



Training Needs Assessment of Coastal Decision-Makers in Georgetown and Horry Counties, South Carolina

REPORT SUMMARY

This study was conducted by Responsive Management for the North Inlet-Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) to provide a needs assessment for the Coastal Training Program (CTP). The study entailed a scientific online survey of individuals who are involved in coastal resource management or decision-making in Georgetown County and/or Horry County, South Carolina.

The survey topics included, in part, coastal decision-maker background information such as education and professional experience, experience with the training program, knowledge and attitudes on coastal issue priorities, interest in training topics, and preferences for program training delivery and format. This report will be used to guide future training development and program planning for CTP.

2007 NEEDS ASSESSMENT

An earlier Needs Assessment of decision-makers in coastal SC was conducted in 2007 as a joint study for the North Inlet-Winyah Bay NERR as well as the ACE Basin NERR. The 2007 report can be accessed at: <http://northinlet.sc.edu/services/>

ABOUT RESPONSIVE MANAGEMENT

Responsive Management is an internationally recognized survey research firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation issues:

responsivemanagement.com

ACCESS THE FULL 2021 NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT AT:
<http://northinlet.sc.edu/training/>

154 completed surveys were received

METHODS

- The survey contact list included **1,404 individuals**, including 1,004 contacts from the CTP plus additional contacts compiled by Responsive Management
- The online survey questionnaire was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the North Inlet-Winyah Bay NERR, based in part on the 2007 needs assessment survey
- The survey was disseminated in **February and March 2021**
- Email and telephone calls were used to distribute the survey. It was also posted on the NI-WB NERR website homepage

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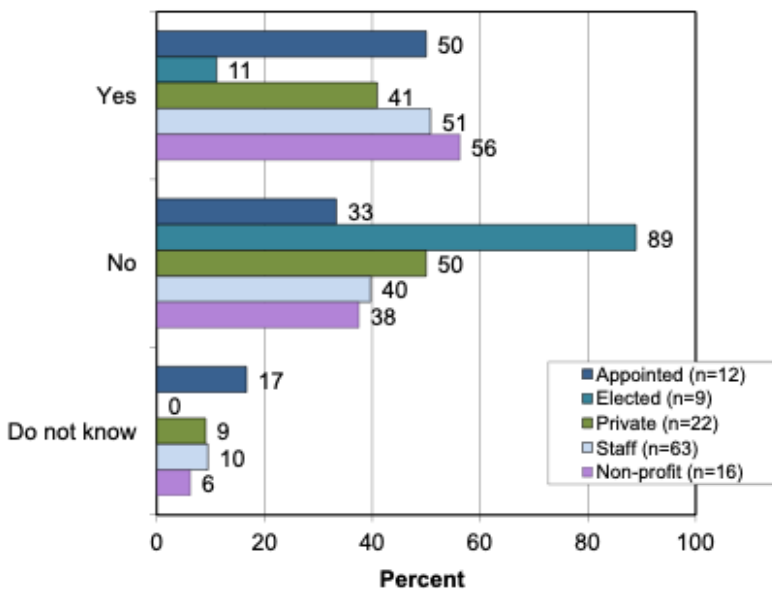
RESULTS

CTP = Coastal Training Program
CDM = Coastal Decision-Maker

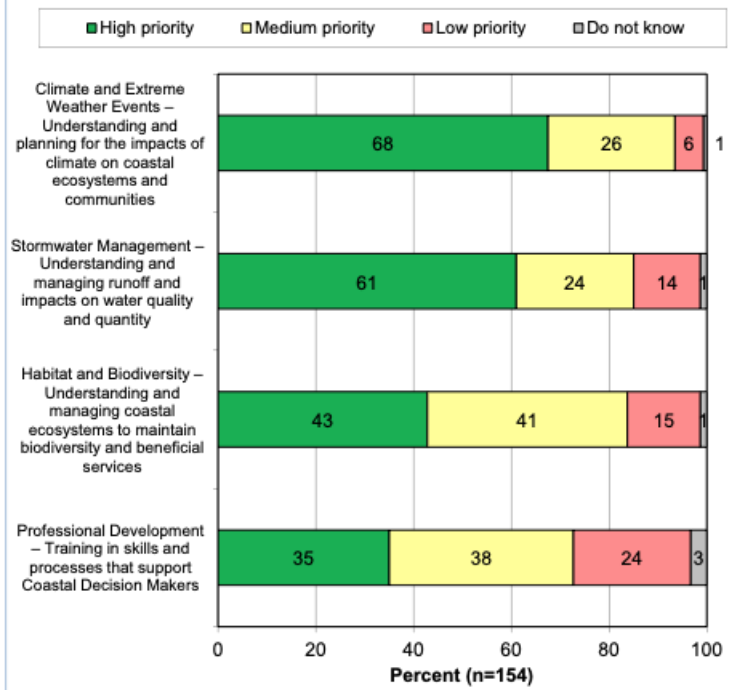
- Coastal Decision-Makers spend a mean of **40% of their time directly on coastal issues**
- 53% of CDMs (53%) say that coastal issues are a high priority in their position. 30% say they are a medium priority and 12% say they are a low priority.
- The mean number of training events attended by CDMs per year is 2.62 and the median is 2.
- 33% were very familiar, 36% somewhat familiar, and **31% were not at all familiar with the CTP**
- The **importance of the CTP was ranked as 8.25 (mean)** and 9 (median) out of 10 by CDMs
- Just over half of coastal decision-makers (51%) have received training through CTP

Sample Graphs: Audience Reach and Priority Training Topics

Q22. Have you ever received training or education through the North Inlet-Winyah Bay NERR Coastal Training Program?



Q32. Please indicate whether you consider each of the following a high, medium, or low priority for your coastal training/education needs or interests:



9.11 / 10 - mean rating of CTP quality

CONCLUSION

- Coastal decision-makers consider the CTP to be important and high-quality
- Climate and Stormwater are high priority topics, but different audiences value issues differently
- There is a need to improve outreach to diverse audiences in training programs
- Colleague recommendations and word-of-mouth were important sources of CTP information
- Lack of awareness was the biggest barrier to participation - help spread the word!