

**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: **Submission Date**

Visitor Services Project (VSP) Surveys at the Following Parks:

1. Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR)
 2. Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CHIC)
 3. Mount Rainier National Park (MORA)
 4. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (LIBO)
 5. White Sands National Monument (WNSA)
 6. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JEFF)
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2. **Abstract:** *This submission contains 6 separate collections. Mail back questionnaires will be used to collect information from visitors at: Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR) Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CHIC) and Mount Rainier National Park (MORA), Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (LIBO), White Sands National Monument (WNSA), and Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JEFF). The surveys will be used to gather information concerning visitor satisfaction about the park's services and facilities. The parks are in the process of reviewing their Long Range Interpretive Plans as a part of General Management Plans. The data will assist park managers in developing and providing services and interpretive programs that meet visitors' needs and expectation. These parks have a special need in connecting with the local communities due to some significant changes in the surrounding areas or identity problems. The surveys will also provide information about the impact of visitor spending on local communities and visitor opinions on commercial services provided by local business. The information will be shared with park partners and gateway communities to assist in mutual planning efforts. The questionnaires will be designed 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).*
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(not to exceed 150 words)

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Park or Program Liaison Contact Information - Jefferson National Extension Memorial (JEFF)

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Project Information

5. **Park(s) For Which Research is to be Conducted:**
1. Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR)
 2. Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CHIC)
 3. Mount Rainier National Park (MORA)
 4. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (LIBO)
 5. White Sands National Monument (WNSA)
 6. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JEFF)

6.	Location	Start Date		End Date
	Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CHIC)	5/12/2012	to	5/18/2012
Survey Dates:	Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial	5/19/2012	to	5/25/2012
	White Sands National Monument (WNSA)	6/17/2012	to	6/23/2012
	Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JEFF)	6/23/2012	to	6/29/2012
	Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR)	6/27/2012	to	7/03/2012
	Mount Rainier National Park (MORA)	7/30/2012	to	8/7/2012

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 |
|--|--|---|---|---------------------------------------|

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.*

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.

Study findings will be used to:

- provide input into planning (e.g., General Management Plan, Comprehensive Interpretive Plan, Long Range Interpretive Plan)
- provide information that will assist with the conceptual design of interpretive and educational programs to match visitor interests and needs

- provide feedback about the design of future visitor facilities or renovations of existing facilities
- evaluate visitor behavior for potential impacts on natural and cultural resources
- provide basic information about the economic benefits of visitation to local businesses and governments in the area.

Management Justification: Each park has specific reasons for needing a visitor study:

1. Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR)

There has never been any scientific research or data collection done to assess the visitors of the Missouri National Recreation River. The managers at MNRR would like to know more about who their visitors are, where all they come from, and what type of services and programming they are interested in receiving. Currently, the best information the park has on visitor use and trends has relies on unobtrusive observations of river use (boaters, anglers, and paddlers). Park managers feel that the park suffers from a tremendous identity crisis because the river receives a tremendous amount of use, particularly by local residents, however most people are not aware that MNRR is a unit of the National Park System even though it was designated in 1978. This study is needed to provide park manager scientific information for various planning efforts that will take place in 2012-2013 including a regional interpretive planning effort with park partners.

2. Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CHIC)

A VSP visitor study was conducted in 2005 that was used to provide data for the Chickasaw National Recreation Area General Management Plan. Some park facilities and services have been added or changed (including the construction of the Chickasaw Nation's cultural center in 2006, adjacent to the NRA) based on the results of the long-term management plan. This proposed collection is almost identical to the 2005 study with many questions remaining the same. Information collected will continue to inform managers about current visitor demographics, visitor opinions on park resources/attributes, services/facilities, commercial services, and visitor spending. The results will be compared to the 2005 survey to measure any improvement or changes in visitors' evaluation of services and facilities. In addition, an updated survey is necessary to provide information about improvement or changes in visitors' evaluation of park services and facilities, as well as to work more closely with the Chickasaw Nation and local communities to provide needed visitor services.

3. Mount Rainier National Park (MORA)

The park is in the process of developing visitor experience and resource protection (VERP) indicators and standard transportation planning as directed in the GMP. A visitor survey is needed to measure visitor experience and incorporate with ecological and biological survey data to develop VERP indicators. In addition, the survey results will be used in park planning projects, for making management decisions on visitor related issues such as Wilderness and Transportation Planning. Changes in Transportation Planning may have effect on

the local communities as visitors may be required to park in the local communities before coming in the park. The information is needed to collaborate with local communities to improve the visitor experience. The visitor survey results will also be compared with the data from the 2000 survey to determine any changes or improvement in visitor experience and visitor opinion about quality of services. These comparisons will provide guidelines for ways to improve customer services and resource protection standards.

4. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (LIBO)

Significant changes have occurred in the area since the most recent visitor study conducted in 1997. Updated information is needed as the park responds to the changes in increased visitation due to the opening of a new highway. The primary access road to the park changed with the opening of a four-lane highway (US 231) from Interstate 64. The information from this collection will also be used as the park amends their 2012-2013 General Management Plan to more effectively address the changes in their visitation patterns. The information collected will help park and adjacent land managers to:

- amend the 2012-2013 General Management Plan;
- attract visitors of other nearby recreational sites;
- obtain visitor opinions about effects of the new US Highway 231 and prepare the park for ways to respond.

