



Volunteer Program Assessment Report 2018

by
Kendra Baumer
& Jennifer M. Ghahari, Ph.D.



Volunteer Assessment Survey



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NYNJTC Volunteer Assessment Survey Methodology

Surveys were sent to Trail Conference volunteers, utilizing the online Survey Monkey website, during April of 2018.

The questionnaire introduction stated:

“Throughout the following survey, you will be asked a series of questions about your volunteer experience with the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference. Your answers will be anonymous and will be vital for shaping the future of the Trail Conference, so please answer candidly. This survey takes an average of 10 minutes to complete.

We will use the input from this survey to improve our volunteer programs. Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Trail Conference; without your help, we would not be able to accomplish all that we do. Thank you for your feedback!”



NYNJTC Volunteer Assessment Survey Data Analysis

Data analyses were computed through Survey Monkey.

Data will be presented as follows:

- Total Data
- Comparative Results will be shown for applicable measures

Note: It is important to note the small base size of some data sets. While these sets provide valuable exploratory information, larger base sizes are required to off-set outliers in the data.

** As results have been rounded to the nearest whole-number, some results will therefore occasionally not add to 100%.*



Volunteer Demographics

- Twice as many male volunteers completed the survey, than females, with three-quarters of respondents being 53 years or older. Conversely, only 9% were 34 years or younger.

	%	N
Male	68%	120
Female	30%	53
Other	2%	3

	%	N
Younger than 18	1%	1
18 – 34	8%	14
35 – 52	18%	31
53 – 70	58%	102
71 +	16%	28

Note: 17 respondents chose to skip the demographic questions.



Volunteer Service: Years & Location

- More than half of the volunteers answering the survey work in NJ, with West of Hudson volunteers at double the rate of East of Hudson. 13% of volunteering occurs in the Catskills – a prime focus of 2018 is to increase this volunteer base.

Q1	%	N
0-2 Years	24%	60
3-5 Years	19%	47
6-10 Years	21%	53
11-15 Years	13%	34
16-20 Years	8%	21
21-30 Years	9%	22
31+ Years	7%	17

Q2	%	N
New Jersey	45%	114
NY: West of Hudson	39%	100
NY: East of Hudson	18%	45
TC HQ / Office	14%	35
Catskills	13%	33

Q1: How long have you been a Trail Conference volunteer?

Q2: Where do you typically volunteer for the Trail Conference? (Select all that apply)



Current TC Positions/Roles

- The majority of Volunteers completing the survey were trail volunteers, with 66% identifying as Trail Maintainers and/or Corridor Monitors.

Q24	%	N
RTC Chair and/or LTC Chair	6%	11
Trail Supervisor	14%	25
Trail Crew Leader	5%	9
Trail Crew Member	24%	43
Trail Maintainer and/or Corridor Monitor	66%	121
Lean-to Caretaker	2%	4
Chain Sawyer	7%	13

Q24	%	N
Board Member	4%	7
Committee Member	10%	18
Office Volunteer (Development, Front Office, Store, etc.)	3%	6
Invasives Office Volunteer	1%	1
Insect Trap Monitor	1%	2
Rare & Endangered Plant Monitor	3%	5
Invasives Strike Force (ISF) Surveyor	4%	8
ISF Invasives Removal Crew	3%	6
Habitat Helper/Native Landscaping	3%	6
Blockbuster Surveyor	2%	3

Q24: Please select your current positions/roles with the Trail Conference: (select all that apply)



Volunteer Growth Opportunity Perceptions

- Roughly three-quarters of volunteers feel there is opportunity for growth within the Trail Conference organization; conversely, only 7% feel there is no opportunity.

Q3	%	N
Definitely Yes	36%	81
Probably Yes	37%	84
Unsure	20%	46
Probably Not	6%	13
Definitely Not	1%	3



Volunteer Growth Opportunity Interests

- Volunteers express the most interest in wanting to learn more skills – primarily in the form of workshops (72%), followed by those who want to learn through online methods.

Q4	%	N
Training and workshops to expand skills	72%	118
Online learning/classes	37%	60
Mentoring the next generation of volunteers	29%	47
Live webinars on specified topics	25%	41
Increased responsibility and/or promotion into leadership positions	20%	33
Leading workshops and training sessions	14%	23
Other	6%	9

“Other Responses”	N
Trail Maintenance//planning info	4
Sawyer Certification	2
Committees	1
Fundraising	1
Photography	1

Q4: Which of the following Trail Conference opportunities interest you? (Select all that apply)

Note: Answers in the “Other” category were omitted from this report if they indicated no interest or that they were retired from volunteering.



Volunteer Position Characteristics

- Volunteers express their positions have a wide-variety of positive characteristics, most-notably: taking care of parks/ecosystems and/or trails; working for the greater good and a sense of responsibility.
- Characteristics that were less descriptive of their roles were also less important to the volunteers, so overall the volunteer/position structure of the Trail Conference appears to meet volunteers intrinsic desires.

Characteristic	Yes, my volunteer position has this characteristic	No, my volunteer position doesn't have this characteristic	This characteristic is important to me
Taking care of parks/ecosystems and/or trails	96%	4%	56%
Working for the greater good	96%	2%	52%
A sense of responsibility	95%	3%	46%
Being outside/outdoor recreation	94%	4%	58%
Flexibility in time/schedule	94%	4%	52%
Fun	87%	12%	52%
Variety in tasks or placements	65%	33%	31%
Meeting new people	62%	34%	25%
Working with a team	57%	40%	27%
Structured schedule	22%	77%	10%

Q5: 1) Please check (yes or no) if your Trail Conference volunteer position has each of the characteristics listed.
 2) Then, check which characteristics of volunteering are important to you.



Volunteer Recruitment

- Volunteer recruitment is perceived to be an “all hands on deck” approach, with Volunteers and Staff receiving high mentions for recruitment responsibility.

