



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Visitor Services Project



Valley Forge National Historical Park Visitor Study

Summer 2001

Report 130



University of Idaho



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

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Visitor Services Project
Report 130

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Todd Simmons was VSP Research Aide and Margaret Littlejohn is National Park Service VSP Coordinator, based at the Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho. We thank the staff and volunteers of Valley Forge National Historical Park for their assistance with this study. The VSP acknowledges the Public Opinion Lab of the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University, for its technical assistance.

Visitor Services Project Valley Forge National Historical Park Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Valley Forge National Historical Park (NHP) during August 11-19, 2001. A total of 755 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 550 questionnaires for a 72.8% response rate.
- This report profiles Valley Forge NHP visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Forty percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Forty-six percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Fifty-two percent of visitors were aged 31-55 years and 21% were aged 15 or younger.
- United States visitors were from Pennsylvania (53%), New Jersey (6%), New York (4%), 34 other states and Washington, D.C. Four percent of all visitors were international, with 16% from France, 13% from England, and 11% from Taiwan.
- Most visitor groups (68%) had visited the park previously. Of those visitor groups, 31% had visited several times a month in the last year. Most visitor groups (99%) visited the park in the summer during the last three years, 56% in spring and 55% in fall.
- On this visit, the most common activities were walking/running/jogging/hiking (65%), visiting historic structures (60%) and driving for pleasure (40%).
- Previous visits (53%), friends or relatives (42%), and travel guides/tour books (24%) were the most used sources of information about the park prior to visiting. On future trips to Valley Forge NHP, 47% of visitor groups said that the internet/web site would be their preferred method of obtaining information in planning their visit, 37% said they would use previous visit, and 35% would use travel guides/tour books.
- Most visitor groups (79%) said they were aware of the National Park Service management of the site, 17% were not aware, and 4% were not sure.
- Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups used Highway 23 (eastern side of park) to enter the park, 18% used Highway 23 (western side of park) and Trooper Road/Rt. 363, and 15% used Pawling's Road.
- The most commonly visited sites in the park were the Visitor Center (55%), National Memorial Arch (45%), Washington's Headquarters (43%) and Muhlenberg's Brigade (37%). The sites most frequently visited first included the Visitor Center (49%), Schuylkill River Trail (14%), and Pawling's Parking Area (11%).
- Most visitor groups (86%) indicated that they felt "very safe" during their visit to Valley Forge NHP, 10% felt "somewhat safe," and 2% had "no opinion."
- The average visitor group expenditure was \$143. The average per capita expenditure was \$56. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of group spent more, 50% spent less) was \$19. Thirty-two percent of visitor groups spent no money and 39% spent between \$1 and \$100 in total expenditures in Valley Forge NHP. Of the total expenditures by groups, 47% was for lodging, and 23% was for restaurants and bars.
- Most visitor groups (92%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at Valley Forge NHP as "very good" or "good." No visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "very poor."

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

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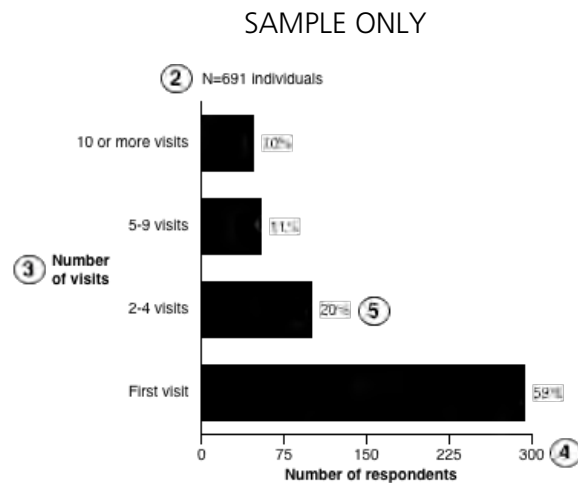
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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Valley Forge National Historical Park, also referred to as "Valley Forge NHP." This visitor study was conducted August 11-19, 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 to help managers request additional analyses. The final section includes a copy of the **Questionnaire**. The separate appendix includes comment summaries and visitors' unedited comments.

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



1 Figure 4: Number of visits

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

METHODS

Questionnaire design and administration

The questionnaire for this visitor study was designed using a standard format that has been developed in previous Visitor Services Project studies. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks. Other questions were customized for Valley Forge NHP.

Interviews were conducted with, and questionnaires were distributed to, a sample of visitors who arrived at Valley Forge National Historical Park during the period from April 11-19, 2001. Visitors were sampled at 6 locations (see Table 1).

Table 1: Questionnaire distribution locations

| Location | Questionnaires distributed | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----|
| | Number | % |
| Betzwood Picnic Area | 183 | 24 |
| Visitor Center | 165 | 22 |
| Washington's Headquarters | 150 | 20 |
| Varnum's Quarters | 87 | 12 |
| Pawling's Parking Area | 86 | 11 |
| National Memorial Arch | 84 | 11 |
| GRAND TOTAL | 755 | 100 |

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

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

Returned questionnaires were coded and the information was entered into a computer using 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

This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members. Thus, the sample size ("N"), varies from figure to figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 493 visitor groups, Figure 3 presents data for 1,340 individuals. A note above each graph specifies the information illustrated.

Sample size, missing data and reporting errors

Occasionally, a respondent may not have answered all of the questions, or may have answered some incorrectly. Unanswered questions result in missing data and cause the number in the sample to vary from figure to figure. For example, although 550 questionnaires were returned by Valley Forge NHP visitors, Figure 1 shows data for only 493 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.

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

Limitations

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

2. The data reflect visitor use patterns of visitors to the selected sites during the study period of August 11-19, 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.

**Special
conditions**

Weather conditions during the visitor study were typical of August in the Valley Forge area, with warm, sunny days, and the occasional thunderstorm.

RESULTS

At Valley Forge National Historical Park, 795 visitor groups were contacted, and 755 of these groups (95%) accepted questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 550 visitor groups, resulting in a 72.8% response rate for this study.

Visitors contacted

Table 2 compares age and group size information collected from the total sample of visitors contacted with that from those who actually returned questionnaires. Based on the variables of respondent age and visitor group size, non-response bias was judged to be slightly significant. The ages and group sizes reported by actual respondents were higher than the ages and group sizes reported during the initial interview. This may be due to underreporting of both variables during the initial interview and that visitors interpreted the questions differently. Group size and age data should be treated with some caution, and other data that may differ by age or group size should be examined carefully.

Table 2: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents

| Variable | Total sample | | Actual respondents | |
|--------------------|--------------|------|--------------------|------|
| | N | Avg. | N | Avg. |
| Age of respondents | 700 | 44.8 | 532 | 45.4 |
| Group size | 731 | 2.13 | 493 | 3.33 |

Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 204 people. Forty percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 22% consisted of one person.

Demographics

Forty-six percent of visitor groups were made up of family members, 23% were people traveling alone, and 21% were made up of friends (see Figure 2). Groups listing themselves as "other" for group type included military personnel and co-workers.

Fifty-two percent of the visitors were in the 31-55 age group (see Figure 3). Another 21% of visitors were in the 15 or younger age group.

**Demographics
(continued)**

International visitors to Valley Forge NHP comprised four percent of the total visitation. The countries most often represented were France (16%), England (13%) and Taiwan (11%), as shown in Table 3. The largest proportions of United States visitors were from Pennsylvania (53%), New Jersey (6%), and New York (4%). Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from another 34 states and Washington, D.C. (see Map 1 and Table 4).

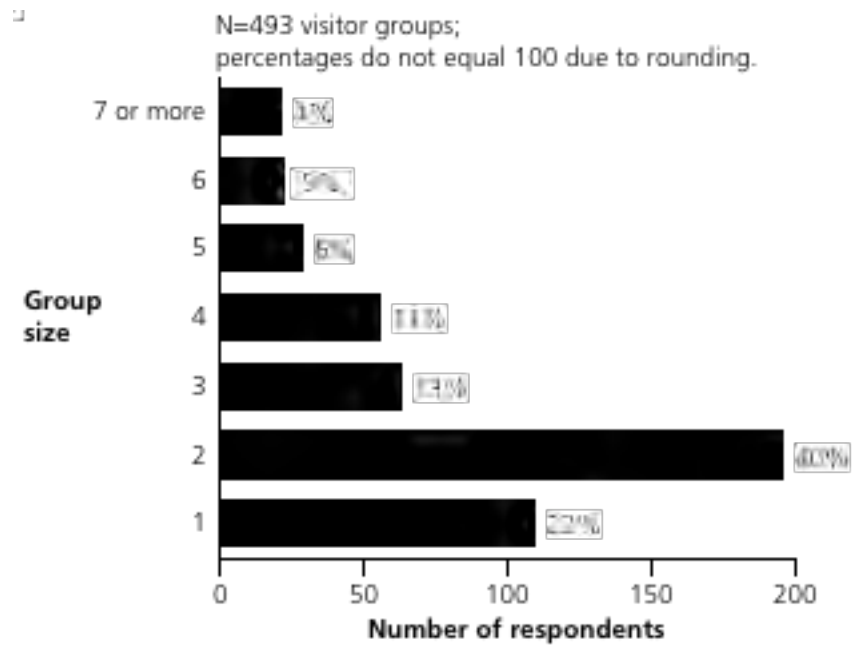


Figure 1: Visitor group sizes

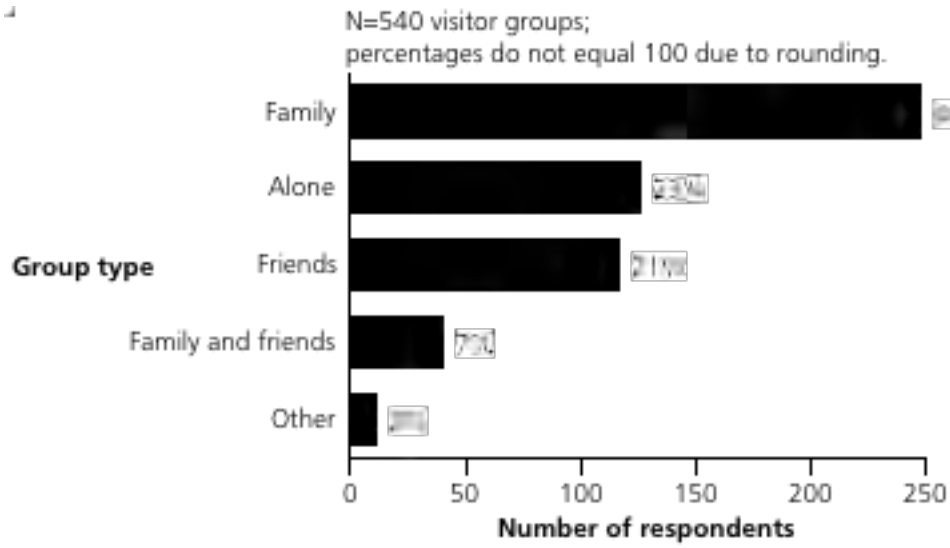


Figure 2: Visitor group types

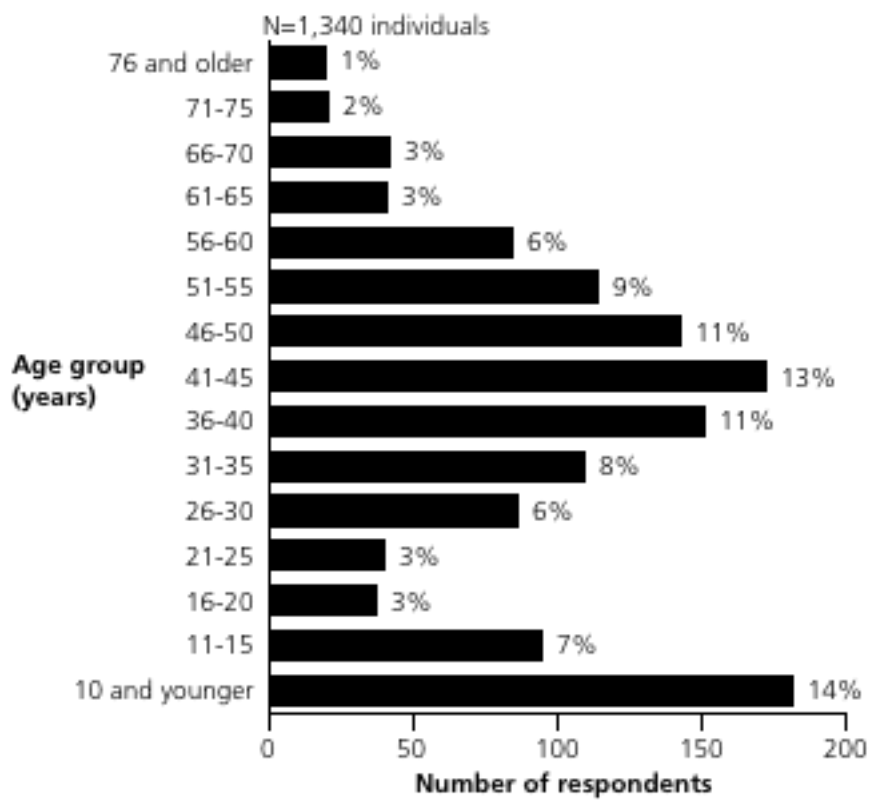


Figure 3: Visitor ages

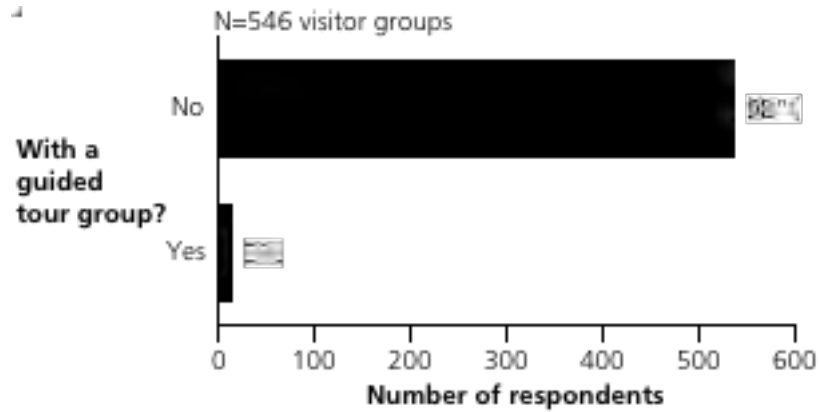
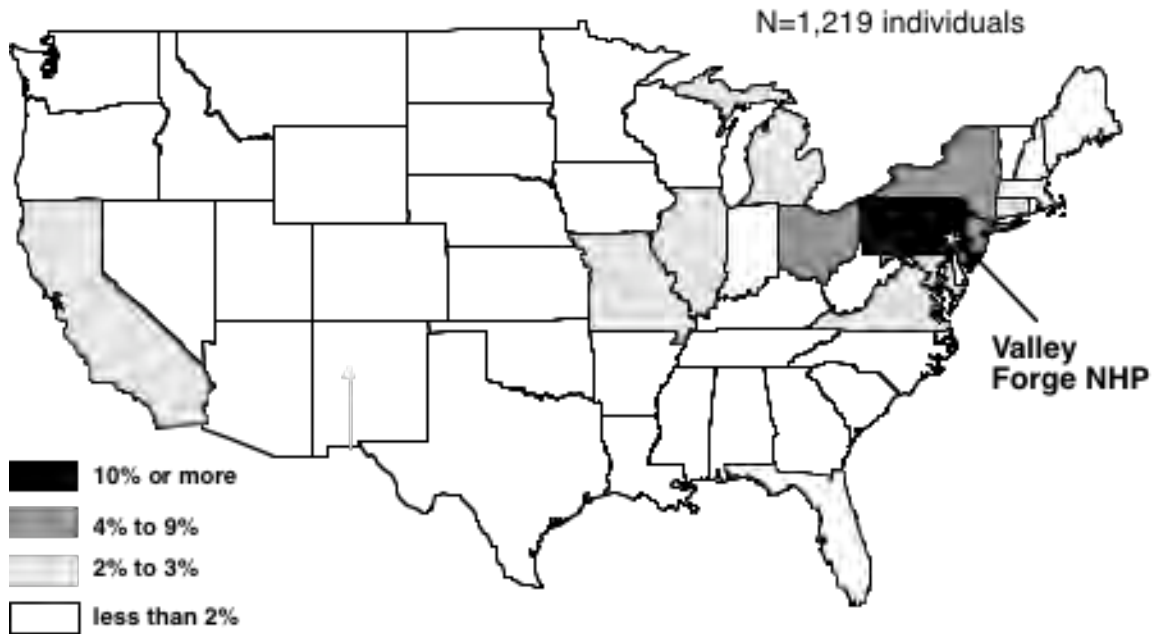


Figure 4: Participation in a guided tour

Table 3: International visitors by country of residence

N=45 individuals;
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

| Country | Number of individuals | Percent of international visitors | Percent of total visitors |
|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| France | 7 | 16 | 1 |
| England | 6 | 13 | <1 |
| Taiwan | 5 | 11 | <1 |
| Canada | 4 | 9 | <1 |
| Scotland | 4 | 9 | <1 |
| China | 3 | 7 | <1 |
| Australia | 2 | 4 | <1 |
| Czechoslovakia | 2 | 4 | <1 |
| Denmark | 2 | 4 | <1 |
| Germany | 2 | 4 | <1 |
| Holland | 2 | 4 | <1 |
| Turkey | 2 | 4 | <1 |
| Bosnia | 1 | 2 | <1 |
| India | 1 | 2 | <1 |
| Ireland | 1 | 2 | <1 |
| Kenya | 1 | 2 | <1 |



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

Table 4: United States visitors by state of residence

N=1,219 individuals;
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

| State | Number of individuals | Percent of U.S. visitors | Percent of total visitors |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Pennsylvania | 643 | 53 | 51 |
| New Jersey | 67 | 6 | 5 |
| New York | 51 | 4 | 4 |
| Ohio | 45 | 4 | 4 |
| Virginia | 40 | 3 | 3 |
| Illinois | 38 | 3 | 3 |
| California | 34 | 3 | 3 |
| Connecticut | 30 | 2 | 2 |
| Missouri | 24 | 2 | 2 |
| Michigan | 22 | 2 | 2 |
| Maryland | 21 | 2 | 2 |
| Wisconsin | 18 | 1 | 1 |
| Delaware | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Florida | 17 | 1 | 1 |
| Minnesota | 16 | 1 | 1 |
| Massachusetts | 15 | 1 | 1 |
| Texas | 11 | 1 | 1 |
| Iowa | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| Washington | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| Kansas | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Louisiana | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Maine | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| North Carolina | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Rhode Island | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| 13 other states and Washington D.C. | 57 | 5 | 5 |

Frequency of visits/seasons visited

Visitor groups were asked how often they had visited Valley Forge NHP. Most visitor groups (68%) reported that this visit was a repeat visit, and 42% said it was their first visit (see Figure 5).

