

Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Springfield Armory National Historic Site (NHS) visitors during July 15–August 8, 2013. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 228 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 65.1% response rate.

Group size and type	Forty percent of visitor groups consisted of two people and 34% were in groups of three or four. Sixty-five percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups and 16% were alone. Nineteen percent of visitor groups had a member who identified with or belonged to an interest group.
State or country of residence	United States visitors were from 34 states and comprised 96% of total visitation during the survey period, with 21% from Massachusetts and 12% from New York. Twenty-two percent of visitor groups were residents of the greater Springfield area (within 100 miles of the park). There were too few international visitors to provide reliable data.
Frequency of visits	Eighty-four percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time, while 10% had visited two or three times.
Age, ethnicity, race, educational level, and income level	Forty-one percent of visitors were ages 36-60 years, 25% were 61 years or older, and 20% were ages 15 years or younger. Four percent were Hispanic or Latino. Ninety-three percent of visitors were White, 3% were Asian, and 3% were of more than one race. Thirty-eight percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 32% had a bachelor's degree. Twenty-two percent of respondents reported a household income of \$50,000-\$74,999, 17% had an income of 75,000-\$99,999, and 17% had an income of \$100,000-\$149,999.
Awareness of park prior to visit	Fifty-nine percent of visitor groups were aware that the National Park Service manages Springfield Armory NHS.
Information sources	Most visitor groups (84%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit through the park website (56%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (37%), travel guides/tour books (14%), and maps/brochures (14%). Most visitors (94%) received the information they needed. Seventy-one percent of visitor groups prefer to use the park website to obtain information for a future visit.
Park website	Fifty-four percent of visitor groups obtained information from the park website to plan their visit to the park. Ninety-seven percent of visitor groups found the information they needed on the park website. Ninety-two 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, 46% of visitor groups said the park was one of several destinations, and for 40%, the park was their primary destination.
Primary reason for visiting the area	For 33% of visitor groups, visiting the park was the primary reason non-resident group members visited the area.
Reasons for visiting the park	The most common reasons for visiting the park were view indoor museum exhibits (78%), interest in gun history (66%), and see the largest historic US military small arms collection (57%).

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Services used in nearby communities	Thirty-nine percent of visitor groups needed support services on this trip, of which, 97% were able to obtain needed support services.
Transportation	Eighty-four percent of visitor groups used a private vehicle to travel between overnight accommodations or home and the park, while 13% used a rented vehicle. Ninety-seven percent of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park.
Directional signs	Of the visitor groups who used directional signs to guide them to the park 49% found interstate highway signs adequate, 46% found signs in local communities adequate, and 65% found signs in the park/adjacent college adequate.
Overnight stays	Fifty-two percent of visitor groups stayed overnight in the greater Springfield area (within 100 miles of the park), of which 59% stayed one or two nights, 21% stayed three or four nights, and 20% stayed five or more nights. Seventy-three percent of visitor groups stayed in lodges, rented condos/homes, cabins, B&Bs, while 17% stayed in residences of friends or relatives.
Length of visit	Fifty-two percent of visitor groups spent two hours in the park, while 34% spent three or more hours. The average length of stay was 2.2 hours. One percent of visitor groups visited the park on more than one day.
Local attractions visited	The most common local attractions visited were Dr. Seuss National Memorial (27%), Basketball Hall of Fame (25%), and Springfield museums (23%).
Activities on this visit	The most common activities on this visit were viewing museum exhibits (99%), watching park videos/films (78%), and shopping in park bookstore (59%). The most common activity that was the primary reason for visiting the park was viewing museum exhibits (88%).
Ranger-led talks/programs	Nineteen percent of visitor groups participated in ranger-led talks/programs. The most common reason that prevented visitor groups from participating in ranger-led talks/programs were the visitor did not have time for this activity (49%) and they were not aware of talks/programs (39%).
Information services and facilities	The information services and facilities most often used by visitor groups were the museum exhibits (96%), restrooms (72%), videos/films (70%), and assistance from park staff (70%).
Protecting park resources and attributes	The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park resources and attributes included museum and archival collections (99%), historic landscapes and buildings (91%), and repair/maintenance of buildings (90%).
Interaction with park employees/volunteers	Ninety-six percent of visitor groups obtained information from a NPS uniformed employee or volunteer. Ninety-eight percent of visitor groups rated the quality of information provided as “very good” or “good.” Ninety-seven percent rated the helpfulness of the employee/ volunteer as “very good” or “good.” Ninety-eight percent rated the courteousness of the employee/volunteer as “very good” or “good.”

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Expenditures	The average visitor group expenditure (inside and outside the park within 100 miles of the park) was \$294. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$108. The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$134.
Income forgone to make this trip	Ten percent of respondents had forgone income to make this trip.
Methods of learning about the park	Ninety-seven percent of visitor groups were interested in learning about the park through indoor museum exhibits (79%), films, movies, videos (74%), and ranger-guided walks/talks (60%).
Overall quality	Most visitor groups (95%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Springfield Armory NHS as “very good” or “good.” One percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality as “poor.” 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) 885-2585 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>.