



Missouri National Recreational River Visitor Study

Summer 2012

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRSS/EQD/NRR—2013/645



ON THE COVER

Missouri River Cleanup at Yankton, SD
Photograph courtesy of NPS staff

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Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Missouri National Recreation River visitors during July 19 - 25, 2012. A total of 467 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 256 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 54.8% response rate.

Group size and type	Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups consisted of two or three people and 35% were in groups of six or more. Sixty-four percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.
State or country of residence	United States visitors were from 29 states and comprised 99% of total visitation during the survey period, with 43% from Nebraska, and 34% from South Dakota. International visitors were from five countries and comprised 1% of total visitation during the survey period.
Frequency of visits	Thirty-four percent of visitors visit the park about once a year, 28% visited for the first time, and 22% visit several times a year.
Age, ethnicity, race, and preferred language	Thirty-three percent of visitors were ages 46-65 years, 20% were 31-45 years old, 21% were ages 15 years or younger, and 13% were 66 years or older. Two percent were Hispanic or Latino. Ninety-six percent of visitors were White and 2% were American Indian or Alaska Native. Eighty-six percent of visitor groups preferred English for speaking and 88% preferred English for reading.
Educational level and income level	Thirty-one percent of respondents had completed a bachelor's degree, 24% had a graduate degree, and 24% had some college. Twenty-two percent of respondents had an income level of \$50,000-\$74,999 and 16% had an income of \$75,000-\$99,999.
Awareness of park prior to visit	Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups were aware that a recreational area called Missouri National Recreational River existed. Seventy-eight percent were aware that the park is a unit of the National Park Service. Sixty percent were aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Systems.
Information sources	Many visitor groups (71%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit through friends/relatives/word of mouth (57%) and previous visits (49%). Most visitors groups (97%) received the information they needed. Forty-six percent of visitor groups prefer to use the park website to obtain information for a future visit.
Park as destination	For 68% of visitor groups, the park was the primary destination, and for 20%, the park was one of several destinations.
Services used in nearby communities	Seventy-eight percent of visitor groups obtained support services in nearby communities. The community most often used to obtain support services was Yankton, SD (71%).
Length of stay	Of the visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours in the park, the average length of stay was 3.5 hours. Of the visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more, the average length of stay was 6.3 days. The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 63.3 hours, or 2.6 days.

Executive Summary (continued)

Locations visited in the 39 and 59-mile districts	The most commonly visited locations in the park were Lewis & Clark Visitor Center (42%), Riverside Park (27%), Ponca State Park (25%), and Chief White Crane Campground (20%).
Expected activities on this visit	The most common expected activities on this visit were enjoying natural quiet (65%), swimming/playing in the water (50%), and hiking (49%).
Activities on this visit	The most common activities were enjoying natural quiet (72%), swimming/playing in the water (49%), and viewing wildlife/birds (49%). The activity that was most important to visitor groups was camping (23%). Most visitor groups (84%) were able to do the activities they wanted to do. The most common reasons that prevented visitor groups from participating in activities were weather conditions (43%) and time constraints (35%). Three percent of visitor groups had difficulty accessing or participating in park activities or services.
Protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences	The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes and resources included clean air/visibility (91%), clear water (87%), and scenic views and natural landscapes (87%).
Extended programs on a future visit	Thirty-two percent of visitor groups were interested in attending extended programs on a future visit. The most common extended programs visitors were interested in attending were workshops/seminars/Park Institute programs (73%), citizen science programs (55%), and volunteer activities (53%).
Ranger-led programs on a future visit	Sixty-one percent of visitor groups were interested in attending ranger-led programs on a future visit. The most common ranger-led programs visitors would be interested in attending were stargazing/astronomy programs (50%), ranger-led outdoor hikes/walks/ talks (50%), and cultural demonstrations & story telling (48%). Sixty-one percent of visitor groups would like to be informed about the availability and schedule of ranger programs through the park website.
Preferred topics to learn on a future visit	Seventy-four percent of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park. The most common topics were birds and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, etc. (72%), early exploration, trade, and settlement along the Missouri River (64%), variety of recreational opportunities and activities available (46%), and Native American cultures of the area – current and past. (46%).
Overall quality	Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Missouri National Recreational River as “very good” or “good.” Less than 1% of groups rated the overall quality as “poor,” and no visitor groups rated the overall 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) 885-2585 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>.

Acknowledgements

We thank Ally Begly and Marc Manni for compiling the report, Margaret Littlejohn for overseeing the fieldwork, Pixie Siebe, Aaron Zillinger, and the staff and volunteers of Missouri National Recreational River for assisting with the survey, and David Vollmer and Matthew Strawn for data processing.

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Introduction

This report describes the results of a visitor study at Missouri National Recreational River in Yankton, SD conducted July 19 - 25, 2012 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Park Studies Unit (PSU) at the University of Idaho.

As described in the National Park Service website for Missouri National Recreational River, “Imagine a 100-mile stretch of the nation’s longest river representing a vestige of the untamed west. The Missouri National Recreational River is where imagination meets reality. Two free flowing stretches of the Missouri make up the National Recreational River. Relive the past by making an exploration of the wild, untamed and mighty river that continues to flow as nature intended.” (www.nps.gov/mnrr, retrieved January 2013).

Organization of the Report

This 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 a summary 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 a 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.

Presentation of the Results

Results are represented in the form of graphs (see Example 1), scatter plots, pie charts, tables, and text.

Key

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 the total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

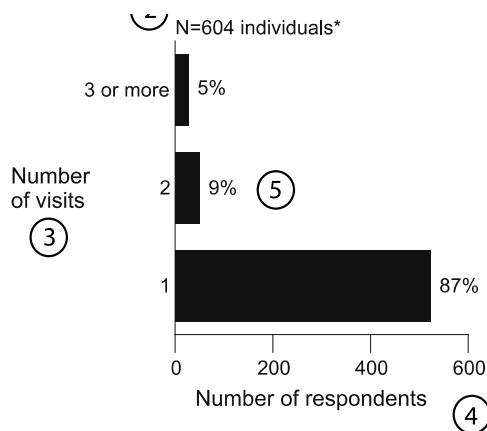
** appears when total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer choice.

3. Vertical information describes the response categories.

4. Horizontal information shows the number or proportion of responses in each category.

5. In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

Example 1



Methods

Survey Design and Procedures

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 method, 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 11 sites during July 19 - 25, 2012. Visitors were surveyed between the hours of 7 a.m. and 9 p.m. Table 1 shows the locations, number of questionnaires distributed at each location, and the response rate for each location. During this survey, 512 visitor groups were contacted and 467 of these groups (91.2%) accepted questionnaires. (The average acceptance rate for 277 VSP visitor studies conducted from 1988 through 2012 is 91.3%.) Questionnaires were completed and returned by 256 respondents, resulting in a 54.8% response rate for this study. (The average response rate for the 277 VSP visitor studies is 71.6%.)

Table 1. Questionnaire distribution

Sampling site	Distributed*		Returned		Returned % of total
	N	%	N	% by site	
Bubble Boat Ramp	38	8	21	55	8
Chief White Crane Campground	30	6	20	67	8
Clay County Park Boat Ramp	14	3	11	79	4
Fort Randall Creek Boat Ramp/ Campground	17	4	11	65	4
Lewis & Clark Visitor Center	136	29	81	60	32
Mulberry Bend Overlook	2	<1	1	50	<1
Niobrara State Park Campground	14	3	9	65	4
Ponca State Park	97	21	51	53	20
Verdel Boat Ramp	10	2	5	50	2
Yankton Riverside Park	109	23	46	42	18
Total	467	99%	256	--	100+%*

*percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Questionnaire design

The Missouri National Recreational River questionnaire was developed at a workshop held with park staff to design and prioritize questions. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks while others were customized for Missouri National Recreation River. Many questions ask respondents to choose answers from a list of responses, often with an open-ended option, while others are completely open-ended.

No pilot study was conducted to test the Missouri National Recreational River questionnaire. However, all questions followed Office 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, the age of the member completing the questionnaire, and how this visit to the park fit into their group's travel plans. These individuals were asked their names, addresses, and telephone numbers or email addresses in order to mail them a reminder/thank-you postcard and follow-ups. Participants were asked to complete the survey after their visit, and return it using the Business Reply Mail envelope provided.

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 participants who had not returned their questionnaires. Fourteen weeks after the survey, a third round of replacement questionnaires was mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires.

Table 2. Follow-up mailing distribution

Mailing	Date	U.S.	International	Total
Postcards	August 9, 2012	443	3	446
1 st replacement	August 23, 2012	296	1	297
2 nd replacement	September 13, 2012	244	0	244
3 rd replacement	November 2, 2012	199	0	199

Data analysis

Returned questionnaires were coded and the 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; 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

As with 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 their 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 at the selected sites during the study period of July 19 - 25, 2012. 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. When 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 largely sunny and hot, with multiple survey days recording temperatures in excess of 100 degrees. There were also several days during the survey that were overcast with more moderate temperatures. No special events occurred in the area that would have affected the type and amount of visitation to the park.

Checking non-response bias

Five variables were used to check non-response bias: participant age, group size, group type, park as destination, and participant travel distance to the park. Respondents and non-respondents were different in term of average age, group size, and travel distance to park. Respondents and non-respondents were not significantly different in reason for visiting the area and group type (see Tables 3 - 6). Visitors at lower age ranges (40 years old and younger), visitors traveling with smaller group sizes (4 people or less), and visitors who live in the area within a 50-mile radius of Yankton may be underrepresented in the study results. See Appendix 3 for more details on the non-response bias checking procedures.

Table 3. Comparison of respondents and non-respondents by average age and group size

Variable	Respondents	Non-respondents	p-value (t-test)
Age (years)	52.18 (N=252)	43.80 (N=197)	<0.001
Group size	7.46 (N=250)	4.27 (N=200)	<0.001

Table 4. Comparison of respondents and non-respondents by group type

Group type	Respondents	Non-respondents	p-value (chi-square)
Alone	29 (12%)	26 (13%)	0.957
Family	159 (64%)	127 (61%)	
Friends	31 (12%)	28 (14%)	
Family and friends	30 (12%)	26 (13%)	
Other	29 (12%)	26 (13%)	

Table 5. Comparison of respondents and non-respondents by primary destination

Destination	Respondents	Non-respondents	p-value (chi-square)
Park as primary destination	163 (66%)	147 (70%)	0.109
Park as one of several destinations	56 (23%)	33 (16%)	
Unplanned visit	26 (11%)	30 (14%)	

Table 6. Comparison of respondents and non-respondents by primary destination

Destination	Respondents	Non-respondents	p-value (chi-square)
Within 50 miles	78 (31%)	91 (44%)	0.35
51-100 miles	57 (23%)	45 (22%)	
101-200 miles	66 (27%)	40 (20%)	
201 miles or more	47 (20%)	27 (13%)	
International visitors	1 (<1%)	2 (1%)	

Results

Group and Visitor Characteristics

Visitor group size

Question 15b

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

Results

- 38% of visitor groups consisted of two or three people (see Figure 1).
- 35% were in groups of six or more.
- 19% were in groups of four or five.

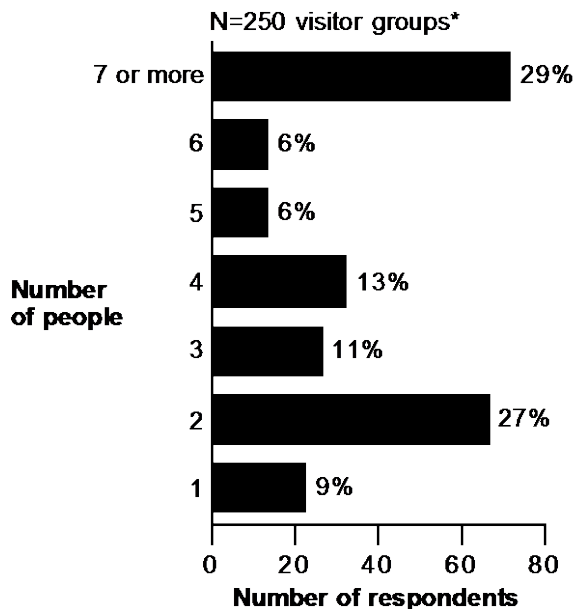


Figure 1. Visitor group size

Visitor group type

Question 15a

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

Results

- 64% of visitor groups consisted of family members (see Figure 2).

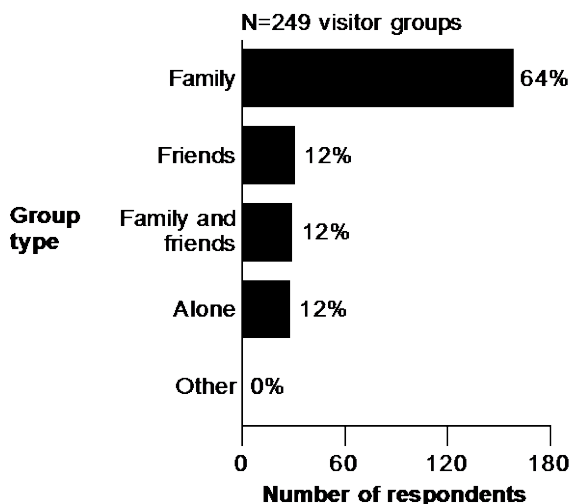


Figure 2. Visitor group type

*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 14a

On this visit, was your personal group with a commercial guided tour group?

Results

- Less than one percent of visitor groups were with a commercial guided tour group (see Figure 3).

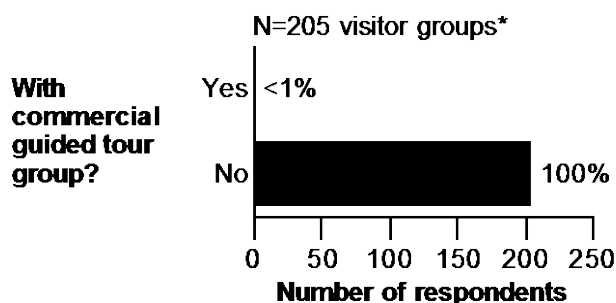


Figure 3. Visitors with a commercial guided tour group

Question 14b

On this visit, was your personal group with a school/educational group?

Results

- No visitor groups were with a school/educational group (see Figure 4).

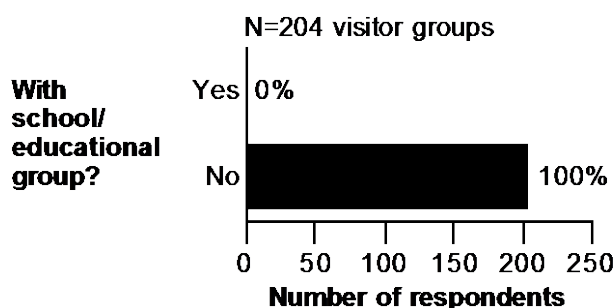


Figure 4. Visitors with a school/educational group

Question 14c

On this visit, was your personal group with an “other” organized group (scouts, work, church, etc.)?

Results

- 3% of visitor groups were with an “other” organized group (see Figure 5).

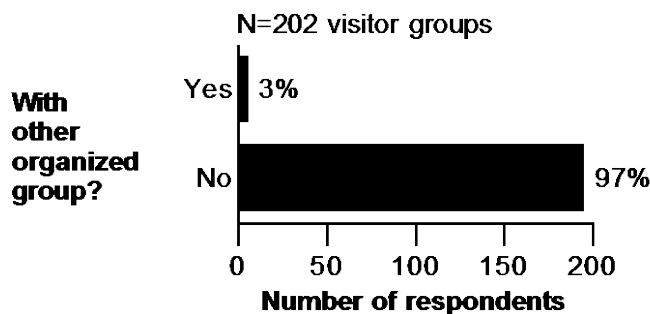


Figure 5. Visitors with an “other” organized group

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 14d

If you were with one of these organized groups, how many people, including yourself, were in this group?

Results – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 6).

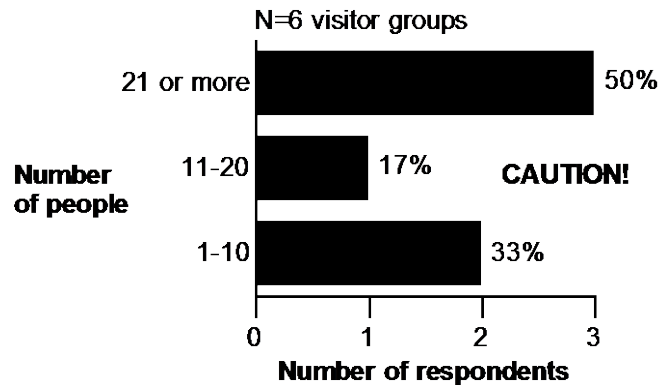


Figure 6. Organized group size

*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 18b

For 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 29 states and comprised 99% of total visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 43% of U.S. visitors came from Nebraska (see Table 7 and Figure 7).
- 34% came from South Dakota.
- Smaller proportions came from 27 other states.

Table 7. United States visitors by state of residence

State	Number of visitors	Percent of U.S. visitors N=704 individuals*	Percent of total visitors N=713 individuals
Nebraska	300	43	42
South Dakota	239	34	34
Iowa	40	6	6
Minnesota	25	4	4
Kansas	16	2	2
California	11	2	2
Missouri	9	1	1
Arizona	7	1	1
New York	5	1	1
Pennsylvania	5	1	1
Texas	5	1	1
Illinois	4	1	1
Oklahoma	4	1	1
Washington	4	1	1
West Virginia	4	1	1
14 other states	26	4	4

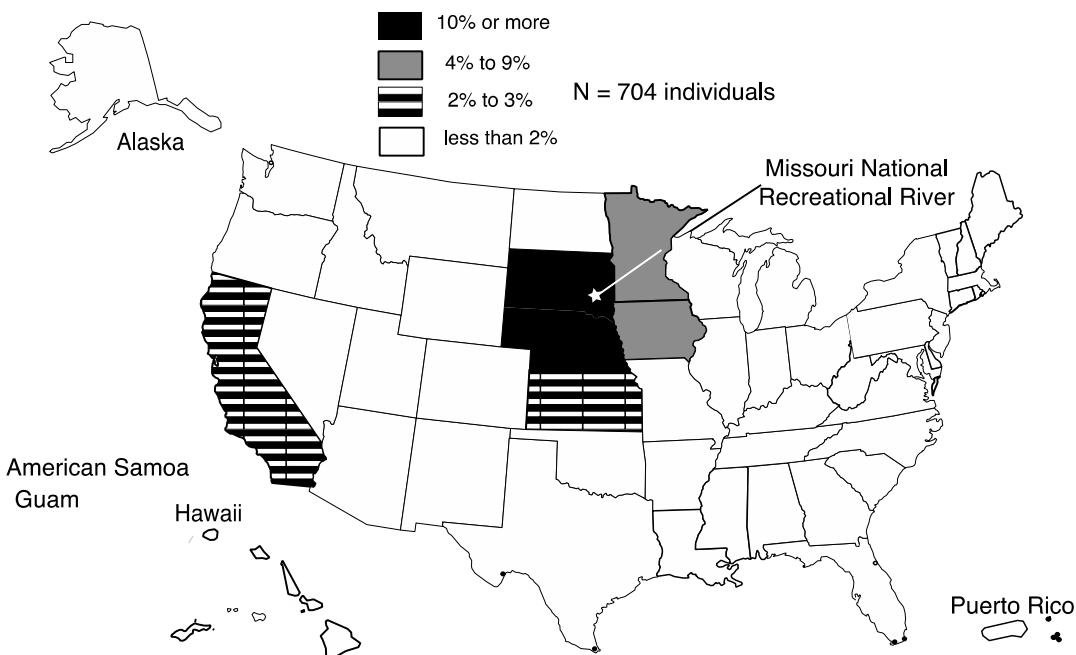


Figure 7. United States visitors by state of residence

*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

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

Table 8. Visitors from South Dakota and adjacent states by county of residence

Results

- Visitors from South Dakota and adjacent states were from 55 counties and comprised 82% of the total U.S. visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 15% came from Douglas County, NE (see Table 8).
- 12% Came from Yankton County, SD.
- 9% came from Minnehaha County, SD.
- Small proportions of visitors came from 52 other counties in South Dakota and adjacent states.

