

June 2, 2005

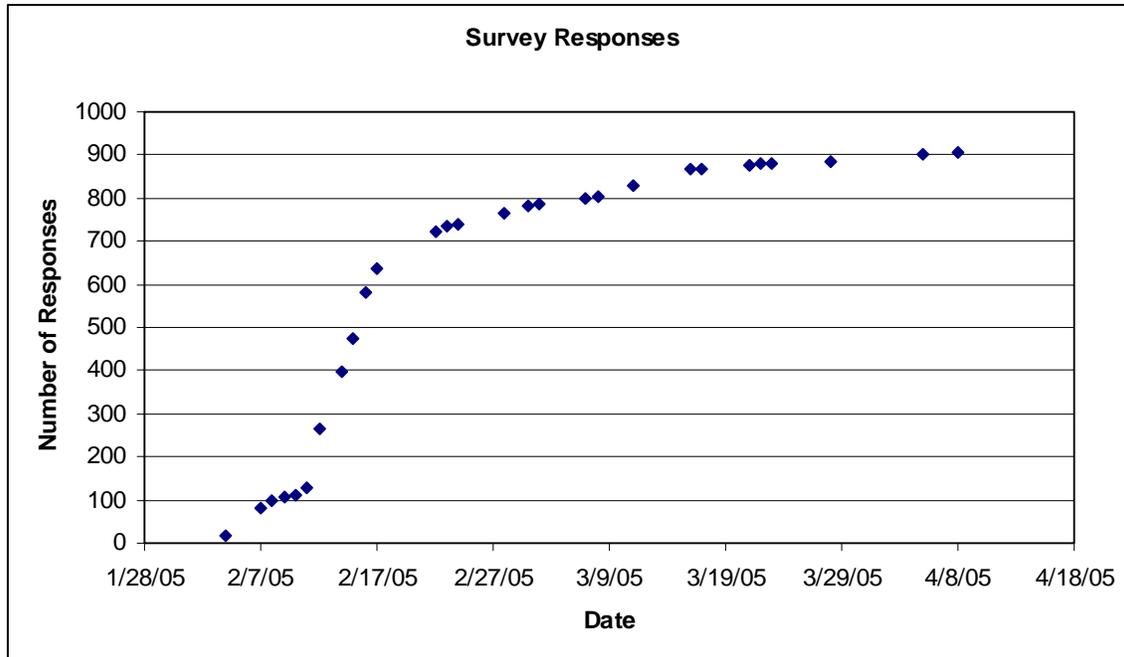
Subject: NSS Member Survey Results

Members of the Board of Directors  
National Speleological Society

Bryson (2004) suggests that planning for non-profit organizations, simply put, consists of three steps: (1) Figure out where you are, (2) Figure out where you want to be, and then (3) Figure out how to get from where you are to where you want to be. Step (3) is the actual strategic plan. The plan is useful, but usually much value is obtained from the strategic planning process. Additionally, often the end state of (2) is never reached but instead serves as a guide post or objective, until modified by later planning. This document and the record of the Board of Governors (BOG) planning sessions conducted in the summer and again in the fall of 2004 serve as a statement of where we are, or at least where we (the BOG and the membership) believe we are.

This means the BOG should review the assessment of where we are, and begin discussing where we should be. The record of the BOG planning sessions was held until completion of the survey. That record and this document should now be released to the Society's members.

The NSS member survey was administered in February and March 2005 using a web page to elicit responses. The questions were reviewed and edited by members of the Board of Directors as a whole, with survey development primarily by Martha Mills and me. The web page was linked to a database, hosted *pro bono* by a colleague, Steve Henderson. The survey was announced in the *NSS News*, through the Society's web page, and, less formally, through internal organization email lists and by word of mouth. The table below shows the response count over time. There was no monetary cost to the Society.



There were 910 elicited responses, including routine tests of the database. Eliminating those records that were tests or clearly spurious entries, those with no data, left 899 records. Removing entries with duplicate NSS numbers left 887 records. Entries were considered valid when the NSS number matched the zip codes in the NSS office membership records. Removing those with mismatching zip codes (125 records) and those with no zip codes (36 records), left 726 records which were considered valid. A copy of an Excel® file with the data, with personal information removed, is provided with this report.

The results of the member survey are presented below. Where a Likert scale was used to assess agreement with a statement, the tables provide the frequency count of the various responses. The modal response, the most frequent answer, is emboldened. The median answer, that for which half of the answers are above and below, is underlined. Assigning numeric values to the agreement, -2 to “Strongly Disagree” and so on, permits calculation of the mean answer which is provided in square braces. This statistic assumes that there is equal distance between categories for the respondents. “No opinion” answers are not used in calculating these descriptive statistics; only the frequency count is provided.

Comments were edited for grammar and spelling and to redact references to individuals unless it was required for clarity. Comments regarding organizations were not redacted.

Respectfully submitted,  
William K. Klimack

**Who are we?**

The purpose of the Society is stated in our founding constitution. It is:

to promote interest in, and to advance in any and all ways, the study and science of speleology, the protection of caves and their natural contents, and to promote fellowship among those interested therein.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
1. The existing statement of purpose is still a valid guideline for Society programs and activities, and should not be changed.	9	19	24	<u>308</u> [1.4]	<b>353</b>	13

**Comments:**

- The “three-legged stool” model of science/exploration, conservation, and caver fellowship has served the NSS well and makes it almost unique among either scientific or conservation organizations.
- To educate the public in the need for study and preservation of our cave systems and the life they contain while building strong bonds of fellowship among those willing to participate in this effort. Just a passing thought.
- I was initially tempted to disagree, since so many of our members are not necessarily interested in “speleology” as such. While I think this should remain the primary purpose of the Society, we might want to add a 2nd purpose such as: “to encourage safe and responsible practices of cave exploration” or something like that.
- I feel that fellowship for interest in caves... not hot tubs...drinking and things that promote cavers to be viewed as anti-social or counter culture. To gain public respect and support we need to appeal to normal people not the lunatic fringe.
- Does not include sports cavers or imply exploration, etc.
- Way too vague -- almost seems like a bush policy statement, i.e.: Iraq
- What else is there? This covers it all, across the board for all members.
- The promotion of fellowship is especially important. Rivalries for whatever reason should be avoided. In other words, the caves should come first. Welcome all who are interested in mission, regardless of capability.
- I think that a statement about recreational use of caves and the karst could be inserted, perhaps as follows: The National Speleological Society promotes the protection of natural processes in cave ecosystems and karst landscapes; promotes

- scientific studies and research in or about cave and karst resources and systems; promotes educational and recreational use of caves; promotes through it's membership base the conservation and protection of cave resources and karst processes; and promotes the continuation of all speleological sciences.
- I see the society drifting from its mission and losing focus. Trying to be involved in to many areas.
  - We need to educate and prepare the next generation of cavers.
  - It was founded with this great purpose; are we not interested in promoting fellowship and advancing science and protecting caves?? Leave well enough alone!!!
  - The NSS has always been more than a scientific organization
  - Eliminate "to promote interest in". Too many yahoos involved in caving these days.
  - Basic cave access for "recreational" or "tourist" caving can be at odds with study/science and protection. The purpose statement seems vague on the basic cave access and thus seems to severely limit this use over the other uses.
  - Need to make sure that we do not let recreational use completely overshadow the goal express in this statement.
  - We also need to talk about management of the cave resource to allow the public user community access.
  - A bit more on conservation and karst and karst processes would be good.
  - Remember the word fellowship.
  - I believe exploration should probably be expressly ranked as a primary purpose.
  - What about the recreational caver?
  - Prefer caves and grottos to the word speleology.
  - While I strongly agree with the statement of purpose, I would like to see an addition. I have been to several NSS preserves, and am very grateful to be able to have access to them. I would like to see an addition relating to NSS preserves and property, and access to them.
  - "In any & all ways" is too broad. It could include illegal or immoral ways.
  - I would like to see some acknowledgement of exploration and responsible recreational use also.
  - Promoting interest should be deleted. Currently, cave protection and access are much more important.
  - The main focus of the society should be the protection of caves and their contents, natural and historic, and the science of speleology. We should never go away from this tenet.
  - Not sure if promoting interest is good for protection.
  - The science and exploration of caves needs stressed over conservation.
  - Being a "recreational" caver, I would like to see the statement read..."the study, science, and recreation of speleology..."
  - I think perhaps a rewording or rephrasing of the section that reads "and to advance in any and all ways" needs reworked, as it is quite vague and open to individual interpretation as to the true meaning implied therein.

- I believe the most important aspects of the statement are the protection of caves and fellowship. Science is important for understanding and to facilitate protection. Promotion of interest needs to be done in a manner consistent with the NSS goals.
- Perhaps exploration should be mentioned.
- I think it should promote fellowship and SAFETY.
- I would put protection of caves first, maintaining or helping to get cave access to NSS members should be in there too.
- I agree with everything except the "promote interest in" part at the beginning.
- Advancing societies understanding of caves and karst is essential especially for those who live in these regions.
- The phrase "in any and all ways" should be made more specific.
- Not so much to create interest, but to guide the interest if it is there.
- Education of the non-caving public to promote conservation and protection of caves and their assets should be added into the purpose statement.
- The goal of the dissemination and application of knowledge related to the study and science of speleology should be more specifically stated. "To promote interest in" suggests marketing, and the role of NSS is also educational and outreach-oriented.
- Where is the part regarding cave exploration?
- I would eliminate "in any and all ways". This is unnecessarily broad and seems to suggest that the ends justify any means. And, since NSS grottos seem to be involved primarily in cave exploration, this purpose is conspicuously absent from the mission statement.
- These words still hold true today.
- We should add a statement that a major goal is to increase understanding and appreciation of caves, caving and the cave environment in the general public.
- "Interest in, and the study and science of..." does not acknowledge the contributions of recreational cavers.
- The definition of fellowship may need expanding. Quite frankly, nowhere in the purpose is the word fun.
- Perhaps the use of the words "in any and all ways" should be changed-- promoting the study and science in all ways may not protect the cave in all ways. Eh, but it seems to have worked so far :)
- Just the purchase of Great X cave proves this statement to be true.
- I am especially interested in the protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources found in caves. The continued cooperation among NSS members will ensure this into the future as the resources becomes more heavily utilized.
- People in general, through disrespect and ignorance, will destroy what is natural and beautiful in itself. In doing so the world often loses wonders and secrets that are never known.
- Something with teaching or safe caving maybe ... I like it the way it is though.

## Organizational Structure

The NSS is currently a membership organization. This means each member is entitled to vote in the election of the Board of Directors ("the Board"). Each member may vote for up to four candidates. Directors are elected by obtaining the largest number of votes cast.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
2. I feel that the Board adequately represents my interest as a caver.	4	31	153	<b><u>393</u></b> [0.8]	90	55
3. I feel that the Board adequately represents the interests of my region.	9	50	211	<b><u>319</u></b> [0.6]	64	73
4. If I have a concern about an issue I feel comfortable approaching a Board member(s) with my concerns.	6	27	166	<b><u>291</u></b> [0.8]	130	106

### Comments:

- There are some members of the board who represent themselves and no one else.
- Each member may vote if and when they have not just attended a NSS beer bash at some grotto or national meeting or social gathering -- I suspect that too many buddies with vested interests may potentially reach Board status.
- We need to encourage better qualified candidates to run for the Board, who will more actively participate in the business of the Society.
- There are not enough members from the South willing to serve on the board.
- The secret nature of many factions makes it difficult for me to feel that any issues I might raise will get a fair hearing.
- Knowing members of the board makes this easy.
- I do not think the board knows what happens outside their circle of friends. The good old boy network.
- I have never had any dealings with the NSS board. I also refrain from voting for members unless I personally know them and their views.
- I think areas with the most activity (caves, cavers) should receive a larger portion of the representation.
- Would like to see more Western Cavers consistently.
- I feel the election process tends to favor regions with larger numbers of cavers.

- The NSS has not put much effort into including the western parts of the country nor addressing their current needs.
- I wish there was a better way for members to know the candidates and their strong and weak points before voting for the board. We have some good people on the board now and some real turkeys.
- Too much emphasis on expedition style caving, and caving for science. Whatever happened to the regular caver? Regions are covered as “hotspots”, with focus being placed on them due to existing projects and/or prolific authors. BOG meetings that vary in location seem out of touch with certain regions. Some Board members feel “above” the issues of everyday cavers.
- If you’re not an insider, forget it. Never expect a returned email.
- I think having a certain number of Directors elected from each Region is a good idea if candidates are available.
- Elite-ism can intimidate some members.
- I am a Florida resident and a cave diver; while the CDS is my primary affiliation the NSS does little to support us, other than to take our dues and the NSS news we receive little in return.
- The Forest Service on the Tongass National Forest is doing great damage to the karst by rampant logging, disregarding their own standards and guidelines and the Cave Act. The Board will listen to the Forest Service employees before listening to the local cavers and Grottos and Projects.
- I felt the society has always done a good job.
- With the fiasco of the library and trying to give away the Journal as examples of what the board is capable of, I do not feel the board is in tune with the desires of the membership.
- Because of the number of members eastern candidates are normally elected.
- The interests of my region are not represented because my region (extreme eastern MT) has no karst or karst features and is therefore exempt.
- I do not really have an opinion as to my representation by the Board members. I do know anecdotally of grotto members attempting to contact a board member with a concern over management of a popular cave with poor results, but was not actively involved with the grotto on that project. I do find I am a bit put off by the disdain often shown by the board to average, non-vertical, more casual cavers such as myself. Were it not for medical and physical limitations, I would be caving more often, but feel I am not important to the BOG, as I am currently not doing 20 caves a month.
- The Board of Governors seems to be a reactionary entity in a lot of ways. Planning a direction for the society to grow needs to be the #1 goal of the Board.
- There are a few members of the board that have put themselves out there to be open to questions and concerns, but no one really knows the rest of you guys!
- I have had some misinformation regarding NSS and section members regarding preserve issues. Seem like the BOG wants to keep things quiet until they make a decision and not involve the membership.

- I am part of the CDS cave diving section. I never see any thing the NSS has down for or with the CDS. It like since we swim through caves and do not crawl we are not real cavers.
- I have attempted to voice concerns to bog person they tell me “oh well.”
- I don’t always vote for someone in my region. If I do, its only one representative and they may not feel the same on certain issues.
- I do not feel comfortable bringing up any subjects at meetings because I am usually the youngest member and I don’t always welcome.
- Just would feel weird talking to someone on the board.
- So far I do not know much about the board, or have heard much about decisions they have made. When are the elections anyways?
- I am stationed in Germany so it would be hard for the board to adequately represent my region however maybe we should look into making a new place on the board for someone that is overseas, and that can provide insight on how to deal with international cavers.
- New member - have not formulated an opinion yet.

## **Land Acquisitions**

The NSS owns several Nature Preserves containing caves. Our Cave and Karst Acquisition and Grant Policy set forth the following as principals for cave and karst acquisition.

The NSS Board of Governors (Board) shall consider acquiring properties for the Society that contain caves, cave entrances, or significant karst features when acquisition Proposals and Management Plans are presented that are in line with purposes of the Society. A cave purchase is a significant commitment of resources, which makes a very visible statement about the Society’s values and the significance of the cave properties we acquire.

The NSS acquires cave properties on a selective and infrequent basis, preferring to support cave conservancies in their efforts to preserve and protect caves and karst resources. The NSS has neither the financial resources to acquire, nor the personnel to manage, every deserving cave property that is a candidate for ownership; therefore the Society must be selective in its acquisitions.

As an alternative to ownership or direct management, the Society generally prefers to award grants and/or provide other support to cave conservancies to assist in their efforts to protect caves and karst resources. Grant requests will be evaluated by the same criteria, with the exception of national significance, as properties considered for NSS purchase.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
5. The current policy is acceptable and should be continued.	4	23	61	<b><u>464</u></b> [1.1]	160	14
6. The NSS should strive to acquire nationally significant caves only if state and regional conservancies are not in a position to do so, or if there are no conservancies in the areas where the caves are located.	7	58	90	<b><u>366</u></b> [0.9]	177	28
7. The NSS has acquired enough caves. Keep what we have but let the state and regional conservancies buy cave properties in the future instead of the NSS.	91	<b><u>336</u></b> [-0.6]	174	64	18	43
8. The NSS should transfer ownership of its Nature Preserves to those state and regional conservancies that are willing to assume responsibility for them.	73	203	<b><u>205</u></b> [-0.1]	159	45	41

Comments:

- What we have seems to work. We have a mix of NSS-owned caves, caves owned by private conservancies (or individual cavers), and many organizational structures. Diversity is the name of the game. What is crucially important is that these various organizations respect each other and cooperate as much as possible.

- I would support the NSS spinning off a new conservancy to hold title to caves the NSS currently owns, or acquires in the future. This would separate the liability matter from the NSS itself, and could also provide a more concentrated management structure to address the unique needs of land management.
- Need all paths for acquisition and preservation of significant caves.
- The best protection is what we give them. State and Federal Agencies are never as dedicated or efficient as the NSS.
- There are always going to be special or unusual cases for which NSS ownership may be the best course of action.
- Ownership also means liability and the attendant risks. Let local persons manage the assets as it removes the NSS from the chain and potential losses and costs. It also lets a local control manage according to their established goals. Big government and its control over local issues are not productive. Should Hawaiian cavers dictate how to manage a New York cave ???? Local control, responsibility and funding are best.
- Most cave properties are probably owned by somebody, and they should have the responsibility for doing what they are able to conserve them or use them as underground storage sheds.
- The NSS can represent a broader base of membership in acquiring caves of National significance. It also demonstrates a physical evidence of what NSS does for Caves.
- 7. Depends on the cave and the situation. Need to stay open to opportunities and best use of limited financial resources.
- The NSS has too many assets for lawyers to go after. The conservancies have only the caves.
- I believe local caving organizations are better able to support through volunteers and dollars the maintenance needed to preserve caves. They are also better able to regulate traffic and change plans as situations change. This assumes each preserve works under a Management Plan approved by all parties.
- I feel that the NSS should be the last step in acquiring the properties after the federal, state, and any conservancies have had a chance at acquiring the properties.
- From a liability insurance standpoint alone, the society cannot afford to own caves. It can and should be a conduit to the local conservancies. We need to divest our caves to local conservancies.
- Local groups most support purchase and are involve.
- The Society should continue to acquire significant karst properties where feasible. It should not divest of properties it already owns.
- When NSS finances permit it, additional worthwhile cave properties should be purchased, even if only as an interim ownership purchase.
- NSS caves should be accessible to all members. Regional groups would tend to be more restrictive.
- It becomes easy for local groups with local agendas and control issues to make it difficult for even fellow NSS members to visit many of these acquired caves.
- This is a very complex issue and I am not sure points 5-8 are a fair assessment of the feedback required to guide the Society.
- Conservancies are better structured to own and manage caves. This was never the NSS mission and it has hurt the society and area conservancies. Most conservancies

are made up of NSS member, thus your taking money from them when you purchase a cave. 7 and 8 conflict with each other!

