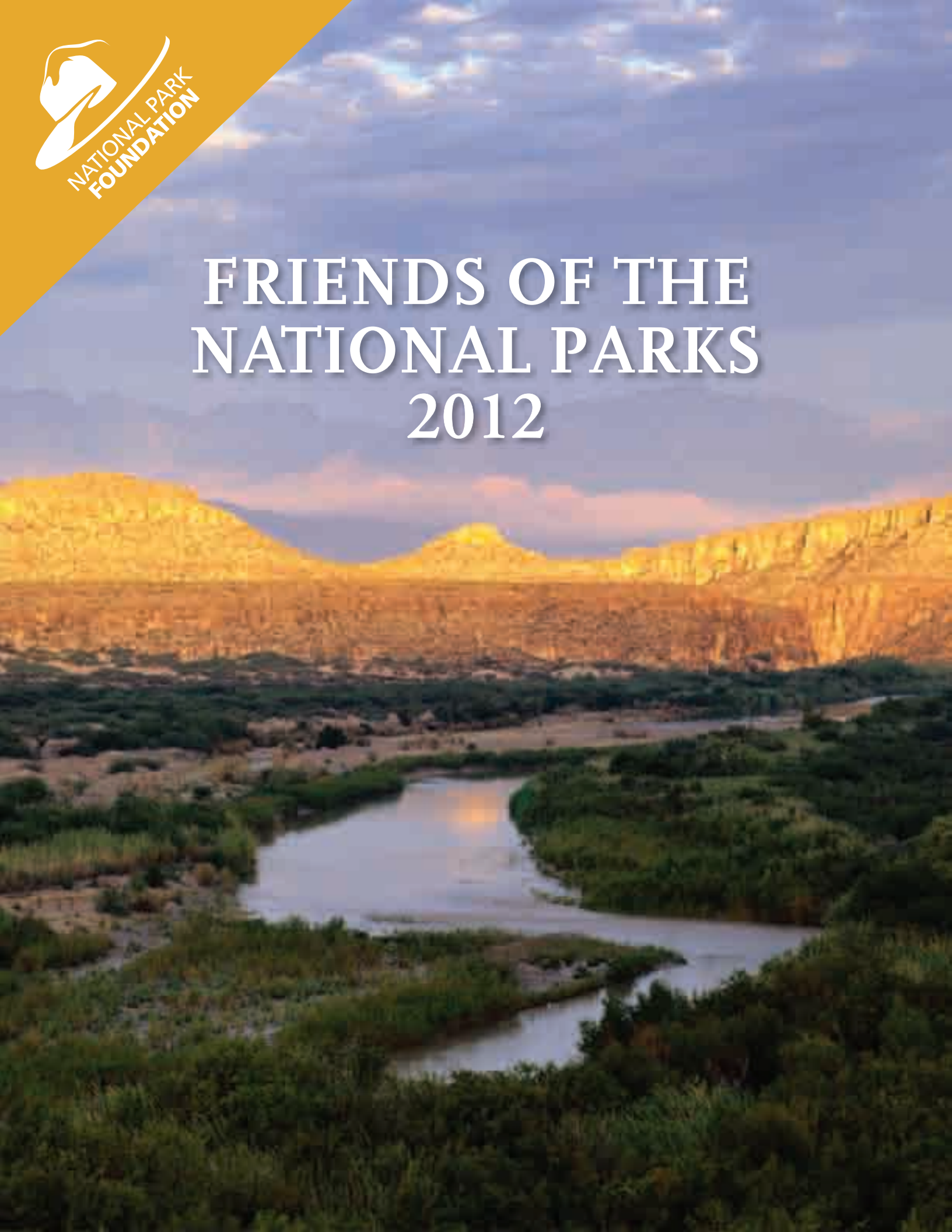
NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL PARKS 2012



ABOUT THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION

The mission of the National Park Foundation (NPF), in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), is to enrich America's national parks and programs through private support, safeguarding our heritage and inspiring generations of national park enthusiasts. Chartered by Congress in 1967, the NPF is founded on a legacy that began more than a century ago, when private citizens from all walks of life took action to establish and protect our national parks. Today, the National Park Foundation carries on that tradition as the only national charitable nonprofit whose sole mission is to directly support the NPS.

In 1998, Congress amended the NPF charter directing the organization "to assist and promote philanthropic partners and programs of support at the individual national park unit level." To fulfill this part of the mission, the NPF works to support and promote the work of Friends Groups and nonprofit park partners nation-wide.

THANK YOU!

The NPF would like to thank the all of the Friends Groups who so generously participated in the survey which informed this report. Additional thanks to the NPS Partnership Office and NPS Regional Partnership Coordinators who encouraged participation and to Applied Research Northwest who assisted in the creation of the survey and provided initial analysis and all graphics in Appendix B.

Additional thanks to the NPF Board and NPS Director Jon Jarvis for their continued support of the Foundation's work with park partners.

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INTRODUCTION

The history of the national parks and the National Park Service (NPS) would be incomplete without the stories of generosity and park philanthropy. Whether it is the gift of the Muir Woods by William and Elizabeth Kent or the efforts of the Rockefeller family to preserve Acadia, Grand Teton and the Virgin Islands, many of today's most famous parks were preserved through the efforts of private citizens to protect the places they loved. From extraordinary citizens like Stella Levitson, who helped fund a museum at Mesa Verde National Park in the 1920s to the numerous Friends Groups that encourage private support for the parks today, national parks centrality to a shared American identify, is achieved in part through the work of philanthropy. Both the creation and improvements of many national parks have resulted from the generosity of individuals committed to stewardship of our shared natural, historical and cultural treasures for the benefit of future generations.

Today, that tradition is continued by the National Park Foundation (NPF) in partnership with the National Park Service – enriching "America's national parks and programs through private support, safeguarding our heritage and inspiring generations of national park enthusiasts" – and the many Friends Groups that support specific parks. Together with other park partners, NPF and Friends Groups form a continuum of local and national philanthropic support that strengthens and expands upon the public support for our national parks.

Friends of the National Parks Survey 2012

The National Park Foundation is committed to serve as a catalyst, resource and national voice for Friends Groups and other park partners. With surveys and a range of programmatic support, the Foundation has recognized that Friends Groups are a significant and growing source of financial, in-kind, programmatic and volunteer support to individual national parks.

The intent of this survey, as with previous surveys, is to map the landscape of Friends Groups and provide an aggregate indication of Friends Groups' activities, accomplishments and challenges. This survey is not intended to predict trends, influence the activity of Friends Groups or serve as a strategic guide to (especially new) Friends Groups. The respondents, generous with their information, time and insights, were self-selecting; together their responses provide insights and examples into both what works and what needs work in park partnerships.

The landscape in which Friends Groups operate continues to change and evolve in response to the challenges of raising funds and meeting park needs. Though there are some Friends Groups that have been supporting parks since 1930, many Friends Groups grew out of successful advocacy efforts in the 1970s and 80s: raising philanthropic dollars ensured the ongoing stewardship of the park resources which early advocates had successfully secured. This resulted in a growth of Friends Groups in the 1980s and the increased focus on fundraising and programs that we have now.

A more recent change in the landscape of park support is active fundraising by cooperating associations eager to expand on their longstanding earned revenue streams. There are also some cooperating associations merging with other nonprofits to provide greater efficiencies and focus for park enthusiasts interested in supporting their favorite places. Though neither are wide-sweeping trends, they do offer insight into the changing landscape of park philanthropy.

Though the landscape evolves, the community of Friends Groups supporting national parks is (relatively) small and very diverse, ranging from smaller, all-volunteer efforts to larger, staffed organizations. The 102 respondents to this survey represent the spectrum of Friends Groups and share the same goal of providing philanthropic support to their parks, but do so in different ways with a mix of volunteer, in-kind and donor dollars supporting varying efforts including interpretation, resource protection, youth programs and engaging new audiences.

This survey builds on the 2010 report, Friends of the National Parks Report 2010, and provides the NPF with information on how to effectively support and partner with nonprofit park partners and the NPS on building both organizational and park capacity, identifying emerging and relevant issues and collaborating on training, communications and policy that result in stronger national parks. The 2010 report provided the strategic direction for a number of NPF activities including:

- Park Partners Project – The NPF provides capacity building consulting and grant support to selected Friends Groups. 16 Friends Groups which collectively support 23 national parks have begun or completed the Park Partners Project since 2010.
- Online Community and Resource Center – The NPF provides a web portal for Friends Groups stakeholders to more easily find and share resources, ask questions and connect with each other.
- Trainings and Webinars – The NPF partners with NPS and Friends Groups to provide in-person training and webinars on relevant topics.

The 2012 Report provides the NPF with a renewed focus on supporting the organizational capacity and growth of Friends Groups and finding ways to effectively partner to meet the growing needs of all national parks.

HISTORY AND METHODOLOGY

The NPF conducted a Friends Survey in 2010, the first since Crystal Fortwrangler's 1996 report, "National Parks Friends Groups: A Statistical Analysis,"1 and "Friends of the National Parks" published by Gary Machlis and Nancy Medlin in 1993. As described in the 2010 report, the Machlis-Medlin and Fortwrangler reports differed on the number of participants, number, length and variation in questions, making direct comparisons then and in 2010 challenging.

The 2010 Friends of the National Parks survey was the Foundation's attempt to create a benchmark to which following surveys could be compared and trends identified. However, upon reviewing the 2010 survey results, several changes were made to questions for the 2012 survey, including more specific questions related to governance, membership, technology and partnership, which resulted in a total of 63 questions (including optional comments), an increase from 43 in 2010.

As in 2010, the NPF sent the survey to the 217 organizations that self-identify as Friends Groups and for which the NPF has e-mail addresses. As in 2010, the definition of a "Friends Group" was any self-identifying organization that provided philanthropic (including in-kind and volunteer) support to a national park site. 99 surveys were completed; a 46% response rate, similar to the 45% response rate in 2010. The low response rate may have been due to several factors, including an online-only survey; a longer survey with specific questions that necessitated financial and other data; time to take the survey. Though the respondent rate was 99, only 85 Friends Groups completed the last question of the survey. Finally, there are some questions that did not apply to every organizations, so the sample size ("n=") number is smaller for some questions.

Table 1: Survey Comparisons, 1992, 1996 & 2010

	Machlis-Medlin, 1992	Fortwangler 1996	Friends of the National Parks 2010	Friends of the National Parks 2012
Organizations contacted	163	160	246	217
Number of responses	121	147	111	99
Questions (non-contact related)	33	14	43	63
Primary delivery mechanism	U.S. Mail	U.S. Mail	E-mail/PDF	E-mail

Comparison and Cross-Tabulated Charts

A stated goal of the 2012 report was to compare data to the 2010 survey. Comparison charts were created when the same or similar data was available; cross-tabulated charts were created when they provided additional insights. Though this was partially successful, the introduction of new questions made it slightly more challenging. All comparison and cross-tabulated charts are included in Appendix C.

[1] The Fortwangler survey, like the Machlis-Medlin survey, did cross-comparisons between budget and membership. Fortwangler also included cumulative numbers of financial and in-kind Friend Groups contributions to parks.

National Data
Relevant and appropriate information on national trends and data has been included to provide additional context and reference.

Additional Limitations and Observations
As with all surveys, there are limitations in what can be interpreted or completely understood. These include:

- The respondents to the 2012 survey were not necessarily the same respondents to the 2010 survey; thus, the information is relevant only in aggregate and as an indicator.
- Not all groups contacted replied; their answers may have been quite different from those groups that did reply.
- A single representative from each origination completed the survey so their answers possibly reflect an individual perspective.
- As some questions could be left unanswered, the sample's size (n=) can vary from question to question.
- Finally, the Foundation did not attempt to independently corroborate all replies.

GOVERNANCE

Successful governance – the framework in which an organization operates – is determined in large part by a board's effectiveness, including the adherence to established best practices. In the 2012 Survey, Friends Groups were asked about a range of best practices relevant to non-profit organizations, including: incorporation status; board size and meeting frequency, board committees, strategic planning, relevance of board recruitment and board fundraising and, finally, board and staff evaluation.

Incorporation as a 501(c)(3) –the IRS tax determination for charitable organizations– is essential for any Friends Group wanting to fundraise and accept donor contributions. 94% of the Friends Groups surveyed are registered as 501(c)(3) organizations, with 24% of these reporting incorporation since 2007, a finding similar to that in the 2010 Park Partner Survey.

Nearly two thirds of Friends Groups (64%) follow the calendar year. 20% follow a fiscal year ending in September and 12% a fiscal calendar ending in June.

Strategic planning is recognized in the nonprofit sector as a standard best practice[2]: in 2012 73% of Friends Groups said that they have a strategic plan, an increase from the 44% in the 2010 Report. 61% of Friends reported having active plans –12% have inactive plans– that map their organization's near term goals and direction. Finally, Friends Groups identified strategic planning as second only to fundraising as an organizational challenge.

Board Operations

Though all boards exercise financial and operational oversight –ensuring that mission is put in to action– additional board responsibilities depend on the organization's stage of growth. For early growth or all-volunteer organizations, there is a "*doing board*" where board members manage day-to-day operations in addition to their oversight role. The "*transitioning board*" is one that is focused on staff development and long-term sustainability. The "*governing board*," typical of most universities and larger non-profits, is one that oversees strategy and monitor results. Regardless of board stage, all board members have a shared responsibility for the fiscal health and viability of an organization, including fundraising and other sources of revenue.

Stages of Board Development

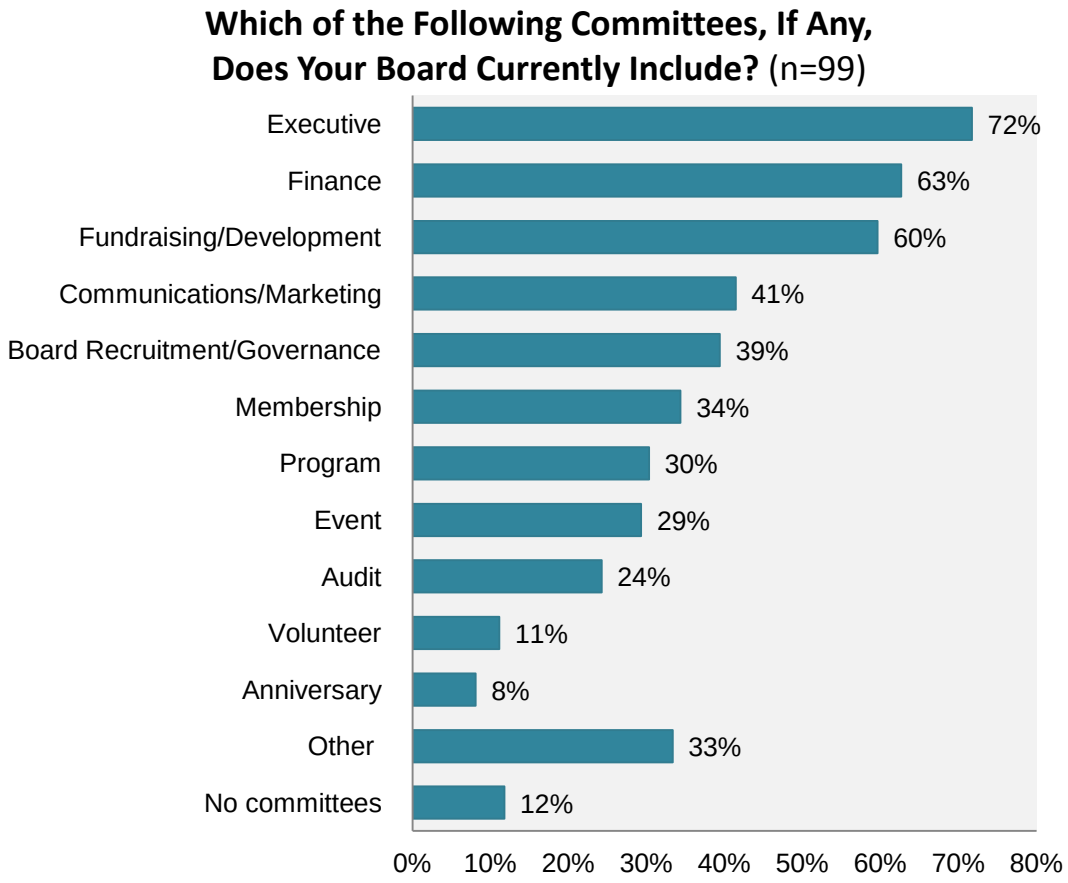
In the 2012 Survey, Friends reported that boards ranged in size from zero to 40 with a median size of 12, with most boards (70%) consisting of between six and 20 members. Boards met on an average of six times a year. The successful use of board committees can indicate a higher level of effectiveness by leveraging specific board member skills, completing work and making recommendations, thus freeing the all-board meetings for decision making. Of the 99 respondents, 72% have an executive board; 63%

[2] Strategic planning is recommended by industry thought leaders including BoardSource and Independent Sector among others.

Figure 1: Stages of Board Development

Souce: leadingresources.com

have a finance committee and 60% had a fundraising or development committee. Twelve percent (12%) said they have no committees.



Board Fundraising and Evaluation

There are two best practices that indicate a board that is actively growing in both resources and expertise. Board recruitment –bringing in new board members with specific talents that address

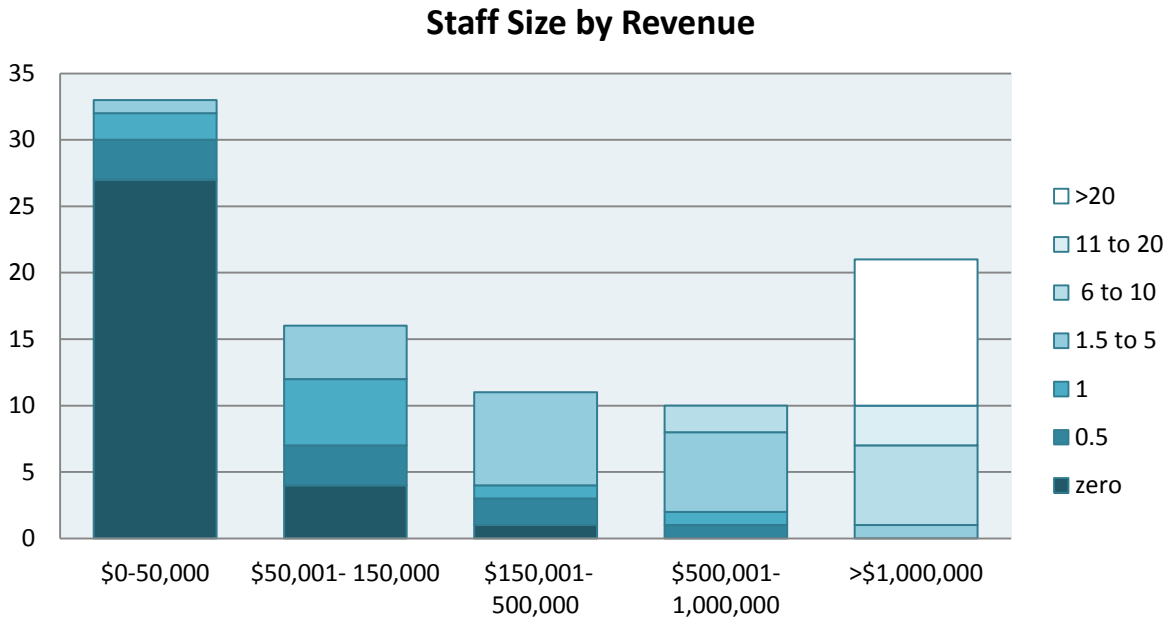
identified organizational needs– and fundraising, which includes the ways in which every board member can be engaged in raising revenue and support, from hosting events, writing grants, accessing networks to making "the ask." 87% of respondents said board recruitment was very or extremely important; 81% said fundraising was very or extremely important.

Board self-evaluations can reveal strengths and areas for improvement while informing board learning, decision-making and board recruitment. About one-quarter (24%) of Friends Groups conducted a board self-evaluation. Evaluations of executive directors are similarly important[3] and, not surprisingly, more frequently performed. Among those organizations that have an executive director, just over half (52%) said that they conducted an evaluation of the director.

Staffing

As noted previously, staffing is an indicator of a maturing organization. This does not mean that all organizations should have staff and indeed there are many examples of effective all-volunteer organizations which excel at fulfilling their mission without the need for staff support. Of the respondents, one-third had zero employees (a decrease from 40% in 2010) and 18% have between a half and a full time employee (26% in 2010). Consistent with 2010, about half of all Friends Groups have less than one full time staff member.

Eleven percent of Friends Groups have over 20 employees, an increase from 8% in 2010. The majority of Friends Groups with revenue of less than $50,000 do not have staff; only four Friends Groups earning between $50,001 and $150,000 had no employees; the rest had at least one part time or full time employee.



[3] Like strategic planning, evaluation of board and staff is another recognized best practice by leading organizations in the non-profit sector including Independent Sector, BoardSource and Bridgespan among others.

