



Curecanti National Recreation Area Visitor Study

Summer 2010

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/SSD/NRR—2011/616/107287



ON THE COVER

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Data in this report were collected and analyzed using methods based on established, peer-reviewed protocols and were analyzed and interpreted within the guidelines of the protocols.

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Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Curecanti National Recreation Area (NRA) visitors during July 3 - 11, 2010. A total of 891 questionnaires was distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 491 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 55% response rate.

Group size and type	Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 29% were in groups of five or more. Sixty-three percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
State or country of residence	United States visitors comprised 99% of total visitation during the survey period, with 72% from Colorado and smaller proportions from 38 other states. Too few international visitors (N=15 individuals) responded to have reliable data.
Frequency of visits	Forty-four percent of visitors visit Curecanti NRA one to eleven times per year. Thirty-five percent of visitors were on their first visit to the park in their lifetime.
Age, ethnicity, race, and education level	Forty-four percent of visitors were ages 41-65 years, 16% were ages 15 years or younger, and 16% were ages 66 or older. Five percent were Hispanic or Latino, and 96% were White. Thirty percent of respondents had some college, while 27% had a bachelor's and 27% had a graduate degree.
Physical conditions	Ten percent of visitor groups had members with physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in activities or services. Hiking, using stairs, and walking were the services/activities most commonly listed as difficult to access or participate in.
Awareness of park management	Prior to their visit, 76% of visitor groups were aware that Curecanti NRA is a unit of the National Park System and 54% of visitor groups were aware of the difference between a National Park and a National Recreation Area.
Information sources	Most visitor groups (75%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about the park through previous visits (51%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (40%), and the Curecanti National NRA website (31%); 94% received the information they needed. To obtain information for a future visit, 54% of visitor groups would use the park website.
Park as a destination	For 51% of visitor groups, Curecanti National NRA was one of several destinations. Thirty-two percent indicated that Curecanti NRA was not a planned destination.
Use of park campgrounds	Thirty percent of visitor groups camped in a Curecanti NRA campground. The most common reasons visitor groups did not camp inside the park were that the campgrounds lacked facilities (8%) and the location was not convenient (8%).
Length of stay	The average length of stay in the park was 53.3 hours, or 2.2 days. The average length of stay in the park area (with a 50-mile radius of Gunnison) was 114.8 hours, or 4.8 days.

Executive summary (continued)

Local and regional attractions	Sixty percent of visitor groups visited other local and regional attractions. Of those groups that visited other attractions, 66% visited Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and 31% visited Crested Butte.
Sites visited in the park	The most commonly visited sites in the park were Elk Creek (43%), Lake Fork (30%), and Cimarron (25%).
Activities	The most common activities on this visit were general sightseeing (47%) and fishing (46%). The most important activity was fishing (33%). On a future visit, visitor groups would prefer to participate in fishing (59%) and general sightseeing (46%).
Visitor centers	Forty-five percent of visitor groups visited a park visitor center. Of those groups, 68% visited Elk Creek Visitor Center and 31% visited Cimarron Visitor Center. They visited to obtain information (55%) and use the restrooms (53%). Of those visitor groups that did not visit either visitor center, 64% did not need visitor center services.
Visitor services and facilities	The visitor services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were the visitor center restrooms (47%), the boat docks (47%), and assistance from park staff (41%).
Protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences	The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences included clean water (97%), clean air (95%), and scenic views (89%).
Interpretive programs for a future visit	Seventy-three percent of visitor groups would be interested in interpretive programs on a future visit. The most common topics visitor groups were interested in learning about on a future visit were plants and animals (55%) and geology (55%); the most common type of interpretive program preferred by visitor groups was a self-guided tour booklet (55%).
Commercial services for a future visit	Sixty-three percent of visitor groups were interested in commercial services for a future visit. The most common commercial services that visitor groups would like to have available were restaurant/food service (56%) and grocery/camp store (52%).
Overall quality	Most visitor groups (85%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Curecanti NRA as “very good” or “good.” Less than two percent of groups rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho at (208) 885-7863 or the following website http://www.psu.uidaho.edu .

Acknowledgements

We thank Dr. Gail Vander Stoep for overseeing the fieldwork, Amanda Halverson, Cindi Jette, Marian McGlew, Martha Seibe, and the staff and volunteers of Curecanti National Recreation Area for assisting with the survey, and David Vollmer and Matthew Strawn for data processing.

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Introduction

This report describes the results of a visitor study at Curecanti National Recreation Area (NRA) conducted July 3 - 11, 2010 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Park Studies Unit (PSU) at the University of Idaho.

The National Park Service website for Curecanti NRA describes the park: “Three reservoirs, named for corresponding dams on the Gunnison River, form the heart of Curecanti. Blue Mesa Reservoir is Colorado's largest body of water, and is the largest Kokanee Salmon fishery in the United States. Morrow Point Reservoir is the beginning of the Black Canyon, and below, East Portal is the site of the Gunnison Diversion Tunnel, a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark” (www.nps.gov/cure, retrieved January, 2011).

Organization of the Report

The report is organized into three sections.

Section 1: **Methods**. This section discusses the procedures, limitations, and special conditions that may affect the study results.

Section 2: **Results**. This section provides summary information for each question in the questionnaire and includes visitor comments to open-ended questions. The presentation of the results of this study does not follow the order of questions in the questionnaire.

Section 3: **Appendices**

Appendix 1: *The Questionnaire*. A copy of the questionnaire distributed to visitor groups.

Appendix 2: *Additional Analysis*. A list of sample questions for cross-references and cross-comparisons. Comparisons can be analyzed within a park or between parks. Results of additional analyses are not included in this report.

Appendix 3: *Decision rules for checking non-response bias*. An explanation of how the non-response bias was determined.

Appendix 4: *Visitor Services Project Publications*. A complete list of publications by the VSP. Copies of these reports can be obtained by visiting the website: www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp/reports.htm or by contacting the VSP office at (208) 885-7863.

Visitor Comments Appendix: A separate appendix provides visitor responses to open-ended questions. It is bound separately from this report due to its size.

Presentation of the Results

Results are represented in the form of graphs (see example below), scatter plots, pie charts, tables, or text.

SAMPLE

1. The figure title describes the graph's information.

2. Listed above the graph, the "N" shows the number of individuals or visitor groups responding to the question. If "N" is less than 30, "**CAUTION!**" is shown on the graph to indicate the results may be unreliable.

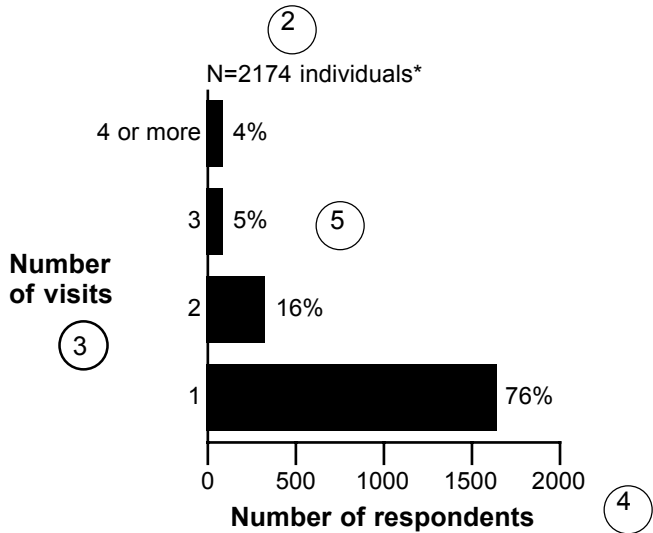
* appears when total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

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

3. Vertical information describes the response categories.

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

5. In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.



1 **Figure 14.** Number of visits to the park in past 12 months

Methods

Survey Design

Sample size and sampling plan

All VSP questionnaires follow design principles outlined in Don A. Dillman's book *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (2007). Using this method, the sample size was calculated based on the park visitation statistics of previous years.

Brief interviews were conducted with a systematic, random sample of visitor groups that arrived at various sites during July 3 - July 11, 2010. Visitors were surveyed between the hours of 6 a.m. and 7 p.m. Table 1 shows the four locations, number of questionnaires distributed at each location, and the response rate for each location. During this survey, 958 visitor groups were contacted and 891 of these groups (93.0%) accepted questionnaires. (The average acceptance rate for 228 VSP visitor studies conducted from 1988 through 2010 is 91.5%.) Questionnaires were completed and returned by 491 visitor groups, resulting in a 55.1% response rate for this study. (The average response rate for the 228 VSP visitor studies is 72.6%.)

Table 1. Questionnaire distribution

Sampling site	Distributed		Returned	
	N	%	N	%
Cimarron	179	20	105	21
Pine Creek	170	19	103	21
Lake Fork Marina	240	27	118	24
Elk Creek area (marina & visitor center)	302	34	165	34
Total	891	100	491	100

Questionnaire design

The Curecanti National Recreation Area (NRA) questionnaire was developed at a workshop held with park staff to design and prioritize the questions. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks while others were customized for Curecanti NRA. Many questions asked visitors to choose answers from a list of responses, often with an open-ended option, while others were completely open-ended.

No pilot study was conducted to test the Curecanti NRA questionnaire. However, all questions followed Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines and/or were used in previous surveys; thus, the clarity and consistency of the survey instrument have been tested and supported.

Survey procedure

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, they were asked which member (at least 16 years old) had the next birthday. The individual with the next birthday was selected to complete the questionnaire for the group. An interview, lasting approximately two minutes, was conducted with that person to determine group size, group type, and the age of the member completing the questionnaire. These individuals were asked for their names, addresses, and telephone numbers or email addresses in order to mail them a reminder/thank you postcard and follow-ups. Visitors were asked to complete the survey after their visit, and return the questionnaire by mail. The questionnaires were pre-addressed and affixed with a U.S. first-class postage stamp.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank-you postcard was mailed to all participants who provided a valid mailing address (see Table 2). Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey. Seven weeks after the survey, a second round of replacement questionnaires was mailed to visitors who had not returned their questionnaires.

Table 2. Follow-up mailing distribution

Round 1 mailing	Date	U.S.	International	Total
Postcards	July 26, 2010	857	0	857
1 st Replacement	August 9, 2010	548	4	552
2 nd Replacement	August 27, 2010	457	0	457

Data analysis

Returned questionnaires were coded and the visitor responses were processed using custom and standard statistical software applications—Statistical Analysis Software® (SAS), and a custom designed FileMaker Pro® application. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data; responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized. Double-key data entry validation was performed on numeric and text entry variables and the remaining checkbox (bubble) variables were read by optical mark recognition (OMR) software.

Limitations

As all surveys, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. This was a self-administered survey. Respondents completed the questionnaire after the visit, which may have resulted in poor recall. Thus, it is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflected actual behavior.
2. The data reflect visitor use patterns to the selected sites during the study period of July 3 - 11, 2010. The results present a 'snapshot in time' and do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year.
3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "**CAUTION!**" is included in the graph, figure, table, or text.
4. Occasionally, there may be inconsistencies in the results. Inconsistencies arise from missing data or incorrect answers (due to misunderstood directions, carelessness, or poor recall of information). Therefore, refer to both the percentage and N (number of individuals or visitor groups) when interpreting the results.

Special conditions

The weather during the survey period was generally hot and sunny, with occasional overcast skies and a few thunderstorms. No special events occurred in the area that would have affected the type and the amount of visitation to the park. At Pine Creek, one boat trip was cut short on July 9, 2010, because of a passenger evacuation. Visitors were given a refund or were rebooked on another boat trip. Visitation was quite slow at certain times/locations during the survey period.

Checking non-response bias

Four variables were used to check non-response bias: respondents' age, group size, overall quality rating score, and level of education. Participants at higher age ranges may be more responsive to the survey, but there was no significant difference in group size (see Table 3). There were no significant differences between early and late responders in terms of level of education and the rating of overall quality of facilities, services and recreational opportunities (see Table 4). See Appendix 3 for more details on the non-response bias checking procedures.

Table 3. Comparison of respondents and nonrespondents

Variable	Respondents	Nonrespondents	p-value (t-test)
Age (years)	53.36 (N=490)	45.83 (N=395)	0.085
Group size	4.26 (N=489)	3.79 (N=399)	<0.001

Table 4. Comparison of respondents at different mailing waves

	Before postcard	Between postcard and 1st replacement	After 1st replacement	p-value
Education level (number of respondents in each category – Chi-square test)				
Some high school	3	0	3	
High school diploma/GED	32	8	30	
Some college	56	23	65	
Bachelor's degree	69	23	39	
Graduate degree	71	19	38	0.082
Overall quality (Average rating within each mailing wave – ANOVA)				
	4.28	4.18	4.25	0.611

Results

Group and Visitor Characteristics

Visitor group size

Question 21b

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

Results

- 38% of visitors were in groups of two (see Figure 1).
- 29% were in groups of five or more.

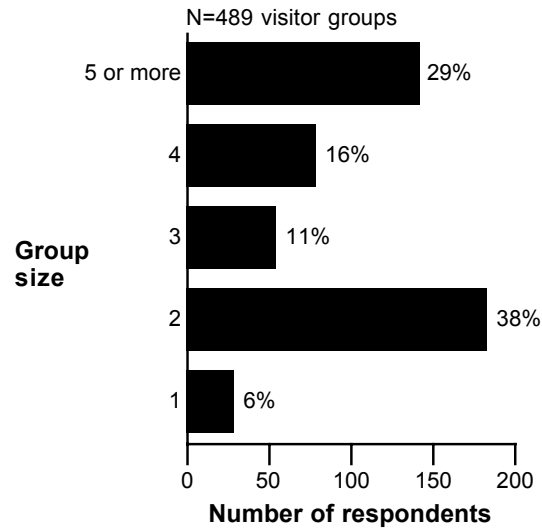


Figure 1. Visitor group size

Visitor group type

Question 21a

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

Results

- 63% of visitor groups were made up of family members (see Figure 2).
- 18% were with family and friends.

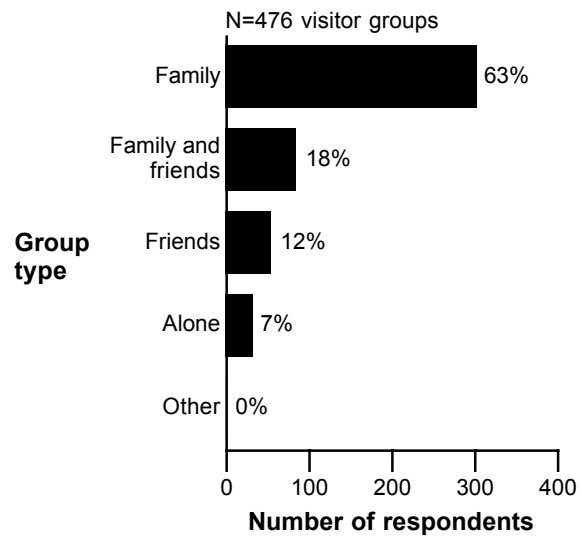


Figure 2. Visitor group type

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitors with organized groups

Question 20a

On this visit, were you and your personal group with a commercial guided tour group?

Results

- 1% of visitor groups were with a commercial guided tour group (see Figure 3).

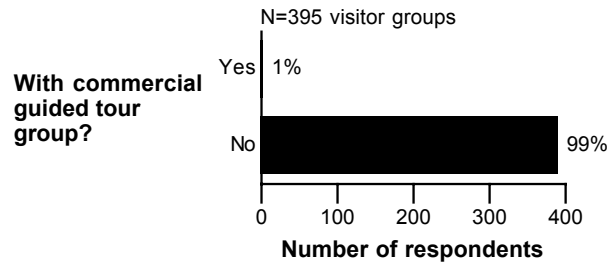


Figure 3. Visitors with a commercial guided tour group

Question 20b

On this visit, were you and your personal group with a school/ educational group?

Results

- 1% of visitor groups were with a school/educational group (see Figure 4).

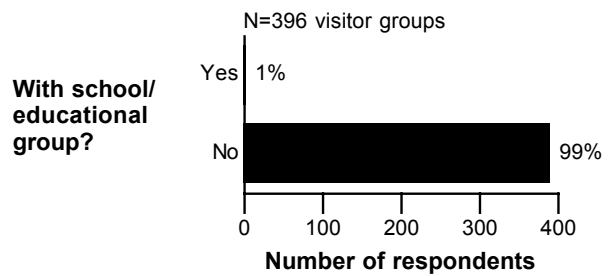


Figure 4. Visitors with a school/educational group

Question 20c

On this visit, were you and your personal group with a guided fishing group?

