



A National Visitor Satisfaction Monitoring Program for Concession Operations in the National Park Service

Concessioner Survey Instruction Manual

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An Introduction to this Manual

A fundamental part of the original National Park Service Organic Act is the service mandate to promote the use of the National Park Service (NPS) areas. Contracted concessioners provide specific services to fulfill part of this mandate. Evaluating visitor experiences with concessioners is considered important to understanding how satisfied visitors are with the services provided by concessioners. Though other studies may ask questions about visitor satisfaction with services, it is not clear if the data collected truly relates to concessioner services (since for a visitor, identifying concessioners is not that easy) or if the visitor completing the survey actually used the service. The following study intends to provide a system wide perspective evaluating visitor perceptions' of concessioner service.

The manual contains four sections. The first begins with a discussion of what the concessioner survey study is and why it is needed. It goes on to discuss the basic issues involved in creating the concessioner study: the types of concessioners involved and what customer judgments are used to measure visitor perceptions of the service experience. The second section has instructions on choosing survey distribution locations and survey days and hours. The third section explains survey distribution technique and the last section discusses what to do with the completed surveys.

The University of Idaho, Park Studies Unit (UI PSU), is conducting this study for the National Park Service; we hope this manual will answer any questions about this study and your role in the study. If you have any unanswered questions, need clarification, or just need to talk over your sampling plan please feel free to me, Jennifer Hoger Russell, Director Concessions Survey, at:
E-mail: jhoger@uidaho.edu
Phone: 208.885.4806

This manual is available online at the PSU website:
<http://www.psu.uidaho.edu/>

Section 1: The Concessioner Survey

What Is the Concessioner Survey?

Global competition and modern communications have increasingly created an awareness and emphasis for industry to provide high quality products and/or services. Outdoor recreation similarly has an underlying goal of “quality”. NPS personnel want to provide high quality outdoor recreational opportunities and visitors want high quality experiences (Manning, 1999). Research in outdoor recreation has been primarily studied from a recreational perspective aiming to understand what contributes to high quality experiences and covers a broad range of issues. However, little research exists investigating the way visitors perceive the quality of services provided by NPS concessioners.

The Park Studies Unit (PSU), based at the University of Idaho’s Department of Conservation Social Science, designs and conducts visitor studies to National Park units and public lands. The Visitor Services Project (VSP) provides visitor information such as visitor profiles as well as general visitor feedback on services and opinions about park services. Some VSP studies have questions about concession services but the results are only applicable to the individual

location. Independent from this VSP project, the University of Idaho PSU also has a Visitor Survey Card (VSC) project through which it currently conducts annual surveys at all units of the National Park System to measure performance-based management goals in accordance with the goals for the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993. Though the VSC has a system wide commercial service measurement, the survey uses a single question to access a very complex array of services.

Quick Notes:

Concessioner Survey:

- National study evaluating customer satisfaction with concession services
- Collect data from visitors who have actually used a service
- Three-year trend data
- Cover a range of concession services

For this reason the NPS Commercial Services Program contracted for a separate concessions-specific survey to evaluate visitor experiences with concessioner services. This Concessioner Survey is a standalone survey that will

provide specific data, usable at the park level and the system level, about the quality of services provided by park concessioners.

How Were Locations Selected?

This is a national study and every NPS location, which offers a concession service, is included in the pool from which the sample of participating parks was drawn. To ensure a representative range of concessioner services, five types of concessioner services (retail, dining, lodging, guided tours, and marinas) are of interest in this study.

Some NPS locations contain services in all five categories whereas others may contain only one service. The NPS Commercial Services Program office in Washington, D.C. provided a spreadsheet for this project listing all NPS units with concessioner services and then specifically by NPS location, which service(s) the unit provides. NPS locations were sorted into groups based on which of the five concessioner services are offered at each location. Within each group, a random sample of locations was chosen. Because some locations offer multiple concession services, some locations were randomly selected to be surveyed in more than one category.

At each NPS location selected, an assigned Concessioner Survey contact coordinates and supervises the study effort. Distribution of the surveys must use consistent methodology at all NPS locations. It is possible to use volunteers, seasonal staff or NPS personnel for survey distribution. Only visitors who actually purchase concession services during their park visit will be included in this survey.

The number of surveys distributed per NPS location must be at least fifty in order for the participating locations to receive specific information relevant to the location. This information is a valuable tool, providing managers with feedback about visitor experiences with concession services, for determining areas in need of service improvements and contract reviews. It will also help managers make more informed investment decisions.

If a NPS location is interested in more comprehensive information about concession services for their specific location, this manual provides the means for such a study. Data from such a study would enable the NPS location to compare their own data against the results from the national study.

Creating the Concessioner Survey

Who Are the Concessioners?

Concessioners, commercial use authorizations and leasing all fall under the heading: commercial services. This study is only interested in concessioners, and specifically the following five categories: retail, food, lodging, guide services and marinas. Any stores selling groceries, gifts, souvenirs, books etc., fall into the retail category. Food establishments include both counter service and restaurant dining. Lodging includes hotels, cabin rentals, RV sites or campgrounds. Guide services may include any activity but tours must begin and end within park boundaries. Marinas include those with dry storage facilities, wet slips and boat rentals.

Thinking about Satisfaction and How to Measure It

Defining and measuring quality, especially in the service industry, is difficult. Concrete and objective criteria, e.g., 'zero defects', are not applicable and so the focus shifts to measuring customers' perceptions and attitudes to assess the quality of the service (Hayes, 1998). Customer satisfaction is often used as a measure of quality in outdoor recreation (Outdoor

Recreation Resources Review Commission, 1962). Measuring satisfaction is a means for managers to receive feedback from visitors.

