



**Cumberland Gap
National Historical Park
Visitor Study
Fall 1999**

Report 117
Visitor Services Project
Cooperative Park Studies Unit



Cumberland Gap National Historical Park

Visitor Study Fall 1999

Margaret Littlejohn

Visitor Services Project
Report 117

June 2000

Margaret Littlejohn is VSP Coordinator, National Park Service, based at the Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho. I thank Mike Meehan and the staff and volunteers of Cumberland Gap NHP for their assistance with this study. The VSP acknowledges the Public Opinion Lab of the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University, for its technical assistance.

Visitor Services Project
Cumberland Gap National Historical Park
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Cumberland Gap NHP (NHP) during October 9-16, 1999. A total of 678 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 520 questionnaires for a 76.7% response rate.
- This report profiles Cumberland Gap NHP visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Over one-half (65%) of the visitor groups were family groups. Forty-four percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Fifty-seven percent of visitors were aged 40-65 years, while 13% were aged 15 years or younger.
- Fifty-four percent of visitors were making their first visit to Cumberland Gap NHP. Most of the visitor groups (86%) spent less than a day at the park. Of those groups that spent less than a day at the park, 78% spent four hours or less.
- United States visitors were from Kentucky (26%), Tennessee (21%), and 39 other states and Washington D.C. There were too few international visitors to provide reliable information
- The sources of information most used by visitor groups were previous visits (32%), friends or relatives (31%), live in local area (24%), and travel guide/tour book (20%).
- On this visit, the most common activities were viewing fall colors (88%), hiking (57%), studying history (37%), buying sales items in visitor center (25%), and viewing wildflowers (25%).
- On this visit, the most commonly visited sites within Cumberland Gap NHP were the Pinnacle Overlook (81%) and the visitor center (73%). The least visited sites include Skylight Cave (4%) and Sand Cave (4%). During past visits, the most commonly visited sites were Pinnacle Overlook (88%), visitor center (78%) and the Iron Furnace (49%). The least visited sites during past visits were White Rocks (20%) and Skylight Cave (18%).
- Visitors were asked to rate the importance of park qualities and activities at Cumberland Gap NHP. The qualities or activities which received the highest "extremely important" or "very important" ratings were scenic views (94%), air quality (86%) and wilderness (82%).
- With regard to the use, importance, and quality of services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The services and facilities most used by 481 visitor groups were restrooms (85%), Pinnacle Overlook (77%), and parking lots (69%). According to visitors, the most important services and facilities were the fitness trail (97% of 44 respondents), park road directional signs (95% of 198 respondents), and roads (95% of 263 respondents). The highest quality services and facilities were the Pinnacle Overlook (97% of 332 respondents), the fitness trail (96% of 44 respondents) and the parking lots (94% of 306 respondents).
- Eighteen percent of 503 visitor groups visited the Hensley Settlement at Cumberland Gap NHP. Forty-seven percent of 90 visitor groups said they would likely be willing to pay a fee to observe historic craft demonstrations.
- Sixty-nine percent of the visitor groups indicated they visited the visitor center during this trip. The most common reasons for visiting the visitor center were to view the exhibits (79%), use the restroom (77%) and obtain information from park staff (71%).
- Ninety-two percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services at Cumberland Gap NHP as "very good" or "good." Visitors made many additional comments.

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the
University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit; phone (208) 885-7129 or 885-7863.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

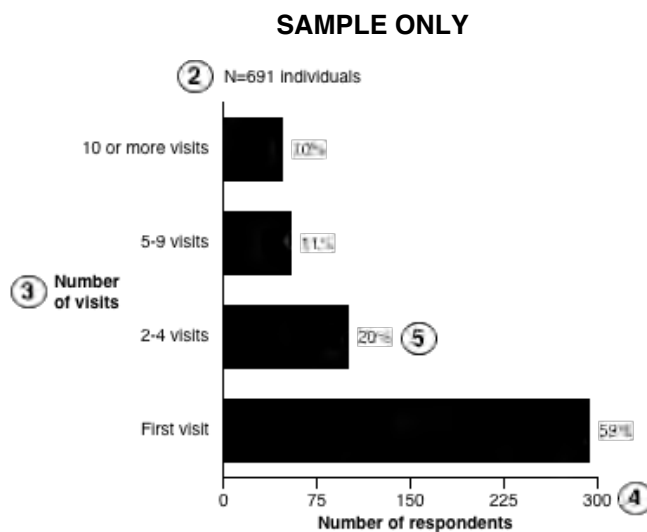
	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODS	2
RESULTS	5
Visitors contacted	5
Demographics	5
Length of visit	12
Visitors' awareness of NPS management	14
Sources of information	15
Sites visited—this visit and past visits	16
Reasons for visiting park	18
Reasons for visiting visitor center	19
Visitor activities and use of park resources	22
Hensley Settlement visits/willingness to pay fee	24
Visitor services and facilities: use, importance, and quality	25
Visitor expectations	45
Importance of park activities and qualities	47
Historic route restoration services preferred	51
Subjects of interest for future visits/ preferred methods of learning	52
Overall quality of visitor services	54
What visitors liked most	55
What visitors liked least	57
Planning for the future	59
Comment summary	61
ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS	63
QUESTIONNAIRE	65
VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS	67

INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (NHP). This visitor study was conducted October 9-16, 1999 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.

The **Methods** section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. The **Results** section includes a summary of visitor comments. An **Additional Analysis** page is included which will help managers request additional analyses. The final section includes a copy of the **Questionnaire**. An appendix includes comment summaries and visitors' unedited comments.

Most of this report's graphs resemble the example below. The large numbers refer to explanations following the graph.



① **Figure 4: Number of visits**

- 1: The Figure title describes the graph's information.
- 2: Listed above the graph, the 'N' shows the number of visitors responding and a description of the chart's information. Interpret data with an 'N' of less than 30 with **CAUTION!** as the results may be unreliable.
- 3: Vertical information describes categories.
- 4: Horizontal information shows the number or proportions in each category.
- 5: In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

METHODS

Questionnaire design and administration

The questionnaire for this visitor study was designed using a standard format that has been developed in previous Visitor Services Project studies. A copy of the questionnaire is included at the end of this report.

Interviews were conducted with, and questionnaires distributed to, a sample of visitors who arrived at Cumberland Gap NHP during October 9-16, 1999. Visitors were sampled at eight locations (see Table 1).

Table 1: Questionnaire distribution locations
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Location:	Questionnaires distributed	
	Number	%
Pinnacle Overlook	360	53
Visitor center	149	23
Wilderness Road Campground	58	9
Bartlett Park	50	7
Hensley Settlement	26	4
Fitness Trail	19	3
Chadwell Gap Trailhead	9	1
Civic Park Trailhead	7	1
GRAND TOTAL	678	101

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, an interview lasting approximately two minutes was used to determine group size, group type, and the age of the adult who would complete the questionnaire. This individual was then given a questionnaire and asked his or her name, address, and telephone number in order to mail them a reminder/thank you postcard. Visitor groups were asked to complete the questionnaire during or after their visit, then return it by mail.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank you postcard was mailed to all participants. Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the initial interview. Eight weeks after the survey a second replacement questionnaire was mailed to visitors who still had not returned their questionnaires.

Questionnaire design and administration-continued

Returned questionnaires were coded and the information entered into a computer using a standard statistical software package. Frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data, and responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized.

Data analysis

This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members. Thus, the sample size ('N'), varies from Figure to Figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 516 visitor groups, Figure 5 presents data for 1,518 individuals. A note above each graph specifies the information illustrated.

Sample size, missing data and reporting errors

Occasionally, a respondent may not have answered all of the questions, or may have answered some incorrectly. Unanswered questions result in missing data and cause the number in the sample to vary from Figure to Figure. For example, while 520 visitors to Cumberland Gap NHP returned questionnaires, Figure 1 shows data for only 516 respondents.

Questions answered incorrectly due to carelessness, misunderstanding directions, and so forth turn up in the data as reporting errors. These create small data inconsistencies.

Limitations

Like all surveys, this study has limitations, which should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. It is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflect actual behavior. This disadvantage applies to all such studies and is reduced by having visitors fill out the questionnaire soon after they visited the park.

2. The data reflect visitor use patterns of visitors to the selected sites during the study period of October 9-16, 1999. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year.

3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "**CAUTION!**" is included in the graph, Figure or table.

**Special
Conditions**

During the study week, weather conditions were fairly typical of October, with occasional rainy days.

RESULTS

At Cumberland Gap NHP, 699 visitor groups were contacted, and 678 of these groups (97%) agreed to participate in the survey. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 520 visitor groups, resulting in a 76.7% response rate for this study.

Visitors contacted

Table 2 compares age and group size information collected from both the total sample of visitors contacted and those who actually returned questionnaires. Based on the variables of respondent age and visitor group size, non-response bias was judged to be insignificant. Although there is a slight difference in age between the visitors who accepted questionnaires and those who returned them, it is not judged to be significant.

Table 2: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Age of respondents	671	47.4	513	49.7
Group size	677	3.2	504	4.0

Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 206 people. Forty-four percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 16% were people visiting in groups of four.

Demographics

Sixty-five percent of visitor groups were made up of family members, 11% consisted of friends, 11% were made up of family and friends, and 9% of visitors were alone (see Figure 2). Groups listing themselves as "other" for group type included church groups, clubs, and spouses. Two percent of visitors were in a guided tour group (see Figure 3). One percent of visitors were part of an educational group (see Figure 4).

Over one-half of visitors (57%) were aged 40-57 years (see Figure 5). Thirteen percent of visitors were aged 15 years or younger.

Fifty-four percent of visitors were visiting Cumberland Gap NHP for the first time, while 28% of visitors had visited between two and four times (see Figure 6).

**Demographics-
continued**

Visitors were asked to identify their ethnic and racial backgrounds. Most visitors (98%) said they were not of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity (see Figure 7). Most visitors (93%) were white and 2% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, as shown in Figure 8.

There were not enough international visitors to provide reliable information (see Table 3). The largest proportion of U.S. visitors were from Kentucky (26%) and Tennessee (21%). Smaller proportions came from 39 other states and Washington D.C. (see Map 1 and Table 4).

