Summary Report: What makes a volunteer stewardship group successful?

Introduction

Volunteer environmental stewardship groups are organized groups of people who give their time and effort on a voluntary basis with the common purpose to preserve, protect, and work for the betterment of a specific geographic area (Lerner 1986).

This study investigated the question of what are the successful characteristics of volunteer stewardship groups and discusses the importance of several elements of the relationship between the volunteer stewardship group and the land management agency that contribute to success. The research objectives of the study were: 1) to identify the characteristics that contribute to the success of a volunteer stewardship group as they relate to the elements of a non-profit organization; 2) to examine the characteristics of the relationship between volunteer stewardship groups and the land management agency and identify their importance to success; and 3) to examine the differences in of the perceptions of volunteer stewardship group leaders and land management personnel as they relate to what characteristics make a volunteer stewardship group successful/unsuccessful and to what characteristics of the relationship are important to success.

Methods

Sample population

The research objectives were addressed by surveying two populations: volunteer stewardship group leaders and land management personnel who coordinate and work with volunteer stewardship groups to get projects accomplished. The sample of volunteer stewardship groups was chosen from groups with available web sites, and was limited, for budget reasons, to groups within the states of Arizona, New Mexico, California, Oregon, and Washington.

A list of 51 volunteer stewardship groups and a corresponding list of the primary land management personnel each group coordinated with were compiled. Surveys were sent to the leader of each volunteer stewardship group and the land management employee that worked with each group. Several groups coordinated with the same land management agency resulting in a smaller number of land management personnel contacted. A sample of 51 volunteer stewardship groups and 39 land management personnel were surveyed (Appendix A).

Survey development and administration

Two mailback questionnaires were designed to gather information regarding the successful characteristics of volunteer stewardship groups. One was designed to
be completed by a volunteer stewardship group leader (Appendix B); the other was designed to be completed by a land management agency employee (Appendix C). The agency person to be surveyed was identified as someone with experience working with volunteer stewardship groups and the volunteer stewardship group representative was a person with authority, such as a group president or volunteer coordinator. Both were asked the same questions, the differences were in the wording of questions in the relationship section that asked ‘between your group members and the land management agency’ for questionnaires going to volunteer stewardship group leaders or ‘between your agency and group members’ for questionnaires going to land management personnel.

Standard survey research procedures were used in developing and administering the questionnaires and to encourage participation (Salant and Dillman 1994). A week before mailing the surveys, participants were contacted to ensure participation as well as confirm the mailing addresses and contact person. An instruction letter along with a postage-paid envelope were included with the survey in the mailed package and two follow-up mailings reminding participants to return their questionnaires were sent at established two week intervals. Two week intervals were allotted between the mailings.

Instrument questions and data analysis

The questionnaires included open-ended questions regarding volunteer stewardship groups, a series of closed-ended questions related to the relationship between volunteer stewardship groups and the land management agency, and selected socio-demographic variables. A definition of a volunteer stewardship group was provided, as well as a definition of a successful volunteer stewardship group: Successful volunteer stewardship groups demonstrate a high level of achievement proportionate to their vision and mandate, which is measurable internally by the satisfaction of those involved as well as externally by the level of community support and public recognition (Millar 2003). The two open-ended questions were:

1) What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group **successful**?

2) What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group **unsuccessful**?

Responses to the questions were content analyzed and each response was placed into one of eight categories: aspirations, strategy, organizational skills, systems and infrastructure, human resources, organizational structure, culture, and other. The categories were based on the McKinsey and Company (2001) capacity framework and each response was evaluated using the definitions of each of the categories. The responses and categories are provided in Appendix
D. The importance of each category was measured according to the number of responses each category received.

Ten questions designed to address the relationship between volunteer stewardship groups and land management agencies revolved around three key mediating variables of a successful relationship: 1) communicative interaction; 2) commitment; and 3) trust. Questions assessed the attitudinal judgments of the respondents regarding the importance of various elements of the relationship and were measured using a 5-point Likert scale. Respondents were instructed to circle the number which best corresponded to their response on a scale of -2 through 2, where -2 was “very unimportant” and 2 was “very important.” Respondents were asked to rate each of the statements as to their importance to the success of a volunteer stewardship group:

1) The relationship between your agency and group members
2) Perceived trust between your agency and group members
3) Formal communication (e.g., use of professional letterheads, business attire for meetings) between your agency and group members
4) Consistent communication between your agency and group members
5) Opportunities for social interaction between your agency and group members
6) Information sharing between your agency and group members
7) Resource sharing (i.e., equipment, training) between your agency and group members
8) Equally shared decision making between your agency and the group regarding the projects and goals to be accomplished by the volunteer stewardship group
9) Providing feedback to the group members on their accomplishments
10) Commitment by your agency to work with a volunteer stewardship group

Note: Questionnaires sent to volunteer stewardship groups had reverse question wording, i.e., between your group members and the land management agency.

This data was summarized as an average importance rating for each of the samples.

Demographic characteristics for both sample populations were also gathered. The respondent’s position title, agency affiliation, and number of years of experience with volunteer stewardship groups was obtained. The volunteer stewardship groups were also asked to describe some of the general characteristics of their group members, i.e., age, gender, race, level of education, and employment status.
Summary Highlights

Administration of the questionnaires resulted in a 64% response rate from the land management personnel (n = 25) and a 61% response rate from the volunteer stewardship groups (n = 31). Survey highlights are presented as bulleted statements. For more detailed information on survey results, see the Summary Figures (p. 11). Highlights are organized into four sections: Successful Characteristics, Unsuccessful Characteristics, Characteristics of the Relationship, and Demographics.

Successful Characteristics

- The distribution of the comments as they were applied to the various elements of a non-profit organization illustrates the relative importance of each element to success (Figure 1).

- Comments most often focused on the Culture of an organization. These comments were usually in regard to the shared values members had towards their organization’s mission, and an organization’s work ethic.

- Comments provided by group leaders illustrate the concept of Culture in a successful volunteer stewardship group, “[group members have] the willingness to do volunteer work when called upon” and “[they] work hard for a few hours and then have refreshments.”

- Other elements of a successful non-profit organization that received a large portion of the comments were Organizational Skills – (“a feeling of accomplishment”), Strategy – (“willingness to work on projects that are needed rather than ‘fun’”), and Aspirations – (“a clear vision of the role of the organization”).

- The land management personnel and volunteer stewardship group leaders were mostly in agreement about which elements of a non-profit organization contributed to success.