- If the NSS purchased the Nature Preserves then the NSS should continue to control the property. Many of these “other” conservancies may have hidden agendas that many of the members may disagree with. I also feel that all NSS properties should always be open to NSS members, this may not necessary be the case if other groups control the preserve.
- If it is to the advantage of the NSS and the Cave the NSS should transfer ownership to a preserve that is likely to remain viable for an extended time. There should be an option in the transfer that if the preserve is not able to remain viable, the property should revert back to the NSS.
- Regional conservancies tend to be small cliques of people who sometimes view caves in their care as their personal property.
- NSS funds would be best used where caves at risk that are not subject to ownership by another body.
- Do not sell. Those properties will increase in value through the years.
- Cave ownership/management by local conservancies is the best way to preserve caves where feasible. The NSS should be the purchaser/manager of last resort for exceptional, endangered caves/properties.
- Except for the cave on the NSS office land, the NSS should not own caves. It would be OK for the NSS to acquire a cave and turn it over to a regional conservancy or the Nature Conservancy or similar national conservancy.
- "Being an elected official in New York, I can say that the NSS as a group has an interest in preserving areas that most people might not appreciate except for possibly a link with aquifer recharging. In areas of significant local cave and karst the NSS can and should focus extra resources and opinion to help support local organizations such as the NCC and others in their efforts to preserve. One of the issues with cave preservation is access. It is, I would think, difficult for a national program to manage smaller protected resources scattered throughout the country. Joining with local organizations should facilitate this and keep more people involved. I would think the model used by State, County and Local municipalities to protect sensitive lands might be appropriate to look at.
- I do not think that the NSS should be in the business of owning caves. That is a role for various conservancies. Do not "compete" with the conservancies. Instead, use the NSS funds for other purposes.
- Except for Shelta Cave, the NSS should not own caves. The NSS should acquire caves and then turn them over to a regional cave conservancy group or the Nature Conservancy or other national group. The cost of insurance is too high and the risk to the NSS too great for it to own caves.
- Our goal is to save and preserve caves; we should do that via any means possible. We should strive to preserve and protect them; we should not rely on other organizations whose funding may or may not have caves as their primary preservation target. Also the NSS usually tries to keep them accessible, many other organizations do not. I am an older caver and have seen many caves lost to development, quarrying and permanent closures. We should try to save caves at all costs.

- Other agencies may not have the same policies as the NSS. Some groups gain control of a cave and exclude the general NSS membership.
- I utilize the John Guilday preserve in Franklin, WV, every year to train Boy Scouts in cave conservation. The three caves purchased by the NSS have been well traveled and worn, but it is a safe place for the Scouts and keeps them out of other caves requiring care.
- One of the reasons I continue membership in and support of the NSS is its active policy toward protection of caves and karst environments through its cave acquisition program. Should this change I will reconsider my support of the NSS in favor of the organizations that do make this commitment.
- Not all areas have the benefit of conservancies.
- At times, the NSS will have to step in to get some deals done. One suggestion is for the NSS to work cooperatively with other national level groups such as The Nature Conservancy or other outdoor groups. For instance, TNC partners with Ducks Unlimited on wetland projects, but for different reasons.
- Caves need to be protected!
- Although acquiring significant caves is a laudable goal I see problems in that the Society would then need additional funds to provide liability insurance for these properties. At some point these insurance bills will be taking a significant proportion of our operating budget. I believe it could also make the Society a target for lawsuits. Is the Society does not have significant assets; it would seem that we would be less an object of some law suit seeking money.
- The NSS should not buy so many caves that it puts the NSS in financial trouble as it has recently.
- The NSS should retain the properties they have and SELECTIVELY consider new acquisitions when the need exists and it makes sense. While I tend to agree that most properties should be acquired by local/regional conservancy, there are some significant caves that the NSS should acquire rather than held in trust locally (assuming both organizations agree to the NSS owning the property).
- #8. ...unless the NSS is not able to properly manage or has too much liability in a particular parcel or Preserve; and such conservancy will do as good a job of protecting the cave(s) on the property as the NSS.
- The NSS should continue to acquire caves... as long as the liability of such action does not contain an unreasonable financial burden (i.e., liability insurance).
- re #8, would only transfer ownership of properties if there is a good reason, such as (but not limited to) inability to manage, or financial liability, and the other agencies could do it better.
- The current NSS preserves show a preferential treatment for areas with larger numbers of cavers, but ignore areas with fewer cavers. We western cavers are left to preserve caves through alternative conservancies.
- At least one past cave purchase and subsequent actions in management of that purchase made a joke of the responsibility of the NSS to protect the cave and the unique organisms found there.
- #7 seems to be saying in absolute terms "Do not buy any more caves – period." #7 is at odds with #6. I believe NSS should keep the "buy-caves-if-need-be" option available.

- I strongly support cave purchase as an ideal. However, the NSS has gotten into money problems with this course of action.
- The NSS as a National Organization should strive to assist local conservancies in the acquisition of cave and karst areas. The NSS should get out of the cave buying and cave management business altogether. Resources should be directed at the membership and membership benefits. A separate national organization might be formed to assist in the purchase/transfer of high profile properties to local conservancies or until local forces can be mustered such as the model used by the Trust for Public Land.
- States and Feds do not have a good track record on conservation.
- I think the NSS should hold onto what they have unless the state or regional conservancies can guarantee long term management. I am concerned that state and regional conservancies could become insolvent in the future when the key people who started them move on. The NSS holds a larger base group to guarantee long term care. NSS can coordinate with local groups that are present. If those groups fail then care can default back to the NSS.
- To transfer ownership of caves the NSS already manages would degrade the “values” the society claims to have.
- Transfer only if the NSS is the monitoring body and can re obtain if the caves are not being properly cared for.
- Buy the caves and let the devil take the hindmost! The NSS can and should take an aggressive stance towards cave ownership on a national level.
- With the current number of preserves, I am happy with the NSS managing these caves. But, if we get more, possibly even just a few more, I think it will be hard for the NSS to manage these properties and we should consider giving ownership to Conservancies that have ownership and management as their sole task.
- I agree with the overall policy, when it is fiscally responsible. Acquisitions of unique caves/karst features should not be supported on member donations and debt to the agency. The nature of a national level organization provides a level of management and structure that many state groups may or may not have. Many state and regional conservancies have individual issues confronting them that would be best served by national level oversight.
- Because of the somewhat hostile attitude toward youth groups I mentioned above the acquisition of caves and open for educational purposes, I would prefer State Management of the caves.
- Cave acquisition whether by purchase or lease (by the NSS or any cave conservancy dedicated to caves and cavers) is going to become more important to ensure access and preservation as urban and sub-urban areas sprawl into previously agricultural areas. Properties also become more and more segmented through time making access to large tracts of land difficult.
- These "preserves" belong to the membership at large, and as such; should be managed for their benefit.
- I am concerned about the NSS' practice of closing caves once acquired. I can see no practicality to this practice!
- The regional cave management associations I am aware of perform the role of resource protection & management very well.

- I do not believe that there can ever be too many caves acquired weather it is by the NSS or the various state and regional agencies. All of these organizations have the same goals...to protect and preserve our natural resources.
- With respect to Questions 6 and 7, I feel that the NSS should only look to acquire significant caves when no other options are available. However, it is also very important that the NSS work with and encourage the acquisition of caves by state and regional organizations and to help establish and maintain sound management plans. Many organizations may have the financial resources but they do not have the knowledge base of the NSS as to what should be acquired and how to manage it once it is in possession. This also applies to transferring ownership; we must make sure that those transfers are completed with sound management practices.
- The NSS can never acquire too many caves. However, buying remote and seldom visited sites seems a bit off-message.
- If available and feasible the caves should be obtained for conservation, research, and members use.
- The NSS ownership of caves is a benefit for not only the regional cavers, but nationally as well. For instance, I live in Pittsburgh but am planning to stop by Great X on the way to or from convention. As an NSS member it is easier to arrange access than it would be for me if this was owned by a regional conservancy.
- State and regional conservancies might not always be the best option.
- The decision as to whether to transfer ownership of a cave to another conservancy should not be a matter of policy. It should be done on a case by case basis after reviewing the performance of the proposed conservancy, and after performing detailed due diligence. Also, we should be concerned that if it is transferred to the state, there may be public hearing and eminent domain issues that disappear in the event of development, road widening, etc. We just need to be aware of the risks.
- I like the idea of having the national name and prestige of the NSS attached to the ownership of caves, as that name carries weight that local organizations cannot match. I can easily see the NSS passing management duties to state and regional organizations, but having the stronger and potentially more viable NSS in a position to transfer management to a new organization should the local group fail or disband.
- If a nationally significant cave is up for sale and is "in harms way" and No Regional or State Conservancies have the resources to purchase or there is not a conservancy in the area where the caves are located then the NSS could or should acquire new properties that could be turned over after a conservancy has been formed or resources are obtained to "buy back" the property from the NSS and assume responsibility of the property
- I do not trust that state governments will hold cave resources to the same set of standards that we cavers do.
- State or federal authorities will not have the same priorities as NSS, and will also probably prohibit exploration of said cave properties to NSS members for any caving purposes if property is transferred.
- I feel State Nature Preserves do not do enough research but are simply holding organizations, compared to the NSS.
- It is important for the NSS to be proactive in cave acquisition through any means or partnerships available.

- The state or region may not have the interest in caves that the NSS has. It is best to conserve the caves if the NSS is in a position to do so.
- The society has a difficult situation to balance the protection of caves with the financial resources available. I feel that state and regional conservancies should bear the majority of the responsibility to acquire caves, and I feel that grants given by the NSS are appropriate.
- Attempt to acquire more significant caves when possible but transfer ownership when possible to regional areas when possible for a better hands-on management.
- As long as there are caves and karst areas that need protection the NSS should lead the way in acquisition. If these features can later be transferred to a more able body (State or Federal) then that is an acceptable option.
- The State and Federal agencies have agenda with a somewhat different agenda than the NSS, I therefore feel that it is desirable to have diversified ownership of cave properties, i.e., some privately owned, some owned by the government, some by conservancies and some by the NSS.
- Where NSS has the funds properties should continue to be purchased. Try to get state and regional conservancies to manage the property for us. Where possible NSS should continue ownership and just transfer management responsibilities and costs to state and regional conservancies. The more properties we own the better.
- The NSS should strive to acquire NOT JUST nationally significant caves but any and all caves we can lay our hands on before anything else gets closed. And do something about getting some of the Mexican caves open to common people like me and not people of science. You know what cave I'm talking about.
- I would prefer conservancies to buy caves but the NSS can still buy them.
- Transfer of currently NSS owned and maintained lands should only occur if the local or state conservancies or agencies are willing to abide by NSS or better standards, and proof is available to ensure that the agency or conservancy can adequately self-maintain at that level.
- #8 once you transfer the ownership it's unlikely that your opinion will influence their changes. With the cut backs in so many programs, having the cave best interest will not always an option.
- The NSS should not be in the business of acquiring caves.
- The acquisition of caves is not something that the NSS should make a priority, but it should make it an option, as in the acquisition of Great X. If later, a cave conservancy could purchase the land from the NSS, I see no harm in that happening.
- What ever we have, we should keep. However, our future money will be better spent keeping our library up to date and funding expeditions and educational programs.
- National control to some degree is good.
- This point about cave acquisitions. The NSS and conservancies should first address the insurance issues of purchasing new caves.
- The NSS should NEVER turn over caves to state or other government agencies.
- I think, in situations where significant caves are not getting the proper management, the NSS should evaluate the situation and consider the purchase of the cave if possible and if no other conservancies are taking action.

- Some states do not have the budgets to purchase or annex lands that caves are on. Until a government agency is available to manage a property, the NSS should attempt to gain properties until they can be acquired by the state/ federal government.
- Protection of these valuable resources through ownership should be a priority. Through ownership, you can provide the highest level of resource protection and security.
- Not all state and regional conservancies are in a position to acquire or manage caves.
- In the intermountain region most caves belong to federal agencies and/or mining companies. Caves have been closed or destroyed because by both of these groups. Western states rarely protect these resources due to economics and a feeling that cave conservation is not that important.
- Property purchased by the NSS should be kept by the NSS.
- Any cave that can be purchased is a cave saved, with the proper research on the need to save the cave to be purchased.
- The number one problem that we have in the Western Region is cave access and protection. We have a cave conservancy and we are struggling to buy some caves. Perhaps the NSS could participate by providing some help financially or as negotiator or both.
- The NSS does a better job acquiring and maintaining preserves than many of the local conservancies. Local petty politics occasionally override simple caving.
- I belong to a cave conservancy and understand the cost and management issues. I would encourage acquiring sensitive caves if no other group is going to try and protect them. To keep or transfer NSS ownership would require more discussion as far as I am concerned.
- NSS can never own enough caves. Ownership of caves by a responsible organization such as NSS or SCCI is vital to preserving caves for bats and cavers alike while limiting access to those who will only harm themselves and the cave environment if they have access.
- We control our own destiny here. To maintain availability and to conserve karst regions we may need to intervene.
- Trusting the "State" can be a risky business. Our current administration is a good indicator of this. Some things are best left in private hands, unless some irrefutable covenant can be devised.
- We should look to the FL cave divers for there first hand experience with "loosing caves" due to development.
- NSS should continue to hold these properties under its umbrella as the pre-eminent organization for cave and karst protection.
- It is my opinion that if it is financially feasible to acquire ownership or management of a cave, it is a good thing to do so. This way, there is a standard of management set for these properties. The best scenario in either situation is to allow management to be done locally, by the mentioned agencies, or by private persons or local grottos. This way the properties are managed to a set standard, yet some of the burden of this task load is spread out.
- Who is gonna pay the insurance on the properties?

- #7 There are not enough regional or state conservancies in a position to buy the caves in question.
- Although a financial resource problem to purchase, NSS caves are worth every penny...
- Too much is not enough. And State could place restrictions on cave exploration that would not be good for cavers in general.
- The NSS should keep the properties it has, and consider buying ones that are significant, threatened, and/or lack some other means of protection. Land acquisition is an effective means of protection and it should not be abandoned... it should still be available should the need arise, although it should be used very sparingly. If transferring ownership of a cave will help reduce costs for the NSS, and there are sufficient clauses in the transfer to adequately protect the cave (and allow responsible use), then I see no reason why doing so would be a problem.
- I think the NSS should protect every cave it is able to. Caves are a precious natural resource and need to be protected.
- #7. Why would we say we have enough caves? It is not a matter of the number but a matter of a situation that may arise when we as an organization should intervene and purchase the relevant property. "Enough" is static as we know the future is dynamic and situations may arise that we do not foresee in which a cave needs to be protected.
- #8 State and regional conservancies may not always be the best way to go... we should do what ever best assures the protection of properties in the future.
- Although the concept of acquiring caves by the NSS is a nice idea. I understand the problem of how difficult it is to manage properties, especially when we are really a volunteer organization. Perhaps it is best to let the local cave conservancies own and manage caves. This keeps more interest in a property when there is a personal connection to the land & the cave.
- NSS properties should only be turned over to state and regional conservancies (i.e. The Nature Conservancy) in the event that the NSS no longer has the manpower or desire to manage said properties.
- If we have something never give it up once it's gone I can never be replaced.
- I agree with the policy in that the NSS should not be in the business of acquiring caves, therefore not striving to do so.
- I definitely think that the NSS ownership of caves is and should continue to be a large part of conservationism. Many caves may become closed to study and exploration to NSS members and cavers if these preserves and state governments receive them.
- Let the state have it and it will be closed to everyone.
- You never know what the state might do .They might cut access to it completely.
- Re: 8. if those conservancies can show that they can responsibly take over control, that would be best. Perhaps something in deed saying that ownership reverts back to NSS if conservancy can no longer take care of. Or NSS keeps ownership, but cave is completely managed by the local conservancy.
- Possible Special Interests and Corruption within Government.
- It would seem that transferring caves to agencies that have the resources to care for them would free up resources to help in other areas.

- The NSS should continue to purchase caves on its own, and management of current ones should remain the same. State and regional conservancies have a tendency to change policies without input, therefore affecting the open/closed status of a cave visited by NSS/grotto members.
- I feel that nationally significant caves are better under a larger regulatory body such as the NSS. State and regional conservancies are a great thing, but are much more subject to personal politics influencing decisions.
- While I understand the financial limitations, I trust the NSS to manage caves in a preferred fashion, as opposed to a state or regional agency whose policies may alter negatively at the whim of the current political position. I would prefer to see the NSS manage as many caves as possible.
- I think the NSS should continue the way it is. Please do not turn cave protection over to people that will not be held accountable by cavers that vote.
- I disagree with the NSS owning enough caves I know of some here that need help.
- All properties currently owned by the NSS should be held and the nearest grotto should assume responsibility to insure protection and care for the property.
- If the NSS has the money to buy caves do so and keep them in our possession if possible.
- 7. The state doesn't have as much an interest in protecting caves as the NSS.

9. If, rather than purchasing property, the NSS acquired property through donations, would your answer change?

	Yes	No
Number of Responses	62	628
Percent	91.1%	8.9%

## Publications

The NSS publishes the NSS NEWS, the Journal of Cave and Karst Studies, American Caving Accidents, the NSS Members Manual, Convention Guidebooks, Convention Programs, monographs, and brochures. The next series of questions deals with your assessment of the value of our periodicals and other membership benefits.

The next two questions appear similar. One asks how you value the periodicals and the other asks you to rate their value to the Society.

This publication is valuable to me as a member of the NSS:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
10. NSS News.	1	11	8	240	<b>457</b> [1.6]	9

11. <i>Journal of Cave and Karst Studies.</i>	34	89	175	<u>254</u> [0.6]	156	18
12. <i>American Caving Accidents.</i>	3	13	85	<u>264</u> [1.3]	<b>342</b>	19
13. <i>NSS Members Manual.</i>	5	17	70	<u>278</u> [1.3]	<b>343</b>	13
14. <i>Convention Guidebook.</i>	9	30	184	<u>251</u> [0.9]	187	65
15. <i>Convention Program.</i>	12	36	215	<u>246</u> [0.7]	141	76

Comments:

- The J of C and K studies seems to suffer from academic snobbery.
- At my age, I do not expect to attend convention, thus for me Convention info is not of interest.
- I speak loudly for the Journal of Cave and Karst Studies because it is an extremely important outlet for new scientific studies of caves. However, I consider all of the NSS publications valuable.
- As a cave scientist I find nothing of interest in the NEWS but I generally find the interviews interesting.
- As you can tell by my number I am older than dirt, therefore the things that appealed to me in my youth no longer apply in the same manner. Perhaps some publications could be elective saving the Society the cost of providing them.
- The News and Journal are probably the main things that set us apart from just being a very large grotto.
- Less than 25% of the membership is into science and it is a waste of funds to spend. Let it be an optional subscription for a professional. I doubt that half the members can pronounce or understand the terms of advanced biological or Mineralogical science..... I professional earns his living and needs to afford the costs to earn his living out of his own pocket.
- I think everyone feels American Caving Accidents is fascinating.
- Not interested is depth of presentations.
- *NSS News* is the primary tool for promotion of membership and dissemination of events and news.
- Not being a professional geologist or biologist I find most articles in the Journal to be beyond my interest or comprehension.
- Convention guidebook is most useful to me when it gives specific directions to cave I want to see in the convention area. I totally disagree with the policy to not publish directions to caves, especially to cavers; with the false assumption that these directions would have an overall negative impact in the scheme of things.
- JCKS is seldom of interest to me. It gets recycled.
- Let Louise take the Journal and the local convention support the program and guidebook. Keep the news but consider going to bi-monthly (6 per year) if you

- need to save money. The Members Manual is my most valuable and curated NSS literature; the News I donate to the Texas Speleological Survey after reading.
- The NSS News and the Journal are very valuable to me in that the News keeps me informed as to the latest exploration trips, results of photo contest, Society news, etc. The Journal is that publication that contributes scientific knowledge to the society as well as the science community for the future of speleology to build upon.
  - The Journal is a valuable scientific publication which should be continued and supported by the society. It should be mailed to members whom request it.
  - News provides the "glue" that helps the highly mobile and diversified membership maintain a collective self awareness and mutual set of interests and goals. Likewise, the Member Manual helps us stay in contact, plus find friends anywhere in the world! And the ACA is an essential element for evaluating cave rescue incidents and effective improvements in training of cavers and cave rescuers.
  - I would like to see American Caving Accidents published more frequently.
  - 10. The NSS news is the voice of the NSS. 13. As a grotto treasurer and one responsible for our I/O reports, the Members Manual is a great resource! 14/15. What is a convention with out these?
  - A wonderful suite of publications which should continue. Each is extremely valuable to me as a member.
  - I have read the arguments for the Journal, I have read the Journal and I think it a waste of time.
  - Now too old to attend the Conventions. NSS could save some money if the Mailing Computer could drop Pubs not needed by people requesting specific deletions from their subscriptions.
  - I just got back in after being out of caving for sometime. Not sure I have seen all of these recently.
  - I am only interested in the convention guidebook and program if I actually attend the convention.
  - The guide books are great if you are at the convention; otherwise NOT.
  - I refer to the members' manual frequently.
  - For obvious reasons, the Convention Guidebook is only useful when the convention was local to my caving.
  - Some of these could be combined, eliminated or available electronically to lower costs.
  - The various NSS publications listed above have served as valuable sources of information and references to me for many years. I frequent make use of them to provide information to others on various aspects of caving, karst environments, fauna, etc. The arrival of the NSS News has been and continues to be an eagerly anticipated event in our family. The NSS Members Manual provides a way to locate fellow cavers and make contacts in new areas.
  - The "Journal" could be distributed to only interested parties.
  - As a geologist, I think we should beef up the Journal, perhaps by teaming with some allied societies (GSA, etc) and also should look at ways to get more papers

submitted by those karst researchers that are publishing elsewhere. Those articles could even be simply reprints or summaries of papers. This is a tough issue from funding, editing/publishing and average caver interest aspects.

