



2022 Socioeconomic Research of Capitol Reef National Park

Report on 2022 Data Collection (Revised)



Milky Way over Chimney Rock in Capitol Reef National Park.

NPS / JACOB W. FRANK

2022 Socioeconomic Research of Capitol Reef National Park: Report on 2022 Data Collection (Revised)

Science Report NPS/SR—2026/463

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Abstract

A strong mandate and need for socioeconomic monitoring are expressed in the NPS strategic goals for science, in statements by the NPS leadership, and the report of the Second Century Commission. This mandate resulted in a pilot socioeconomic monitoring study in 2015/2016 at a sample of park units across the U.S; the current study uses outcomes from the first stage of the pilot program and progresses into a second stage of the pilot process at 24 NPS units across the United States. Capitol Reef National Park (Capitol Reef) was selected as one of these units. This report informs core issues of visitor use management and develops a deeper, contemporary understanding of who visits Capitol Reef and what they do during their visit. It uses a two-phased survey methodology to capture a representative sample of visitor information, characteristics, and behavior: (1) an on-site intercept survey conducted via tablet, and (2) a follow up (mail-back and/or online survey) for full trip details. The results are organized by these two phases and are intended to assist park managers in understanding current utilization and perception of park resources, operations and potential issues, as well as to facilitate communication and decision-making processes within the park and between the park and its local partners and stakeholders.

The revised version of this report corrects a previous error identified in Figure 9 and includes minor editorial, formatting, and accessibility updates. No substantive changes have been made to the findings or conclusions presented in the original 2022 report.

Introduction

The National Park Service (NPS) has both a strong mandate and need for socioeconomic research. This is expressed in the NPS strategic goals for science, in statements by the NPS leadership, in the report of the Second Century Commission, and through the Department of the Interior priorities for 2018–2022. Additionally, a recent U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report identified the needs to better understand and monitor customer experience dimensions where results more directly link to investments made. The need for socioeconomic research and monitoring also was identified in an external review of the NPS Social Science Program and supported in the 2008 Interior Appropriations Bill Joint Explanatory Statement.

This mandate resulted in a pilot socioeconomic monitoring study in 2015/2016 at a sample of park units across the U.S., previously described as “Phase One.” The current study uses outcomes from the 2015/16 pilot program and progresses into “Phase Two” of the pilot process at 24 NPS units across the United States. Capitol Reef National Park (Capitol Reef) was selected as one of these units. Phase Two seeks to further explore visitor demographics and characteristics, applying recommendations from the 2015/16 Phase One pilot program and validating instrument and method refinements. It is part of the program designed to collect data from in-park visitors at a broad agency level in order to best represent information needs regarding visitors across the National Park System. Data collected during the 2022 Phase Two sampling period¹ are intended to inform individual park managers of key information about their visitors and allow for analysis of data at the agency level for future implementation.

The purpose of this study is to inform core issues of visitor use management and to develop a current and deeper understanding of who visits Capitol Reef National Park, what they do during their visit, and their spending profile. The results of the study are intended to assist Capitol Reef National Park managers in understanding current utilization and perception of park resources, operations, and issues that may exist due to increasing visitation, and facilitating communication and decision processes within the park and between the park and its local partners and stakeholders.

The study was conducted by a large-scale research team from Otak, Inc., RRC Associates, Inc., and the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana.

¹ It is important to note that during the 2022 Phase Two sampling period, some aspects of the visitor profiles (e.g., perceptions and behavior) may have been impacted, to varying degrees, by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Pleasant Creek, Capitol Reef National Park.
NPS / KIT FROST

Methods

The study used a two-phased survey methodology to capture a representative sample of visitor information, characteristics, and behavior:

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

This comprehensive two-phase approach provided an increased sample size for key questions of importance to visitor use statistics and permitted surveyors to provide clarification of frequently confused questions from the intercept survey while also capturing key in-depth information on visitor spending profiles and trip characteristics for long-term planning. Additionally, the tablet survey was kept brief to ensure the visitor's experience was not significantly altered.

Study Area

The Capitol Reef National Park local area map is shown in Figure 1. The local area around CARE consists of Sevier, Emery, Piute, Wayne, and Garfield counties in Utah. Within CARE, the study area was comprised of 11 locations. Table 1 shows more details about sampling locations. The locations and volumes of surveyor effort were determined based on historic visitor volumes and distribution across the park's main areas.

Sampling Period and Procedure

Intercept Survey

The on-site intercept survey was developed to collect rapid visitor information via tablet-based responses, which were then analyzed and provided for park managers within several weeks of conclusion of data collection. This effort allowed for immediate management action if needed.

The intercept sampling was conducted during the period of May 7th to 16th, 2022. A sample of visitors were intercepted while visiting Capitol Reef across the designated locations listed in Table 1, above. The majority of respondents were visitors on foot at these locations. However, some roadway surveys were conducted in the Northern and Southern parts of the park in order to capture a greater number of respondents in more remote regions of the park.

Surveyors approached potential respondents at the site to introduce the purpose of the study and asked them to participate in a short 5–7-minute survey about their experience in Capitol Reef (NPS 2022). If the visitor was eligible (at least 18 years of age, not a Capitol Reef 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 Non-Response Bias Analysis section). 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, visitors were invited to participate in a follow-up survey by mail-back or online response. Those who agreed to participate were given an envelope containing a printed copy of the follow-up survey and 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 follow-up survey.

Therefore, four potential outcomes were possible when intercepting visitors (see Table 2):

1. Complete refusal, refusing to answer any questions, including non-response bias questions;
2. Partial refusal, answering non-response questions but nothing further;
3. Complete intercept, but refuse to take follow-up;
4. Complete intercept and take follow-up.

Table 2. Response outcomes—Capitol Reef intercept Survey.

Outcome	Total
Eligible visitors contacted	1,190
Complete refusals	46
Partial refusals (non-response questions completed)	54
Intercept surveys completed	1,090

Table 2 (continued). Response outcomes—Capitol Reef intercept Survey.

Outcome	Total
Follow-up surveys distributed	925
Intercept response rate	91.6%
Follow-up acceptance rate	84.9%

During the sampling period, 4 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 Capitol Reef. Each surveyor worked nine 7-hour days (six hours data collection and one-hour lunch break) and rotated between several sites. Each surveyor had one day off during the 10-day sampling window.

Mail-Back/Online Survey

The follow-up mail-back/online 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 Capitol Reef. This method extended data collection and asked participants to complete the survey after their visit either through a postage-paid envelope provided to them, or online via a provided survey link. The follow-up survey covers visitor trip spending details, travel patterns, and perceptions of their recent visit (NPS 2022). Both the intercept survey and the follow-up survey were tagged with a unique identifier (four-digit code) for each respondent so their on-site tablet responses could be paired with their follow-up responses. Joining the two datasets provides a more complete picture of connecting 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 contacts about a week following the end of each data collection period. This postcard or email thanked them for their original participation and encouraged them to complete the follow-up 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 3 shows response rate for the follow-up mail-back/online survey.

Table 3. Response rate—Capitol Reef follow-up mail-back/online survey.

Outcome	Total
Follow-up surveys distributed	925
Valid follow-up surveys completed	420
Response rate	45.4%

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 on-site intercept survey. These three questions can then be compared to both those who completed the intercept survey only, and those who completed both the intercept and follow-up surveys. With an intercept survey response rate of 91.6%, concern over *intercept* non-response is muted. Tables 4 through 6 below show results of bias testing between intercept-only and full survey respondents. Chi-Squared tests are used to indicate differences between groups. A p-value of 0.05 is used as the indicated threshold of significance. P-values of 0.05 or lower indicate significant difference between groups.

Table 4. Non-response bias question: “Are you a permanent or seasonal/second home resident of the local area around Capitol Reef?” Note: p-value not computed due to low cell counts in “Yes” category.

Response	Full Survey Respondents		Intercept-Only Respondents	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	3	0.7%	14	2.1%
No	413	99.3%	660	97.9%

Table 5. Non-response bias question: “Do you currently live in the United States?” Note: p-value = 0.0002.

Response	Full Survey Respondents		Intercept-Only Respondents	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	389	93.5%	582	86.4%
No	27	6.5%	92	13.6%

Table 6. 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 Capitol Reef and/or within the local area?” Note: p-value = 0.045.

Response	Full Survey Respondents		Intercept-Only Respondents	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	340	81.7%	500	74.3%
No	76	18.3%	173	25.7%

The distribution of responses among full survey respondents and intercept-only respondents differed significantly for two questions: 1) country of residence, and 2) overnight visitation. Therefore, international visitors/non-US residents and day visitors are not as well represented in the full responses as desired.

Results

Intercept Survey Results

The following section provides results of the 1,090 visitor intercept surveys conducted in Capitol Reef National Park from May 7th to 16th, 2022. 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. To preserve the data for additional analyses, outliers for open-ended numeric questions (e.g., nights spent, days in local area, etc.) have not been removed. Given these outliers, medians are shown instead of means throughout the report, in order to better represent the central tendency.

Questions 1–2: Visitor Residency

First, respondents were asked to indicate if they were permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around Capitol Reef. If they did not reside permanently or seasonally in the local area, they were asked if they currently live in the U.S., and if so, for their ZIP code. Figure 2 depicts responses to this group of questions.

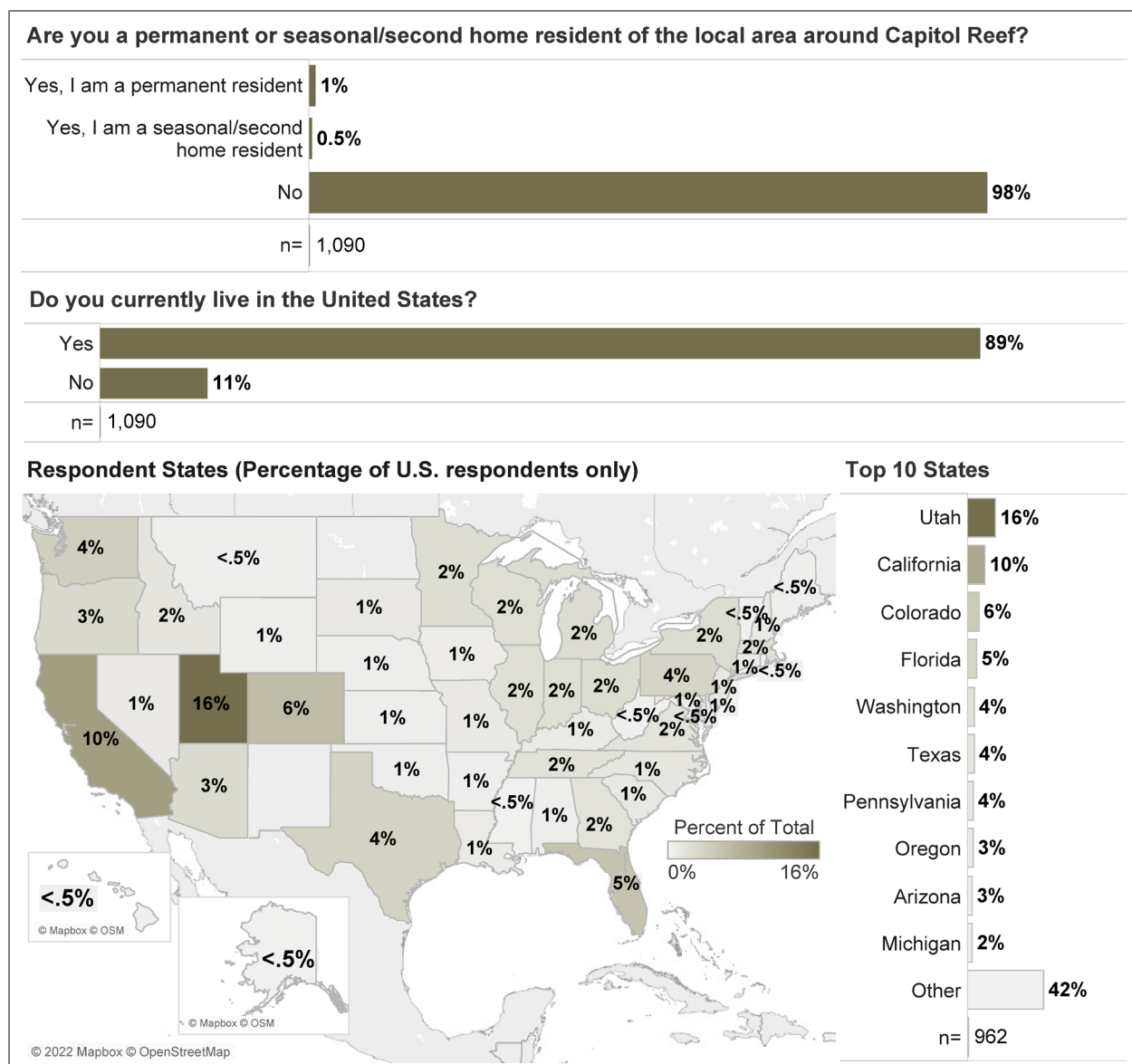


Figure 2. Visitor local residency status and geographic origin of domestic visitors to Capitol Reef.
NPS

- Just under 2% of respondents (a combined 1.5%) stated that they were either permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around Capitol Reef.
- There was a large geographic concentration of visitors from Utah (where Capitol Reef is located), with roughly one in six respondents calling the state home.
- Among the 89% of respondents currently residing in the U.S., 16% reside in Utah, followed by 10% from California, and 6% from Colorado.

Question 3: Trip Purpose

If respondents indicated that they were not permanent or seasonal residents of the local area, they were asked about the overall purpose for their trip away from home (Figure 3).

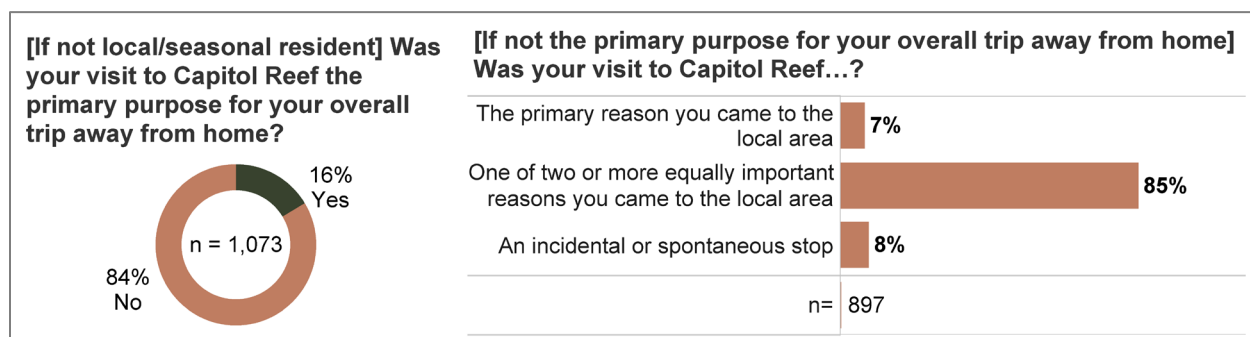


Figure 3. Role of Capitol Reef in overall trip purpose.

