



BOISE RIVER ENHANCEMENT NETWORK

Stakeholder Feedback & Internal Assessment

Treasure Valley, Idaho



August 2020

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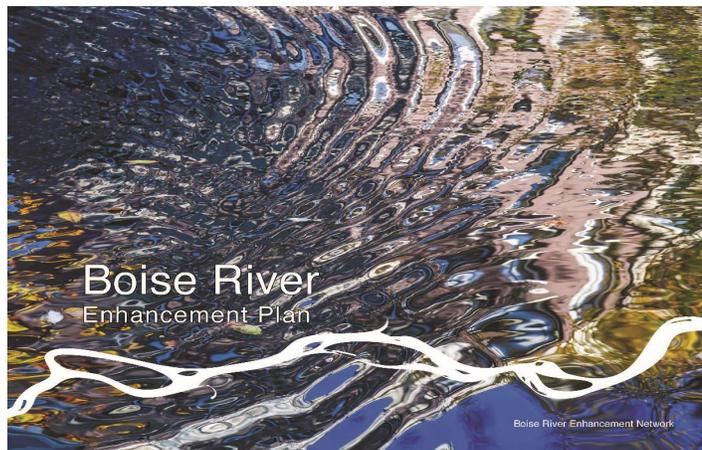
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PART 1 BACKGROUND

1.1 BREN HISTORY

The Boise River Enhancement Network (BREN) was formed in response to stakeholder concerns for the health of the Boise River and the lack of a cooperative planning in the watershed. In 2011, dozens of people worked together to host a workshop for Boise River stakeholders, attended by over 100 people ([Appendix A, From Vision to Reality – Enhancing the Lower Boise River Workshop](#)). Participants agreed that the most important next steps were to form an ongoing network and develop a river enhancement plan.

In 2012 and 2013, a diverse group met monthly to establish BREN and to provide education, networking, and planning services. The group applied for and received a 2-year, \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. With this funding, BREN created a governing structure and wrote the [Boise River Enhancement Plan](#). The Plan was written in 2015 through an extensive literature review and with the input from resource practitioners, scientists, and the general public. The Plan provides a clear, science-based analysis of the key issues and solutions for the Boise River that is widely accepted by the community-at-large.



BREN is now a multi-stakeholder network that aggregates and shares knowledge and resources to support enhancement of the Lower Boise River, from Lucky Peak to the Boise River. Presently, BREN's primary role is to provide education to the public and local decision-makers on the



health of the Boise River and opportunities for enhancement, and to support local stakeholders with enhancement projects.

Our vision is a healthy Boise River that enriches the quality of life of those who live in the watershed and inspires people to care for it.

1.2 BREN'S MISSION, VISION, AND ACTIVITIES

Mission

We are a network of people that live, work and play in the Boise River watershed dedicated to promoting the ecological enhancement of the river.

Vision

The Boise River is recognized as a valuable resource by all communities in the Treasure Valley. Boise River Enhancement Network participants envision a healthy Boise River that enriches the Valley's quality of life.

Imagine a Boise River that:

- Helps meet our communities' desire for outdoor recreation and economic vitality;
- Provides irrigation and drinking water to communities;
- Flows through natural and restored fish and wildlife habitat;
- Offers clean water for swimming and fishing;
- Inspires people to better understand and appreciate the river and engage in stewardship efforts.

Activities

Educational Activities

- Brown bag talks
- Presentations to stakeholder groups
- Presentations at conferences/forums
- Tabling at conferences/events
- Field trips
- Float trips

Provide Scientific Expertise for Enhancement Activities

- Serve on advisory committees hosted by other stakeholders
- Enhancement technique trainings
- Comment on river-related decision-making
- Provide scientific/technical advice on projects
- Identify enhancement opportunities and communicate them to decision-makers and stakeholders
- Provide [Boise River Enhancement Plan](#), river-related information, and scientific resources on website

Support Stakeholders to Implement Enhancement Activities

- Social media outreach
- Reach out to political and stakeholder groups/individuals to build relationships and partners
- Help plan and coordinate enhancement activities
- Provide grant-writing support

Develop/Organize Stewardship Activities

- Recruit and manage volunteers
- Recruit sponsors
- Identify enhancement opportunities
- Plan/coordinate stewardship events
- Boise River clean-ups

Social and Traditional Media

- Blogs and newsletters
- Acknowledge and publicize enhancement projects
- Publicize river-related enhancement needs
- Press conferences and press releases

1.3 STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To develop the Strategic Plan, BREN is following the Strategic Planning in Nonprofits (SPiN) process developed by the Washington Nonprofits Institute. The SPiN process divides the strategic planning process into the following six (6) phases:

1. **PREPARE** - Gather Relevant Information
2. **LISTEN** - Obtain Feedback & Internal Assessment
3. **ENVISION** - Review Mission
4. **PLAN** - Identify Strategic Priorities
5. **EXECUTE** - Implement the Plan
6. **EVALUATE** - Develop Evaluation Measures



Prepare

As a part of the Prepare Phase, BREN established a Strategic Planning Committee in November 2019 to oversee the strategic planning process, conduct behind-the-scenes work (i.e. stakeholder outreach, internal assessment, report writing), and ensure milestones are achieved.

BREN held a Strategic Planning Kickoff Meeting with the majority of BREN’s Leadership (Board and Coordinating Team members) on February 20, 2020. At the Kickoff Meeting, members agreed to the SPiN process and timeline, and identified key issues/opportunities that need to be addressed with Strategic Planning (please refer to [Appendix B, Strategic Planning Kick-off Meeting Notes](#)). Information from the Kickoff Meeting was used to develop questions for stakeholders and to perform the internal assessment as a part of the Listen Phase.

Listen

The Listen Phase was conducted by the Strategic Planning Committee with input from BREN Leadership. This document compiles all of the information obtained during the Listen Phase including stakeholder feedback (survey and interviews), BREN nonprofit health check-up, SWOT Analysis, identification of primary BREN activities and potential evaluation criteria.

Envision

To determine whether BREN’s Mission Statement should be updated, the Strategic Planning Committee created a Mission Assessment survey that was taken by BREN Leadership (see [Section 3.1](#)). While the majority of survey participants support making either some or major changes to BREN’s Mission Statement, it was decided that an update will be considered following identification of strategic priorities.

1.4 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is intended to compile information from the [Prepare](#), [Listen](#) and [Envision](#) Phases to assist BREN Leaders in identifying of strategic priorities during the [Plan](#) Phase. Strategic priorities will be identified during a facilitated, Strategic Planning Retreat on August 29, 2020.

PART 2 STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

Obtaining stakeholder feedback is an important part of the strategic planning process. Stakeholder feedback can provide an outside perspective on BREN's strengths, weaknesses, and reputation; identify trends; build relationships and community investment; and provide new ideas and out-of-the box thinking.

BREN conducted stakeholder feedback through a stakeholder survey to BREN Members and through interviews with key "ticketholders", as described in the following two sections.

2.1 SUMMARY FROM SURVEY OF OPINIONS FROM MEMBERS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND OTHERS

The Strategic Planning Committee prepared an online survey through the Survey Monkey platform that was sent out to over 1,400 on BREN's mailing list. The survey was designed to gather opinions relevant to the development of our strategic plan, and to inform the plan's authors about the relationship, involvement, and level of satisfaction of our members.

The survey was conducted from June 2, 2020 to July 12, 2020. One hundred and twenty two (122) people of the 1,400 invited (8.7%) responded to the invitation and 87% of those completed all nine (9) questions. All full analysis of the survey methods, validity, and results is provided in [Appendix C, Survey of Opinions from Members, Stakeholders, and Others](#).

Key findings include the following:

- Most who consider themselves a member are also **volunteers** (47%) and **donors** (39%), suggesting a high level of commitment to BREN in the form of giving of time and money.
- The data suggest BREN serves as a forum for members who have a **broad range of interests** that include public service, citizen science, and professional involvement in the Boise River.
- The data suggest a high level of **active involvement** (i.e. projects and educational programs) in BREN by its members.
- The data suggest a **high level of member satisfaction** in the projects and educational programs sponsored by BREN.
- The data, although limited to a select group of members, suggest the services of BREN are highly regarded.
- The data, although limited to a select group of members, suggest the educational programs of BREN are highly regarded.
- The data, although limited to a select group of members and with one exception, suggest the level of satisfaction of respondents to their experiences with BREN is high.

2.2 SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS WITH TICKETHOLDERS

The Strategic Planning Committee also conducted interviews with “ticketholders”. Ticketholders are organizations or individuals that you want to hear from but may not have “stake” in your organization, such as a “stakeholder”. In-person interviews can garner more candid feedback but can be biased depending on the relationship between the interviewer and interviewee. Thus, a set of standard questions were used. Careful consideration was taken as to who conducted the interviews. Details on the interview process and summaries of each interview are provided in [Appendix D, Summary of Interviews with Ticketholders](#).

Some major themes from the ticketholder interviews are:

- We are viewed as **locals** who are **passionate** about our regard for the Boise River.
- We are different than other 501(c)(3) non-profits in that our sole focus is a single natural resource (i.e. the Boise River). This is something almost everyone can rally around.
- BREN is an **advocate**, but **not partisan**. We should remain both.
- Perhaps our most important roles are to **advise** and **educate** the public, staff of local governments, and decision makers.
- We are known by most to be **volunteers, citizen scientists, and natural resource professionals**.
- We are regarded as very professional in our dealings with others, and easy to work with.
- The **Boise River Enhancement Plan is well respected** for both its content and presentation.
- People want to do “good”, but often don’t know what that is for the river. BREN informs them of what it means to do “good” and helps them learn how best to do it.
- BREN has taught both staff of local governments and independent contractors how to better do their work related to the river.
- BREN is a young organization and as it matures should focus on fund raising to hire full time staff.

PART 3 INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

3.1 MISSION ASSESSMENT

The Strategic Planning Committee prepared an online survey through the Survey Monkey platform that was sent out to BREN Leadership. The survey was conducted from May 27, 2020 to June 8, 2020. Twelve (12) people participated in the survey. The following section summarizes the main results from the survey. Please refer to [Appendix E, Mission Assessment Survey](#) for the entire survey results.

1. Recalling BREN's Mission

Results were split between those that had a good recall (50%) and those that did not have a good recall (50%) of BREN's Mission Statement.

2. Verbs in BREN's Mission Statement

Majority (67%) of respondents indicated the verbs in BREN's Mission Statement were "mostly okay, but not great".

3. Saying the BREN's Mission Statement Out Loud

Majority (75%) of respondents indicated it was "okay, but not really natural" to say BREN's Mission Statement out loud.

4. Additional Information about BREN's Mission Statement

- BREN's Mission Statement has a total of 25 words, whereas the ideal mission statement is between 8 to 15 words.
- BREN's Mission Statement is moderately readable on the Flesch-Kincaid Readability scale (42.7), whereas the ideal mission statement has a score between 61 and 100.
- BREN's Mission Statement has an average grade reading level of 13.5, whereas the ideal mission statement has a reading level between grades 5 and 8.
- BREN's Mission Statement contains no jargon.
- BREN's Mission Statement contains a minor grammatical error.

5. Based on survey answers and the additional information provided, should BREN update its Mission Statement?

Half (50%) of the respondents support making some changes to BREN's Mission Statement, 42% support making major changes to BREN's Mission Statement, 8% prefer to keep it as is and to only correct its grammar.

3.2 NONPROFIT HEALTH CHECK-UP

Overall, BREN is meeting or partially meeting most nonprofit health indicators, as summarized below. Please refer to [Appendix F, Nonprofit Health Check-up](#) for additional details.

Governance

BREN meets or partially meets all governance items. CT/Board meetings are regularly held, BREN Leaders are aware of organization's mission and programs, CT members are elected, and the CT/Board sign a conflict of interest statement. BREN could improve with the adoption of a compelling Mission Statement, increased transparency and involvement of the Board, and improved succession planning.

Human Resources

BREN meets or partially meets most of the human resources items. BREN could improve in this area with investments in professional/leadership development, volunteer tracking and orientation, and succession planning for top organizational personnel. The BREN Coordinator has a written job description and is evaluated by a member of the Board.

Communication

BREN needs improvement in communication by providing annual reporting with financial and program information and the adoption of a compelling Mission Statement. BREN has a quality Customer Resource Management (CRM) system and strong social media strategy.

Planning

BREN currently has an annual Work Plan that guides the organization's work and is supported by the Board, Coordinating Team, Coordinator, and volunteers. BREN does not have a strategic plan, technology plan, needs assessment, or business plan for major programs.

Evaluation

BREN does not have a robust evaluation plan that tracks indicators for effectiveness/impact of projects and programs in relation to its Mission. Overall program and project outcomes are regularly discussed at meetings and communicated with stakeholders and donors.

Financial Overview

BREN meets or partially meets most of the financial overview items. BREN has an annual budget that is reviewed regularly, contracts with a qualified bookkeeper, tracks finances with bookkeeping software, and has a qualified Treasurer to review finances. BREN could improve with more stable funding and annual independent audit by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

Risk Management

BREN meets or partially meets most of the risk management items. BREN maintains minutes of Board/CT meetings, files necessary tax documents, maintains a filing management system, maintains insurance, tracks grant funds, and enters into signed agreements/contracts. BREN could improve with an additional technology backup system and virus protection.

3.3 SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis can be a powerful guide to developing a strategic plan because it looks at both an organization's inner workings and external environment. SWOT is an acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The Strategic Planning Committee prepared the SWOT Analysis below with feedback from BREN Leadership, Kickoff Meeting notes, stakeholder feedback, Mission Assessment, and Nonprofit Health Check-up.