- The number of comments from the land management personnel and volunteer stewardship group leaders differed for System and Infrastructure (i.e. volunteer stewardship group leaders provided some comments regarding System and Infrastructure, while the land management personnel did not provide any comments for the category) (p = 0.037), and Organizational Structure (land management personnel provided some comments regarding Organizational Structure, while the volunteer stewardship group leaders did not provide any comments for the category) (p = 0.004).
• Statistical differences were not detected in the number of comments provided by the land management personnel and the volunteer stewardship group leaders for the other elements of a non-profit organization.

Unsuccessful Characteristics

• The comments regarding the characteristics of volunteer stewardship groups that make them unsuccessful had a similar distribution as to what makes them successful (Figure 2).

• Strategy and Culture received the most comments as characteristics which when lacking contribute the most to an unsuccessful organization.

• The non-profit element Organizational Structure, along with the System and Infrastructure element, received the fewest comments.

• Of the responses to unsuccessful characteristics, no difference was detected in the number of comments provided for each of the elements between the land management personnel and volunteer stewardship group leaders.

• The Culture of an organization was seen to be the most important characteristic contributing to the success of a volunteer stewardship group, as well as one of the characteristics that contributes to a group being unsuccessful.

• The Strategy of a volunteer stewardship group was seen, however, as the characteristic, which when deficient, contributes the most to an unsuccessful group. This category included comments like “lack of communal planning/engagement with volunteers,” “unrealistic goals,” and “meaningless projects”.

• The relatively few comments that fell under the category of “Other”, regardless of whether the comments were about successful or unsuccessful characteristics, were in regards to some aspect of the relationship between land managers and volunteer stewardship groups. For example one land manager responded with the following comment, “[A successful group] fosters frequent, positive communication within themselves, partner groups/agencies, and the general public”.

Characteristics of the Relationship

• The relationship between the land management agency and the volunteer stewardship groups was unanimously regarded as very important by both groups.
• Trust within the relationship, consistent communication, information sharing, and a commitment to work together were characteristics of the relationship that were considered very important to success.

• Social interaction, shared decisions, resource sharing, and feedback were characteristics rated as important to success.

• All of the variables, except formal communication, were seen as important factors contributing to success (Figure 3). Formal communication included such activities as using professional letterheads or wearing business attire to meetings.

• The opinions of the land management personnel and the opinions of the volunteer stewardship group leaders who responded differed when they were asked how important it was to have equally shared decision making between group members and the land management agency regarding the projects and goals to be accomplished by the volunteer stewardship group (p = 0.007). It is more important to have equally shared decision making to volunteer stewardship group leaders than it is to the land management personnel.

• Opinions also differed when they were asked how important it was to get feedback from the land management agency regarding the group’s accomplishments (p = 0.044). Providing feedback to volunteer stewardship groups was statistically more important to land management personnel than it was to the volunteer stewardship group leaders.

Demographics

• Of the land management personnel 19 respondents worked for a federal agency and 6 respondents worked for a state agency. The respondents were primarily volunteer coordinators or park rangers, with a few Forest Service District Rangers.

• The years of experience ranged from 3 years to 39, with an average of 12 years experience (avg. = 11.5; std. deviation = 8.0), for the land management personnel.

• The years of experience expressed by the volunteer stewardship group leaders ranged from 1 year to 19 years with an average of 5 years experience (avg. = 5.3; std. deviation = 4.7). The volunteer stewardship group leaders were primarily presidents or executive directors of their organization.
• The volunteer stewardship groups were often named in reference to their area of concern and often had names that began with “Friends of …”

• The volunteer stewardship groups ranged in size from 9 members to almost 7900 members (avg. = 801; std. deviation = 1494) and reported being formally organized for 5 to 74 years (avg. = 15; std. deviation = 13).

• The general characteristics of the groups indicated the following median responses: members generally were 51 years old or older, membership was generally evenly split with half male volunteers and half female volunteers, most volunteers were Caucasian, had a college degree, and were employed full-time.

Discussion

The results from the surveys exemplify the complexity of the elements of a non-profit organization. The same elements (e.g., culture, strategy, organizational skills) that greatly contribute to the success of a volunteer stewardship organization are the same ones which, when lacking, will negatively impact the chances of success. Because a stewardship group is composed of volunteers with the common purpose to preserve, protect, and work for the betterment of a specific geographic area (Lerner 1986), it is not surprising that the culture of an organization is a key characteristic that contributes more than any other element to the success of a volunteer stewardship group.

The culture of an organization is regarded as the connective tissue that binds together the organization, including shared values and practices, behavior norms, and, most important, the organization’s orientation toward performance (McKinsey and Company 2001). When broken down, there are several important elements within the definition of culture that potentially explain why culture was reported to greatly contribute to success. One important aspect of culture is the intertwined process of communication that continually influences the progress of the other elements of an organization (Miller 2005). Consistent communication, trust, and a commitment to work together were elements shown to be very important to the relationship between land managers and volunteer stewardship groups, and are likely elements equally as important within the culture of an organization.

Another underlying aspect of culture is social cohesion or, in other words, the ability of a group of individuals to work together. If culture is the tissue that binds an organization together, then it would seem important to have unity, rather than disorder, within the group members. In order to promote unity and social cohesion within a volunteer stewardship group, it becomes important to recognize the importance of having shared values, practices, and behavior norms among group members.
Interacting with people who have similar passions about the environment and nature was the only behavioral intention found in a study of high school students and community residents that significantly influenced an individual’s willingness to volunteer (Hancock 2007), thus reiterating the importance of having shared values, practices, and behavior norms among group members. Georg Simmel, a classical social theorist, posited that a “harmony of interests” and “a common goal in the face of obstacles” would be the basis for cooperation among individuals (Edles and Appelrouth 2005, p. 262). The significant influence the behavioral intention to interact with people who have similar passions about the environment and nature had when attempting to explain one’s willingness to participate in a volunteer stewardship group supports this idea of a ‘harmony of interests’ as the basis for cooperation among individuals. Thus, having shared values, practices, and behavior norms among group members would theoretically contribute, in a positive manner, to the social cohesiveness of a volunteer stewardship group.

