

Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Stones River National Battlefield (NB) visitors during July 13-23, 2013. A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 269 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 59.8% response rate.

Group size and type	Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups consisted of one or two people and 31% were in groups of three or four. Seventy-two percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups and 15% were visiting alone.
State or country of residence	United States visitors were from 37 states and comprised 99% of total visitation during the survey period, with 35% from Tennessee. Nineteen percent of visitor groups were residents of the area (within a 1-hour drive of the battlefield). There were too few international visitors to provide reliable data.
Frequency of visits	For 73% of visitors, this was their first visit in their lifetime, while 13% visit once a year and 11% visit several times a year.
Age, gender, ethnicity, race, and income level	Visitor ages ranged from 1-85 years. Forty-three percent were 51-70 years old, 25% were 31-50 years old, and 18% were ages 15 years or younger. Fifty-two percent were male and 48% were female. Three percent were Hispanic or Latino. Ninety-six percent of visitors were White. Twenty-four percent of respondents reported an income level of \$50,000-\$74,999 and 15% had an income of \$100,000-\$149,999.
Awareness of park prior to visit	Sixty-two percent of visitor groups were aware that Stones River NB is a unit of the National Park System.
Information sources	Most visitor groups (79%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit most often through the Stones River NB website (50%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (33%), and maps/brochures (32%). Most visitor groups (89%) received the information they needed. Seventy-eight percent of visitor groups prefer to use the Stones River NB website to obtain information for a future visit.
Park as destination	During the on-site interview, 52% of visitor groups said the park was one of several destinations and for 41%, the park was their primary destination.
Primary reason for visiting the area	The most common primary reasons for visiting the park area among non-resident visitor groups were to visit the park (37%) and visit friends/relatives in the area (28%).
Visit another time	Eighty-three percent of respondents would likely visit Stones River NB at another time if they had been unable to visit on this trip.
Transportation	Sixty-five percent of non-resident visitor groups used a car to travel most of the distance from their home to the park area (within a 1-hour drive of the battlefield) and 17% used a SUV/truck/van. Ninety-six percent of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park.
Number of park entries	Seventy-four percent of visitor groups entered the park once on this visit, while 20% entered twice.

Executive Summary (continued)

Overnight stays	Fifty-five percent of visitor groups stayed overnight in the area within a 1-hour drive of the battlefield of which 54% stayed one or two nights. Seventy-one percent of visitor groups stayed in a lodge, motel, rented condo/home, cabin or B&B and 22% stayed at the residence of friends or relatives.
Length of visit	Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups spent one or two hours in the park, while 34% spent three or more hours. The average length of stay was 2.1 hours. Eight percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day.
Local attractions visited	Fifty-three percent of visitor groups visited other local attractions on this visit. Of those visitor groups that visited other local attractions, 31% visited Chickamauga and Chattanooga NMP, 29% visited Shiloh NMP, and 27% visited Battle of Franklin Sites.
Sites visited	The most common sites visited in the park were the visitor center (97%), National Cemetery (63%), and Slaughter Pen (55%).
Activities on this visit	The most common activities were visiting the visitor center (90%), hiking/walking (35%), and attending other ranger-led talks/programs (31%). The most common activities that were the primary reason for visiting the park were visiting the visitor center (26%) and conducting genealogy or historical research (10%).
Activities on future visits	The most common activities to do on a future visit were visiting the visitor center (79%), attending other ranger-led talks/programs (61%), and attending costumed living history programs (54%).
Information services and facilities	The information services and facilities most often used by visitor groups were the visitor center - overall (92%), indoor exhibits (86%), restrooms (80%), and outdoor exhibits (76%).
Topics learned on this visit	The most common topics learned on this visit were <i>Events of the Battle of Stones River</i> (95%), <i>Events of the Civil War</i> (78%), and <i>Natural setting where events occurred</i> (74%). The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of topics presenting different viewpoints of the Civil War were <i>Impact of the Civil War on American history</i> (84%), <i>Events of the Civil War</i> (79%), and <i>Events of the Battle of Stones River</i> (77%).
Learned something relevant or meaningful about the Civil War	Seventy-two percent of visitor groups learned something about the Civil War that is relevant or meaningful to their life.
Opinions about safety	Five percent of visitor groups had safety concerns.
Expenditures	The average visitor group expenditure (inside and outside the park within a 1-hour drive of the battlefield) was \$281. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$95. The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$138. Ten percent of respondents had forgone income to make this trip.

Executive Summary (continued)

Methods of learning about the park on a future visit

Ninety-seven percent of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park through outdoor exhibits (60%), indoor exhibits (60%), ranger-guided walks/talks (58%), and self-guided tours (56%).

Overall quality

Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Stones River NB as “very good” or “good.” Less than 1% 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) 885-2585 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>.