

## Question Justifications

### Primary Objectives in accordance with the Recreation Survey Questions:

- (1) **Recreation Preferences:** The general recreation questions are intended to supply sufficient data to determine:
  - the overall existing recreation conditions,
  - current user demand,
  - user preference,
  - emerging trends,
  - changes in demographic profile of users,
  - changing values,
  - user expectations and needs, and
  - the quality of the recreation experience for a variety of activities within a particular geographic area.

The information obtained in the surveys will allow Reclamation to adequately assess potential impacts to recreation resources and determine the amount of funds necessary to meet public needs and increase public satisfaction.

- (2) **Visitation Estimation:** The visitation questions are intended to gather information from current recreation users as to how their visitation by recreation activity might change under different river flow and reservoir surface elevation conditions. Since the hydrologic conditions vary throughout the recreation season, the intent is to gather sufficient reservoir surface elevation, river flow, and visitation data for estimating visitation impacts using linear interpolation. By gathering this type of information at various points (i.e., low and high thresholds where visitation goes to zero), a total visitation curve can be created. Visitation estimates based on alternative specific river flows and reservoir elevations can then be developed by inserting the fluctuation pattern between data points. Knowing the visitation at a particular area allows us to adequately plan for and meet public demand for water-based recreation.
- (3) **Travel Cost Modeling:** These types of questions allow us to gather recreation specific user data for possible travel cost modeling that can be used to estimate recreation economic values.
- (4) **Regional Economic Impacts:** These types of questions are intended to gather data on per trip expenditures by recreation activity for use in the regional economic impact analysis. The expenditure per trip and economic sector would be applied to estimates of trips by recreation activity and alternatively obtained from the interpolation analysis. The expenditures by economic sector would then be used in conjunction with a regional input/output model to estimate impacts of a proposed Federal action on regional income, jobs, etc.
- (5) **Ethnicity and Race:** These types of questions are intended to gather statistical data to be used to establish a visitor profile of recreation users to Reclamation lands and waters.

(6) **Formulation of Recreation Area Surveys:** Each survey will be created keeping in mind the specific attributes of the particular recreation area for which the survey is being developed. The collection of OMB approved questions will be utilized to develop unique surveys that pertain to the features and recreation opportunities at any given recreation area, eliminating the possibility of creating surveys with irrelevant or non-applicable questions. In order to avoid an unnecessary burden on the respondent, the survey should not exceed 20 questions and each question that is included on the survey should be relevant to the recreation area being surveyed. **Note:** Reclamation will, under no circumstances, add questions or items to a survey or question that have not already been approved by OMB.

Generally, all the collected information as described in this Question Justification section will be used in a variety of planning reports, studies, and NEPA documents to address existing baseline conditions. In addition, the information will be used to address and analyze potential impacts of proposed Federal actions. Tabulated results will allow decisionmakers to make informed decisions on supplying appropriate facilities and services to meet the needs of the public.

### **Justification of Questions by Topic:**

#### **Campground**

Q. 1-3: Camping Questions are intended to determine the total number of camping trips including overnight trips taken in the last 12 months, and recreation activities participated in while camping. The information establishes the current recreation camping environment/condition at the area being surveyed and will be used for future planning efforts.

Q. 4: is intended to gather information pertaining to how important respondents feel about a variety of facilities, services, amenities, and services relevant to their camping experience. The information will be used to help determine future opportunities provided to campers that will increase user satisfaction at various sites, and target funds to areas where improvements are most beneficial.

Q. 5-7: Questions are intended to determine if a respondent's camping trip to the area being surveyed is the primary purpose of the trip (i.e., destination spot) or part of a larger trip itinerary and distance traveled to the site. The information helps to determine the current recreation profile and existing environment/condition.

Q. 8-11: Questions are intended to determine the make-up of respondents group, type of facilities being used, type of primary recreational equipment being used (i.e., boat, bicycle, fishing equipment, etc.), and type of activities respondents and members of their camping party are participating in at the recreation site. The information helps to determine the user profile and existing recreation environment/condition.