NPS

- For the majority of non-local respondents (84%), visiting Capitol Reef was not the primary purpose for their overall trip away from home.
- Among those respondents for whom Capitol Reef was not their primary trip purpose, 85% stated that their visit to Capitol Reef was one of two or more equally important reasons they came to the local area, while another 8% indicated that it was an incidental or spontaneous stop.

Question 4: Length of Stay

If respondents indicated that they were not permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around Capitol Reef, they were 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 4.

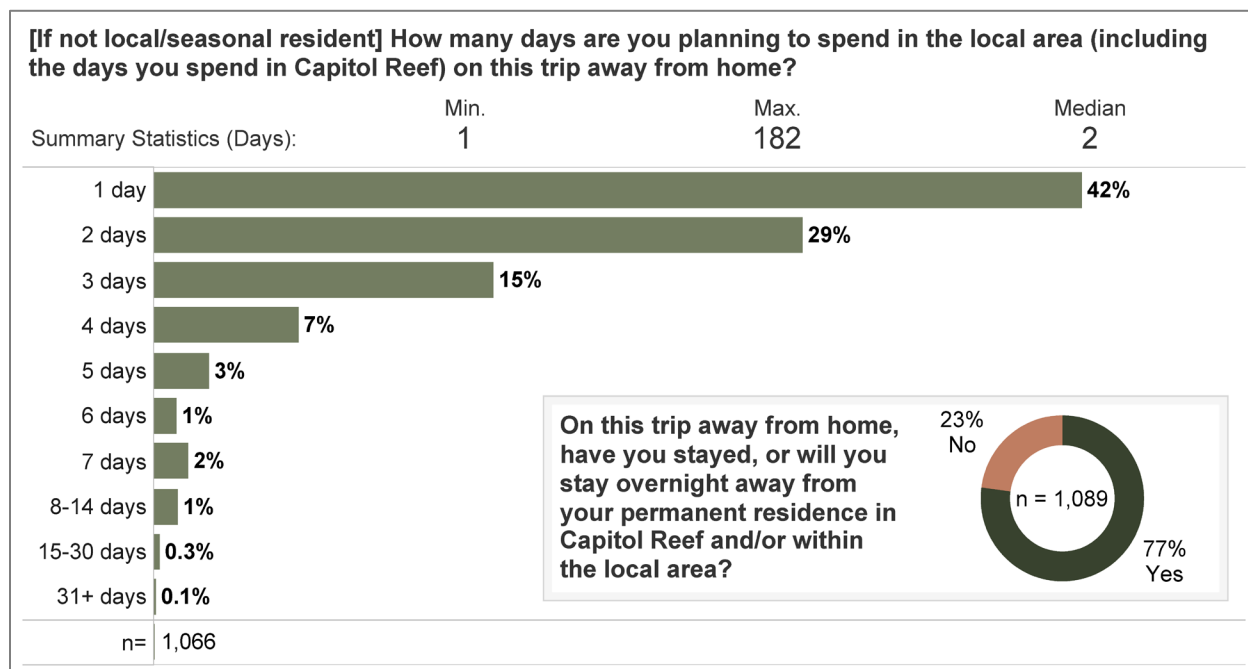


Figure 4. Time spent in the local area around Capitol Reef.

NPS

- A plurality of non-local respondents (42%) spent one day in the local area, while 29% spent two days, and 15% spent three days. The median length of stay was two days.
- Additionally, roughly three quarters of all respondents (77%; including permanent/seasonal residents) had stayed or planned to stay overnight away from their permanent residence in the park and/or in the local area.

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 5).

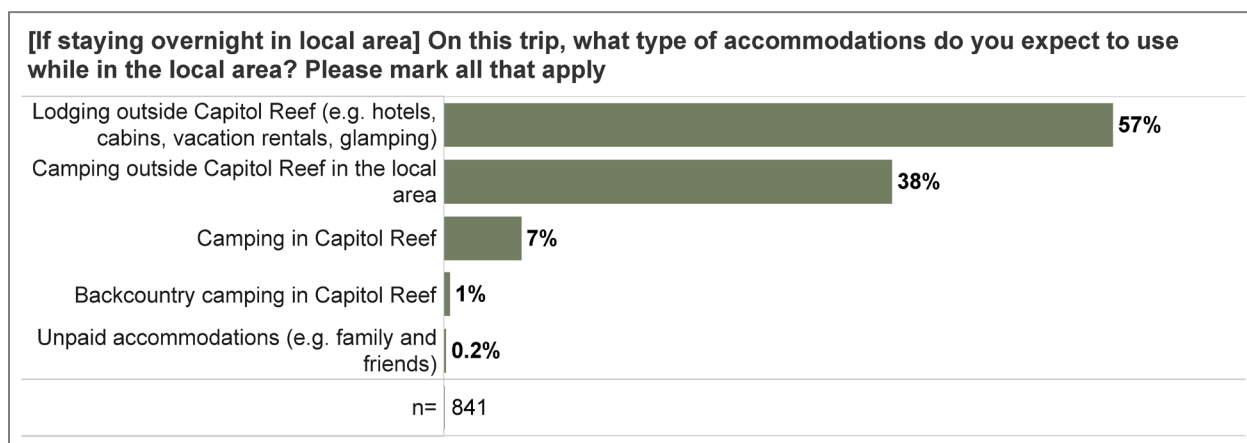


Figure 5. Accommodation types used in the local area around Capitol Reef.

NPS

- A majority of overnight respondents (57%) reported staying in lodging outside Capitol Reef (e.g., hotels, cabins, vacation rentals, glamping)
- This was followed in prevalence by camping outside Capitol Reef in the local area (38%), and camping in Capitol Reef (7%).

Respondents who camped in Capitol Reef were asked in which campground(s) they had stayed or planned to stay (Figure 6).

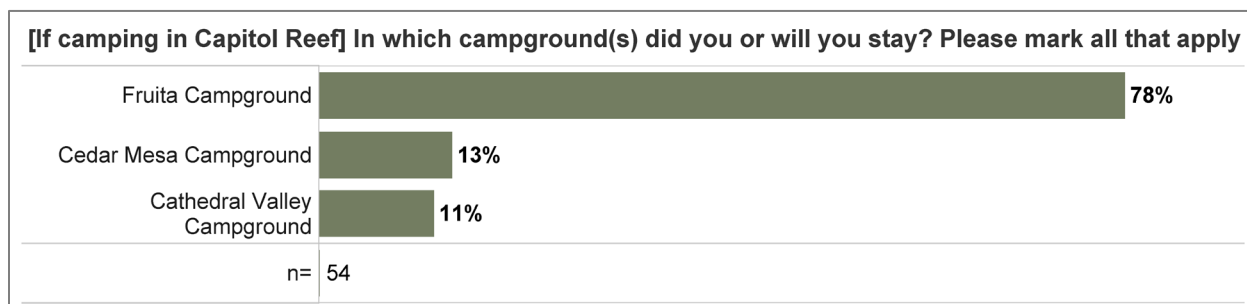


Figure 6. Campground use within Capitol Reef.

NPS

- The majority of respondents who camped in Capitol Reef (78%) reported staying at the Fruita Campground, followed by the Cedar Mesa Campground (13%), and the Cathedral Valley Campground (11%).

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

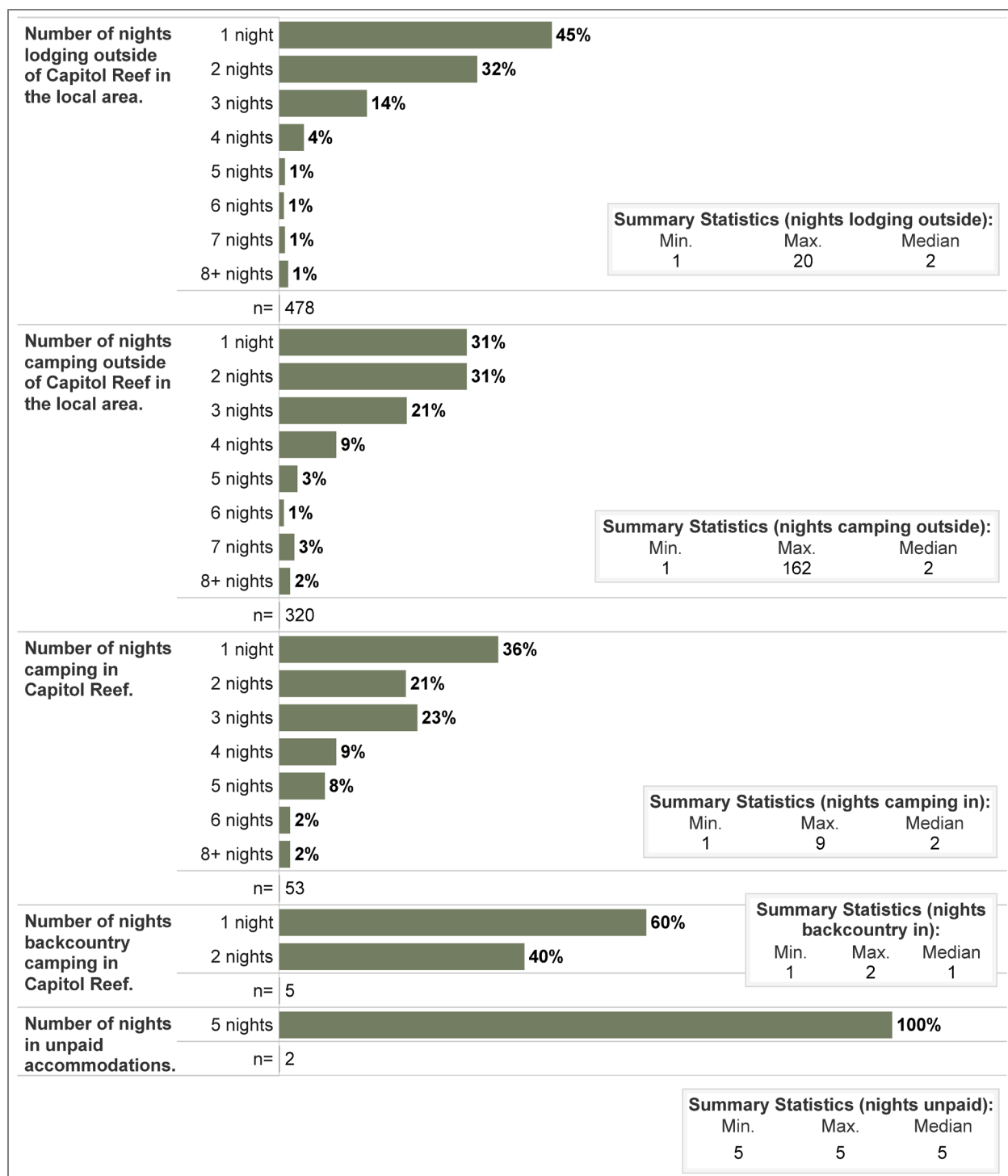


Figure 7. Number of nights spent in the local area around Capitol Reef, by accommodation type. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 8](#).

NPS

- Among the 57% of overnight respondents who lodged outside of Capitol Reef in the local area (per Figure 5), median length of stay was two nights. The majority (77%) lodged two nights or fewer in the local area this trip; 91% spent three nights or fewer.

- Among the 38% of overnight respondents who camped outside of Capitol Reef (per Figure 5), median length of stay was two nights, while roughly one-third (31%) stayed either one night or two nights, respectively.
- Among the 7% of overnight respondents who camped in Capitol Reef (per Figure 5), median length of stay was two nights. The majority (57%) of campers were spending two nights or fewer camping in the park this trip; 80% spent three nights or fewer.
- As mentioned in the Intercept Results Section, caution is recommended in the interpretation of results for questions with a sample size smaller than 30. In the case of backcountry campers ($n = 5$) and those who stayed in unpaid accommodations ($n = 2$), this warning would apply.

Questions 9–11: 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 Capitol Reef (Figure 8). A personal group was defined as the visitor and companions with whom they visited the park, such as a spouse, family, and/or friends, but visitors were informed not to account for the larger group with whom they may have traveled, such as a school, church, scout, or tour group.

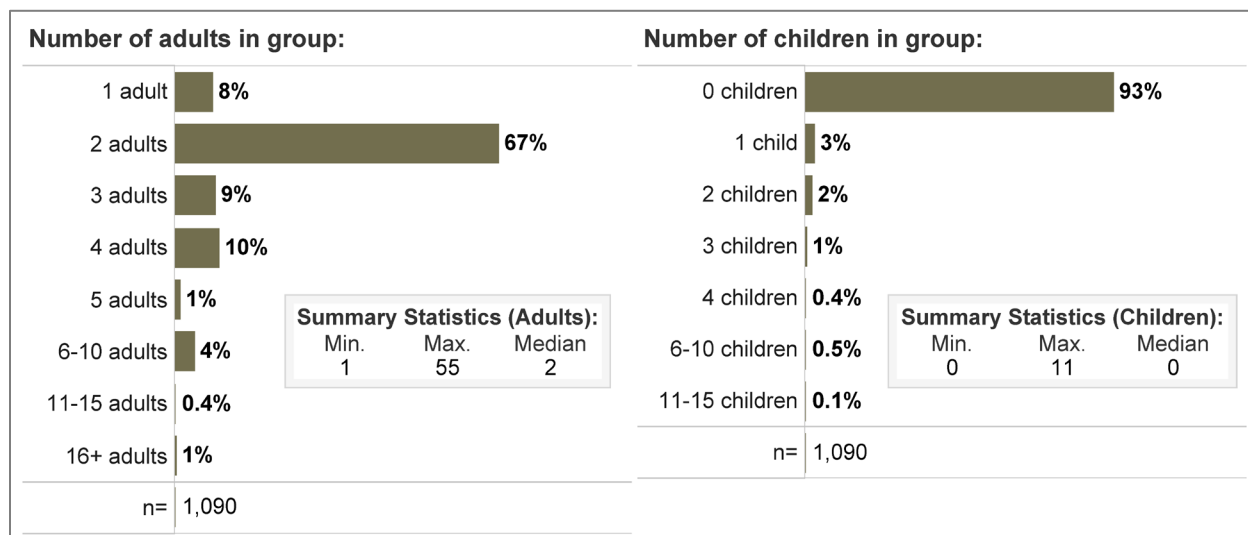


Figure 8. Number of adults and children in respondent's personal group while visiting Capitol Reef. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 9](#).

