

WHY HERE AND NOT THERE:

THE CONDITIONAL NATURE OF RECREATION CHOICE

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ABSTRACT: This paper reports results of several studies to identify the state of the art and direction of research on how recreationists make choices. Findings from the studies have been combined into a list of propositions; the propositions can be considered hypotheses from which future studies can be developed or the effect of management activities on choices can be evaluated. Concepts that underlie recreation choices are illustrated. The complex and diverse nature of the recreationists' decision making process supports a grounded approach in future investigations.

INTRODUCTION

How people make decisions about when and where to recreate has become a topic of increasing interest in the past few years (Brown and Ross 1982; Knopp and Leatherberry 1982; Krumpke and McLaughlin 1982; McDonough 1982; Stynes 1982; Watson 1983). The new focus is evident in both recreation research and management. In research, studies have evolved from those that describe recreation events and users to those that focus on why the events observed occur. The focus on recreationist's decision making (a process orientation) has been a logical outcome of this progression.

For managers, understanding the process of making recreation choices is extremely important for two reasons: (1) to recognize when and how integrated resource management activities (in recreation, timber, minerals, range, engineering, wildlife, hydrology, cultural resources, and so on) impact specific kinds of recreation opportunities, in positive and negative ways; and (2) to recognize when specific recreation goals and objectives can be achieved without unnecessarily constraining the management of other resources.

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Identification and evaluation of effects of resource management, as well as other, more general social changes, have become important areas of concern. Recreationists make their own decisions, managers do not make decisions for the recreationists. But managers' actions affect the places recreationists go. An understanding of the process people go through, as well as the factors they consider, will facilitate the judgmental process managers must apply in matching supply with demand and protecting the integrity of quality recreation opportunities.

The purpose of this paper is to report results of several recent studies in the West and Alaska to identify the state of the art and direction of research in the area of choice behavior. Concepts that underlie recreation choices, and how they can be related to management as well as research, are illustrated.

VARIED RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

Investigators have followed divergent pathways in pursuit of knowledge about recreation behavior. Knopp and Leatherberry (1982) observe that in assessing "how individuals choose an activity and place, the primary emphasis has been on motivational factors often referred to as needs, desires, reasons or similar terms. Some researchers have included what can be called intervening factors, for example, cost, distance, access, knowledge. Unfortunately, in failing in our research to account for experience and the tendency for people to tire of an activity and drop it to take up new pastimes, we obtain a static view of decision making." Similarly, variation in the patterns of use associated with different places displays dynamic qualities of choice behavior as well--discovery of places, attachment to favorite ones, repeat visitation, relocation as sites change in undesirable ways, and so forth (Downing 1982). Only recently do we seem to be looking into the dynamic dimensions of recreation choice. But, how do we represent the dynamic nature of recreational choice phenomena; in particular how do we express the balancing of conflicting desires?

Propst and Lime (1982) observe that recreation researchers have most often looked to other disciplines for help in solving conceptual problems. They cite efforts at applying economic and job satisfaction models to recreation satisfaction,

but suggest that the results have been mixed. Another investigator has recently proposed applying a variation of a noncompensatory model as a "simplified approximation of whatever the complex cognitive decision process might actually be" (Watson 1983). Indeed, what might it actually be? We persist in efforts to fit our data to existing theoretical perspectives, many of which are themselves in need of further elaboration and refinement in the substantive area from which they were initially derived. Most of these models have their critics.

DEVELOPING A GROUNDED CONCEPTUAL APPROACH

A review of the literature indicated that both the research methods currently being used and the various theoretical perspectives discussed have not fully explained the complex nature of the choices inherent in the data described in this paper. Most past work seemed to lack a behavioral basis. So we turned to Glaser and Strauss (1967) for developing a "grounded approach" to explain the choices observed and reported in our investigations. Glaser and Strauss (1967) and Schatzman and Strauss (1973) state that a grounded approach may be of greater assistance, at least initially, in representing the theoretical complexity in a substantive area of inquiry. They advocate entering the field with minimal commitment to an existing theoretical model; a model can then be derived inductively to conform to the richness, diversity, discrepancies, and apparent inconsistencies in data encountered.

