



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

**Visitor Services Project**



# **Outer Banks Group Parks Visitor Study**

**Fort Raleigh National Historic Site**

**Summer 2002**

**Report 136a**



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Visitor Services Project

# Fort Raleigh National Historic Site

## Visitor Study Summer 2002

Jason R. Reed

Yen Le

Margaret Littlejohn

**Visitor Services Project  
Report 136**

December 2003

---

---

---

Jason R. Reed and Yen Le were VSP Research Assistants with the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho. Margaret Littlejohn is National Park Service VSP Coordinator, based at the Park Studies Unit. We thank the staff and volunteers of Fort Raleigh National Historical Site 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**  
**Fort Raleigh National Historic Site**  
**Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Fort Raleigh National Historic Site (NHS) during July 12-18, 2002. A total of 299 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 224 questionnaires for a 74.9% response rate.
  - This report profiles Fort Raleigh NHS visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
  - Thirty-three percent of visitor groups were groups of two. 79% of the visitor groups were family groups. Forty percent of visitors were aged 36-55 years and 26% were aged 15 or younger. The majority of visitor groups (99%) were not a part of a guided tour group.
  - United States visitors were from North Carolina (19%), Virginia (14%), Maryland (7%) and 30 other states and Washington, D.C. There were not enough international visitors to provide reliable data.
  - The three most important reasons for visiting Fort Raleigh NHS were "historical significance," "Lost Colony Theater", and "general interest/to see it."
  - Most visitors (77%) reported that this was their first visit to Fort Raleigh NHS.
  - On this visit, the most common activities were visiting historic sites (91%), walking (66%) and swimming/sunbathing (62%).
  - On past visits, the most common activities were visiting historic sites (45%), swimming/sunbathing (36%) and walking (33%).
  - Most visitor groups (91%) reported that they had adequate access to park staff on this visit.
  - Twenty-four percent of visitor groups (50 groups) reported that litter "detracted from" their park experience. Six percent of visitor groups (13 groups) reported that fires on the beach "added to" their park experience.
  - Most visitor groups (49%) reported that crowding had "no effect" their park experience. Of the 46% percent of visitor groups that reported that crowding "detracted from" their park experience, most (64%) reported that they felt most crowded in the afternoon.
  - 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 services and facilities by 192 visitor groups at Fort Raleigh NHS were the visitor center (84%) and parking lots (79%). The most important services and facilities were "Lost Colony" theatre (97%, N=103), ranger-led programs (93%, N=40), and restrooms (92%, N=139). The best quality services and facilities were assistance from park staff (96%, N=116), parking lots (93%, N=140) and "Lost Colony" theater (93%, N=101).
  - Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at the Outer Banks Group parks as "very good" or "good." None of the 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 Park Studies Unit; phone (208) 885-7863. For a copy of this report summary, visit the following website: <http://www.nps.gov/socialscience/waso/products.htm>

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODS	2
RESULTS	4
Visitors contacted	4
Demographics	4
Length of visit	11
Sources of information	12
Importance of visiting Outer Banks Group parks in decision to visit the Outer Banks	13
Activities	14
Reasons for visiting Fort Raleigh NHS	16
Visitor services and facilities; use, importance, and quality	23
Opinions about access to park staff	24
Comparison of current programs/activities with those on past visit(s)	25
Importance of selected park attributes	19
Selected factors' effect on visitor experience	28
Opinions about crowding	21
Opinions about safety	29
Overall quality	31
What visitors liked most	32
What visitors liked least	34
Planning for the future	35
Additional comments	36
ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS	37
QUESTIONNAIRE	39
VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT PUBLICATIONS	41

---



---

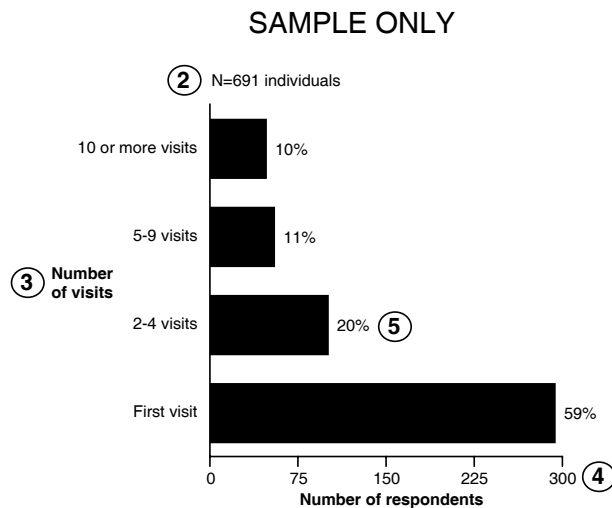
## INTRODUCTION

---

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Fort Raleigh National Historic Site, also referred to as "Fort Raleigh NHS." This visitor study was conducted July 12-18, 2002 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the 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 Fort Raleigh NHS.

Interviews were conducted with, and questionnaires were distributed to, a sample of visitors who arrived at Fort Raleigh NHS during the period from July 12-18, 2002. Visitors were sampled as they arrived at two locations (see Table 1).

---

**Table 1: Questionnaire distribution locations**

Location	Questionnaires distributed	
	Number	%
Fort Raleigh NHS Visitor Center	277	93
Lost Colony Play	22	7
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>100</b>

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 3 shows information for 221 visitor groups, Figure 4 presents data for 782 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 Fort Raleigh NHS visitors returned 224 questionnaires, Figure 1 shows data for only 223 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 July 12–18, 2002. 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 July in the Fort Raleigh NHS area, with warm to hot sunny days, and the occasional thunderstorm/rain shower.

---

---

## RESULTS

---

At Fort Raleigh NHS, 327 visitor groups were contacted, 299 of these groups (91%) accepted questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 224 visitor groups, resulting in a 74.9% response rate for this study.

### Visitors contacted

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

---

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

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Age of respondents	293	45.9	220	47.0
Group size	298	6.1	223	4.3

---

Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 45 people. Thirty-three percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 41% consisted of three or four people.

### Demographics

Seventy-nine percent of visitor groups were made up of family members, 10% were traveling with family and friends, 7% were with friends and 3% were traveling alone (see Figure 2). Groups listing themselves as "other" for group type included those traveling with "theatre camp" and "boyfriend." One percent of visitor groups were traveling with guided tour groups (see Figure 3).

Forty-eight percent of the visitors were in the 36-55 age group, and another 26% of visitors were aged 15 years or younger, as shown in Figure 4.

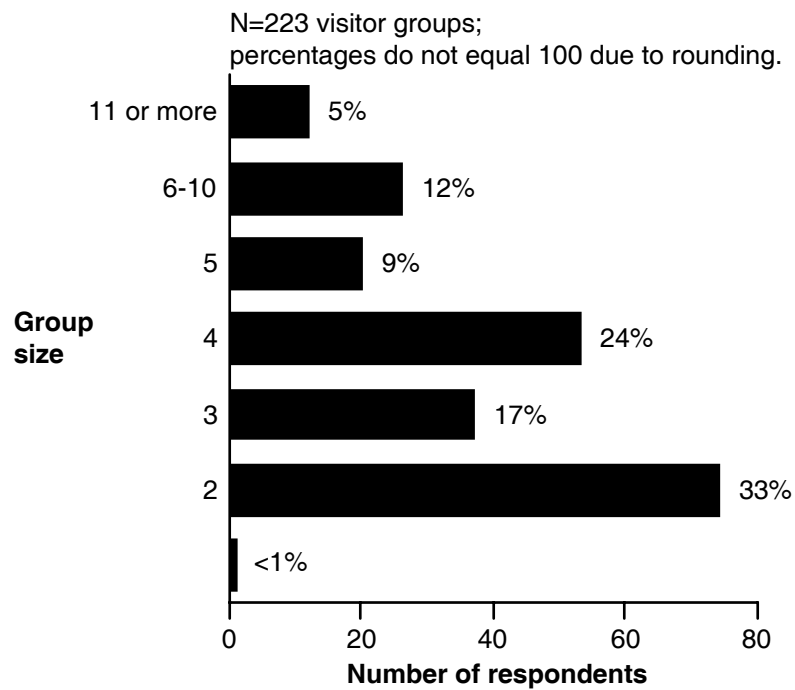
Visitor groups were asked how many times each member in the group had visited Fort Raleigh NHS including this visit. Most visitors (77%) reported that this was their first visit to Fort Raleigh NHS, as shown in Figure 5.

---



**Demographics  
(continued)**

There were not enough international visitors to provide reliable data (see Table 3). The largest proportions of United States visitors were from North Carolina (19%), Virginia (14%) and Maryland (7%). Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from another 30 states and Washington, D.C. (see Map 1 and Table 5).



