



## 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: 5/30/2017

PROJECT TITLE: **Grand Teton National Park Qualitative Semi-Structured Interview Guide for String and Leigh Lakes  
2017**

**ABSTRACT:** (not to exceed 150 words)

*String and Leigh Lakes have become some of the most highly visited areas in Grand Teton National Park (GRTE). As visitor use increases to this area of GRTE, and all National Parks, it is important to identify, understand, and monitor key components of the visitor experience. This study seeks to understand visitors' travel patterns to GRTE and these areas specifically as well as information sources that informed their visit and expectations; as well as motivations, expectations, and perceptions of their experience at String and Leigh Lakes, as it relates to current social and ecological conditions at these key sites. On-site semi-structured interviews will be conducted from July to October of 2017. All adults (aged 18 and older) in the sampling area during the sampling period will be eligible to participate in the interviews.*

### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

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**PROJECT INFORMATION:**

**Where will the collection take place:** Grand Teton National Park (GRTE)

**Sampling Period Start Date:** July 15, 2017 **Sampling Period End Date:** October 12, 2017

Type of Information Collection Instrument: (Check ALL that Apply)

- Mail-Back Questionnaire     Face-to-Face Interview     Focus Groups  
 On-Site Questionnaire     Telephone Survey     Other (List)

Will an electronic device be used to collect information?  No  Yes – Type of Device:

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**SURVEY JUSTIFICATION:**

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*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.*

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String and Leigh Lakes and the surrounding trail systems that encompass this area, have become some of the most highly visited destinations in GRTE. For example, from 2014 to 2016, there was a ~30% increase in visitation to the area, which was documented by park staff via trail counters that access the String and Leigh Lakes. These popular lakes and surrounding trail systems provide visitors the opportunity for a variety of experiences and activities. Visitors may partake in water or land-based activities, and also have access to backcountry areas, as well as front-country areas – including one of the park's few picnic areas – all at the base of the iconic and scenic Teton mountain range. Thus, visitor activities in the area range from paddle-boarding, kayaking and canoeing, day-hiking, backpacking, horseback riding, and water-side picnicking.

As visitation to these sites continues to increase, so does the significance of informed visitor management to properly plan and protect the social and ecological systems in the area. Impacts from increased use are already evident in the String and Leigh Lakes. For example, as a result of managed parking densities reaching capacity during the 2016 season, park volunteers regularly documented approximately 250 undesignated parking spots as being used by visitors accessing the areas. These types of visitor behaviors have the potential to damage the fragile ecological systems, and social experiences due to potential crowding and lack of parking, access, conflict and possibly unsafe conditions.

Given these increasing challenges, GRTE is seeking information regarding visitor experiences at the String and Leigh Lakes that will help guide future management and visitor use at these sites. This study will provide information regarding the following: visitor demographics; visitors' travel patterns to GRTE and String and Leigh Lakes specifically; information sources that informed their visit and expectations; visitor motivations, expectations, and perceptions of their experience, as it relates to current social and ecological conditions at String and Leigh Lakes. This information will help

GRTE understand desired conditions, suitable uses, acceptable levels of impact, and potential visitor outreach opportunities for these areas.

**SURVEY METHODOLOGY:**

**(A) Respondent Universe:** All adult visitors 18 years or older visiting the String and Leigh Lakes areas of GRTE, for 30 sampling days, between July 15 and October 12, 2017.

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

A systematic sample of all adult visitors at the locations and months provided below:

- String and Leigh Lakes Access parking area #1
- String and Leigh Lakes Access parking area #2
- String and Leigh Lakes Access parking area #3

Location	Sampling Days Per Site				Total
	July	August	September	October	
Access parking area #1	2	3	3	2	10
Access parking area #2	2	3	3	2	10
Access parking area #3	2	3	3	2	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>30</b>

The sampling design is based on suggestions provided by park staff. At each sampling location, the interviewer will randomly intercept visitors as they are exiting the String and Leigh Lakes to the parking areas, at 10-minute intervals (dependent upon visitor traffic). Sampling will be stratified by day of the week and location (i.e., the three main parking lots, where visitors access and exit the String and Leigh Lakes). During the 30-day sampling period (between July 15 to October 12, of 2017) visitors will be approached between the hours of 8:00 AM and 7:00 PM. Face to face, semi-structured interviews will be completed on site. If the visitor refuses, information used for non-response bias testing will be recorded as described in the section below.

Location	Estimated Number of Visitor Contacts				Total
	July	August	September	October	
Access parking area #1	5	8	8	4	25
Access parking area #2	4	8	8	5	25
Access parking area #3	5	8	8	4	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>75</b>

**(C) Instrument Administration:**

The initial contact with all visitors will be used to explain the study and determine interest in participating in the study, and whether they are existing the String and Leigh Lakes (i.e., post experience in the area). This should take approximately 1 minute. The interviewer will employ the following script when working with potential respondents:

*“Excuse me, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am conducting a short interview with Grand Teton National Park to better understand the types of experiences visitors seek while recreating here. Participation is voluntary, and your responses will be anonymous. It will take about ~15 minutes to complete. Are you 18 years of age or older and willing to participate?”*

→If NO: [Non-response Question] *“Do you mind if I ask, what is the primary activity you will be taking part in during your time at the String and Leigh Lakes area?”*

*Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you enjoy your visit.”*

→If YES: *“I’d like to record our conversation so I can share this information with the park later. Is this OK with you?”*

→If NO: [Non-response Question] *“Do you mind if I ask, what is the primary activity you will be taking part in during your time at the String and Leigh Lakes area?”*

*Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you enjoy your visit.”*

→If YES: *“Are you ending or starting your visit to the String/Leigh Lakes today?”*

*If ENDING: “Excellent, we will begin the interview now.”*

*If STARTING: “Okay, thank you for your time, but we are seeking visitors that have already experienced the area. Have a wonderful time in Grand Teton National Park.”*

**(D) Expected Response Rate / Confidence Level:**

Based upon similar methods, we anticipate that we will ask a total of 75 individual to be interviewed (n=25 at each site). Of these, we estimate that about 80% agree to participate and the remaining 20% will refuse (n=15); however 12 (80%) of those will agree to answer the non-response bias questions, and the remaining 3 will completely refuse to participate.