If their visit was a repeat visit, visitor groups were asked to list the number of visits they had made to the park in the past year. During the past year, 34% of visitor groups visited less than once a month, 31% of visitor groups visited several times a month, and 24% several times a week (see Figure 6). Three percent visited every day and 7% visited once a month.

In addition, visitor groups were asked to list the number of visits they had made to the park, including this visit. Fifty-five percent of visitor groups had visited only once, 22% had visited 10 or more times, and 18% had visited from 2-4 times (see Figure 7).

Visitor groups asked to list all of the seasons they had visited the park in the last three years. Most visitor groups (99%) visited in summer, and 56% visited in spring, 55% in fall, and 42% in winter (see Figure 8).

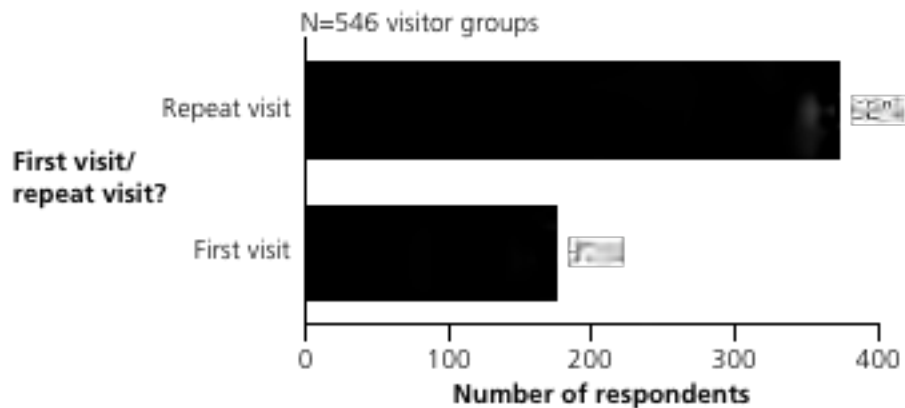


Figure 5: First time/repeat visits to Valley Forge NHP

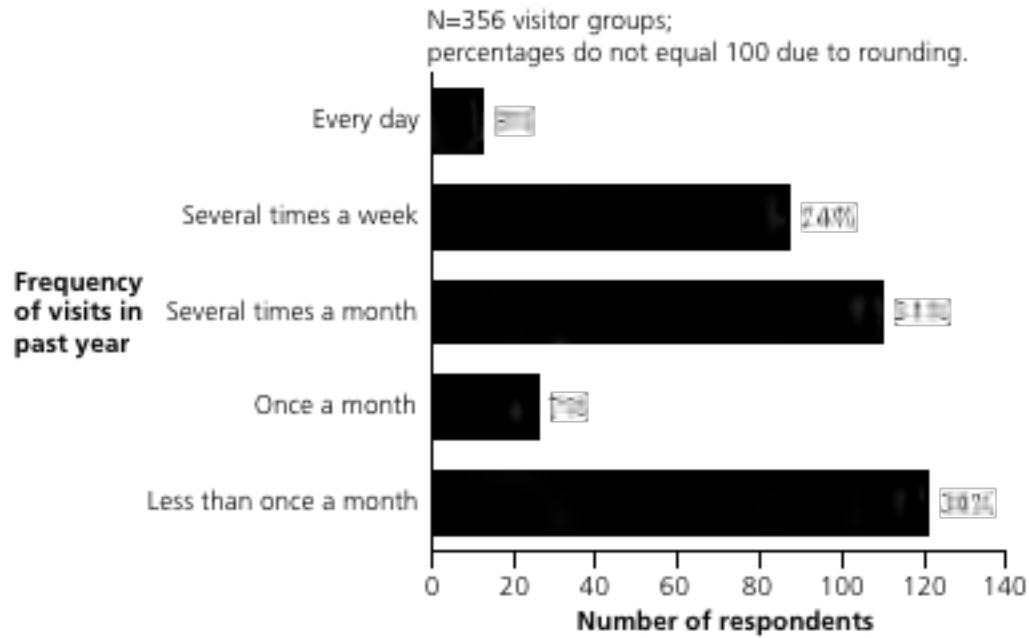


Figure 6: Frequency of visits to Valley Forge NHP in past year

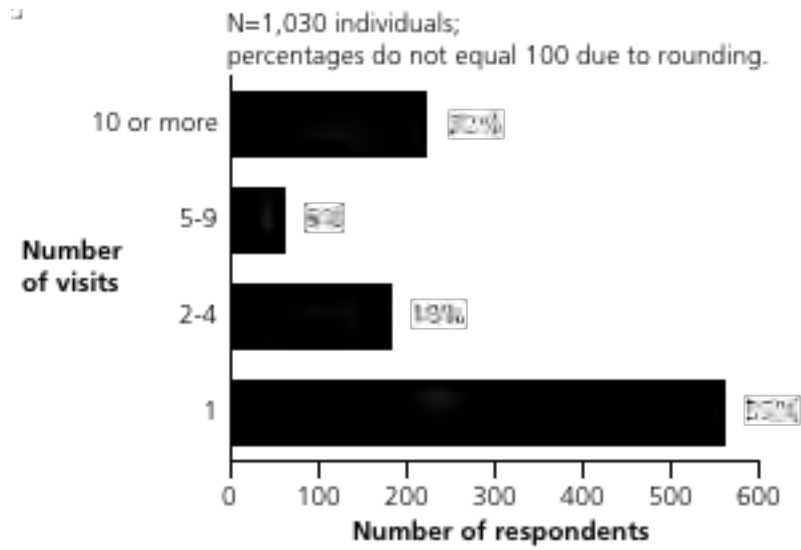


Figure 7: Number of visits to Valley Forge NHP

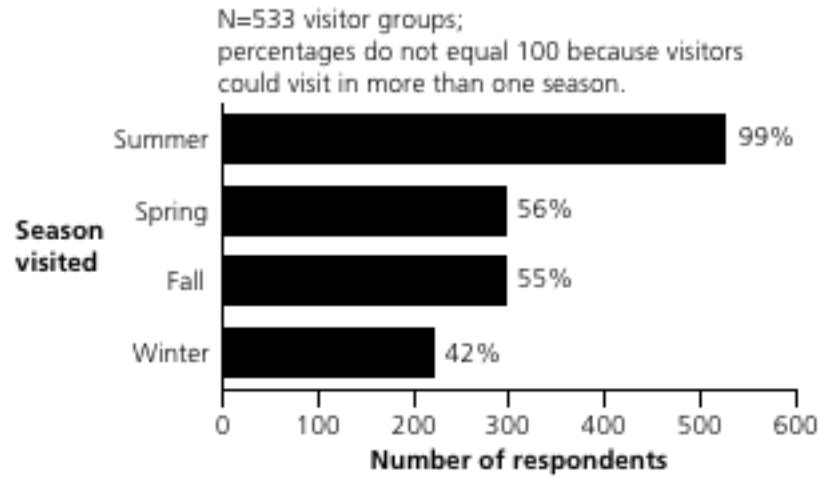


Figure 8: Seasons visited during the last three years

Figure 9 shows the proportions of visitor groups that participated in a variety of activities at Valley Forge NHP. The most common activities were walking/running/jogging/hiking (65%), visiting historic structures (60%), and driving for pleasure (40%). "Other" types of activities participated in were rollerblading, watching the movie in the Visitor Center, and taking the self-guided audio tour.

For walking/running/joggin/hiking and for bicycling, visitors were asked whether they had used paved or unpaved trails. Figure 10 shows that 86% of visitors went walking/running/jogging/hiking on paved trails, and 47% went on unpaved trails. Most visitor groups (89%) went bicycling on paved trails, but 38% went on unpaved trails (see Figure 11).

Activities

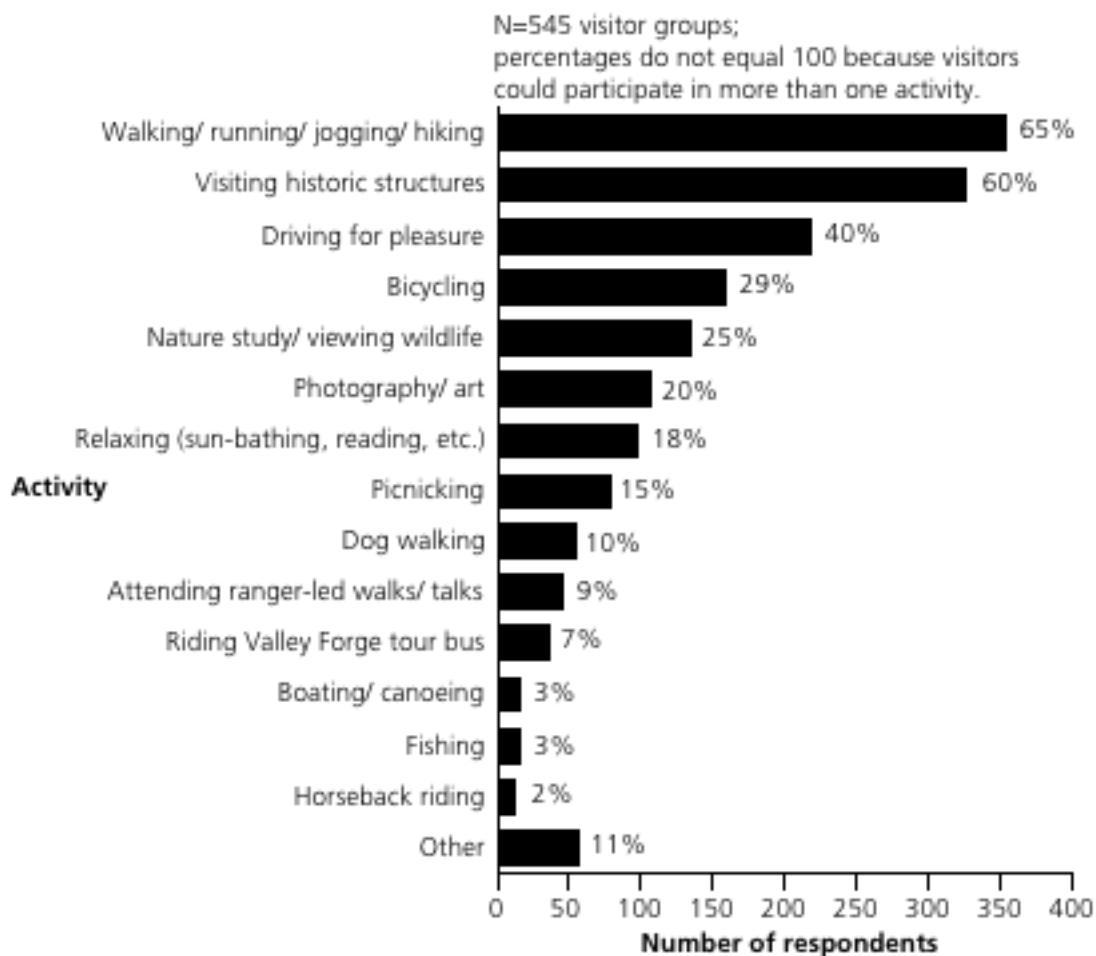


Figure 9: Visitor activities

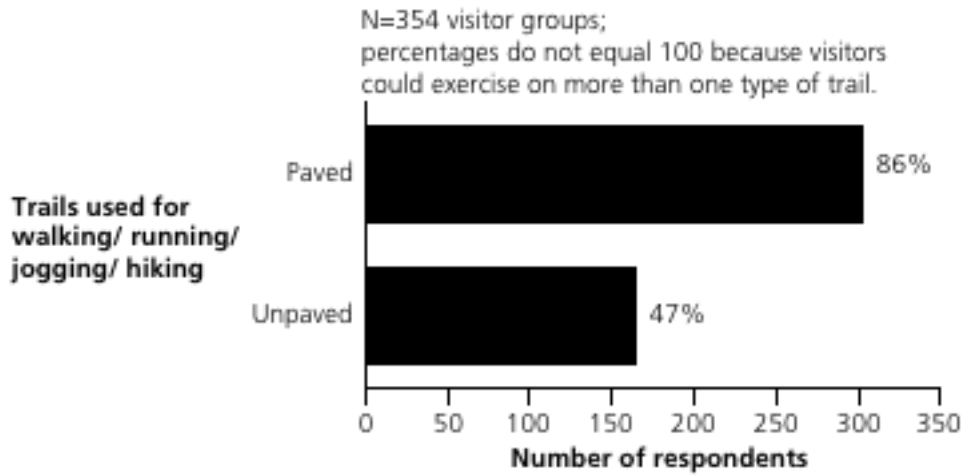


Figure 10: Type of trail used for walking/running/jogging/hiking

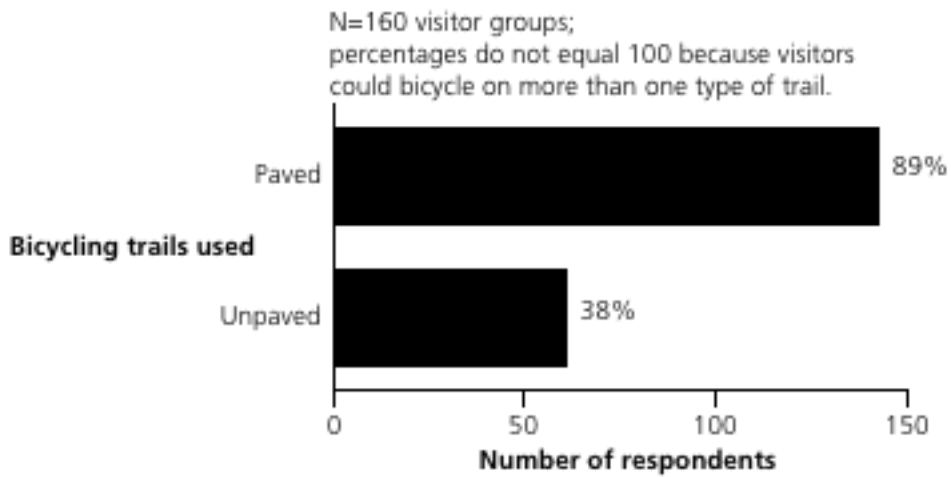


Figure 11: Type of trail used for bicycling

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the sources from which they had received information about Valley Forge NHP prior to their visit. Eleven percent of visitor groups received no information prior to their visits. Of those visitor groups who received information, the most common sources were previous visits (53%), friends, relatives or word of mouth (42%), and travel guides and/or tour books (24%), as shown in Figure 12. "Other" sources of information used by visitor groups included living or growing up nearby, history classes, and history books.

