



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Simpson, Brown, Helgeson, Manning and Mital
FROM: Monica Shovlin, Marketing & Creative Services and Greenpower Program
Supervisor, and Lance Robertson, Public Affairs Manager
DATE: January 24, 2014
SUBJECT: Greenpower Customer Survey Results
OBJECTIVE: Information Only

Issue

EWEB Greenpower ranks among the most successful green power programs in the region — the sixth largest in customer participation, according to the nonprofit [Renewable Northwest Project](#). However, EWEB customer participation in the voluntary Greenpower program and Greenpower customer participation in the grant-voting process has declined slightly in recent years (see attached graphs). The number and quality of Greenpower grant proposals also has declined. In 2007, EWEB made the transition from the original Windpower program to Greenpower. In 2012, staff recommended and the board approved a shift in the use of revenues generated by customers' voluntary participation in the program. Revenues currently support local renewable energy projects, including the solar photovoltaic incentive program, as well as the annual Greenpower grant that began in 2009.

Although these changes have been communicated on the web site and in various publications, staff and board members continue to receive anecdotal customer feedback indicating a knowledge gap about how program funds are used.

Background

To learn more about customer perceptions and satisfaction levels – as well as help EWEB inform customers about future program changes -- staff surveyed Greenpower customers in November 2013. In addition to trying to determine the level of awareness of how program revenues are used, the survey also collected customer demographics and preferences for administration of the grant program, communications and other program features.

Discussion

The survey was sent to all 2,402 active Greenpower customers (1,407 by email and 935 by snail mail); 529 customers completed the survey, for a 22% response rate – well above the approximately 330 responses needed to ensure a 95% confidence level with plus or minus 5% margin of error.

The following is a summary of the key results from the survey:

- EWEB Greenpower customer satisfaction is high, with 34.8% of respondents “very satisfied.” and 52.4% “somewhat satisfied.” Of those not choosing “very satisfied,” the reasons are:
 - 59% said they had a lack of knowledge about where their voluntary contribution goes
 - 35.74% said they didn’t have enough information
 - 28.16% said the Greenpower customer benefits were limited
- The reasons people chose to become a Greenpower customer are as follows:
 - 89% said they believe in renewable energy
 - 59% said it feels like the right thing to do
 - 57% said they signed up to support wind power
 - 42% said they signed up to support local solar projects
- 76% of respondents did not know that EWEB Greenpower does not currently fund EWEB’s investments in wind farm projects
- 55% of respondents are not aware that since 2012, EWEB Greenpower contributions fund the solar photovoltaic incentive program.
- The majority of respondents (83%) are aware that EWEB Greenpower funds an annual grant
 - 82% of respondents have participated in the voting process in the last two years
 - Of those that didn’t vote, 48.6% said they forgot to vote
- More than half of respondents (58.6%) weren’t sure and 16% of respondents indicated they wanted to see the \$100K grant distributed differently. More than half said they’d like to award two grants instead of one large grant. Community solar projects and energy education to local schools and Lane Community College also were suggested.
- When asked their level of interest on various ways to encourage greater customer engagement, 67% said they were interested in community workshops and an annual Greenpower report, and 64% said they were interested in an e-coupon book of Greenpower business customer offers.

Customer demographics:

- Half of respondents have been an EWEB Greenpower customer for more than five years
- The majority of respondents are over the age of 55, with 35% of respondents 65 and over and another 32% ages 55 – 64
- Most respondents (90.34%) were residential Greenpower customers, and of these, 88.34% own their home
- Yearly household income was pretty evenly split among all choices.

***Please also note:** Greenpower began funding solar incentives for all EWEB customers in 2012. Of the 237 residential solar net-metered customers who received Greenpower-funded incentives since then, all but 25 are Greenpower supporters.

