

FOREWORD

The 1999-2000 National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE) is the latest in a series of national surveys that was started in 1960 by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC). The federal government (ORRRC) initiated this National Recreation Survey (NRS) to assess outdoor recreation participation in the United States. Since that first in-the-home survey in 1960, six additional NRS's have been conducted —1965, 1970, 1972, 1977, 1982-83 and 1994-95. Over the years, the NRS surveys have changed in their methodology, composition, funding, and sponsorship.

In 1960, interviews were done in person over the four seasons of the year. In 1965, interviewing was done only in early fall. The 1970 survey instrument was a brief mailed supplement to the National Fishing and Hunting Survey. The 1982 survey was conducted in person in cooperation with the National Crime Survey, and the 1977, 1994, and 2000 surveys were conducted by telephone.

In 1994 the NRS was renamed the National Survey on Recreation and the Environment (NSRE). This new name was introduced to reflect the growing interest and emphasis of the U.S. population about their natural environment. Accordingly, the NSRE was expanded to include questions concerning peoples' wildlife and wilderness uses, environmental values, and attitudes regarding public and management issues. Additional information pertaining to the recreational needs of people with challenging and disabling conditions was also included.

NSRE 2000 is the eighth in the continuing series of U.S. National Recreation Surveys. Although similar to the previous national surveys, **NSRE 2000** explores the outdoor recreational needs and environmental interests of the American people in greater depth. The growth of **NSRE 2000** reflects the continuing growth of interest in our nation in outdoor recreation and our natural environment.

NSRE 2000 is an in-the-home phone survey of 50,000 households across all ethnic groups throughout the United States. Questions from **NSRE 2000** broadly address such areas as outdoor recreation participation, demographics, household structure, lifestyles, environmental attitudes, natural resource values (for example, concerning Wilderness), constraints to participation, and attitudes toward management policies.

The funding and responsibility of the NRS's have also changed quite considerably over the years. Initially the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, which did the first survey in 1960, recommended that subsequent surveys be completed at five-year intervals, but consistent funding and responsibility were not created. From 1965 through 1977, the research was done by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and its successor, the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. Those agencies were abolished in 1981, and responsibility fell to the National Park Service in the U.S. Department of the Interior (USDI). The National Park Service

coordinated the development of a consortium that included itself, the Forest Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Department of Health and Human Service's Administration on Aging, and the USDA's Bureau of Land Management.

By the late 1980's, it was clear that the National Park Service would no longer assume the financial and organizational demands of such a large survey. Park Service Officials asked the Forest Service to assume its coordinating role for the next National Recreation Survey. The Outdoor Recreation and Wilderness Assessment Group, a part of the research branch of the Forest Service, assumed this role jointly with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This joint role between the Forest Service Outdoor Recreation and Wilderness Assessment Group in Athens, GA, and NOAA has continued to the present day and includes responsibility for the current **NSRE 2000** survey.

The present list of sponsoring agencies for the **1999-2000 NSRE** effort includes the USDA Forest Service, NOAA, the USDA's Economic Research Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, USDA Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the University of Georgia, and the University of Tennessee. In addition, valuable assistance and resources were also provided by the American Horse Council, the American Motorcyclist Association, the American Recreation Coalition, B.A.S.S., Inc., the Carhart Wilderness Training Center, the Corps of Engineers, the Forest Service (specifically the Carhart Wilderness Training Center, Ecosystem Management Coordination, Recreation Staff, the Rocky Mountain Research Station, and Wildlife Staff), the Motorcycle Industry Council, the National Association of Recreation Resource Planners, the National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers, the National Environmental Education & Training Foundation, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Outdoor Recreation Coalition of America, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the Recreation Vehicle Industry Association, the Snow Sports Industries of America, the U.S. Orienteering Federation, and the Wilderness Society.