- I don't make it to conventions.
- The Journal is too scientific for my interest.
- Too scientific to be of value to average member.
- Most of the Journal of Cave and Karst Studies are over my head!
- I agree to 14 and 15 only when I attend those conventions. Otherwise 14) would be neutral and 15) would be disagree.
- #11. This is a very important publication, but not all members need a mailed copy of technical data that is out of their region/area of interest. Maybe these could be accessed on line or by request only.
- I rarely correspond with the membership.
- Although I enjoy leafing through the JCKS, the text of the articles is usually not of much interest to me. It seems to be more targeted to the scientific community, of which I am not a part.
- The convention Guidebook and Program are funded by convention fees and are not a cost burden to the general society. Email addresses can be dropped from the Members Manual and listed on the NSS web page with the owners' permission.
- All the above NSS publications are useful to me.
- The news and Journal are my primary link to the rest of the society and MUST continue to be so. ACA and the manual could more easily be published, and be more readily useful, on line and be updated as new members joined or left and as accidents were reported. Annual statistical summaries and such could be published in the News and likely get a wider audience. Guidebooks and programs are of interest to the convention goers and are only useful to me if I plan on going to that area at some point in the future. That being said, I have purchased a few books from conventions I did not attend.
- The Members Manual should be online, but accessible only by password holding members. Accidents should be a part of the News. Timely reporting of accidents is better than an annual bulletin.
- Don't go to conventions.
- I use them all the time and keep them as references.
- If the convention guidebook and program are COMPLETELY covered by the convention registration fee, then I change my answer to NEUTRAL. However if I, a member who rarely attends convention, am supporting the production of these books, then I do not wish them to be continued.
- The NSS news is the only conduit of information many members see. I would like to see less expedition style caving stories, excepting maybe a specific issue, and more Society news and business. I would be willing to pay more in terms of membership fees in return for more quantity in the News. JCKS is a special interest group publication, while many cavers have an interest in things scientific, many do not need a specialized Journal. Make it a sole responsibility of the scientific groups within the NSS, and give members the options of payment and receipt. Members Manual is quite valuable; I use it quite often, especially to

contact cavers in other locales as I travel to their areas. Maybe take out much of the organizational info. Same with the Convention Guidebook, a valuable resource to regional caving areas. I usually do away with the Convention Program, as it is all abstracts for sessions. Maybe those should be a separate publication and let the program focus on convention activities and information. I usually read the ACA for accident analysis and issues with caves/pits I am planning to visit to troubleshoot/problem solve before hand.

- The members' manual could be every other year and put the awards in an issue of the NSS news.
- I rarely read the Journal.
- A printed members' manual is a waste of money and paper. Why does this information need to be released?
- The ACA (perhaps only by virtue of infrequency) and the members manual could be well served by online publishing, with a choice to receive a paper copy at the actual expense of the publication.
- The convention publication needs to be paid for by the convention committees. Where is the ACA?
- As an amateur caver, this is a pricy publication that I enjoy looking at the pictures, but am clueless otherwise.
- I should not get it unless I want it.
- The Three checked entries are the main reason I am a member of the NSS.
- I believe that the NSS news could be published less frequently, such as every other month to help with expenses.
- I would like the NSS News to address more issues, events, and explorations in the US. Over the past 10 years the News has shifted more toward international news, which I have little interest in, consequently I find myself reading less and less articles from the News.
- #14 - #15 not used so rated lower.
- Always read the news, but wish for fewer international articles.
- I believe that the Members Manual could be published less frequently (every 2 years?) without significant impact. Additionally, some of the information provided could be posted on the internet, thereby reducing the size of the publication.
- American caving accidents is very instructive about what can and should be done for safety and courteous purposes.
- I am not a geologist type, and have no use for the Journal of Cave and Karst Studies. I wish the NSS did not have to spend the money to print and mail me a copy.
- If individual members do not want to receive or read the Journal then the NSS should save the printing and mailing costs. Only send it to those who want it.
- I am a silent member, mainly to support the nature of the NSS, rather than play an active part (especially now that I have 2 small kids).
- Quit wasting my money!! I have no interest in the Journal of cave and Karst studies. Keep sending it, and I will keep putting it in the trash. For the scientific community it is a great journal. Let the members individually elect if they want to

receive it or not. I would rather the NSS use the money it spends on the Journal (in my case) for other needs. The other manuals are a great resource; in this day and age would we not be better putting the members manual in electronic format? If you want a hardcopy print it yourself!!

- JOCKS...boring stuff....but necessary.....I guess. Program...same thing boring but I guess we need it.
- Convention program is only useful if one attends the event. Members' manual allows us to find each other.
- The NSS News is interesting, but with the lack of local articles it is sometimes difficult to make it relevant to the general membership. I have attended about 3 conventions, so it is difficult to judge their importance to me.
- NSS News and JCKS have not reflected much in American cave exploration but have rather concentrated on ""dream trips"" to international places. While this exploration is important to American caving. The overuse of the publications for the foreign scientists may make the average USA caver, who joins the NSS to learn more about their local region, see the NSS as too much like our federal government. The NSS in my eyes does not see much in the activity of USA caving. JCKS is really not that useful to me at this time.
- Due to limited vacation time and the usually long distances to travel to convention, I rarely attend them. Publication of convention related materials should be paid by convention proceeds.
- Journal of Cave & Karst Studies as well as NSS News are EXTREMELY important!!!!!!!!!!
- Very important to be aware of accidents, especially their causes and possible prevention or correction of situations leading to them. Members' manual is very handy when caving out of region for local contacts. Have caved in Missouri and used manual to locate members for cave info.
- The JCKS and News changed me from a "tourist" caver to a caver that is aware of the idea of the cave as ecosystem. A cave is not a playground.
- I do not read my J of CKS and would like to opt out of receiving it.
- Journal of Cave and Karst Studies is for and should be sent to science people that would like to read it. Most of the time don't understand it.
- The NSS news does not have enough about caves and activities in the U.S. The photographers are good, but I feel like many more photographers would like an opportunity to show their work, than the few that are publicized.
- #11 To be frank and I know a lot of people who think the same thing. I don't read it. Save the money and don't send it. *American Caving Accidents* is valuable to me and my group of friends.
- The *American Caving Accidents* is THE MOST IMPORTANT publication of the NSS. The ACA provides the greatest educational and training information to NSS members at this time and should be distributed EVERY YEAR. The Journal has been the source of much debate. Personally, I do not need to see everything that is published there, but I do like to have the reference.
- The publications are what got me and several others I know to join the NSS.
- Although appropriate for many people, the Journal of cave and Karst Studies is not relevant for all cavers. I have read the comments of some on the BOG that

think by forcing this publication on all cavers, maybe some will get some knowledge from it. Looks like a journal of theses mostly. Although, I do try to read the abstracts and see if there is anything I can glean from a particular article. Maybe just a choice as to whether we want to receive it not by a simple check on a box on the membership application.

- I find very little of interest to me in the cave and karst studies.
- I do not read either one of these. Would be good to pick and choose which ones the members would like mailed to them. For me receiving the ones I do not have time to read are a waste of resources.
- The NSS members' manual should be offered in CD-ROM format instead of print to hold down printing & mailing costs.
- All are excellent resources.
- I don't think that I have ever looked thru any of the publications marked disagree.
- Journal of Cave and Karst Studies contains too much technical jargon, making it only readable to people in specialized fields.
- The NSS should save money by sending the JCKS only to members who request it. It is valueless to me and most members.
- The Journal of Cave and Karst Studies is beyond me and way technical for me. On the occasion I do find some small thing of interest.
- The Journal provides a great opportunity to keep up to date with current research in the field, the NSS news provides a great update of events and American Caving Accidents allows us the opportunity to learn from others mistakes.
- NSS Members Manual appears to be an expensive publication. A web site with browse/search function that requires an NSS membership to access would be much cheaper to maintain and insure everyone is accessing the latest information.
- I think the members need to be listed by states or regions!
- Might save the society better if periodicals went to quarterly in stead of monthly.
- I am not currently very active in caving. Journal is still useful to me. I am not surer what you mean by "convention". It could mean "rules" or it could refer to "plans and proceedings" of member conferences. I would find the former more useful than the latter.
- I know that the NSS News is dependent on submissions, however though the articles are not rich in quality. I look to the news to see what's happening, most of the time I read boring I went to China trip reports. We need to push harder to solicit submissions. On the other hand the color photos are great.
- The Journal is too technical for me. I will likely never attend a convention, as it seems to be more of a "beer party" than a cave centered activity.
- Very confusing question. Bad job guys.
- "American Caving Accidents" and the "NSS Members Manual" are indispensable resources for me. I have found several of the other resources very useful.
- I have never been to a convention but I would love to go.
- All these publications are critical in keeping an organization like the NSS together as a group. Without them, we would not know anything about the others following the same interests.
- Would like to see JCKS come out more often.

- If it requires more money to keep the NSS news I am willing to pay more.
- I am more interested in cave diving instead of dry cave info.
- 11 The journal should be sent only to those who request it on their membership. It is too scientific for many. 14/15 have never attended a convention, but have used previous guidebooks when visiting that area.
- The NSS news only concentrates most of their articles on cavers that have been known in the past years. The caves also that are centered on are usually out of the country, and very few in the US. I think that there should be a section in the NSS news about new equipment, lights, clothing... etc... and give a rating on each of these. That would be beneficial to me as a caver.
- 99.9% of my caving is done within the Republic of the Philippines and not the U.S. of A. I maintain a home there with access to thousands of unexplored and explored caves.
- I am in the cave diving section and do not read these publications.
- I enjoy and regularly use all of the publications in one way or another.
- The NSS News still has too much international caving news. Perhaps work together with the grotto newsletter reviewer to develop full stories from those sources. I know hundreds of cavers who come to Kentucky but only a handful with the resources to go to China or South America.
- My husband and I never received the American Caving accidents publication. And we have never been to a Convention.
- The Journal of Cave and Karst Studies is not valuable to me, because I have no background in biology and geology; hence the Journal is technically over my head. The Members manual is of small consequence to me, I think that it could be just as well online and thus saving the printing cost... but this may not make it as useful for some people.
- I have only received #10 and #11.
- Even though I am a member, I have never received the manuals I marked as neutral.
- The NSS news is my way of staying in touch with caving in America and the rest of the world. The Journal of Cave and Karst Studies gives me ideas for what kinds of tests I can try out here.

This publication is valuable to the Society in terms of fulfilling the purpose of the NSS:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
16. <i>NSS News.</i>	2	2	8	243	<b><u>458</u></b> [1.6]	13
17. <i>Journal of Cave and Karst Studies.</i>	3	8	48	277 [1.4]	<b><u>366</u></b>	24
18. <i>American Caving Accidents.</i>	2	5	45	296 [1.4]	<b><u>359</u></b>	19

19. <i>NSS Members Manual.</i>	4	9	53	<u>303</u> [1.4]	<b>333</b>	24
20. <i>Convention Guidebook.</i>	3	23	127	<u>304</u> [1.0]	206	63
21. <i>Convention Program.</i>	4	19	152	<u>289</u> [1.0]	195	67

Comments:

- Oh, come on. If these publications are not valuable to the NSS, why is the Society publishing them? The Journal of Cave and Karst Studies is important to the Society (as contrasted with individual members) because it is the primary justification for claiming that the NSS is a scientific organization. It is the main communication link between the NSS and other scientists and scientific organizations.
- A print copy of "American Caving Accidents" does not, I feel, have to be provided to each member of the Society. The publication should be available on line, and for purchase in print form for those who need it.
- Science professionals are the minority and don't seem to associate with cavers on the same level. Convention guides are nothing more than a chamber of commerce and geology blurb. Let the convention fund its own... let the local business fund the book that will benefit them. How many cavers are going to consult the geology section or biology section .....it's a lofty thought that bears no reality to its audience and makeup.
- Same as above comments. [The NSS News and the Journal are very valuable to me in that the News keeps me informed as to the latest exploration trips, results of photo contest, Society news, etc. The Journal is that publication that contributes scientific knowledge to the society as well as the science community for the future of speleology to build upon.]
- Ditto. [News provides the "glue" that helps the highly mobile and diversified membership maintain a collective self awareness and mutual set of interests and goals. Likewise, the Member Manual helps us stay in contact, plus find friends anywhere in the world! And the ACA is an essential element for evaluating cave rescue incidents and effective improvements in training of cavers and cave rescuers.]
- As above for the Society! [A wonderful suite of publications which should continue. Each is extremely valuable to me as a member.]
- The news and journal are the foundation of the NSS mission.
- Once again, if you are at the convention they are valuable.
- As a non scientist, I find the Journal sometimes unreadable.
- I guess the manual and the accidents could be accessible online. The others need to be hard copy.
- All of these publications are valuable tools that meet the goals of the NSS.
- All publications listed are of essence to the society.
- Essentially the same reasons as above.
- Host organization should be responsible for cost of Convention materials.

- NSS has to establish that it is a scientific society, thus it has to keep JCKS.
- See above comment. [A printed members' manual is a waste of money and paper. Why does this information need to be released?]
- These publications are THE place for publishing the information they contain, and I think are important to maintaining a sense of community in the national organization.
- The convention guidebooks are almost worthless; they have little use in actually finding caves. In fact, why would anyone go to convention to go caving?
- I once heard a comment as to such, The NSS News, also known as the photo albums of Dave, Peter & Ann. Need more frequency on cave accidents publishing.
- I think these are all of vital importance for the NSS to help disseminate information to its membership.
- The membership manual is important to some cavers, such as me and my husband, because we travel and sometimes contact cavers to see where we can go see easy caves. The NSS news I feel it very important.
- The JCKS, along with Convention programming, are what we do to fulfill the science mission in the NSS mission statement.
- The Journal is important if the NSS decides to be a scientific society. Sharing the journal with another group, such and *NCKRI* would be a positive advancement for the Journal. The NSS Members Manual does not only provide the contact information for members that they need, but it is the major way in letting people know about the ""inner workings"" of the NSS. My hope with the Members Manual is that people see it and find some aspect of the NSS that they are interested in and contact committee chairs or section chairs to get more involved. American Caving Accidents- this is to date the best way for people to be informed of cave safety.
- I am in the NSS for the caving not science. As for the membership manual, save the printing and have a searchable online database.
- The NSS members manual should be available online- in a secure area-for members only? Is it already?
- Same answer as above. [NSS Members Manual appears to be an expensive publication. A web site with browse/search function that requires an NSS membership to access would be much cheaper to maintain and insure everyone is accessing the latest information.]
- Again, To (Promote Fellowship) Members need to be listed by states or regions.
- As far as I can tell the convention has little impact in fulfilling the purpose of the Society.
- See above. [Very confusing question – bad job guys.]
- The NSS publishes some of the best cave publications in the world. Items 16-20 are extremely valuable and should be continued.
- It is all about communication and filling informational niches. Who else would publish the "Journal". Despite the fact that it is beyond the interest of many (perhaps most?) NSS members it is important to make available the latest scientific studies on caves etc.

- I do not read these publications.
- The NSS news has helped me educate people on base about caves, and why we protect them.

### NSS Services

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following: The following services are valuable to me as a member of the NSS:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
22. NSS periodicals.	1	9	55	<b><u>337</u></b> [1.3]	307	17
23. NSS Bookstore.	2	19	105	<b><u>387</u></b> [1.1]	189	24
24. NSS conventions.	3	21	174	<b><u>291</u></b> [1.0]	191	46
25. NSS Library.	4	31	202	<b><u>308</u></b> [0.8]	132	49
26. NSS Audio-Visual Library.	9	32	229	<b><u>292</u></b> [0.7]	102	62
27. Local grotto.	4	18	102	208 [1.3]	<b><u>359</u></b>	35
28. Regional activities.	1	11	133	<b><u>304</u></b> [1.1]	241	36
29. Office services and staff availability.	7	25	218	<b><u>282</u></b> [0.7]	111	83
30. Museum.	16	46	<b><u>295</u></b> [0.4]	201	56	112

#### Comments:

- See last comment. [At my age, I do not expect to attend convention, thus for me Convention info is not of interest.]
- I ranked the Library and the Museum low because I have no effective mechanisms for making use of them.
- I have never seen anything about an NSS Museum. And there is no Grotto in south Florida.
- Maybe things have changed, but years ago when we tried to borrow slide shows for the grotto meetings, they were always "out" - not available. So we gave up trying.
- These services are the Society.
- I only wish I went to more conventions, alas. I do not use the bookstore, staff or museum and would cut there if possible.

- Local Grottos are where the action and excitement are (I hope)! This is especially important for the initial/continuing contact with new/existing cavers, relationships with local public, press, and land owners, etc. It also includes the essential and strong imprinting of safety, conservation, techniques, self responsibility, mutual reliance, and other critical values and skills. Conventions and Regional events provide the broadening and diversity across the membership, including the valuable lesson that their Grotto is not the only, or even best, action! ;-)
- 26. Our grotto uses these resources all the time
- Factions in local grottos make it uncomfortable for many to attend meetings. In our area to majority of local NSS members not to mention local cavers do not attend grotto meetings.
- Local Grottos collectively are the heart of the organization, and care needs be exercised to assure cooperation rather than competition between them and other groups.
- I believe that one should not have to belong to a grotto to go caving. Local grottos are ok; however, I choose to cave with others cavers that I feel comfortable with. It happens that many of these cavers live in different states.
- The NSS library is not in a convenient location for me and does not have a good online index.
- What museum--what local grotto?
- I was not aware we have a museum.
- What museum?
- I would like to see a much greater emphasis on expanding the Library and in building a permanent Museum. In this regard, you may wish to review "Attachment P" to the NSS/NSF contract (which Paul Stevens and I spearheaded a few years ago).
- Where is the museum?
- Personally speaking, I am not interested in spending my personal vacation time going to conventions. I have been to 3 conventions. Two in Texas, one in California.
- I live in the Tidewater area of Virginia. The local Grotto is small and not very active due to the distances required to get to quality caves or caving activities. I was more involved when I resided in the DC area with DC Grotto and PSC.
- As I live a long distance from NSS activities, some of the above services do not relate to me.
- Have not used the library resources, rarely use the AV resources, and probably would not get much use from a museum.
- The Western Region claims to represent the state of Nevada. In the past fifteen years they have nothing (literally nothing) to advance the goals of the NSS in my state.
- I have not availed myself of #28-30 (once 15 years ago of #29). This says something about me, not necessarily about those services. Were I living nearer to Huntsville, I am sure I would avail myself of #25, 26, & 30.
- These are basic functions and activities of the NSS. They are invaluable to me as a cave person.

