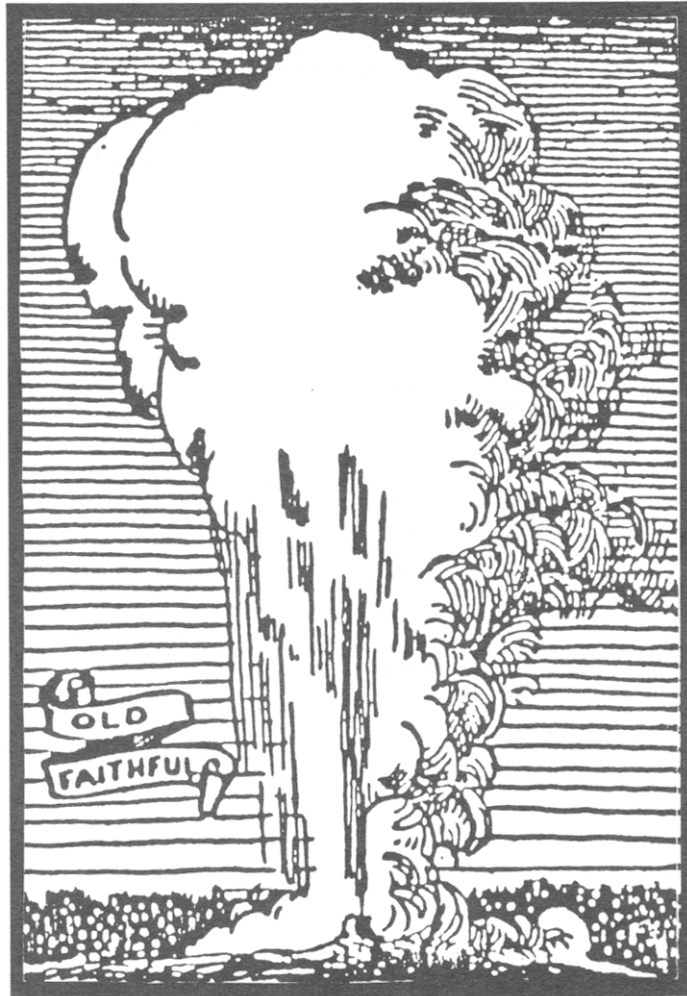


Visitor Services Project  
Yellowstone National Park



# Visitor Services Project

# Yellowstone National Park

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Report 25

March 1990

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# Visitor Services Project (VSP)

## Yellowstone National Park

### Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a study of visitors to Yellowstone National Park during July 12–18, 1989. One thousand seventy questionnaires were distributed and 856 were returned, an 80% response rate.
- The report profiles Yellowstone visitors. The separate Appendix has visitors' comments about the park and their visit. A summary of these comments is included in both this report and the appendix.
- Forty-two percent of visitors were in groups of two people. Seventy-eight percent of visitors were in family groups. The most common ages were children younger than fifteen years old (23%) and adults aged 36–45 (21%). Almost half of visitors (49%) were on their first visit.
- Seven percent of visitors were foreign, with the highest proportions from Canada (43%) and Germany (14%). U.S. visitors came from 48 states.
- Of the visitors who stayed more than one day, 68% stayed two to three days. Common activities included viewing wildlife (93%) and thermal features (85%), photography (83%), walking for pleasure (75%) and visiting museums/visitor centers (73%).
- Most visitors stopped at Old Faithful (84%), Canyon (68%), Grant Village/West Thumb (63%), Madison (61%) and Norris (61%).
- Most visitors used the park folder/map (92%), park newspaper (68%) and visitor center exhibits (60%). Visitors highly rated the usefulness of ranger personnel, the park folder/map, self-guided trails/trail guides and sales publications.
- On the nights visitors spent in the park, most stayed in developed campgrounds (84%), and one night was the most common length of stay. Outside the park, most nights were spent in hotels or cabins (59%) and three nights was the most common length of stay.
- Regarding the 1988 fires, 64% of visitors stated the fires were not a reason for their visit; 7% stated they were the primary reason for visiting; and 86% would recommend a visit to family/friends. Most felt that they would likely visit the park again within the next five years (54%). Almost half (48%) said they felt the fires were beneficial to the park's natural systems; 28% said they were not; and 24% didn't know. Almost equal numbers of comments said the park appeared worse than expected and better than expected.
- Visitors made many more general comments about their visits to Yellowstone NP.

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For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact Dr. Gary E. Machlis, Sociology Project Leader, University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, Moscow, Idaho 83843 or call (208) 885-7129.

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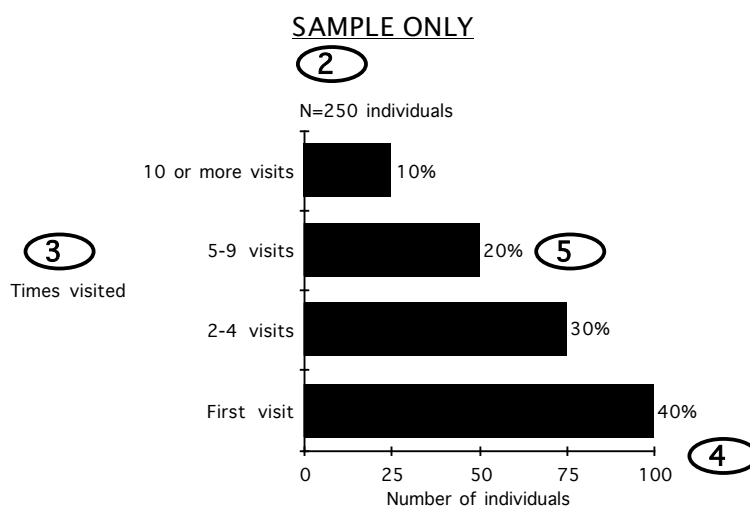
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## INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Yellowstone National Park (referred to as "Yellowstone"). This visitor study was conducted July 12–18, 1989 by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Cooperative Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho.

A Methods section discusses the procedures and limitations of the study. The Results section follows, including a summary of visitor comments. Next, a Menu for Further Analysis helps managers request additional analyses. The final section has a copy the Questionnaire. The separate Appendix includes a comment summary and the visitors' unedited comments.

Many of this report's graphs resemble the example below. The large numbers refer to explanations following the graph.



① Figure 4: Number of visits

- 1: The figure title is a general description of the graph's information.
- 2: A note above gives the 'N', or number of cases in the sample, and a specific description of the information in the chart. Use **CAUTION** when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable.
- 3: Vertical information describes categories.
- 4: Horizontal information shows the item number in each category; proportions may be shown.
- 5: In most graphs, percentages are included to provide additional explanation.

## METHODS

### General strategy

Interviews were conducted and questionnaires distributed to a sample of selected visitors entering Yellowstone during July 12–18, 1989. Visitors completed the questionnaire during their trip and then returned it by mail.

### Questionnaire design

The questionnaire design used the standard format of previous Visitor Services Project studies. See the end of this report for a copy of the questionnaire.

### Sampling

Visitors were contacted at five sites: the North entrance, Northeast entrance, East entrance, South entrance and West entrance. Visitors entering the park were sampled using a selected interval to contact entering vehicles. The number of contacts for each entrance reflected the entrance's portion of the park's total visitation.

### Questionnaire administration

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, the interview took approximately two minutes. These interviews included determining group size and the age of the adult who would complete the questionnaire. This individual was asked his or her name, address and telephone number for the later mailing of a reminder–thank you postcard.

### Data analysis

Two weeks following the survey, a postcard reminder was mailed to all participants. Questionnaires returned within ten weeks were coded and entered into a computer. Frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were calculated using a standard statistical software package. Respondents' comments were summarized.

Table 1 shows that the proportion of visitors who received and returned questionnaires closely reflects the proportion of actual visitation for each entrance.

Table 1: Comparison of total visits and survey sample

Entrance	Number of visitor groups		% of park visits		Difference
	Total*	Survey**	Total	Survey (%)	
North	6,725	130	14	15	1
West	15,176	264	32	31	1
South	14,175	238	30	29	1
East	9,119	161	19	19	0
Northeast	2,759	50	5	6	1
Totals	47,954	843	100	100	

\*The "total" numbers of visitor groups that entered the five Yellowstone park entrances during the week of July 12 – 18, 1989 were taken from the park travel statistics.

\*\*The number of returned questionnaires distributed at each entrance.

#### Sample size, missing data and reporting errors

This study collected information on both visitor groups and individual group members. Thus, the sample size ("N"), varies from figure to figure. For example, while Figure 1 shows information for 810 groups, Figure 3 presents data for 2545 individuals. A note above each figure's graph specifies the information illustrated.

Occasionally, a respondent may not have answered all of the questions, or may have answered some incorrectly. Unanswered questions create missing data and cause the number in the sample to vary from figure to figure. For example, although 856 questionnaires were returned, Figure 1 shows data for only 810 respondents.

Questions answered incorrectly due to carelessness, misunderstanding directions and so forth, turn up in the data as reporting errors. These create small data inconsistencies.

#### Limitations

Like all surveys, this study has limitations which should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. It is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflect actual behavior. This disadvantage applies to all such studies and is reduced by having visitors fill out the questionnaire as they visit the park.

2. The data reflect visitor use patterns during the study period of July 12–18, 1989. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors using the park during other times of the year.

3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "**CAUTION**" is included in the graph, figure or table.

4. Language problems may have resulted in foreign visitation being underestimated.



## RESULTS

### A. Visitors contacted

A total of 1154 visitor groups were contacted; 93% accepted questionnaires. Eight hundred fifty-six visitor groups completed and returned their questionnaires, an 80% response rate.

Table 2 compares information collected from the total sample of visitors contacted and the actual respondents who returned questionnaires. Non-response bias is insignificant.

Table 2: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Average age of respondent	1070	45.0	846	45.0
Average group size	1067	3.4	810	3.5

### B. Characteristics

Visitor group sizes varied from one person to 56 people. Forty-two percent of Yellowstone visitors came in groups of two people, 21% in groups of four (see Figure 1). Families accounted for 78% of visitor groups, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 3 shows a wide range of age groups; the most common were children 15 years or younger (23%), and adults 36–45 years of age (21%). Forty-nine percent were on their first visit to Yellowstone and 36% percent had visited 2–4 times, as seen in Figure 4.

Foreign visitors comprised 7% of all visitation. Map 1 and Table 3 show that 43% of foreign visitors came from Canada and 14% from Germany. Map 2 and Table 4 show that American visitors commonly came from California (11%), Wyoming (7%), Utah, Idaho, and Montana (6% each).

