



2024 Socioeconomic Research of National Park Service Visitors

Report on 2024 Data Collection (Revised)



A park ranger leads a family-friendly patio program at White Sands National Park, engaging visitors with hands-on educational activities.

NPS

2024 Socioeconomic Research of National Park Service Visitors: Report on 2024 Data Collection (Revised)

Science Report NPS/SR—2026/435

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Please cite this publication as:

Otak Inc., RRC Associates Inc., University of Montana, and GAIA Environmental Consulting LLC. 2026. 2024 Socioeconomic Research of National Park Service Visitors: Report on 2024 Data Collection (Revised). Science Report NPS/SR—2026/435. National Park Service, Fort Collins, Colorado. <https://doi.org/10.36967/2318547>

This publication replaces the version of this report published in May 2026.

The National Park Service Science Report Series disseminates information, analysis, and results of scientific studies and related topics concerning resources and lands managed by the National Park Service. The series supports the advancement of science, informed decisions, and the achievement of the National Park Service mission.

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Abstract

A strong mandate and need for socioeconomic monitoring have been expressed in the National Park Service (NPS) strategic goals for science, in statements by NPS leadership, and in various official reports. Since socioeconomic monitoring began in 2022, the NPS has conducted visitor surveys at 24 parks per year across the United States and associated territories. On the ground, the study uses a two-step survey methodology to capture a representative sample of park visitors during the peak season of each respective park unit. This process includes (1) an on-site intercept survey conducted via tablet, and (2) a post-trip survey (completed either by mail-back or online) for more in-depth trip details. The types of data collected include visitor demographics, trip characteristics/planning, and experience evaluations. Results are organized by these two survey instruments and are aimed at assisting park managers. For the 2024 report, data from the first three years of data collection in the SEM are combined and weighted to display a more comprehensive set of aggregate results. This study shows the importance of data consistency on a national scale and the utility of aggregated results for the entire agency.

Introduction

Social science research has become increasingly recognized as a crucial component of park planning, amplifying its significance for the National Park Service (NPS). With the ever-changing landscape of visitation and a desire to provide transformative visitor experiences, understanding the needs and expectations of the visiting public has become more important than ever. The agency seeks to provide the highest quality visitor experience while also protecting the important natural and cultural resources that make these sites special.

A pilot visitor study was conducted in 2015/2016 across selected park units throughout the United States. Building upon the insights gleaned from the pilot study, the Socioeconomic Monitoring Program (SEM) Visitor Survey has been carried out each year starting in 2022 at 24 NPS units across the country. The study aims to deepen understanding of visitor demographics and characteristics of National Park Service Visitors.

This report contains the data and findings collected from the SEM Visitor Surveys conducted in 2024, 2023, and 2022. The study gathers data at a comprehensive agency level, addressing the informational needs of park managers throughout the National Park System. The data collected during these SEM Visitor Survey sampling periods are intended to provide park managers with data-supported insights into their visitors while enabling data analysis at the agency level and beyond for future applications.

This study collects information about visitor use, aids in finding effective management solutions, and offers insights into the visitors who experience NPS sites. The findings empower NPS managers to better comprehend visitor behaviors, inform park operations, and identify areas for enhancing the visitor experience. Moreover, these results are intended to facilitate communication and foster informed decision-making processes, both within the NPS unit and in collaboration with local partners and stakeholders.

Notably, this study does not claim to be a representative sample of the visitors across the National Park System. Rather, it is a representative sample of the National Park System itself, capturing responses based on the eight park stratifications detailed further below. Some limitations in representing all visitors across the NPS remain due to the limited ability to create additional strata due to park variations (e.g., further strata by geographic regions). Each year is a subset of 24 units from a total of 378 qualifying park units that are selected to capture variance in stratification and park type. With this three-year combined approach, a total of 72 parks across the System are included within the dataset. This approach results in the most robust dataset produced from the SEM to date.

This report does not include visitor spending data, despite it being collected as part of the study. For detailed information regarding visitor spending, please refer to the Visitor Spending Effects report where this data is presented. The research was carried out by a team including Otak, Inc., RRC Associates, Inc., the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana, and GAIA Environmental Consulting.

Methods

The following section describes the set of approaches applied to the SEM Visitor Survey from 2022 through 2024. From park selection to on-the-ground intercepting techniques, the methods were based on rigorous research dating back to the original 2015/2016 pilot. Modifications to the survey design and sampling plans came as a result of this original pilot.

Park Eligibility and Stratification

Parks must meet one requirement to be considered eligible for participation in the SEM: a minimum of five years of Visitor Use Statistics (VUStats) reporting. Any park unit within the NPS that meets this minimum is considered eligible for the SEM Visitor Survey. Park selection is based on eight strata generated through filtering by two sets of park classifications, as seen below.

1. Park type (based on Congressional designation):
 - a. Natural
 - b. Recreation
 - c. Historic/Cultural - Urban (metro area more than or equal to one million in population)
 - d. Historic/Cultural - Non-urban (metro area less than one million in population)
2. Visitation size:
 - a. High visitation (top 80% of park visits within stratum)
 - b. Low visitation (bottom 20% of park visits within stratum)

Throughout the report, the phrases “NPS unit”, “unit”, or “park unit” are used to refer to NPS managed sites selected using these criteria for the SEM program.

Park Type

All eligible park units are assigned a park type based on the overarching primary congressional designation. The four park types are chosen to represent broad designation classifications of all available park types in the NPS. Sites within the “Historic/Cultural” park type are determined to be Urban or Non-urban based on the following definitions:

Urban parks are defined as: A unit where the majority (50% or more) of the site is located within an Urban Area or within a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) with a population greater than one million people. Urban Areas and MSAs are defined by the US Census Bureau.

Non-urban parks are defined as: A unit where the majority of the NPS site (50% or more) is located outside of any Urban Area or MSA with a population greater than one million people. Urban Areas and MSAs are defined by the US Census Bureau.

Visitation Magnitude

After defining park type, units are then assigned into the “high” or “low” visitation stratum based on a five-year average of VUStats data. Units in the initial pool are classified based on the year’s past five-year average of visits. Any new park additions use the most recent five years of VUStats reporting data.

1. Within each park type stratum, units were sorted in descending order by overall visitation.
2. The top-ranked parks whose combined visitation account for 80 percent of the stratum’s visitation are the “high visitation” units. The remaining parks (whose combined visitation account for 20 percent of the stratum’s visitation) are the “low visitation” units.

Park Unit Selection

From each of the eight strata, three units are randomly selected for a total of 24 parks per year out of a possible 378 qualifying park units as of 2022. This represents a subset of the 424 total National Park Service managed units (Figure 1). This list of qualifying parks will increase as more parks become eligible for inclusion within the sampling frame.

2024

1. Amistad National Recreation Area
2. Arches National Park
3. Boston National Historical Park
4. Casa Grande Ruins National Monument
5. Fort Frederica National Monument
6. Fort Larned National Historic Site
7. Grand Canyon National Park
8. Hawai’i Volcanoes National Park
9. Homestead National Historical Park
10. Indiana Dunes National Park
11. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument
12. Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park
13. Lake Mead National Recreation Area
14. Lyndon B. Johnson National Historical Park
15. Mammoth Cave National Park
16. Minute Man National Historical Park
17. Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument
18. Padre Island National Seashore
19. Point Reyes National Seashore

20. Roger Williams National Memorial
21. Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway
22. Salem Maritime National Historic Site
23. Vicksburg National Military Park
24. Wilson's Creek National Battlefield

2023

1. Aztec Ruins National Monument
2. Badlands National Park
3. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
4. Cuyahoga Valley National Park
5. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
6. Dinosaur National Monument
7. Everglades National Park
8. Federal Hall National Memorial
9. Fort Donelson National Battlefield
10. Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
11. Gauley River National Recreation Area
12. George Washington Military Park
13. Golden Gate National Recreation Area
14. Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site
15. Great Basin National Park
16. Greenbelt Park
17. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, Alaska
18. Lassen Volcanic National Park
19. Mary McLeod Bethune Council House National Historic Site
20. National Capital Parks-East
21. Prince William Forest Park
22. San Juan National Historic Site
23. Stones River National Battlefield
24. Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site

2022

1. Cape Hatteras National Seashore
2. Capitol Reef National Park
3. Catoctin Mountain Park
4. Cumberland Gap National Historical Park
5. Fort Bowie National Historic Site
6. Fort Laramie National Historic Site
7. Gateway Arch National Park
8. General Grant National Memorial
9. Grand Teton National Park
10. Guadalupe Mountains National Park
11. Isle Royale National Park
12. Korean War Veterans Memorial
13. Lake Meredith National Recreation Area
14. Martin Van Buren National Historic Site
15. Morristown National Historical Park
16. Mount Rushmore National Memorial
17. Natchez Trace Parkway
18. National Capital Parks Central
19. Niobrara National Scenic River
20. Pinnacles National Park
21. Rocky Mountain National Park
22. Thomas Edison National Historical Park
23. Thomas Jefferson Memorial
24. Vanderbilt Mansion National Historic Site

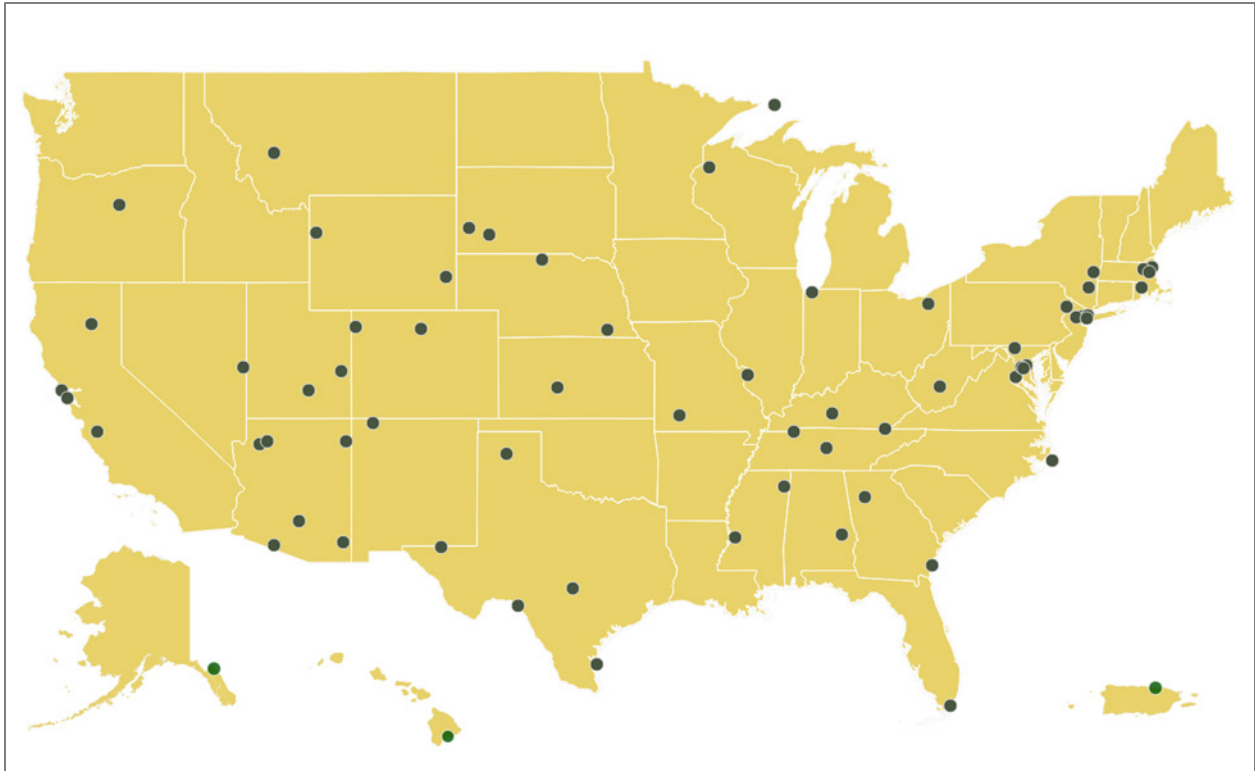


Figure 1. Map of NPS units sampled from 2022–2024.

NPS

Survey Instruments

The SEM Visitor Survey methodology is designed to capture a representative sample of visitor information, characteristics, and behavior at each sampled park unit through:

1. An onsite intercept survey conducted via tablet, and
2. A post-trip follow-up survey (mail-back or online) for full trip details.

This comprehensive approach provides the necessary information to make on-the-ground decisions in park units using the intercept survey to capture visitor responses on higher priority information, while also capturing key in-depth information on visitor spending and trip characteristics for long-term planning from the post-trip survey. Additionally, the intercept survey is designed to be brief so as not to fundamentally affect visitors' experiences. The methods also permit a larger sample to be collected on key questions of interest by asking these high priority questions during the intercept survey.

The survey instruments were developed through rigorous testing during the 2015/2016 pilot study and further refined based on results of the data collection. After the initial pilot study, question formats were modified and refined to improve respondent understanding and data quality from responses. Beginning in 2020, the SEM Visitor Survey questions were further improved by expert review and refined methodologies. The 2015/2016 pilot did not include an in-depth intercept survey

and was scoped for only a post-trip survey. Therefore, some questions needed to be reframed and reworded for the updated SEM Visitor Survey effort.

The post-trip survey was offered online as a new component of the SEM Visitor study starting in 2022, in addition to the original mail-back option used in the 2015/2016 pilot. This online offering was in part adopted to solve issues of international visitors not willing or able to mail surveys during or after their trip to the United States. This approach was also aimed towards capturing a more complete range of visitors.

Some questions require the addition of local context for each park. For instance, accommodation types that are not offered in specific units are removed from their intercept survey. On other questions, all response options are built specifically for the NPS unit being sampled, such as locations visited within the unit on that day. Results of questions that are fully customized to individual park units are not included in this report; they can be found in the separate park unit-level reports.

Park staff were consulted to determine whether language would be a possible barrier to survey participation among their visitors. As a result, both survey instruments were translated into Spanish, and offered in Spanish at select park units. For units without translations, staff felt that the majority of visitor groups would have at least one individual comfortable taking the survey in English. Additional languages may be offered in the future, depending on visitor demographics at selected park units, to ensure that the survey is accessible to as many visitors as possible.

Data Collection

The on-site intercept survey is designed to rapidly collect visitor information as tablet-based responses, reaching the largest possible sample for the highest priority visitor information. The intercept sampling was conducted in each unit during one of its peak months ($\pm 10\%$ of peak visits to allow flexibility for various circumstances). A sample of visitors was intercepted while visiting various sites at each of the NPS units sampled for this study. Intercept site locations and volumes of surveyor effort were determined based on historic visitor volumes and distribution across the NPS unit's main areas with the intent to capture the most robust and representative sample for that NPS unit's peak month. Where feasible, Visitor Use Statistic estimates for monthly visitation per site were used to station surveyors proportionally across intercept site locations. NPS staff were consulted prior to study launch to confirm visitor use statistics metrics to guarantee the most popular and representative locations were captured in the sampling plan. Types of intercept site locations vary between NPS units, including trailheads, visitor centers, boat launches, historic sites, and others.

Surveyors approached potential respondent groups at the site to introduce the purpose of the study and ask them to participate in a short five-to-seven-minute survey about their experience in the NPS unit (NPS 2024a). Within the group, the adult with the next upcoming birthday was asked to participate. If the visitor was eligible (at least 18 years of age, not a park employee, and had not previously taken the survey) and agreed to participate in the study, the surveyor verbally administered the survey questions and recorded the responses on a handheld tablet device. If the

visitor did not agree, surveyors asked if they would be willing to answer three non-response bias questions (see the Non-Response Bias Analysis section, below). Upon complete or partial refusal, the surveyor would thank the visitor for their time, log the non-response, and approach the next visitor group.

At the end of the intercept survey, respondents were invited to participate in a post-trip survey by mail-back or online response. Those who agreed to participate were given an envelope containing a printed copy of the post-trip survey with a postage paid envelope for mailing it back, as well as a hyperlink and instructions for accessing it online. As part of the intercept protocol, surveyors logged a unique identifier (four-digit code) from the envelope into the tablet for future connection to the post-trip survey.

Therefore, four potential outcomes were possible when intercepting visitors (see Table 1 for national results):

1. Complete refusal, refused to answer any questions, including non-response bias questions;
2. Partial refusal, answered non-response bias questions but nothing further;
3. Completed intercept, but refused to take post-trip survey; or
4. Completed intercept and took post-trip survey.

Table 1. National response outcomes—SEM intercept survey administration.

Outcome	Total	2024	2023	2022
Eligible visitors contacted	67,975	20,844	23,220	23,911
Complete refusals	6,341	1,646	2,801	1,894
Partial refusals (non-response bias questions completed)	4,651	1,036	1,575	2,040
Intercept surveys completed	56,983	18,162	18,844	19,977
Post-trip surveys distributed	51,796	17,226	17,335	17,235
Intercept response rate	83.8%	87.1%	81.2%	83.5%
Post-trip acceptance rate	90.9%	94.8%	92.0%	86.3%

During the sampling period, two to seven surveyors were stationed simultaneously at different sampling sites. Start times varied day-to-day and by location to capture a diverse sample of visitors across the unit. Typically, each surveyor worked 10 seven-hour days (approximately six hours data collection and one-hour lunch break) and rotated among several sites. The sample target was 400 complete post-trip surveys at the majority of units and 800 completed post-trip surveys at nine parks with higher intercept complexity. Smaller park units only had one to two locations to survey; therefore, a smaller number of surveyors were stationed for more days to aim for the same completion target. Most park units had a 12-day sampling window (with 10 days of surveying); some park units with low visitation were extended to try to capture a larger sample.

Post-Trip Survey

The post-trip survey was distributed to participating respondents who completed the intercept survey and then agreed to take a follow-up survey after completing their trip to the NPS unit. This method extended data collection and asked participants to complete the survey after their visit, either through a provided postage-paid envelope, or online via a provided survey link. The post-trip survey covers visitor trip spending details, travel patterns, and perceptions of their recent visit (NPS 2024b). Both the intercept survey and the post-trip survey were tagged with a unique identifier (four-digit code) for each respondent so their onsite intercept responses could be paired with their post-trip responses. Numbers were assigned at random to the individual. The use of this code allows the data to be joined, while keeping all surveys confidential and removing respondents' identifying information. Joining the two datasets provides a more complete picture of in-park experiences and post-visit perceptions.

At the end of the intercept survey, respondents were asked for their physical mailing address or email address. This allowed for a reminder postcard or email to be sent to all respondents who provided contact information about a week following the end of each onsite data collection period. This postcard or email thanked respondents for their original participation and encouraged them to complete the post-trip survey if they had not already done so.

Three weeks after postcard mailing, a second contact (with the same unique IDs) was delivered to all outstanding addresses/emails, noting that the individual's completed questionnaire had yet to be received. The mailed survey packets included replacement surveys and postage-paid, self-addressed return envelopes. A final contact was mailed/emailed to all remaining non-respondents four weeks after sending the second contact (i.e., first full replacement survey). Table 2 shows national response rates for the post-trip survey.

Table 2. National response outcomes—SEM post-trip survey administration.

Outcome	Total	2024	2023	2022
Post-trip surveys distributed	51,796	17,226	17,335	17,235
Valid post-trip surveys completed	16,752	5,629	5,363	5,760
Response rate	32.3%	32.7%	30.9%	33.4%

Non-Response Bias Analysis

To account for potential biases between respondents and non-respondents, three questions were asked of eligible visitors contacted who did not wish to participate in the survey. The responses to these three questions can then be compared to both the larger group of respondents who completed the intercept survey, and the smaller group who completed both the intercept and post-trip surveys.

The Office of Management and Budget recommends testing for non-response bias when a response rate is less than 80%. Non-response bias testing was conducted on unit-specific datasets, where needed, based on this 80% response rate threshold.

At a national level, the three-year average intercept survey response rate of 84% indicates that concern over intercept non-response is muted. However, the national three-year average response rate for respondents who accepted a post-trip survey was lower at 32%. Due to the lower post-trip survey response rate, bias testing was conducted on the national dataset to evaluate differences between the full set of respondents who participated only in the onsite intercept survey (intercept-only respondents) and those eligible visitors who participated in the full survey (full survey respondents). Results of the bias testing are shown in Tables 3 through 5.

Table 3. Post-trip survey three-year average response to non-response bias question: “Are you a permanent or seasonal/second home resident of the local area around this NPS unit?” Note: p-value < 0.001.

Response	Frequency: Full survey respondents	Percent: Full survey respondents	Frequency: Intercept-only respondents	Percent: Intercept-only respondents
Yes	4353	26.2%	12299	30.5%
No	12273	73.8%	28051	69.5%

Table 4. Post-trip survey three-year average response to non-response bias question: “Do you currently live in the United States?” Note: p-value < 0.001.

Response	Frequency: Full survey respondents	Percent: Full survey respondents	Frequency: Intercept-only respondents	Percent: Intercept-only respondents
Yes	15864	95.6%	37125	92.1%
No	732	4.4%	3166	7.9%

Table 5. Post-trip survey three-year average response to non-response bias question: “On this trip away from home, have you [and your personal group] stayed, or will you stay overnight away from your permanent residence either in this NPS unit and/or within the local area?” Note: p-value < 0.001.

Response	Frequency: Full survey respondents	Percent: Full survey respondents	Frequency: Intercept-only respondents	Percent: Intercept-only respondents
Yes	10056	60.5%	21650	53.7%
No	6567	39.5%	18687	46.3%

A chi-square test for homogeneity was performed for each of the three questions to evaluate differences between the groups. The chi-square test for homogeneity is a statistical test used to determine whether there is a significant association between categorical variables. It compares observed data with expected frequencies to assess if any deviations are due to chance. A p-value of 0.05 is used as the indicated threshold of this significance; p-values of 0.05 or lower indicate significant difference between groups.

The distribution of responses among full survey respondents and intercept-only respondents differed significantly for all three non-response bias questions. Given this significance, the post-trip survey represents each group at a lower rate than would be expected (i.e., local residents (26.2%), international visitors/non-US residents (4.4%), and day visitors (39.5%)) based on their proportion among intercept survey respondents (i.e., 30.5%, 7.9%, and 46.3%, respectively).

Data Combinations

Upon completion of the 2024 SEM Visitor Survey field season, individual datasets were developed for each site. This included creating a separate cleaning procedure for each unit, as some questions varied by response options and unit-specific sites and locations. However, most of the survey questions were used throughout the study and their data included in the final dataset to ensure consistency across all sites. Dataset cleaning procedures considered the future joining procedure for the national dataset by ensuring exact coding and naming of items such as:

1. Variable names between units
 - a. Response options specific to each unit were named distinctly from national-sample variables.
2. Value labels within responses
 - a. Coding was maintained throughout each survey to ensure ease of matching during the combination process.
3. Tracking of additions/removals per question
 - a. Some response options were removed from the base survey based on availability at the NPS unit (e.g., accommodation types, activities). These were documented and maintained for final dataset combinations.