- Never used or intend to use/see in the future.
- The NSS office is a LONG ways from here.
- I have never interacted with the museum.
- My local grotto is dysfunctional and therefore of no value. The region is not as dysfunctional, but it is only hosts a big party twice a year. NSS needs to figure out how to share the burden of its library (paper and audio-visual) with other like-minded organizations. It is too much for the NSS and there is only a part-time librarian and this is NO curator. Some of those materials in the library require curation. Find an organization to partner with.
- AS I wrote above local my grotto does not welcome cavers such as myself who volunteer with Boy and Girl Scout Groups!
- I am sure these things are valuable to others, and that is fine. I personally am unable to use them due to my geographic location.
- As an individual I have never accessed the libraries.
- Those reasons which I have marked "strongly agree" are the main reasons I joined the NSS in the first place, and why I decided to become a life member.
- I do not participate in local activities or live close enough to visit the NSS facilities.
- Never had a need for museum or office services.
- I feel the library and museum can be a great resource for members who are interested in history and research. Our grotto has used the audio-visual library before, and I feel that it can be a good way to see things not in our region that I personally may want to visit some day. Office staff, and board members, should know the benefits that are offered to the membership. Recently I had to contact Alamo and fix the problem of the NSS discount being dropped accidentally since no one at the NSS seemed to have a clue, some I contacted did not even seem to know that the NSS had an agreement with Alamo. It would also be nice to communicate with the membership on a yearly basis the discounts, etc that have been provided to the NSS. During my communication with NSS board and office people, I found out we can get a credit card and there is a travel agent available for those who want one.
- Museum??? In about 100 to 150 years from now.
- Is there actually a museum?
- I have never had a chance to use these services.
- I feel certain areas and a vast majority of "unknown" cavers are left out literature put out by NSS.
- What museum???
- I do not believe we are part of any region, not do I understand what value, if any, a regional entity has.
- As a member I was unaware the NSS had a library, an audio-visual library or a museum.
- No experience with library or museum
- The local grottos allow for me to easily get in contact with local cavers when I'm in a new area.

- These things all support our cause, and give us information as needed. All are valuable services.
- As far as I can tell the convention has little impact in fulfilling the purpose of the Society.
- #27 The local grotto is not very active or organized for caving trips or get togethers.
- All of the grottos in my area are more than an hour or two away so I am not active in any of them; however, I find several in my area to be more secret societies than clubs.
- I have no relationship with the NSS beyond the local and regional groups.
- The bookstore is one of the only places to centrally find good cave books. If at all possible, it should be expanded.
- 30. What museum??
- I am nowhere near the NSS so the Bookstore/Library/etc are of little consequence to me.
- The Library looks like it will be MUCH more useful once the Ebooks are operational (especially for a busy student like me).

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following: The following services are valuable to fulfill the purpose of the Society:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
31. NSS periodicals.	2	4	23	<u>329</u> [1.4]	<b>335</b>	33
32. NSS Bookstore.	5	12	69	<b>383</b> [1.2]	218	39
33. NSS conventions.	3	9	52	<b>331</b> [1.3]	294	37
34. NSS Library.	2	10	63	<b>354</b> [1.2]	249	48
35. NSS Audio-Visual Library.	2	13	87	<b>357</b> [1.1]	213	54
36. Local grotto.	3	8	50	<u>288</u> [1.4]	<b>340</b>	37
37. Regional activities.	3	8	75	<b>340</b> [1.2]	255	45
38. Office services and staff availability.	5	10	107	<b>349</b> [1.1]	186	69
39. Museum.	7	30	185	<b>284</b>	133 [0.8]	87

Comments:

- What museum. And how would it be better than at ACCA or Cincinnati MNH?
- An extremely poorly designed question set -- had to scroll way too far to the right to see all the choices.
- What is valuable to me is valuable to the society. The membership is the society.
- 39. Limit historical collections to special interests (e.g. vertical section) or to local museums of natural history.
- Again, I do not use many of your services and therefore cannot truly support them. I agree a strong staff is necessary to support the Board but not to be available to the membership except for keeping up with dues, moves and trends.
- Ditto. [Local Grottos are where the action and excitement are (I hope)! This is especially important for the initial/continuing contact with new/existing cavers, relationships with local public, press, and land owners, etc. It also includes the essential and strong imprinting of safety, conservation, techniques, self responsibility, mutual reliance, and other critical values and skills. Conventions and Regional events provide the broadening and diversity across the membership, including the valuable lesson that their Grotto is not the only, or even best, action! ;-)] And there is a key distinction. "We" the NSS as a whole are dramatically unlike other organizations, especially "business models!" We are People and Family, not factories, products, wealth, or various organizational structures! And the mutual synergy, joy, power, and achievement all rely on each of the above supporting resources, as a body relies on life blood, with a Heart!
- Where is it? Items are displayed at convention but that is the only access most cavers have.
- Where is the museum? Items are displayed at convention but that is the only contact most cavers have.
- Cost and overhead to maintain some of these services need to be weighed against their benefits to the NSS and its members.
- These are all things the NSS should be providing.
- See above.
- The above serve core functions for the NSS.
- Same as above.
- NSS is a scientific society. It needs a library, it needs a meeting, and it needs a journal. However, costs being what they are, NSS needs to find a partner(s).
- My local Grottos are not in favor of us who work as volunteers with local Scout Groups. When I meet cavers for other Grottos from other areas of the country I get the comment that NSS needs more volunteers like me and my caving partner.
- The local grottos are falling apart due to lack of new members.
- Loose the voice mail during business hours.
- I believe that the museum could serve as a good education tool. However, I do not believe that it is an important education tool for our members. It is only useful to share with non-society members. If it is not promoted or easily accessible to the general public then the purpose is greatly reduced.
- Do we have a second museum?????
- I believe that National Conventions are valuable only when they are held in areas that have substantial numbers of caves. No MI No Maine....

- No experience with library or museum
- The local grottos are the heart of the organization, providing a venue for cavers to meet and explore their caving interests.
- As far as I can tell the convention has little impact in fulfilling the purpose of the Society.
- These are critical resources for an organization such as the NSS.
- Didn't even know there was an NSS museum.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following: I am satisfied with my access to the services provided by the NSS office.

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
40. NSS periodicals.	1	3	41	<b><u>370</u></b> [1.3]	273	38
41. NSS Bookstore.	0	6	81	<b><u>374</u></b> [1.2]	212	53
42. NSS conventions.	0	15	112	<b><u>345</u></b> [1.1]	185	69
43. NSS Library.	6	39	157	<b><u>302</u></b> [0.8]	132	90
44. NSS Audio-Visual Library.	5	26	167	<b><u>294</u></b> [0.8]	127	107
45. Local grotto.	6	14	95	<b><u>301</u></b> [1.2]	258	52
46. Regional activities.	3	10	113	<b><u>329</u></b> [1.1]	201	70
47. Office services and staff availability.	4	23	179	<b><u>270</u></b> [0.8]	134	116
48. Museum.	13	48	<b><u>247</u></b> [0.5]	190	71	157

Comments:

- As above; what museum? I have been much involved with the ACCA and Cincinnati Museum but have never been asked by NSS to help with a projected or existing museum ( I am a Fellow, CE, and Science Award holder + life member).
- The Arizona Regional (ARA) is out of control and drive off most of the active cavers who are not willing to put up with the "clan" type atmosphere at meetings and with interchange of information.
- Not much use to me.
- I support but have not used the NSS since the 1994 Texas Convention.
- I would like to know what is in the museum.

- Being in Indiana I do not get to the materials often. The nearest grotto is over an hour drive and meeting in the evening which conflicts with my work schedule.
- Make the library available on the net.
- Hard to get to the Museum (wherever it is other than at the Convention) or Library when one lives 1500 miles away.
- Museums too far away from NY! Can we take items out of the audio visual library?
- Regional activities for the OH/KY/IN area are not announced and may be non-existent as far as I know museum is located an 8-hour drive away in a office that is not open on weekends so is pretty much inaccessible to me.
- The NSS office would be better located in a more central, more member accessible and appropriate location, such as the Mammoth Cave region. An NSS museum would be better located there.
- As a busy father of three kids in grade school and sports, etc., we find it difficult to get to the conventions due to busy summers, long travel distances, and overall cost. Registration for a family of five is usually hundreds of dollars before travel and other costs. Site selection has sometimes been an issue: I bet Huntsville will be hot in July.
- Where is the museum?
- I am uncertain how to access the actual holdings of the libraries. The last time was pre-internet days. The access was by telephone and U.S. mail. Surely some aspects have been accelerated via E-mail. As indicated elsewhere, I live inconveniently distant from the museum. I do not even know what is there.
- Difficult to learn how to gain access to Library and museum.
- People have to physically visit the library to fully use it. This is a problematic no matter what NSS does with its library.
- Again it the attitude problem I encounter with members of the local grottos.
- It would be most helpful to develop at the very least some sort of online index of library contents. A DVD (for sale) with all back issues of the News and JCKS with images, searchable text, references would be wonderful. The NSS has the resources in the library, but most members have little opportunity to utilize it.
- Where is the museum?
- Loose the voice mail during business hours.
- While our Grotto was listed with the NSS, in the past few years, the communication with Grotto Staff was NEVER addressed.
- See above: geographic location is the reason I do not use these things.
- Never seen the libraries - don't know what they contain - don't know how to check anything out.
- I did not know we had a museum.
- I have not tried to obtain access to documents in the library or from the AV-Library, however, I believe these resources should be available to all members. The office staff is the first personal contact with members and others. The staff has always been helpful and pleasant. NSS publications should be available regularly and on time.
- I rarely get return calls or emails from NSS unless I owe money.

- On a local level the NSS does not do that much.
- Where is this museum, anyway???
- The A/V Library has missing and damaged items.
- No experience with library or museum.
- When I first go into caving and contacted the local grotto I felt and WAS put out and treated like an outsider. I still am to this day. I did realize that there are other grottos out there that were more than happy to take me in and help me in any way they could.
- Periodicals need to go to quarterly instead of monthly.
- As far as I can tell the convention has little impact in fulfilling the purpose of the Society.
- Living in Canada reduces ability to participate.
- Too far away...
- I am unaware of any "office services", library (both audio and written), regional activities etc. There is not enough promotion of these additional services nor is there enough info on how to utilize them.
- I don't access as many resources as I should. I still believe they are important.
- I didn't know there was a NSS museum.
- Not enough information is given on how to access the NSS Libraries.
- I have been unable to attend a conference since I have been a NSS member because the conferences are so far away. Also, the grottos and museum is too far way from my location.
- Never personally used the Bookstore, attended a convention, [or] used the NSS Library or Audio Visual.
- I think that some of the library should be accessible through a website with password protection! Also if this is already possible I don't know about it!!
- After several inquiries for items from the NSS Library, local grottos, and regional activities, all with no response whatsoever, I would have to say that I am very disappointed in those activities. I would have to say that it is disgraceful when one can get more information and cooperation from non-cavers, the US Forest Service, and the Department of Natural Resources than from the people that do this for a living or hobby. Sad when the local volunteer fire dept helps more than the local grotto.
- The largest factor in my disagreement is distance that I must travel for access.

## **NSS Office**

The NSS office is in Huntsville, Alabama, adjacent to the NSS Shelta Cave Nature Preserve. Housed within the building are the office, the Bookstore, the Audio-Visual Library, and the NSS Library. An additional building, on Cave Avenue, is owned by the Society and used for archival and bookstore storage. Space is not available for developing an NSS Museum, based on the items collected over the decades.

It is generally accepted that the facility is "full." There is some ability to expand and there is vacant land that might be used for future expansion.

Ignoring financial concerns, please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
49. Make no significant changes to the existing facilities.	35	<u>246</u>	<b>261</b> [-0.3]	74	20	90
50. Prudent expansion to existing facilities should be undertaken as required.	7	19	79	<b>459</b> [1.0]	112	50
51. The NSS office facilities should be relocated but kept in the same region.	38	166	<b>352</b> [-0.3]	45	12	113
52. The NSS office facilities should be relocated to another part of the country.	98	<u>214</u> [-0.6]	<b>288</b>	19	13	94
53. The NSS office facilities should continue to be housed together	0	12	<b>151</b>	334 [1.0]	170	59

Comments:

- If it ain't broke, don't fix it.
- A museum is great but does not have to be all encompassing to fulfill its purpose. NSS Office facilities should be improved as needed and kept with the main NSS facilities so long as it can function efficiently in that location. If the staff feel relocating is better suited to their needs then their opinions should have more weight in the consideration.
- The current office site is reasonably close to the center of population of the society and of caving activities.
- The NSS Office and Library should remain in Huntsville.
- If it ain't broke don't fix it ... The NSS address has been known so long that it would not be productive to change.

- As with most businesses/entities of any merit, it might be more convenient to have a main branch with perhaps smaller regional or even international branches, as do some art museums, etc.
- Organizations must be willing to change and expand.
- 49. If the facility is not adequate to maintain society services, need to expand.
- We must improve our facilities to meet the needs and expectations of our members.
- I think the location is fine and should stand. If you need to expand and can get a large grant to do so, then go for it. All non-profits must expand or die.
- There is no reason to relocate to another region of the USA. The offices have served us well at their present location.
- The land is not that valuable, we cannot afford a move.
- Properties in the immediate area should be acquired as needed to expand the NSS facilities. Huntsville is a logical location that is accessible to the majority of the NSS membership population...and is in a cave-dense location as well. Movement of these facilities to an unpopulous remote location would be ludicrous.
- Q49: As the society grows, we need to expand. I support a museum. Q52: I see no reason to take on the expense of relocation at this time. This location is much better than the basement in Virginia.
- re-49: Is always a good idea to shore up older infrastructure.
- The library could burn up at any time. The money spent on Great X should have been used to protect our library first!
- Keep the NSS office at its present location (Huntsville). If any expansion is needed to the existing facilities then do it.
- Comments about the facilities and museum may be more relevant, after the next convention for many of us who have not yet seen them. It seems more expensive to move the facilities unless there is a good reason to do so.
- We went through this fight at least twice before.
- I like the office where it is. My only concerns with expansion, are 1 concern for Shelta Cave, and overlying structures, and financial.
- Huntsville is OK for an NSS office.
- The office needs a fire prevention system. Surplus book store stock should not be kept in the library. Cave files should be moved from Bloomington to Huntsville.
- 50) A wise financial decision should be made which compares the long term costs of relocation,(which is not restricted to the region it is currently in,) expansion of current facilities, renting space, splitting office facilities etc... Can expand facilities only when ample money is available.
- Improvements need to be made for fire prevention. The office needs a sprinkler system. Surplus materials and book store stock should be housed separately instead of being stored in the library. The cave files should be moved from Bloomington to Huntsville.
- Expand the building we have; it is cheaper to add on the existing facility than to move. It is a great location and they should be kept together.
- As the NSS grows, the office must grow.
- It was a sad day when the NSS moved out of the DC area!

- Make appropriate changes as agreed by the Board or cease to remain a viable and growing organization. If this means improving the Huntsville facilities, the mission should not be to hide from issues, but to define the needs then find a way! We elect the BoG to drive this process.
- Any relocations should be on a cost trade out basis. Old facility sale and new facility purchase costs should be approximately equal to keep overall costs down.
- As I stated above, the Mammoth Cave region would be much better location for the office/museum. It would also be a better place to raise public awareness of the society.
- Changes should be made as needed for services to continue or improve. A more central location in the region might be helpful. Chattanooga maybe.
- Is there a more centralized location option in a bigger city such as Nashville, Louisville, or Indianapolis that has a large caver base, big airport, interstate cross-roads and lots of other intrinsic administrative support?
- I have never been there and probably never will, thus I cannot assess these problems.
- I believe that if the facilities are in need of change or expansion this should be done. I also believe that, if at all possible the facilities should remain where they are.
- Cost aside, I feel the facilities should remain together insofar as practical. I believe separating them will only increase overhead costs.
- I feel it would be a crime to move to a new region and disrupt the lives of our dedicated staff.
- The facility is aging and the needs of the Society will continue to grow.
- Handle it.
- Placing a museum or other higher profile facility near a major commercial cave property (e.g. Mammoth) might improve awareness.
- I do not have specific recommendations. However, if the general opinion of the B.O.G. that the facilities are "full", I would not rule out some sort of expansion or even a change of location for some of the facilities.
- I do not see a need to move the facilities.
- If the NSS facility must expand then so be it. To relocate would only serve to add needless additional cost to the society and its membership.
- The office should be in a central part of the country.
- The question here is really "Are the current location and facilities serving our members?" Probably not. I find it difficult to believe that cavers from California spend much time in the NSS office. NSS needs a central location, maybe not central, one that is easy to get to, with a facility to match its needs. A location relatively near a major airport.
- I think the NSS Offices should be moved to a more central location. Especially if expansion is needed for cost effective reasons. Huntsville is fine, although I have never visited the NSS offices.
- I am from the Huntsville area so of course I would like the office to stay handy. I do think that its location atop Shelta Cave is not good for its preservation. Nor is the possibility of sinkhole creation due to collapse of this huge void going to help

the longevity of present NSS facilities, Moving it to an area that neither threatens (or is threatened by) caves is recommended.

- What would be the reasoning behind the expense of moving?
- Do not abandon Huntsville. It's our home.
- "Reasonable" changes or expansion should be considered. Having a good place to work (paid or volunteer) is key to having a smoothly operating organization.
- Expand if you need it - you are professionals!
- One would have to justify such a move.
- The number of caves surrounding the NSS facilities where it is located now is unlike anywhere in the country. So still close to the ones (caves) that you protect.
- The facilities should be expanded to allow for museum space and other space as needed for successful administration of the society. Whether the facilities remain where they are or are relocated depends on how best the needs can be met.
- I believe the NSS office should remain where it is and the existing facilities should be used for further expansion. This to me is the logical thing to do.
- I would prefer to see an expansion and upgrading of the existing facilities than to pay for the costs of relocation. No matter what part of the country the office is located, individuals that are not within easy access will have an issue with it. I personally have never been to the NSS office, so from that perspective, I do not care where it is located. I think Huntsville is a reasonable and somewhat central location as compared to the NSS membership. I hope there is not discussion of relocating to Carlsbad, where it would be far less accessible to more of the membership than it is now.
- While I live no where near Alabama, it is a good central location for the NSS.
- Centralize the location to reduce administrative costs, and expand as necessary for administration.
- The NSS office is located in one of the most cave prolific areas of the country. I feel that it is close to the heart of what caving is about because of that. It will incur additional expense to move it should that decision be made.
- If you grow you have to enlarge, you might think of locating closer to the middle of the U S.
- Keep overhead/office costs at minimum. If there is more space, it will get filled - and costs will rise.
- There needs to be expansion to house the museum, and also upgrades are needed to protect the resources that the NSS library contains. I think trying to give away the Library was a total fiasco. I was wondering who was sleeping with whom to get that deal rolling. It obviously was NOT what the MEMBERSHIP of the NSS wanted.
- Make needed changes when deemed necessary.
- The existing infrastructure (including local employees) has proved itself time and again. To relocate to an arbitrarily chosen location for the sake of more space would be ludicrous. Stay where we are and add on as needed.
- Having the office based in the heart of caving country is important to me living in Alabama myself. Not to be selfish, but the location along with the adjacent Shelta cave is a strong selling point for the NSS. Keep a good thing as is, please.

