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THE IMPACT OF PLACE ATTACHMENT ON LAND SUCCESSION OF NEBRASKA AGRICULTURISTS

By

Shari Kunert

A THESIS

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THE IMPACT OF PLACE ATTACHMENT ON LAND SUCCESSION OF NEBRASKA AGRICULTURISTS

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Many Nebraska agriculturists rely on small family farms for their livelihood. The farm is their source of income and may be an important inheritance for their family when they retire or die. Land succession planning is a process to allow landowners to pass farmland on to the next generation without incurring a potentially debilitating tax liability for the heirs. The purpose of this study is to determine the influence of place attachment on land succession planning of Nebraska agriculturists. This comparative research, mixed methods in nature, involves Nebraska agriculturists who have a land succession plan and Nebraska agriculturists who do not have a land succession plan, and are both within 10 years of retirement (52 years of age) and beyond retirement. The qualitative portion explored how Nebraska agriculturists with and without a succession plan described their place attachment to their land. Ten themes emerged from the qualitative analysis on the Nebraska agriculturists with a will. Eight themes emerged from the qualitative analysis on the Nebraska agriculturists without a will. Two themes, nature bonding and family bonding, were held in common. In the quantitative portion explaining place attachment, Nebraska agriculturalists with a will had significantly higher place identity, place dependence, nature bonding, and overall place attachment than Nebraska agriculturists without a will. The two hypotheses that were not supported were for greater family bonding and friend bonding in Nebraska agriculturists with a will than Nebraska

agriculturists without a will. This study opens the door for further place attachment research in other states to assist in outreach programs in succession planning for agriculturists.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Nebraska's economy is dependent on agriculture. Agricultural exports from Nebraska were fifth in the United States in value for the 2010 fiscal year at $5.3 billion (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). Couple the economy with the agriculturists' average age of 55.9 years and one can see that a succession plan needs to be implemented in family farms (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). A succession plan, though, is fraught with economic factors, intra-familial relationships, and time constraints. For the purposes of this paper, a land succession plan is defined as a will, a legal document that defines how the estate of the deceased is to be distributed.

Economic Factors

Economic factors include making sure that the successors can pay the taxes on the land, maintain the land, have enough income, and help the ones exiting to have money for retirement. The actual financial state of the farm would need to be considered in detail to make sure that the farm can supply all of these needs (Goeller, 2007).

Nebraska's place in agricultural production makes land succession planning imperative for the future of Nebraska's farms. Considering the growth of irrigated cropland in Nebraska from 30.7% in 1997 to 39.3% in 2007, there will also be an increase in price per acre due to the increased production capabilities of the land (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). Other factors to consider that pertain to Nebraska's economy are products associated with land

usage such as soybeans, feed grains, and feeds and fodder. These products placed Nebraska in 4th, 3rd, and 6th place in value nationally in 2007, respectively (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). Nebraska was first in hides and skins (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). The census for agriculture through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) showed that Nebraska's total land usage percentage for farmland in 2007 was 92.5% (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). Thus, Nebraska cannot survive without ties to land. Agricultural land can be used for pasture for stock animals, irrigated for crop production, non-irrigated for crop production, conservation land, and for living purposes.

The average Nebraska farm is 953 acres, which means that 16.2% of all farms fall into the 500-999 acres category, so the size of the inherited operation needs careful consideration. The largest category of farms in Nebraska is in the 100-499 acre size with 32.8% of all farms (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). Nebraska, though, does have 11.0% of farms that are greater than 2000 acres. This is an immense amount of land that could possibly change hands in the near future, even though it may be small amounts at a time. Nebraska also has 83.5% of all farms in a sole-proprietorship or individual family ownership (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011).

Because the average age of Nebraska agriculturists is nearly 56 years, many are at a time in their lives when succession planning needs to be finalized for economic and future land ownership reasons. There are approximately 45.5 million acres of farmland in Nebraska in production, resulting in a large pool of agricultural land that could

possibly change ownership upon the owners retirement or death (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011).

Intra-Family Relationships

Family relationships pertain to the communication within the family as to how the land succession will take place and when. Given the increased average age of agriculturists from 1997 to 2007, 52.5 years to 55.9 years respectively, one can see that there will be an increase in land transfers in the near future (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011; Kaplan, Nussbaum, Becker, Fowler, & Pitts, 2009). Communication is imperative, so everyone in the family understands what the succession plan entails so the plan can be initiated (Titus, Rosenblatt, & Anderson, 1979). A study on small Pennsylvania farms concluded that a lack of communication between agriculturists and their successors can make succession planning constrained or even stop the process (Kaplan et al., 2009). A study of California agriculturists found that about half had decided on who should take over the farm (Girard & Baker, 2005; Kaplan et al., 2009). An Iowa farm study found that even fewer agriculturalists had decided on a successor with less than a third having a decision made (Duffy, Baker, & Lamberti, 2000; Kaplan et al., 2009). Succession planning is imperative to keep the family farm in the family.

Time Constraints

Time constraints are very important when considering a transfer of land management before the inevitable time when land succession decisions are final at the passing of the agriculturist. It is best to plan for the future rather than to wait and have

fewer options. Having a current agriculturist help a successor to learn farm and land management through assisted decision making rather than being a sole decision-maker is beneficial for land succession to an heir (Errington, 1993/94; Kaplan et al., 2009). Following this gradual transfer of land and farm management can take 15 years to complete the eventual transfer (Leonard & Gutmann, 2006).

Small farms are also at risk for environmental factors, such as drought, floods, hail, and tornadoes. Nebraskans cannot afford to be complacent when it comes to seeking financial security for themselves and their heirs. For these and other disconnects between human systems and natural systems, it is important that Nebraskans begin to think about the connections and interrelationships between land, water, populations, cultures, technologies and the environment. For example, Nebraska's Preferred Future (NPF) began as a Nebraska Network 21 initiative. NPF is a collaboration of many different organizations. An overview of the goals includes helping make Nebraskans more aware that they need to plan for the future socially, economically, and environmentally (Nebraska Ag Relations Council, Center for Applied Rural Innovation, Nebraska Development Network, & EcoSpheres, 2001). Planning includes agricultural land and the effects of urban sprawl upon it. Rural and urban leaders need to have more discussion to understand the needs and values of each area.

NPF also hopes to educate Nebraskans about the importance of sustainability and stewardship of natural resources, including agricultural land and water usage. When the number of agriculturists is diminished, it affects the prosperity and sense of community within rural towns, so the agricultural way of life needs to be preserved (Nebraska Ag Relations Council et al., 2001).

Another example of a program the assists with rural environmental planning is The University of Nebraska Rural Initiative (UNRI) through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The UNRI attempts to foster sustainable practices and socially acceptable practices for preserving Nebraska's natural resources in rural areas (The University of Nebraska Rural Initiative, 2012). UNRI also helps develop and spread information for rural Nebraska programs through divisions called Partnerships for Rural Nebraska (PRN) Economic Development Regions. The PRN assists Nebraskans with economic development and success. Nebraska is trying to be forward thinking. For instance, in a study funded by UNRI found 52% of land purchased in the Panhandle of Nebraska from 2003-2006 was by out-of-state buyers and 36% was by local, in-state buyers (Johnson, Conley, Nene, & Krepel, 2008). UNRI has land succession planning assistance to help with this predicament.

Succession Planning Assistance in Other States

The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services gives a vast array of land succession planning tools for many different states including: Vermont, Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Iowa (Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 2012). The North Carolina information, for example, consists of different transition plans. Other assistance is given in estate and retirement planning for trusts, advanced medical directives or "living wills", and probate processes for families of the deceased that did or did not have a will. The possibility of divorce and how to incorporate the scenario into a land transition plan or land succession plan is also covered. The University of Minnesota through their cooperative extension has an interactive website dedicated to assisting people with estate planning. Purdue University

in Indiana has a website to assist agricultural families in succession planning (Purdue University School of Consumer and Family Sciences, 2003). The Purdue website describes how to handle different scenarios and how and when the family discussions over the farm should commence. Iowa has a website for everyone to assist them with planning for retirement, including retirement calculators and estate planning information (Univeristy of Iowa Extension and Outreach, 2012).

Succession planning refers to planning for the inevitable outcome of retirement of the owner, but it does not refer to place attachment, a deeply felt emotional connection to a place, which could be directly related to why Nebraska agriculturists have will or don't have a will. Place attachment could play an immense role as to why Nebraska agriculturists plan for the future of their land. Due to Nebraska's decreasing rural, agricultural population and heavy reliance on agriculture for the local economy, the researcher believes that there is a stronger attachment to the land than only for the economy's sake. Place attachment or sense of place can be defined as "an array of deeply dissolved meanings, built upon those attributes of objects, settings, events, and fundamental particulars of everyday practice and life that become taken for granted, no longer regarded as what is, but as what ought to be" (Pred, 1983). Place attachment studies have been increasing in relation to the environment, other individuals, and communities (Brehm, 2007; Butz & Eyles, 1997; Raymond, Brown, & Weber, 2010). Place attachment can also pertain to rural land and how individuals view them (Goudy, 1982; Walker & Ryan, 2008). The researcher believes that agricultural land is meaningful to agriculturists beyond economics; therefore the researcher proposes that place attachment plays a part in why agriculturists devise a land succession plan.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to ascertain the influence of place attachment on land succession planning by Nebraska farmers who have and have not developed plans in the form of legal wills addressing the succession of property. Qualitative data was gathered by personal interviews with current Nebraska agriculturists, who are within 10 years of retirement, 52 years of age, or beyond retirement age. It also discerns what information would be beneficial to Nebraska agriculturists to help them with intergenerational succession. The comparative phenomenological portion of the study describes the experience of place attachment on agriculturalists that have and have not developed land succession plans. The quantitative portion of the study explains the difference in place attachment in agriculturalists who have a land succession plan and agriculturalists who do not have a succession plan.

