Congaree National Park
Visitor Study

Summer 2011

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRSS/EQD/NRR—2012/565
ON THE COVER
Canoer on Cedar Creek in Congaree National Park
Photograph courtesy of Congaree National Park
Congaree National Park
Visitor Study

Summer 2011

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRSS/EQD/NRR—2012/565

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Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Congaree National Park (NP) visitors during July 27- August 19, 2011. A total of 448 questionnaires was distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 274 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 61.2% response rate.

Group size and type
Forty-one percent of visitor groups consisted of two people. Sixty-three percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.

State or country of residence
United States visitors were from 36 states and Washington, DC and comprised 92% of total visitation during the survey period, with 44% from South Carolina. International visitors were from 13 countries and comprised 8% of total visitation during the survey period.

Frequency of visits
Eighty-three percent of visitors visited the park once in the past 12 months and 76% were visiting the park for the first time in their lives. Eleven percent had visited 4 or more times in their lifetime.

Age, ethnicity, race, and educational level
Thirty-four percent of visitors were ages 46-65 years, 21% were 21-35 years old, 12% were ages 10 years or younger, and 4% were 71 or older. Three percent were Hispanic or Latino. Most visitors (90%) were White and 5% were Asian. Forty-two percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 31% had a bachelor’s degree.

Physical conditions
Seven percent of visitor groups had members with physical conditions affecting their ability to access or participate in activities and services.

Awareness of park programs
Forty-seven percent of visitor groups were aware, prior to their visit, of the various programs offered at the park.

Knowledge of wilderness
Forty-eight percent of the respondents said they were aware of congressionally designated wilderness before their visit to the park. Fifty-six percent of visitor groups said they learned about wilderness while at the park.

Non-native species management
Forty-five percent of the respondents were aware of the policy regarding removal of non-native species. Most visitor groups (88%) were in support of removal of non-native plants and 75% were supportive of removal of non-native animals.

Scientific research and education in the park
Thirty-nine percent of visitor groups noticed scientists working or scientific markers or equipment being used in the park. Through programs or products, 33% of the visitors learned about the results of scientific studies conducted at the park.

Information sources
Most visitors (95%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Of those visitors, 53% used the park website and 23% obtained their information from friends/relatives/word of mouth.

Park as destination
Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups said the park was their primary destination and 37% said it was one of several destinations.

Primary reason for visiting the area
Twenty-five percent of visitor groups were residents of the area (within 1-hour drive of the park). The most common primary reason for visiting the park area among nonresident visitor groups was to visit the park (48%).
Executive Summary (continued)

Overnight stays
Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups stayed overnight away from home either in the park or the area. Of those visitors that stayed outside the park (within 1-hour drive), 41% stayed 1 night and 23% stayed 4 or more nights.

Accommodations
Of those visitor groups that stayed outside the park (within 1-hour drive), 72% stayed in a lodge, hotel, motel, vacation rental, or B&B.

Time spent at park and in the area
The average length of stay in the park was 6.3 hours. The average length of stay in the area was 34.6 hours, or 1.4 days.

Activities
The most common visitor activities within the park were walking/hiking (82%), visiting the visitor center (79%), and birdwatching (13%).

Use of park trails
The Elevated Boardwalk Trail was used by 80% of visitor groups and the Low Boardwalk Trail was used by 58%.

Information services and facilities
The information services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were assistance from park staff (91%), park brochure/map (85%), and visitor center exhibits (79%).

Visitor services and facilities
The visitor services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were restrooms (90%), parking areas (86%), and boardwalks (85%).

Protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences
The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences included clean water (95%), native wildlife (91%), clean air (91%), and natural quiet/sounds of nature (89%).

Elements affecting park experience
Twenty-seven percent of visitor groups reported that encountering small numbers of visitors on trails added to their park experience. Airplane noise detracted from 9% of the visitor groups’ experiences.

Expenditures
The average visitor group expenditure (inside and outside the park within a 1-hour drive) was $221. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was $50. The average total expenditure per capita was $98.

Future visit
Sixty-eight percent of visitor groups were interested in canoeing/kayaking on future visits and 48% were interested in owl prowls. Seventy-seven percent of visitor groups were interested in learning more about plants and animals on future visits and 64% were interested in learning more about history.

Overall quality
Most visitor groups (95%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Congaree NP as “very good” or “good.” No visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor.”

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho at (208) 885-7863 or the following website http://www.psu.uidaho.edu.
Acknowledgements

We thank Colleen Kulesza and Mystera Samuelson for compiling the report, Corinne Fenner for overseeing the fieldwork, Lauren Gurniewicz and the staff and volunteers of Congaree NP for assisting with the survey, and David Vollmer and Matthew Strawn for data processing.

About the Authors

Colleen Kulesza is a doctoral candidate at the University of Idaho and a research assistant for the Visitor Services Project. Yen Le, Ph.D., is Assistant Director of the Visitor Services Project at the University of Idaho, and Steven Hollenhorst, Ph.D., is the Director of the Park Studies Unit, Department of Conservation Social Sciences, University of Idaho.
Introduction

This report describes the results of a visitor study at Congaree National Park (NP) in Hopkins, SC, conducted July 27–August 19, 2011 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Park Studies Unit (PSU) at the University of Idaho.

As described in the National Park Service website for Congaree National Park: “Welcome to the largest remnant of old-growth floodplain forest remaining on the continent! Experience champion trees, towering to record size amidst astonishing biodiversity…Congaree National Park houses a museum quality exhibit area within the Harry Hampton Visitor Center, a 2.4 mile boardwalk loop trail, over 20 miles of backwoods hiking trails, canoeing, kayaking, fishing and more…As a designated Wilderness area, International Biosphere Reserve, Globally Important Bird Area, and the largest intact tract of old-growth floodplain forest in North America, Congaree National Park is home to a variety of ongoing research and education projects.” (http://www.nps.gov/cong/index.htm, retrieved October, 2011).

Organization of the Report

This report is organized into three sections.

Section 1: Methods
This section discusses the procedures, limitations, and special conditions that may affect the study results.

Section 2: Results
This section provides a summary for each question in the questionnaire and includes visitor comments to open-ended questions. The presentation of the results of this study does not follow the order of questions in the questionnaire.

Section 3: Appendices
Appendix 1: The Questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire distributed to visitor groups.

Appendix 2: Additional Analysis. A list of sample questions for cross-references and cross comparisons. Comparisons can be analyzed within a park or between parks. Results of additional analyses are not included in this report.

Appendix 3: Decision Rules for Checking Nonresponse Bias. An explanation of how the nonresponse bias was determined.
Presentation of the Results

Results are represented in the form of graphs (see example below), scatter plots, pie charts, tables, and text.

**SAMPLE**

1. The figure title describes the graph’s information.

2. Listed above the graph, the “N” shows the number of individuals or visitor groups responding to the question. If “N” is less than 30, “CAUTION!” is shown on the graph to indicate the results may be unreliable.

   * appears when the total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

   ** appears when total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer choice.

3. Vertical information describes the response categories.

4. Horizontal information shows the number or proportion of responses in each category.

5. In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

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**Figure 14.** Number of visits to the park in past 12 months
Methods

Survey Design and Procedures

Sample size and sampling plan

All VSP questionnaires follow design principles outlined in Don A. Dillman’s book Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method (2007). Using this method, the sample size was calculated based on park visitation statistics of previous years.

Brief interviews were conducted with a systematic, random sample of visitor groups that arrived at the visitor center during July 27–August 19, 2011. Visitors were surveyed between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. During this survey, 466 visitor groups were contacted and 448 of these groups (96.1%) accepted questionnaires. (The average acceptance rate for 250 VSP visitor studies conducted from 1988 through 2011 is 91.5%.) Questionnaires were completed and returned by 274 respondents, resulting in a 61.2% response rate for this study. (The average response rate for the 250 VSP visitor studies is 72.3%.)

Questionnaire design

The Congaree NP questionnaire was developed at a workshop held with park staff to design and prioritize questions. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks while others were customized for Congaree NP. Many questions asked visitors to choose answers from a list of responses, often with an open-ended option, while others were completely open-ended.

No pilot study was conducted to test the Congaree NP questionnaire. However, all questions followed Office Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines and/or were used in previous surveys; thus, the clarity and consistency of the survey instrument have been tested and supported.
Survey procedure

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, they were asked which member (at least 16 years old) had the next birthday. The individual with the next birthday was selected to complete the questionnaire for the group. An interview, lasting approximately two minutes, was conducted with that person to determine group size, group type, age of the member completing the questionnaire, and how this visit to the park fit into their group’s travel plans. These individuals were asked their names, addresses, and telephone numbers or email addresses in order to mail a reminder/thank-you postcard and follow-ups. Participants were asked to complete the questionnaire after their visit, and return it in the Business Reply Mail envelope provided.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank-you postcard was mailed to all participants who provided a valid mailing address (see Table 1). Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey. Seven weeks after the survey, a second round of replacement questionnaires was mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires.

Table 1. Follow-up mailing distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round 1 Mailing</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postcards</td>
<td>August 24, 2011</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; replacement</td>
<td>September 8, 2011</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; replacement</td>
<td>September 28, 2011</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>141</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>U.S.</th>
<th>International</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>Postcards</td>
<td>September 6, 2011</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; replacement</td>
<td>September 20, 2011</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; replacement</td>
<td>October 10, 2011</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data analysis

Returned questionnaires were coded and the responses were processed using custom and standard statistical software applications—Statistical Analysis Software® (SAS), and a custom designed FileMaker Pro® application. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data; responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized. Double-key data entry validation was performed on numeric and text entry variables and the remaining checkbox (bubble) variables were read by optical mark recognition (OMR) software.
Limitations

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

1. This was a self-administered survey. Respondents completed the questionnaire after the visit, which may have resulted in poor recall. Thus, it is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflected actual behavior.

2. The data reflect visitor use patterns at the selected sites during the study period of July 27–August 19, 2011. The results present a ‘snapshot in time’ and 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, table, or text.

4. Occasionally, there may be inconsistencies in the results. Inconsistencies arise from missing data or incorrect answers (due to misunderstood directions, carelessness, or poor recall of information). Therefore, refer to both the percentage and N (number of individuals or visitor groups) when interpreting the results.

Special conditions

The weather during the survey period was very hot with heat advisories for at least 10 days. There were only a couple days with significant cloud cover and brief storms. No special events occurred in the area that would have affected the type and amount of visitation to the park.
Checking nonresponse bias

Five variables were used to check nonresponse bias: participant age, group size, group type, park as destination, and participant proximity from home to the park. All variables were found to be significantly different between respondents and nonrespondents (see Tables 2 - 5). The results indicate some biases occurred due to nonresponse. Visitors at younger age ranges (especially 35 and younger), visitors traveling with friends, visitors who indicated park was the primary reason to visit the area, and visitors came from local area (within 1-hour drive) were underrepresented in the survey results. See Appendix 3 for more details of the nonresponse bias checking procedures.

Table 2. Comparison of respondents and nonrespondents by average age and group size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Nonrespondents</th>
<th>p-value (t-test)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Age (years)</td>
<td>47.40 (N=274)</td>
<td>37.83 (N=174)</td>
<td>&lt;0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group size</td>
<td>2.87 (N=272)</td>
<td>2.69 (N=167)</td>
<td>0.271</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table 3. Comparison of respondents and nonrespondents by group type

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Nonrespondents</th>
<th>p-value (chi-square)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Alone</td>
<td>41 (15%)</td>
<td>29 (17%)</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>170 (63%)</td>
<td>96 (52%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>32 (12%)</td>
<td>38 (22%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and friends</td>
<td>27 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2 (1%)</td>
<td>5 (3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Comparison of respondents and nonrespondents by primary destination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Nonrespondents</th>
<th>p-value (chi-square)</th>
</tr>
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<td>Park as primary destination</td>
<td>142 (53%)</td>
<td>116 (67%)</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park as one of several</td>
<td>111 (13%)</td>
<td>52 (30%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destinations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unplanned visit</td>
<td>16 (6%)</td>
<td>4 (2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5. Comparison of respondents and nonrespondents by distance from home to park

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Nonrespondents</th>
<th>p-value (chi-square)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within 50 miles</td>
<td>90 (33%)</td>
<td>83 (49%)</td>
<td>0.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-100 miles</td>
<td>29 (11%)</td>
<td>14 (8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101-200 miles</td>
<td>13 (5%)</td>
<td>9 (5%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>201 miles or more</td>
<td>129 (48%)</td>
<td>55 (32%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International visitors</td>
<td>9 (3%)</td>
<td>10 (6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results

Group and Visitor Characteristics

Visitor group size

**Question 19b**
On this visit, how many people were in your personal group, including yourself?

**Results**
- 41% of visitor groups consisted of 2 people (see Figure 1).
- 32% were in groups of 3 or 4.

![Figure 1. Visitor group size](#)

Visitor group type

**Question 19a**
On this visit, what kind of personal group (not guided tour/school/other organized group) were you with?

**Results**
- 63% of visitor groups consisted of family members (see Figure 2).
- “Other” group type (1%) was:
  - Hiking group

![Figure 2. Visitor group type](#)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Visitors with organized groups

**Question 18a**
On this visit, were you and your personal group with a commercial guided tour group?

**Results**
- 1% of visitor groups were with a commercial guided tour group (see Figure 3).

**Figure 3.** Visitors with a commercial guided tour group

**Question 18b**
On this visit, were you and your personal group with a school/educational group?

**Results**
- 3% of visitor groups were with a school/educational group (see Figure 4).

**Figure 4.** Visitors with a school/educational group

**Question 18c**
On this visit, were you and your personal group with an "other" organized group (scouts, work, church, etc.)?

**Results**
- 7% of visitor groups were with an "other" organized group (see Figure 5).

**Figure 5.** Visitors with an "other" organized group

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Question 18d
If you were with one of these organized groups, how many people, including yourself, were in this group?

