

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>