5. White Sands National Monument (WNSA)

Since the last visitor study conducted in 1990, significant changes have occurred in the park area. New Mexico's Hispanic/Latino population grew by 25% from 2000 to 2010 and greater numbers of this ethnic group is visiting the park. A survey is important as the park responds to these demographic changes in visitation. The survey will

- provide useful information for interpretive planning efforts, especially as it relates to translating interpretive literature;
- determine appropriate services that meet the needs of a changing population.

6. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JEFF)

A visitor study was completed in 1992, but since then many things have changed in the park. Specifically, as part of the new General Management Plan, a new design for the grounds around the Gateway Arch has been created. The park will also redo all exhibits with new themes and fresh approaches. With such a large-scale reconfiguration of the park's infrastructure and with exhibits in planning stages, a survey that provides information on visitor expectations and impacts on resources would provide excellent background data for planning and development. A visitor survey is the most reliable tool to help formulate a plan to meet the needs of park visitors in the future. The information collected will help park and park partners to:

- design new visitor facilities and prepare plans for renovating existing facilities;
- share data on visitor demographics and preferences with park partners and concessioners to address issues such as transportation, accessibility, parking, and safety.

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 a systematic sample of all recreational visitors, age 16 and older, visiting the parks during the study periods. The intercept locations for each of the parks are listed in the table below (Table 1).

Table 1: Sample Locations

Park	Intercept Location
Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Standing Bear Overlook • Lewis and Clark Visitor center • Spirit Mound Historic Prairie • Mulberry Bend Overlook • Chamber of Commerce in Yankton • Riverside Park, and • 13 boat ramps (survey on rotation basis)
Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CHIC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travertine Nature Center, • Veteran's Lake campgrounds, • Buckhorn boat ramp, • The Point boat ramp, and • Guy Sandy boat ramp.
Mount Rainier National Park (MORA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entrance stations at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Nisqually, ○ Stevens Canyon, ○ White River, ○ Carbon River, and ○ Mowich Lake
Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (LIBO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Historical Farm • Visitor Center
White Sands National Monument (WNSA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main Park Entrance
Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JEFF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway Arch (North and South Entrance) • The Old Court House

(b) Sampling Plan/Procedures:

Mail-back questionnaires will be used at each of the parks to collect the following information from visitors:

- 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 studies as they visit the park during the seven-day study period.

The survey design and sampling plan for this visitor study is based upon Dillman's Tailored Design Method (TDM). The TDM has been shown to increase response rates, improve accuracy, and reduce cost and burden hours. The methodology has

been used in 250 previous surveys conducted by the VSP. Most questions have been included in other VSP questionnaires or appear in the current NPS Known Pool of Questions (1024-0224). A systematic sampling procedure, based on the park's visitation statistics from the previous year, will require intercepting every nth visitor group to participate in the study.

Each interviewer will receive 1-1/2 hours of training on how to conduct on-site contact. The interviewers will be instructed to contact every nth visitor at each of the park locations (listed in Table 1 above). This training will cover every aspect of on-site contact this includes: 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 survey day.

(c) Instrument Administration:

The initial contact with visitors will be used to explain the study and determine if visitors are interested in participating (see attached script). 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, all individuals approached will be asked the non-response bias questions to collect information that will be used in the final analysis (see item 9e below). The visitors that refuse to participate will be asked if they would be willing to take two minutes to respond to non-response bias questions. The number of refusals will be recorded and used to calculate the overall response rate for the collection.

Visitors selected for participation in the survey will be read the following script:

"Hello, my name is _____. I am conducting a survey for the National Park Service to better understand your opinions about this park's programs and services. Your participation is voluntary and all responses will be kept anonymous. Would you be willing to take a survey and mail it back to us using the self-addressed envelope?"

→If **YES** - then ask, "has any member of your group been asked to participate in this survey before?"

If **"YES"** (already asked to participate) then, *"Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study we hope that you will return the questionnaire soon. Have a great day."*

If **"NO"** (have not been previously asked to participate) then, *"Thank you for agreeing to participate. Who in your group is at least 16 years old and has the next birthday? Ask them to start the process by answering the non-response bias questions (listed below). Record responses in spaces provided on the tracking sheet. Hand them a survey packet including the questionnaire and a self-addressed stamp envelope."*

- If NO- (soft refusal) - ask them if they would be willing to answer the non-response bias questions (listed below) and then thank them for their time. Record responses in spaces provided on the tracking sheet.
- If NO- (hard refusal) - end the contact and thank them for their time.

Once the visitor has agreed to participate in the study, we will ask them to provide or personally to record their name, address, and phone number or email address on the survey log sheet – this information will be used to follow-up with all non-respondents. At the end of the survey sampling period, all visitors accepting a survey packet on-site will be mailed a thank you/reminder post card within 11 working days. A reminder letter with a stamped, addressed replacement questionnaire will be sent to non-respondents 21 working days after completion of on-site contacts. A second reminder letter will be mailed to non-respondents after 35 working days with a stamped, addressed replacement questionnaire.

