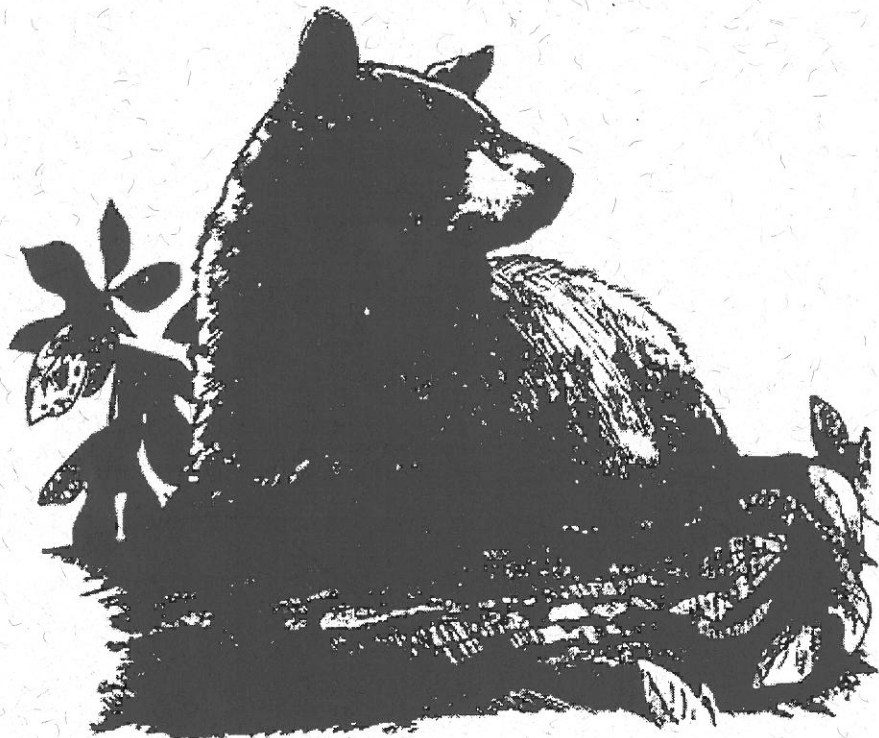




**National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior**

**The Visitor Services Project**



# **Shenandoah National Park Visitor Study**

**Summer 2001**

**Report 127**



**University of Idaho**

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# Shenandoah National Park

## Visitor Study

Summer 2001

Margaret Littlejohn

### Visitor Services Project Report 127

April 2002

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Margaret Littlejohn is VSP Coordinator, National Park Service, based at the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit. I thank Todd Simmons and the staff and volunteers of Shenandoah 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.

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**Visitor Services Project  
Shenandoah National Park  
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Shenandoah National Park during July 15-21, 2001. A total of 900 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 691 questionnaires for a 76.7% response rate.
- This report profiles Shenandoah National Park visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Over two-thirds of the visitor groups (70%) were family groups. Forty-nine percent of visitor groups were in groups of two; another 30% were in groups of three or four. Thirty-nine percent of visitors were aged 36-55 years, while 21% were aged 15 years or younger.
- United States visitors were from Virginia (29%), Maryland (8%), Pennsylvania (8%), Washington, D.C. (7%) and 34 other states. International visitors (8%) were from Canada (27%), England (25%), Germany (8%) and 19 other countries.
- The sources of information most used by visitor groups were previous visits (57%), travel guide/tour book (34%), and friends/relatives (33%). On future visits, the park internet/web site was the most preferred method to learn about the park (38%). For the greatest proportion of visitors (46%), the park was one of several destinations.
- Most visitors (72%) were visiting Shenandoah National Park for the first time during the past 12 months. Forty-two percent had visited more than once in the past two to five years. Most visitors (74%) spent less than one day (24 hours) at the park. The most important reasons for visiting the park were to view the scenic drive/overlooks (87%) and enjoy solitude/natural quiet (75%).
- With regard to use, importance and quality of services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used interpretive service by 614 respondents was the park brochure/ map (92%). The most important and best quality interpretive service was assistance from park staff (importance: 85%, N=246 respondents), (quality: 94%, N=242 respondents).
- Visitors were asked to rate the importance and quality of concession services they used for each location in the park.

<b>Concession location</b>	<b>Most used</b>	<b>Most important</b>	<b>Best quality</b>
Elkwhallow	restrooms—81%	restrooms—93%, N=128	assistance from staff—95%, N=39
Panorama	restrooms—80%	restrooms—86%, N=84	restrooms—78%; N=82
Skyland	restrooms—79%	lodging—92%, N=38	assistance from staff—86%, N=37
Big Meadows Lodge	restrooms—69%	restrooms—90%, N=97	assistance from staff—89%, N=38
Big Meadows Wayside	restrooms—74%	restrooms—93%, N=114	assistance from staff—93%, N=31
Lewis Mountain Campgrd	There were not enough respondents to provide reliable information.		
Loft Mountain	gift shop—53%	gift shop—38%, N=32	gift shop—69%, N=32

- Eighteen percent of visitors camped during their trip. Campers used tents (59%) and RV/campers (45%). Of those camping in the park, 52% stayed at Big Meadows. The median (50% stayed less, 50% stayed more) number of nights camped in the park was two. The most important campground characteristic was quiet at night (97%, N=81) and most important campground facility was showers (90%, N=54). The best quality campground characteristic was neatness of site (93%, N=83) and the best quality campground facility was paved parking pads (93%, N=43).
- Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at Shenandoah National Park as "very good" or "good." Visitors made many additional comments.

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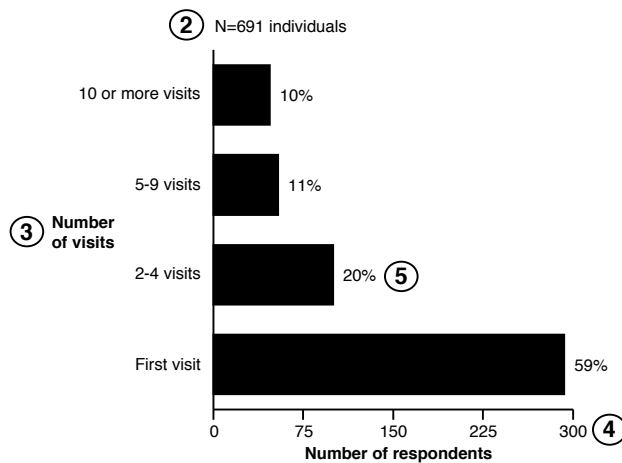
## INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Shenandoah National Park (NP). The visitor study was conducted July 15-21, 2001 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.

The report is organized into four sections. The **Methods** section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. The **Results** section provides summary information for each question in the questionnaire and includes a summary of visitor comments. An **Additional Analysis** section is included which will help managers request additional analyses. The final section includes a copy of the **Questionnaire**. A separate appendix includes comment summaries and visitors' unedited comments.

Most of the graphs in this report resemble the example below. The circled numbers refer to explanations following the graph.

### SAMPLE ONLY



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.

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## METHODS

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### Questionnaire design and administration

The questionnaire for this visitor study was designed using a standard format that has been developed in previous VSP studies. Some of the questions are comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks. Other questions are customized for Shenandoah NP.

Interviews were conducted with, and questionnaires distributed to, a sample of visitors who arrived at Shenandoah NP during July 15 - 21, 2001. Visitors were sampled at four different entrances throughout the park (see Table 1).

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**Table 1: Questionnaire distribution locations**

Location	Questionnaires distributed
Front Royal Entrance	300
Thornton Gap Entrance	300
Swift Run Entrance	150
Rockfish Entrance/McCormick Gap Overlook	150
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>900</b>

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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 for his or her name, address, and telephone number in order to mail 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. Seven weeks after the survey a second replacement questionnaire was mailed to visitors who still had not returned their questionnaires.

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

### Data analysis

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This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members. Thus, the number of respondents ('N'), varies from figure to figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 678 visitor groups, Figure 4 presents data for 1,917 individuals. A note above each graph specifies the number of respondents.

### 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 691 visitors to Shenandoah NP returned questionnaires, Figure 1 shows data for only 678 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.

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

### Limitations

1. It is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflect actual behavior. This applies to all such studies, but 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 July 15-21, 2001. 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.
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**Special  
Conditions**

During the study week, weather conditions were fairly typical of mid-July. The weather included some rainy days, some warm, sunny days and some foggy days. Temperatures were in the 70's to 80's, with overnight temperatures 50's to 60's.

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## RESULTS

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A total of 1,013 visitor groups were contacted, and 900 of these groups (89%) agreed to participate in the survey. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 691 visitor groups, resulting in a 76.7% response rate for this study.

### Visitor groups 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.

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**Table 2: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents**

Variable	Total sample		Actual Respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Age of respondents	892	45.5	680	46.6
Group size	899	3.0	678	4.0

Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 80 people. Forty-nine percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 30% were people visiting in groups of three or four.

### Demographics

Seventy percent of visitor groups were made up of family members and 11% consisted of friends (see Figure 2). "Other" groups included business associates, club, Boy Scouts and school class.

Thirty-nine percent of visitors were between the ages of 36 and 55 (see Figure 3). Twenty-one percent of visitors were aged 15 years or younger.

Most visitors (72%) were visiting Shenandoah for the first time during the past twelve months (see Figure 4). Forty percent of visitors had not visited during the past two to five years (see Figure 5). Twenty-nine percent visited one or two times in the past two to five years and 15% had visited 7 or more times in that period.

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**Demographics  
continued**

International visitors from 22 countries comprised 8% of the total visitation to Shenandoah NP (see Table 3). The countries most often represented (besides the United States) were Canada (27%), England (25%), and Germany (8%).

The largest proportions of United States visitors were from Virginia (29%), Maryland (8%), Pennsylvania (8%), and Washington, D.C. (7%), as shown in Map 1 and Table 4. Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 34 other states.

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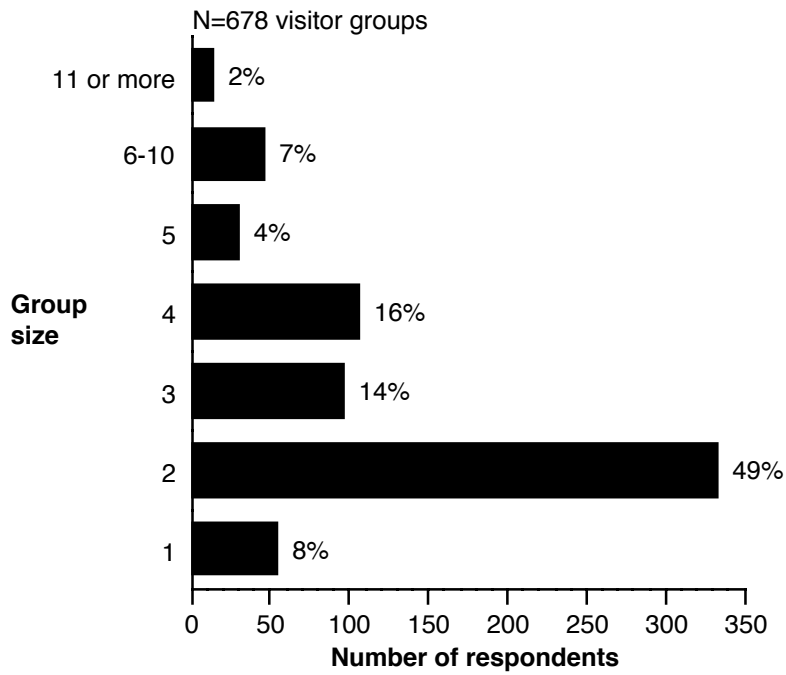


Figure 1: Visitor group sizes

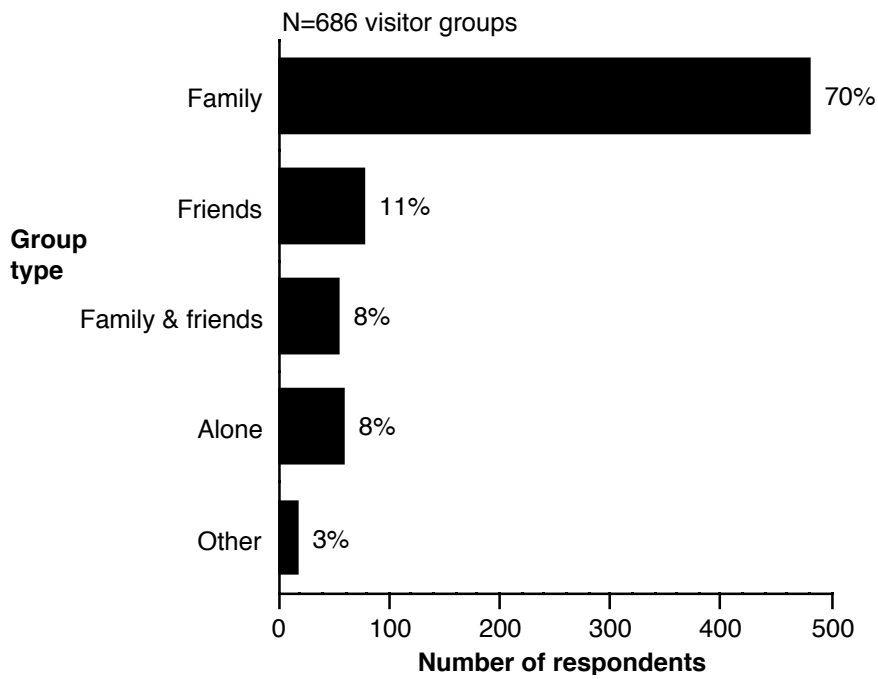


Figure 2: Visitor group types

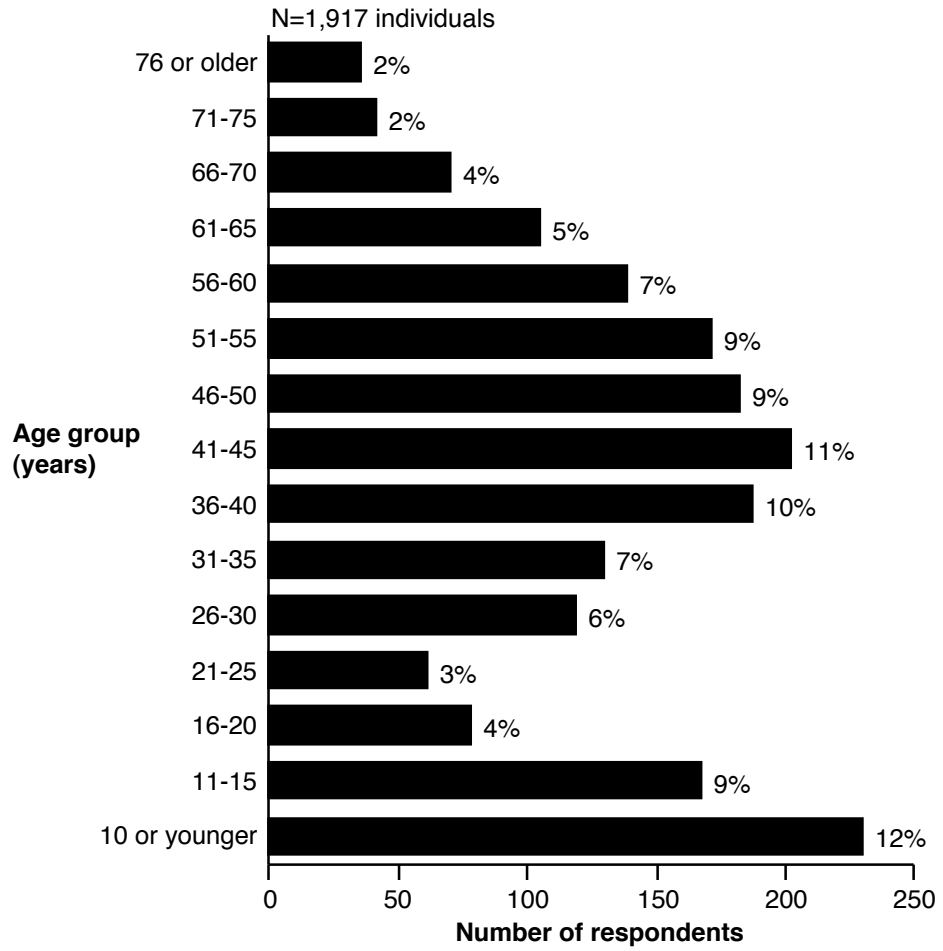


Figure 3: Visitor ages

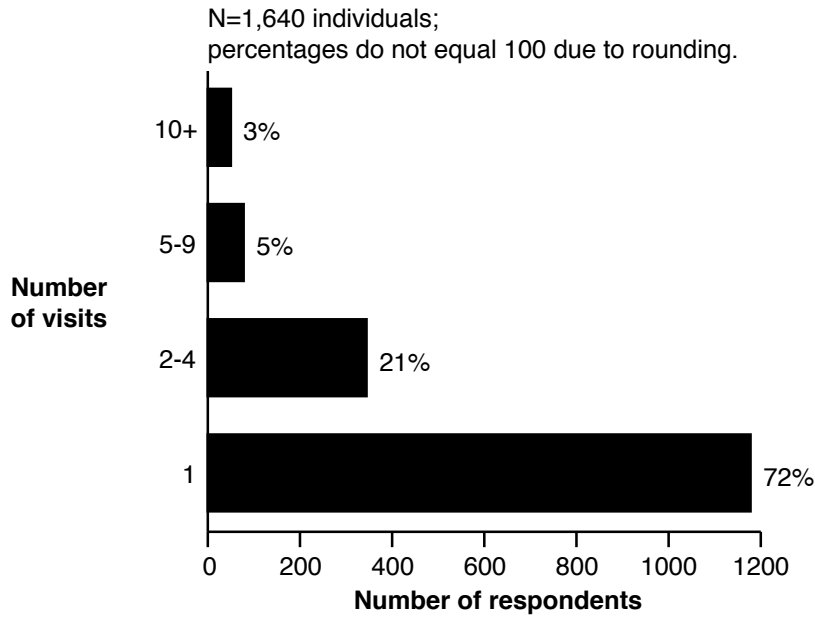


Figure 4: Number of visits in past 12 months

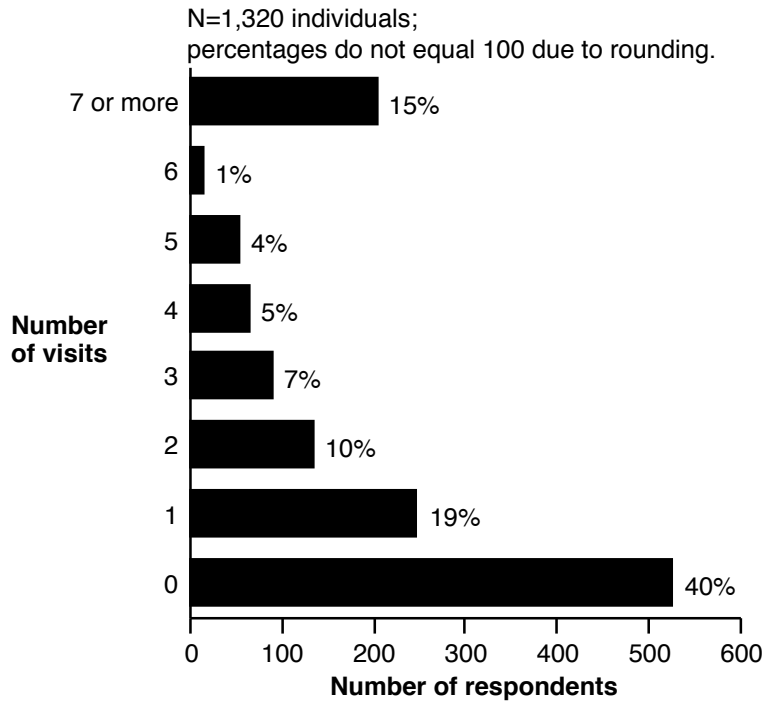
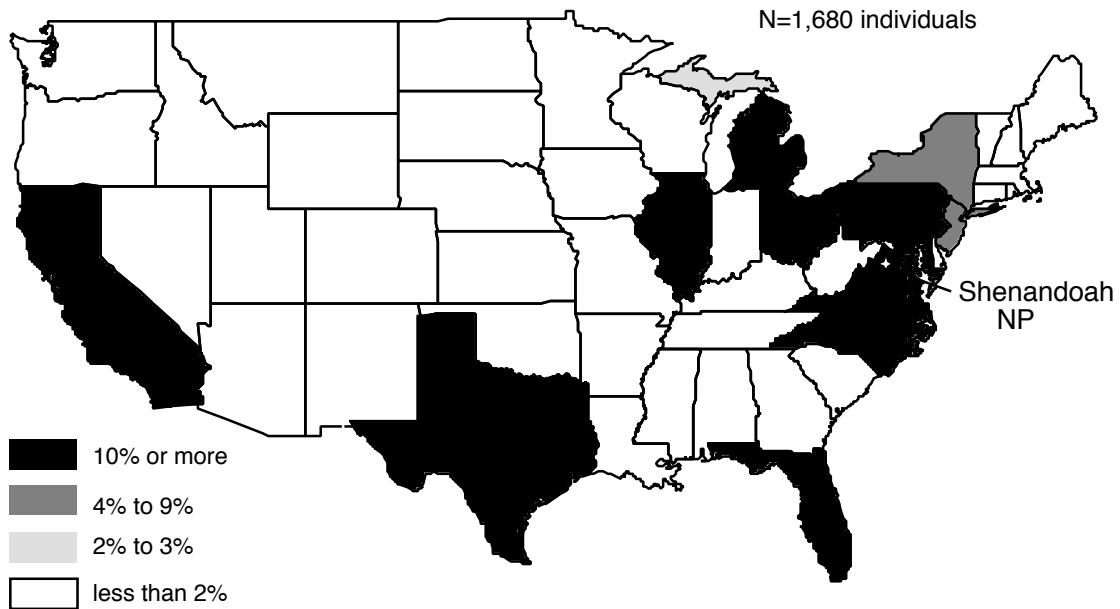


Figure 5: Number of visits in past 2 to 5 years

**Table 3: International visitors by country of residence**

N=147 individuals;  
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Country	Number of individuals	Percent of international visitors	Percent of total visitors
Canada	40	27	2
England	37	25	2
Germany	12	8	1
South Africa	7	5	<1
Holland	6	4	<1
Sweden	6	4	<1
India	6	4	<1
Scotland	5	4	<1
Spain	5	3	<1
Brazil	4	3	<1
Colombia	3	2	<1
Japan	3	2	<1
Belgium	2	1	<1
Costa Rica	2	1	<1
Denmark	2	1	<1
Hong Kong	2	1	<1
China	1	1	<1
France	1	1	<1
Italy	1	1	<1
Norway	1	1	<1
Taiwan	1	1	<1
Ukraine	1	1	<1



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

**Table 4: United States visitors by state of residence**

N=1,680 individuals;  
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

State	Number of individuals	Percent of U.S. visitors	Percent of total visitors
Virginia	495	29	27
Maryland	139	8	8
Pennsylvania	131	8	7
Washington D.C.	119	7	7
Florida	98	6	5
New York	75	4	4
New Jersey	73	4	4
Ohio	69	4	4
Michigan	55	3	3
California	39	2	2
North Carolina	36	2	2
Illinois	31	2	2
Texas	28	2	2
Massachusetts	25	1	1
Arizona	24	1	1
West Virginia	23	1	1
Tennessee	21	1	1
Delaware	20	1	1
Georgia	20	1	1
Missouri	17	1	1
18 other states	142	8	8



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**Length of visit**

Visitor groups were asked how much time they spent at Shenandoah National Park. Seventy-four percent of visitors spent less than 24 hours (less than one day) at the park, as shown in Figure 6. Fifteen percent spent two or three days at the park.

Of the groups that spent less than 24 hours at the park, 72% spent two to six hours (see Figure 7). Seventeen percent spent 8 hours or more.

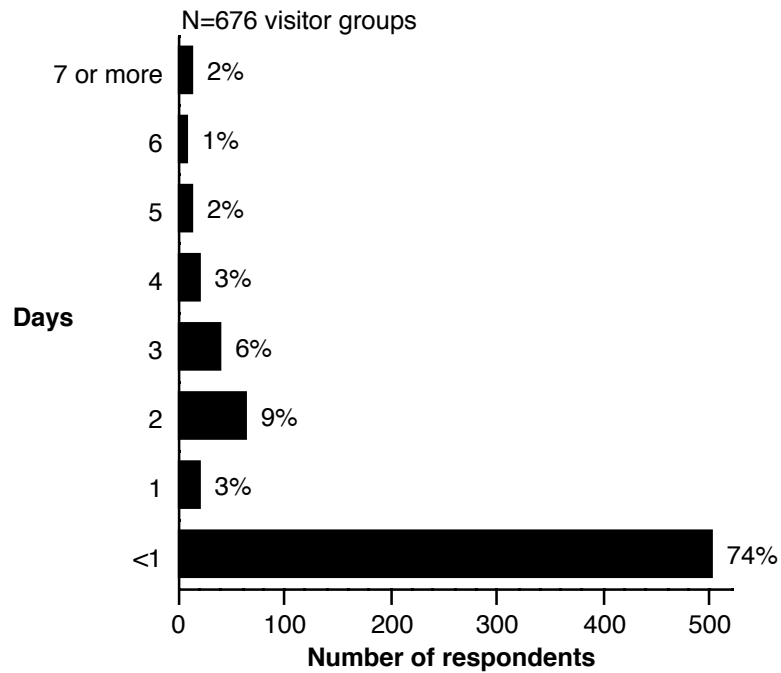
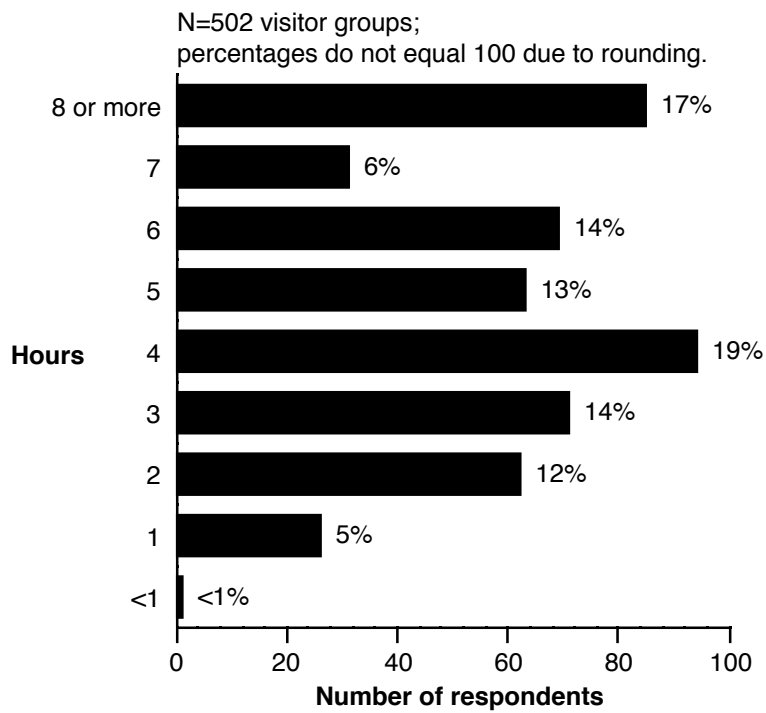


Figure 6: Days spent at Shenandoah NP

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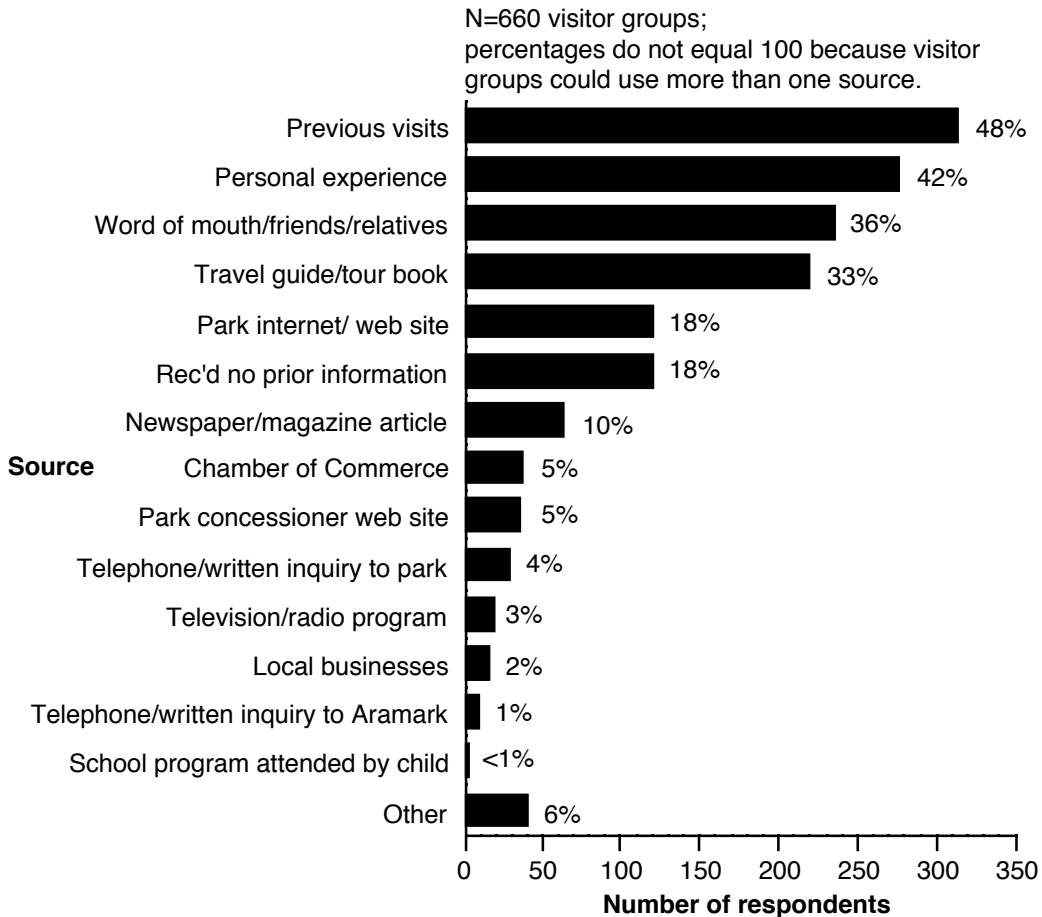


**Figure 7: Hours spent at Shenandoah NP by visitors who spent less than 24 hours**

**Sources of information**

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the sources they used to obtain information about Shenandoah NP prior to their visit. The most common sources of information were previous visits (48%), personal experience (42%), word of mouth/friends/ relatives (36%), travel guide/ tour book (33%), and park internet/web site (18%), as shown in Figure 8. Eighteen percent of visitors received no information prior to their visit. Six percent of visitors obtained information from "other" sources including brochures, other web sites, trail guide books, park map/hiking guide and seeing the highway sign.

Visitors were also asked to list the sources of information they would prefer to use for future visits. Park internet/web site (38%) was the most common source, followed by personal experience (37%), previous visits (36%) and travel guide/tour book (33%), as shown in Figure 9. "Other" sources preferred for learning about future visits included park map and hiking guide, trail guide booklet and other web sites.



**Figure 8: Sources of information this visit**

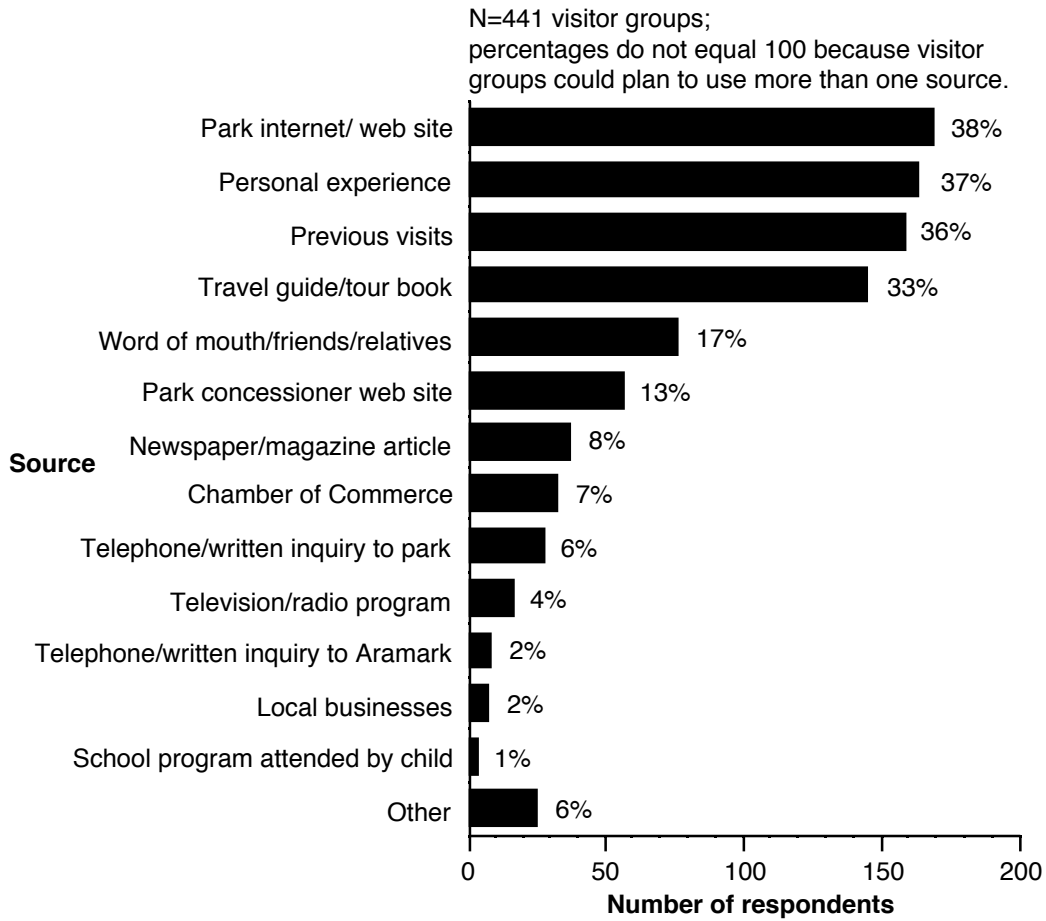
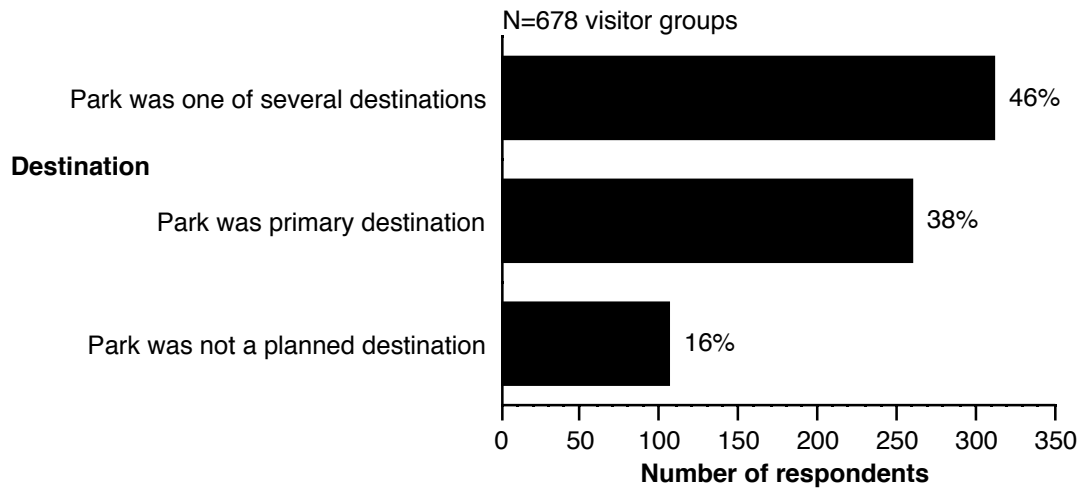


Figure 9: Preferred sources of information for future visits

**Park as a destination**

Visitors were asked how the visit to Shenandoah National Park fit into their travel plans. Almost one-half of the visitors (46%) said the park was one of several destinations, as shown in Figure 10. For 38% of the visitors, the park was the primary destination and for 16% the park was not a planned destination.



**Figure 10: Shenandoah NP as a destination**

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the importance of fourteen selected reasons for visiting Shenandoah National Park. The reasons with the most "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included viewing the scenic drive and overlooks (87%), enjoying solitude/natural quiet (75%), viewing wildlife and plants (72%), and experiencing wilderness (71%), as shown in Figures 11-25. The reasons for visiting that received the highest "not important" ratings were ranger-led programs (63%) and staying overnight in an historic setting (56%). "Other" reasons for visiting included self-education, avoiding busy traffic route, taking a break, experiencing the beauty, swimming, fishing, and recalling family history.

### Importance of selected reasons for visiting

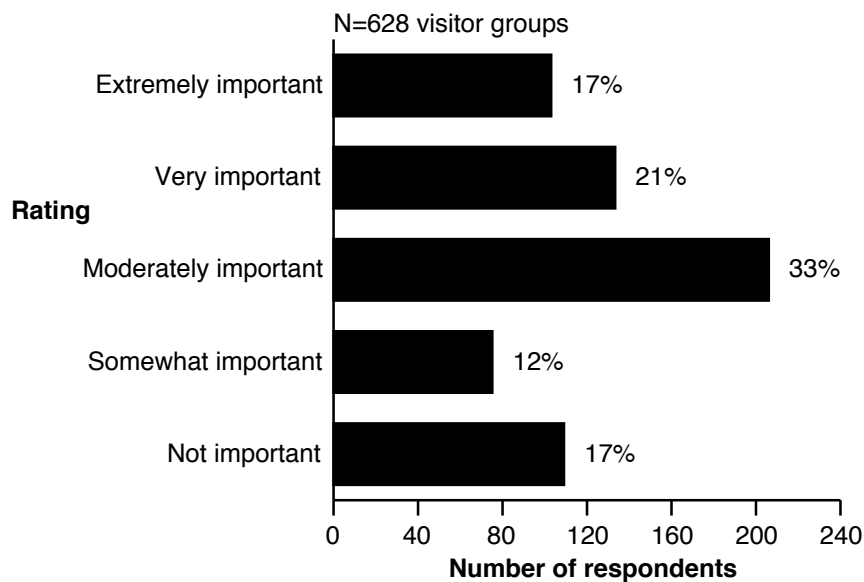
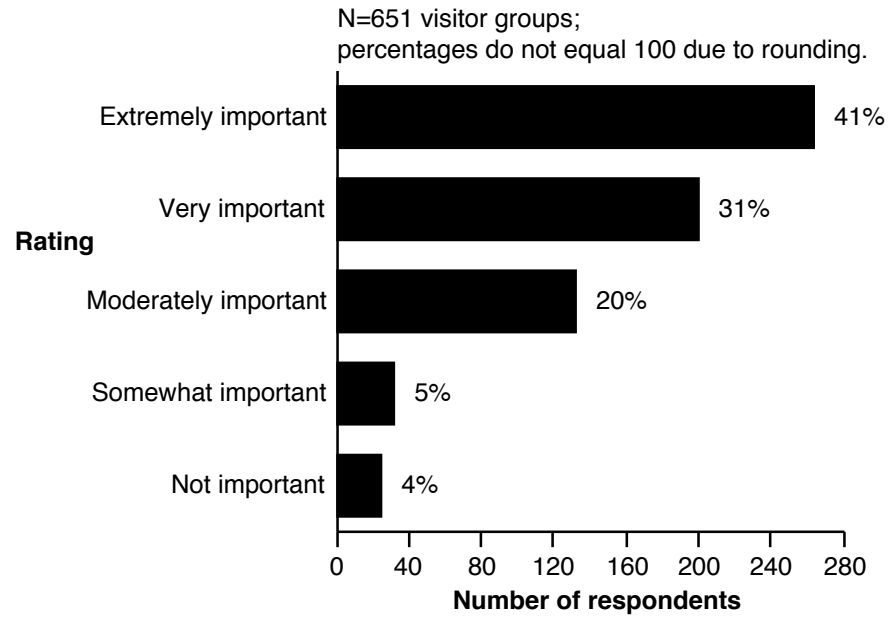
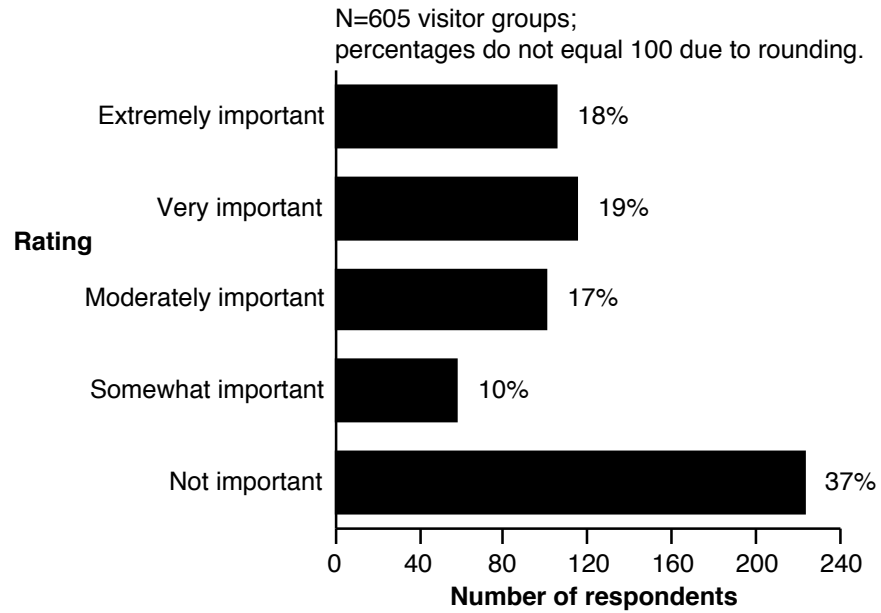


Figure 11: Importance of visiting a national park



**Figure 12: Importance of viewing wildlife/plants**



**Figure 13: Importance of hiking less than 2 hours**

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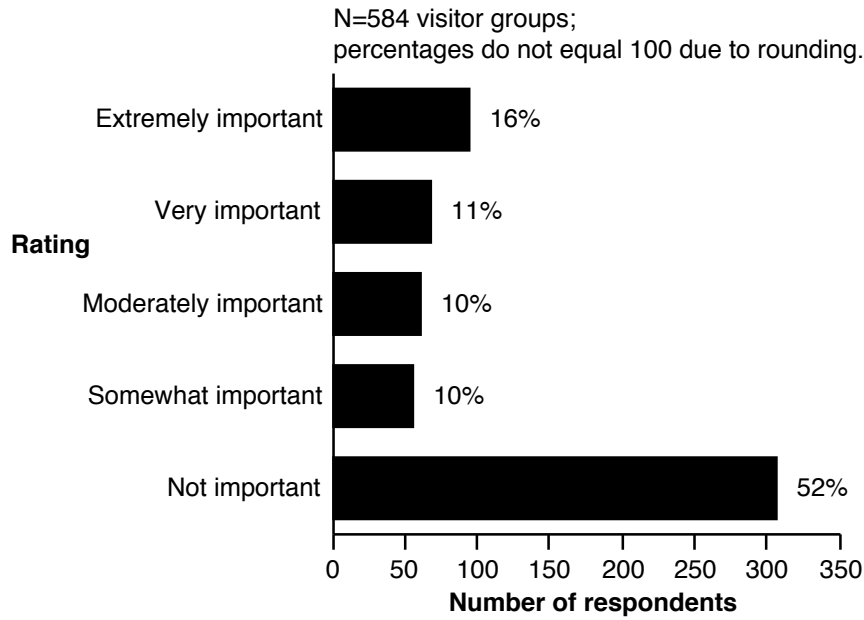


Figure 14: Importance of hiking 2 hours or more

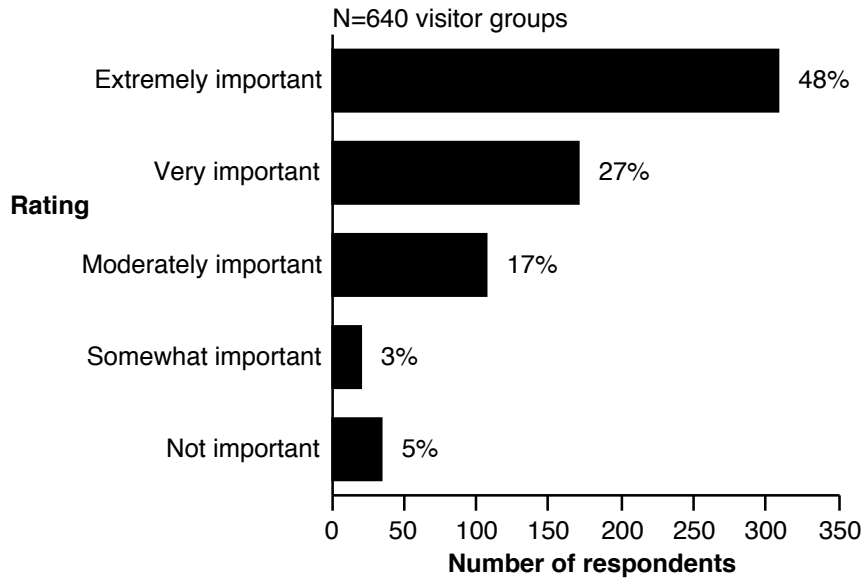


Figure 15: Importance of enjoying solitude/natural quiet



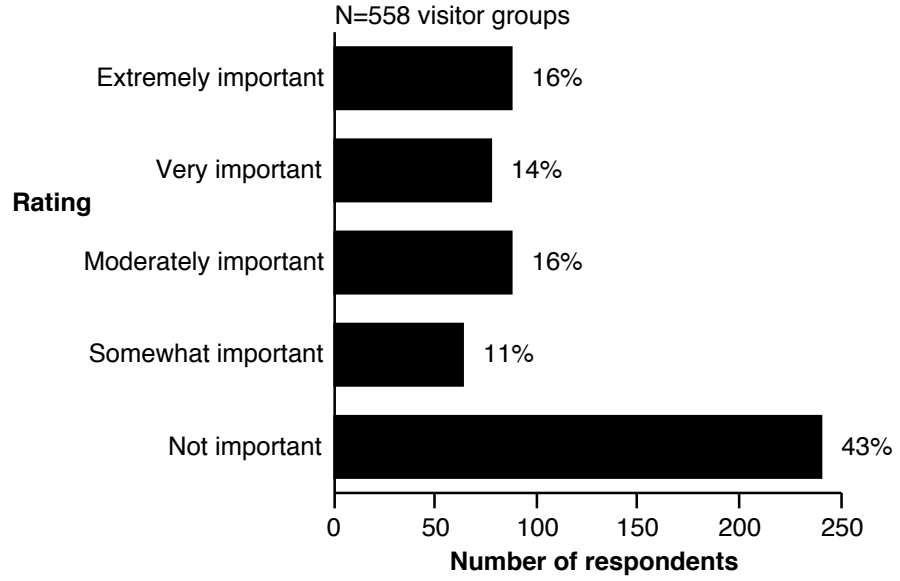


Figure 16: Importance of experiencing night sky

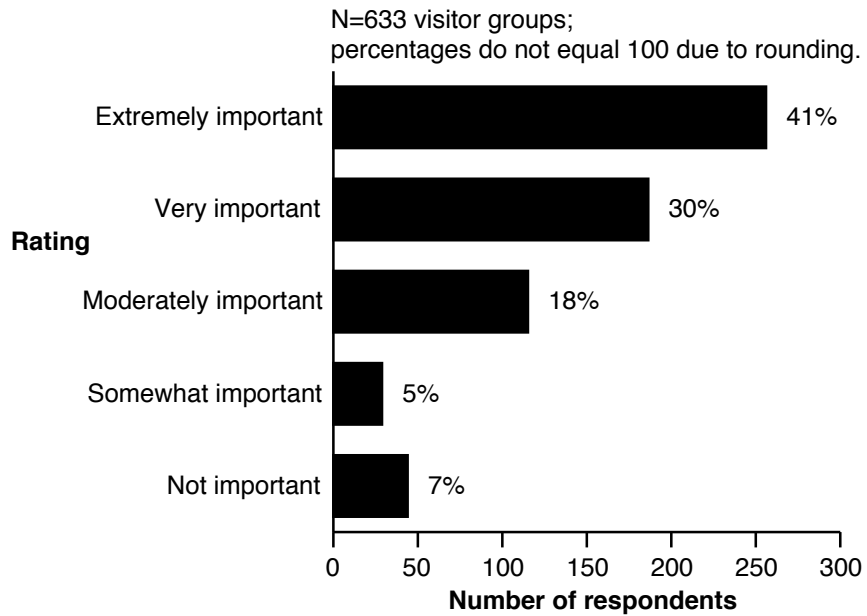


Figure 17: Importance of experiencing wilderness

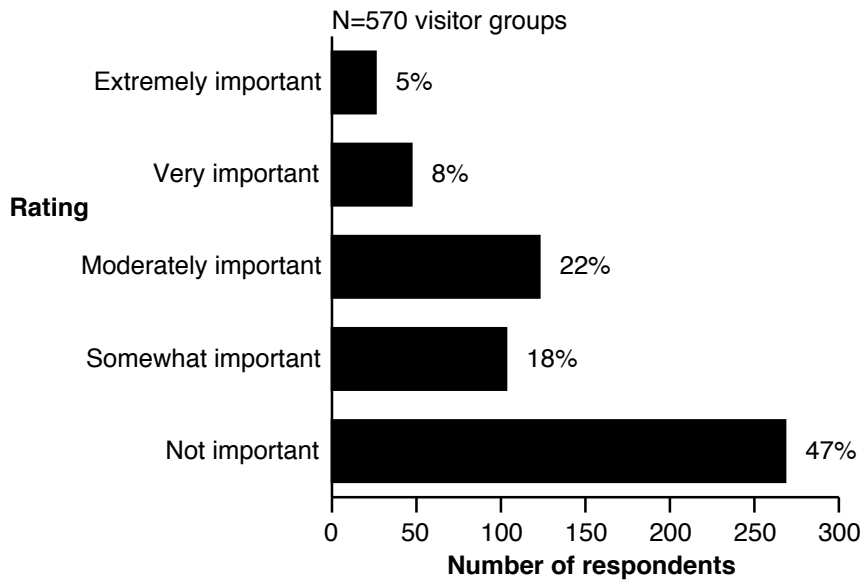


Figure 18: Importance of participating in educational opportunities

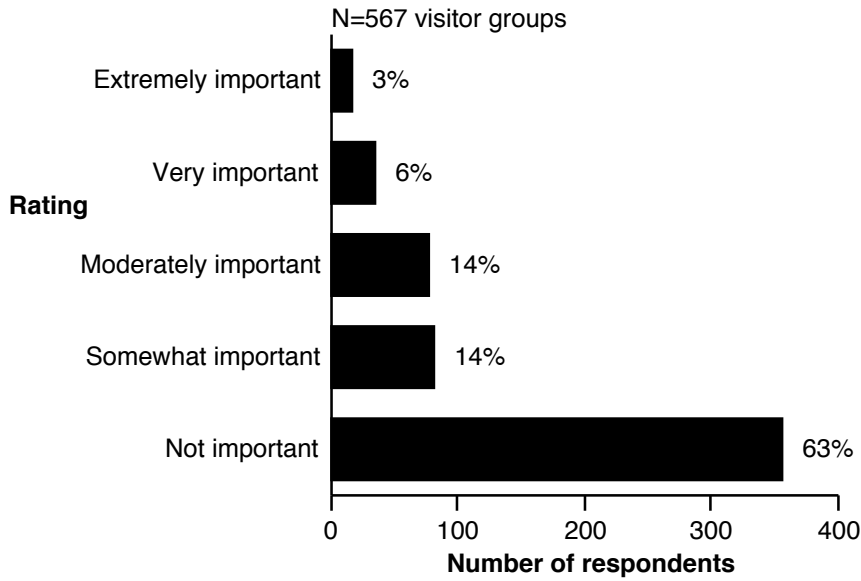


Figure 19: Importance of participating in ranger-led programs

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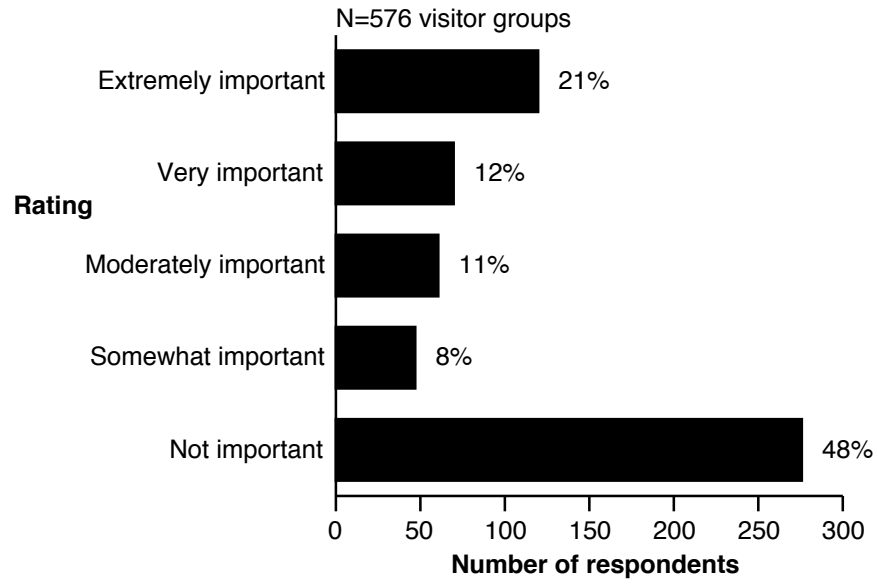