NPS

- The median number of adults per group was two. Most groups (67%) included two adults.
- Most groups (93%) did not include any children.

Respondents were then asked to provide the age of each member of their group (Figure 9).

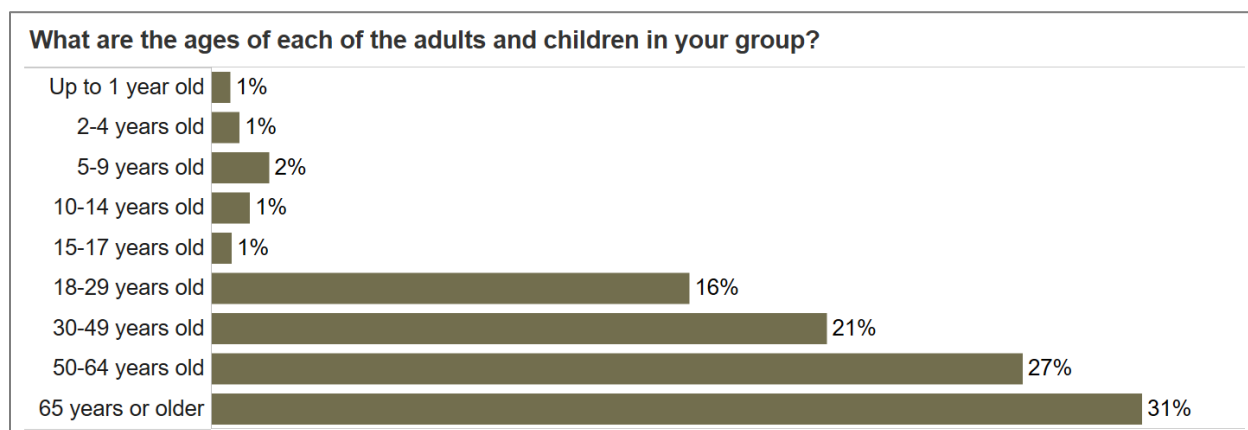


Figure 9. Age distribution of all members of respondent's personal group while visiting Capitol Reef.

NPS

- The most common age of the adults and children in a personal group were those 65 years and older (31%), 50–64 years old (27%), and 30–49 years old (21%).
- Children (i.e., visitors under 18 years old) accounted for a combined total of just 6% of group members.

Questions 13–16: Park Use Characteristics

First, respondents were asked to indicate if they planned to visit Capitol Reef for more than one day, and then a series of follow-up questions about the length of time they might spend in the park (Figure 10 and Table 7).

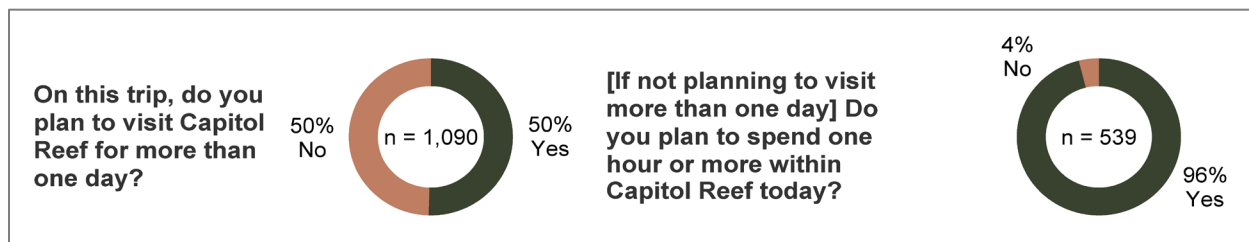


Figure 10. Duration of the respondent's trip to Capitol Reef.

NPS

Table 7. Amount of time spent within Capitol Reef.

Question	n	Min.	Max.	Median
[If not planning to spend one hour or more] How many minutes do you plan to spend within Capitol Reef today?	21	2	59	30
[If planning to spend less than a day, but one hour or more] How many hours do you plan to spend within Capitol Reef today?	518	1	18	5
[If planning to visit at least one day] How many days do you plan to spend within Capitol Reef on this trip?	550	1	48	2
[If planning to visit at least one day] On how many different days do you expect to enter the park?	550	1	48	2

- While visiting Capitol Reef, half of respondents (50%) did not plan to spend more than one day in the park while the remaining half (50%) did.
- Among the 50% of visitors who did not spend more than a day in Capitol Reef, the overwhelming majority (96%) planned to spend one hour or more in the park. The median length of time spent in the park among this group was five hours.
- The remaining 50% of visitors planned to visit for more than one day; among those visitors, the median length of stay was two days.
- Those respondents who spent at least 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.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate the most recent entrance they used to enter Capitol Reef (Figure 11).

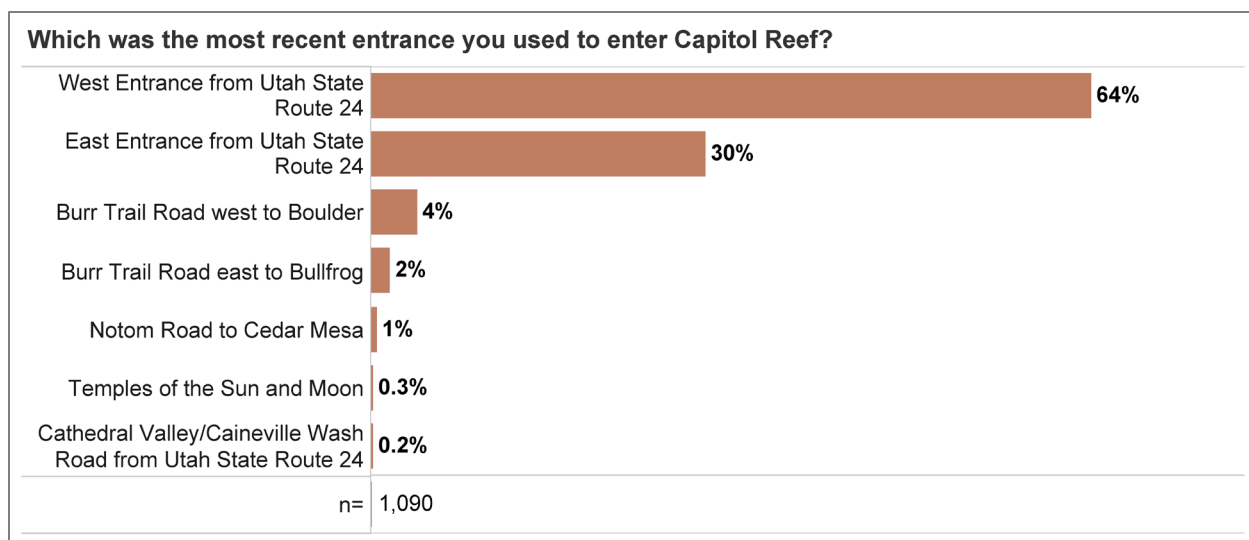


Figure 11. Most recent entrance used to enter Capitol Reef.

NPS

- The West Entrance from Utah State Route 24 was the most commonly used entrance to Capitol Reef (64%).
- The second most common entry point into the park was from the East Entrance via Utah State Route 24 (30%).
- Due to park geography and proximity of intercept sites to entrances, the results for most recent entrance used were impacted by the volume of visitors intercepted at various sites.

Respondents were also presented with a list of locations within Capitol Reef and asked to indicate if they had been to, or planned to visit them, that day (Figure 12).

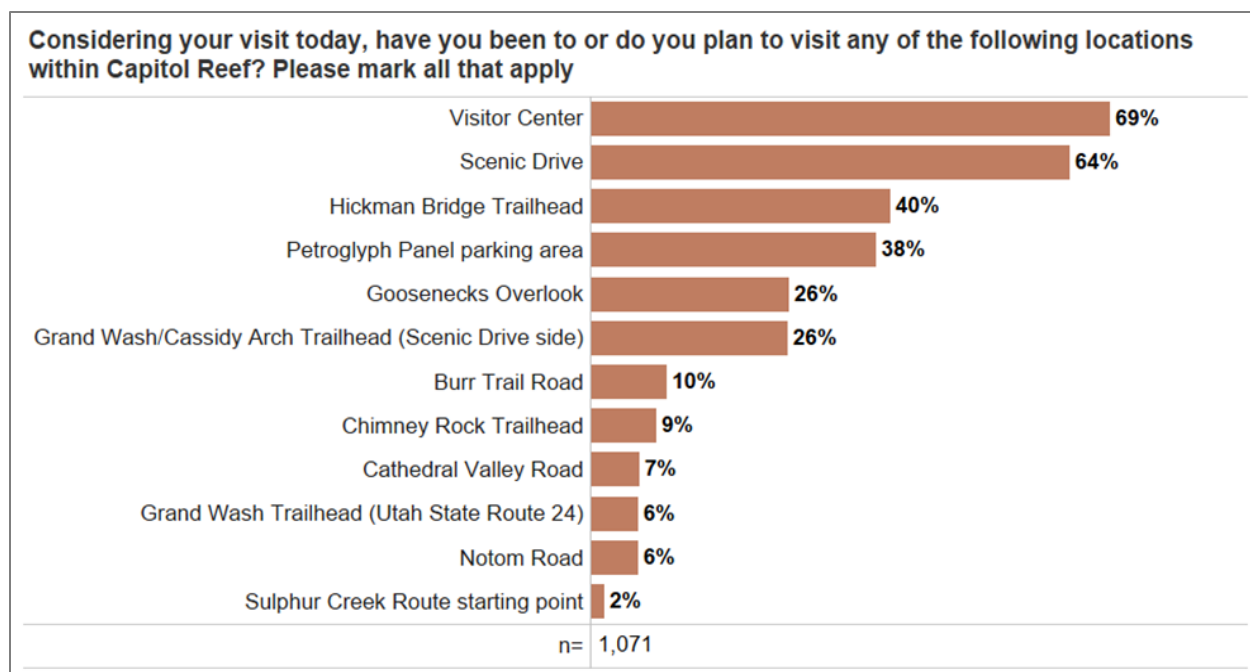


Figure 12. Park locations visited during the most recent trip to Capitol Reef.

NPS

- The most commonly visited location in Capitol Reef was the Visitor Center (69% of respondents had either been there or planned to visit it on their trip), followed by the Scenic Drive (64%) and the Hickman Bridge Trailhead (40%).
- The Sulphur Creek Route starting point was the least-visited location from the list provided, with only 2% of respondents reporting having visited or planning to visit.

Question 17: Transportation

Visitors were asked about the form of transportation they used to enter Capitol Reef on the day they were surveyed (Figure 13).

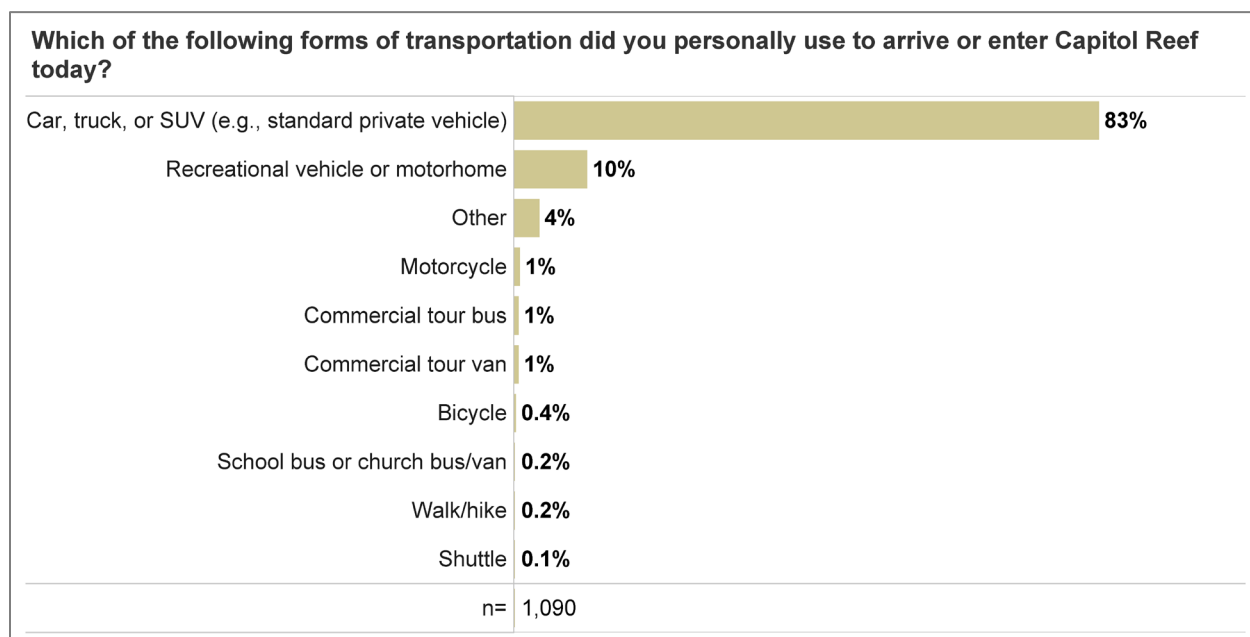


Figure 13. Form of transportation used to enter Capitol Reef on the day of the survey.

NPS

- The majority of respondents (83%) reported that they used their car, truck, or SUV to enter Capitol Reef on the day of the survey.
- This was followed distantly by use of a recreational vehicle or motorhome (10%), and “Other” options (4%).

If respondents entered the park 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).

