



Wind Cave National Park Visitor Study

Summer 2010

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/SSD/NRR—2011/108/106477



ON THE COVER

Bison at Wind Cave National Park

Photograph courtesy of Wind Cave National Park

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February 2011

U.S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Natural Resource Program Center
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Please cite this publication as:

Holmes, N.C., A. Blotkamp, B. Lackey, S. J. Hollenhorst. 2011. Wind Cave National Park Visitor Study: Summer 2010. Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/SSD/NRR—2011/108/106477. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado.

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Executive Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Wind Cave National Park (NP) during July 27 - August 2, 2010. A total of 852 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 575 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 67.5% response rate.
- This report profiles a systematic random sample of Wind Cave NP visitors. Most results are presented in graphs and frequency tables.
- Thirty-two percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 29% were in groups of four. Eighty-seven percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
- United States visitors comprised 93% of total visitation during the survey period, with 11% from Minnesota and smaller proportions from 44 other states and Washington, D.C. International visitors were from 12 countries.
- Eighty-seven percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time in their lifetime, and 98% were visiting for the first time in the past 12 months.
- Twenty-seven percent of visitors were ages 36-50 years, 31% were ages 15 years or younger, and 6% were ages 66 or older. Thirty-eight percent of respondents had completed a bachelor's degree.
- Most visitor groups (76%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about the park through travel guides/tour books (45%), and most (93%) received the information they needed. To obtain information for a future visit, 67% of visitor groups would use the park website.
- For 57% of non-resident visitor groups, the primary reason for visiting the park area (within 30 miles of the park) was to visit other attractions in the area.
- Seventy-two percent of visitor groups stayed overnight in the area within 30 miles of the park, of which 26% percent stayed two nights.
- Of those visitor groups that stayed less than one day, 28% spent three hours visiting the park. Of those that visited for more than one day, 58% spent two days visiting the park. The average length of stay was 7 hours or 0.3 days.
- The most common activity was taking the cave tour (77%) and the most important activity was also the cave tour (71%).
- Seventy-seven percent of visitor groups took a cave tour, and 50% of them took the Natural Entrance tour. Of those that did not take a tour, 36% reported they didn't because of lack of time and 20% reported they didn't due to physical limitations.
- Fifty-six percent of visitor groups viewed the prairie exhibits, but only 15% viewed the cave exhibits. Of those that did not view any exhibits (30%), forty-three percent reported it was because they did not have time.
- Most visitor groups (92%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Wind Cave NP as "very good" or "good." Less than 1% of groups rated the overall quality as "very poor" or "poor."

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>.

Acknowledgements

We thank Dr. Brenda Lackey for overseeing the fieldwork, Maria Bromley, Chad Kooistra, Amanda Halverson, and the staff and volunteers of Wind Cave National Park for assisting with the survey, and David Vollmer and Matthew Strawn for data processing.

About the Authors

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Introduction

This report describes the results of a visitor study at Wind Cave National Park (NP) in Hot Springs, SD, conducted July 27 - August 2, 2010 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Park Studies Unit (PSU) at the University of Idaho.

The National Park Service website for Wind Cave NP describes the park: “One of the world’s longest and most complex caves and 28,295 acres of mixed-grass prairie, ponderosa pine forest, and associated wildlife are the main features of the park. The cave is well known for its outstanding display of boxwork, an unusual cave formation composed of thin calcite fins resembling honeycombs. The park’s mixed-grass prairie is one of the few remaining and is home to native wildlife such as bison, elk, pronghorn, mule deer, coyotes, and prairie dogs” (www.nps.gov/wica, retrieved November, 2010).

Organization of the Report

The report is organized into three sections.

Section 1: Methods. This section discusses the procedures, limitations, and special conditions that may affect the study results.

Section 2: Results. This section provides summary information for each question in the questionnaire and includes visitor comments to open-ended questions. The presentation of the results of this study does not follow the order of questions in the questionnaire.

Section 3: Appendices

Appendix 1: *The Questionnaire.* A copy of the questionnaire distributed to visitor groups.

Appendix 2: *Additional Analysis.* A list of sample questions for cross-references and cross-comparisons. Comparisons can be analyzed within park or between parks. Results of additional analyses are not included in this report.

Appendix 3: *Decision rules for checking non-response bias.* An explanation of how the non-response bias was determined.

Appendix 4: *Visitor Services Project Publications.* A complete list of publications by the VSP. Copies of these reports can be obtained by visiting the website: www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp/reports.htm or by contacting the VSP office at (208) 885-7863.

Visitor Comments Appendix: A separate appendix provides visitor responses to open-ended questions. It is bound separately from this report due to its size.

Presentation of the Results

Results are represented in the form of graphs (see example below), scatter plots, pie charts, tables, or text.

SAMPLE

1. The figure title describes the graph's information.
2. Listed above the graph, the "N" shows the number of individuals or visitor groups responding to the question. If "N" is less than 30, "CAUTION!" is shown on the graph to indicate the results may be unreliable.

* appears when total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

** appears when total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer choice.

3. Vertical information describes the response categories.
4. Horizontal information shows the number or proportions of responses in each category.
5. In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

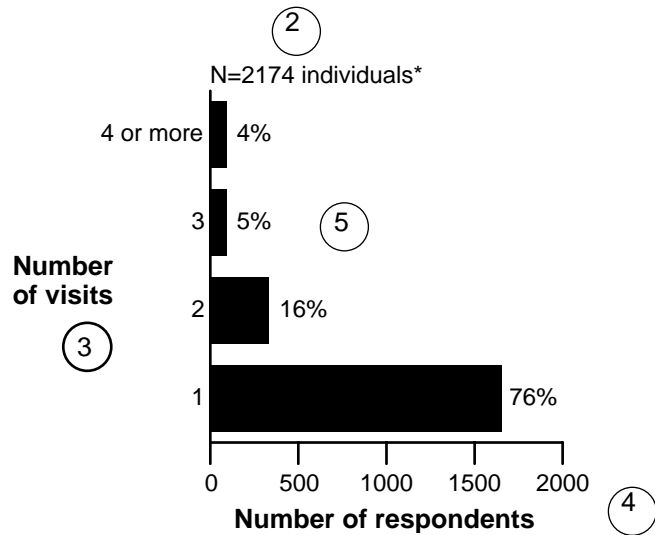


Figure 14. Number of visits to the park in past 12 months

Methods

Survey Design

Sample size and sampling plan

All VSP questionnaires follow design principles outlined in Don A. Dillman's book *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (2007). Using this methodology, the sample size was calculated based on the park visitation statistics of previous years.

Brief interviews were conducted with a systematic, random sample of visitor groups that arrived at four sites during July 27 - August 2, 2010. Visitors were surveyed between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Table 1 shows the four locations, number of questionnaires distributed at each location, and the response rate for each location. During this survey, 935 visitor groups were contacted and 852 of these groups (91.1%) accepted questionnaires (average acceptance rate for 211 VSP visitor studies conducted from 1988 through 2009 is 91.8%). Questionnaires were completed and returned by 575 visitor groups resulting in a 67.5% response rate for this study. The average response rate for the 211 VSP visitor studies is 73.5%.

Table 1. Questionnaire distribution, summer 2010

Sampling site	Distributed		Returned	
	N	%	N	%
Junction of roads 5 and 6	6	<1	5	1
North Entrance	235	28	150	26
South Entrance	299	35	201	35
Visitor Center/West Entrance	312	37	219	38
Total	852	100	575	100

Questionnaire design

The Wind Cave NP questionnaire was developed at a workshop held with park staff to design and prioritize the questions. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks while others were customized for Wind Cave NP. Many questions asked visitors to choose answers from a list of responses, often with an open-ended option, while others were completely open-ended.

No pilot study was conducted to test the Wind Cave NP questionnaire. However, all questions followed Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines and/or were used in previous surveys, thus the clarity and consistency of the survey instrument have been tested and supported.

Survey procedure

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, they were asked which member (at least 16 years old) had the next birthday. The individual with the next birthday was selected to complete the questionnaire for the group. An interview, lasting approximately two minutes, was conducted with that person to determine group size, group type, and the age of the member completing the questionnaire. These individuals were asked for their names, addresses, and telephone numbers or email addresses in order to mail them a reminder/thank you postcard and follow-ups. Visitors were asked to complete the survey after their visit, and return the questionnaire by mail. The questionnaires were pre-addressed and affixed with a U.S. first-class postage stamp.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank-you postcard was mailed to all participants who provided a valid mailing address (see Table 2). Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey. Seven weeks after the survey, a second round of replacement questionnaires was mailed to visitors who had not returned their questionnaires.

Table 2. Follow-up mailing distribution

Mailing	Date	U.S.	International	Total
Postcards	August 17, 2010	779	54	833
1 st Replacement	August 31, 2010	432	28	460
2 nd Replacement	September 21, 2010	320	0	320

Data analysis

Returned questionnaires were coded and the visitor responses were processed using custom and standard statistical software applications—Statistical Analysis Software® (SAS), and a custom designed FileMaker Pro® application. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data and responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized. Double-key data entry validation was performed on numeric and text entry variables and the remaining checkbox (bubble) variables were read by optical mark recognition (OMR) software.

Limitations

Like all surveys, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. This was a self-administered survey. Respondents completed the questionnaire after the visit, which may have resulted in poor recall. Thus, it is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflected actual behavior.
2. The data reflect visitor use patterns to the selected sites during the study period of July 27 - August 2, 2010. The results present a 'snapshot-in-time' and do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year.
3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "CAUTION!" is included in the graph, figure, table, or text.
4. Occasionally, there may be inconsistencies in the results. Inconsistencies arise from missing data or incorrect answers (due to misunderstood directions, carelessness, or poor recall of information). Therefore, refer to both the percentage and N (number of individuals or visitor groups) when interpreting the results.

Special conditions

The weather during the survey period was partly cloudy, with occasional breezy periods. No special events occurred in the area that would have affected the type and the amount of visitation to the park.

Checking non-response bias

Four variables were used to check non-response bias: respondents' age, group size, overall quality rating score, and level of education. Participants at higher age range may be more responsive to the survey but there was no significant difference in group size (see Table 3). There were no significant differences between early and late responders in term of level of education and overall quality rating (see Table 4). See Appendix 3 for more details of the non-response bias checking procedures.

Table 3. Comparison of respondents and nonrespondents

Variable	Respondents	Nonrespondents	p-value (t-test)
Age (years)	47.65 (N=575)	43.58 (N=275)	<.001
Group size	3.78 (N=573)	3.80 (N=276)	0.882

Table 4. Comparison of respondents at different mailing waves

	Before postcard	Between postcard and 1st replacement	After 1st replacement	p-value
Education level (number of respondents in each category – Chi-square test)				
Some high school	5	0	0	
High school diploma/GED	27	6	13	
Some college	65	16	40	
Bachelor's degree	108	26	74	
Graduate degree	90	26	56	0.652
Overall quality (Average rating within each mailing wave – ANOVA)				
	4.47	4.49	4.37	0.33

Results

Group and Visitor Characteristics

Visitor group size

Question 23b

On this visit, how many people were in your personal group, including yourself?

Results

- 32% of visitors were in groups of two (see Figure 1).
- 29% were in groups of four.
- 24% were in groups of five or more.

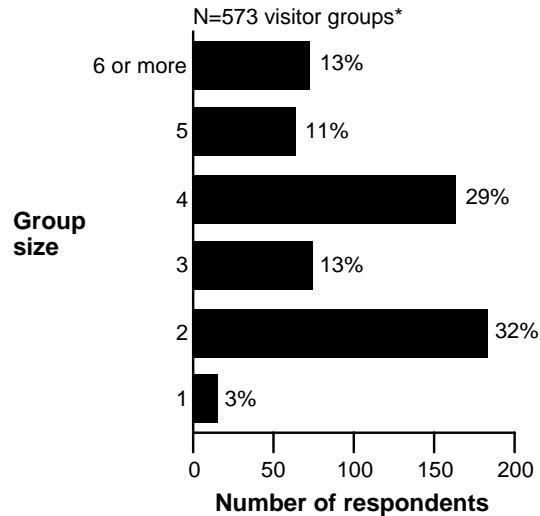


Figure 1. Visitor group size

Visitor group type

Question 23a

On this visit, what kind of personal group (not guided tour/school/other organized group) were you with?

Results

- 87% of visitor groups were made up of family members (see Figure 2).
- 6% were with friends.

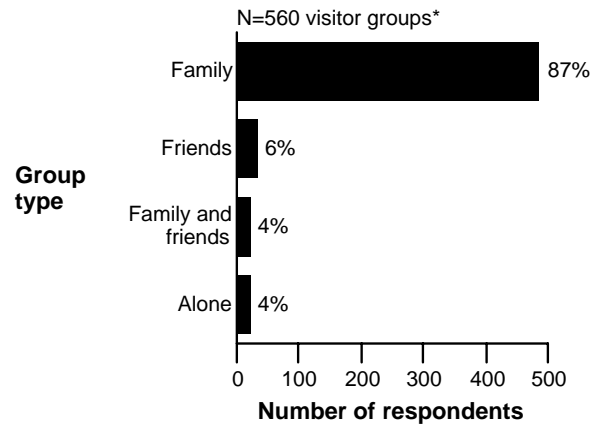


Figure 2. Visitor group type

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Visitors with organized groups

Question 22a

On this visit, were you and your personal group part of a larger organized group such as school/ educational, commercial guided tour, church group, etc.?

Results

- Less than 1% of visitor groups were with a larger organized group such as school/educational, commercial guided tour, church group, etc. (see Figure 3).

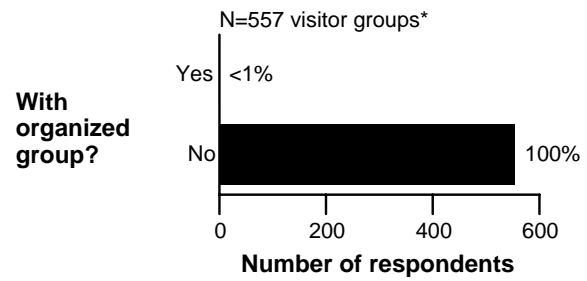


Figure 3. Visitor groups with a larger organized group

Question 22b

If YES, about how many people, including yourself, were in this group?

Results

- No visitor groups responded to this question.

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

United States visitors by state of residence

Question 24b

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your state of residence?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- U.S. visitors were from 45 states and Washington, D.C. and comprised 93% of total visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 11% of U.S. visitors came from Minnesota (see Table 5 and Figure 4).
- 9% came from Nebraska.
- Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 43 other states and Washington, D.C.

Table 5. United States visitors by state of residence*

State	Number of visitors	Percent of U.S. visitors N=1720 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=1842 individuals
Minnesota	196	11	11
Nebraska	158	9	9
Illinois	136	8	7
Colorado	121	7	7
Iowa	107	6	6
Wisconsin	99	6	5
California	93	5	5
Kansas	74	4	4
South Dakota	68	4	4
Florida	49	3	3
Michigan	49	3	3
Texas	46	3	3
Pennsylvania	45	3	2
Missouri	41	2	2
New York	35	2	2
Oklahoma	35	2	2
North Dakota	34	2	2
Utah	31	2	2
Wyoming	30	2	2
Ohio	28	2	2
Washington	26	2	1
24 other states and Washington, D.C.	219	13	12

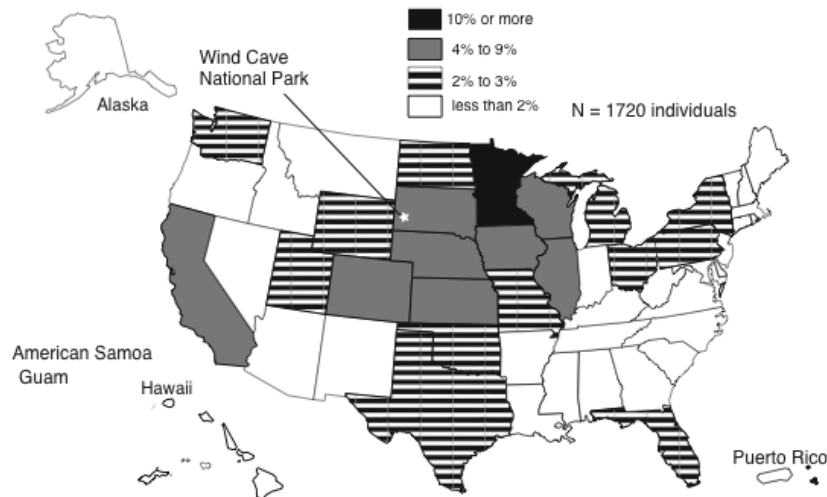


Figure 4. Proportions of United States visitors by state of residence

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Visitors from South Dakota and adjacent states by county of residence

- Visitors from South Dakota and adjacent states were from 109 counties and comprised 35% of the total U.S. visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 7% came from Hennepin County, MN (see Table 6).
- 6% came from Ramsey County, MN.
- Smaller proportions of came from 107 other counties in South Dakota adjacent states.

Table 6. Adjacent state visitors by county of residence*

County, State	Number of visitors N=608 individuals	Percent
Hennepin, MN	43	7
Ramsey, MN	34	6
Douglas, NE	19	3
Polk, IA	18	3
Lancaster, NE	17	3
Pennington, SD	16	3
Burleigh, ND	16	3
Pottawattamie, IA	14	2
Wright, MN	13	2
Minnehaha, SD	12	2
Cass, NE	12	2
Platte, NE	12	2
Fall River, SD	11	2
Sarpy, NE	11	2
Dakota, NE	10	2
Yellowstone, MT	10	2
Laramie, WY	9	1
Blue Earth, MN	9	1
Carver, MN	9	1
Johnson, IA	9	1
89 other counties	304	50

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

International visitors by country of residence**Question 24b**

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your country of residence?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- International visitors were from 12 countries and comprised 7% of total visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 37% of international visitors came from Canada (see Table 7).
- 17% came from the Netherlands.
- 13% came from Germany.
- Smaller proportions of international visitors came from 9 other countries.

Table 7. International visitors by country of residence

Country	Number of visitors	Percent of international visitors N=122 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=1842 individuals
Canada	45	37	2
Netherlands	21	17	1
Germany	16	13	1
Switzerland	12	10	1
United Kingdom	10	8	<1
Italy	4	3	<1
Japan	4	3	<1
Poland	4	3	<1
Austria	2	2	<1
India	2	2	<1
Australia	1	1	<1
Greece	1	1	<1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Number of visits in past 12 months

Question 24c

For you and your personal group on this visit, how many times have you visited Wind Cave NP in the past 12 months (including this visit)?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- 97% of visitors were visiting the park for the first time in the past 12 months (see Figure 5).

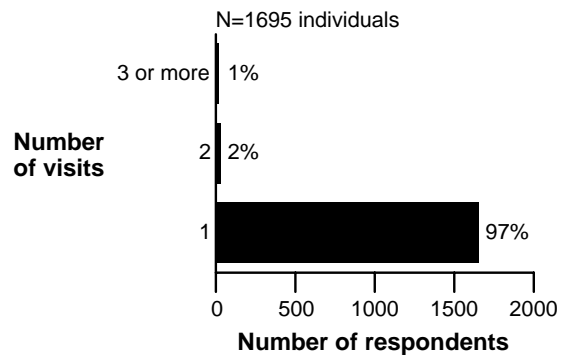


Figure 5. Number of visits to park in past 12 months

Number of lifetime visits

Question 24d

For you and your personal group on this visit, how many times have you visited Wind Cave NP in your lifetime (including this visit)?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- 84% of visitors were visiting the park for the first time in their lifetime (see Figure 6).
- 11% visited two times.

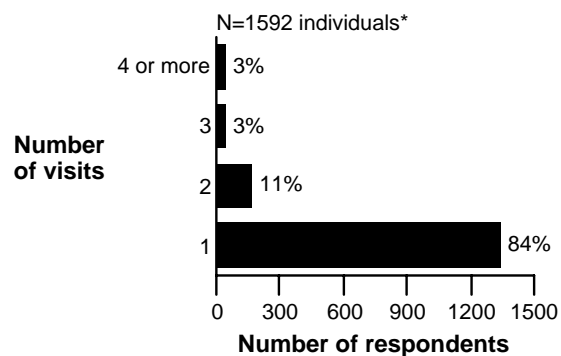


Figure 6. Number of visits to park in lifetime

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Visitor age

Question 24a

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your current age?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- Visitor ages ranged from 1 to 87 years.
- 27% of visitors were 36 to 50 years old (see Figure 7).
- 31% of visitors were in the 15 years or younger age group.
- 6% were 66 or older.

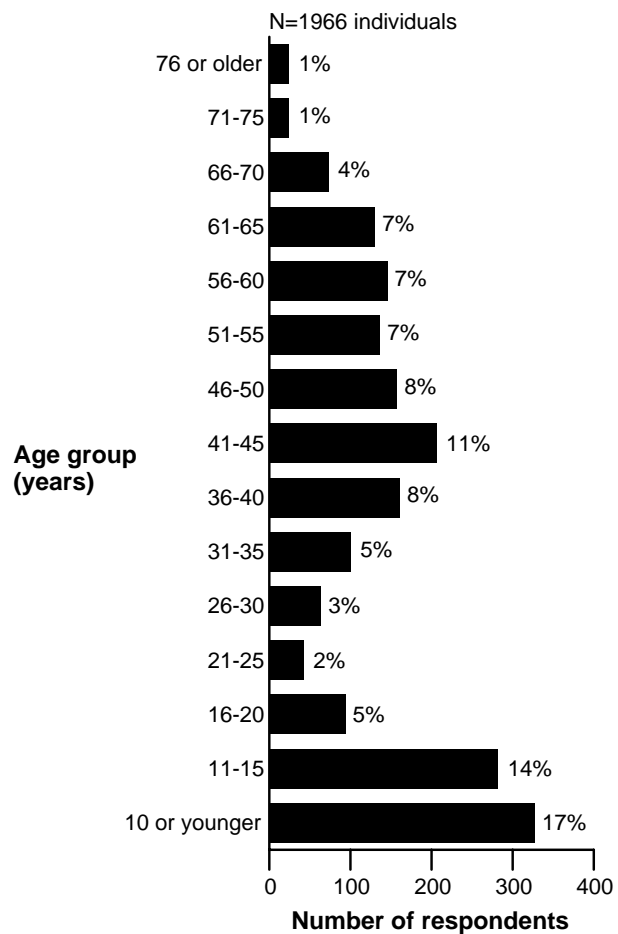


Figure 7. Visitor age

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Language used for speaking and reading

Question 28a

When visiting an area such as Wind Cave NP, which language do you and most members of your personal group prefer to use for speaking?

Results

- 99% of visitor groups reported English as their preferred language for speaking (see Figure 8).
- Other languages (1%) are listed in Table 8.

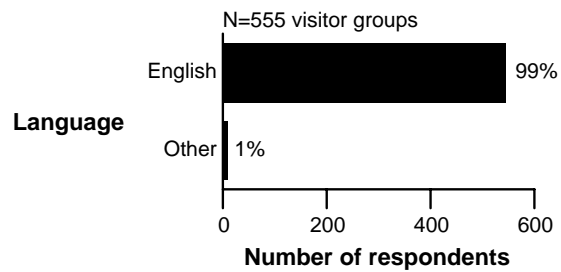


Figure 8. Language preferred for speaking

Question 28b

When visiting an area such as Wind Cave NP, which language do you and most members of your personal group prefer to use for reading?

Results

- 99% of visitor groups preferred English for reading (see Figure 9).
- Other languages (1%) are listed in Table 9.

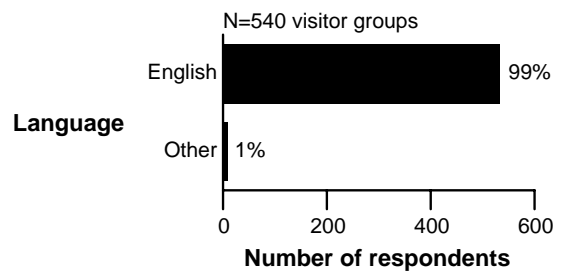


Figure 9. Language preferred for reading

Table 8. Other languages preferred for speaking (N=12 comments) – **CAUTION!**

Language	Number of times mentioned
German	5
Dutch	2
Filipino	1
Italian	1
Kannada	1
Polish	1
Ukranian	1

Table 9. Other languages preferred for reading (N=11 comments) – **CAUTION!**

Language	Number of times mentioned
German	4
Dutch	2
Italian	2
Kannada	1
Polish	1
Ukranian	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Physical condition

Question 26a

Does anyone in your personal group have a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services?

Results

- 11% of visitor groups included members that had a physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services (see Figure 10).

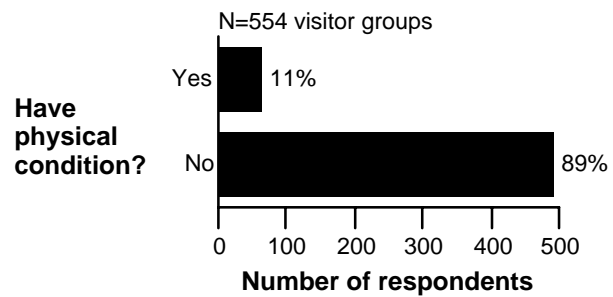


Figure 10. Visitor groups that had members with physical conditions

Question 26b

If YES, what services or activities were difficult to access/participate in?

Results

- 42 visitor groups commented on services and activities that were difficult to access/participate in (see Table 10).

Table 10. Services and activities that were difficult to access/participate in. (N=46; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Service/activity	Number of times mentioned
Cave tour	19
Stairs	16
Walking	7
Hiking	4

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Respondent's level of education

Question 27

For you only, what is the highest level of education you have completed?

Results

- 38% of respondents had a bachelor's degree (see Figure 11).
- 31% had a graduate degree.

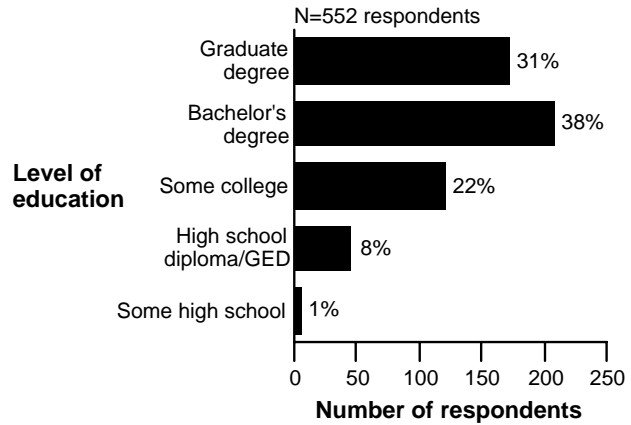


Figure 11. Respondent's level of education

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Household income

Question 29a

Which category best represents your annual household income?

Results

- 22% of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000-\$74,999 (see Figure 12).
- 19% had an income of \$75,000-\$99,999.
- 19% had an income of \$100,000-\$149,999.

