

*A Report on*

# **Customer Service**

*for Texas Parks and Wildlife Department*

*Submitted June 1, 2010*



Life's better outside.®

## WHAT IS A CUSTOMER?

Customers are the most important people in this office.

Customers are not dependent on us ...  
... *we are dependent on them.*

Customers are not an interruption of our work ...  
... *they are the purpose of it.*

Customers are not doing us a favor by our serving them ...  
... *they are doing us a favor by giving us the  
opportunity to do so.*

## CUSTOMER INVENTORY

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) serves a wide array of customers. We consider the citizens of Texas our most important “customer” group – it is our mission to manage and conserve Texas’ resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

Each of the strategies in the General Appropriations Act directs an effort to provide or enhance a facility, program, activity or service that benefits our customers directly and all Texans indirectly:

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	CUSTOMERS SERVED
A.1.1.	Wildlife conservation, habitat management and research	Hunters, non-consumptive users, WMA visitors
A.1.2.	Technical guidance to private landowners and general public	Hunters, non-consumptive users, private landowners
A.1.3.	Enhanced hunting and wildlife-related recreational opportunities	Hunters, anglers, non-consumptive users, private landowners
A.2.1	Inland fisheries management, research and habitat conservation	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
A.2.2	Inland hatcheries operations	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
A.2.3.	Coastal fisheries management, research and habitat conservation	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users, commercial fishermen
A.2.4.	Coastal hatcheries operations	Anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.1.1.	State parks, historic sites and state natural areas	State park, historic site, and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.1.2.	Parks minor repair program	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.1.3.	Parks support	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
B.2.1.	Local park grants	Local governments and their park visitors
B.2.2.	Boating access, trails and other grants	Local governments and their park visitors, boaters, anglers, physically challenged and disadvantaged populations
C.1.1.	Wildlife, fisheries and water safety enforcement	Hunters, anglers, boaters, commercial fishermen, private landowners, general public

STRATEGY	DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES	CUSTOMERS SERVED
C.1.2.	Game warden training academy	Hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users, commercial fishermen, private landowners
C.1.3.	Law enforcement oversight, management and support	Hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users, commercial fishermen, private landowners
C.2.1.	Hunter and boater education	Hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
C.2.2.	<i>Texas Parks &amp; Wildlife</i> magazine	Hunters, anglers, private landowners, boaters, state park, historic site and state natural area visitors, non-consumptive users, educators
C.2.3.	Communication products and services	Hunters, anglers, private landowners, boaters, state park, historic site and state natural area visitors, non-consumptive users
C.2.4.	Outreach and education	Non-consumptive users, educators, youth, women, physically challenged, with focus on minorities
C.3.1.	Hunting and fishing license issuance	Hunters, anglers, commercial fishermen, license deputies
C.3.2.	Boat registration and titling	Boaters and county tax assessor-collectors
D.1.1.	Capital improvements and major repairs	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
D.1.2.	Land acquisition	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
D.1.3.	Infrastructure program administration	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users
D.1.4.	Debt service	State park, historic site and state natural area visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, non-consumptive users

Strategies may be subject to change based on approval from the Legislative Budget Board and Governor's Office.

## TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT'S CUSTOMER SERVICE COMPLAINT-HANDLING PROCESS

As prescribed by Section VI, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Personnel Manual and Employee Handbook, formal complaints received in the divisions must be submitted to the Office of Internal Affairs for review, tracking and determination of proper follow-up action. Information on the complaint-handling process, as well as instructions on how to file a complaint can be found at [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/feedback/complaints/file\\_a\\_complaint.phtml](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/feedback/complaints/file_a_complaint.phtml).

Correspondence containing non-formal complaints received at the department through the Executive Office are logged into the Department Mail Tracking System and assigned to the appropriate division director for a timely response that appropriately addresses the concerns raised.

Correspondence containing non-formal complaints received at the department through individual divisions are logged into division tracking systems and assigned to the appropriate division personnel for a timely response that appropriately addresses the concerns raised.

## COMPACT WITH TEXANS

A Customer Compact is an agreement made with the customers of an institution to provide services that follow a predetermined set of guiding principles. Simply stated, it defines the standards that customers should expect. The following compact is provided to the many diverse customers of the department.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department provides outdoor recreational opportunities, manages state parks, historic sites, state natural areas, wildlife management areas and fish hatcheries, protects fish, wildlife and historical and cultural resources for present and future generations.

Over the years it has inherited the functions of many state entities created to protect Texas' natural and cultural resources. More information about the history of TPWD can be found at [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/about/history/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/about/history/).