**Figure 1: Visitor group sizes**

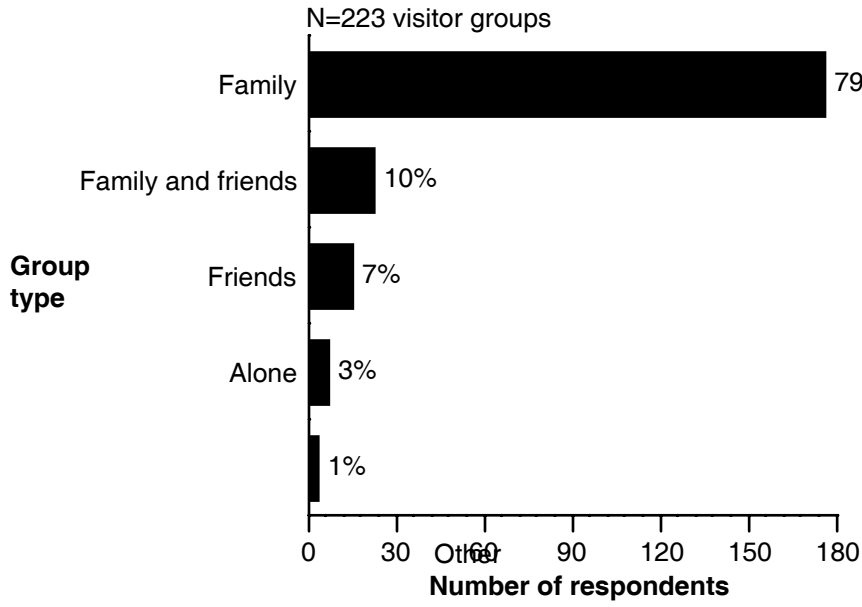


Figure 2: Visitor group types

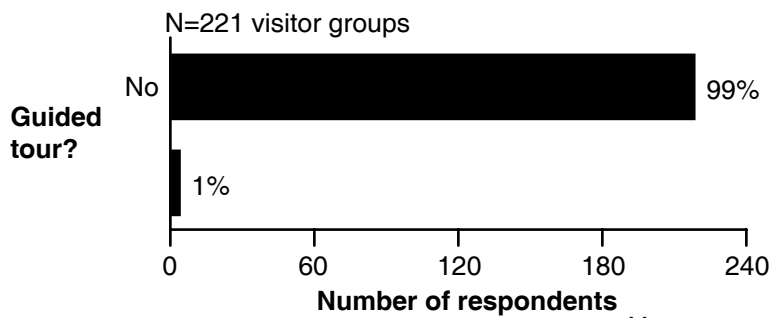
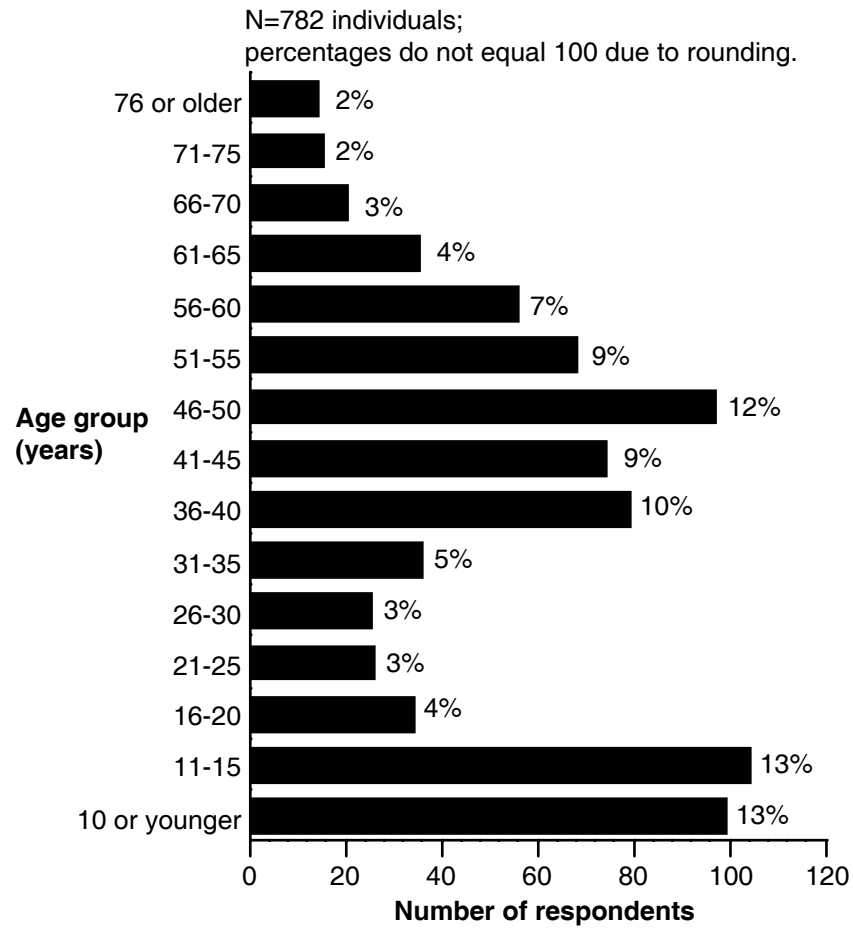
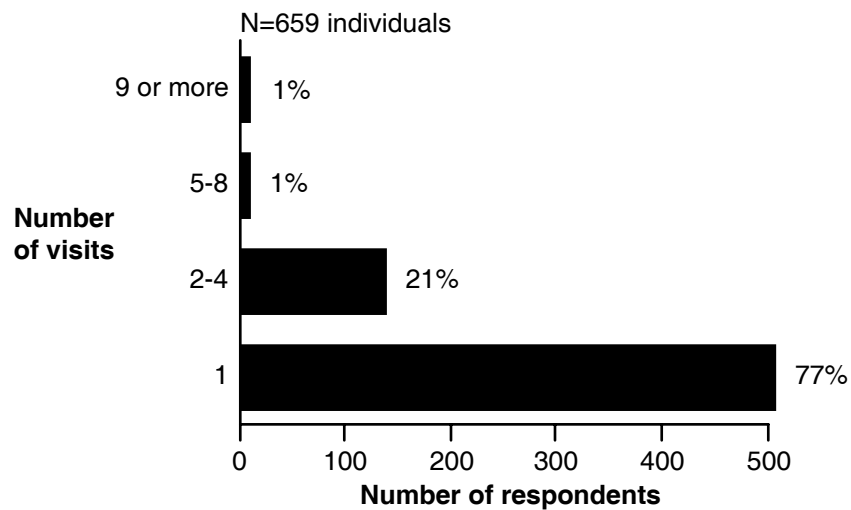


Figure 3: Visitors with guided tour group





**Figure 4: Visitor ages**



**Figure 5: Number of visits to Fort Raleigh NHS**

(including this visit)

---

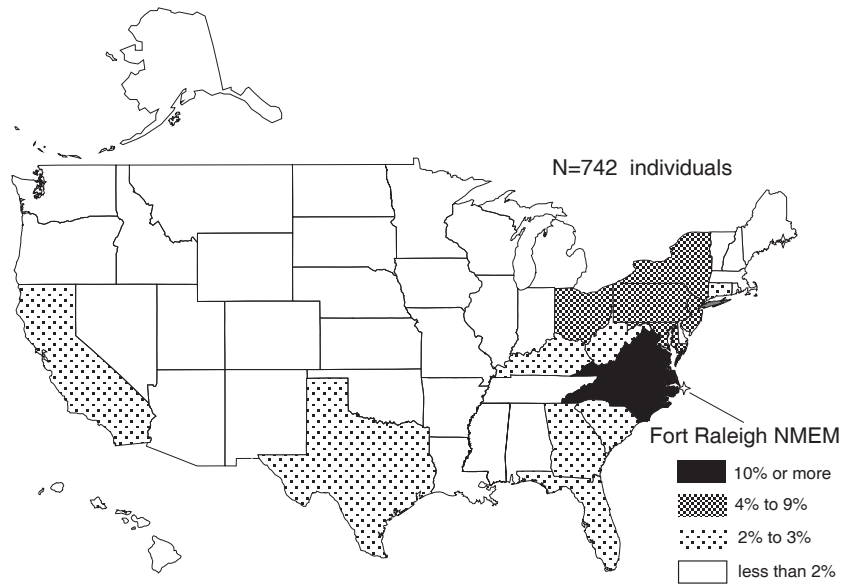
**Table 3: International visitors by country of residence**

percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

**CAUTION!**

Country	Number of individuals	Percent of international visitors N=4 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=972 individuals
England	2	50	<1
Holland	2	50	<1

---



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

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

State	Number of individuals	Percent of U.S. visitors N=742 individuals	Percent of total visitors N=746 individuals
-------	-----------------------	-----------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------

---

North Carolina	140	19	19
Virginia	102	14	14
Maryland	55	7	7
New York	53	7	7
Ohio	49	7	7
Pennsylvania	48	6	6
New Jersey	34	5	5
California	24	3	3
Georgia	24	3	3
Florida	22	3	3
Kentucky	21	3	3
South Carolina	19	3	3
Texas	17	2	2
Washington D.C	14	2	2
West Virginia	12	2	2
Indiana	11	1	1
Illinois	10	1	1
Massachusetts	10	1	1
Missouri	8	1	1
Oregon	8	1	1
Connecticut	7	1	1
Michigan	6	1	1
Tennessee	6	1	1
Iowa	5	1	1
Louisiana	5	1	1
Arizona	4	1	1
7 other states	28	4	4

---

**Length of visit**

Visitor groups were asked how long they spent visiting Fort Raleigh NHS on this visit. Table 5 lists the lengths of visit for each day of the week.

