

The Awareness, Knowledge, and Opinions of Metropolitan Phoenix Residents Regarding the Rio Salado Project

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OF METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS
REGARDING THE RIO SALADO PROJECT

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to determine the awareness, knowledge, and opinions of the residents of metropolitan Phoenix regarding the Rio Salado Project. The study applied selected perspectives and strategies from the fields of marketing and policy analysis to a large-scale project in the public sector. The results of the study should be valuable to the Rio Salado Development District in developing a master plan for the Rio Salado Project and in designing public-information programs.

The initial section in this report provides the necessary background related to the study. Subsequent sections present the major research questions that were examined, provide a rationale for the study, and describe the research methods that were employed. The findings related to the awareness and knowledge levels as well as the opinions of residents regarding the Rio Salado Project are then presented. Throughout this section, the findings regarding the relationships, if any, between each of these factors and selected demographic variables are also presented. Finally, conclusions from the study are outlined and discussed.

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

The Rio Salado Project (hereafter RSP or Project) is an effort to convert the land along the Salt River in metropolitan Phoenix into a viable combination of recreational, commercial, and residential areas. The affected area stretches 40 miles and includes about 65,000 acres, from the Granite Reef Dam east of Mesa to the confluence of the Salt, Gila, and Agua Fria rivers west of Phoenix. As conceived, lakes, golf courses, equestrian trails, and other recreational facilities would be interspersed with greenbelts, residences, and commercial components such as restaurants, shops, and office buildings. Among the major features proposed have been an international exposition center, a domed stadium, and a monorail from uptown Phoenix to ASU.¹

The Project was conceived and proposed by a group of architecture students at ASU in 1966. Since then, the idea has been developed and refined through various studies, including several carried out by ASU faculty and students. Major supporters of the Project have included the Valley Forward Association, the Maricopa Association of Governments, and the three municipalities through which the Salt River runs, namely Mesa, Tempe and Phoenix.²

In 1980, the state legislature passed a law creating an organization, the Rio Salado Development District (hereafter RSDD or District) that would be responsible for bringing the project to fruition. Since then, a board of directors for the RSDD has been appointed, an executive director and

¹Walter Gray, "Rio Salado Project: The Dream Finally Begins to Take Shape," Phoenix, August 1981, pp. 174-176.

²Ibid.

deputy director have been selected, a contract has been issued to a consulting firm for the purpose of defining the District's planning area, and preliminary work has begun on a master plan for the Project. Construction of major facilities must await the completion of upstream flood-control structures. It is estimated that the Project will span 20-50 years. Thus, the Project is still in a formative, but critical stage of development.³

The Rio Salado Project is intended to benefit the residents of metropolitan Phoenix in a number of significant ways. Potential benefits range widely, from aesthetic to economic. In order to maximize the benefits to area residents, it is essential that their expectations and preferences be known and be taken into account. This study was designed to satisfy this informational need.

In order to arrange financing for the Project, a county-wide election, elections in several municipalities, and/or approval by the state legislature may be necessary. Prior to deciding on which financing plan will be put to a vote, it is important that the District have insights into the political viability of different alternatives. The findings from this study are intended to provide such insights.

The timing of this study coincides with the Project's schedule for arranging financing and developing a master plan. By design, this study has been completed prior to the development of the RSP master plan and the time when financing plans may be submitted for public and/or legislative approval. As such, the results of the study can be used in deliberations related to both of these important Project activities.

³Walter Mattern, "Questions Dam Progress of Rio Salado Project," Arizona Republic, September 27, 1981, p. S11.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Since the Project was originally proposed, there have been occasional efforts to inform the public as to its nature and potential benefits. For example, the first major efforts along these lines probably occurred in 1974-1975 under the auspices of the Legislative Council Committee on Rio Salado. Likewise, inputs from the public--or at least community leaders--have been solicited on occasion. The first such effort may have occurred in 1969 when a group of community leaders convened to give their reactions to the first three phases of the ASU architecture students' study of the RSP.

Despite communications programs such as these, the RSDD does not have any broad-based, reliable benchmarks as to the public's awareness and knowledge of the Project much less what the public's opinions are regarding such issues as what components or features should be included in the Project and how it should be financed. This study is intended to provide the RSDD with such information so that it can be used for planning purposes.

The five research questions to be addressed in the study are presented below:

1. What are the awareness and knowledge levels among metropolitan Phoenix residents regarding the Rio Salado Project? There have been various public information programs for the Project, and milestones in the Project's early progress have generated substantial media publicity. But are Phoenix area residents aware of the RSP, do they know what the RSP is intended to accomplish, and are they familiar with the scope and magnitude of the RSP?

2. What are the opinions of metropolitan Phoenix residents regarding different possible elements of the Project? Initial plans call for the Project to be multi-purpose in scope, including recreational, commercial, and residential uses. However, there are innumerable degrees of emphasis that can be assigned to these three different uses and there is a wide variety of specific components (e.g., tennis courts, picnic areas) that can be included in a particular use category (e.g., recreation). One section of the study focused on citizens' opinions as to the relative desirability of various possible components.

3. What are the awareness and knowledge levels as well as opinions of metropolitan Phoenix residents regarding the Indian Bend Wash in Scottsdale? The Wash, now largely finished, is similar in some respects--but much smaller in scale--compared to the Project. However, planning of the Project might be improved by asking citizens questions such as the following: Are you aware of the Indian Bend Wash (IBW)? What is its purpose? Are you satisfied with the Wash? The findings should assist Project planners in incorporating successful elements of the Wash--both design features and public information programs--into the Project and also in avoiding any problems the public associates with the Wash.

4. What are the opinions of metropolitan Phoenix residents toward planned urban development, perceived and anticipated quality of life, and future growth in the area? Phoenix is one of the fastest growing Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSA) in the United States. Approximately 25 percent of the adults living in Maricopa County moved here in the past four years. In addition, it is estimated the population in this SMSA will double by shortly after the year 2000. This rapid growth will put tremendous strains on existing facilities such as roads, water and sewer

facilities, and the land available for industrial development, housing developments, and recreation. However, this growth will also provide opportunities to create an urban milieu that will enable the area's residents to work and live in a stimulating, productive, and pleasurable environment. In that the Rio Salado Project is envisioned as an integral element in the future shape of metropolitan Phoenix, it is important that the District's planners have public-opinion information that indicates whether the Project will be developed in a community that is satisfied or dissatisfied with its quality of life and is pro-growth or anti-growth.

5. What is the political viability of the Rio Salado Project? At some point in the development of the RSP, the question of whether public funds should be used to fund the Project may be placed before the voters of Maricopa County and/or the municipalities through which the Salt River runs. Therefore, before placing this issue on the ballot, it is essential that the District have answers to questions such as the following: Would the citizens of metropolitan Phoenix support the Project in an actual election? What is the relative strength of support and opposition? What are the conditions or financing arrangements that are viewed as acceptable by the public? In this area of inquiry, it was necessary to distinguish the responses of registered voters versus other citizens. Also, the demographic and psychographic bases of support and opposition were investigated in order that appropriate and "targeted" informational campaigns can be implemented by the District.

RESEARCH METHODS

A public-opinion survey provided the data necessary for this study. The population for this survey was people who are at least eighteen years of age and are full-time residents of the Phoenix SMSA (which, in general, coincides with the boundaries of Maricopa County). The various components of the survey are discussed below.⁴

Sample Size and Sampling Error

The sample consisted of 1,095 people with telephones, who reside in the SMSA. With a desired confidence coefficient of 95 percent and assuming the most conservative option of .5 for the proportion of the sample giving a particular dichotomous response, the confidence interval for a sample size of 1,100 can be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Sampling error} = P \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{(P)(Q)}{n}}$$

Where P = proportion giving a particular dichotomous response,

Q = 1-P, and

n = sample size.

$$\text{Sampling error} = P \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\frac{(.5)(.5)}{1,100}} = .5 \pm .03$$

Thus, it can be said with 95 percent confidence that the sample estimate should be within three percentage points of the true value.

Sampling and Data Collection

The primary means of data collection was telephone interviews. The specific technique used to select telephone numbers was Random Digit

⁴Brief profiles of the study's principals and the research agencies involved are presented in Appendix A.

Dialing.⁵ Using this technique, the number of residential telephones in each prefix was determined. The number of telephone numbers within each prefix was then determined proportionate to the size each prefix represents in the population of all telephone numbers. If one particular prefix had five percent of all telephones, five percent of the telephone numbers were selected from that prefix. After the number of telephone numbers in each prefix was determined, four randomly generated numbers were assigned to each prefix selected. A Random Digit Dialing procedure ensures that unlisted telephone numbers are included in the sample.