- I feel the TAG region is the most active caving region in the U.S. Why would you move the NSS offices out of that region?
- I would like to see the NSS built a new facility on the land they already own in Huntsville.
- The NSS office facilities should be relocated to another part of the country.
- Options to items 50 & 51 should be equally compared taking into account moving expenses.
- I think I could answer these questions better after seeing the facilities at the 2005 Convention. However, if expansions or improvements are needed to keep historical documents safe, then prudent expansion should be undertaken. I see no need to move the facilities.
- No location will satisfy everyone. Keep current location and expand facilities as need and resources permit.
- I think expansion should always be considered if the need is there.
- It does not seem prudent to relocate office staff or materials great distances. If another building is close by it seems that dispersing materials would be a way of conserving artifacts in case of fire.
- The office is of little use to the cavers in the rest of the country.
- NSS should stay in the heart of TAG, this is after all where the most prolific caving in the country is located.
- I know of no reason to expand. [sic]
- If the offices are moved they should always remain in a karst area that is often visited by cavers. The existing location seems ideal but change is sometimes good.
- They are fine where they are.
- We need a museum.
- If changes need to be made in order to improve quality of services, then we should make those changes!
- Leave the office at or near its current location. The cost of moving the office will out weigh the change in location.
- I think moving the NSS office from its current location would be a disgrace to the founding members and their vision of the NSS.
- I think some type of regional office would be more accessible.
- Agreeing with #49 is a formula for stagnation.
- Expand facilities as resources allow. Look for relocation to a more accessible location, i.e. close to major airport.
- I may be biased on this as I live reasonably close to the offices. It would be a good goal for the society to plan for updating the NSS facilities, potentially one that could serve current as well as future needs. Sort of a multi use facility, to include a large presentation room that could also be leased out for banquets and such.
- The location of the facilities is perfect for most NSS members.
- Adding on may produce more income from a museum to then use that income elsewhere, especially if everything is housed together.

- This would be a judgment I feel should be left to the folks that work there. They know their needs best. If they need more space, build it.
- I live here.
- This is a National organization, with technology today, we could feasibly operate certain functions from anywhere in the country.
- If existing facilities work, use them and add on if necessary. Keep the NSS facilities in the USA and keep things were they the work best.
- Personally, I would like to see NSS facilities moved to Bowling Green, KY or other property close to Mammoth Cave National Park, but realize the financial improbability of that ever happening.
- If there is room and need for expansion to continue archiving and learning about caves then by all means.

### Conventions

Currently, NSS Conventions are hosted by a volunteer group of cavers, and thus are held each year in a different location around the country each year. The registration fee for NSS Members runs between \$125 and \$150, and includes all the guidebook, program, sessions and salons, the Howdy Party, Wednesday night party, the Slide Salon program, final Banquet, and camping. A 30% discount is offered to new NSS Members for their first convention. We would like to increase convention attendance, and the appeal and value of conventions to members.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
54. The conventions should continue to travel around the country.	0	5	45	<u>310</u> [1.4]	<b>347</b>	19
55. Conventions should be held in the same place every year.	258	<b>350</b> [-1.2]	83	3	1	31
56. Conventions should rotate between a few (perhaps 2 to 4) specific locations, one in each part of the country.	99	<b>284</b> [-0.5]	204	75	21	43

Comments:

- I like having the Conventions in different locations, involving different groups of volunteers. Limiting it might easily run out of will volunteers!
- Vive la difference!
- In question 56 above, the number of locations should be no fewer than four. Two is too few.
- For the size of NSS conventions, the venue should change. 2-4 venues are not enough for the size of an NSS convention.
- Save wear and tear on caves by revisiting suitable places across the country over and over again.
- Why only discounts to new members? What about old retired professional cots like me, having one of the lowest member numbers I usually see in the bulletins.
- Geographic variety is a must for a national organization.
- 55. - 56. Do we want to expand the WV OTR into the NSS convention?
- The quality of the convention experience varies too much by holding it in a different local each year.
- A large part of the appeal of conventions is the excuse to visit different areas of the country. Maine and the U.P. are good examples. Also, people would get burned out in the specific locations after a couple of conventions.
- Rotating locations gives youth and economically disadvantaged an opportunity to attend. It also provides access to local caves not usually seen by out-of-state folks.
- If conventions are held in the same place year after year then people would become "bored" with the site and tend to not go to the convention.
- It is important and useful to expose the membership, to the extent feasible, to as many localities as possible. Limiting venues to one or a few also risks "burning out" local hosts.
- Convention should rotate so staff can be found.
- Strongly disagree with allegation "...and thus.." statement above. The primary reason for rotating the Convention to various places has been that it provides a far more significant benefit - the ability to explore those many different areas, their caves, and their cavers! A single location, or just a few, would lose this remarkable advantage.
- The variety of present locations in which conventions are held is a plus and should be maintained as is. Trying to host a convention in one spot (or two) would be detrimental to the local caves in that area and not advantageous to the convention attendees from the various regions.
- Permanent staff would be needed.
- 54. Extremes in locations should be avoided. 55. No! It quickly wears out local resources. 56. Many more locations but only between the east and west mountains.
- Variety is what should keep the membership strong and active. Why would members of an organization that explores cave want to be in the same place year after year?
- Having the conventions traveling to different parts of the country allows one to visit caves that they may never have the chance to see. Also, having the

- convention in different parts of the country allows people living in those areas a better chance to attend the convention.
- It is too much work for any group year after year. Also it showcases caves across the country.
  - Impact to local caves should be considered. An ideal convention site might be within 1 to 2 hours from several caving areas thus lessening impact to any one area.
  - The conventions being in different places and parts of the USA Gives cavers a chance to see and learn about other areas, caves and cavers.
  - An informal rotation of East, Central, West was the best idea but availability of hosts dictates when and where most of the time.
  - Use of the same location makes it difficult for some members to attend.
  - Conventions are an excellent way of seeing various cave areas around the country, and occasionally showing off ours.
  - For maximum participation, not to mention nationwide (hopefully positive) publicity, conventions need to rotate.
  - Conventions have introduced cavers to regions they would never otherwise have visited.
  - Conventions Are the way that New and younger members realize the value of membership, by putting them in one place it would limit, by sheer cost of travel, the number of younger members attending.
  - Conventions have brought cavers to parts of the country they would never visit otherwise.
  - Moving the conventions is one of the greatest things; really would a lot of cavers really have traveled to Iowa or to Mass to cave if not for a convention?? It gets more cavers to know regional geography and geology; learn about the different areas we travel to. This is one of the best things about the NSS!!
  - Every part of the country should have an opportunity to host a convention.
  - Due to the diverse membership of the NSS, the conventions need to service as many as possible. I attend when they are local to me...WV, VA
  - Diversity, diversity.... Also, why saddle 2 to 4 regions with the humongous volunteer job of hosting conventions all the time?
  - Varied locations with different types of caves and geology keep conventions interesting.
  - Different places, different faces.
  - We keep reinventing the wheel every year, and as someone who has been involved with caver and other conventions, I believe we need to have more NSS staff involvement in basic issues such as registration, etc.
  - Having 4 main locations or regions could result in better long-term planning. I strongly suggest that these locations be in major cave and caver concentration areas, with the occasional convention somewhere else to keep the mix fresh. A convention in the UP of Michigan is not in a cave area. There also needs to be some attention to facilities and simple comforts like a swimming pool and decent camping. Conventions need to be easy to access via interstate or airports. Cost and value is always an issue."

- Conventions would be more interesting and intriguing if they are held in unique places each time and never the same. I believe that is the way it has always been done. I have only been to one convention, but if I planned to go to many then I would want them to each be different.
- Conventions need a variety of locations and choices for caving trips
- I think that the traveling conventions give more cavers a chance to attend.
- One of the features I look forward to is attending a convention in a new location.
- 56) Is there a proposal for this? If there were long term benefits for fixed sites then the answer would be "Agree"
- I enjoy the chance to show my kids new places around the country.
- The growing difficulty in finding locations may require that the NSS find regular locations in different regions to ease the work load of the Convention Committees
- I would not attend if it was in the same place every year and the impact on the caves would be too great. I would also be unlikely to attend if the rotation was a small number of locations. Visiting different parts of the country is a very big reason I attend conventions.
- #56. Two locations most likely would not do it for me. I live in NJ and sometimes will go to convention if it is fairly close. I believe a lot of members (especially first-time convention goers) need to have a less than ten hour drive.
- Conventions rotating between 5 to 10 specific locations would work for me.
- 2-4 locations are not enough, but the annual rotation of a planning committee can cause its toll in reinventing the wheel, etc.
- By varying the site across the country, it allows members in different states to attend. If the site was constant or only varied slightly, I think many would either have to save up for one convention trip or avoid it entirely.
- The idea of moving the conventions around the country is to showcase new areas and people. To keep the conventions in the same place would mean stagnation and over the long run a decrease in convention attendance.
- The current system works and is interesting. Increase attendance in other ways.
- Variety in caves and local is what makes it an "special adventure" each time
- Having different sites does the following: (1) distributes the workload of hosting the convention; (2) allows conventioners to see different parts of the country in general and cave/karst areas in particular.
- While there was a period with few or no bids, they have picked up which is a good sign. Go to a few sites only if volunteers are completely exhausted. Maybe an alternative would be to try to keep moving it around as we do now, but have a "bail out" site that can be activated when needed. To keep the work load down for local volunteers, as many routine things like registration should be automated or "packaged," although I know convention chairs like to do things there own way. But if we can reduce time costs for potential convention committees, we might encourage more to volunteer.
- The current method of changing the NSS convention every year best serves variety and the spotlighting of different cave areas each year.
- I think the current convention program works OK.
- Don't be absurd caves aren't just in a few locations keep traveling

- should rotate the location or a further lack of attendance will happen
- Local conventions should be encouraged. Rotation helps all members feel represented by the society.
- Caves should be nearby.
- I think that rotating to a few sites (perhaps 2 to 4) nationwide would help to hold down costs and reduce the work of putting on a convention since the facilities will be the same each time the convention returns
- The conventions should rotate but holding conventions in non cave areas such as UP Michigan and Maine while worthwhile places to vacation are not cave areas and defeat the purpose of caving and camaraderie of cavers. We can see these places on our own when we are in the mood for other forms of recreation. Conventions are for caving lets keep them in cave areas.
- One of the major reasons for going to convention is the chance to see another part of the country.
- If you want to cave in the same place every year with 1000+ cavers, go to OTR.
- It would be easier to plan if convention moved among a few locations. I am blocking out dates for my travels at least 18 months in advance. SO NSS conventions moving from locations for year to year and timing slightly throughout the summer, makes blocking out travel time for Convention very difficult and not worth it. The convention does not offer me something that I cannot get anyplace else.
- I enjoy the rotations of conventions, but do base my attendance on where they are held, and my travel availability. I do object to a single location, as I feel that would unduly burden members for travel, and reduce attendance overall.
- It would be boring to go to the same place year after year. It also would pose an inordinate continuing burden on the locals to host the meetings.
- I think it is a good idea to keep a variety
- Conventions only in one spot would soon grow stale and caving in the area would impact any caves in the area.
- The best way to experience people & caves from other regions is to go to a convention in "other" regions.
- Although I am rarely able to travel to conventions, I know that all who do love the opportunity to visit a wide variety of settings and parts of the country that they otherwise might never see.
- We are a national organization. A traveling convention enables most cavers who attend to see the caves of the local area. It also gets different regions involved.
- Part of the unique lure of "Convention" is the chance to meet cavers and visit karst located throughout the country. Yes, "Convention" is not as efficient and business-like as it could be, and that is also part of the excitement of attending this event. If you make it too structured-- they will not come.
- Having conventions in single or few locations will breakup and regionalize the NSS.
- There are cavers all over the country and they should all have a chance to host this event. Also I love to travel around and see what is out there in the other states. Keep it on the move.

- Holding the conventions in the same place does not allow everyone the opportunity to attend. Most of us cannot go traveling all over the country every year for the convention. I can not get to all, but at least with the present plan, I can attend when the convention is close to my residence.
- I am not in a position to travel around for this, but I did attend one when it was fairly local to me and enjoyed it. I think amateurs might just attend more if it was "local" to them occasionally. Maybe advertise locally, provide some "events" for youth to introduce them to caving, not necessarily cave, but "stuff"
- Promoting fellowship and awareness from various regions is important, therefore the convention should be hosted from all regions.
- When the Convention is held at different locations it gives the members a chance to experience the diversity of the geological differences we hold so dear.
- Arizona, needs a convention. What happened? A few loud members swayed the non popular opinion.
- Moving around helps make it easier for all to attend when possible
- I like being able to see different parts of the country by having conventions located in different places. However, my attendance is limited sometimes by the location, but other times I want to attend more because it is in an interesting new place.
- For me, part of the enjoyment of convention is to get exposure to new parts of the country. I think that holding it in one location every year will not help attendance in that after the first couple of years, people will get bored with it and find something else to do. We already have an OTR. We do not need another one.
- The traveling conventions give us more incentive to see other parts of the country. Secondly, they open opportunities to see caves that we would have difficulty getting access to. Thirdly, over the long-term they allow more participation of members because we can not all travel across the country.
- Rotating between fixed spots is an interesting idea. My support would depend on the locations. Preferably, they should all be in good caving areas.
- Moving convention gives members an opportunity to travel to and cave in different places. It also keeps the visitation burden off the same caves and cave owners year after year.
- Caves are located throughout the US and the convention should be as well.
- Our regional is having the same problem of lack of attendance. Part of the problem is repeating the same sites. Conventions to me are a great way to see other parts of the country. I do not go to cave, it is a vacation from caving. I go to see old friends and do some class work. When would I ever go to the UP? I never had a reason until the NSS convention.
- Life is dull enough. It would really be dull if we went to the same place for vacation every year. I consider the convention as a vacation we get to see different parts of the country. You might even consider having it in the states that hasn't had one
- It gives us a chance to see other grotto areas in different states.
- Part of the attraction of having a National Convention is having it in different areas is to go caving in different areas.

- Convention should rotate to allow it to be available to more cavers
- In order to attract new cavers and continue the NSS mission conventions should be held throughout the country.
- Convention attendance for all other than a few dedicated individuals is generally dictated by the location...the only ones we attend are those located in our region. To always hold the convention in a single location would limit attendance to those living w/in a certain distance.
- BORING! If you have the convention in the same place year after year you will have less and less attendance as time goes on. You will also loose merchandising people as the same people return year after year.
- Make them accessible to all on a rotating basis - current plan is quite satisfactory
- Conventions should be located in different areas to allow access to all. However, conventions in areas with few or no caves should be limited.
- other than a convention in Maine, with what 3 caves was a waste of a year, so it should be held in a cave rich area each year, though not so far into an extreme corner of the U.S. as to make it unfeasible for attending.
- I feel that with a large diversity of caves in this country, rotating the convention site to different locations helps highlight the features of this diversity.
- If you hold conventions in the same place all the time people will quit coming to them. One of the attractions is getting a chance to go to new places and visit new caves.
- Many attend convention to see new areas of the country (i.e. tourism not just caving).
- I feel like the conventions should be held in a different state every year. It gives everyone equal opportunity to attend and different sites to visit.
- Variety is the spice of Life
- Conventions should travel around the country.
- Conventions should travel around the country as is the policy right now. This keeps Convention staff for each area from getting ""burned out."" It also allows us to visit areas in the country that we may not otherwise.
- I must say something about the topic of a Convention Cruise- this is a TERRIBLE idea. We have a problem already with getting and keeping new members and our membership is getting older. It is not only the price of the convention cruise. I believe that most younger cavers would not be interested in a cruise and I can say that I would NOT attend a cruise for Convention.
- Rotate, rotate, rotate
- Good to visit other areas
- Keeping in one place is difficult for cavers from different area who may occasionally get lucky and have one close to home
- Keeping conventions or for that matter, any NSS activities like NCRC National Trainings in one place severely hampers many members. The BOG and other controlling bodies need to remember that a large percentage of its members or participants are not "well-to-do" and only can attend functions when financially able to do so. As the cost of travel increases, the burden placed on participants to pay for entry fees, travel expenses, etc, can and will become overwhelming.

- Going to different parts of the country is what cavers enjoy. To experience other caving in other places . Just make sure there ARE CAVES in the area at a convention
- Variety.
- Giving cavers the opportunity to travel to different areas and visit caves is a great advantage to having conventions in different areas.
- Rotating the conventions allows members with limited time and/or means to attend conventions near them. It also allows members from different locales to participate in organizing and executing convention activities.
- I think moving the convention around the country gives people a chance to meet other cavers and explore new areas. I think this exposure is very important to keeping people aware of caves and caving issues on a larger scale.
- I think one of the major appeals is the ability to see areas all over the country, and eventually have one close to home.
- By circulating the location, members who cannot easily travel long distances have a better chance of attending a convention on occasion. Conversely, it also gives members from other parts of the country the opportunity to experience caving in other parts of the country that they might not otherwise travel to.
- The changing venue makes the conventions more available to a larger group of members.
- Convention should move about to enable everyone to access it from time to time
- Conventions should always travel to make it more available for different members to attend.
- Moving Convention around the country makes it more possible for people in different areas of the country to attend. Rotating it in only a few locations could place an undue burden on the cavers in those locations.
- Rotating the conventions throughout the country allows cavers to get a taste of what different areas of the country have to offer in the way of caving and cavers.
- As Long as the conventions travel to areas with substantial numbers of caves. Rotating would be great. If however it was a choice repeating a convention site and going say to Maine then repeat the place with caves.
- If the convention were held in the same place every year it would loose a lot of the appeal. A lot of people come to visit a new part of the country and to visit different caves. Part of the appeal in going to a new convention is to learn about different caves and to obtain a guidebook for that area. Also it would make the convention in assessable to a lot of people who live far from where the convention was being held.
- I feel that if the conventions do not travel, some regions of the country would be left out, like the Northeast where I live.
- In addition, going to conventions has given me the opportunity to travel great places I probably would not have planned a trip to otherwise.
- Changing the location of convention allows many people to attend that may not be able to travel long distances.