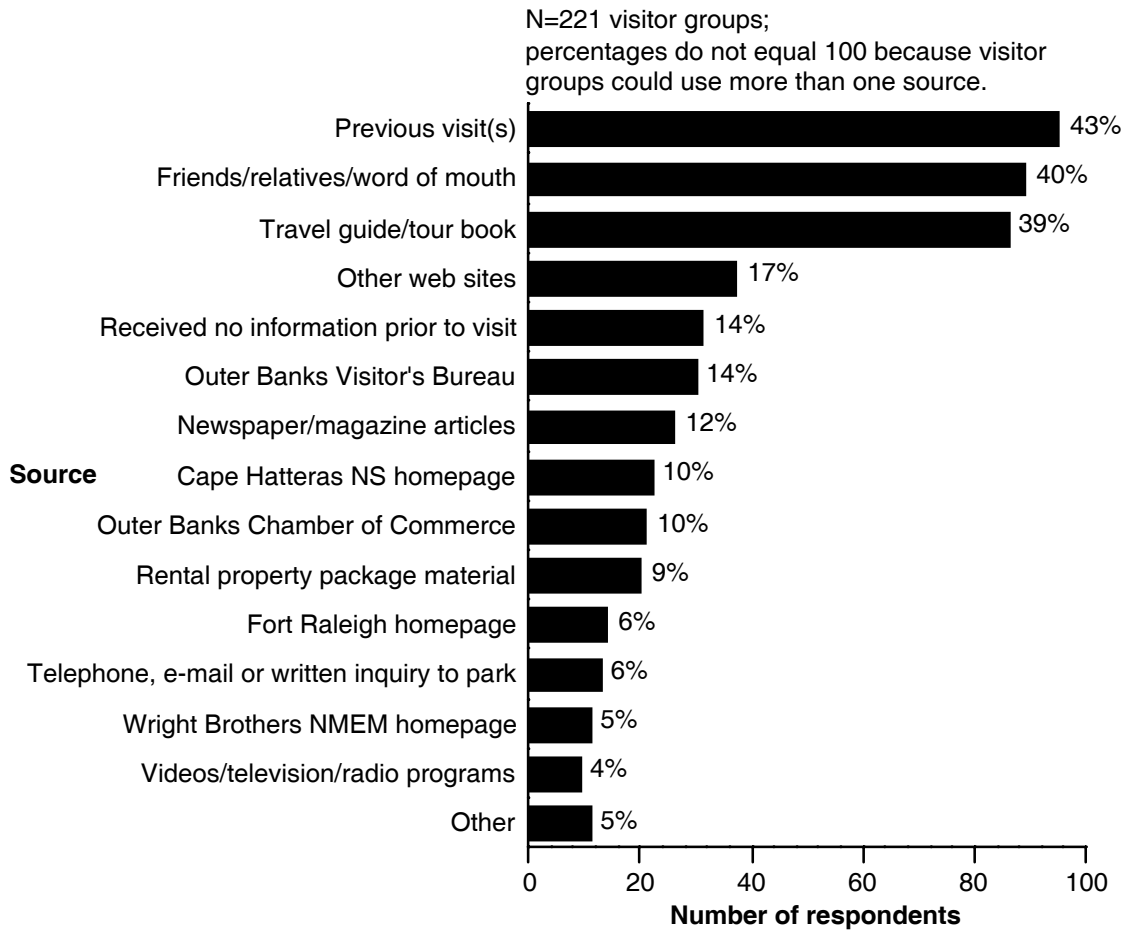
**Table 5: Time spent as Fort Raleigh NHS**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>Sunday</b> N=23	
5 hours and above	0
4 hours	1
3 hours	4
2 hours	12
1 hour	6
<b>Monday</b> N=29	
5 hours and above	3
4 hours	5
3 hours	8
2 hours	7
1 hour	6
<b>Tuesday</b> N=40	
5 hours and above	7
4 hours	12
3 hours	10
2 hours	6
1 hour	5
<b>Wednesday</b> N=45	
5 hours and above	9
4 hours	15
3 hours	9
2 hours	8
1 hour	4
<b>Thursday</b> N=33	
5 hours and above	3
4 hours	5
3 hours	3
2 hours	16
1 hour	6
<b>Friday</b> N=31	
5 hours and above	5
4 hours	13
3 hours	3
2 hours	6
1 hour	4
<b>Saturday</b> N=24	
5 hours and above	5
4 hours	1

3 hours	1
2 hours	6
1 hour	11

**Sources of information**

Visitor groups were asked to indicate the sources from which they had received information about Fort Raleigh NHS prior to their visit. Fourteen percent of visitor groups received no information prior to their visit. Of those visitor groups who received information, the most common sources were previous visits (43%), friends, relatives or word of mouth (40%) and travel guides/tour books (39%), as shown in Figure 6. "Other" sources of information used by visitor groups included being a local resident, North Carolina Welcome Centers, National Parks Passport and AAA.



**Figure 6: Sources of information used by visitors prior to arriving**



Visitors were asked, "Prior to your trip, how important a role did visiting the National Park Service Outer Banks parks have in your decision to visit the Outer Banks?" Among Fort Raleigh NHS visitors, visiting Fort Raleigh NHS played an "extremely" to "very" important role in deciding to visit the Outer Banks for 33% of visitors, as shown in Table 6. For Fort Raleigh NHS, 44% of the visitors said that park was "somewhat" to "not" important in their decision to visit the Outer Banks.

**Importance of  
visiting Outer  
Banks Group  
parks in decision  
to visit the Outer  
Banks**

**Table 6: Importance of visiting Outer Banks Group parks in decision to visit the Outer Banks**

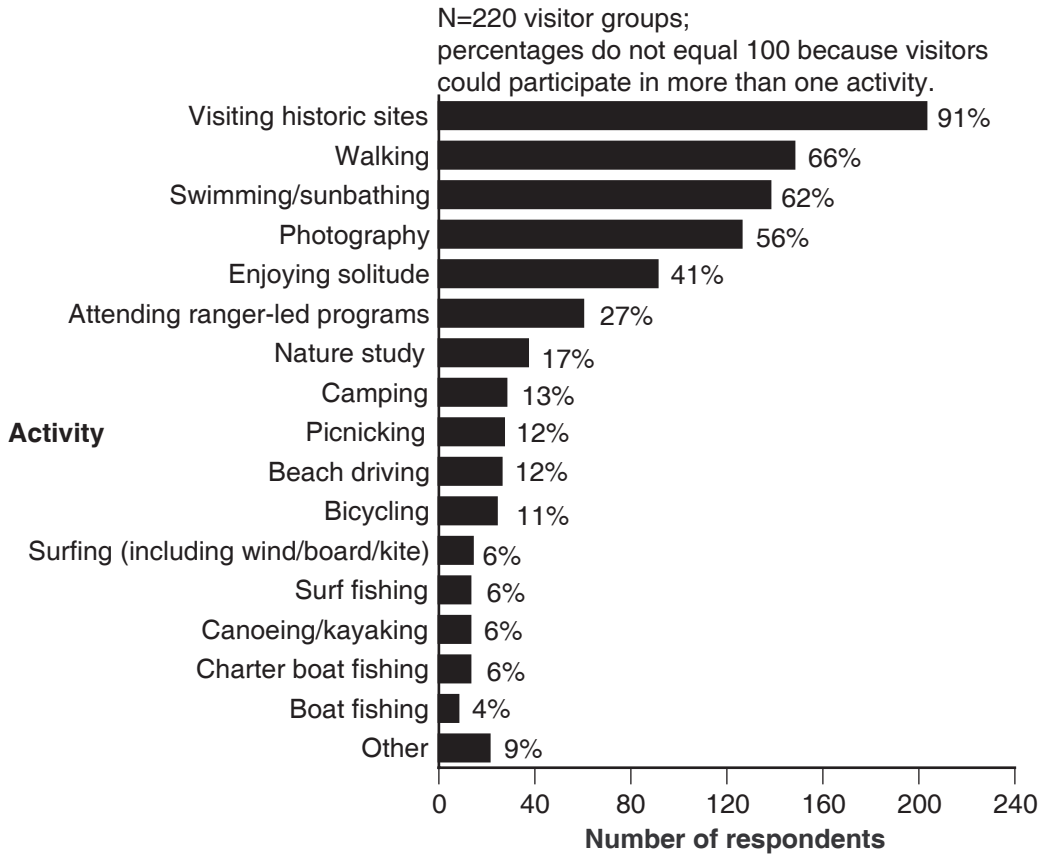
percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Park	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know/did not visit
Cape Hatteras NS N=212	23%	15%	19%	6%	25%	12%
Ft. Raleigh NHS N=218	18%	15%	21%	16%	28%	3%
Wright Brothers NMEM N=219	16%	17%	22%	9%	22%	12%

