



Social Science Program  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Visitor Services Project

# Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore Visitor Study





IN REPLY REFER TO:

## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore  
1100 North Mineral Springs Rd.  
Porter, IN 46304-1299

August 2009

Dear Visitor:

Thank you for participating in this important study. Our goal is to learn about the expectations, opinions, and interests of visitors to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. This information will assist us in our efforts to better manage this park and to serve you, our visitor.

This questionnaire is only being given to a select number of visitors, so your participation is very important! It should only take about 20 minutes to complete after your visit.

When your visit is over, please complete this questionnaire. Seal it with the stickers provided on the last page and drop it in any U.S. mailbox.

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Littlejohn, NPS VSP Director, Park Studies Unit, College of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 441139, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83844-1139, phone: 208-885-7863, email: [littlej@uidaho.edu](mailto:littlej@uidaho.edu).

We appreciate your help.





Sincerely,

Constantine Dillon  
Superintendent

**DIRECTIONS**

At the end of your visit:

- 1) Please have the selected individual complete this questionnaire.
- 2) Answer the questions carefully since each question is different.
- 3) For questions that use circles (O), please mark your answer by filling in the circle with black or blue ink, or a pencil with dark (e.g. #2) lead.

Like this:  Not like this:   

- 4) Seal it with the stickers provided.
- 5) Drop it in a U.S. mailbox.

Thank you!

**PRIVACY ACT and PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT statement:**

16 U.S.C. 1a-7 authorizes collection of this information. This information will be used by park managers to better serve the public. Response to this request is voluntary. No action may be taken against you for refusing to supply the information requested. Your name is requested for follow-up mailing purposes only. When analysis of the questionnaire is completed, all name and address files will be destroyed. Thus the permanent data will be anonymous. Please do not put your name or that of any member of your personal group on the questionnaire. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Burden estimate statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 20 minutes per response. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this form to Margaret Littlejohn, NPS Visitor Services Project, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, P.O. Box 441139, Moscow, ID, 83844-1139; email: [littlej@uidaho.edu](mailto:littlej@uidaho.edu).

## Your Visit to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore

NOTE: In this questionnaire, your **personal group** is defined as anyone that you are visiting the park with, such as spouse, family, friends, etc. This does not include the larger group that you might be traveling with, such as school, church, scouts, or tour group.

1. a) Prior to your visit, how did you and your personal group obtain information about Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore? Please mark (●) **all** that apply in column (a).
- b) If you were to visit Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in the future, how would you and your personal group prefer to obtain information about the park? Please mark (●) **all** that apply in column (b).

### a) Prior to this visit

### b) Prior to future visits

- |  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> Did not obtain information prior to visit → <b>Go to part b of this question</b>                 |                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Previous visits  | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Visitor center (U.S. Hwy. 49, just south of U.S. Hwy. 20)  | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Friends/relatives/word of mouth  | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Travel guides/tour books (such as AAA, etc.)   | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Maps/brochures   | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Newspaper/magazine articles  | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Inquiry to park via phone, mail, or email  | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Television/radio programs/videos   | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore website: <a href="http://www.nps.gov/indu">www.nps.gov/indu</a> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Other websites   | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> School class/program   | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Local businesses (hotels, motels, restaurants, etc.)   | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Chamber of commerce/visitors bureau/state welcome center   | <input type="radio"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify below)   | <input type="radio"/> |

This visit \_\_\_\_\_ Future visit \_\_\_\_\_

- c) From the sources you used prior to this visit, did you and your personal group receive the type of information about the park that you needed?

- No                       Yes → **Go to Question 2**

d) If NO, what type of park information did you and your personal group need that was not available? Please be specific.

