

**Visitor Services Project  
Congaree National Park  
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Congaree National Park during April 15-24, 2005. A total of 453 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 326 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 72% response rate.
- This report profiles Congaree National Park visitors. Most results are presented in graphs and frequency tables. Summaries of visitor comments are included in the report and complete comments are included in an appendix.
- Forty-one percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 28% were in groups of three or four. Fifty-six percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Forty-seven percent of visitors were ages 41-65 years and 15% were ages 15 or younger.
- United States visitors were from South Carolina (65%), North Carolina (7%), 33 other states, and Washington DC. International visitors, comprising 5% of the total visitation, were from Canada (33%), England (29%), and 12 other countries.
- Fifty-seven percent of visitors visited Congaree National Park for the first time in their lifetime and 62% visited for the first time in the past five years. Thirty-two percent of visitors (16 years or older) have a graduate degree and 29% hold a bachelor's degree.
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Congaree National Park through previous visits (44%) and friends/relatives/word of mouth (31%). Five percent of visitor groups did not obtain any information before their visit. Most groups (88%) received the information they needed about the park.
- Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups' primary reason for traveling to the Congaree National Park area (within 1-hour drive of park) was to visit Congaree National Park. On this visit, the most common activities were walking/hiking (89%) and visiting the visitor center (76%).
- In regard to use, importance, and quality of visitor services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The most used services/facilities by the 318 visitor groups included restrooms (86%), trails (82%), and park trail map (79%). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included trails (98%, N=249), restrooms (94%, N=264), and directional signs-in park (89%, N=224). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of "very good" and "good" ratings included ranger-led programs (97%, N=59), trails (97%, N=244), and restrooms (95%, N=261).
- The average of total expenditures in and outside the park (within 1-hour drive of park) per visitor group was \$103. The median visitor group expenditure (50% of groups spent more, 50% of group spent less) was \$24. The average per capita expenditure was \$40.
- Most visitor groups (97%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Congaree National Park as "very good" or "good." Two percent of groups rated the overall quality as "very poor" or "poor."

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho or at the following website: <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>