

**Visitor Services Project
Horseshoe Bend National Military Park
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Horseshoe Bend National Military Park (NMP) during March 22 - April 19, 2008. A total of 392 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 231 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 60% response rate.
- This report profiles a systematic random sample of Horseshoe Bend NMP. 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.
- Thirty-seven percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 27% were in groups of three or four. Sixty-eight percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
- United States visitors comprised 99.5% of total visitors, with 78% from Alabama and smaller proportions from 21 other states. International visitors represented less than 1% of total visitation and this data must be viewed with caution.
- Forty-six percent of visitors were ages 36-65 years, 10% were over 65 years, and 29% were ages 15 years or younger. Eight percent of visitor groups reported physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services.
- Fifty-five percent of visitors had visited the park once in their lifetime and 18% had visited five or more times.
- Ninety percent of visitor groups visited the visitor center, 77% visited the Battlefield/Barricade site and 74% visited the Battlefield overlook. Forty-one percent of visitors visited Wind Creek State Park and 32% visited Cheaha State Park during their trip.
- The most common activities visitor groups participated in were learning about American Indian history (82%), learning about the War of 1812 (66%), and taking the auto tour (57%).
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Horseshoe Bend NMP through previous visits (41%) and friends/relatives/word of mouth (35%). Eighty-seven percent of visitors obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Fifty-four percent indicated they would prefer to obtain information from the park website for a future visit.
- Prior to this visit, 65% percent of visitor groups were aware of the prescribed fire policy and 67% were willing to tolerate short periods (up to 2 days) of occasional smoke or reduced visibility caused by prescribed burns.
- Regarding use, importance, and quality of visitor services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups (see N= below) that responded to each question. The most used visitor services/facilities included restrooms (85%) and visitor center exhibits (82%). The visitor services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included park orientation film (94% N=94) and visitor center exhibits (93%, N=169). The visitor services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were park orientation film (96%, N=92) and living history/costumed interpretation (96%, N=95).
- Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups visited Horseshoe Bend NMP during the anniversary of the battle weekend (March 29-30, 2008). Of these, 84% participated in the Creek hunting camp demonstrations. Compared to their expectations 45% of visitor groups felt the park was less crowded than expected.
- Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities as “very good” or “good.”

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>.