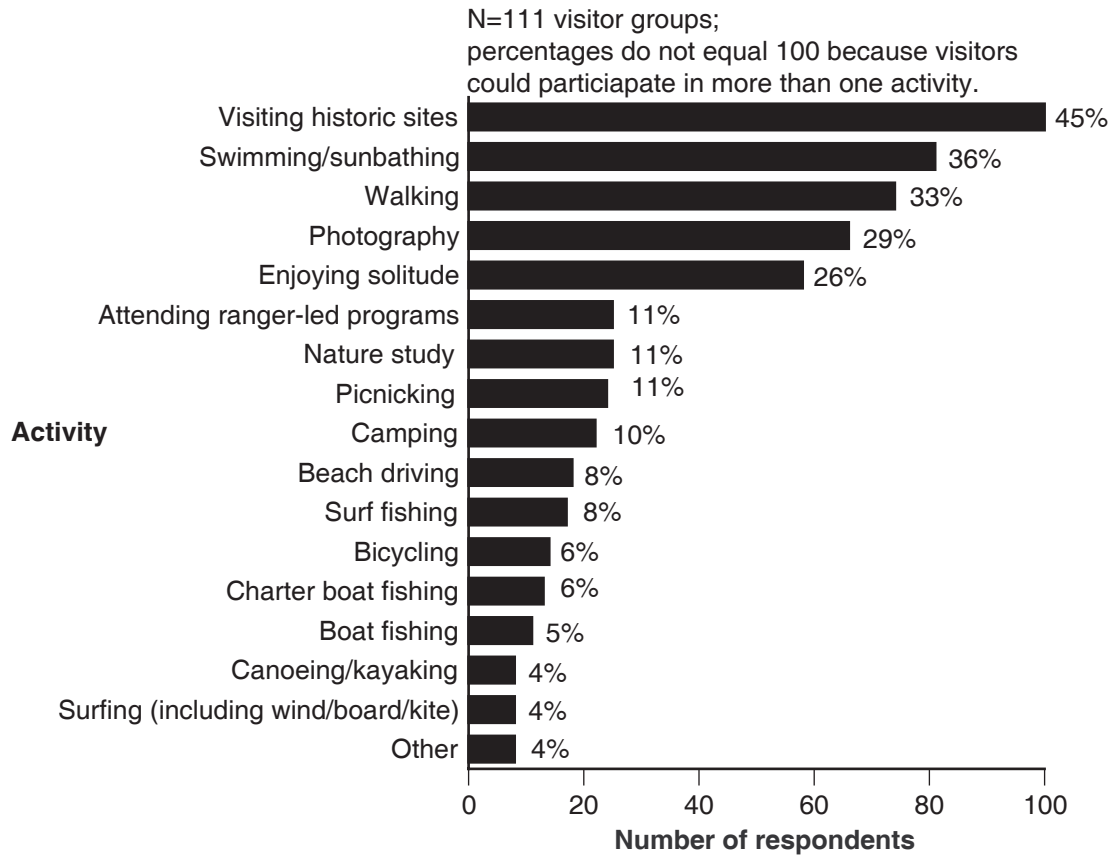
**Activities**

Visitor groups were asked to list the activities that they participated in at one or more Outer Banks Group parks on this visit. The most common activities were visiting historic sites (91%), walking (66%) and swimming/sunbathing (62%), as shown in Figure 7. "Other" activities included viewing "Lost Colony" play, family time/visiting relatives/family reunion, and history/education.

On past visits, the most common activities were visiting historic sites (45%), swimming/sunbathing (36%) and walking (33%), as shown in Figure 8. "Other" activities on past visits included viewing "Lost Colony" play, and history/education.



**Figure 7: Visitor activities on this visit**



**Figure 8: Visitor activities past visit**

Visitor groups were asked a number of questions relating to their visit to the Fort Raleigh NHS. Visitors were asked to list the three top reasons for visiting Fort Raleigh NHS. The "historical significance," "Lost Colony play," and "general interest/to see it" are three most listed reasons, as shown in Tables 7-9.

### Reasons for visiting Fort Raleigh NHS

**Table 7: Most important reason for visiting Fort Raleigh  
NHS**

N=190 comments

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Historical significance	87
"Lost Colony" theater	31
General interest/to see it	11
To see the play at 'Lost Colony" theater	10
Gardens	6
Education/to teach/research	5
Sightseeing	5
For the children/grandchildren	4
First time visiting/seeing different area	3
To do something new	3
Enjoy the park	2
Fort	2
Mystery	2
Roanoke Island	2
Fun/play	2
Other comments	15

**Table 8: Second most important reason for visiting  
Fort Raleigh NHS**

N=122 comments

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Historical significance	17
"Lost Colony" theater	13
Educational purpose (teach/research)	11
General interest/to see it	10
For the children/grandchildren	7
To see the play at "Lost Colony" theater	7
Gardens	5
Fort	5
First time visited/seeing different area	4
Live nearby	4
Sightseeing	4
Ranger programs and talks	3
Photography	3
Nature study	3
To do something new	2
Memorial/monument	2
To get National Parks Passport stamp	2
Beauty of the area/scenery	2
Walking/hiking	2
Other comments	16

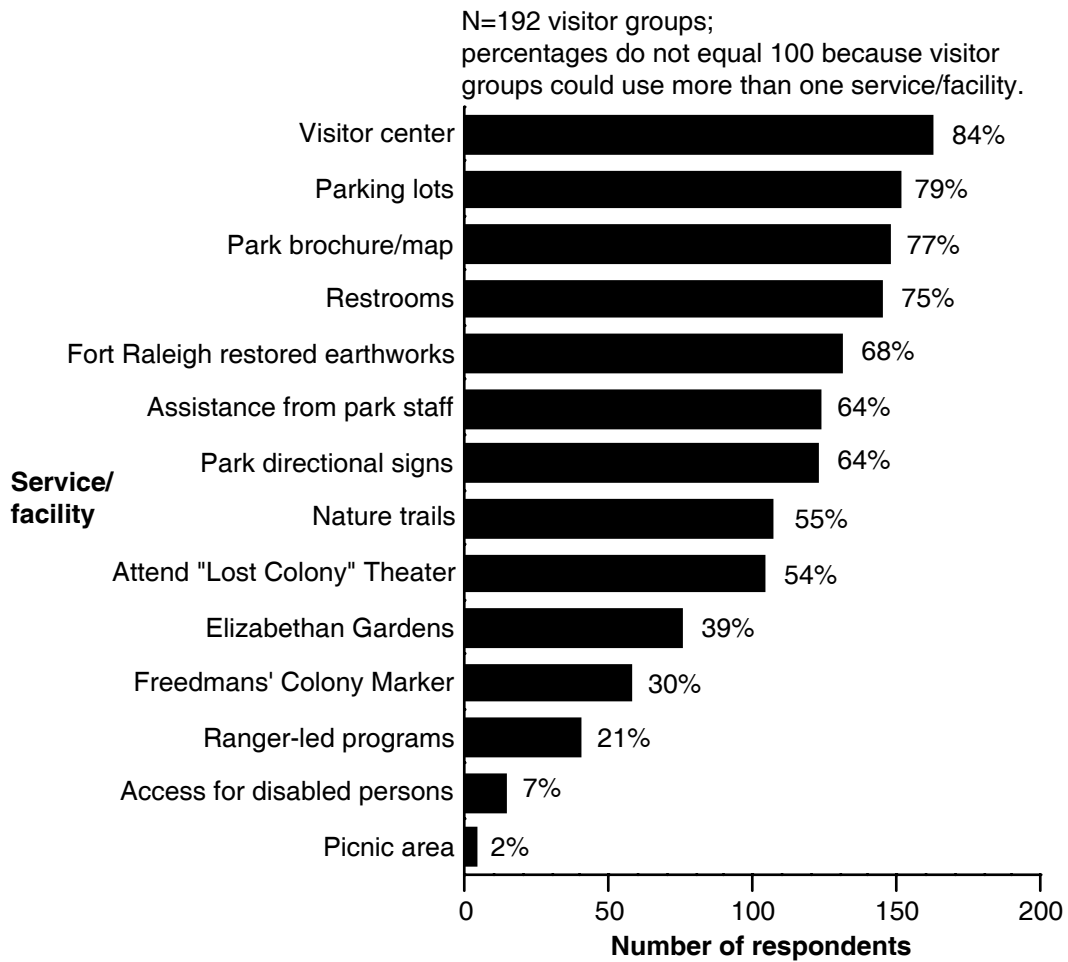
**Table 9: Third most important reason for visiting Fort  
Raleigh NHS**

N=63 comments

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Historical significance	6
General interest/to see it	6
To see the play at "Lost Colony" theater	4
Beauty of the area/scenery	4
Gardens	4
Educational purpose (teach/research)	3
To do something new	3
Live nearby	3
To show family/friends	3
Museum/artifacts	3
Uncrowded/solitude/low population	3
Enjoy the park	2
For the children/grandchildren	2
Fort	2
Other comments	15

**Visitor services and facilities: use, importance and quality**

Visitor groups were asked to note the park services and facilities they used at Fort Raleigh NHS during this trip to the NPS Outer Banks Group parks. As shown in Figure 9, the services and facilities that were most commonly used at Fort Raleigh NHS were the visitor center (84%), parking lots (79%) and park brochure (77%). The least used services or facilities were access for disabled persons (7%), and picnic area (2%).



**Figure 9: Services and facilities used at Fort Raleigh**

Visitor groups that visited Fort Raleigh NHS rated the importance and quality of each of the services and facilities they used. The following five point scales were used in the questionnaire.

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

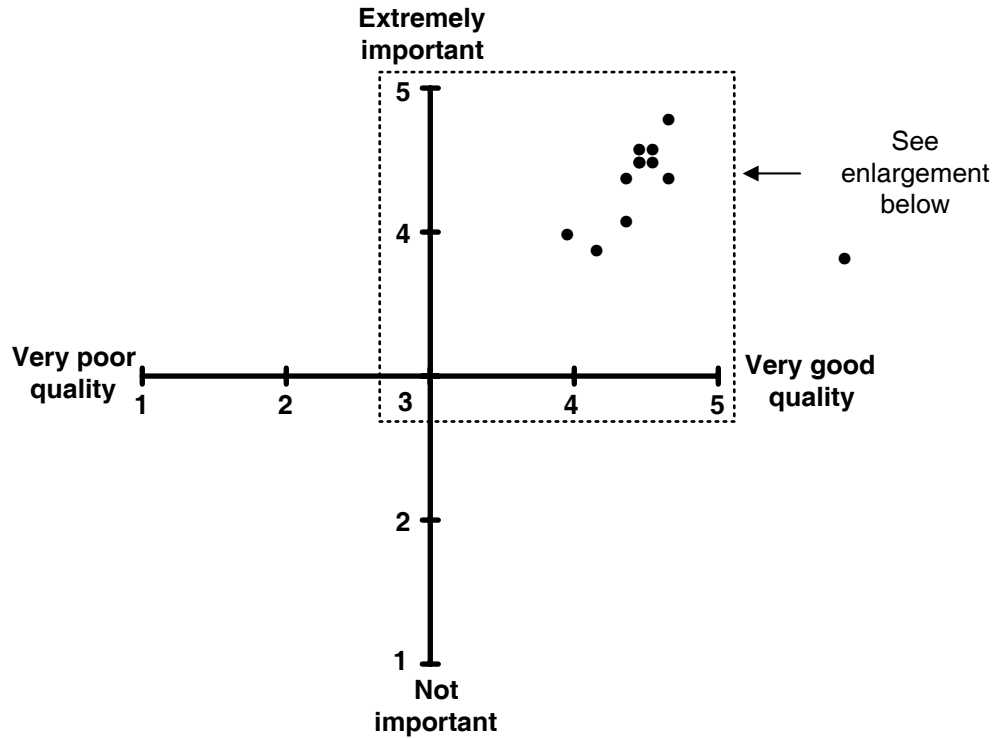
QUALITY
5=very good
4=good
3=average
2=poor
1=very poor

The average importance and quality ratings for each service and facility were determined based on ratings provided by visitors who used each service and facility. Figures 10 and 11 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: picnic area and access for disabled persons were not rated by enough visitors to provide reliable information.