TPWD has 11 internal divisions: Wildlife, Coastal Fisheries, Inland Fisheries, Law Enforcement, State Parks, Infrastructure, Information Technology, Communications, Administrative Resources, Legal and Human Resources. Intergovernmental Affairs and Internal Audit and Investigations are administered through the Executive Office. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department headquarters is located at 4200 Smith School Road, Austin, Texas 78744. State parks, historic sites, state natural areas, wildlife management areas, fish hatcheries and field offices are located across the state.

TPWD is largely user-funded. As a result, the department works diligently to listen to our current customers, anticipate future customers' needs and adjust TPWD programs and services to deliver the greatest benefit to Texans, while protecting natural and cultural resources for future generations.

**Our Customer Service Philosophy is:**

*We affirm that excellent customer service is essential to our mission of managing and conserving natural and cultural resources and providing hunting, fishing and outdoor recreational opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.*

Our goal is to provide highly responsive service to our customers. We will achieve exemplary customer service through:

- Listening to our internal and external customers, to better understand them and providing opportunities for our customers to submit comments,
- Courtesy,
- Personal responsibility,
- Professionalism,
- Problem solving,
- Respect,
- Being open, friendly, flexible and caring,
- Being responsive, and
- Working to resolve conflicts with different user groups.

## **TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT'S SERVICE STANDARDS**

In serving our customers, TPWD employees will strive to do the following:

1. Answer correspondence (including faxes and e-mails) quickly and clearly.
2. See people as promptly as possible in all our offices.
3. Provide current information about services on the Internet and at field offices across the state. TPWD's home page is at [www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us). Frequently asked questions can be found at [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/faq/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/faq/)
4. Answer telephone calls quickly and helpfully. Our toll free number is (800) 792-1112. More information on specific TPWD telephone numbers can be found at [www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/about/](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/business/about/)
5. Respond to inquiries typically within 10 working days of receipt.
6. Do everything reasonably possible to make services available to everyone, including those with disabilities.
7. Provide information about TPWD sites and programs to Texans statewide.

The agency's customer service representative is Lydia Saldaña, Director of Communications. She can be reached at (512) 389-4557 or (512) 389-4411 (fax).

## 2010 CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT

TPWD provides products and services to a wide range of external customer groups and individual customers. A solid customer service orientation and ongoing efforts to solicit feedback regarding preferences and satisfaction are vital to our ability to effectively meet the needs of these customers. Recent/ongoing examples of these survey/customer assessment efforts include:

- Annual public scoping meetings – conducted to obtain customer feedback regarding management direction on specific issues of interest
- Frequent meetings with advisory committees and boards – to help guide programmatic decisions and development of proposed regulations and other recommendations
- Annual angler creel surveys – conducted on water bodies throughout the state to determine angler impact on aquatic resources and overall angler satisfaction with management efforts
- Statewide angler surveys – conducted every four years to determine general attitude and opinion regarding statewide management efforts, angler preferences, and specific resource management issues
- TPWD on-line customer satisfaction survey (general)
- Statewide State Park On-Site Visitor Survey
- Department Web site – TPWD routinely solicits and responds to public comment and inquiries through the agency Web site
- Invasive Species Awareness Survey – conducting a pre-awareness and post-awareness survey of registered boat owners in East Texas.

For the purpose of this report, TPWD will focus on the TPWD online customer satisfaction survey and the Statewide State Park On-Site Visitor Survey.

## FY 2009 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS

Two survey efforts related to customer satisfaction were completed by TPWD during FY 2009. The results of a long-term study of Texas state park visitors were completed in December 2008. This study involved on-site customer surveys at state parks to assess the overall satisfaction of park users with their visit as well as other visitation and marketing information.

The second survey effort in FY 2009 was an online survey that measured the level of satisfaction with TPWD, covering the seven statutorily required customer service elements, among key TPWD customer groups: state park visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, and wildlife watchers. This survey was implemented in the spring of 2009.

Where applicable, the Standard Customer Service Performance Measures are addressed and performance is estimated for FY 2009 for each survey effort.

## STATE PARK ON-SITE VISITOR SURVEY

This is a long-term study of day and overnight state park visitors to gain useful marketing and customer satisfaction information on state park visitors on a year-round basis. Topics covered in the survey include:

- Overall satisfaction with park visit;
- Likelihood to return to the park;
- Visitation and travel patterns;
- Visitor socio-demographics.

### A. Information Gathering Methods

The visitor surveys were completed at 67 state parks. The surveys were distributed randomly by park staff on weekdays and weekends to both day and overnight users and distributed for an entire year to capture data for all four seasons. Park staff asked the visitor to return the survey either by mail or at the entrance gate before leaving the park.

