

## Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Petersburg National Battlefield visitors during July 26 – August 1, 2011. In total, 520 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 256 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 51.9% response rate.

<b>Group size and type</b>	Forty-one percent of visitor groups consisted of two people and 28% were visiting alone. Fifty percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.
<b>State or country of residence</b>	United States visitors were from 37 states and comprised 98% of total visitation during the survey period, with 44% from Virginia. International visitors were from 4 countries and comprised 2% of total visitation during the survey period.
<b>Frequency of visits</b>	Fifty-six percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time, while 21% had visited 4 or more times.
<b>Age, ethnicity, race, and educational level</b>	Thirty percent of visitors were ages 36-55 years, 30% were 56-70 years, 18% were ages 15 years or younger, and 6% were 71 years or older. Seven percent of visitors were Hispanic or Latino. Eighty-seven percent of visitors were White and 8% were Black or African American. Thirty-four percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 31% had a bachelor's degree.
<b>Preferred language for speaking/reading</b>	Most visitor groups (98%) preferred to use English for speaking and reading.
<b>Physical conditions</b>	Five percent of visitor groups had members with physical conditions affecting their ability to access or participate in activities or services.
<b>Information sources</b>	Most visitor groups (75%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit through friends/relatives/word of mouth (42%), maps/brochures (37%), and previous visits (34%). Most visitors (93%) received the information they needed. Fifty-three percent of visitor groups prefer to use the park website to obtain information for a future visit.
<b>Park website</b>	Thirty-five percent of visitor groups used the park website to plan their visit of which 80% obtained the information they needed. Eighty-two percent of visitor groups rated the quality of the park website as “very good” or “good.”
<b>Park as destination</b>	Forty-six percent of visitor groups indicated the park was the primary destination, while 35% indicated the park was one of several destinations.
<b>Transportation</b>	Eighty-eight percent of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park.
<b>Length of stay in the park</b>	Fifty-six percent of visitor groups spent up to two hours visiting the park, while 44% spent three or more hours. The average length of stay visiting park sites was 3.0 hours.
<b>Number of days visiting the park</b>	Thirty-three percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day; of which, 61% visited on three or more days, while 38% visited up to two days.

## Executive Summary (continued)

<b>Length of stay in the area</b>	Thirty-eight percent of visitor groups were residents of the park area (within 25 miles of any park site). Of the visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours in the park, the average length of stay was 4.7 hours. Of the visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more, the average length of stay was 8.1 days. The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 92.7 hours or 3.9 days.
<b>Sites visited in the park</b>	The most commonly visited sites by visitor groups were the Crater (65%), Eastern Front Visitor Center (52%), and Confederate Battery 9 (44%). The site most frequently visited first was the Eastern Front Visitor Center (36%).
<b>Local attractions visited</b>	Forty-five percent of visitor groups visited other local attractions, of which, 47% visited other attractions in Richmond, VA, 36% visited Richmond National Battlefield Park, and 35% visited other attractions in Petersburg, VA.
<b>Activities on this visit</b>	The most common activities were general sightseeing (51%), following a Civil War Trails Tour (32%), and learning/researching history (31%). The most important activity was jogging/running for exercise (20%).
<b>Use of park trails</b>	Seventy-two percent of visitor groups used park trails, of which, 91% were hiking or walking, while 9% were bicycling.
<b>Visitor services and facilities</b>	The visitor services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were restrooms (63%), trails (62%), and park brochure/map (59%).
<b>Protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences</b>	The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences included preserved battlefield landscape (92%), historic structures/buildings (85%), and clean air (77%).
<b>Future visits to park</b>	Eighty-seven percent of visitor groups would consider visiting again.
<b>Appropriate use of park entrance fees</b>	Visitor groups indicated the most appropriate uses of entrance fees were to maintain facilities (73%), maintain and update exhibits (63%), and fund restoration projects in the park (59%).
<b>Shuttle bus services</b>	Forty-one percent of visitor groups were interested in riding a shuttle bus, with on-board interpretive programs, between park sites on a future visit to the park, while 39% were not interested.
<b>Topics to learn on a future visit</b>	Eighty-two percent of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park through interpretive programs on a future visit. Preferred topics were civilian history of the Civil War period (76%) and military history (74%).
<b>Interpretive services on a future visit</b>	Eighty-six percent of visitor groups were interested in having interpretive services available on a future visit. Preferred services were outdoor exhibits (72%), ranger-led tours/programs (65%), and self-guided tours (61%).
<b>Overall quality</b>	Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Petersburg National Battlefield as “very good” or “good.” One percent of groups rated the overall quality as “poor” and no visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very 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>.