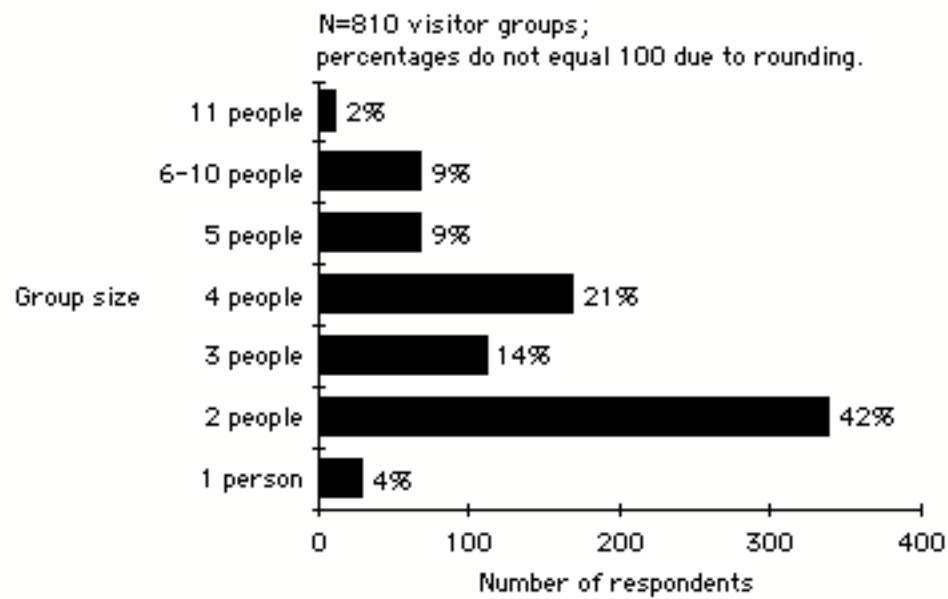


Figure 1: Visitor group sizes

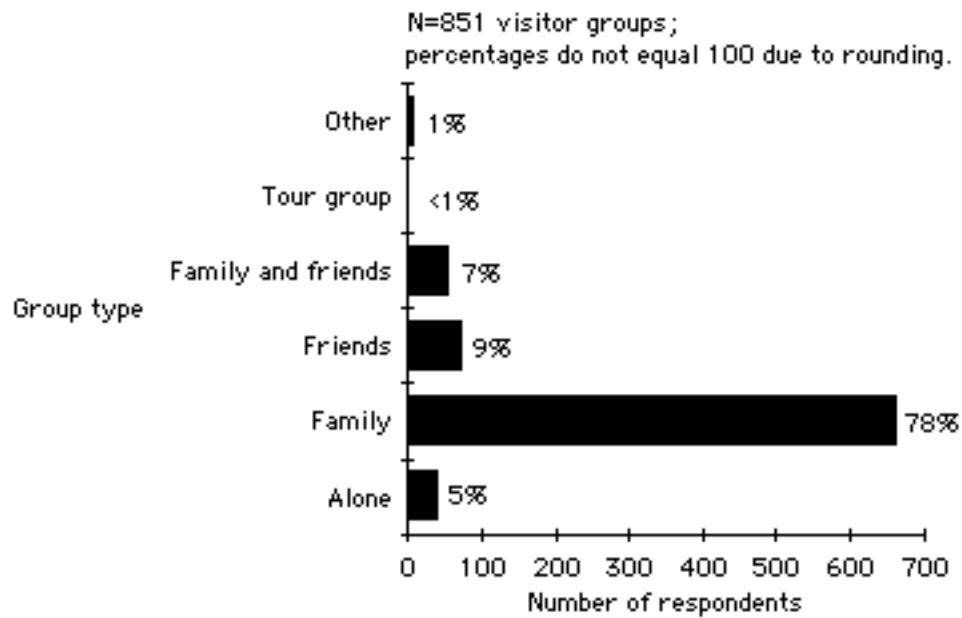


Figure 2: Visitor group types

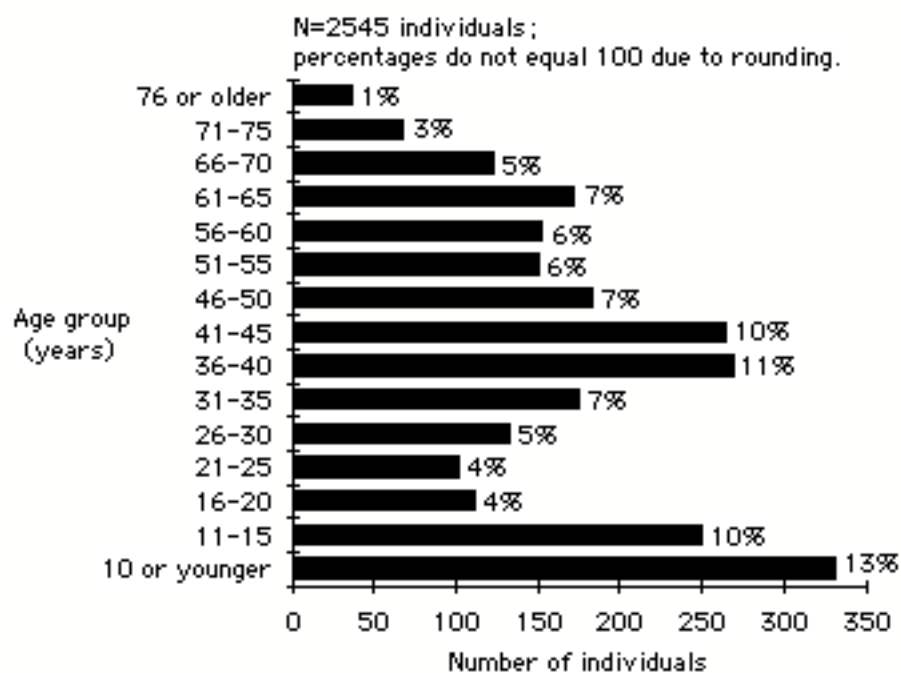


Figure 3: Visitor ages

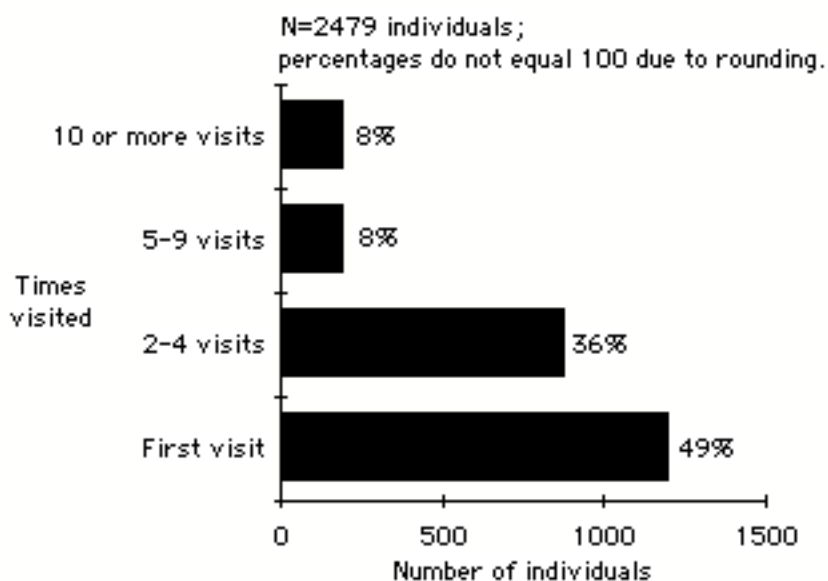
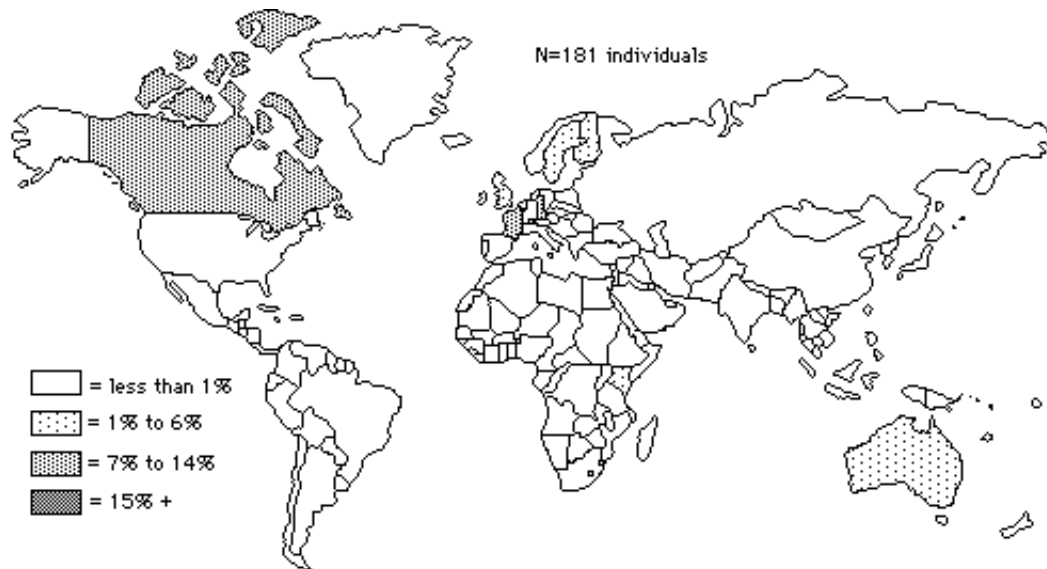


Figure 4: Number of visits

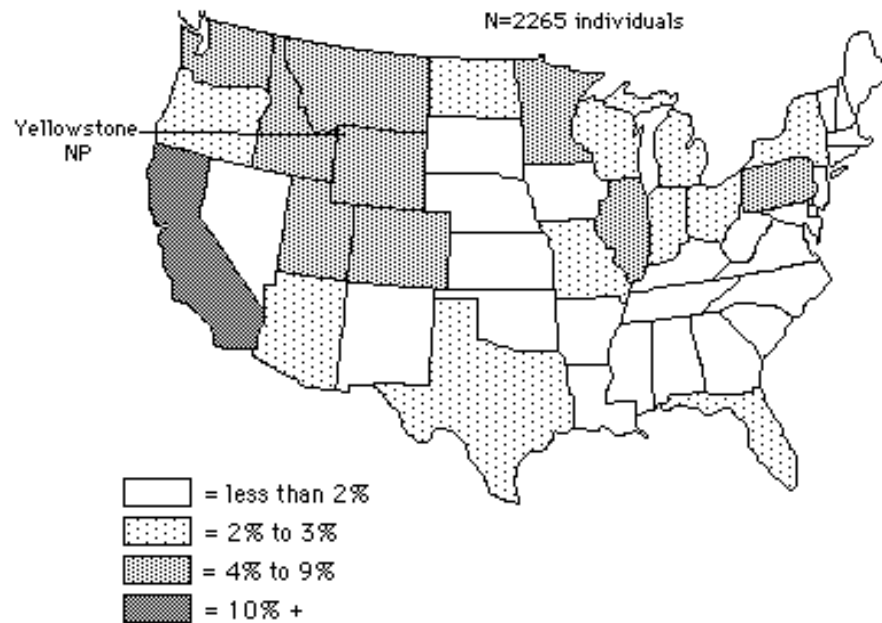


Map 1: Proportion of foreign visitors by country

Table 3: Proportion of visitors from foreign countries

N=181 individuals;  
individual country percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Country	Number of individuals	% of foreign visitors
Canada	77	43
Germany	26	14
Switzerland	14	8
France	12	7
Australia	10	6
United Kingdom (U.K.)	9	5
Netherlands	7	4
Taiwan	6	3
Finland	4	2
Liechtenstein	4	2
Denmark	3	2
Sweden	2	1
Kenya <sup>2</sup>	1	
Italy	1	<1
Japan <sup>1</sup>	<1	
Philippines	1	<1
New Zealand	1	<1
South Africa	1	<1



Map 2: Proportion of visitors from each state

Table 4: Proportion of visitors from each state

N=2265 individuals;  
individual state percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

State	Number of individuals	% of visitors from state
California	238	11
Wyoming	161	7
Utah	141	6
Idaho 126	6	
Montana	124	6
Colorado	103	5
Washington	98	4
Minnesota	94	4
Illinois 82	4	
Pennsylvania	79	4
Texas 77	3	
Michigan	74	3
Ohio	65	3
Indiana	62	3
Wisconsin	59	3
Florida	58	3
Oregon	51	2
New York	46	2
Missouri	40	2
Arizona	39	2
North Dakota	34	2
Other states (28)	414	18

### C. Length of stay

Figure 5 shows that 40% of the visitors who stayed more than one day, stayed two days in Yellowstone; 8% stayed 6 days or more. Forty-five percent of the visitors who reported their length of stay spent less than one day in the park. Of the day visitors, 26% stayed from eleven to 23 hours (see Figure 6).