Results

- 2% of visitor groups were with a guided fishing group (see Figure 5).

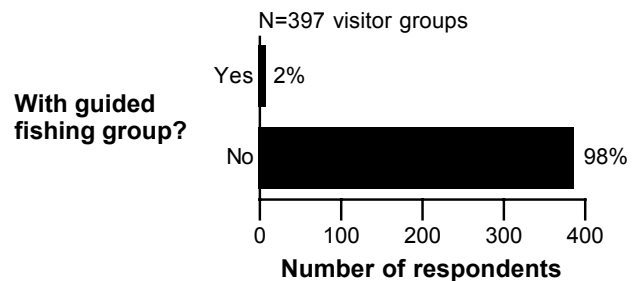


Figure 5. Visitors with a guided fishing group

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 20d

On this visit, were you and your personal group with an “other” organized group (business, church, scout, etc.)?

Results

- 4% of visitor groups were with an “other” organized group (see Figure 6).

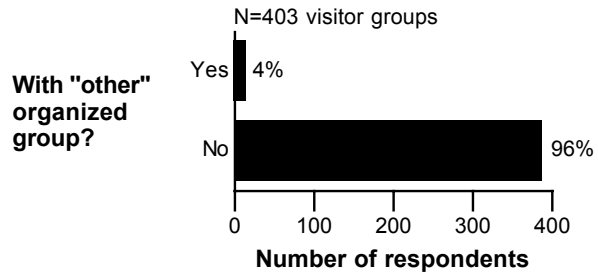


Figure 6. Visitors with an “other” organized group

Question 20e

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

Results - Interpret with CAUTION!

- Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 7).

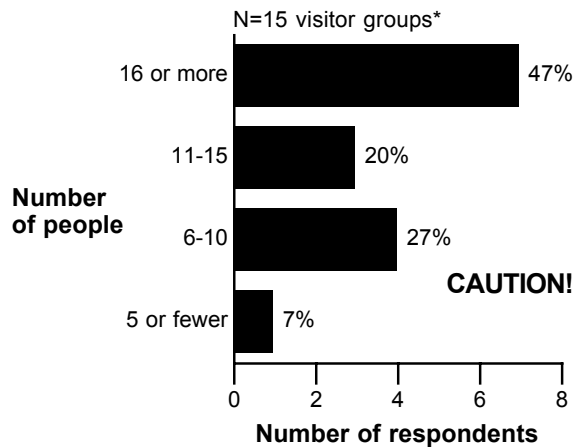


Figure 7. Organized group size

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

United States visitors by state of residence

Question 22b

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your state of residence?

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

Results

- U.S. visitors were from 39 states and comprised 99% of total visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 72% of U.S. visitors came from Colorado (see Table 5 and Figure 8).
- 5% came from Texas.
- Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 37 other states.

Table 5. United States visitors by state of residence*

State	Number of visitors	Percent of U.S. visitors N=1,453 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=1,468 individuals
Colorado	1,044	72	71
Texas	71	5	5
Arizona	34	2	2
Missouri	24	2	2
Iowa	22	2	1
California	19	1	1
Kansas	18	1	1
Minnesota	18	1	1
Florida	17	1	1
Illinois	17	1	1
New Mexico	17	1	1
Washington	11	1	1
Nebraska	10	1	1
Oklahoma	10	1	1
Indiana	8	1	1
Michigan	8	1	1
New Jersey	8	1	1
Pennsylvania	8	1	1
Wisconsin	8	1	1
20 other states	81	6	6

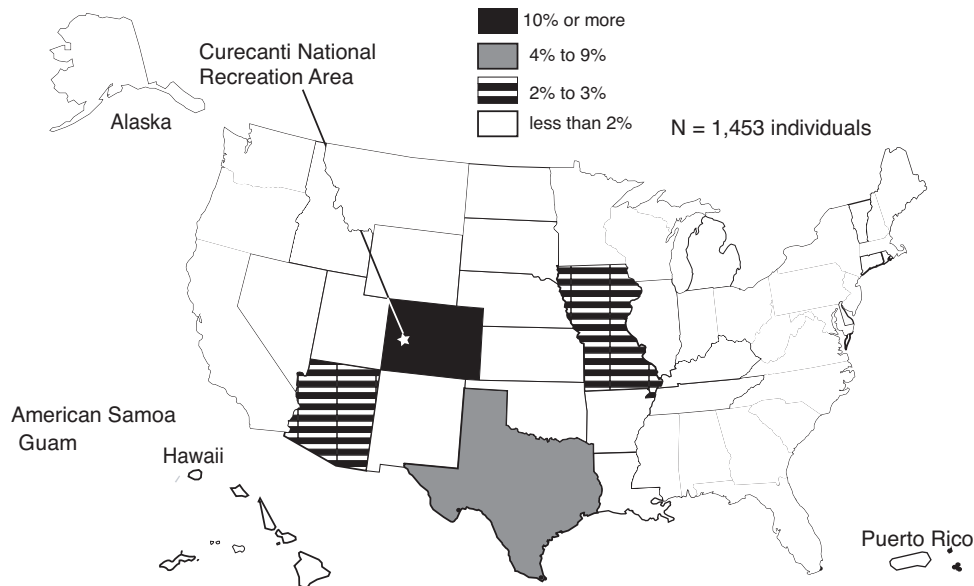


Figure 8. Proportions of United States visitors by state of residence

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitors from Colorado and adjacent states

- Visitors from Colorado adjacent states were from 68 counties and comprised 78% of the total U.S. visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 15% came from Montrose County, CO (see Table 6).
- 13% came from Mesa County, CO.
- Smaller proportions of visitors came from 66 other counties in Colorado and adjacent states.

Table 6. Visitors from Colorado and adjacent states by county of residence*

County, State	Number of visitors	
	N=1,131 individuals	Percent
Montrose, CO	165	15
Mesa, CO	142	13
Gunnison, CO	113	10
El Paso, CO	97	9
Denver, CO	57	5
Delta, CO	47	4
Adams, CO	41	4
Douglas, CO	39	3
Pueblo, CO	37	3
Arapahoe, CO	36	3
Weld, CO	31	3
Fremont, CO	30	3
Boulder, CO	24	2
Garfield, CO	23	2
Larimer, CO	21	2
Maricopa, AZ	21	2
Chaffee, CO	17	2
Jefferson, CO	15	1
Bernalillo, NM	10	1
Moffat, CO	9	1
Morgan, CO	8	1
Ouray, CO	8	1
Elbert, CO	7	1
Shawnee, KS	7	1
Broomfield, CO	6	1
La Plata, CO	6	1
Pima, AZ	6	1
Summit, CO	6	1
40 other counties	100	9

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

International visitors by country of residence**Question 22b**

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

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

Results – Interpret with CAUTION!

- Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Table 7).

Table 7. International visitors by country of residence***CAUTION!**

Country	Number of visitors	Percent of international visitors N=15 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=1,468 individuals
Belgium	4	27	<1
Netherlands	4	27	<1
Czech Republic	2	13	<1
Israel	2	13	<1
Brazil	1	7	<1
Canada	1	7	<1
Morocco	1	7	<1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Frequency of visits

Question 22c

For you and your personal group on this visit, how frequently have you visited the Curecanti NRA (including this visit)?

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

Results

- 44% of visitors visit Curecanti NRA 1 to 11 times per year (see Figure 9).
- 35% were on their first visit.

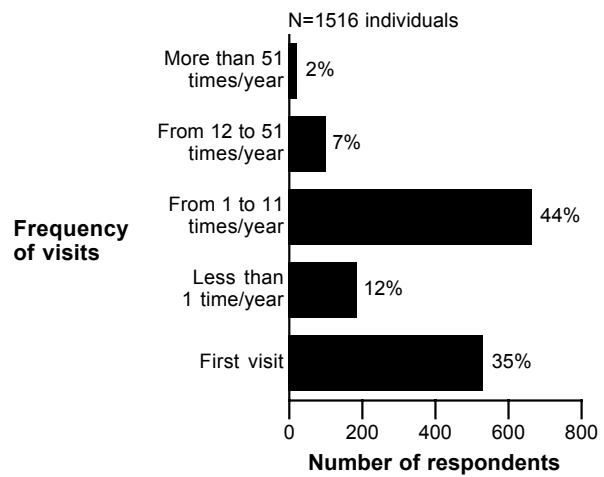


Figure 9. Frequency of visits to Curecanti NRA

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitor age

Question 22a

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your current age?

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

Results

- Visitor ages ranged from 1 to 89 years.
- 44% of visitors were 41 to 65 years old (see Figure 10).
- 16% of visitors were in the 15 years or younger age group.
- 16% were 66 or older.

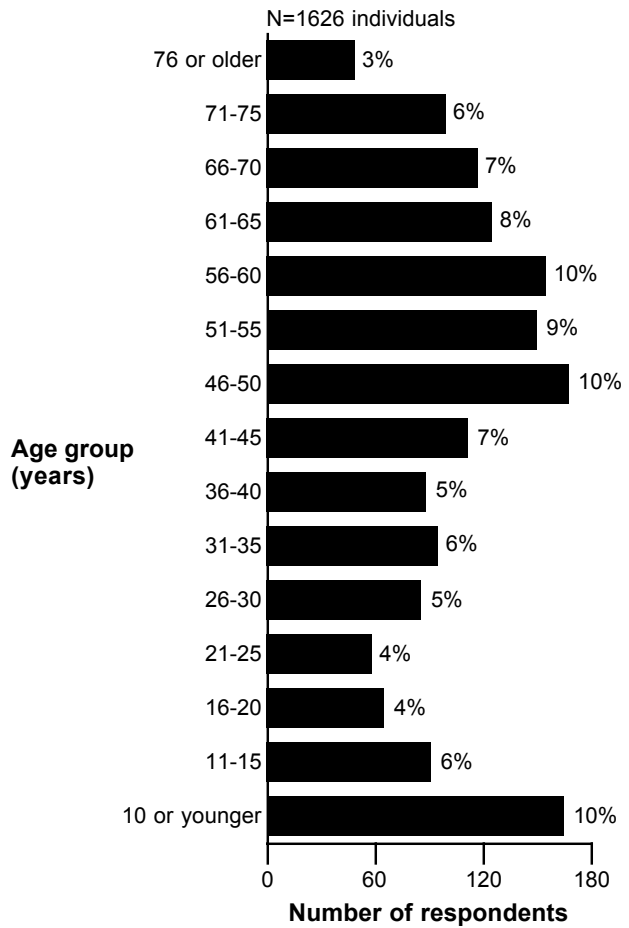


Figure 10. Visitor age

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitor ethnicity

Question 24a

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

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

Results

- 5% of visitors were Hispanic or Latino (see Figure 11).

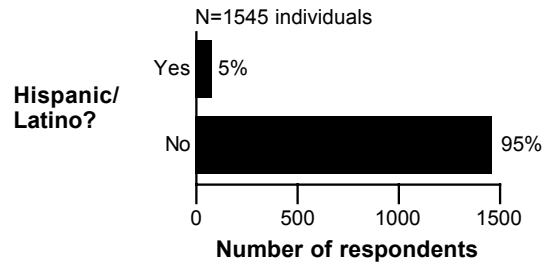


Figure 11. Visitors who were Hispanic or Latino

Visitor race

Question 24b

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

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

Results

- 96% of visitors were White (see Figure 12).

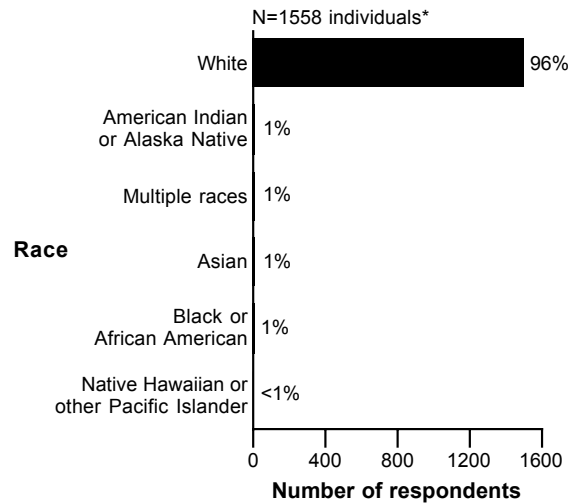


Figure 12. Visitor race

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Language used for speaking and reading

Question 25a

When visiting an area such as the Curecanti NRA, which language(s) do you and most members of your personal group prefer to use for speaking?

Results

- 95% of visitor groups reported English as their preferred language for speaking (see Figure 13).
- “Other” languages (5%) are listed in Table 8.

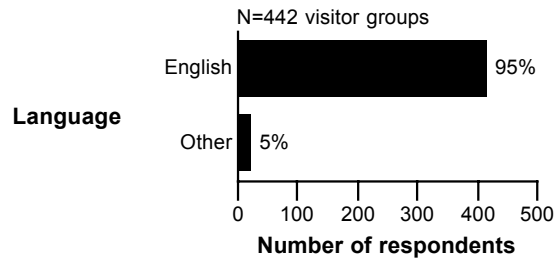


Figure 13. Language preferred for speaking

Question 25b

When visiting an area such as the Curecanti NRA, which language(s) do you and most members of your personal group prefer to use for reading?

Results

- 96% of visitor groups preferred English for reading (see Figure 14).
- “Other” languages (4%) are listed in Table 9.

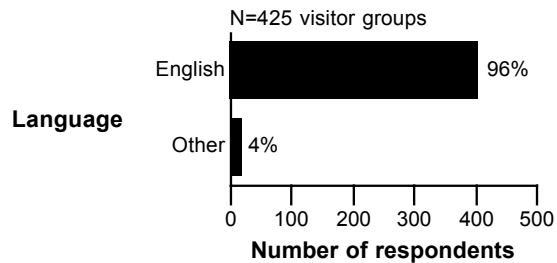


Figure 14. Language preferred for reading

Table 8. Other languages preferred for speaking (N=8 comments) – **CAUTION!**

Language	Number of times mentioned
Spanish	4
German	2
American Sign Language	1
Japanese	1

Table 9. Other languages preferred for reading (N=8 comments) – **CAUTION!**

Language	Number of times mentioned
Spanish	5
German	2
Chinese	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitors with physical conditions

Question 26a

Does anyone in your personal group have a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services?

Results

- 10% of visitor groups had members with physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services (see Figure 15).

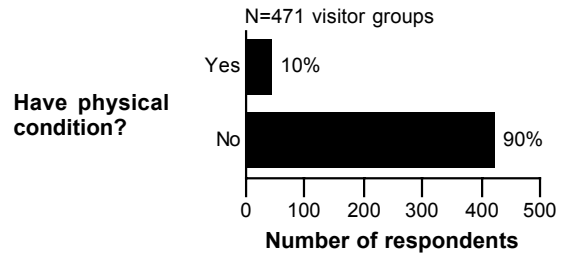


Figure 15. Visitor groups that had members with physical conditions

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 26b

If YES, what services or activities were difficult to access/participate in? (open-ended)

Results

- 41 visitor groups commented on the services and activities that were difficult to access or participate in (see Table 10).

Table 10. Services/activities that were difficult to access/participate in (N=43 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Services/activities	Number of times mentioned
Park service/activities	
Hiking	8
Stairs	5
Walking	5
Access to boat	1
Access to lake for families with children and persons with disabilities or in wheelchairs	1
Climbing	1
Down to and up from boat ramps	1
Elevator to second floor	1
Hiking down and back up	1
Lack of handicap parking at marina	1
Lakeside access for shore fishing for older people	1
Long walks over rough terrain	1
Need oxygen for breathing machine	1
Ranger-led discussions/activities	1
Stairs - climbing without the railing	1
Standing	1
Steep trail	1
Trails due to wheelchair	1
We're old military vets; everything hurts	1
Morrow Point Boat Tour services/ activities	
Morrow Point boat tour	3
Stairs/steps down to boat dock	4
Legally blind - Morrow Point boat tour	1
Morrow Point Trail	1

Respondent level of education

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 23

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

Results

- 30% of respondents had some college (see Figure 16).
- 27% had a bachelor’s degree.
- 27% had a graduate degree.

