



**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 5-15-2014

1. **Project Title:** Visitor Survey for Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park

2. **Abstract:** A mail back survey will be used to collect information from visitors at Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park (CHCH). The park is in the process of developing visitor experience and resource protection indicators and standards as well as General Management Plan. Because a comprehensive study has never been conducted at CHCH. The survey is important to establish a baseline reference of visitor profile. The survey will also 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 expectation. The information will also 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).

3. **Principal Investigator Contact Information**

First Name: Lena

Last Name: Le

Title: Director

Affiliation: Social &Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University

Street Address: PO Box 644014, Wilson-Short Hall #133

City: Pullman

State: WA

Zip code: 99164-4014

Phone: 509-335-6202

Fax: 509-335-0116

Email: lena.le@wsu.edu

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

First Name: Kim

Last Coons

Title: Chief of Interpretation and Resource Education

Park: Chickamauga &Chattanooga NMP

Office/Division Interpretation and Education

Street Address: P.O. Box 2128

City: Fort Oglethorpe

State GA

Zip code: 99613

Phone: 423-752-5213 ext. 139

Fax: 423-752-5215

Email: Kim_coons@nps.gov

Project Information

5. **Park Where Research is to be Conducted:** Chickamauga & Chattanooga National Military Park

6. **Survey Dates:** 07/10/2014 to 7/17/2014

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

Mail-back Questionnaire

Face-to-Face Interview

Focus Groups

On-Site Questionnaire

Telephone Survey

Other (explain)

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 park has never conducted a comprehensive visitor survey to gather information about visitors and their opinions of park management. The park is in the planning process for developing visitor experience and resource protection indicators and standards and transportation planning as directed in General Management Plan. A comprehensive visitor survey to obtain information about visitor experience and transportation choices is needed to provide necessary information for this planning process

Study findings will be used as follows, depending upon the specific park:

- As input into planning (e.g., General Management Plan, VERP)
- To design interpretive and educational programs to match visitor interests and needs.
- For designing future visitor facilities or renovating existing facilities.
- To evaluate visitor behavior for potential impacts on natural and cultural resources

9. **Survey Methodology:** **(a) Respondent universe:**
(Use as much space as needed; if necessary include additional explanation on a separate page.) 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 interviewers at the visitor centers, Ridge Overlook, and on audio tour trail.

(b) Sampling plan/procedures:

Park visitors will be randomly selected to participate in the studies as they visit selected park locations during a 7 day period between July 10th to July 17th 2014. The survey design and sampling plan for this collection visitor studies 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 same methodology has been applied in similar study at other NPS site with similar resources or in the same geographical area conducted by the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho such as:

- Stone River National Battlefield (2013) at 60% response rate
- Petersburg National Battlefield (2011) at 62% response rate
- Great Smokey Mountain NP (2008) at 68% response rate

Most questions have been included in this survey questionnaire appear in the 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 be instructed to contact every nth visitor at each of the park locations (listed in section a above). The Interviewer 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 interviewers. 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. 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. At this point, all individuals asked to participated in the study will be asked the non-response bias questions to collect information that will be used in the final analysis (see item 9e below). Visitors that refuse 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.

"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 870 visitors will be contacted during the sampling period. We estimate that 800 (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 520 visitors (65%) are expected to complete and return the survey by mail. This response rate was estimated based on surveys result of similar NPS unit in the area as cited in section b. Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the day-use survey findings will be accurate to within 5 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 870 individuals during the sampling period. Among which, we plan to obtain verbal agreement to participate in the survey from 800 individuals. We expect to receive total of 520 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 (870 x 3 minutes = 43.5 hours). We expect that 70 (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= 800) we expect that 520 will complete and return the survey, with that, an additional 20 minutes will be required to complete and return the questionnaire (520 responses x 20 minutes = 173 hours). The total burden for this collection is estimated to be 216.5 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	870	Estimated Time to Complete Initial Contact	3	Estimated Burden	44
Total Number of Responses	520	Time to Complete and Return Surveys	20	Estimated Burden	173
				Total Burden	217

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.