
Visitor Services Project Chiricahua National Monument Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Chiricahua National Monument during March 26-April 1, 1996. A total of 419 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 361 questionnaires for an 86% response rate.
- This report profiles Chiricahua visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of visitors' comments.
- Sixty-four percent of the visitor groups were family groups; 14% were groups of friends. Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Sixty percent of visitors were aged 41-70.
- United States visitors were from Arizona (31%), California (9%), Michigan (8%), and 38 other states. International visitors were from Germany (51%), Canada (23%), and 4 other countries.
- Of those visitor groups which spent less than a day at Chiricahua, 46% spent three or four hours. Of those groups which spent a day or more, 79% spent two or three days.
- On this visit, the most common activities were taking the scenic drive (91%), photography (74%), and walking/day hiking (68%).
- Travel guides/ tour books (42%) and friends or relatives (35%) were the most used source of pre-trip information. This was a first visit for 70% of the visitors to Chiricahua.
- Twelve percent of visitor groups arrived at Chiricahua in recreational vehicles, which ranged up to forty feet in length. Six percent of visitor groups pulled trailers.
- The most visited sites were the visitor center (86%) and Massai Point (79%). Fifty-nine percent of the visitor groups went to the visitor center first.
- Fifty-six percent of visitor groups indicated a special interest in western history. When asked about topics they would like to learn about on a future visit, 67% of visitor groups said wilderness and 61% said historic resources.
- Visitor groups rated scenery (96%), quiet (81%), and clean air (79%) as "extremely important" or "very important" park qualities. Sixty-one percent of visitor groups were unaware that much of Chiricahua has designated as wilderness.
- The information services that were most used by visitors were the park brochure/map (96%), the entrance station (72%), and information from park employees (61%). All information services were rated as above "average" on both importance and quality.
- The most used visitor services and facilities were parking (95%), roads (91%), and park directional signs (90%). All services and facilities were rated as above "average" both in importance and quality.
- Forty-one percent of visitor groups preferred "first come, first served until the monument is full" for reducing congestion, while 26% preferred the use of a shuttle bus system.
- Ninety-three percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services at Chiricahua as "very good," or "good." Less than one percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "very poor."

<p>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 83844-1133 or call (208) 885-7129.</p>
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