

## Survey Results Shown in Red

### Survey of INPS Membership – 2013

The Board of the Idaho Native Plant Society (INPS) is facing a number of important issues and decisions that will have long- range impacts on the Society. The INPS budget, website, annual meetings, Sage Notes format, plant conservation and membership fees are a few of the issues the board is dealing with. Knowing how the INPS membership feels about these issues is very important to the board. The board is, therefore, soliciting input from our members through the following survey. We hope that each INPS member will take the time to provide the board guidance by filling out the survey. The survey should take about 10-15 minutes to fill out. We appreciate your participation in the survey and your help in making INPS better meet the needs of its members.

*Please circle the appropriate letter or, where applicable, please place ranking next to the letters.*

#### GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. I am a member of the following INPS chapter(s):
  - a. Calypso (Coeur d'Alene) - 9
  - b. Loasa (Twin Falls) - 12
  - c. Pahove (Boise) - 75
  - d. Sawabi (Southeast Idaho) - 29
  - e. Upper Snake (Idaho Falls) - 16
  - f. White Pine (Moscow) - 41
  - g. Wood River (Ketchum, Sun Valley) - 0
  - h. Unaffiliated - 4
  
2. My reason for membership with the INPS is (please rank all six by priority with 1 being the highest priority):
  - a. Networking and socializing. 1-20, 2-22, 3-34, 4-41, 5-36, 6-27
  - b. Plant education, preservation, and conservation. 1-102, 2-48, 3-13, 4-13, 5-4, 6-1
  - c. Current scientific issues. 1-46, 2-39, 3-43, 4-30, 5-11, 6-8
  - d. Field trips and meetings. 1-53, 2-43, 3-35, 4-31, 5-10, 6-6
  - e. To learn about gardening with native plants. 1-50, 2-34, 3-24, 4-35, 5-18, 6-21
  - f. To learn the names of the plants I see when hiking, camping, etc. 1-60, 2-47, 3-19, 4-24, 5-14, 6-17
  
3. I go to the INPS website, idahonativeplants.org, (check one):

- a. Daily - 0
  - b. Weekly - 14
  - c. Monthly - 41
  - d. Seldom - 103
  - e. Never – 12
  - f. I didn't know there is a web site. - 13
4. I would improve the INPS website by (check all that apply):
- a. I like it the way it is now. - 36
  - b. Including more information about plant identification. - 79
  - c. Including more information about chapter activities. - 52
  - d. Including more links to other native plant websites. - 54
  - e. Including more general information about INPS activities. - 41
  - f. Make the site easier to navigate and use. - 25
  - g. Include a password protected directory for members. - 15
  - h. Other (please specify) – 2  
 More on jobs/occupations available.  
 Haven't used it yet.
5. Current dues for INPS membership are: \$10-Senior, \$10-Student, \$17-Individual, \$22-Household, \$35+- sustaining, \$100+-Patron. It is the desire of the INPS board to keep dues low and affordable. I feel that the dues:
- a. Could go up \$5.00 - \$10.00 if necessary to meet Society budgetary needs. - 113
  - b. Could go up \$10.00 - \$15.00 if necessary to meet Society budgetary needs. - 39
  - c. Could go up \$15.00 - \$20.00 if necessary to meet Society budgetary needs. - 19
  - d. Should not increase as I could not afford to stay in INPS. - 15
6. The most important step INPS could take to increase public awareness of native plant issues is (check one):
- a. Increasing public outreach and education - 121
  - b. Advertising locally and statewide via news media - 18
  - c. Getting more members - 12
  - d. Increasing presence in schools and universities - 23
  - e. Other (please specify)

SAGE NOTES QUESTIONS

Sages Notes is a quarterly publication of INPS. It contains articles about chapter activities, workshops, INPS ERIG grants, collecting forays, annual meetings, specific plants or genera, literature reviews, etc. Since Feb 2011 Sage Notes has contained 20-28 pages per issue with all pages containing some color. A printed copy is sent to all members except those opting to read it on our website. Cost of printing and mailing is a major expense for INPS. It costs \$20-\$30.00 a year per copy to print and mail Sage Notes. The last year timeliness in getting Sage Notes to our members has been a problem.