The telephone interviewing was done at the Arizona State University Telephone Laboratory under the supervision of Dr. Bruce Merrill, Director of the Public Opinion Research Program. Bilingual interviewers were used extensively to increase Hispanic participation in the survey. At least five call backs were made to contact people originally selected in the sample. After that, random substitution was allowed.

The Measuring Instrument

Development of the measuring instrument was guided by the study's five research questions. A draft of the instrument was prepared by the researchers. Four extensive pretests of the instrument were carried out to ensure both comprehensiveness and validity. Mr. Tim Bray, Executive Director of the Rio Salado Development district, participated in the process of developing the instrument by evaluating a draft of the instrument and also reviewing the final instrument.

⁵Sanford L. Cooper, "Random Sampling by Telephone--An Improved Method," Journal of Marketing Research, November, 1964, pp. 45-48.

In order that a variety of questions could be asked of all of the survey participants, a brief description of the RSP⁶ was included in the measuring instrument, about midway through the total set of questions. For some participants, this description probably aided their recall about the RSP. For example, some sample members may have been familiar with the concept of the Project but did not recall that it was named the Rio Salado Project. For other participants, this description probably represented their first or most definitive exposure to the RSP. In the case of such respondents, their answers to questions following the description definitely represent top-of-the-head impressions.

Weighting and Tabulation

Since telephone surveys underweight minorities,⁷ respondents who identified themselves as Hispanics or blacks were statistically weighted using a sub-routine in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). This procedure ensures that the awareness, knowledge, and opinions of minorities in the Phoenix SMSA are proportionally represented in the survey.

Coding of the survey data was done by students from both colleges participating in the study. File building was done using the SPSS available through the ASU Computing Center.

⁶The description read as follows: "The Rio Salado Project is intended to convert the Salt River bed and adjacent lands into recreational, commercial, and residential areas. The project will stretch along the river bed for about 40 miles, from Granite Reef Dam north of Mesa through Tempe, along the airport, through Phoenix to the Agua Fria River west of Phoenix." In the Survey Results section of this report, pre-description findings are distinguished from post-description findings.

⁷For example, in more than 70 county-wide telephone surveys conducted by Dr. Merrill, Hispanics have been underweighted between 42 and 54 percent.

One-dimensional and cross-tabulated distributions were prepared. Appropriate statistical analyses, such as significance tests and correlational analysis, were conducted.

Sample Validation

The only way to determine if a sample is valid is to compare statistics generated by the sample with known population parameters. This is not easy in Phoenix SMSA because the population is growing rapidly and because this particular sample generalizes to households with telephones, not to the entire adult population.

The two most frequently used sources for parameters in the Phoenix area are the 1980 census data and Inside Phoenix. Table 1 shows how both the weighted and unweighted samples compare with known population parameters.

Analysis of Table 1⁸ shows that the telephone sample includes proportionally fewer high school graduates than are contained in the total population. On all other dimensions, the sample is remarkably close to the population parameters indicating that the sample is a valid microcosm of the adult population in Maricopa County.

⁸The remaining demographic data on the sample is presented in Appendix B.

TABLE 1

COMPARISON OF DEMOGRAPHICS OF SURVEY
SAMPLE WITH KNOWN POPULATION PARAMETERS

Characteristic	1980 Census	1982 <u>Inside</u> <u>Phoenix</u>	Weighted Sample	Unweighted Sample
a) Education				
High school or less	n.a.**	52%	35.3%	33%
Some college		26	37.3	38
College graduates		13	18.4	20
Post graduates		9	8.9	10
		<u>100%</u>	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%*</u>
b) Ethnicity				
Anglo or White	77%	82%	80.8%	90%
Hispanic	12	11	13.7	6
Black	3	3	3.5	2
Other	9	4	1.9	2
	<u>100%*</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%</u>
c) Age				
18-24	19%	19%	16.9%	16%
25-34	24	24	24.5	24
35-44	15	17	16.2	16
45-54	12	14	12.2	12
55-64	12	11	11.7	12
65 or older	19	15	18.4	19
	<u>100%*</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%*</u>
d) Marital status				
Married	60%	65%	64.6%	65%
Single	25	20	20.6	20
Divorced/separated	15	15	14.7	15
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%</u>
e) Sex				
Male	49%	48%	49.9%	50%
Female	51	52	50.1	50
	<u>100%</u>	<u>100%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100%</u>

*Does not total to 100.0% due to rounding error.

**Census data are collected in different categories than those used in this survey and therefore are not comparable to the survey data.

SURVEY RESULTS

The findings from the survey of metropolitan Phoenix residents are divided into five sections paralleling the study's five research questions. In each section, the basic findings are presented first. Then, the findings are examined in relation to selected demographic factors. In so doing, it can be determined whether awareness and knowledge levels as well as opinions vary across different groups of residents.

Awareness and Knowledge Regarding RSP

Awareness Levels. Only 19 percent of the respondents indicated that they were familiar with the Rio Salado Project. Among the familiar respondents, just 10 percent (or 2 percent of the total sample) reported that they were "very familiar" with the RSP while the other familiar respondents classified themselves as being "somewhat familiar" with the Project. Despite various publicity the Project has received, the large majority of citizens are entirely unaware of it.

The awareness levels were further examined in relation to the demographic and psychographic characteristics of the sample. The results are presented in Table 2. There are statistically significant differences across at least some of the categories for each of the 15 factors. However, it should be recognized that chi-square statistical tests do not indicate whether any difference within each pair of awareness levels is statistically significant.

Since the groups with low awareness are groups which are characterized by relatively low levels of formal education, education was statistically controlled to determine if the differences in awareness levels across various groups were, in fact, due to varying levels of educational

TABLE 2

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC CORRELATES
OF METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS'
AWARENESS LEVELS REGARDING THE RSP

Factor and Groups	Percent Aware
a) Age*	
18 - 24	5
25 - 34	16
35 - 44	22
45 - 54	25
55 - 64	29
65 or older	21
b) Education Level*	
High school or less	10
Some college	19
College graduates	25
Postgraduate	40
c) Ethnicity*	
White	20
Black	14
Hispanic	10
d) Family Income in 1981*	
Under \$15,000	14
\$15,000 - 19,999	17
\$20,000 - 24,999	25
\$25,000 - 39,999	28
\$40,000 or more	27
e) Sex*	
Female	13
Male	25
f) Marital Status*	
Married	21
Single	11
Divorced/widowed/separated	22
g) Number of Children Under 18 Years of Age at Home*	
0	20
1 or more	17
h) Spouse's Employment Status*	
Works full-time	16
Works part-time	23
Unemployed	23

TABLE 2
(continued)

i) Length of Residence in Arizona*	
Since 1979	6
1970 - 1979	15
1960 - 1969	23
1950 - 1959	28
Before 1950	34
j) Type of Residence*	
Single-family home	20
Apartment	12
Condominium	23
Mobile home	20
k) Occupancy Status*	
Own or buying residence	22
Renting residence	11
l) Proximity to RSP Planning Area Boundary*	
0 - 3 miles	23
More than 3 miles	18
m) Political Party Identification*	
Republican	26
Democrats	19
Other	26
Not registered	10
n) Interest in Politics*	
Very interested	30
Somewhat interested	16
Not very interested	15
Not at all interested	11
o) Ideology*	
Very liberal	20
Somewhat liberal	17
Moderate	11
Somewhat conservative	23
Very conservative	22

*Significant difference at the .05 level.

Note: Proximity to RSP Planning Area Boundary was determined from the respondents' Zip Codes. If all or part of the Zip Code territory was within the RSP Planning Area or the most distant boundary of the Zip Code territory was no more than 3 miles from the RSP Planning Area boundary, then this respondent's proximity was categorized as 0 - 3 miles. The proximity of all other respondents was categorized as more than 3 miles. It should be recognized that this measure of proximity is approximate.

attainment. When so controlled, the two important explanatory variables were education and length of residence in Arizona. That is, different levels of education and length of residence in Arizona were more responsible for differences in awareness levels than were differences in other demographic and/or psychographic variables.

Therefore, minorities and young people exhibit low levels of awareness due to their relatively low levels of education. It should be pointed out, however, that highly educated minorities were as aware of the Project as were highly educated whites.

