

INTRODUCTION

This report is the first in a series that describes the results of the 1999-2000 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (*NSRE 2000*). The *NSRE 2000*, in general, was conducted to discover and describe: (1) participation by Americans in outdoor recreation activities, (2) opinions concerning management of both public and private forests and grasslands, (3) the importance and value of our natural environment, (3) uses and values of wildlife and wilderness, (4) people's lifestyles, and (5) recreational trips people take away from home. The *NSRE 2000* data will be used by a variety of public and private organizations for both management and research purposes.

Data for the *NSRE 2000* was obtained from random-digit-dialing (RDD) telephone surveys. The phone numbers for the *NSRE 2000* survey were obtained from Survey Sampling, Inc (SSI). SSI subjects all their numbers to extensive cleaning and validation to ensure that all exchanges are currently valid. SSI provided the NSRE with a random-digit-dial (RDD) sample using a database of "working blocks." A block is a set of 100 contiguous numbers identified by the first two digits of the last four numbers (e.g., in number 559-4200, "42" is the block). A block is termed to be working if one or more listed telephone numbers are found in that block. Numbers are generated from all eligible blocks in proportion to their density of listed telephone households. As numbers are pulled, they are marked as used and are not available again during a nine-month period. Once numbers are selected, they are entered into the computer-aided telephone interviewing system (CATI).

The CATI system has two primary functions: (1) it facilitates the dialing and interviewing process; and (2) it manages the administrative functions associated with interviewing. For each interview, the CATI system randomly selects numbers for an interviewer, who then instructs the computer to dial that number. Upon reaching an appropriate person and receiving agreement to an interview, the interviewer reads the survey questions as they appear on the computer screen. Using a computer to control the survey, skip patterns are executed as intended, responses are within range, there are no missing data, and data entry occurs as the survey is administered. If no person is contacted, then a code is entered (e.g., busy, no answer). If the timing of the call is inconvenient, a call back is scheduled for another date and time. If an answering machine is obtained, a brief message is left explaining the *NSRE 2000*, its importance, and that we will endeavor to reach them at another time and date.

This report, specifically, describes results from version one of the *NSRE 2000*, which asked questions pertaining to people's participation in outdoor activities, and the total numbers of days they spent participating in outdoor recreation activities. This first survey had a target sample of 5,000 Americans above the age of 16. The average length of interviews for this survey was 20 minutes. Data was collected from July 1999 through November 1999. A total of 5,064 useable interviews were completed. A main goal of the NSRE survey is to achieve minimum sample sizes for each State to support the production of State reports, however this first sample used strictly proportional sampling. However, a sampling strategy has been created which, over-all the NSRE Versions, will provide a quota sample of 400 per State.

This sampling approach, however, reaches a random sample of telephone numbers, rather than of people. Affluent families ' are virtually certain to have a telephone number and many have more

than one. At the other end of the affluency scale, many low-income households may not have a telephone. As a result, affluent people may have been over represented somewhat in the survey sample. Demographic characteristics of the NSRE sample are compared with 1990 Census estimates for individuals 16 and above in table 1.

Table 1.

Category	Proportion of NSRE 2000 Sample (%)	1999 Proportion of Population (%)
AGE		
16-24	14.6	16.2
25-34	17.6	17.9
35-44	21.0	21.2
45-54	19.6	17.2
55-64	13.5	11.2
Over 65	13.7	16.4
RACE		
Caucasian	83.8	74.0
African American	8.1	11.4
Hispanic	6.4	10.2
Other (non Hispanic)	3.4	4.4
GENDER		
Male	43.2	48.2
Female	56.6	51.8

In viewing the results presented in this report, it is important to remember that individuals were asked about their personal participation in specific recreation activities. When all versions of the *NSRE 2000* have been completed, participants would have answered questions pertaining to approximately 80 outdoor recreation activities. However, for version one, questions were restricted to people's participation in approximately 50 outdoor recreation activities (marked by an asterisk "*" in the list below). For analysis and description of results, it was useful to place these activities into 12 groups. For simplicity, each activity was placed in only one category. In many cases, however, activities could have been placed in more than one category. Hiking, for example, was classed as an individual activity, which it is for many people. For others, however, hiking might best be classed as a backpacking and camping activity. The activity groups and the individual activities surveyed were:

Individual Activities

Bicycling *
Mountain biking
Walking for exercise
or pleasure *
Horseback riding
Day Hiking *
Running or jogging
Golf
Tennis outdoors
Gardening or landscaping
Inline skating or
rollerblading
Orienteering

Snow and Ice Activities

Ice skating outdoors
Sledding
Snowshoeing
Downhill skiing
Snowboarding
Cross country skiing
Snowmobiling

Viewing or Photographing

Viewing, identifying, or
photographing birds *
Viewing, identifying or
photographing fish *
Viewing, identifying or
photographing other
wildlife
Viewing, identifying or
photographing
wildflowers, trees or
other natural vegetation
Viewing or photographing
natural scenery

Hunting

Big game
Small game
Waterfowl

Fishing

Fishing in coldwater such
as mountains rivers or
streams
Fishing in warm rivers and
lakes

Ice fishing
Saltwater fishing
Fishing for migratory fish like
salmon, shad, or other
spawning fish*

Outdoor Team Sports

Softball or baseball
Football
Basketball outdoors
Soccer outdoors *
Handball, racquetball, or
squash outdoors
Yard games - horseshoes,
badminton, croquet,
frisbee
Attend outdoor sports events
as a spectator
Volleyball outdoors

Boating/Floating/Sailing

Sailing *
Canoeing *
Kayaking *
Rowing *
Motor boating
Water skiing *
Personal water craft such as
Jet skis, wave runners *
Sailboarding or windsurfing
Rafting, tubing, or other
floating *
Surfing*

Swimming

Swimming in streams, lakes,
or the ocean *
Swimming in an outdoor
pool
Snorkeling
Scuba diving
Visiting a beach
Visiting a waterside

Driving for Pleasure

Sightseeing *
Driving for pleasure on
country roads or in a
park *
4-wheel drive, ATV or

motorcycle driving off-
road *
Riding motorcycles for
pleasure on a highway

Visiting Educational Sites

Visiting nature center, nature
trail, visitor center, or
zoo*
Attend outdoor concerts,
plays or other outdoor
performances*
Visit prehistoric structures or
archaeological sites*
Visiting historic sites,
buildings, or monuments*
Visiting a farm or other rural
land setting

Traditional Activities

Gathering of family or
friends*
Picnicking*

Outdoor Adventure Activities

Exploring caves
Backpack camping on trails*
Camping at developed sites*
Camping at primitive sites*
Visiting a wilderness or other
primitive, roadless area*
Gather mushrooms, berries,
firewood, or other natural
products*
Mountain climbing
Rock climbing