Sources of information

On future trips to Valley Forge NHP, 47% of visitor groups said that the internet/web site would be their preferred method of obtaining information in planning their visit, followed by previous visits (37%), and travel guides/tour books (35%), as shown in Figure 13.

As shown by Figure 14, most (78%) of visitor groups indicated that they had received the information that they needed, 10% had not, and 12% received no information prior to their visit. Table 5 lists the information needed by visitor groups that they did not receive.

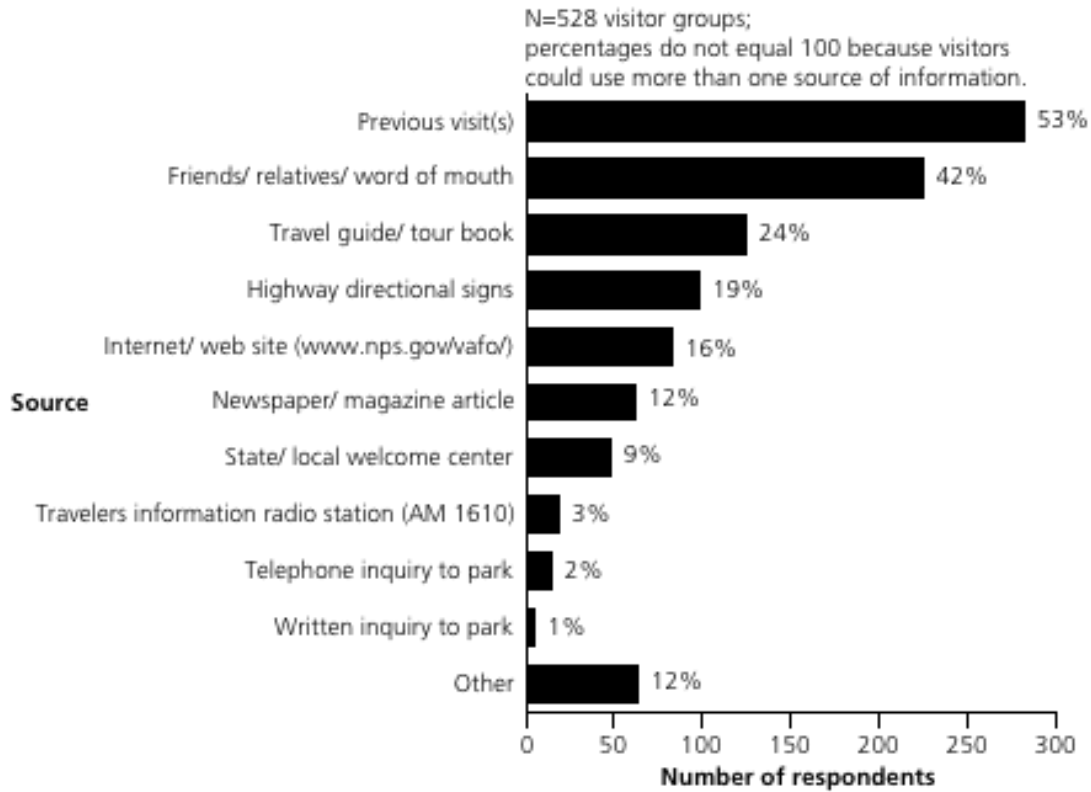


Figure 12: Sources of information used by visitors prior to arriving

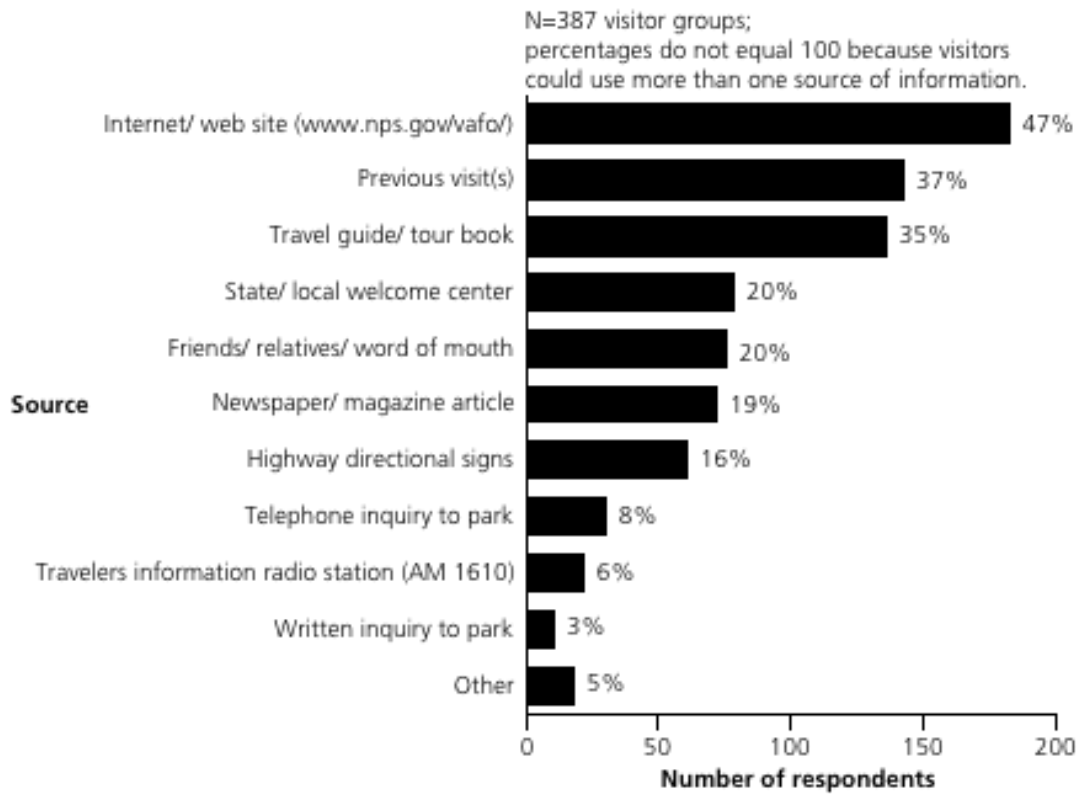


Figure 13: Sources of information for future visits

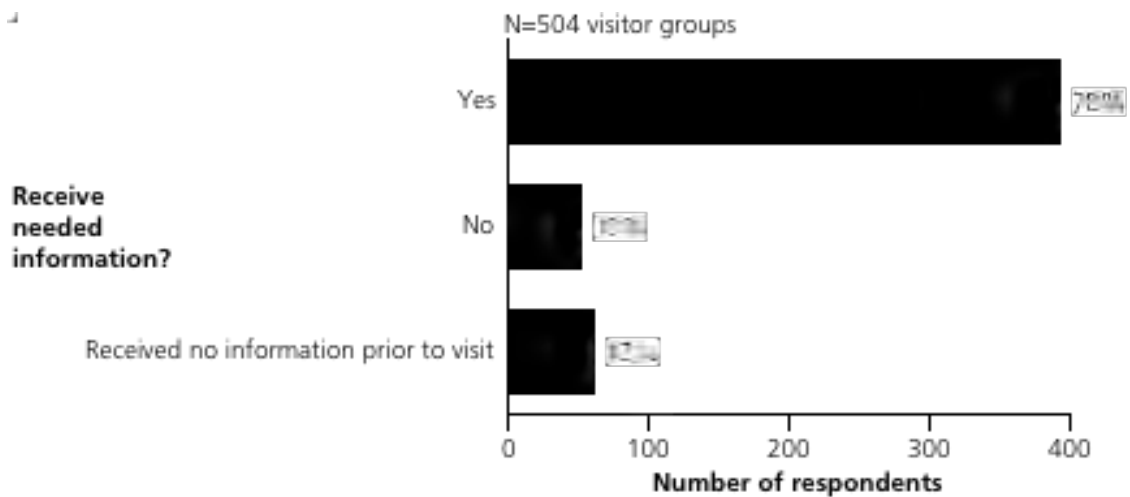


Figure 14: Receive needed information?

Table 5: Type of information needed

N=36 comments

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|--|------------------------------|
| Better directional signs | 9 |
| Detailed information about trails | 8 |
| Better park and area maps | 7 |
| Schedule of special events and re-enactments | 4 |
| History of park | 2 |
| Park rules and regulations | 2 |
| Eating options | 1 |
| Horseback riding opportunities | 1 |
| Policies about dogs/pets | 1 |
| Cost/fee | 1 |

Visitor awareness of NPS management/mission

Visitor groups were asked: "Prior to your visit to Valley Forge National Historical Park, were you aware that this site is managed by the National Park Service? Most visitor groups (79%) said they were aware of the National Park Service management of the site, 17% were not aware, and 4% were not sure (see Figure 15).

Visitor groups were also asked: "The National Park Service mission at Valley Forge National Historical Park is to preserve and protect the landscape and historical remnants of the encampment of the Continental Army in 1777-78. Prior to your visit, were you aware of this mission?" As shown in Figure 16, about two-thirds (66%) of visitor groups indicated that they were aware of this mission, 29% were not aware, and 5% were not sure.

Lastly, visitor groups were asked how their understanding of the National Park Service's mission at Valley Forge NHP was enhanced after their visit. Thirty-two percent of visitor groups said their understanding was enhanced, 25% said it was greatly enhanced, and 16% said it was not enhanced at all (see Figure 17).

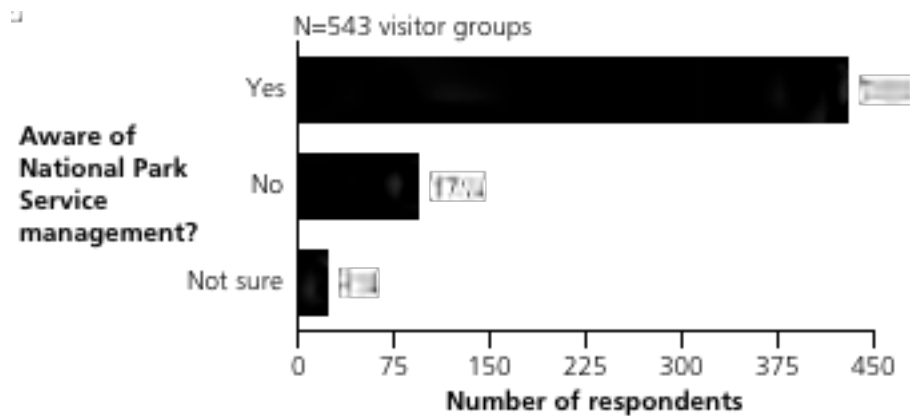


Figure 15: Awareness of National Park Service management of Valley Forge NHP

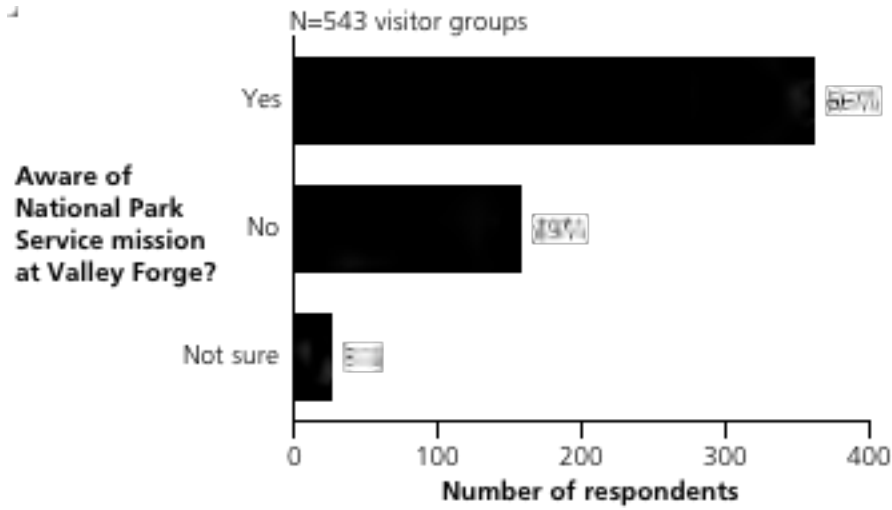


Figure 16: Awareness of National Park Service mission at Valley Forge NHP

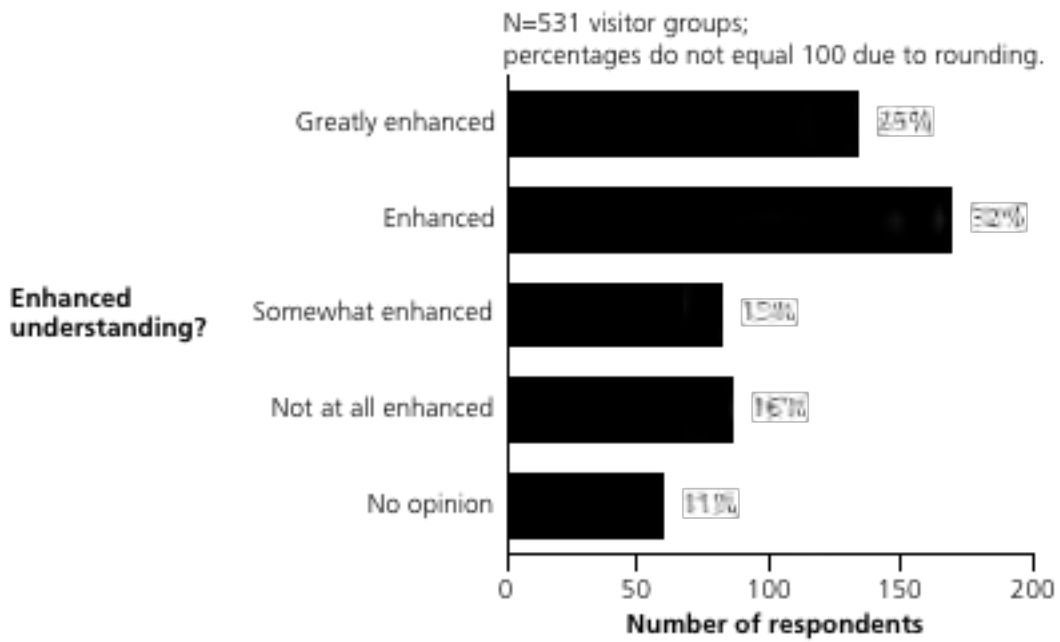


Figure 17: Understanding of National Park Service mission after visit

Visitor rankings of Valley Forge NHP qualities

Visitor groups were asked, "For each of the following qualities of Valley Forge National Historical Park, please rank them (from 1 to 4) in order of their importance to you and your group." The qualities included: historic/educational; nature/environment; scenic/views; and recreational opportunities. Table 6 lists the importance rankings visitor groups gave to each of the four qualities. Historic/educational qualities received the highest importance ranking (51%), followed by scenic / views (47%) as second highest importance ranking.

| Table 6: Ranking of Valley Forge NHP qualities | | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| N=total number of group who ranked each factor; percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding. | | | | | |
| Importance ranking | | Historic/ Educational N=465 | Nature/ Environment N=445 | Scenic/ Views N=443 | Recreational opportunities N=456 |
| 1 | # | 235 | 60 | 32 | 129 |
| | % | 51% | 14% | 7% | 28% |
| 2 | # | 43 | 144 | 208 | 58 |
| | % | 9% | 32% | 47% | 13% |
| 3 | # | 59 | 186 | 148 | 60 |
| | % | 13% | 42% | 33% | 13% |
| 4 | # | 128 | 55 | 55 | 209 |
| | % | 28% | 12% | 12% | 46% |

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the roads they used to enter Valley Forge NHP. Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups used Highway 23 (eastern side of park), 18% used Highway 23 (western side of park) and Trooper Road/Rt. 363, and 15% used Pawling's Road. Yellow Springs Road (3%) was the road used least to enter the park (see Figure 18).

Roads used/traffic congestion experienced

As shown in Figure 19, most visitor groups (91%) did not experience traffic congestion on their visit to Valley Forge NHP. Nine percent of visitor groups did experience traffic congestion, and of those, 65% experienced traffic congestion getting to the park, and 50% experienced it inside the park (see Figure 20).