- The traveling conventions allow more members access to the convention at least part of the time. Locking the convention into a few areas or one would limit the ability of some members to attend
- I do enjoy convention, but they should be more in cave areas of the country.
- There should be places selected then voted on by the membership or do bidding for the location.
- Each Grotto should be allowed to host a convention if it chooses to do so and has the proper facilities. If you have it in the same locations every year it makes it difficult for different grottos to host a convention.
- It would be a long way for some people to travel
- Moving around allows those individuals that can't fund long trip the change to occasionally get to convention locally.
- The impact on local caves is too damaging to have the convention in one place every year or in areas with more fragile caves. NSS should rotate the conventions between 3-4 areas in different places around the country where the impact can be managed well.
- I have not ever attended an NSS convention because the locations seem to be located in more of the western states, making it difficult and cost prohibitive to attend. I have enjoyed several regional events however.
- If the conventions move around the country, more people will get to attend. I live in OH, and if the convention is in CA every year, for instance, I would never be able to attend. If it were in MI or KY the following year, that is not so hard to get to.
- If convention was held in the same place every year I feel it would limit the number of people attending. I enjoy going to conventions that are scattered over the USA.
- Convention should move around the country.
- Conventions should be located in areas of significant cave/karst features and NSS membership. Rotate them but be sure the rotation reflects population and the presence of cave and karst features.
- Diversity is always good.
- Needs to rotate in regions where caves are located.
- Moving the conventions to different locations should increase access. Put the locations in some sort of rotation so a large number of members would be within a day's drive of the convention site every three or four years.
- I think the conventions should continue to visit various parts of the country.
- Helps keep it interesting giving a different destination and venue each year,
- Allowing the local supporting grottoes to show there stuff, and adding some diversity to the potential caving venues.
- This would limit both the participation and the change in area for cavers. I hope to one day attend a convention when one comes closer, if we have it in the same place every year I will definitely be unable to attend.
- Rotating allows for local/regional attendance. However, it is absolutely SILLY to have conventions where there are not caves!!!

- I feel the convention should move around from year to year, but only be held in areas where caves are present. For those who go to the convention as part of their yearly vacation, it is nice to go different places. The same place would get very old. Since the convention is for cavers, I think it should strongly be advised to have it in an area where caves are present.
- The locations need to rotate to provide reasonable access for as many cavers in varied locations as possible, plus I love the idea of caving regions I have not seen before.
- The more places the conventions are held at, the more opportunities people will be allowed to go
- We cave all over the world why should we go to a convention that is stationary. Try international conventions.
- The best way to see the country, cheaply.
- It is good to have a selection of caves around the US and to keep learning about the differences in the world.
- New member - have never attended a convention.
- Provided that the locations are within a day or two drive from the major areas, having it in the four or five locations on a rotating basis may allow people to plan ahead and make more than just a few.
- Possibly more than one convention per year, in geographically separated designated locations across the U.S.

The following items are important to me when deciding to attend a convention:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
57. Sessions.	1	17	143	<b><u>343</u></b> [0.9]	125	97
58. Section and committee meetings and activities.	5	48	<b><u>259</u></b> [0.5]	243	54	117
59. Photo, Cartography, and Art Salons.	3	15	139	<b><u>340</u></b> [0.9]	143	86
60. Caving during convention.	5	17	116	<b><u>278</u></b> [1.1]	238	72
61. Camaraderie and meeting cavers.	0	5	68	<b><u>291</u></b> [1.3]	<b>293</b>	69
62. Geology field trip.	6	19	208	<b><u>284</u></b> [0.8]	120	89
63. Pre- and post-convention caving field camps.	4	20	226	<b><u>273</u></b> [0.7]	105	98
64. Evening events	5	26	174	<b><u>287</u></b>	153	81

and parties.				[0.9]		
65. Vendors.	1	17	118	<b>315</b> [1.1]	202	73
66. Activities for children.	14	46	<b>270</b> [0.5]	154	93	149
67. Regional or local attractions.	7	18	174	<b>322</b> [0.8]	125	80
68. Distance I must travel to attend convention.	7	33	120	<u>249</u> [1.1]	<b>254</b>	63
69. Proximity of convention events and facilities to each other.	3	21	162	<b>320</b> [0.9]	133	87
70. Cost of convention registration.	13	49	225	<b>251</b> [0.6]	112	76
71. Dates of convention.	5	16	190	<b>314</b> [0.8]	127	74

Comments:

- I have one [sic] to Conventions wherever they have been held.
- As a biospeleologist I only go to conventions that have great biology in caves e.g. New Braunfels TX, SW Missouri, southern Indiana & central Kentucky or Tennessee or northern Alabama, parts of WV/VA.
- I have been an active caver, and have attended many regionals, but I have never attended an NSS convention.
- The limited number who attend the geology trip is of limited productivity.
- The parties are being more and more counter culture and freak shows... let's stress less coed showers, skinny dipping, hot tubs, wine tasting and lunatic fringe groups.....others watch and make there opinion on the NSS.
- Let these parties be in another venue....not a family convention. You want to increase attendance then appeal to the family..... I think that these "" tasteless"" type parties and events are best done at a local level and not at a national event that attracts media and local investigation... We need to project a more normal image to attract members with the means and stability to promote the Society and its future.
- Focus should be on convention.
- I go if I want if I can. Distance and finances are usually of no importance although I know they are important to others.
- I attend no matter what, although the dates in 2005 are terrible (July 4th)
- In a rotational hosting situation, conventions are bound to occasionally occur some distance from where you live. This should not be a major factor to attendees.
- Now too old to travel and party.

- Convention dates do not matter except that convention should never be over the 4th of July. Convention should also not conflict with the International Congress, as it did in 1993.
- Convention dates do not matter except that they should never include July 4 and should not conflict with the International Congress.
- I have never attended a convention, usually just had other more pressing things.
- The cost is not a big factor to me, but I often hear it is for others (generally those who can not seem to manage their finances appropriately)
- Evening events could be at least somewhat important, depending upon what they are. Parties are not at all important. NSS could eliminate them as far as I am concerned. I would rather have some nice get-together meals w/ people of similar, specialized interests (e.g., breakfast or lunch together with karst geomorphologists).
- I have never attended a convention. My caving activities time is maxed out with exploration, survey, geologic study, and Grotto activities. Now with work activities and a child I have less time than before. Maybe when my child gets older we can attend a convention.
- The cost is so low and reasonable, who could complain. If it doubles or triples that would be another matter.
- If the area is a worthwhile cave area then distance is no problem.
- These activities can be arranged independently. Focus on the sessions!
- The main reason I go to a caving convention is to cave. I also look forward to seeing cavers from the US, and many of them I see only at convention. I do base attendance on travel plans, and have avoided conventions where the caving may be good, but it is burdensome to either fly/drive whatever in order to get to the Convention AND/OR caving sites.
- Convention dates should coincide as best as possible with most US School closings.
- Geographic location and the date of the event drive my intentions to attend or not to attend. I enjoy visiting new places and place a premium on sites I have not visited.
- Having a place within an hour of site for (real) caving would be good.
- Big problem is the long driving distance from home - added time needed for Vacation.
- Conventions should be held in out of the way locations near lots of caves.
- As a scientist. The cost of convention is minimal as compared to the conferences of other societies - that needs to be kept in perspective.
- In the lat few years we have attended Maine, CA, and MI traveling from Texas. They were all great trips for us."
- Caving at convention is a very high priority.
- I think I covered this in my last statement.
- I have a child so dates of convention are very important. Cost is EXTREMELY important, since a family would be paying out up to \$450 dollars to attend, making it out of range for many families. The events I have attended have mostly

- been solo. Caving in the region is very important, since I am a CAVER. If you hold a convention in an area with few caves, I will be less likely to attend.
- The parties strongly detract from the professionalism of the NSS. The party atmosphere at conventions is not conducive to families camping in close proximity. For some participants, alcohol seems to be an important part of the convention activity - too bad, it reflects poorly on the rest of us. If the NSS is going to attract quality members then we must raise our standards and improve our reputation.
  - I have not attended a convention only because the price is too high for me.
  - Geology Field Trips are an interesting part of Convention, but not my reason to attend one.
  - Distance is not an issue, as long as it is organized well.
  - The cost and dates are not an issue. As long as the price is kept relatively reasonable for younger cavers and that Conventions are kept to the summer months.
  - Convention is a vacation for me, so it's a good opportunity to travel and see new places.
  - Sessions are important but are not a deciding factor in my attendance decision.
  - Never been to convention
  - As I said before the appeal of traveling to different areas is pretty high
  - Conventions at non-caving locations such as Michigan and Maine seem to be a waste of time.
  - For me the purpose of convention is to meet people and to go to different caves.
  - #71 I do attend other activities during the summer.
  - Distance from home not an issue - caving in new areas and/or meeting cavers from new areas is part of the fun
  - I will likely never attend a convention, as it seems to be more of a "beer party" than a cave centered activity. If I wanted to see a bunch of drunks I could just go to the local ...
  - To me, the where and the when are most important. Closely followed by cost.
  - I work in television and July is a ratings month, I cannot take time off then.
  - If I had more vacation time I would attend the conventions. The location and cost are not my problem.
  - Local Theme Parks are not of interest, caves and geology of them are.
  - I am a fairly new member and have never attended one.
  - Never can get the time off from work for a convention :-(-

I attend conventions:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
72. Every year or almost every year.	84	<b><u>215</u></b>	131 [-0.5]	49	45	202
73. When it is held	39	85	<u>149</u>	<b>212</b>	49	192

within a day or two drive from me.			[0.3]			
74. When it is held in an area with caving opportunities.	31	70	177 [0.4]	193	72	183
75. When it is held in an area that is of interest to me or my family.	31	47	161 [0.5]	242	67	178
76. Whenever I can.	29	53	118	227 [0.7]	122	177
77. I used to but don't any more.	89	127	168 [-0.5]	57	20	265
78. I would like to but haven't yet.	83	86	121 [0.2]	131	128	177

Comments:

- See comment on previous question.
- Have never attended a convention but would love to!
- Age(71) and distance have impaired attendance in recent years
- Caving has little to do with us attending the convention.
- I have never attended a convention. Sometimes things just work out that way.
- Attended all conventions early as an active caver (before distractions).
- Never been to one.
- Since my wife and family are not interested in caving related activities I have no plans to attend conventions without them.
- Wish I could go to AL this year but daughter decided to hold her wedding that week.
- Too many other irons in too many other fires to take the time to go. Wish I could as I do miss many old friends.
- NULL
- I do not attend conventions due to time. I must attend several other professional related meetings so my time and resources are limited.
- I always attend (since 1968).
- I go whenever it is possible.
- The key criterion for me is the ability to escape workload and other crises to attend!
- Q72: I tend to attend depending on when they are scheduled in the west.
- I enjoy the conventions and the sessions. I also enjoy the caving opportunities one might have. However, the main point of the convention (for me) is not caving, but the sessions and papers. I try to attend the conventions whenever I can. Conventions in the east are easier for me to attend those in the west. However, the convention I did attend in the west (Colorado) was a great one.

- I was regular until I got married and had children. My kids are now getting to an age where I might be able to attend again.
- The older we get the more responsibilities!!! Not always able to go, but always WANT to!!!
- I am not the one to decide this issue. In 35 years of caving I have attended 2 conventions, 76 in Morgantown WV and 96 in Blacksburg, VA.
- Have never attended a convention-was more active in caving when I was spelunking sponsor at Marshall HS. I do enjoy reading about the conventions in the NSS News.
- Most conventions are just too far away and are not that appealing. I had rather use that time to go caving.
- We live on an island in Alaska and conventions are too far to travel to. We did make it to the 1997 one though, and I found it an enjoyable experience.
- Life's responsibilities interfere.
- #75. My family does not usually go...I do and will when it is a one day drive or less, in an area of caving interest, and fits into my time/vacation schedule.
- much work, little money
- Dates are significant issue for me.
- Scheduling conflicts have prevented me from attending convention more often, even when it is near.
- I work at the convention to make it more attractive for others to come to our convention.
- #73-#76 are marked indicating my theoretical preference. #72 & #78 indicates the actual situation.
- I have been to conventions before however my time off work is limited and I have a family and they don't cave so it is rare for me to take one half of my vacation time to attend a convention.
- Would like to but generally use up all my vacation time caving with friends or camping with family. If I had a lot of vacation I would go every year that it was in a good caving location.
- Again my attitude is based on my perceived attitude of the local area cavers.
- Distance does not bother me and even if there are no caving areas close we always find some on the way and see all the other local features when we do get to convention.
- I must choose my time off wisely, conventions rate low for me. But I would like to do it some year.
- I have only been able to go to one convention, partly because distance and partly because summer is the busy time of year at work.
- Really enjoyed my first convention in Porterville, CA. Would attend more, but financially difficult/vacation scheduling is an issue. Plan on attending the upcoming Washington state (local to me) and Indiana conventions (local to my family).
- Have no interest in attending a convention.
- I attend about every other year.

- Caving is the motivation to attend, if there are regional attractions I can bring the family (which increases the chances that I can attend!) The closer it is to me the better, but most folks probably say that.
- I do attend Cave Diving conventions.
- Schedule conflict always occurs.
- Obviously I attend whenever I can but distance is the limiting factor.
- The time of year conventions are held interferes with my busiest time at work, and I have not been able to attend one since 1997 as a result.
- Have yet to attend one.
- Conventions are a perfect place to meet people and to get involved.
- Since I only get 2 weeks of vacation a year I have a hard time justifying spending one whole week in the same area. Or just having the time to take 1 full week at a time off from work.
- I plan to attend Washington primarily because the area is of interest to me and my family.
- The cost of getting to convention is a major factor in the decision about whether or not to go. Also the weather and location of convention is also important. Who wants to camp on asphalt in Alabama in the summertime!
- I have not had the opportunity to attend such an event yet, but offer my opinion on what would be important to me.
- I have not attended one but may in the future.
- See comment above.
- Have not been to a convention.
- I work at UPS and our vacations have to be bid on in January.
- I would like to attend a convention within a few hours drive from me.
- Have never attended a convention.
- When you have a convention I am usually home in the Philippines ...caving due to opportune weather patterns and other social reasons.
- I am a new member, have not had opportunity yet.

Please indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following: The registration fees for conventions:

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion
79. Are great value considering what is included in the week-long event.	3	41	165	<u>241</u> [0.8]	141	135
80. Are a fair value for what is included in the week-long event.	12	53	202	<u>241</u> [0.5]	63	155
81. Are a poor value	94	<u>265</u>	145	19	10	193

for what is included in the week-long event.		[-0.8]				
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Comments:

- Those who whine about registration fees should consider that most professional societies charge \$200 - \$800 for registration. The registration fee typically provides a copy of the program and little else. Often the banquet, if there is one, is an add-on. There are no parties, no guidebooks, and certainly no free beer. The NSS conventions are a wonderful bargain, thanks entirely to thousands of hours of free labor provided by the cavers who put on the convention. For most societies, the nuts and bolts of running the convention is done by paid staff.
- These could have been one question, #80.
- There is always something for nearly everyone and a variety of price “accommodations.”
- Always considered the Convention a great opportunity at a reasonable fee but have never been able to get to one. Especially since becoming disabled.
- Quality costs.....and people will respect value. You expect not much from motel 6 but a lot from a Hyatt Regency. I attend professional conventions that cost 300 to 500 for 4 days. We need to realize that quantity is not quality. If you pay more you savor the experience...
- I strongly do NOT agree that values can be set on anything, be it a car, home or beanie baby -- the value guides are self serving and in many cases wishful thinking -- I call them guide-by-the-noses!
- Recognize that volunteers keep the costs as low.
- Having hosted two and attended over a dozen, I think they are cheap unless you are poor, broke or a student. I support country venues over city to save on expenses and believe the single most costly item should be port-a-potties.
- The prices are inline with other similar meetings and are actually quite good for what one receives.
- Cost is not a factor.
- They should be doubled.
- Q80 & 81: I am responsible for scheduling a high school reunion each year. We run about \$80-90 for a three day event. This does not include housing. I think we are getting good value for our money.
- The registration fees are a good value. If one has ever attended other conventions (for example GSA) one would soon learn how good a value the NSS convention fees are.
- The cost is well below many professional events.
- We have to look at cost for a family of five, site conditions, local attractions, and access, as well as timing for school, etc. As a musician, I think the NSS needs to put some cash into the Campground party.
- Given the costs for similar function, I feel it one of the best values out there.
- Conventions would be a bargain at a higher registration rate
- The NSS convention is the best summertime value you can find.

- Not having attended any conventions and knowing only from the program what occurs, I can not give any valid assessment. My guess is my opinion would be to agree with #80, maybe even "strongly agree."
- It is soooo cheap and always a great deal
- The fee does seem steep to me, but then, I am there mostly for caving and not for the sessions.
- I do not think they are outrages, but it can be hard sometimes. I get two weeks vacation a year. The California convention was expensive for that reason. I only had five days, so I had to fly in there.
- I think the convention is overpriced and as I wrote before, a family cannot attend due to price.
- The sites chosen that do not have water, electricity, and shade are not a good deal for a week long convention.
- The Convention prices are incredibly reasonable. The cost of the Convention is almost always cheaper than the cost to travel there.
- This is one of the cheapest conventions anyone could go to for the time frame (week long) and all the activities that are offered.
- The cost is a bargain compared to other meetings I attend.
- I think the convention is a great value considering the costs incurred by those putting it on and continuing inflation. I feel the NSS should consider increasing the low end. I think this would encourage more grottos to take on the challenge if their odds of breaking even were a little better.
- considering all the planning involved and setting up a location and coordinating all of the events, I consider the cost a pretty good value
- #81 The value is good for the price.
- Seems excessive, especially if you want to bring your family and in relation to fees charged at SERA and TAG Fall Cave-in.
- It cost a lot of money to run that complex of an event. I hope everyone can understand that.
- I think the fee is a good value for what I get from convention.
- Never been to a convention.
- \$125 sounds reasonable for event, camping, etc.
- Good value for money spent.

82. Have you attended NSS Conventions?

	Yes	No
Number of Responses	415	303
Percent	57.8%	42.2%

83. If so, how many?

Events	Responses	Events	Responses
1	86	16	0
2	97	17	1
3	38	18	1
4	38	19	0

5	23	20	8
6	23	21	0
7	8	22	2
8	6	23	1
9	8	24	0
10	27	24	0
11	4	25	3
12	8	26	0
13	2	27	0
14	2	28	1
15	10	29	0
		> 30	7
Maximum		53	
Mode		2	
Median		3	

84. Have you attended other gatherings, such as regional events, OTR, TAG, and so on?

	Yes	No
Number of Responses	543	171
Percent	76.1%	23.9%

85. If so, how many?

Events	Responses	Events	Responses
1	50	16	3
2	49	17	0
3	28	18	3
4	27	19	0
5	26	20	62
6	21	21	1
7	7	22	1
8	18	23	1
9	5	24	0
10	51	25	17
11	2	26	2
12	22	27	0
13	1	28	2
14	3	29	0
15	28	30	29
		> 30	68
Maximum		300	
Mode		20	
Median		10	

86. Please indicate your membership category:

Category	Responses
Regular	458
Limited	20
Associate	5
Conservation	2
Sustaining	23
Life	131
Conservation life	0
Institutional	0
Family Regular	60
Family Associate	11
Family Sustaining	1
Family life	6

The NSS created a limited (originally called “general”) membership category with very low dues to encourage membership among cavers who had balked at the cost of joining the NSS. The limited membership does not provide the NSS News or the Journal, but also does not communicate with or engage members as well as a Regular Membership does. While limited membership has attracted new members who may not have otherwise joined the Society, it has also led some NSS members to downgrade their membership. There has been no change in the total number of NSS members for several years, with the number of nonrenewals balanced by new members joining.

Some think the following trends will make it difficult for the Society to continue to vigorously pursue its goals:

- The growth in the percentage of limited members.
- The annual percentage of non-renewing members.
- The lack of growth in total membership.
- The increase in the average age of the membership.

