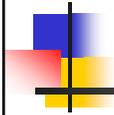
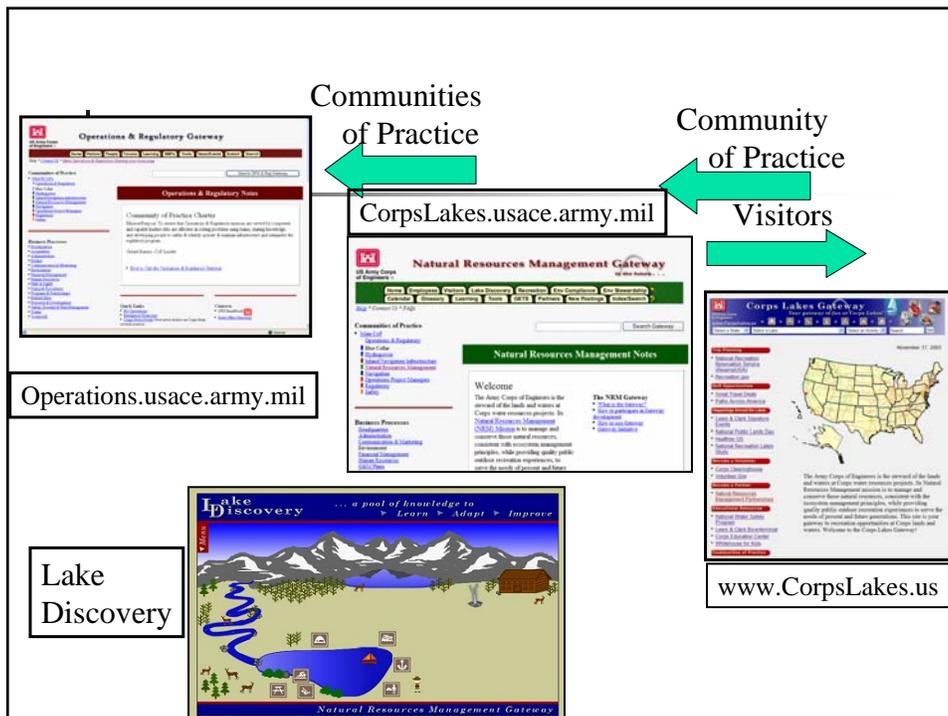


NRM Gateway Update & Comment Card Initiative



LRD Ranger Conference Presentation
Bonnie F. Bryson

24 Oct 2007



Content Development Workshops

Subject Matter Experts... the way we get information and the way we maintain it.

<http://corpslakos.usaco.army.mil/employees/gateway/workshop.html>



Some Gateway Principles

- Make it all about the Community of Practice.
- Initially focus on the innovators.
- Create events that make sharing a fun way to learn together...

Natural Resources Management Gateway
to the future...

US Army Corps of Engineers

Home Employees Visitors Lake Discovery Recreation Env Compliance Env Stewardship
Calendar Glossary Learning Tools GETS Partners New Postings Index/Search

Help * Contact Us * FAQs

Communities of Practice

- Main CoP
 - Operations & Regulatory
 - Blue Collar
 - Hydropower
 - Inland Navigation Infrastructure
 - Natural Resources Management
 - Navigation
 - Operations Project Managers
 - Regulatory
 - Safety

Business Processes

- Headquarters
- Administration
- Communication & Marketing
- Environment
- Financial Management
- Human Resources
- O&M Plans

Natural Resources Management Notes

Welcome

The Army Corps of Engineers is the steward of the lands and waters at Corps water resources projects. Its [Natural Resources Management \(NRM\) Mission](#) is to manage and conserve those natural resources, consistent with ecosystem management principles, while providing quality public outdoor recreation experiences, to serve the needs of present and future

The NRM Gateway

- What is the Gateway?
- How to participate in Gateway development
- How to use Gateway
- Gateway Initiative

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[Back](#) [Home](#) [Search](#) [Favorites](#) [Print](#) [Mail](#) [Share](#)

<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/glimpse-subscribe.cfm?Step=Subscribe&Email=None>



Natural Resources Management Gateway

to the future . . .

