

FOREWORD

The 1994-95 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). Since that time, six additional surveys were conducted in 1965, 1970, 1972, 1977, 1982-83, and 1994-95. Through the years, the series has experienced changes in funding, sponsorship, methodology, and composition. In 1960, interviews were done in person in each of four seasons. 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 1977 survey was conducted by telephone, and the 1982-83 NRS in person.

The agencies responsible for the survey have changed considerably over the years. The ORRRC, which did the first survey in 1960, recommended that subsequent surveys be completed at 5-year intervals, but consistent funding and responsibility were not created. From 1965 through 1977, the work was done by the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and its successor, the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service. That agency was abolished in 1981, and responsibility for the survey 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 Services' Administration on Aging, and the USDI's Bureau of Land Management.

By the late 1980's, the National Park Service could no longer assume the financial and organizational demands of a large national 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). The final list of sponsoring agencies for the 1994-95 effort includes the USDA Forest Service, the USDI Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the USDA's Economic Research Service. NOAA discontinued its involvement shortly before data collection began. The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association also joined as a sponsor. In addition, valuable assistance and resources were provided by the National Park Service, the University of Georgia, and Georgia Southern University. The University of Indiana cosponsored the section on people with disabilities.

The name "National Survey on Recreation and the Environment" was coined to reflect the growing interest by Americans in their natural environment. To address that interest, the scope of the survey was expanded from that of earlier surveys to include more issues related to natural resources and the environment.