Figure 20: Importance of staying overnight in a natural setting

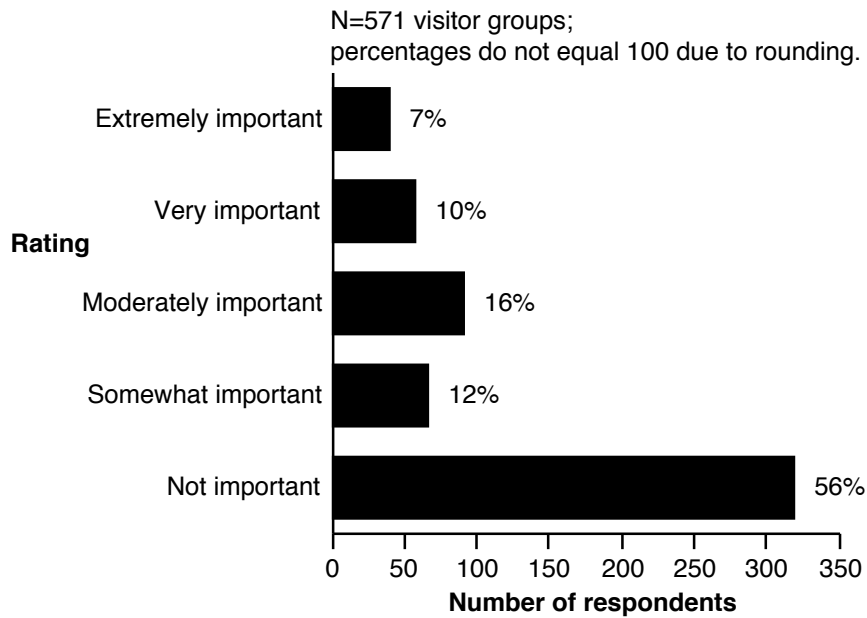


Figure 21: Importance of staying overnight in an historic setting

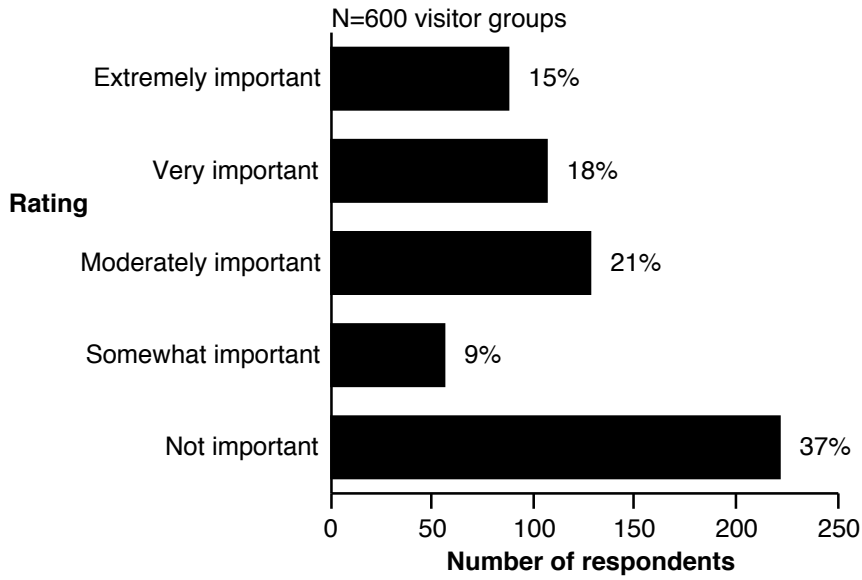


Figure 22: Importance of picnicking

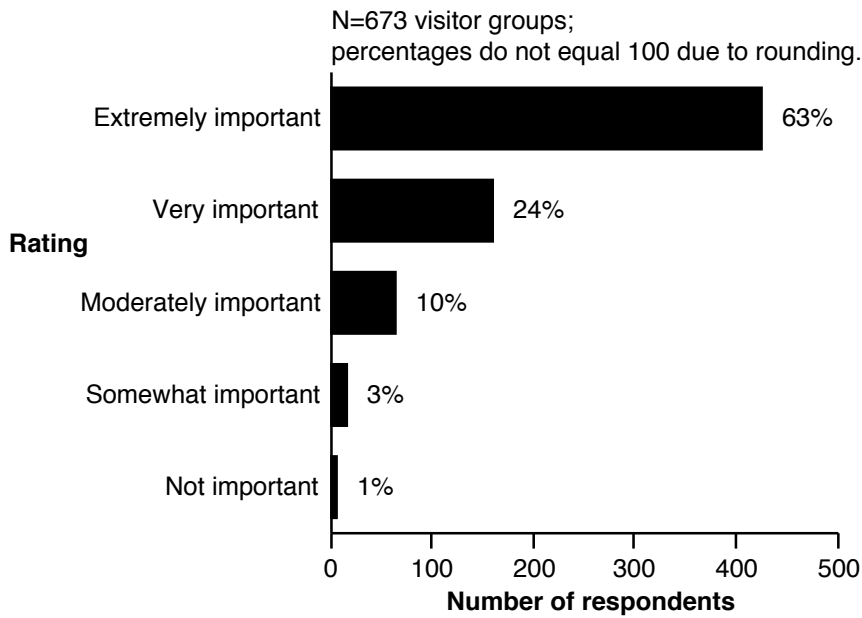


Figure 23: Importance of viewing scenic drive and overlooks

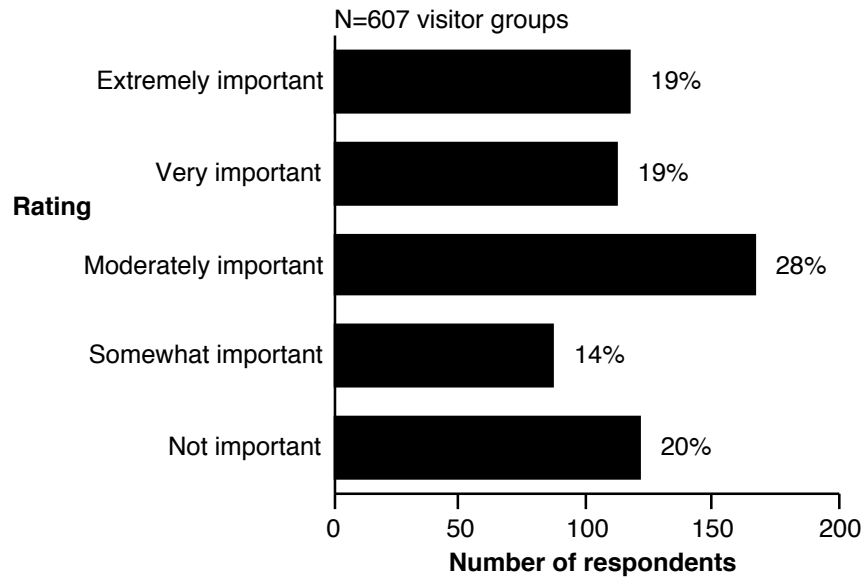


Figure 24: Importance of exploring historic features

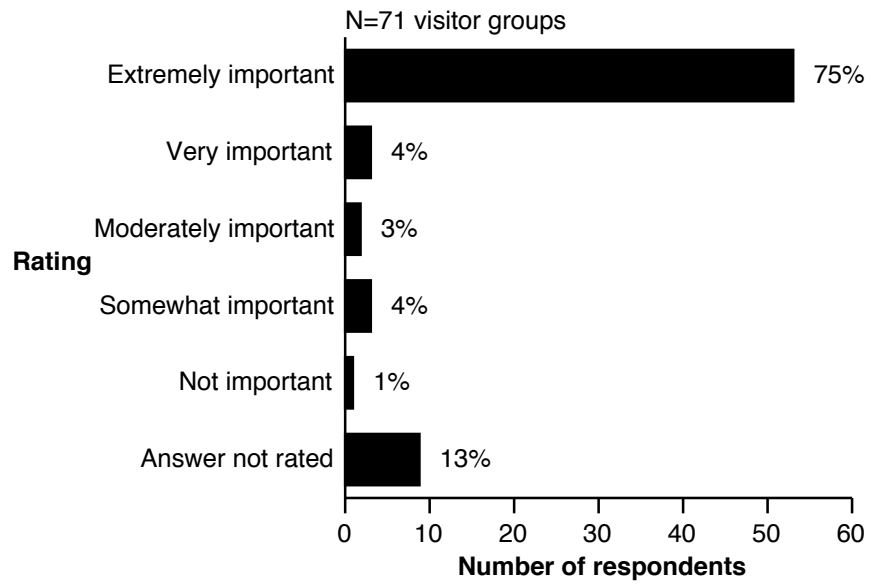
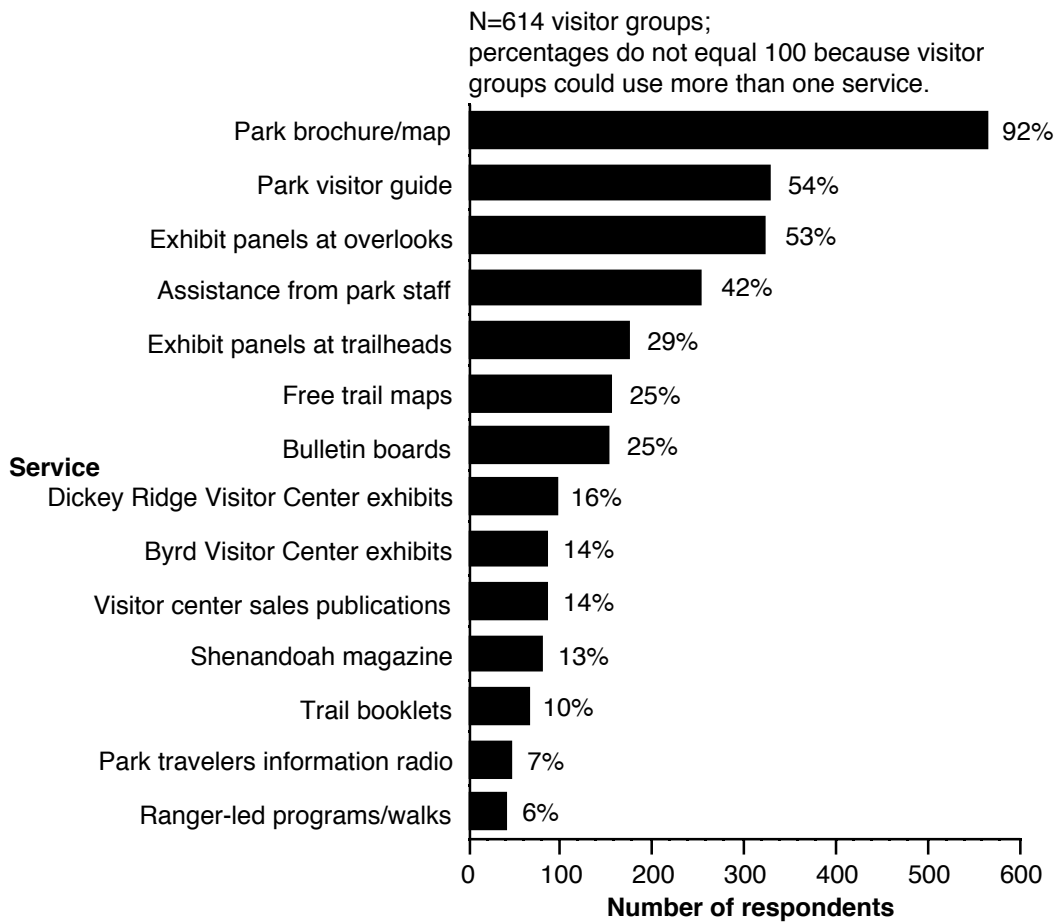


Figure 25: Importance of "other" reasons

Visitors were asked to identify the interpretive or visitor services they used during this visit to Shenandoah National Park. The most used services included the park brochure/map (92%), park visitor guide—*Shenandoah Overlook* (54%), and exhibit panels at overlooks (53%), as shown in Figure 26. The least used service was the ranger-led programs/walks (6%).

**Use, importance and quality of interpretive/visitor services**



**Figure 26: Interpretive or visitor services used**

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the park services 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. Figures 27 and 28 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the park services. All services were rated above average in importance and quality. NOTE: Access for disabled people was not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

Odd-numbered Figures 29-55 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services. Those services receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included assistance from park staff (85%), free trail maps, park brochure/map and trail booklets (each 83%). The highest proportion of "not important" ratings was for the park travelers information radio station (5%).

Even-numbered Figures 30-56 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services. Those services receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included assistance from park staff (94%), park brochure/map (88%), Byrd Visitor Center exhibits (84%) and visitor center sales publications (84%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for the park travelers information radio station (19%).

Figure 57 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services.

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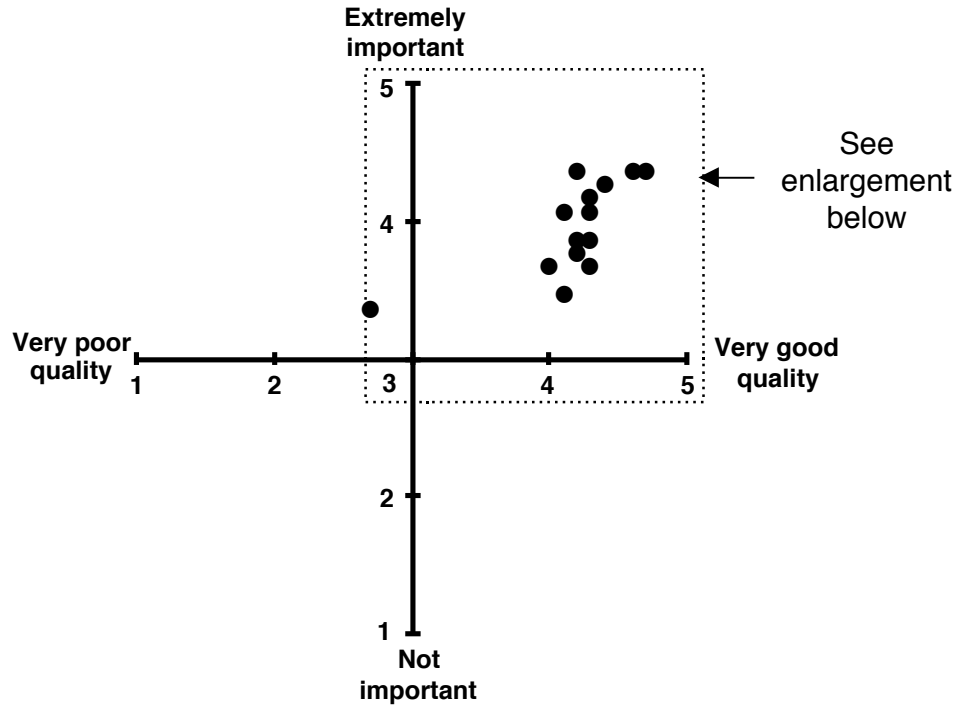


Figure 27: Average ratings of interpretive/ visitor service importance and quality

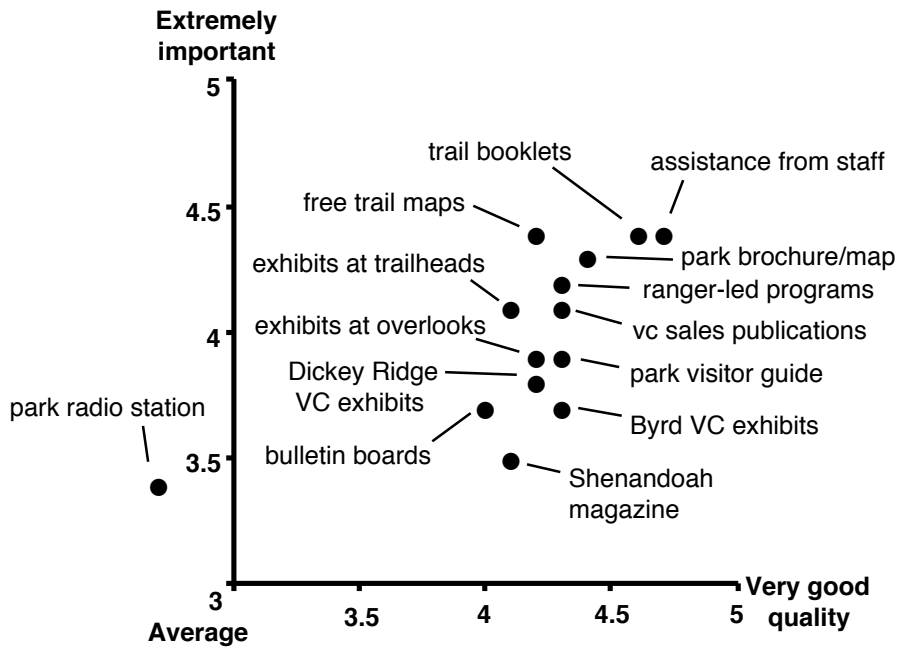


Figure 28: Detail of Figure 27



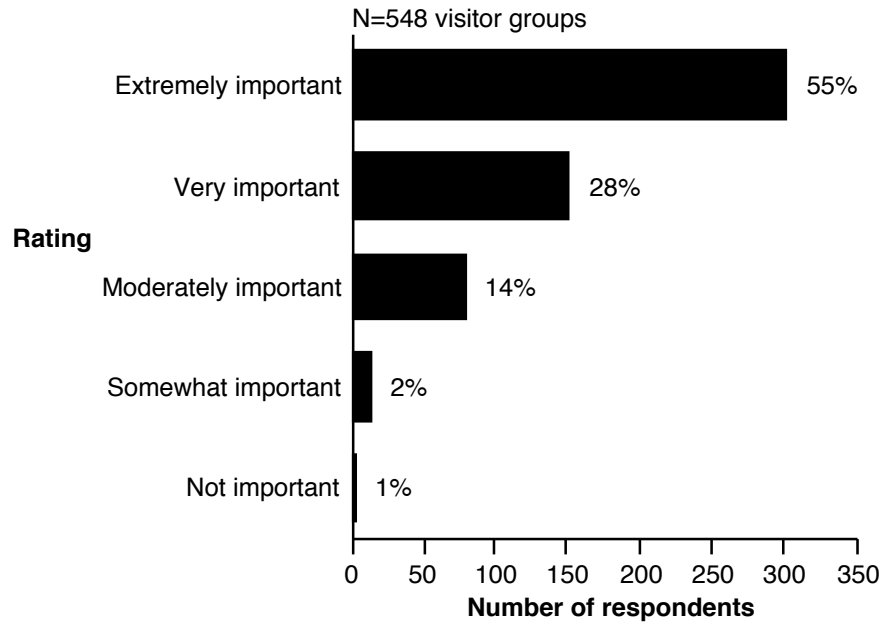


Figure 29: Importance of park brochure/map

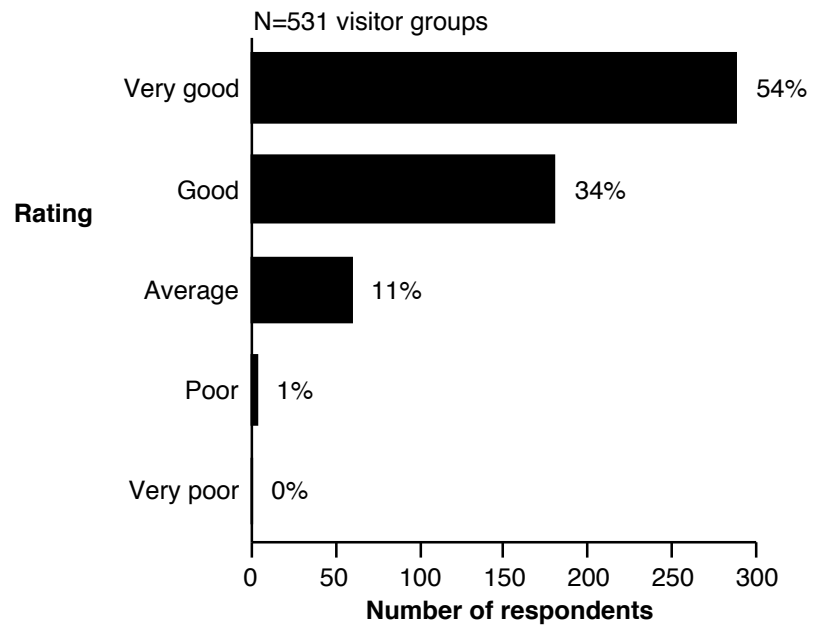


Figure 30: Quality of park brochure/map

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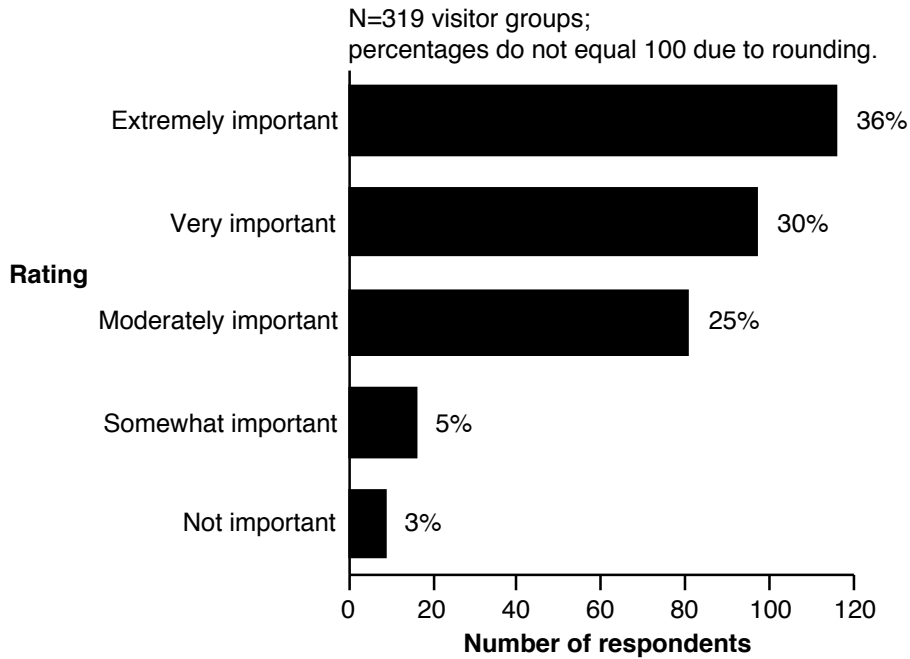


Figure 31: Importance of park visitor guide "Shenandoah Overlook"

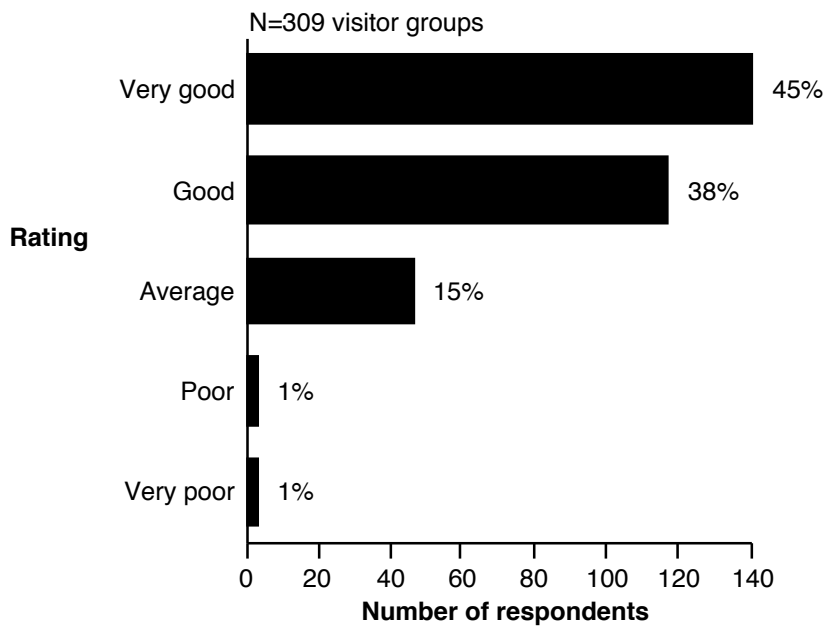


Figure 32: Quality of park visitor guide "Shenandoah Overlook"

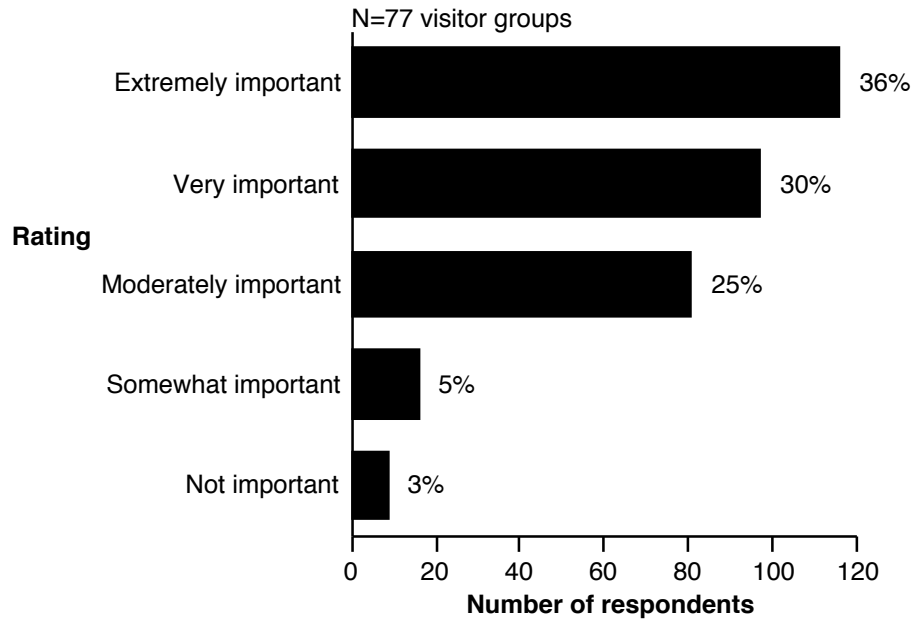


Figure 33: Importance of Shenandoah magazine

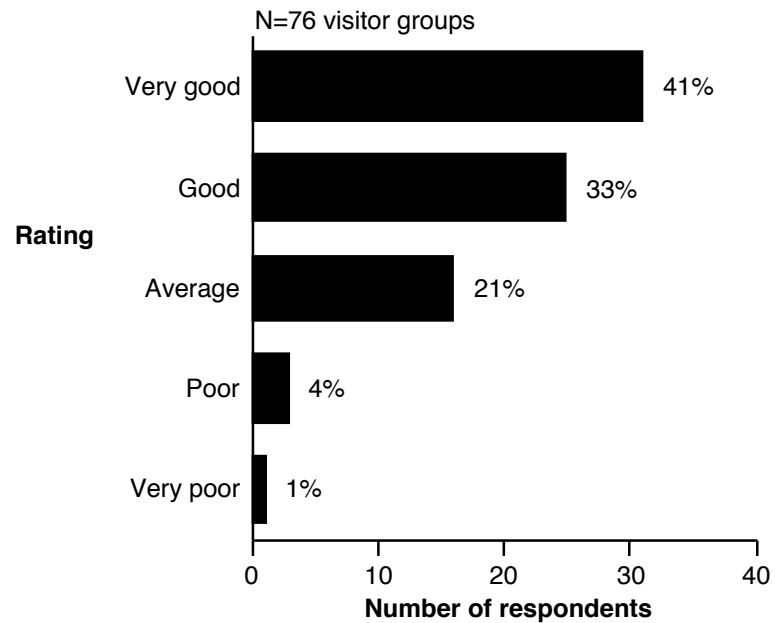


Figure 34: Quality of Shenandoah magazine

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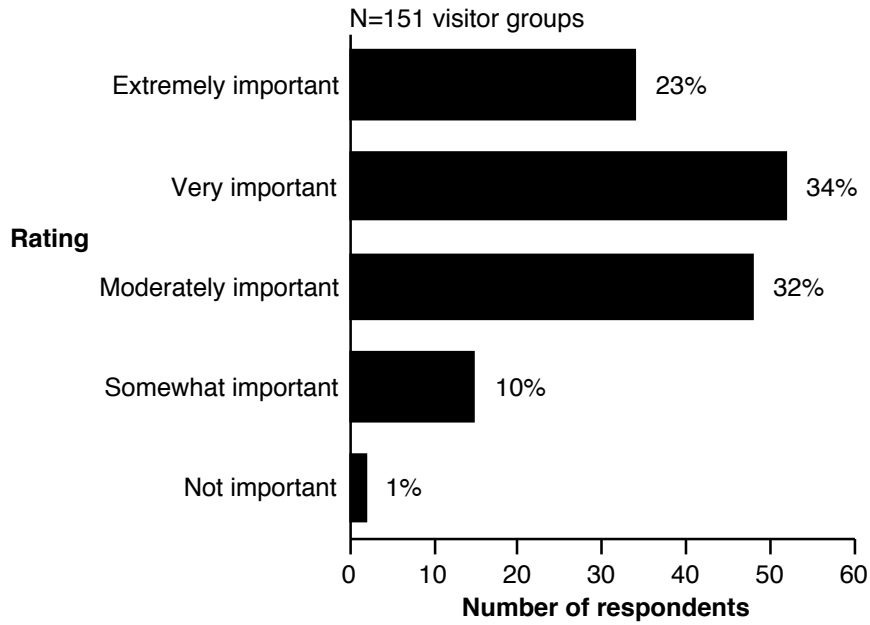


Figure 35: Importance of bulletin boards

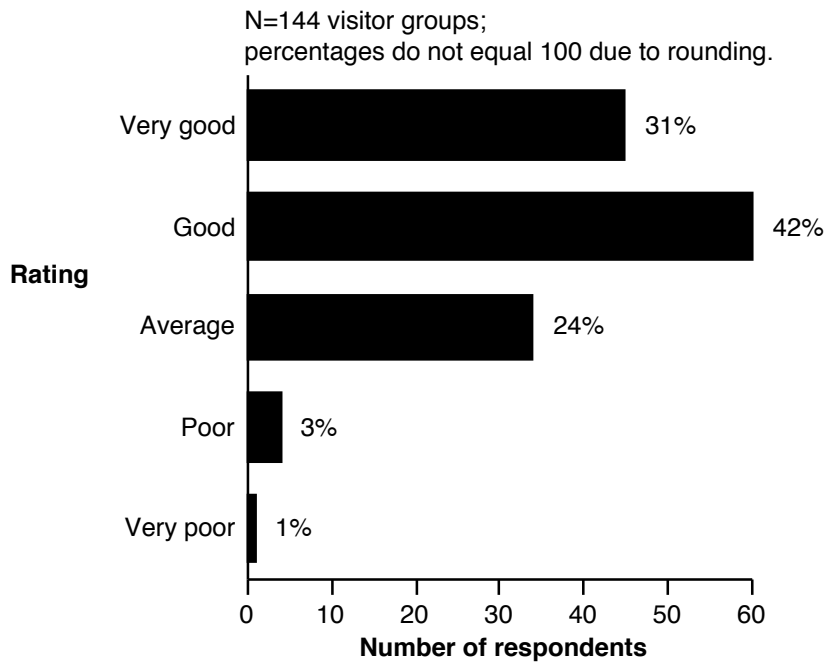


Figure 36: Quality of bulletin boards

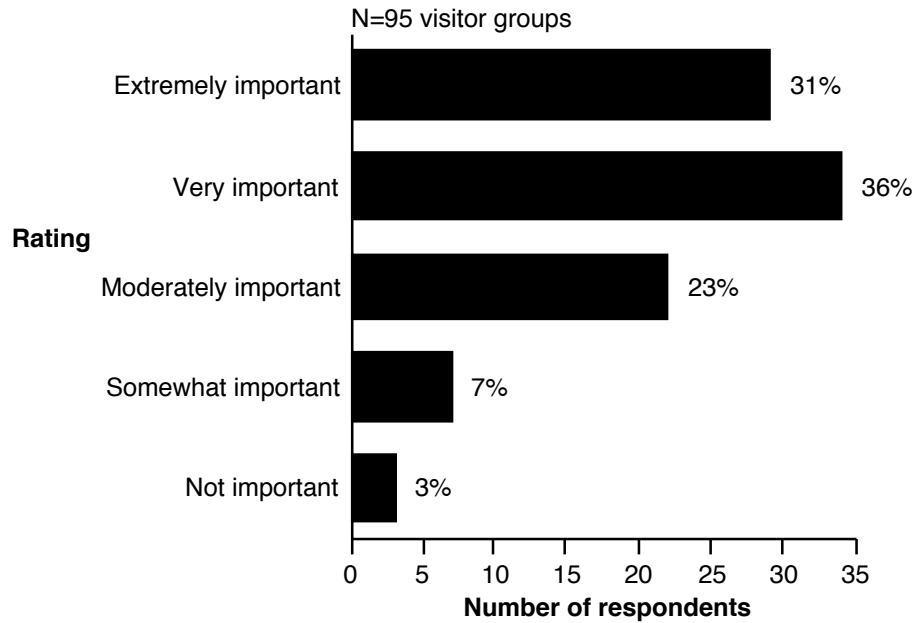


Figure 37: Importance of Dickey Ridge Visitor Center exhibits

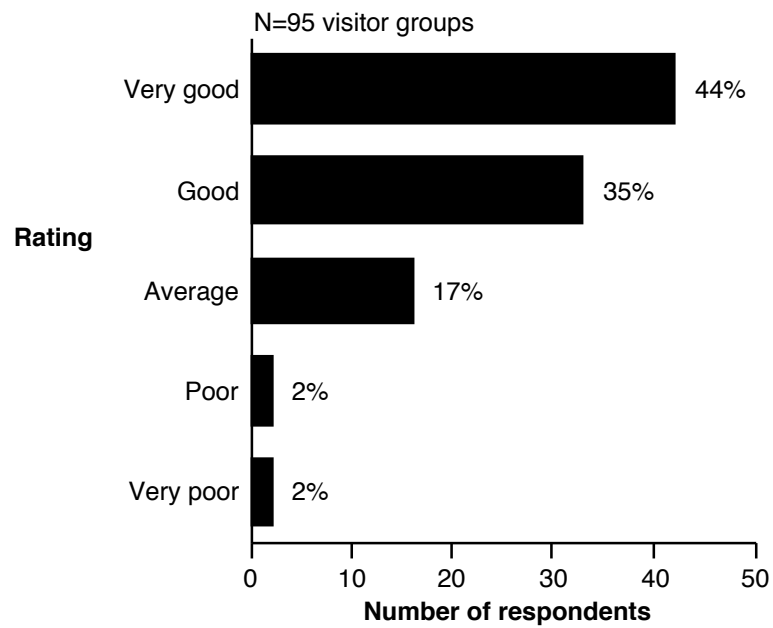


Figure 38: Quality of Dickey Ridge Visitor Center exhibits

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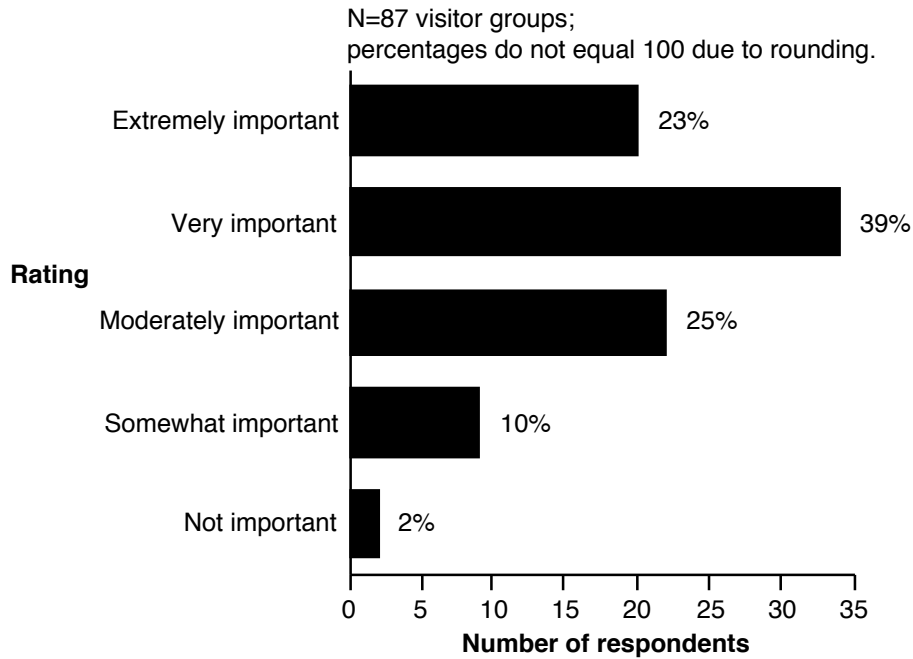


Figure 39: Importance of Byrd Visitor Center exhibits

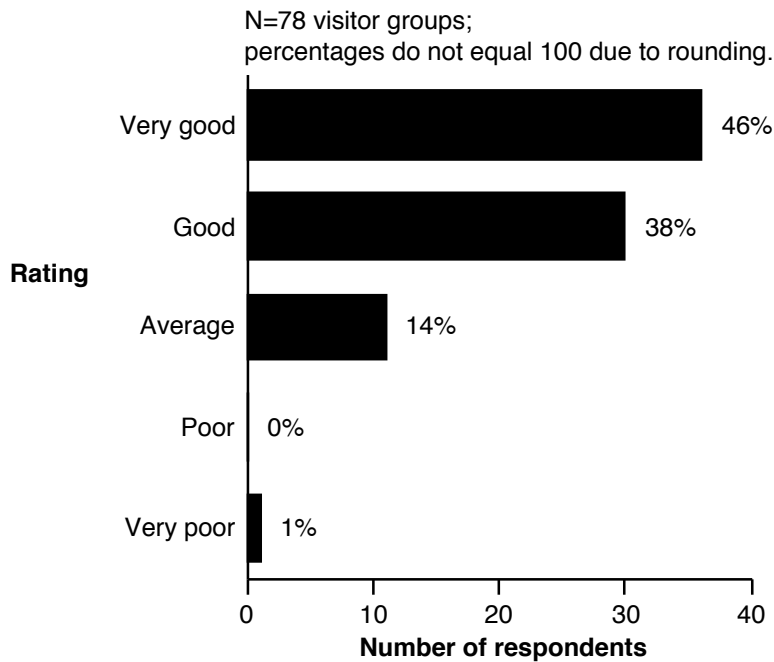


Figure 40: Quality of Byrd Visitor Center exhibits

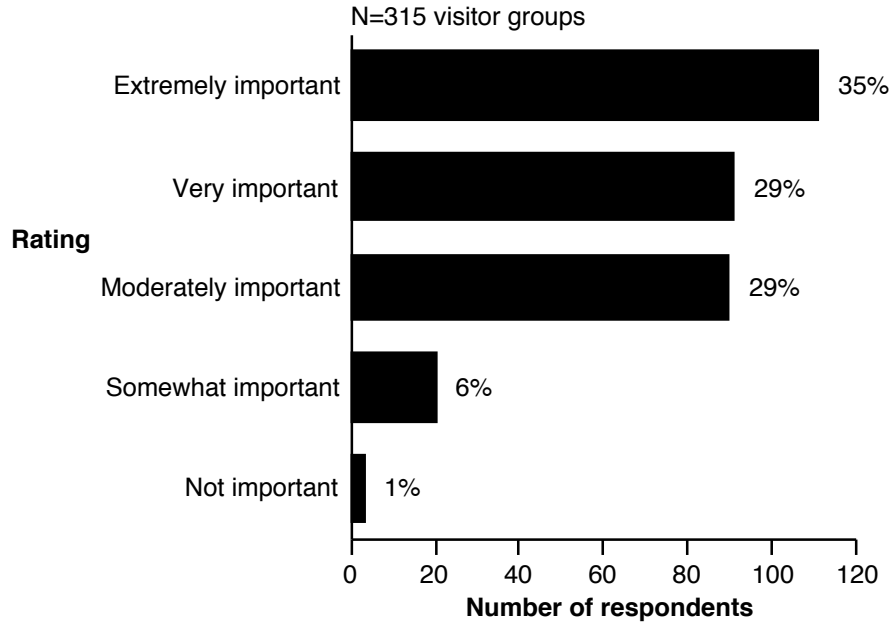


Figure 41: Importance of exhibit panels at overlooks

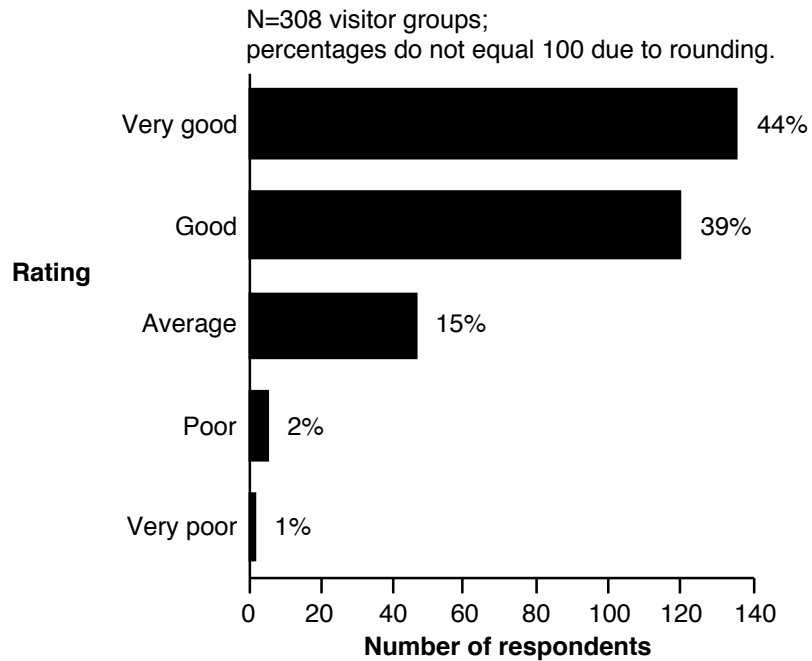


Figure 42: Quality of exhibit panels at overlooks

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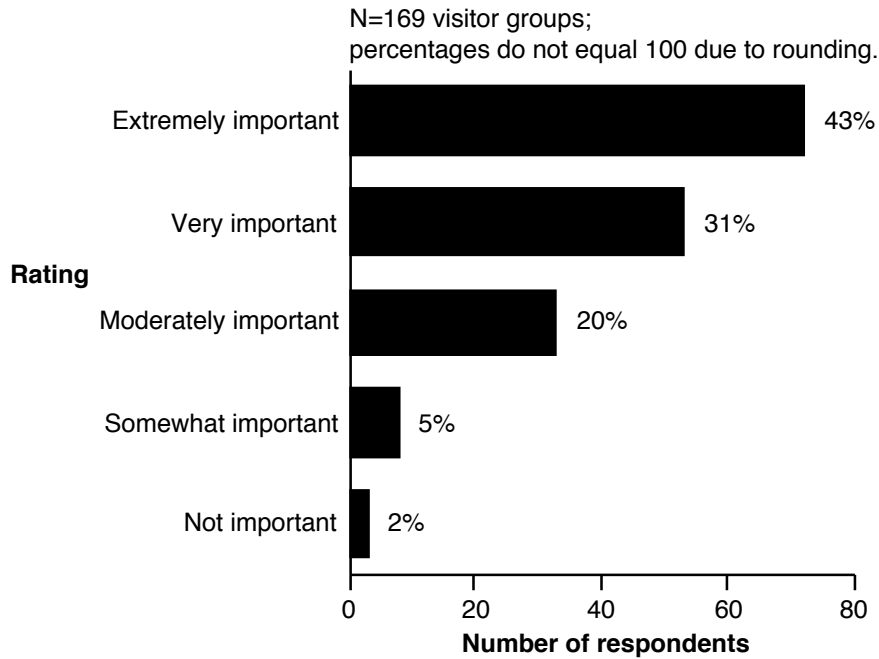


Figure 43: Importance of exhibit panels at trailheads

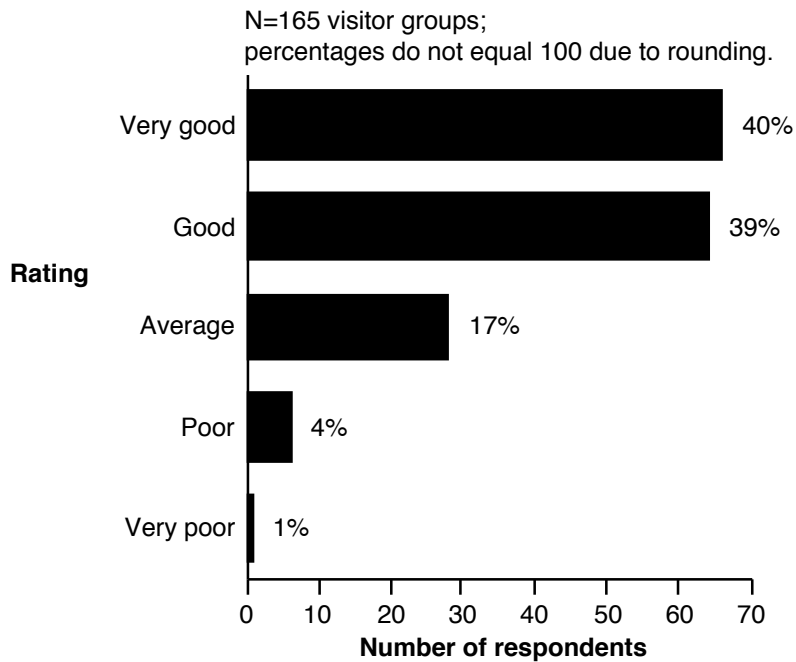


Figure 44: Quality of exhibit panels at trailheads



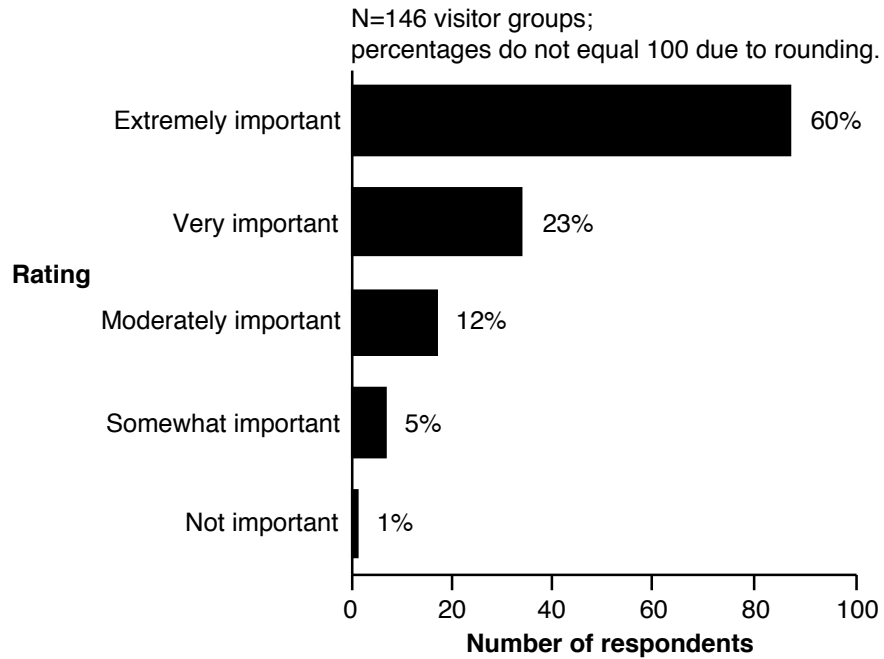


Figure 45: Importance of free trail maps

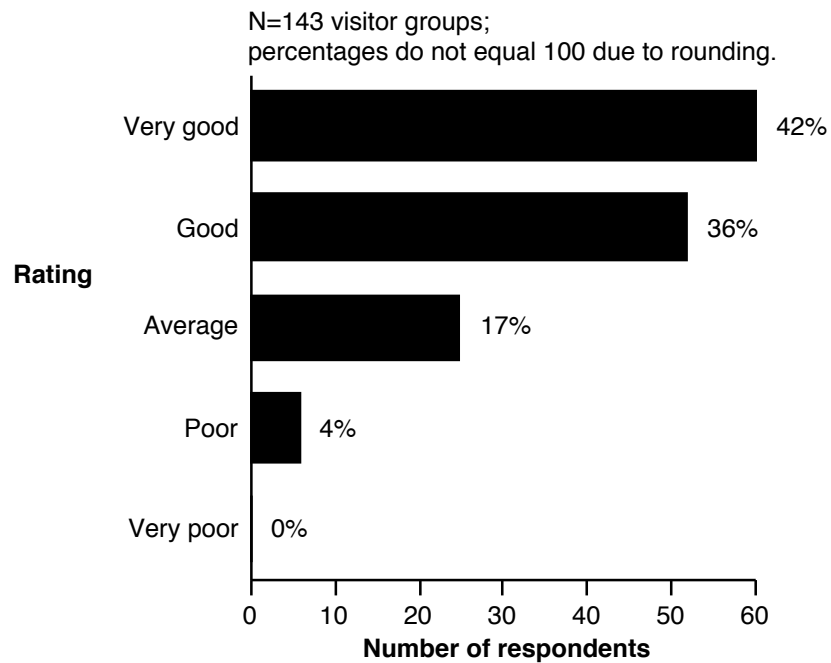


Figure 46: Quality of free trail maps

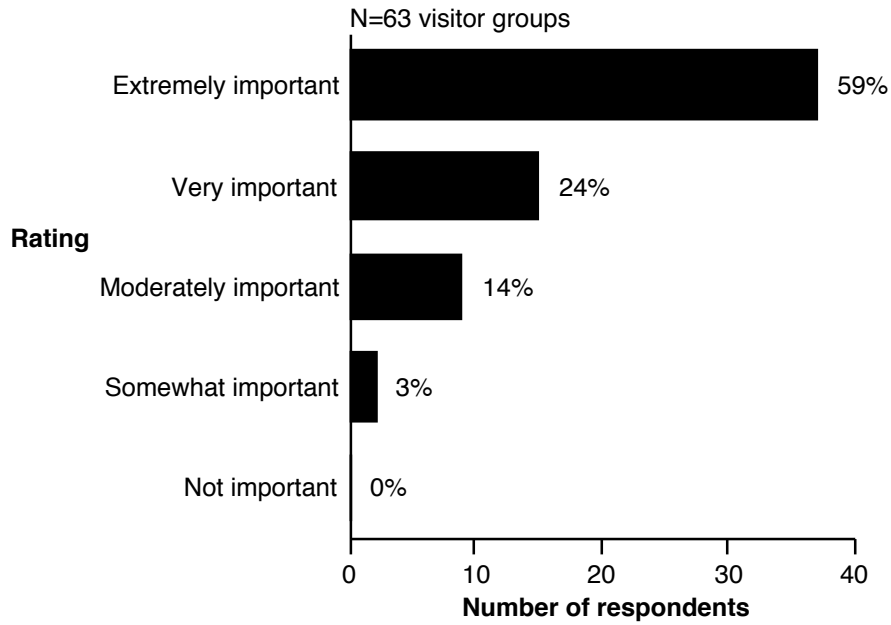


Figure 47: Importance of trail booklets

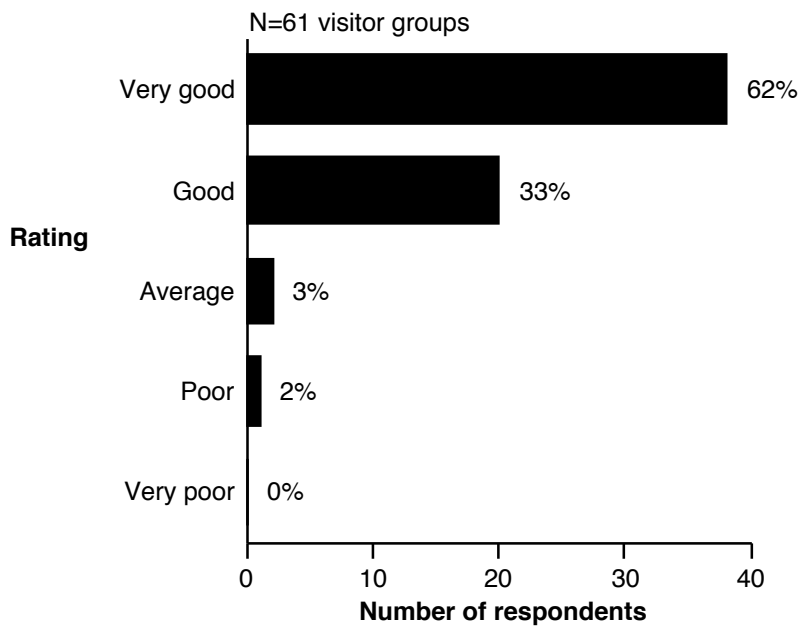


Figure 48: Quality of trail booklets

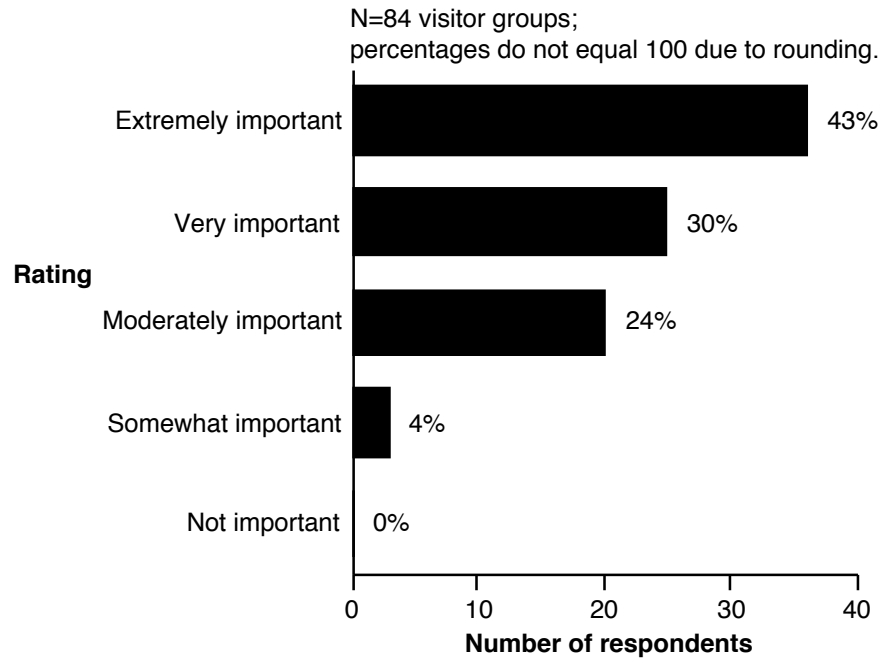


Figure 49: Importance of sales publications at visitor centers

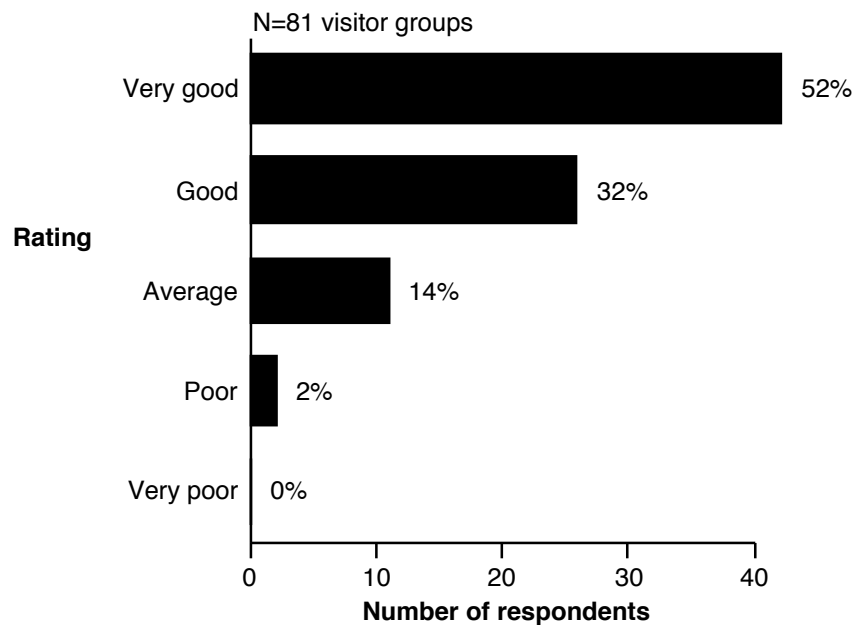


Figure 50: Quality of sales publications at visitor centers

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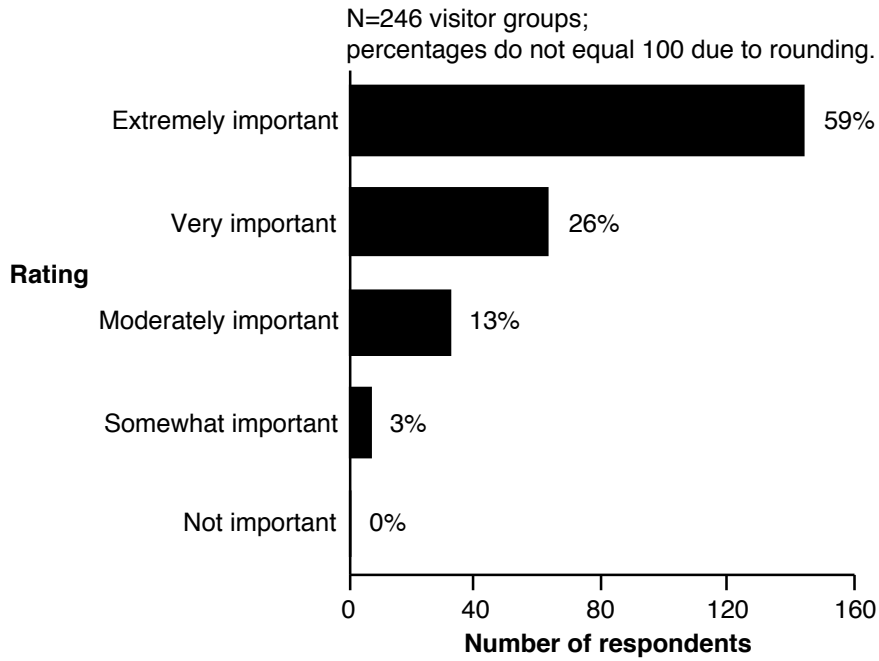