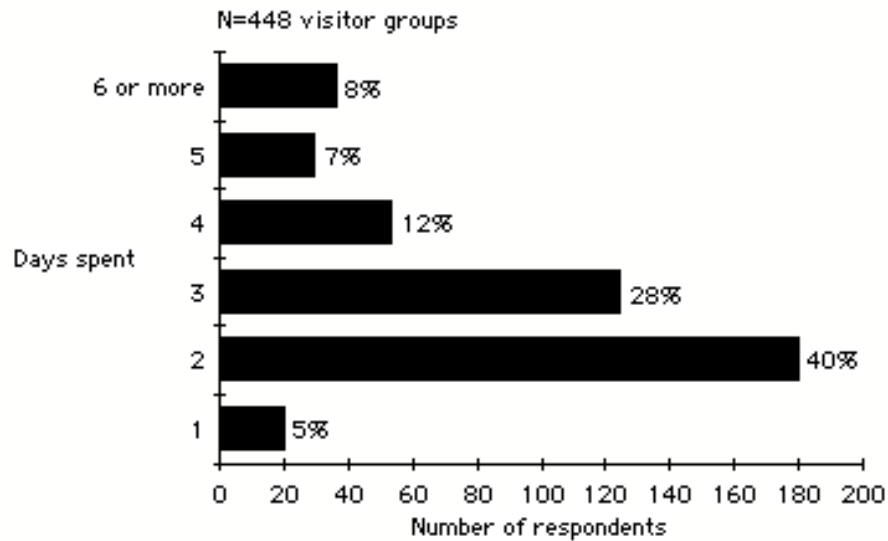


Figure 5: Days spent in park

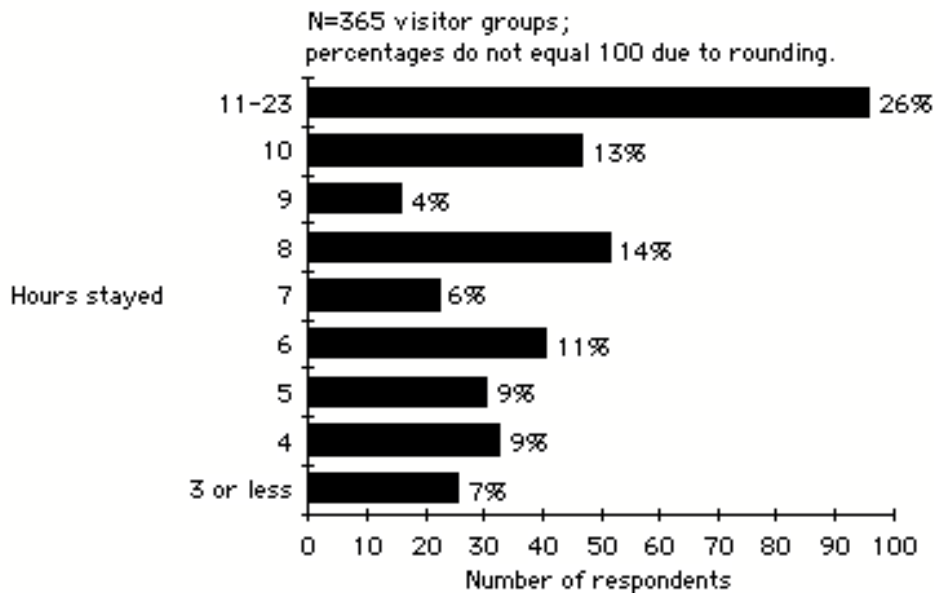


Figure 6: Hours spent in park

#### D. Activities

Figure 7 shows the proportion of visitor groups who participated in each activity during their visit. Common activities were viewing wildlife (93%), viewing thermal features (85%), photography (83%), walking for pleasure (75%), visiting the museums/visitor centers (73%), and shopping (67%). "Other" activities (15%) included camping, eating, "honeymooning," sightseeing, and talking with park researchers.

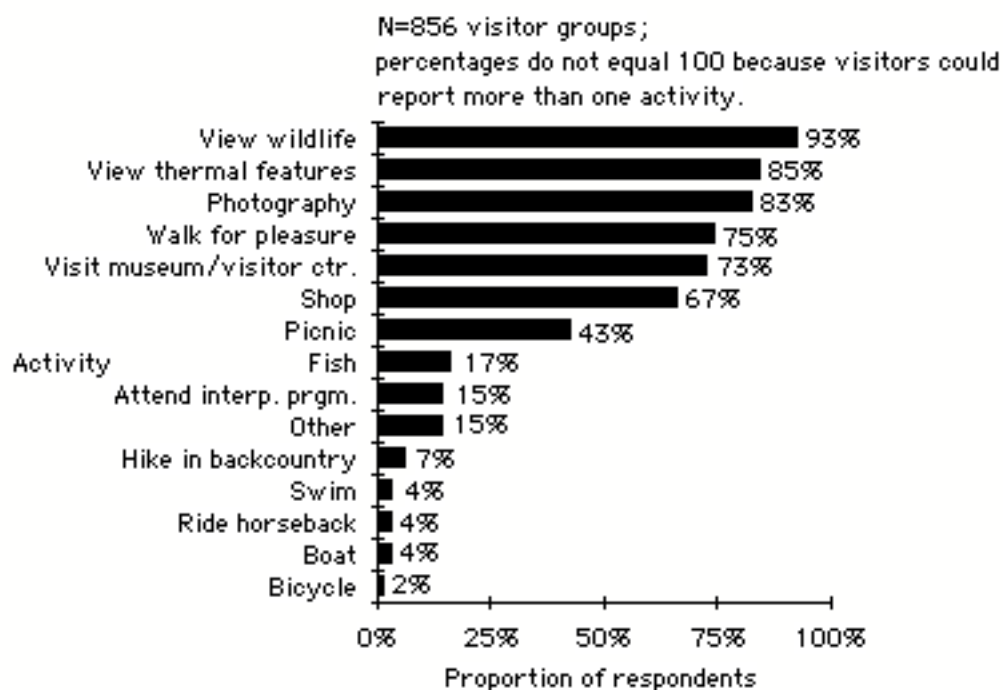
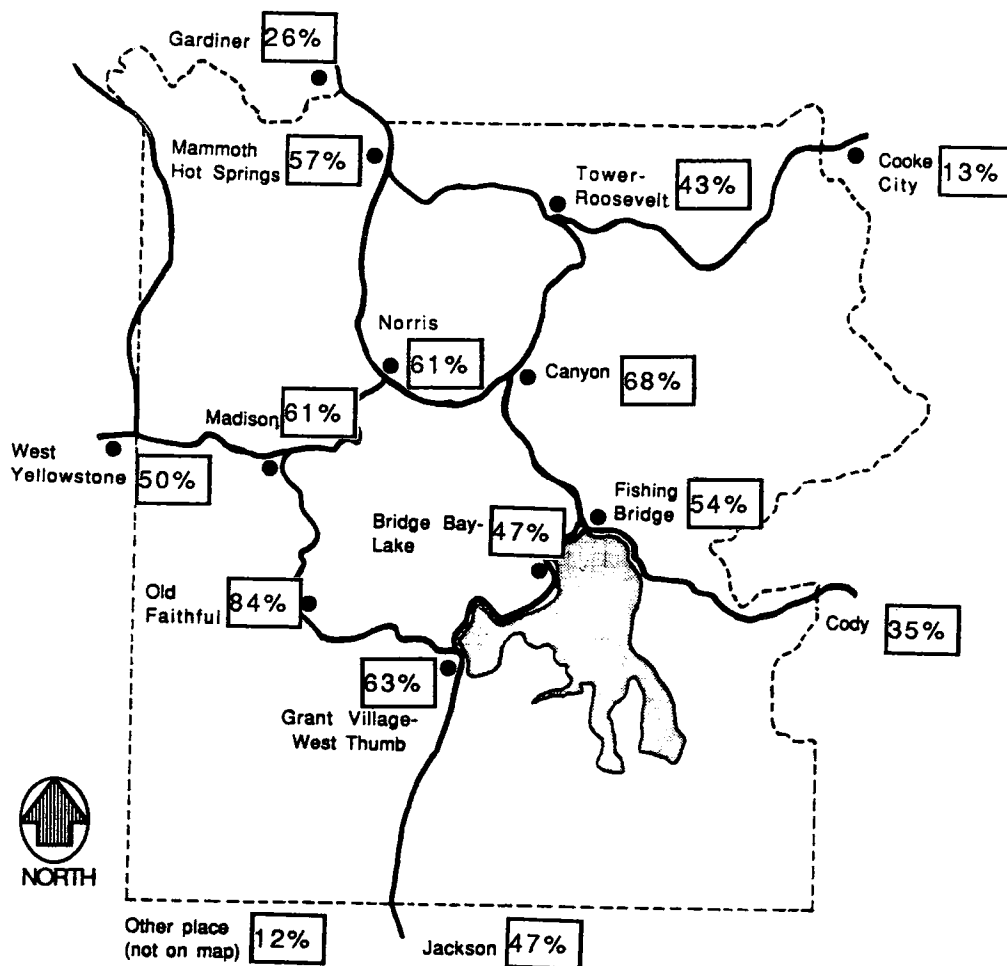


Figure 7: Proportion of visitor groups participating in each activity

### E. Sites visited

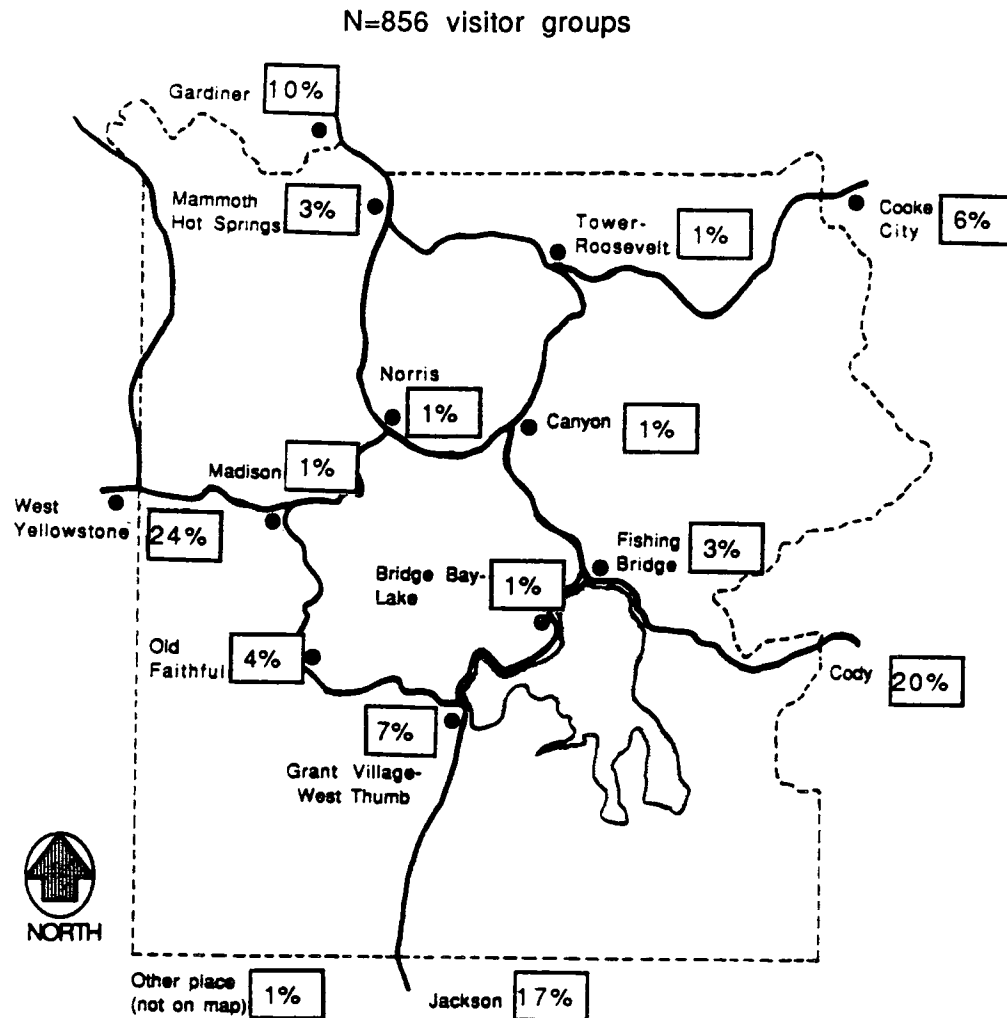
Map 3 shows the proportion of visitor groups that visited selected sites in Yellowstone. Most visitor groups stopped at Old Faithful (84%), Canyon (68%), Grant Village/West Thumb (63%), Madison (61%) and Norris (61%). Map 4 shows that visitors' first stops were often at the towns surrounding the park: West Yellowstone (24%), Cody (20%), Jackson (17%), and Gardiner (10%).