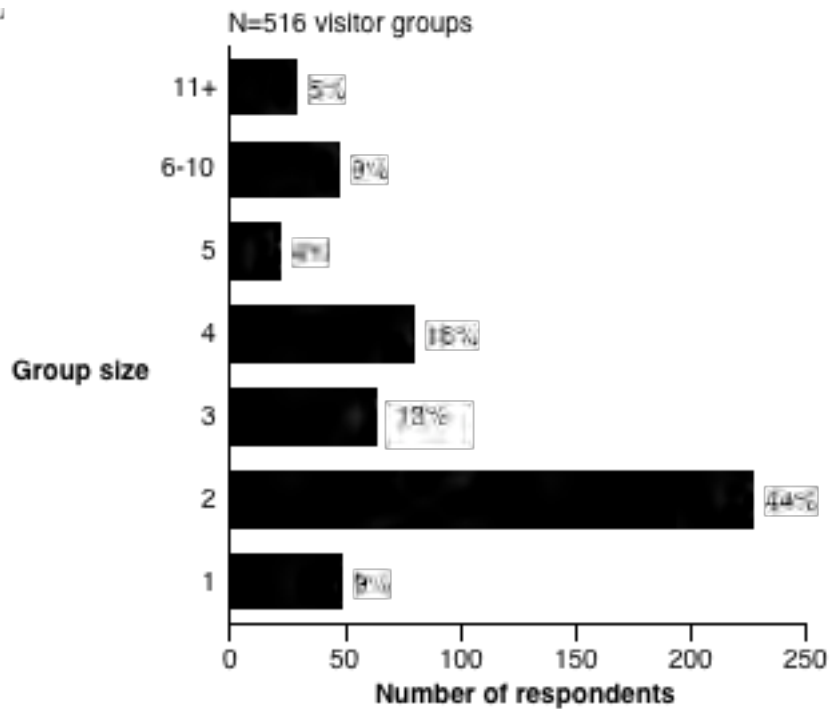


Figure 1: Visitor group sizes

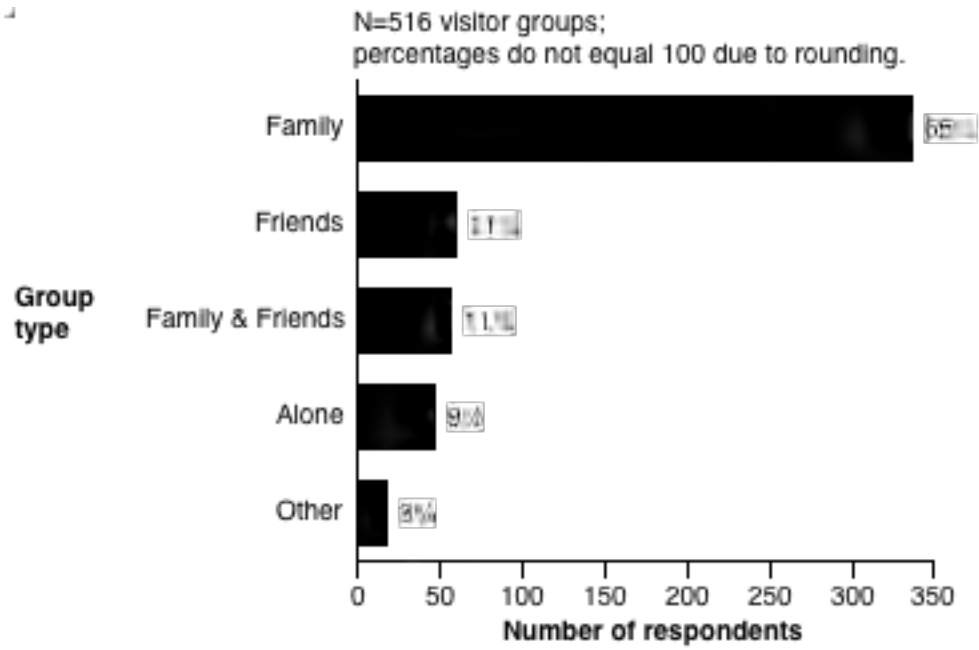


Figure 2: Visitor group types

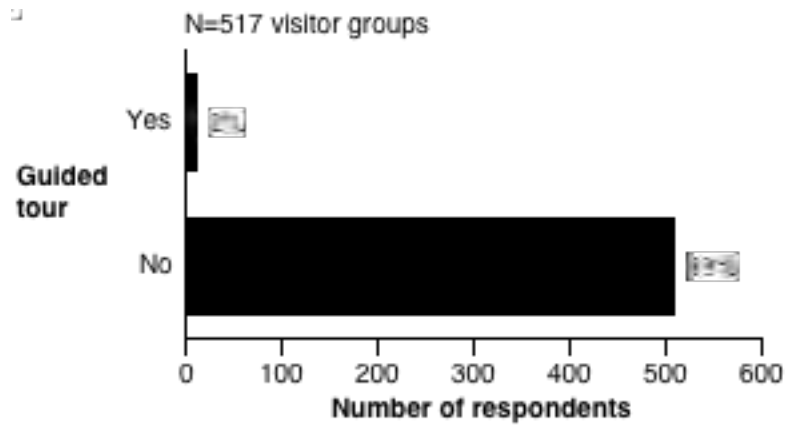


Figure 3: Participation in a guided tour

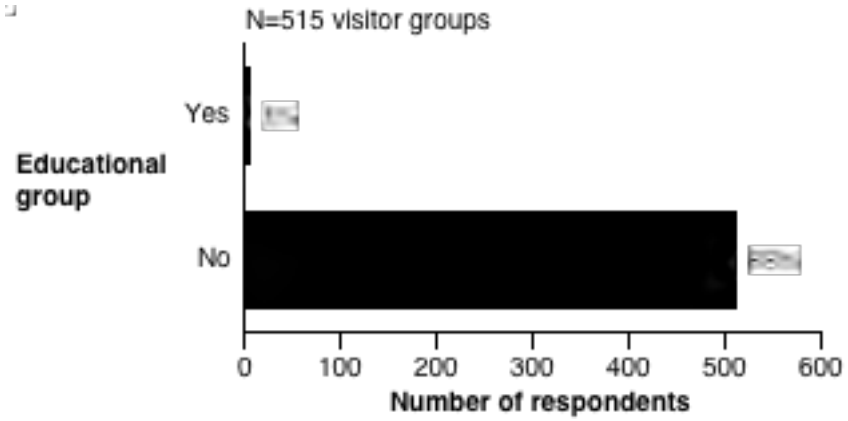


Figure 4: Participation in educational group

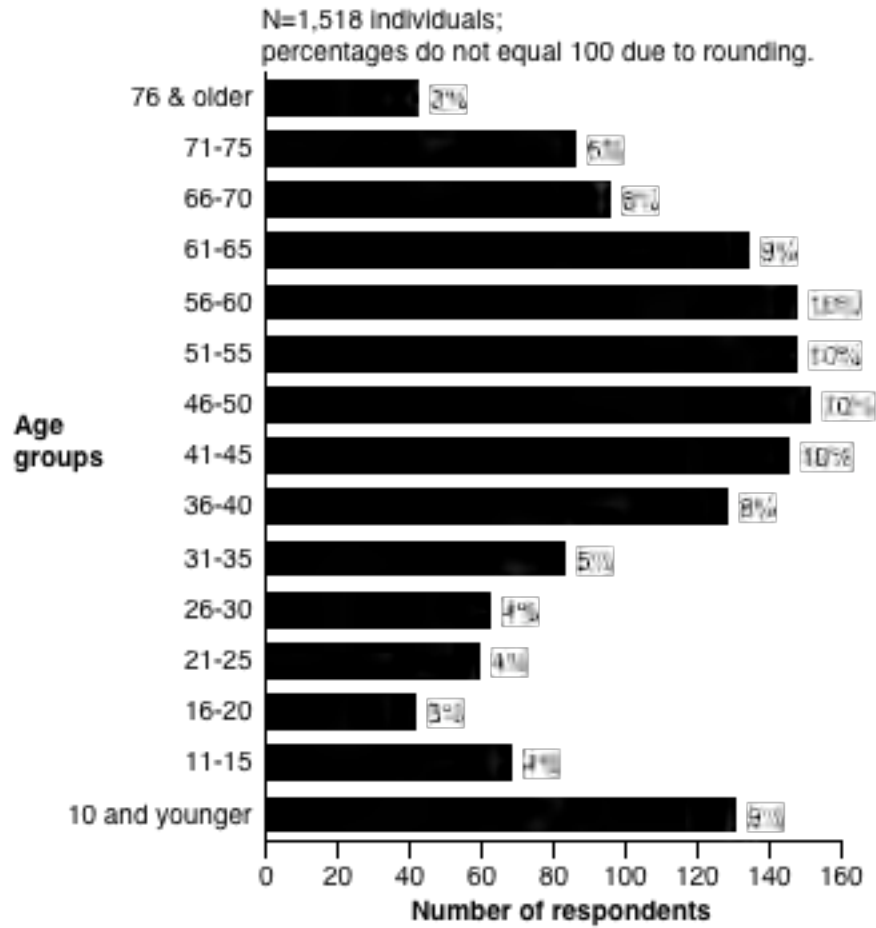


Figure 5: Visitor ages

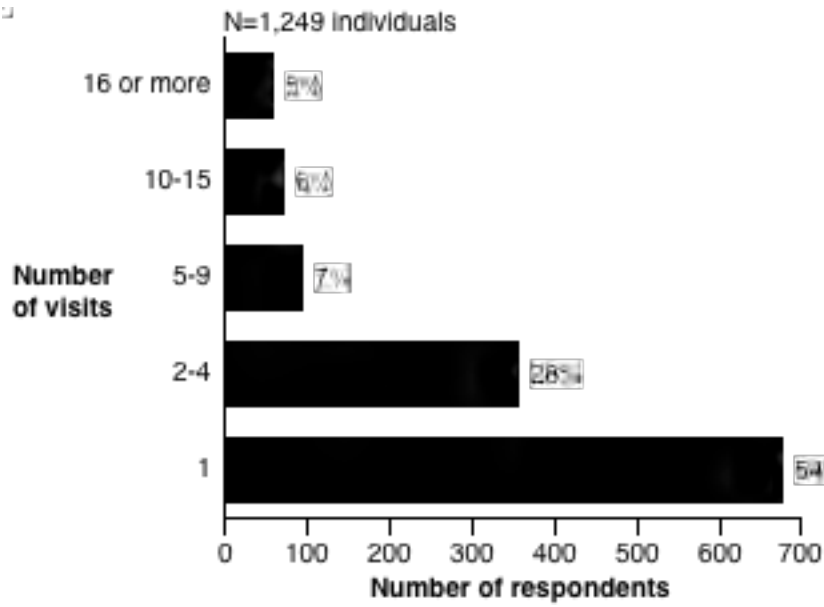


Figure 6: Number of visits

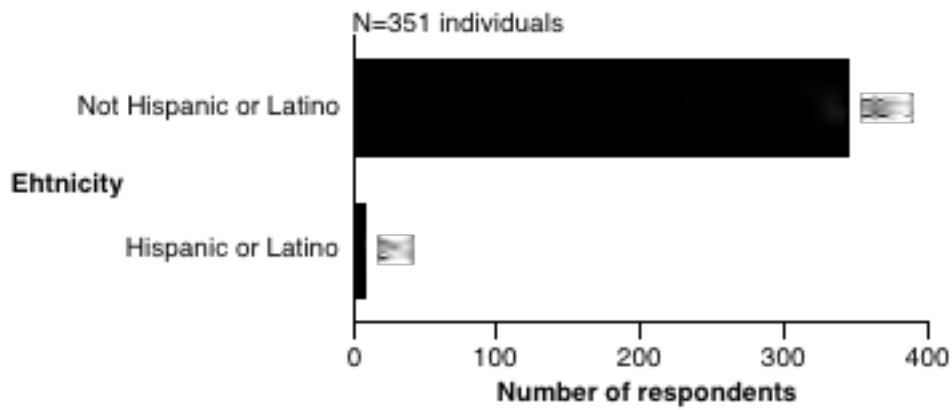


Figure 7: Respondent's ethnicity

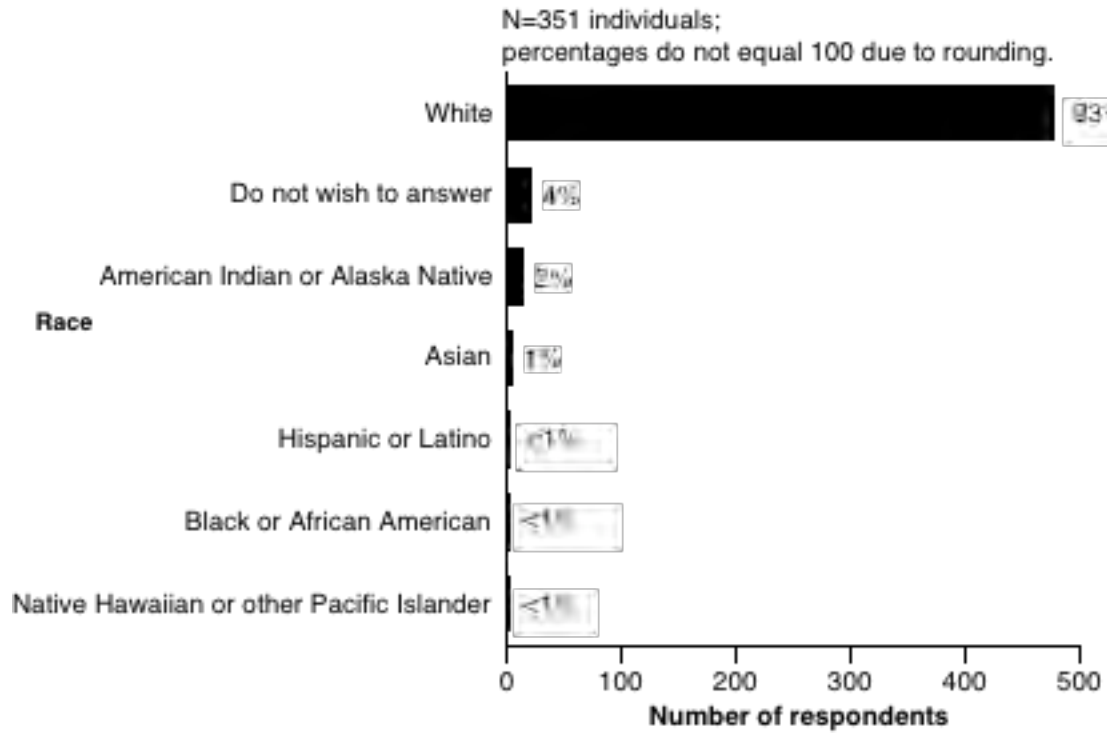


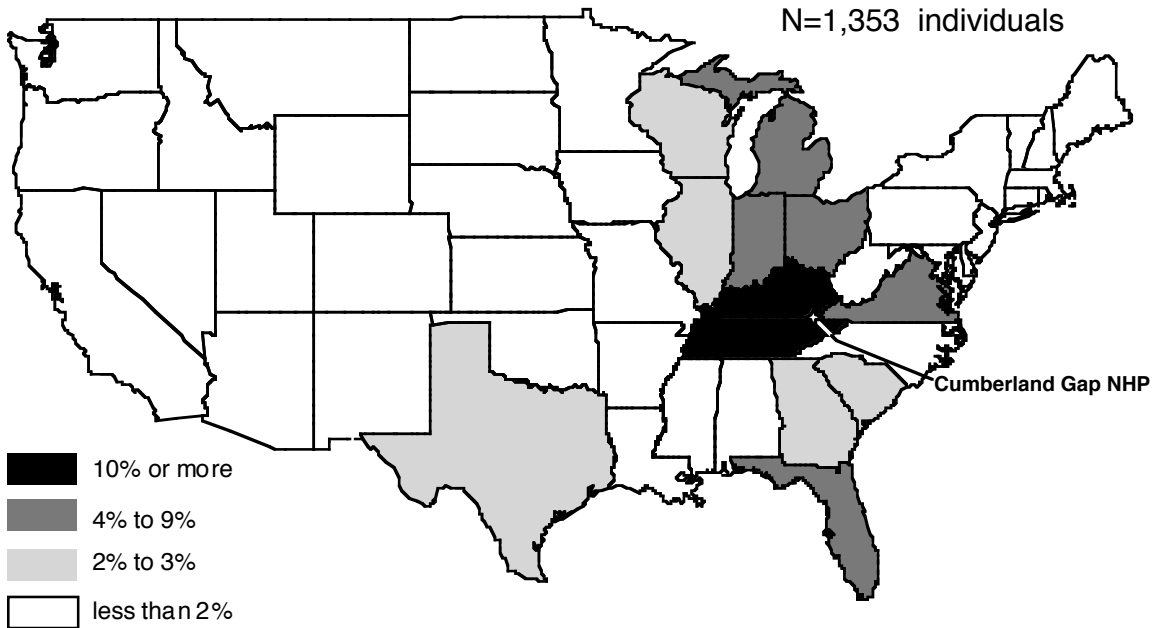
Figure 8: Respondent's race

Table 3: International visitors by country of residence

N=13 individuals;
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

CAUTION!

Country	Number of individuals	Percent of Int'l visitors	Percent of total visitors
Canada	3	23	<1
Denmark	3	23	<1
Brazil	2	15	<1
Europe	2	15	<1
Scotland	2	15	<1
Belgium	1	8	<1



Map 1: Proportion of United States visitors by state of residence

Table 4: United States visitors by state of residence

N=1,353 individuals;
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

State	Number of individuals	Percent of U.S. visitors	Percent of total visitors
Kentucky	350	26	26
Tennessee	289	21	21
Ohio	118	9	9
Virginia	104	8	8
Indiana	70	5	5
Michigan	69	5	5
Florida	59	4	4
Illinois	37	3	3
Texas	36	3	3
Georgia	24	2	2
Wisconsin	24	2	2
South Carolina	22	2	2
North Carolina	20	2	2
Alabama	17	1	1
California	12	1	1
Louisiana	12	1	1
Missouri	12	1	1
Minnesota	7	1	1
Pennsylvania	7	1	1
21 other states + Washington D.C.	64	5	5

Length of visit

Visitor groups were asked how much time they spent at Cumberland Gap NHP. Most visitor groups (86%) spent less than one day at the park (see Figure 9). Of the groups that spent less than a day at the park, 78% spent four hours or less, while 10% spent seven hours or more (see Figure 10).

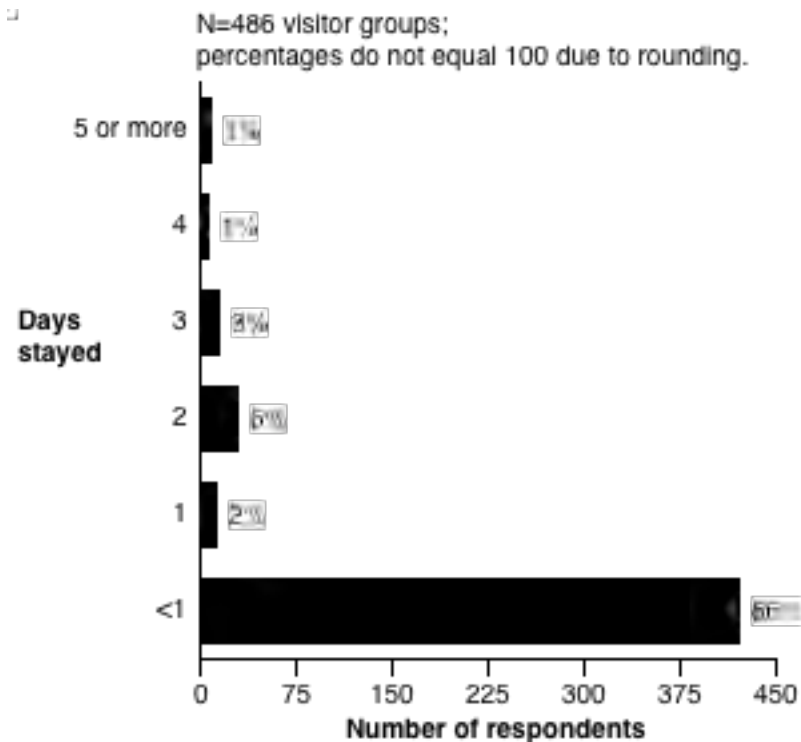


Figure 9: Days spent at Cumberland Gap NHP

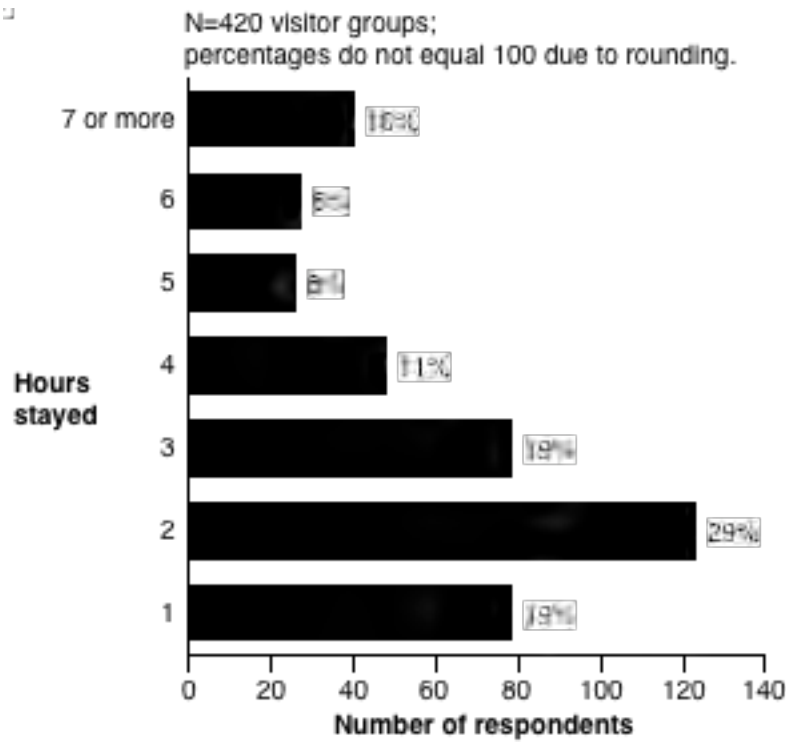


Figure 10: Hours spent at Cumberland Gap NHP

**Visitors'
awareness of
NPS
management**

Visitor groups to Cumberland Gap NHP were asked if they were aware prior to their visit that the park was managed by the National Park Service. Figure 11 illustrates that 67% of the respondents were aware prior to their visit that the park was managed by the National Park Service. Twenty-seven percent were not aware of the park's management and 7% were "not sure."

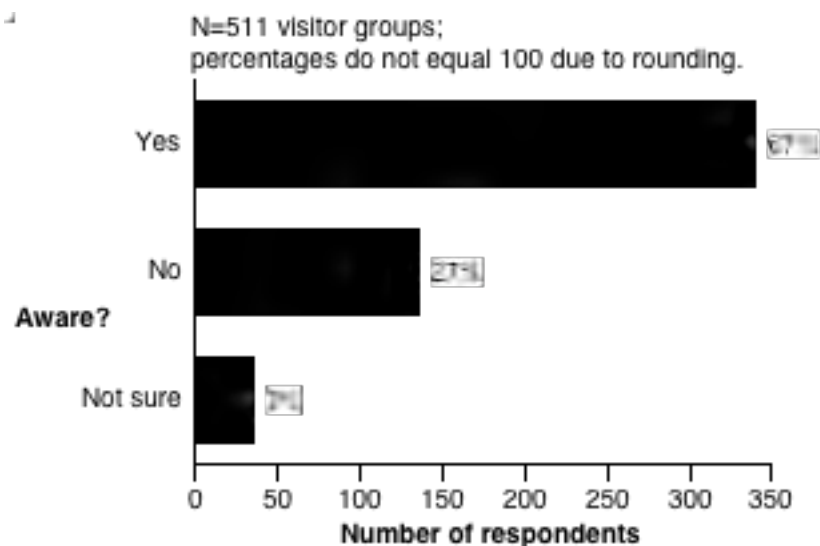


Figure 11: Aware that NPS managed Cumberland Gap NHP

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the sources they used to obtain information about Cumberland Gap NHP prior to their visit. Figure 12 shows the percentages of visitor groups that used each method of obtaining information prior to their visit to Cumberland Gap NHP. The most common sources of information were previous visits (32%), friends or relatives (31%), live in local area (24%), and travel guide/tour book (20%). "Other" sources of information include maps, family members that live nearby, and hearing about it years ago. Thirteen percent of visitors did not obtain any information prior to their visit to Cumberland Gap NHP.

Sources of information

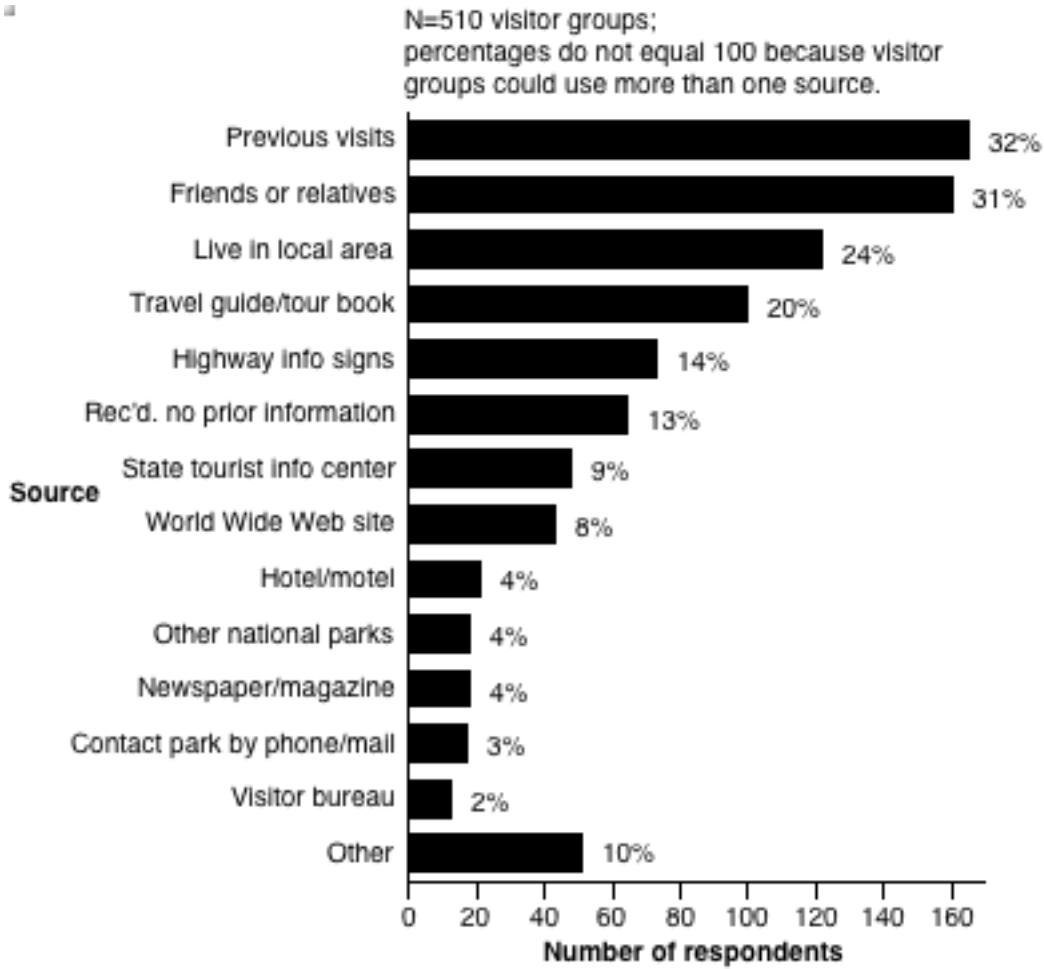


Figure 12: Sources of information

**Sites visited—
this visit and
past visits**

Visitors were asked to list the sites they visited at Cumberland Gap NHP. Figure 13 shows the proportion of visitor groups that visited each site in Cumberland Gap NHP during this visit. The most frequently visited sites include the Pinnacle Overlook (81%), visitor center (73%), Iron Furnace (27%), and campgrounds (13%). The least visited sites were Sand Cave (4%) and Skylight Cave (4%).

Figure 14 shows the proportion of visitor groups who visited each site during past visits. The sites most frequently visited during past visits include the Pinnacle Overlook (88%) and the visitor center (78%).

Visitors were also asked to list other sites they visited in addition to Cumberland Gap NHP. Figure 15 illustrates that 69% of the visitors visited the historic town of Cumberland Gap while 31% said they visited Pine Mountain State Park. Seventeen percent of visitors listed “other” sites which included Cumberland Falls, the Museum of Appalachia, Middlesboro, and Mammoth Cave.