Recommendations

In response to customer feedback from this survey, staff plans to make the following changes to the Greenpower program in 2014:

- Offer two grants of up to \$50,000 each for eligible local nonprofit renewable energy project proposals, as selected by vote of Greenpower customers;
- Create a Greenpower customer-specific e-newsletter for distribution annually or biannually that includes grant winner and other program updates that may be repurposed from other

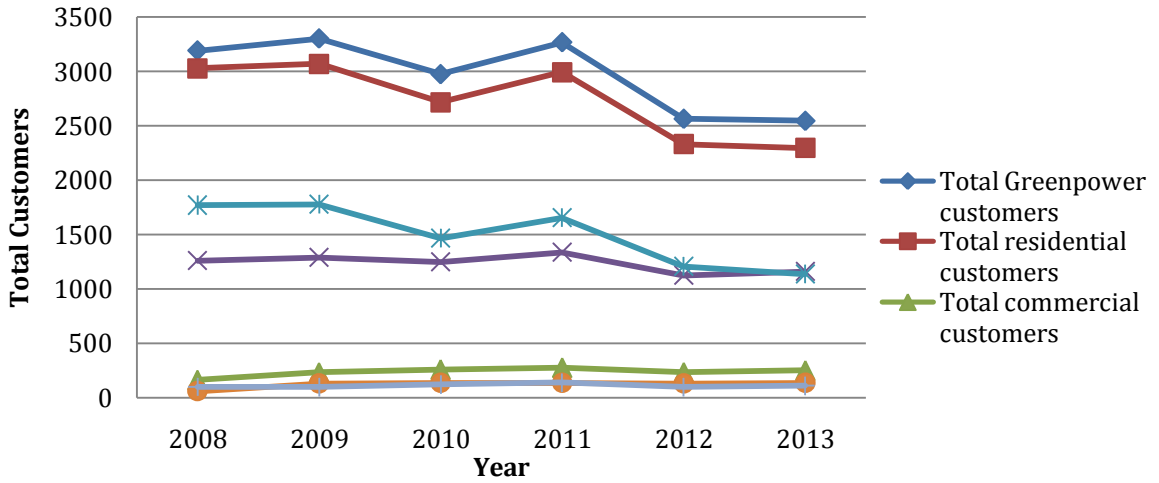
publications, as well as a high level “annual report” of program finances and customer participation;

- Update/clarify website and other communications regarding power resources associated with Greenpower RECs;
- Offer one or two Greenpower customer workshops on renewable power topics each year, if minimum attendance can be assured via preregistration;
- Research options for an e-coupon book of Greenpower business offers for distribution to current and new residential Greenpower customers.

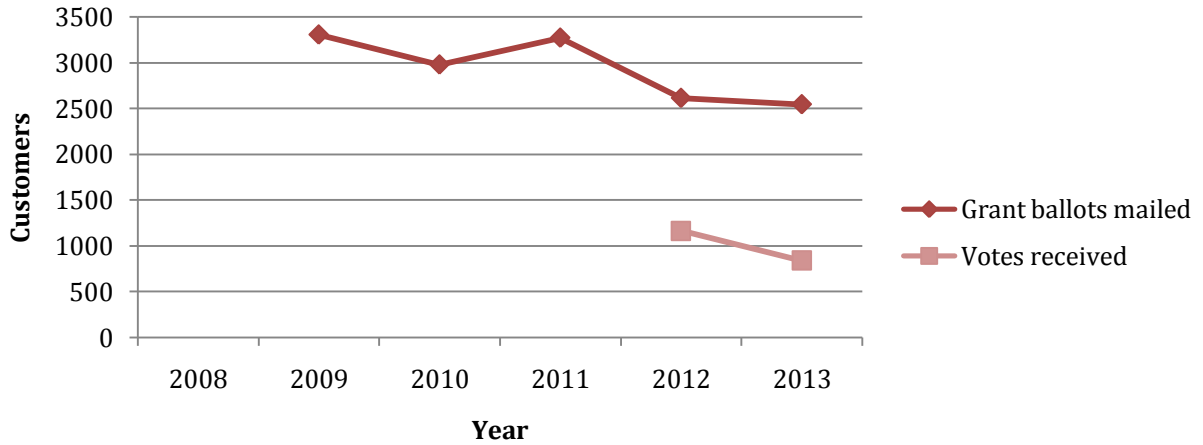
Requested Board Action

None; information only. If you would like to review the full survey results, including verbatim responses to open-ended questions, contact Monica Shovlin at monica.shovlin@eweb.org.

Greenpower customers



Greepower grant voter turnout



Greenpower revenue