Figure 51: Importance of assistance from park staff

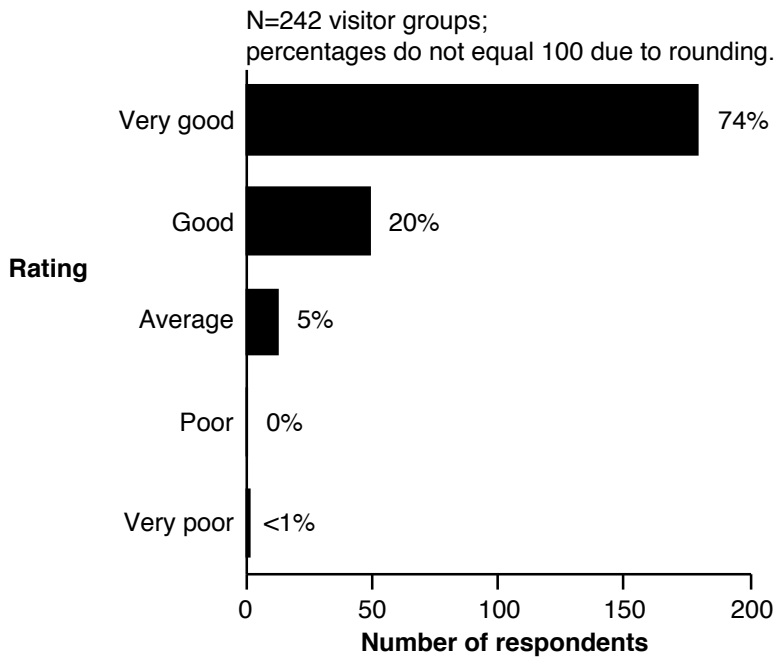


Figure 52: Quality of assistance from park staff

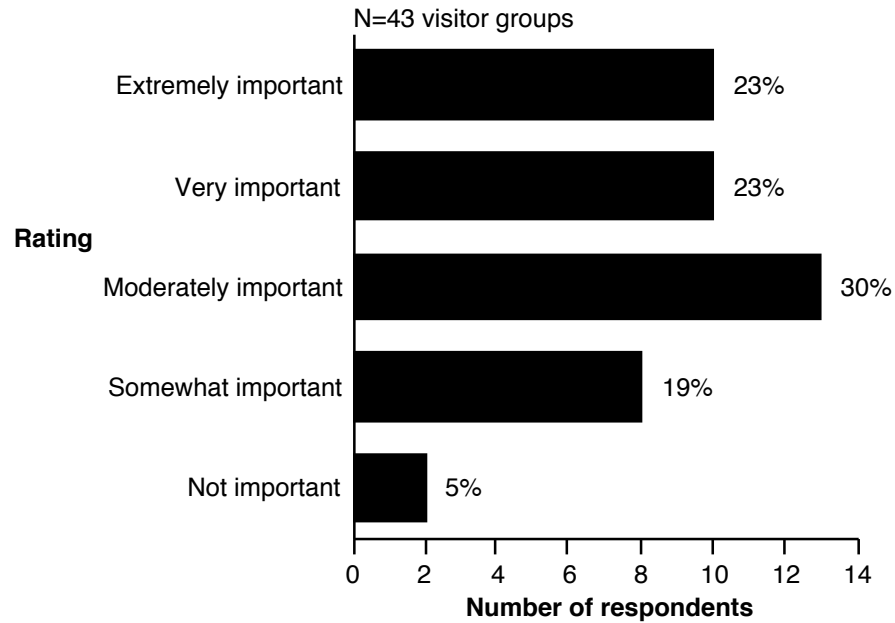


Figure 53: Importance of park travelers information radio station

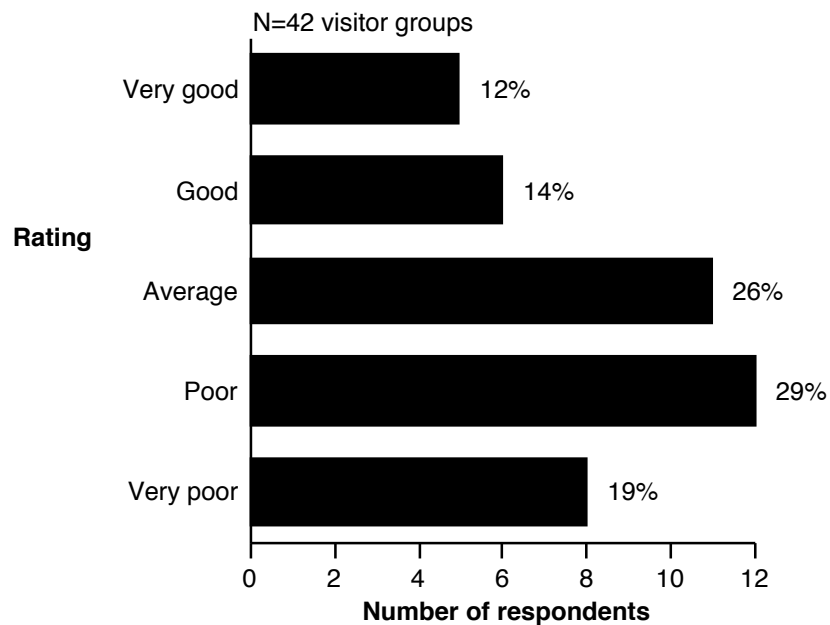


Figure 54: Quality of park travelers information radio station

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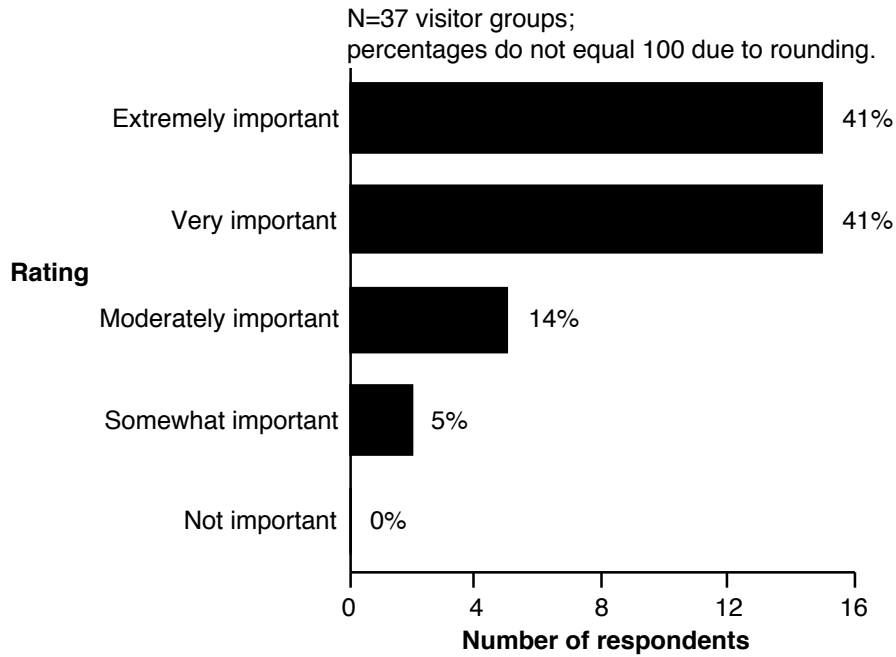


Figure 55: Importance of ranger-led programs/walks

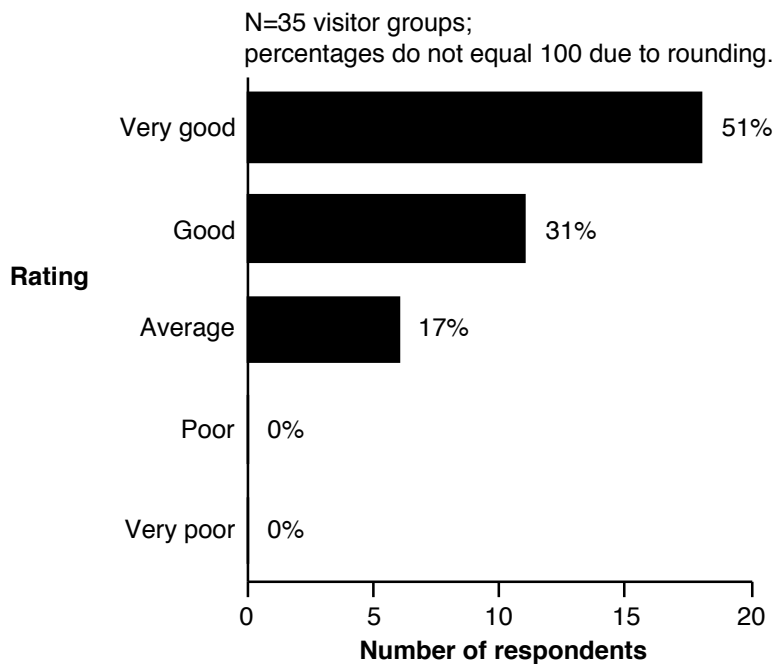
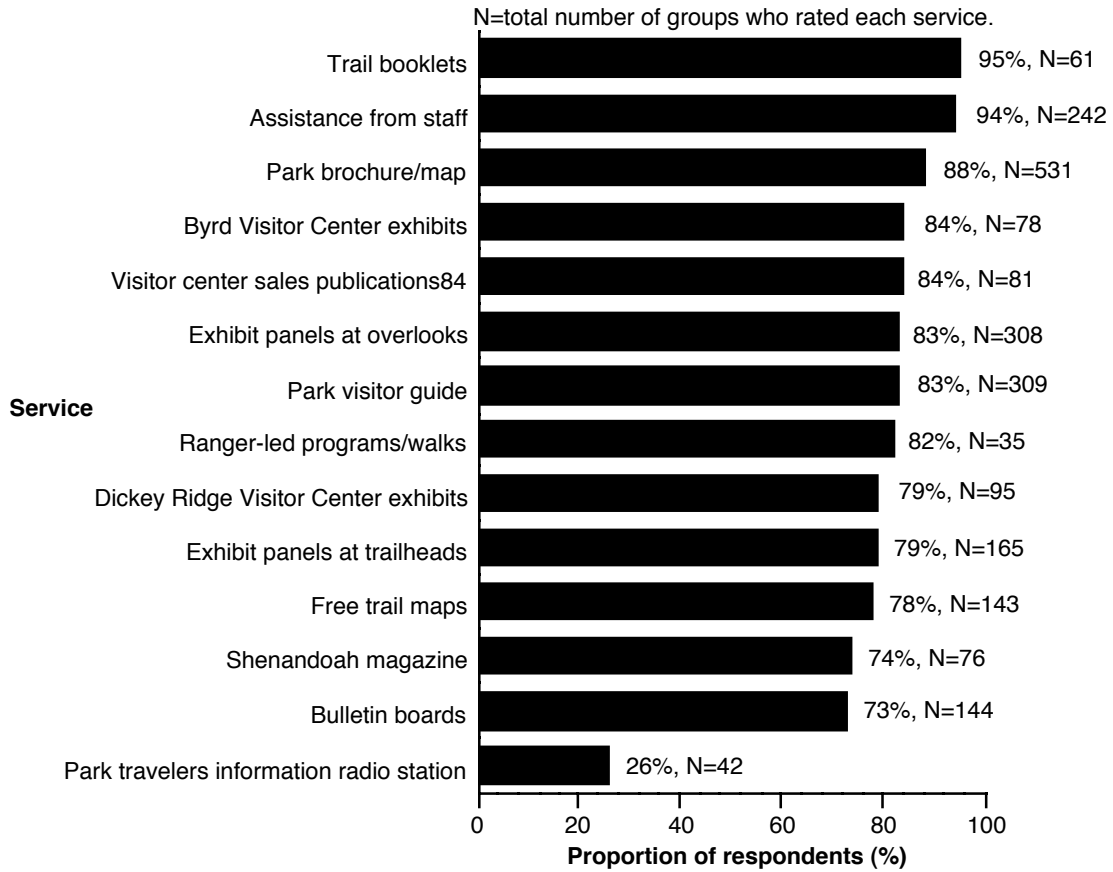


Figure 56: Quality of ranger-led programs/walks



**Figure 57: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for interpretive/visitor services**

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Visitors were asked to identify the concession services and facilities they used during this visit to Shenandoah NP. They are presented by their location in the park in the following order: Elkwallow, Panorama, Skyland, Big Meadows Lodge, Big Meadows Wayside, Lewis Mountain Campground and Loft Mountain. The proportions of use at each concession location are shown in Figure 58.

**Use, importance  
and quality of  
concession  
services and  
facilities**

**Elkwallow** : The most used concession services were restrooms (81%) and campstore/gift shop (56%), as shown in Figure 59. The least used service was the gas station (14%).

**Panorama** : The most used concession services were restrooms (80%) and gift shop (62%), as shown in Figure 73 on page 52. The least used service was assistance from staff (21%).

**Skyland:** The most used concession services were restrooms (79%) and gift shop (57%), as shown in Figure 85 on page 59. The least used service was conference hall (2%). Special events or activities visitors attended included wine tasting, cloggers, and music at night.

**Big Meadows Lodge:** The most used concession services were restrooms (69%) and gift shop (61%), as shown in Figure 107 on page 71. The least used service was special events (7%). Special events or activities that visitors attended included wine tasting, tap room entertainment, concert, and amateur astronomers night sky program.

**Big Meadows Wayside:** The most used concession services were restrooms (74%) and campstore (50%), as shown in Figure 125 on page 81. The least used service was showers/laundry (17%).

**Lewis Mountain Campground:** Not enough visitors responded to the question to provide reliable results (see Figure 143 on page 92).

**Loft Mountain:** The most used concession service was the gift shop (54%), as shown in Figure 150 on page 96. The least used service was showers/laundry (21%).

Figure 161 on page 102 shows combined proportions of "good" or "very good" ratings for each concession service/facility throughout the park.

Visitors were also asked to share additional comments about the concession services and facilities in Shenandoah NP. Table 5 on page 103 lists the comments they made.

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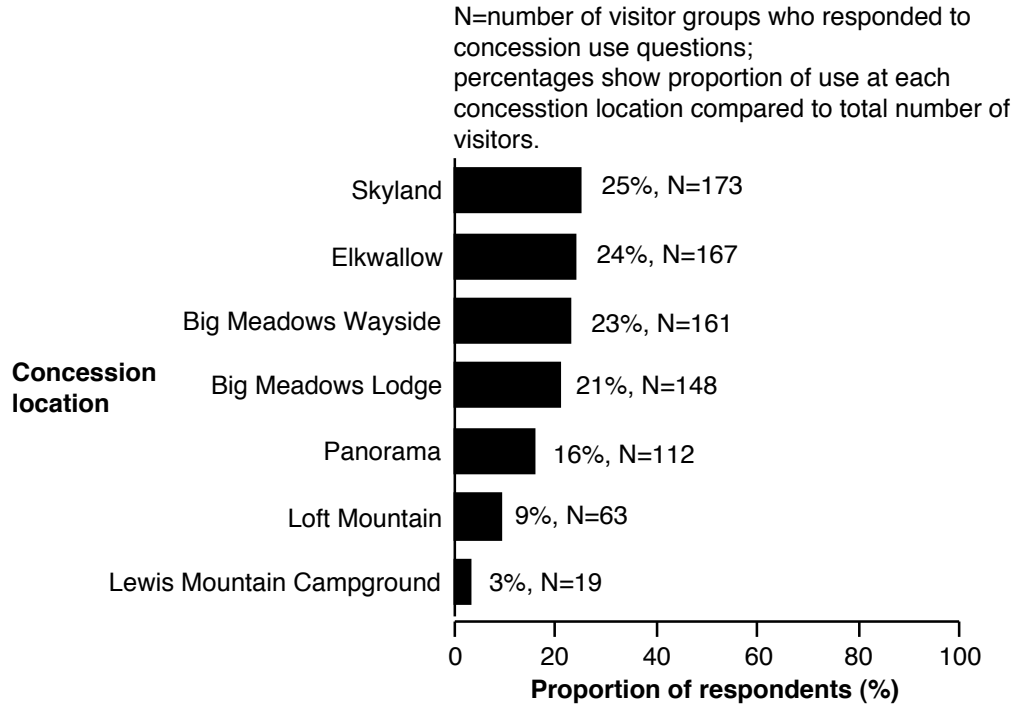


Figure 58: Proportion of use at each concession location

**Elkwallow concession services and facilities**

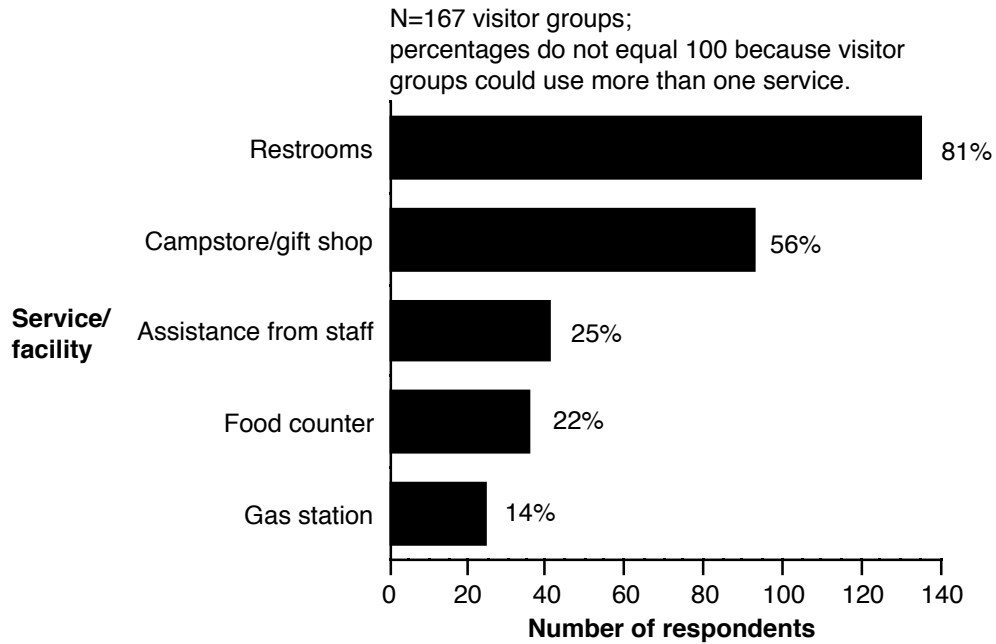


Figure 59: Elkwallow concession services and facilities used

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

<p>IMPORTANCE</p> <p>5=extremely important</p> <p>4=very important</p> <p>3=moderately important</p> <p>2=somewhat important</p> <p>1=not important</p>	<p>QUALITY</p> <p>5=very good</p> <p>4=good</p> <p>3=average</p> <p>2=poor</p> <p>1=very poor</p>
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The average importance and quality ratings for each Elkwallow concession service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 59 and 60 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the concession services and facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. NOTE: The gas station was not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

Even-numbered Figures 62-70 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included restrooms (93%) and assistance from staff (85%). None of the services or facilities received any "not important" ratings.

Odd-numbered Figures 63-71 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. Those facilities receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included assistance from park staff (95%) and campstore/gift shop (79%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for the food counter (3%).

Figure 72 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services and facilities.

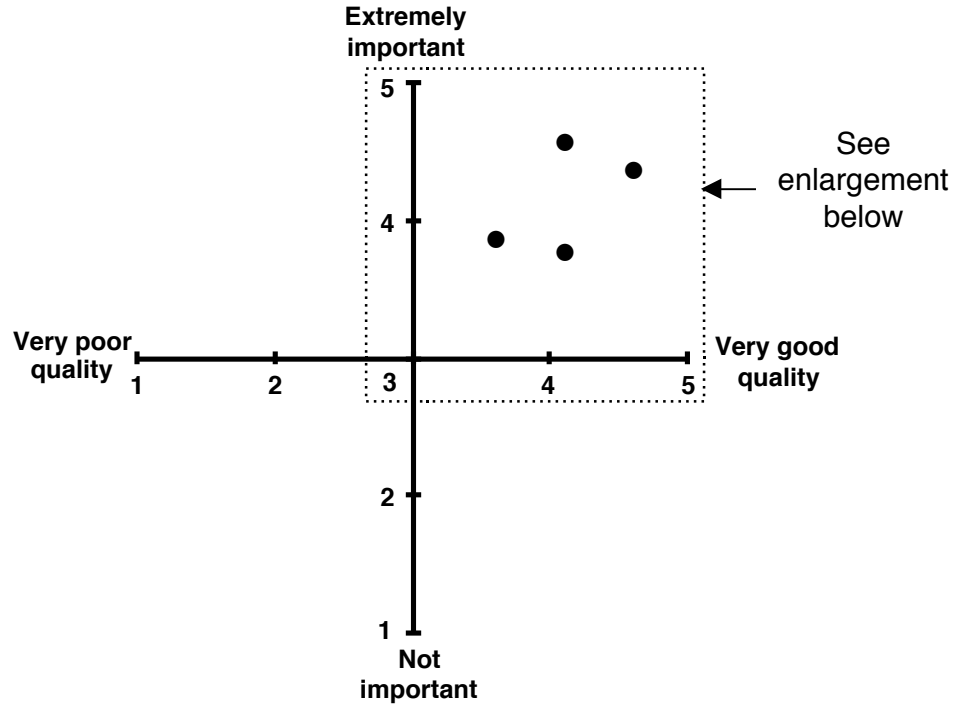


Figure 60: Average ratings of Elkwallow concession service importance and quality

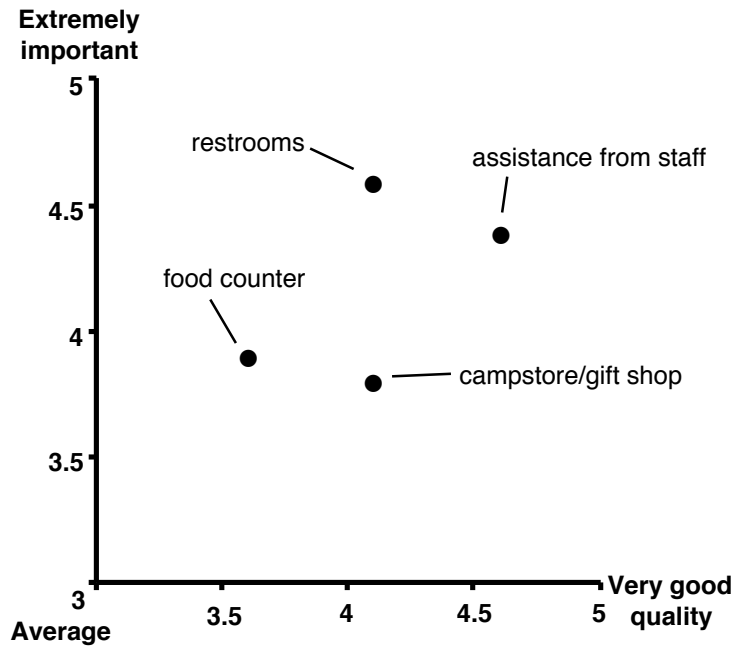


Figure 61: Detail of Figure 60

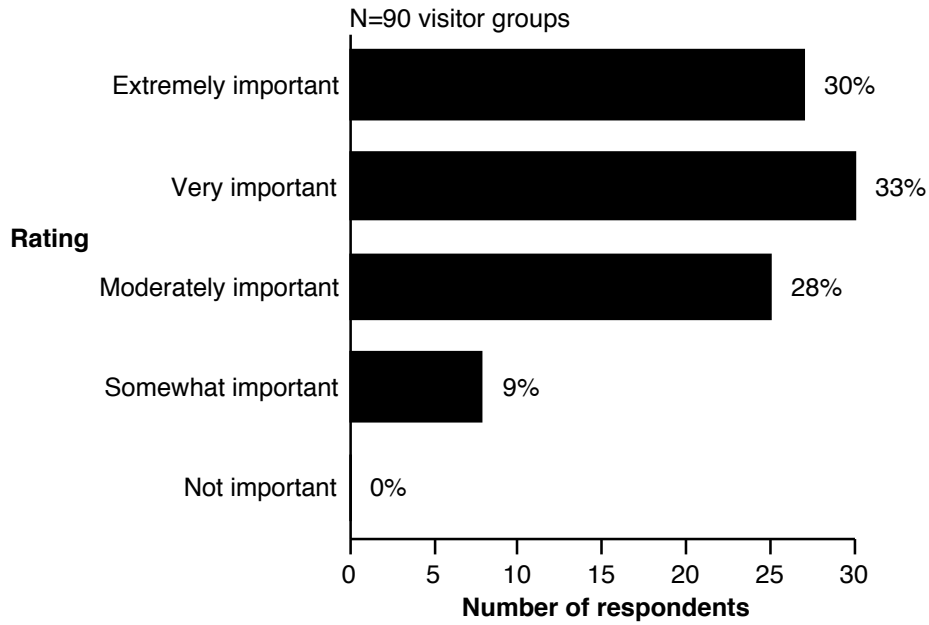


Figure 62: Importance of campstore/gift shop (Elkwallow)

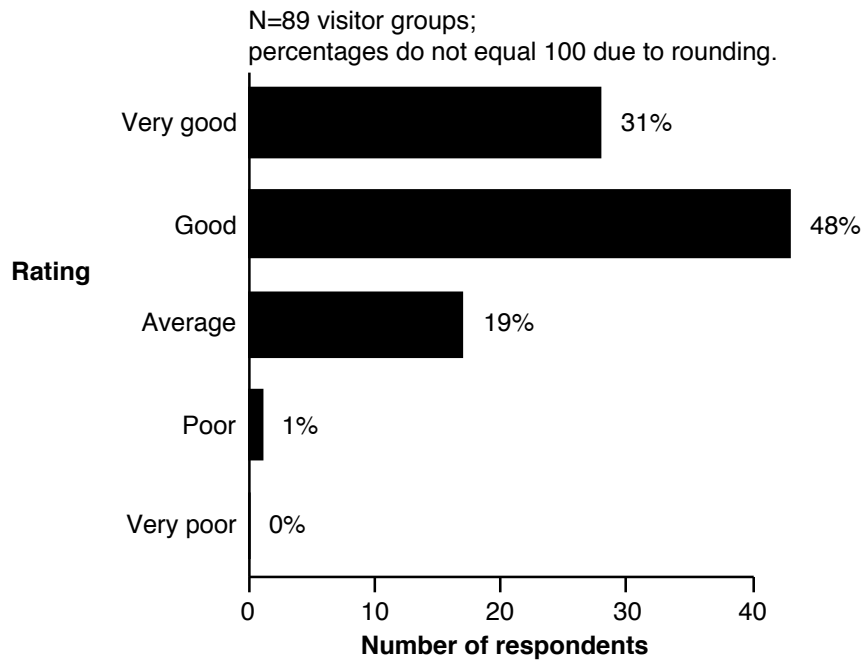


Figure 63: Quality of campstore/gift shop (Elkwallow)

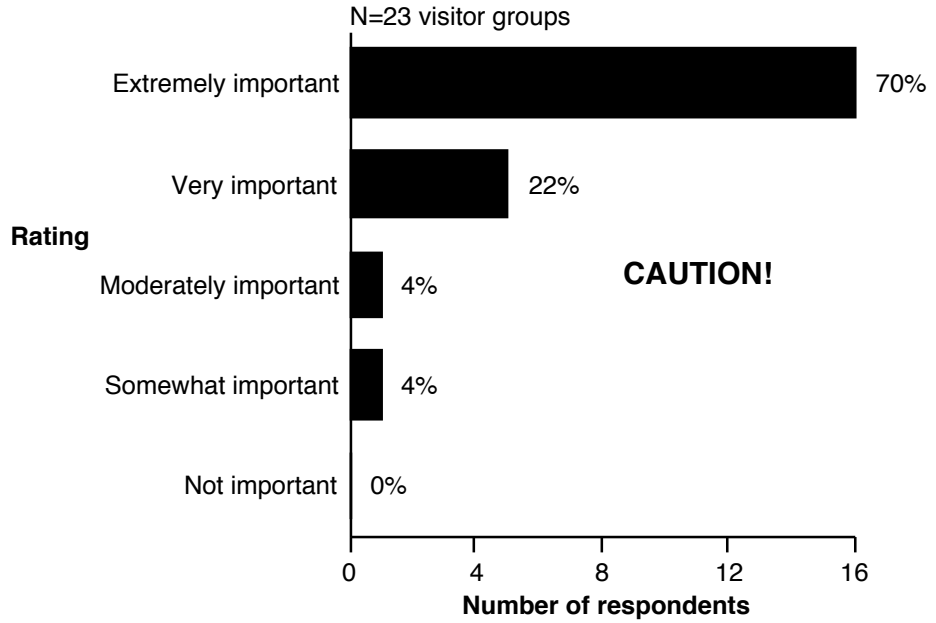


Figure 64: Importance of gas station (Elkwallow)

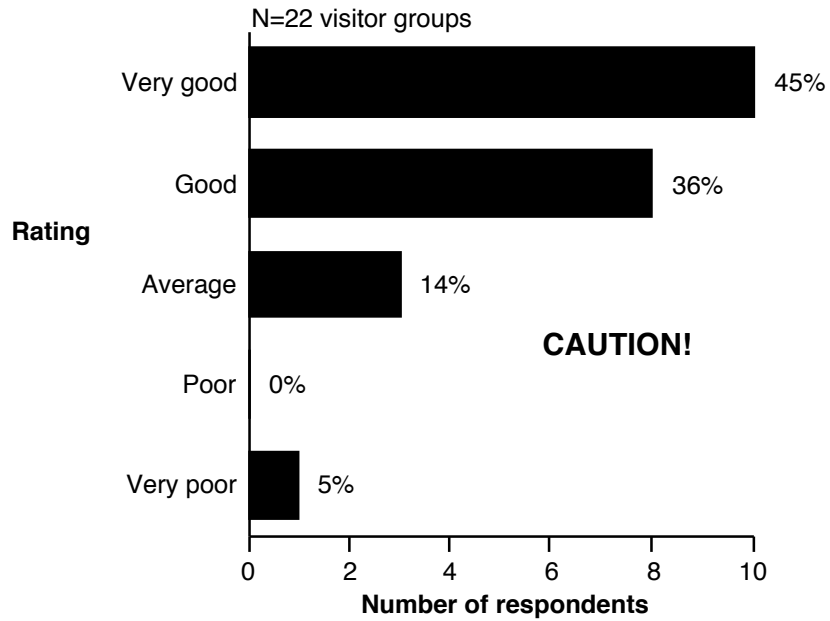


Figure 65: Quality of gas station (Elkwallow)

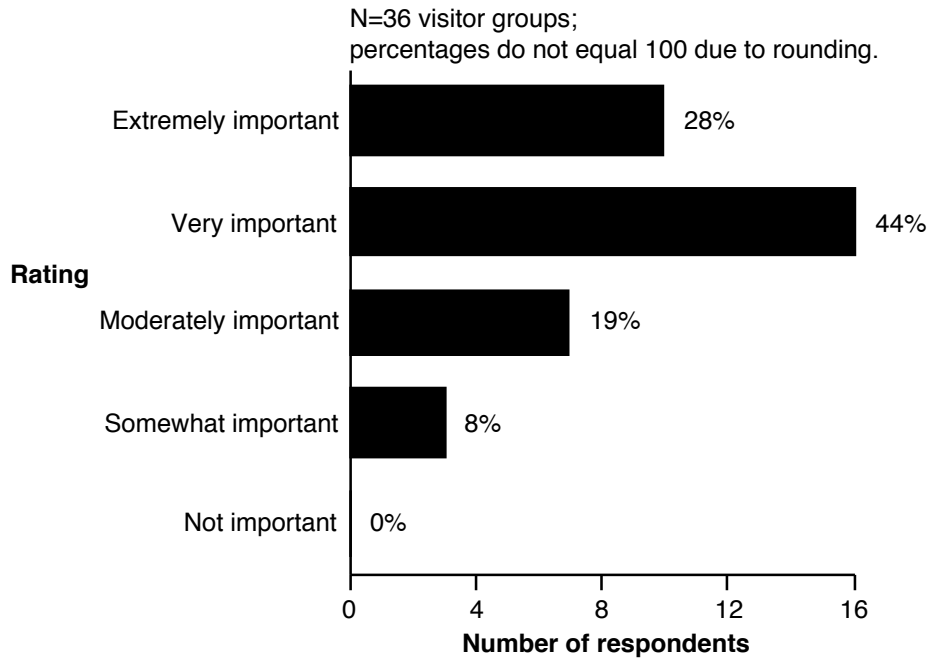


Figure 66: Importance of food counter (Elkwallow)

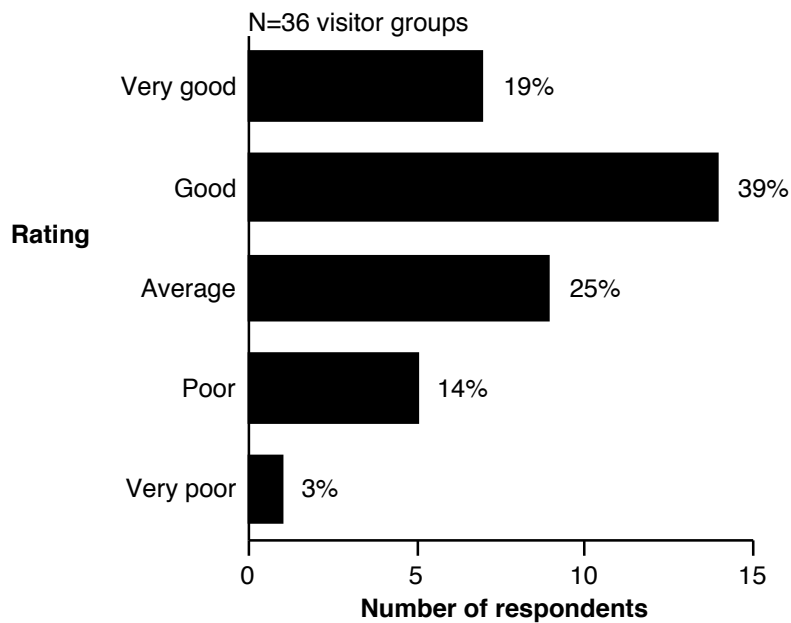


Figure 67: Quality of food counter (Elkwallow)

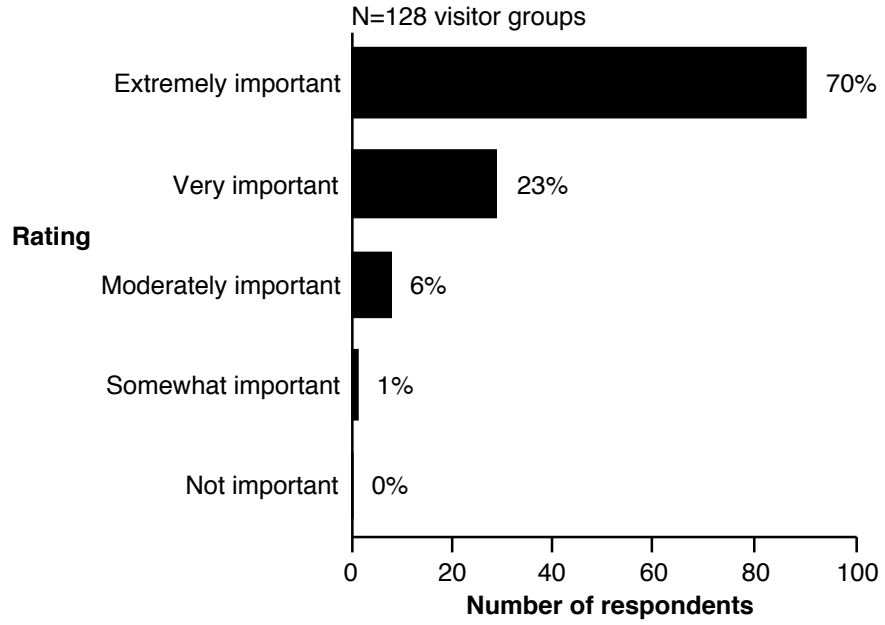


Figure 68: Importance of restrooms (Elkwallow)

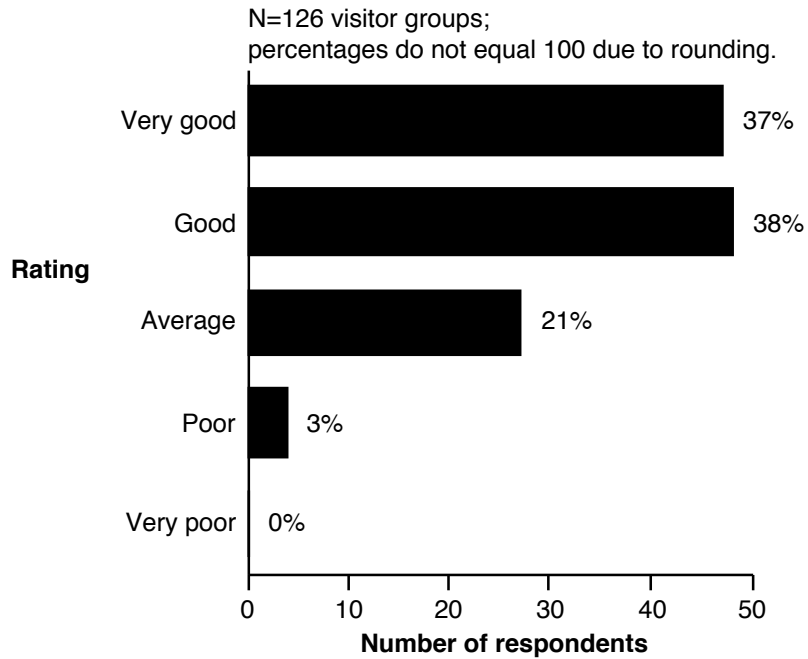


Figure 69: Quality of restrooms (Elkwallow)

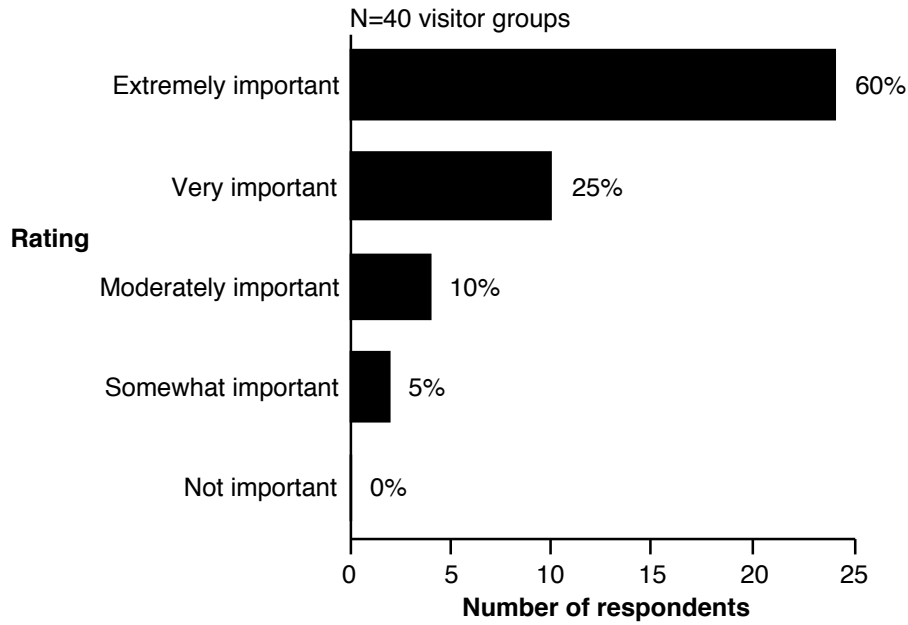


Figure 70: Importance of assistance from staff (Elkwallow)

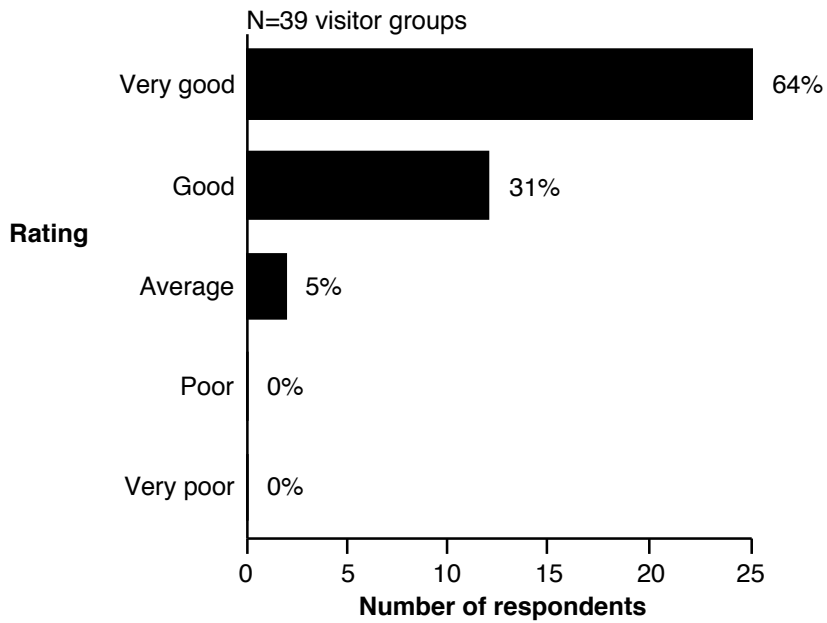
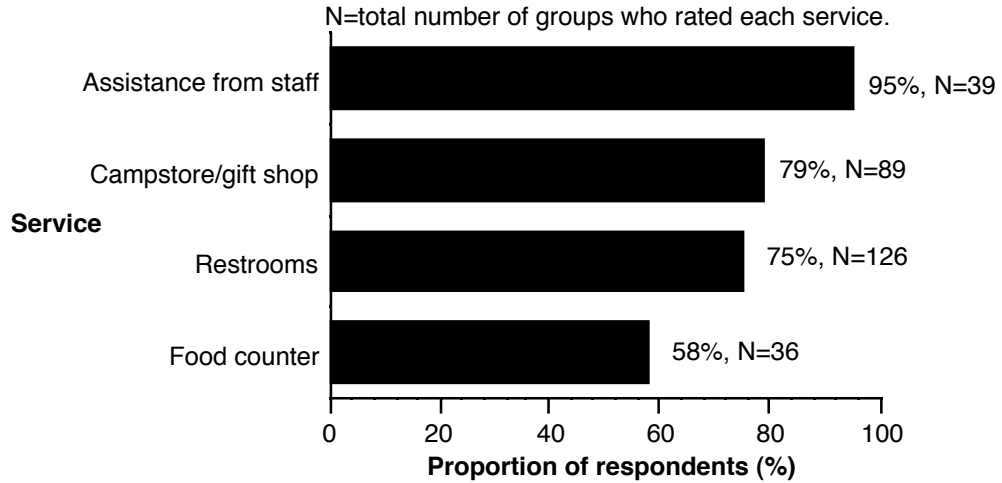


Figure 71: Quality of assistance from staff (Elkwallow)

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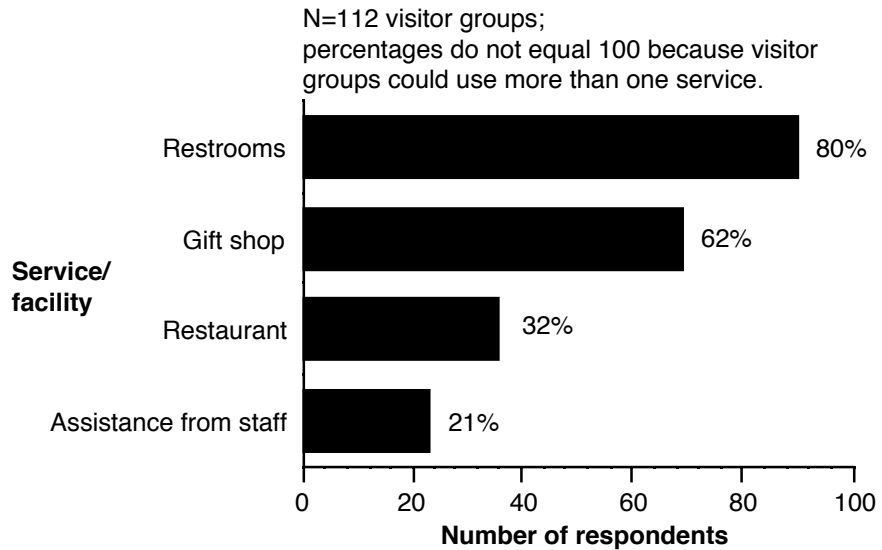




**Figure 72: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for Elkwallow concession services and facilities**

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**Panorama  
concession services  
and facilities**



**Figure 73: Panorama concession services and facilities used**

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Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the Panorama concession 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 Panorama concession service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 74 and 75 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the park services and facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. NOTE: Assistance from staff was not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

Even-numbered Figures 76-82 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. The service and facility receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings was the restrooms (86%). The highest proportion of "not important" ratings was for the gift shop (5%).

Odd-numbered Figures 77-83 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. The service and facility receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings was the restrooms (78%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for the restaurant (3%).

Figure 84 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services and facilities.