#### TIME FRAME

Surveys were implemented in three waves lasting one year each in duration. The first wave of the survey began in November 2002 and ended in October 2003. The second wave was from June 2004 thru May 2005 and the final wave began in September 2006 and ended in August 2007.

#### METHODOLOGY

Park staff were provided detailed information on how to randomly distribute surveys to ensure adequate representation of state park visitors. Visitors were approached in the park and asked to complete the questionnaire and return it either at the park office, survey drop box, or by mail to Austin headquarters.

The goal for each park was to complete 200 surveys per three-month season, or 800 surveys for the year. Based on an estimated 30% response rate, the goal was for park staff to distribute approximately 60 surveys per week at most parks. Parks with low visitation distributed fewer than 60 surveys per week. Questionnaires were distributed based on the proportion of day to overnight visitors at each park, based on visitation data collected by the State Parks Division. Simple random sampling procedures were followed to ensure that customers who received the questionnaire were representative of the entire population of state park visitors.

Supervised Gary Job Corps students performed data entry at Austin headquarters. Consumer Research staff audited and corrected data entry completed by the students.

Due to various reasons (low visitation, staff shortages, park closures, etc.), questionnaire distribution at many parks was below the 60 surveys per week goal and returns were well below the goal of 200 per season. A total of 26,825 completed surveys were returned from the 67 parks during the three waves of data collection.

#### LIMITATIONS

One limitation of this survey research was the lower than expected distribution of surveys at some sites, leading to a lower number of returned surveys at these sites. However, the impact of this limitation is more relevant to the site-specific data. For the aggregate data reported in this report, the sampling error is very low due to the large number of completed surveys (over 26,000).

A second limitation was that an ideal response rate of 50% or greater could not be achieved at most sites due to budget considerations. Thus, there may be a certain amount of non-response bias in this survey. Non-response bias occurs when those visitors who respond to the survey are systematically different from those visitors who did not respond. To gauge the extent to which the lower response rate leads to non-response bias in results, a non-response test was conducted at three sites. A non-response survey, covering several key variables, was mailed as a follow-up to visitors who did not complete and return the visitor survey they were given. The results of the non-response survey were compared to the on-site visitor survey to determine if there were differences that might indicate a bias. At one of the parks studied, the on-site visitor survey seems to have over-estimated the overall satisfaction level of day users. For day visitors at the other two sites, and for all overnight visitors, there was no significant difference in overall satisfaction between the on-site visitor survey respondents and the non-response survey respondents. This suggests that non-response bias had a limited effect on the results of the satisfaction question.

A third limitation of this survey effort involves the representativeness of the surveyed parks to the entire state park system. While the survey's primary intent was to collect information on a site-specific basis, a secondary goal was to collect information to provide visitor information on a system-wide basis. To ensure that the data is as representative as possible, survey data will be weighted so that the aggregate results will reflect the proper balance of visitors based on overnight and day visitation and seasonal visitation for each individual park as well as the overall contribution of each park's visitation to the total visitation at all 67 state parks in the survey. Thus data from parks with high visitation will be weighted more heavily in the aggregate results than will data from low-visitiation parks.

#### NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED

26,825 surveys were returned from 67 state parks participating in the three waves of the survey.

#### SAMPLING ERROR, CONFIDENCE LEVEL AND RESPONSE RATE

The sampling error for 26,825 completed surveys is less than plus or minus 1 percentage point at the 95% confidence level. Over 112,486 surveys were distributed; resulting in an overall response rate of 24%.

#### GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS

Both day and overnight visitors and visitors in all four seasons of the year were included in the data collection process. The survey was fielded at 67 state parks. Surveys were not conducted at all state parks during the same year because the time required for consumer research staff to manage all the surveys concurrently made this process not feasible. By the end of the three year data collection process, all parks were offered the opportunity to participate in the survey. Visitors to very small parks with low visitation and parks that were not gated and did not have on-site staff to distribute the surveys were not included in the survey. Some parks participated in the survey, but were excluded from the study as the number of completed survey returns was too small (less than 100).

## B. Performance Measures

### *Outcome Measures*

#### PERCENTAGE OF SURVEYED CUSTOMER RESPONDENTS EXPRESSING OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES RECEIVED

The primary objective of the on-site state park visitor survey was to provide an assessment of customer satisfaction on a statewide basis. The statewide survey findings illustrate that TPWD is providing quality service to its state park customers and that they are satisfied with the offerings at state parks. About 94% of state park visitors were either very satisfied or satisfied with their park visit.

