

**Visitor Services Project
Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site (NHS) during June 15 – July 13, 2007, which included the annual Rendezvous special event and general visitors. A total of 629 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups (365 to general visitors 264 and questionnaires to Rendezvous visitors). Of those, 475 questionnaires (283 general and 192 Rendezvous) were returned resulting in an overall 75.4% response rate.
 - This report profiles a systematic random sample of Fort Union Trading Post NHS 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.
 - Fifty-four percent of general visitor groups and 36% of Rendezvous visitor groups were in groups of two. Twenty-three percent of general and 34% of Rendezvous visitors were in groups of three or four. Sixty-eight percent of general and 63% of Rendezvous visitor groups were made up of family members.
 - Among the general visitor groups, United States visitors were from 46 states and comprised 97% of total general visitation to the park during the survey period. Fifteen percent of U.S. visitors came from North Dakota and 9% were from Montana. Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 44 other states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico.
 - Of the Rendezvous visitor groups, U.S. visitors were from 24 states and comprised almost 100% of total Rendezvous visitation to the park during the survey period. There was one international visitor. Forty-seven percent of U.S. visitors came from North Dakota and 38% came from Montana. Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 22 other states.
 - General visitor ages ranged from 1 to 87 years. Rendezvous visitor ages ranged from 1 to 92 years. Fifty-one percent of general visitors and 31% of Rendezvous visitors were aged 51-70 years. Fourteen percent of general visitors and 27% of Rendezvous visitors were 15 years or younger. Respondent gender was 52% male and 48% female for general visitors, and 42% male and 58% female for Rendezvous visitors.
 - Two percent of general visitors and 1% of Rendezvous visitors were Hispanic or Latino. Race was most often White (general visitors 94%, Rendezvous visitors 95%) and American Indian or Alaska Native (3% general visitors, 5% Rendezvous visitors). Most visitor groups preferred to speak and read English.
 - Physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities/services were found in 14% of general visitor groups and 16% of Rendezvous visitor groups. Thirty-eight percent of general visitors and 43% Rendezvous visitors had difficulty with access. Most often, the fort (62% general visitors, 31% Rendezvous visitors) caused the access problems. Among visitors who had access problems, mobility conditions were the most common reasons.
 - Most general visitors (80%) were visiting the park for the first time, while 59% of Rendezvous visitors had visited two or more times. Thirty-one percent of Rendezvous visitors had visited five or more times.
 - Prior to this visit, general visitor groups most often obtained information about Fort Union Trading Post NHS through maps and brochures (54%), travel guides/tour books publications (45%), and friends/relatives/word of mouth (33%). Rendezvous visitor groups obtained information from previous visits (66%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (51%) and newspaper/magazine articles (47%). Ten percent of general visitor groups and 4% of Rendezvous visitor groups did not obtain any information about the park prior to their visit.
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- Most general visitor groups (73%) spent less than two hours in the park. The average time spent was 2.1 hours. Most Rendezvous visitor groups (78%) spent two or more hours in the park. The average time spent was 3.7 hours.
- Seventy-nine percent of general visitor groups and 27% of Rendezvous visitor groups stayed overnight away from home, with 42% of general visitor groups and 39% of Rendezvous visitor groups staying one night. Thirty-four percent of general visitor groups and 36% of Rendezvous visitor groups spent two or three nights. One-half of the general visitor groups and 35% of Rendezvous visitor groups stayed in lodges, hotels, motels, cabins, bed and breakfasts, etc., while 32% of general visitor groups and 27% of Rendezvous visitor groups camped in a developed campground.
- Regarding use, importance, and quality of visitor services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most commonly used visitor services and facilities by general visitor groups included museum exhibits (91%), park brochure/map (77%), and Trade House (77%). The most commonly used visitor services and facilities by Rendezvous visitor groups included restrooms (71%), Trade House (64%), and museum exhibits (60%).
- The services/facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings by general visitor groups were restrooms (88%), Trade House (85%), and museum exhibits (85%). The services/facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings by Rendezvous visitor groups were restrooms (87%), living history/costumed interpretation (83%), and assistance from information desk staff (81%).
- The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings by general visitor groups were living history/costumed interpretation (94%) and assistance from information desk staff (94%). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings by Rendezvous visitor groups were Trade House (91%), living history/costumed interpretation (90%), and park brochure/map (90%).
- The average group expenditure in and outside the park (within 100 miles) was \$248 for general visitor groups and \$121 for Rendezvous visitor groups, with a median (50% spent more and 50% spent less) of \$150 for general visitor groups and \$66 for Rendezvous visitor groups. The average total expenditure per person was \$98 for general visitor groups and \$66 for Rendezvous visitor groups.
- Ninety-two percent of both general visitors and Rendezvous visitors rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Fort Union Trading Post NHS as “very good” or “good.” One percent or less 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>.