



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

Social Science Program

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Programmatic Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys

Submission Date

1. **Project Title:** Visitor Survey for Katmai National Park & Preserve

2. **Abstract:** A Mail back survey will be used to collect information from visitors at Katmai National Park & Preserve (KATM). The park is in the process of developing visitor experience and resource protection indicators and standards as a part of Long Range Interpretive Plan. Several management options are being considered to reduce users' conflicts, reduce wait time to be admitted to bear viewing platform and enhance general visit experience. The survey will provide park managers with visitor opinion on various facilities and policies. The information collected is important to properly develop and provide services and facilities that meet visitors' needs and expectation. The information will also be shared with park partners and gateway communities to assist in mutual planning efforts especially in the area of economic development. 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, visitor spending, and opinions on park management).

3. **Principal Investigator Contact Information**

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4. **Park or Program Liaison Contact Information**

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Project Information

5. **Park Where Research is to be Conducted:** Katmai National Park and Preserve

6. **Survey Dates:** 06/10/2014 to 09/30/2014

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

Mail-back Questionnaire

On-Site Questionnaire

Other (explain)

Face-to-Face Interview

Telephone Survey

Focus Groups

8. **Survey Justification:** *The National Park Service Act of 1916, 38 Stat 535, 16 USC 1, et seq., requires that the National Park Service (NPS) preserve the national parks for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. At the field level, this means resource preservation, public education, facility maintenance and operation, and physical developments that are necessary for public use, health, and safety. Allocation of funding is to be roughly in proportion to the seasonally adjusted volume of use (P. L. 88-578, Sect. 6) and in consideration of visitor characteristics and activities for determining carrying capacity (92 Stat. 3467; P. L. 95-625, Sect. 604 11/10/78). Other federal rules (National Environmental Policy Act, 1969 and NPS guidelines) require visitor use data in impact assessment of development on users and resources as part of each park's general management plan.*

Managerial Justification.

The most recent visitor study at Katmai National Park was in 2006. Since then the park managers have been challenged with visitation issues such as congestion at bear viewing areas and visitor use conflicts. The park is in the planning process for developing management strategies that will be used to enhance visitor experience and reduce conflicts. The local economic development group is also interested in information about impacts of visitation and spending on the local community. This information will be used in future collaborative planning efforts. A visitor survey has been requested by the park provide necessary information that will contribute to their planning processes. The findings from this collection will be used by park to evaluate visitor behavior for impacts on natural and cultural resources and the potential economic contributions to the communities surrounding the Park.

9. **Survey Methodology:** **(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 period. A systematic sample of visitors will be contacted by trained surveyors at various locations as shown in table 1 below.*

Table 1: Sampling Locations

Location	June 10 - 17	July 10 -17	August 10 - 17	September 10 - 17
Brooks Camp	X	X	X	X
Crosswind Lake			X	
Hallo Bay	X	X		
Naknek River	X			
Rapid Camp		X	X	
Lake Camp		X	X	
Swikshark Lagoon	X			
Kukak Bay	X			
Geographic Harbor		X	X	
American Creek		X		
Alagnak River	X	X		
Kamishak River/ Nanuktuk Creek			X	
Morain Creek		X	X	

(b) Sampling plan/procedures:

Park visitors will be randomly selected to participate as they visit selected park locations during the survey sampling period: June 10 to September 17, 2014 (see Table 1). The survey design and sampling plan for this collection is based upon Dillman's Tailored Design Method (TDM). The TDM has been shown to increase response rates, improve accuracy, and reduce burden hours. The same methodology has been successfully applied in similar study conducted by the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho at:

- Denali National Park (2011) 71% response rate
- Katmai National Park and Preserve (2006) 74% response rate

A systematic sampling procedure based on the park's visitation statistics from the previous year will be used to stratify the sample at each site. During the designated sampling period an on-site surveyor will ask every *n*th visitor to participate in the study. The surveyor will be trained on every aspect of on-site surveying including: using sampling intervals, avoiding sampling bias, and how to handle all types of interviewing situations, especially safety of the visitors and the surveyors. Quality control will be ensured by monitoring surveyor 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 purpose of the study and to determine the visitors' interest in participating. This should take approximately 1 minute. If a group is encountered, the surveyor will ask the individual within the group who has the next birthday to serve as the respondent. At this point, all individuals will be read the following script:

"Hello, my name is _____ and I am conducting a survey for the National Park Service. This survey will help us to better understand your experiences during your visit at Katmai. Your participation is voluntary and all responses will be kept anonymous. Would you be willing to take a questionnaire 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 in this study. Who in your group is at least 18 years old and has the next birthday?* [The surveyor start the process asking the participant to answer the four non-response bias questions (listed below). The responses will be recorded on a tracking sheet. The surveyor will end by hand them a survey packet including the questionnaire and a self-addressed stamp envelope].

➔If **NO-** (soft refusal) – The surveyor will ask them if they would be willing to answer the non-response bias questions (listed below) and then thank them for their time. [The surveyor will 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, the surveyor will ask them to provide or personally record their name, address, and phone number or email address on the survey tracking sheet – this information will only 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 postcard 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. At the completion of the mailing process all names and contact information collected purposes of this collection will be destroyed.

Any visitors refusing to participate will be asked if they would be willing to take two minutes to respond to the non-response bias questions. The number of refusals will be recorded and used to calculate the overall response rate for the collection.

(d) Expected response rate/confidence levels:

A total of 1,310 visitors will be contacted during the sampling periods. We estimate that 1,205 (92%) visitors will agree to participate in the survey. The number of refusals will be recorded and will be used in calculating the response rate. Among those agreeing to participate we expect that 843 visitors (70%) will complete and return the survey by mail. This response rate was estimated based on surveys result of similar NPS units in the area as cited in section b above. Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the survey findings will be accurate to within 3 percentage points.

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

During the initial contact, the surveyor 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 for every survey contact. Results of the non-response bias check will be reported and any implications for 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 similar surveys that were used by the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho. The questions are taken from the currently approved list of questions in NPS Pool of Known Questions (OMB 1024-0224; Current Expiration Date: 8-31-2014). Variations of the questions have been reviewed by NPS managers and University of Idaho professors.

10 Burden Estimates: Overall, we plan to approach at least 1,310 individuals during the sampling periods. Among which, we plan to obtain verbal agreement to participate in the survey from 1,205 individuals. We expect to receive total of 843 completed surveys for this collection.

We expect that the initial contact time will be one minute with additional two minutes to ask four questions for non-response bias check. The total initial contact time will be at least three minutes per person (1,205 x 3 minutes = 60 hours). We expect that 105 (8%) visitors will completely refuse to participate for those individuals we will record their reason for refusal if given.

For those who agree to participate (n= 1,205) we expect that 843 will complete and return the survey, with that, an additional 20 minutes will be required to complete and return the questionnaire (843 responses x 20 minutes = 281 hours). The total burden for this collection is estimated to be 341 annual hours.

Table 2: Estimate burden hours

Estimated Number of Contacts		Estimation of Time (Minutes)		Estimation of Respondent Burden (hour)	
Total Number of Initial Contacts	1,310	Estimated Time to Complete Initial Contact	3	Estimated Burden	60
Total Number of Responses	843	Time to Complete and Return Surveys	20	Estimated Burden	281
				Total Burden	341

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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. Hard copies and electronic copy of the final report will be submitted to the park.
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