

## **Code of Conduct and Instructions for Surveyors**

The following list is intended to help surveyors with the process of conducting a successful survey and to establish certain guidelines and proper etiquette for communicating with respondents. Reclamation's survey Project Leader and/or contractor will discuss these instructions and survey conduct items with all potential surveyors (camp hosts, volunteers, contractor personnel, entrance gate attendants, Reclamation personnel, or combination thereof).

### Responsibilities of Project Leader

- Oversees the survey on site to ensure a valid, nonbiased sampling based on the pre-defined sampling periods.
- Prepares a sampling plan and detailed schedule that will be adhered to by the surveyors.
- Trains all individuals who will be distributing surveys on the survey process before the survey begins, and train all *new* individuals who will be distributing surveys throughout the survey period.
- Ensure that there are enough surveyors present on the scheduled survey days.
- Makes all staff personnel aware of the survey collection so that they can answer any questions related to the survey from any visitors to the recreation area.
- Makes sure that drop boxes or drop off points are established where respondents can easily deposit their completed surveys. Drop boxes will be clearly labeled, sealed shut with only a slot in the top for depositing the surveys.

### General guidelines:

- The surveys will be handed out on-site during a predetermined survey period (specific locations will be visited during specific times of the day, days of the week (i.e., week days, weekends, holidays etc.) and at specific locations that have been established in the sampling plan).
- Campground hosts can hand out surveys to campers in their campground and have them drop the surveys off before they leave. Campground hosts will follow the sampling plan established by the Project Leader.
- Each surveyor will have a sufficient amount of surveys, clipboards, and pencils to hand out for the established survey period.

- The preferred survey method is to have respondents fill out the survey on-site. This gives respondents the opportunity to ask questions and usually results in better response rates. 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., visitor center, entrance station, drop box, or with a campground host), or send the survey back in the mail. If respondents request to mail in the survey questionnaire, surveyor should provide them with a postage-paid return envelope that is addressed to the Project Leader, not the surveyor.
- Since the sampling frame is a defined geographic area (i.e., reservoir or river corridor), surveyors should limit the information collection to those areas at a specific time and place as detailed in the sampling plan.
- Surveyors will attempt to survey every 5<sup>th</sup> group at the survey location. Note: A group can be one or more individuals. If there is more than 1 individual in a group the surveyor will pick the person that has the next birthday; however, that person has to be 16 years or older.
- Surveyors should be dressed professionally, preferably in campground host uniforms. If uniforms are not available, the surveyors should wear appropriate attire and name tags.

How to survey respondents:

- Surveyors should always be polite, friendly, and neutral. When they approach a visitor or a group of visitors, they should greet them in a friendly, professional, and non-threatening way and introduce themselves. The Surveyor will respect the respondent's privacy. The Surveyor will explain to the respondents why the survey is being conducted, the purpose of the study, and the approximate time it will take to fill out the survey. Reclamation's Project Leader or contractor will provide each potential surveyor with a background paper containing enough information to allow surveyors to answer basic questions about the purpose of the survey.
- Surveyors should assure respondents that their responses will be treated with anonymity (respondents do not have to provide their names and/or addresses). After this short introduction, the surveyor should ask the respondents if they would like to participate. If they agree, hand them a survey, clipboard, and pencil and let them fill out the survey. Take the survey, pencil, and clipboard back from them after they are finished and put the completed surveys in a secure place along with other filled-out surveys. If the respondent wishes to fill out the survey at a later date and send it back via regular mail, tell the respondent that his address and any other personal information provided will be destroyed once it is received.
- Most of the respondents will be happy to fill out a survey, but the surveyors should be aware that some people will refuse. If respondents are not willing to fill out the

survey on-site or at a later point in time, that is perfectly fine. It is important to keep in mind that this is a voluntary effort and nobody can or should be forced to give their opinion. Surveyors should be polite and thank them anyway.

- Surveys will maintain a survey log recording the disposition of every contact, including refusals and the observable characteristics of refusers and non-refusers for use in a non-response bias analysis.
- For the purposes of the individual survey collections, Reclamation has not attempted to differentiate between and define personal groups as opposed to organized groups. Therefore, surveyors will attempt to collect information from every fifth group of one or more individuals within the defined geographic areas that are participating in a recreation activity. It is Reclamation's intent to get feedback from a representative sample of all visitors that are recreating at its water bodies.
- Surveyors should target survey respondents that they actually observe recreating (i.e., boaters who just finished their fishing trip or current campers in the campground). If there is any doubt, ask potential respondents politely if they have participated in a specific recreation activity on/next to the river or reservoir during their current or previous visit. To save the surveyors and public's time, surveyors should only attempt to contact those individuals that can best respond to the topic areas of the survey (e.g., if you are administering a boating survey, surveyors should not waste their time by asking people who are picnicking to fill out the survey).
- If possible, surveyors should attempt to collect surveys from both male and female respondents. It is important to get a representative sample of the recreating population. Some recreational activities are preferred by one gender versus the other.
- Surveyors should only ask visitors to fill out a survey that are at least 16 years old. The survey respondents should be mature enough to be able to answer all the questions.
- Surveyors should assist respondents and try to answer any questions that they might have about the survey in general or specific questions to the best of their knowledge. Surveyors should give unbiased answers, that is, do not take one side over another on certain issues. If they are unsure about the answer to a question, please be honest and apologize. See last bullet for instructions on what to do if the surveyor cannot answer a question. If respondents do not know the answer to a question, tell them to leave it blank. However, surveyors should try and get as many responses as possible by clarifying any questions or uncertainties.
- Once respondents have completed the survey, thank them politely for their participation. If they would like to have a copy of the results (report of findings) of the survey, surveyors should write their names and addresses down on a separate

sheet of paper and assure them that they will receive the results when they are available. Please note that this option is only available to respondents who specifically ask for it. Surveyors should give the names and addresses to the Project leader as soon as possible. The Project leader will keep the names and addresses separately from the surveys so that the surveys cannot be traced to a specific person. Surveyors should keep all the filled-out surveys together in a safe place and give them to Project Leader at their earliest convenience. If the surveys are to be mailed to the Project Leader, copies of the surveys will be sent. Surveyor will maintain possession of the originals until such time as they are physically put into the hands of the Project Leader.

- Surveyors should always be safe. Although it is important that they approach as many of the boaters and campers as possible during your assigned survey period, it is much more important to be safe. If they have the feeling that a group of recreationists could be threatening or dangerous, they should not approach them and/or leave the scene immediately. If, during a survey, a respondent or group of respondents acts threatening or makes rude personal remarks, surveyors can and should terminate the survey and leave the person or group right away. Do not put surveyors at risk! Be careful of highway traffic. Surveyors should use common sense and wear appropriate clothing for the weather conditions and protect themselves with a hat, rain gear, sunscreen, water, etc. They may want to take a folding chair along for comfort.
- Make sure that all surveyors have an appropriate number of business cards available with the name, address, and telephone number of the Project Leader or other qualified person who they may contact to ask specific questions or to verify the legitimacy of the information collection.