County, State	Number of visitors N=579 individuals	Percent*
Douglas, NE	89	15
Yankton, SD	68	12
Minnehaha, SD	53	9
Clay, SD	35	6
Platte, NE	29	5
Union, SD	26	4
Cedar, NE	24	4
Lancaster, NE	21	4
Lincoln, SD	18	3
Sarpy, NE	18	3
Washington, NE	17	3
Knox, NE	13	2
Saunders, NE	12	2
Dixon, NE	9	2
41 other counties	147	25

*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 18b

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

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

Results – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- International visitors were from five countries and comprised 1% of total visitation to the park during the survey period.
- Not enough individuals responded to provide reliable results (see Table 9).

Table 9. International visitors by county of residence – **CAUTION!**

Country	Number of visitors	Percent of international visitors N=9 individuals*	Percent of total visitors N=713 individuals
Canada	3	33	<1
Belgium	2	22	<1
Germany	2	22	<1
China	1	11	<1
Italy	1	11	<1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Frequency of visits to park

Question 18c

For your personal group on this visit, what is your frequency of visits to Missouri National Recreational River?

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

Results

- 34% of visitors visit the park about once a year (see Figure 8).
- 28% visited for the first time.
- 22% visit several times a year.

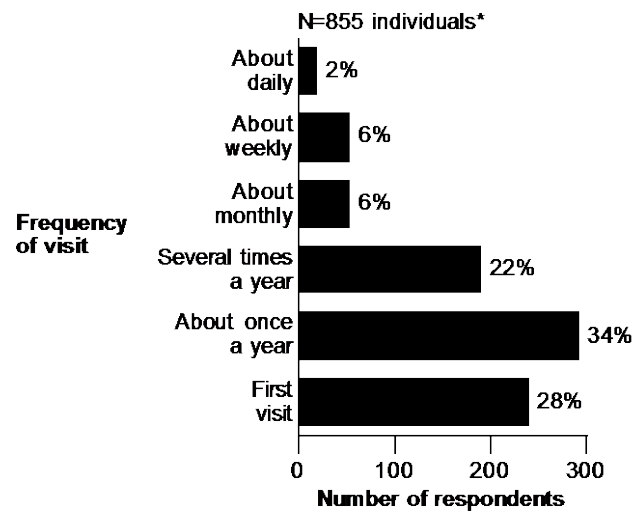


Figure 8. Frequency of visits to park

*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 18a

For 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 92 years.
- 33% of visitors were 46 to 65 years old (see Figure 9).
- 21% were 15 years or younger.
- 20% were 31-45 years old.
- 13% were 66 years or older.

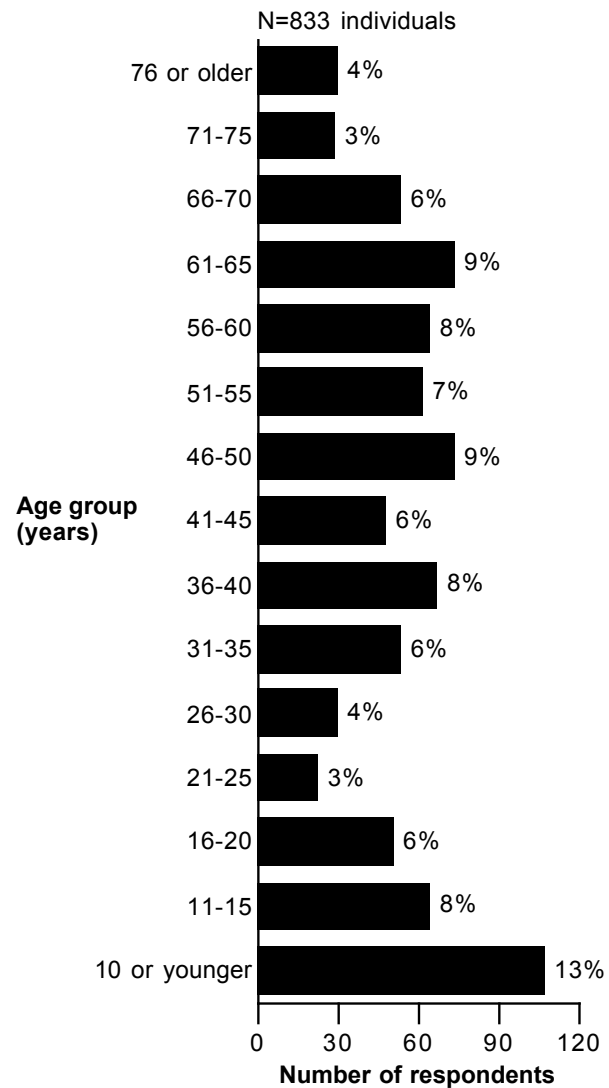


Figure 9. Visitor age

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitor ethnicity

Question 20a

Are you or members of your personal group Hispanic or Latino?

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

Results

- 2% of visitors were Hispanic or Latino (see Figure 10).

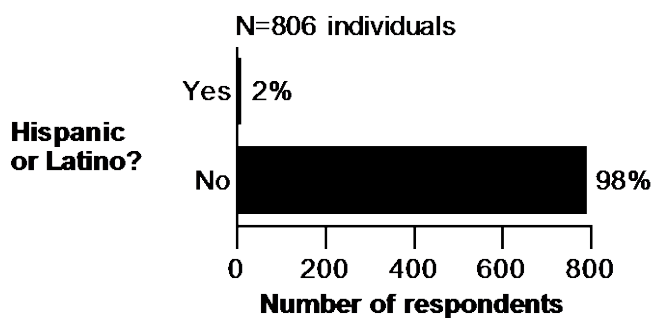


Figure 10. Visitor ethnicity

Visitor race

Question 20b

What is your race? What is the race of each member of your personal group?

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

Results

- 96% of visitors were White (see Figure 11).
- 2% were American Indian or Alaska Native.

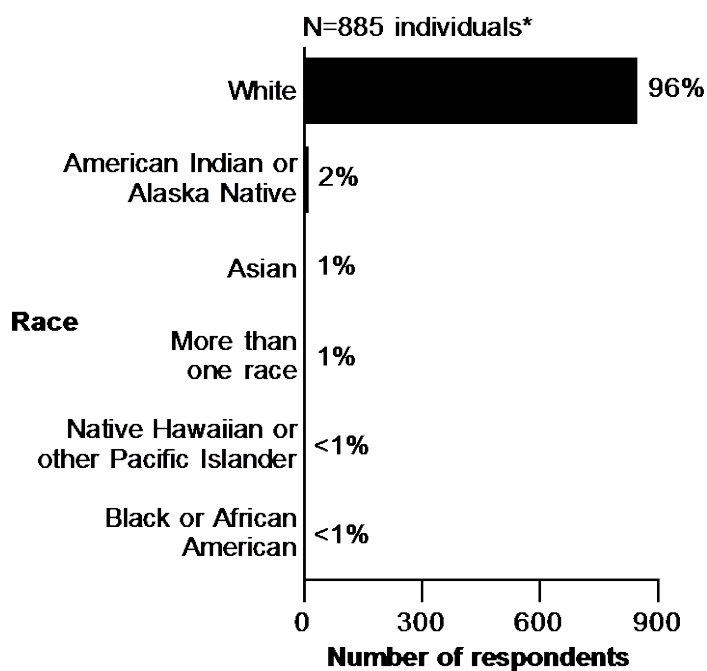


Figure 11. Visitor race

*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 17a

When visiting an area such as Missouri National Recreational River, what language(s) do most members of your personal group prefer to use for speaking?

Results

- 86% of visitor groups preferred English for speaking (see Figure 12).
- “Other” languages (8%) are listed in Table 10.

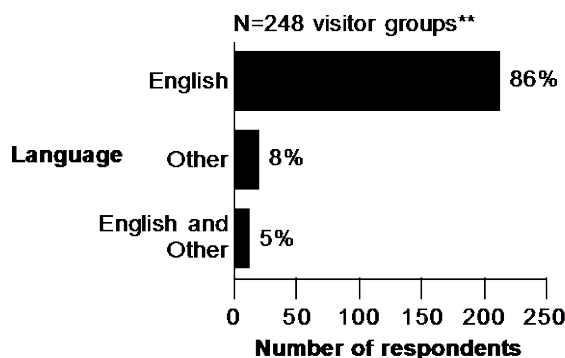


Figure 12. Language preferred for speaking

Question 17b

When visiting an area such as Missouri National Recreational River, what language(s) do most members of your personal group prefer to use for reading?

Results

- 88% of visitor groups preferred English for reading (see Figure 13).
- “Other” languages (7%) are listed in Table 11.

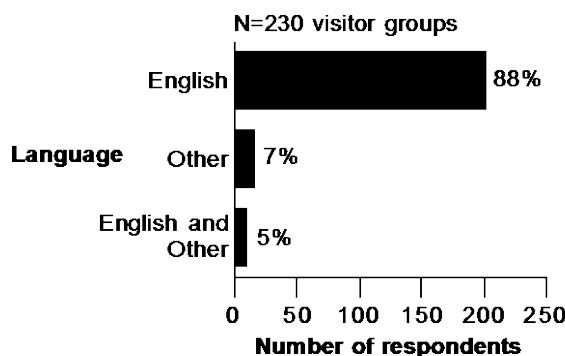


Figure 13. Language preferred for reading

Table 10. “Other” languages preferred for speaking (N=4 comments) – **CAUTION!**

Language	Number of times mentioned
Spanish	2
Chinese	1
German	1

Table 11. “Other” languages preferred for reading (N=3 comments) – **CAUTION!**

Language	Number of times mentioned
Chinese	1
German	1
Spanish	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 17c

What services in the park need to be provided in languages other than in English?

Results

- 3% of visitor groups felt there were services that need to be provided in languages other than English (see Figure 14).
- Four visitor groups listed services that need to be provided in languages other than English (see Table 12).

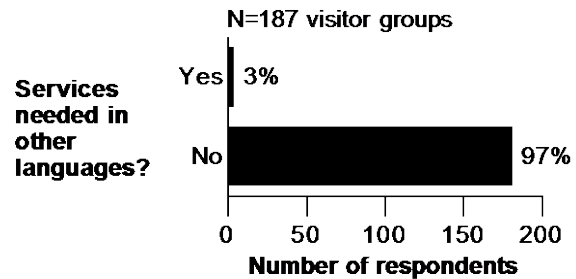


Figure 14. Visitor groups that felt services needed to be provided in languages other than English

Table 12. Services needed in other languages

(N=5 comments; one visitor group made more than one comment) – **CAUTION!**

Service	Number of times mentioned
Bathroom	1
Emergency signs	1
Exhibits	1
Information	1
Information booths	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Respondent level of education

Question 16

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

Results

- 31% of respondents had a bachelor's degree (see Figure 15).
- 24% had a graduate degree.
- 24% had some college.

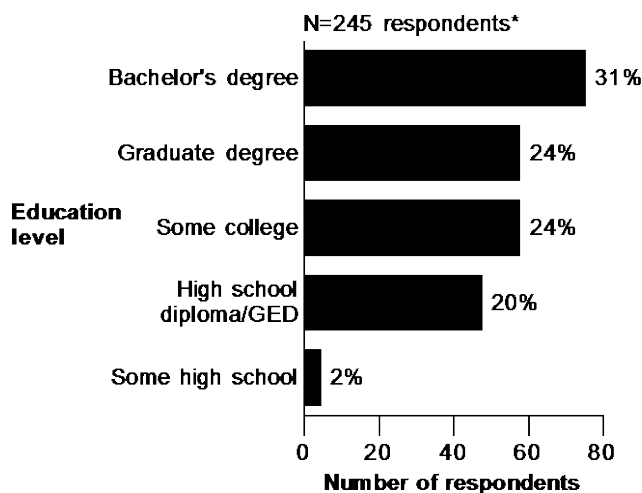


Figure 15. Respondent level of education

Respondent household income

Question 19a

For you only, which category best represents your annual household income?

Results

- 22% of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000-\$74,999 (see Figure 16).
- 16% had an income of \$75,000-\$99,999.
- 13% had an income of \$100,000-\$149,999.

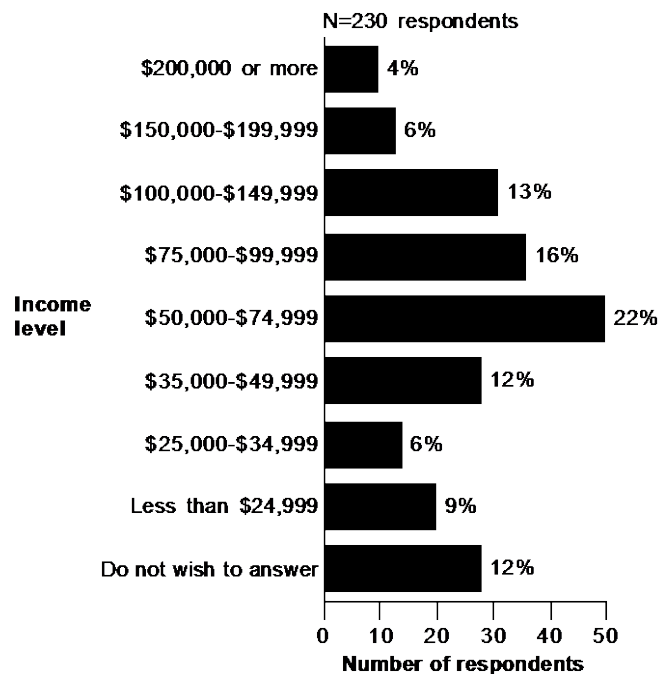


Figure 16. Respondent household income

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Respondent household size

Question 19b

How many people are in your household?

Results

- 46% of respondents had two people in their household (see Figure 17).
- 26% had three or four people.
- 19% had five or more people.

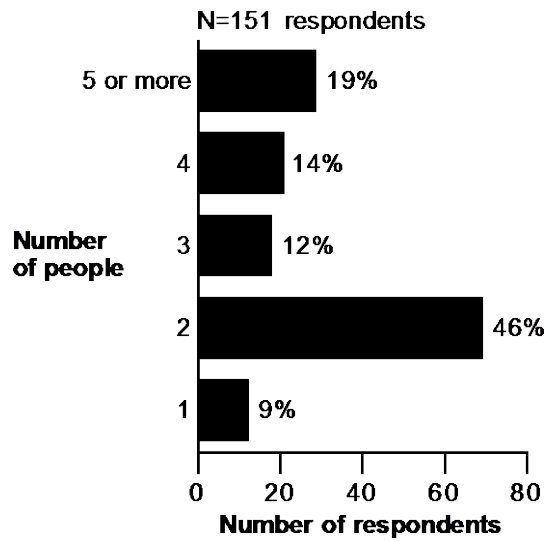


Figure 17. Number of people in respondent household

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Awareness of park

Question 1a

Prior to your visit, was your personal group aware that a recreational area called Missouri National Recreational River existed?

Results

- 57% of visitor groups were aware that a recreational area called Missouri National Recreational River existed (see Figure 18).

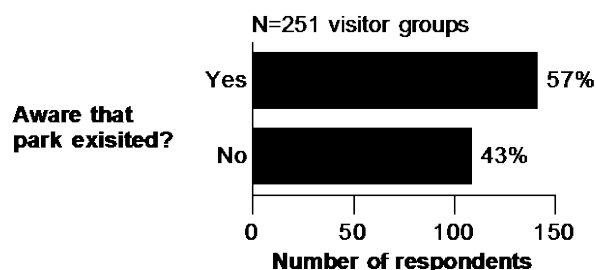


Figure 18. Visitor groups that were aware that a recreational area called Missouri National Recreational River existed

Question 1b

Prior to receiving this questionnaire, was your personal group aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a unit of the National Park Service?

Results

- 78% of visitor groups that were aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a unit of the National Park Service (see Figure 19).

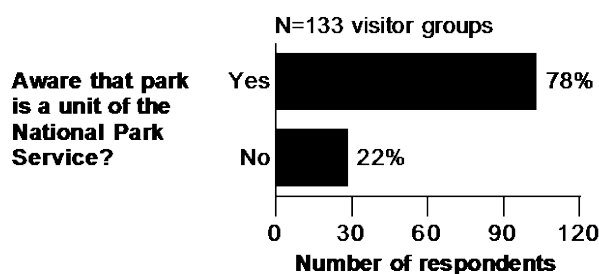


Figure 19. Visitor groups that were aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a unit of the National Park Service

Question 1c

Prior to receiving this questionnaire, was your personal group aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Systems?

Results

- 60% of visitor groups that were aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Systems (see Figure 20).

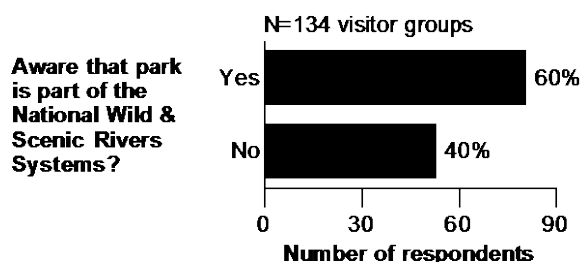


Figure 20. Visitor groups that were aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Systems

*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 3a

Prior to this visit, how did your personal group obtain information about Missouri National Recreational River?

Results

- 71% of visitor groups obtained information about Missouri National Recreation River prior to their visit (see Figure 21).
- As shown in Figure 22, among those visitor groups that obtained information about Missouri National Recreational River prior to their visit, the most common sources were:

57% Friends/relatives/word of mouth
49% Previous visits

- “Other” websites and/or social media (17%) used to obtain information prior to visit were:

campsd.com
Chief White Crane
gfp.sd.gov
google.com
maps.google.com
nefga.org
nps.gov
nps.gov/state/ne
outdoornebraska.ne.gov
parkstamps.org
rec.gov
South Dakota Parks
yankton.net

- “Other” sources (6%) were:

Live in area
Nebraska Passport
Nebraska Game and Parks

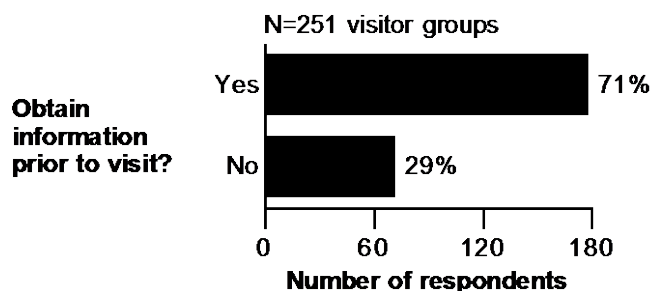


Figure 21. Visitor groups that obtained information prior to visit

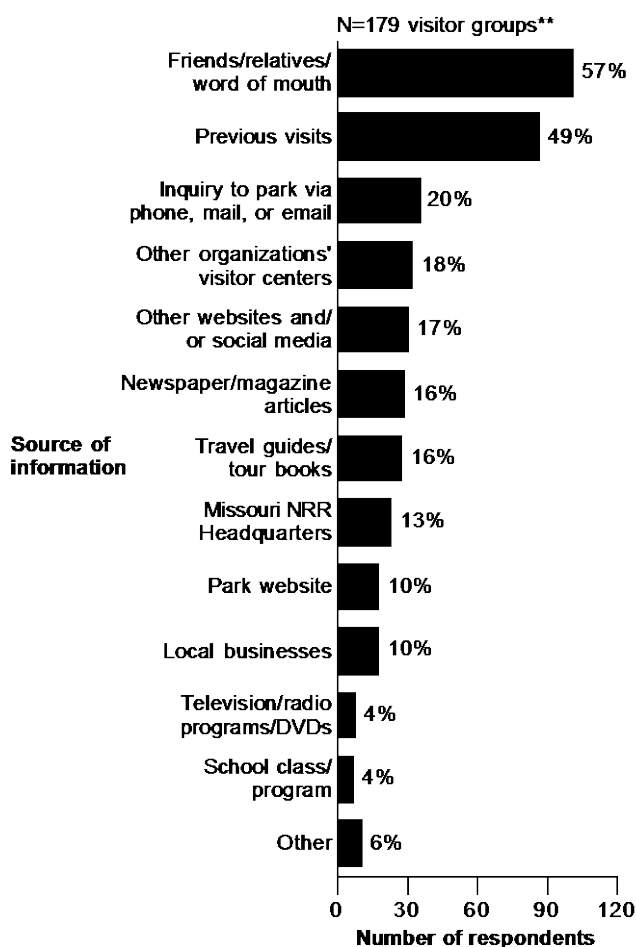


Figure 22. Sources of information used by visitor groups prior to visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 3c

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

Results

- 97% of visitor groups received the type of information they needed from sources used prior to this visit (see Figure 23).