Q. 12-15: Questions to determine the manner in which respondents rate the quality of existing facilities, services, and amenities at the campground being visited and how the respondent personally feels about the campground. The information will help assess the overall quality of existing facilities and what needs to be accomplished to increase user satisfaction at the site.

Q 16-17: Questions are intended to identify how important the site is to the respondent in relationship to the fee(s) paid, personal views on fees under a variety of circumstances, and how the allocation of fees should be applied. The information will be used to establish an appropriate fee schedule that meets user expectations relevant to the services provided. Actions taken will direct funds to the appropriate places to increase user satisfaction with the site being surveyed.

### **Lake and River Visit Expenditure**

Part I - Q. 18: Lake Trips Worksheet is intended to gather baseline information about the respondent's day and overnight trips to a number of lakes or reservoirs in the area. The information helps determine the existing user pattern of the visitor to the geographic area.

Part II - Q. 19-21: are intended to gather information related to the amount of time spent at the lakes identified in Part I and the activities respondents participated in at those lakes or rivers. The information will be used for future planning purposes to help determine where funds can be targeted at a particular site to meet the needs and expectations of visitors.

Part III – Q. 22-23: are intended to collect information that will be used to determine the recreation economic value that visiting the lakes/rivers listed will have to the local economy and how the expenses in the worksheet compare with respondents typical trips. The information will be used to compare trips to a lake or river to other trips taken by respondents.

### **Marina**

Q. 24-26: Questions are intended to determine if respondents are boaters, whether their boat is registered, and what type/size of boat that the respondent is using on the lake. These questions are intended to establish the user group that most often utilizes the water body.

Q. 27: is intended to solicit respondent past and current use of marina facilities for mooring their boat. Information can help determine future use of marina facilities.

Q. 28-30: Questions are intended to capture the frequency of visits by the respondent in order to generate information that can help determine the existing boating environment at the lake or river being studied and where respondents most often participate in their boating activity.

Q. 31: is intended to help identify the number of visitors who participate in boating activities at the lake or reservoir being studied. Information will help in determining total visitation and the recreation boating economic value to the local area.

Q. 32-39: are intended to help determine the boating opportunities (moorings/slips), and the goods and services that could be provided by a concession operation at the river or lake being studied. The information helps in determining the feasibility of providing these opportunities to the boating public.

## **Recreation Activities**

### **Screening Question**

Q. 40: is considered a screening question that determines the activities visitors are participating in and, in order of importance, which of the five activities are the most important to respondents. The second part of this question is also intended to generate the number of people participating in the five major activities and the percentage of time spent engaging in such activities. The information will be used to help assess the current recreation environment (i.e., visitation, activities participated in, etc.), evaluate existing programs, and implement actions that can add value to the quality of the visitors experience at the area being surveyed. Since different activities have different recreation economic values, the collected information can provide Reclamation with the total value that recreation contributes to the local economy.

### **General Activity**

Q. 41-45: are intended to provide Reclamation with basic information about the number of times the site was visited and the duration of the visit(s) when a respondent was participating in their primary activity. The questions also capture the level of expertise that the respondent would consider themselves to have. This information is intended to help determine visitation frequency and the type of visitors that utilize the recreation area.

**Activity Behavior:** Boating, Fishing, Hunting, and Camping are intended to collect information about the activities respondents are participating in while visiting the area being surveyed. The information is generally used to better understand the existing situation or condition at the area being surveyed and assist with future planning efforts.

Boating - Q. 46-49: are intended to collect information about the intended duration of a single trip, what type of boat, and its characteristics, will be used on the trip, and what activities the respondent participated in while boating. This information aids in planning the need for future facilities and services.

Fishing – Q. 50-57: are intended to collect information about the respondent’s fishing habits to include type of fishing, quantity of fish caught, frequency of seasonal participation, and fishing club/organization affiliation. The information that is captured in this section allows planners to evaluate the fishing conditions and plan future efforts to meet expectations of fishing participants.