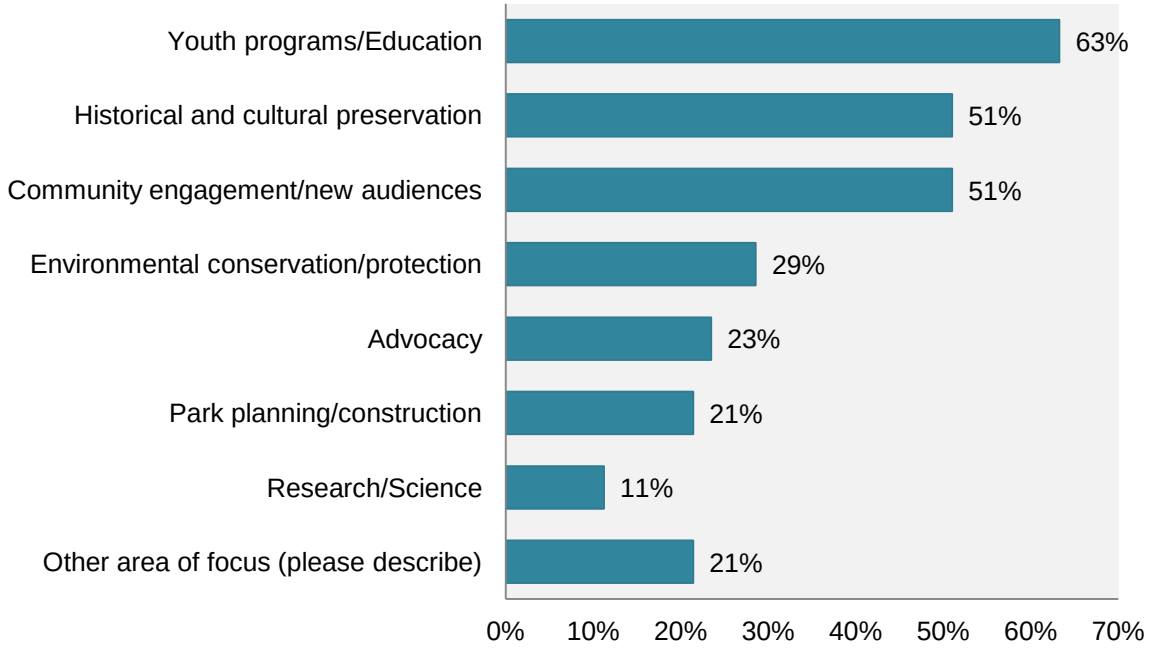
PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

While governance addresses organizational framework, programs and activities are the way in which Friends Groups execute on their individual mission and partnership objectives with the NPS. Programs typically reflect a Friends Group's stated mission and may include education, conservation and advocacy among other objectives. Activities are the day-to-day activities that the Friends Group performs to support their program objectives and can include fundraising, volunteer management, operations among other activities. Separate questions were asked to identify programming areas and the types of daily activities in which Friends Groups were engaged.

Programs

Groups were asked to identify the top three areas of program work in which they engaged in over the past year. Figure 2 demonstrates that the most common program area was youth programs and education (63%), an increase from the 53% reported in the 2010 Report. "Historical and cultural preservation" and "community engagement/new audiences" were program areas for 51% of all Friends Groups. Environmental conservation and protection was 29%. Overall, the trend identified in 2010 of Friends Groups moving away from conservation and preservation programming toward those focused on education and engagement continues.

What Were the Top Three Areas of Program Work for Your Organization in the Past Fiscal / Calendar Year?
(n=98) Multiple answers permitted



Activities

How a Friends Group executes on its programmatic goals can vary widely, depending on its revenue streams, partnerships and capacity. Some organizations manage their own programs in the park, others

fund programs. Not surprisingly, the chief activities in support of programmatic objectives noted in Figure 3 were fundraising (57%) and major events (52%). 38% of Friends Groups responded that program management was also an important activity. This is consistent with the findings in the 2010 Report where fundraising (65%) and major events (51%) were also primary activities. "Managing partnership with NPS" was a newly added answer to this question and it garnered 35% support, highlighting the time and resources necessary to support this partnership.

Aligning goals and activities is a hallmark of a successful organization, demonstrating a close connection between mission and resource allocation. Yet strikingly, 66% of respondents have a membership program, but only 17% consider membership management one of their top three activities.

Though most responses were consistent with the 2010 Report, "volunteer management" fell from 24% to 14% and "publicity" fell from 25% to 10% as an important activity. At the same time, the 2010 survey permitted four responses whereas the 2012 permitted three, which may indicate that volunteer programs and publicity may be as present in Friends Groups but are in a second tier of activity priorities. This is interesting given that 83% of Friends Groups provide volunteers to their park.

Additionally, two organizations reported acquiring 501(c)(3) status as a primary activity in the previous year, highlighting the efforts required in the early stages of forming a nonprofit organization.

More notable is the growth in number of 501(c)(3) registered Friends Groups, with growth doubling every decade since 1980. Though some organizations will soon celebrate their centennial, 75% of all respondents were established after 1980. Indeed, of those Friends Groups established since 1980, 25% were established after 1990; 23% since 2000.

This significant growth in new Friends Groups reflects the national trend of an increase in non-profit organizations.[4] In 2006, 9,105 environmental-focused nonprofits were registered as 501 (C)(3) organizations with 7,332 filing Form 990. That number grew in four years to 29,872 registered 501 (C)(3)s with 16,529 filing Form 990 annually.[5]

Another factor in the growth of Friends Groups and supporting organizations is the active promotion by NPS of Friends and other groups in public/private partnerships. An NPS publication "Making Friends, An Introduction to Building National Park Friends Groups," underscores the growing need of Friends Groups. It begins with the recognition that "More than ever, with America's changing demographics and landscape, there is an on-going need to build strong public support, which includes an awareness of park issues, conservation values, and a strong sense of stewardship and involvement."[6]

Sample Programs and Activities

Wine, food and art event

"Plein Air Paint Out"

"Run with the Ranger"

Christmas open house

Educational forum for parents and educators

Summer seminars for teachers

Habitat restoration and trail building

Connecting park programs to public health

"Friends Feast"

150th anniversary celebration

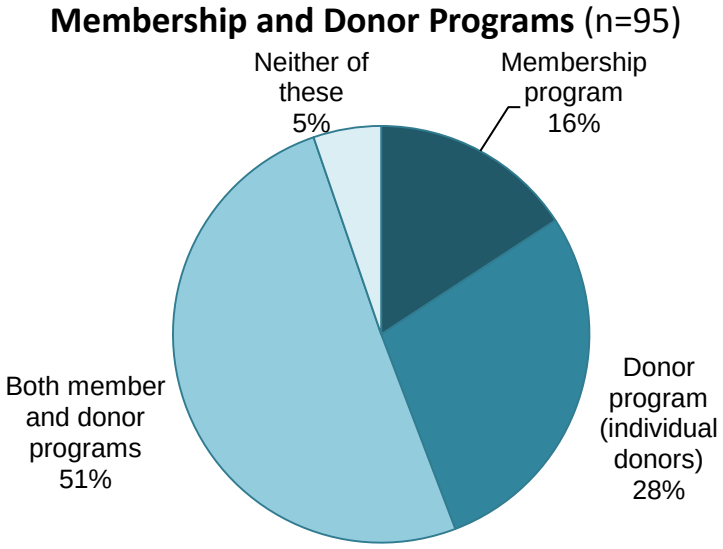
[4] See National Center for Charitable Statistics (NCCS) chart in Appendix C and, for current data on registered Non-Profit organizations, http://nccs.urban.org/
[5] Ibid.
[6] "Making Friends: An Introduction to Building National Park Service Friends Groups" published by Midwest Region, April 2009 page 1.

FUNDRAISING AND RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

For most Friends Groups fundraising is the central activity, with support coming from a variety of sources including individual, corporate, foundation and government grants and through earned income and investment revenue.

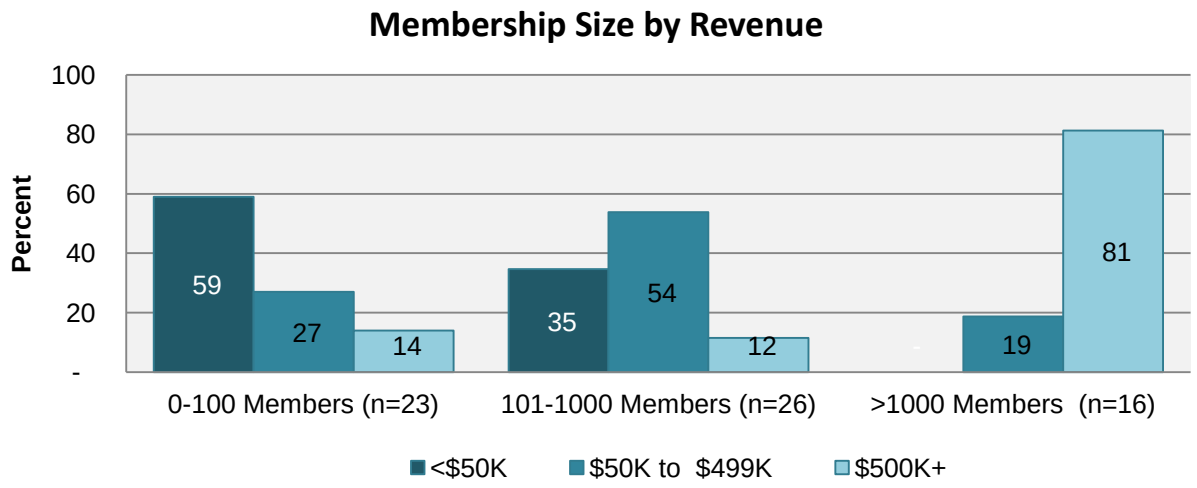
To better understand the nuances of individual support —and the constituency building vital to any Friends Groups— respondents were asked whether they have a membership program, a donor program or both. The intention of each action is different: Membership is typically transactional ("for $35 I get a hat and a membership card") and often a gateway to larger donations. Donations are typically motivated by charitable intent ("doing good because I care") and are 100% tax deductible.

Figure 4 shows that 79% of Friends Groups surveyed have a donor program and half said they have both a donor and a member program. Having both membership and donor opportunities demonstrates a continuum for increased individual engagement.

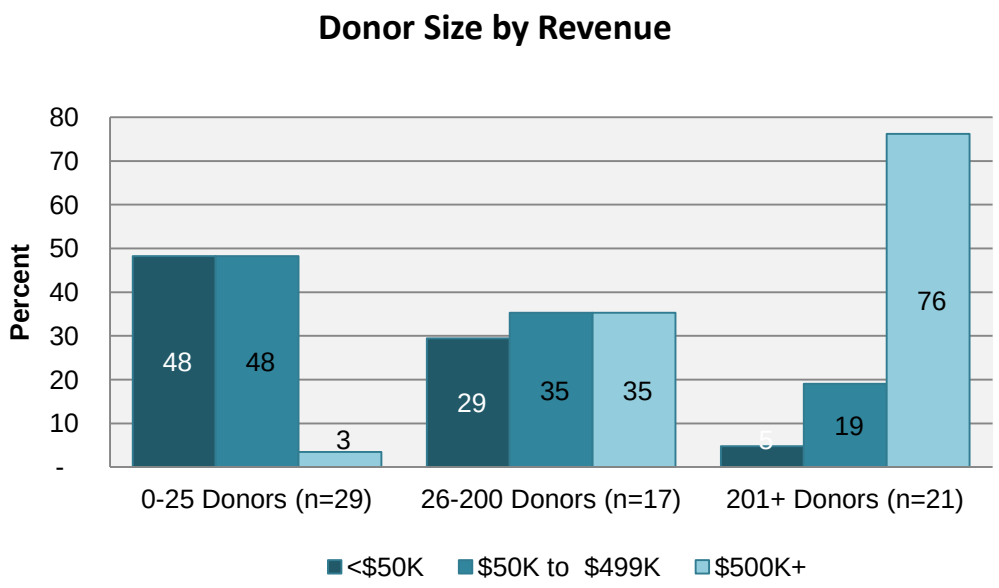


For Friends Groups with membership renewal and getting new members are primary objectives. Friends Groups with membership programs were asked to report the size of their membership at the conclusion of their past fiscal year. 54% had less than 200 members; indeed the median for 51% of reporting Friends Groups was 169 members. 19% had between 201 and 1,000 and 20% had between 1001 and 5,000. Total size of membership size ranged up to 21,000 for one Friends Group (of which 6,674 were new members.

> Over the years since our creation, we have had approximately 200 [people] fill out membership forms and donate membership dues. We have not made annual membership drives. In recent years, we have focused on major donations from corporations and individuals capable of making significant donations.



Friends Groups who said they have a program for individual donors were asked to report how many individual donors they had during their past fiscal year. 43% had less than 25, 24% had less than 201 and 16% had between 201-1000. The median number of individual donors was 75, meaning that half of donor programs had less than 75 donors, half had more.

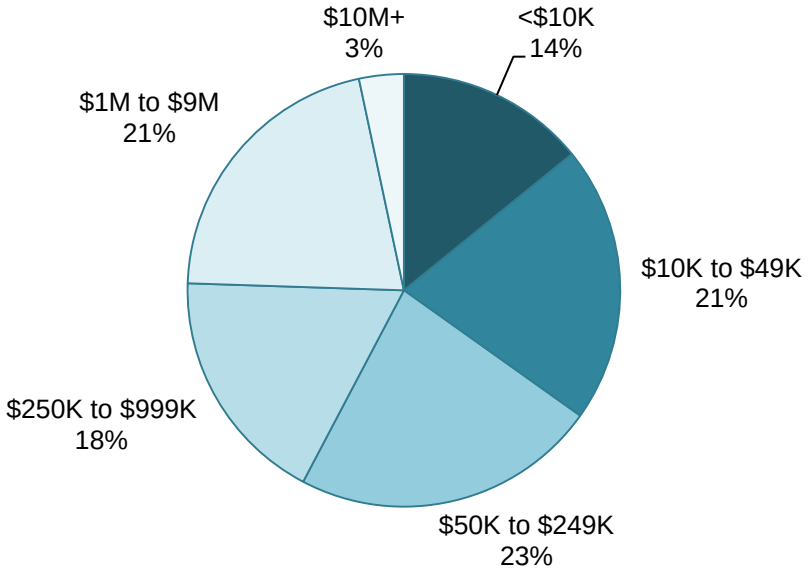


The size of a major gift can be an indicator of a Friends Groups success in fundraising. When asked to report the minimum contribution that constitutes a major gift for their organization, 40% considered a gift in the range of $150-$499 to be a major gift; 14% identified a major gift between $500 and $999; 29% chose $1,000-$2,499 and 9% selected $10,000 or more. Friends groups that don't have either a membership or donor program were more likely to say that $150-249 is a major gift.

Revenue

Friends Groups reported their total revenue for the last year. Groups reported as little as zero and as high as $33 million with roughly one-third reporting less than $50K (35%), nearly a quarter (23%) brought in between $50K and $249K, 18% between $250k and $999k and the balance (24%) brought in over $1M. Four percent (3%) reported revenue over $10M.

What Was Your Total Revenue for the Last Fiscal/Calendar Year? (n=91)



Friends Groups were asked to identify the sources of revenue: the mean percentage was calculated for each of the sources and compiled into the Revenue Sources pie chart below. On average, Friends Groups reported 16% of their revenue came from memberships and 29% came from individual donors; a total of 45% comprising individual support. 15% of support came from Foundations and 6% from Corporations. The remaining support included Earned Income and Government Grants.

Frequently used donor management programs (most to least popular):

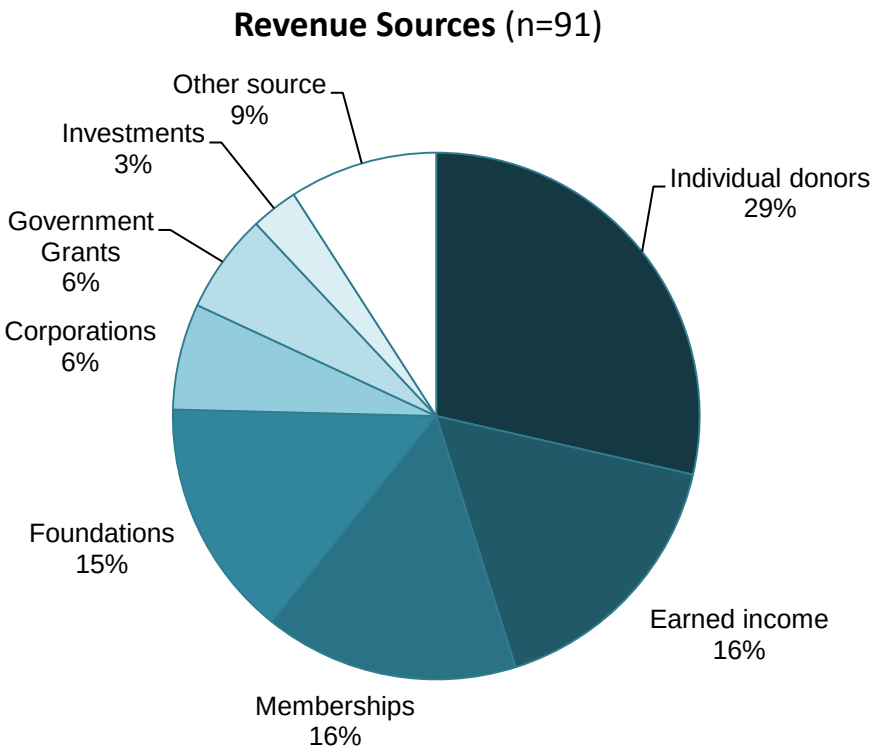
Excel
Raiser's Edge
GiftWorks
Quickbooks
Access
Salesforce
Exceed!Basic
DonorPerfect
eTapestry
Filemaker

With the exception of Individual Giving – which was lower – this follows the national trends in giving. Nationally 73% ($217.79 billion) of all giving comes from Individuals (an increase of 3.9%); 14% from foundations; 5% from corporations and 8% in bequests. Bequests comprise $24.41 billion (an increase of 12.2%) of the total amount of individual giving. Total giving to registered charitable organizations was $298.42 billion in 2011 (about 2% of GDP). This is an increase of 4% from 2010 but 11% below giving in 2007[7].

Interestingly, based on data from 2009, environmental giving remained at $2.7 billion nationally, holding steady even though overall foundation support decreased 2.1% from 2008 (and a 17.2%

[7] From Giving USA Report 2012

overall loss in foundation assets since 2008.) This was due in part to the increase of donations to environmental and animal charities (4.6%).



We are just beginning formal fundraising efforts and do solicit individual contributions from participants in the annual commemoration and from supporters, but it is not yet a formal program. We are having are first fundraising event next week and have invited 30-50 people to the home of a Board member

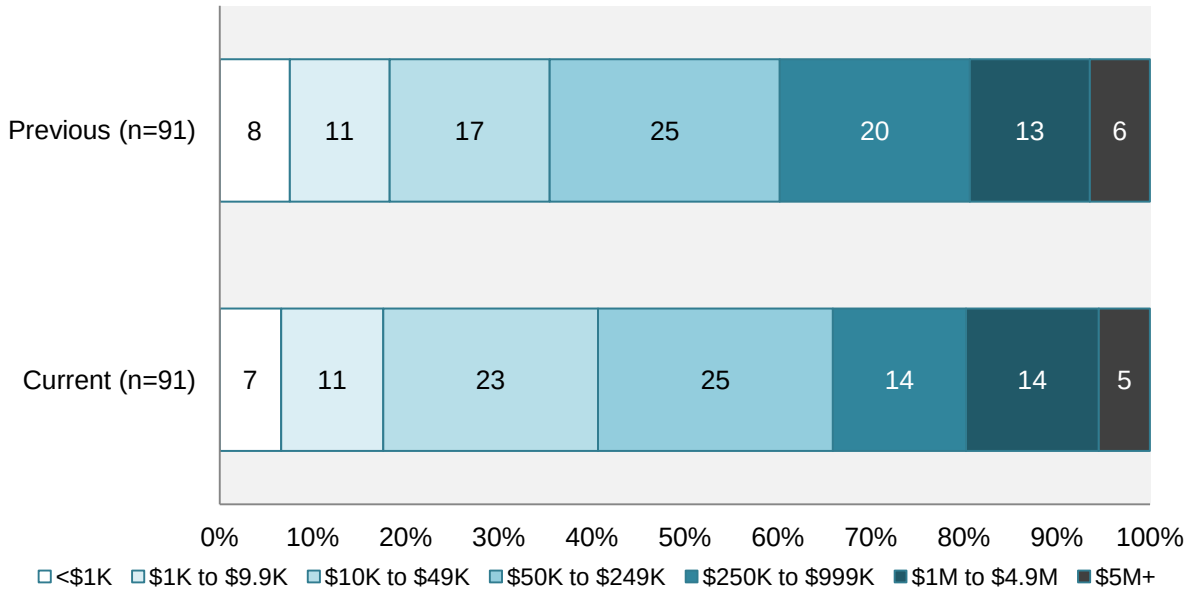
FISCAL MANAGEMENT

Friends groups were asked about their current and previous budgets, external audits, personnel policies and IT plans.

Operating budget

Friends groups reported current operating budgets that ranged from zero up to $13.1 million with a median budget of $125,000. The previous year budgets had a similar range and slightly lower median ($112,000).

Operating Budget: Comparing Current and Past Years



Personnel policies and IT plans

59% (n=83) of reporting Friends Groups have personnel policies and 43% (n=84) have an IT plan, though 10% described their plan as outdated.

External Audit

Laws triggering audits vary from state to state and non-profits must follow the rules of (all) the states in which they fundraise. Wise Giving Alliance suggests $250,000 while Independent Sector suggests $1 million as the threshold to conduct an audit.[8] 90% of Friends Groups had an external audit in 2011 or 2012; this is an increase from the 62% reported in the 2012 Report. Six percent (6%) said it was more than five years ago (2005 or prior).

