

February 6, 2013

Mr. Adrian H. Garcia  
Forestry Support Services  
Box 84004  
Los Angeles, CA 90073

Dear Mr. Garcia:

I appreciate your January 2, 2013, comment on the Federal Register notice regarding the Forest Service's intent to continue the National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) program.

I agree that quality and consistency in field survey crews is very important. That has been widely discussed in the NVUM program, and is well-known in all of the forms of monitoring that the Forest Service accomplishes. That is why in the NVUM program we strive every year to improve the quality and availability of our field training program.

Each forest supervisor and forest staff has the responsibility and authority to decide, for their situation, what is the most effective and efficient means to accomplish the NVUM fieldwork that is assigned. Forest staff contacts are made aware of the consequences of poor adherence to the established field protocols. We have seen as much variation in quality of field interviewers within the public, private, or non-profit types as across the types. As a result, we insist that, however the field units choose to accomplish their NVUM targets, all interview crews are trained and that there is at least one person available at the field unit level who can train interviewers for that unit. The same reason underlies our quality control programs.

I have a contact person on the staff of each of the agency's Regional Offices. Part of their job is to help the local field staff identify potential contractors to accomplish the field interviewing. I will again make sure that each of my regional coordinators is aware of your company and has your contact information.

Thank you for your continued interest in and support of the NVUM program.

Sincerely,



Donald B.K. English, Ph.D.  
Visitor Use Monitoring Program Manager  
National Forest System; Recreation, Heritage, and Volunteer Resources