In many respects, the grounded theory guided the design of studies discussed later in this paper. In general, our research progressed from using qualitative to quantitative methods then back again to qualitative where appropriate. Each approach offers a different level of resolution about how recreationists make decisions. This issue is discussed more fully by Downing and Clark in this proceedings.

FACTORS OF RECREATION CHOICE

Within the context of a given outing at a specific time, people frequently are faced with diverse and often conflicting choices, choices that require trade-offs among competing desires. When deciding whether to go on an outing, participants must make many decisions that are conditional on many, often interrelated factors. Types of decisions to be made and factors to be considered are shown in table 1. Although many of the factors have been described in previous studies, the pattern of interrelationships between the choices and kinds of factors has not been described. The items shown are not necessarily exhaustive nor are they listed in any order of priority. Most of them are discussed later in this paper.

Table 1.--Types of decisions to be made and factors that often weigh in recreation choices

Decisions	Factors
Go versus do not go	Information and knowledge
With whom: Primary group Alone Others	Individual considerations: Time/money available Desire for change Limitations/handicaps
Where: Specific geographic area Macrosite characteristics	Group considerations: Primary group Secondary group Competition from others
To do what: Single or multiple activities Desires of individual or group	Activity considerations: Equipment available Season
How: Mode of travel Style of activity	Place considerations: Weather/seasons (may impede/facilitate) Opportunities there Natural attractions
When: Time of day, week Season	Management considerations: Rules/regulations Facilities provided Perceived safety
Why: Satisfactions desired Needs, motives Preferences, etc.	

When people reach the site of their choice, they may re-evaluate many of their prior decisions. As a consequence, the individual or group may adapt as necessary to match expectations with realizations encountered on site. Thus, the decisions and factors shown in table 1 must be viewed in a dynamic and probabilistic rather than deterministic way.

The requirements for decisions--evidence of diverse mediating factors in decision making--have been referenced by other authors (Anderson and Brown 1984; Harvey 1976; Krumpke and McLaughlin 1982; Peterson 1974; Young and Smith 1979). This perspective gives rise to a number of questions about places, people, management activities, users' decision processes, and the structure of interrelationships among the decision factors shown in table 1. A variety of such questions is given in the paper by Downing and Clark.

WHAT WAS FOUND

Three studies provide the basis from which we derive a series of propositions related to the decision process. The studies were located in Alaska, Washington, Oregon, and Utah and used various methods for data collection. The study in the Pacific Northwest (Oregon and Washington) used on-site participant observation, a questionnaire, and interviews in roaded, dispersed areas (Clark and others 1984). The Alaska study used an in-home interview with residents and focused on their perceptions and use of natural resources. The study represented the views of non-users as well as users (Clark and others 1982). The Utah study was also conducted on-site but used naturalistic inquiry (ethnography) in developed and undeveloped areas (Downing 1982).

Each of the studies focused in one way or another on aspects of recreational choice behavior. The studies in the Pacific Northwest and Utah intended to explain why people chose the areas in which they were found. The Alaska study determined specifically where people went from their residence and which of the places identified (on a map) were their favorite or most often visited, and what similar place they would use if the favorite was somehow changed in an undesirable way. In this study, respondents were also asked what would be the consequence of resource management activities, such as logging, on their favorite place, that is, would the changes make the place more or less desirable, and if less desirable, would they stop going there.

A grounded approach, as described by Glaser and Strauss (1967), and an ecological perspective (McDonough 1982; Propst and Lime 1982) have been adopted in an attempt to put into perspective past research findings. Findings and conclusions from the three studies were combined and are summarized below as propositions. They may be considered hypotheses from which management implications and research studies can be developed. Later we discuss the structure or pattern of relationships among the decision factors that affect how people make choices.