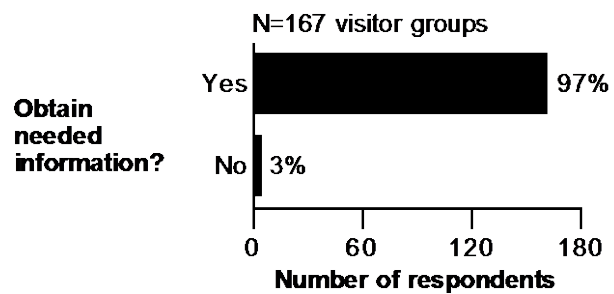


Figure 23. Visitor groups that received needed information prior to their visit

Question 3d

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

Results – Interpret results with CAUTION!

- 8 visitor groups listed information they needed but was not available (see Table 13).

Table 13. Type of park information needed but not available (N=8 comments) – **CAUTION!**

Information	Number of times mentioned
Better overview	1
Did not even know about the MNRR	1
Didn't receive any information	1
Didn't receive anything about the park when we paid the entrance fee	1
Map of camping/boating areas	1
Procedures for renting a cabin	1
Rodeo	1
Weren't aware of available information	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 3b

If you were to visit Missouri National Recreational River in the future, how would your personal group prefer to obtain information about the park?

Results

- As shown in Figure 24, visitor groups' most preferred sources of information for a future visit were:

46% Park website

(www.nps.gov/mnrr)

32% Previous visits

27% Other organizations' visitor centers

- "Other" websites and/or social media (18%) to obtain information for a future visit were:

campsd.com

facebook.com

gfp.sd.gov

google.com

nps.gov/state/ne

outdoornebraska.ne.gov

parkstamps.org

rec.gov

South Dakota Parks

- "Other" sources of information (4%) were:

At bridge

Campground handouts

Email

National parks

Niobrara State Park

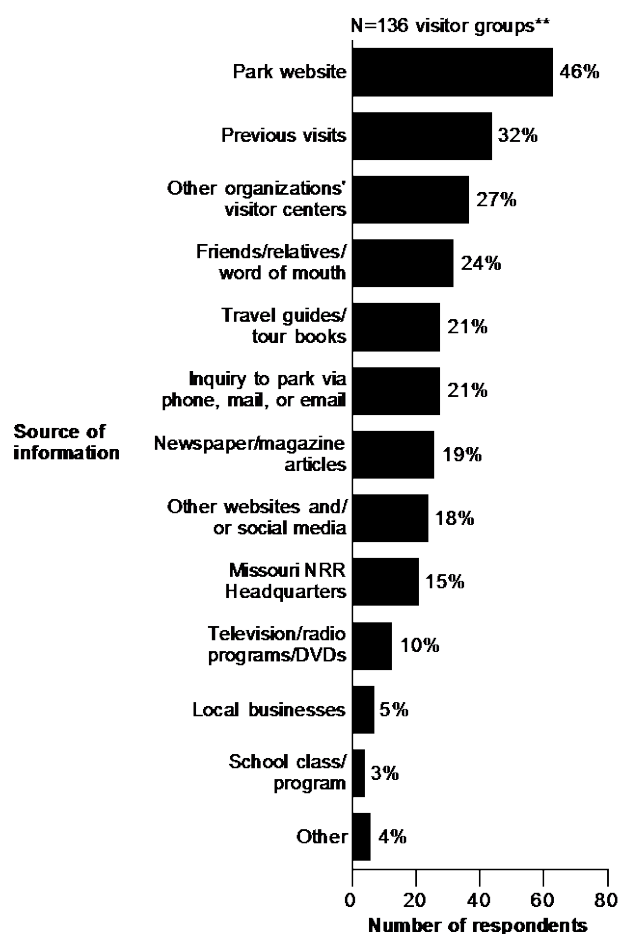


Figure 24. Sources of information to use for a future visit

*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 from on-site interview

A two-minute interview was conducted with each individual selected to complete the questionnaire. During the interview, the question was asked: “How did this visit to Missouri National Recreational River fit into your personal group’s travel plans?”

Results

- 68% of visitor groups indicated that the park was their primary destination (see Figure 25).
- 20% indicated the park was one of several destinations.

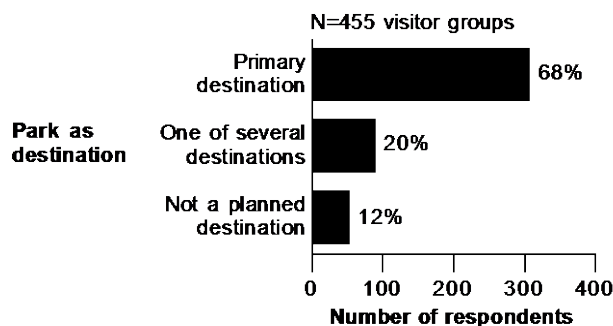


Figure 25. How visit to park fit into visitor groups' travel plans

Support services used in nearby communities

Question 12

Please mark all the communities along the Missouri River from Spencer, NE and Pickstown, SD to Sioux City, IA in which your personal group obtained support services on this visit.

Results

- 78% of visitor groups obtained support services in listed communities (see Figure 26).
- Table 14 shows the support services used in listed communities. Locations with an N of less than 30 should be interpreted with **CAUTION!**
- Table 15 shows the “Other” support services used in listed communities.
- 71% of visitor groups obtained support services in Yankton, SD (see Figure 27).

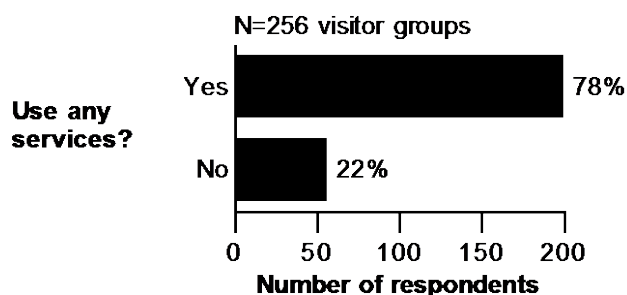


Figure 26. Visitor groups that obtained support services

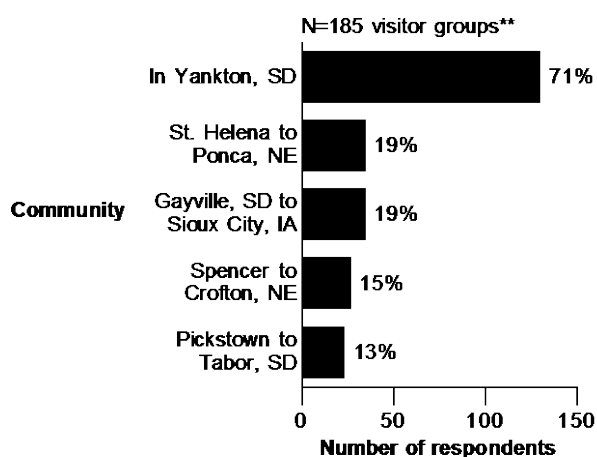


Figure 27. Communities where visitor groups obtained support services

*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. Support services used

Service	Community				
	From Pickstown to Tabor, SD (N=24) CAUTION!	In Yankton, SD (N=131)	From Gayville, SD to Sioux City, IA (N=35)	From Spencer to Crofton, NE (N=27) CAUTION!	From St. Helena to Ponca, NE (N=35)
Buy gasoline	63%	76%	77%	59%	54%
Buy groceries	33%	63%	37%	44%	66%
Buy photography/art supplies	4%	8%	0%	0%	0%
Buy recreational equipment/ supplies	25%	30%	17%	15%	9%
Eat a meal	50%	82%	57%	63%	54%
Guide services (hunting, fishing, etc.)	0%	8%	0%	7%	3%
Obtain travel/tourist information	13%	34%	20%	19%	23%
Shop	13%	52%	23%	15%	29%
Stay overnight in a campground/RV park	50%	37%	6%	30%	43%
Stay overnight in a motel/hotel/ B&B/etc.	8%	20%	20%	7%	11%
Use sport facilities (golf course, archery range, etc.)	13%	14%	6%	7%	49%
Visit art gallery/museums	0%	19%	3%	0%	9%
Other	0%	5%	3%	4%	3%

Table 15. "Other" support services used
(N=6 comments; one visitor group made more than one comment) – **CAUTION!**

Service	Community	Number of times mentioned
Air conditioning	Yankton	1
Antique shops	Not specified	1
Antique shops	Yankton	1
Church	Gayville, SD to Sioux City, IA	1
Laundry	Yankton	1
Rented kayaks	Yankton	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 15c

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

Results

- 57% of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park (see Figure 28).
- 19% used four or more vehicles.
- 17% used two vehicles.

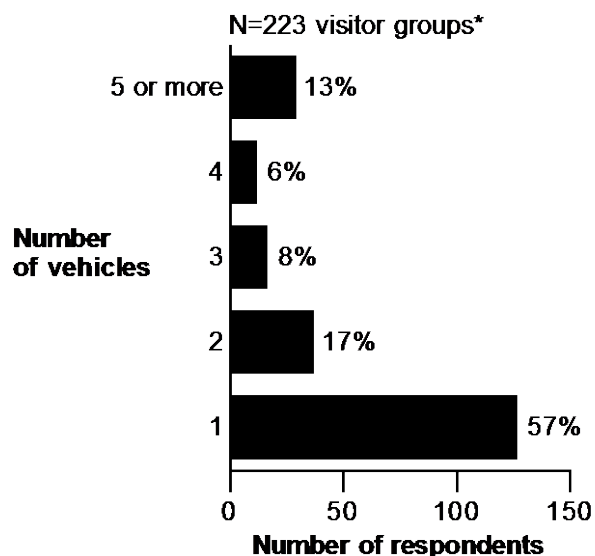


Figure 28. Number of vehicles used to arrive at the park

Question 15c

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

Results

- 63% of visitor groups used one vehicle to visit the park (see Figure 29).
- 16% used two vehicles.
- 12% used four or more vehicles.

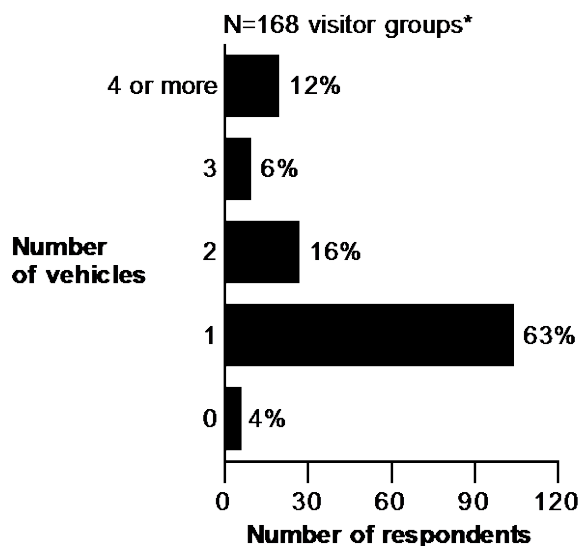


Figure 29. Number of vehicles used to visit the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Length of visit in the park

Question 4

On this visit, how much total time (both on land and on the river) did your personal group spend visiting Missouri National Recreational River?

Results

Number of hours if less than 24

- 53% of visitor groups spent one or two hours (see Figure 30).
- 33% spent four or more hours.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups who spent less than 24 hours was 3.5 hours.

Number of days if 24 hours or more

- 51% of visitor groups spent two or three days (see Figure 31).
- 32% spent five or more days.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups who spent 24 hours or more was 6.3 days.

Average length of visit

- The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 63.3 hours or 2.6 days.

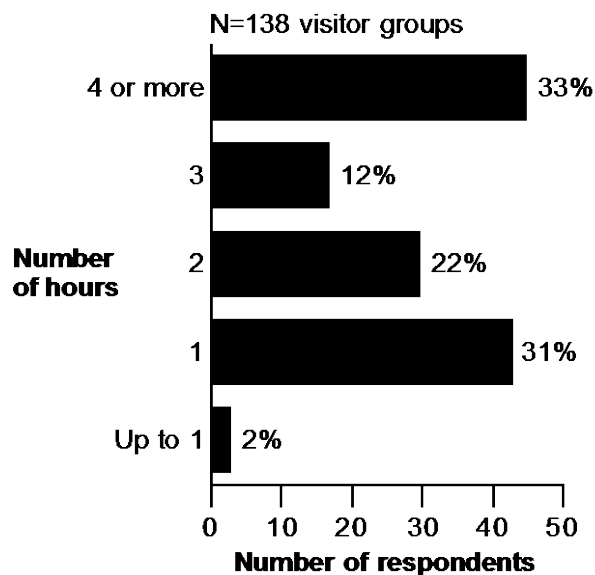


Figure 30. Total number of hours spent at Missouri National Recreational River if less than 24 hours

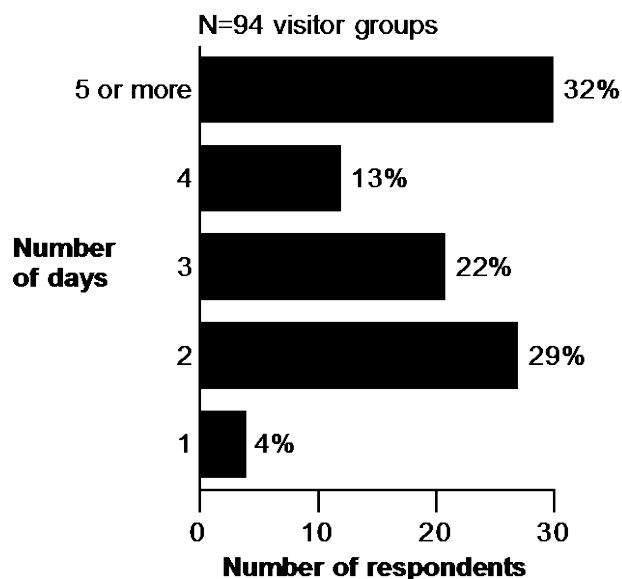


Figure 31. Total number of days spent at Missouri National Recreational River if 24 hours or more

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Locations visited in the 39- and 59-mile districts

Question 9

Please indicate all the locations in Missouri National Recreational River that your personal group visited.

- As shown in Figure 32, the most commonly visited places by visitor groups were:

42% Lewis & Clark Visitor Center
 27% Riverside Park
 25% Ponca State Park
 20% Chief White Crane Campground

- The least visited places were:

5% Verdel Boat Ramp
 5% Fort Randall Overlook

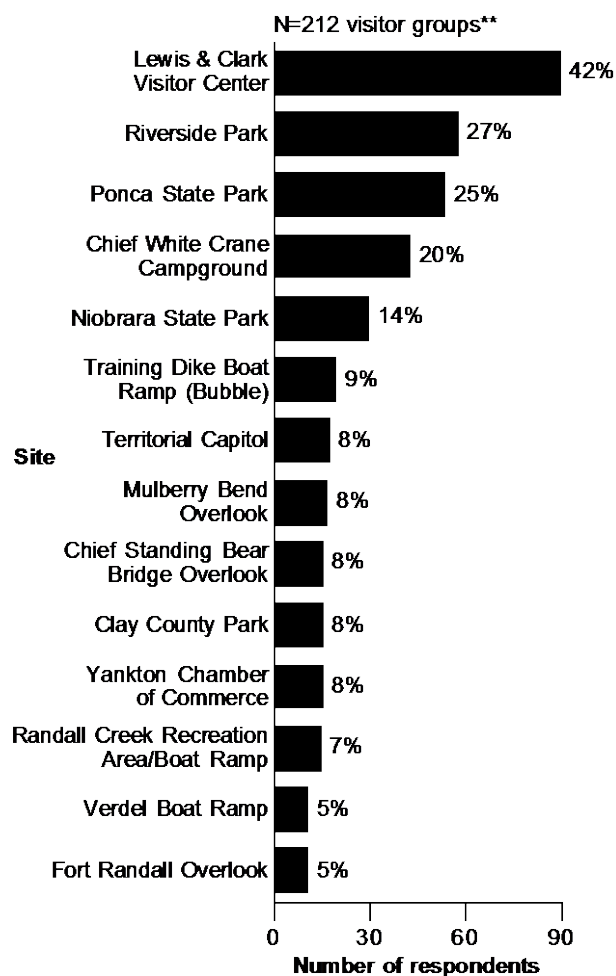


Figure 32. Locations visited in the 39- and 59-mile districts

*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 on this visit

Question 6a

As you were planning this trip to Missouri National Recreational River, which activities did your personal group expect to include on this visit?

Results

- As shown in Figure 33, the most common expected activities on this visit were:

65% Enjoying natural quiet
50% Swimming/playing in the water
49% Hiking

- “Other” expected activities (12%) were:

Backwater kayaking
Bob's Bar
Eat bowl of cereal for breakfast
Explore visitor center
Fish from a boat
Junior Ranger Program
Look at campers or boats to buy
Nebraska passport
Read - see sun rise
Target shooting
Touring inside of dam
Use playground
View historical structure
View scenery
View size of river
View waterways
Visit nature center
Walking
Wildflowers

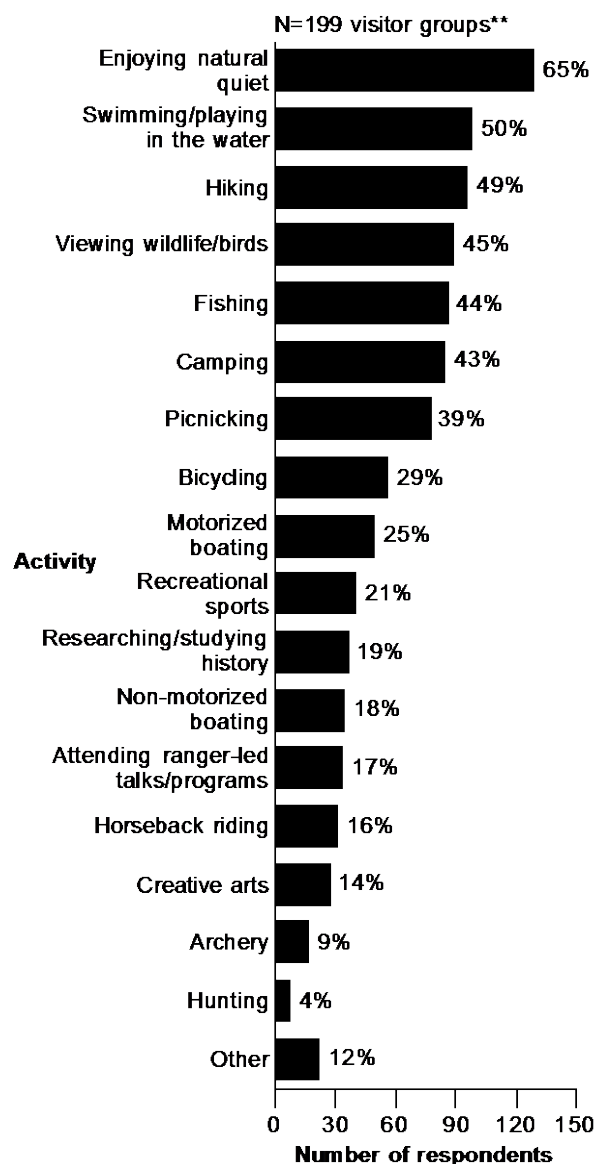


Figure 33. Expected activities on this visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Activities on this visit

Question 6b

On this visit, in which activities did your personal group actually participate within Missouri National Recreational River?

