Badlands National Park
Visitor Study

Summer 2000

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and
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Visitor Services Project
Report 123

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Todd Simmons is a VSP Research Aide based at the Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho. I thank Dr. James Gramann and the staff and volunteers of Badlands National Park 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
Badlands National Park Visitor Study
Report Summary

• This report describes the results of a visitor study in Badlands National Park from August 2-8, 2000. A total of 798 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 639 questionnaires for an 80.1% response rate.

• This report profiles visitors at Badlands National Park. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.

• Over one-half of the visitor groups (61%) were in family groups. Thirty-nine percent of visitor groups were in groups of two. Forty percent of visitors were aged 36-55 years; 22% were aged 15 years or younger. One-half of the visitors (50%) had a bachelor's or higher degree.

• United States visitors were from Minnesota (10%), Wisconsin (10%), Illinois (8%), Michigan (8%), 40 other states and Washington D.C. International visitors comprised 7% of Badlands visitation, with 38% from Canada, 17% from England, 14% from Germany and the remainder from 11 other countries.

• Most visitors (65%) were making their first visit to Badlands National Park. Eighty-three percent of the visitor groups spent less than one day at the park. Of those groups that spent less than a day at the park, 74% spent four hours or less.

• On this visit, the most common activities were viewing scenery (100%), visiting the visitor center (74%) and viewing roadside exhibits (73%).

• The most used sources of information were travel guides or tour books (48%), friends or relatives (42%), previous visits (39%) and word of mouth (25%). For future visits, visitors selected the internet-Badlands NP home page (55%), travel guide/tour book (47%) and previous visits (35%) as their preferred methods of obtaining information.

• The features or qualities of Badlands NP receiving the highest importance rating included preservation of native prairie (75%), experiencing wildness (70%), and natural quiet (70%).

• On this visit, the most commonly visited sites within Badlands NP were the Pinnacles Overlook (67%), Ben Reifel visitor center (65%), Journey Overlook picnic area (39%), and Roberts Prairie dog town (37%).

• In regard to the use, importance and quality of information services, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The information services that were most used by 560 respondents were the park brochure/map (92%) and the visitor center exhibits (67%). According to visitors, the most important information services were visitor center staff (86% of 260 respondents) and park brochure/map (84% of 492 respondents). The highest quality information services were visitor center staff (86% of 256 respondents) and park brochure/map (84% of 475 respondents).

• The visitor services and facilities that were most used by 560 respondents were the paved roads (87%) and the overlooks (77%). According to visitors, the most important visitor services and facilities were overlooks (93% of 418 respondents) and Cedar Pass campground (93% of 43 respondents). The highest quality services and facilities were overlooks (95% of 407 respondents) and paved roads (89% of 455 respondents).

• Ninety-four percent of Badlands visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services at Badlands National Park 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.
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</table>
INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Badlands National Park (NP). This visitor study was conducted August 2 – 8, 2000 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.

A Methods section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. A Results section follows, including a summary of visitor comments. Next, an Additional Analysis page helps managers request additional analyses. The final section has a copy of the Questionnaire. The separate 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.

SAMPLE ONLY

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

The questionnaire for this visitor study was designed using a standard format that has been developed in previous Visitor Services Project (VSP) studies. Some of the questions are comparable with VSP visitor studies conducted at other parks. Other questions are customized for Badlands NP. A copy of the questionnaire is included at the end of this report.

Interviews were conducted with, and questionnaires distributed to, a sample of visitor groups who arrived at Badlands NP during the period from August 2 - 8, 2000. Visitors were sampled at a total of six locations (see Table 1).

Table 1: Questionnaire distribution locations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location:</th>
<th>Questionnaires distributed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ben Reifel Visitor Center</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinnacles Overlook</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Door Trailhead</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Pass Lodge</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White River Visitor Center</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sage Creek Campground</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAND TOTAL</td>
<td>798</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. These individuals were then given a questionnaire and asked their names, addresses, and telephone numbers 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 survey. Seven weeks after the survey, second replacement questionnaires were mailed to visitors who still had not returned their questionnaires.
Returned questionnaires were coded and the information was entered into a computer using Statistical Analysis System (SAS), 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.

This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members, depending upon the specific survey question. Thus, the sample size ("N"), varies from figure to figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows group size information for 632 visitor groups, Figure 4 presents age data for 2,079 individuals. A note above each graph specifies the information illustrated.

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, although 639 questionnaires were returned by Badlands visitors, Figure 1 shows data for only 632 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 that 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 visit the park.

2. The data reflect visitor use patterns of visitors to the selected sites during the study period of August 2 – 8, 2000. 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

Weather conditions during the visitor study were typical of August in the Badlands area, with hot, sunny days. At the park's request, the survey was conducted during the Sturgis (SD) Motorcycle Rally. Visitation during this period included many Rally participants passing through the park in small groups or in large motorcycle caravans.
RESULTS

In Badlands National Park, 822 visitor groups were contacted, and 798 of these groups (97%) accepted questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 639 visitor groups, resulting in an 80.1% response rate for this study.

Table 2 compares age and group size of the total sample of visitors contacted with the age and groups of visitors who actually returned questionnaires. Based on the variables of respondent age and visitor group size, non-response bias was judged to be insignificant.

