

Visitor Services Project

Arches National Park

Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Arches National Park (NB) during August 10-16, 2003. A total of 600 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 471 questionnaires for a 78.5% response rate.
- This report profiles Arches NP visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Forty-five percent of visitor groups were groups of two and 32% were groups of three or four. Sixty-seven percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Fifty-four percent of visitors were aged 26-55 years and 18% were aged 15 or younger.
- International visitors, comprising 36% of the total visitation, were from Germany (28%), France (22%), Italy (16%), and 21 other countries. United States visitors were from California (16%), Colorado (9%), Utah (8%), Illinois (7%), 39 other states, and Washington, D.C.
- Most visitors (77%) reported that this was their first visit to Arches NP. On the day they received the questionnaire, 50% of visitor groups spent two to four hours at the park, while 46% spent five or more hours. Thirty-four percent of groups visited on more than one day, with 77% staying two days.
- Seventy-six percent of visitor groups' primary reason for traveling to the Moab, Utah area was to visit Arches NP. Seventeen percent of groups' primary reason was to visit other attractions in the area.
- On this visit, most common activities while visiting the Moab area were taking a scenic drive (66%), dining (60%), and shopping (40%).
- At Arches NP, the most common activities were taking a scenic drive/sightseeing (94%) and walking/hiking (86%).
- The most common walking/hiking destinations in the park included The Windows (62%), Delicate Arch (60%), Balanced Rock (57%), Delicate Arch Viewpoint (54%), and Landscape Arch (51%).
- Prior to this visit, visitors most often obtained information about Arches NP through travel guides/tour books (53%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (39%), and internet-NPS or Arches NP web site (30%). Eleven percent of the visitors received no information before their visit. Most groups 92% received the information they needed about the park.
- Sixty-six percent of groups learned about cryptobiotic crust on their current visit to the Arches NP. Visitor groups reported learning about the crust from trail exhibits (60%), park brochures (53%), and visitor center exhibits (43%).
- Fifty-three percent of groups were aware that most of the fees collected in Arches NP were used in the park but were uncertain of the details. When asked how they would like fees used in the park, 56% of groups would like these fees used for backlogged maintenance/ infrastructure improvements and 55% reported using them for natural/cultural resource management.
- Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of visitor services at Arches NP as "very good" or "good." No groups rated the overall quality as "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>

