



Social Science Program

Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys

1. **Project Title** | World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument (VALR) visitor study | February 10, 2011
Submission Date:

2. **Abstract:** World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument (VALR) has a new visitor center complex. Currently, free timed tickets to visit the Memorial are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. A maximum of 300 people are allowed on the Memorial at any given time. Throughout the day, 150 people are transported to and from the Memorial via the mainland dock. A maximum of 3,000 people visit the Memorial each day. VALR has requested the Visitor Services Project's (VSP) assistance to assess their ticket system.

3. **Principal Investigator Contact Information**

First Name: Lena **Last Name:** Le

Title: NPS Visitor Services Project (VSP) Assistant Director

Affiliation: NPS Visitor Services Project, PSU,
College of Natural Resources,
University of Idaho

Street Address: 6th & Line Streets, Room 17D

City: Moscow **State:** ID **Zip code:** 83844-1139

Phone: 208-885-7863 **Fax:** 208-885-4261

Email: lenale@uidaho.edu

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

First Name: Paul **Last Name:** DePrey

Title: Superintendent

Park: World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument

Street Address: 1 Arizona Memorial Place

City: Honolulu, Hawaii **State:** HI **Zip code:** 96818

Phone: 808-423-7300 **Email:** Paul_DePrey@nps.gov

Project Information

5. **Park Where Research is to be Conducted:** World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument (VALR)

6. **Survey Dates:** March 1, 2011 to March 7, 2011
and May 1, 2011 to May 7, 2011

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.)**

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

Currently, free timed tickets to visit World War II Valor in the Pacific National Monument are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis only. Tickets are given out for specified times throughout the day since the boat that transports visitors to the Memorial holds a maximum of 150 people. A maximum of 300 people are allowed on the Memorial at any given time. Throughout the day, the boat takes 150 people out to the Memorial and brings 150 people back to the mainland dock, with a maximum of 3,000 people able to visit the Memorial in a day. Visitors are advised to arrive early to obtain a ticket, often resulting in long lines early in the morning. Visitors arriving later in the day often cannot obtain tickets, especially during the busy summer months. The Memorial receives approximately 4,500 visitors per day during the peak season and approximately 2,000 people per day during shoulder seasons. The total visitation is about 1.3 million visitors per year.

The park's comment cards show that visitors' most frequent complaints concern wait time for tickets and the noise level at the memorial. There is no formal evaluation of the system in place. A new system might be needed to improve visitors' time efficiency, and thereby improve the quality of the experience. To fill their waiting time, visitors can visit other Pearl Harbor attractions (not operated by the National Park Service) adding to the experience of visiting the Memorial. A new ticket/reservation system might be needed to improve visitors' time efficiency, thereby improving the quality of the park experience.

This research aims to:

- investigate the current ticketing system to identify the areas that may need improvement;
- investigate other existing ticketing systems to recommend potential solutions to VALR;
- make recommendations about ways to provide visitors with a whole harbor experience by incorporating visits with other sites.

A mixed method approach is designed to collect both quantifiable information from the visitors and in-depth qualitative information from visitors, park partners and tour companies.

The survey card is designed to collect data from visitors, including wait time, other sites visited, individual perceptions of crowding, and individual opinions on preferred type of park experience. Visitors will be randomly selected to participate in the study as they wait in line for the shuttle boat to take them back from the memorial.

The focus groups sessions will be conducted to gather information from the employees and park partners' at the Pearl Harbor VALR Monument. The NPS is interested in understanding how the ticketing system can be improved from the perspective of tour guides and concessionaires at the Monument. Before now, the NPS managers had anecdotal knowledge to access the current ticketing system. At this point the managers would like to have qualitative data that can be used and documented in future management plans.

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

(a) Respondent universe:

The respondent universe will be visitors to VALR, age 16 and older, and representatives of park partners and tour companies within the Pearl Harbor area, during the study periods. A systematic sample of visitors will be contacted by VSP-trained interviewers.

(b) Sampling plan/procedures

Survey card: The survey design and sampling plan for this visitor study is based upon a drop-off/retrieve method as used in Vincent and Santos (1996) and Le et al (2006). The drop-off/retrieve method has been shown to increase response rates, improve accuracy, and reduce cost and burden hours in tourism studies. Most questions have been included in other VSP questionnaires or appear in the NPS Known Pool of Questions. A systematic sampling procedure, based on the park's visitation statistics from the previous year, will require intercepting every *n*th visitor to participate in the study. Selected visitors will be given a survey card and a clipboard while waiting for shuttle boat to take them back from the memorial. If the visitor is not interested in the participating in the survey the interviewer will ask three questions and make one observation that will be recording and used in determining any non-response bias if needed. The interviewers will then come to retrieve the questionnaires on the boat or on the dock at the end of the boat ride.

Each interviewer will receive 1-1/2 hours of training on how to select, approach, and conduct interviews. This training will cover every aspect of the interview process. Quality control will be ensured by monitoring interviewers in the field, and by checking their paperwork at the end of each day of surveying.

Focus groups: The non NPS employees of Pearl Harbor attractions (i.e. tour operators, concessionaires, and volunteers) will be invited to attend scheduled focus group sessions. The focus groups will be conducted in the park's conference room from March 4-9, 2011. Each session will last between 60 to 90 minutes. We anticipate hosting at least 6 sessions during this sampling period.

VALR staff will provide VSP researchers with a contact list of the non-NPS employees and volunteers. The VSP will be responsible for contacting and extending the invitation to participate in the focus groups. We will plan to have at least 8 people participate in each of the 6 focus group session.

(c) Instrument administration

Comment card: 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. For those who decline to participate in the survey, they will be asked 3 questions to collect information that will be used in the non-response bias analysis (see questions below). The number of visitors refusing to participate will be recorded and used to calculate the overall response rate for the collection. Survey participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire on site.

Focus groups: Focus groups will be administered by experienced VSP staff. The focus group scripts are attached.

(d) Expected response rate/confidence levels:

A total of 2000 visitors will be intercepted to ask for participation in the onsite survey, of which 1600 is expected to complete the on-site survey card. The number of refusals will be recorded and reported in a survey log, and will be used in calculating the response rate. With this sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the day-use survey findings will be accurate to within 2.5 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.

Focus group components aim to generate qualitative data to the point where no new ideas/comments are being generated). The confidence level concept does not apply.

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

During the initial contact, the interviewer will ask each visitor three questions taken from the survey. These questions will be used to report any non-response bias. The non-response bias check will be used for the survey component only.

- 1) *How old are you?*
- 2) *What is your zip code (or name of country)?*
- 3) *Are you with a commercial guided tour group (cruise ship, etc.) today?*
- 3) *Gender (by observation)*

Responses will be recorded in the survey a log for every visitor 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 214 previous VSP survey instruments. Questionnaires are regularly peer reviewed by NPS managers and university professors.

10 **COMMENT CARD**

Total number of initial contacts for on-site comment card	2000	Estimated time (mins.) to complete initial contact	1	Estimated Burden Hours	33
Expected number completing on-site comment card	1600	Estimated time (mins.) to complete the questionnaire	10	Estimated Burden Hours	267

11 **FOCUS GROUP**

Expected number participating in focus groups	48	Estimated time (mins.) Initial Contact	5	Estimated Burden Hours	76
		to complete focus groups (mins)	90		

12 **Total Burden 376**

13. **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. They 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.