The levels of awareness for all of the demographic and psychographic groups are rank-ordered in Table 3. People with postgraduate education clearly had the highest levels of awareness. The next highest levels of awareness were reported by people who moved to Arizona before 1950. At the other extreme, 18-24 year olds and people who moved to Arizona in the 1980s had the lowest levels of awareness regarding the Rio Salado Project.

Levels of Knowledge. The second major area of inquiry under this research question involved citizens' knowledge levels regarding various aspects of the Project. The findings related to the purpose of RSP and its relationship with flood-control dams are presented in Table 4.

Those respondents who indicated that they were familiar with the RSP were asked to identify the main purpose of the RSP from among five choices. As shown in part a) of Table 4, the most common response was that the Project is intended to provide parks and recreation areas. Of particular significance is the fact that about one-third of the respondents who said they were familiar with the RSP selected flood control as the Project's main purpose.

TABLE 3
 RANK ORDERING OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC
 GROUPS BASED ON AWARENESS LEVELS REGARDING THE RSP

Percent Aware	Group
40	Postgraduate education
34	Moved to Arizona before 1950
30	Very interested in politics
29	55-64 year olds
28	Moved to Arizona in 1950-1959; \$25-39,999 income
27	\$40,000 or over income
26	Republicans; other political party
25	45-54 year olds; people 65 or over; males; \$20-24,999 income; college graduates
23	Moved to Arizona in 1960-1969; live in condominiums; spouse works part-time; spouse is unemployed; politically somewhat conservative; live within 3 miles of RSP
22	35-44 year olds; divorced/widowed/separated; own or buying resi- dence; politically very conservative
21	Married; 65 or older
20	Whites; live in single-family homes; mobile home residents; politically very liberal; no children under 18 years of age
19	Percent of adult metropolitan Phoenix population aware of Rio Salado Project
19	Democrats; some college education
18	Live more than 3 miles from RSP
17	Politically somewhat liberal; 1 or more children under 18 years of age
16	25-34 year olds; spouse works full-time; \$15-19,999 income; somewhat interested in politics
15	Moved to Arizona in 1970-1979; not very interested in politics
14	Blacks; under \$15,000 income
13	Females
12	Apartment dwellers
11	Single; renting residence; politically moderate; not at all interested in politics
10	Hispanics; high school education or less; not registered to vote
6	Moved to Arizona in 1980s
5	18-24 year olds

TABLE 4

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' KNOWLEDGE LEVELS
REGARDING PURPOSE OF RSP AND ITS RELATIONSHIP
WITH FLOOD-CONTROL DAMS

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) Main purpose:		
Provide parks and recreation areas	76	35.3
Control floods	71	33.0
Beautify Phoenix	26	12.1
Develop land in/along Salt River	18	8.3
Create jobs	7	3.3
Other purposes	17	7.9
	<u>215**</u>	<u>100.0*</u>
b) Relationship between RSP and planned dam construction		
No relationship	52	37.1
Need dam(s) first	32	22.9
Other explanations	23	16.4
Both go together	17	12.1
Stop the flooding	16	11.4
	<u>140**</u>	<u>100.0*</u>
c) "The RSP cannot be built until a flood-control dam is built on the upper Salt River."		
Agree strongly	164	17.9
Agree	622	67.8
Disagree	111	12.1
Disagree strongly	20	2.2
	<u>917</u>	<u>100.0</u>
d) "If the RSP is built, flood- control dams will <u>not</u> have to be built on the Salt and Verde Rivers."		
Agree strongly	7	0.9
Agree	146	18.5
Disagree	529	67.0
Disagree strongly	108	13.7
	<u>790</u>	<u>100.0*</u>

*Does not total to 100.0% due to rounding error.

**Only respondents who indicated a familiarity with the RSP were asked these questions.

Even greater levels of misinformation are evident in part b) of Table 4. Although only 12 percent of the sample--presumably those most familiar with RSP--answered this question, almost one-half of them incorrectly identified the relationship between the Project and upstream flood-control dams. More than one-third of the respondents said there was no relationship between the two projects, and more than 10 percent said the RSP was intended to stop flooding in the Valley.

After providing the survey participants with a brief description of the RSP, residents' knowledge levels with respect to the relationship between RSP and flood-control dams were examined further. The findings are presented in parts c) and d) of Table 4. According to these responses, knowledge levels are somewhat higher than suggested by the pre-description findings. Specifically, only 14 percent and 19 percent of the respondents to the two questions incorrectly stated that upstream flood-control dams were unnecessary for construction of the RSP.

These findings may exaggerate actual knowledge levels for two reasons. First, the number of participants who did not answer these two questions was substantial--more than 25 percent of the sample in the case of both questions. In all likelihood, some participants did not answer these questions due to a lack of knowledge about the RSP-dams relationship. Second, although it was brief and basic, the description of the Project that was read to each participant may have increased the sample member's knowledge of the RSP and may have given them a fundamental understanding of the RSP concept and its relationship with the dam(s).

Knowledge levels of metropolitan Phoenix residents regarding one other aspect of the RSP were also examined. One-half of the familiar respondents knew that construction on the RSP had not yet started, and 25 percent

indicated that they did know. The remaining respondents incorrectly stated that construction had already begun.

Opinions Regarding Possible Elements

An important determinant of citizens' satisfaction with the RSP, both before and after it is built, will be the mix of facilities that comprise the Project. Citizens' preferences regarding the mix of facilities should be considered in developing the RSP's master plan. Thus, two different questions sought such inputs from the survey participants.

One open-end question asked what kinds of facilities and activities the sample member would most like to see included in the RSP; the findings are presented in part a) of Table 5. Citizens' preferences, according to this survey, are for the RSP to be a giant park--perhaps similar to the Indian Bend Wash (IBW). As can be seen in part a) of Table 5, all of the specific facilities and activities mentioned by at least one percent of the respondents were recreation-related. The miscellaneous category included a wide range of other suggestions (e.g., race track, skating rink) but only a few of them pertained to commercial or recreational facilities (e.g., restaurants, shopping center).

A specific question gauged the survey participants' reactions to the possibility of building a domed football stadium within the RSP area. The finding in part b) of Table 5 indicates that almost two-thirds (63 percent) of metropolitan Phoenix residents are not in favor of including a domed stadium in the RSP.

TABLE 5

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' PREFERENCES
REGARDING FACILITIES AND ACTIVITIES
INCLUDED IN THE RSP

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) Desired facilities and activities:		
Parks	395	38.5
Recreation (in general)	148	14.4
Water sports	122	11.9
Golf course(s)	73	7.1
Jogging/bike paths	53	5.2
Sport facilities (in general)	47	4.6
Tennis courts	24	2.3
Baseball fields	22	2.1
Horseback riding area	20	1.9
Entertainment/cultural facilities	14	1.4
Sports stadium	13	1.3
Swimming pool(s)	12	1.2
Basketball courts	10	1.0
Don't know/care	9	0.9
Flood control	8	0.8
Miscellaneous	56	5.5
	<u>1026</u>	<u>100.0*</u>
b) "A domed football stadium should not be included as part of the RSP."		
Agree strongly	114	10.6
Agree	564	52.4
Disagree	315	29.3
Disagree strongly	83	7.7
	<u>1076</u>	<u>100.0</u>

*Does not total to 100.0% due to rounding error.

Awareness, Knowledge, and Opinions Regarding Indian Bend Wash

Information related to how metropolitan Phoenix citizens perceive the IBW could be useful in planning the RSP. Therefore, several questions focused on awareness, knowledge, and opinions regarding the IBW.

Survey participants who reported that they were familiar with the RSP were also asked whether they were familiar with the Indian Bend Wash. The large majority (73 percent) of the respondents indicated that they were very familiar or somewhat familiar with the IBW and only 27 percent said they had not heard of the IBW. However, the fact that more than one-quarter of the respondents were unaware of the IBW is somewhat surprising when it is considered that this group of respondents consisted only of those people who were familiar with the RSP. It would seem that those persons who reflected an interest in the community and/or a civic awareness by knowing something about the RSP, which is still only a concept, would also be familiar with the IBW, which is now being used by Scottsdale residents.

Sample members who indicated that they were familiar with the RSP were also questioned regarding perceived similarities and differences, if any, between the RSP and IBW. The findings are reported in Table 6. About 86 percent of the familiar participants responded to the question about similarities. Of the respondents, 12 percent incorrectly reported that there were no similarities between the two projects and 19 percent simply said that the two projects were similar in general. The most frequently mentioned similarity was parks.