Satisfaction, for the purpose of this study, is defined as the comparison of an individual's expectations of what they feel service businesses should offer with their perceptions of the performance of businesses providing the services (Oliver, 1980; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988). Expectations, however, are not universal and are subject to substantial interpretation. Individuals have different needs, socioeconomic and cultural characteristics, past experiences, attitudes and preferences and objectives that influence their expectations (Whisman & Hollenhorst, 1998).

Measuring satisfaction is complex and studies on satisfaction show other customer judgments are involved in a visitor's overall perception of satisfaction. For example, a visitor eating at a restaurant may include in an overall satisfaction rating, the atmosphere of the restaurant, the friendliness and service of the waiter, the quality of the food, and the value of restaurant for the amount paid, etc. This visitor may rate the overall satisfaction as very good, whereas the ratings of

individual aspects might be less good, depending on individual preferences and expectations.

Two other customer judgments believed to influence customers' attitude formations are service quality and perceived value. When looking at service quality this study will evaluate two components: the service (i.e., the waiter, guide or any contact visitors have with concessioner employees) and the product or facility (i.e., the food, campground facilities, etc.). Service quality is defined as the role of the provider in contributing to the overall satisfaction (Tian-Cole & Crompton, 2003).

Perceived value is the third customer judgment included in this study. It is defined as the attitude a visitor forms by evaluating the relative costs and benefits – monetary and non-monetary – of a purchase (Yang & Peterson, 2004).

Collecting Data Using a Survey Instrument

This survey provides one way to listen to visitors about which concessioner services are working well and what needs to be improved. In order to maximize instrument reliability it is important to ask people questions relevant to their particular service experience. It is also desirable to keep the questionnaire as short as

possible to minimize the time burden to the visitor.

Quick Notes:

- Concessioners of interest in this study are: retail, lodging, food, guide services and marinas.
- Customer judgments included in this study are: satisfaction, service quality and perceived quality.
- Study will collect data using a short on site survey questionnaire.

To accomplish the above goals, individual survey instruments - one per concession service category (i.e., retail experience, dining experience, etc.) - were created for this study. Using the three predictor judgments (satisfaction, service quality and perceived value) discussed previously, questions from other studies using these customer judgments were adapted to the Concessioner Survey. Each instrument contains the same demographic and core questions, with the addition of individualized questions relevant to the specific concession category. This yields specific data for each category as well as an overall system evaluation.

Section 2: Preparing for the Concessioner Survey

Introduction

The Concessioner Survey will be conducted over a period of several months with each unit assigned a specific “Survey Month”. Each NPS unit will appoint a *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* who will be responsible for choosing survey locations and days, administering the survey, training personnel to distribute questionnaires, collecting and returning results.

Choosing the Survey Locations

(See Appendix 2 for detailed, category-specific instructions.)

This is a survey about the experiences of visitors with concessioner services. Since only visitors who purchased a concessioner service are eligible to participate, and for a visitor identifying concessioners can be difficult, it is necessary to distribute surveys directly outside the concession. For some NPS units, choosing this location may be easy, as there is only one place providing the concession service (e.g., a single retail store). But, for many NPS units there are multiple locations providing concession services (e.g., a large park may offer multiple hotels as well as campgrounds

under the lodging category) and this makes choosing a location to distribute surveys more difficult.

At NPS units where multiple

Quick Notes:

- Return Target: distribute 56 questionnaires and get back at least 40 completed
- Survey Period: one calendar month
- Results: posted online
- Questions: contact Jennifer Hoger Russell
Email: jhoger@uidaho.edu
or tel: (208) 885-4806
- The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approved the Concessioner Survey. This approval applies solely to use of the scannable survey card during a park’s designated Survey Month using the methods and procedures included in this manual.

locations exist, we ask for your assistance in determining locations to distribute questionnaires, since each NPS unit is best able to identify its own concessioners.

The *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should create a list that includes any contracted concessioner offering at least one of the five the type of service the unit is surveying. After completing the list, consider all the different locations and choose the ONE location you feel is most representative for your unit.

Important: Choosing a location that is not, in your best judgment, most representative is inappropriate and not acceptable. More importantly, it is not likely to be informative.

Our goal is to ensure that we receive as many returns as possible because this influences the representation of the results; and that we receive a truthful indication of visitors' views, about the quality of concessioner services provided. With that goal in mind, once locations have been chosen, it is imperative that the chosen concessioner be provided the details of the study project and that a uniformed NPS employee or a volunteer will be distributing questionnaires to "concessioner" customers outside of the selected location. It is not possible - and will invalidate the data - if concessioner employees are used to distribute questionnaires or if the concessioner is aware of the exact survey dates.

Quick Notes:

- Consider all the different locations offering the concession service at your unit and choose the ONE location you feel is most representative for your unit.
- Inform concessioner of the survey.
- Choose four (4) survey days during the assigned survey month.
- Choose survey days in advance and distribute surveys on those days even if the pre-selected days have inclement weather.
- Schedule survey days evenly between weekdays and weekends.
- Distribute surveys during a two-hour period that ranges from low to high visitor traffic.
- If the daily distribution target is not met, continue on the next available weekend or weekday as appropriate.
- Choose and train

Selection of Survey Days

(See Appendix 2 for detailed, category-specific instructions.)

Survey days must be chosen during the assigned Survey Month of the individual NPS locations. Four survey days must be chosen for each concessioner category your

location is surveying (e.g., if your location is surveying both retail and dining experiences, choose four days for each category).

