

# Great Falls Park and Carderock Recreation Area Climbing Thresholds Survey

**PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT:** The Paperwork Reduction Act requires us to tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether or not you have to respond. We are authorized by the National Park Service Protection, Interpretation, and Research in System (54 USC 1000702) to collect this information. This information will be used by park managers to guide the development of a Climbing Management Plan. Your responses to this collection are completely voluntary and will remain anonymous. You can end the process at any time and will not be penalized in any way for choosing to do so. No personal identifiable information will be collected. Data collected will only be reported in aggregates and no individually identifiable responses will be reported.

**Burden Estimate Statement:** A Federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and you are not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. We estimate that the time burden to complete this survey is 10 minutes. Direct comments concerning the burden estimate or any other aspect of this information collection to: Dr. Sarah Jackson at [sjackso@ksu.edu](mailto:sjackso@ksu.edu); or Bret Meldrum at [bret\\_meldrum@nps.gov](mailto:bret_meldrum@nps.gov).

## Pre-Survey Question

1. At which park were you intercepted to complete this survey?
  - Carderock → If 'Carderock,' Skip Questions 10, 11, and 12
  - Great Falls → If 'Great Falls,' skip Questions 15 and 16

**\*\*Answer to Question 1 will be used to auto-populate any instance of [insert park] in Qualtrics and to establish the appropriate skip pattern based on intercept location.\*\***

Topic Area 5: ACT48 (Variation: to specify outdoor climbing)

2. Before today, have you ever climbed outside?
  - Yes
  - No → If 'No,' skip questions 3, 6, 8, 9, 19. Qualtrics will establish appropriate skip pattern based on response.

Topic Area 5: HUNTFISH3 (Variation: Changed activity to climbing.)

3. How many **years** have you climbed outside?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Area 5: ACT14

4. Please rate your current experience level as a climber? (select one)
  - Beginner
  - Novice
  - Intermediate
  - Advanced
  - Expert

Topic Area 1: GROUP4

5. How many people were in your climbing group today, including you?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Area 5: ACT37 (Variation: to quantify activity)

6. On average, how many **days a month** do you **climb outside**?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Area 5: ACT37 (Variation: quantify activity.)

7. On average, how many **days a month** do you **climb indoors**?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Section 1: Park History

Topic Area 3: CVIS2 (Variation to specify activity)

8. When was the **first time** you climbed at [insert park]? *Please indicate a year.*  
\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Area 3: CVIS3 (Variation: Generalize to an average year)

9. On average, how many **days a year** do you climb at [insert park]?  
\_\_\_\_\_ days per year

Topic Area 2: ITIN8

Q10-Q12: Only asked of respondents intercepted at Great Falls.

10. Were you aware of the climbing registration system at Great Falls?
- Yes → Did you register before climbing today?  Yes  No
  - No → (Skip to Question 13)

Topic Area 2: ITIN (New Question: Needed in order to understand how often individuals are using the voluntary registration system.)

11. How often do you register at Great Falls before starting your climb?
- Never (Skip to Question 13)
  - Rarely
  - Sometimes
  - Often
  - Always

Topic Area 2: BACCOM1 (Variation: Changed permit to registration.)

12. Please indicate all the locations where you have registered before climbing at Great Falls. *Please select all that apply.*
- Visitor Center
  - Visitor Center Registration Box
  - Climber Lot Registration Box
  - I have registered, but I don't know where.

Topic Area 7: PART6

13. Have you ever volunteered for a climbing area maintenance project at [insert park] (e.g., trail construction, trash clean up, etc.)? (Check one)
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't recall

Topic Area 7: PART7

14. Have you ever volunteered for climbing area maintenance project anywhere else (e.g., trail construction, trash clean up, etc.)? (Check one)
- Yes
  - No
  - I don't recall

## Section 2: Management

Topic Area 8: MGMTOPT22 (*Variation: Replaced Likert scale with option ranking and modified wording to reflect park conditions and pertinent management options.*)  
(Q15 and Q16 will only be asked of respondents intercepted at Cadrerock. These questions will use the Qualtrics “pick, group, and rank” question type, allowing respondents to drag and drop ranking numbers into the appropriate position.)

Local climbing groups have voiced concern about the river-level erosion at Carderock and asked the National Park Service to stabilize the riverbank to keep climbing staging areas (bottoms of climbs) open. Please indicate the extent to which you would support or oppose each of the following potential management actions at this park. The list of items are **not necessarily actions that are going to occur in the area**, but we are interested in your opinions about these potential actions. These are sample actions that other parks have used to address erosion that impacts recreation opportunities.

