
Visitor Services Project Lowell National Historical Park Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Lowell National Historical Park during August 3-9, 1997. A total of 560 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 471 questionnaires for an 84% response rate.
- This report profiles Lowell National Historical Park visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Fifty-nine percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Forty-four percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Forty percent of visitors were aged 36-55.
- Seventy-two percent of visitors were making their first visit to Lowell National Historical Park of the past five years. Sixty-two percent of visitor groups spent from two to four hours at the park.
- International visitors (6% of total visitation) came from fourteen countries, including England (30%) and Canada (27%). United States visitors were from Massachusetts (43%), New Hampshire (10%), California (5%), New York (5%), 32 other states and the District of Columbia.
- On this visit, the most common activities were visiting the visitor center (86%), viewing exhibits (66%) and visiting the Boot Cotton Mills Museum (65%).
- Friends or relatives (38%), travel guides or tour books (22%), and previous visit(s) (21%) were the most used sources of information by visitor groups prior to their visit.
- Sixty-four percent of visitor groups indicated that learning about industrial history was a primary reason for visiting Lowell National Historic Park. Ninety-three percent of visitors felt they had a better understanding of the park's national significance as a result of their visit.
- Forty-eight percent of respondents said that Lowell National Historical Park was their primary destination, while 33% reported that it was one of several destinations. Nineteen percent responded that the park was not a planned destination.
- In regard to the use, importance, and quality of facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. According to visitors, the services and facilities that were most commonly used were restrooms (81%), parking (75%), and the visitor center museum exhibit (69%). The most important facilities were the Boot Mill museum exhibit (95% of 252 respondents), the canal tour (93% of 182 respondents), and restrooms (92% of 324 respondents). The highest quality facilities were the Boot Mills museum exhibit (95% of 245 respondents), restrooms (92% of 320 respondents) and the canal tour (92% of 177 respondents).
- Most visitors (77%) felt safe during their visit to the park. Those who did not feel safe listed a number of reasons for feeling unsafe, including dangerous looking people, groups of teens hanging around and walking through a rundown area.
- Fifty-six percent of visitor groups spent from \$1 to \$50 on lodging, travel, food or "other" items such as souvenirs, film and gifts in Lowell, Massachusetts, while 19% spent no money in Lowell. Of the total expenditures by groups, 39% was for food and 20% was for lodging. The average visitor group expenditure during this visit was \$45; the average per capita expenditure was \$23.
- Seventy-six percent of visitors felt the \$4 fee for the Boot Cotton Mills Museum was about right and 80% said that the \$4 fee for the canal boat tour was about right.
- Ninety-seven percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services at Lowell National Historical Park as "very good" or "good." No groups rated services as "very poor."
- Visitors made many additional comments.

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the
University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit; phone (208) 885-7129 or 885-7863.