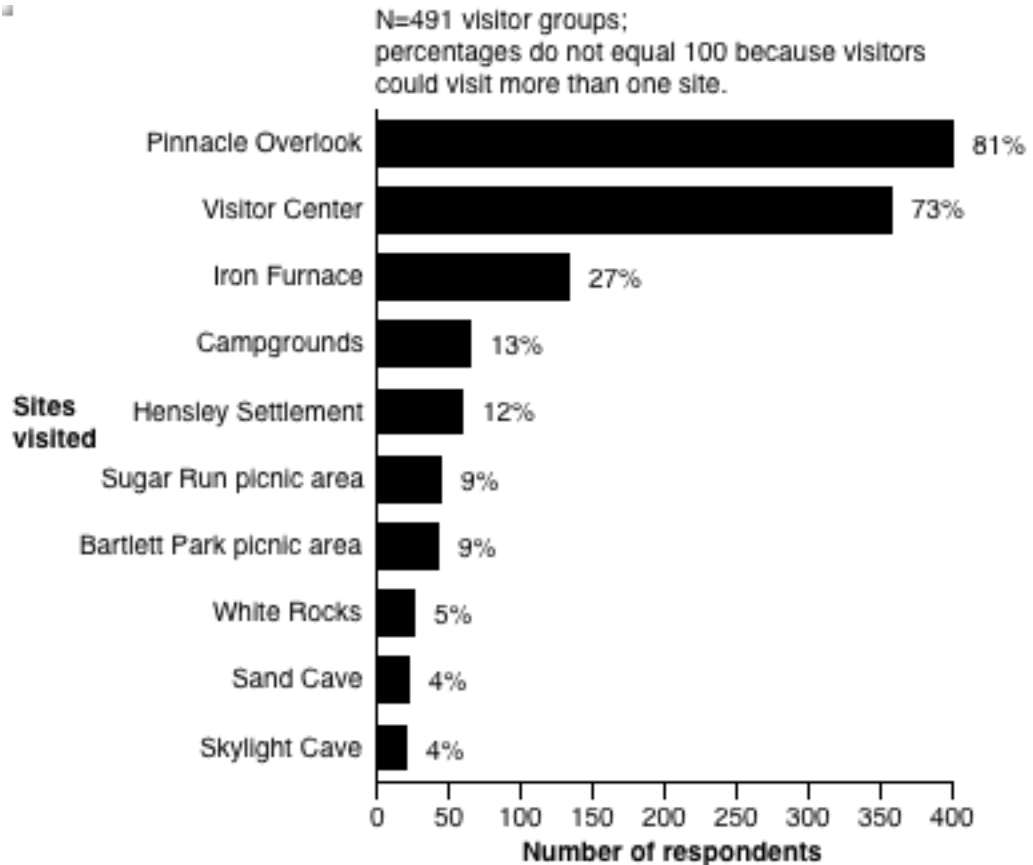


Figure 13: Sites visited this visit

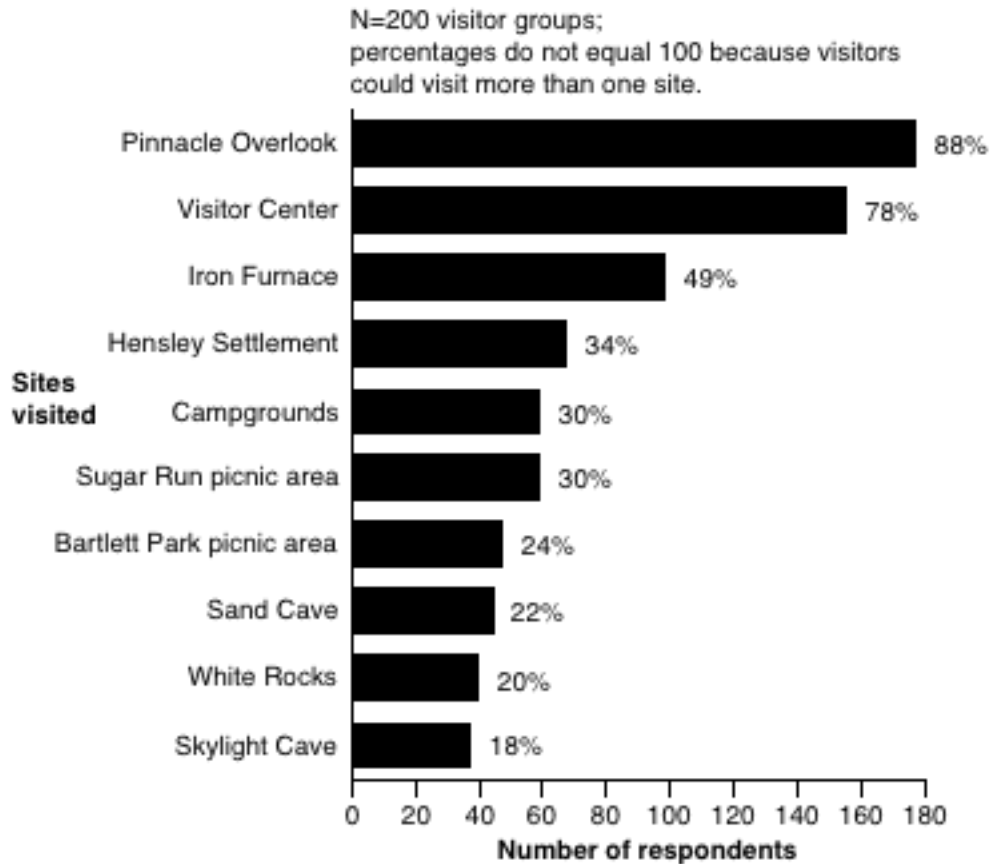


Figure 14: Sites visited past visits

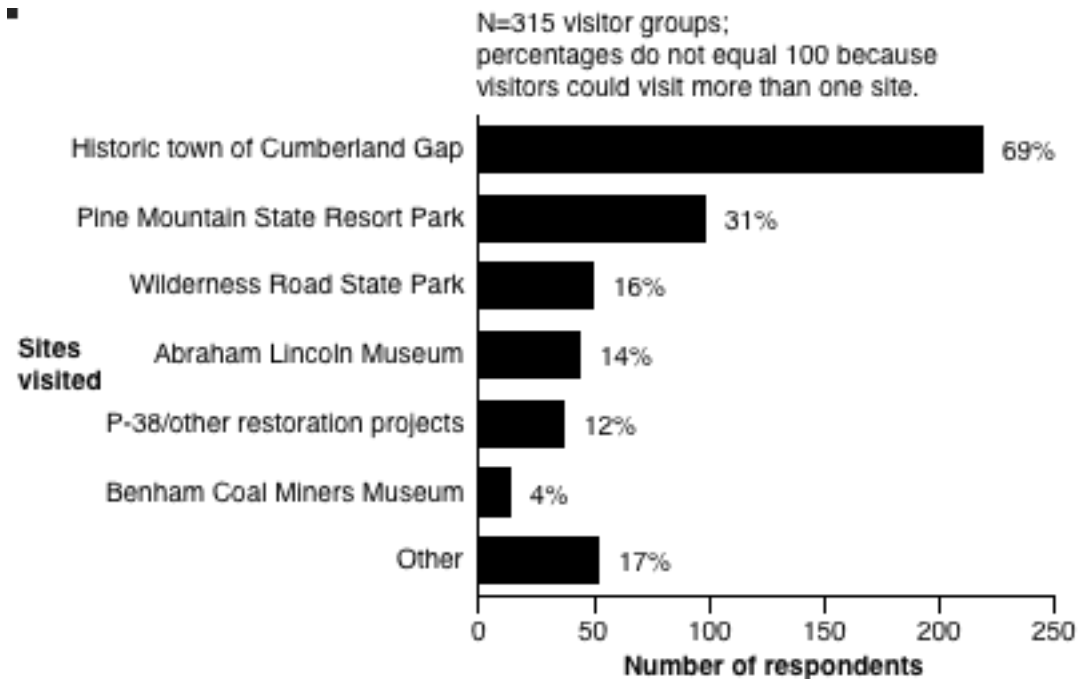


Figure 15: Sites visited in addition to Cumberland Gap NHP

**Reasons for
visiting park**

Visitors were asked to list their reasons for visiting Cumberland Gap NHP on this trip. As shown in Figure 16, the most often listed reasons were to view the fall colors (85%), view scenery (82%), and experience solitude/quiet (38%).

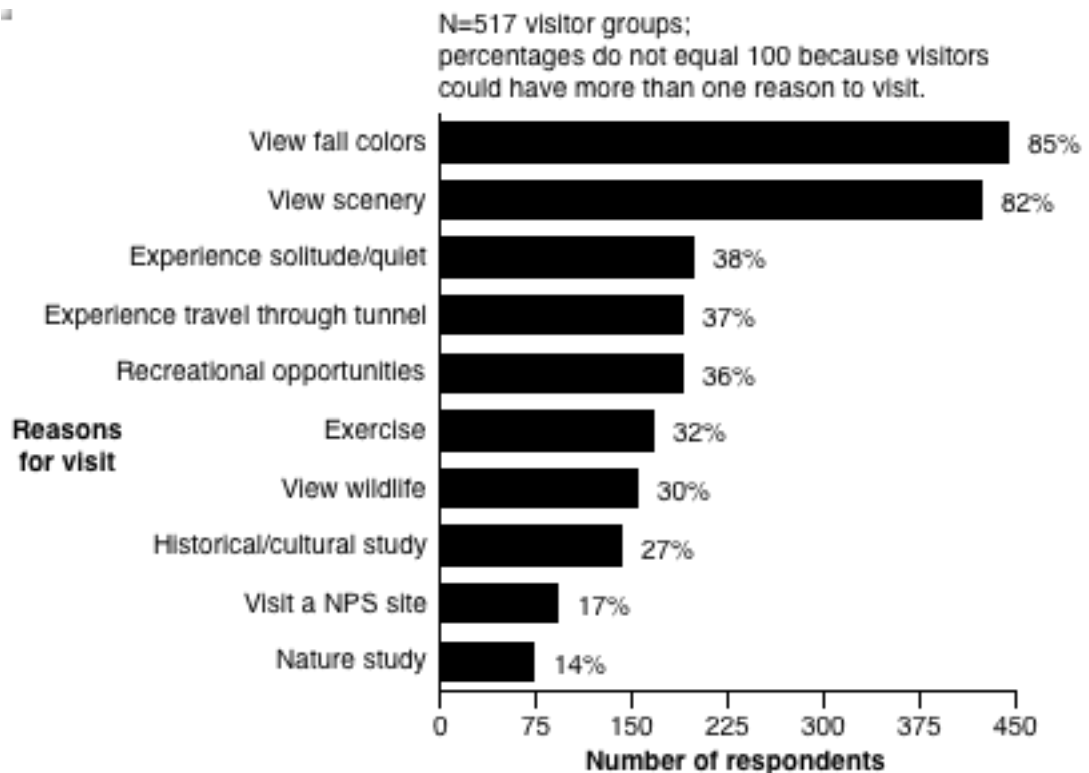


Figure 16: Reasons for visiting Cumberland Gap NHP

Visitors were asked whether or not they visited the Cumberland Gap NHP Visitor Center during this visit. Figure 17 shows that 69% of the visitor groups visited the visitor center.

Visitors were asked to list their reasons for visiting the Cumberland Gap NHP Visitor Center on this trip. As shown in Figure 18, the most often listed reasons were to view the exhibits (79%), use the restrooms (77%), obtain information from park staff (71%), and obtain a map (65%). "Other" reasons for visiting the visitor center included buying merchandise, waiting for the weather to change, and learning history.

Visitor groups were asked what they liked most about Cumberland Gap NHP Visitor Center exhibits. Seventy-four percent of visitor groups (267 groups) responded to this question (Table 5). In addition, visitor groups were asked what they liked least about Cumberland Gap NHP Visitor Center exhibits. Thirty-seven percent of visitor groups (135 groups) responded to this question (Table 6).

Reasons for visiting visitor center

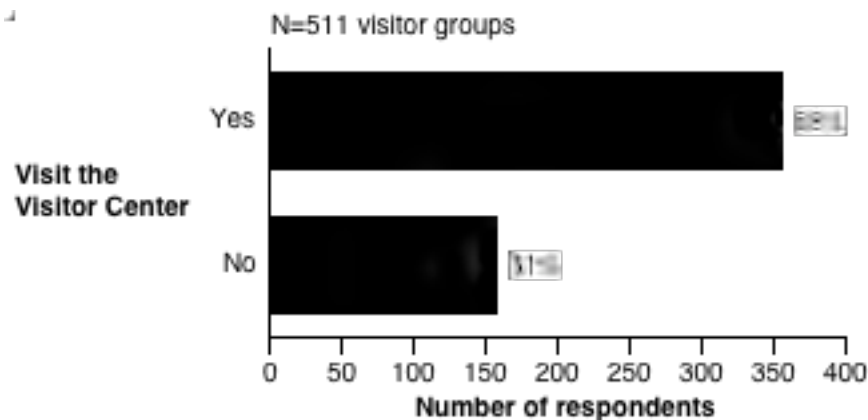


Figure 17: Visitor groups who visited the visitor center

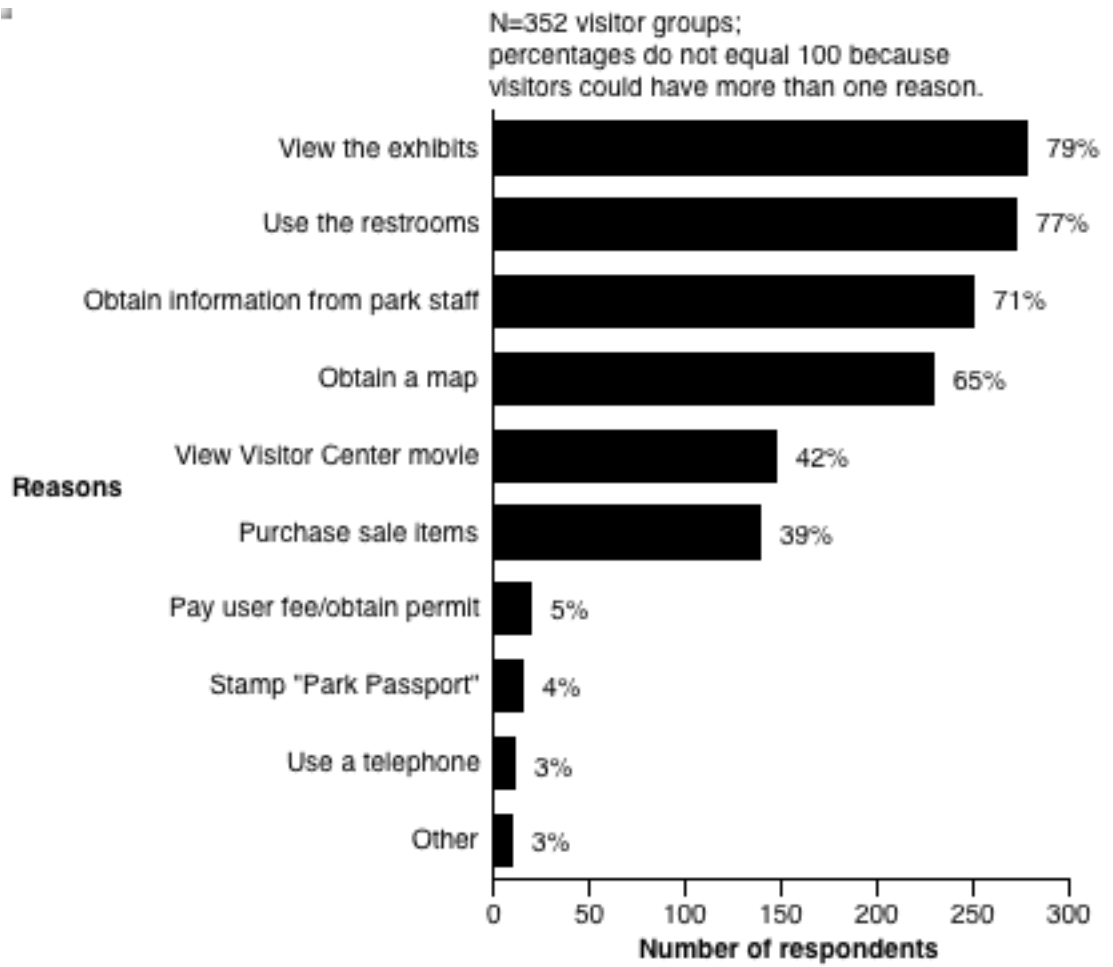


Figure 18: Reasons for visiting Cumberland Gap NHP Visitor Center

Table 5: What visitors liked most about visitor center exhibits

N=267 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Historical exhibits	62
Movie	47
Friendly, helpful, courteous and knowledgeable staff	44
Historical artifacts	25
Informative	24
All exhibits	19
Liked it all	18
Good selection of books/sales items	16
Clean facility	10
Educational	10
Good layout/well presented	14
Interesting	8
Beautiful scenery/site	8
Daniel Boone exhibits	6
Topographic map	5
Nature information	5
Museum	5
Cultural information	3
Civil War exhibit	3
Authenticity/accuracy	3
Muzzle loader	2
Pioneer exhibits	2
Hensley Settlement video	2
Attractive	2
Variety of information	2
Compact format	2
Easily understood	2
Interesting to young children	2
Other comments	20

Table 6: What visitors liked least about visitor center exhibits

N=135 comments;

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Nothing	38
Liked everything	25
Too few exhibits	13
Old/outdated	3
Exhibits are always the same	3
Price of sale items too high	3
Weak exhibits	2
Poor movie	2
Movie is too old	2
Other comments	38

Visitor activities

Visitors were asked what types of activities members of their group had participated in during their visit to Cumberland Gap NHP. As shown in Figure 19, the most common activities were: viewing fall colors (88%), hiking (57%), studying history (37%), buying sales items in the visitor center (25%), and viewing wildflowers (25%). Activities listed as “other” included viewing the area, photography, and obtaining information for future trips.

Visitors were also asked to list activities they have participated in at Cumberland Gap NHP during past visits. Seventy-one percent of visitor groups had hiked, 57% had viewed fall colors, and 49% had picnicked (see Figure 20). Activities listed as “other” included viewing the area and mountain biking.

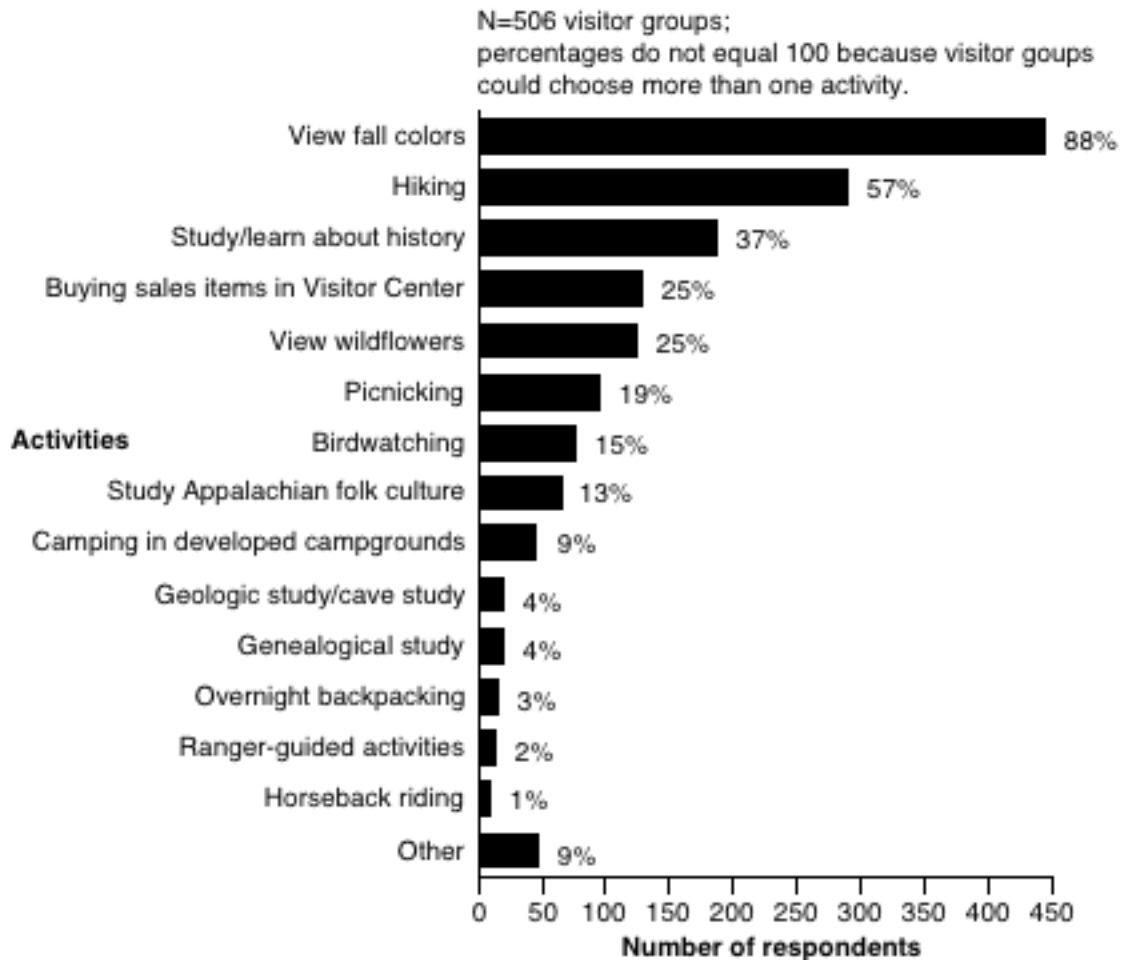


Figure 19: Visitor activities this visit

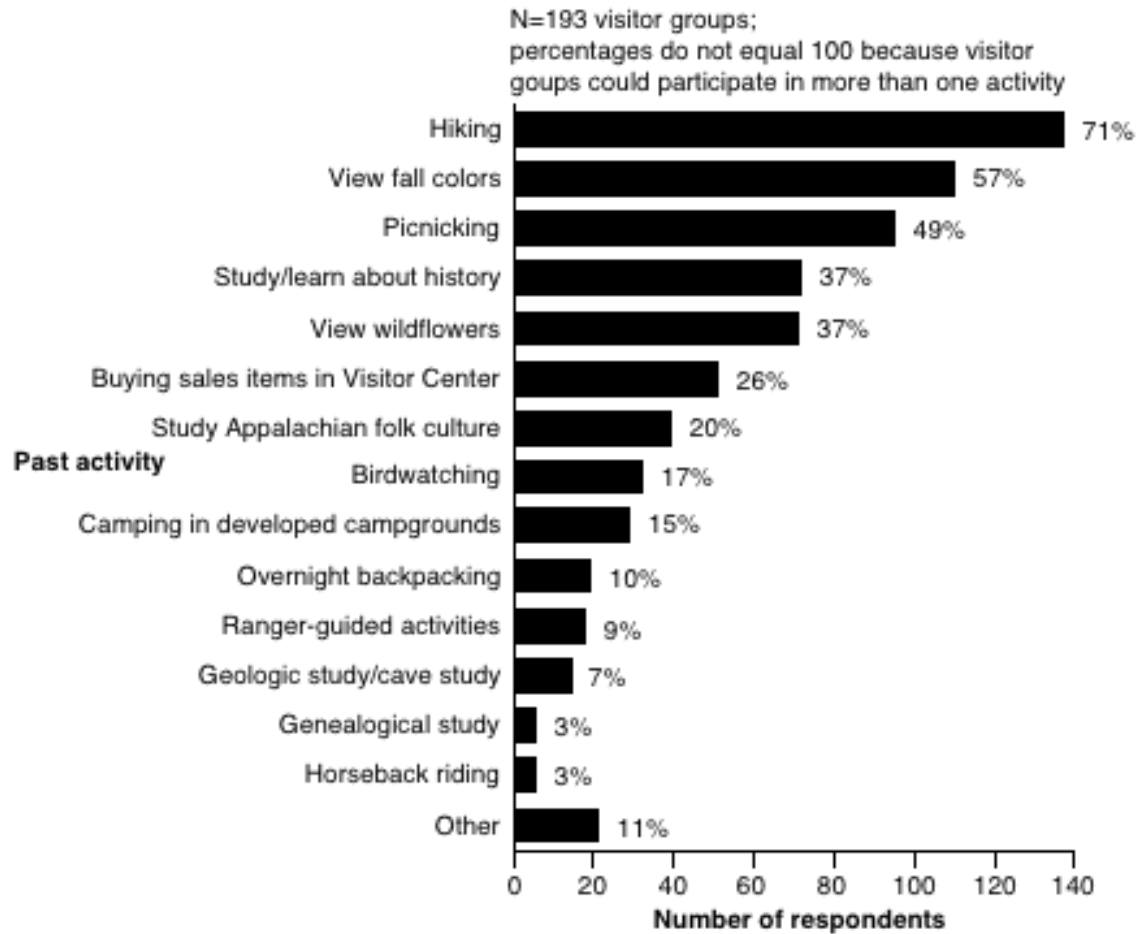


Figure 20: Visitor activities past visits

**Hensley Settlement visits/
willingness to pay fee**

Visitors were asked whether or not they had visited the Hensley Settlement on this trip. As shown in Figure 21, 18% of visitor groups visited the Hensley Settlement.

Visitors who had visited the Hensley Settlement were also asked if they would be willing to pay a small fee to observe historic craft demonstrations. Forty-seven percent said yes, it is likely that they would be willing to pay a small fee (Figure 22).