7. The timeliness of Sage Notes is (check one):

- a. Extremely important to me - 22
- b. Somewhat important to me - 86
- c. Not important to me - 75

8. When Sage Notes arrives in my mail box I (check one):

- a. Read it all the way through - 76
- b. Read selected articles - 78
- c. Put it aside to read later - 21
- d. Throw it in the trash - 0

9. I prefer to receive Sage Notes as (check one):

- a. Paper copy by regular mail - 67
- b. Attached to an email - 40
- c. An emailed link to the online copy - 75

10. My favorite articles in Sage Notes are (please rank all eight by priority with 1 being the highest priority): **Note: results showed only six rankings.**

- a. Botanical forays and field trips – 1-40, 2-49, 3-42, 4-27, 5-13, 6-6
- b. Workshops and conferences – 1-26, 2-38, 3-27, 4-43, 5-22, 6-16
- c. Current literature reviews – 1-23, 2-33, 3-42, 4-40, 5-23, 6-11
- d. Species highlights – 1-72, 2-50, 3-32, 4-18, 5-5, 6-1
- e. Chapter news – 1-18, 2-44, 3-53, 4-36, 5-14, 6-9
- f. Articles about members – 1-7, 2-29, 3-47, 4-47, 5-25, 6-12
- g. Discussion of native and rare plant issues and topics – 1-84, 2-54, 3-26, 4-10, 5-2, 6-2
- h. Humorous or special interest articles about native plants or native plant people – 1-24, 2-55, 3-38, 4-25, 5-17, 6-10

11. As printing and mailing costs increase, it may become necessary to increase revenue or consider a cheaper format. I am in favor of (check one):

- a. Keeping Sages Notes around 20-28 pages with its current paper quality and format. - 21
- b. Keeping Sages Notes around 10-15 pages with its current paper quality and format. - 27
- c. Publishing Sage Notes using current format once or twice a year and do a smaller, lesser quality format twice or three times a year. - 42

- d. Using less color and lower quality of paper on all issues, but keep it around 20-28 pages. - 26
- e. Make Sage Notes a comprehensive annual publication and supplement it with a Newsletter of lesser quality - 39
- f. Other (please specify) - 24

12. If the Board chooses to keep the current format, I am in favor of (check one):

- a. Increasing membership dues to meet increased printing and mailing costs. - 37
- b. Doing only an emailed copy or an emailed link to the online copy. - 85
- c. Charging an extra fee of \$20.00 to \$30.00 a year to those who want a paper copy. - 57

#### ANNUAL MEETING QUESTIONS

13. Please describe your participation in the annual meetings

- a. I try to attend the annual meeting every year - 21
- b. I attend the annual meeting occasionally - 33
- c. I attend the annual meeting when it is close to home - 29
- d. I have not attended the annual meeting - 90
- e. I was not aware of the annual meeting - 8

14. What factors make it difficult for you to attend the annual meeting?

- a. Distance and cost of travel - 60
- b. Lodging and/or camping arrangements - 10
- c. Time of year the meeting is held, or scheduling conflicts - 79
- d. Lack of information about the annual meeting - 16
- e. Cost of the registration fee - 9

15. 2013 was the first time INPS has combined with another society for the annual meeting. Did you attend that combined American Penstemon Society/Idaho Native Plant Society annual meeting in June, 2013?

- a. Yes - 26
- b. No - 156

16. In 2014 INPS will hold its annual meeting jointly with the Eriogonum Society. There may be future opportunities for INPS to combine with other organizations, although this is likely to

occur only occasionally. Do you favor continuing with joint annual meetings when the opportunity arises?

- a. Yes - 164
- b. No - 11

17. I would prefer that the annual meeting:

- a. Be formal with hotel and meeting rooms (more costly) - 12
- b. Be informal with camping (less costly) - 87
- c. Alternate between the two formats - 71

18. My favorite activities at the annual meetings are (please rank all six by priority with 1 being the highest priority)?

- a. Networking and socializing – 1-19, 2-25, 3-33, 4-34, 5-17, 6-10
- b. Field trips – 1-72, 2-36, 3-11, 4-14, 5-2, 6-3
- c. Learning to identify plants – 1-65, 2-36, 3-21, 4-10, 5-2, 6-5
- d. Banquet and annual INPS business – 1-6, 2-12, 3-25, 4-36, 5-31, 6-27
- e. Camping – 1-7, 2-20, 3-31, 4-26, 5-28, 6-24
- f. Learning about local issues and activities to conserve native plants – 1-55, 2-46, 3-24, 4-9, 5-5, 6-3

## ERIG QUESTIONS

INPS sponsors the **Education, Research, and Inventory Grant (ERIG)** program which seeks to stimulate and promote research, conservation and educational activities which contribute to the appreciation, conservation, or knowledge of Idaho's native flora or plant communities. Grants of up to \$1000 can be awarded. The INPS board allocated \$2000 for awards in 2013. Of that amount over \$700 came from donations specifically for the ERIG program. Grant requests are usually greater than funds available.

