



Programmatic Review and Clearance Process for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys

The scope of the Programmatic Review and Clearance Process for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys is limited and will only include individual surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and residents of communities near parks. Use of the programmatic review will be limited to non-controversial surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and/or residents of communities near parks that are not likely to include topics of significant interest in the review process. Additionally, this process is limited to non-controversial information collections that do not attract attention to significant, sensitive, or political issues. Examples of significant, sensitive, or political issues include: seeking opinions regarding political figures; obtaining citizen feedback related to high-visibility or high-impact issues like the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park, the delisting of specific Endangered Species, or drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Submission Date: 2/1/2017

Project Title: Denali Winter Roads and Trails Survey

Abstract (not to exceed 150 words)

Monitoring for adverse effects to wildlife and park operations and visitor safety were required as part Denali National Park strategic planning efforts. Current monitoring efforts show an increase of park visitation from 2014-2016. However, the park does not know if this increased visitation is correlated to increased winter recreation opportunities or how it relates to visitor experiences. The purpose of this collection is to gauge visitor satisfaction with the current status of roads and trails in Denali National Park and Preserve (DENA).

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Project Information

Where will the collection take place? (Name of NPS Site) Denali National Park and Preserve(DENA)

Sampling Period **Start Date: June 1, 2017** **End Date: Sept 17, 2017**

Type of Information Collection Instrument (Check ALL that Apply)

- Mail-Back Questionnaire Face-to-Face Interview Focus Groups
 On-Site Questionnaire Telephone Survey

Will an electronic device be used to collect information?

- No Yes - type of device: iPads on site and personal computers

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 and development.

In 2015 Denali National Park and Preserve began an Environmental Assessment and as mandated a visitor experience analysis is necessary to provided information regarding visitor use of the area, especially the roads and trails. DENA is also in the process of updating its Trail Strategy that will be used to provide guidance to individual trail related documents for the next 15 years.

This collection is required and necessary to provided information regarding the impact of visitor use due to early road opening (plowing during the winter to Mile 9 of the Park Road) period during the winter – spring shoulder season that the road is currently plowed (February through April). As well as effect of increased visitation on the backcountry and trails throughout the park. Mangers and planners are interested in knowing more about the type of use, extent and duration of use, expectations and preferences during the early road opening season.

Survey Methodology

(a) Respondent Universe:

There will be two separate respondent groups for this collection

- On-site: Respondents will consist of all members of the public, over the age of 18, who are visiting the park during the winter early road opening season (February – April).
- Off-Site: Respondents will consist of all members of the local gateway communities, over the age of 18, who are in attendance at the Trails Strategy Public Meetings during the sampling period.

(b) Sampling Plan/Procedures:

For the on-site surveys, a systematic sampling method will be used to select visitors at the following location listed in the table below. Visitors will be randomly selected by intercepting every 3rd visitor before they exit the designated sampling locations. The 32 sampling days will be stratified by day of the week, time, and location. On each sampling day, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., a trained researcher will be stationed at one of the following on-site locations:

- Murie Science and Learning Center info desk after they receive information about the Park, winter activities, and visit the Center's exhibit
- Mt. Vista Rest Area when groups return their vehicles after their recreational use of the surrounding area)

Location	Sampling Days Per Site		
	February	March	April
Murie Science and Learning Center	5	5	5
Mt. Vista Rest Area	5	5	5
Healy, AK (Community Center)	1	0	0
McKinley Village, AK (Community Center)	0	1	0
Total	11	11	10

For the on-site survey, one visitor group will be intercepted at a time and once the initial contact is ends the next interval will begin. If researchers are unable to meet their sampling quota for the month, which will be assessed mid-month each month, additional day(s) will be added and the sampling procedures will continue as described above. Sampling will not occur on holidays or days with expected abnormal visitation as to not skew the sample.

There are typically between 20-25 people in attendance that the Trails Strategy Public Meetings. Because of the size and nature of the audience, we will randomly select every other person to participate in the collection. We will use this method with less than 100 people. If there are more than 100 people in attendance we will select every 3rd person exiting the meeting. An announcement will be made at the end of the meeting that information about a survey will be given to a random sample of the people in the room.

