

Visitor Services Project
Death Valley National Monument



Visitor Services Project Report 34
Cooperative Park Studies Unit



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Report 34

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Ms. Margaret Littlejohn is VSP Western Coordinator, National Park Service based at the Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho. I thank the Death Valley '49ers, Inc., Dana E. Dolsen, Ahmed Fahsi, and the volunteers and staff at Death Valley National Monument 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.

Visitor Services Project

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Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a study of visitors to Death Valley National Monument during July 18-24, 1990. English (393) and French (55) questionnaires were distributed and a total of 353 questionnaires were returned--a 79% response rate.
- This report profiles Death Valley visitors. A separate appendix has their comments about the park and their visit. A summary of these comments is included in this report and the appendix.
- Visitors were commonly families (62%); often in groups of two (40%) or four (24%). Thirty-three percent of visitors were 36-50 years old. Most (82%) were on their first Death Valley visit.
- Visitors from foreign countries comprised 72% of the total visitation and commonly came from France (29%), Germany (21%), and Switzerland (10%). Americans came from California (21%), Texas (10%), and many other states. The languages visitors understood and fluently spoke included English (86%), French (48%), German (40%) and others.
- Seventy-two percent of the visitors spent less than one day in the park. Most visitors viewed scenery (96%), took photographs (91%), and shopped (50%). At Death Valley, most visitors went to Furnace Creek, Zabriskie Point, and Sand Dunes. More of the visitors stopped first at Stovepipe Wells, Zabriskie Point, and Furnace Creek.
- Of the visitors who stayed at least one night, most stayed in motels rather than RV or tent campgrounds. Of the visitors staying in motels, 82% stayed one night.
- Fifty-eight percent of visitors said they were unable to see or do something they had planned to see or do during their Death Valley visit. The flashflooding which had closed the roads was the most common reason listed which prevented visitors from meeting their expectations.
- Eight-four percent of visitors said experiencing the desert was an extremely or very important feature to their visit. Visitors often purchased sales items at the visitor center or Scotty's Castle bookstores (59%). The most useful interpretive or information services that visitors identified were the park map/brochure, visitor center bookstore, visitor center museum, information signs, and ranger personnel. Visitors often cited viewing desert scenery (79%) as the primary reason they visited.
- Sixteen percent of the visitors visited Scotty's Castle. The excellent guides and guided tour were commonly listed as what visitors liked most about the castle's tours and services. Of the items visitors liked least, several listed "nothing;" others said the tour was too hot. They made many additional comments about their Death Valley visits.

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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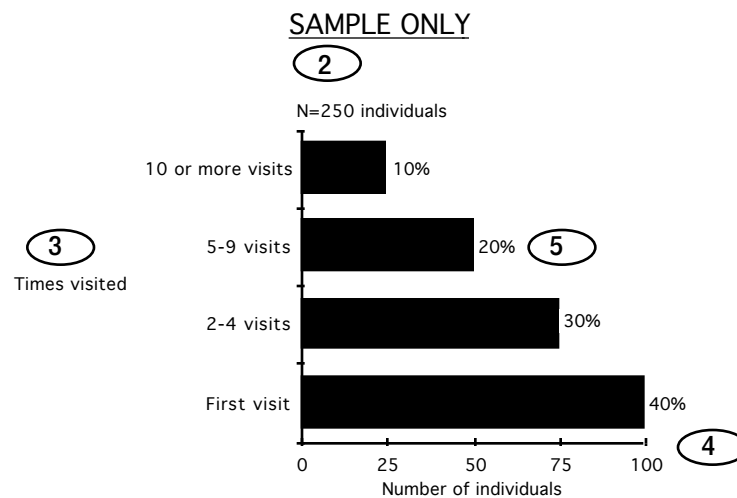
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INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Death Valley National Monument (referred to as "Death Valley"). This visitor study was conducted July 18-24, 1990 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 of the Questionnaire in English and French. 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 where the sample size is 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 Death Valley during July 18-24, 1990. Visitors completed the questionnaire during or after their trip and then returned it by mail.

Questionnaire design

The questionnaire design used the standard format of previous Visitor Services Project studies. The questionnaire was available in both English and French. See the end of this report for a copy of both questionnaires.

Sampling

Visitors were sampled using a selected interval as they walked into Scotty's Castle, the Furnace Creek visitor center, the Fred Harvey store, gas station, and motel lobby.