Visitor experiences and concessioner staffing can be significantly different between weekends and weekdays. As a result, the four survey days should be scheduled evenly between weekdays and weekends.

During the selected survey day, surveys should be distributed during a two hour period. The two hours should be during times with low to high visitor traffic (i.e., to distribute to visitors checking out of a hotel, the hours between 8:00am and 10:00am might be preferable).

If the “target” number of questionnaires to be distributed per survey day is not met, continue distribution on the next available weekend or weekday as appropriate.

Choosing Your Surveyors

(See Appendix 3 for detailed, instructions and FAQ.)

The quality of survey results is directly related to the methods, message, demeanor, and level of enthusiasm used by your Surveyors. As a result, Surveyors should be carefully selected and trained for this important survey responsibility.

To attain the highest quality results, the UI PSU encourages *Concessioner Survey Coordinators* to choose their Surveyors carefully, based on the following criteria. Surveyors should:

- Be able to carefully follow the survey distribution instructions,
- Be a uniformed park employee or uniformed park volunteer,
- Be dedicated solely to that duty for the two-hour survey day, and
- Be able to work well with a variety of people, and enthusiastically explain the importance of this study.

A Summary Example - Step by Step (including flow chart)

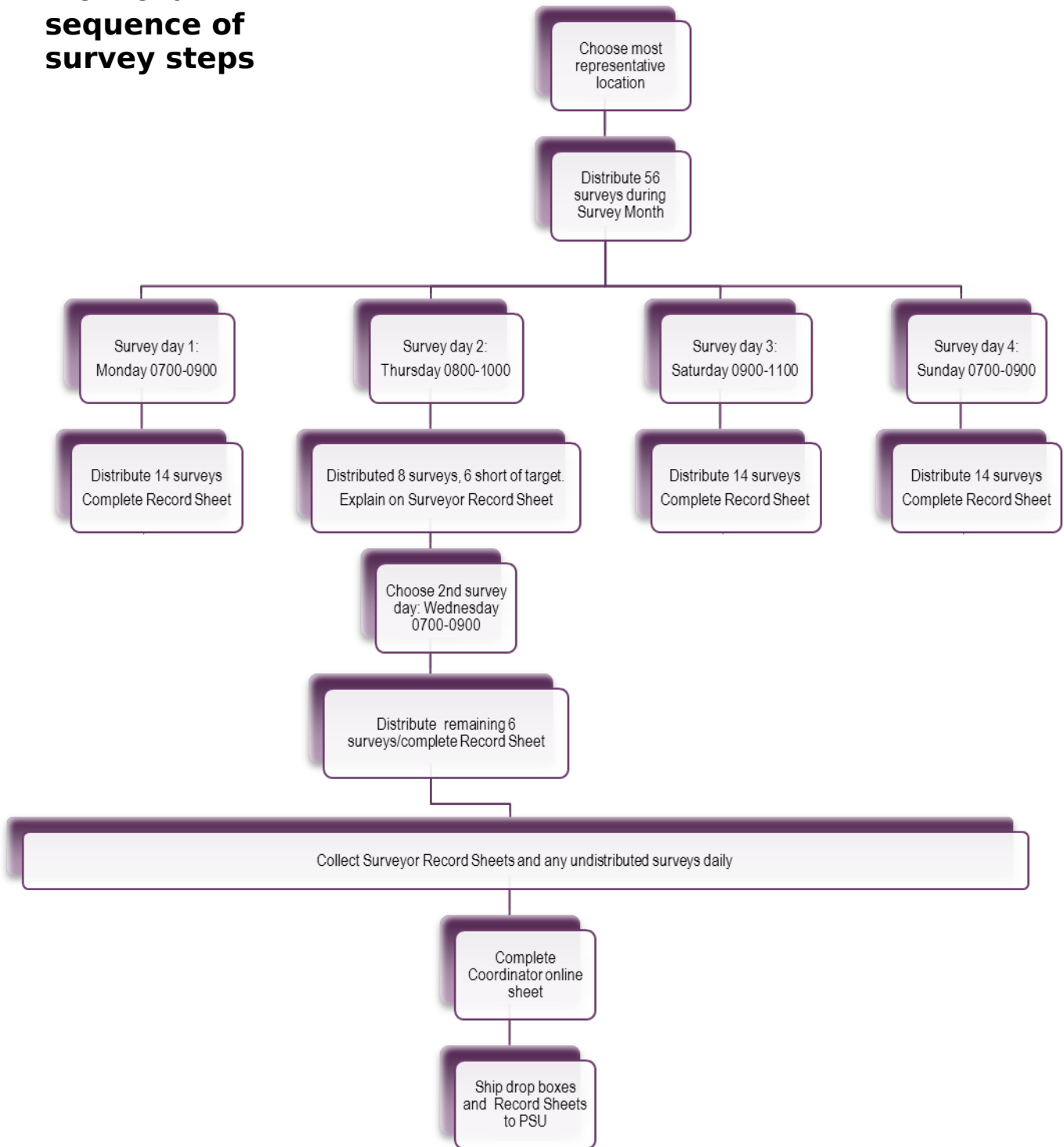
Imaginary National Park has been chosen to survey the lodging experience and assigned June as the Survey Month.

1. List of Lodging Possibilities:
Frontier Lake Lodge
Back Lake Lodge
Sundance Bay Village
Dude Ranch
Sundance Bay Campground
Back Lake Campground
2. Most representative:
Sundance Bay Village
 - Though Sundance Bay Village may not be as well known as Frontier Lake Lodge it offers a variety of lodging possibilities, such as cabins,

RV resort, and a campground and is perhaps more representative, accommodating a wider array of visitor desires and budget options.