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2. Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware that Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore is a national park?
- Yes                       No
3. Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware that there are two adjacent parks along Lake Michigan named Indiana Dunes? One is Indiana Dunes **National Lakeshore**, managed by the U.S. National Park Service, and the other is Indiana Dunes **State Park**, managed by Indiana's Department of Natural Resources. Please mark (●) **one**.
- Not aware there were two parks
- Aware of both and knew each was managed by a different organization
- Aware of both, but thought both were managed by the National Park Service
- Aware of both, but thought both were managed by Indiana Dunes State Park
- Aware of both, but didn't know which organization managed either park
4. Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware of the safety risks of swimming in Lake Michigan?
- Yes                       No
5. On this visit, what was the **primary** reason that you and your personal group came to the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore **area** (from Gary, IN to Michigan City, IN)? Please mark (●) **one**.
- Resident of the area (from Gary, IN to Michigan City, IN)
- Visit Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
- Visit other attractions in the area
- Visit friends/relatives in the area
- Business
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
6. On this trip to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, did you and your personal group visit other places in the area (from Gary, IN to Michigan City, IN)? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.
- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Chicago                                   | <input type="radio"/> Outlet Mall (Michigan City, IN)                       |
| <input type="radio"/> Indiana Dunes State Park                  | <input type="radio"/> Valparaiso University                                 |
| <input type="radio"/> Notre Dame University<br>(South Bend, IN) | <input type="radio"/> Casinos/hotels (within a 1-hour<br>drive of the park) |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify) _____              |   |

7. a) On this visit to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, did you and your personal group have only **one specific site** within the park that you planned to visit?
- Yes                       No → **Go to Question 8**
- b) If YES, which site was it? \_\_\_\_\_
- c) On this visit, were you able to **find** that site?
- Yes                       No → **Go to Question 8**
- d) On this visit, were you able to find **parking** at that site?
- Yes                       No
8. If you visit Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in the future, would you and your personal group be willing to pay a modest fee (\$5/vehicle/day) for parking?
- Yes, likely               No, unlikely               Not sure
9. a) During your travel to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, did you see signs leading you to the park? Please mark (●) **one**.
- Yes, saw signs       No, didn't see signs       Aware of signs, but did not need them
- b) If YES, were the signs helpful?
- Yes                       No
10. On this visit, how long did you and your personal group stay at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore? (Please list partial hours or days as  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  $\frac{1}{2}$ , or  $\frac{3}{4}$ .)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Number of hours, **if less than 24 hours**
- Or**
- \_\_\_\_\_ Number of days, **if 24 hours or more**
11. a) If you were to visit the park in the future, would you and your personal group be willing to pay a modest fee (such as \$2.00/person each way) to ride a shuttle from a central location to the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore's beaches at the central and east ends of the park?
- Yes, likely               No, unlikely               Not sure
- b) If you were to visit the park in the future, would you and your personal group be willing to ride a combination of a train from Chicago and a shuttle bus to get to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore beaches?
- Yes, likely               No, unlikely               Not sure

12. a) On this visit, which of the following sites at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore did you and your personal group visit/use? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Paul H. Douglas Center for Environmental Education (Gary, IN) |   |
| <input type="radio"/> Portage Lakefront & Riverwalk                                 | <input type="radio"/> Beach at the west end of park     |
| <input type="radio"/> Mt. Baldy   | <input type="radio"/> Beach in the central part of park |
| <input type="radio"/> Bailly Homestead  | <input type="radio"/> Beach at the east end of park     |
| <input type="radio"/> Dunewood Campground   | <input type="radio"/> Visitor center (U.S. Hwy. 49)     |
| <input type="radio"/> Chellberg Farm  | <input type="radio"/> Other (Specify) _____             |

b) If you and your personal group only visited one site on this visit, why did you choose that site?

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13. On this visit, which of the following trails at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore did you and your personal group use? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Miller Woods Trail           | <input type="radio"/> Little Calumet River Trail       |
| <input type="radio"/> Marquette Trail              | <input type="radio"/> Calumet Bike Trail               |
| <input type="radio"/> Long Lake Loop Trail         | <input type="radio"/> Calumet Dune Trail               |
| <input type="radio"/> Dune Succession Loop Trail   | <input type="radio"/> Ly-co-ki-we Horse & Hiking Trail |
| <input type="radio"/> West Beach Loop Trail        | <input type="radio"/> Dune Ridge Trail                 |
| <input type="radio"/> Inland Marsh Trail           | <input type="radio"/> Mt. Baldy Trail                  |
| <input type="radio"/> Cowles Bog Trail             | <input type="radio"/> Heron Rookery Trail              |
| <input type="radio"/> Other (Please specify) _____ |  |

14. If you were to visit the park in the future, would you and your personal group be likely to use food concessions if they were available at selected locations along Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore?

- Yes, likely       No, unlikely       Not sure

15. a) On this visit, in which activities did you and your personal group participate in within Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.

