

Proceedings of the

Southern Regional Recreation Workshop

Rock Eagle 4-H Center
Eatonton, Georgia

September 13-15, 1982



Published by the
Southern Rural Development Center

FOREWORD

Representatives from 10 of the 13 states in the Southern Region participated in the Recreation Workshop sponsored by the Southern Rural Development Center. The workshop afforded Extension Recreation Specialists and allied co-workers from the Southern Region an opportunity to meet and discuss issues facing their profession during the '80's and to plan strategies for coping with these issues.

Similar workshops were held at the National level in 1979, 1972 and 1967 in Kentucky, Michigan and Georgia respectively. Also, mini meetings involving Extension Recreation Specialists were held in conjunction with the National Recreation Congress, Chicago, in 1959 and 1956. The three National Workshops were Extension Committee on Organization and Policy sponsored.

The workshop was structured for Extension Recreation Specialists, allied Extension Specialists and co-workers in state agencies and local groups and organizations. The objectives were:

1. Provide the opportunity for recreation specialists and allied persons to meet and discuss the common problems/issues facing Extension during the '80's.
2. Review the role/responsibility/clientele of the Cooperative Extension Service in the field of recreation within the context of the issues facing the profession during the '80's.
3. Improve lines of communication among the states within the Southern Region.
4. Foster ways and means for sharing materials, joint publications, coordinated studies/research and professional improvement opportunities.

The participants felt that these objectives were met in whole or in part. Those that were not met in totality are in the process of being accomplished. For further insight into the success of the workshop see the evaluation report.

Since no presentations were taped, this synopsis for the workshop was developed from the notes taken by the recorders. It is hoped that the workshop along with this report will serve as an information resource to us as we proceed with the tasks of "fine-tuning" our roles/responsibilities, developing strategies for "delivering" our services, building and maintaining our support groups, interfacing with our respective administrative staffs and allied groups and accomplishing multi-state/regional educational efforts.

Proceedings of the
SOUTHERN REGIONAL RECREATION WORKSHOP

Rock Eagle 4-H Center
Eatonton, Georgia

September 13-15, 1982

Sponsored by

Division of Economics and Community Resource Development
Cooperative Extension Service
Louisiana State University

and

Southern Community Development Committee

in cooperation with
Southern Rural Development Center

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
SOUTHERN REGIONAL RECREATION WORKSHOP

Rock Eagle 4-H Center
Eatonton, Georgia

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

p.m.

2:00 Registration

3:00 First Session

Presiding: Mr. Michael Hedges
University of Arkansas

Welcome: Mr. Bill Edwards
University of Georgia

Remarks: Dr. William W. Linder
Southern Rural Development Center
Dr. Joe Lanham, ES-USDA

Purpose & Scope: Dr. Wayne Robichaux
Louisiana State University

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

a.m.

8:00 Second Session

Presiding: Mr. Robert Clark
Auburn University

Critical Issues Facing Recreation in the 80s
Resource Person:

Mr. Tom Martin, Director
Southeast Regional Office
National Recreation & Park Association

Group Discussion

9:30 Break

10:00 Third Session

Extension - Its Role and Clientele
Resource Person:

Dr. Carson E. Watt, Project Leader
Texas A&M University

Group Discussion

Noon Lunch

p.m.

1:30 Fourth Session

Strategies for Recreation Programming
Resource Person:

Dr. Leon H. Harkins
Extension Forest Resource Specialist
North Carolina State University

Group Discussion

3:00 Break

3:30 Fifth Session

Multi-State/Regional Efforts
Resource Person:

Dr. Allen J. Worms
Recreation Specialist
University of Kentucky

Group Discussion

5:30 Adjourn

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

a.m.

8:00 Sixth Session

Presiding: Dr. Willie H. Thomas
Tuskegee Institute

Group Reports

9:30 Break

10:00 Directions for the Future
Moderator: Dr. Don Buzzingham
Texas A&M University

Noon Adjourn

GROUP I HIGHLIGHTS

EXTENSION-ITS ROLE AND CLIENTELE (Group 1)

What is Extension's role to rural communities and areas? Is it feasible to provide technical assistance? What is the difference between technical assistance and education?

After much shared opinion, Group 1 concluded that technical assistance is a necessary part of Extension's educational mission in recreation. However, the amount provided is a question that must be answered by each state staff. Group recognized that it is a part of the state specialist's role to provide assistance to county Extension personnel.