Strengths

- Educational programs/projects are well-attended by a broad spectrum of people
- Groups reach out to BREN for education and enhancement opportunities
- The Boise River Enhancement Plan is science-based and serves as a guide for enhancement activities.
- The Boise River Enhancement Plan is widely accepted by the community at-large
- BREN has successful partnerships with other NGOs and agencies to get work done
- Breadth of expertise of volunteers, members, and leadership
- Large number of volunteers with a high level of involvement working on the appropriate types of projects for volunteers
- Opportunistic and nimble
- New and returning corporate sponsorships
- Individual contributions growing
- Corporate stewardship program growing
- Membership is growing and managed with a customer relationship management (CRM) system
- Respected by many local government and agencies; willing to speak/listen to BREN
- Strong connections and relationships with people in key leadership positions
- Support by Soil & Water Conservation Districts
- Sound accounting and financial processes and risk management
- BREN has a dedicated, part-time paid Coordinator
- Provide database and information on Boise River via website
- Experienced in developing and managing projects and presentations
- BREN's niche as a watershed group – there is no other group dedicated to the ecological enhancement of the Boise River

Weaknesses

- Lack of a proactive process to identify and prioritize enhancement investments
- Conflicting visions of organizational structure and strategy
- Mission Statement not compelling
- Need better coordination and leveraging of membership/volunteers
- Organizational structure (Board and CT) combined with differing meeting schedules can make decision-making cumbersome and confusion about authorities and responsibilities
- Low frequency and length of meetings inhibits opportunity for discussion and participatory decision-making.

- Board of Directors sometimes out-of-touch
- BREN leadership does not represent all stakeholders
- Important issues often dealt with by a small group of leaders
- BREN Members sometimes speak for BREN in public settings without sanction of BREN leadership
- Volunteer burnout and overload
- Need for additional funds to pay current contractor and/or future staff to complete tasks needed to meet BREN goals for the year
- Need increased capacity to engage and build relationships with a variety of local governments, NGOs, etc.
- Unstable funding leading to high degree of uncertainty during planning
- Lack of formal reporting about accomplishments, impacts and organizational health to members, donors, and partners (e.g. Annual Report)
- Lack of a succession plan for key positions
- One-year terms for Board and two-year terms for Coordinating Team can lead to high turnover.
- Lack of strong connections in Canyon County
- No strategy to address data gaps in ecosystem understanding as outlined on page 36 of Boise River Enhancement Plan (i.e. system-wide substrate study, finer-scale geomorphic analysis, comprehensive wetland and riparian survey, recreation study, groundwater study)
- Processes and organization can't keep up with the planning, development, and community growth along the Boise River

Opportunities

- People love the river - many stakeholders yet to engage, especially in lower reaches
- Youth and minority communities interested in river enhancement projects
- Population increase = more stakeholders to engage and partnership opportunities
- Citizen science or volunteer action plan
- Existing projects/areas for continued work:
 - Ada County Expo-Idaho Property
 - Barber Dam Relicensing
 - Wood's Park, Eagle
 - Middleton River Park
 - Barber Park/Barber Pool
 - IBO River site
 - 3-D river management tool
 - New FEMA floodplain maps
- Stakeholder organizations are doing enhancement work
- Engage more with regulated community
 - Emergency Management, Community Resilience (flooding, drought, climate change)
 - Link FEMA hazard mitigation planning to potential enhancement projects
 - Planning and Zoning
- Engage more with the academic community

- University of Idaho and BSU Managing Idaho's Landscapes for Ecosystem Services
- Engage more with Tribes
- Work with developers to support growth that does not degrade the Boise River
- Develop an evaluation process to inform annual reports and other communications
- Increase/stabilize funding with membership fee
- Market-based approaches to generate income
 - Designing and implementing enhancement projects
 - Implementing, managing or monitoring mitigation (wetlands, stormwater, etc.)
- New local funding sources and grants
- Improving political climate in Ada County increasing interest in the River and its habitat
- New technology to support enhancement
 - LiDAR 3-D model
 - Green Infrastructure Mapping
- New regulations that protect water quality (NPDES/IPDES) and stormwater programs
- Explore project prioritization
 - Reach-by-reach ecologic analysis and prioritization, including identification of agencies and organizations involved with that part of the river
 - Programmatic enhancement plan that can be funded and implemented over a long time frame (20 years)
- Social Media Presence
- The community of professional expertise in science, engineering, and planning is growing in the Treasure Valley

Threats

- Population increase leading to increased development within the floodplain and pressure on natural resources.
- Lack of uniform regulations, protections, and setbacks along the Boise River
- Lack of enforcement of existing regulations (i.e. Boise River System Ordinance)
- Lack of understanding by river-front landowners and HOAs regarding river-friendly activities, characteristics and role of healthy riparian habitat, and existing regulations
- Weakening of environmental laws
- Anti-regulatory positions of many political leaders
- Cyclical changes in agency/government leadership
- Ecological threats (as identified in Boise River Enhancement Plan)
 - Continued channel confinement and simplification
 - Loss of cottonwood forest overstory
 - Invasive species
 - Nonpoint source runoff
 - Vulnerability of remaining functional floodplain
 - Increased recreational pressure
- Increased economic uncertainty due to pandemic
- Perception that there are too many NGOs that are in competition with BREN
- Perception that BREN is an advocacy organization or is anti-development

PART 4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

4.1 POTENTIAL CRITERIA FOR PRE- AND POST-ACTIVITY EVALUATION

Purpose

To provide a way for BREN to evaluate the specific projects, programs, or activities.

Implementation

This evaluation can be performed before and after BREN engages in an activity to provide comparison and lessons-learned. Scores could be assigned (i.e. High = 3 points; Medium = 2 points; Low = 1 point) to identify thresholds. The post-evaluation would only be carried out by individuals directly involved in implementation. Records of evaluations could be kept so the process can improve with experience.

Stakeholder Engagement (Mission Impact)

- **High** - Activity involves/supports those who make decisions about the river or encourages many people to influence decision-makers.
- **Medium** – Activity moderately involves/supports those who make decisions about the river or encourages some people to influence decision-makers.
- **Low** – Activity minimally involves/supports those who make decisions about the river or encourages few people to influence decision-makers.

Ecological Enhancement (Mission Impact)

- **High** – Activity influences river policy/management or supports large-scale enhancement work.
- **Medium** – Activity mostly supports small-scale enhancement work or provides education about enhancement work.
- **Low** – Activity has little influence on river policy/management or does little to support enhancement work.

Financial Viability for BREN

- **High** – Activity has high potential to secure funding
- **Medium** – Activity has moderate potential to secure funding
- **Low** – Activity has low potential to secure funding

Ease of Implementation

- **High** – Activity generally requires limited effort on BREN’s part to implement
- **Medium** – Activity generally requires a moderate level of effort on BREN’s part to implement
- **Low** – Activity generally requires a high level of effort on BREN’s part to implement

4.2 POTENTIAL QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE ENGAGING IN AN ACTIVITY

- Does BREN have adequate resources (Coordinator time, volunteers, expertise, time, money) to do the activity well?
- What are the fiscal resources needed to do the activity well? Does BREN have those resources, or would a partner supply them?
- How would a proposed activity be perceived by partners/stakeholders, in particular local governments & agencies?
- Have we explored all possible partnerships and evaluated activities in relation to agency mission and objectives?
- Do partners have financial resources to help implement or sustain the project over the long term?

APPENDIX A VISION TO REALITY WORKSHOP SURVEY RESULTS

Lower Boise River 'Vision to Reality' Workshop Breakout Session Results

Data sources are based on the results of a workshop breakout sessions attended by 106 participants..

Who do you represent?

In breakout work sessions participants were asked to describe who they represent or their affiliations. The tag cloud of words represents the scale of each response with the percentage in parenthesis.

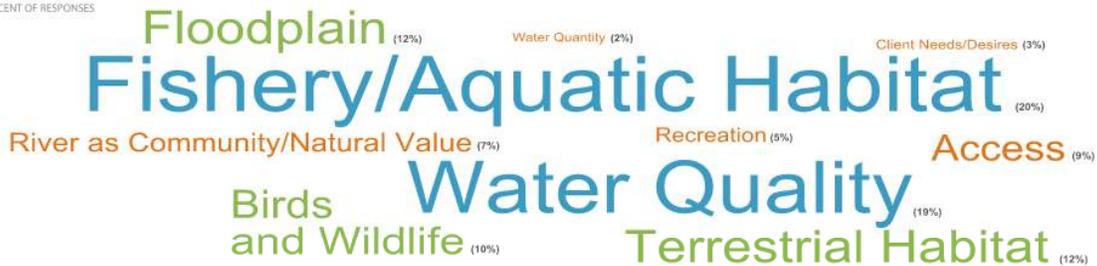
PERCENT OF RESPONSES



What are your enhancement goals and interests?

In breakout work sessions participants were asked to describe their interests and goals for river enhancement. The tag cloud of words represents the scale of each response with the percentage in parenthesis.

PERCENT OF RESPONSES



What are your challenges?

In breakout work sessions participants were asked to describe the challenges they face in enhancement efforts. The tag cloud of words represents the scale of each response with the percentage in parenthesis.

PERCENT OF RESPONSES



What should happen next?

In breakout work sessions participants were asked what steps should happen next. The tag cloud of words represents the scale of each response with the percentage in parenthesis.

PERCENT OF RESPONSES



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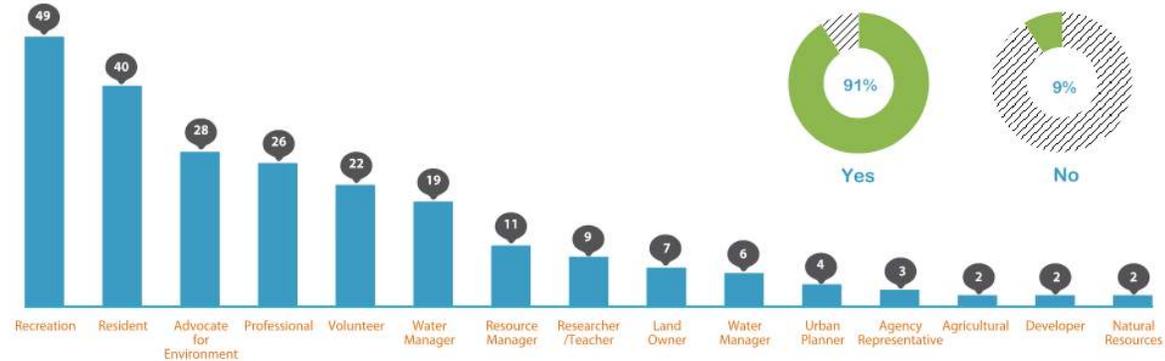
Lower Boise River 'Vision to Reality' Workshop Survey Results

Data sources are based on the results of a survey questionnaire. The graphics reflect the results of 100 of the 184 people that were invited to take the survey.

Interest in the River

What is your stake or interest in the Lower Boise River?

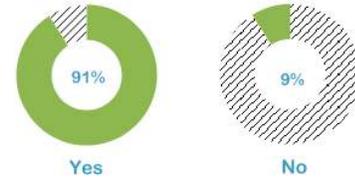
NUMBER OF RESPONSES



Willingness to Contribute

Are you interested or willing to contribute further to restore or enhance the Lower Boise River?

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS



Your Role

What is your role and what actions have you performed on the Lower Boise River?

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS

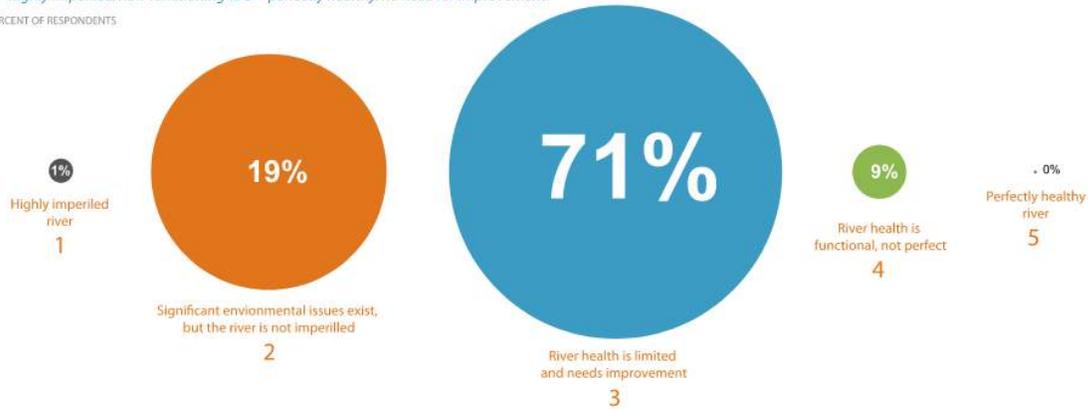


River Health

How do you rate the health of the Lower Boise River - on a scale of 1-5?

1 = highly imperiled/non-functioning to 5 = perfectly healthy/no need for improvement.