[8] The legal trigger for an audit varies by state and can be as low as $100,000 to none at all. However, non-profits spending over $500,000 in federal funds must have an audit. Non-profits that fundraise in other states must follow that state's regulations. In terms of best practice (and also considering cost), organizations give varied recommendations on when to audit: Wise Giving Alliance suggests $250,000, Standards of Excellence Institute recommends $300,000 and Independent Sector $1 million as an audit threshold.

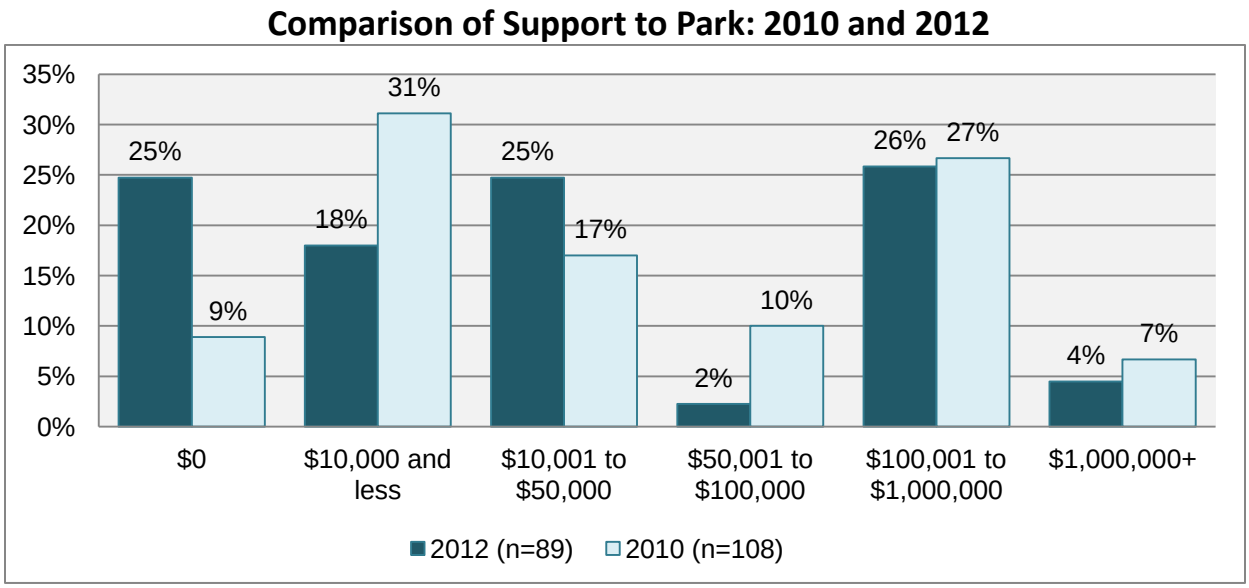
PARK PARTNERSHIP

The missions of all Friends Groups include the support and enrichment of their national parks; for many Friends Group it is their sole purpose, while others may include neighboring federal, state or municipal public lands and surrounding communities. Most organizations consider their partnership with the NPS essential to their ability to provide the additional support for the conservation, preservation and enjoyment of their local national parks. Increasingly, many Friends Groups see their role as providing for essential park needs. The nature and depth of the partnership varies from park-to-park but for many the mutual association provides a marketing and resource advantage.

Friends Groups were asked to provide both quantifiable information about their contributions – volunteer time, financial and in-kind support— and their perspective on their relationship with the park and other partner organizations. Each kind of contribution has value to the national parks and requires Friends Groups commitment and resources. By examining these contributions separately and together, a more complete picture of philanthropic impact and the decisions necessary to pursue these varied resources emerges.

Financial Contributions to the Parks

Most Friends Groups (75%) said that they made a financial contribution to the park in the past year; 25% of respondents did not, an increase from the 9% reported in 2010. In comparing 2010 and 2012 responses, there was great variation in the cash support organizations provided below a $100,000 threshold; but larger cash support –over $100,000– was very similar. Financial contributions ranged as high as $21.2 million. 22% of Friends Groups said they donated over $250,000 to their park.



In-kind support was an important source of support to national parks; a slightly smaller proportion of Friends Groups (63%) made in-kind donations. Of those Friends Groups making in-kind contributions, the majority (65%) contributed $50,000 or less. This compares favorably with results from 2010 when 56% valued in-kind support between $10,000 and $50,000.

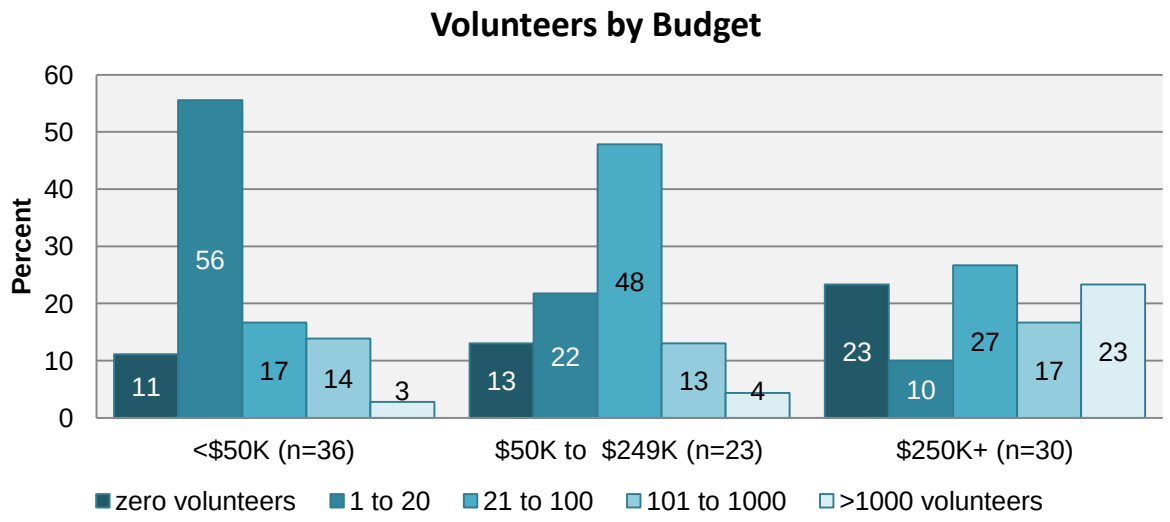
Volunteer Contributions to the Parks

Nationally volunteerism is an active and important means of civic engagement and serves as a "membership" gateway for many Friends Groups. Over 26% of all Americans volunteer[9] and that investment in time leads to greater personal philanthropy. In a survey of over 1,000 people conducted by Harris Interactive for the Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund, those who have volunteered in the past twelve months donate ten times more money than non-volunteers; and two-thirds of those who have volunteered, donate to the same charity with which they volunteer.[10]

Survey respondents alone provided as many as 66, 721 volunteers to the park who provided a total 941,976 hours valued at $26.5 million ($21.79/hour).

Of the 89 Friends Groups who completed the question, 84% provided volunteers to work on behalf of their organization in the last year, a finding consistent with the 2010 Report (80%). 60% of Friends Groups said that they provided between 1 and 100 volunteers during that period; 15% between 101 and 1,000 and 10% said they provided over 1000 volunteers.

Friends Groups with smaller budgets had higher percentages of volunteer engagement; overall the percentage of volunteers decreased the larger the revenue budget. Likely this is due to hiring staff and a priority on fundraising.



Relationships with the NPS

Friends Group leaders consistently have a positive view of their NPS counterparts, especially their Superintendent or primary liaison. A large majority of the groups (91%) rated their relationship with the NPS liaison as either excellent (69%) or very good (22%). Indeed many comments highlighted the importance of leadership at the park. Similarly, most groups described their relationship with NPS park staff as generally extremely strong (52%) or very strong (36%). Several comments noted that co-location

[9] Bureau of Labor Statistics: Volunteering in the United States.
[10] Fidelity Charitable Gif Fund Volunteerism and Charitable Giving in 2009 Executive Summary.

–Friends offices within the park– made for a closer partnership, “We view ourselves as seamless partners in fulfilling the mission of the park,” explained one Group. The converse was also true: when the relationship with NPS was not strong, there were significant challenges and difficulties “[Our relationship is] evolving… and we have much to learn about respecting the culture, pace [and] process.”

These perceptions are reinforced by regular communication; Friends Groups were asked how often they meet or talk with their NPS liaison and over half said they connect weekly (40%) or twice a month (16%). The importance of regular communication was evidenced by the three major themes evidenced in the comments section: shared understanding and purpose, working well together and leadership.

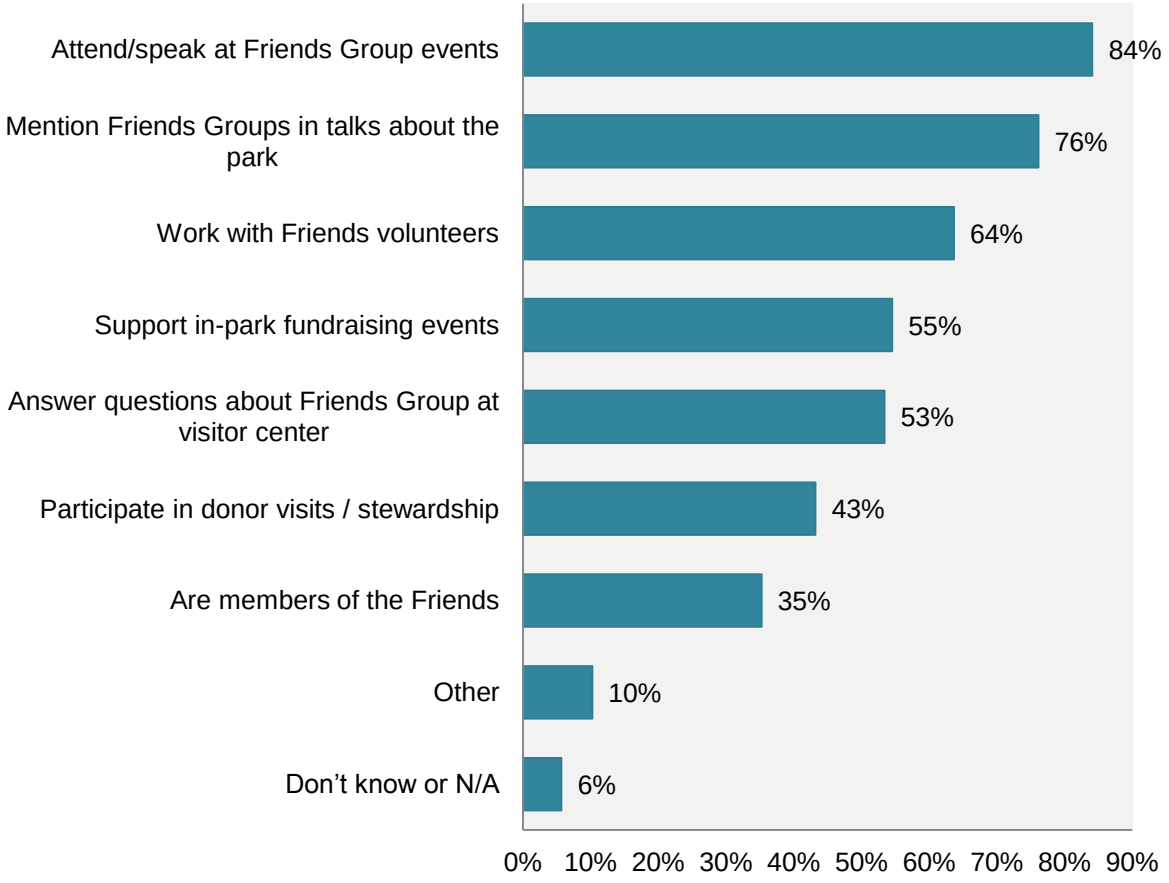
Many Friends Groups emphasized how important communication was to building a mutual understanding and, ultimately, a more integrated approach to working together. “Relationships with park staff have become stronger as we, with the help of our official NPS liaison, have worked to educate them on the role of the Friends” explained one Group. “Ongoing communication allowed for more effective planning and delivery,” explained another partner. “The Foundation has a strong collaborative partnership with the Park. We work closely together through the year to identify projects and programs in need of funding, providing the funding in a timely manner to ensure that projects [can be] completed, and planning for the future of the Park.”

Others pointed out how important a role park leadership played in the success of the partnership and in the relationship between the Friends and *all* park staff. “The Park Superintendent is the person in the Park with a very strong understanding of what a Friends group can and does do for the Park. Front line staff does not fully understand the Friends and how the Friends can be helpful to the Park. This can often cause frustration in trying to get staff to be forth coming with needed information, supportive of Friends programming, and cooperative in trying to work together,” explained one respondent. Others had similar comments. “We have a very good relationship with the Superintendent but the staff can view our work as additive to their already stretched workload.” A change in leadership also presented new opportunities for Friends Groups. One reported a “Far more collaborative [relationship] over [the] last two years with new park leadership including [a] new superintendent and new chief of interpretation.” This was echoed by another Friends Group, “It has grown from a tough partnership to a very good partnership in the last year due to the new chief of interpretation.”

Park Visibility

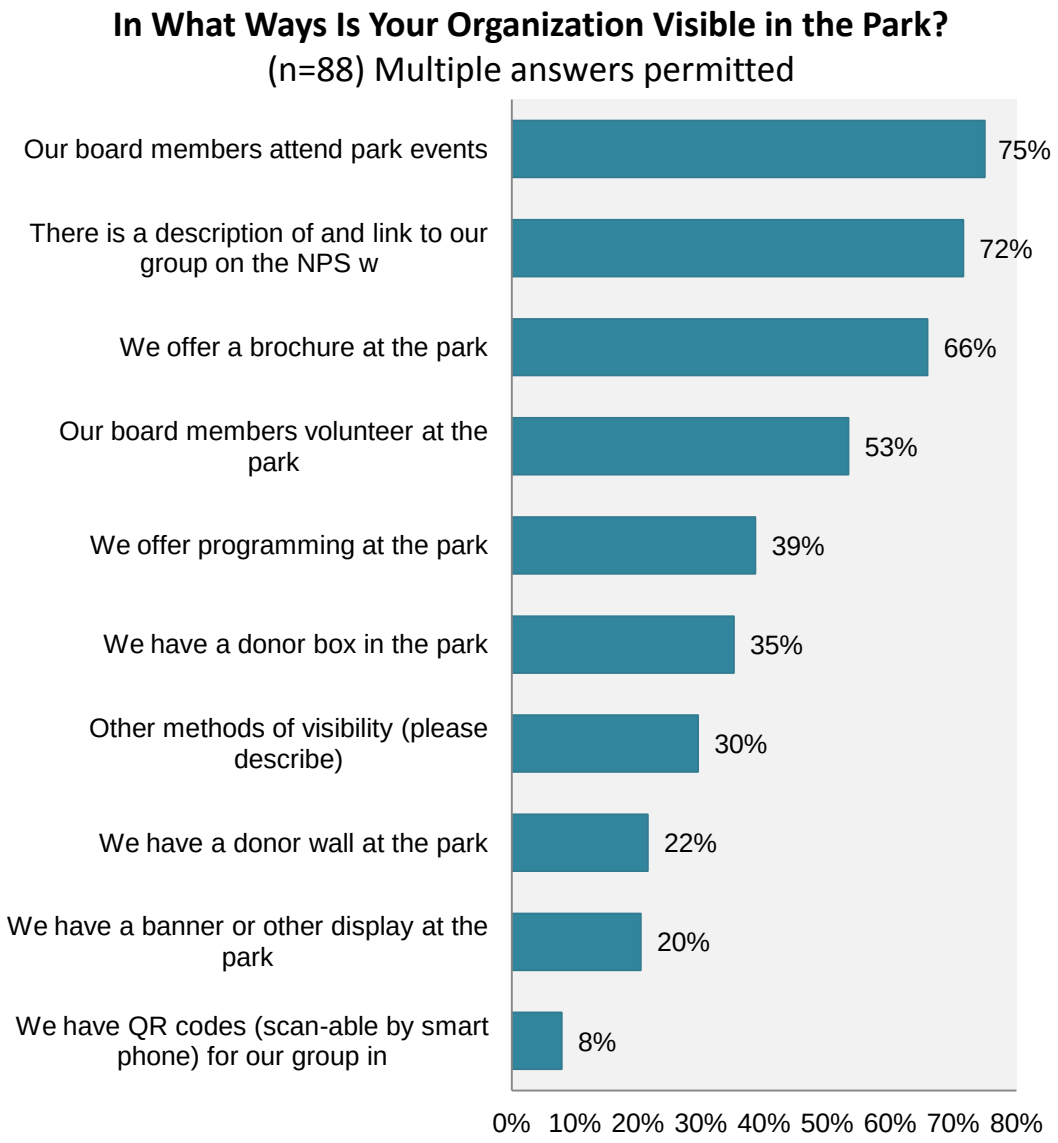
Though challenged by the restrictions of NPS Directors Order #21, Friends Groups and their NPS partners do have permissible ways in which to connect with park visitors and potential supporters. NPS staff, especially superintendents, demonstrated public support for Friends Groups outreach and fundraising efforts through a range of allowable activities. The most common form of NPS support was attending and speaking at Friends Group events (84%) and mentioning the Friends Group in talks about the park (76%). Less than half of Friends Groups (43%) are accompanied on donor visits or stewardship activities by NPS leaders. Although 67% of Friends Groups offer membership programs, only 35% have local NPS employees as members. There are opportunities for increased NPS participation /support as detailed below.

What Does Park Leadership / Staff Do to Support Your Friends Group's Fundraising Activities? (n=88) Multiple Answers Permitted



Three-quarters of the Friends Groups said that they are visible in the park through Board member presence in the park and the park website; 66% offer brochures in the park. Mention of the Friends Groups is at least twice as likely to appear on a virtual NPS platform (72% of Friends Groups are described/linked to on NPS websites) than within the park itself through a donor box (35%), donor wall (22%) or banner (20%). Finally 35% reported that NPS employees were members of their Friends Groups, an important "vote" of support for many.

Board and volunteer presence in the park continue to be an important way for Friends to connect with visitors and potential supporters. There is significant opportunity for Friends to increase their visibility – within the restrictions of D.O. 21 and with the support of their Superintendent– at the park via sponsored programs, brochures, donor walls and (temporary) banners and information.

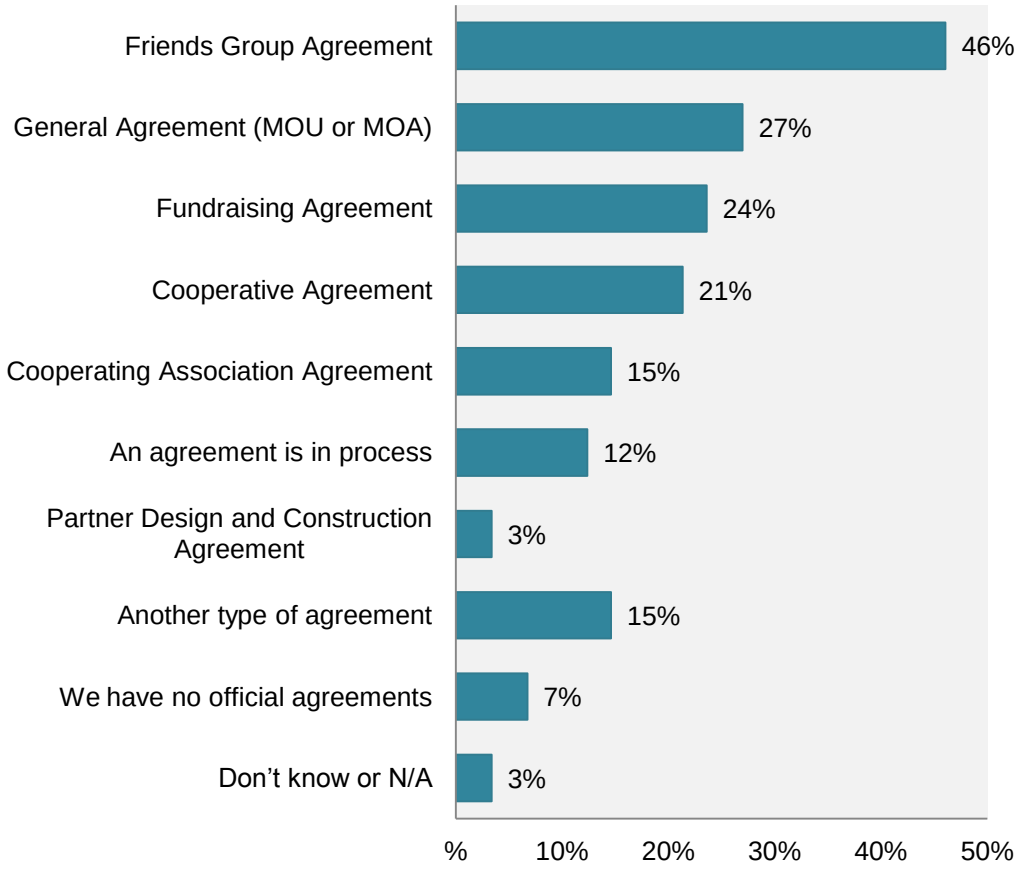


Work Plans and Agreements

In recent years, the NPS has moved to formalize philanthropic partnerships and revised the model agreements used with park partners. In 2010, the NPF and National Park Friends Alliance shared with NPS the challenges of previous templates and suggestions for streamlining revised templates. The resulting revised template has been used for a number of Friends Groups. The Foundation and National Park Friends Alliance continues to work with the NPS and Friends Groups to address concerns with the template language for the intellectual property attachment.

