

## Executive Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park during the week of July 26-August 1, 1987. Questionnaires were given to 920 visitors and 331 were returned, a 36% response rate.
- The survey provides a profile of the people who visited Harpers Ferry. Their general comments about the park are found in Volume 2 of the report and this volume has a summary of visitor comments.
- Visitors were most likely to be in family groups of two to four people. Most visitors were making their first visit to Harpers Ferry. The majority of visitors came from Maryland or Virginia.
- Most visitors stayed two to four hours and did not spend the night in the area. Resting, viewing the exhibits, visiting the Visitor Center and shopping were the most common activities.
- The sites that received the greatest use (in order) were the historic area, the shops area, the riverbank/shoreline and "the Point".
- The average per capita expenditure during the visit was approximately \$ 14.00. The most common level of visitor group expenditures was \$ 25.00 or less, though the average group expenditure was approximately \$ 50.00. Among all visitor groups, 86% spent money on food, 80% spent money on 'other' items, 78% spent money on travel and 48% spent money on lodging.
- Visitors indicated that they were attracted to the park for more than one reason. The primary attractions were the historical features and outdoor recreation.
- Most visitors used the park map/brochure and the information desk among several interpretive services. The map/brochure was the most useful and the radio station was least useful.
- Visitors indicated that what they liked most about their visit in general terms were the park's beauty, historic nature and quiet and relaxing atmosphere. The river was the most frequently mentioned natural feature, the historic area and the shops were also frequently mentioned. Interpretive programs, films and tours were also mentioned often, as were swimming and tubing.
- Visitors liked least about their visit: having to leave, the weather and the garbage near the river. Also mentioned were inadequate parking and a lack of picnic tables and grills.
- Visitors made many additional comments about their visit.