	-2 Strongly Disagree	-1 Disagree	0 Neutral	1 Agree	2 Strongly Agree	No Opinion/No Answer
87. The Limited Membership should be retained.	27	158	<b>216</b> [0.1]	213	40	72
88. The lack of	3	45	116	<b>375</b>	114	73

retention of members is a significant problem.				[0.8]		
89. The difficulty of the NSS to attract some cavers to join is a significant problem.	3	47	138	<u>367</u> [0.8]	104	67
90. My grotto does a good job getting cavers to join the grotto.	21	74	167 [0.5]	<u>243</u>	65	156
91. My grotto does a good job getting cavers to join the NSS.	18	81	<u>200</u> [0.4]	<b>219</b>	52	156
92. My grotto does a good job welcoming new people to meetings and caving.	22	45	113	<u>289</u> [0.7]	114	143
93. I am likely to renew my membership.	1	1	22	232	<u>400</u> [1.6]	70
94. For Regular and Associate Members only: When I renew, I am likely to renew my membership at the Limited Member level.	152	<u>271</u> [-1.1]	65	11	8	219
95. For Limited Members only: When I renew, I am likely to renew at the Regular Member level or higher.	11	16	<u>55</u> [0.2]	20	18	606
96. I would like to become a Sustaining, Life, or Conservation Member someday.	25	59	158	<u>179</u> [0.5]	96	209

97. Being a NSS member is valuable or important to me.	1	4	45	<u>321</u> [1.4]	<b>334</b>	21
98. Most cavers I know think being a NSS member is valuable or important to them.	2	27	100	<u>367</u> [1.0]	173	57
99. Most cavers I know realize being a NSS member helps further the goals of the NSS.	2	14	73	<u>391</u> [1.1]	193	53
100. The cost of dues is reasonable.	2	24	56	403	204	37
101. Knowing I would lose my NSS number if I did not renew would help encourage me to keep my membership current.	48	111	152 [0.3]	<u>206</u>	108	101

Comments:

- "No opinion" results from being a Life member.
- There are several grottos in our area. CAG (Central Arizona Grotto) and EGI (Escabrosa Grotto) are ones that do not welcome people, are extremely political, etc. and most cavers that I visit with are turned off by the grottos which are reflected in their interest in the NSS because they think the NSS operates as do the grottos.
- Some join as a lark and have no long lasting interest in caves.....
- We need to appeal to the long term serious person in caves .. The average guy not at the top or at the bottom....."
- There should be NO Limited membership. Perhaps a first time member could be allowed a sizeable discount for the first year. That may encourage some to join AND they will have the benefits of the NEWS, etc. to help them to want to remain a member.
- It was nice that the NSS allowed me to retain my number which was dormant while I was overseas during military service in Vietnam.
- "94. Would not consider membership justified w/o NSS News & Journal.
- 101. NSS used to do that when a member did not renew -- seemed foolish then as it became a disincentive to re-joining after several years out of the NSS."

- You are not alone. As President of the Texas Archeological Society, I see flat membership at 1500+/- over the last 10 years as we struggle to offset an older membership and rising costs (insurance especially). Let me know if you find a solution. Canceling memberships is an interesting approach as I dropped out for a number of years only to get my number back when rejoining. Low # is good.
- Perhaps a limited email version of the NSS News for limited members might help to get them more involved in the NSS. I would propose a brief three page email that would contain summaries of the articles with links to full text on the NSS website and contain a list of important dates and important announcements.
- 
- 94: being not very active in going caving, the publications are important.
- 87 The membership must be allowed to grow. 90 The very poor way that new attendees are treated means that few attend a second meeting. 91 On some occasions persons have been officers that were not NSS members. More than half of those attending meetings are not NSS members.
- I am a life member. Only a certain percent of the population is interested in caves and especially caving. And only a certain percent of these are interested in being and serving in an organization. However, the latter numbers can be increased by careful personal attention on the part of Grotto leadership. There is much interest in caves out there: "armchair speleologists" if welcomed would increase our finances, political (and agency) interest, and educational capabilities.
- The dues are way too high for the average working person. Being able to pick up my old NSS number was very important to me when I rejoined the NSS.
- I can see both sides of the argument for limited membership. However, for the most part I would allow these people limited membership for a certain length of time and then ""make"" them become a regular member.
- I am a regular member because I enjoy the news and journal; these periodicals are very important to me."
- I think there may be a new increase in caving soon.
- It does not sound like the limited membership is doing what it was designed to do
- not a member of a grotto
- I am not impressed by low NSS numbers.
- I personally dropped out for a number of years but renewed when I became an active Scout leader. Reclaiming my old number was a plus.
- The NSS does not supply me with anything tangible I have been a board member of many clubs and the NSS does not offer me any protection with insurance like other clubs I belong to
- Just reuped after 25 years. You need to reach out to younger members. I am now involved with Scouting.
- I would favor a flexible general membership category that could choose not to receive SOME of the pubs, especially the Journal. I think a subscription to the News without membership is already cheaper than a limited membership, why not something in-between in cost, with some pubs included.
- An NSS number has always been an indication of when one started caving.

- Dues are just too high for what is given in return; the big problem I feel in acquiring and retaining members. It is the reason I have dropped in and out of the NSS over the years. I strongly believe in the NSS goals at a national level, but struggle to justify the cost/benefit.
- "Limited membership is counter productive to the goals of the NSS.
- Losing your NSS number might be an incentive for retention. Especially us old farts."
- "Dues are too cheap, which is why we have money problems.
- Why do people not renew? Is there any follow-up on why?"
- I have been a member since 1975 with maybe one year that lapsed; but I will continue to be a member
- Limited membership could be structured as introductory --current members should not be able to downgrade (except perhaps for individual special circumstances) and membership in limited category could be time-limited (e.g. 2 years, again with perhaps some way to apply to continue in individual special circumstances)
- If the limited membership is retained, it should be for a limited time, such as a student membership. While membership is encouraged at the grotto level, short of a national requirement (which we all know would not go over well) for NSS membership within some period of time it can be difficult to translate a significant % of grotto membership to NSS membership. I do feel the cost is quite reasonable when compared to similar national organization.
- 101 - This could be a discouragement for someone to re-join after an absence.
- I think it is important to keep the same membership number. I also think it would create a database nightmare with the same name registered multiple times.
- I have several friends that have enrolled their infants so they will have a low number when they grow older. The NSS would loss this revenue and the connection down the road this will bring
- Why should the NSS worry about uninterested people? People come and go. Worry about those who care. I like getting the NSS news, seeing the out-of-the way place people cave. I like paying a year at a time. More money the those [sic] concerned about NSS funding. Helps my charity budget. My NSS # could change to letters for all I care.
- My read on local opinion of the NSS is rather negative, an unnecessary evil. Most grotto members are not NSS members as they cannot afford the dues at their current levels. However, I did not know about the Limited membership option. I will bring this up at the next meeting.
- #94 I enjoy the NSS news and would not want to lose it.
- #101 Threatening the membership (with anything) will not help you win their loyalty. Some people may run into financial troubles, but once back on their feet they will be back to paying their dues. DO NOT DO THIS.....EVER!!!"
- "#94 – If I can not pay a regular membership, I would stop being a member, I believe. Such a membership would have little value to me.
- #101 – loss of a particular number is no big deal. I guess I would like to have said I had been a member for so long that I have a 4-digit number (I have 5-digit

- number), but otherwise, I would not be traumatized if I dropped my membership, then resumes later with a higher number."
- I have been a member of a large number of grottos. A few did a great job in welcoming anyone who was new. Most did not welcome them very well. I mean welcoming them to the meeting and allowing them to get to know members and vice versa. Offering to take them caving at all was worse. This is clearly an area that most grottos can improve, and for all grottos it is a continual thing to watch.
  - The number does not mean much to me but it does to some others. However, if people are unable to renew for a while because of other things in their life at that time or lack of funds we should not discourage them from coming back by taking away their original number. Attract them back with their original number. The NSS number should stay with that person. It is like an identity for that person.
  - Cavers are a rare breed indeed either you are with the NSS or your not.
  - I would like to have a lifetime membership, but the one-payment cost is too much. Perhaps a payment plan could be set up so that a lifetime membership is paid over a one-year time period.
  - Don't threaten me. If I lost my number I would never renew. The number is important to me but I don't respond well to threats
  - Limited membership should be limited to a two-year window of when people FIRST join, then they should either join as regular members or decide they do not want to belong at all.
  - No reason to downgrade.
  - I used to suggest that many of the Scout leaders that I have taken caving and have shown a strong interest in caving I had in the past invited them to come to my local PSC meetings. For the most part they never returned due to the change in atmosphere when they announce that they were a Scout leader
  - I believe that an NSS membership number should be retired after a certain number of years of membership, and that that number should always point to that past member. I am getting to the point where I cannot continue (because of age) to actively participate, but I would like to see my number always be a reference to me, or be able to transfer my number to my child.
  - Have a low cost membership only attracts low cost people. Caving on the cheap is a stupid idea born in the army surplus store that we need to out grow.
  - No change in my plans but sometimes I pay for more than one year.
  - The cost of life membership for someone my age (56) is too high.
  - My NSS number is just that.
  - My number is not a status symbol for me. But on the other hand, why would I lose it? Would you reassign it?
  - I am now a limited member because I did not wish to get the NSS new or the Journal because I rarely ever read them.
  - Members that do not want to receive the news or other publications should have that right. Threats will not help retain members, and may lose some.
  - I have been a life member for about 15+ years. I regularly cave with about 6 or so other cavers. I have made repeated attempts to get them to join, but the cost, more than anything, seems to be a major factor.

- I think that the limited membership also limits the individual's exposure to the NSS and the ideals of the society. If they do not receive the NSS News and do not participate in the NSS activities and government, they are not advancing the society. It is an individual's decision to not participate but we should be giving all member equal exposure and the Opportunity to participate.
- Membership is our main goal of the Nashville Grotto this year. We are making a real effort to welcome and retain new guests. We are starting to use name tags at the meetings and directing portions of the cave trips just for beginners. We are also developing a program that can be presented to other groups that will advertise caving and the grotto.
- Folks SHOULD NOT lose their NSS number if they do not renew. My dues lapsed for a number of years, I would have been very upset to lose my number
- I am already a life member. Limited membership should have a limited time of availability, i.e. two years or something. (Is this the same thing as student membership? I never heard of limited membership, not that I would consider it...)
- The only thing with which I currently disagree is the number of members calling a particular grotto their primary. We have lost a few members and now are not recognized by the NSS even though we (those still active)are active cavers and have been "dumped" by local MAR groups because of the 5 NSS member minimum. I feel that those of us who make the effort to keep our grotto going should not be penalized because our area has so few cavers. Other grottos are too far to travel.
- I really look forward to the periodicals; photos and news from around the country. I would not become a limited member if I lost my publications.
- Threaten to drop my number if I quit for a while, and I would quit right then for good! I promise.
- Most cavers have no clue how important NSS membership is.
- Dues are reasonable.
- If my membership lapsed and my number was ""lost"", I would NOT renew!"
- I feel that most people who go caving do not see the value of joining the NSS. Local grottos have difficulty getting new members, since most constitutions state that one has to join the NSS after 1 year. Many grottos do not push this rule. Many cavers I have met will never cave outside of the state, let alone the region, so they are not interested in caving in foreign countries, since they will never go there. Even the membership manual is not helpful to them, since they rarely go caving outside of the state, and a local grotto gets them in contact with local cavers.
- As with any organization keeping members has always been difficult so ebbs and tides are expected. Our grotto similar to the NSS has cavers come and go but the core remain and are mostly NSS members.
- 94 No, I enjoy the NSS news. But the Karst studies are pretty deep on technical data most of which I am not familiar with. The geological portion I understand.
- Losing NSS number upon delinquent membership - BAD IDEA!
- I hope #101 is not implemented as I do not think I would reup my membership if I ever lost my # due to not renewing every year.

- #92 My grotto (windy city) seems more directed to having parties than welcoming people or caving. #101 my number is not important to me.
- I am a member of two grottos in my state. One of them is incredible with welcoming and retaining new members. The other is not. Both provide information to people about the NSS when they arrive, but it is not particularly encouraged until they have been caving for a while. I think this policy is a good one because most people who stick with the grotto do, eventually, become NSS members- and stay members.
- Losing my NSS number is not an issue, because I plan to stay a member for life."
- I strongly disagree that folks should lose their NSS# if they drop out for a year. I know several folks that would never re-join if they lost their #. Individual #s are important and taking it away could have the opposite, much worse, effect than what you think.
- Numbers are part of history
- I am not interested in limited membership; I prefer to more fully support NSS. I am not concerned about keeping a specific NSS number.
- I find a great deal of value in the publications and do not feel that the rates charged to Limited Members are enough to provide any income to the NSS.
- I do not want to downgrade my membership, because it does the organization more good to contribute more money, and I recognize the needs of the NSS to continue to get funding from me.
- Several cavers that I know do not think that NSS membership is a good value.
- Lose of an NSS number should only happen after some amount of time (1-2 year) of not being a member.
- I think changing NSS numbers for those that do not renew would only add significant paperwork and effort to an already overworked NSS staff.
- As an individual \$33 is not much. With a husband and wife, it becomes excessive. The limited membership is a way for my wife to still have an NSS number without getting 2 sets of mail. We would join as a family if you would let her keep her NSS number.  
I think that this is a little petty and would be counter productive.
- Limited membership is a great option for members of households where more than one person is an NSS member. As part of this it is a great option for caving couple who get married and neither one of them wants to give up their individual membership number. Why kill trees for people who do not want a second copy of the publications?
- 101, I don't plan on letting my membership expire, ever.
- I do not belong to a local grotto, but the conservancy I belong to encourages grotto and NSS memberships. We welcome new people all of the time, since we are always looking for donations.
- I enjoy the publications. Numbers should be retained even if not renewed.
- I think losing your number for not renewing would help some to renew on time, but the numbers also tell us where that person ranks in membership. If you were a member 25 years ago, and return to the organization, that low number is seen as impressive to other cavers and should be retained by the member. When you hear

- someone's number, you know right away if that person joined before or after you, or approximately how long they have been associated with NSS, active or not.
- This last point is a cheap ploy that would penalize those who forget to renew on time, or for some reason cannot afford to be a member for a period of time. If anything, it would discourage people that were once members from re-joining.
  - I have never been contacted by a local grotto.
  - My only NSS contact has been Phillip Moss.
  - Being as young as I am I have had trouble fitting in with veteran cavers in Colorado Arizona and here in Florida
  - As a US domestic member I think the dues are fine. A new category of International membership could be created to expand membership. You could send 1 or 2 copies of the NSS news to a set of members in a grotto in another country. This way countries like the Ukraine, China, and others in Eastern Europe, with annual salaries that are very low could become members. The Lviv Caving club in the Western Ukraine manages Optimistic Cave, the second largest cave in the world. They have no members in the NSS. Signing up their club and sending 1 or 2 copies of the news letter to them would be good.
  - I have never been contacted by the Grotto I joined. I love caves and exploring, but I have had no contact other than NSS national publications. I will stay a member due to my love of caves, but I am very discouraged with my grotto and "welcoming new members."
  - Could care less about member #, have even seen people wear their number like a badge of honor and even talk down to people with High NSS numbers.
  - I believe my current grotto needs a lot of help. There are cavers in it that only cave once or twice a year, or if they do cave, they do not cave with anyone in the grotto. We would better attract new members if we had a website, as now the other grottos in my state send me e-mails sent to them from prospective members that do not know my grotto is still active. I am the most active member of my grotto, and I will soon be moving, so I fear what will become of it.
  - NULL
  - I disagree because Limited Membership can serve as a gradual stepping stone to higher levels of membership as expertise and experience is gained. I am pleased in being a regular member.
  - I am trying to get a Grotto started in Germany and have 2 people that are about to join. I am working on some more.
  - The number system causes more problems than it helps. I did not join until this last year for that reason. I have the number 55026. Does this mean that I am the worst caver in the world? No. But that is how it is perceived.
  - My main reason for joining was for the knowledge I can obtain from your publications, bookstore, and hopefully at some point from your library. I think the NSS does a good job promoting cave conservation and if my membership can help in any way - that would always be an important consideration.

## **NSS Functions**

In the table below are displayed functions that the NSS provides. Each primary function is then divided into two or more components, in the second column. We want you to rate the relative importance to the Society of providing these components between now and the year 2015. Please do this by dividing 100 marbles (or 100 equal weights) among the rows of the Importance column. For example, if Research is twice as important as Exploration, there should be twice as many marbles in Research as Exploration.

Please then grade how well you think the NSS currently is providing these functions. In the Grade column, for each function select:

Green if the NSS largely does this function well now,  
 Yellow if there are significant problems, and  
 Red if the Society does not perform the function well now.

		Importance	Grade	
Conduct Research & Exploration	Research	14.8	Green: Yellow: Red:	421 104 12
	Exploration	15.7	Green: Yellow: Red:	447 84 7
Protect Caves & Cave Species	Protect Caves	16.6	Green: Yellow: Red:	413 121 7
	Protect Cave Life	13.4	Green: Yellow: Red:	380 137 13
	Protect Karst & Groundwater	13.5	Green: Yellow: Red:	322 168 31
Facilitate Scholarship	Educate	13.1	Green: Yellow: Red:	325 180 18
	Provide Library	7.9	Green: Yellow: Red:	374 109 23
	Provide Museum	5.7	Green: Yellow: Red:	188 161 127
	Publish	11.6	Green: Yellow: Red:	457 60 4
	Provide Conferences	7.5	Green: Yellow: Red:	348 108 28

Provide Member Services	Facilitate Social Opportunities	Hold Conventions	12.2	Green: 471 Yellow: 48 Red: 5
		Facilitate Internal Organization Operations	8.2	Green: 360 Yellow: 118 Red: 18
	Facilitate Recreation		8.5	Green: 334 Yellow: 129 Red: 27
	Facilitate NSS Info Exchange		9.0	Green: 337 Yellow: 140 Red: 19
Govern the Society	Manage the NSS		11.6	Green: 381 Yellow: 114 Red: 15
	External Liaison/Coordination		6.9	Green: 294 Yellow: 156 Red: 23
	Membership	Encourage Caver Membership	10.8	Green: 225 Yellow: 238 Red: 47
		Retain Members	11.2	Green: 174 Yellow: 257 Red: 74

**Demographics (optional)**

102. Sex:

	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Number of Responses</b>	616	97
<b>Percent</b>	86.4%	13.6%

103. NSS member for \_\_\_\_\_ total years.

<b>Years</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Responses</b>
0	6	16	15
1	42	17	3
2	37	18	6
3	29	19	7
4	20	20	40
5	43	21	9

6	18	22	11
7	14	23	6
8	25	24	4
9	10	25	21
10	43	26	10
11	9	27	7
12	23	28	5
13	12	29	6
14	8	30	31
15	29	> 30	136
<b>Maximum</b>		61	
<b>Mean</b>		17.7	
<b>Mode</b>		10	
<b>Median</b>		15	

104. Grotto member for \_\_\_\_ total years.

<b>Years</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Responses</b>
0	85	16	8
1	23	17	3
2	49	18	11
3	28	19	10
4	21	20	31
5	43	21	4
6	14	22	7
7	17	23	3
8	13	24	4
9	11	25	16
10	39	26	4
11	10	27	4
12	24	28	5
13	5	29	1
14	11	30	22
15	40	> 30	72
<b>Maximum</b>		53	
<b>Mean</b>		14.9	
<b>Mode</b>		0	
<b>Median</b>		10	

Question 103 answer minus question 104 for each respondent. Positive numbers indicate that the respondent reported being an NSS member that number of years longer than being a grotto member. A negative number means the reverse.