TABLE 6

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
REGARDING SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES
BETWEEN RSP AND IBW

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) Similarities		
Both include parks	46	31.5
Both involve flood control	31	21.2
They are similar (general response)	28	19.2
None	18	12.3
Both are on flood plain	4	2.7
Both include golf courses	2	1.4
Miscellaneous	17	11.6
	<u>146**</u>	<u>100.0*</u>
b) Differences		
Size	50	38.8
None	23	17.8
Different facilities	11	8.5
Cost	4	3.1
Difference in locations	4	3.1
RSP has constant/more water	4	3.1
RSP includes businesses	4	3.1
Miscellaneous	29	22.5
	<u>129**</u>	<u>100.0</u>

*Does not total to 100.0% due to rounding error.

**Only respondents who indicated a familiarity with the RSP were asked these questions.

About 78 percent of the familiar participants responded to the question about perceived differences between the RSP and the IBW. There was a substantial number of individualized responses. The most frequently mentioned specific difference involve the comparative sizes of the two projects.

A final question in this area of examination asked the survey participants whether they considered the IBW to be successful. Only one-quarter of the respondents considered the IBW to be unsuccessful. However, this finding should be viewed with some caution. Since only 19 percent of the total sample was familiar with the RSP and more than one-quarter of those familiar with the RSP were unfamiliar with the IBW, it is quite possible that some--perhaps many--of the survey participants did not have sufficient knowledge to adequately answer this question.

Opinions Regarding Growth and Quality of Life

Several questions in the survey examined citizens' perceptions of the relationship between such factors as population growth and the quality of life, on the one hand, and the RSP, on the other hand. As shown in part a) of Table 7, the large majority (65 percent) of responding sample members believed that growth and development in the Phoenix area should be encouraged. Another question pursued this same topic by asking whether they perceived that the RSP will affect population growth. The findings in part b) of the same table indicate that over 50 percent of the respondents believed that the RSP will directly affect metropolitan-Phoenix population growth.

A similar question asked sample members for their opinions about the quality of life in relation to the RSP; these findings are summarized in part c) of Table 7. The strong majority (73 percent) of the respondents were optimistic regarding the likelihood that the RSP would improve the quality of life in the Phoenix area.

TABLE 7

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' OPINIONS
GROWTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE IN RELATION TO THE RSP

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) Opinions regarding population growth and economic development in metropolitan Phoenix:		
Should be encouraged	708	64.6
Should be discouraged	388	35.4
	1,096	100.0
b) "The RSP will not directly affect population growth in the Phoenix area."		
Agree strongly	9	0.9
Agree	461	44.9
Disagree	514	50.1
Disagree strongly	42	4.1
	1,026	100.0
c) "The RSP will not significantly improve the quality of life in the Phoenix area."		
Agree strongly	11	1.0
Agree	288	25.9
Disagree	737	66.4
Disagree strongly	74	6.7
	1,110	100.0

Political Viability of the RSP

Related to this research question, a pair of items on the questionnaire focused on citizens' views regarding RSP funding. In addition, several other items dealt with residents' overall opinions regarding the RSP as well as their views on specific issues that might influence their overall opinions.

Opinions Regarding Funding Alternatives. To assist the District in assessing alternative means of financing, citizens' inputs were obtained through this survey. One question asked whether tax money should be used to build the RSP; the findings are reported in part a) of Table 8. Almost two-thirds (66 percent) of the respondents said that tax money should be used for the RSP.

The opinions of metropolitan Phoenix residents regarding the use of tax dollars for the RSP were further examined in relation to demographic and psychographic groups. As can be seen in Table 9, there are statistically significant differences across the respondents when they are grouped according to ethnicity and the three political variables--party, degree of interest, and ideology. The specific differences are summarized below:

- Blacks and Hispanics were substantially more supportive of using tax dollars to finance the RSP than were whites.
- From a political perspective, respondents who classified themselves as Democrats and/or somewhat liberal were more supportive of using tax dollars for the RSP than were persons with other party identifications or political ideologies.

TABLE 8

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' OPINIONS
REGARDING ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF FINANCING THE RSP

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) Opinions regarding whether tax money should be used to build the RSP		
Yes	751	66.3
No	381	33.7
	<u>1,132</u>	<u>100.0</u>
b) Reasons why tax money should <u>not</u> be used to build the RSP		
Taxes too high	104	29.4
Private money should be used	62	17.5
RSP should not be built	35	9.9
Benefits only a specific group	26	7.3
Not enough tax dollars for current projects	19	5.4
Use tax dollars for higher priorities (e.g., roads)	18	5.1
State should pay for it (e.g., use lottery proceeds)	15	4.2
Expense too high, waste of dollars	11	3.1
RSP will be flooded out	9	2.5
Miscellaneous	55	15.5
	<u>354</u>	<u>100.0*</u>
c) "Cities, rather than private investors, should own and develop the land in the RSP."		
Agree strongly	56	5.4
Agree	625	60.4
Disagree	310	30.0
Disagree strongly	44	4.3
	<u>1,035</u>	<u>100.0*</u>

*Does not total to 100.0% due to rounding error.

TABLE 9

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC CORRELATES
OF METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' OPINIONS
REGARDING ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF FINANCING THE RSP

Factor and Groups	Percent Supporting Use of Tax Dollars
a) Age	
18 - 24	63
25 - 34	68
35 - 44	67
45 - 54	68
55 - 64	69
65 or older	64
b) Education Level	
High school or less	62
Some college	68
College graduate	70
Postgraduate	73
c) Ethnicity*	
White	64
Black	74
Hispanic	77
d) Family Income in 1981	
Under \$15,000	66
\$15,000 - 19,999	63
\$20,000 - 24,999	74
\$25,000 - 39,999	75
\$40,000 or more	69
e) Sex	
Female	66
Male	67
f) Marital Status	
Married	67
Single	65
Divorced/widowed/separated	66
g) Number of Children under 18 Years at Home	
0	65
1 or more	68

TABLE 9
(continued)

h) Spouse's Employment Status	
Works full-time	67
Works part-time	65
Unemployed	66
i) Length of Residence in Arizona	
Since 1979	61
1970 - 1979	64
1960 - 1969	67
1950 - 1959	71
Before 1950	64
j) Type of Residence	
Single-family home	66
Apartment	71
Condominium	68
Mobile home	54
k) Occupancy Status	
Own or buying residence	67
Renting residence	65
l) Proximity to RSP Planning Area Boundary	
0 - 3 miles	69
More than 3 miles	65
m) Political Party Identification*	
Republican	68
Democrat	72
Other	62
Not registered	61
n) Interest in Politics*	
Very interested	68
Somewhat interested	68
Not very interested	67
Not at all interested	45
o) Ideology*	
Very liberal	68
Somewhat liberal	73
Moderate	64
Somewhat conservative	66
Very conservative	54

*Significant difference at the .05 level

- At the other extreme, survey participants who said they were not at all interested in politics and/or were very conservative were far below average with respect to their support for using taxes as a funding source for the RSP.

In fact, according to the rank ordering in Table 10 of all of the demographic and psychographic groups with respect to levels of support for using tax dollars to finance the RSP, these two political groups along with people living in mobile homes indicated the least support. The highest levels of support were found among Hispanics, blacks, and people with incomes in the range of \$20,000-39,999.

Another question in the survey asked those participants who said tax money should not be used to explain their position; the findings are presented in part b) of Table 8. Two categories of responses are, in a sense, not really explanations. Almost 10 percent of the respondents expressed the opinion that the Project should not be built and, therefore, tax money obviously should not be used for the Project. Just under 5 percent of the respondents were not really against the use of tax money but rather specified that it should be state funds that are used to build the RSP. Among the remaining respondents, the most common reason for not using tax money to finance the RSP was that taxes are already too high.

The matter of who citizens think should finance the Project was complicated by the results of another question in the survey. As shown in part c) of Table 8, almost two-thirds (66 percent) of the respondents stated that cities, rather than private investors, should own the land in the RSP. This finding may suggest that citizens are wary about the outcomes of private development and, as a result, would prefer government involvement.