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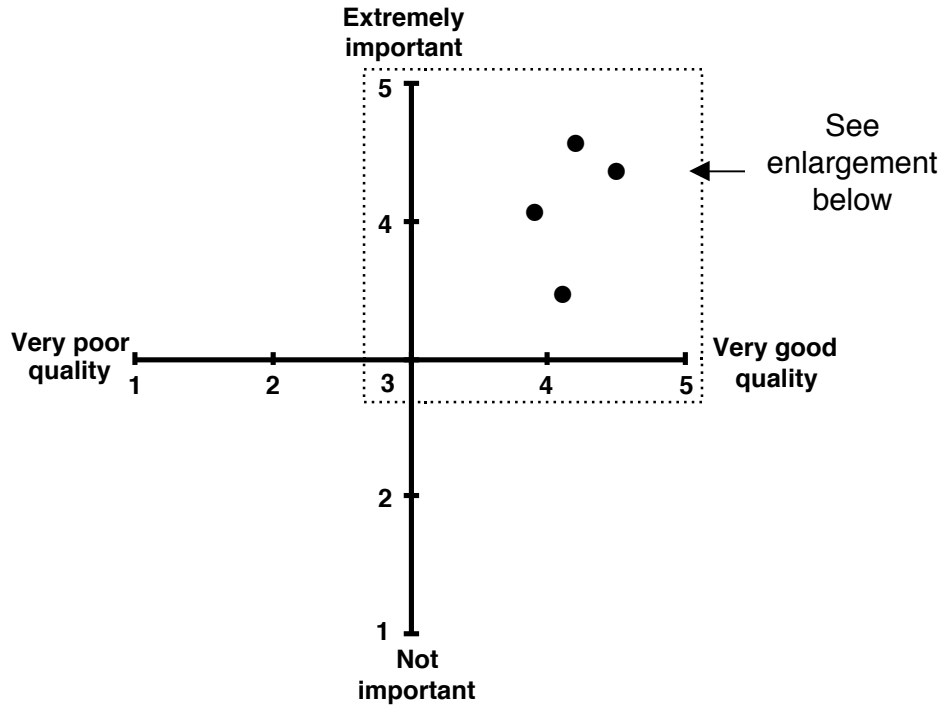


Figure 74: Average ratings of Panorama concession services importance and quality



Figure 75: Detail of Figure 74

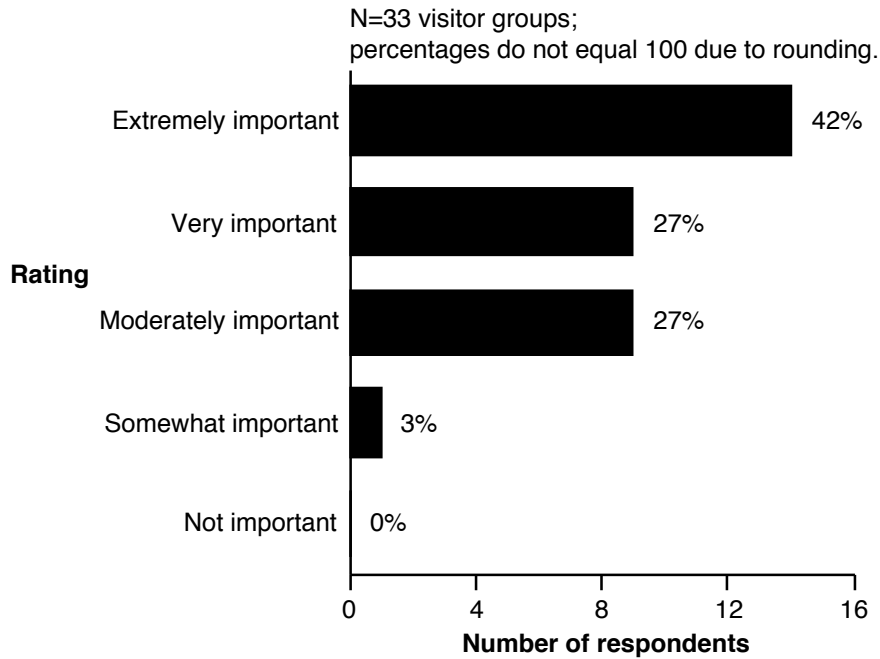


Figure 76: Importance of restaurant (Panorama)

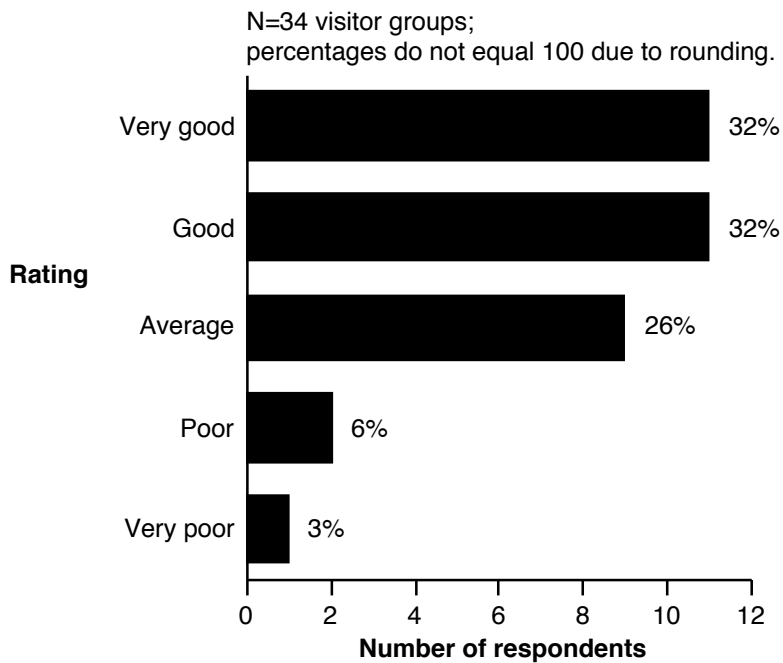


Figure 77: Quality of restaurant (Panorama)

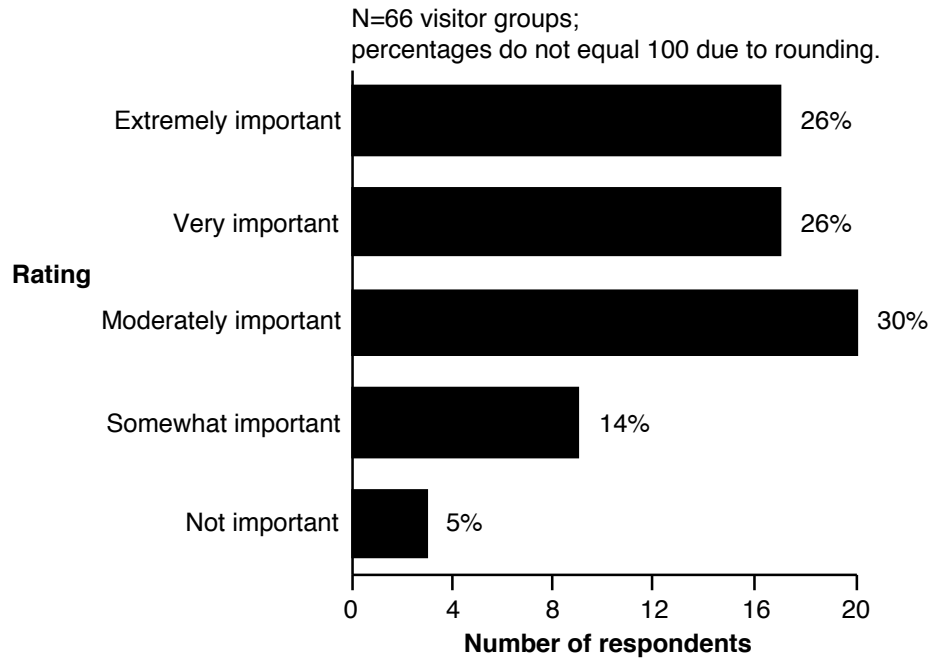


Figure 78: Importance of gift shop (Panorama)

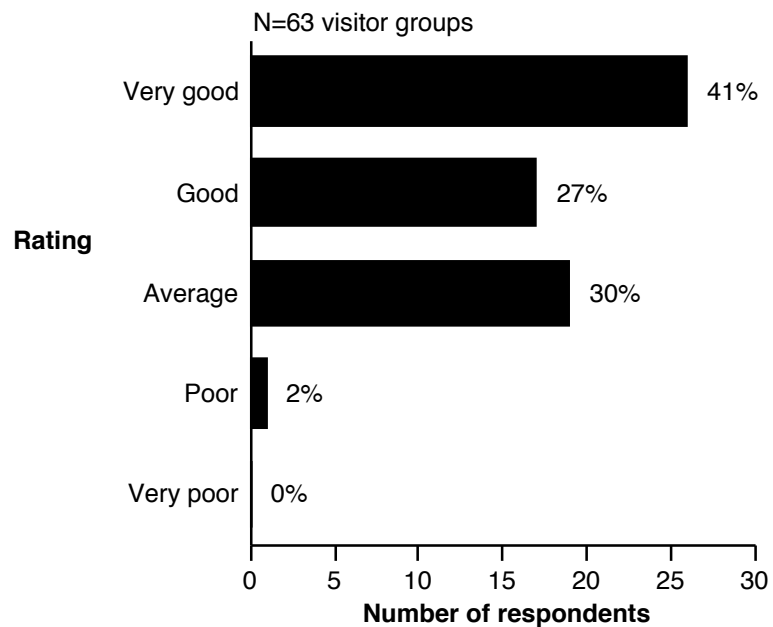


Figure 79: Quality of gift shop (Panorama)

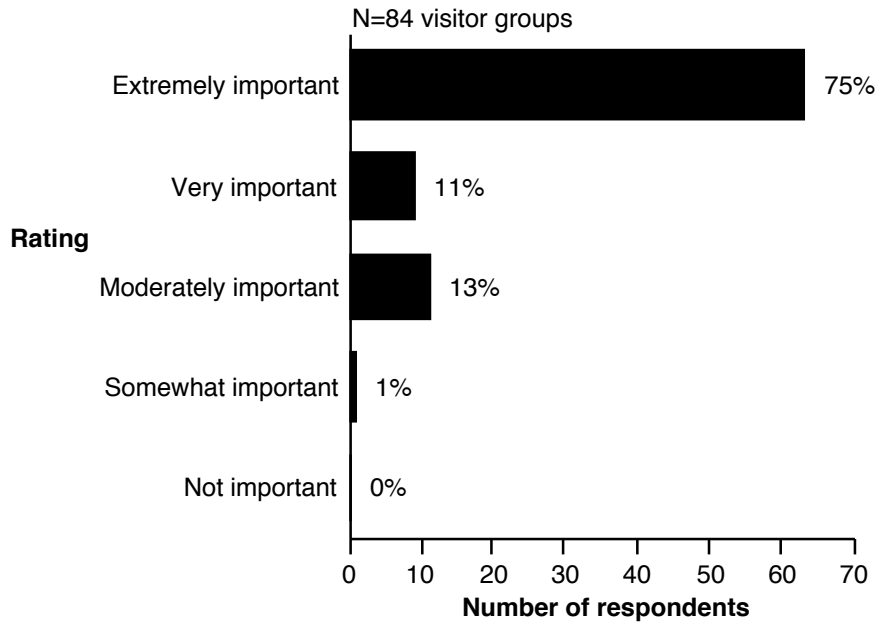


Figure 80: Importance of restrooms (Panorama)

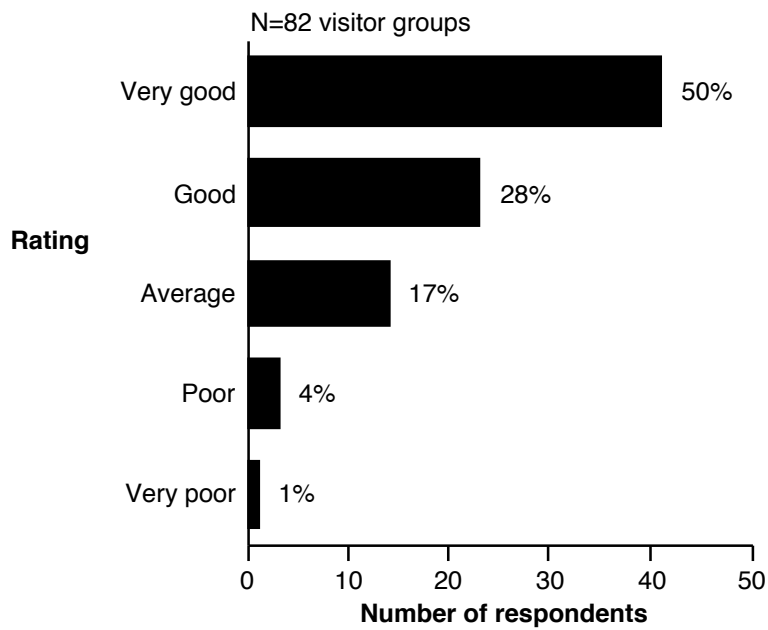


Figure 81: Quality of restrooms (Panorama)

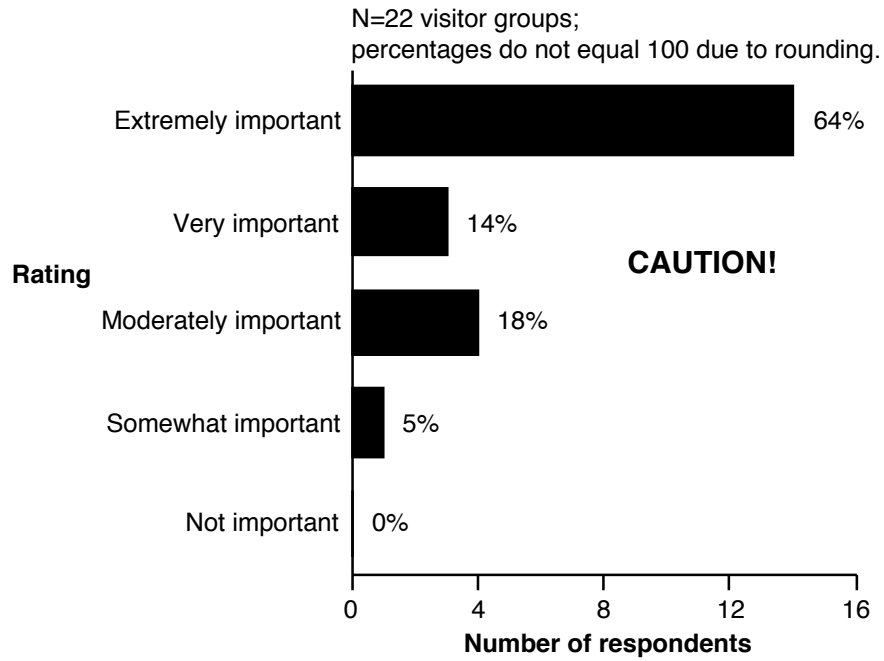


Figure 82: Importance of assistance from staff (Panorama)

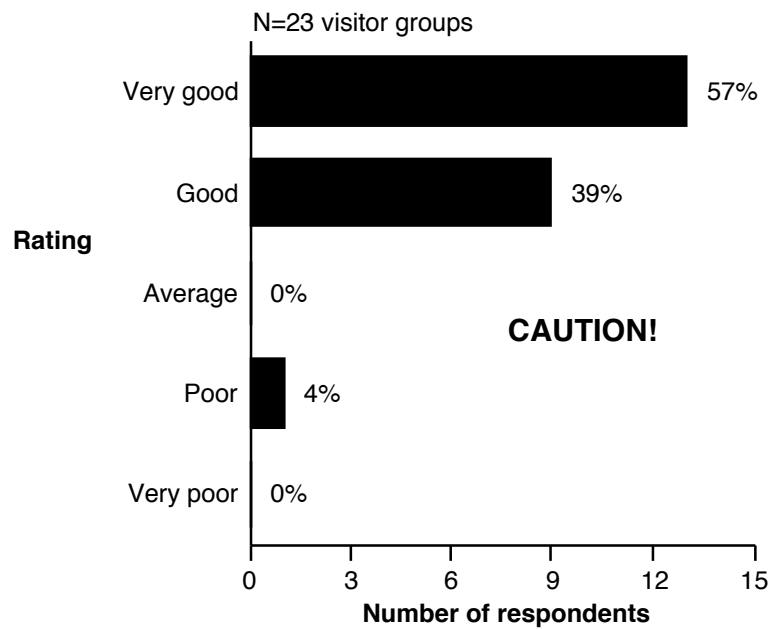
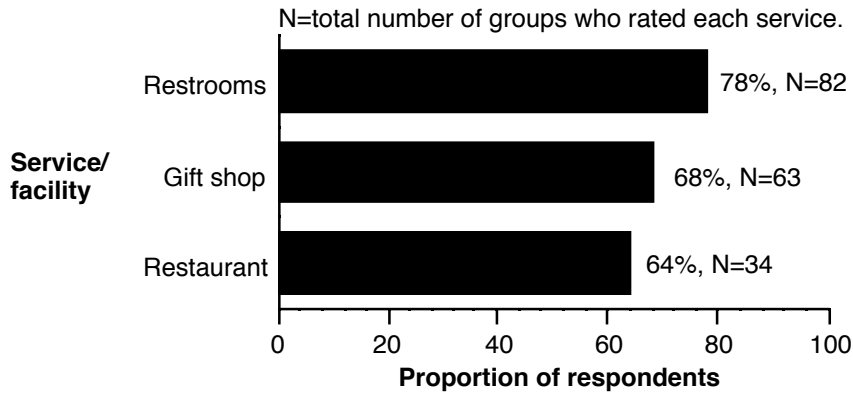


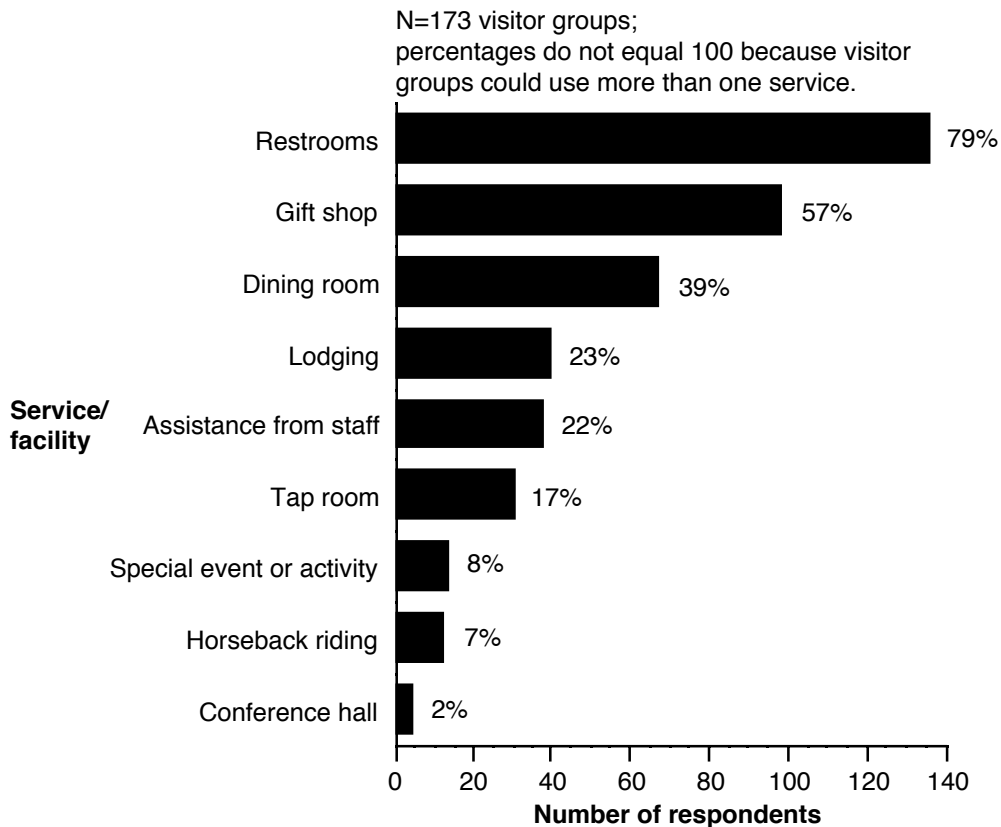
Figure 83: Quality of assistance from staff (Panorama)



**Figure 84: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for Panorama concession services and facilities**

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**Skyland concession services and facilities**



**Figure 85: Skyland concession services and facilities used**

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Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the Skyland concession 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 Skyland concession service and service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 86 and 87 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the park facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. NOTE: The tap room, horseback riding, conference hall and special event/activity were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

Even-numbered Figures 88-104 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included lodging (92%) and restrooms (92%). The highest proportion of "not important" ratings was for the tap room (7%).

Odd-numbered Figures 89-105 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included assistance from park staff (86%) and restrooms (85%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for the dining room (2%).

Figure 106 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services and facilities.

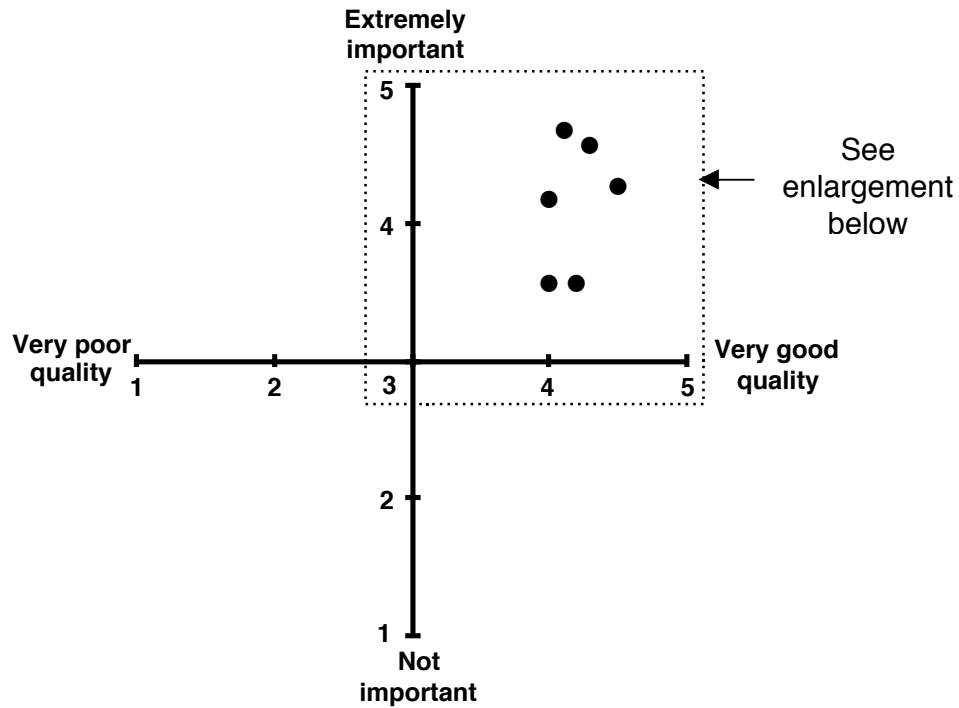


Figure 86: Average ratings of Skyland concession services importance and quality

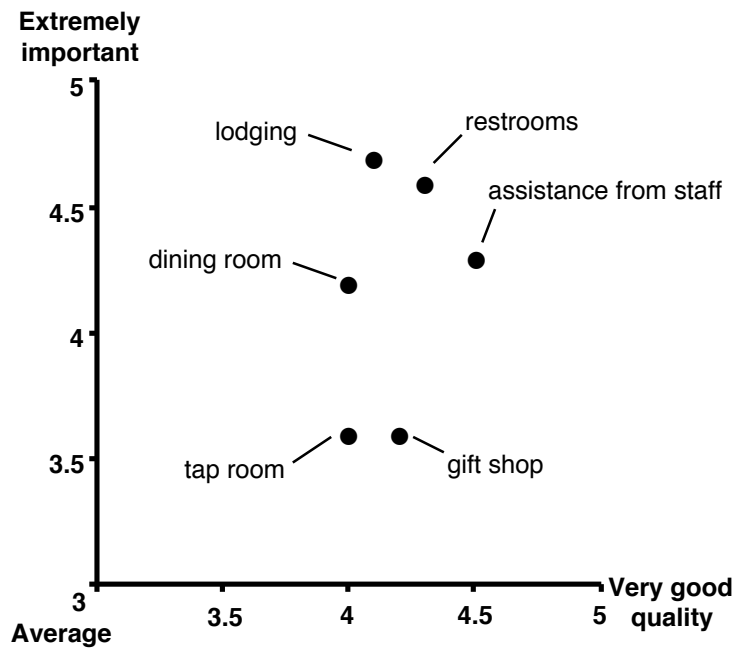


Figure 87: Detail of Figure 86

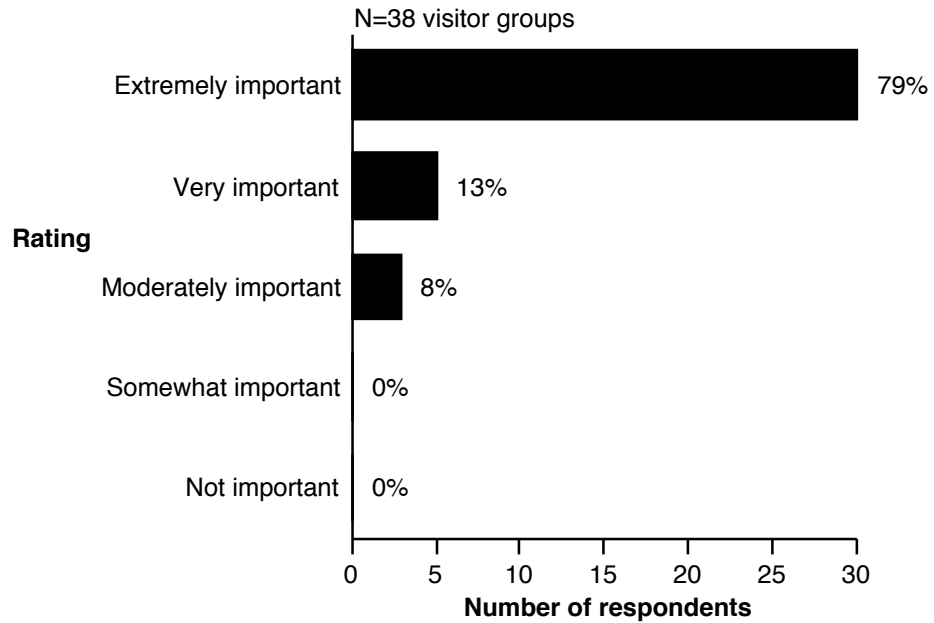


Figure 88: Importance of lodging (Skyland)

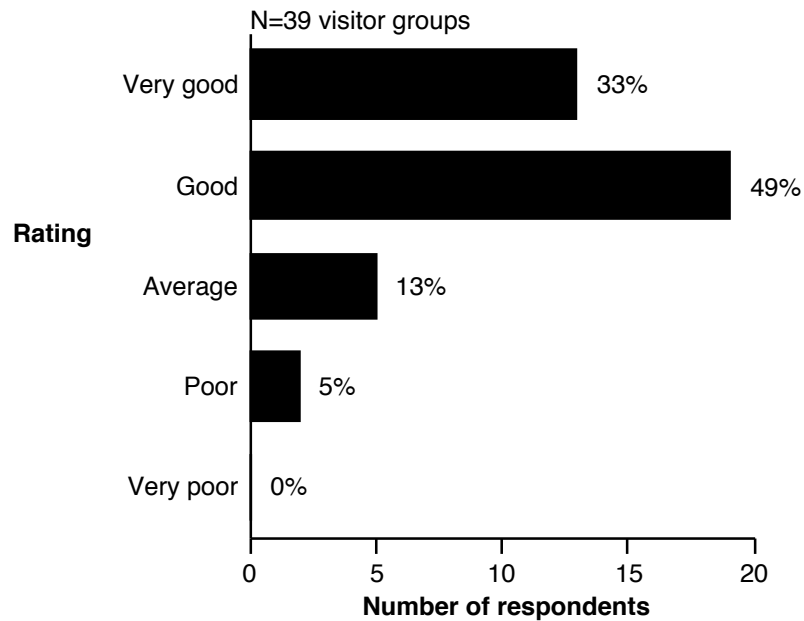


Figure 89: Quality of lodging (Skyland)

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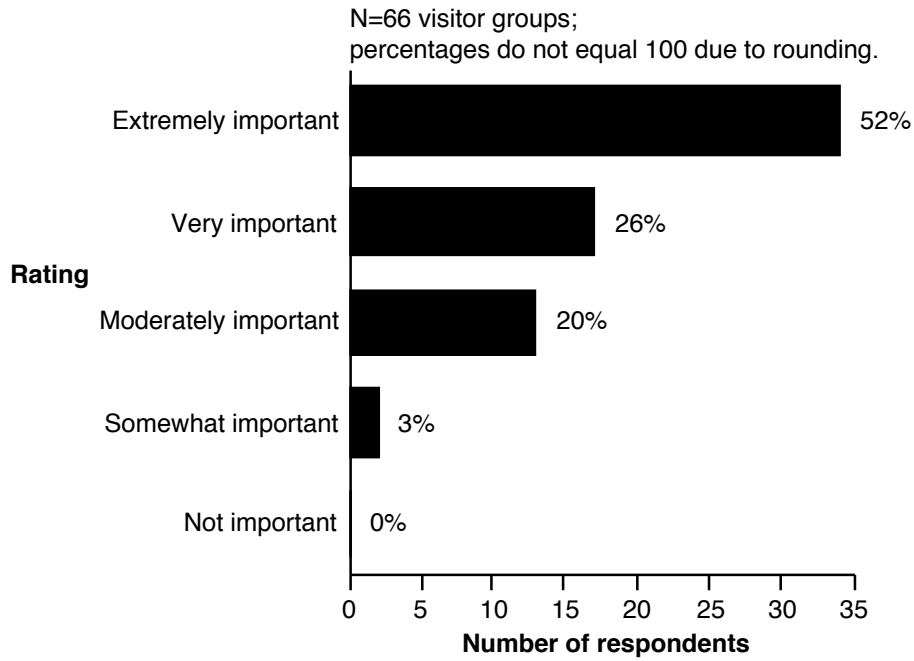


Figure 90: Importance of dining room (Skyland)

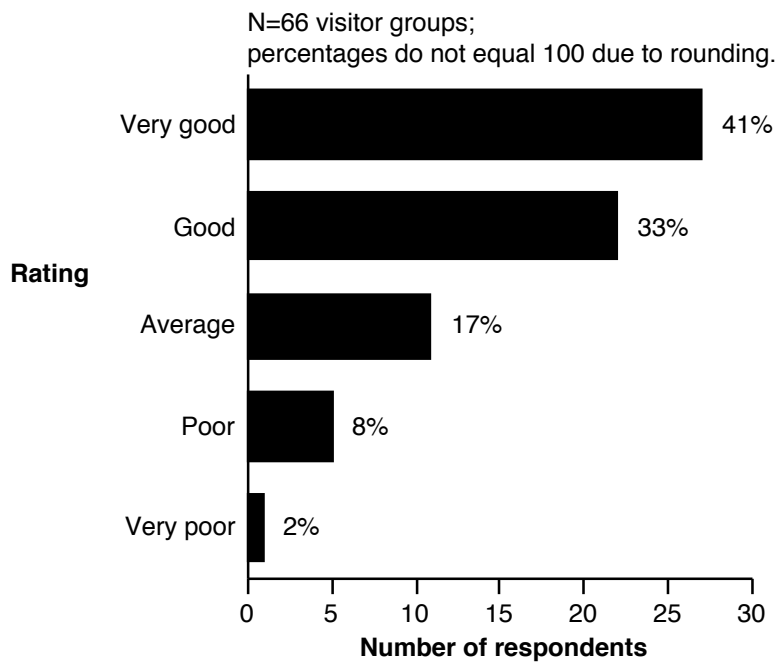


Figure 91: Quality of dining room (Skyland)

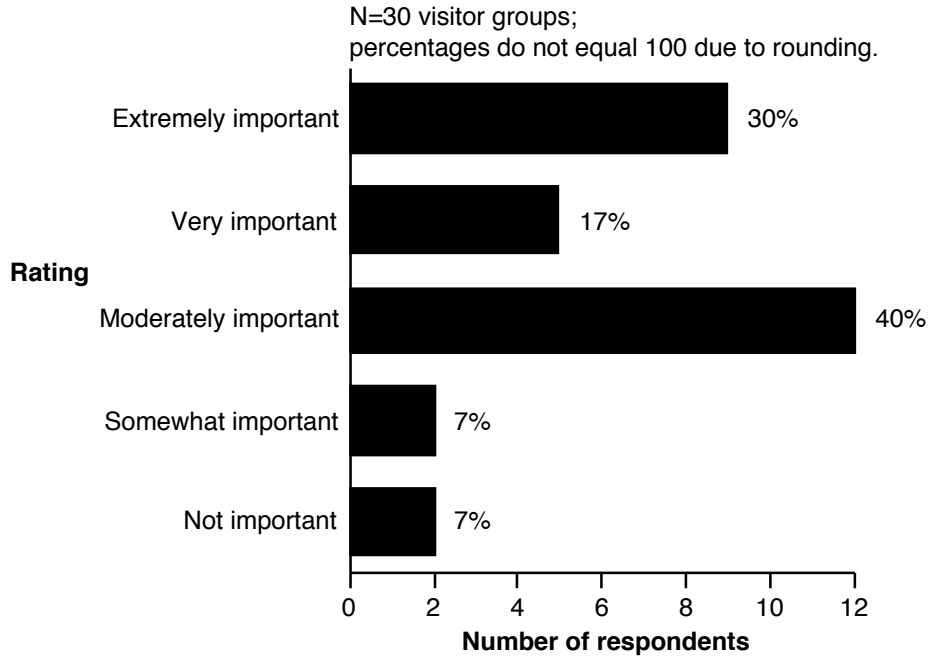


Figure 92: Importance of tap room (Skyland)



Figure 93: Quality of tap room (Skyland)

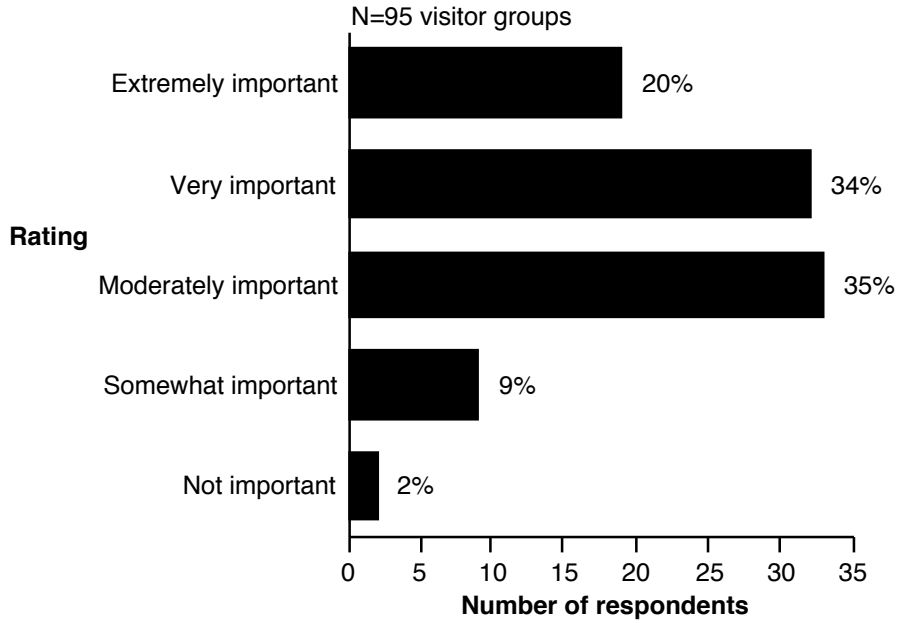


Figure 94: Importance of gift shop (Skyland)

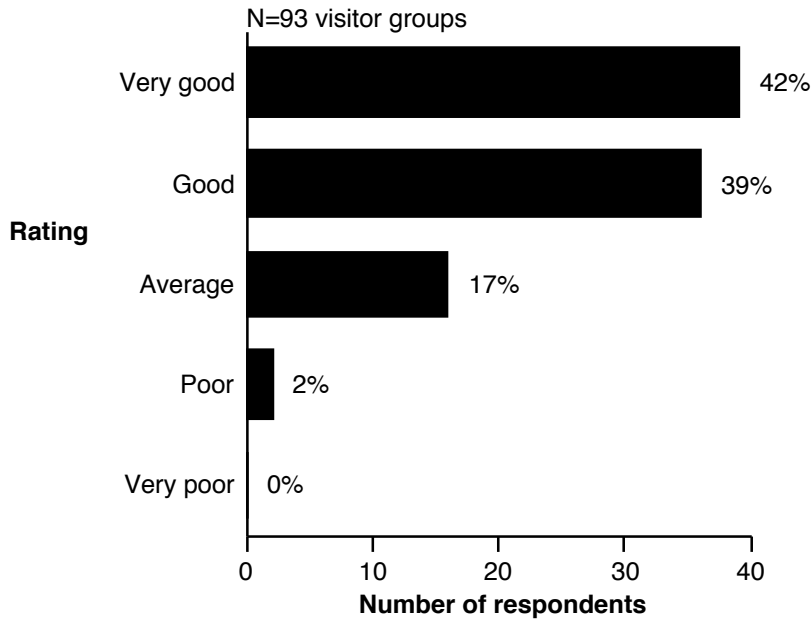


Figure 95: Quality of gift shop (Skyland)

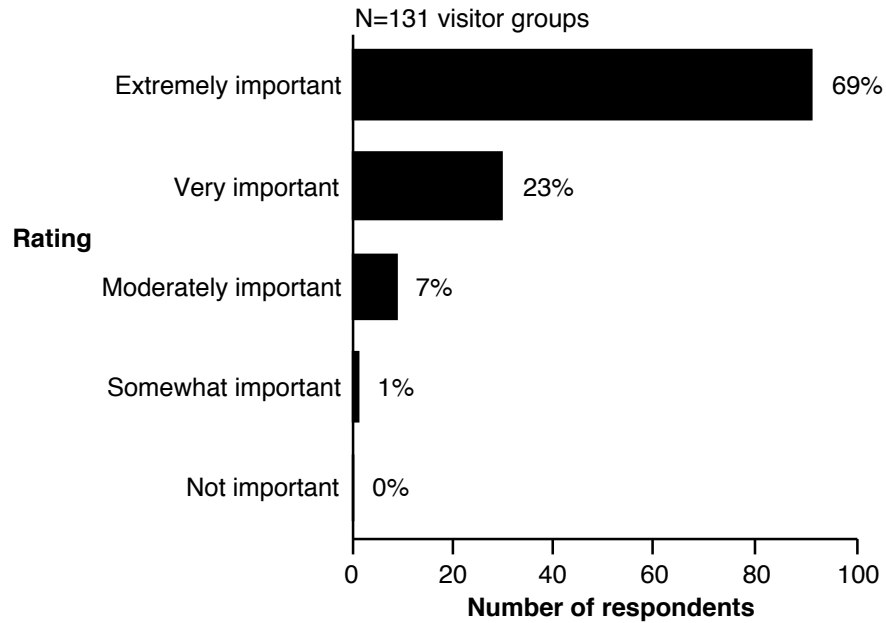


Figure 96: Importance of restrooms (Skyland)

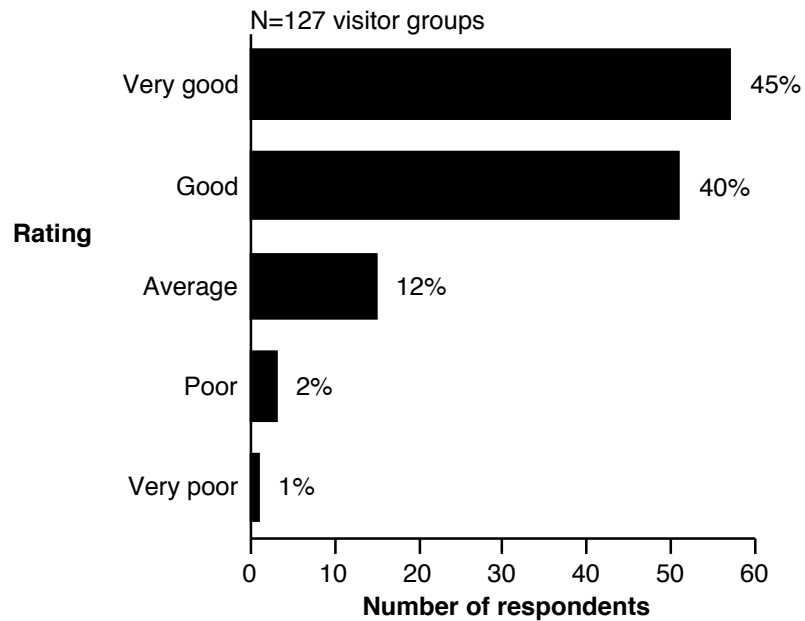


Figure 97: Quality of restrooms (Skyland)

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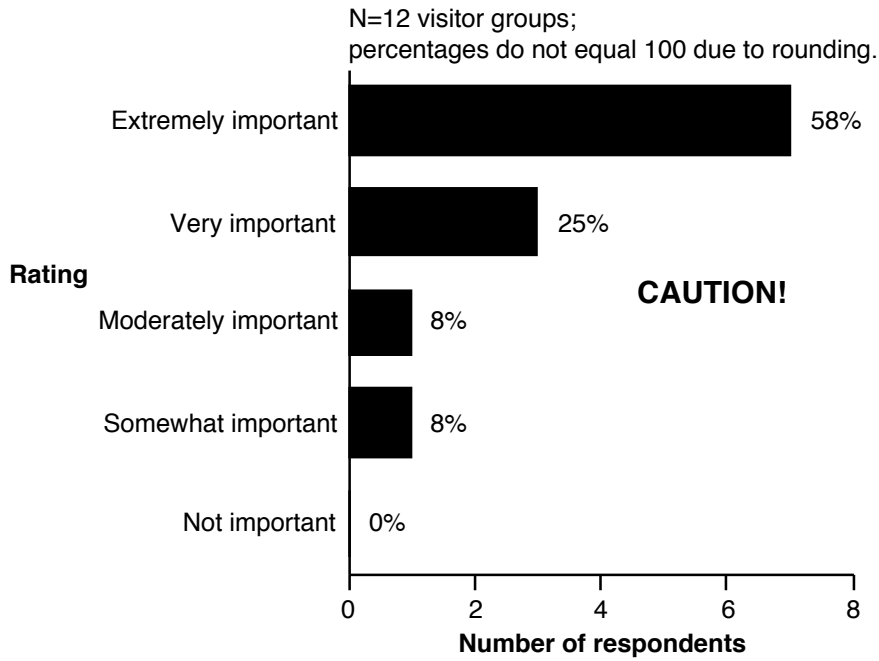


Figure 98: Importance of horseback riding (Skyland)

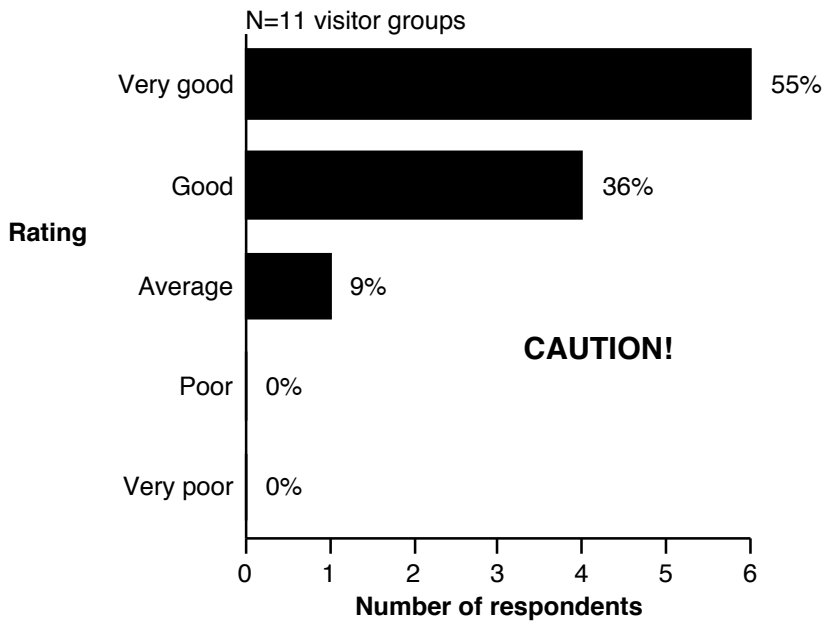


Figure 99: Quality of horseback riding (Skyland)



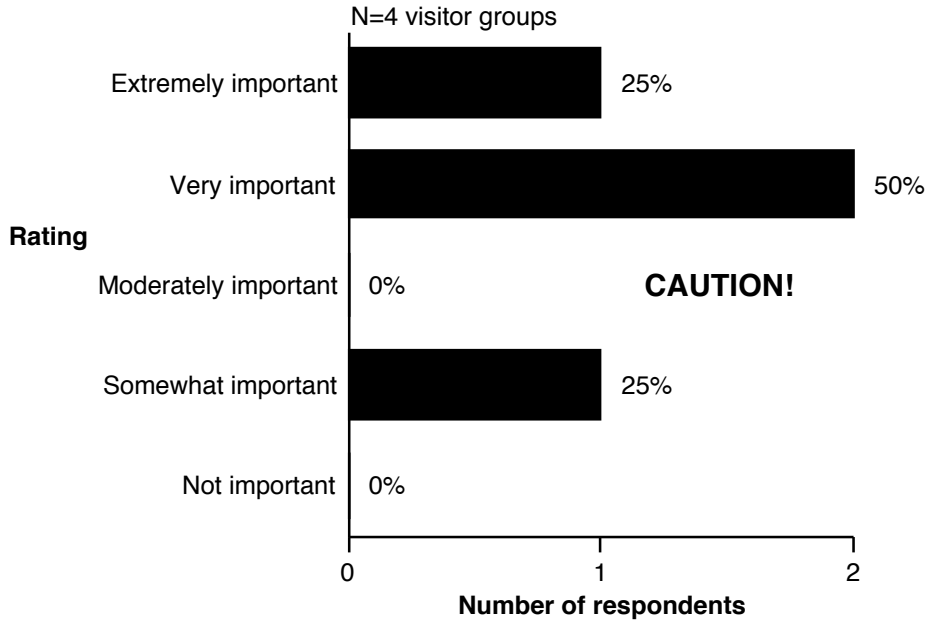


Figure 100: Importance of conference hall (Skyland)

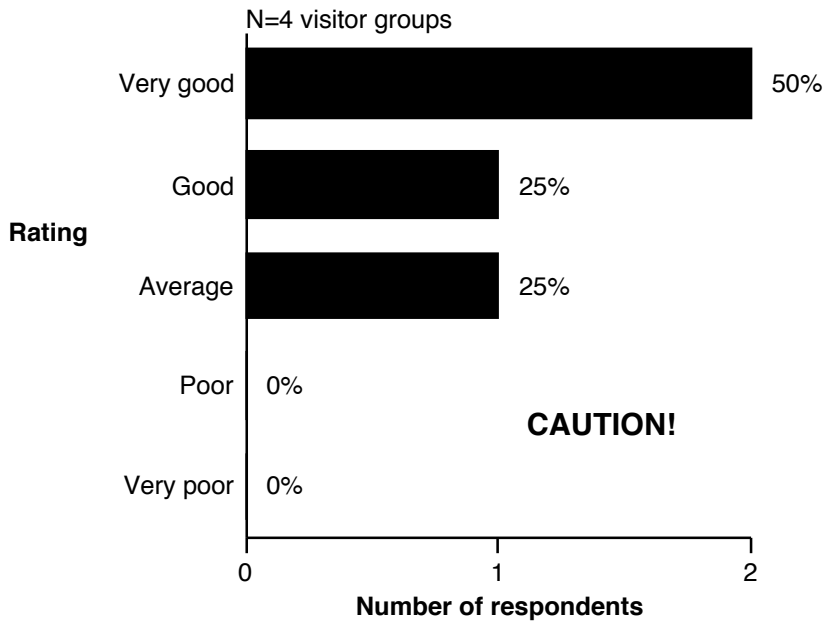


Figure 101: Quality of conference hall (Skyland)

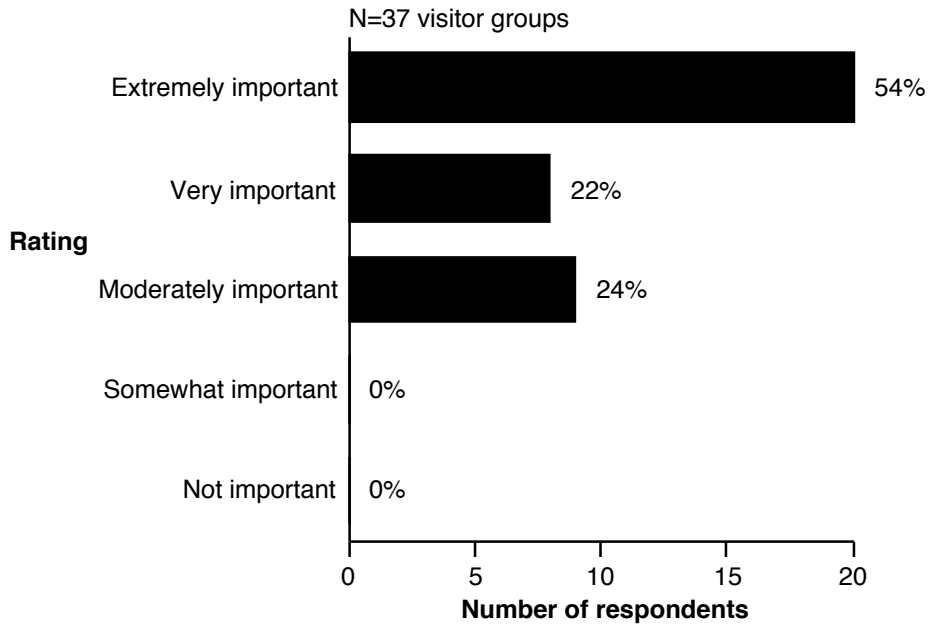


Figure 102: Importance of assistance from staff (Skyland)

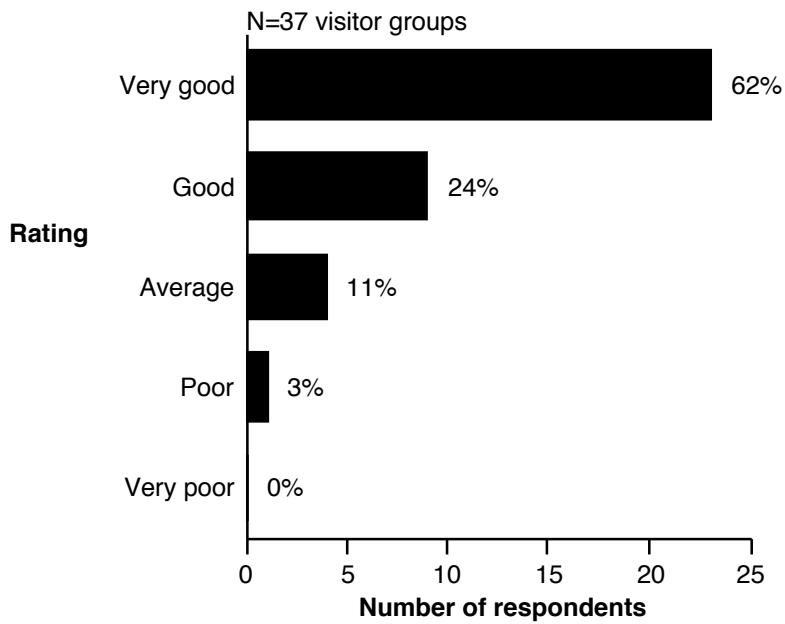


Figure 103: Quality of assistance from staff (Skyland)

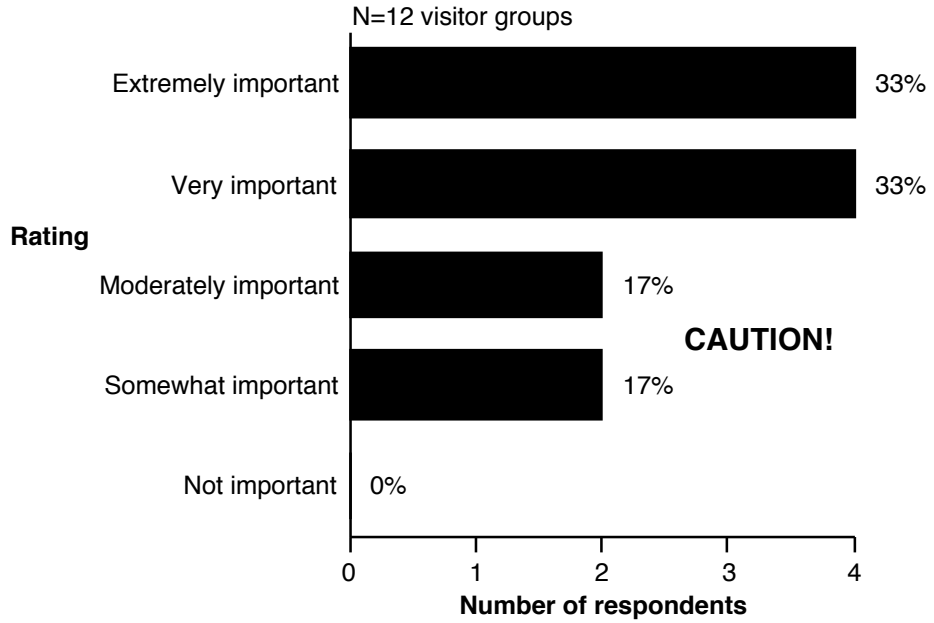


Figure 104: Importance of special event or activity (Skyland)

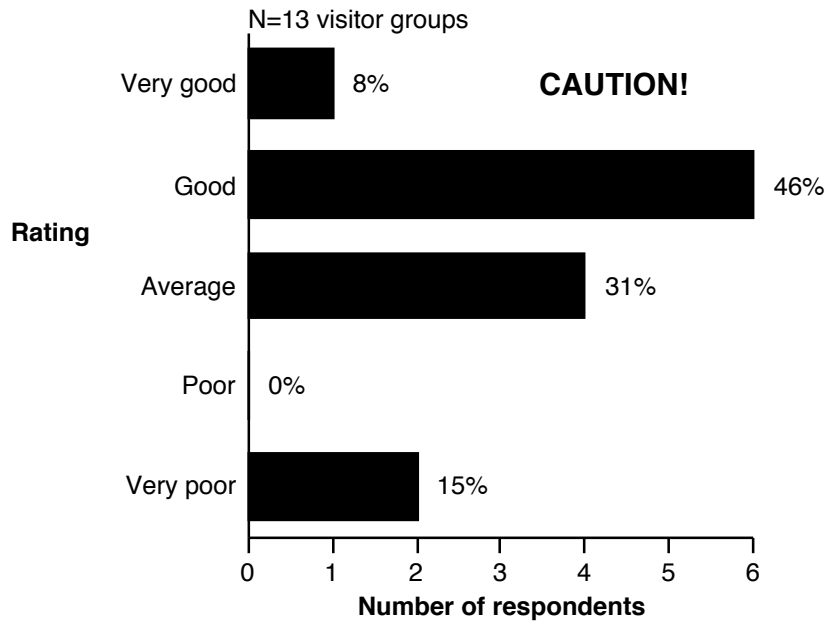


Figure 105: Quality of special event or activity (Skyland)

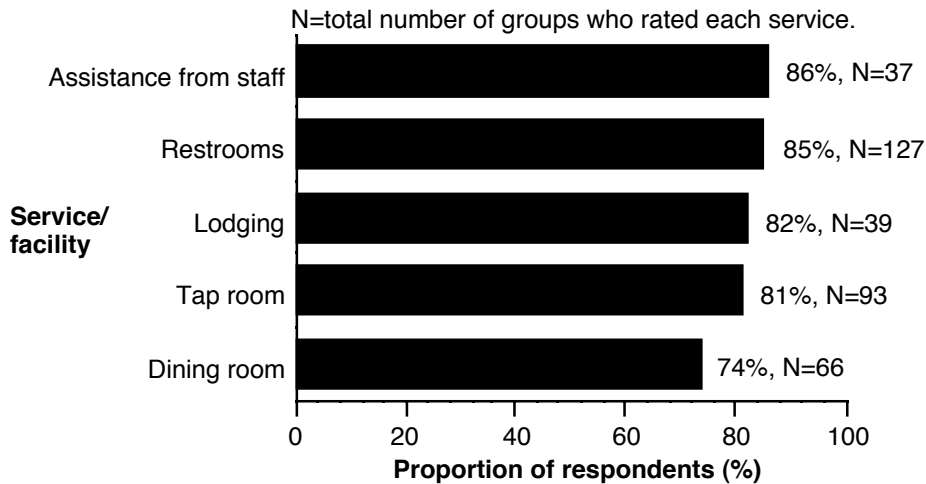


Figure 106: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for Skyland concession services and facilities

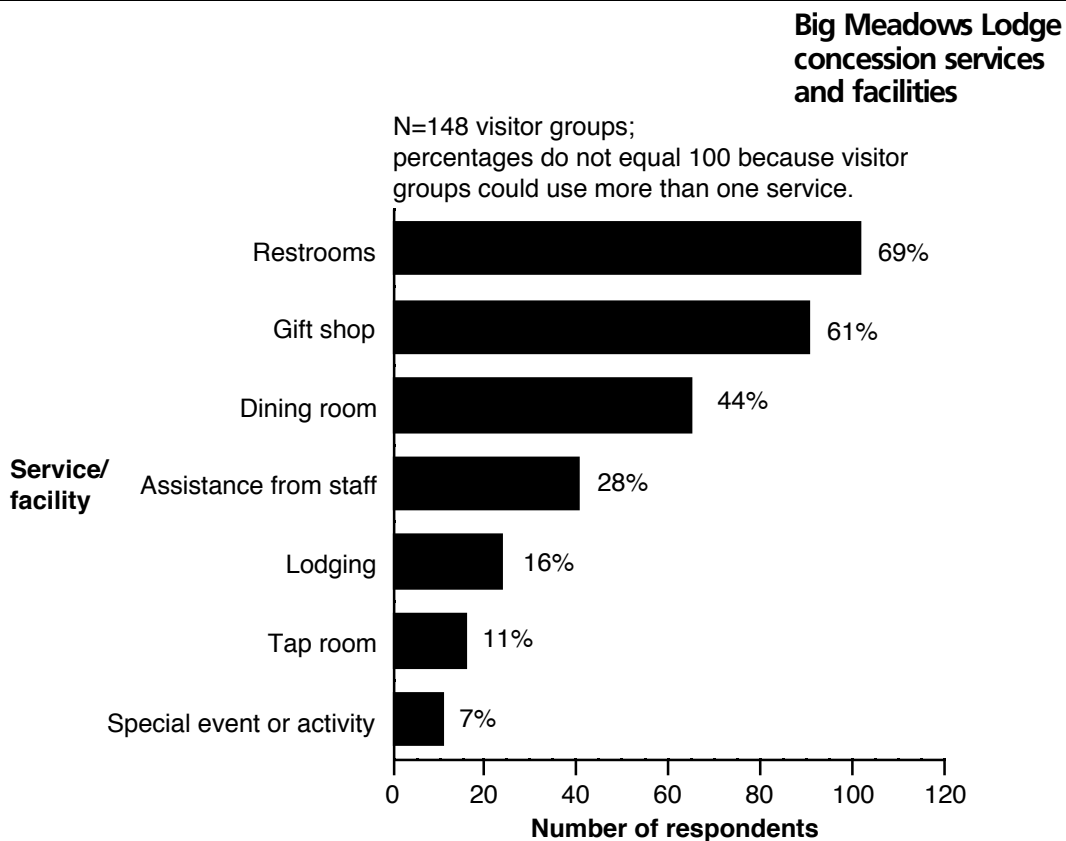


Figure 107: Big Meadows Lodge concession services and facilities used

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the Big Meadows Lodge concession 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 Big Meadows Lodge concession service and service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and service and facility. Figures 108 and 109 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the concession services and facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. NOTE: Lodging, tap room, and special event/activity were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

Even-numbered Figures 110-122 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included restrooms (90%) and the dining room (80%). The highest proportion of "not important" ratings was for the dining room (2%).

Odd-numbered Figures 111-123 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual facilities. Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included assistance from park staff (89%), restrooms (85%), and gift shop (84%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for the dining room (3%).

Figure 124 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services and facilities.