3. Selection of survey days:
Tuesday, June 8; Thursday, June 10; Saturday June 12; and Saturday June 19.
- Choosing days earlier in the month allows survey days to be added if the daily survey distribution target of 14 surveys is not met. For example, if on Tuesday only 8 surveys are distributed, a second weekday, perhaps the following Wednesday can be added as a second day to distribute the remaining 6 surveys.

Flow chart sequence of survey steps



Pre-selecting the days and then not changing them is imperative. The days may be consecutive or spread out depending on what works best for your park and staff availability. NOTE: if your location is surveying a second type of concessioner service it is possible to survey a second concessioner on the same day as long as it is at a different time. Do not ask a visitor to complete two surveys—for instance, one for lodging and one for dining.

4. Selection of survey times:
Tuesday, 0700-0900;
Thursday, 0800-1000;
Saturday, 0900-1100;
Saturday, 0700-0900
Since we are surveying the lodging experience, the survey times should be around check out times. The two-hour period should contain some slow and high traffic time.

NOTE: if your location is surveying a second type of concessioner service it is possible to, for example, continue surveying for the retail experience in the following two-hour block (Tuesday, 0900-1100). Just keep in mind that visitors may not be asked to fill out a second concessioner survey.

5. Estimating the number of visitor parties expected to checkout during a two-hour period:
 - Since we want to distribute surveys evenly over the two-hour period if you expect 60 people on a weekday, you should ask the surveyor to approach every third visitor party, which would allow for some refusals. In the weekend, if the number of visitors expected is higher, 100 visitors during the two-hour period, the surveyor should approach every fifth visitor party.

Section 3: Execution of the Concessioner Survey

Introduction to the Survey

Understanding our visitors' needs and responding to their observations about concessioners is fundamental to the success of the NPS as a promoter of outdoor recreation on Federal lands. To help us understand the opinions of park visitors, we need your help in implementing this survey. This manual provides a systematic guide for implementing the survey.

The goal of this survey is to evaluate overall quality of concessioner services based on a representative sample of visitors. Procedures have been developed to ensure appropriate and representative sampling (Hoger, 2004). It is very important that these procedures are followed precisely to ensure the results truly reflect the variety of visitors using this NPS location. Without adherence to these procedures, the results will be neither accurate nor useful (Dyck, 2007).

One factor that affects the accuracy of the results is the number of completed surveys we receive. To encourage a high response rate, visitors will be asked to immediately complete the survey and slide it into the drop-box we provide.

Return the completed survey questionnaires to the PSU in the drop boxes using the return labels provided with the materials shipment. The results will be scanned and posted online and a hard copy of the report will be sent to the park.

Survey Distribution Instructions

Fundamental Concept:

- Distribute surveys to a random sample of visitors who use a concessioner service on a selected survey day. A visitor is one who has paid for a service on the day the survey is being conducted.
- Only visitors who have purchased a service within the specified concessioner category (i.e., retail, lodging, dining, guided tour or marina) should be surveyed.
- Only survey visitors who have not been surveyed before in a different concession category (i.e., if a visitor has already been asked to complete a survey for a dining experience do not ask them to complete another for their lodging experience).
- Only survey visitor parties with an adult, 18 years or older.

Step 1: Daily Distribution Target

- Each Survey Day the questionnaires, drop box, surveyor record sheet, pens and two clipboards should be brought to the survey site.
- Each NPS location will be provided 56 questionnaires to distribute per concession category for which they were selected (see cover letter for categories specific to this location).
- Distribute the 56 questionnaires equally over the four survey days (14 questionnaires per survey day). If this is not possible due to a low number of visitors, adding survey days is acceptable.
- The Surveyor Record Sheet (*template provided in Appendix 4*) needs to be filled out on each survey day indicating the number of visitor parties approached and number who accepted/refused to complete the questionnaire.
Note: Extra Record sheets – ONE is needed for every survey day – may also be downloaded from the PSU website:
<http://www.psu.uidaho.edu/>

Step 2: Selection of Visitor Party

- The visitor party should be surveyed if it meets two conditions:
 1. the visitor party paid for the concessioner service;
 2. the party has not been surveyed previously for another concession category.
- If these two conditions are not met, continue to the next visitor party where these conditions are met.

Quick Notes:

- Visitors must have used the concessioner service on the day you are surveying.
- Do not survey a visitor who has already completed a concessioner survey for a different category.
- Only adults 18 years and older may participate.
- Each survey day, distribute 14 questionnaires.
- The questionnaire should be completed by an adult who has had the most recent birthday.
- Stand outside the concessioner and select visitors using an objective method. Visitors who volunteer may not be selected.
- Always treat visitors in a dignified manner and never coerce them into participating.
- Keep accurate records by

- Do not distribute a questionnaire to a party where all members are under 18 years. This is a survey of adults, 18 years and older.
- Only one adult in the visitor party should complete the questionnaire. The person who fills out the survey should be chosen randomly, by asking for the person who has had the most recent birthday.
The reason for using the most recent birthday method is to ensure we get a good mix of visitors (not just women, not just older people, etc.). It is a good randomization technique.
- If you are in doubt whether anyone in the party is 18 years or older, ask: "Is there anyone in this group who was born before 1993?".