- Attending ranger-led talks/programs/demonstrations or special event
- Beach activities (swimming, tanning, walking)
- Bicycle riding
- Boating/kayaking/canoeing/tubing
- Camping at Duneland Campground
- Creative arts (photography/drawing/painting/writing)
- Enjoying solitude/quiet
- Fishing
- General sightseeing
- Horseback riding
- Nature study (birdwatching, dune succession, plant diversity)
- Picnicking
- Visiting historic sites
- Visiting visitor center on US Hwy. 49 (viewing film, visiting bookstore, etc.)
- Walking/hiking
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b) Which **one** of the above activities was the primary reason you and your personal group visited Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore on this visit? Please list **one**.

\_\_\_\_\_

16. Does the presence of lifeguards influence your decision on where to swim?

- Yes, I would prefer areas with lifeguards
- No, lifeguard service is not a factor in choosing where I swim

17. Did you or any member of your group participate in a school program at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore when you were a child?

- Yes
- No
- Don't remember/don't know



18. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore contains over 12 miles of beaches. The park encourages visitors to stay out of the water during periods of rip currents or a high level of e-coli activity. When these unsafe/unhealthy conditions exist, how do you prefer to learn this information? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.

- Radio announcements
- Signs on beaches
- Cell phone message
- Rangers walking on beaches making announcements
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

19. a) For the safety issues below, please indicate how safe you and your personal group felt from crime and accidents during this visit to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Please mark (●) **one** answer for each issue.

**How safe did you feel in the park?**

Safety issue	How safe did you feel in the park?				
	Very Unsafe	Somewhat unsafe	Neither unsafe nor safe	Somewhat safe	Very safe
Personal safety—from crime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal safety—from accidents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal property—from crime	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

b) If you marked “very unsafe” or “somewhat unsafe” on any of the above items, please explain why.

\_\_\_\_\_

20. On this visit, what was your **primary** reason/motivation for visiting Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore? Please mark (●) **one**.

- Visit the beach/swim/sunbathe
- Walk/jog park trails
- Attend special event in the park or the area
- Visit a national park
- Passing through to another destination
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

21. a) Please mark (●) **all** the information services and facilities that you or your personal group **used** at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore during this visit.
- b) Next, for only those services and facilities that you or your personal group **used**, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.
- c) Finally, for only those services and facilities that you or your personal group **used**, please rate their quality from 1-5.

<b>a) Information services/facilities used</b>	<b>b) If used, how important?</b>	<b>c) If used, what quality?</b>
Mark (●)	1=Not important 2=Somewhat important 3=Moderately important 4=Very important 5=Extremely important	1=Very poor 2=Poor 3=Average 4=Good 5=Very good
<input type="radio"/> Park brochure/map	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Assistance from park staff	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Visitor center exhibits	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Outdoor exhibits	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Park orientation film	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Ranger-led programs	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Junior Ranger program	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Directional signs	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Regulation signs	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Information signs	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Bulletin boards	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Park newspaper, <i>The Singing Sands</i>	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Park website: <a href="http://www.nps.gov/indu">www.nps.gov/indu</a> used before or during visit	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Visitor center bookstore sales items (selection, price, etc.)	_____	_____

22. a) Please mark (●) **all** the visitor services and facilities that you or your personal group **used** at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore during this visit.
- b) Next, for only those services and facilities that you or your personal group **used**, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.
- c) Finally, for only those services and facilities that you or your personal group **used**, please rate their quality from 1-5.

a) Visitor services/facilities used Mark (●)	b) If used, how important?	c) If used, what quality?
	1=Not important	1=Very poor
	2=Somewhat important	2=Poor
	3=Moderately important	3=Average
	4=Very important	4=Good
	5=Extremely important	5=Very good
<input type="radio"/> Access for people with disabilities	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Campground	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Picnic areas	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Restrooms	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Trails	_____	_____
<input type="radio"/> Visitor center (U.S. Hwy. 49)	_____	_____

23. a) On this visit to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, did you and your personal group attend any ranger-led talks/programs?
- No                       Yes → **Go to Question 24**
- b) If NO, what prevented you and your personal group from participating in ranger-led talks/programs? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.
- Not interested
- Did not have time for this activity
- Not aware of any ranger-led talks/programs offered at park
- No program subjects of interest
- Not enough programs offered
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

24. a) If you were to visit Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in the future, would you and your personal group be interested in attending ranger-led talks/programs?
- Yes, likely                       No, unlikely                       Not sure

b) If YES, what theme or topic would interest you?