Respondents were asked to identify which signed agreements they currently have with the NPS; multiple responses were permitted. The figure below shows the most frequent signed agreement was a Friends Group Agreement; nearly half (46%) of groups surveyed currently have this with the NPS, an increase from 31% in the 2010 Report. Seven percent (7%) said that they have no official/current agreements, although another twelve percent (12%) had an agreement in process.

What Signed Agreements Do You Currently Have with the NPS? (n=89)



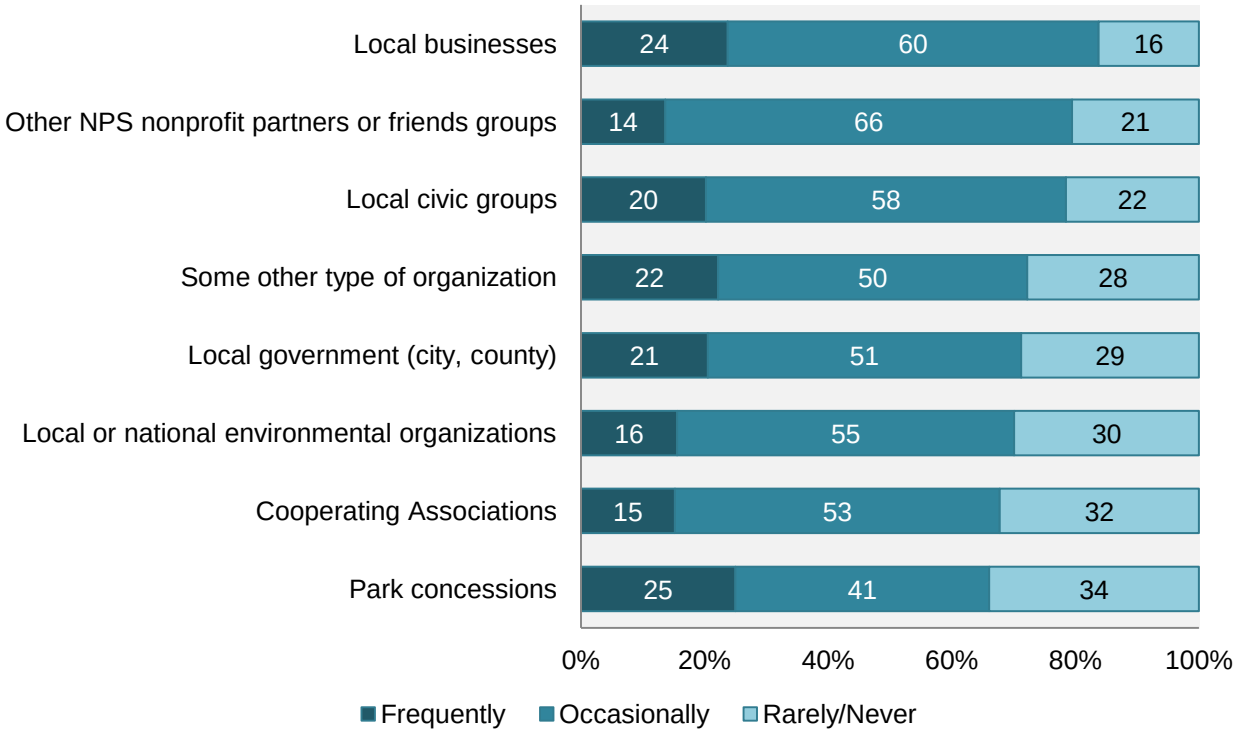
In addition to agreements, annual work plans provide both the park and their partner with a road map for goals and projects in the upcoming year. Nearly half (49%) of Friends Groups said that they have a current annual work plan with their local national park. Forty-three percent (44%) said they didn't have a current work plan, and the balance (7%) didn't know or said this didn't apply to them.

Other Partners

Friends Groups were asked if there were any other organizations that fundraise for their park: 34% said there were; 48% said no; and 18% were not sure. When asked to describe their relationship with the other fundraising organization, most comments indicated cooperative and somewhat collaborative relations.

Friends Groups were also asked to indicate how frequently they partner with other types of organizations. The figure below shows that the most frequent type of partner is local businesses –84% said they partner with local businesses *frequently* or *occasionally*. This is a substantial increase from 2010 when only 53% reported similarly. About one quarter (26%) of Friends Groups said they *frequently* partner with park concessioners.

How Often Do You Partner with the Following Types of Organizations?
(n=51 to 80)



Regarding partnering with other NPS nonprofit partners, these responses were similar to those reported in the 2010 Survey where 75% of Friends Groups responded affirmatively.

COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING

Communications and marketing strategies and tools are of increasing importance to Friends Groups eager to increase their membership, grow their brand and strengthen their partnerships. Questions on traditional and social media were first asked in the 2010 survey, and were used again in the 2012 survey. The use of Facebook by Friends Groups grew significantly from a reported 43% in 2010 to 65% in 2012 (of 85 reporting Friends Groups) with 21% updating Facebook pages daily and 62% weekly. There was a huge range of Facebook fans from 0 to 17,400– with a median of 447. Twitter use has also grown significantly since 2010 – from 12% to 32%– with half of the respondents tweeting daily or weekly.

Staying the same was the percentage of friends groups that have printed newsletters –69%. Website use and maintenance jumped up slightly from 86% of all respondents in 2010 to 95% on 2012.

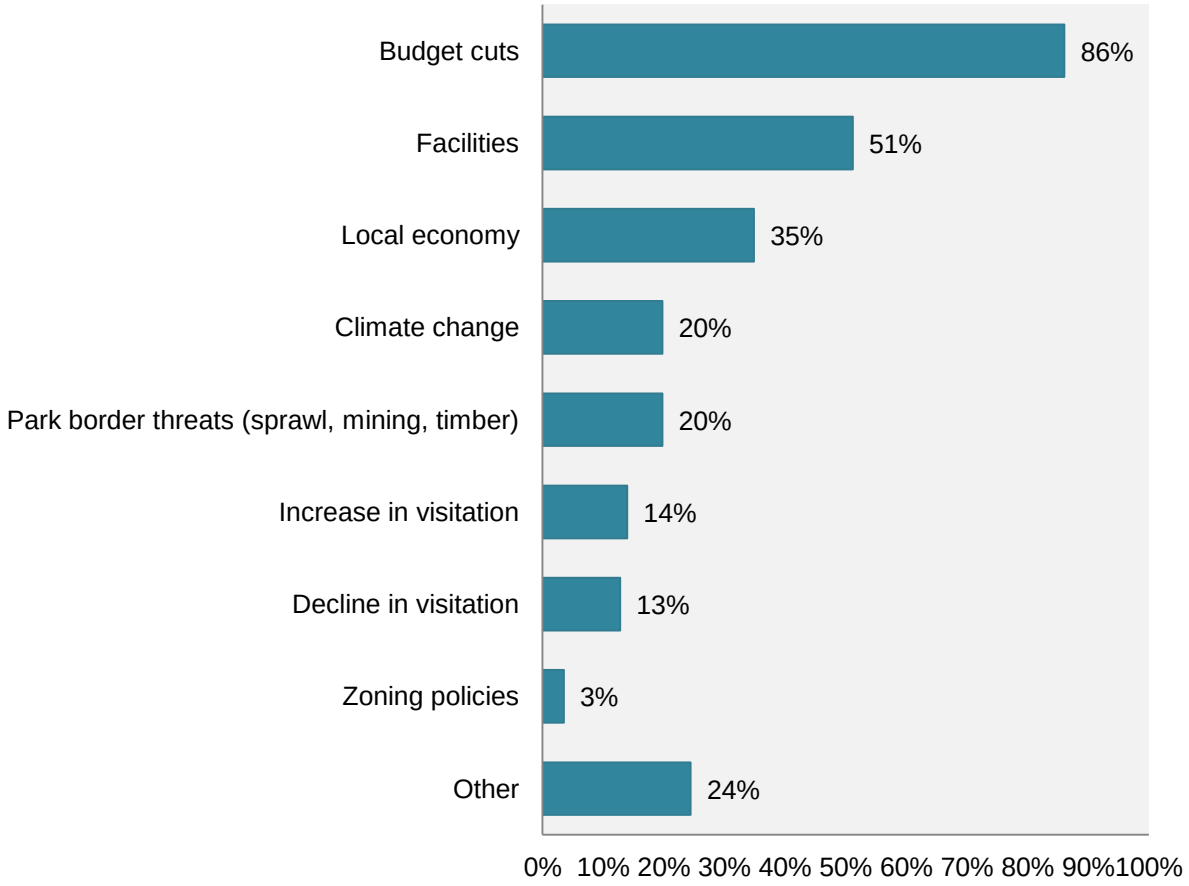
Traditional media still plays a vital role in Friends' communications and marketing strategies. Of the 81 Friends Groups that responded to this question, 90%, have been profiled in the media at least once in the last year and one-fifth (21%) said that they were profiled 25 or more times in the last year. The numbers support the importance of cultivating local media. Two-thirds (65%) of Friends Groups reported that they maintain a database of media contacts.

Finally, Friends Groups were also asked how often they communicate with their Congressional representatives or their offices. Two-thirds of the 86 responding Friends Groups (67%) said they do this occasionally and another 15% said they do it frequently. One-third said *rarely* or *never*.

STRENGTHS AND CHALLENGES

The survey aimed to assess capacity to address both current and future challenges in supporting national parks. Looking forward, Friends Groups were asked to name the top challenges facing their associated park. Given ongoing economic difficulties, it is not surprising that 86% of Friends Groups listed budget cuts as the greatest challenge, an increase from 61% in 2010. Half of groups (12%) mentioned facilities and one third cited the local economy.

What Are The Top Three Key Challenges Facing The Park?
(n=85) Multiple Answers Permitted

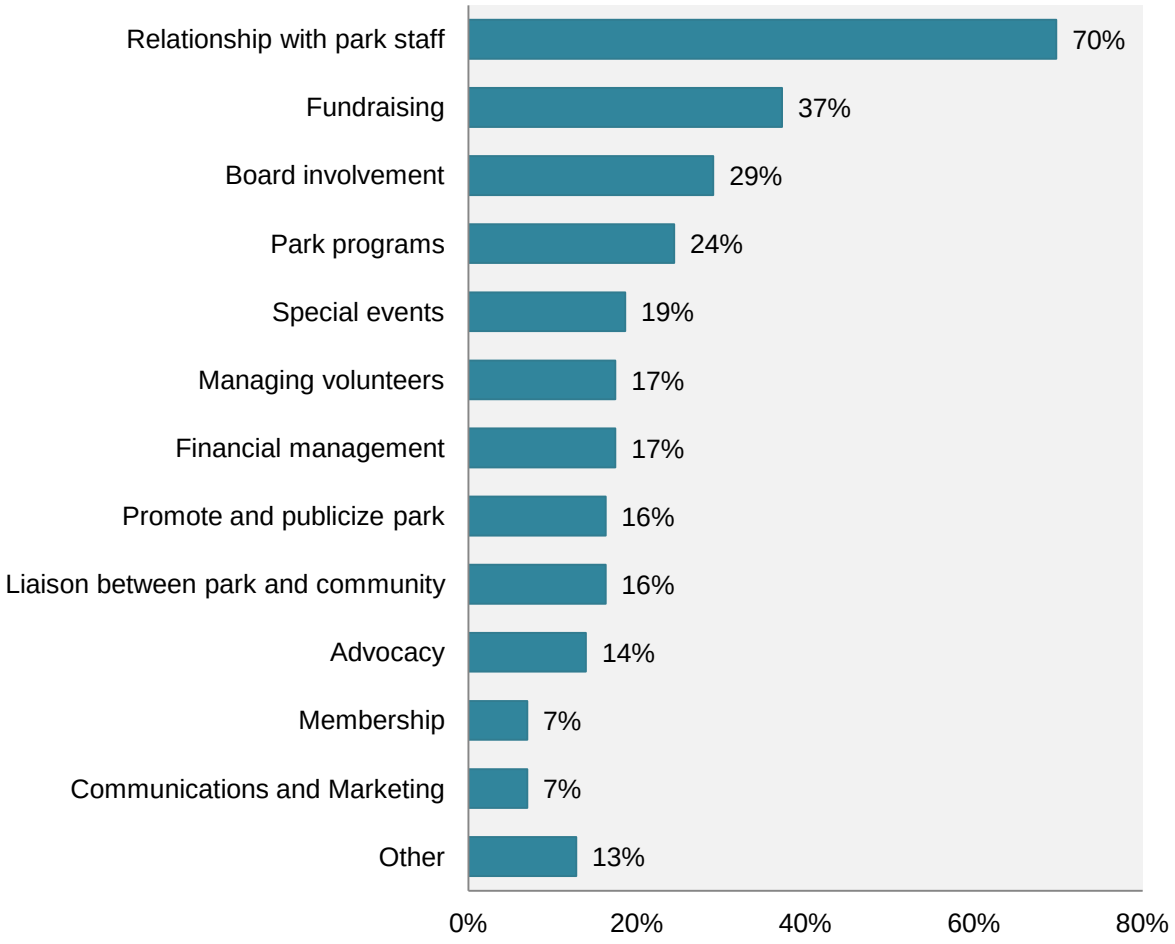


Organizational strength determines to what degree a non-profit can fulfill its mission. While all organizations have activities they excel at, not all align with or support their mission. It takes significant leadership and discipline to realize and translate priorities into actions. The question asked in the 2012 survey differs slightly from the one asked in the 2010 Survey, in that the park relationship was included. When asked to consider their greatest strengths, the top mention was the relationship with park staff (70%, again not an option given in the 2010 survey).

The economy and the shrinking federal budget make the partners' job a challenge. Working together to determine the best possible ways that partners can help their park would be advantageous.

The second most identified strength was fundraising (37%, similar to the 36% reported in 2010), followed by board involvement (29%). This differs markedly from the 2010 survey in which 52% reported being a liaison between the park and community as an organizational strength –an option that garnered only 16% in 2012. Only 19% of Friends Group said special events in 2012 were an organizational strength (as compared with 42% in 2010), while 24% said park programs in 2012 were a forte (32% reported so in 2010.)

What are the greatest strengths of your organization?
(n=87) Multiple answers permitted

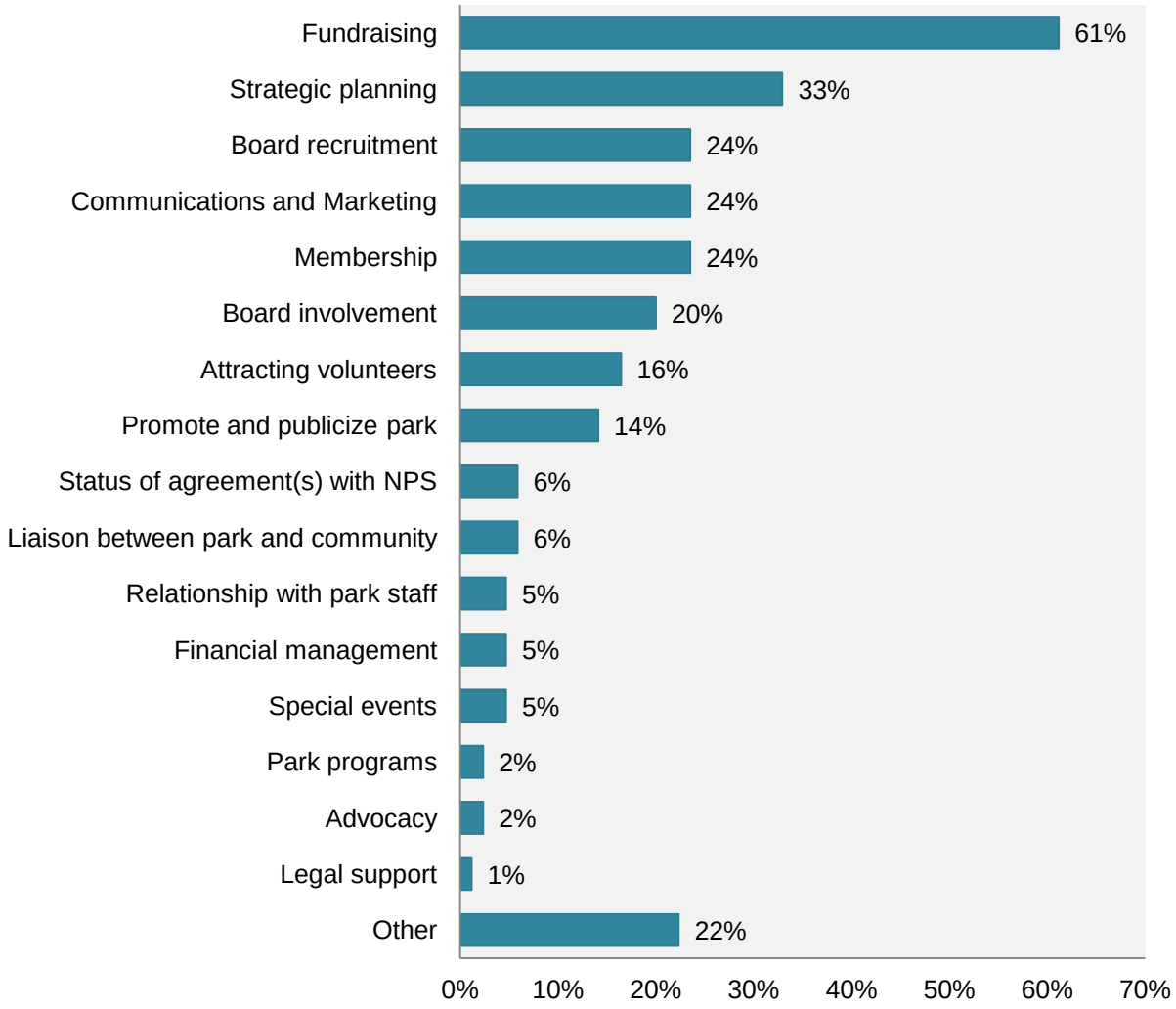


Although our organization has been established for a while, our mission and vision has recently changed dramatically. We are really a "young" organization, still in the developmental stage of our strategic plan.

When asked to name the greatest obstacles facing the organization, the top mention, concurrent with the 2010 survey (76%), was fundraising (61% in 2012). This is true across the non-profit sector and not unique to Friends Groups. About a third identified strategic planning as an obstacle, an increase from the 25% who said it was a challenge in 2010. This may reflect a greater awareness or need for planning. Board recruitment was lower in 2012, falling from 40% in 2010 to 24% in 2012, though as noted earlier it remains an important activity for boards. Twenty-four percent (24%) also cited Communications and Marketing and Membership as an obstacle.

Data management is one of our greatest problems. We hope to move to a new and better fundraising software system. Funding for programs, as well as data entry time to transfer information, is a major concern for a small organization and one person staff. We acknowledge the need for something better.

What are the greatest obstacles facing your organization?
(n=85) Multiple Answers Permitted

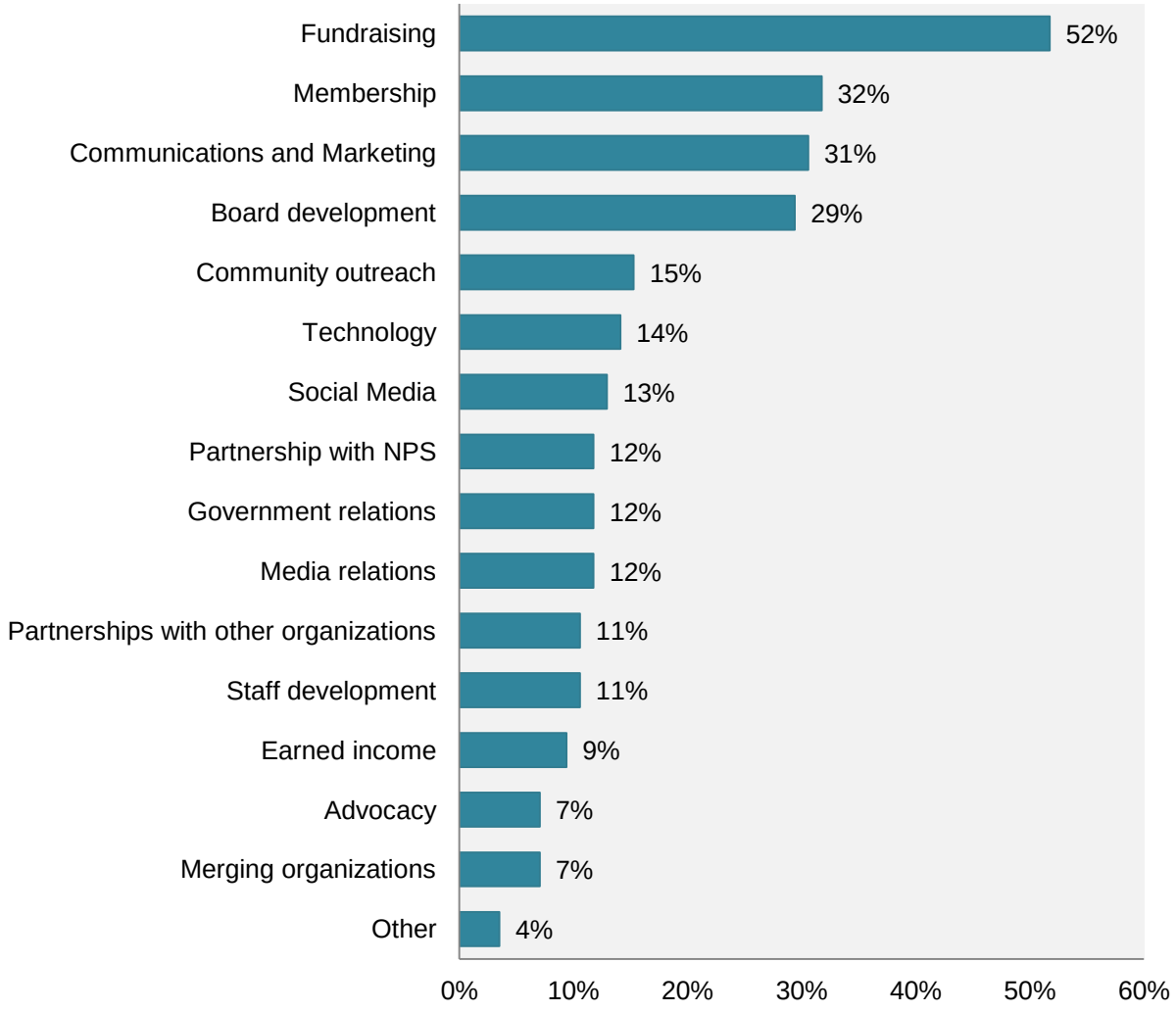


Potential Training Opportunities

A major objective of this survey is to determine what kinds of support and training Friends Groups need. The 2010 survey catalyzed the creation of the Park Partners Project, a year-long, competitive in-depth capacity building project and webinar series focusing on issues identified in the report. The 2012 survey again asked Friends Groups which types of training would be the most helpful to their organization. The most frequently selected training was fundraising (52%), down from 75% in 2010. Just under a third mentioned membership. 29% mentioned board development, a decrease from the 51% reported in 2010.