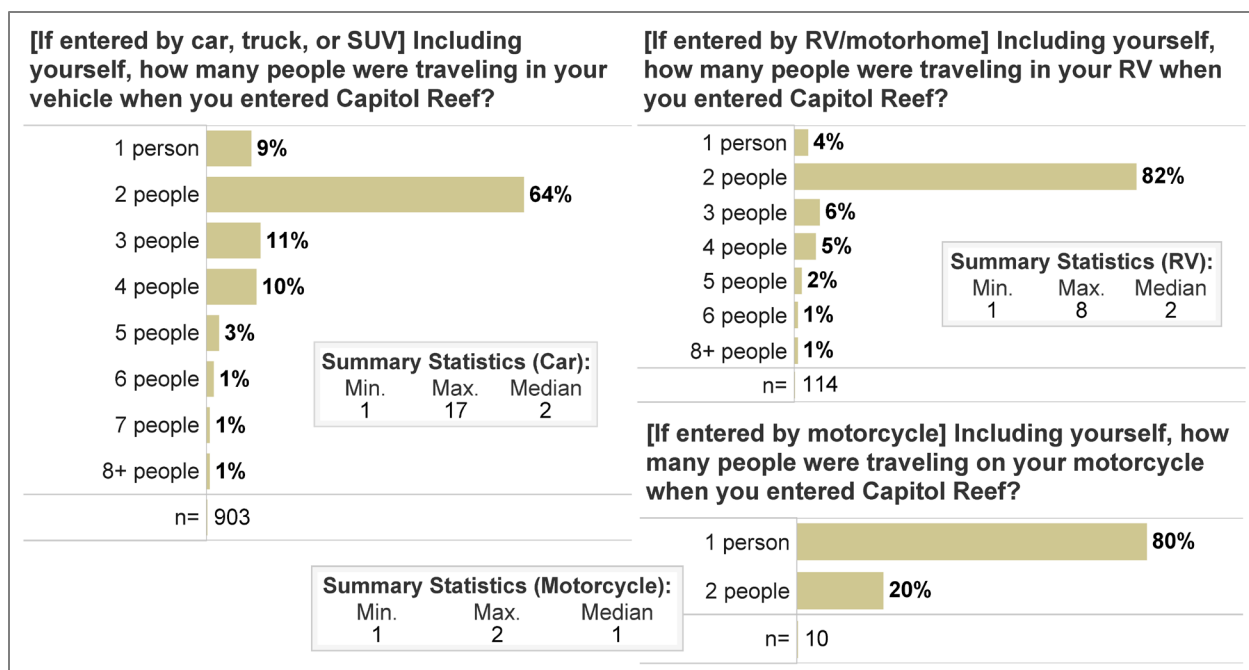


Figure 14. Number of people in or on respondent's vehicle when entering Capitol Reef. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 10](#).

NPS

- Roughly two-thirds of respondents traveling by car reported two people. The next common group size was three people (11%), followed by four people (10%).
- The majority of respondents entering Capitol Reef by RV/motorhome reported traveling in a group of two (82%), followed by three people (6%) and four people (5%).
- Most motorcyclists (80%) indicated they were solo riders.

Question 19: Previous Visits to Capitol Reef

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

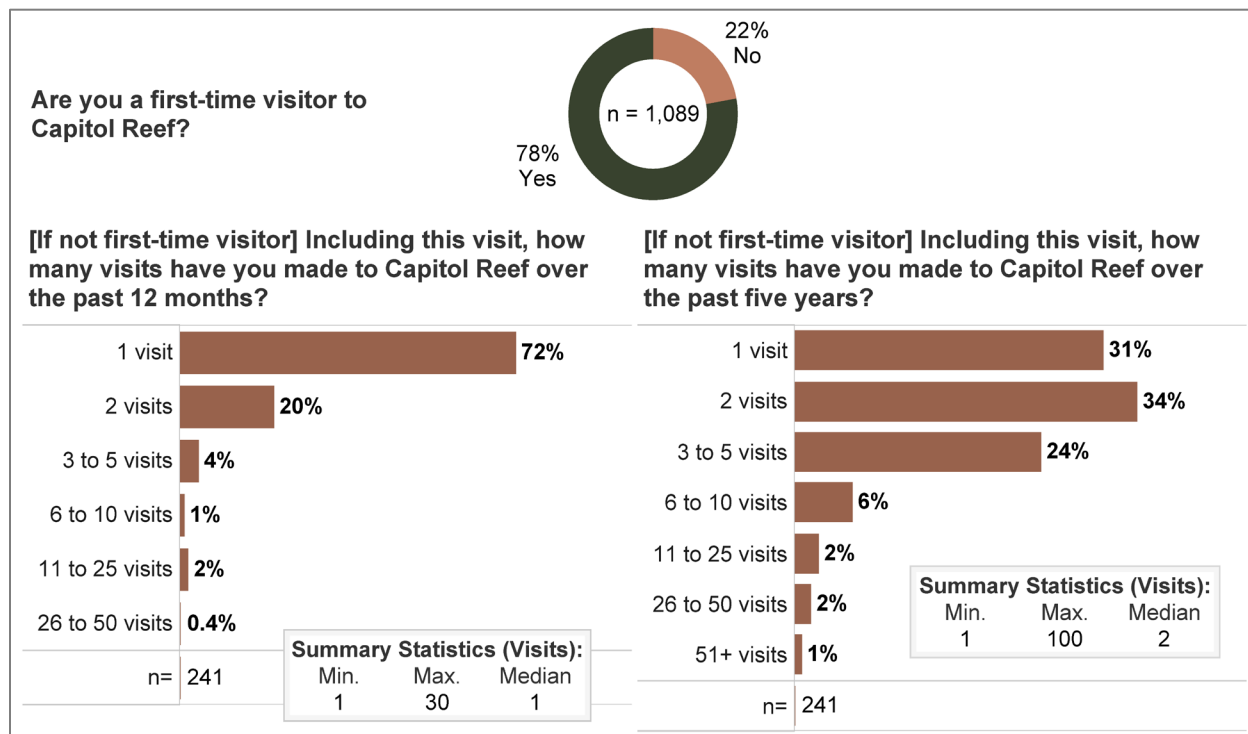


Figure 15. Previous visits to Capitol Reef. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 11](#).

NPS

- Most respondents (78%) were on their first ever trip to Capitol Reef.
- Among the 22% of respondents who were repeat visitors, the majority (72%) were on their first visit in the past 12 months (i.e., had last visited more than a year ago).
- However, the majority of repeat visitors (65%) had visited at least two times prior in the past 5 years.
- The median number of visits made in the past 5 years was two, including the current trip; 5% of repeat visitors had made more than 10 visits in the past 5 years.

Question 20: 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).

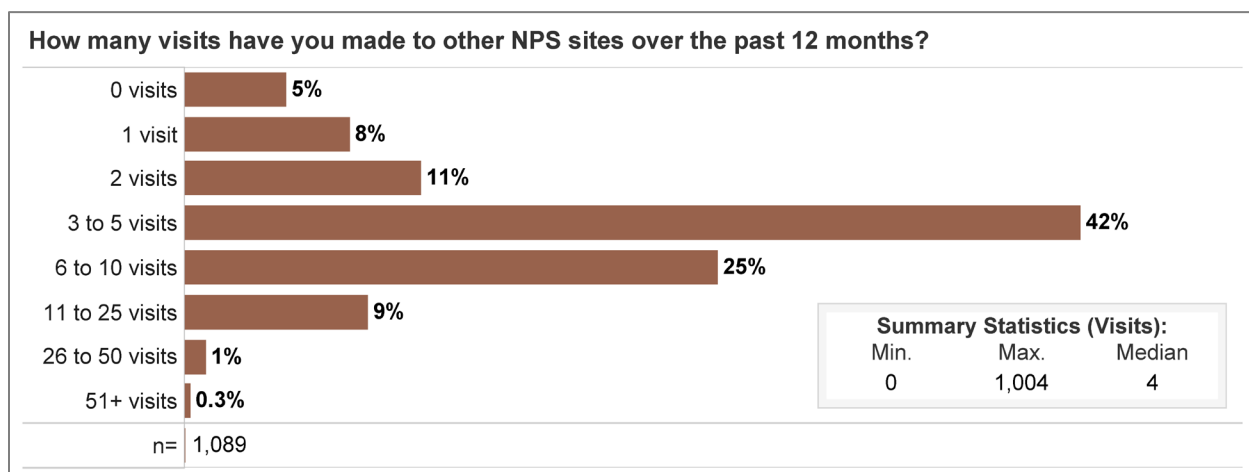


Figure 16. Visits made to other NPS sites within the past year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 12](#).

NPS

- The overwhelming majority (95%) had made at least one visit to other NPS site(s) in the past year.
- The median number of visits made to other NPS site(s) in the past 12 months was four, though a combined 77% had made 3 or more visits in the past year.

Follow-Up Survey Results

The following section provides results of the 420 follow-up visitor surveys received by mail-back or online following fieldwork conducted in Capitol Reef National Park in Spring of 2022. 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.

Questions 1–2: Information About Capitol Reef

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

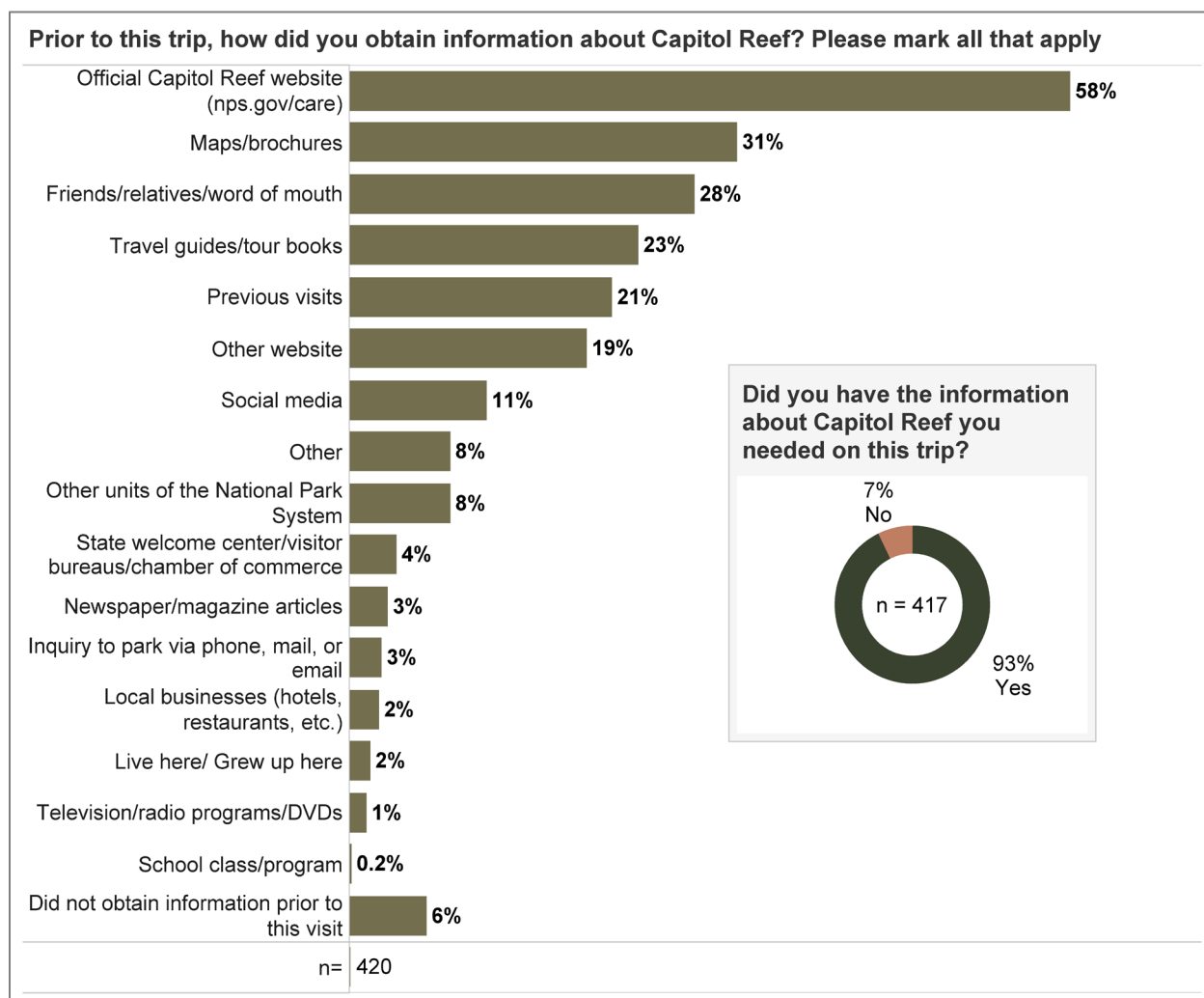


Figure 17. Sources used to obtain information about Capitol Reef prior to the trip.

NPS

- The most used resource was the official Capitol Reef website, with 58% of respondents reportedly using it. The second most common source were maps/brochures (31%), followed

by friends/relatives/word of mouth (28%), tour guides/our books (23%), and previous visits (21%).

- In a follow-up question, 93% of respondents said that they had the information about Capitol Reef that they needed on their trip, while 7% indicated that there was information that they needed but did not have.
- In an open-ended follow-up question, those who did not have the information they needed on this trip were asked to elaborate. These comments are provided as an accompanying document for review.

Question 3: Transportation

While in the intercept survey, respondents indicated a mode of transportation they used to enter the park on the day of the intercept, the follow-up survey asked respondents to select all forms of transportation they personally used to travel from their home to Capitol Reef on their trip (Figure 18).

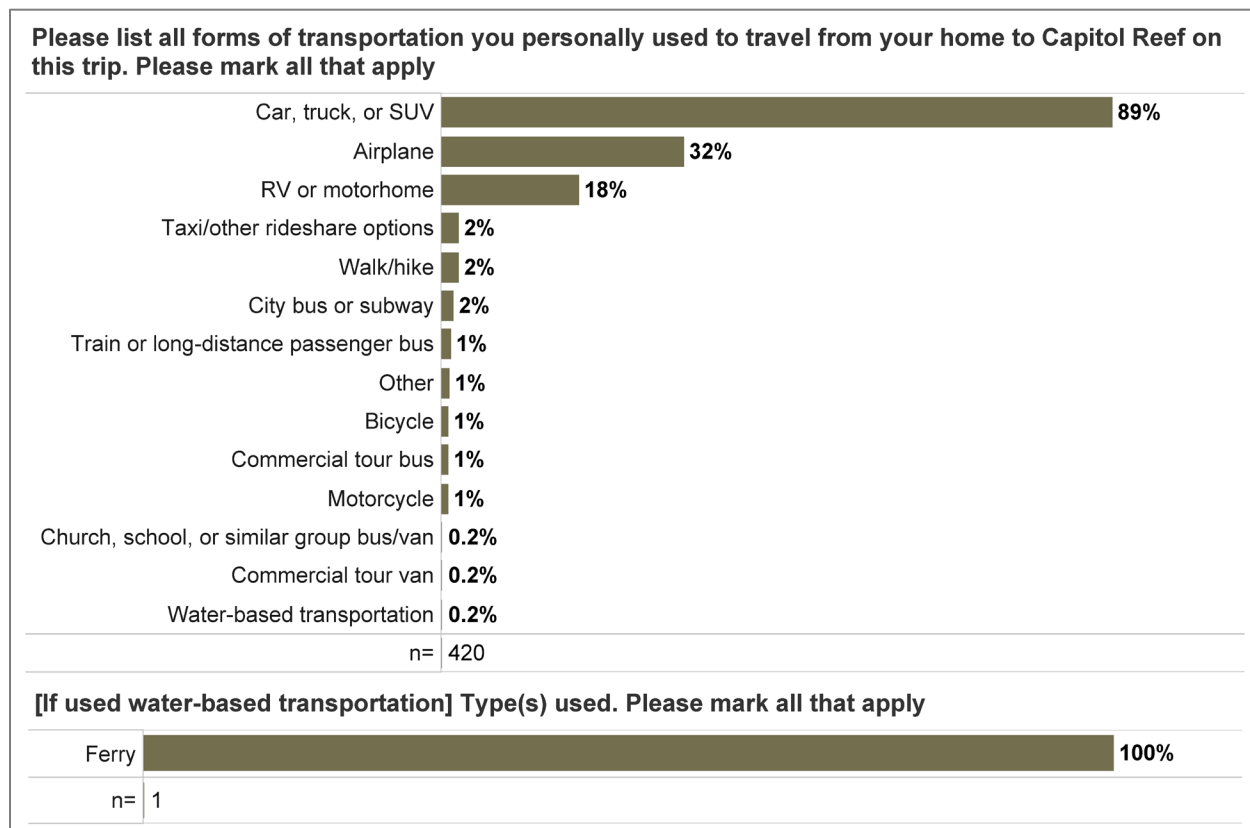


Figure 18. Forms of transportation used to travel from home to Capitol Reef on the recent trip.

