

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



Social Science Program

OMB Control Number 1024-0224
Current Expiration Date:8-31-2014

Programmatic Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys

1. Project Title: Visitor Services Project (VSP) Survey for Lassen Volcanic National Park (LAVO)	Submission Date: 1-10-2012
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2. Abstract: A mail back questionnaire will be used to collect information from visitors at Lassen Volcanic National Park (LAVO) during the winter and summer of 2012. The survey will be used to gather information concerning visitor satisfaction about the park's services and facilities. The data will assist park managers in developing and providing services and facilities that meet visitors' needs and expectations. The information will also be shared with park partners and gateway communities to assist in mutual planning efforts. A questionnaire will be used to systematically collect data that will include information on trip/visit characteristics (e.g. activities, evaluation of park services/facilities, perceptions of park experiences, and opinions on park management).

(not to exceed 150 words)

3. Principal Investigator Contact Information

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Title: NPS Visitor Services Project (VSP) Director
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4. Park or Program Liaison Contact Information

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Park: Mount Rainier National Park
Park: Interpretation and Education
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Project Information

5. **Park(s) For Which Research is to be Conducted:** Lassen Volcanic National Park

6. **Survey Dates:** Winter 1/12/2012 TO 1/18/2012
Summer 8/6/2012 TO 8/12/2012

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

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mail-Back Questionnaire Other (explain)	<input type="checkbox"/> On-Site Questionnaire	<input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-Face Interview	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Focus Groups
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8. **Survey Justification:** *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.*

Lassen Volcanic National Park is in the process of starting its first Long Range Interpretive Plan. A visitor survey at this time would be beneficial in planning for visitor services and needs, in addition to helping the park management understand the impacts of the new developments that have taken place in the last ten years. The study results will be used to implement projects and programs outlined in the park's General Management Plan, 2009 Strategic Management Plan and the new Long Range Interpretive Plan. There is a special emphasis for inclusion of park stakeholders and partnerships that will expand the outreach of the park for visitors, gateway communities, and associated marketing efforts. Study findings will be used as follows:

- As inputs into planning documents(e.g., General Management Plan, Long Range Interpretive Plan, and Visitor Experience and Resource Protection (VERP))
- To design interpretive and educational programs to match visitor interests and needs.
- For the design of future visitor facilities or renovations of existing facilities.
- To evaluate visitor behavior for potential impacts on natural and cultural resources.
- To determine whether concession services in parks are meeting visitor needs.
- To help local businesses and governments better understand how visitors are contributing economically to the area.

The mail-back questionnaire used in this study is designed to collect data that

will include

- individual characteristics,
- trip/visit characteristics,
- individual activities,
- individual evaluation of park services/facilities,
- individual perceptions of their park experiences, and
- individual opinions on park management

Park visitors will be randomly selected to participate in the study as they visit selected park locations during a 7 day period during the winter and summer visitation periods.

9.

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

(a) Respondent Universe:

The respondent universe for this collection will be all recreational visitors, age (16 and older), who visit the park during the study periods. A systematic sample of visitors will be contacted by VSP-trained interviewers at the Southwest entrance station, Manzanita entrance station, Warner Valley, and Butte Lake.

(b) Sampling Plan/Procedures:

The survey design and sampling plan for this collection of information is based upon Dillman's Tailored Design Method (TDM). The TDM has been shown to increase response rates, improve accuracy, and reduce cost, and respondent burden. The methodology has been used in 245 previous surveys conducted by the NPS Visitor Services Project (VSP). Most questions have been included in other VSP questionnaires or appear in the current NPS Known Pool of Questions. A systematic sampling procedure will be based on the park's visitation statistics from the previous year and will require intercepting every *n*th visitor group to participate in the study.

Each interviewer will receive 1-1/2 hours of training on how to conduct interviews. This training will cover every aspect of interviewing, including conducting the interviews using sampling intervals, avoiding sampling bias, and how to handle all types of interviewing situations, including safety of the visitor and the interviewer. Quality control will be ensured by monitoring interviewers in the field, and by checking their paperwork at the end of each day of surveying.

Park visitors will be intercepted at Southwest, Manzanita entrance stations, Warner Valley and Butte Lake during two seven-day periods (from 1/12 to 1/18 and 8/6 to 8/12 in 2012) as they enter the park. The number of questionnaires distributed at each location will be stratified according to visitation statistics of the same month in 2011. No survey will be distributed at Butte Lake and Warner Valley in January survey due to seasonal closure.

(c) Instrument Administration:

The initial contact with visitors will be used to explain the study and determine if visitors are interested in participating. This should take approximately 1 minute. If a group is encountered, the survey interviewer will ask the individual

within the group who has the next birthday to serve as the respondent for the study. At this point, the survey respondent will be asked four questions to collect information that will be used in the non-response bias analysis (see questions below). The respondent will also be asked to record their name, address, and phone number or email address on the survey log. Finally the respondent will be given a stamped, addressed questionnaire to complete and mail back to the Visitor Services Project. The number of visitors refusing to participate will be recorded and used to calculate the overall response rate for the collection.

