Visitor Services Project
Frederick Douglass
National Historic Site
Report Summary

• This report describes the results of a visitor study at Frederick Douglass National Historic Site during May 3-9, 1992. A total of 325 questionnaires were distributed and 197 returned, a 61% response rate.

• This report profiles Frederick Douglass visitors. A separate appendix has visitors’ comments about their visit; this report and the appendix contain a comment summary.

• Visitors were often in school and church groups (38%) or guided tour groups (35%). Fifty-two percent of visitors were 21-45 years old; 21% were aged 15 or younger. Most (82%) were first time visitors to Frederick Douglass.

• Visitors from foreign countries comprised 2% of the visitation. Thirty-eight percent of Americans came from Maryland, Virginia and Washington D.C., with smaller numbers from many other states.

• Visitors arrived at Frederick Douglass NHS by tour bus (43%), private vehicle (30%) and bus (21%). Ninety-two percent of visitors spent two hours or less at the site.

• Visitors most often used travel guide/tour books (26%), advice from friends and relatives (26%) and previous visits as sources of information about the site. Ninety-one percent of visitors did not feel that the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site was difficult to locate.

• Most visitors arrived at Frederick Douglass National Historic Site by traveling on 295 South, Martin Luther King Avenue, "V" or "W" Streets. Most visitors (92%) spent two hours or less at Frederick Douglass National Historic Site.

• Fifty-seven percent of visitors waited to take a tour of the Frederick Douglass home. A combination of first come, first served or advanced reservations would be preferred by visitors (42%) on a future visit.

• Fifty-three percent of visitors were visiting an African-American historic site for the first time.

• The most used visitor services were the ranger-led tours, visitor center movies and visitor center exhibits. The visitor center movies, park brochure, visitor center exhibits and ranger-led tours received the highest quality ratings.

• Visitors made many additional comments.

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact Dr. Gary E. Machlis, Sociology Project Leader, University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, Moscow, Idaho 83843-4199 or call (208)885-7129.