



Expedited Approval for NPS- Sponsored Public Surveys

1. Project Title | Yellowstone National Park Traveler Information and Transit Needs | 10/27/2009
Submission Date: | Survey

2. Abstract: The Western Transportation Institute-Montana State University is working with Yellowstone National Park to determine traveler information and transit needs along the US 89 corridor from Livingston to Gardiner, Montana. The survey goals are: 1) find important aspects and primary sources of trip planning information; 2) assess the effectiveness of implemented traveler information technology; 3) discover the preferred distance (time) where traveler information is useful; and 4) discover visitors' perceptions about the need for public transportation.
(not to exceed 150 words)

3. Principal Investigator Contact Information

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Project Information

5. Park(s) For Which Research is to be Conducted: Yellowstone National Park

6. Survey Dates: (mm/dd/yyyy) to (mm/dd/yyyy)
 (mm/dd/yyyy) to (mm/dd/yyyy)

7. Type of Information Collection Instrument (Check ALL that Apply)

- Mail- Back Questionnaire On- Site Questionnaire Face-to-Face Interview Telephone Survey Focus Groups
- Other (explain)

8. Survey Justification: (Use as much space as needed; if necessary include additional explanation on a separate page.)

Social science research in support of park planning and management is mandated in the *NPS Management Policies 2006* (Section 8.11.1, "Social Science Studies"). The NPS pursues a policy that facilitates social science studies in support of the NPS mission to protect resources and enhance the enjoyment of present and future generations (National Park Service Act of 1916, 38 Stat 535, 16 USC 1, et seq.). NPS policy mandates that social science research will be used to provide an understanding of park visitors, the non-visiting public, gateway communities and regions, and human interactions with park resources. Such studies are needed to provide a scientific basis for park planning, development, operations, management, education, and interpretive activities.

This survey is part of a larger research effort to determine the usefulness of providing traveler information to visitors accessing Yellowstone National Park by way of the US 89 corridor which runs from Livingston, Montana to the Gardiner, Montana entrance of Yellowstone National Park. The survey will also be used to determine visitors' attitudes regarding the need for public transportation (transit) along the US 89 corridor and in Yellowstone National Park. The information gained from the visitor survey will be used along with other data collected, such as visitor counts. The end result will be an evaluation of the deployed Intelligent Transportation System infrastructure for traveler information along the US 89 corridor and in and around the park.

Literature Review: The Yellowstone Traveler Information and Transit Needs Survey is needed to address previously unanswered questions concerning traveler information and transit issues in Yellowstone National Park (YNP). Prior to this proposed study, two Visitor Services Project (VSP) surveys have been conducted in YNP in the last 15 years: one during February 1995¹ and another in July 2006². These surveys included few questions on transportation services and contained no sections focused specifically on the U.S. 89 corridor. In terms of transit and traveler information issues covered in the former surveys, the 1995 study included questions which asked respondents to comment on the quality of informational and directional signs. The 2006 survey addressed the adequacy of directional signs on interstates, highways, and developed areas of the park and included a section on how information was obtained about the park prior to the visit. Neither study addressed the potential of an integrated 511 system, the use of YNP radio broadcasts on the AM frequency, or public transportation options to enter the park.

9. Survey Methodology: (Use as much space as needed; if necessary include additional explanation on a separate page.)

- (a) Respondent universe: Visitors/travelers (age 16 and older) entering Yellowstone National Park through the Gardiner, MT entrance during the sampling period. Only individual vehicles (not tour or other buses) will be surveyed.
- (b) Sampling plan/procedures: The survey will be conducted in the months of June and July at the Gardiner, MT entrance to Yellowstone. A total of four days during each month will be randomly selected as survey days. At least one Saturday will be included as a survey day in each month. Each 8-hour survey day (including a 1-hour break) will also be randomly selected to have the

survey period begin in either the morning (at 8:00 a.m.) or in the afternoon (at 1:00 p.m.). The first vehicle to enter the park at the beginning of the sampling day will be sampled and every 4th vehicle thereafter until the end of the sampling period has been reached. (The sampling interval may be adjusted to reflect actual traffic volume.) Vehicles that pass through the entrance station while an interview is taking place will not be counted in the sampling interval. If a visitor refuses to participate, he/she will be replaced by the next vehicle to pass through the entrance. The driver will be asked to complete the survey, but will be told that he/she can consult with passengers in the car when answering individual questions. The following script will be used when inviting participation in the survey:

Good (morning/afternoon/evening), we are conducting a survey to determine the usefulness of traveler information and interest from visitors to Yellowstone National Park in having a public transportation/transit/bus service to and within the park. Would you be willing to take approximately 3 minutes to participate in our survey today? Your responses are voluntary and anonymous.

If YES: We would like you as the driver to complete the survey, but you can consult with other people in the car when answering questions.

If NO: May I ask you one short question?

If YES: Is this your first visit to Yellowstone National Park?.

If NO: Thank you. Have a good trip.