Table 2: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Total sample</th>
<th></th>
<th>Actual respondents</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age of respondents</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>45.0</td>
<td>630</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
<td>795</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 51 people. Thirty-nine percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 22% were people visiting in groups of four. Sixty-one percent of visitor groups were made up of family members, 20% were made up of friends, and 7% were made up of family and friends (see Figure 2). Groups listing themselves as “other” for group type included school trips and spouses. One percent of visitors were in a tour group (see Figure 3).

Thirty-two percent of the visitors were between the ages of 36 and 50 (see Figure 4). Another 27% of visitors were below the age of 21.

Sixty-five percent of visitors were making their first visit to the park, whereas 36% had visited the park previously (see Figure 5).

Twenty-three percent of visitors stated they had graduate degrees, while another 27% had bachelor’s degrees (see Figure 6).
Demographics (continued)

Ninety-nine percent of visitors did not identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino (see Figure 7). Ninety-five percent of visitors did identify themselves as White, and 2% identified themselves as Native Americans (see Figure 8).

International visitors to Badlands National Park comprised 7% of the total visitation (see Table 3). The countries most often represented (besides the United States) were Canada (49%), England (22%), and Germany (18%). The largest proportions of United States visitors were from Minnesota (10%), Wisconsin (10%), Illinois (8%) and Michigan (8%). Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from another forty-six states and Washington D.C. (see Map 1 and Table 4).
Figure 2: Visitor group types

- Family: 61%
- Friends: 20%
- Family and friends: 7%
- Alone: 7%
- Other: 4%

N=631 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Figure 3: Participation in a guided tour

- No: 99%
- Yes: 1%

N=633 visitor groups
Badlands National Park Visitor Study
August 2-8, 2000

N=2,079 individuals; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Visitor ages

Figure 4: Visitor ages

N=1,948 individuals

Number of visits

Figure 5: Number of visits
Some high school: 5%
High school graduate: 20%
Some college: 26%
Bachelor's degree: 27%
Graduate degree: 23%

Figure 6: Education level

Ethnicity

Not Hispanic or Latino: 99%
Hispanic or Latino: 1%

Figure 7: Ethnicity
Figure 8: Race

Table 3: International visitors by country of residence
N=128 individuals; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of individuals</th>
<th>Percent of Int’l visitors</th>
<th>Percent of total visitors</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guatemala</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Map 1: Proportion of United States visitors by state of residence

Table 4: United States visitors by state of residence
N=1,815 individuals;
Percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of individuals</th>
<th>Percent of U.S. visitors</th>
<th>Percent of total visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>142</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>Iowa</td>
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<td>Ohio</td>
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<td>California</td>
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<td>Massachusetts</td>
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<td>Florida</td>
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<td>Colorado</td>
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<td>Texas</td>
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<td>South Dakota</td>
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<td>Washington</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 other states and Washington D.C.</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Length of stay

Visitor groups were asked how much time they spent in Badlands National Park. Eighty-three percent of visitor groups spent less than one day at the park while 12% spent one or two days (see Figure 9). Of the groups that spent less than one day at the park, over 74% spent four hours or less (see Figure 10).

Figure 9: Days spent at Badlands NP
Figure 10: Hours spent at Badlands NP

N=520 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.
Activities

Figure 11 shows the proportions of visitor groups that participated in a variety of activities at Badlands National Park. The most common activities were viewing scenery (100%), visiting visitor center (74%), and viewing roadside exhibits (73%). Visitor groups participated in a number of "other" activities including hiking, nature study and biking.

N=636 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 because groups could participate in more than one activity.

Figure 11: Visitor activities
Figure 12 shows the proportions of visitor groups that hiked trails located within Badlands NP. The most hiked trails included Fossil Exhibit Trail (54%), Door Trail (40%), and Windows Trail (38%).

Visitor groups were also asked about their opinion on the number of trails in Badlands NP. Eighty-eight percent of visitor groups indicated that the number of trails was about right, while 12% thought there were too few trails (see Figure 13).

Visitor groups were also asked about the current locations of the trails in Badlands NP. Seventy-seven percent of visitor groups indicated that the current locations were adequate, while 19% indicated new trails in different locations were needed (see Figure 14).

N=338 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 because visitors use more than one trail.

- Fossil Exhibit Trail: 54%
- Door Trail: 40%
- Windows Trail: 38%
- Cliff Shelf Trail: 28%
- Notch Trail: 25%
- Saddle Pass Trail: 15%
- Castle Trail: 15%
- Medicine Root Trail: 9%

Figure 12: Trails hiked in Badlands NP
Figure 13: Number of trails in Badlands NP

N=454 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Number of trails

- About right: 88%
- Too few: 12%
- Too many: <1%

Figure 14: Location of trails in Badlands NP

N=386 visitor groups

Trail location

- Current locations adequate: 77%
- Add new trails and locations: 19%
- Other: 4%
Visitor groups were asked to indicate the sources they used to obtain information about Badlands National Park prior to their visit. Forty-eight percent received information from travel guides/tour books, 42% received information from friends or relatives, and 39% from previous visits (see Figure 15). Nine percent of visitor groups received no information prior to their visit. “Other” sources of information used by visitor groups included local people, school geography lessons, and PBS specials.

Visitor groups were also asked to indicate the sources of information they would prefer to use prior to future visits. As shown by Figure 16, the most common preferences were the Internet-Badlands home page (55%), travel guides/tour books (47%), and previous visits (35%).