TABLE 10

RANK ORDERING OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC
GROUPS BASED ON OPINIONS REGARDING ALTERNATIVE MEANS
OF FINANCING THE RSP

Percent Stating That Tax Dollars Should Be Used for RSP	Group
77	Hispanics
75	\$25-39,999 income
74	\$20-24,999 income; blacks
73	Postgraduate education; politically somewhat liberal
72	Democrats
71	Live in apartments; moved to Arizona in 1950-1959
70	College graduates
69	55-64 year olds; \$40,000 or more income; live within 3 miles of RSP
68	25-34 year olds; 45-54 year olds; some college education; 1 or more children under 18 years of age; live in condominiums; Republicans; very interested in politics; somewhat interested in politics; politically very liberal
67	35-44 year olds; males; married; spouse works full-time; moved to Arizona in 1960-1969; own or buying residence; not very interested in politics
66	Percent of adult metropolitan Phoenix population stating that tax dollars should be used for RSP
66	Under \$15,000 income; females; divorced/widowed/separated; live in single-family homes; politically somewhat conservative; spouse is unemployed
65	Single; no children under 18 years of age; spouse works part-time; renting residence; live more than 3 miles from RSP
64	65 or older; whites; moved to Arizona in 1970-1979; moved to Arizona before 1950; politically moderate
63	18-24 year olds; \$15-19,999 income
62	High school or less education; other political party
61	Moved to Arizona in the 1980s; not registered to vote
54	Live in mobile homes; politically very conservative
45	Not at all interested in politics

However, if this finding indicates that citizens prefer the cities to be involved by owning the land, then various questions arise regarding jurisdiction and funding methods.

Overall Assessment. Based on what they knew about it, including the brief description that was read by the interviewer, each survey participant was asked for an overall opinion regarding the RSP. Over 91 percent of the respondents answered this question. As shown in part a) of Table 11, the results are highly favorable. More than three-quarters of the overall opinions were favorable, which includes one-sixth of the opinions being very favorable.

These overall assessments of the RSP were further examined in relation to the various demographic and psychographic groups. The results are presented in Tables 12 and 13. As shown in Table 12, the proportions of the survey respondents expressing a favorable overall opinion about the RSP differed significantly across six demographic and psychographic variables: education level, ethnicity, family income, sex, political party identification, and interest in politics.

The specific differences across demographic and psychographic variables are listed below:

- The proportion of people with postgraduate education who expressed a favorable opinion was substantially higher than in the groups with less education.
- Minorities were more favorable than whites.
- Males were more favorable than females.
- In general, the proportion of favorable opinions increased as income levels rose.

TABLE 11
 METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS'
 OVERALL OPINIONS REGARDING THE RSP

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) Overall opinion:		
Very favorable	187	16.7
Generally favorable	678	60.5
Generally unfavorable	200	17.9
Very unfavorable	55	4.9
	<u>1,120</u>	<u>100.0</u>
b) Reasons why favorable:		
Provides recreation, parks	236	28.1
Utilizes/revitalizes river- bottom land	158	18.8
Provides flood control	118	14.0
Is good/great plan	78	9.3
Improves/beautifies area	70	8.3
Creates jobs; improves economy	36	4.3
Provides place to go	30	3.6
General statement about need and/or potential benefits	21	2.5
Provides water activities	19	2.3
Stimulates growth & development	14	1.7
Favorable, but attached condition	5	0.6
Miscellaneous	55	6.5
	<u>840</u>	<u>100.0</u>
c) Reasons why unfavorable:		
Will still have floods	73	33.0
Too expensive; waste of money	35	15.8
No need for it; don't need it	24	10.9
Unfavorable (general reaction)	15	6.8
Concern about location	14	6.3
Would not use it	12	5.4
Funds should be used on other projects (e.g., roads, welfare)	7	3.2
Miscellaneous	41	18.6
	<u>221</u>	<u>100.0</u>

TABLE 12

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC CORRELATES
OF METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS'
OVERALL OPINIONS REGARDING THE RSP

Factor and Groups	Percent Expressing A Favorable Opinion
a) Age	
18 - 24	80
25 - 34	73
35 - 44	79
45 - 54	78
55 - 64	81
65 or older	76
b) Education Level*	
High school or less	75
Some college	79
College graduates	76
Postgraduate	84
c) Ethnicity*	
White	75
Black	84
Hispanic	88
d) Family Income in 1981*	
Under \$15,000	76
\$15,000 - 19,999	78
\$20,000 - 24,999	85
\$25,000 - 39,999	80
\$40,000 or more	85
e) Sex*	
Female	76
Male	78
f) Marital Status	
Married	77
Single	78
Divorced/widowed/separated	78
g) Number of Children Under 18 Years of Age at Home	
0	77
1 or more	78
h) Spouse's Employment Status	
Works full-time	78
Works part-time	72
Unemployed	78

TABLE 12
(continued)

i) Length of Residence in Arizona	
Since 1979	78
1970 - 1979	75
1960 - 1969	74
1950 - 1959	81
Before 1950	84
j) Type of Residence	
Single-family home	77
Apartment	82
Condominium	81
Mobile home	70
k) Occupancy Status	
Own or buying residence	78
Renting residence	78
l) Proximity to RSP Planning Area Boundary	
0 - 3 miles	77
More than 3 miles	77
m) Political Party Identification*	
Republican	76
Democrats	83
Other	73
Not registered	75
n) Interest in Politics*	
Very interested	78
Somewhat interested	79
Not very interested	74
Not at all interested	64
o) Ideology	
Very liberal	89
Somewhat liberal	83
Moderate	73
Somewhat conservative	76
Very conservative	68

*Significant difference at the .05 level.

- Democrats were much more favorable about the RSP than were other political groups.
- Persons who had some degree of interest in politics were more favorable than were persons who indicated no interest at all in politics.

In Table 13, the various demographic and psychographic groups are rank-ordered according to the proportion within each group that expressed a favorable overall opinion about the RSP. The largest proportions of favorable opinions were formed among people who said they had a very liberal political ideology, Hispanics, and two different income groups--\$20,000-24,999 and \$40,000 or more. The smallest proportions of favorable opinions were found among people who said they were not at all interested in politics, people who have a very conservative political ideology, mobile-home dwellers, and people whose spouses work part-time.

The overall assessments of the RSP were also examined in relation to the respondents' awareness levels regarding the RSP. When the respondents are categorized by awareness levels, the differences in proportions of favorable overall opinions toward the RSP are significant at the .05 level:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Percent Expressing a Favorable Opinion</u>
Very familiar	86
Somewhat familiar	87
Have not heard of the Project	75

This finding suggests that attitudes toward the RSP improve as a person learns about the RSP.

TABLE 13

RANK ORDERING OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC
GROUPS BASED ON OVERALL OPINIONS
REGARDING THE RSP

Percent Expressing Favorable Opinion	Group
89	Politically very liberal
88	Hispanics
85	\$20-24,999 income; \$40,000 or more income
84	Postgraduate education; blacks; moved to Arizona before 1950
83	Democrats; politically somewhat liberal
82	Live in apartments
81	55-64 year olds; moved to Arizona in 1950-1959; live in condominiums
80	18-24 year olds; \$25-39,999 income
79	35-44 year olds; some college education; somewhat interested in politics
78	45-54 year olds; \$15-19,999 income; males; single; divorced/widowed/separated; 1 or more children under 18 years of age; spouse works full-time; spouse is unemployed; moved to Arizona in the 1980s; own or buying residence; renting residence; very interested in politics
77	Percent of adult metropolitan Phoenix population expressing a favorable overall opinion regarding the RSP
77	Married; no children under 18 years of age; live in single-family homes; live within 3 miles of RSP; live more than 3 miles from RSP
76	65 or older; college graduates; under \$15,000 income; females; Republicans; politically somewhat conservative
75	High school or less education; whites; moved to Arizona in 1970-1979; not registered to vote
74	Moved to Arizona in 1960-1969; not very interested in politics
73	25-34 years of age; other political party; politically moderate
72	Spouse works part-time
70	Live in mobile homes
68	Politically very conservative
64	Not at all interested in politics

The survey participants were also asked why they were favorable or unfavorable about the Project. These findings are summarized in parts b) and c) of Table 11. Just under 10 percent of the respondents with a favorable opinion did not provide a specific reason but rather endorsed the Project in general by saying that it was a good or great plan. The most common specific reason involved the recreational opportunities that the RSP will provide; two other specific reasons ("provides place to go" and "provides water activities") were also related to recreation. Once again, more than 100 of the respondents pointed to flood control as a major benefit of the RSP.

Among the survey participants who had an unfavorable overall opinion of the Project, the most common reason involved concerns about floods, ordinarily either that the RSP would not be sufficient to prevent floods or it would be destroyed by floods. Since both perceptions ignore the necessity of upstream flood control prior to major Project construction, this finding underscores the fact that numerous residents are uninformed or misinformed about RSP. A second common reason indicated that some participants perceived the costs as outweighing the benefits.