Research Question

The research question this study hopes to answer is: Do Nebraska agriculturists that have a succession plan have a greater sense of place attachment than Nebraska agriculturists that do not have a succession plan? Additional questions to be explored are: What factors influence place attachment in agriculturalists that have a will? What factors influence place attachment in agriculturalists that do not have a will?

Limitations

Limitations exist in that the researcher already has her preconceived notions, but that cannot be avoided. The researcher lived in a rural setting for all of her childhood; therefore interpretations of the data collected may impart some of her views. The

researcher will need to rely on others who are qualified in qualitative analysis to assist her in the analysis of the collected data. Another limitation entails time constraints. The researcher does not have enough time to locate and include a larger group of individuals with the desired criterion to participate in the study.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review

Economics of Succession Planning

Knowing what occurs during inevitable land succession can help make future planning beneficial to successors. Intergenerational land succession needs to have a plan in order to prepare for all the different scenarios in the economy and inheritance tax laws. A successor must abide by all county, state, and federal inheritance and estate tax laws. All of these stipulations can inundate an agriculturist with information, barriers, and ideas for a succession plan. Following is a review of several aspects of succession planning such as taxes, trusts, and farm corporations.

Taxes

Taxes such as estate taxes need to be considered when devising a land succession plan. When a person dies without a will or "intestate", the family will rely on a will that has already been written by the state, which is commonplace in all 50 states when a person dies "intestate", in which the descendant lived (Spiegelman, 2010b). If the deceased is unmarried and has no relatives, then the property is awarded to the state. If the deceased has relatives, then the state already has a formula to discern who inherits what property and how much property. Therefore, the family, if they don't agree with the state, will have to go through arduous and expensive dealings with the state. The family, or successor, is already dealing with the stress of their loved one dying and their emotional state (Rachman, 1980). Now they have to deal with estate divisions.

The family will also have to deal with probate, whether there is a will or not. Probate is a legal process that entails the division of assets, settling of debts, and paying of taxes according to value of the estate determined by the state (Spiegelman, 2010b). A will is public document, therefore it has to be approved and scrutinized by anyone who wants to view it. Then the will can be contested. Probate means significant attorney fees even it is not contested, which reduces the amount of the estate and it is also time consuming. If the will is contested, then the attorney fees and time span increases.

There are ways to avoid probate though. Families can avoid probate through the following actions:

1) The designation of an heir or beneficiary for life insurance policies, annuities, and retirement accounts will allow these assets to pass directly to the surviving family members or successors (Spiegelman, 2010a).

2) Bank accounts can be designated as "pay on death" and thus avoid probate by being directly passed on to the beneficiaries. Securities can have successors designated as "transfer on death", but it is not always made available to the owner. Each state and financial firm determines if this option is available.

3) Assets and accounts can be titled with the successor in mind by titling the assets as "joint tenants with right of survivorship." These assets, so titled, pass directly to the successors. Joint tenancy, though, means that the joint tenant has access to the account and so might their creditors. Careful consideration needs to be given to this option.

4) A family revocable trust can be utilized for large and difficult estates. A revocable trust is when the ownership of some or all of the assets is turned over to

the trust, which is a separate legal entity formed through legal documentation and is a private document (Williamson and Gentilini Attorneys at Law, 2011a). The trust still has the original owner's access and control, but probate is avoided and the inheritance goes directly to the beneficiaries. A trust still allows for the original owner to buy, sell, and trade assets. There are estate tax benefits to trust as well.

The individual estate tax exemption or estate tax credit was $5,000,000 as of January 1, 2011. This exemption, though, is not permanent and can change for year to year, so it is important to utilize a good estate planner for this option. A benefit to this option, besides the avoidance of probate, is stepped-up basis. Stepped-up basis means that the value is set for the assets upon time the trust is formed. For example, if the land was purchased at $1,500 an acre and upon death the land is valued at $6,000 an acre, then the land is assessed at $6,000 an acre and no taxes are paid on the increase in value. It is as if the land was always valued at $6,000 an acre. Stepped-down basis applies though. If the value decreases, then the assessment is for the lower amount. This is very beneficial to the heirs.

The greatest benefit to the heirs is the careful succession planning by the original owner before they die. With careful planning and consideration for the family, then the agricultural land, or asset, can remain in the family without significant monetary loss to the family and estate due to probate, estate taxes, and attorney fees.

Farm Corporations

Family farm corporations are considered their own entity according to the law, so they are owned and managed under different criteria than a family farm (Constitution, 1982). Family farm corporations are different from corporate farm industries because the entity, or farm, has related family members as the voting majority within the corporation (The National Center for Agricultural Law Research & Information, 2003). A distinction is made that the shareholders, or related family members, must be natural persons and not a corporate entity. At least one shareholder, or family member, must reside on the property, thus preventing "absentee ownership."

Family farm corporations may also have stipulations on who performs the farm duties on the farm. Corporate farming laws can also have restrictions on the amount of time that land can be owned by corporations before it is disposed. Corporations may acquire land through a bank for a debt collection or for legal security reasons. The land will usually have restrictions on its use as well. Nebraska, for example, allows for a corporate entity to own agricultural land, but it must be on behalf and for the benefit of a family member (Constitution of Nebraska, 1982). The entity must be owned by a person(s) that is within "the fourth degree of kindred according to the rules of civil law" of the person that conducts the daily maintenance of the farm or ranch. Article XII, Section 8 of the Nebraska Constitution continues to ascertain that the family farm or ranch corporation must be held by related family members, who hold a majority of the voting rights and in which at least one family member resides on the property. The restrictions though do not apply to poultry farms, alfalfa processors, and mining lands. In Nebraska if a corporation, though, acquires agricultural land, then the land may not be

developed for non-farm or non-ranch purposes and can only be owned for a maximum of five years. Furthermore, the land cannot be utilized for farming or ranching unless it is leased to a family member of the land.

A family farm corporation can be beneficial for the life of the agriculturists, but upon death the benefits are lost. Capital gains tax are assessed on the property, therefore the family may end up paying a significant amount of taxes (Williamson and Gentilini Attorneys at Law, 2011b). If the family members have to sell property, then they are looking at even higher capital gains tax. All of these taxes could have been avoided with proper succession planning.

Proper reflection and adherence to beneficial succession planning would assist families to maintain financial and aesthetic ramifications on the family farm (Titus et al., 1979). The financial attributes of succession planning would benefit the successors by allowing them to value the land that they inherit and retain the good environmental health of the land by the continuance of conservation management decisions and land stewardship for the future. The aesthetic nature of the land would be maintained due to place attachment to the property (Vaske & Kobrin, 2001). By coupling financial concerns and the maintaining of aesthetic attributes with place attachment, Nebraska's important natural resource, agriculture, would be maintained for the future generations of farmers.

Place Attachment

Place attachment is the phenomenon of being emotionally attached to a particular location or land (Lewicka, 2011; Raymond et al., 2010; Tuan, 1975). The attachment to the place is felt so strongly that non-economic factors play an immense role in

determining management decisions (Spash, 2006; Wilson, 2008). The history of place attachment or sense of place can be found as far back as Aristotle, but the beginnings of a sense of place philosophy can be found in Heidegger's work (1962). The discussion turns to the concern and care for all things, especially places (Heidegger, 1962). A sense of place is an extension of human nature. It is what humans do, they create a place. Tuan (1974, 1975) further builds on this idea by connecting experiences and places. Tuan (1980) explains the difference between rootedness and sense of place with rootedness being a long-term residence in a specific locale, but sense of place is created with involvement of activities in the place. Tuan continues the explanation with: "There is a knowing that is the result of familiarity through long residence; and a knowing that is the result of conscious effort. The former kind generates a sense of stability and rootedness, the latter explicit knowledge (p. 8)."

Farms are small areas that can give intimate and explicit knowledge and meaning to the beholder, the agriculturists. Basically, places are not simply locations. The building of a sense of place continues with life experiences and daily interactions which allow for a greater connection to place and more in depth feelings towards a location (Goudy, 1982; Pred, 1983; Tuan, 1975). In other words, "an authentic sense of place is largely unselfconscious, an array of deeply dissolved meanings, built upon those attributes of objects, setting, events, and fundamental particulars of everyday practice and life that become taken for granted, no longer regarded as what is, but as what ought to be" (Pred, 1983, p. 50).

Agriculturalists live in the place, their farm, and experience its intricacies and interconnections on a daily basis, thus sense of place is created (Curry, 2000). A study

by Leonard and Gutmann (2006) found Nebraska agriculturists were very interested in just maintaining their land and then putting more land into Conservation Reserve Programs (CRP) the closer they got to retirement (Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006)(Leonard & Gutmann, 2006). The Leonard and Gutmann study revealed that over half of the agriculturists wanted their children to continue to farm and /or ranch on their land, not other land. Individuals in rural areas and small, rural communities have been found to develop place attachment (Butz & Eyles, 1997; Davis, 1999; Grossman, 1995; Tuan, 1991), so this could be a basis for the deeper connection to their own land. Agricultural areas are primarily small, rural towns and small rural communities have been found to have a greater sense of place attachment as well (Lewicka, 2011). As a community increases in population, the level of place attachment decreases. There seems to be an inverse relationship, thus place attachment may be greater in agricultural areas.

Population is not the only deterrent to a sense of place attachment. A homogeneous community has a greater sense of place than a diverse community (Tuan, 1975). Nebraska agriculturists are predominantly white and male (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011; United States Department of Agriculture & National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2007). This pattern continues with socioeconomic status, the greater the diversity, the less place attachment (Walker & Ryan, 2008). In Nebraska, approximately 30% of agriculturists make under $10,000 and approximately 30% make between $100,000 and $500,000 (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). There is a difference in income, but

there are two larger groups with the same socioeconomic status. In other words, agriculturists in the United States and Nebraska are close to a homogeneous community, therefore; Nebraska agriculturists with a land succession plan may follow the literature on place attachment and have a greater sense of place attachment.