Once each unit-specific dataset was created, a source file of the SEM national dataset was developed by combining the 24 unit-specific datasets. The three combined unit-specific datasets were then merged together to create the three-year dataset. Because of the maintained consistency, almost all data cleaning was done through the unit-specific files rather than the national dataset. Question labels were renamed to say “this NPS unit” in the national dataset, where an individual site name was included in the unit-specific data. All graphs and tables are labeled with this format throughout the report.

National-Level Data Weighting

Data for the national report are intended to be representative of the National Park System by collecting data on peak season visitors across the country. As previously described in the Park Unit Selection methods, park units are sampled using a stratified random sample approach in which all park units within a stratum have equal probabilities of selection. However, within each stratum, the number of visits to any given park may vary greatly. For example, within the high visitation Historic/Cultural Urban stratum, Boston National Historical Park (NHP) experienced a peak month visit (July 2024) of 419,382, while Minute Man NHP recorded 108,286 (October 2024). As such, for estimates to be representative of all peak season visits to park units within the system, estimations should account for 1) a stratum's visits as a proportion of visits nationwide, and 2) a park unit's visits as a proportion of visits to its stratum's three sampled units.

Using this framework, for this year's national report, two sets of weighting schemes were implemented:

1. A 3-year pooled weighting scheme, denoted as "3-Year Combined", which averages peak-month visits across 2022–2024 for each park unit within the system.
2. An individual, year-specific, weighting scheme for 2022, 2023, and 2024, which uses peak-month visits in each year for each park unit within the system.

While previous reports have only presented results using the second scheme, three full years of data collection presents the opportunity to start examining pooled estimates. The purpose of using two approaches to weighting is to ensure the 3-year combined results are representative of all three years of data collection and not tied to fluctuations in a single year, while also retaining the usefulness of comparing single-year results over time or isolating specific years of interest. While this approach aims to strike a balance between yearly specificity and smoothed outcomes, it can lead to unexpected slight differences between the range of results across each single year and the 3-year combined results. In general, results for each year are representative of that specific year only while the 3-year combined results are representative of an average year between 2022–2024.

Limitations

As with any research study, limitations and assumptions exist. Because this study uses a sample of park units across the country by type and size, there are some limitations, including:

1. The study is intended to represent all NPS visitors, over time, across the system based on park unit size and type. Because representation is meant to be focused on these two categories, some results, such as state of origin, may not be as geographically distributed as expected, especially within single year categories. Therefore, results are generalizable only to the types and sizes of park units sampled and to individual park units, not yet regionally.
2. Calculating results for regions, park unit types, and park unit sizes will require data from additional years.
3. Outliers were not removed from the dataset, so responses may be higher or lower than anticipated in open-ended numeric values (e.g., nights spent). To preserve the dataset, measures of central tendency are limited to median values. Means are not included.
4. Not all variables from the NPS unit-specific datasets are displayed for the national data. Questions which required a high degree of unit-specific customization are not included in this report.

Results

Intercept Survey Results

The following section provides results of the visitor intercept surveys conducted in the 72 NPS units from March 2022 through October 2024. All results are presented in this report, regardless of sample size, which varies by question. Caution is recommended in the interpretation of figures with sample size lower than $n = 30$. Categories on some questions may not sum to 100% due to rounding differences and/or the opportunity to select more than one response option. Furthermore, sample sizes displayed are unweighted while all results displayed are weighted by peak month or the three-year peak month average visits as described in the methods section.

Questions 1–2: Visitor Residency

First, respondents were asked to indicate if they were permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around NPS units. Permanent and seasonal residents were then asked for their ZIP code within the local area. Respondents who do not reside permanently or seasonally in the local area were asked if they currently live in the U.S., and if so, for their ZIP code. Figures 2 and 3 depict responses to this group of questions.

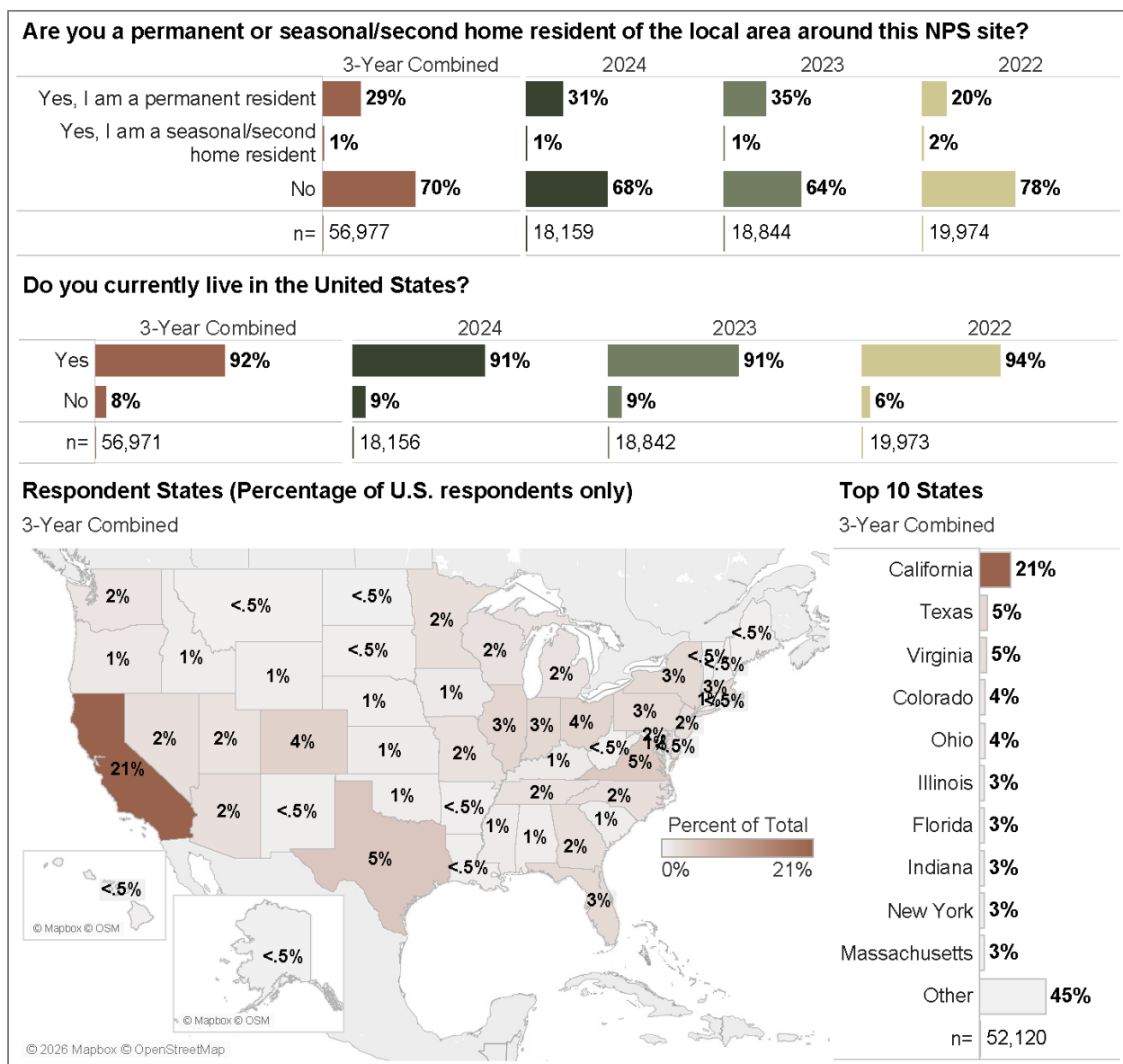


Figure 2. Respondent residency status of domestic visitors surveyed at NPS units, overall.
NPS

- Only around three in ten respondents across the three-year combined results (a total of 29% overall) stated that they were either permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around the NPS unit they were surveyed at. The proportion of visitors represented by local residents was slightly higher in 2023 (35%) and lower in 2022 (20%). Among the 92% of overall respondents currently residing in the U.S., 21% reside in California, followed by 5% from Texas, 5% from Virginia, 4% from Colorado, and 4% from Ohio.
- There was some geographic concentration of respondents across the three years from California (reflecting the high share of the U.S. population in the state), as well as smaller shares from Texas, Virginia, Colorado, and Ohio. The geographic distribution of respondents differed between the three years, which was largely driven by the NPS units surveyed each year.

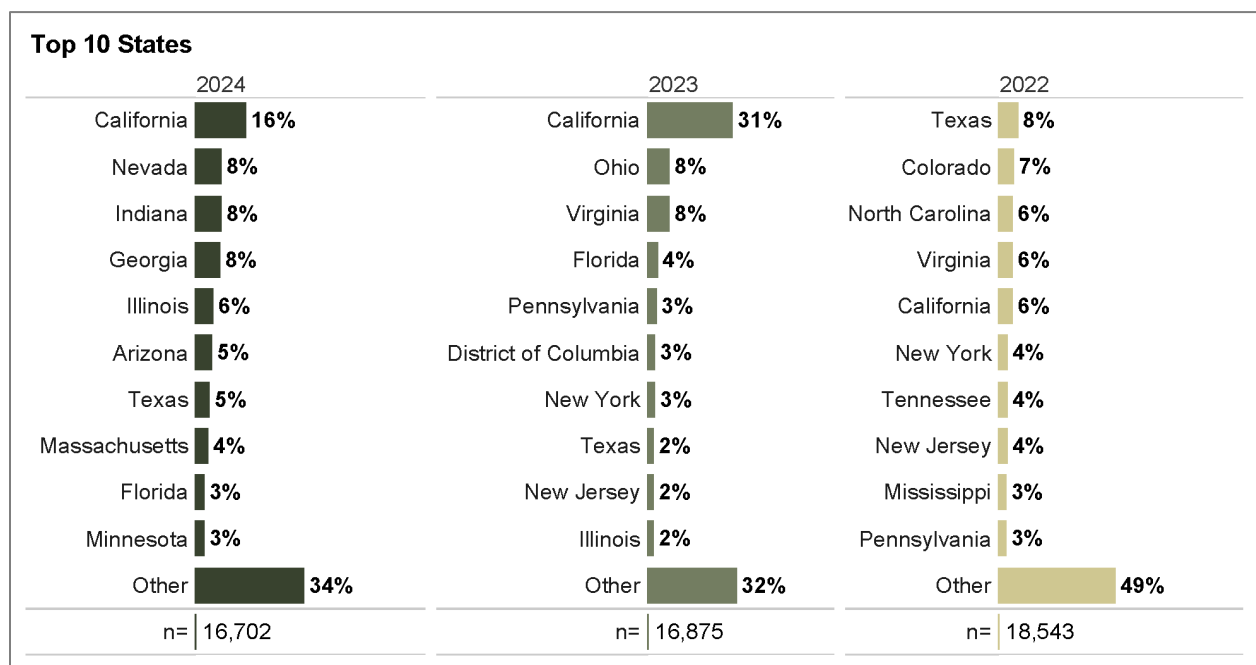


Figure 3. Top 10 states of origin of all domestic visitors surveyed at NPS units by year.

NPS

- The 2024 surveying year saw a more modest distribution of respondents across the country, with decreased shares of visitors from California (–15 percentage points [ppt] vs. 2023), which made up a plurality of respondents in both years. Among the top 10, states such as Texas (+3 ppt) and Illinois (+4 ppt) saw increases compared to 2023.
- Respondents in 2024 and 2023 had approximately two-thirds of domestic visitors come from states listed in the top 10. Conversely, nearly half of respondents in 2022 (49%) came from states not listed in the top 10.
- This figure displays the need for utilizing a 3-year average to make the best decisions on topics such as visitor origin. Park selection influences the most common locations visitors come from, especially when taking into account local residents from the area near each selected park. For instance, 2023’s large spike from California was largely driven from Golden Gate National Recreation Area’s sampling during the summer season and associated power from a very high volume of annual visitation.

Question 3: Trip Purpose

Respondents who are not permanent or seasonal residents of the local area were asked about the purpose for their overall trip away from home, while permanent or seasonal residents of the local area were asked about the purpose of their trip away from home “today,” the day they were intercepted in the park. Figure 4 depicts responses to this group of questions.

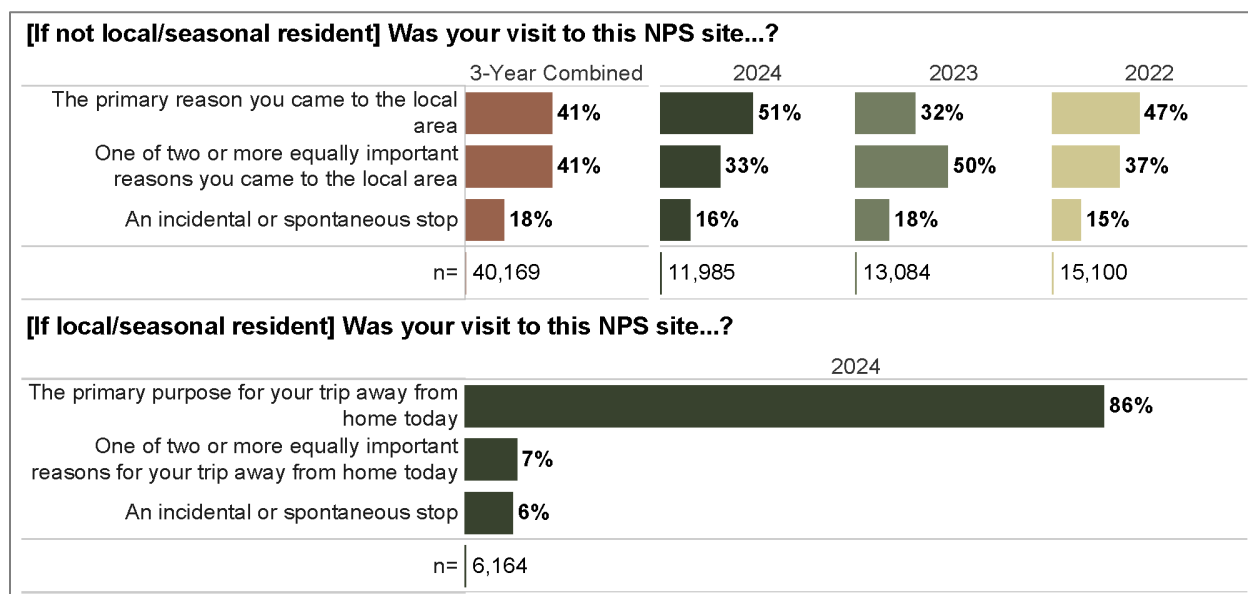


Figure 4. Role of NPS units in overall trip purpose.

NPS

- Just over four in ten (41%) non-local respondents across all three years stated that their visit to the NPS unit was the primary reason that brought them to the area, with another 41% which stated that the NPS unit was one of two or more equally important reasons that brought them to the area.
- In 2024, around half (51%) of non-local respondents stated that their visit to the NPS unit was the primary reason that brought them to the area, while 33% stated that the NPS unit was one of two or more equally important reasons that brought them to the area.
- Shares of non-local respondents that stated their visit to the NPS unit was the primary reason that brought them to the area were lowest in 2023 (32%). Conversely, non-local respondents in 2023 were much more likely, compared to other years, to state that the NPS unit was one of two or more equally important reasons that brought them to the area (50%).
- Asked for the first time in 2024, among permanent or seasonal local resident respondents, most respondents (86%) stated that their visit to the NPS unit was the primary reason for their trip away from home on the day they were surveyed. Another 7% stated that the visit was one of two or more equally important reasons for their trip, while 6% stated it was an incidental or spontaneous stop.

Question 4: Length of Stay

Respondents who are not permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around the NPS unit were also asked how many days they planned to spend within that local area, including days spent in the park. All respondents, regardless of residency, were asked whether they would be staying overnight away from their permanent residence within the local area. Responses to both of these questions are depicted in Figure 5.

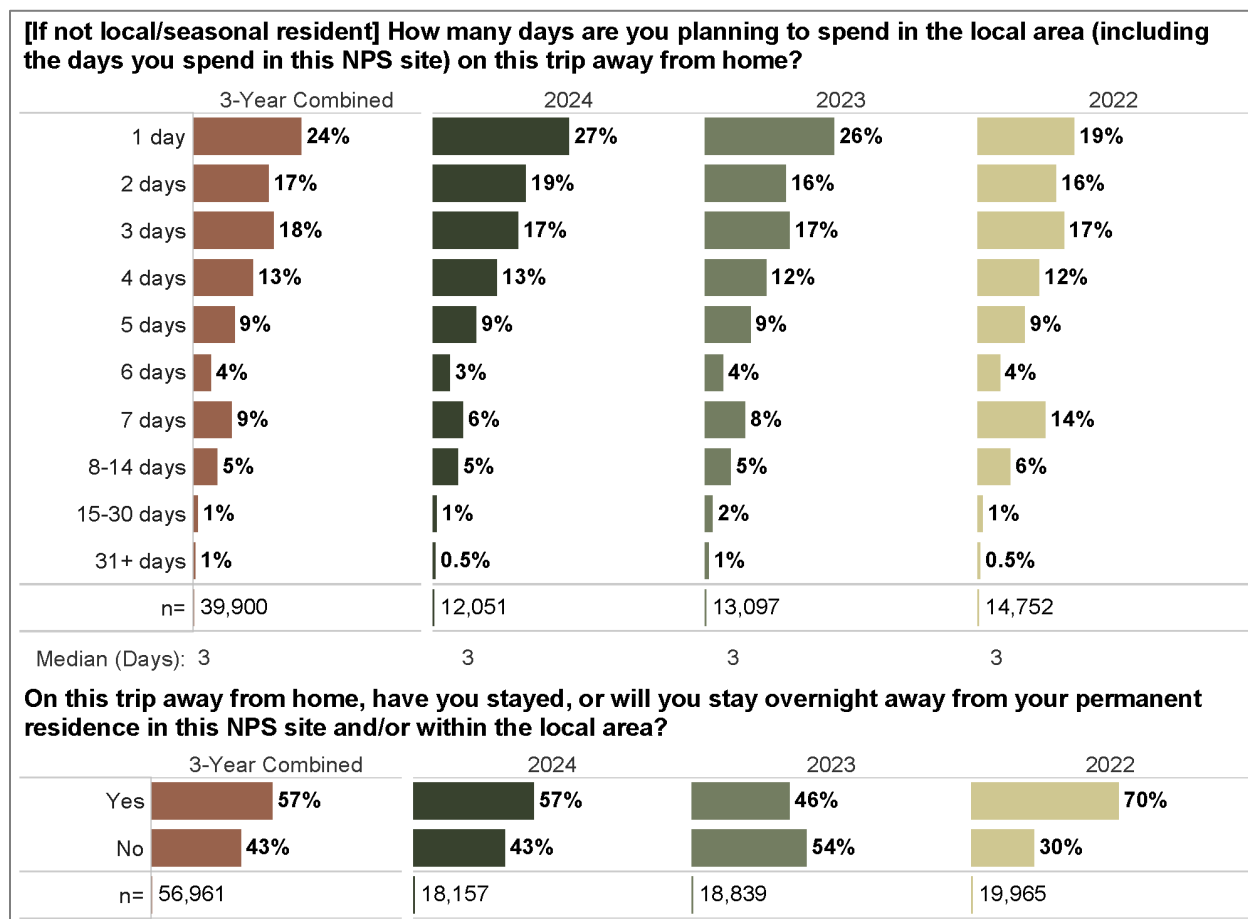


Figure 5. Time spent in the local area around NPS units. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 7](#).

NPS

- Around one-fourth of non-local respondents across the three years (24%) spent one day in the local area, with another 17% that spent two days, and 18% that spent three days.
- In 2024, a plurality of non-local respondents (27%) spent one day in the local area, with another 19% that spent two days, and 17% that spent three days.
- Distribution in length of stay was somewhat shorter in 2024 compared to prior years. While approximately two-thirds (63%) of non-local respondents in 2024 spent three or fewer days in the local area, 2023 (59%, –4 ppt vs. 2024) and 2022 (52%, –11 ppt vs. 2024) were both modestly lower by comparison. The median length of stay for each of the three years was three days.
- Additionally, 57% of all respondents across the three years (including permanent/seasonal residents) stayed overnight away from their permanent residence in the local area. The share staying overnight locally was lower in 2023 (46%) and moderately higher in 2022 (70%).

Questions 5–6: Overnight Visitors

If respondents indicated that they stayed overnight in the local area, they were asked about the type(s) of accommodation they used or planned to use while there (Figure 6).

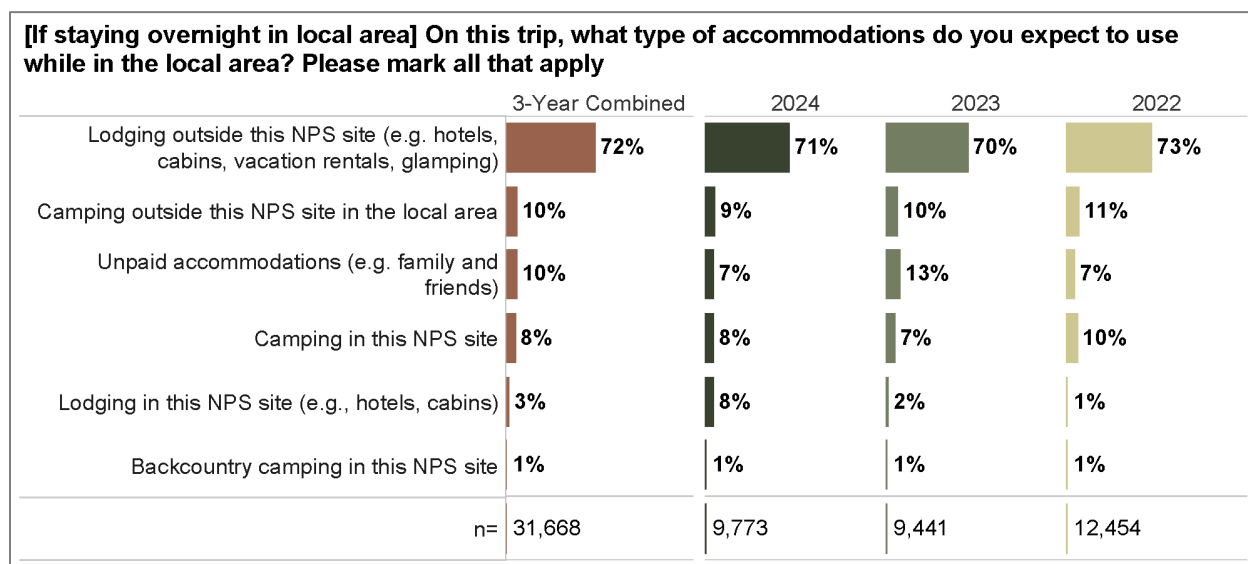


Figure 6. Accommodation types used by overnight visitors in the local area surrounding NPS units.