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.

The Death Valley questionnaire was printed in both English and French. If visitors could not speak English, they were asked in English if they would prefer a questionnaire written in French. A total of 55 French questionnaires were distributed; 46 of these were returned.

Data analysis

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder-thank you postcard was mailed to all participants. Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey, along with international reply coupons for foreign visitors to help defray postal costs. Returned questionnaires were coded and entered into a computer. Frequency distributions and cross-tabulations were calculated using a standard statistical software package. Respondents' comments were summarized and the French comments were translated into English.

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 343 groups, Figure 3 presents data for 1095 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 353 questionnaires were returned, Figure 1 shows data for only 343 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 of visitors to the selected sites during the study period of July 18-24, 1990. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors using other sites in the park or to visitors 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.

Special conditions

Most (72%) of the visitors contacted were foreign. Because of language problems, the refusal rate was higher (15%) than has been normal (<10%) for VSP studies.

High temperatures were in the proximity of 120° F every day during the survey. A thunderstorm on the night of July 16, 1990 caused flashflooding which closed all of the park roads except one to Las Vegas. Roads from Furnace Creek were gradually opened during the week of the survey, as follows: Highway 190 past Stovepipe Wells--July 17 (5 p.m.); Wildrose, and Badwater Road 127--July 20 (3 p.m.); Scotty's Castle--July 21 (noon). This impacted where visitors could visit, what activities they could participate in, how long they stayed, and other factors.

RESULTS

A. Visitors contacted

Five hundred twenty-four visitor groups were contacted; 85% accepted questionnaires. Three hundred fifty-three visitor groups completed and returned their questionnaires, a 79% response rate.

Table 1 compares information collected from the total sample of visitors contacted and the actual respondents who returned questionnaires. Non-response bias was insignificant.

Table 1: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents

Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Age of respondent (years)	442	40.5	350	40.5
Group size	443	5.1	343	4.3

B. Characteristics

Figure 1 shows group sizes, which varied from one person to 54 people. Forty percent of Death Valley visitors came in groups of two people, 24% came in groups of four. Sixty-two percent of visitors came in family groups, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 3 shows a wide range of age groups; the most common were visitors aged 36-50 (33%), with fewer visitors above age 50. Eighty-two percent of visitors were at Death Valley for the first time (Figure 4).

Visitors from foreign countries comprised 72% of all visitation. The visitors contacted who could not speak English or French may be underrepresented in this study. Of the 76 visitor groups who refused to do the survey, more than 50% of the refusals were because of language barriers. Map 1 and Table 2 show that most foreign visitors came from France (29%), Germany (21%), and Switzerland (10%). Map 2 and Table 3 show that American visitors came from California (21%), Texas (10%), Nevada (7%), followed by Florida and New York (each at 6%), as well as many other states.