PERCENT OF RESPONDENTS



Infographic design by:
Ecosystem Sciences Foundation

Lower Boise River 'Vision to Reality' Workshop

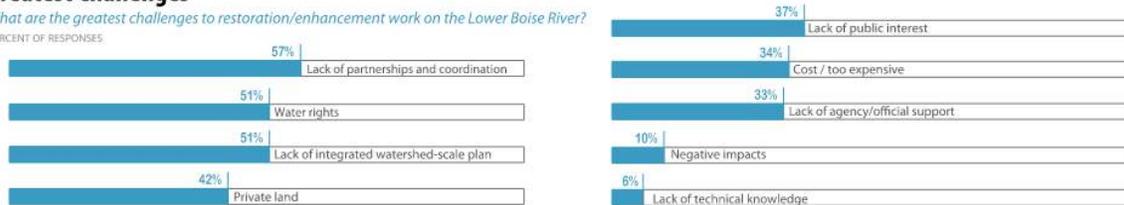
Survey Results

Data sources are based on the results of a survey questionnaire. The graphics reflect the results of 100 of the 184 people that were invited to take the survey.

Greatest Challenges

What are the greatest challenges to restoration/enhancement work on the Lower Boise River?

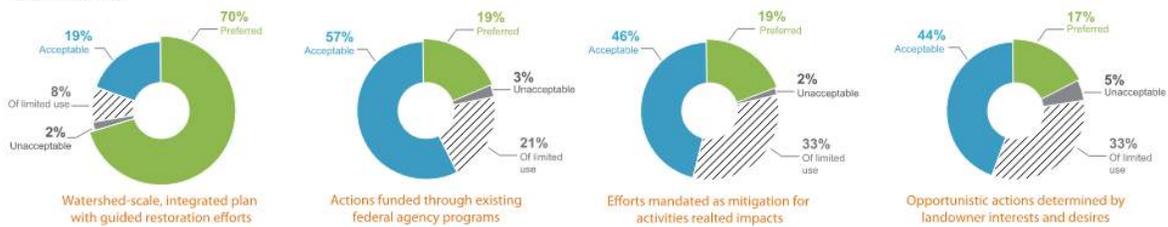
PERCENT OF RESPONSES



Approaches to Restoration

Please rate the following approaches to restoration/enhancement on the Lower Boise River (Preferred, Acceptable, Of limited use, Unacceptable).

PERCENT OF RESPONSES



What Needs Improvement

Rate the following Lower Boise River issues based on their importance or need.

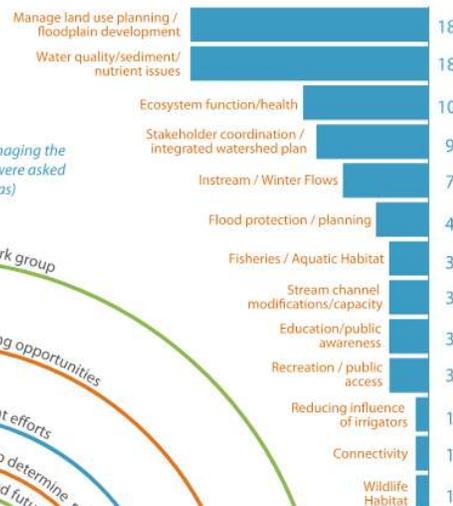
AVERAGE RATING BASED ON PERCENT OF RESPONSES



Important Issues

What is the most important issue for the Lower Boise River?

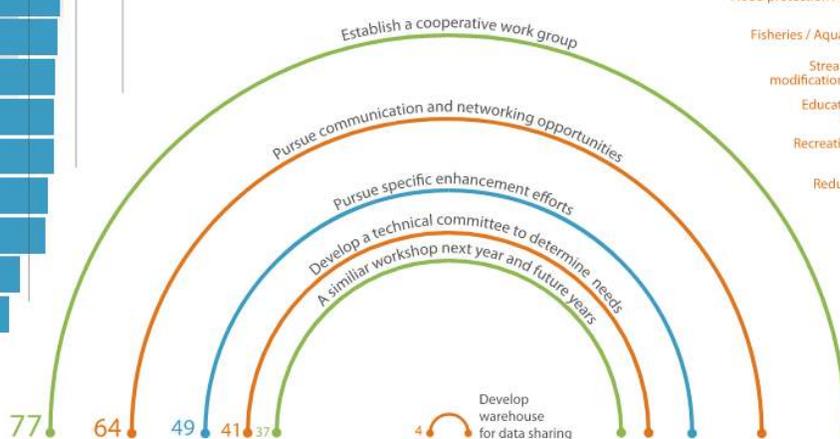
NUMBER OF RESPONSES



Next Steps

What are the "next steps" for managing the Lower Boise River? (Participants were asked to suggest a range of ideas)

NUMBER OF RESPONSES



Infographic design by:
Ecosystem Sciences Foundation

APPENDIX B STRATEGIC PLANNING KICKOFF MEETING NOTES

What about the organization of the Boise River Enhancement Network is working well?

- Membership is free and growing
- Diversity of the Coordinating Team
- Visibility and recognition (echoed)
- Good organizational structure (Coordinating Team and Board of Directors) and an appropriate meeting schedule (every other month) allows for disbursement of duties and deliverables (both strength and weakness)
- Large number of volunteers with a high level of involvement working on the appropriate types of projects for volunteers (echoed 2 more times)
- The level of networking and sharing
- Attracts people and energy
- Diversity of skills and personal outreach/connection
- Expertise of volunteers, members, and leadership
- Leadership opportunities
- Locally focused
- Adaptability
- Watershed-based (lower Boise River)
- Inclusivity, includes all stakeholders
- Avoiding divisive issues
- Depth of connections locally
- Financial accountability
- Integrity and consistency in what we do
- Opinions are respected by local government and agencies
- Record keeping and administration

What about the organization of the Boise River Enhancement Network hinders our effectiveness?

- Need more streamlining of internal communications and to deal with email overload (sometimes too little communication and sometimes too much which can be ineffective)
- Organizational structure (Coordinating Team and Board of Directors) and an appropriate meeting schedule (every other month) can make decision-making cumbersome and important issues dealt with by a small group of leaders.
- All volunteer – could have increased effectiveness with some paid staff
- Need for additional funds to pay current staff and/or more staff
- Lack of an Executive Director
- Conflicting visions for BREN – grassroots organization versus a network of organizations
- Need better coordination and leveraging of membership
- Need committees to work on separate aspects of marketing (e.g., social networking, traditional media)
- Decide if BREN is an advocacy organization or a science organization
- Takes on too much

- Burnout, overload, and rate of turnover in leadership
- Better succession planning
- Better mentoring
- Insufficient funding
- Need to better solidify BREN as the key/go-to organization for Boise River mgmt. issues
- Who represents BREN (e.g. to the public, local government and agencies, media)?
- Work better with local media
- Need increased capacity to engage with a variety of local governments, other NGOs, etc.

What about the selection and way in which the Boise River Enhancement Network carries out its programs and projects is working well?

- Educational programs/projects are strong – plantings, float trips, etc.
- The Boise River Enhancement Plan serves as a guide for enhancement activities and is widely accepted by the community at-large
- Developing relationships with local governments (i.e. Star presentations, Middleton advice)
- Developed partnerships with other NGOs and agencies to get work done (echoed)
- Working to be more proactive
- Opportunistic and nimble (i.e., Barber Park invasive plant removal project planned and completed quickly)
- People have fun! Volunteer projects are rewarding experiences
- Creating opportunities for involvement (echoed)
- Good sponsorships who are paying to get work done
- Facilitating solutions to problems on the river with businesses and local government
- Science-based solutions and advice
- Moving the conservation needle

What about the selection and way in which the Boise River Enhancement Network carries out its programs and projects hinders our effectiveness?

- Lack of a prioritization process
- Need a better list of accomplishments on website, better promotion of accomplishments
- Need an updated history of BREN on website
- Project selection too ad hoc, not necessarily strategic
- Need to take more time to celebrate
- Need guidelines for advocacy
- How should BREN handle the tension between advocacy and sponsors?
- Better acknowledgement of sponsors (plaques or other formal recognition)
- Lack of large scale enhancement projects intended to influence ecosystem processes that require a programmatic approach
- Better long-term planning and scheduling of projects
- BREN doesn't reach out to the academic community
- Need better impact on policy for managing the river and riparian areas
- Better process for signing up and organizing volunteers for specific projects and events
- Better engagement with local government through annual reporting, regular meetings, or similar efforts

APPENDIX C SURVEY OF OPINIONS FROM MEMBERS, STAKEHOLDERS, AND OTHERS

Background

A survey of opinions from members of the Boise River Enhancement Network (BREN), its stakeholders, and others was conducted beginning June 2, 2020 and ending July 12, 2020. "Stakeholders" were those who appeared on a list maintained by BREN that is shown as an attachment to this memo. "Others" included members of the Coordinating Team and Board of Directors of BREN.

The survey was designed to gather opinions relevant to the development of our strategic plan, and to inform the plan's authors about the following from those who responded to the survey: (a) their relationship to BREN (e.g. member, volunteer, donor); (b) the nature and extent of their involvement (e.g. attended an event, partnered in a project); (c) the likelihood of them recommending an "on the ground" project or educational program sponsored by BREN to family or friends; (d) the helpfulness of our services to them or their organization, and the effectiveness of our educational programs; and (e) their level of satisfaction after their experience(s) with BREN. In addition, the survey was designed to allow for open answers to questions about the nature of work we should consider for the future, and how we can improve.

Summary of Survey Results

A. Number and Timing of Responses

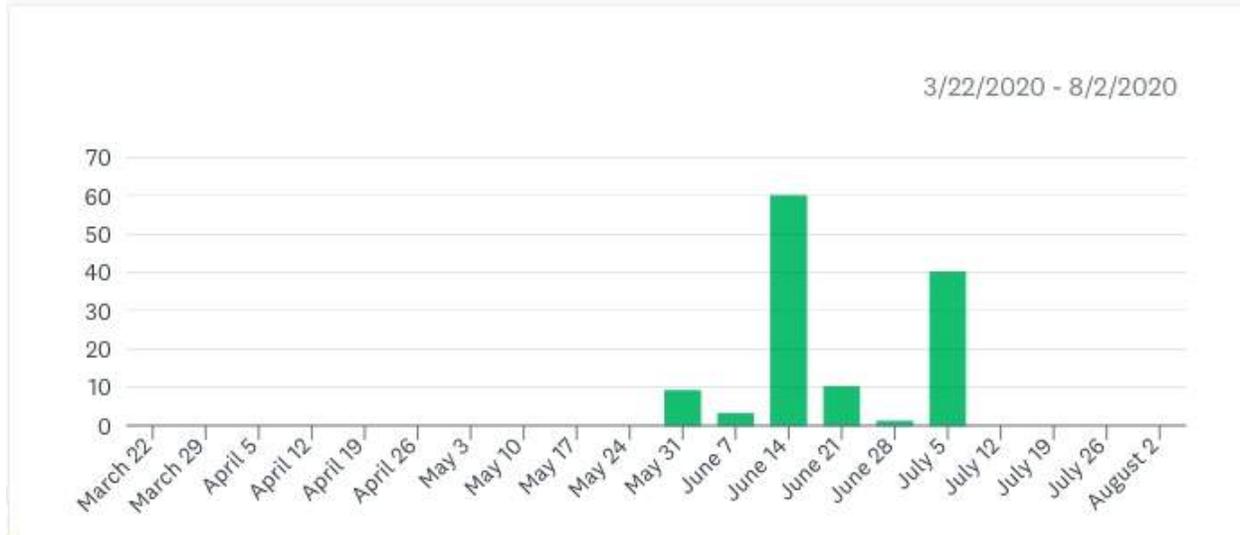
An invitation to "take" the survey was sent to a list of 1,400 persons who appear on an active mailing list maintained by BREN. That invitation was personally sent by e-mail and announced on the BREN web site with a link to the survey. The survey was constructed, responses collected, and the results analyzed using the web based commercial platform commonly known as Survey Monkey.

The first invitation to members of the BREN Coordinating Team and the Board of Directors ONLY was sent Tuesday June 2, 2020 on or around 2:15 PM. This was the "soft opening" which allowed us to identify and correct any potential logistical problems of administering the survey. The first invitation to ALL of the remaining 1,400 persons was sent Sunday June 14, 2020 on or around 3:00 PM. A second invitation was sent to ALL 1,400 persons on Tuesday July 7, 2020 on or around 8:45 PM. The survey "closed" at midnight on Sunday July 12, 2020. The content of the survey at the time of the "soft opening" was identical to that during the remainder of the survey period.

One hundred and twenty two (122) people of the 1,400 invited (8.7%) responded to the invitation and 87% of those completed all nine questions. The literature offers ambiguous opinions as to what constitutes a "valid" survey response rate. The consensus is it largely depends upon the level of engagement and interest of the population that is surveyed. There is no "statistically valid" response rate. I have embraced the "low bar" response rate of 10 to 15% and believe, with caution, the responses to this survey are meaningful.

A chart of the response volume during the 41-day period the survey was “open” is shown in the following graphic.

Responses Volume



The data show a surge in responses at the time of each invitation (i.e. June 2, June 14, and July 7, 2020) followed soon after by a steep decline in rate (i.e. number of responses / day).

The data show, as expected in most surveys, a decline in number of answered questions as respondents progressed through the survey. These data offer insights into how to better design future surveys.