One caution arises when postulating about how culture contributes to success and theorizing about the importance of social cohesion. The potential exists for what can be referred to as “groupthink.” Groupthink is a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive group (Miller 2005). It is characterized by group members having a strong desire to get along with each other and maintain good feelings about the group, but in reality individuals become reluctant to raise contrary points of view which lead to the belief that all members are in complete agreement and the group is invulnerable to error (Miller 2005). The caution arises with volunteer stewardship groups because the potential exists for an extreme outcome where the social cohesiveness of the group members leads to failure of the organization. For example a volunteer stewardship group could be composed of people who really enjoy working together, and over time they become close friends and like-minded on many issues. Eventually the group members are accustomed to their way of doing business and struggle to maintain a cooperative relationship with the new land manager. This caution and example may not too far fetched, because the culture of an organization was also one of the characteristics that contributed the most to making a volunteer stewardship group unsuccessful.

Volunteer stewardship groups were also shown to not be completely successful without a well organized strategy designed to achieve those aspirations. One important component of the McKinsey and Company’s capacity framework (2001) is the interconnectedness of the elements. When lacking, the strategy of a volunteer stewardship group was seen as the characteristic that contributed the most to an unsuccessful group. Efforts within the strategy element should seek to align the organization’s strategies with its aspirations (McKinsey and Company 2001).

System and infrastructure as well as organizational structure received very few comments when looking at either the successful characteristics or unsuccessful
characteristics. These two elements seem to embody the structural elements supporting a non-profit business model. Since all volunteer stewardship groups are non-profit organizations (Millar 2003), this study is evidence supporting an appropriate business model choice for volunteer stewardship groups.

Finding so few differences regarding the successful characteristics of the volunteer stewardship groups, as well as what characteristics of the relationship are important to success, between the volunteer stewardship group leaders and land management personnel was unexpected. This could be an indication of common interests and expectations shared by volunteer stewardship group leaders and land management personnel, after all stewardship is at the heart of both populations (Westphal and Childs 1994).

Well-managed organizations know good relationships with their publics are important to their success (Guth and Marsh 2006). Several factors were viewed as particularly important to success with regards to the relationship between volunteer stewardship groups and land management personnel. Consistent communication, trust, and a commitment to work together were very important to a successful relationship between land management personnel and volunteer stewardship groups. This research supports the concepts in relationship marketing where commitment and trust are theorized to be key mediating variables of a successful relationship (Morgan & Hunt 1994). Trust is so important to a relationship that it is considered to be the cornerstone of a strategic partnership (Morgan and Hunt 1994).

Communication, which can be broadly defined as the formal and informal sharing of information between firms, is a precursor to trust (Morgan and Hunt 1994). Sharing information was also seen as very important to success. Social interaction, shared decisions, resource sharing and feedback were important factors contributing to success. In general, the relationship itself is very important to the success of a volunteer stewardship group.

Volunteer stewardship groups can use the information provided in this study to evaluate their own organization. This may prove useful to inspire donors because evaluations that rigorously measure the effectiveness of a stewardship group’s programs can demonstrate achievements and can serve to strengthen the internal workings of an organization (McKinsey and Company 2001; Millar 2003). The good intentions of nonprofits are no substitute for organization and leadership or accountability, performance, and results (Drucker 1989).

Understanding the importance of a relationship and understanding the delicate balance of the elements of a non-profit organization, will greatly improve the cooperative management effort provided by volunteer stewardship groups and land management personnel. The elements of culture and strategy embody several of the characteristics that greatly contribute to success. The same elements contributing to success are the same ones that can negatively impact
the chances of success, implying a delicate balance and a need for volunteer stewardship groups and land management personnel to understand the strength and weaknesses of their organizations in order to improve the quality, and possibly quantity, of achievements. This study illustrates the important components of a successful volunteer stewardship group that, when finely tuned and coordinated result in long lasting relationships and well managed resources for generations to come.
Figure 1 The number of comments from a survey of volunteer stewardship group leaders and land management personnel regarding the successful characteristics of volunteer stewardship groups as applied to the elements of a non-profit organization.

* Indicates statistically significant difference in number of responses between land management personnel and volunteer stewardship group leaders for a category.
The number of comments from a survey of volunteer stewardship group leaders and land management personnel regarding the unsuccessful characteristics of volunteer stewardship groups as applied to the elements of a non-profit organization.
Figure 3 The average importance rating, ranging from -2 to 2 with -2 being very unimportant and 2 being very important, for each of the characteristics of the relationship between the land management agency and the group.

* Indicates statistically significant difference in number of responses between land management personnel and volunteer stewardship group leaders for a category.
Literature Cited


Hancock, P. H. 2007. Assessing an individual’s sense of stewardship and the successful characteristics of volunteer stewardship groups. p. 57. Masters Thesis. Northern Arizona University School of Forestry.


Appendix A: The list of volunteer stewardship groups and land management agency personnel contacted.