[Home](#) [Visitors](#) [Lake Discovery](#) [Recreation](#) [Env Compliance](#) [Env Stewardship](#) [Partners](#)
[News/Events](#) [People](#) [Forums](#) [Learning](#) [GETS](#) [Tools](#) [New Postings](#) [Submit](#) [Index/Search](#)

[Help](#) * [Contact Us](#)

Communities of Practice

- [Main CoP](#)
- [Operations & Regulatory](#)
- [Flood Risk Management](#)
- [Hydropower](#)
- [Inland Navigation Infrastructure](#)
- [Natural Resources Management](#)
- [Navigation](#)
- [Operations Project Managers](#)
- [Regulatory](#)
- [Safety](#)

Business Processes

- [Headquarters](#)
- [Acquisition & Administration](#)
- [Budget](#)
- [Communication & Marketing](#)
- [Environment](#)
- [Facility & Land Use Management](#)
- [Financial Management](#)
- [Human Resources](#)

NRM Gateway *Glimpse*

to the future . . .

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<http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/visitors/visitors.cfm>



Corps Lakes Gateway

Your gateway to fun at Corps Lakes!

[www.CorpsLakes.us](#)

Select a State Select a Corps of Engineers Lake Select an Activity Search

[Age & Disability Discount Passes](#)

trip Planning

- [Recreation.gov](#)
- [USACE Recreation Brochures](#)

OD Opportunities

- [Great Travel Deals](#)
- [Paths Across America](#)

happenings Around the Lakes

- [Take Me Fishing](#)
- [National Public Lands Day](#)
- [Healthier US](#)
- [National Recreation Lakes Study](#)
- [Great Outdoors Month](#)

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- [Volunteer.Gov](#)

ecome a Partner

- [Natural Resources Management](#)

October 22, 2007



The Army Corps of Engineers is the steward of the lands and waters at Corps water resources projects. Its Natural Resources Management mission is to

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 Back - Search - Favorites - Go Links >>
 http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/visitors/ecard.cfm

Corps Lakes Gateway
 Your gateway to fun at Corps Lakes!
 Army Corps of Engineers
 www.CorpsLakes.us

Select a State | Select a Corps of Engineers Lake | Select an Activity | Search | Go!

Corps Lakes Gateway > Send E-Card

Send an E-Card

www.CorpsLakes.us
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers




Welcome to Corps Lakes E-Card System!

To begin, just click on the link below.
 Then follow the simple steps to design and send an e-card from any Corps of Engineers site to anyone's email.

Have fun making your card!

[Design Your E-Card!](#)

Trusted sites

Edit View Favorites Tools Help
 Back - Search - Favorites - Go Links >>
 http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/visitors/ecard-select.cfm?Step=2&Id=13&Theme=Boating