Q6	%	N
All Volunteers	74%	162
Staff	68%	149
Volunteers in Leadership Positions	61%	132
The Board of Directors	35%	76
Other	8%	17

“Other Responses”	N
Everyone	11
Unsure	3
Non-Applicable Responses	3



Volunteer Recruitment - Responses by Position -

- Across all Volunteer roles, Staff and Volunteers are viewed as having fairly equal responsibility regarding volunteer recruitment.

Q6	Staff	Volunteers in Leadership Positions	All Volunteers	The Board of Directors
RTC Chair and/or LTC Chair	73%	82%	82%	45%
	8	9	9	5
Trail Supervisor	84%	76%	84%	36%
	21	19	21	9
Trail Crew Leader	89%	100%	67%	44%
	8	9	6	4
Trail Maintainer and/or Corridor Monitor	69%	65%	74%	36%
	84	79	90	44
Lean-to Caretaker	100%	75%	75%	50%
	4	3	3	2
Chain Sawyer	83%	75%	83%	42%
	10	9	10	5
Invasives (Net)	80%	33%	73%	27%
	24	10	22	8

Q6: Whose responsibility should it be to recruit volunteers? (Select all that apply)



Perceived Barriers to Volunteering

- 2/3 of Volunteers indicated no barriers to them initially becoming a volunteer, with lack of response and location of opportunities as the biggest barriers of those who expressed any.
- Of the half of volunteers who tried to recruit others, the time commitment needed was the biggest barrier expressed to them (20%). These results can also be used for future recruiting, to point out episodic availabilities and how even volunteering a few hours can make a difference.

Barrier	Q7 – Barriers to you becoming a volunteer	Q8 – Barriers recruiting others
- I have not tried to recruit others	n/a	45%
- There were no barriers in becoming a volunteer with the Trail Conference	66%	19%
After expressing volunteer interest, you did not hear back in a timely manner	12%	6%
Location of volunteer opportunities	10%	9%
Time commitment needed	9%	20%
The reporting/paperwork involved	7%	5%
Requirement to buy a Trail Conference Membership	6%	7%
Lack of responsiveness from Trail Conference Staff	6%	6%
Inability to be properly trained/guided on what to do in your volunteer role	5%	3%
Lack of responsiveness from Trail Conference Volunteer Supervisors and Chairs	4%	3%
Too many required responsibilities	0.5%	4%

Q7: Were there any barriers to you initially becoming a volunteer? (select all that apply)

Q8: In the past two years, were there any barriers when you tried to recruit others to volunteer, as expressed by the recruits? (select all that apply)



Amount Asked of Volunteers / Perceptions - Response by Position -

- Invasives Volunteers, Trail Maintainers and Corridor Monitors and Trail Supervisors expressed the greatest satisfaction in volunteer workload.

Q9	Definitely Too Much	Somewhat Too Much	Just the Right Amount	Somewhat Too Little / Not Enough	Definitely Too Little / Not Enough
RTC Chair and/or LTC Chair	9%	36%	36%	18%	0%
Trail Supervisor	0%	20%	72%	12%	0%
Trail Crew Leader	11%	22%	56%	0%	11%
Trail Maintainer and/or Corridor Monitor	2%	6%	86%	7%	1%
Lean-to Caretaker	25%	25%	25%	0%	25%
Chain Sawyer	8%	17%	67%	8%	0%
Invasives (Net)	0%	0%	90%	7%	3%



Top 3 Changes Recommended

- Some comments listed are below, regarding what top 3 changes Volunteers would make in their TC volunteer experience.

More learning workshops to expand my skills.

Make reporting electronic

Easier to contact sawyers/report blowdowns (maybe designated sawyers for each park)

Better communication between senior staff and volunteer leaders. Better sense of collaboration between staff and volunteer leaders.

Possibility of rotating to another trail

None, The trail conference is an exceptionally well run organization!



How Can the TC Help Volunteers Succeed

- Some comments listed are below, regarding how the TC can help Volunteers.
- Many of the comments linked back to the need for better communication so we are making this a top priority to address.

Update us if there's work done on the trails we maintain.

Respond in a timely manner

Keep in touch on a regular basis

Listen. Follow up.

I think you are doing a commendable job. Continue with the workshops. Maybe add a few conferences at the Headquarters.

Let me know about new developments, including asking my opinion about proposed changes to my trail section



Feedback Perceptions

- Volunteers expressed easier abilities to provide feedback on Staff, as opposed to feedback regarding fellow Volunteers. They were most unsure whether or not their feedback could or would be anonymous.
- We will be looking into ways to allow for Volunteers to provide easier constructive feedback in the future.

Q12 – REGARDING STAFF	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Unsure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Timely feedback can be provided	34%	22%	38%	3%	4%
Anonymous feedback can be provided	19%	11%	60%	7%	4%
Feedback is easy to provide	27%	25%	39%	4%	5%

Q13 – REGARDING VOLUNTEERS	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Unsure	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Timely feedback can be provided	25%	18%	52%	4%	2%
Anonymous feedback can be provided	19%	10%	61%	8%	3%
Feedback is easy to provide	24%	18%	51%	6%	2%

Q12: If you ever wanted or needed to provide feedback on Trail Conference Staff, how would you describe that process:

Q13: If you ever wanted or needed to provide feedback regarding other Trail Conference Volunteers, how would you describe that process:



Perceived Helpfulness of Trainings/Workshops (1/2)

- Of the many trail trainings/workshops listed, “Trail Maintenance” was taken by nearly 40% of Volunteers in this survey – 87% of whom felt it was very helpful.

