

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AWARENESS TELEPHONE SURVEY

By CAROLYN PETTITT

Background

A key component of the Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve Studies (NEBRs) project is community involvement. Now that SI/MAB plots have been established along the Niagara Escarpment, people of all ages who live within a 40 kilometer radius of the plots will be encouraged to take part in various monitoring activities either at the established plots or in their own backyards. Community open houses/workshops will take place so that public can:

- Learn about the importance of environmental monitoring
- Find out more about the monitoring plots already established in their community,
- Give input on what should be monitored in their community, and
- Receive training to develop the skills necessary to participate in monitoring activities

Purpose of the Awareness Survey:

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) emphasizes the importance of evaluating the effectiveness of public participation initiatives. Therefore in order to evaluate the successfulness of NEBRs openhouses/workshops, a pre-test and post-test will take place. These tests are in the form of an environmental monitoring awareness/interest survey, which will be administered via telephone to people living within a 40 km radius of the SI/MAB plots established in Hamilton, Mono Centre and Wiarton. The pre-test will provide baseline information on the public's current awareness of, and interest in environmental monitoring taking place in their community. It is hoped that after the openhouses/workshops are completed, a post-test will reveal that a greater proportion of the public is aware of the monitoring taking place in their community, and that a greater number of people are interested in participating in the NEBRs.

Sample Size and Accuracy of Results:

In order to ensure that the pre-tests and post-test surveys accurately capture the level of public awareness/interest in environmental monitoring an appropriate sample size must be selected. The following number of surveys will be conducted in each community so that results fall within a 90% confidence interval with a 5% margin of error:

- Hamilton 275
- Mono Centre 265
- Wiarton 231

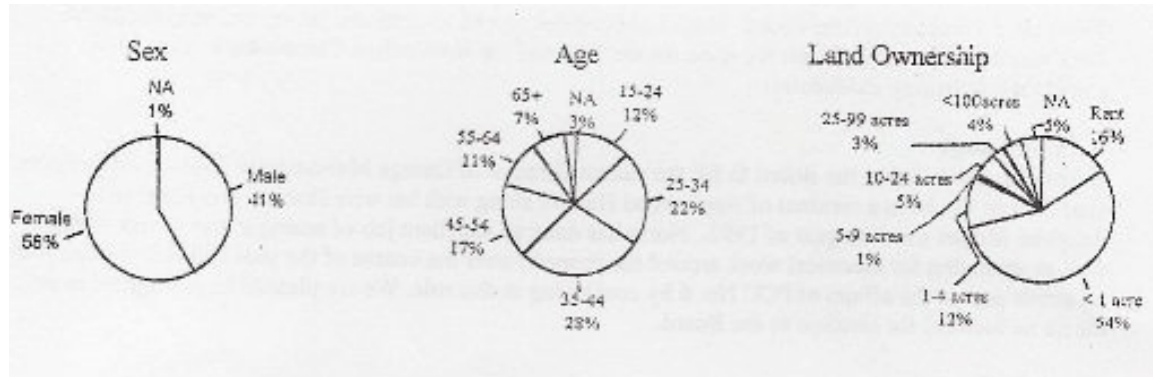
Results:

With the help of several dedicated volunteers, surveys have been completed for the Mono Centre community. Surveys for Hamilton and Wiarton are expected to be completed this spring.

The following are some of the key findings of the Mono Centre pre-test.