Volunteer Stewardship Group Contact List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group Name</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<td>Friends of Sabino Canyon*</td>
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<td>PO Box 31265</td>
<td>Tucson</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>85751-1265</td>
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<td>Friends of Saguaro National Park*</td>
<td>Attn: B. Newpson</td>
<td>300 E. University Suite 140</td>
<td>Tucson</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>85705</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sky Island Alliance/Friends of Tumacori Highlands</td>
<td>Attn: Mike Quigley</td>
<td>PO Box 41165</td>
<td>Tucson</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>85717</td>
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<td>Friends of Lake Powell*</td>
<td>Attn: Steven Ward</td>
<td>PO Box 7007</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>86040</td>
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<td>Friends of Kartchner Caverns State Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>2980 South Highway 90</td>
<td>Benson</td>
<td>AZ</td>
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<td>Friends of the Forest, Inc.*</td>
<td>Attn: Chuck Jenkins</td>
<td>PO Box 2391</td>
<td>Sedona</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>86339-2391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona State Parks Foundation</td>
<td></td>
<td>PO Box 4216</td>
<td>Pheonix</td>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>85030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prescott Creeks*</td>
<td>Attn: Jason Clay</td>
<td>PO Box 3004</td>
<td>Prescott</td>
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<td>Friends of the Santa Cruz River*</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Friends of Walnut Canyon*</td>
<td>Attn: Betsy McKeller</td>
<td>330 S. Ash Ln</td>
<td>Flagstaff</td>
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<td>Grand Canyon Association*</td>
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<td>Grand Canyon</td>
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<td>Grand Canyon National Park Foundation</td>
<td>Attn: Terra Crampton</td>
<td>625 North Beaver</td>
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<td>Stewards of Public Lands*</td>
<td>Attn: Diane Joens</td>
<td>312 W. Mesquite Dr.</td>
<td>Cottonwood</td>
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<td>Friends of the San Pedro River, Inc.*</td>
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<td>1763 Paseo San Luis</td>
<td>Sierra Vista</td>
<td>AZ</td>
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<td>Gila Conservation Coalition*</td>
<td>Attn: Allyson Siwik</td>
<td>305A Cooper St.</td>
<td>Silver City</td>
<td>NM</td>
<td>88061</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amigos Bravos: Friends of the Wild Rivers*</td>
<td>Attn: Rachel Conn</td>
<td>PO Box 238</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Gila Watershed Alliance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Channel Islands National Park</td>
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<td>Ventura</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>93001</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy</td>
<td>Attn: Sue Gardner</td>
<td>Fort Mason, Bldg. 201 3rd Floor</td>
<td>San Francisco</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>94123</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of the Dunes</td>
<td>PO Box 186</td>
<td>Arcata</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>95518</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge</td>
<td>7715 Lakeville Highway</td>
<td>Petaluma</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>94954-9266</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of the Foothills*</td>
<td>Attn: Brittany Mckee</td>
<td>PO Box 3942</td>
<td>San Clemente</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>92674</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of the Elephant Seal*</td>
<td>PO Box 490</td>
<td>Cambria</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>93428</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of the Santa Cruz State Parks</td>
<td>Attn: Christa Stiner</td>
<td>144 School Street</td>
<td>Santa Cruz</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>95060</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocates of the Forest Nisene Marks State Park</td>
<td>Attn: Paul Ticknor</td>
<td>PO Box 461</td>
<td>Aptos</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>95001-0461</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Crater Lake National Park*</td>
<td>PO Box 88</td>
<td>Crater Lake</td>
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<td>PO Box 1306</td>
<td>Sherwood</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>97140</td>
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<td>Friends of Banks/Vernonia</td>
<td>Attn: Ron Johnson</td>
<td>24600 NW Bacona Road</td>
<td>Banks</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>97106</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Shore Acres*</td>
<td>PO Box 1172</td>
<td>Coos Bay</td>
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<td>97420</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Friends of Tryon Creek State Park*</td>
<td>Attn: Robin Perterson</td>
<td>11321 SW Terwilliger Blvd.</td>
<td>Portland</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>97219</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends of Dibblee Point*</td>
<td>Attn: Lori Baker</td>
<td>PO Box 211</td>
<td>Rainier</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>97048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olympic Park Associates</td>
<td>Attn: Tim McNulty</td>
<td>168 Lost Mountain Lane</td>
<td>Sequim</td>
<td>WA</td>
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<td>Friends of Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge*</td>
<td>Attn: Tricia Woods</td>
<td>PO Box 215</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willapa National Wildlife Refuge*</td>
<td>Attn: Kristine Massin</td>
<td>3888 State Route 101</td>
<td>Ilwaco</td>
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<td>Channel Islands National Park</td>
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<td>1901 Spinnaker Drive</td>
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<td>National Wildlife Refuge*</td>
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<td>Tryon Creek State Natural Area*</td>
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<td>Karen Houston</td>
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<td>Lisa Langelier</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coronado National Forest*</td>
<td>5700 N. Sabino Canyon Rd.</td>
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<td>Buenos Aires NWR</td>
<td>PO Box 109</td>
<td>Bonnie Swarbrick</td>
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<td>Nogales Ranger District Coronado National Forest</td>
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<td>Maggie Oconnell</td>
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<td>Bandelier National Monument*</td>
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<td>Lynne Dominy</td>
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<td>Bitter Lake NWR</td>
<td>4065 Bitter Lakes Rd.</td>
<td>Steve Alvarez</td>
<td>Roswell</td>
<td>NM</td>
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<td>Pinnacles National Monument</td>
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<td>Carl Brenner</td>
<td>Paicines</td>
<td>CA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Golden Gate National Park*</td>
<td>Fort Mason, Building 201</td>
<td>Terry Kريدler</td>
<td>San Fransisco</td>
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<td>NMED/SWQB*</td>
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<td>Marcy Leavitt</td>
<td>Santa Fe</td>
<td>NM</td>
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<td>Joan Mayer</td>
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<td>Kartchner Caverns State Park*</td>
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<td>Julie Smith</td>
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<td>Prescott Parks and Recreation Department</td>
<td>125 N. Arizona Ave.</td>
<td>Eric Smith</td>
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<td>Peaks Ranger District Coconino National Forest*</td>
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<td>Flagstaff</td>
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<td>Oracle State Park*</td>
<td>Attn: Jerry Ravert</td>
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<td>Verde Ranger District</td>
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<td>Humbolt Bay Beaches and Dunes</td>
<td>Attn: Denise DelSecco</td>
<td>PO Box 186</td>
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<td>California State Parks*</td>
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<td>Soquel Demonstration State Forest</td>
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<td>4750 Old San Jose Road</td>
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<td>Tule River/ Hot Springs Ranger District Sequoia National Forest</td>
<td>Attn: Tom Burns</td>
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<td>Attn: Bill Wollcott</td>
<td>201 Sunset Beach Rd.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crater Lake National Park</td>
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<td>PO Box 7</td>
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<td>Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge*</td>
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<td>16507 SW Roy Rogers Rd</td>
<td>Sherwood</td>
<td>97140-9292</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oregon Department of State Lands</td>
<td>Attn: Tammy Hubert</td>
<td>775 Summer St. NE Suite 100</td>
<td>Salem</td>
<td>97301-1279</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mount Rainier National Park*</td>
<td>Attn: Kevin Bacher</td>
<td>55210 238 Ave East</td>
<td>Ashford</td>
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<td>Attn: Maggie Tyler</td>
<td>600 East Park Avenue</td>
<td>Port Angeles</td>
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<td>PO Box 1447</td>
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<td>26010 S. Smith Rd</td>
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*Indicates surveyed was returned and analyzed.
Appendix B: The survey administered to volunteer stewardship group leaders.

What makes volunteer stewardship groups successful?
**Instructions:** This questionnaire is designed to help us learn more about volunteer stewardship groups. There are no right or wrong answers. Many questions are open-ended to allow you to share your thoughts and comments. There is extra space at the end if needed.

**Section 1**

**Definition:** Volunteer environmental stewardship groups are organized groups of people who give their time and effort on a voluntary basis with the common purpose to preserve, protect, and work for the betterment of a specific geographic area.

1. The following questions will help us learn about the people who participated in the study and the volunteer groups they work for.