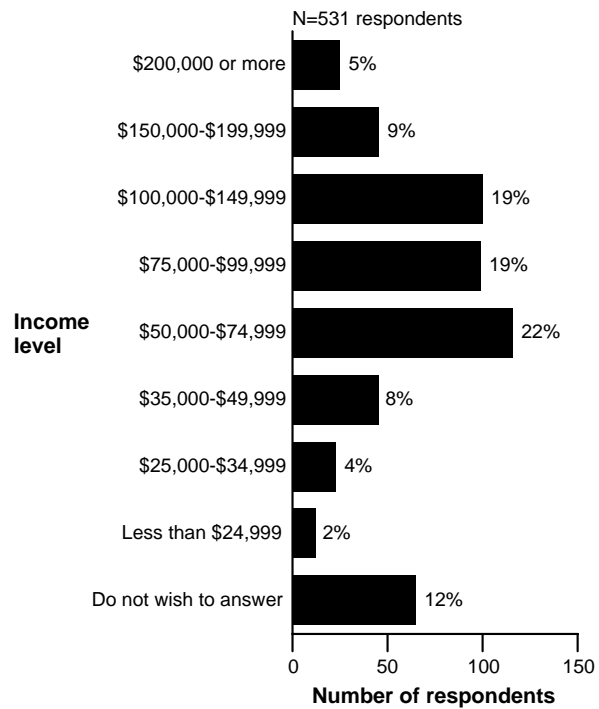


Figure 12. Respondent's level of income

Household size

Question 29b

How many people are in your household?

Results

- 37% of respondents had two people in their household (see Figure 13).
- 30% had four people.

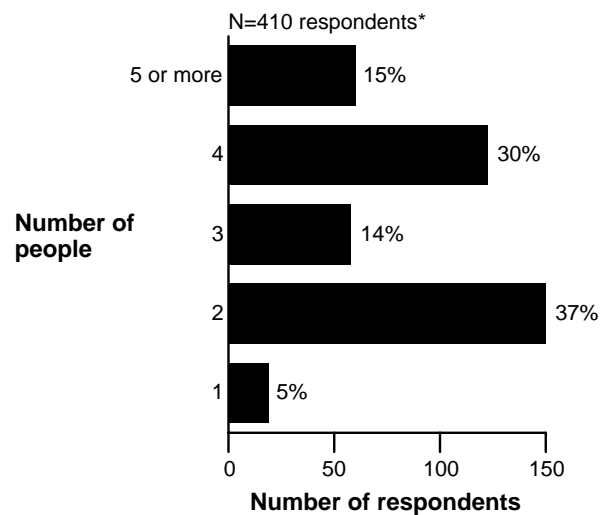


Figure 13. Number of people in household

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Trip/Visit Characteristics and Preferences

Information sources prior to visit

Question 1a

Prior to this visit, how did you and your personal group obtain information about Wind Cave National Park (NP)?

Results

- 76% of visitor groups obtained information about Wind Cave NP prior to their visit (see Figure 14).
- As shown in Figure 15, among those visitor groups that obtained information about Wind Cave NP prior to their visit, the most common sources were:

45% Travel guides/tour books
 40% Wind Cave NP website
 28% Friends/relatives/word of mouth

- “Other” sources (7%) were:

Billboards
 Black Hills Central Reservations
 Black Hills map
 Black Hills vacation Brochures
 Jewel Cave
 Keystone information booth
 Maps
 National Park book
 National Speleological Society
 NPS Passport Book
 Park map from City of Rocks National Reserve

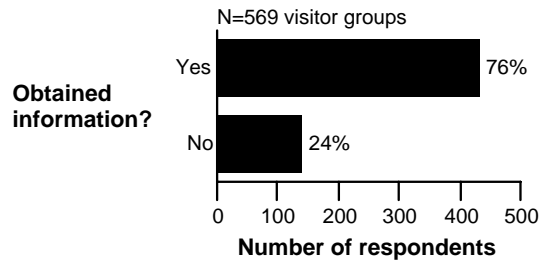


Figure 14. Visitor groups that obtained information about Wind Cave NP prior to visit

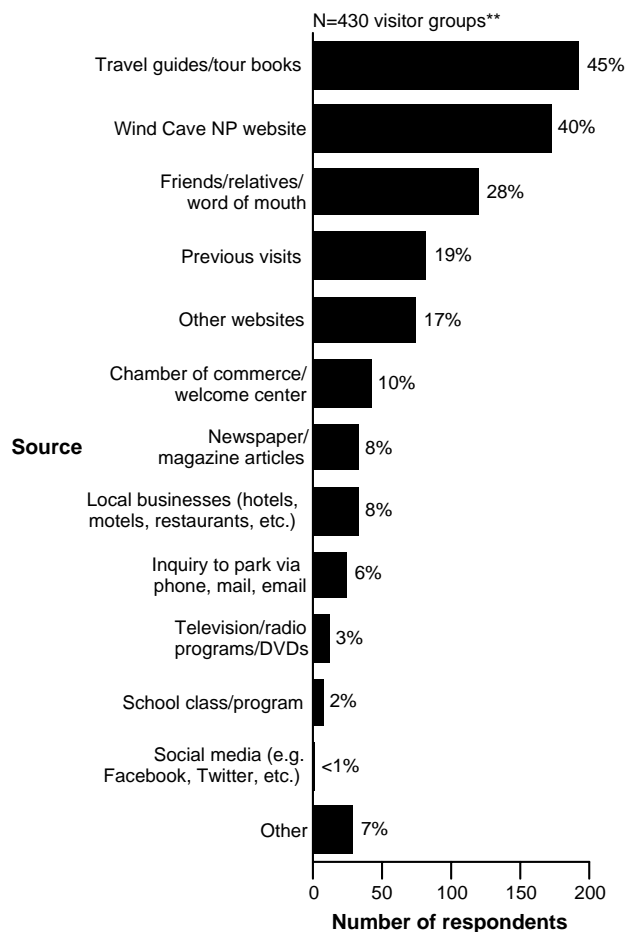


Figure 15. Sources of information used prior to visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Question 1c

From the sources you used prior to this visit, did you and your personal group receive the type of information about the park that you needed?

Results

- 93% of visitor groups received needed information prior to their visit (see Figure 16).

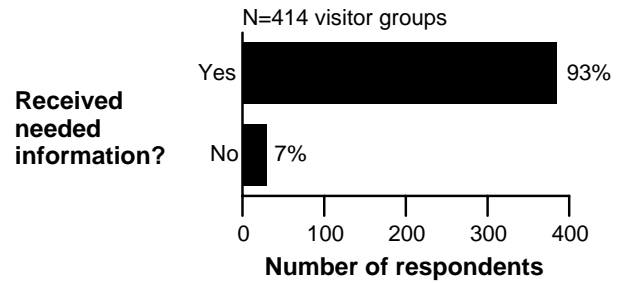


Figure 16. Visitor groups that received needed information prior to their visit

Question 1d

If NO, what type of park information did you and your personal group need that was not available? (open-ended)

Results

- 31 visitor groups listed information they needed but was not available (see Table 11).

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Table 11. Needed information
(N=39 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Type of information	Number of times mentioned
Tour times	12
Ability to reserve tours online	2
Cost	2
General park information	2
A "tourist" card like other attractions have	1
Ability to reserve tours by phone	1
Booking information	1
Camping information	1
Difference between Wind Cave and Custer Parks	1
How Wind Cave is different than other caves	1
Information on surrounding national parks and attractions	1
Map	1
More detailed information	1
More geological information	1
More historical information	1
More information on the rest of the park other than the cave	1
More information on tours	1
Park brochure of area	1
Restaurant recommendations	1
South Dakota travel guide	1
That tours sell out fast	1
That you can't purchase tickets in advance	1
Types of tours available	1
Wait time for cave tour	1
What we need to bring (e.g., flashlights)	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Information sources for future visit

Question 1b

If you were to visit Wind Cave NP in the future, how would you and your personal group prefer to obtain information about the park?

Results

- As shown in Figure 17, visitor groups' most preferred sources of information for a future visit were:

67% Wind Cave NP website
 36% Travel guides/tour books
 25% Previous visits

- "Other" sources of information (2%) were:

Maps
 Park literature

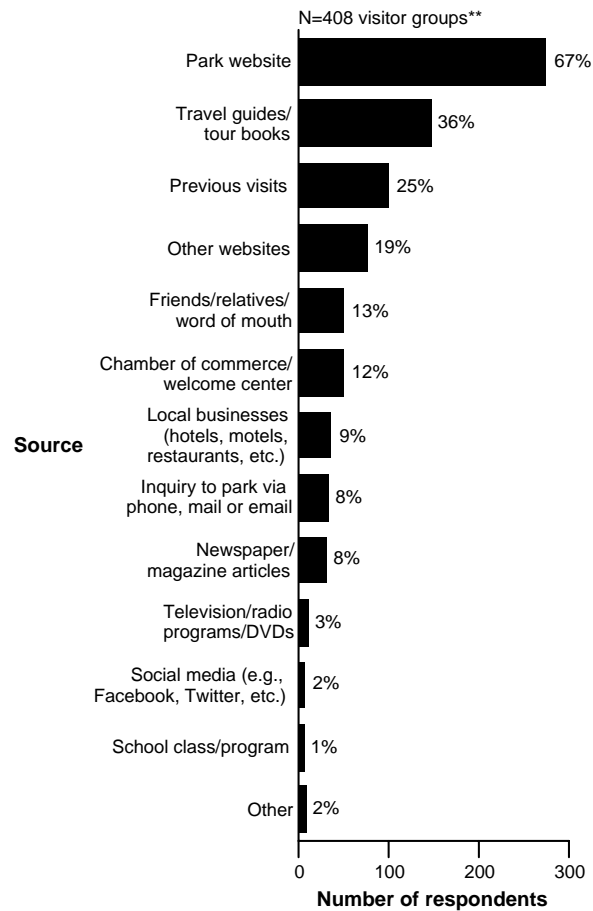


Figure 17. Sources of information for a future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Park as destination

Question 2

How did this visit to Wind Cave NP fit into your personal group's travel plans?

Results

- For 69% of visitor groups, Wind Cave NP was one of several destinations (see Figure 18).
- 28% indicated that the park was not a planned destination.

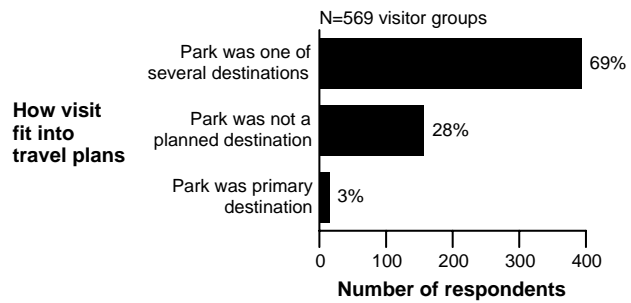


Figure 18. How visit to park fit into visitor groups' travel plans

Timing of decision to visit the park

Question 3

When did you and your personal group make the decision to visit Wind Cave NP?

Results

- 31% of visitor groups made the decision to visit Wind Cave NP on the day of their visit (see Figure 19).
- 26% decided to visit 2-7 days before their visit.

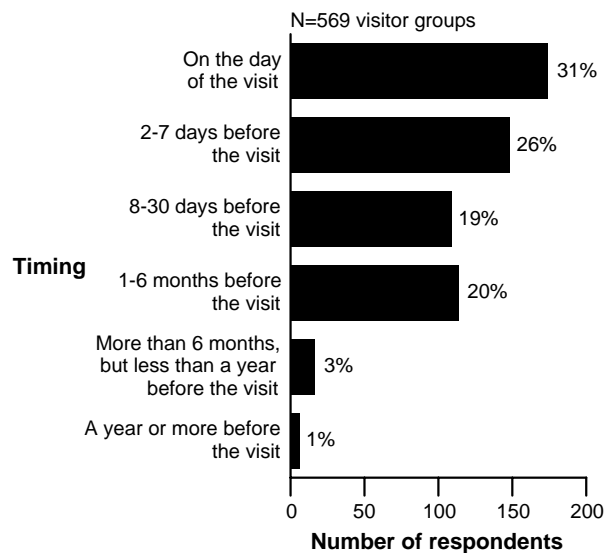


Figure 19. Timing of decision to visit park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Primary reason for visiting park area

Question 4

For this trip, what was the primary reason that you and your personal group visited the Wind Cave NP area (within 30 miles of the park)?

Results

- 2% of visitor groups were residents of the area (see Figure 20).
- As shown in Figure 21, the primary reason for visiting the area (within 30 miles of the park) among non-resident visitor groups was:

57% Visit other attractions in the area

- “Other” primary reasons (2%) were:

- Backpack
- Elderhostel
- General trip to Black Hills
- Have fun
- Have property in the area
- Hike
- Learn
- On vacation
- Reside within 90 miles
- Summer road trip
- Wanted to see bison
- Wanted to see scenic beauty

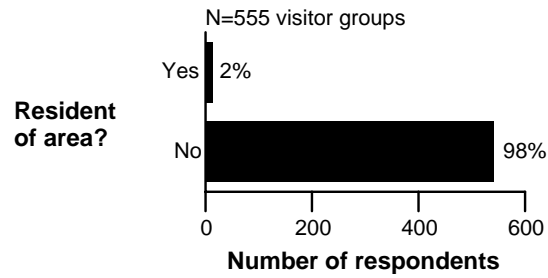


Figure 20. Residents of the area (within 30 miles of the park)

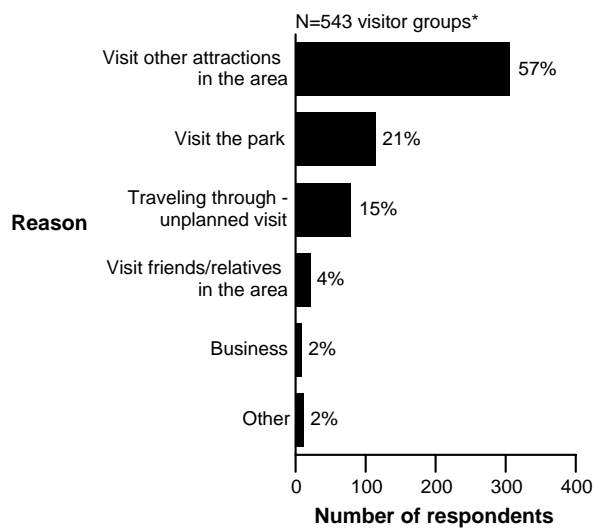


Figure 21. Primary reason for visiting the Wind Cave NP area (within 30 miles of the park)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Locations stayed on night prior to visit

Question 10a

On this trip, where did you and your personal group stay on the night before visiting Wind Cave NP? If you stayed at home, please write the name of the town/city and state where you live.

Results

- Table 12 shows the locations (N=83) in which visitor groups (N=539) stayed on the night before visiting Wind Cave NP.

Table 12. Locations in which visitor groups stayed on the night before visit (N=539 comments)

Location	Number of times mentioned	Percent
Custer, SD	128	24
Rapid City, SD	83	15
Hot Springs, SD	67	12
Hill City, SD	51	9
Keystone, SD	45	8
Custer State Park, SD	32	6
Chadron, NE	8	1
Spearfish, SD	8	1
Badlands National Park, SD	6	1
Crawford, NE	5	1
Deadwood, SD	5	1
Lead, SD	5	1
Cheyenne, WY	4	1
Devil's Tower, WY	4	1
Mount Rushmore, SD	4	1
Sylvan Lake, SD	4	1
Sheridan, WY	3	1
Wall, SD	3	1
Alliance, NE	2	<1
Black Hills National Forest, SD	2	<1
Casper, WY	2	<1
Fort Collins, CO	2	<1
Horse Thief Campground, SD	2	<1
Newcastle, WY	2	<1
Sturgis, SD	2	<1
Sundance, WY	2	<1
58 other locations	58	11

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Locations stayed on night after visit

Question 10b

On this trip, where did you and your personal group stay on the night after visiting Wind Cave NP? If you stayed at home, please write the name of the town/city and state where you live.

Results

- Table 13 shows the locations (N=100) in which visitor groups (N=539) stayed on the night after visiting Wind Cave NP.

Table 13. Locations in which visitor groups stayed on the night after the visit (N=538 comments)

Location	Number of times mentioned	Percent
Custer, SD	108	21
Rapid City, SD	85	16
Hill City, SD	48	9
Keystone, SD	44	8
Hot Springs, SD	39	8
Custer State Park, SD	30	6
Deadwood, SD	7	1
Chadron, NE	6	1
Spearfish, SD	6	1
Lead, SD	5	1
Mitchell, SD	5	1
Wall, SD	5	1
Badlands National Park, SD	4	1
Fort Collins, CO	4	1
Sylvan Lake, SD	4	1
Valentine, NE	4	1
Cheyenne, WY	3	1
Cody, WY	3	1
Crawford, NE	3	1
Denver, CO	3	1
Longmont, CO	3	1
North Platte, NE	3	1
Scottsbluff, NE	3	1
Sioux Falls, SD	3	1
Sundance, WY	3	1
Yellowstone, WY	3	1
Boulder, CO	2	<1
Chamberlain, SD	2	<1
Colorado Springs, CO	2	<1
Devil's Tower, WY	2	<1
Estes Park, CO	2	<1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Table 13. Locations in which visitor groups stayed on the night after the visit (continued)

Location	Number of times mentioned	Percent
Murdo, SD	2	<1
Ogallala, NE	2	<1
Oreville Campground, SD	2	<1
Sturgis, SD	2	<1
65 other locations	65	13

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Adequacy of directional signs

Question 5a-5d

On this visit, were the signs directing you and your personal group to and within Wind Cave NP adequate?

Results

- Figures 22–25 show visitor groups’ opinions on the adequacy of signs directing them to and within the park.

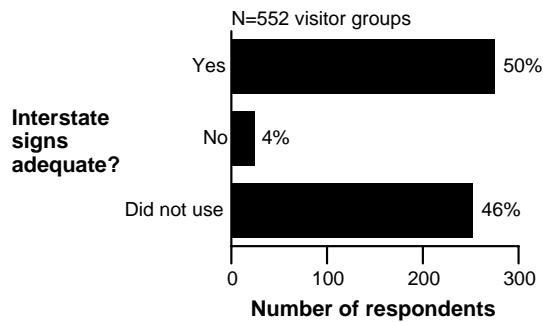


Figure 22. Visitor groups’ opinions on adequacy of interstate signs

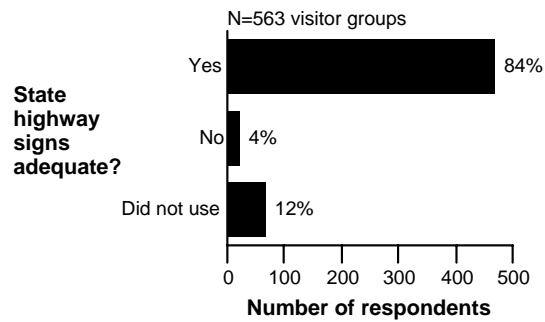


Figure 23. Visitor groups’ opinions on adequacy of state highway signs

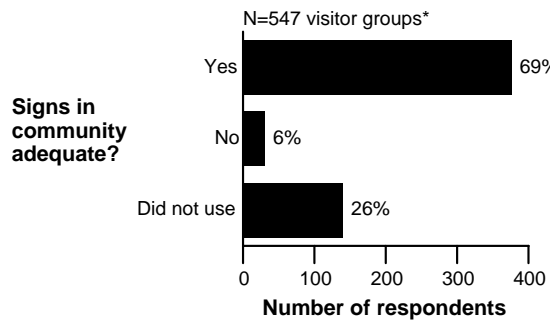


Figure 24. Visitor groups’ opinions on adequacy of signs in the local communities

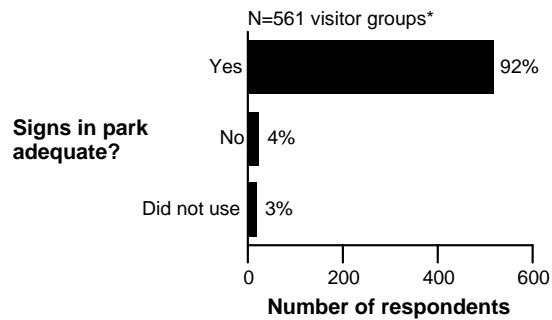


Figure 25. Visitor groups’ opinions on adequacy of signs in the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Question 5e

If you answered NO for any of the above, please explain.

Results

- 85 visitor groups commented on problems with directional signs (see Table 14).

Table 14. Comments on directional signs
(N=88 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Sign type	Comment	Number of times mentioned
Interstate (N=19)	Did not see signs	12
	Need more signs	2
	Didn't pay attention	1
	Only saw park signs	1
	Signs not clear enough for direction to actual cave	1
	Too far off interstate	1
	Vague directions	1
State highway (N=22)	Need more signs	7
	Did not see any signs	5
	Signs need to be more specific/clear	3
	Signs are small and hard to locate	2
	Did not see any signs for Leland Cave	1
	Didn't pay attention	1
	Had to ask for directions	1
	Sign for turn into park too close to turn	1
Vague directions	1	
Signs in local communities (N=23)	Did not see any signs	12
	Need more signs	4
	Signs not obvious	2
	Signs too small	2
	Saw signs for park, but hard to follow	1
	Signs not clear enough for direction to actual cave	1
	Vague directions	1
Signs in the park (N=25)	Need more signs	2
	Signs too small	2
	Uncertain which way to go	2
	Came from the south and missed the sign for visitor center	1
	Couldn't figure out how to leave park	1
	Couldn't find entrance to park	1
	Couldn't tell if it was Custer State Park or Wind Cave	1
	Did not see any signs	1
	Hiking trails could be more clearly marked	1
	Misread signs	1
	No approaching signs	1
	No sign from entrance directing us to visitor center	1
	Not enough information about hikes, cave tours around park	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Table 14. Comments on directional signs (continued)

Sign type	Comment	Number of times mentioned
Signs in the park (continued)	Sign in front of this building (park administration) should say "Wind Cave tour tickets here"	1
	Signs hard to see	1
	Signs not clear	1
	Signs not clear enough for direction to actual cave	1
	The cave entrances were not clear from the park entrance	1
	Vague directions	1
	We weren't quite sure where to go in the parking lot	1
	We weren't sure how far outside visitor center to go for tour - not sure if we were at the right trail	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Number of vehicles

Question 25a

On this visit, how many vehicles did you and your personal group use to arrive at the park?

Results

- 94% of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park (see Figure 26).

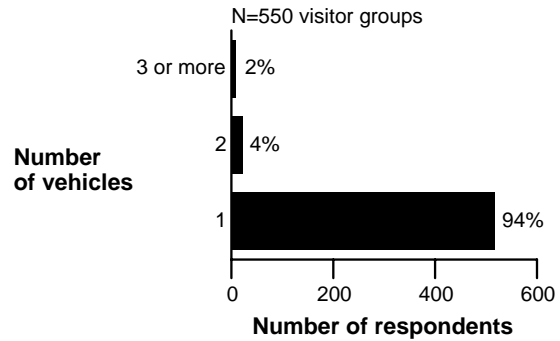


Figure 26. Number of vehicles used to arrive at the park

Number of park entries

Question 25b

On this visit, how many times did you and your personal group enter the park?

Results

- 73% of visitor groups entered the park one time (see Figure 27).

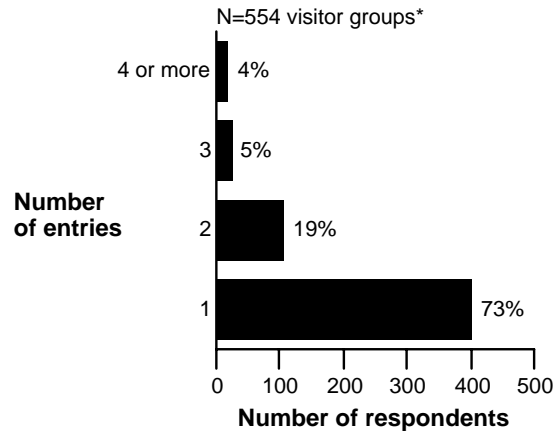


Figure 27. Number of park entries

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Overnight stays

Question 6a

On this trip, did you and your personal group stay overnight away from home in Wind Cave NP or in the area within 30 miles of any entrance point?

Results

- 72% of visitor groups stayed overnight away from their permanent residence within 30 miles of the park (see Figure 28).

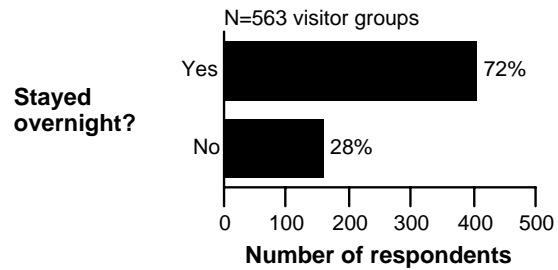


Figure 28. Visitor groups that stayed overnight within 30 miles of the park

Question 6b

If YES, please list the number of nights you and your personal group stayed.

Results

Inside Wind Cave NP

- 39% of visitor groups stayed one night inside Wind Cave NP (see Figure 29).
- 42% stayed three or more nights.

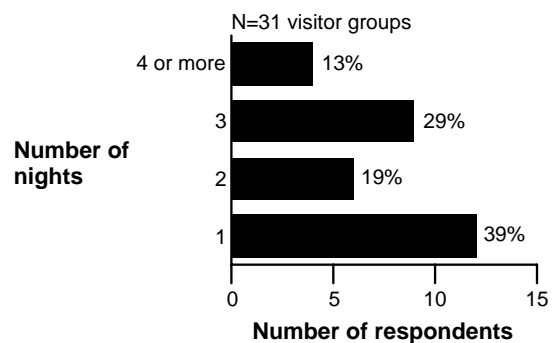


Figure 29. Number of nights spent inside the park

Outside Wind Cave NP (within 30 miles of any entrance point)

- 26% of visitor groups stayed two nights outside Wind Cave NP within 30 miles of the park (see Figure 30).
- 24% stayed three nights.
- 19% stayed five or more nights.

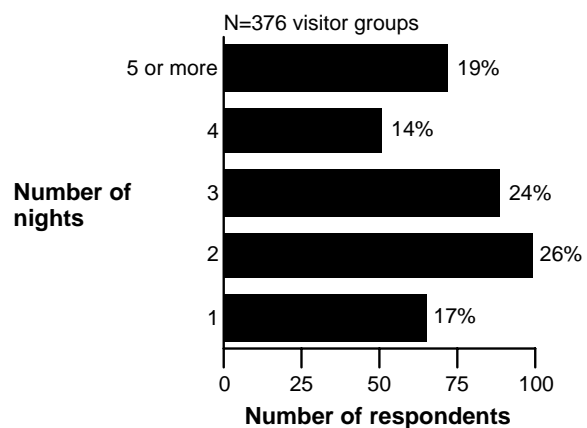


Figure 30. Number of nights spent outside Wind Cave NP within 30 miles of the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Accommodations

Question 6c

In which type of accommodation did you and your personal group spend the night(s) inside the park?

