



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: 5-20-2021

PROJECT TITLE: Greater Yellowstone Wildlife Approach On-site Interviews

ABSTRACT: (not to exceed 150 words)

Scholars have identified recreation, park, and tourism settings as places for the elicitation of awe-inspiring experiences. Wildlife viewing in parks and protected areas, especially when megafauna such as bison and elk are involved, are often cited as highly emotional, awe-inspiring experience for many visitors. This collection of information will help park managers understand how emotional experiences during human-wildlife interactions could be incorporated into management decisions to reduce human-wildlife conflict.

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PROJECT INFORMATION:

Where will the collection take place? Grand Teton National Park and Yellowstone National Park

Sampling Period Start Date: 6/20/2021

Sampling Period End Date: 8/31/2021

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 – Digital recorder

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 and National Park Service Protection Interpretation and Research in System (54 USC §100702) 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.

Recreation, park, and tourism settings are identified-as areas that elicit awe-inspiring experiences. These destinations often provide magnificent scenery, biodiversity, treasured heritage sites, and important cultural resources. In fact, the emotion of awe is most often elicited in experimental research through the use of nature-based imagery. Although park managers recognize that visits to national parks can be highly emotional experiences, and experimental researchers often rely on nature-based stimuli to elicit awe in laboratory settings, there is very little research available to understand awe experiences in parks in protected areas from the visitor perspective.

Grand Teton National Park (GRTE) and Yellowstone National Park (YELL) were established to preserve and protect some of the largest conservation herds of ungulates in North America. Millions of people travel to these parks each year for the opportunity to view wildlife in their native habitats. Park managers are challenged by human behavior, whereby visitors approach wildlife at inappropriately close distances despite. Communication and outreach efforts are designed to inform visitors about the dangers of unsafe and close encounters with wildlife in the parks. In general, much of the human dimensions of wildlife research has been dedicated to understanding visitor awareness pertinent to wildlife-related decision making. Wildlife viewing, especially in area where bison and elk are present, is considered to be highly emotional and awe-inspiring experiences for many visitors. YELL and GRTE managers requested this study to understand how awe experiences affect visitor behaviors in location where are found. This collection of information will help park managers understand how emotional experiences during human-wildlife interactions could be incorporated into management decisions to reduce human-wildlife conflict.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

(A) Respondent Universe:

All adults (18 years of age and older) visiting the Antelope Flats areas of GRTE and the Mammoth area of YELL, from June 20 to August 31, 2021.

(B) Sampling Plan / Procedures:

Potential respondents will be intercepted at the end of their visit as they exit Antelope Flats (GRTE) and Mammoth (YELL). These locations will allow researchers to capture individuals who are hiking or scenic driving in GRTE and YELL. At each sampling location sampling will be stratified by day of the week and location. During the sampling period (June 20 to August 31, 2021) a random sample of visitors will be approached at the end of their experience between the hours of 12 pm and 7:00 PM (at 30-minute intervals) for a total of 6 sampling days (i.e., 3 days in GRTE, 3 days in YELL). Visitors at the beginning of their visit will not be eligible for participation and the next (*n*th) person will be randomly selected.

During the course of the sampling period, we estimate that will have approach at least 40 visitors at each site Antelope Flats (*n*=20), and at Mammoth (*n*=20). Sampling and recruiting efforts will conclude at the end of the sampling period.

(C) Instrument Administration:

The initial contact will be used to explain and determine interest in participating in the study. Visitors observed walking away from a wildlife encounter (i.e., bison in GRTE, elk in YELL) will be approached for intercept. The initial contact is anticipated to take approximately 1 minute to complete. The interviewer will use the following sample script during the initial contact:

"Excuse me, my name is _____. I am conducting a short interview to help (YELL or GRTE) managers understand visitor experience here at [INSERT STUDY LOCATION HERE] with wildlife. Your participation is voluntary and your responses will be anonymous. The interview should take about 15 minutes to complete. Are you 18 years or older and willing to participate?"