All participants will be mailed a thank you/reminder post card within 11 working days after initial on-site contact. A reminder letter with a stamped, addressed replacement questionnaire will be sent to all non-respondents 21 working days after initial on-site contact. A second reminder letter will be mailed after 35 working days with a stamped, addressed replacement questionnaire.

(d) Expected Response Rate/Confidence Levels:

A total of 450 winter and 708 summer visitors will be contacted during the sampling periods. Based on previous and nearly identical studies conducted by the VSP, 414 winter and 650 summer (92%) visitors will agree to participate in the survey. The number of refusals will be recorded and reported in a survey log, and will be used in calculating the response rate.

We expect that 306 winter and 480 summer visitors (68%) will complete and return the questionnaires by mail. This response rate was estimated based on previous survey in 1999 at the park. Based on the day-use survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the day-use survey findings will be accurate to within 5 percentage points. Thus, the proposed sample size will be adequate for bivariate comparisons and will allow for comparisons between study sites and more sophisticated multivariate analysis if deemed necessary. For dichotomous response variables, estimates will be accurate within the margins of error and confidence intervals will be somewhat larger for questions with more than two response categories.

	Number of Initial Contacts	Expected Response Rate	Expected Number of Responses	Margin of Error +/- %
Winter	450	68%	306	5%
Summer	708	68%	480	5%
Total	1,158		786	

(e) Strategies for dealing with potential non-response bias:

During the initial contact, the interviewer will ask all visitor four questions taken from the survey. These questions will be used in a non-response bias analysis.

- 1) *What type of group are you traveling with today?*
- 2) *(If with an organized group-tours, school, etc.) How many people are in your group?*

- 3) How did this visit to Lassen Volcanic NP fit into your travel plans?
(Was this your primary destination, one of several destinations, not a planned destination?)
- 4) How old is the person who will complete the questionnaire?

Responses will be recorded on a log for every visitor contacted and agree to answer the questions. Results of the non-response bias check will be described in a report and the implications for park planning and management will be discussed.

(f) Description of any pre-testing and peer review of the methods and/or instrument (recommended):

The questionnaire format and many of the questions have been used in 245 previous VSP survey instruments. The questions in this survey are taken from the currently approved list of questions in NPS Pool of Known Questions (OMB 1024-0224; Current Expirations Date: 8-31-2014). All questions were reviewed by NPS managers and university professors. Any variations of the questions were reviewed and approved by NPS Information Collection Review Coordinator.

10 **Burden Estimates:** We plan to approach at least 450 (winter season) and 708 (summer season) individuals during the respective sampling periods ($n=1,158$). With an anticipated response rate of 68%, we expect to receive 786 total responses for this collection.

We expect that the initial contact time will be at least one minute per person ($1,158 \times 1 \text{ minute} = 19 \text{ hours}$). We expect that 94 (8%) visitors will refuse to participate during the initial on-site contact, for those individuals we will record their reason for refusal and ask them to answer the four questions that will be used for the non-response check. This is estimated to take no more than 2 minutes ($94 \times 2 = 3 \text{ hours}$) to complete each session.

For those who agree to participate ($n= 1064$) we expect that 786 will complete and return the survey, with that, an additional 20 minutes will be required to complete the questionnaire ($786 \text{ response} \times 20 \text{ minutes} = 262 \text{ hours}$). The burden for this collection is estimated to be 284 hours.

Estimated Number of Contacts		Estimation of Time		Estimation of Respondent Burden	
Total Number of Initial Contacts	1,158	Estimated Time (mins.) to Complete Initial Contact	1	Estimated Burden Hours	19
Estimated number of on-site refusals	94	On-site Refusal/nonresponse	2	Estimated Burden Hours	3
Total Number of Responses (Spring and Summer – combined)	786	Time to complete and return surveys	20	Estimated Burden Hours	262
				Total Burden	284

11. **Reporting Plan:** The results of the studies will be presented in internal agency reports for NPS managers. Response frequencies will be tabulated and measures of central tendency computed (e.g., mean, median, mode, as appropriate). The reports will be archived with the NPS Social Science Program for inclusion in the Social Science Studies Collection; and will also be posted on the Park Studies Unit VSP website at: <http://psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports.htm>. Hard copies will be available upon request. The economic data will be used to produce special reports for the NPS covering overall use estimates and local economic impacts.

Visitor Services Project
Lassen Volcanic National Park

Introductory Script and Letters Used in Contacting On-site Visitors

Hello! The National Park Service is conducting a visitor survey at *Lassen Volcanic National Park* to get your opinions about this park's programs and services. If you take a mail-back questionnaire, we would like to receive a completed one back within a week if possible. It should take about 20 minutes to complete once you get started. Which person in your group has the next birthday (**at least 16 years old**)? Are you willing to participate?