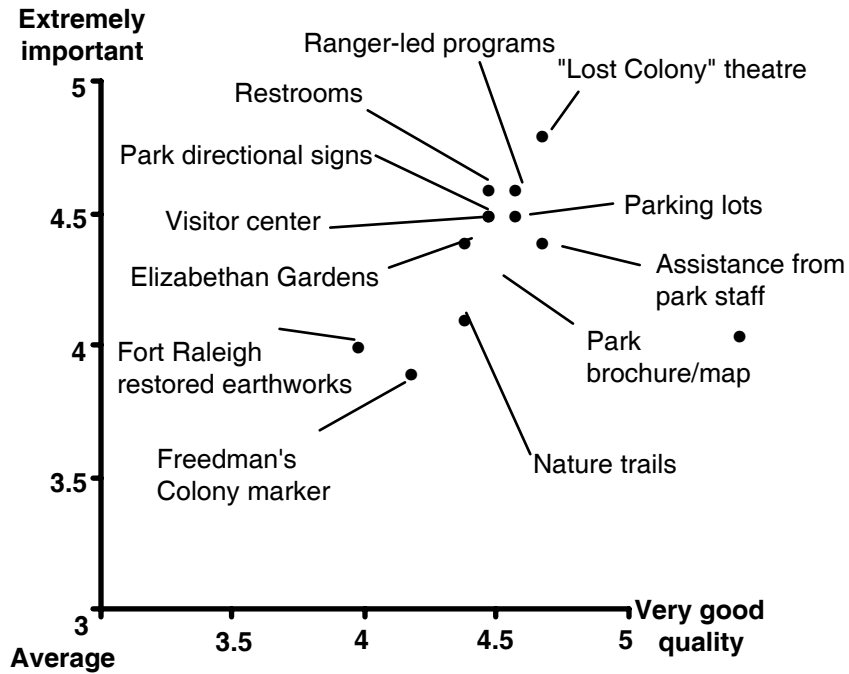
Table 10 compares the importance ratings for selected services and facilities. The services and facilities that received the highest proportion of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were attending “Lost Colony” Theater (97%), ranger-led programs (93%) and restrooms (92%). Those services and facilities receiving the highest proportion of “not important” ratings included Freedman’s Colony Marker (4%), Fort Raleigh restored earthworks (3%), and nature trails (2%).

Table 11 compares the quality ratings for selected services and facilities. The services and facilities that received the highest proportion of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were assistance from park staff (96%), parking lots (93%), and attending “Lost Colony” Theater (93%). The facility receiving the highest proportion “very poor” ratings was Fort Raleigh restored earthworks (2%).

Figure 12 combines the “very good” and “good” quality ratings and compares those ratings for all of the services and facilities.



**Figure 10: Average rating of visitor services and facilities importance and quality at Fort Raleigh NHS**



**Figure 11: Detail of Figure 10**



**Table 10: Importance of visitor services and facilities at Fort Raleigh NHS**

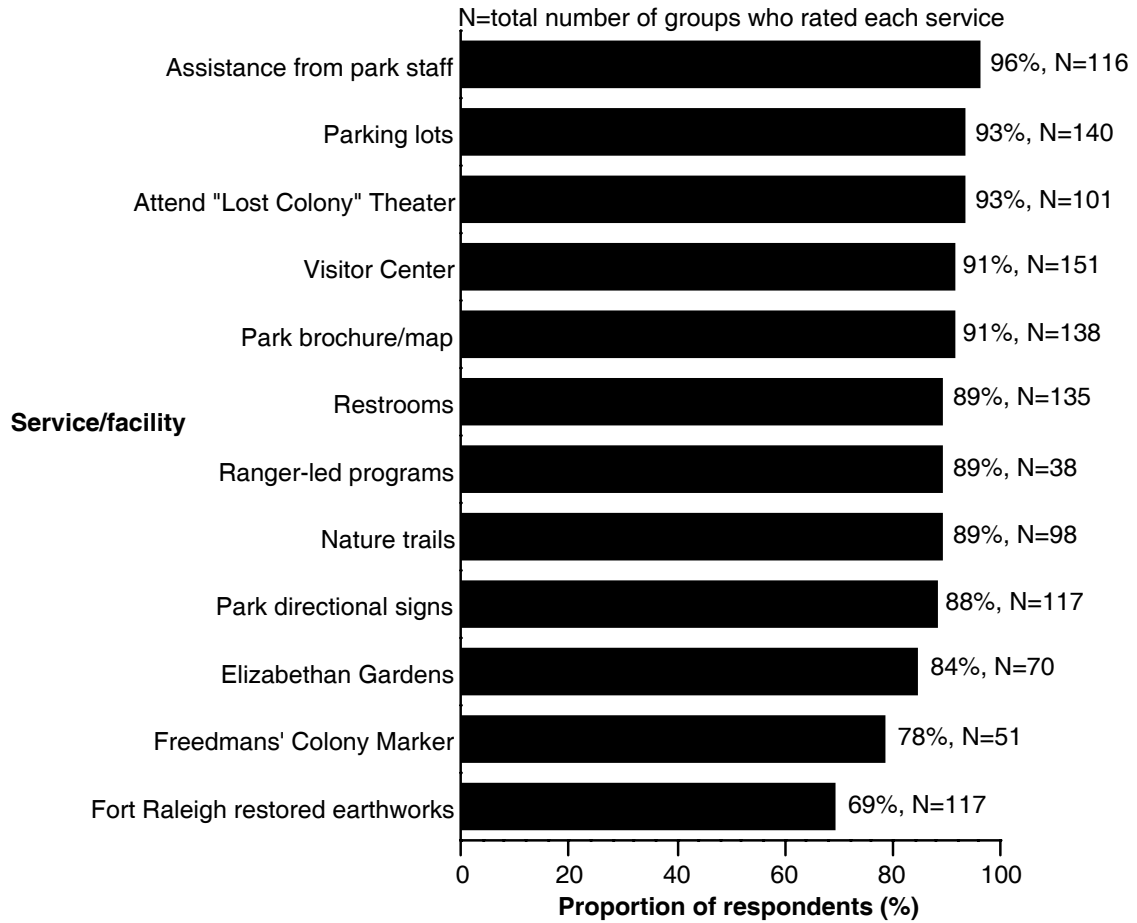
N= number of visitor groups who rated each service/quality;  
percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Visitor service/facility		Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not important
Park brochure/map	N=144	51%	35%	11%	3%	1%
Visitor Center	N=158	64%	24%	9%	3%	0%
Assistance from park staff	N=120	59%	28%	8%	4%	1%
Nature trails	N=103	41%	33%	21%	3%	2%
Fort Raleigh restored earthworks,	N=123	44%	29%	17%	7%	3%
Freedman's Colony Marker	N= 55	38%	27%	20%	11%	4%
Ranger-led programs	N= 40	65%	28%	8%	0%	0%
Restrooms	N=139	67%	25%	7%	1%	0%
Access for disabled persons <b>CAUTION!</b>	N= 13	85%	7%	7%	0%	0%
Picnic area <b>CAUTION!</b>	N= 4	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Park directional signs	N=120	64%	23%	11%	2%	1%
Parking lots	N=142	63%	23%	12%	1%	1%
Attend "Lost Colony" Theater	N=103	84%	13%	4%	0%	0%
Elizabethan Gardens	N= 72	63%	24%	8%	6%	0%

**Table 11: Quality of visitor services and facilities at Fort Raleigh NHS**

N=number of visitor groups who rated each service/facility;  
percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