Location	Estimated Number of Visitor Contacts		
	February	March	April
Murie Science and Learning Center	50	50	63
Mt. Vista Rest Area	7	7	7
Healy, AK (Community Center)	13	0	0
McKinley Village, AK (Community Center)	0	13	0
TOTAL	0	0	0

(c) Instrument Administration:

All selected persons (both on-site and at the meetings) will be approached, greeted and asked to participate in the survey as they are exiting the designated sampling location. If a group is approached the person 18 year old or older with the closest birthday to the current date will be asked to serve as the respondent. For those who agree to participate (both on-site and at the meetings) will be given a post card with a unique numeric identifier, information about the survey, and instructions for linking to an electronic version of survey. The participants will be handed a survey tracker log sheet and asked to write their email address next to the same unique numeric identifier on their post card. The email address will only be used as a means to send all participants the initial post-visit reminder with the URL that will connect them to the survey from the email; and to send the follow-up email to all non-respondents. (All email addressed will be destroyed by shredding at the end of the sampling period. Individual names or any other personal identifiable information will not be requested or necessary for the purposes of this study).

The numeric identifier on each postcard will be used to code all respondents and non-respondents. The survey instrument will ask the respondent to write the unique identifier in the space provided. One follow-up reminder will be sent to all non-respondents with a link to the full survey or to the non-response survey questions. The survey will be available for one full calendar month after the end of the sampling period.

Individuals or groups unwilling or unable to participate in the study will be thanked for their consideration. All visitors will be asked to answer the four questions that will be used to non-response check for bias. In addition to the responses to the non-response bias questions, additional characteristics (i.e., sex, apparent recreational activity, group size, number of adults and children in group, and potential language barrier time, location, mode of transportation) will be documented in a study log.

Visitors selected to participate in the survey will be read the following script:

"Hello, my name is _____. I am conducting a survey for the National Park Service. We are trying to understand more about visitor experiences with trails and roads in Denali during the late winter season of the Park. Your participation is voluntary and all responses will be kept anonymous. Would you be willing to complete questionnaire that should take no more than 10 minutes to complete here using an iPad or once you return home?"

FOR BOTH SURVEY GROUPS

→ If **YES** - then ask, "Are you 18 years or older?"

→ If **YES** "Thank you for agreeing to participate in this study. This postcard contains information about the study and a link that will you will use to connect to our on-line survey when you are at home. There is a number on the post card that you will use when you are taking the survey. I would like to ask you to provide your email address on the space next to the same number on the postcard. We will only use your email address to send you a reminder about the survey in a couple of weeks only if we haven't heard from you by then. We are hoping that you will take the time to complete the survey. The information you provide us will help us with our management planning here at the park. Before you leave, may I ask you four very short questions? Afterwards they will Record responses in spaces provided on the tracking sheet and thank them for their time.

- If NO- (soft refusal) – the surveyor will ask if they would be willing to answer the non-response bias questions (listed below) before they leave. Afterwards they will *Record responses in spaces provided on the tracking sheet and thank them for their time.*
- If NO- (Hard refusal) – The surveyor will thank them for their time.

(d) Expected Response Rate/Confidence Levels:

Approximately 210 combined visitors and community members will be asked to participate in the study, 70 each month of the three month sampling period.

Response rates based upon total estimated number of all visitor contacted					
Intercept Location	Initial Contacts	Acceptance 80%	Non-respondents (Soft refusals) 20%	Non-response survey 20%	Hard Refusals 80%
Murie Science and Learning Center	163	130	33	6	26
Mt. Vista Rest Area	21	17	4	1	3
Healy, AK (Community Center)	13	10	3	1	2
McKinley Village, AK (Community Center)	13	10	3	2	2
Total	210	167	43	0	0
% soft refusals					

Based upon the number of people accepting postcards and the invitation to complete the survey we anticipate that at least 50% will complete the on-line survey. This also includes the number of people responding to the follow-up reminder. Of the non-respondents we expect that 20% will complete the non-response survey leaving 20 non-respondents. A total of 210 individuals will be contacted during the sampling period (on-site visitors: n=184 and meeting participants n=26). We estimate that a total of 147 (80%) visitors will agree on-site to participate in the survey and a total 20 (80%) will agree to participate at the meetings.

From the total number of acceptances (n=167), we anticipate that 50% will complete and return the survey by email or on site with a provided iPad for visitors (on-site visitors: n= 74 and meeting participants: n=10). Of those 20% (n= 29) will complete the non-response survey questions and 10% will completely refuse to complete the survey.