Propositions About People

- Most visits are in groups (friends, family, multiple-families, peer groups, etc.)
- The group one recreates with plays a major role in choice behavior (Cheek and others 1976). Most studies document that few people recreate alone, even in Wilderness (Hendee and others 1978). So the process of negotiation between members of the primary group must be evaluated; yet most studies focus on individual desires and behavior, an orientation that does great injustice to the reality of decision making. The decision process includes individual and group past experiences that must somehow be melded into a satisfactory solution. Data from these studies did not document the differential "power" each person in the group possessed, but numerous responses, particularly in the Pacific Northwest and Utah studies, revealed that this phenomenon plays an important role in final decisions. Future studies should allow researchers to distinguish between "the recreationist as an individual" and "the recreationist as a group member" (whether the party head, peer, or subordinate). Perhaps some of the methods and concepts of behavioral sociologists and psychologists might be utilized to evaluate this exchange process.

User characteristics

- Group composition may be fluid with members arriving and departing at different times.
- Members may engage in the same activity as a group; at other times, individuals and subgroups engage in separate, and occasionally, widely disparate activities.
- It is common to observe variation in style of outing within a group (for example, some may camp in tents of different style, whereas others stay in pickup campers or recreation vehicles).
- Not all needs or preferences of individuals within the group may be met; trade-offs and accommodations must be made at times. The group may require compromise and consensus, or submission to some of the desires of its members.

Attachment to place

- Recreationists form attachments to sites and return to favorite or preferred places again and again (Knopf 1983).
- They tend to use places similar to those used as children.
- They visit other "acceptable" places for similar outings as well. Occasionally visitors use sites with attributes they rate as "undesirable" or "unacceptable," although these conditions do not preclude engagement in the chosen activity with the chosen group.
- They tend to travel within a well-defined area ("home range"), generally no more than 2-4 hours for people using roaded forest areas and boats in coastal areas.
- They may decide where to live based on the availability of desirable places and opportunities for activities.

Preferences for setting

- Recreationists include individuals who prefer developed sites, those who prefer dispersed sites, and those who have no preference and use both types of setting.
- They will, under certain circumstances, switch from dispersed to developed settings and vice versa in apparent contradiction to stated preferences.
- Dispersed area users take advantage of opportunities in primitive and semi-primitive settings by bringing their own equipment to provide the creature comforts found in developed campgrounds.

- Developed sites are chosen for convenience and safety, dispersed places for freedom and lack of regimentation.
- Both dispersed and developed sites offer opportunities for socializing with others not in the party or for privacy, depending on site selection and timing of visits.
- Water, whether in lakes, streams, or marine locations, is an important component in making choices (Clark and others 1984; Lime 1971; Lucas 1964).

Adaptability

- Forest recreationists may be temporarily or permanently displaced from places that change in unacceptable ways.
- Displacement may be of a "conditional" nature; that is, recreationists may return under special circumstances.
- Forest recreationists appear to vary in their "threshold of disruption" and in their willingness to adapt to undesirable changes in a place. Expectations and the availability of alternatives are key elements in understanding how thresholds operate to change patterns of actual use.
- They vary in their willingness to explore new and unknown territory, particularly outside the bounds of the home range.

Propositions About Activities

In each of the studies, there were few activities in which there were no participants, even though the environmental conditions ranged from developed campgrounds to wilderness.

- A variety of activities occurs on each outing, which leads to diverse experiences and satisfactions.
- Activities may include all or part of the primary group and any other people who join together at the site. Activities range from very active to very passive and span a wide geographical frontier in relation to the prime site that the group visits.
- The same activity may take on different styles. People can participate in the same activity in a variety of ways and in many different places ranging from city parks to wilderness. An activity such as hiking, for example, is basically the same in each area, but the motives for engaging in the activity, the style of participation, and the resulting experiences can vary dramatically from one area to another (Clark and Stankey 1979).

Propositions About Places

- Attributes of a place can attract or detract and can facilitate or constrain a specific activity.

