

**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**

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1.	<b>Project Title:</b> Formative Evaluation of a Visitor Center Exhibit Design Plan, Fort Union National Monument, New Mexico	<b>Submission Date</b> 7-16-2012
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2.	<b>Abstract:</b> Researchers from Northern Arizona University will conduct a formative evaluation of planned exhibits for the Fort Union National Monument (FOUN) Visitor Center. The Park's exhibit designers will provide mockups and prototypes of the planned exhibits. Groups of participants will examine the proposed exhibits to help evaluate exhibit interpretive efficacy, placement and articulation. This project will assist the design team in understanding how well the planned exhibits will work for visitors, and will allow them to make design adjustments based on these findings. <small>(not to exceed 150 words)</small>
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**3. Principal Investigator Contact Information**

<b>First Name:</b> Michael	<b>Last Name:</b> Kelly	
<b>Title:</b> Project Director		
<b>Affiliation:</b> Northern Arizona University		
<b>Street Address:</b> PO Box 4099		
<b>City:</b> Flagstaff	<b>State:</b> AZ	<b>Zip code:</b> 86011
<b>Phone:</b> 928-523-5044	<b>Fax:</b> 928-523-7423	
<b>Email:</b> Michael.Kelly@nau.edu		

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

<b>First Name:</b> Marie	<b>Last Name:</b> Frias Sauter	
<b>Title:</b> Superintendent		
<b>Park:</b> Fort Union National Monument (FOUN)		
<b>Street Address:</b> PO Box 127		
<b>City:</b> Watrous	<b>State:</b> NM	<b>Zip code:</b> 87753
<b>Phone:</b> 505-425-8025 x222	<b>Fax:</b> 505-454-1115	
<b>Email:</b>		

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**Project Information**

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5. **Park(s) For Which Research is to be Conducted:** Fort Union National Monument

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6. **Survey Dates:** 07/27/2012 TO 08/29/2012

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

<input 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 checked="" 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.*

Each year approximately 11,000 visitors come to Fort Union National Monument. Visitors come to Fort Union National Monument to learn about the history associated with the site, walk the 1.25 mile self-guided trail of the fort grounds, view Santa Fe Trail ruts, and enjoy the vast openness of the outdoors. Visitors normally spend an average of 1 to 1 ½ hours experiencing the park.

The exhibits at the Fort Union National Monument (FOUN) Visitor Center are outdated and narrow in perspective. They do not reflect the primary interpretive themes of the Monument. The managers of Fort Union would like to attract local Hispanic community member and would rely on visitor input on planned replacement exhibits to help ensure their effective representation of the local culture. This effort will allow park managers to connect with the local Hispanic community to receive needed feedback and opinions on the planned interpretive efforts. The proposed research is needed to better understand how well the new, planned exhibits will help visitors understand the history and culture of the park. This research will help National Park Service managers and designers understand the needs of visitors when using interpretive exhibits. The feedback provided by participants will be incorporated in to the final exhibit designs for the Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center.

Because of New Mexico's large Hispanic population, FOUN park managers are interested in determining ways to increase visitation of this population. The history of Fort Union is directly related to Hispanic settlers how they helped shape and influence the surrounding physical, historical and cultural landscape of Fort Union. The 2010 US Census data indicated that 82.9 % of

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population in the communities surrounding the park in southern Mora county and northern San Miguel county self-identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino. This research will in part help National Park Service managers and exhibit designers understand the perspective of members of the local community concerning the planned interpretive exhibits in their draft stage. The feedback provided by participants will be incorporated in to the final exhibit designs for the Fort Union National Monument Visitor Center

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 consist of residents of San Miguel and Mora Counties, living within 60 miles of Fort Union National Monument.

**(b) Sampling Plan/Procedures:**

Park managers identified thirty local community groups and organizations already associated informally with the park (see shaded box below). A snowball sampling method will be used to identify the participants for the focus groups. Lead individuals from each of the groups listed below will be contacted by telephone. Park staff will use a pre-designed script (Attachment 1) to initiate the contact. The person contacted will be asked if they would be willing to identify at least three additional people in the community who might be willing to participate in the research.

Park staff will create a list of community members to contact. Each person will be contacted by phone using scripted language (Attachment 2). The sampling method will continue until a list of 100 potential participants are identified. A total of 70 names will be randomly drawn from this list and scheduled to a focus group session. Additional names may be drawn randomly from the remaining 30 proposed participants as necessary to achieve a total of 70 participants. Participants will be reminded of their appointment a few days before using a pre-designed script (Attachment 3).

