



**Social Science Program
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**

Visitor Services Project



Gateway National Recreation Area— Floyd Bennett Field Visitor Study

Spring 2003

Report 141



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Gateway National Recreation Area—Floyd Bennett Field

Visitor Study Spring 2003

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Visitor Services Project Report 141

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Visitor Services Project Gateway National Recreation Area—Floyd Bennett Field Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Gateway National Recreation Area — Floyd Bennett Field from May 24 - June 1, 2003. A total of 857 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 492 questionnaires for a 57.4% response rate.
- This report profiles Floyd Bennett Field visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Twenty-seven percent of visitors were traveling alone; twenty-nine percent of visitors were with friends. Thirty-one percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Twenty-four percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Forty-one percent of visitors were aged 41-65 years and 10% were aged 15 or younger.
- United States visitors were from New York (96%), New Jersey (1%), and Puerto Rico (1%), with smaller percentages from four other states. There were not enough international visitors to provide reliable data.
- Nine percent of the visitors were of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Of these, 55% were Puerto Rican, 5% Cuban. Forty-one percent identified themselves as of "other" Hispanic ethnicity. Most visitors were of White racial background (82%), followed by Black/African American (15%) and Asian (5%).
- Forty-seven percent of visitors reported visiting Floyd Bennett Field 21 or more times during the prior twelve months. Another 45% visited two to twenty times in the prior twelve months. When asked how often they visit, 53% of visitors said they visit at least once a week. Another 21% visit daily and 16% visit at least once a month. Most (76%) visit on both weekdays and weekends. Fifty percent of visitors spent four or more hours on this visit.
- Prior to this visit, visitors most often obtained information about Floyd Bennett Field through word of mouth (67%), previous visits (51%), and park program guide (18%). Twelve percent of the visitors received no information before their visit. Most visitors (76%) were aware that Gateway National Recreation Area—Floyd Bennett Field is a unit of the National Park Service.
- On this visit, the most common activities were fishing (30%), jogging/walking/hiking (27%), gardening (24%) and model airplanes (23%). The most common activities on past visits included seeing historical aircraft or buildings (40%), jogging/walking/hiking (38%), and fishing (37%).
- The qualities/characteristics that visitors most often came to Floyd Bennett Field for included open space (75%), quiet (70%), natural views (65%), safe environment (64%), and a place to relax (62%). Other qualities/characteristics received smaller proportions of responses. When asked how well their expectations about these qualities/characteristics had been met, the highest ratings were for open space (77%), pursuing hobbies (72%) and a place to relax (70%).
- The factors most detracting to the visitors at Floyd Bennett Field were speeding cars and motorcycles (23%), and trash (17%). Factors most adding to visits were model cars and airplanes (31%), and patrols by park rangers/park police (21%).
- Sixty-three percent of visitors rated the overall quality of visitor services at Floyd Bennett Field as "very good" or "good." Eleven percent of groups rated the overall quality of visitor services as "poor" or "very poor."

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>

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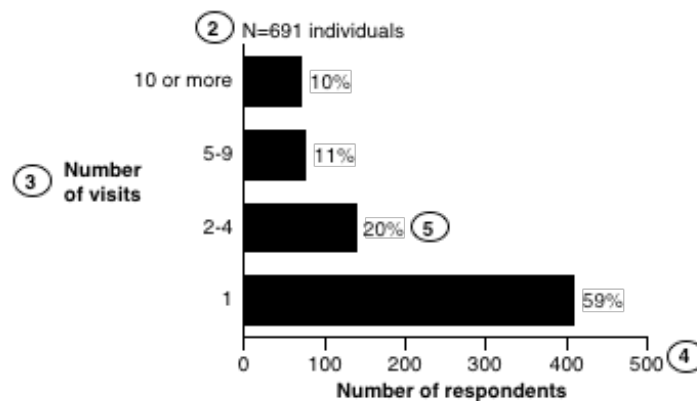
INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Gateway National Recreation Area (NRA)—Floyd Bennett Field, also referred to as "Floyd Bennett Field." This visitor study was conducted May 24 - June 1, 2003 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.

The report is organized into four sections. The **Methods** section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. The **Results** section provides summary information for each question in the questionnaire and includes a summary of visitor comments. An **Additional Analysis** section is included to help managers request additional analyses. The final section includes a copy of the **Questionnaire**. The separate appendix includes comment summaries and visitors' unedited comments.

Most of this report's graphs resemble the example below. The large numbers refer to explanations following the graph.

SAMPLE ONLY



① Figure 4: Number of visits

- 1: The Figure title describes the graph's information.
- 2: Listed above the graph, the 'N' shows the number of visitors responding and a description of the chart's information. Interpret data with an 'N' of less than 30 with **CAUTION!** as the results may be unreliable.
- 3: Vertical information describes categories.
- 4: Horizontal information shows the number or proportions in each category.
- 5: In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

METHODS

Questionnaire design and administration

The questionnaire for this visitor study was designed using a standard format that has been developed in previous Visitor Services Project studies. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks. Other questions were customized for Floyd Bennett Field. Interviews were conducted with, and 857 questionnaires were distributed to a sample of visitors who arrived at Floyd Bennett Field during the period from May 24 - June 1, 2003. Visitors were sampled on the main road to Floyd Bennett Field, and along the Rockaway Gateway Trail/greenway.

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, an interview, lasting approximately two minutes was used to determine group size, group type, and the age of the adult who would complete the questionnaire. These individuals were then given a questionnaire and asked for their names, addresses and telephone numbers in order to mail them a reminder-thank you postcard. Visitor groups were asked to complete the questionnaire during or after their visit and then return it by mail.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder-thank you postcard was mailed to all participants. Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey. Seven weeks after the survey, second replacement questionnaires were mailed to visitors who still had not returned their questionnaires. A phone follow-up call was made to a random sample of non-respondents to ascertain why they had not responded.

Data Analysis

Returned questionnaires were coded and the information was entered into a computer using a standard statistical software package—Statistical Analysis System (SAS). Frequency Distribution and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data, and responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized.

Sampling size, missing data and reporting items

This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members. Thus, the sample size ("N") varies from Figure to Figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 460 visitor groups, Figure 5 presents data for 915 individuals. A note above each graph specifies the information illustrated.

Occasionally, a respondent may not have answered all of the questions, or may have answered some incorrectly. Unanswered questions result in missing data and cause the number in the sample to vary from Figure to Figure. For example, although Floyd Bennett Field visitors returned 492 questionnaires, Figure 1 shows data for only 460 respondents.

Questions answered incorrectly due to carelessness, misunderstanding directions, and so forth turn up in the data as reporting errors. These create small data inconsistencies.

Limitations

Like all surveys, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. It is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflect actual behavior. This disadvantage applies to all such studies and is reduced by having visitors fill out the questionnaire soon after they visit the park.
2. The data reflect visitor use patterns of visitors to the selected sites during the study period of May 24 - June 1, 2003. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year.
3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word **"CAUTION!"** is included in the graph, figure or table.
4. Because of modest non-response bias for both visitor age and group size (see Table 1), the responses to some questions, such as activities, qualities/ characteristics that you came for, and future activities may vary from a more balanced sample of visitors.

Special conditions

Weather conditions during the visitor study ranged from cloudy, rainy and cold—temperatures of 50 degrees or below—(May 24-26 and June 1) to occasional sunny and warmer days at Floyd Bennett Field (May 27-31). Occasional thunderstorms passed through the area. The region was unseasonably rainy and cool during the spring and early summer. The last U.S. departures of the Concorde jet from JFK Airport took place during the study period.

RESULTS

Visitors contacted

At Floyd Bennett Field, 963 visitor groups were contacted; 857 of these groups (89%) accepted questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 492 visitor groups, resulting in a 57.4% response rate for this study.

Table 1 compares age and group size information collected from the total sample of visitors who participated, with age and group size of visitors who actually returned questionnaires. Based on the variable of visitor group size, non-response bias was judged to be insignificant. The average age of respondents was somewhat older than the visitors who received questionnaires, so non-response bias is judged to be somewhat significant. Older visitors returned their questionnaires more frequently than younger visitors. Visitors who returned their questionnaires also had slightly larger group sizes.

Table 1: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Age of respondents	834	48.2	460	51.6
Group size	843	1.8	460	3.1

Demographics

Figure 1 shows visitor group sizes, which ranged from one person to 200 people. Forty-one percent of visitors were traveling alone; thirty-one percent of visitor groups consisted of two people, while another 20% consisted of three or four people.

Twenty-four percent of visitor groups were made up of family members, 27% were traveling alone, and 29% were with friends (see Figure 2). “Other” group types included those traveling with model airplane club, fellow cyclists, wife, and gardening friends. Most respondents (99%) said they were not traveling with a school or education group (see Figure 4). Thirty-five percent of the visitors were age group 46-65 years, and 11% were in the 66-75 year age group (see Figure 5). Children who were 15 years and younger made up 10% of Floyd Bennett Field visitors.

Demographics (continued)

Most visitors (90%) spoke English as their primary language (see Figure 6). Table 2 summarizes other languages spoken by visitors. Nine percent of the visitors were of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino ethnicity (see Figure 7). Of those, 55% were Puerto Rican, 5% were Cuban, and 41% specified “other,” as shown in Figure 8. Most respondents (82%) were of White racial background, 15% were Black or African American, 5% were Asian, and smaller proportions were of other racial backgrounds (see Figure 9).

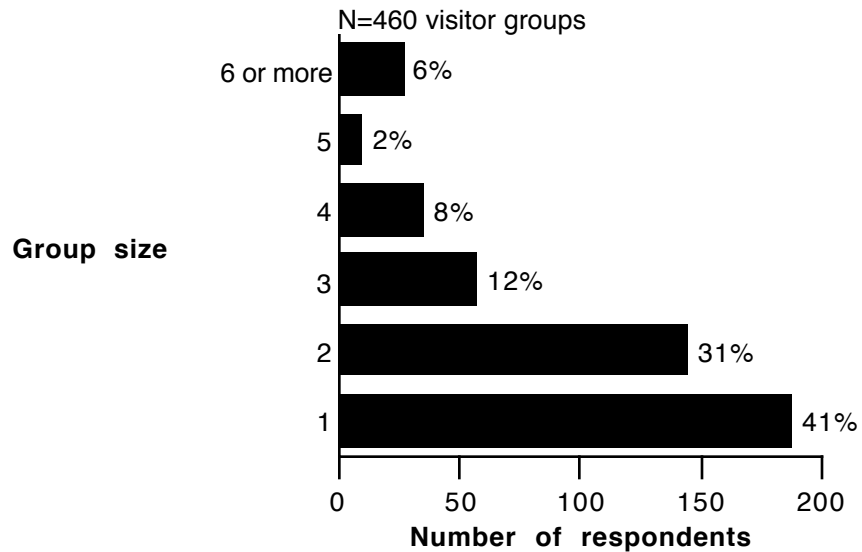
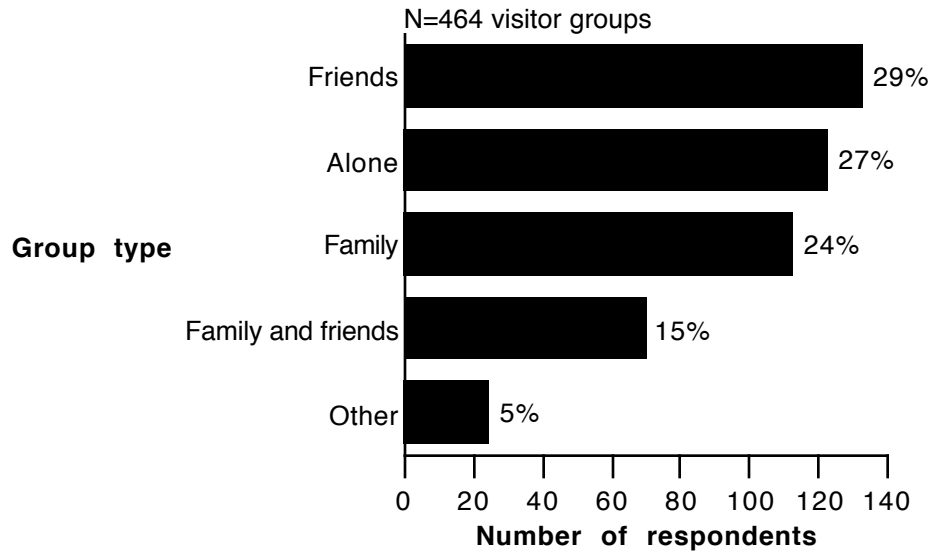
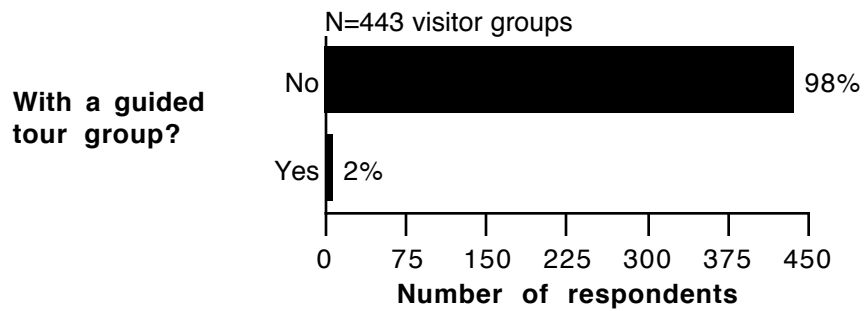


Figure 1: Visitor group size

**Figure 2: Visitor group type****Figure 3: Participation with a guided tour**

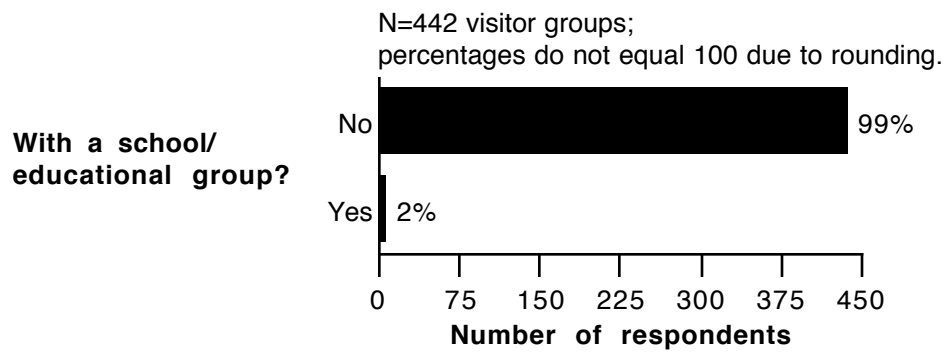


Figure 4: Participation with a school group

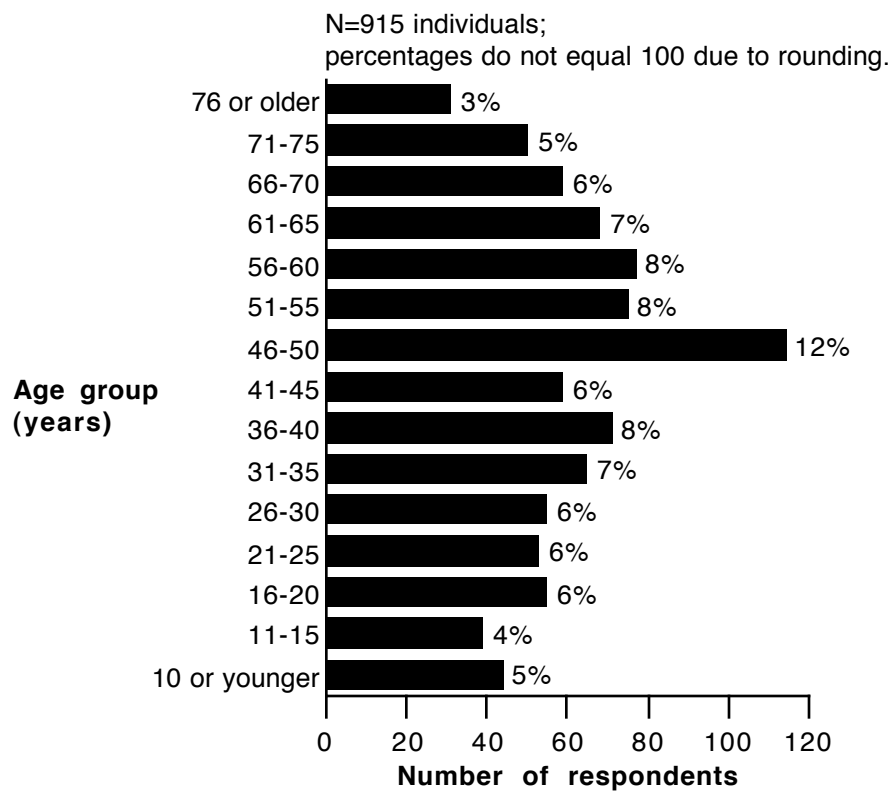
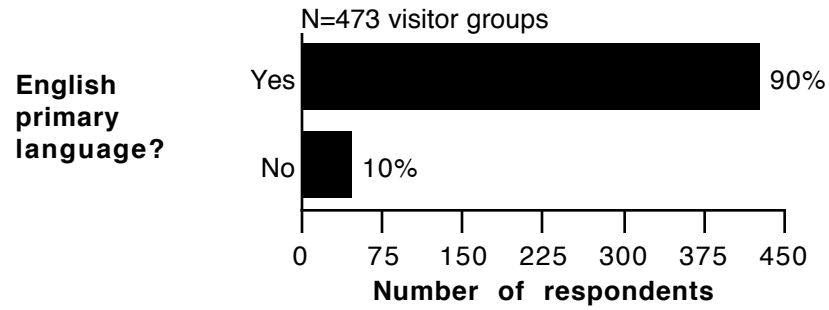


Figure 5: Visitor ages

**Figure 6: Primary language****Table 2: Primary languages other than English**

N=47 visitor groups

Language	Number of individuals	Percent of total visitors N=492
Russian	25	6
Turkish	2	<1
Cambodian	1	<1
Chinese	1	<1
Czech	1	<1
English and Spanish	1	<1
Hebrew	1	<1
Italian	1	<1
Italian and English	1	<1
Polish	1	<1
Spanish	1	<1
Spanish and Chinese	1	<1
Ukrainian	1	<1
Urdu	1	<1

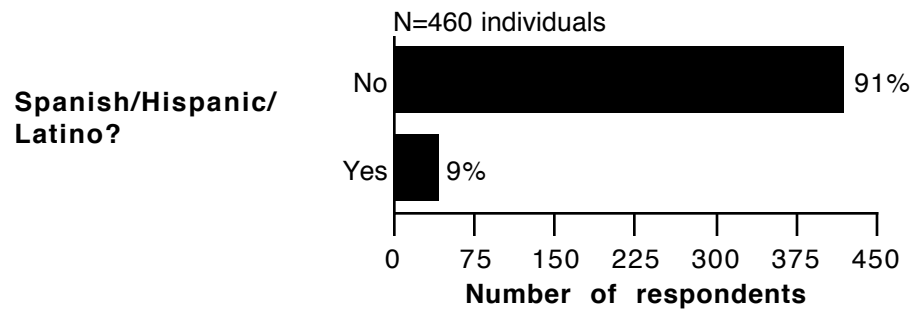


Figure 7: Visitors of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity

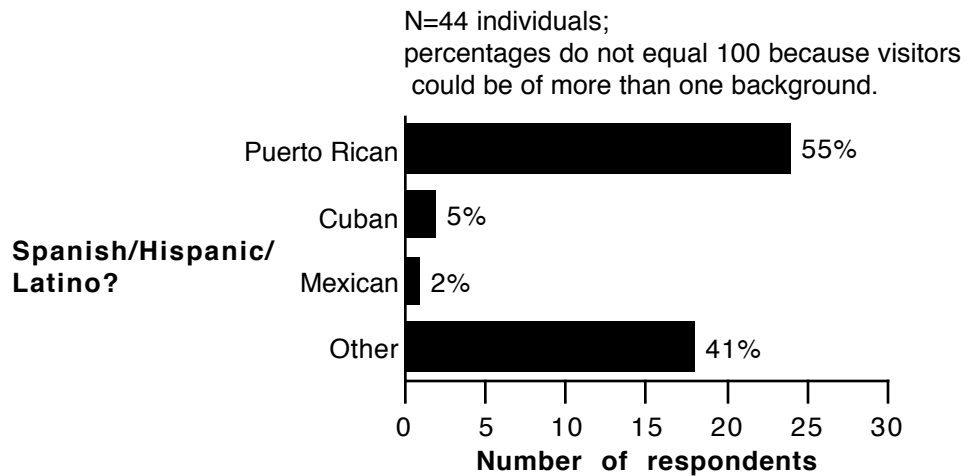
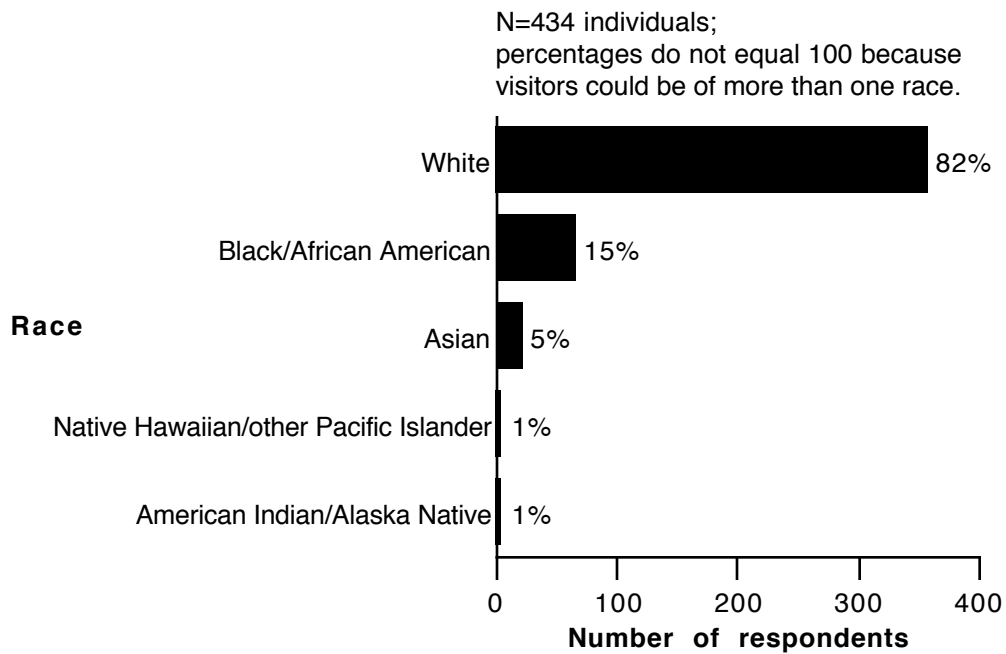
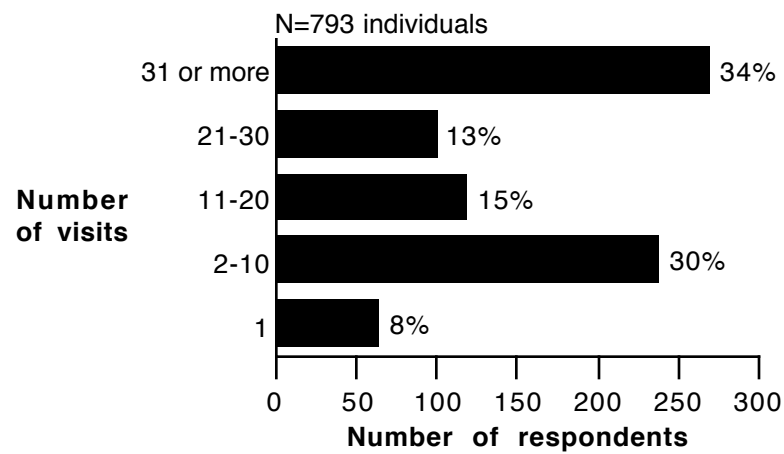


Figure 8: Spanish/Hispanic/Latino ethnicities

**Figure 9: Visitor race****Demographics (continued)**

Visitors reported on the number of times each group member had visited Floyd Bennett Field in the past 12 months. Thirty-four percent of visitors had visited 31 times or more (see Figure 10). Thirty percent had visited two to ten times: 8% of visitors reported that this was their first visit to Floyd Bennett Field in the past 12 months.