Place is a major element that composes a recreation outing and that must be evaluated in individual and group decisions. Several features of place have been identified in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) for example, including physical and biological factors, man-made factors, and social features (Brown and others 1978; Clark and Stankey 1979). Studies reported in this paper indicate that each of these features may or may not play a role in the decision making process. Place may be evaluated at macrosite or microsite levels. One level or the other may take precedence at different times and for different individuals in the primary group. One person's favorite may be another's least desirable place to go.

- Users of dispersed and developed sites are found in dispersed and developed settings (different microsites) located in geographic proximity along paved highways and gravel roads in forests, near settled areas, and in more remote regions.
- At a macrosite level, the place may be acceptable to users of dispersed and developed sites, whereas preferences at the microsite level may differ substantially.
- Users of dispersed and developed sites frequently travel into dispersed areas for day use activities.
- Acceptability of macrosites and microsites varies by season (for example, a place may be acceptable for an individual or group for hunting in the fall and cross-country skiing in winter but not as a dispersed or developed site for family camping in the summer).

Propositions About Management

- Few visitors to a roaded forest learn about the place through information supplied by the agency. Informal personal contacts, most often family and friends, are the most important source of information about opportunities.
- Lack of developed campgrounds is infrequently a reason users give for choosing dispersed sites. Dispersed and developed settings are not substitutes one for the other.
- User acceptance of management practices varies (Downing and Clark 1979).
- Users of roaded recreation settings, in contrast to primitive settings, are less likely to be annoyed by common management activities such as logging and grazing. The size of clearcuts, and their location relative to campsites, however, is important.

- Users support road closures for some management purposes (to protect wildlife, for example), but have less support for others (to save limited maintenance money, for example).
- Many visitors in Pacific Northwest forests express strong support for agency presence, ranger patrols specifically.
- Visitors value unchanging settings. For example, visitors in the Pacific Northwest indicated that opening areas for dispersed recreation is a good reason for building new roads, but not in the area which they were in at the time.
- Acceptability of visitor impacts varies. Some recreationists express little concern about litter and garbage, fires, noise, vandalism and theft. Others, however, have relocated (have been displaced) from settings where these problems have been present.

Propositions About Recreationists' Decisions

General characteristics of choice

- Recreationists may choose a particular place for a given outing for a variety of reasons:
 - (1) habit, tradition;
 - (2) a desire to be in a place of expected stability, reliability, familiarity in a changing world (Iso-Ahola 1980);
 - (3) a desire for psychological distance--to be far enough away to feel like they have gotten away;
 - (4) to explore for new and unknown territory; or
 - (5) to accommodate to particular needs and constraints of a trip (mediating factors): special needs of the group, time constraints, and cost constraints (Cheek and Burch 1976; Kelly 1976; McDonough 1982).

Specific characteristics of choice

- Access is a key determinant influencing recreation choices and the location and amount of use. Of all the management factors identified by Clark and Stankey (1979) in the ROS, access probably plays the most critical role in either facilitating or constraining recreational use. Whether one chooses the term "facilitating" or "constraining" to describe access conditions depends on a personal point of view.
- Favorite sites are frequently more remote and possess desired land characteristics. Conversely, most-visited places are usually more accessible, more convenient, and provide particular activities and facilities.
- Both dispersed and developed sites may be selected for separation, remoteness, and isolation from others not in the group.

- Dispersed sites are often chosen over developed sites because they can better accommodate needs of large groups.
- Dispersed settings offer privacy, freedom to engage in activities not allowed in developed sites, freedom to adapt the place to the particular "style" of the group.
- Users of dispersed and developed sites have stopped visiting (have been displaced from) formerly used dispersed and developed sites because:

- (1) settings have changed in undesirable ways;
- (2) too many people are there;
- (3) number of undesirable people (people who are not considerate of others and do not know how to behave) has increased;
- (4) resource management activities have increased;
- (5) more preferred places have been found; or
- (6) life circumstances have changed (for example, places that supported the needs and desires of a family with children are not as desirable after the children grow older or leave the parents).

