

Fox River Navigational System Authority Rapide Croche Project Executive Summary

The St. Norbert College Survey Center was contracted by the Fox River Navigational System Authority in 2010 to conduct a mail survey with a random sub-sample of Wisconsin boat owners of registered watercraft in the lower Fox River/Winnebago pool lakes counties (Brown, Calumet, Fond du Lac, Outagamie, Waupaca and Winnebago) and boat owners with watercraft greater than 26 feet in the adjacent Lake Michigan counties (Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette and Sheboygan). The individuals must also have provided their contact information (name and address) to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) when they registered their boat. This survey was created to determine opinions regarding: Development of a cleansing and transfer station at the Rapide Croche Lock; Demand for and usage of the Rapide Croche Lock, cleansing area, and lift and transfer station; The number and type of watercraft that would use the facility on an annual basis; and The potential number and type of visitors the lock and transfer station would attract over the course of the year. A total of 994 completed questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 48% and a margin of error of 3.1% at the 95% confidence interval.

Results from the survey were used to build a number of scenarios which would profile the number and type of potential transfer station users based on a specific combinations of responses from the survey. Nineteen scenarios were built for the Fox River Navigational System Authority to utilize and debate based on their experiences. Scenario 4 was adopted which combined respondents who currently use the Fox River between Green Bay and Rapide Croche two or more times per year (Q1) and also use the Fox River between Lake Winnebago and Rapide Croche two or more times per year (Q2) as well as anticipate using the proposed transfer station two or more times per year (Q14). Using the percentage of registered boaters based on this scenario, approximately 1,312 boaters would use the proposed transfer station per year. Users would mostly consist of V-shaped hull craft (82%) with the majority being up to 20,000 lbs. in weight (83%). Length varies between 12 feet to over 40 feet, however, the biggest percentage is between 16 feet and 40 feet (81%) with a indicated beam of up to over 10 feet. The heaviest indicated use times would be Friday through Sunday, and all (100%) would be willing to wait 20-30 minutes to have their boat cleaned and transferred. Ninety-four percent (94%) feel it should be managed on a first come first served basis and 76% feel the price should be calculated on length. Please keep in mind margins of error are higher for these smaller sub-group scenarios.

The scenario was further tested by the Fox River Navigational System Authority using a non-scientific online survey of boaters in the Lake Winnebago Watershed (n=22). Using these results, 90% of potential users indicated they had a V-hull boats with lengths of mostly 21-40 feet (70%), beams of 10 or more feet (60%) and weights up to 20,000 pounds (75%). Ninety percent (90%) indicated they would mostly use the transfer station on weekends.