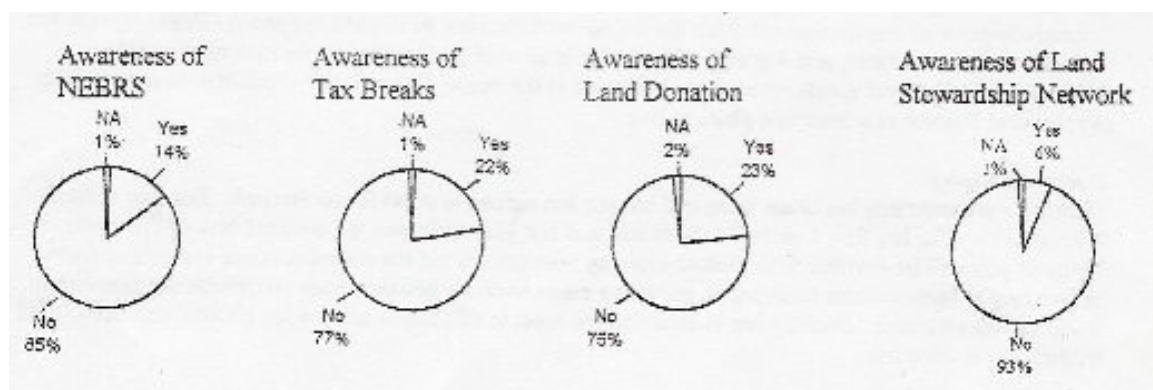
- **Demographics**

Approximately 3 out of every 5 respondents was female. Sixty-three percent of respondents were between the ages of 25 and 54, and more than half of the respondents owned land less than an acre in size.



- **Awareness of NEBRS Project and Other Related Environmental Initiatives**

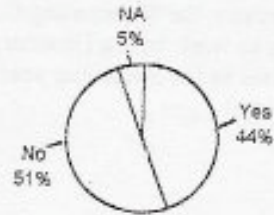
Less than 20% of respondents were aware of the NEBRS project. Similarly, only about 25 % of respondents knew that landowners could receive a provincial tax break through the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program and the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program and the Managed Forest Tax Incentivve Program, or that landowners could donate their property to an organization such as the Nature Conservancy which would conserve the land. In addition, less than 15% of respondents had heard of the Ministry of Natural Resource's Land Stewardship Network which encourages the wise use of land.



- **Awareness of Local Environmental Change**

Almost half of all respondents indicated that they had noticed some type of environmental change in their community.

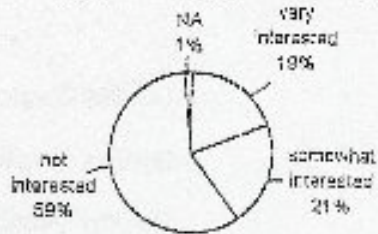
Observation of Local Environmental Change



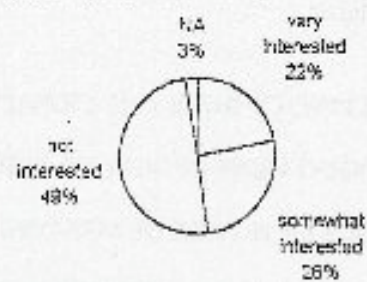
• Interest in Participating in the NEBRS Project

Approximately 2 out of every 5 respondents indicated that they have an interest in participating in the NEBRS project, while over half of all respondents indicated an interest in attending an openhouse/workshop to find out more about the project.

Willing to Participate in NEBRS



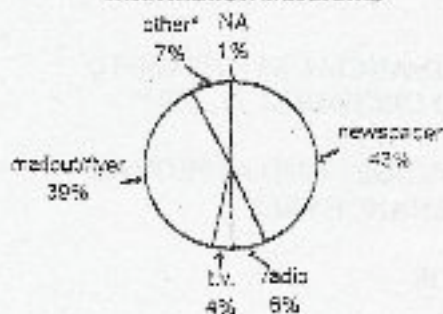
Willing to Attend Monitoring Workshop



• How to deliver Information about the NEBRS Project

The largest proportion of respondents indicated that they would prefer to receive information about the NEBRS project either through a flyer or mailout, or by reading an article about the project in the local newspaper.

Information Mediums



* other information mediums included: email, mail, displays, and schools presentations to children

SURVEY

Introduction: Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from Humberview on behalf of outdoor education. We're conducting a survey to determine public awareness of the environmental monitoring activities in our community. It will take a few minutes of your time and will help us determine how we can best let people know what we are doing. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

If required: Your number was randomly generated.
I need to speak to someone 15 years or older.
The survey takes about 5 minutes.
Your answers are confidential. We are not selling anything.

