

**Visitor Services Project
Grand Teton National Park
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Grand Teton National Park (NP) during July 13-19, 2008. A total of 1,044 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 739 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 71% response rate. The location of questionnaire distribution accurately reflects visitation statistics.
 - This report profiles a systematic random sample of Grand Teton NP visitors. Most results are presented in graphs and frequency tables. Summaries of visitor comments are included in the report and complete comments are included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.
 - Forty-four percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 29% were in groups of three or four. Seventy-two percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
 - Thirty percent of visitors were ages 51-65 years, 19% were ages 15 years or younger and 11% were over 65 years. This is probably due to the aging and increasing affluence of the demographics of Grand Teton NP visitors. Seven percent of visitor groups included members with physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services. The aging trend parallels the U.S. trend, and may be magnified by the age and income cohort of residents in the Jackson area, and the high cost to families with children.
 - United States visitors comprised 90% of total visitation during the survey period, with 12% from California, 7% from Utah, 7% from Wyoming, and smaller proportions from 45 other states and Washington, D.C. International visitors were from 21 countries and comprised 10% of total visitation, with 18% from Canada, 17% from the United Kingdom, 10% from the Netherlands, and 10% from Germany. Smaller proportions came from 17 other countries.
 - Sixty percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time, while 21% had visited two or three times, and 16% had visited five or more times. Forty-one percent of visitor groups entered the park once during this visit and 44% entered two to four times. Eighty-six percent of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park.
 - Most visitor groups (89%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Grand Teton NP through previous visits (47%) and maps/brochures (41%). Use of the internet to obtain park information doubled to 36% since the Grand Teton NP VSP study conducted in 1997.
 - For 48% of visitor groups, visiting Yellowstone National Park was the most common reason for visiting the area. For 74% of visitor groups, Grand Teton NP was one of several destinations in their travel plans.
 - The most common sites visited by visitor groups were Jenny Lake (70%), followed by Colter Bay (48%). Reported visitation to the Craig Thomas Visitor Center may have been negatively affected by confusion with the name. The most common visitor activities were viewing scenery/scenic drive (77%) and hiking/walking (52%).
 - The information service/facility most commonly used by visitor groups was the park brochure/map (92%). Use of the park newspaper was surprisingly low at 38%. The most commonly used visitor service/facility was roads (90%). The concession service/facility most commonly used by visitor groups was the grocery/camp store/gift shop (66%).
 - All information, visitor, and concession services/facilities were rated above average in their importance and quality. The visitor information service most commonly used by visitor groups was the park brochure/map (92%). The information service receiving the highest importance rating was park brochure/map (85%). The service receiving the highest quality rating was assistance from park staff (96%).
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- The visitor service/facility most commonly used by visitor groups was roads (90%). The visitor service/facility receiving the highest importance rating was trails (96%). The service/facility receiving the highest quality rating was trails (93%).
- The concession service/facility most commonly used by visitor groups was grocery/camp store/gift shop (66%). The concession service/facility receiving the highest importance rating was camp in developed campground (96%). The concession service/facility receiving the highest quality rating was guided scenic float trip (93%).
- The average group expenditure in the park and the surrounding area (within 100 miles) increased substantially from the 1997 study average of \$575 to \$1,388, with a median (50% spent more and 50% spent less) of \$673. This is one of the higher average group expenditures in national park units studied by the VSP in recent years. The average total expenditure per person was \$472. Sixty-six percent of visitor groups had two adults covered by expenditures, while 41% had no children covered by expenditures.
- Most visitor groups (96%) rated the overall quality of visitor facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Grand Teton National Park as “very good” or “good.” One percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

Comparison of 2008 and 1997 survey results

- Demographics. Same proportion of first-time visitors; fewer children, slightly older visitors in 2008; group sizes and group types are similar; 96% of all visitors speak English in 2008 (not asked in 1997). 5% were residents of Teton County in 2008 compared to 2% in 1997.
- International visitors. Slightly higher proportion in 2008 (10%) than in 1997 (8%).
- Source of information. Use of internet more than doubled; about 40% used word-of-mouth (both studies).
- Park as destination. 2008, 17% primary destination; 74% one of several destinations. Not asked in 1997.
- Primary reason for visiting area. 2008: Yellowstone 48%; Grand Teton 28%. Not asked in 1997.
- Arrival direction. Similar proportions: 50% Jackson/Moose-Wilson (2008); 53% Jackson (1997).
- Average length of park visit. More groups spent more than one day: 56% (2008); 45% (1997).
- Overnight stay. 81% stayed within 100 miles; average of 3.6 nights inside park, 4.6 nights outside. (Not asked in 1997 survey.)
- Most common activity. Viewing scenery/scenic drive: Similar: 77% (2008); 98% (1997).
- Most visited site. Jenny Lake: 70% (2008); 72% (1997).
- Average expenditures. \$1,388/visitor group (2008); \$575/visitor group (1997).
- Overall quality. Rated as “very good” or “good:” 96% (2008); 92% (1997).

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho at (208) 885-7863 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>.