Step 3: Approaching a Visitor Party

- The surveyor should stand in a convenient location outside the concessioner.
- Instead of just surveying visitors who appear friendly or approachable or who have extra time to complete a survey, discuss with the *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* an objective method for selecting visitors to survey (see *Appendix 2 for more detailed instructions*). For example, employing one of the following approaches:

- o Every *n*th visitor to exit a specific area
- o A visitor at every *n*th campsite

**n*th equals a predetermined number dependent on number of visitors present, for example, *n* could represent every 3rd person. This method ensures a randomized sample.

- Visitors will pass by while the Surveyor is working with a respondent. Surveyors should take their time, finish with a respondent and then begin to identify the next respondent.

Quick Notes:

- This is the hardest part. It is tiring and at times frustrating. Some visitors, no matter how friendly you are, may be impolite. Just remember your attitude and enthusiasm is what will make the difference between the success and failure of this study. Please keep smiling!
- It is important for the surveyor to obtain the visitor's verbal consent to participate in the study.
- Although visitors may wish to volunteer, they should not be selected as potential respondents. Every potential respondent must be asked to participate in the survey. Visitors who volunteer may not be

Step 4: Narrative to a Potential Respondent

(See Appendix 3 for more interview tips/strategies.)

GREETING:

1. Hello! My name is (name), and (location name) is conducting an important survey.
2. We are asking a few visitors for their opinions about the park's concession services. Have you already completed a concessioner survey?
3. The National Park Service contracts with outside vendors to provide concession services such as lodging and dining; they are not part of the National Park Service. We are surveying visitors to collect information for the NPS about how satisfied visitors are with the contracted concessioners. Your participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous. You can complete the survey in less than 5 minutes. This feedback helps the NPS do a better job for its visitors.
4. Your opinion is important!
5. Would you be willing to complete the survey card?

IF THEY ACCEPT OR SAY "YES":

1. Would you be willing to answer two quick questions for the accuracy of the record I keep of visitors I have contacted?
2. May I have your zip code?

3. Considering all aspects of your (fill in survey category) experience, how well did the concessioner meet your expectations on a scale from 1 to 5, one being the best and five the worst?
4. When you are through with the survey card, would you please fold it in half and slide it into the lockbox?
5. Thank you very much. We really appreciate your help and hope you enjoy your visit.

IF THEY REFUSE OR SAY "NO":

1. I understand. Would you be willing to answer two quick questions for the accuracy of the records I keep of visitors I have contacted?
2. May I have your zip code?
3. Considering all aspects of your (fill in survey category) experience, how well did the concessioner meet your expectations on a scale from 1 to 5, one being the best and five the worst?
4. Thank you. We hope you enjoy your visit.

Step 5: Complete the Surveyor Record Sheet

(See Appendix 4 for sample record sheet)

After approaching every visitor party, whether or not they accept a questionnaire, please record the following information on the Surveyor Record Sheet:

- For each visitor party approached check whether they accepted or refused to complete the questionnaire.
- If they refuse, please ask the questions and fill in the record sheet as appropriate.
- If the surveyor is not able to get answers for the zip code and rating questions, explain the reason (i.e., “visitor was in a hurry to catch the bus”).
- For each day, please total the number of questionnaires accepted and refused.

Note: If the daily target number of questionnaires (14) is not distributed, please explain why on the record sheet.

Section 4: Managing the Concessioner Survey Data

Data management should begin as soon as survey distribution begins (Broom & Hall, 2009). It is important for the *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* to regularly review record sheets to be sure that the surveyors are collecting all the information and doing it properly. Be prepared for questions - no matter how many scenarios for randomly choosing visitors' are discussed, on site decisions can be difficult. For example, a common problem can be tour busses. If a tour bus group containing all senior citizens were exiting a restaurant, it would be inappropriate to distribute all 14 surveys to the group. It is important for surveys to be distributed to a variety of visitors - including different genders, races, ages, etc. - otherwise the data is biased and useless.

Drop Box Instructions:

- When the drop boxes are not in use, they need to be kept in a secure place. The boxes are to be with the surveyor when they are distributing the surveys. Drop boxes should never be left unattended. At the end of the survey month, the boxes with completed surveys must be shipped back to UI PSU using

the pre-paid mailing label included with the materials shipment.

Quick Notes:

- The drop boxes are to be with the surveyor when they are distributing surveys and at all other times kept in a secure place.
 - Tampering with any questionnaires before sending them to UI PSU is inappropriate and invalidates data.
 - NPS unit Concessioner Survey Coordinator should review each survey day the surveyor record sheet for accuracy.
 - At end of survey, complete coordinator online record sheet.
 - After all surveys are completed, ship drop boxes and daily surveyor record sheets back to PSU using enclosed FedEx label.
 - Thank you for participating.
- Please report lost, damaged, or stolen boxes immediately to Jennifer Hoger Russell. She can be reached at: 208.885.4806 or by email: jhoger@uidaho.edu

- Immediately after the 56 surveys have been distributed, place the drop box containing the completed questionnaires into the shipping carton. Affix the enclosed return-shipping label to the sealed packing box and call FedEx for a pick-up. There will be no costs incurred by the park for shipping. The FedEx shipping label has been filled out with all the necessary information so that the UI PSU can cover shipping expenses.

Record Sheets:

- The *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should look over the surveyor record sheet at the end of each survey day for accuracy and completion.
- After all surveys have been distributed, the *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should complete one report using the online form to summarize the entire survey month (see *Appendix 4 for sample record sheet*). Please include all surveyor record sheets in shipping carton with drop box.

What's Next?:

- Reports will be generated for the NPS Commercial Services program that focus on the NPS at the national level for each of the service categories with an additional report summarizing the

categories on their shared questions and demographics.

- Additionally, each park participating in the survey will receive a summary report specific to their involvement. Completed surveys will also be returned to the park each year so that managers will be able to use the open-ended comments.

