

**Visitor Services Project**  
**Apostle Islands National Lakeshore**  
**Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Apostle Islands National Lakeshore (NL) during July 24 - August 1, 2004. A total of 671 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Visitor groups returned 505 questionnaires for a 75% response rate.
- This report profiles Apostle Islands NL 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 had two people, 28% had three or four people, and 22% had six or more people. Many visitor groups consisted of family (47%) and friends (24%). Fifty-nine percent of visitors were ages 36-60 years and 11% were ages 15 years or younger.
- International visitors, comprising 2% of the total visitation, were from Canada (38%), France (13%), Spain (13%), and 5 other countries. United States visitors were from Wisconsin (42%), Minnesota (33%), Illinois (5%), and 30 other states.
- When asked to list the number of visits to the park during 2004, 72% of visitors said this was their first visit of the year. One-third of groups (33%) were visiting for the first time in their lifetime. Visitor groups were asked how long they spent in Apostle Islands, including the waters within 1/4-mile of any park land. For those who spent less than 24 hours, the average length of stay was 5.5 hours. For those who spent 24 hours or more, the average length of stay was 4.6 days.
- Forty-eight percent of visitors said their primary reason for visiting the area was to visit Apostle Islands NL. The most visited places included Bayfield, WI (65%), Madeline Island (31%), Stockton Island, Meyers Beach/Sea Caves, and Raspberry Island (each 28%). Lack of time (57%) was the most common reason for not visiting the park islands, while 20% said they didn't own a boat. The most used form of transportation to visit the park was a private vehicle (68%), followed by foot (27%), kayak (25%), powerboat (21%), sailboat (15%) and commercial cruise boat (14%).
- Most groups (77%) stayed overnight away from home in the park or in the area within a 30-mile or 45-minute drive of Bayfield, WI. In the park, 72% of visitors stayed from one to three nights; outside the park 79% stayed from one to three nights. The most common types of lodging used: in the park—on a boat (51%) or at an island campsite (38%) and outside the park—car or RV campground (31%) or a motel (30%).
- The average visitor group expenditure during the visit was \$586. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$270. The average per capita expenditure was \$164.
- In regard to use, importance, and quality of park services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used visitor services/facilities by the 432 respondents included the park brochure/map (54%), vault toilets/outhouses (53%), and trails (51%). The visitor services/facilities that received highest combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included campsites (96%, N=89), trails (82%, N=206), vault toilets/ outhouses (82%, N=220), and cruise boat tour (81%, N=58). The Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center (97%, N=97), ranger programs/tours (95%, N=70), and park brochure/map (88%, N=201) received highest combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings.
- Most visitor groups (92%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at Apostle Islands NL as "very good" or "good." One percent of groups rated the overall quality as "very poor" or "poor."

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please visit the University of Idaho  
Park Studies Unit website: [www.psu.uidaho.edu](http://www.psu.uidaho.edu)