N=856 visitor groups;  
percentages do not equal 100 because  
visitors could stop at more than one site.



**Map 3: Proportion of visitors stopping at each site**





**Map 4: Proportion of visitors who stopped at each site first**

#### **F. Interpretive and information service evaluation**

Of those information and interpretive services available at Yellowstone, the most commonly used were the park folder/map (92%), *Yellowstone Today* (park newspaper) (68%), visitor center exhibits (60%), and roadside exhibits (51%), as shown in Figure 8. The least used service was ranger-led walks/talks (8%).

The following services were often rated "extremely useful" to "very useful:" ranger personnel (74%), the park folder/map (73%), ranger-led walks/talks (72%), self-guided trails/trail guides (72%), and sales publications (70%), as shown in Figures 9-20. Services often rated "not useful" to "somewhat useful," were campfire

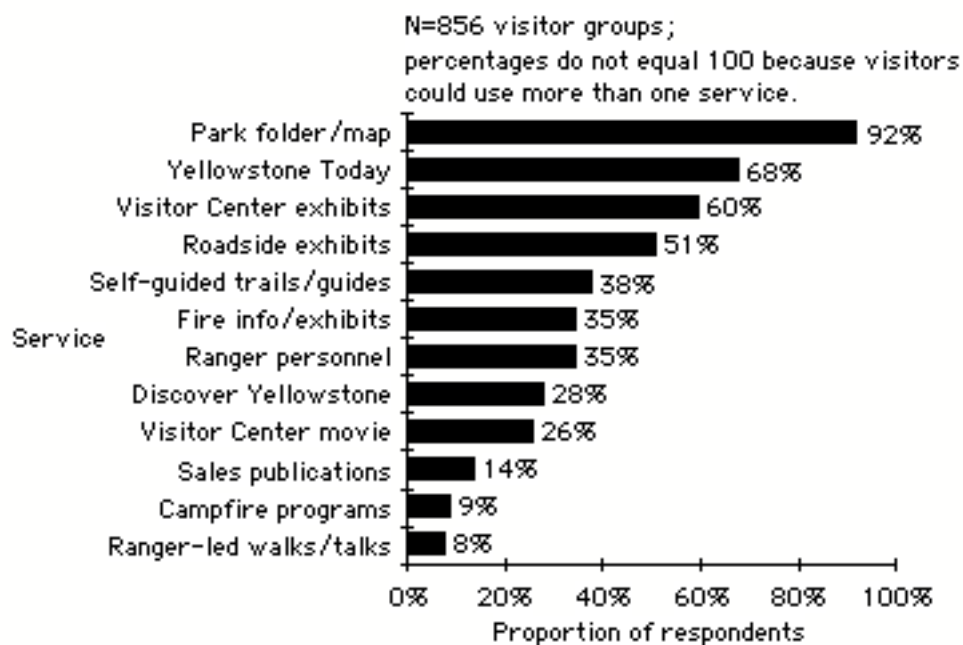


Figure 8: Proportion of visitors that used each information/interpretive service

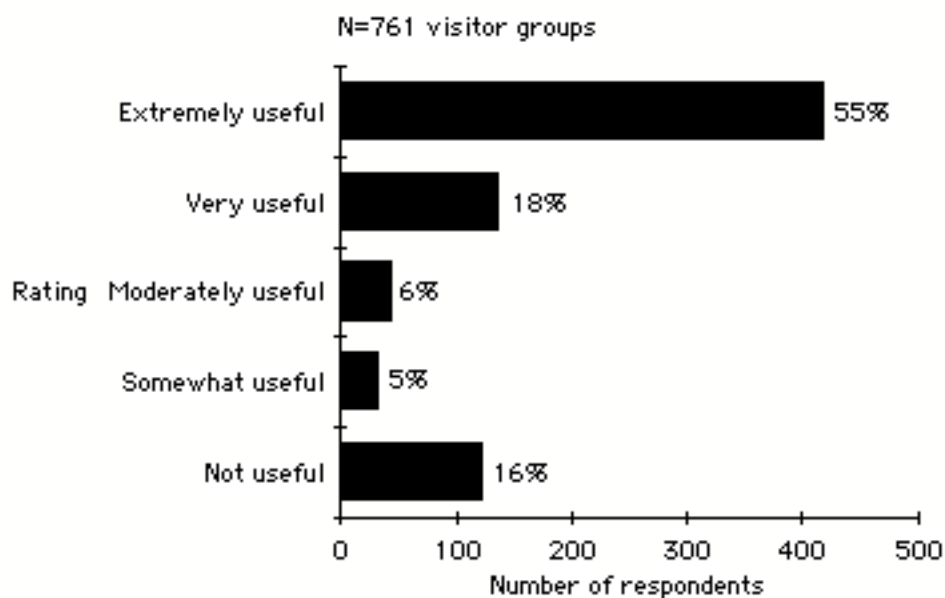


Figure 9: Visitor ratings of park folder/map

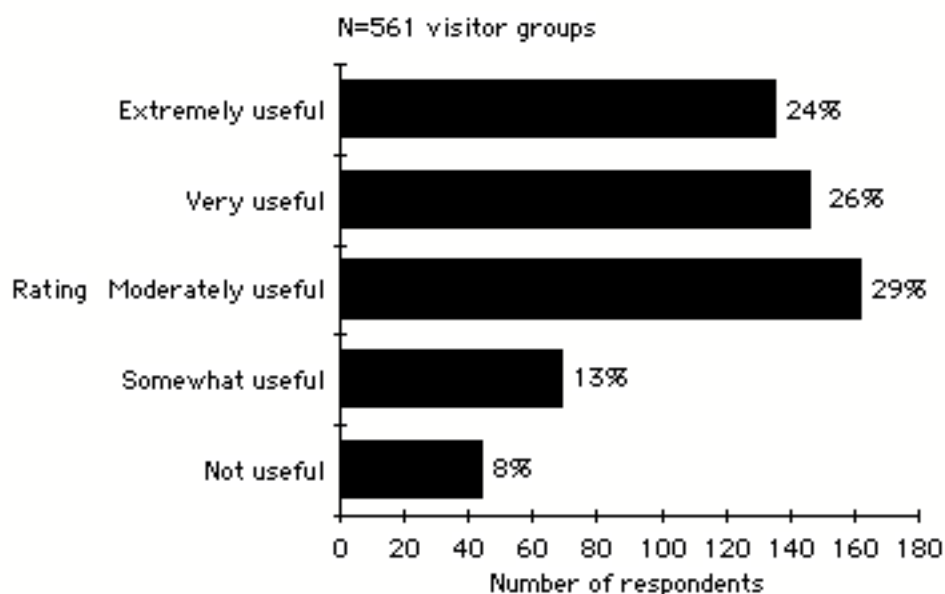


Figure 10: Visitor ratings of *Yellowstone Today* (park newspaper)

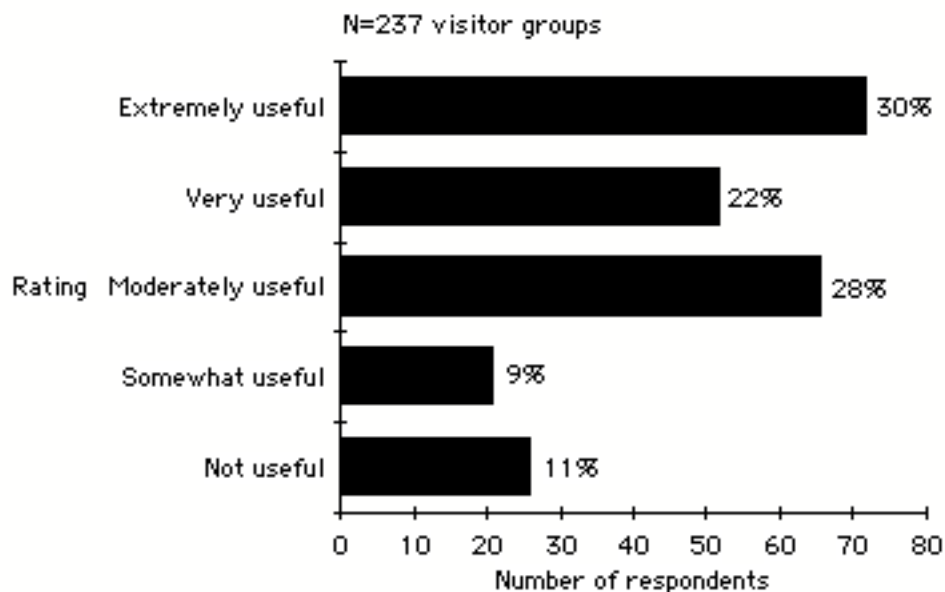


Figure 11: Visitor ratings of *Discover Yellowstone* (park activity guide)