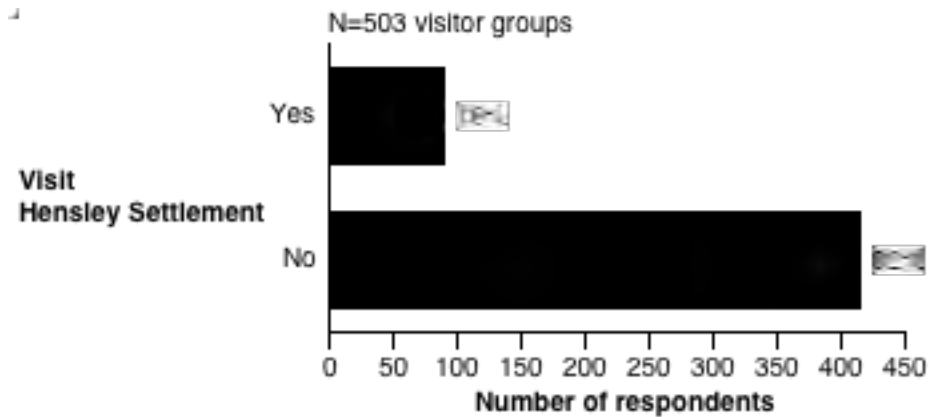


Figure 21: Visitors who visited the Hensley Settlement in the last 12 months

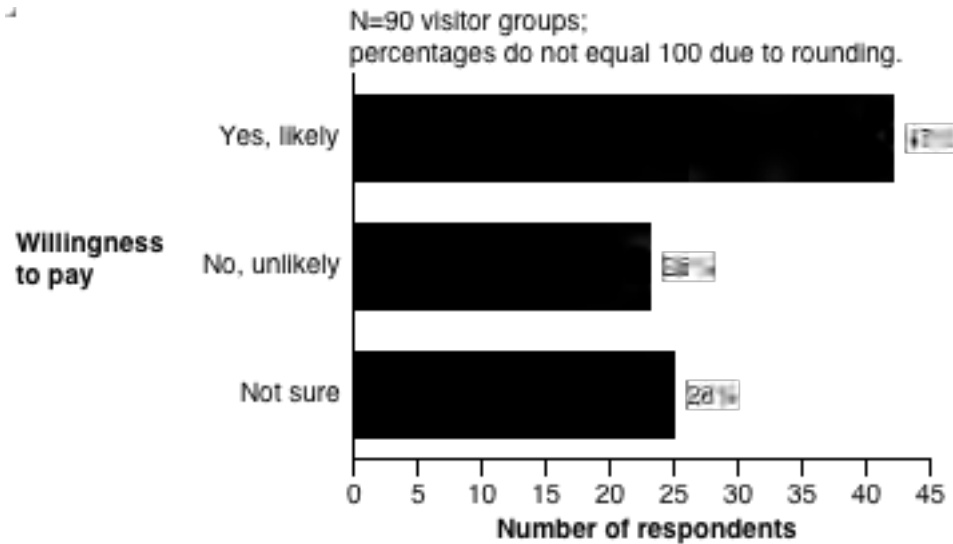


Figure 22: Willingness to pay a fee

Visitor groups were asked to note the services and facilities they used during their visit to Cumberland Gap NHP. As shown in Figure 23, the services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were restrooms (85%), Pinnacle Overlook (77%), parking lots (69%), and roads (59%). The least used services were ranger-guided activities (6%) and backcountry campsites (4%).

Visitor services and facilities: use, importance, and quality

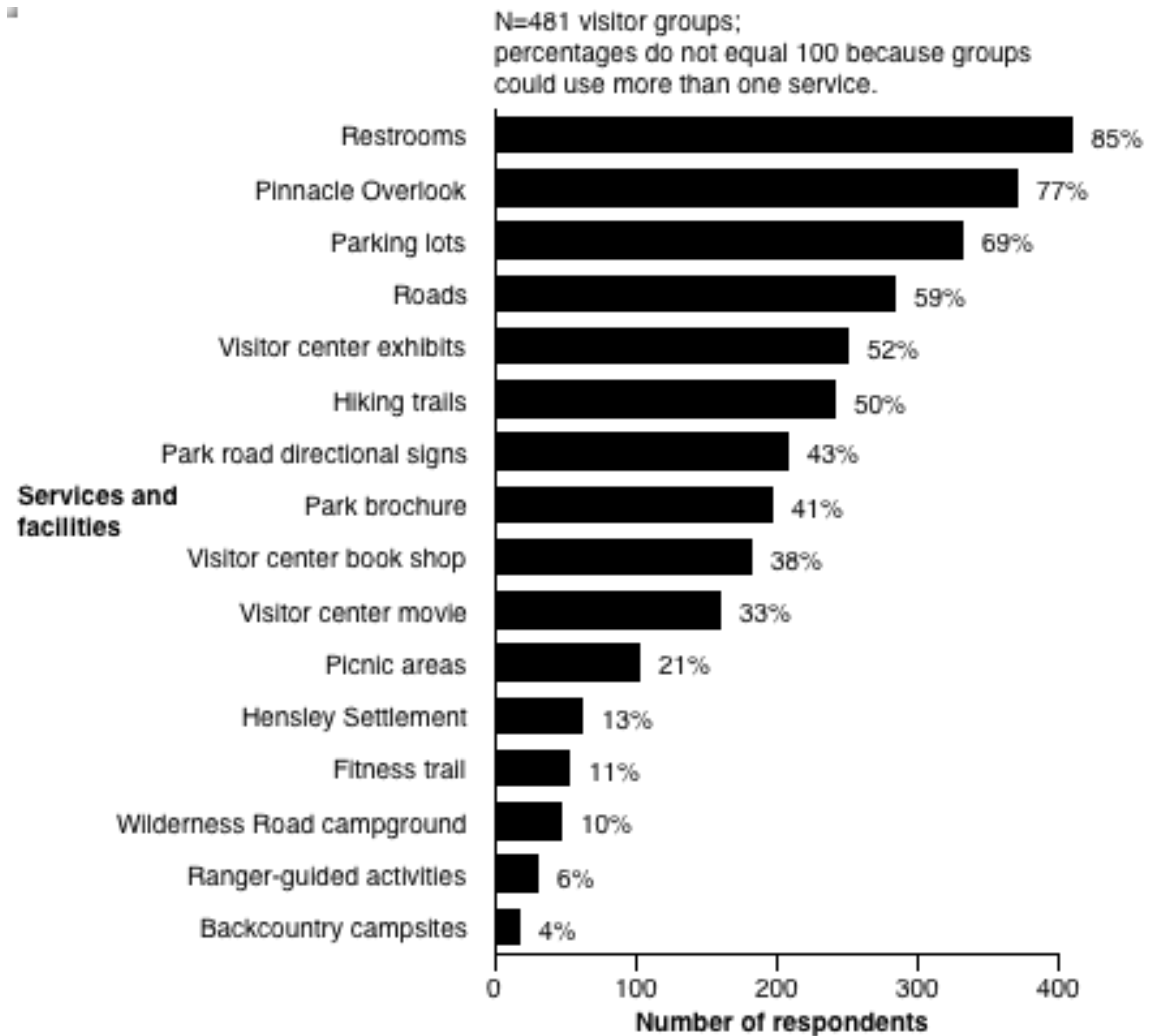


Figure 23: Services and facilities used

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the services and facilities they used. The following five point scales were used in the questionnaire:

IMPORTANCE
5=extremely important
4=very important
3=moderately important
2=somewhat important
1=not important

QUALITY
5=very good
4=good
3=average
2=poor
1=very poor

The average importance and quality ratings for each service were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service. Figure 24 and 25 shows the average importance and quality ratings for each of the visitor services. All services were rated as above "average" both in importance and quality. It should be noted that the ranger-guided activities and the backcountry campsites were not rated by enough visitor groups to provide reliable data.

Figures 26-41 show the importance ratings that visitor groups gave for each of the individual services. Those services receiving the highest combined proportion of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included the fitness trail (97%), roads (95%), and park road directional signs (95%). The service with the largest proportion of "not important" responses was restrooms (2%).

Figures 42-57 show the quality ratings that visitor groups gave for each of the individual services. Those services receiving the highest combined proportion of "very good" and "good" ratings included Pinnacle Overlook (97%), fitness trail (96%), and parking lots (94%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for the park road directional signs (6%).

Figure 58 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services.