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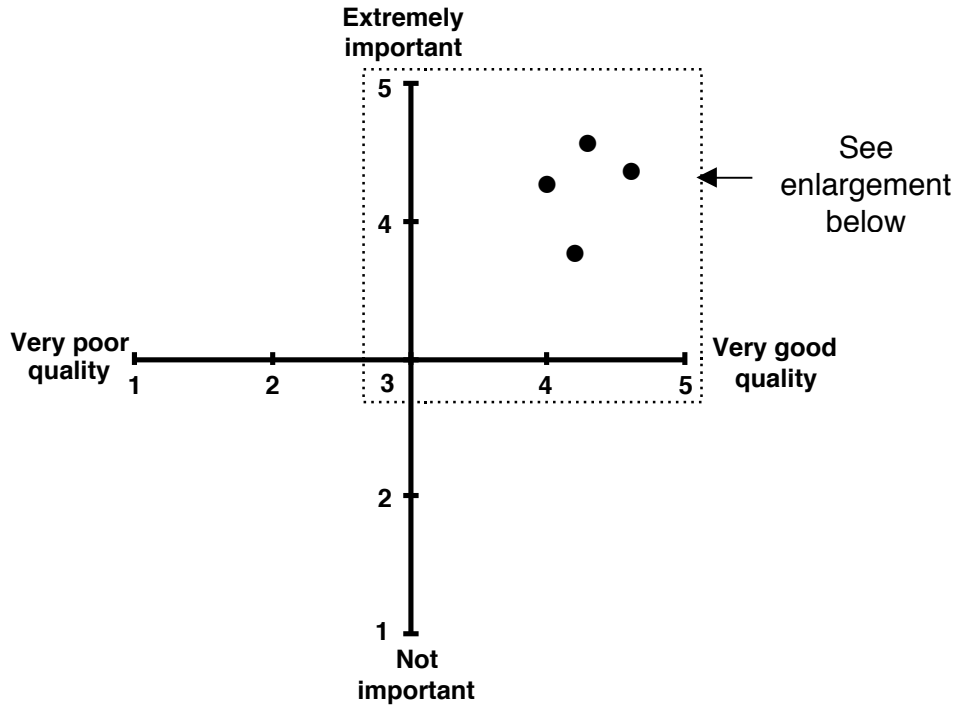


Figure 108: Average ratings of Big Meadows Lodge concession services importance and quality

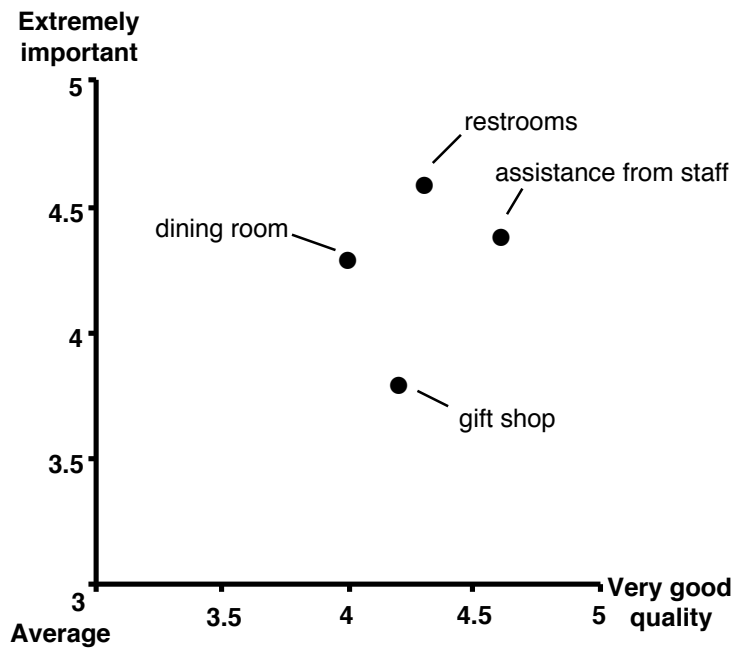


Figure 109: Detail of Figure 108

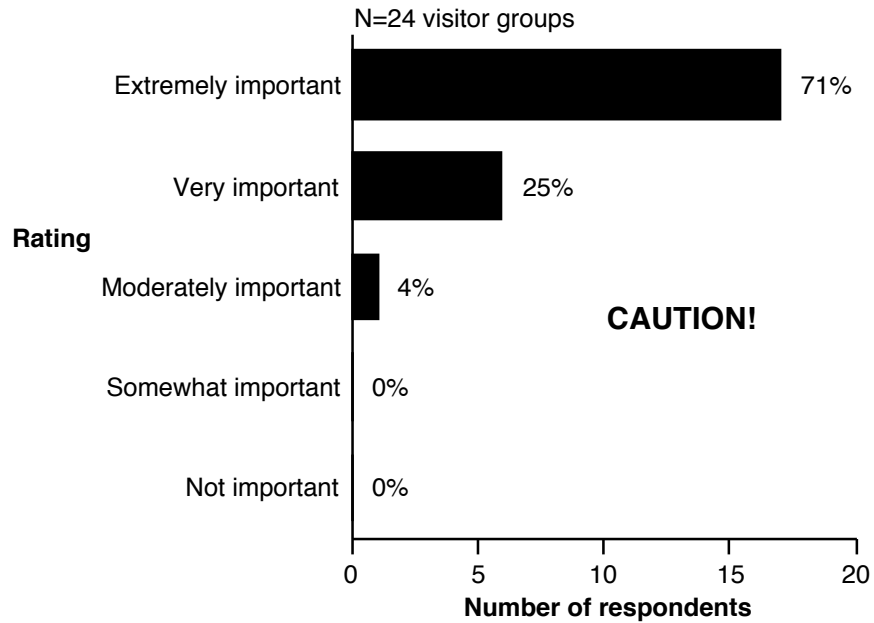


Figure 110: Importance of lodging (Big Meadows Lodge)

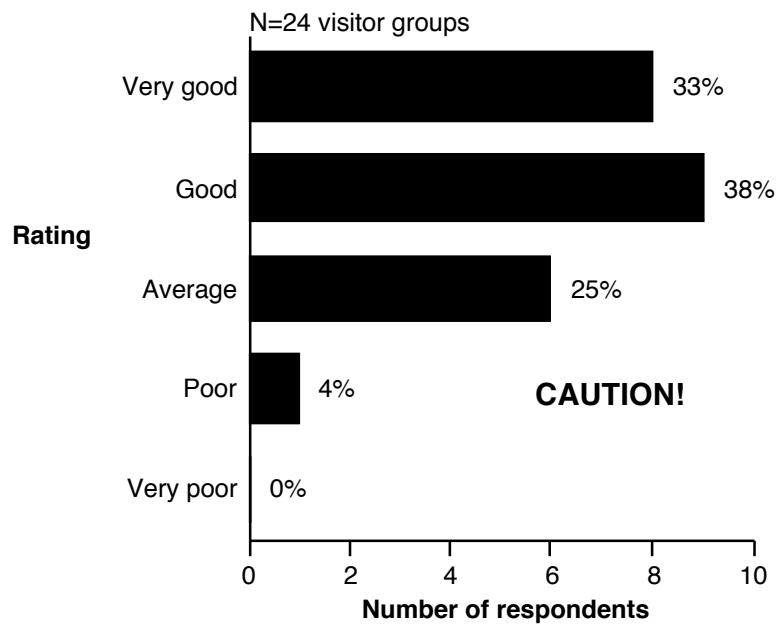


Figure 111: Quality of lodging (Big Meadows Lodge)

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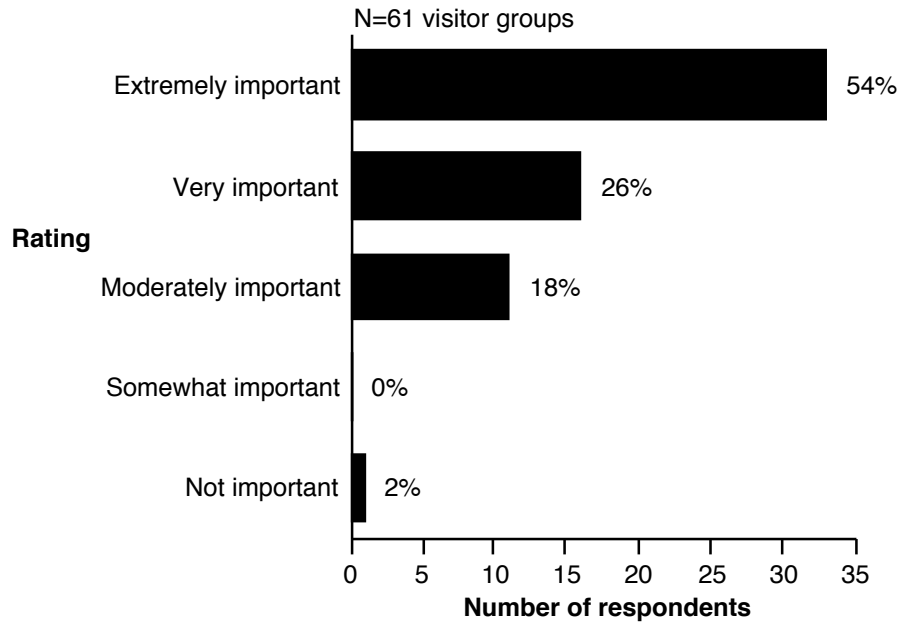


Figure 112: Importance of dining room (Big Meadows Lodge)

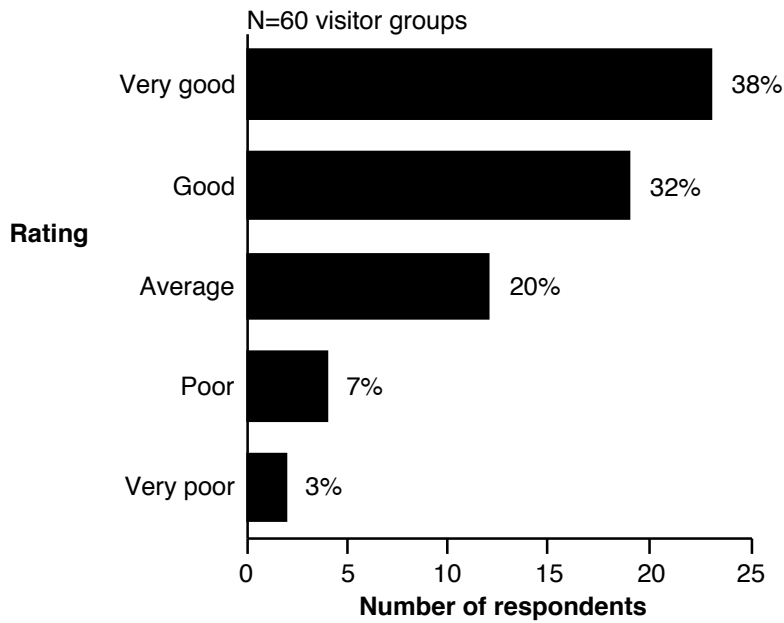


Figure 113: Quality of dining room (Big Meadows Lodge)



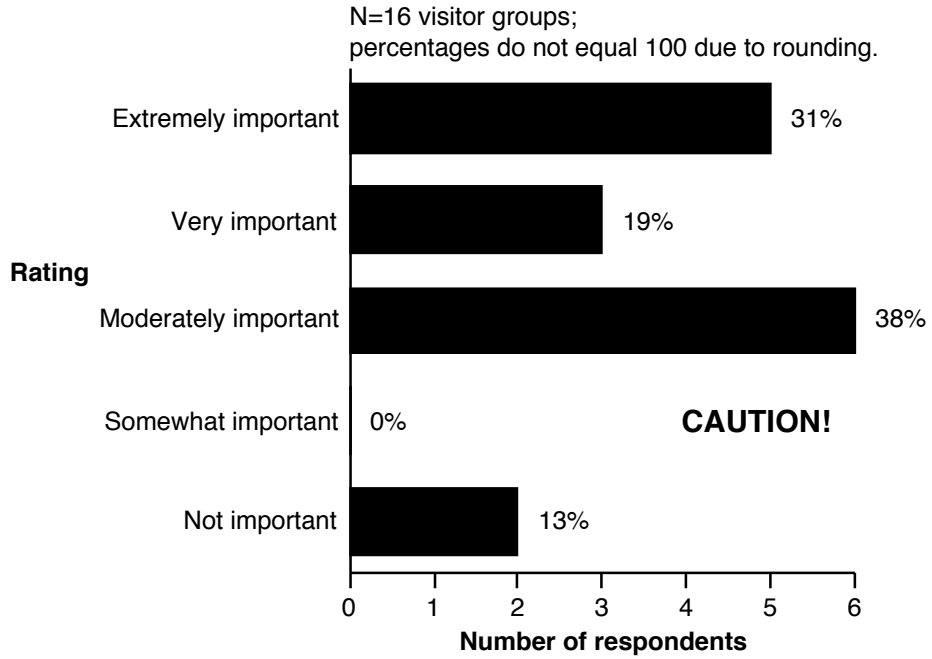


Figure 114: Importance of tap room (Big Meadows Lodge)

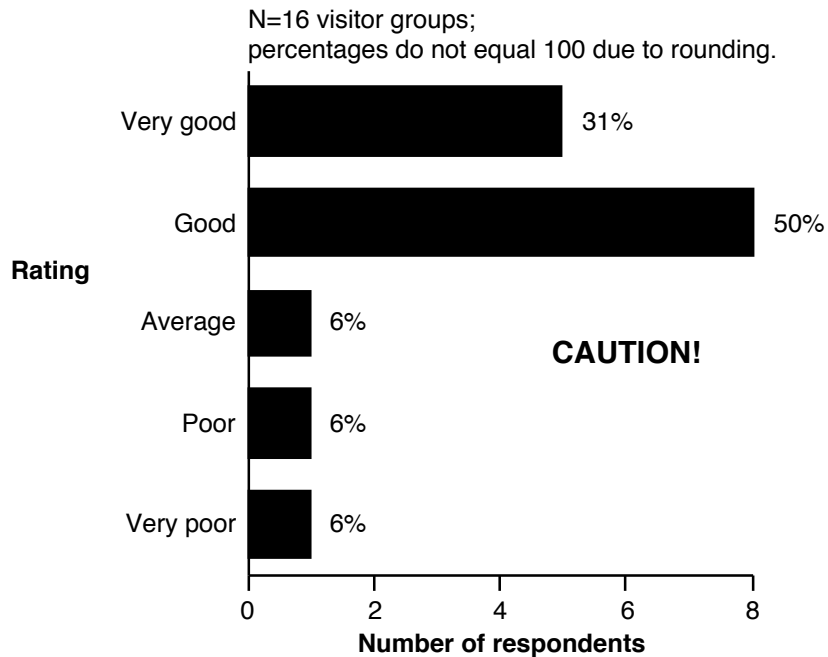


Figure 115: Quality of tap room (Big Meadows Lodge)

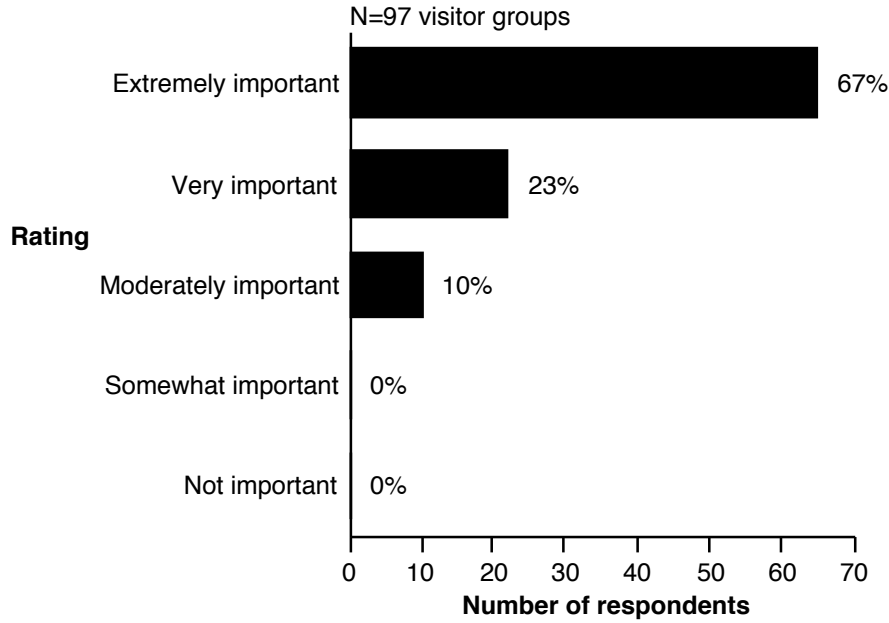


Figure 116: Importance of restrooms (Big Meadows Lodge)

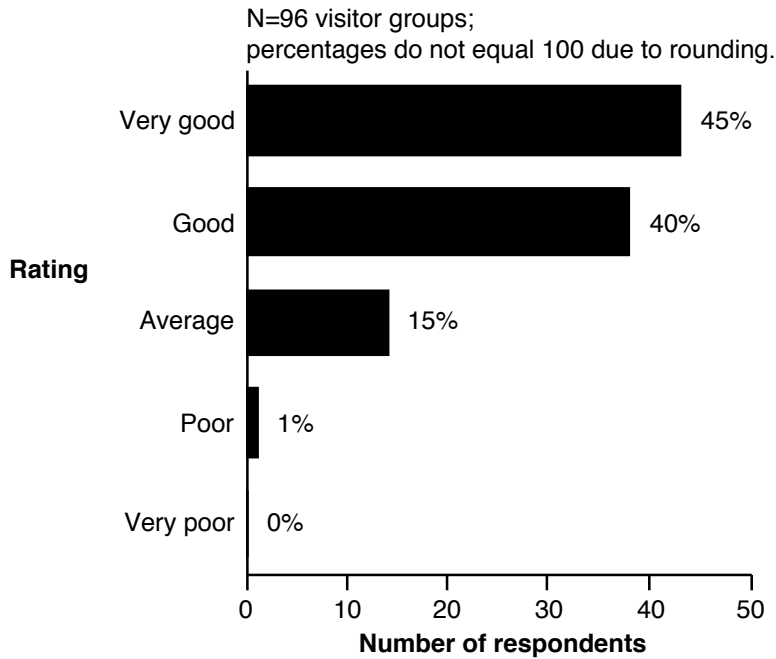


Figure 117: Quality of restrooms (Big Meadows Lodge)

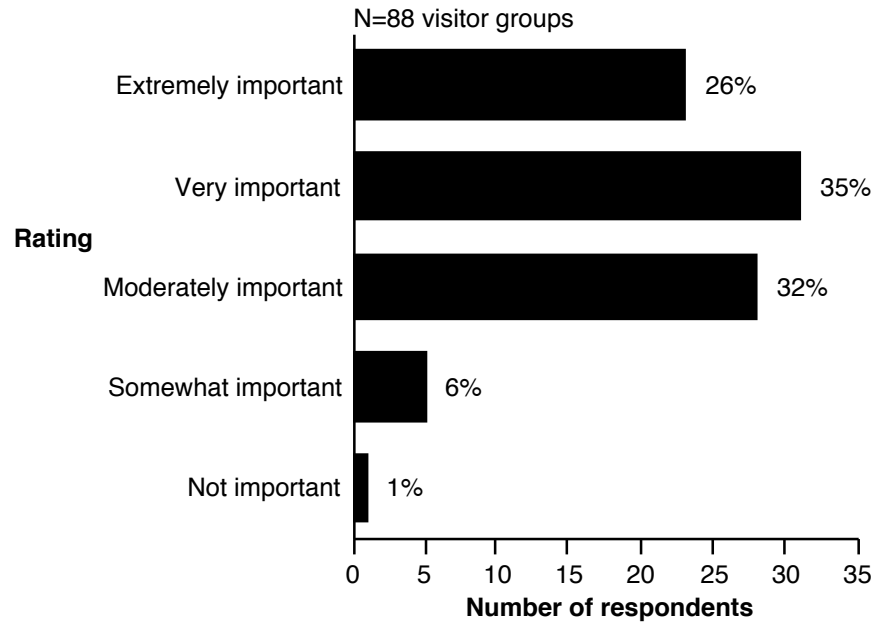


Figure 118: Importance of gift shop (Big Meadows Lodge)

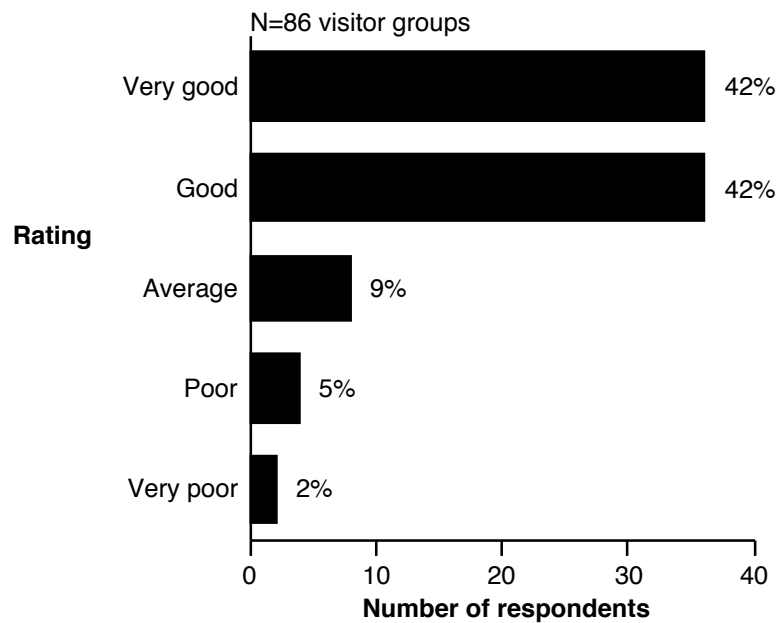


Figure 119: Quality of gift shop (Big Meadows Lodge)

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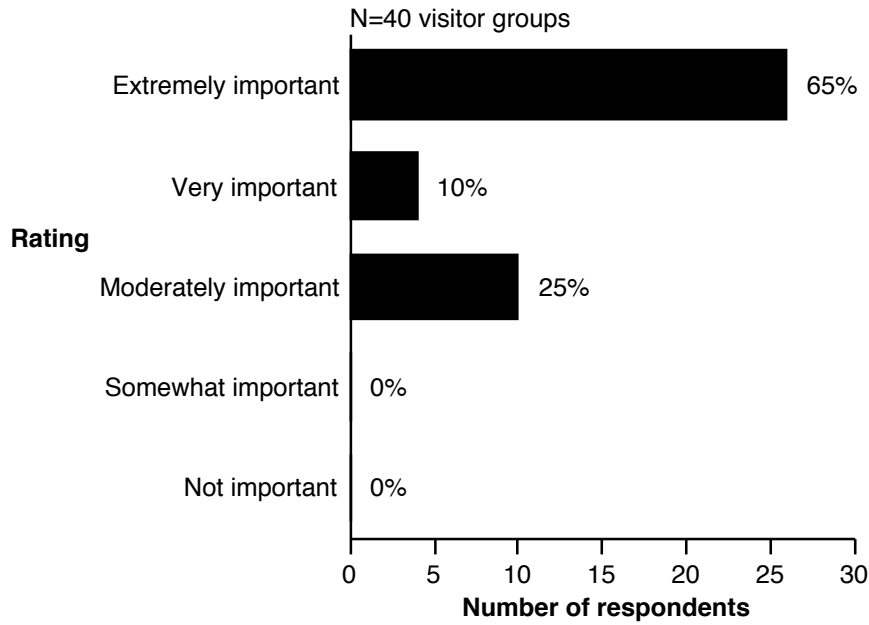


Figure 120: Importance of assistance from staff (Big Meadows Lodge)

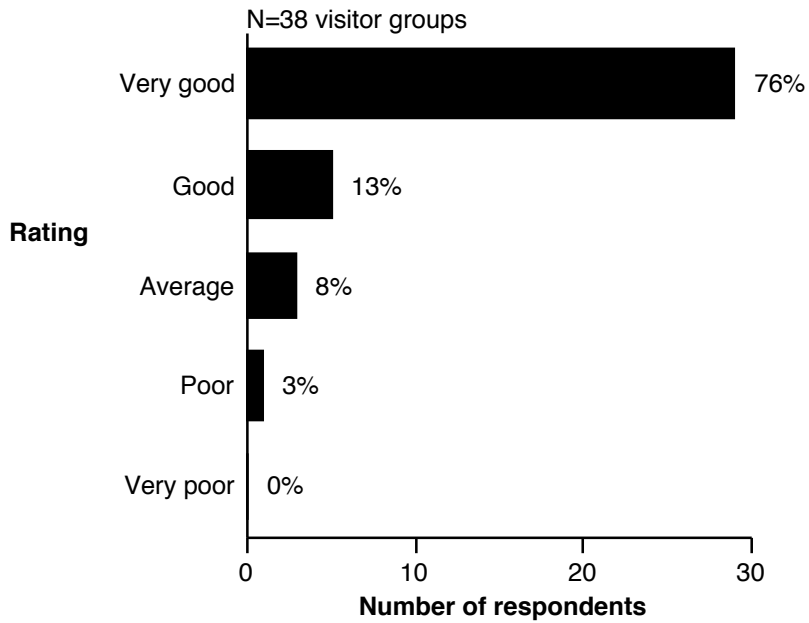


Figure 121: Quality of assistance from staff (Big Meadows Lodge)

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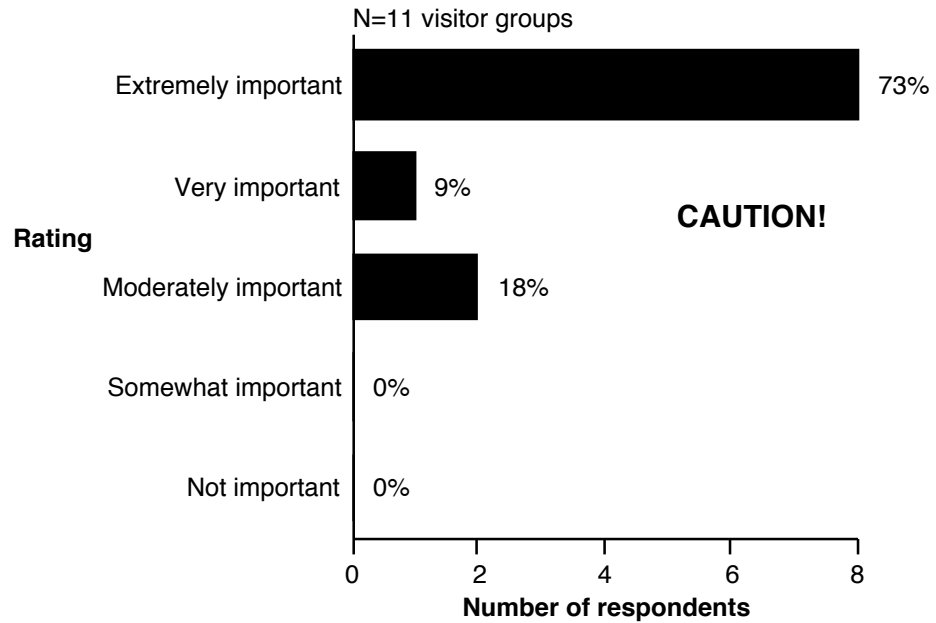


Figure 122: Importance of special event or activity (Big Meadows Lodge)

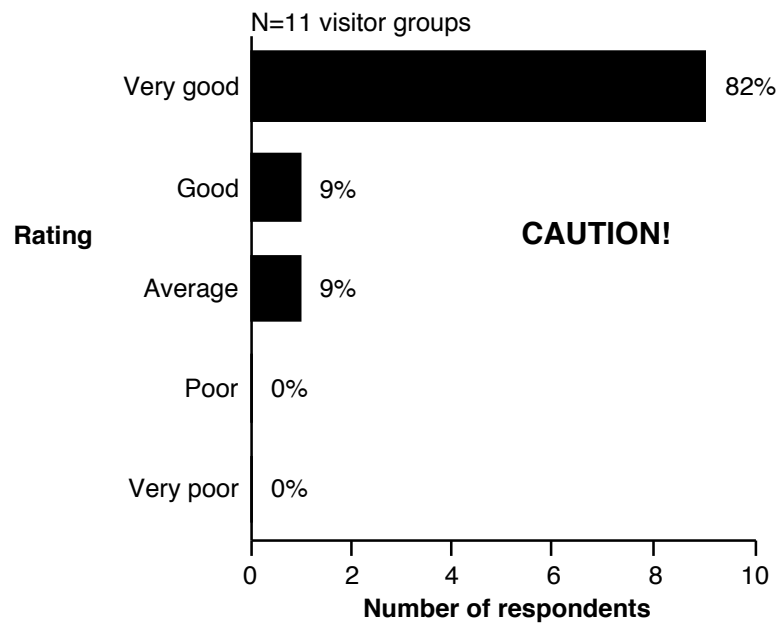
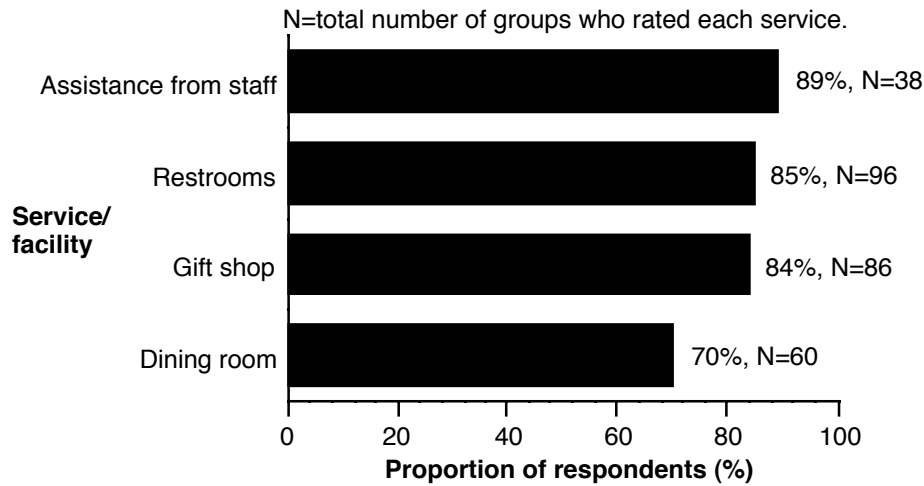
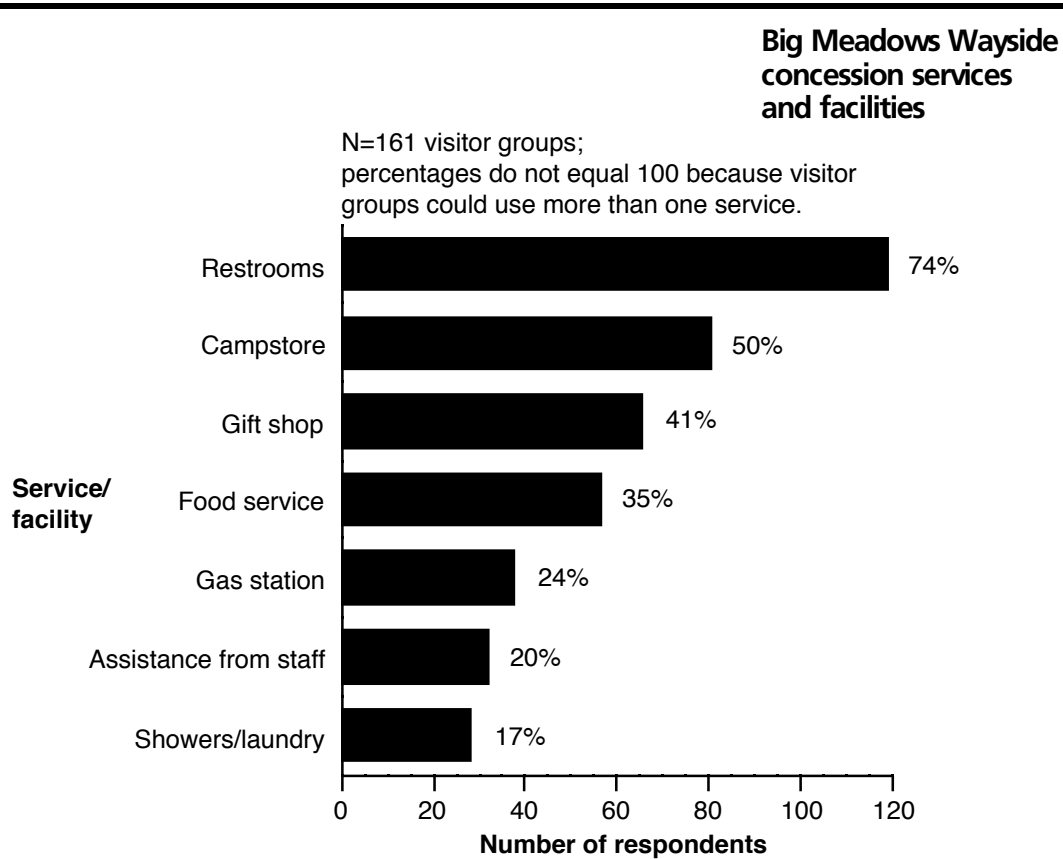


Figure 123: Quality of special event or activity (Big Meadows Lodge)



**Figure 124: Combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings for Big Meadows Lodge concession services and facilities**



**Figure 125: Big Meadows Wayside concession services and facilities used**

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

<p>IMPORTANCE</p> <p>5=extremely important</p> <p>4=very important</p> <p>3=moderately important</p> <p>2=somewhat important</p> <p>1=not important</p>	<p>QUALITY</p> <p>5=very good</p> <p>4=good</p> <p>3=average</p> <p>2=poor</p> <p>1=very poor</p>
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The average importance and quality ratings for each Big Meadow Wayside concession service and service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 126 and 127 show the average importance and quality ratings for each of the concession services and facilities. All services and facilities were rated above average in importance and quality. NOTE: Showers/laundry were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

Even-numbered Figures 128-140 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings included restrooms (93%), gas station (92%) and assistance from staff (85%). The highest proportion of "not important" ratings was for the campstore (1%).

Odd-numbered Figures 129-141 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services and facilities. Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings included assistance from park staff (93%), campstore (81%), gift shop (81%) and restrooms (80%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for the food service (4%).

Figure 142 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services and facilities.

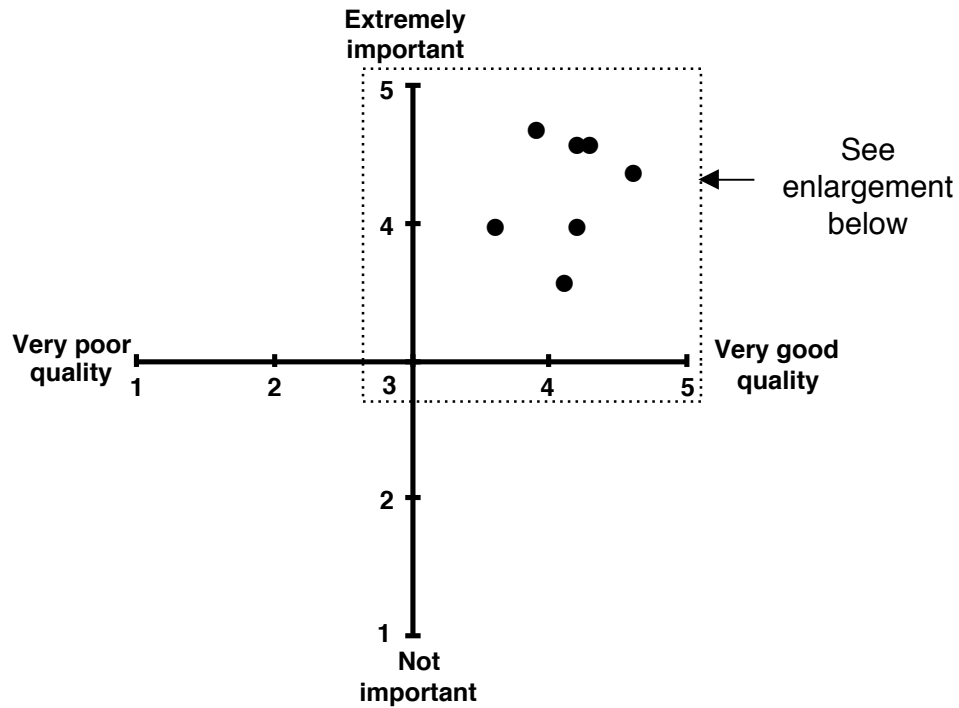


Figure 126: Average ratings of Big Meadows Wayside concession services importance and quality

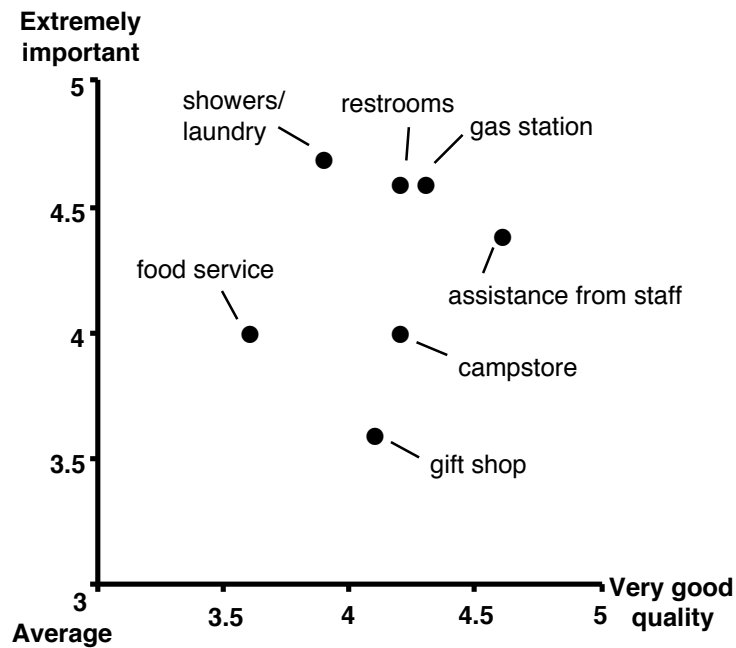


Figure 127: Detail of Figure 126



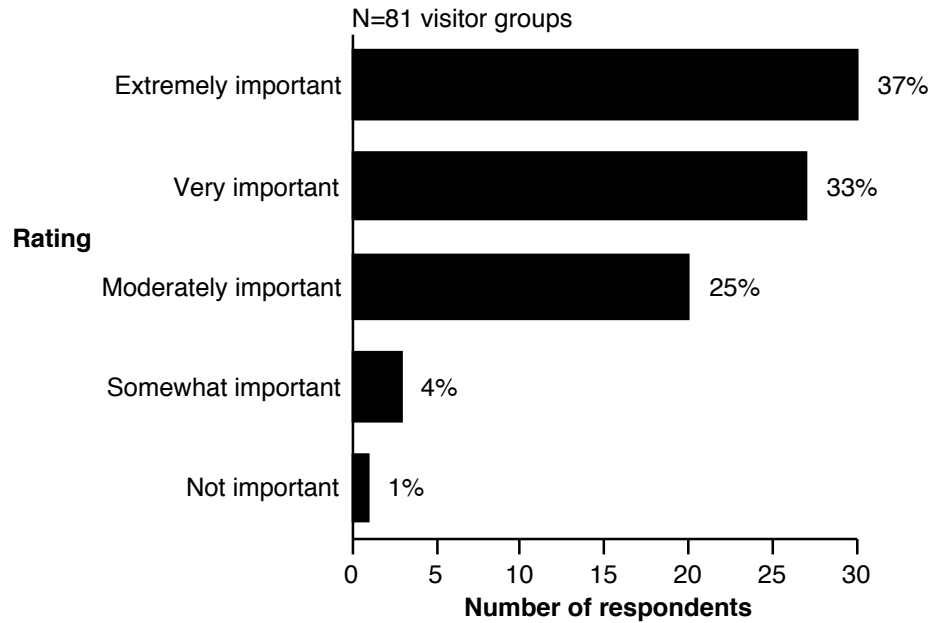


Figure 128: Importance of campstore (Big Meadows Wayside)

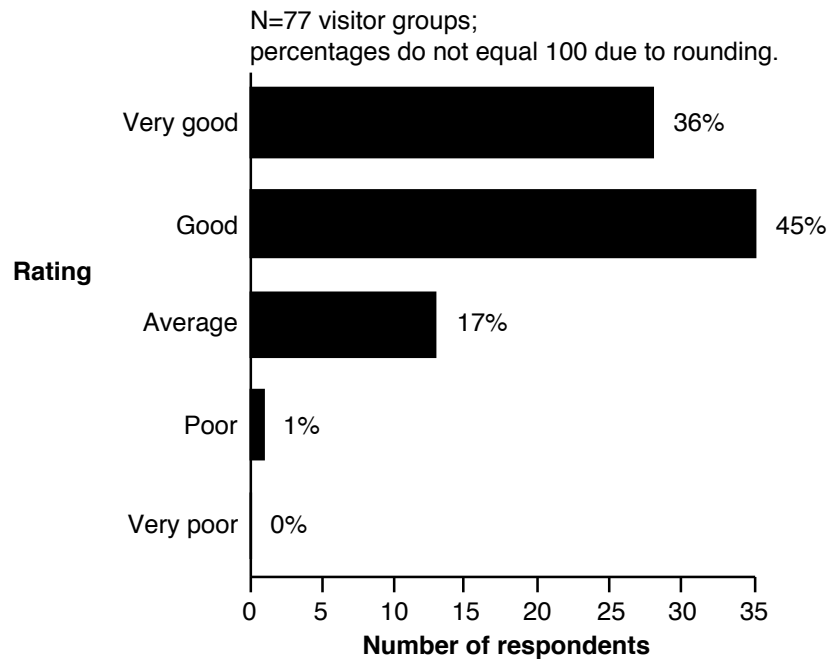


Figure 129: Quality of campstore (Big Meadows Wayside)

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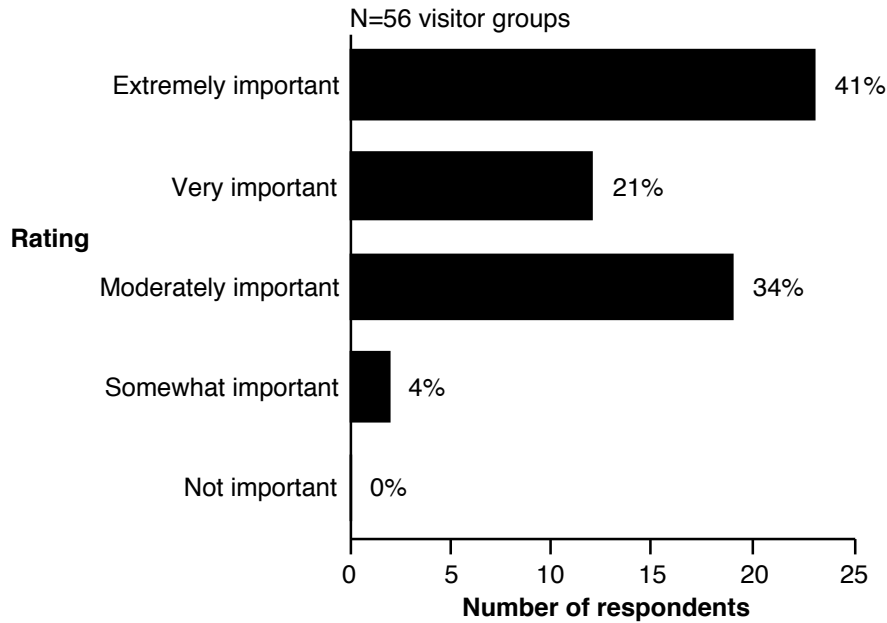


Figure 130: Importance of food service (Big Meadows Wayside)

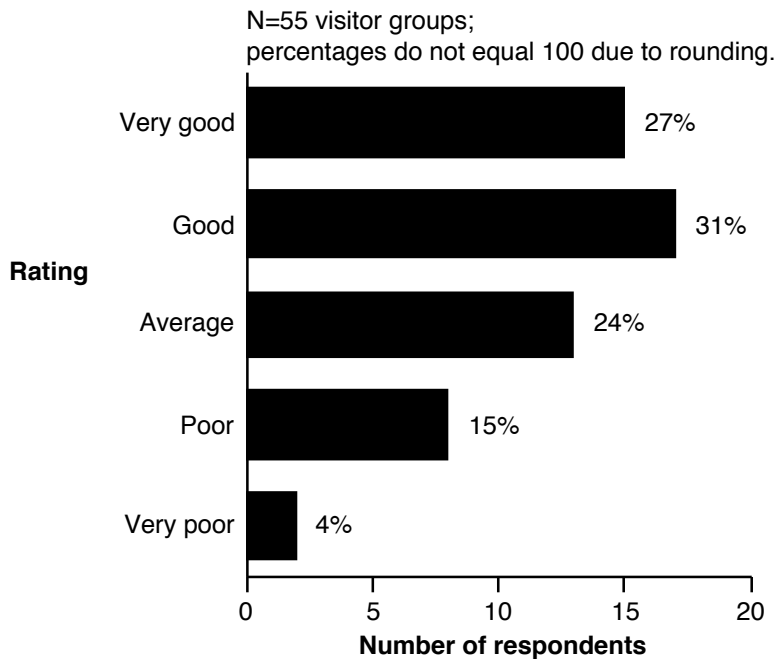


Figure 131: Quality of food service (Big Meadows Wayside)

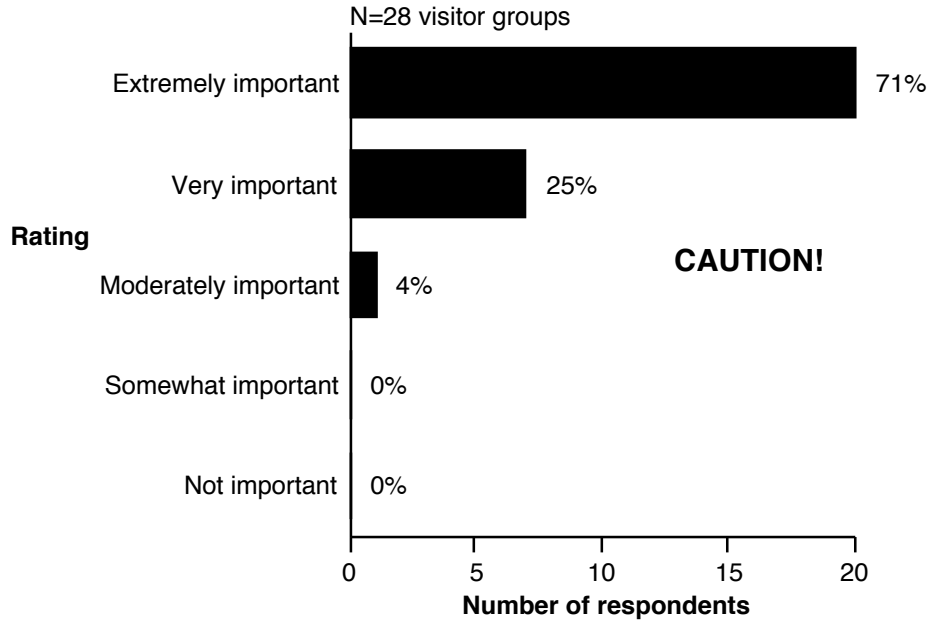


Figure 132: Importance of showers/laundry (Big Meadows Wayside)

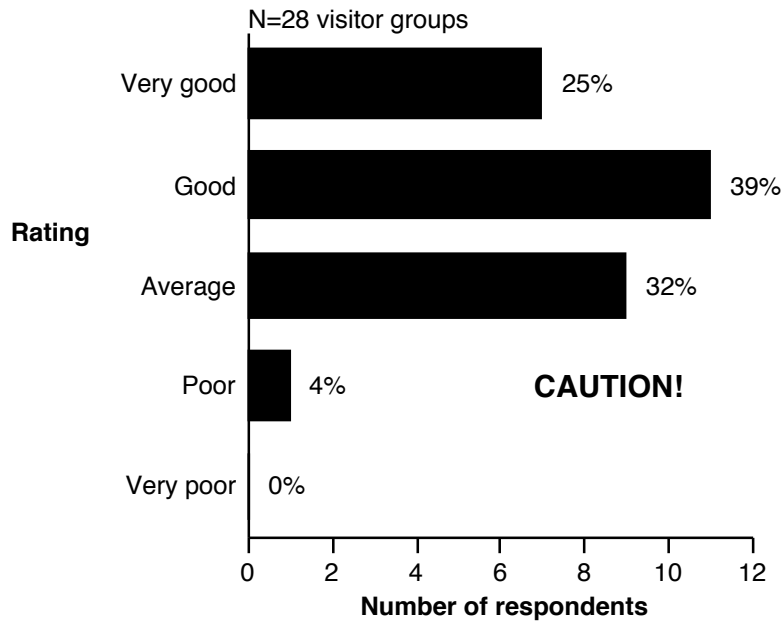


Figure 133: Quality of showers/laundry (Big Meadows Wayside)

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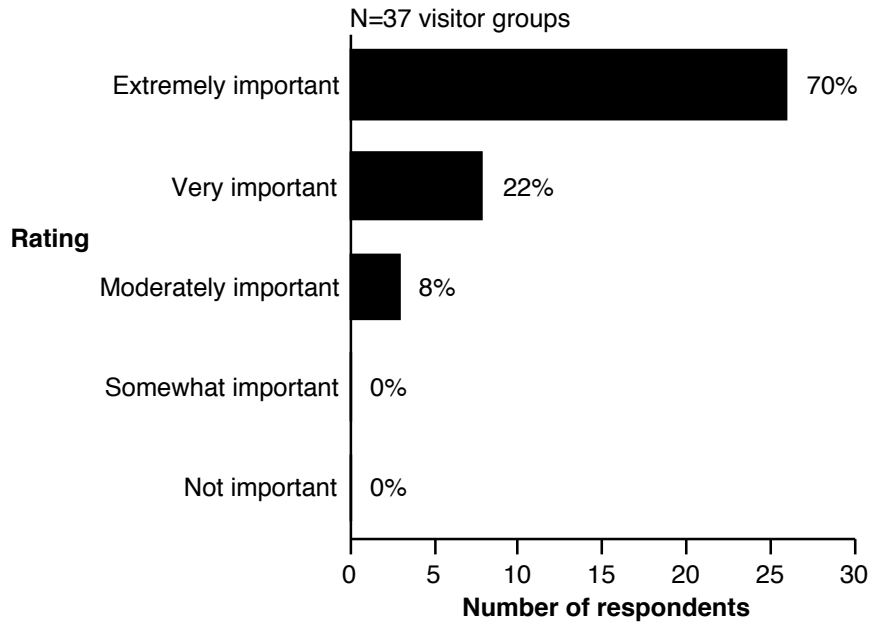


Figure 134: Importance of gas station (Big Meadows Wayside)

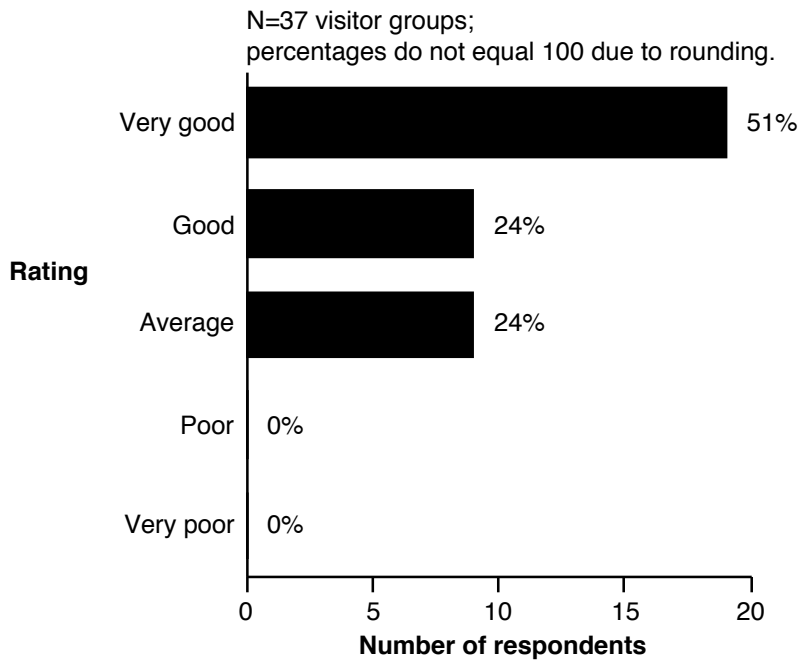


Figure 135: Quality of gas station (Big Meadows Wayside)

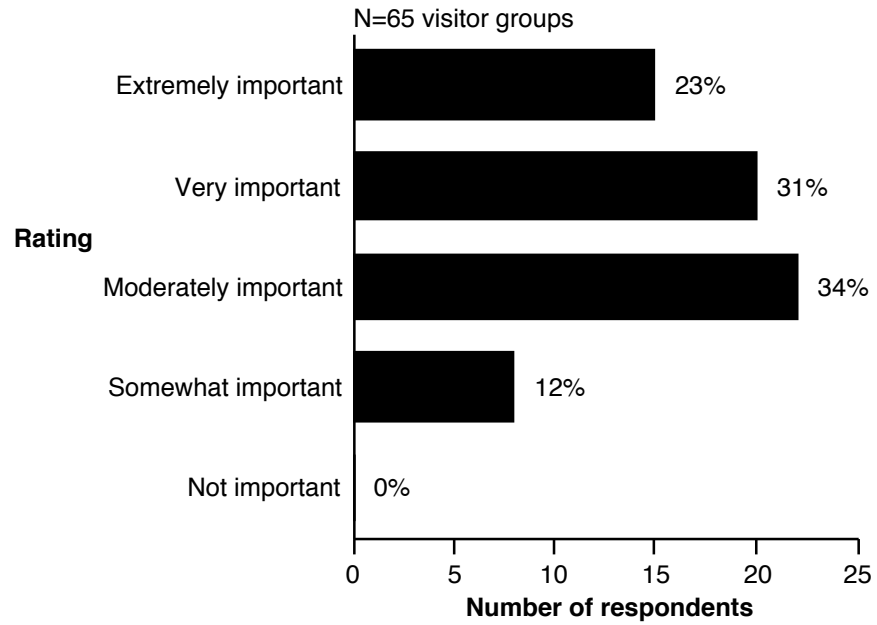


Figure 136: Importance of gift shop (Big Meadows Wayside)

