

Motivation of Public
Participation at
SRS Citizens Advisory
Board Meetings

Objective

- Interview public participants at Savannah River Site Citizens' Advisory Board (CAB) meetings to:
 - learn their motivation in attending meetings
 - understand the impact they believe their attendance has on the SRS CAB, and
 - learn how their input is utilized by the Savannah River Site (SRS)
- In learning why community members attend meetings, the CAB can utilize that knowledge and encourage continued public participation



Public Participation

- Upward rise in public participation concerning environmental input by government agencies
- Motivated by communities who desire a more direct role in molding future decisions about their health and environment
- Participation builds trust and often yields decisions that take into account unique community needs



Benefits of Public Participation

- Public participation is not simply a nice or necessary thing to do; it actually results in better outcomes and better governance. When done in a meaningful way, public participation will result in two significant benefits:
 - Sponsor agencies will make better and more easily implementable decisions that reflect public interests and values and are better understood by the public
 - Communities develop long-term capacity to solve and manage challenging social issues, often overcoming longstanding differences and misunderstandings
- Source: EPA - <http://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide-introduction-public-participation>

Benefits of Public Participation

- Accountability
- Gauge of what is working and what is not working
- Good Public Participation:
 - Representativeness
 - Inclusivity
 - Process Fairness and Flexibility
 - Transparency
 - Independence and Fairness



How does Public Participation Result Better Decisions?

- Public participation contributes to better decisions because decision-makers have more complete information – in the form of additional facts, values, and perspectives obtained through public input, and incorporate best information and expertise of all stakeholders.
- Decisions more implementable and sustainable as decision considers needs and interests of all stakeholders, who better understand and are more invested in the outcomes.
- Decisions informed by public participation viewed as more legitimate and less subject to challenge. Decision-makers who understand stakeholder interests become better communicators, able to explain decisions in terms stakeholders understand and that relate to stakeholders' values and concerns.
- Source: <http://www.epa.gov/international-cooperation/public-participation-guide-introduction-public-participation>

Public Participation - Challenges

- Public interest grows, deficit remains in how to engage public and utilize public input.
- Funds spent on public participation, but lack of evaluation of participation.



What is Public Participation?

- Rowe and Frewer (2004) – “...the practice of consulting and involving members of the public in the agenda-setting, decision-making, and policy-forming activities of organization or institutions responsible for policy development.”
- Option 1 – “passive recipients of information from the regulators or governing bodies concerned.”
- Option 2 – public’s input is sought out and utilized as direct input into the decision-making process.

Savannah River Site Citizens Advisory Board (CAB)

- DOE (Department of Energy) seeks advice and recommendations on environmental remediation, waste management and related issues
- Bi-Monthly Meetings
- Conduit between the public and the Department of Energy
- Understanding public motivation to attend meetings to continue to grow attendance and participation

