Visitor Services Project
Nez Perce National Historical Park

Report Summary

• This report describes the results of a visitor study at Nez Perce National Historical Park during July 17-23, 1994. A total of 1178 questionnaires were distributed and 899 returned, a 76% response rate.

• This report profiles Nez Perce 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 (69%). Groups often consisted of two people (50%); over one-fourth were three or four people (27%). The most common visitor ages were 46-70 years old (32%), and 15 years or younger (18%). Most (79%) were first time visitors to the park. International visitors comprised 4% of all visitors. Twenty-eight percent of international visitors came from Canada and 27% from Germany. United States visitors came from Idaho (18%), Washington (15%), California (13%), Oregon (13%) and 44 other states.

• Common activities for visitors were visiting the visitor center (76%), learning Nez Perce history (52%), taking photographs (46%) and visiting historical or archeological sites (41%). Most visitors stayed two hours or less at the site where they received the questionnaire.

• Almost two-thirds of the visitors (64%) cited learning Nez Perce history as a reason for visiting the park. Seventy-four percent of visitors said they visited to learn about history. Two topics were of primary interest: history of the Nez Perce region and the Nez Perce tribe and people, each selected by 69% of the visitors.

• Over one-third of the visitors (36%) had received no information about the park prior to their visit. Previous visits, maps and brochures were the most used sources of information.

• The most visited park sites were Lolo Pass Visitor Center area (32%), Big Hole Battlefield (31%), White Bird Battlefield (29%), and Spalding (21%).

• The most used services were the visitor center exhibits (75%), park brochure/map (63%) and information from park employees (51%). Ranger-led programs/tours was the service which received the highest ratings in importance and quality.

• The most used facilities were the highway historical signs (71%), highway directional signs to park sites (65%) and restrooms (63%). Interpretive trail signs was the service which received the highest ratings in importance and quality.

• In the future, the educational subjects visitors would most like to learn about are history of the Nez Perce, Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Nez Perce War of 1877 and pioneers/settlers. Half of the visitors (50%) said they would like more contact with the Nez Perce tribe/people in the future.

• Visitors' most frequent starting locations on the day they received the questionnaire were Lewiston, Idaho; Missoula, Montana and Joseph, Oregon. These three towns were also visitors' most often listed destinations on the day they received the questionnaire.

• Visitors made many additional comments.

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