1. Gender (BY OBSERVATION)

2. ACER (Association for Canadian Educational Resources a not-for-profit group developing learning materials) is involved in monitoring environmental changes in a international project at Albion Hills Field Studies Centre. Were you aware of this project?

Yes	1
No	2

3. Have you personally noticed any changes in your natural environment over the past five years?

Yes	1
No	2

4. A) have you at any time reported such environmental changes to anyone?

Yes	1	SKIP TO 4B)
No	2	SKIP TO 4C)

- B) were you satisfied with the response?

Yes	1	SKIP TO 5
No	2	GO TO 4C)

- C) was this because you did not know where to report such changes OR for some other reason?

Yes	1
Other	2

5. Is your home situated on READ LIST

One acre or more	1	
Less than one acre	2	SKIP TO 9

6. The land Stewardship Network is an awareness, education and referral program available to people who own land in Ontario. Were you aware of this?

Yes	1
No	2

7. As you may know, if you conserve parts of your property you could be eligible for a provincial tax break through either the Conservation Land Tax Incentive Program or the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program. Were you aware of this?

Yes	1
No	2

8. You can donate part of your property to organizations such as the Nature Conservancy, a Conservation Authority, Federation of Ontario Naturalists or a local Land Trust. Were you aware of this ?

Yes	1
No	2

9. A) Do you have any of the following on your property? READ LIST

Trees	1
Woodlot	2
Bush	3
Wetland	4
Stream/creek	5
none of the above	SKIP TO 10

- B) Would you like to see your _____ monitored?

Trees	1
Woodlot	2
Bush	3
Wetland	4
Stream/creek	5
none of the above	SKIP TO 10

10. A) Are you interested in finding out more about the international biodiversity monitoring plot near you

- B) If Yes in 10 A), Ask

Very Interested?	1
Somewhat Interested?	2

11. Would you be interested in Observing and recording changes in your environment as part of this monitoring project? DON'T READ

Yes	1
Maybe/ Perhaps	2
No	3

12. A) Would a member of your household be interested in attending a workshop to find out more about the environmental monitoring taking place in your community and how you can participate?

Yes	1
No	2

 SKIP TO 13

- B) If yes at 12 A) ASK:

Very Interested	1
Somewhat interested?	2

Note there is a Sustainable Communities Symposium in Orangeville all day Sat April 1st

13. To help us plan the workshop, when would be the best time for you to attend?

READ LIST	Weekday – day	1
	Weekday – evening	2
	Saturday – morning	3
	Sunday – afternoon	4
	Anytime	5
	Other	6

14. A) Which of the following is the best way for us to keep you informed of the project and the environmental monitoring that is taking place in your community?

READ LIST	Newspaper	1
	Radio	2
	Television	3
	Mailout	4
	E-Mail	5
	Other	6

B) Would you read a mailout if you received one from time to time?

Yes	1
No	2

C) Would you like to receive information about the spring workshop at AHFSC?

Yes	1
No	2

IF YES FOR 14 B OR 14 C, ASK FOR MAILING ADDRESS AND ENTER ON OTHER SHEET

The final two questions are for classification purposes. Please remember that all the information that you provide is strictly confidential.

15. In which age category are you? READ LIST

15-21	1
22-34	2
35-44	3
45-54	4
55-64	5
65+	6

16. How much land do you own within one-half hours drive from Albion Hills Field Centre? READ LIST

Less than one acre	1
1-4 acres	2
5-9 acres	3
10-24 acres	4
25-99 acres	5
100+	6
Rent	7
Don't know	8

IF IN HECTARES, 1 HA = 2.47 PER ACRE

Your participation has been most helpful. If you would like any more information about the survey or related questions, please call _____ at _____.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP, GOOD BYE