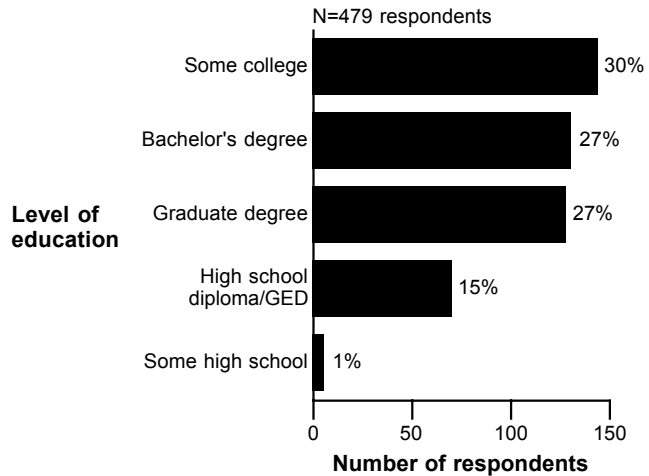


Figure 16. Respondent level of education

Awareness of park management

Question 3a

Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware that Curecanti NRA is a unit of the National Park System?

Results

- Prior to their visit, 76% of visitor groups were aware that Curecanti NRA is a unit of the National Park System (see Figure 17).

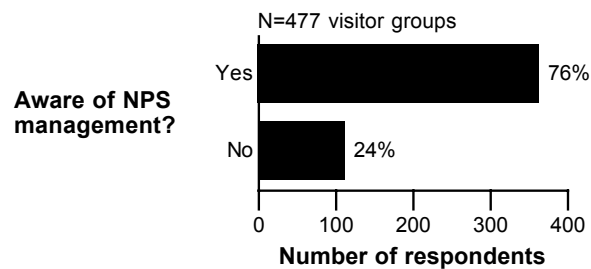


Figure 17. Visitor groups that were aware that Curecanti NRA is a unit of the National Park System

Question 3b

Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware of the difference between a National Park and a National Recreation Area?

Results

- Prior to their visit, 54% of visitor groups were aware of the difference between a National Park and a National Recreation Area (see Figure 18).

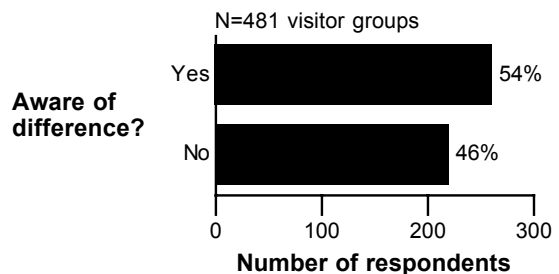


Figure 18. Visitor groups that were aware of the difference between a National Park and a National Recreation Area

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Trip/Visit Characteristics and Preferences

Information sources prior to visit

Question 1a

Prior to this visit, how did you and your personal group obtain information about Curecanti NRA?

Results

- 75% of visitor groups obtained information about Curecanti NRA prior to their visit (see Figure 19).
- As shown in Figure 20, among those visitor groups that obtained information about Curecanti NRA prior to their visit, the most common sources were:

- 51% Previous visits
- 40% Friends/relatives/word of mouth
- 31% Park website

- “Other” sources (3%) were:

- Local resident
- Membership park
- Parks iPod+ application
- National Parks Passport
- Saw signs when driving by

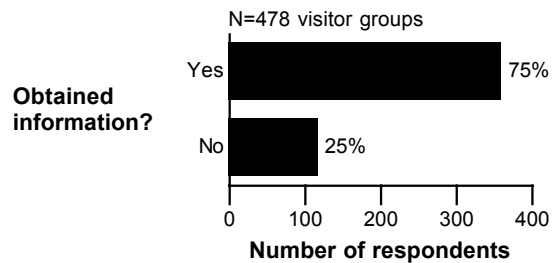


Figure 19. Visitor groups that obtained information about Curecanti NRA prior to visit

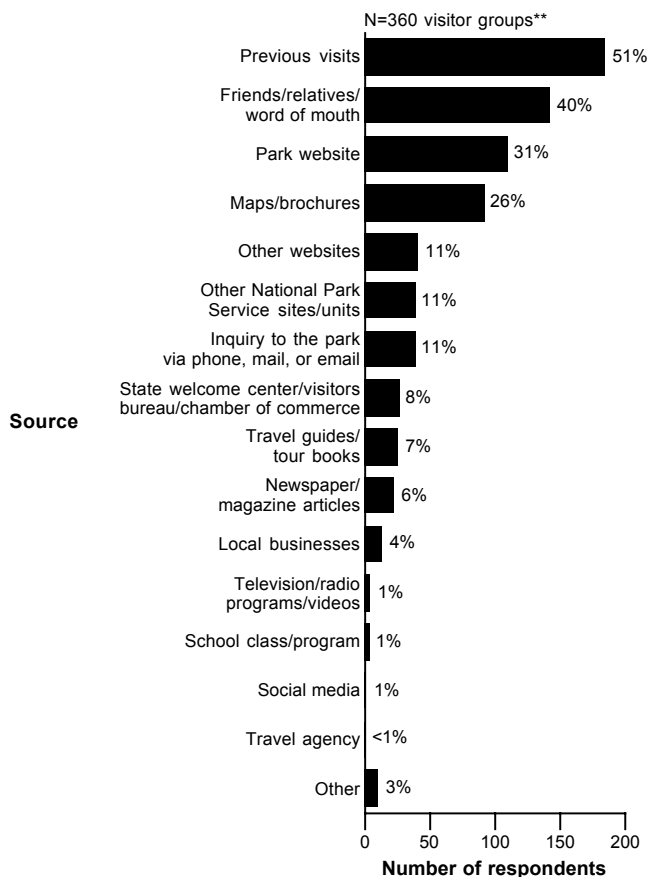


Figure 20. Sources of information used prior to visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 1c

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

Results

- 94% of visitor groups received needed information prior to their visit (see Figure 21).

Received needed information?

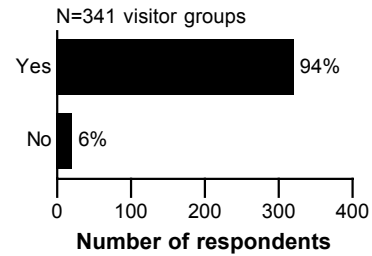


Figure 21. Visitor groups that received needed information prior to their visit

Question 1d

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

Results

- 16 visitor groups listed information they needed but was not available (see Table 11).

Table 11. Needed information

(N=17 comments; one visitor group made more than one comment.)

Type of information	Number of times mentioned
Fishing report - where, when, and how	2
Boating regulations	2
A more detailed, better-labeled trail map	1
A way to hike to the lake from the Montrose side	1
Anything - welcome center closed	1
Campsite close to lake	1
Costs	1
Entrance station	1
Fishing regulations	1
More details of area to visit	1
Needed more information on the old train route	1
Showers	1
Specific information about reserving campsites at Morrow Point Reservoir	1
Tent camping was not as spread out as we'd have liked	1
Time of boat tours	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Information sources for future visit

Question 1b

If you were to visit Curecanti NRA in the future, how would you and your personal group prefer to obtain information about the park?

Results

- As shown in Figure 22, visitor groups' most preferred sources of information for a future visit were:

- 54% Curecanti NRA website
- 32% Maps/brochures
- 30% Previous visits

- "Other" sources of information (3%) were:

- Local resident
- Passport to national parks
- Roadside markers

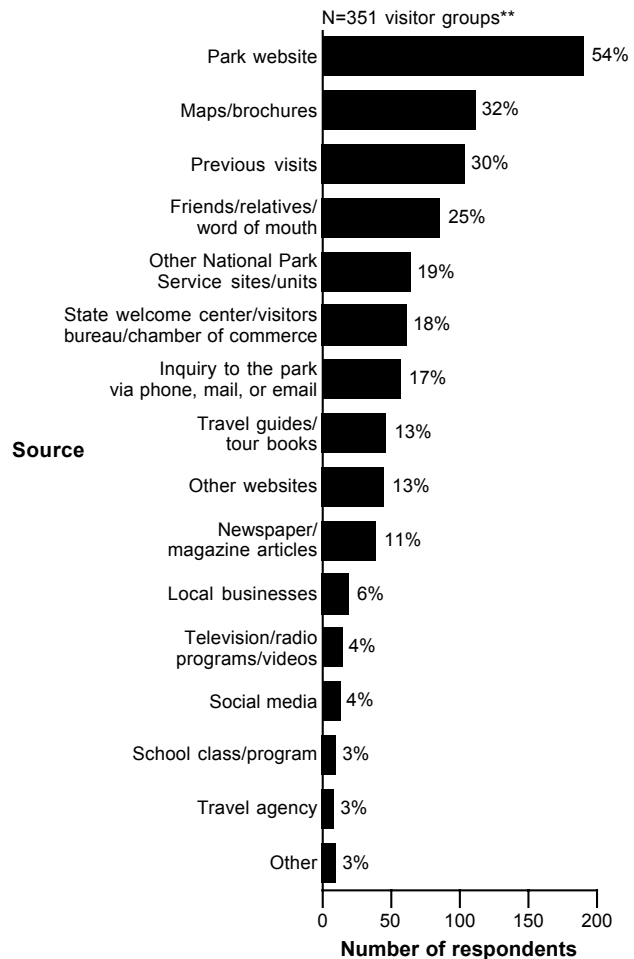


Figure 22. Sources of information to use for a future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Park as destination

Question 5

How did this visit to Curecanti NRA fit into your personal group's travel plans?

Results

- For 51% of visitor groups, Curecanti NRA was one of several destinations (see Figure 23).
- 32% indicated that Curecanti NRA was not a planned destination.

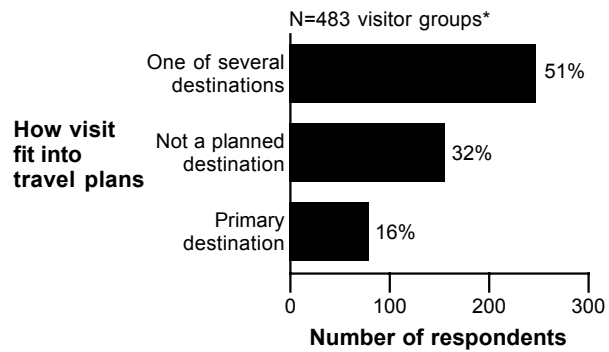


Figure 23. How visit to park fit into visitor groups' travel plans

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Number of vehicles

Question 4a

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

Results

- 72% of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park (see Figure 24).
- 19% used two vehicles.

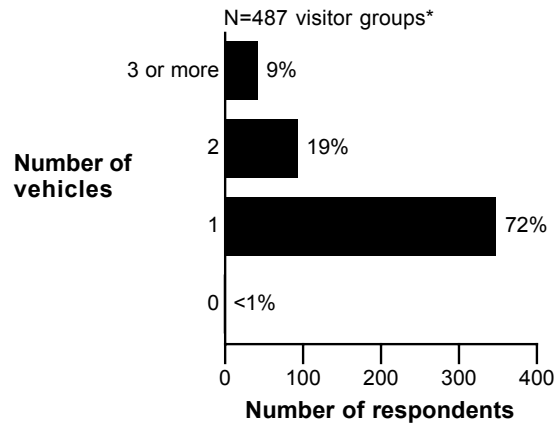


Figure 24. Number of vehicles used to arrive at the park

Number of park entries

Question 4b

On this visit, how many times did you and your personal group enter Curecanti NRA?

Results

- 55% of visitor groups entered Curecanti NRA one time (see Figure 25).
- 22% entered twice.

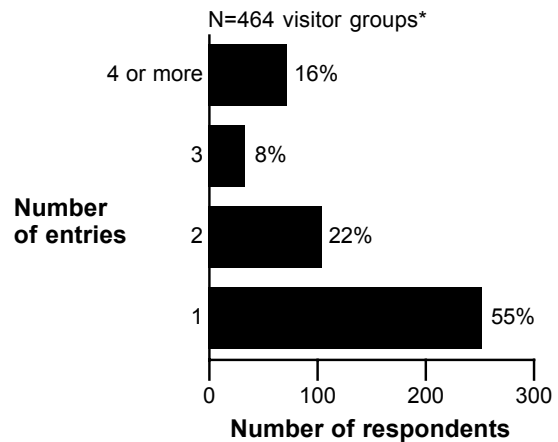


Figure 25. Number of park entries

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Use of park campgrounds

Question 7a

On this trip, did you and your personal group camp in any Curecanti NRA campgrounds?

Results

- 30% of visitor groups camped in a Curecanti NRA campground (see Figure 26).

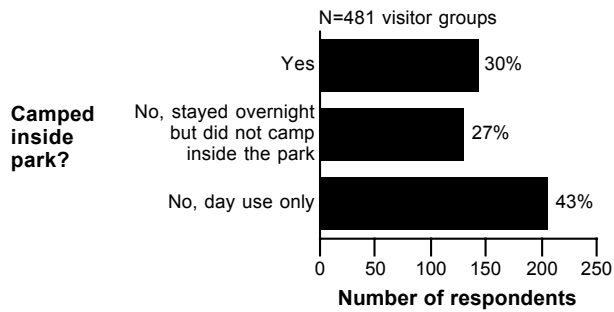


Figure 26. Visitor groups that camped inside Curecanti NRA

Question 7b

If you and your personal group did not camp in any Curecanti NRA campgrounds, why not?

Results

- As shown in Figure 27, the most common reasons visitor groups did not camp inside the park were:
 - 8% Campgrounds lacked facilities
 - 8% Location not convenient
- “Other” reasons (60%) are listed in Table 12.

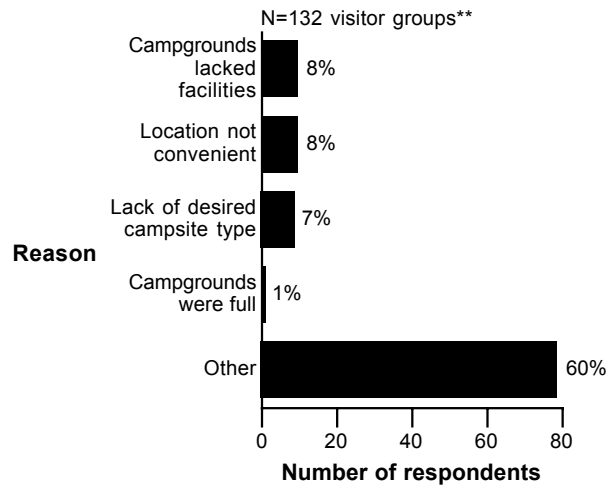


Figure 27. Reasons visitor groups did not camp inside Curecanti NRA

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 12. "Other" reasons visitor groups did not camp inside the park (N=121 comments)

Reason	Number of times mentioned
Own cabin nearby	13
Preferred hotel	12
Did not intend to camp	11
Live nearby	11
Member of Blue Mesa Recreation Ranch	6
Camped at a private campground	5
Camped at Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP	5
Day trip	5
Passing through	5
Member of private campground	4
Other accommodations	4
Own property nearby	4
Stayed with family	4
Stayed with friends	4
Gunnison resident	3
Rented cabin	3
Stayed in personal residence	3
Fishing	2
Private cabin	2
Stayed at RV park	2
Stayed in Crested Butte	2
Stayed in Gunnison	2
Other comments	8

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 7c

If the campgrounds lacked desired campsite types or facilities, what is it that you and your personal group needed that was not available?
(Open-ended)

Results

- 27 visitor groups provided desired campsite types or facilities that were not available (see Table 13).

Table 13. Desired campsite types or facilities that were unavailable (N=36 comments; some visitors made more than one comment.)

Campsite type or facility	Number of times mentioned
Full hook-ups	7
More sites with electricity	5
Sewage dump station	3
Shade	3
Cabins	2
50 amp electricity	1
All camping facilities are in need of repair	1
Change machine for showers	1
Flush toilets	1
Grassy areas	1
More handicap fishing access	1
More privacy	1
More sites with water	1
Playground	1
Services (ice, food, etc.)	1
Showers	1
Sink for dishes	1
Tent pads	1
Too close to road	1
Trees	1
Trees (Blue Mesa area)	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Length of stay in park

Question 6a

On this visit, how long did you and your personal group spend visiting Curecanti NRA?

Results

Number of hours if less than 24 hours

- 24% of visitor groups spent up to one hour visiting the park (see Figure 28).
- 17% spent 7 or more hours.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours in the park was 4.1 hours.

Number of days if 24 hours or more

- 30% of visitor groups spent 3 days visiting the park (see Figure 29).
- 28% spent 5 or more days.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more was 5.1 days.

Average length of stay

- The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 53.3 hours, or 2.2 days.