Hunting – Q. 58: is intended to obtain information about the types of animals sighted, shot at, and bagged during the respondents and their hunting party’s visit.

Camping – Q. 59-61: are intended to capture the frequency and type of camping the respondent participates in. This information gives planners the information needed to evaluate facilities and opportunities currently being offered.

### **Barriers and Constraints**

Q. 62-67: are intended to identify the barriers and constraints of participating in primary activities as well as determining the quality of the recreation experience for respondents (i.e.,

user satisfaction). The information will be used to identify measures in order to improve the quality of the recreation experience for visitors and assess the respondent's satisfaction with the area.

### **Recreation Development**

Q. 68: This question is intended to introduce the respondent to a proposed development and indicate whether or not the respondent would choose to use other recreation sites if the proposed development was completed (i.e., identifying the net benefits in the regional or local area of completing the proposed development). This question can also be used to allow the respondent to suggest a development.

Q. 69: This question is intended to get respondents to indicate the extent of fees they would be willing to pay to assist in maintaining the proposed development. If they are not willing to assist in paying for the development, this question asks for the participant to select a reason why? The information will be used by decisionmakers to determine the value of completing the proposed development and whether to proceed with development based on feedback from the respondent.

### **Recreation Management**

#### **Activity Participation**

Q. 70-71: are intended to identify all the activities that respondents participate in at the area being surveyed and the number of times in a typical year that respondents participate in the activities. The information will be used to describe and understand the existing recreation environment and assist in future planning efforts.

#### **Fees for use of Facilities**

Q. 72-74: are intended to measure the attitude of respondents surrounding charging fees for participating in different activities and, if respondents paid a fee, were they satisfied with the value of the fee paid. Specifically, Q. 74 is asked because Reclamation is interested in determining if the respondent used one of the America the Beautiful Passes, The National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass, to access the recreation site as opposed to paying a general fee. The information will be used to help determine if the fee schedule may need to be adjusted.

#### **Park Ranger**

Q. 75: is intended to simply find out what the respondent thinks about the current presence of the Park Ranger(s) at the area. The information will be used to adjust, if necessary, the Park Ranger activities.

#### **Management Issue Areas and Management Performance**

Q. 76-77: asks the respondent to identify how serious they think a variety of potential issues are at the recreation area and whether respondents are satisfied with the management of multiple items. The information will be used by decisionmakers in adjusting management strategies to better serve the recreating public.

## **Reservoir Preferred Water Level and River Instream Flow**

**Note:** These two question areas are discussed together because the questions are the same except that one is tailored for a reservoir and the other is for a river. The only difference is the types of recreation activities discussed (i.e., activities differ depending on if you are visiting a lake or river). The information gathered in these questions helps describe different reservoir elevations and river flows and the impact to users that may be caused by changing the hydrological conditions of a body of water.

Q. 78-79 & 95-96: are intended to generate information that will allow Reclamation to determine the user's current perception of the reservoir or river they are visiting during their trip(s) and their feelings about changing the available water supply. The information will assist in documenting the current recreation condition at the site and analyze the impact it would have on the recreation environment if water levels would change.

Q. 80-81 & 97-98: are intended to get respondents to think about the different recreation activities they are pursuing during their trips as well as to introduce the concept of a primary recreation activity. The information would be used for future planning efforts.

Q. 82 & 99: provides information for the current trip data point. The allocation of trips by "season" helps identify which months the river flows or reservoir elevations would be most important for each primary activity. The information allows Reclamation managers to anticipate when peak visitation occurs for certain activities and enables them to manage the area accordingly (i.e., plan for peak visitation periods and provide the appropriate number of personnel to manage the situation).

Q. 83 & 100: is intended to assist in describing the existing recreation condition in the area by asking the respondent for the number of visits and days or hours spent participating in their primary activity. Information allows Reclamation to concentrate planning efforts and funding on facilities and services that best support certain recreation activities and that will increase user satisfaction.