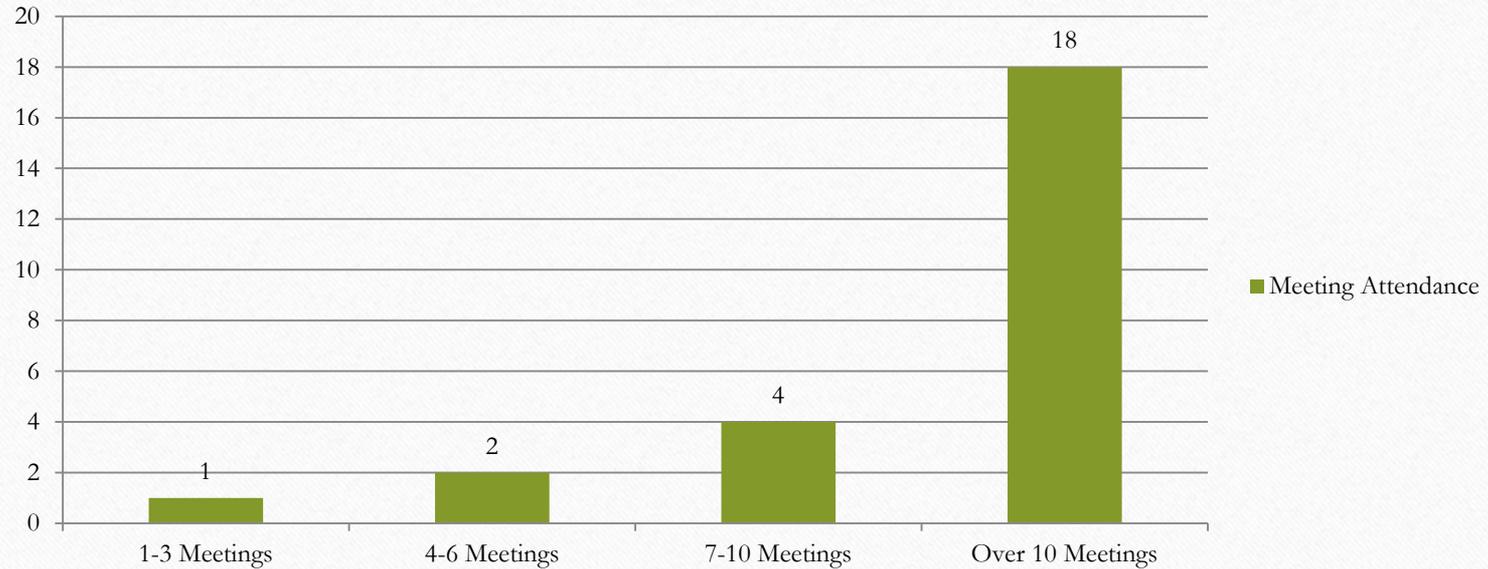


Methodology

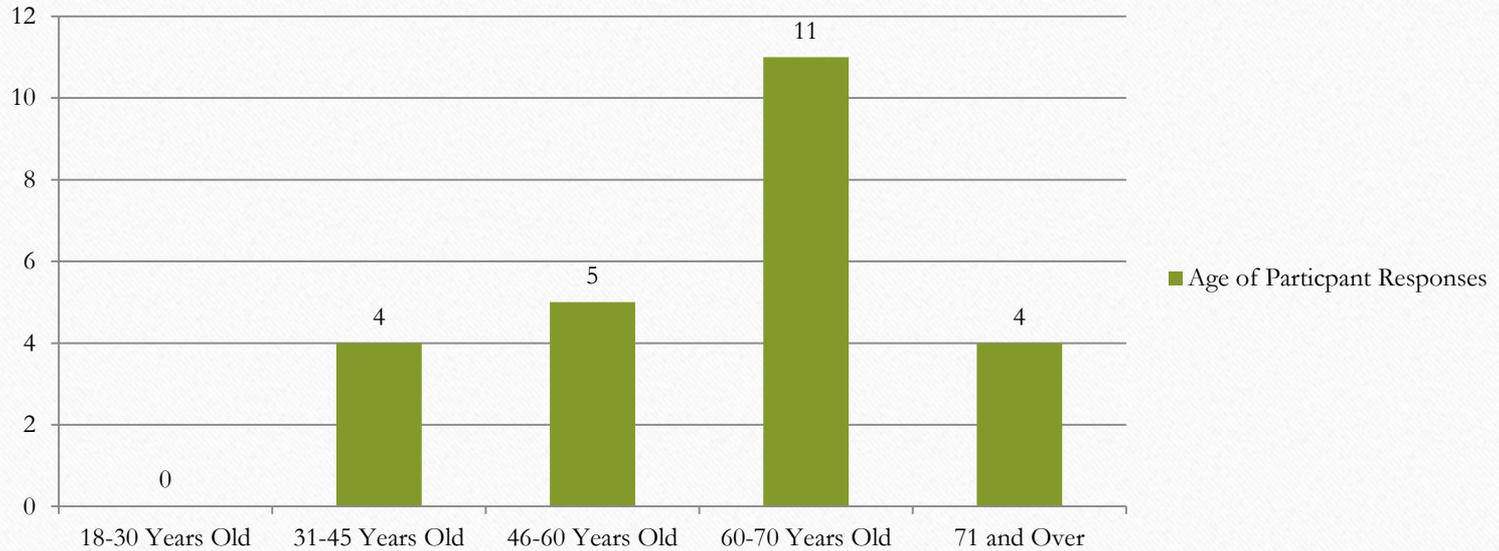
- 15 Questions (several questions with multiple parts) – open-ended and Likert-scale
- Process Evaluation
- Perceived Usefulness
- Reliability and Validity