NPS

- Nearly all respondents (89%) used a personal vehicle, such as a car, truck, or SUV, at some point during their trip from home to Capitol Reef.
- The second most common mode of travel was an airplane (32%), followed by RVs or motorhomes (18%).

Question 4: Travel Party Composition

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

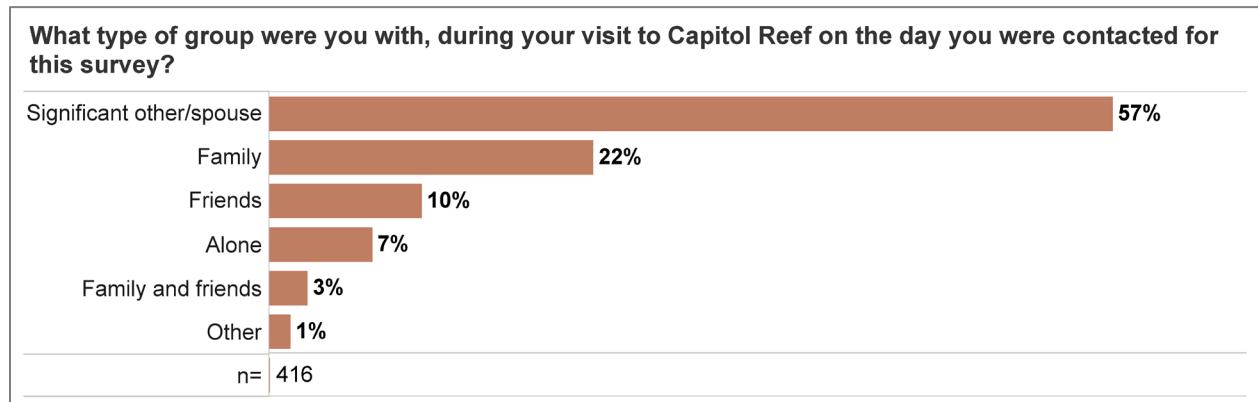


Figure 19. Travel party composition during Capitol Reef visit.

NPS

- The majority of respondents (57%) visited Capitol Reef with their significant other or spouse on the day of the survey.
- Roughly one in five respondents (22%) explored Capitol Reef with their family, and another 10% visited the park with their friends.

Question 10: Entrance Fees

Respondents were asked to indicate which type of entrance fees applied to them personally on their most recent trip to Capitol Reef (Figure 20).

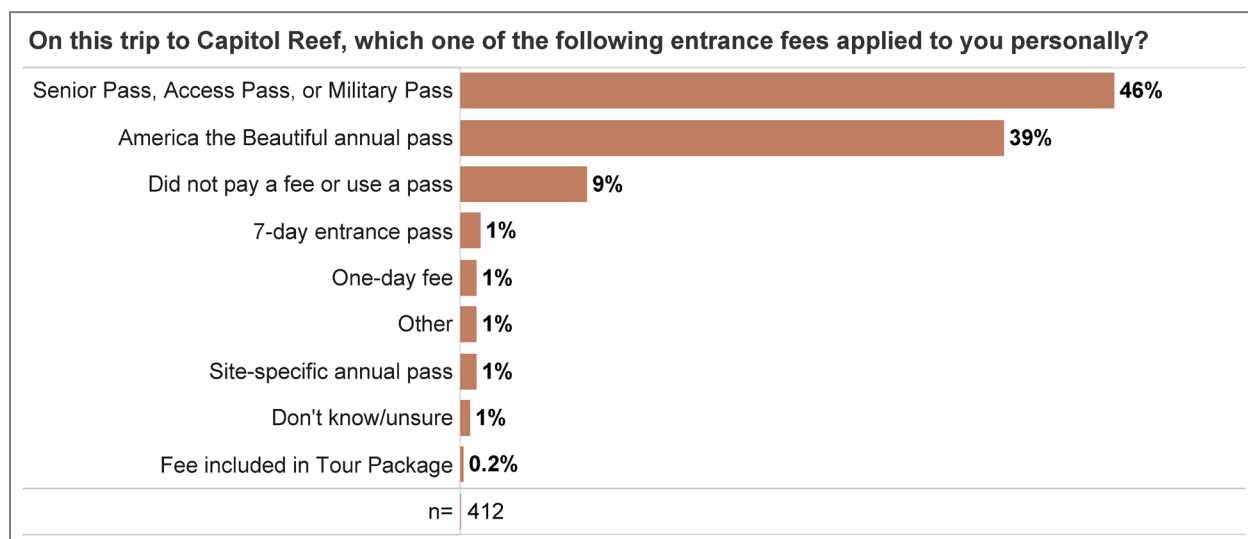


Figure 20. Entrance fees to enter Capitol Reef on the most recent trip.

NPS

- A plurality of respondents (46%) reported using a Senior Pass, Access Pass, or Military Pass and another 39% entered using an America the Beautiful annual pass.
- In contrast, just 3% of respondents entered using a Capitol Reef-specific pass or fee (i.e., annual pass, 7-day, or single-day entrance fee).

Questions 12–14: Trip Characteristics

Respondents were asked if they visited other National Park Service sites on their trip away from home (Figure 21).

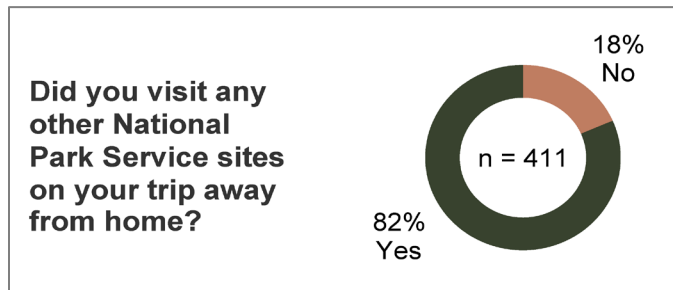


Figure 21. NPS sites visited on trip away from home.

NPS

- The overwhelming majority (82%) of all respondents had visited other NPS sites on their trip, while 18% identified Capitol Reef as the only NPS site they visited while away from home.
- In an open-ended follow-up question, those who had visited other NPS sites on their trip were asked to list which one(s). These comments are provided in an accompanying document.

Survey respondents were then asked to identify all activities that they participated in while visiting Capitol Reef, and which of those was their primary activity (Figure 22).

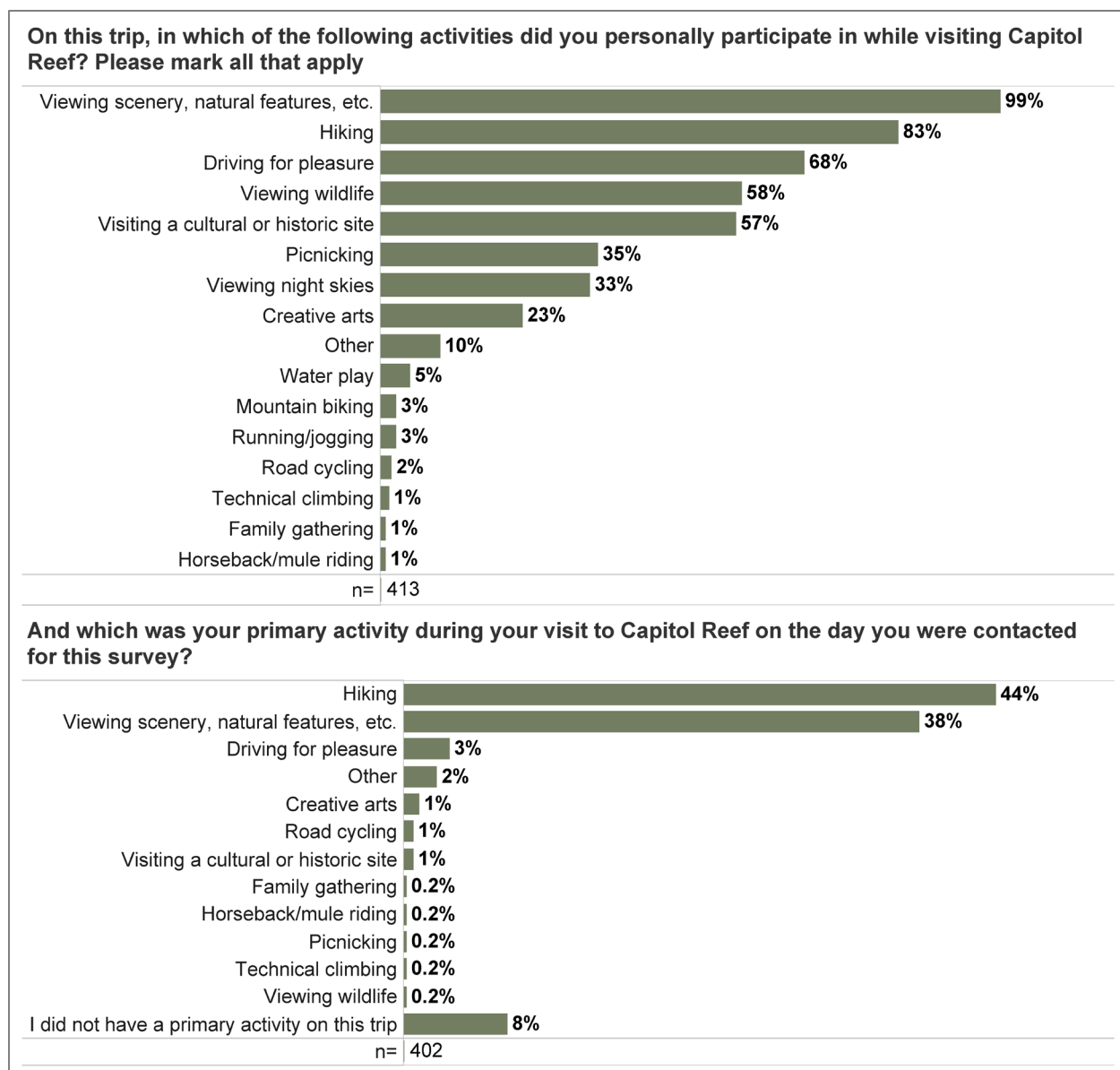


Figure 22. Participation in activities at Capitol Reef.

NPS

- Almost all visitors reported viewing scenery, natural features, etc., (99%), while 83% reported hiking, and 68% reported driving for pleasure.
- Horseback/mule riding, family gatherings, and technical climbing were all uncommon activities (reported by 1% or fewer of respondents).
- The plurality of respondents (44%) reported hiking as their primary activity, followed by viewing scenery, natural features, etc. (38%).
- Notably, while the majority of respondents reported viewing wildlife during their trip, less than 1% identified this as their primary activity.

Questions 15–16: Reasons to Visit

Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of various reasons to visit Capitol Reef on their trip, then asked which of those was the most important reason for them to visit Capitol Reef (Figure 23).

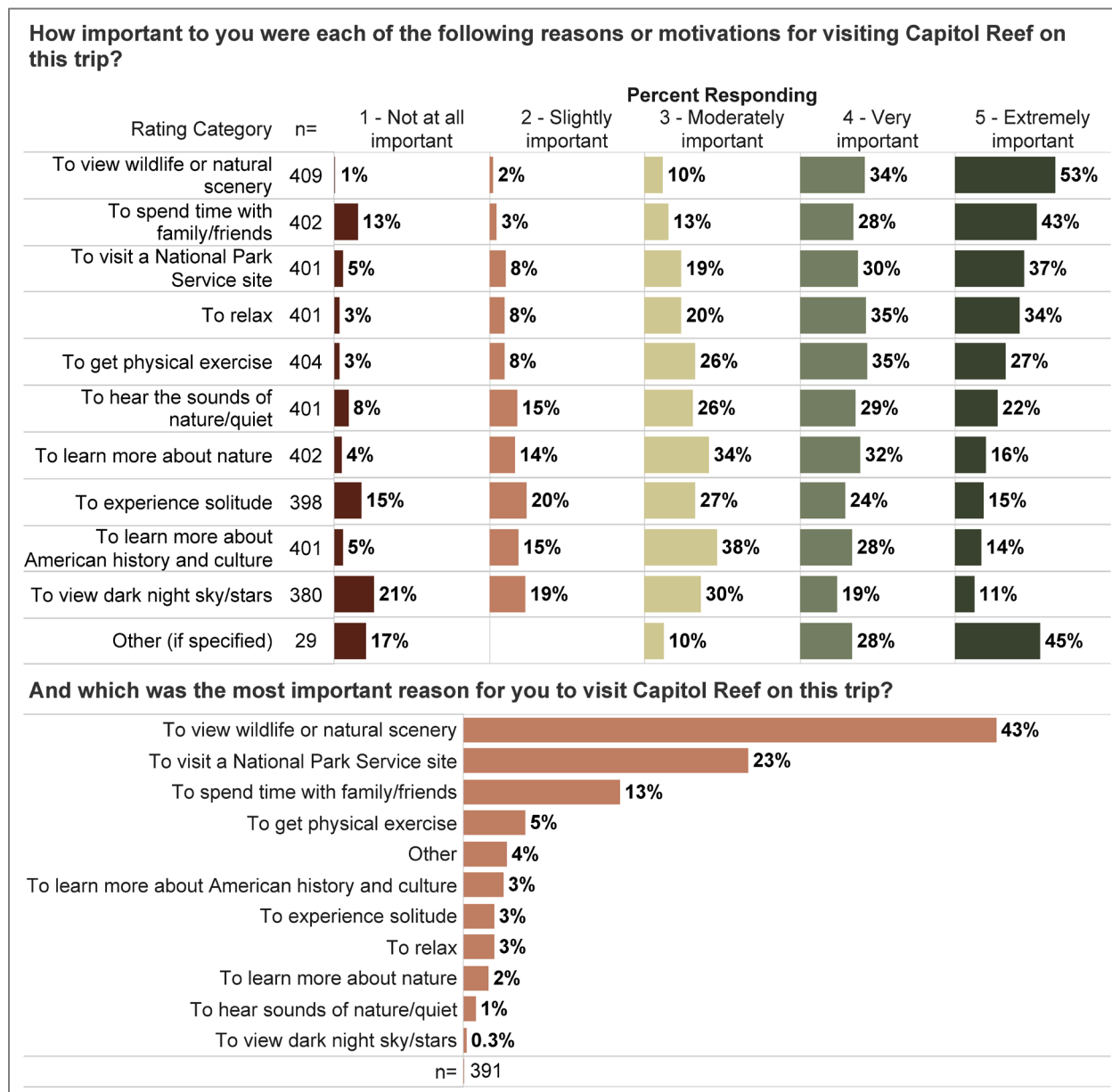


Figure 23. Reasons or motivations to visit Capitol Reef. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 13](#).

