

# Attachment 1. Use of Information - Customer Comment Card

## 1) Collection Population – Day Use and Camping Parks

### How Many Completed Comment Cards

Most projects should administer eight completed comment cards during each scheduled survey period. However, projects that elect the low sample option (Survey Plan Option 5) should administer six completed comment cards during each scheduled survey period.

It is possible that more than one survey period will be scheduled for a given day. This may occur in any of three different ways:

- o Two or more recreation areas may be designated for sampling on the same day.
- o A recreation area may appear on the survey schedule two or more times on the same day.
- o A single recreation area or two or more recreation areas may occur on day-use and camping survey schedules on the same day.

The full complement of six or eight completed comment cards should be administered for each scheduled survey period. Examples: 1) If camping visitors are scheduled for sampling at two different recreation areas on the same day, then eight completed comment cards should be obtained from camping visitors at each of recreation area on the evening prior to the scheduled survey day; 2) if two day use surveys are scheduled for the same area on the same day, then a total of 16 completed comment cards (eight cards for each scheduled survey) should be obtained at that area on the scheduled day; 3) if day use and camping surveys are both scheduled for the same area on a given day, then eight completed comment cards should be obtained from day-use visitors on that day and eight additional comment cards should be administered to camping visitors at that area on the evening prior to the scheduled day.

The survey plan options available to you in Step 4 depend primarily on the total annual day use and camping visitation that occurs on the Corps-managed recreation areas on your project. Two reduced-effort options and a No Survey option are available to projects with low project visitation and/or staffing or other limitations that make it administratively unfeasible to conduct the standard survey. Two of these options require written justification.

The survey plan options are described in the following table:

Option No.	Survey Description	Sample Size		
		Total	Scheduled Sampling Periods	Samples Per Period

1	Survey of camping visitors on project; Survey of day use visitors on project	160 + 160	20 + 20	8 + 8
2	Survey of day use visitors on project	160	20	8
3	Survey of camping visitors on project	160	20	8
4	Combined survey of day use and camping visitors across project	160	20	8
5	Combined survey of day use and camping visitors with reduced sampling effort	78	13	6
6	No Survey	0	0	0

### Recording the Type of Survey on the Comment Card

Each comment card should be marked as having been administered using one of the following survey protocols:

Type of Survey	Applicable Situations	Scheduled Survey Options
<b>Scheduled Survey:</b>		
Day-Use	Surveys of day users arising from Survey Plan Options 1 or 2.	1, 2
Camping	Surveys of campers arising from Survey Plan Options 1 or 3.	1, 3
All Visitors	Surveys of all project visitors without regard to whether they are day use or camping visitors at arise from Survey Plan Options 4 or 5.	4, 5
<b>Other Protocols:</b>		
Solicited	Questionnaires completed at request of ranger outside any formal survey process to document visitor a complaint or comment.	NA
Self-service	Questionnaires placed on office counter or other central location for	NA

	visitors to take as they wish.	
Other	Questionnaires administered using a protocol that cannot be categorized by one of the above**	NA

\*\* Examples:

- o Additional questionnaires completed at a recreation area where more data is desired than would be obtained in the scheduled surveys.
- o Questionnaires distributed to visitors as they enter the recreation area, instead of when they leave.
- o Questionnaires distributed to visitors with instructions to return them to the office, gate house, or other central collection point.

Comment cards that are administered using the procedures described in this guidance should be marked obtained using one of the three types of scheduled surveys indicated on the card. Projects conducting separate day use and camping surveys (Survey Option 1) should mark cards administered to day use visitors as “Day Use” and cards administered to campers as “Camping.” Projects conducting only a survey of day-use visitors (Survey Plan Option 2) should mark each card as “Day Use”. Projects conducting only a survey of campers (Survey Plan Option 3) should mark each card as “Camping”. Projects administering a single survey to all project visitors (Survey Plan Options 4 or 5) should mark each card as “All Visitors”, regardless of whether that particular questionnaire was administered to a day user or camper. The automated reporting system will produce a separate attribute summary table for each type of survey administered by the project.

Completed questionnaires obtained using methods that do not conform to the proscribed survey protocol can still be entered into the comment card database. However, these questionnaires should be marked as having been obtained using one of the Other Protocols listed on the comment card.