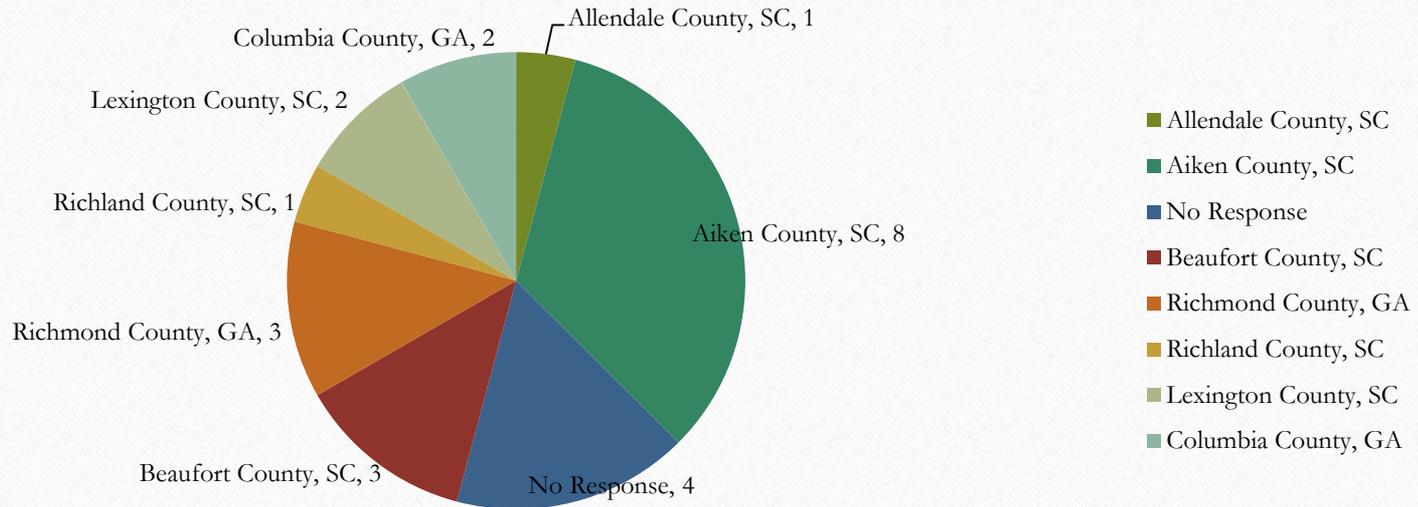
SRS CAB Meeting Attendance



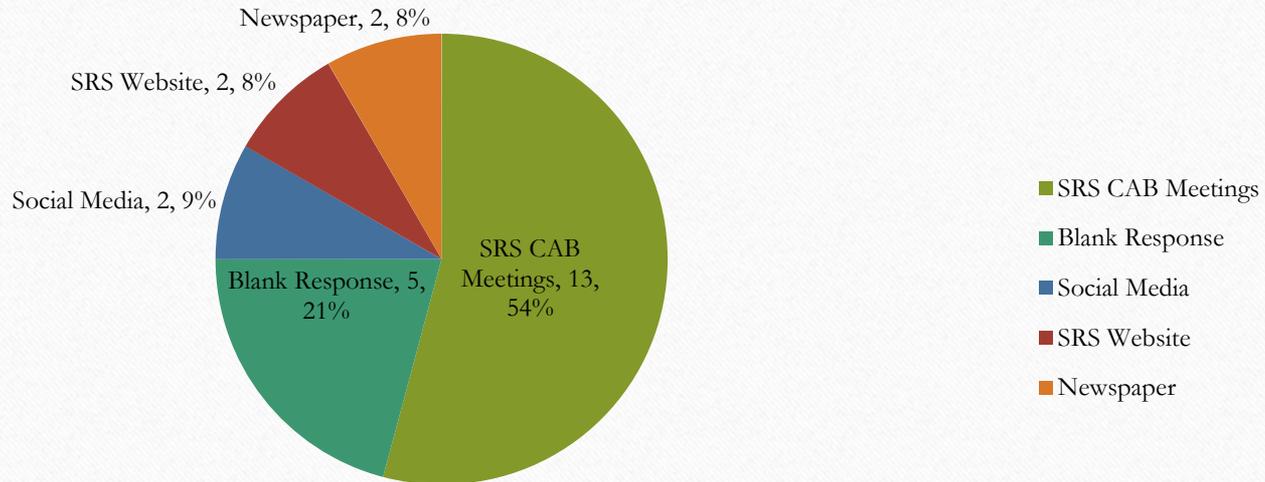
Age Demographic



County and State of Residence



Preference of Receiving SRS Information



Rating of Clean-Up Information at SRS and Rating of Savannah River Site Protecting the Environment

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Median	Std Dev	Min	Max
How do you rate SRS at cleaning-up legacy waste at the SRS	24	4.42	4	1.017	2	6
How do you rate SRS at protecting the environment	24	4.9	4	0.928	2	6

Input Relationship Information

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Median	Std Dev	Min	Max
How do you rate SRS at using your input	24	4.75	4.5	1.887	3	6

