

Executive Summary

This visitor study report profiles a systematic random sample of Katmai National Park & Preserve (NP) visitors during June 14 - September 30, 2014. A total of 789 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 488 questionnaires were returned, resulting in a 61.8% response rate.

Group size and type	Fifty-four percent of visitor groups consisted of two people and 23% were in groups of three or four. Fifty-eight percent of visitor groups consisted of family groups.
State or country of residence	United States visitors were from 45 states and comprised 76% of total visitation during the survey period, with 19% from Alaska and 12% were from California. International visitors were from 29 countries and comprised 24% of total visitation during the survey period with 19% from Australia and 18% from Switzerland.
Frequency of visits	Ninety-three percent of visitor groups visited the park once in the past 12 months. For 74% this was their first visit in their lifetime, while 15% had visited two or three times.
Age, ethnicity, race, educational level, and income level	Fifty-six percent of visitors were ages 51-70 years, 6% were 71 years or older, 5% were ages 15 years or younger, and 5% were 15 years or younger. Fifty-one percent of visitors were male. Forty-nine percent of respondents had completed a graduate degree and 32% had a bachelor's degree. Forty-five percent of respondents reported an income level of \$75,000-\$199,999.
Awareness of park prior to visit	Eighty-one percent of visitor groups were aware they would be visiting Katmai NP&PRES, an area managed by the National Park Service. Fifty percent were familiar with Katmai NP&PRES's rules and regulations.
Information sources	Most visitor groups (86%) obtained information about the park prior to their visit most often through friends/relatives/word of mouth (41%), Katmai NP&PRES's website (39%), and bear watching/fishing guide companies/outfitters (37%). Most visitor groups (91%) received the information they needed. Sixty-five percent of visitor groups prefer to use the Katmai NP&PRES website to obtain information for a future visit.
Park as destination	During the on-site interview 67% of visitor groups said the park was one of several destinations and for 33% the park was their primary destination.
Primary reason for visiting park	Seventy-nine percent of visitor groups visited the park for bear watching and 14% visited for fishing.
Transportation	Seventy-two percent of visitor groups used a commercial flight to travel to Alaska. Fifty-seven percent of visitor groups used a commercial airplane to arrive at Katmai NP&PRES, while 25% used a lodge flyout.
Length of visit	Of the visitor groups that spent less than 24 hours in the park. The average length of stay was 6.2 hours. Of the visitor groups that spent 24 hours or more, the average length of stay was 4.9 days. The average length of stay for all visitor groups was 52.8 hours, or 2.2 days.

Executive Summary (continued)

Overnight stays	Sixty-nine percent of visitor groups stayed overnight away from home in Katmai NP&PRES or in the surrounding area, or in Alaska outside the map area. Of those visitors who spent the night inside the park, 51% stayed in a lodge, motel, cabin, rented condo/home, or B&B, of which 23% spent two nights. Of those visitors who spent the night outside the park (area on map), 70% stayed in a lodge, motel, cabin, rented condo/home, or B&B, of which 44% spent five or more nights. Of those visitors who spent the night in Alaska outside the map area, 74% stayed in a lodge, motel, cabin, rented condo/home, or B&B, of which 51% spent five or more nights.
Sites visited	The most common sites visited in the park were Brooks Camp (62%), Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes (15%), and Hallo Bay (13%).
Activities on this visit	The most common activities (excluding Brooks Camp) were bear watching (72%), photography (66%), and attending bear orientation and safety talk (33%). Eighty-one percent of visitor groups visited Brooks Camp. The most common activities in which visitor groups participated in at Brooks Camp were attending bear orientation and safety talk (92%), bear watching (87%), and photography (71%)
Topics learned this visit	The most common topics learned about on this visit were brown bears (99%) and salmon or other fish (63%).
Visitor services and facilities	The visitor services and facilities most often used by visitor groups were the restrooms (75%), orientation video program (65%), visitor center (overall) (55%), and park brochure/map (55%)
Protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences	Ninety-three percent of visitors did not use/experience hunting. The highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings of protecting park attributes, resources, and experiences included clean water (98%), bear watching (96%), native wildlife (95%), wilderness (94%), and scenic views (93%).
Observation of park rangers	Eighty-three percent of visitor groups observed the presence of park rangers (other than the visitor center, ranger-led tours, or bear safety briefing). Of those, 87% felt the availability of park rangers was “about the right amount.”
Expenditures	The average visitor group expenditure (inside and outside the park and in Alaska) was \$7619. The median group expenditure (50% of groups spent more and 50% of groups spent less) was \$5200. The average total expenditure per person (per capita) was \$3720.
Interpretive programs on a future visit	Eighty-nine percent of visitor groups were interested in attending interpretive programs on a future visit. Of those visitor groups interested in learning about the park, the most common topics included volcanism/geology (68%), other natural history (63%), and brown bears (61%).
Overall quality	Most visitor groups (93%) rated the overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Katmai NP&PRES as “very good” or “good.” No visitor groups rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Social and Economic Sciences Research Center at Washington State University at 509.335.1511 or the following website <http://www.sesrc.wsu.edu>.