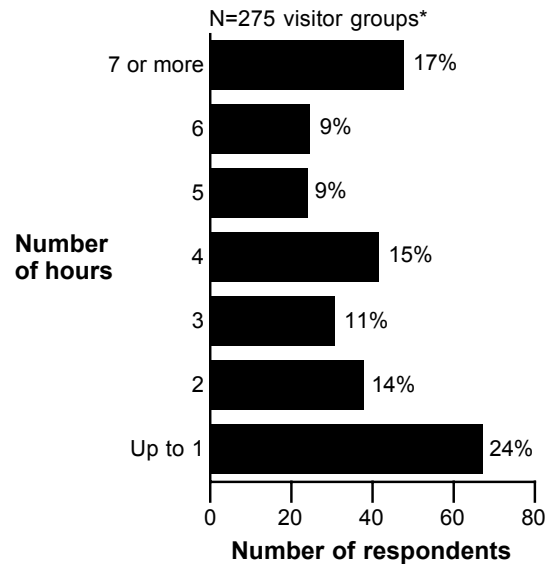


Figure 28. Hours spent at the park

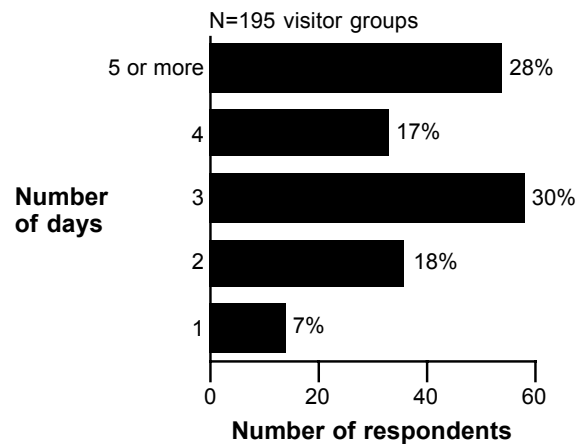


Figure 29. Days spent at the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Length of stay in park area

Question 6b

How long did you and your personal group stay in the Curecanti NRA area (within a 50-mile radius of Gunnison)?

Results

- 18% of visitors groups were residents of the area within a 50-mile radius of Gunnison (see Figure 30).

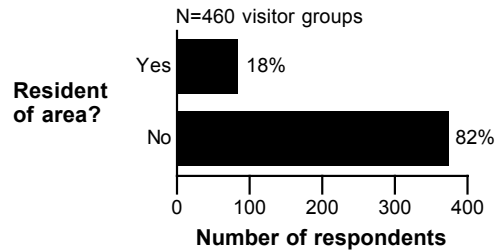


Figure 30. Visitor groups that were residents of the area (within a 50-mile radius of Gunnison)

Number of hours if less than 24 hours

- 32% of visitor groups spent 6 or more hours visiting the area (see Figure 31).
- 23% spent up to 1 hour.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours was 4.7 hours.

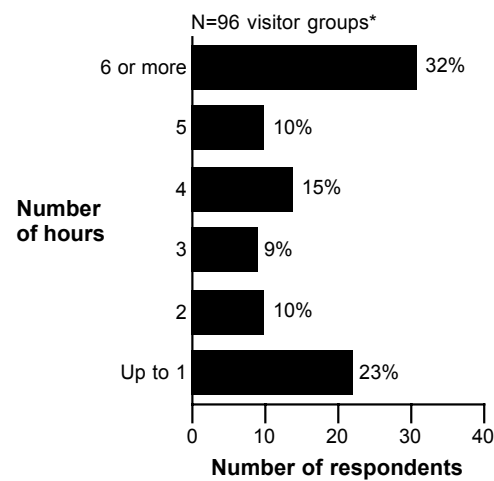


Figure 31. Hours spent in the area

Number of days if 24 hours or more

- 28% of visitor groups spent 6 or more days visiting the park (see Figure 32).
- 44% spent 3 or 4 days.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more was 6.4 days.

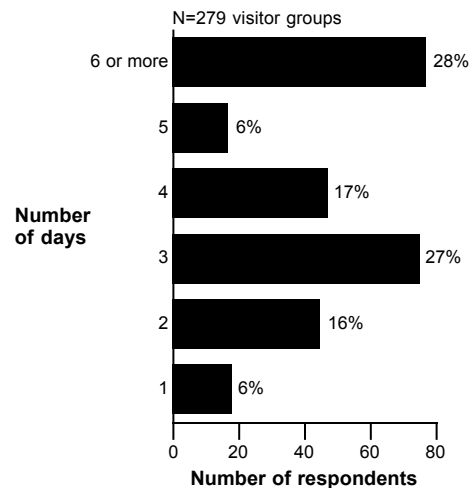


Figure 32. Days spent in the area

Average length of stay

- The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 114.8 hours, or 4.8 days.

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Local and regional attractions visited

Question 8

Which other local and regional attractions did you and your personal group visit on this trip to Curecanti NRA?

Results

- 60% of visitor groups visited other local and regional attractions (see Figure 33).
- As shown in Figure 34, of visitor groups that visited other local and regional attractions, the most common sites were:
 - 66% Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP
 - 31% Crested Butte
- Table 14 shows “other” local and regional attractions (23%).

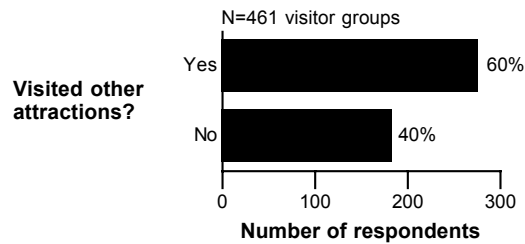


Figure 33. Visitor groups that visited other local and regional attractions

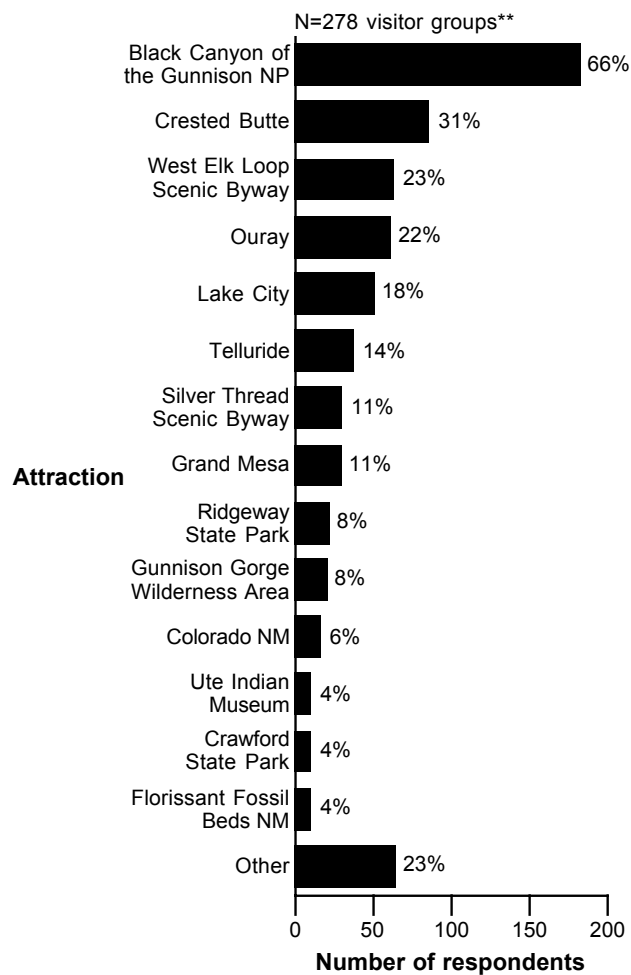


Figure 34. Other local and regional attractions

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 14. Other local and regional attractions visited
(N=79 comments)

Attraction	Number of times mentioned
Taylor Park Reservoir	5
Blue Mesa	4
Gunnison 4th of July fireworks	4
Gunnison	4
Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve	3
Mesa Verde	3
Silver Jack Reservoir	3
Buena Vista	2
Grand Junction	2
Leadville	2
Morrow Point Dam	2
Pioneer Museum in Gunnison	2
Alpine Loop	1
Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge	1
Big Blue Wilderness Area	1
Black Canyon of Gunnison boat trip	1
Cabin in Little Cimarron	1
Cimarron Dam	1
Cimarron Pinnacle	1
Courthouse Mountain Summit	1
Dams	1
Dillon Pinnacle	1
Dinosaur National Monument	1
East Elk Creek Group Campground	1
Elk Creek	1
Gunnison National Forest	1
Gunnison River	1
Lake Fork	1
Las Molas Lake	1
Little Cimarron access	1
Little Cimarron drainage	1
Mesa Verde National Park	1
Molas Pass	1
Monarch Pass	1
Montrose	1
Mt. Princeton	1
Newberry store	1
Orchards on Grand Junction	1
Orvis Hot Springs	1
Owl Creek Pass	1
Paonia Cherry Festival	1
Ponderosa	1
Rainbow Lake	1
Reservoirs	1
Ridgeway Railroad Museum	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 14. Other local and regional attractions visited (continued)

Attraction	Number of times mentioned
Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory	1
Rocky Mountain National Park	1
Salida	1
San Juan Skyway	1
Silverton Ridgeway	1
Stopped at numerous pull-offs	1
Taylor River rafting	1
Vega State Park	1
Wineries	1
Yankee Bay Basin	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Sites visited in the park

Question 11

On this visit to Curecanti NRA, which of the following sites did you and your personal group visit?

Results

- As shown in Figure 35, the most commonly visited sites by visitor groups at Curecanti NRA were:

43% Elk Creek
30% Lake Fork
25% Cimarron

- The least visited sites were:

2% Cooper Ranch
2% Riverway
2% Dry Gulch

- “Other” sites (6%) were:

Blue Mesa
Blue Mesa Dam
Blue Mesa Reservation
Blue Mesa Reservoir boat dock
Crystal Reservoir
Curecanti Creek Trail
Dams
Elk Creek Marina
Marina
Morrow Pass
Morrow Point
Morrow Point Dam
Morrow Point Reservoir
Overlooks on Hwy 92
Red Bridge
River leading to Crystal Reservoir
Sapinero Basin
Soap Creek
Toured the entire lake on boat
Wind surfing area

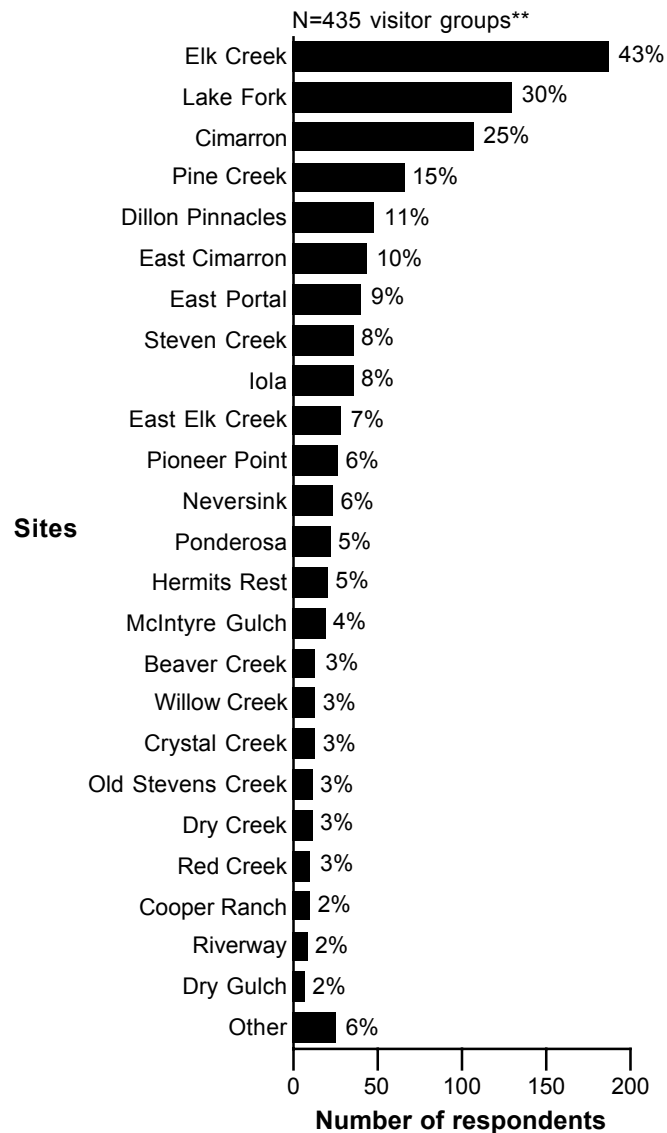


Figure 35. Sites visited within the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Activities on this visit

Question 10a

On this visit, in which activities did you and your personal group participate within Curecanti NRA?

Results

- As shown in Figure 36, the most common activities in which visitor groups participated were:

- 47% General sightseeing
- 46% Fishing
- 38% Motor boating

- “Other” activities (7%) were:

- ATVing
- Biking
- Canoe camping
- Dump station
- Eat
- Exploring
- Jeep tour
- Junior Ranger program
- Learning about Curecanti NRA
- Motorcycling
- Mountain biking
- National Park Passport stamp
- Obtain boat permit
- Pine Creek Boat Ride
- Railroad exhibits
- Railroad history
- Sailing
- Shore camping on our boat
- Water sports (skiing, tubing)

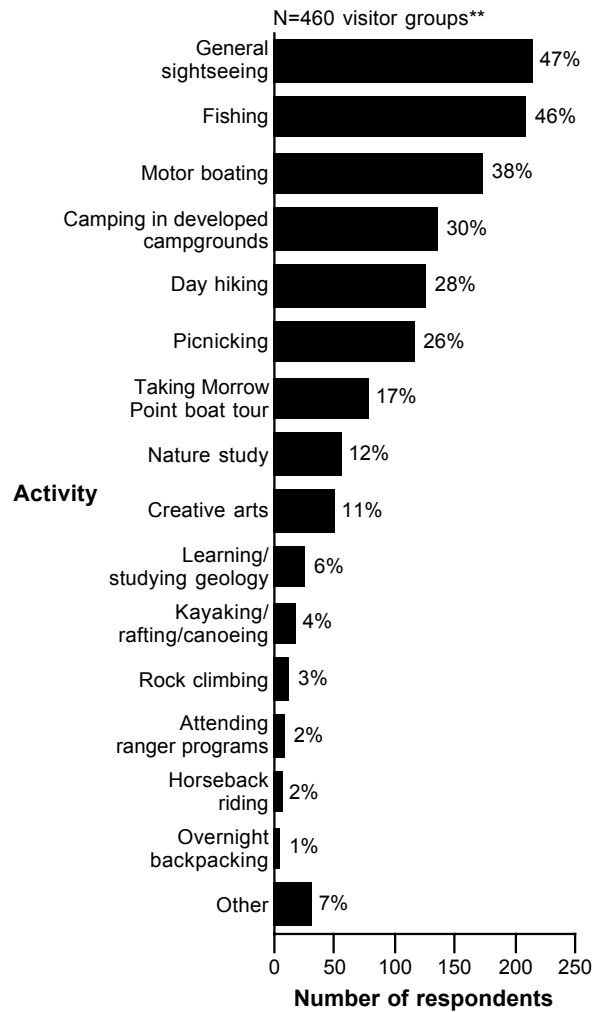


Figure 36. Activities on this visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Most important activity

Question 10c

Which one of the above activities in column (a) was most important to you and your personal group on this visit to Curecanti NRA?

