

**Visitor Services Project  
Yellowstone National Park  
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Yellowstone National Park (NP) during July 23-29, 2006. A total of 1,302 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 903 questionnaires were returned (806 paper questionnaires and 97 online questionnaires), resulting in a 69.4% response rate.
- This report profiles a systematic random sample of Yellowstone NP visitors. Most results are presented in graphs and frequency tables. Summaries of visitor comments are included in the report and complete comments are included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.
- Forty-six percent of visitor groups were in groups of two or three, 31% were in groups of four or five, and 18% were groups of six or more. Seventy-one percent of visitor groups were family groups. Fifty-one percent of visitors were ages 36-65 years and 25% were ages 15 years or younger. Three percent of respondents were of Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Ninety-five percent of respondents were White, 3% were Asian, and 2% were American Indian or Alaska Native.
- United States visitors were from California (12%), Utah (10%), Idaho (5%), Colorado (5%), Washington (5%), Texas (5%), and 43 other states and Washington, D.C. International visitors, comprising 10% of the total visitation, were from Canada (25%), Netherlands (17%), Germany (10%), United Kingdom (9%), Italy (7%), and 17 other countries.
- Fifty-three percent of visitors visited the park for the first time in their life. Eighty-seven percent of visitors visited the park once in the past 12 months. Visiting Yellowstone NP was the primary reason that brought 60% of visitor groups to the area (within 150 miles of park).
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Yellowstone NP through maps/ brochures (56%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (55%), and previous visits (53%). Nine percent of visitor groups did not obtain any information about the park before their visit. To prepare for a future visit, 70% of visitors would prefer to use the park website.
- Of the visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours at the park (N=338), 82% spent five or more hours and 18% spent up to four hours. Of the visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more at the park (N=347), 53% spent two or three days and 44% spent four or more days. Most visitor groups (87%) stayed overnight away from home in the park or within 150 miles of the park.
- The most common sites visited in the park included Old Faithful (90%) and Mammoth Hot Springs (69%). The most common activities in the park were sightseeing/taking a scenic drive (96%) and viewing wildlife/ birdwatching (86%). Sightseeing/taking a scenic drive (59%) was the activity that was the primary reason for visiting the park.
- The most common commercial services used were purchasing gifts/souvenirs (76%) and restaurants/food service (76%). For commercial services, most visitor groups rated quality as “about what was expected.”
- Regarding use, importance, and quality of concession services and activities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used services/activities included the trail ride (28%), scenic motorized tour (23%), and cookout (20%). The services/activities that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included scenic motorized tour (65%, N=31) and trail ride (57%, N=44). The service/activity that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings was trail ride (84%, N=44).
- Most visitor groups (89%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Yellowstone NP as “very good” or “good.” Less than 2% of visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho at (208) 885-7863 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>