Q14	I didn't take this training / workshop	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not at all Helpful
		(N)	(N)	(N)
Trail Maintenance	61%	66	9	1
Trail Layout & Design	85%	25	3	1
Trail Supervisor Training	86%	14	13	1
Trail Tread & Drainage	91%	13	4	1
Trail Structures	94%	9	2	1
Trail Chair Training	95%	6	2	1
A.T. Natural Heritage Monitoring / Corridor Monitoring	97%	4	1	1
Lean-to Maintenance	98%	4	0	1



Perceived Helpfulness of Trainings/Workshops (2/2)

- Other than “Trail Maintenance,” the “First Aid/CPR/AED course had the most attendees – this class was viewed as very helpful by 91% of those attendees.
- Chainsaw Certification and GPS courses were also viewed as very helpful.
- Of the Invasives courses, there was comparatively less agreement in helpfulness of these courses, however the majority of respondents felt the courses were very helpful.

Q14	I didn't take this training / workshop	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not at all Helpful
		(N)	(N)	(N)
First Aid / CPR / AED	77%	42	2	2
Chainsaw Certification	90%	18	0	1
GPS	97%	4	0	1
Invasives Strike Force Training	83%	26	7	1
Advanced Invasive Plant ID	93%	10	2	1
BlockBuster Survey Training	97%	3	2	1
Invasive Insect Trap Monitoring	98%	2	1	1



Initial Feeling of Preparedness

- While 80% of Volunteers feel they were initially prepared for their responsibilities when first volunteering with the Trail Conference, 15% felt they were underprepared.

Q15	%	N
Definitely Yes	39%	76
Probably Yes	41%	80
Unsure	5%	10
Probably Not	14%	27
Definitely Not	1%	2



Support from Trail Conference

- Volunteers expressed several ways in which they feel they could be better supported by the TC, and these include: increasing the opportunities for communication amongst volunteers as well as continuing to improve the onboarding process for new volunteers.

Q16	%	N
Online how-to manuals and guides	44	73
Training/workshop opportunities to expand skills and knowledge	40	66
Better communication opportunities with other volunteers	35	58
Better on-boarding process when people initially apply to volunteer	32	52
Better communication opportunities with staff	29	48
Physical/paper how-to manuals and guides	18	30
Other	19	32

“Other Responses”	N
Support is fine/good	14
More communication	4
Handbook needs work	2

Q16: In what ways do you feel you could be better supported by the Trail Conference? (Select any that apply.)



Volunteer Support Resources

- Of the many resources available, Volunteers expressed they are most aware of support in the form of: trainings/workshops, visiting the TC Headquarters and reaching out to a Staff member. Half of respondents indicated another Volunteer as a resource for help – if we can increase communication capabilities among Volunteers (as indicated on the previous slide) this could be a useful tool for ongoing support.

Q17	%	N
Trainings / Workshops	75%	134
Visit Trail Conference Headquarters	65%	116
Staff member	63%	113
Another volunteer	56%	100
Volunteer Handbook	56%	99
“Overview & Responsibilities” document of program/position you participate in	30%	53
Online personal dashboard	28%	49

Q17: You can access the following resources for support. Please select the ones you're aware of. (Select all that apply.)



Volunteer Appreciation & Recognition

- 8-in-10 Volunteers feel they receive enough appreciation and recognition, with 12% feeling otherwise. Fellow Volunteers were cited most as giving recognition of others, followed by the TC organization as a whole and public/trail users.

Q18	%	N
Definitely Yes	39%	73
Probably Yes	39%	73
Unsure	11%	21
Probably Not	6%	11
Definitely Not	6%	11

Q19	%	N
Fellow volunteers and volunteer leaders	65%	122
The Trail Conference organization as a whole (events, publications, social media, etc.)	50%	94
The public/trail users	49%	92
Trail Conference Staff	36%	68
Land and park managers	24%	45
* Specific Mentions on Next Slide		

Q18: Do you feel you receive enough appreciation and recognition for your volunteer work?

Q19: Who do you receive appreciation and recognition from? (Select all that apply.)



Recognition – Specific Volunteer Mentions

Jakob Franke

Karl Soehnlein

My Trail Chair

Charlie Gadol

Dave Webber

NJ Regional Trail Chairs

Claudia Farb

Fred Stern
Trail Supervisor

Estelle & Bob

Estelle Anderson &
Bob Jonas

Ron Luna,
my Trail Supervisor

Mike Lenhardt
my Supervisor

Trail Chairs Estelle
Anderson & Bob Jonas

Estelle / Messmer

John Mangerlein

Trail Crew Leaders and
Core Crew Members

Rich Jobsky
Excellent Volunteer Supervisor

Kori Phillips,
my supervisor

Essex County Dept of
Recreation, Essex County
Park Conservancies

Howie Lieberman

Howie Lieberman

Q19: Who do you receive appreciation and recognition from? (Select all that apply.)

* Is there anyone you would specifically like to mention, who you feel you receive appreciation and recognition from (either by name or position/title)?



Forms of Recognition/Appreciation

- Of the many potential forms of recognition/appreciation, annual t-shirts were most desired, followed by events and an item to acknowledge volunteer milestones.
- Of those writing in responses, many indicated that they actually had no need for recognition (i.e. volunteering was its own reward) and others stated “a simple thank you” was all they needed to feel appreciated.

Q20	%	N
Annual t-shirts	51%	97
Events/gatherings	39%	74
Item acknowledging milestone years or hours of service (e.g. patch, hat, etc.)	37%	69
Thank you letter	27%	51
Being featured in a Trail Conference publication (Trail Walker, E-Walker, Social Media, etc.)	21%	39
Other	27%	51

“Other Responses”	N
No Need	22
Simple “thank you”	17
Membership reduction / don’t ask for money with events/emails	3
Picnic	3
20-Year Vest	2
Patch with Rocker	1

Q20: How do you personally like to be recognized and shown appreciation? (Select all that apply.)