Behavior is another contributor to a sense of place. Actions, such as participation in a community, increase the attachment to a place. In rural settings, it is the cooperation between community members to reach a final conclusion or project (Tuan, 1980). Tuan states, "We create places with sticks and stones" (p.6). The building of a place is what agriculturists do when they choose to raise their family and interact intimately with their land. They also choose who will continue to build in their place, their home. It is the place or in this case, the farm, that may hold fond memories or a special meaning to them. Generational attachment is another known phenomenon (Lewicka, 2011). It is a social construction that ties place attachment and the increase in meaningfulness of the land. Fond memories and meaningfulness help to create a sense of place (Lewicka, 2011; Tuan, 1977). In a New England study, agricultural scenes received a greater attachment score than open or forested areas (Walker & Ryan, 2008).

Natural resource management, including soil conservation, is a continuation of a connection to the land. Agricultural land has minerals, water, wildlife, and soil. The use of these natural resources can negatively or positively affect the outcome of land use (Gliessman, 2007), so whether an agriculturists chooses soil conservation measures or not is extremely relative to the productivity of the land. A greater sense of place has been recognized to lead to a greater investment in conservation programs or land trusts (Cross, Keske, Lacy, Hoag, & Bastien, 2011). Soil conservation programs, like riparian buffers,

Wetland Reserve Programs, grassland protection programs, and watershed protection programs can help reduce the soil chemical load and erosion, while giving a small, economic payment to the agriculturists for extra income (Boggess & Heady, 1981). Land owners are better able to put conservation programs into practice, whereas renters tend to degrade the land and tend to not use conservation programs, such as conservation tillage (Lichtenberg, 2004). Agriculturists do not always try to achieve full economic value, but do try to maintain the functional nature of the land (Kooten, Weisensel, & Chinthammit, 1990), thus non-economic values are sometimes very important to conservation programs (Spash, 2006). Furthermore, a connection to nature, an element of place attachment, does play into decisions on conservation by agriculturists (Gosling & Williams, 2010).

Another area for place attachment and conservation is in wildlife management and feelings of the community toward wildlife management. Management decisions concerning native areas can be related to the place attachment felt to the area (Andersson, Barthel, & Ahrné, 2007; Treves & Karanth, 2003). The greater the education on ecosystem management and the functions of the ecosystem, the more likely that the community members will choose conservation (Rokicka & Słomczyńska, 2002; Treves & Karanth, 2003; Turner & Berkes, 2006). In the Turner and Berkes study (2006), it was found that people develop or learn about conservation practices through oral history, experiences with wildlife, and ecological observations. Life experiences in the natural environment can help alter or reinforce beliefs in conservation within a society. Another study in Nigeria found that incorporating local people's ecological knowledge helps facilitate conservation behavior (Etkin, 2002). Agriculturists hold an intimate knowledge of their land, so social and economic factors play out in their decision on whether or not

to choose conservation behavior (Lynne, Shonkwiler, & Rola, 1988). A rural Maine study detailed the effects of place attachment with landscape protection, including agricultural land, which resulted in greater conservation protection for landscapes (Walker & Ryan, 2008).

Wildlife on agricultural lands is a part of the natural ecosystem. People can also feel a sense of place due to a connection to the wildlife in the area (Butler, Shanahan, & Decker, 2003; Harris, Krausman, & Shaw, 1995; Jonker, Muth, Organ, Zwick, & Siemer, 2006). Conservation ideas and sense of place are connected (Butler et al., 2003; DeCaro & Stokes, 2008; Wilson, 2008). Sense of place can also increase the awareness and personal responsibility in wildlife conservation (Cantrill, 2011; Gosling & Williams, 2010). With all of these interconnections between sense of place and conservation, an integrated model would be best to utilize when approaching agriculturists about conservation practices.

Another subject to consider is that place identity is not always positive (Manzo, 2005). When a place is taken from someone or a community, the negative emotions due to loss of a sense of place are intense (Windsor & McVey, 2005).

The array of place attachment studies also specifically involves agricultural areas. Agriculture is an integral economic and social component of a community or location, so it is important to have a tie to the land. Agriculturists in other parts of the world acknowledge their sense of place through their actions with protests (Klandermans, Sabucedo, Rodriguez, & de Weerd, 2002) or the continuation of agricultural practices despite changes in the community (Jokisch, 2002). Nebraska agriculturists may feel the

same way about their land despite changes in the community. Development of a sense of place has been demonstrated across the United States (Curry, 2000; Schnell, 2003). The sense of place can be found in many different regions and communities. In a London, England study on place attachment, attached individuals: had greater self-esteem due to place attachment, greater place identification, a sense of continuity, and described the functionality of their environment (Twigger-Ross & Uzzell, 1996).

Various studies have been construed on the basic premise of place attachment, the attachment of an individual or group to a location. Studies range from urban areas to rural areas, different community sizes and, diverse populations to homogenous populations. For the purpose of studying grassland management and people, we will look at studies that pertain to the physical land and place attachment. Said studies range from unidimensional to four dimensional and across different social aspects such as social connections. A unidimensional study can utilize place attachment as a follower of sense of place (Relph, 1976). Some studies that use Likert scales can also be placed in the unidimensional category. Two-dimensional studies look at place attachment between the physical environment and how the connection relates to a social aspect within the communities (Brehm, Eisenhauer, & Krannich, 2006; Scannell & Gifford, 2010). Another study by Brehm (2007) looked at different meanings from community members and how the meaning could be applied to the physical environment. A conglomeration of four environmental-social categories was derived by Brehm's interpretation. The idea of place attachment can also be defined as a social mechanism transpired from shared cultural and behavioral actions within the confines of the physical location (Stedman, 2003). Place attachment and length of residence are also tied together (Kaltenborn &

Williams, 2002; Stedman, 2003). A three-dimensional study was conducted with place attachment composed of the elements: place identity, place dependence, and a type of social bonding (Gerard, Graefe, & Manning, 2005).

Many different multidimensional studies on place attachment have been conducted. One such study looks at the connections between place attachment, place dependence, and the different bonds that individuals have with a recreational place (Williams & Vaske, 2003). Another study looked at five categories: place familiarity, identity, dependence, belongingness, and rootedness and then empirically analyzed the items (Hammitt, Backlund, & Bixler, 2006). Gosling and Williams (2010) used factor loading, means, and standard deviations for environmental concern and concern for human welfare scales along with the 11 subscales. The Gosling and Williams study found that greater connections to nature led to more pro-environmental decisions. While these studies illustrate the multidimensionality of place attachment, we feel that a multidimensional study with different poles would lend to greater knowledge of the place attachment phenomenon.

Raymond, Brown, and Weber (2010) developed a measure of five elements of sense of place: place identity, place dependence, nature bonding, family bonding, and friend bonding. Their integrated model of rural landowner place attachment encapsulates the different elements of place-based scholarship. (See Figure 1)

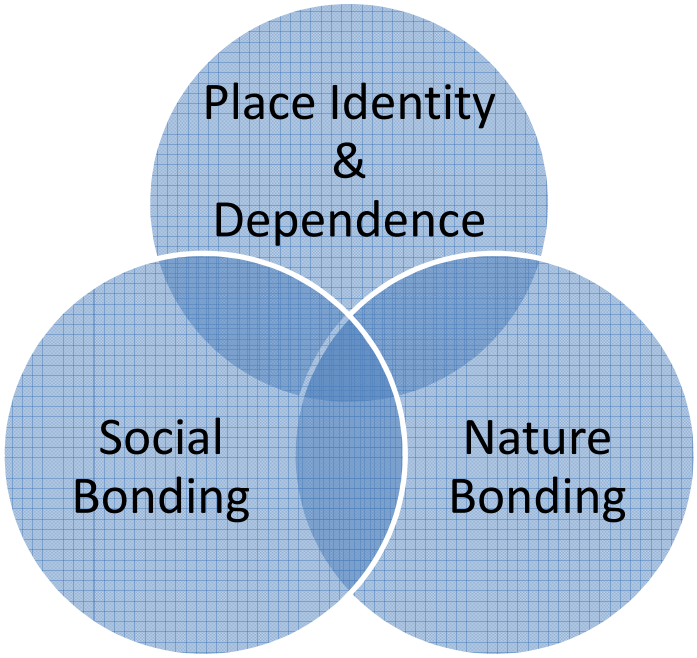


Figure 1: Three-pole and four-dimensional conceptual model of place attachment from Raymond et al. 2010 (p. 425).

The place identity and place dependence area depicts the personal context of place attachment such as, place identity, place dependence, and rootedness (Raymond et al., 2010). Place identity refers to a meaningful connection to a place that defines a person. Place dependence is the relationship that we have for a place's use. Rootedness is the longevity of habituation in a single location (Raymond et al., 2010; Tuan, 1980). Social bonding with family and friends, according to Raymond (2010), is the community context area such as, a sense of belonging, attachment to the community, and the familiarity a person has with a place. Nature bonding refers to the natural environment context. For example, nature bonding is a feeling of a connection to nature and the ability to identify with the natural environment.

Their research was carried out in a medium urban and rural area and a rural mountain range with agricultural practices. Their research showed that the rural areas in the mountain range had a "significantly higher place identity, place dependence, nature bonding, and family bonding (p. 430)" than the more urban areas. I believe this research holds immense importance in the realm of place attachment and those who maintain the land.