Extension's role may change as travel budgets shrink. The traditional method of providing on-site assistance to counties may not be cost effective. As a result, specialists will do more consulting rather than delivering a finished product. Texas is already involving local professionals to assist in providing technical assistance. Extension specialists may be training more volunteer leaders and professionals than Extension agents in order to meet the demand for technical assistance in rural areas. Therefore, Extension's role may not be in the "front line" of delivery, but rather training the trainers.

Group 1 felt a definite need for recreation specialists to evaluate traditional approaches and implement cost-effective methods, such as using local resources and professionals to provide services that would normally be done by the Extension specialists. For example, instead of providing a development plan, it was suggested to let the community leaders make the decisions for the development plan by being led through the needs assessment, site analysis, conceptual diagram, etc.

Another question that we discussed was, "Will Extension absorb services abandoned by other state and federal agencies?" Group realized that according to current trends, Extension budgets could not handle additional responsibilities using traditional methods. Perhaps Extension could help fill voids by creating a consortium of professionals, interested citizens and organizations to render assistance.

Also, specialists need to think of ways that Extension can be an asset to other organizations, possibly through the use of our communications network. The group emphasized the need to be more in touch with the total parks and recreation needs in the state and to be involved with other recreation-oriented agencies.

Another role for Extension is to be a research catalyst. Extension can identify research needs and then encourage researchers to do the research. One research need in particular was an economic analysis of the value of community festivals.

A strategy to help eliminate duplication of services is for Extension specialists to coordinate educational programs with state and local agencies and organizations. An example cited was the cooperation of the Louisiana Extension with the state tourism department in preparation for the 1984 World's Fair to be held in New Orleans. In Georgia, Extension coordinated a recreation leadership workshop with area churches utilizing church recreation directors and instructors.

One recommendation was to make a list of various agencies or organizations with a state that provide recreational programming or technical assistance. In Arkansas, a list of retired professionals who are qualified to provide community assistance was compiled. In Texas, a technical assistance consortium was created to provide community assistance. This type of effort requires much coordination and communication among organizations.

Improved interagency coordination was another strategy discussed for recreation programming. Recreation specialists have worked with various departments within their own state Extension Service to educate target audiences. While most recreation specialists work in affiliation with the Community and Rural Development section, some state recreation specialists are housed in 4-H, Home Economics or Agriculture (Forestry, Marine Advisory). To improve dissemination on the county level, one strategy is to have one person in each county staff responsible for receiving recreation information. This might improve the adoption of state-level initiated programs that are applied voluntarily at the county level. Radio scripts and news articles should be sent to the county with blanks that can be filled in by the Extension agent responsible for recreation.

Strategies in recreation programming should reflect changes in technology. The topic of most concern was using microcomputers in recreation. Some software is already available, but a lot needs to be developed. The group recognized that as Extension recreation specialists we need to become acquainted with the use and application of microcomputers. Software development and distribution may be a future strategy in recreation programming.

Technology has also changed our strategy in the realm of mass media. Educational programs coordinated with mass media have proven to be effective. In Arkansas, a program on hunting and landowner rights was aired through Arkansas ETV with good success. The media can be used to increase the number of clientele reached. In North Carolina, the telephone is used to disseminate information. A user dials a toll free number, asks for the topic and respective tape number and then receives information without direct personal contact.

Changes in population and economy affect recreation programming strategies. An aging population will require programs to meet their needs. Parks and recreation departments may use their existing facilities differently in view of an aging population. The recreational interests of the population influence strategies. Community festivals are presently attracting large numbers. Communities need guidance in planning and producing such an event so that participants have fun while the community benefits. The economy dictates a need for strategies that will get more recreation out of less money. Parks and recreation areas will need facilities requiring less maintenance dollars and a plan of action for those facilities. For example, an operation and maintenance handbook for swimming pools could also include a section on personnel, particularly training lifeguards.

The group also discussed a need to educate the public on the importance of leisure. Some sports, such as flag football, are not played often after age 21. Therefore, we should plan programs that develop lifetime leisure skills, such as walking, tennis or fishing, which could be taught in a "camp" setting and aimed at a specific audience.

The exchange of ideas and materials among states would also be helpful in developing recreation programming.

