

Visitor Services Project
Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site

Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site during June 19-25, 1992. A total of 436 questionnaires were distributed and 378 returned, an 87% response rate.
- This report profiles Bent's Old Fort visitors. A separate appendix has visitors' comments about their visit; this report and the appendix contain a comment summary.
- Visitors were often families (77%) and in groups of two to four (76%). Twenty-eight percent of visitors were 36-50 years old; 24% were 15 years or younger. Most (78%) were first-time visitors to Bent's Old Fort.
- Visitors from foreign countries comprised 3% of the visitation, with 56% of the international visitors from Sweden. Americans came from Colorado (35%), Kansas (10%), and Oklahoma (9%), with smaller numbers from many other states.
- Most visitors (80%) spent one to two hours at Bent's Old Fort. Fifty-nine percent stayed about the time planned. Most visitors visited the information station (96%), viewed trail exhibits (66%), watched the video program (56%) and took a guided tour (54%).
- Visitors (30%) most often used maps and brochures as sources of information about the park. The section of highway most used to get to Bent's Old Fort was Highway 194 between La Junta and the fort.
- The most frequent reasons bringing visitors to the fort were to learn about history (78%), curiosity (61%) and to see exhibits/furnishings (51%). Seventy-seven percent of the visitors considered history of the West as a special interest/hobby.
- Ninety-one percent of the visitors walked between their vehicle and the fort; 11% rode the electric cart. All the visitors (100%) considered the fort accessible.
- The most used visitor services were the reconstructed fort and room furnishings. The reconstructed fort and guided tour were the most important services according to visitors. The sales area and seeing domestic animals at the fort were the least important services. The reconstructed fort and employee assistance received the highest quality ratings. Seeing domestic animals and restrooms were considered the poorest quality services.
- Most visitors (97%) said they had no difficulty finding their way around the fort.
- Visitors made many additional comments.

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