<b>Q 103-104</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Q 103-104</b>	<b>Responses</b>
-15	2	1	42

-14	1	2	23
-13	1	3	18
-12	0	4	13
-11	0	5	21
-10	3	6	14
-9	1	7	6
-8	0	8	10
-7	1	9	6
-6	2	10	14
-5	13	11	3
-4	5	12	6
-3	7	13	6
-2	26	14	4
-1	35	15	6
0	269		
<b>Maximum</b>		54	
<b>Minimum</b>		-15	
<b>Mean</b>		4.4	
<b>Mode</b>		0	
<b>Median</b>		0	

105. If you have a spouse or significant other, is he or she a caver?

	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Number of Responses</b>	269	359
<b>Percent</b>	42.8%	57.2%

106. Education completed:

<b>High School</b>	122
<b>College (undergraduate)</b>	310
<b>Graduate level</b>	272
<b>Currently a full-time student</b>	37 (5.1 %)

107. How many days did you cave during the last 12 months?

<b>Days</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
0	99
1 - 5	180
6-10	129
11-20	128
21-30	87
31 +	84

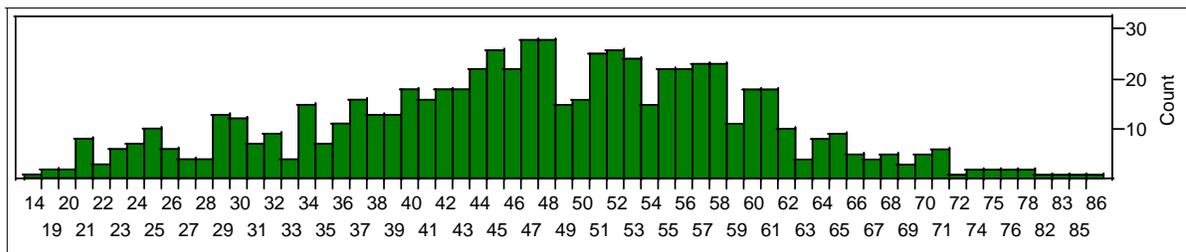
108. I consider myself (check all that apply):

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
-----------------	------------------	----------------

A dry caver	547	75.3
A cave or cavern diver	70	9.6
A vertical caver	425	58.5
A cave mapper	292	40.2
A project caver	244	33.6
A professional scientist	108	14.9
An amateur scientist	125	17.2
A cave photographer or videographer	191	26.3
A cave historian	60	8.2
A caving artist (non-photographic) or writer	31	4.3
A cave rescue person	157	21.6
A cave digger	190	26.2
A cave conservator	271	37.3
A cave explorer	479	66.0

109. What is your age: \_\_\_\_ years?

<b>Mean</b>	47.4
<b>Median</b>	48
<b>Mode</b>	48
<b>Standard Deviation</b>	12.3
<b>Maximum</b>	86
<b>Minimum</b>	14



110. Where do you live (primary residence)?

111. Where do you (primarily) cave?

	<b>Live</b>	<b>Cave</b>
<b>Alabama</b>	23	44
<b>Alaska</b>	5	3
<b>Arizona</b>	16	19
<b>Arkansas</b>	15	19
<b>California</b>	40	27
<b>Colorado</b>	22	18
<b>Connecticut</b>	9	1

<b>Delaware</b>	2	1
<b>Florida</b>	18	29
<b>Georgia</b>	39	23
<b>Hawaii</b>	3	5
<b>Idaho</b>	5	4
<b>Illinois</b>	15	3
<b>Indiana</b>	49	36
<b>Iowa</b>	5	6
<b>Kansas</b>	4	1
<b>Louisiana</b>	4	0
<b>Maine</b>	1	2
<b>Maryland</b>	27	1
<b>Massachusetts</b>	8	0
<b>Minnesota</b>	0	0
<b>Mississippi</b>	4	0
<b>Missouri</b>	24	25
<b>Montana</b>	2	5
<b>Nebraska</b>	0	0
<b>Nevada</b>	3	5
<b>New Hampshire</b>	3	0
<b>New Jersey</b>	20	1
<b>New Mexico</b>	10	15
<b>New York</b>	20	21
<b>North Carolina</b>	10	0
<b>North Dakota</b>	1	0
<b>Ohio</b>	34	1
<b>Oklahoma</b>	4	1
<b>Oregon</b>	5	3
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	40	11
<b>Rhode Island</b>	0	0
<b>South Carolina</b>	2	0
<b>South Dakota</b>	1	0
<b>Tennessee</b>	50	59
<b>Texas</b>	27	12
<b>Utah</b>	7	6
<b>Vermont</b>	2	3
<b>Virginia</b>	52	28
<b>Washington</b>	10	7
<b>Wyoming</b>	2	4
<b>American Samoa</b>	0	0
<b>District of Columbia</b>	0	0
<b>Federated States of Micronesia</b>	0	1
<b>Guam</b>	0	0
<b>Commonwealth of Northern Marianas</b>	0	0

<b>Puerto Rico</b>	1	1
<b>US Virgin Islands</b>	0	0
<b>North America: Canada</b>	2	2
<b>North America: Mexico</b>	0	7
<b>Caribbean</b>	0	2
<b>Central America</b>	0	5
<b>South America</b>	0	0
<b>Europe</b>	3	2
<b>Africa</b>	0	0
<b>Asia</b>	1	2
<b>Other</b>	0	11

Please provide any additional comments:

- I am a little too old for active caving
- One of the original founders of the VPI Grotto
- Only caves I visit now are Commercial with easy access but there was a time....LOL Comfortable in the fact I did it all....starting with A.K. Cameron at Mark Twain and Cameron Caves in 1950..... Cavers are a great bunch of people....
- My main activities have been with PSC and OTR. There is no comparable local group here in Champaign Illinois.
- I consider the NSS as the current leader in most all factions of caver conservation and protection. I do believe that the politics of "some" cavers in Arizona have resulted in the loss of many excellent people. This faction has been and continues to set very childlike standards in caver relationships and creates a fear factor like I have not witnessed elsewhere.
- I am basically an armchair caver at this point in my life. I retain my NSS membership and am still concerned about the NSS and the conservation of caves in the US and throughout the world.
- Let's fall back and regroup... the largeness of the conventions means more adverse impact on an area. Lets make conventions an experience and membership a something to achieve. Not given away Lets try for quality and make it competitive to be an NSS member.....
- While I was once an active caver, I am now into many other things, perhaps because there is no grotto or caves anywhere around here. SW Florida is not cave country. When I lived in CT before retirement all was handy. Even WV was not that far away. A few extra pounds and a bunch more years make other interests look inviting.
- I believe that in the coming years cave management (or rather people management) will be one of the most significant activities of the NSS. Issue is only partly raised in the questionnaire.
- I do not really know how well the NSS is conducting its business but know you are having a hard time with finances. I will continue to support the NSS by yearly membership but little more other than to encourage people to join. I am active in regional, conservation and archeological activities in Texas.

- I have primarily caved in California, New Mexico, Nevada and Arizona in the past. I am now a retired caver.
- Good luck. You have a tough job ahead of you.
- During my time as Grotto president, we were able to get the Grotto membership up to 165, which was a high population percentage in the US. This was done by constant telephoning and writing. The result was that a politician member introduced a bill to protect Alaskan caves. Unfortunately, there was an amendment added to publish the location of all caves, so we agreed to withdraw our support and it died.
- I am VERY proud to be an NSS member
- When are you going to send me my new card. You cashed my check. [Info passed to office.]
- Cave Primarily: Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia
- My days of spending weeks on expedition are over. I do mostly educational trips with scouts and others now. I still have a few projects I would like to finish but my body is betraying me.
- Cave mainly in FL,GA,AL,TN
- While growing a company and family- I let my caving slide. I am very interested in new tech to find new caves.
- Most "yellows" above really mean, I have not used the service, so I can not say how good/bad it is. The exception is the recreation aspect of caving. The NSS should consider trying to emphasize the "fun" aspects of caving, although without sacrificing cave formations or endangered species. This might attract more members. It was certainly how I got started in the 70s.
- The NSS is a good boys' net work and if you are not on the inside you get nothing from the NSS. The only time you find out about trips is to read the NEWS I pay for these trips to all these places and yet I can not go there. I belong to two of the clubs and I have to belong to the national organizations but they supply with me a lot of insurance up to 2,500,000 worth what does the NSS do for me this is after paying dues for over 27 years. In 27 years I have been on the board of NSS clubs 18 years, it has not gotten me anything, PS I doubt that you will see me paying anymore dues c ya good bye lone and kisses.
- Thank you for the initiative that you took in preparing and analyzing this survey.
- I believe that the NSS News editor is biased in the articles he prints and the photograph he uses. I would like to see a more professional attitude and the NSS news articles and photographs reflect the society's values - in other words- articles about cave trips into closed caves and photos of cavers touching formations should not be printed!
- Wow, I had to input that I have not been underground once in the past 12 months. That's got to change...
- For a voluntary organization the NSS does a great job. Even though I have not caved in a number of years I will always be a member.
- I recently retired as an aquatic biologist and am renewing an interest in cave biology. I dropped membership in NSS when my caving activity stopped and renewed when my activity recommenced. I will say there was some gratification

- to retaining the same NSS number even after the period of inactivity. It lends to a sense of belonging and continuity.
- I really hope the NSS grows and prospers, and that we make wise decisions.
  - I should be considered primarily an armchair caver. very retired from caving
  - Put term limits on Board members. Impeach \_\_\_\_\_.
  - I need more contact with members of the local grotto.
  - I'm primarily a recreational caver who caves with close friends or family. I believe secrecy is the best protection for caves though I of course buy every survey I can get my hands on. Most cave vandals will not pay for surveys or even know they exist to destroy caves. I do not believe in gating because it leads to cliques. In other words grottoes rule and if you're not with the in crowd you're on the outside of the gate. I'm not political in the least so have no interest there. I believe that if people are interested in caving they will find the NSS. I did. We don't need to recruit cavers. If their drawn they belong in caves if their not they don't. I believe in education. Perhaps plaques at cave entrances would be nice, to draw in cavers that aren't aware of the NSS. I love the *NSS News* and bookstore and many other things about it. Many caves are closed to all but NSS members which I believe is a shame, back to the click thing, can you tell I hate clicks:-)?If I would try an recruit anyone it would be kids, adults very seldom get into anything new. If you're not a caver by 25 you probably never will be.
  - The company I worked for used words like strategic planning, and ever other buzz word that they could buy, and our stock went from 56.00 to 2.95 but our CEO still managed to retire with 8.5 mill and 32 thousand a month. I am not saying that the NSS is like a large corp. but don't let it get that way. Look back at what worked and keep doing it, look at caving as a whole and not at who is screaming the loudest. Keep it simple and get people, and keep people caving all people.
  - Unlike other recreational/conservation organizations, the NSS has remained primarily a "Volunteer" organization. I would like to see it remain so. I am also a lifetime member of the ATC and have noted the changes that have taken place since "professionals" were brought in and do not agree with the direction the organization is taking. Please keep the NSS a volunteer-based organization.
  - I enjoy caving and sharing this adventure with youth, particularly girls. My life has grown busy and I no longer cave each month, but remember when I did! I am not an active Grotto or NSS member, just an average amateur caver, but I think for those who are dedicated or professionally involved you appear to be doing great.
  - I am the President of the Charleston Grotto. I think that additional charges should be applied to membership fees for the membership manual if a caver wants one.
  - I currently live in South Korea and I am a member of the only national caving organization there, the Korean Society of Cave Environmental Science. I go caving occasionally in the US when I am back home. You will observe that my answers above reflect my general lack of knowledge about things going on in the US.
  - The NSS should be careful not to listen to too much of the fluff on the NSS discussion board, as this is not a representative view of the membership.

- My membership is renewed to help sustain the mission of NSS and to enjoy the articles and especially the pictures in the monthly newsletter. I think the NSS could do more to be visible in the promotion of cave exploration and conservation. I was not aware of the library or museum. Perhaps NSS can play a partnership role with other museums and organizations to produce and promote education about caves and their unique place in the world.
- I wish the NSS News had more articles on how to... Such as new techniques or gear. Cavers' ideas and what works best for them underground or camping ideas. Reviews on gear would be great too. Even reviews on camping gear or places to camp.
- We have some problems but as a whole they all can be solved If the people in charge just have a little common sense
- I feel the NSS has always done a good job of education and protection. I would like to see a traveling exhibit to schools which educate the students. This could be done in coordinate with the National Science Teacher Association. The NSS should attend the state Science Teacher conventions which are held in each state and set up displays and sell books. Many more people would be reached if we could do this.
- My current job responsibilities and distance to caves has kept me from being more active in caving recently. The monthly *NSS News* publication keeps me in touch with what is going on in caving. I also find the *NSS News* is a very high quality publication for the price. I like to get to conventions when I can, but it depends on the dates and location. My husband and I are life members, but like to donate some money every year. It might be nice to have a little more information in the annual appeal letter as to what the current initiatives are that need money, or just the general services that are require more funding.
- Perhaps the NSS should consider using the services of a newsletter publication specialist. These organizations publish the newsletter (*NSS News*) free of charge in exchange for the right to sell ad-space. They also guarantee a certain percentage of membership growth as a result of their publication and marketing skills.
- Most of my Caving has been in abandoned MINES ( most vertical) looking for lost people, Homicides and lost animals. The difference between a cave and an abandoned mine is: Caves are natural. Mines were dug by man. Try crawling through a backfilled passage wearing a dregger [sic] mask and pushing it ahead of you and all the time the ground is moving under you as it settles due to change in the atmospheric pressure."
- Please include more basic caving educational articles in the NSS news. Thank you for dropping the cartoons. Please include RNs and EMT-Ps in the Medical Section. Thanks.
- Grotto meeting I attended I was not welcomed in at all was more like looked at like why are you here, so I never went back.
- Not a grotto member, but member of Cave Diving Section.
- As I have stated before this survey and now. Consider removing the cave and karst journals from regular mailings. It seems you would save some money as none of the people I have talked to about this read it. May the cave be with you.

- There are too many committees/sub-committees and what not. There also seems to be too much emphasis and tolerance of drinking and alcoholic consumption, both at conferences (from what I have seen) and on the local level.
- The organization does a good job for me and I am proud to be a member and attend conventions. Thanks for your time and effort.
- Grottos should pursue NSS members in their areas who are not active grotto members.
- I also belong to AAA and Aircraft Owners & Pilots, organizations which are growing yearly because of political concerns, and also their superb variety of goods and services.
- I am proud to be a member of the NSS. Thank you.
- I would very much like to see the salon gallery, in *NSS News* back to the format of all photos in the center, the maps are nice, I do wish to continue to see them, but myself and many others are disappointed to see so few photos lately please include them from now on and don't take them away again, thank you.
- See you underground!!!!!!!
- I will likely never attend a convention, as it seems to be more of a "beer party" than a cave centered activity." I did seriously consider attending this year, but after reading about it decided that I was not comfortable inviting my friends to attend with me.
- I feel that the *Journal of Cave and Karst Studies* should be sent to only the members that request them. Maybe that would cut some costs, and the copies sent to members that don't care about reading them, or don't understand them, will not be wasted.
- I am happy with the NSS at this time but feel that the org. should become more streamlined. An org. of this size is very difficult to manage and maintain with very limited resources and few volunteers.
- I am not really up to speed on some the issues at hand, but, overall I am happy with the NSS, and I will continue to be a member as long as I am able.
- I have no primarily cave location, living in the New York metro area, I always have to cave in places away from the city. This year I was caving in Puerto Rico twice and the Ukraine once for 9 days of caving. I only have 2 1/2 years of caving experience and still consider myself learning. But I think that after 10 years I will still be in the same place.
- I am Currently a teacher and Geology student, and am interested in specific research,
- I would like to see the NSS and all other organizations around the world combine into one international organization (International Speleological Society ISS) so you could combine resources and standardize caving practices and goals.
- I really do not know enough about the NSS to answer these questions.
- YOU GUYS ARE DOING A GREAT JOB. THANK YOU
- I apologize for my mostly neutral position as it is mainly due to being a newbie here.
- Have been in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Illinois. My profession is Land surveying / Civil Engineering so the mapping comes easy

to me. I grew up in southern Indiana so Caves are of great interest to me. I enjoy the adventure. Thank You for allowing me to express my opinions, I hope they help

Comments on the survey itself:

- Oops! Here is my first, and perhaps most important, comment to you: The design of this survey appears to be okay, except for the following: the ""Strongly Agree"" radio button should be first (left-most) option and ""Strongly Disagree"" should be way over at the right. People mostly will be looking for the Agree button, not the Disagree button. I just clicked the Strongly Disagree button by mistake above, then caught my error and fixed it. I wonder how many other people will commit similar errors when filling out the survey. Putting the Strongly Agree button first (left-most) also would seem to put a more positive feel on the whole survey. Sort of like "putting out best foot forward."
- Who is the idiot who proofread this?
- Make the survey fit the screen!
- This survey has too many questions! Who put this together? Any survey company knows not to make people take so long! Good luck getting people to fill it out!!! Argh! [Posted after question 101.]
- This survey is a good idea. The results should be interesting.
- The above NSS Functions survey section was poorly written so not sure how to respond. That was the weakest part of the survey. May have to disregard this section.
- I found the survey only OK, at best -- many options needed a much better breakdown, and others were too vague, fuzzy and/or generic -- I should add that it is a LOT better than the average AOL survey, if that makes you feel any better!
- Format of "NSS Functions" question was unmanageable.. In particular the use of colors was stupid. There are many members who cannot see the colors for various reasons.
- I appreciate the opportunity to give my opinions to the NSS. I support your effort and would like to know of the results of the total survey.
- Thanks.
- Excellent survey, right on time and target, and Thanks for listening! :)
- A bit long winded. Most people in this country have to pay to use a computer. Could put off a lot of people from voting. Not very user friendly, had to use the left and right cursor keys to see the whole screen.
- No option for regions in question 111.
- Marble thingy looks too imposing to answer. Try somebody else.
- The chart on NSS functions - the one where you had to divide up marbles was confusing! It could have been much clearer if you had used heavy lines to indicate the main divisions!
- Could not figure out what you wanted me to do in the "marbles" chart. Is the sum of all the categories to equal 100, or 100 in each sub group.
- I did not understand what was meant by the Sum of Weights 200 in the Functions section. Was each primary function allotted 100 or all together 200?

- Thanks for getting the membership involved...like with this survey.
- Interesting survey. Hope it will help.
- Good Luck and thanks.
- NSS function does not make sense. It must be redone.
- I never liked to play with marbles so I skipped that part. Sorry, too tired.
- The survey is too long to get a demographically representative response. Too many near duplicate questions.
- The one section is too complicated-- 100 points and multiple sections and different colors! Sorry!
- I did not complete the NSS Functions area because I do not really know what percentages I feel are appropriate.
- Good survey. I am glad you are asking our opinions and seeking a membership based solution to our issues.
- By not sending this to each member your results will be biased.
- Too long of a survey...I got hungry. Good luck!
- Thank you.
- NSS functions survey toward the end was a little unusual.
- Keep up the good work. Thanks.
- I did not provide information about the importance of each aspect of the Society because it was confusing at best. The main thing that the NSS should focus on is education of its membership. I do like the survey. It illustrates that the Board is willing to listen to the membership. I hope that real changes occur because of this.
- Keep up the good work.
- Great job with the survey!!
- The "NSS Functions" section above should have been carefully thought through before using it in this survey. If the goal of the survey is to get people to participate, then keep it simple!
- Thank you for this opportunity. This should be continued in the future, but be not so long.
- I hate surveys.
- This survey was too long.
- I think this survey is an excellent idea to evaluate the state of the organization, and see where we all need to go as a group. Keeping your members thoughts and goals in mind is a great way to make sure the organization is headed in the right direction.
- Survey well thought out.