Place attachment is a widely studied phenomenon, but I attempt to relate Nebraska agriculturists that have a land succession plan with a greater sense of place compared to those that do not have a land succession plan. If agriculturists have a greater sense of place, then they would be more apt to utilize conservation programs and land succession plans to protect the inheritance of their land. Soil and water conservation programs can utilize the notion of place attachment as well and can be utilized as a social phenomenon to benefit Nebraska's soil, water, and wildlife through self-determined conservation practices and education of land succession plans.

Place attachment can play an immense role in how an agriculturist can be emotionally attached to their land and the immediate surroundings of their land. The comparative phenomenological portion of the study describes the experience of place attachment from the perspective agriculturalists who have land succession plans and agriculturalists who do not have land succession plans.

Based on the above literature review, the following hypotheses were developed for the quantitative portion of the study:

Hypothesis 1: Agriculturalists with a will have a significantly higher place identity than Agriculturalists without a will.

Hypothesis 2: Agriculturalists with a will have a significantly higher place dependence than Agriculturalists without a will.

Hypothesis 3: Agriculturalists with a will have a significantly higher nature bond than Agriculturalist without a will.

Hypothesis 4: Agriculturalists with a will have a significantly higher family bond than Agriculturalists without a will.

Hypothesis 5: Agriculturalists with a will have a significantly higher friend bond than Agriculturalists without a will.

Hypothesis 6: Agriculturalists with a will have a significantly higher overall place attachment than Agriculturalist without a will.

CHAPTER III

Methods

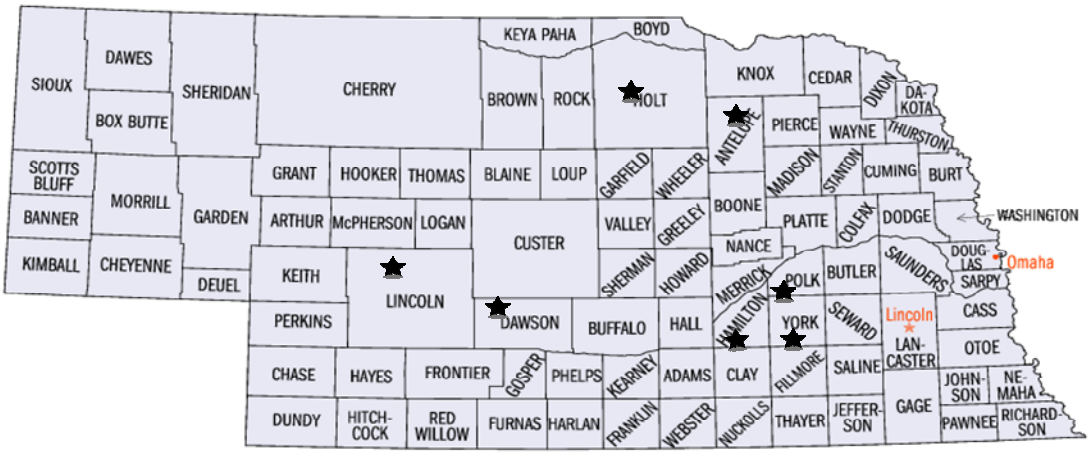
The research for sense of place attachment utilized a mixed methods approach with qualitative and quantitative methods. The qualitative methods explored the factors or themes that influenced place attachment in Nebraska agriculturists with a will and Nebraska agriculturists without a will. The quantitative methods were utilized to explain any differences in place attachment between agriculturists with a will and Nebraska agriculturists without a will.

For the purpose of this research criterion a snowball sampling of individuals was used for the qualitative component. Both the qualitative and quantitative samples were heterogeneous, but were predominantly white and male. Agriculture in Nebraska is a male dominated field, and the vast majority of agriculturalists in Nebraska are white (Economic Research Service & United States Department of Agriculture, 2011). All of the individuals owned agricultural land and were 10 years from retirement or beyond full retirement age (more than 62 years old). The individuals' years until retirement were a criteria because of the nearness of land succession in terms of time and that succession was inevitable in the future.

Qualitative Measures

A total of 15 individuals were personally interviewed by the researcher who met the criteria for this research project. Nine individuals had a land succession plan and for comparison six individuals did not have a land succession plan. Figure 1 shows which

counties in Nebraska the participants in the qualitative component of the study came from.



*Stars depict the county where participant(s) reside

Figure 2. Map of Nebraska qualitative study participant's county of residence.

An interview protocol was followed. The protocol consisted of 5 open-ended questions to cover each of Raymond et al. (2010) five elements of place attachment: place identity, place dependence, nature bonding, family bonding, and friend bonding (2010) (see Table 1). The questions and consequent sub-questions were based on answering the research questions: What factors influence place attachment in agriculturalists that have a will? What factors influence place attachment in agriculturalists that do not have a will?

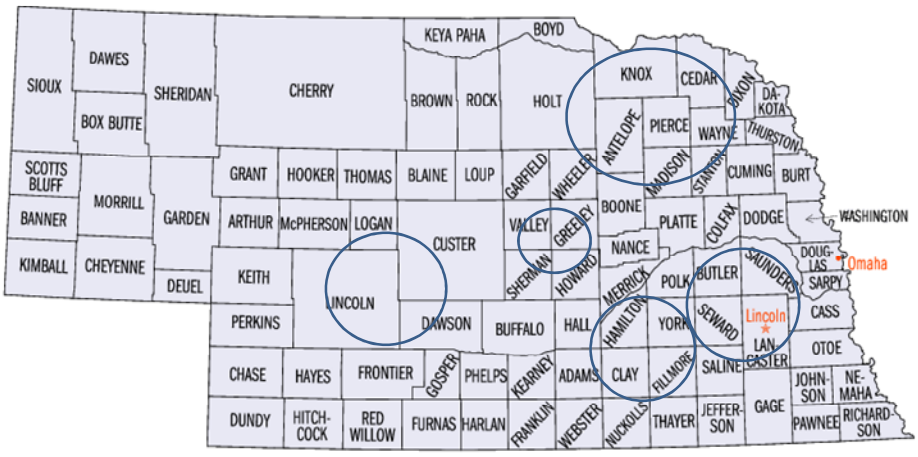
Table 1

Interview Questions

Place Identity	Please describe how you feel about your land. How would you describe your personal connection to your land?
Place Dependence	Describe how living where you do helps you meet your personal needs and goals.
Family Bonding	Please describe how your emotional connection to your family affects your attitude toward the land.
Nature Bonding	How has the natural environment of the region in which you live influenced your attitude toward the land?
Friend Bonding	Please describe how your friendships in the community affect your attitude toward the land.

Qualitative Analysis

The interviews were transcribed by the researcher from verbatim written recordings. Then the transcriptions were entered into MAXQDA®, a qualitative analysis software, and analyzed for "cluster of meaning" (Creswell, 2007) or themes of the interview statements. The use of thematic analysis is to draw out noticeable or salient dimensions of a connection to agricultural land and a land succession plan, if they have one. Ten themes emerged in the analysis of the transcribed interviews of agriculturalists with a succession plan, and eight themes emerged in the analysis of the transcribed interviews of agriculturalists without a succession plan.



*Circles depict the general area where participant(s) reside

Figure 3. Map of Nebraska quantitative study participant's general area of residence.

Peer Examination and Member Examination

Thematic analysis was reviewed by two other qualified individuals for quality purposes. One individual is a doctoral student with a background in qualitative analysis. The other individual is a business professional with an educational background in utilizing qualitative analysis, research, and marketing. The member examination was carried out through telephone conversations with two qualitative research participants. Each participant had their interviews read back verbatim from MAXQDA® input interview statements. Each participant responded that the transcriptions correctly detailed their answers to the qualitative questions.

Quantitative Measures

Surveys were distributed to voluntary participants by the researcher and by two Farmer's Cooperatives on behalf of the researcher. The surveys were accompanied by an informed consent form which described the selection criteria for the participants and details about the study. The survey used a 5-point Likert scale (Creswell, 2007; Raymond et al., 2010). The Likert scale refers to "1 = Strongly Disagree", "3 = Neutral", and "5 = Strongly Agree." The survey consisted of 13 statements. The participants were to mark how much they agreed or disagreed with the statement. The survey consisted of: three place identity items; three place dependence items; three nature bonding items; two family bonding items; and two friend bonding items. At the end of the survey were: one question to see if they had a land succession plan and six questions on general demographics relating to years in residence, years in farming, number of generations in farming, years the land had been operated by their family, education level, and gender.

Participants

Sixty-seven Nebraska agriculturalists completed the place attachment survey for a return rate of 44.7%. Forty-seven had a will and 20 did not have a will. The sample was made up of 56 males and 11 females.

Quantitative Analysis

Summated scales were carried out for each element of place attachment. The mean was found for each element within the categories of surveys with a will and surveys without a will. This comparative analysis allowed for differences within the five elements of place attachment to be scored. If there was a significant difference between

will and non-will surveys, then the hypothesis that Nebraska agriculturists with a will have a greater place attachment would be supported.

CHAPTER IV

Results

Qualitative Results

Fifteen participants were individually interviewed. The answers to the five queries on place attachment (see Table 1) were transcribed verbatim into MAXQDA®. The answers were coded for overall themes in each group for the will and non-will participants and for each question. Some statements were coded with more than one theme because the statements consisted of variables from different themes.

Results of Qualitative Succession Plan Interviews

Nine agriculturalists with a will were interviewed as part of the exploration into factors influencing place attachment. There were five males and four females. All were white. Ten themes emerged from significant statements from the succession plan or will group (see Table 2).