### Process for Selecting Visitors to Survey

- o **Camping Survey:** On the designated sampling day, check with the gate attendant to identify campers that are scheduled to leave the following day. Select and visit either campsites and then select one member to complete the survey. You may need to visit additional campsites if you encounter any refusals.
- o **Day-Use Survey:** Obtain eight completed surveys distributed over as much of the day as is practical. The survey should be administered to one member of recreation parties that are preparing to leave the recreation area. As closely as possible, attempt to distribute the sample equitably among different types of visitor groups in proportion to their use of the area.
- o **Composite survey of Day-use and Camping Visitors:**
  - When administering comment cards at a camping-only area, follow the rules above for the Camping Survey.

- When administering comment cards at a day-use only area, follow the rules above for the Day Use Survey.
- When administering comment cards at a multiple use area that has both day use and camping visitors, plan to allocate eight comment cards in proportion to the number of day use and camping visits expected on the area using the rules above for the Day-Use Survey and Camping Survey, as appropriate. If the proportion of day use versus camping visitors is unknown, then allocate the comment cards 50:50 to day-use and camping visitors.

### **Which Member of the Visitor Party to Survey**

Visitors are generally organized into parties that recreate as a group. Those individuals that leave in the same vehicle are considered to be members of the same recreation party. You should select only one member of a visitor party to participate in the survey. This should usually be one of the adult members. You should not administer the survey to individuals under 16 years old.

Responses to satisfaction questions are known to vary by visitor age, gender, and activity, and other factors. Since the survey process does not control the selection of visitors at the recreation area, the survey clerk should attempt to match the distribution of visitor characteristics obtained in the sample with those of the recreation area visitors as closely as possible.

### **Adjustments for Unforeseen Circumstances:**

- o **Short-term closure of recreation areas:** If the recreation area is closed on the scheduled sampling date because of high water or other short-term events, reschedule the survey for the same day of the week as soon as the area re-opens.
- o **Rain days:** The need to reschedule a survey due to adverse weather conditions would typically apply only to day use visitors. If adverse weather conditions keep visitors from using the recreation area on the designated sampling day, then reschedule the survey for that recreation area as follows:
  - If the survey was originally scheduled for a weekday, then reschedule it for the next available weekday.
  - If the survey was originally scheduled for a holiday or weekend day, then reschedule it for the next available holiday or weekend day.
- o **Inability to fill daily quota:** If too few visitors are available on the scheduled sampling day to obtain eight completed surveys, then fill out the remainder of the quota on the next available day as described above under “Rain Days.” This situation should arise infrequently if visitation statistics entered for Project recreation areas are accurate and low visitation areas (<5,000 annual visits) have been omitted from the survey.
- o **Other unforeseen circumstances:** See the section “Have Questions or Need Help” for contact information.

### **Interacting with Visitors**

- o **Do this.** After receiving visitor consent, hand the visitor a comment card and pencil. Ask the visitor to complete the card immediately and return it directly to you. Encourage candid responses. If appropriate, remind them that we cannot make improvements unless they provide honest and candid feedback. Give them space to mark their comments without feeling any undue pressure from you. Avoid the temptation to read their responses as they mark them. Avoid reading responses to comment cards in the presence of any visitors.
- o **Not this.** Do not leave the comment card with the visitor with instructions to drop it off later at a designated location. The response rate for this method of administering the comment card can be very low.

**Data To Record Each Survey Period**

The printed copy of the survey schedule has columns labeled “Actual Survey Date,” “Completes,” and “Refusals.” In these columns you should record the date the survey actually took place, the number of surveys completed (usually eight) and the number of refusals encountered during the sampling period. The survey clerk should record appropriate values at the end of each survey period. This is the only data that the survey clerk must record. This data will be requested during data entry.

## 2) Collection Population – Visitor Center

**Recording the Type of Survey on the Visitor Center Comment Card**

The comment card distribution plan you developed using the Survey Schedule Generator for Visitor Centers and the distribution guidelines described here together constitute the standard survey protocol for conducting satisfaction surveys at Visitor Centers. Comment cards administered to visitors using this protocol should be marked as a “Scheduled” survey in the upper left-hand corner of the card.