Results

- As shown in Figure 37, the most important activity listed by visitor groups was:

33% Fishing

- “Other” most important activities (3%) were:

- Viewing railroad exhibits
- Junior Ranger program
- Learning about railroad history
- Learning about Curecanti NRA
- Sailing
- Motorcycle riding
- Obtaining boat permit
- Participating in water sports

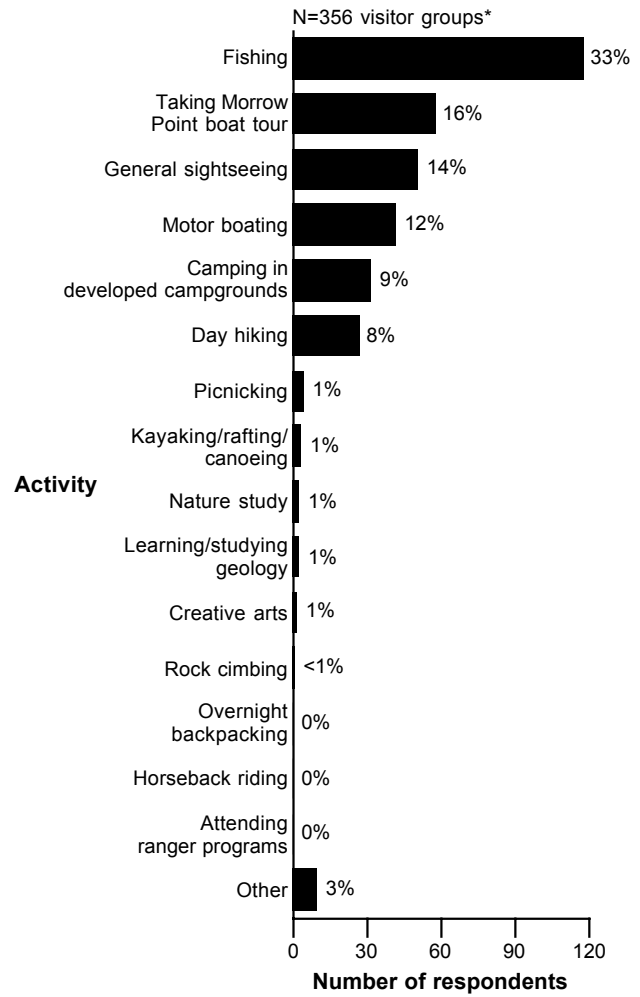


Figure 37. Most important activities at Curecanti NRA

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Resources/facilities that would enhance participation

Question 10d

What resources and/or facilities would enhance your personal group's participation in this "most important" activity? (Open-ended)

Results

- 176 visitor groups suggested resources/facilities that would enhance their participation in their "most important" activity (see Table 15).

Table 15. Resources and/or facilities that would enhance participation in activities (N=211 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Activity	Comment	Number of times mentioned
Camping in developed campgrounds	Full hook-ups	11
	Less expensive shower facilities	4
	Clean/improve showers	4
	Showers	3
	Water at sites	2
	Change machine for coin-operated showers	1
	Camping spot for tents with concrete pads	1
	Camping spot for tents without gravel	1
	Camping spot for tents without wind	1
	Improved shower facility	1
	Individual water faucets	1
	Larger camp spaces for bigger vehicles	1
	More campsites in Ponderosa	1
	More campsites only for tents right next to the water	1
	More hiking trails near campground	1
	More signage	1
	Picnic shelters	1
Ranger-led programs	1	
Trees in Elk Creek Campground	1	
Creative arts (photography, painting, writing)	Signs indicating photo opportunities	1
Day hiking	More hiking trails	3
	Better postings on distance to Morrow Point boat tour	1
	Cleaner restrooms	1
	Information from park rangers	1
	Information on Internet	1
	More access to potable water (more locations with water spigots/fountains)	1
	More information at trailhead	1
	More maps	1
	Signage with trail distance	1
	Well-maintained trails	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 15. Resources/facilities that would enhance participation in activities (continued)

Activity	Comment	Number of times mentioned
Fishing	More Kokanee salmon	8
	More stocked fish	12
	Fewer lake trout	4
	Improve access to the lake	3
	Allow fishing from dock	1
	Better information online or in office concerning access to Crystal during varying water levels and flows	1
	Better shore landing not under private control	1
	Better ventilation in restrooms at Elk Creek	1
	Boat docks	1
	Boat ramps	1
	Change mussel inspection stations to top of hill at Lake Fork, then only have to check in and out once as you enter and leave	1
	Cleaner restrooms	1
	Easier access to the river at Cimarron	1
	Electricity at Lake Fork for medical needs	1
	Elk Creek Marina needs lots of improvements	1
	Fish cleaning station	1
	Floating potty barge	1
	Improve or replace marina dock at Lake Fork	1
	Kids' fishing boat trips (\$10-15/kid for a few hours)	
	Lake trout (stop killing them)	1
	Lessons on catching fish	1
	Lighted restrooms	1
	More boat docks	1
	More parking for boat trailers	1
	Post what bait is catching fish for the day	1
	Replace old dock at Elk Creek	1
	Shuttle service to dock from highway parking	1
	Sites to fish from and specifically for kids	1
	Updated daily fishing reports posted	1
	Variety of watercraft to rent (jet skis, canoes)	1
	Water campsites	1
General sightseeing	Maps	2
	Brochure explaining what to see and do in area	2
	Wayside exhibits	2
	Additional advertising of this area	1
	Better road signs	1
	Larger signage	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 15. Resources/facilities that would enhance participation in activities (continued)

Activity	Comment	Number of times mentioned
General sightseeing (continued)	More hiking trails	1
	More information about fishing regulations	1
	More picnic tables	1
	More signage	1
	Prefer fewer people around	1
	Prefer no signs	1
	Shade	1
	Tour of the dam facility	1
	Volunteer docents knowledgeable about local history	1
	Well-maintained roads	1
	Well-maintained trails	1
Learning/studying geology	Interpretive signs	1
	More exhibits	1
	More signage	1
	Prefer fewer people around	1
	Prefer no signs	1
Motor boating	Less expensive fuel	3
	Cleaner restrooms	2
	Cheaper rope	1
	Constant inspections from staff and with the state of Colorado	1
	Data on website more with pictures	1
	Keep weeds cut	1
	Longer hours at marina	1
	More boat-in campgrounds	1
	More parking for boat trailers	1
	More picnic tables	1
	Need a picnic area at Elk Creek Marina	1
Nature study (wildlife, birds, wildflowers, etc.)	More hiking trails	1
	Nature trails with identification signs	1
	Ranger-led programs	1
Picnicking	Trash cans by the picnic tables	1
Taking Morrow Point boat tour	Food and drink	2
	Alternative access for handicapped (e.g., chairlift)	2
	Access to maps prior to arrival	1
	Access to trip information prior to arrival	1
	Easier access to boat dock	1
	Moment of silence (turn off boat motors) at turnaround point	1
	More information at top of hike down to the boat	1
	More signage	1
	Tour dam facility	1
	Variety of watercraft to rent (jet skis, canoes)	1
	Water fountain	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 15. Resources/facilities that would enhance participation in activities (continued)

Activity	Comment	Number of times mentioned
Boat Permit	Ability to obtain boat permit online	1
Sailing	Lights on docks for evening return (dock is very poorly lit at the moment when returning to the marina)	1
Railroad Exhibits	Locomotive 278 restored and on public display again	1
Junior Ranger program	More ranger participation	1
Marina	The attitude of people working at the marina is great when I take my fishing boat. When I take my ski/wake board boat, they are rude.	1
Learning about the park	Would like to know more about Native American inhabitation before white men arrived	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Activities on future visits

Question 10b

If you were to visit Curecanti NRA in the future, in which activities would you and your personal group prefer to participate?

Results

- As shown in Figure 38, the most common activities in which visitor groups would prefer to participate on future visits were:

- 59% Fishing
- 46% General sightseeing

- “Other” activities (5%) were:

- ATVing
- Biking
- Exploring
- Hunting
- Junior Ranger program
- Motorcycle
- Mountain biking
- Railroad exhibits
- Railroad history
- Sailing
- Shore camping on our boat
- Star gazing
- Water sports (water skiing, tubing)

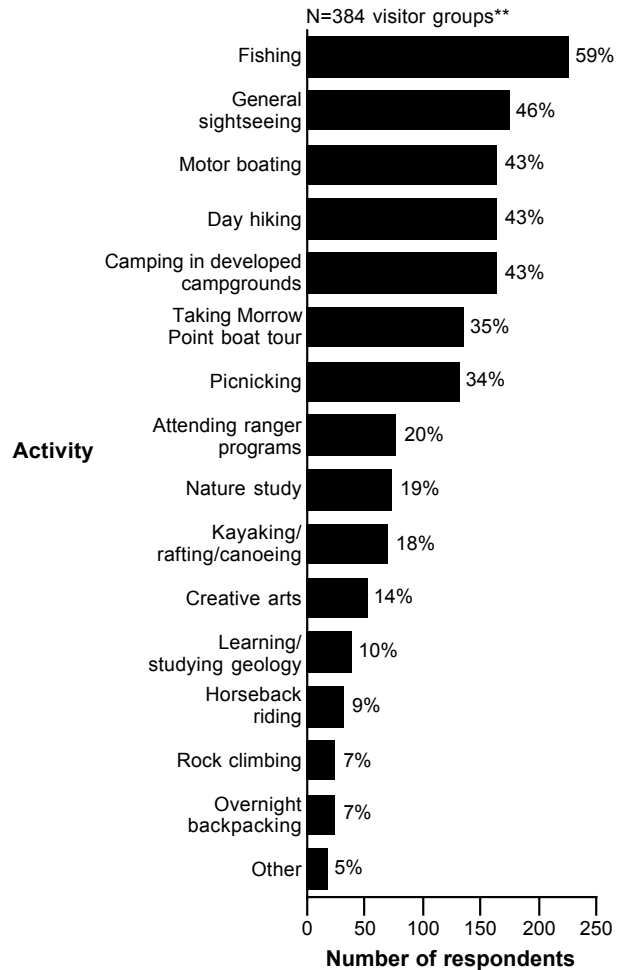


Figure 38. Activities on future visits

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitor centers visited

Question 9a

On this trip, please indicate which visitor centers you and your personal group visited at Curecanti NRA.

Results

- 45% of visitor groups visited a park visitor center (see Figure 39).
- 68% of visitor groups who visited a park visitor center visited the Elk Creek Visitor Center (see Figure 40).

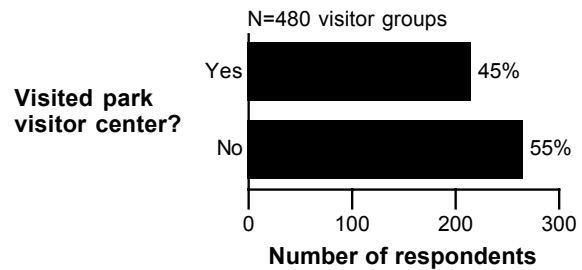


Figure 39. Visitor groups that visited a park visitor center

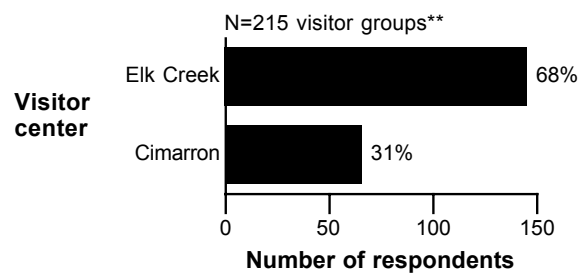


Figure 40. Visitor centers visited

Question 9b

If you visited at least one park visitor center, what were your reasons for visiting?

Results

- Of those visitor groups that visited a visitor center, 55% visited to obtain information (see Figure 41).
- 53% visited to use restrooms.
- Table 16 shows “other” reasons (16%) for visiting the visitor centers.

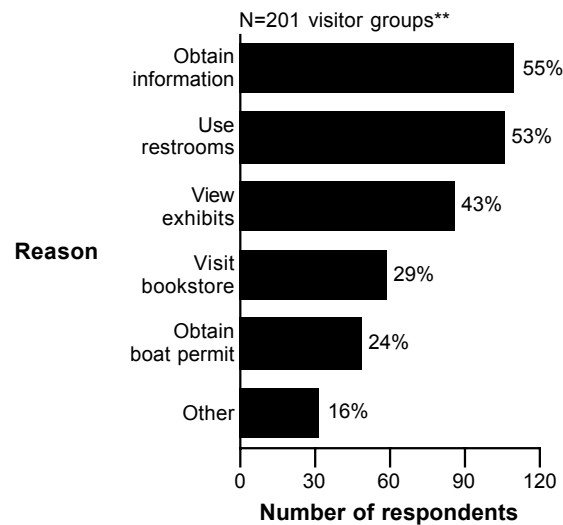


Figure 41. Reasons for visiting a park visitor

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 16. Other reasons for visiting visitor centers

Reason	Number of times mentioned
National park passport stamp	8
Junior Ranger program	7
Dump trash	2
Obtain senior pass	2
Air conditioning	1
Boat inspection	1
Boat rental	1
Check in	1
Drinking water	1
Find out about boat tour	1
Fishing	1
Fishing license	1
Lunch	1
Morrow Point boat trip reservation	1
Prep fish	1
Raining and we were on motorcycles	1
Took children for educational purposes	1
Video presentation	1
Voice complaint about employee	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 9c

If you did not visit either park visitor center, why not?

Results

- Of those visitor groups that did not visit either visitor center, 64% did not need visitor center services (see Figure 42).
- 35% did not visit because they had visited in the past.
- Table 17 shows “other” reasons (6%) for not visiting the visitor centers.

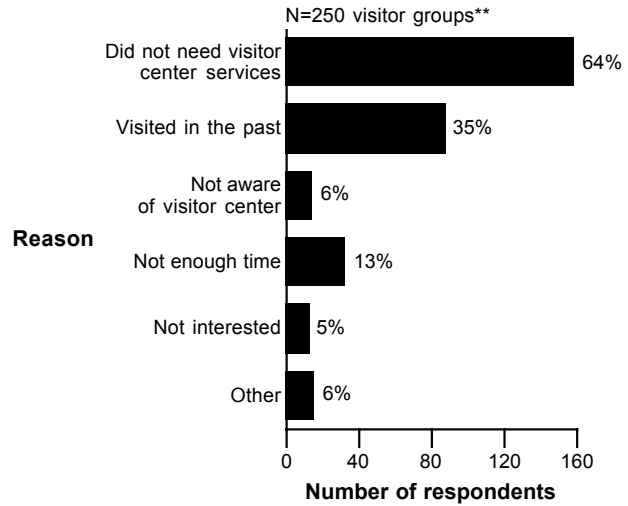


Figure 42. Reasons for not visiting a visitor center

Table 17. “Other” reasons for not visiting visitor centers (N=16 comments)

Reason	Number of times mentioned
Closed	8
Did not know where they were	2
Didn't stop at Cimarron	1
Didn't stop at Elk Creek	1
Got catalog brochures via mail from visitor center services	1
Live locally and looked online	1
Went fishing	1
Went to Lake Fork	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Rules/regulations

Question 2a

Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware of the following rules/regulations at Curecanti NRA?

Results

- Table 18 shows visitor groups that were aware of specific rules/regulations at Curecanti NRA prior to their visit.

Question 2b

Did you and your personal group learn or learn more about these rules/regulations (via publications, signs, talking to park staff, etc.) during this visit to Curecanti NRA?

Results

- Table 18 also shows the visitor groups that learned or learned more about these rules/regulations during their visit.

Table 18. Visitor groups that were aware of or learned more about rules/regulations (N=number of visitor groups that responded to each item)

a) Aware prior to visit?			b) Learned or learned more about during visit?			
N	Yes (%)	No (%)	Rules/regulations	N	Yes (%)	No (%)
441	70	30	Boat permits are required for all motorized craft	287	32	68
448	67	33	Campsites can be reserved through a national reservation system	278	26	74
442	72	28	Mussel inspection is required for motorized and trailered watercraft	299	42	57
408	50	50	ORV use is allowed in designated areas or on designated routes	287	17	83
435	68	32	Personal flotation devices are required for children under the age of 13	287	32	68
445	73	27	Pets are allowed but must be leashed at all times	276	31	69
448	86	14	State hunting and fishing regulations apply	266	26	74

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 2c

How did you and your personal group learn about the above rules/regulations on this visit?