Table 2

Operational definitions of the ten themes for participants with a will

Theme	Definition	Supporting Literature
1.Plan for succession	The designation of a successor	Trow 1961
2.Pride	Success in a professional status	Tissari 2006
3.Friend connection	To feel like part of a community and to identify with community members	McMillian & Chavis 1986; Raymond et al., 2010
4.Nature connection	The ability to feel attached to or a part of nature	Gosling &Williams 2010; Raymond et al., 2010
5.Family connection	To feel an emotional attachment to family members	Raymond et al., 2010
6.Connection to place or land	To have an emotional attachment to a place due to feelings or understanding	Tuan 1975; Raymond et al., 2010
7.Steward of the land	The current responsible use of natural resources for future generations	Worrell & Appleby 2000
8.Disassociation (from industrial farmers)	To be set apart from a group or entity	Borchardt 1983; Clayton & Beranek 1985
9.Peace	A "value of concern or togetherness" without conflict	Galtung 1969
10.Disassociation (from town and townspeople)	To be set apart from a group or entity	Borchardt 1983; Clayton & Beranek 1985

Theme 1: Plan for Succession

Planning for succession is the designation of an heir (Trow, 1961). Planning for succession pertained to discussing who would inherit the land or what the future of the land was to be as thought of by the agriculturist. This theme can be seen in several statements from the Nebraska agriculturists with a will:

> "I would like it to stay in the family."
>
> "It's always been in the family. I feel that I want to keep it for many more years. It needs to stay in the family and never be sold"

> "This land has been handed down for 3 generations already. I'm looking forward to handing it down to my children and hopefully they will hand it down to their children."

Each statement referred to keeping the land within their family for the next generation to maintain.

Theme 2: Pride

Pride can best be defined as a positive attribute in the attainment of a raised professional status (Tissari, 2006). Pride comments referred to comments about successful ownership of the land. When discussing his land, a participant responded with:

> "Nothing has been handed down from generations ahead. It was purchased by me and continues to be farmed."

> "I'm proud to be able to produce a good enough crop every year because of it (his land)."

> "I feel proud to own my land. It was a gift. I definitely feel a connection to my land. It gives me a great source of satisfaction."

Theme 3: Friend Connection.

Friend connection is the ability to feel like part of a community or the ability to identify with community members (McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Raymond et al., 2010). Friend connection comments discussed activities with friends or a connection through the same thoughts or beliefs of other community members. Examples of friend connection themed statements include:

> "I'm glad to live where my friends live. They have good values that are the same as mine. Since we have the same interests we can talk about what is happening on our land."

> "Most of my friends are small farmers."

> "The people that work the soil with you give you closer ties to them… I help some plant gardens and even bring them manure…As friends we have to work together for this."

> "Most of my friends are farmers. I like their perspective on our living better than the town people….I like the way my friends my think. It's reassuring to me."

Theme 4: Nature Connection

The nature connection theme refers to the ability to feel attached to or a part of nature (Gosling & Williams, 2010; Raymond et al., 2010). A nature connection comment explained how the person felt about the natural world, its attributes, or how the person felt when they were surrounded by the natural environment. The comments with a nature connection would be:

> "I can go out and walk around and watch the wildlife with peace and quiet…relaxation and quietness, stillness and that warms my heart. It gives me a connection to nature."

> "I've always enjoyed living outside and watching and enjoying the wild life"
> "Most of my friends all appreciate the outdoors, but I feel the way I do about the land because it's in my heart."

> "Wildlife is instrumental in enjoying my land…the water and irrigation is instrumental in making the farm viable to have enough pasture for the wildlife area on my farm."

Nebraska is part of the flyway for migratory birds and this fact was acknowledged when one participant responded:

> "When the spring migration of ducks happens, it's the greatest enjoyment to see them come in. The wildlife has been depleted because of the fence line to fence line and chemicals. Wildlife isn't here. Pheasants are gone. It changed the whole environment really, fence lines and chemicals. People don't plant trees, they tear them out. We lost our wildlife. We don't see any. We went from pheasants to nothing. When I was little we never saw deer and now we see them all the time. They only have creek bottoms now."

Another participant focused on the negative attributes associated with not having the natural environment for a nature connection when he related:

> "I like seeing the wild turkeys and some deer, but not too many. I think there's too many deer now. So far, the pheasants and grouse are gone. I miss them. I was hoping they would be around for my grandchildren, but there isn't any habitat left. It's all farmed now."

Theme 5: Family Connection

The family connection theme is about feeling an emotional attachment to one's family (Raymond et al., 2010). A family connection comment related to the activities of being part of a family, the raising of family members, or providing for family members. Several comments were related to raising a family on the land.

> "I have lived 80 years in this same place to raise my family."

> "My personal needs and goals would be providing and caring for my family. My land has enabled me to teach my children responsibility and to be good stewards of the land. That's what we need to be after all."

> "Working together each one to learn to enjoy working the soil is the benefit of it. On the farm you are with your family more so it is a benefit."

> "The land is where we all resided and lived together. It draws me closer to it because of my family or blood relation lived there. Reminds of the good times and bad times we shared which strengthened the family ties…I think because of my family that's why I care so deeply for the land. I do it all for them. The land is for all of us,"

> "I have an emotional connection to the land because it has helped me raise my four children."

Theme 6: Connection to Place or Land

The connection to place or land could be described as an emotional attachment to a place due to feelings or an understanding of the area (Raymond et al., 2010; Tuan, 1975). When a participant discussed their emotions or feelings about the area, it was considered

to be an example of the connection to place or land theme. This theme can be found in every question by one or more participants. Here is an example of the connection to land or place theme:

> "The land is part of me. It's my family. It pulses through you and you are lucky for it to be a part of you because you know that while watching it and knowing it that you would be lost without it."

Priorities in place connection themed statements are evident as well. Two participants illustrate their dilemmas with these comments:

> "Well, almost to a degree and obviously with some temperance there's a thought that the land comes first and my family second. You don't always think that way, but on a subconscious level you know what needs to be done…one has to have more of a connection to one than the other, but my attitude toward the land is stable. I love the land."

> "I guess I try to keep things in perspective with family first and the land second, but with the weather and conditions sometimes you have to put the family second and skip functions and time with them."

Theme 7: Steward of the Land

Land stewardship entails using the current natural resources responsibly for future generations (Worrell & Appleby, 2000). Land stewardship comments discussed how to leave the land in a better state for the next generation or to plan for how to tend to the land in a better way for the future. The steward of the land theme begins in the place identity question with:

> "The land is here for us to take care of. If you take care of it, it will reward you"

> "It's a great feeling to own the land and work the soil and keep it up to raise good crops. I love keeping it up. I'm a caretaker of the soil."

Teaching family members about good stewardship is evident in this reply:

> "My land has enabled me to teach my children responsibility and to be good stewards of the land. That's what we need to be after all."

Tying ancestors to current land can be found within several replies:

> "You always want to take of it as best you can. As ancestors did for the land, they did it for you, so you take care of the land for future generations."

> "I want to pass it on to them, so I have to continue to take better care of it for them…I feel the need to be good stewards of the land in order to keep it good for others…Of the friendships that I have, everybody seems to want to take care of the land because it needs to be passed on to the next generation. We need to try to leave it better for them."

> "They are all trying to do their best to utilize the land and keep it productive. We are custodians of the soil and must keep it the best we can. My friends are the same… We all try to keep the land productive, but I don't think we do the right thing. We are trying to produce more with chemicals to feed the world but we are hurting the soil with the chemicals. We need better guidelines in chemical application. As friends we have to work together for this. You must put in the soil what you want to take out."

Theme 8: Disassociation (from Industrial Farmers)

Disassociation refers to the state, either emotional or physical, of being set apart from a group or entity (Borchardt, 1983; Clayton & Beranek, 1985). Disassociation comments referred or mentioned an increased distance or distinct difference from another entity. The comments made by the participants referred blatantly to the distinct difference between themselves and the industrial farmers such as:

> "My friends are the same, but I'm not friends with the big farmers."

> "I get disgusted with the big farmers because they are greedy and that is not human nature."

> "We get disgusted with the big farmers. We get fearful that they will crowd us smaller farmers out of business. I don't like that kind of attitude."

> "I don't like the big farmers either. They don't care how much chemicals they put on or how much they hurt the soil. It's not right."

Theme 9: Peace

The theme peace refers to a "value of concern or togetherness" without conflict (Galtung, 1969). Peace can be a feeling of tranquility from within or an emotional state that is acquired from the external world. Some comments representing the peace theme are:

> "I can go out and walk around and watch the wildlife with peace and quiet…It calms the mind, heart, and soul."
>
> "Our kids can play outside all day and we don't have to worry."

Theme 10: Disassociation (from town and townspeople)

Disassociation occurs when a person feels a distance or set apart from a group or entity (Borchardt, 1983; Clayton & Beranek, 1985). Disassociation themed comments make the distinction that rural areas are set apart from urban areas with comments like:

> "We don't have the problems as in the city."
>
> "At the present we are still pretty isolated with people with high morals away from the city."
>
> "I wanted to be in the country, so I built here away from the city."
>
> "I like their perspective on our living better than the town people. I don't like how greedy they are."

Results of Qualitative Non-Succession Plan Interviews

Six agriculturalists without a will were interviewed as part of the exploration into factors influencing place attachment. There were four males and two females. All were

white. The interviews for the non-succession plan or non-will participants were analyzed for overall themes. Eight themes emerged from significant statements from the non-succession plan or non-will participants (see Table 3).