Which of the Following Types of Training Would Be the Most Helpful to Your Organization?

(n=85) Multiple answers permitted



DISCUSSION

Though the 2012 survey was more extensive in its questions than the 2010 survey, overall the trends and challenges remained fairly consistent. That said, there are both strategic and tactical opportunities for the NPF, the NPS and other organizations (like the Association of Partners for Public Lands) to better support the growth and success of park partners. Observations of interest include the following:

Programs takes precedence, but advocacy is back on the radar
Although there has been a 20 year trend away from advocacy, particularly in the creation or protection of park resources, the importance of advocacy is now on the increase related to issues impacting parks. This could reflect a savvier understanding of the types of educating non-profits can do for elected officials and/or as a response to cuts in park budgets.

Supporting the park is not just a cash-only proposition
Efforts to quantify in-kind, volunteer and cash support are all relevant in framing the scope and spectrum of philanthropic impact on parks. Friends Groups provide all three types of support and use different resources to do so. Understanding both the quantitative and qualitative ways in which Friends Groups support parks both strengthens and deepens the philanthropic tradition supporting parks.

Social Media is here to stay
A vast majority of Friends Groups have a presence on Facebook and others are increasingly exploring Twitter as a means to engage members and others. Learning more about how to further capitalize on these social networks is the next challenge.

Fundraising is an ongoing challenge – strategic planning is a new one
Fundraising remains the primary challenge – and objective – for most Friends Groups and a need they continue to want to learn more about. Strategic planning is a newly identified challenge and another area of interest for learning.

Resources
The following sites offer both specific and general resources for Friends Groups and nonprofits.

NPF Park Partner Online Community and Resource Center

NPF WebEx

NPS Partnership Website

Association for Park and Public Lands

BoardSource

Independent Sector

Giving USA

Blue Avocado

APPENDIX A

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Alaska Geographic
Assateague Island Alliance
Beatrix Farrand Garden Association
Big Thicket Association
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
Boston Harbor Island Alliance
C&O Canal Trust
Carver Birthplace Association
Channel Islands Park Foundation
Conservancy for Cuyahoga Valley National Park
Death Valley Conservancy
Discover Your Northwest
Dumbarton Oaks Park Conservancy
Dunes National Park Association
Edison Innovation Foundation
Eugene O'Neill Foundation
First Flight Foundation
Fort Vancouver National Trust
Frederick W Vanderbilt Garden Association, Inc.
Friends of the Dunes
Friends of Acadia
Friends of Arches and Canyonlands Parks: The Bates Wilson Legacy Fund
Friends of Bandelier
Friends of Big Bend National Park
Friends of Canaveral
Friends of Cape Lookout
Friends of Carl Sandburg at Connemara
Friends of Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park
Friends of De Soto National Memorial, Inc.
Friends of Fairsted
Friends of Flight 93 National Memorial, Inc
Friends of Fort McHenry
Friends of Georgetown Waterfront Park
Friends of Homestead
Friends of Hopewell Furnace NHS
Friends of Independence National Historical Park
Friends of LBJ National Historical Park
Friends of Minidoka
Friends of Minute Man National Park
Friends of Peirce Mill Inc.
Friends of Port Chicago National Memorial
Friends of Saguaro National Park
Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes, Inc
Friends of Still Creek, Inc
Friends of the Blue Ridge Parkway
Friends of the Flagstaff Monuments
Friends of the Florissant Fossil Beds, Inc.
Friends of The Fordyce, Inc.
Friends of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park
Friends of the Little Bighorn Battlefield
Friends of the Preserve at LRC
Friends of the San Francisco Maritime Museum Library
Friends of Thomas Edison National Historical Park
Friends of Vicksburg National Military Park and Campaign
Friends of Virgin Islands National Park
Friends of Wind Cave National Park
Gettysburg Foundation
Glacier National Park Fund
Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy
Grand Canyon Association
Grand Teton National Park Foundation
Guilford Battleground Company
Historic Hampton, Inc.
Honoring Eleanor Roosevelt
Ice Age Trail Alliance
Jefferson National Parks Association
Lackawanna & Wyoming Valley Railroad Historical Society
Mississippi River Fund
Mount Rushmore Society
National Parks of Lake Superior Foundation
National Parks of New York Harbor Conservancy
NatureBridge
North Cascades Institute
North Country Trail Association

Outside Las Vegas Foundation
Overmountain Victory Trail Association
Pea Ridge National Military Park Foundation
Pinnacles Partnership
Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Inc.
Rock Creek Conservancy
Rocky Mountain Nature Association
Saint-Gaudens Memorial
Sandy Hook Foundation
Santa Fe Trail Association
Santa Monica Mountains Fund
Save Historic Arlington House
Sequoia Parks Foundation
Shenandoah National Park Trust
Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation
South Florida National Parks Trust
St. Croix River Fund
St. Thomas Historical Trust
Timucuan Trail Parks Foundation
Trust for the National Mall
Voyageurs National Park Association
Washington's National Park Fund
Whaling History Alliance
Yellowstone Park Foundation
Zion Natural History Association

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

Respondent Information

1. Respondent information:

Name of person completing the survey:

E-mail of person completing the survey:

Position of person completing the survey:

Organization name:

What NPS unit(s) does the group support?

Governance

2. Is your organization currently a registered 501 c-3?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

3. If yes, please specify year of registration:

4. Does your organization have bylaws?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know or N/A

5. Does your organization have a strategic plan?

- Yes, we have an active plan
- Yes, but it is not actively followed
- No
- Don’t know or N/A

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

6. Which of the following committees, if any, does your board currently include?

Select all that apply.

- ☐ Board currently has no committees
- ☐ Executive
- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Fundraising/Development
- ☐ Program
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Audit
- ☐ Anniversary
- ☐ Volunteer
- ☐ Board Recruitment/Governance
- ☐ Communications/Marketing
- ☐ Event
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Governance, continued

7. What year does your organization follow?

- ○ Calendar year
- ○ Some other fiscal year, please specify ending month:

8. How many members currently comprise the board?

Number of current members:

9. How many times did your entire board meet during 2011/your last fiscal year?

Number of meetings:

Governance, continued

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

10. How important is board recruitment to your organization?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important
- Don't know or N/A

11. How important is the board's role in fundraising to your organization?

- Extremely important
- Very important
- Somewhat important
- Not very important
- Not at all important
- Don't know or N/A

12. Did the board conduct a self-evaluation during 2011/your last fiscal year?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know or N/A

13. Did the board conduct a formal evaluation of the executive director during 2011/your last fiscal year?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know
- Not applicable (no executive director)

14. How many employees does the organization have?

Programs and Activities

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

15. What were the top three areas of program work for your organization in 2011/your last fiscal year?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Youth programs/Education
- ☐ Community engagement/new audiences
- ☐ Environmental conservation/protection
- ☐ Historical and cultural preservation
- ☐ Research/Science
- ☐ Advocacy
- ☐ Park planning/construction
- ☐ Other area of focus (please describe)

16. What were the top three activities you did as an organization in 2011/your last fiscal year? i.e where most effort was given?

Select up to 3

- ☐ Managing partnership with NPS
- ☐ Major event/s
- ☐ Program management
- ☐ Fundraising
- ☐ Membership management
- ☐ Volunteer management
- ☐ Publicity
- ☐ Community relations/engagement
- ☐ Internal operations
- ☐ Other area of focus (please describe)

17. Comments on programs and activities:

Fundraising and Resource Development

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

18. Do you have...

- ○ Membership program
- ○ Donor program (individual donors)
- ○ Both of these
- ○ Neither of these
- ○ Don't know or N/A

For these next questions, please enter numbers only, with no commas or symbols.

If you have a membership program.....

19. What was your membership at the end of 2011/your last fiscal year?

Number of members: _____

20. How many of these were new members?

Number of new members: _____

If you have an individual donor program.....

21. How many individual donors did you have in 2011/your last fiscal year?

Number of individual donors: _____

22. How many of these were new donors?

Number of new donors: _____

23. Comments about the membership and/or donor program(s):

_____

Fundraising and Resource Development, continued

24. What is the minimum contribution your organization recognizes as a major gift?

[ ]

25. What was your total revenue for the last fiscal/calendar year?

Dollar amount: _____

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

26. Here are some common sources of revenue for groups like yours. Please enter the percent that each source represented in your total revenue during 2011/your last fiscal year. The responses should total 100.

Memberships	
Individuals/Donors	
Foundations	
Corporations	
Investments	
Earned income (including retail and program operations)	
Government Grants	
Other source	

27. If you indicated an "other" source above, please describe it:

28. Comments:

29. What database management software do you use to manage members and/or donors?
Select all that apply

- ☐ Raiser's Edge
- ☐ GiftWorks
- ☐ Exceed!Basic
- ☐ DonorPerfect
- ☐ Filemaker
- ☐ eTapestry
- ☐ SAGE Act
- ☐ Excel
- ☐ Don't know or N/A
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

30. Comments:

Fiscal Management

31. What was your Operating Budget for 2011/your last fiscal year?

Enter $ amount:

32. What is your Operating Budget for 2012/your current fiscal year?

Enter $ amount:

33. When was your last External Audit?

34. Are your personnel policies ...

- Current
- Outdated
- We don't have personnel policies
- Don't know or N/A

35. Is your IT plan...

- Current
- Outdated
- We don't have an IT plan
- Don't know or N/A

Park Partnership

We would like to know about how much volunteer time your organization contributed to the park(s) in the past year. Please provide your best estimates in numerical form.

36. How many volunteers worked for the park(s) on behalf of your organization in 2011/your last fiscal year?

Number of volunteers:

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

37. How many hours did your volunteers contribute on behalf of your organization in 2011/your last fiscal year?

Volunteer hours:

38. What were your financial contributions to the park(s) during 2011/your last fiscal year?

Total dollar amount:

Total value of in-kind donations:

39. What are some of the more successful projects and activities your organization has done on behalf of the park(s)? Please describe:

Park Partnership, continued

40. Do you have an annual work plan with the park(s)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know or N/A

Comment if more than one park:

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

41. What signed agreements do you currently have with the National Park Service?
Select all that apply

- [ ] We have no official agreements
- [ ] An agreement is in process
- [ ] Friends Group Agreement
- [ ] Cooperating Association Agreement
- [ ] Fundraising Agreement
- [ ] Cooperative Agreement
- [ ] Partner Design and Construction Agreement
- [ ] General Agreement (MOU or MOA)
- [ ] Don't know or N/A
- [ ] Another type of agreement (please specify)

42. Please rate the quality of the general relationship that you have with your official NPS liaison.

- ○ Excellent
- ○ Very good
- ○ Good
- ○ Fair
- ○ Poor
- ○ Don't know or N/A

43. Please rate the strength of the relationship that you have with NPS staff.

- ○ Extremely strong
- ○ Very strong
- ○ Somewhat strong
- ○ Not very strong
- ○ Not strong at all
- ○ Don't know or N/A

44. Comments on partnership with the park:

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

45. How often do you have scheduled meetings or calls with your NPS liaison or other staff?

- ○ Daily
- ○ Weekly
- ○ Bi-monthly
- ○ Monthly
- ○ Quarterly
- ○ Annually
- ○ Don't know or N/A

Park Partnership, continued

46. What does park leadership/staff do to support your organization's fundraising activities?

Select all that apply

- ☐ Mention Friends Groups in talks about the park
- ☐ Attend/speak at Friends Group events
- ☐ Participate in donor visits / stewardship
- ☐ Answer questions about Friends Group at visitor center
- ☐ Support in-park fundraising events
- ☐ Work with Friends volunteers
- ☐ Are members of the Friends
- ☐ Don't know or N/A
- ☐ Other (please describe)

47. In what ways is your organization visible in the Park?

Select all that apply

- ☐ There is a description of and link to our group on the NPS website
- ☐ We offer a brochure at the park
- ☐ We have a donor box in the park
- ☐ We have a donor wall at the park
- ☐ We have a banner or other display at the park
- ☐ We have QR codes (scan-able by smart phone) for our group in the park
- ☐ We offer programming at the park
- ☐ Our board members volunteer at the park
- ☐ Our board members attend park events
- ☐ Other methods of visibility (please describe)

48. What other NPS support has been useful – including trainings–and can you offer a comment about how helpful it was?

49. Are there other organizations that fundraise for the park?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No
- ○ Don't know or N/A

50. If yes, please tell us about the relationship you have with that organization(s):

Park Partnership, continued

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

51. How often do you partner with the following types of organizations?

	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely/Never	N/A
Cooperating Associations				
Local businesses				
Local civic groups				
Local government (city, county)				
Local or national environmental organizations				
Other NPS nonprofit partners or friends groups				
Park concessions				
Some other type of organization				

52. Please describe that "other" type of organization above, if applicable:

Communications and Marketing

53. How frequently do you update or publish the following....

	Daily or more	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Twice a year	Once a year or less	Don't know	N/A
Website								
Printed newsletter								
Online or e-newsletter								
Facebook								
Twitter								
Google+								
YouTube								

54. Please provide your best estimates in numerical form. Enter N/A if not applicable.

How many hits did your website get during the last fiscal/calendar year?

How many Facebook fans/likes do you have?

How many Twitter followers do you have?

Communications and Marketing, continued

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

55. How many times has your organization or its programs been profiled in the media in the last year? This means a website, newspaper, magazine, television, or radio mentioning your group's name and describing something that you do or have done as an organization.

56. Do you maintain a database of media contacts?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know or N/A

57. How often do you communicate with your Congressional representatives or their offices?

- Frequently
- Occasionally
- Rarely or never
- Don't know or N/A

58. Comments:

Strengths and Challenges

Last but not least...

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

59. What are the top three key challenges facing the park?
 Select up to three

- ☐ Budget cuts
- ☐ Local economy
- ☐ Decline in visitation
- ☐ Increase in visitation
- ☐ Facilities
- ☐ Climate change
- ☐ Park border threats (sprawl, mining, timber)
- ☐ Zoning policies
- ☐ Other (please describe)

60. What are the greatest strengths of your organization?
 Select up to three

- ☐ Relationship with park staff
- ☐ Fundraising
- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Park programs
- ☐ Managing volunteers
- ☐ Communications & Marketing
- ☐ Financial management
- ☐ Board involvement
- ☐ Special events
- ☐ Liaison between park and community
- ☐ Promote and publicize park
- ☐ Advocacy
- ☐ Other (please describe)

Strengths and Challenges, continued

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

**61. What are the greatest obstacles facing your organization?
 Select up to three **

- [ ] Status of agreement(s) with NPS
- [ ] Relationship with park staff
- [ ] Strategic planning
- [ ] Board recruitment
- [ ] Fundraising
- [ ] Park programs
- [ ] Communications & Marketing
- [ ] Financial management
- [ ] Board involvement
- [ ] Membership
- [ ] Attracting volunteers
- [ ] Legal support
- [ ] Special events
- [ ] Liaison between park and community
- [ ] Promote and publicize park
- [ ] Advocacy
- [ ] Other (please describe)

Friends of the Parks 2012 Survey

**62. Which of the following topics for training would be the most helpful to your organization?
 Select up to three **

- ☐ Partnership with NPS
- ☐ Partnerships with other organizations
- ☐ Board development
- ☐ Social Media
- ☐ Fundraising
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Communications & Marketing
- ☐ Membership
- ☐ Government relations
- ☐ Media relations
- ☐ Advocacy
- ☐ Earned income
- ☐ Merging organizations
- ☐ Staff development
- ☐ Community outreach
- ☐ Other (please describe)

63. Comments:

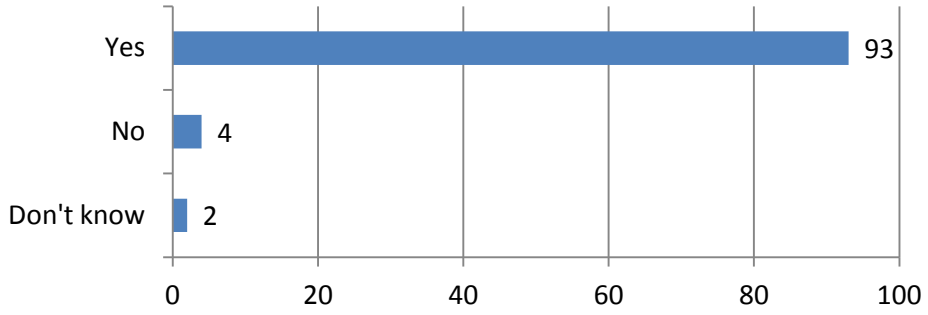
Thank You!

