

**COLORADO PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP SURVEY – NOVEMBER 2009**

SUMMARY REPORT

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CPRA Membership Survey –2009

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Executive Summary

The Colorado Parks and Recreation Association was very interested in conducting a study to evaluate general member satisfaction with the services and benefits of CPRA, and to look into other initiatives that might benefit members. Therefore, a survey was designed to collect valuable feedback from current CPRA members.

Summary of Results:

Of the 935 member emails sent out with the survey web link, 230 members (25%) completed some or all of the 32 questions on the e-survey.

The average length of time respondents said they had been a CPRA member was 12.44 years – this is two years longer than in the 2005 CPRA member survey (10.29 years). For the great majority of current CPRA members, their agency pays for their membership (88%). A very slight majority of members said they were CPRP certified (52%), and 13% said they were CTRS certified. Interestingly, a third of the member respondents said they intended to take the CPRP examination in the next 12 months (35%). These numbers represent an increase over the 2005 CPRA respondents (26% reported CPRP certification, and 10% reported CTRS certification at that time).

Directors, CARA, Small Communities, and Aquatics were the four highest represented Interest Sections (at 28%, 24%, 22%, and 20% respectively), with 13% reporting they were not sure what sections they were members of. A follow up question asking if the interest sections fit member needs found the most common response was “Sort of – I follow one interest section, but not the other(s)” (43%). The second most common response was “Yes, all interest sections I am involved in fit my needs” (40%). Other sections members would like to see offered were Facility Managers (49% - or 67 respondents), then Youth Services (28%), and then Fitness (23%).

Most members hear about CPRA events through the CPRA website (73%), Byline Magazine (70%), and then the CPRA Connections Web Letter (67%). Members do find value in CPRA’s professional development opportunities – in particular the Section Workshops (52%). Grouped together in almost a statistical dead heat are the National Playground Safety Institute (41%), and the Facility Design and Management School (41%), and CPRA’s Annual Conference (40%) as also being valuable. (Note: The Annual Conference slipped from its Very Valuable category (52%) in 2005, to Valuable in 2009). The one category that was primarily considered ‘Somewhat Valuable’ was the Day at the Capitol (51%).

There was general enthusiasm evidenced through the “Valuable” designation for all the different “effective training tools/methods” for members, which were ranked as follows: Conferences (one or more days) – 54%, Discussions/Round Table – 53%,

Workshops (one day or less) – 52%, Webinars – 44%, “Packaged program” – 42%, Online Courses (41%), and Teleconferencing/Videoconferencing – 40%.

Members said that the CPRA resources they currently use are valuable (the Newsletters, and the CPRA directories), and that the CPRA website itself is very valuable (44%). However, half of all respondents do not use the CPRA Blog (50%), while only 15% find the blog valuable.

The question asking respondents if they used social networks was interesting in its almost universal rejection of this form of communication – only Facebook has slightly more than half saying they do access the website (51%), while the other three (My Space, Twitter, and Linked In) showed that 82% or more never use these sites. In comments, respondents said they use Facebook for personal networking, but not for work. In the follow up question, 49% say they probably wouldn’t use any of them, while 40% of the other half said they might use them to communicate/network with other CPRA members.

When asked if CPRA should conduct research, 49% said yes, and another 30% said they would take the time to read it, and another 31% said they would be willing to help CPRA do research, or participate in research in their field. Thirty four percent of the respondents said they were not sure, and a smaller 13% said no, they would not be willing to pay more in membership dues for access to research. Beneficial research mentioned was comparison data (in terms of fees charged and facilities) and trends information. The great majority of respondents would like to electronically access CPRA’s research information (92%) with very few asking for a hard copy.

In terms of partnership development, most respondents said yes, CPRA should partner with other organizations. In order of preference, the preferred partners were: Live Well Colorado (74%), CO Department of Public Health and Environment (67%), SCORP (65%), Colorado Kids Outdoors (64%), and national Get Outdoors Day (59%). Less than half of all respondents were in favor of partnering with the American Heart Association (48%). And members would like to access information from partners through a website link (55%).

When asked how they contribute to the overall success of the association the great majority of members felt their primary contribution was through paying their membership dues (93%), followed by participation in section meetings and events (64%), and attending the annual conference (63%). Overall, they were ‘very satisfied’ (27%) or ‘satisfied’ (55%) with CPRA member services and benefits. And they felt their CPRA membership was ‘very important’ (33%) or ‘important’ (38%) to their professional development.

As in 2005, CPRA members felt that the most important issues facing the Parks and Recreation Field today were: 1) Funding/financing challenges, 2) Budgets and budget cuts, and 3) the economy (and if anything, these views were more strongly expressed in 2009 than previously). Additional concerns were about 1) the attitude that parks and recreation are non-essential government services, and 2) Health and wellness

issues like obesity and an inactive lifestyle are problematic. Again, members felt that there needed to be more education of the public regarding the benefits of parks and recreation.

Final comments on what would give respondents more satisfaction as a CPRA member included: 1) Even more regional opportunities to network with other professionals, and 2) I am satisfied with/I like CPRA

Demographic profile of the 2009 respondents to the CPRA member survey:

- 42% men completed the survey compared with 58% women.
- The average age was 43.48 years, with a range of 24 to 66 years.
- The average number of years in the parks and recreation field was 18.07 years, with a range of 1 to 41 years.
- CPRA members are very educated: 64% have a four year degree, and 30% have some graduate work.
- This CPRA membership survey was responded to by a predominantly white population – 98.5%, with only 1.5% Latino, and no blacks.

Research Objectives

The Colorado Parks and Recreation Association wanted to continue to better understand their members' interests and opinions so that efforts could be made to meet members' expectations, and follow up on the previous CPRA member survey that was conducted in spring, 2005. The 2009 CPRA General Member Survey was designed to identify association members' views on:

- The CPRA Interest Sections
- Opinion of the value of various CPRA professional development services
- Satisfaction with association publications, website, and other general social media communication
- Opinion of the benefit of CPRA-conducted research
- Opinion regarding CPRA and partnerships with other like-minded groups
- Overall satisfaction with CPRA member services and benefits
- Important issues facing the parks and recreation field today

Structure of the Survey Questionnaire

The survey was jointly designed by the consultant and CPRA's staff and Board, and consisted of 32 questions. The survey was entered into CPRA's SurveyMonkey.com account, and the website link was sent in an e-mail message on August 24th and September 2nd, 2009 to all members who had given e-mail addresses to CPRA. The survey invitation asked members to take a few minutes to give CPRA their opinions about the benefits and services provided by CPRA, and to complete the survey by September 11, 2009.

Sample Population and Research Methodology

The sample population consisted of every CPRA member who was on the master e-mail list, some 935 members. In all, a total of 230 surveys were collected for a response rate of 25%, which is good. Currently the response rate for members of organizations (soliciting their opinions) has an Opening Rate of around 75-86%, and a Click Through rate of around 14%. (Internet Research, 2006).

SurveyMonkey software tabulated all quantifiable questions (see pdf copy of survey with results included), and the consultant did a content analysis and count of all qualified comment questions (results listed below) plus an interpretation of the survey data in the Executive Summary.