   A. What is the name of your organization?

      _____________________________________________________________

   B. How many members are involved with your organization? __________

   C. How long has your group been formally organized and in service?

      ____________ Years

   D. What types of activities is your organization involved with?

   E. Does your organization charge a membership fee? (check one)

      □ No

      □ Yes → How much? ________________________________

   F. Does your organization have a stated political orientation?

      □ No

      □ Yes → What is it? ________________________________

   G. What type of organizational structure (i.e. non-profit, private, etc) does your stewardship group employ?

   H. What is your stewardship group’s primary mission (as reflected in your mission statement)?
I. What public land management agency does your volunteer stewardship group primarily work with?

__________________________________________________

J. What is your title within the volunteer group?

__________________________________________________

K. How many years have you been with your organization?

______________ Years

2. Please describe the general characteristics of your group.

A. Age
   Group members generally fall within which of the following age groups? (check one)
   - 20 years old or younger
   - 21-30 years old
   - 31-40 years old
   - 41-50 years old
   - 51 years old or older

B. Gender
   In general, group members are: (check one)
   - Mostly female volunteers
   - Mostly male volunteers
   - Evenly split

C. Race
   Most of the members are: (check one)
   - African American
   - Asian
   - Caucasian
   - Hispanic
   - Native American
   - Pacific Islander
   - Other

D. Level of education
   Our members generally have: (check one)
   - Some high school
   - High school diploma
   - Some college
   - College degree
☐ Post-graduate education  
☐ Other (specify) __________________  
☐ I do not know

E. *Employment status*

Most of the members are: (check one)

☐ Full-time students  
☐ Part-time students  
☐ Unemployed  
☐ Retired  
☐ Employed full-time  
☐ Employed part-time  
☐ Full-time homemaker/caregiver  
☐ Other (specify) ___________________  
☐ I do not know

F. Please describe any other demographic characteristics common within your organization.

**Section 2**

**Definition:** A successful volunteer stewardship group can be defined as an organization that demonstrates a high level of achievement proportionate to its vision and mandate. This success can be measured internally by the satisfaction of those involved as well as externally by the level of community support and public recognition.

What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group **successful**?

What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group **unsuccessful**?

What type of organizational structure (i.e. non-profit, private, etc) do you feel works best in order for the group to be successful? Why?

What type of stated political orientation (i.e. non-political, liberal, conservative, or other) do you feel works best in order for the group to be successful? Why?
Section 3

Please rate each of the following characteristics as to how important you feel they are to the success of a volunteer stewardship group. On a scale of -2 through 2, with -2 being very unimportant and 2 being very important, circle the number which best corresponds with your response.

<table>
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<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Importance</th>
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<td>The relationship between your group members and the land management agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceived trust between your group members and the land management agency</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal communication (e.g. use of professional letterheads, business attire for meetings, etc.) between your group members and the land management agency</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consistent communication between your group members and the land management agency</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunities for social interaction between your group members and the land management agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information sharing between your group members and the land management agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource sharing (i.e. equipment, training, etc.) between your group members and the land management agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equally shared decision making between your group members and the land management agency regarding the projects and goals to be accomplished by your volunteer stewardship group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Getting feedback from the land management agency group’s accomplishments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commitment by your volunteer stewardship group to work with a land management agency</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group members live in close proximity to the natural resource they desire to preserve and protect.</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2</td>
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</table>
Are there any other characteristics that you feel are important for the success of a volunteer stewardship group?

Finally, what characteristics (e.g. outgoing, professional) should the primary person from your group that coordinates and works with the land management agency possess to promote the success of the volunteer stewardship group?

Section 4

This last section is reserved for you to share any additional comments or thoughts you may have regarding volunteer stewardship groups and public land management.

Thank you for your valuable input. Please fold the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed postage paid envelope.
Appendix C: The survey administered to land management personnel.

What makes volunteer stewardship groups successful?
**Instructions:** This questionnaire is designed to help us learn more about volunteer stewardship groups. There are no right or wrong answers. Many questions are open-ended to allow you to share your thoughts and comments. There is extra space at the end if needed.

**Section 1**

**Definition:** Volunteer environmental stewardship groups are organized groups of people who give their time and effort on a voluntary basis with the common purpose to preserve, protect, and work for the betterment of a specific geographic area.

What types of activities do these groups help your agency with? e.g. fund raising, project work, political support, etc.

**Definition:** A **successful** volunteer stewardship group can be defined as an organization that demonstrates a high level of achievement proportionate to its vision and mandate. This success can be measured internally by the satisfaction of those involved as well as externally by the level of community support and public recognition.

What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group **successful**?

What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group **unsuccessful**?

What type of organizational structure (i.e. non-profit, private, etc) do you feel works best in order for the group to be successful? Why?

What type of stated political orientation (i.e. non-political, liberal, conservative, or other) do you feel works best in order for the group to be successful? Why?
### Section 2

Please rate each of the following characteristics as to how important you feel they are to the success of a volunteer stewardship group. On a scale of -2 through 2, with -2 being very unimportant and 2 being very important, circle the number which best corresponds with your response.

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<th>Characteristics</th>
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<td>The relationship between your agency and group members</td>
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<td>Perceived trust between your agency and group members</td>
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<td>Formal communication (e.g. use of professional letterheads, business attire for meetings, etc.) between your agency and group members</td>
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<td>Consistent communication between your agency and group members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunities for social interaction between your agency and group members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information sharing between your agency and group members</td>
<td>-2 -1 0 1 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resource sharing (i.e. equipment, training, etc.) between your agency and group members</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equally shared decision making between your agency and the group regarding the projects and goals to be accomplished by the volunteer stewardship group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Providing feedback to the group members on their accomplishments</td>
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<td>Commitment by your agency to work with a volunteer stewardship group</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer group members live in close proximity to the natural resource they desire to preserve and protect.</td>
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Are there any other characteristics that you feel are important for the success of a volunteer stewardship group?
What characteristics (e.g. outgoing, professional) should the primary person from your agency that coordinates and works with volunteer stewardship groups possess to promote the success of a volunteer stewardship group?

Section 3

These final questions will help us learn about the people who participated in the study.

What is your job title?

__________________________________________________

What public land management agency are you employed with?

__________________________________________________

How many years of experience do you have working with volunteer stewardship groups?

___________________ Years

Section 4

This last section is reserved for you to share any additional comments or thoughts you may have regarding volunteer stewardship groups and public land management.

Thank you for your valuable input. Please fold the questionnaire and return it in the enclosed postage paid envelope.
Appendix D: The written comments provided by volunteer stewardship group leaders and land management personnel regarding the successful and unsuccessful characteristics of volunteer stewardship groups.