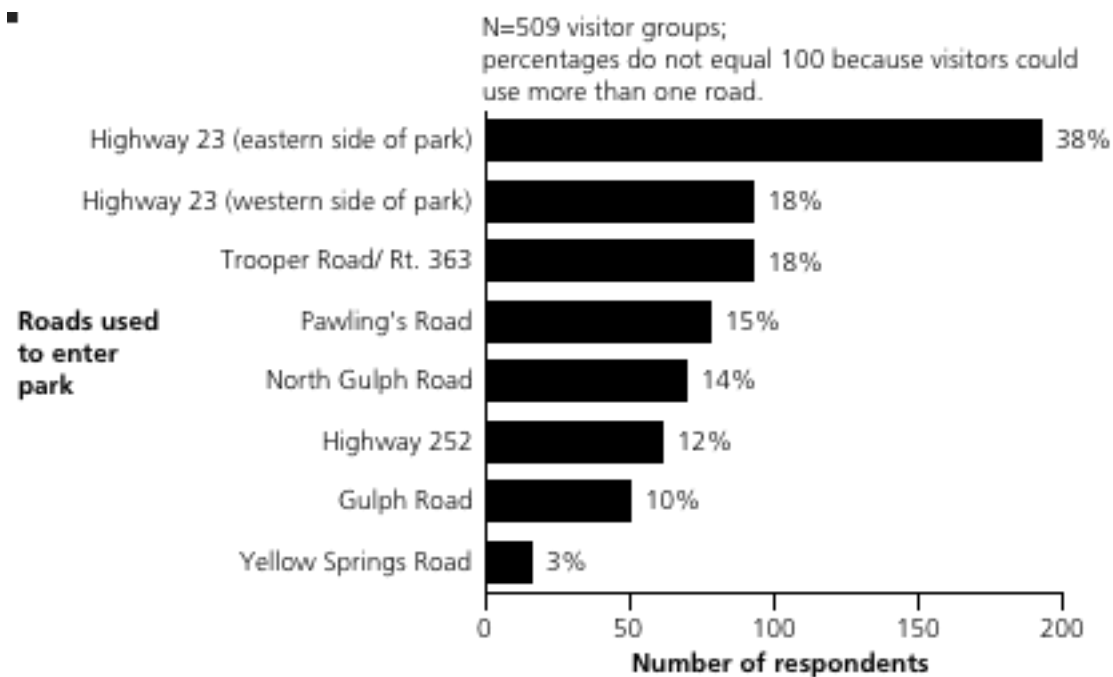


Figure 18: Roads used to enter Valley Forge NHP

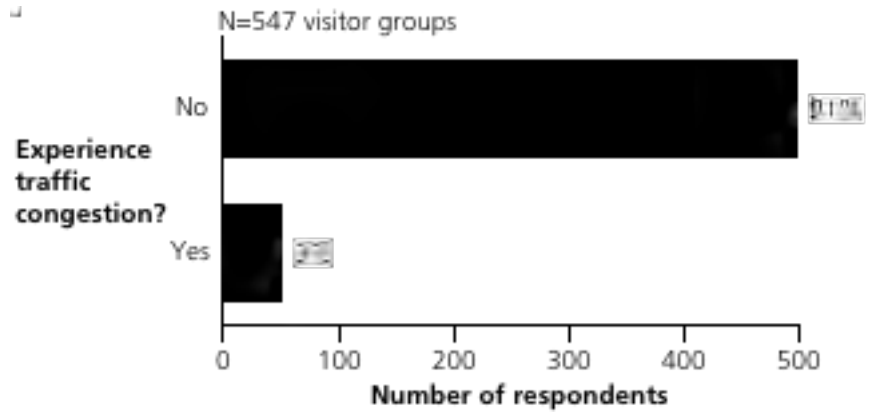


Figure 19: Experience traffic congestion?

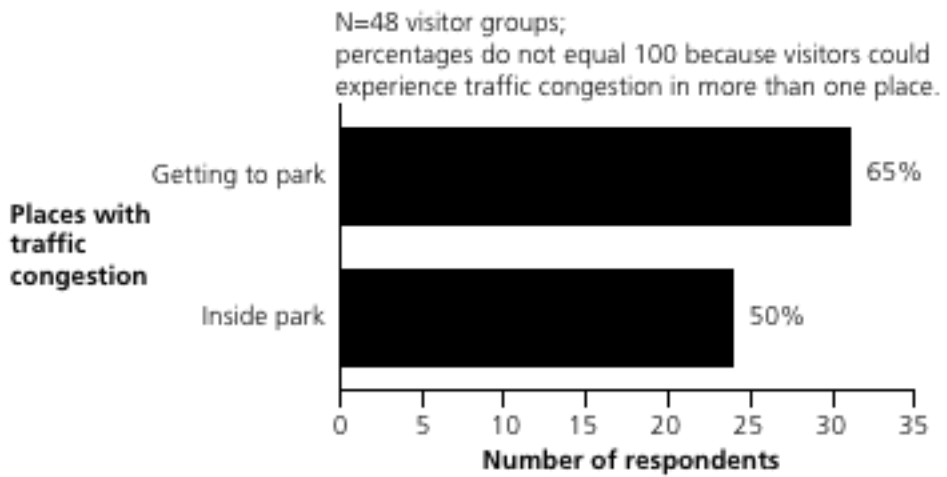


Figure 20: Places visitors experienced traffic congestion at Valley Forge NHP

Visitor groups were asked: "On this visit to Valley Forge National Historical Park, did you and your group experience any parking problems?" Most visitor groups (92%) did not experience any parking problems (see Figure 23). Eight percent of visitor groups experienced parking problems. The parking problems are listed in Table 7, and the places where they experienced those problems are listed in Table 8.

Parking

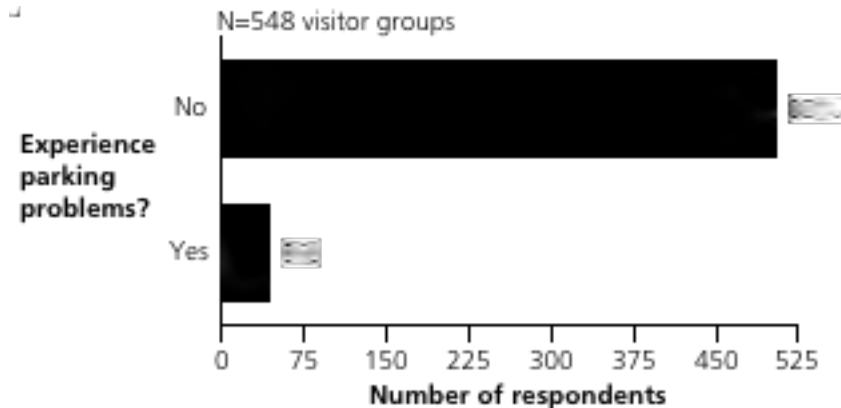


Figure 23: Experience parking problems?

Table 7: Type of parking problem encountered

N=37 comments

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---------------------------|
| Not enough space | 26 |
| Other drivers did not park correctly | 5 |
| Parking for visitors is too far from Visitor Center | 3 |
| Directional signs to parking lot were confusing | 2 |
| Potholes at Pawling's Parking Area | 1 |

Table 8: Places parking problems were encountered

N=29 comments

CAUTION!

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Betzwood Picnic Area | 21 |
| Pawling Road | 4 |
| Everywhere | 1 |
| Varnum's Headquarter | 1 |
| Wayne's Woods picnic area | 1 |
| National Monument Arch | 1 |

Sites visited

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the sites they had visited at Valley Forge NHP and the order in which they had visited them. As shown in Figure 21, the most commonly visited sites were the Visitor Center (55%), National Memorial Arch (45%), Washington's Headquarters (43%) and Muhlenberg's Brigade (37%). The least visited site was Walnut Hill (8%). "Other" sites visited included the Betzwood area and the river trail.

Figure 22 shows the proportion of visitor groups who visited each e first during their visit to the park. The sites most frequently visited first cluded the Visitor Center (49%), Schuylkill River Trail (14%), and wling's Parking Area (11%). The sites visited first by the fewest number visitor groups were the Artillery Park, Wayne's Woods (each <1%) and alnut Hill (0%).

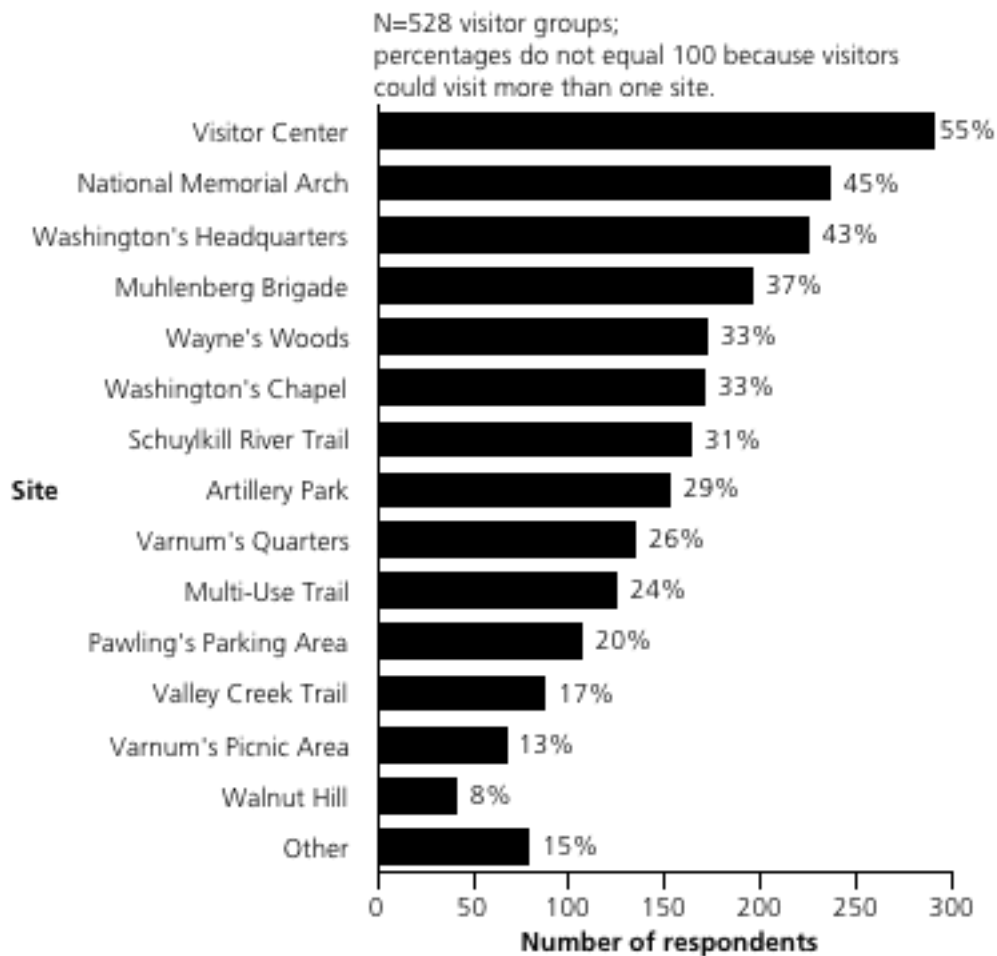


Figure 21: Sites visited

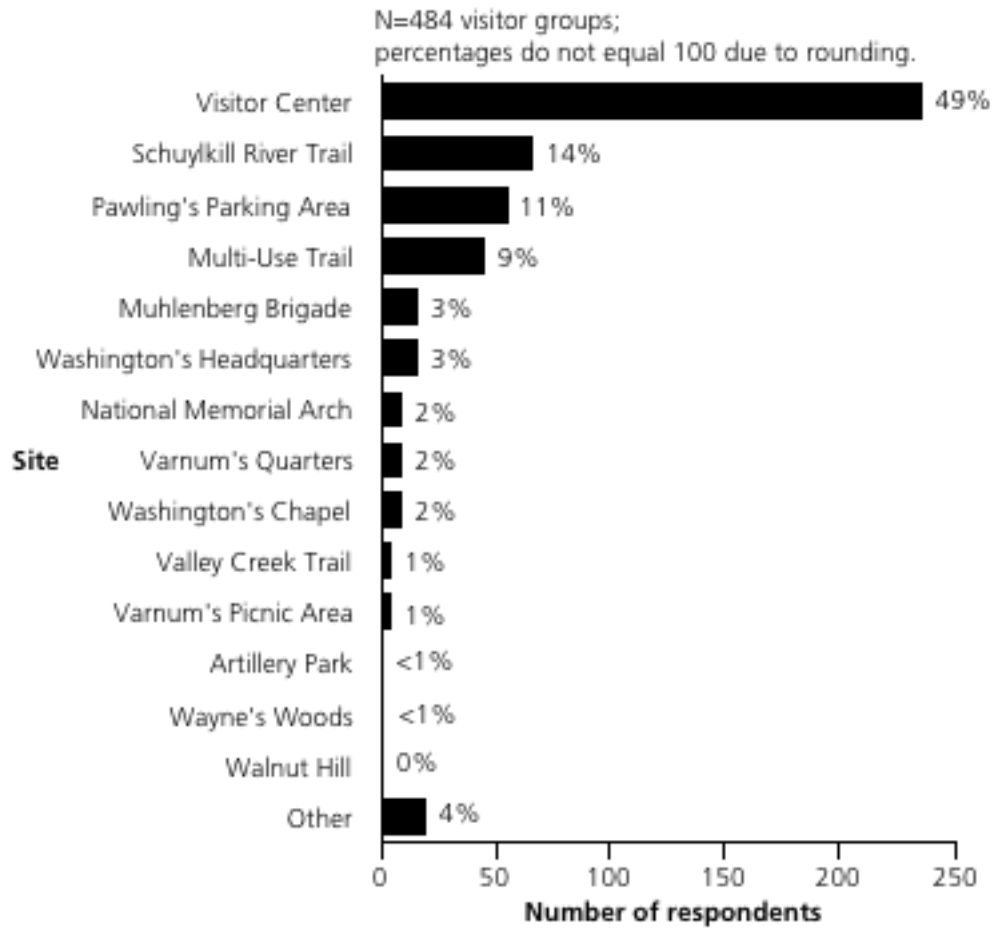


Figure 22: Sites visited first in Valley Forge NHP

Safety

Visitor groups were asked a series of question regarding safety in Valley Forge NHP. As shown in Figure 24, most visitor groups (86%) indicated that they felt "very safe" during their visit to Valley Forge NHP, 10% felt "somewhat safe," and 2% had no opinion. One percent of visitor groups felt "very unsafe" during their visit.

Visitor groups were asked: "As pedestrians, did you or members of your group have safety concerns while crossing roads in Valley Forge National Historical Park?" Most visitor groups (92%) did not have safety concerns while crossing roads in the park (see Figure 25). Eight percent of visitor groups did have safety concerns while crossing roads, and the places where they did are listed in Table 9.

Visitor groups were also asked: "While driving on Valley Forge National Historical Park roads, did you or member of your group have safety concerns relating to the following items?" Those items were: directional signs; pedestrian/bike/horse crossings; road design; amount of traffic. Most visitors groups did not have safety concerns related to any of the items (see Figures 26-29). Nine percent of visitor groups did have safety concerns related to the amount of traffic in the park (see Figure 29).

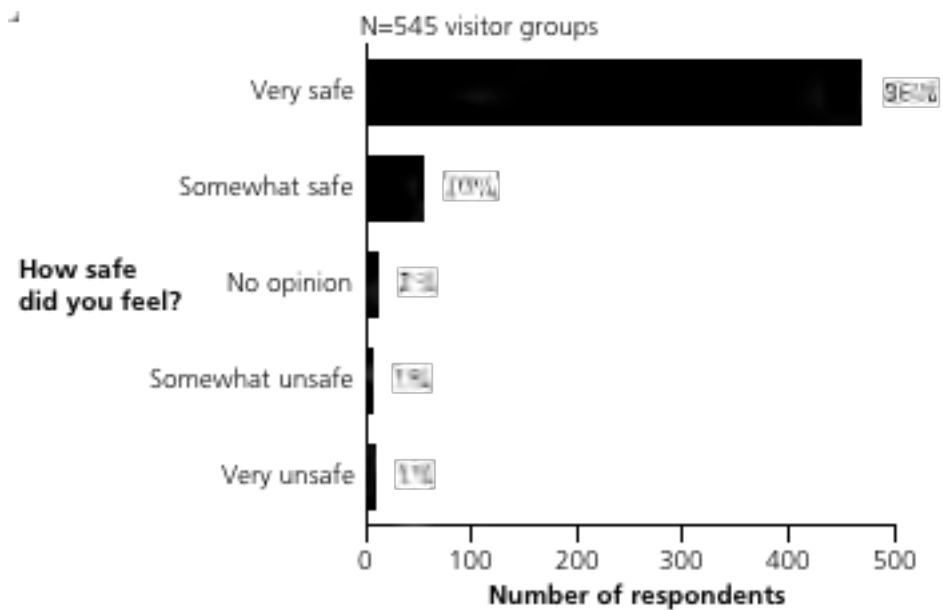


Figure 24: Visitors safety level while visiting Valley Forge NHP

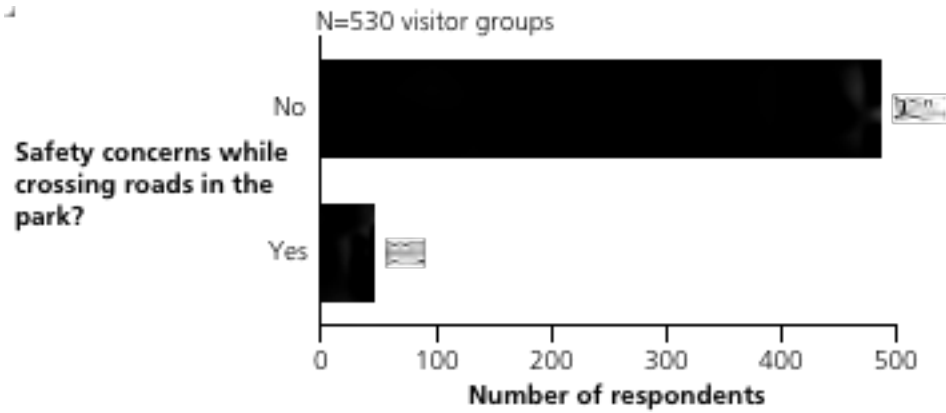


Figure 25: Safety concerns while crossing roads in Valley Forge NHP?