IF NO: Would you be willing to answer a few quick questions? Thank you.

IF YES: Thank you—(ask and record responses to the questions below).

This should only take about two minutes. Who in your group (at least 16 years old) has the next birthday?

- 1) What type of group are you traveling with today?
- 2) (If with an organized group-tours, school, etc.) How many people are in your group?
- 3) Was this park your primary destination? One of several destinations on this trip? Or was this park not a planned destination on this trip?
- 4) How old is the person who will complete the questionnaire?

So we can thank you and remind you to mail back the questionnaire, please write your name, address, and email address/phone number. Thank you. Be sure to mail the questionnaire—your opinions are important!

**1st follow-up printed on a scenic park postcard
(sent to all participants within 11 working days after initial on-site contact)**

Dear Visitor:

Thank you for participating in the *Lassen Volcanic National Park* visitor study. We are looking forward to hearing from you.

A select number of people were contacted for this study, so your opinions are very important!

If you have already returned your questionnaire, thank you. If not, please mail it today.

After eight months, look for the survey results at: www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports.htm.

(Insert electronic signature here)

First, MI, Last, Superintendent
(Park name)

OMB Control Number 1024-0224
Current Expiration Date: 8-31-2014

**2nd follow-up note and letter with replacement questionnaire
(sent to non-respondents 21 working days after initial on-site contact)**



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Park Name

P.O. Box

City, ST Zip Code

IN REPLY
REFER TO:

Date

Dear Visitor:

The National Park Service would like to thank you for participating in the *Lassen Volcanic National Park* visitor study. Only a select number of visitors were contacted, therefore each visitor's opinions are very important.

If you have already returned your questionnaire, thank you. If you have not returned your questionnaire, please mail it today. Unless your questionnaire was mailed in the last few days, we would appreciate you completing the enclosed replacement questionnaire since we have not received yours as of today.

In approximately eight months, the results of the visitor survey will be posted on the Visitor Services Project website at www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports.htm.

If you have any questions regarding your questionnaire, please contact Margaret Littlejohn, National Park Service Visitor Services Project Director by phone 208-885-7863 or email: littlej@uidaho.edu.

Thank you for sharing your opinions with us.

Sincerely,

(Insert electronic signature here)

First, MI. Last, Superintendent

**3rd follow-up letter with replacement questionnaire
(sent to non-respondents 35 working days after initial on-site contact)**

United States Department of the Interior



IN REPLY
REFER TO:

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Visitor Services Project
PSU, College of Natural Resources
University of Idaho
P.O. Box 441139
Moscow, Idaho 83844-1139

Date

I am writing about the visitor study at *Lassen Volcanic National Park*, in which you agreed to participate. The waiting period for incoming questionnaires is almost over and we have not yet received yours. I would appreciate you completing another one unless you mailed it within the past few days.

The staff of *Lassen Volcanic National Park* is anxiously awaiting the survey results. They want to use your ideas and opinions in making decisions about what services and programs to provide for visitors in the future.

I urge you to complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it by (Month Day). Your contribution to the success of this study is greatly appreciated.

In approximately eight months, the results of the visitor survey will be posted on the Visitor Services Project website at www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports.htm.

Should you have questions regarding your questionnaire, please contact me by phone: (208)-885-7863 or email: littlej@uidaho.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret Littlejohn".

Margaret Littlejohn
Director, Visitor Services Project

Lassen Volcanic National Park Survey Log

Day: M T W Th F Sa Su Date: ____ / ____ , 201_

Interviewer _____

“Hello! The National Park Service is conducting a visitor survey at *Lassen Volcanic National Park* to get your opinions about this park's programs and services. If you take a mail-back questionnaire, we would like to receive a completed one back within a week if possible. It should take about 20 minutes to complete once you get started. Which person in your group has the next birthday (**at least 16 years old**)? Are you willing to participate?

IF NO: Would you be willing to answer a few quick questions? Thank you.

IF YES: Thank you—ask and record responses to the questions below.

- 1) What type of group are you traveling with today?
- 2) (If with an organized group-tours, school, etc.) How many people are in your group?
- 3) Was this park your primary destination? One of several destinations on this trip? Or was this park not a planned destination on this trip?
- 4) How old is the person who will complete the questionnaire?

So the superintendent can thank you (and remind you to mail back the questionnaire), please provide your name, address, phone number and email address. Thank you. Be sure to mail the questionnaire—your opinions are important

Inter- viewer initials	Time	Already rec'd Questionnaire (Y or N)	Refused (Y or N)	Gender and Age of Respondent			Group Type	Group Size	Primary Destination? (Y/N)	Reason for refusal
				Male	Female	Age				

Today's date

Park Name

Sampling site

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	

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ID	First name and last name		
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Phone or email		Country	

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	

ID	First name and last name		
Mailing address			
City		State	Zip Code
Phone or email		Country	