Methods & Frequency of Reporting

- The majority of Volunteers prefer submitting reports electronically, with 86% wanting to fill out a digital form on the TC website.
- The majority of Volunteers reporting hours indicated that they do so twice a year.
- 8% of those completing the survey indicated they do not report their hours.

Q21	%	N
Digitally via a form on the website	86%	160
Sending a Word/PDF document via e-mail	63%	117
Filling out a paper form and mailing it to Trail Conference Headquarters	31%	57
Filling out a paper form and dropping it off in person at Trail Conference Headquarters	11%	20

Q22	%
Once a year	9%
Twice a year	76%
Quarterly	6%
Monthly	4%
Weekly	0.6%
Daily	4%
I've only attended group events that do not require me to report hours	9% (of total)
I do not report my hours	8% (of total)

Q21: Which of the following methods of reporting volunteer accomplishments and hours would you be comfortable using? (Select all that apply.)

Q22: How often do you submit your volunteer hours?



Perceptions of Reporting Work & Hours

- The current system for reporting hours appears to have room to improve, with roughly a quarter of Volunteers indicating it is not easy, quick/efficient or clear how to do so.
- The majority of Volunteers agree that reporting of hours is important/necessary. However, 33% of Volunteers “somewhat agree” or disagree with the importance/necessity of reporting hours. The TC can use this finding to better stress the importance of why reporting is necessary to receive operational funding and dollar-matches for our projects.

Q23	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Very Easy	38%	36%	18%	8%
Very Quick / Efficient	35%	38%	19%	8%
Very Clear	42%	37%	16%	5%
Very Important / Necessary	68%	27%	2%	4%



Leadership Perceptions of Tasks

- 40 respondents identifying as RTC/LTC Chairs, Trail Supervisors & Crew Leaders expressed responsibilities of greatest importance are “inspecting their assigned trails” as well as “volunteer recruitment” and “support of volunteers” to maintain said trails.
- Planning and meetings were viewed as, comparatively, less important to their roles.

Q25	Not at All Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important
Ensuring volunteer reports get collected and submitted	8%	30%	63%
Supporting and training my team of volunteers (maintainers, crew, supervisors, LTCs, etc.)	8%	15%	78%
Recruitment of volunteers to help fill vacancies	10%	20%	70%
Participating in the annual planning and budget process for my region	28%	38%	35%
Working with land managers to discuss and assess the trail system needs and priorities	15%	20%	65%
Attending and actively participating in meetings of the Regional Trails Council (RTC) and other groups that may exist in my region	25%	40%	35%
Being familiar with my assigned trails and inspecting them on a regular basis	10%	8%	83%



Leadership-Volunteer Communication

- 40 respondents identifying as RTC/LTC Chairs, Trail Supervisors & Crew Leaders indicated widespread communication frequencies with their Volunteers: 53% communicate monthly or more often whereas 13% communicate only when reports are due.

Q26	%	N
Daily	5%	2
Weekly	23%	9
Monthly	25%	10
Quarterly	30%	12
Bi-annually	3%	1
Annually	3%	1
I only communicate with them when reports are due	13%	5



Volunteer Focus Group / Assessment Session



Methodology

Twenty people attended the focus group session on February 24, 2018. Participants were broken into groups of 3 to 4 based on volunteer role:

- Board Member
- Crew Leader
- Invasive Strike Force
- Regional and Local Trails Committee Chair
- Mixed Roles (Office, Committee, Board, Chair)

Over the course of an hour teams worked to evaluate five elements of volunteer programming. Within each of the elements there were statements addressing specific components of the volunteer experience.

For each statement, as a team, participants gave a rating from 1 to 5 (1 meaning no or minimal achievement; 5 meaning completely or outstanding achievement). In addition to the rating, teams left a mandatory comment as to why they chose that number, giving us both quantitative and qualitative data.



Scoring Overview

Overall, Board Members reported the highest Trail Conference assessment achievement levels, followed by Trails Chairs Team 1.

ISF and the Mixed-Role Group reported mid-level assessment achievement. Trails Chairs Team 2 and Crew Leaders reported the lowest level, at roughly only two-thirds of TC achievement success of the Board Members' impressions.

Rank	Group	Score
1	Board Members	75%
2	Trails Chairs Team 1	70%
3	ISF & Mixed Group	63%
4	Trails Chairs Team 2 & Crew Leaders	46%

Rank	Measure/Category	Score
1	Recognition & Appreciation	73%
2	Volunteer / Staff Relations	69%
3	Recruitment	63%
4	Training & Support	60%
5	Communication	44%



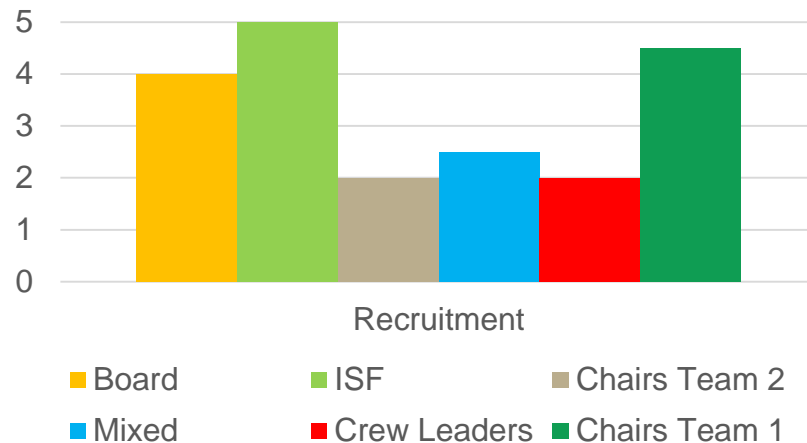
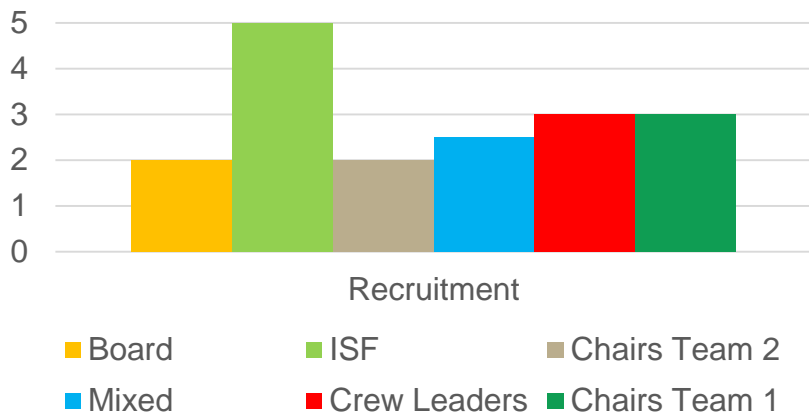
Recruitment