64. Do you have any final concluding comments you would like to offer?

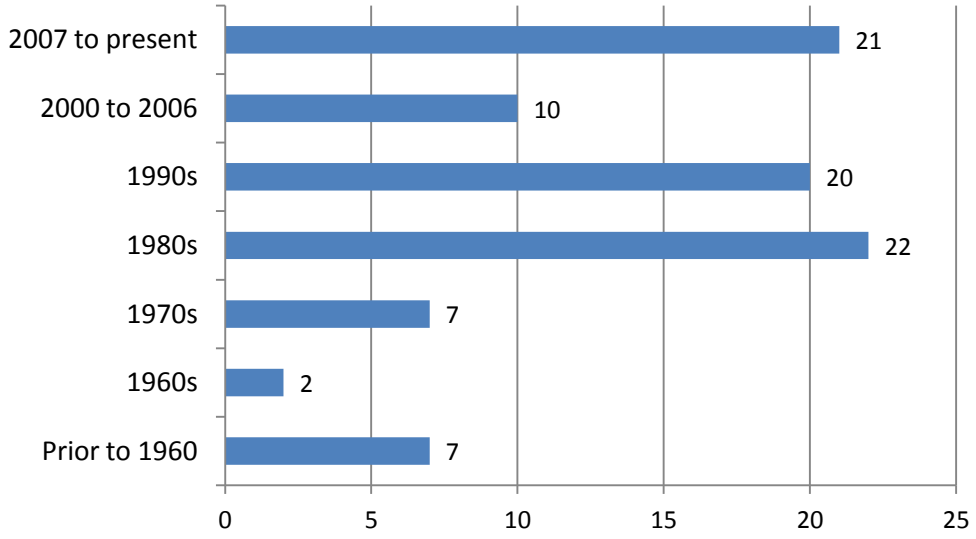
65. Thank you for your time and participation in this survey. If you would like to receive a link to the analysis and report, please provide your email:

RESPONSES

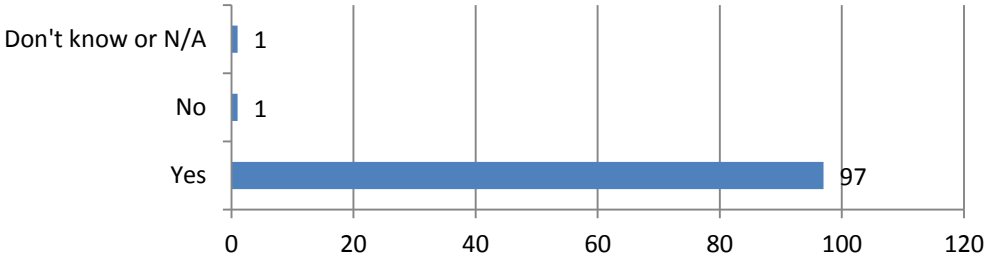
Q.2 Is your organization currently a registered 501 (c)(3)? (n=99)



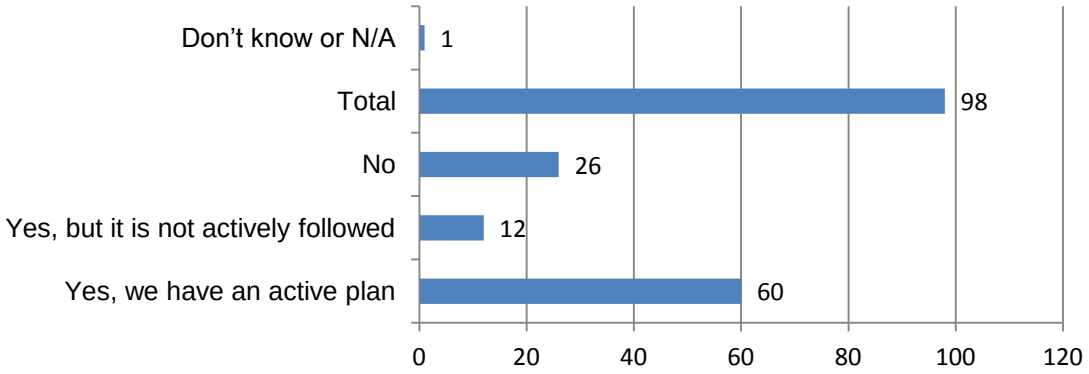
Q. 3 If yes, please specify year of registration. (n=89)



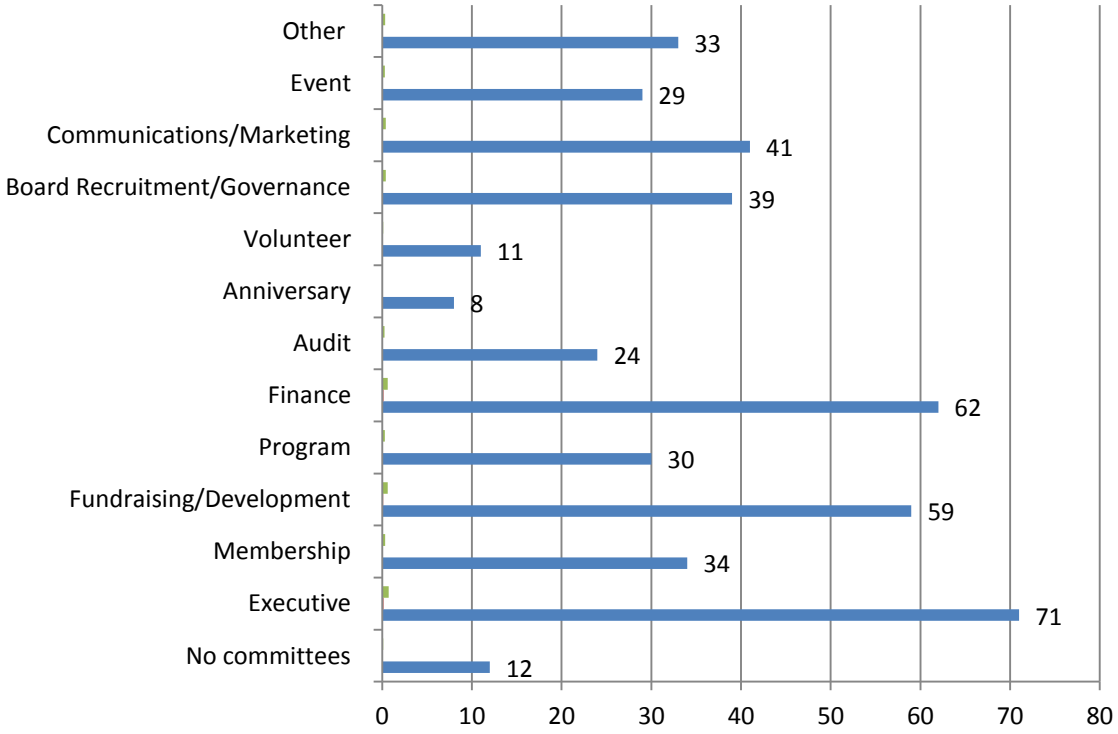
Q. 4 Does your organization have bylaws? (n=98)



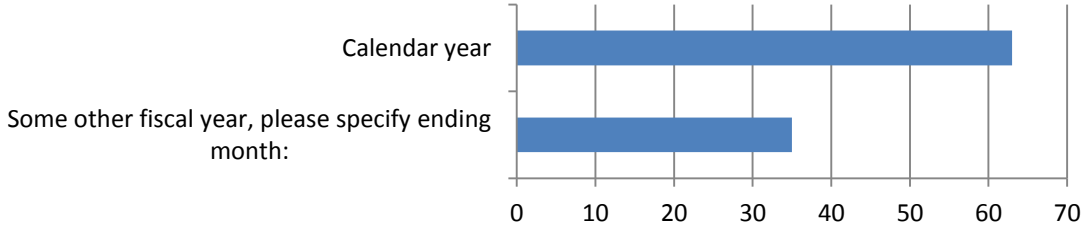
Q. 5 Does your organization have a strategic plan? (n=98)



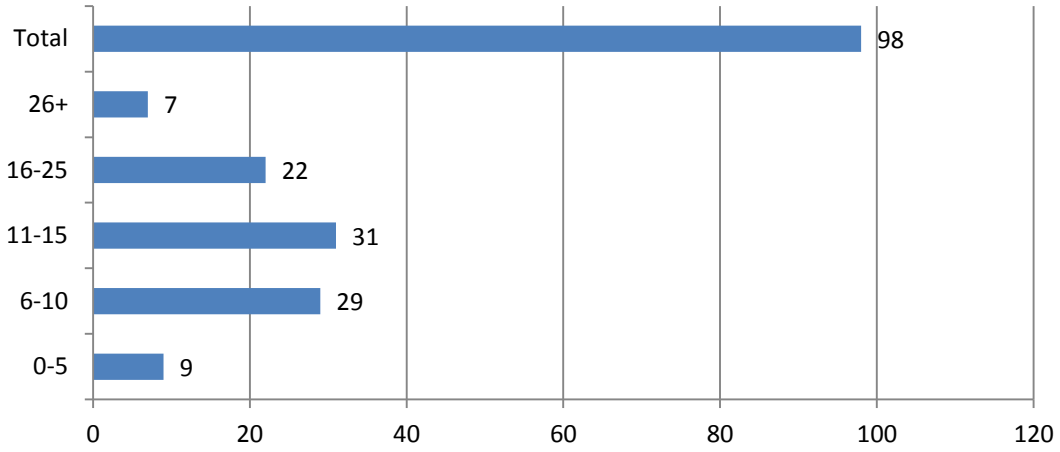
Q. 6 Which of the following committees, if any, does your board currently have? *Select all that apply. (n=99)*



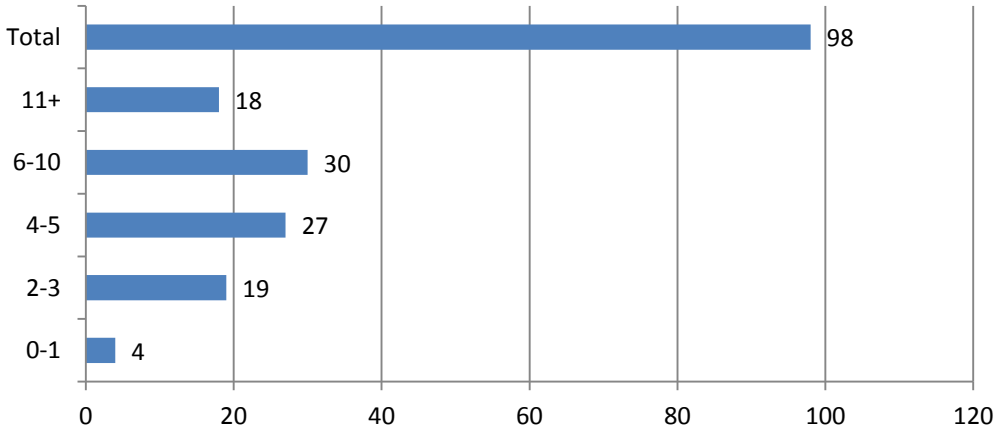
Q. 7 What year does your organization follow? (n=98)



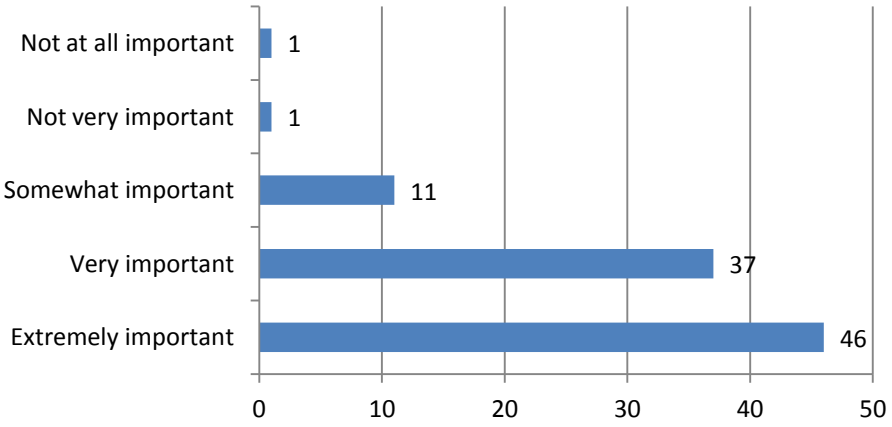
Q.8 How many members currently comprise the board? (n=98)



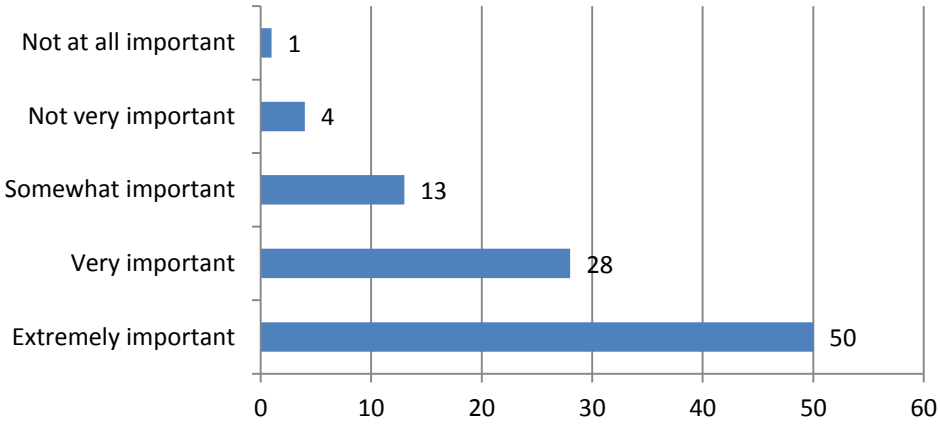
Q.9 How many times did your entire board meet during 2011/last fiscal year? (n=98)



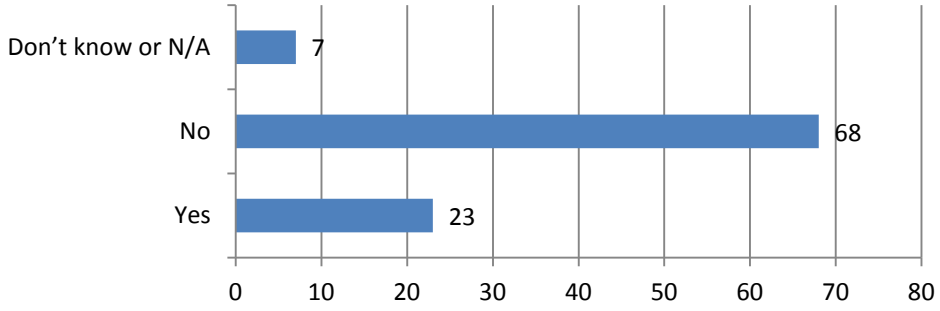
Q.10 How important is board recruitment to your organization? (n=96)



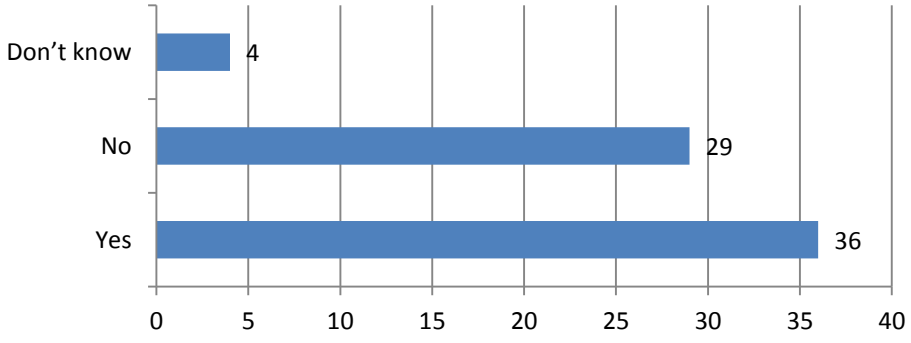
Q.11 How important is the board's role in fundraising to your organization? (n=96)



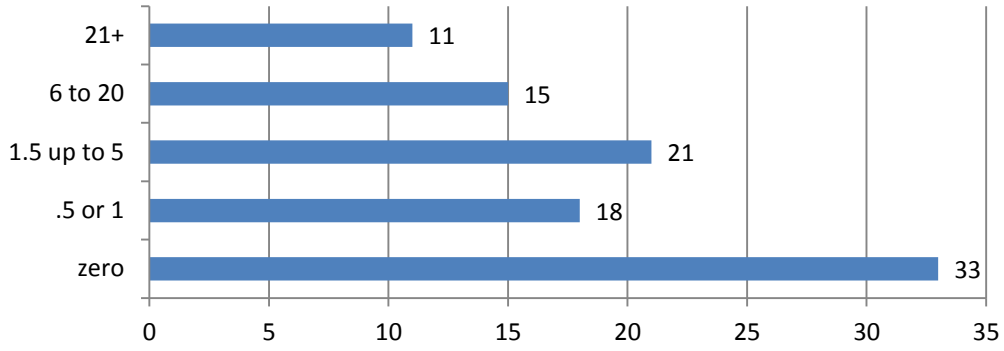
Q.12 Did the board conduct a self-evaluation during 2011/last fiscal year? (n=98)



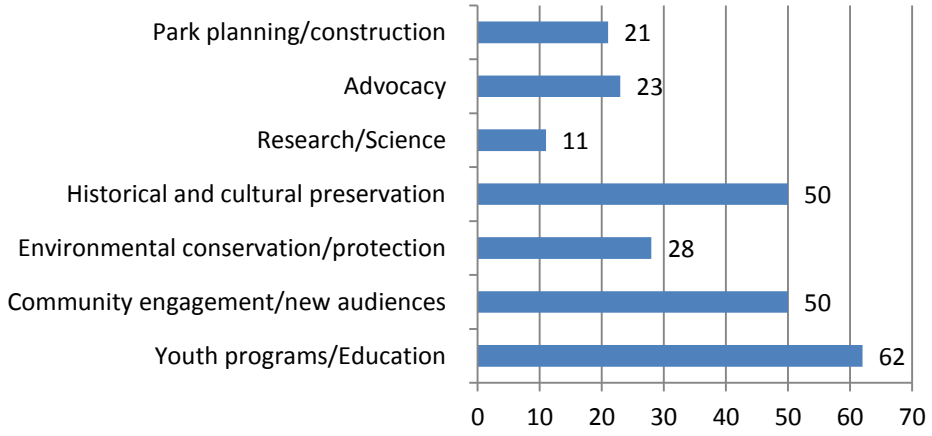
Q.13 Did the board conduct a formal evaluation of the executive director during 2011 / your last fiscal year? (n=69)



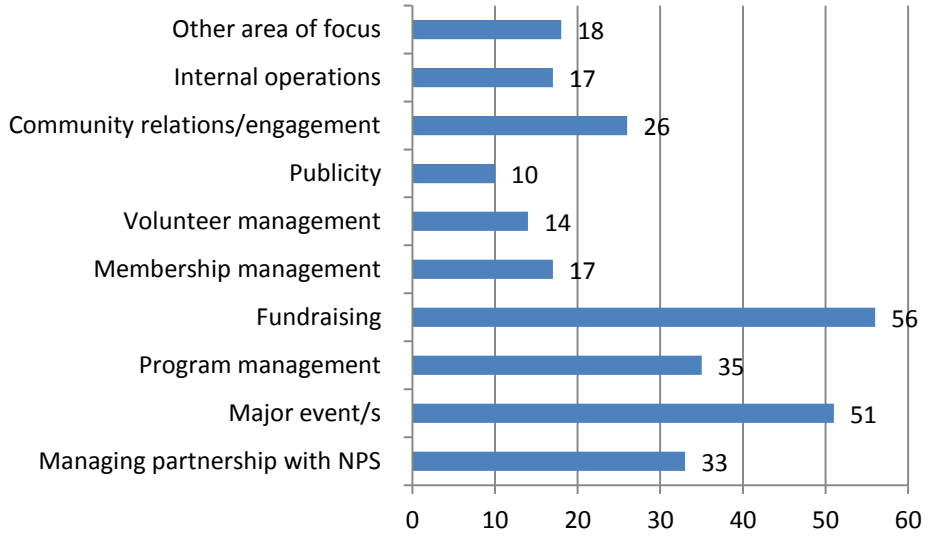
Q. 14 How many employees does the organization have? (n=98)



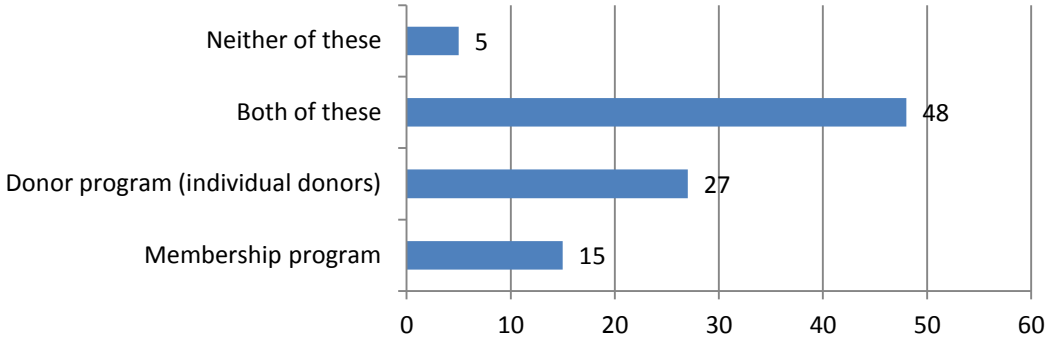
Q. 15 What were the top three areas of program work for your organization in 2011/your last fiscal year? (n=98)



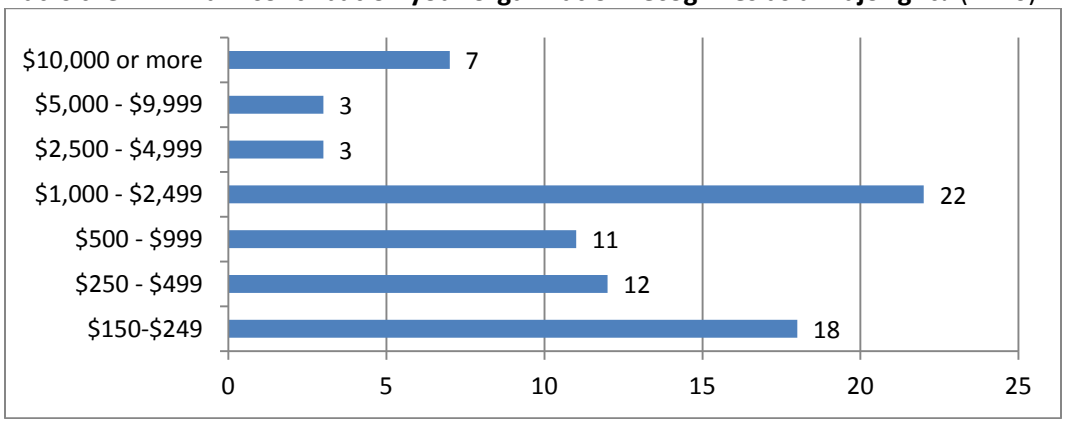
Q. 16 What were the top three <u>activities</u> you did as an organization in 2011/your last fiscal year? i.e. where most effort was given? *(n=98)*



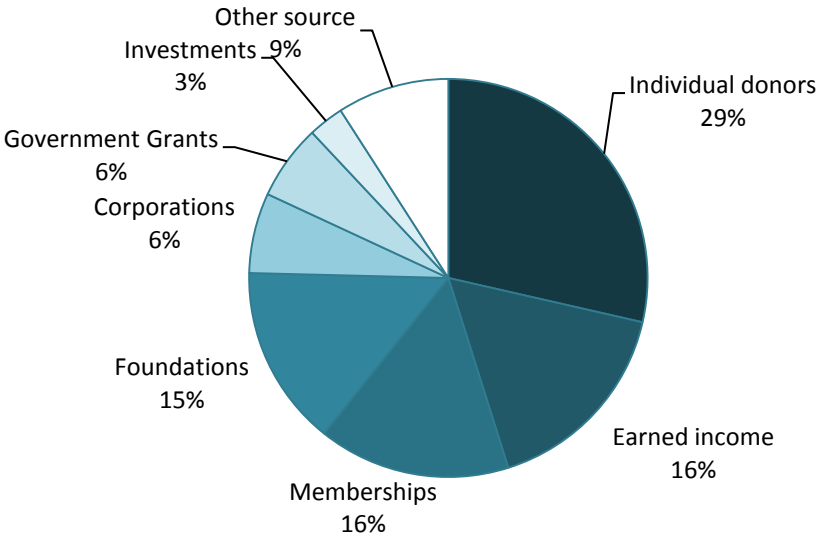
Q. 18 Do you have… (n=95)