- Across all three years, the majority of overnight respondents (72%) have stayed in lodging outside NPS units, followed more distantly by camping outside NPS units (10%), and other unpaid accommodations (10%).
- In 2024, more than two-thirds of overnight respondents (71%) stayed in lodging outside NPS units; this share was largely consistent across the past three years. This was followed in prevalence by camping outside NPS units (9%). The use of each accommodation type has remained largely unchanged compared to prior years.

Respondents were then asked to indicate the number of nights they spent or would spend in each accommodation type (Figures 7 and 8).

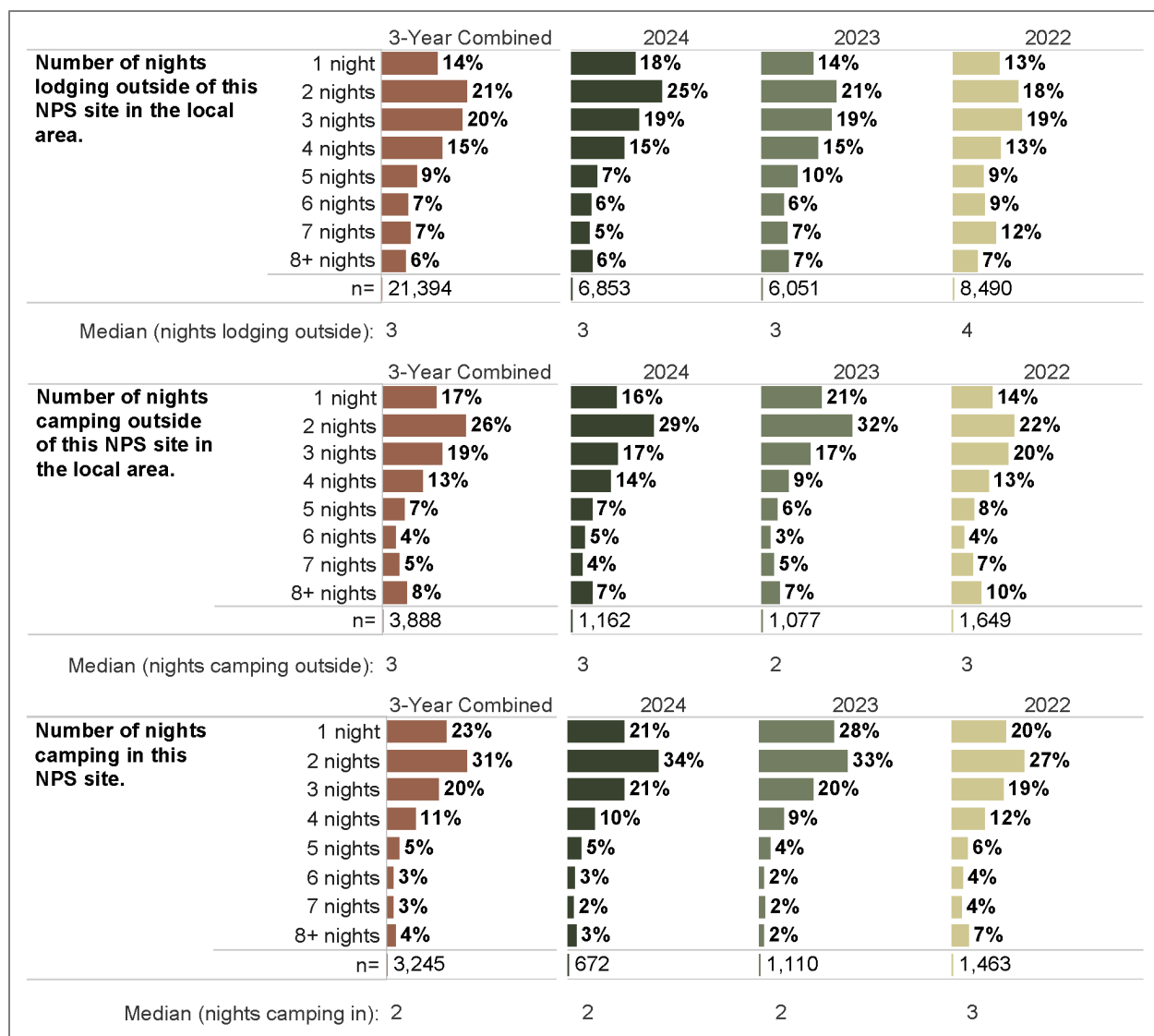


Figure 7. Number of nights spent within NPS units and in the local area surrounding it, by accommodation type. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 8](#).

NPS

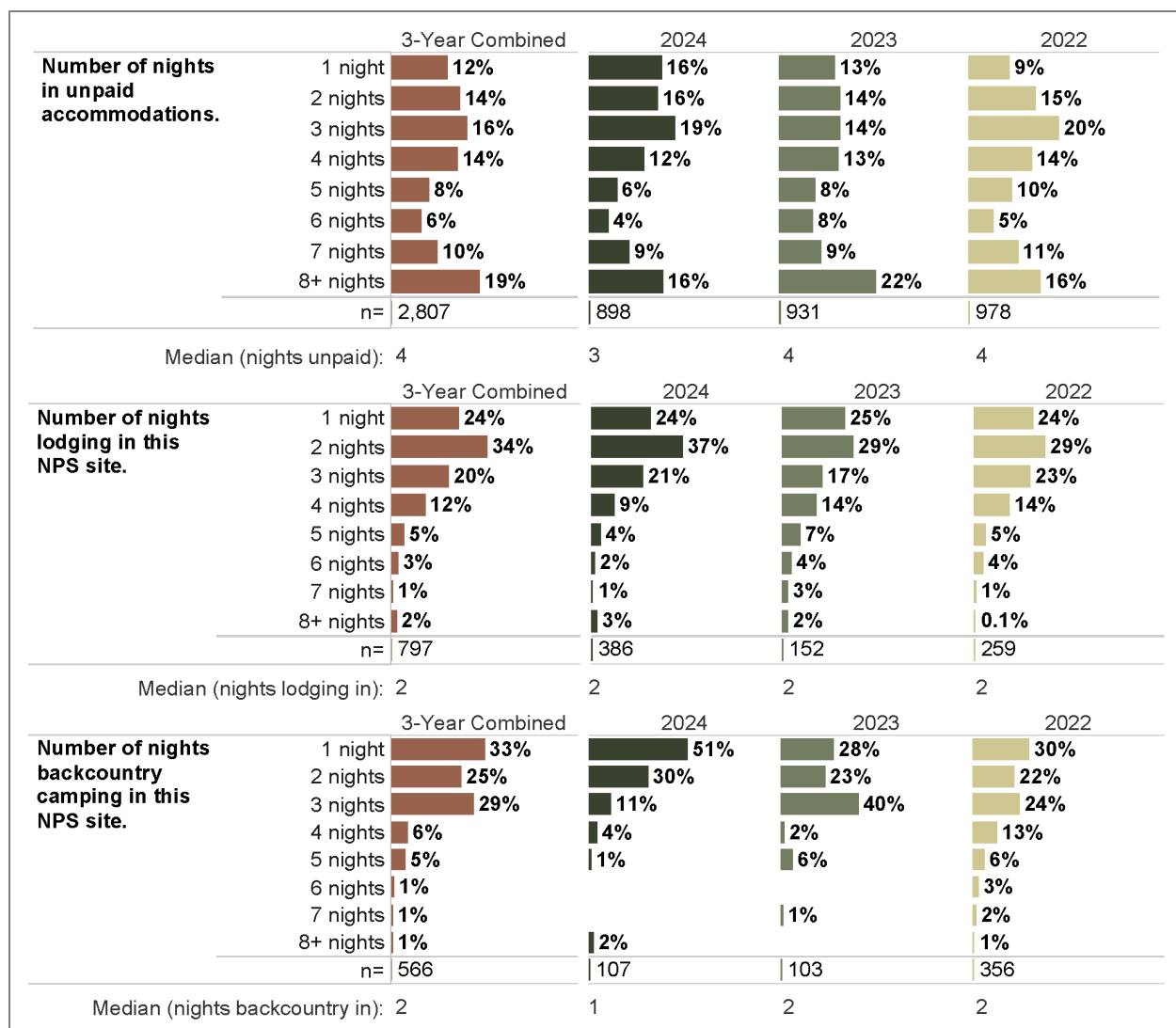


Figure 8. Number of nights spent within NPS units and in the local area surrounding it, by accommodation type. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 8](#).

NPS

- Generally, the distribution of nights spent by accommodation type was consistent across the three years, with median nights spent by each accommodation type differing by only one night between years.
- Among the 72% of all overnight respondents surveyed from 2022 through 2024 who lodged outside of the NPS unit in the local area (per Figure 6), median length of stay was three nights. Median length of stay in 2024 and 2023 was also three nights, with 2022 having a four-night length of stay. When viewed together, more than half of overnight respondents across the three years (55%) stayed for three nights or fewer.
- Among the 10% of overnight respondents surveyed from 2022 through 2024 who camped outside of the NPS unit (per Figure 6), median length of stay was three nights. Median length of stay was also three nights in 2024 and 2022, but only two nights in 2023. When viewed together, more than six in ten overnight respondents (62%) camped for three nights or fewer.
- Among the 10% of overnight respondents surveyed from 2022 through 2024 who stayed in unpaid accommodations in the local area (per Figure 6), median length of stay was four nights. Median length of stay in 2023 and 2022 was also four nights, but only three nights in 2024. There was much broader spread in length of overnight stay among those staying in unpaid accommodations than those in paid options.
- Among the 8% of overnight respondents surveyed from 2022 through 2024 who camped inside of the NPS unit (per Figure 6), median length of stay was two nights. Median length of stay was also two nights in 2024 and 2023 but was slightly higher in 2022 at three nights. When viewed together, around three-fourths of respondents (74%) camped for three nights or fewer.
- Among the 3% of overnight respondents surveyed from 2022 through 2024 who lodged inside of the NPS unit (per Figure 6), median length of stay was two nights. Median length of stay was also two nights in 2024, 2023, and 2022. When viewed together, more than half of respondents (58%) spent two nights or fewer.
- Among the 1% of overnight respondents surveyed from 2022 through 2024 who camped in the backcountry inside of the NPS unit (per Figure 6), median length of stay was two nights. Median length of stay was two nights in 2023 and 2022, but one night in 2024. When viewed together, nearly nine in ten overnight respondents (87%) stayed for three nights or fewer.

Questions 7–9: Party Characteristics

Respondents were asked to indicate how many adults (18 or older) and children (under 18) were in their personal group during their visit to the NPS unit where they were surveyed (Figure 9). A personal group was defined as the visitor and companions with whom they visited the NPS unit, such as a spouse, family, and/or friends, but respondents were informed not to account for the larger group with whom they may have traveled, such as a school, church, scout, or tour group.

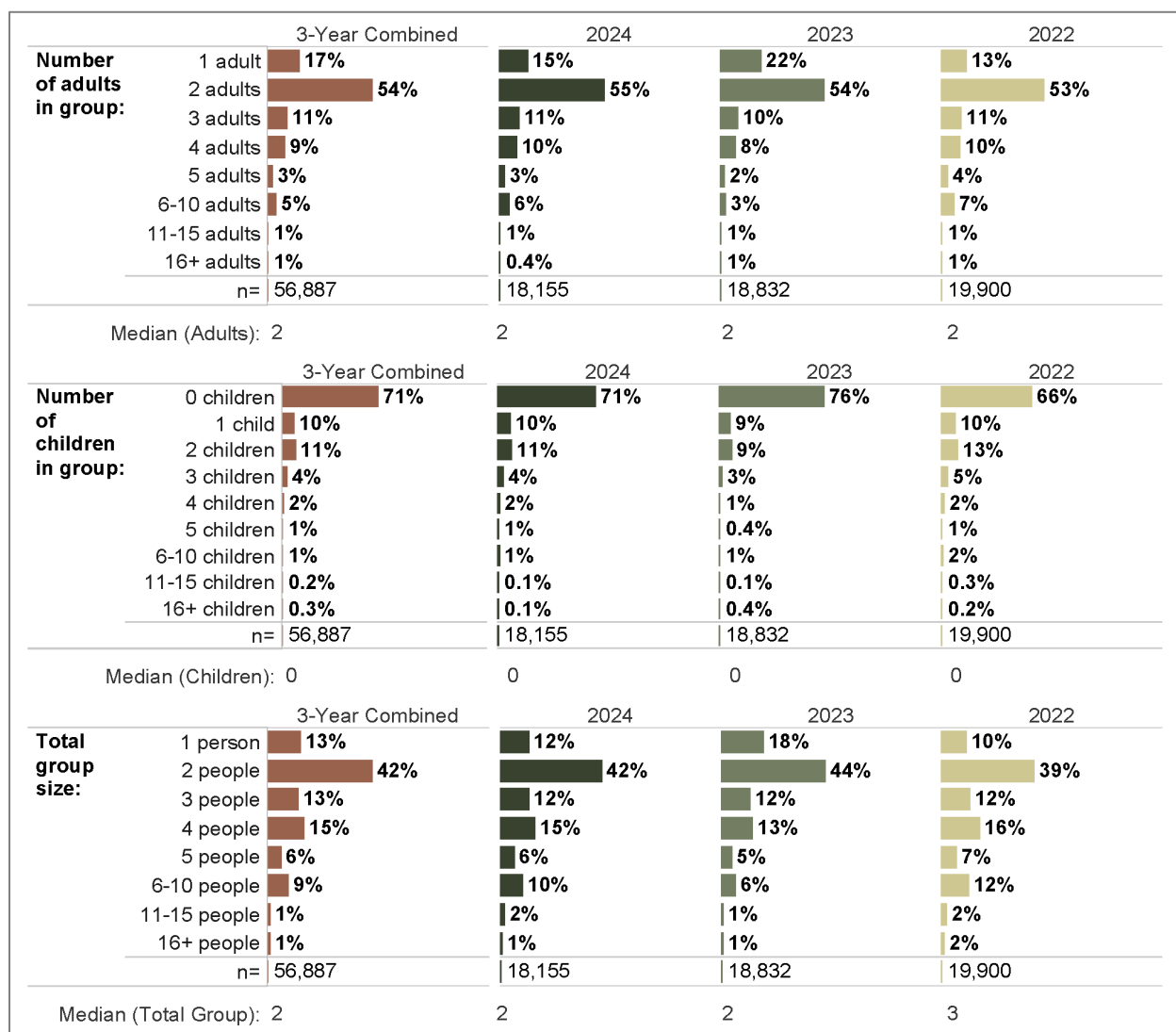


Figure 9. Number of adults and children in respondent's personal group, and total group size, while visiting the NPS unit. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 9](#).

NPS

- Overall distributions of group sizes were fairly consistent across all three years, leading to relatively stable combined results. The median total number of people (adults and children) per group was two in 2024 and 2023, but three in 2022. When viewed together, the three-year aggregate had a median group size of two.
- The median number of adults per group was two, both for all three years, as well as when viewed in aggregate. The majority of groups included two adults.
- Most groups, both for all three years, as well as when viewed in aggregate, did not include any children. However, children were somewhat more prevalent in 2022 (34% of groups included one or more child), slightly elevating the overall group size of that year.

Respondents were then asked to provide the age of each member of their group (Figure 10). These data show the true age distribution of respondent groups sampled at the NPS unit.

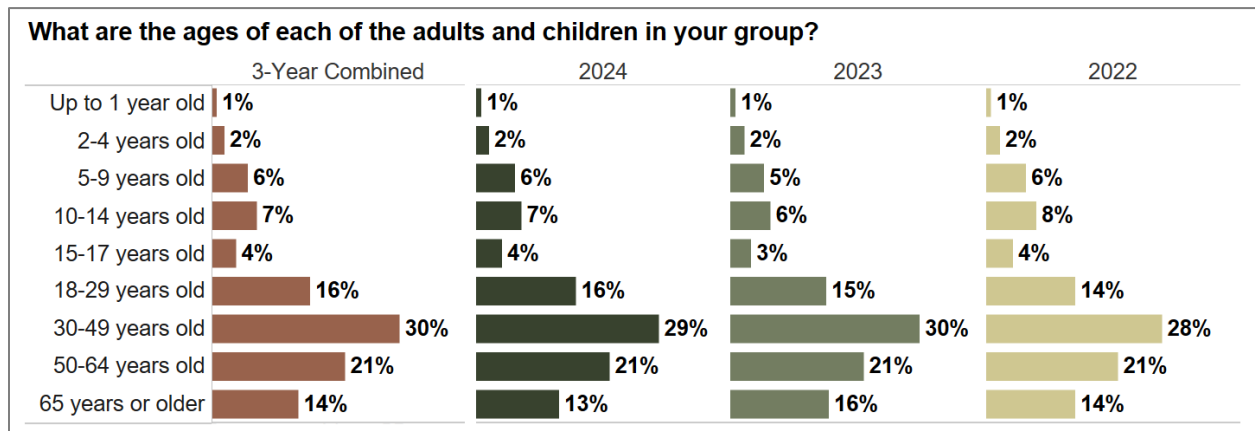


Figure 10. Age distribution of all members of respondent's personal group while visiting the NPS unit.

- Age distribution varied minimally across the three years. The most common age of the adults and children in a personal group was 30–49 years old, which represented a plurality of respondents in the three-year aggregate (30%). This was followed in prevalence by respondents ages 50–64 years old (21%) and 18–29 years old (16%).
- Consistent with results from Figure 9, children (i.e., visitors under 18 years old) accounted for a combined total of 20% of group members, varying slightly between years.

Questions 13–18: Park Use Characteristics

Respondents were asked to indicate which type of entrance fee applied to them personally on their most recent trip to the NPS unit (Figure 11).

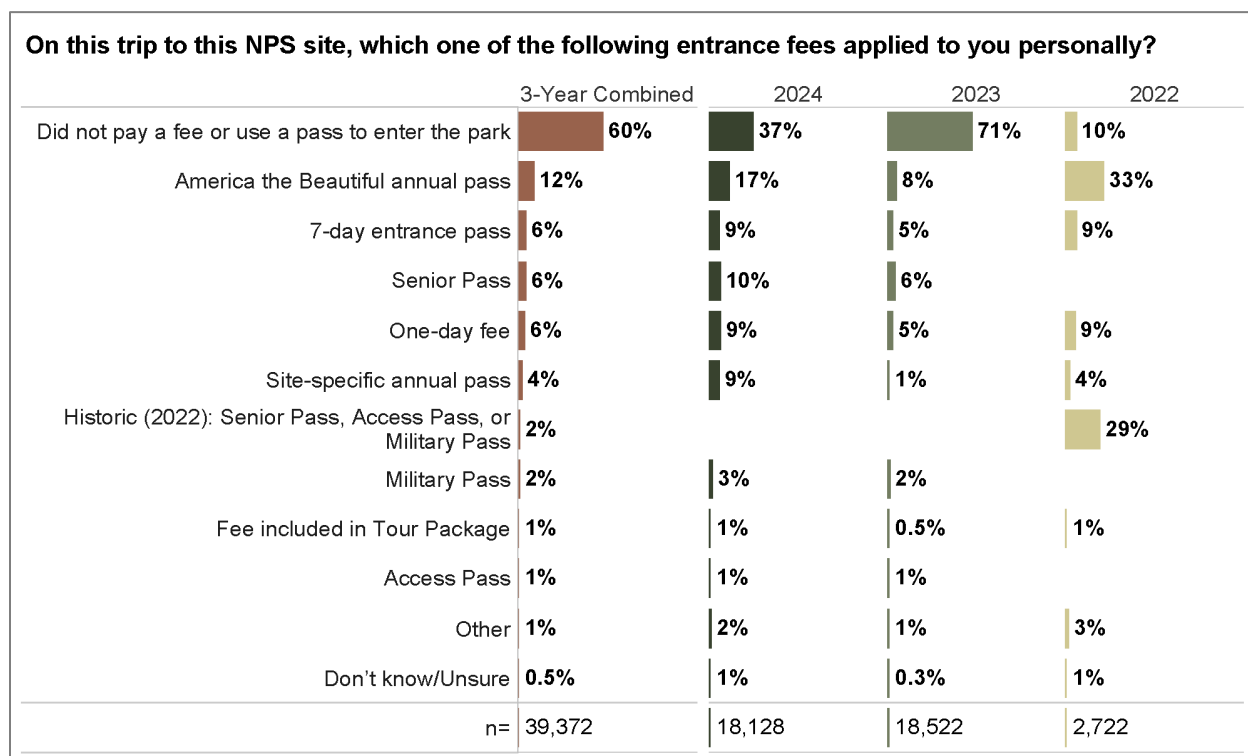


Figure 11. Entrance fee paid to enter NPS units on the most recent trip.

NPS

- Respondents asked about their entrance fee(s) in 2022 were asked this question in their post-trip survey, reducing the overall sample for 2022. The distinct distribution of fee types for 2022 was impacted by this methodological shift, as well as the set of NPS units surveyed during that year.
- When viewed together, the majority of respondents (60%) did not pay a fee or use a pass to enter the NPS unit. This aligns with the influence NPS units that don't require entry fees have on national results, because only around one-fourth of NPS units actually require an entry fee.
- Around one in ten respondents (12%) reported using an America the Beautiful annual pass, with another 11% in each year that entered using a Senior Pass, Military Pass, or Access Pass.
- A total of 16% of respondents reported that they entered using an NPS unit-specific pass or fee (i.e., annual pass, seven-day pass, or one-day entrance fee).

Then, respondents were asked to indicate if they planned to visit the NPS unit where they were surveyed for more than one day, and then a series of follow-up questions about the length of time they might spend in the NPS unit (Figure 12 and Table 6).