Results

- 47% of visitor groups tent camped (see Figure 31).
- 42% were RV/trailer camping.
- Only one “other” type of accommodation (4%) was specified:

Personal residence

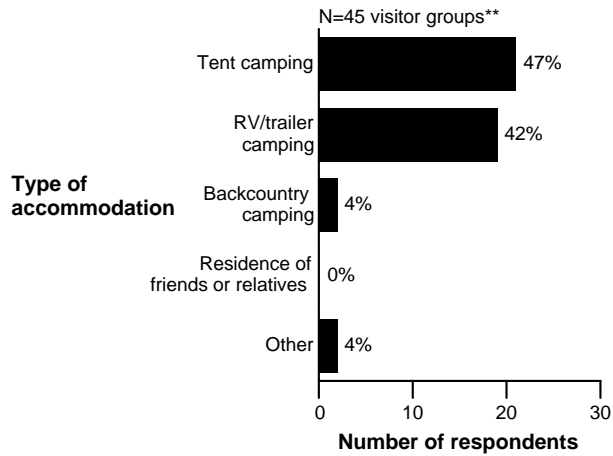


Figure 31. Accommodations used inside the park

Question 6d

In which type of accommodation did you and your personal group spend the night(s) outside the park within 30 miles of the park?

Results

- 70% of visitor groups stayed in a lodge, motel, cabin, rented condo/home, or B&B (see Figure 32).
- 20% were RV/trailer camping.
- No “other” (<1%) types of accommodations were specified.

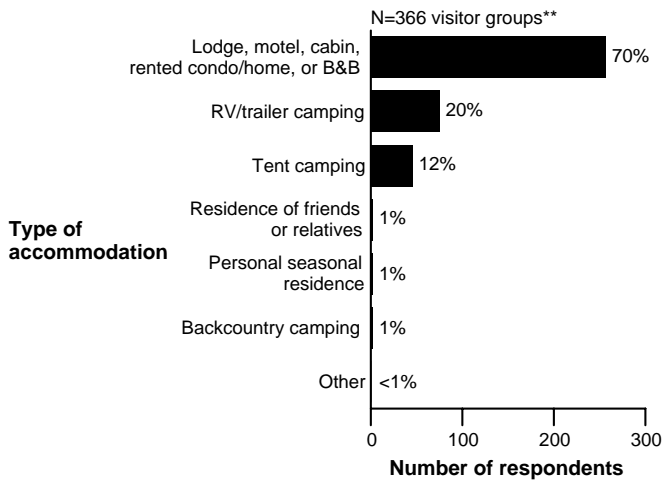


Figure 32. Accommodations used outside Wind Cave NP within 30 miles of the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Use of park campground

Question 6e

If you and your personal group camped in the area, but did not stay in Wind Cave NP's campground, why not?

Results

- 47% of visitor groups were unaware that the park has a campground (see Figure 33).
- 15% felt the campground lacked desired facilities.
- "Other" reasons (41%) are presented in Table 15.

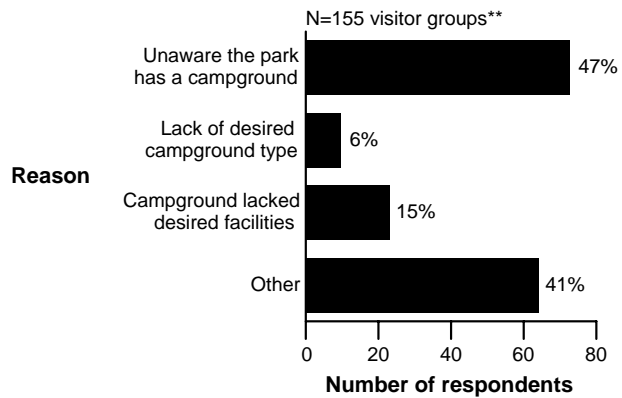


Figure 33. Reasons for not staying in park campground

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Table 15. "Other" reasons for not using the park campground
(N=58 comments)

Reason	Number of times mentioned
Wanted a more centrally located site	12
Already camping elsewhere	9
Had reservations elsewhere	9
Wanted to stay closer to Mt. Rushmore	3
Prefer less populated areas	2
Wanted to be closer to town	2
Afraid of unavailability	1
Campground at Deerfield Lake was so nice	1
Chose Custer State Park for its variety of natural sights	1
Got there late at night, wanted to camp there but didn't realize the drive was quite so far	1
Had horses with us	1
Inclement weather	1
Just chose Horsethief Lake	1
More convenient to stay in Custer State Park due to our travel plans	1
No campsite available	1
No time	1
Only there a short time	1
Stayed in Custer Gulch Campground in past	1
Stayed near wedding party	1
Stayed on personal property	1
Stayed with family we were visiting	1
Sullivan Park was our destination	1
Traveling through	1
Wanted to camp on National Forest land	1
Wasn't sure we would get a first come, first serve site	1
Wind Cave wasn't main reason for stay	1
Work/camping outside of park for summer	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Length of stay

Question 11

On this trip, how many total hours or days did you and your personal group spend visiting the Wind Cave NP?

Results

Number of hours if less than 24 hours

- 28% of visitor groups spent 3 hours visiting the park (see Figure 34).
- 21% spent 5 or more hours.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups that spent less than one day was 3.6 hours.

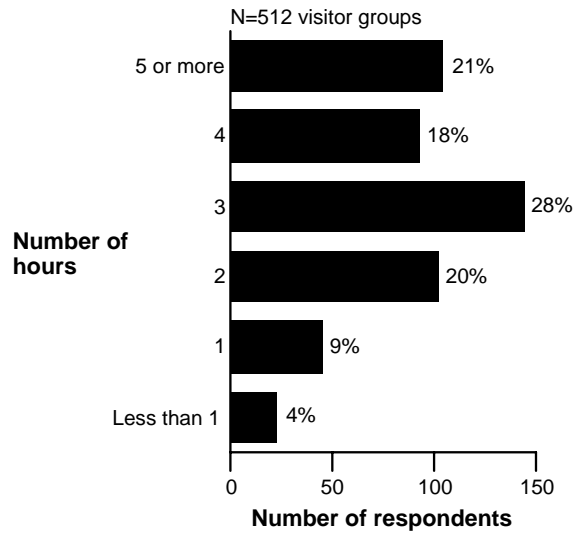


Figure 34. Hours spent at the park

Number of days if 24 hours or more

- 58% of visitor groups spent 2 days visiting the park (see Figure 35).
- The average length of stay for visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more was 2.2 days.

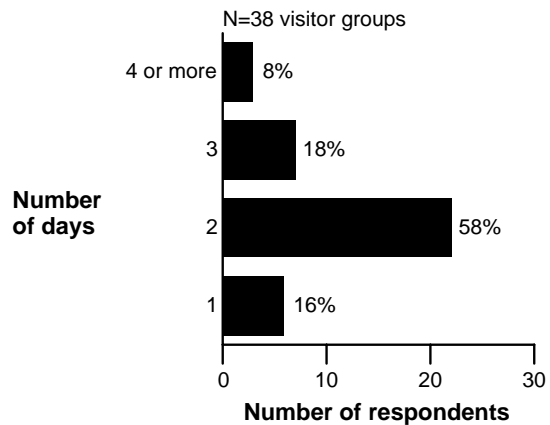


Figure 35. Days spent at the park

Average length of stay

- The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 7 hours, or 0.3 days.

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Expected activities

Question 7a

As you were planning your trip to Wind Cave NP, which activities did you and your personal group expect to include on this visit?

Results

- As shown in Figure 36, the most common activities in which visitor groups expected to participate were:

- 83% Cave tour
- 67% Scenic drive
- 49% Photography

- “Other” expected activities (3%) were:

- Biking
- Exploring
- Getting National Park Passport stamp
- History of area
- Junior Ranger program
- Seeing all the sites
- Spending time with family
- Using restrooms
- Visiting visitor center

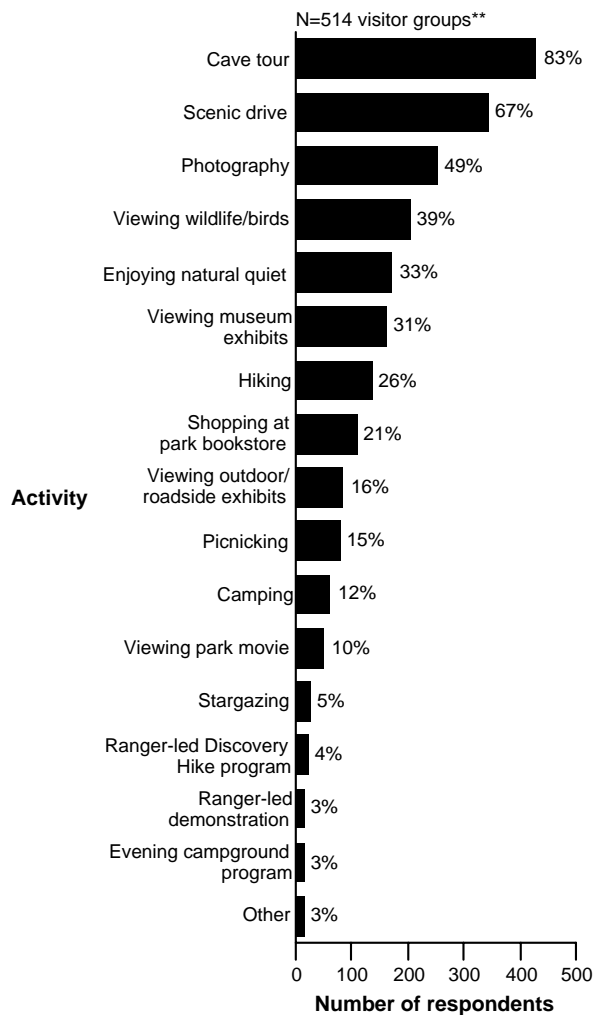


Figure 36. Expected activities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Activities on this visit

Question 7b

On this visit, in which activities did you and your personal group participate while visiting Wind Cave NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 37, the most common activities in which visitor groups participated on this visit were:

- 77% Cave tour
- 72% Scenic drive
- 52% Viewing museum exhibits
- 52% Photography

- “Other” activities (3%) were:

- Biking
- History of area
- Getting National Park Passport stamp
- Junior Ranger program

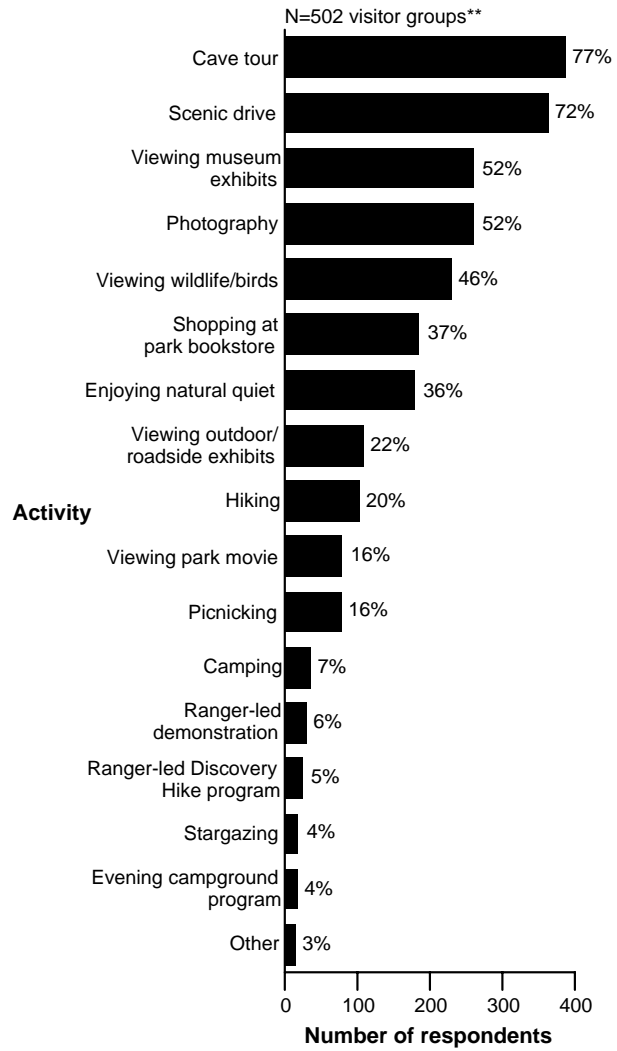


Figure 37. Activities on this visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Most important activity

Question 7c

Which one of the above activities was most important to you and your personal group on this visit to Wind Cave NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 38, the most important activities listed by visitor groups were:

71% Cave tour
 9% Viewing wildlife/birds
 8% Scenic drives

- “Other” activities (2%) were:

Getting National Park Passport stamp
 Junior Ranger program

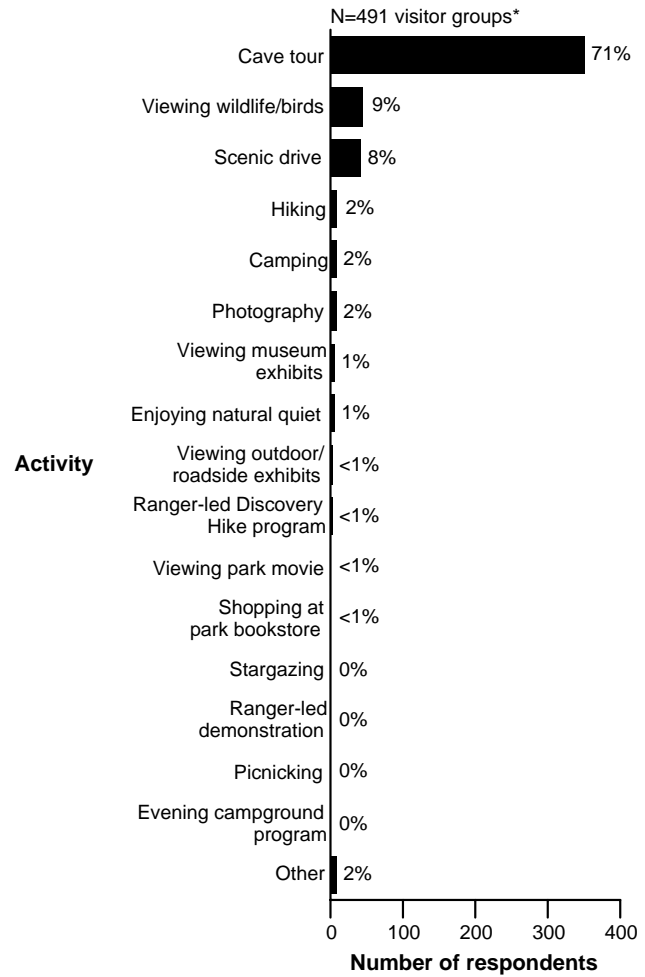


Figure 38. Most important activities at Wind Cave NP

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Participation in cave tours

Question 12a

On this visit, did you or any member of your personal group take a cave tour(s)?

Results

- 77% of visitor groups took a cave tour (see Figure 39).

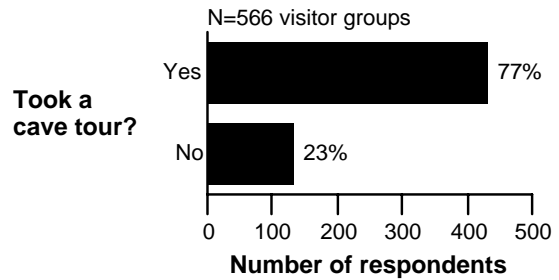


Figure 39. Visitor groups that took a cave tour

Question 14a

On this visit, did *all* members of your group take a cave tour at Wind Cave NP?

Results

- For 72% of visitor groups that took cave tours, all members of the group took the tour (see Figure 40).

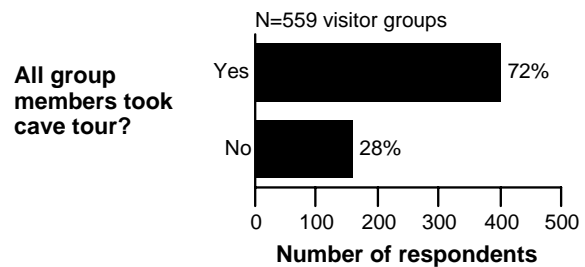


Figure 40. Visitor groups in which all members took a cave tour

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Question 14b

If NO, what prevented the person(s) in your personal group from taking a cave tour?

Results

- Of the visitor groups in which a member did not take the cave tour, 89% were interested in the tour (see Figure 41).
- As shown in Figure 42, of those visitor groups in which a person(s) in the group was interested in taking the cave tour, but did not, the most common reasons were:

- 36% Lack of time
- 20% Physical limitations
- 15% Took cave tour on previous visit

- "Other" reasons for not taking the tour (16%) were:

- Claustrophobia
- Recently visited another cave
- Too long of a wait
- Took Jewel Cave tour instead
- Unaware of cave tour
- Grandparents were tired
- Illness
- Inconvenient with disabled child
- No parking
- Not enough tour times
- Prefer outdoor things
- Too crowded

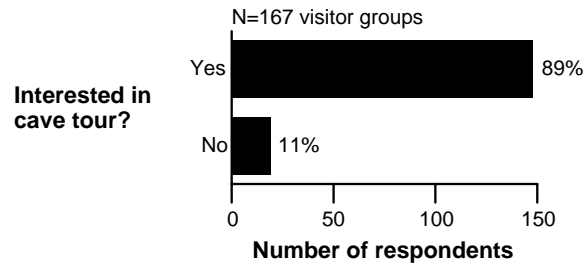


Figure 41. Visitors interested in the cave tour

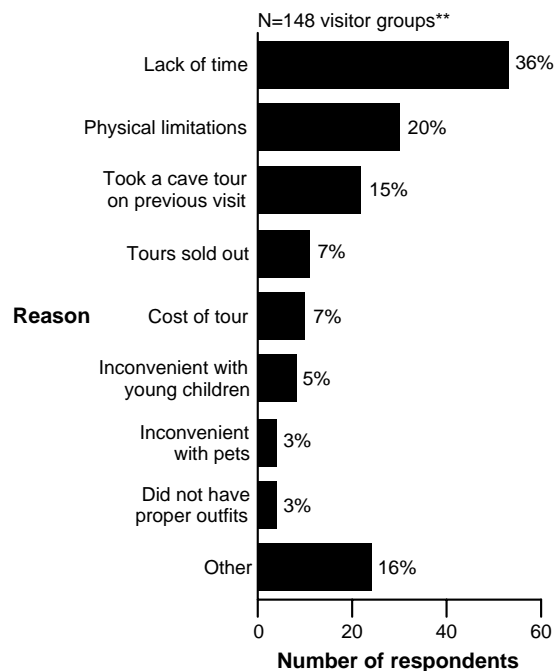


Figure 42. Factors preventing visitors from taking cave tours

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Choice of cave tour

Question 12b

Which cave tour(s) did you and your personal group take on this visit?

Results

- 50% of visitor groups took the Natural Entrance Tour (see Figure 43).
- 33% took the Fairgrounds Tour.

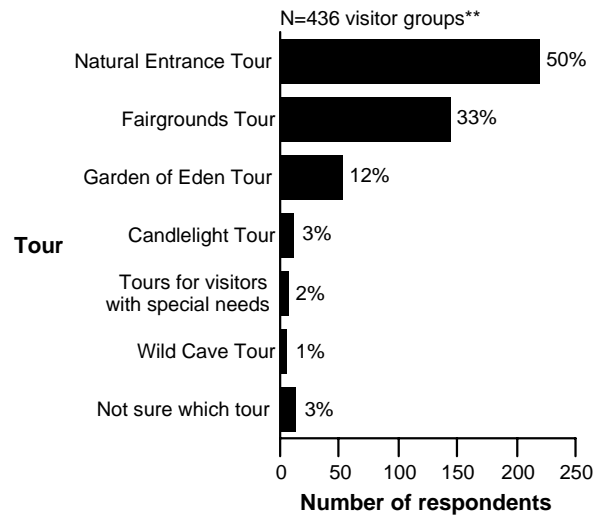


Figure 43. Cave tours taken by visitors

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Reasons for selecting cave tours

Question 12c

Why did you and your personal group select a particular cave tour(s)?

Results

- As shown in Figure 44, the most common reasons for choosing a particular cave tour were:

- 62% Availability at the desired time
- 42% Length of tour – time
- 38% Description of tour
- 38% Length of tour – distance

- “Other” reasons (6%) were:

- Had already been on two other tours
- Had special needs/disabled group member
- Just wanted to be in a cool cave on a hot day
- Kid-friendly tour
- Longest one available
- Natural
- Needed room for our cave gear
- Other tour sold out
- Ranger recommendation
- Seemed like the most adventurous
- Seemed most unique
- The original tour was booked
- Told it was most beautiful
- Tour guide needed two more, we showed up
- Travel agent recommendation
- Wanted to avoid large groups
- Wanted to see as much cave as possible
- With young children

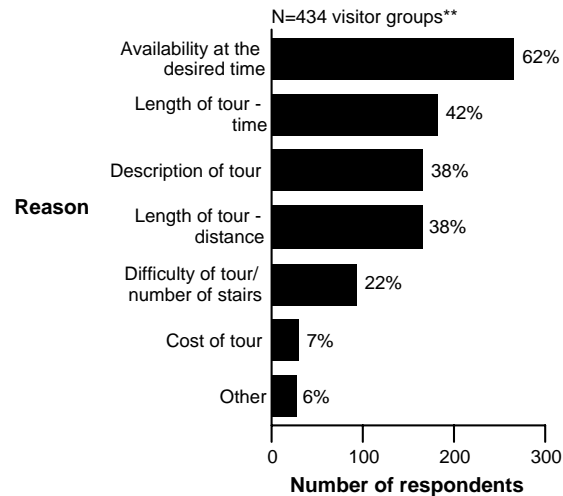


Figure 44. Reasons for selecting cave tours

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Value of cave tour for fee paid

Question 12d

For the tour(s) that you took, please rate the value received for the fee paid.

Results

- 91% of visitor groups rated the value of the cave tours, overall, for the fees paid as “very good” or “good” (see Figure 45).
- Figures 45 – 51 show how each cave tour was rated for its value.

Note: No visitor groups rated the value of the Wild Cave Tour.

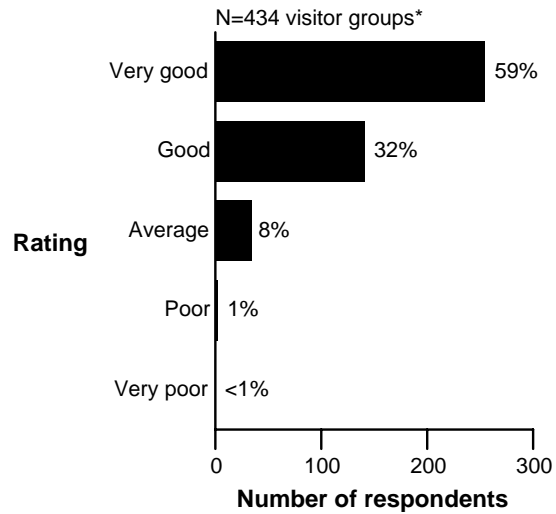


Figure 45. Value for fee paid: cave tours (overall)

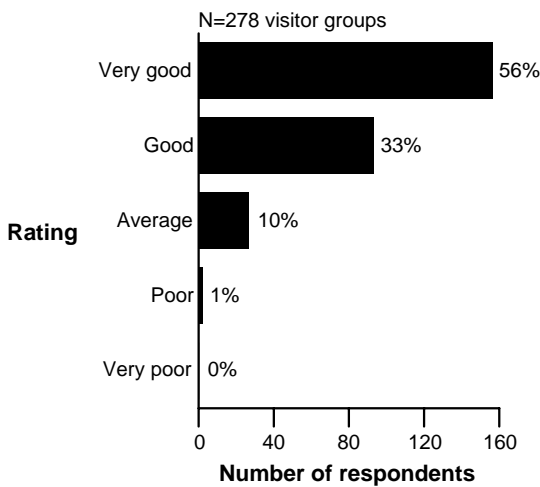


Figure 46. Value of tour for fee paid: Unspecified tour

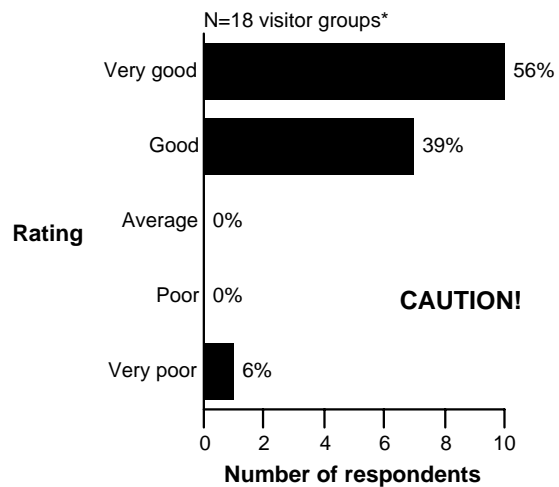


Figure 47. Value of tour for fee paid: Garden of Eden Tour

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

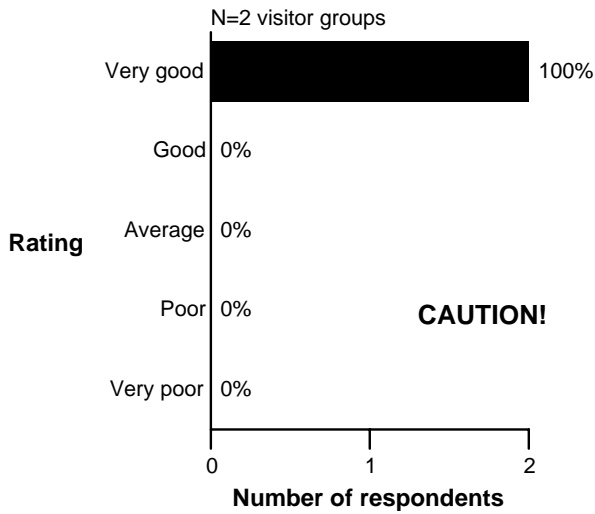


Figure 48. Value tour for fee paid: Tours for visitors with special needs

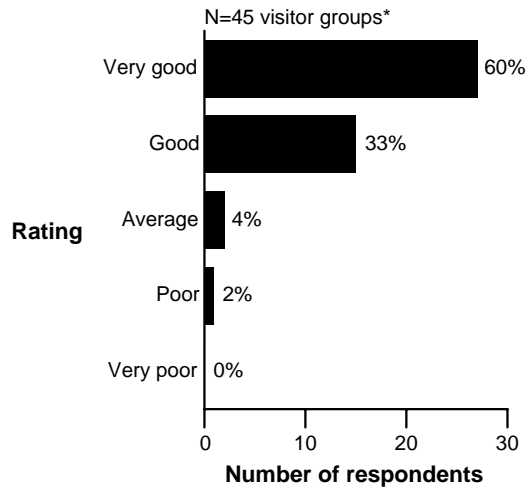


Figure 49. Value tour for fee paid: Fairgrounds Tour

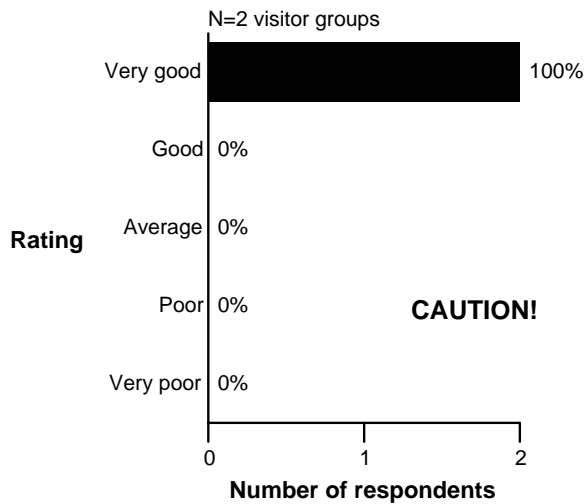


Figure 50. Value of tour for fee paid: Candlelight Tour

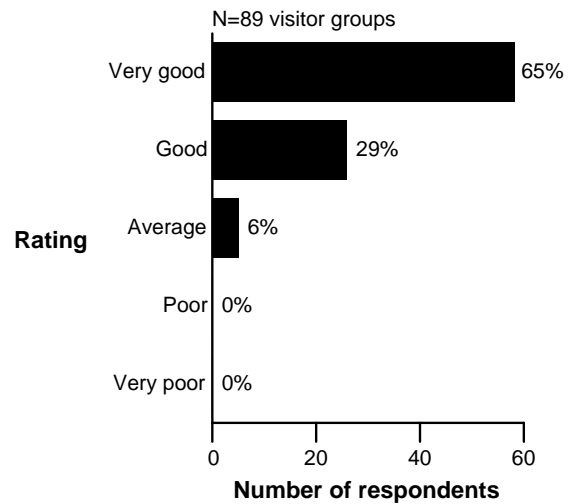


Figure 51. Value of tour for fee paid: Natural Entrance Tour

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Crowdedness of cave tour

Question 12e

How many people were in your cave tour?