NPS

- Overall, visitors responded favorably to each of the reasons provided. All ten reasons inquired about received at least 60% of respondents reporting they were either moderately, very, or extremely important to their visit.

- Viewing wildlife and natural scenery received the highest rate of respondents indicating it was an extremely important (53%) reason for their trip, followed next by spending time with family/friends (43%).
- The most common response about the most important reason was to view wildlife or natural scenery (43%), followed by visiting a National Park Service site (23%), and to spend time with family/friends (13%).

Questions 17–19: Programs, Services, and Learning

Respondents were asked to identify all programs and services that they personally participated in in Capitol Reef during their trip (Figure 24).

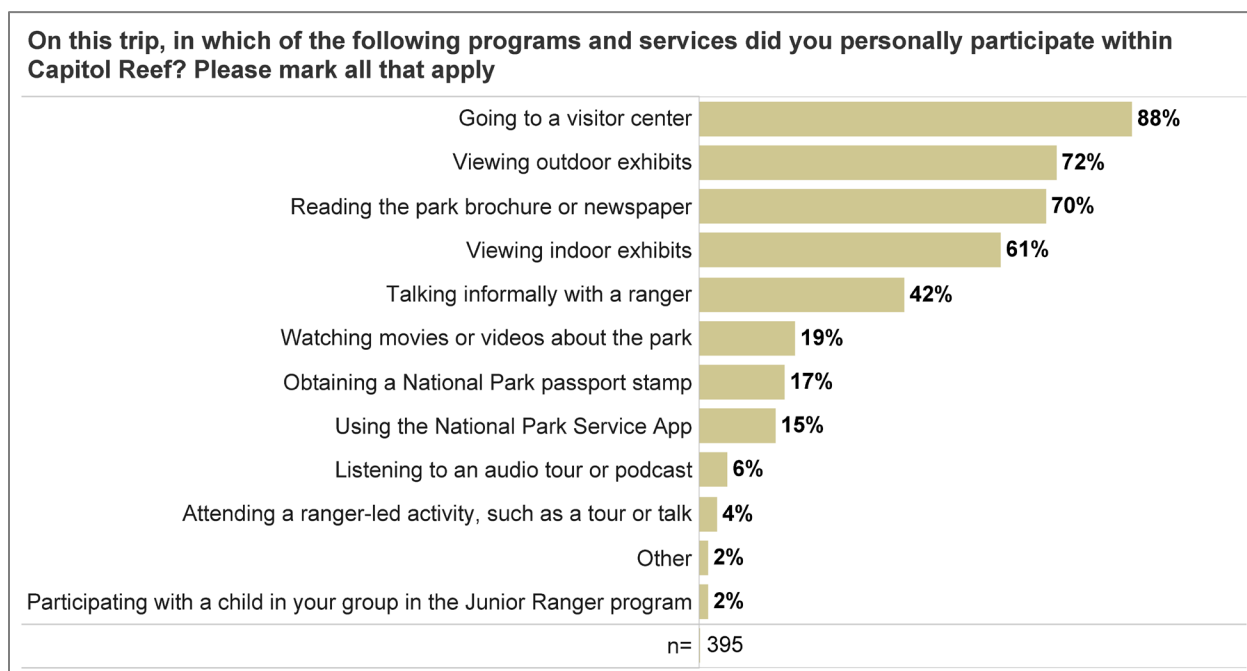


Figure 24. Programs participated while visiting Capitol Reef.

NPS

- The two most-used programs or services were going to a visitor center and viewing outdoor exhibits, with the majority of respondents reporting participating in each of them (88% and 72%, respectively).
- Several other programs were engaged in by over half of respondents: reading the park brochure or newspaper (70%) and viewing indoor exhibits (61%).

Two follow-up questions asked if respondents learned anything from park 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).

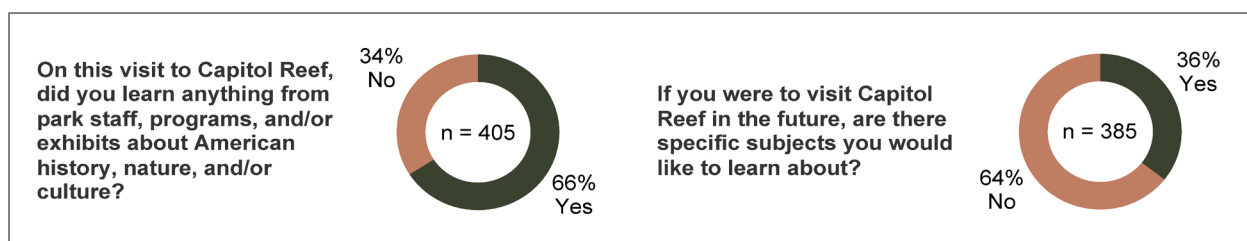


Figure 25. Learning.

NPS

- Two-thirds of respondents (66%) reported that they learned something from park staff, programs, and/or exhibits about American history, nature, and/or culture.
- Just over one-third of respondents (36%) reported that if they were to visit Capitol Reef in the future, there are specific subjects they would like to learn about.
- Respondents who said yes to either of these two questions were asked to elaborate. These comments are provided as an accompanying document for review.

Questions 20–21: 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 Capitol Reef (Figure 26).

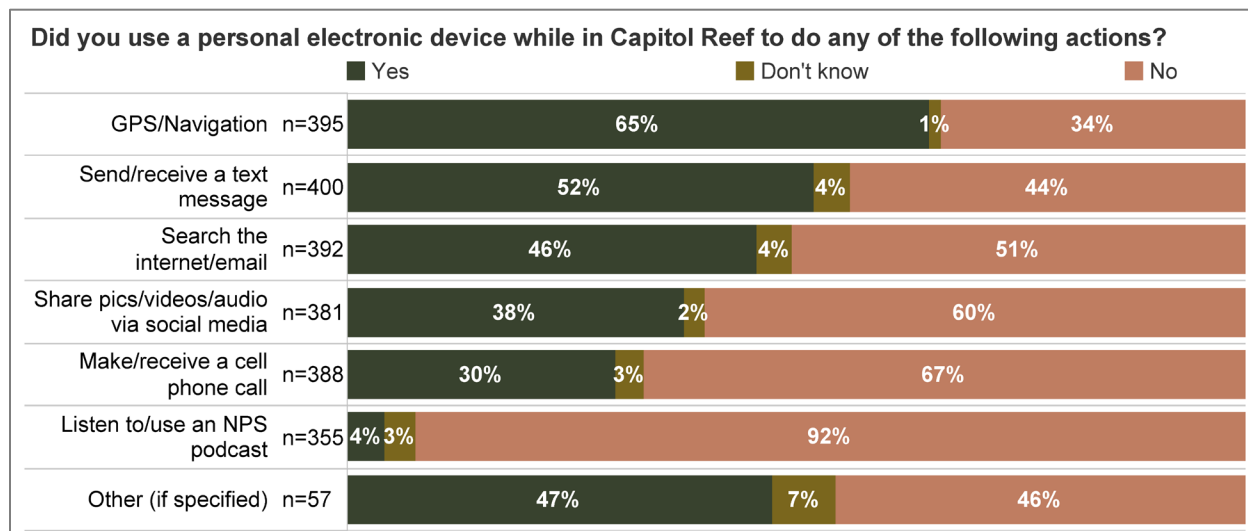


Figure 26. Use of personal electronic devices while visiting Capitol Reef. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 14](#).

NPS

- Nearly two-thirds of respondents (65%) reported using GPS/navigation, and just over half of respondents (52%) reported sending/receiving a text message.
- Conversely, only 4% of respondents listened to or used an NPS podcast.

Then, respondents were asked to rate both the importance of each of these electronic device uses (Figure 27), and the quality of their service (Figure 28).

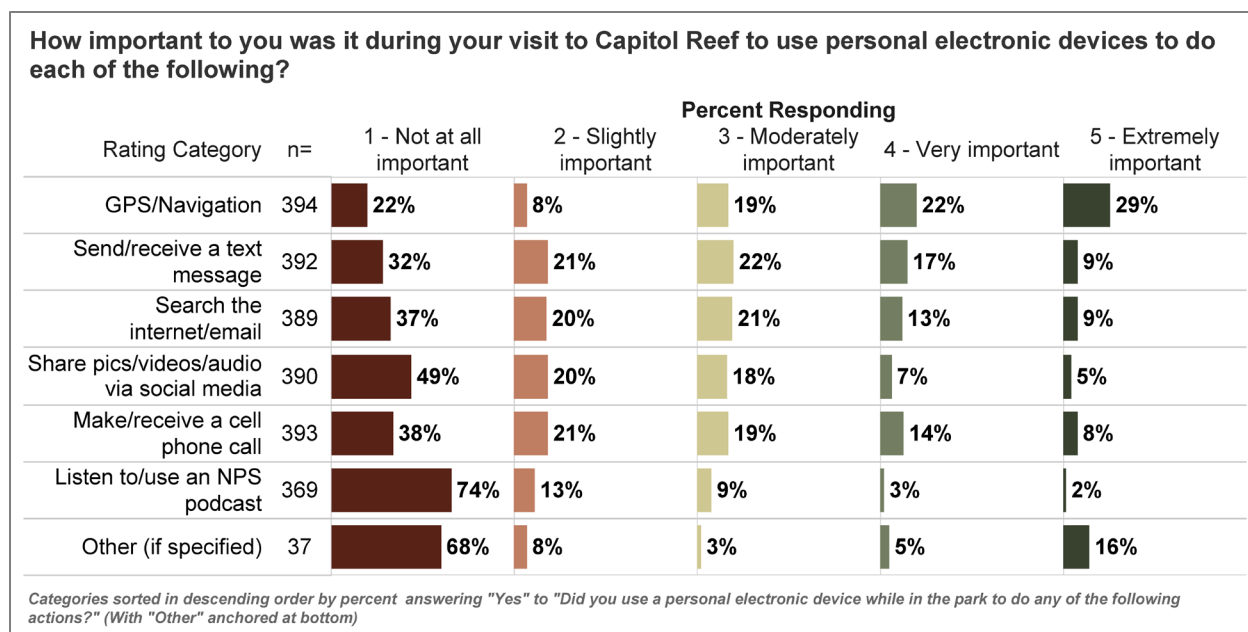


Figure 27. The importance of use of personal electronic devices while visiting Capitol Reef. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 15](#).

NPS

- The most important device uses were GPS/navigation (29% rated as extremely important) and to send/receive a text message and search the internet/email (9% of respondents for each category rated them as extremely important).
- Listening to and using an NPS podcast was rated as extremely important only by 2% of respondents, and not at all important by 74% of respondents.

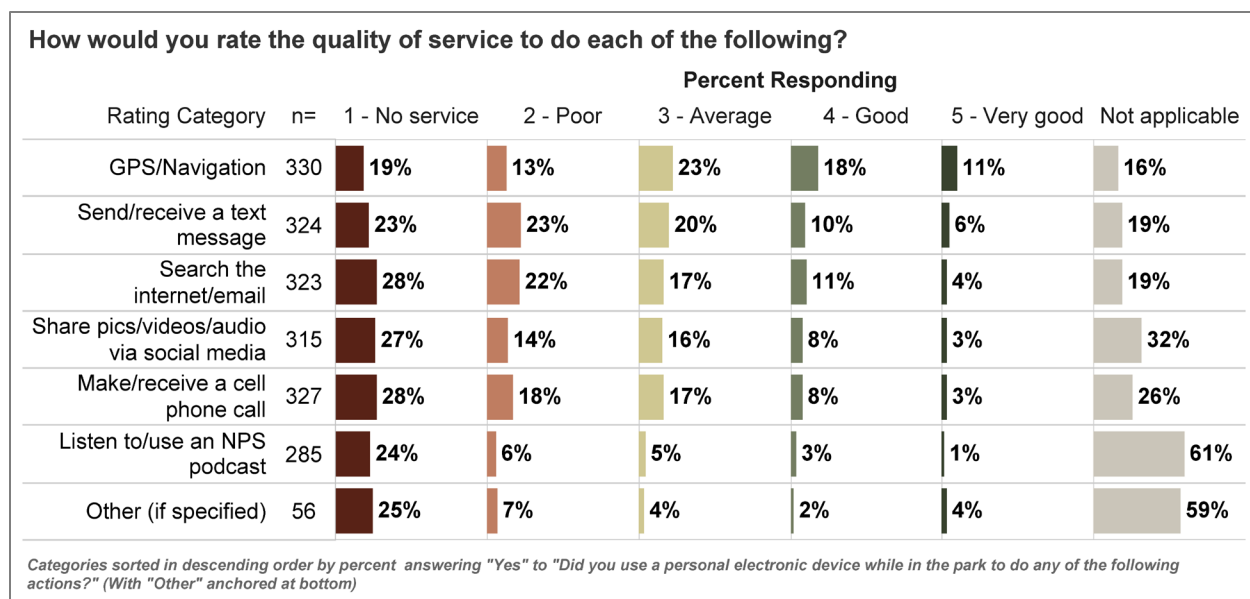


Figure 28. Quality of service of personal electronic devices while visiting Capitol Reef. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 16](#).