***Output Measure*****NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED (SURVEYS COMPLETED)**

Each park was expected to distribute 60 surveys per week for a total of over 3,000 surveys distributed over the course of the year. Not all parks were able to distribute the required number of surveys due to various reasons (low visitation, staff shortages, park closures, etc.). For the 67 sites completing the survey, a total of 112,486 surveys were distributed and 26,825 surveys were returned.

The average number of people in each visitor group is 2.5. The survey thus covered 67,063 visitors to state parks, and state natural areas.

**NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SERVED**

Estimated visitation data suggest that for all state parks in the TPWD system combined, there were approximately 7,500,000 visits in FY 2009. An estimated 1,900,000 of these visits were overnight visits and 4,200,000 visits were day use. As many state park users visit the parks multiple times in a single year, the total number of state park users is less than the total number of visits.

***Efficiency Measure*****SURVEY COSTS**

The out-of-pocket costs of this survey effort are for producing and mailing the on-site surveys to each park (\$4,200) and conducting the non-response survey to visitors at three sites, including mailing the survey and paying the return postage (\$1,500), for a total of \$5,700. The majority of other costs were associated with park staff time including distribution of the survey. Marketing staff also invested a considerable amount of staff time coordinating the survey effort, monitoring the data entry by Gary Job Corps students, and conducting the data analysis and reporting. A rough estimate of staff time contributed by Marketing staff is 3,000 hours (1,000 hours for each wave) for a total of \$75,000. The labor provided by Gary Job Corps students was free. A very rough estimate of park staff time to administer the surveys is 100 hours per park per year (at \$10 estimated hourly wage) for a total park staff cost of \$67,000. The total estimated cost for the entire survey effort including staff time is \$147,700, a cost of \$5.51 per completed survey.

***Explanatory Measures*****NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IDENTIFIED**

The total number of customers identified is based on the number of surveys returned (26,825 survey returns).

**NUMBER OF CUSTOMER GROUPS SURVEYED**

Two customer groups were surveyed:

- State Park Day Visitors
- State Park Overnight Visitors

### C. Analysis of Findings

The depth of the survey over three waves and across 67 state parks has provided the following key findings.

#### *Demographics*

Texas resident visitors to all parks are older (average age 47) than the typical Texas resident (average age 43) and earn higher household incomes. The median household income for Texas visitors is higher (\$60,000-\$79,999) compared to the Texas population (\$40,000). The majority (84%) of visitors are white, despite the fact that white/non-Hispanics make up only about half of the Texas population.

While the age of Texas resident visitors did not statistically vary by season, there are distinct differences in age when comparing overnight and day visitors:

#### **Age (18+) Comparison of Day and Overnight Visitors**

Bold numbers indicate statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence interval.

	Day Visit	Overnight Visit
24 and under	5%	3%
25-34	15%	10%
35-44	24%	20%
45-54	24%	23%
55-64	<b>19%</b>	<b>24%</b>
65 and older	<b>13%</b>	<b>20%</b>
Average Age	47.2	51.4
Median Age	47.0	53.0

Thirteen percent of park visitors are from outside Texas. These visitors are older (average age 56) than resident Texan visitors and have lower household incomes. Ninety-four percent of out-of-state visitors are white/non-Hispanic.

#### *Park Visitation Patterns*

The majority of visitors (58%) were repeat visitors to the state park they were visiting at the time they were surveyed. Visitors during the fall were more likely to be repeat visitors than visitors during the other seasons.

#### **First-Time and Return Visitors by Season of Visit**

Bold numbers indicate statistically significant differences at the 95% confidence interval.

	First-Time Visitor	Repeat Visitor
Winter	43%	57%
Spring	44%	56%
Summer	43%	57%
Fall	<b>39%</b>	<b>61%</b>

Overnight visitors average 3.6 nights at the park in the last 12 months, where day visitors average 3.1 days at the park in the last 12 months.

Seventy percent of overnight and 57% of day visitors reported visiting another state park or historic site within the last year.

**State Park Travel Characteristics**

Sixty-six percent of all visitors said the state park is the primary destination for their trip. Overnight visitors (71%) are more likely than day visitors (64%) to name the park as their primary destination.

Day visitors primary reasons for coming to the park are scenery/sightseeing (15%) and to hike/walk the trails (13%). Overnight visitors came mainly to camp (22%) and also for scenery/sightseeing (8%).

Thirty-two percent of park users visited other local attractions. Overnight visitors (36%) are more likely than day visitors (31%) to visit other attractions in the local area.