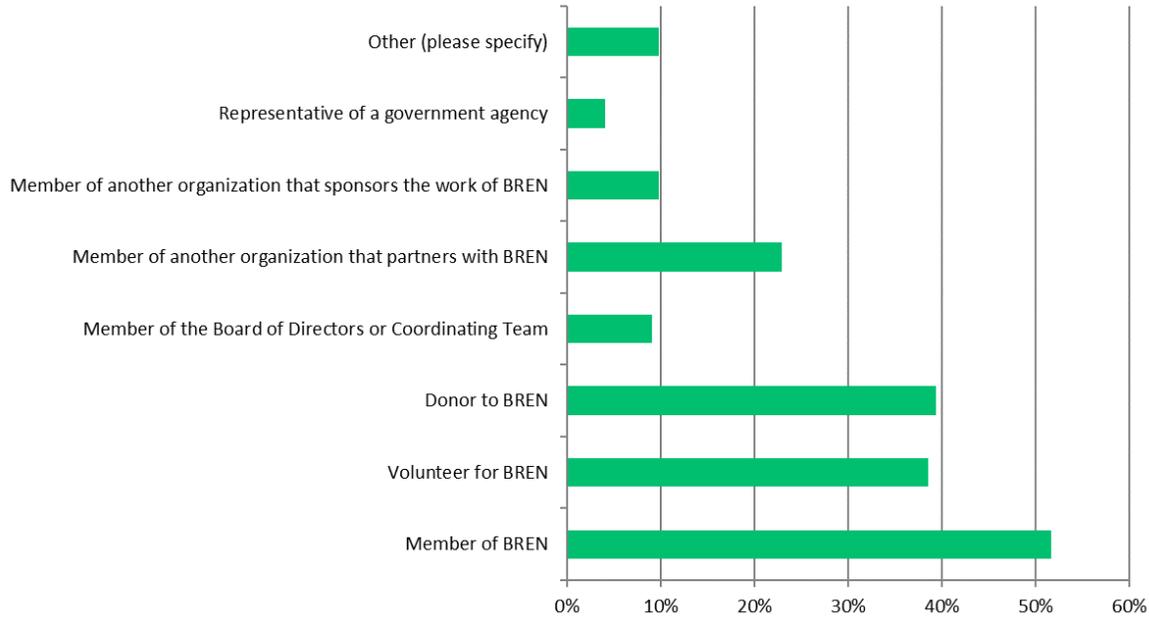
- Question 1: Answered 122 Skipped 0
- Question 2: Answered 106 Skipped 16 -16
- Question 3: Answered 96 Skipped 26 -10
- Question 4: Answered 96 Skipped 26 -0
- Question 5: Answered 90 Skipped 32 -6
- Question 6: Answered 84 Skipped 38 -6
- Question 7: Answered 84 Skipped 38 -0
- Question 8: Answered 84 Skipped 38 -0
- Question 9: Answered 84 Skipped 38 -0

An abrupt change in number of answered questions occurred at Question 3, the first to require multiple responses to a single question. And, at Question 5, the first question in a series that required considerable thought to evaluate helpfulness or effectiveness. Eighty-four (84) of 122 respondents (69%) answered all 9 questions.

B. Responses to the Questions

Question No. 1 Tell us about your relationship with BREN (please check all that apply):

Tell us about your relationship with BREN (please check all that apply):



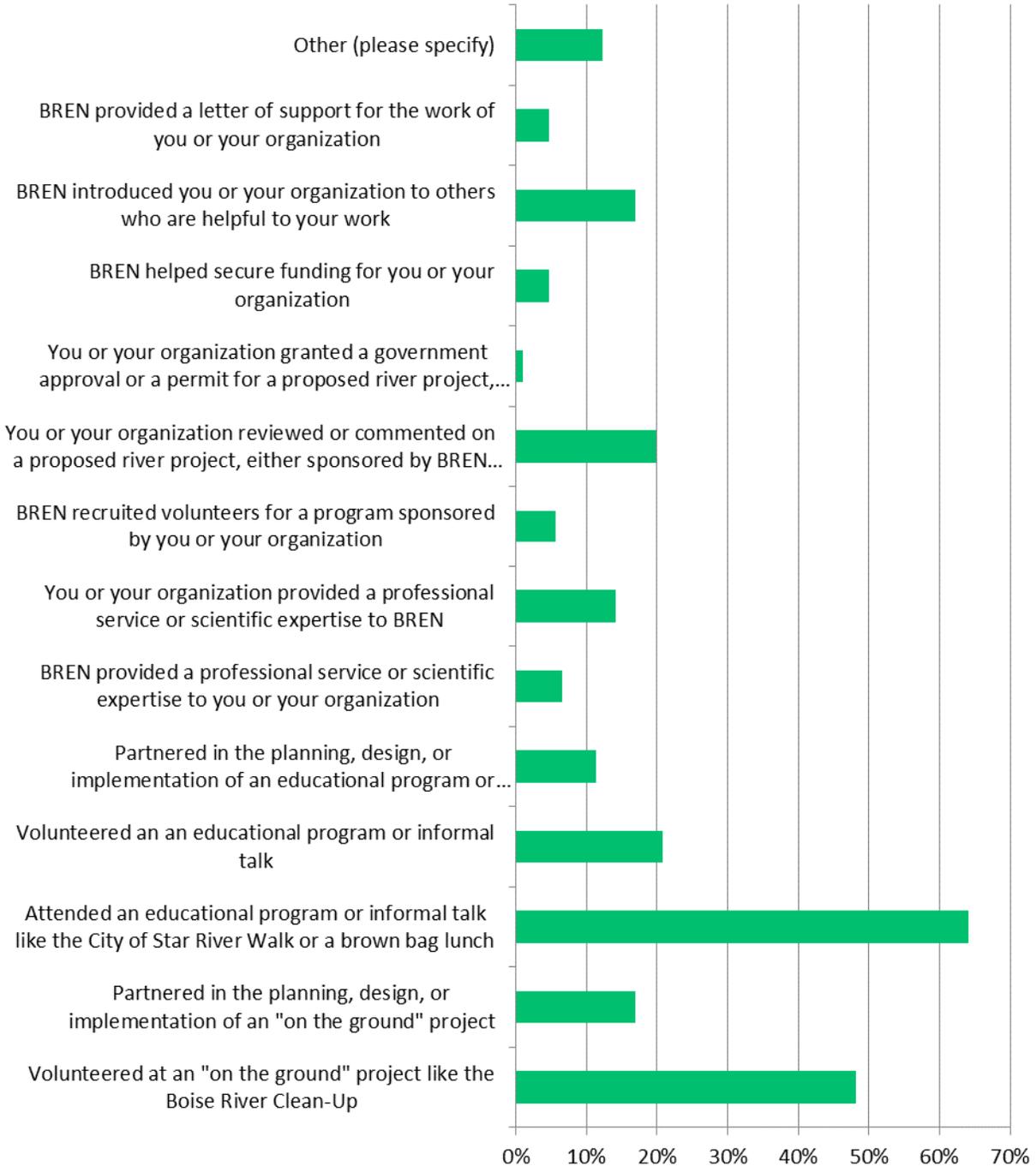
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Member of BREN	51.64%	63
Volunteer for BREN	38.52%	47
Donor to BREN	39.34%	48
Member of the Board of Directors or Coordinating Team	9.02%	11
Member of another organization that partners with BREN	22.95%	28
Member of another organization that sponsors the work of BREN	9.84%	12
Representative of a government agency	4.10%	5
Other (please specify)	9.84%	12
Total Respondents: 122		

The data show a majority (52%) of respondents consider themselves to be members of BREN. One person who responded as "Other", when asked to specify said, "I don't think I'm a member, but I do receive your emails and have attended some talks".

Most who consider themselves a member are also volunteers (47%) and donors (39%), suggesting a high level of commitment to BREN in the form of giving of time and money.

Question No. 2 How have you or your organization worked with BREN in the past (please check all that apply):

How have you or your organization worked with BREN in the past (please check all that apply):



QUESTION No. 2 CONTINUED:

Boise River Enhancement Network (BREN) Strategic Planning Effort "Listening Phase" Survey of Opinions from Members, Stakeholders, and Others

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Volunteered at an "on the ground" project like the Boise River Clean-Up	48.11% 51
Partnered in the planning, design, or implementation of an "on the ground" project	16.98% 18
Attended an educational program or informal talk like the City of Star River Walk or a brown bag lunch	64.15% 68
Volunteered an an educational program or informal talk	20.75% 22
Partnered in the planning, design, or implementation of an educational program or informal talk	11.32% 12
BREN provided a professional service or scientific expertise to you or your organization	6.60% 7
You or your organization provided a professional service or scientific expertise to BREN	14.15% 15
BREN recruited volunteers for a program sponsored by you or your organization	5.66% 6
You or your organization reviewed or commented on a proposed river project, either sponsored by BREN or others	19.81% 21
You or your organization granted a government approval or a permit for a proposed river project, either sponsored by BREN or others	0.94% 1
BREN helped secure funding for you or your organization	4.72% 5
BREN introduced you or your organization to others who are helpful to your work	16.98% 18
BREN provided a letter of support for the work of you or your organization	4.72% 5
Other (please specify)	12.26% 13
Total Respondents: 106	

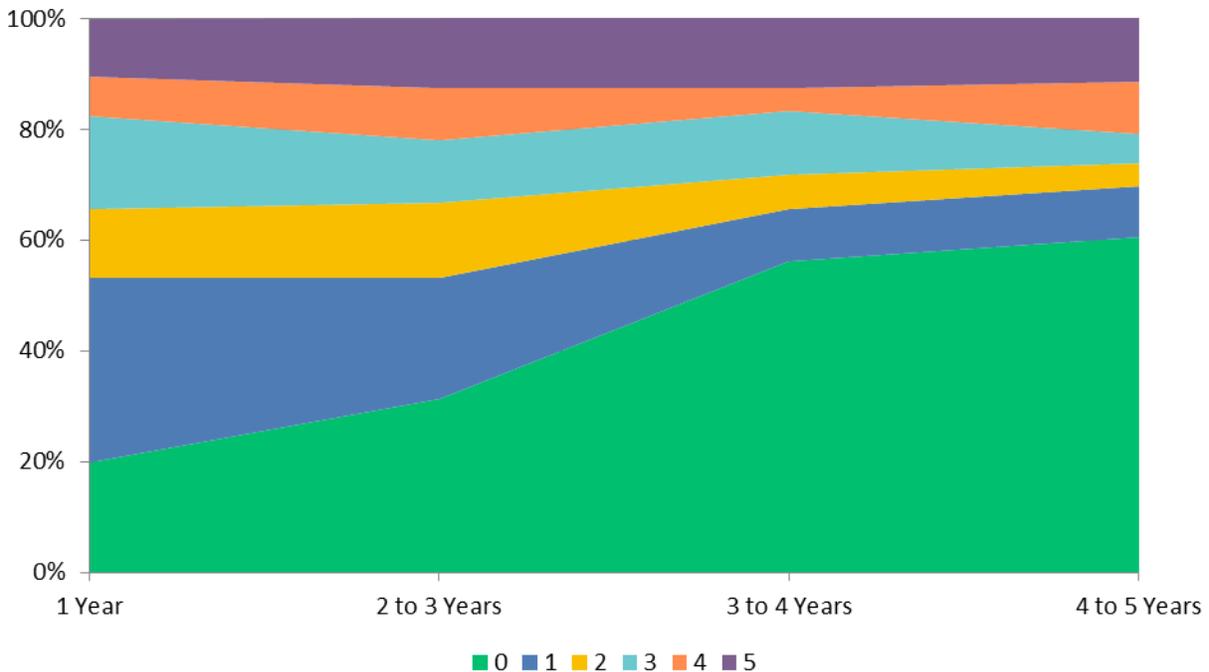
The data show a majority (64%) of respondents attended an educational program or informal talk, and many (48%) volunteered at an "on the ground" project. A considerable number (21%) volunteered at an educational program, and 11% participated in its planning, design, or implementation. By comparison, the data show 17% participated in the planning, design, or implementation of an "on the ground" project.

BREN recruited volunteers for 6% of respondents. A professional service or scientific expertise was provided **to** 7% of respondents **from** BREN, and **from** 14% of respondents **to** BREN. Notably, 20% of respondents commented on a proposed river project and 17% of respondents were introduced by BREN to others who are helpful to their work.

The data suggest BREN serves as a forum for members who have a broad range of interests that include public service, citizen science, and professional involvement in the Boise River.

Question No. 3. Tell us how many projects or educational programs your or your organization have participated in over the past (please check one circle in each row):

Tell us how many projects or educational programs you or your organization have participated in over the past (please check one circle in each row):



	0	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
1 Year	19.79% 19	33.33% 32	12.50% 12	16.67% 16	7.29% 7	10.42% 10	96
2 to 3 Years	31.25% 30	21.88% 21	13.54% 13	11.46% 11	9.38% 9	12.50% 12	96
3 to 4 Years	56.25% 54	9.38% 9	6.25% 6	11.46% 11	4.17% 4	12.50% 12	96
4 to 5 Years	60.42% 58	9.38% 9	4.17% 4	5.21% 5	9.38% 9	11.46% 11	96

The data show a large majority (80%) of respondents have participated in at least one BREN sponsored project or educational program in the past year, and a considerable number (47%) have participated in two or more of these events.

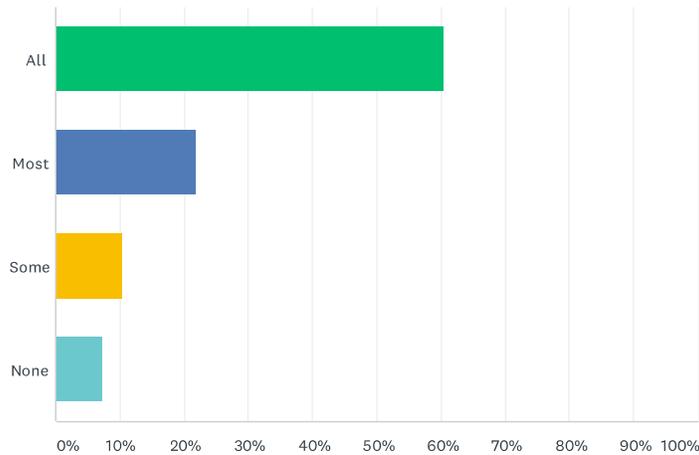
These data suggest a high level of active involvement in BREN by its members.

