



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: 11-30-2020

PROJECT TITLE: Glacier National Park Visitor Survey

ABSTRACT: (not to exceed 150 words)

Glacier National Park visitation has increased by about 40% since 2012. The University of Montana has partnered with the park since 2005 to conduct annual visitor use monitoring on the roads and trails. In addition to long-term visitor use monitoring, one of the goals of the partnership between the park and the University is to begin conducting regular visitor surveys about the following: visitor experiences, willingness to support management actions, social media use, information sources, congestion, leave no trace principles, and appropriate behavior around wildlife. An on-site survey will occur over the course of 20 weeks between May 1 – September 30, 2021 to capture the park's spring bicycle season and peak visitor season. The results will provide up-to-date information about visitor demographics, experience, information sources, acceptable future management actions, and intentions to share their park experiences on social media.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

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PARK OR PROGRAM LIAISON CONTACT INFORMATION:

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PROJECT INFORMATION:

Where will the collection take place? Glacier National Park

Sampling Period Start Date: May 1, 2021

Sampling Period End Date: September 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 Tablet

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.

Since 2012, Glacier National Park visitation has increased by about 40% (at its peak in 2017). In addition to increasing visitation during the peak season (June-August), visitation has increased during shoulder season months in spring and fall due to a growing interest in biking the Going-to-the-Sun Road before it opens to vehicles, and visitors avoiding peak season crowds in Fall. In the last ten years Glacier has encountered growing issues of road and parking congestion and, more recently, issues of littering and human waste throughout the park.

Park managers have four primary learning objectives for the survey.

- First, to learn about current visitor experience in both frontcountry and backcountry settings, especially as they relate to crowding and congestion. This will inform managers if they are effectively managing for the acceptable experiences and for those mandated by NPS wilderness management policy.
- Second, to learn about park visitors' willingness to support various potential management actions to address crowding and congestion, such as ticketed entry. This information allows managers to determine what future actions might be more or less acceptable to visitors as they continue to consider options for crowding management.
- Third, to learn visitors' primary information sources for the park including: trip planning, weather/current conditions, congestion/crowding, wildlife and wildlife encounters, and Leave No Trace principles. This information will help managers better reach future visitors by providing information in the most popular information outlets.
- Fourth, to learn about the motivations and desired experiences of visitors, including knowledge of appropriate behavior on public lands and interest in recreational bicycling. This information will allow park managers to better understand increasing visitation trends, the need for educational messaging, and anticipate changes in the future.

The results of this survey will reveal current visitor trends and then serve as a reference point to evaluate any long-term trends in visitor experiences, opinions about management, and information sources in Glacier National Park.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

(A) Respondent Universe:

All respondents will be 18 years of age or older and visitors of Glacier National Park between May 1, 2021 and September 30, 2021.

(B) Sampling Plan / Procedures:

Researchers will use a multi-stage design for a randomized, stratified-cluster sampling approach. The sampling approach was developed in collaboration with park managers and based on long-term monitoring research with University of Montana. Sampling will occur over the course of 20 weeks between May 1 – September 30, 2021 to capture the park's spring bicycle season and peak visitor season. Sampling will be stratified by location, day of week, and time of day so that results can be generalized to the typical Glacier visitor. Researchers will systematically intercept visitors at the end of their visit at specified times and locations by approaching every 10th person in busy areas (indicated with an asterisk in the tables below) and every fourth person in less busy areas. For groups, one person may volunteer to take the survey. If multiple people are willing, then the person with the nearest birthday will be selected to respond to the survey. If that person does not want to respond to the survey, another member of the group may volunteer if they desire.

There will be two distinct sampling blocks within a 20-week sampling period. The first, or bicycle season, block will be from May 15th – June 28th. During the bicycle season block, sampling will only occur on weekends stratified between two time blocks (8:00-12:30 & 12:30-17:00) at the Apgar Visitor & Transit Center and the Avalanche Lake Area. These locations and days of week were selected because the bulk of visitation occurs during this time, in these two areas and is mostly concentrated on the weekends. Contact will be made with every 10th visitor as they return to their vehicles at the Avalanche developed area. See Table 1. for an example of a week in the sampling schedule for bicycle season.

Table 1. Example sampling schedule for bike season

Location	Dates of Sampling	Saturday		Sunday	
		AM	PM	AM	PM
Apgar Visitor & Transit Center*	May 15 - June 28	X			X
Avalanche Lake Area*	May 15 - June 28		X	X	

The second sampling block will occur between July 1st-September 30th. Sampling will be evenly distributed among days of the week (Monday-Sunday) and between two five-hour time blocks (8:00-12:30 & 12:30-17:00). The majority of Glacier's visitors visit during these months, and visitation is mostly distributed evenly among all days of the week. See Table 2. for an example of a week in the sampling schedule for peak season.

Table 2. Example sampling schedule for peak season

Location	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday		Friday		Saturday		Sunday	
	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Apgar Visitor & Transit Center*		X						X						
Avalanche Lake Area*					X						X			
Bowman Lake						X						X		
Logan Pass Visitor Center*	X			X										
Many Glacier			X						X					
St Mary Visitor Center													X	X
Two Medicine							X			X				

(C) Instrument Administration:

Researchers will position themselves at one of the designated sampling locations at a randomized, pre-determined day and time-block. Researchers will approach every n^{th} person or group that passes by and politely ask if they would like to participate in the on-site survey. Visitors that agree, will be asked to complete the survey using a sanitized tablet or a paper copy of the questionnaire. If the person or group is not at least 18 years of age or refuses, they will be thanked for their time and consideration, and asked if they would be willing to answer two questions that will be used to check non-response bias. Researchers will record observational variables (e.g., gender and group size) in a survey log to assess demographic non-response bias. Researchers will be available to answer any questions and will accept the versions of the finished with the questionnaire.