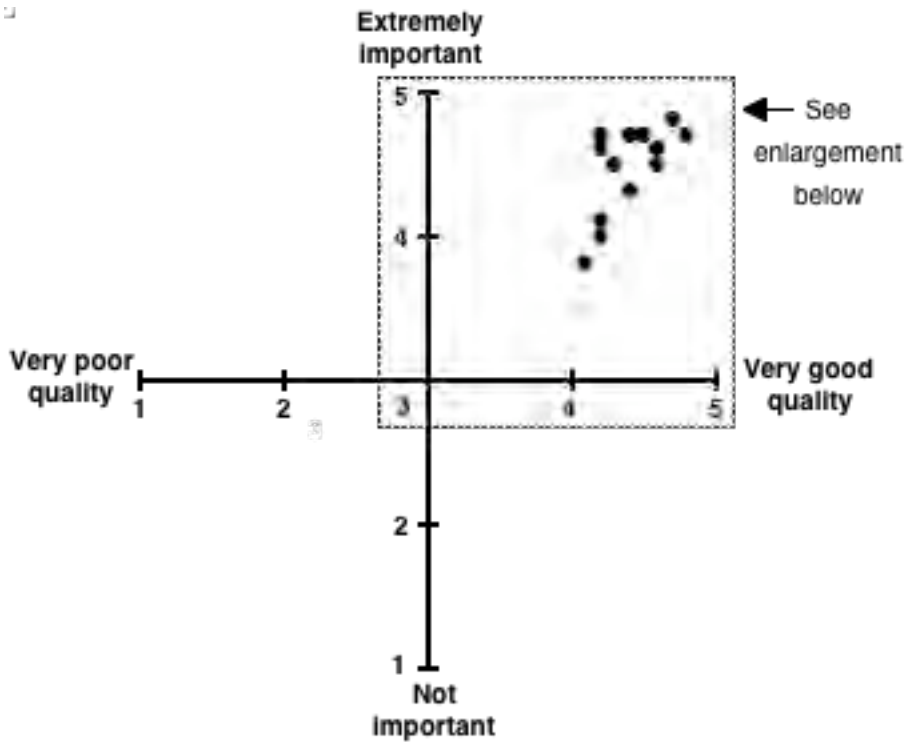


Figure 24: Average ratings of service and facility importance and quality

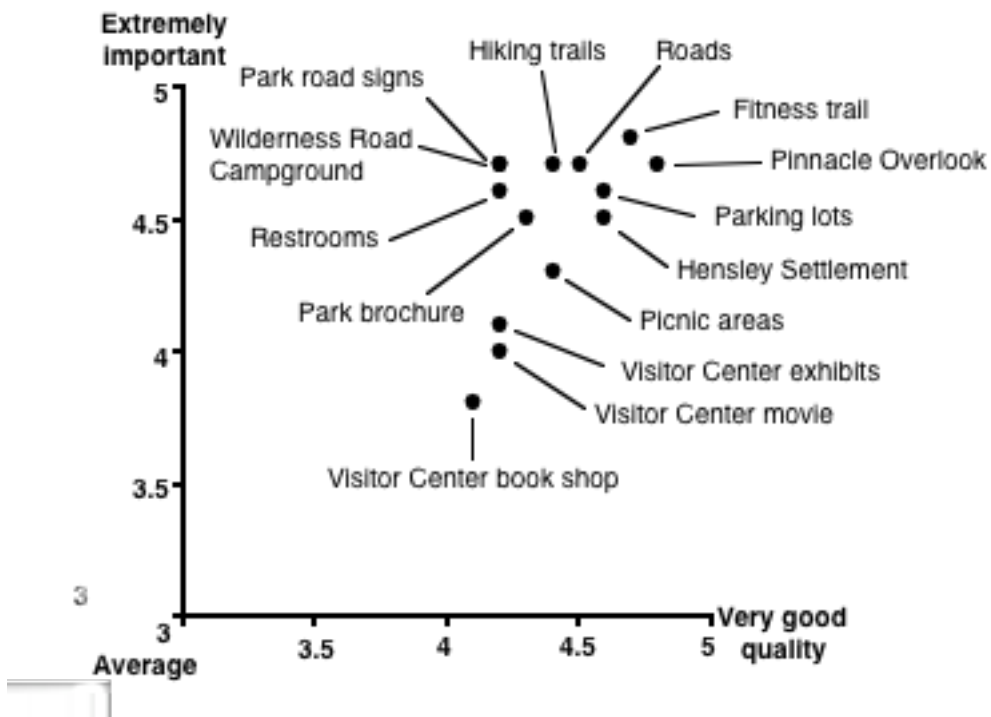


Figure 25: Detail of Figure 24

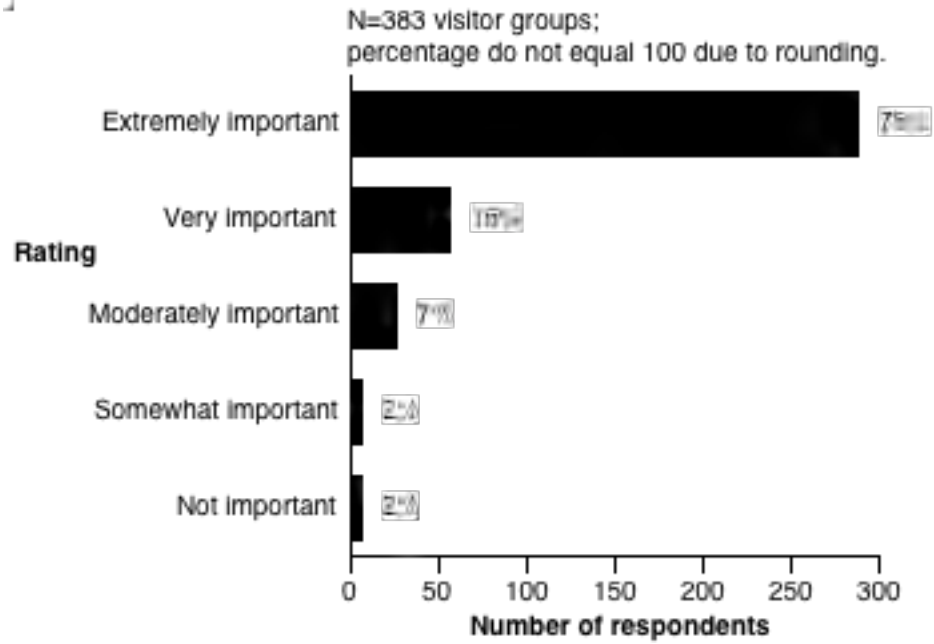


Figure 26: Importance of restrooms

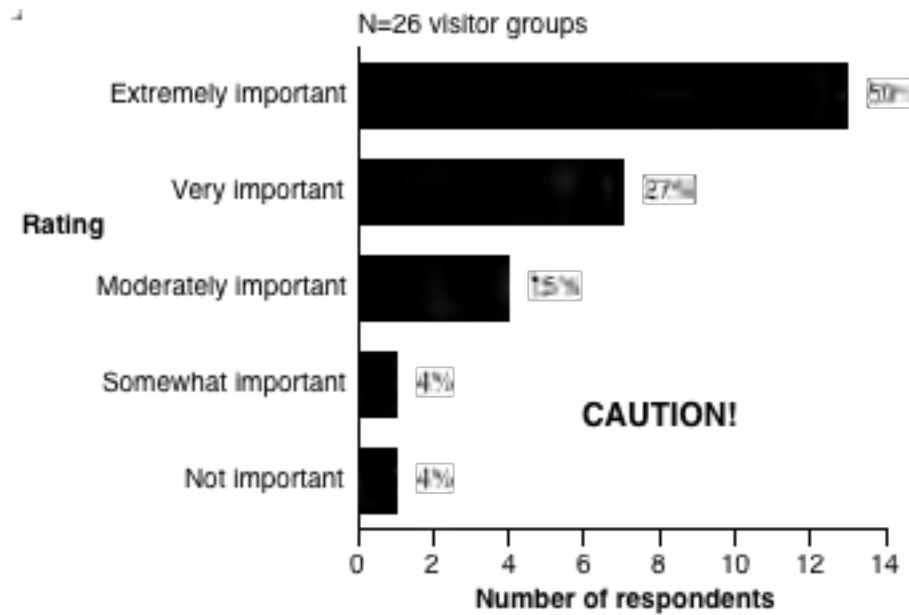


Figure 27: Importance of ranger-guided activities

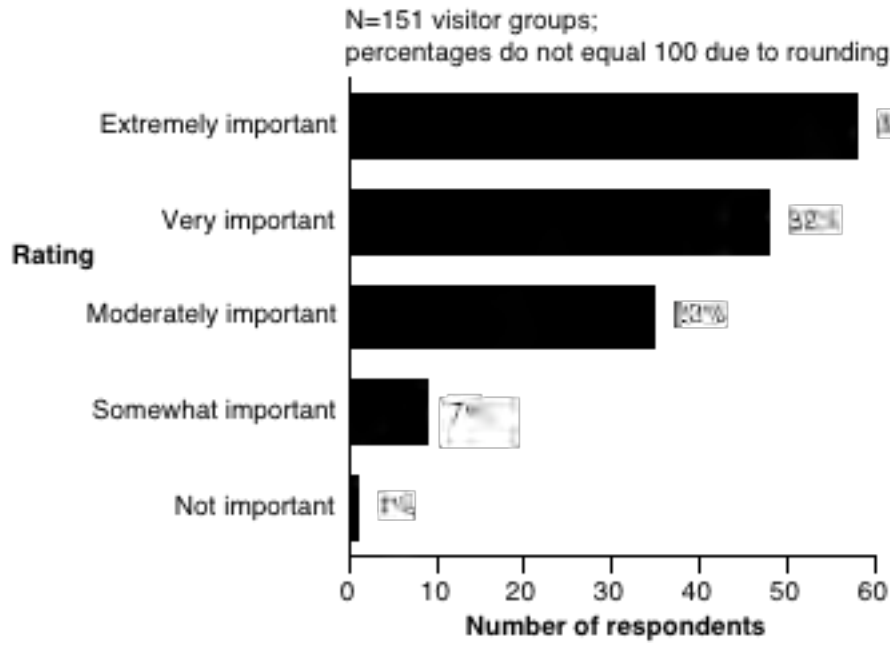


Figure 28: Importance of visitor center movie

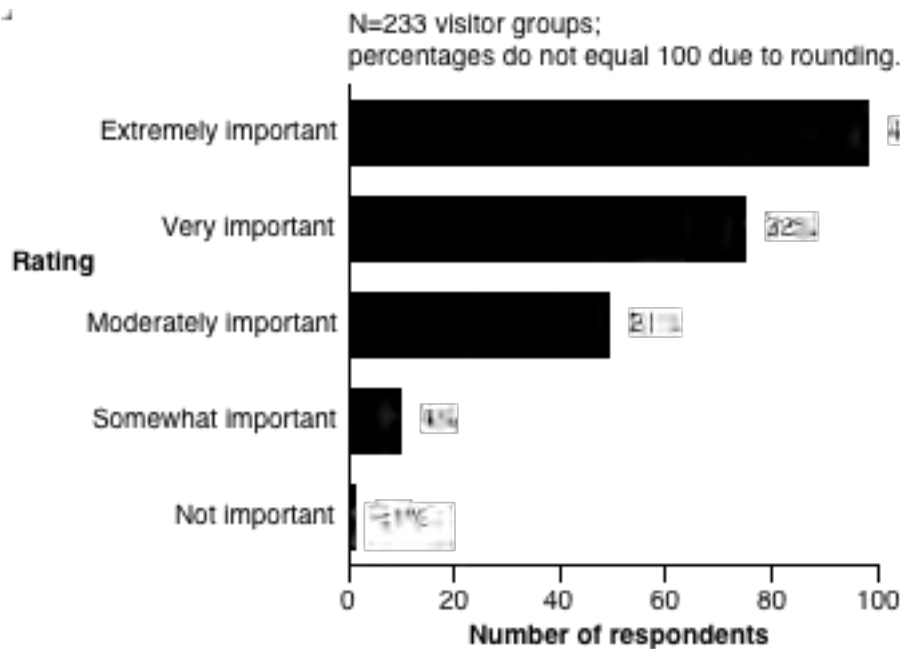


Figure 29: Importance of visitor center exhibits

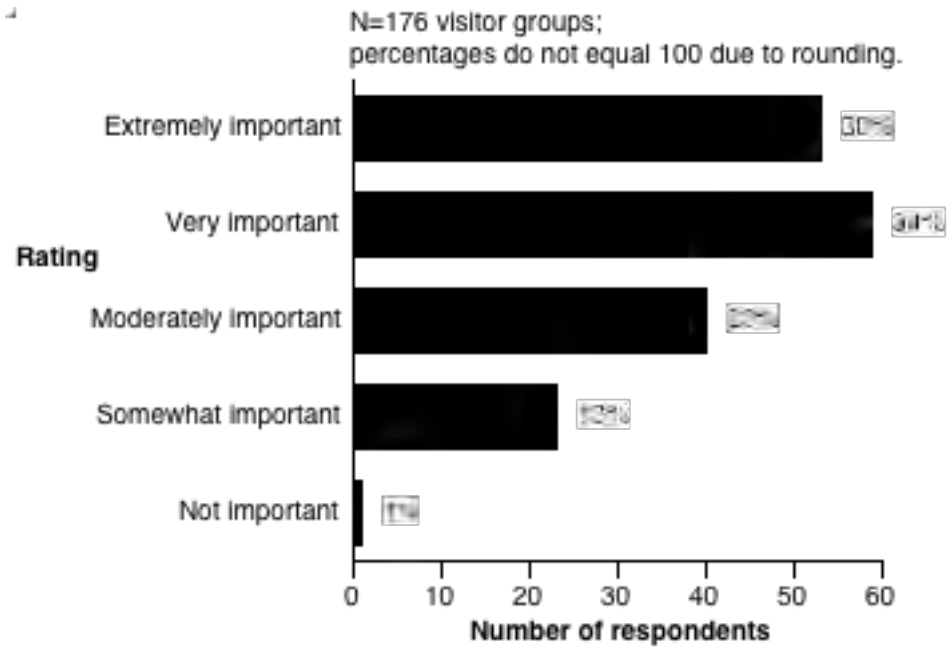


Figure 30: Importance of visitor center book shop

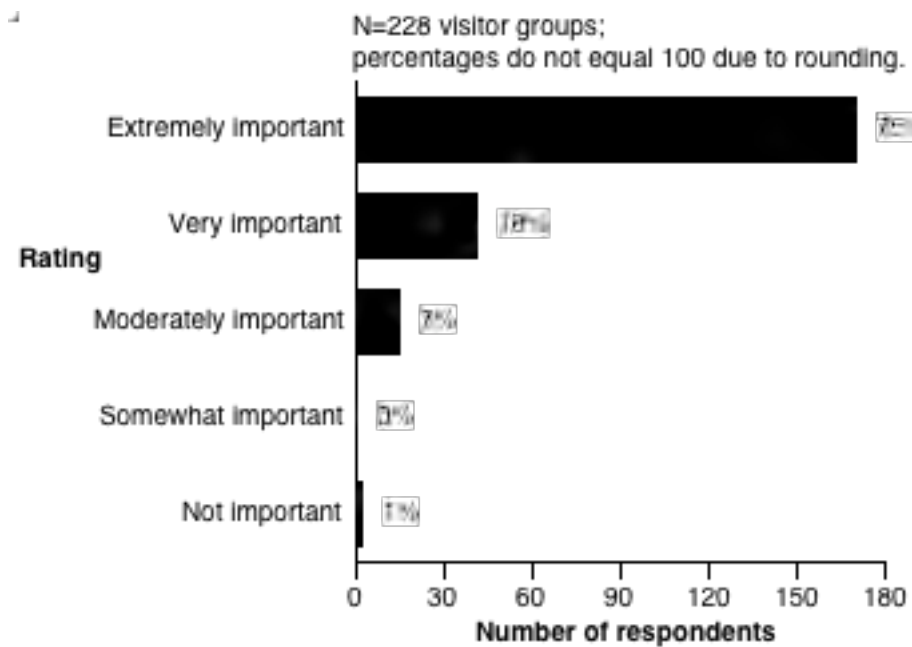


Figure 31: Importance of hiking trails

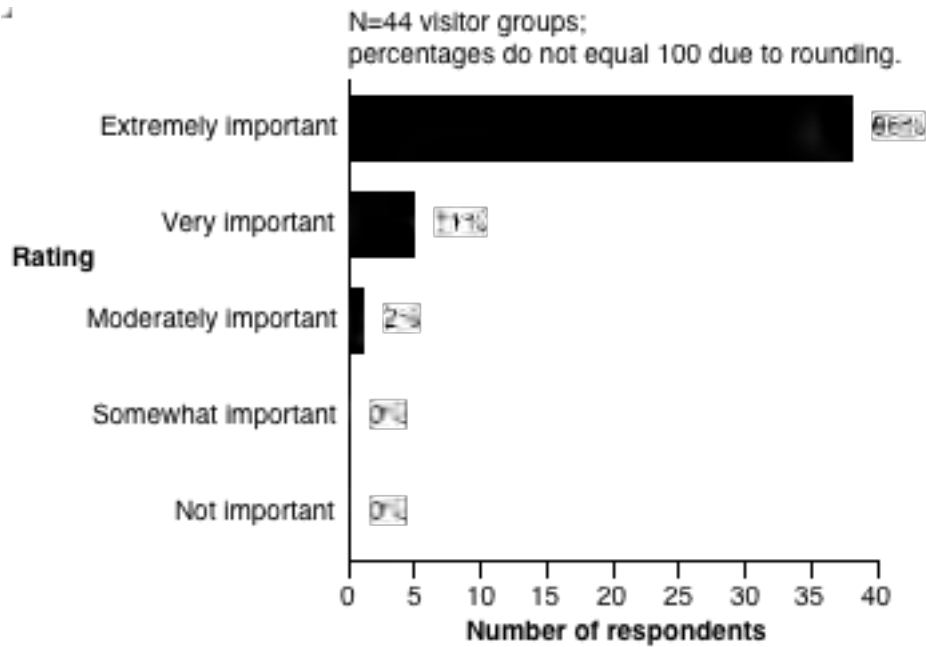


Figure 32: Importance of fitness trail

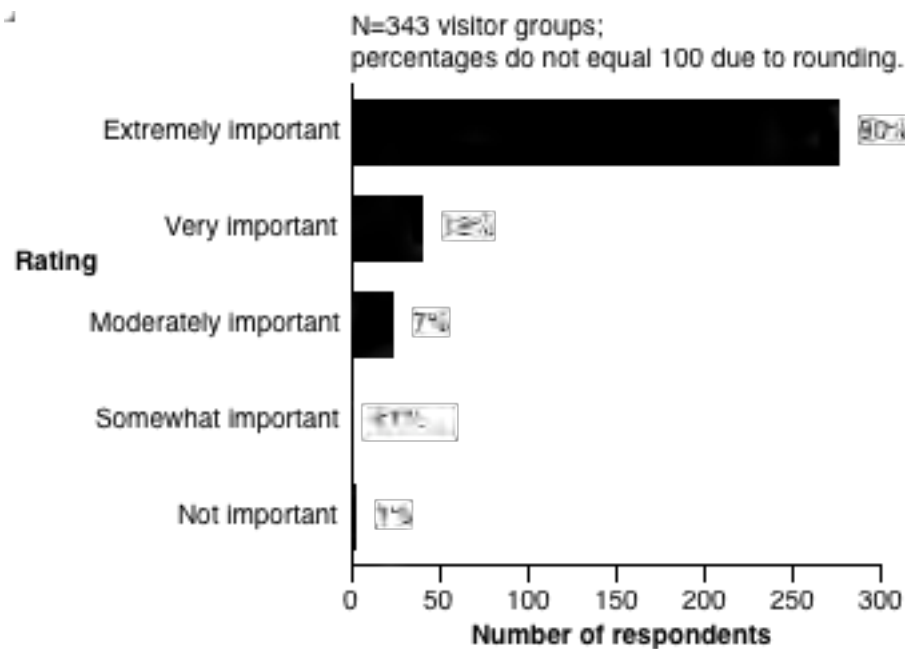


Figure 33: Importance of Pinnacle Overlook

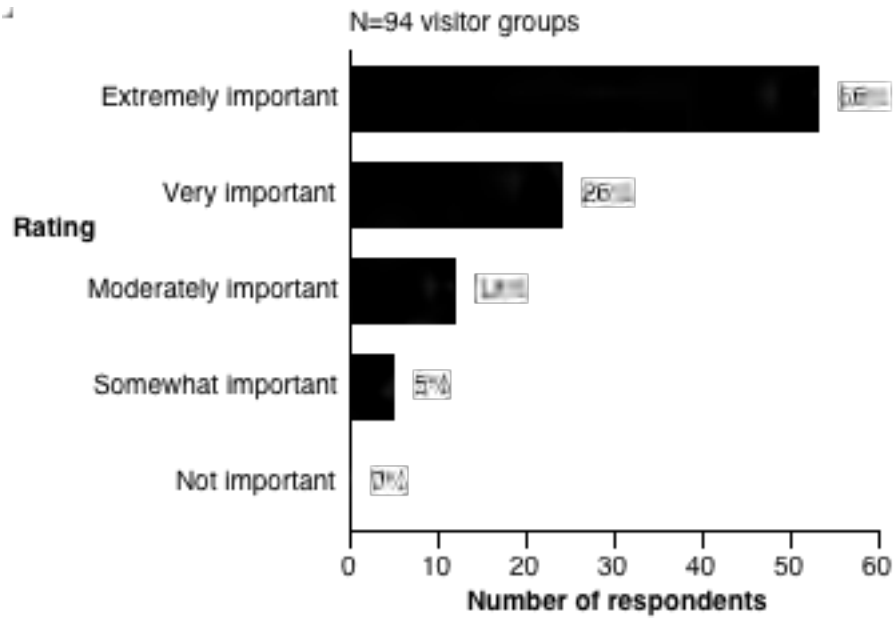


Figure 34: Importance of picnic areas

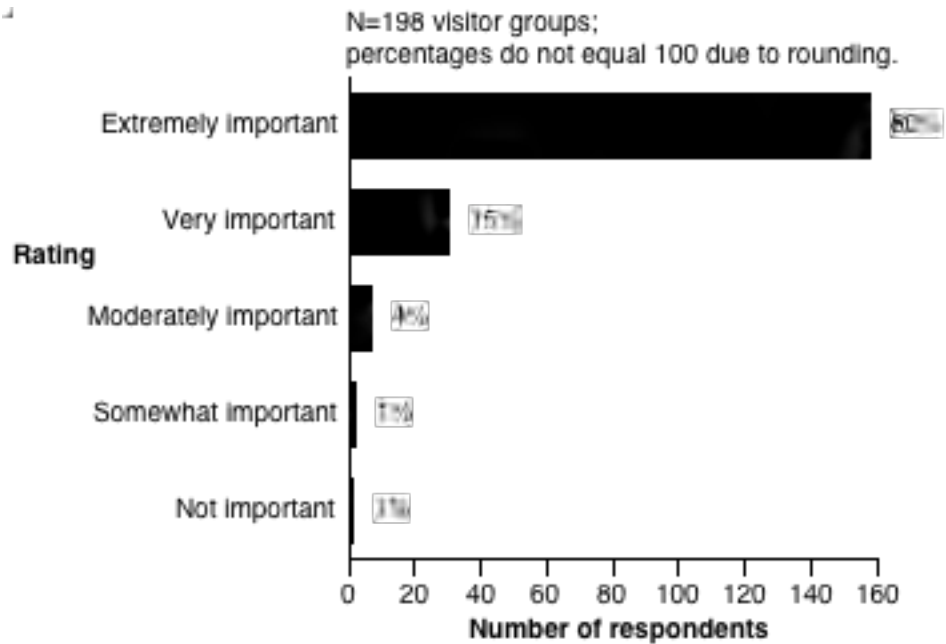


Figure 35: Importance of park road directional signs

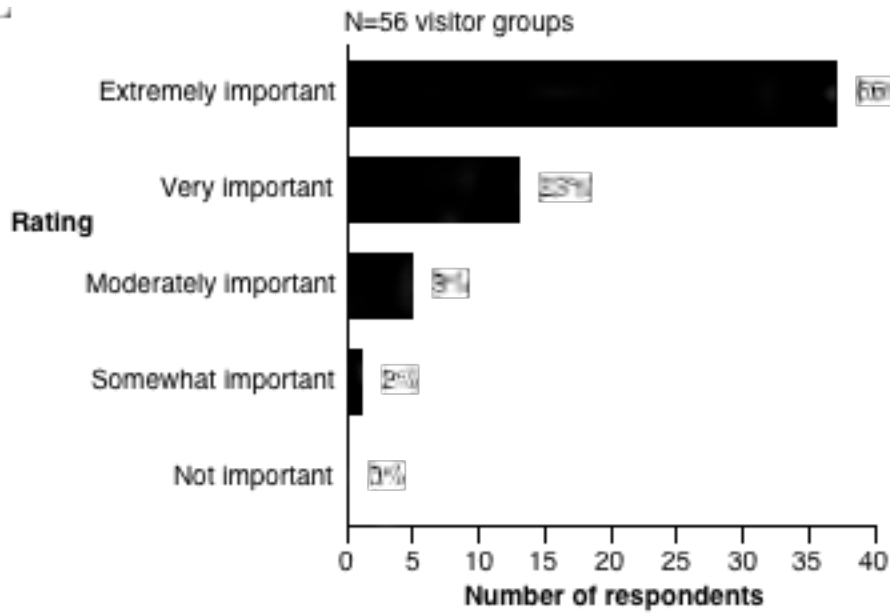


Figure 36: Importance of Hensley Settlement

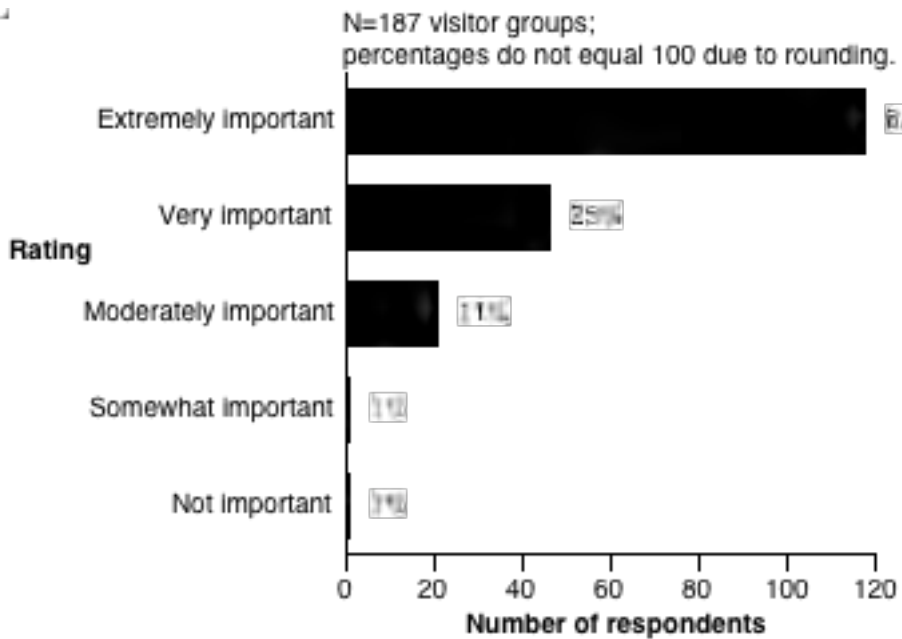


Figure 37: Importance of park brochure

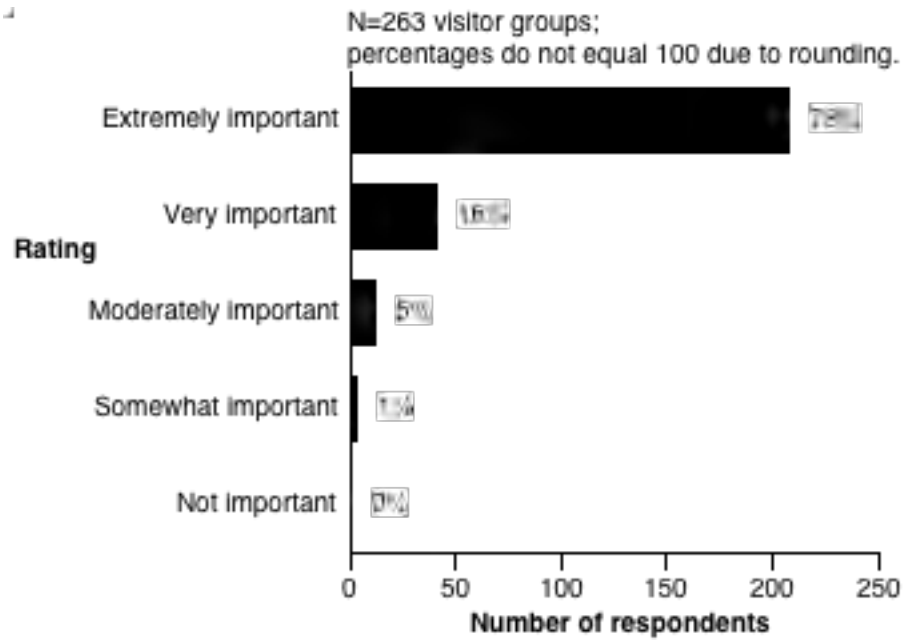


Figure 38: Importance of roads

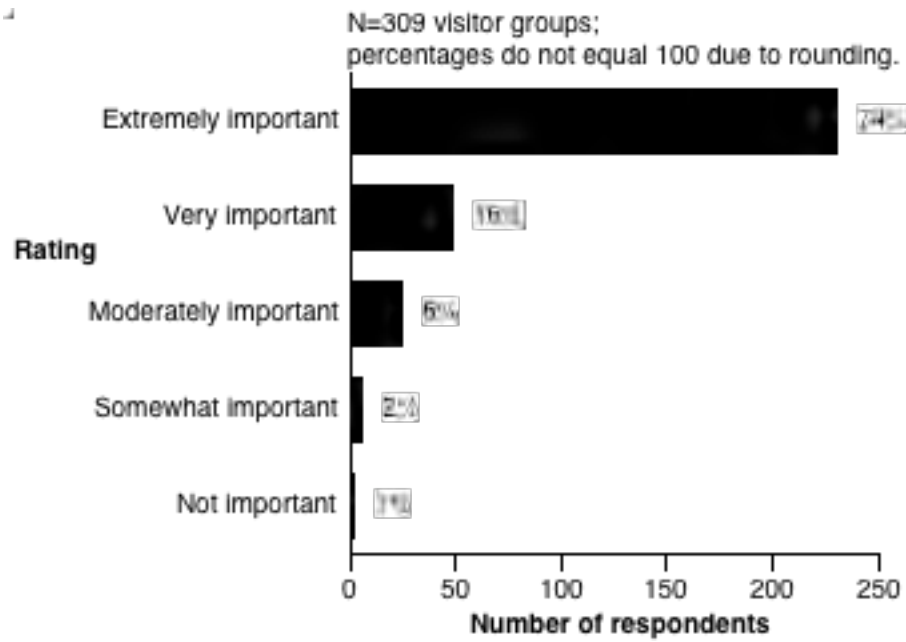


Figure 39: Importance parking lots

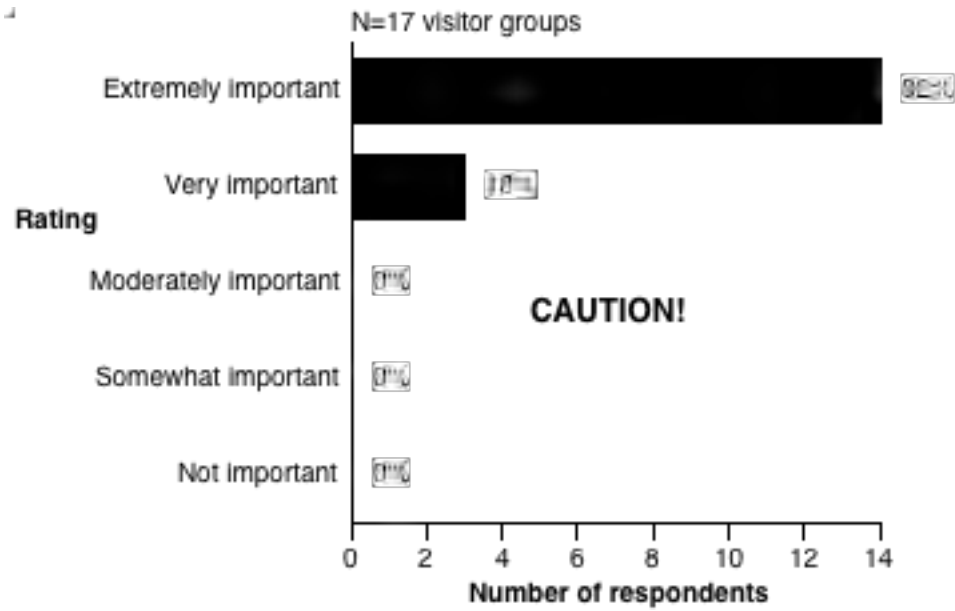


Figure 40: Importance of backcountry campsites

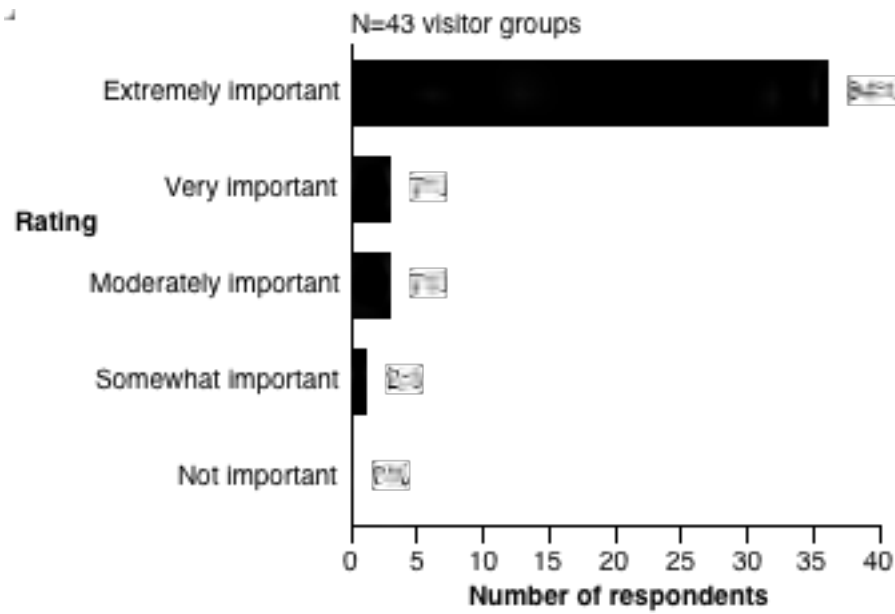


Figure 41: Importance of Wilderness Road Campground

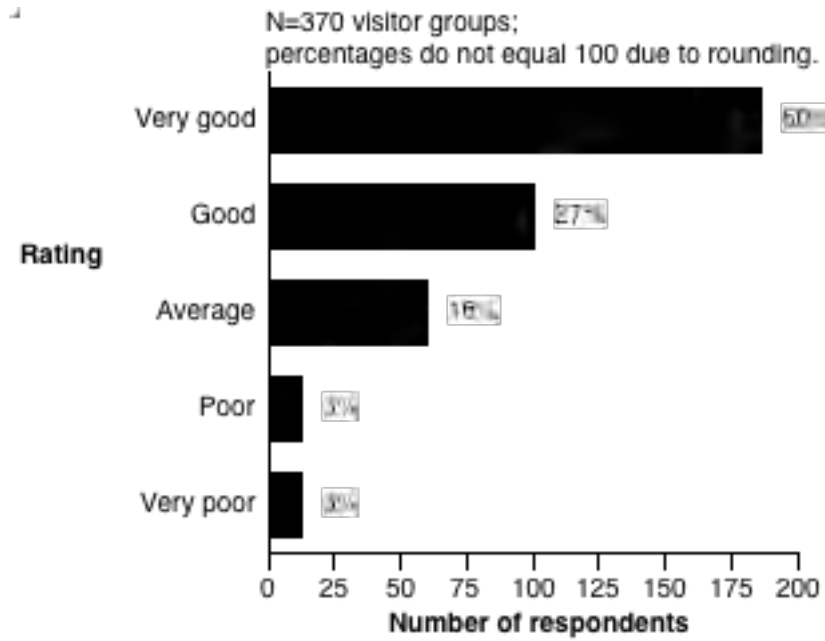


Figure 42: Quality of restrooms

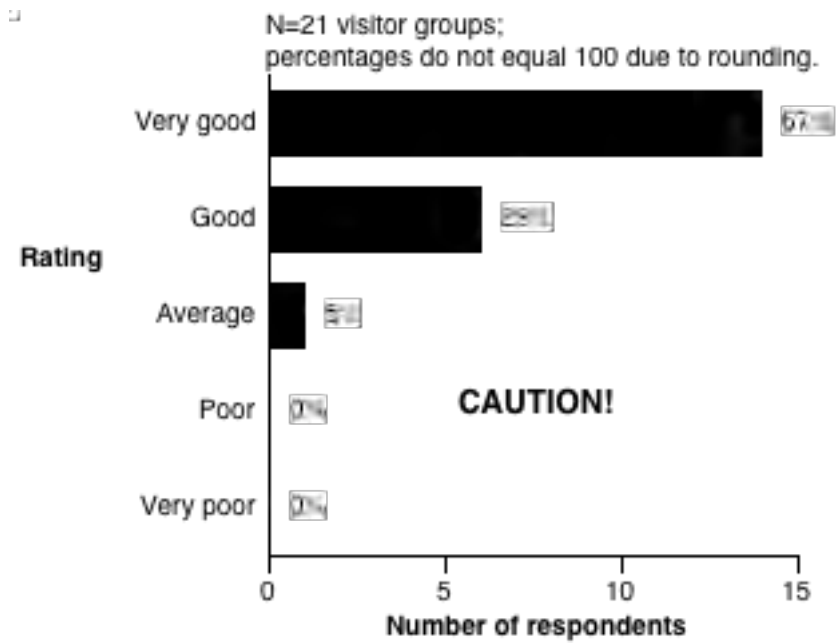


Figure 43: Quality of ranger-guided activities

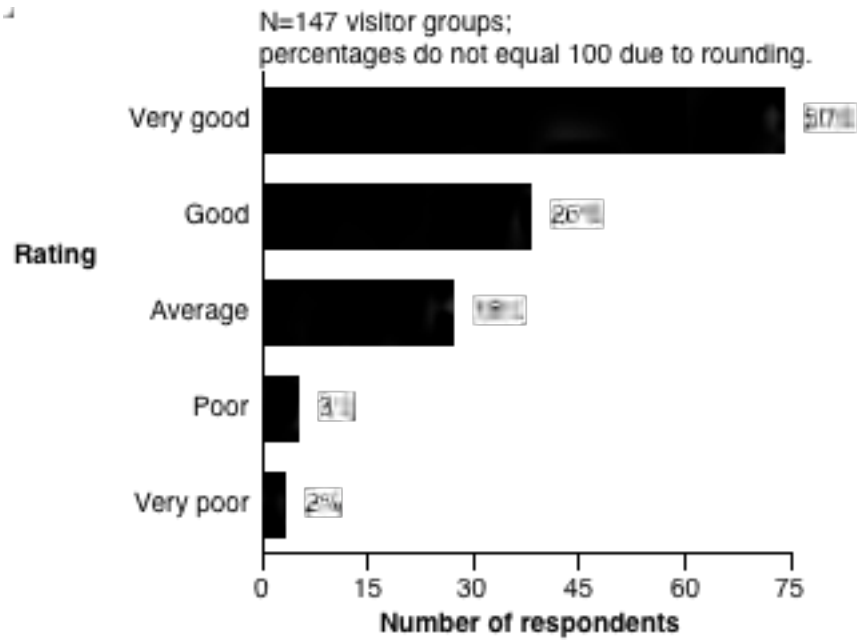


Figure 44: Quality of visitor center movie

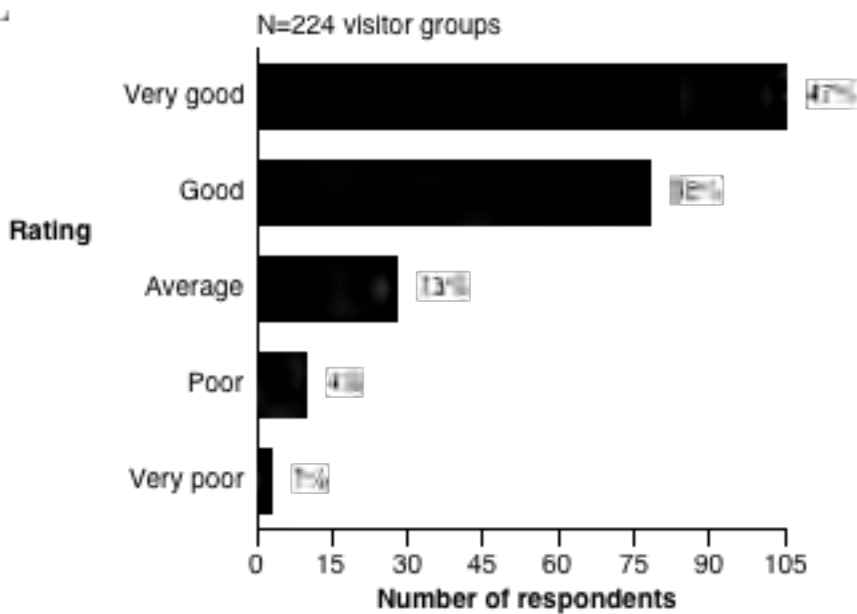


Figure 45: Quality of visitor center exhibits

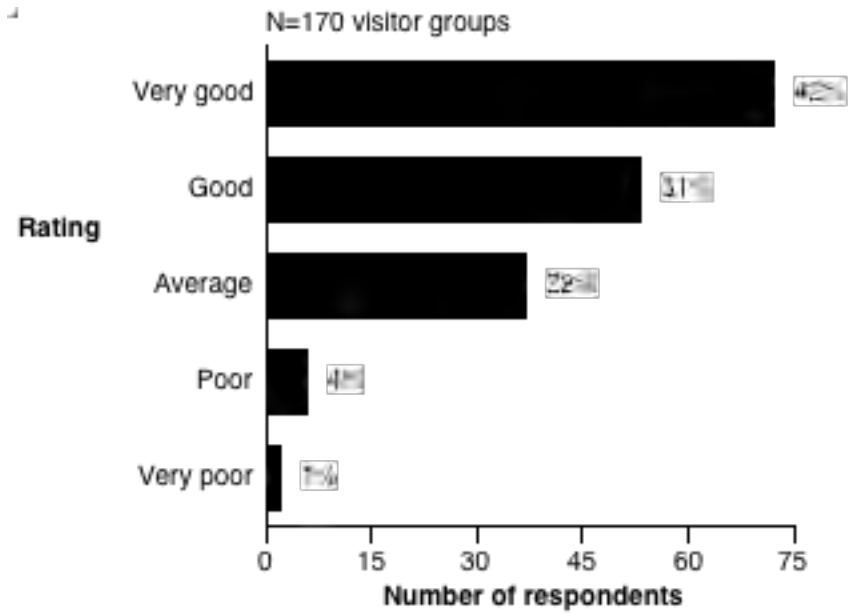


Figure 46: Quality of visitor center book shop

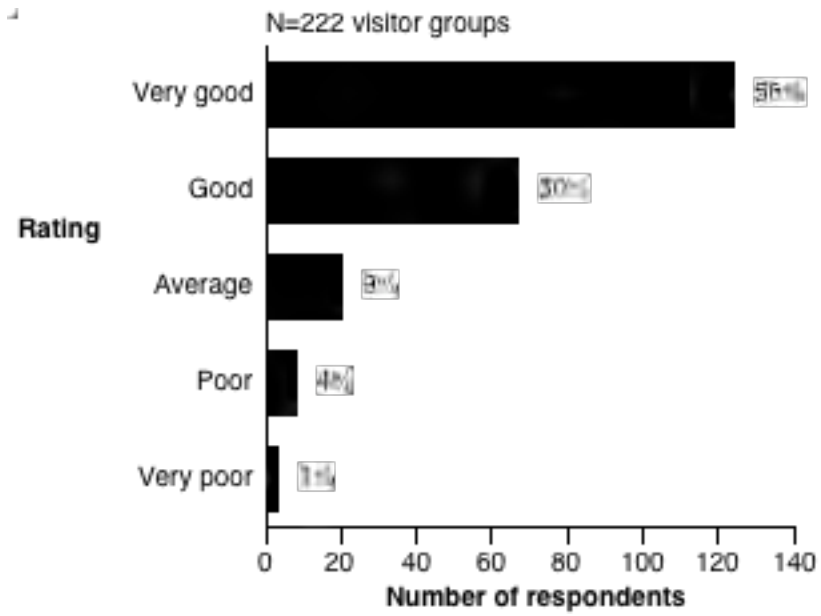


Figure 47: Quality of hiking trails

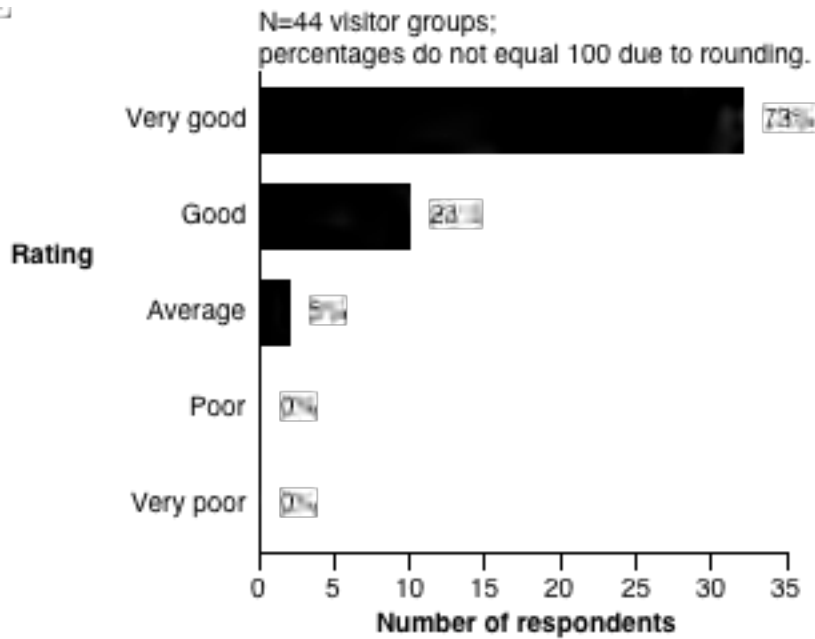


Figure 48: Quality of fitness trail