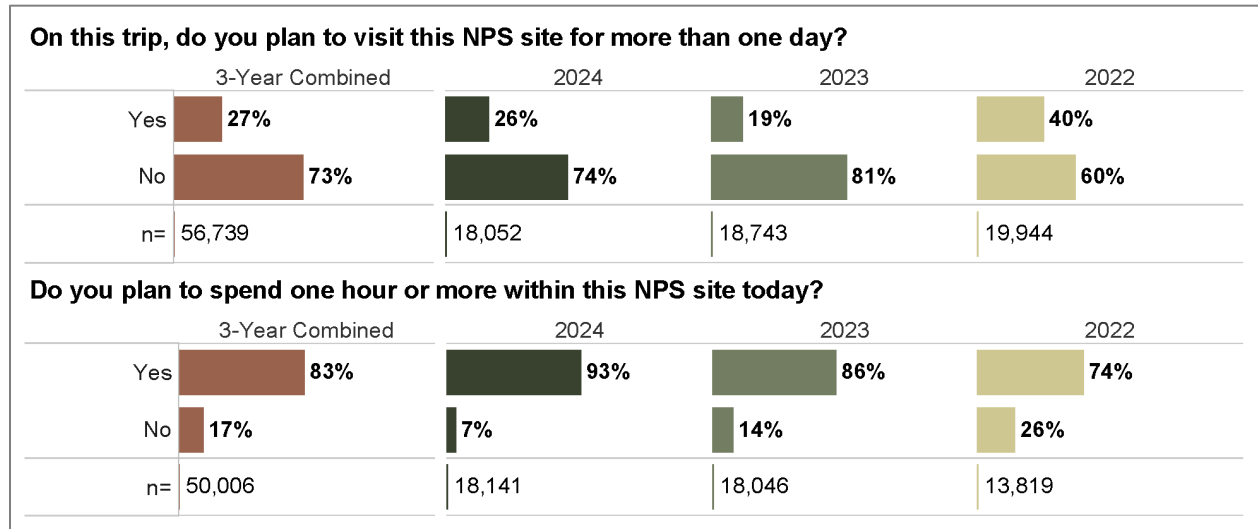


Figure 12. Length of time spent within NPS units on this trip.
NPS

Table 6. Length of time spent within NPS unit on this trip.

Question	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If not planning to spend one hour or more] How many minutes do you plan to spend within NPS units today?	7403	20	1542	30	2357	25	3504	20
[If planning to spend one hour or more] How many hours do you plan to spend within NPS units today?	41140	3	15902	4	14989	3	10249	3
[If planning to visit more than one day] How many days do you plan to spend within NPS units on this trip?	13907	2	3779	2	3993	2	6135	3
[If planning to visit more than one day] On how many different days do you expect to enter the park?	13764	2	3719	2	3928	2	6117	2

- The majority of respondents across the three years (83%) planned to spend one hour or more within NPS units on the day they were surveyed. Among these visitors, median length of time spent in the park “today” was three hours overall, three hours for respondents in 2023 and 2022, and four hours for respondents in 2024.
- Among the 17% of respondents who planned to spend less than an hour within the park on the day they were surveyed, the median length of anticipated visit was 20 minutes overall, 30 minutes in 2024, 25 minutes in 2023, and 20 minutes in 2022.
- Additionally, a majority of respondents (73%) were planning to spend just a single day in NPS units on their trip. Among the 27% of respondents who planned to visit for more than one day, the median length of visit was two days overall, two days in 2024 and 2023, and three days in 2022.
- Those respondents who spent more than one day in the park were also asked on how many different days they expected to enter the park; the median answer was two days overall and two days for respondents in 2024, 2023, and 2022.

Question 20: Transportation

Respondents were asked about the form of transportation they used to enter the NPS unit on the day they were surveyed (Figure 13).

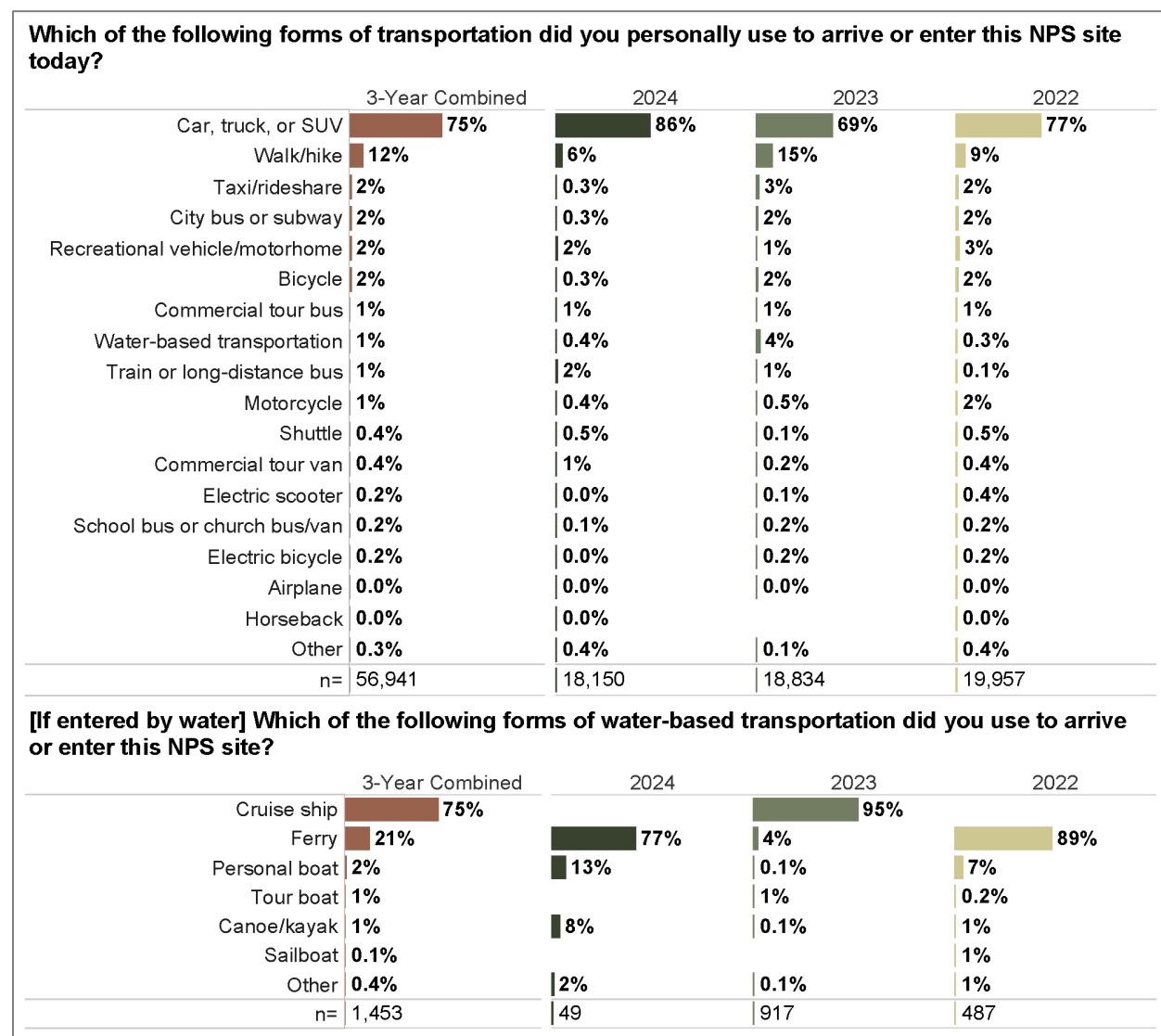


Figure 13. Form of transportation used to enter NPS units on the day of the survey.

NPS

- Most respondents across all three years (75%) reported that they used their car, truck, or SUV to enter NPS units on the day of the survey, with respondents in 2024 seeing the highest level of use by car, truck, or SUV to enter NPS units (86%). This was followed distantly by respondents walking/hiking (12% overall).
- Water-based transportation questions varied greatly by park selections. In 2024 and 2022, parks that were selected did not have cruise ports nearby but rather used ferries to access the site. This ends up being prevalent in the year-over-year results as park selection heavily influences this transportation type.

If respondents entered the NPS unit using a multi-passenger private vehicle (i.e., car, truck or SUV, recreational vehicle or motorhome, or motorcycle), they were asked to indicate how many people were traveling in or on that vehicle (Figure 14).

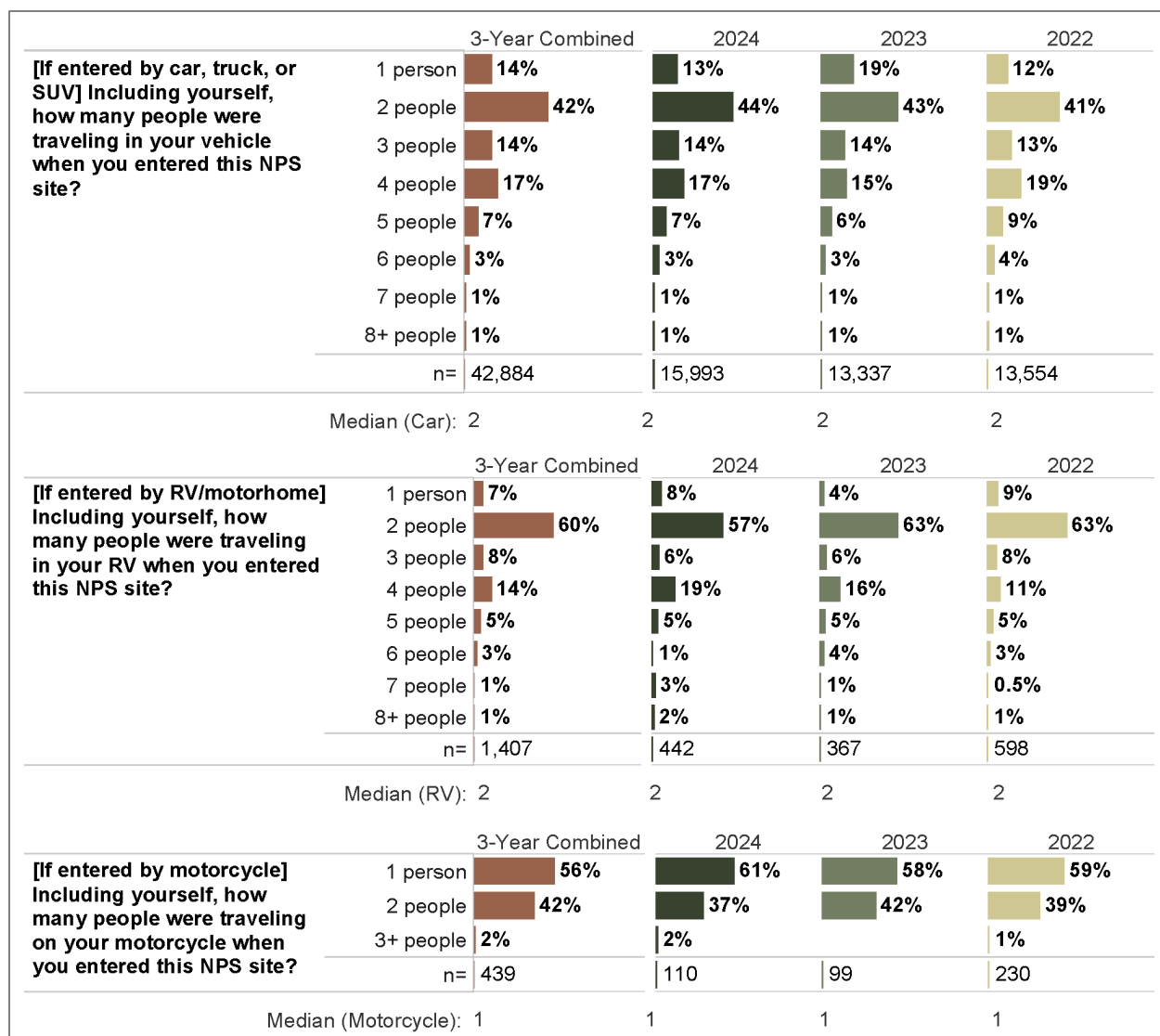


Figure 14. Number of people in or on respondent's vehicle when entering NPS units. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 10](#).

NPS

- The group size of respondents traveling by car had little variation across all three years, with a plurality of respondents overall (42%) traveling by car that reported two people in the vehicle, consistent with patterns in overall group size (Figure 9).
- More than half of respondents (60%) across the three years which entered NPS units by RV/motorhome reported traveling in a group of two.
- The majority of respondents overall entering NPS units by motorcycle (56%) reported entering the NPS unit alone.

Question 22: Previous Visits to NPS Units

Respondents were asked if they were first time visitors to the NPS unit where they were surveyed. Repeat visitors were then asked how many visits they have made to the NPS unit they were surveyed in during the last 12 months and the last five years (Figure 15).

		3-Year Combined	2024	2023	2022
Are you a first-time visitor to this NPS site?	No	54%	54%	56%	53%
	Yes	46%	46%	44%	47%
	n=	56,931	18,150	18,831	19,950
		3-Year Combined	2024	2023	2022
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to this NPS site over the past 12 months?	1 visit	43%	42%	33%	55%
	2 visits	12%	14%	10%	13%
	3 to 5 visits	13%	15%	13%	11%
	6 to 10 visits	7%	8%	7%	5%
	11 to 25 visits	8%	8%	9%	6%
	26 to 50 visits	5%	6%	7%	4%
	51+ visits	12%	8%	20%	5%
	n=	27,519	9,161	8,714	9,644
Median (12-month Visits): 2			2	4	1
		3-Year Combined	2024	2023	2022
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to this NPS site over the past five years?	1 visit	20%	19%	15%	24%
	2 visits	14%	13%	10%	18%
	3 to 5 visits	17%	18%	14%	21%
	6 to 10 visits	9%	11%	8%	9%
	11 to 25 visits	10%	12%	10%	9%
	26 to 50 visits	7%	8%	7%	5%
	51+ visits	24%	20%	35%	14%
	n=	27,517	9,160	8,714	9,643
Median (5-year Visits): 5			6	15	3

Figure 15. Previous visits to NPS units. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 11](#).

NPS

- Around half of respondents overall (46%) were on their first ever trip to the NPS unit where they were surveyed, with repeat visitors being the plurality in all years.
- Among the respondents who were repeat visitors (54% overall), a plurality across the three years (43%) were on their first visit in the past 12 months (i.e., had last visited more than a year ago) to the NPS unit where they were surveyed.
- Distribution varied across the past three years when respondents were asked about NPS unit visits over the past five years. In 2022, most respondents reported five or fewer visits (63%), while a larger share of respondents in 2023 reported 51+ visits (35%), and 2024 saw a more modest distribution (50% reported five or fewer visits).
- Consistent with this variation, the median number of visits made in the past five years was three in 2022, 15 in 2023, six in 2024, and five overall across the three years.

Question 23: Previous Visits to Other NPS Units

Finally, respondents were asked how many visits they made to other NPS sites over the past 12 months (Figure 16).

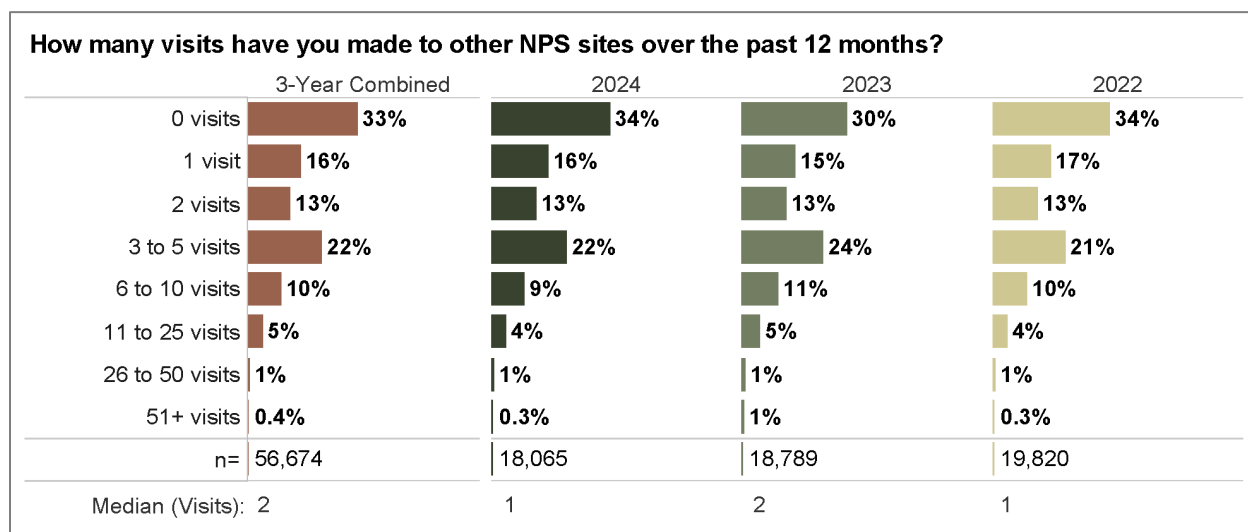


Figure 16. Visits made to other NPS sites within the past year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 12](#).

NPS

- The majority of respondents overall (67%) had made at least one visit to other NPS site(s) in the past year, and patterns were similar across all years.
- The median number of visits made to other NPS site(s) in the past 12 months was two overall across the three years and in 2023, but only one in 2022 and 2024.

Post-Trip Survey Results

The following section provides results of the post-trip visitor surveys received by mail-back or online following fieldwork conducted in the 72 NPS units from 2022 through 2024. Again, caution is recommended in the interpretation of figures with sample size lower than $n = 30$, and categories on some questions may not sum to 100% due to rounding differences and/or the opportunity to select more than one response option. Furthermore, sample sizes displayed are unweighted while all results displayed are weighted by peak month or the three-year peak month average visits as described in the methods section.

Questions 1–2: Information About NPS Units

First, respondents were asked what sources they used to obtain information about the NPS unit they were surveyed in prior to their trip, and whether they had the information they needed on their trip (Figure 17).

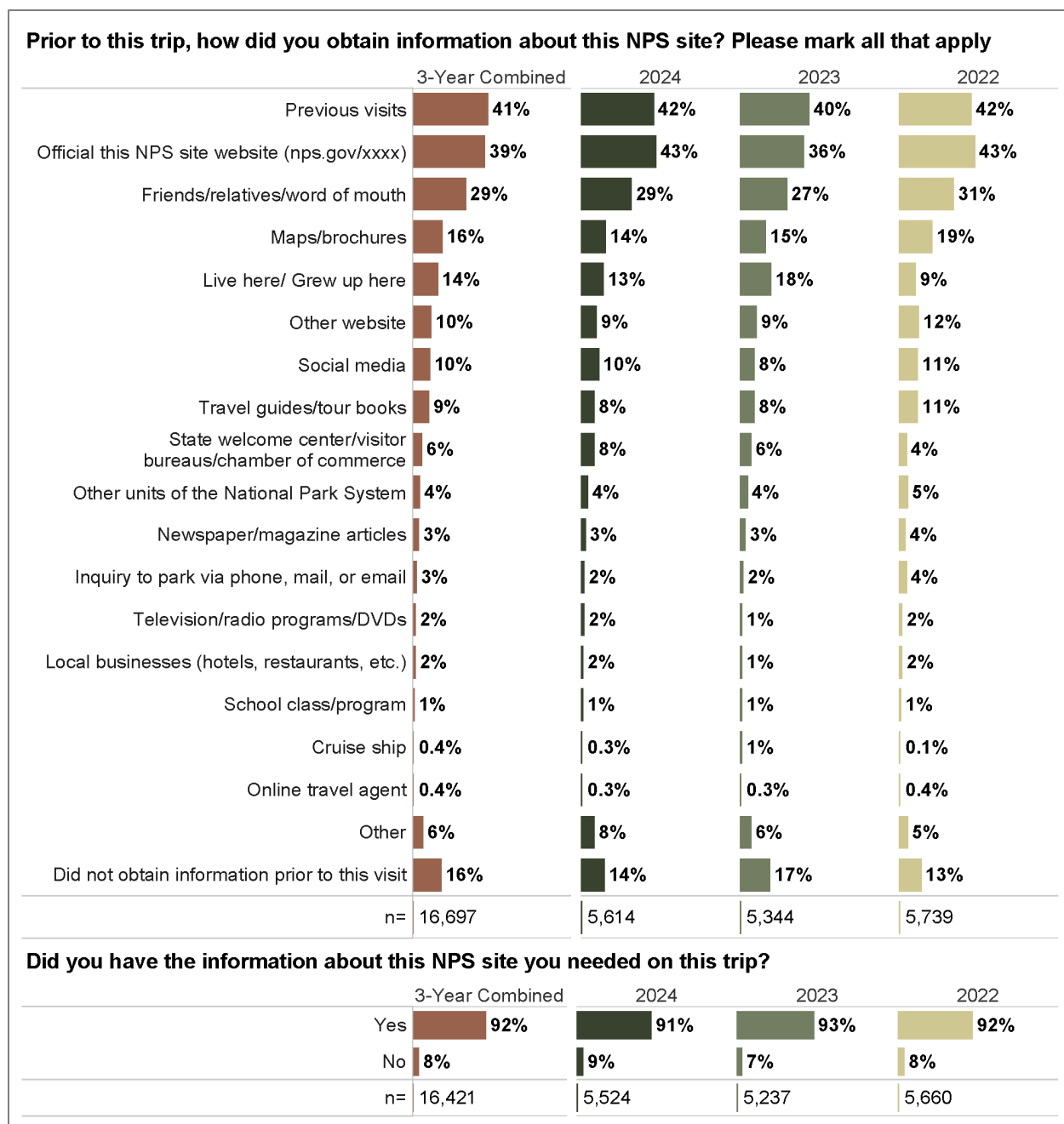


Figure 17. Sources used to obtain information about NPS units prior to the trip.

NPS

- The most-used resources across all years were prior visits to the NPS unit (41%), the official National Park Service website for the unit (39%), and word of mouth (29%).
- In a follow-up question, the vast majority of respondents across all years (92%) said that they had the information about NPS units that they needed on their trip, while 8% indicated that there was information that they needed but did not have.

Question 3: Transportation

On the intercept survey, respondents indicated a mode of transportation they used to enter the park on the day they were contacted. In the post-trip survey, respondents were asked to select all forms of transportation they personally used to travel from their home to the NPS unit on their trip (Figure 18). Because this survey covers their full trip, respondents may have a variety of transportation options they used during the entirety of their trip away from home.

