

## 1 Supporting Statement A

### National Park Service Visitor Survey Card

OMB Control Number 1024-0216

Terms of Clearance: None

#### General Instructions

A completed Supporting Statement A must accompany each request for approval of a collection of information. The Supporting Statement must be prepared in the format described below, and must contain the information specified below. If an item is not applicable, provide a brief explanation. When the question "Does this ICR contain surveys, censuses, or employ statistical methods?" is checked "Yes," then a Supporting Statement B must be completed. OMB reserves the right to require the submission of additional information with respect to any request for approval.

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**1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary. Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection.**

The National Park Service (NPS) has the overall federal responsibility of managing visitor service programs that assist in preserving national parks for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations; therefore, we are requesting the renewal of the Visitor Survey Card so that we may continue to fulfill our program specific mission up-to-date information is necessary to assist with park management and planning. To assist in carrying out these responsibilities, the Visitor Survey Card (VSC) is administered annually to provide an annual account of visitor satisfaction and related to park and agency's performance related to The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) (P.L. 103-62. NPS Management Policy Goals IIa1 (visitor satisfaction) and IIb1 (visitor understanding and appreciation) requires visitor use data in the impact assessment on the impact of users and resources as part of each park's general management plan. The VSC is used to provide visitor evaluations of: service/facility quality and awareness of park significance. Each year, all NPS park units conduct and use the results of the VSC to measure and report performance. The results have been used by Superintendents and other managers to develop site specific management plans.

The NPS fully adopted the use of Visitor Survey Card in 2001 because a cost effective surveying efforts rather than a few select surveys on a park-by-park basis each year was needed. This effort was created as a means to strategically assess visitor satisfaction by using the same program structure and collection methods to provide comparability across park units. As a result, the NPS has been able to use the results answer questions about visitors: who they are, what they do, what they need, and what their opinions are. Parks use the results to improve visitor services and facilities. Local businesses within predetermined proximities of park units have used the data to determine how visitors are contributing to the area economy. Finally, this information collection has been instrumental in providing trend data used for annual performance targets. The renewal of the Visitor Survey Card will allow for the continued success of our program specific mission to ensure the integrated use of social science research in decision making.

This collection will provide information required by the following laws:

- **The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (P.L. 103-62).**

*GPRA goals IIa1 and IIb1:*

*IIa1: Visitors safely enjoy and are satisfied with the availability, accessibility, diversity, and quality of park facilities, services and appropriate recreational opportunities.*

*IIb1: Park visitors and the general public understand and appreciate the preservation of parks and their resources for this and future generations.*

- **National Park Service Organic Act, 16 U.S.C. §a-1**  
*"...which purpose is to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations".*
- **National Park Service Protection Interpretation and research in System (54 USC §100701)**  
*Recognizing the ever increasing societal pressures being placed upon America's unique natural and cultural resources contained in the System, the Secretary shall continually improve the ability of the Service to provide state-of-the-art management, protection, and interpretation of, and research on, the resources of the System.*
- **National Park Service Protection Research Mandate(54 USC §100702)**  
*The Secretary shall ensure that management of System units is enhanced by the availability and utilization of a broad program of the highest quality science and information.*
- **National Environmental Policy Act of as amended in 1982 (Sec 102 [42 U.S.C. § 4332A])**  
*The Federal Government shall utilize a systematic, interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts in planning and in decision making which may have an impact on man's environment.*

**2. Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate the actual use the agency has made of the information received from the current collection. Be specific. If this collection is a form or a questionnaire, every question needs to be justified.**

The NPS Social Science Program uses the VSC to provide park managers with data that has been used to improve visitor services and facilities. Local businesses have also use the data to understand how visitors contribute to the area economy.

### **Use of Information**

Data from this collection has been used by NPS managers to develop long-term strategic plans and annual goals. The results of the VSC have been administered at more than 330 units to assess visitor services. The twelve activities included and rated in the visitor services survey include serve as viable indicators of NPS performance in serving its primary customers, park visitors.

