



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: 8-3-2020

PROJECT TITLE: Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Escalante District Visitor Recreation Study

ABSTRACT: (not to exceed 150 words)

In the face of increasing visitor use, the Escalante District of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GLCA) has started a planning process to manage backcountry use. An intercept survey will be used to collect information from visitors in four areas of GLCA. Information will be used to understand trip planning, group characteristics, low-impact behaviors, and identify potential indicators of the visitor experience. The data from this collection will be used to inform the backcountry management plan for the Escalante District of GLCA

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

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PROJECT INFORMATION:

Where will the collection take place? Glen Canyon National Recreation Area

Sampling Period Start Date: 10/1/2020

Sampling Period End Date: 4/30/2021

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

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

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

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.

Glen Canyon NRA (GLCA) is striving to provide world-class recreation opportunities for an increasingly diverse array of visitors. This means maximizing a variety of opportunities in a manner that is safe for the visitor and provides the desired recreational experience while also ensuring adverse impacts to resources are not occurring. Park-wide visitation has doubled since 2012 and is currently at 4.3 million visitors per year. With this rapid increase in visitation, GLCA managers want to maximize the quality of visitor experiences in backcountry areas like the Escalante District of GLCA. Over half of GLCA is managed as wilderness, and for the aspects of wilderness character quality, like protection of natural sounds, ability to experience solitude, and lack of human presence that are perceived to be essential to the quality of visitor experiences in backcountry areas at GLCA.

Beyond overall park visitation numbers, GLCA has very limited data on visitor use from trailhead registries, and no social science data exists to understand visitor experiences, resource conditions, and interactions with resources in the backcountry. However, GLCA managers received anecdotal report from visitors about their rapidly diminishing backcountry experiences due to crowding, loss of solitude, human waste/littering issues, and resources impacts (i.e., cutting trees, rock cairns, graffiti, social trails, etc.). To mitigate these negative effects and maximize visitor experience quality, GLCA managers requested information that will help them have a clear understanding of visitation trends, visitor experiences and expectations, resource condition, and the ways in which GLCA visitors are interacting with these resources. The focus of this project is to collect visitor use and experience data that can be used to develop indicators to inform thresholds of visitor capacities in the most heavily used backcountry areas of the park. The data collected will be used to inform a comprehensive backcountry recreation management plan for the study area(s) that is necessary to guide park staff in developing recreation opportunities, protecting the visitor experience, protecting resources, and ensuring management objectives are being met for the area.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

(A) Respondent Universe:

All adults (18 years of age and older) visiting the Coyote Gulch, Willow Gulch, Reflection Canyon, and Fence/Neon Canyon areas of the Escalante District of GLCA during the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021 during daylight hours.

(B) Sampling Plan / Procedures:

A random sampling of potential respondents will occur onsite at four locations: Coyote Gulch, Willow Gulch, Reflection Canyon, and Fence/Neon Canyon. These locations were selected in collaboration with managers at GLCA to capture individuals who have experienced a diversity of backcountry conditions in the Escalante District. A total of 8 sampling days at each location will be stratified by day of the week, time (7AM to 7PM), location, and season (e.g., fall and spring). Contact will be made with every nth visitor as they exit the respective areas at the end of their visit.

Table 1. Estimated number of contacts during sampling period

Location	Fall	Sample	Total
Coyote Gulch	100	100	200
Willow Gulch	100	100	200
Reflection Canyon	100	100	200
Fence/Neon Canyon	100	100	200
Total	400	400	800

(C) Instrument Administration:

Visitors that agree to participate will be asked to complete an on-site survey with the researcher. If an individual or group refuses or is not an adult (i.e., younger than 18 years of age), they will be thanked for their consideration. All eligible visitors refusing to complete the on-site survey, will be asked if they are willing to answer 2 questions that will be used to check for non-response bias. Researchers will also record observational variables (i.e. gender, group size, children in group, etc.) in a survey log to assess non-response bias. If the visitor agrees to participate in the study, surveys will be administered, using an iPad and a fillable-fileable electronic survey.

