



## NSGL 2008 Survey Results

The NSGL recently conducted a survey to gather information to help better understand patron needs and assist in planning future directions. The 12-question survey was sent to the Sea Grant network, library groups, the NSGL patron mailing list, and several constituency groups. The feedback has been very encouraging (**89% rated our service good or excellent**), and we have summarized the results here for your convenience.

### **Familiarity with NSGL Services:**

Out of a total 410 respondents,

- 63% were somewhat or very familiar with the NSGL.
- 37% were not yet familiar with the NSGL

### **Affiliation:**

- 25% Sea Grant
- 15% government
- 14% libraries
- 14% scientists
- 14% academic/education
- 4% industry
- 14% other (concerned citizens, museums, aquariums, NGOs, lifeguards, etc.)

*The following results are based on respondents having some familiarity with NSGL and its services:*

### **Services Rating:**

- 40% Excellent
- 49% Good
- 9% Average
- 2% Poor

### **Database Search Frequency:**

- 51% occasionally or often search
- 36% seldom search
- 13% never search

### **Download Digital Documents:**

- 45% occasionally or often download
- 33% seldom download
- 22% never download

### **Document Format Preference (print vs online):**

- 76% prefer online
- 12% prefer hardcopy
- 12% depends on circumstance (sampling of explanations below)
  - Depends on the length of the document, as well as what information I need from it.
  - Some of the documents were scanned long ago and the hard copy is much better quality...esp for photos, illustrations.
  - Posters and odd-sized publications are better in hard copy
  - Usually prefer downloadable online form, but often need access to hardcopy versions for non-electronic uses
  - ...when images, graphs and tables are not included in digital products, the value is diminished and print is preferred
  - ...once in a while I want a hardcopy so I can peruse when inconvenient to have electronics.
  - If it is longer than 50 pages, I prefer printed hardcopy.
  - If documents necessary to prove point or justify terms and conditions of VPDES permits, hard copies necessary

- Sometimes the original document has better text, graphics photos and illustrations...
- Some documents are worth reviewing to make sure they're what I'm looking for...

***If hardcopy Sea Grant documents were no longer available from NSGL or another centralized library, would this impact your work?***

- 55% definitely or probably
- 14% no
- 31% unsure (sampling of explanations below)
  - Historical information would not be readily available.
  - I am working on long term data trends and older reports are used...
  - Many of these items are only easily findable at NSGL.
  - My grandchildren would miss the information, example: reports for school, and just for fun reading!
  - The Library is an important reference resource. I cannot imagine any reason to reduce or eliminate the services of the library. The library does need to have greater visibility.
  - The NSGL library serves as our "corporate" repository ..., the NSGL saves us time and personnel that would otherwise have to be dedicated to such tasks.
  - There are some very unique NSG documents that are not accessibly through university libraries. If they are not available then what purpose would they serve?
  - While I may not need hardcopy documents often, I believe it is still important to maintain a central archival library
  - ... knowing that the NSGL exists and has these items is very important to marine science librarians.
  - I have used these services in the past and it was helpful to me then...I work in a library myself and knowing the information is available is such a help. Patrons don't realize the work in maintaining these types of services. Convenience is important.

***General comments received (partial list):***

- Actually, I only used your service once and it was fantastic...very efficient. I passed on your link information to all the other librarians in the school district. I think our 5th grade teachers could use your digital documents as well, for their oceanography unit. You're a great resource that we've barely tapped into!
- As a Canadian this service is much apprized. We have nothing exactly like it in Canada. I have used numerous materials over the years
- By answering this survey, I just learned about some services and links that I didn't know were available.
- Market this resource! Keep doing what you're doing!
- National Sea Grant Library has provided most anything I have ever requested. I am a very satisfied user.
- The Library is an excellent resource for locating old reports published under sea grant...it has been very useful.
- We use a lot of digital resources provided by a wide range of organisations. The service that you provide is amongst the very best in terms of accessibility, range of content and ease of use. Well done! (University of Cambridge Library, UK)
- While I do not use the library too much personally, we view this as VITAL for Sea Grant and very much want the library to continue into the future.
- You've always been very helpful. Human factor is a big plus!
- I think the library provides a valuable service...For National Sea Grant, we need a NATIONAL digital library that stores our research and extension publications. This means they need the necessary equipment...to provide digital print and video to our user groups across the US. Increasingly, state programs do NOT have the resources or space to warehouse present and past reports. This is how we use the NSGL. It is my feeling that there should be sufficient funding to insure that this program continues. It is a needed service both to the individual Sea Grant Programs, and the state and national constituency that we serve.