

Visitor Services Project
Valley Forge National Historical Park
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Valley Forge National Historical Park (NHP) during August 11-19, 2001. A total of 755 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 550 questionnaires for a 72.8% response rate.
- This report profiles Valley Forge NHP visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Forty percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Forty-six percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Fifty-two percent of visitors were aged 31-55 years and 21% were aged 15 or younger.
- United States visitors were from Pennsylvania (53%), New Jersey (6%), New York (4%), 34 other states and Washington, D.C. Four percent of all visitors were international, with 16% from France, 13% from England, and 11% from Taiwan.
- Most visitor groups (68%) had visited the park previously. Of those visitor groups, 31% had visited several times a month in the last year. Most visitor groups (99%) visited the park in the summer during the last three years, 56% in spring and 55% in fall.
- On this visit, the most common activities were walking/running/jogging/hiking (65%), visiting historic structures (60%) and driving for pleasure (40%).
- Previous visits (53%), friends or relatives (42%), and travel guides/tour books (24%) were the most used sources of information about the park prior to visiting. On future trips to Valley Forge NHP, 47% of visitor groups said that the internet/web site would be their preferred method of obtaining information in planning their visit, 37% said they would use previous visit, and 35% would use travel guides/tour books.
- Most visitor groups (79%) said they were aware of the National Park Service management of the site, 17% were not aware, and 4% were not sure.
- Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups used Highway 23 (eastern side of park) to enter the park, 18% used Highway 23 (western side of park) and Trooper Road/Rt. 363, and 15% used Pawling's Road.
- The most commonly visited sites in the park were the Visitor Center (55%), National Memorial Arch (45%), Washington's Headquarters (43%) and Muhlenberg's Brigade (37%). The sites most frequently visited first included the Visitor Center (49%), Schuylkill River Trail (14%), and Pawling's Parking Area (11%).
- Most visitor groups (86%) indicated that they felt "very safe" during their visit to Valley Forge NHP, 10% felt "somewhat safe," and 2% had "no opinion."
- The average visitor group expenditure was \$143. The average per capita expenditure was \$56. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of group spent more, 50% spent less) was \$19. Thirty-two percent of visitor groups spent no money and 39% spent between \$1 and \$100 in total expenditures in Valley Forge NHP. Of the total expenditures by groups, 47% was for lodging, and 23% was for restaurants and bars.
- Most visitor groups (92%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at Valley Forge NHP as "very good" or "good." No visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "very poor."

