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National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Denali National Park and Preserve Backcountry [Day and Overnight] Hiker Experience Survey**

***Your perspective matters!***



**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** The National Park Service is authorized by the NPS Research Mandate (54 USC 100702) to collect this information. This information will be used by park managers to understand visitors’ perceptions of bison-safety at Yellowstone National Park. Responses to this request are voluntary and anonymous. Your name will never be associated with your answers, and all contact information will be destroyed when the data collection is concluded. No action may be taken against you for refusing to supply the information requested. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number and expiration date.

**BURDEN ESTIMATE**: We estimate that it will take about 10 minutes to complete this questionnaire. You may send comments concerning the burden estimates or any aspect of this information collection to: Dr. Rose Keller, Denali National Park &Preserve Social Scientist; rose\_keller@nps.gov (email).

Welcome to Denali National Park and Preserve! You have been selected to help park management to understanding more about the experiences of backcountry hikers here at Denali. Now that you are returning from your adventure, we would like to hear from you, because your feedback is critical and this survey is the only way we will know if we are meeting the recreation goals, opportunities to explore, learn, and wildlife experiences you expected while visiting Denali. Your responses will provide us with insight that we may use in our backcountry management strategies. Please take the time to complete the survey and return it before you leave the bus ride.

**SECTION 1: Background Information**

**1a.** How many visits have you made to Denali National Park backcountry?

**1a. \_\_\_\_First visit , or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_visits (write in #)**

**1b.** From the options given, what is your primary motivation for visiting Denali?

**1b. (choose best option)**

**\_\_\_\_\_ to experience solitude and nature**

**\_\_\_\_\_ to experience a sense of adventure/challenge**

**\_\_\_\_\_ to view wildlife**

**\_\_\_\_\_ to view scenery**

**\_\_\_\_\_ to explore my sense of self**

**1c.** What is your level of wilderness experience?

**\_\_\_\_Novice (0-2 wilderness trips)**

**\_\_\_\_Somewhat experienced (3-5 trips)**

**\_\_\_\_Very experienced (6 or more trips)**

**SECTION 2: Backcountry Information**

**2a.** Did you spend any time hiking on [named (maintained)] trails?

**2a. \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No**

**2a. If Yes, which one(s)? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**2b.** Would you prefer fewer or more maintained trails in the backcountry?

**2b. \_\_\_Fewer \_\_\_\_More \_\_\_\_Same \_\_\_\_Don’t know**

**2c.** Did Denali National Park staff provide you with sufficient information to hike in the backcountry?

**2c. \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No**

**2d.** Did you come to Denali specifically to hike off-trail?

**2d. \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No**

**2e.** Did you rely on social media to plan your hike in the backcountry?

**2e. \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No**

**2f.** If YES, which sources?

**2f. Check all that apply**

**\_\_\_**Magazine/online (write) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_Online hiker/explorer forum

\_\_\_Facebook

\_\_\_Guide/Tour book (write)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_Gaia GPS

\_\_\_GPS product support

\_\_\_ iNaturalist

\_\_\_Geocaching Apps

\_\_\_ Other (write) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: This version of this question will only appear in the DAY HIKER survey**

**2g. Check the box** according to your best approximation of the number of times today you heard or saw each of the following items in the table below **Be sure to write in the Backcountry UNIT #(s) or trails you were on today. (If needed** the Survey interviewer has a reference map to help you to identify the Unit Numbers).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Day Hike** | **Number of encounters during your day** | | | | | |
| *Backcountry* UNIT # (s)\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_ (write in) | **0 times** | **1-2 times** | **3-5 times** | **5-10 times** | | **Over 10 times** |
| **Motorized noise** (Includes noise from construction, buses and other vehicles on park road. Excludes aircraft noise) |  |  |  |  | |  |
| **Aircraft noise** (Includes fly-overs, landings, takeoffs) |  |  |  |  | |  |
| **Modern equipment** (Includes bikes, equipment, chain saws, vehicles. Excludes backpacking equipment) |  |  |  |  | |  |
| **Landscape modifications** (Includes trails, rock cairns, trampled vegetation. Excludespark road) |  |  |  |  | |  |
| **Other Park visitors** (How often did you encounter other visitors, or groups smaller than 6 people?) |  |  |  |  | |  |
| **Large Groups of Park visitors** (Encounters with groups larger than 6 people) |  |  |  |  | |  |
| **Rangers** (How often did you encounter Park rangers?) |  |  |  |  | |  |
| **Researchers/Research Teams** (how often did you come across researchers?) |  |  |  |  | |  |
|  | | | | | | |
| Park Road (how much of your day did you see it?) **CHECK one** | **□**  **not at all** | **□**  **some of the day** | **□**  **most of**  **the day** | | **□**  **all day** | |
|  | | | | | | |
| At any time during the day did you see: Litter or Human Waste? | | | **□ Yes □ No** | | | |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **NOTE: The following two questions will be added and will only appear in the OVERNIGHT version of the survey. There will be three similar tables for the respondent to complete that account for at least three days in the backcountry.** | |
| Were you **ABLE** to Camp out of Sight of Others? | **□ Yes □ No** |
| Did you **WANT** to camp out of sight of others? | **□ Yes □ No** |