Results

- As shown in Figure 34, the most common activities on this visit were:

72% Enjoying natural quiet
49% Swimming/playing in the water
49% Viewing wildlife/birds

- “Other” activities (11%) were:

Critter corner
Education center
Enjoy cleanliness of cabins and water
Enjoy views of water
Exercise
Explore visitor center
Geology
Junior Ranger program
Local business visits
Making new friends
Nebraska passport
Obtain NPS Passport stamps
Read
Riverside resort
Scenic drive
Scuba diving
Sightseeing
Stargazing
Target shooting
View scenery
Viewing flora and fauna
Visit dam
Visit the park
Visit visitor center
Walking
Walking the bridge (Meridian)

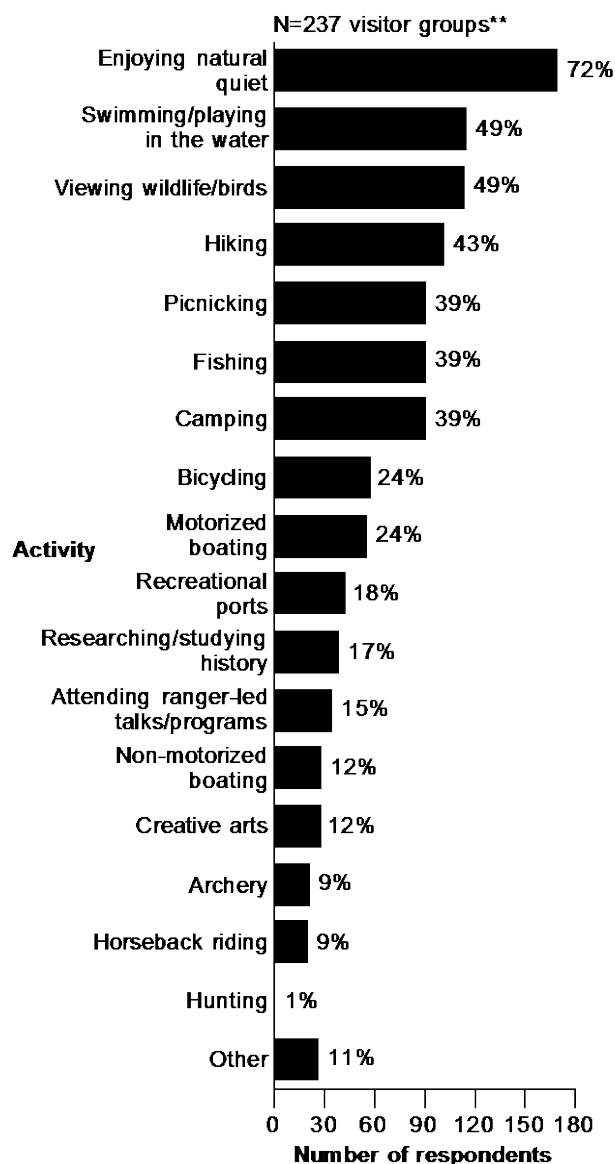


Figure 34. Activities on this visit

*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 6c

Which one of the above activities was the most important to your personal group on this visit? (Open-ended)

Results

- As shown in Figure 35, the activities listed as “most important” to visitor groups included:

23% Camping
16% Fishing
10% Swimming/playing in the water
10% Enjoying natural quiet

- “Other activities (7%) were:

Enjoying nature
Enjoying scenic views
Enjoying solitude
Exercise
Obtain NPS passport stamp
Participating in Junior Ranger program
Seeing historical structure
Spending time with extended family
Touring inside of dam
Viewing waterways
Visiting Nature Center
Walking the bridge (Meridian)
Walking

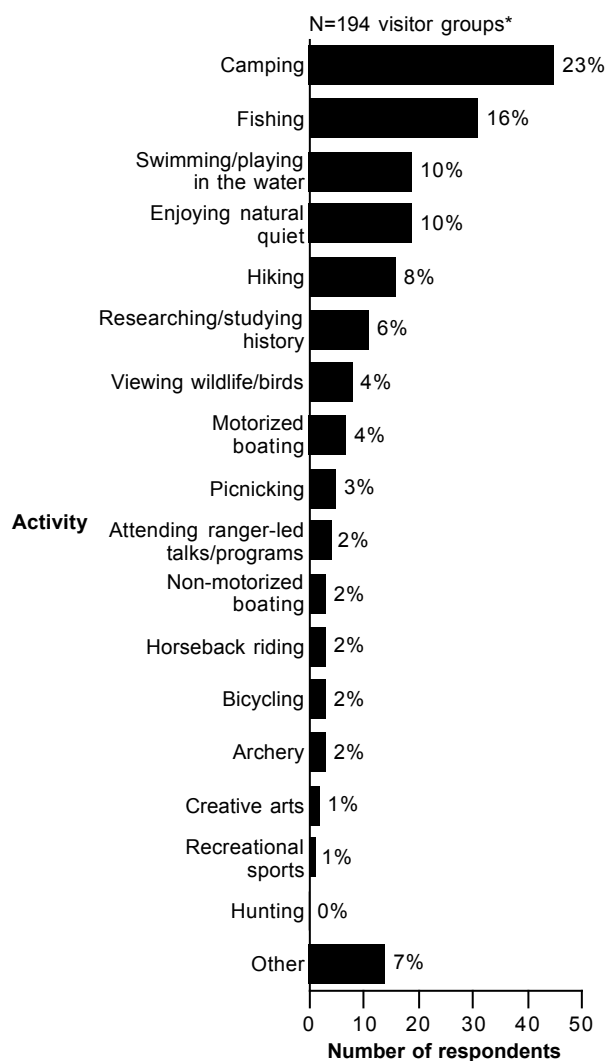


Figure 35. Most important activity

Activities visitor groups wanted to do but were unable to do

Question 7a

Were there any activities that your personal group wanted to do but were unable to do while visiting Missouri National Recreational River?

Results

- 84% of visitor groups were able to do the activities they wanted to do (see Figure 36).

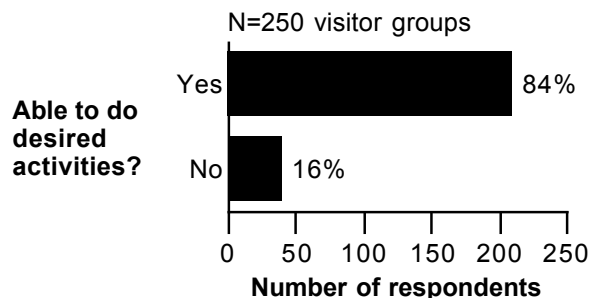


Figure 36. Visitor groups that were not able to do the activities they wanted to do

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 7b

If YES, what were they? (Open-ended)

Results

- 42 visitor groups listed activities they wanted to do but were unable to do on this trip (see Table 16).

Table 16. Activities visitor groups wanted to do but were unable to do on this trip (N=46 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

Activity	Number of times mentioned
Hiking	5
Kayaking	4
Camping	3
Canoeing	3
Fishing	3
A program that was held the day we were leaving	1
Arts and crafts	1
Being in the water having beach access	1
Boating on the river	1
Driving the dam road	1
Educational programs	1
Explore trails	1
Exploring	1
Frisbee golf	1
Fishing	1
Horseback riding	1
Just spending more time outdoors	1
Kayaking	1
Motorized boating	1
Nature hike opportunities	1
Outdoor activities	1
Paddle boats no longer at park from years ago	1
Scuba driving	1
See old friends	1
Shore fishing	1
Spear fishing	1
Spend more time outside	1
Tour the dam	1
Utilize fish cleaning station	1
Wanted to tour Gavins Point Dam	1
Watching fish below the power house	1
Water activities	1
Would like to go on sightseeing tours by boat	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 7c

What prevented you from participating in these activities?

Results

- As shown in Figure 37, the most common reasons that prevented visitor groups from participating in activities were:

43% Weather conditions

35% Time constraints

- “Other” reasons (15%) were:

Boaters driving way too close to dive area, even with dive flags up

Couldn't find

Deer flies (swarms)

Drought

Free daily canoe checkouts would be nice for campers

No fishing areas close to river for elderly people to fish. Debris (branches) in water

Security fence

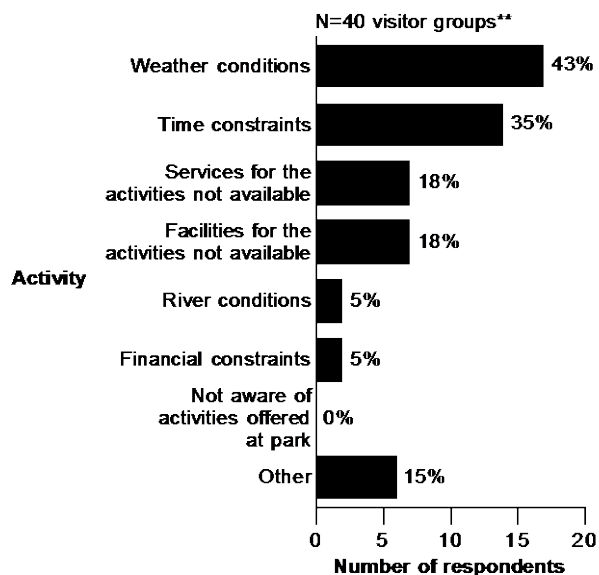


Figure 37. Reasons for not participating in activities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 13a

On this visit, did anyone in your personal group have difficulty accessing or participating in any park activities or services?

Results

- 3% of visitor groups had difficulty accessing or participating in park activities or services (see Figure 38).

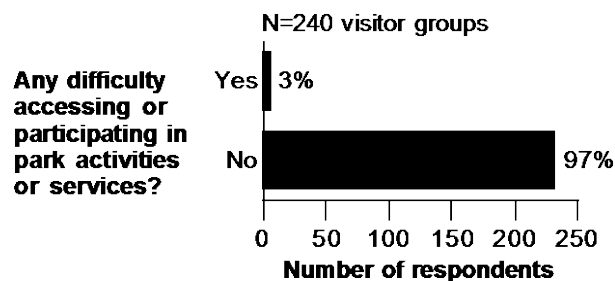


Figure 38. Visitor groups that had difficulty accessing or participating in park activities or services

Question 13b

If YES, in which park activities or services did the person(s) have difficulty accessing or participating during this visit? (Open-ended)

Results – Interpret with CAUTION!

- 6 visitor groups listed activities or services in which they had difficulty accessing or participating (see Table 17).

Table 17. Activities/services in which visitor groups had difficulty accessing or participating – **CAUTION!** (N=7 comments; one visitor group made more than one comment)

Activity/service	Number of times mentioned
Cabin access/steps	1
Cleaning fish	1
Fishing access	1
Getting our cabin at 3:30 even though it was clean - we were hot and had melting ice and they wouldn't let us go in till 4:00 PM. Hotels always let you check in if the room is ready.	1
Need more kayaking	1
The steps down to the river were all crumbled. We have used these many times in the past to access the river and hope that they will be fixed.	1
Too dark to the bathroom	1

*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, Resources, and Elements

Park exhibits viewed/read

Question 8a

The park and its partners have installed a series of outdoor exhibits at boat ramps, along walking trails, and at overlooks along the Missouri National Recreational River that are maintained by the National Park Service. The park also has indoor exhibits located in the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center at Gavins Point Dam, the Chamber of Commerce/Welcome Center in Yankton, and the Missouri National Recreational River Education Center at Ponca State Park.

For this visit to Missouri National Recreational River, please list all the exhibits that your personal group viewed/read.

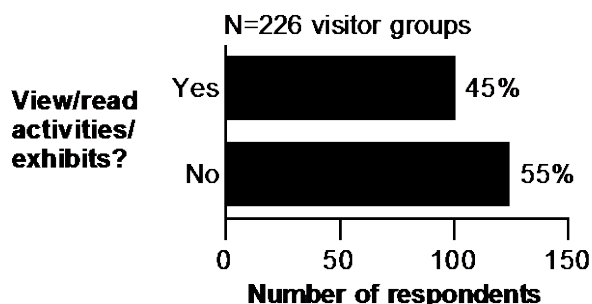


Figure 39. Visitor groups that viewed/read exhibits

Results

- 45% of visitor groups viewed or read exhibits (see Figure 39).
- Table 18 shows location and topics of exhibits that were viewed or read. Items with an N of less than 30 should be interpreted with **CAUTION!**

Question 8b

Please rate the quality of the exhibits that your personal group viewed/read.

Results – Interpret results with **CAUTION!**

- Table 18 shows the quality ratings of exhibits.

Question 8c

How could the exhibits be improved to enhance your experience?

Results – Interpret results with **CAUTION!**

- Table 18 shows recommendations to enhance exhibits.

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 18. Exhibits viewed/read
(N=number of visitor groups)

Exhibit location	Exhibit topic	N	Quality rating	Recommendation for improvement
Chief Standing Bear Bridge Overlook	Lewis and Clark, etc.	1	5	
	Unspecified	2	4.5	
Chief White Crane Campground	Unspecified	3	5	
Clay County Park	Lewis and Clark	1	3	
	Map of Missouri River	1	5	
	River history	1	3	
Fort Randall Overlook	Fort information	1	4	
	Lewis and Clark	1	5	
	Unspecified	1	5	
Gavins Point Dam	All exhibits	1	4	
	Aquarium	3	4.7	
	Dam construction	1	5	
	Fanged fish fossil and stuffed animals/taxidermy exhibit	1	5	More fossils would be good.
	Hatchery	1	5	
	Tour	3	4.3	Drinks and snacks on site. Slow down information delivery.
	Unspecified	4	5	
	Videos	1	5	
Lewis and Clark Visitor Center	All exhibits	3	5	
	Bird area	2	4	
	Dam construction	2	4	
	Dress up	1	5	
	Education display	1	3	Need to update education display.
	Films/videos	3	3.7	

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 18. Exhibits viewed/read (continued)

Exhibit location	Exhibit topic	N	Quality rating	Recommendation for improvement
Lewis and Clark Visitor Center (continued)	Garden	1	3	It seemed to be a small exhibit in a big building. More kids activities like the dress up station and the steamboat. Make the gift store smaller.
	History	4	5	
	Inside exhibit	1	3	
	Lewis and Clark	4	4	
	Local history	1	5	Did not realize there were different overlooks and such, maybe more signage.
	Museum	1	5	
	Nature	1	5	
	Overlooks	1	5	
	Relief map	1	5	
	Unspecified	25	4.8	
	View	1	5	
	Visitor Center	1	5	
	Wildlife	1	5	
	Yankton	1	5	
Mulberry Bend Overlook	Lewis and Clark	1	5	
	Unspecified	2	5	
Niobrara State Park	Lewis and Clark	2	3.5	More pictures and maps to match the words.
	Ponca Indian information	1	3	
	Unspecified	2	3.5	
	View	1	5	
Ponca State Park	Artifacts	1	5	
	Dam system history	1	5	
	Exhibits	1	5	
	History	1	5	

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 18. Exhibits viewed/read (continued)

Exhibit location	Exhibit topic	N	Quality rating	Recommendation for improvement
Ponca State Park (continued)	Lewis and Clark	3	4.3	
	Pool	1	Unspecified	The pool was fun but it should cost less.
	Museum	1	5	
	Nature	1	5	
	Pioneers	1	4	
	Ranger Station displays	1	5	
	River history	1	4	
	Scenic overlook	1	5	
	Three State Overlook	3	4.7	
	Towers in Time	1	5	Better nighttime lighting.
	Unspecified	9	4.8	
	Wildlife	2	4.5	
	River	1	Unspecified	Along river to install magnifiers (telescope) to view river and surroundings.
Ponca State Park Education Center	Area history	1	5	
	Everything	1	5	
	Inside exhibits	1	5	
	River history	1	5	
	Unspecified	3	5	
	Wildlife	1	5	
Riverside Park	Lewis and Clark	1	3	
	Sculptures	1	5	
	Territorial Capitol	1	5	
	Unspecified	4	4.3	
	Walking trails	1	5	
Scenic Drives	Three park roads	1	5	

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 18. Exhibits viewed/read (continued)

Exhibit location	Exhibit topic	N	Quality rating	Recommendation for improvement
Scenic View Area	Unspecified	1	5	
Territorial Capitol	Unspecified	1	4	
Training Dike Boat Ramp	Unspecified	2	3.5	
Verdel Boat Ramp	Unspecified	2	3.5	
Yankton Chamber of Commerce	Staff	1	Unspecified	More experienced hostess.
	Tourist information	1	5	

Question 8d

Please suggest topics to add or delete, or specific types of exhibits that your personal group would find interesting.

Results – Interpret results with **CAUTION!**

- 7 visitor groups suggested topics/exhibits they would find interesting (see Table 19).

Table 19. Suggested topics/exhibits – **CAUTION!**
(N=11 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

Topic	Number of times mentioned
Butterfly/moth collection	1
Campfire cooking	1
Dam building progress in 50's	1
Identification of common birds	1
Identify more of the local wildlife	1
Lewis and Clark history exhibit arts and crafts activity	1
List of programs for the park when you enter the park	1
More on role steamships played	1
Park stamp information	1
Pioneer farm/garden/building	1
Size of fish in the area	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Importance of protecting park resources and attributes

Question 5

Missouri National Recreational River was established to preserve and protect the free-flowing river and its outstanding scenic, natural, cultural, historic, fish and wildlife values, while providing for public enjoyment. On this visit, how important was the protection of the following attributes/resources to your personal group?

Results

- As shown in Figure 40, the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes and resources were:

91% Clean air/visibility
87% Clean water
87% Scenic views and natural landscapes

- Table 20 shows the importance ratings of each attribute/resource.
- The attribute/resource receiving the highest “not at all important” rating was:

19% Dark starry night sky

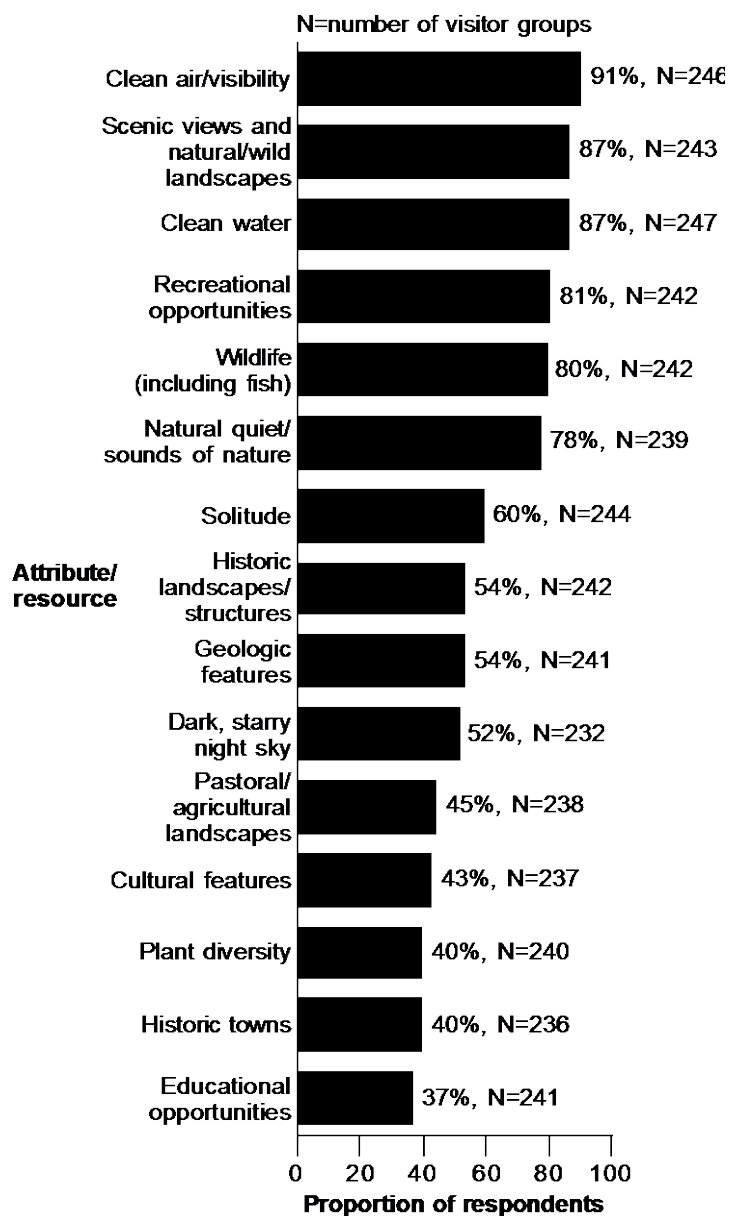


Figure 40. Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes and resources

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 20. Importance ratings of protecting park attributes and resources
(N=number of visitor groups)

Attribute/resource	N	Rating (%)*				
		Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
Clean air/visibility	246	2	1	6	39	52
Clean water	247	1	2	9	34	53
Cultural features	237	7	12	38	27	16
Dark, starry night sky	232	19	5	24	29	23
Educational opportunities	241	11	15	36	24	13
Geological features	241	7	12	27	39	15
Historic landscapes/ structures	242	4	12	30	34	20
Historic towns	236	11	18	31	25	15
Natural quiet/sounds of nature	239	4	5	14	34	44
Pastoral/agricultural landscapes	238	11	12	33	28	17
Plant diversity	240	8	16	36	21	19
Recreational opportunities (floating, hiking, camping, etc.)	242	3	2	12	31	50
Scenic views and natural/ wild landscapes	243	1	<1	11	36	51
Solitude	244	4	6	30	25	35
Wildlife (including fish)	242	4	2	15	32	48

*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

Extended programs on future visit

Question 2a

The National Park Service offers a variety of extended programs at Missouri National Recreation River that may require more than a one-time commitment. Please indicate all programs in which you would be interested in participating.