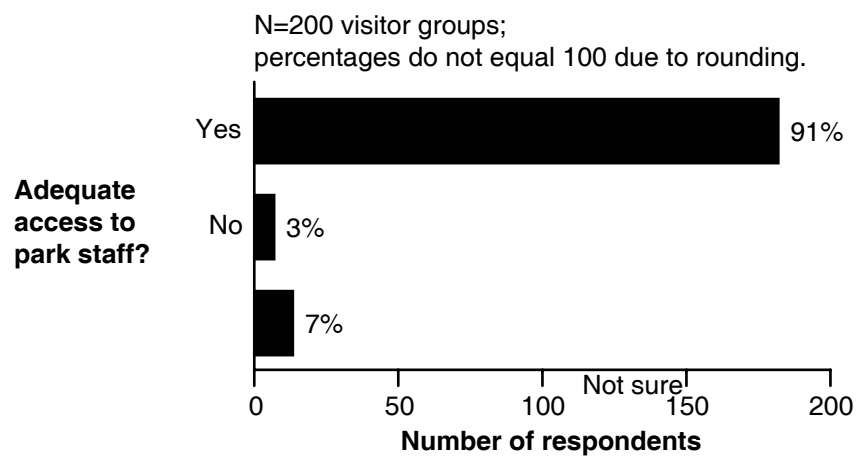
Visitor service/facility		Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Park brochure/map	N=138	59%	32%	7%	1%	1%
Visitor Center	N=151	59%	32%	7%	1%	1%
Assistance from park staff	N=116	73%	23%	3%	0%	1%
Nature trails	N= 98	53%	36%	9%	2%	0%
Fort Raleigh restored earthworks	N=117	42%	27%	26%	3%	2%
Freedman's Colony Marker	N= 51	49%	29%	18%	4%	0%
Ranger-led programs	N= 38	68%	21%	8%	3%	0%
Restrooms	N=135	58%	31%	10%	1%	0%
Access for disabled persons <b>CAUTION!</b>	N= 12	67%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Picnic area <b>CAUTION!</b>	N= 4	75%	0%	25%	0%	0%
Park directional signs	N=117	59%	29%	12%	0%	0%
Parking lots	N=140	71%	22%	6%	1%	0%
Attend "Lost Colony" Theater	N=101	79%	14%	4%	2%	1%
Elizabethan Gardens	N= 70	61%	23%	13%	1%	1%



**Figure 12: Combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings for visitor services and facilities at Fort Raleigh NHS**

**Opinions about  
access to park  
staff**

Finally, visitor groups were asked: "In your opinion, did you and your group have adequate access to park staff at Fort Raleigh NHS during this visit?" Most visitor groups (91%) felt that they had adequate access to park staff, 7% were "not sure", and 3% felt that they did not have adequate access to park staff (see Figure 13).



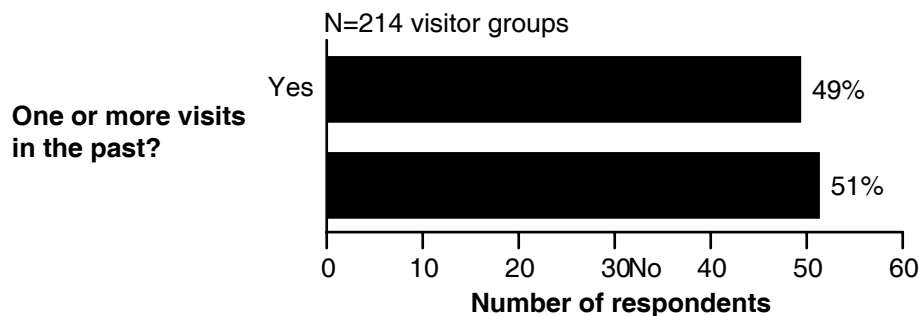
**Figure 13: Access to park staff at Fort Raleigh NHS**

**Comparison of current programs/activities with those on past visit(s)**

Visitors were asked a number of questions about their experience with Fort Raleigh NHS programs/activities on past visit and the impact of past experiences on the current visit. Visitors were first asked: "In the past, have you visited one or more of the Outer Banks Group parks?" As shown in Figure 14, most visitor group (51%) indicated that this was their first visit to Fort Raleigh NHS, another 49% indicated that they had visited in the past.

Visitor groups who had visited Fort Raleigh NHS in the past were asked how the programs and activities on this visit compare with what was experienced during past visits. Visitor groups were specifically asked to list the similarities and differences in the programs and activities. Table 12 lists comments from visitor groups.

Finally, visitors were asked whether these similarities/differences had any impact on their visit. Most visitor groups (53%) indicated that the similarities/differences had "no effect" on their visit, 35% indicated they "added to" their park experience, and another 12% indicated that they "detracted from" this visit (see Figure 15).

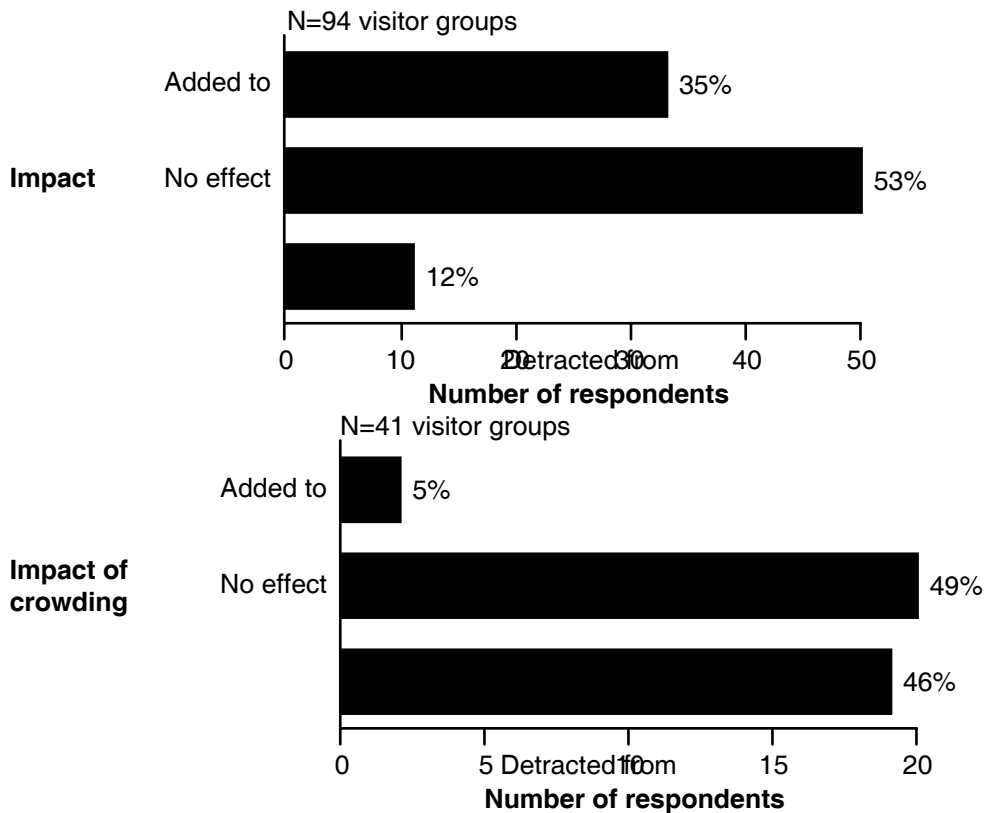


**Figure 14: Visits to one or more of Outer Banks group parks in the past**

**Table 12: Differences in programs/activities on this visit vs. previous visits**

N=47 comments;  
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
None/no change/similar	16
All improving	5
Wright Brothers museum not open	4
Lighthouse/location of lighthouse/access to lighthouse	4
Rangers more friendly/knowledgeable	3
Other comments	15



**Figure 15: Impact of past experience on this visit**

### Importance of selected park attributes

Visitors were asked to rate the importance of selected attributes in planning for the preservation of Fort Raleigh NHS for future generations. Table 13 compares the ratings of the attributes by the visitors of all three parks. The attributes that received the highest proportion of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings were preserving historic sites (92%), educational opportunities (82%) and natural open space (64%). Those attributes receiving the highest proportion of "not important" ratings included night sky/stargazing (27%), solitude (19%), wildlife viewing (15%) and recreational opportunities (15%).

**Table 13: Importance of attributes in planning for the preservation of the park for future generations**

N=number of visitor groups who rated each attribute; percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Attribute		Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know
Scenic views	N=217	36%	20%	27%	7%	7%	2%
Wildlife viewing	N=210	16%	18%	26%	18%	15%	8%
Recreational opportunities	N=209	17%	23%	21%	18%	15%	6%
Natural quiet/sounds of nature	N=202	35%	22%	23%	9%	9%	2%
Night sky/stargazing	N=210	13%	11%	14%	17%	27%	18%
Solitude	N=212	18%	21%	20%	16%	19%	6%
Educational opportunities	N=211	60%	22%	9%	4%	1%	4%
Preserving historic sites	N=216	74%	18%	5%	1%	1%	2%
Natural open space	N=216	40%	24%	21%	6%	6%	4%





Table 14 compares selected factors that may have had an effect on visitor experience. Those factors receiving the highest proportion of “added to” ratings included fires on beach (6%), dogs off leash (4%), vehicles on beach (4%) and visitors drinking alcohol (4%). The factors that received the highest proportion of “detracted from” ratings were litter (24%), vehicles on beach (13%), airplane over-flights and dogs off leash (each 10%).