Results

- 77% of visitor groups learned about rules/regulations on this visit (see Figure 43).
- As shown in Figure 44, the most common methods visitor groups used to learn about rules/regulations were:

- 64% Signs
- 59% Ranger/park staff

- “Other” methods (16%) were:

- Common sense
- Fishing guide
- Fishing regulation book
- Internet
- Live in area
- Local newspaper
- NPS map for Curecanti
- Park website
- Posting on toilets
- Previous knowledge
- Prior visits
- Saw people with their pets
- State regulations
- This questionnaire
- Took a pontoon boat ride
- Visiting other park areas
- Walk-in
- Word of mouth
- Worked for the Corps of Engineers

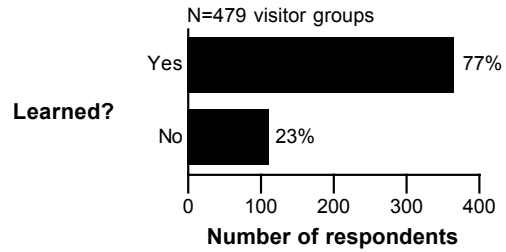


Figure 43. Visitor groups that learned about rules/regulations on this visit

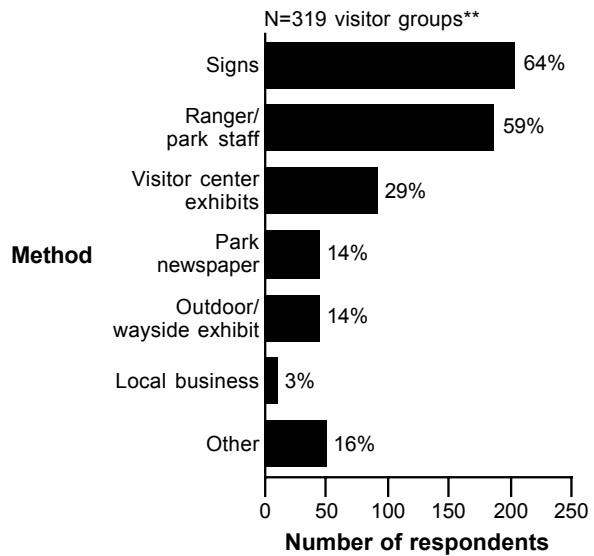


Figure 44. Methods that visitor groups used to learn about rules/regulations

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Opinions about safety

Question 14a

Please indicate how safe you and your personal group felt in the following locations during this visit to Curecanti NRA.

Results

- Table 19 shows how visitor groups rated the safety of various park locations.

Table 19. Visitor groups' ratings of safety at park locations

(N=number of visitor groups that rated the safety of each location; n=number of visitor groups that did not use/visit each location)

Location	N	Safety rating (%)					Did not use/visit	
		Very unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neither safe nor unsafe	Somewhat safe	Very safe	n	% of total
Overlooks	273	11	3	4	12	70	148	35
Campsites	220	10	<1	4	10	75	206	48
Parking areas	439	10	1	4	8	77	17	4
Roads	433	9	4	6	14	67	19	4
Trails	269	9	2	4	16	70	149	36

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Question 14b

If you marked that you felt “very unsafe” or “somewhat unsafe” for any of the above locations, please explain where and why.

Results – Interpret with CAUTION!

- 27 visitor groups responded to this question.
- Not enough visitor groups responded to provide reliable results (see Table 20).

Table 20. Reasons for feeling unsafe(N=29 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.) **CAUTION!**

Location	Reason	Number of times mentioned
At overlooks	Part of Pioneer Point doesn't have fence	1
In campsites	Not type of people I'm used to being around	1
	Too many campfires and dry weeds	1
	Small children – big drop off	1
	Camp host dog running around loose and wouldn't leave us alone at Lake Fork Campground	1
In parking areas	Have to climb hill to go to Lake Fork Marina store – could have a heart attack	1
	There was an ambulance in Morrow Point boat tour parking lot	1
	A bit congested, helped by ranger at boat launch thankfully. Little parking for 35 boat docks.	1
On roads	Highway sign in driveway entrance of milepost 134	1
	Traffic on highway 50	1
	Posted speed limit too fast on highway from East Portal to the river	1
	Worried about mountain lions when walking to primitive camp area on Red Creek Road	1
	Road to Ponderosa Campground from Ferros Trading Post was extremely rough and washboarded	1
	Dislike "one-lane" highways; cars are going way too fast around corners	1
	Rock falls and curves in the road worrisome at night	1
	Potholes/narrow	1
	Bad visibility on curves	1
	Crazy 4 th of July drivers	1
	Not enough guardrails	1
	Road at Ponderosa needs to be graded for RV/campers	1
Some small gaps on bridge	1	

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 20. Reasons for feeling unsafe (continued)

Location	Reason	Number of times mentioned
On trails	Not sure if we were in danger of poison ivy/oak in less cleared areas of Mesa Creek trail	1
	Pine Creek Trails needs railing all the way down – slippery in the morning	1
	Trail by river is steep and narrow (more difficult for small children)	1
	On the Pine Creek Trail, the path to the toilets is a little unsafe	1
Lake Fork	No lighting	1
	Don't see rangers on patrol or presence like in the past	1
	Too many "wanderers" and pedestrians walking on boat launch ramp – dangerous for boat launch/load	1
All locations	Spouse uneasy with altitude	1

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Ratings of Services, Facilities, Attributes and Resources

Visitor services and facilities used

Question 15a

Please indicate all the visitor services and facilities that you or your personal group used during this visit to Curecanti NRA.

Results

- As shown in Figure 45, the most common visitor services and facilities used by visitor groups were:

47% Visitor center restrooms
47% Boat docks

- The least used service/facility was:

4% Junior Ranger program

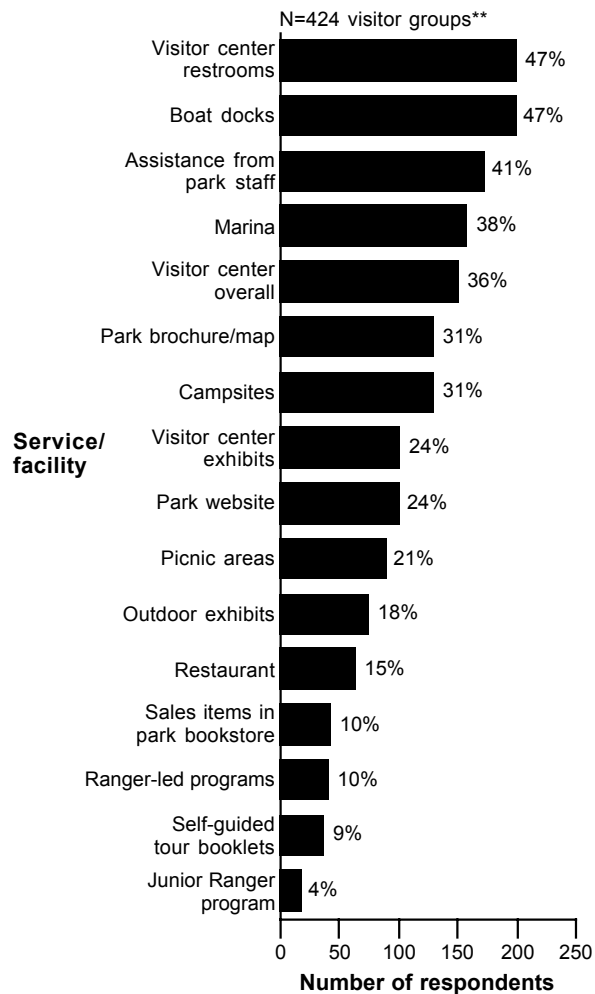


Figure 45. Visitor services and facilities used

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Importance ratings of visitor services and facilities

Question 15b

Next, for only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.

- 1=Not important
- 2=Somewhat important
- 3=Moderately important
- 4=Very important
- 5=Extremely important

Results

- Figure 46 shows the combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- The services and facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were:

- 92% Campsites
- 87% Visitor center restrooms
- 87% Boat docks

- Table 21 shows the importance ratings of each service and facility.
- The service/facility receiving the highest “not important” rating that was rated by 30 or more visitor groups was:

- 7% Sales items in park bookstore

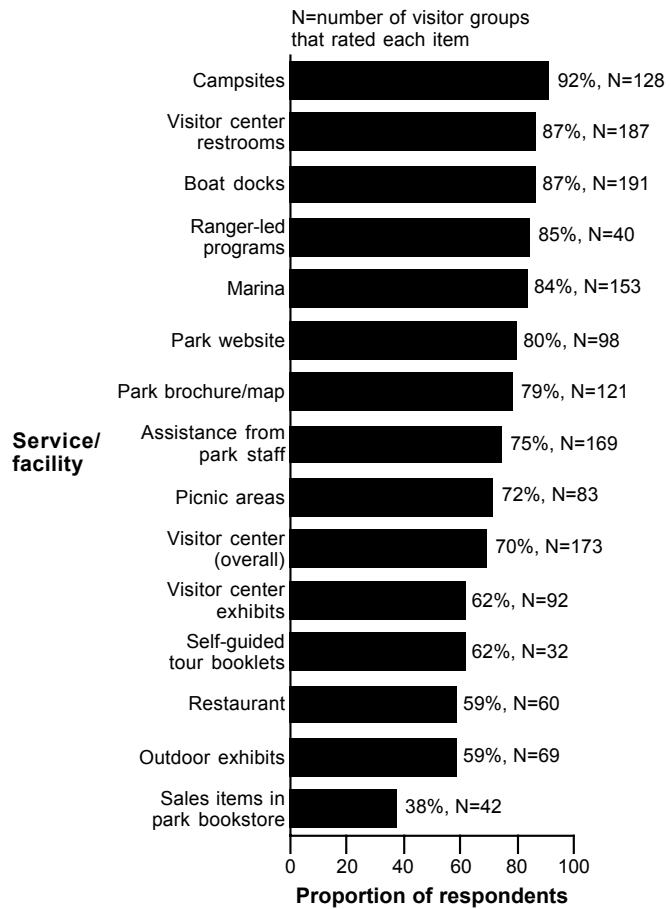


Figure 46. Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of visitor services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 21. Importance ratings of each service and facility
(N=number of visitor groups that rated each service and facility)

Service/facility	N	Rating (%)				
		Not important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
Assistance from park staff	169	2	5	19	34	41
Boat docks	191	2	3	8	23	64
Campsites	128	1	3	4	22	70
Park website	98	1	4	15	26	54
Junior Ranger program – CAUTION!	14	0	0	14	36	50
Marina	153	2	3	12	30	54
Outdoor exhibits	69	1	4	35	42	17
Park brochure/map	121	2	6	14	36	43
Picnic areas	83	0	6	23	45	27
Ranger-led programs	40	5	0	10	35	50
Restaurant	60	5	7	30	32	27
Sales items in park bookstore	42	7	12	43	24	14
Self-guided tour booklets	32	3	9	25	34	28
Visitor center exhibits	92	4	12	22	39	23
Visitor center restrooms	87	2	2	9	30	57
Visitor center (overall)	173	2	7	21	38	32

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Quality ratings of visitor services and facilities

Question 15c

Finally, for only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their quality from 1-5.

- 1=Very poor
- 2=Poor
- 3=Average
- 4=Good
- 5=Very good

Results

- Figure 47 shows the combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings of visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- The services and facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were:

- 91% Assistance from park staff
- 89% Ranger-led programs
- 86% Visitor center (overall)

- Table 22 shows the quality ratings of each service and facility.
- The services/facilities receiving the highest “very poor” quality ratings that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups were:

- 3% Boat docks
- 3% Ranger-led programs
- 3% Self-guided tour booklets
- 3% Sales items in park bookstore

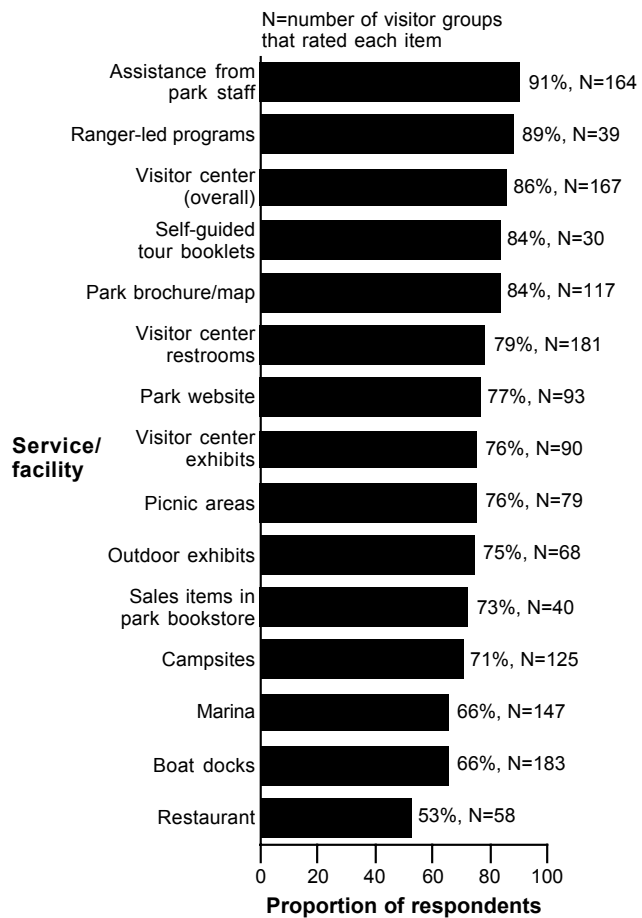


Figure 47. Combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings of visitor services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 22. Quality ratings of each service and facility
(N=number of visitor groups that rated each service and facility)

Service/facility	N	Rating (%)				
		Very poor	Poor	Average	Good	Very good
Assistance from park staff	164	0	2	7	27	64
Boat docks	183	3	6	26	34	32
Campsites	125	2	6	22	49	22
Park website	93	0	5	17	43	34
Junior Ranger program – CAUTION!	13	0	16	8	54	23
Marina	147	1	3	31	44	22
Outdoor exhibits	68	0	4	21	47	28
Park brochure/map	117	0	1	15	33	51
Picnic areas	79	1	3	20	47	29
Ranger-led programs	39	3	0	8	10	79
Restaurant	58	2	9	36	6	17
Sales items in park bookstore	40	3	8	18	40	33
Self-guided tour booklets	30	3	0	13	47	37
Visitor center exhibits	90	1	6	18	38	38
Visitor center restrooms	181	1	4	15	40	39
Visitor center (overall)	167	1	1	12	41	45

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Mean scores of importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities

- Figures 48 and 49 show the mean scores of importance and quality ratings of all visitor services/facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- All visitor services/facilities were rated above average.

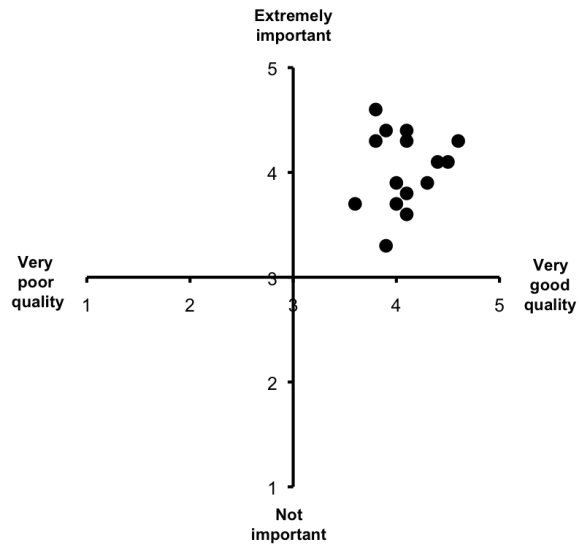


Figure 48. Mean scores of importance and quality ratings of visitor services and facilities

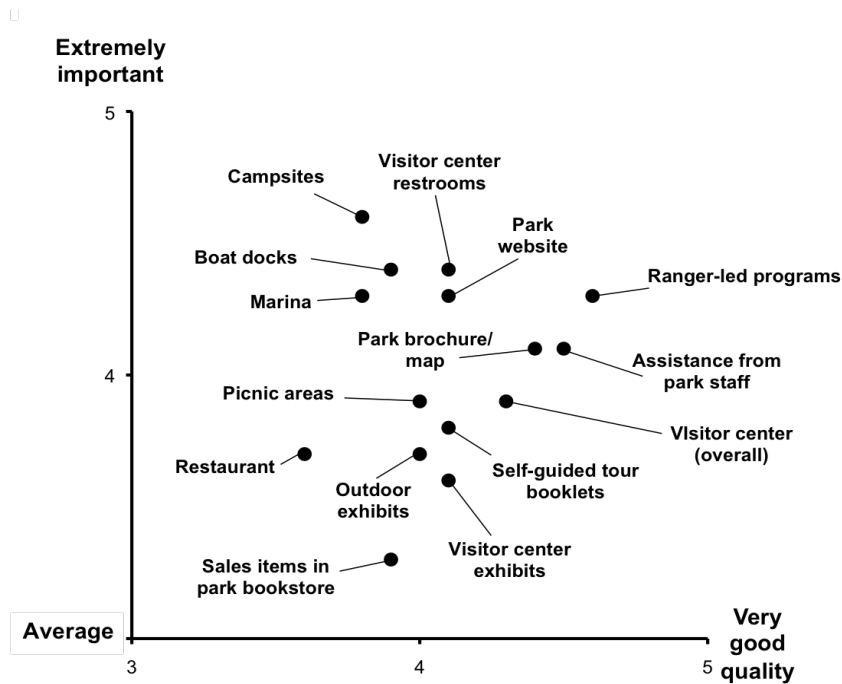


Figure 49. Detail of Figure 48

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Importance of protecting park attributes/resources/experiences

Question 16

It is the National Park Service's responsibility to protect Curecanti NRA's natural, scenic, and cultural resources and the visitor experiences that depend on these. How important is the protection of the following to you and your personal group?