Table 3

Operational definitions of the nine themes for participants without a will

Theme	Definition	Supporting Literature
1.Disassociation (from land or place)	To set apart from a group or entity	Borchardt 1983; Clayton & Beranek 1985
2.Freedom	To have unrestricted options	Parent 1974; Gastil 1980
3.Nature connection	The ability to feel attached to or a part of nature	Gosling &Williams 2010; Raymond et al., 2010
4.Family connection	To feel an emotional attachment to family members	Raymond et al., 2010
5.Connection to community	To feel an attachment to a small community	Plas and Lewis 1996
6.Livelihood	The ability to gain income for "tangible assets"	Chambers & Conway 1992
7.Disassociation (from wildlife)	To set apart from a group or entity	Borchardt 1983; Clayton & Beranek 1985
8.Disassociation (from friends)	To set apart from a group or entity	Borchardt 1983; Clayton & Beranek 1985

Theme 1: Disassociation (from Land or Place)

Disassociation refers to the state, either emotional or physical, of being set apart from a group or entity (Borchardt, 1983; Clayton & Beranek, 1985). The participants comments mainly centered on not being emotionally attached to their land such as:

> "The land is interesting. It's my living, but as far as emotionally attached I'm not."
> "My work with it is limited because I work outside the home now. I'm not hands on anymore."
>
> "I don't have any personal connection to the land."

Theme 2: Freedom.

Freedom relates to having no restrictions on options (Gastil, 1980; Parent, 1974). The freedom comments discussed or explained how they felt about being able to make their own decisions without consulting others or without the regard for others' thoughts and perceptions of their actions. The non-will participants' statements that relate to the freedom theme include:

> "Well, my land is something I don't want to give up at this point. I like it because I can do what I feel like with it…I own it and I have the right to do what I want with it as long as the banker says it is ok."
>
> "It's mine and only mine, so I have a right to do what I please with it."
>
> "I can do whatever I like out here…My goals were to earn a living and have freedom to do as I please.
>
> "…so I guess I had freedom from all of the town rules."

Theme 3: Nature Connection

The nature connection theme is when a person has the ability to feel attached to or to feel as if they are a part of nature (Gosling & Williams, 2010; Raymond et al., 2010).

A nature connection theme pertained to an attachment to the natural world or an emotion felt by being in the natural world. The nature connection theme plays out in two comments:

> "It's nice to see the sunrise and sunset. It's nice to appreciate the beauty of the outdoors. We see pheasants in spring and different crops around. We take a lot of walks and pictures with the sun and trees. We've enjoyed doing these things. It's like we have our own campground in our backyard."

> "The habitat is down because of farmers take out trees and put more chemicals on the land, so it is harmful to the wildlife. We need better CRP programs and more money for them to make farmers more willing to do conservation programs. Too much land is taken out of conservation programs now, so there isn't much wildlife left."

Theme 4: Family Connection

The family connection theme is about feeling an emotional attachment to one's family (Raymond et al., 2010). A family connection theme referred to how to care and support family members. Childhood activities were on this participant's mind when she answered with:

> "Why I think the land has allowed my kids to have freedom and learn how to be kids. They can play in mud or do chores. Both are important."

Another non-will participant thought of her parents when she answered with:

> "My parents lived on this land, this land that is now mine. I have a connection to them through the land and my kids will have the same connection to me through the land."

Sometimes heritage plays a role in why people think about their family and how they remain connected to their own family such as:

> "I would say the land is more important to me because of my family. It is part of their heritage and they can identify with the land...I have a connection to them through the land and my kids will have the same connection to me through the land."

Theme 5: Connection to Community

The connection through memberships and activities can be formed within a community in slightly urban areas (Plas & Lewis, 1996). Connection to community comments discussed emotions and activities with other members of the community. The social construct of rural communities can be aligned with small urban areas in such a way that people feel a sense of community to the adjacent township which can be defined by such comments as:

> "The small community here is more personable than a large city."
>
> "A small community equals freedom for me. We have low crime here and we know everybody."

Theme 6: Livelihood

Livelihood refers to the ability to gain income for "tangible assets" (Chambers & Conway, 1992). Specifically, livelihood referred to the ability to earn income or assets. The land helped one participant attain his goal. He detailed his goal when he said:

> "It fulfilled my goals because I raised hogs."
>
> One participant tied money and land together with:
>
> "It makes me money and that is what I need. I work it, I plant it, I water it. That's all. As long as it makes me a livelihood, I don't care beyond that. Money allows me to live and the land makes me money. They go together."
>
> The livelihood comments are further detailed with these comments:
>
> "The land is important because it is our livelihood."
>
> "I'm not sure that the land helped me with my personal needs goals, other than to make a living. I guess that was my goal. I needed money to raise a family and

> have a wife to support. Money allowed me to buy food and pay bills. That's important."
>
> "The land is bringing in a lot of money, which is the same as everything else. Everything else is going up too, so the land better bring in money for me."
>
> "The farm makes more money than my other job right now. It is easier to support my family with farming and the land."

Theme 7: Disassociation (from Wildlife)

Disassociation refers to the state, either emotional or physical, of being set apart from a group or entity (Borchardt, 1983; Clayton & Beranek, 1985). In this case the comments centered on the disconnection or disassociation from wildlife such as:

> "I've never thought about it. I'm not concerned about wildlife at all. I don't think about wildlife at all. I'm concerned about water for crops. That's it as far as that goes."
>
> "Wildlife is here in places and it doesn't affect me."
>
> "We keep putting in more farmland and wildlife is still here, so I guess I don't really care about that. That's all I have to say about wildlife."

Theme 8: Disassociation (from Friends)

Disassociation refers to the state, either emotional or physical, of being set apart from a group or entity (Borchardt, 1983; Clayton & Beranek, 1985). A disconnection from friends is the core of this theme. Participants relayed their feelings toward their friends and the land with such comments as:

> "Friendships, well, I don't think of them. We have friends and a small community. We live close to town is all. I don't think there's anything to land and friendships."
>
> "My friends definitely don't alter my feelings towards the land."
>
> "I don't really have a good connection to that, friends and land. My friendships are not based on the land."

> "I don't have greater connection to them or the land because of that. I have friends because I like them, not for any other reason. The land doesn't change my friendships."

> "I don't like the town people, so I guess I have friends out here because they don't think like the town people. They farm just like me, but it doesn't mean I like them because they farm the land. I like them because they are good people. The land doesn't affect any of my friendships. We just think more alike than city people."

Quantitative Results

Reliability Analyses

Reliability analyses of the responses to the 5-point Likert scale instrument for the five elements of place attachment indicated an overall high reliability ($\alpha = .90$). See Table 4. The Cronbach's alpha analysis was used to test the overall reliability of the survey instrument and to test the reliability of each element of place attachment. The reliability for all elements of place attachment was high. Scale reliabilities were acceptable per Nunnally and Bernstein's (1994) conclusion that minimum reliability (Cronbach's alpha) measures should be .70.

Table 4

Reliability analyses for the place attachment instrument

Place Attachment Element	Cronbach's Alpha
Place identity	.90
Place dependence	.90
Nature bonding	.89
Family bonding	.79
Friend bonding	.84
Overall	.90

Hypothesis Testing Using Independent Sample *t*-Tests

An analysis using an Independent Sample *t*-Test indicated a statistically significant difference between place identity for agriculturalists that have a will ($M = 4.5$, $SD = 0.41$) and agriculturalists that do not have a will ($M = 3.8$, $SD = 0.50$; $t(65) = 3.53$, $p < .05$, $d = .93$). Agriculturalists that have a will had a significantly greater place identity than agriculturalists that do not have a will. Hypothesis 1 was supported. Descriptive statistics and the results of the Independent Sample *t*-Test are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5

Results of an Independent Sample t-*Test comparing place identity in Nebraska agriculturalists that have a will to Nebraska agriculturalists without a will*

Place Identity	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Without will	20	3.75	.50	3.53	65	.001*	0.93
With will	47	4.52	.41				

*$p < .001$.

An analysis using an Independent Sample *t*-Test indicated a statistically significant difference between place dependence for agriculturalists that have a will ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.99$) and agriculturalists that do not have a will ($M = 3.3$, $SD = 1.11$; $t(65) = 3.01$, $p < .05$, $d = .78$). Agriculturalists that have a will had significantly greater place dependence than agriculturalists that do not have a will. Hypothesis 2 was supported. Descriptive statistics and the results of the Independent Sample *t*-Test are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6

Results of an Independent Sample t-Test comparing place dependence in Nebraska agriculturists that have a will to Nebraska agriculturists without a will

Place Dependence	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Without will	20	3.35	1.11	3.01	65	.004*	0.78
With will	47	4.17	.99				

*$p < .01$.

An analysis using an Independent Sample *t*-Test indicated a statistically significant difference between nature bonding for agriculturalists that have a will (M = 4.5, SD = 0.71) and agriculturalists that do not have a will (M = 3.3, SD = 1.03; $t(65)$ = 5.58, $p < .05$, d = 1.34). Agriculturalists that have a will had a significantly greater nature bonding than agriculturalists that do not have a will. Hypothesis 3 was supported. Descriptive statistics and the results of the Independent Sample *t*-Test are displayed in Table 7.

Table 7

Results of an Independent Sample t-*Test comparing nature bonding in Nebraska agriculturists that have a will to Nebraska agriculturists without a will*

Nature Bonding	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Without will	20	3.28	1.03	5.58	65	.000*	1.34
With will	47	4.50	.71				

*$p < .001$.