Opinions Regarding Parties Affected by RSP. Further insight into why respondents expressed a favorable or unfavorable opinion about the RSP might be gained by examining residents' perceptions of who will benefit the most from the Project. A large proportion of the survey participants responded in general terms by saying "everyone" or "the community." The specific group mentioned most frequently, as shown in part a) of Table 14, was developers. It is also noteworthy that only 1.8 percent of the interviewees thought that no one will benefit from the RSP.

TABLE 14

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' PERCEPTIONS
REGARDING GROUPS AFFECTED BY THE RSP

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) Groups that will benefit the most from RSP:		
Everyone	290	27.4
People in the area	121	11.4
The community; whole city; Valley	105	9.9
Developers	92	8.7
South Phoenix citizens	79	7.5
Young people	77	7.3
Business	54	5.1
People who use it	50	4.7
Property owners	28	2.6
County	23	2.2
Mesa-Tempe citizens	21	2.0
No one	19	1.8
The state	15	1.4
Snowbirds	12	1.1
People seeking recreation/leisure	12	1.1
Flood victims	10	0.9
Politicians	7	0.7
Salt River Project	6	0.6
Business and industry	5	0.5
Miscellaneous	32	3.0
	<u>1058</u>	<u>100.0*</u>
b) "The Rio Salado Project will not directly benefit me"		
Agree strongly	58	5.0
Agree	523	45.2
Disagree	512	44.3
Disagree strongly	64	5.5
	<u>1157</u>	<u>100.0</u>
c) "The Rio Salado Project will not hurt minority families living along the Salt River"		
Agree strongly	21	2.3
Agree	559	62.0
Disagree	293	32.5
Disagree strongly	28	3.1
	<u>901</u>	<u>100.0*</u>

*Does not total to 100.0% due to rounding error.

Two other specific questions were intended to identify citizens' perceptions regarding who will be affected by the RSP. These findings are presented in parts b) and c) of Table 14. The survey participants were almost evenly split regarding whether the RSP will directly benefit them. It is interesting to note that, although 50 percent of the respondents envision no direct benefit from the project, more than 75 percent of the respondents have a favorable overall opinion about it. This finding suggests, therefore, that indirect benefits (e.g., a more attractive metropolitan area) may be sufficient to satisfy many citizens regarding the Project and/or that some citizens who do not anticipate direct benefits may still favor the Project because it will directly benefit numerous other residents of metropolitan Phoenix.

A frequently expressed concern about the RSP is that it will hurt minority groups, particularly those who reside along the Salt River. About one-quarter of the survey participants did not respond to the question on this topic. Among those who did, the large majority (64.3 percent) did not think that the RSP will hurt minorities in the Project area.

Once again, these findings were further examined in relation to the demographic and psychographic groups comprising the sample. As shown in Table 15, there were no statistically significant differences for family income, number of children, spouse's employment status, and proximity to RSP. There were significant differences for the other 11 variables. Among the noteworthy differences were the following:

- Persons in the 18-34 age range were least optimistic about the impact of the RSP on minority families living along the RSP while persons in the 35-54 age range were the most optimistic.

TABLE 15

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC CORRELATES
OF METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' OPINIONS
REGARDING WHETHER THE RSP WILL HURT MINORITY
FAMILIES ALONG THE SALT RIVER

Factor and Groups	Percent Indicating RSP Will Not Hurt Minorities
a) Age*	
18 - 24	53
25 - 34	58
35 - 44	73
45 - 54	73
55 - 64	66
65 or older	69
b) Education Level*	
High school or less	64
Some college	58
College graduates	68
Postgraduate	80
c) Ethnicity*	
White	66
Black	69
Hispanic	57
d) Family Income in 1981	
Under \$15,000	60
\$15,000 - 19,999	64
\$20,000 - 24,999	64
\$25,000 - 39,999	64
\$40,000 or more	77
e) Sex*	
Female	62
Male	67
f) Marital Status*	
Married	66
Single	55
Divorced/widowed/separated	71
g) Number of Children Under 18 Years of Age at Home	
0	65
1 or more	63

TABLE 15
(continued)

h) Spouse's Employment Status	
Works full-time	65
Works part-time	78
Unemployed	63
i) Length of Residence in Arizona*	
Since 1979	47
1970 - 1979	64
1960 - 1969	63
1950 - 1959	71
Before 1950	80
j) Type of Residence*	
Single-family home	66
Apartment	61
Condominium	66
Mobile home	53
k) Occupancy Status*	
Own or buying residence	68
Renting residence	56
l) Proximity to RSP Planning Area Boundary	
0 - 3 miles	61
More than 3 miles	65
m) Political Party Identification*	
Republican	70
Democrats	60
Other	70
Not registered	59
n) Interest in Politics*	
Very interested	67
Somewhat interested	65
Not very interested	63
Not at all interested	43
o) Ideology*	
Very liberal	61
Somewhat liberal	56
Moderate	63
Somewhat conservative	70
Very conservative	75

*Significant difference at the .05 level.

- A larger proportion of postgraduate-educated persons than persons with less education indicated that the RSP will not hurt nearby families.
- A smaller proportion of Hispanics than whites and blacks indicated that the RSP will not hurt minority families.
- Democrats and people who are not registered to vote were much less optimistic about the impact of RSP on minority families in the vicinity than were Republicans and persons affiliated with "other" parties.

In Table 16, the various demographic and psychographic groups are ranked according to the proportion of the particular group expressing the opinion that the Project would not hurt minority families along the RSP. The least optimistic groups, by far, were people who are not at all interested in politics and people who moved to Arizona in the 1980s. The four most optimistic groups were people who moved to Arizona before 1950; people with postgraduate education; people whose spouses work part-time; and people with incomes of \$40,000 or more.

Opinions Regarding RSP Referendum. The final area of questioning pertained to the possibility of a vote on the RSP. One question asked whether there should be a vote on the Project, and a second asked whether the participant would support or oppose the Project if it were put to a vote.

According to the findings in part a) of Table 17, virtually all (94 percent) of the survey participants were of the opinion that the RSP should be put to a vote of the public. In the event of such a referendum, the findings in part b) of the same table suggest that more than three-quarters

TABLE 16

RANK ORDERING OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC GROUPS
 BASED ON OPINIONS REGARDING WHETHER THE RSP WILL
 HURT MINORITY FAMILIES LIVING ALONG THE SALT RIVER

Percent Stating That RSP Will Not Hurt Minorities	Group
80	Moved to Arizona before 1950; postgraduate education
77	\$40,000 or over income
75	Politically very conservative
73	35-44 year olds; 45-54 year olds
71	Divorced/widowed/separated; moved to Arizona in 1950-1959
70	Republicans; politically somewhat conservative; other political party
69	65 or older; blacks
68	College graduates; own or buying residence
67	Males; very interested in politics
66	55-64 year olds; whites; married; live in single-family homes; live in condominiums
65	No children under 18 years of age; spouse works full-time; somewhat interested in politics; live more than 3 miles from RSP
64	Percent of adult metropolitan Phoenix population stating that RSP will not hurt minorities
64	High school or less education; \$15-19,999 income; \$20-24,999 income; \$25-39,999 income; moved to Arizona in 1970-1979
63	1 or more children under 18 years of age; moved to Arizona in 1960-1969; spouse is unemployed; not very interested in politics; politically moderate
62	Females
61	Live in apartments; politically very liberal; live within 3 miles of RSP
60	Under \$15,000 income; Democrats
59	Not registered to vote
58	25-34 year olds; some college education
57	Hispanics
56	Renting residence; politically somewhat liberal
55	Single
53	18-24 year olds; live in mobile homes
47	Moved to Arizona in 1980s
43	Not at all interested in politics

TABLE 17

METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' OPINIONS
REGARDING A REFERENDUM ON THE RSP

Topic	Respondents	
	Number	Percent of Total
a) "The people in the Valley should vote on whether they want the RSP"		
Agree strongly	271	22.9
Agree	841	71.2
Disagree	65	5.5
Disagree strongly	5	0.4
	1182	100.0
b) "If it comes to a vote, I would support the RSP"*		
Agree strongly	85	8.2
Agree	722	69.8
Disagree	188	18.2
Disagree strongly	39	3.8
	1034	100.0

*To check whether the wording of this item influenced the survey participants' responses, the wording presented here was used for one-half of the sample and the word "oppose" was substituted for "support" for the other one-half of the sample. In the "support" version of the item, 78.3 percent of the respondents expressed their support for the Project by agreeing with the statement; in the "oppose" version of the item, 77.9 percent of the respondents expressed their support by disagreeing with the statement. Thus, it is apparent that wording of the item did not influence the participants' opinions. This conclusion can reasonably be generalized to other items in which an Agree/Disagree response scale was used.

of the public would support the RSP. It is also noteworthy that for every person who would oppose the RSP, more than two would strongly support it. This subset of the findings is noteworthy because the people with the strongest views on a subject are most likely to become involved in a political campaign for or against the particular issue.