Results – Interpret with CAUTION!
• Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. Organized group size

N=14 visitor groups*

11 or more 43%
6-10 29%
1-5 29%

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**United States visitors by state of residence**

**Question 20b**
For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your state of residence?

**Note:** Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- U.S. visitors were from 36 states and Washington, DC and comprised 92% of total visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 44% of U.S. visitors came from South Carolina (see Table 6 and Figure 7).
- 7% came from Florida and 5% were from California.
- Smaller proportions came from 20 other states and Washington, DC.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of visitors</th>
<th>Percent of U.S. visitors N=648 Individuals*</th>
<th>Percent of total visitors N=706 Individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 other states and Washington, DC</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Visitors from South Carolina and adjacent states by county of residence

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

Results

• Visitors from South Carolina and adjacent states were from 41 counties and comprised 52% of the total U.S. visitation to the park during the survey period.

• 37% came from Richland County, SC (see Table 7).

• 19% Came from Lexington County, SC.

• Small proportions of visitors came from 39 other counties in South Carolina and adjacent states.

Table 7. Visitors from South Carolina and adjacent states by county of residence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County, State</th>
<th>Number of visitors</th>
<th>Percent*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richland, SC</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lexington, SC</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sumter, SC</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spartanburg, SC</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mecklenburg, NC</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulton, GA</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg, SC</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florence, SC</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horry, SC</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston, SC</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dorchester, SC</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kershaw, SC</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berkeley, SC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cobb, GA</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenville, SC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pickens, SC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake, NC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiken, SC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carroll, GA</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherokee, SC</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 other counties</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**International visitors by country of residence**

**Question 20b**
For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your country of residence?

**Note:** Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- International visitors were from 13 countries and comprised 8% of total visitation to the park during the survey period.
- 21% of international visitors came from Germany (see Table 8).
- 14% were from France.
- Smaller proportions of international visitors came from 11 other countries.

**Table 8. International visitors by country of residence**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of visitors</th>
<th>Percent of international visitors N=58 Individuals*</th>
<th>Percent of total visitors N=706 individuals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Arab Emirates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukraine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer**
**Number of visits to Congaree NP in past 12 months**

**Question 20c**
For you and your personal group on this visit, how many times have you visited Congaree NP in the past 12 months (including this visit)?

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- 83% of visitors visited the park once in the past 12 months (see Figure 8).
- 8% of visitors visited 2 times.

![Figure 8. Number of visits to park in past 12 months](image)

**Number of lifetime visits to Congaree NP**

**Question 20d**
For you and your personal group on this visit, how many times have you visited Congaree NP in your lifetime (including this visit)?

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- 76% of visitors were visiting the park for the first time (see Figure 9).
- 11% had visited 4 or more times in their lifetime.

![Figure 9. Number of visits to park in lifetime](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Number of visits to other national parks in past 12 months**

**Question 20e**
For you and your personal group on this visit, how many times have you visited other national parks in the past 12 months (including this visit)?

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- 35% of visitors had visited other national parks once in the past 12 months (see Figure 10).
- 25% had visited other national parks 5 or more times.

![Figure 10. Number of visits to other national parks in past 12 months](image)

**Number of lifetime visits to other national parks**

**Question 20f**
For you and your personal group on this visit, how many times have you visited other national parks in your lifetime (including this visit)?

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- 39% of visitors had visited other national parks between 1 and 5 times in their lifetime (see Figure 11).
- 21% had visited other national parks 26 or more times.
- For 15% of visitors, this was their first visit to any national park.

![Figure 11. Number of visits to other national parks in lifetime](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Visitor age

**Question 20a**
For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your current age?

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- Visitor ages ranged from 1 to 86 years.
- 34% of visitors were 46 to 65 years old (see Figure 12).
- 21% were 21-35 years old.
- 20% were 15 years old or younger.
- 4% were 71 years or older.

![Figure 12. Visitor age](image_url)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Visitor ethnicity

**Question 23a**
Are you or members of your personal group Hispanic or Latino?

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- 3% of visitors were Hispanic or Latino (see Figure 13).

![Figure 13. Visitors who were Hispanic or Latino](image)

Visitor race

**Question 23b**
What is your race? What is the race of each member of your personal group?

Note: Response was limited to 7 members from each visitor group.

**Results**
- 90% of visitors were White (see Figure 14).
- 5% were Asian.
- Less than 1% were Black or African American, American Indian or Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.
- 2% were Multiple races.

![Figure 14. Visitor race](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Visitors with physical conditions affecting access/participation

Question 22a
Does anyone in your personal group have mobility or other physical impairments?

Results
- 7% of visitor groups had members with mobility or other physical conditions (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. Visitor groups that had members with mobility or other physical conditions

Question 22b
If YES, did anyone in your personal group have a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services?

Results – Interpret with CAUTION!
- Not enough visitor groups responded to provide reliable results (see Figure 16).

Figure 16. Visitor groups that had a member with physical conditions affecting access to services or participation in park activities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Respondent level of education**

**Question 21**
For you only, what is the highest level of education you have completed?

**Results**
- 42% of respondents had a graduate degree (see Figure 17).
- 31% of respondents had a bachelor’s degree.

*Figure 17. Respondent level of education*

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer*
**Respondent household income**

**Question 25a**
Which category best represents your annual household income?

**Results**
- 53% had an income between $50,000 and $149,999 (see Figure 18).

![Figure 18. Respondent household income](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$200,000 or more</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000-$199,999</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$149,999</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$34,999</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than $24,999</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not wish to answer</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**Respondent household size**

**Question 25b**
How many people are in your household?

**Results**
- 37% of respondents had 2 people in their household (see Figure 19).
- 21% had 4 people.

![Figure 19. Number of people in household](chart)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of people</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 or more</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Awareness of park programs**

**Question 2**
Prior to your visit, were you and your personal group aware of programs (ranger-led walks, canoe trips, presentations, school group tours, etc.) offered in Congaree NP?

**Results**
- 47% of visitor groups were aware of programs offered at the park (see Figure 20).

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Park name change and decision to visit**

**Question 3a**
In 2003, Congaree Swamp National Monument became Congaree NP. Did this name change have any effect on your decision to visit?

**Results**
- 18% of respondents said their decision to visit was affected by the name change (see Figure 21).

**Question 3b**
If YES, what effect did it have? (Open-ended)

- 46 respondents commented on the effect of the park’s name change (see Table 9.)

![Figure 21. Respondents for whom the name change affected decision to visit](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trying to visit all national parks</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being a national park encouraged/influenced us to visit</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More likely to visit a national park than a national monument</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always visit a national park if in the area</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater interest if designated as a national park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I love national parks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National park prestige</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit prompted by name change</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not want to visit a swamp</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn’t know there was a national park in South Carolina</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excited to hear about a new national park</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact that it is a national park</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Found it in list of national parks</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater importance if designated as a national park</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had never heard of it</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looked for national parks near our route</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More likely to visit</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds like more to do</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sounds more official</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer**
Knowledge of congressionally designated wilderness

Question 4a
Prior to your visit, were you aware of what congressionally designated wilderness is?

Results
• 48% of respondents were familiar with congressionally designated wilderness (see Figure 22).

![Figure 22](image)

Figure 22. Respondents who were aware of what congressionally designated wilderness is

Question 4b
If NO, did you and your personal group learn about congressionally designated wilderness during your visit?

Results
• 56% of visitor groups said they learned about congressionally designated wilderness at Congaree NP during their visit (see Figure 23).

![Figure 23](image)

Figure 23. Visitor groups that learned about congressionally designated wilderness at park

Park policy to remove non-native species

Question 5
The National Park Service has a policy to control or remove non-native plants and animals from within park boundaries. Non-native species occupy an area that is not part of their natural, historic range, and often originated from another continent or region. Many of these species are invasive and damage park resources. Were you aware of this policy prior to your visit to Congaree NP?

Results
• 45% of respondents were aware of the policy to remove non-native species (see Figure 24).

![Figure 24](image)

Figure 24. Respondents aware of park policy regarding non-native species

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Support for policy to remove non-native species

Question 6
Would you and your personal group be supportive of the control and removal of non-native species at Congaree NP?

Results
- 88% of visitor groups were supportive of the removal of non-native plants (see Figure 25).
- 75% were supportive of the removal of non-native animals (see Figure 26).

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Awareness of research and education in the park

Question 15a
Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware that Congaree NP is the home to the Old-Growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center, one of 21 centers nationwide?

Results
- 22% of visitor groups were aware of the Old-Growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center before visit (see Figure 27).

Question 15b
Did you and your personal group notice any scientists, scientific markers, or scientific equipment at work while you were in the park?

Results
- 39% of visitor groups noticed scientists, scientific markers, or scientific equipment at work in the park (see Figure 28).

Question 15c
Did you and your personal group – through programs and products – learn about actual results of scientific studies at the park?

Results
- 33% of visitor groups learned about research results through programs and products while in the park (see Figure 29).

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Trip/Visit Characteristics and Preferences

Information sources prior to visit

Question 1
Prior to your visit, how did you and your personal group obtain information about Congaree NP?

Results

- 95% of visitor groups obtained information about Congaree NP prior to their visit (see Figure 30).
- As shown in Figure 31, among those visitor groups that obtained information about Congaree NP prior to their visit, the most common sources were:
  - 53% Park website
  - 23% Friends/relatives/word of mouth
  - 20% Previous visits
- Other websites used (7%) were:
  - Google
  - Google maps
  - Friends of Congaree Swamp
  - Los Angeles Times
  - Mapquest
  - National Geographic
  - Noca.org
  - Parkstamps.org
  - Wikipedia
  - www.lincon.com/nps/nps_sites.htm
- Other sources (8%) were:
  - Book
  - Boy scouts
  - Big T's Barbecue
  - GPS system
  - Junior Ranger program
  - National Parks by National Geographic
  - National park passport program
  - Outfitters

Figure 30. Visitor groups that obtained information prior to visit

Figure 31. Sources of information

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Park as destination**

*Question from on-site interview*
A two-minute interview was conducted with each individual selected to complete the questionnaire. During the interview, the question was asked: “How did this visit to Congaree NP fit into your personal group’s travel plans?”

*Results*
- 59% of visitor groups indicated that the park was their primary destination (see Figure 32).
- 37% said the visit to Congaree NP was one of several destinations.

*Figure 32. How visit to park fit into visitor groups’ travel plans*

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer*
**Alternate recreation site**

**Question 24a**
On this trip, if you and your personal group had not chosen to visit Congaree NP, what other recreation site would you have visited instead? (Open-ended)

**Results**
- 62% of visitor groups (N=170) responded to this question.
- Table 10 lists the places that visitor groups indicated as potential alternate sites they would have visited instead of Congaree NP.

**Table 10. Alternate recreation sites (N=191 comments)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A South Carolina state park</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Murray</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure/don't know</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverbanks Zoo</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Smoky Mountains National Park</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harbison State Forest</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sesquicentennial State Park, SC</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Sumter</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverfront Walk</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoo</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninety-Six National Historic Site</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plantation (within SC)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poinsett State Park, SC</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City parks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Beidler Forest</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Museum</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other national parks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saluda Shoals Park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Capitol</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Museum in Columbia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other locations</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Question 24b**
How far is this alternative site from your home?

**Results**
- 55% of the visitor groups indicated that they would travel up to 50 miles from their home to visit the alternate site (see Figure 33).
- 31% would travel 201 or more miles.

![Figure 33. Number of miles to alternate recreation site](#)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Primary reason for visiting the park area**

**Question 7**

On this trip, what was the primary reason that you and your personal group came to the Congaree NP area (within 1-hour drive of the park)?

**Results**

- 25% of visitor groups were residents of the area (see Figure 34).

- As shown in Figure 35, the primary reasons for visiting the area (within a 1-hour drive of the park) among nonresident visitor groups were:

  48% Visit the park  
  16% Traveling through – unplanned visit  
  16% Visit friends/relatives in the area

- Other primary reasons (9%) were:

  Attend a MeetUp hike  
  Basic training graduation  
  Bringing son to college at USC  
  Canoe trip  
  Expose students to research topics  
  Five Points  
  On our vacation itinerary  
  Resident - 1.5 hours away  
  Traveling through - planned visit

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding  
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer*
**Number of vehicles**

**Question 12**
On this visit, how many vehicles did you and your personal group use to arrive at the park?

**Results**
- 93% of visitor groups used 1 vehicle to arrive at the park (see Figure 36).

![Figure 36. Number of vehicles used to arrive at the park](image)

**Overnight stays**

**Question 9a**
On this trip, did you and your personal group stay overnight away from your permanent residence either inside Congaree NP or within the nearby area (within 1-hour drive of the park)?

**Results**
- 38% of visitor groups stayed overnight away from home either in the park or the area (see Figure 37).

![Figure 37. Visitor groups that stayed overnight in the park or within a 1-hour drive of the park](image)

**Question 9b**
If YES, how many nights did you and your personal group spend inside the park?

**Results – Interpret with CAUTION!**
- Not enough visitor groups responded to provide reliable results (see Figure 38).

![Figure 38. Number of nights spent inside the park](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Question 9c
If YES, how many nights did you and your personal group spend outside the park within a 1-hour drive?

Results
• 41% of visitor groups stayed 1 night outside the park within a 1-hour drive of the park (see Figure 39).
• 36% stayed 2 or 3 nights.

Figure 39. Number of nights spent in the area outside the park (within a 1-hour drive of the park).

Accommodations used inside the park

Question 9b
In which types of accommodations did you and your personal group spend the night(s) inside the park?

Results - Interpret with CAUTION!
• Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 40).
• Table 11 shows the number of nights spent in accommodations inside the park.

Figure 40. Accommodations used inside the park

Note: Some visitor groups indicated they used an accommodation without specifying the number of nights; therefore, the N in Figure 40 and in Table 11 is different.

Table 11. Number of nights spent in accommodations inside the park – CAUTION!
(N=number of visitor groups that specified the number of nights in each type of accommodation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Number of nights (%)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV/trailer camping</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent camping</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backcountry camping</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Accommodations used outside the park

Question 9c
In which types of accommodations did you and your personal group spend the night(s) outside park within 1-hour drive?

Results
- 72% of visitor groups stayed overnight in a lodge, hotel, motel, cabin, rented condo/home, or bed & breakfast (see Figure 41).
- Table 12 shows the number of nights spent in accommodations outside the park within a 1-hour drive of the park.
- “Other” accommodations (1%) were not specified.