• **THANK YOU**

Please know that your hard work and dedication to completing this survey with the highest level of scientific integrity is greatly appreciated!

Appendix 1: Roles and Responsibilities

The following are the roles and responsibilities for conducting the Concessioner Survey.

Superintendent

After receiving this manual the *Superintendent* should assign a Concessioner Survey Park Coordinator for each NPS unit they manage. In addition, the Superintendent should deliver this manual to the assigned coordinator.

Concessioner Survey Coordinator

The *Coordinator* will need to carefully read this manual and use the instructions and guidelines to plan the park's survey. The *Coordinator* will need to select and train Surveyors to properly distribute survey cards. The *Coordinator* will need to fill out the Concessioner Survey Coordinator Report form and include it with the lockbox to the UI PSU as soon as the NPS unit completes distribution of the survey cards.

Surveyors

The designated park *Surveyor(s)* will need to be trained according to the survey distribution instructions and guidelines included in this workbook. Surveyors will distribute survey cards to park visitors. Surveyors will need to fill out the Surveyor Record Sheets for each Survey Day and return the form and all remaining survey cards to the Concessioner Survey Coordinator.

Principal Investigator and UI PSU

The Director, Jennifer Hoyer Russell, will be available to provide information, guidance, and assistance that park staff may require for conducting the survey.

The *UI PSU* will analyze the data and send out a report at the end of each survey season.

Appendix 2: Choosing Where, When & Who to Survey

Surveying the RETAIL Experience

Choosing Where to Survey:

- A Retail establishment includes any store selling groceries, gifts, souvenirs, books, etc. Thinking about your unit, create a list that includes any contracted concessioner offering this type of service. After completing the list, consider the locations of the different stores and the assortment of goods carried. You will be responsible for choosing one store that you feel is most representative of your unit.
- Clearly, describe the concessioner location on the record sheets. This location will be used for all of the survey days.
- Once chosen, visit the concessioner location to discuss the study methods. Use this time to inform the manager that a NPS employee or volunteer will be handing out questionnaires to a random sample of exiting customers. Please do not specify the exact survey dates or times with the concessioner- this may cause a potential bias in the survey results.
- Identify a specific area outside the concessioner exit where the surveyor can safely stand to observe visitor movement.

Choosing When to Survey:

- To ensure that all types of visitors are able to be potentially selected, it is necessary to choose different survey times over the four survey days. For example, at a store survey times should vary between 9:00am and 11:00am, 11:00am and 1:00pm and 3:00pm and 5:00pm in order to encounter a variety of customers.
- Choose two-hour periods that provide a range between slow and high traffic.

Choosing Who to Survey:

- To ensure that surveyors randomly choose visitors for participation in the survey, it is necessary to develop an objective method. The goal is to distribute the daily survey target (14 surveys) evenly over a two-hour period. So, if the retail location has approximately 100 visitors who shop within a two hour period, the surveyor would need to approach every 5th visitor party (to allow for some refusals). If however, only 25 visitors are expected during the two-hour survey period, it is necessary to approach every other visitor to distribute the 14 surveys.
- The *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should discuss the strategy with the surveyor before beginning a survey period. At the end of

the survey period adjustments for remaining survey days should be made based on surveyor feedback.

- A park may need to schedule additional survey days if, because of visitation numbers, less than 56 survey cards are distributed over the four survey days. Continue scheduling survey days in the Survey Month until all 56 survey cards have been distributed.

Surveying the LODGING Experience

Choosing Where to Survey:

- A lodging experience includes any hotel, cabin rental, campground, RV site, etc. Thinking about your unit, create a list that includes any contracted concessioner offering this type of service. After completing the list, considering all of the different lodging possibilities, you will be responsible for choosing one location that you feel is most representative of your unit.
- Clearly, describe the concessioner location on the record sheets. This location will be used for all of the survey days.
- Once chosen, visit the concessioner location to discuss the study methods. Use this time to inform the manager that a NPS employee or volunteer will be handing out questionnaires to a random sample of exiting customers. Please do not specify the exact survey dates or times with the concessioner- this may cause a potential bias in the survey results.
- Identify a specific area outside the concessioner exit where the surveyor can safely stand to observe visitor movement.

Choosing When to Survey:

- To ensure that all types of visitors are able to be potentially selected, it is necessary to choose different survey times over the four survey days. For example, at a hotel or campground survey times should vary between 7:00am and 9:00am, 8:00am and 10:00am and 9:00am and 11:00am in order to encounter a variety of customers.
- Choose two-hour periods that provide a range between slow and high traffic.

Choosing Who to Survey:

- To ensure that surveyors randomly choose visitors for participation in the survey, it is necessary to develop an objective method. The goal is to distribute the daily survey target (14 surveys) evenly over a two-hour period. So, if the lodging location has approximately 100 visitors who check out within a two hour period, the surveyor would need to approach every 5th visitor party (to allow for some refusals). If however, only 25 visitors are expected during the two-hour survey period, it is necessary to approach every other visitor to distribute the 14 surveys.

- The *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should discuss the strategy with the surveyor before beginning a survey day. At the end of the survey day adjustments for the remaining survey days should be made based on surveyor feedback.
- A park may need to schedule additional survey days if, because of visitation numbers, less than 56 survey cards have been distributed over the four survey days. Continue scheduling survey days in the Survey Month until all 56 survey cards have been distributed.