Question No. 4. Tell us the number of projects or educational programs you have participated in that you would recommend to family or friends (please check one):

Boise River Enhancement Network (BREN) Strategic Planning Effort "Listening Phase" Survey of Opinions from Members, Stakeholders, and Others

Q4 Tell us the number of projects or educational programs you have participated in that you would recommend to family or friends (please check one):

Answered: 96 Skipped: 26



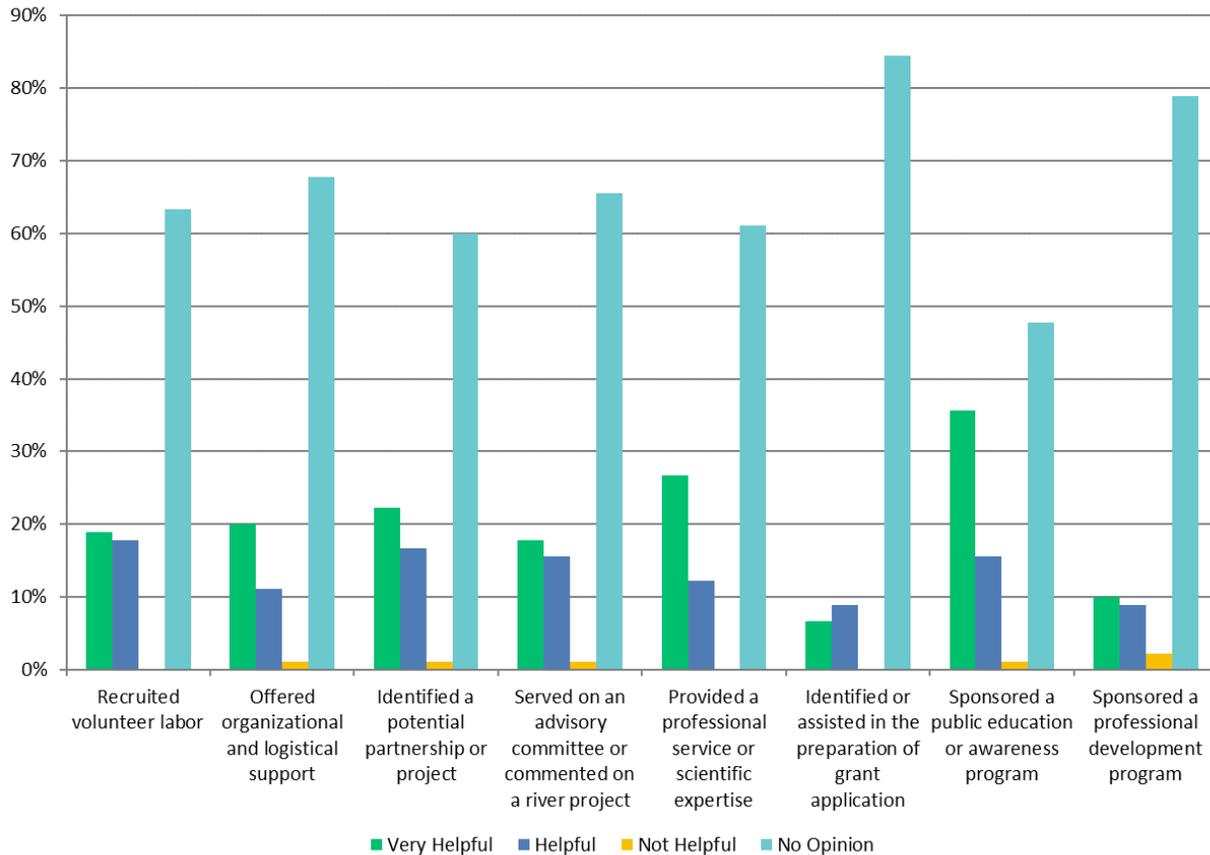
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
All	60.42%	58
Most	21.88%	21
Some	10.42%	10
None	7.29%	7
TOTAL		96

The data show a large majority (91%) of respondents would recommend a BREN sponsored project or educational program to family or friends. Less than 8% would not.

These data suggest a high level of member satisfaction in the projects and educational programs sponsored by BREN.

Question No. 5. Rate the helpfulness of the following services provided by BREN to you or your organization (please check one circle in each row):

Rate the helpfulness of the following services provided by BREN to you or your organization (please check one circle in each row):



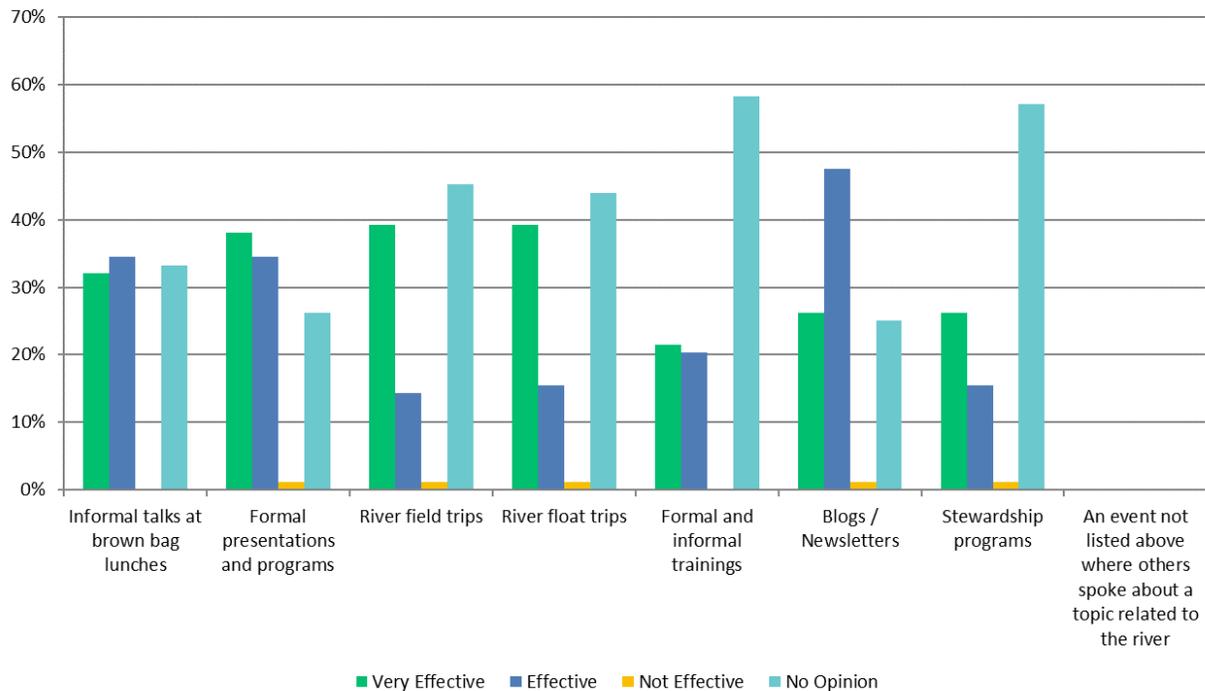
The data show most (48% to 84%) of respondents have no opinion as to the helpfulness of any of the 8 services provided by BREN that are listed in the survey. It is important to note that this question was skipped by 32 of 90 respondents suggesting, among other reasons, fatigue with the survey or a lack of relevance of this question to a respondent’s experience(s) with BREN.

Of those who do have an opinion, most (19% to 52%) find a service to be either helpful or very helpful. Less than 3% find BREN not helpful in any one listed service. The three services most highly rated are: (1) Sponsored a public education or awareness program (52% helpful or very helpful), (2) Provided a professional service or scientific expertise (39% helpful or very helpful), and (3) Identified a potential partnership or project (39% helpful or very helpful).

These data, although limited to a select group of members, suggest the services of BREN are highly regarded.

Question No. 6. Keeping in mind the mission of BREN, rate the effectiveness of the following education programs that you participated in (please check one circle in each row):

Keeping in mind the mission of BREN, rate the effectiveness of the following educational programs that you participated in (please check one circle in each row):



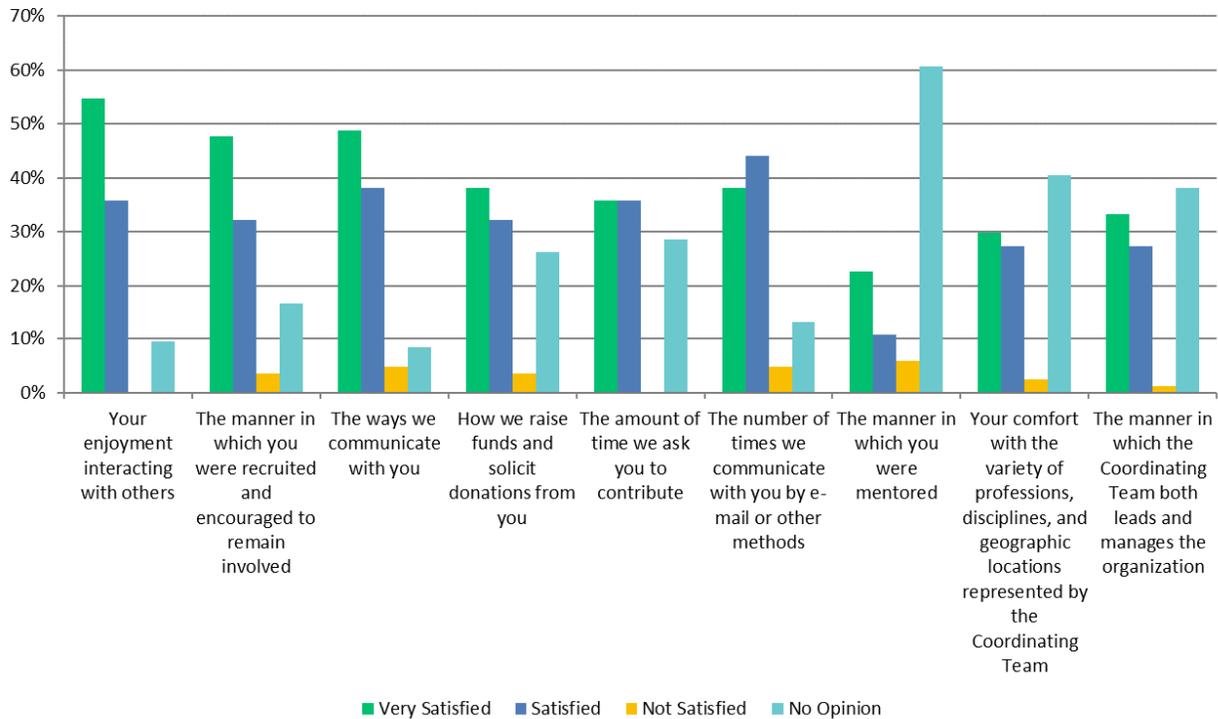
The data show many (25% to 58%) of respondents have no opinion as to the effectiveness of any of the eight (8) education programs provided by BREN that are listed in the survey. It is important to note that this question was skipped by 38 of 84 respondents suggesting, among other reasons, fatigue with the survey or a lack of relevance of this question to a respondent's experience(s) with BREN.

Of those who do have an opinion, most (41% to 73%) find an educational program to be either effective or very effective. Less than 2% find BREN not effective in any one listed educational program. The three educational programs most highly rated are: (1) Blogs / Newsletter (74% effective or very effective), (2) Formal presentations and programs (73% effective or very effective), and (3) Informal talks and brown bag lunches (67% effective or very effective).

These data, although limited to a select group of members, suggest the educational programs of BREN are highly regarded.

Question No. 7. Keeping in mind your experiences with BREN as a *member, volunteer, or colleague* rate your level of satisfaction with the following (please check one circle in each row):

Keeping in mind your experiences with BREN as a member, volunteer, or colleague rate your level of satisfaction with the following (please check one circle in each row):



The data show many (8% to 61%) of respondents have no opinion as to the level of satisfaction of any of the nine (9) experiences that are listed in the survey. It is important to note that this question was skipped by 38 of 84 respondents suggesting, among other reasons, fatigue with the survey or a lack of relevance of this question to a respondent’s experience(s) with BREN.

Of those who do have an opinion, and with one exception, most (57% to 91%) find themselves to be either satisfied or very satisfied with their experiences. With one exception, less than 5% find themselves not satisfied with their experiences. The three experiences most highly rated are: (1) Your enjoyment interacting with others (91% satisfied or very satisfied), (2) The ways we communicate with you (87% satisfied or very satisfied), and (3) The number of times we communicate with you by e-mail or other methods (82% satisfied or very satisfied).

Question No. 7 continued

The three experiences least highly rated are: (1) The manner in which you were mentored (34% satisfied or very satisfied), (2) Your comfort with the variety of professions, disciplines, and geographic locations represented by the Coordinating Team (57% satisfied or very satisfied), and (3) The manner in which the Coordinating Team both leads and manages the organization (60% satisfied or very satisfied).

The one exception mentioned above is (1) The manner in which you were mentored, to which 6% of respondents were not satisfied.

These data, although limited to a select group of members and with one exception, suggest the level of satisfaction of respondents to their experiences with BREN is high.

