

**Visitor Services Project
Capitol Reef National Park
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Capitol Reef National Park (NP) during May 24 – June 1, 2008. A total of 615 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 480 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 78% response rate.
 - This report profiles a systematic random sample of Capitol Reef NP. 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.
 - Sixty percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 22% were in groups of three or four. Sixty-eight percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
 - United States visitors comprised 80% of total visitors, with 30% from Utah, 9% from California, and smaller proportions from 43 other states and Puerto Rico. International visitors were from 17 countries and comprised 20% of total visitation, with 31% from Germany, 28% from the Netherlands, and 12% from the United Kingdom. Smaller proportions came from 14 other countries.
 - Sixty-one percent of visitors were ages 31-65 years, 16% were over 65 years, and 10% were ages 15 years or younger. Seven percent of visitor groups reported physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services. Walking/hiking was the most common activity that was difficult to participate in.
 - Sixty-nine percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time. 17% had visited four or more times, and 14% visited three or more times. Fifty-two percent entered the park once during this visit and 22% entered two times. Ninety-one percent of visitors used one vehicle to arrive at the park.
 - Ninety-three percent of visitor groups used English for speaking and reading. Brochures and maps were the most common services desired in languages other than English.
 - For 49% of visitors, taking the scenic drive/viewing scenery was the most common reason for visiting the park. Visiting Capitol Reef NP was the reason that 44% of visitors came to the area.
 - Most visitor groups (88%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Capitol Reef NP through maps/brochures (55%) and travel guides/tour books (55%). Eighty-three percent indicated they would prefer to obtain information for a future visit from the park website.
 - Fifty-three percent of visitor groups used the park website to obtain information and 55% found it to be “very helpful.” Seventy-nine percent indicated they would like the website to include “information to plan your visit,” and 63% would like “information about the park.”
 - The most common site visited by visitor groups was the visitor center (92%), followed by the scenic drive (91%). Thirty-five percent went to the visitor center first, and 29% first visited the Fruita Historic District.
 - The most common visitor activities were viewing scenery (93%), taking photographs/painting/drawing (78%), and hiking (70%). The most important activities were viewing scenery (35%), hiking (35%), and attending ranger-led programs (17%).
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- Seventeen percent of visitor groups attended a ranger-led program or activity, and 52% indicated they would be interested in attending a program in the future. Sixty-seven percent were interested in a program lasting one-half hour to an hour.
- Regarding what they learned during their park visit, 71% of visitor groups learned about geology and 60% learned about pioneer history/orchards. On a future visit, visitor groups indicated they would be interested in learning about geology (84%), American Indian culture/history (75%) and animal life (75%).
- The information services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were the park brochure/map (94%) and the exhibits at the visitor center (74%). The most commonly used visitor services and facilities were roads (97%) and restrooms (90%). All information and visitor services and facilities were rated as above average in their importance and quality.
- Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups visited the park bookstore, and 86% were able to find the sales items in which they were interested. The quality of the bookstore was rated as “very good” or “good” by 81% of visitor groups.
- Eighty percent of visitor groups felt that conducting scientific research about the park’s natural and cultural resources was “extremely important” or “very important,” and 96% felt that such research is a valuable use of public land.
- Of those visitors who stayed overnight in the park or in the area within 100 miles, 44% stayed one night in the park. Thirty percent spent two nights in the area. Of the visitors who stayed overnight inside the park, 86% camped in a developed campground, while of those staying outside the park, 69% stayed in a lodge/motel/cabin, etc.
- The average group expenditure in the park and the surrounding area (within 100 miles) was \$350, with a median (50% spent more and 50% spent less) of \$236. The average total expenditure per person was \$150. Seventy percent had two adults covered by expenditures and 76% had no children covered by expenses.
- Most visitor groups (93%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Capitol Reef National Park as “very good” or “good.” One percent 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>