Comments provided by Land Management Personnel

Section 1: What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful?

Survey#  Written comment/response  – Element of a non-profit organization

47.  Continued recruitment of new members, including group leaders – Strategy
     Positive reinforcement – Other
     Meaningful project/cause – Aspirations
     See comment Section 2  – Culture
46.  Organization – Organizational Skills
45.  Motivation to accomplish projects – Culture
     Sense of ownership & pride about what they represent – Culture
     A desire to be a part of a team or something bigger than themselves – Culture
     An opportunity to contribute – Strategy
     Belief in what they do – Culture
     Leadership, direction and a real work load to take on – Strategy
     See comment Section 2  – Culture, Aspiration
40. Willingness & energy to help – Culture
     One that wants to accomplish (not impose) FS needs not their own mandate – Aspirations
     Cooperative, team effort – Organizational Skills
     Flexibility – Organizational Structure
     Service ethic – Culture
     Their geographic base- favorite, preference – Culture
     See comment Section 2 – Culture
78. Cohesive group of motivated individuals who support the mission of the organization – Human Resources
     Organizational structure that allows for individuals to capitalize on their personal strengths without compromising the collaborative nature of the group process – Organizational Structure
66. Local interest – Human Resources
     Long-term commitments to projects – Strategy
70. The volunteer must believe in the organization/cause and feel their contribution is appreciated and contributes to the success of the organization – Aspirations & Culture.
     Most volunteers like to know what their duties are and what is expected of them.
     Should have one person assigned as a volunteer coordinator – Organizational Structure
     Must have set goals – Aspirations
Rewards for the volunteers: agency shirts/hats and volunteer hour pins, group barbecue – Culture.

74. The park and FOSP are involved with the community. They are willing to help with community events which do not directly relate to the park – Strategy. They expanded their goals and mission to support the park when it opened – Aspirations.

See comment Section 2 – Culture

57. Passion for the resource – Culture
Background pertinent to the work they do – Human Resources
Feeling of belonging – Culture
Open communication w/ agency – Organizational Skills

See comment Section 2 – Aspirations

87. One single leader who can speak/organize for the group – Human Resources
Clear defined goals/mission – Aspirations
Flexibility – willingness to adapt desired project to meet park’s need – Organizational Structure

88. Letting the group accomplish the activities they are interested in and not force them into unwanted duties – Strategy
Let them have their own identity, but feel a part of the staff – Culture

See comment Section 2 – Strategy

84. Dedication – Culture
Having a strategic plan – Strategy
Energy – Culture
Lots of recognition from benefiting agency – Other

62. They must be park (specific location) and community based – Other
Our Friends group works because every member cares about this park and every member has leveraging power within our surrounding communities – 2 Culture

See comment Section 2 – Human Resources, Aspirations, & Culture

65. Partnerships with outside organizations – internal organizations & with the VIP individuals – Sense of purpose/place – 2 Strategy, Culture, & Aspirations

See comment Section 1 organizational structure – Aspirations

58. Commitment on the part of the agency staff as well as on the part of the volunteers – Culture & Other
Recognized success – Organizational Skills

See comment Section 2 – Human Resources & Organizational Skills

72. Well organized and committed to common goal/mission – Aspirations & Organizational Structure
Contains a stable membership that can lend consistency to the group – Human Resources

Keeps goals and activities simple and choose manageable project loads – Strategy
Fosters frequent, positive communication w/ selves, partner groups/agencies, and general public – Other

See comment Section 2 – Aspirations & Strategy

43. Communication – Organizational Skills
Willingness to work on projects that are needed rather than “fun” – Strategy
Clear-cut mission and goals that are agreed by all members – Aspirations
86. A strong sense of ownership for both the resource and the program – Culture
A strong sense of what’s being contributed makes a difference – Organizational Skills
To a lesser extent, a sense that the work is valued and appreciated – Organizational Skills
See comment Section 2 – Culture & Other
76. Sharing a common vision – Aspirations
Working together to accomplish goals consistent with the mission of the agency and other legislation – Strategy
Communication – Organizational Skills
Building trust – Organizational Skills
See comment Section 2 – 2 Culture
75. Commitment to the groups’ goals – Aspirations & Culture
Passion for is purpose – Culture
See comment Section 2 – Organizational Structure & Strategy
42. Leadership with a clear vision of the role of the organization – Aspirations & Human Resources
See comment Section 2 – Other
68. Communication – Organizational Skills
Sense of purpose – Culture
Seeing results – Organizational Skills
Sense of accomplishment – Culture
Feeling appreciated – Organizational Skills
Passion – Culture
Feeling a part of a team – Culture
Continual training – Strategy
Feeling that their input is valued – Organizational Skills
Having fun – Culture
67. Being thoroughly prepared and organized prior to a trip – Strategy
82. Strong initiative – Culture
Self leadership – Culture
Communication with agency – Organizational Skills
89. Commitment and dedication – drive and resourcefulness – Culture
Need individuals on the board who have a business background and who are good at getting funding – Human Resources
See comment Section 2 – 2 Culture

Section 1 What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group unsuccessful?

Survey# Written comment/response – Element of a non-profit organization
47. A few people doing most of the work leads to burn out – Culture
46. Disorganization – communication breakdowns – Organizational Skills
45. Competitiveness (too much) – Culture
No belief but just want to belong to another club – Culture
Lack of direction by agency – Other
Projects are repetitive without goals or end in sight – Strategy
Boredom – Culture
0. Difficult to deal with – Organizational Skills
Hung up on their agenda – Aspirations
Appreciation for the bureaucratic process – Other
78. Lack of structure or organization and/or an unclear set of short term goals that 
correspond to their long term vision – Organizational Structure & Strategy
Dissention among group members – inability to agree and methods or best 
practices for achieving goals – Culture & Strategy
66. Lack of local interest – Human Resources
Politics – Other
Agendas – Strategy
70. Volunteers like to feel they are a part of the organization – Culture
Volunteers are there to help and you need to prepare for their arrival and have 
needed tools and have set goals – Strategy & Aspirations
Volunteers feel their contribution is not appreciated – Culture
74. Too narrow of a mission – Aspirations.
Being only on paper and not work with and on the park – Organizational Skills
57. Frustration over government red tape / time it takes to get things done – Strategy
87. Lack of organization/leader – Human Resources
Lack of planning – Strategy
Unrealistic time lines or project ideas – Strategy
Wanting everything and in return offering nothing – Organizational Skills
Seeing a project as a way in - “We are going to be in the back country. Is there a 
project we can do so we can camp for free?” – Strategy
88. Opposite – don’t force them into jobs they’re not interested in. Will lose them – 
Strategy
Lack of communication – System and Infrastructure
84. Burnout amongst the very few people who give the most time – Human 
Resources
62. Our Friends group relies on the leadership of one person to keep the group 
running – Human Resources
They also make very limited efforts to obtain new memberships and do very 
limited fund raising (only with NPS direction & ongoing input) – Human 
Resources & Strategy
65. (No comments)
58. Lack of common vision – Aspirations
Lack of commitment to seeing it be successful – Culture
72. Exact opposite of the characteristics listed above (see comments regarding 
successful characteristics)– Aspirations, Strategy, Human Resources, 
Organizational Structure, & Other
43. Poor communication – Organizational Skills
Differing goals – Aspirations
Individual volunteers trying to force their interests/needs over that of the resource 
– Human Resources
86. Disorganized management with a lack of clear mission or objectives – Organizational Structure & Aspirations
Lack of regular activities to keep members motivated and involved – Strategy