Figure 41. Accommodations used outside the park within a 1-hour drive

Note: Some visitor groups indicated they used an accommodation without specifying the number of nights; therefore, the N in Figure 41 and in Table 12 is different.

Table 12. Number of nights spent in accommodations outside the park within a 1-hour drive
(N=number of visitor groups that specified the number of nights spent in each type of accommodation)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accommodation</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4 or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lodge, hotel, motel, cabin, rented condo/home, or</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bed &amp; breakfast</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV/trailer camping – CAUTION!</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tent camping – CAUTION!</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backcountry camping – CAUTION!</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal seasonal residence – CAUTION!</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residence of friends or relatives – CAUTION!</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other – CAUTION!</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Length of stay in the park**

**Question 13b**
On this visit, how long did you and your personal group spend visiting Congaree NP?

**Results**

**Number of hours if less than 24**
- 53% spent 3-4 hours in the park (see Figure 42).
- 33% of visitor groups spent up to 2 hours.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups who spent less than 24 hours was 3.2 hours.

**Number of days if 24 hours or more**
- Interpret with CAUTION! Not enough visitor groups responded to provide reliable results (see Figure 43).

**Average length of stay for all visitors**
- The average length of stay in the park for all visitor groups was 6.3 hours.

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer*
**Length of stay in the park area**

**Question 13a**
How long did you and your personal group stay in the Congaree NP area (within 1-hour drive of the park)?

**Results**
- 25% of visitor groups were residents of the area within a 1-hour drive of the park (see Figure 44).

**Number of hours if less than 24**
- 44% spent 3-4 hours in the park area (see Figure 45).
- 31% of visitor groups spent 1-2 hours.
- 14% spent 7 or more hours.
- The average length of stay in the area for visitor groups who spent less than 24 hours was 4.7 hours.

**Number of days if 24 hours or more**
- 48% of visitor groups spent 1-2 days in the park area (see Figure 46).
- 29% spent 3-4 days.
- 22% spent 5 or more days.
- The average length of stay for visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more was 4.3 days.

**Average length of stay for all visitors**
- The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 34.6 hours, or 1.4 days.

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
### Sites visited in the Congaree NP area

#### Question 8
On this visit, which sites did you and your personal group visit in the Congaree NP area (within 1-hour drive of the park)?

- As shown in Figure 47, the sites most commonly visited in the Congaree NP area were:
  - 26% University of South Carolina
  - 25% State Capitol
  - 18% Riverbanks Zoo

- The least visited site was:
  - 2% National Advocacy Center

- “Other” sites (25%) visited are shown in Table 13.

![Figure 47](image)

**Figure 47.** Sites visited in the park area (within a 1-hour drive of the park)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Table 13. “Other” sites visited in the park area (N=46 comments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Charleston</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Canal Park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia Riverfront Park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camden</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clemson Sandhill Research and Education Center</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columbia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darlington Raceway</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edisto River</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five Point</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Sumter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenway Riverwalk</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical churches in Columbia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunley</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayaking on trail</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Marion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miyabi Restaurant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Myrtle Beach</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Guard Museum</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nickelodeon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninety-Six National Historic Site</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orangeburg</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santee National Wildlife Refuge</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina farmers market</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tony's Restaurant</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Activities within the park**

**Question 11**
On this visit, in which activities did you and your personal group participate within Congaree NP?

**Results**
- As shown in Figure 48, the most common activities in which visitor groups participated were:
  - 82% Walking/hiking
  - 79% Visiting the visitor center
  - 13% Birdwatching
  - 13% Nature study
- “Other” activities (11%) were:
  - Drawing
  - Eating pawpaws
  - Four-hour guided tour
  - Junior Ranger program
  - National park passport stamp
  - Photography
  - Plan future trip
  - View park film
  - View plants
  - View wildlife

**Figure 48.** Activities on this visit

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Use of park trails

Question 10a
On this visit to Congaree NP, did you and your personal group walk/canoe/kayak any park trails?

Results
- 93% of visitor groups used a trail in Congaree NP (see Figure 49).

Question 10b
If YES, which of the following trails did you and your personal group walk/canoe/kayak on this visit?

Results
- As shown in Figure 50, of those visitor groups that used park trails, the most commonly used trails were:
  - 80% Elevated Boardwalk Trail
  - 58% Low Boardwalk Trail
  - 23% Weston Lake Loop Trail
- The least used trail was the Kingsnake Trail (2%).
- Other trails (2%) were:
  - Champion tree trail
  - Wise Lake

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Ratings of Services, Facilities, Attributes, Resources, and Elements

**Information services and facilities used**

**Question 16a**
Please indicate all of the information services and facilities that you or your personal group used at Congaree NP during this visit.

**Results**
- As shown in Figure 51, the most common information services and facilities used by visitor groups were:
  - 91% Assistance from park staff
  - 85% Park brochure/map
  - 79% Visitor center exhibits
- The least used service/facility was ranger-led talks/programs/walks (10%).

![Bar chart showing the use of various information services and facilities](chart.png)

**Figure 51.** Information services and facilities used

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Importance ratings of information services and facilities

Question 16b
For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.

1=Not important
2=Somewhat important
3=Moderately important
4=Very important
5=Extremely important

Results
- Figure 52 shows the combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of information services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- The services and facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were:
  - 90% Park brochure/map
  - 87% Park interpretive pamphlets
  - 85% Assistance from park staff
- Table 14 shows the importance ratings of each service and facility.
- The service/facility receiving the highest “not important” rating that was rated by 30 or more visitor groups was:
  - 3% Visitor center bookstore sales items

![Figure 52. Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of information services and facilities](image-url)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Table 14. Importance ratings of information services and facilities
(N=number of visitor groups that rated each service and facility)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/facility</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Moderately important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from park staff</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from park volunteers</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin boards</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Ranger program - CAUTION!</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park brochure/map</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park interpretive pamphlets</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park newspaper Boardwalk Talk</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park website (nps.gov/cong)</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger-led talks/programs/walks - CAUTION!</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger-guided canoe tours - CAUTION!</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor center bookstore sales items</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor center videos/films/movies</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor center exhibits</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Quality ratings of information services and facilities

Question 16c
For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their quality from 1-5.

1=Very poor
2=Poor
3=Average
4=Good
5=Very good

Results
- Figure 53 shows the combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings of information services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- The services and facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings were:
  - 99% Assistance from park staff
  - 97% Assistance from park volunteers
  - 93% Park interpretive pamphlets
  - 91% Visitor center exhibits
- Table 15 shows the quality ratings of each service and facility.
- No visitor groups rated any information services or facilities as “very poor.”

Figure 53. Combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings of information services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Table 15. Quality ratings of information services and facilities
(N=number of visitor groups that rated each service and facility)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/facility</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from park staff</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance from park volunteers</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulletin boards</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Ranger program - CAUTION!</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park brochure/map</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park interpretive pamphlets</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park newspaper Boardwalk Talk</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park website (nps.gov/cong)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger-led talks/programs/walks - CAUTION!</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger-guided canoe tours - CAUTION!</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor center bookstore sales items</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor center videos/films/movies</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor center exhibits</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Mean scores of importance and quality ratings of information services and facilities

- Figures 54 and 55 show the mean scores of importance and quality ratings of information and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.

- All information services and facilities were rated above average.

Figure 54. Mean scores of importance and quality ratings of information services and facilities

Figure 55. Detail of Figure 54

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
*total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Question 17a
Please indicate all of the visitor services and facilities that you or your personal group used at Congaree NP during this visit.

Results
- As shown in Figure 56, the most common visitor services and facilities used by visitor groups were:
  - 90% Restrooms
  - 86% Parking areas
  - 85% Boardwalks
- The least used service/facility was:
  - 1% Backcountry camping

![Figure 56. Visitor services and facilities used](image)

*|total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**|total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Importance ratings of visitor services and facilities

Question 17b
For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.

1=Not important
2=Somewhat important
3=Moderately important
4=Very important
5=Extremely important

Results

- Figure 57 shows the combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.

- The visitor services and facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings were:
  - 96% Trails
  - 90% Restrooms
  - 87% Park directional signs
  - 86% Boardwalks

- Table 16 shows the importance ratings of each service and facility.

- The services/facilities receiving the highest “not important” ratings that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups were:
  - 2% Boardwalks
  - 2% Parking areas

Figure 57. Combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of visitor services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Table 16. Importance ratings of visitor services and facilities
(N=number of visitor groups that rated each service and facility)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/facility</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Moderately important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access for people with disabilities</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backcountry camping</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardwalks</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campgrounds</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe launches</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directional signs outside of park</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park directional signs</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking areas</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic areas</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Quality ratings of visitor services and facilities

**Question 17c**
For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their quality from 1-5.

1 = Very poor
2 = Poor
3 = Average
4 = Good
5 = Very good

**Results**
- Figure 58 shows the combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings of visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.

- The services and facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” ratings were:
  - 97% Boardwalks
  - 96% Trails
  - 96% Restrooms

- Table 17 shows the quality ratings of each service and facility.

- The service/facility receiving the highest “very poor” rating that was rated by 30 or more visitor groups was:
  - 4% Directional signs outside park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Table 17. Quality ratings of visitor services and facilities  
(N=number of visitor groups that rated each service and facility)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service/facility</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access for people with disabilities -</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CAUTION!</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Backcountry camping - <strong>CAUTION!</strong></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardwalks</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campgrounds - <strong>CAUTION!</strong></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe launches - <strong>CAUTION!</strong></td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directional signs outside of park</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park directional signs</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking areas</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnic areas</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restrooms</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>&lt;1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding  
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Mean scores of importance and quality ratings of visitor services and facilities

- Figures 59 and 60 show the mean scores of importance and quality ratings of visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.

- All visitor services and facilities were rated above average.

Figure 59. Mean scores of importance and quality of visitor services and facilities

Figure 60. Detail of Figure 59

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Importance of protecting park resources and attributes**

**Question 14**

It is the National Park Service’s responsibility to protect Congaree NP natural, scenic, and cultural resources while at the same time providing for public enjoyment. How important is protection of the following resources/attributes in the park to you and your personal group?

1 = Not important
2 = Somewhat important
3 = Moderately important
4 = Very important
5 = Extremely important

**Results**

- As shown in Figure 61, the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park resources and attributes included:

  - 95% Clean water
  - 91% Native wildlife
  - 91% Clean air

- Table 18 shows the importance ratings of each resource/attribute

- The resource/attribute receiving the highest “not important” rating was:

  - 7% Clear night sky

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Table 18. Visitor rating of importance of protecting park resources and attributes
(N=number of visitors that rated each resource/attribute)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource/attribute</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Moderately important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clean air (visibility)</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean water</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear night sky (star gazing)</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural history (photographs/artifacts/oral histories)</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated wilderness/backcountry</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational opportunities</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic buildings/archeological sites</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native plants</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native wildlife</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural quiet/sounds of nature</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking availability</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational opportunities</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic views</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitude</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Elements that affected park experience**

**Question 29**
Please indicate how the following elements may have affected you and your personal group’s park experience during this visit to Congaree NP?

**Results**
- 32% of visitor groups experienced airplane noise, and of those, 28% felt it detracted from their park experience.
- 78% of visitor groups experienced small numbers of visitors on trails, of which 34% felt this added to their park experience.

- Other elements that detracted from visitors’ experiences included:
  - Chiggers
  - Exotic plants/fire ants
  - Extremely hot weather
  - Litter on boardwalks
  - Unspecific signage about dogs on trails
  - Slippery boardwalks
  - Spiders and spider webs on trail
  - Storm that canceled canoe trip
  - Trail numbering - boardwalk

**Table 19. Effects of different elements on the park experience**

(N=number of visitors that rated each element)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Total N</th>
<th>n₁</th>
<th>Detracted from</th>
<th>No effect</th>
<th>Added to</th>
<th>n₂</th>
<th>% of total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airplane noise</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile noise</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>＜1</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunshots from neighboring lands</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise from park staff activities</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train noise</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other visitors’ activities</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small number of visitors on trails</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large number of visitors on trails</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>＜1</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small number of visitors canoeing/kayaking</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large number of visitors canoeing/kayaking</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of wild pigs</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Expenditures

Total expenditures inside and outside the park

Question 26
For you and your personal group, please estimate all expenditures for the items listed below for this visit to Congaree NP and the surrounding area (within 1-hour drive of the park).

Results
• 65% of visitor groups spent $1-$200 (see Figure 62).
• 12% spent $201-$400.
• The average visitor group expenditure was $221.
• The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was $50.
• The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was $98.
• As shown in Figure 63, the largest proportions of total expenditures inside and outside the park were:
  - 32% Lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc.
  - 20% Gas and oil
  - 20% Restaurants and bars
  - 10% All other purchases

Figure 62. Total expenditures inside and outside the park

Figure 63. Proportions of total expenditures inside and outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
**Number of adults covered by expenditures**

**Question 26c**
How many adults (18 years or older) do these expenses cover?

**Results**
- 56% of visitor groups had 2 adults covered by expenditures (see Figure 64).
- 22% had 1 adult covered by expenditures.

![Figure 64. Number of adults covered by expenditures](image)

**Number of children covered by expenditures**

**Question 26c**
How many children (under 18 years) do these expenses cover?

**Results**
- 61% of visitor groups had no children covered by expenditures (see Figure 65).

![Figure 65. Number of children covered by expenditures](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer*
**Expenditures inside the park**

**Question 26a**
Please list your personal group’s total expenditures inside Congaree NP.

**Results**
- 49% of visitor groups spent $1-$25 (see Figure 66).

- 36% spent no money inside the park.

- The average visitor group expenditure inside the park was $14.

- The median group expenditure (50% groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was $5.

- The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was $10.

- As shown in Figure 67, the largest proportion of total expenditures inside the park was:
  - 81% All other purchases

![Figure 66. Total expenditures inside the park](image)

![Figure 67. Proportions of total expenditures inside the park](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer*
All other purchases (souvenirs, film, books, sporting goods, clothing, etc.)

