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**Visitor Services Project**  
**Badlands National Park Visitor Study**  
**Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study in Badlands National Park from August 2-8, 2000. A total of 798 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 639 questionnaires for an 80.1% response rate.
- This report profiles visitors at Badlands National Park. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Over one-half of the visitor groups (61%) were in family groups. Thirty-nine percent of visitor groups were in groups of two. Forty percent of visitors were aged 36-55 years; 22% were aged 15 years or younger. One-half of the visitors (50%) had a bachelor's or higher degree.
- United States visitors were from Minnesota (10%), Wisconsin (10%), Illinois (8%), Michigan (8%), 40 other states and Washington D.C. International visitors comprised 7% of Badlands visitation, with 38% from Canada, 17% from England, 14% from Germany and the remainder from 11 other countries.
- Most visitors (65%) were making their first visit to Badlands National Park. Eighty-three percent of the visitor groups spent less than one day at the park. Of those groups that spent less than a day at the park, 74% spent four hours or less.
- On this visit, the most common activities were viewing scenery (100%), visiting the visitor center (74%) and viewing roadside exhibits (73%).
- The most used sources of information were travel guides or tour books (48%), friends or relatives (42%), previous visits (39%) and word of mouth (25%). For future visits, visitors selected the internet-Badlands NP home page (55%), travel guide/ tour book (47%) and previous visits (35%) as their preferred methods of obtaining information.
- The features or qualities of Badlands NP receiving the highest importance rating included preservation of native prairie (75%), experiencing wildness (70%), and natural quiet (70%).
- On this visit, the most commonly visited sites within Badlands NP were the Pinnacles Overlook (67%), Ben Reifel visitor center (65%), Journey Overlook picnic area (39%), and Roberts Prairie dog town (37%).
- In regard to the use, importance and quality of information services, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The information services that were most used by 560 respondents were the park brochure/map (92%) and the visitor center exhibits (67%). According to visitors, the most important information services were visitor center staff (86% of 260 respondents) and park brochure/map (84% of 492 respondents). The highest quality information services were visitor center staff (86% of 256 respondents) and park brochure/map (84% of 475 respondents).
- The visitor services and facilities that were most used by 560 respondents were the paved roads (87%) and the overlooks (77%). According to visitors, the most important visitor services and facilities were overlooks (93% of 418 respondents) and Cedar Pass campground (93% of 43 respondents). The highest quality services and facilities were overlooks (95% of 407 respondents) and paved roads (89% of 455 respondents).
- Ninety-four percent of Badlands visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services at Badlands National Park as "very good" or "good." 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.

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