Figure 15: Sources of information—this visit
Figure 16: Sources of information future visits

N=405 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could use more than one source of information.
Visitor groups were asked to indicate how their visit to Badlands NP fit into their travel plans. Ninety-one percent of visitors to Badlands NP were planning to visit the park as one of several destinations. Six percent of visitors were not planning on visiting Badlands NP at all. Three percent of visitors intended it to be their primary destination (see Figure 17). Other destinations indicated by visitor groups included Mt. Rushmore National Memorial (86%), Wall Drug (68%), Black Hills National Forest (65%) and Custer State Park (59%), as shown in Figure 18.

Fifty-three percent of visitor groups indicated that they spent one night away from home within a 1-hour drive of Badlands NP (see Figure 19). Fifty percent of visitor groups spent zero nights inside Badlands NP and 28% spent one night (see Figure 20). Forty-two percent of visitor groups spent one night outside Badlands NP and 22% spent two nights (see Figure 21). As shown in Figure 22, 54% percent of visitor groups stayed in campgrounds inside the park, while 32% utilized motels or cabins. Of those visitors staying outside the park, 43% used motels and cabins, and 29% stayed in campgrounds (see Figure 23).

Figure 24 shows the number of times visitor groups entered the park: 69% entered one time, 19% entered two times and 5% entered three times.

Visitors were asked where they spent the night prior to arriving at Badlands NP and also where they spent the night after leaving Badlands NP. Table 5 shows the number of visitor groups who stayed in each town/ city prior to arriving at Badlands NP. Table 6 shows the number of visitor groups who stayed in each town/ city after leaving Badlands NP. Rapid City, SD was the most listed city on both tables.
**Figure 17: Badlands NP as part of travel plans**

- **Travel plans**
  - One of several destinations: 91%
  - Not a planned destination: 6%
  - Primary destination: 3%

**Figure 18: Other destinations visited on this trip**

- **Other destinations**
  - Mt. Rushmore National Memorial: 86%
  - Wall Drug: 68%
  - Black Hills National Forest: 65%
  - Custer State Park: 59%
  - Devils Tower National Monument: 45%
  - Yellowstone National Park: 42%
  - Grand Teton National Park: 34%
  - Wind Cave National Park: 23%
  - National Grasslands: 23%
  - Rocky Mountain National Park: 17%
  - Wounded Knee: 13%
  - Pine Ridge Indian Reservation: 10%
  - Prairie Homestead: 9%

N=630 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 because groups could visit more than one site.
Figure 19: Stay overnight away from home within 1-hour of Badlands NP

Figure 20: Number of nights spent in Badlands NP
Figure 21: Number of nights spent within 1-hour drive of Badlands NP

Figure 22: Type of lodging used inside Badlands NP by groups staying overnight in the park
Figure 23: Lodging type used outside of Badlands NP by groups staying overnight out of park

Figure 24: Number of times entered park
The table below lists the places visitors spent the night prior to arriving at Badlands National Park, with the number of times each place was mentioned out of 565 comments. The total number of times mentioned is 142.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rapid City, SD</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell, SD</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall, SD</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux Falls, SD</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custer, SD</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keystone, SD</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamberlain, SD</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kadoka, SD</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sturgis, SD</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murdo, SD</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill City, SD</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custer State Park, SD</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Springs, SD</td>
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<td>Spearfish, SD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pierre, SD</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux City, IA</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillette, WY</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, SD</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belvidere, SD</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior, SD</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oacoma, SD</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philip, SD</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Lee, SD</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo, WY</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casper, WY</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadwood, SD</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul, MN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 other places</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6: Places visitors the spent night after leaving Badlands NP
N=401 comments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rapid City, SD</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custer, SD</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keystone, SD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spearfish, SD</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sturgis, SD</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custer State Park, SD</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hill City, SD</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux Falls, SD</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Hills, SD</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gillette, WY</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot Springs, SD</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell, SD</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Rushmore National Memorial, SD</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamberlain, SD</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar City, UT</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buffalo, WY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cody, WY</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundance, WY</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sheridan, WY</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sioux Falls, SD</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casper, WY</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deadwood, SD</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kadoka, SD</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellowstone National Park, WY</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert Lee, MN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brookings, SD</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denver, CO</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Devils Towers, WY</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellsworth Air Force Base, SD</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jackson, MN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pierre, SD</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wind Cave, SD</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>94 other places</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visitor groups were asked to rate the importance of certain features or qualities of Badlands NP. The features or qualities they were asked to rate included geology, educational opportunities, recreational opportunities, experience wilderness, solitude, night sky, Native American culture/history, paleontology, protection of endangered species, preservation of native prairie, and natural quiet. As shown by Figure 25-34, the features or qualities that received the highest “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were: preservation of native prairie (75%), experience wilderness (70%), and natural quiet (70%). The highest “not important” ratings were for “night sky” (27%) and solitude (13%).

N=601 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Figure 25: Importance of geology
Figure 26: Importance of educational opportunities

Figure 27: Importance of recreational opportunities
Figure 28: Importance of experiencing wilderness

Figure 29: Importance of solitude
Badlands National Park Visitor Study  
August 2-8, 2000  

**Figure 30:** Importance of night sky

- Extremely important: 19%
- Very important: 16%
- Moderately important: 14%
- Somewhat important: 9%
- Not important: 27%
- Don't know: 13%

N=562 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

**Figure 31:** Importance of Native American culture

- Extremely important: 22%
- Very important: 25%
- Moderately important: 25%
- Somewhat important: 11%
- Not important: 13%
- Don't know: 3%

N=585 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.
Figure 31: Importance of paleontology

Figure 32: Importance of protecting of endangered species
**Figure 33: Importance of preserving native prairie**

[N=599 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.]