Results

- 32% of visitor groups were interested in attending extended programs on a future visit (see Figure 41).

- As shown in Figure 42, the most common programs in which visitor groups would be interested in participating in the future were:

73% Workshops/seminars/Park Institute programs
55% Citizen science programs
53% Volunteer activities

- “Other” programs (4%) were:

Fishing programs
Kayak demonstrations
Kayak trips

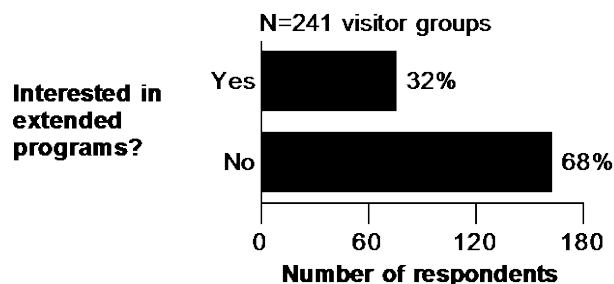


Figure 41. Visitor groups interested in attending extended programs on a future visit

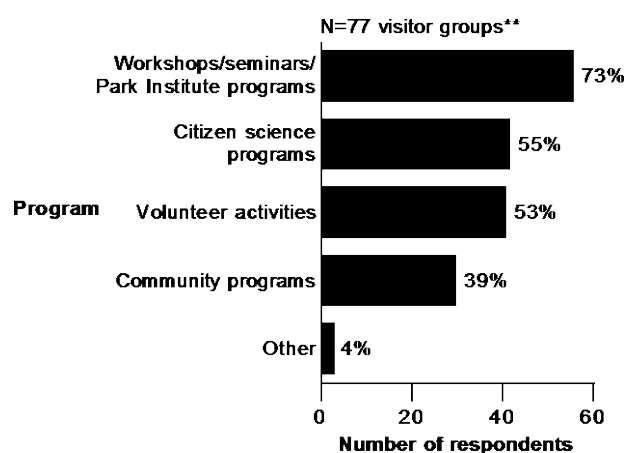


Figure 42. Extended programs on a future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Ranger-led programs on future visit

Question 10a

If you were to visit the park in the future, please indicate all the types of ranger programs that your personal group would be interested in attending.

Results

- 61% of visitor groups were interested in attending ranger-led programs on a future visit (see Figure 43).

- As shown in Figure 44, the most common programs in which visitor groups would be interested in participating in the future were:

50% Stargazing/astronomy programs

50% Ranger-led outdoor hikes/walks/talks

48% Cultural demonstrations & story telling (dancing, drumming, weaving, beading, pottery, etc.)

- “Other” programs (6%) were:

Archery

Live animals

Orienteering/Survival Camping/High Adventure

Park stamps (overview and specifics)

Role of steamships

Talk from ranger

Walking-stick making

Wildlife watching and talks about the animals in the area

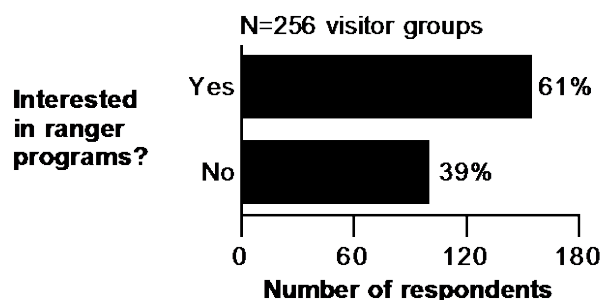


Figure 43. Visitor groups interested in attending ranger-led programs on a future visit

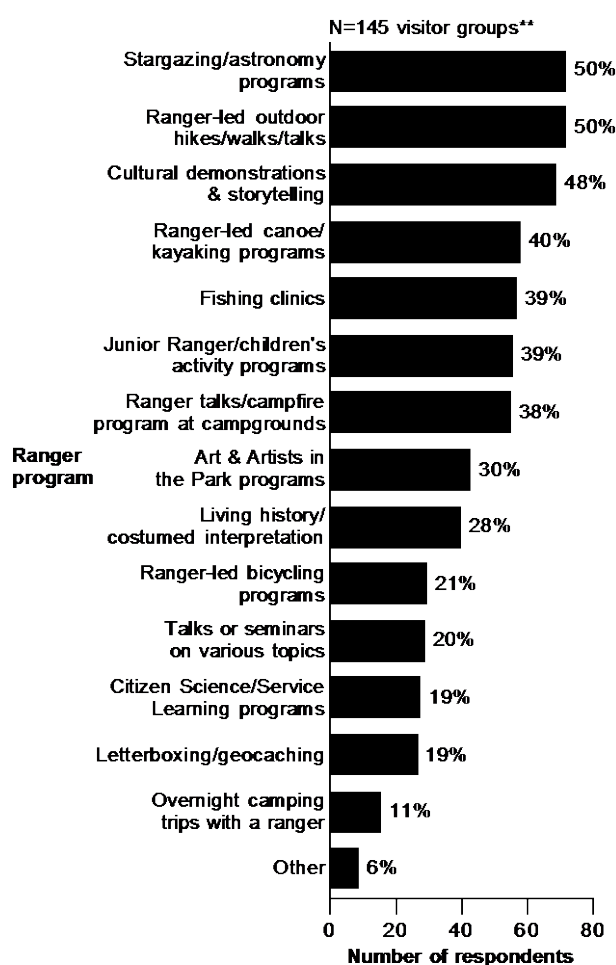


Figure 44. Ranger-led programs on a future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Preferred start times and lengths for ranger programs on future visit

Question 10b

For the programs that your personal group would be interested in attending, what time of the day should the program start?

Question 10c

For the programs that your personal group would be interested in attending, what would be the most suitable program length?

Art & Artists in the Park programs

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 45.

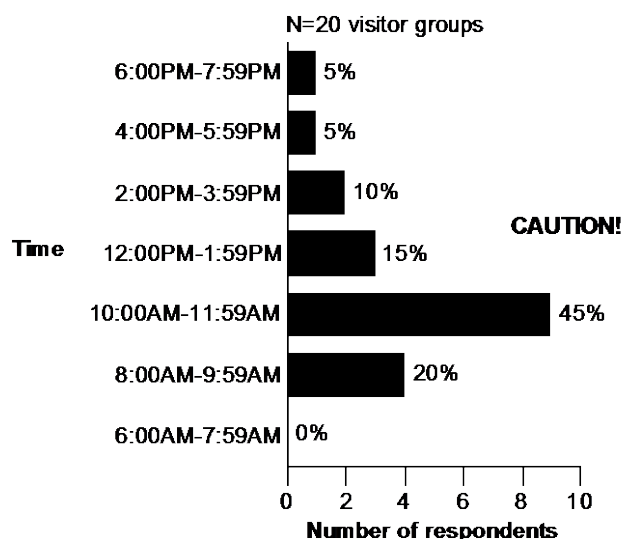


Figure 45. Desired start time for Art & Artists in the Park programs

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown in Figure 46.

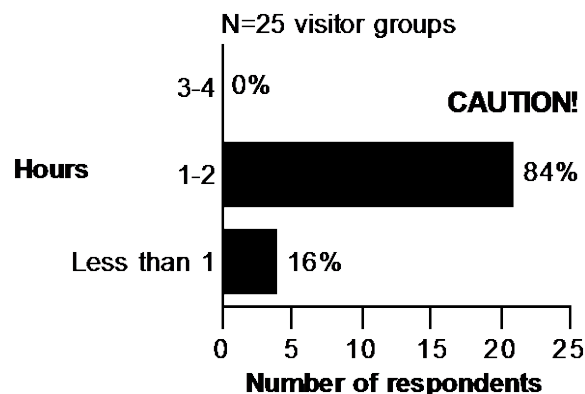


Figure 46. Desired program length for Art & Artists in the Park programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Citizen Science/Service Learning programs

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 47.

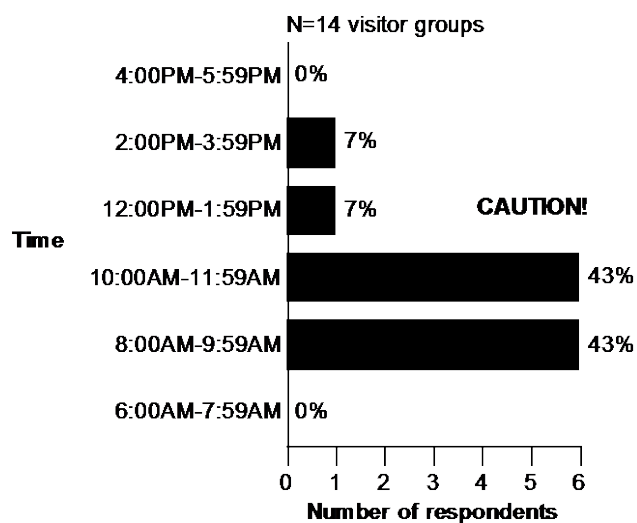


Figure 47. Desired start time for Citizen Science/Service Learning programs

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown in Figure 48.

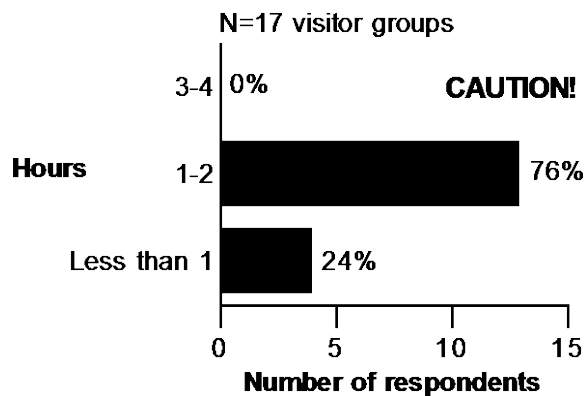


Figure 48. Desired program length for Citizen Science/Service Learning programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Cultural demonstrations & storytelling

Desired start time

- 39% of visitor groups would prefer a start time of 10:00 AM-11:59 AM (see Figure 49).
- 23% would prefer a start time of 2:00 PM-3:59 PM.

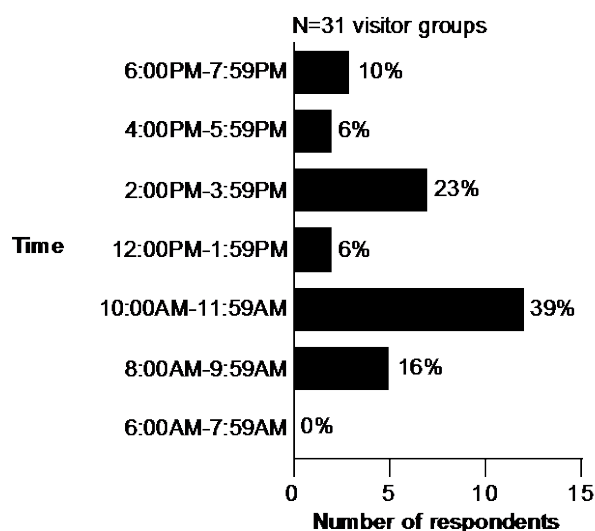


Figure 49. Desired start time for cultural demonstrations and storytelling

Program length

- 71% of visitor groups would prefer a program length of 1-2 hours (see Figure 50).
- 26% would prefer a program length of less than 1 hour.

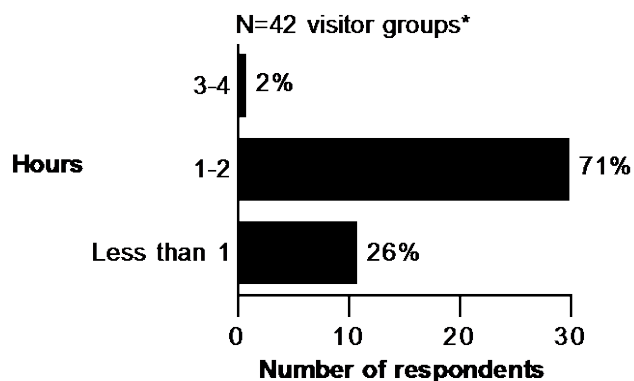


Figure 50. Desired program length for cultural demonstrations and storytelling

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Fishing clinics

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 51.

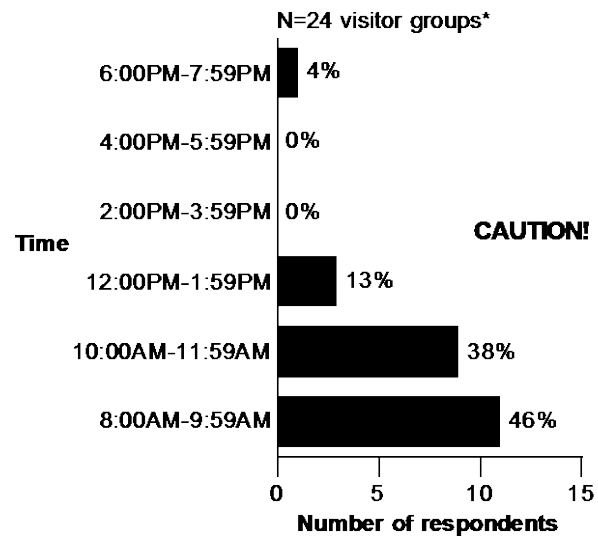


Figure 51. Desired start time for fishing clinics

Program length

- 91% of visitor groups would prefer a program length of less than 1-2 hours (see Figure 52).

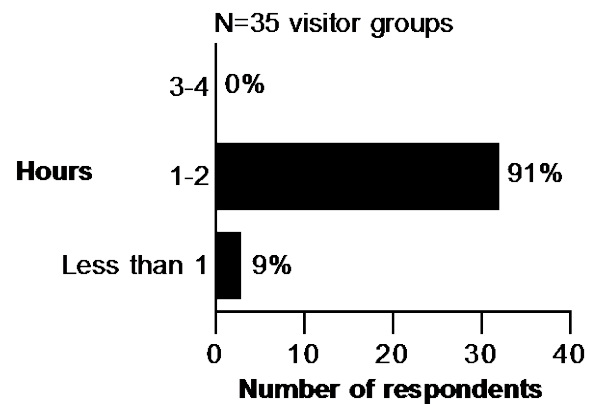


Figure 52. Desired program length for fishing clinics

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Junior Ranger/children's activity programs

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 53.

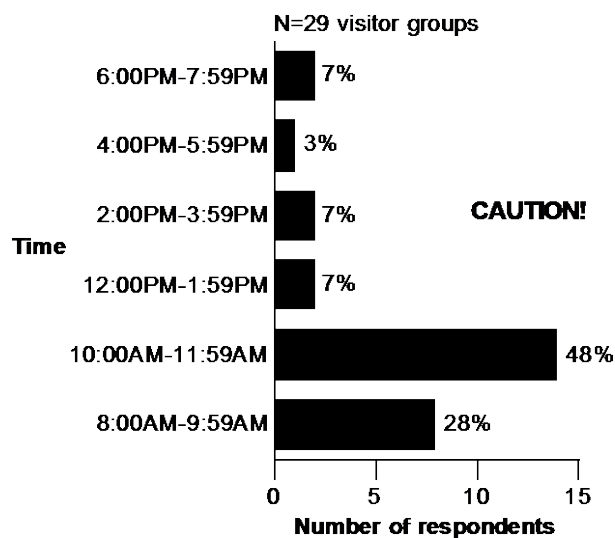


Figure 53. Desired start time for Junior Ranger/children's activity programs

Program length

- 64% of visitor groups would prefer a program length of 1-2 hours (see Figure 54).
- 33% would prefer a program length of less than 1 hour.

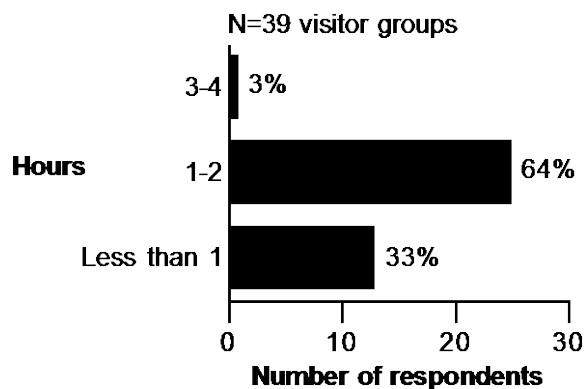


Figure 54. Desired program length for Junior Ranger/children's activity programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Letterboxing/geocaching

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 55.

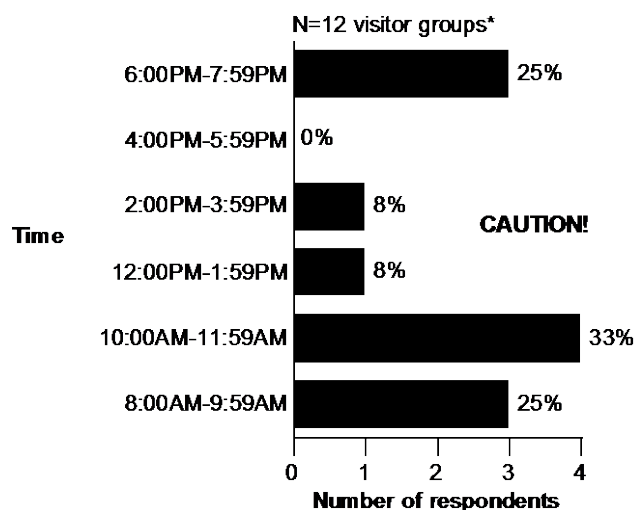


Figure 55. Desired start time for letterboxing/geocaching

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown in Figure 56.

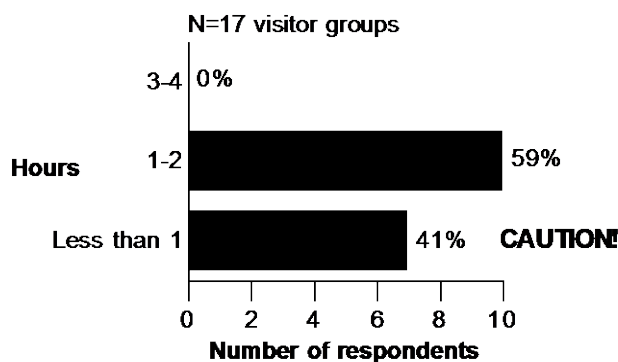


Figure 56. Desired program length for letterboxing/geocaching

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Living history/costumed interpretation

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 57.

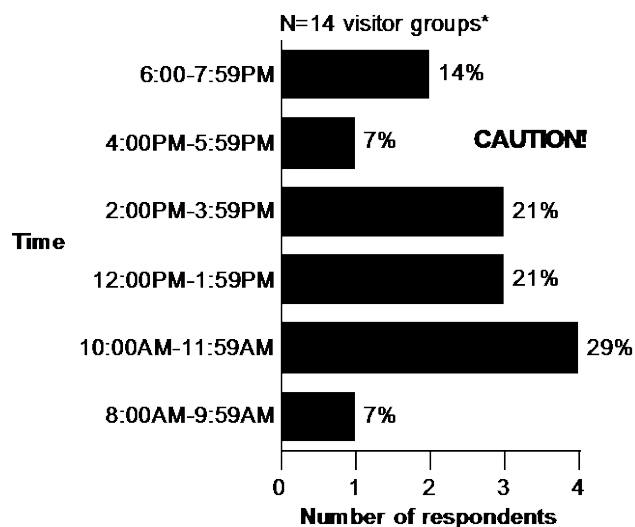


Figure 57. Desired start time for living history/costumed interpretation

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown in Figure 58.

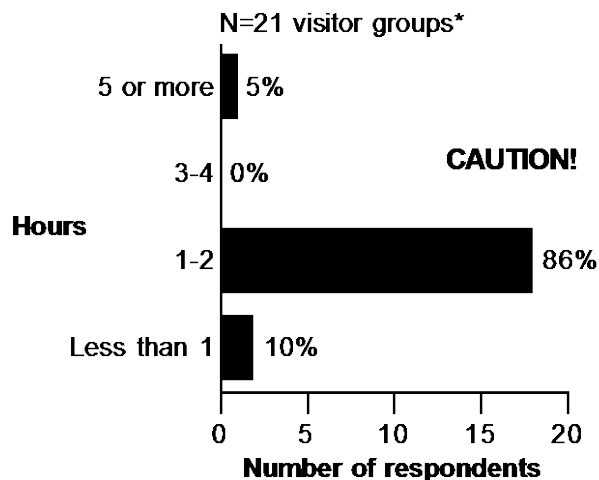


Figure 58. Desired program length for living history/costumed interpretation

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Overnight camping trips with a ranger

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 59.