- 44% of visitor groups spent no money on other purchases inside the park (see Figure 68).
- 25% spent $1-$10.

Figure 68. Expenditures for all other purchases inside the park

Donations

- 74% of visitor groups spent no money on donations inside the park (see Figure 69).
- 23% spent $1-$10.

Figure 69. Expenditures for donations inside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Expenditures outside the park

Question 26b
Please list your group’s total expenditures in the surrounding area outside the park (within 1-hour drive of park).

Results
- 61% of visitor groups spent $1-$200 (see Figure 70).
- 15% spent $401 or more.
- The average visitor group expenditure outside the park was $220.
- The median group expenditure (50% groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was $48.
- The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was $110.
- As shown in Figure 71, the largest proportions of total expenditures outside the park were:
  33% Lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, B&Bs, etc.
  20% Gas and oil
  20% Restaurants and bars

Figure 70. Total expenditures outside the park within a 1-hour drive

Figure 71. Proportions of total expenditures outside the park within a 1-hour drive

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, B&B, etc.

- 69% of visitor groups spent no money on lodging outside the park (see Figure 72).
- 22% spent $1-$200.

Camping fees and charges

- 95% of visitor groups spent no money on camping fees and charges outside the park (see Figure 73).

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Canoe/kayak rental charges

- 98% of visitor groups spent no money on canoe/kayak rental charges outside the park (see Figure 74).

Guide fees and charges

- 99% of visitor groups spent no money on guide fees and charges outside the park (see Figure 75).

Restaurants and bars

- 45% of visitor groups spent no money on restaurants and bars outside the park (see Figure 76).
- 34% spent $1-$50.

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Groceries and takeout food

- 57% of visitor groups spent no money on groceries and takeout food outside the park (see Figure 77).
- 33% spent $1-$50.

![Figure 77. Expenditures for groceries and takeout food outside the park](image)

Gas and oil (auto, RV, boat, etc.)

- 59% of visitor groups spent $1-$50 on gas and oil outside the park (see Figure 78).
- 20% spent no money.

![Figure 78. Expenditures for gas and oil outside the park](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Other transportation (rental cars, taxis, auto repairs, but NOT airfare)

- 90% of visitor groups spent no money on other transportation outside the park (see Figure 79).

![Figure 79](image)

**Figure 79.** Expenditures for other transportation outside the park

Admission, recreation and entertainment fees

- 86% of visitor groups spent no money on admission, recreation and entertainment fees outside the park (see Figure 80).
- 8% spent $1-$50.

![Figure 80](image)

**Figure 80.** Expenditures for admission, recreation, and entertainment fees outside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
All other purchases (souvenirs, film, books, sporting goods, clothing, etc.)

- 73% of visitor groups spent no money on all other purchases outside the park (see Figure 81).
- 18% spent $1-$50.

Donations

- 94% of visitor groups spent no money on donations outside the park (see Figure 82).

Unpaid vacation/unpaid time off

Question 25c
Did your household take any unpaid vacation or take unpaid time off of work to come on this trip?

Results
- 19% of visitor groups took unpaid vacation or unpaid time off work to come on this trip (see Figure 83).

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Preferences for Future Visits

**Likelihood of future visit**

**Question 28**
Would you and your group be likely to visit Congaree NP again in the future?

**Results**
- 79% of visitor groups indicated that they would be likely to visit Congaree again in the future (see Figure 84).
- 15% of visitor groups were not sure about visiting the park in the future.

*Figure 84. Visitor groups that would likely visit Congaree NP in the future*

---

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer*
Preferred activities and programs on future visits

Question 30
If you were to visit Congaree NP in the future, which types of organized activities and programs would you and your personal group like to have available?

Results
- 83% of visitor groups were interested in attending organized activities or programs on a future visit to the park (see Figure 85).
- As shown in Figure 86, of those visitor groups that wanted organized activities/programs, the most preferred were:
  - 68% Canoeing/ kayaking
  - 48% Owl prowls
  - 45% Night walk/night sky program
- “Other” activities/programs (4%) were:
  - Backpacking
  - Cub scouts
  - Fishing
  - Hunting license
  - Interpretive hikes
  - Science tours
  - Snake tour
  - Study of wildlife - snakes
  - Tree identification

Figure 85. Visitor groups interested in activities and programs

Figure 86. Preferred activities and programs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Preferred topics to learn on future visits

**Question 31**
If you were to visit Congaree NP in the future, which subjects would you and your personal group like to learn about?

Results
- 91% of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park on future visits (see Figure 87).
- As shown in Figure 88, of those visitor groups that were interested in learning about the park, the most common subjects were:
  - 77% Plants/animals
  - 64% History
  - 60% Old growth floodplain forest
  - 57% Champion trees
- “Other” subjects (2%) were:
  - Invasive species
  - Number of annual visitors
  - Politics of management
  - Science of management

![Figure 87. Visitor groups that were interested in learning about the park](image)

![Figure 88. Subjects to learn on future visit](image)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Overall Quality

Quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities

Question 27
Overall, how would you rate the quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities provided to you and your personal group at Congaree NP during this visit?

Results
- 95% of visitor groups rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities as “very good” or “good” (see Figure 89).
- Less than 1% rated the quality as “poor.”
- No visitor groups rated the quality as “very poor.”

Figure 89. Overall quality rating of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer
Visitor Comment Summaries

What visitors liked most

Question 32a
What did you and your personal group like most about your visit to Congaree NP? (Open-ended)

Results
- 88% of visitor groups (N=240) responded to this question.
- Table 20 shows a summary of visitor comments. The transcribed open-ended comments can be found in the Visitor Comments section.

Table 20. What visitors liked most
(N=383 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSONNEL (8%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helpful park staff</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledgeable/informative park staff</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park staff</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Courteous/friendly park staff</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ranger on guided canoe trip</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (10%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided canoe trip</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-guided boardwalk tour</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor center</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational value/experience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History of park/area</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpretive signs/pamphlet</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about trees/ecosystem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (19%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boardwalk</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trails</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good trails</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean restrooms</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLICY/MANAGEMENT (4%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilderness</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free admission</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of other people/uncrowded</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park is well organized/laid out</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 20. What visitors liked most (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (27%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giant/tall trees</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiders</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trees</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snakes/lizards</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birds</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different/interesting types of vegetation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtles</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old growth forest</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unaltered nature</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment/ecosystem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique forest/landscape</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild pigs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypress trees</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse ecosystem</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural habitat/surroundings</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owls</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woodpecker sighting</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL (33%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitude</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiet</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beauty</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiking</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to new/unique ecosystem</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family experience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remoteness</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenery</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique place</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discovering the park existed</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting away from people/civilization</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayaking</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to city/home</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What visitors liked least

Question 32b
What did you and your personal group like least about your visit to Congaree NP? (Open-ended)

Results
- 62% of visitor groups (N=169) responded to this question.
- Table 21 shows a summary of visitor comments. The transcribed open-ended comments can be found in the Visitor Comments section.

Table 21. What visitors liked least
(N=186 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PERSONNEL (3%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intrusive park rangers/police</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (13%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-guiding markers hard to see</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to take guided canoe trip</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hauling canoes to launch</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor map</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (12%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slippery boardwalk</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallen trees/debris on trail</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kayak/canoe launch site</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Litter</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trail was obscure</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLICY/MANAGEMENT (6%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park is difficult to locate</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited food/drink options</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (16%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not see much wildlife/animals</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mosquitoes/bugs</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiders</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiggers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of wild pigs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snakes</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 21. What visitors liked least (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GENERAL (50%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot weather</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing to dislike</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humid weather</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of time</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other visitors' noise/loud talking</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot weather canceled ranger program</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spider webs across trail</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Significance of the park

Question 33
Congaree NP was established because of its significance to the nation. In your opinion, what is the national significance of this park? (Open-ended)

Results
• 76% of visitor groups (N=207) responded to this question.
• Table 22 shows a summary of visitor comments. The transcribed comments can be found in the Visitor Comments section.

Table 22. Significance of the park
(N=260 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protection/preservation of old growth forest</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old growth forest</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique habitat/ecosystem</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champion trees</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely significant</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of natural resources/nature</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tall/old trees</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of floodplain</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation/protection</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rare environment/ecosystem</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biodiversity</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational value</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of a unique forest/ecosystem</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For future generations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great old swamp</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitat protection</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical significance</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Largest old growth bottomland forest in North America</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old growth bottomland floodplain</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The forest</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uniqueness</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untouched nature/land</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flood plain forest/ecosystem</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Francis Marion/Revolutionary War history</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One of the few remaining bottomlands/old growth forests</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation/protection of wildlife</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protection of wilderness</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cypress trees/knees</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example of undisturbed nature/wilderness</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep it undeveloped/untouched</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large variety of trees/vegetation</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need more parks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational opportunity</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiding climate change research</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An area to enjoy that is pure nature</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best example of remnant of native ecosystem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 22. Significance of the park (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bird habitat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can teach us how to restore forests</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know/not sure</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological significance</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecological studies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecosystem we are unfamiliar with</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exception</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gnomes</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International bird habitat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Last contiguous wild section of old growth flood plain forest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mangrove forest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPS got it right</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old timber for future generations</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only national park in South Carolina</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to observe nature</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity to view landscape without disturbing it</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People need to see it</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plants</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation success story near a large urban area</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve local charms</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserve what others take for granted and destroy</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preserves the largest trees east of the Rockies</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides natural absorption of water to prevent flooding</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to urban area</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refreshing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminder of the natural gifts we have largely lost</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows delicate balance between trees and marsh</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>So all can experience God's great creation</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitude</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina wildlife and history</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To have been able to save 24,000 acres out of 52 million</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique history and habitat</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique opportunity to walk through a swamp</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Untouched jewel in the middle of the state</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unusual climate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilderness area with one of the largest forests in the US</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Planning for the future

Question 34
If you were a manager planning for the future of Congaree National Park, what would you and personal group propose? (Open-ended)

Results
- 61% of visitor groups (N=167) responded to this question.
- Table 23 shows a summary of visitor comments. The transcribed comments can be found in the Visitor Comments section.

Table 23. Planning for the future
(N=217 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONNEL (2%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (26%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More interpretive programs/educational activities</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional guided canoe trips</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase educational opportunities in local communities</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More cultural/historical interpretation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More exhibits</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand gift shop/book selection</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand/improve visitor center</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More children's educational programs</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New/updated park movie</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (25%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional trails</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extend the boardwalk</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve/add signage to park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RV campground with full hookups</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand/improve campground</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve campground</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional RV sites</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear debris from trails/boardwalk</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue trail maintenance</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve hiking trails</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observation/canopy tower</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repair/maintain boardwalk</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 23. Planning for the future (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLICY/MANAGEMENT (31%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acquire adjacent buffer areas/expand park boundary</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase awareness of park - advertise</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertise to the local/regional community</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertise/promote the park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe/kayak rental and shuttles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue protection/preservation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep industry/development away from park</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lodging in the park</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage the community to build awareness and support</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect the park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (6%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remove/control non-native plant/animal species</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protect from invasive/non-native plant/animal species</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL (10%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep it the way it is</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep up the good work</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canopy/zip line tour</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional comments

Question 35
Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Congaree National Park? (Open-ended)

Results
• 57% of visitor groups (N=155) responded to this question.
• Table 24 shows a summary of visitor comments. The transcribed comments can be found in the Visitor Comments section.

Table 24. Additional comments
(N=207 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comment</th>
<th>Number of times mentioned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONNEL (19%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff is helpful</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff is friendly</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed the staff</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff is knowledgeable/informative</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES (11%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational experience</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed visitor center exhibits</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE (9%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed the boardwalks</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve signage to and from the park</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park/facilities are clean</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLICY/MANAGEMENT (4%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glad that the park is free</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good use of tax dollars</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (3%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>GENERAL (54%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed visit</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will return</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love the park</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park is a gem/treasure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful park</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great job</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep up the good work</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thank you</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other comments</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Visitor Comments

This section contains visitor responses to open-ended questions.