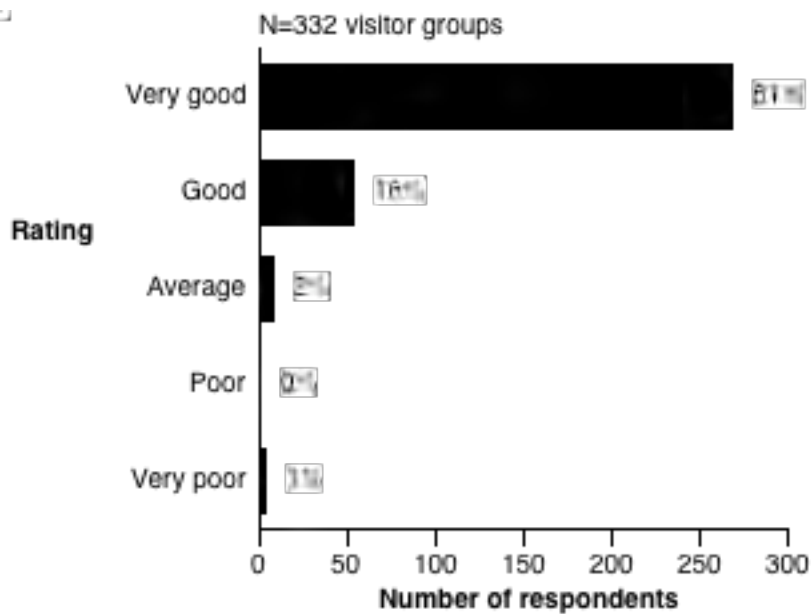


Figure 49: Quality of Pinnacle Overlook

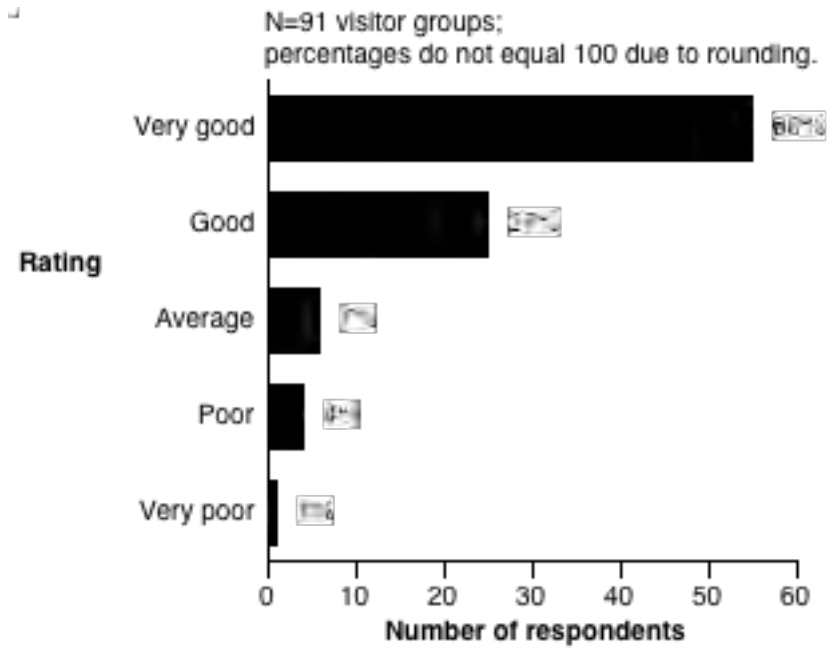


Figure 50: Quality of picnic areas

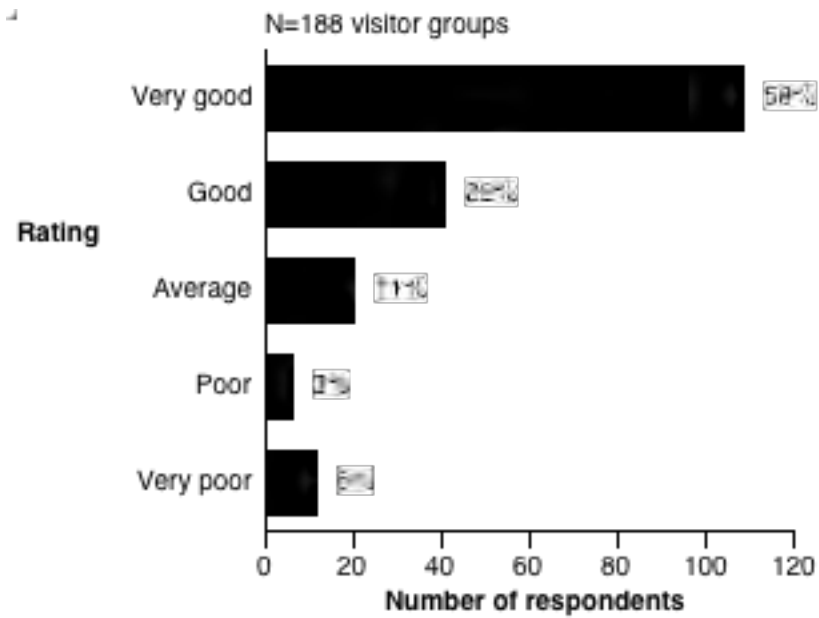


Figure 51: Quality of park road directional signs

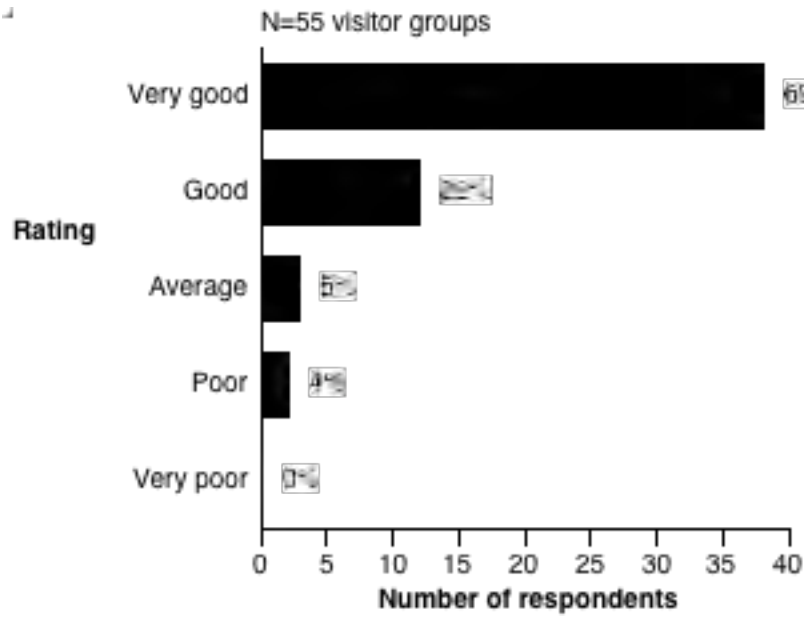


Figure 52: Quality of Hensley Settlement

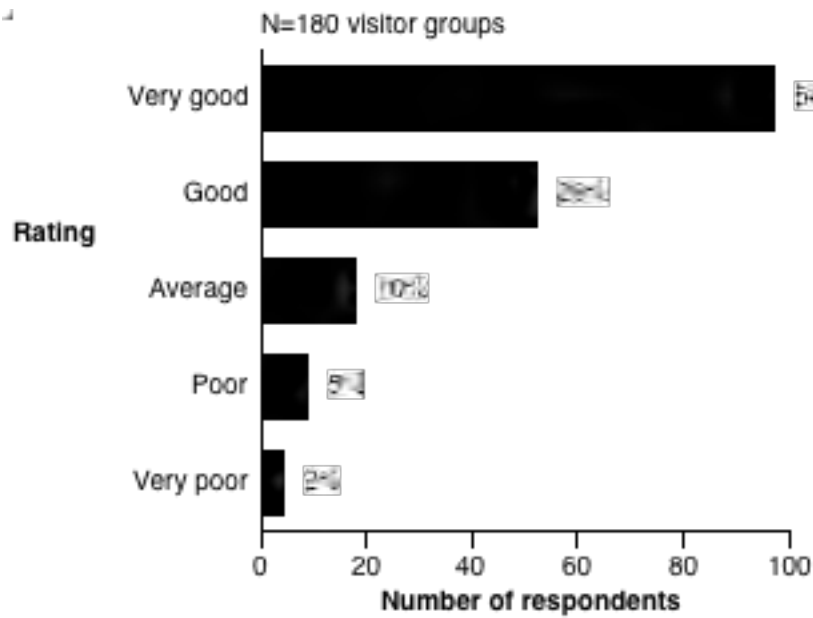


Figure 53: Quality of park brochure



Figure 54: Quality of roads

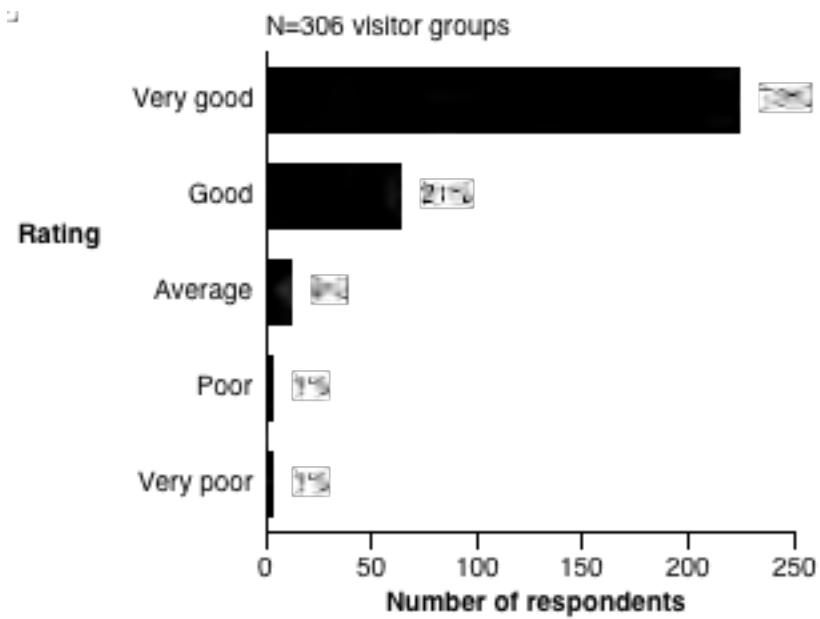


Figure 55: Quality of parking lots

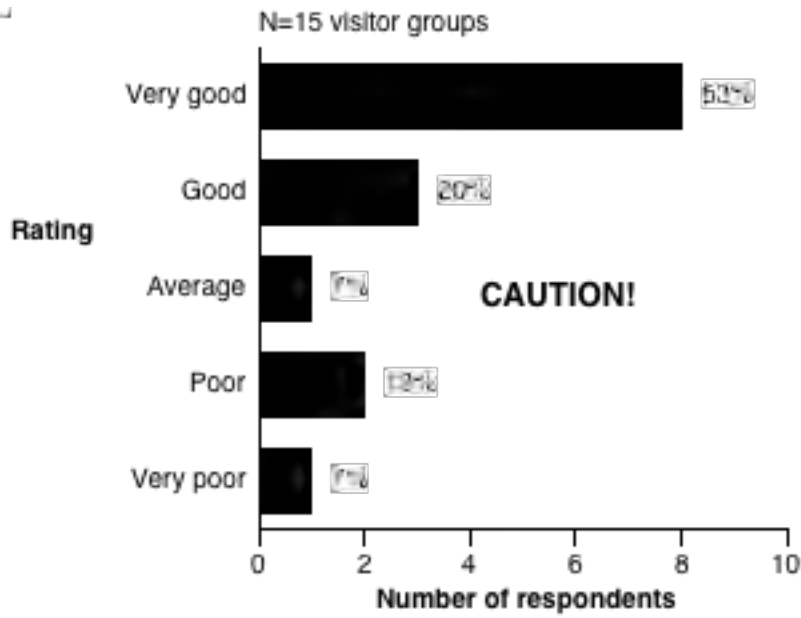


Figure 56: Quality of backcountry campsites

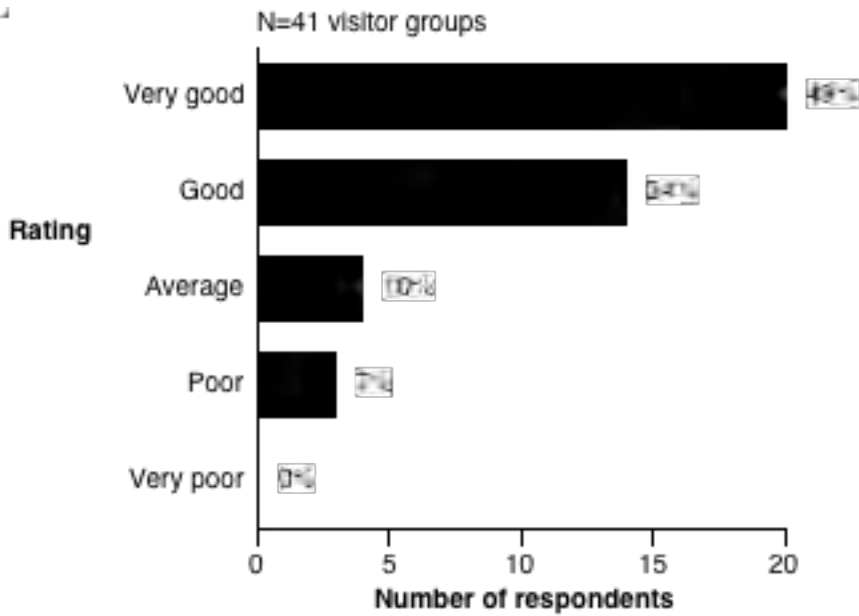


Figure 57: Quality of Wilderness Road Campground

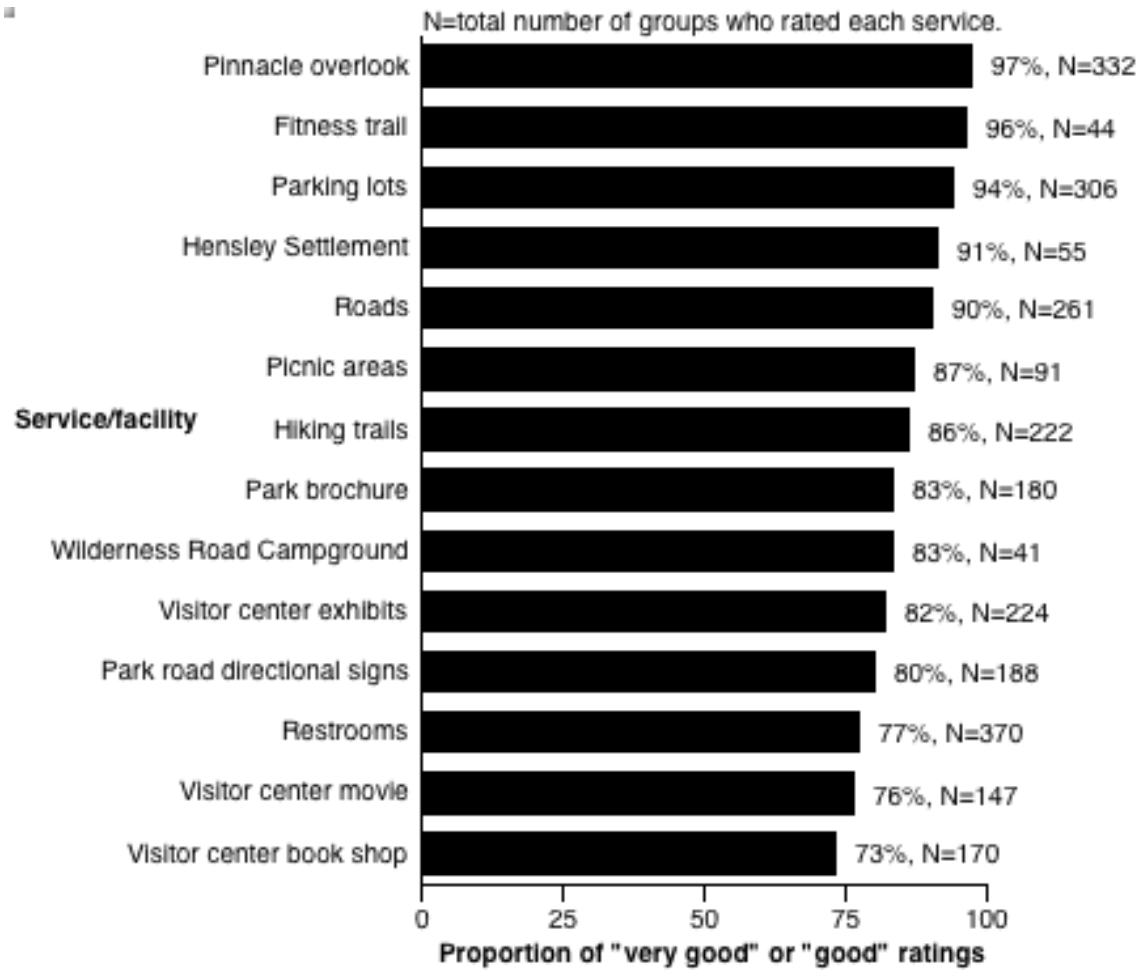


Figure 58: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for services

Visitor expectations

Visitors were asked to indicate if there was anything they expected to see or do but were not able to while visiting Cumberland Gap NHP. Seventeen percent of visitors responded “yes” (see Figure 59). The most common topics mentioned were to see more views, visit the Hensley Settlement, and hike (see Table 7). The most commonly mentioned reasons visitors did not get to see or do what they expected included weather and lack of time (see Table 8).

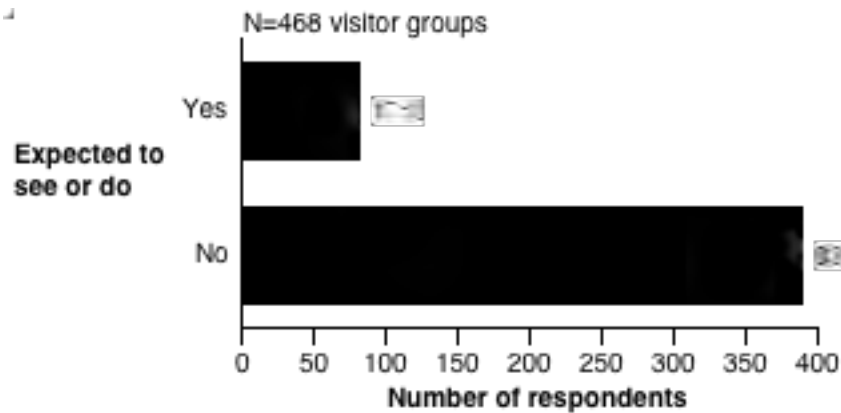


Figure 59: Was there anything you or your group expected to see or do, but were not able?

Table 7: Expected to see or do

N=87 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
See more views	29
Visit the Hensley Settlement	19
Hike	6
Visit Cudjo Cave	4
See more leaf color	3
Horseback ride	3
Visit Sand Cave	3
See more wildlife	3
Visit Daniel Boone's road/trail	3
Walk/travel over the gap	2
See more of the park	2
Learn more about history/culture	2
Other comments	17

Table 8: What prevented you from seeing or doing what you expected

N=87 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Weather	46
Too little time	14
Road to Hensley Settlement was in poor condition	6
No horses available to rent	3
Lack of information	3
Couldn't drive to 3-State Monument	3
Cudjo Cave was closed	2
No access over gap	2
Other comments	18