Results

- As shown in Figure 52, the most common group sizes on cave tours were:

37% 1-5 people
20% 36 or more people

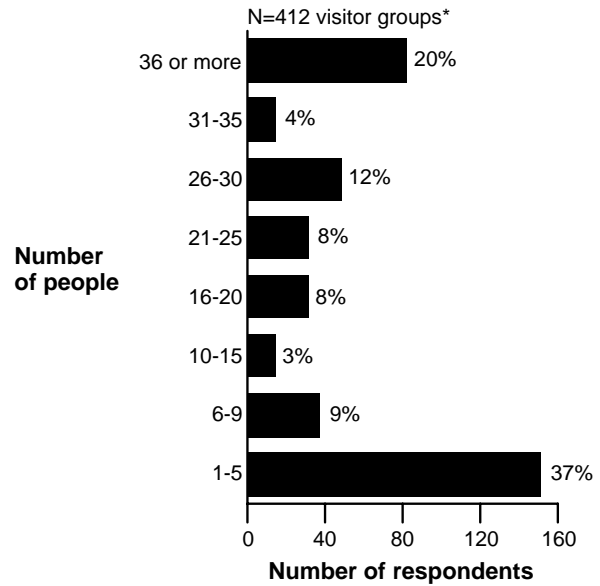


Figure 52. Number of people on cave tour

Question 12f

How crowded did you and your personal group feel during your cave tour?

Results

- 40% of visitor groups reported feeling “a little crowded” during their cave tour (see Figure 53).
- 31% felt “not at all crowded.”
- 23% felt “moderately crowded.”

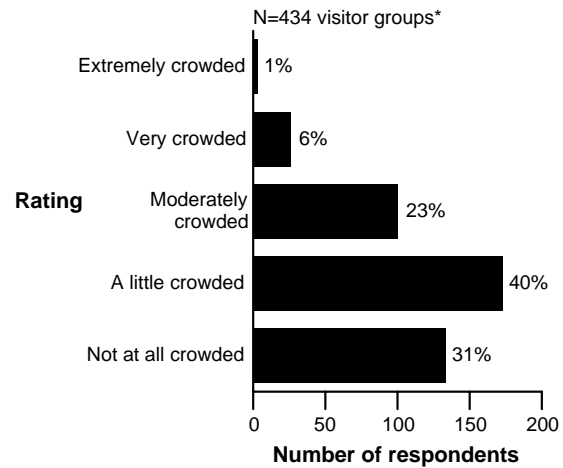


Figure 53. Crowdedness of cave tour

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Question 12g

What do you and your personal group think is the *maximum acceptable number* of people in each cave tour group before it becomes too crowded?

Results

- 51% of visitor groups felt the number of people is important, but could not give a maximum (see Figure 54).
- 48% of visitor groups suggested a maximum acceptable number of people in each cave tour.
- As shown in Figure 55, of those visitor groups for which a maximum number of people per tour was important, the most common suggested tour sizes were:

- 24% 10-15 people
- 24% 16-20 people
- 18% 26-30 people

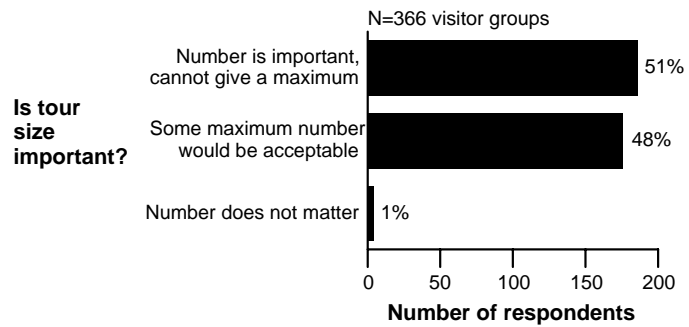


Figure 54. Visitor groups' opinions on importance of tour size

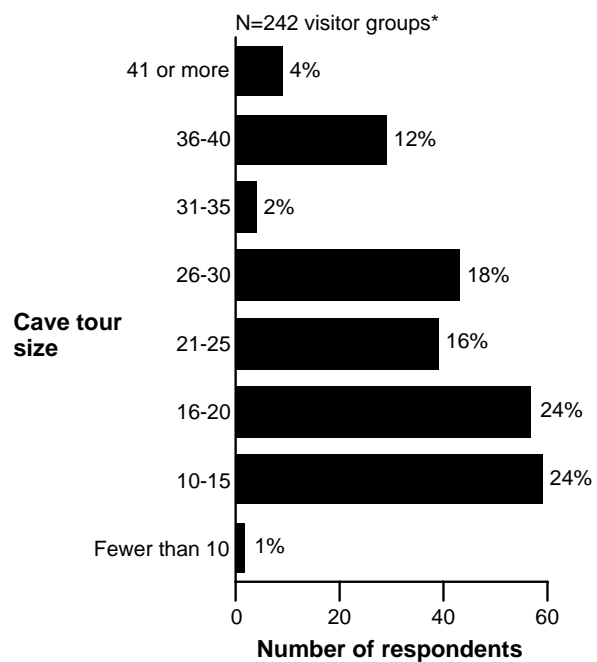


Figure 55. Acceptable maximum number of people per cave tour

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Elements affecting the cave tour experience

Question 18

How did the following elements affect you or your personal group's cave tour experience?

Results

- Figures 56-61 show how different elements affected visitor groups' cave tour experiences.
- Table 16 shows a comparison of how different elements on the cave tour added to, detracted from, or had no effect on visitor groups' cave tour experiences.

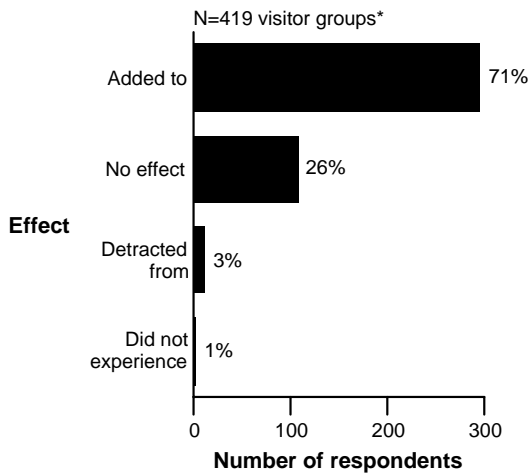


Figure 56. Effect of level of lighting on trail

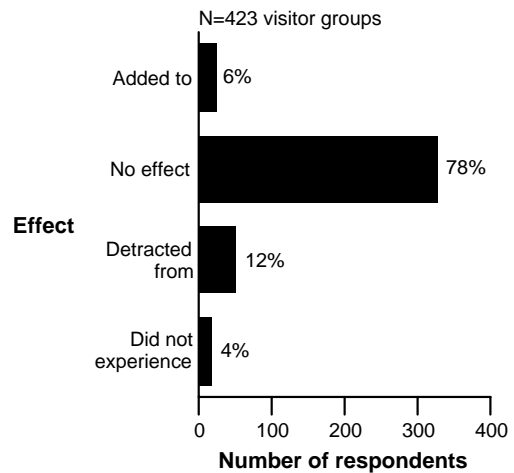


Figure 57. Effect of visitors' use of flash photography

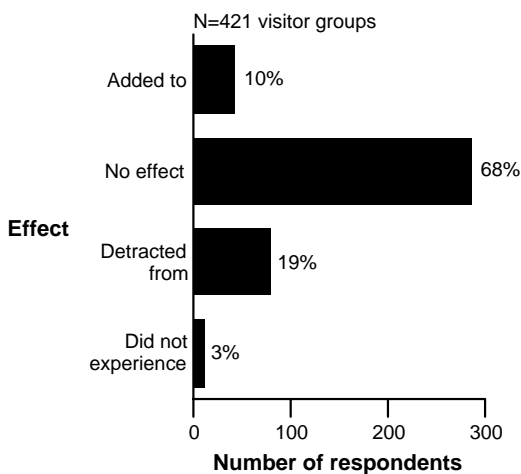


Figure 58. Effect of presence of young children

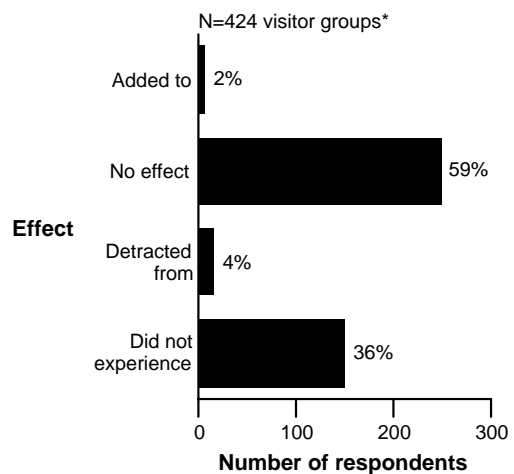


Figure 59. Effect of lack of warm clothing

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

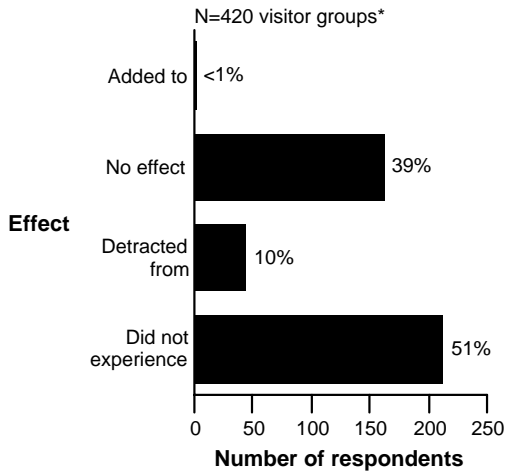


Figure 60. Effect of visitors' use of cell phones for light

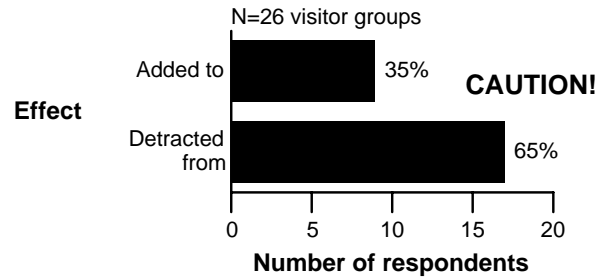


Figure 61. Effect of "other" elements

- "Other" elements that added to the cave tour experience (35%) were:

- Additional lighting of cave features
- Blackout on tour/candlelight
- Candle light
- Excellent guide
- Personable ranger
- Personality of tour guide
- Other visitor's flashlight helped me see the features

- "Other" elements that detracted from the cave tour experience (65%) were:

- Children with flashlights
- Crying children
- Guide
- Guide talked down to us
- Ill-behaved children
- Insufficient lighting/markings steps
- Low passages
- Number of people
- Stairs
- Tour was too fast
- Unable to use tripod

Table 16. Visitor ratings of how various elements affected the cave tour experience (N=number of visitors that rated each element.)

Element	N	Rating (%)			
		Added to	No effect	Detracted from	Did not experience
Level of lighting on trail	419	71	26	3	1
Visitors' use of flash photography	423	6	78	12	4
Presence of young children	421	10	68	19	3
Lack of warm clothing	424	2	59	4	36
Visitors' use of cell phones for light	420	<1	39	10	51
Other elements – CAUTION!	26	35	-	65	-

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Willingness to pay proposed cave tour fee increase

Question 17

If fees for the following cave tours increased in the future, would you and your group be willing to pay the proposed prices for each tour? Most or all of the funds would stay in the park to support visitor programs.

Results

- Figures 62-66 show, for each of the five different cave tours, visitor groups' willingness to pay proposed tour fee increases.

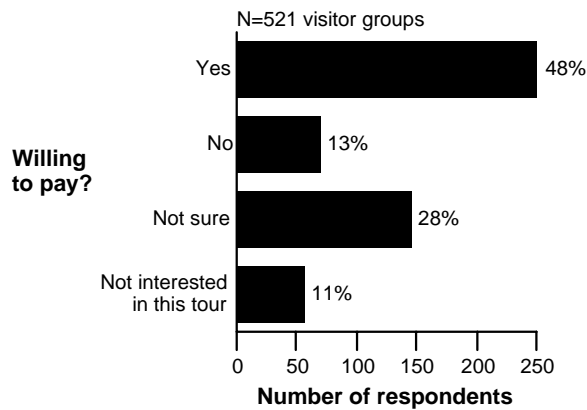


Figure 62. Garden of Eden Tour (current \$7/adult; proposed \$10/adult)

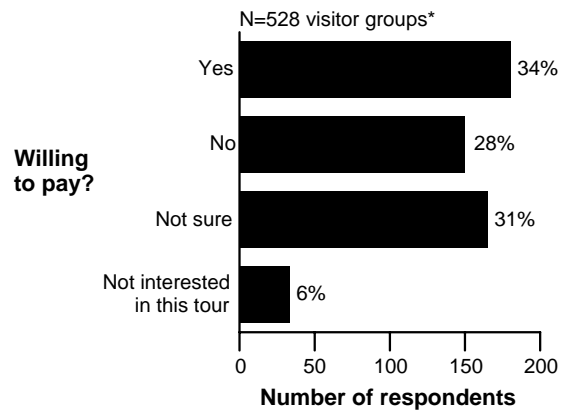


Figure 63. Natural Entrance Tour (current \$9/adult; proposed \$15/adult)

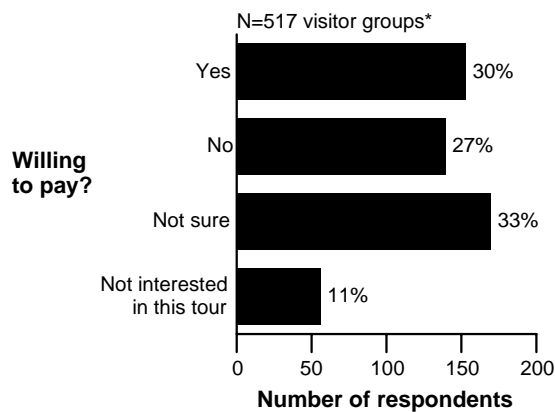


Figure 64. Fairgrounds Tour (current \$7/adult; proposed \$15/adult)

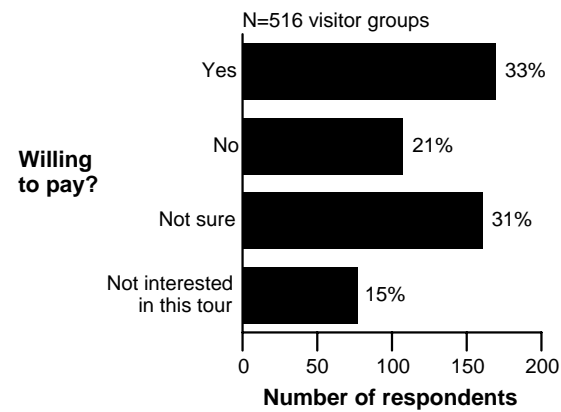


Figure 65. Historic Candlelight Tour (current \$7/adult; proposed \$15/adult)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

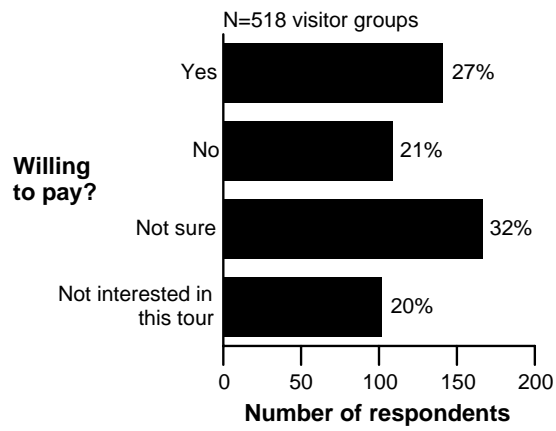


Figure 66. Wild Cave Tour (current \$23/adult; proposed \$30/adult)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Viewing exhibits

Question 13a

Wind Cave NP visitor center has two museum exhibit areas: (1) Prairie exhibits on the ground level and (2) Cave exhibits on the lower level. On this visit, did you and your personal group view/use any of these exhibits?

Results

- 56% of visitor groups viewed the prairie exhibits (see Figure 67).
- 30% did not view any exhibits.
- 15% viewed the cave exhibits.

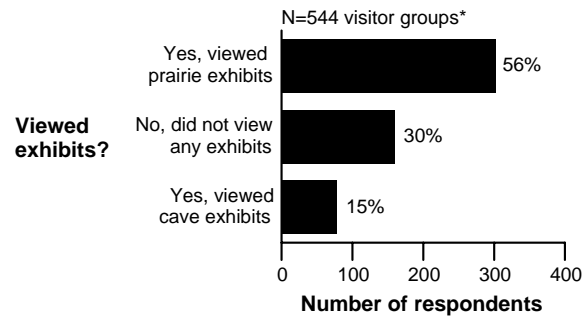


Figure 67. Visitor groups that viewed/used the exhibits

Reasons for not viewing exhibits

Question 13b

If you did not view any exhibit, why not?

Results

- As shown in Figure 68, the most common reasons that visitor groups did not view any exhibits were:

43% Did not have time
 23% Did not go to visitor center
 22% Did not know exhibits' location

- "Other" reasons (17%) were:

Children with us and they were done
 Did not know they existed
 Didn't realize there were exhibits, then ran out of time
 No parking
 Other plans
 Saw cave exhibit, never found prairie exhibit
 Too tired after the tour
 Tour was available immediately

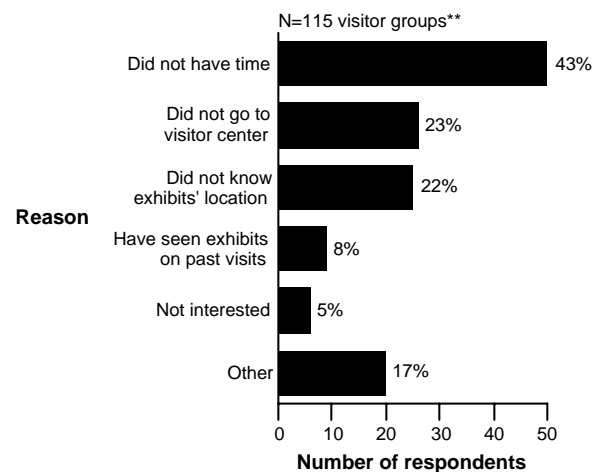


Figure 68. Reasons for not viewing exhibits

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Rating of prairie exhibit features

Question 13c

For the prairie exhibits that you used/viewed, please rate their quality from 1 to 5 for the following features for each exhibit.

- 1=Very poor
- 2=Poor
- 3=Average
- 4=Good
- 5=Very good

Results

- Figures 69 -73 show how visitors rated the quality of five features in the prairie exhibits.

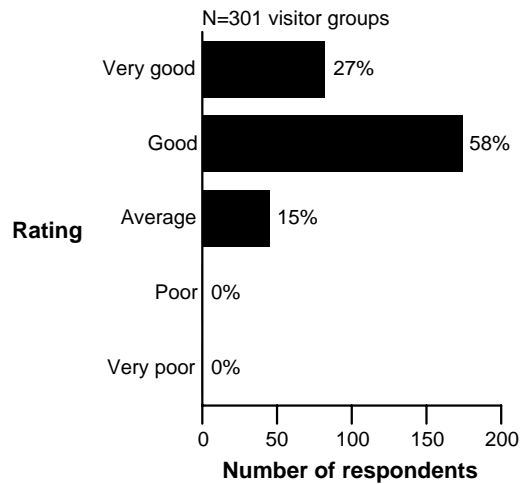


Figure 69. Quality of lighting

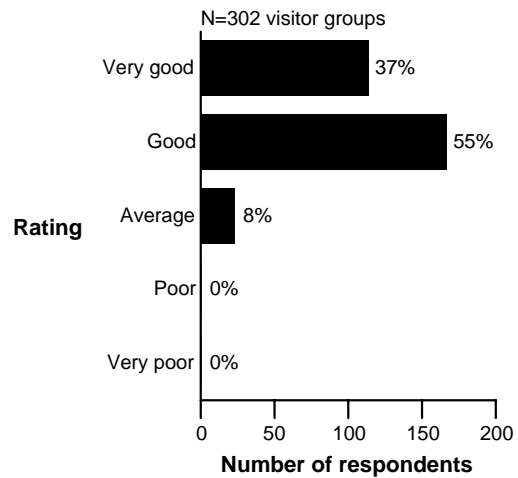


Figure 70. Ease of understanding

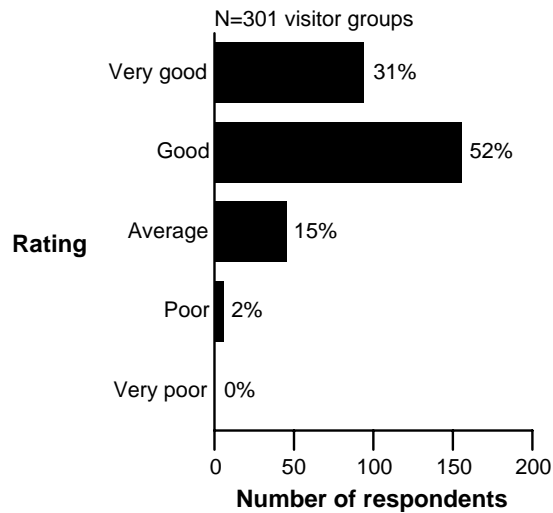


Figure 71. Quality of content

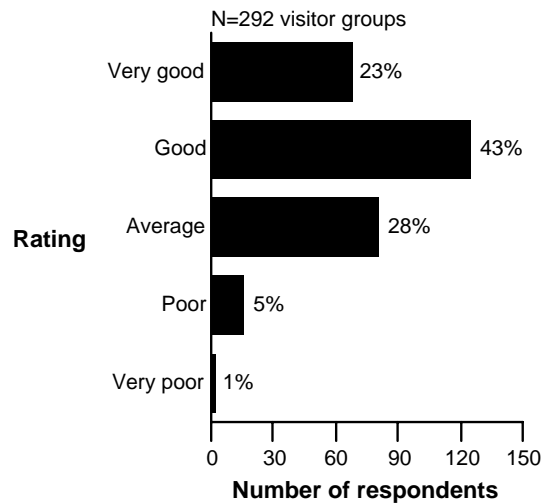


Figure 72. Varieties of display modes

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

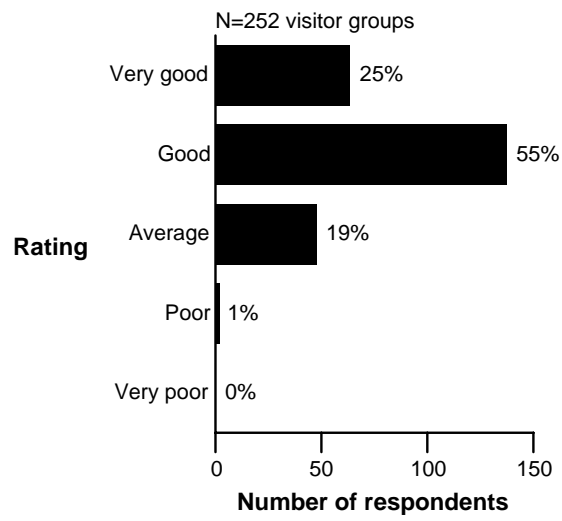


Figure 73. Order of display

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Rating of cave exhibit features

Question 13d

For the cave exhibits that you used/viewed, please rate their quality from 1 to 5 for the following features for each exhibit.

- 1=Very poor
- 2=Poor
- 3=Average
- 4=Good
- 5=Very good

Results

- Figures 74-78 show how visitors rated the quality of five features in the cave exhibits.