Question 32a
What did you and your personal group like most about your visit to Congaree NP? (Open-ended)

- As always, the uniqueness of it - the bird life, massive trees, otters
- Awesome spiders
- Beautiful spot
- Beautiful, peaceful, clean
- Beauty of a diverse ecosystem, biodiversity
- Beauty, quiet, canoeing opportunity
- Being outdoors in a really unique forest
- Biodiversity and the interpretive guide for the boardwalk to help explain what we saw
- Birds and turtle activity
- Boardwalk
- Boardwalk
- Boardwalk
- Boardwalk
- Boardwalk
- Boardwalk and staff assistance
- Boardwalk and visitor center
- Boardwalk hike
- Boardwalk through the swamp/forest
- Boardwalk trail
- Boardwalk trail
- Boardwalk trail
- Boardwalk trail, very quiet and peaceful
- Boardwalk trails - elevated and low
- Boardwalk walk
- Boardwalk with explanation map
- Boardwalk, bookstore
- Boardwalk, giant trees
- Camping, hiking, everything
- Canoe experience
- Canoe trail
- Canoe trip
- Canoe trip
- Canoe trip except for having to offload and carry canoes down hill to put in area
- Canoe trip, talks with ranger greeter
- Canoeing
- Canoeing
- Canoeing
Canoeing, kayaking
Chance to visit protected wilderness area
Clean
Cleanliness
Close to major city. Total unaltered nature. Excellent ranger/volunteer.
Congaree is unique in its narrow focus
Connecting with nature
Corrine was great as a guide
Courteous staff, very knowledgeable. Tried to accommodate and wait out rain.
Desolation
Different types of vegetation
Discovering it existed
Diversity of species on trails
Diversity of the walk and park, the solitude
Elevated boardwalk, ease of use with stroller. We saw a woodpecker - beautiful.
Enthusiastic, knowledgeable staff
Environment
Everything, especially the big spiders
Experiencing pristine, old growth forest
Exposure to a new ecosystem
Extremely clean restrooms
Fantastic nature, the beauty of the park, the silence
Finding lizards, turtles, a humming bird and an owl along the boardwalk
Free access
Free admission, beautiful, educational and fun family experience
Friendliness of staff. Cleanliness.
Friendly
Getting away from people
Good hiking trails and scenery
Great experience overall
Great trails
Guided tour, natural canopy we paddled through
Helpful national park ranger
Helpful staff, neat ecosystem - glad I stopped. Very clean restrooms.
Hiking on boardwalk
Hiking through this unique environment on well marked trails and meeting enthusiastic park rangers
Hiking, bird watchers
History of the park/area, trails
How nice the lady working was and how clean everything was
How safe the boardwalk was for my three year old
I enjoyed being out in nature in a natural habitat in the way it should be and away from civilization for a while
I enjoyed hiking through the unique environment of the park and even a brush with a cottonmouth was enjoyable
I liked being in the park early and experiencing a lot of wildlife without a lot of people
o Information building
o Information from the ranger
o Interesting trees and plants, colorful, large spiders, skinks, hiking
o Introduction video was very informative. Raised boardwalk was very nice.
o It is magical
o It was a fun and inexpensive way to spend time with my family
o It was a surprise. Did not know it was there. Boardwalks nice.
o It was clean, the possibility of sighting snakes, lizards
o It was like no place I’ve ever been before
o It’s beauty, instructional value, solitude, and wonderfully helpful staff
o It’s close to home, I visit frequently
o Junior Ranger
o Kayaking was great, but I am a biologist so I loved seeing the snakes, spiders and life everywhere
o Knowledgeable and professional guide
o Landscape unlike any other we have experienced
o Learning about the age of the trees and the natural flooding cycles
o Learning about the local environment
o Loop boardwalk
o Loved the canoe ride tour
o Majestic trees
o Mostly solitude and change from upland pine hammock to bottomlands. Also, birds and butterflies.
o Natural beauty
o Natural landscape
o Natural surroundings
o Nature
o Nature
o Nature
o Nature
o Nature, walking, cane trip with ranger
o Nice boardwalk trail and benches
o Nice, quiet, clean
o No camping fees, the peace
o No noise
o Old growth forest, competent and friendly staff
o Openness
o Opportunity to hike the natural area
o Opportunity to see park a different way; fulfill school work project at no cost
o Overall layout and presentation of park
o Park ranger, solitude, views of the plant and animal life, time shared with family
o Park was kept and personnel were great
o Peaceful
o Peaceful solitude, the opportunity to walk through wetlands without disturbing them
o Peaceful way of the park, fresh air, amazing trees, spiders
o Personal attention, self-guided tour
o Pine Tree how tall they are, wildlife
o Quiet
o Quiet trails
o Quietness
o Quietness, boardwalk, trees
o Quite beautiful nature/wildlife
o Ranger answered questions from our group while we were waiting for storm to pass over. Very knowledgeable, very interesting information. Impressed by their knowledge.

o Ranger-led canoe trip
o Ranger-led kayaking
o Rangers and volunteers very helpful
o Rangers were so happy we came
o Rangers were very nice and helpful, especially Kathleen
o Relaxing near the lake
o Remote, quiet, beautiful
o Scenery
o Seeing a different ecosystem from Denmark
o Seeing a pileated woodpecker and turtles and skinks
o Seeing lizards on the boardwalk
o Seeing plants and trees and birds
o Seeing the giant trees
o Seeing the large trees
o Seeing the woodpecker
o Seeing turtles and spider
o Seeing undisturbed nature
o Seeing wildlife, large trees, learning from staff
o Self-guided boardwalk tour
o Serenity
o Sidewalk
o Signage and trees and guided walks
o Silence
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude
o Solitude and remote
o Solitude, being around nature
o Solitude, insect world
o Solitude, nature
o Solitude, sense of being alone in nature
o Solitude, trails, wildlife, unique flora
- Sounds and sights of nature
- Spiders
- Staff
  - Stepping back in time - refreshing
  - The beauty of the forest and the peace that was found there
  - The big old growth trees and the quiet forest
  - The boardwalk and guide made our experience relaxing and yet wild
  - The boardwalk and helpfulness of staff, based on our limited time at Congaree
  - The boardwalk trail
  - The boardwalk trail with brochure pointing out points of interest
  - The boardwalk walk through the old growth flood plain forest and the historical moonshine still
  - The boardwalk walking path
  - The boardwalk was terrific
  - The boardwalk. The staff were very nice and informative.
  - The boardwalks and scenery with nature
  - The canoe tour was awesome
  - The cypress trees and "knees"
  - The different areas
  - The eco-system there and it's history; learning of and seeing the campsites and river activities
  - The free, ranger-led canoe trip
  - The hiking trails
  - The huge trees and insects - spiders. It was really quiet. Visitor center.
  - The many unique biological scenes
  - The old growth trees are magnificent
  - The park ranger was a great guy. Very helpful and very attractive.
  - The park rangers were very knowledgeable
  - The peace and quietness. Very, very few people - maybe half a dozen.
  - The pine wilderness and the untouched woods
  - The quality of the boardwalk (construction)
  - The quiet and the trees
  - The quiet walk and the beautiful green cypress trees
  - The seclusion, generous campsite, very positive and helpful staff
  - The self-guided boardwalk tour
  - The serenity of the boardwalk. It was very peaceful.
  - The staff was very informative
  - The swamp, the wildlife - boars, spiders, lizards
  - The trees
  - The various animals we saw, the awesome trees, the wonderful sounds of nature and most of all the solitude
  - The well maintained boardwalks
  - The wilderness, we felt nature all around us and the walk (self-guided came in hand) was beautiful
  - To see animals, trees, and plants on the walk
  - Trails and walks
o Trails, wildlife
o Tranquility, seeing wildlife
o Trees and plants
o Trees, owls photographic opportunities. The forest and wildlife.
o Trees, spiders
o Trees, turtles, thunder/lightning, raw
o Trying something new and being in nature
o Turtles, spiders, wilderness
o Unspoiled solitude
o Unusual forest; nice, quiet atmosphere
o Vegetational landscape
o Very different plants and animals than we see in Ohio
o Viewing several wild pigs
o Visitor center is blended nicely into the forest; boardwalk was easy to walk
o Visitor center, trails
o Walking along the boardwalk trail and talking with the rangers about other opportunities
o Walking the boardwalk
o Walking the boardwalk
o Walking trail
o Walkways
o We liked the quietness and ability to walk at our leisure and sit and observe. We saw a doe and a
yearling and we stood watching each other. So peaceful.
o We were there early and it was not crowded - very peaceful
o Welcome center
o Well organized
o Wild pigs - we saw eight and that was new for us
o Wildlife - turtles at Weston Lake
o Wonderful boardwalk hike
**Question 32b**
What did you and your personal group like least about your visit to Congaree NP? (Open-ended)

- Bad map and trail markings
- Being harassed by the park ranger. We were asked if we had been drinking. We were not loud or obnoxious. We asked him directions on the boardwalk. He waited in the parking lot for us for two hours and administered several tests, including a breathalyzer. Of course, I passed. He then called for back up and followed us out.
- Boardwalk slippery
- Bugs
- Chatty persons in bird/lark tour loud and distracting
- Chiggers
- Chiggers, trail sometimes obscure, fallen trees on trail, no good places to stop and rest on trail
- Clearer trails
- Could do better identifying the numbered stops on the boardwalk tour. We missed several, hard to see.
- Didn't see any animals
- Difficult to locate
- Difficulty in getting there
- Distance from restroom
- Don't have an answer - nothing
- Everything was fine
- Extreme heat required cancellation of ranger (outdoor) program
- Facilities were closing down. We came at the end of the day.
- Failed to see river otters
- Four employees/volunteers talking together inside visitor center did not offer greeting upon entrance
- Getting there. More signs might help just because it is such a rural area.
- Hauling canoes to waterfront and back to truck
- Having to carry canoes. Too much talking from several groups on canoe trip. Couldn't hear nature noises.
- Heat
- Heat
- Heat
- Heat
- Heat
- Heat
- Heat - August, 95 degrees
- Heat - but there is nothing you can do about that
- Heat and humidity
- Heat and humidity, spiders
- Heat and humidity, the sights tend to get old
- Heat and mosquitoes
- Honestly, the spider webs across the Oak Ridge Trail, but it was nice to have the trail to myself
- Hot
Hot and sticky
Hot weather
Hot weather
How hot it was
Humid weather
Humidity
Humidity
Humidity
Humidity
Humidity
Humidity
Humidity - not your fault
Humidity, but that's part of nature. Beautiful park.
Humidity, heat
I came unprepared for the hot temperature
I didn't find much to complain of, but perhaps more easily accessible campsites
I didn't see as many wild animals as I hoped for, but it was late morning when I hiked
I don't feel like I learned much about the wildlife in the forest
I think there should be more history information in visitor center about the area
I was alone and therefore felt unsafe
Impact of wild pigs, noise of other visitors
Inability to see more of the park by car
Intrusive and seemingly unnecessary park police presence, especially in campground - treated people as suspects, not visitors
Invasive plants (e.g. stilt grass) and animals (hogs)
It was very hot and humid. Ranger-guided tour was cancelled.
Kayak launch site
Knuckle head kids
Lack of distance signs on boardwalk. I'm handicapped and walked to where loops meet. The only sign was "no dogs."
Lack of presence of park rangers on trails
Lack of space to park RV
Launching canoes - uncertain what role we were to do
Law enforcement being sneaky and walking into your campsite like they owned it
Leaving
Liked it all
Liked it all
Limited drinks/snacks in center
Limited information in exhibits at visitor center
Litter
Loud group of summer camp kids and indistinct signage on trail regarding dogs
Loud visitors at night
Loved it
Map confusion on water
Missed the canoe trip due to storm
Missing canoe tour because of personal time restraints

Mosquitoes

Mosquitoes

No changes in elevation

No signs marking the way to the park from interstate

No time to explore

No vehicle access to river. No RV campground.

Not able to see lake clearly

Not being able to take a canoe tour

Not enough ranger-led trips/talks/programs

Not enough time spent

Not enough time to do more

Not much wildlife

Not seeing wild pigs

Nothing

Nothing

Nothing

Nothing

Nothing

Nothing

Nothing

Nothing

Nothing - everything was great

Nothing - it was all pretty cool

Nothing - love the park

Nothing specific

Nothing, but not enough time

Nothing, we love the Congaree

Numbers for self-guided tour, hard to find, white paint might make them show up

Only one bathroom at the Visitor Center

Other people being loud

Other than trail, it didn't offer very much

Our feet hurt by the end

Outdated video

Path from canoe parking to launch; expected more information "guided tour"

People falling into water when getting out of canoe along slippery bank adjacent to deep water

Pig damage, dangerously slippery boardwalk - and not particularly wet or muddy

Poison ivy and mosquitoes

Poor park literature

Poor selection in gift shop; hard to get feel for park in short time period

Seeing limited wildlife - no snakes or deer seen

Signs
- Small size of park
- Snakes
- Snakes!
- Solitude
- Some trail numbers were missed, location changed - some high - others low
- Some trash left by people and airplane noise overhead
- Spiders
- Spiders
- Spiders
- Spiders and spider nets crossing the trail
- Temperature
- Temperature too hot and humid
- The apparent impact of a drought - nothing the immediate “staff” could do anything about
- The boardwalk was wet and slippery
- The bugs
- The extreme heat and humidity, but we know we chose a day that would be hot and humid
- The heat and humidity. We need to visit again in the fall.
- The heat at 102 degrees
- The heat while we were there. Spider webs from few hikers.
- The heat. Not being able to take a guided canoe tour.
- The humidity under the tree canopy
- The humidity, but that can't be changed
- The landmarks numbers need to be noticed by painting trim in red
- The markers identifying features on the boardwalk need to be easier to find
- The poor signage trying to get there
- The terrible condition of the Kingsnake Trail. We got lost it was in such disrepair.
- There were no alligators
- This time was great, but in the past it has been loud on boardwalk with people
- Too many canoers on tour
- Too short
- Visitors talking and not realizing how loud they are in the forest
- We did not allot enough time to fully appreciate the park
- We didn't get to go canoeing
- We disliked the heat
- We enjoyed everything about the visit
- We felt the Junior Ranger books were a little too heavy even for 10 year old children
- We left three kids home for canoe trip as we could only reserve one, then found out multiple no shows. Very irritating.
- We liked everything
- We liked everything
- We wondered about lack of food facilities, or at least food vending machines at welcome center
- We wouldn't have found the NP without our GPS
- Weren't able to see all of the wildlife in our brief visit, but that's no fault of the park
- When we entered the park we weren't sure if we actually entered; it was desolate
- Without flood, not a lot to see
Question 33

Congaree NP was established because of its significance to the nation. In your opinion, what is the national significance of this park? (Open-ended)