Some states are more agriculturally-oriented in providing recreation services, and others more community-oriented. Regardless of each state's emphasis, the group agreed that it was necessary to build a support group--a clientele that needs and demands Extension's service in the field of leisure and recreation.

MULTI-STATE REGIONAL EFFORTS (Group 1)

Group One saw an overwhelming need to establish a communications system among southern Extension recreation specialists. A newsletter to be published 2-3 times a year among the states attending the conference was proposed. The newsletter will contain calendar of events, workshops to attend, educational material available, programming ideas and methods and directory of recreation specialists. Through the newsletter, states could exchange ideas and materials for use in similar programs.

Group 1 also discussed the need for a coordinated effort among the states relative to the development and distribution of educational materials. The group proposed an exchange of educational material once a year within the region by mailing a set of publications to each state. Dr. Linder said the Southern Rural Development Center would provide mailing labels for each state.

Through the sharing of ideas and needs, it was hope that in the future some states could even collaborate on preparing and publishing publications or that some publications could be developed for regional distribution and use. Perhaps, a regional team could be formed to identify common needs for educational materials and

work to prevent duplication of efforts to produce those materials. States could also work together to sponsor workshops or meetings. A regional team could also identify common research needs, e.g. the economic value of community festivals.

Ideally, it would be nice to have a regional specialist to coordinate all these suggestions. That is practically impossible, though, because of budget constraints. Communication among states will have to be a volunteer effort that will be stimulated hopefully by the newsletter and meetings. We agreed that those Extension specialists attending the National Recreation and Parks Association meeting could meet together. Since not all the specialists attend the national congress, we decided that the Community and Rural Development tri-annual training meeting would be the best place for all the specialists to meet to continue regional communications.

GROUP II HIGHLIGHTS

GENERAL (Group 2)

The working portion of the meeting began with a review of the Critical Issues in the 80's by Tom Martin of NRPA. Discussion was centered on the pertinent issues and objectives for the next decade. Initially, Martin discussed (1) redefining recreation to include (in the public's mind) such things as natural resources, conservation and preservation; (2) education of the general public and public administrators as to the importance of recreation; (3) the need for research on recreational impacts such as social structure changes resulting from recreation, or planning for needs of the "old" and "new" populations; dollar returns to communities for recreation tourism investments.

A normative group technique procedure was used to determine issues most pressing to those present. Funding was the most pressing issue. Objectives to resolve funding problems were discussed.

The workshop participants were divided into two groups to discuss issues in the 80's.

A. Issues in the 80's (Group 2)

Discussion leader Bob Soileau presented several topics for reaction from the group. First, how do Extension Recreation Specialist contend with the problem of the overwhelming agricultural interest and emphasis in Extension which make it difficult to see recreation as an important program component?

Comments:

1. Stress agriculture as a component in community development. This puts agriculture on even footing with recreation in CRD.
2. Get agricultural administrators involved in the community decision process. Expand their role from a land-grant process. Expand their role from a land-grant process facilitator to include socio-economic techniques.

A second problem is that Extension directives for the rural and agricultural sectors conflict with directives and goals for more public support. Joe Lanham emphasized the policy directives of the Agricultural Research and Extension Users Advisory Board. In their recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture, these conflicts were quite evident.

Comments:

1. The status of recreation in funding priority or in administrative thinking is not ascribed. Rather it is achieved.
2. Extension recreation specialists must get past the point where an administrator can even doubt the importance of recreation.
3. Stop selling selves and sell something with which administrators can identify.
4. Mix recreation with industry or resource base to show importance.
5. Since many requests for help are for site specific planning, etc., specialists need to establish a network of intra/intre college and agency experts to respond.
6. Inter-discipline ties with biologists, architects, planners, and economists are important.

The third question for discussion related to a perceived change in societal attitude changes on the question of recreation research.

Comments:

1. Extension specialists are at a disadvantage without a research component or a close tie with researchers.
2. There is a need for community profits. "Benchmark" or typical profiles would be useful also.
3. The decline in staffing or funding for recreation extension is not compatible with community demands for help. Any "advertising" such as the administration wants brings a deluge of requests for help. There simply isn't time to handle the demand. The apathy at state and federal levels is not matched at local level.

SUMMARY ON ROLE IN 80'S (Group 2)

The Extension Recreation role is less traditional now than in last few years. Roles are different among states. The important question at present is how to communicate among states the techniques and procedures that help us in our role in other states with different circumstances.