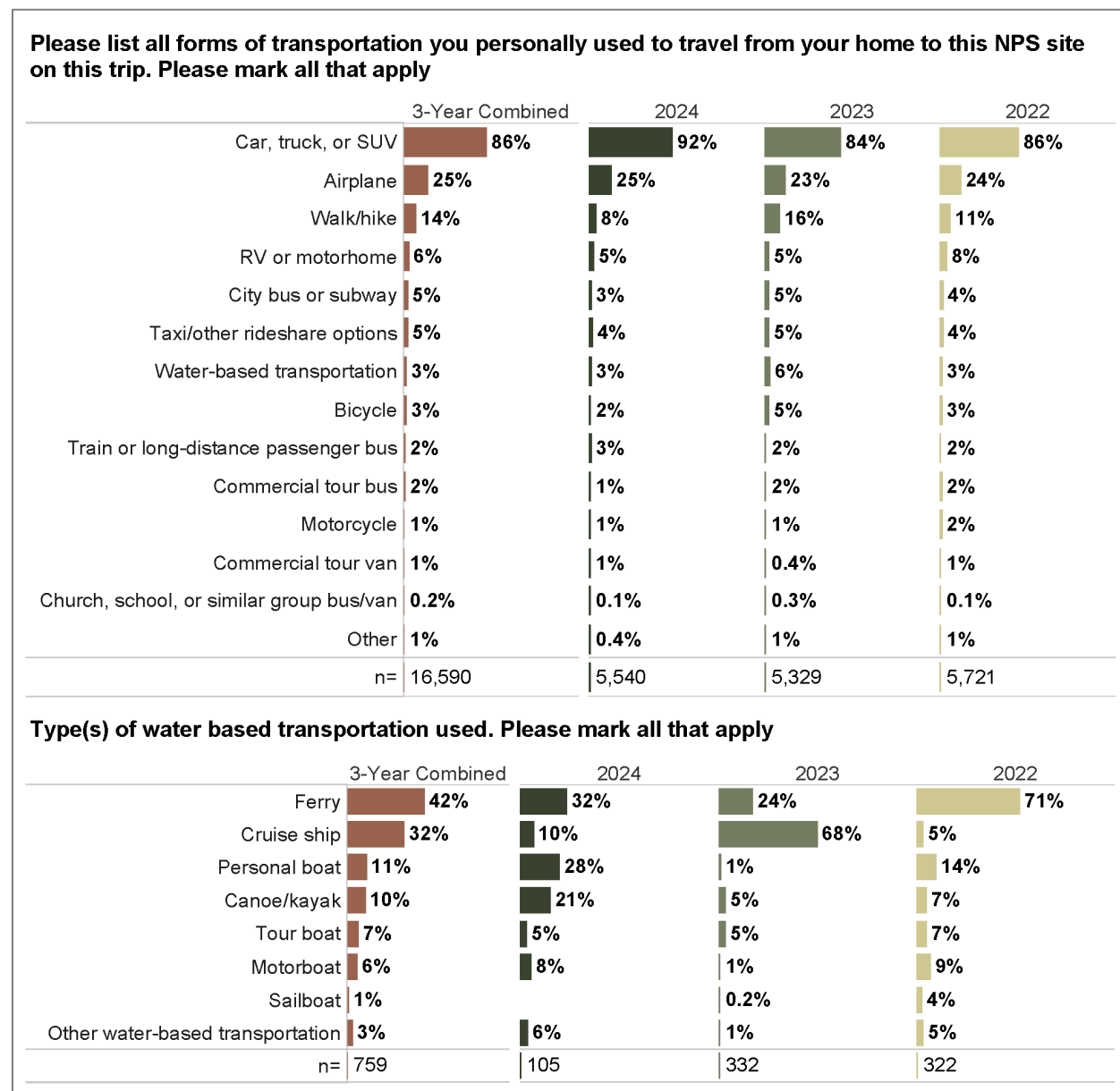


Figure 18. Forms of transportation used to travel from home to NPS units on the recent trip.
NPS

- The top modes of transportation that respondents used on their trip to NPS units were largely consistent over the course of the past three years. More than three-quarters of respondents across all three years (86%) used a personal vehicle, such as a car, truck, or SUV, at some point during their trip from home to NPS units. The second most common mode of travel was an airplane (25%), followed by walking/hiking (14%).
- Water-based transportation made up a small percentage (3%) of transportation used across the past three years, with the exact type of water-based transportation varying widely. This variation is potentially the result of a low sample size each year and variation in the NPS units surveyed in each year.

Question 4: Travel Party Composition

Respondents were asked what type of group they were with during their visit to the NPS unit on the day of the survey (Figure 19).

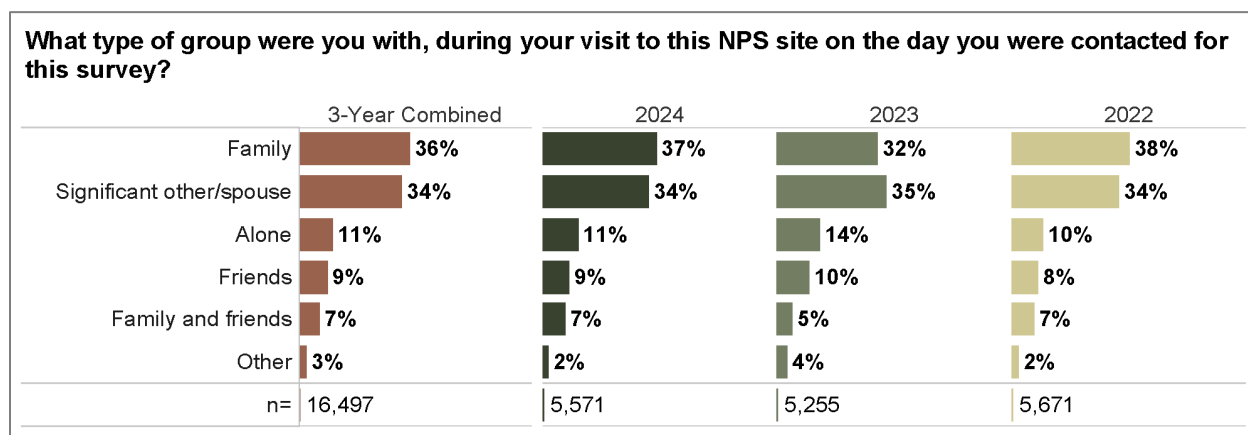


Figure 19. Travel party composition during NPS units visit.

NPS

- The largest share of respondents across all three years visited NPS units with either family (36%) or a significant other or spouse (34%), with this result grouping shifting slightly from year to year.
- The next most common group compositions saw similar variations from year to year, with their ordering remaining largely consistent; solo travelers (11%), friends (9%) and family and friends (7%).

Questions 11–13: Trip Characteristics

Respondents were asked if they visited other National Park Service sites on their trip away from home (Figure 20).

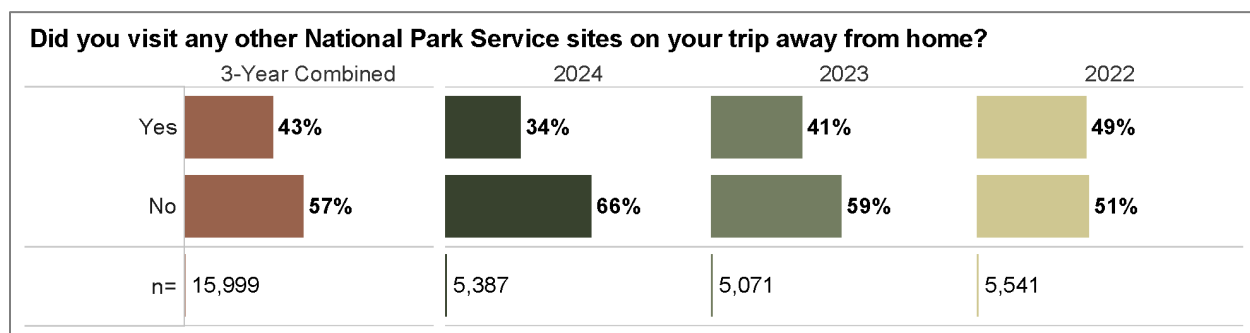


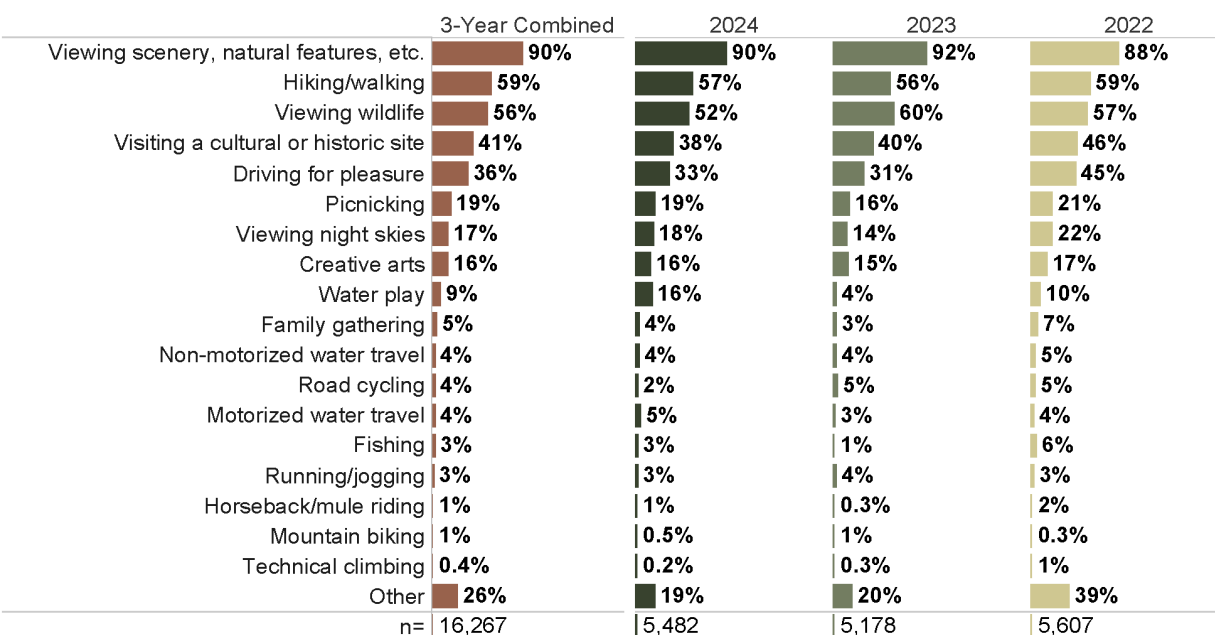
Figure 20. NPS sites visited on trip away from home.

NPS

- Overall, 43% of respondents stated that they visited another NPS unit on their trip away from home.
- Respondent visits to other NPS sites on their trip varied moderately from year to year. Around one in three respondents in 2024 stated that they visited another NPS unit on their trip away from home, markedly lower compared to 2023 (–7 ppt) and 2022 (–15 ppt).

Survey respondents were then asked to identify all activities that they participated in while visiting NPS units, and which of those was their primary activity (Figure 21).

On this trip, in which of the following activities did you personally participate in while visiting this NPS site? Please mark all that apply



And which was your primary activity during your visit to this NPS site on the day you were contacted for this survey?

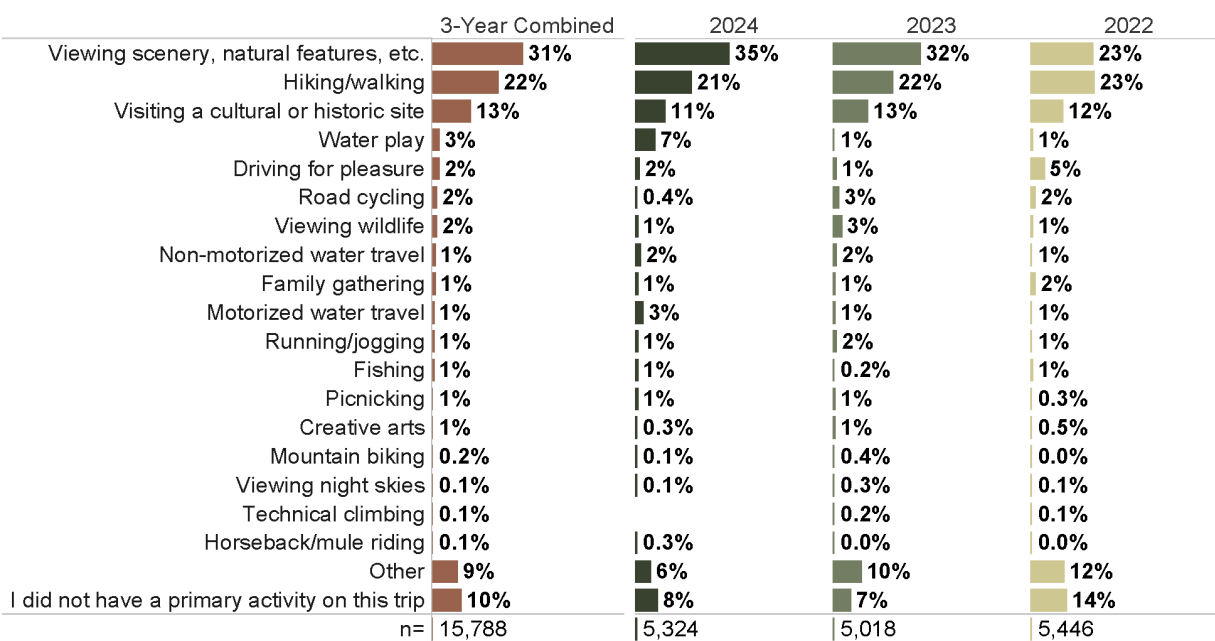


Figure 21. Participation in activities at NPS units.

NPS

- The top activities respondents participated in saw little variation across all three years. The leading activity reported across the three years was viewing scenery, natural features, etc. (90%). A majority of peak season respondents also engaged in hiking (59%) and viewing wildlife (56%).
- Activities that require more unique offerings at NPS units were all more uncommon, such as horseback/mule riding, technical climbing, and mountain biking (reported by less than 1% of respondents across all years).
- Primary activities identified by respondents across all years corresponded to more common activities in NPS units, such as viewing scenery, natural features, etc. (31%), hiking/walking (22%), and visiting a cultural or historic site (13%).

Questions 14–15: Reasons to Visit

Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of distinct reasons to visit NPS units on their trip and were then asked which of those was the most important reason for them to visit NPS units (Figures 22 and 23).

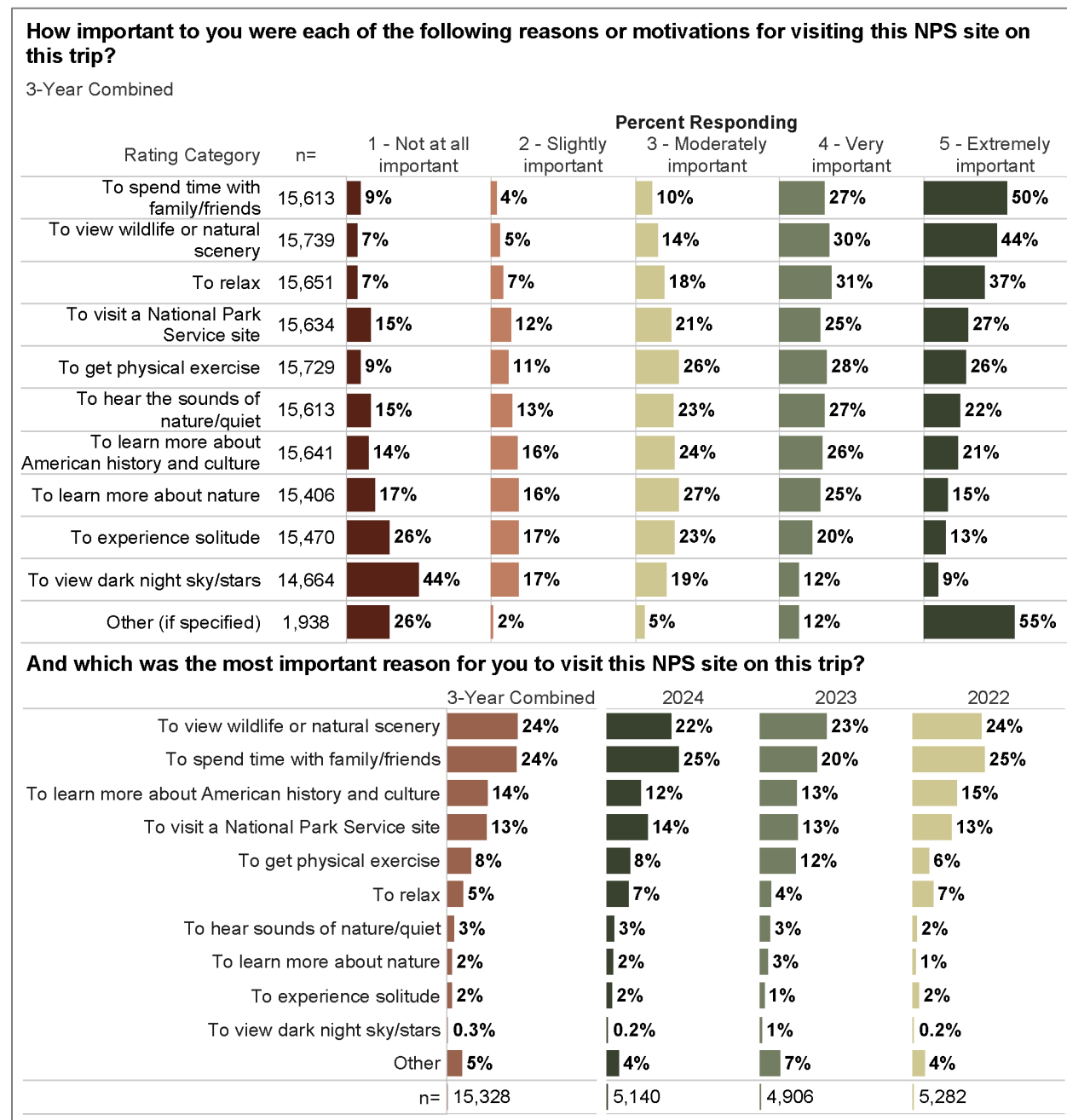


Figure 22. Reasons or motivations to visit NPS units, overall. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 13](#).

NPS

- Overall, the highest shares of respondents indicated spending time with family/friends (50%), viewing wildlife or natural scenery (44%), and relaxing (37%) as extremely important reasons for their trip to NPS units.
- The least important reasons rated were to experience solitude and to view dark night sky/stars (only 13% and 9% of respondents, respectively, reported them as extremely important, and 26% and 44% of respondents, respectively, rated them as not at all important). As highlighted in past reports, this finding does not mean that these activities are not important. They tend to be extremely important to more niche groups of visitors.
- The most common responses for the top reason to visit NPS units were viewing wildlife or natural scenery (24%) and spending time with family/friends (also 24%).

How important to you were each of the following reasons or motivations for visiting this NPS site on this trip?

By Year of Data Collection

Rating Category	Year	n=	Percent Responding				
			1 - Not at all important	2 - Slightly important	3 - Moderately important	4 - Very important	5 - Extremely important
To spend time with family/friends	2024	5,263	9%	3%	10%	27%	50%
	2023	4,938	10%	4%	11%	29%	46%
	2022	5,412	9%	3%	10%	26%	51%
To view wildlife or natural scenery	2024	5,315	6%	5%	15%	31%	42%
	2023	5,009	4%	4%	14%	32%	46%
	2022	5,415	9%	6%	13%	29%	42%
To relax	2024	5,293	6%	7%	19%	30%	38%
	2023	4,955	5%	7%	19%	32%	36%
	2022	5,403	8%	7%	16%	31%	37%
To visit a National Park Service site	2024	5,256	14%	12%	23%	25%	25%
	2023	4,964	15%	12%	21%	24%	27%
	2022	5,414	14%	12%	21%	26%	27%
To get physical exercise	2024	5,302	8%	12%	27%	28%	25%
	2023	5,001	7%	10%	24%	29%	30%
	2022	5,426	11%	12%	27%	27%	23%
To hear the sounds of nature/quiet	2024	5,276	14%	13%	25%	26%	23%
	2023	4,951	13%	12%	24%	29%	23%
	2022	5,386	16%	13%	22%	28%	22%
To learn more about American history and culture	2024	5,250	16%	15%	23%	25%	20%
	2023	4,961	14%	16%	23%	26%	21%
	2022	5,430	11%	16%	25%	27%	21%
To learn more about nature	2024	5,184	16%	17%	27%	25%	15%
	2023	4,895	14%	17%	25%	26%	17%
	2022	5,327	20%	15%	28%	24%	13%
To experience solitude	2024	5,221	26%	18%	22%	20%	14%
	2023	4,892	26%	18%	24%	20%	13%
	2022	5,357	24%	16%	23%	22%	14%
To view dark night sky/stars	2024	4,893	44%	15%	19%	12%	10%
	2023	4,659	49%	16%	17%	10%	8%
	2022	5,112	39%	18%	20%	14%	9%
Other (if specified)	2024	654	31%	3%	7%	11%	49%
	2023	668	23%	1%	4%	13%	60%
	2022	616	24%	2%	5%	13%	55%

Figure 23. Reasons or motivations to visit NPS units, by year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 13](#).

NPS

- When viewed across years, the ranking of top reasons or motivations for visiting NPS units were largely consistent with the aggregated three-year ratings (per Figure 23).
- Around half of respondents across all three years (46%–51%) rated spending time with family/friends as extremely important reasons for visiting. Viewing wildlife and natural scenery (42%–46%) and relaxation (36%–38%) were rated as extremely important by more than one-third of respondents each year.

Questions 16–18: Programs, Services, and Learning

Respondents were asked to identify all programs and services in which they personally participated within the NPS unit during their trip (Figure 24).

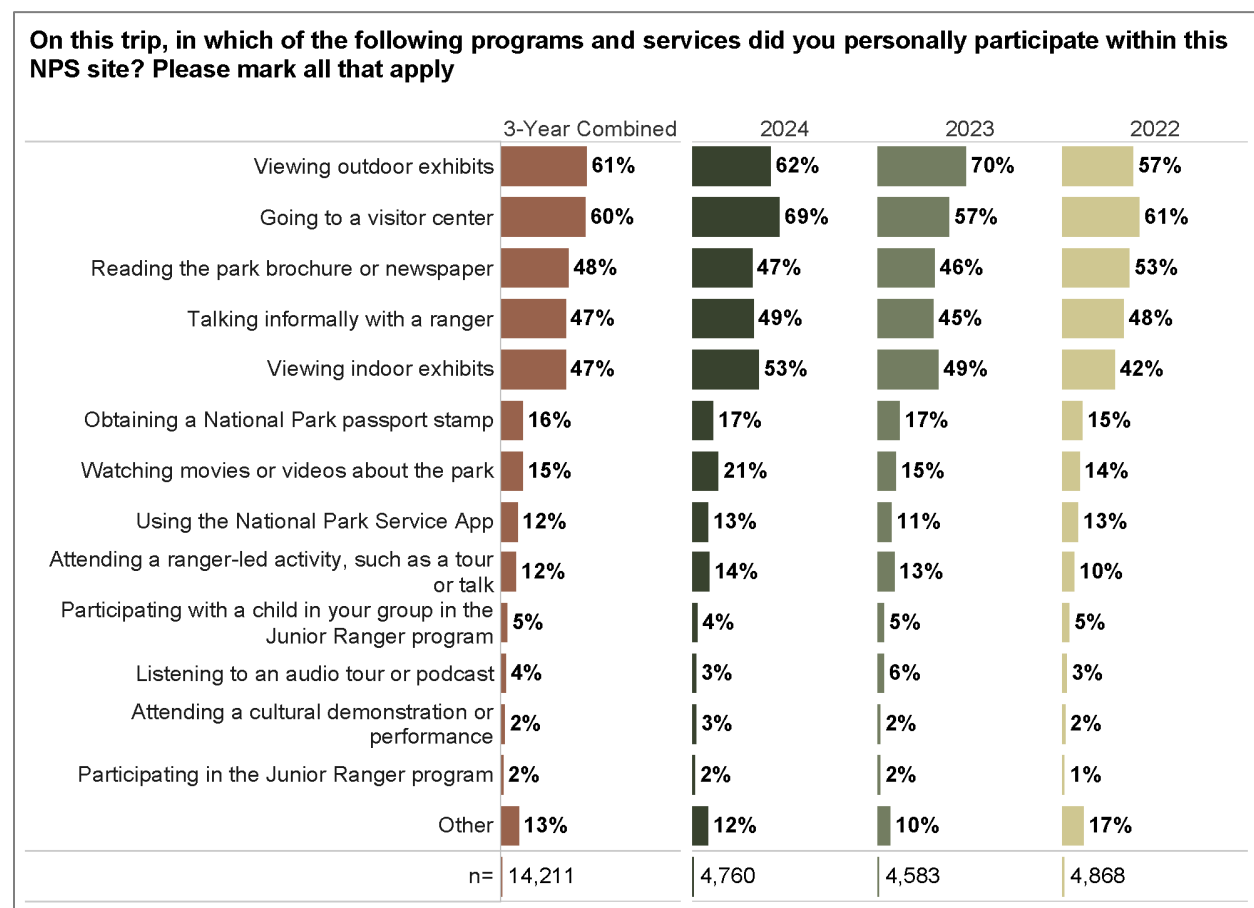


Figure 24. Participation in programs at NPS units.