Q. 84 & 101: identifies those facilities that are most often used by visitors to lakes and rivers. The information collected will be used for planning purposes and to concentrate funding for maintenance of those facilities that are most often used by visitors.

Q. 85-86 & 102: gather data on recreation expenditures per trip for various fees and activities participated in. The collection of this information is intended to be used for economic analysis and future recreation planning.

Q. 87-88 & 103-104: gather information on preferred flows and reservoir elevations by primary activities and the associated changes in trips and days or hours per trip under preferred conditions. This preferred flow or elevation data point represents the pinnacle of the total visitation curve. Q. 88 & 104 generates data on the upper and lower conditions where recreationists would stop participating in each primary activity. This reflects the point where total visitation curve would hit the horizontal axis. Visitation is assumed to be zero at these two points.

Q. 89-94 & 105-109: are intended to determine what types of user conflicts are occurring on the reservoirs and rivers, and the actions taken by the user(s) if conflicts were encountered. The information will assist in determining the existing recreation condition and potential impacts under different alternatives, which may be considered when implementing a management strategy that impacts changes in reservoir elevation and river flow. The information allows Reclamation to adjust its management strategies in order to reduce user conflicts, increase the quality of the respondent's recreation experience, and increase user satisfaction with the site.

### **River Recreation Quality**

Q. 110-111: are intended to collect information on how important the river is to respondents overall and for different sections/stretches of the river being studied. The information will be used to establish baseline information about the river and to describe the existing condition in a variety of planning reports and studies.

Q. 112: is intended to collect information from respondents concerning several factors such as water quality, erosion, conflicts, economics, and use of the river by outfitters/guides. This information allows Reclamation to establish a baseline condition for the area being surveyed.

Q. 113: is intended to collect information about the availability and quality of a variety of opportunities and facilities on or along the river. This information will be used to establish a baseline condition to compare with potential changes to the river corridor.

Q. 114: is intended to solicit information from respondents concerning how they feel about a variety of proposed management actions. If used, the responses collected will be used to compare with information provided in questions 110-113 so that future management actions can more closely resemble the needs and opinions of recreation consumers.

Q. 115-116: are intended to collect information about how respondents compare the river being studied to other rivers and how the river being studied provides specific personal and area benefits. The information will be used to document how visitors to the area view the importance of the river as well as the local area and to assist in future planning efforts.

Q. 117: is intended to collect information about potential problems along the river corridor. The information will be used to change management strategies, which would correct identified problems and increase user satisfaction with the opportunities, facilities, and services along the river being studied.

### **Water Level Impact on Recreation Boating Use**

Q. 118: is intended to determine the number of trips respondents made to the lake/reservoir being surveyed and the number of days or hours spent at the site for each trip. Additionally, this question is also asking how their use patterns might change given a scenario where the water level was altered by a specific number of feet. The information will be used to compare the existing use pattern (i.e., number of trips and length of stay) of respondents and what their use patterns might be with the change in water elevation.

Q. 119-122: are intended to determine what, if anything, the respondents would do if they knew what the water elevation was before leaving on their trip. Depending on the respondent's responses for a variety of possibilities, information will be used to determine the potential impacts on boat users resulting from the prescribed change in water elevation.

Q. 123-126: are the same as Q. 119-122 but address a different water level reduction (i.e., scenario 2). The information obtained from all the questions will help in identifying impacts (number of trips and length of stay) under two different scenarios compared to the existing condition.

### **Visitor Satisfaction**

Q. 127-131: is intended to capture the satisfaction level of the respondent and their party regarding the current recreation facilities, services, facilitated programs, and opportunities at the survey site. Additionally, the comment sections add the opportunity for the respondent to provide specific details about each question. This information will be used to gauge how satisfied visitors are with the current offerings and aid in future planning efforts to increase overall satisfaction.

### **Demographics**

Q. 1-5: are intended to be used on each survey in order to gather statistical data which will be used to establish a visitor profile of users to Reclamation lands and waters. Additionally, the information gathered will provide managers with pertinent statistical information to make informed decisions.