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c) What program length would be most suitable for you and your personal group?  
Please mark (●) **one**.

- Under 1/2 hour                       Other (Please specify below) \_\_\_\_\_  
 1/2 - 1 hour  
 1 - 2 hours

25. If you visit Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore in the future, how would you and your personal group prefer to learn about cultural and natural history/features of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore? Please mark (●) **all** that apply.

- Not interested in learning about the park → **Go to Question 26**  
 Indoor exhibits     Outdoor exhibits  
 Park website: www.nps.gov/indu                       Self-guided tours  
 Volunteer opportunities                                       Special events  
 Ranger-led interpretive programs  
 Electronic media/devices available to visitors (downloadable digital files, podcasts, cell phone tour, interactive computer programs, audio, etc.)  
 Films, movies, slideshows  
 Printed materials (brochures, park newspaper, books, maps, etc.)  
 Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

26. On this visit, were you and your personal group part of the following types of organized groups?

- a) Commercial guided tour group                       Yes                       No  
 b) School/educational group                                       Yes                       No  
 c) Other group (scouts, work, church, etc.)                       Yes                       No

d) If you were with one of these organized groups, how many people, including yourself, were in this group?

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of people in organized group

27. a) On this visit, what kind of personal group (not guided tour/school/other organized group) were you with? Please mark (●) **one**.

- Alone
- Family
- Other (Please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- Friends
- Family and friends

b) On this visit, how many people were in your personal group, including yourself?

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of people

c) On this visit, how many vehicles did you and your personal group use to arrive at the park?

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of vehicles

28. For you and your personal group on this visit, please provide the following. (If you do not know the answer, leave blank).

	<b>a) Current age</b>	<b>b) U.S. ZIP code or name of country other than U.S.</b>	<b>Number of visits to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (including this visit)</b>	
			<b>c) past 12 months</b>	<b>d) lifetime</b>
Yourself	_____	_____	_____	_____
Member #2	_____	_____	_____	_____
Member #3	_____	_____	_____	_____
Member #4	_____	_____	_____	_____
Member #5	_____	_____	_____	_____
Member #6	_____	_____	_____	_____
Member #7	_____	_____	_____	_____

29. For you only, what is the highest level of education you have completed? Please mark (●) **one**.

- Some high school
- High school diploma/GED
- Some college
- Bachelor's degree
- Graduate degree

30. a) Are you or members of your personal group Hispanic or Latino? Please mark (●) **one** for each group member.

	Yourself	Member #2	Member #3	Member #4	Member #5	Member #6	Member #7
Yes, Hispanic or Latino	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
No, not Hispanic or Latino	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

b) What is your race? What is the race of each member of your personal group? Please mark (●) **one or more** for you and each group member.

	Yourself	Member #2	Member #3	Member #4	Member #5	Member #6	Member #7
American Indian or Alaska Native	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Asian	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Black or African American	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
White	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

31. a) Does anyone in your personal group have a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services?

Yes                       No → **Go to Question 32**

b) If YES, on this visit, what activities or services did the person(s) have difficulty accessing or participating in?

32. a) Is there any service or facility that the park does not have that you would like to have available?

Yes                       No → **Go to Question 33**

b) If YES, what services or facilities would you like to see provided?

33. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore was established because of its significance to the nation. In your opinion, what is the national significance of this park?

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34. Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore?

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35. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the facilities, services, and recreational opportunities provided to you and your personal group at Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore during this visit? Please mark (●) **one**.

- |                       |                       |                       |                       |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Very poor             | Poor                  | Average               | Good                  | Very good             |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

36. a) Which category best represents your annual **household** income? Please mark (●) **one**.

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Less than \$24,999 | <input type="radio"/> \$50,000-\$74,999   | <input type="radio"/> \$150,000-\$199,999   |
| <input type="radio"/> \$25,000-\$34,999  | <input type="radio"/> \$75,000-\$99,999   | <input type="radio"/> \$200,000 or more     |
| <input type="radio"/> \$35,000-\$49,999  | <input type="radio"/> \$100,000-\$149,999 | <input type="radio"/> Do not wish to answer |

b) How many people are in your household? \_\_\_\_\_ Number of people

Thank you for your help! Please seal the questionnaire with the stickers provided and drop it in any U.S. mailbox.

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

**Visitor Services Project  
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