
Visitor Services Project
Kenai Fjords National Park - Exit Glacier
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at the Exit Glacier Area of Kenai Fjords National Park during August 5-11, 1999. The report contains two separate results sections. A section entitled *General Visitor Population Results* contains information on the general visitor population to the Exit Glacier Area. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to visitors at the Exit Glacier parking lot. Visitors returned 331 questionnaires for an 83% response rate for this portion of the study. A second section entitled *Harding Icefield Trail Oversample Results* includes information on a separate sample of visitors hiking the Harding Icefield Trail. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed on the Harding Icefield Trail. Visitors returned 123 questionnaires for an 82% response rate for this portion of the study.

General Exit Glacier Visitor Population Results

- This report section profiles Exit Glacier Area visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
 - Sixty-five percent of the visitor groups were family groups, 15% were with friends and 10% were with family & friends. Forty-one percent of visitors were groups of two; 23% were in groups of four. Approximately one-half of visitors (52%) were aged 26-55 and 14% were aged 15 years or younger.
 - Eighty-two percent of visitors were making their first visit to Kenai Fjords National Park. Ninety-two percent of the visitor groups spent less than a day at the park and 5% spent one or two days. Of those groups that spent less than a day at the park, 59% spent two or three hours.
 - United States visitors were from Alaska (19%), California (12%), Minnesota (6%), Washington (6%), 40 other states and Washington, D.C. International visitors comprised 8% of the total visitation. The countries represented included Germany (24%), Japan (19%), England (8%), Switzerland (8%), and 11 other countries.
 - On this visit, the most common activities were taking photographs (97%), touching the glacier (66%) and visiting the Exit Glacier ranger station (47%).
 - The sources of information most used by visitor groups prior to their trip were travel guides and tourbooks (44%), friends and relatives (35%) and *Milepost* magazine (27%).
 - In regard to the use, importance and quality of services, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The services that were most used by 310 respondents were the parking lot (86%), roads (73%) and restrooms (73%). According to visitors, the most important facilities were the Harding Icefield Trail (93% of 89 respondents), restrooms (90% of 217 respondents) and other trails (88% of 110 respondents). The highest quality services were other trails (92% of 106 respondents) and the Harding Icefield Trail (90% of 90 respondents).
 - Forty-three percent of visitor groups spent over \$351 on lodging, travel, food or "other" items such as clothing, film and gifts in the Kenai Fjords National Park area. Of the total expenditures by groups, 36% were for tours and admission fees and 25% were for lodging.
 - Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups reported the level of crowding of people at the Exit Glacier Area was "not at all crowded" and 38% reported it "somewhat crowded." Fifty-two percent of visitor groups reported that the level of crowding of vehicles at the Exit Glacier area was "not at all crowded" and 41% reported it "somewhat crowded." Seventy-four percent of visitor groups reported that a "shuttle system from off-site parking area" was an "acceptable" option for limiting visitor congestion at the Exit Glacier area.
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- Eighty-nine percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services in the Exit Glacier Area at Kenai Fjords National Park as "very good" or "good." Less than one percent of groups rated services as "very poor." Visitors made many 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.