Sixty-three percent of all visitors travel less than two hours one-way to the park. A third of overnight visitors (31%) travel more than four hours compared to only 11% of day visitors.

The majority of visitors (72%) come to the park with family members. Overnight visitors (80%) are more likely to come with family members than day visitors (68%).

Sixty-seven percent of visitors come to the park without children (adults only in their group).

**Composition of Party – by Type of Visitor**

	Overnight Visitors	Day Visitors	Total
<b>ADULTS ONLY</b>			
1 adult/senior, 0 kids	7%	16%	13%
1 adult, 1 senior, 0 kids	6%	4%	4%
2 adults, 0 kids	33%	31%	32%
2 seniors, 0 kids	13%	5%	8%
3+ adults/seniors, 0 kids	7%	12%	10%
Total	66%	68%	67%
<b>WITH CHILDREN (Age 17 and below)</b>			
1 adult/senior, 1+ kids	5%	6%	6%
2 adults/seniors, 1+ kids	22%	18%	19%
3+ adults/seniors, 1+ kids	7%	7%	7%
0 adults/seniors, 1+ kids	0%	1%	1%
Total	34%	32%	33%

The average party size is 2.6 people for overnight users and 2.5 for day users equaling a total visitor average of 2.5 people. This average is statistically consistent throughout the four seasons.

Over one-half of visitors (58%) pay the per-person price to enter the park and a third (28%) of visitors use the State Parks Pass. Overnight visitors are more likely to use a State Park Pass (40%) than day visitors (22%).

Overnight visitors averaged 2.2 nights per current visit.

Forty-two percent of day visitors live in the local area, 29% of the day visitors stayed the night in the local area and 29% did not stay locally.

**Sources that Influenced the Park Visit**

Word of mouth is the most influential source of information for park visitors to learn about the parks, followed by the TPWD Web site and State Park Guide.

Over a quarter of visitors (26%) report that TPWD communications and marketing efforts are influential in their decision to visit a state park. These communication and marketing efforts include the TPWD Web site (12%), the State Park Guide (8%), *Texas Parks & Wildlife* magazine (5%), and the PBS television series (1%). More overnight visitors (39%) are influenced by communication and marketing efforts than day visitors (20%).

**Visitor Satisfaction**

Overall, park visitors are quite satisfied with their visits to the park, with 94% being very satisfied or satisfied. There is no statistical difference in satisfaction between day and overnight visitors, or when comparing the four seasons.

**Visitors' Overall Satisfaction with Park Visit**

	Overnight Visitors	Day Visitors	Total
Very Satisfied	64%	66%	65%
Satisfied	29%	29%	29%
Somewhat Satisfied	5%	4%	5%
Dissatisfied	1%	1%	1%
Very Dissatisfied	1%	1%	1%

**Visitors' Overall Satisfaction with Park Visit – by Season**

	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Very Satisfied	66%	64%	62%	67%
Satisfied	28%	29%	30%	28%
Somewhat Satisfied	5%	5%	6%	4%
Dissatisfied	1%	1%	1%	1%
Very Dissatisfied	0%	1%	1%	0%

Of the visitors who listed a reason, the top reasons for dissatisfaction with their visit or areas where they would like to see improvements are:

- Park-specific improvements (24%)\*
- Shower improvements (16%)
- Campsite improvements (11%)
- Trail improvements such as more information, maps and signage (8%)
- General site maintenance (8%)

\* These comments were improvements specific to each state park.

Campsite improvements (16%), restroom improvements (10%), and improved interpretive programs (10%) are the top facilities or activities overnight visitors would like to see at state parks. Day visitors would like to see improvements with trails (12%) and interpretive programs (11%).

Satisfaction has an important impact on the visitor's intent to return to visit the park. Ninety-two percent of visitors who are very satisfied and 80% of satisfied visitors are very likely or likely to return to the park compared to only 43% of somewhat satisfied or dissatisfied visitors.

**Impact of Customer Satisfaction on Likelihood to Return to Park**

Overall Satisfaction with Visit

Likelihood of Visiting the Park Again	Overall Satisfaction with Visit		
	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied/ Dissatisfied/ Very Dissatisfied
Very Likely	81%	46%	21%
Likely	11%	34%	22%
Somewhat Likely	5%	14%	32%
Unlikely	1%	3%	15%
Very Unlikely	1%	2%	10%

Over 68% of all visitors (across all seasons and day/overnight) stated they are very likely to return to the state park.