The Visitor Survey Card contains three categories (*park facilities visitor services*, and *recreational opportunities*) and uses eight questions to evaluate: service/facility quality and, awareness of park significance. The measures of visitor services listed below serve as viable indicators of NPS annual GPRA performance measures:

*Park Facilities* - The responses to the questions in this section are used to assess the condition of facilities allowing the NPS to mitigate costs, improve visitor satisfaction and increase safety awareness. The following five items are used to determine visitor satisfaction with park facilities:

- Visitor center
- Exhibits (indoor and outdoor)
- Restrooms
- Walkways, trails, and roads
- Campgrounds and/or picnic areas.

*Recreational Opportunities* - The following two items are used to determine visitor satisfaction with the recreational and educational experiences available in a park. Tracking these ratings over time allows managers to understand the scope of appreciation for the cultural and outdoor recreational opportunities available in parks. The experiences include

- Learning about nature, history, or culture
- Outdoor recreation (sightseeing, camping, bicycling, boating, hiking, etc.)

*Visitor Services* The ratings in this section are used to understand visitor satisfaction about services offered within the park. Because of previous survey responses, park visitors are now provided with an orientation of services to ensure a safe and enjoyable visit while minimizing visitor related accidents and damages. The following five topic areas are used to rate park services:

- Assistance from park employees
- Park map or brochure
- Ranger programs
- Commercial services in the park (food, lodging, gifts, rentals, etc.)
- Value for entrance fee paid.

A mail-back questionnaire will be used to collect information from visitors at all units in the National Park System.

- 3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden and specifically how this collection meets GPEA requirements.**

No automated data collection will take place. The survey instrument for this collection is a self-addressed and postage paid mail back postcard. The visitor will have the option of returning the card via postal mail or using a designated survey drop-box before leaving the site.

- 4. Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Item 2 above.**

There is no known duplication of efforts.

- 5. If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities, describe any methods used to minimize burden.**

This information collection will not impact small businesses or other small entities.

- 6. Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.**

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) requires each federal agency to prepare three reports: 1) a strategic plan setting forth its broad mission and goals; 2) a performance plan listing its specific goals and indicators to measure the achievement of those goals, with a linkage to its budget; and, 3) a performance report on whether its goals were met and at what costs. Without this collection NPS will fail to have the information from each park unit, needed to establish specific regional and national goals. This collection is the only NPS collection dedicated to this fundamental purpose. Without the VSC,

gathering visitor perceptions of service and facilities from enough disparate surveys to provide comparability across park units would be an impossible task. Without this collection park managers would have to rely on anecdotal and observation evidence not appropriate to meet the GPRA goals.

- 7. Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:**
- \* requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
  - \* requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
  - \* requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
  - \* requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records, for more than three years;**
  - \* in connection with a statistical survey that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
  - \* requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
  - \* that includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
  - \* requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secrets, or other confidential information, unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

No special circumstances apply to this information collection.

- 8. If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and in response to the PRA statement associated with the collection over the past three years, and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.**

**Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.**

**Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every three years — even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior periods. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.**

On January 10, 2017, a 60-day Federal Register notice (82 FR 3024) was published stating an intention to request OMB approval for an information collection associated with the *National Park Service Visitor Survey Card*. In this notice, public comment was solicited for 60 days ending March 13, 2017. No public comments concerning this notice were received.

In addition to our Federal Register notice, comments were solicited from several experts knowledgeable of customer satisfaction surveys. The individuals listed below provided editorial suggestions and feedback concerning the clarity of the process and approximate length of time it would take to complete the questionnaire, based on their previous experiences with similar collections. Their suggestions provide minor improvements to the design and grammatical clarity of the instrument. The reviewers also said that the process was straightforward and that the instructions were very helpful. The respondents suggested that, based on their review of the final version of the surveys, the estimated burden time to complete the questionnaire should take no more than three minutes per respondent as we suggest in Table 3 (below). This estimate reflects the time it takes each respondent to read the instructions and complete the questionnaire.

