

**Visitor Services Project  
Golden Spike National Historic Site  
Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Golden Spike National Historic Site (NHS) during August 10-19, 2006. A total of 340 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 264 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 78% response rate.
- This report profiles a systematic random sample of Golden Spike National Historic Site. Most results are presented in graphs and frequency tables. Summaries of visitor comments are included in the report and complete comments are included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.
- Forty-two percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 35% were groups of four or more. Seventy-one percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
- Forty-nine percent of visitors were ages 41-70 years and 23% were ages 15 years or younger.
- Thirty-two percent of individuals had some college, 30% held a Bachelor's degree, and 21% held a graduate degree.
- United States visitors were from Utah (35%), California (12%), Washington (6%), Idaho (5%), New York (4%), Colorado (4%), and 32 other states and Washington, D.C. There were too few international visitors to provide reliable data.
- Ninety-three percent of visitors visited the park for the first time in twelve months. Eighty percent of visitors visited the park once in their lifetime. Visiting Golden Spike NHS was the primary reason that brought 45% of visitor groups to the area (within a one-hour drive of the park).
- Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Golden Spike NHS through travel guides/tour books (35%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (34%), and previous visits (23%). Nineteen percent of visitor groups did not obtain any information about the park before their visit.
- Seventy-six percent of visitor groups stayed up to two hours, and average length of stay was 3.6 hours.
- The most common sites visited in the park included the Visitor center (98%) and the Last Spike site (87%). The most common activities in the park were viewing locomotive trains (91%) and viewing exhibits in Visitor center (89%). Learning about history (75%) was the primary reason for visiting the park.
- Regarding 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/facilities included the Visitor center exhibits (91%), Visitor center restrooms (84%), and Visitor center parking (76%). The services/activities that received the highest combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings included locomotive/steam demonstration (86%, N=166) and Visitor center restrooms (83%, N=205). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings were Railroader's Festival activities (100%, N=32) and locomotive/steam demonstration (94% N=165).
- Average group expenditure was \$164, with a median (50% paid more and 50% paid less) of \$60. Average total expenditure per person was \$67.
- Most visitor groups (90%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Golden Spike NHS as "very good" or "good." Less than 2% of visitor 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 at (208) 885-7863 or the following website <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>

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