Trained research assistants working under the supervision of the PI will use the following example script when working with potential respondents:

Hello, my name is _____. I am conducting research for Glen Canyon National Recreation Area to help park managers better understand visitor experiences,

perceptions of resource conditions, and visitor support for management scenarios in the Escalante District. Your participation is voluntary, and your responses will be anonymous. In total, it will take you about 10 minutes to participate. Would you be willing to participate?

IF NO: Do you mind if I ask you two quick questions?

IF NO: *Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you enjoy your visit.*

IF YES:

- “Are you a first-time visitor to [CANYON NAME]?”
- “During this trip, did you visit the Escalante Interagency Visitor Center in Escalante, Utah?”

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

IF YES - Individual: *Thank you.*

IF YES – Group: *Thank you. Before we start, who in your group is at least 18 years old and had the most recent birthday? Would you be willing to participate in the study?*

IF NO: Do you mind if I ask you two quick questions?

IF NO: *Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you enjoy your visit.*

IF YES: *Great! Let’s start.*

(D) Expected Response Rate / Confidence Level:

We anticipate contacting approximately 800 visitors during the sampling period and estimate that 80% will agree to complete the survey. These estimates are based on recent visitor use studies in national parks. For instance, in a project in the String and Leigh Lakes area of Grand Teton National Park in 2018 by D’Antonio and colleagues, response rates were about 87%. We believe the similarity of the populations (e.g., hikers) will result in similar response rates. Sample sizes of about 400 are recommended for quantitative outdoor recreation research. This provides us with a 95% confidence level with a confidence interval of about +/-5%. Sampling and recruiting will conclude at the end of the sampling period.

Table 3. Anticipated Response Rates

Location	Initial Contacts	Acceptance 80%	Non-respondents (Soft refusals) 20%	Non-response survey	Hard Refusals 20%
Coyote Gulch	200	160	40	20	10
Willow Gulch	200	160	40	20	10
Reflection Canyon	200	160	40	20	10
Fence/Neon Canyon	200	160	40	20	10
TOTAL	800	640	160	0	40

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

Refusals will be recorded, reported, and analyzed using non-response bias questions and observational data (i.e. gender, group size, children in group).

- “Are you a first-time visitor to [CANYON NAME]?”
- “During this trip, did you visit the Escalante Interagency Visitor Center in Escalante, Utah?”

Respondents will be compared with non-respondents using the available data, and any non-response bias and potential implications for park planning and management will be reported.

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

This survey uses questions from the NPS Pool of Known Questions and is designed to complement the Interagency Visitor Use Management Framework. The instrument was developed collaboratively with managers from the NPS to ensure the instrument made sense for the site and the planning needs of GLCA. The final instrument was tested by faculty and graduate students at Utah State University’s Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism for burden timing, clarity, and conceptual accuracy.

BURDEN ESTIMATES:

800 visitors will be intercepted to ask for their participation in this research. From the 80% of intercepted visitors who agree to participate (n=640), we expect the survey to be completed in 15 minutes (640 people X 15 minutes = approximately 160 hours). This includes the initial contact. From the 20% of people we expect to refuse participation (n=160), we expect the non-response bias questions to take about two minutes to complete (160 people X 2 minute = approximately 5 hours). This includes the initial contact. The total burden time for this collection is estimated at 163 hours.

Table 4. Burden Estimates

	Responses	Completion Time * (minutes)	Burden Hours (rounded up)
Completed questionnaire*	640	15	160
Non-response survey	80	2	3
Total burden requested under this ICR:	0		163

* Initial contact time of one minute is added to the time to complete the surveys.

REPORTING PLAN:

NPS personnel will be continuously updated throughout the process as the need arises. A final technical report will be delivered to NPS managers in the Natural Resource Data Series format, or other desired format, that will be developed

collaboratively to address the study purpose and identify key findings for management and planning needs. A presentation and participation in workshops will also be provided at the request of NPS colleagues.

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 collection, 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.