- **Extremely important**: 51%
- **Very important**: 24%
- **Moderately important**: 15%
- **Somewhat important**: 4%
- **Not important**: 4%
- **Don't know**: 1%

**Figure 34: Importance of natural quiet**

[N=598 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.]

- **Extremely important**: 44%
- **Very important**: 26%
- **Moderately important**: 16%
- **Somewhat important**: 6%
- **Not important**: 7%
- **Don't know**: 2%
Prescribed fire policy

In some national park units, the National Park Service policy involves setting fires under prescribed weather and burning conditions to meet specific resource management objectives such as the reduction of alien plants, restoration of native vegetation, and removal of unnatural levels of woody or grassy material that could cause a catastrophic fire. Visitors were asked "Prior to this visit to Badlands National Park, were you aware of this prescribed fire policy?"

As shown in Figure 35, 69% of visitor groups were aware of the prescribed fire policy at Badlands NP. Twenty-seven percent of visitor groups were unaware of the prescribed fire policy and 4% were not sure.

Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups would be willing to tolerate short periods (up to 2 days) of occasional smoke or reduced visibility caused by prescribed burns during a future visit (see Figure 36). Twenty-one percent would not be likely to tolerate the above conditions, and 20% were unsure.

As shown by Figure 37, 73% of visitor groups would be willing to tolerate temporarily blackened landscapes resulting from prescribed burns during a future visit. Sixteen percent of visitor groups would not be likely to tolerate the above conditions, and 11% were unsure.

![Bar chart showing awareness of prescribed fire policy]

N=617 visitor groups

Yes: 69%
No: 27%
Not sure: 4%

Figure 35: Awareness of prescribed fire policy
Figure 36: Tolerate smoke as a result of burning

Figure 37: Tolerate blackened landscapes as a result of burning
Sites visited

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the sites they visited at Badlands NP. Figure 38 shows the proportion of visitor groups that visited selected sites within Badlands NP during their visit. The most frequently visited sites included Pinnacles Overlook (67%), Ben Reifel Visitor Center (65%), Journey Overlook picnic area (39%), and Roberts Prairie Dog Town (37%). The least visited sites were Sage Creek Campground (12%) and Sheep Mountain Table (12%).

Figure 38: Sites visited this visit
Visitor groups were asked to note the information services they used during their visit to Badlands National Park. As shown in Figure 39, the services that were most commonly used by visitor groups were the park brochure/map (92%), visitor center exhibits (67%), and roadside exhibits (66%). The least used services were the evening slide show (8%) and sales publications (5%).

Figure 39: Information services used this visit
Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the services they used. The following five point scales were used in the questionnaire:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPORTANCE</th>
<th>QUALITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5=extremely important</td>
<td>5=very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4=very important</td>
<td>4=good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3=moderately important</td>
<td>3=average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2=moderately important</td>
<td>2=poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1=not important</td>
<td>1=very poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average importance and quality ratings for each service were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service. Figures 40 and 41 show 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 sales publications were not rated by enough people to provide reliable data.

Figures 42-56 show the importance ratings that visitor groups gave each of the individual services. Those services receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included ranger-led walks (86%), park brochure/map (84%), and trail brochures (81%). The highest proportions of "not important" ratings were for entrance station staff (5%) and the park newspaper-Prairie Preamble (4%).

Figures 57-71 show the quality ratings that visitor groups gave each of the individual services. Those services receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included information from visitor center staff (86%), park brochure/map (84%) and roving rangers (82%). The highest proportions of "very poor" ratings were for the entrance station staff (2%) and the Badlands web site (2%).

Figure 72 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services.
Figure 40: Average ratings of information service importance and quality

Figure 41: Detail of Figure 40
Figure 42: Importance of park brochure/ map

Figure 43: Importance of park newspaper
Badlands National Park Visitor Study

August 2-8, 2000

Figure 44: Importance of orientation video

Figure 45: Importance of bulletin boards
Figure 46: Importance of roadside exhibits

Figure 47: Importance of visitor center exhibits
Figure 48: Importance of visitor center staff

Figure 49: Importance of entrance station staff
Badlands National Park Visitor Study

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Figure 50: Importance of roving rangers

N=108 visitor groups

- Extremely important: 42%
- Very important: 31%
- Moderately important: 19%
- Somewhat important: 7%
- Not important: 1%

Figure 51: Importance of self-guiding trail brochures

N=150 visitor groups

- Extremely important: 43%
- Very important: 38%
- Moderately important: 14%
- Somewhat important: 3%
- Not important: 2%
Figure 52: Importance of sales publications

Figure 53: Importance of ranger-led walks & talks
Figure 54: Importance of evening slide show program

Figure 55: Importance of “Pig Dig” (paleontological site)
Figure 56: Importance of web site

N=90 visitor groups

- Extremely important: 48%
- Very important: 29%
- Moderately important: 14%
- Somewhat important: 9%
- Not important: 0%
Figure 57: Quality of park brochure/map