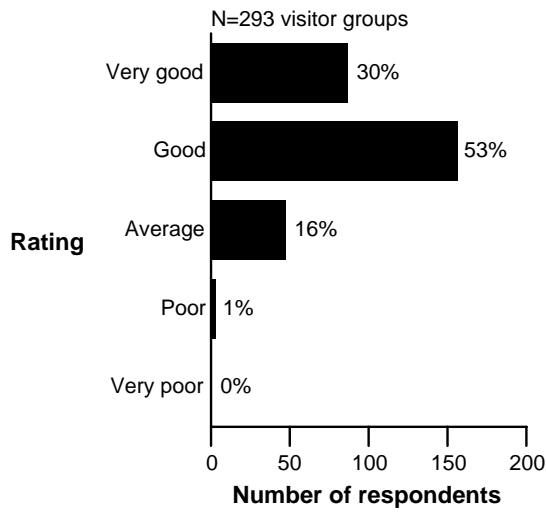


Figure 74. Quality of lighting

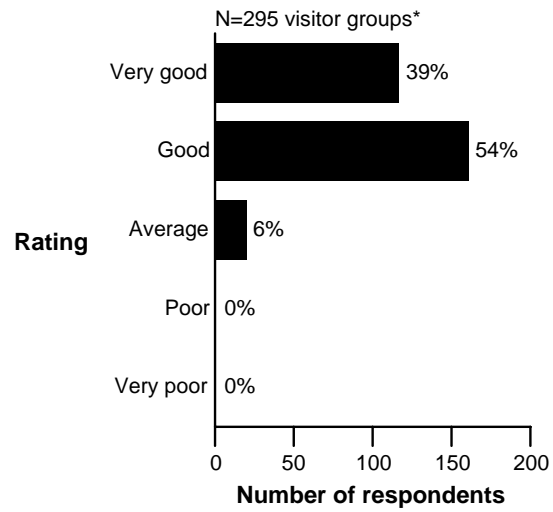


Figure 75. Ease of understanding

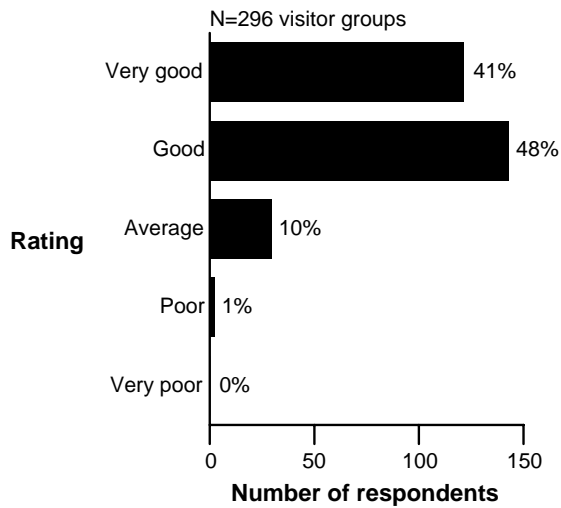


Figure 76. Quality of content

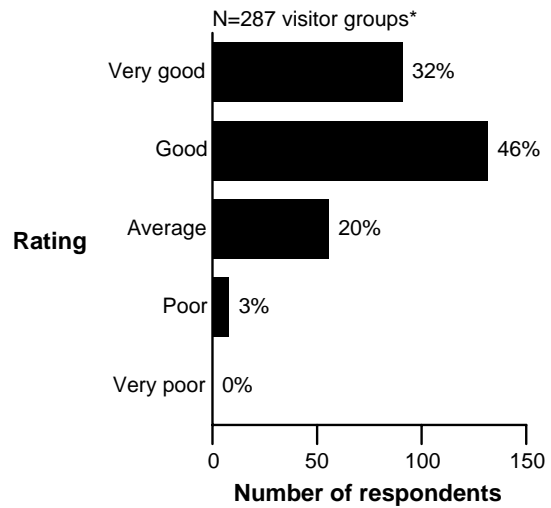


Figure 77. Varieties of display modes

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

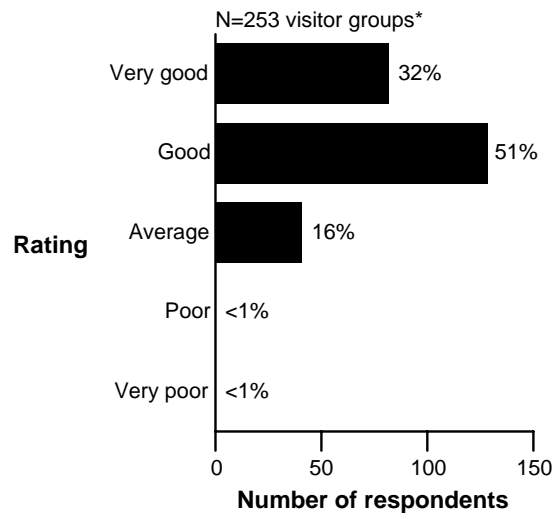


Figure 78. Order of display

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Ranger-led talks/programs

Question 15a

On this visit to Wind Cave NP, did anyone in your personal group participate in any of the ranger-led talks/programs, other than the cave tour?

Results

- 11% of visitor groups participated in ranger-led talks/programs (see Figure 79).

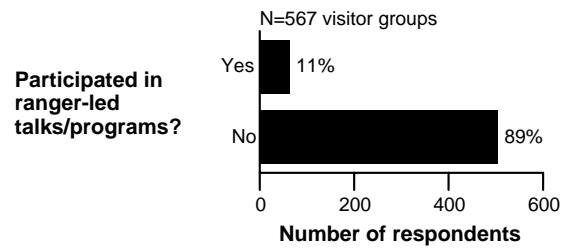


Figure 79. Visitor groups that participated in ranger-led talks/programs

Question 15b

If NO, what prevented you and your personal group from participating in ranger-led talks/programs?

Results

- As shown in Figure 80, the most common reason that prevented visitor groups from participating in ranger-led programs was:

64% Did not have time

- "Other" reasons (4%) were:

- Did not have information before arrival at park
- Did other activities
- Didn't know difference between ranger talks and tour
- Had other plans
- In back of group
- Inclement weather
- No parking
- Programs were only tentative
- Small kids' attention span
- Too crowded
- Too hot to leave pet in car
- Two family members German speaking
- Wait too long
- Was hungry

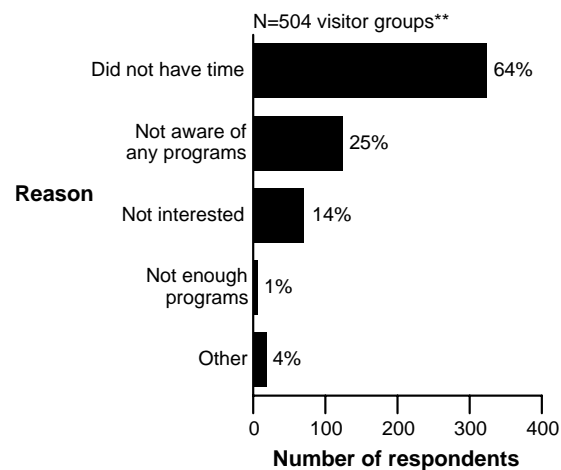


Figure 80. Reasons why visitor groups didn't participate in ranger-led talks/programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Ratings of Services, Facilities, Attributes, and Resources

Visitor services and facilities used

Question 8a

Please indicate all the visitor services and facilities that you and your personal group used at Wind Cave NP during this visit.

Results

- As shown in Figure 81, the most common visitor services and facilities used by visitor groups were:

87% Restrooms
 75% Ranger-led cave tour
 73% Parking lots

- The least used service/facility was:

4% Ranger-led programs

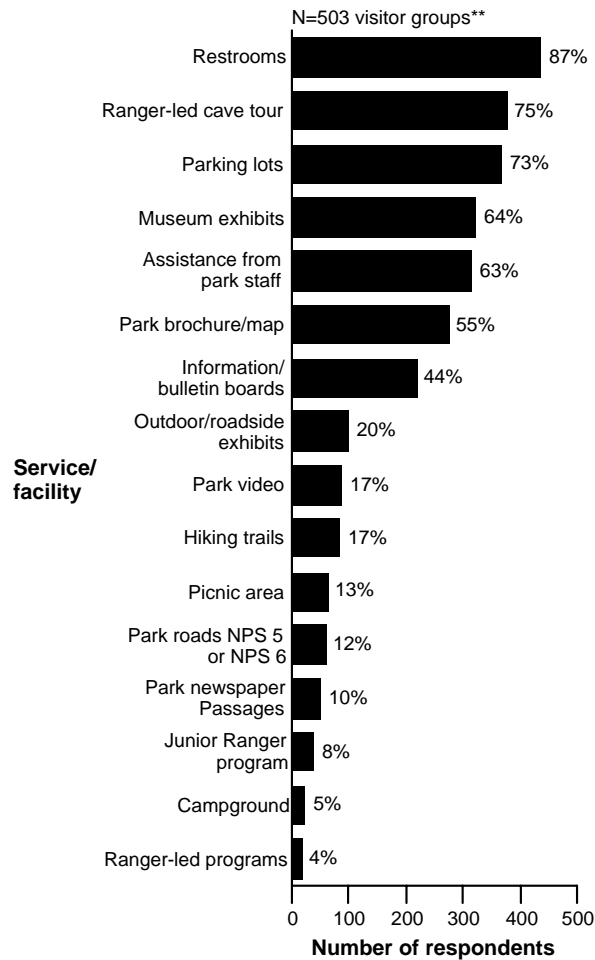


Figure 81. Visitor services and facilities used

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Importance ratings of visitor services and facilities

Question 8b

Next, for only those services and facilities that you and your personal group used, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.

- 1=Not important
- 2=Somewhat important
- 3=Moderately important
- 4=Very important
- 5=Extremely important

Results

- Figure 82 shows the combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings for visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- The services and facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were:

- 97% Ranger-led cave tour
- 88% Restrooms
- 84% Junior Ranger program
- 83% Park Roads NPS 5 or NPS 6

- Figures 83 to 98 show the importance ratings for each service and facility.
- The service/facility receiving the highest “not important” ratings that was rated by 30 or more visitor groups was:

- 4% Museum exhibits in visitor center

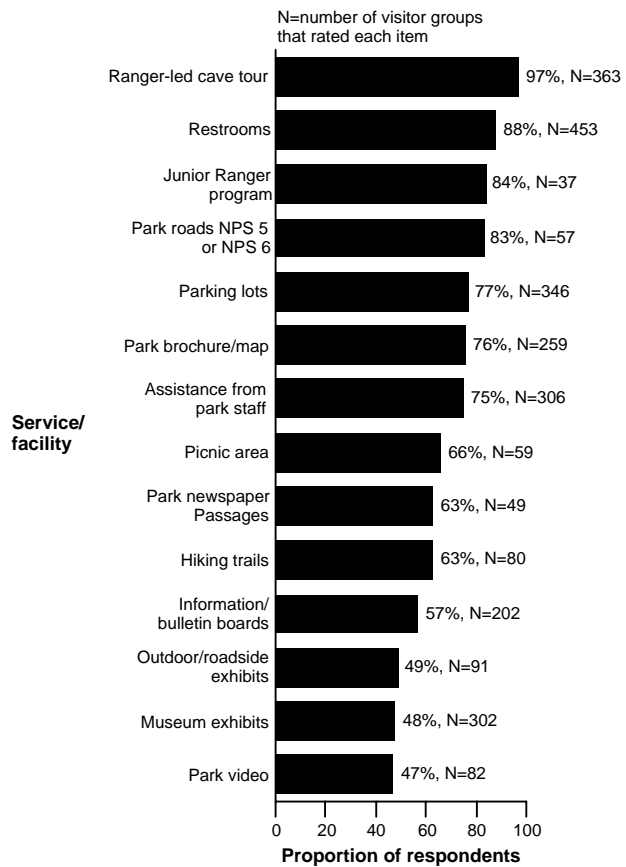


Figure 82. Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of visitor services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

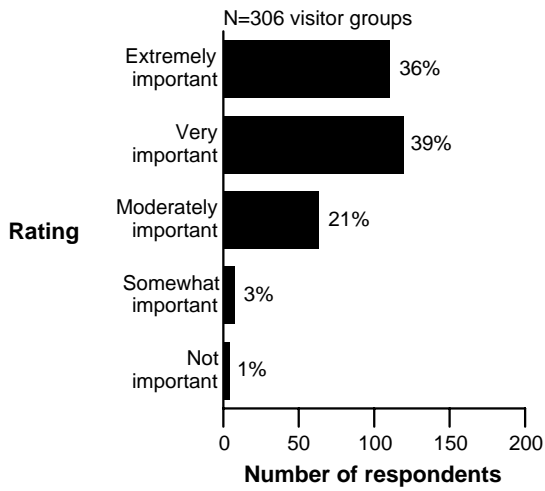


Figure 83. Importance of assistance from park staff

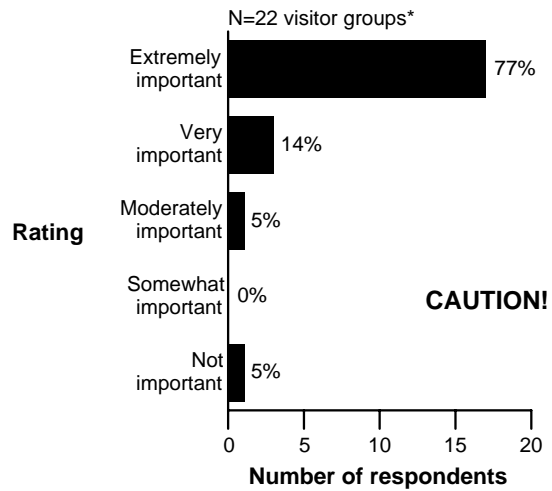


Figure 84. Importance of campground

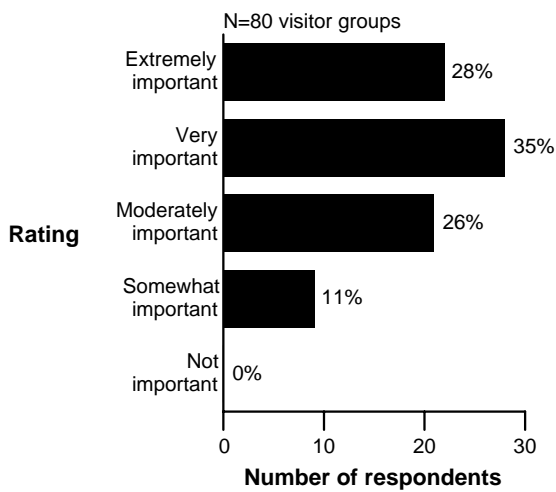


Figure 85. Importance of hiking trails

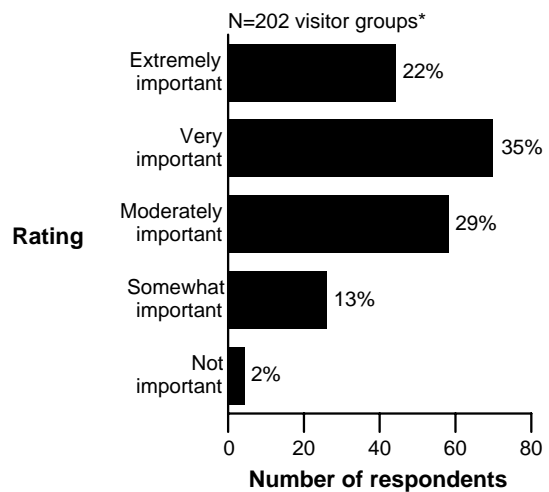


Figure 86. Importance of information/bulletin boards

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

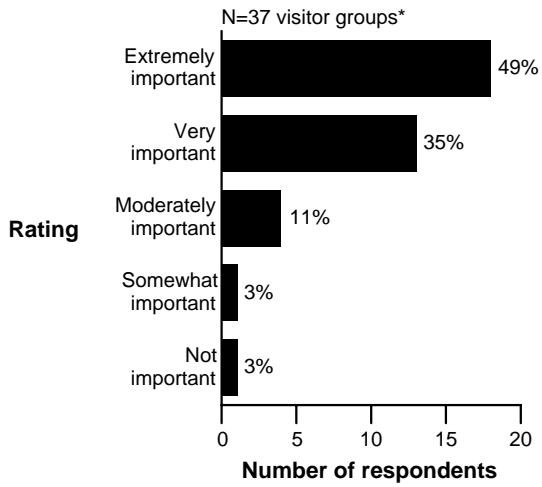


Figure 87. Importance of Junior Ranger program

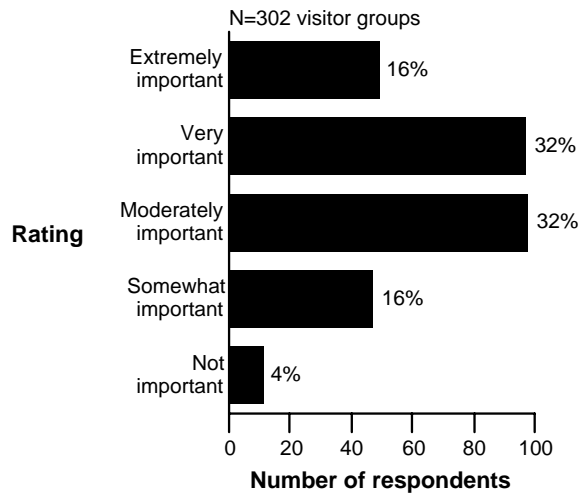


Figure 88. Importance of museum exhibits (in visitor center)

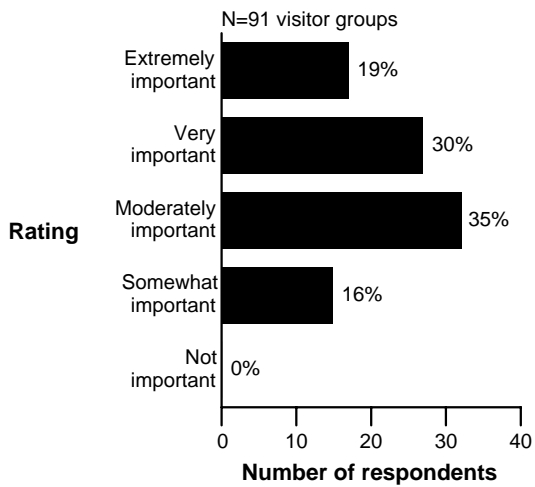


Figure 89. Importance of outdoor/roadside exhibits

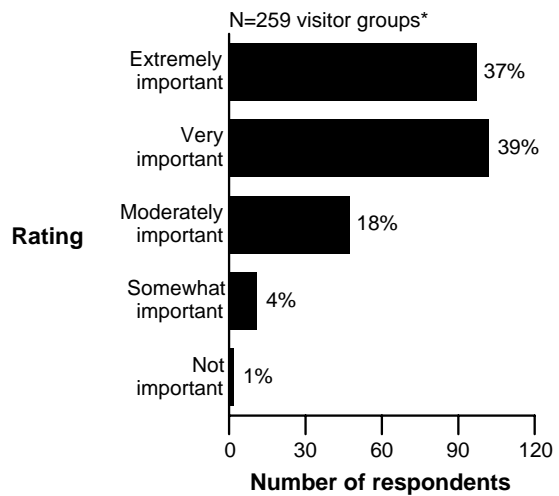


Figure 90. Importance of park brochure/map

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

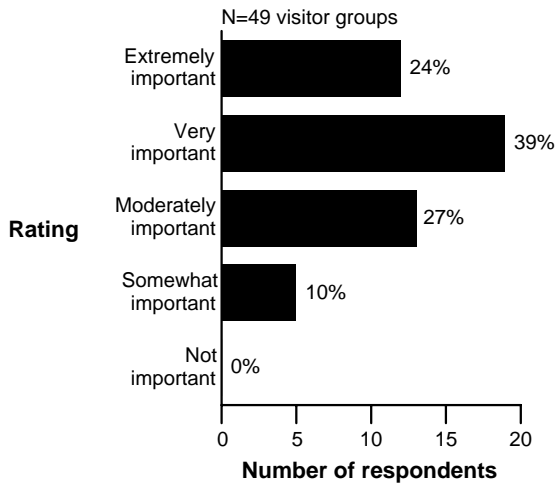


Figure 91. Importance of park newspaper *Passages*

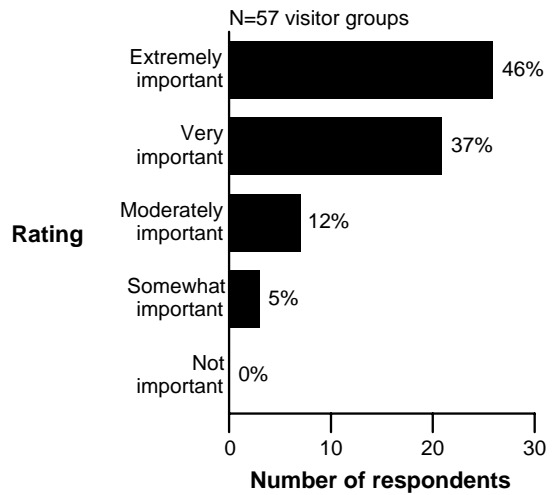


Figure 92. Importance of park roads NPS 5 or NPS 6 (gravel/backcountry)

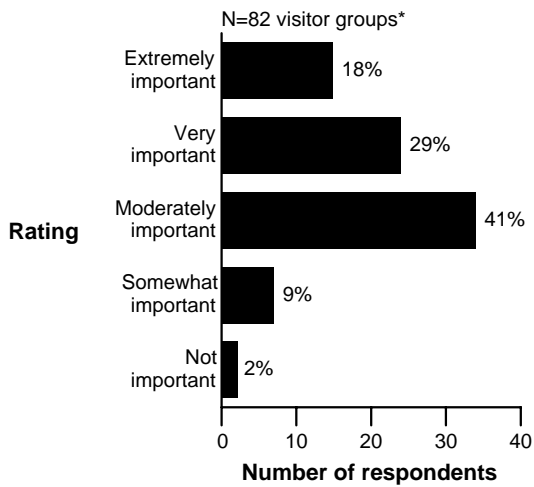


Figure 93. Importance of park video

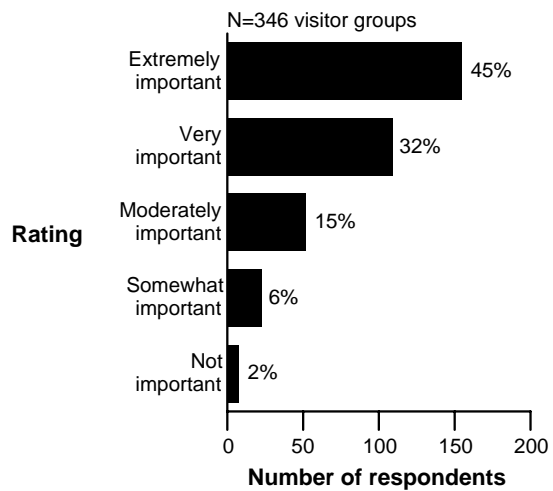


Figure 94. Importance of parking lots

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

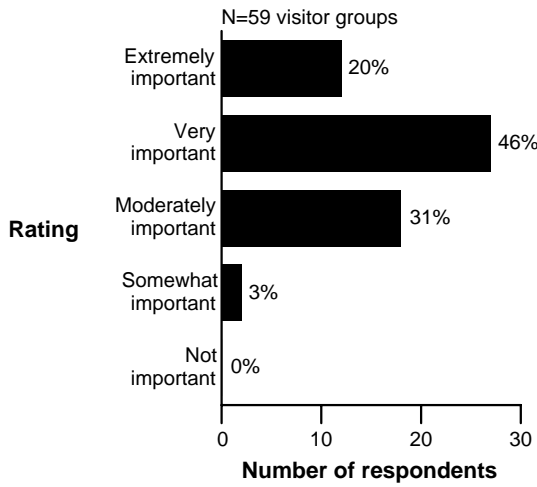


Figure 95. Importance of picnic area

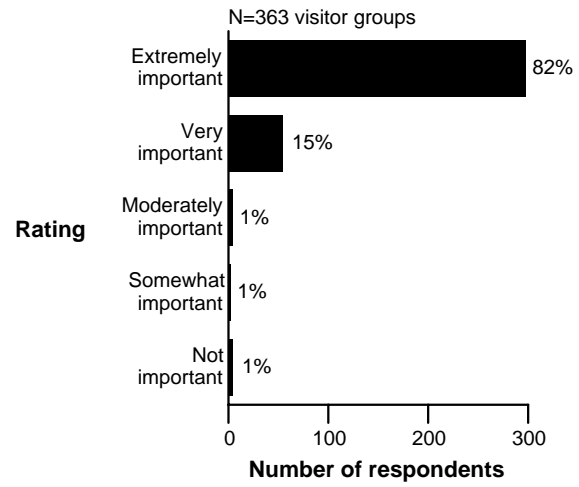


Figure 96. Importance of ranger-led cave tour

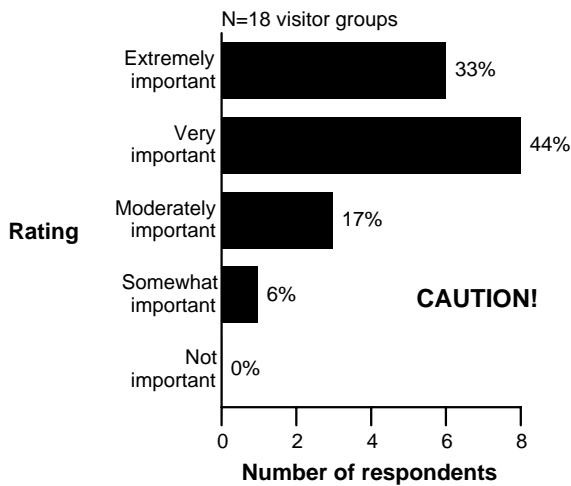


Figure 97. Importance of ranger-led programs (other than cave tour)

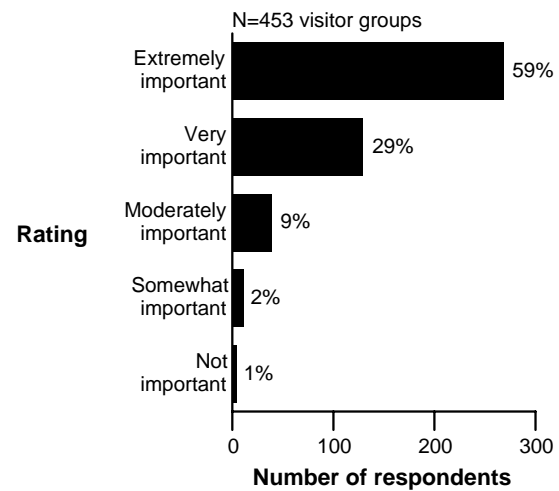


Figure 98. Importance of restrooms

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Quality ratings of visitor services and facilities

Question 8c

Finally, for only those services and facilities that you and your personal group used, please rate their quality from 1-5.

- 1=Very poor
- 2=Poor
- 3=Average
- 4=Good
- 5=Very good

Results

- Figure 99 shows the combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings for visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.

- The services and facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were:

- 96% Assistance from park staff
- 95% Ranger-led cave tour
- 92% Park brochure/map
- 89% Junior Ranger program

- Figures 100 to 115 show the quality ratings for each service and facility.

