This report describes the results of a study of visitors to Yellowstone National Park during July 12-18, 1989. One thousand seventy questionnaires were distributed and 856 were returned, an 80% response rate.

The report profiles Yellowstone visitors. The separate Appendix has visitors' comments about the park and their visit. A summary of these comments is included in both this report and the appendix.

Forty-two percent of visitors were in groups of two people. Seventy-eight percent of visitors were in family groups. The most common ages were children younger than fifteen years old (23%) and adults aged 36-45 (21%). Almost half of visitors (49%) were on their first visit.

Seven percent of visitors were foreign, with the highest proportions from Canada (43%) and Germany (14%). U.S. visitors came from 48 states.

Of the visitors who stayed more than one day, 68% stayed two to three days. Common activities included viewing wildlife (93%) and thermal features (85%), photography (83%), walking for pleasure (75%) and visiting museums/visitor centers (73%).

Most visitors stopped at Old Faithful (84%), Canyon (68%), Grant Village/West Thumb (63%), Madison (61%) and Norris (61%).

Most visitors used the park folder/map (92%), park newspaper (68%) and visitor center exhibits (60%). Visitors highly rated the usefulness of ranger personnel, the park folder/map, self-guided trails/trail guides and sales publications.

On the nights visitors spent in the park, most stayed in developed campgrounds (84%), and one night was the most common length of stay. Outside the park, most nights were spent in hotels or cabins (59%) and three nights was the most common length of stay.

Regarding the 1988 fires, 64% of visitors stated the fires were not a reason for their visit; 7% stated they were the primary reason for visiting; and 86% would recommend a visit to family/friends. Most felt that they would likely visit the park again within the next five years (54%). Almost half (48%) said they felt the fires were beneficial to the park's natural systems; 28% said they were not; and 24% didn't know. Almost equal numbers of comments said the park appeared worse than expected and better than expected.

Visitors made many more general comments about their visits to Yellowstone NP.

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