Key issues are technical assistance, education, research coordination, and on/off campus networks.

THE EXTENSION CLIENTEL - (Group 2)

1. The clientel is changing based upon economics of the time. We are now looking to groups who have the ability to pay. There are larger groups than the city park and recreation directors such as churches, commercial developers, etc.
2. The traditional client groups simply cannot pay the costs of workshops without fees.
3. Private non-profit groups now supply a rather significant portion of recreation in the region. Home Economics and 4-H groups supply large amounts also.
4. There is a difference between constituency and clientel.

Summary on Clientel

Economics is changing clientel. Since recreation is less supported now by traditional groups, we need to work with municipal groups, state recreation planners, and private non-profit groups. Extension needs to take the lead in generating clientel groups who can respond and who can make a bigger difference in program support and in impact on community.

To say recreation is good is not enough. The area must be justified on basis of health, safety, need, and economies. New client groups may help on this issue.

STRATEGIES FOR RECREATION PROGRAMMING (Group 2)

Bob Soileau initiated the discussion with probing questions. Work-group participants were asked to identify their most effective strategy now. After discussion the following comments were made.

Comments:

1. Get impetus for recreation from the county commission or delegate level.
2. Develop community analysis programs -- prepare profiles of benchmark communities.
3. Form Extension Recreation Advisory Council. This is a how-to committee to funnel help to areas in need.
4. State or regional associations to promote specific recreation services such as tourism, marinas are good program support builders.
5. These associations can be linked for publicity on critical issues in states. They can generate public service ads in the media.

6. Strategy for traditional clientele - Choose some popular local activity and work on it for expanded visibility; i.e. longer season, multiple use, etc. An example is county fairground. Develop a year-round use program.
7. Newsletters (a) for regular news events (b) for special events only.
8. Educational programs for a host of organizations are needed. 4-H, county agents, commercial recreation and tourism, community recreation and programming, state recreation society's.
9. Training programs for extension and other youth groups. Teach that recreation is something other than diversion.
10. Home economists groups need more attention. They can be taught how to implement various skills in the community organizations.
11. Resource base organizations are not a regular client, but should be. They are quite active physically and politically.
12. Extension specialists must adapt to new technologies in computer age.

TABLE 1
 Participant Evaluation of SRDC Recreation Workshop, By Sessions,
 Eatonton, GA September, 1982

SCALE	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Somewhat Useful	Of Very Little Use	Not Useful
Critical Issues (N=12)	-	7	5	-	-
Extension Role/Cientele (N=12)	3	7	2	-	-
Strategies (N=12)	2	7	3	-	-
Regional Efforts (N=12)	5	7	-	-	-
Group Reports (N=12)	2	8	1	1	-
General Discussion Group Reports (N=12)	5	4	2	-	1
Proposed Regional Network (N=12)	11	1	-	-	-
Proposed Regional Newsletter (N=11)	10	1	-	-	-

RECOMMENDED READING REFERENCES *

Proceedings, National Workshop on Cooperative Extension's Role in Outdoor Recreation 1967, University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education, Athens, GA.

Proceedings, National Recreation Workshop, 1972, Kellogg Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan.

Recreation and Tourism, Challenges and Opportunities for Cooperative Extension, Community Resource Development and Public Affairs Subcommittee of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, 1978.

Proceedings, National Recreation Specialists Workshop, Lake Barkley State Resort Park, Cadiz, KY, 1979.

*Publications are available from the Southern Rural Development Center upon request.

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Eatonton, GA, September 13-15, 1982

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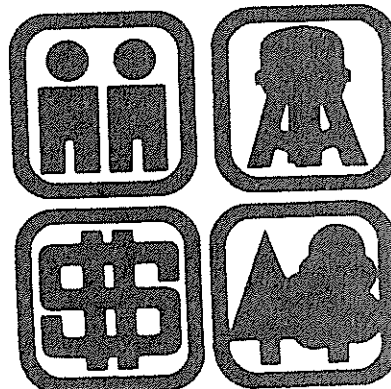
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The SRDC is one of four regional rural development centers in the nation. It coordinates cooperation between the Research (Experiment Station) and Extension (Cooperative Extension Service) staffs at land-grant institutions in the South to provide technical consultation, research, training, and evaluation services for rural development. This publication is one of several published by the Center on various needs, program thrusts, and research efforts in rural development. For more information about SRDC activities and publications, write to the Director.



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