Because international visitors represented only one percent of visitation to Floyd Bennett Field (see Table 3 with caution). The largest proportions of United States visitors were from New York (96%), Puerto Rico (1%), and New Jersey (1%). Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from another 4 states (see Map 1 and Table 4).



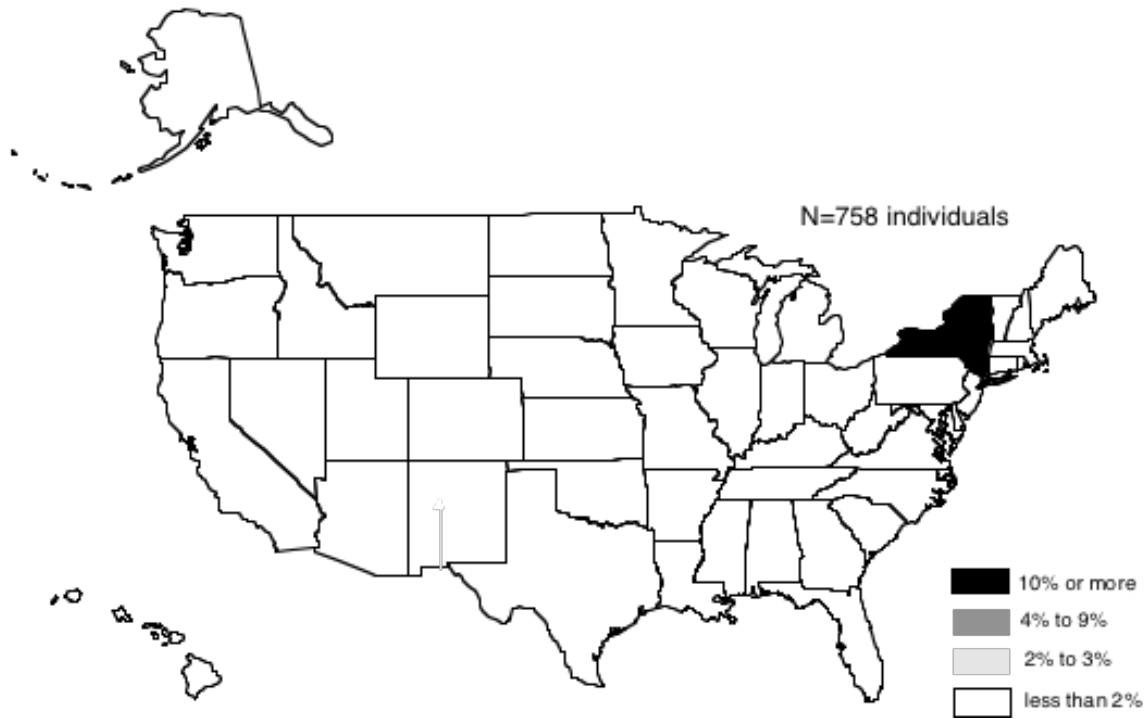
**Figure 10: Number of visits in past 12 months
(including this visit)**

Table 3: International visitors by country of residence

percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

CAUTION!

Country	Number of individuals N=7 individuals	Percent of international visitors	Percent of total N=765 individuals
Mexico	2	29	<1
Russia	2	29	<1
Czechoslovakia	1	14	<1
Dominican Republic	1	14	<1
Greece	1	14	<1



Map 1: Proportion of United States visitors by state of residence

Table 4: United States visitors by state of residence

State	Number of individuals N= 758 individuals	Percent of U.S. visitors	Percent of total visitors N=765 individuals
New York	731	96	96
New Jersey	10	1	<1
Puerto Rico	8	1	<1
Pennsylvania	3	<1	<1
Florida	2	<1	<1
California	1	<1	<1
Connecticut	1	<1	<1

Length of visit

Thirty-five percent of visitor groups spent 5 or more hours at Floyd Bennett Field on the visit when they received the questionnaire. Another 16% responded that they spent three hours (see Figure 11), and 23% spent 2 hours.

Visitors were asked if they were camping at Floyd Bennett Field on this visit. Two percent were camping and 98% were not (see Figure 12). Of those camping, 29% camped for one day, 57% camped for 2 days, and 14% reported camping three nights or more (see Figure 13).

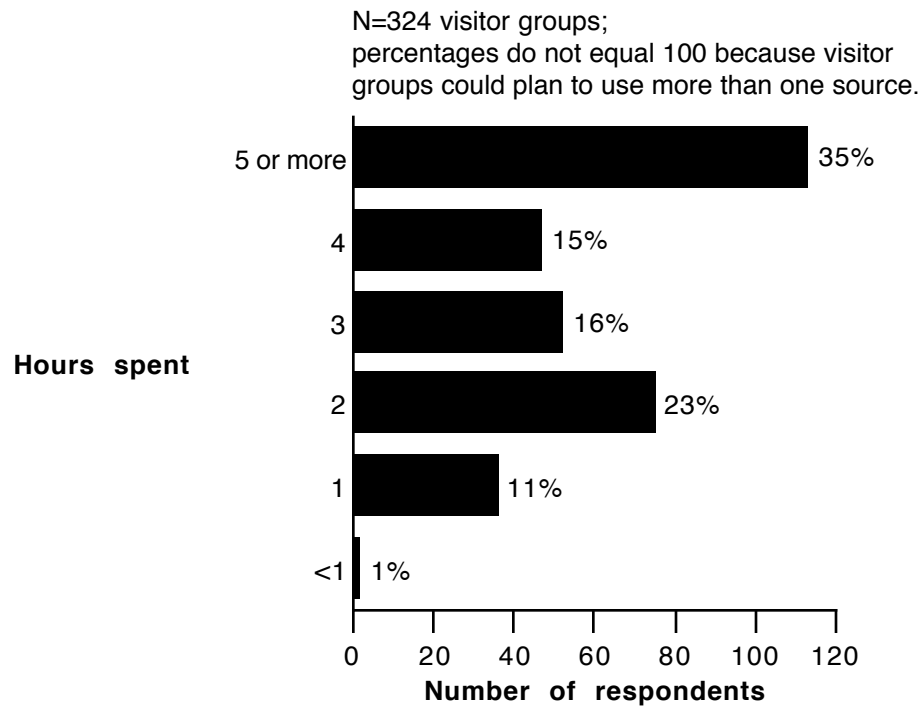


Figure 11: Hours spent at Floyd Bennett Field on this visit

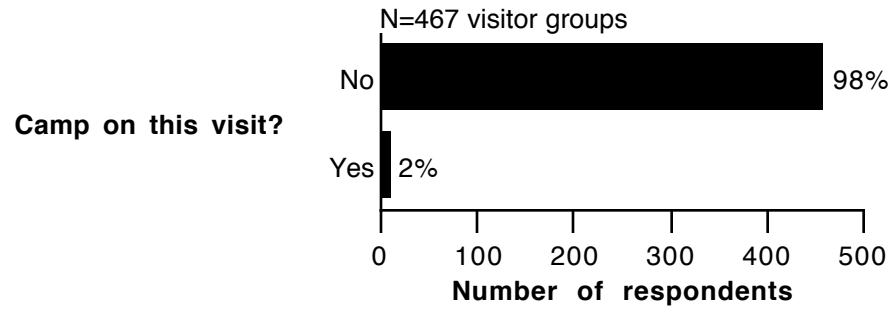
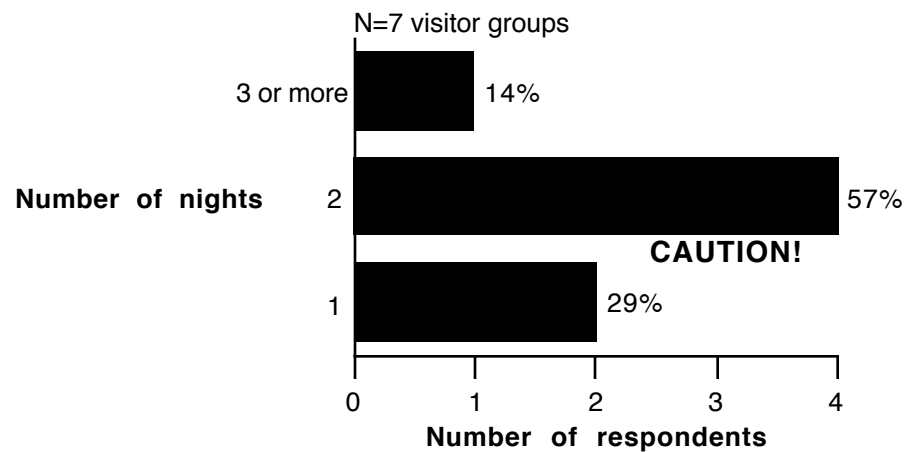


Figure 12: Visitor groups camping on this visit



**Figure 13: Number of nights visitors camped at
Floyd Bennett Field**

Sources of information

Visitors reported sources of information they used prior to visiting Floyd Bennett Field. Figure 14 shows that the groups who received information most often used word of mouth/friends/relatives (67%), previous visits (51%), and the park program guide (18%) as their sources. Twelve percent of visitor groups received no information prior to their visit. Several sources of information were the least used: child attending school program at site, video/television/radio programs, school/college class and telephone/written/e-mail inquiry to park (each 3%). “Other” sources of information used by visitors included driving by, beltway billboard signs, and Historical Aircraft Restoration Project (HARP).

Most visitors (72%) received the information they needed to plan their visit. However, 17% did not receive the information they needed (see Figure 15). The additional information that they needed prior to their visit included hours of operation, information on community gardens, fishing information and rules and regulations.

Figure 16 shows the information sources that visitors would prefer to use prior to future visits. The most preferred source was word of mouth/friends/relatives (33%), followed by previous visits (24%). The least preferred sources were a school/college class and telephone/written/e-mail inquiry to the park (each 1%).

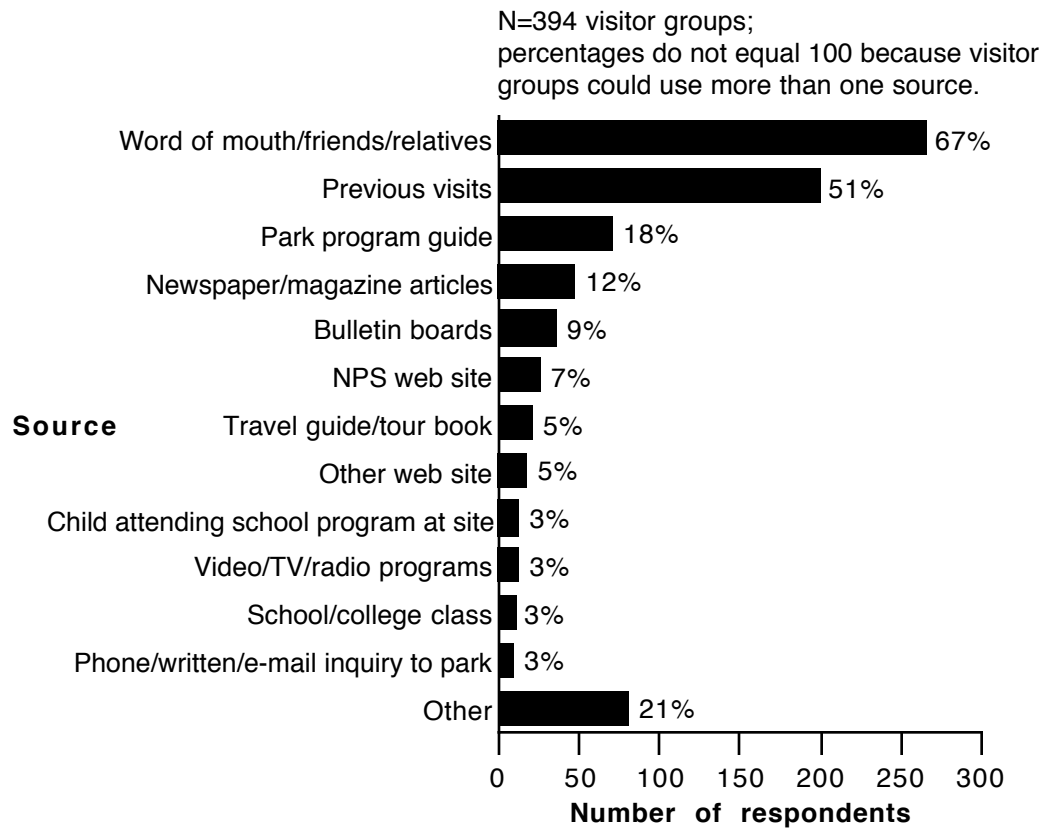


Figure 14: Sources of information used by visitors prior to this visit

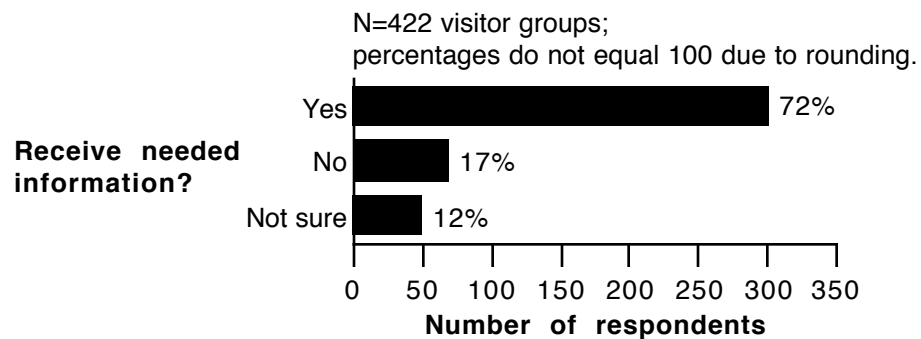


Figure 15: Receive needed information?

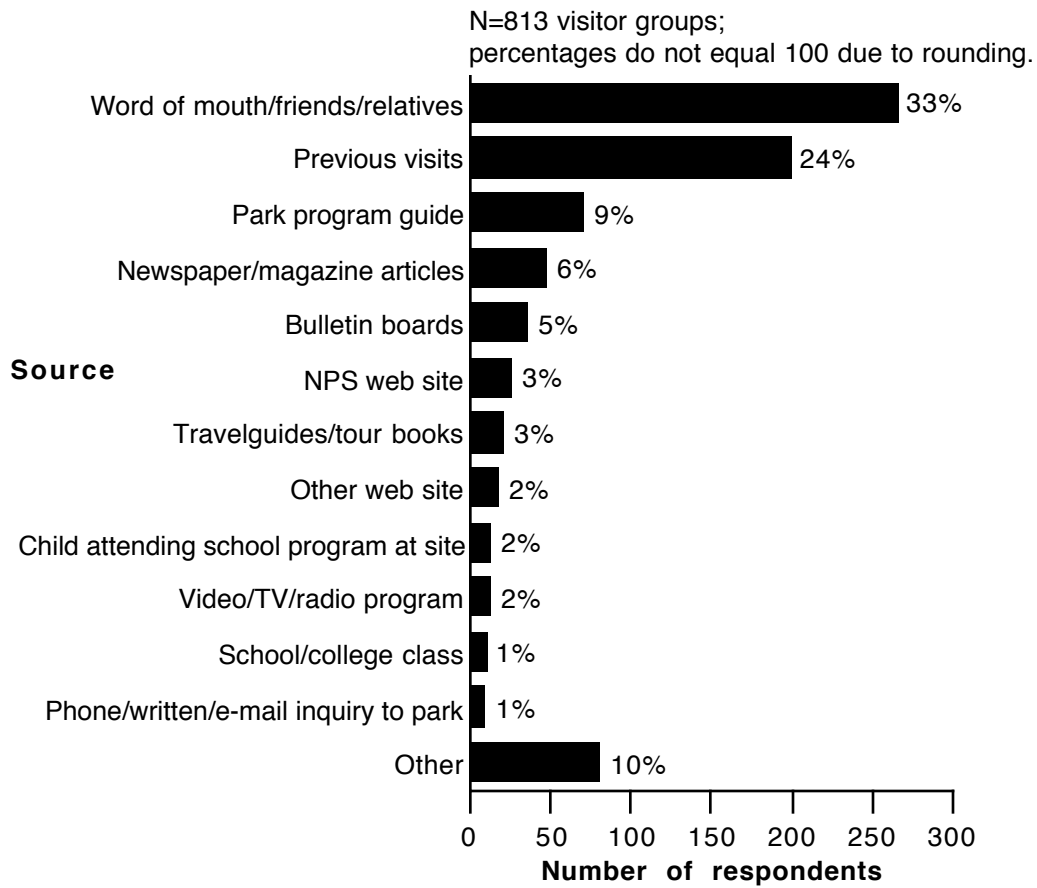


Figure 16: Sources of information prior to future visits

Awareness of site management by National Park Service

Visitor groups were asked: “Prior to this visit to Floyd Bennett Field, were you aware that this site is managed by the National Park Service?” Most visitors (76%) were aware that the site is managed by the National Park Service (see Figure 17). Seventeen percent were not aware and another 8% were “not sure.”

When asked if they were aware that Floyd Bennett Field is part of Gateway National Recreation Area (NRA), 83% of respondents were aware of the relationship between Gateway NRA and Floyd Bennett Field (see Figure 18). Fourteen percent of visitors were not aware, and 3% were “not sure” of the relationship between Gateway NRA and Floyd Bennett Field.

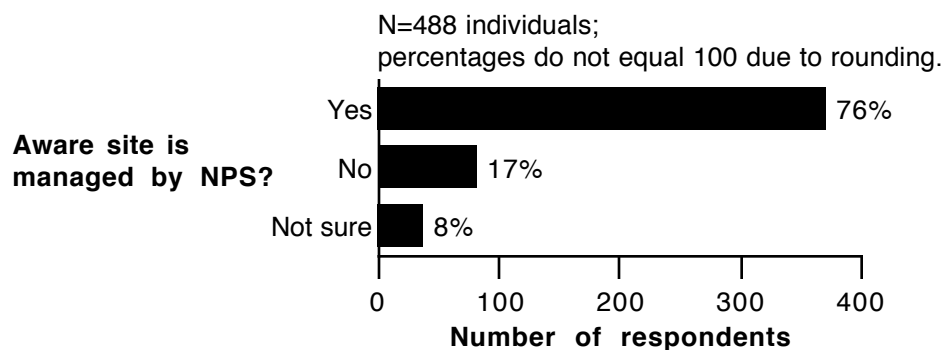


Figure 17: Visitor awareness that site is managed by the National Park Service

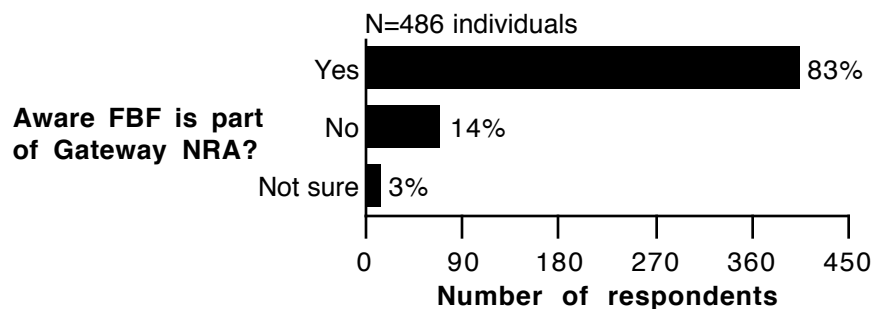


Figure 18: Visitor awareness that Floyd Bennett Field is part of Gateway NRA

Visits to other National Park Service units

When asked, "Have you ever visited other National Park Service sites anywhere in the United States?", 65% of visitors had visited other NPS sites (see Figure 19). Twenty-four percent had not visited other parks, and 11% were "not sure."