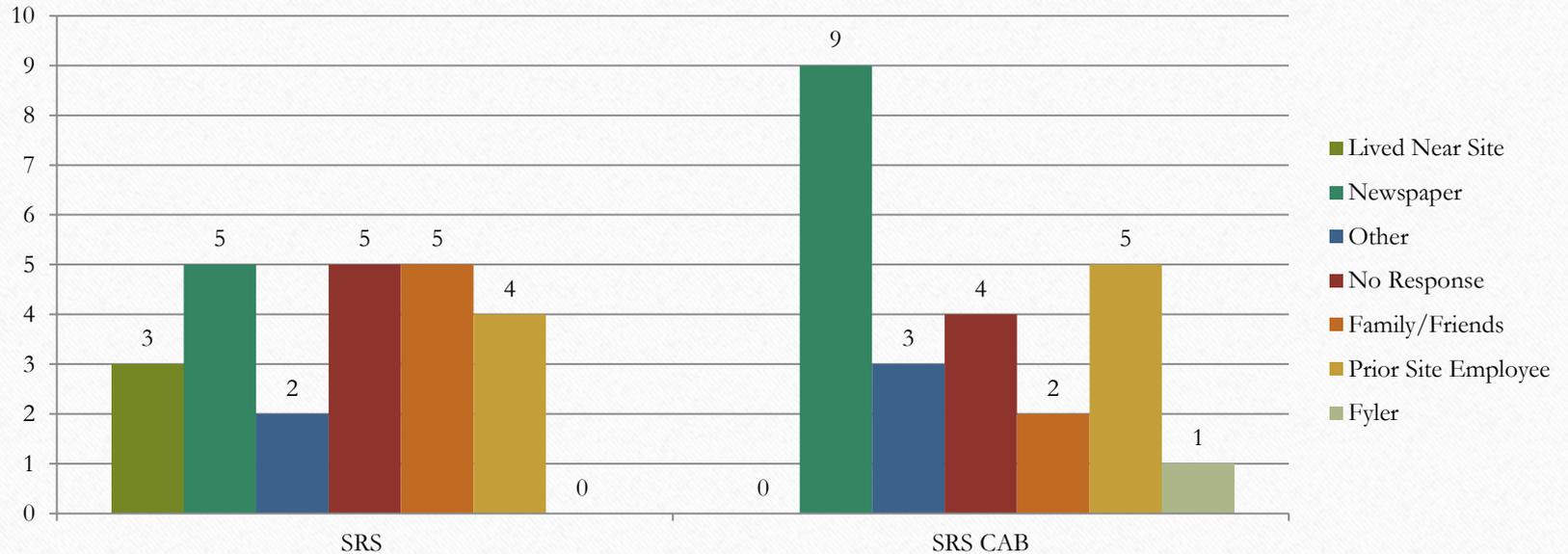
Explaining Decisions

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Median	Std Dev	Min	Max
How do you rate SRS at explaining decisions	24	4.625	4	1.209	2	6

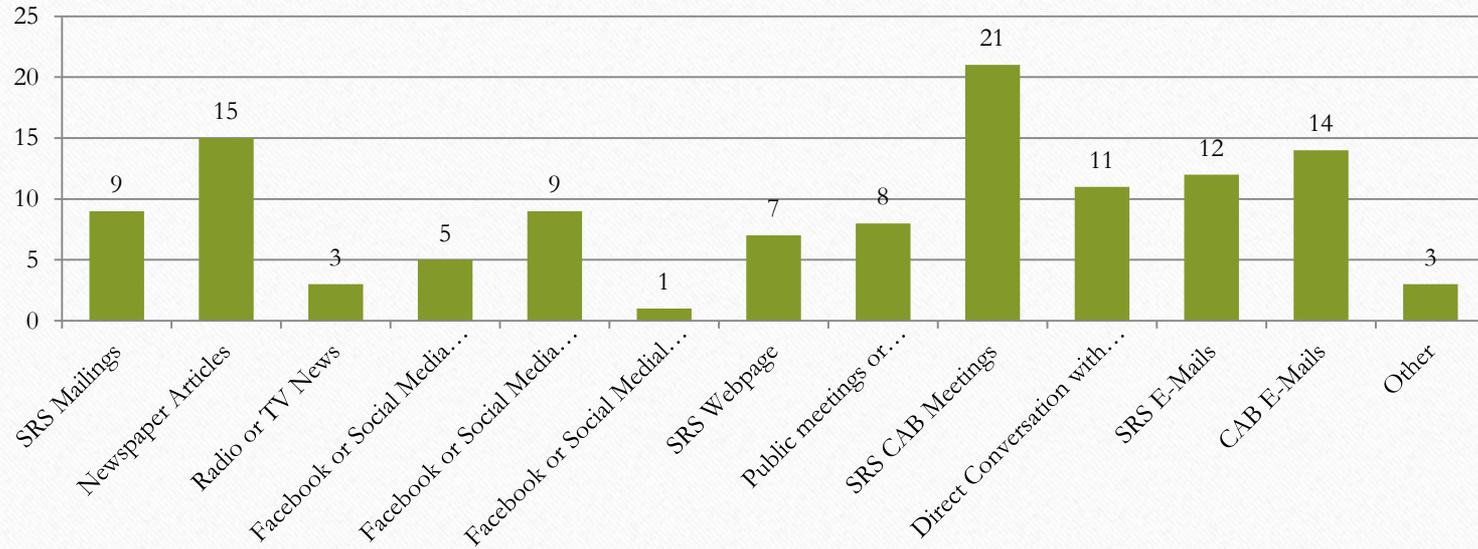
	<i>N</i>	Mean	Median	Std Dev	Min	Max
How do you rate SRS at providing the information you need at CAB meetings:	24	4.95	4.5	0.609	3	6
How do you rate SRS at giving you accurate information at CAB meetings:	24	5	4.5	0.7223	3	6
How do you rate at SRS making information easy to understand at CAB meetings:	24	4.625	4.5	0.9696	3	6
How do you rate SRS at being responsive to questions at CAB meetings:	24	5.16	4.5	0.9168	3	6