76. Not identifying a shared vision upfront – Aspirations
When an agency thinks they control the stewardship group, this also poses a serious problem – Other
Not showing respect – Other

75. Lack of understanding of what a long term commitment means – Strategy

42. Taking too much and losing vision of the mission of the group – Strategy & Aspirations

68. Feeling unworthy – Organizational Skills
Ignored – Other
Pressured and unappreciated – Other
Lack of the above mentioned items (see comments regarding successful characteristics) – 1 Strategy, 4 Organizational Skills, & 5 Culture

82. Over-stepping bounds of service agreements – Strategy

Low volunteer turnout – Human Resources

89. Board becoming stagnant – members only attending meetings because they do not have the time to do anything else – Human Resources

Section 2 Are there any other characteristics that you feel are important for the success of a volunteer stewardship group?

47. Opportunities to have fun - (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

45. Shared goals, vision - (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Aspirations)
Acceptance of diversity (political, radical, ideals) - (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Aspirations)
Sense of fun - (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

0. Relationships, interactions - (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

74. People in the group need to be involved, not just one or two carrying the group. People get “burned out” if no one else helps (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

57. Shared goals (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Aspirations)
88. Be part of each other – invite representative to your in-house staff meetings and attend their meetings (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Strategy)

62. People who care deeply about the mission of the group and have time that they are willing to give to it (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Human Resources & Aspirations)

Participants need to be action oriented with enthusiasm and follow-thru (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

65. Not possible with Federal Gov’t site (with an arrow connecting to equally shared decision making…

58. Diverse individuals who have the right knowledge and skills to accomplish the group’s goals (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Human Resources)

Ability to work together (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Organizational Skills)

72. Groups that represent themselves for something/a goal rather than portraying themselves as against something/a goal will definitely set a better tone for group success (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Aspirations & Strategy)

86. A strong and positive sense of identity for the group, and a sense for the important role they play in accomplishing the mission of the agency (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture & Other)

76. Honesty, integrity - (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – 2 Culture)

42. Staff time to properly dedicate to group (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Other)

68. The same characteristics mentioned on the last page under successful characteristics.

89. Hardworking (Comment will be added to Section 1. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

Comments provided by Volunteer Stewardship Group Leaders

Section 2 What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful?

Survey# Written comment/response – Element of a non-profit organization
34. Personal connection/investment – Culture
   Sense of ownership – Aspirations
   Recognition – Organizational skills (performance measurement)
   Longevity – Aspirations
35. Accomplish goals – Culture (orientation toward performance)
   Participation from individuals and other community groups, businesses, public
   agencies, etc. – Human Resources
   Leadership – System and Infrastructure
   See comment Section 3 - Aspirations
8. Strong community participation – Human Resources
   Volunteer projects that provide a sense of accomplishment – Strategy
27. The volunteers should have a common goal – Aspirations
1. Shared ownership and goals – Culture
   Positive Energy - Culture
14. Appropriately thanking and recognizing its volunteers - Organizational skills
   (performance measurement).
   Make it fun. With the Stewards of Public Lands, we see results. This is important
   to volunteers. They can see their contribution makes a difference.
90. Defined relationship with land management organization – Organizational skills
   Hopefully collaborative – Organizational skills (external relationship building)
   Training for both parties i.e. culture of each – Organizational Skills
   Skills in planning, communicating, managing conflict – Organizational Skills
   Enthusiasm – Culture
   See comment Section 3 – Culture, Organizational skills, and Strategy
4. No opinion
9. Effectiveness – Organizational skills (performance measurement)
   Broad community support – Organizational Skills
   Continuity (different individuals participating overtime but maintaining consistent
   goals and group identity) – Culture
   See comment Section 3 – Aspirations, Culture, Organizational skills, & Strategy
30. Common purpose – Aspirations
41. Clearly stated mission and goals – Aspirations
   Measurable objectives that meet the goals – Strategy
19. Give them meaningful, satisfying work – Strategy
   See comment Section 3 – Strategy
13. The willingness to do volunteer work when called upon – Culture
   Have occasional social event - Culture
10. Work hard for a few hours, supply refreshments – Culture
   See comment Section 3 – Culture
31. Strong leadership and programs to keep membership interested and involved –
   System and Infrastructure & Strategy
33. 1. Love of a common goal – Aspirations
   2. Unselfish dedication to reach that goal – Culture
   3. Organization and follow thru – Organizational skills
17. Good communication with volunteers. Keeping volunteers updated about volunteer needs as well as thanking volunteers and keeping them updated about how their work helped is essential for a successful group. – Organizational Skills
2. Include volunteers in some of the decision making process or at the very least incorporate volunteer efforts into some content related work (don’t have them doing only administrative work). - Strategy
15. Feeling that you accomplished something positive – Organizational skills (performance measurement)
See comment Section 3 – Organizational skills
38. Being results oriented – Culture
2. Close collaboration with the land management agency (NPS) - Organizational skills (external relationship building)
Recognition of the group within the community – Organizational Skills
Member commitment to the cause – Culture
11. We are really not a volunteer group. All of our staff are paid. We donate about $40,000/year for volunteer stipends in support of the NPS volunteer program.
6. People: caring nature, willing to participate, from active backgrounds, self starting, dedicated – Human resources
Organization: Non-political, self-organizing, determined, partnering to accomplish goals, well trained – Organizational skills
See comment Section 3 – Other
18. I think the key component of a successful volunteer stewardship group is a core group of passionate individuals to maintain momentum – System and Infrastructure, Culture, & Strategy. A core group is necessary to provide some carry over of ideas and knowledge. Passion is essential for anything based on volunteerism to survive. Momentum is necessary to carry out multi-year fundraising efforts or projects, especially if you have turnover in your core group.
39. Engagement by many people – Culture
Leaders within the group – Organizational skills
20. 1. Smooth working relationship with the supported agency – Organizational Skills
2. Interesting meetings and group projects – Strategy
3. A feeling of accomplishment – Organizational Skills
16. Members believe in the cause – Aspirations & Human Resources
Fun & enjoyable – Culture
Educational – Strategy
Meet new, interesting people – Culture
49. Goal oriented members – Culture
See comment Section 3 – System and Infrastructure & Strategy
37. 1. Strong mission and goals – Aspirations
2. Strong agenda – Strategy
3. Good Projects – Strategy
4. Most folks who are interested in the outdoors & are willing to share with others – Human Resources & Culture
5. Good cooperation with Refuge staff – Organizational Skills
See comment Section 3 – 3 Culture
48. Members who are dedicated to the purpose of the organization & enjoy and love the area – Human Resources, Aspirations, & Culture
See comment Section 3 – System and Infrastructure

