

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

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Acadia National Park during August 2-8, 2009. A total of 1,160 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 854 questionnaires were returned, resulting in an overall 73.6% response rate.
- This report profiles a systematic random sample of Acadia 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 the Visitor Comments Appendix.
- Thirty-seven percent of visitor groups were in groups of two and 33% were in groups of three or four. Seventy-three percent of visitor groups were in family groups.
- United States visitors comprised 94% of total visitation during the survey period, with 15% from Massachusetts, 14% from Maine, and smaller proportions from 39 other states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico. International visitors were from 15 countries and comprised 6% of total visitation, with 55% from Canada, 13% from the Netherlands, 10% from the United Kingdom, and smaller proportions from 12 other countries.
- Sixty-one percent of visitors were visiting the park for the first time in the past five years, 21% visited two or three times and 18% had visited four or more times. Fifty percent were first time visitors, while 31% visited four or more times.
- Fifty-three percent of visitors were ages 36-65 years, 22% were ages 15 years or younger, and 8% were 66 years or older. Seven percent of visitor groups included members with a physical condition, of which 77% reported problems with mobility.
- Most visitor groups (95%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit. Visitor groups most often obtained information about the park through previous visits (58%) and friends/relatives/word of mouth (51%). Most visitor groups (95%) received the information they needed. Twenty-seven percent of visitor groups would likely use electronic devices to obtain park information on a future visit.
- Seventy-two percent of visitor groups stayed overnight on Mount Desert Island. Forty percent visited the park four to seven hours and 42% stayed two to three days. Forty-four percent visited Mount Desert Island two to five hours and 33% stayed two to three days. The average length of stay in the park was 70 hours (2.9 days) and average length of stay on Mount Desert Island was 100.1 hours (4.2 days).
- The most common sites visited by visitor groups were Cadillac Mountain summit (75%) and Jordan Pond House and area (67%). The most common visitor activities were sightseeing/driving for pleasure (83%) and hiking on trails (79%). Nineteen percent attended a ranger-led program.
- The information service and facility most commonly used by visitor groups was the park brochure/map (90%). The most commonly used visitor services and facilities were directional signs outside the park (82%) and restrooms (81%). Eighty-two percent rated the quality of the park website as “very good” or “good.”
- Seventy-nine percent of visitor groups were interested in interpretive/ranger-led programs on a future visit. Fifty-three percent were willing to pay a modest fee to attend a program. The most common topics to learn on a future visit were tidal areas (61%) and animals other than birds (59%).
- Most visitor groups (96%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Acadia National Park 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>