- Asociacion de Las acequias - Mora
- Buena Vista Volunteer Fire Departments
- CCHP – Las Vegas Citizens' Committee for Historic Preservation
- Chacon Volunteer Fire Departments
- CHET Volunteer Fire Departments
- City of Las Vegas
- Community Center in Cleveland
- Golondrines Volunteer Fire Departments
- Helping Hands, Inc.
- La Jicarita Community Enterprise
- Las Vegas Arts Council
- Las Vegas Chamber of Commerce
- Las Vegas Rough Riders Museum
- Luna Community College – Las Vegas
- Main Street Las Vegas
- Mora Independent School
- Mora Land Grant
- Mora Valley Chamber of Commerce – Mora
- Mora Volunteer Fire Departments
- New Mexico Highlands University – Las Vegas

- New Mexico Small Business Development Center – Las Vegas
- Ocate Volunteer Fire Departments
- The Armand Hammer United World College of the American West – Montezuma
- The Cleveland Mill
- USFWS in Las Vegas
- Village of Wagon Mound
- Volunteer Fire Departments
- Wagon Mound: Volunteer Fire Departments
- Watrous community Needs Focus
- Wind River Ranch

The University of Northern Arizona will provide each participant will be offered a \$25 voucher that will be used to compensate them for their travel time and expenses to and from the focus group site. This research involves a large rural area and would require several hours of travel to the designated research location. The researchers have used small incentives in this economically challenged community to cover the cost of travel for two focus groups studies previously approved by OMB (see: 1024-0224 Bandelier National Monument Visitor Needs Survey - 2008; and 1024-0224 Bandelier National Monument. Visitor Center Formative Evaluation – 2006).

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**(c) Instrument Administration:**

**Focus Groups:**

After a brief introduction and consent disclosure (see Attachment 4), there will be an opportunity for the focus group participants to view and evaluate the proposed exhibits in the visitor center. Participants will be managed in groups of five as they are guided by a facilitator through the mock exhibits. The research will use a scorecard of written statements (see Attachment 5) to be used by participants at each exhibit. Each group tour of the exhibits is expected to take no longer than one hour to complete and will be facilitated by a trained evaluator whose conversations will be structured by a predesigned protocol (see Attachment 6).

**Evaluation Scorecard:**

The participants will use a scorecard (see Attachment 5) to evaluate the exhibits in the visitor center. After experiencing each exhibit, the respondents will be given a minute to answer the questions related to the message, placement, and sequencing of the exhibit. They will be asked to rate each exhibit using a likert scale measure of 1 (strongly disagree) – 5 (strongly agree). The scorecard will also include space for comments after each question.

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**(d) Expected Response Rate/Confidence Levels:**

Using a snowball sampling method, we will continue until we have a total of 70 people needed to participate in this study. Because this study design is qualitative and uses purposive samples selected from targeted groups, we will not use the results to generalize the findings for all visitors

Data analysis of the scaled numeric responses will include graphical displays

of the distribution of responses in a bar chart and will summarize the central tendency of responses by calculating the mode with 'spread' measured by quartiles or percentiles. This analysis technique is entirely appropriate for formative exhibit evaluation purposes and subsequent feedback to the design process, which is dynamic by nature. Statistical inferences may be examined if needed, using appropriate analysis of variance techniques to analyze responses across groups. Participant comments will be categorized and intercalated with the numeric scoring in explanation of the evaluation results.

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

The initial contact strategy will help the park understand potential non-response bias. The staff member contacting and recruiting potential participants by phone will ask three questions (see below).

1. *Are you aware of the National Park Service unit called Fort Union National Monument, located in Watrous, New Mexico?"*
2. *Have you visited Fort Union National Monument in the last 2 years?*
3. *On average, how many times a year do you visit a national or state park?*

This data will be used to compare qualitatively some differences between participants and those choosing not to participate.

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

The protocols and instrument are based on work previously conducted by the Principal Investigator at two National Park units with similar visitation numbers, located near rural communities. In developing these tools for use at Fort Union, the research team worked closely with the park's interpretive staff who applied their experience and knowledge gained by interacting with park visitors. The instrument and methodology were reviewed by the outside design team, as well as interpretive staff from other parks in the region.

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10     **Burden Estimates:**     We plan to contact at least 100 individuals during the first round of telephone calls. With an anticipated response rate of 70%, we expect to receive 70 total responses for this collection.

We expect that the initial contact time will be at least five minutes per person (100 x 5 minutes = 8 hours). We expect that 30 (30%) persons contacted will refuse to participate during the initial contact, for those individuals we will record their reason for refusal and ask them to answer the three questions that will be used for the non-response check.

For those who agree to participate (n= 70) we expect that will attend the focus group sessions, with that, an additional 70 minutes will be required to complete process (70 response x 70 minutes = 82 hours). The burden for this collection is estimated to be 90 hours.

Estimated Number of Contacts	
Total Number of Initial Contacts	100
Estimated number of refusals	30
Total Number of Responses	70

Estimation of Time	
Estimated Time (mins.) to Complete Initial Contact	5
Time to complete the focus group sessions	70

Estimation of Respondent Burden	
Estimated Burden Hours	8
Estimated Burden Hours	82

**Total Burden 90 hours**

11. **Reporting Plan:** The final report for this project will include a brief literature review, research results, description of study methodology, recommendations to for the Visitor Center Exhibit Plan, and a description of study limitations.

The report will be submitted to the Fort Union National Monument superintendent for review and comment. Researchers will be available to make a public presentation about project findings. The report will also be made available to all participants. Finally, the final report will be submitted to managing NPS staff at the Colorado Plateau Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit. A copy of the final report will be sent to the NPS Social Science Program, as required, for inclusion in the Social Science Studies Collection.