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## Visitor Services Project San Juan Island National Historical Park

### Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at San Juan Island National Historical Park during August 10-16, 1994. A total of 518 questionnaires were distributed and 406 returned, a 78% response rate.
- This report profiles San Juan Island National Historical Park visitors. A separate appendix has visitors' comments about their visit; this report and the appendix contain a comment summary.
- Visitors were often in family groups (64%). Groups often consisted of two people (35%) or three to four people (38%). The most common visitor ages were 36-50 years old (37%) and 15 years or younger (21%). Most (68%) were first-time visitors to the park. International visitors comprised 6% of all visitors. International visitors were often from Canada (55%) and the United Kingdom (12%). United States visitors came from Washington (49%), California (13%) and Oregon (9%) and 37 other states.
- Common activities for visitors were sightseeing (94%), walking/hiking on trails (78%), taking photographs (70%) and viewing wildlife (45%). The most visited sites in the park were the historical camp at English Camp (72%), the American Camp Visitor Center (57%), the historical camp at American Camp (50%) and the Redoubt/earthen fort (40%). One-fourth of the visitors (25%) went to the Friday Harbor Visitor Center before visiting the other park sites.
- Just over half of the visitors (51%) said they were aware of the existence of the park. Most visitors learned about the park from maps/brochures (32%), travel guides (25%), friends and relatives (24%) and several other sources.
- Most visitors (87%) used the ferry to get to San Juan Island. To get to the park, most visitors (65%) used a private vehicle, followed by rental cars/vans (16%).
- The park was not the primary destination for 80% of the visitors. Visitors said their reasons for visiting were to view scenery (87%) and learn about history (64%).
- The most used interpretive services were the historical buildings/features (86%), visitor centers (72%), and outdoor exhibits (71%).
- Twelve percent of the visitors live on San Juan Island either year round or part of the year.
- Over one-third of the visitors (38%) estimated their total expenditures during this visit as up to \$100. Twenty percent said they spent \$251 or more. The average visitor group expenditure during the visit was \$169; the average per capita expenditure was \$51.
- The subjects visitors would most like to learn about in the future are natural history (68%), Native American inhabitants (64%) and the history of early settlers (63%). The most preferred methods of learning the cultural and natural history in the future are trailside exhibits (63%) and visitor center exhibits (62%).
- Visitors made many additional comments.

<p>For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact Dr. Gary E. Machlis, Sociology Project Leader, University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, Moscow, Idaho 83844-1133 or call (208) 885-7129.</p>
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