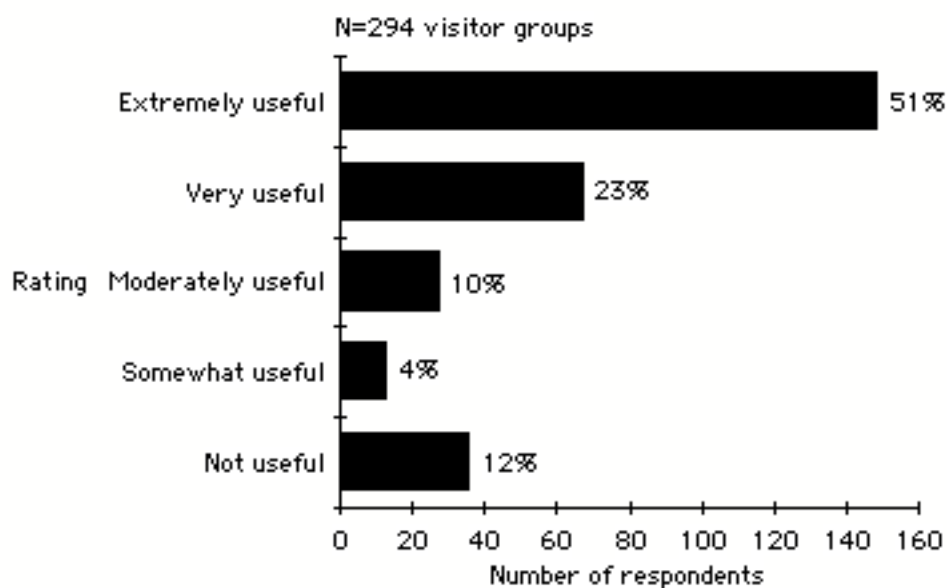


Figure 12: Visitor ratings of ranger personnel

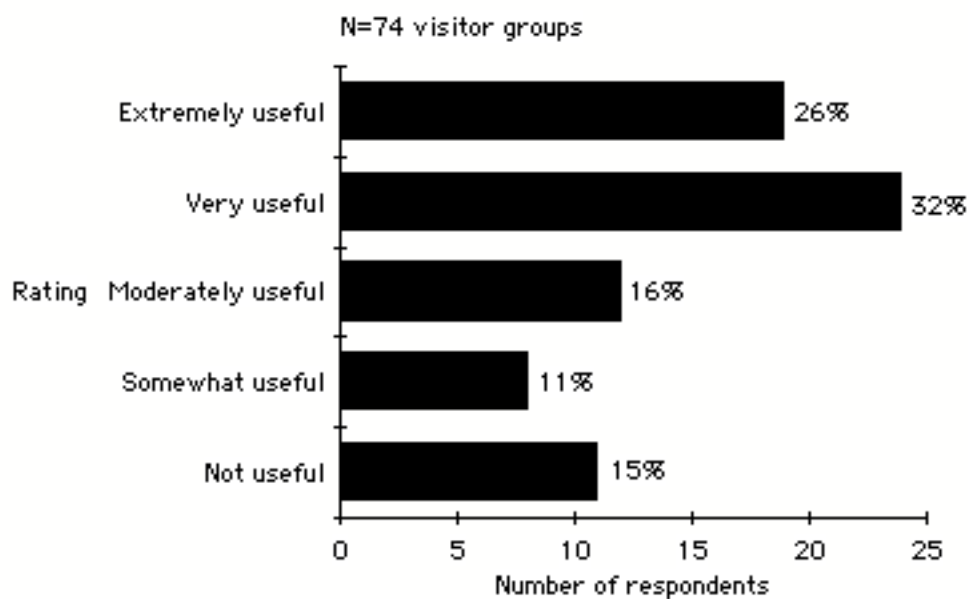


Figure 13: Visitor ratings of evening campfire programs

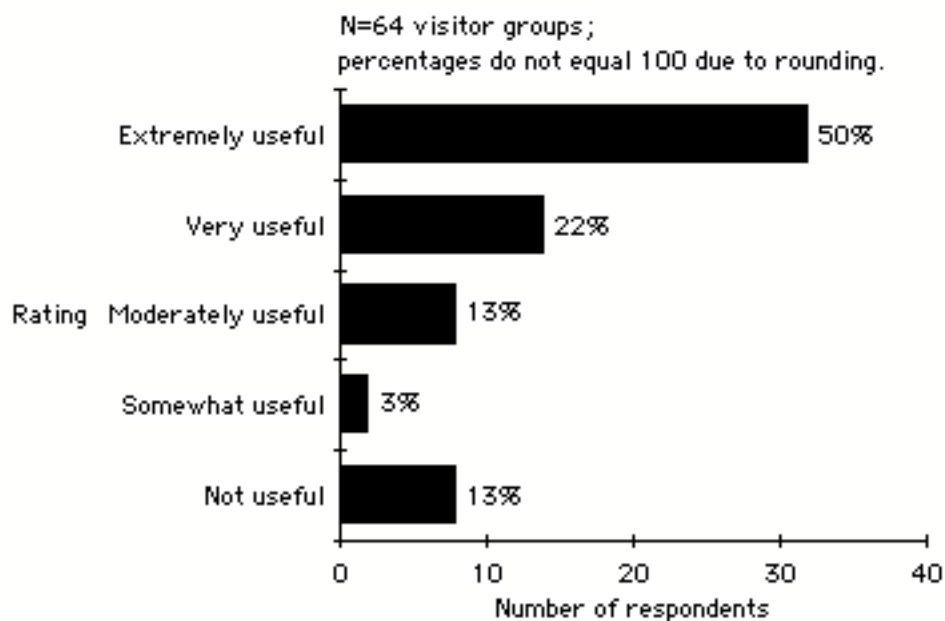


Figure 14: Visitor ratings of ranger-led walks/talks

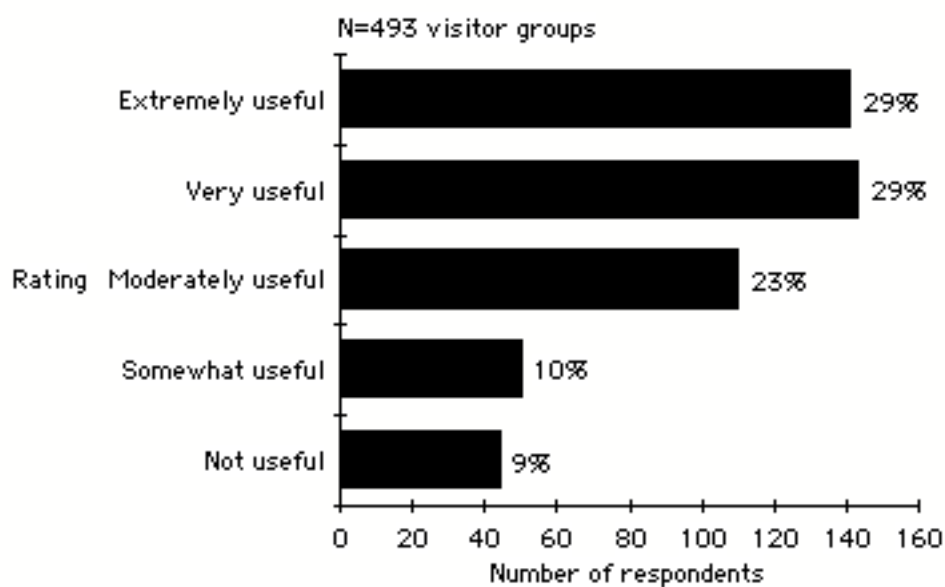


Figure 15: Visitor ratings of visitor center exhibits

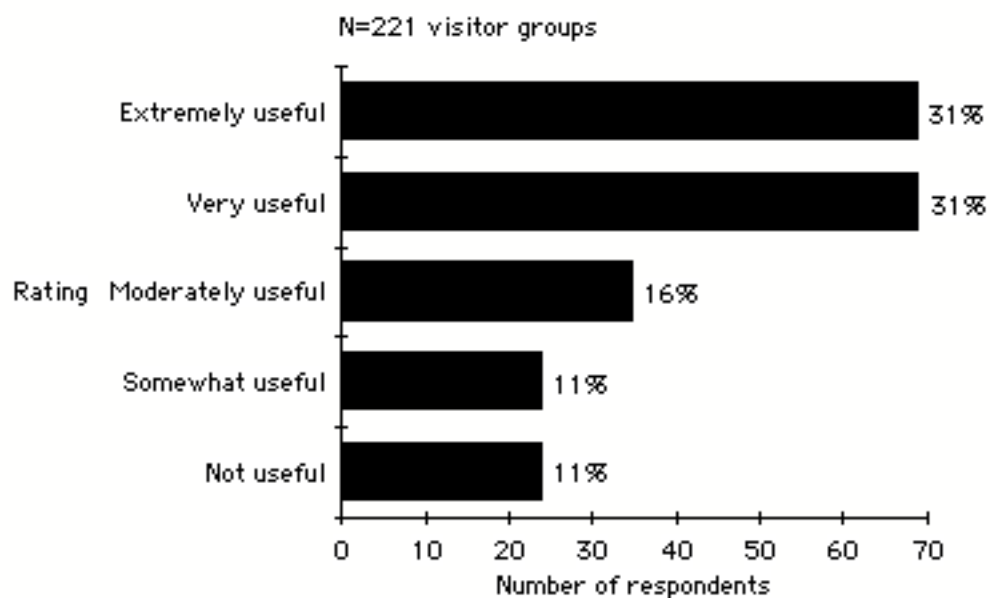


Figure 16: Visitor ratings of visitor center movie

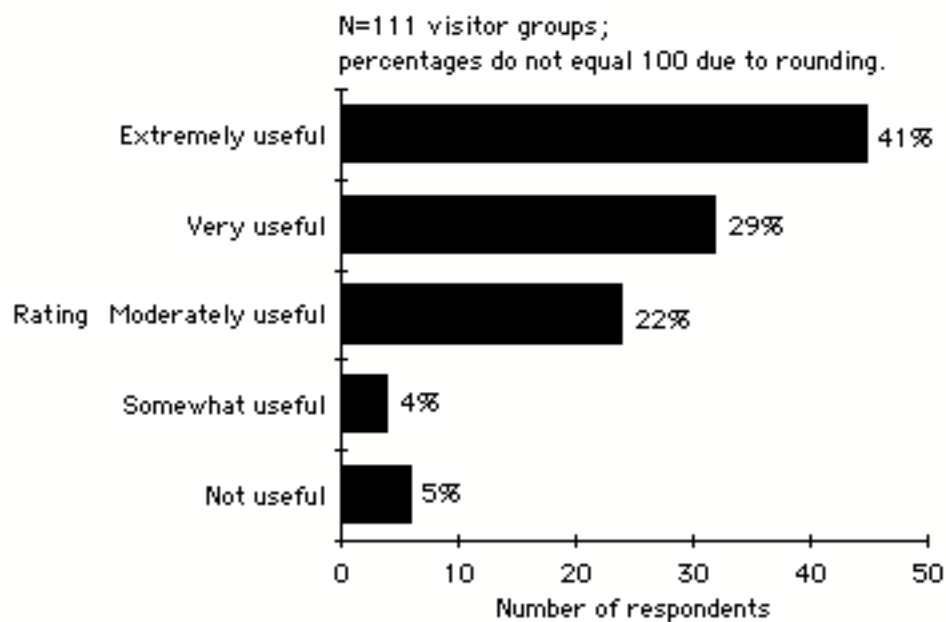


Figure 17: Visitor ratings of sales publications

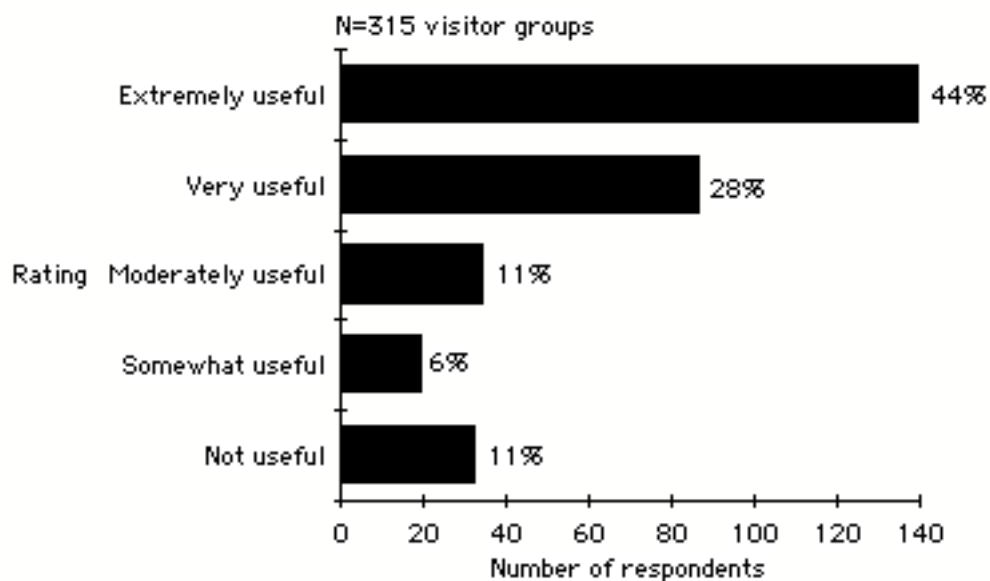


Figure 18: Visitor ratings of self-guided trails/trail guides

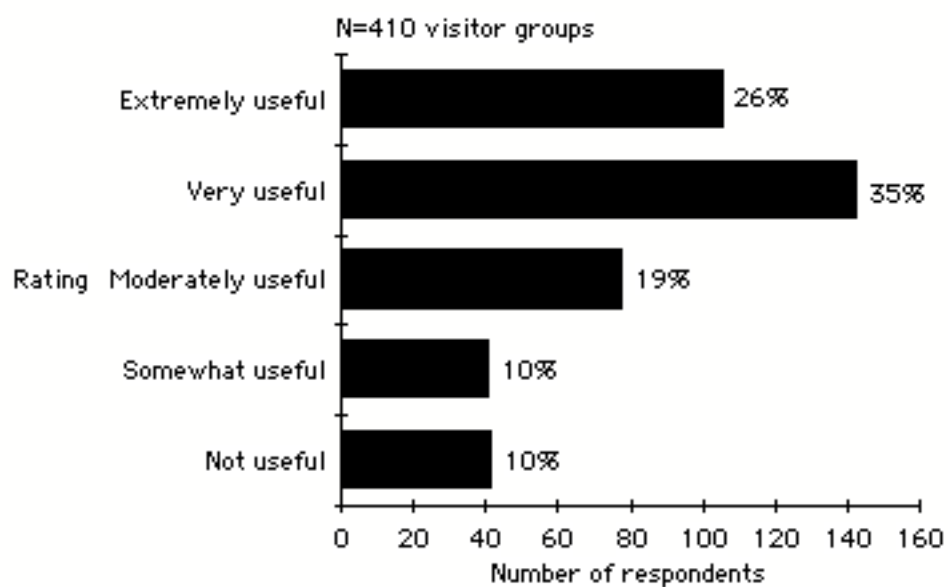


Figure 19: Visitor ratings of roadside exhibits

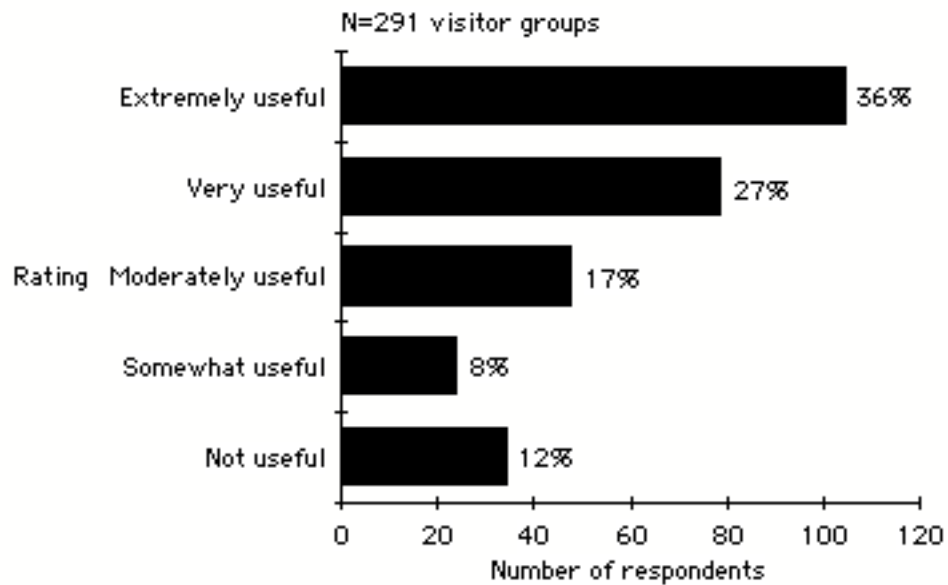


Figure 20: Visitor ratings of fire information/exhibits

#### G. Overnight use

Most nights visitors spent in the park were in developed campgrounds (84%), as Figure 21 shows. Forty-eight percent of visitors staying at all types of accommodations in the park spent three nights (Figure 22). Outside the park, the largest proportion of nights visitors spent were in cabins or hotels (59%), as Figure 23 shows. Of visitors staying in all types of accommodations outside the park, 36% spent one night and 31% spent two nights (Figure 24).



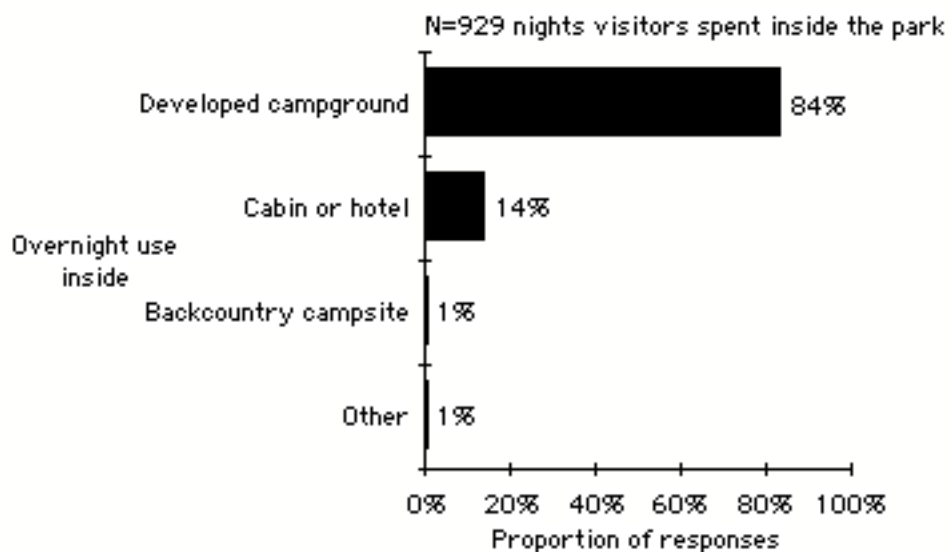


Figure 21: Proportion of nights visitors spent at different types of accommodations inside the park

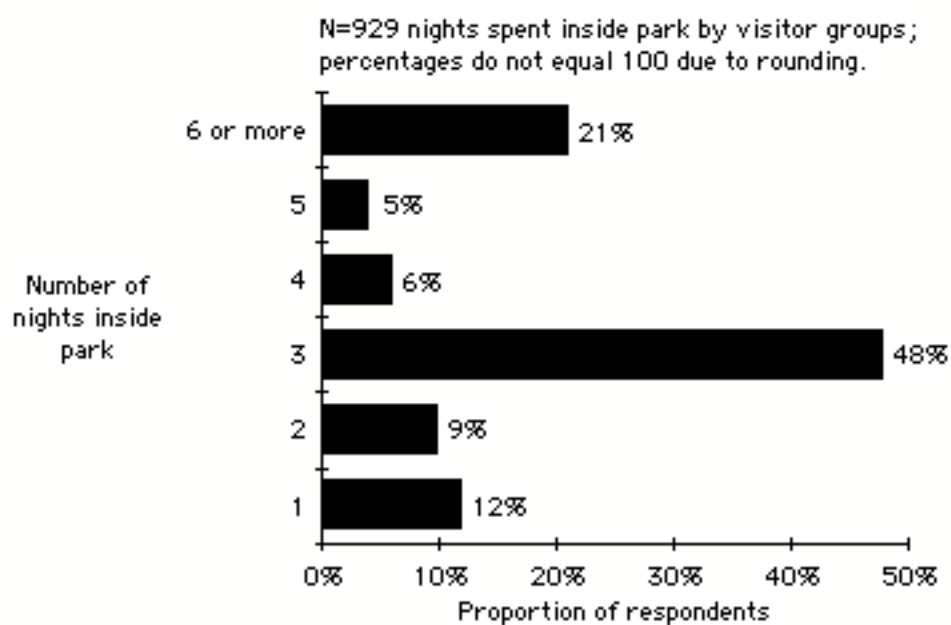


Figure 22: Number of nights spent by visitors in all types of accommodations inside the park

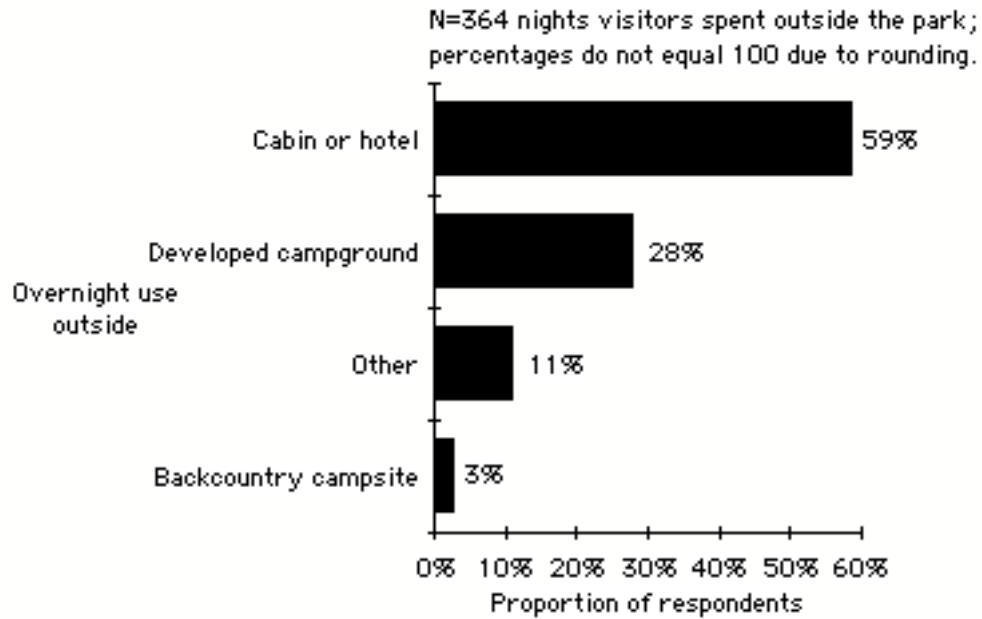


Figure 23: Proportion of nights visitors spent at different types of accommodations outside the park

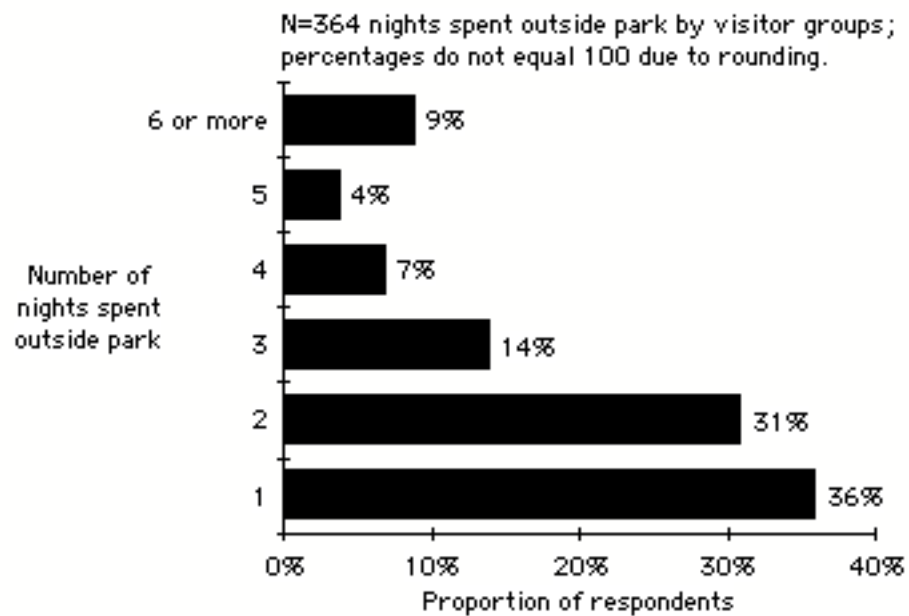


Figure 24: Number of nights spent by visitors in all types of accommodations outside the park

#### H. Reason for visit: Role of 1988 fires

Most visitors (64%) said the 1988 fires were not a reason for visiting the park (Figure 25). Twenty-nine percent said the fires were one of several reasons they visited; 7% stated it was a primary reason for visiting.

