

Executive Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Mesa Verde National Park during the week of July 19-25, 1987. Questionnaires were given to 850 visitors and 358 were returned, a 42% response rate.
- The report is in two volumes. Volume 1 provides a statistical profile of the people who visited Mesa Verde. Volume 2 has their general comments about the park (a summary is included in this volume).
- Visitors were most likely to be in family groups of two to four people. Most visitors were making their first visit to Mesa Verde. The majority of visitors came from Colorado, California and Texas. German tourists formed a significant proportion of foreign visitors.
- Most visitors stayed two days. Motorized travel on park roads, visiting or viewing cliff dwellings and ruins were their most common activities.
- The sites that received the greatest proportion of all visitors were the Museum and Cliff Palace. Forty-four percent of Far View Visitor Center visitors stopped at the Visitor Center first.
- The average per capita expenditure for the two days was approximately \$ 18.00. The most common visitor group expenditure was from \$ 1-50.00, though the average group expenditure was approximately \$ 63.00 per visit.
- Fifty-eight percent of visitors viewed the Far View Visitor Center exhibits, with the majority rating them very to moderately useful. Twenty-three percent of the respondents felt that more information facilities are needed at Mesa Verde. The park entrance and nearby communities were commonly suggested locations.
- The nearby communities of Cortez, Durango, and Farmington together accounted for 56% of visitor places of origin on their arrival day as well as for 42% of visitor destinations on their departure day from Mesa Verde.
- A total of 43% of the respondents indicated that they had purchased items from the park's bookstore. The major reasons for their purchases were for keeping as souvenirs and to aid with their visit .
- Besides saying that they enjoyed their visit, visitors commented about the park's friendly or helpful employees and that they would like to or plan to visit again.