

Visitor Services Project
Fort Larned National Historic Site
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Fort Larned National Historic Site (NHS) during May 25 - June 27, 2009. A total of 340 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 261 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 76.8% response rate.
 - This report profiles a systematic random sample of Fort Larned NHS. 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-four percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 23% were in groups of three or four. Seventy-five percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
 - United States visitors comprised 97% of total visitors during the survey period, with 41% from Kansas, 8% from Colorado, and smaller proportions from 36 other states. International visitors were from six countries and comprised 3% of total visitation during the survey period, with 29% from Germany, 24% from Canada, and 19% from the United Kingdom. Smaller proportions came from three other countries.
 - Fifty-nine percent of visitors were ages 41-70 years, 9% were 71 years or older, and 17% were ages 15 years or younger. Seven percent of visitor groups reported physical conditions that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services.
 - Two percent of visitors were Hispanic or Latino. Ninety-eight percent of visitors were of White racial background and 2% were American Indian or Alaska Native.
 - Seventy-five percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time in their lifetime. Most visitors (95%) were visiting the park for the first time in the last 12 months. Ninety-four percent entered the park once during this visit. Ninety-four percent of visitor groups used one vehicle to arrive at the park.
 - Forty-eight percent of visitor groups spent two hours visiting the park.
 - For 43% of visitors groups, visiting Fort Larned NHS was the most common reason for visiting the area. For 44% of visitor groups, the primary reason for visiting the park was to take a self-guided tour of the historic buildings.
 - Most visitor groups (77%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Prior to this visit, visitor groups most often obtained information about Fort Larned NHS through maps/brochures (37%) and travel guides/tour books (32%). Sixty-nine percent indicated they would prefer to obtain information for a future visit from the park website.
 - The most visited sites were the visitor center (93%), the museum (92%), and infantry barracks (91%).
 - The most common visitor activities were taking a self-guided tour of historic buildings (92%), visiting the museum (76%), and general sightseeing (65%).
 - Eighteen percent of visitor groups attended a ranger-led program or activity, and 88% indicated they would be interested in attending a ranger-led program in the future. Fifty-seven percent were interested in a program lasting one-half hour to an hour.
 - Regarding what they learned during their park visit, 74% of visitor groups learned about the role of the Santa Fe Trail as well as how the government established authority. On a future visit,
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visitor groups indicated they would be interested in learning about cultural interactions among soldiers and civilians (75%), how the Plains Indians culture was altered (74%), and the influence of the plains environment (74%).

- The visitor services and facilities most commonly used by visitor groups were the restrooms (79%) and the exhibits at the visitor center (76%). The information service and facility receiving the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings was the restrooms (98%). The information service and facility that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings were the living history demonstrations (97%).
- Of those visitors (51%) who stayed overnight in the area (within 60 miles), 57% stayed one night, while 23% percent spent two nights. Of the visitors who stayed overnight in the area, 60% stayed in lodges, hotels, vacation rentals, B&B, etc.
- Eighty-three percent of visitor groups obtained support services in nearby communities with 52% obtaining services in Larned.
- The average group expenditure in the park and the surrounding area (within 60 miles) was \$172, with a median (50% spent more and 50% spent less) of \$100. The average total expenditure per person was \$72. Sixty-six percent had two adults covered by expenditures and 74% had no children covered by expenditures.
- Most visitor groups (96%) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Fort Larned NHS as “very good” or “good.” Less than one percent 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>.