N=475 visitor groups

Rating

- Very good: 48%
- Good: 36%
- Average: 14%
- Poor: 1%
- Very poor: 1%

Figure 58: Quality of park newspaper

N=186 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

Rating

- Very good: 30%
- Good: 43%
- Average: 22%
- Poor: 4%
- Very poor: 2%
Figure 59: Quality of orientation video

Figure 60: Quality of bulletin boards
Figure 61: Quality of roadside exhibits

Figure 62: Quality of visitor center exhibits
Figure 63: Quality of visitor center staff

N=256 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

- Very good: 56%
- Good: 30%
- Average: 11%
- Poor: 3%
- Very poor: 1%

Figure 64: Quality of entrance station staff

N=197 visitor groups

- Very good: 51%
- Good: 25%
- Average: 17%
- Poor: 5%
- Very poor: 2%
Figure 65: Quality of roving rangers

Figure 66: Quality of self-guiding trail brochures
Figure 67: Quality of sales publications

CAUTION!

Figure 68: Quality of ranger-led walks & talks
Figure 69: Quality of evening slide show program

Figure 70: Quality of “Pig Dig” (paleontological site)
Figure 71: Quality of web site

Figure 72: Combined proportions of “very good” or “good” quality ratings for services
Visitor services and facilities: use, importance and quality

Visitor groups were asked to note the visitor services and facilities they used during their visit to Badlands NP. As shown in Figure 73, the visitor services and facilities that were most commonly used by visitor groups were the paved roads (87%), overlooks (77%), and visitor center restrooms (66%). Maps to the Stronghold District (3%) were the least used visitor service and facility.

Figure 73: Visitor 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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPORTANCE</th>
<th>QUALITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5=extremely important</td>
<td>5=very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4=very important</td>
<td>4=good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3=moderately important</td>
<td>3=average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2=somewhat important</td>
<td>2=poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1=not important</td>
<td>1=very poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average importance and quality ratings for each service/facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service/facility. Figures 74 and 75 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the visitor services and facilities. All services/facilities were rated as above "average" both in importance and quality. It should be noted that Sage Creek Campground, access for disabled persons, lodge cabins, directional road signs to South Unit, road to Sheep Mountain, and maps to locate Stronghold District and/or Palmer Creek were not rated by enough people to provide reliable data.

Figures 76-93 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual visitor services and facilities. Those visitor services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included the overlooks (93%), Cedar Pass Campground (93%) and the trails (92%). The highest proportions of "not important" ratings were for the lodge gift shop (3%) and unpaved roads (2%).

Figures 94-111 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual facilities. Those facilities receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included overlooks (95%), paved roads (89%) and trails (87%). The highest proportions of "very poor" ratings were for unpaved roads (4%) and picnic areas (2%).

Figure 112 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services and facilities.
Figure 74: Average ratings of service and facility importance and quality

Figure 75: Detail
**Figure 76: Importance of Ben Reifel Visitor Center**

N=338 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

- Extremely important: 43%
- Very important: 31%
- Moderately important: 23%
- Somewhat important: 2%
- Not important: <1%

**Figure 77: Importance of visitor center restrooms**

N=350 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

- Extremely important: 69%
- Very important: 21%
- Moderately important: 9%
- Somewhat important: 1%
- Not important: 1%
Figure 78: Importance of Sage Creek Campground

Figure 79: Importance of Cedar Pass Campground
Figure 80: Importance of directional road signs

Figure 81: Importance of paved roads
**Figure 82: Importance of unpaved roads**

N=161 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

- Extremely important: 41%
- Very important: 30%
- Moderately important: 22%
- Somewhat important: 4%
- Not important: 2%

**Figure 83: Importance of overlooks**

N=418 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

- Extremely important: 66%
- Very important: 27%
- Moderately important: 7%
- Somewhat important: <1%
- Not important: <1%
Figure 84: Importance of trails

Figure 85: Importance of access for disabled persons
Figure 86: Importance of picnic areas

Figure 87: Importance of lodge cabins
Figure 88: Importance of lodge restaurant

N=69 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

- Extremely important: 58%
- Very important: 20%
- Moderately important: 17%
- Somewhat important: 3%
- Not important: 1%

Figure 89: Importance of lodge gift shop

N=138 visitor groups

- Extremely important: 25%
- Very important: 25%
- Moderately important: 38%
- Somewhat important: 9%
- Not important: 3%
Figure 90: Importance of White River Visitor Center

Figure 91: Importance of directional road signs to South Unit
**Figure 92: Importance of road to Sheep Mountain**

- **Extremely important**: 59% (N=22 visitor groups)
- **Very important**: 18%
- **Moderately important**: 23%
- **Somewhat important**: 0%
- **Not important**: 0%

**Figure 93: Importance of maps to locate Stronghold District and/or Palmer Creek**

- **Extremely important**: 43% (N=14 visitor groups)
- **Very important**: 21%
- **Moderately important**: 29%
- **Somewhat important**: 0%
- **Not important**: 7%

CAUTION!
Figure 94: Quality of Ben Reifel Visitor Center

- Very good: 42%
- Good: 39%
- Average: 17%
- Poor: 1%
- Very poor: <1%

N=326 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Figure 95: Quality of visitor center restrooms

- Very good: 45%
- Good: 36%
- Average: 13%
- Poor: 5%
- Very poor: 1%

N=341 visitor groups
Figure 96: Quality of Sage Creek Campground

Figure 97: Quality of Cedar Pass Campground
Figure 98: Quality of directional road signs