- The services/facilities receiving the highest “very poor” quality ratings that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups were:

- 1% Parking lots
- 1% Ranger-led cave tour
- 1% Restrooms

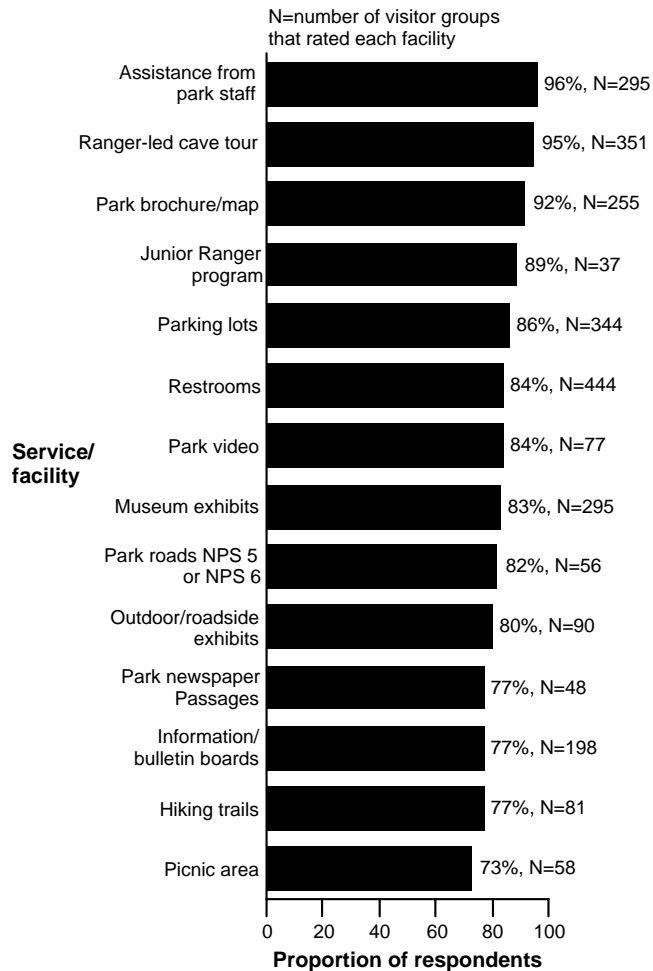


Figure 99. Combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings of visitor services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

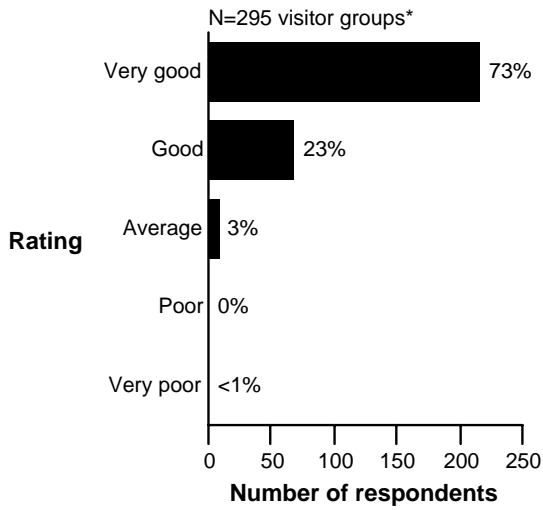


Figure 100. Quality of assistance from park staff

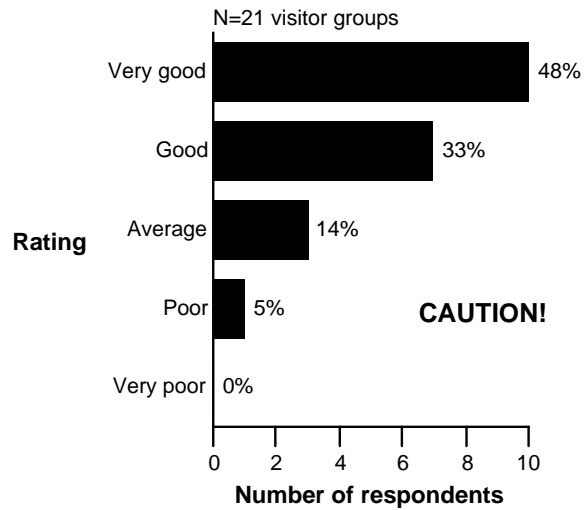


Figure 101. Quality of campground

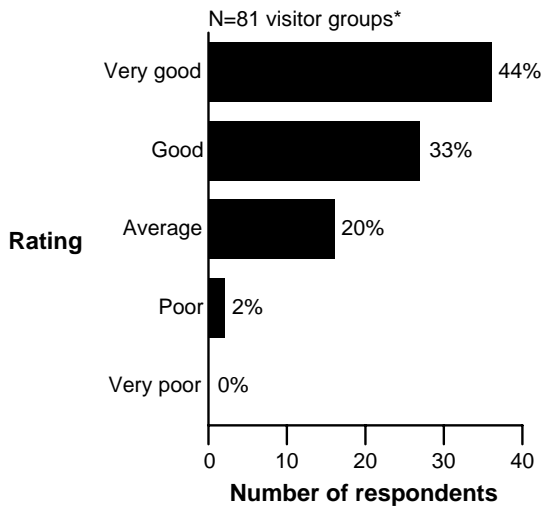


Figure 102. Quality of hiking trails

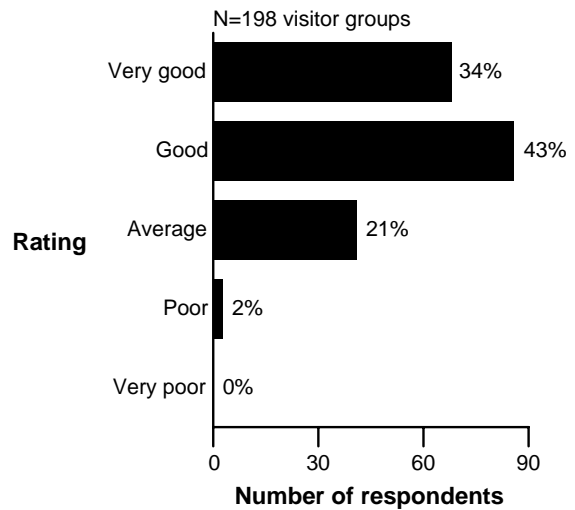


Figure 103. Quality of information/bulletin boards

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

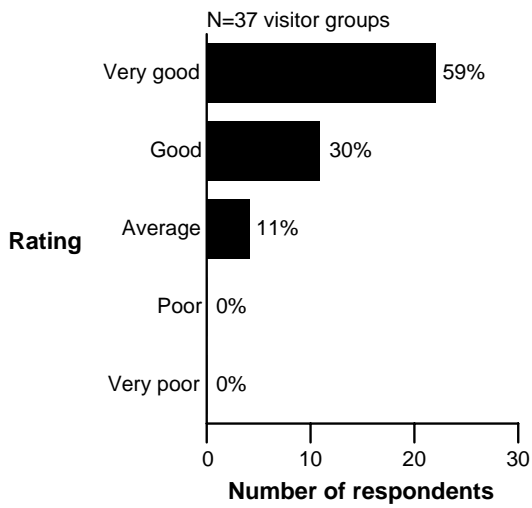


Figure 104. Quality of Junior Ranger program

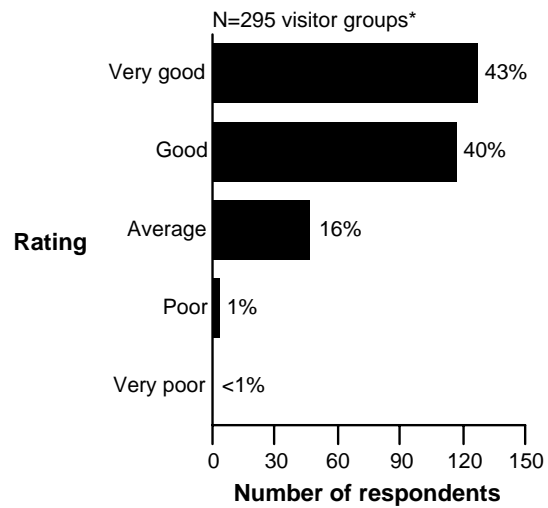


Figure 105. Quality of museum exhibits (in visitor center)

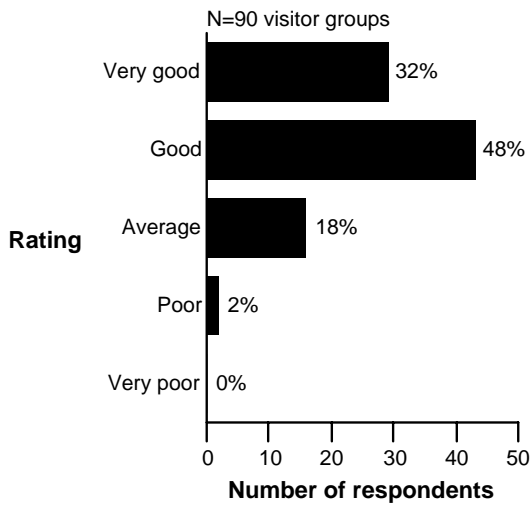


Figure 106. Quality of outdoor/roadside exhibits

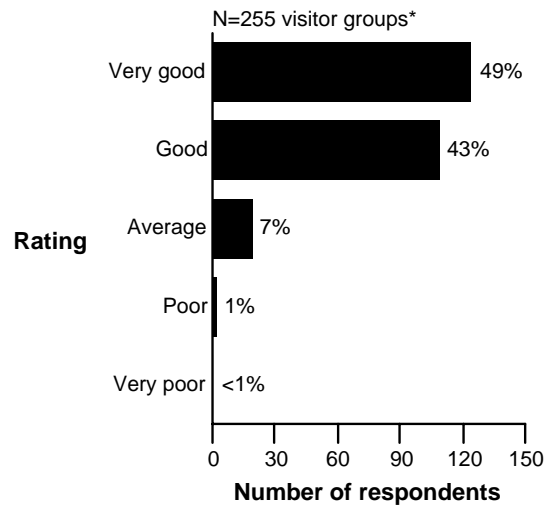


Figure 107. Quality of park brochure/map exhibits

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

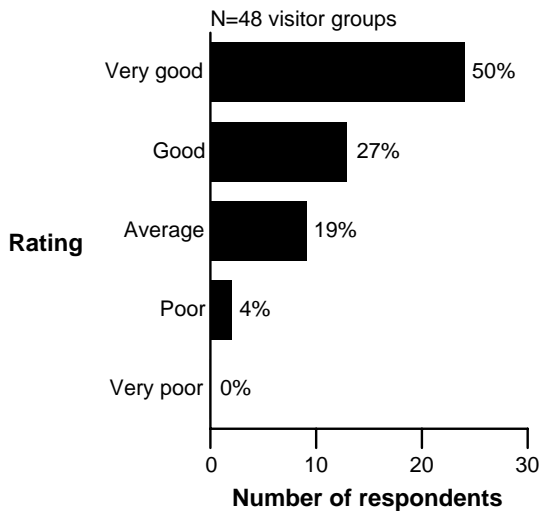


Figure 108. Quality of park newspaper *Passages*

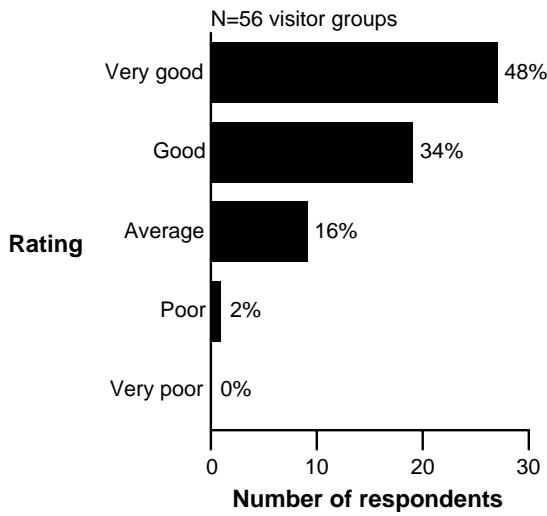


Figure 109. Quality of park roads NPS 5 or NPS 6 (gravel/backcountry)

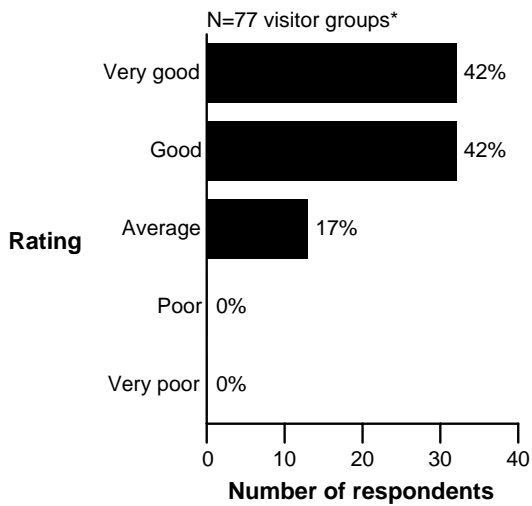


Figure 110. Quality of park video

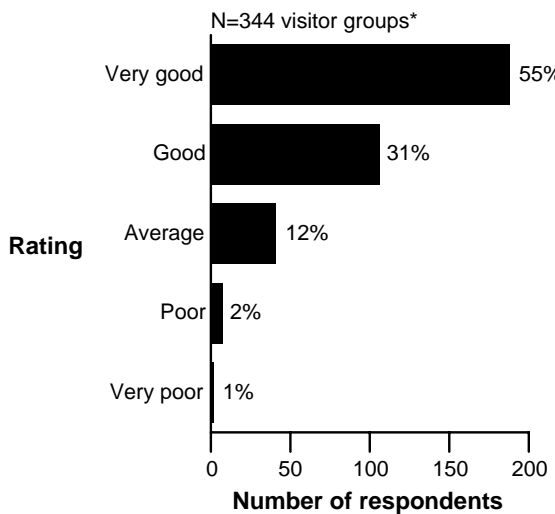


Figure 111. Quality of parking lots

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

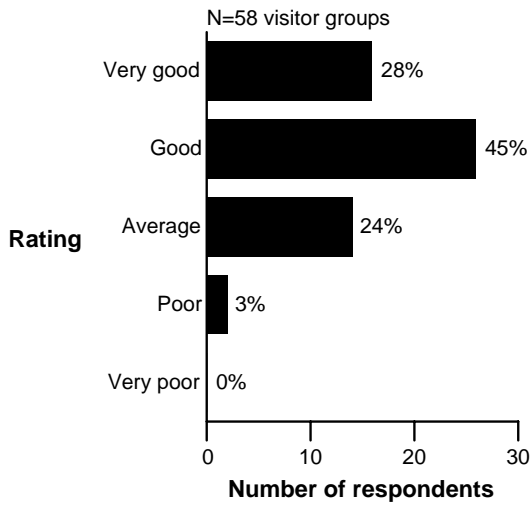


Figure 112. Quality of picnic area

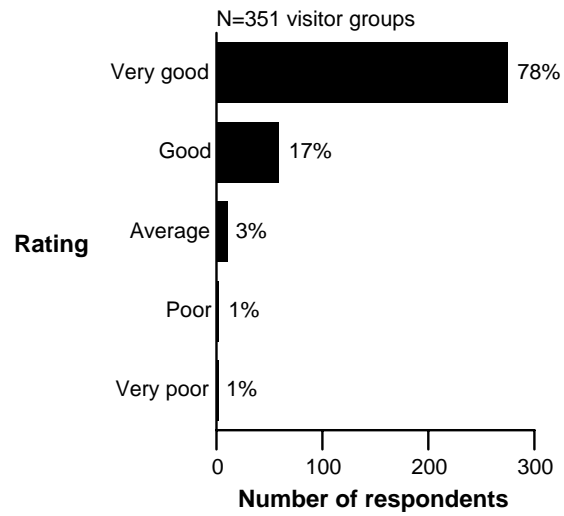


Figure 113. Quality of ranger-led cave tour

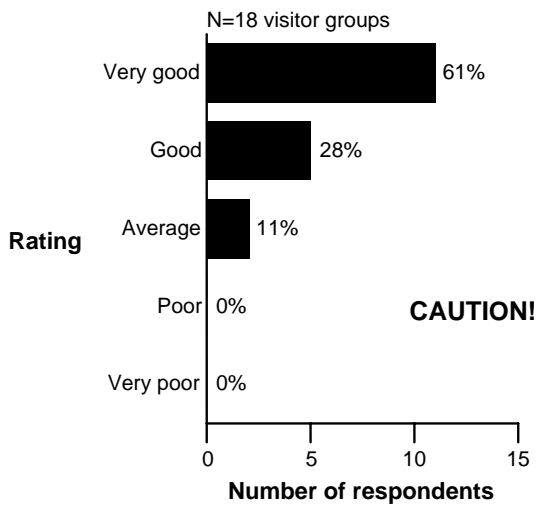


Figure 114. Quality of ranger-led programs (other than cave tour)

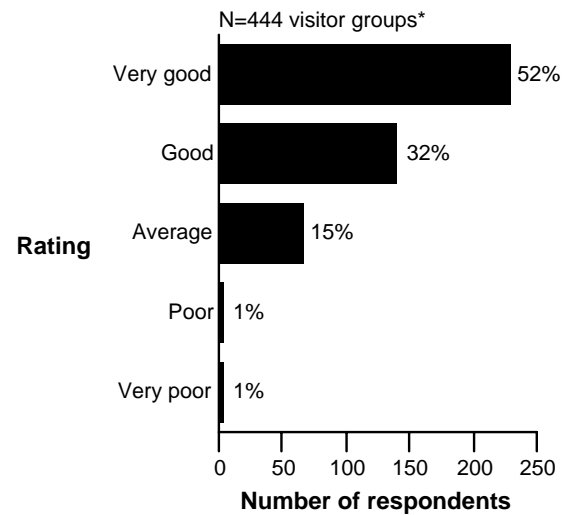


Figure 115. Quality of restrooms

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Mean scores of importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities

- Figures 116 and 117 show the mean scores of importance and quality ratings for all visitor services/facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- All visitor services/facilities were rated above average.

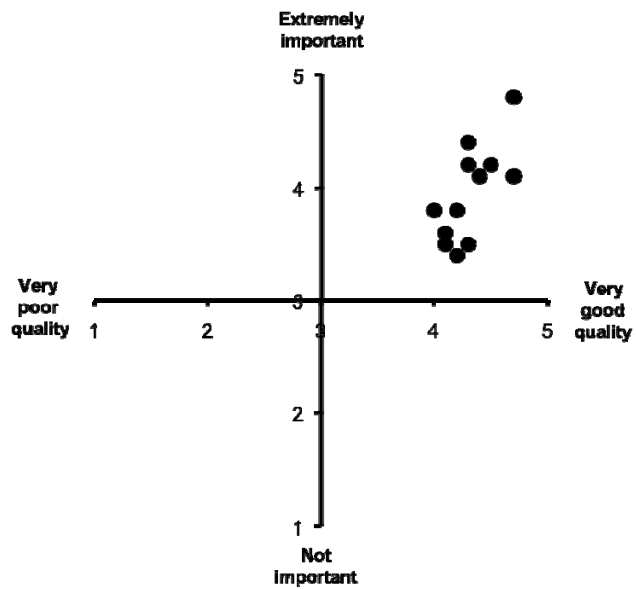


Figure 116. Mean scores of importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities

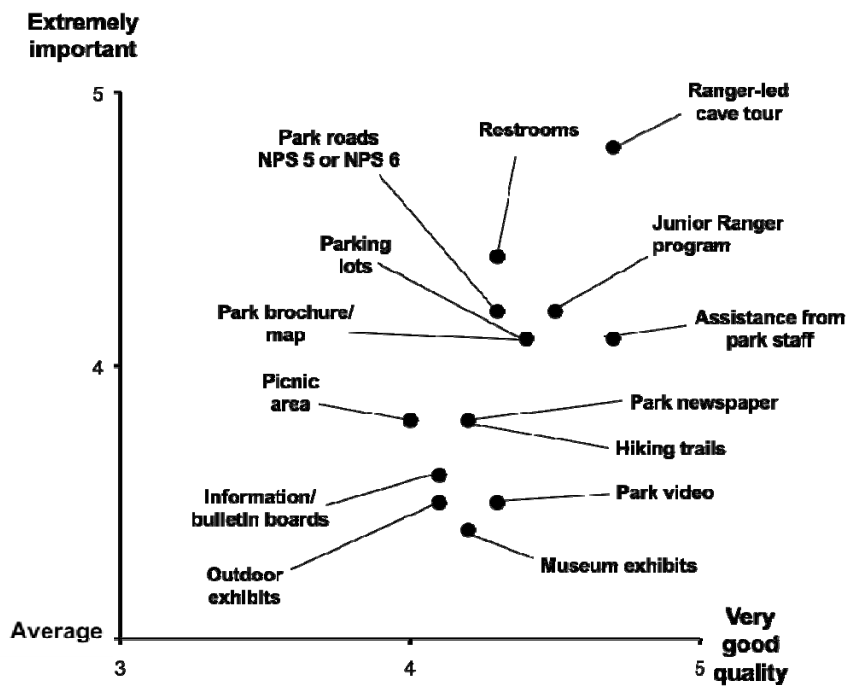


Figure 117. Detail of Figure 116

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Use and quality of park bookstore

Question 9a

Did you and your personal group visit the park bookstore in the visitor center?

Results

- 67% of visitor groups visited the park bookstore in the visitor center (see Figure 118).

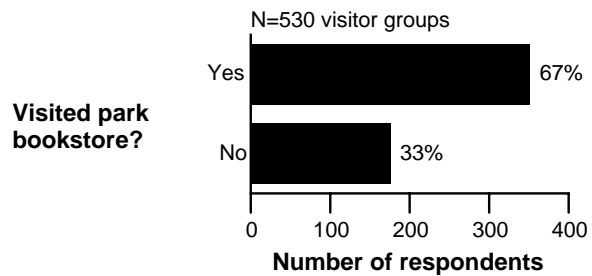


Figure 118. Visitor groups that visited the park bookstore

Question 9b

How would you rate the quality of sales items provided in the park bookstore?

Results

- 75% of visitor groups rated the quality of the sales items in the park bookstore as “very good” or “good” (see Figure 119).

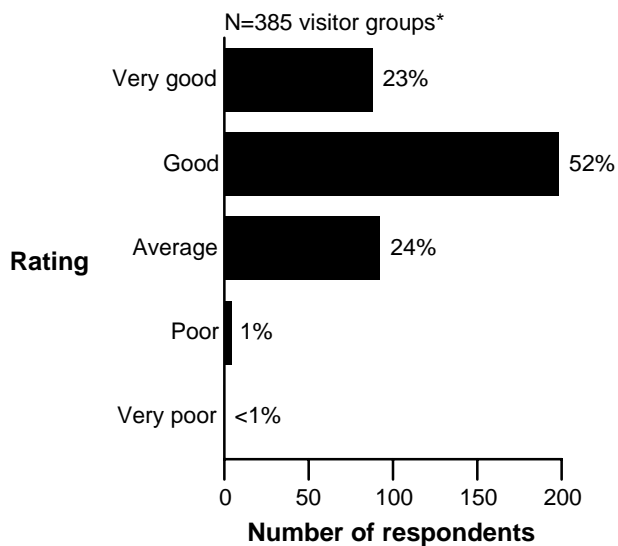


Figure 119. Quality of sales items in park bookstore

Question 9c

What additional items, if any, would you and your personal group like to have available in the park bookstore?

Results

- 86 visitor groups provided suggestions for additional items in the park bookstore (see Table 17).

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Table 17. Additional sales items for park bookstore
(N=89 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Item	Number of times mentioned
T-shirts (more of different styles)	9
More souvenirs/memorabilia	5
Better selection of postcards	4
Clothing	4
Gems/minerals/rocks	3
Penny press	3
Postage stamps	3
Snacks	3
Wind Cave National Park magnets	3
Wind Cave National Park stickers	3
Christmas ornaments	2
Park specific scrap-booking items	2
Small items for children	2
Better quality caps	1
Better selection of books	1
Camping supplies	1
Cave dioramas	1
Cave video	1
Coffee mugs	1
Collectables	1
Collector's coin/medallion	1
Continued variety of books	1
Cooler of inexpensive bottled beverages	1
Cotton socks (not acrylic/nylon)	1
Cross-stitch kits	1
Detailed topography maps	1
DVDs longer than 20 minutes	1
Hiking medallions	1
Ice	1
Information on geology of caves	1
Literature with creation model for origins	1
Local arts and crafts	1
Local information on nature, wildlife, people	1
More books by historians like R.A. Smith	1
More gift items (beyond books)	1
More historical biographies/books related to area	1
More historical items	1
More information about animals	1
More information about bats	1
More information about local attractions	1
National Park Passports (were out)	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Table 17. Additional sales items for park bookstore (continued)

Item	Number of times mentioned
National Park quarters	1
National stamp of the park	1
Natural souvenirs	1
Notecards	1
Park bronze collector medals for Wind Cave	1
Patches	1
Photo albums	1
Pictures from inside the cave	1
Single dose health items (Tylenol, Band-aids, Alka-Seltzer)	1
Snow globe	1
Sterling silver national park charms	1
Wildlife guide books	1
Wind Cave National Park key chains	1
Wind Cave National Park pens	1
Wind Cave tour on DVD	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Expenditures

Total expenditures inside and outside the park

Question 19

For you and your personal group, please report all expenditures for the items listed below for this visit to Wind Cave NP and the surrounding area (within 30 miles of any entrance point).

Results

- 39% of visitor groups spent \$1-200 (see Figure 120).
- 17% spent \$1,001 or more.
- The average visitor group expenditure was \$533.
- The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$297.
- Average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$158.
- As shown in Figure 121, the largest proportions of total expenditures inside and outside the park were:

- 32% Lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc.
- 15% Bars/restaurants/snack bars
- 12% Gas and oil

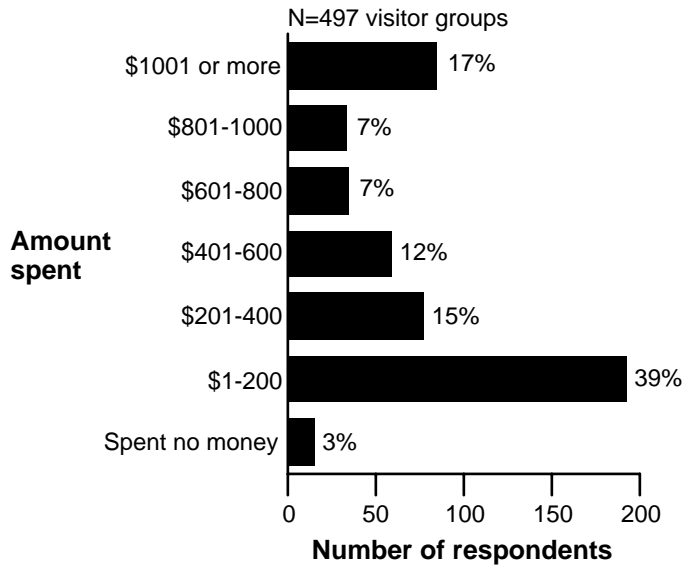


Figure 120. Total expenditures inside and outside the park

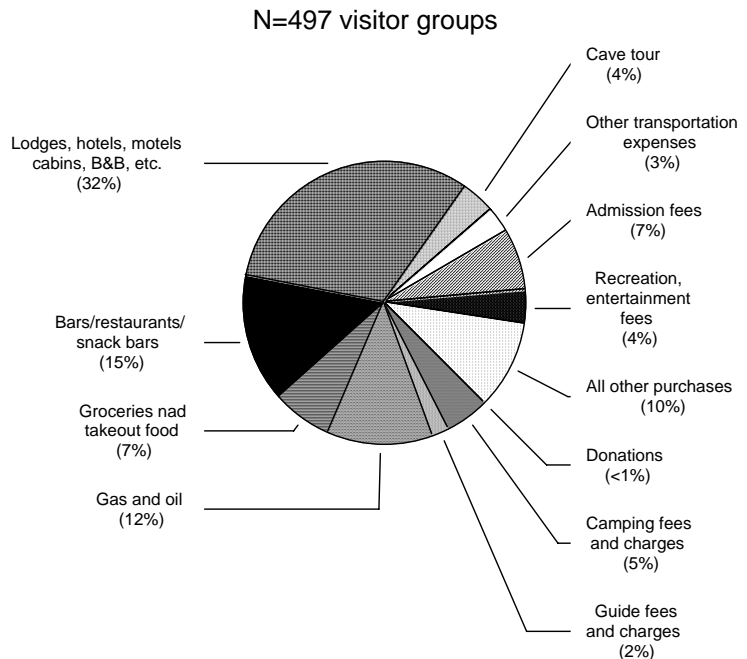


Figure 121. Proportions of total expenditures inside and outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Number of adults covered by expenditures

Question 19c

How many adults (18 years or older) do these expenses cover?

