

Visitor Services Project
Manzanar National Historic Site
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Manzanar National Historic Site (NHS) during August 28 – September 5, 2004. A total of 360 questionnaires was distributed to visitor groups. Visitor groups returned 276 questionnaires for a 77% response rate.
- This report profiles Manzanar NHS visitors. A separate appendix contains visitor comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Forty-five percent of visitor groups had two people and 33% had three or four people. Most visitor groups (66%) were family groups. Forty-three percent of visitors were ages 41-60 years and 16% were ages 15 years or younger.
- International visitors comprised 3% of the total visitation, but the countries represented must be viewed with CAUTION due to the small number of respondents. United States visitors were from California (88%), Nevada (3%), Washington (1%), and 18 other states. Four percent of visitors did not speak English as their primary language. Seven percent of visitors were of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity. The most common racial backgrounds of visitors were White (69%) and Asian (31%). Within the Asian race group, most visitors were Japanese (81%).
- Most visitors (61%) were visiting the park for the first time in their lifetime, although 39% had visited more than once. The sites that groups most frequently visited were the interpretive center (93%) and the cemetery (53%).
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Manzanar NHS from highway signs (52%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (50%), and previous visits (42%). Twenty-four percent of groups received no information before their visit. For future visits, 61% of visitors would prefer to use the Manzanar park website as their source of information.
- Fifty-six percent of groups stayed overnight away from home in the Manzanar NHS/Owens Valley area (including Bishop, Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine). Of groups staying outside the park, 42% stayed one night and 24% spent two nights. The most common types of lodging used outside the park were a lodge/motel/cabin (73%) and tent camping (22%).
- The average visitor group expenditure in and outside the park (in the area including Bishop, Big Pine, Independence, and Lone Pine) was \$275. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of group spent more, 50% spent less) was \$150. The average per capita expenditure was \$106.
- Visitors were asked to rate the importance and quality of park services and facilities that they used. It is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used visitor services/facilities by the 228 respondents included the interpretive center exhibits (94%), parking areas (88%), and restrooms (82%). The visitor service/facility that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings was the interpretive center exhibits (99%, N=210). The interpretive center exhibits (97%, N=204) also received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings.
- Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at Manzanar NHS as "very good" or "good." No visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "very poor."

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