Visitors were also asked what Floyd Bennett Field has in common with other areas in the National Park System. Table 5 shows how visitors compared Floyd Bennett Field with other areas of the National Park System. The most common answer was "nothing" (N=24). Other answers included fishing (N=13), clean (N=12), and history (N=11).

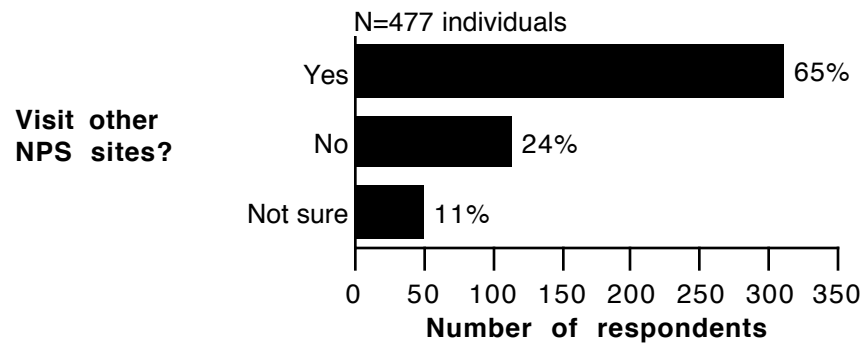


Figure 19: Visitors who have visited other NPS sites

**Table 5: What Floyd Bennett Field has in common
with other NPS units**

N=270 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
History	11
Historic	2
Other comments	7
NATURE/SCENERY	
Open space	18
Natural beauty/setting	11
Beautiful	7
Nature/natural	5
Ocean	3
Beach	2
Green	2
Other comments	9
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES	
Fishing	13
Camping	3
Recreation activities/facilities	3
Other comments	19
MANAGEMENT/POLICIES	
Well kept/well run	13
Clean	12
Preservation	8
Patrols	4
Free	3
FBF has an identity crisis	2
Multi-use	2
Other comments	23
OTHER	
Nothing	24
Quiet	12
Peace	11
Unique	9
Huge	6
Relaxing	5
Other comments	16

Visit characteristics

Responding to the question, “How often do you visit Floyd Bennett Field,” 53% of visitors said "at least once a week" (see Figure 20). Another 21% reported daily visits, and 16% reported "at least once a month." Most visitors (76%) visit the area on both weekends and weekdays, while 13% usually visit on weekends (see Figure 21).

Visitors were also asked to list the time of day they usually visit Floyd Bennett Field, using the following time periods.

Mornings (sunrise to 10 a.m.)
Mid-day (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
Late afternoon (2 p.m. to 6 p.m.)
Evenings (6 p.m. to sunset)
Night (sunset to sunrise)

Sixty-eight percent said they usually visit during mid-day (10 a.m. to 2 p.m.), as shown in Figure 22. Almost one-half of visitors usually visit in late afternoon (2 p.m. to 6 p.m.) and 36% usually visit during the evening between 6 p.m. and sunset.

Most visitors (96%) did not have problems in finding their destinations while visiting Floyd Bennett Field (see Figure 23). However, 4% of those who responded did have difficulty locating their destination at the Floyd Bennett Field. The areas most difficult to find included: Hanger B, fishing areas, and model airplane field.

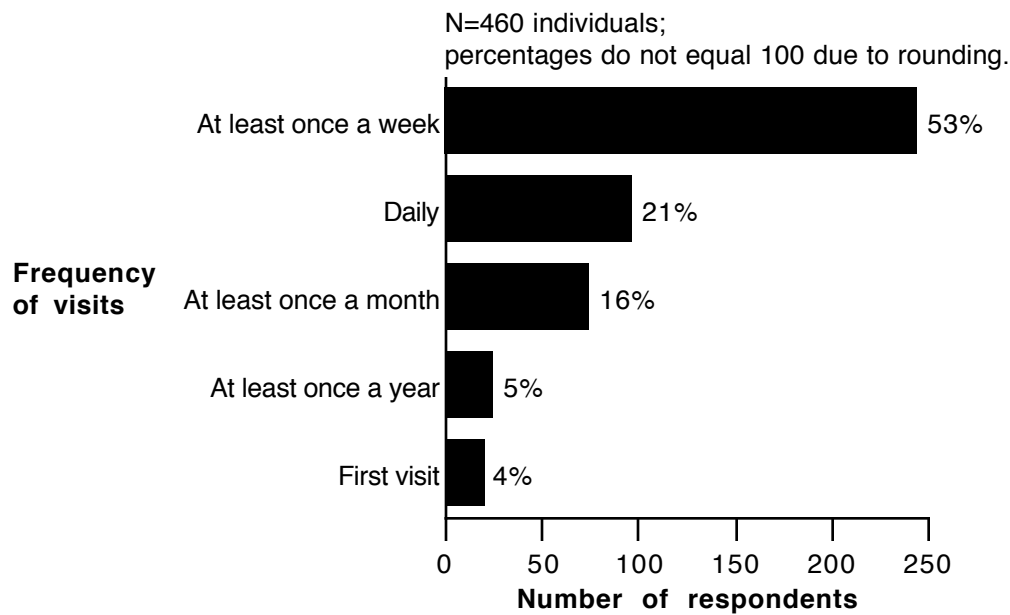


Figure 20: Frequency of visits by Floyd Bennett Field visitors

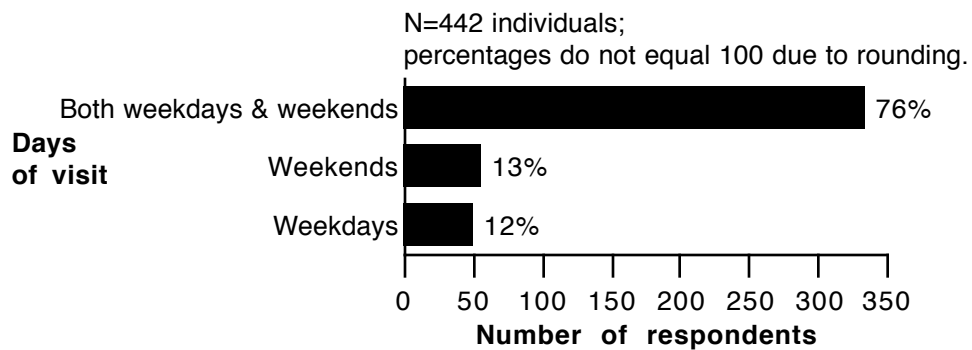


Figure 21: Usual days of visits to Floyd Bennett Field

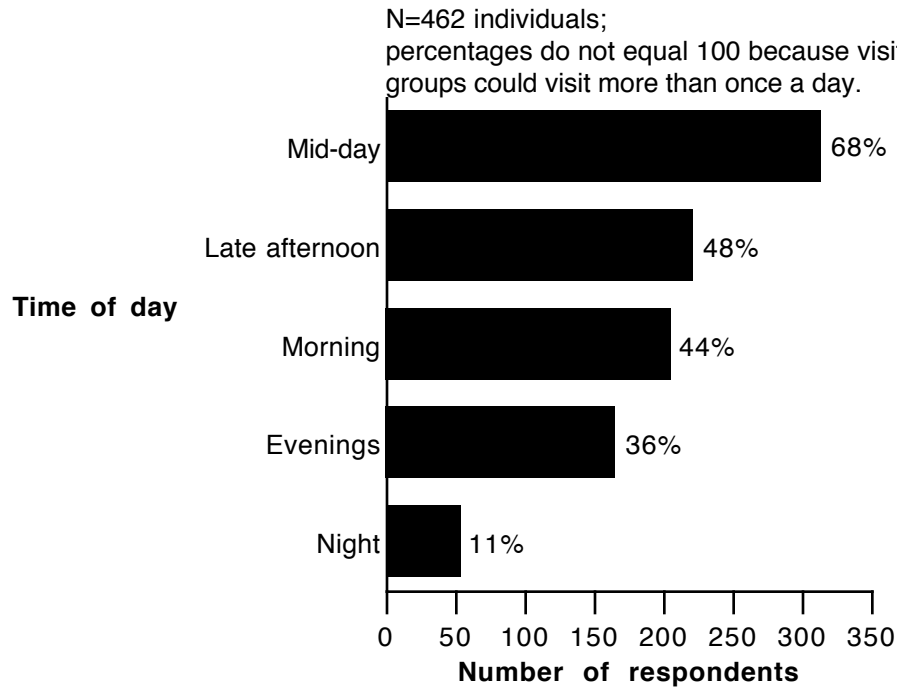


Figure 22: Times of day when visitors usually visit Floyd Bennett Field

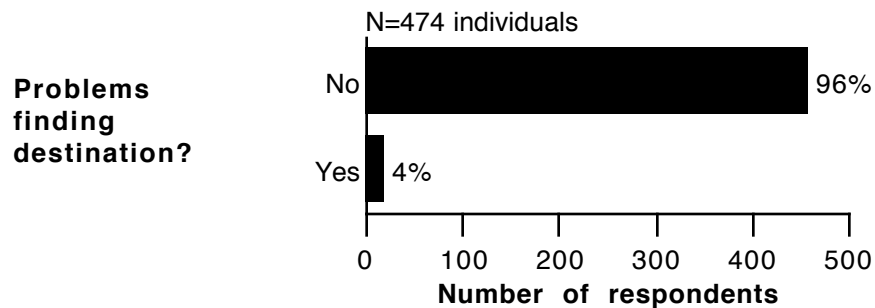


Figure 23: Ability to find destinations at Floyd Bennett Field

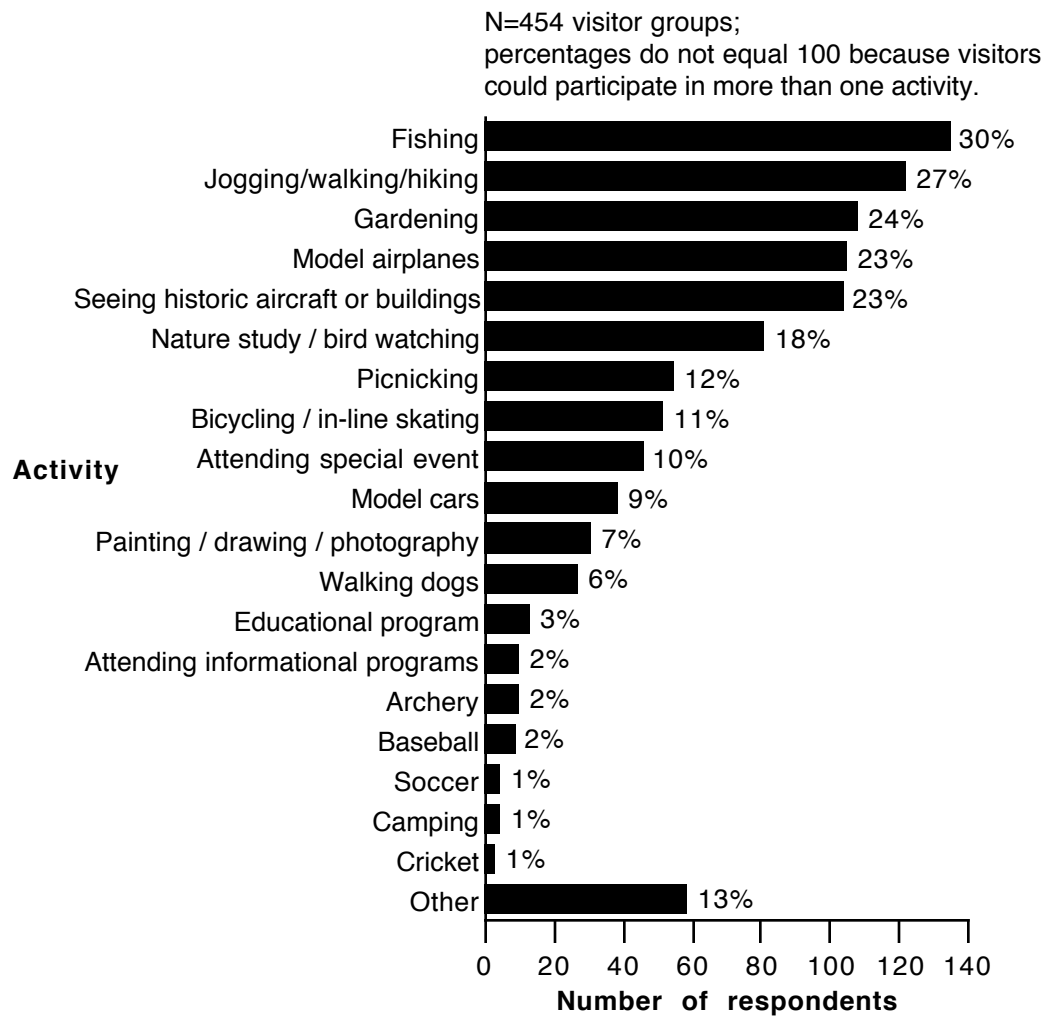
Activities

Figure 24 shows common activities that groups reported participating in during this visit to Floyd Bennett Field. The most common activities reported included fishing (30%), jogging/walking/hiking (27%) and model airplanes (23%). "Other" activities included training student driver, bicycle racing, serving as HARP volunteer, meditating, and observing activities.

Visitors were asked to choose the activity that was the main reason for this visit from a list of activities. Twenty-three percent of visitors reported gardening, 22% percent said fishing, and 17% responded model airplanes (see Figure 25).

The most common activities on past visits included seeing historical aircraft or buildings (40%), jogging/walking/hiking (38%), fishing (37%), and nature study/bird watching (27%), as shown in Figure 26.

Visitors were asked, "Prior to this visit to Floyd Bennett Field, were you aware of the availability of information about which fish are safe to eat (official health warnings about safe/unsafe quantities of local fish to eat)?" Fifty-one percent were not aware of the safety information regarding eating local fish (see Figure 27). Thirty-seven percent were aware of the information and 12% were "not sure."

**Figure 24: Visitor activities on this visit**

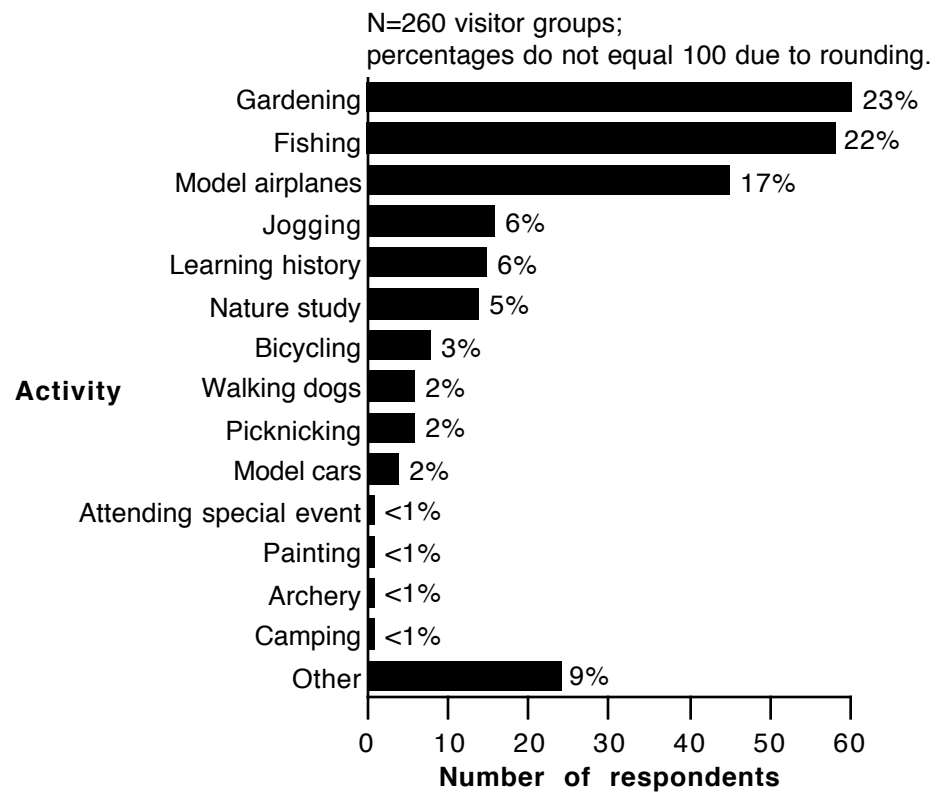


Figure 25: Activity that was the main reason for this visit to Floyd Bennett Field

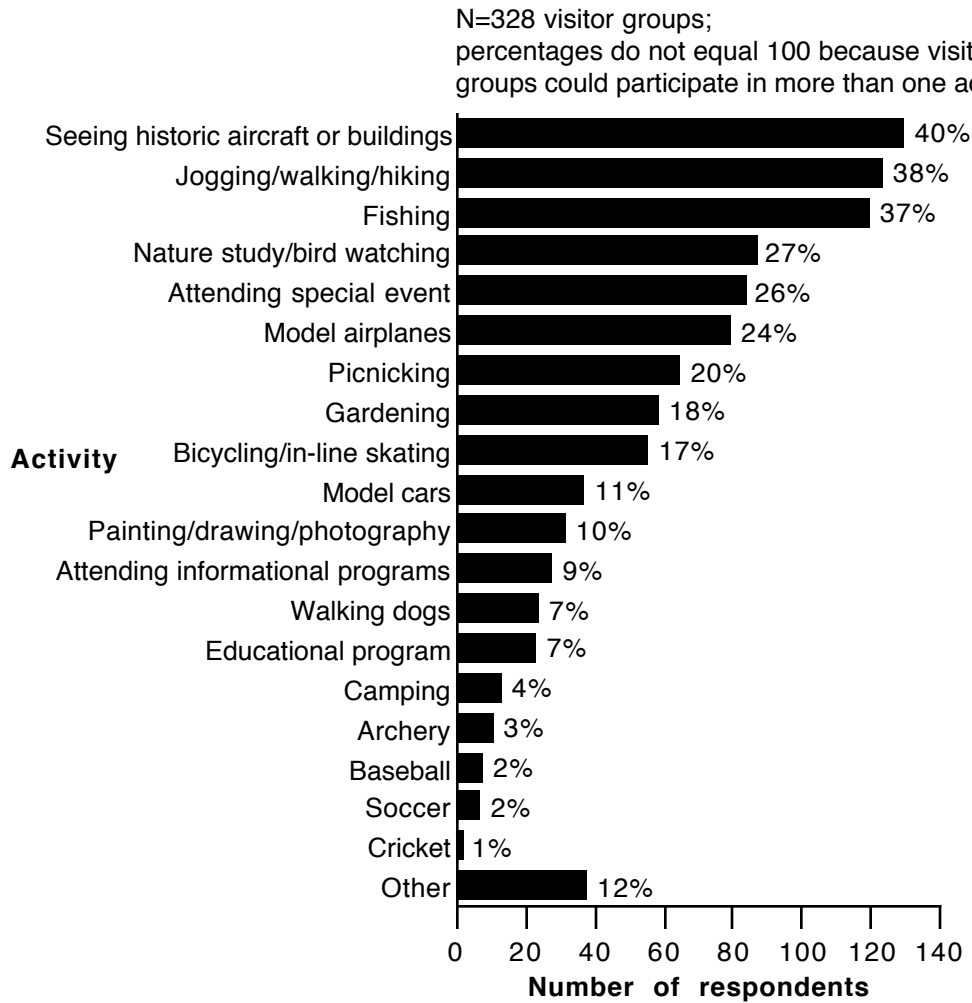


Figure 26: Visitor activities on past visits

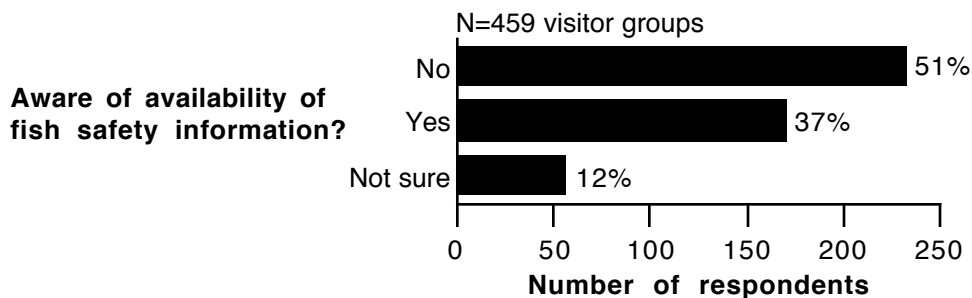


Figure 27: Visitor awareness of availability of fish safety information

Form of transportation and sites visited

Most visitors (95%) used a private vehicle as the form of transportation used to travel to Floyd Bennett Field (see Figure 28). Other forms of transportation used by visitors included bicycle (4%), and motorcycle (4%). No visitors used a taxi service to travel to the Floyd Bennett Field. "Other" forms of transportation included a car and hobby car.