19. What is your opinion on the current level of funding for ERIG?

- a. Too many resources are being expended on the ERIG projects - 7
- b. The level of funding for ERIG is about right - 81
- c. The ERIG projects are important and need more funding - 68

20. What is your opinion on the relative proportion of funding from the various sources?

- a. The level of funding from the various sources is about right - 44
- b. Shortfalls in funding for ERIG should be made up from general INPS funds even if this means a small increase in dues - 20

- c. Greater emphasis should be placed on soliciting donations for ERIG projects - 41
- d. Greater emphasis should be placed on fund- raising events and programs for ERIG projects - 47

21. Do you support the development of an ERIG Foundation?

- a. Yes - 79
- b. No - 5
- c. Don't know or no opinion - 96

#### RARE PLANT CONFERENCE QUESTION

INPS sponsors gatherings of professional botanists and interested amateurs who meet to discuss the status of rare plants within Idaho. These are in the form of biennial, statewide Rare Plant Conferences and more frequent Regional Working Group meetings. The INPS sponsorship brings together botanists from many entities (federal, state, and tribal) and lends objectivity and independence to the findings of these groups. Many volunteers from INPS help in making these meetings a success. The meetings have a low financial impact on INPS; in fact, the Rare Plant Conference has been successfully used to raise funds for ERIG in the past.

22. What is your opinion of the INPS sponsorship of professional botanical gatherings?

- a. We should reduce our involvement with these activities - 10
- b. Our level of involvement is about right - 77
- c. We should look for additional ways to foster this type of activity - 83

#### INPS COMMITTEES QUESTION

INPS has a number of committees that help the organization run more smoothly or that further the objectives of the organization. Standing committees include 1) Conservation committee charged with implementing INPS native plant conservation goals, 2) Annual meeting committee charged with planning and implementing the annual meeting, 3) Membership committee charged with recommending membership categories and promoting membership, 4) ERIG committee charged with implementing the ERIG program, 5) Newsletter committee charged with the many facets of effective publication of Sage Notes. In addition to the standing committees, there are a nominating committee and a ballot committee and other ad hoc or short term committees appointed for special projects. INPS board often has trouble finding members willing to serve on the various committees.

23. How should the INPS board proceed with regard to its committees?

- a. Scale back on the number of committees and concentrate on only the most vital areas - 73
- b. Press the membership to get more involved in the operations of the organization through committees membership - 79

NOTES

24. Notes: (please add any comments you wish here.)

I've enjoyed my membership w/ the society.

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I have been a member for many years. I have seen a shift in membership toward more professional botanists and fewer amateurs, at least in the Pahove area. We have very few general amateur field trips or professional either, for that matter. This decreases my level of commitment to the organization.

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A foundation for ERIG would require a lot of work to establish. It would require some dedicated volunteers. If INPS is a 501-3c, a foundation would not be of further help for soliciting donations.

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I think outreach is important. Please consider activities & lectures on effects of climate change, reforestation after fires & floods. Importance of biodiversity in land & agriculture.

**Comments**

**Survey comments for "How should the INPS board proceed with regard to its committees?"**

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Provide more detail about what participation on a committee would involve.

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Committee participation is a good way to get members more involved in the state organization. A lot of members do not realize what the state does until they become involved.

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Ideally members should be involved. Maybe the chapters could take a more

active role in recruiting volunteers for the state organization.

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np opinion

it hasn't helped to press the membership to get more involved in committees. 'don't know the answer to that problem!

Combination of both.

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Not nec scale back, but get more involved as needed to participate in other committees if needed

Best to ask people who have served on committees.

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Combine (1) and (4), and reduce the workload for (3) and (5)

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No opinion

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There has to be incentive for members to get involved-not just "pressing"

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No opinion.

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Don't know.

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Education of members,about committees and there functions

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Being on the Golden Eagle Audubon board I feel for you!!! Hard to get members involved.



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With hectic schedules the norm, it's important that committee meetings are short, light and provide food/drink options.