Surveying the DINING Experience

Choosing Where to Survey:

- A dining experience includes any food purchased at either a restaurant or counter service location. Thinking about your unit, create a list that includes any contracted concessioner offering this type of service. After completing the list, considering all of the different dining possibilities, you will be responsible for choosing one location that you feel is most representative of your unit.
- Clearly, describe the concessioner location on the record sheets. This location will be used for all of the survey days.
- Once chosen, visit the concessioner location to discuss the study methods. Use this time to inform the manager that a NPS employee or volunteer will be handing out questionnaires to a random sample of exiting customers. Please do not specify the exact survey dates or times with the concessioner- this may cause a potential bias in the survey results.
- Identify a specific area outside the concessioner exit where the surveyor can safely stand to observe visitor movement.

Choosing When to Survey:

- To ensure that all types of visitors are able to be potentially selected, it is necessary to choose different survey times over the four survey days. For example, at a restaurant survey times should vary between 7:00am and 9:00am, 11:00am and 1:00pm and 5:00pm and 7:00pm in order to encounter breakfast, lunch and dinner customers.
- Choose two-hour periods that provide a range between slow and high traffic.

Choosing Who to Survey:

- To ensure that surveyors randomly choose visitors for participation in the survey, it is necessary to develop an objective method. The goal is to distribute the daily survey target (14 surveys) evenly over a two-hour period. So, if the dining location has approximately 100 visitors who eat within a two hour period, the surveyor would need

to approach every 5th visitor party (to allow for some refusals). If however, only 25 visitors are expected during the two-hour survey period, it is necessary to approach every other visitor to distribute the 14 surveys.

- The *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should discuss the strategy with the surveyor before beginning a survey period. At the end of the survey period adjustments for remaining survey days should be made based on surveyor feedback.
- A park may need to schedule additional survey days if, because of visitation numbers, less than 56 survey cards have been distributed over the four survey days. Continue scheduling survey days in the Survey Month until all 56 survey cards have been distributed.

Surveying the GUIDED TOUR Experience

Choosing Where to Survey:

- A guided tour experience includes rafting, horseback riding, etc. Thinking about your unit, create a list that includes any contracted concessioner offering this type of service. After completing the list, considering all of the different guided tour possibilities choose one location, which begins and ends the tour within park boundaries, that you feel is most representative for your unit.
- Clearly, describe the concessioner type and location on the record sheets. This location will be used for all of the survey days.
- Once chosen, visit the concessioner location to discuss the study methods. Use this time to inform the manager that a NPS employee or volunteer will be handing out questionnaires to a random sample of exiting customers. Please do not specify the exact survey dates or times with the concessioner- this may cause a potential bias in the survey results. Identify a specific area outside the concessioner exit where the surveyor can safely stand to observe visitor movement.

Choosing When to Survey:

- To ensure that all types of visitors are able to be potentially selected, it is necessary to choose different survey times over the four survey days. For example, if there are two tours per day, plan on scheduling survey periods to meet both exiting groups.
- Choose two-hour periods that provide a range between slow and high traffic.

Choosing Who to Survey:

- To ensure that surveyors randomly choose visitors for participation in the survey, it is necessary to develop an objective method. The goal is to distribute the daily survey target (14 surveys) over a

number of tour groups. So, if the tour has approximately 4 visitor parties, the surveyor would need to approach 4 returning tour groups (to allow for some refusals) on a survey day.

- The *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should discuss the strategy with the surveyor before beginning a survey period. At the end of the survey period adjustments for remaining survey days should be made based on surveyor feedback.
- A park may need to schedule additional survey days if, because of visitation numbers, less than 56 survey cards have been distributed over the four survey days. Continue scheduling survey days in the Survey Month until all 56 survey cards have been distributed.

Surveying the MARINA Experience

Choosing Where to Survey:

- A marina experience includes the following services: dry storage, wet slips and boat rental. Thinking about your unit, create a list that includes any contracted concessioner offering this type of marina service. After completing the list, considering the different marina possibilities, you will be responsible for choosing one location that you feel is most representative of your unit.
- Clearly, describe the marina location on the record sheets. This location will be used for all of the survey days.
- Once chosen, visit the concessioner location to discuss the study methods. Use this time to inform the manager that a NPS employee or volunteer will be handing out questionnaires to a random sample of exiting customers. Please do not specify the exact survey dates or times with the concessioner- this may cause a potential bias in the survey results.
- Identify a specific area outside the concessioner exit where the surveyor can safely stand to observe visitor movement.

Choosing When to Survey:

- To ensure that all types of visitors are able to be potentially selected, it is necessary to choose different survey times over the four survey days. For example, at a marina times should vary, based on hours of operation, between 7:00am and 9:00am, 11:00am and 1:00pm and 3:00pm and 5:00pm in order to encounter visitors using the various marina facilities.
- Choose two-hour periods that provide a range between slow and high traffic.

Choosing Who to Survey:

- To ensure that surveyors randomly choose visitors for participation in the survey, it is necessary to develop an objective method. The goal is to distribute the daily survey target (14 surveys) evenly over a two-hour period. So, if the marina location has approximately 25 visitors expected during the two-hour survey period, it is necessary to approach every other visitor to distribute the 14 surveys.
- The *Concessioner Survey Coordinator* should discuss the strategy with the surveyor before beginning a survey period. At the end of the survey period adjustments for remaining survey days should be made based on surveyor feedback.
- A park may need to schedule additional survey days if, because of visitation numbers, less than 56 survey cards have been distributed over the four survey days. Continue scheduling survey days in the Survey Month until all 56 survey cards have been distributed.