**Individuals Contacted Outside the Agency:**

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Lena Le, PhD, Director  
Social & Economic Sciences Research Center  
Washington State University  
PO Box 644014, Wilson-Short Hall # 133  
Pullman, WA 99164-4014

B. Derrick Taff, PhD, Assistant Professor  
Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Management  
College of Health and Human Development  
Pennsylvania State University

Steve Lawson, PhD, Senior Director  
RSG  
55 Railroad Row  
White River Junction, VT 05001

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**9. Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.**

No payments or gifts will be given to respondents.

**10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.**

We will not provide any assurance of confidentiality to any respondents. Data collected will only be reported in aggregates and no individually identifiable responses will be reported.

**11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.**

No questions of a sensitive nature will be asked.

**12. Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. The statement should:**

- \* **Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. Unless directed to do so, agencies should not conduct special surveys to obtain information on which to base hour burden estimates. Consultation with a sample (fewer than 10) of potential respondents is desirable. If the hour burden on respondents is expected to vary widely because of differences in activity, size, or complexity, show the range of estimated hour burden, and explain the reasons for the variance. Generally, estimates should not include burden hours for customary and usual business practices.**
- \* **If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens.**
- \* **Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories. The cost of contracting out or paying outside parties for information collection activities should not be included here. Instead, this cost should be included under "Annual Cost to Federal Government."**

The projected number of respondents and the estimated burden for this ICR are indicated in Table 1 below. These estimates are based upon an average respondent rate during the 2015 and 2016 survey seasons, plus the outreach described in item 8. For this collection we have considered the time to contact the visitors, and for each respondent to read and complete the survey.

Overall, a combined total of 132,000 visitors will be approached each year at the parks participating in the program. The initial contact for all on-site visitors will be used to explain the study and determine willingness to participate in the study. We expect that the initial contact time will take no more than one minute per person (132,000 visitors x 1 minute = 2,200 hours). All visitors agreeing to complete the questionnaire will be given a survey card and asked to complete it on site or mail it back at a later time. We are expecting that at least 55% (n=72,600) of all visitors contacted will agree to complete and return the questionnaire. The time to complete and return the questionnaire should take no more than 3 minutes per respondent for a total of 5,929 hours.

Based upon our estimated return rate, we expect that 45% (n=59,400) of all visitors will refuse to complete the survey card and from that number, at least 10% (n=5,940) will agree to complete the non-response survey. We anticipate that it will take one minute to complete the non-response questions resulting in a total of 99 hours for the non-response survey.

**Table 1: Total Estimated Visitors Contacts**

Respondent Group	Total number of Initial Contacts	Completed Responses 55%	All refusals 45%	Completed Non-response survey 10%
On-site Visitors	132,000	72,600	59,400	5,940

**Table 2: Total Annual Dollar Value Of The Burden Hours**

	Annual Number	Estimated Time per Response(min)	Total Annual Burden Hours	Dollar Value of Burden Hour Including Benefits	Total Dollar Value of Annual Burden Hours*
Initial Contacts	132,000	1	2,200	\$33.11	\$72,842
Completed Visitor Survey Cards	72,600	3	3,630	\$33.11	\$120,189
Completed Non-Response Surveys	5,940	1	99	\$33.11	\$3,278
<b>TOTAL</b>	0		0		0

The estimated total annual dollar value of the burden hours for this collection will be \$196,309. The hour cost is based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) news release USDL-

17-0770 of June 9, 2017, to obtain the individual/household average hourly wage using the average full compensation per hour including benefits for private industry. According to this news release, the private industry hourly wage is \$33.11 (this accounts for wages and salaries and benefits). We used this information to calculate the value of respondent burden hours (see - <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/ocwage.pdf> - Retrieved July 6, 2017).