Design Your E-Card! Step 2 - Write Message



Photo Credit: Mike Watkins, Kansas City District

Select Photo Caption

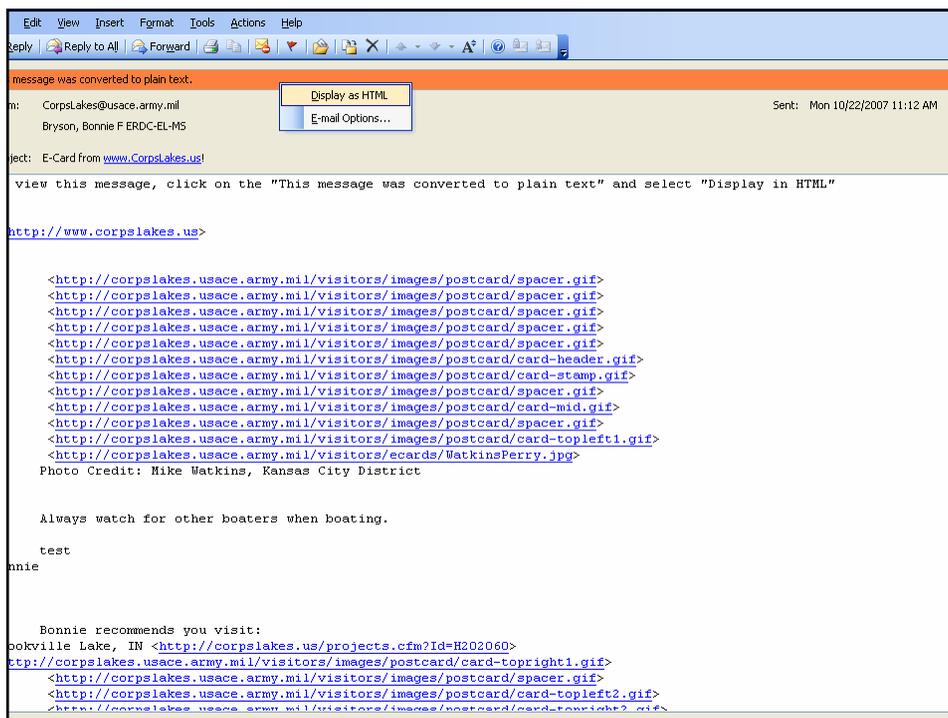
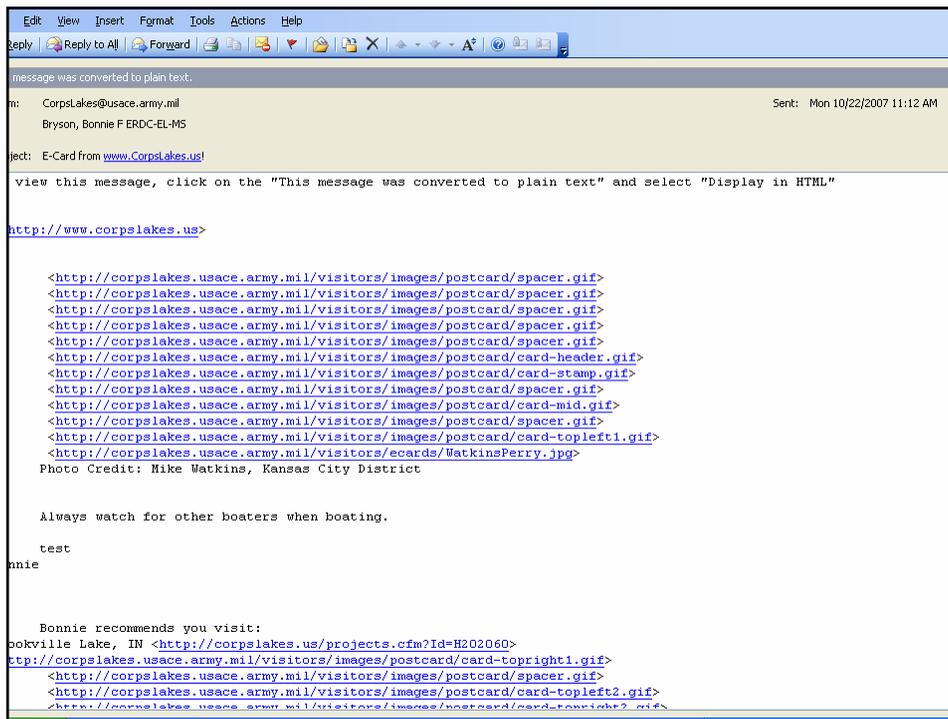
Enter your message

Enter e-mail address of recipient(s) *Separate multiple address with a semicolon(,)*

Enter your name and e-mail address
 Your Name Your E-mail

Do you want to sign the e-card with the name provided above? Yes No

Trusted sites



Edit View Insert Format Tools Actions Help
 Reply Forward

To: CorpsLakes@usace.army.mil
 Bryson, Bonnie F ERDC-EL-M5
 Subject: E-Card from www.CorpLakes.us

Sent: Mon 10/22/2007 11:12 AM

www.CorpLakes.us
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers




Photo Credit: Mike Watkins, Kansas City District

Always watch for other boaters when boating.

[test](#)
 Bonnie

Bonnie recommends you visit:
[Brookville Lake, IN](#)

Send us your photos!

- Note photo credit
- Suggest caption
- Email to Virginia Dickerson

RecStatus – coming to the Gateway Fall 2007



RecSTATUS - Annual Recreation Business Line Status - Microsoft Internet Explorer, provided by IRI 6.0

RecSTATUS
 Annual Recreation Business Line Status

Options
 • Home
 • Select a Project
 • Select a District/Division
 • National View

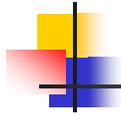
FY 2006 Reports
 RecStatus gives a current fiscal year [2006] annual report. Click on links within the report fields for trend information going back to FY 2004.