Results

- 73% of visitor groups had two adults covered by expenditures (see Figure 122).

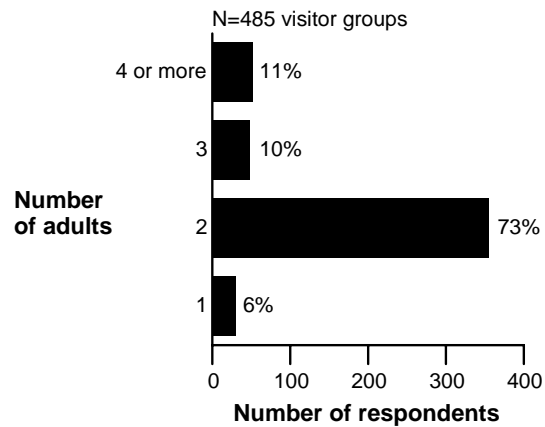


Figure 122. Number of adults covered by expenditures

Number of children covered by expenditures

Question 19c

How many children (under 18 years) do these expenses cover?

Results

- 39% of visitor groups had no children covered by expenditures (see Figure 123).
- 30% had two children.

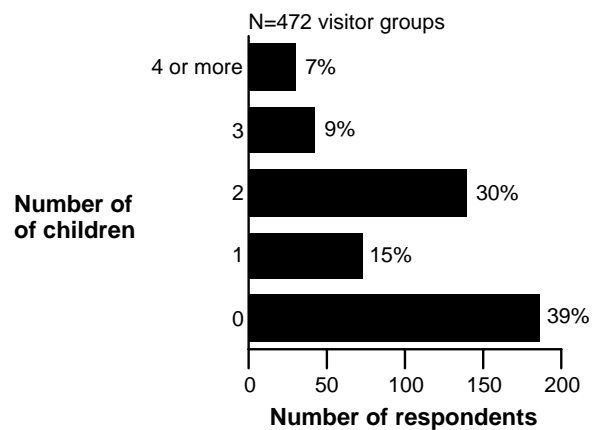


Figure 123. Number of children covered by expenditures

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Expenditures inside the park

Question 19a

Please list your group's total expenditures inside Wind Cave NP.

Results

- 69% of visitor groups spent \$1-50 inside the park (see Figure 124).
- 14% spent \$51-100.
- The average visitor group expenditure inside the park was \$36.
- The median expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$27.
- Average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$12.
- As shown in Figure 125, the largest proportions of total expenditures inside the park were:

60% Cave tour
19% All other purchases

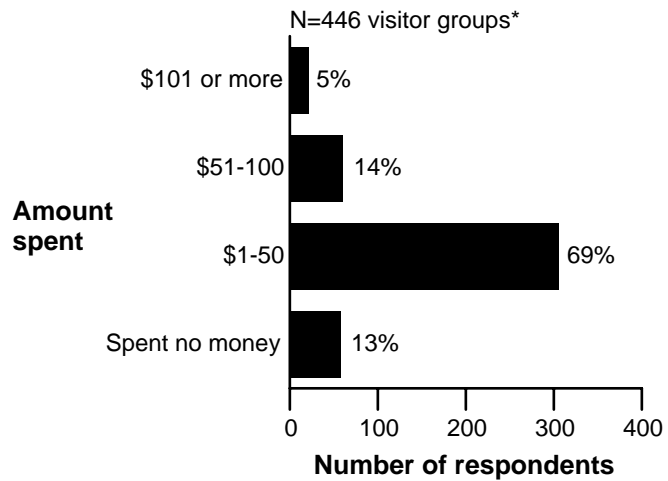


Figure 124. Total expenditure inside the park

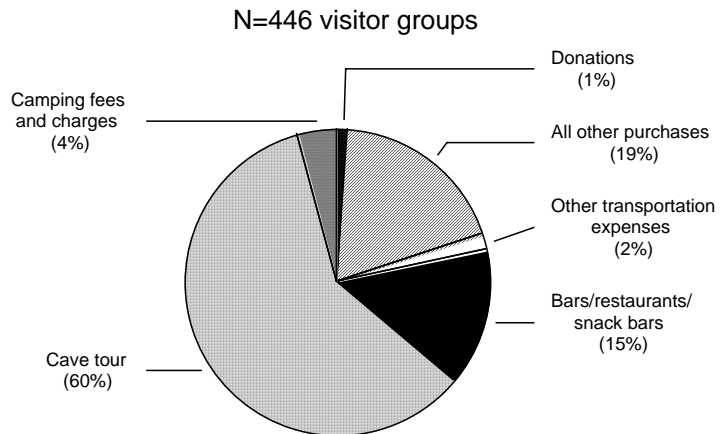


Figure 125. Proportions of total expenditures inside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Camping fees and charges

- 92% of visitor groups spent no money on camping fees and charges inside the park (see Figure 126).
- 4% spent \$1-20.

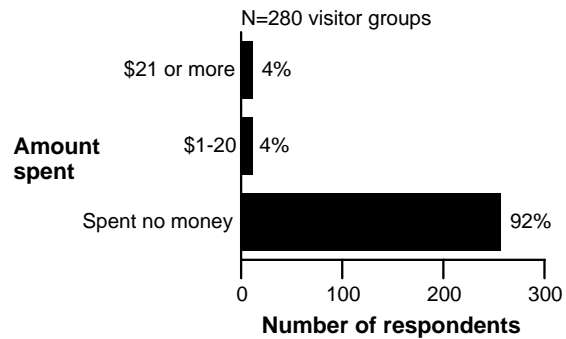


Figure 126. Expenditures for camping fees and charges inside the park

Cave tour

- 41% of visitor groups spent \$21-40 on cave tours inside the park (see Figure 127).
- 34% spent \$1-20.

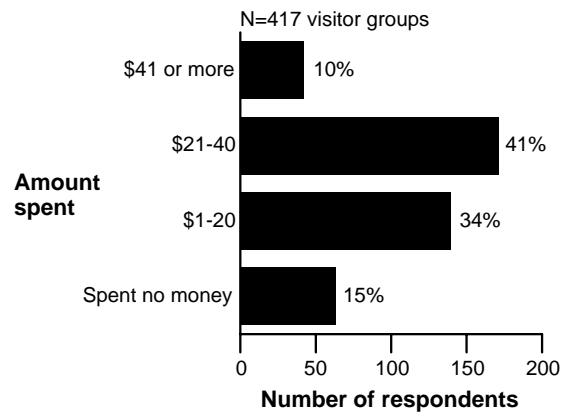


Figure 127. Expenditures for cave tour

Bars/restaurants/snack bars

- 80% of visitor groups spent no money on bars/restaurants/snack bars inside the park (see Figure 128).
- 15% spent \$1-20.

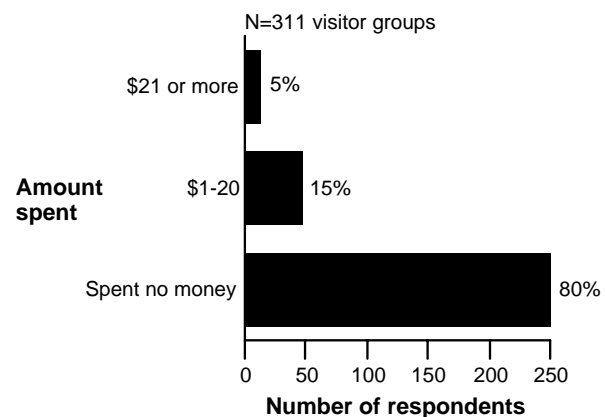


Figure 128. Expenditures for bars/restaurants/snack bars inside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Other transportation expenses (rental cars, taxis, auto repairs, but NOT airfare)

- 98% of visitor groups spent no money on other transportation purchases inside the park (see Figure 129).

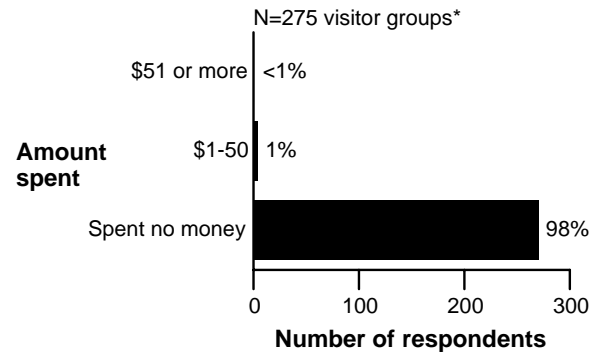


Figure 129. Expenditures for other transportation inside the park

All other purchases (souvenirs, film, books, sporting goods, clothing, etc.)

- 55% of visitor groups spent no money on all other purchases inside the park (see Figure 130).
- 28% spent \$1-20.

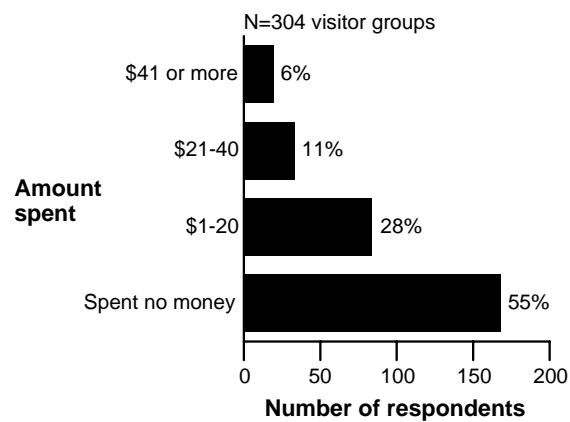


Figure 130. Expenditures for other purchases inside the park

Donations

- 89% of visitor groups spent no money on donations inside the park (see Figure 131).
- 11% spent \$1-10.

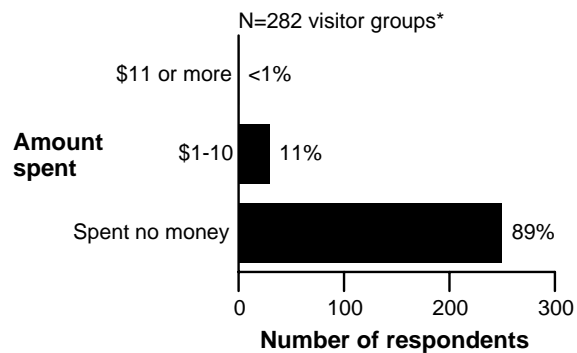


Figure 131. Expenditures for donations inside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Expenditures outside the park

Question 19b

Please list your group's total expenditures in the surrounding area outside the park (within 30 miles).

Results

- 33% of visitor groups spent \$1-200 (see Figure 132).
- 17% spent \$1001 or more.
- 14% spent \$201-400.
- The average visitor group expenditure outside the park was \$538.
- The median expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$319.
- Average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$173.
- As shown in Figure 133, the largest proportions of total expenditures outside the park were:

- 34% Lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc.
- 15% Bars/restaurants/snack bars
- 13% Gas and oil

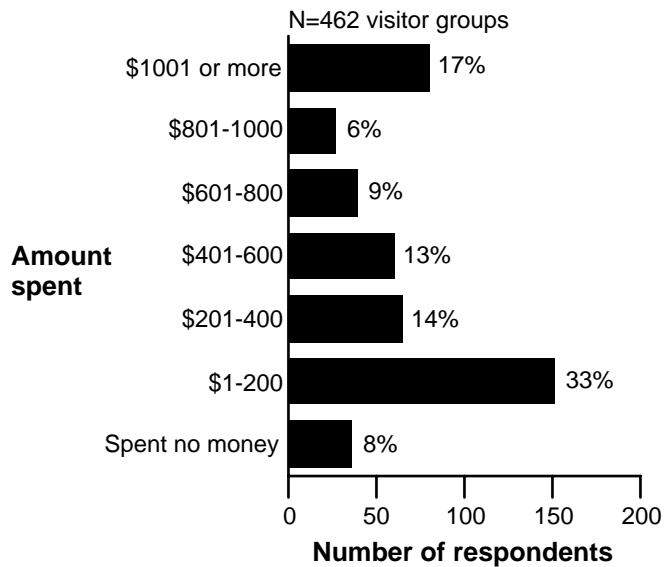


Figure 132. Total expenditures outside the park (within 30 miles)

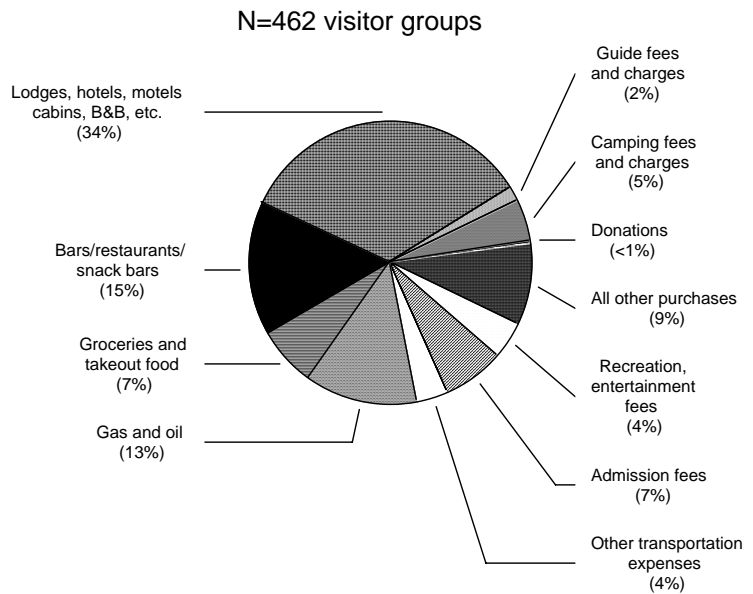


Figure 133. Proportions of total expenditures outside the park (within 30 miles)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc.

- 34% of visitor groups spent no money on lodging outside the park (see Figure 134).
- 16% spent \$101-200.

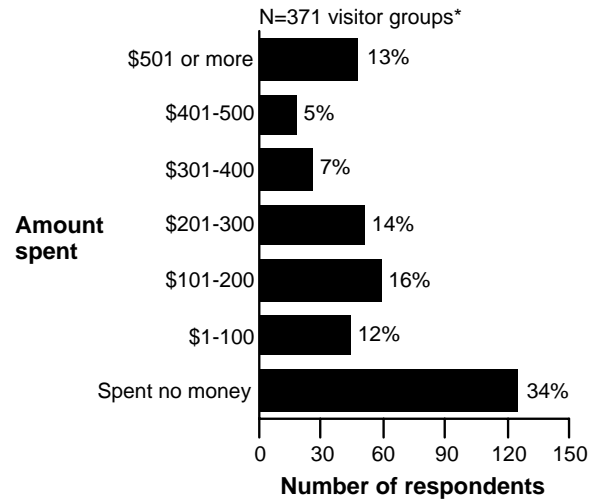


Figure 134. Expenditures for lodging outside the park

Camping fees and charges

- 67% of visitor groups spent no money on camping fees and charges outside the park (see Figure 135).
- 22% spent \$1-100.

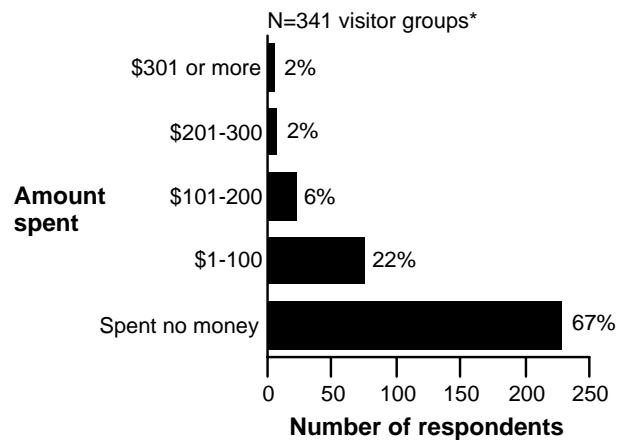


Figure 135. Expenditures for camping fees and charges outside

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Guide fees and charges

- 85% of visitor groups spent no money on guide fees and charges outside the park (see Figure 136).
- 8% spent \$41 or more.

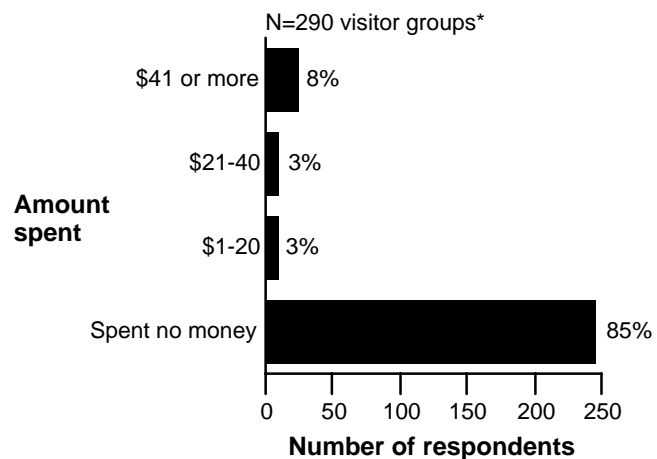


Figure 136. Expenditures for guide fees and charges outside the park

Bars/restaurants/snack bars

- 28% of visitor groups spent \$1-\$50 at bars/restaurants/snack bars outside the park (see Figure 137).
- 24% spent no money.

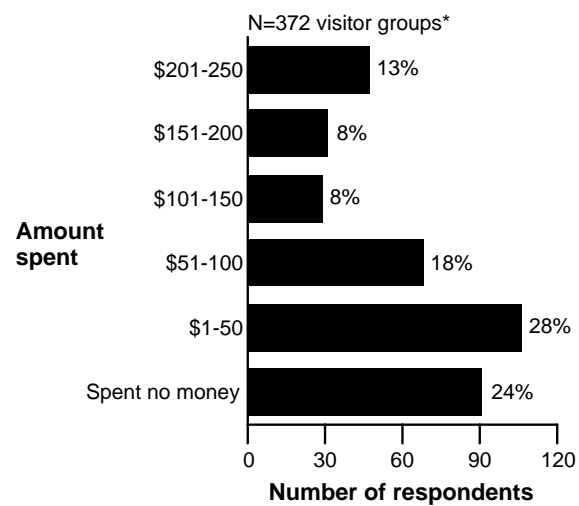


Figure 137. Expenditures for bars/restaurants/ snack bars outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Groceries and takeout food

- 39% of visitor groups spent \$1-50 on groceries and takeout food outside the park (see Figure 138).
- 38% spent no money.

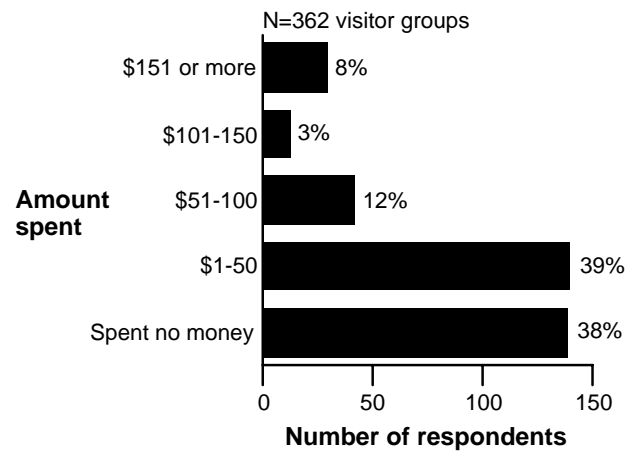


Figure 138. Expenditures for groceries and takeout food outside the park

Gas and oil (auto, RV, boat, etc.)

- 43% of visitor groups spent \$1-50 on gas and oil outside the park (see Figure 139).
- 22% spent \$51-100.

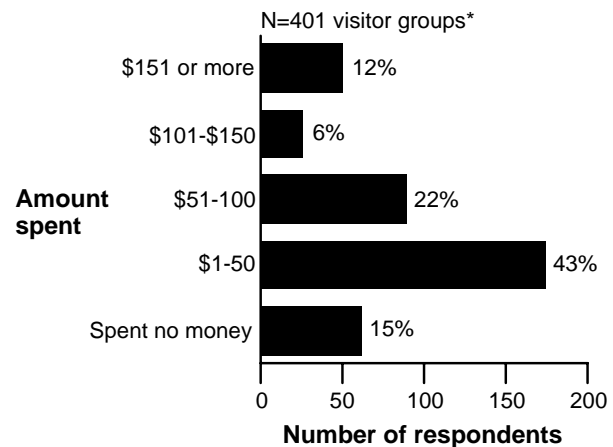


Figure 139. Expenditures for gas and oil outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Other transportation expenses (rental cars, taxis, auto repairs, but NOT airfare)

- 89% of visitor groups spent no money on other transportation purchases outside the park (see Figure 140).
- 5% spent \$201 or more.

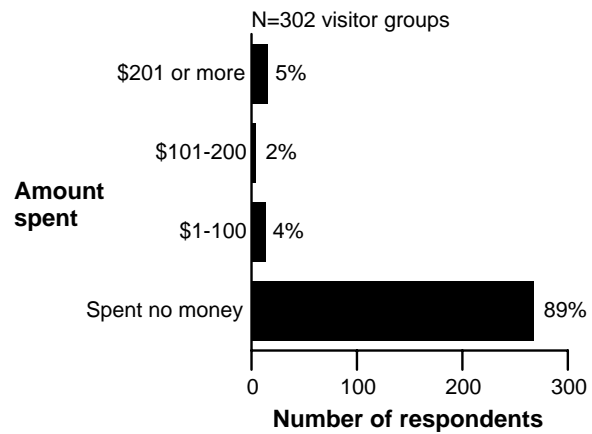


Figure 140. Expenditures for other transportation outside the park

Admission fees

- 42% of visitor groups spent \$1-50 on admission fees outside the park (see Figure 141).
- 31% spent no money.

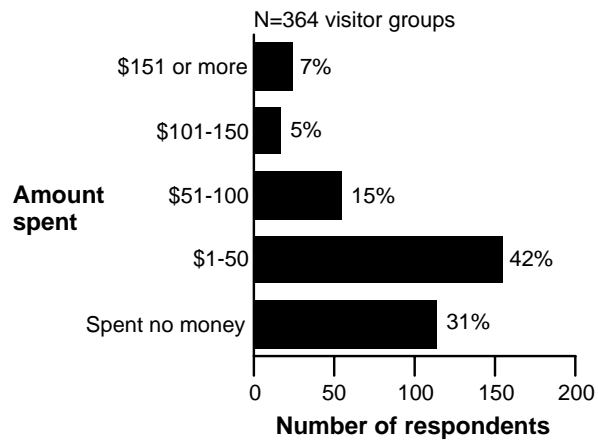


Figure 141. Expenditures for admission fees outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Recreation, entertainment fees

- 68% of visitor groups spent no money on recreation, entertainment fees outside the park (see Figure 142).
- 15% spent \$1-50.

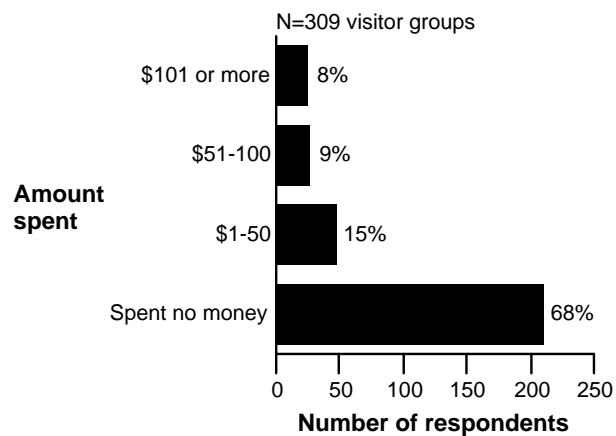


Figure 142. Expenditures for recreation, entertainment fees outside the park

All other purchases (souvenirs, film, books, sporting goods, clothing, etc.)

- 35% of visitor groups spent \$1-50 on all other purchases outside the park (see Figure 143).
- 34% spent no money.

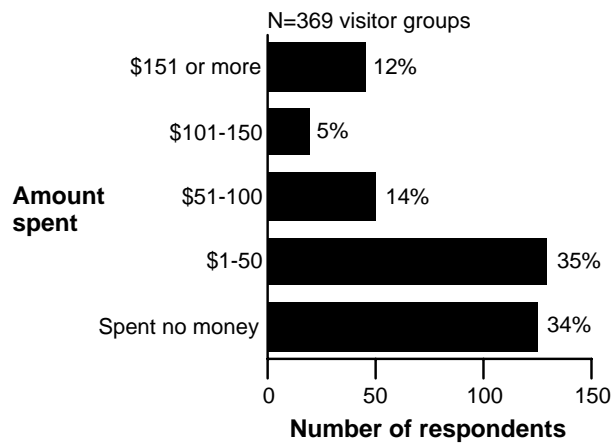


Figure 143. Expenditures for other purchases outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Donations

- 83% of visitor groups spent no money on donations outside the park (see Figure 144).
- 12% spent \$1-20.

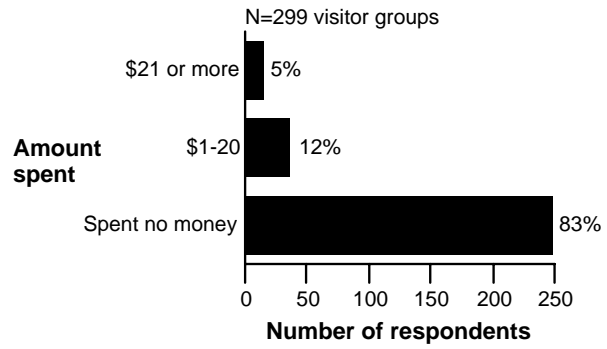


Figure 144. Expenditures for donations outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Preferences for Future Visits

Ranger programs and activities for future visits

Question 16a

If you and your personal group were to visit Wind Cave NP again in the future, in which types of ranger programs/activities would you like to participate?