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Median	Std Dev	Min	Max
How do you rate SRS at understanding your concerns during CAB meetings:	24	4.95	4.5	0.9545	3	6
How do you rate SRS at responding to your concerns during CAB meetings:	24	4.875	4.5	0.9469	3	6
How do you rate SRS at treating you courteously during CAB meetings:	24	5.625	4.5	0.7109	3	6

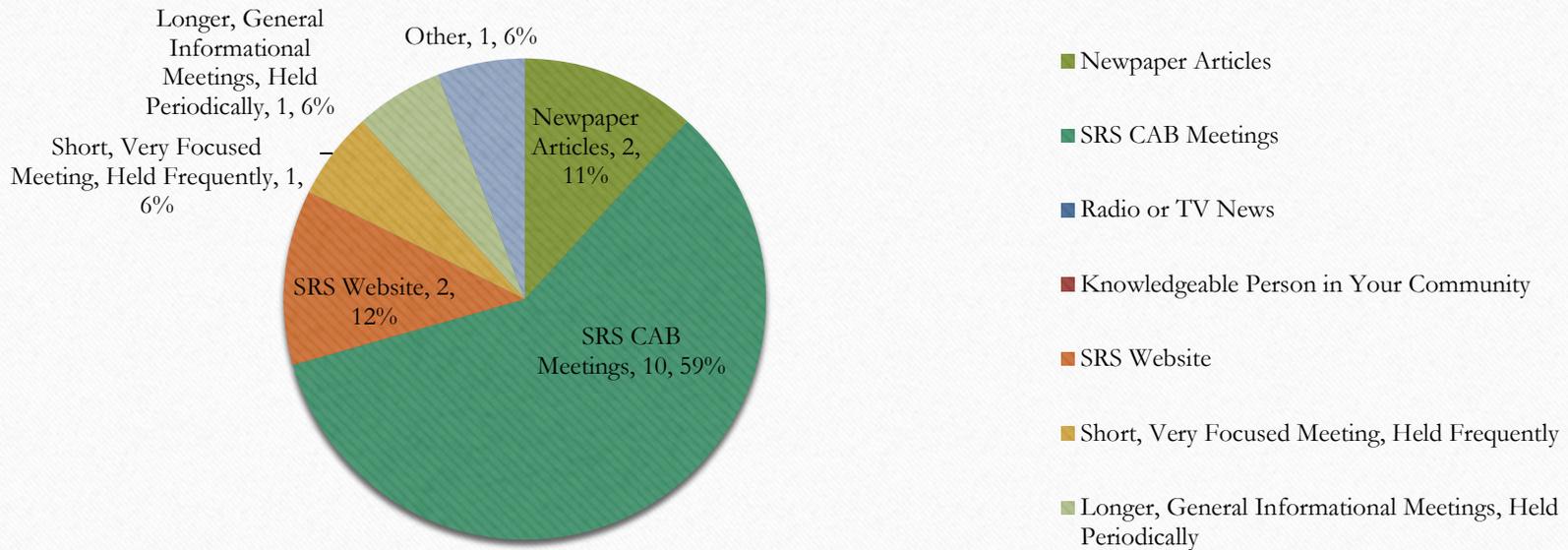
Learning about Savannah River Site & SRS CAB



Receiving Information about the Work at the Savannah River Site



Receiving Information about the work at Savannah River Site



Rating SRS at Cleaning-Up Legacy Waste and Protecting the Environment



Rating of SRS in Reference to Health, Environment, Jobs & Property Values

	<i>N</i>	Mean	Median	Std Dev	Min	Max
How do you rate SRS at protecting my family's health	24	5	4	1.0215	2	6
How do you rate SRS at protecting the environment	24	4.91	4	0.9286	2	6
How do you rate SRS at protecting property values near SRS	24	4.58	23.5	1.0598	1	6
How do you rate SRS at providing jobs in the community	24	4.95	3.5	1.2328	1	6

Conclusion

- Challenges: Sampling, Cost and Voluntary Participation
- Snapshots
- Clean-Up Goals