NPS

- Overall, the top two most-used programs were viewing outdoor exhibits (61%) and going to a visitor center (60%). This was followed in prevalence by just under half of respondents who were reading the park brochure or newspaper (48%), talking informally with a ranger (47%), and viewing indoor exhibits (47%).
- The most-used program varies year-to-year. In 2024 and 2022, going to the visitor center (69% and 61%, respectively) was the most used program. However, in 2023, viewing outdoor exhibits was the most-used program.
- Respondents in 2024 also cited higher use of the indoor exhibits (53%) and movies or videos about the park (21%) compared to prior years.
- Attending cultural demonstrations and performances (2%) and participating in the Junior Ranger program (2%) were among the lowest used programs across all years.

Two follow-up questions asked if respondents learned anything from park unit staff, programs, and/or exhibits about American history, nature, and/or culture, and what specific subjects they would like to learn about in the future (Figure 25).

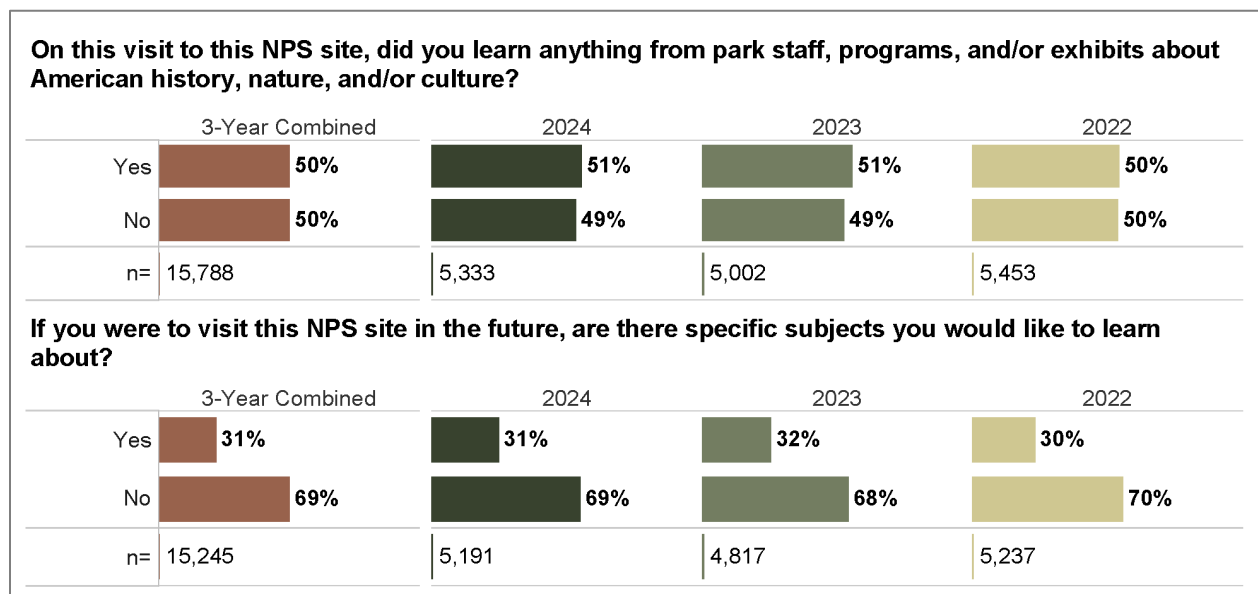


Figure 25. Learning outcomes while visiting the NPS site.

NPS

- Overall, half (50%) of respondents reported that they learned something from park staff, programs, and/or exhibits about American history, nature, and/or culture compared to other years. Another three in ten (31%) respondents overall reported that if they were to visit NPS units in the future, there are specific subjects they would like to learn about.
- The share of respondents learning from park staff, programs, and exhibits, as well as the share wanting to learn about specific subjects, was largely consistent across each survey year.

Questions 19–20: Use of Devices

Two survey questions were focused on the use of electronic devices, their importance, and the quality of service provided. First, respondents were asked which personal electronic devices they used while in the NPS unit where they were surveyed (Figures 26 and 27).

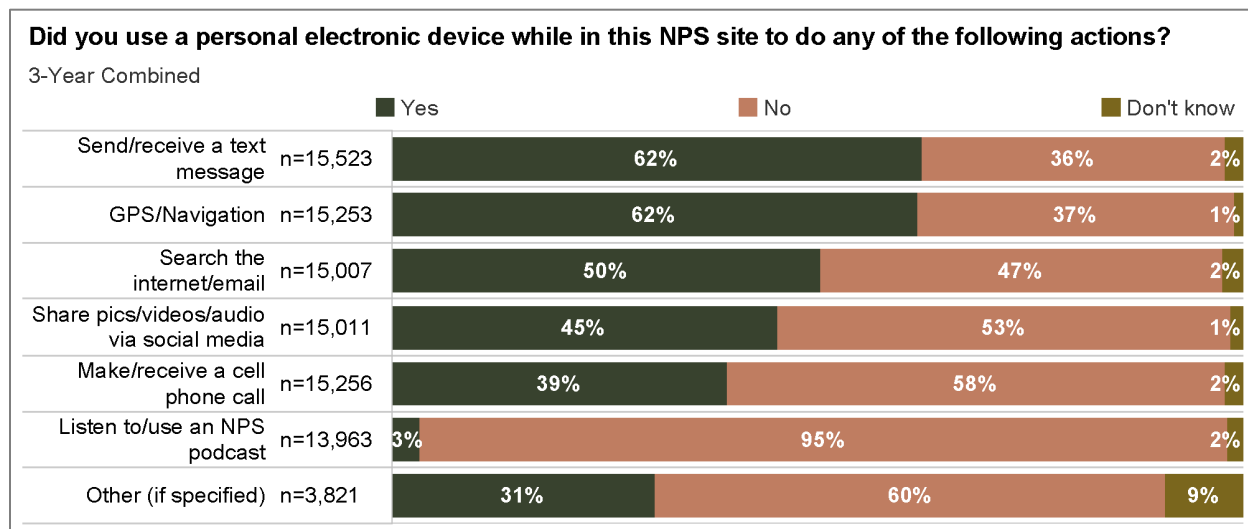


Figure 26. Use of personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units, overall. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 14](#).

NPS

- Overall, at least half of respondents reported sending/receiving a text message (62%), using GPS/navigation (62%) and searching the internet/email (50%). Conversely, only 3% of overall respondents listened to or used an NPS podcast.

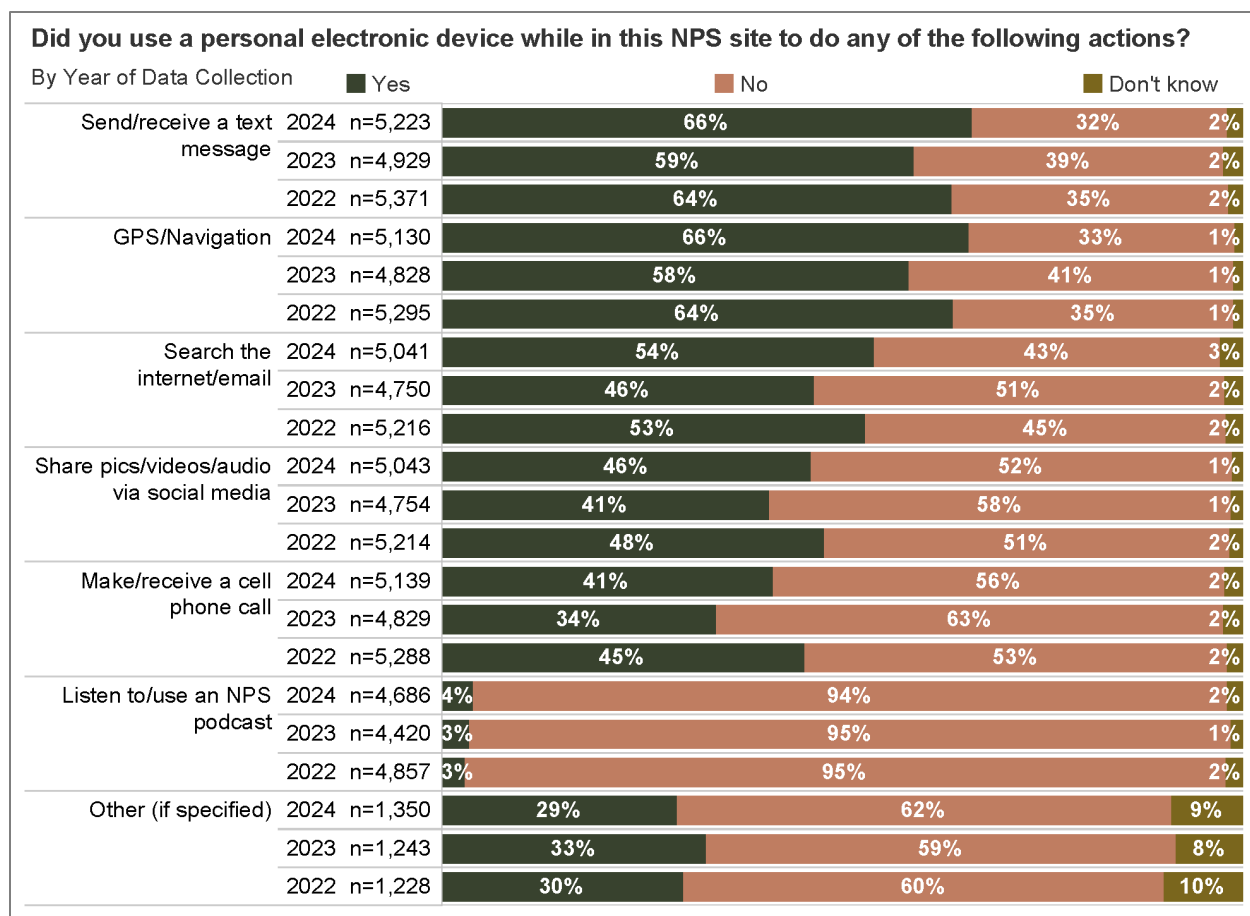


Figure 27. Use of personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units, by year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 14](#).

NPS

- Respondents in 2024 and 2022 made use of personal electronic devices at a notably higher rate than in 2023 in nearly all categories. Respondents in 2024 were the most likely to use a device to send/receive a text, use a GPS, and search the internet/email, though these shares were only marginally higher than the shares in 2022.
- Respondents in 2023 were the least likely to make use of personal electronic devices, with the exception of using a device for a specified “other” purpose.

Then, respondents were asked to rate both the importance of each of these electronic device uses (Figures 28 and 29), and the quality of their service (Figures 30 and 31).

How important to you was it during your visit to this NPS site to use personal electronic devices to do each of the following?

3-Year Combined

Rating Category	n=	Percent Responding				
		1 - Not at all important	2 - Slightly important	3 - Moderately important	4 - Very important	5 - Extremely important
Send/receive a text message	15,370	25%	17%	23%	18%	16%
GPS/Navigation	15,183	23%	8%	17%	22%	30%
Search the internet/email	15,079	35%	17%	22%	14%	11%
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	14,949	47%	19%	19%	9%	7%
Make/receive a cell phone call	15,324	32%	17%	21%	15%	15%
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	14,295	73%	13%	9%	3%	2%
Other (if specified)	2,443	69%	4%	7%	6%	13%

Categories sorted in descending order by percent answering "Yes" to "Did you use a personal electronic device while in the park to do any of the following actions?" (With "Other" anchored at bottom)

Figure 28. The importance of the use of personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units, overall. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 15](#).

NPS

- Overall, the most common devices used (per Figure 27) were also rated as the most important: GPS/Navigation and sending/receiving a text message were rated as extremely important by 30% and 16% of respondents, respectively. Approximately 15% also found it extremely important to make/receive phone calls.
- However, personal electronic device use was not objectively important to large shares of respondents. For every action listed aside from GPS/Navigation, respondents were more likely to indicate that the use was not at all or slightly important than they were to rate it as very or extremely important. Therefore, there is a true split in the sample where some respondents see the use of technology as important with others finding it not necessary.

How important to you was it during your visit to this NPS site to use personal electronic devices to do each of the following?

By Year of Data Collection

Rating Category	Year	n=	Percent Responding				
			1 - Not at all important	2 - Slightly important	3 - Moderately important	4 - Very important	5 - Extremely important
Send/receive a text message	2024	5,181	23%	16%	25%	20%	16%
	2023	4,883	26%	18%	23%	18%	15%
	2022	5,306	25%	16%	23%	18%	17%
GPS/Navigation	2024	5,124	21%	8%	17%	23%	32%
	2023	4,831	25%	8%	16%	21%	29%
	2022	5,228	21%	9%	18%	22%	30%
Search the internet/email	2024	5,072	34%	17%	23%	15%	11%
	2023	4,800	36%	18%	23%	13%	10%
	2022	5,207	35%	17%	21%	15%	13%
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	2024	5,026	47%	19%	20%	8%	6%
	2023	4,769	50%	19%	17%	8%	6%
	2022	5,154	45%	19%	19%	10%	8%
Make/receive a cell phone call	2024	5,167	30%	17%	22%	16%	16%
	2023	4,863	34%	18%	21%	14%	13%
	2022	5,294	31%	16%	20%	16%	16%
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	2024	4,818	72%	14%	9%	3%	2%
	2023	4,539	72%	13%	10%	3%	2%
	2022	4,938	74%	13%	9%	3%	2%
Other (if specified)	2024	894	68%	3%	8%	8%	13%
	2023	793	70%	4%	5%	6%	14%
	2022	756	66%	5%	8%	6%	15%

Categories sorted in descending order by percent answering "Yes" to "Did you use a personal electronic device while in the park to do any of the following actions?" (With "Other" anchored at bottom)

Figure 29. The importance of the use of personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units, by year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 15](#).

NPS

- By year, the importance of personal devices does not vary dramatically. Consistent with their moderately higher use rate of personal electronic devices, respondents in 2024 were slightly more likely to rate GPS/Navigation as either very or extremely important compared to past years (ranging from +3 ppt to +2 ppt, depending on the year).

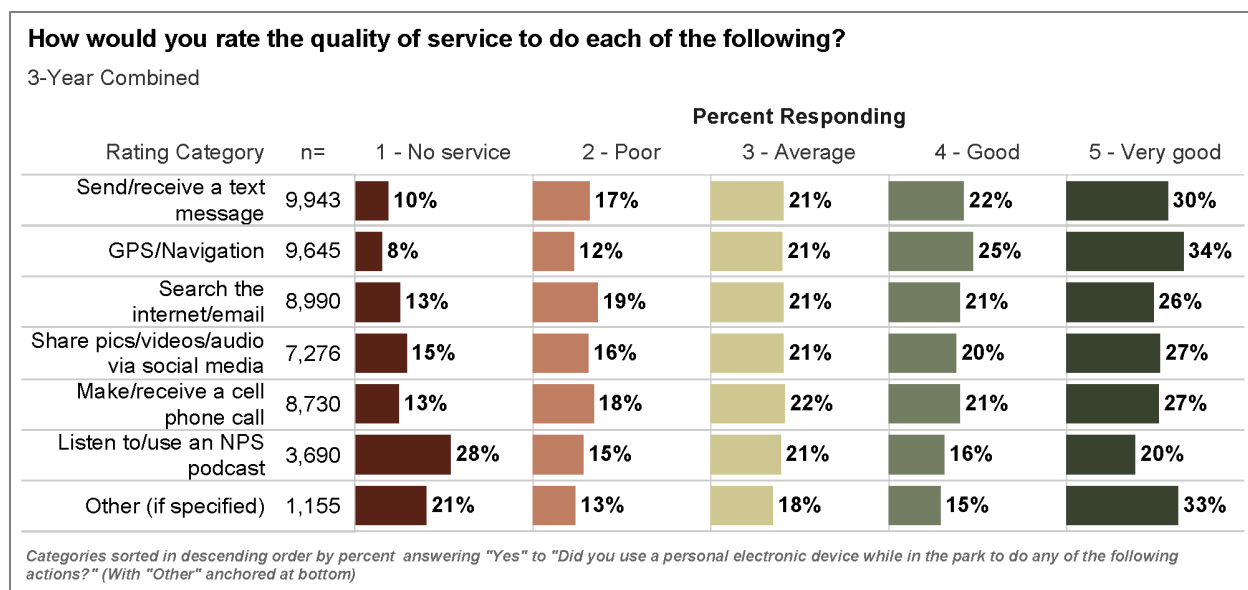


Figure 30. Quality of service for personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units, overall. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 16](#).

NPS

- Overall, the quality of service available for GPS/Navigation was rated as very good or good by 34% and 25% of respondents, respectively. However, 8% of respondents reported that they had no service for this.
- Just under one in six respondents (ranging from 10% to 15%, depending on the service) reported that they had no service to send/receive a text message, share pics/video/audio via social media, search the internet/email, or make/receive a cell phone call.
- However, just over a quarter of respondents (ranging from 26% to 30%, depending on the service) rated the quality of service for these uses as very good.
- Listening to/using an NPS podcast was cited as having the lowest quality of service, with 28% of respondents stating they had no service.

How would you rate the quality of service to do each of the following?

By Year of Data Collection

Rating Category	Year	n=	Percent Responding				
			1 - No service	2 - Poor	3 - Average	4 - Good	5 - Very good
Send/receive a text message	2024	3,441	8%	15%	23%	23%	31%
	2023	3,130	8%	14%	21%	24%	34%
	2022	3,372	12%	19%	22%	21%	26%
GPS/Navigation	2024	3,372	7%	12%	22%	25%	35%
	2023	3,024	6%	10%	20%	26%	38%
	2022	3,249	9%	13%	22%	24%	32%
Search the internet/email	2024	3,109	11%	18%	23%	22%	26%
	2023	2,836	11%	16%	21%	23%	29%
	2022	3,045	15%	22%	21%	19%	22%
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	2024	2,454	12%	16%	24%	21%	27%
	2023	2,227	12%	14%	20%	22%	32%
	2022	2,595	18%	19%	21%	18%	24%
Make/receive a cell phone call	2024	2,995	11%	16%	23%	22%	28%
	2023	2,690	10%	15%	21%	21%	31%
	2022	3,045	15%	20%	21%	20%	24%
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	2024	1,269	23%	14%	26%	18%	19%
	2023	1,165	22%	15%	20%	16%	26%
	2022	1,256	35%	15%	18%	15%	17%
Other (if specified)	2024	421	21%	15%	21%	16%	27%
	2023	367	19%	10%	19%	15%	37%
	2022	367	24%	14%	15%	16%	32%

Categories sorted in descending order by percent answering "Yes" to "Did you use a personal electronic device while in the park to do any of the following actions?" (With "Other" anchored at bottom)

Figure 31. Quality of service for personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units, by year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 16](#).

NPS

- Respondents in 2023, who were the least likely to use personal electronic devices compared to 2022 and 2024, were most likely to rate the quality of service for all personal electronic devices as very good (ranging from +3 ppt to +10 ppt, depending on the service and year).
- Conversely, respondents in 2022 and 2024 generally saw slightly higher shares of more modest ratings of quality of service (i.e., poor or good) compared to 2023 respondents.

Question 21: Physical Difficulties

Respondents were asked if anyone in their personal group had a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in activities or services during their visit to the NPS unit where they were surveyed. If such a condition was identified, respondents were asked to specify the type of difficulty (Figure 32).

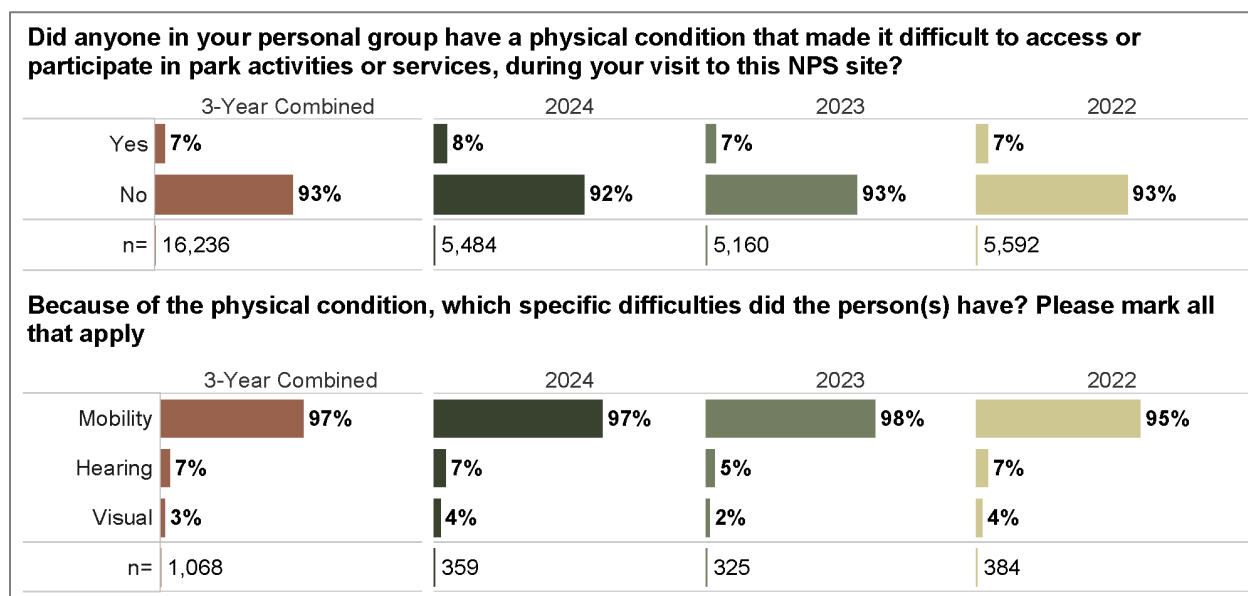


Figure 32. Physical difficulties while visiting NPS units.