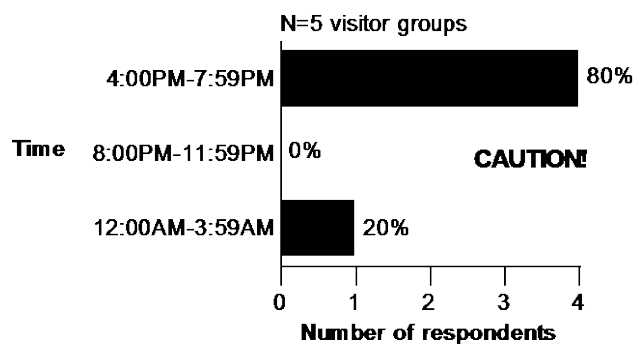


Figure 59. Desired start time for overnight camping trips with a ranger

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown in Figure 60.

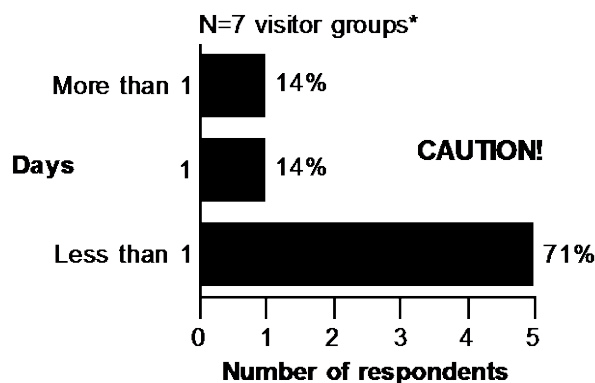


Figure 60. Desired program length for overnight camping trips with a ranger

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Ranger talks/campfire program at campgrounds

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 61.

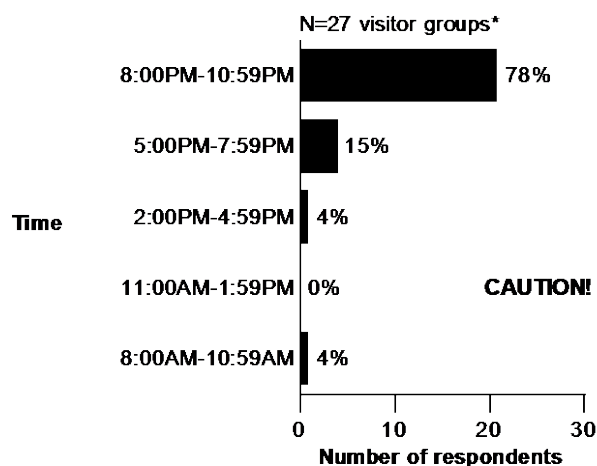


Figure 61. Desired start time for ranger talks/campfire program at campgrounds

Program length

- 72% of visitor groups would prefer a program length of 1-2 hours (see Figure 62).
- 22% would prefer a program length of less than one hour.

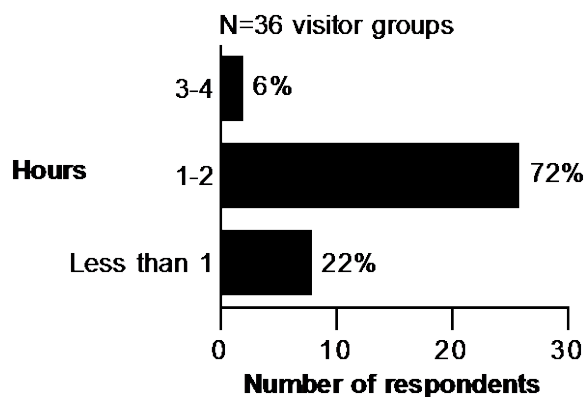


Figure 62. Desired program length for ranger talks/campfire program at campgrounds

*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 bicycling programs

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 63.

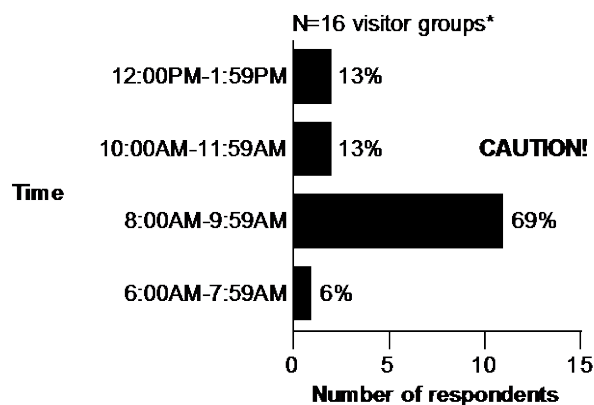


Figure 63. Desired start time for ranger-led bicycling programs

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown in Figure 64.

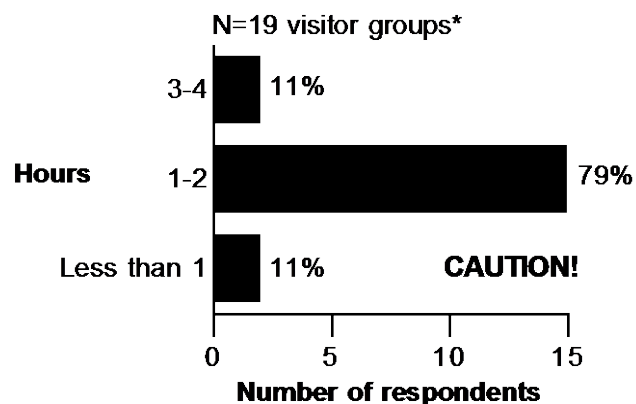


Figure 64. Desired program length for ranger-led bicycling programs

*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 canoe/kayaking programs

Desired start time

- 45% of visitor groups would prefer a start time of 8:00 AM – 9:59 AM (see Figure 65).
- 33% would prefer a start time of 10:00 AM – 11:59 AM.

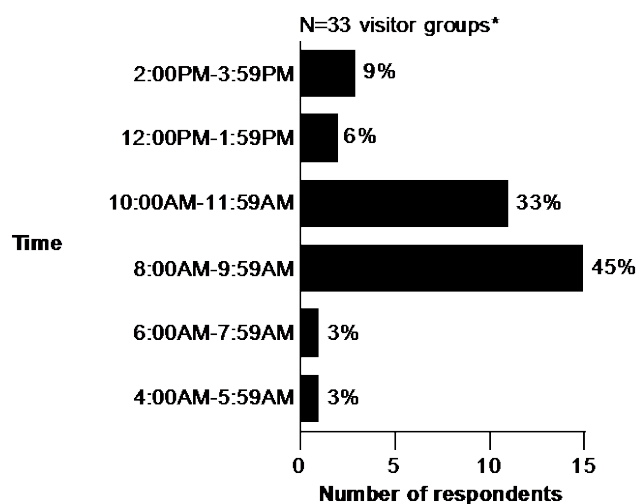


Figure 65. Desired start time for ranger-led canoe/kayaking programs

Program length

- 75% of visitor groups would prefer a program length of 1-2 hours (see Figure 66).
- 23% would prefer a program length of 3-4 hours.

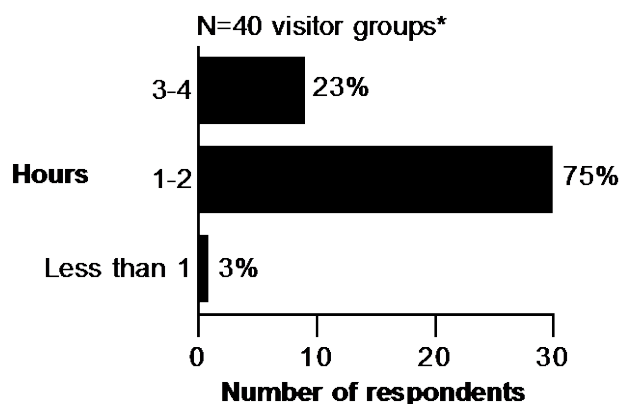


Figure 66. Desired program length for ranger-led canoe/kayaking programs

*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 outdoor hikes/walks/talks**Desired start time**

- 53% of visitor groups would prefer a start time of 8:00 AM – 9:59 AM (see Figure 67).
- 23% would prefer a start time of 10:00 AM – 11:59 AM.

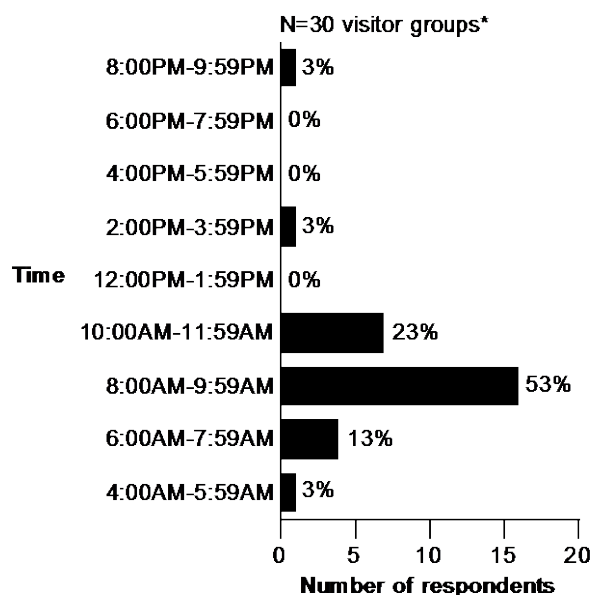


Figure 67. Desired start time for ranger-led outdoor hikes/walks/talks

Program length

- 72% of visitor groups would prefer a program length of 1-2 hours (see Figure 68).
- 13% would prefer a program length of less than 1 hour or 3-4 hours.

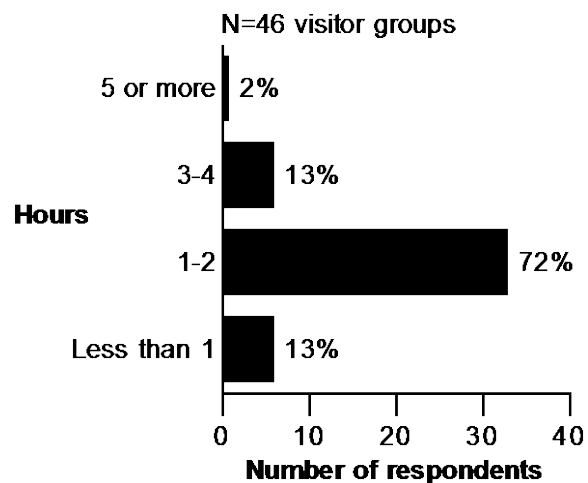


Figure 68. Desired program length for ranger-led outdoor hikes/walks/talks

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Stargazing/astronomy programs

Desired start time

- 42% of visitor groups would prefer a start time of 9:00 PM – 9:59 PM (see Figure 69).
- 39% would prefer a start time of 10:00 PM – 10:59 PM.

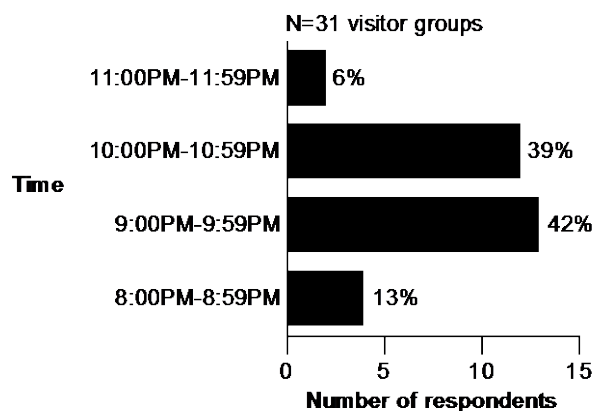


Figure 69. Desired start time for stargazing/astronomy programs

Program length

- 73% of visitor groups would prefer a program length of 1-2 hours (see Figure 70).
- 24% would prefer a program length of less than 1 hour.

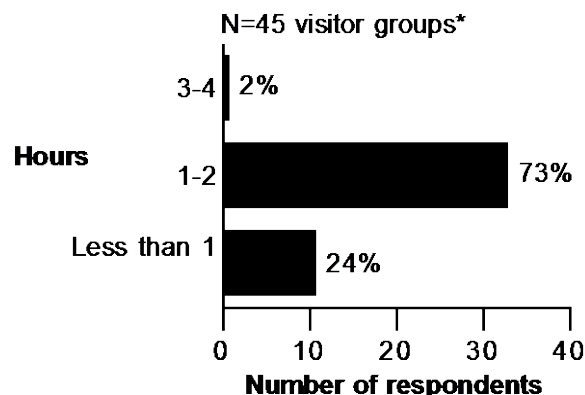


Figure 70. Desired program length for stargazing/astronomy programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Talks or seminars on various topics/Park Institute programs

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 71.

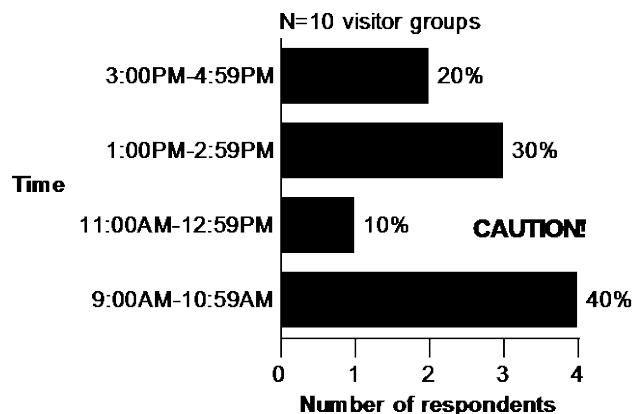


Figure 71. Desired start time for talks or seminars on various topics/Park Institute programs

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown in Figure 72.

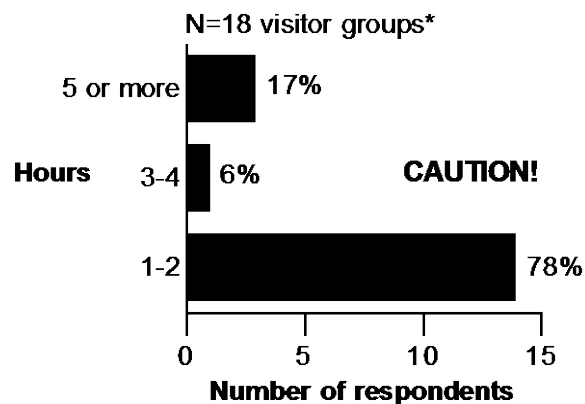


Figure 72. Desired program length for talks or seminars on various topics/Park Institute programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Other programs

Desired start time – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired start times are shown in Figure 73.

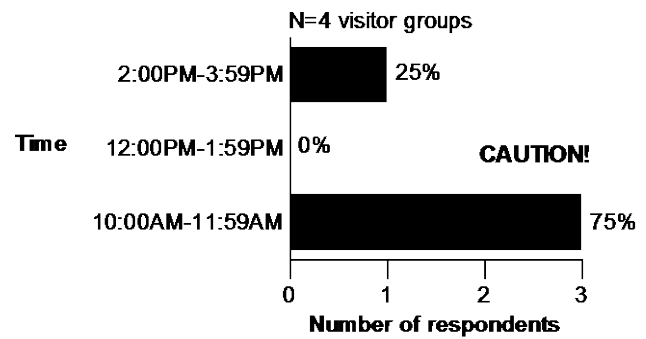


Figure 73. Desired start time for other programs

Program length – Interpret with **CAUTION!**

- The desired program lengths are shown Figure 74.

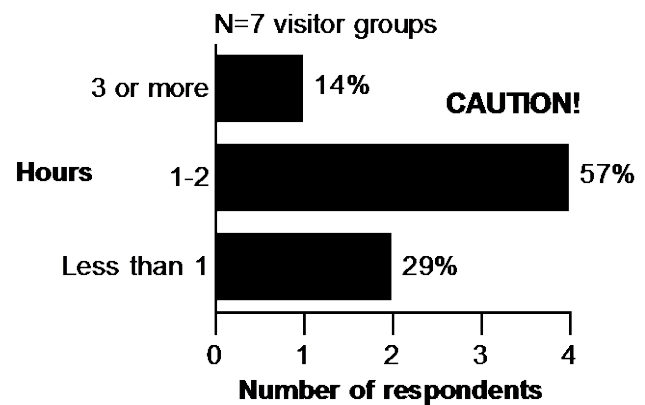


Figure 74. Desired program length for other programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 10d

How would your personal group like to be informed about the availability and schedule of ranger programs?

Results

- As shown in Figure 75, the most common ways that visitor groups would like to be informed about the availability and schedule of ranger programs were:
 - 61% Park website
 - 44% Bulletin boards/announcements
 - 36% Schedule of events flyers
- “Other” methods (5%) were:
 - Email
 - Email listserv
 - Family will call
 - Mail
 - Main office
 - NE State Park Website
 - www.parkstamps.org
- 54 visitor groups indicated the locations where they would like to find bulletin boards/announcements (see Table 21).
- 43 visitor groups indicated the locations where visitor groups would like to find schedule of events flyers (see Table 22).

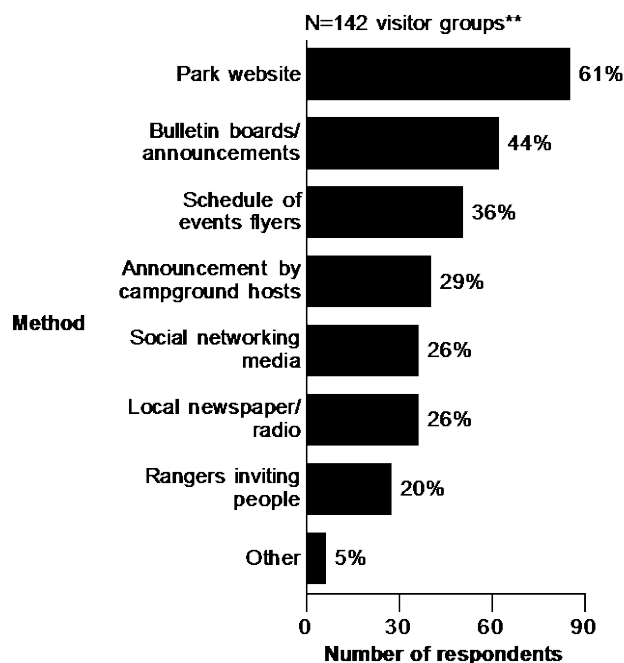


Figure 75. Methods for informing about the availability and schedule of ranger programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 21. Locations where to find bulletin boards/announcements
(N=70 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

Location	Number of times mentioned
Bathrooms/restrooms	18
Visitor Center	11
Campgrounds	8
Park office	6
Check in area	4
Park Headquarters	4
Shower house area	4
Website	2
All public areas	1
Cabins	1
Calendars	1
Chamber of Commerce	1
Check in area	1
Clay County Dock	1
Dam area	1
Local businesses	1
Meridian Pedestrian Bridge	1
Niobrara State Park entrance	1
Park ranger station	1
Territorial Capitol Building	1
Trailheads	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 22. Locations where to find schedule of events flyers
(N=55 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

Location	Number of times mentioned
Bathrooms/restrooms	6
Check-in area	5
Campgrounds	4
Park office	4
Visitor Center	4
Cabins	2
Hotels	2
Hy-Vee	2
Main office	2
Park entrance	2
Park Headquarters	2
Shower house area	2
Bathrooms/restrooms at beaches	1
Bulletin board at campground	1
Clay County Dock	1
Dakota Territorial Museum Arts Association Gar Hall	1
Education Center	1
Email	1
Entrance kiosk	1
Home address	1
Lewis and Clark Resort Cabins	1
Local area	1
Mailings	1
Main bulletin board	1
Niobrara State Park entrance	1
USD	1
Various locations	1
Wal-Mart	1
Website	1
Welcome center	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Preferred topics to learn on future visit

Question 11

If you were to visit Missouri National Recreational River in the future, which topics would your personal group be most interested in learning about?