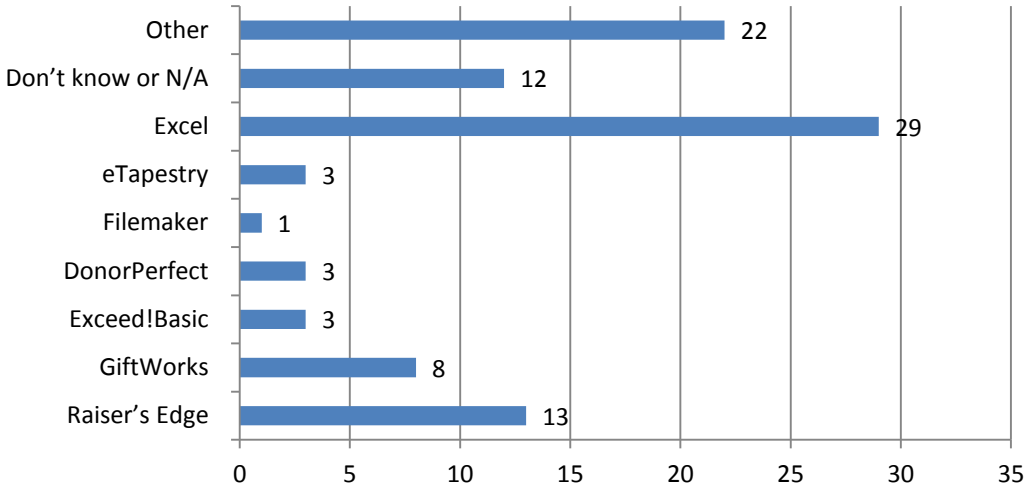
Q. 24 What is the minimum contribution your organization recognizes as a major gift? (n=76)



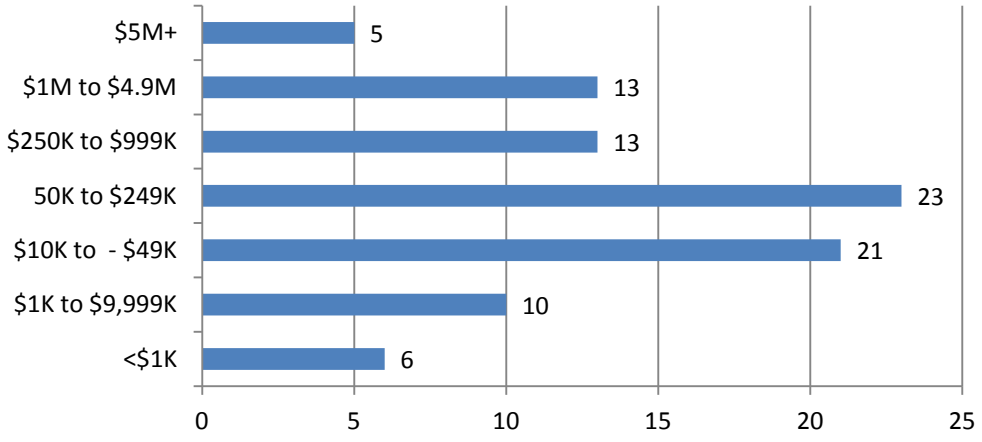
Q. 26 Here are some common sources of revenue for groups like yours. Please enter the percent that each source represented in your total revenue during 2011/your last fiscal year. The responses should total 100.



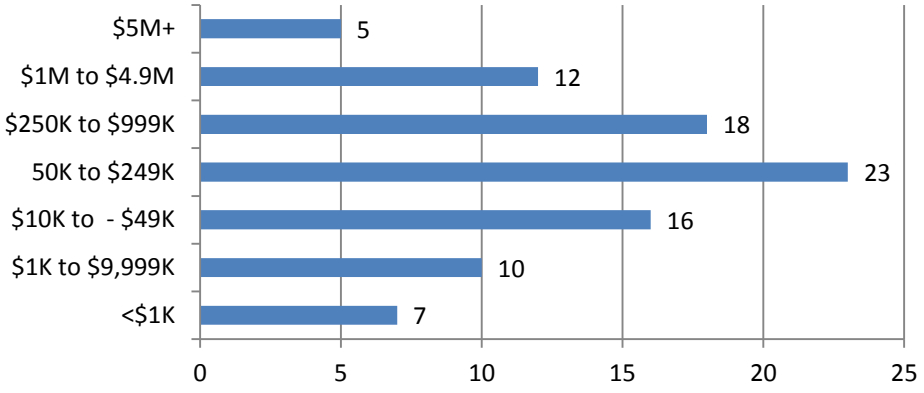
29. What database management software do you use to mange members and/or donors? *Select all that apply.*



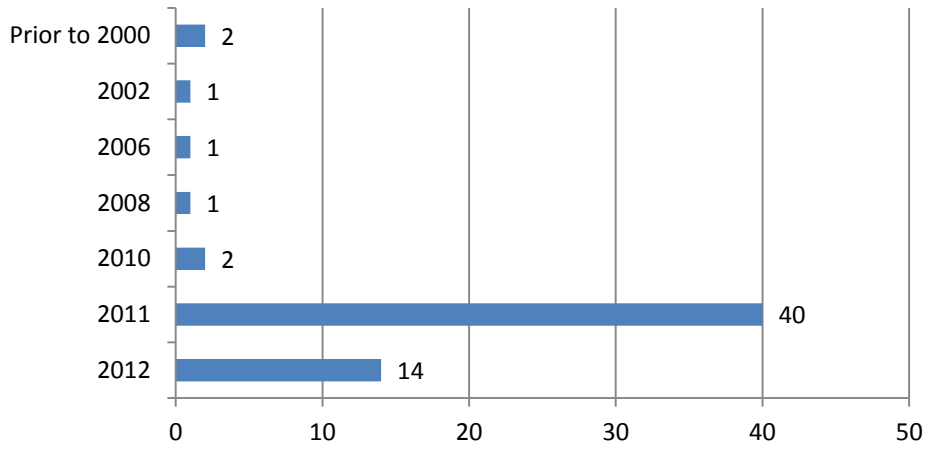
Q. 31 What was your operating budget for 2011/last fiscal year? (n=91)



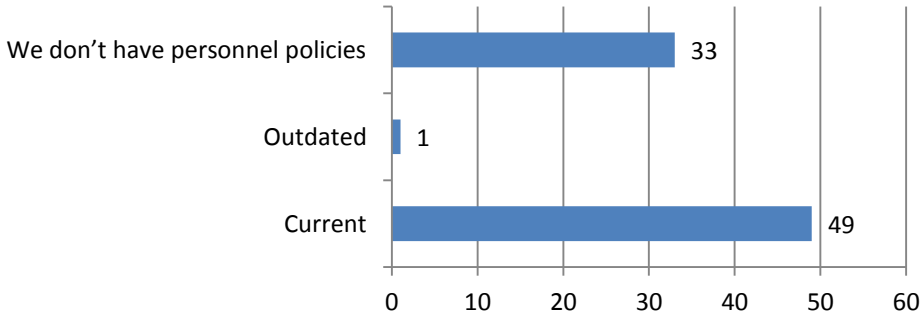
Q. 32 What is your operating budget for 2012/current fiscal year? (n=91)



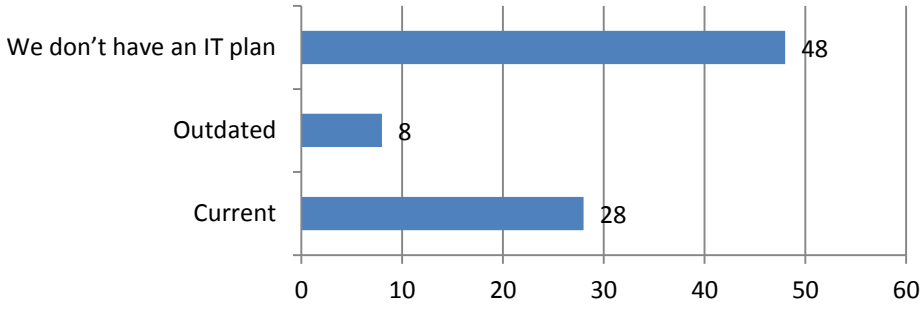
Q. 33 When was your last external audit? (n=61)



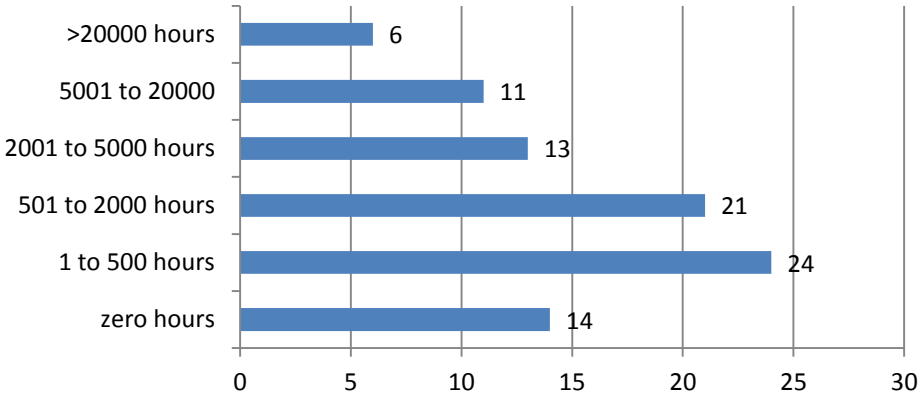
Q. 34 Are your personal policies… (n=83)



Q. 35 Is your IT plan… (n=84)

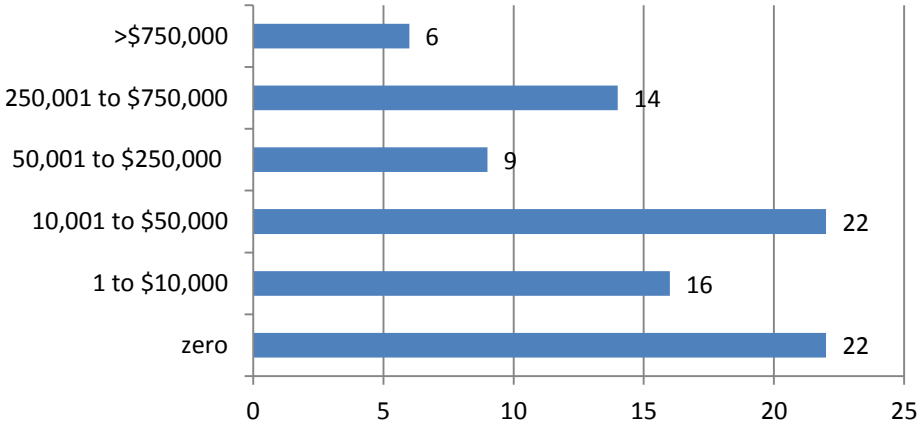


37. How many hours did your volunteers contribute on behalf of your organization in 2011/last fiscal year? (n=89)

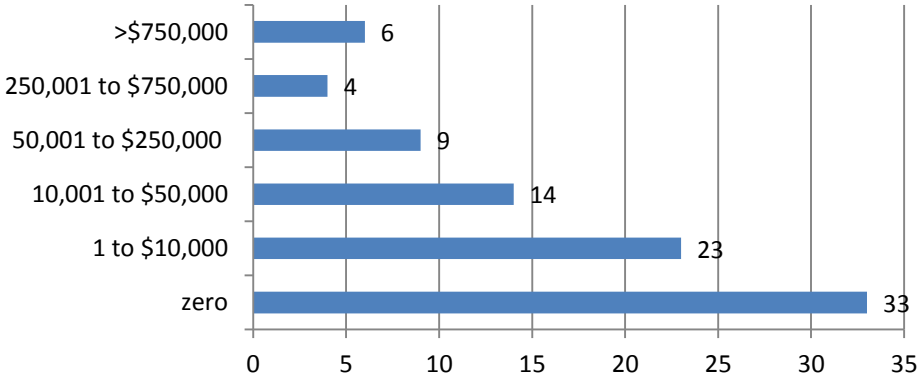


Q. 38 What were your financial contributions to the park(s) during 2011/last fiscal year? (n=89)

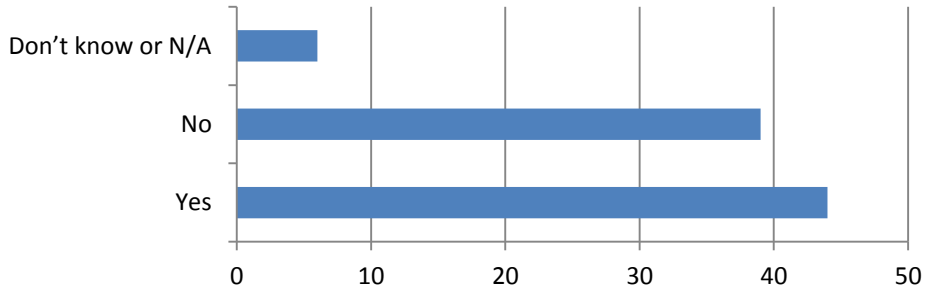
Total Dollar Amount



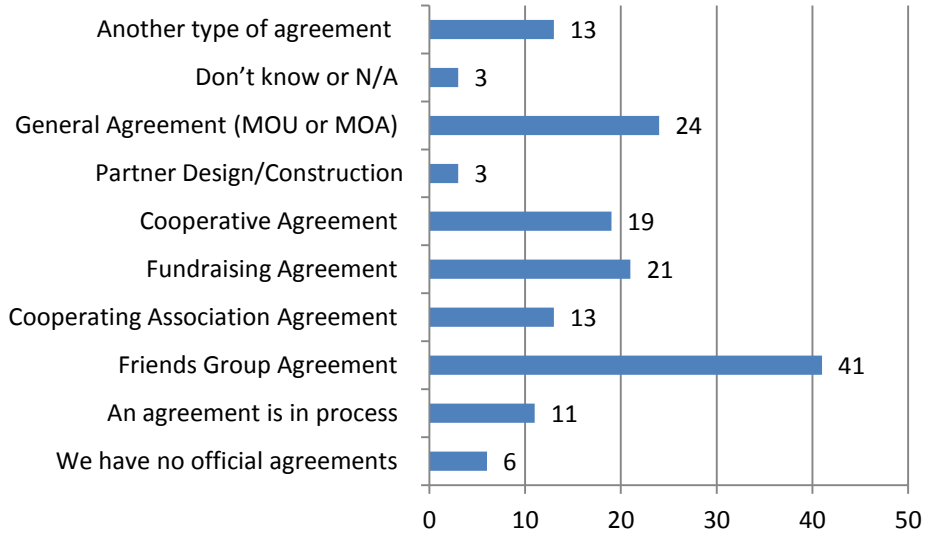
Total In-Kind Donations



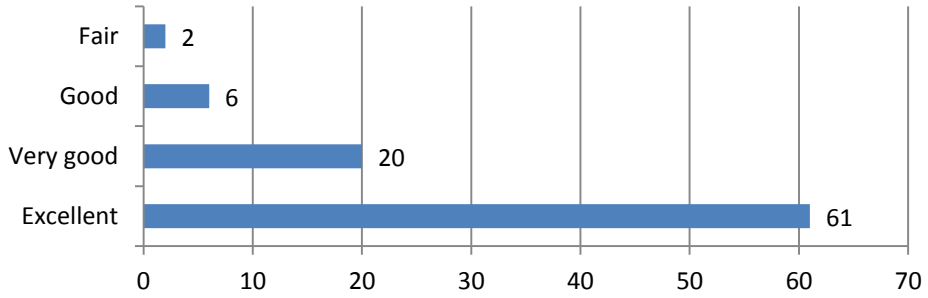
Q. 40 Do you have an annual work plan with the park(s)? (n=89)



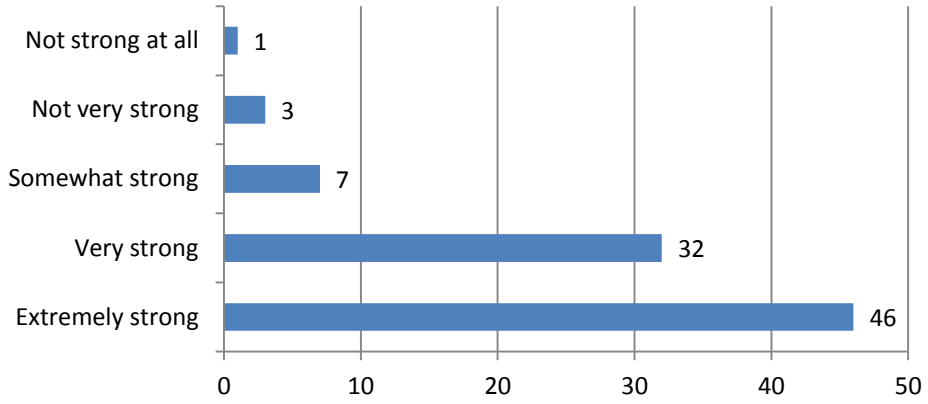
Q. 41 What signed agreements do you currently have with the National park Service? ***Select all that apply.***



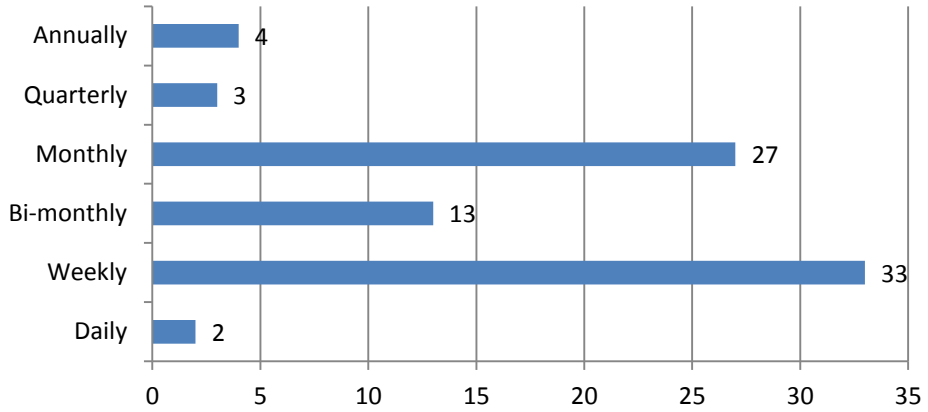
Q. 42 Please rate the quality of the general relationship that you have with your official NPS liaison. N=89



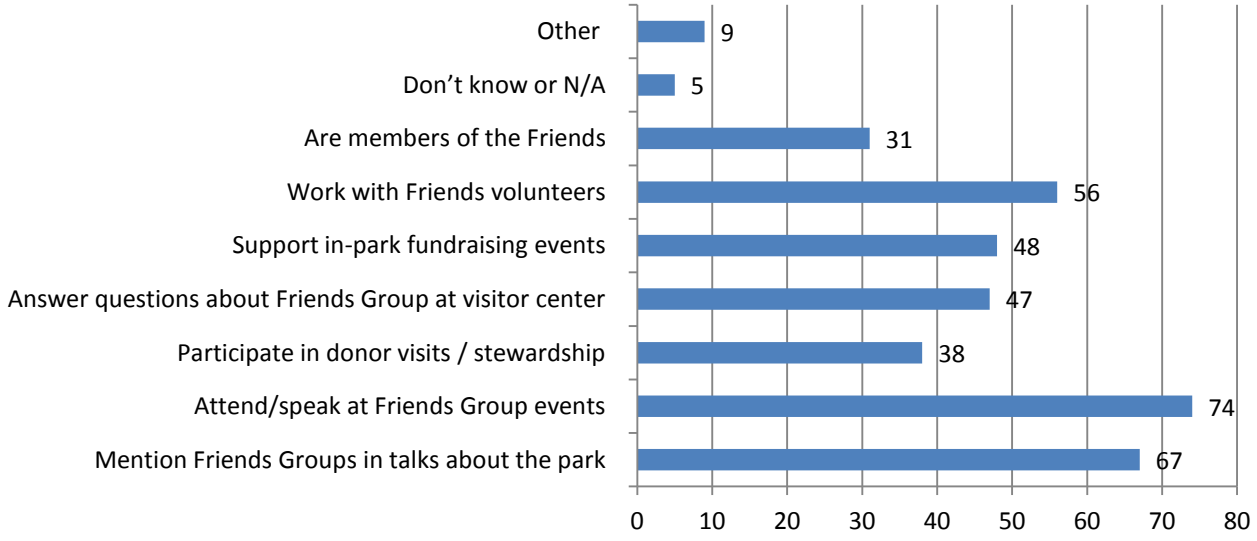
Q. 43 Please rate the strength of the relationship that you have with NPS staff. (n=89)



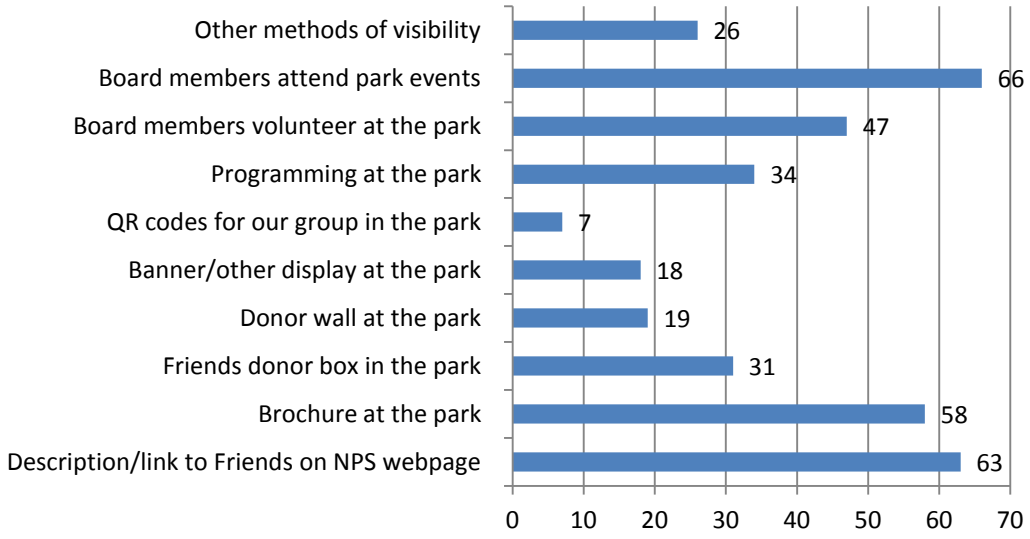
Q. 45 How often do you have scheduled meetings or calls with you NPS liaison or other staff? (n=82)



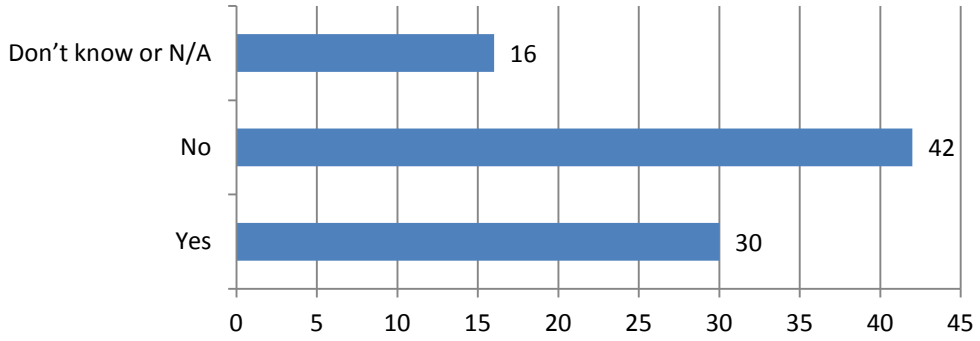
Q. 46 What does park leadership/staff do to support your organization's fundraising activities? Select all that apply.