Results

- Figure 50 shows the combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of park attributes/ resources/experiences that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- The attributes/resources/ experiences receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were:
 - 97% Clean water
 - 95% Clean air (visibility)
 - 89% Scenic views
 - 88% Recreational opportunities
- The attribute/resource/experience that received the highest “not important” rating was:
 - 9% Cultural resources
- Table 23 shows the importance ratings of park attributes/resources/ experiences.

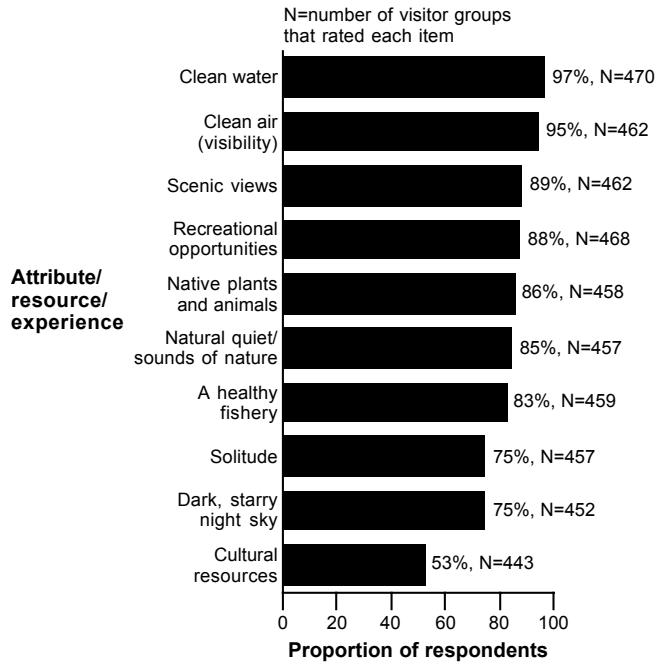


Figure 50. Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protection of park attributes/resources/experiences

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Table 23. Visitor ratings of importance of protecting park attributes/resources/experiences (N=number of visitors that rated each attribute/resource/experience)

Attribute/resource/ experience	N	Rating (%)				
		Not important	Somewhat important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
A healthy fishery	459	4	5	8	28	55
Clean air (visibility)	462	1	1	3	31	64
Clean water	470	<1	1	1	26	71
Cultural resources (train, archeological sites, etc.)	443	9	9	29	30	23
Dark, starry night sky	452	4	5	16	31	44
Native plants and animals	458	2	2	10	37	49
Natural quiet/sounds of nature	457	1	2	12	3	48
Recreational opportunities (boating, hiking, camping, fishing, etc.)	468	1	2	8	38	50
Scenic views	462	<1	2	9	35	54
Solitude	457	3	4	18	37	38

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Preferences for Future Visits

Activities for future visit

Question 13a

If you were to visit Curecanti NRA in the future, would you and your personal group be interested in the following additional activities?

Question 13b

For the activity in which you and your personal group would be interested, where would you prefer that it take place? Please indicate a preference for inside or outside the park.

Results

- Table 24 shows visitor groups' interest in and preferred locations for activities on a future visit.

Table 24. Visitor groups' interest in park activities and preferred locations of activities on a future visit (N=number of visitor groups that responded to each item)

Interested in activity?			Activity	Location of activity			
				Number of visitor groups interested in activities	Inside the park	In the area outside the park	Both inside and outside the park
N	Yes (%)	No (%)		N	(%)	(%)	(%)
402	67	33	Day hiking on one day	251	51	6	42
331	38	62	Day hiking on multiple days (not including overnight backpacking)	130	30	16	54
289	17	83	Overnight backpacking	61	33	30	38
328	43	57	Kayaking/canoeing	138	65	8	27
322	32	68	Mountain biking	104	36	18	46
346	47	53	Ranger-led programs	165	75	4	21

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Preferred topics for a future visit

Question 19a

If you were to visit Curecanti NRA in the future, which topics would you and your personal group prefer to learn about?

Results

- 73% of visitor groups were interested in interpretive programs on a future visit (see Figure 51).
- As shown in Figure 52, the most common topics that visitor groups were interested in learning about were:

- 55% Plants and animals
- 55% Geology
- 53% Fishing

- “Other” topics (6%) were:

- East Portal tour of Gunnison Tunnel
- History
- History of the area
- History of the people
- Hydrology of reservoirs and river
- Mountain biking
- National Park Service
- Native American history
- Railroad history

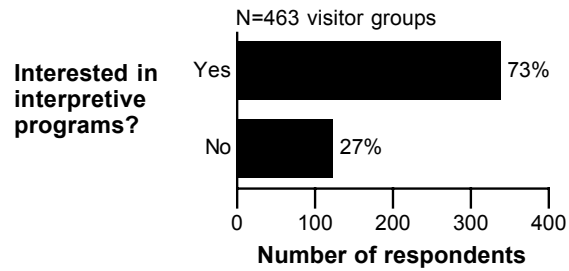


Figure 51. Visitor groups interested in interpretive programs on a future visit

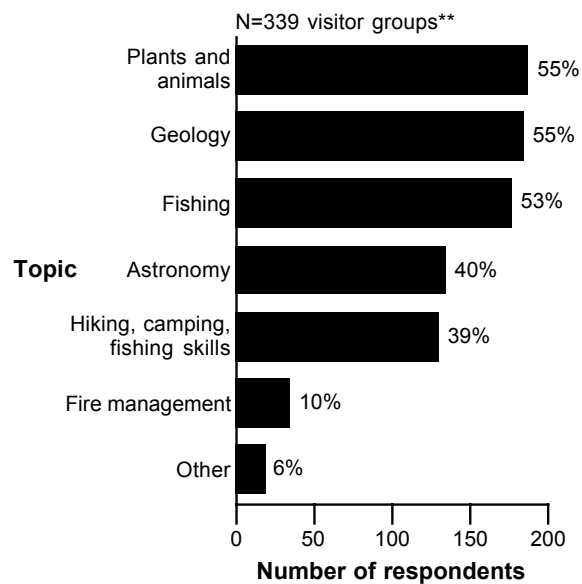


Figure 52. Preferred topics for a future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Interpretive programs for a future visit

Question 19b

Through which types of interpretive programs would you and your personal group prefer to learn about the park’s cultural and natural history?

Results

- As shown in Figure 53, the most common types of interpretive programs preferred by visitor groups were:

55% Self-guided booklet tour
 48% Ranger-led walk/hike/talk
 42% Boat tour

- “Other” programs (3%) were:

Books
 Colorado history for 5th graders
 Film at visitor center
 Fishing guide lecture
 Printed material
 Signs
 Website
 Wildlife tour

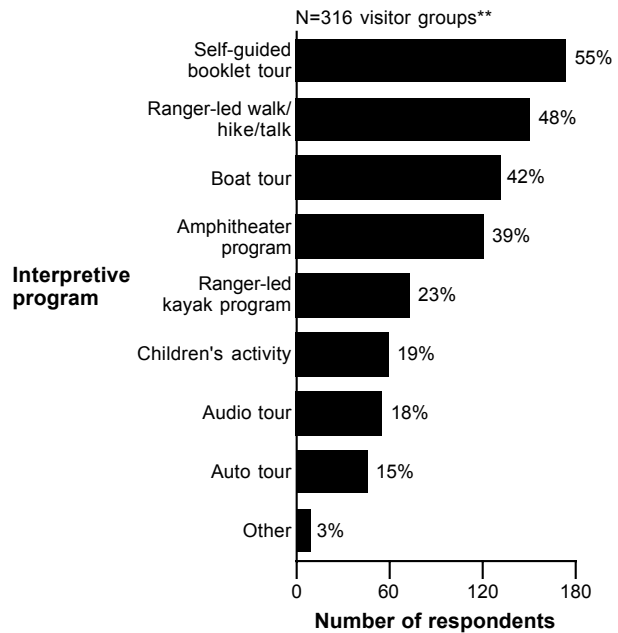


Figure 53. Types of interpretive programs for a future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Commercial services for a future visit

Question 12

If you were to visit Curecanti NRA in the future, which of the following commercial services would you and your personal group like to have available?

Results

- 63% of visitor groups were interested in commercial services (see Figure 54).

- As shown in Figure 55, the most common commercial services that visitor groups would like to have available were:

- 56% Restaurant/food service
- 52% Grocery/camp store
- 45% Marina facilities

- “Other” commercial services (7%) were:

- Boat trip
- Change machines for shower rooms
- Films on area in afternoons/evenings and all day on rainy days
- Fish cleaning stations that work all the time
- Full hookups in campsites
- Guided horseback riding
- Kayak rental
- Kayaking/canoeing lessons
- Lake trout bounty
- Maps
- More areas with access
- More spaces with water and electric hook ups closer to the water
- Motel
- Rent horses
- Restroom at Elk Creek Marina
- RV hook-ups (water, electric and sewage)
- Showers in campsites
- Water ski rental

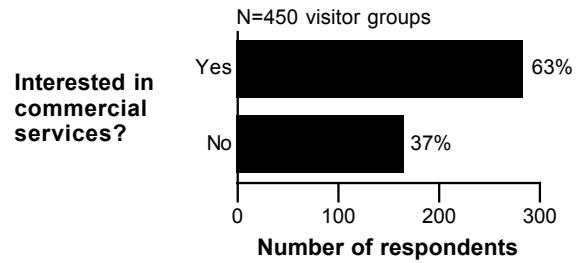


Figure 54. Visitor groups interested in commercial services

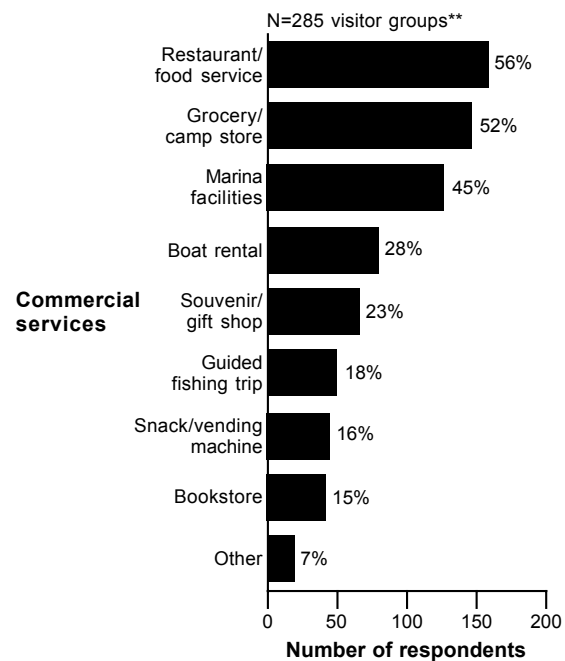


Figure 55. Types of commercial services on a future visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Overall Quality

Question 17

Overall, how would you and your personal group rate the quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Curecanti NRA during this visit?

Results

- 85% of visitor groups rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities as “very good” or “good” (see Figure 56).
- Less than 2% of visitor groups rated the quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

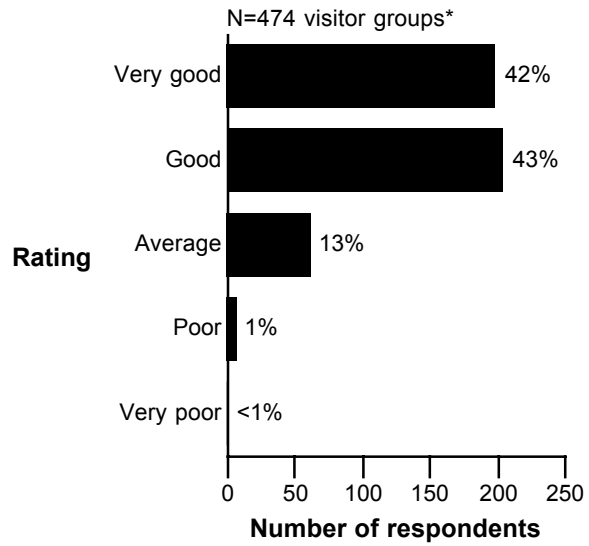


Figure 56. Overall quality rating of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

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

Visitor Comments

Aspect of park's story to share

Question 18

Please list one aspect of Curecanti NRA's story that you would share with family and friends. (Open-ended)

Results

- 52% of visitor groups (N=253) listed one aspect of Curecanti NRA's story that they would share with family and friends (see Table 25). A complete copy of hand-written comments can be found in Visitor Comments Appendix.

Table 25. One aspect of Curecanti NRA's story (N=325 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Story	Number of times mentioned
Beauty/scenic views	64
Good fishing	32
Boat tour	19
Great/beautiful lake	14
Railroad history	15
Friendly staff/rangers	8
Quiet/peacefulness	7
Geologic history	6
Great boating opportunities	6
Amazing night sky	5
Great staff/rangers	5
Not too crowded	5
Cleanliness	4
Decline of fishing over the past years	4
Narrow Gauge Railway	4
Easy accessibility	3
Fishing facilities/cleaning stations	3
Helpful staff/rangers	3
The dam	3
Water rights issues	3
Wildlife	3
D&RG Railroad	3
Camping facilities	2
Camping opportunities	2
Clean facilities	2
Dillon Pinnacles formation	2
Diversity	2
Good fishing in Blue Mesa Reservoir	2
Hiking opportunities on old train beds	2
History	2
How Curecanti NRA was developed	2
Knowledgeable staff	2
Learning opportunities	2
Nice campgrounds	2
Park is not a tourist trap	2

Table 25. One aspect of Curecanti NRA's story (continued)

Story	Number of times mentioned
Proximity to home	2
Ranger-led programs	2
Restfulness	2
Too big to see in one day; plan a long visit	2
A walk by the shoreline at dusk was very interesting, peaceful and fulfilling	1
Accessibility of views (short distance from parking lot)	1
Amount of water (biggest mass of water in Colorado)	1
Attractive rangers	1
Beautiful hike with my daughter	1
Beauty of river trail at Cimarron	1
Best Kokanee fishery	1
Black Canyon	1
Black Canyon walk to Morrow Point boat area	1
Boating facilities	1
Canyon walls	1
Clean air	1
Clean restroom facilities	1
Clean water	1
Combine your visit with Black Canyon	1
Culture of this area	1
Do not put your boat into a slip (unsafe)	1
Do not go to park without reservations	1
Easy walkable access to Gunnison Canyon	1
Easy-access marina	1
Efforts to control invasives (mussels)	1
Efforts to protect the fisheries	1
Everything	1
Excitement of daughter to receive her first Junior Ranger badge	1
Fantastic boat tour guides	1
Fishing (sometimes good, sometimes bad)	1
Formation of the Blue Mesa Reservoir	1
Formation of the gorge	1
Friendly staff at Elk Creek Marina	1
Good views from picnic area below Morrow Pt. Dam	1
Good, level campsites for RV vehicles	1
Gravel from parking areas gets in vehicles, campers, and boats	1
Great family time away from technology	1
Healthy balance between harnessing the river's benefits and preserving area's natural beauty	1
Hike down to Morrow Point boat ride too far for my parents to do; Too few signs to warn elderly and/or physically disabled about the distance	1
History of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison and the water rights traded away	1

Table 25. One aspect of Curecanti NRA's story (continued)

Story	Number of times mentioned
How much the kids enjoying fishing	1
How much we enjoy our hike to the bottom of the Black Canyon	1
Interesting rock formations at Cimarron	1
Junior Ranger program was okay but could be improved	1
Kokanee fishery needs to be restored	1
Love camping at Red Creek	1
Love the Black Canyon	1
Memory of daughter catching a 17" trout	1
My kids loved tubing on the lake	1
Nice camping at Elk Creek	1
No salmon	1
Non-motorized character of Morrow Point Reservoir	1
NRA caters to boating and fishing	1
Old railway grades that can still be seen	1
Outdoor/train exhibits	1
Park is convenient for overnight stop	1
Pictures of the scenery	1
Plethora of wonderful opportunities for those who enjoy the outdoors (but we all must take care of it)	1
Polite people	1
Poor design of mussel inspection station	1
Poor fishing	1
Poor fishing because of stocking lake trout	1
Poor tent camping experience (couldn't find place big enough for our tent)	1
Poor weather in the afternoon	1
Power underground cable	1
Preservation of the train exhibit is great	1
Pretty Pine Creek hike and the stairs/path were very well kept	1
Previous history of valley – drowned cabins and sites	1
Professional park/EMS staff that dealt with medical emergency	1
Professional rangers that reflect well on NPS	1
Proximity of fishing to the campsite	1
Quiet campground at Cimarron	1
Rapid descent of the river	1
RV camping opportunities	1
Sailing	1
Salmon fishing	1

Planning for the future

Question 27

If you were a manager planning for the future of Curecanti NRA, what would you and your personal group propose? (Open-ended)

Results

- 45% of visitor groups (N=229) responded to this question.
- Table 26 shows a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of handwritten comments can be found in Visitor Comments Appendix.