Visitors were asked, "Please rate the importance (from 1 to 5) of the following park activities and qualities to you and your group during this visit." The activities and qualities they were asked to rate included scenic views, solitude, wilderness, hiking opportunities, quiet, and air quality. Figures 60-65 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of these. The highest combined proportion of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings were received by scenic views (94%) and air quality (86%). The largest proportion of "not important" ratings was received by hiking opportunities (8%).

Importance of park activities and qualities

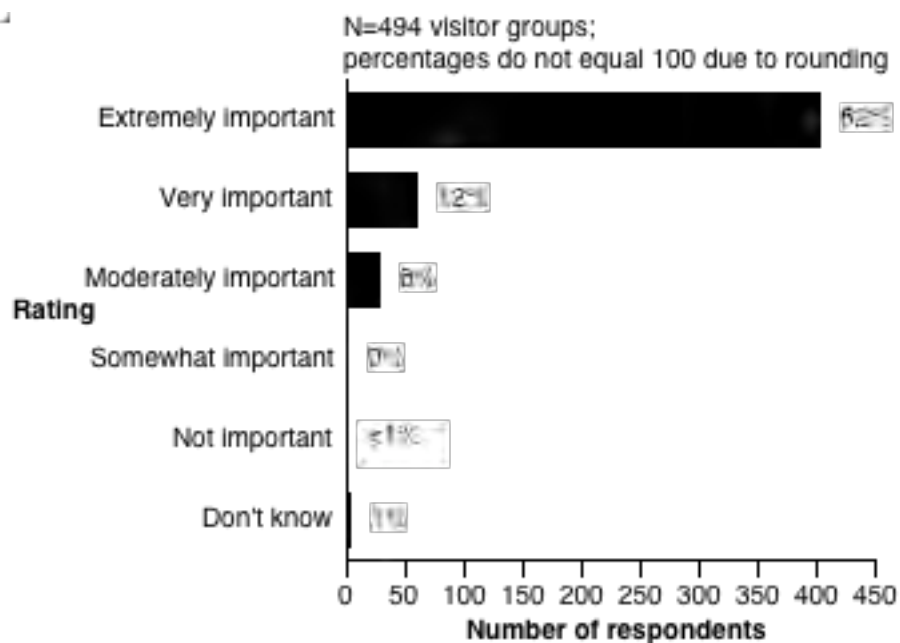


Figure 60: Importance of scenic views

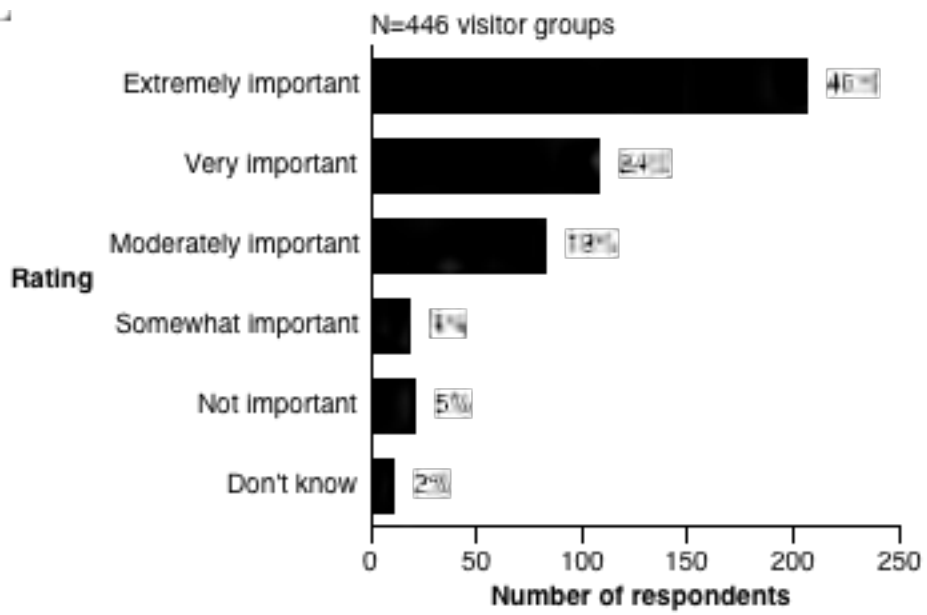


Figure 61: Importance of solitude

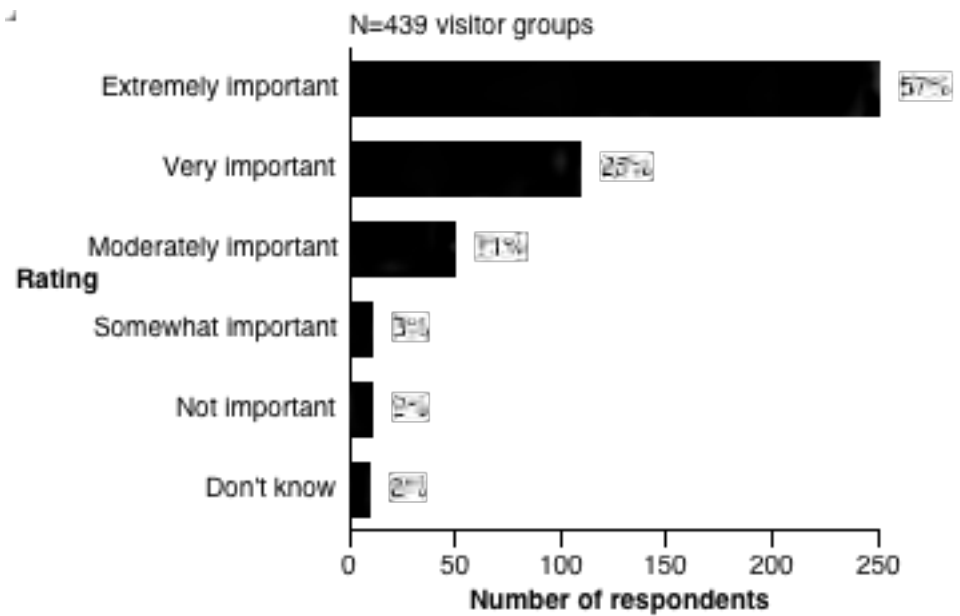


Figure 62: Importance of wilderness

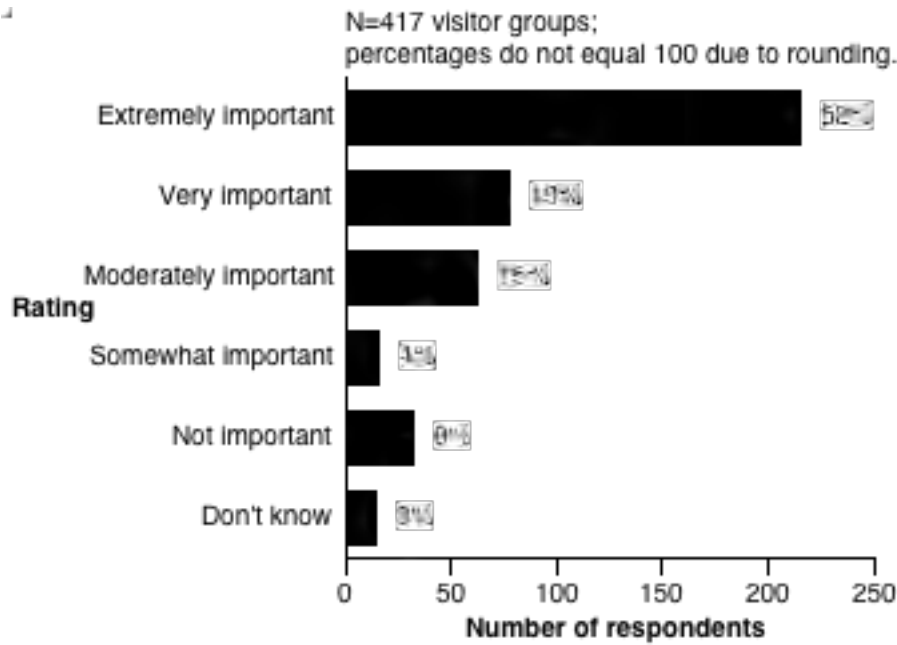


Figure 63: Importance of hiking opportunities

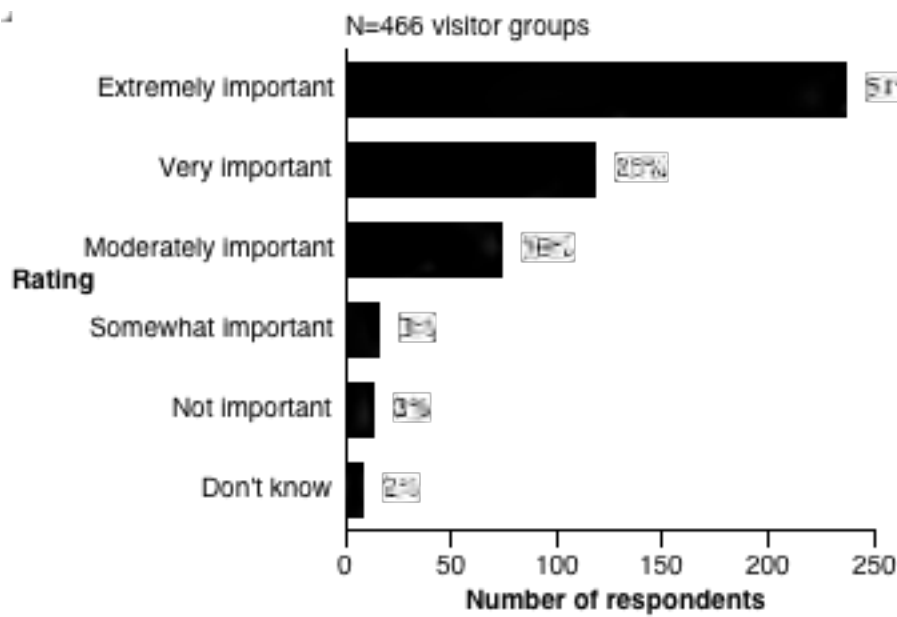


Figure 64: Importance of quiet

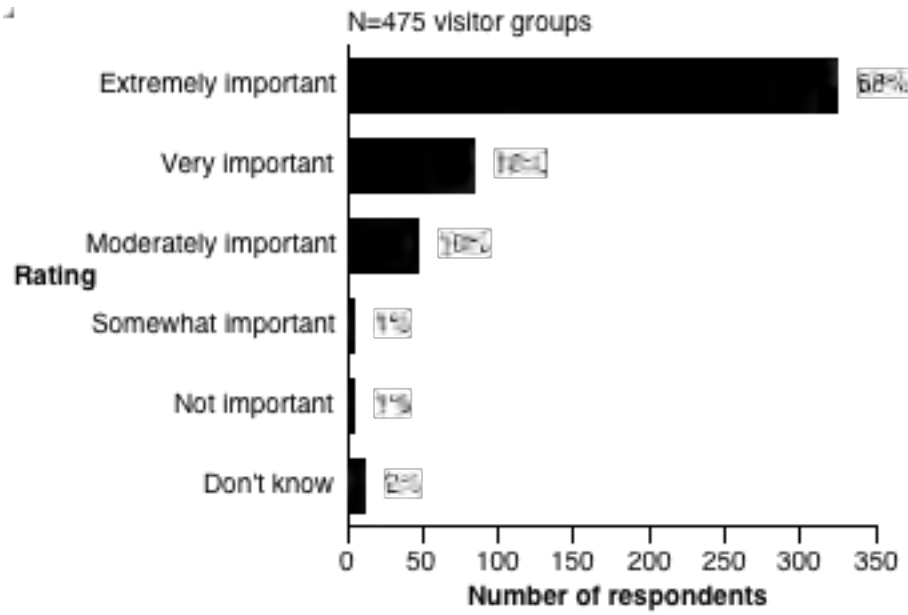


Figure 65: Importance of air quality

Visitors were asked what type of services they would like to have available when the historic route restoration through Cumberland Gap NHP is completed. Seventy-one percent said they would like to have self-guided walking tours, while 54% wanted to have horse-drawn wagon tours. "Other" comments included horseback tours, biking routes and paths, and hiking trails (see Figure 66).

**Historic route
restoration
services
preferred**

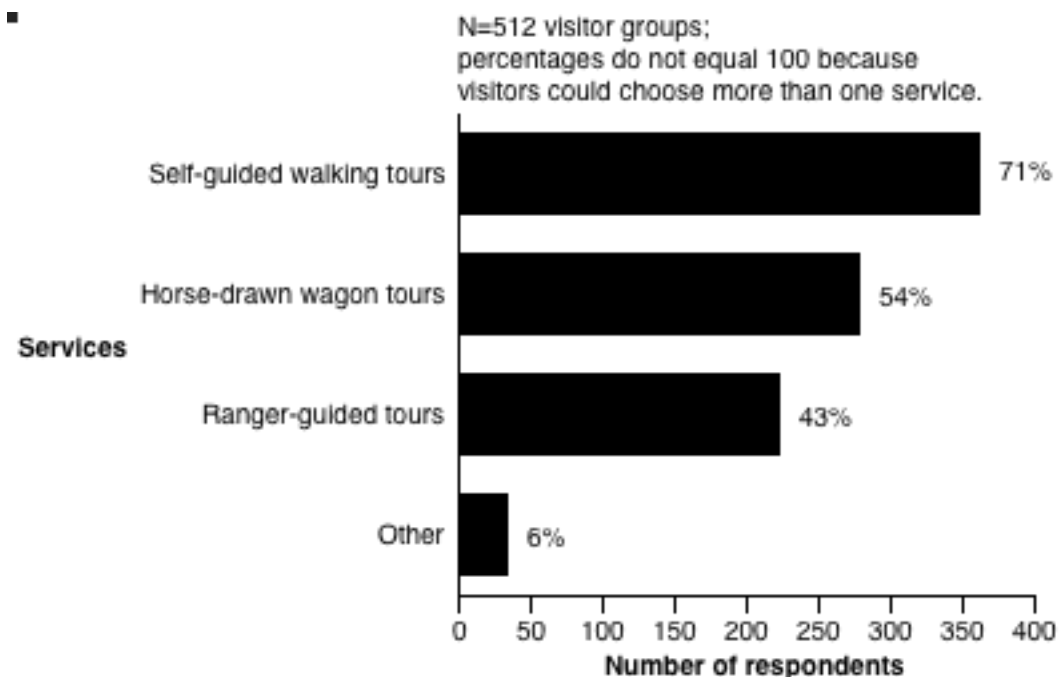


Figure 66: Services preferred when historic route restoration is complete

Subjects of interest for future visits/ preferred methods of learnign

Visitor groups were asked what subjects they would be interested in learning about on a future visit. Sixty-three percent of respondents are interested in learning about Appalachian culture, 60% want to learn about Civil War history, and 56% want to learn about American Indian culture (see Figure 67). "Other" subjects visitors were interested in learning about on a future visit included early settlements and old photos of traffic at the gap.