Figure 99: Quality of paved roads
Figure 100: Quality of unpaved roads

Figure 101: Quality of overlooks
Figure 102: Quality of trails

Figure 103: Quality of access for disabled persons
Figure 104: Quality of picnic areas

Figure 105: Quality of lodge cabins
Figure 106: Quality of lodge restaurant

Figure 107: Quality of lodge gift shop
Figure 108: Quality of White River Visitor Center

Figure 109: Quality of directional road signs to South Unit
Figure 110: Quality of road to Sheep Mountain

Figure 111: Quality of maps to locate Stronghold District and/or Palmer Creek
Figure 112: Combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings for visitor facilities used by visitors.
Visitor groups were asked about the appropriateness of the entrance fee at Badlands National Park. As shown in Figure 113, 79% of visitor groups thought the entrance fee was about right. Nineteen percent of visitor groups thought the entrance fee was too high and 2% thought it was too low.

Figure 113: Appropriateness of entrance fees
Visitors groups were asked about their willingness to utilize public transportation in the future. As shown in Figure 114, 80% of visitor groups indicated they would be unlikely to use public transportation into the park. Twelve percent of visitor groups were "not sure" if they would use public transportation and 7% indicated they would use public transportation. Of the visitor groups who indicated a willingness to use public transportation, 44% stated their preference for using a shuttle from Rapid City, South Dakota, 37% from Interior, South Dakota, and 39% for other forms of transportation (see Figure 115). The other forms of transportation ranged from a service to carry bicycles into the park, to a shuttle from other small towns like Wall, South Dakota.

![Figure 114: Use public transportation into Badlands NP](image)

![Figure 115: Preferred types of public transportation](image)
Visitor groups were asked: “For any of the following elements that you and your group experienced in Badlands National Park, please indicate how they affected your park experience.” As shown in Figures 116-121, the majority of visitor groups indicated “no effect” for each of the 6 elements included in the question. Twenty-three percent of visitor groups indicated that visitors climbing on geologic features detracted from their experience (see Figure 117). Fifteen percent of visitor groups indicated that the number of visitors detracted from their experience (see Figure 118). As shown in Figure 121, 13% of visitor groups indicated that the horseback riders in the park added to their experience.

Figure 116: Did helicopter noise in Badlands NP affect your experience?

Figure 117: Did visitors climbing on geologic features in Badlands NP affect your experience?
Figure 118: Did the number of people in Badlands NP affect your experience?

Figure 119: Did the number of vehicles in Badlands NP affect your experience?
Figure 120: Did recreational vehicle generators running in the Badlands NP campgrounds affect your experience?

Figure 121: Did horseback riders in Badlands NP affect your experience?
Visitor groups were asked to state the amount of money they spent in Badlands NP and in the surrounding area (within a 1-hour drive of the park) on this visit. Groups were asked to indicate the amounts they spent for lodging; camping fees; restaurants and bars; groceries and take-out food; gas and oil; other transportation expenses; admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees; and all other purchases.

**Total expenditures (inside and outside of park):** Thirty-three percent of the visitor groups spent from $1 to $50, and another 17% spent from $51 to $100 in Badlands NP and the surrounding area (see Figure 122). Thirteen percent of the groups spent $101 to $150 and 7% of visitor groups spent no money. Of the total expenditures by groups, 26% was for lodging, 18% was for restaurants and bars, and 20% was for “other” items (see Figure 123).

The average visitor group expenditure during this visit was $228. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was $85. The average per capita expenditure was $71.

**Proportion of expenditures (inside park):** Of the total expenditures by visitor group inside Badlands NP, 33% was for admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees, 15% was for restaurants and bars, and 26% was for “other” items (see Figure 124).

**Lodging (inside park):** Ninety-five percent of visitor groups spent no money for lodging in Badlands NP (see Figure 125). Two percent of visitor groups spent $76 to $100 for lodging.

**Camping fees (inside park):** Eighty-three percent of visitor groups spent no money for camping fees in Badlands NP. Twelve percent of visitor groups spent $1 to $25 for camping fees (see Figure 126).

**Restaurants and bars (inside park):** Seventy-four percent of visitor groups spent no money at restaurants and bars in Badlands NP (see Figure 127). Twelve percent spent $1 to $25 at restaurants and bars, and 10% spent $26 to $50.
Expenditures (continued)

Groceries and take-out food (inside park): Eighty-four percent of visitor groups spent no money on groceries and take-out food in Badlands NP (see Figure 128). Fourteen percent spent $1 to $25 on groceries and take-out food.

Gas and oil (inside park): Eighty-nine percent of visitor groups spent no money on gas and oil in Badlands NP (see Figure 129). Eight percent spent $1 to $25 on gas and oil. As there are no service stations within Badlands NP, visitor groups answering this question might have been confused as to the actual boundary of the park.

Other transportation expenses (inside park): Ninety-eight percent of visitor groups spent no money on other transportation expenses in Badlands NP (see Figure 130). One percent of the groups spent from $1 to $25 on other transportation expenses.

Admissions, recreation, entertainment fees (inside park): Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups spent from $1 to $25 on admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees in Badlands NP (see Figure 131). Thirty-six percent of visitor groups spent no money on admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees.

All other purchases (inside park): Forty-five percent of visitor groups spent no money on other purchases in Badlands NP (see Figure 132). Thirty-four percent of visitor groups spent $1 to $25, and 15% spent $26 to $50 on other purchases.