Results

- 74% of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park on a future visit (see Figure 76).
- As shown in Figure 77, among those visitor groups that were interested in learning about the park on a future visit, the most common topics were:

72% Birds and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, etc.
 64% Early exploration, trade, and settlement along the Missouri River, including the Steamboat Era, Lewis & Clark Expedition, homesteading, etc.
 46% Variety of recreational opportunities and activities available
 46% Native American cultures of the area – current and past

- “Other” topics (3%) were:

Archery
 Arts and crafts
 Children’s activities
 Dog walking area
 Fishing
 Invasive species
 Pottery

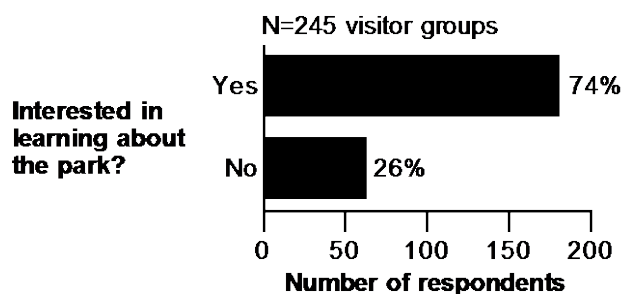


Figure 76. Visitor groups that were interested in learning about the park on a future visit

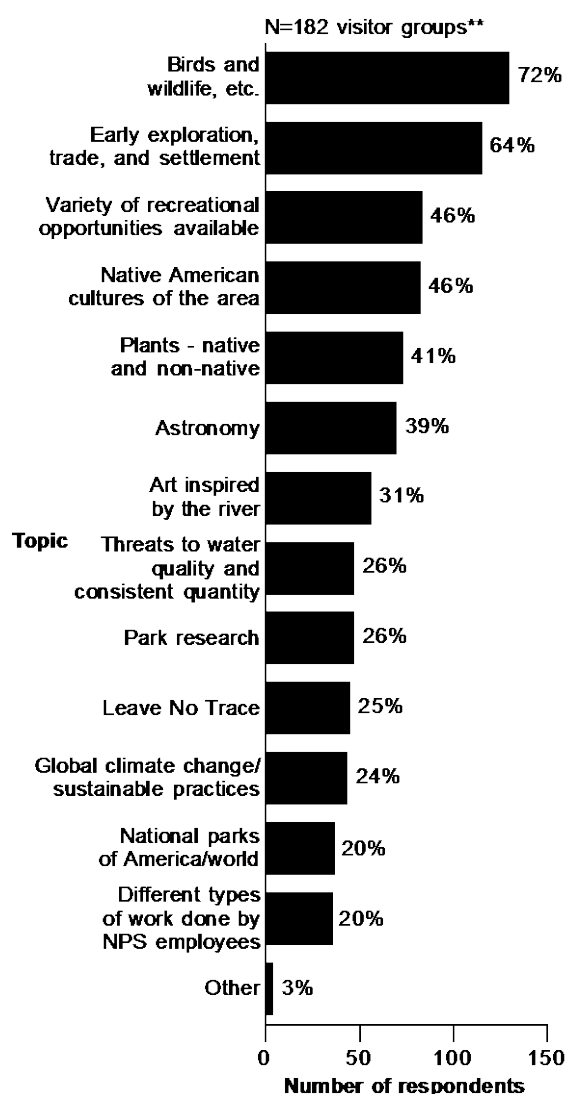


Figure 77. Topics to learn on future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Overall Quality

Question 23

Overall, how would you rate the quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities provided to your personal group at Missouri National Recreational River during this visit?

Results

- 94% of visitor groups rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities as “very good” or “good” (see Figure 78).
- Less than 1% rated the quality as “poor.”
- No visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor.”

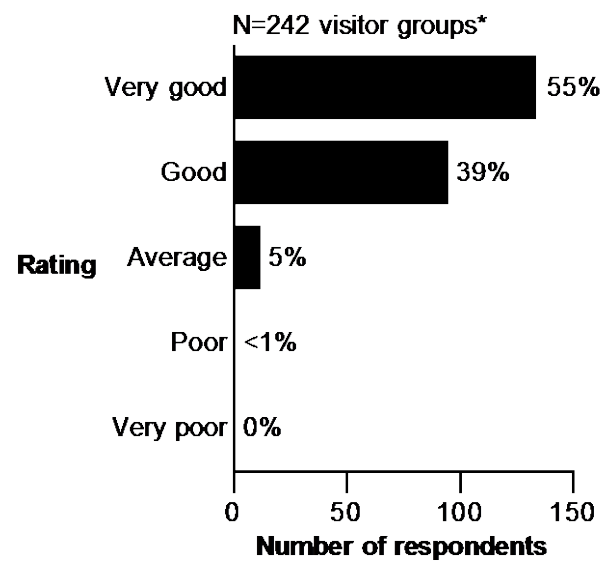


Figure 78. Overall quality rating of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitor Comment Summaries

Planning for the future

Question 21

If you were a manager planning for the future of Missouri National Recreational River, what would your personal group propose? (Open-ended)

Results

- 32% of visitor groups (N=83) responded to this question.
- Table 23 shows a summary of visitor comments. The transcribed open-ended comments can be found in the Visitor Comments section.

Table 23. Planning for the future
(N=129 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL (0%)	
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (26%)	
Kayak/canoe/boat/raft tours	7
More educational programs	7
More children's activities/programs	4
Update exhibits	2
Other comments	13
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (34%)	
More fish cleaning stations	5
Keep park clean	2
More campsites	2
Restrooms or porta-potties available year round	2
Upgrade/build a new swimming pool	2
Other comments	31
POLICY/MANAGEMENT (18%)	
Large fines for littering	6
No jet skis	2
Other comments	15
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (9%)	
Keep it as natural as possible	5
Cleaner water	3
Other comments	4
CONCESSIONS (5%)	
More rentals, e.g. fishing poles, bikes, recreation equipment	3
Other comments	3
General (9%)	
Nothing to improve	5
Keep up the good work	2
More canoe/kayak opportunities	2
Other comments	2

Additional comments

Question 22

Is there anything else your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Missouri National Recreational River? (Open-ended)

Results

- 41% of visitor groups (N=107) responded to this question.
- Table 24 shows a summary of visitor comments. The transcribed open-ended comments can be found in the Visitor Comments section.

Table 24. Additional comments

(N=196 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL (6%)	
Friendly staff	8
Helpful staff	3
Other comment	1
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (13%)	
Excellent exhibits	3
Excellent visitor center	3
Enjoyed exhibits	2
Enjoyed visitor center	2
Learned a lot	2
Very educational	2
Other comments	11
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (17%)	
Park is clean	5
Mini-lodges were fantastic	3
Excellent facilities	2
Excellent visitor center	2
Restrooms/shower rooms need better ventilation	2
Other comments	19
POLICY/MANAGEMENT (10%)	
Comments	20
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (4%)	
Comments	7
CONCESSIONS (1%)	
Comments	2

Table 24. Additional comments (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
GENERAL (49%)	
Enjoyed visit	27
Frequent visitor	9
Beautiful park	6
Repeat visitor	6
Thank you	5
Enjoyed nature	4
Excellent park	4
Keep up the good work	4
Resident of area	4
Will return	4
Beautiful scenic views	3
Unplanned visit	3
Enjoyed camping	2
Other comments	16

Question 21

If you were a manager planning for the future of Missouri National Recreational River, what would you and personal group recommend or propose? (Open-ended)

- A better room and seating for classes that are offered
- A few more recreational and educational programs for kids and adults
- A fish cleaning station at the Verdel boat ramp
- Air conditioning, lawn flamingos, convenience store
- Attend educational programs, example living history
- Ban of motorized boating!
- Better docks and boat ramps
- Boating, exploring more of the parks and dam
- Camping at Ponca State Park
- Canoeing, kayaking, tours of Missouri River by Park Staff
- Charter boat trips, most of us have no way to see the river in total
- Clean shoreline daily in morning
- Cleaner water, shade near the beaches, air pump-up areas
- Cleaner water coming from the James and Vermillion River into the Missouri River
- Community, volunteer based restoration and preservation program
- Continue development - as we noticed in building and activities - while maintaining natural quiet
- Crack down on littering - it's done on purpose - stiff fines or community service
- Dog walking area, more 50 amp camping pads, add additional campsites (modern) to the upper level
- Don't spend millions on birds, to have it washed away by nature! God controls it. Cycle of life.
- Easier camping reservations
- Education on repelling insects at a campsite (most notably - biting deer flies)
- Educational programs
- Enclosed fish cleaning station
- Environmental awareness & education, cultural awareness & activities, engage families to enhance visits/experiences
- Everything was great!
- Everything, visit everything
- Film or slideshow
- Fishing
- Fix the roads! Finish kitchen at cookout shelter for buffalo feeds at Niobara State Park. Programs after cookouts or late afternoon. All programs lasting no longer than one hour.
- Get more natives in the area involved in telling their histories and perspectives
- Get the word out. It is a great recreational area, but a little distance from some of larger cities like Omaha - letting more people know means more visitors.
- Have an archery class for kids a day. Have classes on how to clean fish.
- Have live music concerts
- I am just one person, not a group
- I feel that everything has been done in Ponca that can be done
- I recommend tearing down the Meridian Bridge!
- Improve playground for small children
- It would be very difficult to think of anything to improve this recreational area
- Kayak tours/rentals, sandbar camping, no jet skis or ATV's allowed

- Keep campgrounds updated
- Keep it as it is - well cared for, peaceful place
- Keep it as natural as possible. Work on bank stabilization and plant native plants and flowers on edges.
- Keep it clean so future generations can get a most accurate state of nature
- Keep jet skis off. Maintain wild and scenic.
- Keep on the same course
- Keep rivers clean
- Keep the river in its natural state
- Keep the river natural
- Keep things simple
- Keep up the good work! Raft trips
- Large fines for littering
- Large, easy-to-read signs maybe flashing - \$1,000 fine for littering and enforce it
- Less government experiments with water levels of river
- Longer stay, 1 mini lodge at Ponca instead of 2 for our group
- Longer swim hours, outdoor picnic pavilions
- Make people pay fines for leaving trash at campsites and along the shores of water areas
- Manage water for SD not southern states
- More art galleries
- More boat ramps - canoes, kayaks, paddle boats
- More campsites
- More fishing locations, upgrade the pool
- More garage cans along bike trail and below dam in Yankton
- More info at the KOA campground
- More kayaking, update railings, update stairs to old oak tree, lower prices
- More kids activities
- More lodging (updated)
- More nature programs for kids - Ponca is our favorite but we were disappointed with the decreased level of programs. Seemed to be overtaken by shooting (NRA).
- More park stamps, fossil info and stargazing opportunities
- More parking at ramps, place to dump unused minnows, better marking of boat hazards, more fish cleaning stations
- More play ground equipment, bike rentals, Frisbee golf
- More rentals - fishing poles, bikes, rec equipment
- None
- None
- Nothing
- People working not wasting time - improve the cleanness of bathrooms (cotton wood)
- Please keep everything as natural as possible
- Public access to a much of the area as possible. Need fish cleaning stations
- Radio/media guided tour along the length of the river to highlight attractions/features
- Rangers at visitors center should view exhibits, films, with fresh eyes. Exhibits interesting, but need spicing up. Film quality is poor. Please modernize. This is reason I filled out questionnaire.
- Riverside Park, Meridian Bridge, marina, beach

- Services are being added every year - all to the good. Hopefully tourism will increase and subsequently more services will be needed.
- Sightseeing tour on the water. So many people would like to go on water but don't have the means to do so.
- Snack/drink vending, kayak tour, ways to keep it clean
- Summer theater program outside - equity - the globe theater - Shakespeare
- The kayak rental place should have better boat launch information. Collaborating with private businesses in the area.
- The lodge cabins at Ponca State Park are lovely
- There are several lovely camping sights near Yankton along the Missouri River
- To have restrooms available in the winter months on the weekends
- Turkey Ridge Campground - shower heads were awful
- Updates to exhibits as needed
- Visitors center, trails, visit dams
- We would like to see something done towards building a new swimming pool
- Would change movies at amphitheater - more often Friday & Saturday. We stay at Chief White Crane - more programs.
- Would really like to have canoe/kayak opportunities at Ponca State Park

Question 22

Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Missouri National Recreational River? (Open-ended)

- Bathrooms at White Crane were great!
- Beautiful park. We enjoyed our visit very much. Since our trip I have recommended the park to coworkers and friends. The one exhibit we read was jarringly ethnocentric, skewed to emphasize the perspective of white explorers/settlers (opposed to that of displaced indigenous peoples). I don't recall the topic.
- Buffalo feeds with the speakers/programs are an important way to get people to the park and to find out about the history of the area
- Corp will need to do something to get rid of carp and gar, if they want bass and other species to survive!
- Dogs should be out-lawed. There was dog feces (a lot) in our site upon arrival. The amount of dog feces I see while on walks is disgusting. This NEEDS to be resolved.
- Drove along river 3 days, the exhibit at your center contained vials of water - both were muddy. Not sending a clear message. Films must be improved (quality of protection) to engage audience. This was really important. Nice gift shop. Very helpful, pleasant rangers.
- Each semester I take a group of European USD students to Ponca State Park and Yankton as an introduction to area.
- Educational signs/information regarding proper distances boats need to keep from diving flags. Also visuals of what a diving flag looks like. None of the boaters in the area knew what it was.
- Enjoyed it very much
- Enjoyed the beautiful area
- Enjoyed very much!
- Firewood was impossible to find at a "reasonable" price – scrappy pieces for \$4 highway robbery
- Fish cleaning station was nasty
- For my six year old, the visitors center was perfect. She learned a lot and enjoyed the hands-on exhibits.
- Great facilities - Lewis and Clark
- Great very clean!
- Had a great time
- Had fun and will return next year
- Happened upon park, only found park by car and stopped in visitors office
- Have a section for cultural demonstrations and storytelling. You need music. All of the topics for learning are good. We had a wonderful time!
- Have wooden benches to sit on - not steel
- I called the Yankton office and left a message but didn't get a call back. I wanted to know about camping on islands and unless the island is marked with signs, is it ok to camp there?
- I didn't like having to buy firewood, since we couldn't bring our own
- I fish on the river, no less than 5 times a week, and I love it. Wish it were better, and rod and reel use only.
- I live here. Everything is great. I walk the park daily.
- I was the driver for a friend who wanted to stop and see and reminisce. Therefore, I didn't even know I'd be coming to visit until this AM. It was hot and my friend drove me nuts. At least there was peace and quiet at Riverside Park and shade and a slight breeze to keep cool.
- I was visiting this area only because we were doing the Lewis and Clark trail from Hartford, IL to the west coast
- I'd have a supervisor review this survey - someone doesn't know how to use the copier

- It is a family annual event and we learn something new each visit
- It is always enjoyable down there
- It was a delightful experience! Ponca State Park is a beautiful gem of scenery and friendly personnel.
- It was a spur of the moment visit for us and was very informative and enjoyable
- It was more/better than we were expecting, we're going to do a more extensive Lewis and Clark trip in the future
- It was pleasant and lovely. Less man-made stuff, more nature.
- It would be great to have a fish cleaning station at the Verdel boat ramp
- It's been great. Keep up the good work - just keeps improving.
- It's like an oasis!
- Keep up the good work and enforce the laws as many people are not respectful of them
- Love Ponca and Lewis and Clark! Keep it family friendly!
- Lovely, peaceful views. Friendly ranger.
- Marking tree stumps in lake above dam
- More activities for children under six
- More time to spend in the park
- More ventilation in showers when hot
- No we love the Meridian Bridge addition
- No flies in cabin
- Our visit was lovely - thank you for keeping the river and banks healthy!
- Ponca Park is Great
- Ponca State Park is beautiful and we have enjoyed visiting it for years! The new mini-lodges are awesome!
- Ponca State Park needs more parking by camper. If you bring a camper and boat no room to park anywhere.
- Road repair needed bad in Niobrara park (chuck holes)
- See above, more advertisement, signs
- Stayed in a cabin in the park
- Survey is way too much, do not send again
- The camper cabins are great you should add more in this area - they are hard to reserve
- The fishing is out of this world if you put in the work and figure it out. Don't tell anyone. We catch and release 90% of what we get.
- The help in the office is very helpful and personal. Generally the park is very clean AND safe.
- The Lewis and Clark Visitor Center is set up very well with lots to see and do for all ages - good job!
- The mini lodge concept at Ponca was a homerun! Allowed for 4 families to use as a home base and then venture out to other park/MNRR activities.
- The mini lodges were fantastic. Would like to see these available in the Yankton area.
- The Missouri River is a beautiful area. The park service has done a good job in making it accessible and preserving it. Please keep up the good work and thank you.
- The park was very conducive to enjoying nature. We had a great time.
- The restrooms need better ventilation, recreational equipment rental on-site at the park
- The riverbank that I walk daily is a trash heap! Bottles, cans, dead fish - fishing line that we trip on - soon it will be unusable! I frequently carry extra bags to clean it up, but the next week it's a mess again.

- The river was full of dead carp fish due to high temperatures. I would like to see personnel picking them up. It was hard to be around it and it smelled bad. [individual also complained that question 3 was not clear " Very unclear directions and question too"]
- The visitor center is perfect and awesome
- There were leeches in the water and it was very slimy (Lake Yankton)
- This park has improved so much in the past 32 years
- Visit about every 3 years
- Warn about limited services in certain areas like gasoline sales. Great exhibits!
- We all enjoyed visiting the Lewis and Clark visitor center. The scenic views and educational exhibits were first rate.
- We always have a great time and love coming here! We come every other year and you never let us down!
- We are from Kansas City and were there to view the difference between the river at home vs. farther north
- We are not "visitors" to the river - we live 1/2 mile from it, so "frequenters" would better describe us
- We didn't realize what a wonderful recreation area you have. Encourage people to visit your website.
- We enjoy coming to visit the river once a week. We only live about twenty minutes away.
- We enjoy visiting the park system often - we feel local people take how beautiful it is for granted
- We enjoy walking all the trails
- We enjoyed the fragrance of the flowering in the spring. It is a very well-kept park and lake area.
- We enjoyed the hospitality of host. Very educational.
- We enjoyed the presentation - it would have been better if we would have had seating
- We enjoyed the visit. Everyone was very helpful. Wonderful center for learning at Lewis and Clark!
- We enjoyed the visitor center
- We enjoyed your exhibit but we just came to see what you had. Thanks. Good exhibits.
- We feel it is a great asset to the area
- We go here once a year, take advantage of programs and facilities and have a wonderful time
- We had a lot of fun taking pictures etc. It's so beautiful along the river. I enjoy the environment it's got its own soul and calming effect to us all. Thanks.
- We had a lovely visit and will return!
- We had a wonderful time. The units were very clean. Staff was friendly and place was beautiful.
- We have camped many times near MNRR. We have enjoyed every time. Everything is clean, friendly staff.
- We have lived close to the park since it was organized
- We kayak often and make trips to splash in water. We spend many meal times by river.
- We like camping along the Missouri River. Seem hard to get reservation unless you plan 90 days ahead. It's the best place to camp.
- We live in Sacramento, CA and were in Yankton for three nights only. It was very hot and we would have spent more time out of doors. If we lived in the area we would certainly take advantage of this wonderful resource.
- We love camping here and always have a great time
- We loved it. The river is a great place.
- We really enjoy the area - I've been coming up here since I was a baby and now I can bring my child to enjoy the outdoors.
- We thoroughly enjoyed the trip. Excellent facilities and wonderful people.

- We walk the river every day for our exercise. We love the trees and watching the river and the fisherman. When our boys come home from Minnesota and Kansas City we always go down for riverfront days.
- We wanted to ride horses but tried to get tickets day of but tickets were limited because of heat we are glad of it to protect the horses but went to look at the horses and I have been around horses my whole life and DID NOT feel their hooves were in good condition at all. (from 13) Father is elderly had to get in cabin with steps. Wanted to fish on river, not really a place carved out for fishing. Was in park but alongside river wish they had docks reaching out further in water to get past debris and rocks and stuff.
- We were just passing through the area and was intrigued by the interesting architecture/building on the bluff and decided to stop. Not a very appropriate candidate for this survey!
- We were the spouses of a college reunion and enjoyed our quiet time at the river
- We/I would like to thank you for a very clean, quiet fishing trip with my grandsons. The pond at Ponca State Park is a perfect spot to fish with them.
- Would be interested in attending programs any time, we're retired. We are doing the great park pursuit. That was our one purpose for visiting. But as we left we decided that this is definitely a place to return to. We actually live full time in a motor home - this would be a wonderful place to spend a couple of days.
- You rangers were very nice to us, thank you!

Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



Social Science Division
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
Visitor Services Project

Missouri National Recreational River Visitor Study

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 163 MOSCOW ID

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE



VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT
PARK STUDIES UNIT
COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES
UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO
875 PERIMETER DRIVE
MOSCOW ID 83843-9960



b) What is the race of each member of your personal group? Please mark (●) **one or more** for each group member.