At the macrosite level

- Once pretrip considerations are settled (such as group needs, trip constraints, desire for change of place), recreationists evaluate and make choices among options (Watson 1983) in terms of the following attributes of a setting:

(1) variety of physiographic, topographic, and landscape features (Haas 1979);

(2) season and elevation;

(3) remoteness from home (psychological distance--far enough to feel like getting away) and from centers of population;

(4) variety of resource-dependent opportunities available; and

(5) ROS conditions (ranging from primitive conditions and settings to developed areas with roads and facilities).

At the microsite level

- Many of the options applicable to the macrosite level also apply to the microsite level.
- Choices may be changed upon arrival depending on the availability of sites (favorite, preferred, or otherwise) as well as activities planned and special desires of the group.

Predictability of choices

• The process of making choices is inherently complex, and prediction is exceedingly difficult with present knowledge.

(1) Choice of place (at both the microsite and macrosite level) is difficult to predict for a given type of outing without understanding circumstances about the trip (Knopp and Leatherberry 1982; Krumpke and McLaughlin 1982).

(2) The likelihood of disruption at favorite sites (to determine the threshold of disruption) is difficult to predict from users' statements of preference.

(3) Although the process is difficult to predict, trade-offs people make may not be terribly stressful.

• Although favorite sites would be less attractive with certain changes (clearcuts, new houses or buildings, new logging, mine tailings, new roads, log storage), not everyone would stop going to their favorite place if such changes would occur.

• A variety of situational (mediating) factors limit freedom of choice (for example, distance to alternative sites, cost of fuel, travel time). Places subsequently chosen to accommodate the outing and regarded as "acceptable" may otherwise be rated as "unacceptable" (Schreyer and Roggenbuck 1981).

• Expectations are important in recreationists' decision making. They serve as filters to narrow the range of activities and places that will be considered for a particular outing with a particular group. They are employed during pretrip planning for weighing anticipated trade-offs among alternative possibilities of group composition, activity or experience, and place. How satisfied one is with a particular trip or activity depends in part on how well pretrip expectations match actual outcomes (Roggenbuck and Schreyer 1977).

DISCUSSION

It was difficult to determine the sequence in which the various decision factors shown in table 1 enter recreationists' decision process. Obviously there is great variability between individuals and between one trip and another as to what circumstances are most important.

A variety of factors that influence recreation choice behavior may operate independently at times and interact in complex ways at other times. The content (decision factors) and structure (relationships among factors) of the decision process are of primary interest and must be represented in a holistic way. Numerous studies on recreation behavior are not referenced in this

paper; most did not deal directly with the behavioral choices of recreationists in real-life situations. Future work will be directed at integrating the results from these investigations.

Grounded perspectives about recreational choice behavior are important theoretically and are relevant to managers. Some particularly important concepts follow.

Home Range

For a given outing, people choose among options about place or decide to discontinue visiting certain sites within a bounded geographic area or "home range"--an area judged appropriate to a particular group, activity, or experience. Home range for recreationists visiting roaded, forested areas of Oregon, Washington, and Utah for 2-3 days duration is within 2-3 hours drive of home. The same time frame tends to hold in southeast Alaska as well, but boats rather than wheeled vehicles are the main mode of travel. Some people are more "migratory" in nature than others (they act like tourists) and go beyond the bounds of the home range as defined by the majority of recreationists. But they appear to be more the exception than the rule.

Home range seems to be an important concept. It suggests that there is a more-or-less geographically bounded and behaviorally relevant area within which most trade-offs among settings for a given type of activity or experience are made. The home range contains sites judged by people as "favorite," "most often visited," "acceptable" alternatives, and "unacceptable" places once visited but visited no longer.