- A good example of what we should treasure for the future
- A preserved natural landscape
- A unique forest representative of the region’s natural history
- Ability to see lands by the boardwalk without disturbing the lands
- Again, the eco-system and its flora and fauna inhabitants and its location
- Age of trees living here and animals that inhabit these areas
- An area to enjoy that is pure nature
- An old growth wilderness, preserved and intact
- Anywhere that nature is being preserved and protected is of national significance
- Area to be protected due to uniqueness
- As officially stated. NPS got it right.
- Battlegrounds
- Being the only national park in the state and champion trees
- Bio-diversity hotspot. It also preserves one of the last old-growth forests of its kind.
- Biodiversity, originality of primary forest
- Champion trees
- Champion trees
- Cypress trees
- Don’t know
- Ecological; maintain as meant to be - keep concrete/man out
- Exceptional - it would have been a giant loss had it not become a national park
- Extremely significant
- Extremely significant because the swamp environment is not one we were familiar with
- Flood plain ecosystem
- Flood plain forest are few untouched tracts
- Forced Sherman to march further south? Just kidding, its uniqueness and natural state.
- Forest
- Forest
- Forest and wildlife preservation
- Francis Marion, activities - an example of undisturbed wilderness
- Future generations
- Gnomes
- Good
- Great old swamp
- Great significance
- Habitat and ecological studies
- Habitat protection
- Helps keep nature safe
- Highly significant
- How it was
- Hugely significant
I think it represents the natural/historic importance of this part of the country to our nation's history
- International bird habitat, national forest, old growth bottomland flood plain
- It is a one of a kind park
- It is a wilderness area with one of the largest forests in the US
- It is fortunate to have been able to save 24,000 acres out of 52 million
- It is one of the few remaining bottomland forests
- It is pretty unique to get to walk through a swamp
- It is significant in the sense that the old growth forest is protected
- It is very important to preserve whatever is left of natural habitats, not just for the nation, but for this world survival
- It is wonderful
- It preserves a glimpse of our state’s natural beauty before man exploited
- It preserves a rare and unique ecosystem
- It preserves the land and protects the animals and plants
- It preserves the largest trees east of the Rockies and some great flood plain habitat. People need to see it.
- It preserves the way the land used to be and allows visitors to learn about it and its history
- It reminds us of the past and how many died during war
- It shows the interaction of the trees and the marsh and the delicate balance they have
- It’s a preservation success story near a large urban area. As the largest old growth bottomland forest in North America it is worthy of our respect and loving care. It is a classroom without peer.
- It’s an oasis of biodiversity
- It’s an untouched jewel in the middle of the state
- It’s expanse in an increasingly fragmented habitat for wildlife
- It’s just different
- It’s the largest intact stand of hardwood bottomland left. It’s a unique habitat type with unique organisms.
- It’s unique history, flora, fauna
- It’s proximity to the downtown. It’s habitat.
- Keeping an old growth forest intact
- Keeping old trees safe
- Large cypress and other hardwood forest in natural state in flood plain of the river
- Large expanse of forests and biological diversity
- Large number of record breaking trees
- Large variety of trees/vegetation and what it can teach us about ecosystems
- Last contiguous remaining wild section of old growth river bottom flood plain forest
- Leave everything untouched as the way nature intended
- Little significance
- Love the untouched aspect
- Lowland forest, large tree preservation
- Maintaining old growth forests and flood plains along with great canoeing opportunities within driving distance of major population centers
- Maintaining some of our natural settings
- Maintaining the old timber for future generations
- Mangrove forest
- Many historic looks into past, information
- More visits
- Natural environment where early revolutionaries – Swamp Fox - established a base of operations
- Nature, history. It is so refreshing.
- Not many swamp areas like these left in the country due to development
- Oh my God - all of it. You can't find this anywhere else
- Old forest maintained and preserved
- Old growth
- Old growth bottomland habitat of major size - river and area
- Old growth flood plain area
- Old growth flood plain forest
- Old growth forest
- Old growth forest
- Old growth forest
- Old growth forest
- Old growth forest preservation
- Old growth trees
- Old growth trees and all of the wonderful creatures big and small that live there
- Old growth trees, few remaining areas with this ecology
- Old growth trees, flood plain must be protected
- Old growth trees, unimpacted environment
- Old growth, huge cypress and pines
- Old trees
- Old, large trees
- One of few similar areas
- Opportunity to observe nature doing her own thing
- Originality
- Plants, animals
- Preservation
- Preservation efforts
- Preservation of a large tract of old growth bottom land forest
- Preservation of a particular environment
- Preservation of a unique ecosystem
- Preservation of a unique ecosystem
- Preservation of disappearing natural resource
- Preservation of natural habitat of nation's original inhabitants (wildlife)
- Preservation of natural resources
- Preservation of old growth bottomland forest can teach us how to re-grow this elsewhere
- Preservation of old growth flood plain forest
- Preservation of old growth forest
- Preservation of old growth forest and generally preservation of our natural landscape
- Preservation of our nations old growth flood plain forest
- Preservation of our natural forests
- Preservation of wilderness
Preserve local charms
Preserve low country hardwood forest and territory
Preserve natural life
Preserve old growth forest
Preserving an old growth cypress forest
Preserving old growth forest and the flood plain ecosystem
Preserving old growth forests
Preserving the natural ecosystem in South Carolina
Preserving unique forest
Preserving wilderness areas in general and old growth forests in particular
Preserving wildlife
Protected flood plain
Protected old growth hardwood forest with flood plain
Protecting the natural wildlife of South Carolina
Protecting the swamp habitat and champion trees
Protection of few remaining old growth forests and wetlands
Protection of nature, the unique environment at Congaree National Park. Preservation of pristine bottomland and swamp forest with all of its biodiversity.
Protection of swamp for future generations
Protection of old growth trees
Quite important, unique nature
Rare and undisturbed
Reminder of the beauty and gift of nature to educate people about nature
Reminder of the natural gifts we have largely lost
Remnant of native ecosystem - best remaining example of it
Reserve for birds; provides natural absorption of water to prevent flooding
Retain natural woodlands, resources
Saving a flood plain forest
Saving the old growth flood plain forest for future generations and in aiding climate research changes
Scarcity of type of forest
Shows South Carolina wildlife and history
Significance of stay wild
So that all the world can experience God’s great creation
Southeast wilderness preservation; not much left
Swamp
Swamp atmosphere and education, being able to view old growth forest and big trees
Swamps need protection
Tall trees and cypress knees
The conservation of the champion trees
The diverse plants
The ecosystem
The fact that it is one of the few old growth forests left in the country
The fact that it is one of the largest areas with growth and trees like the ones that grow there
The flood plain forest ecosystem
The large virgin hardwoods and unique ecosystem
The largest flood plain, hardwood, swamp land tract of wilderness - unique ecosystem
The old growth forest
The old growth forest with the wide variety of vegetation all in one area
The plants and animals are unique and educational
The solitude and abundance of gigantic old growth trees
The special environment of this forest
The swamp life, the beautiful trees
The trees are of exceptional height and age
The unique ecosystem
The wildlife, the unique habitat and the champion trees makes Congaree a special place to be preserved
The wildlife, trees
To educate the peoples
To keep this unique land available so generations to come can experience it
To maintain nature and allow generation to enjoy
To preserve and protect the natural landscape and wilderness of the area
To preserve our wildlife and our forests
To preserve what others take for granted and destroy
Trees
Trees are beautiful, land for animals
Trees that can't be found anywhere else
Trees/plants
Unique and threatened ecosystem that should be preserved as part of natural heritage
Unique because of old growth bottomland habitat
Unique biodiversity
Unique ecosystem
Unique ecosystem in park system and in our own experience
Unique environment
Unique environment
Unique plants/animals, new species
Unspoiled nature, champion trees, conservation, recreational opportunities
Unusual climate
Varied - conservation, beauty, history
Very important
Very much
Very significant
Very significant, even if not well loved by human visitors
We need more parks like this one
We need more parks. This one was a nice surprise.
Where else can one see an old growth forest like the one at Congaree
Wildlife and virgin forest
Yes, very
Question 34

If you were a manager planning for the future of Congaree National Park, what would you and personal group propose? (Open-ended)

- "Rest stations" along the way
- A "current conditions" point on the web page so people would know if it was at flood stage
- A close trip to the local community to build awareness and support
- A few more established campgrounds
- A free recreation day
- A full hookup - water, sewer, electric, catv - RV campground located at the river.
- A lodge, so that people that don't camp can stay in the park
- A night on the boardwalks to listen to nightlife with a park ranger
- Acquire any inholdings or adjacent land that could lead to incompatible development
- Acquire buffer areas adjacent to critical areas
- Add more trails to the park
- Adding a few RV sites would be helpful so we could stay longer
- Adding canoe rides
- Adding trails
- Advertise more to locals
- Advertising, canoe and kayak rental and shuttle
- Advertise
- An integrated national campaign for NP to increase awareness and attendance
- An RV campground
- Area for snake aquarium. I would like to see what species are there.
- Balance protection/conservation and recreational use
- Be sure to let workers know their worth, appreciation for a job well done
- Better advertising. Put signs on I-95. This is not a well-known park but it has a lot to offer.
- Better camping sites
- Better creek maps and tree marking
- Better facilities at primitive campground
- Build a lodge to attract overnight guests. Flood the surrounding states with information about park.
- Build trails on new property
- Buying and preserving as much land as possible to add to the park before it is too late
- Campground with electricity
- Can't do it better
- Canoe/kayak rentals
- Canoeing
- Canoeing, kayaking, boardwalk trails
- Canopy/zip line tours
- Clean up deadfall on trails; have someone walk the trails once in a while
- Clear the canoe trail. More hiking trails to reach more of the park.
- Connect in a more concrete way with local schools to integrate Congaree into science lessons at school
- Continue preservation and protection from invasive, nonnative species of plants and animals
o Continue protecting such a wonderful natural
o Continue to do the great job you're doing. Maybe a little more educational programs.
o Continue upgrading of hiking trails
o Continued efforts for financial stability to ensure protection from loss
o Continued funding to protect these trees
o Continued management of invasive plant and animal species and preservation of native species
o Do better maps; mark on the map and on the trail points to figure out where you are
o Easier access to champion trees and labeling of each
o Educational weekend programs for kids
o Eliminate the wild hogs
o Enlarge the borders
o Enlarged exhibits and film
o Enlarging
o Eradication of exotic species and increase educational opportunities in surrounding communities
o Expand and improve visitor center and campgrounds. Broaden partnership with city, University of South Carolina, donors.
o Expand area under protection
o Expand natural areas adjacent to park
o Expand the park
o Expanding the park to include the other side of the Congaree River
o Expansion and ensured protection. I would add another trail that would lead to river and develop trails in new additions to the park.
o Expansion of trails and backpacking
o Extend the boardwalks. Improve the signs directing to the park.
o Extending the amount of the park that is viewable on the boardwalk
o Family camping and exotics control
o Find a way to make more people aware of this park
o Focus on water activities
o Friendlier park rangers with more experience
o Get the word out that you are there so others will come
o Great job! Loved it!
  o I do not have an overview that would make an opinion meaningful
  o Improve information displays on the boardwalk for types of vegetation
  o Improve trail system - more loops instead of loop-less trails
  o Improving the surrounding area by keeping industry as far away as possible
  o Incorporate paths with natural features and make paths more defined
  o Increased publicity for Congaree National Park. Perhaps a documentary television program. We heard about the park only by chance.
  o Just more spreading of the word. I don't feel many know of the park.
  o Keep doing what you're doing with excellence
  o Keep expanding, work on invasive plant control, and stop wasting park resources on unnecessary law enforcement
  o Keep it simply
  o Keep it the way it is
  o Keep it the way it is
- Keep the park a place that a visitor has to want to visit. Don’t add “flashy” things to attract visitors.
- Keep up the good work
- Keep up the great work
- Keeping the boardwalk clean of debris
- Killing the pigs in perpetuity. Whole system appraisal of resource.
- Larger size, more inclusion of ecosystem, greater amounts of water in ecosystem
- Leaving it alone
- Let more people know about the park
- Looking at nature’s true beauty
- Maintain trails, education, and canoeing
- Maintaining the wilderness
- Make entrance more welcoming. Promote hiking trails more.
- Make maps and trail guides more visible, available - not just inside
- Make sure it remains wild and a national park
- Maybe a couple more self-guides, like the numbered guide along the boardwalk, throughout the park
- Maybe add an observation tower, maybe a zip line, more access to Congaree River
- Maybe build a canopy tower where visitors can see the forest at different levels
- More accommodation available in the park - like cabins
- More advertisement
- More advertisement so visitors respect and want to see this special place
- More advertising
- More advertising - most locals don't realize we have a National Park
- More advertising - we didn't even know the national park was here
- More advertising of recreational opportunities at Congaree National Park
- More advertising, HD video in the visitor center
- More availability for canoe trips during summer travel months
- More boardwalk paths, better information on the canoeing
- More boardwalk trails
- More cultural interpretation and community engagement
- More educational classes, fun activities for children
- More funding
- More historical facts
- More history on the area and books in visitor center
- More information on trails
- More internet exposure
- More local awareness, especially to parents and their kids. Word of mouth is the best marketing for the park.
- More outdoor activities, more restrooms
- More posters
- More rangers who can lead canoe tours, program was full for this quarter so we need to come back for that
- More signs on 601, especially after Route 263 intersection. Get GPS companies to correct directions to park by providing GPS coordinates to park entrance on Old bluff Road.
- More special events to get people excited about nature
- More trails and a larger campground
o More walk ways
o More wildlife centered activities
o Move in gift shop and visitor center, especially exhibits
o Movie on history of South Carolina, paleological, geological natural environmental changes
o My knowledge of this park is insufficient for answering this question
o Night tomb - Halloween. Emphasize spookiness.
o No idea
o No planes flying overhead
o Offering programs more often
o Other activities, more canoeing options
o Park facilities
o Photo wall of the natural (native) insects, birds, mammals, reptiles, etc.
o Please have identity markers placed under tree, flora and fauna to match self-guided tour pamphlet
o Possibly provide information on the animals in the park
o Preserve the natural beauty by limiting access as necessary, but use for education - both formal and tourist
o Primitive campsites for backpackers; canoe/kayak rentals on or near park
o Promote educational opportunities more
o Promote more widely
o Protecting, what is there, and enlarging the boundaries, if possible
o Protection against commercial/industrial influence and better protection against Republican budget cuts
o Ranger-led camping
o Ranger-led walks
o Removal of wild pigs, electric RV hookups and sites
o Repair boardwalk
o Responsible enjoyment - encourage use for recreation - hiking, canoeing, camping
o RV friendly parking
o Save the land
o See the movie in the visitor center and walk
o Seems well managed, no change
o Signs to get to the park
o Somehow getting the news out to South Carolina residents that there is a national park close by to raise interest in it
o Someone overseeing boardwalk daily to maintain it. Sweep out under benches so visitors aren't afraid of spiders and wildlife.
o Stronger advocacy - enlist help of legislators
o Summer workshops for K-12 teachers to develop more citizen scientist monitoring, and encourage more teachers to bring school-aged visitors to the park
o Survival training/more fireside camping, more fishing access on creeks and rivers
o Target small group activities to specific interests - hikers, photographers, kayakers
o That personal care be given to such a beautiful place
o The canoe/kayak tours were booked. We would have liked more activity options, but overall great experience.
o The visit was really too short to have an informed knowledge base to answer this
- The website should have more information about why the park is compelling and why you should visit. Information from the visitor center would be good on the website.
- The wild pig population must be controlled. Would like to see trail extension from Kingsnake to old road to river.
- To expand borders and to enhance habitat for native species.
- To limit development, keep plants and wildlife protected.
- Trail maintenance.
- Try to restore and protect more similar ecosystems in area.
- Update visitor center, interpretive displays.
- Updated informational film.
- Very little.
- Water and "real" bathroom at campgrounds, more trails, eradicate fire ants.
- Water source at campground.
- Weigh cost vs. benefit: we need to scale back.
Question 35
Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Congaree National Park? (Open-ended)

