
Visitor Services Project
Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (NHS) during April 19-27, 2008. A total of 338 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 259 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 76.6% response rate.
 - This report profiles a systematic random sample of Carl Sandburg Home NHS. 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 percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 29% were in groups of three or more. Fifty-three percent of visitor groups were in family groups and 22% were alone.
 - United States visitors comprised 99% of total visitors, with 63% from North Carolina, 10% from South Carolina, and smaller proportions from 27 other states. International visitors represented less than 1% of total visitation, but this data should be viewed with CAUTION! due to the low number of respondents.
 - Forty-one percent of visitors were ages 56-70 years, 11% were 71 years or older, and 15% were ages 15 years or younger. Thirty-five percent of visitor groups reported physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services. Seventy-six percent of visitor groups had members who had difficulty walking from the parking lot to the Sandburg Home.
 - Regarding respondents' level of education, 34% had a graduate degree, 30% had a bachelor's degree, and 29% had some college education.
 - Forty-two percent of visitor groups visited the park for the first time, while 30% had visited occasionally during the year, but not every month.
 - Prior to this visit, 89% of visitor groups were aware of who Carl Sandburg was. Fifty-six percent of visitor groups learned about him in a school class/program and 38% knew about him because they live near his home.
 - Eighty-nine percent of visitors obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Carl Sandburg Home NHS through previous visits (53%) and friends/relatives/word of mouth (47%). Forty-six percent indicated that for a future visit, they would prefer to obtain information from the park website.
 - Forty-eight percent of visitor groups spent two hours visiting the park. The average time spent in the park was 1.7 hours. Nine percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day.
 - The most common reasons for visiting the area within 30 miles of the park were to visit friends/relatives in the area (26%) and visit other attractions in the area (24%). The most common reasons for visiting the park were to participate in recreation (48%) and to learn about Carl Sandburg (21%). Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups were residents of the area.
 - The most visited sites were the barn (68%), and the trail around Front Lake (49%). The most common visitor activities included walking/hiking (81%) and visiting goats at the barn (67%).
 - On a future visit, 66% of visitor groups would prefer self-guided tours to learn about the park, and 63% would prefer using exhibits.
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- 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 used visitor services/facilities included parking lot (85%), restrooms (71%), and trails (70%). The visitor services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included Carl Sandburg Home tour (91%, N=84) and trails (88%, N=156). The visitor services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were assistance from park staff (95%, N=72) and Carl Sandburg Home tour (94%, N=77).
- Regarding the importance of protecting the park’s cultural and natural attributes/experiences, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The attributes/experiences that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included clean air (91%, N=243), clean water (89%, N=235), and scenic views (89%, N=240).
- Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of visitor facilities, services and recreational opportunities at Carl Sandburg Home NHS as “very good” or “good.” No 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>.