

**Visitor Services Project**  
**Mount Rushmore National Memorial**  
**Report Summary**

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Mount Rushmore National Memorial during July 11-17, 2007. A total of 1,243 visitor groups were contacted with 978 accepting questionnaires. Of those, 646 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 66.1% response rate.
  - This report profiles a systematic random sample of Mount Rushmore National Memorial 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 the Visitor Comments Appendix.
  - Fifty-six percent of visitor groups were in groups of four or more and 41% were in groups of two or three. Eighty-one percent of visitor groups were family groups and 8% were with groups of friends. Three percent of visitor groups were traveling with an organized tour group.
  - Twenty-nine percent of visitors were ages 15 or younger, 28% were 26-50 years old and 24% were ages 51-70 years.
  - United States visitors were from Colorado (8%), Minnesota (7%), California (7%), Wisconsin (7%), and 42 other states. International visitors, comprising 5% of the total visitation, came from Canada (65%), Germany (10%), Australia (5%) and 9 other countries.
  - Fifty-nine percent of visitors visited the park for the first time in their life, while 41% had visited more than once. Most visitors (91%) were visiting for the first time during the past 12 months.
  - Visiting Mount Rushmore National Memorial was the primary reason that brought 59% of visitor groups to the Black Hills area, while 21% were visiting other attractions in the area. For 80% of visitor groups, Mount Rushmore National Memorial was one of several destinations on this visit.
  - Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about the park through maps/brochures (52%), friends/relatives/word of mouth (49%), and through tour guides/tour books/publications (49%). The most preferred information source to use on a future visit was the park website (62%).
  - Of visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours visiting the park, 42% spent up to two hours and 59% spent three or more hours. The average length of stay was 3.4 hours. Most visitor groups (94%) entered the park one time on this visit.
  - The most common activities visitor groups participated in were viewing/learning about the memorial (95%), visiting information center and bookstore (66%), and shopping in park gift shop (63%). The most important activity was viewing/learning about the memorial (93%).
  - 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 interpretive/information service was the park brochure/map (79%). The services that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included the evening lighting ceremony (79%, N=125), assistance from uniformed park staff (77%, N=138), and film shown in visitor center (75%, N=223). The services that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were assistance from park staff (95%, N=134), Lincoln Borglum Museum (94%, N=187), and park brochure/map (93% N=433).
  - The most used visitor services/facilities were the parking lot (95%) and restrooms (90%). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings included the restrooms (92%, N=530) and access for disabled persons (91%, N=65). The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were the information center (95%, N=330), restrooms (91%, N=528) and parking lot (91%, N=558).
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- Fifty-six percent of visitor groups ate in the park restaurant/snack shop or shopped in the gift shop. Groups rated the quality of various elements in the two facilities. In the park restaurant/snack shop, facility appearance (90%, N=259) received the highest “very good” and “good” quality rating, followed by preparation of menu items (71%, N=250) and length of wait (70%, N=249). Seventy-one percent of visitor groups waited ten minutes or less. In the gift shop, the highest “very good” and “good” quality ratings were for the choice of sales items (79%, N=294) and quality of sales items (77%, N= 294).
- Eighty percent of visitor groups rated the parking fee amount (\$8/vehicle/year or \$50/bus/day) as “about right.” Seventy-five percent of visitor groups will likely visit the memorial again in the future.
- Most visitor groups (96%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Mount Rushmore National Memorial as “very good” or “good.” Less than two percent 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>.