Visitor groups were also asked how they would prefer to learn about Cumberland Gap NHP's natural and cultural resources on a future visit. As shown in Figure 68, visitors prefer learning through printed materials (64%), audio-visual programs (49%), roadside/trailside exhibits (49%), and outdoor exhibits (46%). "Other" preferences included a ranger at the Pinnacle Overlook, trips across the original gap road, and amphitheater lectures.

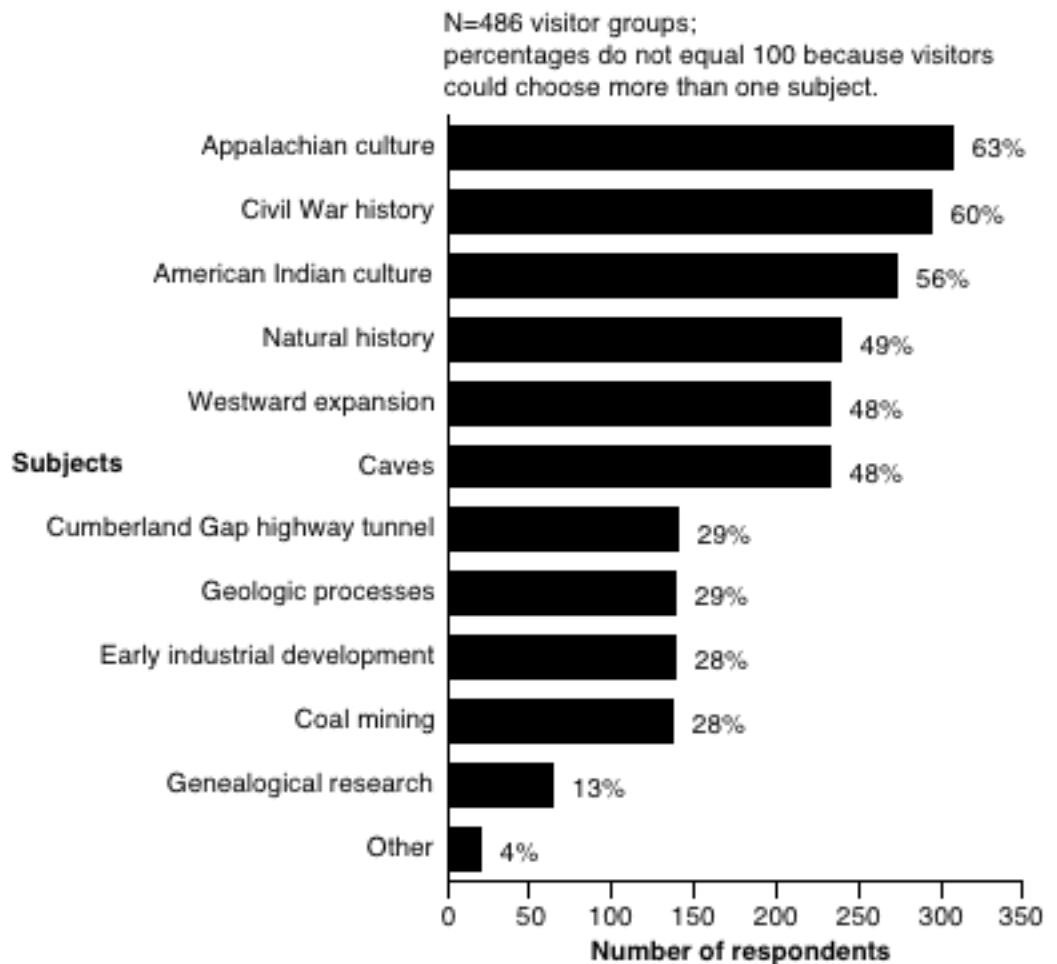


Figure 67: Subjects which visitors are interested in learning about

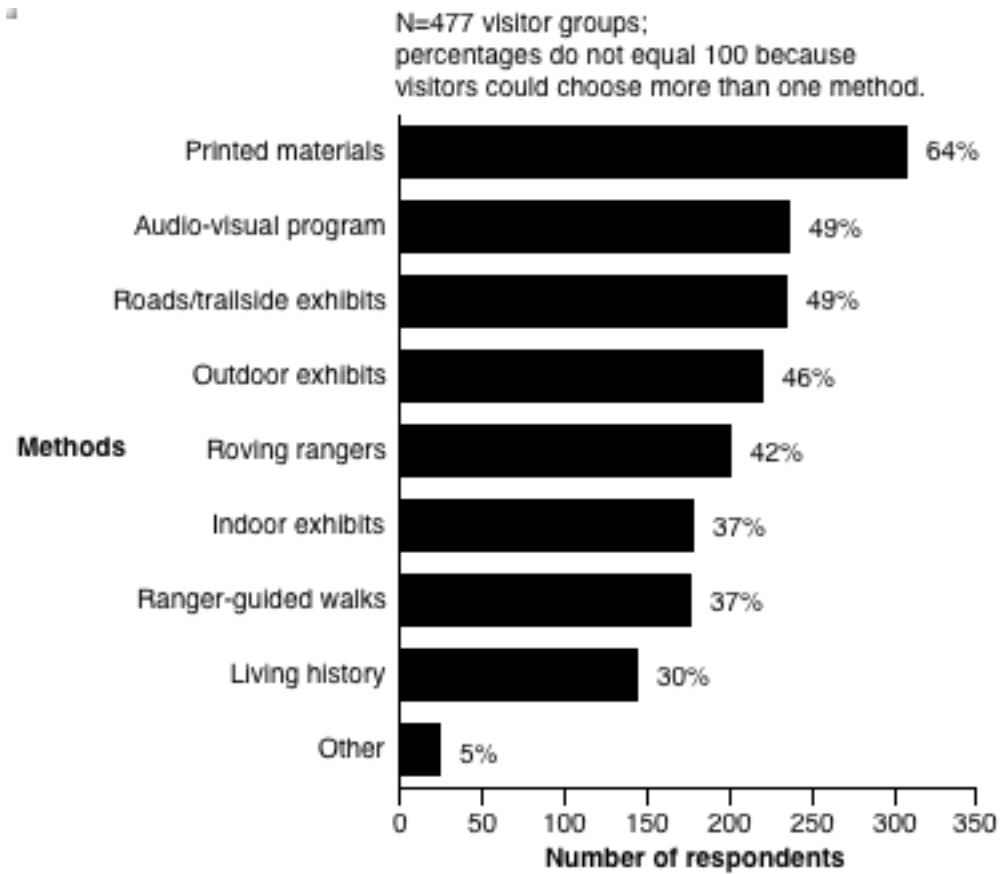


Figure 68: Methods of learning about natural and cultural resources

Overall quality of visitor services

Visitor groups were asked to rate the overall quality of the visitor services provided at Cumberland Gap NHP during this visit. Most visitor groups (92%) rated services as "very good" or "good" (see Figure 69). No visitor groups rated the services as "very poor."

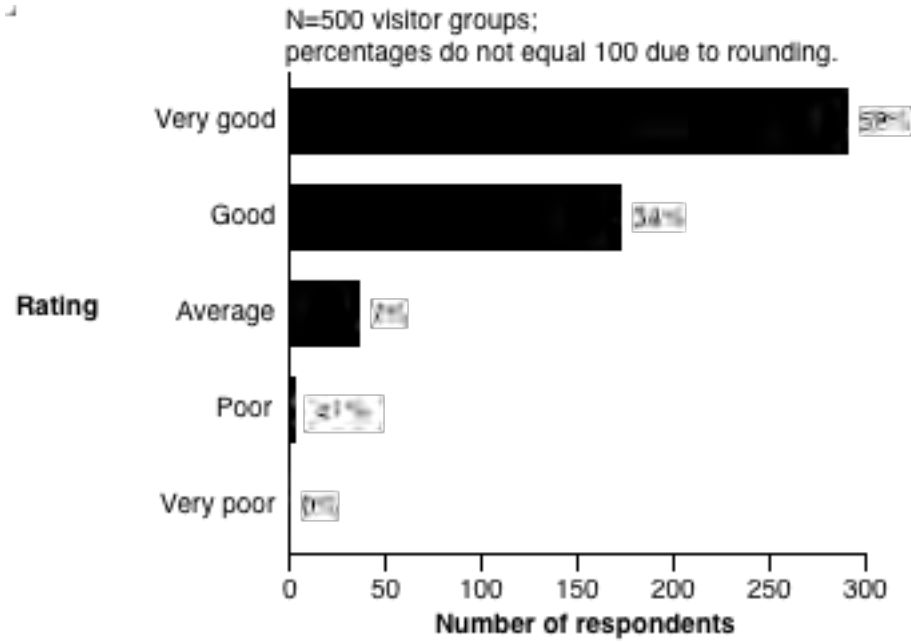


Figure 69: Overall quality of services

Visitor groups were asked, "What did you like most about your visit to Cumberland Gap NHP?" Eighty-five percent of visitor groups (441 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 9 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

What visitors liked most

Table 9: What visitors like most

N=851 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Helpful, courteous, friendly rangers	23
Helpful, courteous, friendly visitor center staff	11
Other comments	4
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Visitor center	10
Learning about history	9
Visitor center displays/exhibits	8
Movie	8
Tour of the Hensley Settlement	4
Civil War sites	4
Historical exhibits	4
Educational/informative	6
Well presented information	2
Iron Furnace	2
Other comments	9
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
Clean park	21
Campgrounds	10
Well maintained	6
Well maintained trails	6
Road access through the park	5
Picnic areas	4
Restrooms	3
Well maintained roads	2
Accessibility to everything	2
Other comments	8
POLICIES	
Pets allowed on trails	1
Campgrounds open year around	1
Campgrounds are kept quiet	1
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Pinnacle Overlook	69
Hiking opportunities	41
Sense of history	33
Overlooks	20
Tunnel	16

Comment	Number of times mentioned
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (cont.)	
The gap area	14
Wilderness/naturalness	13
Tri-state area	12
Wildlife	10
Mountains	10
Nature	10
Fresh air	9
Hensley Settlement	8
Not too crowded	4
Not too developed	4
White Rocks	3
Cumberland Falls	3
Sand Cave	3
Trees	3
Drive to Pinnacle Overlook	2
Flowers	2
Wild turkeys	2
Rocks	2
Other comments	16
GENERAL IMPRESSIONS	
Scenery/natural beauty	198
Fall colors	50
Peace and quiet	43
Solitude	21
Everything	18
Hiking/walking	6
Time with friends/family	5
Friendly people in the area	4
Friendly atmosphere	3
Picnicking	2
Weather	2
Other comments	16

Visitor groups were asked, "What did you like least about your visit to Cumberland Gap NHP?" Fifty-five percent of visitor groups (288 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 10 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

What visitors liked least

Table 10: What visitors like least
N=310 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Provide additional ranger staff	3
Other comments	1
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Lack of park information	7
Need more information on hiking trails	6
Lack of tree identification signs	2
Lack of flower identification signs	2
Other comments	12
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
Poorly or inaccurately marked trails	11
Dirty restrooms	8
Roads have too many curves/too many switchbacks	7
Poorly maintained trails	6
Restrooms	6
Lack of trail distance markers	4
Campground facilities need improvement	4
Lack of drinking water	3
Poor road conditions to Hensley Settlement	3
Not visiting Hensley Settlement due to road conditions	3
Mountain road	3
Poor campground maintenance	2
No firewood at campground	2
Not able to locate a payphone	2
No access to historic route	2
Not enough restrooms	2
Road construction	2
Other comments	21
POLICIES	
Animal feces on the trails	4
Trail damage by horses	2
Other comments	9
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Too crowded	3
Inaccessibility of 3-State Monument	2
Other comments	7

Comment	Number of times mentioned
GENERAL IMPRESSIONS	
Nothing	80
Weather	33
Not enough time	23
Survey	2
Lack of views due to weather	2
Other comments	19

Visitor groups were asked, "If you were a park manager planning for the future of Cumberland Gap NHP, what would you propose?" Fifty-four percent of visitor groups (280 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed in Table 11 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

Planning for the future

Table 11: Planning for the future

N=440 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Utilize volunteers to maintain trails	2
Provide additional roving rangers	2
Provide a knowledgeable ranger at the Pinnacle Overlook	2
Other comments	3
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Provide more historical information and programs	11
Provide live re-enactments	11
Provide more exhibits at the museum	7
Provide horse-drawn tours	6
More variety of ranger-led tours	5
Create a new video	5
Provide more activities	5
Provide more outdoor exhibits	5
Museum exhibits need to be updated	4
Guided trips on wilderness road	3
More trips to Hensley Settlement	3
More children's activities	3
Provide roadside interpretation signs for wilderness road	3
Improve/expand the visitor center	3
Identify landmarks at Pinnacle Overlook	3
Provide a self-guided tour through the gap	3
Provide more Civil War information	3
Provide information about available activities	3
Identify plants along the walkway	2
Provide demonstrations of historic crafts	2
Create a video with more information on the wilderness road	2
Provide guiding walking tours	2
Provide audio tape tours	2
Provide more information on geology	2
Provide activities at the campgrounds	2
Provide more detailed trail maps	2
Provide more information on the wilderness road	2
Offer local live music shows	2
Other comments	29

Comment	Number of times mentioned
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
Better trail maintenance	10
Provide a good road to Hensley Settlement	9
Keep the gap trail authentic	8
Provide more trails	7
Provide a lodge or hotel	6
Provide cabins to rent	6
Proved access to gap trail	6
Provide more mountain bike trails	5
Provide better trail signs/markers	5
Provide a playground	4
Add trails to make loop hikes possible	3
Keep restrooms clean and well supplied	3
Provide better shower services	3
Add more restrooms	3
Re-grade campsite pads	3
Provide a swimming pool	3
Have more trails with handicapped access	2
Add more horseback riding trails	2
Provide a gap trail	2
Remodel restrooms	2
Supply drinking water on the trails	2
Enlarge/improve campsites	2
Provide water at campsites	2
Provide electrical hook-ups at campsites	2
Improve and maintain current roads	2
Other comments	47
POLICIES	
Increase advertising of the park	15
Restrict horses and pets from trails	6
Separate horse trails from other uses	5
Continue to emphasize the history of area	5
Encourage communities to maintain and improve historic structures	2
Don't encourage activities with lots of noise	2
Other comments	18
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Avoid commercialization	20
Preserve park resources	5
Restoration of gap trail is a good idea	4
Expand park boundaries	3
Keep housing developments away from park	2
Provide more wilderness	2
Increase wildlife populations	2
Develop more scenic vistas	2
Other comments	10
GENERAL IMPRESSIONS	
Keep up the good work	15
Provide a café/snack bar	3
Provide a shuttle to gap trail when it opens	3
Provide a shuttle service to park attractions	2
Provide horse rentals	2
Other comments	19

Thirty-six percent of visitor groups (187 groups) wrote additional comments, which are included in the separate appendix of this report. Their comments about Cumberland Gap NHP are summarized below (see Table 12). Some comments offer specific suggestions on how to improve the park; others describe what visitors enjoyed or did not enjoy about their visit.

Comment summary

Table 12: Additional comments

N=279 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Helpful, friendly, knowledgeable staff	33
Other comments	7
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Inform people of sites and activities	3
Need more activities	2
Need more interpretive signs and information	2
Other comments	9
POLICY	
Other comments	5
FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE	
Park is clean and well maintained	7
Need better trail signs	5
Other comments	16
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Nice view from the overlook	6
Wonderful solitude and quiet	4
Enjoyed wildlife	3
Enjoyed the lack of crowds	2
Other comments	6
GENERAL IMPRESSIONS	
Enjoyable time	34
Plan a future visit	33
Thanks	18
Wonderful	16
Beautiful place	13
Not enough time	11
Loved it	10
Good job	7
Bad weather	3
Educational	3
Family involvement in the Civil War	3
Keep up the good work	3
Park enhance area for local residents	2
Love NPS parks	2
Won't return again	2
Other comments	9

Cumberland Gap NHP Additional Analysis VSP Report 117

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) staff offers the opportunity to learn more from VSP visitor study data.

Additional Analysis

Additional analysis can be done using the park's VSP visitor study data that was collected and entered into the computer. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made of any of the characteristics listed below. Be as specific as possible--you may select a single program/ service/ facility instead of all that were listed in the questionnaire. Include your name, address, and phone number in the request.

- Awareness of NPS management
- Sources of information
- Visitor activities this visit
- Visitor activities past visits
- Hours spent at park
- Days spent at park
- Sites visited this visit
- Sites visited past visits
- Other sites visited
- Reasons for visit
- Anything expected to see or do
- Group size
- With guided tour?
- With educational group?
- Group type
- Age
- State of residence
- Country of residence
- Number of visits
- Ethnicity
- Race
- Visit the visitor center?
- Reasons for visiting visitor center
- Sources of learning for future visits
- Subjects to learn for future visits
- Historical route services
- Visit Hensley Settlement?
- Willingness to pay a fee
- Use of visitor services/facilities
- Importance of visitor services/facilities
- Quality of visitor services/facilities
- Importance of park activities/ qualities
- Overall quality rating

Database

The VSP database is currently under development, but requests can be handled through Washington State University, by calling the VSP.

Phone/send requests to:

**Visitor Services Project, CPSU
College of Natural Resources
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho 83844-1133**

**Phone: 208-885-7863
FAX: 208-885-4261**

QUESTIONNAIRE



Visitor Services Project Publications

Reports 1-6 (pilot studies) are available from the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit. All other VSP reports listed are available from the parks where the studies were conducted or from the UI CPSU. All studies were conducted in summer unless otherwise noted.

1982

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park.

1983

2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method.
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial.
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park.

1985

5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

1986

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence NHP
9. Valley Forge NHP

1987

10. Colonial NHP (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry NHP
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence NHP: Four Seasons Study

1988

17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
19. Bryce Canyon National Park
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument

1989

21. Everglades National Park (winter)
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument
23. The White House Tours, President's Park (summer)
24. Lincoln Home National Historical Site
25. Yellowstone National Park
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
27. Muir Woods National Monument

1990

28. Canyonlands National Park (spring)
29. White Sands National Monument
30. National Monuments, Washington, D.C.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park
32. Gateway National Recreation Area
33. Petersburg National Battlefield
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

1991

38. Jean Lafitte NHP (spring)
39. Joshua Tree National Monument (spring)
40. The White House Tours, President's Park (spring)
41. Natchez Trace Parkway (spring)
42. Stehekin-North Cascades NP/ Lake Chelan NRA
43. City of Rocks National Reserve
44. The White House Tours, President's Park (fall)

1992

45. Big Bend National Park (spring)
46. Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (spring)
47. Glen Echo Park (spring)
48. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
49. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
50. Zion National Park
51. New River Gorge National River
52. Klondike Gold Rush NHP (AK)
53. Arlington House-The Robert E. Lee Memorial

1993

54. Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve (spring)
55. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (spring)
56. Whitman Mission National Historic Site
57. Sitka NHP
58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (summer)
59. Redwood National Park
60. Channel Islands National Park
61. Pecos NHP
62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)

**Visitor Services Project Publications
(continued)**

- 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)
- 65. San Antonio Missions NHP (spring)
- 66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center
- 67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts
- 68. Nez Perce NHP
- 69. Edison National Historic Site
- 70. San Juan Island NHP
- 71. Canaveral National Seashore
- 72. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (fall)
- 73. Gettysburg National Military Park (fall)

1995

- 74. Grand Teton National Park (winter)
- 75. Yellowstone National Park (winter)
- 76. Bandelier National Monument
- 77. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
- 78. Adams National Historic Site
- 79. Devils Tower National Monument
- 80. Manassas National Battlefield Park
- 81. Booker T. Washington National Monument
- 82. San Francisco Maritime NHP
- 83. Dry Tortugas National Park

1996

- 84. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 85. Chiricahua National Monument (spring)
- 86. Fort Bowie National Historic Site (spring)
- 87. Great Falls Park, Virginia (spring)
- 88. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer)
- 89. Chamizal National Memorial
- 90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)

1997

- 92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer & fall)
- 93. Virgin Islands National Park (winter)
- 94. Mojave National Preserve (spring)
- 95. Martin Luther King, Jr., NHP (spring)
- 96. Lincoln Boyhood Home National Memorial
- 97. Grand Teton National Park
- 98. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 99. Voyageurs National Park
- 100. Lowell NHP

1998

- 101. Jean Lafitte NHP & Preserve (spring)
- 102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)
- 103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)
- 104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials
- 105. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
- 106. Klondike Gold Rush NHP (AK)
- 107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area (summer)
- 108. Acadia National Park (summer)

1999

- 109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)
- 110. San Juan National Historic Site, Puerto Rico (winter)
- 111. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- 112. Rock Creek Park
- 113. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- 114. Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
- 115. Kenai Fjords National Park & Preserve
- 116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
- 117. Cumberland Gap NHP (fall)

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit; phone (208) 885-7863.

NPS D-94

June 2000



Printed on recycled paper