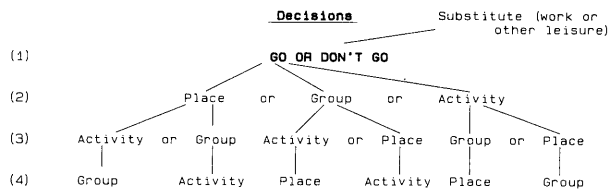
The size of home range may vary for different activities, different modes of travel, and different regions of the country. In southeast Alaska, for example, mode of travel and availability of a range of recreation opportunities closely related to local communities explains why most use is within 25 miles of home. For Anchorage, on the other hand, most recreation opportunities are further from town, and competition for them increases. The amount of time and distance traveled are greater, yet are still within generally predictable limits. The practical significance is that if people do associate a particular travel time and maximum distance with a particular type of activity or experience, "home range" should be incorporated into assessing the relative availability of and demand for different types of place-related opportunities. The activities and experiences possible become the "browse" within the home range. To the extent that resource managers control the basic factors that determine browse available to recreationists within their home ranges, understanding the relationship between available opportunities and use will be important in predicting consequences of resource management options for the public.

Considerations for Modeling Choice Behavior

We have not developed a detailed model of the decision process, but we can suggest some concepts that need to be integrated into a comprehensive model.

The choice process seems to work under two general conditions: the "initial condition" and the "adaptive condition" (fig. 1). The initial condition is where the participants essentially are exploring "new ground" with regard to recreation events. The adaptive condition is where the participants have prior experience and are evaluating whether or not to repeat an event at a particular place with a specified group. It is within these two conditions that concepts such as substitutability and ultimate trip satisfaction for each member of the group begin to make sense.

A. Decision level



B. Decision level

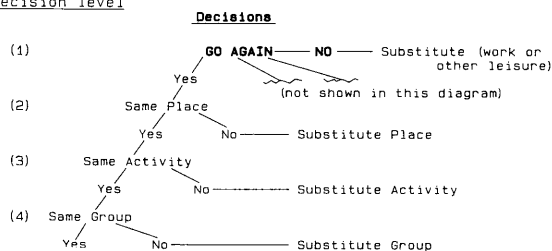


Figure 1.--Conditions in the recreation choice process: A, Initial condition; B, Adaptive condition.

When making the initial decision, a recreationist must consider group, place, and activity. The first choice likely limits or constrains subsequent choices (a filtering process). What decision comes first--about place, people, or activity--likely varies from outing to outing and from individual to individual. Moreover, these early choices determine which macrosite and microsite factors in the ROS are likely to be salient in final selection of place. Other personal or group constraints may become considerations as well and may dominate from the beginning of the decision process. Thus, it is not always possible to select the macrosite and microsite based on individual preferences for attributes of a particular setting.

When considering whether or not to repeat a trip, the recreationist can adapt as a result of prior experience or because of new decision factors. Substitution can then occur at any of the four levels shown in figure 1B. Not only can a recreationist substitute a place, but he or she can also substitute one activity or group for another. When the same combination of decisions is made time after time--that is, the same group goes to the same place to do the same sort of activity, often at the same time of year--the event becomes traditional.

CONCLUSIONS

The decision process for making recreation choices is complex from a research perspective: final decisions are conditional on interaction between people and places with a variety of mediating influences. The process is dynamic with new information continually affecting what people do as well as why they do so.

Preferences are not necessarily equal to actual choices--at least not some of the time and not for some things. This is really not surprising. We must deal with group preferences versus individual preferences. "My favorite" and "our favorite" may not be the same. People in different groups may do the same or different things for the same or different reasons. What "appears to be" may be very different than what "really is." Understanding some of the "why" underlying recreationists' choices will facilitate programs that will provide the range of conditions acceptable to the public.

The focus on place is fundamental, particularly when viewed within the context of home range; it both facilitates and constrains groups and activities. It provides the palette, or array of options, from which people create their own images. People have favorite places; they visit them and can identify attributes associated with those places. People also have favorite activities and people with whom they recreate; however, people often choose other than their favorites. Perhaps only seldom do all favorites (place, people, and activity) overlap (fig. 2). The studies discussed earlier indicate, however, that such apparent "inconsistencies" are rational. Whether they choose other-than-favorite places, activities, or people because of a desire for diversity or because of constraints, recreationists, nonetheless, may have a satisfying time. Choices about a setting might be viewed as "rational" for a given outing but vary from party to party and from trip to trip. Rationality is indicated by the evaluation and eventual selection of places expected to adequately accommodate the fluid nature of arrival and departure times of group members, group needs for activity and space, varying tastes of individuals within the group, and constraints of the particular situation. Evidence of such considerations is common in users' explanations of why they are "here" rather than "there."