NPS

- The majority of respondents across the three years (93%) reported that nobody in their personal group had a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services during their visit to NPS units.
- Among the 7% of respondents who identified at least one difficulty, almost all (97%) reported mobility issues in their group. Smaller shares reported hearing difficulties (7%) and/or visual difficulties (3%).
- While 2023 saw the marginally highest share of respondents with mobility issues (98%) compared to other years, the share of respondents with hearing difficulties (5%) was lower than both 2024 and 2022.

Questions 24–27: Visitor Experience

Respondents were asked if their visit to the NPS unit met their expectations (Figure 33).

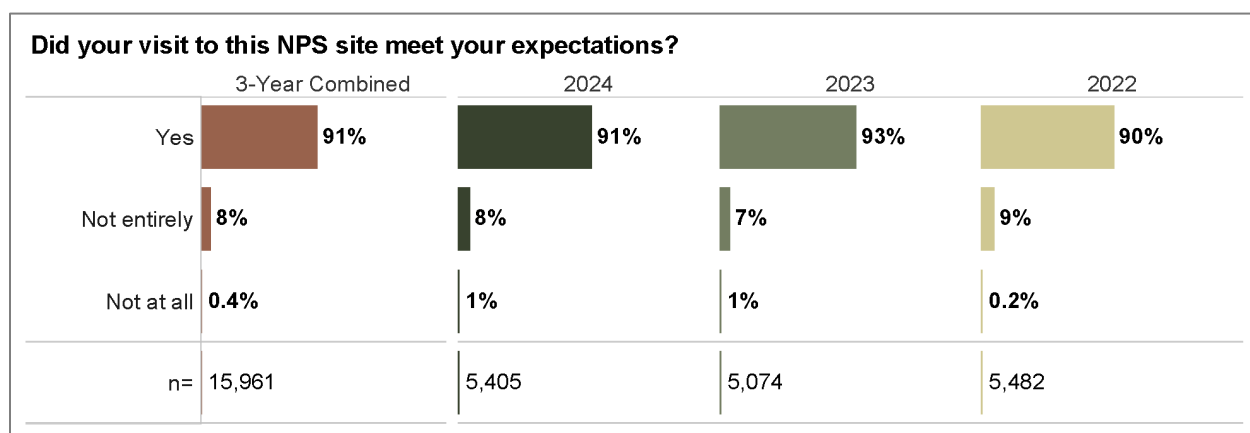


Figure 33. Meeting NPS units expectations.

NPS

- The majority of respondents across all three years (91%) reported that their visit to NPS units met their expectations, with less than one in ten (8%) respondents stating it did not meet their expectations entirely. Only 0.4% of respondents overall stated that their visit to NPS units did not at all meet their expectations.

Respondents were then given several statements about the NPS unit where they were surveyed and asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each given statement (Figures 34 and 35).

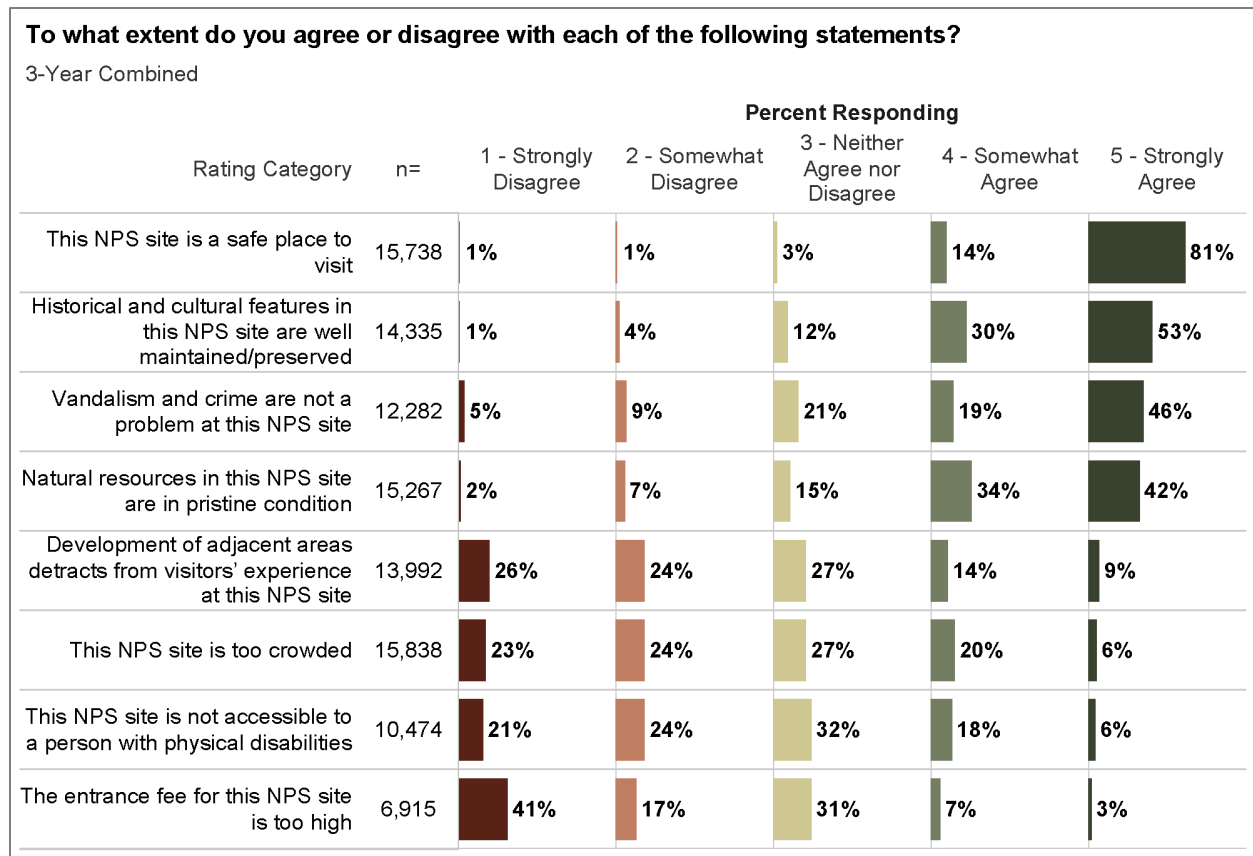


Figure 34. Rating NPS units experience, overall. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 17](#).

NPS

- From all the statements listed, “This NPS site is a safe place to visit” received the most consensus from respondents overall, with a combined 95% saying they either strongly or somewhat agree with it.
- This was followed by “Historical and cultural features in this NPS site are well maintained/preserved” and “Natural resources in this NPS site are in pristine condition” (83% and 76% of respondents, respectively, strongly or somewhat agreed with these statements).
- Conversely, “The entrance fee for this NPS site is too high,” “This NPS site is not accessible to a person with physical disabilities,” and “This NPS site is too crowded” received the least support, with fewer than around one-fourth of respondents either somewhat or strongly agreeing with these statements, and more than one-third of respondents either somewhat or strongly disagreeing with each of them.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?							
By Year of Data Collection							
Rating Category	Year	n=	Percent Responding				
			1 - Strongly Disagree	2 - Somewhat Disagree	3 - Neither Agree nor Disagree	4 - Somewhat Agree	5 - Strongly Agree
This NPS site is a safe place to visit	2024	5,317	1%	1%	3%	14%	81%
	2023	5,001	1%	2%	3%	15%	79%
	2022	5,420	1%	1%	2%	12%	83%
Historical and cultural features in this NPS site are well maintained/preserved	2024	4,839	1%	3%	13%	28%	55%
	2023	4,588	1%	4%	12%	32%	50%
	2022	4,908	1%	3%	11%	29%	56%
Vandalism and crime are not a problem at this NPS site	2024	4,211	4%	8%	20%	20%	48%
	2023	3,936	5%	11%	22%	19%	42%
	2022	4,135	5%	6%	19%	18%	52%
Natural resources in this NPS site are in pristine condition	2024	5,166	2%	7%	15%	36%	41%
	2023	4,865	2%	8%	16%	35%	39%
	2022	5,236	2%	6%	13%	32%	48%
Development of adjacent areas detracts from visitors' experience at this NPS site	2024	4,719	25%	24%	27%	15%	10%
	2023	4,468	27%	25%	27%	14%	7%
	2022	4,805	27%	23%	27%	14%	9%
This NPS site is too crowded	2024	5,347	22%	22%	30%	20%	6%
	2023	5,052	28%	27%	26%	16%	4%
	2022	5,439	25%	23%	25%	21%	7%
This NPS site is not accessible to a person with physical disabilities	2024	3,628	17%	25%	31%	21%	5%
	2023	3,404	22%	26%	31%	16%	5%
	2022	3,442	23%	21%	33%	17%	6%
The entrance fee for this NPS site is too high	2024	2,276	37%	19%	33%	8%	3%
	2023	2,281	43%	17%	29%	8%	3%
	2022	2,358	45%	17%	30%	6%	2%

Figure 35. Rating NPS units experience, by year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 17](#).

NPS

- When viewed across years, “This NPS site is a safe place to visit” remains the most strongly agreed with statement, with the vast majority of respondents across years (94%–95%) somewhat or strongly agreeing with the statement. This was followed by the statement, “Historical and cultural features in this NPS site are well maintained/preserved” (82%–85%).
- Other statements saw more modest differences between the three years, such as the statements, “Natural resources in this NPS site are in pristine condition” (74%–80% each year strongly or somewhat agreed with this statement) and “Vandalism and crime are not a problem at this NPS site” (61%–70%).
- Consistent with the overall sample, “The entrance fee for this NPS site is too high” received the least support (37%–45% strongly disagreed).

Next, respondents were asked to rate the quality of park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in NPS units (Figures 36 and 37).

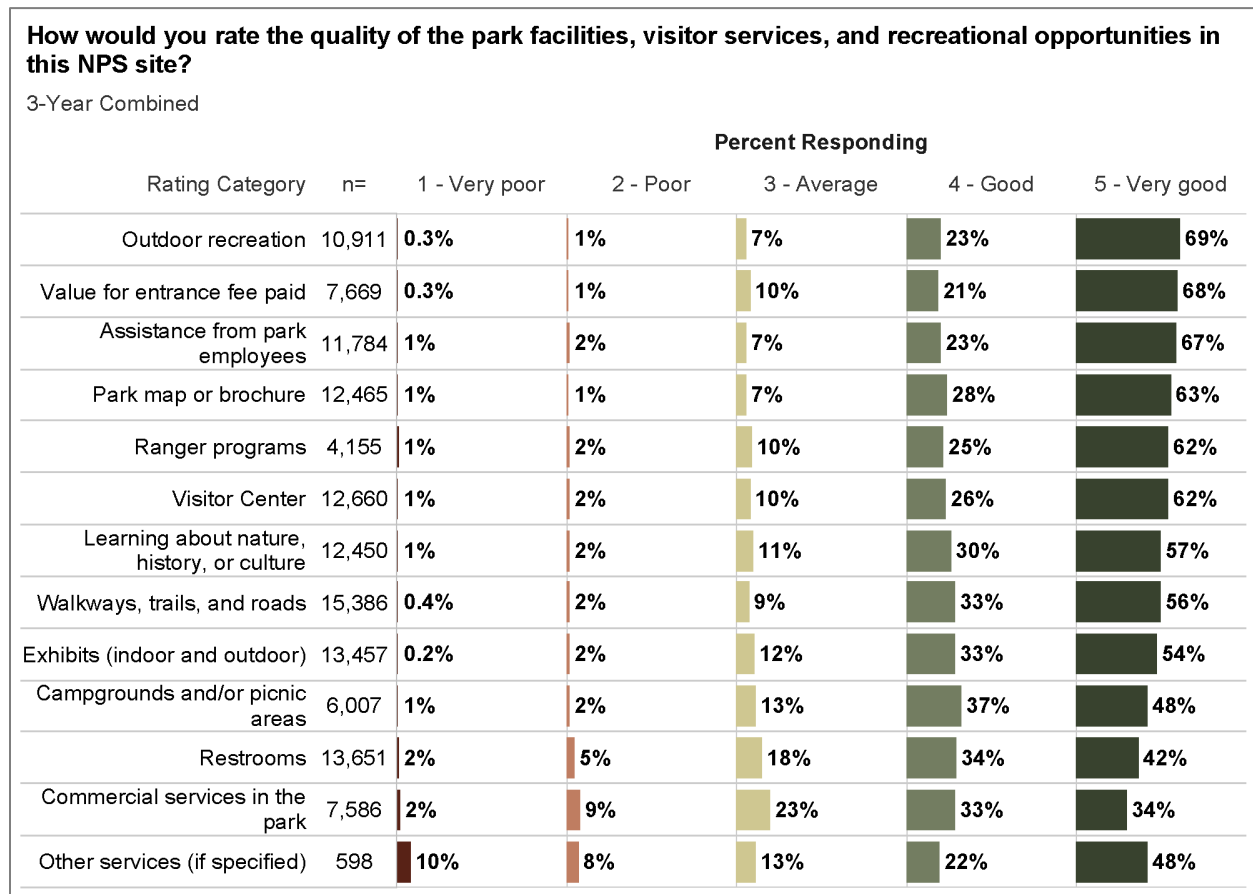


Figure 36. Rating the quality of specific NPS units' facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities, overall. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 18](#).

NPS

- Over half of all respondents overall (ranging from 54% to 69%) rated the outdoor recreation, value for entrance fee paid, quality of assistance from park employees, park map or brochure, ranger programs, the visitor center, learning about nature, history, or culture, walkways, trails and roads, and indoor and outdoor exhibits at NPS units as very good.
- While still highly rated as either good or very good by over half of all respondents, campgrounds and/or picnic areas, restrooms and commercial services in the park were positively rated by the smallest shares of respondents, and had slightly elevated shares of poor and average ratings, compared to other facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities.

How would you rate the quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in this NPS site?

By Year of Data Collection

Rating Category	Year	n=	Percent Responding				
			1 - Very poor	2 - Poor	3 - Average	4 - Good	5 - Very good
Outdoor recreation	2024	3,645	0.2%	1%	8%	23%	68%
	2023	3,501	0.3%	1%	7%	24%	68%
	2022	3,765	0.4%	1%	6%	22%	71%
Value for entrance fee paid	2024	2,161	1%	2%	13%	23%	62%
	2023	2,133	0.1%	1%	12%	23%	64%
	2022	3,375	0.3%	0.5%	7%	19%	73%
Assistance from park employees	2024	4,074	0.3%	1%	8%	22%	68%
	2023	3,760	1%	2%	7%	23%	67%
	2022	3,950	1%	1%	7%	23%	68%
Park map or brochure	2024	4,177	0.2%	1%	7%	28%	64%
	2023	4,036	1%	1%	8%	29%	61%
	2022	4,252	0.4%	1%	7%	26%	66%
Ranger programs	2024	1,474	1%	2%	11%	24%	62%
	2023	1,405	2%	2%	11%	23%	62%
	2022	1,276	1%	3%	10%	25%	61%
Visitor Center	2024	4,510	0.3%	1%	9%	26%	63%
	2023	3,952	1%	2%	11%	27%	60%
	2022	4,198	1%	2%	10%	27%	60%
Learning about nature, history, or culture	2024	4,232	0.5%	2%	12%	29%	58%
	2023	4,114	1%	2%	10%	29%	58%
	2022	4,104	0.4%	2%	12%	31%	55%
Walkways, trails, and roads	2024	5,249	0.4%	2%	10%	34%	55%
	2023	4,881	1%	2%	9%	32%	57%
	2022	5,256	0.3%	1%	8%	32%	58%
Exhibits (indoor and outdoor)	2024	4,612	0.2%	1%	12%	33%	53%
	2023	4,313	0.3%	2%	13%	33%	52%
	2022	4,532	0.1%	2%	11%	33%	54%
Campgrounds and/or picnic areas	2024	1,938	1%	2%	14%	34%	48%
	2023	1,956	1%	3%	13%	39%	44%
	2022	2,113	1%	2%	11%	36%	50%
Restrooms	2024	4,782	1%	4%	17%	35%	43%
	2023	4,313	2%	6%	18%	34%	40%
	2022	4,556	2%	4%	17%	33%	44%
Commercial services in the park	2024	2,473	2%	9%	21%	34%	35%
	2023	2,423	3%	10%	27%	32%	29%
	2022	2,690	2%	9%	23%	32%	34%
Other services (if specified)	2024	240	5%	6%	12%	26%	52%
	2023	206	11%	10%	14%	20%	45%
	2022	152	16%	8%	15%	15%	46%

Figure 37. Rating the quality of specific NPS units' facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities, by year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 18](#).

NPS

- Respondents in 2024 largely conformed to responses in prior years across quality ratings, with the primary difference being the value for entrance fee paid, which has been rated as very good less often with each new year (62%, –2 ppt vs. 2023 and –11 ppt vs. 2022). However, the 2022 survey asked the question by default to all visitors to parks, even if the park did not have an official entrance fee. Various fees exist across the NPS, but a modification to the survey was made in 2023 to remove the question for any park unit that does not have an official entry fee to reduce confusion amongst respondents. Therefore, the sample size dropped substantially in 2023 and 2024 and results from 2022 are not directly comparable.
- Respondents in 2023 showed the same top three highest-rated items as 2022; outdoor recreation, assistance from park employees, and value for entrance fee paid (68%, 67%, and 64% rated as very good, respectively). Respondents in 2024 deviated slightly from this top three due to the decline in rating for value for entrance fee paid, with park map or brochure taking its place (64% in 2024).
- For respondents in 2022, the order of the top three items shifted compared to other survey years. Value for entrance fee paid, outdoor recreation, and assistance from park employees were the top three highest-rated items by respondents that year (73%, 71%, and 68% rated as very good, respectively).

Finally, respondents were asked to rate overall quality of the NPS unit facilities, visitor services, and recreation opportunities (Figure 38).

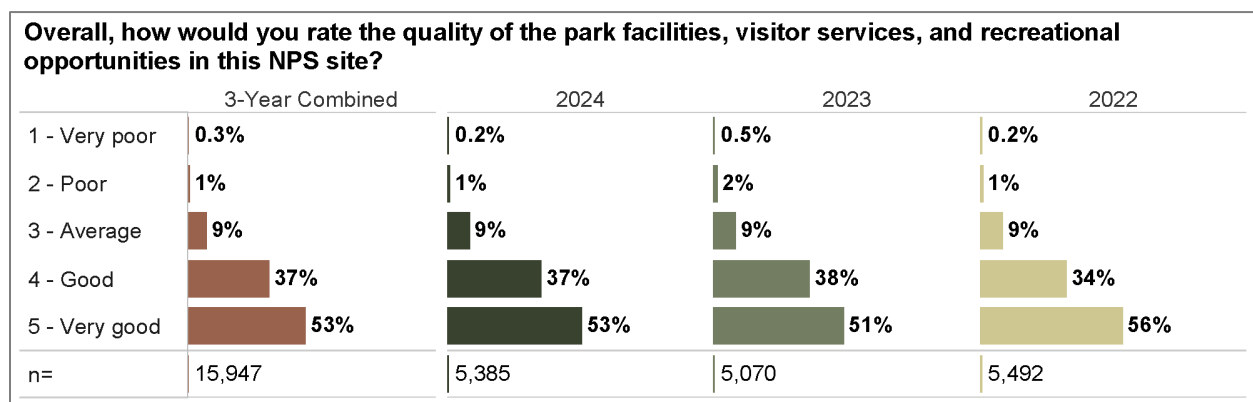


Figure 38. Rating overall quality of NPS units' facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities.
NPS

- Overall, more than half of respondents (53%) rated the quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in NPS units as very good, and another roughly one-third (37%) rated them as good.
- Only around one in ten respondents across all three years (10%) rated the overall quality as average or below.

Questions 30–38: Background/Demographics

In the final section of the post-trip survey, respondents were asked various questions about their personal and household demographics. Figure 39 depicts descriptive statistics for respondent age and education.

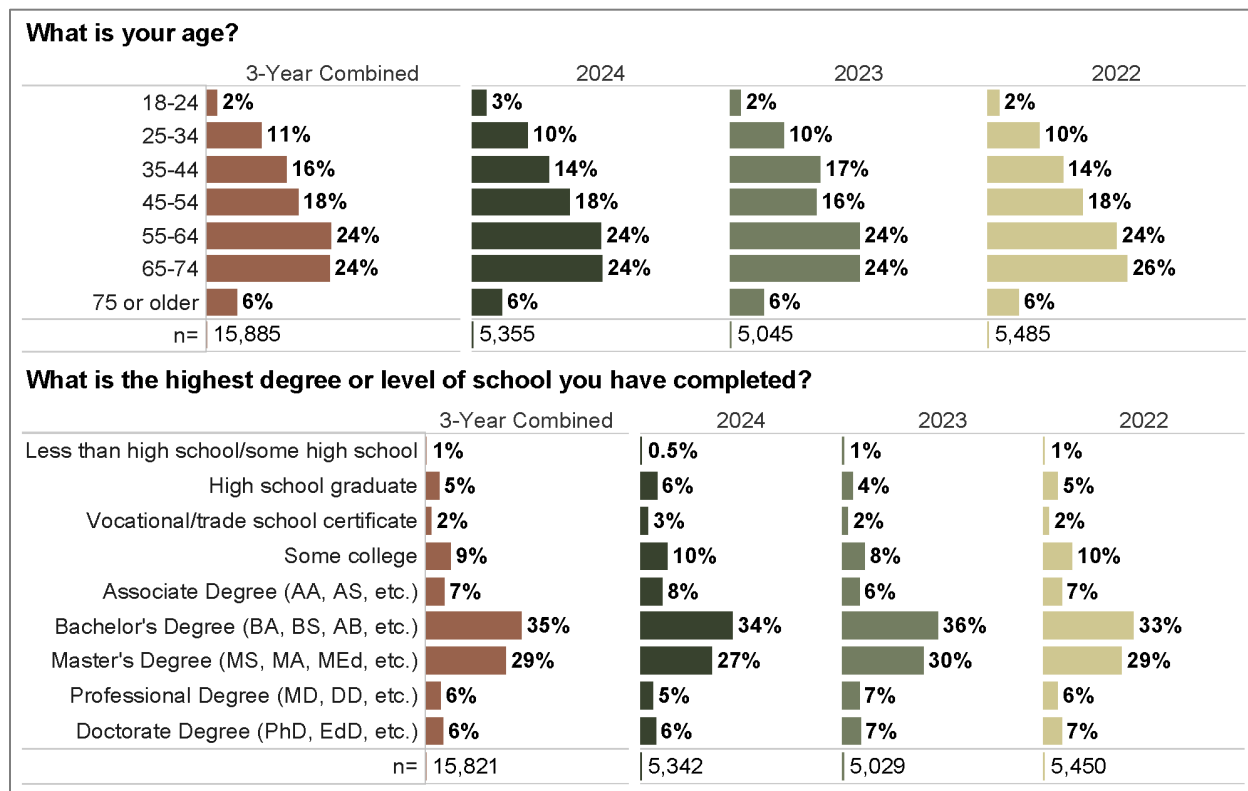


Figure 39. Respondent demographics: age and level of education.