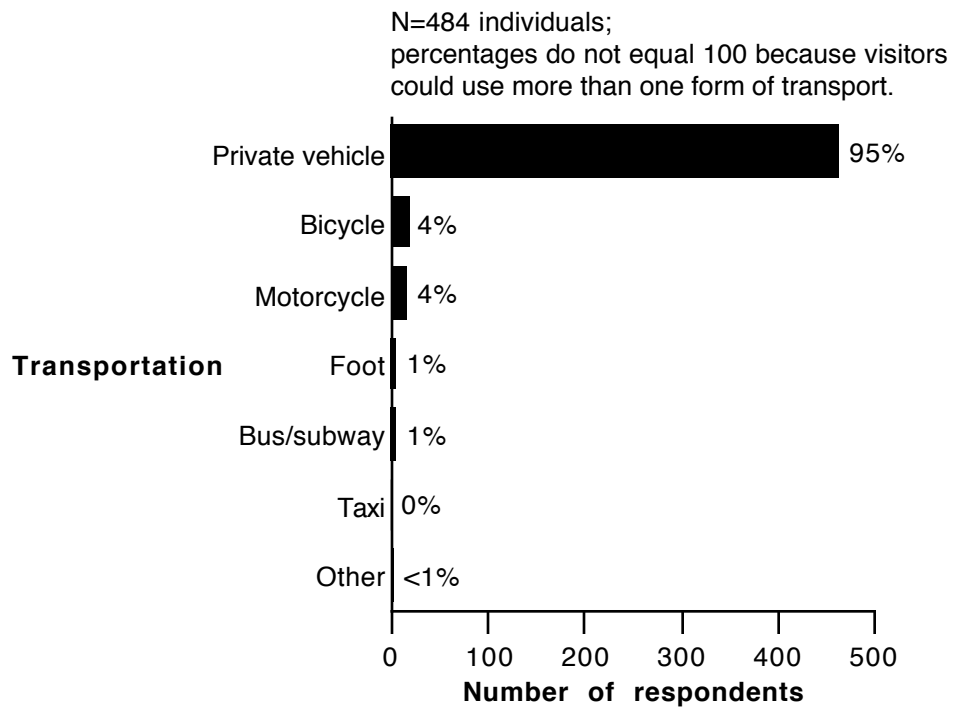


Figure 28: Forms of transportation visitors used to get to Floyd Bennett Field

Visitors were asked what sites they visited while at Floyd Bennett Field during this visit (see map on following page). Figure 29 shows that the most commonly visited sites were the model airplane field (43%), community garden (36%), and seaplane ramp fishing (29%). The least visited area was the Gateway Environmental Study Center (2%).

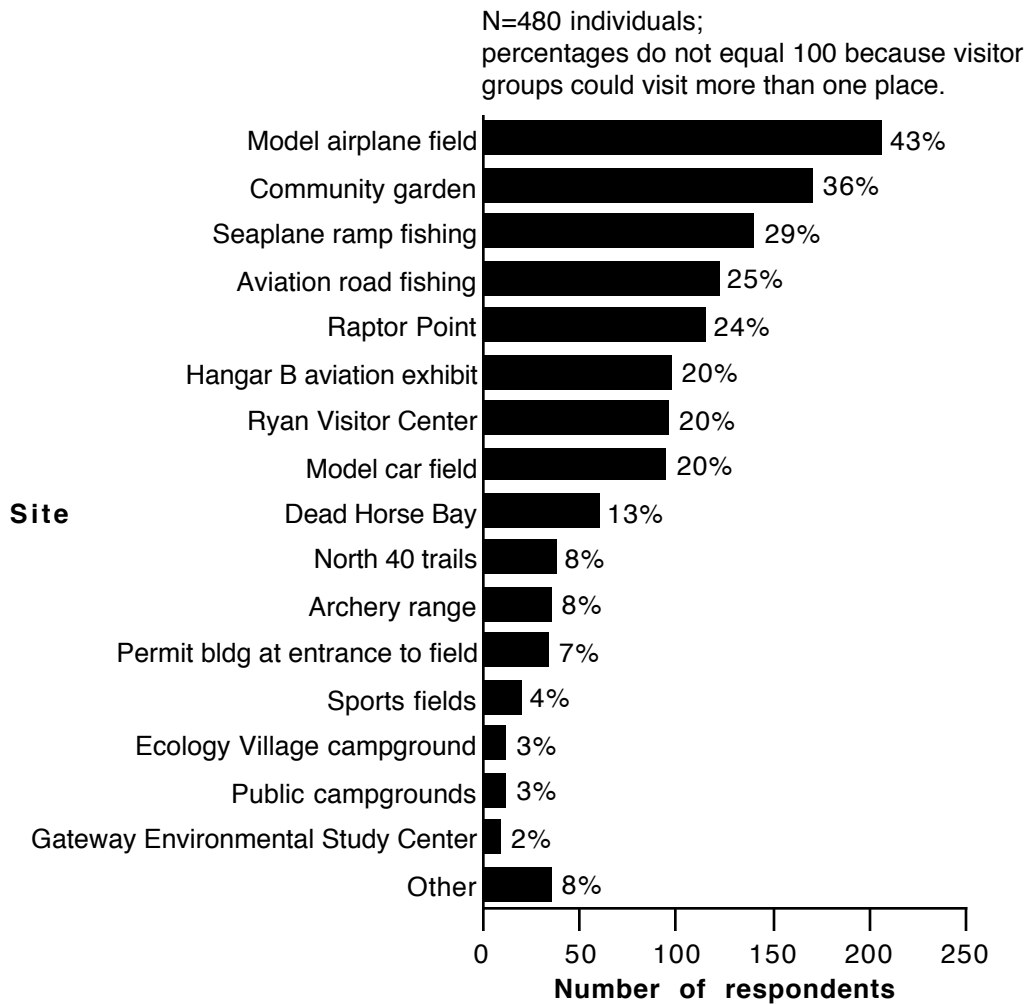
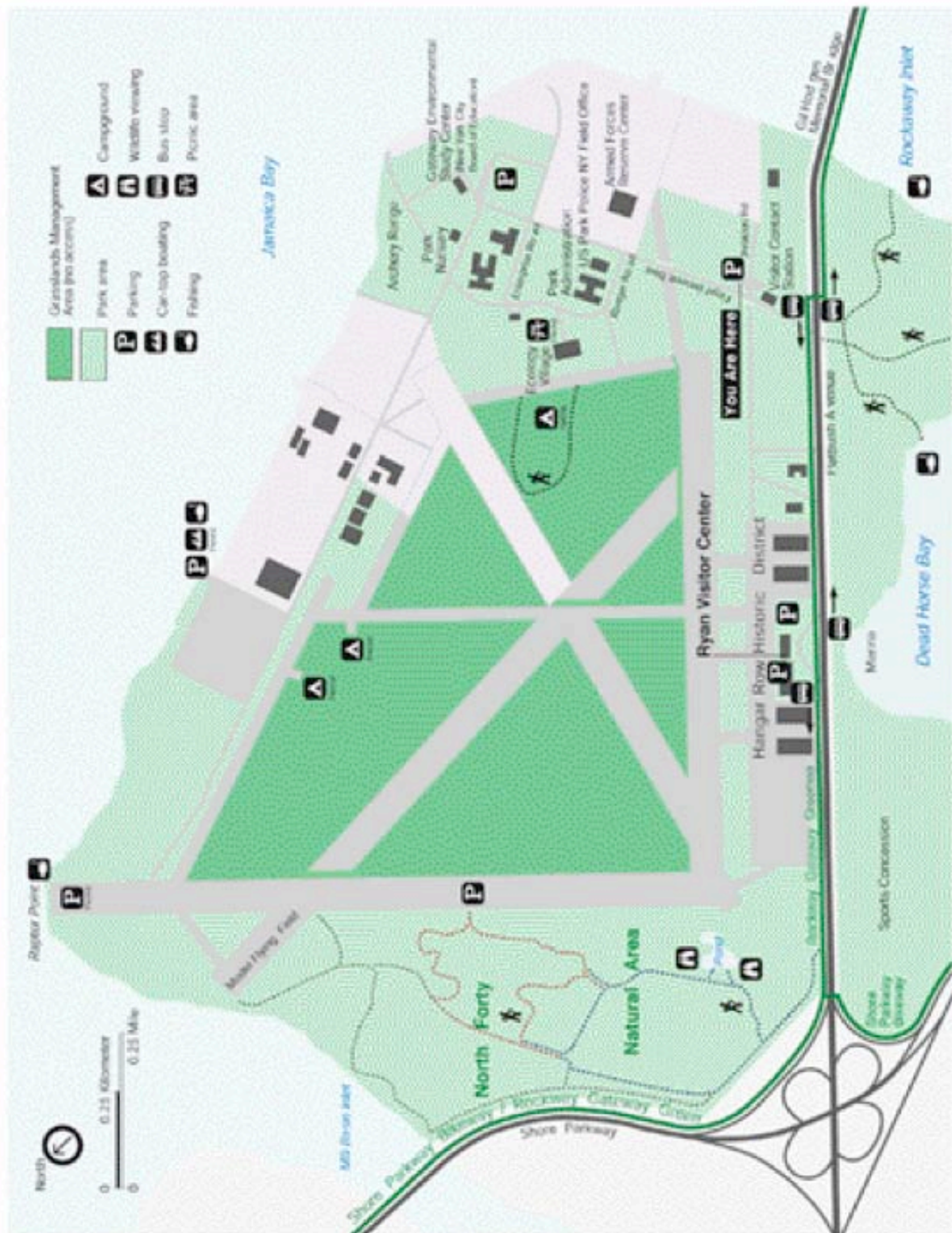


Figure 29: Sites visited while at Floyd Bennett Field



Selected factors' effect on park visitors

Visitors were asked to rate how selected factors may have affected their visit to Floyd Bennett Field using a scale of 1 to 5, (1 or 2=detracted from, 3=no effect, and 4 or 5=added to). The factors that most often had “no effect” on visitor experience were New York police department helicopter overflight (87%), construction (82%), and New York Department of sanitation heavy equipment training (80%), as shown in Table 6. The factors receiving the highest proportion of “added to” ratings included model airplanes and cars (42%), speaking to park staff/volunteers (42%), “other” (37%), and patrols by park rangers/park police (31%). The factors that received the highest proportion of “detracted from” ratings were speeding cars/motorcycles (35%), trash (29%), and smells (19%). “Other” factors that visitors listed included: fishing, gardens and HARP.

Visitors who rated factors effecting their park experience as “1” or “2” (detracted from) were asked to explain how that element detracted from their experience. The comments from 198 visitor groups are summarized in Table 7.

Table 6: Elements' effect on visitor experience N=number of respondents; percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.						
Elements	Affects on park experience (%)					
	Added to		No effect	Detracted from		
	N	5	4	3	2	1
Patrols by rangers/park police	433	21	10	62	5	3
Construction	416	2	7	82	7	6
Commercial aircraft	425	11	7	69	8	6
NY Police dept over-flight (helicopters)	425	12	7	87	6	8
Other visitors (number of people, activities)	409	8	7	75	7	3
Special events or activities	412	20	10	63	4	3
Department of Sanitation, heavy equipment training	418	4	3	80	7	6
NY police department driver training	417	5	6	81	4	5
Trash	414	2	3	66	12	17
Smells	407	3	5	73	8	11
Speeding cars/motorcycles	425	4	5	56	12	23
Student drivers	417	2	5	77	6	11
Speaking to park staff/volunteers	412	27	15	52	3	2
Model cars/planes	426	31	11	50	4	3
Other	101	31	6	46	2	16

Table 7: How elements detracted from park visit

N=210 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Need more rangers	5
Other comment	1
MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES	
Too much trash	36
Smells	12
Dirty	6
Need trash cans	3
Dirty restrooms	2
Odors from compost	2
Not enough restrooms	2
Other comments	6
MANAGEMENT/POLICIES	
No enforcement of regulations	7
NYC police taking too much space	4
Special events block access	3
Department of sanitation training takes space	3
Other comments	4
GENERAL	
Speeding	50
Noise	25
Motorcycles	10
Helicopter noise	9
Dangerous (cars/motorcycles)	4
Model airplane noise	4
Helicopters interfering with RC field	3
Traffic	3
Ranger road closed	2
Crowded	2
Other comments	2

Importance of visitor services and facilities

The National Park Service would like to improve or expand visitor services and facilities at Floyd Bennett Field. Visitors were asked to rate how important twenty specific visitor services and facilities were to them. The following scale was used in the questionnaire:

IMPORTANCE
5=extremely important
4=very important
3=moderately important
2=somewhat important
1=not important
DK= don't know

Figures 30-49 show how visitors rated specific services and facilities in terms of possible future improvements or expansion at Floyd Bennett Field. The highest ratings of "very important" and "extremely important" were for restrooms (83%), trash cans (82%) and ranger/park police presence (64%).

Figure 50 shows the combined "extremely important" and "very important" ratings for all of the services/facilities.