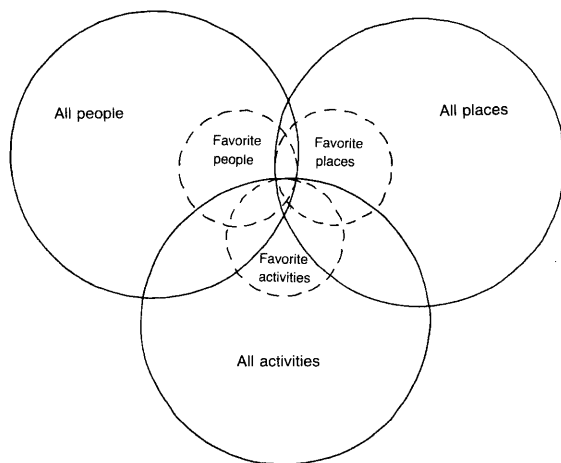


Figure 2.--Relationships between favorite people, favorite place, and favorite activity.

People generally compromise in making recreation choices. They weigh individual versus collective considerations, plus other constraints and opportunities, in reaching a decision. At the group decision making level, there may, in fact, be a close match between preference and behavior. Looking at preferences at the individual level may be appropriate to show the range of possibilities, but may not be a good predictor of actual behavior.

We must conclude that recreationists (at least some members of a group) are often able to achieve satisfactory trip experiences in what they would otherwise regard as a marginally acceptable setting. Under such circumstances, it appears that attributes of a setting support, albeit minimally, the desires of the group regarding activity or experience. When users expect less than an ideal place, going there must be valued more than not going. Anticipated satisfactions of a trip are largely dependent on engaging in desired activities with a desired group. An "optimal" setting is not always required or, alternatively, the requirements of an optimal setting may be quite minimal. Places must then be judged for the degree to which they adequately support activity, experience, and group needs. It may not be possible to label a setting as "optimal" in abstract terms. This may help explain why favorite places are not necessarily the same as those used most frequently for a given kind of outing, and why people often use settings with attributes they regard as somewhat undesirable.

The concepts of "home range" and "browse" seem to apply to recreation as well as to wildlife. People seek diversity and may go to a variety of places, assuming they have knowledge of opportunities available, but generally do so in a confined territory, at least at the aggregate level. They can choose the same browse (experiences and satisfactions) in the same or different place, or go routinely to the same place for different browse.

Past attempts to simplify the methodology and substance of the recreation decision making process have done injustice to the topic. Little is known at present about choice behavior that can be generalized with any degree of reliability. The fact that researchers from diverse disciplines have converged on the matter of recreation choice is comforting; the lack of an integrating perspective is not. The results from this symposium may lead us in a more productive direction.

RESEARCH NEEDS

Additional investigations based on a grounded, behavioral approach are needed to ensure that researchers are working with relevant elements and relationships. Verification through further data processing can then follow for data sets which clearly reflect the idiosyncrasies of the recreation choice process. Research has begun to demonstrate the complexity involved, but more studies should be conducted within a holistic, ecological framework.

There is a need to integrate research methods, models, and concepts. Multidisciplinary studies are also required to understand the complex nature of the recreation choice process. The move from descriptive to explanative studies will necessitate using alternative research designs--longitudinal and experimental--and strategies to collect a mix of quantitative and qualitative data.

There is need to refine the home range concept and to describe the nature and extent of home ranges for different kinds of groups, activities, and experiences. What are the constraints or factors that shape home ranges? Moreover, there is need to determine which of the interrelationships between place, activity, and group are most significant to recreationists' choices, and to determine which management activities are most likely to influence recreationists' choices. Research must focus more on the group, rather than the individual, largely because decisions are typically made within the group unit.

And last, researchers need to know more about what really matters versus what is nice to know but irrelevant for effective management. Determining this balance requires on-going cooperation between researchers and managers.

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