**SECTION 3: The Denali Wilderness**

**3a.** Our goal is to maintain the wilderness character of Denali. We would like for your to first tell us how important each of the following wilderness experiences are when you are in the backcountry (**Check the box** corresponding to how importance of each experience). Then **Check the box** to rate the quality the experience you had here

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Wilderness Experiences** | | | |  | **Quality of the Experience** | | |
|  | Important | Somewhat Important | Not  Important | High Quality | Decent Quality | Poor Quality |
|  |  |  |  | Emoji_u1f600 | neutral-face | angry-face |
| Feeling of Solitude | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Feeling of being in a pristine environment | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Viewing Wolves | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Viewing Bears | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Viewing Dall Sheep | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Being away from noise | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Having unconfined Recreation: being able to travel freely, no designated campsites | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Being spiritually  connected with nature | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Fostering intimacy with close group | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Undeveloped  quality of nature: without modern human occupation | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Being surrounded by natural sounds | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Feeling independent and self-reliant | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Challenging myself/Adventure | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |

**3b.**  If you selected the **feeling of solitude** as important in the table above, then tell us what would be the maximum number of people you could encounter per day to an overall feeling of solitude that would still rate as important?

3b. *Write in a maximum # of people/day : \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**NOTE: This question will only appear in the DAY HIKER SURVEY**

**3c.** If offered, would you use a commercial (tour) service for day hiking in the Denali backcountry?

\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No

**NOTE: This question will only appear OVERNIGHT SURVEY**

**3c.** Did you get your first choice of unit for the backcountry? \_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No

**3d**. Would you use an online reservation system for overnight stays in the Denali backcountry? (Check one) \_\_\_\_\_Yes \_\_\_\_No

**3e.** Based upon your answers in question #2 Please tell us how each item below affected your overall enjoyment during your trip. (Check one)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **How much did each of the following you experienced impact your overall enjoyment?** | **Emoji_u1f600Very positively** | **medium-happy-facePositively** | **neutral-faceNot at all** | **mid-angry-faceNegatively** | **angry-faceVery negatively** |
| The amount of motorized noise | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| The amount of aircraft noise | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Seeing modern equipment | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Seeing trampled vegetation or rock cairns | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Seeing the Park road | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Seeing other Park visitors (less than 6 per group) | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Seeing large groups of visitors (6 or more per group) | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Seeing/encountering Rangers | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Seeing/encountering Research Teams | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Camping out of sight of others | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |

**3f.** How acceptable to you is each of the following potential events on your trip? (Please check one response).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Never Acceptable** | **Sometimes Acceptable** | **Always Acceptable** | **Don’t Know** |
| Encounter more than 2 groups/day in wilderness | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Encounter more than 2 groups/ day on trails | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Experience between 2-5 times/day aircraft noise | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Experience more than 5-times /day aircraft noise | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| See evidence of human impact in wilderness | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| See evidence of human impact next to trails | □ | □ | □ | □ |