Trained researchers and research assistants will use the following example script when working with potential respondents:

*Hello. My name is _____. I am working for the University of Montana to conduct research for Glacier National Park. We are surveying visitors to help park managers better understand your experiences and thoughts about park management. Would you be willing to answer some questions? In total, it will take **10-15 minutes** to participate. All of your answers are voluntary, and you will remain completely anonymous.*

If YES: Offer preference to complete survey. Give instructions for completing the questionnaire and be available to answer questions.

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

If NO: Thank you for your time and consideration. Have a wonderful day and enjoy your visit.

If YES: Thank you!

- “Is this your first visit to Glacier National Park?”
- “What was the main source that you used for planning your Glacier trip? Please select one.

☐ National Park Service website

☐ Glacier National Park official social media websites
(e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

☐ Official Glacier National Park publications

☐ Unofficial or private social media websites

☐ Commercial tour group

☐ Word-of-mouth

☐ Hotel concierge

☐ Other (please specify): _____

COVID-19 Safety Protocol

- Personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - o Researchers will wear full PPE including masks (covering nose and mouth), gloves, and glasses or safety goggles.
 - o Participants will wear mask (covering nose and mouth). If participant is not wearing a mask, disposable masks will be provided.
- Sanitization
 - o Hand sanitizer will be available for participant use before and after participating.
 - o Researchers will use hand sanitizer before and after each participant contact.
 - o Tablets will be wiped with disinfectant before and after being handed to the participant.
 - o If participant chooses to complete a paper copy of the questionnaire, they will use a provided sanitized pen from a cup labeled “clean” and return the pen to a cup label “dirty.” Researchers will routinely sanitize dirty pens with disinfectant.
 - o Paper questionnaires will be collected by the researchers and left to rest in a securely locked, sanitary environment for at least one week before touched for data entry.
- Distancing
 - o Besides exchanging the tablets with visitors, researchers will maintain a distance of six feet from participants at all times.

(D) Expected Response Rate / Confidence Level:

From May through September 2019, 2,864,792 people visited Glacier. We anticipate contacting 1,000 visitors during the sampling period and estimate that 50% will agree to complete the survey. A sample size of about 400 visitors is recommended for quantitative outdoor recreation research for populations over 100,000. This would allow us to report results with a 95% confidence level (or confidence interval of +/- 5%). Sampling and recruitment of participants will conclude at the end of the sampling period.

Table 1a. Anticipated Onsite Survey Response Rates

Total Number of Visitor Contacts)	Completed Onsite Surveys (50% of contacts)	Soft Refusals (50% of contacts)	Completed Non-Response Surveys (30% of soft refusals)	Hard Refusals (70% of soft refusals)
1000	500	500	150	350

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

All refusals will be recorded, reported, and analyze using non-response bias questions and observational data (e.g., gender and group size). For those who wouldn't mind answering just two questions, participants will be asked:

- "Is this your first visit to Glacier National Park?"
 - "What was the main source that you used for planning your Glacier trip? Please select one.
- ☐ National Park Service website

☐ Official Glacier National Park publications

☐ Commercial tour group

☐ Hotel concierge

☐ Glacier National Park official social media websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

☐ Unofficial or private social media websites

☐ Word-of-mouth

☐ Other (please specify): _____

Non-respondents will be compared to respondents using the available data and any non-response bias and potential implications for visitor experience and park management will be reported.

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

The questionnaire was developed in collaboration with Glacier National Park planning, wildlife, and wilderness managers and draws on questions for the 2020 NPS Pool of Known Questions (1204-0224). The final instrument was pilot tested with a group of students and their families (< 9 individuals) in the Department of Society and Conservation in the University of Montana's W.A. Franke College of Forestry. The instrument was checked for relevance, flow, and clarity. It took pilot testers an average of 14 minutes to complete both versions of the questionnaire.

BURDEN ESTIMATES

1,000 visitors will be intercepted and asked to participate in the on-site survey, from those, we expected that 50% (n=500) will agree to participate. The anticipated burden for this collection is 133 hours, this includes the initial contact time (1 minute) and the time to complete the questionnaire (15 minutes; Table 4 below). From the 50% (n=500) of people refusing to participate, we expect that 30% (n=150) will agree to take two-minutes to answer two non-response bias questions including the initial contact of one-minute the burden for the non-response bias check will be about 8 hours (Table 4 below). The total burden time for this collection is estimated to be 141 hours.

Table 4. Burden Estimates

	Completed Responses	Completion Time * (minutes)	Burden Hours (rounded up)
Completed questionnaire*	500	16	133
On-site non-response survey	150	3	8
Total burden requested under this ICR:	650		1410

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



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REPORTING PLAN:

Descriptive and statistical results of this survey will be compiled into a written report that will be delivered to Glacier National Park. Results will also be shared through an oral presentation to park professionals and the public through a Glacier National Park Brown Bag Luncheon in summer 2022. Results may also be published in peer-reviewed journals in future years.

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 Officer, National Park Service, 12201 Sunrise Valley Drive Reston, Virginia 20192.