Table 9: Places visitors had safety concerns while crossing roads in Valley Forge NHP

N=38 comments

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---------------------------|
| Highway 23 throughout the park | 13 |
| Whenever crossing a road (drivers do not slow down for pedestrians) | 8 |
| Memorial Arch | 5 |
| Washington's Headquarter | 4 |
| Walking path is not wide enough for both bikers and pedestrians | 3 |
| Muhlenberg Bridge | 3 |
| Washington Memorial Chapel | 2 |

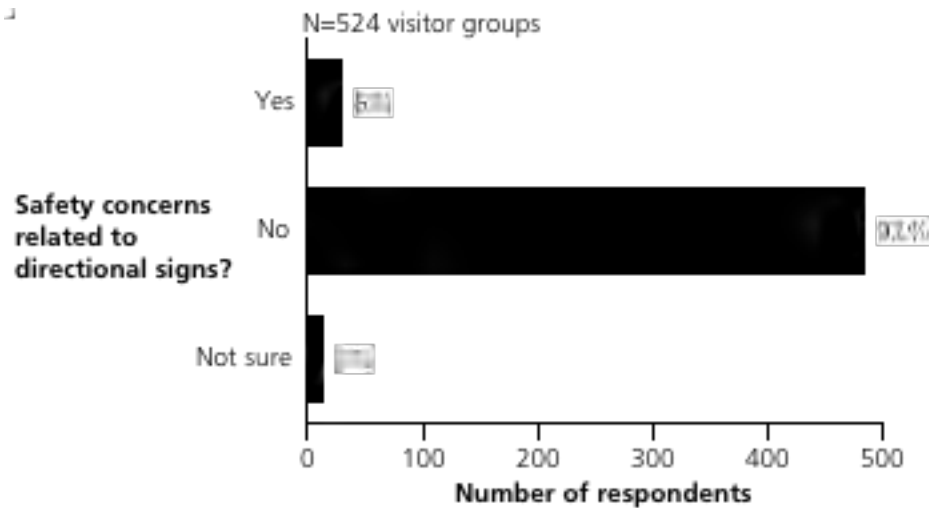


Figure 26: Safety concerns related to directional signs in park?

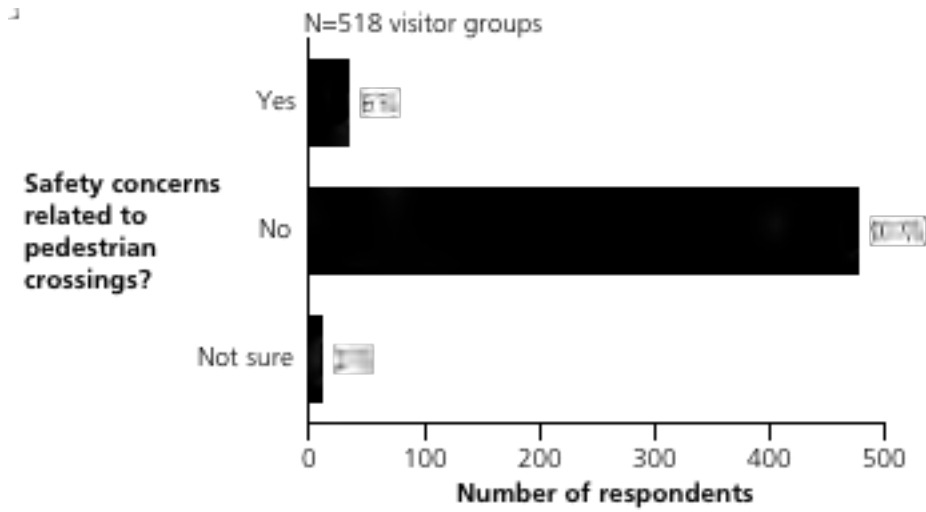


Figure 27: Safety concerns related to pedestrian crossings in park?

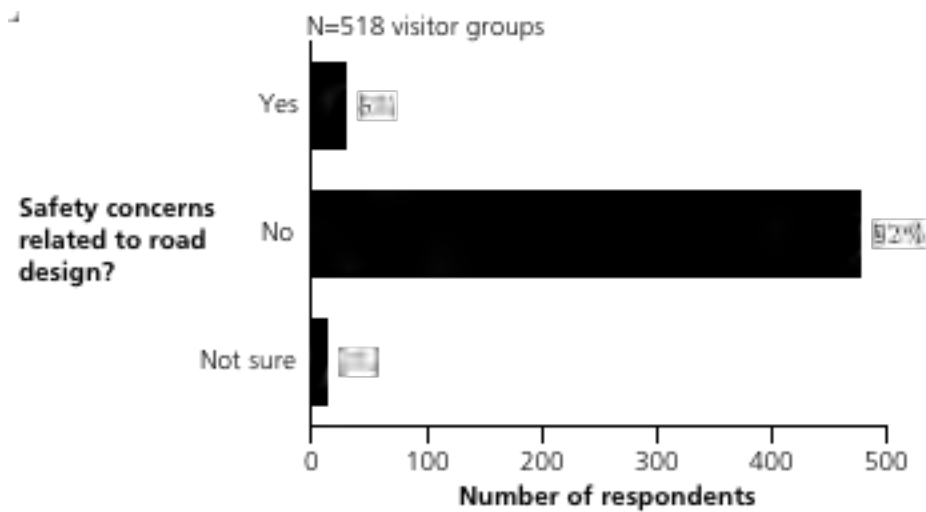


Figure 28: Safety concerns related to road design in park?

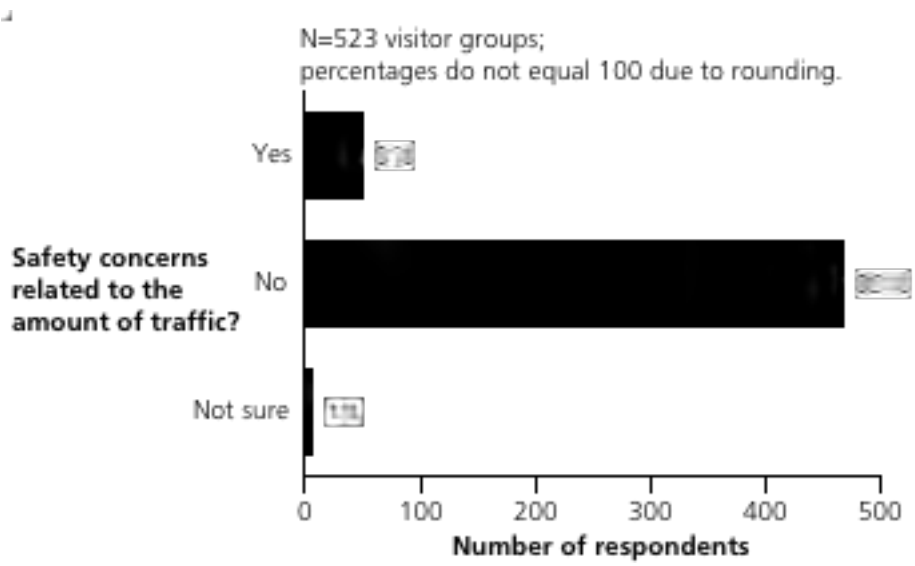


Figure 29: Safety concerns related to amount of traffic in park?

**Lodging/park
entries/travel
route**

Visitor groups were asked a series of questions about their use of lodging while visiting Valley Forge NHP and the surrounding area. Figure 30 shows that 68% of visitor groups did not spend the night away from home within a one hour drive of Valley Forge NHP while on their visit. Thirty-two percent of visitors did spend the night away from home while on their visit.

Those visitors that spent the night away from home were then asked to provide the number of nights they stayed outside the park (within a 1-hour drive). Most visitor groups (76%) spent between one and three nights outside the park, and 9% spent six or more nights in that area (see Figure 31). Figure 32 shows the proportions of types of lodging used within a one-hour drive of the park including lodge, motel, cabin, etc. (74%); residence of friends or relatives (15%), and campground/trailer park (5%). "Other" types of lodging used in the area included motels and local residences.

Visitor groups were asked the number of times they entered Valley Forge NHP during their stay in the area. Most visitor groups (76%) entered the park one time, 20% entered two times, and 3% entered three times (see Figure 33).

Table 10 shows the number of visitor groups who stayed in each town/city prior to arriving at Valley Forge NHP, and Table 11 shows the number of visitor groups who stayed in each town/city after leaving the park. Philadelphia, PA was the most listed city on both tables.

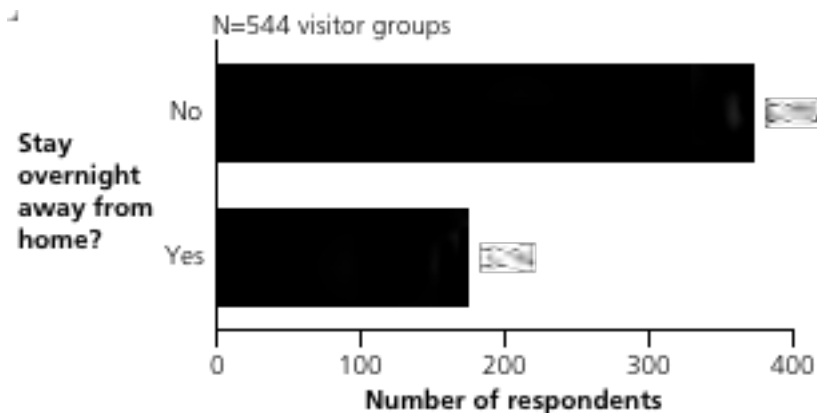


Figure 30: Overnight stays away from home on this visit

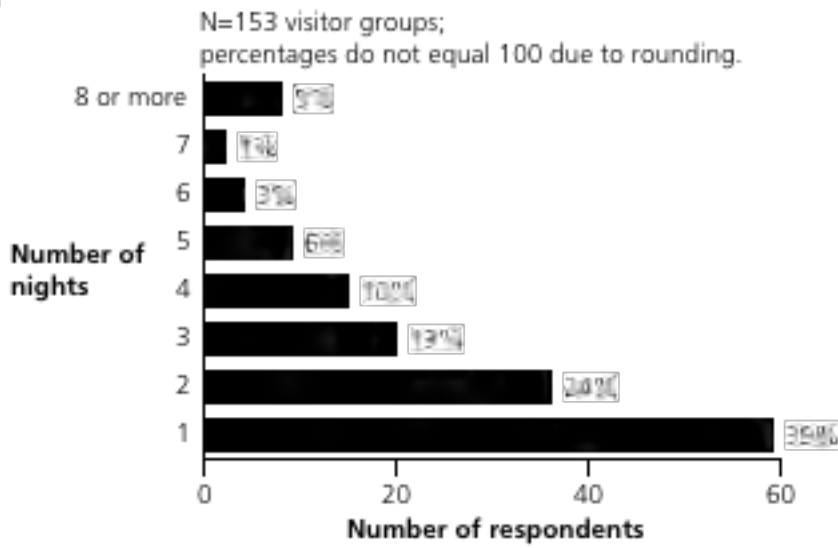


Figure 31: Number of nights spent outside park (within 1-hour drive)

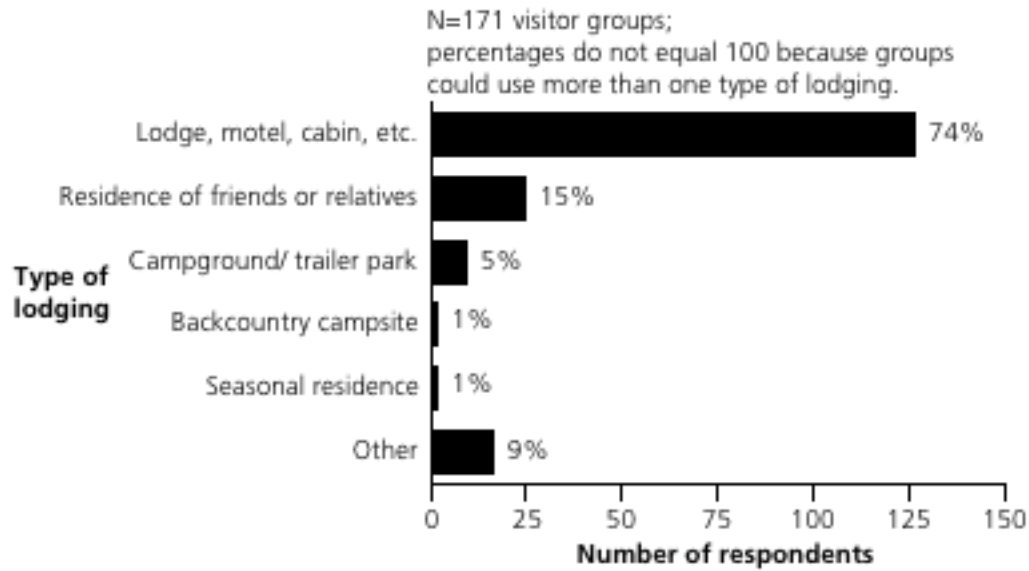


Figure 32: Type of lodging used within 1-hour of park

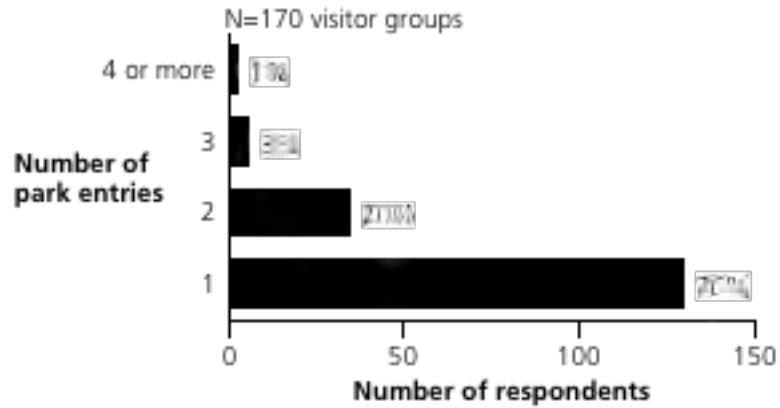


Figure 33: Number of park entries during stay in area

Table 10: Places visitors spent the night prior to arriving at Valley Forge NHP
N=375 comments

| Place | Number of times mentioned |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Philadelphia, PA | 44 |
| King of Prussia, PA | 42 |
| Phoenixville, PA | 28 |
| Wayne, PA | 16 |
| Malvern, PA | 14 |
| Norristown, PA | 10 |
| Audubon, PA | 9 |
| West Chester, PA | 9 |
| Collegeville, PA | 8 |
| Devon, PA | 6 |
| Exton, PA | 6 |
| Valley Forge, PA | 6 |
| Horsham, PA | 5 |
| North Wales, PA | 5 |
| Paoli, PA | 5 |
| Pottstown, PA | 5 |
| Reading, PA | 5 |
| Landcaster, PA | 4 |
| Lansdale, PA | 4 |
| Royerford, PA | 4 |
| Haverford, PA | 3 |
| Havertown, PA | 3 |
| Hershey, PA | 3 |
| Plymouth Meeting, PA | 3 |
| Quakertown, PA | 3 |
| Schwenksville, PA | 3 |
| 103 other places | 125 |

Table 11: Places visitors spent the night after leaving Valley Forge NHP

N=386 comments

| Place | Number of times mentioned |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Philadelphia, PA | 34 |
| Phoenixville, PA | 28 |
| King of Prussia, PA | 25 |
| Wayne, PA | 17 |
| Coatesville, PA | 12 |
| Malvern, PA | 12 |
| Audubon, PA | 10 |
| Newtown Square, PA | 10 |
| Collegeville, PA | 8 |
| West Chester, PA | 8 |
| Gettysburg, PA | 7 |
| Devon, PA | 6 |
| Lancaster, PA | 6 |
| Exton, PA | 5 |
| Lansdale, PA | 4 |
| Norristown, PA | 4 |
| North Wales, PA | 4 |
| Paoli, PA | 4 |
| Pittsburg, PA | 4 |
| Pottstown, PA | 4 |
| Royersford, PA | 4 |
| Vernon, NJ | 4 |
| Havertown, PA | 3 |
| Horsham, PA | 3 |
| Plymouth Meeting, PA | 3 |
| Quakertown, PA | 3 |
| Reading, PA | 3 |
| Schwenksville, PA | 3 |
| Wilmington, DE | 3 |
| Alexandria, VA | 2 |
| Allentown, PA | 2 |
| Baltimore, MD | 2 |
| Berwyn, PA | 2 |
| Conshohocken, PA | 2 |
| Douglassville, PA | 2 |
| Eaglesville, PA | 2 |
| Ft. Dix, PA | 2 |
| Harleysville, PA | 2 |
| Harrisburg, PA | 2 |
| Haverford, PA | 2 |
| Hershey, PA | 2 |
| Jeffersonville, PA | 2 |
| Mont Clare, PA | 2 |
| 112 other places | 117 |

Expenditures

Visitor groups were asked to list the amount of money they had spent both inside Valley Forge NHP and within 1-hour of the park on this visit. Groups were asked to indicate the amounts they spent for lodging; camping fees; guide fees and charges; restaurants and bars; groceries and take-out food, gas and oil; other transportation expenses; admissions, recreation, entertainment fees; and all other purchases.