An analysis using an Independent Sample *t*-Test indicated no statistically significant difference between family bonding for agriculturalists that have a will (M = 3.87, SD = 1.13) and agriculturalists that do not have a will (M = 4.0, SD = 0.76; $t(65)$ = 0.28, $p < .05$, d = .08). Agriculturalists that have a will did not have a significantly greater

family bonding than agriculturalists that do not have a will. Hypothesis 4 was not supported. Descriptive statistics and the results of the Independent Sample *t*-Test are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8

Results of an Independent Sample t-*Test comparing family bonding in Nebraska agriculturists that have a will to Nebraska agriculturists without a will*

Family Bonding	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Without will	20	3.95	.76	.28	65	.780	0.08
With will	47	3.87	1.13				

p > *.05.*

An analysis using an Independent Sample *t*-Test indicated no statistically significant difference between friend bonding for agriculturalists that have a will (M = 3.5, SD = 1.13) and agriculturalists that do not have a will (M = 3.3, SD = 1.09; $t(65)$ = 0.88, $p < .05$, d = .24). Agriculturalists that have a will did not have a significantly greater friend bonding than agriculturalists that do not have a will. Hypothesis 5 was not supported. Descriptive statistics and the results of the Independent Sample *t*-Test are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9

Results of an Independent Sample t-*Test comparing friend boding in Nebraska agriculturists that have a will to Nebraska agriculturists without a will*

Friend Bonding	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Without will	20	3.25	1.09	.88	65	.385	0.24
With will	47	3.51	1.13				

p > *.05.*

An analysis using an Independent Sample *t*-Test indicated a statistically significant difference between overall place attachment for agriculturalists that have a will ($M = 4.2$, $SD = 0.67$) and agriculturalists that do not have a will ($M = 3.5$, $SD = .70$; $t(65) = 3.73$, $p < .05$, $d = .93$). Agriculturalists that have a will had a significantly overall place attachment than agriculturalists that do not have a will. Hypothesis 6 was supported. Descriptive statistics and the results of the Independent Sample *t*-Test are displayed in Table 10.

Table 10

Results of an Independent Sample t-*Test comparing the overall place attachment in Nebraska agriculturists that have a will to Nebraska agriculturists without a will*

Overall Place Attachment	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's *d*
Without will	20	3.50	.70	3.73	65	.000*	0.93
With will	47	4.18	.67				

*$p < .001$.

CHAPTER V

Discussion

Discussion of Qualitative Analysis Results

The results of the qualitative portion of the study indicated two overlapping themes for the will and non-will participants. The nature connection and family connection themes can be found throughout the study group. Both non-will and will participants seemed to have a connection to their farm because of their family. Some specifically chose to raise their children on the farm for various reasons such as childhood playtime and childhood responsibilities. Interestly, the quantitative analysis found no statistical difference between the two groups in family bonding.

The conundrum as to why they don't have a will yet could be that they haven't started to think about succession plannning as an eminent detail of their lives. The nature connection theme related to the family connection theme when one non-will participant liked having nature in the backyard for camping. For this family, maybe having high school children in the house has delayed succession planning.

In a contrast to the idea of place attachment in the literature, the non-will participant group had stark differences in their overall themes such as, disassociation from land or place, disassociation from wildlife, and disassociation from friends. The non-will participants seemed to look at separateness as a part of them. They were able to give reasons to why they chose to live on the farm away from others. Relph (1976) discusses the phenomenon of placelessness as it refers to a barrier from different areas with campers. People chose to take a part of their home with them and not make a home

when they were in natural areas. This action, in turn, proved to be a wall to protect the camping people from new and different areas. Maybe the farm is a way to isolate themselves from others, including friends and towns.

They also wanted to continue to farm no matter what the consequences to the wildlife. They mentioned that as long as the wildlife didn't interfere in their activities then the wildlife was acceptable. They were interested in the wildlife being elsewhere, so maybe the NIMBY (Not In My BackYard) concept plays out with the non-will group.

The non-will group also had livelihood and freedom themes. The non-will group seemed to view the farm land as a way to be successful and to support a family. The land was for monetary purposes only. Freedom played out as a means to a personal need or goal. The non-will participants wanted the ability to do what they chose with their own property.

The will or succession plan group had the plan for succession theme appear in their interviews. They seemed to be thinking ahead as to who would maintain their land when they no longer farmed the land. Other themes, such as peace and connection to land or place, followed Tuan's (1975) work for a connection to place and Heidegger's work (1962) to find peace being with one's surroundings.

The connection to land or place theme was found extensively throughout the participants' statements. The place connection follows the literature by Tuan (1975) and Raymond et al. (2010). Tuan found that the connection to place could be fostered. Several participants discussed having a greater connection to the land because of what they could grow, harvest, and how it is a part of them.

The will participants made a stark distinction between themselves and town, townspeople, and industrial farmers. They mentioned how they were not like the townspeople or industrial farmers. It seemed as if they wanted to remain apart from both groups. They discussed being isolated from crime, greed, and low morals in a distinctive way. Their responses seemed to relate to a better standard of living by residing on a small farm and being better stewards of the land.

The land stewardship theme emerged extensively within the succession plan or will group. They referred to wanting to leave the land in a better state than they started with it for the next generation. They also referred to passing the land on to the next generation. They seemed to be thinking into the future for their present actions with the land, so that the land could remain productive and in a beneficial state. Interestingly, one of the non-will participants acknowldeged the importance of land stewardship when she said: "I guess I'm not a very good steward, since I don't have a will. I need to change that."

Overall, it seems as if the will and non-will groups viewed their farms differently. Both groups saw a positive side to living on their farm, but the positive reasons were dramatically different between the two groups. The non-will group seemed to appreciate isolation from others and the freedom to make choices in the present on how to maintain their property in their own way. Futuristic maintenance of their land was not discussed. Management decisions seemed to be in the present tense only and for monetary gain, not a place connection or attachment.

The will group seemed to be more forward thinking for the next generation, so they wanted to maintain their farm and its surroudings for the future and not just the

present. The will group discussed being stewards of the soil for the present and future. They also related wanting to have their children and future generations to be able to enjoy and witness the wildlife. They also acknowledged that their current actions do affect the state of the land, so they need to leave the land in a better state than they received it.

Discussion of Quantitative Analysis Results

The objective of the quatitative portion of the study was to explain the difference in place attachment between Nebraska agriculturists that have completed land succession planning and those that have not. The results show that a greater sense of place attachment exists between agriculturists with a succession plan than those without a succession plan, but not across all five elements of place attachment. The agriculturists with a will had a significantly higher sense of place identity, place dependence, and nature bonding as well as overall place attachment. There was no significant difference in family bonding and friend bonding. Therefore, the hypotheses associated with three of the five elements of place attachment and overall place attachment according to Raymond et al. (2010) construct of place attachment were accepted. There was also a significant difference bwtween agriculturalists with a will and those without a will in overall place attachment. The Raymond et al. (2010) study was followed, but it was utilized to show place attachment with Nebraska agriculturists.

Reliability analyses were conducted on the survey instrument to determine the internal consistency. The findings show that the overall instrument was reliable and the five elements of place attachment were reliable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994), therefore a general conclusion can be made as to the extent of place attachment with Nebraska agriculturists with a will and without a will.

Implications for Practice

Educational materials need to be made more readily available to Nebraska agriculturists to assist them with succession planning. Succession planning materials would assist Nebraska agriculturists with keeping the family farm within the family and protect them from significant taxes. Nebraska agriculturists are an aging population so succession planning needs to play a larger part in decision making for the future management of the family farm.

Nebraska outreach programs should perform further research as to the five place attachment elements proposed by Raymond et al. (2010) to help preserve the future of agriculture in Nebraska for the next generation. The place attachment principles of family bonding and nature bonding from the qualitative portion could be relied on to assist the programs to initiate succession planning in agriculturists without a will. The place attachment principles of nature bonding, placed identity, and place dependence could assist non-profit organizations like The Nature Conservanacy to convince Nebraska agriculturists to plan for the future usage of their land.

Policy makers could consider helping to fund the cost of estate planners for Nebraska agriculturists to protect the heritage of family farms. Policy makers have already enacted the Nebraska Right-to-Farm Statute and Anti-corporate farming laws, but more assistance in estate planning is needed to help successors avoid probate and to retain the family farm.

Strength of Findings

One of the strenghts of this research is that it is the first to attempt to assess the relavance of place attachment within Nebraska agriculturists with succession plans and without succession plans. The research used a mixed methods approach to ascertain if a difference existed between Nebraska agriculturists with a will and Nebraska agriculturists without a will on their level of place attachment. The quantitative results yielded an overall significantly greater sense of place within Nebraska agriculturists with a will than Nebraska agriculturists without a will and a difference was found in the majority of themes that emerged from the qualitative research.

The quantitative results reflect the research by Raymond et al. (2010) that place identity, place dependence, and nature bonding hold a place in why an agriculturist chooses to have a succession plan. The quantitative results also follows research by Vaske and Kobrin (2001) that enivronmentally responsible behavior and place attachment are related. Land succession planning is a form of environmentally responsible behavior because it is a form of land preservation. Land preservation refers to preserving land because of its aesthetic value and not necessarily economic reasons (Walker & Ryan, 2008).

Limitations of Findings

Factors that need to be entertained before reaching a conclusion on the results of this study are that all agriculturists have a different frame of mind. Farmers are continuously dealing with the physical elements, like weather, in order to raise a crop for harvest, but how they choose to deal with the physical elements is an individual decision. Their own individual framework was utilized for them to complete the survey instrument and to answer the qualitative questions. Some farmers may be so concerned about the

present that they could not think beyond daily routines to see if they had a greater connection to place, nature, friends, or family. They may also have had time constraints or merely wanted to quickly complete the questions and survey, so they did not elaborate further or think of more details.

Directions for Future Research

Several factors need to be considered when interpreting the results because the research was carried out over a wide part of the state, but the population number (N=67) was small. A larger population is needed to verify that the results in this study could be held true for all Nebraska agriculturists who have a will and who do not have a will.

The place attachment phenomenon for those with a will and those without a will could also be a Nebraska agriculturists phenomenon. Research in other states would need to be performed on place attachment before a conclusion could be drawn between greater place attachment and agriculturists with a succession plan. Outreach programs could use this study and build upon it by relying on family bonding and nature bonding issues for reasons as to why agriculturists should plan for eventual land succession to preserve the agricultural way of life.