**Likelihood to Return to the State Park – by Type of Visitor**

	Overnight Visitors	Day Visitors	Total
Very Likely	67%	68%	68%
Likely	20%	18%	19%
Somewhat Likely	9%	9%	9%
Unlikely	3%	3%	3%
Very Unlikely	1%	2%	2%

**Likelihood to Return to the State Park – by Season**

	Winter	Spring	Summer	Fall
Very Likely	69%	67%	66%	69%
Likely	18%	19%	20%	18%
Somewhat Likely	9%	9%	10%	9%
Unlikely	3%	3%	3%	2%
Very Unlikely	1%	2%	1%	2%

## TPWD ONLINE CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEY

A Web site customer satisfaction survey of key TPWD constituents – state park visitors, hunters, freshwater and saltwater anglers, boaters, jet skiers, birders and wildlife watchers was conducted in the spring of 2009. The survey measured the statutorily required customer service quality elements:

- Overall satisfaction with TPWD;
- Satisfaction with TPWD facilities;
- Satisfaction with TPWD staff;
- Satisfaction with TPWD communications;
- Satisfaction with the TPWD Web site;
- Satisfaction with TPWD complaint-handling processes;
- Satisfaction with TPWD service timeliness;
- Satisfaction with TPWD printed information.

The survey also collected data on the customer's level of participation in several outdoor activities to define the customer groups.

### A. Information Gathering Methods

The survey was conducted on the TPWD Web site from April 1, 2009 – May 31, 2009. The goal was to collect a minimum of 400 responses, with at least 100 in each of the key customer groups (state park visitors, hunters, freshwater anglers, saltwater anglers, boaters, wildlife viewers). The survey was posted on the TPWD Web site in the highly visible areas of the home page and the Web pages for park visitors, hunters, anglers, boaters, and wildlife viewers. The survey was conducted as a convenience sample in which Web visitors had the option to click on the survey button and complete the survey online. It is recognized that a convenience sample poses a risk of non-response bias; therefore, the results are presented as indicators of the satisfaction of the customer groups measured. A future study with a random sample would be necessary to completely measure the satisfaction levels of TPWD customers. However, the costs of performing such a study would be substantial.

#### TIME FRAME

The survey was made available on the TPWD Web site April 1, 2009 – May 31, 2009.

#### METHODOLOGY

Visitors to the TPWD Web site could click on the survey button to complete the survey. The survey data was automatically entered electronically into a database, and analysis of the data was completed by Marketing staff.

#### LIMITATIONS

The primary limitation of this research is that the survey was conducted as a convenience sample in which Web visitors had the option to complete the survey while visiting the TPWD Web site. A convenience sample poses risks as it may not fully represent the population of TPWD customers and there was no way to follow up with respondents to determine whether respondents differed from non-respondents.

Additionally, due to the use of the Web site to conduct the survey, TPWD customers who do not have Internet access could not take part in the survey. Though the use of the Internet is generally high among Americans, and Internet access is widely available through libraries and schools as well as in private homes and offices, it is possible that TPWD customers who do not use the Internet may vary from the Web users who participated in the survey.

Another limitation of this study is that the survey was conducted during a single period of the year (spring 2009) and does not cover the broadest possible range of customers who use the TPWD Web site. However, earlier online surveys were conducted in the fall and winter of 2004 and the summer of 2005 to capture visitor satisfaction across the other seasons. The results of these surveys were presented in the previous Customer Service Reports.

**NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED, SAMPLING ERROR, CONFIDENCE LEVEL AND RESPONSE RATE**

A total of 224 customers completed the online satisfaction survey. Many of these customers fell into more than one customer group based on their participation in more than one outdoor recreation activity once or more per year; thus the groups are not mutually exclusive. The goal for overall sample size as well as sample within each group was exceeded. The final tally of customer group sample sizes is as follows:

Customer Group	Sample Size
Total Sample	224
State Park Overnight Visitors	183
State Park Day Visitors	208
Hunters	144
Freshwater Anglers	204
Saltwater Anglers	160
Boaters/Jet Skiers	173
Wildlife Watchers/Birders	184

The maximum sampling error for the total sample of 224 surveys is less than plus or minus 3.0 percentage points at the 95% confidence level.

The response rate cannot be calculated for this survey due to the methodology.

**GROUPS EXCLUDED FROM THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

This survey was intended to target outdoor recreation users using the TPWD Web site. Due to this reason other user groups that use the Web site such as landowners and commercial fishermen were not included in the survey.