15. Please rank the following methods that you prefer at the base of climbs at Carderock from best to worst. 1 equals your most preferred option; 5 your least preferred.

Option	Rank
Do nothing	1.
Seasonal closures for bank stability	2.
Limit use to reduce impact on bank	3.
Green infrastructure (plant trees and other vegetation) to increase bank stability	4.
Gray infrastructure (construct belay platform at the base of climbs) to increase bank stability	5.

Topic Area 8: MGMTOPT22 (*Variation: Replaced Likert scale with option ranking and modified wording to reflect park conditions and pertinent management options.*)

16. To better understand long term use trends, park managers have expressed interest in implementing a permit/registration system, like what is currently in use at Great Falls Parks. The options for implementation presented below are not necessarily going to occur, but it is important to understand your opinion about them. These options are not planned to limit use, but rather, to more comprehensively estimate the number of climbers using the park on an annual basis. Please rank your preference for the following methods of climbing permitting/registration from best to worst. 1 equals your most preferred option; 3 your least preferred option.

Option	Rank
Self-permit/registration	1.
Online permit/registration	2.
No permit/registration	3.

Topic Area 7: PART10

17. How much influence do you think people like yourself can have on the management of [insert park]?

- A lot
- Some
- Very Little
- None at all

Topic Area 7: ABV6 (Variation: changed from 5 point to 7-point scale. The climbing population has voiced strong opinions on management actions, and increasing the scale from a 5 to 7-point Likert scale allows for greater specificity in a respondent's answer and more variation in the sample.)

<b>When it comes to issues concerning natural resource management:</b>	Strongly Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither	Slightly Agree	Moderately Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel that no additional rules and regulations are needed at [insert park]	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Park managers are doing a good job	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Park managers are too influenced by special interest groups	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Park managers change policies without good reasons	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Park managers have the same ideas about management as I do	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Park managers listen to ordinary people's opinions	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Park managers provide all relevant information about decisions to the public	<b>-3</b>	<b>-2</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>

### Section 3: Crowding

We would like to know how you perceive crowding conditions at [insert park].

(For surveys administered at Carderock, the following statement will be included in this introduction: For the following set of questions, please consider the average day at Carderock and not Wednesday Night group climbs.)

Topic Area 2: ITIN17 (Variation: adjusted prompt to be site specific and provide additional displacement coping mechanisms.)

19. Please indicate whether (and if so, how often) you have ever done each of the following when planning to climb at [insert park] to avoid crowded conditions:

	Ever Done?		If YES, how often				
	NO	YES	Rarely	Occasionally	Often	Usually	Always
Climbed earlier in the day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
Climbed later in the day	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
Considered climbing somewhere nearby instead (e.g., [insert other park])	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
Climbed on weekdays to avoid weekend crowds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
Gone to other areas within [insert park] where you are less likely to see other people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5
Considered climbing somewhere further away instead (e.g., Sugarloaf, Elizabeth's Furnace, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	2	3	4	5

Topic Area 5: CROWD21

20. How did the number of other climbers you encountered affect your overall experience today?  
 (Select one response)

Detracted greatly	Detracted somewhat	Had no effect	Added somewhat	Added greatly
1	2	3	4	5

**Topic Area 5: CROWD31**

21. While climbing, how acceptable is it for you to see the following number of other people participating in the same activity during your time at [insert park]? (Please select one number for each of the following items).

<b># other people participating in the same activity</b>	<b><u>Extremely Unacceptable</u></b>	<b><u>Unacceptable</u></b>	<b><u>Neutral</u></b>	<b><u>Acceptable</u></b>	<b><u>Extremely Acceptable</u></b>
<b>Zero</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>1-5</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>6-10</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>11-15</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>16-20</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>More than 20</b>	1	2	3	4	5

Topic Area 5: VERP4 (Variation to add additional response options reflected in VERP4 and to change “before it becomes too crowded” to “before management should take action.” This change is intended to ensure that there is compatibility between crowding thresholds and responses to management action in the previous question section during analysis.)

