



Recreation Research Update



Pacific Southwest Research Station
Wildland Recreation and Urban Cultures

January 2008 No. 63
Caring for the Land and Serving People

European Journal Contributions to Recreation Management

Two articles, co-authored by Dr. Jim Absher, that are listed in this issue of the Recreation Research Update highlight some of our international work and point to a lesser known journal. The *Journal of Forest, Snow and Landscape Research* has been around for many years but is not commonly seen here in the U.S. A quick check on some local sources suggests it may be hard to find but it is worth looking for. It serves Europe as an important source for recreation resource issue advances, and often builds on the North American literature in useful ways.

The article by Chieh-lu Li, et al. contributes to the literature on serving diverse populations. Based on existing work in anthropology that measures cultural values in ethnically diverse populations, it proposes and tests a values segmentation of culturally diverse recreation visitors. It validates values segmentation via socio-demographic and service quality related variables. Data are from a survey of Anglo, Hispanic, and Asian visitors to the Angeles National Forest (near metropolitan Los Angeles, CA). Analysis first attempted to confirm the anthropological literature's four dimensions of cultural values in this setting. A poor fit by the Angeles data led to exploratory factor analysis and interpretable dimensions of cultural values in the data. Three dimensions were found (labeled hierarchical beliefs, uncertainty avoidance, and femininity) and then K-means clustering identified homogeneous groups of respondents based primarily on similar responses to these cultural values dimensions. The result showed that respondents can be segmented into three homogeneous groups, labeled modernist, mixed, and postmodernist. This seems to coincide nicely with other international values work that places the results in a modernization and postmodernization values context. Socio-demographics, service quality, satisfaction, and behavioral intention variables were used to validate and test for variations across the three segments. The findings provided evidence in support of the cross-cultural values scale's ability to identify distinct market segments, and led to further discussion of the findings and management implications.

The second article, by Drs. Carsten Mann and Jim Absher, extends the idea of recreational conflict management to a European setting, and reports the

development of a hybrid (quantitative and qualitative) model to assess and manage it. This article focuses on the methodological contribution that this study makes. The scientific inputs to management of recreation areas in Germany have been largely determined by ecologically oriented quantitative studies with an emphasis on nature protection. Today, however, new activities and increased participation by people seeking different recreational experiences challenge management to address social conflicts between and within user-groups and land management agencies. Management needs protocols incorporate a deeper understanding of the leisure differences that might lead to conflict and result in more tailored management decisions. This study presents a methodological process that more accurately captures the interactions between recreational activity management and conflict-based user-groups. Six nature sport groups in the Northern/Central Black Forest Nature Park were studied. A two stage model was used for each group that starts with a quantitative conflict survey, which is qualitatively validated, and then further interpreted by intra- and inter-group experts. The paper discusses this methodological approach with results from two contrasting groups, hikers and mountain bikers, and shows how an integrated conflict analysis model better explains recreational conflicts in the light of geographic or cultural differences, rapid social change, and the consequences for today's recreation planning and management. *For more information or copies of these articles please contact Jim Absher at 951-680-1559 or jabsher@fs.fed.us.*

Law Enforcement Specials Agents Study: Impacts to Recreation

This was the fourth in a series of studies evaluating the perceptions of U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (USFS) law enforcement of the roles, responsibilities, and issues entailed in their jobs. The study was conducted by Dr. Debbie Chavez (PSW) and Dr. Jo Tynon (Oregon State University). One of the objectives for this study covering special agents, assistant special agents in charge, senior special agents, and supervisory special agents (SAs) was to determine SA perceptions of the impacts of crime and violence to recreation visitors and other forest users. An e-mail survey was administered to 89 SAs in the USFS; 70

were completed and returned (79%). Most of the SA respondents were male (70%). Most were White (76%). The SAs had been in law enforcement an average of 18 years, and had worked as SAs for the USFS for an average of 6 years.

The SA respondents ranked their highest job priority as protecting National Forest System (NFS) employees and forest users, followed by protecting forest resources, and protecting public property. They believed that the NFS line officers with whom they most commonly interacted had a similar set of priorities.