Avg. Assessment = 63

ISF volunteers expressed greatest satisfaction regarding recruitment and getting started with volunteering with the TC.

The Trail Conference clearly describes its needs and expectations when recruiting so that prospective applicants can be informed about volunteering here before they commit.

The Trail Conference makes it easy for a prospective volunteer to sign up and get placed in a volunteer role/event/program.



Currently, there does not appear to be a centrally coordinated recruitment and/or induction process.

We were all specific about the role we were volunteering for. We feel the TC does not actively solicit volunteers enough.

Insufficient details regarding obligations of prospective volunteers not clear on website. Getting placed & follow-up biggest deficiencies.

On website, volunteer opportunities aren't easy to find. TC not understood by general public. Too many times there's a lack of follow-up from a tabling inquiry (ISF does do this well.)

On the ground folks do well – but not TC organization. Phone and emails to TC = bad.

No real instruction. Need for follow-up and better structure so volunteers aren't forgotten.

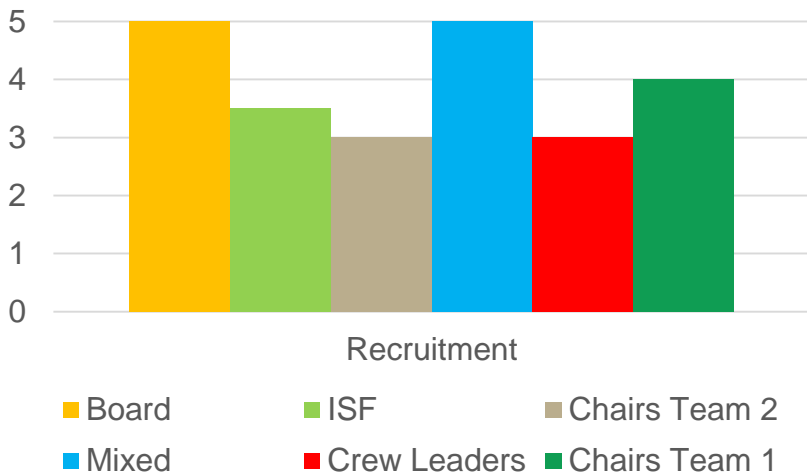


Recognition & Appreciation

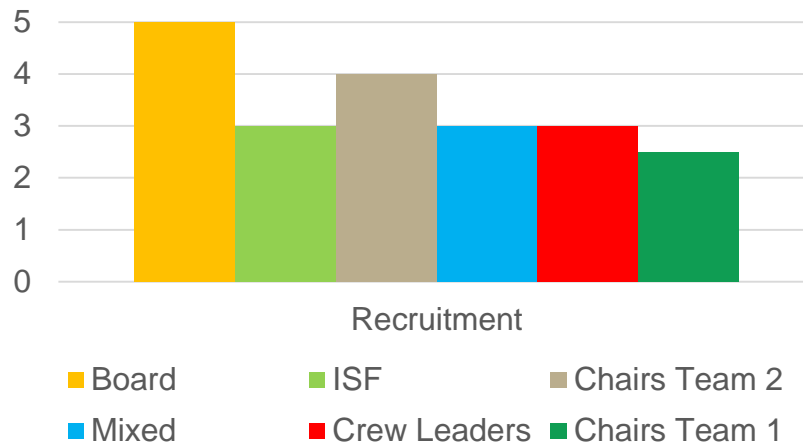
Avg. Assessment = 73

The Board expressed greatest satisfaction whereas ISF, Chairs Team 1 and Crew Leaders ranked this measure lowest.

Volunteers are appropriately recognized and shown appreciation by the Trail Conference.



The Trail Conference openly shares and communicates the accomplishments of volunteers and the value of their work with the TC community and the public.



Still can improve communication to the public.

Seems to be enough recognition. We see plenty in the newsletters with articles & photos. However, we don't see any publicity outside the TC community.

Minimal (recognition / appreciation.) Trail Walker does a great job when info is provided.

T-shirts, parties & awards (good). Trail Walker articles and volunteer spotlight (good). We need an annual report with list of accomplishments. Too many "silos."

Local units better than TC as institution. Some in web and Trail Walker but poorly for individuals.

Need more recognition beyond TW blog. Essentially up to field workers; only they know the accomplishments of the individual.