Intercept Location	Response rates based upon total estimated number of all visitor contacted				
	Initial Contacts	Acceptance 80%	Non-respondents (Soft refusals) 20%	Non-response survey 80%	Hard Refusals 20%
Access parking area #1	25	20	5	4	1
Access parking area #2	25	20	5	4	1
Access parking area #3	25	20	5	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>

Confidence intervals provide a method for estimating population values from sample statistics. Based on the survey sample sizes, there will be 95 percent confidence that the survey findings will be accurate to within 5 percentage points. The proposed sample size will be adequate, if needed, for bivariate comparisons and more sophisticated multivariate analysis. For dichotomous response variables, estimates will be accurate within the margins of error and confidence intervals will be somewhat larger for questions with more than two response categories.

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

*Non-response questions for non-respondents:*

1. *What was your primary source of information about visitor activities in Grand Teton National Park?*
2. *What is your primary destination during your visit to Grand Teton National Park today?*

In addition to the non-response questions for the non-respondents, we will ask all visitors to describe their primary activity at the String and Leigh Lakes area.

The interviewers will also record the following observational information in a survey log:

- time and day of contact,
- gender,
- group size,
- number of adults and children in the group, and
- any potential language barrier

This process will continue throughout the sampling period at each location. This information will be used to determine any non-response bias. Any non-response bias will be reported in final summaries to GRTE.

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

This study uses similar methods and semi-structured interview questions that have been used in other visitor use monitoring studies, and questions specifically from the Pool of Known Questions, though adopted for appropriate context at GRTE/String and Leigh Lakes. The questions included in the semi-structured interview instrument were designed, reviewed and pretested by the following: PI, research staff and graduate students, scientists in the Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management Department at Pennsylvania State University with expertise in social science research, colleagues at Oregon State University, and GRTE staff. Additionally, questions were reduced and truncated, to only include approved pool of known questions/topics (or slight variations specific to GRTE and the context of an interview format), and therefore reduce burden time. Pre-testing for clarity and estimated burden time was conducted with graduate and undergraduate students at Pennsylvania State University.

**BURDEN ESTIMATES:**

We plan to approach 75 potential participants. We expect that the initial contact time will take one minute per person (75 x 1 minute = 1 hour and 15 minutes). From the 75 originally contacted, we expect that ~80% (n=60) will agree to complete the interview. This will take an additional 15 minutes (60 x 15 minutes = 15 hours).

We expect that ~20% (n = 15) of all visitors contacted will refuse to participate in the study. For those individuals, we will record their refusal and ask them to answer the non-response check question that will be recorded on the study log (additional observational data will be collected as well, as mentioned above). Base on similar studies by the researchers in GRTE, we have experienced that ~20% of visitors refusing to complete an on-site study will also refuse to answer the non-response questions as well. Therefore, we expect that of the 15 visitors that refuse to complete the on-site survey 20% (n = 3) will also refuse to answer the non-response question. We estimate that it will take the 12 visitors that have denied participating in the study, but agree to answer the non-response question, approximately one minute to respond (12 x 1 minute = 12 minutes).

The total burden for this collection is estimated to be 16 hours.

	Responses	Completion Time * (minutes)	Burden Hours
Combined Onsite Interviews		<i>Initial Contact time added to completion time</i>	
Completed Interviews	60	16	16
Non-response bias Check:	12	1	<1
Total burden requested under this ICR			16

**REPORTING PLAN:**

Analyze interviews and prepare report: November 2017 – March 2018

- a. All interviews will be transcribed and coded following the constant comparative analytic framework to generate themes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For example, three researchers -- to allow for triangulation, including the PI -- will individually code the interviews for themes. Once coded separately, these researchers will come to consensus through an iterative analysis and review process to determine salient themes;
- b. Product: draft reports with thematic analysis of interviews;
- c. Product: compiled final report for GRTE Management, reviewed by GRTE staff and peer-reviewed by relevant social scientists; the report will also be processed and finalized as a Natural Resources Report archived with the NPS Social Science Branch.

References:

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

## NOTICES

### Privacy Act Statement

**General:** This information is provided pursuant to Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974), December 21, 1984, for individuals completing this form.

**Authority:** National Park Service Research mandate (54 USC 100702)

**Purpose and Uses:** This information will be used by The NPS Information Collections Coordinator to ensure appropriate documentation of information collections conducted in areas managed by or that are sponsored by the National Park Service.

**Effects of Nondisclosure:** Providing information is mandatory to submit Information Collection Requests to Programmatic Review Process.

### Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

We are collecting this information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501) and is authorized by the National Park Service Research mandate (54 USC 100702). This information will be used by The NPS Information Collections Coordinator to ensure appropriate documentation of information collections conducted in areas managed by or that are sponsored by the National Park Service. All parts of the form must be completed in order for your request to be considered. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to, this or any other Federal agency-sponsored information collection unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has reviewed and approved The National Park Service Programmatic Review Process and assigned OMB Control Number 1024-0224.

### Estimated Burden Statement

Public Reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 60 minutes per submission, including the time it takes for reviewing instructions, gathering information and completing and reviewing the form. This time does not include the editorial time required to finalize the submission. Comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form should be sent to the Information Collection Clearance Coordinator, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Dr., Fort Collins, CO 80525.