Results

- 82% of visitor groups were interested in participating in ranger programs/activities on a future visit (see Figure 145).
- As shown in Figure 146, among those visitor groups that were interested in ranger programs/activities, the most common were:
 - 59% Ranger-led hikes
 - 55% Ranger talks
- “Other” programs/activities (3%) were:
 - Anything with our boys
 - Cave tour
 - Ranger-led "vehicle hike" for wildlife
 - Ranger-led horseback riding
 - Star-gazing

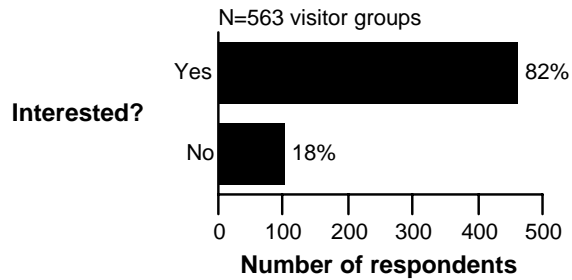


Figure 145. Visitor groups that were interested in participating in ranger programs/activities on a future visit

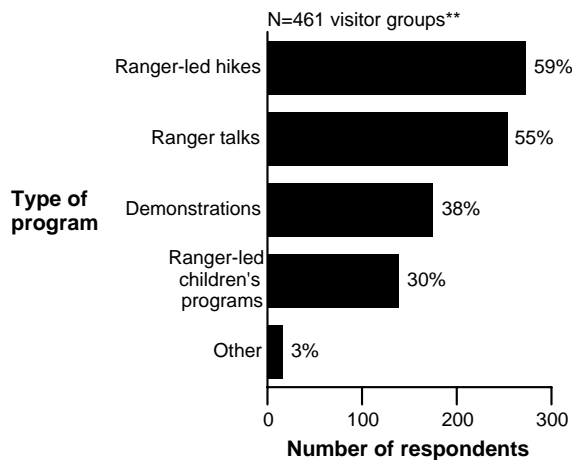


Figure 146. Preferred types of ranger programs/activity

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Preferred length of ranger programs and activities

Question 16b

Which length of ranger-led program/activity would be most suitable for you and your personal group?

Results

- 59% of visitor groups preferred a program length of 1/2 - 1 hour (see Figure 147).
- 24% preferred a program length of 1 - 2 hours.
- "Other" preferred program lengths (1%) were:
 - 1 - 2 hour hike
 - 30 minute talk
 - 3 hours
 - Any
 - Several hours

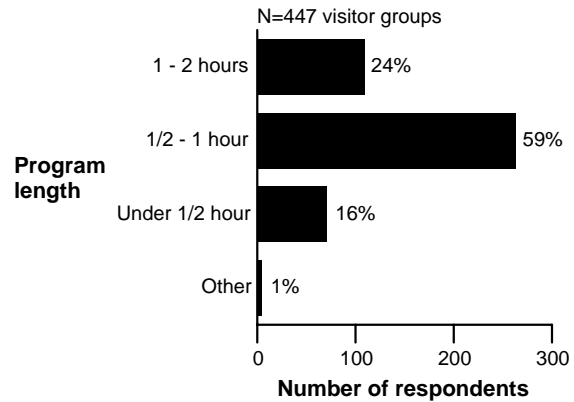


Figure 147. Preferred length of ranger program/activity

Preferred time of day for ranger programs and activities

Question 16c

Which time of day would be most suitable for you and your personal group to attend a ranger-led program/activity?

Results

- As shown in Figure 148, visitor groups' preferred time of day for ranger programs and activities were:
 - 49% 10 a.m. - Noon
 - 16% 8 a.m. - 10 a.m.
- "Other" times of day (6%) were:
 - Anytime
 - Anytime after 10 a.m.
 - Before cave tour
 - Evening
 - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
 - 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
 - 7:30 a.m. - 8 a.m. start for hike
 - 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.
 - Various

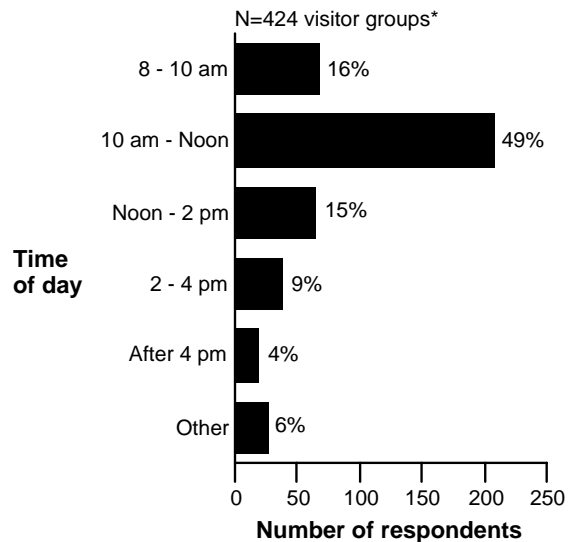


Figure 148. Preferred time of day for ranger program/activity

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Overall Quality

Question 20

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the facilities, services, and recreational opportunities provided to you and your personal group at Wind Cave NP during this visit?

Results

- 92% of visitor groups rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities as “very good” or “good” (see Figure 149).
- Less than 1% of visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

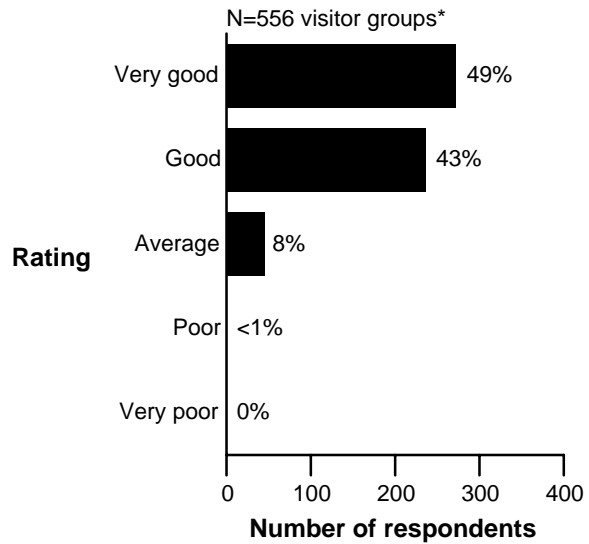


Figure 149. Overall quality rating of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Visitor Comments

What visitor groups liked most about the exhibits

Question 13e	Results
What did you and your personal group like most about the exhibits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 222 visitor groups commented on what they liked most about the exhibits. Table 18 shows a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments is included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

Table 18. What visitor groups liked most about the exhibits (N=245 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Information (unspecified)	27
History of cave	17
History	13
Timeline	11
Touch table	11
Hands-on display	10
Photographs	10
Everything	9
Examples of formations	9
Variety	7
Cave information	6
Good way to spend time before tour starts	6
Wildlife information	6
Geology of cave	5
Information (amount)	5
Many were kid-friendly	5
Cave exhibits	4
Information (quality)	4
Layout/ease of use	4
Cave descriptions	3
History of the park	3
Information (content)	3
Rock/mineral samples	3
Bison information	2
Cave diagram	2
Cave formations	2
Comprehensiveness	2
Display tools	2
Explanations of cave	2
Information (clarity)	2
Light-up cave map	2
Locked elk horns	2
Opportunities to learn	2
Actual relics	1
Animal pictures	1
Audiovisual	1
Cave quiz	1
Computer games	1
Details about Wind Cave	1

Table 18. What visitor groups liked most about the exhibits
(continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Difficulty using computer cave model	1
Ease of understanding	1
Ecology of cave	1
Entertainment value	1
Excerpts from old documents	1
Exhibit that showed where caves are located across country	1
Fact that the exhibits were there	1
Forest fire exhibit	1
Getting information for Junior Ranger program	1
Good explanations	1
Good materials	1
Good visuals	1
History of cave tourism	1
History of caving	1
Importance of prairie ecosystems	1
Information (accuracy)	1
Information (depth of)	1
Interesting facts	1
It was great for someone who had never seen deer, etc.	1
Knowing it was one of the longest caves in the world and it was in pristine condition	1
Locked horns explanation	1
New things	1
Prairie dog exhibit	1
Prairie dog exhibit was easy to understand	1
Prairie dog homes	1
Push buttons	1
Screen showing airflow at natural entrance	1
Show in cave room	1
Simple and easy to understand	1
Tactile exhibits	1
That it's self-guided	1
The cave exhibits were more interesting than the prairie exhibits	1
The cave explorer parts	1
The old book/log	1
The puzzle of the bison with the missing pieces	1
Uncrowded	1
Use of computer touch screen visuals	1
Way information was displayed	1
Windmeter	1

What visitor groups liked least about the exhibits

Question 13f	Results
What did you and your personal group like least about the exhibits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 122 visitor groups commented on what they liked least about the exhibits. • Table 19 shows a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments is included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

Table 19. What visitor groups liked least about the exhibits
(N=123 comments; one visitor group made more than one comment.)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Nothing to dislike	14
Too crowded	10
Too few exhibits	9
Lighting	7
Worn and hard to read	7
Not enough information	6
Need some general maintenance	5
Difficult to find the cave exhibit	3
Lack of cave information	3
Lack of photos/visual material	3
Long wait time	3
The type of information provided	3
Cave exhibit location	2
Couldn't find prairie exhibits	2
Exhibit size too small	2
Exhibits were bland	2
Lack of information in the prairie exhibit	2
Lack of Native American history	2
Outdated	2
"Girl running through cave" exhibit with candle wax	1
3D computer graphics	1
Amount of reading and kids' short attention span	1
Being able to touch animal bones and fur	1
Building too hot	1
Computer interactive	1
Damage done by previous visitors	1
Emphasis on the theory of evolution	1
Faded photos in prairie exhibit	1
Felt like I needed to read entire exhibit to understand individual panels	1
Films	1
Flat prairie pictures	1
Had already seen displays	1
History	1
Information was dry	1
Interactive exhibits	1
Lack of pictures of what Alvin left behind	1
Lack of time to see everything	1
Layout	1
Maps	1

Table 19. What visitor groups liked least about the exhibits
(continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
No order to follow	1
No ranger-led tour through exhibits	1
Not a clear enough explanation of boxwork	1
Not child friendly	1
Organization of cave exhibits	1
Other individuals talking too loud	1
Politically correct messages imbedded in exhibits	1
Poor quality photographs	1
Prairie exhibits had too much reading and were boring	1
Similar to what we've seen in other places	1
Small children misbehaving	1
Some video exhibits were time consuming and busy	1
The building itself	1
The cave timeline was chronological, but it was read right to left rather than left to right	1
Too many places for my kids to hide	1
Work was being done on some	1

Aspect of park's story to share**Question 21**

After visiting Wind Cave NP, what aspect of the park's story might you share with family and friends?

Results

- 77% of visitor groups (N=441) listed an aspect of the park's story to share with friends or relatives.
- Table 20 shows a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments is included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

Table 20. One aspect about park's story to share (N=628) comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Story	Number of times mentioned
Cave tour	63
Wildlife viewing opportunities	54
Boxwork formations	49
Beautiful scenery	34
Cave	33
How the cave was discovered	30
Cave size	22
Bison	21
Alvin McDonald's story	18
Little natural entrance	15
Uniqueness of Wind Cave	14
Wind in and out of cave	13
Cave formations	12
Cave history	12
Geological history of cave formation	12
Length of tunnels	12
Percent of cave still undiscovered	12
History	9
Dry cave vs. wet cave	8
Recommended visit	8
Scenic drive	8
Cave complexity	7
Beautiful prairie	6
Cave exploration	6
Excellent cave tour	6
Great hiking opportunities	6
Origin of cave name	6
4th largest cave	5
Informative/knowledgeable rangers	5
Native American stories	5
Temperature of cave (coolness)	5
Entire experience	4
The CCC involvement	4
Variety of cave tours	4
Comparison to other caves	3
Experience of the cave	3
Frostwork formations	3
Good interpretive programs	3
Great campground	3
Helpful rangers	3

Table 20. One aspect about park's story to share (continued)

Topic	Number of times mentioned
No lights on the cave tour	3
Ranger's stories on the cave tour	3
The "hat story"	3
Wildflowers	3
Will share my photos	3
Cave depth	2
Cave rank in world	2
Excellent staff	2
Friendly rangers	2
Good roads	2
How the cave was mapped	2
Information given on cave tour	2
Natural Entrance Cave Tour	2
No life in the cave	2
Park is more than just a cave	2
Passionate tour guide	2
Rangers	2
Arrive early for cave tours	1
Big Sturgis bikes from NASA	1
Call ahead for cave tour	1
Cave tour group too large	1
Cave tour worth doing	1
Combination of beautiful rolling prairie grasslands and cave	1
Dedication to preservation of national parks flora and fauna	1
Do the Junior Ranger program	1
Don't take young children	1
Ecology of the park	1
Fairgrounds cave tour	1
Fun candle light tour	1
Fun cave tour	1
Funny tour guide	1
Getting engaged at a scenic overlook on NPS 5	1
Good price	1
Great exhibits	1
Great people	1
History of the park	1
Homesteader history	1
Importance of prairie	1
Interesting facts about prairie life	1
Interesting for the whole family	1
Interesting park	1
Lack of surface entrances	1
Nature is irreplaceable and precious	1
Number of rooms in cave	1
Our guide's name	1
Pigtail Bridge	1

Table 20. One aspect about park's story to share (continued)

Topic	Number of times mentioned
Pleasant pull-offs	1
Popcorn formations	1
Quiet	1
Ranger had good attitude	1
Rangers were rude	1
Share Wind Cave book	1
Staff not helpful with questions	1
Storm	1
Take your jackets	1
That it is less crowded and less commercialized than much of Black Hills	1
The hole that they originally went down	1
The lard can used to carry the candle	1
Wait time and difficulty of cave tour	1
Watch the movie	1

Additional comments

Question 30

Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Wind Cave NP? (open-ended)

Results

- 44% of visitor groups (N=253) responded to this question.
- Table 21 shows a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments is included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

Table 21. Additional comments

(N=401 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL (20%)	
Great rangers	36
Knowledgeable/informative rangers	11
Skilled interpreters	10
Helpful rangers	9
Courteous rangers	3
Enjoyed talking to person who gave out survey	3
Rangers were entertaining/funny	3
Tour guide not personable/not lively	3
Friendly rangers	2
Rangers excited/enthusiastic/passionate	2
Recommend hiring seasonals full time	2
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (15%)	
Enjoyed cave tour	12
Need to schedule more cave tours	6
Need slower paced cave tour	4
Learned a lot	3
Advertise campgrounds and what is available	2
Advertise that you can't go in lookout tower at beginning of trail	2
Create cave tour just for adults	2
Emphasize shoes/warm clothing in advertising	2
Enjoyed evening programs	2
Loved candlelight tour	2
Loved Junior Ranger program	2
Need more information about Native Americans	2
Rangers need to say "millions of years ago" is just a theory	2
Too many people on cave tour	2
Other comments	17

Table 21. Additional comments (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (9%)	
Not enough parking	6
Well-maintained/clean park	6
Good accessibility for elderly	2
Install showers	2
Need more picnic tables	2
Need shaded areas in parking lot for pets	2
Other comments	16
POLICIES/MANAGEMENT (10%)	
Survey too long	7
Keep prices low	6
Need restaurant/food vendor	5
Keep it wild/natural	2
Park very crowded	2
Survey asks too much personal information	2
Survey not appropriate for length of stay in park	2
Thank you for doing survey	2
Other comments	12
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (<1%)	
Comment	1
GENERAL COMMENTS (45%)	
Enjoyed visit	51
Thank you	20
Will return	20
Love the park	11
Beautiful scenery	10
Wish we had more time to spend in park	8
Keep up the good work	6
Impressive cave	5
Repeat visitor	5
Enjoyed seeing wildlife	4
Great experience for kids	4
Great family experience	3
Park was a pleasant surprise	3
Enjoyed seeing the prairie	2
Love National Parks	2
Scenic drive	2
Other comments	19

Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Additional Analysis

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn more from VSP visitor study data through additional analysis. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made with any questions.

Below are some examples of the types of cross tabulations that can be requested. To make a request, please use the contact information below, and include your name, address and phone number in the request.

1. What proportion of family groups with children attend interpretive programs?
2. Is there a correlation between visitors' ages and their preferred sources of information about the park?
3. Are highly satisfied visitors more likely to return for a future visit?
4. How many international visitors participate in hiking?
5. What ages of visitors would use the park website as a source of information on a future visit?
6. Is there a correlation between visitor groups' rating of the overall quality of their park experience, and their ratings of individual services and facilities?
7. Do larger visitor groups (e.g., four or more) participate in different activities than smaller groups?
8. Do frequent visitors rate the overall quality of their park experiences differently than less frequent visitors?

For more information please contact:

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College of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 441139
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Phone: 208-885-7863

Fax: 208-885-4261

Email: littlej@uidaho.edu

Website: <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>

Appendix 3: Decision Rules for Checking Non-response Bias

Non-response bias is one of the major threats to the quality of a survey project. It affects the ability to generalize from a sample to the general population (Salant and Dillman 1994; Dillman, 2007; Stoop 2004; Filion 1976; Dey 1997). Since non-response bias is usually caused by participants failing to return their questionnaires, a higher response rate is more desirable. However, higher response rates do not guarantee low non-response bias. Researchers have suggested different methods to detect non-response bias. The most common variables used to detect non-response bias are demographic variables. Some researchers such as Van Kenhove (2002) and Groves (2000) also suggest that saliency of topic has an effect on response rate. In this visitor study, visitor satisfaction (overall quality rating) could be considered as one of the salient factors as we aim to collect opinions from both unsatisfied and satisfied visitors. There are also several methods for checking non-response bias suggested in the literature. We decided to follow the method suggested by Groves (2006), De Rada (2005), and Rogelberg and Luong (1998) to compare the demographic characteristics as well as satisfaction scores of respondents in three different mailing waves. This seems to be the most suitable method because the visitor population is generally unknown.

Respondents and nonrespondents were compared using age and group size. Independent sample T-test was used to test the difference between respondents and nonrespondents. Respondents were then categorized based on the date their questionnaire was received. The first wave is defined as surveys received before the postcards was mailed, the second wave is between postcard and 1st replacement, and the third wave contains surveys received after the 1st replacement. A Chi-square test was used to detect the difference in education levels at different mailing waves and an ANOVA was used to test the difference in overall rating score. The hypothesis was that group types are equally represented. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference in group type is judged to be insignificant.

Therefore, the hypotheses for checking non-response bias are:

1. There was no significant difference between respondents' and nonrespondents' average age.
2. There was no significant difference between respondents' and nonrespondents' average group size.
3. Levels of education are not significantly different among early and late responders.
4. Overall quality ratings are not significantly different among early and late responders

Tables 3 and 4 show no significant difference in group size, overall quality rating, and level of education. However, there was a significant difference in average age between respondents and nonrespondents. Sometimes, a younger person in the group accepted the questionnaire but an older person in the group actually completed it. This may cause discrepancy in age. While it is necessary to exercise some caution in interpreting visitor demographic, there is no evidence of potential bias in visitors' opinions about park operations.

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- Van Kenhove, P., Wijnen, K., and De Wulf K. (2002). The Influence of Topic Involvement on Mail-Survey Response Behavior. *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol 19 (3): 293-301.

Appendix 4: Visitor Services Project Publications

All VSP reports are available on the Park Studies Unit website at www.psu.uidaho.edu.vsp.reports.htm. All studies were conducted in summer unless otherwise noted.

1982

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park.

1983

2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method.
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial.
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park.

1985

5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

1986

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence National Historical Park
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park

1987

10. Colonial National Historical Park (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park (summer & fall)
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study

1988

17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
19. Bryce Canyon National Park
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument

1989

21. Everglades National Park (winter)
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument
23. The White House Tours, President's Park

1989 (continued)

24. Lincoln Home National Historic Site
25. Yellowstone National Park
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
27. Muir Woods National Monument

1990

28. Canyonlands National Park (spring)
29. White Sands National Monument
30. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park
32. Gateway National Recreation Area
33. Petersburg National Battlefield
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

1991

38. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park (spring)
39. Joshua Tree National Monument (spring)
40. The White House Tours, President's Park (spring)
41. Natchez Trace Parkway (spring)
42. Stehekin-North Cascades NP/Lake Chelan NRA
43. City of Rocks National Reserve
44. The White House Tours, President's Park (fall)

1992

45. Big Bend National Park (spring)
46. Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (spring)
47. Glen Echo Park (spring)
48. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
49. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
50. Zion National Park
51. New River Gorge National River
52. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
53. Arlington House-The Robert E. Lee Memorial

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**1993**

- 54. Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Park (spring)
- 55. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (spring)
- 56. Whitman Mission National Historic Site
- 57. Sitka National Historical Park
- 58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- 59. Redwood National Park
- 60. Channel Islands National Park
- 61. Pecos National Historical Park
- 62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
- 63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)

1994

- 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)
- 65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (spring)
- 66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center
- 67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts
- 68. Nez Perce National Historical Park
- 69. Edison National Historic Site
- 70. San Juan Island National Historical Park
- 71. Canaveral National Seashore
- 72. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (fall)
- 73. Gettysburg National Military Park (fall)

1995

- 74. Grand Teton National Park (winter)
- 75. Yellowstone National Park (winter)
- 76. Bandelier National Monument
- 77. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
- 78. Adams National Historic Site
- 79. Devils Tower National Monument
- 80. Manassas National Battlefield Park
- 81. Booker T. Washington National Monument
- 82. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
- 83. Dry Tortugas National Park

1996

- 84. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 85. Chiricahua National Monument (spring)

1996 (continued)

- 86. Fort Bowie National Historic Site (spring)
- 87. Great Falls Park, Virginia (spring)
- 88. Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- 89. Chamizal National Memorial
- 90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)
- 92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (fall)

1997

- 93. Virgin Islands National Park (winter)
- 94. Mojave National Preserve (spring)
- 95. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site (spring)
- 96. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial
- 97. Grand Teton National Park
- 98. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 99. Voyageurs National Park
- 100. Lowell National Historical Park

1998

- 101. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Park (spring)
- 102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)
- 103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)
- 104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials
- 105. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
- 106. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
- 107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area
- 108. Acadia National Park

1999

- 109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)
- 110. San Juan National Historic Site, Puerto Rico (winter)
- 111. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- 112. Rock Creek Park
- 113. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- 114. Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
- 115. Kenai Fjords National Park (fall)
- 116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
- 117. Cumberland Gap National Historical Park

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**2000**

- 118. Haleakala National Park (spring)
- 119. White House Tour and White House Visitor Center (spring)
- 120. USS Arizona Memorial
- 121. Olympic National Park
- 122. Eisenhower National Historic Site
- 123. Badlands National Park
- 124. Mount Rainier National Park

2001

- 125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
- 126. Colonial National Historical Park (Jamestown)
- 127. Shenandoah National Park
- 128. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- 129. Crater Lake National Park
- 130. Valley Forge National Historical Park

2002

- 131. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 132. Dry Tortugas National Park (spring)
- 133. Pinnacles National Monument (spring)
- 134. Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve
- 135. Pipestone National Monument
- 136. Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Ft. Raleigh National Historic Site, and Wright Brothers National Memorial)
- 137. Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia National Forest
- 138. Catoclin Mountain Park
- 139. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
- 140. Stones River National Battlefield (fall)

2003

- 141. Gateway National Recreation Area: Floyd Bennett Field (spring)
- 142. Cowpens National Battlefield (spring)
- 143. Grand Canyon National Park – North Rim
- 144. Grand Canyon National Park – South Rim
- 145. C&O Canal National Historical Park
- 146. Capulin Volcano National Monument
- 147. Oregon Caves National Monument
- 148. Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site
- 149. Fort Stanwix National Monument
- 150. Arches National Park

2003 continued

- 151. Mojave National Preserve (fall)

2004

- 152. Joshua Tree National Park (spring)
- 153. New River Gorge National River
- 154. George Washington Birthplace National Monument
- 155. Craters of the Moon National Monument & Preserve
- 156. Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park
- 157. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
- 158. Keweenaw National Historical Park
- 159. Effigy Mounds National Monument
- 160. Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
- 161. Manzanar National Historic Site
- 162. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

2005

- 163. Congaree National Park (spring)
- 164. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (spring)
- 165. Lincoln Home National Historic Site
- 166. Chickasaw National Recreation Area
- 167. Timpanogos Cave National Monument
- 168. Yosemite National Park
- 169. Fort Sumter National Monument
- 170. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
- 171. Cuyahoga Valley National Park
- 172. Johnstown Flood National Memorial
- 173. Nicodemus National Historic Site

2006

- 174. Kings Mountain National Military Park (spring)
- 175. John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
- 176. Devils Postpile National Monument
- 177. Mammoth Cave National Park
- 178. Yellowstone National Park
- 179. Monocacy National Battlefield
- 180. Denali National Park & Preserve
- 181. Golden Spike National Historic Site
- 182. Katmai National Park and Preserve
- 183. Zion National Park (spring and fall)

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**2007**

- 184.1. Big Cypress National Preserve (spring)
- 184.2. Big Cypress National Preserve (ORV Permit Holder/Camp Owner)
- 185. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (spring)
- 186. Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (spring and summer)
- 187. Lava Beds National Monument
- 188. John Muir National Historic Site
- 189. Fort Union Trading Post NHS
- 190. Fort Donelson National Battlefield
- 191. Agate Fossil Beds National Monument
- 192. Mount Rushmore National Memorial
- 193. Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve
- 194. Rainbow Bridge National Monument
- 195. Independence National Historical Park
- 196. Minute Man National Historical Park

2008

- 197. Blue Ridge Parkway (fall and summer)
- 198. Yosemite National Park (winter)
- 199. Everglades National Park (winter and spring)
- 200. Horseshoe Bend National Military Park (spring)
- 201. Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (spring)
- 202. Fire Island National Seashore resident (spring)
- 203. Fire Island National Seashore visitor
- 204. Capitol Reef National Park
- 205.1 Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer)
- 205.2 Great Smoky Mountains National Park (fall)
- 206. Grand Teton National Park
- 207. Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
- 208. City of Rocks National Reserve

2009

- 209. Fort Larned National Historic Site
- 210. Homestead National Monument of America
- 211. Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

2009 (continued)

- 212. Perry's Victory & International Peace Memorial
- 213. Women's Rights National Historical Park
- 214. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park Unit -Seattle
- 215. Yosemite National Park
- 216. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
- 217. James A. Garfield National Historic Site
- 218. Boston National Historical Park
- 219. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 220. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- 221. Acadia National Park
- 222. Laurance S. Rockefeller Preserve
- 223. Martin Van Buren National Historic Site

2010

- 224.1 Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 224.2 Death Valley National Park (spring)
- 225. San Juan National Historic Site (spring)
- 226. Ninety Six National Historic Site (spring)
- 227. Kalaupapa National Historical Park
- 228. Little River Canyon National Preserve
- 229. George Washington Carver National Monument
- 230. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area
- 231. Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park
- 232. Fort Union National Monument
- 233. Curecanti National Recreation Area
- 234. Richmond National Battlefield
- 235. Rocky Mountain National Park
- 236. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- 237. Wind Cave National Park

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

Visitor Comments Appendix

This section contains complete visitor comments for open-ended questions and is bound separately from this report due to its size.

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its special responsibilities to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated Island Communities.

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/SSD/NRR—2011/108/106477, February 2011

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U.S. Department of the Interior**



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