NPS

- The most common age categories overall were 65–74 (24%) and 55–64 (24%). The least represented age group across all three years was 18–24 (2%). Respondents generally had a similar distribution of age groups across the three years, with the greatest differences taking place between years in respondents ages 35–44 (14%–17%). Even then, the difference is minor.
- Most survey respondents overall reported obtaining higher education, with at least eight in ten (83%) completing a post-secondary degree, and a plurality of respondents (35%) having obtained a bachelor's degree.

Respondents were also asked to identify their race(s) and if they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (Figure 40).

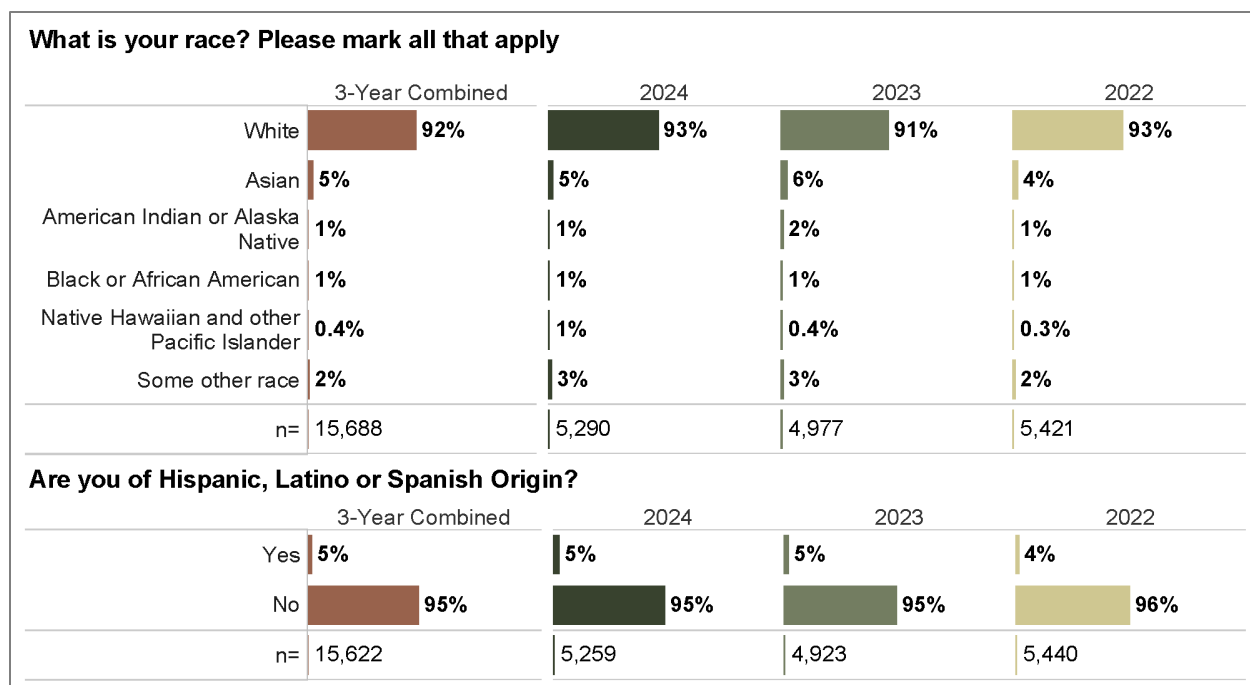


Figure 40. Respondent demographics: race and ethnicity.

NPS

- Most respondents across the three years (92%) were White, while a smaller share of respondents (5%) were Asian. Respondents in 2023 saw a slightly higher level of racial diversity among respondents, as compared to respondents in 2022 and 2024.
- Most respondents across the three years (95%) were not of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin.

At a household level, respondents were asked to report annual income and number of contributors, as well as how many people (adults and children) live in their household (Figure 41).

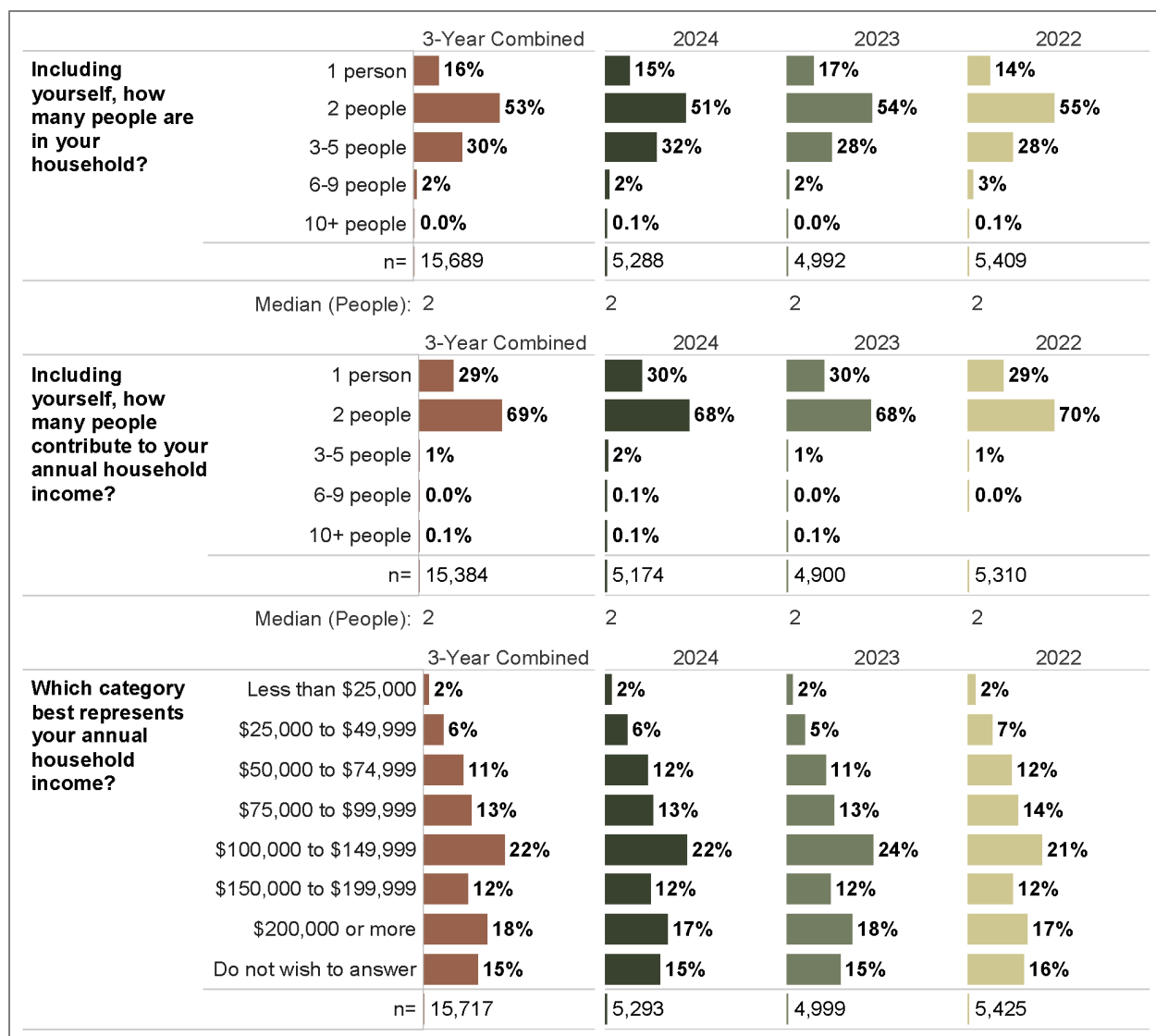


Figure 41. Household demographics: annual household income and household size. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 19](#).

NPS

- Household demographics were fairly consistent throughout the years. The overall distribution varied slightly but without any major practical differences. Most respondents (69%) came from a dual-income household.
- Most respondents (53%) had two people in their household, followed by three to five people (another 30%). The median number of people per household overall and across each year was two.
- In addition to obtaining higher education, visitors surveyed at NPS units also reported relatively high income levels. Around one in five respondents overall (22%) reported that their annual household income was between \$100,000 and \$149,999, and another three in ten respondents (30%) earned \$150,000 or more.

Finally, respondents were asked about their language preference (Figure 42).

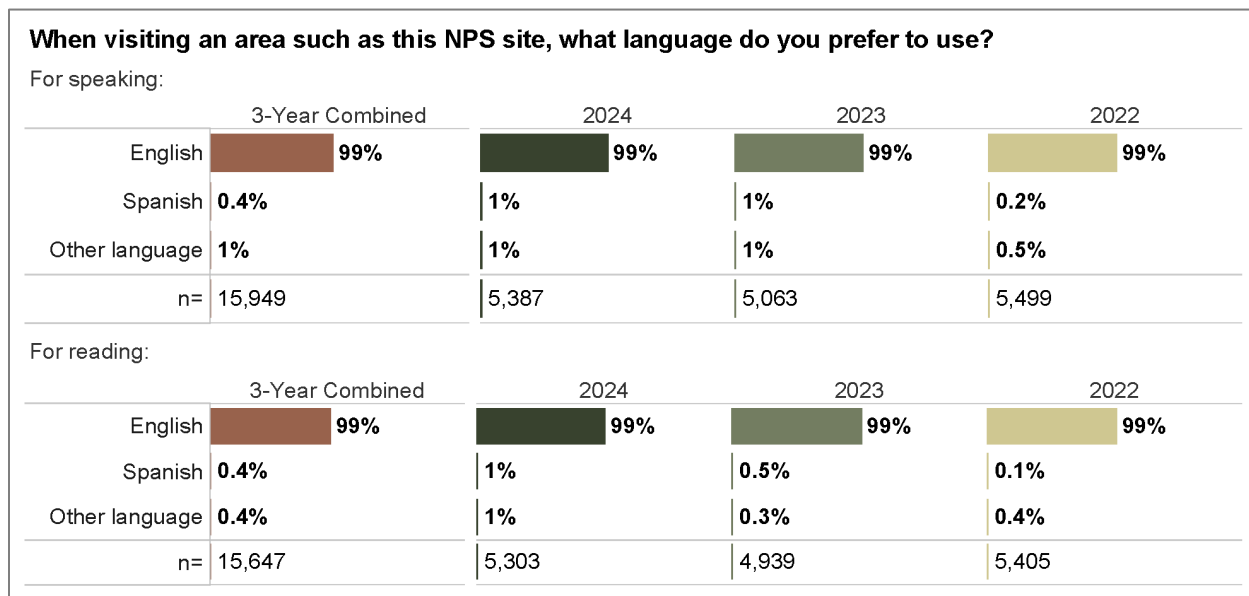


Figure 42. Respondent's language preference.

NPS

- While 5% of respondents overall were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin, less than 1% of respondents preferred to use Spanish for reading and/or speaking when visiting an NPS unit. Similarly, 1% of respondents or less preferred to use some other language for reading and/or speaking when visiting an NPS unit.
- English was selected as the preferred language for both reading and speaking by 99% of respondents overall and across each year.

Discussion and Conclusions

The following section highlights the key findings from the overall three-year average results from the 72 park units across the United States. Because this marks the third year of data collection for this comprehensive study, this report has shifted from a single year of results to a larger comparison across each of the three years of data. In addition to the year-over-year comparisons, these results could be compared with individual park unit studies and some insights from the Comprehensive Survey of the American Public. Future iterations of the SEM Visitor Survey are discussed within this section as well.

National Findings

The 2022–2024 SEM Visitor Study has continued to prove to be an invaluable source of insight into national-level topics that were previously challenging to estimate through individual park unit studies. Since 2022, this ongoing monitoring program has collected over 50,000 surveys from NPS visitors across all parts of the country. This study continues to equip the agency with the ability to compare nationwide results on an annual basis. This year’s findings have revealed a wealth of interesting, useful, and positive information provided by park unit visitors. Similar to prior years of data collection, results from visitors to NPS units were positive overall. However, national-level results remain sensitive to the type of parks selected in each year’s sample. More popular sites (i.e., Grand Canyon National Park in 2024, Golden Gate National Recreation Area in 2023, and Rocky Mountain National Park in 2022) represent a larger sample of peak visitors, skewing results towards the visitor profiles endemic of these larger park types.

Consistent with past results, visitor services and key visitor experience statements continue to be ranked very high across the NPS. Respondents overwhelmingly perceive NPS sites as safe, peaceful, and scenic places to spend quality time with friends and family. This perception further reaffirms the role that park units have played for decades, confirming that visitors still recognize and value these qualities. Furthermore, respondents believe that the sites are well-preserved culturally, historically, and naturally. This attests to the agency’s dual mission of ensuring enjoyment for people while preserving our precious resources, a balance that respondents seem to acknowledge. Additionally, respondents expressed overwhelmingly positive views about the quality of facilities and services offered across the sampled park units. While continuous improvements are always beneficial, visitors consistently rated the existing amenities and services very positively.

Regarding trip characteristics, a significant proportion of respondents indicated that they were visiting a particular site for at least the second time. This high percentage of repeat visitation, which has been held at around half of respondents across all three years of data, demonstrates that park units continue to attract and retain visitors. However, it is crucial to recognize that first-time visitors still represent a considerable portion of visitors. This year just over half of all respondents were first-time visitors to that particular park unit. This emphasizes the need to provide a high-quality experience for new visitors, introducing them to what park units have to offer and acclimating them to the park system. Striking a balance between meeting the expectations of repeat visitors and catering to the needs of newcomers is a key strategy for upholding the agency’s mission.

Consistent with the findings from prior years, most visitors did not feel crowded at the sampled park units during the study period. This perception may vary by park unit and type, but it confirms for the third year that visitors are having a genuinely positive experience at most units. While addressing perceptions of crowding remains a priority at certain popular locations, findings continue to suggest that this can be a very unit-specific challenge. This highlights the resilience of visitors in coping with current conditions at park units and may warrant further exploration in the future.

The results from this study extend across the agency, serving as a foundation for ongoing monitoring of visitor perceptions and service improvements across the country. This year's study represents a continued commitment to socioeconomic monitoring, providing the most detailed data on park visitors yet. The data collected will continue to be analyzed in various ways, from examining open-ended comments to conducting crosstabulation and segmentation of visitor types. This rich dataset will provide ongoing benefits to the agency and future research endeavors. As this report represents the third year of comprehensive data collection for the SEM Visitor Survey, the program continues to grow, collecting results to be used well into the future.

Literature Cited

National Park Service (NPS). 2024a. 2024 NPS socioeconomic monitoring visitor survey: Visitor intercept survey. <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/753512>

National Park Service (NPS). 2024b. 2024 NPS socioeconomic monitoring visitor survey: Visitor post-trip survey. <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/DownloadFile/753513>

Appendix A: Accessible Tables

Tables 7 through 19 contain tabular data from figures found in the body of the report.

Table 7. Data from [Figure 5](#). Number of days spent in the local area on respondent's trip away from home.

Question	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If not local/seasonal resident] How many days are you planning to spend in the local area (including the days you spend in this NPS site) on this trip away from home?	39900	3	12051	3	13097	3	14752	3

Table 8. Data from [Figure 7](#) and [Figure 8](#). Number of nights spent in the local area around NPS units, by accommodation type.

Accommodation Type	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If backcountry camping in this NPS site] Number of nights	566	2	107	1	103	2	356	2
[If camping in this NPS site] Number of nights	3245	2	672	2	1110	2	1463	3
[If camping outside of this NPS site in the local area] Number of nights	3888	3	1162	3	1077	2	1649	3
[If lodging in this NPS site] Number of nights	797	2	386	2	152	2	259	2
[If lodging outside this NPS site in local area] Number of nights	21394	3	6853	3	6051	3	8490	4
[If staying in unpaid accommodations] Number of nights	2807	4	898	3	931	4	978	4

Table 9. Data from [Figure 9](#). Number of adults and children in respondent's personal group, and total group size, while visiting NPS units.

Group Composition	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)
Adults	56887	2	18155	2	18832	2	19900	2
Children	56887	0	18155	0	18832	0	19900	0
Total group size	56887	2	18155	2	18832	2	19900	3

Table 10. Data from [Figure 14](#). Number of people in or on respondent's vehicle when entering NPS units.

Question	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If entered by car, truck, or SUV] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your vehicle when you entered NPS units?	42884	2	15993	2	13337	2	13554	2
[If entered by RV/motorhome] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your RV when you entered NPS units?	1407	2	442	2	367	2	598	2
[If entered by motorcycle] Including yourself, how many people were traveling on your motorcycle when you entered NPS units?	439	1	110	1	99	1	230	1

Table 11. Data from [Figure 15](#). Previous visits to NPS units.

Question	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to this NPS site over the past 12 months?	27519	2	9161	2	8714	4	9644	1
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to this NPS site over the past five years?	27517	5	9160	6	8714	15	9643	3

Table 12. Data from [Figure 16](#). Visits made to other NPS sites within the past year.

Question	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median
How many visits have you made to other NPS sites over the past 12 months?	56674	2	18065	1	18789	2	19820	1

Table 13. Data from [Figure 22](#) and [Figure 23](#). Reasons or motivations to visit NPS units.

Rating Category	Overall Sample Size (n)	2024 Sample Size (n)	2023 Sample Size (n)	2022 Sample Size (n)
To visit a National Park Service site	15634	5256	4964	5414
To experience solitude	15470	5221	4892	5357
To hear the sounds of nature/quiet	15613	5276	4951	5386
To learn more about nature	15406	5184	4895	5327
To learn more about American history and culture	15641	5250	4961	5430
To spend time with family/friends	15613	5263	4938	5412
To get physical exercise	15729	5302	5001	5426
To view wildlife or natural scenery	15739	5315	5009	5415
To relax	15651	5293	4955	5403
To view dark night sky/stars	14664	4893	4659	5112
Other (if specified)	1938	654	668	616

Table 14. Data from [Figure 26](#) and [Figure 27](#). Use of personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units.

Device Use	Overall Sample Size (n)	2024 Sample Size (n)	2023 Sample Size (n)	2022 Sample Size (n)
Make/receive a cell phone call	15256	5139	4829	5288
Send/receive a text message	15523	5223	4929	5371
Search the internet/email	15007	5041	4750	5216
GPS/Navigation	15253	5130	4828	5295
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	15011	5043	4754	5214
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	13963	4686	4420	4857
Other (if specified)	3821	1350	1243	1228

Table 15. Data from [Figure 28](#) and [Figure 29](#). The importance of the use of personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units.

Device Use	Overall Sample Size (n)	2024 Sample Size (n)	2023 Sample Size (n)	2022 Sample Size (n)
Make/receive a cell phone call	15324	5167	4863	5294
Send/receive a text message	15370	5181	4883	5306
Search the internet/email	15079	5072	4800	5207
GPS/Navigation	15183	5124	4831	5228
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	14949	5026	4769	5154
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	14295	4818	4539	4938
Other (if specified)	2443	894	793	756

Table 16. Data from [Figure 30](#) and [Figure 31](#). Quality of service for personal electronic devices while visiting NPS units.

Device Use	Overall Sample Size (n)	2024 Sample Size (n)	2023 Sample Size (n)	2022 Sample Size (n)
Make/receive a cell phone call	8730	2995	2690	3045
Send/receive a text message	9943	3441	3130	3372
Search the internet/email	8990	3109	2836	3045
GPS/Navigation	9645	3372	3024	3249
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	7276	2454	2227	2595
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	3690	1269	1165	1256
Other (if specified)	1155	421	367	367

Table 17. Data from [Figure 34](#) and [Figure 35](#). Rating NPS units experience.

Rating Category	Overall Sample Size (n)	2024 Sample Size (n)	2023 Sample Size (n)	2022 Sample Size (n)
This NPS site is a safe place to visit	15738	5317	5001	5420
This NPS site is too crowded	15838	5347	5052	5439
Natural resources in this NPS site are in pristine condition	15267	5166	4865	5236
The entrance fee for this NPS site is too high (2023 and on: only included on surveys for NPS Sites that use a fee system)	6915	2276	2281	2358
Vandalism and crime are not a problem at this NPS site	12282	4211	3936	4135
This NPS site is not accessible to a person with physical disabilities	10474	3628	3404	3442
Historical and cultural features in this NPS site are well maintained/preserved	14335	4839	4588	4908
Development of adjacent areas detracts from visitors' experience at this NPS site	13992	4719	4468	4805

Table 18. Data from [Figure 36](#) and [Figure 37](#). Rating the quality of NPS units' facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities.

Rating Category	Overall Sample Size (n)	2024 Sample Size (n)	2023 Sample Size (n)	2022 Sample Size (n)
Visitor Center	12660	4510	3952	4198
Exhibits (indoor and outdoor)	13457	4612	4313	4532
Restrooms	13651	4782	4313	4556
Walkways, trails, and roads	15386	5249	4881	5256
Campgrounds and/or picnic areas	6007	1938	1956	2113
Assistance from park employees	11784	4074	3760	3950
Park map or brochure	12465	4177	4036	4252
Ranger programs	4155	1474	1405	1276
Value for entrance fee paid	7669	2161	2133	3375
Commercial services in the park (food, lodging, gifts, rental, etc.)	7586	2473	2423	2690
Other services (if specified)	598	240	206	152
Learning about nature, history, or culture	12450	4232	4114	4104
Outdoor recreation (sightseeing, camping, bicycling, boating, hiking, etc.)	10911	3645	3501	3765

Table 19. Data from [Figure 41](#). Household demographics: annual household income and household size.

Question	Overall		2024		2023		2022	
	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median	Sample Size (n)	Median
Including yourself, how many people are in your household?	15689	2	5288	2	4992	2	5409	2
Including yourself, how many people contribute to your annual household income?	15384	2	5174	2	4900	2	5310	2

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Science Report NPS/SR—2026/435
<https://doi.org/10.36967/2318547>

Natural Resource Stewardship and Science

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