

Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Steamtown National Historic Site (NHS) visitors during August 5-11, 2012. A total of 398 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 253 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 63.6% response rate.

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| Group size and type | Fifty percent of visitor groups consisted of four or more people and 44% were in groups of two or three. Seventy-six percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups. |
| State of residence | United States visitors were from 30 states and comprised 97% of total visitation during the survey period, with 39% from Pennsylvania. Twenty percent of visitor groups were residents of the area (within 60 miles of the park). |
| Frequency of visits | Eighty-eight percent of visitors visited the park once in the past 12 months. For 65%, this was their first visit in their lifetime. |
| Age, gender, ethnicity, race, educational level, and income level | Thirty percent of visitors were 15 years or younger, 26% were 41 to 60 years, and 16% were 66 years or older. Sixty-five percent of visitors were male. One percent were Hispanic or Latino. Ninety-five percent of visitors were White, 2% were Asian, and 2% were more than one race. Forty percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree. Twenty percent of respondents reported a household income of \$100,000-\$149,999. |
| Languages preferred for speaking reading | Most (99%) visitor groups preferred English for speaking and 99% preferred English for reading. Seventeen percent of visitor groups felt services in the park need to be provided in languages other than English. |
| Awareness of park | Sixty-eight percent of visitor groups were aware that Steamtown NHS is a unit of the National Park Service prior to their visit. |
| Information sources | Eighty-eight percent of visitor groups obtained information about the park prior to their visit most often through the Steamtown NHS website, friends/relatives/ word of mouth, and maps/brochures. Most visitors (93%) received the information they needed. Eighty percent of visitor groups preferred to use the Steamtown NHS website to obtain information for a future visit. |
| Park website | Fifty-six percent of visitor groups used the park website to obtain information to plan their trip. Most visitors (86%) found the information they needed on the park website. Eighty-one percent of visitor groups rated the quality of information provided on the park website as “very good” or “good.” |
| Park as destination | During the on-site interview, 53% of visitor groups said Steamtown NHS was their primary destination. For 33%, the park was one of several destinations. |
| Primary reason for visiting the area | For 46% of visitor groups, visiting the park was the primary reason nonresident visitor group members visited the area. |
| Alternative plans to visiting Steamtown NHS | Eighty-seven percent of respondents would have visited Steamtown NHS at another time if they had been unable to visit on this trip. |

Executive Summary (continued)

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| Adequacy of directional signs | Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups found interstate signs adequate, 56% found state highway signs adequate, 57% found signs in Scranton adequate, and 86% found signs in the park adequate. |
| Transportation | Seventy-seven percent of nonresident visitor groups used a car to travel most of the distance from their home to the park area (within 60 miles of the park) and 14% used a SUV/truck/van. Eighty-four percent of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park. |
| Number of park entries | Eighty-four percent of visitor groups entered the park once and 15% entered twice. |
| Overnight stays | Fifty-four percent of visitor groups stayed overnight in the area within 60 miles of the park. Sixty-six percent of visitor groups stayed in lodges, motels, hotels, rented condos/homes, cabins, or B&Bs and 24% stayed in the residence of friends or relatives. |
| Length of visit | Fifty-six percent of visitor groups spent two to three hours in the park and 37% spent four or more hours. The average length of stay was 3.3 hours. Five percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day. |
| Local attractions visited | The local attractions most commonly visited were the mall at Steamtown (60%), Lackawanna Coal Mine Tour (28%), and PA Anthracite Heritage Museum (12%). |
| Sites visited | The most common places visited in the park were Roundhouse (93%), History Museum (90%), and Rail Yard (84%). |
| Activities | The most common activities were viewing indoor exhibits (90%), viewing outdoor exhibits (88%), and shopping in Museum Shop and Bookstore (66%). The most common activities that were the primary reason for visiting the park were train ride-short excursion (27%) and Locomotive Shop-Roundhouse Tour (13%). The most common activities in which visitor groups would prefer to participate on future visits were viewing indoor exhibits (72%), train ride-long excursion (71%), and viewing outdoor exhibits (70%). |
| Information services and facilities | The information services and facilities most often used by visitor groups were indoor exhibits (89%), outdoor exhibits (84%), and Visitor Center (overall) (71%). |
| Visitor services and facilities | The visitor services and facilities most often used by visitor groups were Park History Museum (77%), park directional signs (71%), and Park Technology Museum (68%). |
| Protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences | The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences included repair/maintenance of trains (96%), preservation of locomotives and trains (96%), and historic sites and buildings (94%). |

Executive Summary (continued)

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| Opinions about safety | Most visitor groups (98%) felt “very safe” or “safe” from crime, 96% felt their personal property was “very safe” or “safe” from crime, and 95% felt “very safe” or “safe” from accidents. |
| Expenditures | The average visitor group expenditure (inside and outside the park within 60 miles of the park) was \$241. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$97. The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$94. |
| Children’s programs on future visits | Forty-two percent of visitor groups indicated they were likely to participate in a children’s program on a future visit. |
| Overall quality | Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Steamtown NHS as “very good” or “good.” Three percent of visitor groups rated the quality as “poor” and no visitor groups rated the 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) 885-2585 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>.