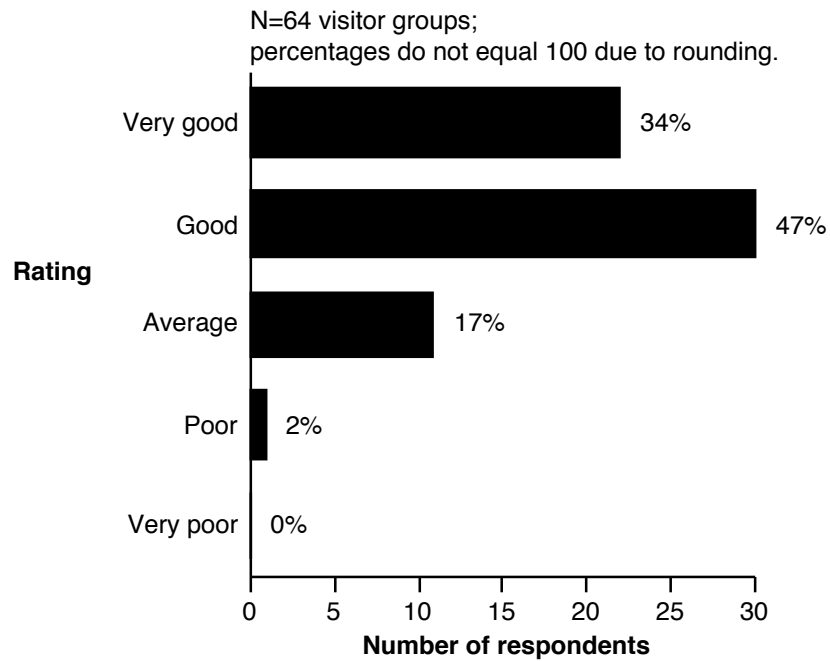


Figure 137: Quality of gift shop (Big Meadows Wayside)

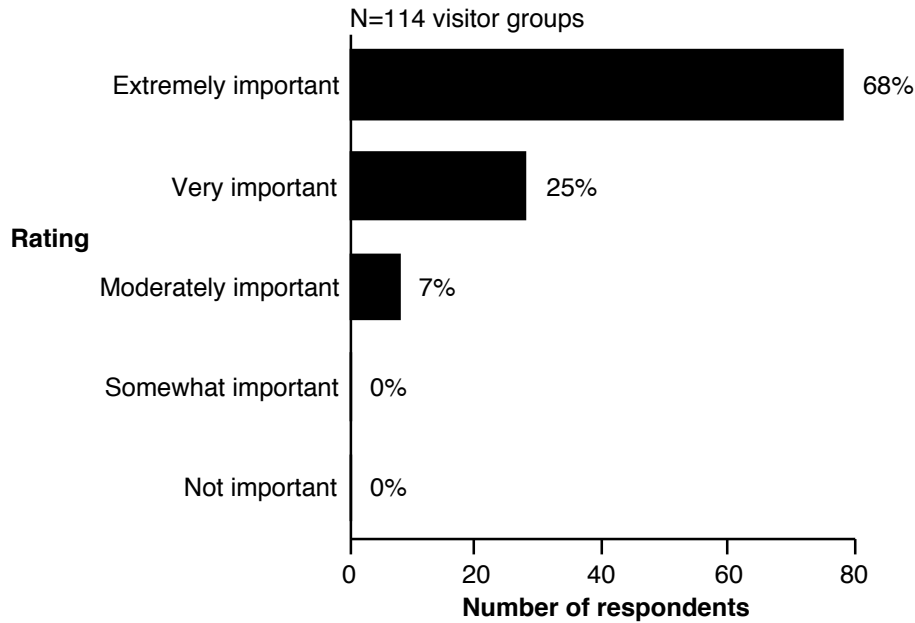


Figure 138: Importance of restrooms (Big Meadows Wayside)

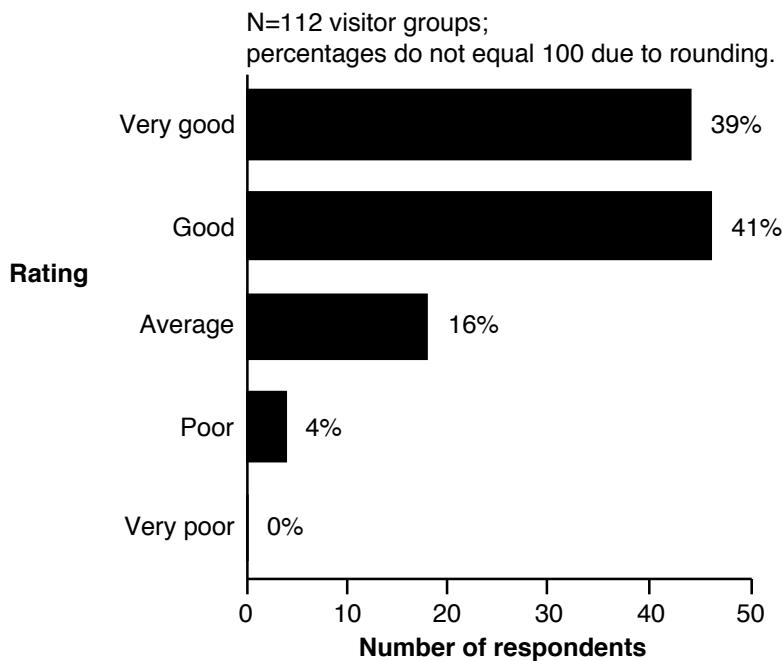


Figure 139: Quality of restrooms (Big Meadows Wayside)

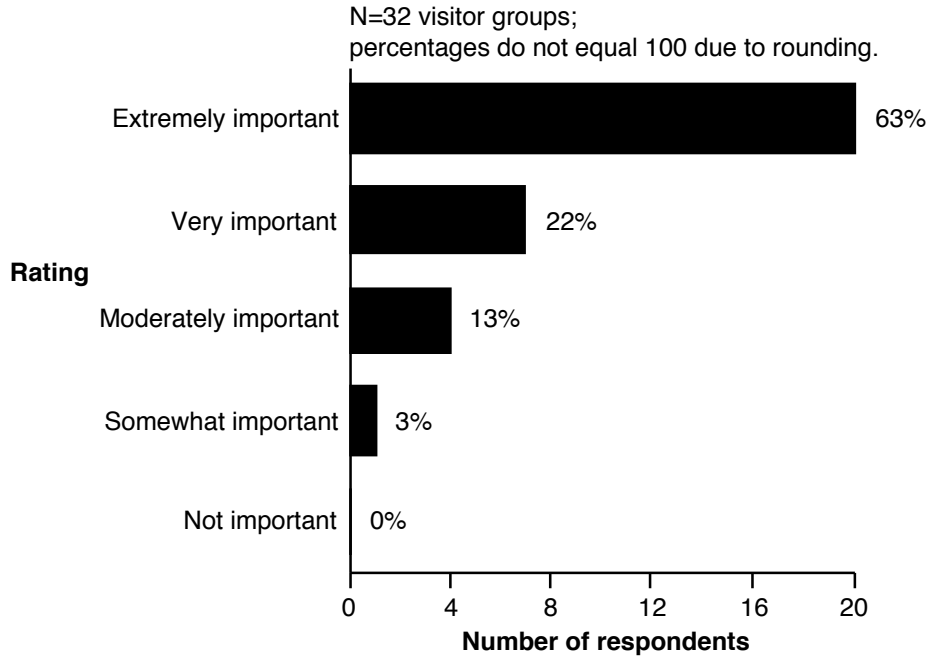


Figure 140: Importance of assistance from staff (Big Meadows Wayside)

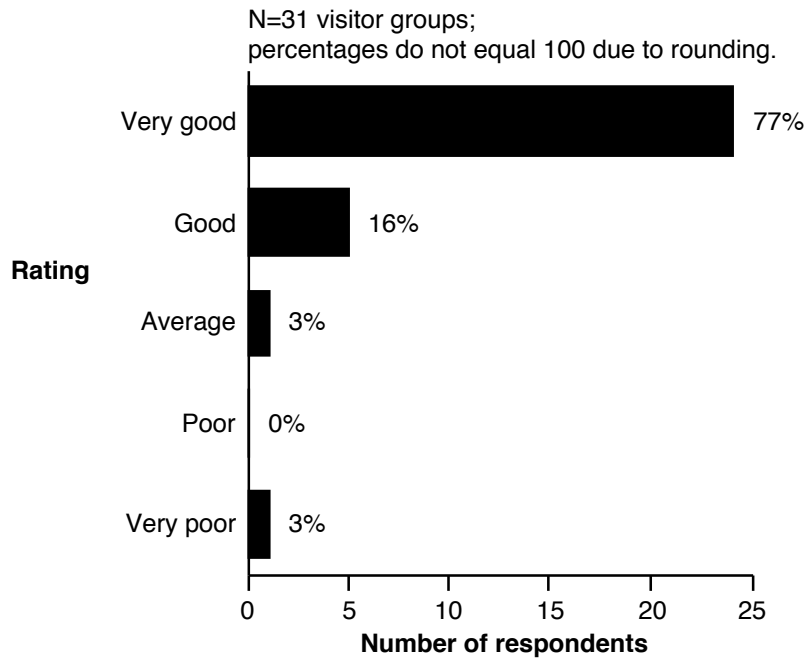
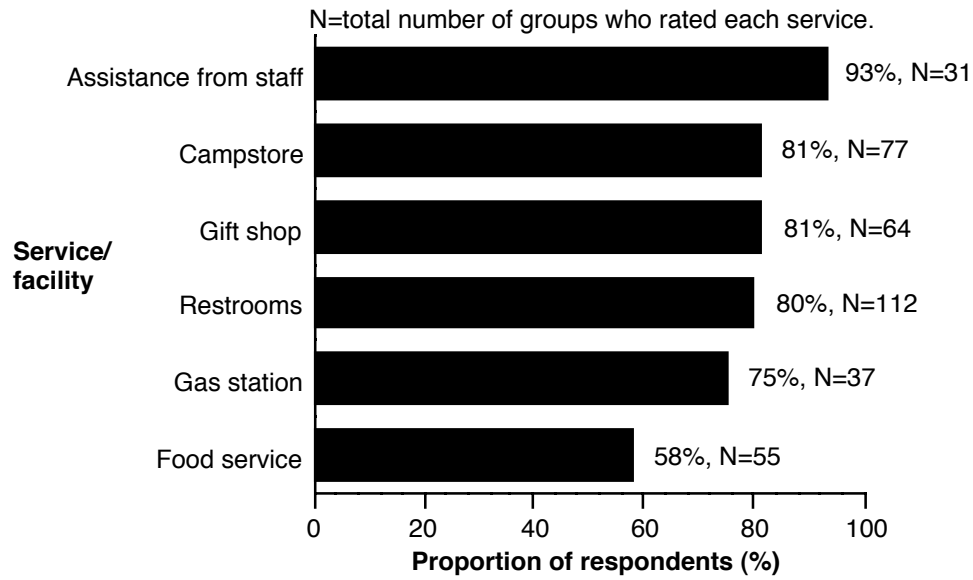


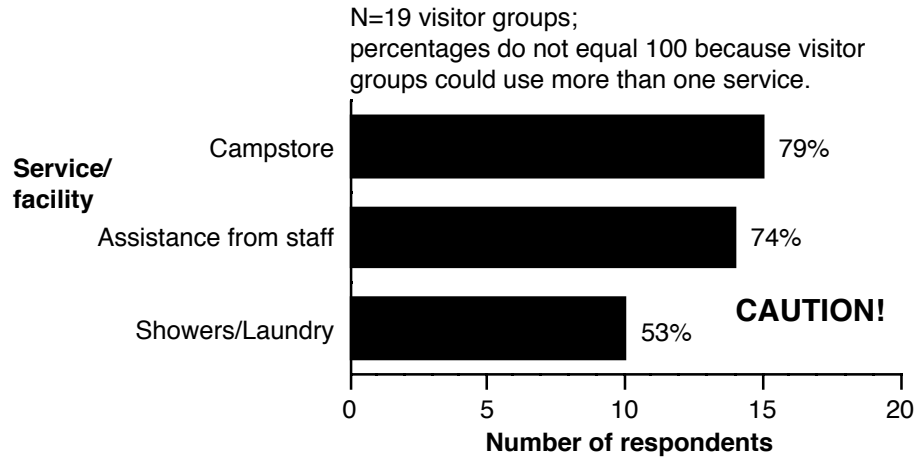
Figure 141: Quality of assistance from staff (Big Meadows Wayside)



**Figure 142: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for Big Meadows Wayside concession services and facilities**



**Lewis Mountain  
Campground  
concession services  
and facilities**



**Figure 143: Lewis Mountain Campground concession services and facilities used**

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of each of the Lewis Mountain Campground concession 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

NOTE: All Lewis Mountain Campground services and facilities were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information (see Figures 144 -149).

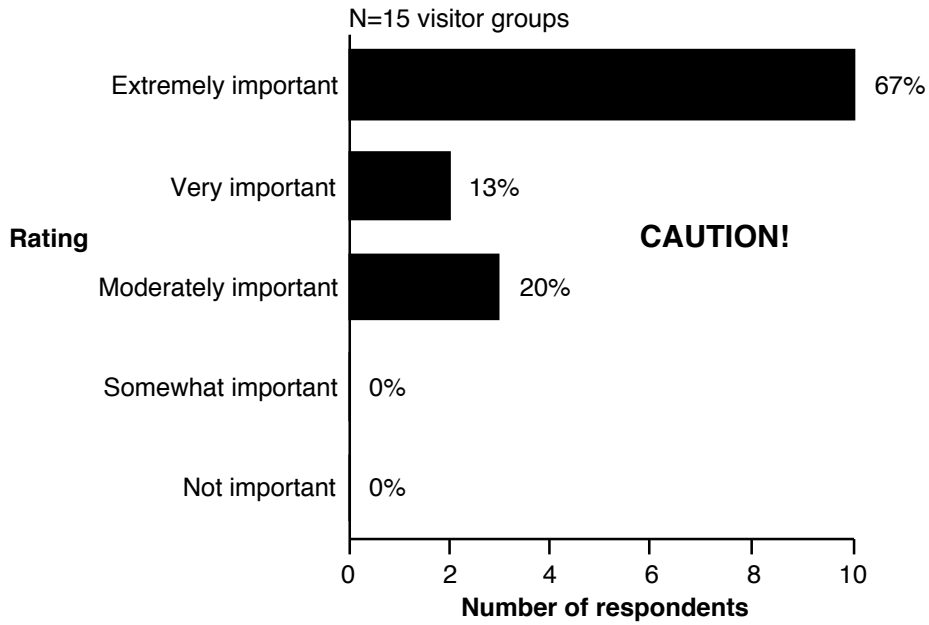


Figure 144: Importance of campstore (Lewis Mountain Campground)

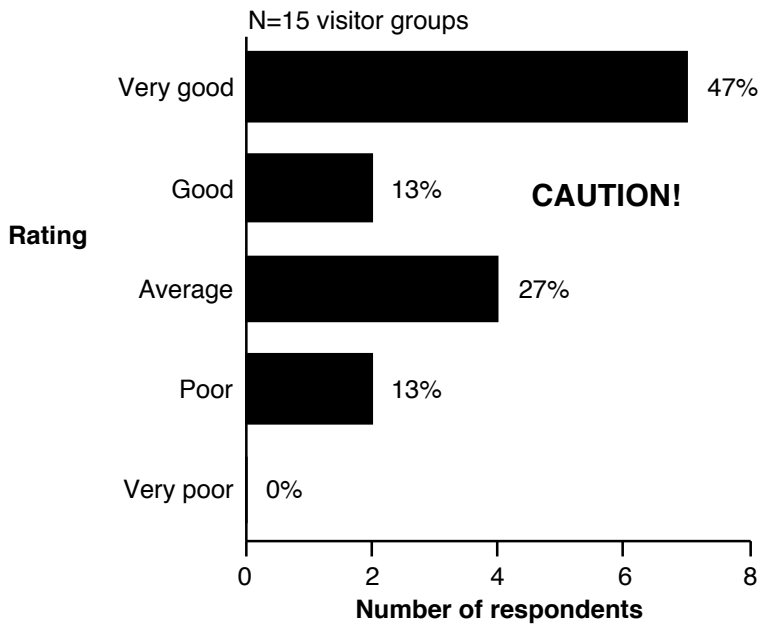


Figure 145: Quality of campstore (Lewis Mountain Campground)

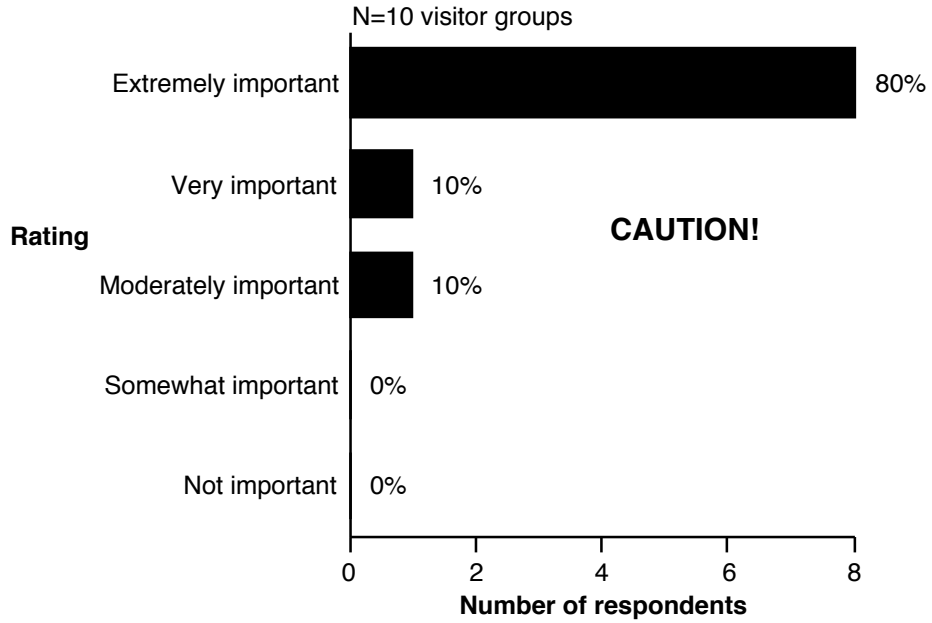


Figure 146: Importance of showers/laundry (Lewis Mountain Campground)

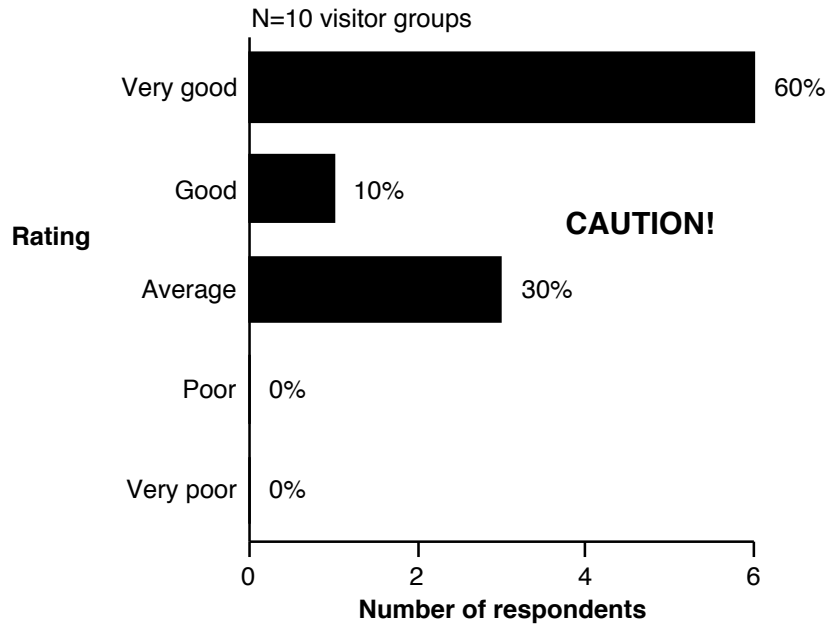


Figure 147: Quality of showers/laundry (Lewis Mountain Campground)

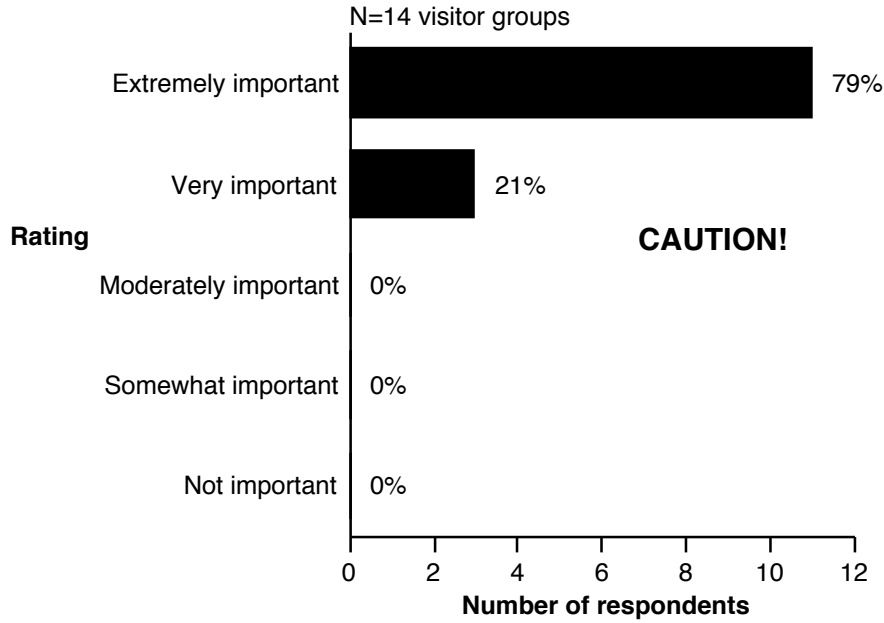


Figure 148: Importance of assistance from staff (Lewis Mountain Campground)

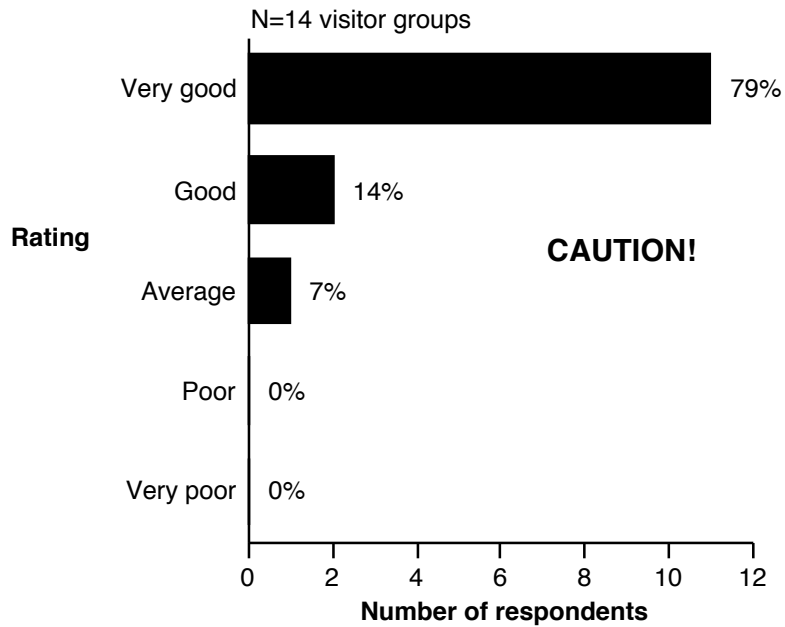
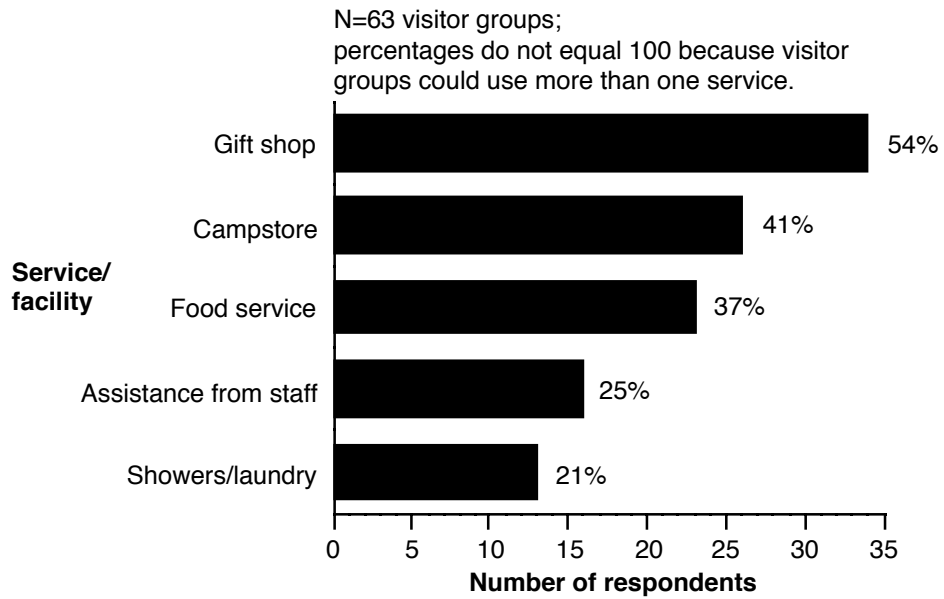


Figure 149: Quality of assistance from staff (Lewis Mountain Campground)

**Loft Mountain  
concession services  
and facilities**



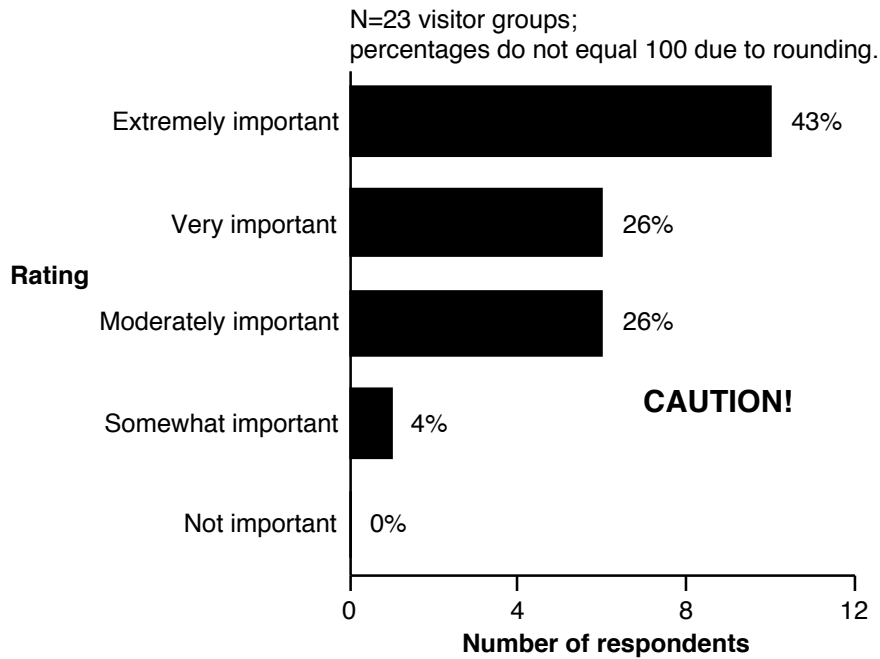
**Figure 150: Loft Mountain concession services and facilities used**

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

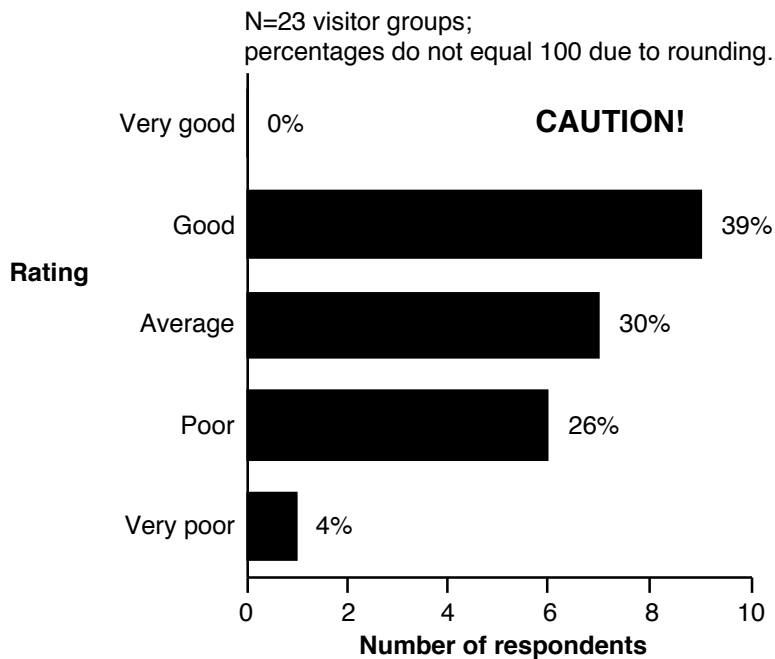
IMPORTANCE
5=extremely important
4=very important
3=moderately important
2=somewhat important
1=not important

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

NOTE: All of the Loft Mountain concession services and facilities except the gift shop were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information. The gift shop received 38% "extremely important" and "very important" ratings and 69% "very good" and "good" ratings.



**Figure 151: Importance of food service/dining area (Loft Mountain)**



**Figure 152: Quality of food service (Loft Mountain)**

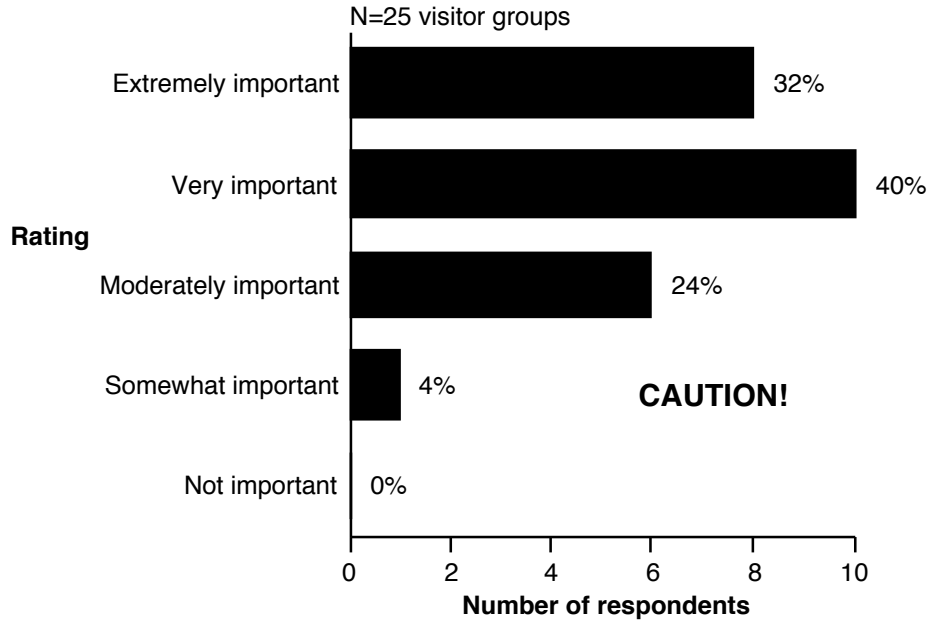


Figure 153: Importance of campstore (Loft Mountain)

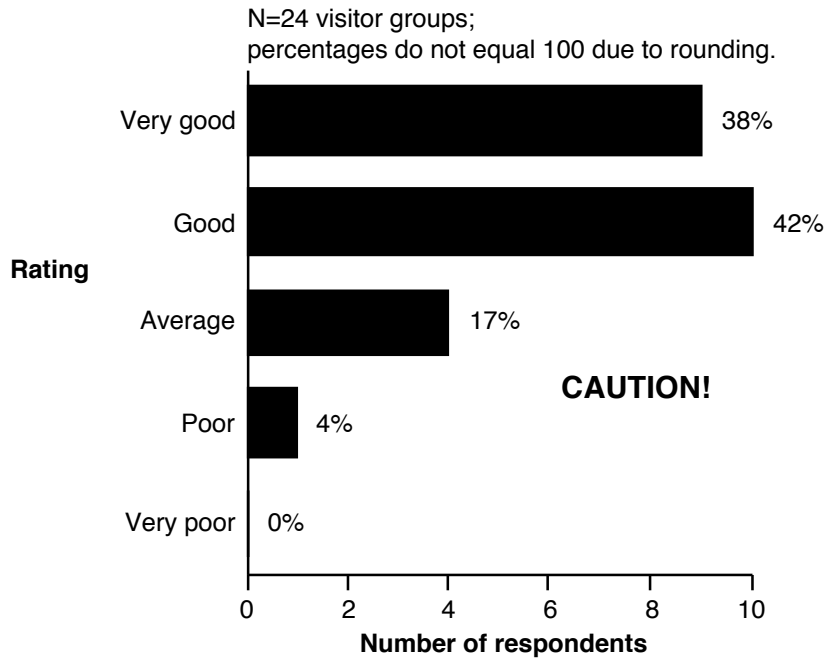


Figure 154: Quality of campstore (Loft Mountain)

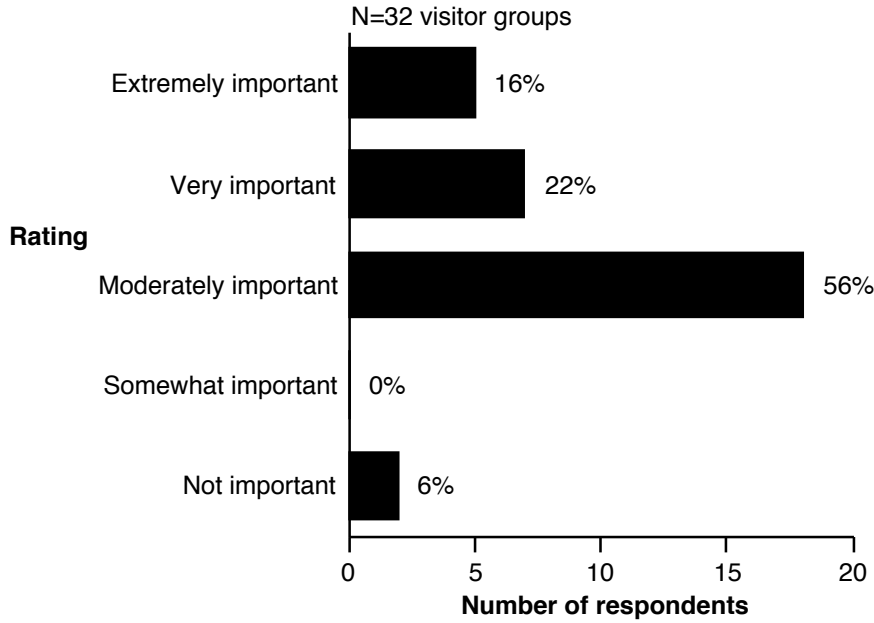


Figure 155: Importance of gift shop (Loft Mountain)

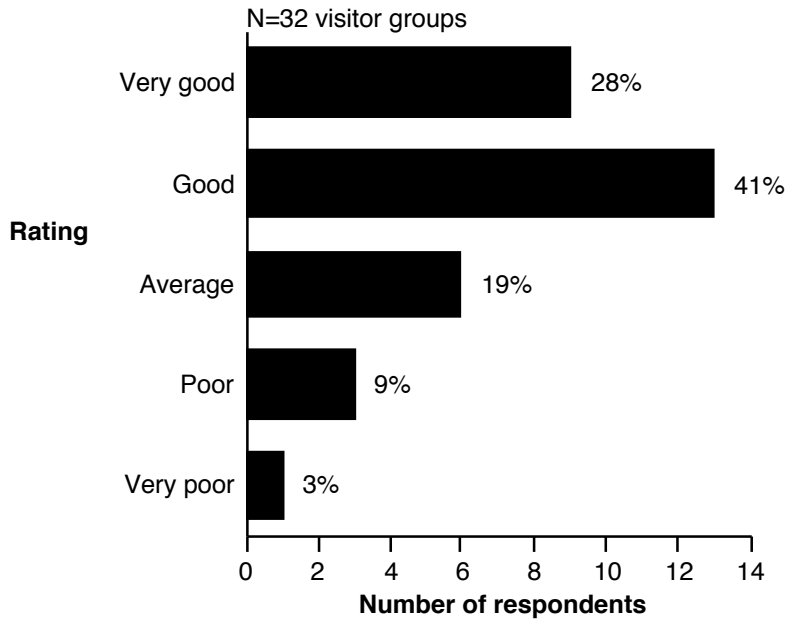


Figure 156: Quality of gift shop (Loft Mountain)



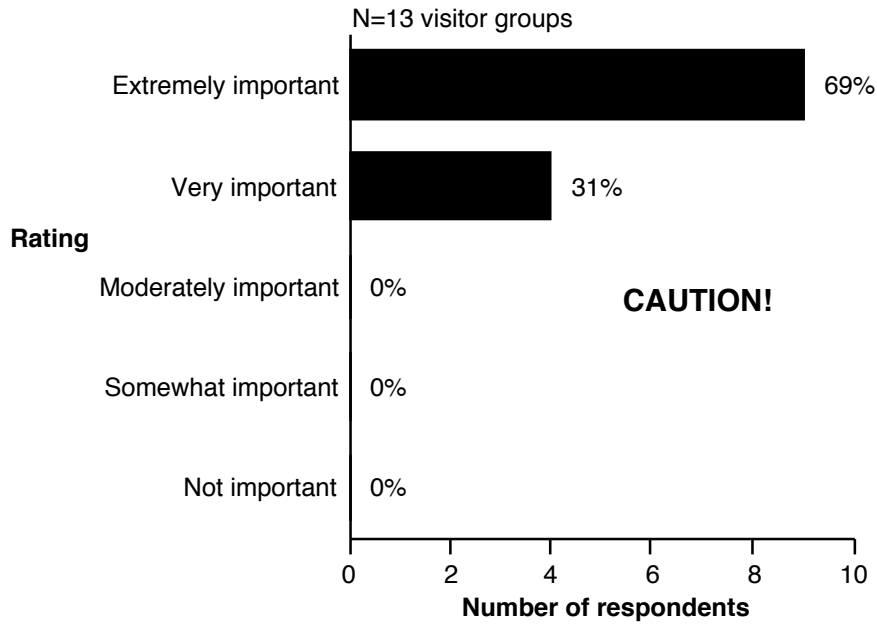


Figure 157: Importance of showers/laundry (Loft Mountain)

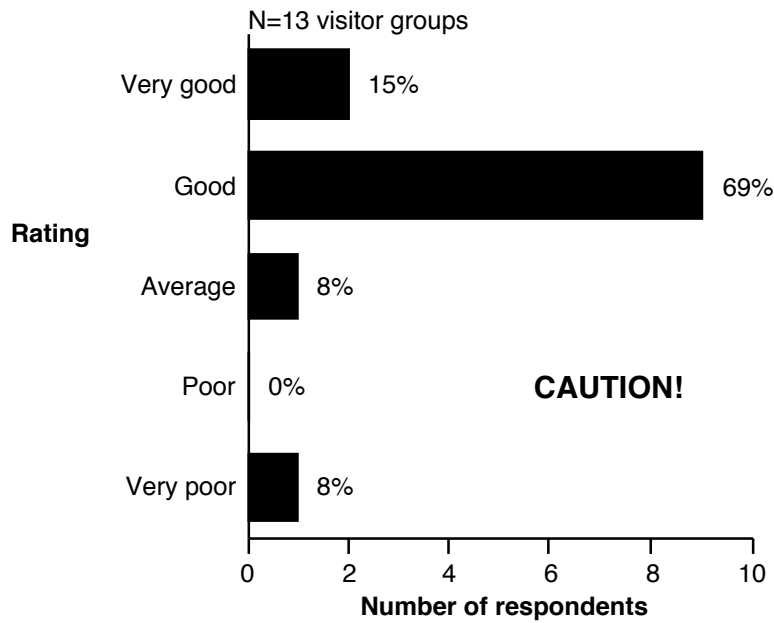


Figure 158: Quality of showers/laundry (Loft Mountain)

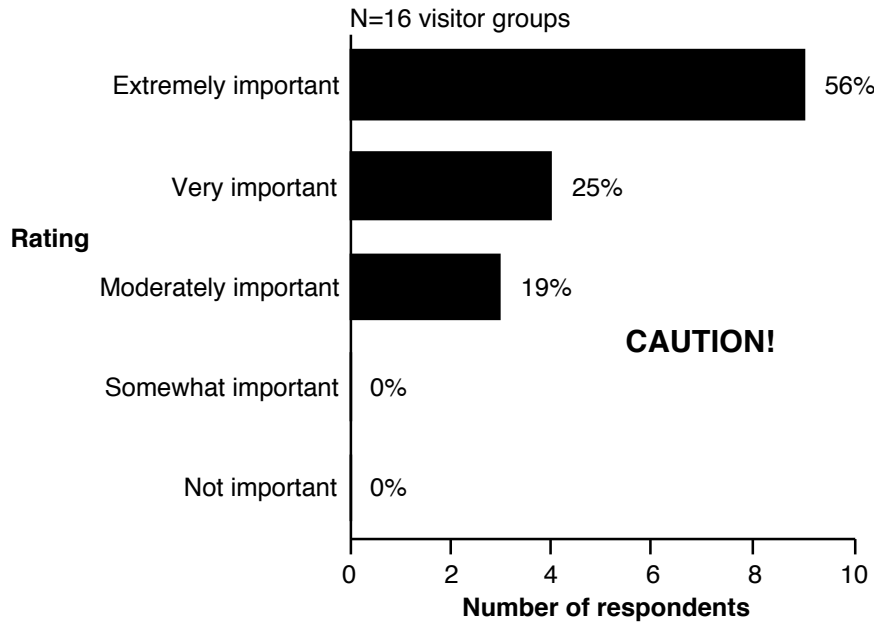


Figure 159: Importance of assistance from staff (Loft Mountain)

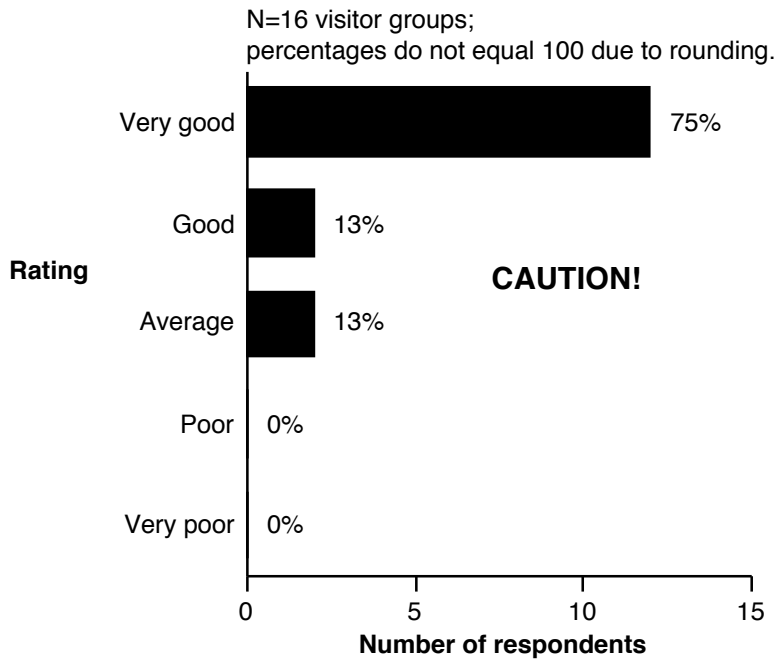
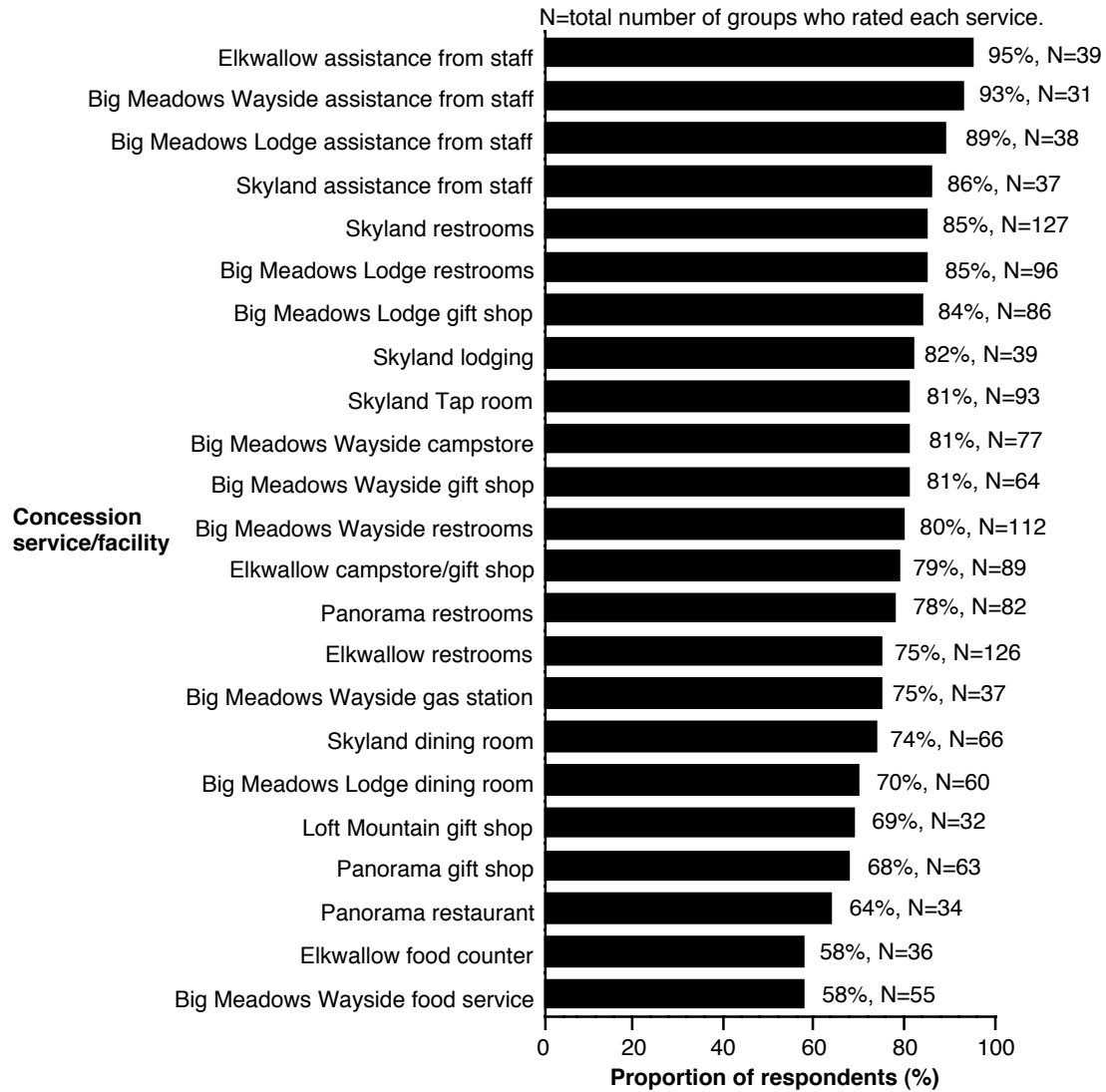


Figure 160: Quality of assistance from staff (Loft Mountain)



**Figure 161: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for all concession services and facilities**

**Table 5: Other comments about concession services or facilities**

N=155 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comments	Number of times mentioned
Staff friendly, helpful, knowledgeable	21
Everything good	18
Facilities clean	14
Restroom clean	8
Food quality good	7
Food quality poor	7
Campstore/gift shop needed more supplies	7
Restaurant service good	6
Need more food areas/options	6
Restroom needs improvement	6
Restaurant food too expensive	6
Store/gas/food service should have longer hours	6
Campstore good	4
Restaurant service poor	4
Prices good	4
Campstore/gift shop items too expensive	4
Provide more showers	4
Shower prices too high	3
Need more information about services/facilities	3
Need more restrooms	3
Need more pay phones	2
Need more water fountains	2
Need more local products	2
Enjoyed picnic area	2
Lodging facilities too expensive	2
Lodging facilities need improvement	2
Train staff about processing credit cards	2

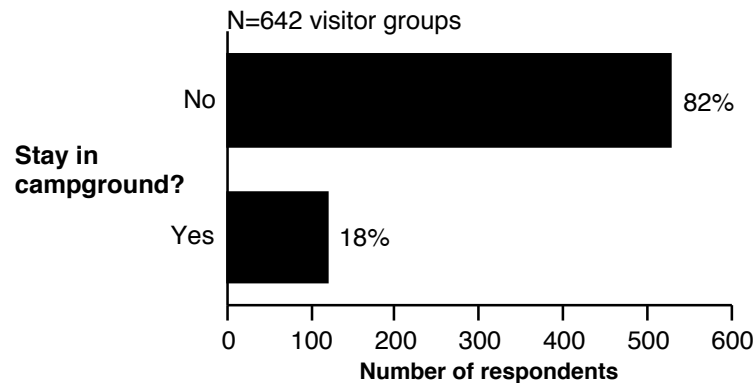
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**Camping in  
and/or outside  
the park**

Visitor groups were asked, "On this trip to Shenandoah National Park, did you and your group stay in a developed campground inside and/or outside the park?" Most visitor groups (82%) did not stay in a developed campground (see Figure 162). The 18% of visitors who stayed in a campground were asked whether they camped in a tent or a RV/camper. Over one-half of the visitors (59%) camped in a tent and 45% camped in a RV/campers (see Figure 163).

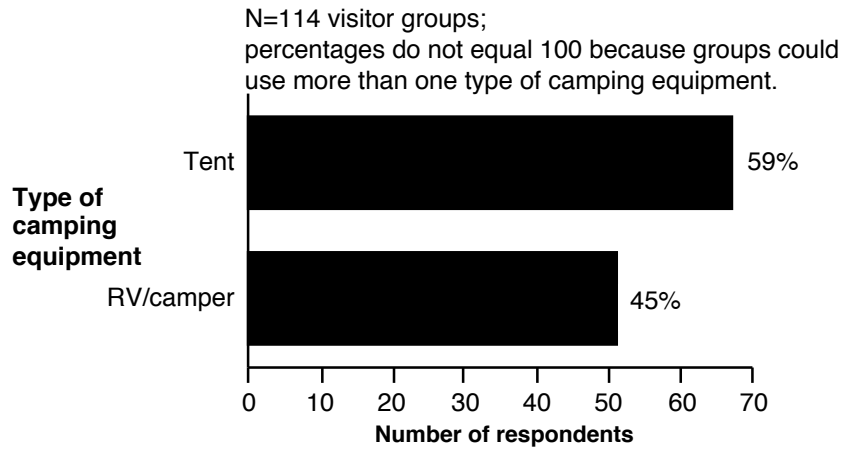
Visitors who camped were also asked the number of nights they camped in and/or outside the park. Over one-half of the visitors (54%) camped one or two nights in Shenandoah NP (see Figure 164). Sixteen percent camped five or more nights. Outside the park, 32% of visitors did not camp (see Figure 165). Twenty-seven percent camped one or two nights and 23% camped five or more nights.

Visitors were asked to identify the park campground they stayed in on this visit. The most used campground was Big Meadows (52%), as shown in Figure 166. The least used was Lewis Mountain.

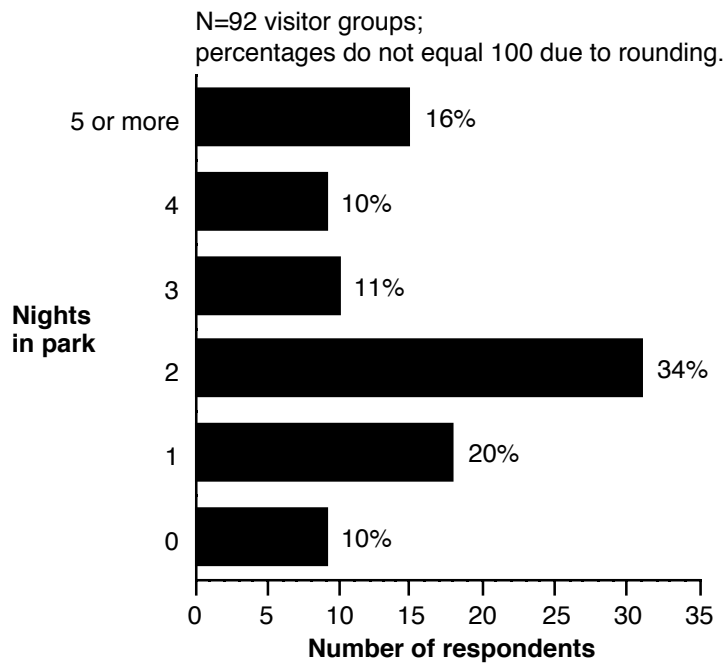


**Figure 162: Stay in developed campground in or outside park?**

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**Figure 163: Type of camping equipment used in or outside park**



**Figure 164: Number of nights spent camping in park**

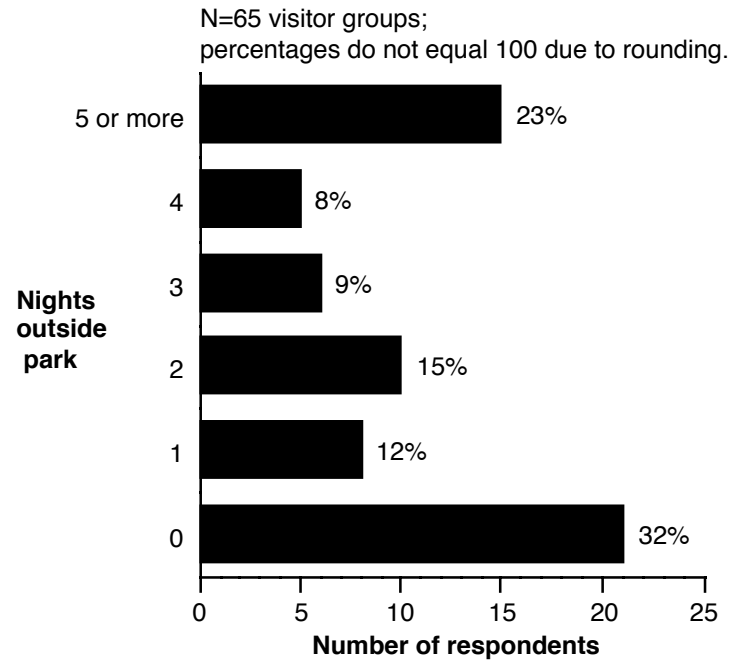


Figure 165: Number of nights spent camping outside park

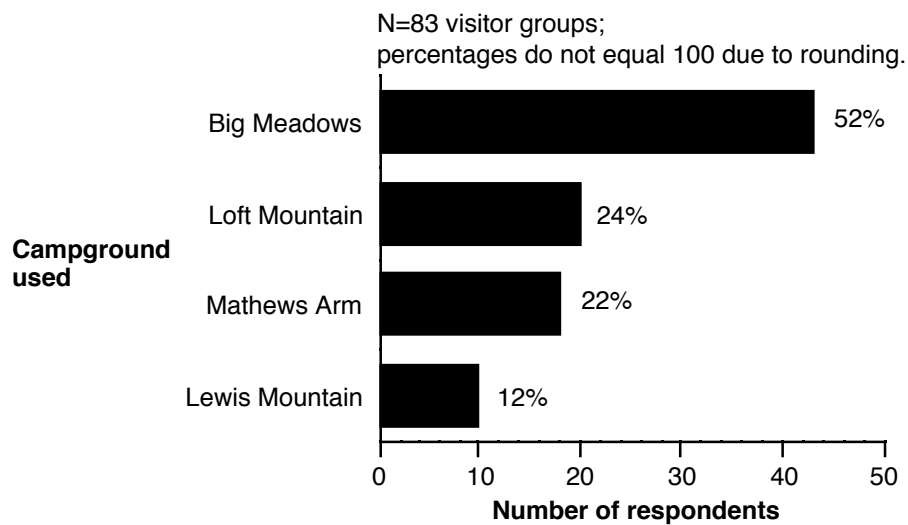


Figure 166: Park campgrounds used in park

Visitor groups rated the importance and quality of selected campground services and facilities they used during this visit to Shenandoah NP. They also rated the importance and quality of selected campground characteristics they used or experienced. The following five point scales were used in the questionnaire.

