

Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument (NM) visitors during August 4-24, 2013. A total of 348 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 225 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 64.7% response rate.

Group size and type	Sixty percent of visitor groups consisted of one or two people and 29% were in groups of three or four people. Seventy-seven percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.
State or country of residence	United States visitors were from 36 states and comprised 96% of total visitation during the survey period, with 23% from Idaho, 15% from Washington, and 12% from California. Four percent of visitor groups were residents of the area (within 50 miles of the park). There were too few international visitors to provide reliable data.
Frequency of visits	For 88% of visitors, this was their first visit in their lifetime, while 9% had visited two or three times.
Age, ethnicity, race, educational level, and income level	Thirty-two percent of visitors were ages 56-70 years, 28% were 31-55 years old, 22% were ages 15 years or younger, and 11% were 71 years or older. Five percent were Hispanic or Latino. Ninety-three percent of visitors were White, 2% were Asian, and 2% were Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. Thirty-nine percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 37% had a bachelor's degree. Twenty-two percent of respondents reported an income level of \$50,000-\$74,999 and 21% had an income of \$75,000-\$99,999.
Information sources	Most visitor groups (77%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit most often through the Hagerman Fossil Beds NM website (43%), maps/brochures (41%), and travel guides/tour books (25%). Most visitor groups (82%) received the information they needed. Seventy-three percent of visitor groups prefer to use the Hagerman Fossil Beds NM website to obtain information for a future visit.
Park as destination	During the on-site interview, 62% of visitor groups said the park was one of several destinations and for 27%, the park was not a planned destination.
Primary reason for visiting the area	For 27% of visitor groups, visiting the park was the primary reason non-resident group members visited the area.
Services used in nearby communities	Fifty-five percent of visitor groups obtained support services in nearby communities. The communities most often used included Hagerman, ID (45%) and Twin Falls, ID (41%). The services most often used included food in Twin Falls, ID (82%), gas in Twin Falls, ID (79%), and food in Hagerman, ID (62%). Most visitor groups (98%) were able to obtain needed services.
Transportation	Sixty-six percent of non-resident visitor groups used a car to travel most of the distance from their home to the park area (within 50 miles of the park) and 21% used a SUV/truck/van. Ninety-five percent of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park, while 5% used two vehicles.

Executive Summary (continued)

Number of park entries	Eighty-six percent of visitor groups entered the park once, while 11% entered twice on this visit.
Likelihood of visiting park at another time if unable to visit on this trip	Sixty-four percent of respondents would likely visit Hagerman Fossil Beds NM at another time if they had been unable to visit on this trip.
Overnight stays	Forty-seven percent of visitor groups stayed overnight in the area within 50 miles of the park, of which 57% stayed one night and 33% stayed two or three nights. Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups stayed in lodges, motels, rented condos/homes, cabins, or bed & breakfasts and 27% were RV/trailer camping.
Length of visit	Eighty-three percent of visitor groups spent one hour visiting the visitor center. Seventy-three percent of visitor groups spent one hour visiting overlooks and trails. Eighty percent of visitor groups spent one or two hours in the park, while 17% spent three or more hours. The average length of stay was 1.7 hours.
Local attractions visited	Seventy-six percent of visitor groups visited other local attractions on this visit. Of those visitor groups that visited other local attractions, 54% visited Craters of the Moon NM, 39% visited Shoshone Falls, and 25% visited Minidoka NHS.
Sources used to obtain information about Minidoka NHS	Of the visitor groups that visited Minidoka NHS on this visit, the most common sources used to obtain information about Minidoka NHS were exhibits (26%), park websites (21%), and park staff (10%).
Difficulty finding way to Minidoka NHS	Nineteen percent of visitor groups had difficulty finding their way to Minidoka NHS.
Sites visited	The most common sites visited in the park were the visitor center (91%), Snake River Overlook (65%), and Oregon Trail Overlook and interpretive trail (58%).
Activities on this visit	The most common activities were visiting the visitor center (87%), viewing Hagerman exhibits including fossils (86%), and stopping at scenic overlooks (67%). The most common activities that were the primary reason for visiting the park were viewing Hagerman exhibits including fossils (41%) and visiting the visitor center (27%).
Activities on future visits	The most common activities to participate in on future visits were visiting the visitor center (77%), viewing Hagerman exhibits including fossils (77%), attending ranger-led talks/programs/tours (71%), and stopping at scenic overlooks (70%).
Ranger-led programs/talks	Fourteen percent of visitor groups participated in ranger-led programs/talks.

Executive Summary (continued)

Topics learned on this visit	Topics visitor groups most often learned about were the fossils (91%), current and historic paleontological work (81%), and geology of the area (65%). The highest combined proportions of “extremely interested” and “very interested” ratings of selected park topics included fossils (69%), Oregon Trail (67%), and geology of the area (63%).
Protecting park resources and attributes	The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park resources and attributes included preservation of paleontological/archeological artifacts (93%), historic site – Oregon Trail (82%), and native wildlife (81%).
Expenditures	The average visitor group expenditure (inside and outside the park within 50 miles of the park) was \$167. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$77. The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$72. Ten percent of respondents had forgone income to make this trip.
Ranger-led programs/talks on a future visit	Seventy-three percent of visitor groups were interested in attending ranger-led programs/talks on a future visit to the park. Of those visitor groups interested in attending ranger-led programs/talks, the most preferred program length was 1/2 - 1 hour (71%). The most preferred time of day to attend a program was 10am to noon (51%).
Methods of learning about the park on a future visit	Most visitor groups (97%) were interested in learning about the cultural and natural history of the park. Of those visitor groups interested in learning about the park, the most preferred methods were films, movies, and videos (74%), indoor exhibits (72%), and trailside exhibits (72%).
Items available for purchase at the bookstore on a future visit	The most common items visitor groups would like to have available for purchase at the visitor center bookstore on a future were souvenir items (60%) and additional publications (60%).
Overall quality	Many visitor groups (74%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Hagerman Fossil Beds NM as “very good” or “good.” Less than 7% 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>.