- [PowerPoint Introduction/Background](#)

Select a Project
 Abiqui Reservoir - Albuquerque
 Adams Lake - Los Angeles
 Albert Falls Dam and Lake Pend Oreille - Seattle
 Adirondack Lake - Mobile
 Allegheny Reservoir - Pittsburgh
 Allegheny River Pk. - Pittsburgh
 Almond Lake - Baltimore
 Alum Creek Lake - Huntington

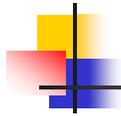
Select a District/Division
 Alaska
 Albuquerque
 Baltimore
 Buffalo
 Charleston

Webdate: January 2007
[Technical Assistance](#)



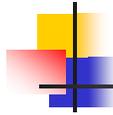
RecStatus

- This is not a data call – data for the report will come from existing data sources, including
 - OMBIL
 - NRRS
 - RecBEST



Purpose

- Consistent presentation of project info
 - Stand alone report
 - Easy one-click access point for detailed information on each item
- Benchmarking tool for managers
 - Project percentile value relative to others
 - % change from previous year's info
- Back-check for OMBIL and other data



RecStatus

RecSTATUS - Annual Recreation Business Line Status - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by LRI 6.0

Home | Select a Project | Select a District/Division | National View | Select FY

Project Summary

2006 RecSTATUS - Annual Recreation Business Line Status
 Project: Burnsville Lake District: Huntington Division: LRD

Project Location

- State(s): WV
- Nearest MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area): CHARLESTON, WV MSA
- Distance from MSA: 78
- Number of fee land counties: 2
- Day Use Market Area:
 - Number of surrounding counties: 20
 - Day use population:
 - Congressional Districts: West Virginia 2nd District (100%)
 - Basin: Ohio Region Upper Ohio
 - Latitude 38.84 Longitude -80.61833
 - [View on map](#)

Project Briefing

- Current presentation not available

Plans and Administration

- Impoundment Date: 12/1/78
- Project Purposes
 - Authorized and operating project purposes
 - General Recreation Authorization
 - National Environmental Policy NEPA 43-31
 - Recreation Related Project Plans last updated:
 - Master Plan: 2/1/74
 - OMP: 7/1/95
 - Sign Plan: 12/1/00
 - Shoreline Management Plan: N/A
 - Date of last recreation use survey
 - Last PDT Periodic Evaluation per EM1110-1-800, Ch. 7
- Active Stakeholders
 - Commercial Concession (Lease): 2
 - Public Park & Recreation (Lease): 2
 - Tribes
- Scope of Corps recreation management
 - Project with Corps managed recreation areas
 - CE Managed Recreation Areas
 - Managed by Others

Webdate: July 2007
 Technical Director



RecStatus

RecSTATUS - Annual Recreation Business Line Status - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by LRI 6.0

Home | Select a Project | Select a District/Division | National View | Select FY

Financial Summary

Total Revenues	\$ 354,640,437	\$ 21,375,514	\$ 148,209,148,209
Discounts Applied (Golden Age, Golden Access)			\$ 2,008
Contract cost (to RA)			\$ 28,747
% sites in NRBS inventory			
Fee Collections			
• CEEMS Revenues	\$ 102,016		
• NRBS Revenues	\$ 160,730		
TOTAL	\$ 262,746		

Regional Economic Impacts of Recreation Visitors to Corps Projects
(Includes both Corps and non-Corps managed areas)

- Total Visitor spending by:
 - Campers: 5.2
 - Day users: 5.1
 - Other overnight visitors
- Total sales: 5.5
- Total regional income: 5.4
- Total regional employment: 210

Recreation Program Summary

Visitation

- Total project visits: 535,450
- Visits to CE managed areas
 - Camping total: 345,531
 - Day use total: 189,919
 - Visitor Center total: 6,142 hours

Interpretive Contacts

- Total on-site direct: 4,191
- Total off-site direct: 0
- Total indirect: 365

Webdate: July 2007
 Technical Director

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http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/rlat/rlat.html

Natural Resources Management Gateway

to the future . . .

