

Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area (NRA) river visitors during July 31 - August 8, 2010. A total of 1,075 questionnaires was distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 440 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 40.9% response rate.

Group size and type	Thirty-three percent of visitor groups consisted of two people and 26% were in groups of six or more. Fifty-three percent of visitor groups consisted of family members.
State or country of residence	United States visitors comprised 97% of total visitation during the survey period, with 40% from New Jersey, 31% from Pennsylvania, 19% from New York and smaller proportions from 15 other states and Washington, D.C. International visitors came from 13 countries with 32% from Canada and 24% from the United Kingdom.
Frequency of visits	Forty percent of visitors had visited the park six or more times in their lifetime, and 37% were on their first visit in the past five years.
Age	Twenty-seven percent of visitors were ages 26-40 years, 27% were ages 41-55 years, 17% were ages 15 years or younger, and 10% were ages 61 years or older.
Awareness of park management	Prior to their visit, 69% of visitor groups knew that Delaware Water Gap NRA is managed by the National Park Service.
Information sources	A majority of visitor groups (77%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit through previous visits (51%) and friends/relatives/word of mouth (46%), and most (84%) received the information they needed. To obtain information for a future visit, 65% of visitor groups would use the Delaware Water Gap NRA website.
Park as destination	For 73% of visitor groups, Delaware Water Gap NRA was the primary destination.
Reason for visiting park	Sixty-three percent of visitor groups ranked "recreation" as their number one reason for visiting Delaware Water Gap NRA.
Services used in nearby communities	Sixty-six percent of visitor groups sought or obtained support services in nearby communities on this visit, and most (96%) were to obtain needed services. The community most commonly used was Milford, PA (26%).
Overnight stays	Forty-one percent of visitor groups stayed overnight away from home in the park or within 20 miles of the park. Thirty-nine percent stayed two nights inside the park, and 33% stayed one night outside the park.
Accommodations used	The most commonly used accommodation inside the park was tent camping in a developed campground (46%), while the most commonly used accommodation outside the park was a lodge, motel, cabin, rented condo/home or B&B (49%).

Executive summary (continued)

Length of stay	Of those visitor groups that visited less than one day, 32% spent five to six hours visiting the park. Of those that visited for more than one day, 49% spent two days visiting the park. The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 19.9 hours or 0.8 days.
Locations visited in the park	The most common location visited was Milford Beach (34%), followed by Smithfield Beach (33%) and Dingmans Boat Launch (30%).
Activities on previous visits	Eighty-one percent of visitor groups have visited previously. The most common activities in which visitor groups participated on previous visits were viewing scenery/river views/waterfalls (64%) and swimming (59%).
Activities on this visit	The most common activities on this visit were swimming (56%) and viewing scenery/river views/waterfalls (52%), and the most important activity was canoeing with private canoes/kayaks (28%).
Personal canoe/kayak/boat trips	Forty-five percent of visitor groups took a personal (non-livery) canoe/kayak/boat trip. Of those groups, 56% used canoes and 44% used kayaks.
Information services	The most commonly used information services were the park brochure/map (58%), the canoe and boat launch safety signs (33%), and the park website (33%). Seventy-nine percent of visitor groups rented equipment from a commercial outfitter. Of the 74% of visitor groups that received the pre-trip safety and river orientation briefing, 92% felt it was adequate.
Visitor facilities	The visitor services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were the parking lots (67%), followed by the restrooms (other than portables; 59%) and roads (54%).
Protecting park resources and attributes	The highest combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings of protecting park resources and attributes included clean air (95%), river with outstanding water quality (93%), and clean drinking water (89%).
Appropriateness of management actions	One hundred percent of visitor groups were interested in river camping, and 67% would be willing to pay \$10 river campsite reservation fee. Sixty-four percent of visitors indicated that power line expansion through Delaware Water Gap NRA and the Middle Delaware Wild and Scenic River would detract from their park experience.
Expenditures	The average visitor group expenditure (inside and outside the park within 20 miles) was \$287. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$119, and the average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$86.
Overall quality	Most visitor groups (90%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Delaware Water Gap NRA as "very good" or "good." Less than 2% of 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 .