Table 26. Planning for the future
(N=337 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL (2%)	
Add rangers	3
Other comments	3
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (15%)	
Add ranger-led programs	7
Advertise park (history, recreation opportunities, etc.)	6
Increase availability of brochures (activities, tours, etc.)	6
Railroad exhibits	4
Add a ranger-led stargazing program	2
Add interpretive signs	2
Add ranger-guided canoe/kayak program	2
Add ranger-guided hikes	2
Add signs along highway to inform public of Curecanti NRA	2
Provide detailed map of lake	2
Provide education to the public	2
Provide guided tour of dams	2
Other comments	13
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (39%)	
Add campsites with full hookups	21
Build more hiking trails	11
Plant more trees (campsites, picnic areas, etc.)	9
Improve cleanliness of restrooms/showers	8
Improve maintenance of camping facilities	5
Improve maintenance on boat docks/slips	5
Add showers	4
Improve/upgrade facilities	4
Add picnic areas/tables	3
Add restrooms	3

Table 26. Planning for the future (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (continued)	
Create designated parking spots for auto/boat combinations	3
Create more beaches	3
Make the park more handicapped accessible	3
Provide larger campsites for RVs and boat trailers	3
Add boat-in camping sites	2
Add developed campsites	2
Better fishing access for disabled/older people	2
Create more shade options in campgrounds	2
Improve picnic areas	2
Institute recycling throughout park	2
Maintain better control of weeds	2
Provide more parking for vehicles without trailers	2
Replace the gravel pads with concrete	2
Other comments	31
POLICIES/MANAGEMENT (19%)	
Keep it wild/natural	15
Do not commercialize the park	3
Enforce rules (boaters, dogs, fishing regulations, etc.)	3
Keep the park affordable	3
Make the park more handicapped accessible	3
Put ranger on duty in campgrounds day and night	3
Allow dogs on designated hiking trails	2
Balance dual mandate of NPS	2
Decrease cost of showers	2
Decrease rules/regulations	2
Enforce no parking at boat ramp	2
Shorten questionnaire	2
Other comments	21
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (13%)	
Increase Kokanee salmon population	10
Preserve park resources	7
Improve fishing	6
Manage the fishery	5
Plant more trees (in campsites, picnic areas, etc.)	3
Remove lake trout	3
Stock lake with fish	3
Maintain good water levels	2
Other comments	4

Table 26. Planning for the future (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
CONCESSIONS (7%)	
Provide lake recreation services (kayak, canoe, boat rentals and tours)	4
Sell food and drinks	4
Improve restaurant	3
Provide fishing tours	3
Provide more boat tours	3
Add a larger store	2
Other comments	3
GENERAL COMMENTS (6%)	
Keep doing what you're doing	9
Other comments	11

Additional comments

Question 28

Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Curecanti NRA? (Open-ended)

Results

- 39% of visitor groups (N=191) responded to this question.
- Table 27 shows a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments can be found in Visitor Comments Appendix.

Table 27. Additional comments

(N=336 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL (14%)	
Friendly rangers/staff	10
Great rangers/staff	9
Helpful rangers/staff	7
EMS group was excellent	5
Camp host great/knowledgeable	2
Tour guide excellent	2
Other comments	12
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (5%)	
Provide films at visitors center	2
Visitor center lacking information	2
Other comments	14
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (14%)	
Restroom facilities needed cleaning	5
Appreciate the clean restrooms	4
Need more camping hookups	4
Update/improve restroom facilities	3
Visitor center closed	3
It's a clean park	2
Other comments	26
POLICIES/MANAGEMENT (11%)	
Good job managing park	7
Unnecessary information in this survey	4
Keep it simple/affordable for all	2
Park needs better advertising	2
Survey didn't apply to us	2
Thanks for the survey	2
Other comments	18
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (6%)	
Increase Kokanee numbers	5
Poor fishing/please improve fishing	4
Remove lake trout	2
Other comments	8

Table 27. Additional comments (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
CONCESSIONS (6%)	
Boat trip/tour was great	10
Liked previous operator of Elkshore Marina better	3
Other comments	8
GENERAL COMMENTS (44%)	
Enjoyed it	53
Love the park	17
Beautiful	13
Thanks	11
Would like to/will return	11
Repeat visitor	9
Great place for fishing	4
Enjoyed quiet	2
It is a jewel/hidden gem	2
Not too crowded	2
Very diverse park	2
Other comments	21

Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

Appendix 2: Additional Analysis

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn more from VSP visitor study data through additional analysis. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made with any questions.

Below are some examples of the types of cross tabulations that can be requested. To make a request, please use the contact information below, and include your name, address and phone number in the request.

1. What proportion of family groups with children attend interpretive programs?
2. Is there a correlation between visitors' ages and their preferred sources of information about the park?
3. Are highly satisfied visitors more likely to return for a future visit?
4. How many international visitors participate in hiking?
5. What ages of visitors would use the park website as a source of information on a future visit?
6. Is there a correlation between visitor groups' rating of the overall quality of their park experience, and their ratings of individual services and facilities?
7. Do larger visitor groups (e.g., four or more) participate in different activities than smaller groups?
8. Do frequent visitors rate the overall quality of their park experiences differently than less frequent visitors?

For more information please contact:

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Appendix 3: Decision Rules for Checking Non-response Bias

Non-response bias is one of the major threats to the quality of a survey project. It affects the ability to generalize from a sample to the general population (Salant and Dillman 1994; Dillman, 2007; Stoop 2004; Filion 1976; Dey 1997). Because non-response bias is usually caused by participants failing to return their questionnaires, a higher response rate is more desirable. However, higher response rates do not guarantee low non-response bias. Researchers have suggested different methods to detect non-response bias. The most common variables used to detect non-response bias are demographic variables. Some researchers such as Van Kenhove (2002) and Groves (2000) also suggest that saliency of topic has an effect on response rate. In this visitor study, visitor satisfaction (overall quality rating) could be considered as one of the salient factors as we aim to collect opinions from both unsatisfied and satisfied visitors. There are also several methods for checking non-response bias suggested in the literature. We decided to follow the method suggested by Groves (2006), De Rada (2005), and Rogelberg and Luong (1998) to compare the demographic characteristics as well as satisfaction scores of respondents in three different mailing waves. This seems to be the most suitable method because the visitor population is generally unknown.

Respondents and nonrespondents were compared using age and group size. Independent sample T-test was used to test the difference between respondents and nonrespondents. Respondents then were categorized based on the date their questionnaire was received. The first wave is defined as surveys received before the postcards were mailed, the second wave is between postcard and 1st replacement, and the third wave contains surveys received after the 1st replacement. A Chi-square test was used to detect the difference in education levels at different mailing waves and an ANOVA was used to test the difference in overall rating score. The hypothesis was that group types are equally represented. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference in group type is judged to be insignificant.

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

1. There was no significant difference between respondents' and nonrespondents' average age.
2. There was no significant difference between respondents' and nonrespondents' average group size.
3. Respondents of different education levels are equally represented in different mailing waves.
4. Overall quality ratings are not significantly different among early and late responders.

Tables 3 and 4 show no significant differences in group size, overall quality ratings, and level of education. However, there was a significant difference in average age between respondents and nonrespondents. Sometimes a younger person in the group accepted the questionnaire but an older person in the group actually completed it. This may cause discrepancies in age. While it is necessary to exercise some caution in interpreting visitor demographics, there is no evidence of potential bias in visitors' opinions about park operations.

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- Van Kenhove, P., Wijnen, K., and De Wulf, K. (2002). The Influence of Topic Involvement on Mail-Survey Response Behavior. *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol 19 (3): 293-301.

Appendix 4: Visitor Services Project Publications

All VSP reports are available on the Park Studies Unit website at www.psu.uidaho.edu.vsp.reports.htm. All studies were conducted in summer unless otherwise noted.

1982

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park.

1983

2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method.
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial.
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park.

1985

5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

1986

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence National Historical Park
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park

1987

10. Colonial National Historical Park (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park (summer & fall)
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study

1988

17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
19. Bryce Canyon National Park
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument

1989

21. Everglades National Park (winter)
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument
23. The White House Tours, President's Park
24. Lincoln Home National Historic Site
25. Yellowstone National Park
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
27. Muir Woods National Monument

1990

28. Canyonlands National Park (spring)
29. White Sands National Monument
30. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park
32. Gateway National Recreation Area
33. Petersburg National Battlefield
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

1991

38. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park (spring)
39. Joshua Tree National Monument (spring)
40. The White House Tours, President's Park (spring)
41. Natchez Trace Parkway (spring)
42. Stehekin-North Cascades NP/Lake Chelan NRA
43. City of Rocks National Reserve
44. The White House Tours, President's Park (fall)

1992

45. Big Bend National Park (spring)
46. Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (spring)
47. Glen Echo Park (spring)
48. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
49. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
50. Zion National Park
51. New River Gorge National River
52. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
53. Arlington House-The Robert E. Lee Memorial

1993

54. Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Park (spring)
55. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (spring)
56. Whitman Mission National Historic Site
57. Sitka National Historical Park
58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
59. Redwood National Park
60. Channel Islands National Park
61. Pecos National Historical Park
62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**1994**

- 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)
- 65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (spring)
- 66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center
- 67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts
- 68. Nez Perce National Historical Park
- 69. Edison National Historic Site
- 70. San Juan Island National Historical Park
- 71. Canaveral National Seashore
- 72. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (fall)
- 73. Gettysburg National Military Park (fall)

1995

- 74. Grand Teton National Park (winter)
- 75. Yellowstone National Park (winter)
- 76. Bandelier National Monument
- 77. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
- 78. Adams National Historic Site
- 79. Devils Tower National Monument
- 80. Manassas National Battlefield Park
- 81. Booker T. Washington National Monument
- 82. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
- 83. Dry Tortugas National Park

1996

- 84. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 85. Chiricahua National Monument (spring)
- 86. Fort Bowie National Historic Site (spring)
- 87. Great Falls Park, Virginia (spring)
- 88. Great Smoky Mountains National Park
- 89. Chamizal National Memorial
- 90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)
- 92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (fall)

1997

- 93. Virgin Islands National Park (winter)
- 94. Mojave National Preserve (spring)
- 95. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site (spring)
- 96. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial
- 97. Grand Teton National Park
- 98. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 99. Voyageurs National Park
- 100. Lowell National Historical Park

1998

- 101. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Park (spring)

1998 (continued)

- 102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)
- 103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)
- 104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials
- 105. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
- 106. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
- 107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area
- 108. Acadia National Park

1999

- 109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)
- 110. San Juan National Historic Site, Puerto Rico (winter)
- 111. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- 112. Rock Creek Park
- 113. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- 114. Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
- 115. Kenai Fjords National Park (fall)
- 116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
- 117. Cumberland Gap National Historical Park

2000

- 118. Haleakala National Park (spring)
- 119. White House Tour and White House Visitor Center (spring)
- 120. USS Arizona Memorial
- 121. Olympic National Park
- 122. Eisenhower National Historic Site
- 123. Badlands National Park
- 124. Mount Rainier National Park

2001

- 125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
- 126. Colonial National Historical Park (Jamestown)
- 127. Shenandoah National Park
- 128. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- 129. Crater Lake National Park
- 130. Valley Forge National Historical Park

2002

- 131. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 132. Dry Tortugas National Park (spring)
- 133. Pinnacles National Monument (spring)
- 134. Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve
- 135. Pipestone National Monument
- 136. Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Ft. Raleigh National Historic Site, and Wright Brothers National Memorial)
- 137. Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia National Forest

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**2002 (continued)**

- 138. Catocin Mountain Park
- 139. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
- 140. Stones River National Battlefield (fall)

2003

- 141. Gateway National Recreation Area: Floyd Bennett Field (spring)
- 142. Cowpens National Battlefield (spring)
- 143. Grand Canyon National Park – North Rim
- 144. Grand Canyon National Park – South Rim
- 145. C&O Canal National Historical Park
- 146. Capulin Volcano National Monument
- 147. Oregon Caves National Monument
- 148. Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site
- 149. Fort Stanwix National Monument
- 150. Arches National Park
- 151. Mojave National Preserve (fall)

2004

- 152. Joshua Tree National Park (spring)
- 153. New River Gorge National River
- 154. George Washington Birthplace National Monument
- 155. Craters of the Moon National Monument & Preserve
- 156. Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park
- 157. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
- 158. Keweenaw National Historical Park
- 159. Effigy Mounds National Monument
- 160. Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
- 161. Manzanar National Historic Site
- 162. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

2005

- 163. Congaree National Park (spring)
- 164. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (spring)
- 165. Lincoln Home National Historic Site
- 166. Chickasaw National Recreation Area
- 167. Timpanogos Cave National Monument
- 168. Yosemite National Park
- 169. Fort Sumter National Monument
- 170. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
- 171. Cuyahoga Valley National Park
- 172. Johnstown Flood National Memorial
- 173. Nicodemus National Historic Site

2006

- 174. Kings Mountain National Military Park (spring)

2006 (continued)

- 175. John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
- 176. Devils Postpile National Monument
- 177. Mammoth Cave National Park
- 178. Yellowstone National Park
- 179. Monocacy National Battlefield
- 180. Denali National Park & Preserve
- 181. Golden Spike National Historic Site
- 182. Katmai National Park and Preserve
- 183. Zion National Park (spring and fall)

2007

- 184.1. Big Cypress National Preserve (spring)
- 184.2. Big Cypress National Preserve (ORV Permit Holder/Camp Owner)
- 185. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (spring)
- 186. Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (spring and summer)
- 187. Lava Beds National Monument
- 188. John Muir National Historic Site
- 189. Fort Union Trading Post NHS
- 190. Fort Donelson National Battlefield
- 191. Agate Fossil Beds National Monument
- 192. Mount Rushmore National Memorial
- 193. Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve
- 194. Rainbow Bridge National Monument
- 195. Independence National Historical Park
- 196. Minute Man National Historical Park

2008

- 197. Blue Ridge Parkway (fall and summer)
- 198. Yosemite National Park (winter)
- 199. Everglades National Park (winter and spring)
- 200. Horseshoe Bend National Military Park (spring)
- 201. Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (spring)
- 202. Fire Island National Seashore resident (spring)
- 203. Fire Island National Seashore visitor
- 204. Capitol Reef National Park
- 205.1 Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer)
- 205.2 Great Smoky Mountains National Park (fall)
- 206. Grand Teton National Park
- 207. Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
- 208. City of Rocks National Reserve

2009

- 209. Fort Larned National Historic Site
- 210. Homestead National Monument of America
- 211. Minuteman Missile National Historic Site
- 212. Perry's Victory & International Peace Memorial

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)

2009 (continued)

- 213. Women's Rights National Historical Park
- 214. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park
Unit -Seattle
- 215. Yosemite National Park
- 216. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
- 217. James A. Garfield National Historic Site
- 218. Boston National Historical Park
- 219. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 220. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- 221. Acadia National Park
- 222. Laurance S. Rockefeller Preserve
- 223. Martin Van Buren National Historic Site

2010

- 224.1 Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 224.2 Death Valley National Park (spring)
- 225. San Juan National Historic Site (spring)
- 226. Ninety Six National Historic Site (spring)
- 227. Kalaupapa National Historical Park
- 228. Little River Canyon National Preserve
- 229. George Washington Carver National
Monument
- 230. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area
- 231. Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park
- 232. Fort Union National Monument
- 233. Curecanti National Recreation Area

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the University of Idaho
Park Studies Unit, website: www.psu.uidaho.edu or phone (208) 885-7863.

Visitor Comments Appendix

This section contains complete visitor comments of open-ended questions and is bound separately from this report due to its size.

The Department of the Interior protects and manages the nation's natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its special responsibilities to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated Island Communities.

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/SSD/NRR—NPS 616/107287, April 2011

**National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**



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