Recreation Leadership Advisory Team

[Headquarters POC](#)

The Recreation Leadership Advisory Team (Team) was formed to provide oversight and serve as an ad hoc committee to the Chief of the Natural Resources Management Branch in HQUSACE. It provides guidance and review to the [Recreation Management Support Program \(RMSP\)](#). The RMSP is designed to provide support for recreational issues or initiatives that have broad applicability to Corps Civil Works projects nationwide. This is accomplished through management studies, management assistance, and information exchange. In addition, the Team provides input to the strategic planning vision and makes recommendations on national priorities for the Corps recreation program.

- [At a Glance](#)
- [Policy & Procedures](#)
- [Program Summary](#)
- [Products](#)
- [Related Sites](#)
- [Recreation Program PMP](#)
- [News / Current Issues](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Good Enough to Share](#)
- [Lessons Learned](#)
- [Headquarters' Perspective](#)
- [Team Members](#)

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http://corpslakes.usace.army.mil/employees/news.cfm?id=rlat

News / Current Issues

- [News Archive](#)

RLAT Meeting Minutes 

- [August 2007](#)
- [February 2007](#)
- [August 2006](#)
- [January 2006](#)
- [August 2005](#)
- [February 2005](#)

[Notification of a Pending EIG Inspection of Recreation Program at SAS](#)

[Draft Study Plan: Demographic Trends and Facilities Modernization in the Corps of Engineers Recreation Program](#)

[RecNotes R-99-2 Article: Recreation Management Support Program](#)

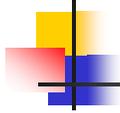
[Back to Recreation Leadership Advisory Team \(RLAT\)](#)

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[Recreation](#) | [Env Compliance](#) | [Env Stewardship](#) | [Ideas](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Glossary](#)

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Customer Comment Card Program

Headquarters POC: [Recreation Management Support Program](#)

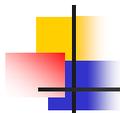
- [Program Summary](#)
- [Procedures Archive](#)
- [Recreation Areas: Survey tools and procedures for FY06-07](#)
- [Visitor Centers: Survey tools and procedures for FY06-07](#)
- [Comment Card Image Files](#)
- [Data / Results Archive](#)

Important Note: Comment tools and procedures for FY05/06 surveys have been moved to make way for FY06/07 surveys. If you are still entering comment card data for the FY05/06 survey year, click on the Procedures Archive above, then access the tools and procedures for the FY05/06 survey year