Visitor Centers may want to take advantage of other opportunities to obtain comment card responses from visitors by methods that do not conform to the standard survey protocol. For this reason, you can specify other methods of data collection on the comment card, to distinguish them from cards obtained using the standard survey protocol. Separate summaries will be produced for comment cards obtained by each of the different survey procedures described in the table below.

Type of Survey	Applicable Situations
Scheduled	Questionnaires administered using the survey calendar and the procedures set forth in the survey guidelines.
Solicited	Questionnaires completed at the request of a visitor center ranger or attendant outside of any formal survey process to document a visitor complaint or comment.
Self-service	Questionnaires placed on the Visitor Center reception desk or other central location for visitors to take and complete as they wish.

Tour Rep	Questionnaires administered to a tour leader or representative outside of the scheduled survey process to obtain feedback on behalf of the entire tour group.
----------	---

### **Sampling Adjustments for Unforeseen Circumstances:**

- Missed sampling days: If sampling does not occur on a particular day for any reason, the sampling day should be re-scheduled for the same day of the week in the week immediately after the last scheduled week of sampling. If multiple days are missed, continue to reschedule into subsequent weeks, as necessary.
- Inability to fill daily quota: Any comment cards that you are unable to obtain on a given day, should be added to the quota of comment cards on the same day of the next week, at the same reference time listed for the missing survey.

### **Daily Comment Card Quota**

A total of 20 completed comment cards should be obtained from visitors each week during an eight-week sampling season. This total results from a daily quota shown on the sampling calendar that may be different every day of the week.

The daily quota should be filled using the procedure described in these guidelines. You may choose to obtain additional cards by other distribution methods such as a self-service stack of cards placed on the reference desk. Any comment cards obtained by methods other than the scheduled survey process do not count toward the scheduled survey quota. The quota for the scheduled survey process should be met no matter how many completed comment cards are obtained by other comment card distribution methods.

### **Choosing Visitors to Survey**

Comment cards should be given to selected visitors at the end of their visit, as they are preparing to leave the Visitor Center. The survey calendar shows the times of day at which you should administer a comment card to a visitor. The times of day indicated on the survey schedule are reference times for administering a comment card. At each reference time listed in the survey schedule, a comment card should be offered to a member of the next visitor party preparing to leave the Visitor Center. If they refuse to participate, the comment card should be offered to a member of each subsequent party, until the card is accepted.

For purposes of this survey, all visitors, including those who visit only to use the restroom, are candidates for the survey.

### **Which Member of the Visitor Party to Survey**

Visitors typically come and go as a group referred to as a visitor party. The party may vary in size from one to many individuals. Large parties, such a bus tour group, should be regarded as a single party. You should select only one member of the party to participate

in the survey, usually an adult member of the party. You should not administer the survey to individuals under 16 years old.

Responses to satisfaction questions are known to vary by visitor age, gender, activity, and other factors. The survey clerk should attempt to match the distribution of visitor characteristics obtained in the sample with those of the Visitor Center visitors as closely as possible. In particular, the clerk should alternate between male and female members of the party each time a card is administered.

Large groups, such as school or bus tour groups, can be handled in one of two ways. You can regard a tour group as a visitor party and sample them using the rules for the scheduled survey protocol, as you would any other visitor party. Comment cards obtained from tour members using the standard survey protocol should be marked as having been collected as part of the scheduled survey.

Alternatively, you can choose to omit tour groups from the scheduled survey process, and sample from the remaining visitors as though the tour group was not present. Use the latter procedure if you plan to obtain comment card data from one or more members of every tour group that comes through the Visitor Center. These comment cards should be marked as a “Tour Rep” survey. They should not be counted toward the daily quota of completed comment cards obtained as part of the schedule survey.

### **Interacting with Visitors**

After receiving visitor consent, hand the visitor a comment card and pencil. Ask the visitor to complete the card immediately, then return it either to you or to a comment card deposit box, if you have one. Encourage candid responses. If appropriate, remind visitors that we cannot make improvements unless they provide honest and candid feedback. Give them some personnel space to fill out the card, so they do not feel any undue pressure from you. Avoid the temptation to read their responses as they mark them. Avoid reading responses to comment cards in the presence of any visitors.