

## Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic, random sample of Fort Scott National Historic Site (NHS) visitors during July 15 – August 23, 2011. A total of 341 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 248 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 72.7% response rate.

<b>Group size and type</b>	Forty-six percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while 30% consisted of four or more people. Seventy-four percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.
<b>State or country of residence</b>	United States visitors were from 33 states and comprised 99% of total visitation during the survey period, with 34% from Kansas. International visitors were too few in number to provide reliable information.
<b>Frequency of visits</b>	Seventy-five percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time, while 17% had visited two or three times.
<b>Age, gender, ethnicity, and race</b>	Forty percent of visitors were ages 55 to 70 years old, 21% were 15 years or younger, 18% were 36 to 50 years old, and 9% were 71 years or older. Fifty-one percent of respondents were male; 49% were female. Two percent of visitors were Hispanic or Latino. Most visitors (95%) were White.
<b>Educational level and income level</b>	Thirty percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 28% had a bachelor's degree. Twenty-seven percent of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000-\$74,000.
<b>Physical conditions</b>	Nine percent of visitor groups had members with physical conditions affecting their ability to access or participate in activities or services.
<b>Awareness of park management</b>	Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups were aware that Fort Scott NHS is a unit of the National Park System.
<b>Information sources</b>	Most visitor groups (77%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit through friends/relatives/word of mouth (35%), maps/brochures (35%), and the park website (34%). Most visitor groups (95%) received the information they needed. Sixty-eight percent of visitor groups preferred to use the park website to obtain information for a future visit.
<b>Park as destination</b>	For 41% of visitor groups, the park was not a planned destination, while for 30%, the park was the primary destination.
<b>Primary reason for visiting the area</b>	Three percent of visitor groups were residents of Fort Scott, KS. The most common primary reasons for visiting the park area among non-resident visitor groups were to visit the park (42%) and traveling through – unplanned visit (31%).
<b>Services used in nearby communities</b>	Fifty-four percent of visitor groups obtained support services in nearby communities. The communities most often used included Fort Scott, KS (66%), Pittsburg, KS (19%), and Nevada, MO (16%). Ninety-six percent of visitor groups were able to obtain needed support services in nearby communities.
<b>Overnight stays</b>	Eighteen percent of visitor groups stayed overnight in Fort Scott, KS, of which 60% stayed one night, while 24% stayed two nights. Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups stayed in lodges, hotels, motels, vacation rentals, B&Bs, etc.

## Executive Summary (continued)

<b>Length of stay</b>	The average length of stay for visitor groups was 1.6 hours. Two percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day.
<b>Local and regional attractions</b>	Sixty-three percent of visitor groups visited local and regional attractions. The most commonly visited attractions were downtown Fort Scott (63%), Fort Scott National Cemetery (26%), and Mine Creek Battlefield (19%).
<b>Activities on this visit</b>	The most common activities of visitor groups were general sightseeing (85%), viewing indoor exhibits and furnished rooms (83%), and viewing outdoor exhibits and buildings (82%).
<b>Talks, programs, and tours</b>	Eight-two percent of visitor groups took the self-guided brochure tour and (8%) took the cell phone tour. Twenty-six percent of visitor groups attended a ranger or volunteer-led talk, program, or tour on this visit. Of those, 43% took a guided tour and 39% attended a talk. Fifty-six percent of visitor groups preferred a program length of 1/2 to 1 hour.
<b>Information services and facilities</b>	The information services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were the indoor exhibits (86%), park brochure/map (79%), restrooms (78%), and visitor center – Post Hospital (75%).
<b>Quality of interaction with park staff</b>	Most visitor groups (94%) had personal interactions with park staff on this visit. The combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings of the quality of interaction with park staff were courteousness (98%), quality of information provided (98%), and helpfulness (97%).
<b>Expenditures</b>	The average visitor group expenditure (inside the park and in Fort Scott, KS) was \$75. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$25, and the average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$35.
<b>Future visits to the park</b>	Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups indicated they would likely visit the park in the future, while 21% were not sure if they would. Ninety-five percent of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park’s cultural and natural history/features on a future visit through a self-guided tour with brochure (67%), indoor exhibits (61%), and outdoor exhibits (60%).
<b>Overall quality</b>	Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Fort Scott NHS as “very good” or “good”. No visitor groups rated the quality as “poor,” while 1% rated the quality as “very 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>.