Appendix 3: Tips for Successful Survey Distribution

Selecting Surveyors

The quality of survey results directly relates to the methods, message, demeanor, and level of enthusiasm used by your Surveyors. As a result, Surveyors should be carefully selected and trained for this important survey responsibility.

To attain the highest quality results, the UI PSU encourages that Surveyors are chosen carefully, based on the following criteria. Surveyors should:

- be able to *carefully follow* the survey distribution instructions,
- be a *uniformed* park employee or *uniformed* park volunteer,
- be *dedicated solely* to that duty during the survey time, and
- be able to work well with a variety of people, and enthusiastically explain the importance of this project.

Suggestions for Dealing with Refusals and Questions

What are some typical refusals?

Visitor: I'm too busy. Or, I can't be bothered.

Reply: It will only take a few minutes and we would really appreciate your help.

Visitor: I don't know enough to answer.

Reply: The survey is only asking about your experience with this concession service.

Visitor: I'm not interested. Or, I don't like surveys.

Reply: The survey is important because the information you provide will help to improve park operations in the future.

While the accuracy of the results is strongly affected by the number of questionnaires we get back, the survey is voluntary. So if the party still refuses, let it go. Do not aggravate the visitors. **Record each refusal on the Record Sheets as they occur.**

What are some frequently asked questions?

Visitor: Why are you doing the survey?

Reply: To learn what visitors think about the concessioner services in the Park. This is one way the NPS uses to find out what is working well and what needs to be improved.

Visitor: Why was I chosen?

Reply: To minimize the possibility of error, we want to include all types of visitors in the study. In order to do this we are using a random method to choose visitors to ensure we are objective.

Visitor: Is the information confidential?

Reply: The information is anonymous. No personal information is collected.

Visitor: Who can I contact if I have any other questions regarding the survey?

Reply: The University of Idaho, Department of Conservation Social Science is conducting the study. If you have questions about the study or interview, you can ask the Director, Jennifer Hoger Russell. She can be reached at: 208.885.4806 or by email: jhoger@uidaho.edu.

Appendix 4: Scripts and Forms

Script for intercepting Visitors:

GREETING:

- Hello! My name is (name), and (location name) is conducting an important survey.
- We are asking a few visitors for their opinions about the park's concession services. Have you already completed a concessioner survey?
- The National Park Service contracts with outside vendors to provide concession services such as lodging and dining; they are not part of the National Park Service. We are surveying visitors to collect information for the NPS about how satisfied visitors are with the contracted concessioners. Your participation in the survey is voluntary and anonymous. You can complete the survey in less than 5 minutes. This feedback helps the NPS do a better job for its visitors.
- Your opinion is important!
- Would you be willing to complete this survey card?

IF THEY ACCEPT OR SAY "YES":

- Would you be willing to answer two quick questions for the accuracy of the record I keep of visitors I have contacted?
- May I have your zip code?
- Considering all aspects of your (fill in survey category) experience, how well did the concessioner meet your expectations on a scale from 1 to 5, one being the best and five the worst?
- When you are through with the survey card, would you please fold it in half and slide it into the lockbox?
- Thank you very much. We really appreciate your help and hope you enjoy your visit.

IF THEY REFUSE OR SAY "NO":

- I understand. Would you be willing to answer two quick questions for the accuracy of the records I keep of visitors I have contacted?
- May I have your zip code?
- Considering all aspects of your (fill in survey category) experience, how well did the concessioner meet your expectations on a scale from 1 to 5, one being the best and five the worst?
- Thank you. We hope you enjoy your visit.

Concessioner Survey Coordinator Record Sheet

NOTE: This is a template for your convenience. The actual report needs to be filled out online at the PSU website: www.psu.uidaho.edu

NPS unit

name: _____

Coordinator

name: _____

Park phone

()

Coordinator

number:

email: _____

List survey locations, date and time:

Day 1 Location: ___/___/___ Time:	Additional Day Location: ___/___/___ Time:
Day 2 Location: ___/___/___ Time:	Additional Day Location: ___/___/___ Time:
Day 3 Location: ___/___/___ Time:	Additional Day Location: ___/___/___ Time:
Day 4 Location: ___/___/___ Time:	Additional Day Location: ___/___/___ Time:

Please attach additional day information as needed.

Date Survey Completed: ___ / ___ / ___ **Total number of survey days:** _____

Total number of cards distributed: _____

Were you able to follow the survey guidelines? **Yes** **No**
(circle one)

If no, please explain:

--

General comments and suggestions:

--

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*For more information, please contact:
Jennifer Hoger Russell, phone: 208-885-4806, fax: 208-885-4261, e-mail:
jhoger@uidaho.edu*

Concessioner Surveyor Record Sheet

Please return this record sheet and any remaining survey questionnaires to your NPS unit Concessioner Survey Coordinator at the end of every survey day. Thank You!

NOTE: The surveyor record sheet is two sided. Complete the questions below at the end of the survey day. The second side contains the table that needs to be filled out for EVERY visitor approached.

NPS unit name: -

Your name: _____

Survey distribution location:

Survey date: _____ Survey time:

Total number of questionnaires distributed:

If less than 14, please explain:

Were you able to follow the survey guidelines?

If no, please explain:

Surveyor Record Sheet (continued)

Would you be willing to answer two quick questions for the accuracy of the record I keep of visitors I have contacted?

- May I have your zip code?
- Considering all aspects of your (fill in survey category) experience, how well did the concessioner meet your expectations on a scale from 1 to 5, one being the best and five the worst?

Visitor Parties Approached	Received Survey		Gender		Zip Code	Rating 1- 5
	YES	NO	MALE	FEMALE		
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						

22						
23						
24						
Daily Total						

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