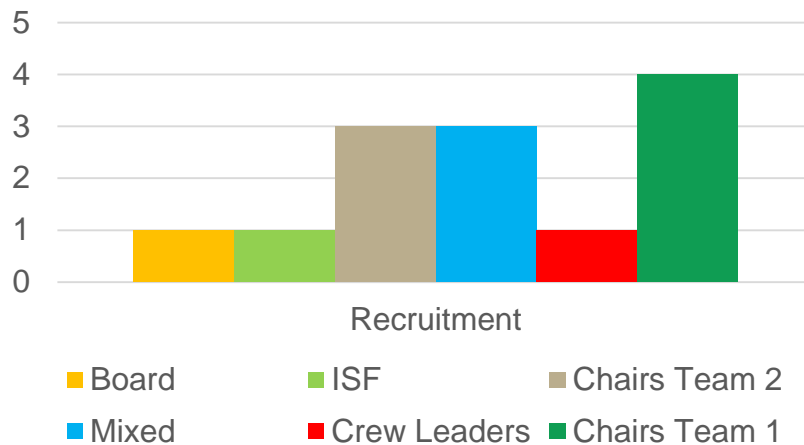


Training & Support (1/2)

Avg. Assessment = 60

ISF, Chairs Team 2 and Crew Leaders had the lowest satisfaction. Scores were low across all groups (except Chairs Team 1) for there being a lack of consistent volunteer orientation.

A standardized orientation is provided to help volunteers become familiar with the purpose, structure and policies of the organization and their role/program.



Have never seen a standardized TC orientation.

None of us saw anything about orientation, policies – however, within the TC community, we don't see a strong need.

TM101 ok quality based on individual supervisors.

We have job descriptions, handbooks. We should used more technology / media to educate.

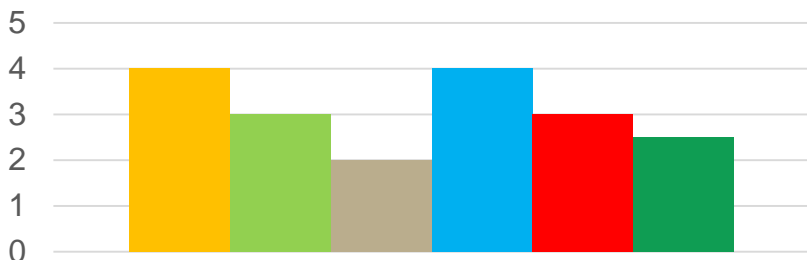
There is none (orientation).

No comments.



Training & Support (2/2)

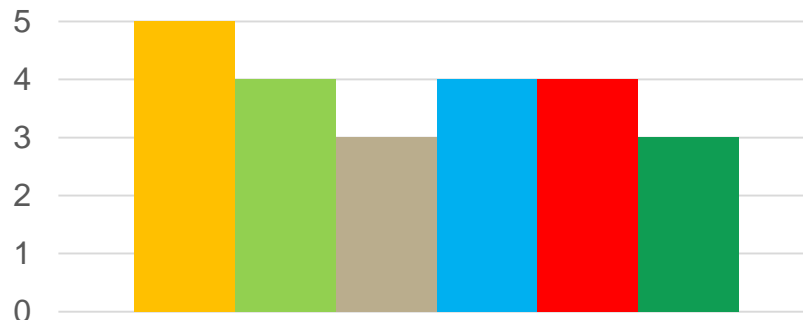
The appropriate number and variety of trainings are provided to ensure all new volunteers have the knowledge, skills and abilities they need to conduct their work well.



Recruitment

- Board
- ISF
- Chairs Team 2
- Mixed
- Crew Leaders
- Chairs Team 1

Growth opportunities are provided for volunteers who wish to advance in responsibility.



Recruitment

- Board
- ISF
- Chairs Team 2
- Mixed
- Crew Leaders
- Chairs Team 1

“Specialty” volunteers (ISF, sawyers) receive excellent training. Excellent opportunities to advance... “wish to advance” may not = “skills” to advance.

2 of us did not feel we had sufficient instruction. Added responsibility was not our goal – success in our chosen work was important. We feel TC is open to growth opportunities.

Inadequate training beyond TM101. Growth positions not encouraged by some local leaders.

What’s available is top-notch (Trail-U and on-the-job). Can we get more courses and students? There’s always an opportunity but we can improve the mentoring.

On-the-job training for crews and chainsaw are good. Unknown for non-trail. Ok for maintainers.

TC seems to offer more training & support for NY (but one person in group thinks they’ve received nothing. What does the TC do to provide or openly offer the opportunities?

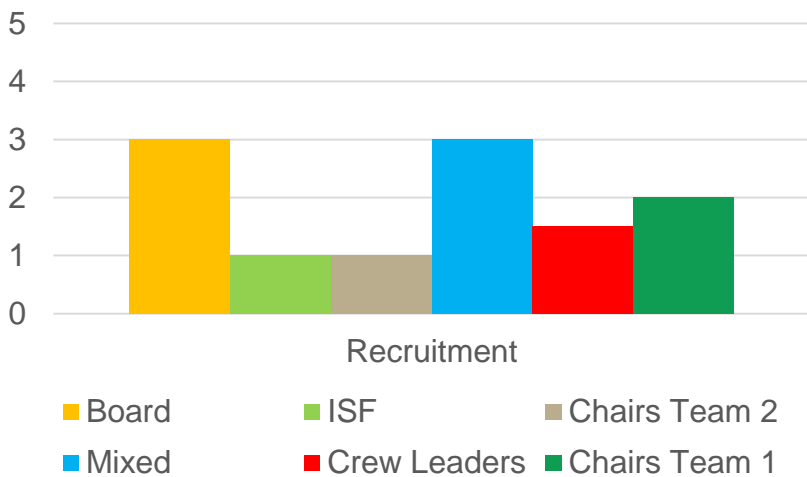


Communication (1/2)