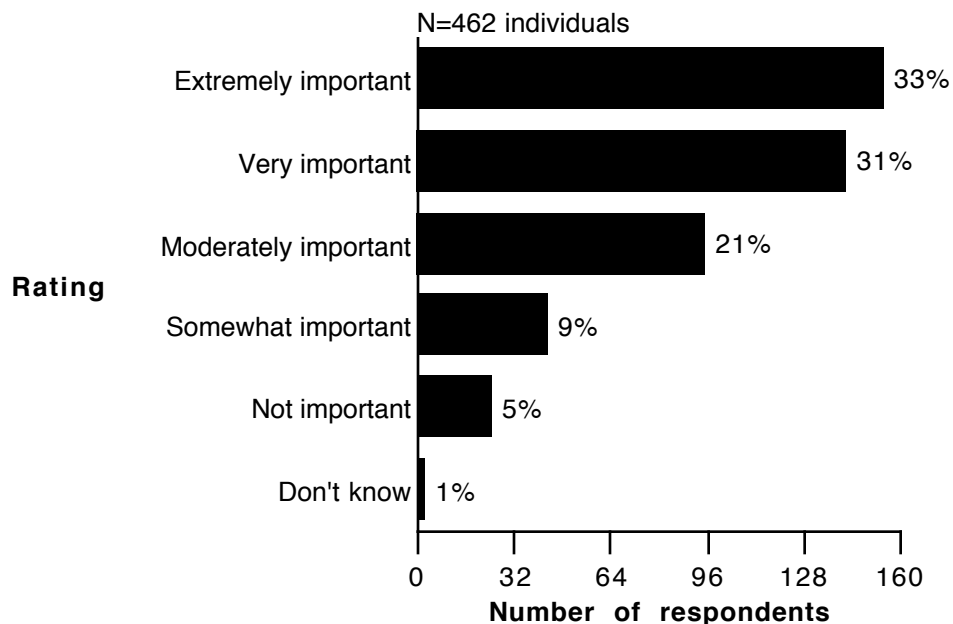


Figure 30: Importance of availability of drinking water

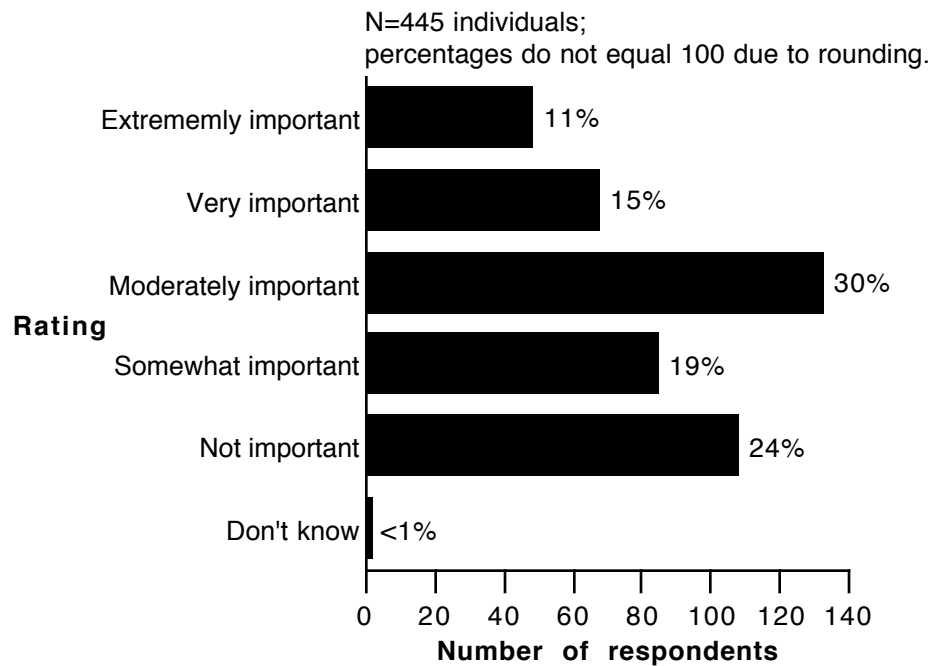


Figure 31: Importance of availability of food

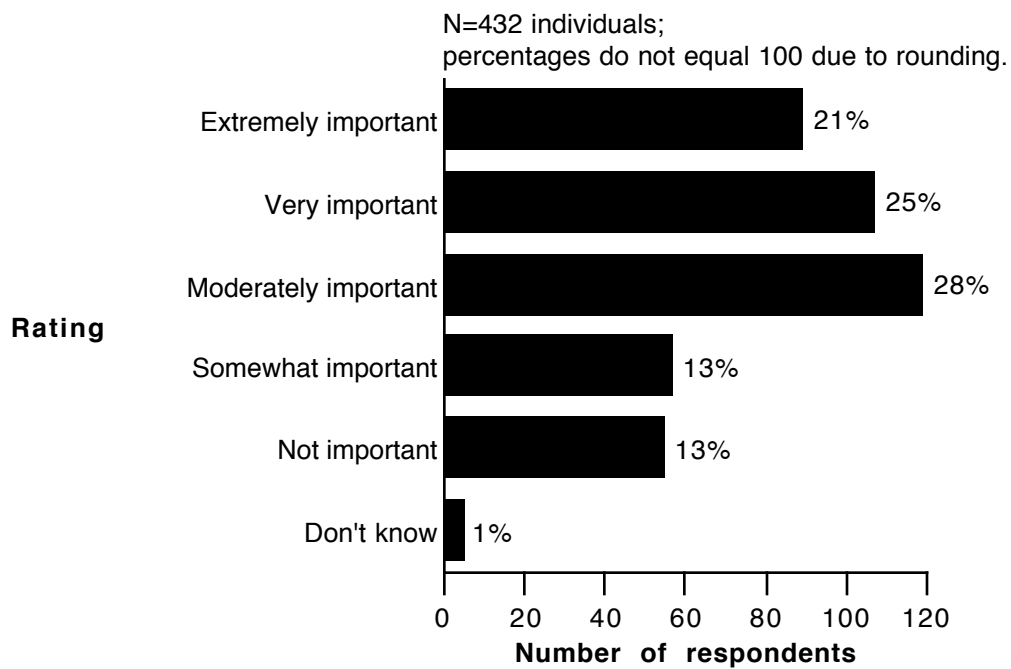
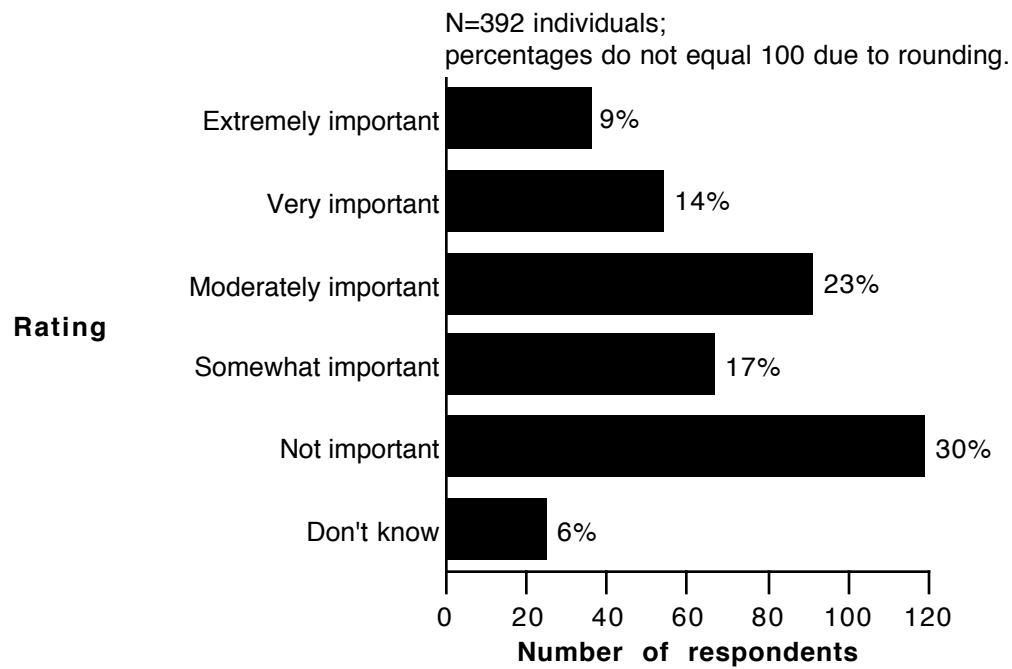
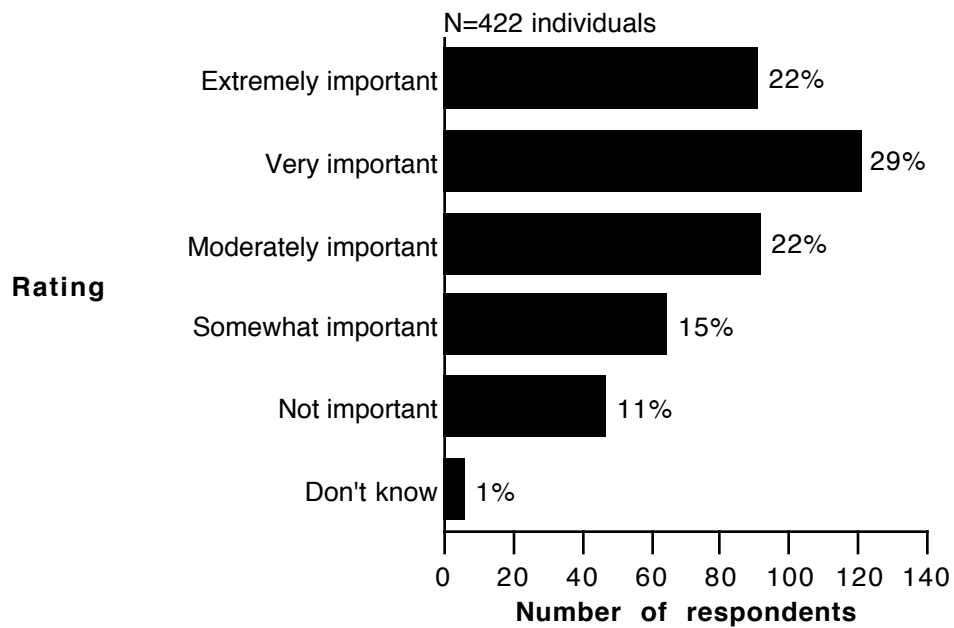
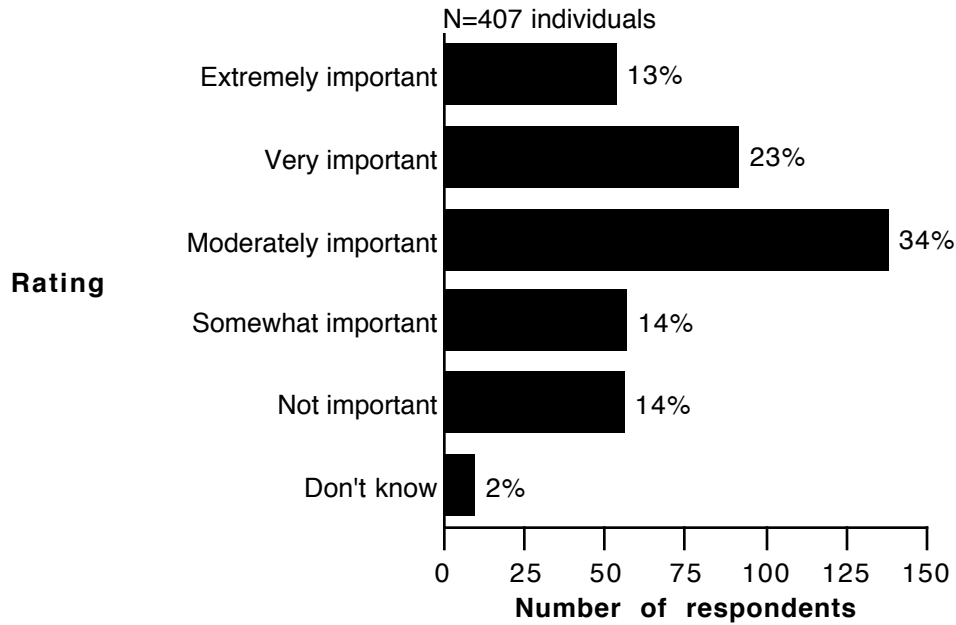
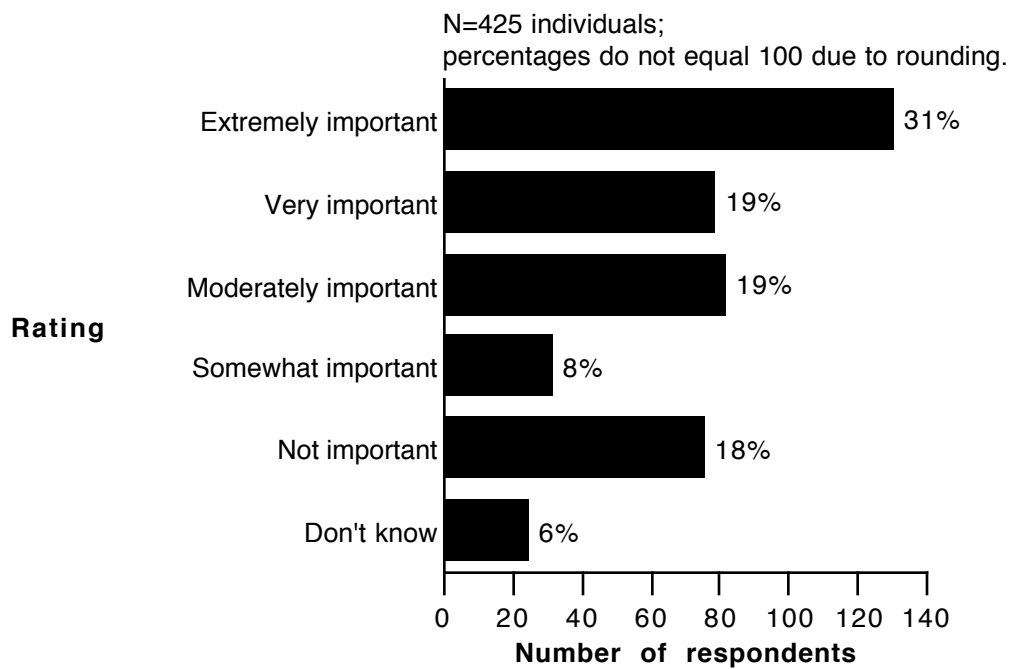
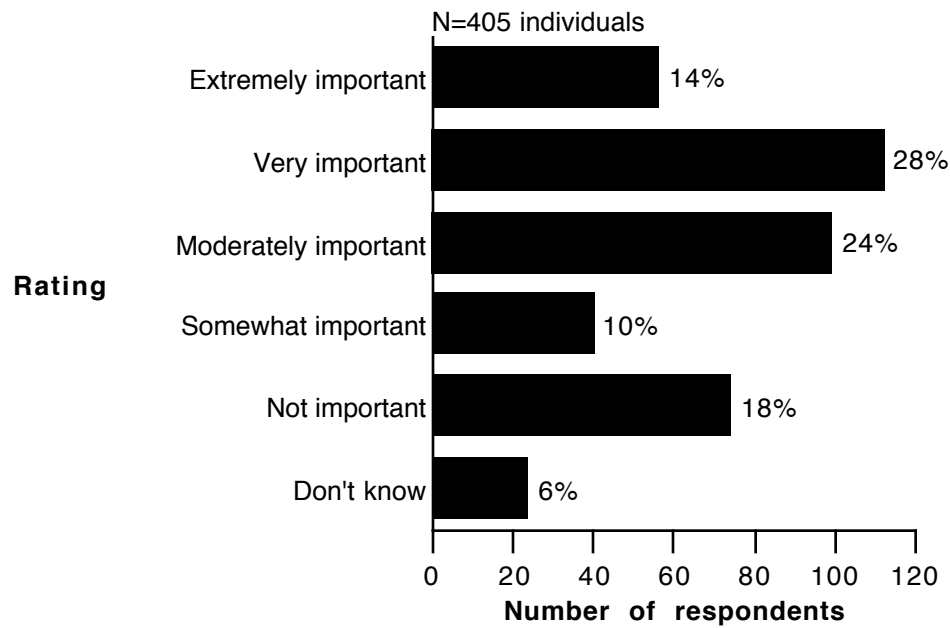
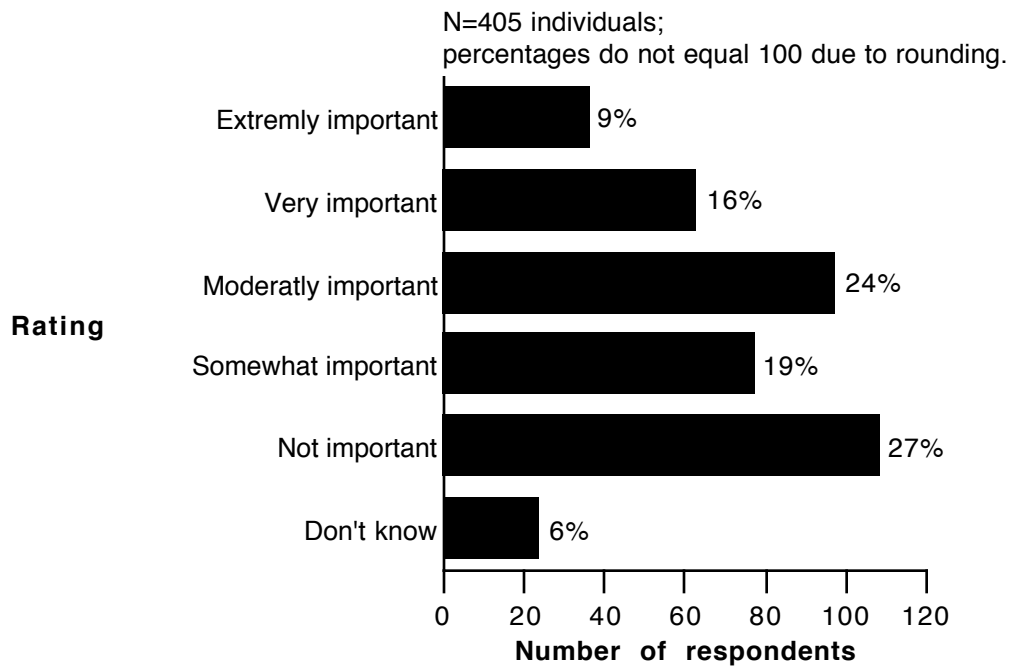
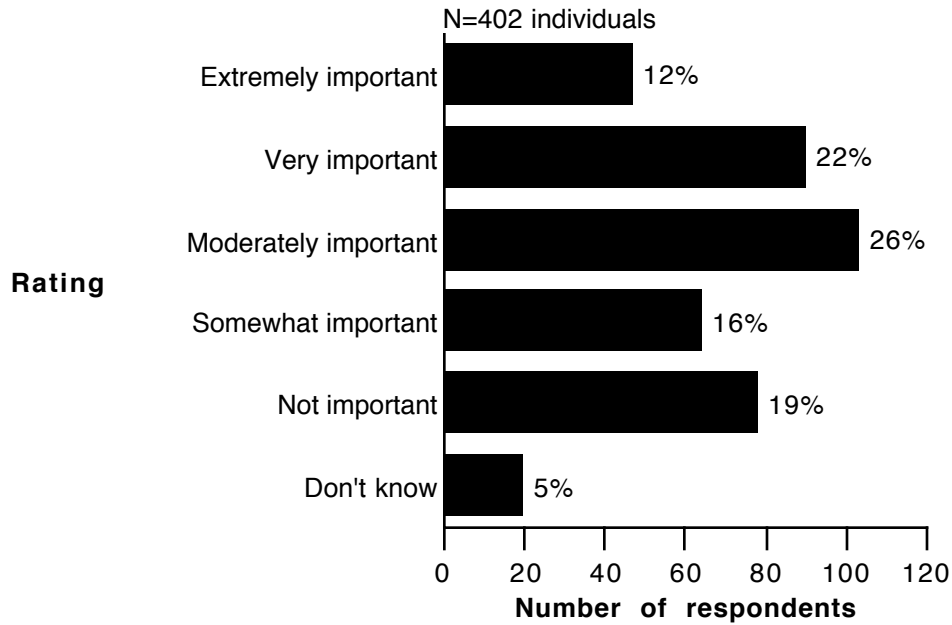
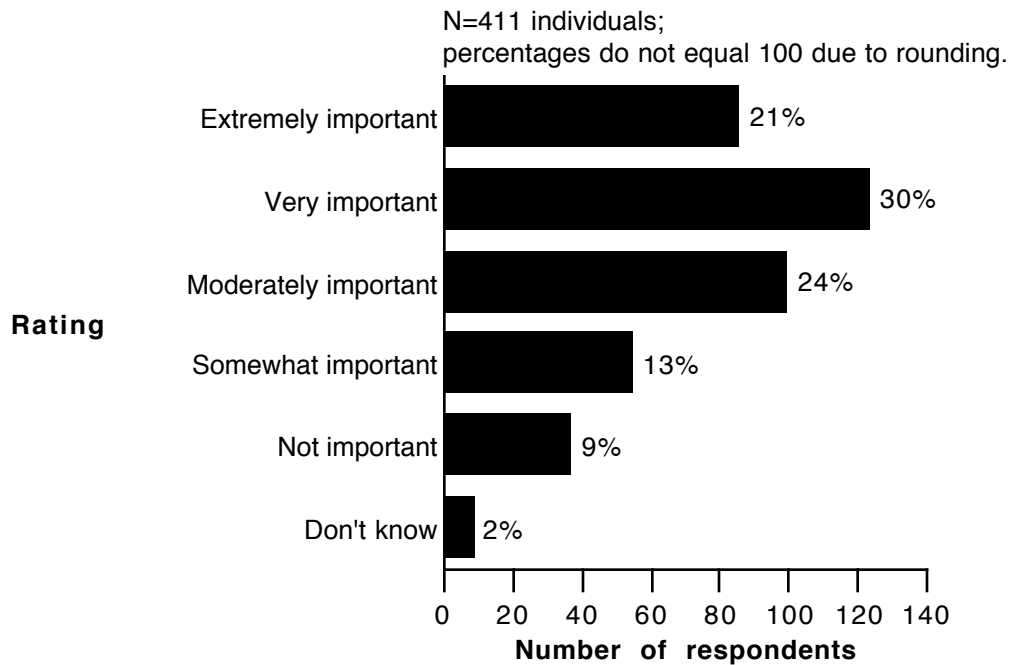


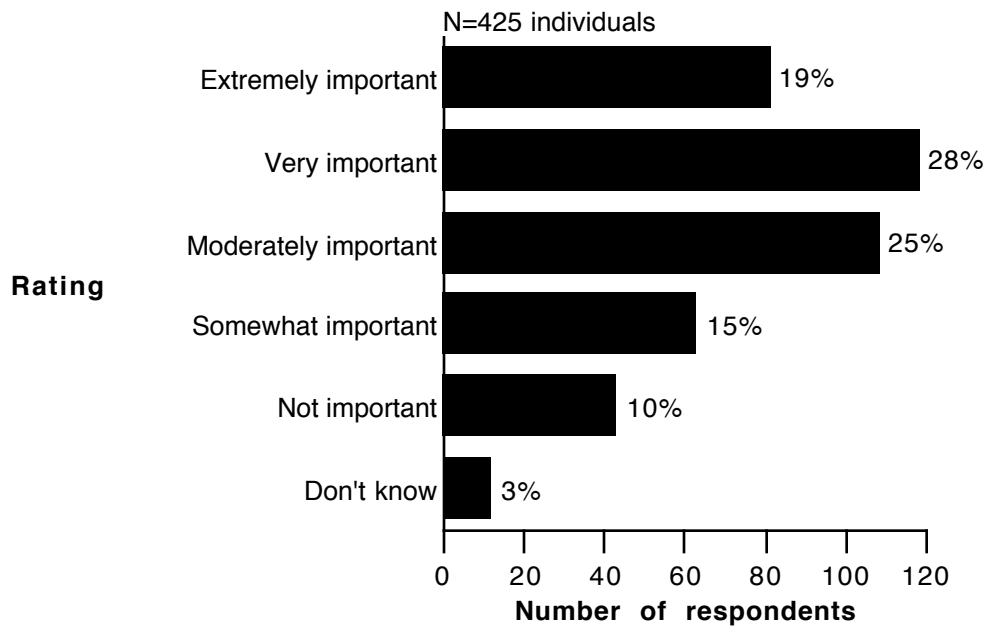
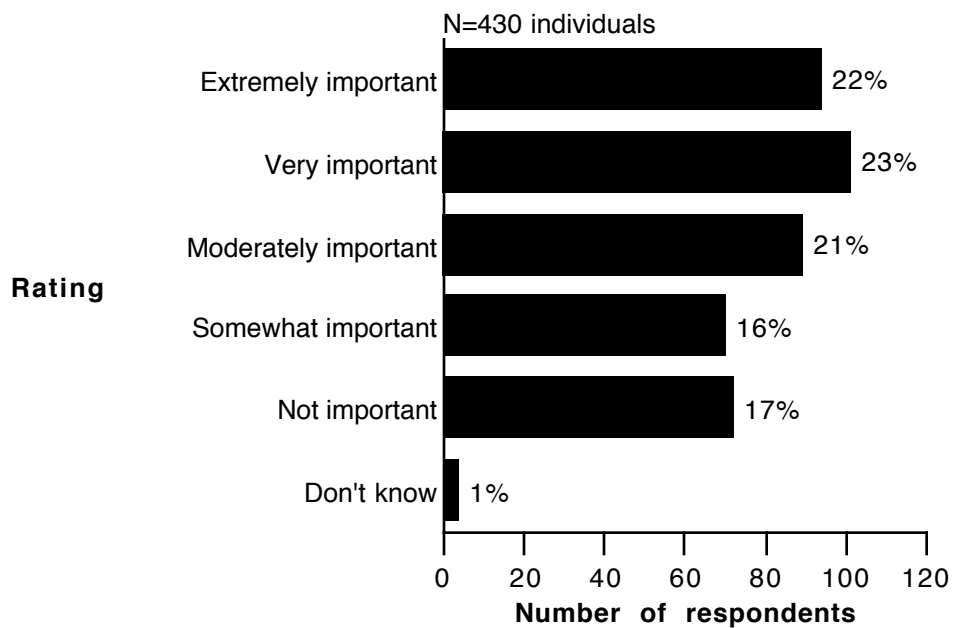
Figure 32: Importance of benches/seating areas