**13. Provide an estimate of the total annual non-hour cost burden to respondents or record keepers resulting from the collection of information. (Do not include the cost of any hour burden already reflected in item 12.)**

- \* The cost estimate should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component (annualized over its expected useful life) and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component. The estimates should take into account costs associated with generating, maintaining, and disclosing or providing the information (including filing fees paid for form processing). Include descriptions of methods used to estimate major cost factors including system and technology acquisition, expected useful life of capital equipment, the discount rate(s), and the time period over which costs will be incurred. Capital and start-up costs include, among other items, preparations for collecting information such as purchasing computers and software; monitoring, sampling, drilling and testing equipment; and record storage facilities.
- \* If cost estimates are expected to vary widely, agencies should present ranges of cost burdens and explain the reasons for the variance. The cost of purchasing or contracting out information collection services should be a part of this cost burden estimate. In developing cost burden estimates, agencies may consult with a sample of respondents (fewer than 10), utilize the 60-day pre-OMB submission public comment process and use existing economic or regulatory impact analysis associated with the rulemaking containing the information collection, as appropriate.
- \* Generally, estimates should not include purchases of equipment or services, or portions thereof, made: (1) prior to October 1, 1995, (2) to achieve regulatory compliance with requirements not associated with the information collection, (3) for reasons other than to provide information or keep records for the government, or (4) as part of customary and usual business or private practices.

There is no non-hour cost burden, record keeping nor any fees associated with collection of this information.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Also, provide a description of the method used to estimate cost, which should include quantification of hours, operational expenses (such as equipment, overhead, printing, and support staff), and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

The total estimated cost to the Federal Government for collecting data, analyzing result and preparing reports as a result of this collection of information is \$194,600. This includes non-federal FTE, and operating costs associated with this information collection (Table 2).

**Table 3. Non-Federal Costs associated with this information collection**

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Annual Cost</b>
<b>Non-federal Personnel FTE</b>	
Project Director	35,000
Project Manager	25,000
Project Analyst	18,600
Technical Assistant	14,000
<b>Operational Costs</b>	
Survey Administration	60,750
Data Entry and Quality Control	13,250
Data Analysis and Final Report	28,000
<b>Travel</b>	7,500
<b>TOTAL</b>	202,100

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments in hour or cost burden.

Between 2014 and 2016 we noticed a 30% increase in the number of returned surveys. This change is due in part the change in contracting services used to manage the survey process. We are anticipating that 72,600 visitors will return completed survey codes for a net increase of 36,960 completed survey cards. Based upon this higher return rate we are requesting that the total annual burden hours for this collection be increased from 4,062 to 5,929 for a net change of 1,867 hours. Due to the increased number of returned survey we are expecting that 10% (n=5,940) of the 59,400 visitors refusing to complete the survey card will agree to take one minute to complete the non-response survey. This is an increase of 1,122 returned surveys and 19 additional burden hours. The total adjustment for this collection is a net increase of 38,082 annual number of responses and 1,867 annual time burden.

**Table 4. Burden hour changes associated with this information collection**

	Contacts			Annual Respondent Burden Hours		
	Previous Number of Contacts approved	Current Number of Contacts Requested	Change	Previous Burden Hours Approved	Current Burden Hours Requested	Change
Initial Contacts	132,000	132,000	0	2,200	2,200	0
Completed Visitor Survey Cards	35,640	72,600	36,960	1,782	3,630	+1,848
Non-Response Bias Surveys	4,818	5,940	1,122	80	99	+19
<b>TOTAL</b>	0	0	+0	4,062	0	+1,867

**16. For collections of information whose results will be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication. Address any complex analytical techniques that will be used. Provide the time schedule for the entire project, including beginning and ending dates of the collection of information, completion of report, publication dates, and other actions.**

All returned surveys will be electronically scanned and the data analyzed. Frequency distributions will be calculated for each indicator and category. All percentage calculations will be rounded to the nearest percent.

All survey results will be computed and individual data reports will be created for each participating National Park. A separate System-wide Report will provide information for all participating sites. These reports will be produced in a printable PDF format and will have formats and tables familiar to park managers. Copies of the reports will be archived with the National Park Service Social Science Program for inclusion in the Social Science Studies Collection.

The sampling period each for year will begin in February and end in August. Reports are typically available by mid-October of each year.

**17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.**

We will display the OMB control number and expiration date.

**18. Explain each exception to the topics of the certification statement identified in "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions."**

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.