

Visitor Services Project
Fort Raleigh National Historic Site
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Fort Raleigh National Historic Site (NHS) during July 12-18, 2002. A total of 299 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 224 questionnaires for a 74.9% response rate.
- This report profiles Fort Raleigh NHS visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Thirty-three percent of visitor groups were groups of two. 79% of the visitor groups were family groups. Forty percent of visitors were aged 36-55 years and 26% were aged 15 or younger. The majority of visitor groups (99%) were not a part of a guided tour group.
- United States visitors were from North Carolina (19%), Virginia (14%), Maryland (7%) and 29 other states and Washington, D.C. There were not enough international visitors to provide reliable data.
- The three most important reasons for visiting Fort Raleigh NHS were historical significance, "Lost Colony" Theater, and general interest/to see it.
- Most visitors (77%) reported that this was their first visit to Fort Raleigh NHS. On this visit, the most common activities were visiting historic sites (91%), walking (66%) and swimming/ sunbathing (62%). On past visits, the most common activities were visiting historic sites (45%), swimming/ sunbathing (36%) and walking (33%).
- The most used sources of information in planning their visit to the Outer Banks Parks were previous visits (43%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (40%) and travel guides/tour books (39%).
- Visitors were asked to rate the importance of selected attributes in planning for the preservation of the park. The attributes receiving the highest "extremely" or "very" important ratings included preserving historic sites (92%), educational opportunities (82%) and natural open space (64%).
- Visitors were asked how selected factors may have affected their park experience. Of those who experienced the factors, the highest "detracted from" factor was litter (24%). Six percent of visitor groups reported that fires on the beach "added to" their park experience.
- Most visitor groups (49%) reported that crowding had "no effect" their park experience. Of the 46% percent of visitor groups that reported that crowding "detracted from" their park experience, most (64%) reported that they felt most crowded in the afternoon.
- With regard to use, importance and quality of services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used services and facilities by 192 visitor groups at Fort Raleigh NHS were the visitor center (84%) and parking lots (79%). The most important services and facilities were "Lost Colony" Theater (97%, N=103), ranger-led programs (93%, N=40), and restrooms (92%, N=139). The best quality services and facilities were assistance from park staff (96%, N=116), parking lots (93%, N=140) and "Lost Colony" Theater (93%, N=101).
- Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at the Outer Banks Group parks as "very good" or "good." None of the visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "very poor."

<p>For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit; phone (208) 885-7863 or visit the following website: http://www.psu.uidaho.edu</p>
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