(d) Expected Response Rate/Confidence Levels:

The response rate for each of the collections is based on VSP surveys at similar park sites. Based on the survey sample sizes, there will be 95% confidence that the survey findings will be accurate to within 3-5 percentage points (table 1 below). Thus, the proposed sample sizes will be adequate for bivariate comparisons and will allow for comparisons between study sites and more sophisticated multivariate analysis. If the response rate is below what would typically be expected, the VSP may need to call a sample of non-respondents to try to increase the response rate. 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 (Table 2).

Missouri National Recreational River (MNRR) - A total of 600 visitors will be contacted during the sampling period. Based on previous and nearly identical studies conducted by the VSP 550 (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. Among which 358 visitors (65%) are expected to complete and return the survey by mail.

Chickasaw National Recreation Area (CHIC) - A total of 1,076 visitors will be contacted during the sampling period. Based on previous and nearly identical studies conducted by the VSP in 2005, 990 (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. An expected 544 visitors (60%) will complete and return the survey by mail. This response rate is based on the previous response rate in 2005.

Mount Rainier National Park (MORA) - A total of 1,199 visitors will be contacted during the sampling period. Based on previous and nearly identical studies conducted by the VSP 1,100 (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. Among which 770 visitors (70%) are

expected to complete and return the survey by mail. This response rate was estimated based on previous survey in 2000 at the park.

Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial (LIBO) - A total of 500 visitors will be contacted during the sampling period. We expect that 460 (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. An expected 322 visitors (70%) will complete and return the survey by mail. This response rate is estimated based on the previous survey at Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial in 1997 and other similar surveys. Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the survey findings will be accurate to within 4.6 percentage points.

White Sands National Monument (WNSA) - A total of 478 visitors will be contacted during the sampling period. We expect that 440 (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. An expected 308 visitors (70%) will complete and return the survey by mail. This response rate is estimated based on the previous survey at White Sands National Monument in 1990 and other similar surveys. Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the survey findings will be accurate to within 4.7 percentage points.

Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (JEFF) - A total of 1,196 visitors will be contacted during the sampling period. Based on the average refusal rate among VSP studies, 1,100 (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. Of those accepting questionnaires, 770 visitors (70%) are expected to complete and return the survey by mail. This response rate was estimated based on the previous VSP survey in 1992 at the park. Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the day-use survey findings will be accurate to within 3 percentage points.

Table 2: Expected Response Rate/Confidence Levels

	Number of Initial Contacts	Number Accepting Survey	Expected Response Rate	Expected Number of Responses	Margin of Error +/- %
MNRR	600	550	65%	358	4
CHIC	1,079	990	60%	544	3
MORA	1,199	1,100	70%	770	5
LIBO	500	460	70%	322	4.6
WNSA	478	440	70%	308	4.7
JEFF	1,196	1,100	70%	770	3
TOTAL	5,052	4,640		3,072	

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

During the initial contact, the interviewer will ask each 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) *How many people are in your group?*
- 3) *How did this visit fit into your travel plans? (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 survey contact. 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 243 previous VSP survey instruments. The questions are taken from the currently approved list of questions in NPS Pool of Known Questions (OMB 1024-0224; Current Expirations Date: 8-31-2014). Variations of the questions have been reviewed by NPS managers and university professors.

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Burden Estimates:

Overall, we plan to approach at least 0 individuals during the three sampling periods. Among which we plan to obtain verbal agreement to participate in the survey from 4,640 individuals. We expect to receive total of 3,072 completed surveys for this collection (Table 3).

We expect that the initial contact time will be at least two minute per person (5,052 x 2 minutes = 168 hours). During the initial on-site contact each person will be asked to answer the four questions that will be used for the non-response check. We expect that 412 (8%) visitors will refuse to participate for those individuals we will record their reason for refusal and they will be asked to answer the four questions that will be used for the non-response check.

For those who agree to participate (n= 4,640) we expect that 2,787 will complete and return the survey, with that, an additional 20 minutes will be required to complete and return the questionnaire (3,072 responses x 20 minutes = 1,024 hours). The burden for this collection is estimated to be 1,192 annual hours.

Table 3: Estimation of Burden

Estimated Number of Contacts		Estimation of Time		Estimation of Respondent Burden	
Total Number of Initial Contacts	5,052	Estimated Time (mins.) to Complete Initial Contact	2	Estimated Burden Hours	168
Total Number of Responses	4,640	Time to complete and return surveys	20	Estimated Burden Hours	1,024

Total Burden 1,192

11. Reporting Plan: The study results will be presented in an internal agency report for NPS

managers. Response frequencies will be tabulated and measures of central tendency computed (e.g., mean, median, mode, as appropriate). The report will be archived with the NPS Social Science Program for inclusion in the Social Science Studies Collection as required by the NSP Programmatic Approval Process; 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 a special report for the NPS covering overall use estimates and local economic impacts.