- (c) Instrument administration: Staff from the Western Transportation Institute will ask visitors to participate in the survey, and will then hand a survey and clipboard to the driver of the vehicle. The staff member will wait to receive the completed survey from the driver and will be available to answer any questions the respondent may have about specific survey items.
- (d) Expected response rate/confidence levels: Based on Western Transportation Institute's survey at the nearby Grand Teton National Park in 2007 (OMB # 1024-0224 NPS 07-043), the expected response rate is 70 percent. A total of 385 completed surveys out of 550 distributed surveys are needed to achieve a confidence level of 95 percent with a confidence interval of +/- 5 percent.
- (e) Strategies for dealing with potential non-response bias: If a visitor refuses to be participate in the survey, the interviewer will attempt to hold the vehicle long enough to ask one question that relates directly to travel information needs: "Is this your first visit to Yellowstone National Park?" The yes-no answer (or refusal) will be entered on a survey log that records the disposition of every contact. In addition, interviewers will attempt to observe the number of passengers in each vehicle and record this in the log. Based on this information, a non-response bias analysis will be completed and the results will be reported. Any implications for interpreting the results will be discussed.
- (f) Description of any pre-testing and peer review of the methods and/or instrument (recommended): The questionnaire and study methods have received an internal review from both the Western Transportation Institute and Yellowstone National Park, and is similar to previous transportation surveys used in national parks.

10. **Total Number of Initial Contacts | Expected Respondents:**

550	385
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11. **Estimated Time to Complete Initial Contact | Instrument (mins.):**

1.0	3.0
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12. **Total Burden Hours:**

28

13. **Reporting Plan:**

The responses to the survey will be analyzed to determine overall results. General analysis will include mean scores, medians, modes, and standard deviations. The results, together with the park's public use counts, will be included in a final report to Yellowstone National Park. A copy of the final report will be archived with the Social Science Studies Collection in Washington, D.C.

Literature Review Documents

1. Visitor Services Project: Yellowstone National Park Visitor Study. Margaret Littlejohn. Report 75. February 1996.
2. Yellowstone National Park Visitor Study. Summer 2006. Park Studies Unit. Visitor Services Project. Report 178. June 2007.

Yellowstone National Park Traveler Information and Transit Survey

The Western Transportation Institute at Montana State University is administering this survey on behalf of Yellowstone National Park in order to determine opinions related to traveler information systems and public transportation. Participation in the survey is strictly voluntary.*

1. How important are the following traveler information items for determining your route to, and the sites you plan to visit, in Yellowstone National Park? [2. variation TPLAN21]

Information on . . .	Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Somewhat Unimportant	Unimportant	Very Unimportant
Road/Weather Conditions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occurrence of Hazard/Accident	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Road Construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Campground/Lodging Availability in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Which direction were you traveling from prior to merging onto US 89 South at Livingston? (see map) [3. TRIPC3]

West (Bozeman/Butte) East (Big Timber/Billings) Other (specify) _____

3. How useful would it be to you if you could receive information related to Yellowstone National Park by calling 511 from the following distances (times)? [Topic Area 5 – Individual Evaluations of Park Services]

	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Moderately Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not at all Useful
30 miles (25 minutes) from the park entrance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
60 miles (50 minutes) from Livingston (I-90)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
90 miles (1.5 hours) from Bozeman or Big Timber	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
170 miles (3 hours) from Butte(I-15) or Billings (I-25)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Is there a working cell phone in your vehicle? Yes No [Topic 1–Individual Characteristics]

5. Have you or any member of your group ever used any of the following traveler information systems through cell-phone or radio, or at Traveler Information Kiosks? Traveler Information Kiosks may be located at rest areas, local businesses, local chambers of commerce, etc. (Check all you have used.) [Topic Area 3 - Individual Activities and Uses of Park Resources]

511 traveler information number Highway advisory radio Computer at Kiosk Touch Screen at Kiosk Telephone at Kiosk Brochure & Maps at Kiosk

6. How useful would it be to you if public transportation (transit) were available... [Topic Area 5 – Individual Evaluations of Park Services]

	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Moderately Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not at all Useful
From Livingston to Gardiner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From the Bozeman Airport to Gardiner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Within Yellowstone National Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Did you see the sign prior to Gardiner which noted, “For Yellowstone Park Information Tune to 1610 AM”? [3. variation LEARN6]
 Yes (go to Question 8) No (go to Question 10)

Did you tune into 1610 AM (the Yellowstone Park Information broadcast)? [6. variation EVALSERV21]
 Yes (go to Question 9) No (go to Question 10)

8. How useful did you find the information on the broadcast? [6. variation EVALSERV21]

Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Moderately Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not at all Useful
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. Is this your first visit to Yellowstone National Park?
 Yes No [1. variation VISHIS1]

10. Please provide any other comments you may have about traveler information issues in Yellowstone National Park, and/or between Livingston and Gardiner on US 89. [6. OPMGMT7]

***Additional Information Provided upon Request.**

16 U.S.C. 1a-7 authorizes collection of this information. This information will be used by park managers to better serve the public. Response to this request is voluntary. No action may be taken against you for refusing to supply the information requested. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

BURDEN ESTIMATE STATEMENT: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average **3 minutes** per response. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this form to:

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THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS SURVEY!