**Figure 33: Importance of camping areas****Figure 34: Importance of directional signs**

**Figure 35: Importance of exhibits****Figure 36: Importance of fishing access**

**Figure 37: Importance of hiking trails****Figure 38: Importance of meeting rooms**

**Figure 39: Importance of multi-use trails****Figure 40: Importance of park brochure/map**

**Figure 41: Importance of picnic tables****Figure 42: Importance of public telephones**

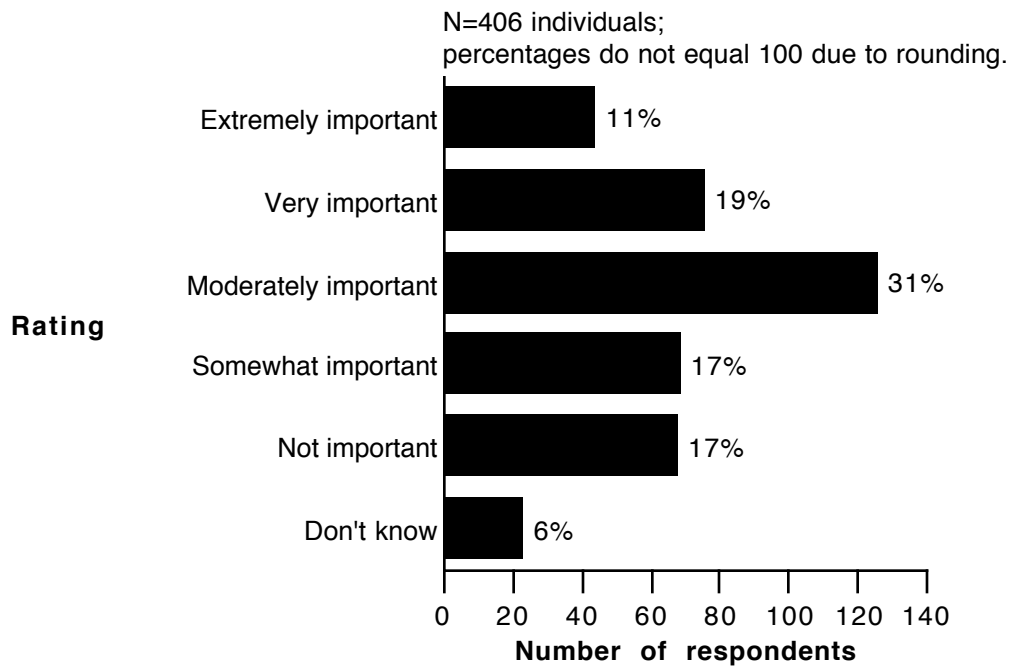


Figure 43: Importance of ranger-led programs

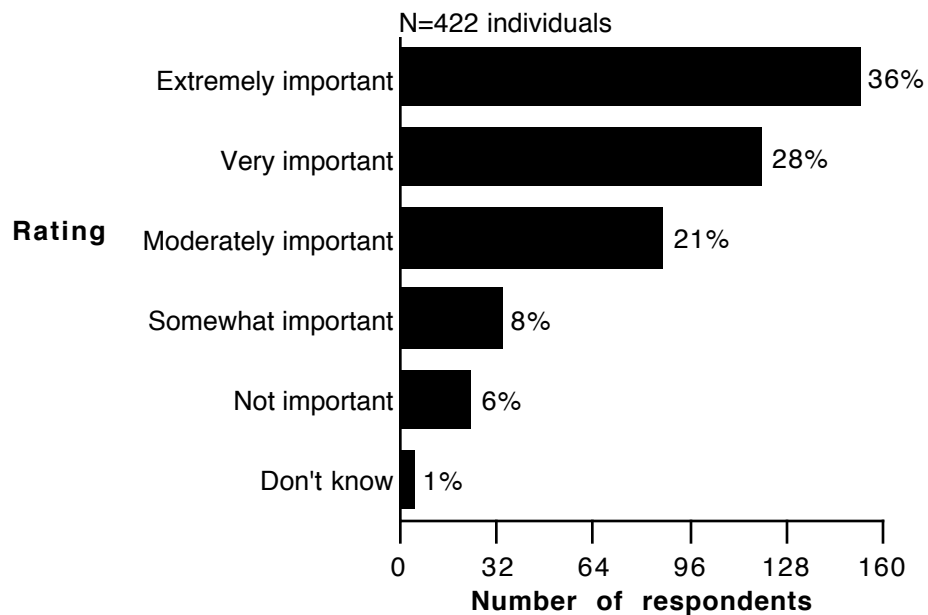
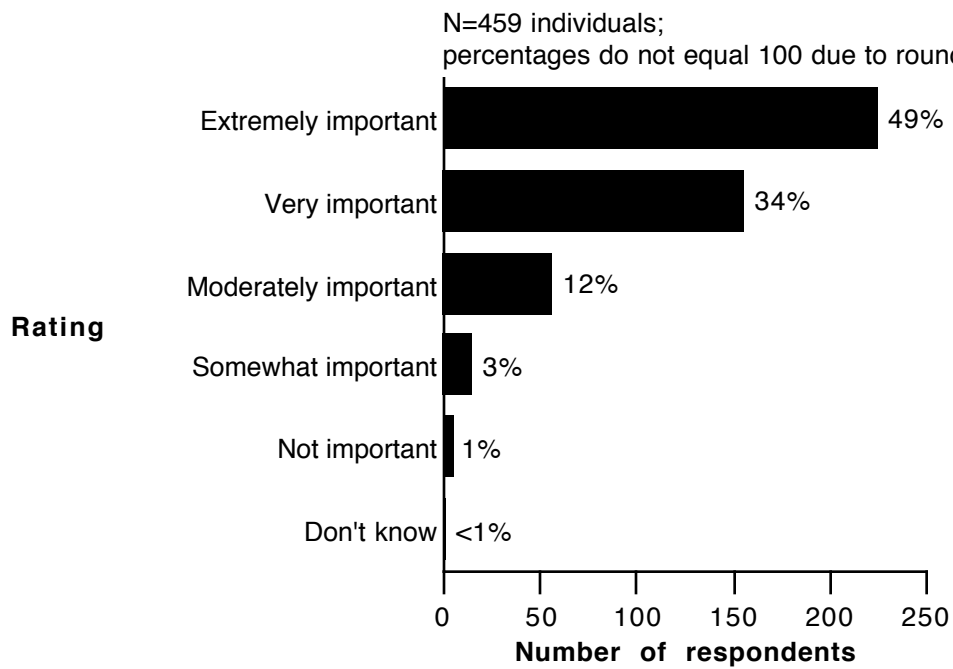
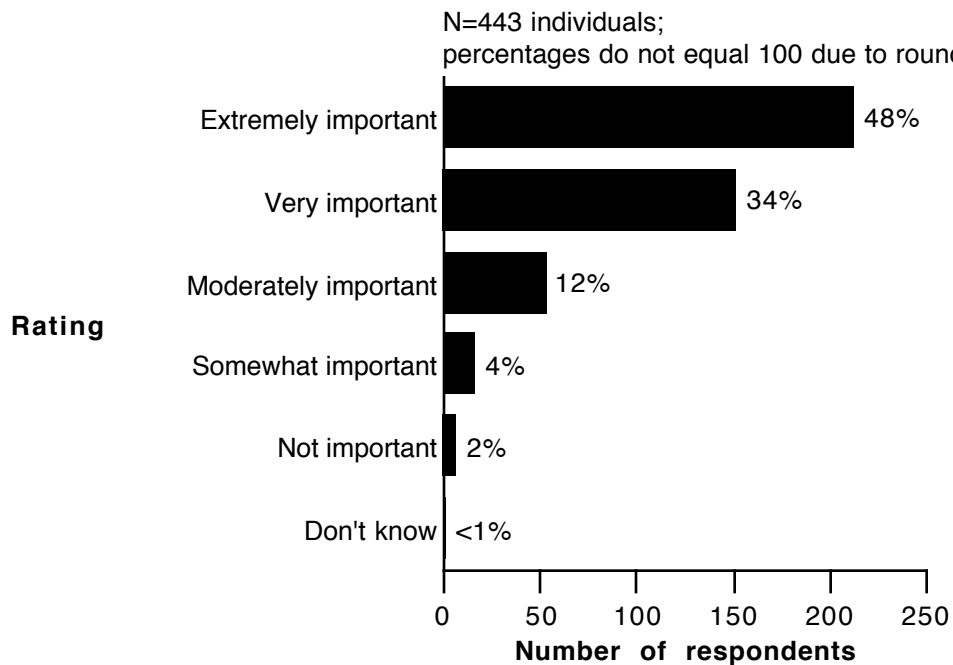


Figure 44: Importance of ranger/park police presence

**Figure 45: Importance of restrooms****Figure 46: Importance of trash cans**

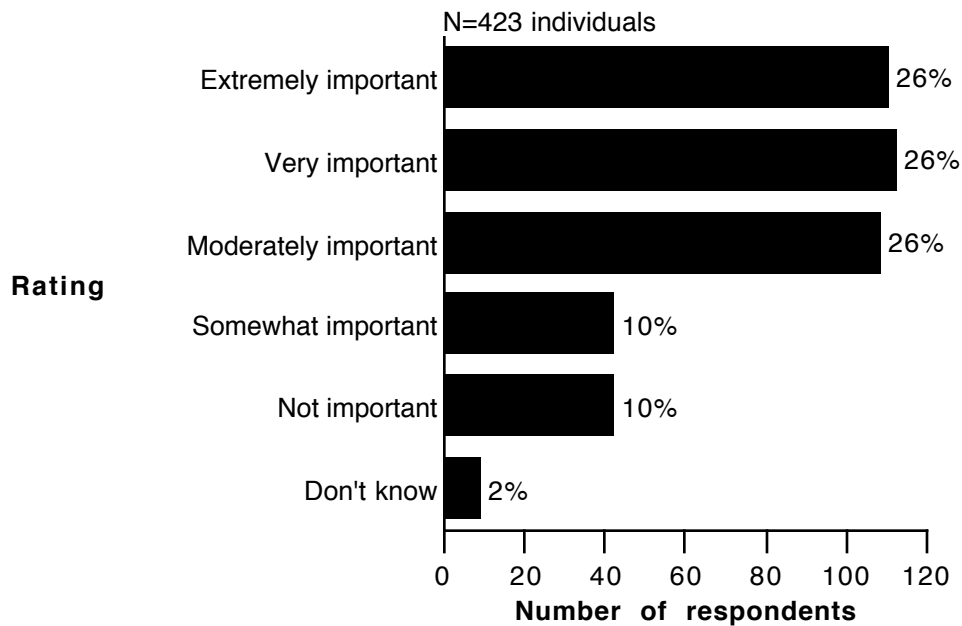


Figure 47: Importance of shade structures

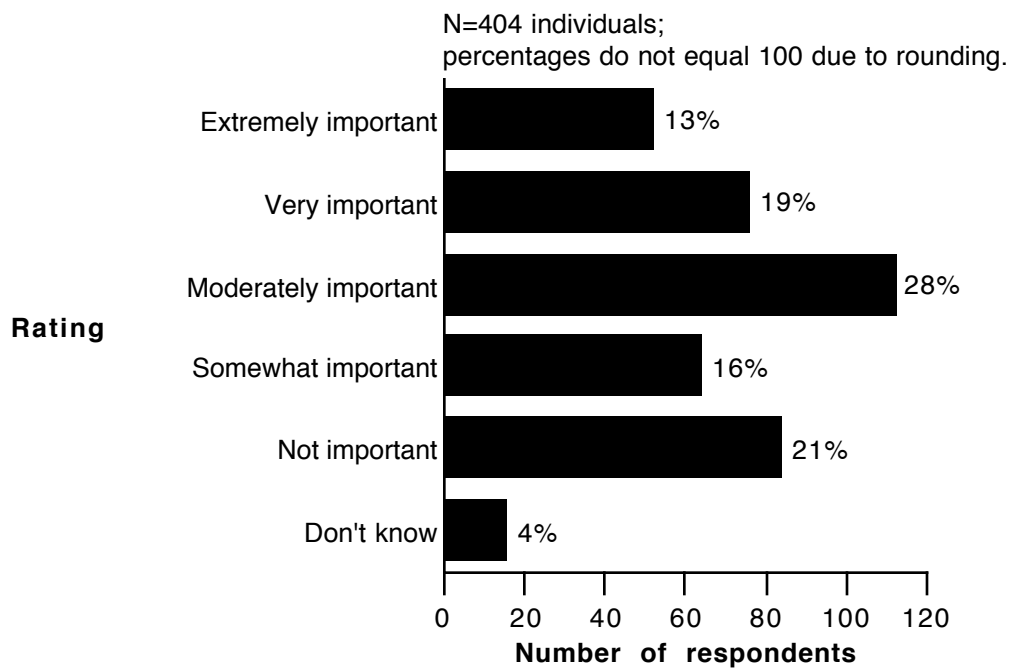


Figure 48: Importance of sports fields

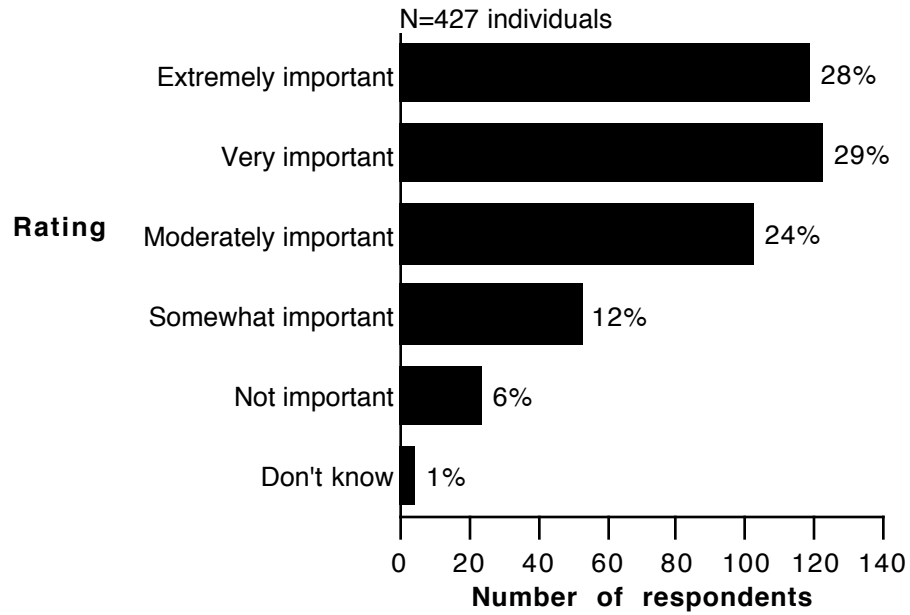


Figure 49: Importance of visitor information office

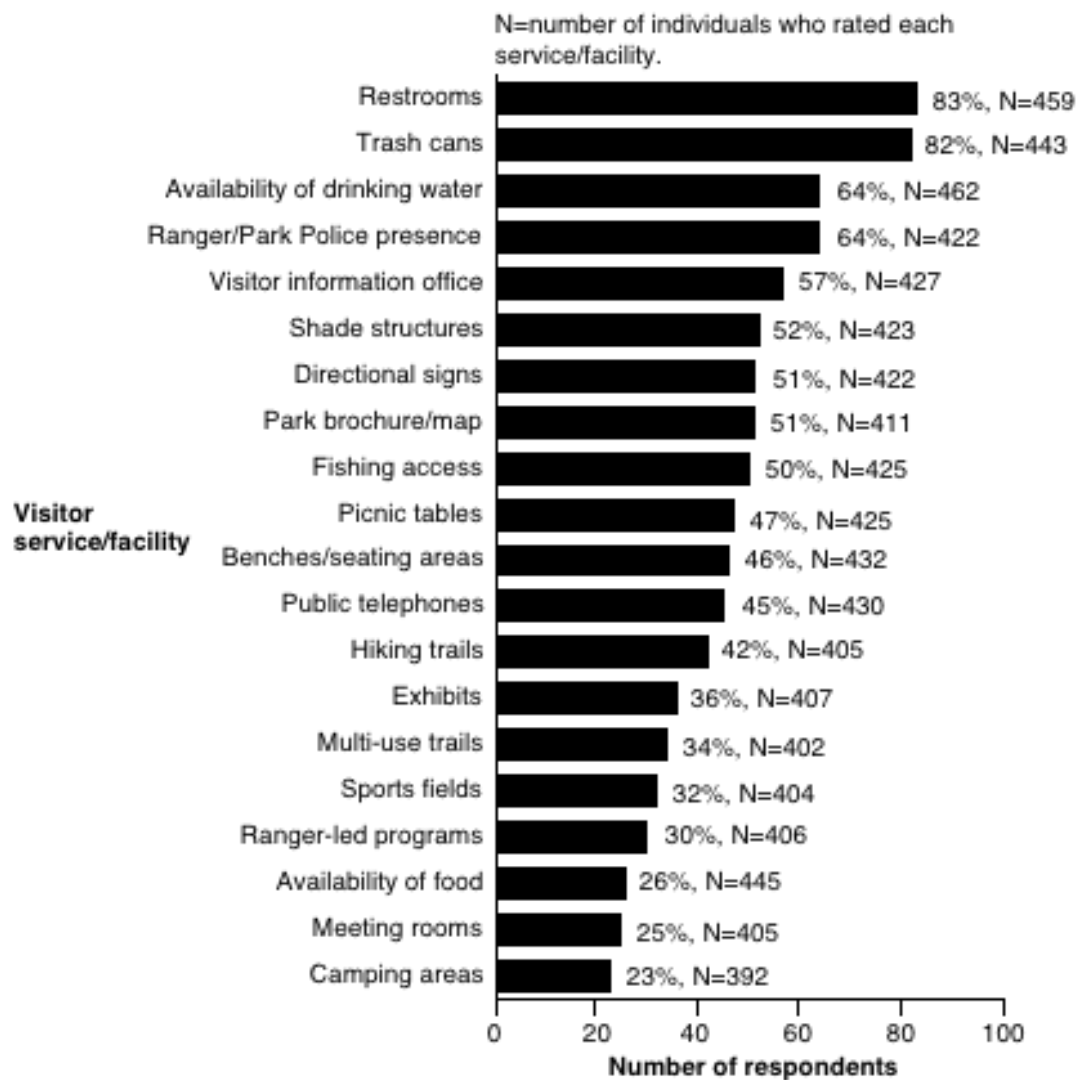


Figure 50: Combined "extremely important" and "very important" ratings for visitor services/facilities

Visitor expectations

Visitor groups were asked what qualities and/or characteristics at Floyd Bennett Field brought them to the park. The qualities/characteristics that most often brought visitors to the site were open space (75%), quiet (70%), and natural views (65%), safe environment (64%) and place to relax (62%), as shown in Figure 51.

Visitors were also asked to rate how well Floyd Bennett Field met their expectations for each of these qualities/characteristics. A five-point scale was used to rate expectations (5=exceeded, 4=somewhat exceeded, 3=met, 2=somewhat met, 1=did not meet at all). Qualities/ characteristics receiving the highest combined expectation ratings of “4” and “5” were open space (77%), pursue hobbies (72%), and place to relax (70%). Figures 52-65 show how well visitors’ expectations for each quality or characteristic were met.

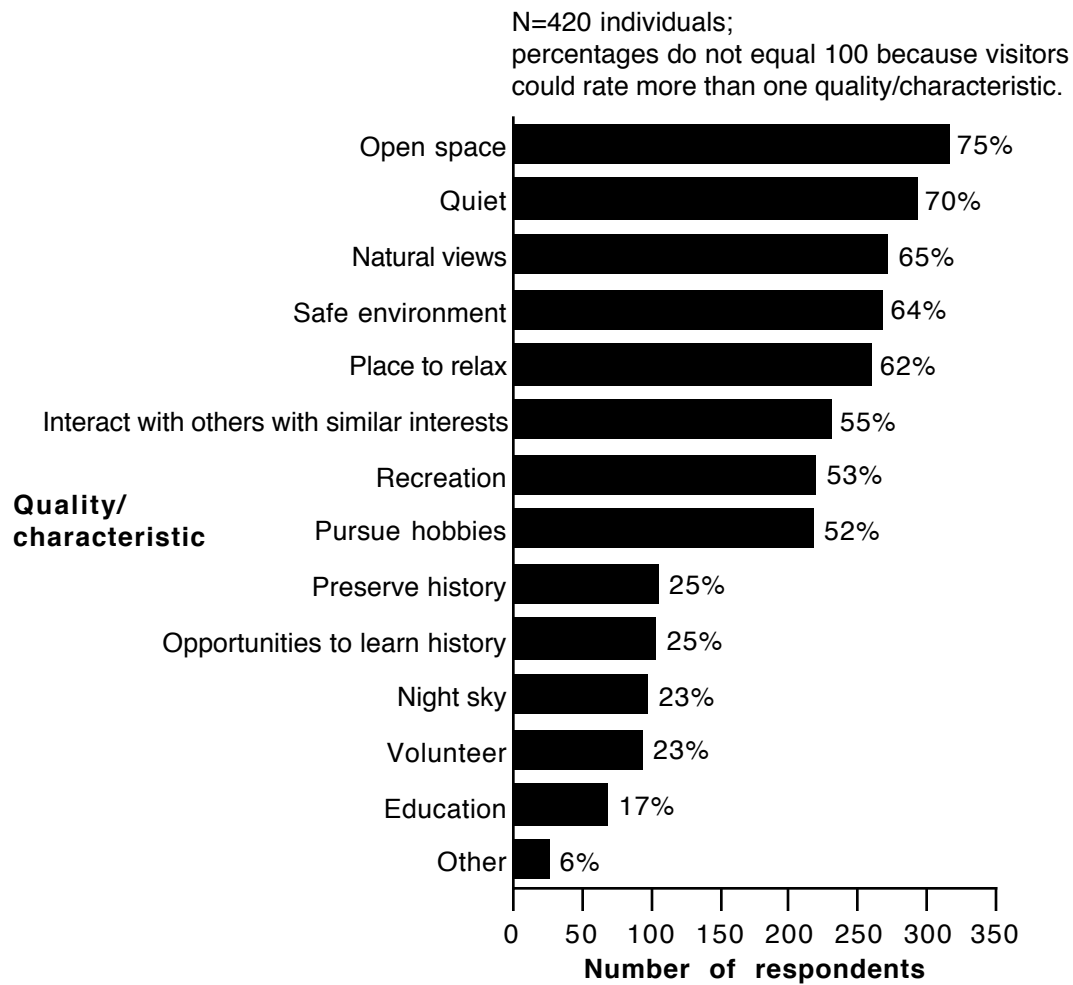


Figure 51: Qualities/characteristics that brought visitors to Floyd Bennett Field

