

# ON THE GROUND

## Survey Sez

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Southwest Hydrology (SWH) surveyed its subscribers in March to learn more about our readers and how we might improve the magazine. Over 850 readers responded to the web-based survey.

### Your Interests

Survey responses to the open-ended question about what topics *SWH* should cover revealed much about readers' interests. The most frequently requested topic was climate change and drought, including: climate forecasting, climate change impacts on both water quantity and water quality, monsoon effects, global and local impacts, and responses to climate change by agencies. Readers want to know what the climate impacts are on hydrologic systems, ecosystems, and socioeconomic systems, and what the climate models are predicting and how certain they are.

Another very popular category is conservation and water reuse, including: rainwater harvesting; public perception issues of water reuse; conservation strategies, technologies, and efficiencies; treatment technologies; and the relation of conservation to growth. The focus of conservation interest ranged from individual homeowners to agriculture, municipalities, and public lands.

Other oft-requested topics included legal/policy/regulatory issues (very popular), the Colorado River (the typical suggestion was simply "more" about the river), natural and artificial recharge, and conjunctive use and surface water-groundwater interaction. More water quality topics were also requested, including nutrient contamination, perchlorate, salinity, and the arsenic standard.

A number of respondents would like more coverage of active or successful projects, case studies, novel approaches, and applied hydrology. Our On the Ground department is designed specifically to feature such project summaries, so all of

you, take note: send us 600 words and a photo or two about what you're up to!

### SWH Responds

The suggestions from the survey are being used to plan future feature topics. In response to specific questions, *SWH* plans to maintain or increase coverage in the Government, R&D, and On the Ground departments and reduce coverage in the less-popular People and Company Line sections. Our science-policy balance will remain about the same. The three-month lag between writing articles and mailing the issue makes coverage of rapidly changing law and policy developments difficult, but we will work in additional legal news as we are able—such as legislative summaries by state.

Many respondents suggested new sections, such as summaries of current conditions and forecasts for hydrologic and climatologic factors, including water table and dam elevations, river discharge, and snowpack, which we had already been considering.

### About You

Who are *SWH* subscribers? Of the survey respondents, 78 percent are male and have worked in the water resources field an average of 20 years. They are well-educated: 73 percent hold a post-graduate degree and nearly half hold a water-related certificate or registration. Typically, they manage two employees.

Respondents reported they read an average of two other sources of industry news. Most popular were the National

Ground Water Association's *Ground Water* (38 percent), *U.S. Water News* (34 percent), publications of state hydrologic organizations (31 percent) and the American Water Resources Association's *Journal* (22 percent).

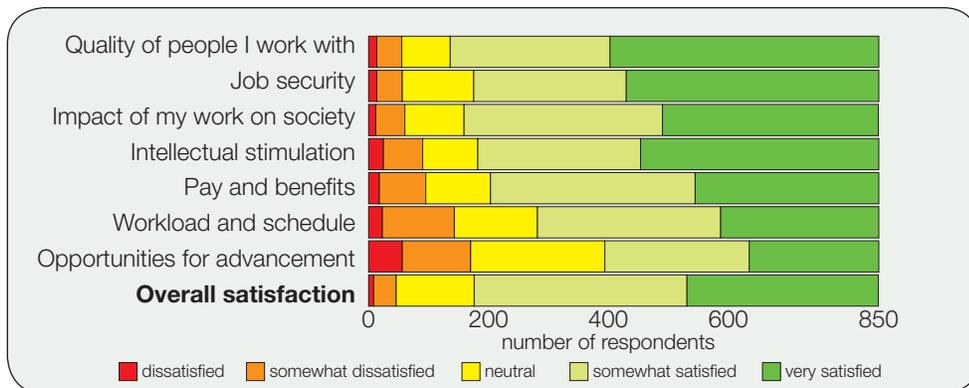
Our respondents work for a wide array of organizations, including federal, state, or local government (41 percent); private consultants (28 percent); university faculty, staff, or students (20 percent); water providers (about 4 percent), and nongovernmental organizations (3 percent).

We asked how satisfied our subscribers were with various aspects of their professional life. Overall, 79 percent reported being very or somewhat satisfied (see chart below). The area of greatest satisfaction was the "quality of people I work with," followed by a tie between job security, intellectual stimulation, and impact of your work on society. Apparently there are substantial nonmonetary benefits to a career in water resources.

On the other hand, respondents were mainly "somewhat" satisfied with their pay and benefits, and less happy with their workload and work schedule. The area of lowest satisfaction was opportunities for advancement.

Thanks to all the respondents who provided this valuable feedback.

Detailed statistics from the survey are available at [www.swhydro.arizona.edu](http://www.swhydro.arizona.edu).



Survey results indicate a high level of job satisfaction among respondents.