**SECTION 4: Personal Perspective**

**4a.** Please tell us the level of support you have for each of the following actions. Check one box for each statement to indicate if you strongly oppose or strongly support the action in the first column. (Please select one response)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Strongly Oppose** | **Oppose** | **Neither Support/Oppose** | **Support** | **Strongly Support** |
| More scientific research in Park | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| More guided/tourist activities in Park | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Expanded Biking opportunities in the Park | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Limiting visitor numbers in Denali’s wilderness | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Mandatory wildlife safety and Leave No Trace talks for day hikers | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| New trail systems in Wonder Lake/Kantishna area | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Improved relations with Subsistence users of the Park and Preserve | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Improve wildlife viewing opportunities. Check the **most important animal you would like to view**   * Bear, * Caribou, * Dall Sheep, * Wolf, * Moose * Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Cooperate more closely with State to regulate sport hunting and trapping around park boundaries. | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Cooperate more closely with other federal, state and private lands to conserve natural and cultural resources. | □ | □ | □ | □ | □ |

4b Trust and Relevancy

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Not at all** | | **A little** | **Some** | **A lot** | **Don’t know** |
| **How much do you trust the National Park Service?** |  | |  |  |  |  |
| Nationally | □ | | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| At [NPS SITE]? | □ | | □ | □ | □ | □ |
|  |  | |  |  |  |  |
| **In your opinion, how relevant is the National Park Service:** |  | |  |  |  |  |
| Locally (specifically in your local area) | □ | | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Nationally | □ | | □ | □ | □ | □ |
| Internationally | □ | | □ | □ | □ | □ |
|  | | | | | | |
|  | **Much worse** | **Worse** | | **Stayed the same** | **Better** | **Much better** |
| **In the last decade, how has your level of trust in National Park Service Management changed?** |  |  | |  |  |  |
| At Denali? | □ | □ | | □ | □ | □ |
| Locally (specifically in your local area) | □ | □ | | □ | □ | □ |
| At the national level? | □ | □ | | □ | □ | □ |
|  |  | | | | | |
| **In the last decade, has your level of trust in other federal agencies (such as EPA, BLM, etc.,) changed** |  |  | |  |  |  |
| Nationally | □ | □ | | □ | □ | □ |
| Locally (specifically in your local area) | □ | □ | | □ | □ | □ |
|  |  |  | |  |  |  |
| **In the last decade, has your level of trust in non-federal entities (such as NGOs, corporations etc.,) changed?** |  |  | |  |  |  |
| Nationally | □ | □ | | □ | □ | □ |
| Locally (specifically in your local area) | □ | □ | | □ | □ | □ |

**5. Demographic Questions**

**5a**. What is your **gender**? (Please write in) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5b**. In **what year** were you **born**? (Please write in) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**5c. For you only, are you** Hispanic or Latino

\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

What is your **race**? (Check **all** that apply).

\_\_\_\_Alaskan Native or American Indian

\_\_\_\_Asian

\_\_\_\_Black or African American

\_\_\_\_Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

\_\_\_\_White

5d. What is your primary **occupation**? (*write in*)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5e. What was your household’s **total** **income** in the past 12 months? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ($), or: what category fits best?

\_\_\_under 25,000 \_\_\_\_70,000—99,999 \_\_\_\_200,000 or more

\_\_\_26,000—39,999 \_\_\_\_100,000—150,000 \_\_\_\_prefer not to answer

\_\_\_40,000– 69,999 \_\_\_\_150,000—200,000

5f. How many people are in your household? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (number of people)

5g. What is the total anticipated **cost of this trip** to Denali from when you left home to when you return? ($)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5h. **Where** are you **visiting from**? (Check one, and write in)

□ Alaska (*provide zip code)* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

are you a year-round or seasonal resident? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_Year-round /\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Seasonal

□ Other U.S. State (*provide State) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

□ International (*provide Country)* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5i. What is your level of formal **education**? (Check one)

* Some high school
* High school graduate
* Vocational/trade school certificate
* Some college
* Two-year college degree
* Four-year college degree [or Bachelor’s degree]
* Master’s Degree [or Graduate degree]
* Ph.D., M.D., J.D., or equivalent

5j **How many** are in your **group**? (Write in) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5k. What **kind of group** are you travelling with this trip? (Check one)

□ Family □ N/A

□ Friends □ Family and Friends

□ Guided tour (which one?) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**(Please use the space on the back page to provide additional comments)**

**THANK YOU** for your help and feedback. Your experience in Denali’s Backcountry truly matters!