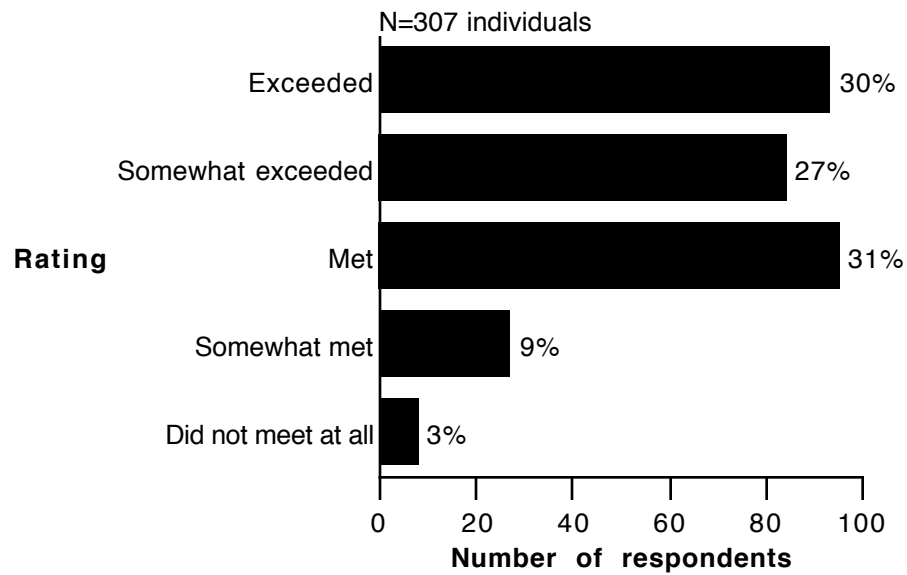


Figure 52: Visitor expectations about quiet

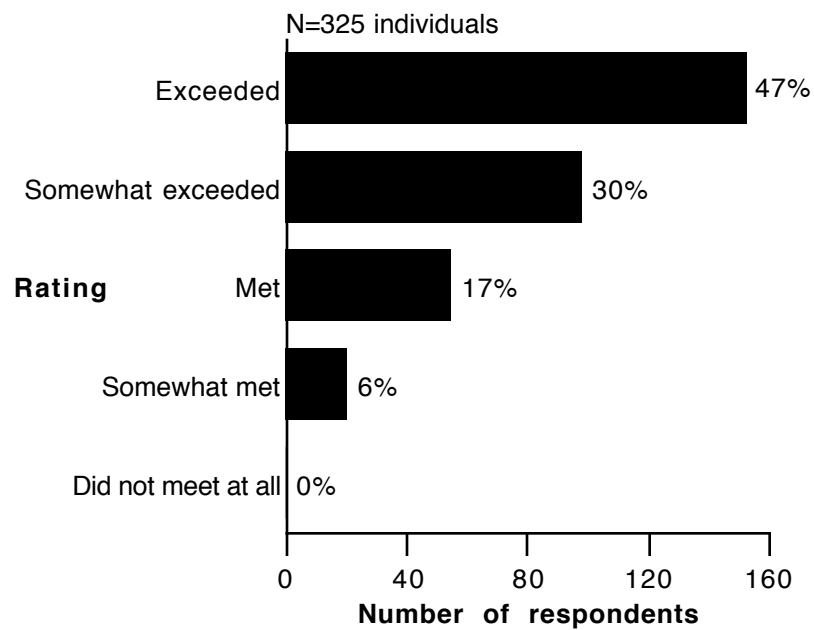


Figure 53: Visitor expectations about open space

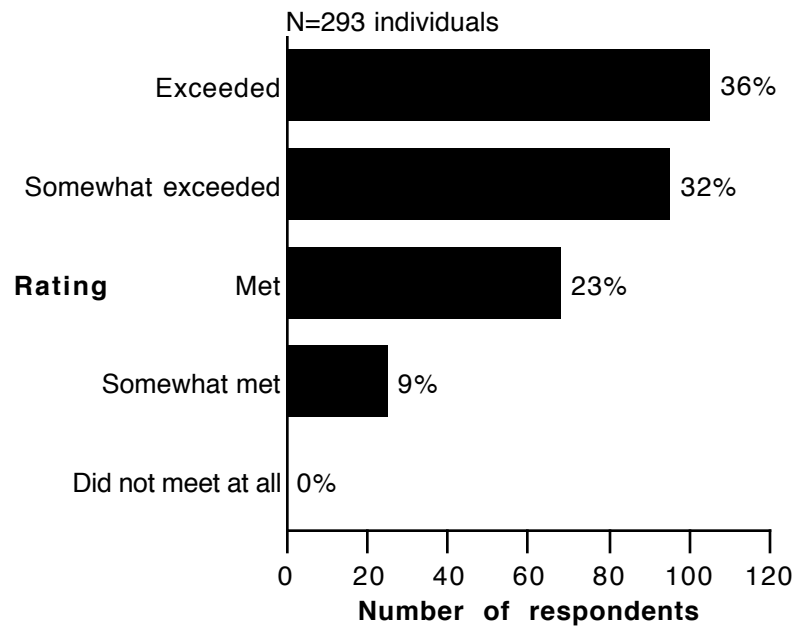


Figure 54: Visitor expectations about natural views

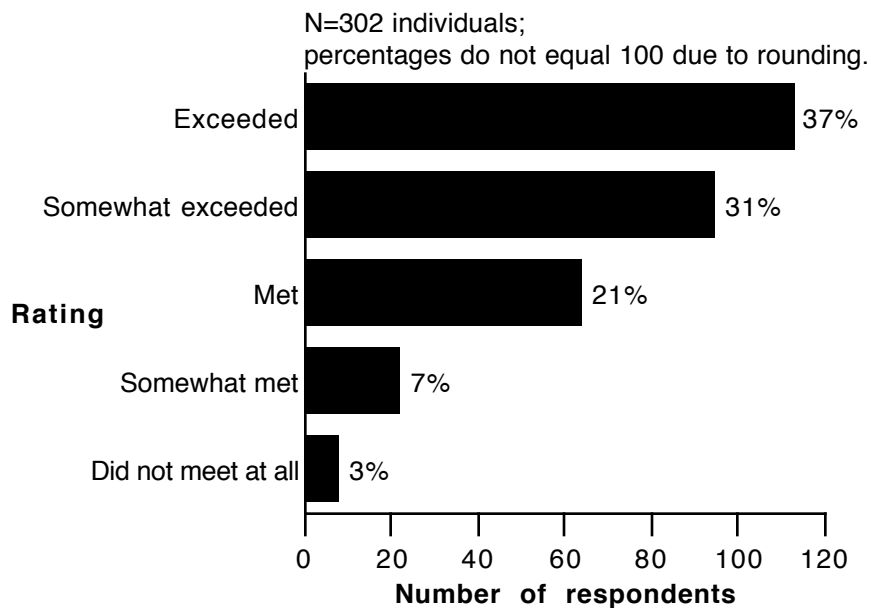


Figure 55: Visitor expectations about safe environment

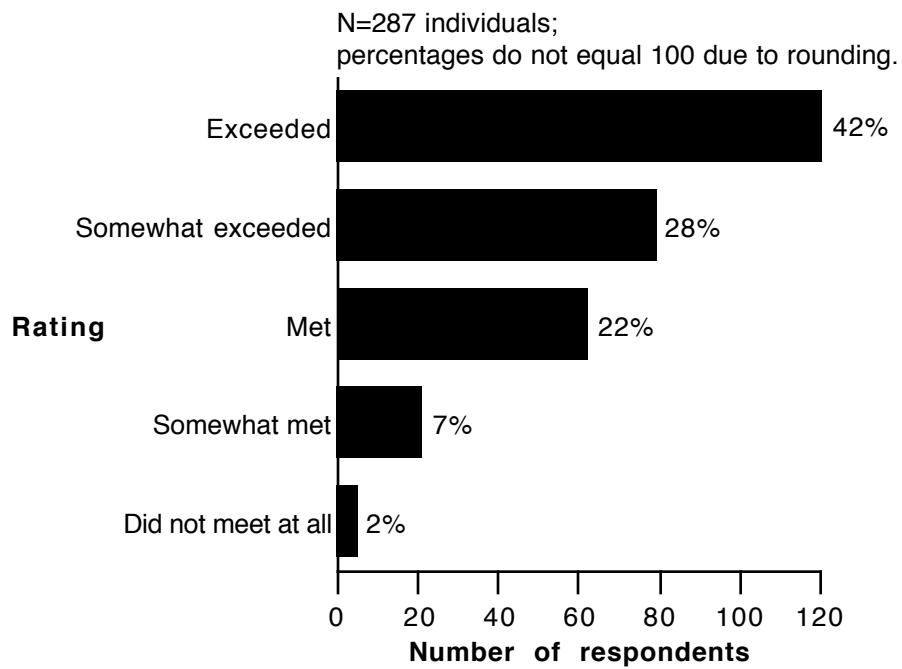


Figure 56: Visitor expectations about place to relax with family

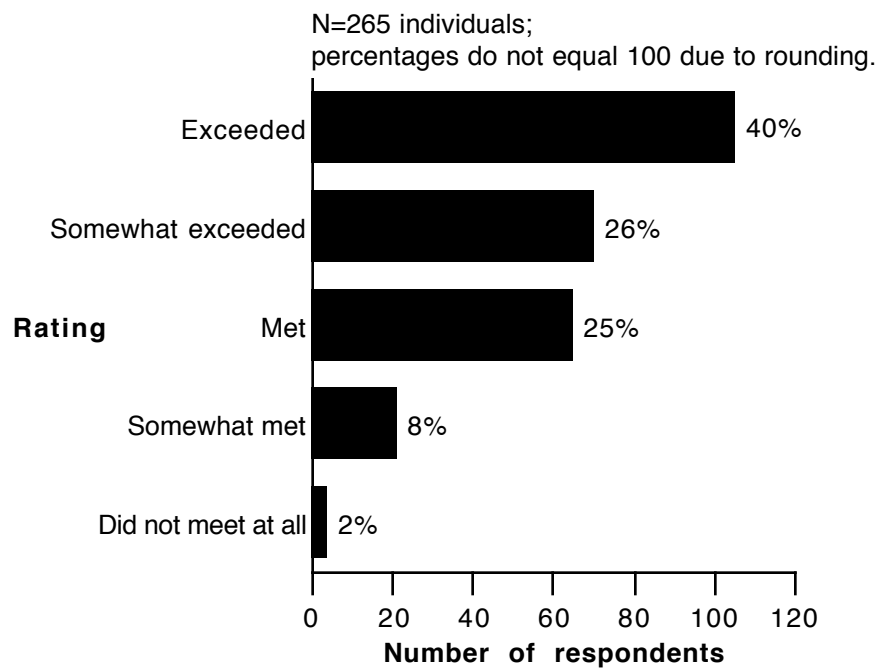


Figure 57: Visitor expectations about interaction with other people who have similar interests

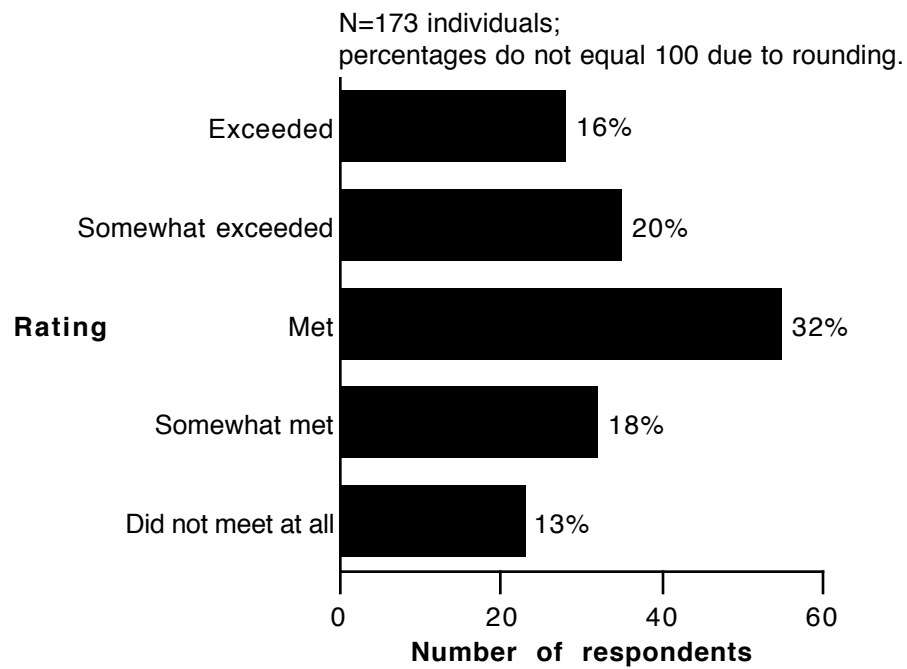


Figure 58: Visitor expectations about opportunities to learn history

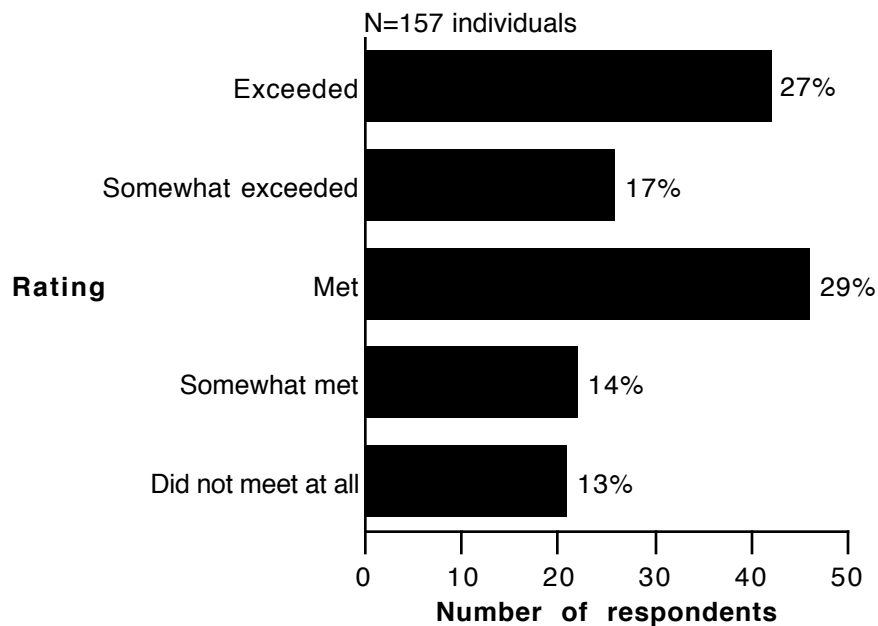


Figure 59: Visitor expectations about opportunities to help protect natural resources/environment (volunteer)

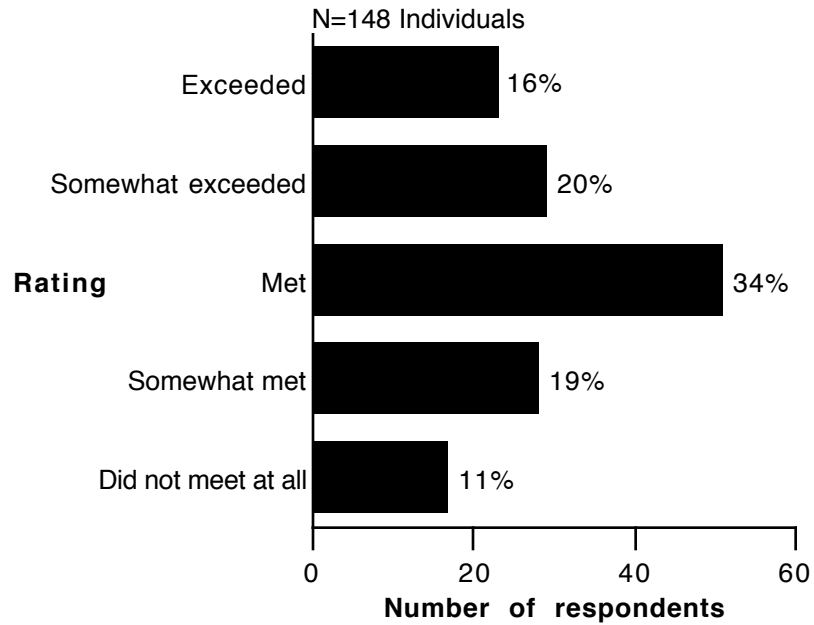


Figure 60: Visitor expectations about educational opportunities

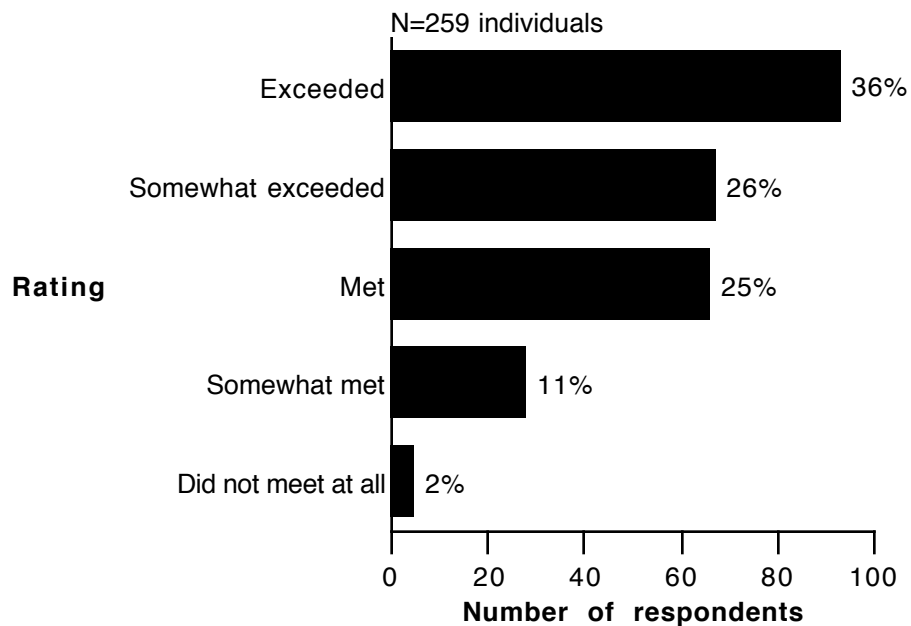


Figure 61: Visitor expectations about recreational opportunities (jogging, hiking, fishing, camping, etc.)

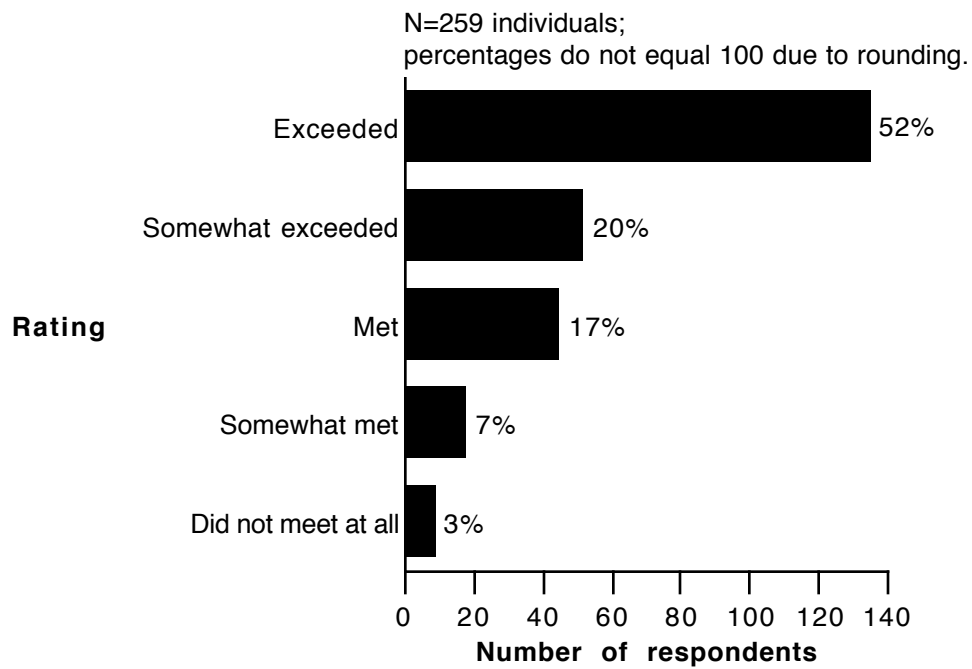


Figure 62: Visitor expectations about opportunities to pursue hobbies (gardening, model planes, model cars, etc.)

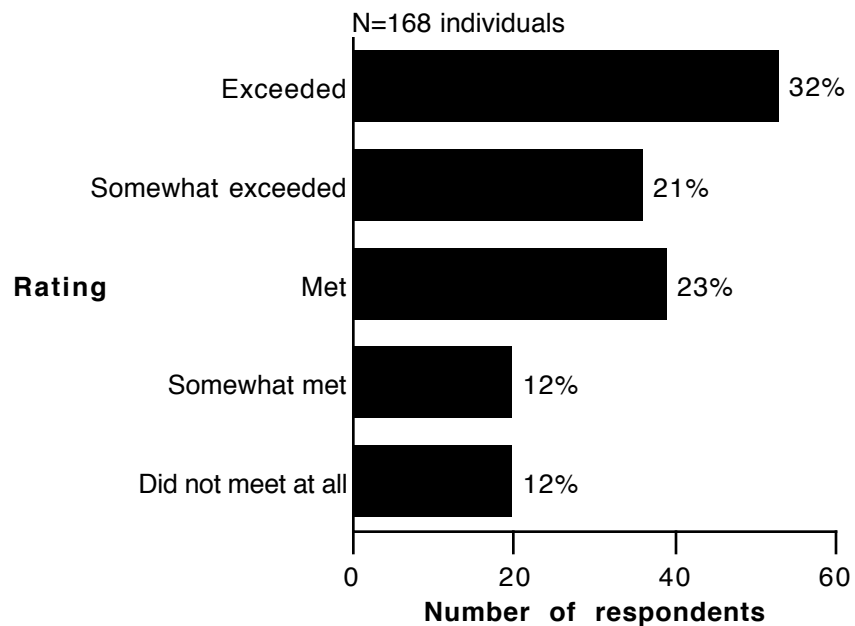


Figure 63: Visitor expectations about opportunities to help preserve historic buildings/aircraft

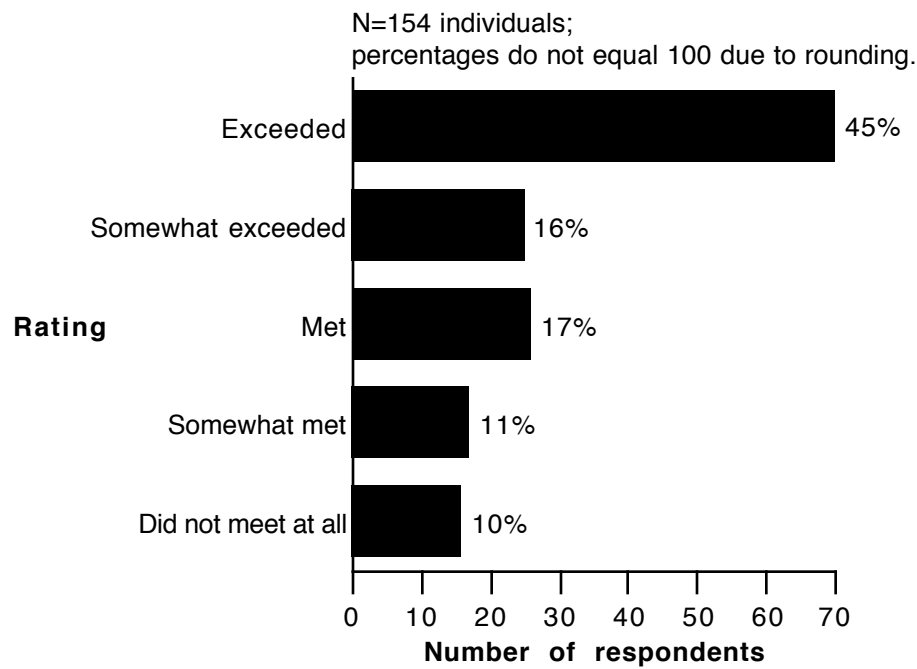


Figure 64: Visitor expectations about views of night sky

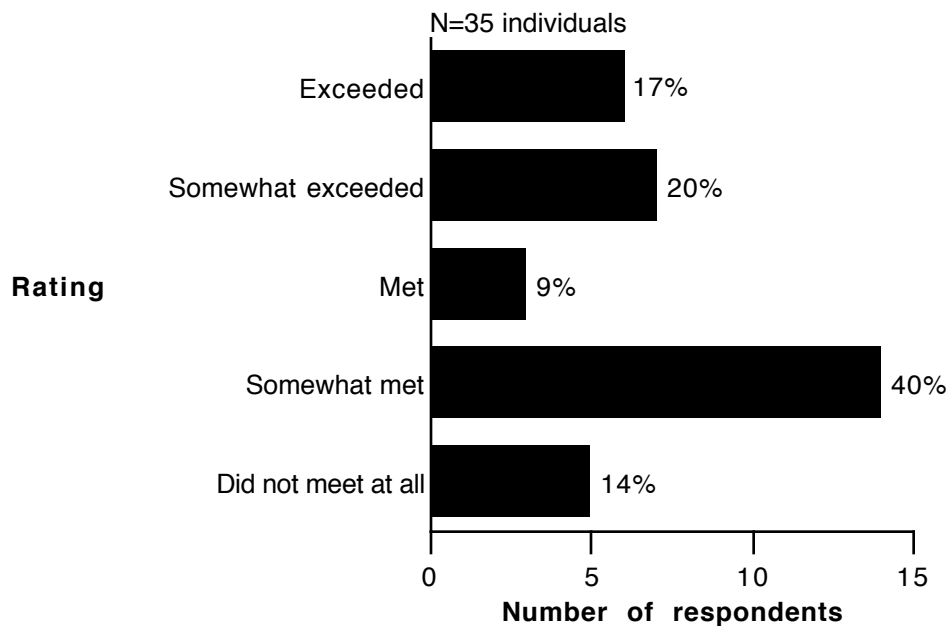


Figure 65: Visitor expectations about “other” qualities/characteristics

Preferred future programs and activities

Visitor groups were asked, “On a future visit to Floyd Bennett Field, what subjects would you be most interested in learning about?” Fifteen percent of visitors were not interested in learning. Of those interested in learning, the most common subjects that visitors preferred to learn about at Floyd Bennett Field included fishing (46%), special events (37%), night sky (33%) and wildlife (33%), as shown in Figure 66.

