

New Melones Lake– Visitor Survey Instructions for Survey Assistants

The following list is intended to help survey assistants with the process of conducting a successful survey and to establish certain guidelines and proper etiquette for communicating with potential survey respondents. Reclamation's Survey Coordinator will discuss/explain these guidelines with all potential survey assistants.

General guidelines:

- The surveys will be handed out on-site each day during the survey period. Each survey assistant will have a sufficient amount of surveys, clipboards and pencils to hand out for the established survey period. During non-survey hours assistants will contact their Survey Coordinator if they need additional supplies.
- The preferred survey method is to have respondents fill out the survey on-site, which gives them the opportunity to ask questions. If this method is not an option (i.e., the respondent has to leave immediately after his or her activity), ask politely if the respondent would fill out the survey later and drop it off at a predetermined drop-off location (i.e. with the campground host or a drop box at the Visitor Center) or send it in by mail to Bureau of Reclamation, Attn: E. Vasquez, 7794 Folsom Dam Road, Folsom, CA 95630.
- Survey assistants should be dressed professionally, preferably in a campground host uniform. The assistants should wear appropriate attire and a name tag.
- All survey assistants shall have an appropriate number of business cards available to provide potential respondents upon request. The business cards will display the name and telephone number of a Reclamation contact who can answer questions or verify the legitimacy of the information collection.
- Please always be safe. Although it is important that you approach as many of the boaters and campers as possible during your assigned survey period, it is much more important to be safe. If you have the feeling that a group of visitors could be threatening or if you are threatened, please do not approach them and/or leave the scene immediately. Do not put yourself at risk! Be careful of highway traffic. Use common sense and wear appropriate clothing for the weather conditions. Protect yourself with hat, rain gear, sunscreen, water, etc.

How to survey recreationists:

- Please always be polite, friendly, and neutral. When you approach a single person or a group of recreationists, please greet them in a friendly, professional, and non-threatening way and introduce yourself. Explain to them that you are conducting a survey for the Bureau of Reclamation, the purpose of the study, and the

approximate time it will take to fill-out the survey. For example one introduction might be:

“Hello my name is Joe Surveyor. I am performing a survey on behalf of the Bureau of Reclamation. The survey asks about your participation in outdoor recreation activities at New Melones Lake. The information is very important to the long-term planning and management of New Melones Lake and will take about 15 minutes to complete. Would you like to participate in the survey?”

- .Assure the recreationist that the responses will be treated with anonymity and confidentiality (respondents do not have to provide their names and/or addresses). If they agree to take the survey, hand them an on-site questionnaire, clipboard, and pencil and let them fill out the survey.
- Most of the recreationists will be happy to fill out a survey, but be prepared that some people will refuse. Please be polite and thank them anyway.
- When a small group of people (i.e. two friends or a family unit) recreates together, please ask only one person out of that group to fill out a survey. If the group is large (i.e. two separate family units recreating together, but traveling separately), you can hand out a survey to one person of each family unit.
- Please try to survey each group of recreationists that you see during the assigned survey period. In a campground, approach each separate group of campers or at a boat ramp, approach each group of boaters after they are finished with their boating trip (i.e., at the boat ramp or parking lot when they are loading up and cleaning the boat). If there are several groups exiting the reservoir at the same time, please try to talk to each group.
- If possible, please alternate between male and female respondents. However, do not miss a potential respondent or group of respondents, because there is no male or female in that particular group. It is important to get a representative sample of the recreating population.
- Only ask recreationists to fill out a survey if they are at least 18 years old. If there is any doubt, ask them politely how old they are and why you need to know their age. If they are younger than 18, please apologize to them and explain that the survey procedures do not allow minors to fill out a survey.
- If a group of recreationists cannot speak English, please write non-English speaker on the top of a blank survey and put that survey in the completed survey box. This is a way to track the non-response due to language so please verify that none of the members of the group speak English.

- Please assist respondents and try to answer any questions that they might have about the survey to the best of your knowledge. Please try to give unbiased answers, that is, do not take one side over another on an issue. If you are unsure about the answer to a question, please be honest and apologize. If you know of a qualified person/agency that might know the answer (i.e. the survey coordinator, principal survey investigator, or your supervisor), suggest that you could give that qualified person a call and try to find an answer to their question. If a respondent does not know the answer to a question on the questionnaire, tell them to leave it blank. However, try to get as many responses as possible by clarifying any questions or uncertainties.
- Please take the survey(s), pencils, and clipboards back from the respondents after they are finished and thank them politely for their participation. Give the completed surveys to the Survey Coordinator at least at the end of your shift. All surveys and information requests should be kept in a safe place until pick-up by the survey coordinator.
- If the respondent would like to have a copy of the results of the survey, please let them know that an executive summary of the survey report is expected by December 2007 and that it should be available at that time on the New Melones RMP/EIS website:

http://www.usbr.gov/mp/ccaofield_offices/new_melones/rmp.html.

- Have some business cards with the URL already written on the back that you can handout to respondents when they want more information on the New Melones RMP/EIS or a copy of the survey report.
- After you have given the respondent the website information, if they still request a hard copy be sent by mail. Write their names and addresses down on a separate sheet of paper and assure them that they will receive the results after they are available. Store the names and addresses in a safe location but separately from the completed survey. Do not store the personal information of the respondent with their completed survey.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR EFFORT!!!