22. What do you think is the maximum acceptable number of people in each climbing group before management should take action? (Please fill in a number or mark one of the other two options)

It would be acceptable to have a maximum of \_\_\_\_\_ people in each climbing group

- It doesn't matter to me
- It matters to me, but I cannot specify a number

Topic Area 5: VERP4 (Variation to change “before it becomes too crowded” to “before management should take action.” This change is intended to ensure that there is compatibility between crowding thresholds and responses to management action in the previous section during analysis.)

Additional context to Questions 22 and 23: Based on previous studies, these two dimensions of crowding likely produce different impacts on the visitor experience, and thus asking both questions is critical to understanding crowding at these parks.

23. What is the maximum acceptable number of other climbers to see while you are at [insert park] before management should take action? (Please fill in a number or mark one of the other two options)

It is acceptable to see as many as \_\_\_\_\_ other climbers.

- It doesn't matter to me
- It matters to me, but I cannot specify a number.

**Topic Area 5: CROWD12 (Variation: Added additional response options)**

24. Imagine that you discovered during your **next planned climbing trip** to [NPS SITE], that your most preferred area was much more crowded than you normally find acceptable. What would you do? (Please select only one.)

- I would make an exception and still climb in my most preferred area.
- I would still climb, but elsewhere in [NPS SITE].
- I would still climb, but somewhere outside of [NPS SITE] (e.g., [insert other park]).
- I would temporarily participate in a different activity in [NPS SITE].
- I would temporarily participate in a different activity, but outside of [NPS SITE].
- There are no levels of crowding that I find so unacceptable to keep me from climbing in my most preferred area.

Topic Area 5: CROWD23 (*Variation: Expanded wording to obtain information about specific response options related to crowding.*)

25. Imagine that your most preferred area in [NPS SITE] was consistently **much more crowded** than you normally find acceptable, how likely would you be to consider the following as a result:

	<b><u>Extremely Unlikely</u></b>	<b><u>Unlikely</u></b>	<b><u>Possibly</u></b>	<b><u>Likely</u></b>	<b><u>Extremely Likely</u></b>
<b>Plan to climb at [insert park] during the week to avoid weekend crowds</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Plan to climb at [insert park] earlier in the day</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Plan to climb at [insert park] later in the day</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Plan to climb at another area in [insert park]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Plan to climb at [insert other park]</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Plan to climb somewhere else (e.g., Sugarloaf, Elizabeth’s Furnace, etc.)</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Plan to climb at an indoor climbing gym</b>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Still plan to visit [insert park] but participate in another activity.</b>	1	2	3	4	5

Topic Area 5: CROWD3

26. How did the number of other climbers you encountered at [insert park] today compare to what you expected?

- A lot less than what I expected
- A little less than what I expected
- About what I expected
- A little more than what I expected
- A lot more than I expected
- I did not have any expectations

**SECTION 4: DEMOGRAPHICS**

Topic Area 1: RES2

27. What is your home zip code? (If you are not a US resident, please list your home country)

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Area 1: AGE1

28. What is your year of birth?

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Area 1: EDUC1

29. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? Please select one response.

- Less than high school degree
- High school graduate (high school diploma or equivalent including GED)
- Some college
- 2-year degree
- 4-year degree
- Graduate or professional degree
- Do not wish to answer

Topic Area 1: RACE/ETH1

30. Are you Hispanic or Latino?

- Yes
- No

Topic Area 1: RACE/ETH2

31. Which of these categories best indicates your race? Answer only for yourself. Please select **one or more**.

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

Topic Area 1: GEND1

32. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Transgender, non-binary, or another gender
- Prefer not to answer

Topic Area 9: ECON9

33. Which category best represents your annual household income? (Please select one.)

Topic Area 7: PACE1 Variations by state/territory and by organization

- Less than \$24,999
- \$25,000 to \$34,999
- \$35,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more
- Do not wish to answer

34. Are you a current member of any of these organizations? *Please select all that apply.*
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access Fund  | <input type="checkbox"/> American Mountain Guides Association              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Alpine Club                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional Climbing Instructor Association      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mid-Atlantic Climbers                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Potomac Appalachian Trail Club                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Potomac Appalachian Trail Club –<br>Mountaineering Section | <input type="checkbox"/> Another Organization not listed:<br>_____         |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> I am not a member of any climbing<br>organization |

Lastly, please provide any additional comments you may have regarding your experience climbing at [insert park]:

Thank you very much for your participation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:  
Dr. Sarah Jackson – [sjackso@ksu.edu](mailto:sjackso@ksu.edu)