NPS

- GPS/navigation was rated as very good or good by 11% and 18% of respondents, respectively. However, 19% of respondents reported that they had no service for this.
- Less than one-third of respondents (ranged from 23% to 28%, depending on the service) reported that they also had no service to send/receive a text message, search the internet/email, share pics/videos/audio via social media, make/receive a cell phone call, or listen to/use an NPS podcast.

Question 22: Physical Difficulties

Respondents were asked if anyone 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 Capitol Reef. If such condition was identified, respondents were asked to specify the type of difficulty (Figure 29).

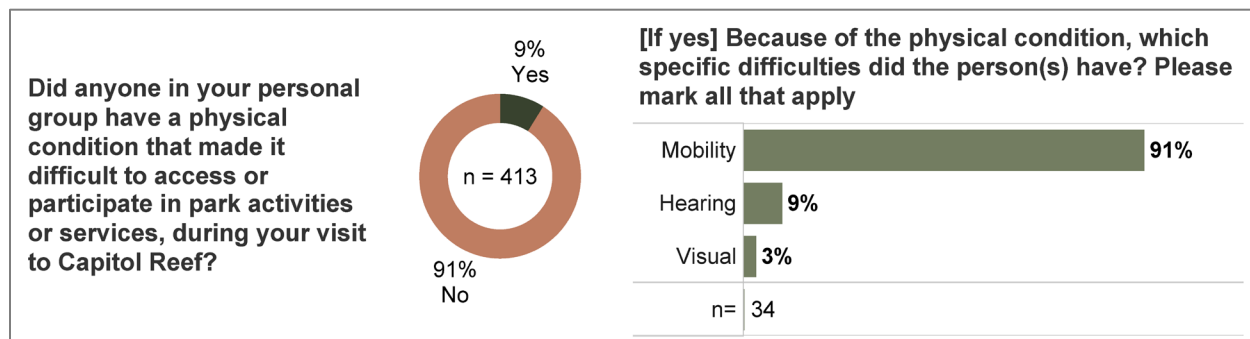


Figure 29. Physical difficulties while visiting Capitol Reef.

NPS

- The majority of respondents (91%) 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 Capitol Reef.
- Among the 9% of visitors who identified at least one difficulty, 91% reported mobility issues in their group, with small portions also reporting hearing and/or visual difficulties.

Questions 25–28: Visitor Experience

Respondents were asked if their visit to Capitol Reef met their expectations (Figure 30).

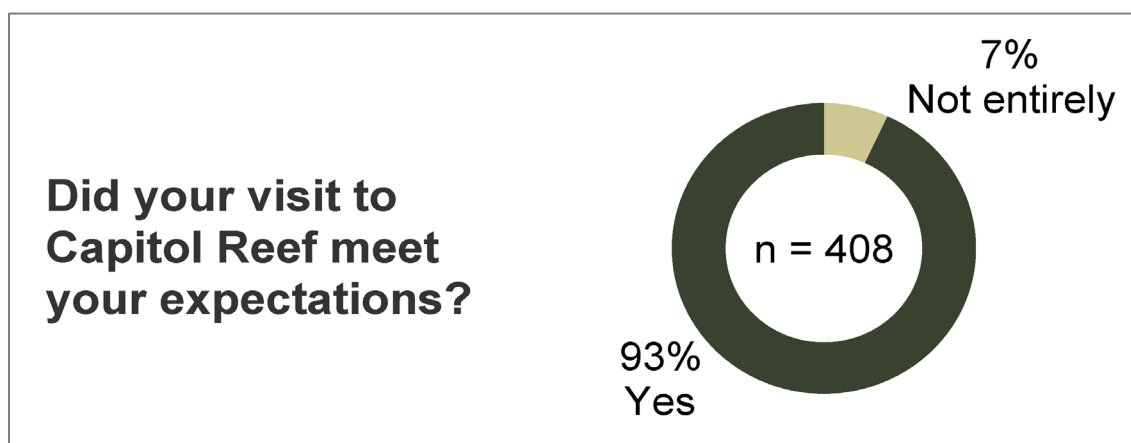


Figure 30. Meeting Capitol Reef expectations.

NPS

- The majority of respondents (93%) reported that their visit to Capitol Reef met their expectations, while 7% of respondents said it did not meet their expectations entirely, and no respondents indicated that it did not meet their expectations at all.
- In an open-ended follow-up question, respondents who indicated that Capitol Reef did not meet their expectations were asked to elaborate. These comments are provided as an accompanying document for review.

Respondents were then given several statements about Capitol Reef and asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each given statement (Figure 31).

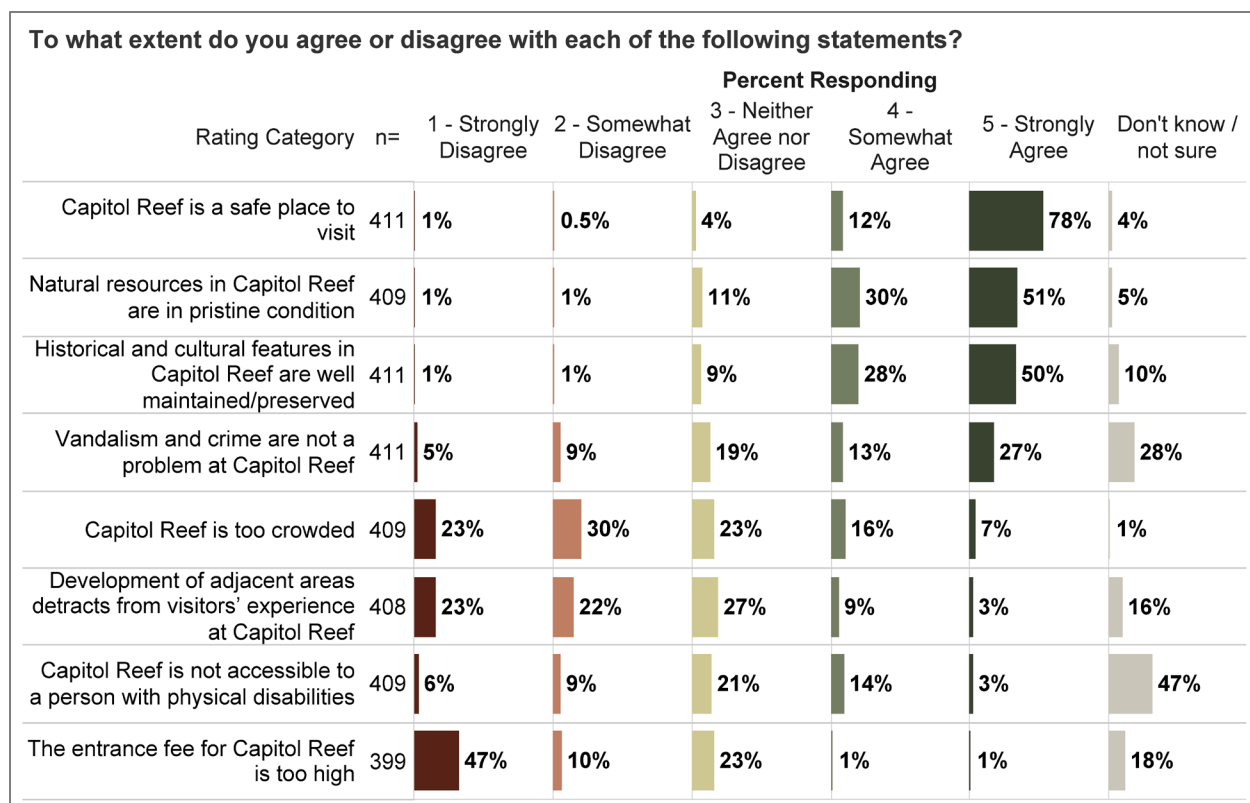


Figure 31. Rating Capitol Reef experience. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 17](#).

NPS

- From all the statements listed, “Capitol Reef is a safe place to visit” received the most consensus with a combined 90% of respondents saying they either strongly or somewhat agree with it. That was followed by “Natural resources in Capitol Reef are in pristine condition” and “Historical and cultural features in Capitol Reef are well maintained/preserved” (81% and 78% of respondents, respectively, strongly or somewhat agreed with these statements).
- Conversely, “The entrance fee for Capitol Reef is too high” (2%) and “Development of adjacent areas detracts from visitors’ experience at Capitol Reef” (12%) received the least support, with only a small proportion of respondents either somewhat or strongly agreeing with these statements.

Next, respondents were asked to rate the quality of park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in Capitol Reef (Figure 32).

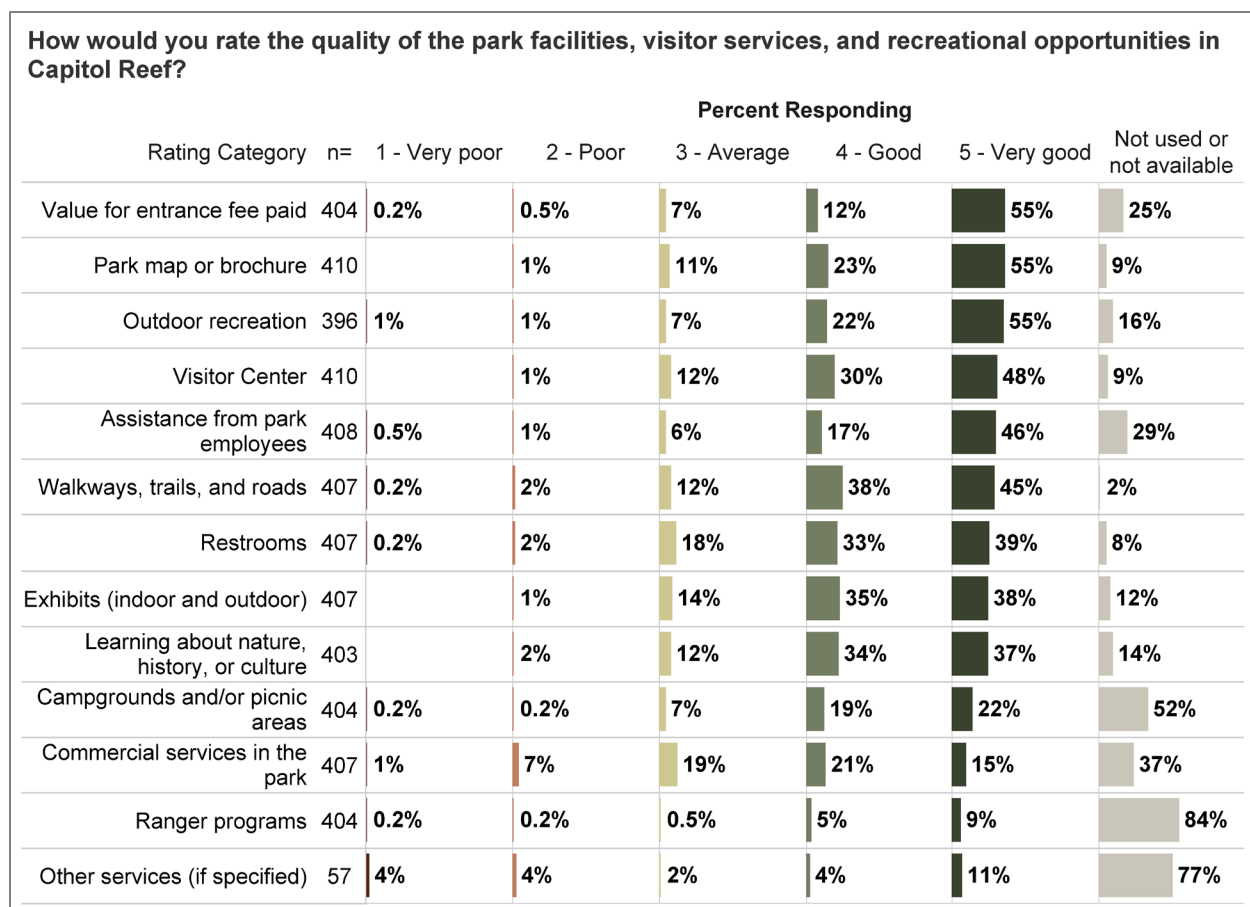


Figure 32. Rating the quality of Capitol Reef facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 18](#).

NPS

- Over half of visitors (all 55%, respectively) rated the value for entrance fee paid, the park map or brochure, and the outdoor recreation at Capitol Reef as very good.
- For the options listed above, a majority of respondents reported a rating of good or very good for each option except for campground and/or picnic areas, commercial services in the park, and ranger programs. Very few respondents found any of the services or facilities to be poor or very poor. However, some options were viewed more favorably than others. For these ratings categories, visitors were most likely to say that they were either not available, or they did not use them.

Finally, respondents were asked to rate overall quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreation opportunities (Figure 33).

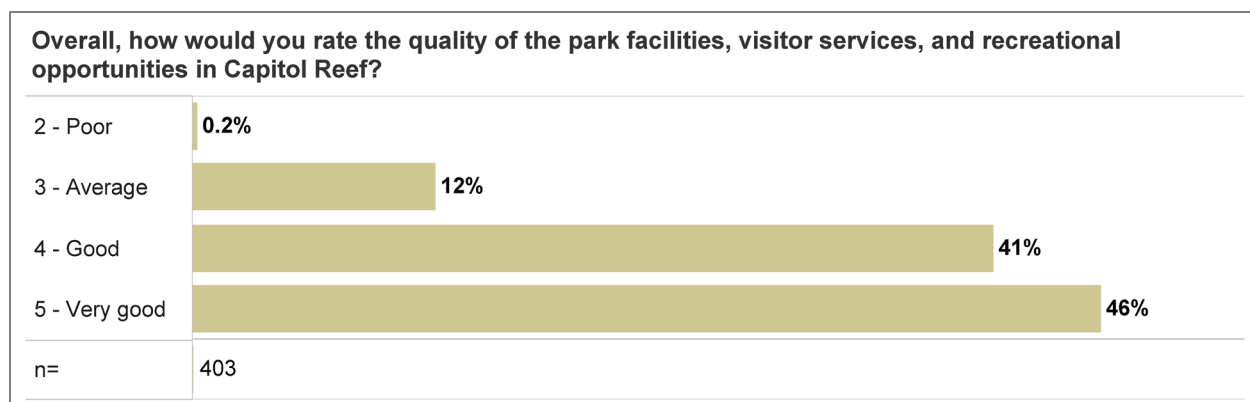


Figure 33. Rating overall quality of Capitol Reef facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities.
NPS

- In general, about half of respondents (46%) rated the quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in Capitol Reef as very good, and another 41% rated them as good (combined 87%).