Several types of crime were on the increase according to SA respondents. Resource damage, marijuana cultivation, methamphetamine labs, methamphetamine chemical dumps, property trespass, and criminal damage topped the list.

The SA respondents described their primary customers as forest users, Forest Service employees, and local agencies. They believed that forest users wanted to be assured of a safe and enjoyable experience while on the forest. They also thought customers wanted them to take action, to conserve the lands, to allow use/access, and for law enforcement to be seen. More than half of the SA respondents felt that recreation visitors were mostly safe from other visitors and mostly physically safe from site features. The types of investigations most commonly found in their area of responsibility that were thought to affect recreation visitors were drug activity, urban-associated crime (e.g., theft), and fire issues (e.g., closures). *For more information about this study contact Deborah Chavez at 951-680-1558 or dchavez@fs.fed.us.*

Fire Social Science and Diversity Studies General Technical Reports (GTR)

The Wildland Recreation Unit is currently finalizing two GTRs. The first GTR includes 17 fire social science papers from research funded through the National Fire Plan. These papers are grouped into four major topical headings: recreation use research, communication research, program evaluation and interface residents research, and trust research. In the second GTR on diversity studies, we include 16 papers grouped into six major topical headings: international studies, syntheses of studies, management studies, environmental belief studies, communication studies, and measurement studies.

Unit Publications

In: Burns, R.; Robinson, K., comps. Proceedings of the 2006 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium; Gen. Tech. Rep. NRS-P-14. Newton Square, PA:

Northern Research Station, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture:

- *Absher, J.D.; Kyle, G.T. 2007. A deconstruction of the I-M-L commitment segmentation of forest recreationists; 42-46.
- *Bright, A.D.; Don Carlos, A.W.; Vaske, J.J.; Absher, J.D. 2007. Source credibility and the effectiveness of firewise information; 551-556.
- *Hammit, W.E.; Kyle, G.T.; Absher, J., 2007. Camper choice behavior for three proximal sites; 584-588.
- *Vaske, J.J.; Absher, J.D.; Bright, A.D. 2007. Salient value similarity, social trust, and attitudes toward wildland fire management strategies; 557-565.
- Chavez, D.J.; Tynon, J.F. Forest Service patrol captains and patrol commanders report: national study. Res. Paper. PSW-RP-254. Albany, CA: Pacific Southwest Research Station, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; 38 p.
- Chavez, D.J.; Tynon, J.F. Forest Service special agent in charge report: national study. Res. Paper. PSW-RP-253. Albany, CA: Pacific Southwest Research Station, Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture; 42 p.
- Gillette, S.; Taylor, J.; Chavez, D.J.; Hodgson, R.; Downing, J. 2007. Citizen journalism in a time of crisis: lessons from a large-scale California wildfire. *Electronic Journal of Communication*. 17(3 & 4) www.cios.org/getfile/01731_EJC.
- Kyle, G.; Absher, J.; Norman, W.; Hammit, W.; Jodice, L. 2007. A modified involvement scale. *Leisure Studies*, 26(4): 399-427.
- Li, C.; Zinn, H.C.; Chick, G.E.; Absher, J.D.; Graefe, A.R.; Hsu, Y. 2007. Segmentation of culturally diverse visitors' values in forest recreation management. *Forest, Snow and Landscape Research*. 81(1/2): 19-29.
- Mann, C.; Absher, J.D. 2007. A two stage analysis of recreation conflict as a basis for management strategies in the black forest: a methodological contribution. *Forest, Snow, and Landscape Research*. 81(1/2): 123-138.
- Winter, P.L.; Cvetkovich, G.T. 2007. Diversity in Southwesterners' views of Forest Service fire management. In: *Wildfire Risk: Human Perceptions and Management Implications*, Wade E. Martin, Carol Raish and Brian Kent (eds.), pp. 156-170. Washington, D.C.: Resources for the Future Press.