### Selected factors' effect on visitor experience

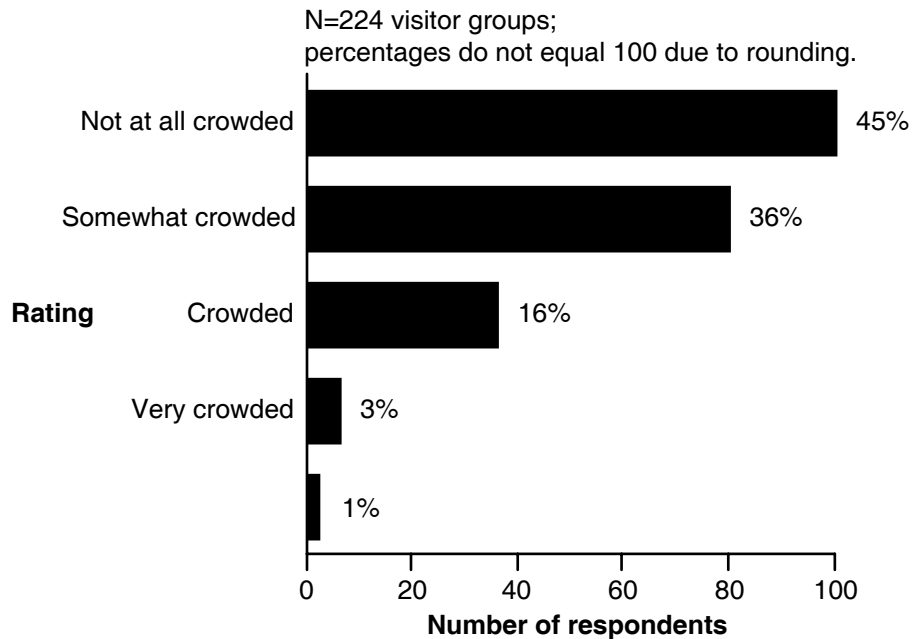
<b>Factor</b>		<b>Added to</b>	<b>No effect</b>	<b>Detracted from</b>	<b>Did not experience</b>
RV electric generators	N=209	0%	14%	6%	80%
Airplane over-flights	N=209	2%	35%	10%	52%
Fires on beach	N=209	6%	21%	3%	69%
Dogs off leash	N=209	4%	24%	10%	61%
Visitors drinking alcohol	N=208	4%	18%	9%	69%
Litter	N=208	2%	11%	24%	63%
Vehicles on beach	N=208	4%	24%	13%	59%

**Opinions about crowding**

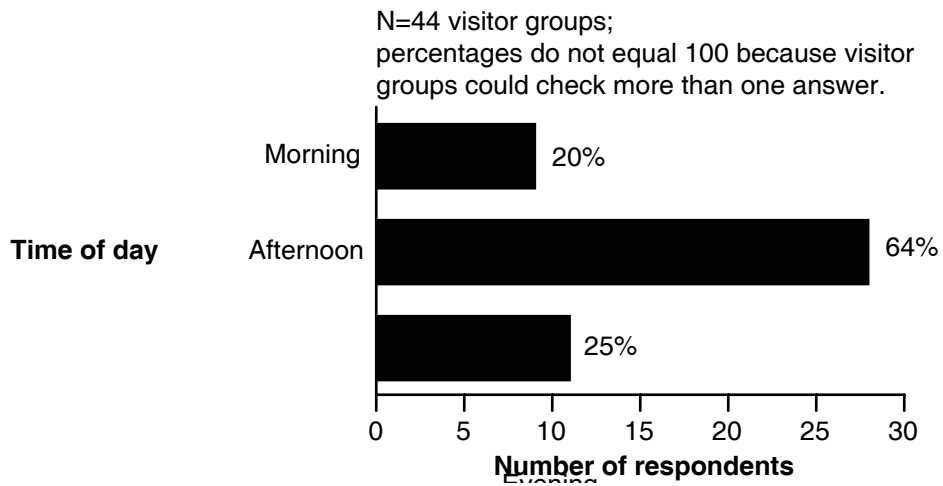
Figure 16 shows visitor perceptions about crowding levels in the park. Most visitor groups (45%) felt it was “not at all crowded,” 36% felt “somewhat crowded,” and another 16% felt “crowded.” If the answer was “crowded,” “very crowded,” or “extremely crowded,” visitor groups were then asked to indicate where they felt crowded. The places that visitors felt crowded included “Lost Colony” play, Wright Brothers Visitor Center and gift shop, Wright Brothers NMEM, and lighthouses.

Visitors were also asked what time of day they experienced crowding. The majority of visitor groups (64%) felt most crowded in the afternoon (noon to 6 p.m.), another 25% felt crowded in the evening (6 p.m. to midnight), and 20% felt crowded in the morning (6 a.m. to noon), as shown in Figure 17.

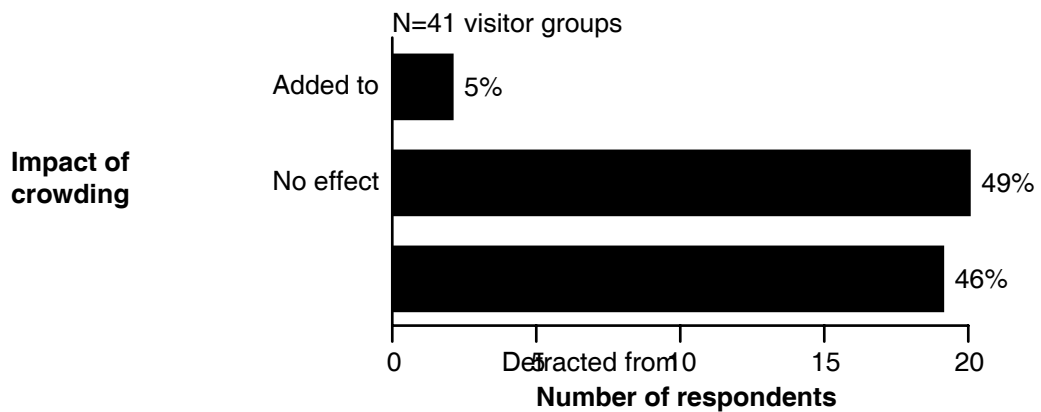
Visitor groups were then asked the impact crowding had on their park experience. Most visitor groups (49%) answered “no effect,” and 46% said crowding had “detracted from” their park experience (see Figure 18).



**Figure 16: Visitor opinions about crowding**



**Figure 17: Time of day crowding visitors felt crowded**



**Figure 18: Impact of crowding**

## Opinions about safety

Visitor groups were asked if they felt prepared for common safety situations encountered at the parks. Most (88%) responded that they felt prepared for the common safety situations that were encountered, as shown in Figure 19.

The visitor groups who responded "no" were then asked how they would have prepared for a safer visit. Comments included "would have brought/drank more water," "learn more about tidal currents" and "life jackets for children."

Visitor groups were asked what common safety situations they encountered in the parks. Common visitor group responses included "sun," "heat," and "tide/tidal currents" (see Table 15).

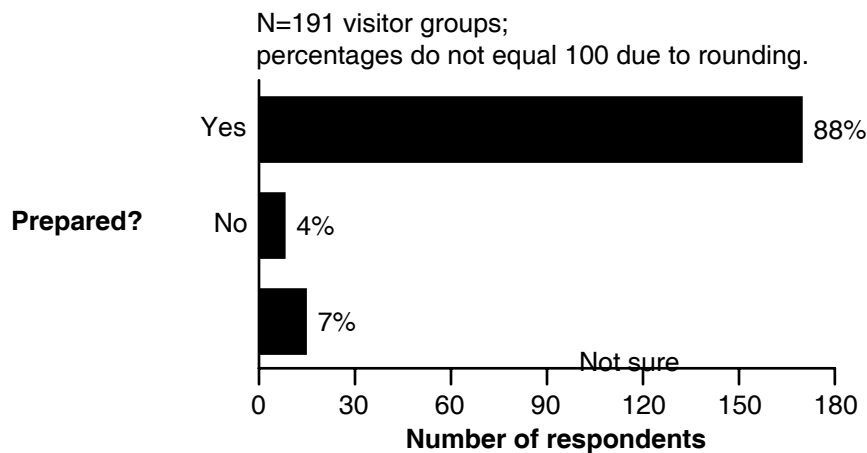


Figure 19: Visitor preparedness for common safety situations

---

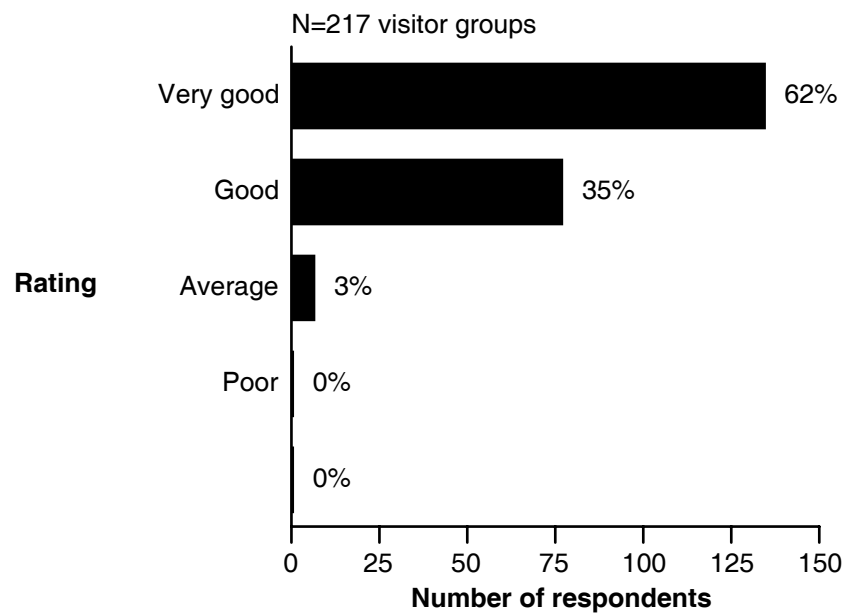
**Table 15: Common safety situations encountered at Fort Raleigh NHS**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>First safety situation N=33</b>	
Sun	12
Heat	12
Insects/mosquitoes	2
Construction/park maintenance	2
Other comments	5
<b>Second safety situation N=13</b>	
Insects/mosquitoes	6
Heat	3
Other comments	4
<b>Third safety situation N=4</b>	
Sun	4

---

**Overall quality**

Visitor groups were asked "Overall, how would you rate the quality of the visitor services provided to you and your group at the Fort Raleigh NHS during this visit?" Most visitor group (97%) rated the overall park quality "very good" or "good" and none of visitor groups rated "poor" or "very poor" for overall quality of Fort Raleigh NHS, as shown in Figure 20.