Total expenditures in and out of park: Thirty-two percent of visitor groups spent no money and 39% spent between \$1 and \$100 in total expenditures in Valley Forge NHP and the surrounding area (see Figure 34). Of the total expenditures by groups, 47% was for lodging, 23% was for restaurants and bars, 11% was for all other purchases, and 6% was for gas oil (see Figure 35).

The average visitor group expenditure during this visit was \$143. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$19. The average per capita expenditure was \$56.

In addition, visitors were asked to indicate how many adults (18 years and older) and children (under 18 years) were covered by their expenditures. Figure 36 shows that 54% of the visitor groups had two adults. Figure 37 show that 73% of the visitor groups had no children under 18 years of age.

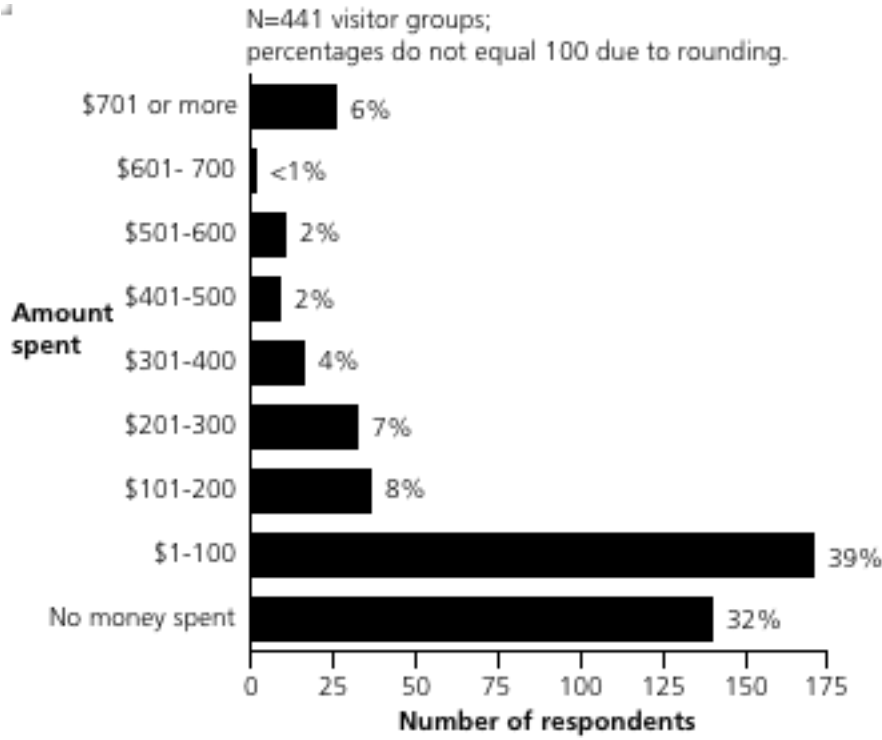


Figure 34: Total expenses in Valley Forge NHP and surrounding area (within 1-hour drive)

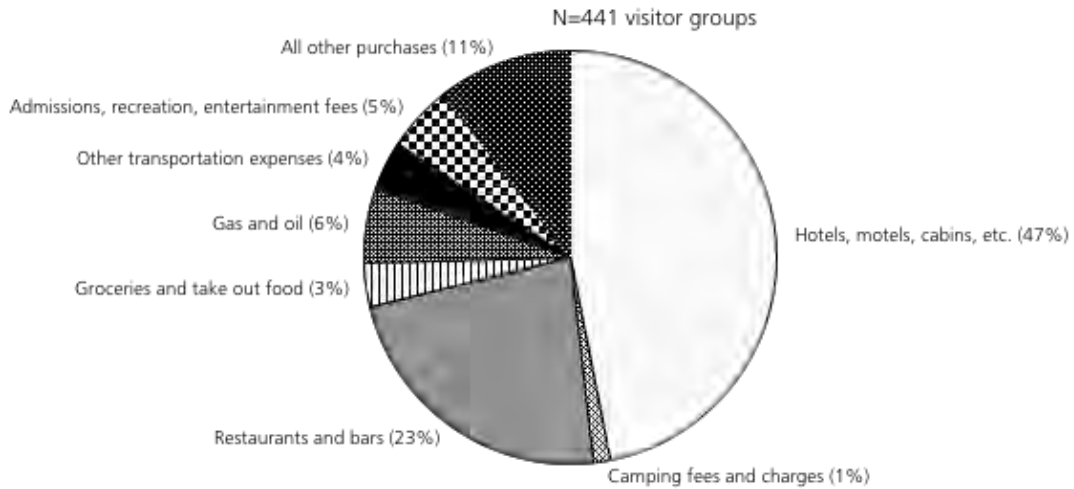


Figure 35: Proportions of expenses in Valley Forge NHP and surrounding area (within 1-hour drive)

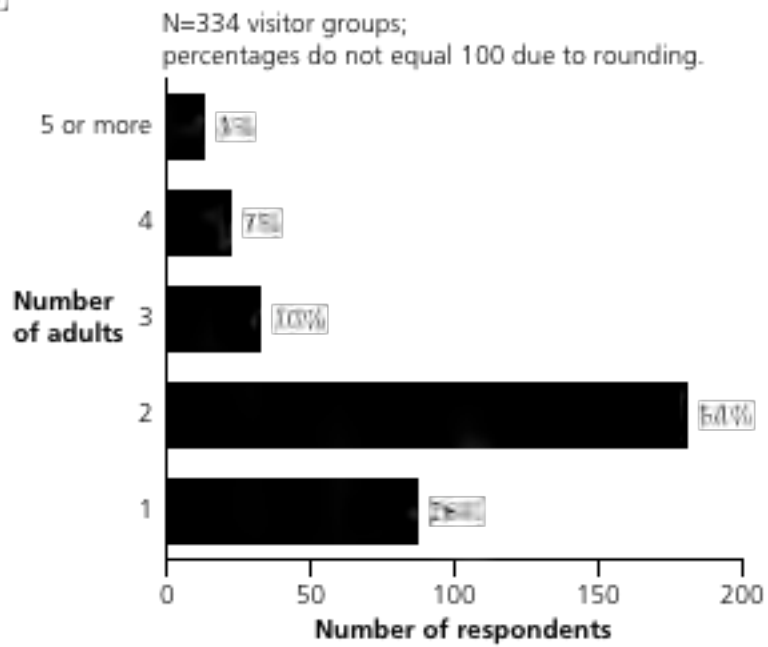


Figure 36: Number of adults covered by expenses

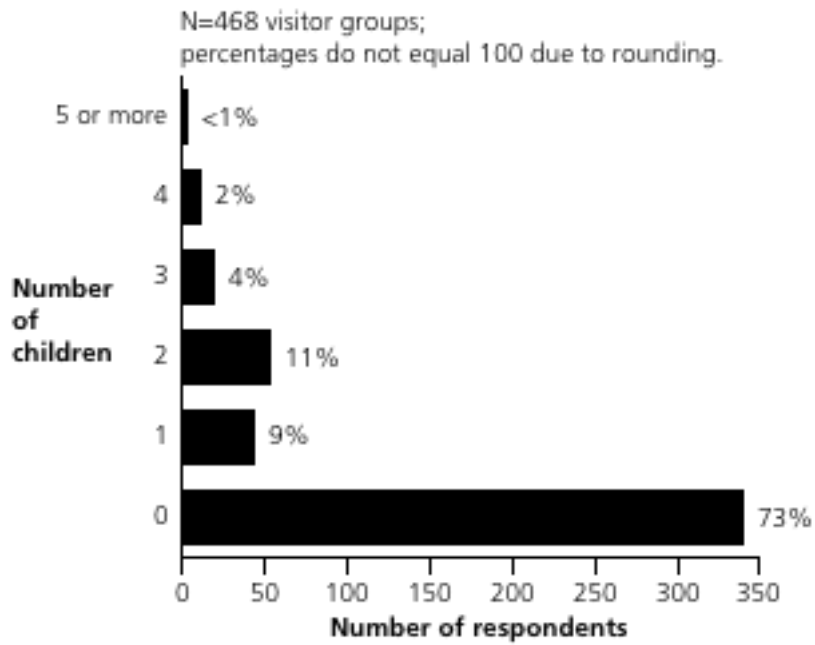


Figure 37: Number of children covered by expenses

Total expenditures in the park: Forty-four percent of visitor groups spent no money in Valley Forge NHP and another 46% spent between \$1 and \$50 in total expenditures in the park on this visit (see Figure 38).

Expenditures inside park

All other purchases accounted for 73% of total expenditures in the park, followed by admission, recreation, and entertainment fees (27%), as shown in Figure 39.

The average visitor group expenditure in the park during this visit was \$16. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$6. The average per capita expenditure was \$10.

Admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees in the park: Fifty-two percent of visitor groups spent no money on admission, recreation, and entertainment fees in Valley Forge NHP, while 45% spent between \$1 and \$25 (see Figure 40).

Other purchases in the park: Fifty-two percent of visitor groups spent no money on other purchases in Valley Forge NHP; 30% spent between \$1 and \$25 (see Figure 41).

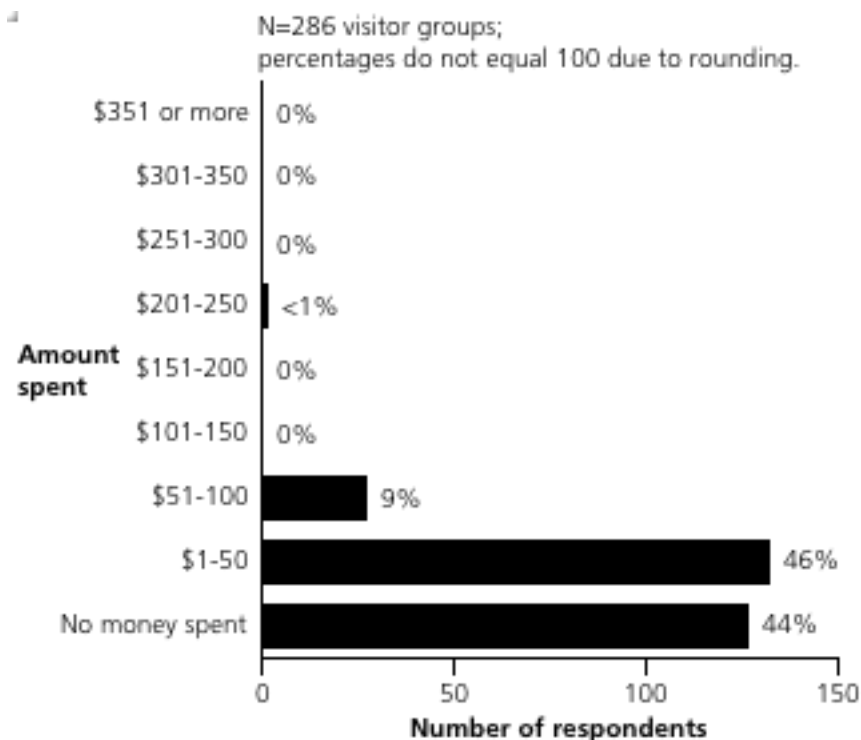


Figure 38: Total expenditures in park

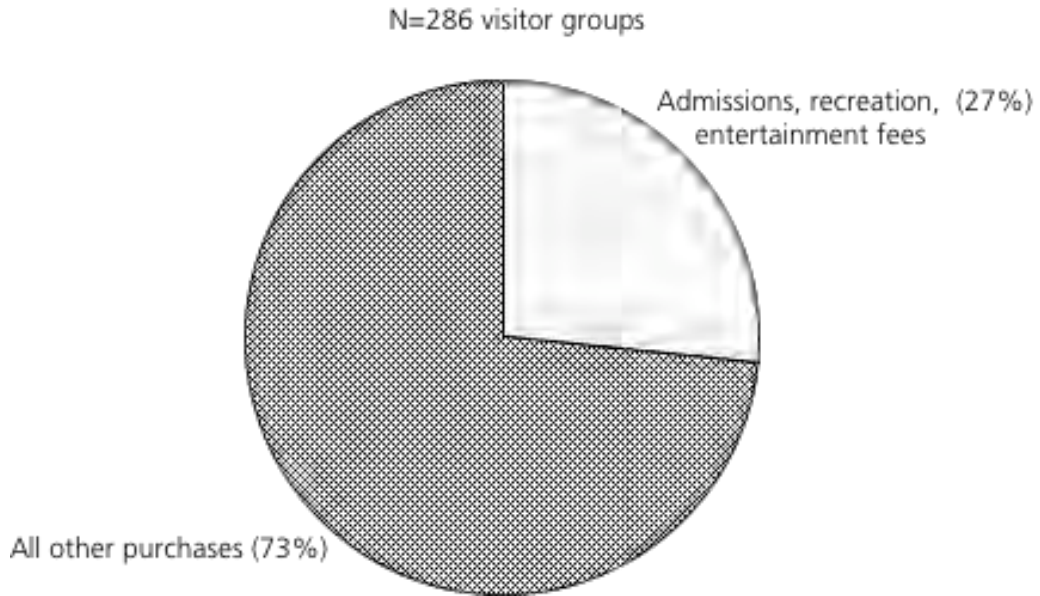


Figure 39: Proportion of expenditures in park

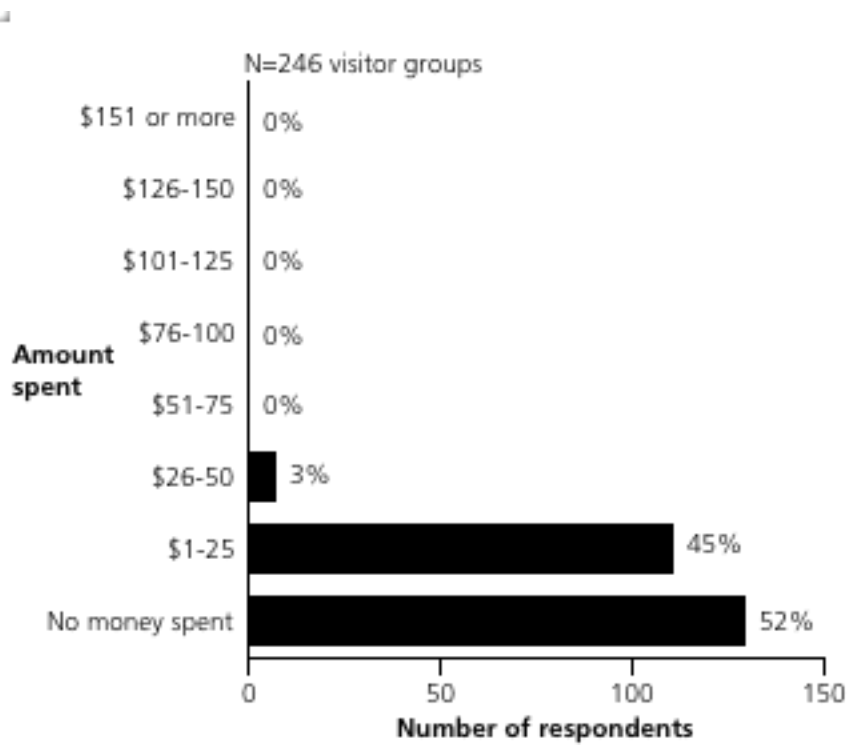


Figure 40: Expenditures for admissions, recreation and entertainment fees in park