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No opinion, see item 22.

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If I had more time and energy i would want to be involved, but this is an area within which we should engage young people who are studying biology to become active.

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I think that the membership committee functions can be accomplished by the INPS Board (for membership categories) and local chapters (promoting membership). I believe that there is value in having a Landscape Committee to promote the use of native plants in landscapes and to assemble information on sources of native plants and native plant expertise.

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what are these committees doing anyways? No one ever lets us know.

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Not sure - I am not really in the loop as to what's critical statewide and what's critical locally to INPS function.

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Tough question. If my favorite agendas are to be scaled back, I don't like the idea.

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Tough call!

These days it is downright impossible to get people to commit to a volunteer position, when you know they are not committed to anything, not even hauling over-scheduled kids around. Those of us who will, end up over stretched with several organizations and feel almost stuck in the positions they are already in. Then they can't commit to taking on other positions either. Pressing folks just makes them disappear.

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**What is your opinion of the INPS sponsorship of professional botanical gatherings?**

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It is unrealistic to expect the Rare Plant Conference to be a fund raiser for ERIG. If there are funds that can go that way after an RPC event, then that's the gravy... but the RPC shouldn't be expected to be an ERIG fundraiser.

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This seems to be what the INPS and conservation is all about.

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This is not a place where we've been involved, so I would leave it for others to comment. Professional development and exchange seem like they would be important for botanists.

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These gatherings should be set to include more lay botanists

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I've never attended, but believe this is probably a worthwhile activity.

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This is really important for Idaho and its botanists.

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The current time of year for the RPC conflicts with other seasonal plans for me, but it is a valuable gathering.

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Hard to have an opinion here. I'm in the NPS because my wife is interested. I've never participated in the rare plant meetings and am not likely to unless my wife talks me into it, which is also unlikely.

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Our educational system has moved far away from appreciation and knowledge about our natural world. It is up to organizations such as INPS to further interest and responsibility for our natural world.

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Although this conference has great value, I believe that it draws a lot of time and effort from the membership to serve the small proportion of people that are professional botanists.

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This needs to be of actual relevance to lay and professional botanical folks. It is usually geared to botanists and the rest of us are discarded in the back rows as unimportant. "Their" ideas are the ones that matter anyways? If INPS is strictly a professional organization, then it needs to be stated as such. The rest of us could form a lay organization that is much more meaningful to us.

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Are you asking here about sponsoring the Rare Plant Conf or prof. botanical gatherings in general?

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Sponsorship is a nice idea but I don't think it should be a high priority, esp. given our \$ standing.

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**Please enter any additional comments:**

Regarding SageNotes, the proposal for two paper formats sounds like a lot of extra work--since neither format would be used by the folks doing layout and editing often enough to get comfortable with it.

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Congratulations to Paul for putting this on the web in such an easy to read format.

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Please collect input/increase emphasis on wild plant sale and how to obtain wild plants from growers (with INPS discount). Thank you.

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Although I like nothing better than holding paper (books, newsletters, newspapers, magazines) for pleasant reading - Sage Notes should go to an electronic format to save \$\$ for INPS

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Thanks for putting together the survey. Hopefully it will make INPS a better organization.

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Sage Notes is not being mailed to those who do not get good internet reception. eliminate paper and mailing costs

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Holy Cow! You all worked hard on this survey. If nothing else, I hope it gets members who do not actively participate to be more aware of the needs of INPS. Maybe more participation to come? nice work on the survey!

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I donate 15 or 20 bucks a year just to do my little part to a needed conservation group. The sage notes are what are inside the words and not the fancy print paper or color. Make adjustments according to your cost concerns but it is the quality of the articles that will determine its worth.

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I don't live in Idaho so I can't participate in many events

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I am an occasional attendee, so don't know enough really to comment

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Thank you for asking for this input. This is an important group, and I want the group to be successful.

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Too few Qs had comment blocks.

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#11.....go to an e-mail format.

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get people on committes and then on the board

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I am a new member, joined this spring, so am unfamiliar with many of the issues, etc.

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If you need ERIG money, the Trust for Public Lands has money for Idaho projects burning a hole in their pockets. -- Told to me by a board member... I am a new member not familiar with all aspects of INPS, but would prefer email and online access to newsletters and other publications.