**Figure 20: Overall quality of visitor services provided this visit**

Visitor groups were asked, "What did you like most about your visit to the Outer Bank Group parks?" Eighty-nine percent of visitor groups (199 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 16 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

### What visitors liked most

**Table 16: What visitors liked most about Outer Banks Group parks**

N=284 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Rangers friendly/helpful/knowledgeable	8
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
'Lost Colony' play	30
History/historic sites	25
Rangers/ranger presentations	22
Informative/educational	20
Movie	12
Other comment	1
<b>FACILITIES &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	
Elizabethan Gardens	20
Cleanliness	16
Lighthouses	16
Wright Brothers Monument	8
Fort Raleigh NHS	7
Trail/layout	5
Coquina Beach	6
Ocracoke Island	4
Camping	2
Flight path	2
Bird refuge	2
Restrooms	2
Parking	2
Other comments	13
<b>POLICY</b>	
Beach access	2
No fees	2
Other comments	3

---

**Table 16 (continued)**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Beaches/dunes	14
Quiet/solitude	11
Naturalness/lack of development	10
Ocean activities	3
Fishing	3
Ocean	3
Other comments	1
<b>GENERAL IMPRESSIONS</b>	
Beauty/scenery	6
Other comments	3

---



Visitor groups were asked, "What did you like least about your visit to the Outer Bank Group parks?" Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups (133 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 17 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

### **What visitors liked least**

#### **Table 17: What visitors liked least**

N=135 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
---------	---------------------------

---

**PERSONNEL**

Do not have staff around to answer question	3
Park staff attitude	2

**INTERPRETIVE SERVICES**

Fort Raleigh-disappointing/expected more	9
Wright Brothers-disappointing/expected more	5
Lost Colony	3
Did not have settlement recreation	2
Other comments	7

**FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE**

Cape Hatteras Lighthouse closed	12
Wright Brothers Visitor Center under construction	10
Fort Raleigh Visitor Center did not open before the play	4
Okracoke Lighthouse hard to find	3
Okracoke parking	3
Confusing road signage	3
Not enough restrooms	2
No shaded area to rest	2
Lack of facilities for disabled persons (hearing aid, closed caption)	2
Did not recreate the settlement	2
Lack of sign for Freedman's Colony Marker	2
Other comments	12

**POLICY**

Paying to enter Elizabethan Gardens	4
Too much development	3
Overcrowded	2
Other comments	4

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Prickly pear/sand burs/cactus	3
-------------------------------	---

**GENERAL IMPRESSIONS**

Heat	14
Insects	5
Wait at ferry terminal	4
Traffic	3
Other comments	5

---

Visitor groups were asked, "If you were a manager planning for the future of Fort Raleigh NHS, what would you propose?" Fifty-four percent of visitor groups (120 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 18 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

## Planning for the future

---

### Table 18: Planning for the future

N=142 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
---------	---------------------------

**PERSONNEL**

Maintain professionalism and friendliness of staff	3
Comment	1

**INTERPRETIVE SERVICES**

Reenact lives of Fort Raleigh	11
Need more artifact/replica	9
Provide more scientific facts about history	8
More children's activities	6
More exhibits	6
Visitor center should open before the play for people to learn	4
Upgrade visitor center	4
Better posting of closed/available attractions	3
Advertise for Junior Ranger programs	2
Provide extensive ranger-led tour	2
Add evening program	2
Other comments	7

**FACILITIES & MAINTENANCE**

Keep maintaining park facilities	5
Need adequate water supply/more drinking fountains	5
Add hot showers	4
More bathhouse/restroom	4
More shaded areas	3
Better signage	3
Need better gift items at bookstore/sales area	2
Add small store/snack bar	2
Other comments	8

**POLICY**

Allow people to climb the lighthouse	6
Allow reservation for campground	3
Do not allow pet	2
No more commercial development inside park	2
Prevent surrounding development approaching park	2
Keep the park opened longer hour	2
Other comments	4

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Leave it as natural as possible	7
---------------------------------	---

**GENERAL IMPRESSION**

Done excellent job, do not change anything	10
--------------------------------------------	----

Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups (85 groups) wrote additional comments. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 19 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix. 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

**Table 19: Additional comments**

N=115 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Park staff/ranger very friendly and helpful	9
Other comment	1
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Very informative/educational	8
"Lost Colony" play was good	6
Good ranger programs	2
More history at Fort Raleigh	2
Other comments	2
<b>FACILITIES &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	
Very well kept	10
Very clean	4
Good job on restoration of the gardens	2
Other comments	6
<b>POLICY</b>	
Disappointed that visitor center closed so early	2
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Focus park resource on educational program for children	4
Preserve naturalness	3
Other comments	2
<b>GENERAL IMPRESSIONS</b>	
Enjoyed visit	24
Beautiful	8
We love the Outer Banks	7
Will be back	4
Our favorite destination	3
Wish we had more time	2
Other comments	4

**Fort Raleigh NHS Visitor Study  
Additional Analysis  
VSP Report 136**

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

**Additional Analysis**

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

- Sources of information prior to visit
- Quality Fort Raleigh NHS services and facilities
- Hours spent on days of week
- Importance Fort Raleigh NHS had in decision to visit the Outer Banks
- Adequate access to park staff
- Crowded?
- Activities on this trip
- Group type
- Time of day crowded
- Activities on past trips
- Group size
- Effects of crowding
- Three most important reasons for visiting Fort Raleigh NHS
- Guided tour group
- Past visits to Outer Banks Group parks?
- Importance of attributes in planning for park preservation
- Age
- Impact of differences/similarities
- Factors' effect on visitor experience
- Zip code/state of residence
- Feel prepared for common safety situations?
- Use Fort Raleigh NHS services and facilities
- Country of residence (other than U.S.)
- Common safety situations encountered at parks
- Importance Fort Raleigh NHS services and facilities
- Number of visits to Fort Raleigh NHS
- Overall quality of services

Phone/send requests to:

Visitor Services Project, PSU  
College of Natural Resources  
P.O. Box 441133  
University of Idaho

Phone: 208-885-7863  
FAX: 208-885-4261  
Email: littlej@uidaho.edu

Moscow, Idaho 83844-1133





**QUESTIONNAIRES**

---



### Visitor Services Project Publications

Reports 1-6 (pilot studies) are available from the University of Idaho 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)

**1994**

- 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry  
(winter)
  - 65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park  
(spring)
-

### Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)

#### 1994 (continued)

- 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. For more information about the Visitor Services Project at the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit: phone (208) 885-5500

- 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

#### 2002

- 131. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 132. Dry Tortugas National Park
- 133. Pinnacles National Monument
- 134. Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve
- 135. Pipestone National Monument

---

136. Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site and Wright Brother National Monument)

---

NPS D-271

February 2003



Printed on recycled paper



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

**Visitor Services Project**

# **Fort Raleigh National Historic Site**

## **Visitor Study**

**Summer 2002**

### **Appendix**

Jason R. Reed

Margaret Littlejohn

Visitor Services Project

**Report 136**

February 2003

---

---

Jason R. Reed is a VSP research assistant and Margaret Littlejohn is National Park Service VSP Coordinator, based at the Park Studies Unit, Department of Resource Recreation and Tourism, University of Idaho. We thank the staff and volunteers of Fort Raleigh NHS 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 groups were asked, "If you were a manager planning for the future of Fort Raleigh NHS, what would you propose?" Fifty-four percent of visitor groups (120 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 17 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

**Planning for the future**

---

**Table 17: Planning for the future**

N=142 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
---------	---------------------------

---

<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Maintain professionalism and friendliness of staff	3
Comment	1
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Reenact lives of Fort Raleigh	11
Need more artifact/replica	9
Provide more scientific facts about history	8
More children's activities	6
More exhibits	6
Visitor center should open before the play for people to learn	4
Upgrade visitor center	4
Better posting of closed/available attractions	3
Advertise for Junior Ranger programs	2
Provide extensive ranger-led tour	2
Add evening program	2
Other comments	7
<b>FACILITIES &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	
Keep maintaining park facilities	5
Need adequate water supply/more drinking fountains	5
Add hot showers	4
More bathhouse/restroom	4
More shaded areas	3
Better signage	3
Need better gift items at bookstore/sales area	2
Add small store/snack bar	2
Other comments	8
<b>POLICY</b>	
Allow people to climb the lighthouse	6
Allow reservation for campground	3
Do not allow pet	2
No more commercial development inside park	2
Prevent surrounding development approaching park	2
Keep the park opened longer hour	2
Other comments	4
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Leave it as natural as possible	7
<b>GENERAL IMPRESSION</b>	
Done excellent job, do not change anything	10

---

Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups (85 groups) wrote additional comments. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 18 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix. 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

**Table 18: Additional comments**

N=115 comments;  
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Park staff/ranger very friendly and helpful	9
Other comment	1
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Very informative/educational	8
“Lost Colony” play was good	6
Good ranger programs	2
More history at Fort Raleigh	2
Other comments	2
<b>FACILITIES &amp; MAINTENANCE</b>	
Very well kept	10
Very clean	4
Good job on restoration of the gardens	2
Other comments	6
<b>POLICY</b>	
Disappointed that visitor center closed so early	2
<b>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT</b>	
Focus park resource on educational program for children	4
Preserve naturalness	3
Other comments	2
<b>GENERAL IMPRESSIONS</b>	
Enjoyed visit	24
Beautiful	8
We love the Outer Banks	7
Will be back	4
Our favorite destination	3
Wish we had more time	2
Other comments	4