26. Ongoing active communication with members, up-to-date database – Organizational Skills
Supportive leadership – Organizational Skills
Easy activities for new volunteers – Strategy
Communication with decision-makers via public meetings, letters, phone calls – Other
Volunteer trainings, thank you activities – parties, broad coalition support – Strategy & Culture

53. Enthusiastic leaders – Human Resources
Demonstrated need – Other
Opportunity to contribute meaningfully – Strategy

Section 2 What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group unsuccessful?

Survey# Written comment/response – Element of a non-profit organization

34. Inconsistency – Strategy
Lack of recognition/acknowledgement – Organizational Skills
Internal discord/disconnect – Culture

8. Volunteer projects that are more “busy” work rather than ongoing opportunities – Strategy
Volunteer projects that are designed without public participation – Strategy

1. Lack of direction – Strategy
Conflicting egos – Culture

14. In other groups in which I have been involved, it seems they unfold for lack of interest – Culture.
Everyone is passionate at first, then the organization dies. Possibly leadership becomes worn out. There are so many worker bees, and when a few end up doing all the work, they become discouraged. Recruitment of people for work is challenging (leadership and planning) – System and Infrastructure & Strategy.

90. Personal agendas that are not in synch with mission – Culture
Lack of commitment/trustworthiness – Culture

4. No opinion

9. Too much reliance on a few active members – Human Resources
Lack of outreach/community involvement – Strategy
Not enough communication of issues, needs, successes of group – Organizational Skills

30. (No comments)

41. Deviating from a clearly-defined mission and set of goals. Or having no or unclear mission. “If you don’t know where you’re going, you will never get there.” – Aspirations

19. Promising interesting work, but don’t deliver – Strategy
Worse yet, providing unwanted services – Strategy

13. Not everyone participates – Culture

10. Work only on weekends, work all day – Strategy.

31. Lack of vision or goals – Aspirations

Weak board – System and Infrastructure

33. 1. Self gratification of being in all photos – no work – Culture
2. Lack of organization – Organizational Structure
3. Lack of actual workers – Human Resources

17. 1. Poor communication between group leaders/staff and volunteers – Organizational Skills
2. Only calling on volunteers for boring repetitive work – Strategy

15. Lack of commitment – Culture

38. Bad relations with Refugee staff and managers – Organizational Skills
2. Lack of collaboration/cooperation – Organizational Skills
Lack of member identity with the cause – Culture

11. Lack of acknowledgement for ?? – Organizational Skills

6. Politics – Other
Unwillingness to compromise to achieve goals – Strategy
Inability to articulate goals – Aspirations

18. I think a group is doomed if there are too many individuals in the core group (or board) that have their own agenda – System and Infrastructure. This can also lead to mission drift, where an organization deviates from their original mission to follow funding or project opportunities – Aspirations.

39. Poor communication – Organizational Skills
Lack of things to do – Strategy

20. 1. Self-centered, self-important officers who use the group to pursue their own agenda – Human Resources
2. Coordinators from the supported agency who don’t “have time” or have personality clashes – Other
3. Members of the group become burned out by overwhelming projects – Culture & Strategy

16. Constant need for funding – Organizational Structure
Volunteers get burned out – lots of other activities to volunteer for – Culture
Volunteers come & go depending upon other commitments in their lives – can be inconsistent – Human Resources

49. Overcommitted members – Human Resources
Members who are not team players – Human Resources

37. 1. Poor cooperation with Refuge staff – Organizational Skills
2. No specific project or goal – Strategy & Aspirations

48. Too few members feel any obligation to do any more than pay dues as their support – Culture

26. Stale membership lists/leaders – Human Resources
Lack of communal planning/engagement with volunteers – Strategy
Poor leadership – Organizational Skills

53. Stagnant leadership without turnover – Human Resources
Burnout among active leaders – Culture
Resistance by land manager to outside influence – Other
Adequate govt. funding makes volunteers unnecessary – Other

Section 3 Are there any other characteristics that you feel are important for the success of a volunteer stewardship group?

35. Just plain determination and vision of the members of the volunteer group. (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Aspiration)

90. Enthusiasm/Commitment - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Aspiration)

Knowledge - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Organizational skills)

Flexibility - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Strategy)

9. Clear mission that can gain broad community support - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Aspiration)

Recognition of economic issues pertaining to environmental ones - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Organizational skills)

Showing up consistently - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

Scientific basis for environmental goals and stands - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Strategy)

19. Convey your accomplishments to donors and volunteers (Don’s spin) - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Strategy)

10. Earnest desire to accomplish the project goals. No matter how hard the work, it should always be done in a cheerful “this is FUN!” atmosphere - (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

15. Recognition (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Organizational Skills)

6. The volunteer group should recognize that the land management has the ultimate responsibility for the land and therefore they are the “senior partner” and the volunteer group is the “junior partner”. (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Other)

49. This is a major source of our problems – refuge is far from population centers. Refuges close to population centers are much more active than we are.
Board members who have the time and energy to recruit new members and meet with community leaders. (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Systems and Infrastructure & Strategy)

37. Food ← lots of potlucks, friends (new & old), fun (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – Culture)

48. An extremely hard working board of directors and committee chair (Comment will be added to Section 2. What do you feel are some of the key characteristics that make a volunteer stewardship group successful? – System and Infrastructure)