- A hidden gem
- A pleasant and enjoyable experience
- A video would have been nice to see before going out on our walk
- A wonderful experience
- As mentioned, no signs on boardwalk and no map in "self-guided boardwalk trail" brochure. Walked to where path split on boardwalk and never saw a number. And because of no distance markers, we turned around and only saw the first sitting area. Wanted to see the bald cypress at #3, but didn't know if it was 1 miles or 2 miles.
- Beautiful park. We loved it. Employees were so helpful.
- Beautiful, peaceful place
- Better posting of bike trails. More trails open to biking.
- Canoe guide Corrine and volunteer very nice and helpful. Tried to control "noisy" people as much as possible.
- Congaree was not a destination point but rather a stop on our way to Charleston for a wedding
- Enjoyable and rewarding visit for an unknown and spur of the moment decision to stop in
- Enjoyed it
- Enjoyed it and will be back
- Enjoyed it very much
- Enjoyed our visit. Glad we stopped.
- Enjoyed the staff - they were helpful and courteous
- Enjoyed, thank you
- Even in close to 100 degrees it was a wonderful experience for the whole family
- Even though it was a hot day, we thoroughly enjoyed our visit. Keep up the good work.
- Expand visitor center gift shop
- Friendly staff and clean bathrooms
- Got lost - more signs
- Great
- Great experience
- Great job
- Great job done by the staff of the national park
- Great job. We will be back.
- Great park, clean. I had a blast.
- Great park, we'll be back. We didn't know about canoeing opportunities, but we are excited about doing a trip in future.
- Great time. Thanks.
- Great wildlife sightings
- Great, friendly rangers
- Great. We love the parks.
- Greatly enjoyed it
- Had a great time. Everyone was so helpful. Best of luck.
- Had a great time. Will come back.
- Had a really nice time and will come back
Have always enjoyed

I asked a ranger for a private place to breast-feed and she told me to use the restroom. I said that was unacceptable and another ranger provided me with a "movie room" that wasn't very private. Market better to families by providing a much-needed air-conditioned family feeding room.

I had no idea it existed until studying my Passport Album. I am very glad we made time to see it and look forward to visiting again and spending a lot more time.

I love the mosquito meter

I love this park. It truly is a jewel.

I only had a very short time there. Very interested in venturing to canoe, fish and explore.

I realize that budgets are strained, but bridges on backcountry trails need replacement

I thought it was great. I have wanted to go for years and I was not let down. Beautiful habitat, great trails/kayaking, and awesome animals.

I was pleasantly surprised by the enjoyable, educational experience. I liked the self-guided boardwalk tour; there should be posters for sale of park scenes. I really like that the park is free

I would like to get a photo of the woodpeckers

I would love to volunteer in some way

I would prefer federal dollars go to protect national parks than many other federal programs

I'm thankful this place is being protected; an excellent use of tax dollars

I've been going to Congaree since I was old enough to walk. I love it as much today as I did then.

If ever in the area again we would definitely go back again

It was a blessing to visit there

It was a pleasure to discover every little thing such as mushrooms, spiders, barred owl and a hawk. We greatly appreciate the park and all of the staff.

It was a true surprise how wonderful this park is - a true hidden treasure that needs to be preserved. We absolutely will be back.

It was a very nice visit. Good instructions, friendly people.

It was an exceptionally rich visit to a unique ecosystem for my daughter and me

It was fun

It was great to meet and speak with "roving" rangers. Friendly staff get A+ at Congaree.

It was our first visit and it was very hot, but we would love to come back in the spring when it is cool and maybe not so dry

It was quite enjoyable and the staff helped very much

Just how degrading it was to be accosted like I was by the ranger

Keep up the good work

Keep up the good work

Keep up the good work and expand the park

Love the deer

Loved the people working there

Loved the visitor center displays. We learned a lot.

Make numbers on boardwalk more visible - maybe just paint with bright colors

Need to specify that the guide doesn't do the canoeing just leads the group

Never let our natural resources be misused, protect them

Nice park

Nice staff

Nice visit

Not many mosquitos. We got lucky.
Our 2 year old grandson particularly liked the "stuffed" animals on display
Please do not give visitors surveys before they go hiking. I had to carry this survey all over the park.
Pretty cool place, loved the visitor center
Pure pleasure - I love visiting as often as I can when in town. I have been a visitor of this particular site since before the center and paths were created. I really enjoy the new boardwalks and informational center available. One of the things I most admire is how this was put together for individuals to enjoy and how it was done without interrupting the natural flow of the environment. I have many pictures within my home that I have taken, framed and enjoy. I will continue to visit the park as often as I can when I'm in town.
Question 17 should include water fountains - extremely important
Ranger help was awesome
Ranger personnel excellent and informative
Rangers and volunteer we spoke with were knowledgeable and helpful
Rangers were very helpful
Saw two groups of wild pigs
Saw two large pileated woodpeckers on Cedar Creek
Signage for leaving park back to interstates in highways
Staff very friendly and helpful
Staff was extremely pleasant and inviting us to return
Staff were exceedingly friendly and knowledgeable
Stopped by to check it out (and to check it off the list), will definitely come back to explore
Such a helpful and friendly staff. All facilities were exceptionally clean.
Superb overall
Swamps are rad
Thank you
Thank you for a great visit
Thank you for a rewarding and respectful experience
Thank you for your good work
Thank you. I was looking for an inexpensive way to celebrate my birthday and this was perfect for me.
Thanks for keeping it a special place
Thanks for learning something new
Thanks, I had a great time
The bats did a great job eating the mosquitos
The law enforcement rangers are getting a bad reputation with some dedicated long-term visitors - surliness, "command voice" at innocent kids, etc. I have heard the complaints and seen a bit.
The park rangers and volunteer staff are wonderful
The ranger and volunteers there are exceptional
The rangers were very friendly, informative, and helpful. The visitor center was beautiful. Loved the park. Thoroughly enjoyed visit. Will definitely visit it again.
The staff was very helpful
The staff was wonderfully helpful
The two gals working in the visitor center were great - Corrine and Kristen
There 9 am on 8/3/2011 - staff was helpful and very pleasant. In reference to Q6B - Animals change their habitat as climate dictates, so boundaries for them change constantly. No one can say they do or do not belong in an area. Part of nature adjustment plan. However, if introduced not naturally (released illegally by humans), then yes, remove.
There should also be arrows on the trees for landmark
This is a wonderful place to experience. Rangers are great.
This park is beautiful. Keep it for us, we will be back.
This trip was totally awesome
Very enjoyable
Very enjoyable
Very enjoyable experience
Very enjoyable walk on boardwalk. Nice area, scenery, quality. Free entrance is a major draw. Thanks.
Very interesting and educational
Very interesting and educational. Would like to arrive earlier next time.
Very peaceful, inspiring, beautiful. We are grateful for the experience.
Very, very inspiring. It felt like a "monument" - a national monument in the midst of an otherwise environmentally challenged area. It must be respected and protected.
Wanted to do photography, but little information available on good spots
We are completing the Junior Ranger programs and loved this park. We wish we could have spent more time, but we had been away from home for a week and just wanted to go home. Our family had no idea the park was so nice and we wish we could have allotted more time to do a longer walk.
We are grateful for the Congaree and all those who work and volunteer there
We are huge national park fans. The ranger and the exhibits were better than at some of the more renowned parks. Congaree is a great park. The ranger is fantastic.
We came a long way to see the area including Congaree. We felt the park helped justify the trip.
We can see both why the site is a National Park and why it previously was not. It's not as immediately compelling as some.
We enjoyed it
We enjoyed our trip. Well worth the drive from Georgia.
We enjoyed our visit
We enjoyed our visit very much
We entered from 601 and State Route 48. Signs were poor or nonexistent leaving in some direction. Could easily miss a turn and get lost. At least put signs pointing to Columbia so driver knows to turn left on right exiting park. This is basic stuff dealing with tourists.
We had a great experience and learned a lot from our guide
We had a great time and we recommend this park to our friends
We had a great time, loved camping and had a great experience at Congaree National Park. Very friendly staff at visitor center. Thanks.
We had a wonderful time
We had fun
We just felt that the Congaree River is central to the park and we couldn't get there to see it. We stayed at Barnyard RV Park on US-1 but that was too far for member #2 to drop off me and my kayak and return back to RV. Anyway, no access to river. We did appreciate use of NPS wheelchair on boardwalk loop. Member #2 used it a little but it was the only way I could persuade her to attempt doing the loop.
We love cypress knees
We loved it
We loved it
We loved it and will come back frequently
o We visit often. It is a treasure. We take our grandchildren just as we took our own children years ago.
o We were blown away and will be back; the park staff are incredibly knowledgeable and helpful!
o We were very enjoy our visit at the park; learn a lot about wildlife. Have a great time.
o We’re glad we organized our family trip to visit CNP
o We’ve lived in Sumter for two years and finally came for a visit. What a treasure to have so nearby.
o Wonderful place
o Wonderful trip - we want to come back. Need outdoor amphitheater to talk to large groups, educate.
o Would be great if more ranger-guided canoe tours were offered - on weekdays as well as weekends.
   We loved the place, especially the grand trees.
o Would have loved to enroll my children in the week-long ranger camp, but distance is too great.
   Loved the park. Please keep it open.
o You guys do almost everything right. Fix Kingsnake Trail and you get two thumbs up from us.
o You need to sell more bug spray that is environmentally safe, along with sunscreen, etc. Sell more earth friendly products that people would like to buy.
Appendix 1: The Questionnaire
Dear Visitor:

Thank you for participating in this important study. Our goal is to learn about the expectations, opinions, and interests of visitors to Congaree National Park. This information will assist us in our efforts to better manage this park and to serve you.

This questionnaire is only being given to a select number of visitors, so your participation is very important! It should only take about 20 minutes after your visit to complete.

When your visit is over, please complete this questionnaire. Seal it in the postage paid envelope provided and drop it in any U.S. mailbox.

If you have any questions, please contact Margaret Littlejohn, NPS VSP Director, Park Studies Unit, College of Natural Resources, P.O. Box 441139, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83844-1139, phone: 208-885-7663, email: littlej@uidaho.edu.

We appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Tracy Swartout
Superintendent
**DIRECTIONS**

1) Please have the selected individual (at least 16 years old) complete this questionnaire.

2) Answer the questions carefully since each question is different.

3) For questions that use circles (O), please mark your answer by filling in the circle with black or blue ink. Please do not use pencil.

   Like this: ●  Not like this: ☑  ☒  ☐

4) Seal it in the postage paid envelope provided.

5) Drop it in a U.S. mailbox.

Thank you!

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**PRIVACY ACT and PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT statement:**

16 U.S.C. 1a-7 authorizes collection of this information. This information will be used by park managers to better serve the public. Response to this request is voluntary. No action may be taken against you for refusing to supply the information requested. Your name is requested for follow-up mailing purposes only. When analysis of the questionnaire is completed, all name and address files will be destroyed. Thus the permanent data will be anonymous. Please do not put your name or that of any member of your group on the questionnaire. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

**Burden estimate statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 20 minutes per response. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this form to Margaret Littlejohn, NPS Visitor Services Project, College of Natural Resources, University of Idaho, P.O. Box 441139, Moscow, ID, 83844-1139; email: littlej@uidaho.edu.

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**Your Visit To Congaree National Park**

NOTE: In this questionnaire, your personal group is defined as anyone that you are visiting the park with, such as spouse, family, friends, etc. This does not include the larger group that you might be traveling with, such as school, church, scouts, or tour group.

1. Prior to your visit, how did you and your personal group obtain information about Congaree National Park (NP)? Please mark (●) all that apply.
   - O Did not obtain information prior to visit ➔ Go to question 2
   - O Chamber of commerce/visitors bureau/state welcome center
   - O Congaree NP website: www.nps.gov/cong
   - O Other websites — Which one(s)? ___________________________
   - O Friends/relatives/word of mouth
   - O Highway signs
   - O Inquiry to park via phone, mail or e-mail
   - O Local businesses (hotels, motels, restaurants, etc.)
   - O Maps/brochures
   - O Newspaper/magazine articles
   - O Other National Park Service sites
   - O Previous visits
   - O School class/program
   - O Social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
   - O Television/radio programs/videos
   - O Travel guides/tour books (such as AAA, etc.)
   - O Other (Please specify) ___________________________

2. Prior to your visit, were you and your personal group aware of programs (ranger-led walks, canoe trips, presentations, school group tours, etc.) offered in Congaree NP?
   - O Yes  O No
3. a) In 2003, Congaree Swamp National Monument became Congaree NP. Did this name change have any effect on your decision to visit?
   O Yes  O No  O Not sure

   b) If YES, what effect did it have? Please be specific. 