The levels of support for the RSP were further examined in relation to the demographic and psychographic characteristics of the survey participants. As shown in Table 18, the differences in levels of support were statistically significant for only four of the 15 variables--education and the three political variables, namely party, degree of interest, and ideology.

Specific differences were as follows:

- There was no direct correlation between levels of education and support. The group with the least education had the smallest proportion of people who would support the RSP and the group with the most education has the largest proportion of supporters. However, this same pattern did not hold for the two intermediate education levels.
- The proportion of Democrats indicating support for the RSP was two to three percentage points higher than among Republicans, persons affiliated with "other" political parties, and persons who are not registered to vote.
- People with at least some interest in politics were far more likely to indicate support for the RSP than were people with no interest at all in politics.

TABLE 18

DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC CORRELATES
OF METROPOLITAN PHOENIX RESIDENTS' SUPPORT OF
OR OPPOSITION TO THE RSP IN THE EVENT OF A REFERENDUM

Factor and Groups	Percent Indicating Support for RSP
a) Age	
18 - 24	78
25 - 34	65
35 - 44	80
45 - 54	80
55 - 64	80
65 or older	77
b) Education Level*	
High school or less	73
Some college	83
College graduates	75
Postgraduate	84
c) Ethnicity	
White	77
Black	83
Hispanic	80
d) Family Income in 1981	
Under \$15,000	74
\$15,000 - 19,999	84
\$20,000 - 24,999	82
\$25,000 - 39,999	83
\$40,000 or more	84
e) Sex	
Female	76
Male	80
f) Marital Status	
Married	80
Single	75
Divorced/widowed/separated	78
g) Number of Children Under 18 Years of Age at Home	
0	78
1 or more	78
h) Spouse's Employment Status	
Works full-time	78
Works part-time	75
Unemployed	81

TABLE 18
(continued)

i) Length of Residence in Arizona	
Since 1979	82
1970 - 1979	78
1960 - 1969	78
1950 - 1959	82
Before 1950	80
j) Type of Residence	
Single-family home	77
Apartment	79
Condominium	75
Mobile home	66
k) Occupancy Status	
Own or buying residence	79
Renting residence	75
l) Proximity to RSP Planning Area Boundary	
0 - 3 miles	79
More than 3 miles	78
m) Political Party Identification*	
Republican	77
Democrats	81
Other	79
Not registered	78
n) Interest in Politics*	
Very interested	74
Somewhat interested	83
Not very interested	75
Not at all interested	54
o) Ideology*	
Very liberal	76
Somewhat liberal	87
Moderate	75
Somewhat conservative	80
Very conservative	61

*Significant difference at the .05 level.

- Support for the Project was greatest among people who classified themselves as having a somewhat liberal ideology and was lowest among people with a very conservative ideology.

The levels of support for the RSP were also examined in relation to the respondents' awareness levels regarding the RSP. When the respondents are categorized by awareness levels, the differences in the proportions of each group that would support the RSP in the event of a referendum are significant at the .05 level:

<u>Group</u>	<u>Percent Indicating Support for RSP</u>
Very familiar	83
Somewhat familiar	88
Have not heard of the Project	75

This finding suggests that support for the RSP increases as a person learns about the Project but may diminish somewhat as a person becomes very familiar with the RSP. The drop-off in support among persons who are very familiar with the RSP should not be given too much credence because this group includes only about 25 respondents and, therefore, really is not sufficient in size to serve as the basis for statistical inferences.

As with other key issues, the findings regarding levels of support within the various groups of respondents were rank-ordered. The results are presented in Table 19. Far above average in terms of the proportion indicating support for the RSP in the event of a referendum were the following four groups: people with somewhat liberal ideology, people with postgraduate education, and people in two income ranges--\$15,000-19,999 and \$40,000 or more. Far below average in levels for support were four groups: people with no interest at all in politics, people with a very conservative ideology, 25-34 year olds, and mobile-home dwellers.

TABLE 19

RANK ORDERING OF DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC
GROUPS BASED ON SUPPORT OF OR OPPOSITION TO THE
RSP IN THE EVENT OF A REFERENDUM

Percent Stating They Would Support the RSP	Group
87	Politically somewhat liberal
84	Postgraduate education; \$15-19,999 income; \$40,000 or more income
83	Some college education; blacks; \$25-39,999 income; somewhat interested in politics
82	\$20-24,999 income; moved to Arizona in the 1980s; moved to Arizona in 1950-1959
81	Spouse is unemployed; Democrats
80	35-44 year olds; 45-54 year olds; 55-64 year olds; Hispanics; males; married; moved to Arizona before 1950; politically somewhat conservative
79	Live in apartments; own or buying residence; other political party; live within 3 miles of RSP
78	Percent of adult metropolitan Phoenix population stating they would support the RSP in the event of a referendum
78	18-24 year olds; divorced/widowed/separated; no children under 18 years of age; one or more children under 18 years of age; spouse works full-time; moved to Arizona in 1970-1979; moved to Arizona in 1960-1969; not registered to vote; live more than 3 miles from RSP
77	People 65 or older; whites; live in single-family homes; Republicans
76	Females; politically very liberal
75	Single; college graduates; spouse works part-time; live in condominiums; renting residence; not very interested in politics; politically moderate
74	Under \$15,000 income; very interested in politics
73	High school or less education
66	Live in mobile homes
65	25-34 year olds
61	Politically very conservative
54	Not at all interested in politics

CONCLUSIONS

In this section the survey findings will be combined into a series of conclusions. For each of the five research questions, related conclusions will be presented.⁹

Awareness and Knowledge Regarding RSP

Three conclusions can be drawn about the levels of awareness and knowledge among metropolitan Phoenix residents regarding the RSP:

1. The public is largely unaware of and uninformed about the Project, as evidenced by 81 percent of the respondents indicating that they have not heard of the RSP and, conversely, only 2 percent classifying themselves as very familiar with the RSP.

2. Levels of awareness regarding the RSP vary substantially across demographic and psychographic groups. These differences, however, are largely due to the varying educational levels of the various groups. When people with similar educational backgrounds are compared within each of the various groups, differences in awareness according to levels of age, ethnicity, income, sex, and degree of political interest virtually disappear. By combining several variables (i.e., length of residence in Arizona, type of residence, and occupancy status), a composite variable that explains some of the differences in awareness levels can be formed. This composite variable might be labeled "degree of permanency."

3. Substantial levels of misinformation exist among those residents who indicate that they are familiar with the Project. This conclusion is based on various findings; to cite one example, one-third of the "familiar" respondents stated that flood control is the primary purpose of the Project.

⁹For ease of reference, the individual conclusions will be numbered consecutively across the five subsections.

Opinions Regarding Possible Elements

Two conclusions can be drawn from the survey results related to citizens' preferences regarding the mix of elements comprising the RSP:

4. Residents of metropolitan Phoenix envision the RSP as--and desire it to be--a giant park. Furthermore, whereas the public prefers a recreational use of the area, very few citizens express a preference for residential or commercial uses of the Project area.

5. Citizens do not want a football stadium to be included as part of the RSP. This conclusion is based on the finding that 63 percent of the survey respondents expressed opposition to this possibility.

Awareness, Knowledge, and Opinions Regarding Indian Bend Wash

Two conclusions pertaining to the relationship between the RSP and the IBW can be drawn:

6. There is substantial overlap between the persons who are familiar with the RSP and those who are familiar with the IBW. This conclusion is based on the finding that 73 percent of the survey participants who were familiar with the RSP were also familiar with the IBW.

7. Among metropolitan Phoenix residents, the RSP and the IBW are perceived similarly as parks but are perceived dissimilarly due to their different sizes.

Opinions Regarding Growth and Quality of Life

Three related conclusions emerged from the findings pertaining to opinions regarding living environment and the RSP:

8. Citizens in the Phoenix area are "pro-growth," as evidenced by 65 percent of the survey participants indicating that population growth and economic development should be encouraged in metropolitan Phoenix.