➔ If NO:

- *"Are you a first-time visitor to this park?"*
 - *"On this visit to [INSERT PARK NAME HERE], have you seen [INSERT BISON OR ELK]?"*
 - *"Are you aware of any park communications regarding the recommended distance individuals should stay away from [INSERT BISON OR ELK]?"*
- Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you enjoy your visit."*

➔ If YES: *"I'd like to ask you a series of questions about your experiences in the park today. Will it be OK with you if I were to record our conversation so I can share this information with the Park staff later?"*

➔ If NO:

- “Are you a first-time visitor to this park?”
- “On this visit to [INSERT PARK NAME HERE], have you seen [INSERT BISON OR ELK]?”
- “Are you aware of any park communications regarding the recommended distance individuals should stay away from [INSERT BISON OR ELK]?”

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

➔ If YES: “Are you just starting your visit to [INSERT PARK NAME HERE]?” “Okay, thank you for your time, but we are seeking visitors that have already experienced the area. Have a wonderful time in [INSERT PARK NAME HERE].”

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

(D) Expected Response Rate / Confidence Level:

Based on previous research experience with this method and as indicated above, we estimate that at least 80% (n=32) of visitors contacted during each sampling period will agree to participate in the on-site survey. We expect 80% of those who do not agree to participate in the on-site survey to answer the non-response bias questions (n=6) with the remain visitors completely refusing to participate in any part of the collection. The completed on-site surveys yield a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error within each period and overall, of +/-5%.

Table 3. Anticipated Onsite Survey Response Rates

Location	Total Number of Visitor Contacts	Completed Onsite Surveys (80% of contacts)	Soft Refusals (20% of contacts)	Completed Non-Response Surveys (80% of soft refusals)	Hard Refusals (20% of soft refusals)
Antelope Flats	20	16	4	3	1
Mammoth	20	16	4	3	1
Total	40	32	8	6	2

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

All visitor refusing to participate will be asked to respond to the following non-response questions:

- “Are you a first-time visitor to this park?”
- “On this visit to [INSERT PARK NAME HERE], have you seen [insert bison or elk]?”
- “Are you aware that there are regulations regarding the recommended distance individuals should stay away from [insert bison or elk]?”

The interviewers will also record the following observational information:

- time and day of contact,
- location,
- group size,
- any potential language barrier,

- gender

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 the units.

(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 NPS Programmatic visitor use studies. Questions from the NPS Pool of Known Questions (OMB Control Number 1024-0224) have been adapted for appropriate context at these units. Any adaptations of questions have been reviewed and approved for use by the NPS Information Collection Clearance Officer. The questions included in this collection were designed, reviewed and pretested by the following: PI, research staff, social scientists and graduate students in the Recreation, Park, and Tourism Management Department at Pennsylvania State University with expertise in social science research, and working with park staff. Pre-testing for clarity questions and to estimate the respondent burden time was conducted with graduate and undergraduate students at Pennsylvania State University. The results of the pretest were used to make minor changes to the wording of the questions for clarity and to establish the respondent burden based on the average completion time (range between 12 and 18 minutes).

BURDEN ESTIMATES

During the sample period, we plan to approach 20 visitors while on site in GRTE, and 20 visitors while on site in YELL for a total of 40. We expect that the initial contact time for all visitors will take at least one minute per person. We expect 80% (n=32) will agree to complete the survey. We estimate that it will take an additional 15 minutes per person to complete the survey (32 x 16 minutes = 9 hours). Of all the visitors contacted, we anticipate that 20% (n=8) will refuse to participate in the study, of those, 80% (n=6) will complete the non-response check, and the remaining 20% (n=2) will give a "hard refusal" and walk away. We anticipate that it will take an additional minute to complete the non-response bias questions (6 x 2 minutes = 0.2 hours, rounded to 1 hour). The total estimated annual burden for this collection is 10 hours.

Table 4. Burden Estimates

	Completed Responses	Completion Time * (minutes)	Burden Hours (rounded up)
On-site Survey*	32	16	9
On-site non-response survey	6	2	1
Total burden requested under this ICR	38		010

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

REPORTING PLAN:

Analyze interviews and prepare report: September 2021 – March 2022

- 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 unit management, reviewed by unit staff and peer-reviewed by relevant social scientists.

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.