Proportion of expenditures (outside park): Of the total expenditures by visitor group outside Badlands NP, 31% was for lodging, 19% was for restaurants and bars, and 19% was for “other” items (see Figure 133).

Lodging (outside park): Sixty percent of visitor groups spent no money on lodging outside of Badlands NP (see Figure 134). Ten percent of visitor groups spent $76 to $100 on lodging.

Camping Fees (outside park): Seventy-two percent of visitor groups spent no money on camping fee outside of Badlands NP (see Figure 135). Fourteen percent of visitor groups spent $1 to $25 on camping fees.
Restaurants and Bars (outside park): Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups spent no money at restaurants and bars outside of Badlands NP (see Figure 136). Twenty-four percent of visitor groups spent $1 to $25 at restaurants and bars, and 16% spent $26 to $50.

Groceries and take-out food (outside park): Fifty-three percent of visitor groups spent no money on groceries and take-out food outside of Badlands NP (see Figure 137). Twenty-seven percent spent $1 to $25 on groceries and take-out food.

Gas and oil (outside park): Thirty-nine percent of visitor groups spent $1 to $25 on gas and oil in Badlands NP (see Figure 138). Thirty percent of visitor groups spent no money on gas and oil.

Other transportation expenses (outside park): Ninety-six percent of visitor groups spent no money on other transportation expenses outside of Badlands NP (see Figure 139). One percent of the groups spent from $1 to $25 on other transportation expenses.

Admissions, recreation, entertainment fees (outside park): Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups spent no money on admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees outside of Badlands NP (see Figure 140). Seventeen percent of visitor groups spent $1-25 on admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees.

All other purchases (outside park): Forty-five percent of visitor groups spent no money on other purchases in Badlands NP (see Figure 141). Twenty-one percent of visitor groups spent $1 to $25.

Visitor groups were asked to indicate how many adults were covered by their expenditures. Sixty-nine percent of visitor groups indicated their expenses covered 2 adults, while 9% indicated the expenses covering only 1 adult (see Figure 142). Visitor groups were also asked to indicate how many children were covered by their expenditures. Thirty-four percent of visitor groups indicated their expenses covered 2 children, 22% indicated the expenses covered 1 child, and 18% indicated the expenses covered 0 children (see Figure 143).
Figure 122: Total expenditures in Badlands NP and surrounding area

Figure 123: Proportions of expenditures in Badlands NP and surrounding area
Figure 124: Proportion of expenditures in Badlands NP

Figure 125: Lodging in Badlands NP
Figure 126: Camping fees in Badlands NP

Figure 127: Restaurants and bars in Badlands NP

N=332 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

N=352 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.
Figure 128: Groceries in Badlands NP

N = 319 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Figure 129: Gas and oil in Badland NP

N = 317 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.
Figure 130: Other transportation expenses in Badlands NP

N=392 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Amount spent

- $151 or more: 1%
- $126-150: 0%
- $101-125: 0%
- $76-100: 0%
- $51-75: 1%
- $26-50: 5%
- $1-25: 58%
- No money spent: 36%

Figure 131: Admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees in Badlands NP

N=306 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Amount spent

- $151 or more: <1%
- $126-150: 0%
- $101-125: 0%
- $76-100: <1%
- $51-75: 1%
- $26-50: 0%
- $1-25: 1%
- No money spent: 98%
Figure 132: All other purchases in Badlands NP

Figure 133: Proportion of expenses outside of Badlands NP
Figure 134: Lodging expenses outside of Badlands NP

Figure 135: Camping fees outside of Badlands NP
Figure 136: Restaurants and bars outside of Badlands NP

N=385 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Figure 137: Groceries outside of Badlands NP

N=332 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.
Figure 138: Gas and oil outside of Badlands NP

N=392 visitor groups

Figure 139: Other transportation expenses outside of Badlands NP

N=267 visitor groups; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.
Figure 140: Admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees outside of Badlands NP

Figure 141: All other purchases outside of Badlands NP
Figure 142: Adults covered by expenses

Figure 143: Children covered by expenses
Visitor groups were asked if there was anything specific which they were unable to see or do during this visit. As shown in Figure 144, 88% of visitor groups indicated there wasn’t anything that they had not been able to see or do. Twelve percent of visitor groups responded that there were things that had not been able to see or do. Some of these were: see the prairie dogs and bison, see fossils in a natural setting, and camp within the Badlands.

![Figure 144: Unable to see or do during this visit](image-url)
Visitor groups were asked if they would visit Badlands NP again in the future. Eighty percent of visitor groups indicated that they would likely visit Badlands NP again in the future (see Figure 145).

Figure 145: Visit again in the future?
Visitor groups were asked to rate the overall quality of the visitor services provided at Badlands NP during this visit. Most visitor groups (94%) rated services as “very good” or “good” (see Figure 146). Less than 1% rated the overall quality of services provided at Badlands NP as “very poor.”