**B. Performance Measures**

***Outcome Measures***

**PERCENTAGE OF SURVEYED CUSTOMERS EXPRESSING OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES RECEIVED**

TPWD receives high satisfaction ratings from its customers in this survey. A total of 79% of customers report being either very satisfied or satisfied overall with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. Fifteen percent of customers report being dissatisfied with the agency.

For the overall satisfaction question and nine of the twelve questions used to assess satisfaction levels on the statutorily required customer service elements, at least 70% of customers report being very satisfied or satisfied with TPWD’s performance. These include the following areas: cleanliness of facilities, staff knowledge, staff friendliness, usefulness and ease of finding information on the Web site and printed information.

Sixty-one percent of customers are satisfied with the timeliness of TPWD’s response to inquiries, 21% report being “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” and 17% reported being dissatisfied.

Complaint handling – measured by satisfaction with TPWD’s responsiveness to customer’s complaints – is the only area in which a minority of customers is satisfied (38%). The largest number of customers (53%) report being “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” with TPWD’s responsiveness to complaints. A total of 8% of customers are dissatisfied.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS FOR TOTAL SAMPLE OF RESPONDENTS

	% Very satisfied/ satisfied	% Very dissatisfied/ dissatisfied
Overall satisfaction	79%	15%
Cleanliness and appearance of sites	84%	5%
Friendliness and courtesy of staff	82%	8%
Ease of understanding information	72%	15%
Usefulness of printed information	78%	6%
Knowledge of staff	77%	8%
Availability of printed information	72%	10%
Usefulness of information on Web site	74%	16%
Ease of finding information on Web site	70%	19%
Hours of operation of business offices	74%	10%
Amount of time it takes for inquiries to be answered	61%	17%
Responsiveness to customer complaints	38%	8%

Below are the detailed results of each satisfaction question for the total sample of respondents.

DETAILED SURVEY RESULTS FOR TOTAL SAMPLE OF RESPONDENTS

**OVERALL: How satisfied are you overall with TPWD?**

	Total
Very satisfied	42%
Satisfied	37%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6%
Dissatisfied	10%
Very dissatisfied	5%

**FACILITIES: How satisfied are you with the cleanliness and appearance of TPWD sites?**

	Total
Very satisfied	43%
Satisfied	41%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10%
Dissatisfied	5%
Very dissatisfied	0%

**FACILITIES: How satisfied are you with the hours of operation of TPWD business offices?**

	Total
Very satisfied	30%
Satisfied	44%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17%
Dissatisfied	5%
Very dissatisfied	5%

**STAFF: How satisfied are you with the friendliness and courtesy of TPWD staff?**

	Total
Very satisfied	43%
Satisfied	39%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10%
Dissatisfied	3%
Very dissatisfied	5%

**STAFF: How satisfied are you with the knowledge of TPWD staff?**

	Total
Very satisfied	43%
Satisfied	34%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15%
Dissatisfied	5%
Very dissatisfied	3%

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

**How satisfied are you overall with the ease of understanding information you have received from TPWD?**

	Total
Very satisfied	40%
Satisfied	32%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13%
Dissatisfied	7%
Very dissatisfied	8%

**WEB SITE: How satisfied are you with the ease of finding information on the TPWD Web site? \***

	Total
Very satisfied	40%
Satisfied	30%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	11%
Dissatisfied	9%
Very dissatisfied	10%

**WEB SITE: How satisfied are you with the usefulness of the information on the TPWD Web site? \***

	Total
Very satisfied	38%
Satisfied	36%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10%
Dissatisfied	9%
Very dissatisfied	7%

**PRINTED INFORMATION: How satisfied are you with the availability of printed information from TPWD?**

	Total
Very satisfied	33%
Satisfied	39%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17%
Dissatisfied	6%
Very dissatisfied	4%

**PRINTED INFORMATION: How satisfied are you with the usefulness of printed information from TPWD?**

	Total
Very satisfied	36%
Satisfied	42%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	16%
Dissatisfied	3%
Very dissatisfied	3%

**TIMELINESS:**

**How satisfied are you with the amount of time it takes for your telephone, letter or e-mail inquiries to be answered?**

	Total
Very satisfied	27%
Satisfied	34%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	21%
Dissatisfied	6%
Very dissatisfied	11%

**COMPLAINT HANDLING: Do you know how to make a complaint to TPWD?**

	Total
Yes	41%
No	59%

**COMPLAINT HANDLING: How satisfied are you with TPWD responsiveness to customer complaints?**

	Total
Very satisfied	23%
Satisfied	15%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	53%
Dissatisfied	5%
Very dissatisfied	3%

**PERCENTAGE OF SURVEYED CUSTOMER RESPONDENTS IDENTIFYING WAYS TO IMPROVE SERVICE DELIVERY**

A total of 56% of respondents offered comments on the online satisfaction survey. Many of these comments involved ways to improve TPWD programs and services while other comments were statements of appreciation and support for TPWD.