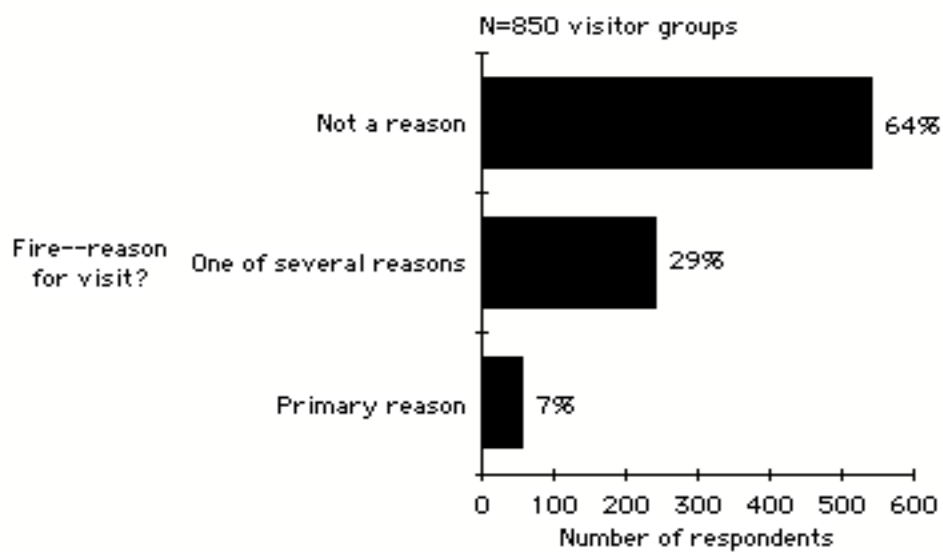


Figure 25: Proportion of visitors citing fires as reason for visit

### I. Recommendation of visits

The majority of visitors (86%) would recommend a visit to Yellowstone to their family and/or friends (see Figure 26). Some visitors would not recommend a visit (6%).

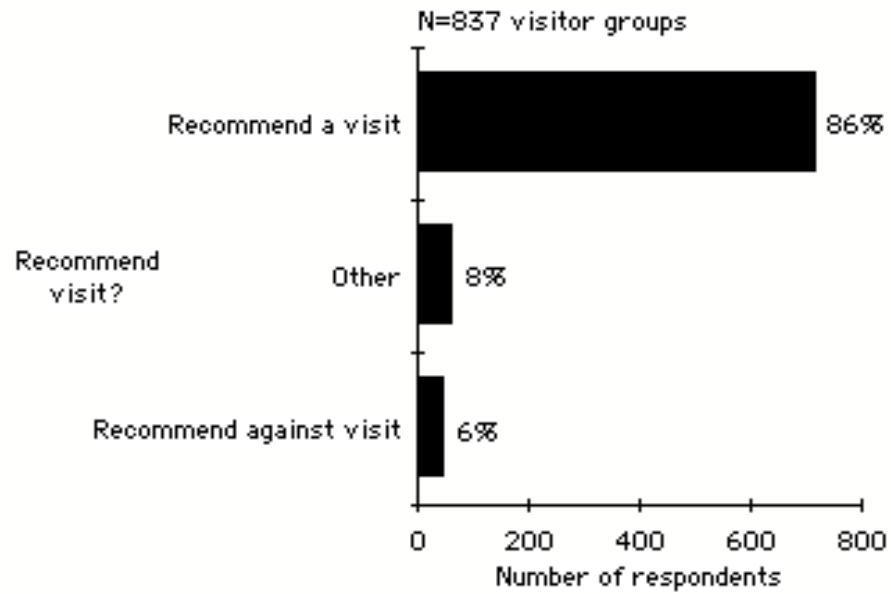


Figure 26: Proportion of visitors who recommend visit

#### J. Possibility of return visit

As Figure 27 shows, 54% of visitors said it is likely that they will visit the park again during the next five years. Twenty-nine percent did not know if they would visit again within five years and 18% stated it was unlikely.

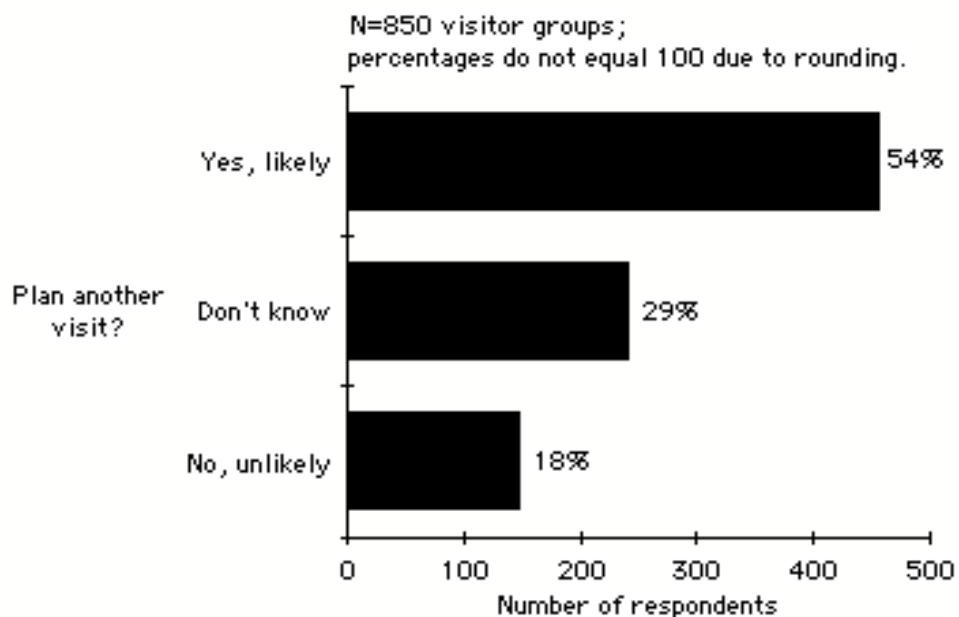


Figure 27: Proportion of visitors planning return visit

#### K. Usefulness of 1988 fires to natural systems

As shown in Figure 28, almost half (48%) of the visitors thought the 1988 fires were beneficial to Yellowstone's natural systems (plants, animals, soil, water, etc.). More than one fourth of the visitors did not see the fires as beneficial, and 24% did not know.

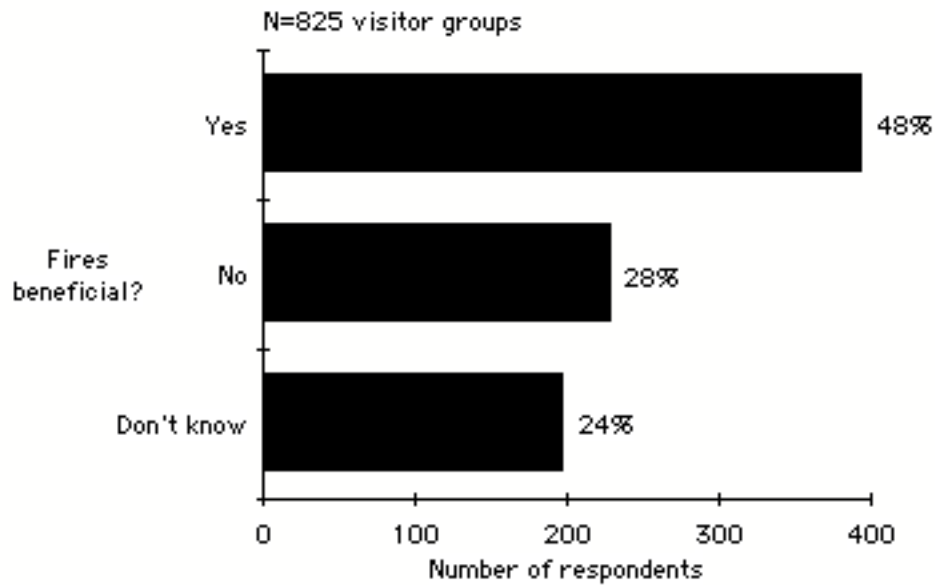


Figure 28: Proportion of visitors who viewed fire as beneficial to natural systems

#### L. Post-fire expectations

Visitors compared their visit to Yellowstone after the 1988 fires with their prior expectations. Table 5 shows their responses were diverse.

Table 5: Visitors' post-fire expectations

N=838 comments;  
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Worse than expected	186
Better than expected	183
About what was expected	131
Scenic—enjoyed visit despite fires	83
Saddening and depressing fire results	34
News coverage exaggerated devastation	32
More interesting after fires	26
Didn't know what to expect	23
Surprised at amount unburned (mosaic pattern)	22
New growth and regeneration faster than expected	17
Burnt areas disappointing	15
News coverage underplayed devastation	9
Fewer animals than expected	9
Natural wonders unaffected	8
Less recovery than expected	7
Fires natural	7
Expected less standing trees	5
Will take years to recover	5
Fires worse than necessary	5
Awesome devastation	4
More flowers than expected	3
News coverage accurate	3
Hope to return in few years	2
Appreciate rest of park more	2
Fire damage closer to attractions than expected	2
Fire effects on animals and habitats greater than expected	2
More animals than expected	2
More effects on rivers and streams than expected	2
Other comments	9

### M. Opinions about fires

Visitors had many opinions about the Yellowstone 1988 fires, as Table 6 shows.

Table 6: Opinions about 1988 fires

N=601 comments;  
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
Let natural fires burn	71
Fires should have been controlled sooner	49
Change policy—fight all fires	44
Still worth visiting—beauty/natural wonders unchanged	30
Sad that fire happened	29
Clear and use burnt wood	23
Interested and fascinated by fire effects	22
Balance fire policy and prevailing conditions	22
Fire beneficial	19
Media exaggerated damage	18
Fires poorly managed	15
Scarred, will take generations to regrow	14
Good fire information, movies, videos, exhibits, newspaper	11
Surprised by regrowth	10
Great opportunity to teach about fire's role	10
Don't let it happen again	10
Educate public—provide more info on fire value and future	9
Not prepared for fire severity and extent	8
Fire well-handled	8
Fewer animals—more fire deaths than reported?	8
Interested in mosaic burn patterns	7
Hope trees regrow quickly	6
Reduce undergrowth, reduce fire hazard	6
Too many animals deaths	6
Green forests nicer	4
Keep politics out of it	4
Good park fire supplement paper	4
Review fire management policy	4
Used to discuss fire safety with children	4
Saw more flowers	4
Surprised anything was left	4
Protect Old Faithful Inn and other buildings	4
Report fire damage and future effects more honestly	3
Plan to return to see regrowth	3
Establish stricter fire and smoking rules	3
Sorry for people who hadn't visited before	3
How will burnt areas be managed?	3
Not as bad as expected	3
Fires cleared out dead timber	3
Don't allow logging in park	3
Excellent restoration project	3
Nature will heal in time—only man in a hurry	3
Use timber sale money for reforestation	2
Too much fuss over fires	2



Media should explain fire role in natural ecosystem	2
Regrowth should support more animals	2
Provide guided walks through burned areas	2
Don't let any more of park burn	2
Man-caused fires outside park should have been put out	2
Fires added color and beauty to park	2
Cancelled '88 visit to park	2
Question "let burn" policy	2
Clean up road edges faster	2
Erosion occurring—ruined fishing	2
Learned about fires	2
Reforest	2
Other comments	56

## N. Comment summary – Introduction

The Appendix of this report contains unedited visitors' comments. A summary of their comments appears below and in the Appendix. Some comments offer specific suggestions about the post-fire period; others were more general including natural features, personnel, maintenance and regulations.