This response rate was estimated based on surveys result of similar NPS on-line surveys. Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the day-use survey findings will be accurate to within 2 to 4 percentage points. The number of all refusals will be recorded and reported in a survey log, and will be used in calculating the response rate

Survey	Completed On-line Surveys			
	On-site Acceptance	Completed online surveys 50%	Non-response survey 20%	Non-respondents/ Hard Refusals 80%
All On-site Surveys	147	74	15	59
Public Meetings	20	10	4	8
Total	167	84	19	0

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

During the initial contact, the interviewer will ask each visitor who refuses participation, AND each visitor who does not complete the survey (and demographic section) four questions taken from the survey. These questions will be used in a non-response bias analysis.

Intercept non-response questions

- 1) *Where are you from (zip code/Country)?*
- 2) *What is your age?*
- 3) *Would you say this trip to Denali is a large portion of your annual budget? (Yes / No)*
- 4) *What kind of group are you travelling with today?*

Survey Non- response Questions:

- 1) *Do you use Denali's formal trails?*
 Yes No

- 2) *Do you support having formal winter trails?*
 Yes No Don't Know/No opinion
- 3) *What is your age? (Please write in) _____*

Responses will be recorded on a log for every survey contact. Results of the non-response bias check will be used to develop sample weights, and provide context to the analysis. Underrepresentation of residency and age groups will be described in the study report. Any implications for park planning and management will also be discussed.

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

A pre-test of the survey instrument was conducted on site with less than 9 visitors. The results revealed:

- The respondent burden mean was 7 minutes
- AK residents and Chinese visitors well represented
- Visitors did not already know about the early road opening in the winter season

Burden Estimates

The overall burden for this collection is estimated based upon the two phases of the collection. The first phase is the "intercept" phase" where the initial contact and invitation is made. The section phase is the "survey completion" phase.

Intercept Phase - Overall, we plan to approach a total of 210 individuals during the initial contact; and from that we expect that 80% (n=167) will accept a post card and agree to complete the survey online. We have calculated the initial contact time to be at least 2 minute per person this time will be used to explain the study, request participation and ask the four non-response questions. We expect that 20% (n=43) of all of the people contacted will refuse to participate but 10 of them will take the additional minute to answer the non-response questions The initial contact and non-response time for this phase of the collection will be 6 hours (177x 2 minutes = 6 hours)

Estimated Total Number	
Initial Contact/ Nonresponse survey	177
On-site Refusals	33
Total contacts	210

Estimation of Time ALL sites (minutes)	
Initial Contact/ Nonresponse survey	2
On-site Refusals	0

Estimation of Burden ALL sites (hours)	
Initial Contact/ Nonresponse survey	6
On-site Refusals	0
Total	6

Survey Completion Phase - For those who agree to participate we expect that 50% (n=84) will return a completed questionnaire. Based on the pretest efforts we have estimated the time to complete the questionnaire to be no more than 10 minutes per respondent. Therefore the burden for completing the questionnaire is (84x10 minutes = 14 hours). We are anticipating that 17 people refusing to complete the full survey will take one minute to answer the non-response questions for the on-line survey (17x 1 minute = <1 hour).

Estimated Total Number	
Completed Responses	84
Nonresponse Survey	17
Total respondents	0

Estimation of Time ALL sites (minutes)	
Completed Responses	10
Nonresponse Survey	1

Estimation of Burden ALL sites (hours)	
Completed Responses	14
Nonresponse Survey	<1
Total	14

The total burden for this collection is estimated to be 20 hours. This time includes the time for both phases of this collection.

Reporting Plan

Response frequencies will be tabulated and measures of central tendency computed (e.g., mean, median, mode, as appropriate). The survey results will be compiled and into a master database to inform park managers of Denali winter use, and give the MSLC staff better understanding of the difference in park visitors, their needs and language, over the winter season. A report with visitor preferences for winter activities and services in Denali will be drafted by the Park road ecologist, recreation planner, and social scientist and reviewed by specific DENA divisions (who have indicated an interest in the results). The draft report will be reviewed by colleagues, the Long-Range Transportation Plan IDT, and the division Chiefs and Superintendent. The final report will be presented to the Denali Management Team and posted as a Natural Resource Data Series in the NPS Data Store (<https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/>). Hard copies will be available on request.