**Question No. 8. Tell us what you would like BREN to do that we are not currently doing?
(respond with N/A if you prefer to leave this box blank)**

Answered: 84 Skipped: 38

- More focus on physical areas from Star to Parma.
- Let me first say that I'm thankful for the efforts of BREN members in communicating issues and coordinating projects with the public in matters related to the health of the Boise River and BREN is to be commended. While I'm not familiar with the details of the BREN organization, although think the educational and litter cleanup components are excellent, my impression thus far has been that your project related efforts are largely focused on a relatively small reach of the Boise River, perhaps due to a high level of public use and project exposure. I think many of your coordinated projects have been good for education and community involvement, and achievable, but provide minimal ecological benefits. My difficulty is that being an avid user of the river throughout the watershed I see a particularly high rate of habitat degradation occurring from Eagle, downstream to the confluence with the Snake. Between Eagle and Star, significant amounts of riparian habitat are being cleared for development, rip rap placed in channel, etc. While this is perfectly legal in Idaho, other states have adopted legislation that requires riparian setbacks for the health of the river. I wonder if BREN does, or might consider engaging in this or similar types (agriculture runoff projects, water quality regulations, etc.) of higher level issues that might affect some real, positive, large scale, lasting benefits for ALL of the Boise River. Maybe focus more on retaining the high quality habitat that exists, because once it's gone it will be gone forever and ecological function cannot be restored
- Get cities and county organizations to develop coordinated management plans for riparian habitat along the Boise River.
- Provide information on how I can get more involved. Provide info on float trips for different portions of the river so that I can get more comfortable with different stretches.
- Focus some attention on the implications of continued full irrigation water diversions to dwindling irrigated acres in the Lower Boise River as urbanization replaces farmland.
- More educational activities, similar to those offered by Audubon
- "Long term projects. Periodic e.g. monthly volunteer work projects. Commitment from city or county officials to work together. More notice on projects, More public education, and more reporting in the newspaper.
- More effort to get the city of Boise and others to remove exotic vegetation. More talks and coordination with fishing groups
- get higher winter flows in the Boise river."
- I am partial to learning about/listening to presentations on birds, but everything you do in the valley is great!
- MORE emails on what is going positive/negative with our river and what we have done, what needs to be done with it to help.
- outreach and recruitment of more diverse community volunteers, more opportunities.

Question No. 8 continued

- I really don't know. My experience with BREN is mostly in through their involvement in planning and development. I appreciate BREN's willingness to engage in community development. BREN provides a much needed voice and expertise on issues such as storm water and land use decisions that impact our river.
- More of the same. Keep up the great work.
- "Clean ups of trashy places. like Indian Creek Reservoir and Blacks Creek Reservoir.
- More access to Boise River in Garden City and Eagle. Confusing No Parking signs on public roads and shopping centers."
- More networking events with professionals, more engagement with cities, municipalities, and agencies.
- I'm new to BREN and unfamiliar with all you are involved with. For me, conservation, and restoration of wildlife habitat along the Boise River is a priority. Human recreation is secondary.
- Think about more of presence/ outreach into school science programs. Charter schools would probably welcome this.
- Partner with Boise Bicycle Project, Idaho Nature Conservancy, and Sierra Club to gain public use of canal banks for enhancement and non-motorized use. Safe access corridors to Greenbelt are lacking from many neighborhoods. Settlers canal could contribute to a corridor.
- Remind me of your various services and how they could help; encourage us to call to query-- for instance whether you could or would like to be involved in our climate lobby group at BUUF. We welcome suggestions of how BREN relates to climate changes.
- I'm interested in programs that are fun and educational for children.
- Networking events
- I don't know enough about what you do to respond
- keep doing what you are doing.
- You're good. Continue growing the network.
- It's hard to answer this right now since social distancing is still in order, and going to seminars, etc. with large groups isn't recommended.
- Good question. Being from BVFF, I see a stronger need to blend the efforts for both organizations
- I am a homeowner in Garden City who is lucky to live on the Boise river. We keep the riverbank untouched. I get so upset every year as my neighbor removes all vegetation on the bank. She claims it's her property but that isn't true. Our attempts to educate her have not helped. As you walk the Garden City Nature Path you see several other places that have done the same. I think it would be very helpful for BREN to send a letter to these homeowners explaining that they do not own the riverbank. I thought I read years ago there was a fine for disturbing the riverbank but not sure it's true or if it is, how to encourage it to be enforced.
- Can't think of anything.

Question No. 8 continued

- More walks/talks at the Shakespeare Festival site at times when there are no performances. Add more informational walks/talks near the Barber Pool area, Barber Park, and Marianne Williams Park. I can't attend events in the Eagle or Star areas.
- Provide small grants
- I'm excited to see some projects in SE Boise, like the Barber pools and Barber park restoration! I'd love to have more attention to the area, including bank restoration, perhaps some signage about dogs on leash, more native plants put in, more invasive plants taken out. I think between the Wood Duck, Harris Ranch, and other nearby neighborhoods, we could have some decent sized community work groups! And maybe that's already gone on quite a bit in this area, I'm quite new to BREN, so just sharing my newbie thoughts :).
- Provide remote viewing or participation options for all presentations and brown bag type meetings.
- Be more involved with local governments to develop ordinances that guide development and conserve open space in the floodplain.
- We can always do more to increase the diversity on our Board, CT, membership, and participation in our projects. Continue engaging on local issues to support efforts that promote Boise River Enhancement.
- I would like to see BREN more engaged with agencies and city governments to improve policy/management along the Boise River, and to identify/prioritize enhancement projects.
- Collect and report information on activities that enhance the River, perhaps annually. A kind of report card or metric of how BREN is doing in facilitating and recognizing projects.
- I would like to see BREN work harder at convening stakeholders to rally around the River. My impression is we are still a little of a 'one off' Network: we have not leveraged our full capacity to bring parties together to design and implement a strategy to increase and sustain the River's integrity.
- I think BREN offers enough programs and "does" enough.

Question No. 9. What else would you like to tell us that is important to the mission of BREN and the work we do? We are particularly interested in knowing how we can improve. (respond with N/A if you prefer to leave this box blank)

Answered: 84 Skipped: 38

- Maybe a more visible partnership with the local organization FACTS?
- Responded in question 8
- Get Boise River floaters during the summer months to clean up their trash, and to wear life jackets for safety.
- You can do more community outreach, simpler maps, perhaps some signage at put in spots of the routes, hazards and take outs.
- I so thoroughly enjoyed the small group river float, accompanied by and commented by experts in different fields. I feel very lucky to have experienced that and could not do that too often!!!!
- See number 8
- Keep advertising on FB
- Thank you!
- I am a Boise native and professional person who participates in a variety of community-based volunteer opportunities. Since learning more about BREN two years ago I have wanted to engage more but somehow feel like volunteering is not "user-friendly". I would love to see more hands-on ways to assist more often.
- I hope BREN can grow and develop into a well-known and respected voice in our community. They are the only group working in urban places and on urban issues for the health of our river.
- Getting decision makers and community leaders out on the river. I think BREN should also continue reach out to underserved community members and share the river with them. These events are awesome.
- There should be more lead time on volunteer projects. Also, some projects get far too many volunteers, so there is nothing to do.
- Work with cities and governments to procure funds to improve the river through restoration projects, programmatic planning and enhancement of the river
- Keep up the good multidisciplinary work
- Too new to BREN to know.
- "Find willing landowners who want to improve riparian habitat and why they should want this... most of the river corridor is privately held.
- Educate people on how bad WQ is on the lower Boise River and why. "
- Protecting the river from becoming a canal while facilitating increased use should be overarching objective.
- I am concerned that cities along the river (Boise specifically) build parks in a way that does not support native wildlife. Basically, they're replacing habitat with concrete and turf grass, and thinking that they're being environmentally friendly. Is this on BREN's radar?

Question No. 9 continued

- Remind us of your various services.
- I appreciate your dedicated administration, the work you do, and the causes you promote!
- I started listening to Friday lunch and learn sessions during the pandemic. I am impressed with what I am learning and I joined BREN but I have not yet explored all you do.
- More river clean-up opportunities and closer to Boise area as well, the city portion is in great need.
- I still need more knowledge of past success and current initiatives to answer this.
- Public awareness.
- I really like 'get-togethers' in casual atmospheres that highlight events, programs, etc. but again that can't really happen right now with distancing.
- Earlier communications on events
- See answer to #8
- Would like to renew my membership
- can't think of anything
- I love attending the walks at the Shakespeare Festival site. The float trip was amazing and very fun. I learned a lot from the various disciplines represented.
- Keep up the good work!
- Do you have outreach instructors introducing river ecology and conservation to? My daughters have not been super excited with their Jr high biology classes, which makes me super sad! Getting the kids involved in a community workday, during school hours to make it even more fun :), would be a dream come true for my kids and probably many others. Having some fisheries person or conservation biologist come into class and teach about some local need or some local cool aspect of the river, then go get some work done toward the goal together, could enhance appreciation and understanding of our great river.
- "I appreciate the dedication of our volunteer Coordinating Team and paid coordinator.
- I wish I knew more about the responsibilities and duties of the Board of Directors, and the reasons for their lack of interaction with the Coordinating Team."
- Education and awareness is key to generating support for a healthy Boise River. Engaging with local government (decision-makers) and members of the public is very important. Perhaps even more important than reaching out to those who are already educated on river issues.
- Thanks
- BREN asks too much of a core group of volunteers and of its Coordinator. We need to develop better methods of dividing up the work, possibly recruiting non-CT members in heading scientific and/or educational efforts. The division between the Board and CT is confusing and inefficient.
- Need to set goals for BREN and the River: annual, 5 year, and aspirational.

Question No. 9 continued

- Be more connected to the people who actually live beside the river or have businesses beside the river and be more informative as to the effect of what climate change can possibly do to the river flow.
- Follow the fantastic Boise River Enhancement Plan with a bold, interdisciplinary, participatory implementation plan.
- I think that there is room for improvement regarding the manner in which BREN operates internally and externally. (Tone, internal management of CT, requested frequency of involvement, urgency of requests, recruiting methods, lack of mentoring, etc.) I think BREN needs to "polish its personality" in terms of its interactions with the public and also its demands on partners and members. I believe there is a perception issue with some of the public. (Others do love BREN though.)

APPENDIX D SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS WITH TICKETHOLDERS

Introduction

The following are summaries of interviews with Boise River Enhancement Network stakeholders that Rob Tiedemann and Rob Richardson conducted from July 16, 2020 to August 6, 2020. Christy Meyer will provide her summary of interviews in a follow up to this report at a later date. Please protect the confidentiality of names associated with each interview until we have written confirmation from all to include them in the public record.

Process

The interview team operated in a systematic manner to produce, as best as possible, unbiased data in the form of written original notes of each interview in draft form. Drafts of written original notes were reviewed, edited, and approved by each interviewee to produce a final document. To ensure the accuracy and completeness of interviews, and consistency among the interviewers a common script was read to each interviewee which: (a) set the stage for the interview, and (b) asked open, focus, comparative, and summary questions. Each question was asked without embellishment to avoid bias.

Templates were used by the team for communications with those person interviewed, such as: (a) the invitation sent to each person prior to their interview, (b) confirmation of the scheduled interview, (c) a request to review and edit the draft interview notes, and (d) approval of the final interview notes.

A summary of interviews by each interviewer was prepared by the protocol described below.

- Please quickly read the written notes of each of your interviews. Take a moment at the end of your read to reflect. Jot down three to five of your general impressions of your read of your written notes.
- Read the notes a second time with care and answer the following questions: (a) what are the themes or messages common to most of the interviews; (b) what are the themes or messages less common, but that stand out for you; and (c) what are the themes or messages that are unique to one or a few of the interviews that we should know about?
- Summarize your analysis of your written notes in a manner consistent with the example shown in the attached (to be provided).
- Please know your written notes will be included as an appendix of the Strategic Plan. They may be referenced in your summary.

Summary of Interviews (conducted by Rob Tiedemann) From:

- Kendra Kenyon, Ph.D. - Ada County Commissioner (Interviewed 7/16/2020)
- Amanda Laib - Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (Interviewed 7/17/2020)
- Liz Urban - President, Golden Eagle Audubon Society (Interviewed 7/21/2020)
- Megan Dixon, Ph.D. - Professor, College of Idaho (Interviewed 7/22/2020)
- Lynda Johnson - The Riverside Hotel (Interviewed 7/23/2020)
- Steve Burgos, P.E. - Director, City of Boise, Department of Public Works (Interviewed 7/23/2020)
- Scot Oliver - Executive Director, Idaho Smart Growth (Written response provided 7/23/2020)
- Eric Grace - Executive Director, Land Trust of the Treasure Valley (Interviewed 7/27/2020)
- Doug Russel (for Mayor Evans, Garden City) - Principal, the Land Group (Interviewed 7/27/2020)

A. Open Questions**1. How would you describe BREN to a friend or colleague?**

- a. Folks who have the river in their hearts.
- b. Local and involved with its stakeholders.
- c. A group of both volunteers and professionals who are committed.
- d. The only non-governmental organization (NGO) with the “refined” mission to enhance the environmental quality of the Lower Boise River.
- e. Responsible for the Boise River Enhancement Plan which was “packaged well”.

2. What would you like me to know about your relationship and involvement with BREN?

- a. An active donor, and passive participant because of schedule and limited time.
- b. Appreciate sharing a common sense of community with like-minded members of BREN.
- c. Appreciate the mix of different people.
- d. BREN is not “top of mind” as is the Idaho Conservation League, Freshwater Trust, and other non-profit organizations.
- e. Our efforts overlap and we complement one another.
- f. All encounters with those who represent BREN have been casual and friendly. Never experienced “heavy handedness”.