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[Privacy and Security Notice](#)
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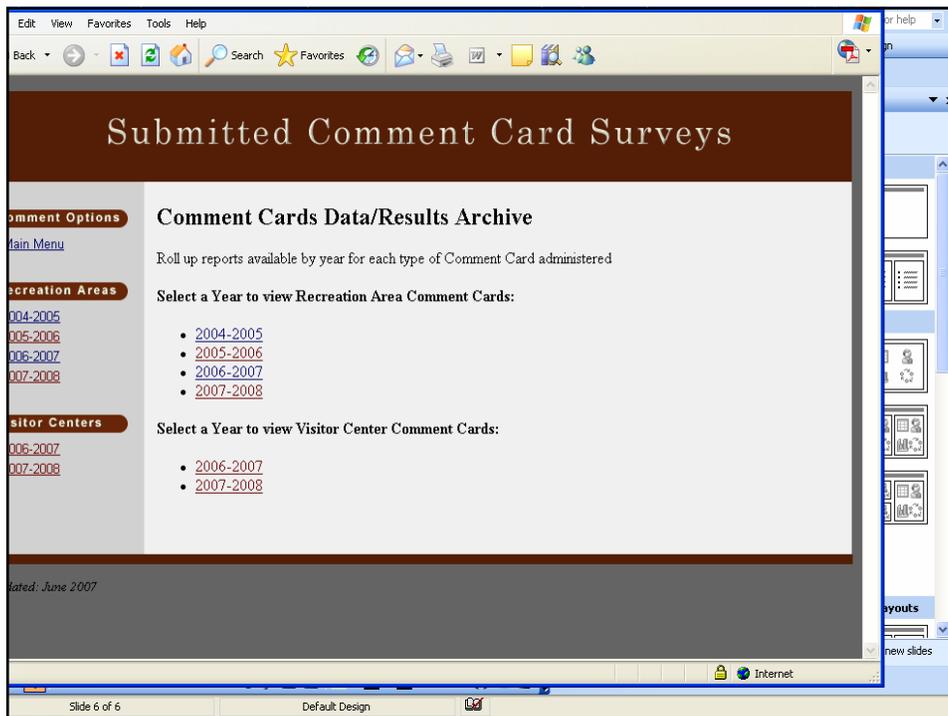
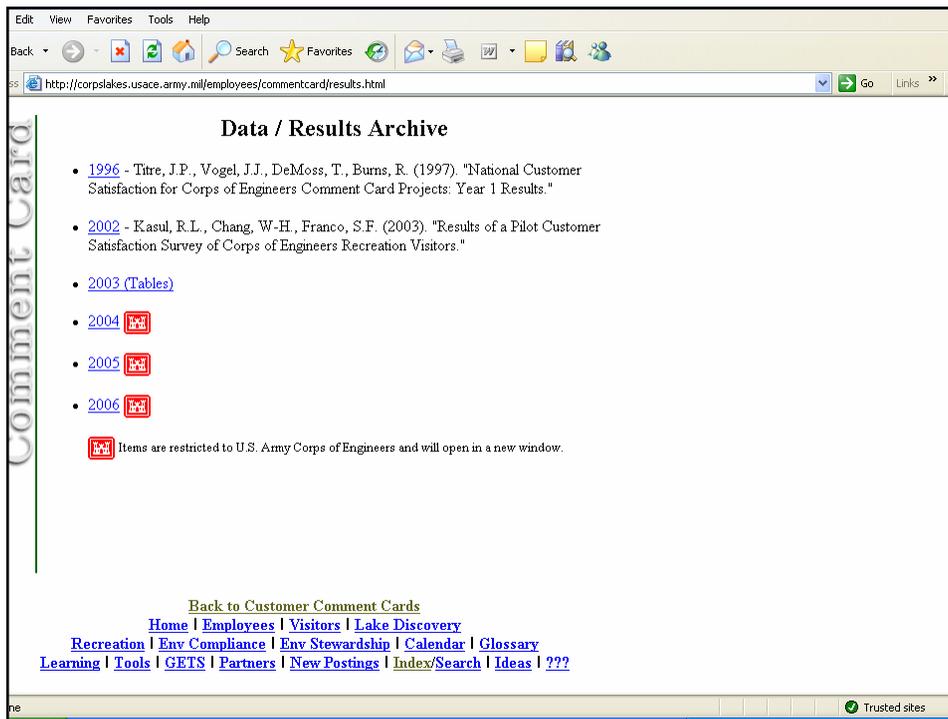
SME: Richard Kasul, ERDC



Comment Card Help

- Help Desk is always open:

For assistance with any aspect of the comment card surveys please contact Christine Wibowo (ERDC) by E-mail at Christine.Wibowo@usace.army.mil or telephone at 601-634-4397



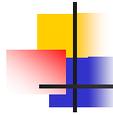
Summary Project Reports

- Item Rating Table →
- Benchmarking Graph →
 - Project to District
 - Project to Division
 - Project to US
- Visitor Comments List →



Why do we have Comment Card Program?

- The Corps initiated a comment card survey in the mid-1990's primarily to meet a reporting requirement mandated by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993.
- GPRA required us to report annually to OMB on CE recreation program performance. Visitor satisfaction was one of the performance measures.
- In 2002, the RLAT asked ERDC to standardize the way the comment card survey was being conducted at Corps projects
- Two years later (2004) , General Strock directed all projects to begin participating in the comment card program. His directive can be found in the NRM Gateway Comment Card pages.

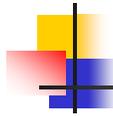


How is this data used?

- Also in 2004, RLAT began to explore ways we could use comment card data to help to benefit the CE recreation program.
1. Benchmarking of project performance against District, Division, and National norms.
 2. Visitor suggestions for improvements
 - Comments organized by facility and service categories (to parallel facility budget categories and justified level of service categories)
 - Used as the visitor satisfaction performance measure in the performance budgeting process

Ongoing Analysis

Based on Comment Card Question: "What do you like most about this area" from Recreation Area Comment Card Survey