	Yourself	Member #2	Member #3	Member #4	Member #5	Member #6	Member #7
American Indian or Alaska Native	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Asian	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Black or African American	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
White	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

21. If you were a manager planning for the future of Missouri National Recreational River, what would your personal group recommend or propose?

22. Is there anything else your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Missouri National Recreational River?

23. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the facilities, services, and recreational opportunities provided to your personal group at Missouri National Recreational River during this visit? Please mark (●) **one**.

Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very good
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thank you for your help! Please seal the questionnaire in the postage-paid envelope provided and drop it in any U.S. mailbox.

♻️ Printed on recycled paper

United States Department of the Interior



NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Missouri National Recreational River
508 East Second Street
Yankton, SD 57078

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Summer 2012

Dear Visitor:

Thank you for participating in this study. Our goal is to learn about the expectations, opinions, and interests of visitors to Missouri National Recreational River. This information will assist us in our efforts to better manage this park and to serve you.

This questionnaire is only being given to a select number of visitors, so your participation is very important. It should only take about 20 minutes to complete.

When your visit is over, please complete this questionnaire. Seal it in the postage-paid envelope provided and drop it in any U.S. mailbox.

If you have any questions, please contact Lena Le, NPS, Visitor Services Project Assistant Director, Park Studies Unit, College of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 441139, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83844-1139, phone: 208-885-2585, email: lenale@uidaho.edu.

We appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Steven Mietz

Steven Mietz
Superintendent

- c) What **services** in the park need to be provided in languages other than English?
Please specify a service or mark (●) "None."

☐ Service (Specify) _____ ☐ None

18. For your personal group on this visit, please provide the following information. If you do not know the answer, please leave it blank.

c) **Frequency of visits to Missouri NRR**
(Please mark **one** for each member)

a) Current age	b) U.S. ZIP code or name of country other than U.S.	Frequency of visits to Missouri NRR				
		First visit	About daily	About weekly	About monthly	Several times a year
Yourself	_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Member #2	_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Member #3	_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Member #4	_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Member #5	_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Member #6	_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Member #7	_____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

19. a) For you only, which category best represents your annual **household** income?
Please mark (●) **one**.

☐ Less than \$24,999 ☐ \$50,000-\$74,999 ☐ \$150,000-\$199,999
☐ \$25,000-\$34,999 ☐ \$75,000-\$99,999 ☐ \$200,000 or more
☐ \$35,000-\$49,999 ☐ \$100,000-\$149,999 ☐ Do not wish to answer

b) How many people are in your household? _____ Number of people

20. a) Are members of your personal group Hispanic or Latino? Please mark (●) **one**
for each group member.

	Yourself #2	Member #3	Member #4	Member #5	Member #6	Member #7
Yes, Hispanic or Latino	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
No, not Hispanic or Latino	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

DIRECTIONS

At the end of your visit:

1. Please have the selected individual (at least 16 years old) complete this questionnaire.
2. Answer the questions carefully since each question is different.
3. For questions that use circles (○), please mark your answer by filling in the circle with **black or blue ink**. Please do not use pencil.

Like this: ● Not like this: ○
○
○
4. Seal it in the postage-paid envelope provided.
5. Drop it in a U.S. mailbox.

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: The Paperwork Reduction Act requires us to tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether or not you have to respond. This information will be used by the National Park Service as authorized by 16 U.S.C. 1a-7. We will use this information to evaluate visitor services cooperatively managed by Missouri National Recreational River. Your response is voluntary. Your name and contact information have been requested for follow-up mailing purposes only. When analysis of the questionnaire is completed, all name and address files will be destroyed and will in no way be connected with the results of this survey. A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. We estimate that it will take about 20 minutes to complete this. You may send comments concerning the burden estimates or any aspect of this information collection to: Lena Le, NPS Visitor Services Project, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, P.O. Box 441139, Moscow, ID, 83844-1139; email: lenale@uidaho.edu

Your Visit To Missouri National Recreational River

NOTE: In this questionnaire, your **personal group** is defined as you and anyone with whom you are visiting the park, such as a spouse, family, friends, etc. This does not include the larger group that you might be traveling with, such as a school, church, scout, or tour group.

Missouri National Recreational River is comprised of two free-flowing stretches of the Missouri River. The park protects a total of 126 river miles and adjacent shoreline between Fort Randall Dam near Pickstown, South Dakota and Ponca State Park in northeast Nebraska, **excluding Lewis and Clark Lake (the reservoir behind Gavins Point Dam), which is managed by South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks.** The park also includes the last eight miles of Verdigre Creek where it flows into the lower Niobrara River and the last 20 miles of the lower Niobrara River where it flows into the mainstem Missouri River near Niobrara State Park and Niobrara, Nebraska.

1. a) Prior to your visit, was your personal group aware that a recreational area called Missouri National Recreational River existed?

☐ Yes ☐ No → Go to Question 2

b) Prior to receiving this questionnaire, was your personal group aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a unit of the National Park Service?

☐ Yes ☐ No

c) Prior to receiving this questionnaire, was your personal group aware that Missouri National Recreational River is a part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Systems?

☐ Yes ☐ No

2. The National Park Service offers a variety of extended programs at Missouri National Recreational River that may require more than a one-time commitment. Please mark (●) **all** programs in which you would be interested in participating.

☐ Not interested in extended programs → Go to Question 3

☐ Citizen science programs (learning how to use observation skills/equipment and helping do park science, such as helping with bird/butterfly/wildlife counts, counting native/non-native plants, etc.)

☐ Community programs

☐ Volunteer activities

☐ Workshops/seminars/Park Institute programs

☐ Other (Please specify) _____

14. On this visit, was your personal group part of one of the following types of organized groups? Please mark (●) **one** for each.
- a) Commercial guided tour group ☐ Yes ☐ No
- b) School/educational group ☐ Yes ☐ No
- c) Other group (scouts, work, church, etc.) ☐ Yes ☐ No
- d) If you were with one of these organized groups, about how many people, including yourself, were in this group?

_____ Number of people in organized group

15. a) On this visit, which kind of personal group (not guided tour/school/other organized group) were you with? Please mark (●) **one**.

☐ Alone ☐ Friends

☐ Family ☐ Family and friends

☐ Other (Please specify) _____

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

_____ Number of people in personal group

c) On this visit, how many vehicles did your personal group use to arrive at and to visit the park? Please write "0" if you did not arrive by vehicle or use a vehicle to visit the park.

_____ Number of vehicles used to **arrive** at the park

_____ Number of vehicles used to **visit** the park

16. For you only, what is the highest level of education you have completed? Please mark (●) **one**.

☐ Some high school ☐ Bachelor's degree

☐ High school diploma/GED ☐ Graduate degree

☐ Some college

17. When visiting an area such as Missouri National Recreational River, which language(s) do most members of your personal group prefer to use for the following?

a) Speaking ☐ English ☐ Other (Specify) _____

b) Reading ☐ English ☐ Other (Specify) _____

12. Please mark (●) **all** the communities along the Missouri River from Spencer, NE and Picktown, SD to Sioux City, IA in which your personal group obtained support services on this visit.

☐ Did not use any services in listed communities → **Go to Question 13**

Service	Community				
	From Picktown to Tabor, SD	In Yankton, SD	From Gayville, SD to Sioux City, IA	From Spencer to Crofton, NE	From St. Helena to Ponca, NE
Buy gasoline	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Buy groceries	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Buy photography/art supplies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Buy recreational equipment/supplies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Eat a meal	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Guide services (hunting, fishing, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Obtain travel/tourist information	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Shop	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stay overnight in a campground/RV park	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Stay overnight in a motel/hotel/B&B/etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Use sport facilities (golf course, archery range, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Visit art gallery/museums	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other (Please specify below)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. a) On this visit, did anyone in your personal group have difficulty accessing or participating in any park activities or services?

☐ Yes ☐ No → **Go to Question 14**

b) If YES, in which park activities or services did the person(s) have difficulty accessing or participating during this visit? Please be specific.

3. a) Prior to this visit, how did your personal group obtain information about Missouri National Recreational River? Please mark (●) **all** that apply in column (a).

b) If you were to visit Missouri National Recreational River in the future, how would your personal group prefer to obtain information about the park? Please mark (●) **all** that apply in column (b).

a) **Prior to this visit** b) **Prior to future visits**

☐ Did not obtain information prior to visit → **Go to part b of this question**

☐ Friends/relatives/word of mouth ☐

☐ Inquiry to park via phone, mail, or email ☐

☐ Local businesses (motels, restaurants, outfitters, etc.) ☐

☐ Missouri National Recreational River Headquarters in Yankton, SD ☐

☐ Missouri National Recreational River website: www.nps.gov/mnrr ☐

☐ Other websites and/or social media (Please specify below) ☐

This visit _____ Future visits _____

☐ Newspaper/magazine articles ☐

☐ Other organizations' visitor centers (e.g., Corps of Engineers, Yankton Chamber of Commerce, Nebraska or South Dakota State Park, Corps of Discovery Welcome Center off Hwy 81 in Nebraska, etc.) ☐

☐ Previous visits ☐

☐ School class/program ☐

☐ Television/radio programs/DVDs ☐

☐ Travel guides/tour books (AAA, etc.) ☐

☐ Other (Please specify below) ☐

This visit _____ Future visits _____

c) From the sources marked in column (a), did your personal group receive the type of information about the park that you needed?

☐ No ☐ Yes → **Go to Question 4**

d) If NO, what type of park information did your personal group need that was not available? Please be specific.

4. On this visit, how much **total** time (both on land and on the river) did your personal group spend visiting Missouri National Recreational River? Please list partial hours or days as $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, or $\frac{3}{4}$.

_____ Number of **hours** (if less than 24 hours)

-OR-

_____ Number of **days** (if 24 hours or more)

5. Missouri National Recreational River was established to preserve and protect the free-flowing river and its outstanding scenic, natural, cultural, historic, fish and wildlife values, while providing for public enjoyment. On this visit, how important was the protection of the following attributes/resources to your personal group? Please mark (●) **one** answer for **each** attribute/resource.

Attribute/resource	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
Clean air/visibility	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Clean water	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Cultural features	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Dark, starry night sky	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Educational opportunities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Geologic features	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Historic landscapes/structures	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Historic towns	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Natural quiet/sounds of nature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Pastoral/agricultural landscapes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Plant diversity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recreational opportunities (floating, hiking, camping, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Scenic views and natural/wild landscapes	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Solitude	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Wildlife (including fish)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

- d) How would your personal group like to be informed about the availability and schedule of ranger programs? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.

- ☐ Announcement by campground hosts
- ☐ Bulletin boards/announcements **Where?** _____
- ☐ Local newspaper/radio
- ☐ Park website www.nps.gov/mnrr
- ☐ Rangers inviting people while walking through campgrounds and on trails
- ☐ Schedule of events flyers **Where?** _____
- ☐ Social networking media (Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, etc.)
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

11. If you were to visit Missouri National Recreational River in the future, which **topics** would your personal group be most interested in learning about? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.

- ☐ Not interested in learning about the park → **Go to Question 12**
- ☐ Art inspired by the river – music, drawing, poetry, writing, etc.
- ☐ Astronomy
- ☐ Birds and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, etc.
- ☐ Different types of work done by National Park Service employees
- ☐ Early exploration, trade, and settlement along the Missouri River, including the Steamboat Era, Lewis & Clark Expedition, homesteading, etc.
- ☐ Global climate change/sustainable practices
- ☐ Leave No Trace/low-impact recreational and camping skills
- ☐ National parks of America/world
- ☐ Native American cultures of the area – current and past
- ☐ Park research/scientific studies conducted in the park
- ☐ Plants – native and non-native
- ☐ Threats to water quality and consistent quantity
- ☐ Variety of recreational opportunities and activities available
- ☐ Other (Please specify) _____

10. a) If you were to visit the park in the future, please mark (●) **all** the types of ranger programs that your personal group would be interested in attending.

b) For the programs that your personal group would be interested in attending, **what time of the day** should the program start? Please list **one** for each program.

c) For the programs that your personal group would be interested in attending, what would be the **most suitable program length**? Please list **one** for each program.

a) Ranger program	b) Start time	c) Length
☐ Not interested in any ranger programs → Go to Question 11		
☐ Art & Artists in the Park programs		
☐ Citizen Science/Service Learning programs		
☐ Cultural demonstrations & storytelling – dancing, drumming, weaving, beading, pottery, etc.		
☐ Fishing clinics		
☐ Junior Ranger/children's activity programs		
☐ Letterboxing/geocaching		
☐ Living history/costumed interpretation		
☐ Overnight camping trips with a ranger		
☐ Ranger talks/campfire program at campgrounds		
☐ Ranger-led bicycling programs		
☐ Ranger-led canoe/kayaking programs		
☐ Ranger-led outdoor hikes/walks/talks		
☐ Stargazing/astronomy programs		
☐ Talks or seminars on various topics/Park Institute programs by scientists or subject matter experts – one to multiple days		
☐ Other (Please specify below)		

6. a) As you were planning this trip to Missouri National Recreational River, which activities did your personal group **expect** to include on this visit? Please mark (●) **all** that apply in column (a).

b) On this visit, in which activities did your personal group **actually participate** within Missouri National Recreational River? Please mark (●) **all** that apply in column (b).

a) Expected activities	b) Activities done on this visit	Activity
☐	☐	Attending ranger-led talks/programs
☐	☐	Archery
☐	☐	Bicycling
☐	☐	Camping
☐	☐	Creative arts (photography, painting, writing, etc.)
☐	☐	Enjoying natural quiet
☐	☐	Fishing
☐	☐	Hiking
☐	☐	Horseback riding
☐	☐	Hunting
☐	☐	Motorized boating
☐	☐	Non-motorized boating (canoeing, kayaking, etc.)
☐	☐	Picnicking
☐	☐	Recreational sports (Frisbee, disc golf, etc.)
☐	☐	Researching/studying history
☐	☐	Swimming/playing in the water
☐	☐	Viewing wildlife/birds
☐	☐	Other – Expected (Specify) _____
☐	☐	Other – Done on visit (Specify) _____

c) Which **one** of the above activities was **most important** to your personal group on this visit? Please list only **one** response.

7. a) Were there any activities that your personal group wanted to do but were unable to do while visiting Missouri National Recreational River?

☐ Yes ☐ No → Go on to Question 8

b) If YES, what were they? Please be specific. _____

c) What prevented you from participating in these activities? Please mark (●) all that apply.

- ☐ Financial constraints
- ☐ Time constraints
- ☐ Facilities for the activities were not available
- ☐ Services for the activities were not available
- ☐ Were not aware of what activities were offered at the park
- ☐ Other reasons (Please specify) _____
- ☐ River conditions
- ☐ Weather conditions

8. The park and its partners have installed a series of outdoor exhibits at boat ramps, along walking trails, and at overlooks along the Missouri National Recreational River that are maintained by the National Park Service. The park also has indoor exhibits located in the Lewis and Clark Visitor Center at Gavins Point Dam, the Chamber of Commerce/Welcome Center in Yankton, and the Missouri National Recreational River Education Center at Ponca State Park.

a) For this visit to Missouri National Recreational River, please list all the exhibits that your personal group viewed/read. Please use the map on the next page to help identify the exhibit's location. **For outside exhibits, please only include those with the park's name and/or a National Park Service Arrowhead at the top.**

☐ Did not view/read any exhibits → Go to Question 9

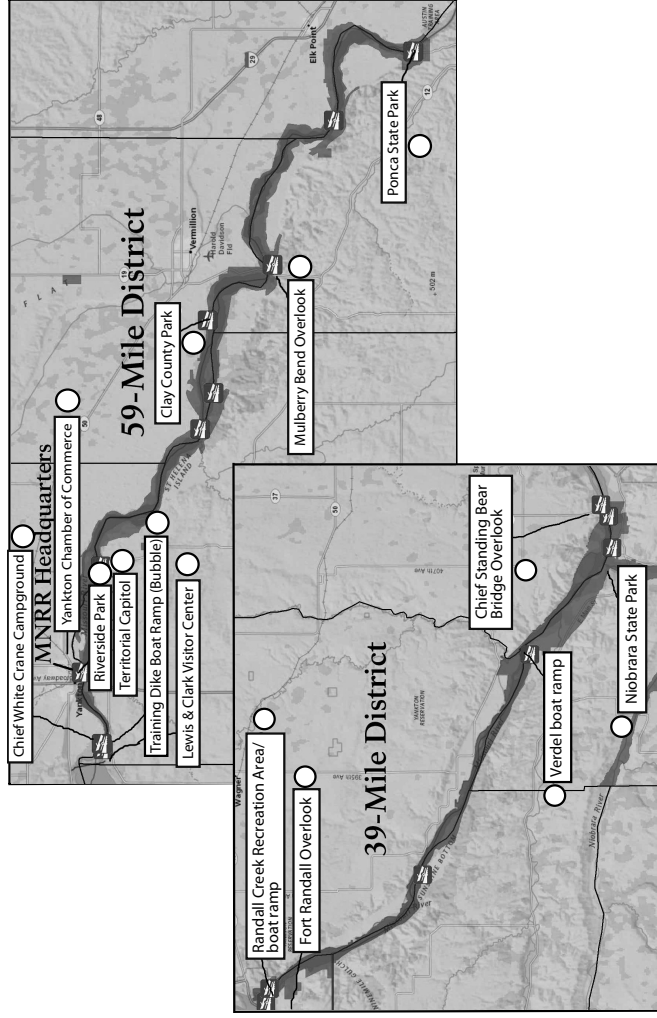
b) Please rate the quality of the exhibits that your personal group viewed/read. Please mark (●) one for each exhibit viewed/read.

a) Exhibit location and topic	Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very good
Location: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Topic: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Topic: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Location: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Topic: _____	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

c) How could the exhibits be improved to enhance your experience? For each exhibit your personal group viewed, please specify its location and topic, and your recommendations.

Exhibit location and topic	Recommendations for improvement
Location: _____ Topic: _____	
Location: _____ Topic: _____	
Location: _____ Topic: _____	
d) Please suggest topics to add or delete, or specific types of exhibits that your personal group would find interesting.	

9. On the map below, please mark (●) all the locations in Missouri National Recreational River that your personal group visited.



Appendix 2: Additional Analysis

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn 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?

The VSP database website (<http://vsp.uidaho.edu>) allows data searches for comparisons of data from one or more parks.

For more information please contact:

Visitor Services Project
Park Studies Unit
College of Natural Resources
University of Idaho
875 Perimeter Drive MS 1139
Moscow, ID 83844-1139

Phone: 208-885-2585
Fax: 208-885-4261
Email: lenale@uidaho.edu
Website: <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>

Appendix 3: Decision Rules for Checking Non-response Bias

There are several methods for checking non-response bias. However, the most common way is to use some demographic indicators to compare between respondents and non-respondents (Dey 1997; Salant and Dillman 1994; Dillman and Carley-Baxter 2000; Dillman, 2007; Stoop 2004). In this study, we used five variables - group type, group size, age of the group member (at least 16 years old) completing the survey, whether the park was the primary destination for the visit, and visitor's place of residence in proximity to the park to check for non-response bias.

A Chi-square tests were used to detect the difference in the response rates among different group types, whether the park was the primary destination for this visit, and visitor's place of residence and proximity to the park. The hypothesis was that there is no significant difference across different categories (or groups) between respondents and non-respondents. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference between respondents and non-respondents is judged to be insignificant.

Two independent-sample T-tests were used to test the differences between respondent and non-respondent average age and group size. The p-values represent the significance levels of these tests. If p-value is greater than 0.05, the two groups are judged to be insignificantly different.

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

1. Respondents from different group types are equally represented;
2. Respondents and non-respondents are not significantly different in term of proximity from their home to the park;
3. Respondents and non-respondents are not significantly different in term of reason for visiting the park;
4. Average age of respondents – average age of non-respondents = 0; and
5. Average group size of respondents – average group size of non-respondents = 0.

As shown in Tables 3 to 6, the p-values for respondent/non-respondent comparisons for age, group size, and distance travel to the park are less than 0.05, indicating significant differences between respondents and non-respondents. The results indicate some biases may occur due to non-response. Visitors at younger age ranges (especially 40 years old and younger), visitors traveling in smaller groups (4 people or less), and visitors who live within 50 miles of Yankton may be underrepresented in the survey results. Results of the study in this report only reflect the simple frequencies. Inferences of the survey results should be weighted to counterbalance the effects of nonresponse bias.

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