**Importance and quality ratings of park campground services, facilities and characteristics**

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 campground service, facility and characteristic (see Figures 167 and 168) were determined from ratings provided by visitors who used or experienced them. All services, facilities and characteristics were rated above average in importance and quality, except for social interaction with other campers, which was below average in importance. NOTE: Food service nearby, pre-trip reservations, primitive sites and dump station were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

Odd-numbered figures 169-197 show the importance ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services, facilities and characteristics. The highest proportion of "extremely important" or "very important" ratings were for quiet at night (97%), privacy (93%), neatness of site (92%), showers (90%) and restrooms (89%). The highest proportion of "not important" ratings were for social interaction with other campers (25%) and paved parking pads (11%).

Even-numbered figures 170-198 show the quality ratings that were provided by visitor groups for each of the individual services, facilities and characteristics. The highest proportion of "very good" or "good" ratings were for neatness of site (93%), paved parking pads (93%), quiet at night (86%) and restrooms (78%). The highest proportion of "very poor" ratings was for social interaction with other campers (6%).

Figure 199 combines the "very good" and "good" quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services, facilities and characteristics. Table 6 lists additional comments visitors made about campground services.



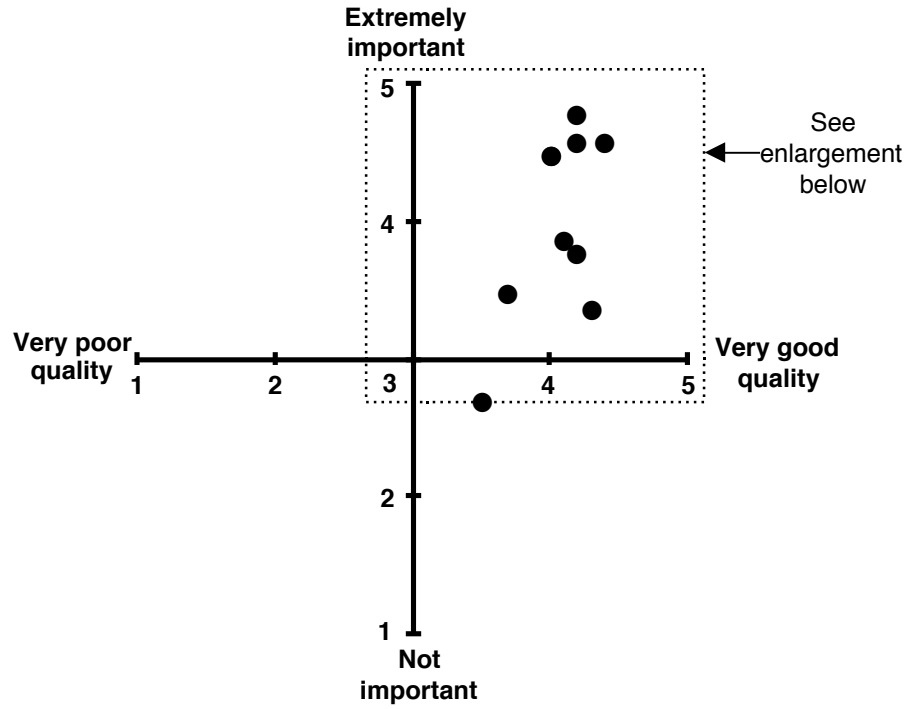


Figure 167: Average ratings of campground services/facilities/characteristics importance and quality

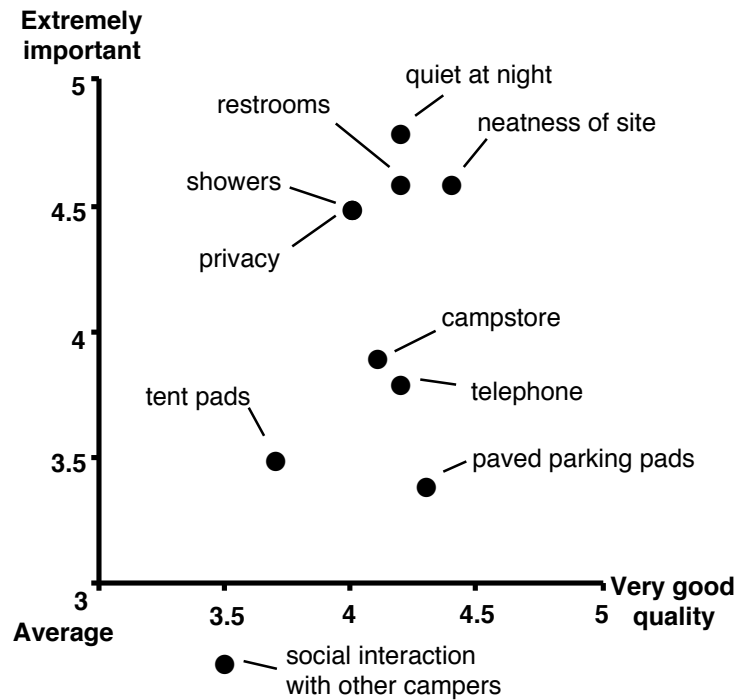


Figure 168: Detail of Figure 167

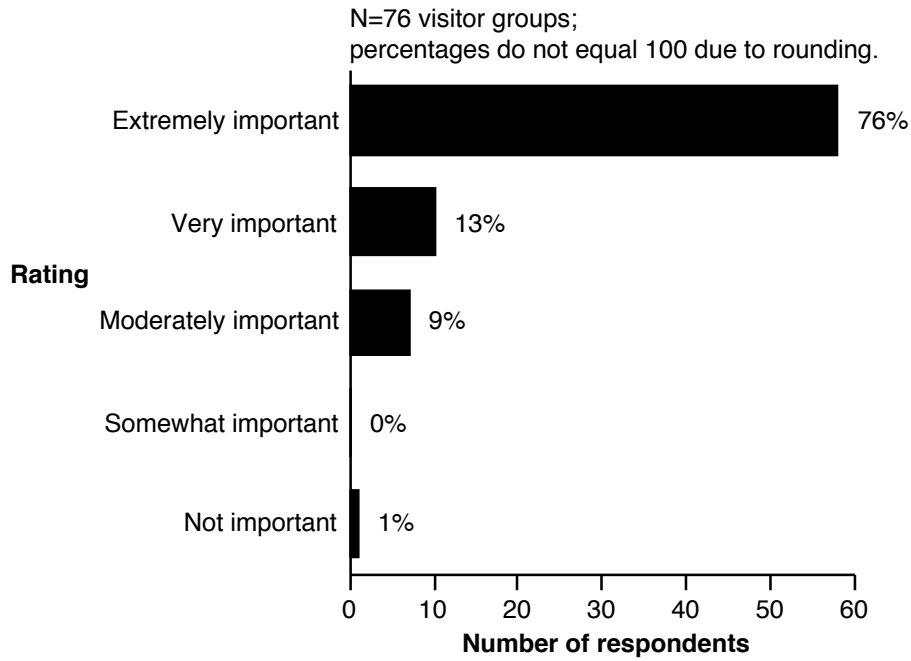


Figure 169: Importance of restrooms

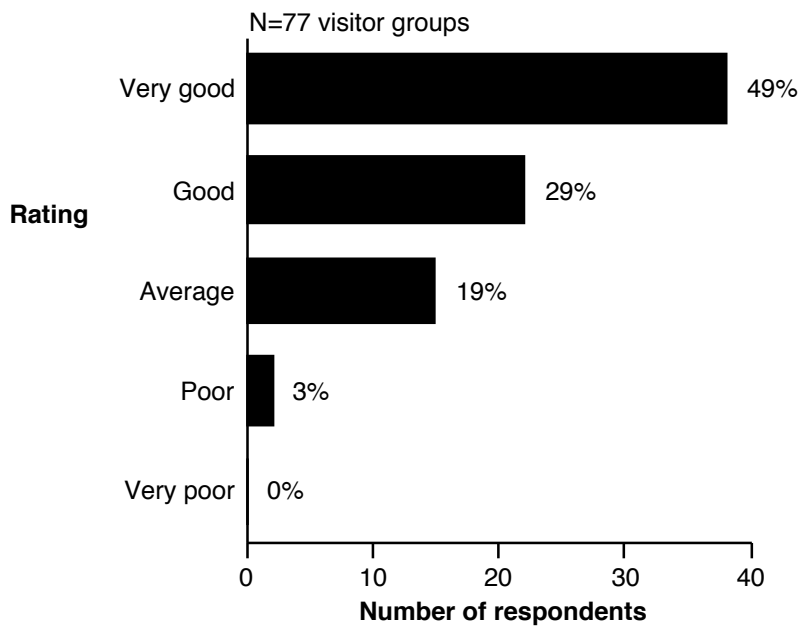


Figure 170: Quality of restrooms

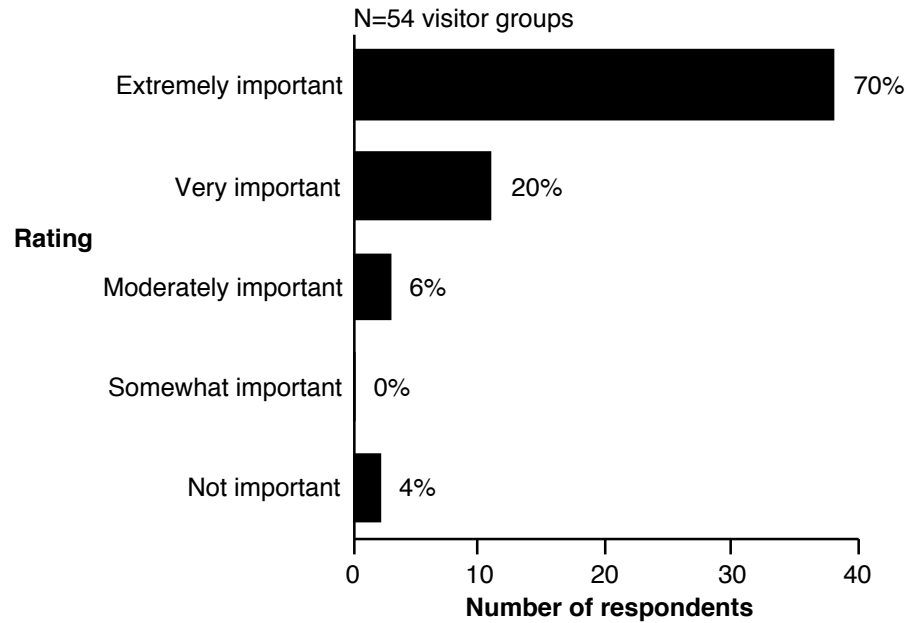


Figure 171: Importance of showers

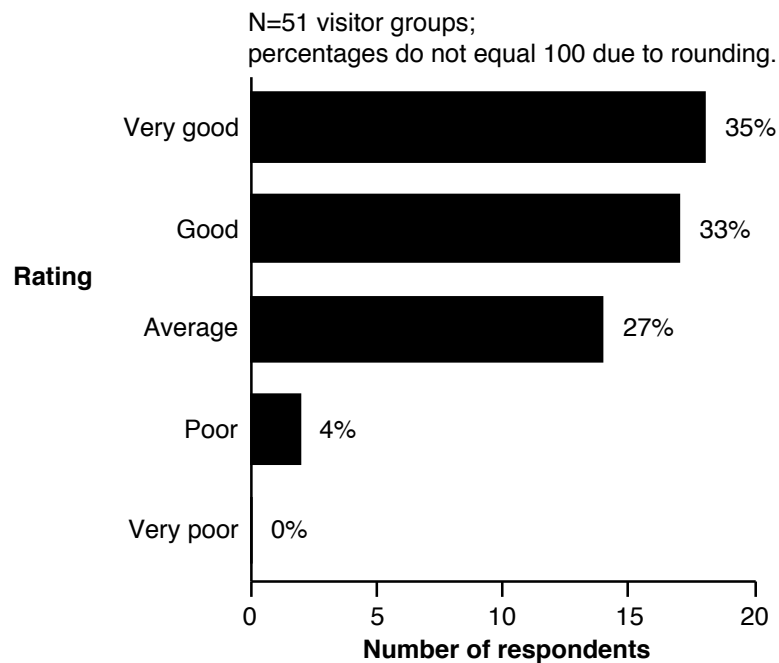


Figure 172: Quality of showers

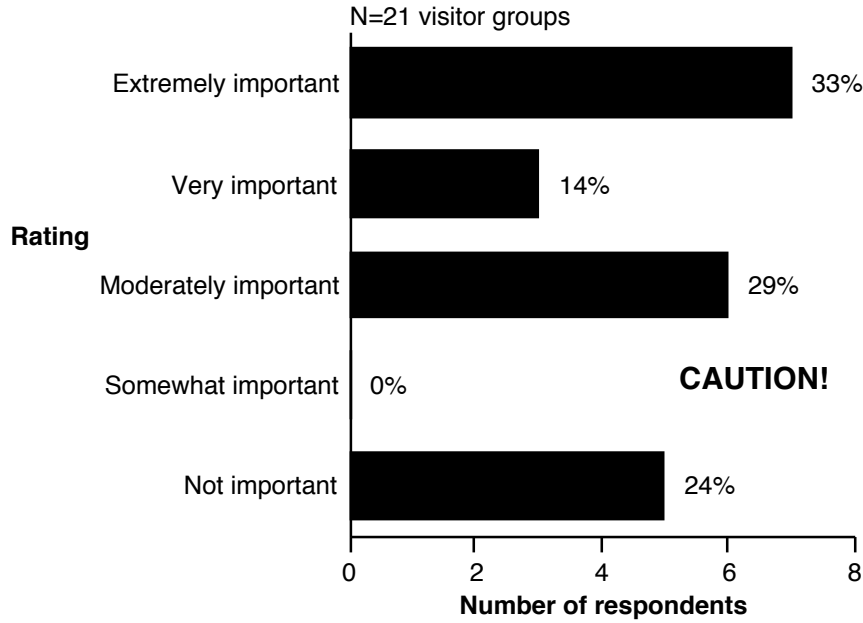


Figure 173: Importance of laundry

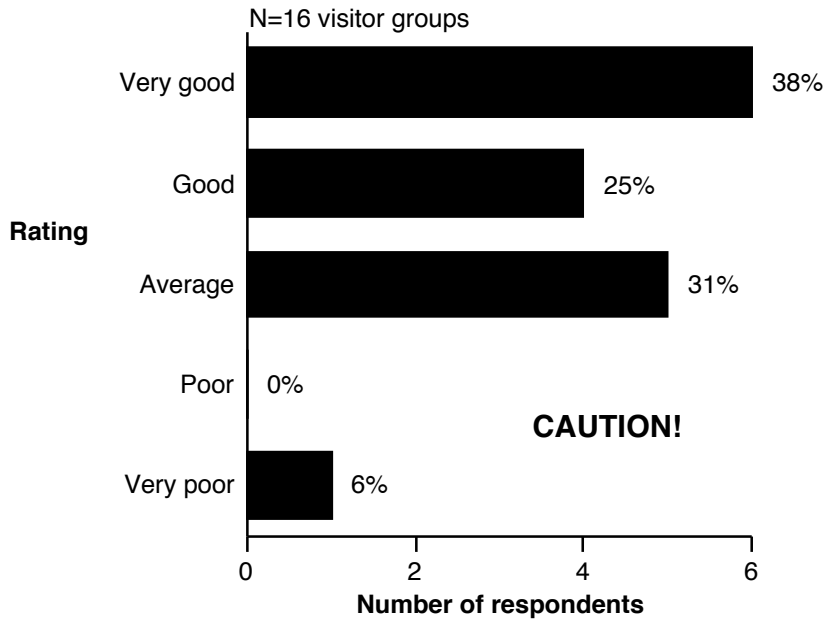


Figure 174: Quality of laundry

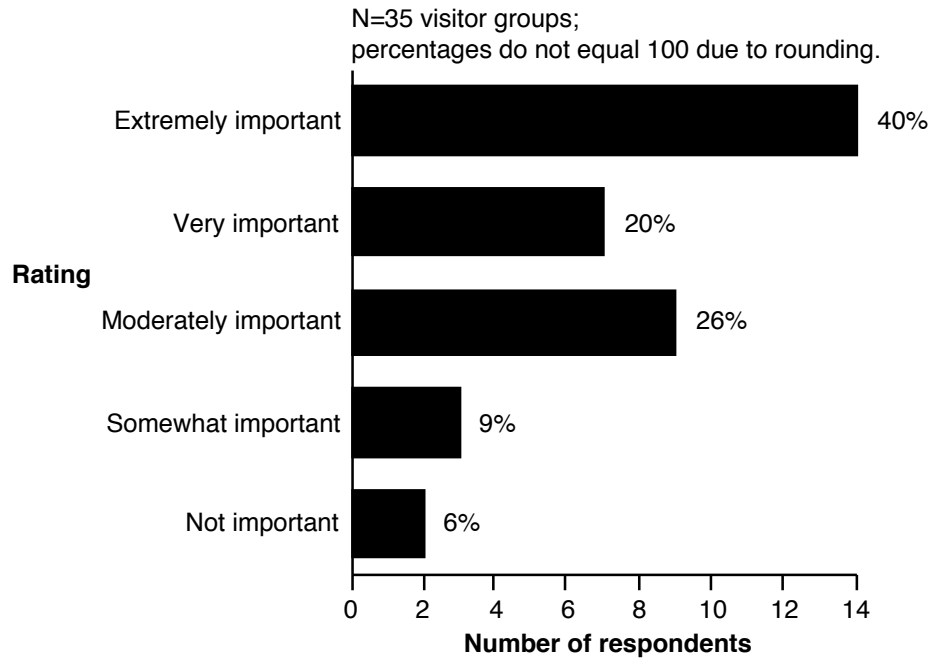


Figure 175: Importance of telephone nearby

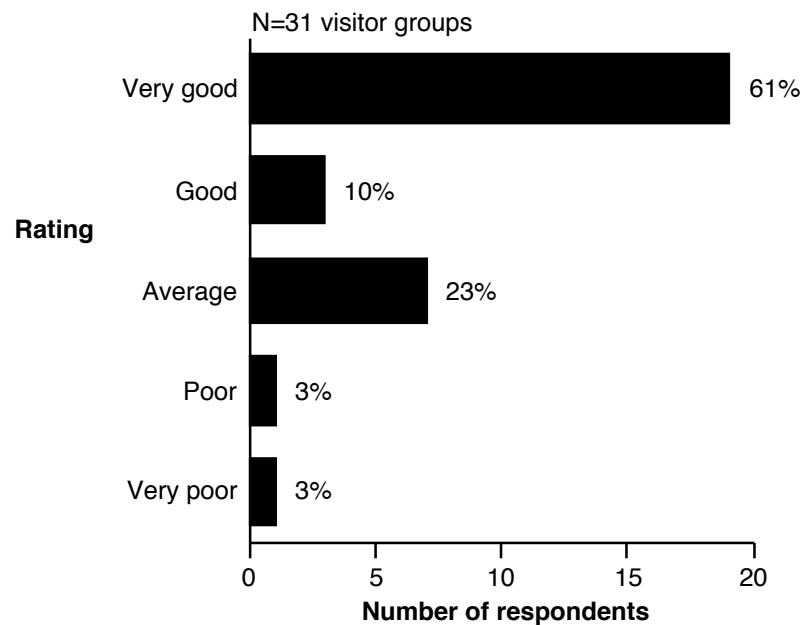


Figure 176: Quality of telephone nearby

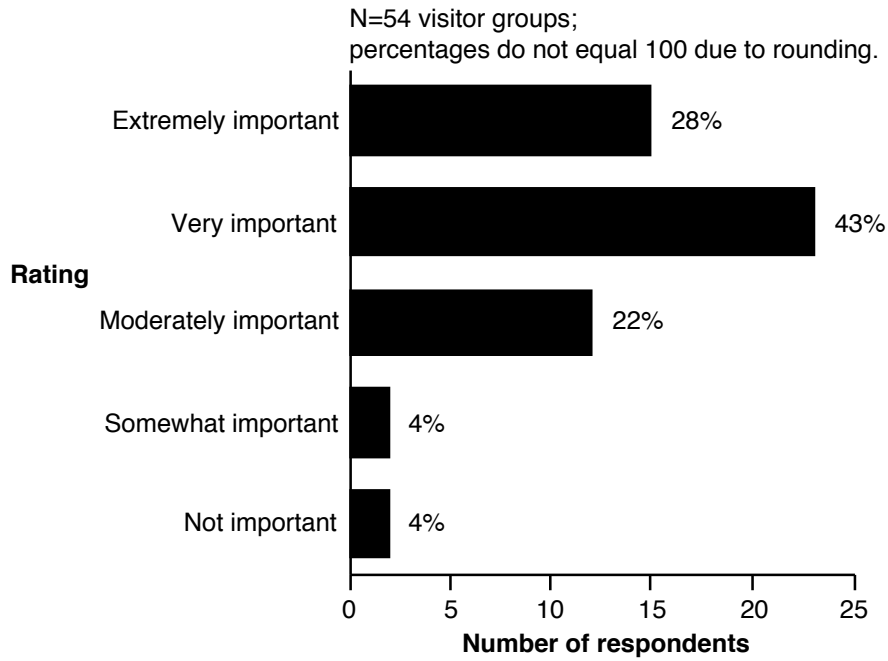


Figure 177: Importance of campstore nearby

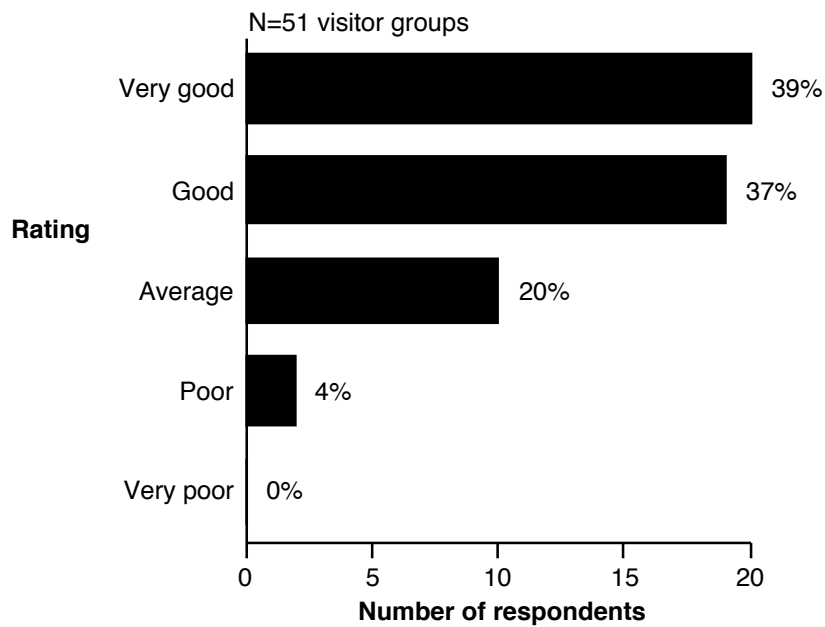


Figure 178: Quality of campstore nearby

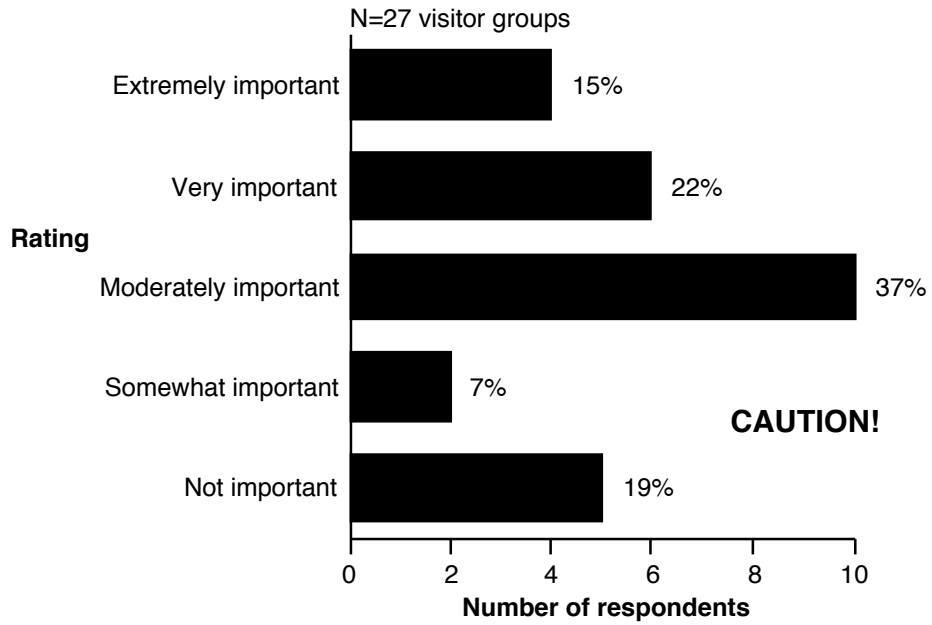


Figure 179: Importance of food service nearby

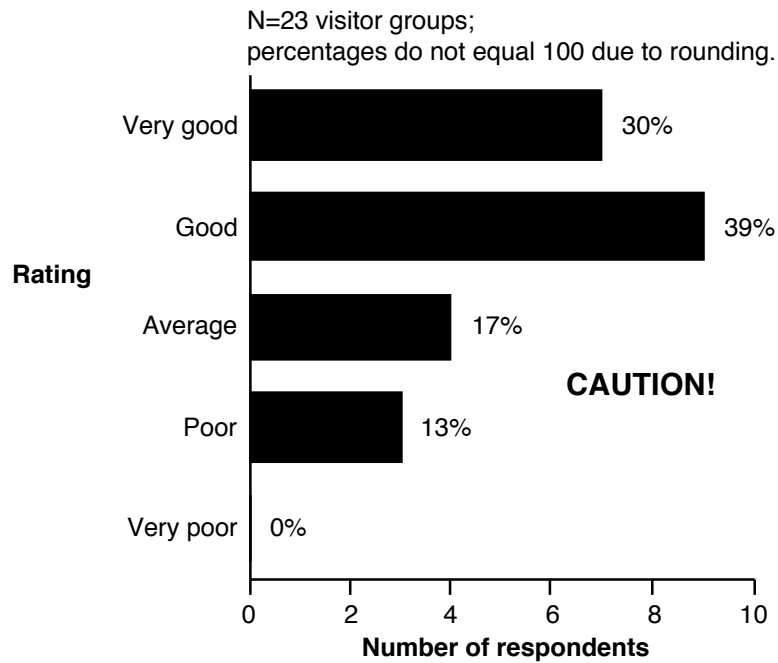


Figure 180: Quality of food service nearby

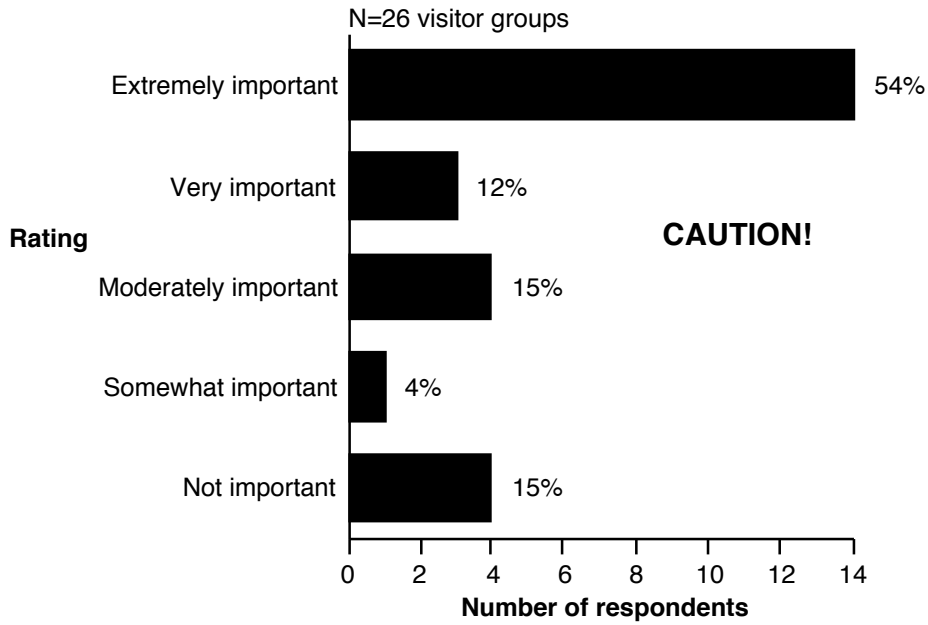


Figure 181: Importance of pre-trip reservations

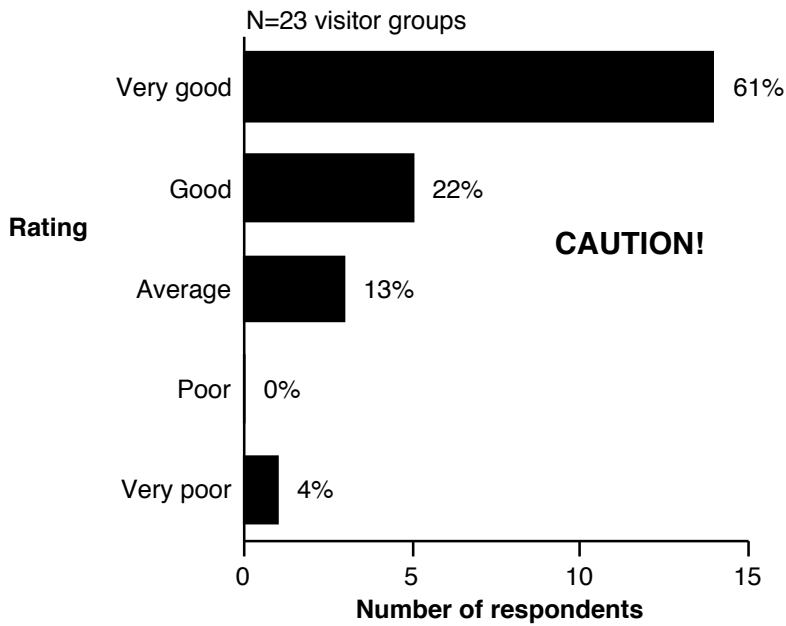


Figure 182: Quality of pre-trip reservations



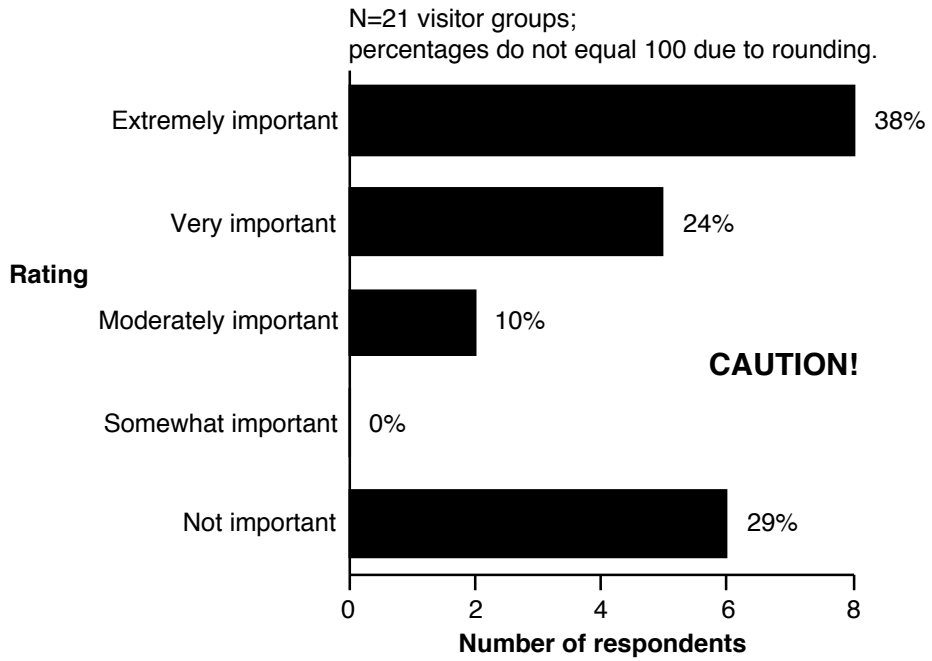


Figure 183: Importance of primitive sites

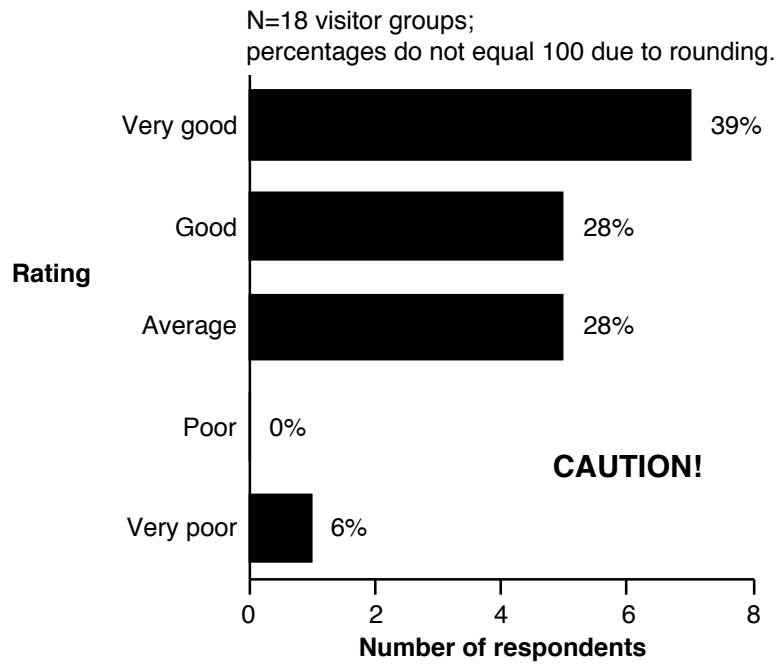


Figure 184: Quality of primitive sites

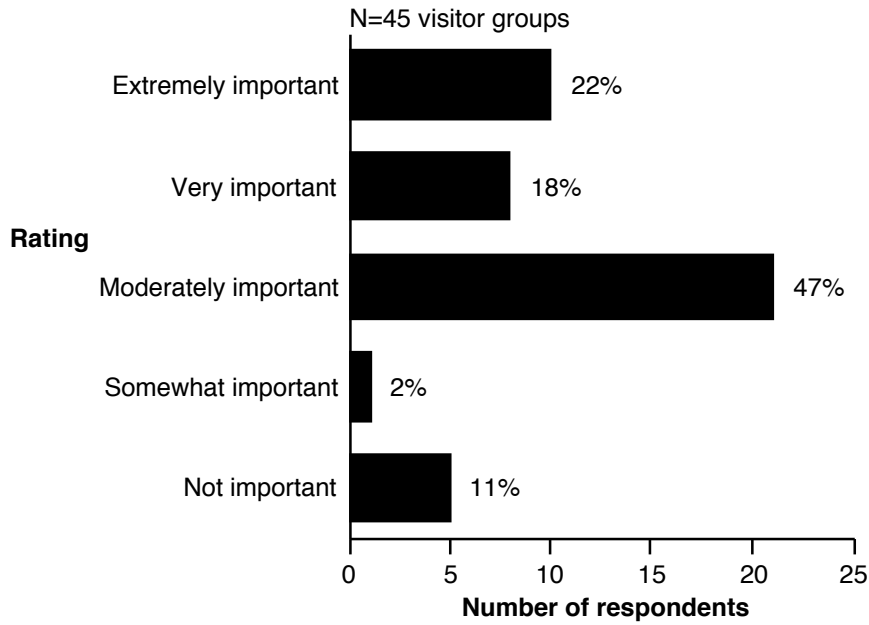


Figure 185: Importance of paved parking pads

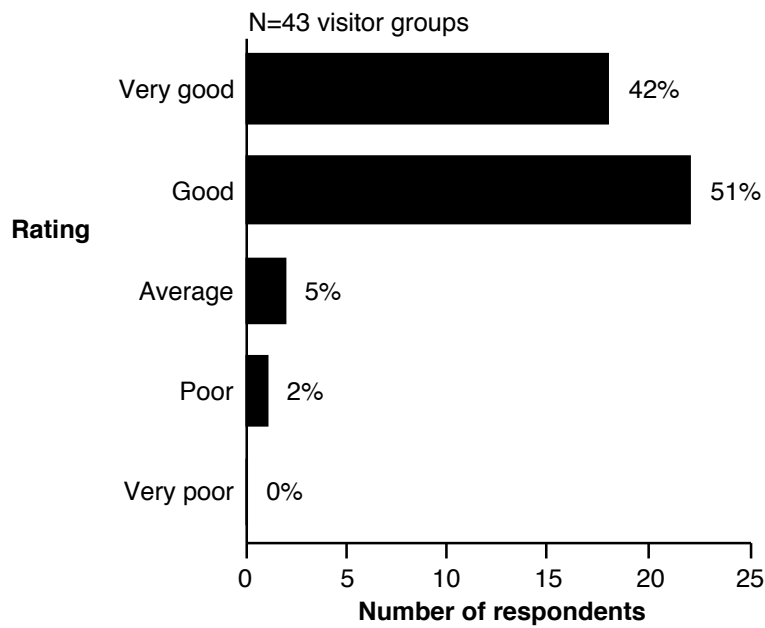


Figure 186: Quality of paved parking pads

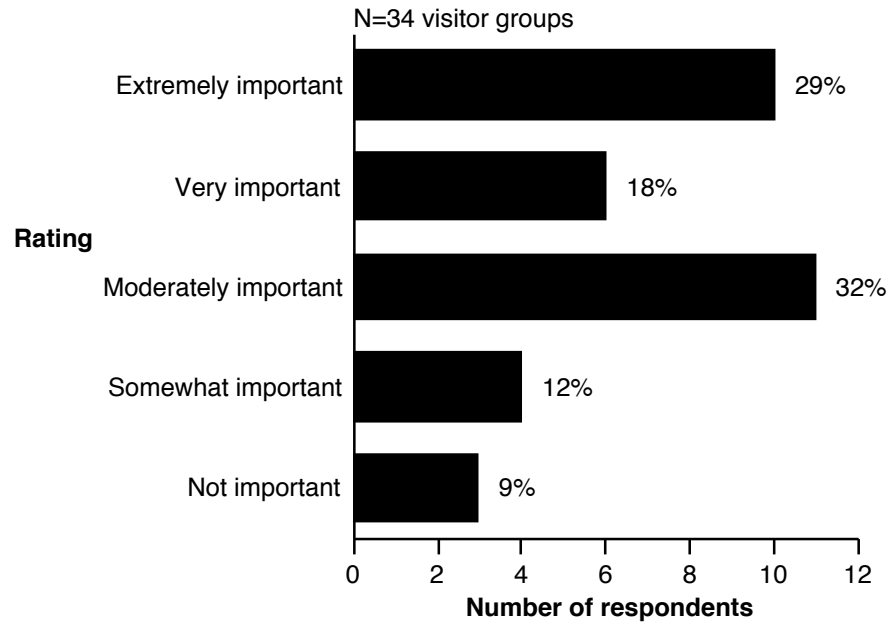


Figure 187: Importance of tent pads

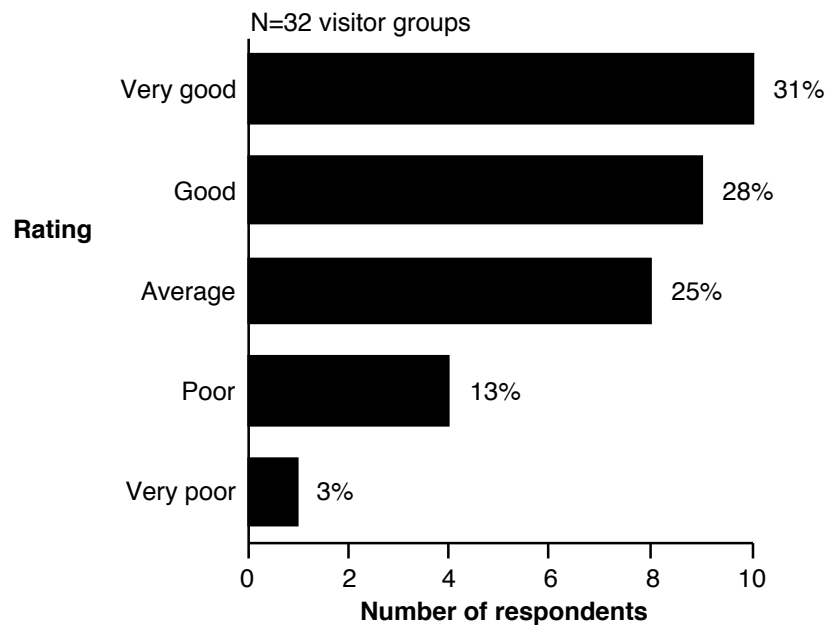


Figure 188: Quality of tent pads

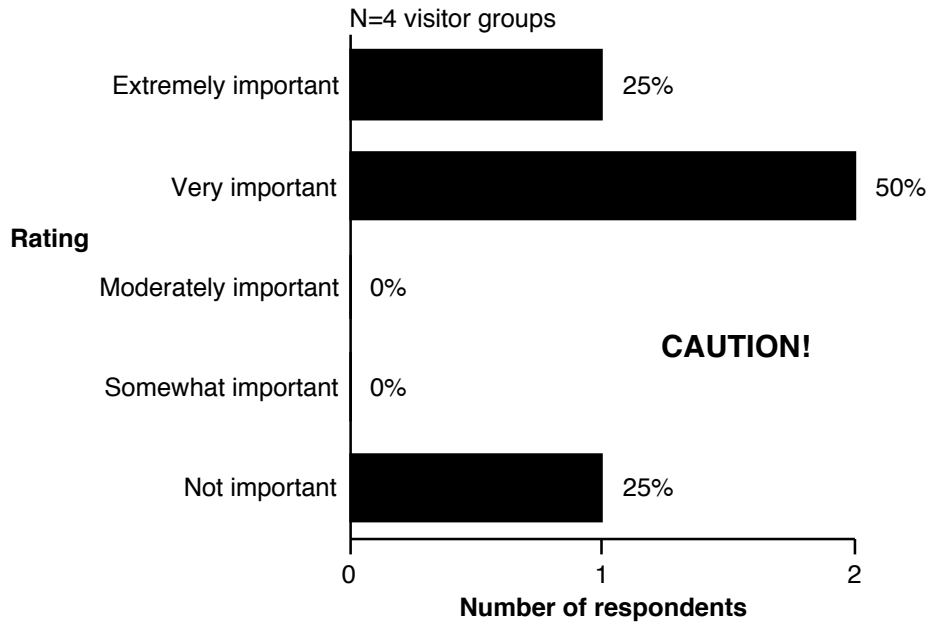


Figure 189: Importance of dump station

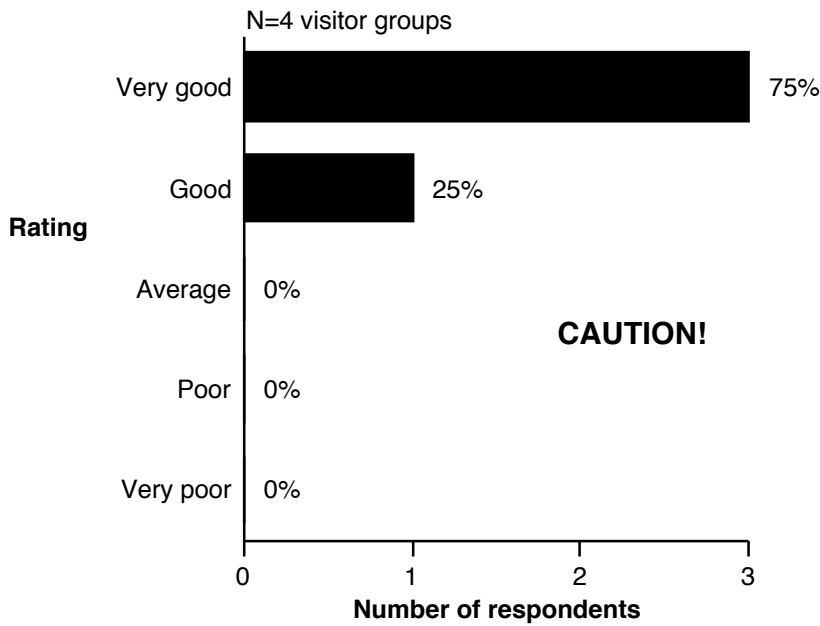


Figure 190: Quality of dump station

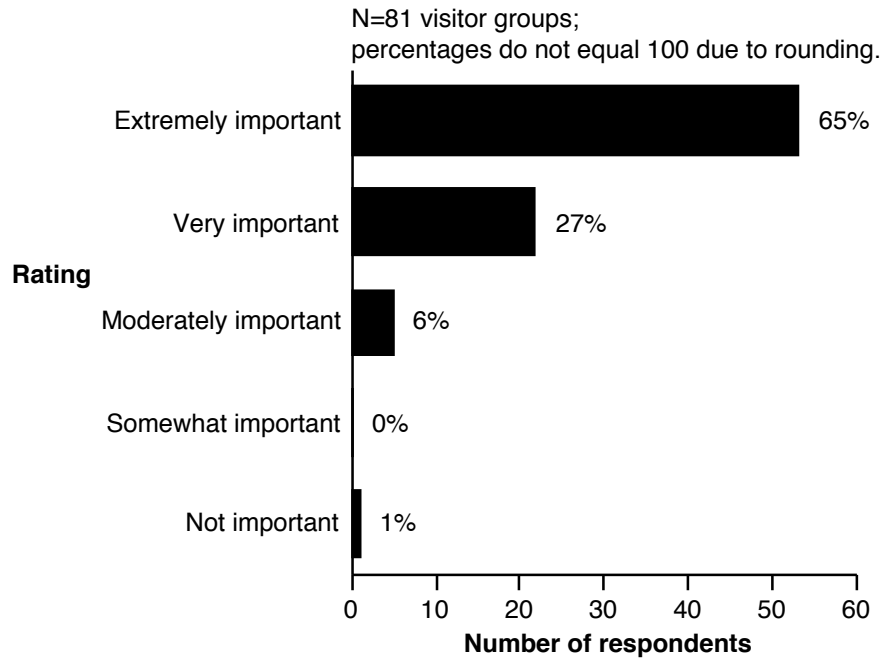


Figure 191: Importance of neatness of site

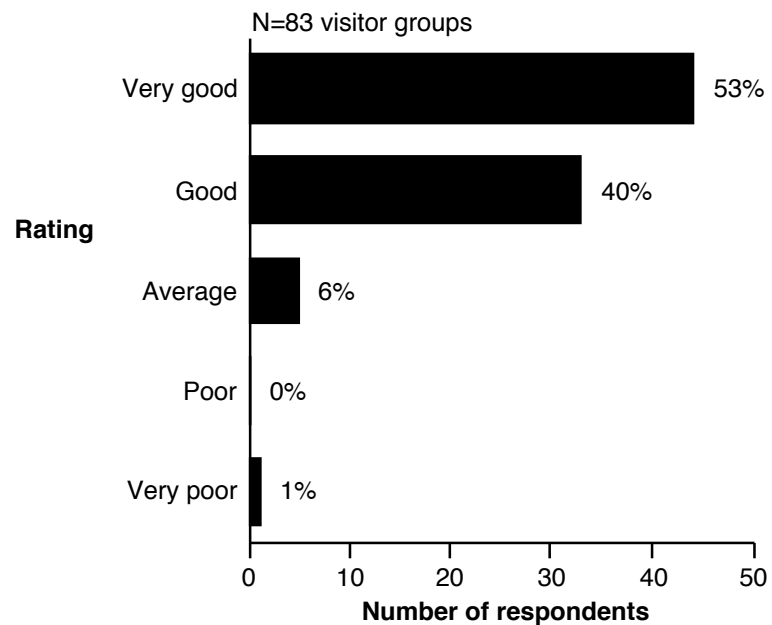


Figure 192: Quality of neatness of site

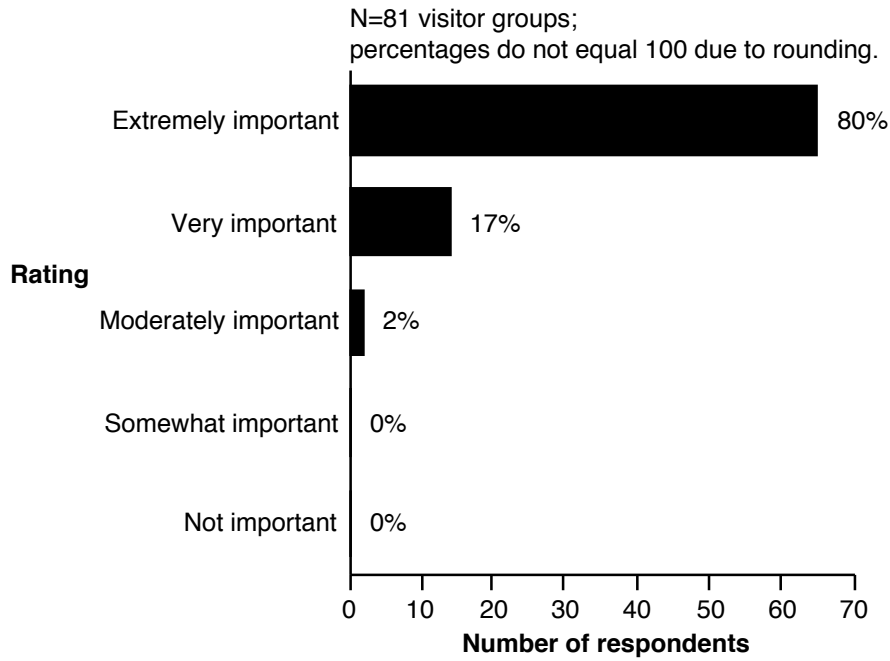


Figure 193: Importance of quiet at night

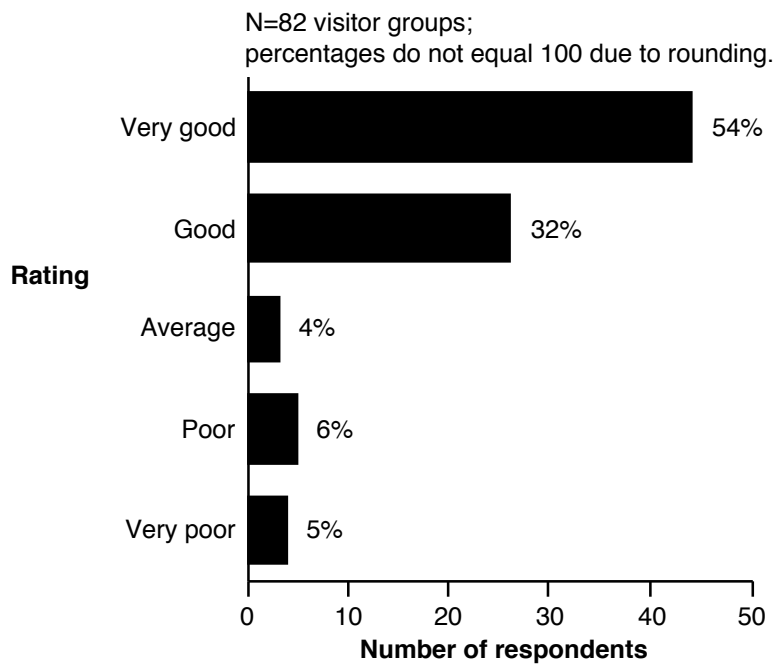


Figure 194: Quality of quiet at night

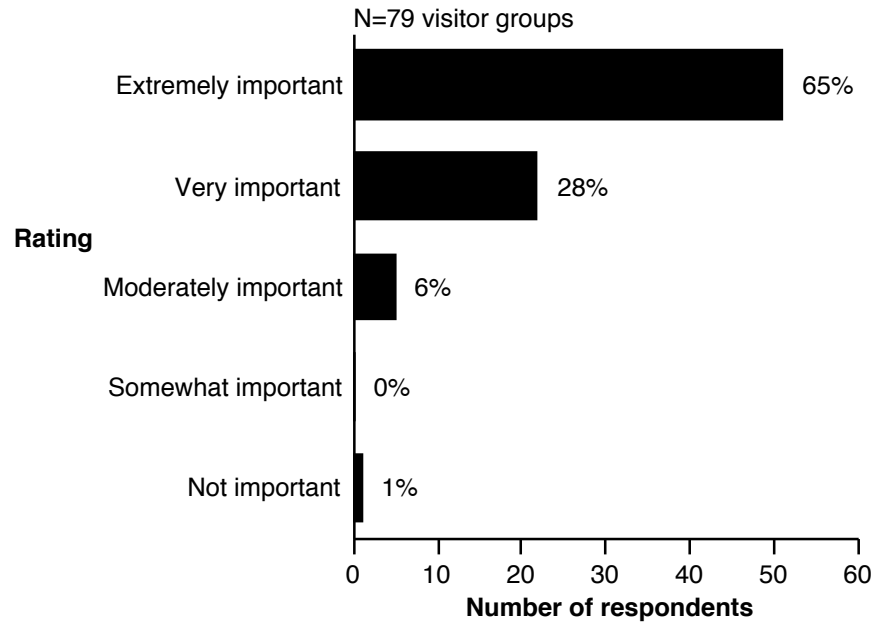


Figure 195: Importance of privacy

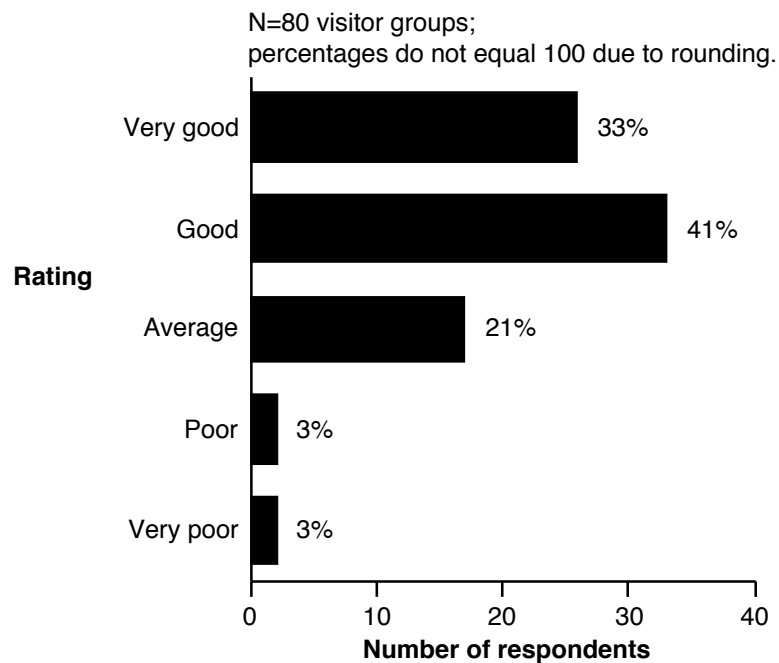
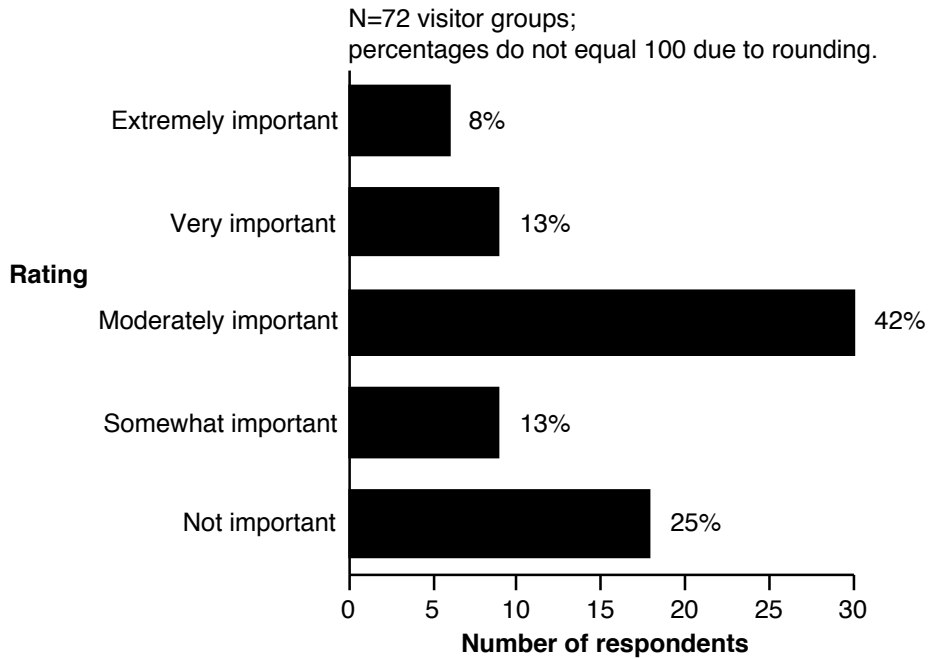
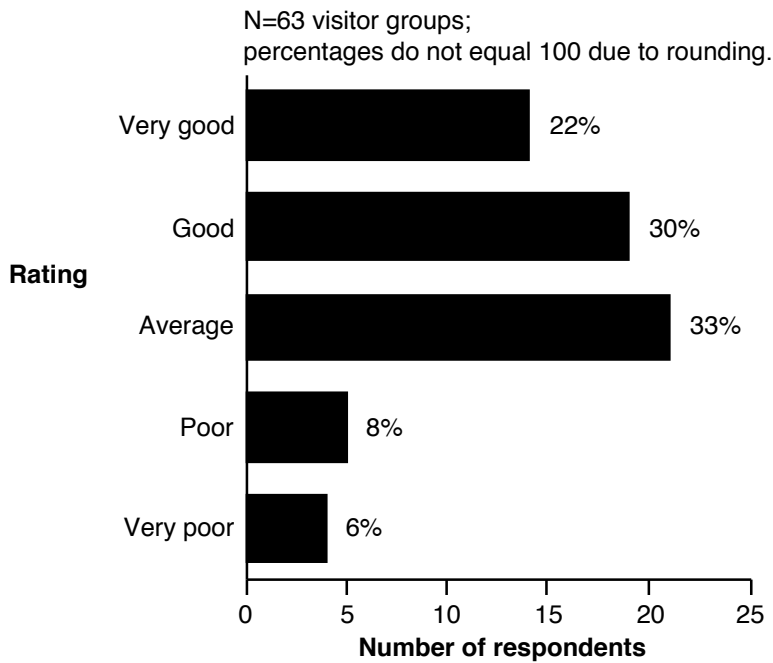