N=1285 comments;  
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>National Park Service</b>	
Rangers friendly, helpful and courteous	20
Rangers not friendly, helpful and courteous	2
Volunteers helpful and courteous	2
Visitor center personnel great	2
Appreciated rangers' enthusiasm and attitudes	2
Park employees outstanding	2
Other comments	5
<b>Concession</b>	
Retail employees helpful and courteous	3
Lodge employees pleasant	2
Restaurant employees friendly	2
Other comments	5
<b>General</b>	
Employees friendly and courteous	7
Staff friendly and informative	5
Most people friendly and courteous	5
College personnel friendly	4
Other comments	4
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Need more information on visiting Yellowstone in winter	2
Other comments	12

## Nonpersonal

Mark more sites on map and provide information on them	7
Enjoyed visitor center exhibits	2
New map confusing	2
Wanted handouts about park, activities, etc.	2
Other comments	19

## Personal

Will attend ranger walks/talks next time	2
Average person not appreciative of burned areas	2
Other comments	6

## FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

## General

Park clean	14
Park well-maintained	10
Excellent facilities	5
More/better facility handicapped access	4
Restrooms excellent	3
Need more outside restrooms	3
Facilities very clean	2
Desired hand washing facilities in outdoor restrooms	2
Appreciated facility improvements	2
Regularly clean and empty outdoor restrooms	2
Other comments	14

## Roads, Trails and Signs

Roads in bad condition/need repair	37
Desired advance notice signs of facilities and sites	12
Approved of road widening and repair	10
Need more pullouts for viewing wildlife and features	7
Need safe bicycle lanes along roads	6
Signs along roads need improvement	5
Roads in good condition	4
Need more passing lanes or RV pullouts	3
Need more bicycle trails/facilities	2
Pullouts need to be wider	2
Need more mileage markers	2
Road signs for intersections and interest points good	2
Other comments	25

## Campgrounds and Picnic Areas

Every campground needs showers	7
Need more full service campsites	6
Campgrounds clean	4
High demand for campsites	4
Need more campgrounds	3
Enjoyed campgrounds	3
Need more accessible RV campsites	2
Improve campground facilities	2
Need more picnic areas	2
Need more tenting sites	2
Need minimum facility tent campgrounds	2
Campgrounds too crowded	2
Other comments	22

## POLICIES

## Regulations

Entrance fee too high	3
Wanted shorter duration entrance permits	3
Use other government funds to improve roads and facilities	3
Yellowstone's experience spoiled by rigorous policies	2
Visitation discouraged by costly entrance fee	2
Reduce speed limit	2
Other comments	17

## Enforcement

Keep people from harassing wildlife	7
Other comments	7

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

## General

Too much park development	5
Manage park for nature not people	3
Park not overly commercialized yet	2
Other comments	7

## Wildlife

Remove animal remains from public view	4
Reintroduce wolves	3
Advocated repopulation of park with bears	2
Thought elk population decreased	2
Fishing excellent	2
Concerned about not seeing bears	2
Other comments	12

## Fires

Fires destroyed much beauty	6
Disallow park management by politicians/bureaucrats	3
Fires have permanent devastating effect on park	3
Don't use let burn policy	3
Disappointed to see burnt forests	3
Remove all dead trees, both burnt and not burnt	2
Clear dead burnt trees as soon as possible	2
Burnt areas provide lesson in power of fire	2
Thankful for protection effort at Old Faithful Inn	2
Good to see new forest beginning	2
Plant trees along roadsides/in burnt areas immediately	2
Fires a natural stage of ecosystem evolution—enrich park	2
Need better fire suppression for park to remain viable	2
Fell dead trees adjacent to facilities—they endanger lives	2
Thin burned areas for economic and ecological reasons	2
Log burnt, but commercially viable trees	2
Let burn policy wasted country's resources	2
Other comments	12

## CONCESSIONS

Enjoyed Old Faithful Inn	3
Accommodations good	3
Services good	3
Wanted lower gas prices	3
Prices too high	3
Food of fair quality	3
Food services poor	3
Food good	2
Food poor	2
Food costs expensive	2
All vendor prices too high	2
Campgrounds too crowded	2
Need RV repair services and supplies	2
Other comments	27

## NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NPS professional and first rate	1
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## VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT

Appreciated opportunity to participate in survey	3
Other comments	2

## GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Enjoyed visit	155
Park beautiful/great	89
Keep up good work	56
Hope or plan to return	52
Enjoyed watching animals	38
Wanted to stay longer	34
Repeat visitors	24
Love Yellowstone NP	23
Disappointed—didn't see bears	23
Liked vast or varied wildland features	22
Wanted to see more/didn't see enough wildlife	19
Enjoyed wildflowers	12
Continue to preserve park's natural features	12
Enjoyed thermal features	12
Just traveling through	11
First time visitors	8
Everyone should visit Yellowstone NP	6
Will/hope to return to evaluate park's post-fire recovery	6
Park experience less satisfying because of fire's impact	6
An educational visit	5
Too crowded	5
Yellowstone visit exceeded expectations	5
Enjoyed fishing	4
Recommend visit to family and friends	4
Will need to ration visitors to park in future	4
Of all parks visited, Yellowstone best	3
Natural beauty of park may be restored in 20 years	3
Safety on road threatened by wildlife viewing drivers	3
Would like to return in winter	3
Enjoyed Old Faithful	3
Disapprove of park management	3
Disappointed that Old Faithful not bigger	2
Proud to be resident of one of park's states	2
Took lots of photos to share	2
Liked lack of people in backcountry	2
Fire removed park's beauty	2
Proud of Yellowstone and the national parks	2
Offer programs/activities like those in national forest	2
Enjoyed park despite fires	2
Burn allowed for better vistas of natural landforms	2
Other comments	37



Analysis Order Form  
Visitor Services Project  
Report 25 (Yellowstone)

Date of request: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Person requesting analysis: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number (commercial): \_\_\_\_\_

The following list specifies all of the variables available for comparison from the visitor survey conducted in your park. Consult this list to identify the characteristics of interest when requesting additional two-way and three-way comparisons.

- |                    |                       |   |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---|
| • Group size       | • Activity            | • Group type                            |
| • Site visited     | • Age                 | • Overnight use                         |
| • State residence  | • Reason for visit    | • Information/interpretive service used |
| • Number of visits | • Recommend visit     | • Info/interpretive service usefulness  |
| • Entry day        | • Plan return visit   | • Order of sites visited                |
| • Length of stay   | • Usefulness of fires |   |

Two-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list)

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Three-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list)

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:  
Cooperative Park Studies Unit  
College of Forestry, Wildlife, and Range Sciences  
University of Idaho  
Moscow, Idaho 83843



## Publications of the Visitor Services Project

A number of publications have been prepared as part of the Visitor Services Project. Reports 1-4 are available at cost from the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit upon request. All other reports are available from the respective parks in which the studies were conducted.

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For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact Dr. Gary E. Machlis, University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit, College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences, Moscow, Idaho 83843 or call (208) 885-7129.

<u>Report #</u>	<u>Title</u>
1.	Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park, 1983.
2.	Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method, 1984.
3.	Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, 1984.
4.	Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park, 1984.
5.	North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1985.
6.	Crater Lake National Park, 1986.
7.	Gettysburg National Military Park, 1987.
8.	Independence National Historical Park, 1987.
9.	Valley Forge National Historical Park, 1987.
10.	Colonial National Historical Park, 1988.
11.	Grand Teton National Park, 1988.
12.	Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, 1988.
13.	Mesa Verde National Park, 1988.
14.	Shenandoah National Park, 1988.
15.	Yellowstone National Park, 1988.
16.	Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study, 1988.
17.	Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, 1989.
18.	Denali National Park and Preserve, 1989.
19.	Bryce Canyon National Park, 1989.
20.	Craters of the Moon National Monument, 1989.
21.	Everglades National Park, 1989.
22.	Statue of Liberty National Monument, 1990.
23.	The White House Tours, President's Park, 1990.
24.	Lincoln Home National Historic Site, 1990.
25.	Yellowstone National Park, 1990.
26.	Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, 1990.
27.	Muir Woods National Monument, 1990.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

**STAMP**

**OFFICIAL BUSINESS**

**Visitor Services Project  
Cooperative Park Studies Unit  
Department of Forest Resources  
College of Forestry, Wildlife and  
Range Sciences  
University of Idaho  
Moscow, Idaho 83843**

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8.	Independence National Historical Park, 1987.	20.	Craters of the Moon National Monument, 1989.
9.	Valley Forge National Historical Park, 1987.	21.	Everglades National Park, 1989.
10.	Colonial National Historical Park, 1988.	22.	Statue of Liberty National Monument, 1990.
11.	Grand Teton National Park, 1988.	23.	The White House Tours, President's Park, 1990.
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		25.	Yellowstone National Park, 1990.
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Visitor Services Project  
**Yellowstone National Park**  
**Appendix**

# Visitor Services Project

# Yellowstone National Park

## Appendix

Margaret Littlejohn

Dana E. Dolsen

Gary E. Machlis

Report 25

March 1990

This volume contains a summary of comments to Question 15, made by visitors who participated in the study. The summary is followed by their unedited comments.

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Ms. Margaret Littlejohn, VSP Western Coordinator, National Park Service; Mr. Dana E. Dolsen, Research Associate, and Dr. Machlis, Sociology Project Leader, of the Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho. We thank Jean McKendry, Mark Van Steeter and the staff at Yellowstone National Park for their assistance with this study. The VSP acknowledges the Public Opinion Lab of the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University for its technical assistance.





# Comment summary

N=1285 comments;  
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>National Park Service</b>	
Rangers friendly, helpful and courteous	20
Rangers not friendly, helpful and courteous	2
Volunteers helpful and courteous	2
Visitor center personnel great	2
Appreciated rangers' enthusiasm and attitudes	2
Park employees outstanding	2
Other comments	5
<b>Concession</b>	
Retail employees helpful and courteous	3
Lodge employees pleasant	2
Restaurant employees friendly	2
Other comments	5
<b>General</b>	
Employees friendly and courteous	7
Staff friendly and informative	5
Most people friendly and courteous	5
College personnel friendly	4
Other comments	4
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Need more information on visiting Yellowstone in winter	2
Other comments	12
<b>Nonpersonal</b>	
Mark more sites on map and provide information on them	7
Enjoyed visitor center exhibits	2
New map confusing	2
Wanted handouts about park, activities, etc.	2
Other comments	19

## Personal

Will attend ranger walks/talks next time	2
Average person not appreciative of burned areas	2
Other comments	6

## FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

### General

Park clean	14
Park well-maintained	10
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Every campground needs showers	7
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Use other government funds to improve roads and facilities	3
Yellowstone's experience spoiled by rigorous policies	2
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Keep people from harassing wildlife	7
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NPS professional and first rate	1
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First time visitors	8
Everyone should visit Yellowstone NP	6
Will/hope to return to evaluate park's post-fire recovery	6
Park experience less satisfying because of fire's impact	6
An educational visit	5
Too crowded	5

Yellowstone visit exceeded expectations	5
Enjoyed fishing	4
Recommend visit to family and friends	4
Will need to ration visitors to park in future	4
Of all parks visited, Yellowstone best	3
Natural beauty of park may be restored in 20 years	3
Safety on road threatened by wildlife viewing drivers	3
Would like to return in winter	3
Enjoyed Old Faithful	3
Disapprove of park management	3
Disappointed that Old Faithful not bigger	2
Proud to be resident of one of park's states	2
Took lots of photos to share	2
Liked lack of people in backcountry	2
Fire removed park's beauty	2
Proud of Yellowstone and the national parks	2
Offer programs/activities like those in national forest	2
Enjoyed park despite fires	2
Burn allowed for better vistas of natural landforms	2
Other comments	37

Table: Inside overnight use

	Cabin/ Hotel		Developed Campground		Backcountry Campsite		Other		
# nights	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Total N
1	58	44	127	16	3	33	3	50	191
2	33	25	113	15	4	44	1	17	151
3	18	14	74	10	1	11	1	17	94
4	9	7	77	10	1	11	1	17	88
5 or more	14	11	391	50	0	0	0	0	405
Totals	132		782		9		6		929

Table: Outside overnight use

	Cabin/ Hotel		Developed Campground		Backcountry Campsite		Other		
# nights	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Total N
1 80	38	31	30	5	50 14	36	130		
2 73	34	32	31	2	20 5	13	112		
3 27	13	17	17	1	10 6	15	51		
4 10	5	11	11	1	10 3	8	25		
5 or more	23	11	11	11	1	10 11	28	46	
Totals	213		102		10		39		364