Visitor Services Project
Pecos National Historical Park

Report Summary

• This report describes the results of a visitor study at Pecos National Historical Park during August 8-14, 1993. A total of 441 questionnaires were distributed and 372 returned, an 84% response rate.

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

• Visitors were often in family groups (61%). Groups often consisted of two people (45%) or four people (19%). Thirty-one percent of visitors were 36-50 years old; 21% were 51-65 years old. Most (80%) were first-time visitors to the park. Visitors from foreign countries comprised 7% of all visitors. Twenty-six percent of international visitors came from Germany and 14% from Great Britain. United States visitors came from Texas (19%), New Mexico (19%), California (10%) and many other states.

• Common activities for visitors were walking the trail (93%), viewing exhibits (89%), using the trail guide (77%), seeing the movie (70%), and taking photographs (70%).

• More than 75% of the visitors visited each of the four sites included on the map. The most visited site was the E. E. Fogelson Visitor Center (96%). Most visitors went to the E. E. Fogelson Visitor Center first (92%).

• Prior to visiting, the most often used sources of information about the park were travel guide/tour books (35%) and friends and relatives (32%), although many other sources were identified. Pecos National Historical Park was not the primary destination for most visitors (80%). Learning about history (88%) and viewing scenery (77%) were the most often identified reasons for visiting the park.

• The most used services were the parking lots (92%), visitor center exhibits (91%), the trail (85%), and visitor center restrooms (84%). The least used service was handicapped access (4%). The most important services according to visitors were the trail (85%), visitor center restrooms (82%) and visitor center personnel (80%). The best quality services were visitor center personnel (88%), visitor center exhibits (88%), roving rangers (88%), and the trail (87%). The poorest quality service was cultural demonstrations (15%).

• When asked how they would like to learn about the park on a future visit, 47% of the visitors preferred a self-guided trail.

• Before they arrived, most visitors (89%) had not planned to camp in the Pecos area. Of visitors who planned to camp, most were able to find a campsite (82%). The most common activity in the Pecos area was sightseeing (83%). Most visitors (74%) stayed less than one day in the Pecos area.

• For total expenditures (lodging, travel, food and "other" items) during their visit to the Pecos area, 50% of the visitor groups spent up to $50. The greatest proportion of their expenditures was spent for lodging (51%), followed by food (20%). The average visitor group expenditure was $135. The average per capita expenditure was $45.

• 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,