4. a) Prior to your visit, were you aware of what congressionally designated wilderness is?
   O Yes  O No  O Not sure

   b) If NO, did you and your personal group learn about congressionally designated wilderness during your visit?
   O Yes  O No

5. The National Park Service has a policy to control or remove non-native plants and animals from within park boundaries. Non-native species occupy an area that is not part of their natural, historic range, and often originated from another continent or region. Many of these species are invasive and damage park resources. Were you aware of this policy prior to your visit to Congaree NP?
   O Yes  O No  O Not sure

6. Would you and your personal group be supportive of the control and removal of non-native species at Congaree NP? Please mark (●) only one for each option.
   a) Non-native plants  O Yes  O No  O Not sure
   b) Non-native animals  O Yes  O No  O Not sure

7. On this trip, what was the primary reason that you and your personal group came to the Congaree NP area (within 1-hour drive of the park)? Please mark (●) only one.
   O Resident of the area (within 1-hour drive of the park)  Go to Question 8
   O Visit Congaree NP
   O Visit other attractions in the area
   O Visit friends/relatives in the area
   O Traveling through – unplanned visit
   O Business
   O Other (Please specify) ____________________________________________________________

8. On this visit, which sites did you and your personal group visit in the Congaree NP area (within 1-hour drive of the park)? Please mark (●) all that apply.
   O EdVenture
   O Columbia Metropolitan Airport
   O Lake Murray
   O Columbia Museum of Art
   O National Advocacy Center
   O Ft. Jackson Army Training Center
   O Riverbanks Zoo
   O Harbison State Forest
   O Shaw Air Force Base
   O The State Capitol
   O South Carolina State Museum
   O University of South Carolina
   O South Carolina State Parks
   O Other (Please specify) ____________________________________________________________

9. a) On this trip, did you and your personal group stay overnight away from your permanent residence either inside Congaree NP or within the nearby area (within 1-hour drive of the park)?
   O Yes  O No  ➔ Go to Question 10

   b) and c) If YES, how many nights did you and your personal group spend in the following types of accommodations? Please write the number of nights stayed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b) Number of nights inside park</th>
<th>c) Number of nights outside park within 1-hour drive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Lodge, hotel, motel, cabin, rented condo/home, or bed &amp; breakfast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>RV/trailer camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Tent camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Backcountry camping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Personal seasonal residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Residence of friends or relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Other accommodations (Please specify below)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inside park ___________________________ Outside park ___________________________

10. a) On this visit to Congaree NP, did you and your personal group walk/canoe/kayak any park trails?
   O Yes  O No  ➔ Go on to Question 11
b) If YES, which of the following trails did you and your personal group walk/canoe/kayak on this visit? Please mark (•) all that apply.

- Cedar Creek Wilderness Canoe Trail
- Elevated Boardwalk Trail
- Low Boardwalk Trail
- Oakridge Trail
- Weston Lake Loop Trail
- Bluff Trail
- Kingsnake Trail
- River Trail
- Sims Trail

11. On this visit, in which activities did you and your personal group participate within Congaree NP? Please mark (•) all that apply.

- Citizen Science program
- Exercising (jogging, rollerblading, etc.)
- Nature study (other than birdwatching)
- Ranger-led programs
- Visiting the visitor center
- Walking dogs
- Walking/hiking

12. On this visit, how many vehicles did you and your personal group use to arrive at the park? Please write "0" if you did not arrive by vehicle.

- Number of vehicles

13. a) How long did you and your personal group stay in the Congaree NP area (within 1-hour drive of the park)? Please list partial hours/days as ¼, ½, ¾.

- Resident of the area → Go to part b of this question on next page

- Number of hours if less than 24 hours
- OR -
- Number of days if 24 hours or more

14. It is the National Park Service’s responsibility to protect Congaree NP natural, scenic, and cultural resources while at the same time providing for public enjoyment. How important is protection of the following resources/attributes in the park to you and your personal group? Please mark (•) one answer for each resource/attribute.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource/attribute</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Moderately important</th>
<th>Very important</th>
<th>Extremely important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clean air (visibility)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean water</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear night sky (star gazing)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural history (photographs/artifacts/oral histories)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Designated wilderness/backcountry</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational opportunities</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic buildings/archeological sites</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native plants</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native wildlife</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural quiet/sounds of nature</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking availability</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational opportunities</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenic views</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solitude</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15. a) Prior to this visit were you and your personal group aware that Congaree NP is home to the Old-Growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center, one of 21 centers nationwide?

- Yes
- No
b) Did you and your personal group notice any scientists, scientific markers, or scientific equipment at work while you were in the park?

O Yes  O No

c) Did you and your personal group – through programs and products – learn about actual results of scientific studies at the park?

O Yes  O No

16. a) Please mark (•) all of the information services and facilities that you or your personal group used at Congaree NP during this visit.

b) For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.

c) For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their quality from 1-5.

a) Information services/facilities used?
Mark (•)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>b) If used, how important?</th>
<th>c) If used, what quality?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1=Not important</td>
<td>1=Very poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2=Somewhat important</td>
<td>2=Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3=Moderately important</td>
<td>3=Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4=Very important</td>
<td>4=Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5=Extremely important</td>
<td>5=Very good</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

O Assistance from park staff
O Assistance from park volunteers
O Bulletin boards
O Junior Ranger program
O Park brochure/map
O Park interpretive pamphlets
O Park website (nps.gov/cong) used before or during visit
O Ranger-led talks/programs/walks
O Ranger-guided canoe tours
O Visitor center bookstore sales items (selection, price, etc.)
O Visitor center videos/films/movies
O Visitor center exhibits

17. a) Please mark (•) all of the visitor services and facilities that you or your personal group used at Congaree NP during this visit.

b) For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.

c) For only those services and facilities that you or your personal group used, please rate their quality from 1-5.

a) Visitor services/facilities used?
Mark (•)

O Access for people with disabilities
O Backcountry camping
O Boardwalks
O Campgrounds
O Canoe launches
O Directional signs outside park
O Park directionals signs
O Parking areas
O Picnic areas
O Restrooms
O Trails

18. On this visit, were you and your personal group part of the following types of organized groups?

a) Commercial guided tour group  O Yes  O No
b) School/educational group  O Yes  O No
c) Other (scouts, work, church, etc.)  O Yes  O No
d) If you were with one of these organized groups, how many people, including yourself, were in this group?

_____ Number of people in organized group
19. a) On this visit, what kind of personal group (not guided tour/school/other organized group) were you with?
   - O Alone
   - O Friends
   - O Family
   - O Family and friends
   - O Other (Please specify) ____________________________

   b) On this visit, how many people were in your personal group, including yourself?
   - Number of people ________

20. For you and your personal group on this visit, please provide the following. (If you do not know the answer, leave blank).

   a) Current age ________
   b) U.S. ZIP code or name of country other than U.S. ________
   c) Past 12 months ________
   d) Lifetime ________
   e) Past 12 months ________
   f) Lifetime ________

21. For you only, what is the highest level of education you have completed? Please mark (•) one.
   - O Some high school
   - O Bachelor’s degree
   - O High school diploma/GED
   - O Graduate degree
   - O Some college

22. a) Does anyone in your personal group have mobility or other physical impairments?
   - O Yes
   - O No ➔ Go on to Question 23

   b) If YES, did anyone in your personal group have a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services?
   - O Yes
   - O No

23. a) Are you or members of your personal group Hispanic or Latino? Please mark (•) one for each group member.

   - O Yes, Hispanic or Latino
   - O No, not Hispanic or Latino

   b) What is your race? What is the race of each member of your personal group? Please mark (•) one or more for you and each group member.

   - O American Indian or Alaska Native
   - O Asian
   - O Black or African American
   - O Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
   - O White

24. a) On this trip, if you and your personal group had not chosen to visit Congaree NP, what other recreation site would you have visited instead?

   b) How far is this alternative site from your home? ________ miles

25. a) Which category best represents your annual household income? Please mark (•) only one.

   - O Less than $24,999
   - O $25,000-$34,999
   - O $35,000-$49,999
   - O $50,000-$74,999
   - O $75,000-$99,999
   - O $100,000-$149,999
   - O $150,000-$199,999
   - O $200,000 or more
   - O Do not wish to answer

   b) How many people are in your household? ________ Number of people

   c) Did your household take any unpaid vacation or take unpaid time off of work to come on this trip?
   - O Yes
   - O No
26. For you and your personal group, please estimate all expenditures for the items listed below for this visit to Congaree NP and the surrounding area (within 1-hour drive of the park). Please write "0" if no money was spent in a particular category.

a) Please list your personal group’s total expenditures inside Congaree NP.

b) Please list your personal group’s total expenditures in the surrounding area outside the park (within 1-hour drive of the park).

NOTE: Surrounding area residents should only include expenditures that were just for this trip to Congaree NP.

EXPENDITURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>a) Inside park</th>
<th>b) Outside park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, B&amp;B, etc.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping fees and charges</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canoe/kayak rental charges</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide fees and charges</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants and bars</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groceries and takeout food</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas and oil (auto, RV, boat, etc.)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other transportation expenses (rental cars, taxis, auto repairs, but NOT airfare)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admission, recreation, entertainment fees</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All other purchases (souvenirs, film, books, sporting goods, clothing, etc.)</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donations</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
<td>$_____________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

c) How many people do the above expenses cover?

_________ Adults (18 years or over)  _________ Children (under 18 years)

Please write "0" if no children were covered by the expenditures.

27. Overall, how would you rate the quality of the facilities, services, and recreational opportunities provided to you and your personal group at Congaree NP during this visit? Please mark (*) one:

Very poor  Poor  Average  Good  Very good

28. Would you and your group be likely to visit Congaree NP again in the future?

O Yes  O No  O Not sure

29. Please indicate how the following elements may have affected you and your personal group’s park experience during this visit to Congaree NP. Please mark (*) only one for each element.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affect your park experience?</th>
<th>Detracted from</th>
<th>No effect</th>
<th>Added to</th>
<th>Did not experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Airplane noise</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automobile noise</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunshots from neighboring lands</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noise from park staff activities (such as chainsaws, leaf blowers, generators, etc.)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Train noise</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other visitors’ activities</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small number of visitors on trails</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large number of visitors on trails</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small number of visitors canoeing/kayaking</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large number of visitors canoeing/kayaking</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of wild pigs</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Please specify)</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>O</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

30. If you were to visit Congaree NP in the future, which types of organized activities and programs would you and your personal group like to have available? Please mark (*) all that apply.

O Not interested in organized activities/programs ➔ Go on to Question 31

O Art/photography  O History tours

O Bird walks  O Night walk/night sky program

O Camping (family)  O Outdoor recreation workshop

O Camping (educational)  O Owl prowls

O Canoeing/kayaking  O Ranger-led programs

O Children’s programs  O Special events/festivals

O Family activities  O Volunteer opportunities (ways to help the park)

O Other (Please specify) ________________________________
31. If you were to visit Congaree NP in the future, which subjects would you and your personal group like to learn about? Please mark (●) all that apply.

- [ ] Not interested in learning about these subjects
- [ ] Challenges facing park
- [ ] Champion trees
- [ ] Climate change
- [ ] Current research
- [ ] History
- [ ] International Biosphere Reserve
- [ ] Recreational opportunities (canoeing/kayaking, fishing, camping, etc.)
- [ ] Other (Please specify)

32. a) What did you and your personal group like most about your visit to Congaree NP?


b) What did you and your personal group like least about your visit to Congaree NP?


33. Congaree NP was established because of its significance to the nation. In your opinion, what is the national significance of this park?


34. If you were a manager planning for the future of Congaree NP what would you and your personal group propose?


35. Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Congaree NP?


Thank you for your help! Please seal the questionnaire in the postage paid envelope provided and drop it in any U.S. mailbox.
Appendix 2: Additional Analysis

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn from VSP visitor study data through additional analysis. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made with any questions.

Below are some examples of the types of cross tabulations that can be requested. To make a request, please use the contact information below, and include your name, address and phone number in the request.

1. What proportion of family groups with children attend interpretive programs?

2. Is there a correlation between visitors’ ages and their preferred sources of information about the park?

3. Are highly satisfied visitors more likely to return for a future visit?

4. How many international visitors participate in hiking?

5. What ages of visitors would use the park website as a source of information on a future visit?

6. Is there a correlation between visitor groups’ rating of the overall quality of their park experience and their ratings of individual services and facilities?

7. Do larger visitor groups (e.g., four or more) participate in different activities than smaller groups?

8. Do frequent visitors rate the overall quality of their park experiences differently than less frequent visitors?

The VSP database website (http://vsp.uidaho.edu) allows data searches for comparisons of data from one or more parks.

For more information please contact:

Visitor Services Project, PSU
College of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 441139
University of Idaho
Moscow, ID 83843-1139

Phone: 208-885-2585
Fax: 208-885-4261
Email: lenale@uidaho.edu
Website: http://www.psu.uidaho.edu
Appendix 3: Decision Rules for Checking Nonresponse Bias

There are several methods for checking nonresponse bias. However, the most common way is to use some demographic indicators to compare between respondents and nonrespondents (Dey 1997; Salant and Dillman 1994; Dillman and Carley-Baxter 2000; Dillman, 2007; Stoop 2004). In this study, we used five variables: group type, group size, age of the group member (at least 16 years old) completing the survey, whether the park was the primary destination for the visit, and visitor’s place of residence proximity to the park to check for nonresponse bias.

Chi-square tests were used to detect the difference in the response rates among different group types, whether the park was the primary destination for this visit, and visitor’s place of residence and proximity to the park. The hypothesis was that there is no significant difference across different categories (or groups) between respondents and nonrespondents. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference between respondents and nonrespondents is judged to be insignificant.

Two independent-sample T-tests were used to test the differences between respondent’s and non-respondent’s average age and group size. The p-values represent the significance levels of these tests. If p-value is greater than 0.05, the two groups are judged to be insignificantly different.

Therefore, the hypotheses for checking nonresponse bias are:

1. Respondents from different group types are equally represented
2. Respondents and nonrespondents are not significantly different in term of proximity from their home to the park
3. Respondents and nonrespondents are not significantly different in term of reason for visiting the park
4. Average age of respondents – average age of nonrespondents = 0
5. Average group size of respondents – average group size of nonrespondents = 0

As shown in Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5, the p-value for respondent/nonrespondent comparisons except for group size were less than 0.05, indicating significant differences between respondents and nonrespondents. The results indicate some biases occurred due to nonresponse. Visitors at younger age ranges (especially 35 and younger), came from the local area (within a 50 mile radius), visitors traveling with friends, and visitors indicated park as primary reason to visit the area were underrepresented in the survey results. Results of the study in this report only reflect the simple frequencies. Inferences of the survey results should be weighted to counter balance the effects of nonresponse bias.
References


The Department of the Interior protects and manages the nation’s natural resources and cultural heritage; provides scientific and other information about those resources; and honors its special responsibilities to American Indians, Alaska Natives, and affiliated Island Communities.

NPS 178/116698, August 2012