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INPS is a great organization that serves a pressing need to educate the public, catalog native plants, identify threats, etc.--no doubt it serves many more functions than I can list. However my membership involvement is entirely passive due to other commitments, tho I maintain membership in order to keep updated on lectures and activities which may be of interest to the Upper Snake IMN chapter. My answers to this survey might be discarded on this basis--I did checkmark answers where there was no "N/A" or "No opinion" option available. (I probably should have left them blank.) Just did not want to ignore the survey as I understand that, on average, surveys are lucky if they get a 20% participation rate. Thank you for the opportunity to explain my minimal involvement. Thank you for all you do.

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Within INPS, at times I have observed a tendency to get caught up in the minutia of operations. I think we need to move beyond this and put our energy towards the important task of educating the public about the value of our native resources.

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Sage Notes is great and really the only visible service INPS provides all its members. (Some may not attend events.) I don't know if you can afford the paper copy for each issue, once a year or what. Do the best you can!

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I am not a very active member of INPS. I continue to pay dues mostly to support conservation and educational activities. I may not continue my membership if the dues increase.

Q11.: I would opt for keeping the format and making the newsletters available online only.

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Maybe have more on-line opportunities. I don't live near my group and have to travel, so it is nearly impossible to do things on the weekdays I'd like to help more, but I don't see many opportunities that I can help with? But I'm probably an oddity & not sure it makes much difference.

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I have not been much involved with INPS for a number of years mainly due to my involvement with Audubon. But I still keep tabs and want to be more involved. Keep up the good work.

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Re Sage Notes: Could mail a simple black & white hard copy to those that want it, and have the color version online. It would be much cheaper. I expect to become more involved after I retire, next couple of years.

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INPS is a critical part of my research information.

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Perhaps INPS could build an endowment so special projects could be funded by the interest. It took Washington NPS several years to build theirs to \$100,000 but it happened.

provide sage notes online only

Joseph Wythe

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Sage Notes does not need to be thick and colorful to be effective; "articles in waiting" would eliminate some problems; providing a stipend for editing helps but isn't enough to sustain the current effort. I favor periodic chapter updates to supplement Sage Notes. Volunteer issues are difficult as tasks seem to always fall to the same dedicated few; volunteer opportunities need to be attractive and offer personal satisfaction to draw members in, and especially geared to those with little experience who may otherwise feel intimidated by the technical aspects of botany. We need to develop materials for increasing the "attractiveness" of native plants and what they represent. (WHY are native plants important; HOW can I make a difference; WHERE can I find more information; WHO do I ask if I want guidelines for helping out?) It would be good to post online available opportunities with specifics as to what is involved, including level of commitment (easy/occasional to technical/continuing). Thanks for your good energy and for the opportunity to comment.

I don't see any reason for a printed newsletter.

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1. I recommend all-electronic publication of Sage Notes with added fee to cover cost of paper copies for those who want it. For annual meeting, continue to provide camping arrangements and list of local motels.

Thank you for the survey and the opportunity to provide our ideas to the INPS board.



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Sage Notes: I suggest eliminating a prerequisite number of pages for a newsletter issue. Some issues may be 14 pages, others 24, or some other number - depending on submission of material. Filling up pages with large color photos unrelated to the articles seems like "filler" (and is likely expensive). Quality over quantity. Quarterly issues are sufficient.

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Our chapter struggles with diversifying membership (most are retirees), which also limits recruiting other demographics and limits the types of activities the group is willing to participate in.

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I feel that there is too much emphasis on chapter activities. If there is a problem with Sage Notes that should be an area to cut back on.

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I don't have a lot of comments. I recently joined the Sawabi chapter, but now live in Nezperce, 450 miles from Pocatello and around 90 miles from Moscow. I'm afraid my involvement in the society is going to be pretty limited. I do like that the dues are very affordable.

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While I enjoy the printed Sagenotes, considering the cost, why not go to an email version or web-based version. This would eliminate printing and postage costs.

I am in Island Park during my summers and would like to attend more events. Are any activities planned for IP?

Plant sale financials need to be made public shortly after the sale is over

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Re Sage Notes, I don't think all the color photos are necessary; web links would look. Same with the photos of people: put them on the web instead. I would like more articles on botany (technical terms are ok), conservation, plant ecology, more precise location of field trips... As mentioned earlier, I think INPS could glean many ideas from a survey of other state nps societies. Good luck!

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I just joined so have not yet had an opportunity to get involved so my answers may not be entirely useful.