B. Focus Questions**1. What about the work of BREN do you consider to be most important?**

- a. The role of a watchdog with “eyes on the ground”, reporting concerns, and handing off enforcement to others.
- b. Technical expertise offered by the group including the disciplines of hydrology, geomorphology, and botany.
- c. BREN’s ability to provide technical knowledge above and beyond that offered by a typical “concerned citizen”.

- d. A passion that is supported by technical expertise.
- e. Translating the science for public consumption and helping people understand the relationship between science and public policy.
- f. BREN's attention to underserved communities.
- g. Ability to do what public agencies cannot.
- h. By far, the Boise River Enhancement Plan because of its relevance and impact.

2. Where would you most like BREN to place its resource of volunteers, citizen scientists, and natural resource professionals?

- a. Identify issues and recommend solutions.
- b. Remain available to teachers.
- c. River restoration projects.
- d. Mobilize volunteers as both workers on-the-ground and citizen scientists.
- e. Educate the public, and by doing so prove our relevance to the community.
- f. Cultivate awareness of how both land use and climate change have impacted and will continue to affect the ecological health and water quality of the river.
- g. Highlight the nexus and cultivate a sense of public accountability for the connection between the behaviors of individuals and the health of the Boise River.
- h. Provide a comprehensive, regional approach to river issues that is more than that provided by the Lower Boise Watershed Council.
- i. Influence political action on climate change, water quality and conservation, environmental justice and equity.
- j. Guide the dialogue that leads to a positive change in public policy.

3. How can BREN best assist you in your job as a member or the leader of a non-profit organization, for-profit business, government agency, native tribe, or elected office?

- a. Be a watchdog and alert the county commissioners to issues.
- b. Maintain your focus on on-the-ground projects.
- c. Help the public understand the importance of the quality and quantity of data needed to understand the resource and make wise management decisions.
- d. Convey the meaning and implications of data I am responsible for so that my work is more impactful.
- e. Identify and focus resources, with the help of stakeholder involvement, on those pollutants and their locations where the need for abatement is greatest to improve water quality.
- f. Review and comment on policy early in its development.
- g. Assist in the development of conceptual plans for river restoration projects before they evolve into alternatives.
- h. Help the city see "the big picture".

- i. Help the public understand the misperception by many that the river is “in good shape” and that issues - such as channelization, temperature, and the introduction of untreated stormwater - require the attention of the public.
 - j. Help others understand why it is important to invest money in the river (NOTE: This is provided, in part, by the BREN Boise River Enhancement Plan.)
 - k. Stay “ahead of the issues” and see over the horizon.
 - l. Find opportunities for some BREN members to advocate or consult with other communities in the state to encourage similar improvements to their own waterways.
 - m. Amplify the voice of the LTTV and their efforts to conserve open space.
 - n. Help designers know what should be known about the river for them to best do their job.
- 4. How would you describe your interactions with the people who represent BREN, and what would you like them to do different?**
- a. Representatives demonstrate a high level of professionalism and dedication.
 - b. Representatives encourage open dialogue.
 - c. People working in unison.

C. Comparative Questions

- 1. How would you compare your experience working with BREN with that of other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations?**
- a. BREN is a young organization and needs to mature.
 - b. BREN does not have a well-articulated mission statement, organizational structure, and the fund-raising ability of other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations.
 - c. Like most non-profits, BREN must do much with largely volunteers and limited staff.
 - d. Early in the life of BREN there seemed to be a lack of urgency as there is with other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations. It was difficult to understand what “problem” BREN was addressing.
 - e. BREN is an organization that offers “benefit of the doubt” and not one ready to go to the mayor and council with their concerns. It is helpful when city department directors and staff first have opportunity to address a public concern.
 - f. Organizational form as both a Coordinating Team, who does most of the “day to day” work of the organization, and a separate Board of Directors.
- 2. How is BREN different from other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations you work with?**
- a. Other organizations do not offer educational opportunities, field trips, or “on-the-ground” volunteer experiences like BREN.
 - b. Because BREN lacks staff, officers, and members of a Coordinating Team with titles and/or clearly established roles, it is difficult to identify the appropriate person to reach out to.

- c. Unlike other organizations, BREN has a singular focus of interest (i.e. Lower Boise River).
- d. BREN has broader interest that go beyond just fish and wildlife or polluting loads of phosphorous.
- e. While others offer passion alone, BREN backs it up with technical expertise.
- f. BREN seems to get an impressive amount of work done by volunteers. Another enviable quality is the way the organization seems to have equal engagement from a wide range of political, economic and competing interests. It could be fraught with difficulties, but it seems collegial and high-functioning.

D. Summary Questions

1. What are the most important things you wish for me to take away from our conversation today?

- a. Recognize the importance of developing strategic initiatives.
- b. Remind your members of what you do and ask them to rank the importance of each.
- c. Recognize the importance of building a strong board of directors that understand their role includes fundraising to support paid staff. If not, build a strong fund-raising committee to do this
- d. Importance of citizen education.
- e. My appreciation for BREN facilitating stakeholder involvement.
- f. Role of science in the public process.
- g. Public understanding of their individual.
- h. BREN is doing a "great job" and is "wonderful" at planning and sharing.
- i. Take all available opportunities to engage with different communities of people, professions, and interests and continue to collaborate with others.
- j. Make effort to increase our public profile so that we become "top of mind" for the City of Boise, Public Works Department.
- k. Help local governments see options for public policy like the Freshwater Trust who has been a liaison with the US Environmental Protection Agency - Region X.
- l. I really like the way BREN uses a beloved natural feature as an organizing principle for all kinds of ecological, economic, recreational and social benefit.
- m. Be cautious not to change our purpose and mission as we prepare a strategic plan.

2. What question should I have asked you that I did not ask, and what more would you like to share with me?

- a. What could we be doing to further support from the community for our work?
- b. What could we be doing to raise funds to hire full time staff?

Summary of Interviews (conducted by Rob Richardson) From:

- Jennifer Tomlinson – City of Boise (interviewed 7/27/20)
- Marie Kellner – Idaho Conservation League (Interviewed 7/27/20)
- Michelle Meyers – Affiliation? (Interviewed 7/29/20)
- Trevor Kesner – City of Boise Parks Department (Interviewed 7/21/20)

A. Open Questions**1. How would you describe BREN to a friend or colleague?**

- a. Loosely knit group of professionals and river advocates who deeply care about the lower Boise river seeking to collaboratively protect and improve its health for all users.

2. What would you like me to know about your relationship and involvement with BREN?

- a. Consider BREN a stakeholder/partner regarding Boise River-related projects with a broad range of experience and expertise.
- b. Unclear of BREN representatives' roles and responsibilities; does one representative speak for BREN as a whole or for him/herself?
- c. Unclear of BREN's organizational structure, goals, and overall mission.
- d. Unclear when/who/how to engage BREN.
- e. Not sure how to treat BREN's comments/feedback.

B. Focus Questions**1. What about the work of BREN do you consider to be most important?**

- a. Non-partisan, unbiased technical advice/comments/feedback from technical experts covering a broad range of disciplines that may not be available otherwise.
- b. Boise River Enhancement Plan has been instrumental in helping guide local policies.

2. Where would you most like BREN to place its resource of volunteers, citizen scientists, and natural resource professionals?

- a. Leverage BREN's technical members for proactive consultation on river-related projects and policy.
- b. Outreach to the community to explain/educate regarding river ecology and function.

3. How can BREN best assist you in your job as a member or the leader of a non-profit organization, for-profit business, government agency, native tribe, or elected office?

- a. Provide technical resources for consultation regarding projects and policy understanding the real constraints facing managers and the system.
- b. Use and expand upon the Boise River Enhancement Plan.

4. How would you describe your interactions with the people who represent BREN, and what would you like them to do different?

- a. Positive interactions; collaborative; helpful; want BREN at the table.

- b. BREN needs to better understand and acknowledge the multi-use aspect of the river, different perspectives, and real constraints to enhancement. Can't be too idealistic.

C. Comparative Questions

- 1. How would you compare your experience working with BREN with that of other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations?**
 - a. BREN is unique
 - b. Great collaborators with exceptional technical knowledge base and institutional knowledge of the river, but unclear of BREN's organizational structure and who to contact for different specialty disciplines – need a list of who knows what.
 - c. High caliber technical volunteers
- 2. How is BREN different from other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations you work with?**
 - a. BREN takes a wholistic approach to the Boise River that fills a niche that is needed.
 - b. BREN is a standout for using volunteer expertise very well.
 - c. BREN is more loosely knit; unclear of organizational structure
 - d. Unclear of BREN's goals and approach; poor visibility
 - e. Variety; from leading projects to supporting projects to education, BREN provides variety

D. Summary Questions

- 1. What are the most important things you wish for me to take away from our conversation today?**
 - a. BREN is relevant and necessary.
 - b. Viewed as a non-partisan (neutral) partner focusing on science/engineering not politics
 - c. Could be more proactive
 - d. The Boise River Enhancement Plan is great but unclear how to translate it into action
 - e. BREN needs to help collaborators understand how to work with BREN by providing structure and an approach. Consider developing an organizational chart and/or list of technical resources available from BREN (directory?).
- 2. What question should I have asked you that I did not ask, and what more would you like to share with me?**
 - a. Would be helpful to have a summary or education session to outline goals and approach toward working together with key stakeholders (how to engage with BREN).
 - b. Many opportunities to work together in the future.

Summary of Interviews (conducted by Christy Meyer) From:

- Karl Gephardt – BREN Founder and Volunteer (Interviewed 7/22/2020)
- Undisclosed Participant – (Submitted written response to questions 7/28/2020)
- Kim Ingraham – City of Star (Submitted written response to questions 7/31/2020)
- Steve Noyes – City of Eagle (Interviewed 7/23/2020)

A. Open Questions**1. How would you describe BREN to a friend or colleague?**

- a. A grass-roots stewardship organization
- b. An organization that fills a capacity that cities don't have
- c. An enthusiastic group making the Boise River healthy
- d. A service organization that enhances the Boise River

2. What would you like me to know about your relationship and involvement with BREN?

- a. BREN volunteers include very dedicated and knowledgeable technical experts
- b. BREN is very proactive and gives more than they take
- c. Interviewees have had very positive interactions with BREN

B. Focus Questions**1. What about the work of BREN do you consider to be most important?**

- a. Understanding habitat needs, and keeping an eye out for habitat during development along the river
- b. Bank stabilization and revegetation
- c. Engaging/educating private landowners
- d. Educating the public to create more river stewards
- e. Outreach to groups that don't typically think about the Boise River while guarding against becoming too self-centered
- f. Monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness of BREN's projects
- g. BREN Website is great, suggest including more information on projects, project funding, and monitoring results on BREN Website

2. Where would you most like BREN to place its resource of volunteers, citizen scientists, and natural resource professionals?

- a. Resources are well-placed now
- b. Complete a needs assessment beyond the footprint of BREN's current stewardship projects
- c. Education and outreach to landowners, county commissioners, and mayors, schools

- 3. How can BREN best assist you in your job as a member or the leader of a non-profit organization, for-profit business, government agency, native tribe, or elected office?**
 - a. Keep promoting stewardship, look for win-win projects, do not come across as opinionated/ inflexible
 - b. BREN is doing great now – they're good communicators and low maintenance
 - c. Continue to provide reliable volunteers and free professional advice
 - d. Educate political leaders, specialty committees, and general public

- 4. How would you describe your interactions with the people who represent BREN, and what would you like them to do different?**
 - a. Continue doing what BREN is doing and engage landowners along the river
 - b. BREN does a great job, they are good communicators, and require little management/oversight
 - c. Enthusiastic
 - d. Can come across as entitled, BREN should recognize that cities don't have the resources to make all improvements that BREN recommends

C. Comparative Questions

- 1. How would you compare your experience working with BREN with that of other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations?**
 - a. BREN stays true to their mission
 - b. BREN professionals and volunteers are usually giving advice or providing help, not seeking advice or help as are many other non-profits
 - c. We have a better relationship with BREN, than with other non-profits. BREN communicates well and doesn't make assumptions or take liberties
 - d. BREN is well organized and active

- 3. How is BREN different from other 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations you work with?**
 - a. BREN focuses on habitat and preserving important plants and wildlife
 - b. BREN creates awareness
 - c. Other nonprofits are ecstatic with any help, BREN seems disappointed that more wasn't accomplished
 - d. BREN's environmental interest and focus make BREN different
 - e. BREN is well-respected, so has a seat at the table. Occasionally BREN has been seen as trying to drive an agenda too heavily, BREN should be careful not to be seen as causing roadblocks.
 - f. Make sure that BREN is being/ continues to be transparent with financials and follows best practices with financial management, this is important to maintaining 501c3 status.

D. Summary Questions

- 1. What are the most important things you wish for me to take away from our conversation today?**
 - a. BREN is very valuable, seems to be headed in the right direction, and should continue to grow.
 - b. BREN should be careful to not become a combative adversary or a dominant voice.
 - c. Keep doing what you're doing, expand downriver, work with landowners
 - d. Keep the river diverse
 - e. I appreciate what BREN does, they're an amazing group of people that I enjoy working with

- 2. What question should I have asked you that I did not ask, and what more would you like to share with me?**
 - a. Do you know where the funds go that BREN receives?