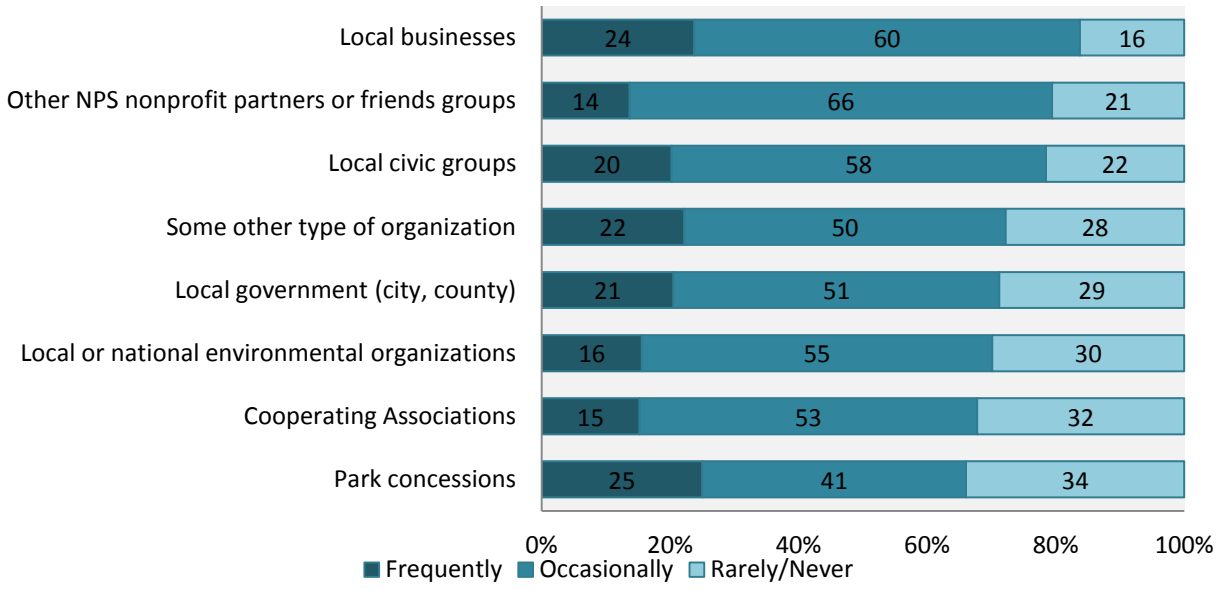
Q. 47 In what ways is your organization visible in the Park? Select all that apply.



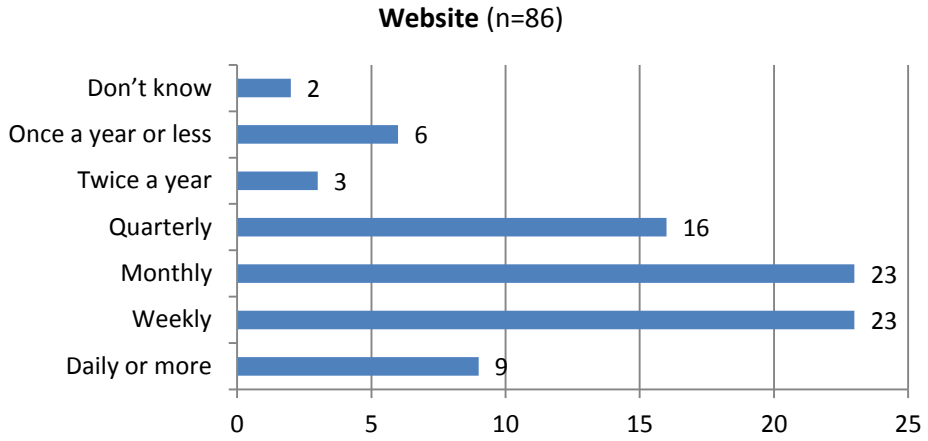
Q. 49 Are there other organizations that fundraise for the park? (n=88)

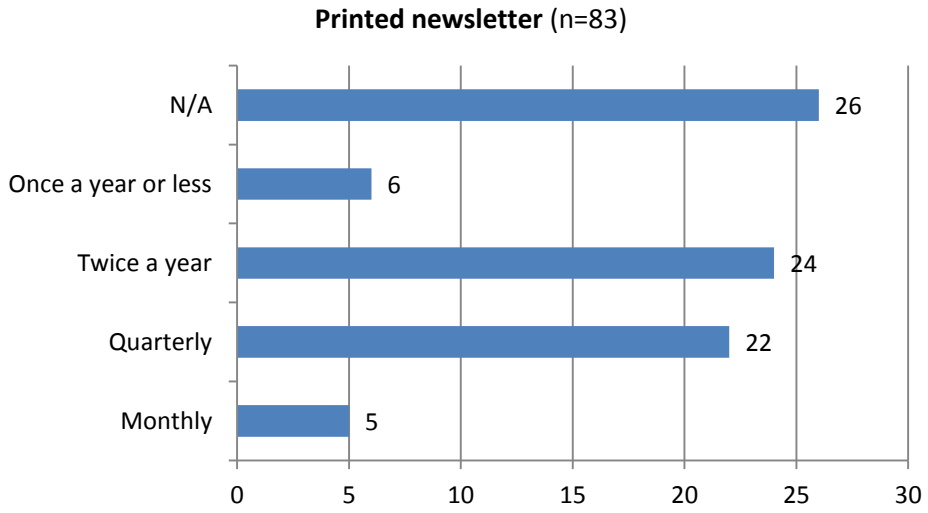


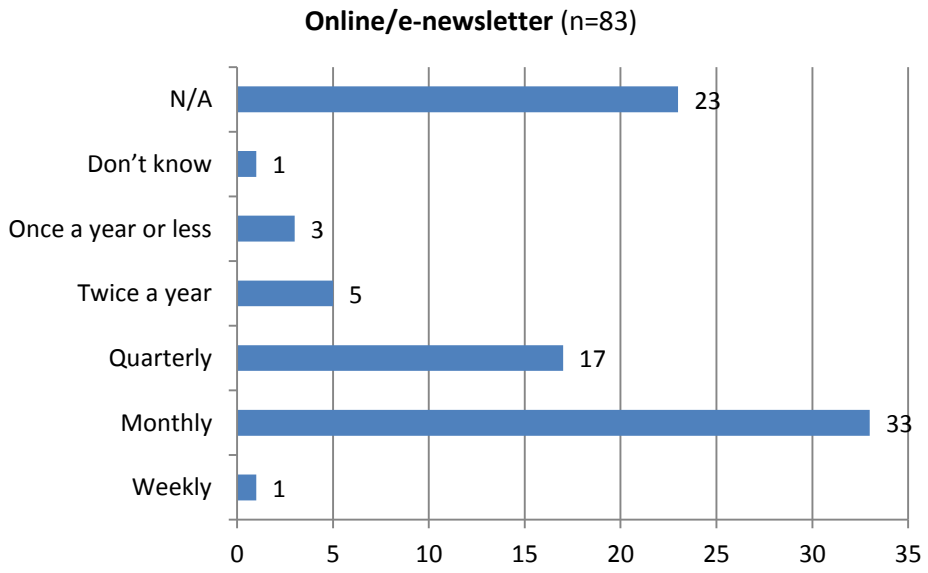
Q 51. How often do you partner with the following types of organizations?



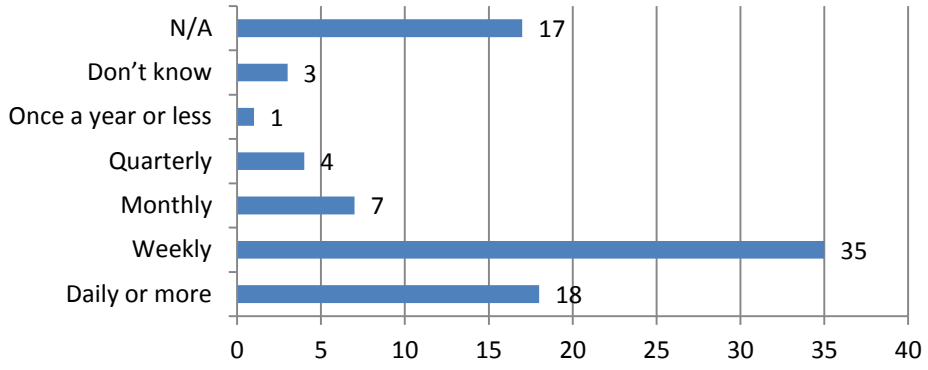
Q. 53 How frequently do you update or publish the following…



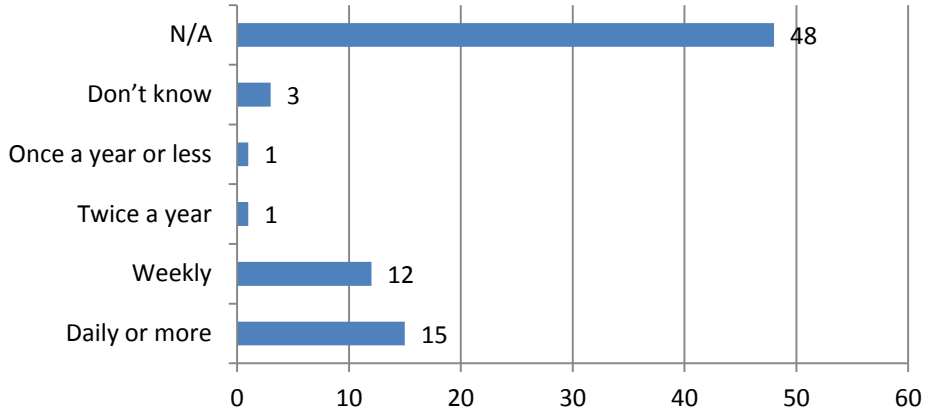




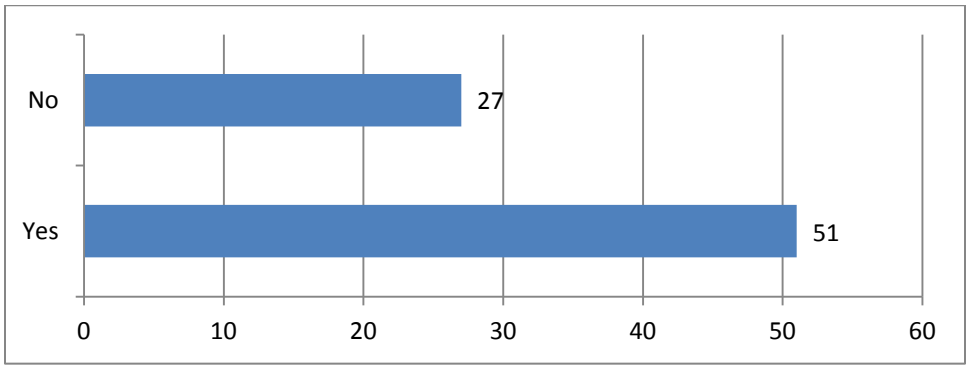
Facebook (n=85)



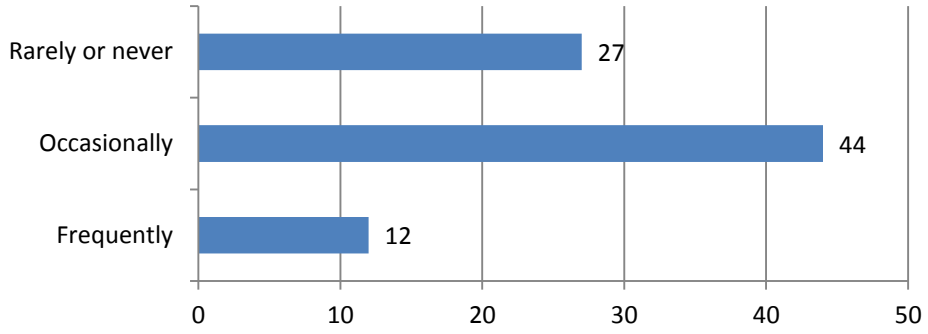
Twitter (n=80)



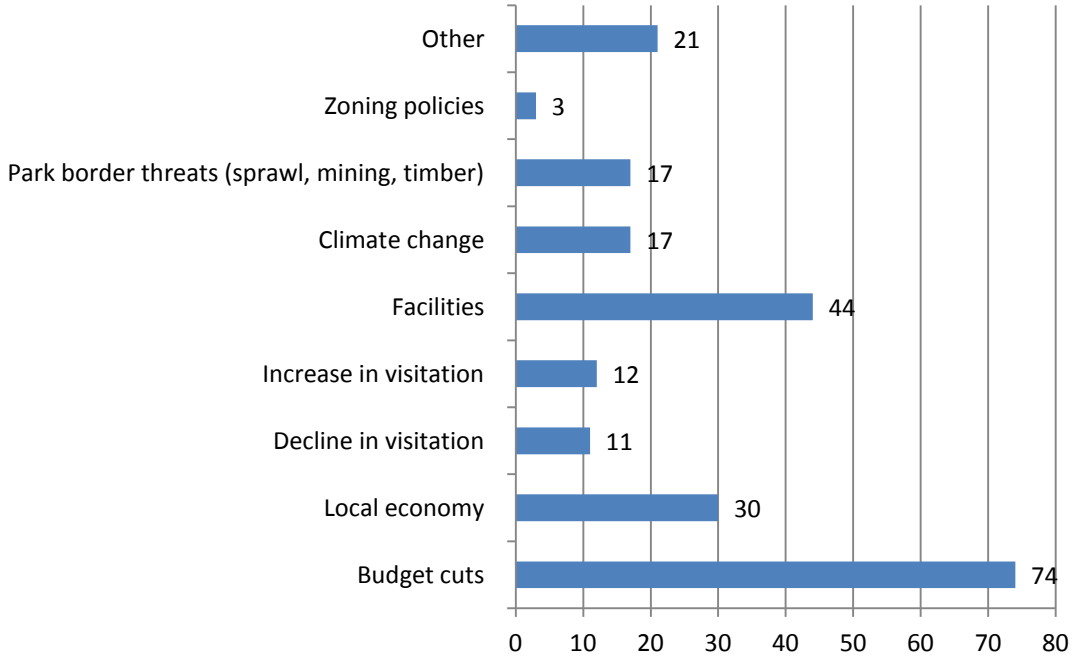
Q. 56 Do you maintain a database of media contacts? (n=78)



Q. 57 How often do you communicate with your Congressional representatives or their offices? (n=83)

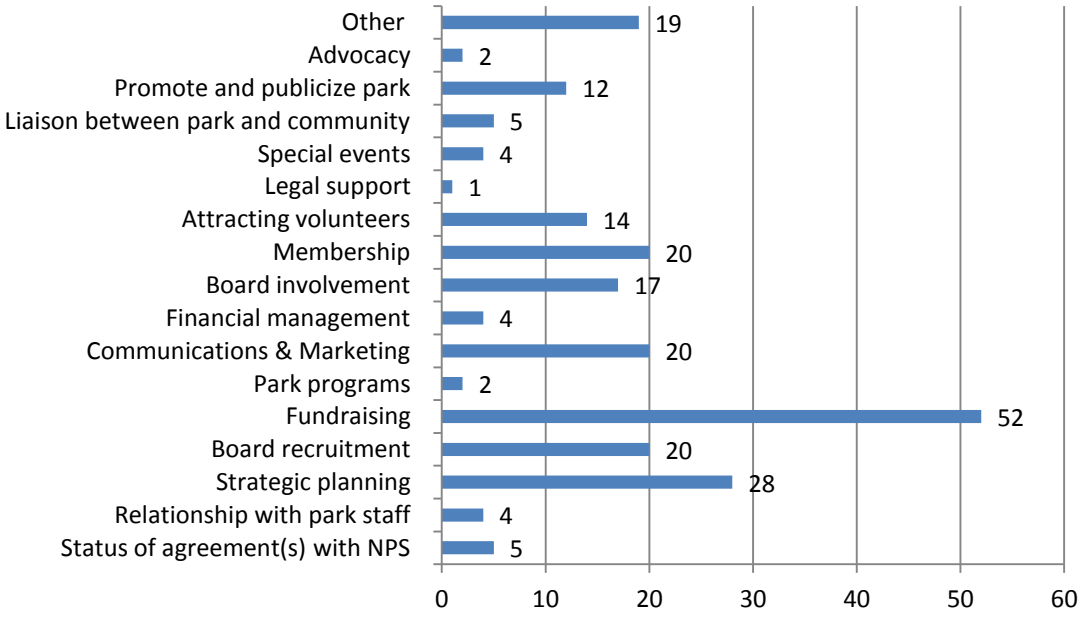
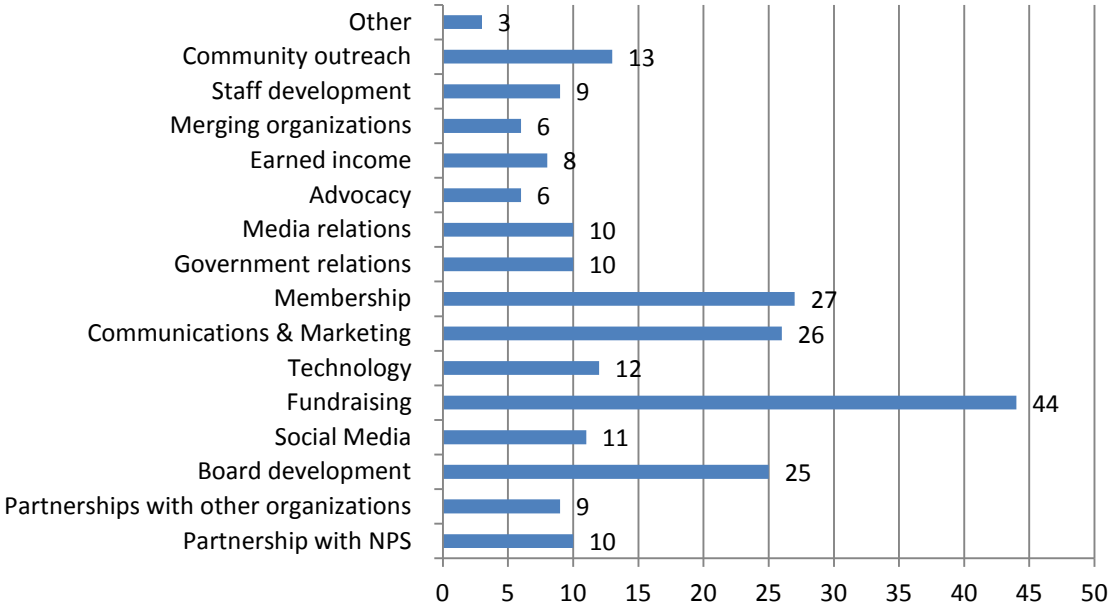


Q. 59 What are the top three key challenges facing the park? Select up to three.



Q. 60 What are the greatest strengths of your organization? ***Select up to three.***

Q. 61 What are the greatest obstacles facing your organization? ***Select up to three.***



Q. 62 Which of the following topics for training would be the most helpful to your organization. ***Select up to three.***