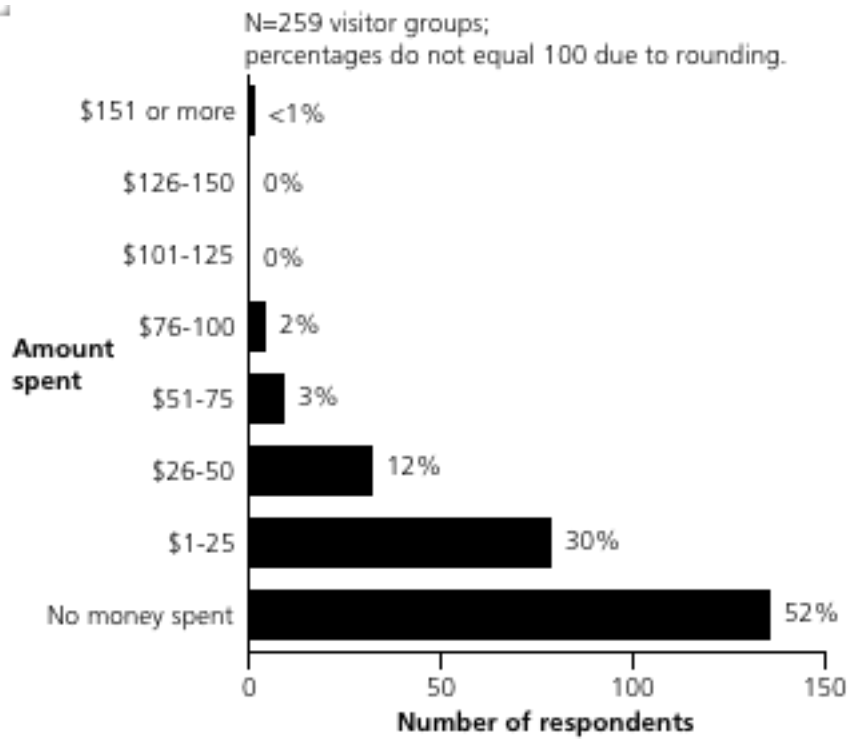


Figure 41: Expenditures for all other purchases in park

**Expenditures
outside park**

Total expenditures: Twenty-six percent of visitor groups spent between \$1 and \$50 in total expenditures out of the park during this trip (see Figure 42).

Lodging accounted for 51% of total expenditures out of the park, followed by 25% for restaurants and bars, as shown in Figure 43.

The average visitor group expenditure in the park during this visit was \$146. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$10. The average per capita expenditure was \$91.

Hotels, motels, cabins, etc. out of the park: Almost two-thirds of visitor groups (65%) spent no money on lodging out of the park (see Figure 44).

Camping fees and charges out of the park: Most visitor groups (97%) spent no money on camping fees and charges out of the park.(see Figure 45).

Restaurants and bars out of the park: Fifty-five percent of visitor groups spent no money on restaurants and bars out of the park, while 12% spent between \$26 and \$50 (see Figure 46).

Groceries and take-out food out of the park: Most visitor groups (72%) spent no money on groceries and take-out food out of the park, while 21% spent between \$1 and \$25 (see Figure 47).

Gas and oil out of the park: Forty-eight percent of visitor groups spent no money on gas and oil out of the park, while 38% spent between \$1 and \$25 (see Figure 48).

Other transportation expenses out of the park: As shown in Figure 49, most visitor groups (85%) spent no money on other transportation expenses out of the park.

Admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees out of park: Most visitor groups (82%) spent no money on admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees out of the park, while 10% spent between \$1 and \$25 (see Figure 50).

Other purchases out of park: Over three-fourths of visitor groups (78%) spent no money on other purchases out of the park (see Figure 51).