***Output Measure***

**NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED (COMPLETED)**

A total of 224 customers who visited the TPWD Web site were surveyed.

**NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SERVED**

TPWD serves the entirety of the state of Texas population by managing and conserving the natural and cultural resources of Texas and offering outdoor recreation opportunities to its citizens. The 2009 projection for the population of the state of Texas is 24.7 million people.

### *Efficiency Measure*

#### COST PER CUSTOMER SURVEYED (SURVEYS COMPLETED)

There were no out-of-pocket costs for conducting this survey. All costs were for staff time in designing the survey instrument, defining the methodology, and analyzing and reporting survey results. Staff time costs are estimated at \$500 (20 hours). This results in a cost of \$2.23 per completed survey.

### *Explanatory Measures*

#### NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IDENTIFIED

This survey was implemented to a sample of Web users from April 1, 2009 – May 31, 2009. A total of 224 customers were surveyed.

#### NUMBER OF CUSTOMER GROUPS SURVEYED

Many TPWD customer groups were surveyed. Web users include persons interested in TPWD services and programs. The following customer groups were targeted for this survey:

- State Park and State Historic Site Visitors
- Hunters
- Freshwater Anglers
- Saltwater Anglers
- Boaters and Jet Skiers
- Birders and Wildlife Watchers

Additionally, other customers who use the TPWD Web site include:

- Landowners
- Recreational Bikers and Mountain Bikers
- Rock Climbers
- Horseback Riders
- Outdoor Enthusiasts
- The General Public

## **C. Analysis of Findings**

Overall, TPWD receives high satisfaction ratings across the board from its customers.

In the areas of facilities, staff, Web site, and printed information, between 70% and 84% of customers rated themselves as “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with TPWD’s performance. A total of 61% of customers are satisfied with the timeliness of TPWD’s response to inquiries, with 17% being dissatisfied.

The only area in which a minority of customers is satisfied with TPWD is complaint handling. A total of 38% of customers rated being satisfied with complaint handling, while 53% are “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied” and 8% are dissatisfied.

## **FY 2011 ESTIMATED PERFORMANCE**

The TPWD Online Customer Satisfaction Survey is conducted approximately every two years and the results are reported in the Customer Service Report. The same survey instrument and general methodology that was used in FY 2005, 2007, 2009 will be used again in FY 2011. There will be no survey data collected in FY 2010. The next online survey will be implemented again in the fall of 2010.

### ***Output Measure***

#### ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS SURVEYED (SURVEYS COMPLETED)

The goal will be to collect a minimum of 200 responses, with at least 100 in the each of the key customer groups (state park visitors, hunters, freshwater anglers, saltwater anglers, boaters, wildlife viewers).

### ***Efficiency Measure***

#### ESTIMATED SURVEY COSTS

There will be no out-of-pocket costs for conducting this survey. All costs involve only staff time in designing the survey instrument, defining the methodology, and analyzing and reporting survey results. Staff time costs are estimated at \$500 (20 hours).

### ***Explanatory Measures***

#### ESTIMATED NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS IDENTIFIED

The total number of customers identified is based on the number of surveys completed (minimum of 200).

#### NUMBER OF CUSTOMER GROUPS TO BE SURVEYED

Many TPWD customer groups will be surveyed. Web users include persons interested in TPWD services and programs.

The following customer groups will be targeted for this survey:

- State Park and State Historic Site Visitors
- Hunters
- Freshwater Anglers
- Saltwater Anglers
- Boaters and Jet Skiers
- Birders and Wildlife Watchers

Additionally, other customers who use the TPWD Web site include:

- Landowners
- Recreational Bikers and Mountain Bikers
- Rock Climbers
- Horseback Riders
- Outdoor Enthusiasts
- The General Public





4200 Smith School Road • Austin, Texas 78744

[www.tpwd.state.tx.us](http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us)

TPWD receives federal assistance from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies. TPWD is therefore subject to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, in addition to state anti-discrimination laws. TPWD will comply with state and federal laws prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any TPWD program, activity or event, you may contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Federal Assistance, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Mail Stop: MBSP-4020, Arlington, VA 22203, Attention: Civil Rights Coordinator for Public Access.

In accordance with Texas State Depository Law, this publication is available at the Texas State Publications Clearinghouse and/or Texas Depository Libraries.