Summary

This mixed method study examined the differences between Nebraska agriculturists with a will and Nebraska agriculturists without a will on their level of place attachment. The qualitative research with 15 participants explored the themes or factors that were conveyed through personal interviews with Nebraska agriculturists with a will and Nebraska agriculturists without a will. The quantitiative research with 67

participants attempted to explain the differences within place attachment between Nebraska agriculturists with a will and Nebraska agriculturists without a will.

The qualitative research showed two overlapping themes within both groups, but distinct differences in the overall themes. The succession plan group had many connection to land or place themed comments throughout their interviews which coincides with Tuan (1975) and Raymond et al. (2010) research. The succession group follows Pred (1983) with their peace theme for how their land made them feel because they belong to it. The land steward theme also followed the research by Cross et al. (2011) to show that a greater sense of place attachment followed with a beneficial futuristic mindset on land maintenance. The non-succession plan group had more themes that were of a disassociative nature such as disassociation from friends, disassociation from land or place, and disassociation from nature. The disassociation themes in this context are a direct contradiction from a sense of place.

The quantitative research helped explain the differences within the place attachment elements with Nebraska agriculturists with a will and Nebraska agriculturists without a will. Four of the six hypotheses were supported. Hypothesis 1: Agriculturists with a will will have a significantly higher place identity than Agriculturists without a will was supported. Hypothesis 2: Agriculturists with a will will have a significantly higher place dependence than Agriculturists without a will was supported. Hypothesis 3: Agriculturists with a will will have a significantly higher nature bond than Agriculturists without a will was supported. Hypothesis 4: Agriculturists with a will will have a significantly higher family bond than Agriculturists without a will was not supported. Hypothesis 5: Agriculturists with a will will have a significantly higher friend bond than

Agriculturists without a will was not supported. Hypothesis 6: Agriculturists with a will will have a significantly higher overall place attachment than Agriculturists without a will was supported.

The latter results that yielded a greater overall place attachment for Nebraska agriculturists with a will than Nebraska agriculturists without a will is consistent with the research by Walker and Ryan (2008) which illustrated that people have a greater sense of place attachment to agricultural areas. The research also coincides with research by Butler, Shanahan, and Decker (2003) and Jonker et al. (2006) that found a greater sense of place can consist of a greater attachment to nature.

With regard to the study's reserch question, do Nebraska agriculturists that have a succession plan have a greater sense of place attachment than Nebraska agriculturists that do not have a succession plan, the expereince of place attachment is quite different for Nebraska agriculturalists, but the research implies that Nebraska agriculturists with a will have a greater overall place attachment. Nebraska agriculturists with a will are also trying to plan for the eventual succession of their agricultural land to the next generation. The results suggest that this type of research could be utilized in other agricultural areas throughout the United States to assist with succession planning education.

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APPENDIX A

Qualitative Interview Questions

1. Please describe how you feel about your land? How would you describe your personal connection to your land?

2. Describe how living where you do help you meet your personal needs and goals

3. Please describe how your emotional connection to your family affects your attitude toward the land.

4. How has the natural environment of the region in which you live influenced your attitude toward the land?

5. Please describe how your friendships in the community affect your attitude toward the land.

APPENDIX B

Quantitative Survey

Directions: Read each item carefully. Using the scale shown below, please select the number that best describes you and circle the appropriate number.

	Strongly Disagree	**Somewhat Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
The area where I live means a lot to me…..…….…….	1	2	3	4	5
I am very attached to the natural environment of my community……	1	2	3	4	5
Living on my farm is more important to me than living anywhere else.	1	2	3	4	5
I live here because my family is here……..	1	2	3	4	5
The friendships developed through volunteer activities in my community are very important to me……..	1	2	3	4	5
I am very attached to the region of Nebraska where I live.....	1	2	3	4	5
When I spend time in the natural environment in my area, I have a sense of connection to the natural environment……	1	2	3	4	5
My farm is the best place for me to live……	1	2	3	4	5
My relationship with my family in this area is very special to me…….	1	2	3	4	5
The friendships developed through sporting activities in my community are important to me……	1	2	3	4	5
I feel the area of Nebraska where I live is a part of me……..	1	2	3	4	5
I would feel less attached to my community if the native plants and animals disappeared…….	1	2	3	4	5
No other place compares to the community where I live……...	1	2	3	4	5

Check Appropriate Answer

Do you have a succession plan (a will or other legal document)? __Yes __No

Length of residence (years): __<10 __11-20 __21-30 __31-40 __41-50 __>50

Years involved in farming: __<10 __11-20 __21-30 __31-40 __41-50 __>50

Generations family involved in farming: __1 __2 __3 __4 __5 __>6

Years property on which currently live has been owned or operated by family: __<20 __21-40 __41-60 __61-80 __81-100 __101-120 __121-140 __141-160 __161-180 __181-200 __>200

Education: ___High School ___Assoc. ___BA/BS ___MS/MBA ___PhD

Gender: ____Male ____Female

APPENDIX C

Study Participant Informed Consent for Qualitative Participants

INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The Impact of Place Attachment on Land Succession of Nebraska Agriculturists

Purpose:
This research project will aim to obtain information on current land succession plans by Nebraska agriculturists. You must be 19 years of age or older to participate. You are invited to participate in this study because you are a Nebraska farmer or owner of agricultural land.

Procedures:
You will be asked to complete a personal interview followed by a short a survey. . The interview will take 20-30 minutes on the phone or in person at a time convenient for you. The survey will take 5 minutes and will be conducted at a place that is convenient for you immediately after the interview. The word "land" will refer to your land and the immediate surroundings of your land.

Benefits:
There are no direct benefits to you as a research participant.

Risks and/or Discomforts:
There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Confidentiality:
Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigator and her advisor during the study and for 2 years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

Compensation:
You will receive no compensation for participating in this project.

Opportunity to Ask Questions:
You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

Freedom to Withdraw:
Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:
You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. After having the informed consent form read to you, or reading the informed consent form yourself, participating in the interview, and completing the survey qualify as informed consent.

Name and Phone number of investigator(s)

Shari Kunert, Principal Investigator — Office: (402) 613-3266
Mark Burbach, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator — Office: (402) 472-8210

512 Hardin Hall / P.O. BOX 830995 / Lincoln, NE 68583-0995 / (402) 472-8210 / http://snr.unl.edu

APPENDIX D

Study Participant Informed Consent for Survey Only Participants

INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES
SCHOOL OF NATURAL RESOURCES

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

The Impact of Place Attachment on Land Succession of Nebraska Agriculturists

Purpose:
This research project will aim to obtain information on current land succession plans by Nebraska agriculturists. You must be 19 years of age or older to participate. You are invited to participate in this study because you are a Nebraska farmer or owner of agricultural land.

Procedures:
You will be asked to complete a short a survey. . The survey will take 5 minutes and will be conducted at a place that is convenient for you. The word "land" will refer to your land and the immediate surroundings of your land.

Benefits:
There are no direct benefits to you as a research participant.

Risks and/or Discomforts:
There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Confidentiality:
Any information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigator and her advisor during the study and for 2 years after the study is complete. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

Compensation:
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You may ask any questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may contact the investigator(s) at the phone numbers below. Please contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965 to voice concerns about the research or if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

Freedom to Withdraw:
Participation in this study is voluntary. You can refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or in any other way receive a penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:
You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. After having the informed consent form read to you, or reading the informed consent form yourself, participating in the survey, and completing the survey qualify as informed consent.

Name and Phone number of investigator(s)

Shari Kunert, Principal Investigator	Office: (402) 613-3266
Mark Burbach, Ph.D., Secondary Investigator	Office: (402) 472-8210

512 Hardin Hall / P.O. BOX 830995 / Lincoln, NE 68583-0995 / (402) 472-8210 / http://snr.unl.edu

APPENDIX E

Institutional Review Board Letter of Approval

March 16, 2012

Shari Kunert
School of Natural Resources

Mark Burbach
School of Natural Resources
512 HARH, UNL, 68583-0995

IRB Number: 20120312319 EX
Project ID: 12319
Project Title: The Impact of Place Attachment Land Succession in Nebraska Agriculturists

Dear Shari:

This letter is to officially notify you of the certification of exemption of your project by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the Protection of Human Subjects. It is the Board's opinion that you have provided adequate safeguards for the rights and welfare of the participants in this study based on the information provided. Your proposal is in compliance with this institution's Federal Wide Assurance 00002258 and the DHHS Regulations for the Protection of Human Subjects (45 CFR 46) and has been classified as Exempt Category 2.

You are authorized to implement this study as of the Date of Final Approval: 03/16/2012.

1. The approved informed consent forms have been uploaded to NUgrant (files with -Approved.pdf in the file name). Please use these forms to distribute to participants. If you need to make changes to the informed consent forms, please submit the revised forms to the IRB for review and approval prior to using them.

We wish to remind you that the principal investigator is responsible for reporting to this Board any of the following events within 48 hours of the event:
* Any serious event (including on-site and off-site adverse events, injuries, side effects, deaths, or other problems) which in the opinion of the local investigator was unanticipated, involved risk to subjects or others, and was possibly related to the research procedures;
* Any serious accidental or unintentional change to the IRB-approved protocol that involves risk or has the potential to recur;
* Any publication in the literature, safety monitoring report, interim result or other finding that indicates an unexpected change to the risk/benefit ratio of the research;
* Any breach in confidentiality or compromise in data privacy related to the subject or others; or
* Any complaint of a subject that indicates an unanticipated risk or that cannot be resolved by the research staff.

This project should be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines and you should notify the IRB immediately of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project. You should report any unanticipated problems involving risks to the participants or others to the Board.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB office at 472-6965.

Sincerely,

Becky R. Freeman

Becky R. Freeman, CIP for the IRB