9. The public is evenly divided regarding whether the RSP will stimulate population growth in the Phoenix area. This conclusion is based on the finding that 55 percent of the responding sample members believed that the RSP will directly affect population growth in the metropolitan area.

10. Residents of metropolitan Phoenix are optimistic about the RSP's improving the quality of life in the Phoenix area. The finding that almost three-quarters of the survey participants foresaw the RSP as improving the quality of life underlies this conclusion.

Political Viability of the RSP

The largest number of conclusions can be drawn from the portion of the study that directly and indirectly examined the political viability of the Project:

11. Residents of metropolitan Phoenix believe that tax dollars should be used to finance the RSP. This conclusion is drawn from the survey result indicating that 66 percent of the respondents approved of the use of tax money for the RSP.

12. Important correlates of opinions regarding the use of tax money for the RSP include ethnicity and the three political variables, namely political party identification, interest in politics, and ideology.

13. Most residents of metropolitan Phoenix who know something about the RSP hold a favorable overall opinion about the RSP whereas a slightly smaller proportion--but still the large majority--of residents who are unaware of the Project would have a favorable opinion if given some information about it. The survey results pertaining to levels of awareness regarding the RSP were the bases for this conclusion.

14. Favorability of opinions regarding the RSP vary markedly across certain demographic and psychographic groups. Noteworthy correlates of favorability of opinions include education level, ethnicity, political party identification, and degree of interest in politics.

15. Those citizens who favor the RSP do so primarily because they envision it as providing needed recreation and parks whereas those citizens who hold an unfavorable opinion about the RSP do so largely because they are concerned about the RSP in relation to future floods and/or whether the benefit-to-cost ratio on the Project is better than on alternative expenditures such as roads and highways.

16. In the minds of metropolitan Phoenix residents, the benefits of the RSP will be very broad-based, covering virtually the entire community. This conclusion is based on the survey finding that the three most frequently mentioned beneficiary groups--accounting for almost one-half of the total responses--were very general in scope (e.g., everyone, people in the area).

17. Most citizens do not believe that the Project will hurt minority families living along the Salt River. Support for this conclusion comes from the finding that 64 percent of the survey participants expressed this opinion.

18. Opinions regarding the impact of the RSP on minority families living nearby vary substantially across most demographic and psychographic groups. The most important correlates for this particular opinion include age, education, ethnicity, degree of permanency (e.g., length of residence), political party, and degree of interest in politics.

19. There is almost unanimity among residents of metropolitan Phoenix that there should be a vote on the Project. The basis for this conclusion

is the survey result indicating that 94 percent of the respondents think the people in the Valley should vote on whether they want the RSP.

20. The large majority of the public would support the RSP in the event of a referendum. This conclusion is drawn from the finding that 78 percent of the survey participants would support the RSP if it comes to a vote.

21. Within some demographic and psychographic groups, there are noteworthy variations in levels of support for the RSP in the event of a referendum. One noteworthy correlate is level of education; others are the three political variables, namely political party identification, degree of interest in politics, and ideology.

To summarize the conclusions, the public in metropolitan Phoenix lacks information about the RSP. Citizens who are somewhat familiar with the Project often are misinformed about it but nevertheless ordinarily hold favorable opinions regarding this large-scale endeavor. Likewise, given a brief description of the Project, citizens who previously knew nothing about it express favorable opinions about it. Furthermore, the public wants the Project to be a giant recreational area.

The study's findings and conclusions should be useful to the Rio Salado Development District in designing the Project so that it will be acceptable and satisfying to residents of metropolitan Phoenix. Even more importantly, the study's results should be useful in formulating public-information programs that make more people aware of the Project and indicate why it should include residential and commercial--as well as recreational--components.

APPENDIX A

PROFILES OF INVESTIGATORS AND RESEARCH FACILITIES

The proposed study was an interdisciplinary, intercollegiate research effort. Brief overviews of the principals and units involved in the study are presented below.

Bruce D. Merrill

Professor Merrill joined the ASU faculty in 1970 after completing a Ph.D. in Political Behavior at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. At Michigan, Professor Merrill trained at the Survey Research Center and the Center for Political Studies. His research and teaching interests are in public opinion, American political parties, campaign management and organization, and survey research. In August of 1981, he became Director of the Public Opinion Research Program in the Center for Urban Studies.

Public Opinion Research Program

The Public Opinion Research Program was established to provide survey research data for institutions needing applied research. Studies have already been completed for the Maricopa Association of Governments (M.A.G.) and Phoenix Newspapers, Inc. The Rio Salado Project study represented a unique opportunity for the Public Opinion Research Program to both train graduate students in polling techniques and to provide important inputs to a project that could eventually affect the lives of all residents of Maricopa County.

APPENDIX A (continued)

Bruce J. Walker

After serving on the University of Kentucky faculty for four years, Professor Walker joined the Arizona State University marketing faculty in 1974. For three years, Dr. Walker served as a faculty research associate in the Bureau of Business and Economic Research. His research interests center on marketing channels; retailing, and franchising; energy conservation; and survey research methods. He has received research grants from the International Franchise Association, the Arizona Solar Energy Commission, the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education, and various university sources. Dr. Walker has two published textbooks, and his research has appeared in a variety of professional journals, including Journal of Marketing Research, Business, Journal of Applied Psychology, Journal of Marketing, and Arizona Business.

Bureau of Business and Economic Research

The Bureau of Business and Economic Research serves as the focal point for research activities within the College of Business Administration at Arizona State University. The Bureau has established a strong record of applied research undertaken for federal, state, and local agencies. For example, the Bureau serves as the operational component at ASU to provide data processing and research services for the Arizona State Data Center. Numerous projects completed by the Bureau have been in the fields of survey research and policy analysis involving the compilation and analysis of large data sets.

APPENDIX B

REMAINING DEMOGRAPHIC AND PSYCHOGRAPHIC
CHARACTERISTICS OF SURVEY SAMPLE**

Characteristic	Weighted Sample	Unweighted Sample
Length of Residence in Arizona		
Since 1979	10.9%	11%
1970 - 1979	43.1	44
1960 - 1969	23.3	23
1950 - 1959	14.2	14
Before 1950	8.5	8
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100%</u>
If Not an Arizona Native, Area of U.S. Moved From		
Pacific	14.2%	13%
Mountain	10.0	10
West south central	7.0	6
West north central	12.5	13
East north central	32.8	35
East south central	1.8	2
South Atlantic	6.1	6
Mid-Atlantic	13.4	14
New England	2.2	2
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100%*</u>
Occupation		
Retired, disabled	17.5%	19%
Homemaker	15.7	16
Professional position	11.3	12
Unemployed, not employed	14.8	14
Craftsman	7.0	7
Technician	3.8	4
Sales position	10.0	10
Operator	3.0	3
Laborer	7.8	7
Service worker	4.6	4
Other	4.6	5
	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%*</u>
Spouse's Employment Status		
Employed full-time	50.3%	50%
Employed part-time	6.7	7
Unemployed	43.0	43
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100%</u>

APPENDIX B (continued)

Family Income in 1981		
Under \$15,000	29.6%	29%
\$15,000 - 19,999	17.4	17
\$20,000 - 24,999	14.2	14
\$25,000 - 39,999	23.0	24
\$40,000 or more	15.7	16
	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%</u>
Number of Children Under 18		
Years of Age at Home		
None	63.5%	65%
1	13.5	13
2	14.2	14
3	5.7	5
4 or more	3.0	3
	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%</u>
Type of Residence		
Single-family home	73.0%	74%
Apartment	17.2	16
Condominium	4.4	5
Mobile home	5.0	5
Other	0.3	-
	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%</u>
Occupancy Status		
Own or buying residence	71.5%	73%
Renting residence	28.5	27
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100%</u>
Political Party Identification		
Republican	34.3%	37%
Democrat	27.0	25
Other	8.4	9
Not registered	30.4	30
	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%*</u>
Interest in Politics		
Very interested	23.9%	25%
Somewhat interested	56.0	57
Not very interested	15.6	15
Not at all interested	4.6	4
	<u>100.0%*</u>	<u>100%*</u>
Ideology		
Very liberal	5.2%	5%
Somewhat liberal	26.4	26
Moderate	17.8	17
Somewhat conservative	42.5	44
Very conservative	8.0	9
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100%*</u>

*Does not total to 100.0% due to rounding error.

**Data regarding the sample's education, ethnicity, age, marital status, and sex is presented in Table 1.