Figure 196: Quality of privacy

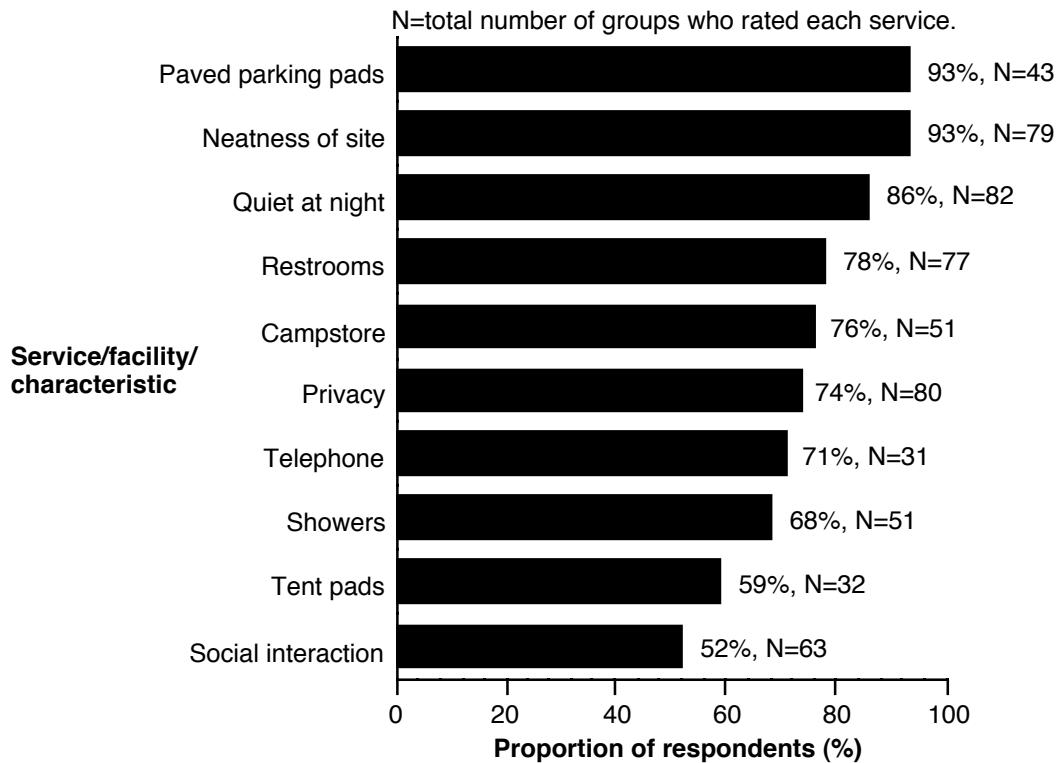


**Figure 197: Importance of social interaction with other campers**



**Figure 198: Quality of social interaction with other campers**





**Figure 199: Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for campground services, facilities and characteristics**

**Table 6: Other comments about park campground services**

N=33 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comments	Number of times mentioned
Camp sites well designed	4
Everything good	4
Restrooms need improvement	4
Loft Mountain Campground best	3
Liked campsite privacy in park	2
Restroom facilities good	2
RV sites too close to tent sites	2
RV generators too noisy	2
Other comments	6

Visitors were asked to respond to the following question, "If you and your group did not stay overnight in Shenandoah National Park lodging or campgrounds, please explain why?" Table 7 shows visitors' responses.

**Reasons for not staying in park lodging or campgrounds**

**Table 7: Reasons for not staying in park lodging or campgrounds**

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

Comments	Number of times mentioned
Just a day trip	117
Just driving through	107
Live nearby	62
Did not plan to stay overnight in park	25
Stayed in motel/hotel/B&B outside park	21
Short vacation/did not have time to stay overnight	19
Prefer to stay outside park/closer to other destinations	18
Need campground with full hookups	9
Stayed with friends/relatives	7
Park's accommodations full	7
Did not bring camping gear/not a camper	7
Did not know availability of park lodging	6
Exploring, checking availability	6
No swimming pool at park lodging	5
Have second home/cabin nearby	5
Concerned about weather	5
Park facilities too expensive	3
Wanted different facility that park offers	2
Other reasons	9

## Opinions about safety

Visitor groups were asked to rate how safe they felt from crime and accidents during this visit to Shenandoah NP. Visitors were asked to comment on three safety issues including personal safety from crime, personal safety from accidents, and personal property from crime.

**Park safety:** In Shenandoah NP, most visitors (79%) felt "very safe" from crime against their person (see Figure 200). Over one-half of visitors (54%) felt "very safe" from accidents to their person (see Figure 199). Finally, 68% of visitors felt "very safe" from crime against personal property (see Figure 201). Table 8 lists the reasons why visitors felt unsafe while visiting the park.

**Safety in home town or city:** Visitors were asked to rate their feeling of safety on the same issues in their home town or city. Figure 202 shows that 53% of visitors felt "somewhat safe" from crime against their person. Figure 203 shows that 56% of visitors felt "somewhat safe" from accidents to their person. Figure 204 shows that 52% of visitors felt "somewhat safe" from crime against personal property.

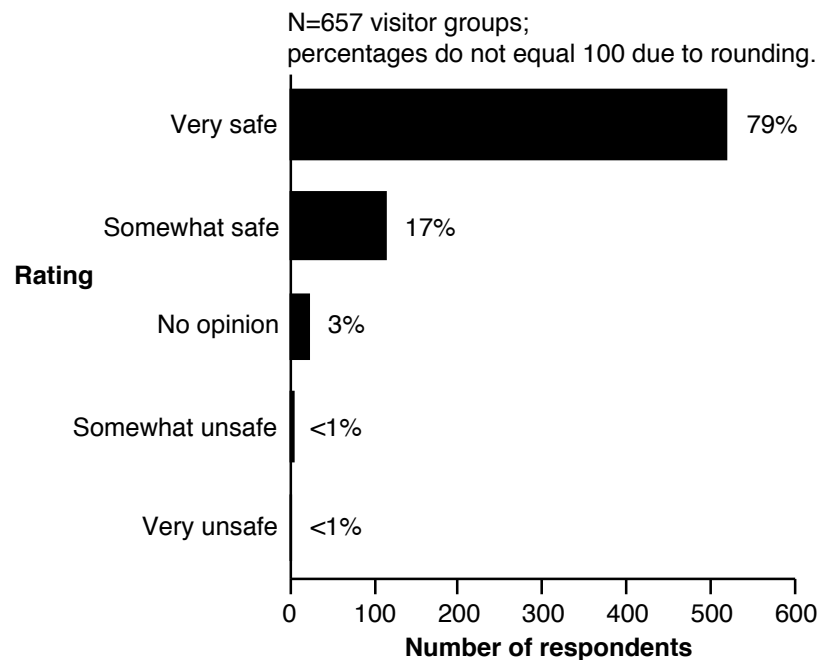


Figure 200: Personal safety from crime in park

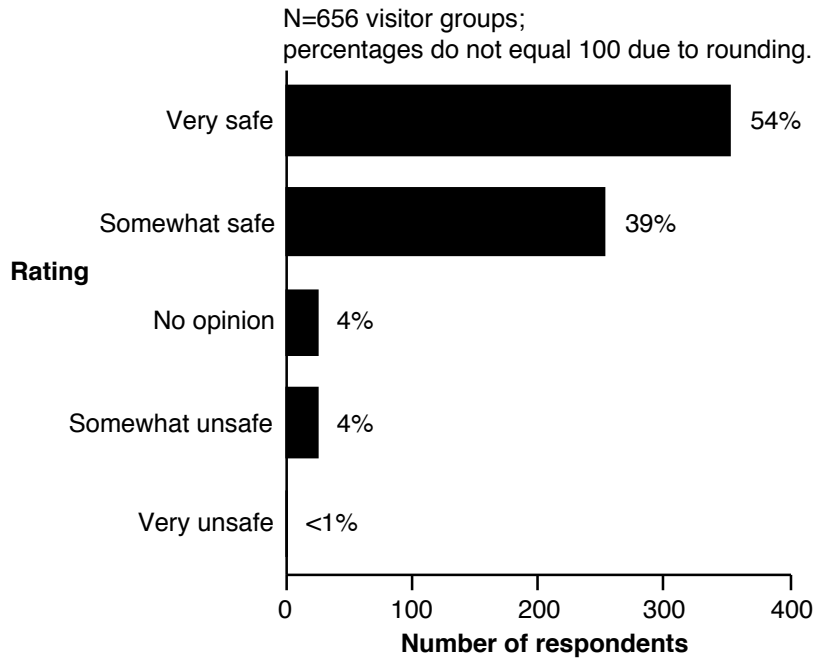


Figure 201: Personal safety from accidents in park

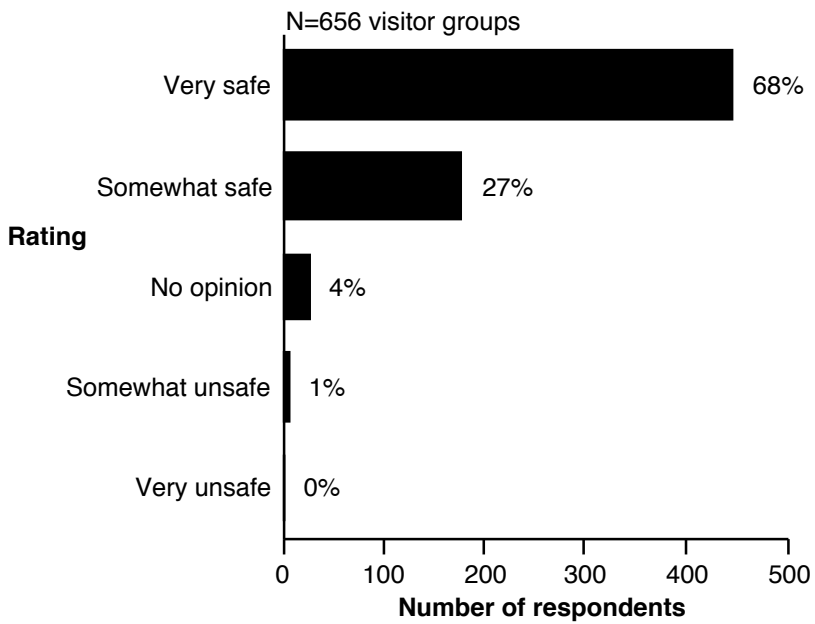


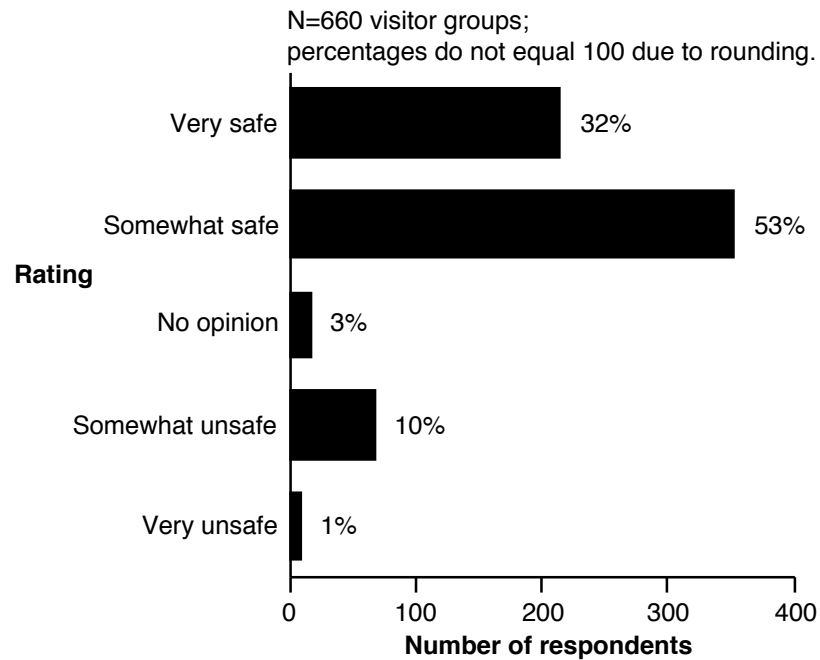
Figure 202: Safety of personal property from crime in park

**Table 8: Reasons for feeling unsafe in park**

N=44 comments;

some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Speeding drivers	8
Narrow, dangerous road	8
Need more rangers patrolling	6
Dangerous trail—falling rocks	4
Wildlife on road	3
Bad weather/fog make driving dangerous	3
Felt personal possessions were not safe	3
Wildlife viewing dangerous—other drivers stop suddenly	2
Don't know what to do in bear encounter	2
High volume of traffic	2
Blind turns on road	2
Other comments	1



**Figure 203: Personal safety from crime in home town/ city**

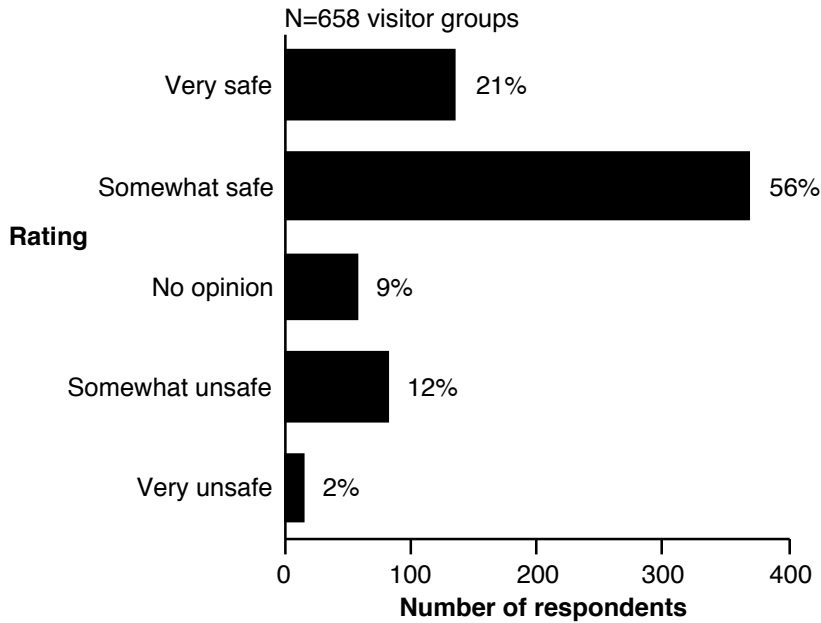


Figure 204: Personal safety from accidents in home town/ city

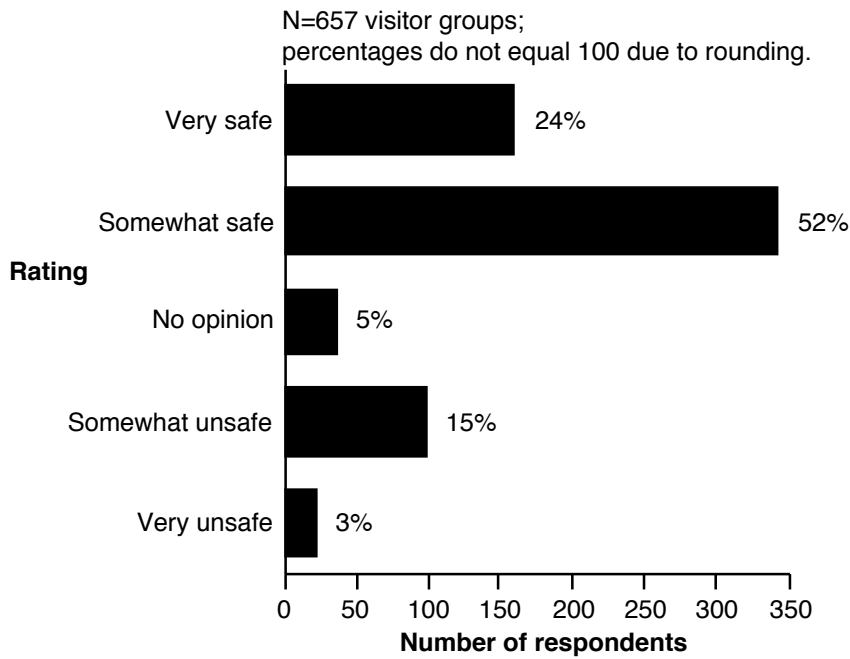
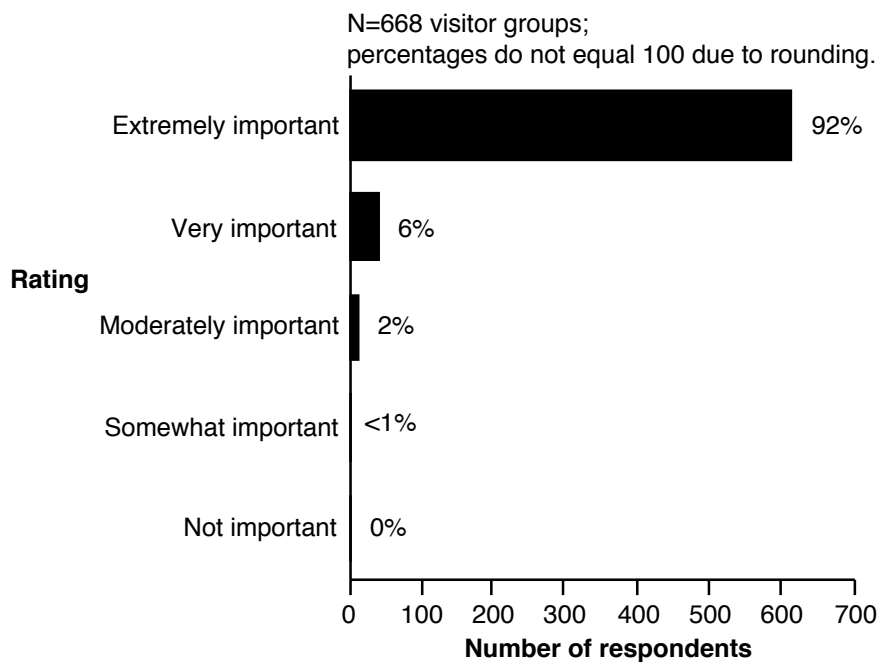


Figure 205: Safety of personal property from crime in home town/ city

**Importance of park attributes in planning for park preservation**

Visitor groups were asked, "For each of the following attributes of Shenandoah National Park, please rate its importance (from 1 to 5) in planning for the preservation of the park for future generations?" The selected attributes included forest, wildlife, clean air, clean water, historic features, wilderness/backcountry, developed campground facilities, natural quiet/sounds of nature, ranger-led programs, solitude, and educational opportunities.

As Figures 206-216 show, the attributes that received the highest "extremely important" to "very important" ratings were clean air (98%), forest (98%), clean water (97%), wildlife (97%), natural quiet (95%), and wilderness/ backcountry (92%). According to visitors, the highest "not important" rating was for developed campgrounds (6%).



**Figure 206: Importance of forest**

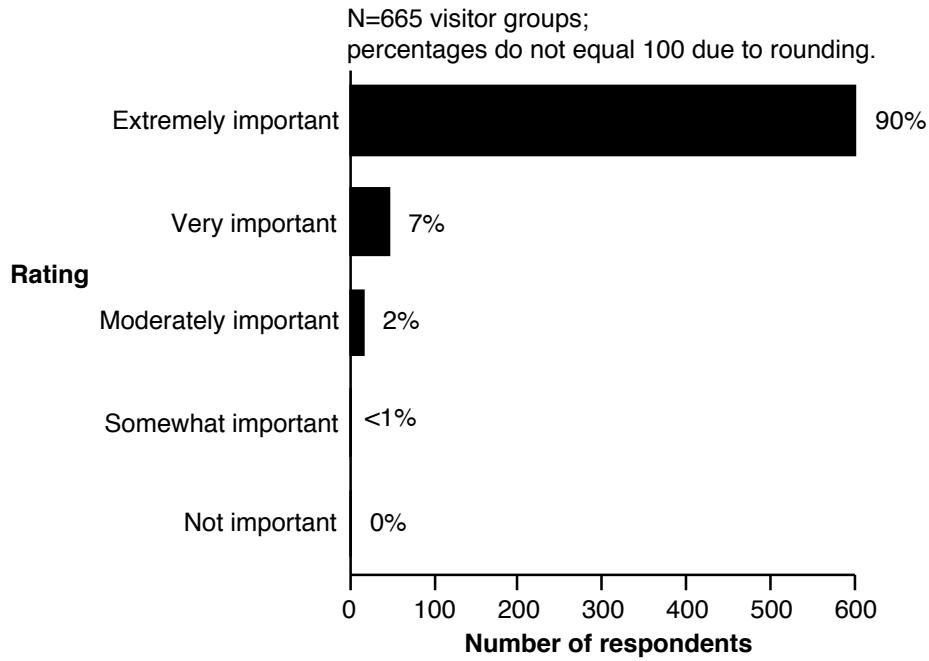


Figure 207: Importance of wildlife

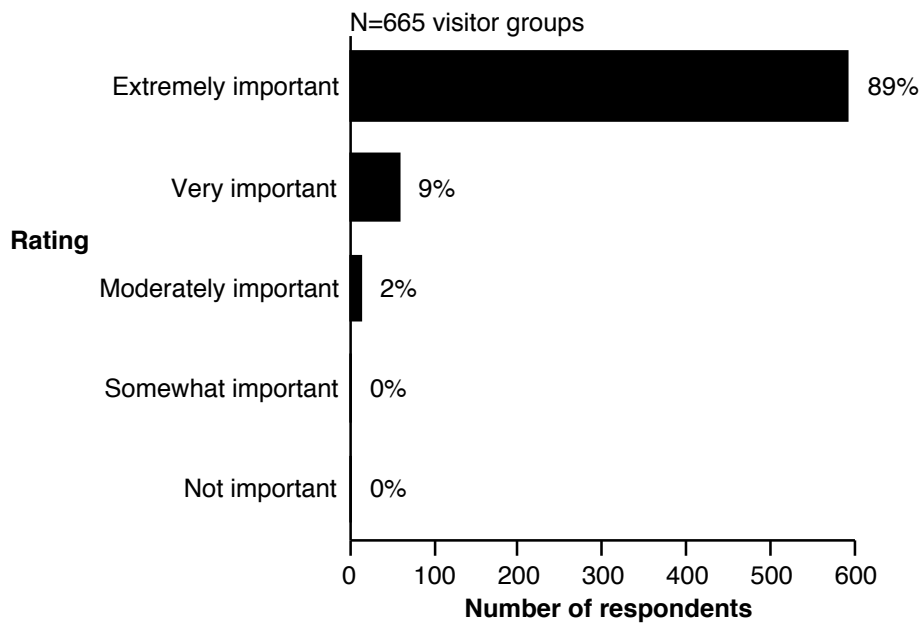


Figure 208: Importance of clean air



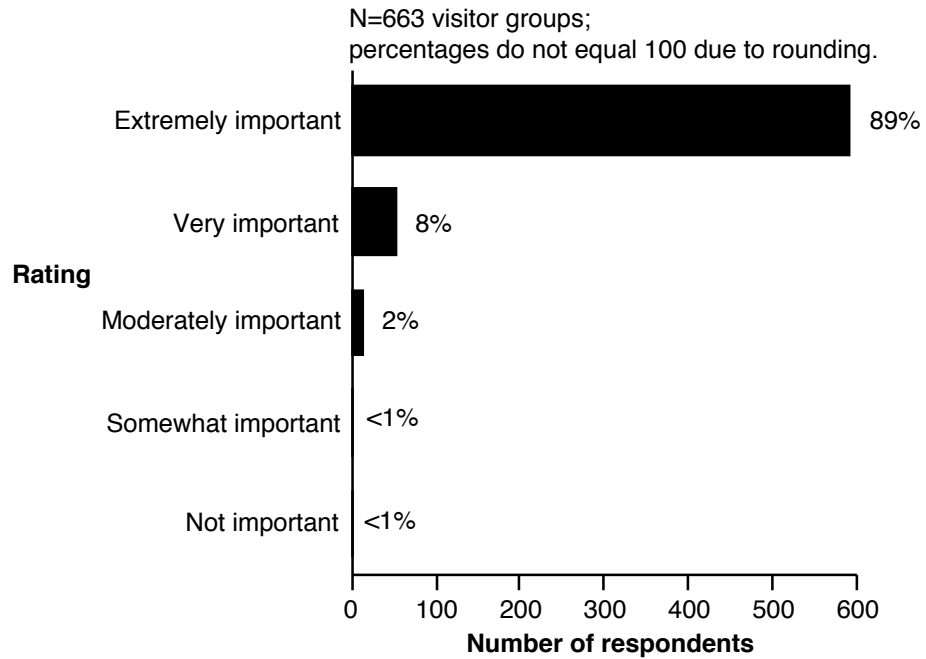


Figure 209: Importance of clean water

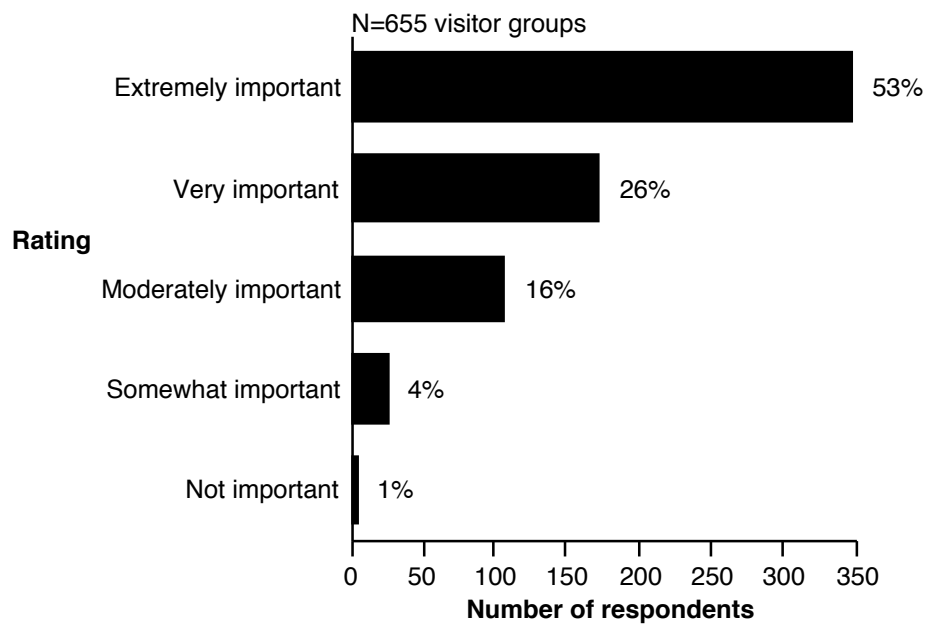


Figure 210: Importance of historic features

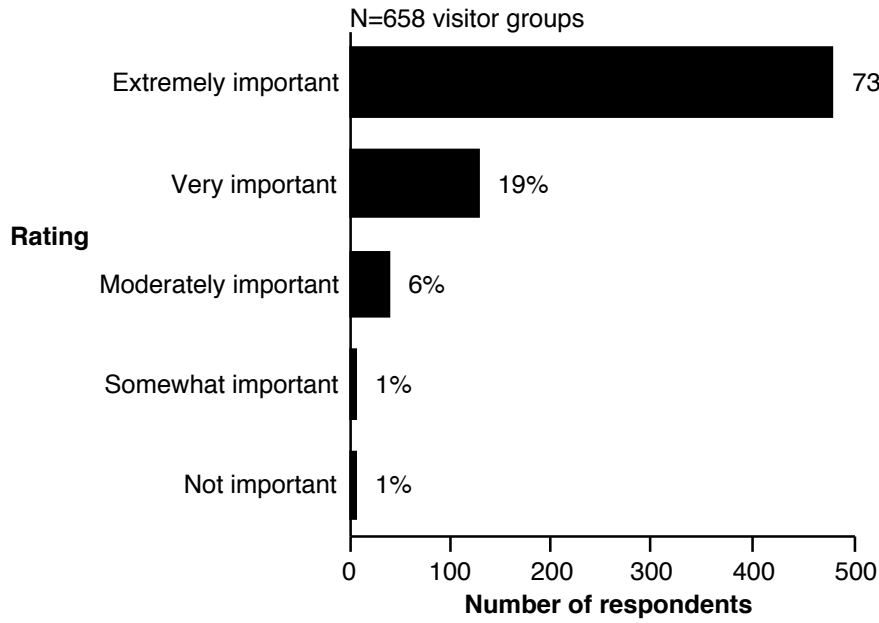


Figure 211: Importance of wilderness/backcountry

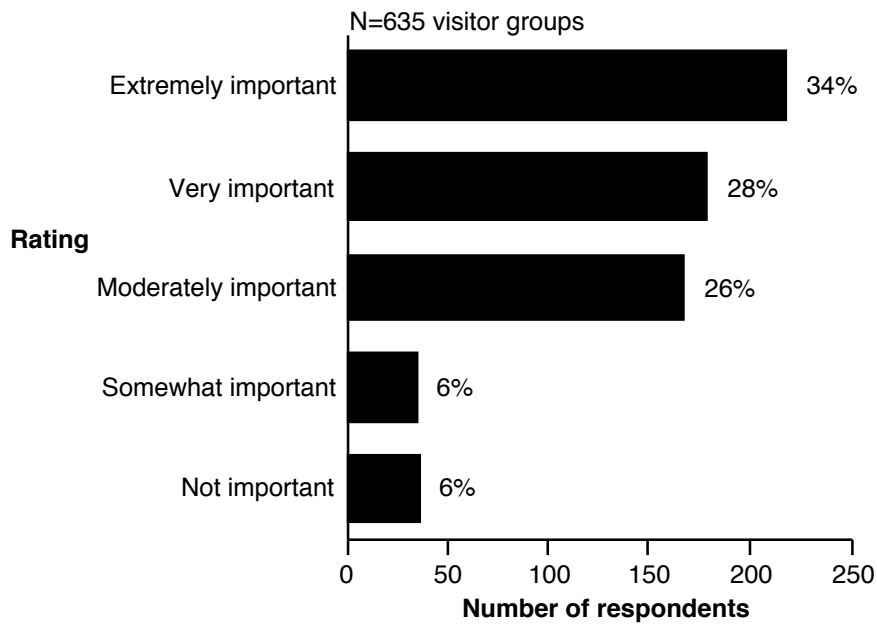


Figure 212: Importance of developed campground facilities

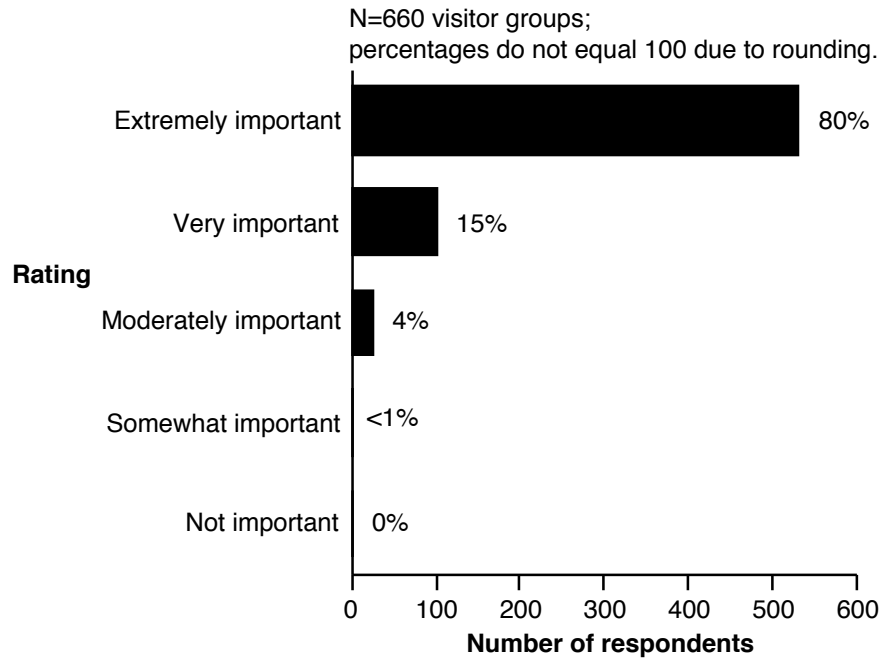


Figure 213: Importance of natural quiet/sounds of nature

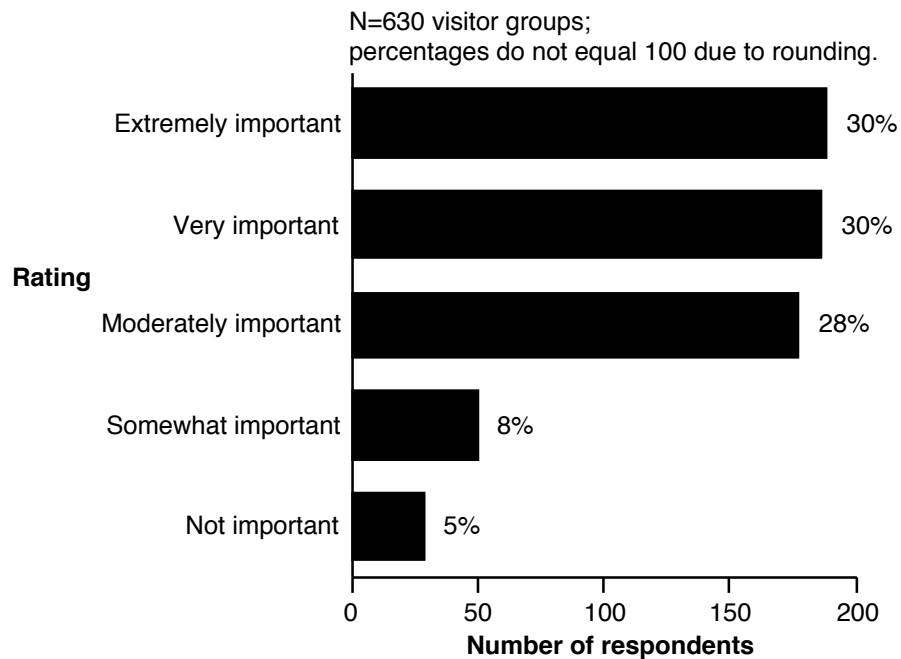


Figure 214: Importance of ranger-led programs

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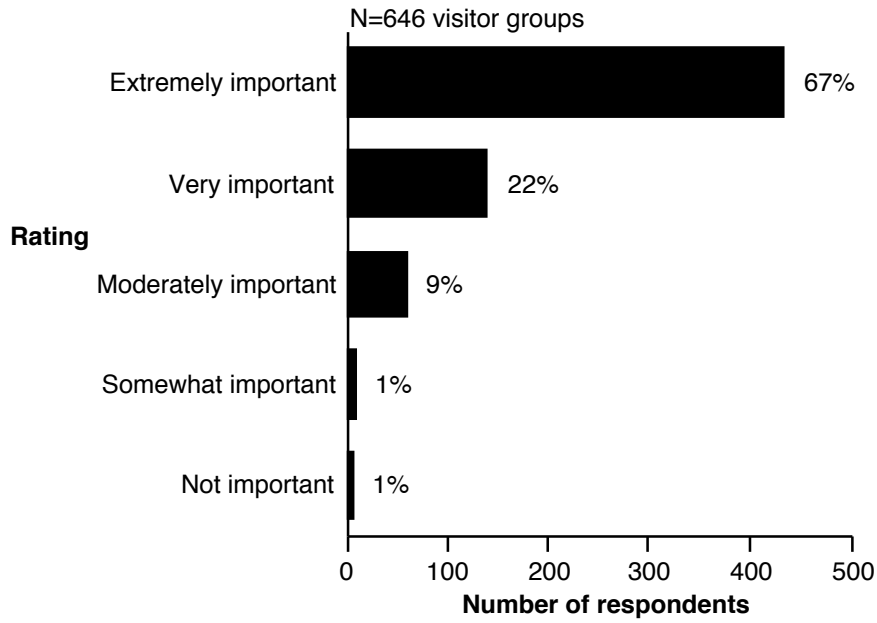


Figure 215: Importance of solitude

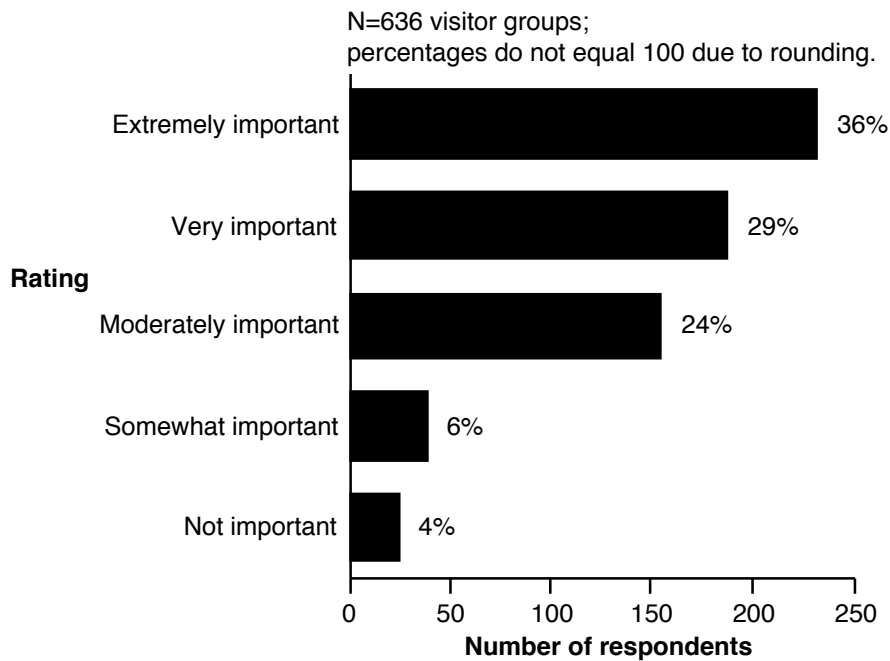


Figure 216: Importance of educational opportunities

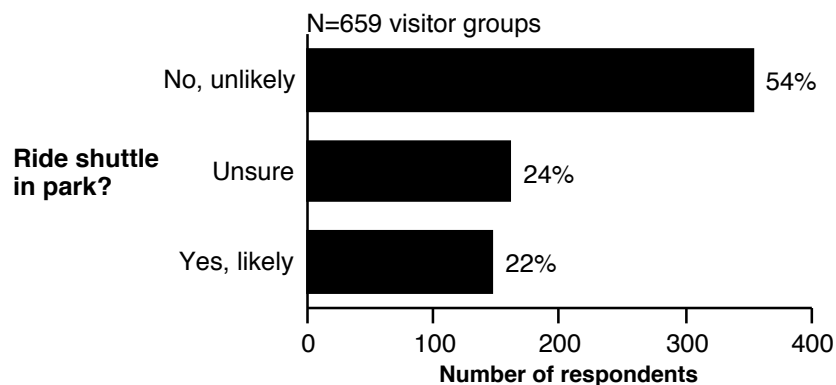
### Opinions about future shuttle bus

Visitor groups were asked if, on a future visit to Shenandoah National Park, they would be willing to ride a shuttle bus to park facilities and trailheads, and to other local attractions within 50 miles of the park. They were also asked if they would be willing to pay a modest fee for this service, in addition to the park entrance fee.

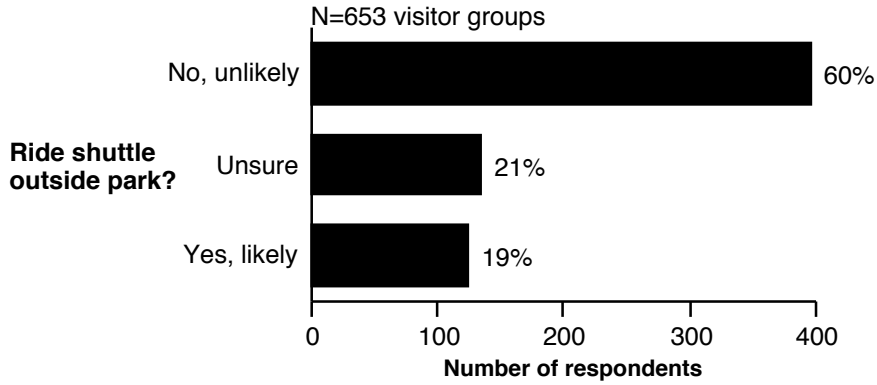
Over one-half of the visitor groups (54%) said it was unlikely that they would be willing to ride a shuttle bus to park facilities and trailheads on a future visit (see Figure 217). Twenty-four percent of the visitors were "unsure" about riding a shuttle on a future visit and 22% said they would likely be willing to ride.

Sixty percent of the visitors said they would not be willing to ride a shuttle to local attractions within 50 miles of the park (see Figure 218). Twenty-one percent of visitors said they were "unsure" about riding a shuttle to local attractions and 19% said they would likely ride a shuttle.

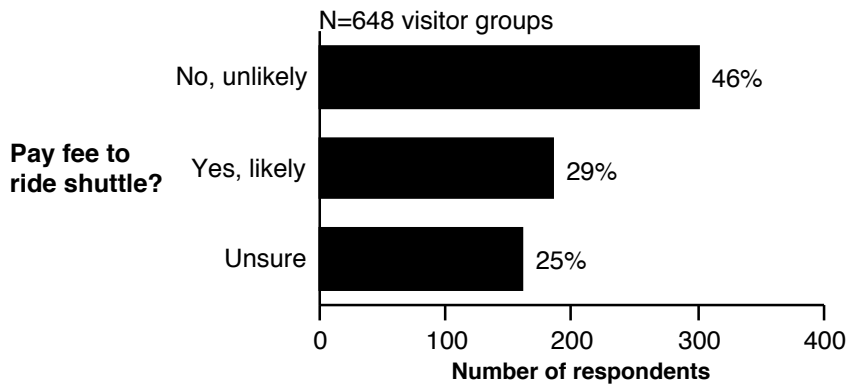
Less than one-half of the visitors (46%) would be willing to pay a modest fee to ride a shuttle (see Figure 219). Twenty-nine percent of groups are likely willing to pay a fee to ride a future shuttle; 25% were "unsure."



**Figure 217: Willingness to ride shuttle bus to park facilities and/or trailheads on future visit**



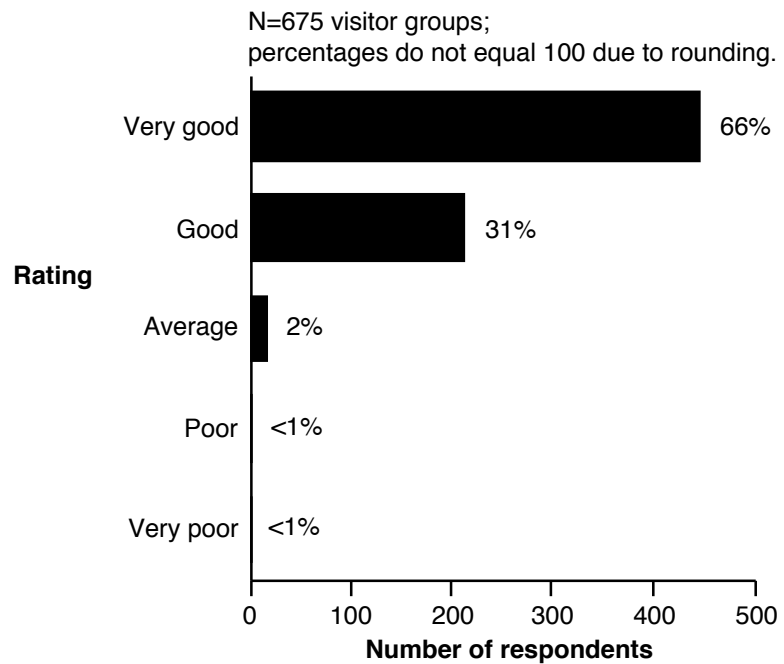
**Figure 218: Willingness to ride shuttle bus to local attractions within 50 miles of park on future visit**



**Figure 219: Willingness to pay to ride a shuttle bus on future visit, in addition to entrance fee**

**Overall quality of visitor services**

Visitor groups were asked to rate the overall quality of the visitor services provided at the Shenandoah National Park during this visit. Most visitor groups (97%) rated services as "very good" or "good" (see Figure 220). One visitor group rated the services as "very poor."



**Figure 220: Overall quality of services**

Forty-nine percent of visitor groups (338 groups) wrote additional comments, which are included in the separate appendix of this report . Their comments about Shenandoah National Park are summarized below (see Table 9). Some comments offer specific suggestions on how to improve the park; others describe what visitors enjoyed or did not enjoy about their visit.

### Additional comments summary

**Table 9: Additional comments**

N=612 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Park staff helpful	15
Park staff friendly	13
Rangers should patrol more	8
Park staff professional/knowledgeable	6
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Provide nature/conservation information	9
Improve park web site	6
History important value of park	6
Park provides valuable nature information	6
Trail maps need more information about trail condition	5
Ranger-led program informative	5
Disappointed in ranger program content	2
<b>FACILITIES/ MAINTENANCE</b>	
Good job maintaining park	37
Park clean	17
Trails well maintained	17
Trails clearly marked	17
Campground facilities good	11
Buses for hikers helpful	10
Overlooks well maintained	7
Trim branches/remove dead trees	7
Park should warn about fog	7
Trailhead direction signs confusing—need improved	6
Need bike lane for bicycles—improve safety	5
Park well organized	4
Need more restrooms at picnic areas	2
Other comment	1
<b>POLICIES</b>	
Entrance fee too high for drive through/daytime visitors	12
Enforce speed limit	9
Park is safe	5
Entrance fee reasonable	5
Motorcycle noise ruined peacefulness/solitude	4
Willing to pay more if it helps preserve park	4
Campground noise policy needs better enforcement	3



**Table 9 (continued)**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>CONCESSIONS</b>	
Food quality poor	3
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Enjoyed watching wildlife	30
Seeing bears was highlight of trip	25
Preserve park for future generations	18
Appreciate park's proximity to city	10
Park already overdeveloped	8
Park too crowded with vehicles	6
Bear encounters scary	3
Animals too tame	2
<b>GENERAL IMPRESSIONS</b>	
Enjoyed visit	85
Beautiful park/scenery	55
Will visit again	52
Peaceful/quiet	14
One of the best national parks	8
Visit evoked fond memories of past	8
Do not change anything	8
Will recommend to others	6

## Shenandoah National Park Additional Analysis VSP Report 127

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) 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 visit          | • Panorama: quality of concession services/facilities                     | • Type of camping done                                     |
| • Sources of information-future visit         | • Skyland: use of concession services/facilities                          | • Number of nights camped in park                          |
| • Travel destination.                         | • Panorama: use of concession services/facilities                         | • Number of nights camped out park                         |
| • Importance of reason for visiting           | • Panorama: importance of concession services/facilities                  | • Park campground used                                     |
| • Length of stay - hours                      | • Skyland: importance of concession services/facilities                   | • Importance of campground service/facility/characteristic |
| • Length of stay - days                       | • Skyland: quality of concession services/facilities                      | • Quality of campground service/facility/characteristic    |
| • Group type                                  | • Big Meadows Lodge: use of concession services/facilities                | • Safety: personal safety from crime in park               |
| • Group size                                  | • Big Meadows Lodge: importance of concession services/facilities         | • Safety: personal safety from accident in park            |
| • Age   | • Big Meadows Lodge: quality of concession services/facilities            | • Safety: personal property from crime in park             |
| • U.S. Zip code of residence                  | • Big Meadows Wayside: use of concession services/facilities              | • Safety: personal safety from crime in home town/city     |
| • Country of residence                        | • Big Meadows Wayside: importance of concession services/facilities       | • Safety: personal safety from accident in home town/city  |
| • Number of visits - 12 months                | • Big Meadows Wayside: quality of concession services/facilities          | • Safety: personal property from crime in home town/city   |
| • Number of visits - 2 to 5 years             | • Lewis Mountain Campground: use of concession services/facilities        | • Ride shuttle to facilities/trailheads                    |
| • Use of interpretive/ visitor services       | • Lewis Mountain Campground: importance of concession services/facilities | • Ride shuttle to local attractions                        |
| • Importance of interpretive/visitor services | • Lewis Mountain Campground: quality of concession services/facilities    | • Pay fee to ride shuttle                                  |
| • Quality of interpretive/ visitor services   | • Loft Mountain: use of concession services/facilities                    | • Importance of attributes                                 |
-

**Additional Analysis (continued)**

- Elkwallow: use of concession services/facilities
- Elkwallow: importance of concession services/facilities
- Elkwallow: quality of concession services/facilities
- Loft Mountain: importance of concession services/facilities
- Loft Mountain: quality of concession services/facilities
- Stay in developed campground?
- Overall quality of services in park

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  
Email: [littlej@uidaho.edu](mailto:littlej@uidaho.edu)**

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**QUESTIONNAIRE**

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## 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 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
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

### 1990 (continued)

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 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 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)

### 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)

## Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)

### 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 (summer)
- 89. Chamizal National Memorial
- 90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)
- 92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer & fall)

### 1997

- 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 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
- 116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
- 117. Cumberland Gap NHP (fall)

### 2000

- 118. Haleakala National Park (spring)
- 119. White House Tour & White House Visitor Center (spring)
- 120. Shenandoah National Park
- 121. Olympic National Park
- 122. Eisenhower National Historic Site
- 123. Badlands National Park
- 124. Mount Rainier National Park

### 2001

- 125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
- 126. Colonial National Historical Park—Jamestown Island
- 127. Shenandoah National Park

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