Questions 31–39: Background/Demographics

In the final section of the follow-up survey, respondents were asked various questions about their personal and household demographics. Figure 34 depicts descriptive statistics for respondent gender, age, and education.

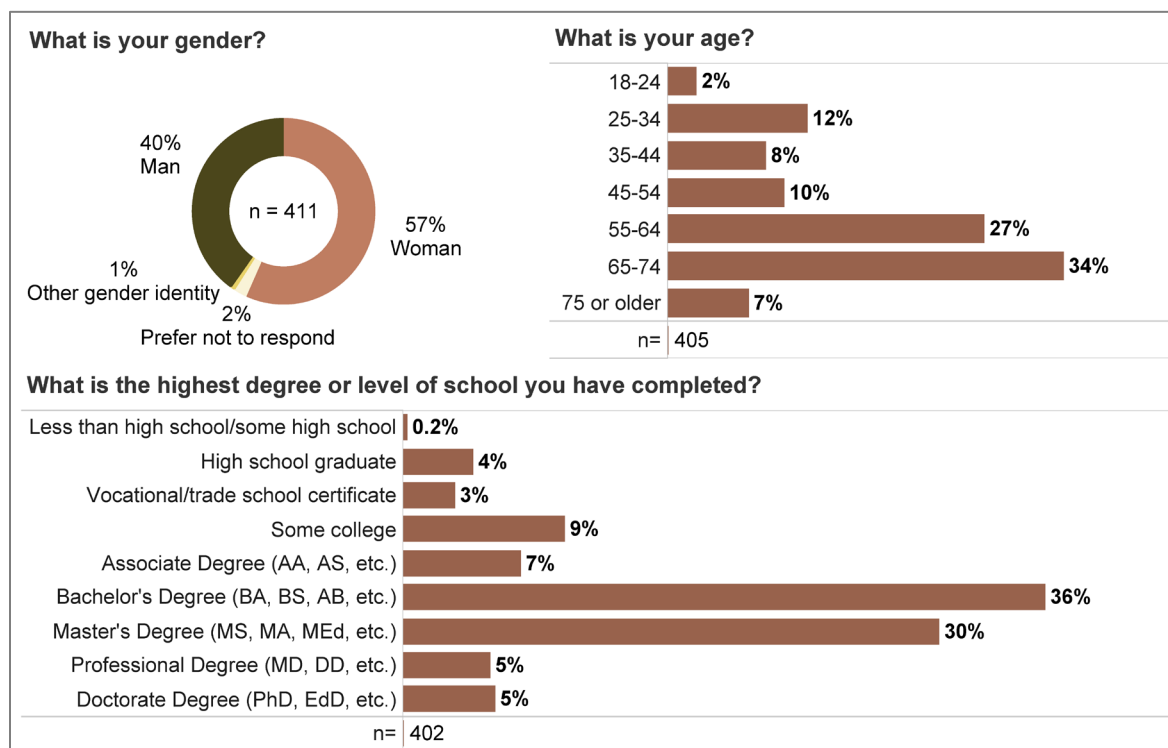


Figure 34. Respondent demographics: gender, age, and level of education.

NPS

- Follow-up survey respondents were more likely to be women than men (57% vs. 40%). Another 1% had another gender identity, while 2% preferred not to disclose their gender identity.
- The most common age categories were 65–74 years old (34%), 55–64 (27%), and 25–34 (12%). The least represented age group were 18–24 years old (only 2% of the participants surveyed).
- Most survey respondents were highly educated, with a combined 83% having some college degree, and a plurality (40%) holding a master's or advanced degree.

Respondents were also asked to identify their race(s) and if they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin (Figure 35).

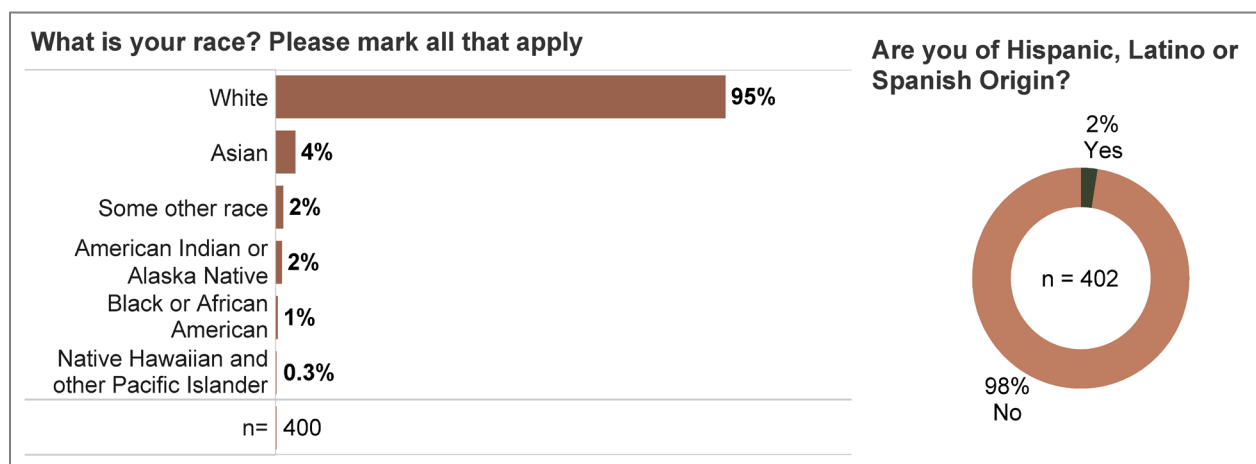


Figure 35. Respondent demographics: race and ethnicity.

NPS

- The majority of respondents (95%) were White, while 4% were Asian.
- Most respondents (98%) 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 36).

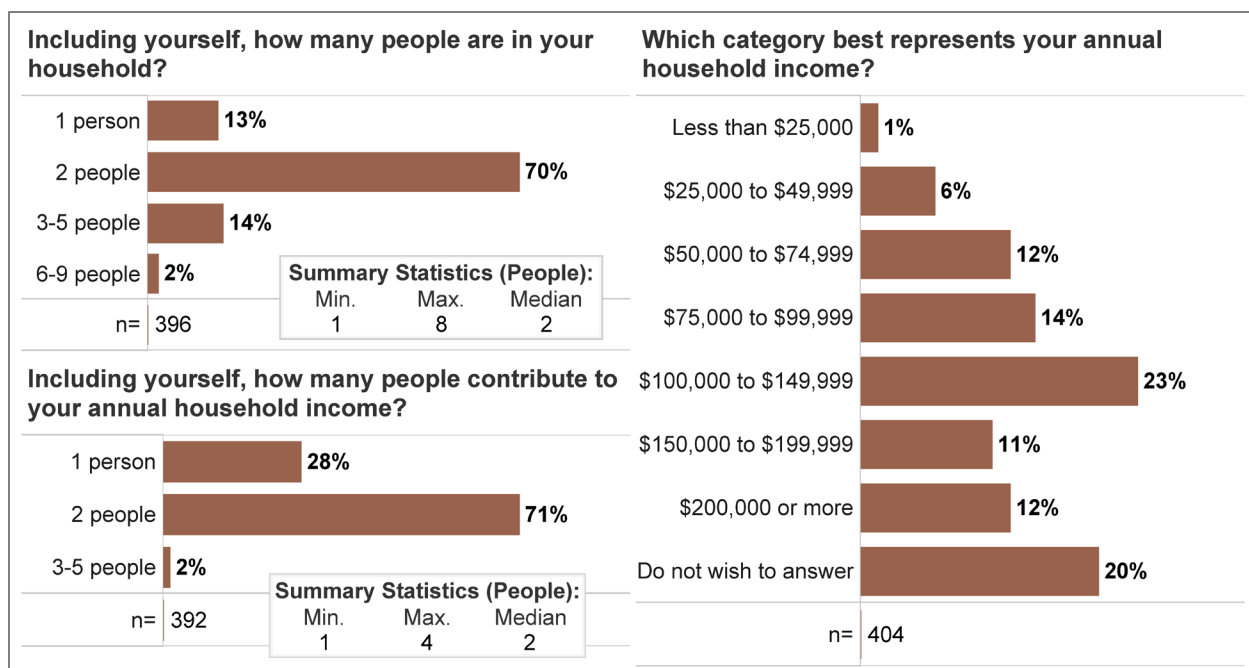


Figure 36. Household demographics: annual household income and household size. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in [Appendix A, Table 19](#).

NPS

- The majority of respondents (70%) had two people in their household, followed by 3–5 people (another 14%).
- In addition to being highly educated, Capitol Reef visitors are also relatively affluent. Roughly a quarter of respondents (23%) reported that their annual household income was between \$100,000 to \$149,999, 11% reported annual household income between \$150,000 to \$199,999, and another 12% earned \$200,000 or more.
- Most respondents (71%) came from a dual-income household.

Finally, respondents were asked about their language preference (Figure 37).

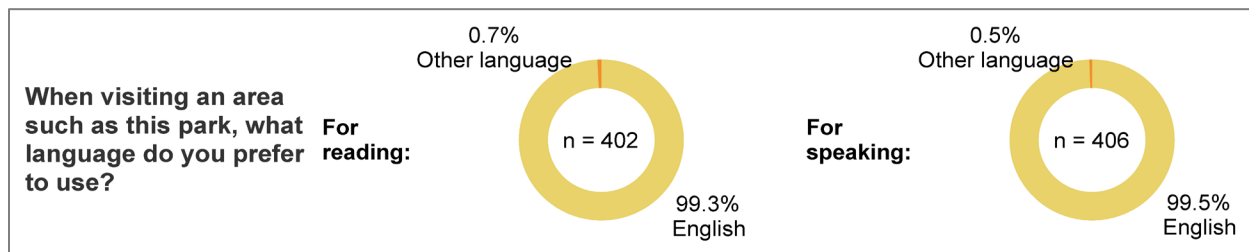


Figure 37. Respondent's language preference.

NPS

- While 2% of respondents were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish, the overwhelming majority of respondents (99%) preferred to use English both for reading and speaking when visiting an area such as Capitol Reef.
- Less than 1% of respondents preferred Spanish for either reading and/or speaking.

Literature Cited

National Park Service (NPS). 2022. 2022 Socioeconomic Monitoring of Capitol Reef National Park: Visitor Intercept and Post-Trip Surveys.
<https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2318658>

Appendix A: Accessible Tables

This appendix contains accessible tables with data from figures found in the body of the report (Tables 8–19). Table captions include hyperlinks to the corresponding figures.

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

Accommodation Type	n	Min.	Max.	Median
Backcountry Camping in Capitol Reef	5	1	2	1
Camping in Capitol Reef	53	1	9	2
Camping outside Capitol Reef	320	1	162	2
Lodging outside Capitol Reef	478	1	20	2
Unpaid accommodations	2	5	5	5

Table 9. Data from [Figure 8](#). Number of adults and children in respondent's personal group while visiting Capitol Reef.

Group Composition	n	Min.	Max.	Median
Adults	1090	1	55	2
Children	1090	0	11	0

Table 10. Data from [Figure 14](#). Number of people in respondent's vehicle when entering Capitol Reef.

Question	n	Min.	Max.	Median
[If entered by car, truck, or SUV] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your vehicle when you entered Capitol Reef?	903	1	17	2
[If entered by RV/motorhome] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your RV when you entered Capitol Reef?	114	1	8	2
[If entered by motorcycle] Including yourself, how many people were traveling on your motorcycle when you entered Capitol Reef?	10	1	2	1

Table 11. Data from [Figure 15](#). Previous visits to Capitol Reef.

Question	n	Min.	Max.	Median
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to Capitol Reef over the past 12 months?	241	1	30	1
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to Capitol Reef over the past five years?	241	1	100	2

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

Question	n	Min.	Max.	Median
How many visits have you made to other NPS sites over the past 12 months?	1089	0	1004	4

Table 13. Data from [Figure 23](#). Reasons or motivations to visit Capitol Reef.

Rating Category	n
To visit a National Park Service site	401
To experience solitude	398
To hear the sounds of nature/quiet	401
To learn more about nature	402
To learn more about American history and culture	401
To spend time with family/friends	402
To get physical exercise	404
To view wildlife or natural scenery	409
To relax	401
To view dark night sky/stars	380
Other (if specified)	29

Table 14. Data from [Figure 26](#). Use of personal electronic devices while visiting Capitol Reef.

Device Use	n
Make/receive a cell phone call	388
Send/receive a text message	400
Search the internet/email	392
GPS/Navigation	395
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	381
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	355
Other (if specified)	57

Table 15. Data from [Figure 27](#). The importance of use of personal electronic devices while visiting Capitol Reef.

Device Use	n
Make/receive a cell phone call	393
Send/receive a text message	392
Search the internet/email	389
GPS/Navigation	394
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	390
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	369
Other (if specified)	37

Table 16. Data from [Figure 28](#). Quality of service of personal electronic devices while visiting Capitol Reef.

Device Use	n
Make/receive a cell phone call	327
Send/receive a text message	324
Search the internet/email	323
GPS/Navigation	330
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	315
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	285
Other (if specified)	56

Table 17. Data from [Figure 31](#). Rating Capitol Reef experience.

Rating Category	n
Capitol Reef is a safe place to visit	411
Capitol Reef is too crowded	409
Natural resources in Capitol Reef are in pristine condition	409
The entrance fee for Capitol Reef is too high	399
Vandalism and crime are not a problem at Capitol Reef	411
Capitol Reef is not accessible to a person with physical disabilities	409
Historical and cultural features in Capitol Reef are well maintained/preserved	411
Development of adjacent areas detracts from visitors' experience at Capitol Reef	408

Table 18. Data from [Figure 32](#). Rating the quality of Capitol Reef facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities.

Rating Category	n
Visitor Center	410
Exhibits (indoor and outdoor)	407
Restrooms	407
Walkways, trails, and roads	407
Campgrounds and/or picnic areas	404
Assistance from park employees	408
Park map or brochure	410
Ranger programs	404
Value for entrance fee paid	404
Commercial services in the park (food, lodging, gifts, rental, etc.)	407
Other services (if specified)	57
Learning about nature, history, or culture	403
Outdoor recreation (sightseeing, camping, bicycling, boating, hiking, etc.)	396

Table 19. Data from [Figure 36](#). Household demographics: annual household income and household size.

Question	n	Min.	Max.	Median
Including yourself, how many people are in your household?	396	1	8	2
Including yourself, how many people contribute to your annual household income?	392	1	4	2

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Natural Resource Stewardship and Science

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