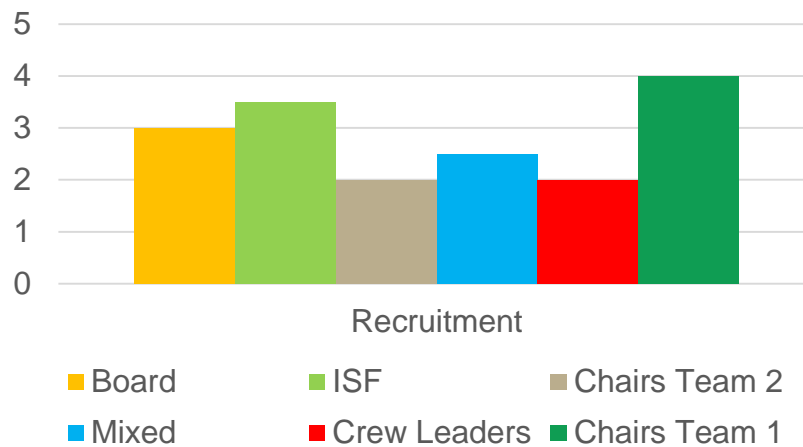
Avg. Assessment = 44

While the Board rated Communication high, ISF, Crew Leaders and Chairs Team 2 rated this low. Overall, Communication was rated lowest of all assessment fields in the focus group.

The Trail Conference widely articulates the policies and procedures applicable to volunteers and their work.



The organization communicates why volunteer reports are important and how the information from the reports is used.



Communication is strong, but ability for volunteers to comply is weak due to digital issues.

Beyond our status as TC members, we have not seen such communication. Re: ISF, we understand how our contributions are used but it took some time. Issue is that TC did not pro-actively communicate.

Little info promulgated widely. Message not out there and inconsistent throughout leadership.

There's a disconnect between what's available & getting it to all volunteers. Communication is good down to a certain level. It gets weakest down to volunteers in the field.

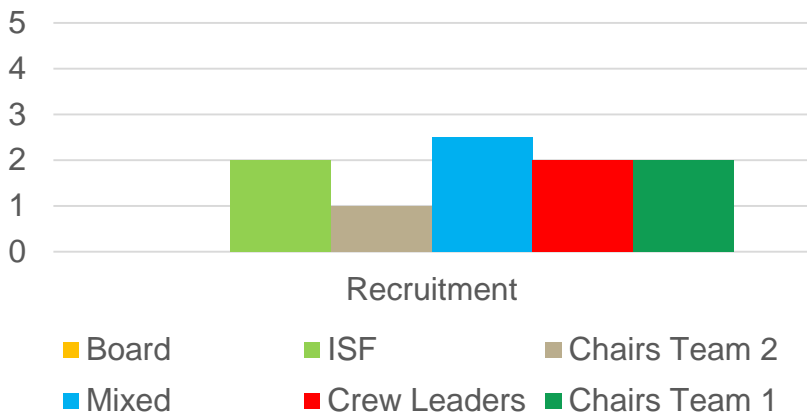
Re: maintainer reporting – no communication of why.

(policies) Depends more on Regional leadership than HQ.
(reports) Depends largely on Region and Chair/Leadership.

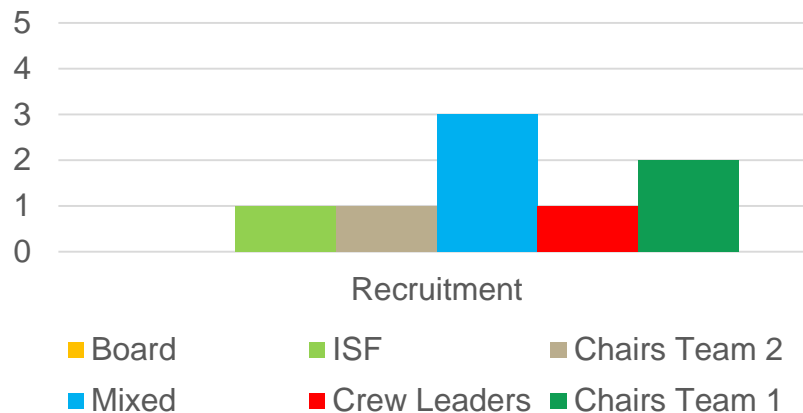


Communication (2/2)

Whenever the Trail Conference staff plans changes or something new, staff considers how volunteers can be involved and what the impact of the new activity will be on current volunteers.



Whenever the Trail Conference staff plans changes or something new, the change/new activity is widely and openly communicated so that all volunteers are informed in a timely manner about it.



As Board members we do not have direct knowledge about staff interactions with volunteers.

(Changes) not applicable to ISF.
Re: SmartPhone App for Blockbuster – Training was minimal. ISF App was not made available to surveyors.

Lots of unwelcome surprise info.
Spotty communication.

If you happen to volunteer in the HQ, you are more connected. In the field, not so much. Maybe use the Trail Walker to help?
Should be a Board member on every committee and maybe have a (monthly?) volunteer email.

Changed maintainer reports due date.

Depends on Regional PC for most part, but not from Headquarters.



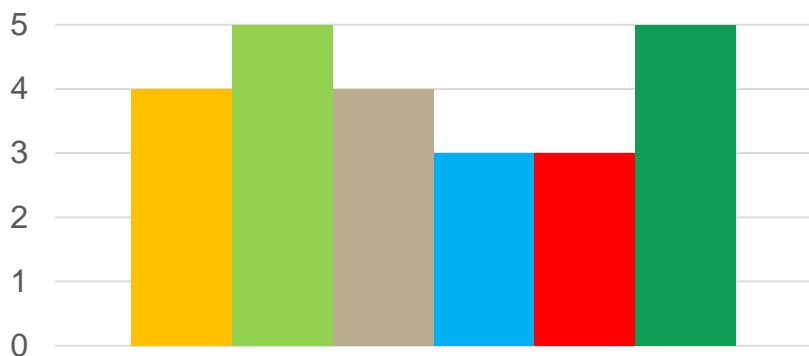
Volunteer / Staff Relations (1/2)