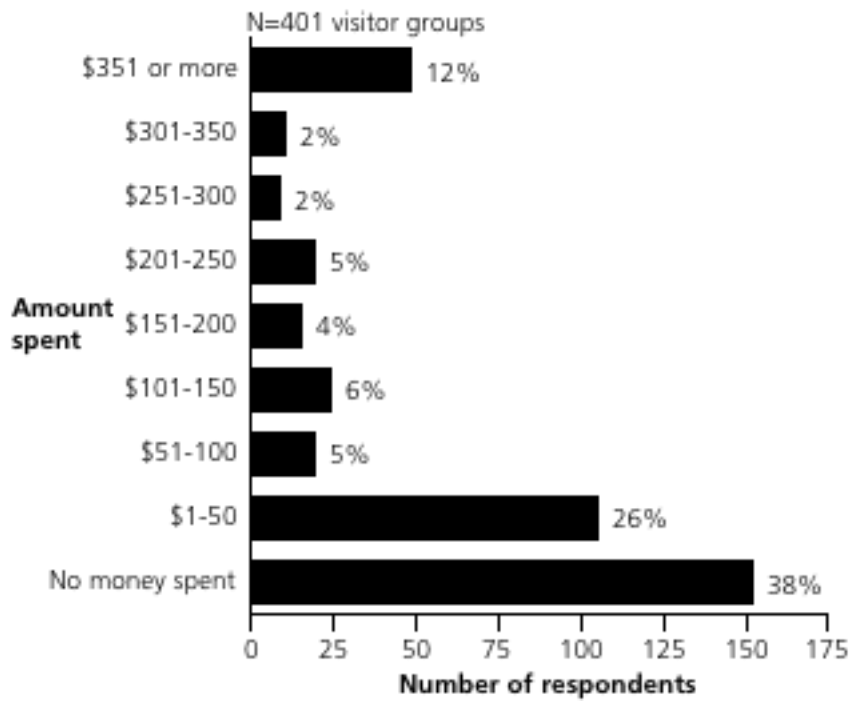


Figure 42: Total expenditures out of park

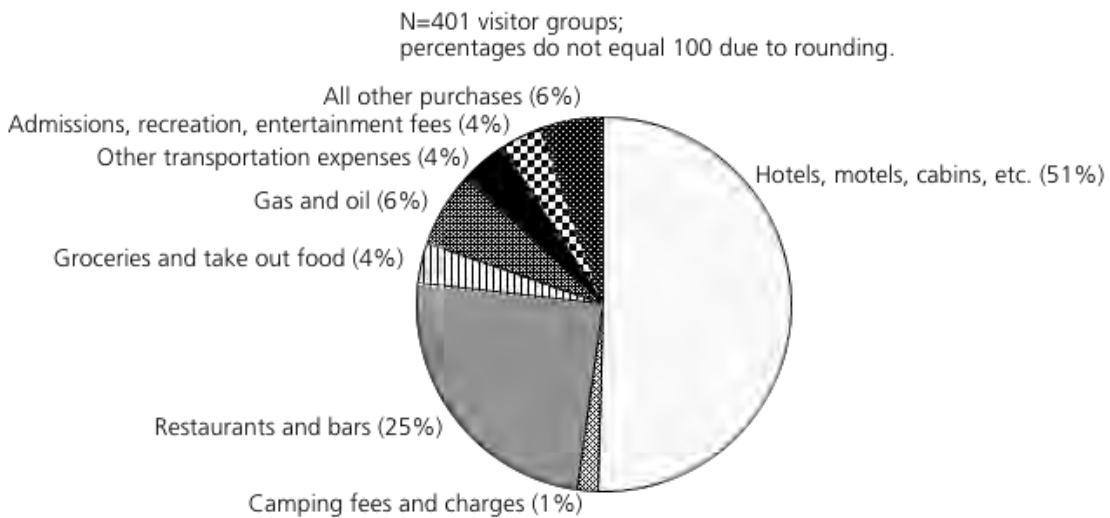


Figure 43: Proportion of expenditures out of park

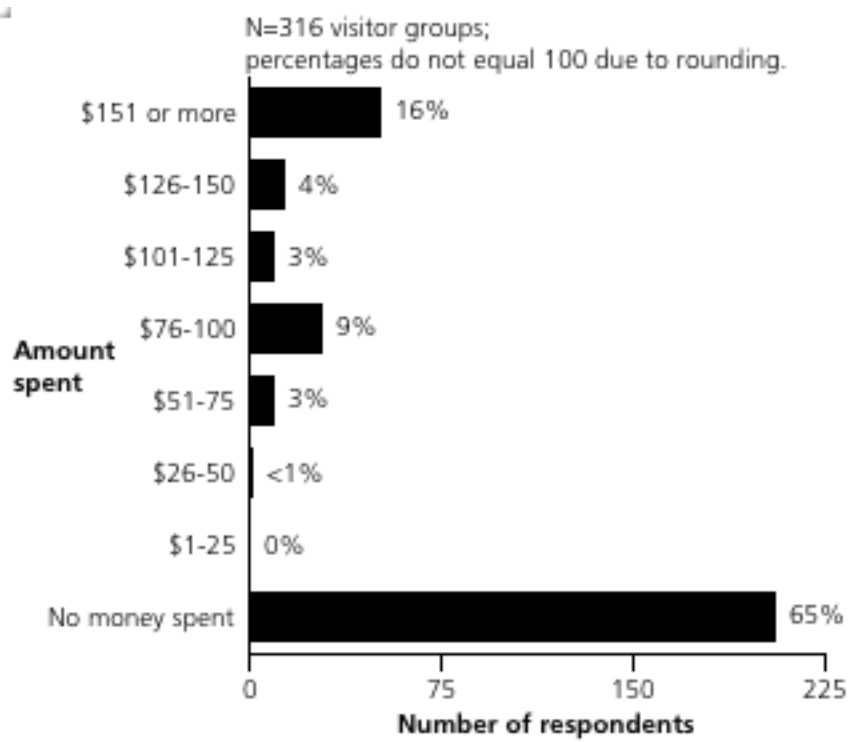


Figure 44: Expenditures for hotels, motels, cabin, etc. out of park

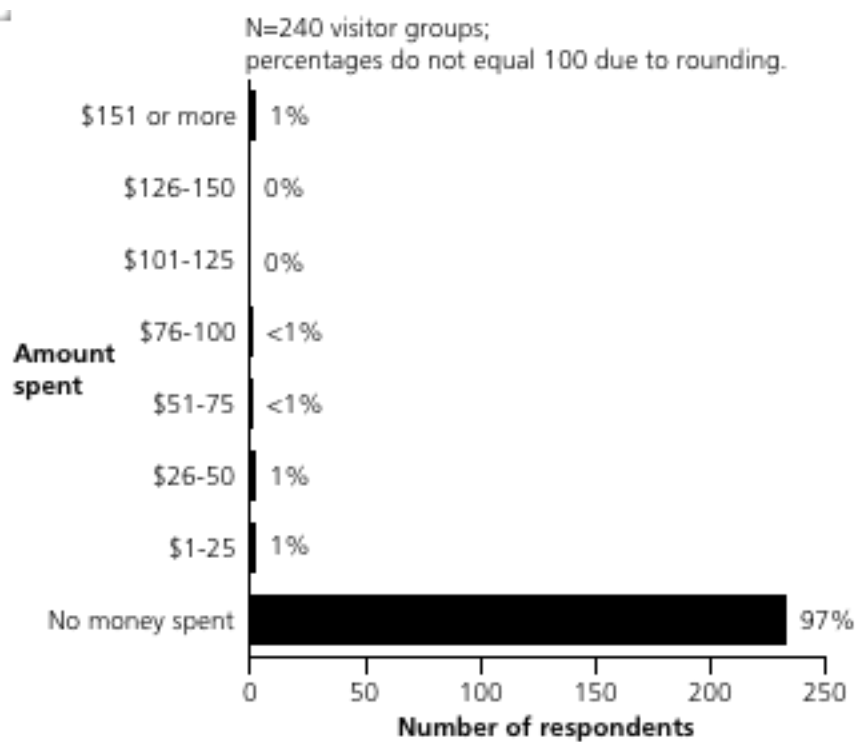


Figure 45: Expenditures for camping fees and charges out of park

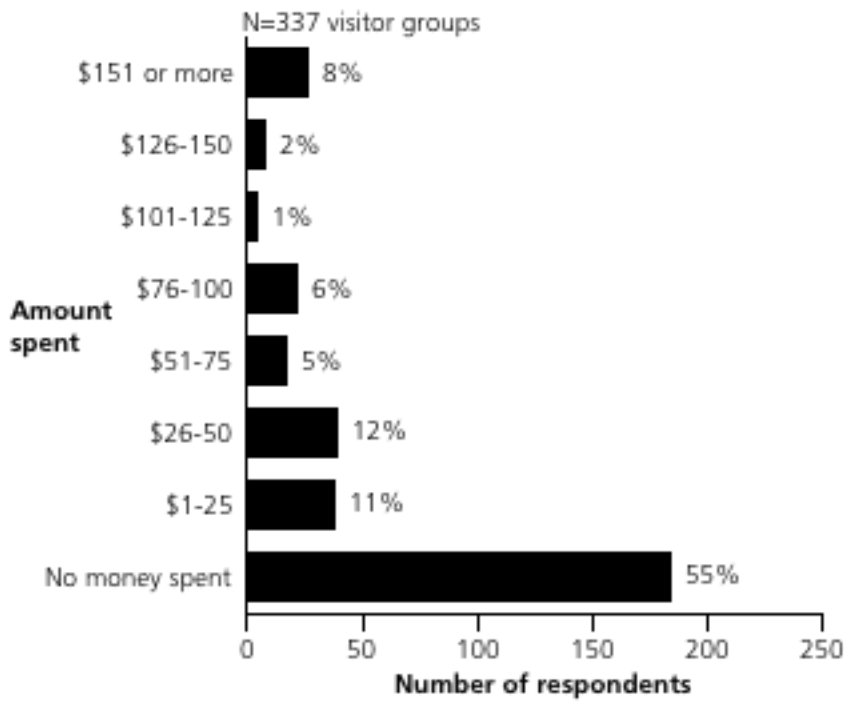


Figure 46: Expenditures for restaurants and bars out of park

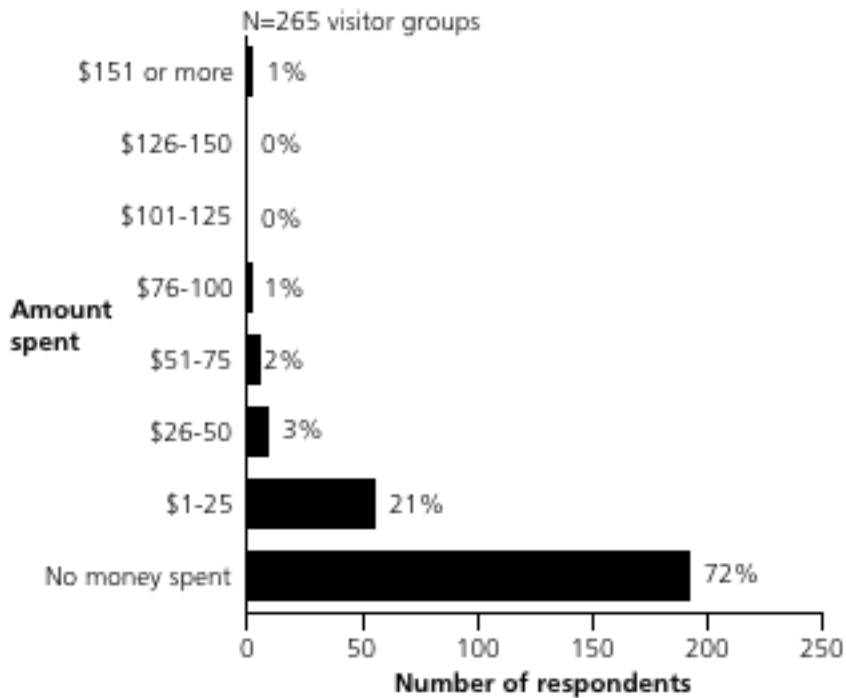


Figure 47: Expenditures for groceries and take-out food out of park

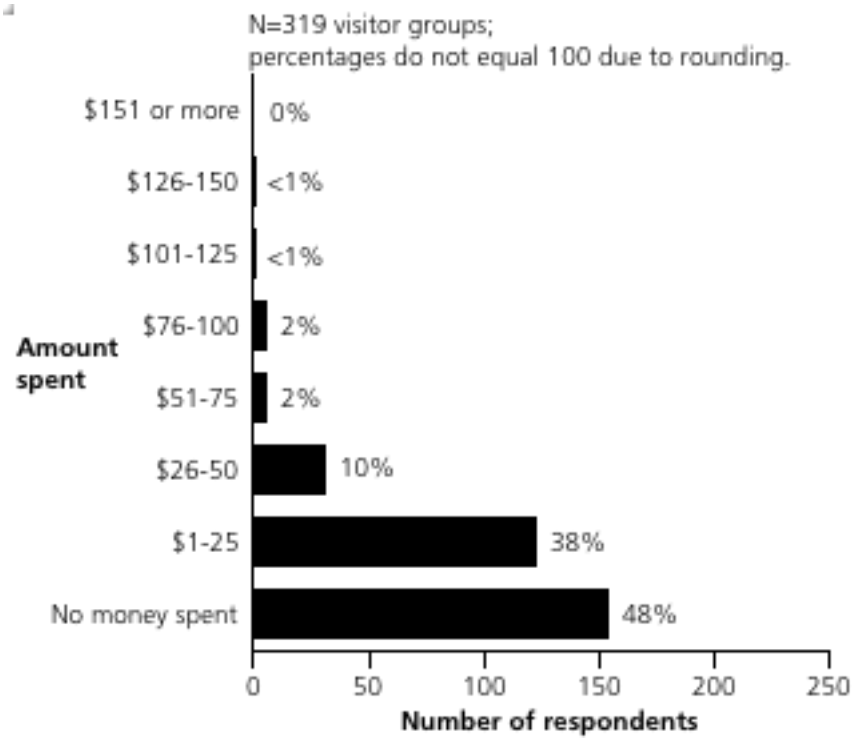


Figure 48: Expenditures for gas and oil out of park

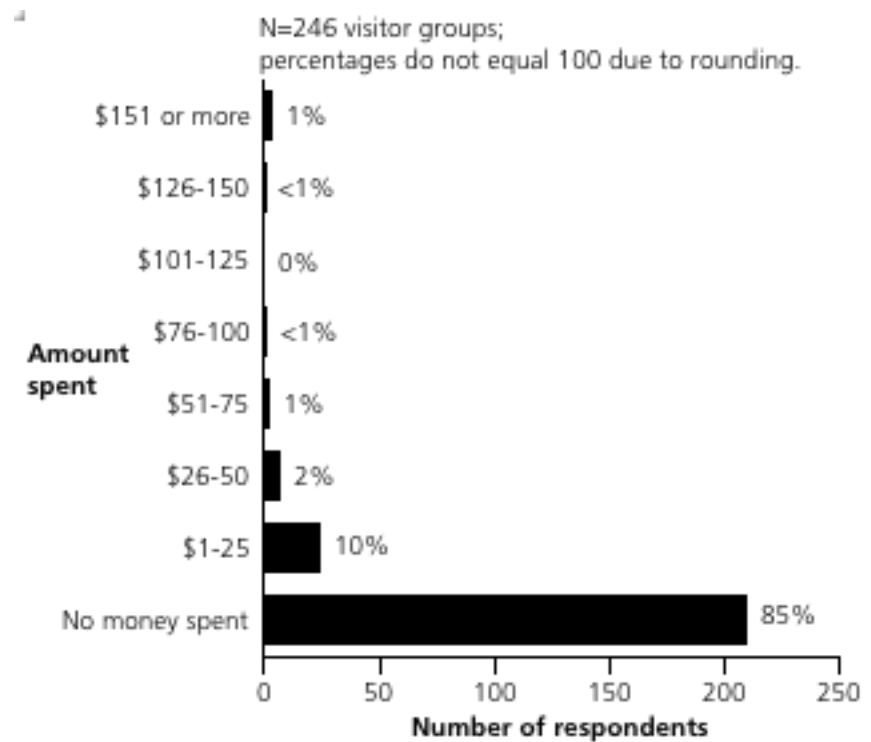


Figure 49: Expenditures for other transportation expenses out of park

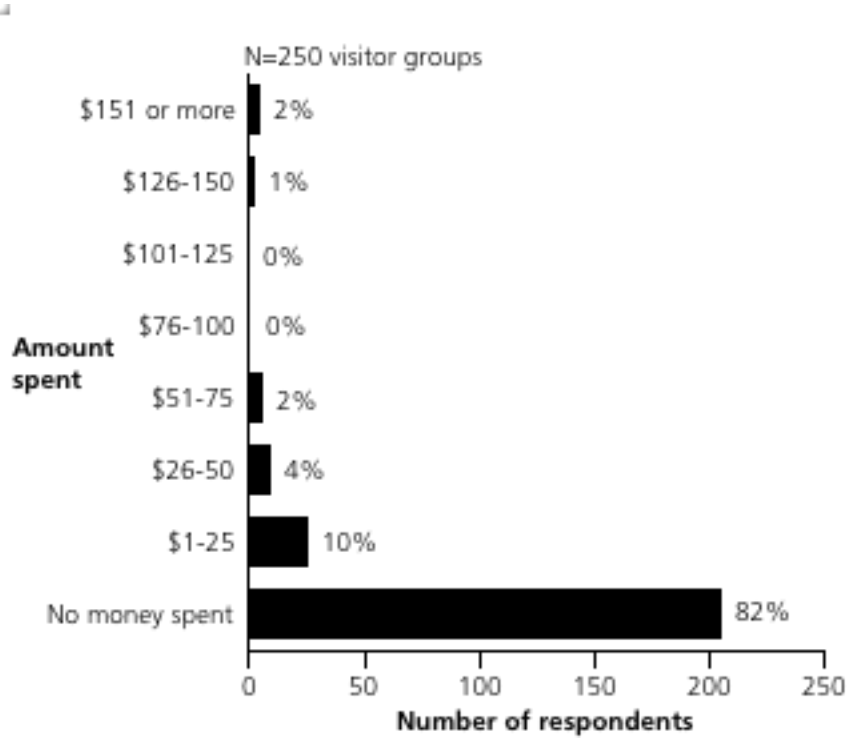


Figure 50: Expenditures for admissions, recreation, and entertainment fees out of park

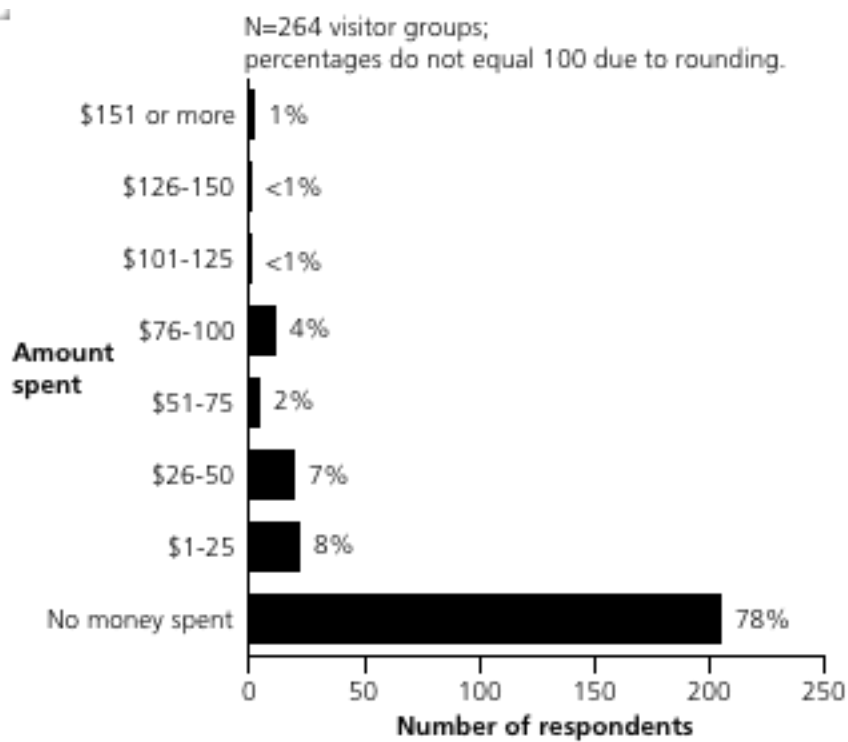


Figure 51: Expenditures for all other purchases out of park

Overall quality of visitor services

Visitor groups were asked to rate the overall quality of the visitor services provided at Valley Forge NHP during this visit. Most visitor groups (92%) rated services as "very good" or "good" (see Figure 52). No visitor groups rated the overall quality of services provided at Valley Forge NHP as "very poor."

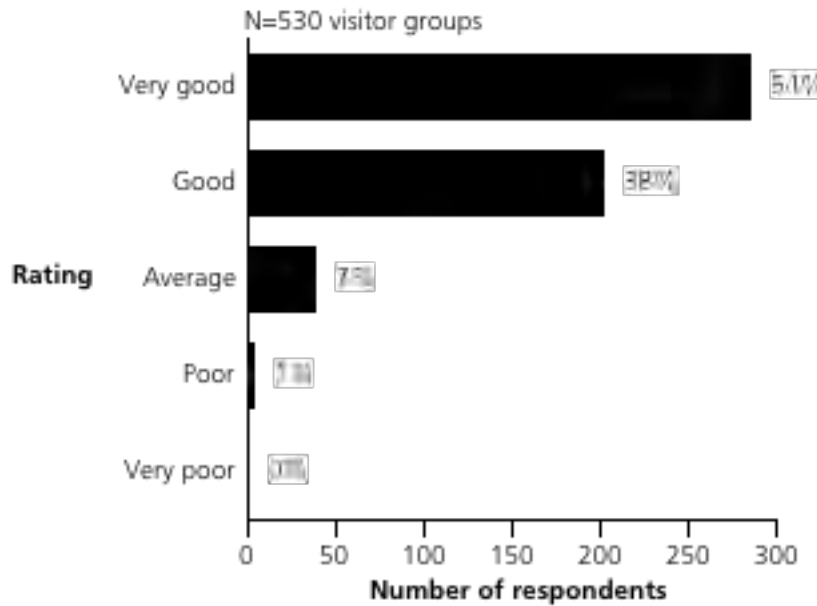


Figure 52: Overall quality of visitor services

Visitor groups were asked, "If you were a manager planning for the future of Valley Forge National Historical Park, what would you propose?" Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups (324 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 12 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

Planning for the future

Table 12: Planning for the future

N=416 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---------------------------|
| PERSONNEL | |
| Better public relations from staff | 10 |
| More costumed personnel | 11 |
| More visible rangers for safety reasons | 7 |
| Rangers need better interpretive training | 2 |
| INTERPRETIVE SERVICES | |
| More living history with details of soldiers' daily lives | 16 |
| Provide in-depth guided tour of park | 13 |
| More re-enactments | 11 |
| More hands-on activities for children | 5 |
| Display more artifacts | 5 |
| Improve interpretive boards/exhibits | 5 |
| Need film for children | 3 |
| Provide more books for children | 3 |
| Enlarge movie screen in Visitor Center | 2 |
| Rent/recycle tour tape to lower cost | 2 |
| Provide maps when Visitor Center is not open | 2 |
| FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE | |
| More parking spaces | 17 |
| Improve road directional signs | 15 |
| Improve mileage marks on trail | 10 |
| Provide more bathrooms | 10 |
| Redesign Visitor Center to fit historical context | 7 |
| Provide more water fountains | 6 |
| Provide more emergency phone booths | 5 |
| Better announcements of re-enactments | 5 |
| Improve pedestrian road crossings | 5 |
| Upgrade audio system for Visitor Center movie | 4 |
| Pave unpaved trails | 4 |
| Add accommodation facilities in park | 4 |
| Better direction to the Visitor Center | 4 |
| Improve signs on trails | 3 |
| Do not pave trails | 3 |
| Improve bathroom facilities | 2 |
| Provide more trash cans along trails | 2 |
| Rebuild bridge at Valley Creek | 2 |
| Rebuild bridge at Rt. 252 | 2 |
| Provide more benches along walking path | 2 |
| Camping site for visitors with horses | 2 |

Table 12 (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|--|------------------------------|
| POLICIES | |
| Continue to preserve historical significance | 18 |
| Re-route public traffic away from park | 10 |
| Open more mountain bike trails | 10 |
| Enforce speed limits on roads | 8 |
| Separate bike/hike path | 7 |
| Enforce dog owners picking up pets' waste | 6 |
| Allow archery hunting of deer | 5 |
| No admission fee at museum | 4 |
| Enforce trail rules | 4 |
| Do not build National Military cemetery | 3 |
| Build National Military cemetery | 2 |
| Expand park areas | 2 |
| Other comments | 4 |
| RESOURCE MANAGEMENT | |
| Control deer population | 16 |
| Maintain natural setting of park | 13 |
| Widen multiple-use trail | 11 |
| Better trail management | 11 |
| Build more trails | 10 |
| More horseback riding opportunities | 4 |
| Mow lawn more often | 4 |
| Better weed control around monuments | 4 |
| Provide dog-off-leash area | 3 |
| Provide more fishing opportunities in park | 2 |
| CONCESSIONS | |
| Build concession area selling food and drink | 21 |
| Provide bike rentals | 2 |
| GENERAL IMPRESSIONS | |
| Keep it as is | 26 |
| Fireworks on 4 July | 2 |
| Outdoor colonial music concerts | 2 |
| Other comments | 2 |

Forty-seven percent of visitor groups (257 groups) wrote additional comments, which are included in the separate appendix of this report. Their comments about Valley Forge NHP are summarized below (see Table 13). Some comments offer specific suggestions on how to improve the park; others describe what visitors enjoyed or did not enjoy about their visit.

Comment summary

Table 13: Additional comments

N= 257 comments

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| PERSONNEL | |
| Friendly staff | 17 |
| Helpful staff | 10 |
| Knowledgeable staff | 10 |
| Park staff was rude | 3 |
| INTERPRETIVE SERVICES | |
| Improve audio tour tape | 5 |
| Visitor Center nice | 4 |
| Audio tour tape was good | 3 |
| Film was good | 3 |
| FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE | |
| Park well maintained | 32 |
| Road signs were confusing | 5 |
| Impressive facilities | 5 |
| Better pedestrian crossing | 4 |
| Remodel Visitor Center | 3 |
| Clean bathrooms | 2 |
| Nice picnic area | 2 |
| Trails well maintained | 2 |
| POLICY | |
| Keep park free for all | 4 |
| RESOURCE MANAGEMENT | |
| Enjoyed seeing deer | 10 |
| Reduce deer herd | 8 |
| GENERAL IMPRESSIONS | |
| Enjoyable | 47 |
| Great learning/educational experience | 24 |
| Beautiful | 23 |
| Good recreational opportunities | 10 |
| Good local resource | 6 |
| Felt safe in park | 5 |
| Felt unsafe | 5 |
| Park is national treasure | 5 |

Valley Forge National Historical Park Visitor Study Additional Analysis VSP Report 130

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

Additional Analysis

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

- Aware of NPS management
- Sources of information prior to visit
- Sources of information future visit
- Receive all needed information
- Understanding of NPS mission at Valley Forge NHP
- Understanding of mission enhanced after visit
- Seasons visited
- Activities
- First visit/repeat visit
- Frequency of visits
- Importance of qualities of Valley Forge NHP
- Experience traffic congestion
- Experience parking problems
- Sites visited
- Sites visited (order)
- Roads used to enter park
- Group type
- Age
- State/country of residence
- Number of visits (including this visit)
- Group size
- With a guided tour
- Overnight stay within 1 hour of park
- Number of nights outside park
- Type of lodging within 1 hour of park
- # of park entries
- Level of safety
- Safety concerns while crossing park roads
- Safety concerns relating to directional signs
- Safety concerns relating to pedestrian/bike/horse crossing
- Safety concerns relating to road design
- Safety concerns relating to the amount of traffic
- Admissions/recreation/entertainment fee expenditures in park
- All other expenditures in park
- Lodging expenditure out of park
- Camping fee expenditures out of park
- Restaurant and bar expenditures out of park
- Groceries and take-out food expenditures out of park
- Gas and oil expenditures out of park
- Other transportation expenditures out of park
- Admissions/recreation/entertainment fee expenditures out of park
- All other purchases out of park
- Number of adults covered by expenses
- Number of children covered by expenses
- Overall quality of services

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

QUESTIONNAIRE

Visitor Services Project Publications

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

1982

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

1983

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

1985

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

1986

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence 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
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

1991

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

1992

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

1993

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

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**1994**

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

1995

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

1996

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

1997

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

1998

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

1999

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

2000

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

2001

- 125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
- 126. Colonial National Historical Park (Jamestown)
- 127. Shenandoah National Park
- 128. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- 129. Crater Lake National Park
- 130. Valley Forge National Historical Park

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