What Visitors Liked Most	Number	Percent
Attractiveness of area	1,648	24.7
Cleanliness	892	13.4
Quiet and/or peaceful	895	13.9
Camping / camping facilities	609	9.8
Fishing	582	8.7
Convenience from home	431	6.5
Rangers	412	6.5
Swimming / swimming beach	364	5.5
Accessibility	285	4.3
Location	274	4.1
Family / child friendly	243	3.6
Facilities	240	3.6
Shade	187	2.8
Restrooms or Showers	171	2.6
Open space	161	2.4
Safety and security	154	2.3
Friendly visitors	147	2.2
Picnicking / picnic areas	136	2.0
33 additional categories so far	1826	<2.0 ea.
Total To Date	6677	

Examples of Comments

- Very scenic, lake is beautiful
- Lake area, views, shade trees, birds
- Good, clean, very good for kids to ride bikes.
- A nice place to camp, family place.
- Outdoor fellowship with friends- much cooler than at home.
- It's close to my home so we can come often. The campground is always clean and the people are nice.
- Cleanliness and quietness.
- Wonderful lake- excellent staff.
- The area is very clean and well-managed. We appreciate the rangers patrolling the area and keeping it safe.
- Convenient and safe for fishing.
- Cleanliness of shower house and beach
- Location, environment, cleanliness, cost.

Recreation Area Survey Summary of Suggestions

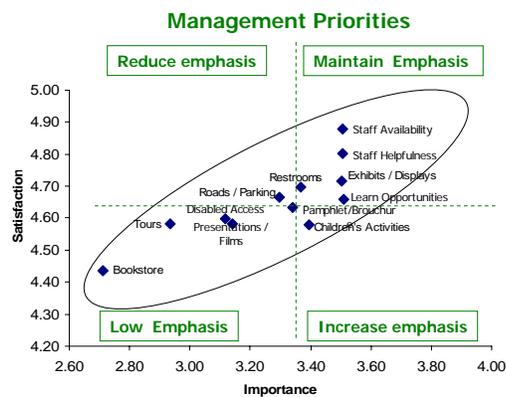


Suggestion Categories	Number	Percent
Facility Issues:		
Camping / Picnic Sites	2,664	25%
Buildings – Restrooms / Shower Houses	2,204	20%
Roads & Parking	889	8%
Boat Ramps / Courtesy Docks / Piers	708	7%
Signs	257	2%
Other Facilities	1,958	18%
Service Issues:		80%
Mowing	695	6%
Facility Cleaning	581	5%
Visitor Assistance	322	3%
Repairs	244	2%
Reservations	205	2%
Park Attendant / Park Host	94	1%
Other Comments:		20%
Comments, but no suggestions	3,318	
Inappropriate or offensive Comments	64	
No comment offered	19,087	
Total	33,290	

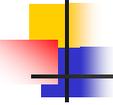
Visitor Center Survey Importance – Performance Evaluation



Attribute	Importance	Satisfaction
Learning Opportunities	3.51	4.66
Staff Helpfulness	3.51	4.80
Staff Availability	3.51	4.88
Exhibits / Displays	3.50	4.72
Children's Activities	3.39	4.58
Restrooms	3.37	4.70
Pamphlets / Brochures	3.34	4.63
Roads / Parking	3.30	4.66
Presentations / Films	3.14	4.58
Disabled Access	3.12	4.60
Tours	2.93	4.58
Bookstore	2.71	4.44



Importance Scale: 1 = Not Important to 4 = Very Important.
Satisfaction Scale: 1 = Very Poor to 5 = Very Good.



How was the survey procedure developed?

- The main goal of the survey scheduling process is to ensure that every visitor to the lake during the 3-month sampling window has the same probability of being surveyed, i.e., a **representative sample**.
- We plan to continue using the current procedure as long as producing a representative sample remains the motivating principle behind the survey scheduling process.



What is the timing of survey announcements?

- The annual survey can be scheduled to begin as early as 01 April
- Two e-mail announcements:
 - Around 01 March - head-ups announcement.
 - About 15 March - when survey tools for the new year become available on the NRM Gateway.
 - Distributed to everyone on CDL-NRM-MS, CDL-NRM-DISTRICTS, CDL-Operations-Project-Managers email lists. Every Operations Project Manager should be getting these announcements
 - Check the Gateway page...



Can we go back to simpler data entry tool?

- Our first online data entry tool supported an earlier version of the comment card
- When we expanded the comment card, it was no longer possible to view the entire card at once on your computer display screen.
- No way to make the screen look exactly like the comment card in the way we did earlier.