Avg. Assessment = 69

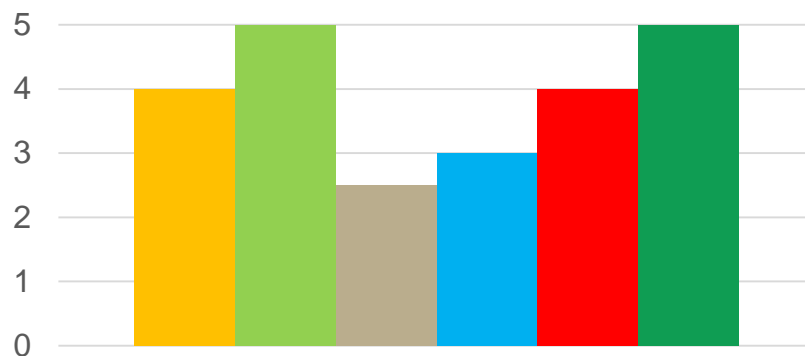
Chairs Team 1 and Board rated this highest, while Chairs Team 2 and Crew Leaders rated this lowest.

Scores were overall lowest for volunteers being able to voice opinions and provide feedback.

Staff work effectively as a team with volunteers.



Volunteers work effectively as a team with staff.



- Board
- ISF
- Chairs Team 2
- Mixed
- Crew Leaders
- Chairs Team 1

- Board
- ISF
- Chairs Team 2
- Mixed
- Crew Leaders
- Chairs Team 1

In general, the TC could not accomplish the work we do without effective teamwork.

Very good experiences!

Interactions vary from exceptional to acceptable.

If your goals are aligned with the Exec. Dir, this works well. Depends on individual volunteers – some are great, some are not team players.

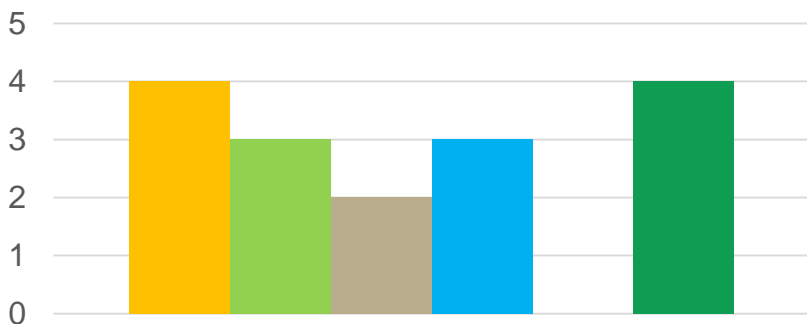
Supports the volunteers. NJ Program Coord spread too thin.

Rating depends on Regional staff contact.



Volunteer / Staff Relations (2/2)

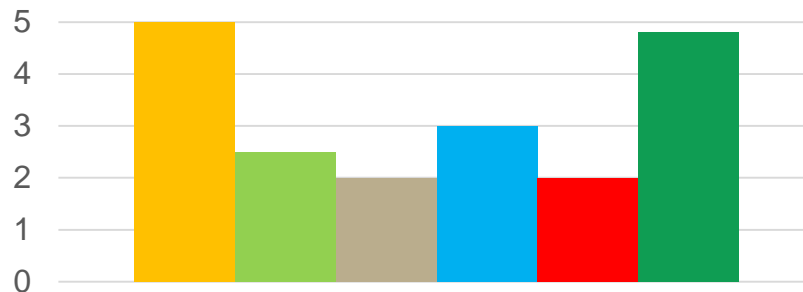
Staff understand the needs, wants and motivations of volunteers.



Recruitment

- Board
- ISF
- Chairs Team 2
- Mixed
- Crew Leaders
- Chairs Team 1

The Trail Conference provides opportunities for volunteers to voice opinions, make suggestions and provide feedback about anything in the organization.



Recruitment

- Board
- ISF
- Chairs Team 2
- Mixed
- Crew Leaders
- Chairs Team 1

For the most part, staff are sensitive to volunteers. There are numerous opportunities for volunteers to voice opinions, suggestions and feedback.

Not so much... but how would we know if "they" understand. You're doing it now (providing opportunities). TC doesn't actively seek or publicize for suggestions but my feedback has always been considered.

Not too much (understanding). Yes – can voice opinions but follow-up is not so good.

This is complicated by staff individual obligations (working in different silos). Staff generally very supportive. Open to suggestions but they should be solicited. If suggestion is not accepted, explain why.

Corporate – not at all.
Supervisors / Chairs – unknown. Trail Crew – yes.

Depends on staff level. Easy to voice opinions, requests, etc. But will they be answered?



End of Session – Final (Spoken) Comments

Group	Weakness Mentioned	Strength Mentioned
Board	“Lack of understanding of various roles and how organizational components fit in the bigger picture.”	“You guys (Staff) and 2000 volunteers.”
ISF	“Communication. Not much communication/publicity and recruitment.”	“Volunteer/Staff relations; work wonderfully together.”
Chairs 1	“Relationship with the T.C. Staff.”	“Open sharing of Volunteer achievements.”
Mixed	“Too much in a silo, regarding communication.”	“Volunteer appreciation and recognition are done well.”
Crew Leaders	“Communication points 1 & 4. Boils down to the T.C. being reactive to volunteers and not proactive.”	“Training and Communication is good at Volunteer-to-Volunteer level. But it struggles between Staff and Volunteers.”
Chairs 2	“Communication weaknesses depends on the Regional P.C. more than Headquarters.”	“Volunteer-Staff relationships. Communication strengths with Regional P.C. <u>not</u> with H.Q. Staff.”

Group	Additional Non-Prompted Comments at End
Mixed	“While working with people in similar roles is good, our group had dissimilar roles and we also found that beneficial and learned a lot.”
Chairs 1	“We enjoyed the exchange of ideas and experiences among other regions. This was great – we should have more of this.”