Figure 146: Overall quality of visitor services
Visitor groups were asked, “If you were a manager planning for the future of Badlands National Park, what would you propose?” Forty-eight percent of visitor groups (304 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 15 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

### Table 15: What visitors like most

N=397 comments; some visitors made more than one comment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONNEL</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More rangers on trails</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangers need to be more knowledgeable</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Native Americans as rangers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more information</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Native American exhibits</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update visitor center</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve quality of map/brochure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More history in the video</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archeological digs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have more ranger-led programs</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more educational signs along road</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add relevant ecological exhibits</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have weather warnings</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more information about geology</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Number of times mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct more trails</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain road infrastructure</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more water stations</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more restrooms</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide water, electricity, and showers in campgrounds</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct more picnic areas</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor quality road signs</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more showers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Update restrooms</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct more scenic overlooks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construct some bike trails</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better trails</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build new visitor center</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide better wheelchair/handicapped accessibility</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more trashcans</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build more hiking trails in South Unit</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean the restrooms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not modernize visitor center</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve non-paved roads</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park was clean</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide guardrails on more roads</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more campgrounds</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more directional trail signs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more safety measures</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLICIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement shuttle system</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibit/have fines for climbing on rocks</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eliminate helicopter/airplane overflights</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep development limited</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep people on trails</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertise more</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit RV access</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire more land</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have one-day pass available</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow biking on trails</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limit # of visitors per day</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More free camping</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open up more areas for backpacking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep park natural</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant more shade trees</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More visible wildlife</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcycle noise distracting</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control non-native species</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do controlled burns in May or June</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give public notice of prescribed burns</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Number of times mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCESSIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build general store with water and food</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food available at restricted use areas</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve Cedar Pass Lodge</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More lodging in park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide vegetarian meals</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL IMPRESSIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive experience</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Forty-three percent of visitor groups (277 groups) wrote additional comments, which are included in the separate appendix of this report. Their comments about Badlands National Park are summarized below (see Table 18). Some comments offer specific suggestions on how to improve the park; others describe what visitors enjoyed or did not enjoy about their visit.

Table 18: Additional comments
N= 315 comments; many visitors made more than one comment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONNEL</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly rangers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful staff</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable staff</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More information on geological history</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More in-depth information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening activities were great</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactive displays at visitor center excellent</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liked brochure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More information on Native Americans</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACILITIES &amp; MAINTENANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better signage</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More water available</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads in good condition</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnouts and trails well laid out</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLICY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implement shuttle service</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep visitors off geologic features</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give it back to the Native Americans</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONCESSIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment</td>
<td>Number of times mentioned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motorcyclists (Sturgis) detracted from experience</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great place to see wildlife</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep natural</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black-footed ferret project interesting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL IMPRESSIONS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive experience</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will return in the future</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciate National Park Service</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique scenery</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Want to spend more time in park</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed solitude</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Views challenged the imagination</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Badlands National Park Visitor Study
Additional Analysis
VSP Report 123

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.

- Sources of information this trip
- Sources of information future trips
- Travel plans
- Other destinations
- Visitor activities
- Sites visited
- Hours spent in park
- Days spent in park
- Trails hiked
- Number of trails (appropriateness)
- Location of trails (appropriateness)
- Stay overnight away from home
- # nights spent in park
- # nights spent outside park
- Type of lodging in park
- Type of lodging outside park
- # of times entered park
- Town/City stayed in prior to arriving
- Town/City stayed in after leaving
- Group type
- Group size
- With guided tour
- Age
- State of residence
- Country of residence
- Number of visits
- Education level
- Ethnicity
- Race
- Park feature/quality importance
- Information service used
- Information service importance
- Information service quality
- Services/Facilities used
- Services/Facilities importance
- Entrance Fee appropriateness
- Willingness to use public transportation
- Public transportation preference
- Elements affect park experience
- Anything unable to see or do
- Expenditures in park
- Expenditures outside park
- Adults covered by expenses
- Children covered by expenses
- Awareness of prescribed fire policy
- Willing to tolerate smoke
- Willing to tolerate blackened landscape
- Visit again in the future
- Planning for the future
- Additional comments
- Overall quality rating

Database:

The VSP database is currently under development but requests can be handled by contacting the VSP.

Phone/send requests to:
Visitor Services Project, CPSU
College of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 441133
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

1983
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial.

1985
5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

1986
7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence National Historical Park
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park

1987
10. Colonial National Historical Park (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study

1988
17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
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
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 National Historical Park (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 National Recreation Area
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 National Historical Park (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 National Historical Park
58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (summer)
59. Redwood National Park
60. Channel Islands National Park
61. Pecos National Historical Park
62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)
## Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Publications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1994 | 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)  
65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (spring)  
66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center  
67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts  
68. Nez Perce National Historical Park  
69. Edison National Historic Site  
70. San Juan Island National Historical Park  
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 National Historical Park  
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  
89. Charnižal 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., National Historic Site (spring)  
96. Lincoln Boyhood Home National Memorial  
97. Grand Teton National Park  
98. Bryce Canyon National Park  
99. Voyageurs National Park  
100. Lowell National Historical Park |
| 1998 | 101. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve (spring)  
102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)  
103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)  
104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials  
106. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park (AK)  
107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area  
108. Acadia National Park |
| 1999 | 109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)  
110. San Juan National Historic Site (Puerto Rico)  
111. Saint 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 National Historic Park (fall) |
| 2000 | 118. Haleakala National Park (spring)  
119. White House Tour and White House Visitor Center (spring)  
120. USS Arizona Memorial  
121. Olympic National Park  
122. Eisenhower National Historic Site  
123. Badlands National Park |

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