How can we use volunteers for data entry -- no CAC card

- This needs to be addressed for all CE programs – computer security issue



Can we replace manual data entry with automatic forms reader?

- This has strong appeal and we have looked into it a couple of times
- Currently optical character recognition (OCR) needed to read the visitor comments is not as good as we need it to be
- If we migrate to form reading technology at the present time, we would have to have to give up the comments
- We will continue to monitor OCR technology -- when we think it has progressed to the point where it will work for us, we will take steps to make it available for use with the comment card



Can we replace the field survey with a web survey?

- Potentially no survey labor and definitely no data entry labor make this a very attractive option. But there are downside issues
 - Low response rate.
 - With low response rates, response bias becomes an issue.
 - OMB, which has approval authority for all CE visitor surveys, will soon require remedial measures for surveys that do not achieve an 80% response rate. If they are serious about enforcing this, it will mean trouble for anyone doing web-based surveys.



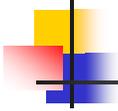
There are not enough visitors to fill sample quota

- This will happen occasionally at all projects, both large and small
- To help minimize the chance of low-use areas and days appearing in the sample edit the list of recreation areas and visitation statistics.
 - Zero out visitation for very-low-visitation areas and for remote areas that may pose an undue survey burden
 - Adjust visitation statistics to reflect actual visitor use -- you do not have to accept the default visitation values (from VERS)



We keep sampling the same people over and over...

- If happening only at one or two recreation areas, it is likely that the area is being over sampled because reported visitation is too high – edit your visitation stats in the generator
- If this is happening at most or all recreation areas on the survey schedule, there may be other issues and you should make us aware of this through the help desk, so we can help sort it out on a case by case basis



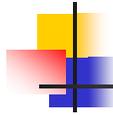
Why is it so important to capture demographic info?

- Demographics known to affect customer satisfaction scores
- This data is being collected in anticipation of using the demographic and other data to help better understand variability in scores
- An effort is currently underway to do this with data from SAD



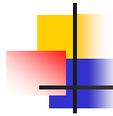
Why ask Hispanics to identify themselves separately from other ethnic groups?

- OMB regards ethnicity (Hispanic or non-Hispanic) and race (Asian, black, white, etc.) as separate demographic attributes.
- OMB requires all U.S. Government agencies that collect demographic data from the public to ask for ethnic and racial identify in separate questions.



Will the card keep changing?

- The comment card has had one major revision -- in 2004 when we changed from the old mid-1990's version to the current card
- In 2006
 - Finished development of the larger comment card
 - Added the classification of visitor suggestions (requested by RLAT) during data entry
 - A separate comment card for visitor centers (requested by RecBEST visitor center committee)
- It was our recommendation to RLAT to keep the process unchanged from that point forward



How does comment card database link to OMBIL database?

- It doesn't
- The comment card database is maintained on a server that supports the NRM Gateway. Data is uploaded to RecBEST as needed.
- We did get an inquiry from OMBIL a year ago and we volunteered to make the raw data available to them for incorporation into OMBIL



What are budget impact of comment card results?

- Visitors' written comments are used by managers to support improvement packages



Biggest field concern -- time and effort at lake level to administer...

- Since implementing the comment card, we have made several adjustments to reduce impact of survey on smaller projects
 - Raised the visitation levels needed to make the survey required or to qualify for the low-sample option.
 - Waived the survey requirement for projects that did not meet the funding level needed to be in RecBEST. At least a couple of projects in LRD that qualify to opt-out on this basis.
 - Reduced the sampling quotas for project by one-third



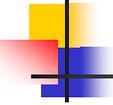
Who decides the future direction of the Comment Card initiative?

- ERDC makes recommendations to Headquarters through the RLAT based on
 - Stated requirements (RecBEST and others)
 - Feedback we receive from projects.



Who decides the future direction of the Comment Card initiative?

- ERDC is in the process of formulating our recommendations for next year's comment card survey, which we will offer at the next RLAT meeting (Feb 2008)



Who decides the future direction of the Comment Card initiative?

- We recognize that:
 - the last couple of surveys have established a strong baseline
 - budget limitations are making it difficult for projects to respond to the needs that have already been identified through those earlier surveys.
- Make your views independently known to your RLAT representatives (LRD: Dr. Michael Loesch)



Suggestions?