Visitors were also asked what organized activities and programs they would like to have available on future visits to Floyd Bennett Field. Twenty-one percent of visitor groups were not interested in organized activities/programs. Of those who were interested, 45% said special events, 37% responded history tours, and 32% mentioned family activities (see Figure 67).

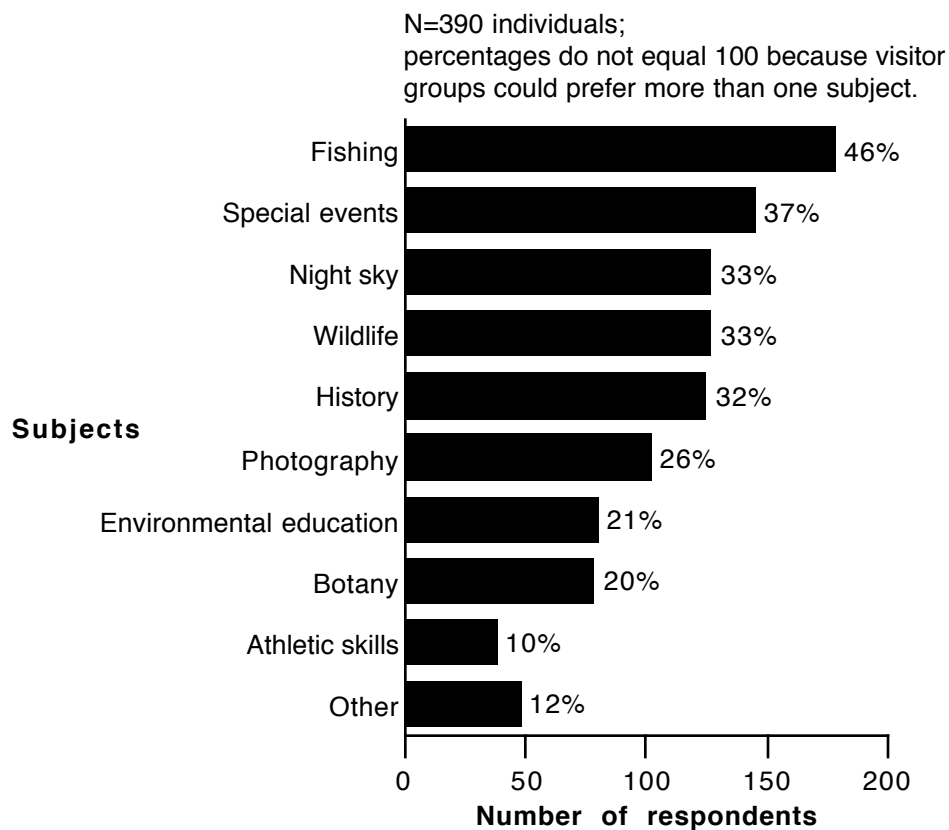


Figure 66: Preferred subjects to learn on future visits

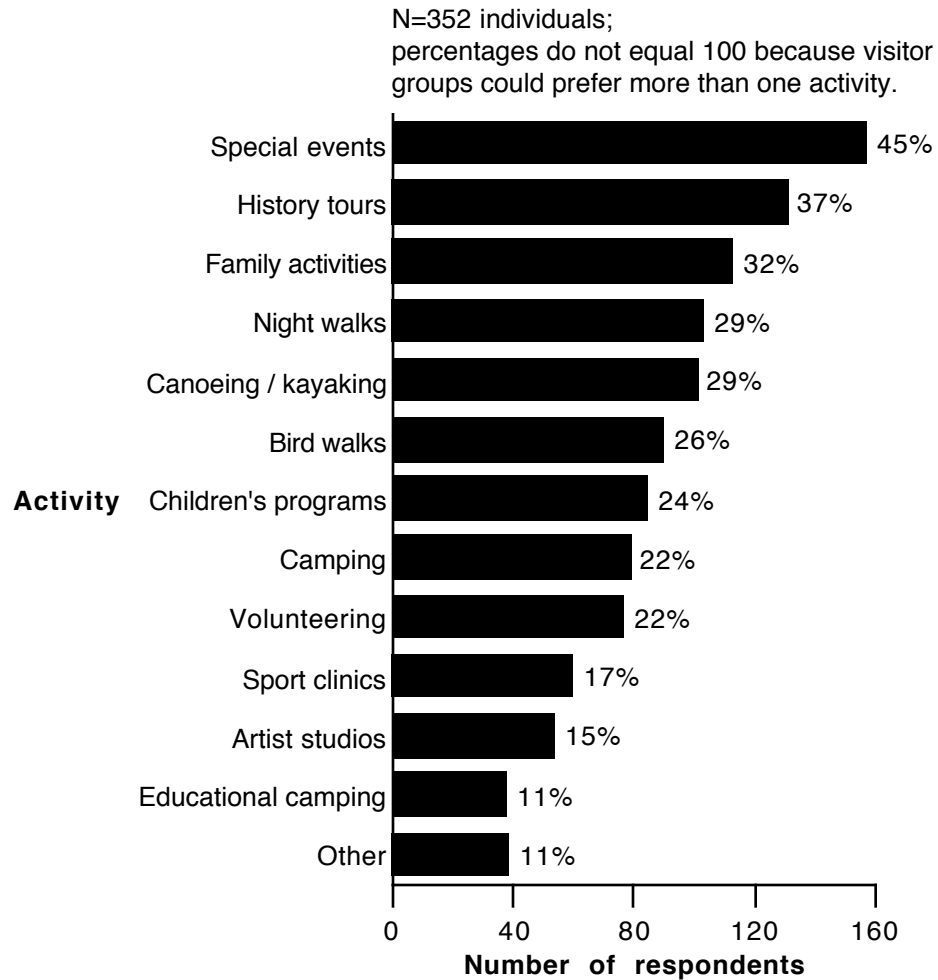


Figure 67: Preferred activities and programs visitors would like available on future visits

Most important information learned

Responding to the question, “In your opinion, what is the most important information you learned during this visit to Floyd Bennett Field?,” visitors cited history, gardening, and fishing most often. Other comments made included: need improvements, HARP, and model airplanes. Table 8 lists other comments made by visitors.

Table 8: Most important information learned on this visit

N=255 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
NPS cares	4
Other comments	3
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
History	33
HARP	6
Other comments	4
MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES	
Needs improvement	5
Bathrooms	2
Other comments	11
MANAGEMENT/POLICIES	
Activities	7
NPS interested	7
Access	2
Fishing access	4
Commercialization	2
Other comments	26
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Gardens	22
Fishing	17
Nature	3
Preservation	3
Wildlife	2
Birds/bird watching	2
Other comments	19

**Table 8: Most important information
learned on this visit (continued)**

Comment	Number of times mentioned
GENERAL	
Camping	6
Recreation	5
Fish consumption	4
Hobbies	4
Great to visit	2
Location	2
Great resource	2
Other comments	46

Overall quality of visitor services

Visitor groups were asked to rate the overall quality of the visitor services provided at Gateway National Recreation Area--Floyd Bennett Field during this visit. Sixty-three percent rated the overall quality as “good” or “very good” (see Figure 68). Eleven percent rated the overall quality as “poor” or “very poor.”

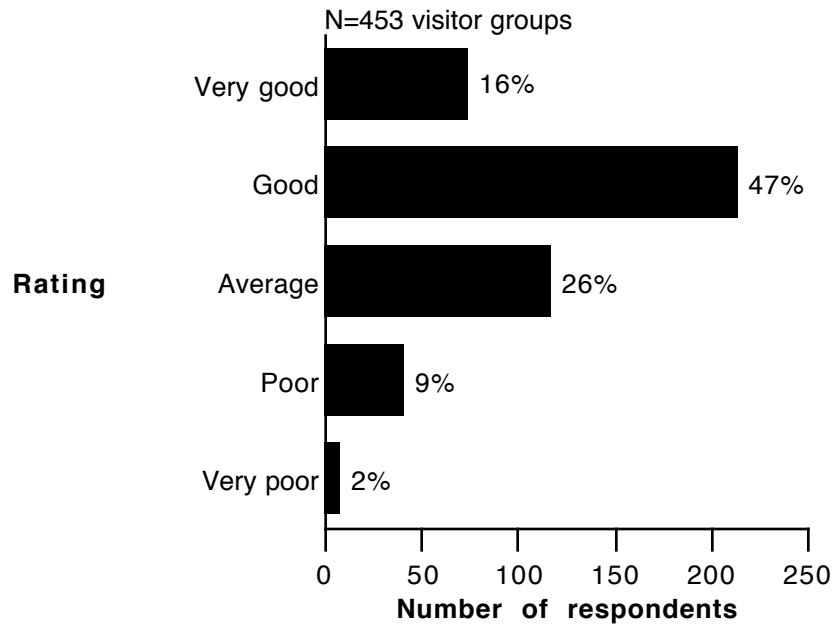


Figure 68: Overall quality of visitor services

What visitors liked most

Visitors were asked, “What did you enjoy most about your visit to Floyd Bennett Field?” Seventy-five percent of visitor groups (368 groups) responded to this question; these comments are included in a separate appendix of this report. Visitor comments about Floyd Bennett Field are summarized below (see Table 9).

Table 9: What visitors liked most

N=410 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Staff	2
Friendly staff	2
Other comments	2
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Hanger B/HARP	6
Historic Aircraft	6
History	3
Aviation exhibits	2
Other comments	2
MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES	
Gardens	32
Remote control area	17
Clean	7
Beach	3
Bike route	2
Other comments	2
MANAGEMENT/POLICIES	
Safe/safety/security	10
Blimp	6
Enjoyed	5
Other comments	2
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Open space	50
Birds/birdwatching	9
Natural	6
Ocean/sea	5
Serenity	5
Fresh air	2
Other comments	19

Table 9: What visitors liked most (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<i>Recreation</i>	
Fishing	42
Model aircraft	24
Hobbies	4
Biking	6
Other comments	10
GENERAL	
Quiet	54
Peace/peaceful	22
Relax/relaxing	14
Natural	8
Access	6
All	5
Away from city	5
Not crowded	3

What visitors liked least

Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups (N=280) responded to the question, “What did you enjoy least about your visit to Floyd Bennett Field?” Table 10 includes a summary of those responses: a comprehensive list of comments can be found in a separate appendix to this report.

Table 10: What visitors liked least

N=228 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Comments	2
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
No information available	4
Other comment	1
MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES	
Trash/litter	27
Not enough restrooms	19
No food available	11
No drinking water	8
Dirty restrooms	8
Disrepair	7
Dirty	6
Potholes	6
No shade/shelter	5
No benches	3
Smells	3
Weeds	2
Other comments	5

Planning for the future

Visitor groups were asked, “If you were a manager planning for the future of Gateway National Recreation Area--Floyd Bennett Field, what would you propose?” Sixty-six percent of visitor groups (323 groups) responded to this question. A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 11 and complete copies of visitor responses are contained in the appendix.

Table 11: Planning for the future

N=333 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Need additional rangers	10
Other comment	1
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Educational programs	8
Historic aircraft	6
More information available	4
Park guide at entrance	3
Historic events	3
Historic information	2
Fishing education	2
Boating education	2
After school programs	2
Other comments	5
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
More restrooms	27
Provide drinking water	19
Repair hangers/buildings	18
More sports facilities	16
Provide food	16
More directional signs	14
Provide phones/emergency phones	10
Build boat ramp	10
Need benches	6
Repair roads	6
More trash cans	5
Provide bait shop	4
Provide shade structures	3
Need changing rooms	2
Lights at fishing area	2
Other comment	1

Table 11: Planning for the future (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
MANAGEMENT/POLICIES	
Need to Advertise/publicity	20
Enforce rules/regulations	8
Need sports complex	4
No sports complex	3
No NYPD/sanitation dept	3
Other comments	3
RECREATION	
Provide picnic areas/BBQ area	11
Have air shows	10
More fishing sites	10
Have major/special events	10
Bigger bike path	7
Have family activities	4
Stop poaching	2
Build shooting range	2
Other comment	1
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Keep natural environment	14
Build hiking trails	5
Bigger garden area	5
Remove poison ivy	2
Other comment	1
GENERAL	
Comments	2

Comment summary

Forty-five percent of visitor groups (219 groups) wrote additional comments, which are included in the separate appendix of this report. Some comments about Floyd Bennett Field are summarized below (see Table 12). Some comments offer specific suggestions on how to improve the park; others describe what visitors enjoyed or did not enjoy about their visit.

Table 12: Additional comments

N=133 comments;
some visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
Need more rangers	6
Great staff	3
Staff unhelpful	2
Other comments	6
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Advertise	8
Like HARP	4
More history programs	3
Have special events	2
Other comments	8
FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE	
More restrooms	8
Provide BBQ/picnic areas	4
Dirty	3
Poorly kept	3
Build pier	2
More trash cans	2
Provide tables at beach	2
Other comments	16
MANAGEMENT/POLICIES	
Enforce rules	3
Want coast guard presence	2
Other comments	14
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Like gardening	10
Preserve	4
Don't overdevelop	4
Other comments	14

Table 12: Additional comments (continued)

Comment	Number of times mentioned
MANAGEMENT/POLICIES	
Speeding	15
Noise	9
No enforcement	3
Ranger road closed	3
Police training	2
Traffic	2
HARP closed	2
Other comments	18
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT	
Fishing access	4
Other comments	7
GENERAL	
Weather	16
Nothing	10
Motorcycles	7
Bugs	5
Other comments	8

Gateway National Recreation Area--Floyd Bennett Field Visitor Study Additional Analysis VSP Report 141

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn more from VSP visitor study data. Additional analysis can be done using the park's VSP visitor study data that was collected and entered into the computer. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made of any of the characteristics listed below. Be as specific as possible-you may select a single program/service/facility instead of all that were listed in the questionnaire. Include your name, address and phone number in the request.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| • Awareness that Gateway NRA is managed by NPS | • Activities participated in during this visit | • Zip code or country |
| • Awareness that FBF is part of Gateway NRA | • Activities participated in on past visits | • Number of visits in past 12 months |
| • Sources of information prior to visit | • Activity that was the main reason for visiting | • Spanish/Hispanic/Latino |
| • Sources of information prior to future visits | • Form of transportation used to get to FBF | • Ethnicity? |
| • Receive needed information? | • Places visited at FBF | • Race |
| • Camp at FBF on this visit? | • Importance of services/facilities at FBF | • Qualities/characteristics of FBF that brought you to park |
| • Number of days camping | • Visits to other NPS sites? | • Ratings of how well qualities/characteristics met expectations |
| • Number of hours at FBF | • Group size | • Awareness of safety information regarding fish consumption |
| • Frequency of visits to FBF | • Group type | • Subjects of interest on a future visit |
| • Days usually visit FBF | • With guided tour group? | • Organized activities on a future visit |
| • Time of day of visits to FBF | • With school/educational group? | • Overall quality of services |
| • Problems finding destination at FBF | • Is English primary language? | |
| • Factors' effect on visitor experience | • Current age | |

Phone/send requests to:

Visitor Services Project, PSU
College of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 441139
University of Idaho
Moscow, Idaho 83844-1139

Phone: 208-885-7863
FAX: 208-885-4261
Email: littlej@uidaho.edu

QUESTIONNAIRE

Visitor Services Project Publications

Reports 1-6 (pilot studies) are available from the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit (UI PSU). All other VSP reports are available on the UI PSU web site: <<http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>>. All studies were conducted in summer unless otherwise noted.

1982

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park.

1983

2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method.
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial.
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park.

1985

5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

1986

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence National Historical Park
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park

1987

10. Colonial National Historical Park (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park (summer & fall)
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study

1988

17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
19. Bryce Canyon National Park
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument

1989

21. Everglades National Park (winter)
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument
23. The White House Tours, President's Park (summer)
24. Lincoln Home National Historical Site
25. Yellowstone National Park
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
27. Muir Woods National Monument

1990

28. Canyonlands National Park (spring)
29. White Sands National Monument
30. National Monuments, Washington, D.C.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park
32. Gateway National Recreation Area
33. Petersburg National Monument
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

1991

38. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park (spring)
39. Joshua Tree National Monument (spring)
40. The White House Tours, President's Park (spring)
41. Natchez Trace Parkway (spring)
42. Stehekin-North Cascades NP/Lake Chelan National Recreation Area
43. City of Rocks National Reserve
44. The White House Tours, President's Park (fall)

1992

45. Big Bend National Park (spring)
46. Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (spring)
47. Glen Echo Park (spring)
48. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
49. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
50. Zion National Park
51. New River Gorge National River
52. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park (AK)
53. Arlington House-The Robert E. Lee Memorial

1993

54. Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve (spring)
55. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (spring)
56. Whitman Mission National Historic Site
57. Sitka National Historical Park
58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (summer)
59. Redwood National Park
60. Channel Islands National Park
61. Pecos National Historical Park
62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**1994**

- 64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)
- 65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (spring)
- 66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center
- 67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts
- 68. Nez Perce National Historical Park
- 69. Edison National Historic Site
- 70. San Juan Island National Historical Park
- 71. Canaveral National Seashore
- 72. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (fall)
- 73. Gettysburg National Military Park (fall)

1995

- 74. Grand Teton National Park (winter)
- 75. Yellowstone National Park (winter)
- 76. Bandelier National Monument
- 77. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
- 78. Adams National Historic Site
- 79. Devils Tower National Monument
- 80. Manassas National Monument Park
- 81. Booker T. Washington National Monument
- 82. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
- 83. Dry Tortugas National Park

1996

- 84. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 85. Chiricahua National Monument (spring)
- 86. Fort Bowie National Historic Site (spring)
- 87. Great Falls Park, Virginia (spring)
- 88. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer)
- 89. Chamizal National Memorial
- 90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
- 91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)
- 92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer & fall combined)

1997

- 93. Virgin Islands National Park (winter)
- 94. Mojave National Preserve (spring)
- 95. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site (spring)
- 96. Lincoln Boyhood Home National Memorial
- 97. Grand Teton National Park
- 98. Bryce Canyon National Park
- 99. Voyageurs National Park
- 100. Lowell National Historical Park

1998

- 101. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Preserve (spring)

1998 (continued)

- 102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)
- 103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)
- 104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials
- 105. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
- 106. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
- 107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area
- 108. Acadia National Park

1999

- 109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)
- 110. San Juan National Historic Site, P.R. (winter)
- 111. Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway
- 112. Rock Creek Park
- 113. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
- 114. Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
- 115. Kenai Fjords National Park & Preserve
- 116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
- 117. Cumberland Gap National Historic Park (fall)

2000

- 118. Haleakala National Park (spring)
- 119. White House Tour & White House Visitor Center (spring)
- 120. USS Arizona Memorial
- 121. Olympic National Park
- 122. Eisenhower National Historic Site
- 123. Badlands National Park
- 124. Mount Rainier National Park

2001

- 125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
- 126. Colonial National Historical Park (Jamestown)
- 127. Shenandoah National Park
- 128. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
- 129. Crater Lake National Park
- 130. Valley Forge National Historical Park

2002

- 131. Everglades National Park (spring)
- 132. Dry Tortugas National Park (spring)
- 133. Pinnacles National Monument (spring)
- 134. Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve
- 135. Pipestone National Monument
- 136. Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Wright Brothers National Monument)
- 137. Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Park
- 138. Catoclin Mountain Park
- 139. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
- 140. Stones River National Monument (fall)

Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)

2003

141. Gateway National Recreation Area - Floyd
Bennett Field (spring)

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

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