APPENDIX E MISSION ASSESSMENT SURVEY

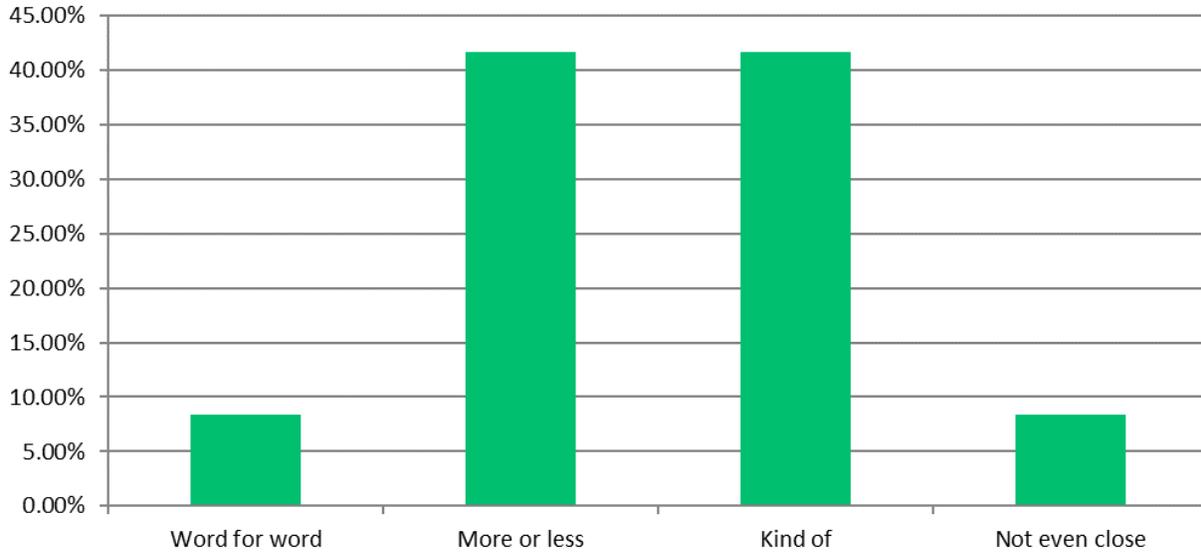
Question No. 1. From memory, please write BREN's mission statement in the open box shown below.

Answered 12

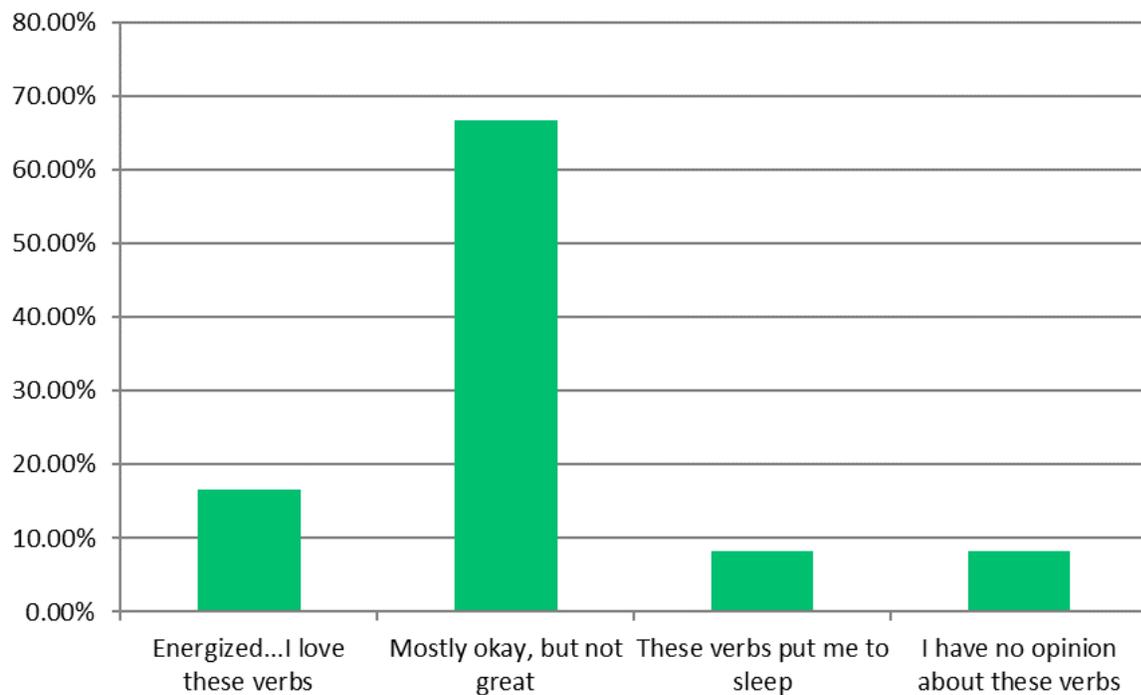
Skipped 0

- Share and collaborate among professionals, managers, and the public, ideas regarding how to improve and enhance the lower Boise River.
- We are a group of people seeking to enhance the health of the Boise River.
- BREN is people who live, work and play in the Boise River watershed dedicated to the ecological enhancement of the river
- We are a network of people that love the Boise River working to promote the ecological health of the Boise River
- A group of river users dedicated to maintaining and improving the rivers health environment.
- BREN seeks to protect and enhance function of the Boise River for the benefit of people and nature.
- A group of people dedicated to enhancing the quality of the Lower Boise River.
- We are a network of people that live, work and play in the Boise River Watershed that are dedicated to the ecological enhancement of the River.
- We are a network of people that live, work and play in the Boise River watershed dedicated to promoting the ecological enhancement of the river.
- People passionate about protecting and enhancing the Boise River.
- We are a network of people who live, work, and play in the Boise River supporting the enhancement of the river.
- We are a network of people who live, work, and play in the Boise River watershed (can't recall the rest).

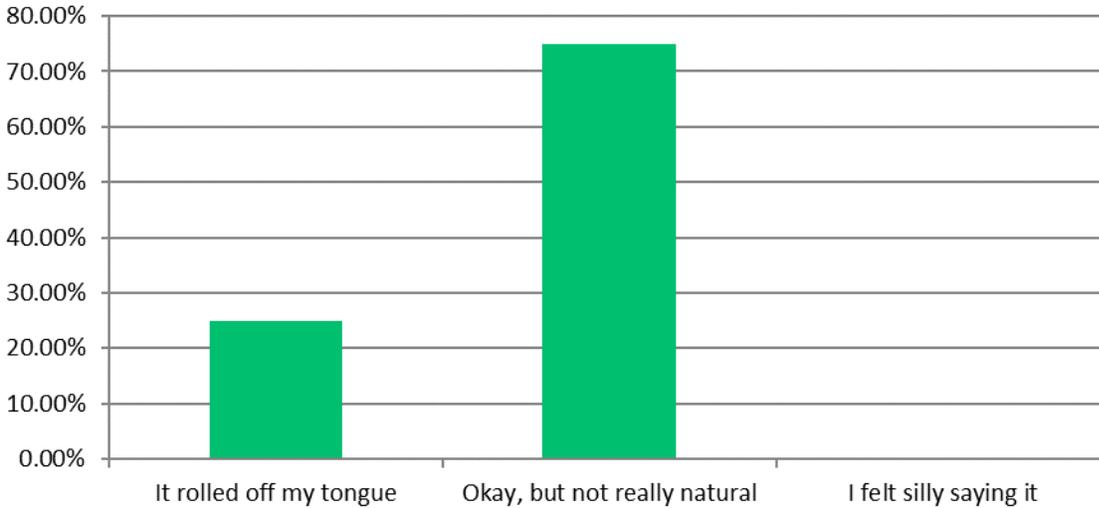
Question No. 2. After comparing BREN's mission statement shown above with your response to the first question, did you recall from memory BREN's mission statement. (please check only one of the boxes shown below):



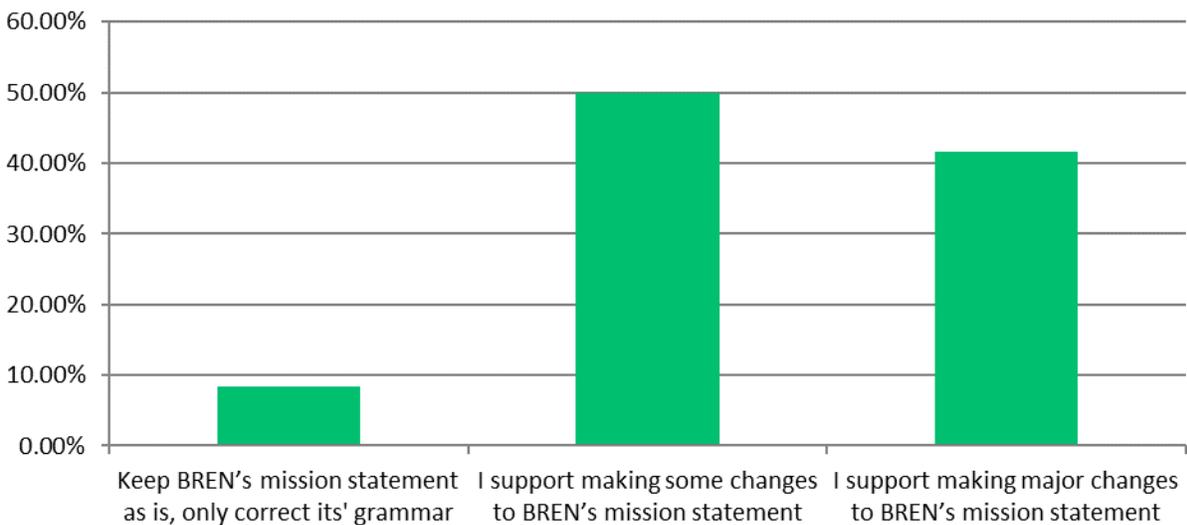
Question No. 3. How do the verbs in BREN's mission statement make you feel (please check only one of the boxes shown below):



Question No. 4. How does it feel to say BREN’s mission statement out loud (please check only one of the boxes shown below)?



Question No. 5. Based on your answers and the additional information provided in this survey, how do you feel about updating BREN’s mission statement? (please check only one of the boxes shown below):



APPENDIX F BREN NON-PROFIT HEALTH CHECK-UP

Governance	Yes	Partially	No
Do you have a clear mission statement that guides your leadership?		X	
Do you have an organizational chart that includes the CT/board of directors?	X		
Are CT/board members aware of the organization's mission and programs?	X		
Does the board hold regularly scheduled CT/board meetings or committee meetings?	X		
Are there written expectations and responsibilities for CT/board members?		X	
Are board members recruited through a transparent process?		X	
Do board members contribute to the health of the organization?		X	
Are CT members recruited through a transparent process?	X		
Do CT members contribute to the health of the organization?	X		
Do you have a conflict of interest policy signed by CT/board members?	X		
Do CT/board members represent the different demographic groups related to your mission and its implementation?		X	
Does actual turnover of the CT/Board follow planned turnover?		X	
Do new CT/Board members receive appropriate orientation and training?		X	

Human Resources (Note- currently no staff, but Coordinator)	Yes	Partially	No
Are there written job descriptions for Coordinator's work?	X		
Do staff members receive regular professional development?		X	
Is the Coordinator evaluated?	X		
Is there a succession plan in place for the director and top organization staff members?			X
Do you track how many people volunteer during a one-year period?		X	
Are volunteers oriented and supported?		X	

Communication	Yes	Partially	No
Is there a communication plan in place?		X	
Does your communication include information for donors about impact and finances?			X
Do you have an annual report? Does it include statement of financial position?			X
Do you have a donor services system that includes tracking actual and potential donors, tracking money received, thanking donors, and following up?	X		
Do you have a social media outreach plan that grows your community?	X		
Can every member of your CT/board speak in a compelling way about your mission?			X

Planning	Yes	Partially	No
Does the organization have a strategic plan (or other organizational work plan)?	X		
Did CT/board members contribute to this plan?	X		
Did staff members contribute to this plan?	X		
Is a regular needs assessment performed?			X
Does the organization have a technology plan?			X

Do major programs have a business plan that aligns them with the organization's mission and funding reality?			X
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Evaluation	Yes	Partially	No
Do you track all projects/programs? Since organizations founding?		X	
Is there an evaluation plan in place that measures the impact of programs in the short and long-term?			X
Do you track indicators that would prove achievement of the organization's mission? Are these indicators reviewed annually/regularly?		X	
Are program participants tracked in a database?	X		
Is evaluation a topic during regular staff meetings?	X		
Is information gathered through evaluation used in program design?			X
Is information gathered through evaluation used in communications with donors and extended community?	X		

Financial Overview	Yes	Partially	No
Does the organization have an annual budget?	X		
Does the organization review the budget after six months?	X		
Does the organization prepare a bank reconciliation on a monthly basis?	X		
Does a qualified bookkeeper manage the organization's money day to day?	X		
Does a different person from the bookkeeper sign checks?		X	
Does the organization have at least two signatories on the bank account?	X		
Does an accountant—or someone with accounting experience— serve as the organization's treasurer?	X		
Are payments made by check?		X	
Does the organization have a clear system for managing cash?	X		
Is the accounting function computerized (using a program like QuickBooks)?	X		
Is funding stable and from a diversity of sources?		X	
An independent audit or review of the organization's financial condition is conducted annually by a Certified Public Accountant.			X

Risk Management	Yes	Partially	No
Do you maintain minutes of all CT/board meetings?	X		
Do you file all of the necessary tax documents (local, state, federal)?	X		
Do you maintain necessary records at necessary levels of government to show nonprofit status?	X		
Do you maintain enough insurance to protect the organization's assets?	X		
Do you maintain technology safeguards, including backing up systems and virus control?		X	
Do you maintain a central listing of organization passwords?	X		
Do you track grants to ensure proper handling of funds?	X		
Are all formal partnerships clearly outlined in signed agreements?	X		
Are you protected against patent/copyright infringement?			X