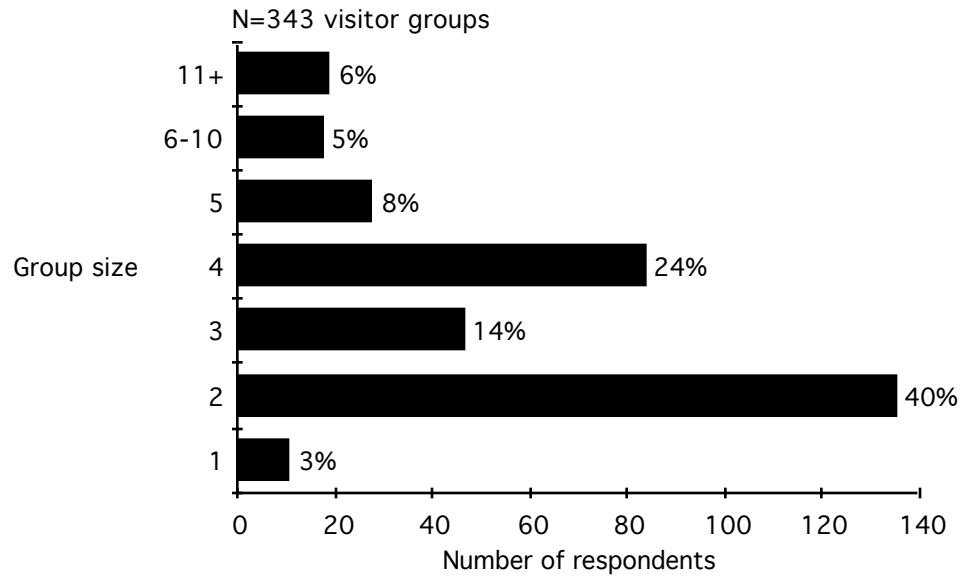


Figure 1: Visitor group sizes

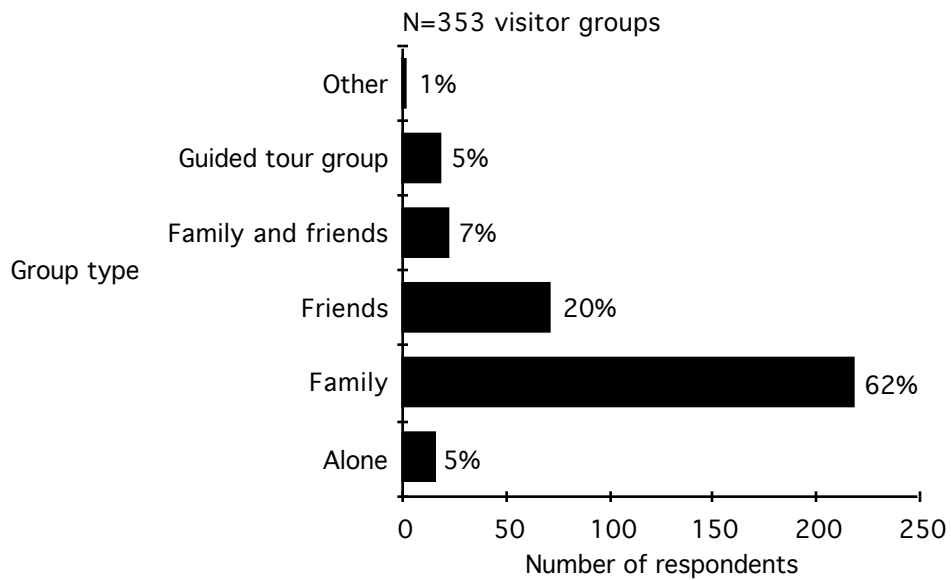


Figure 2: Visitor group types

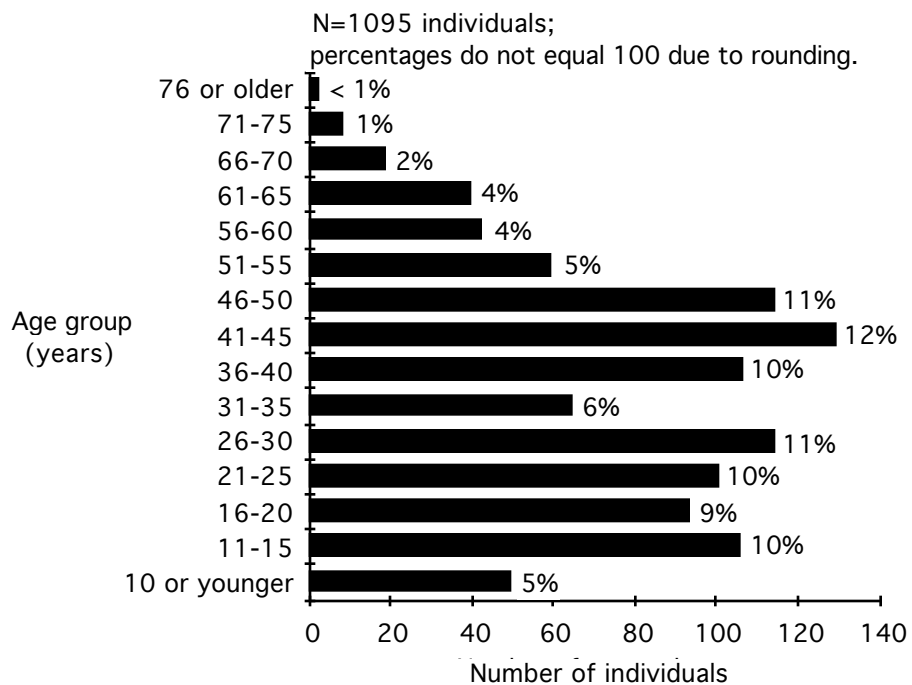


Figure 3: Visitor ages

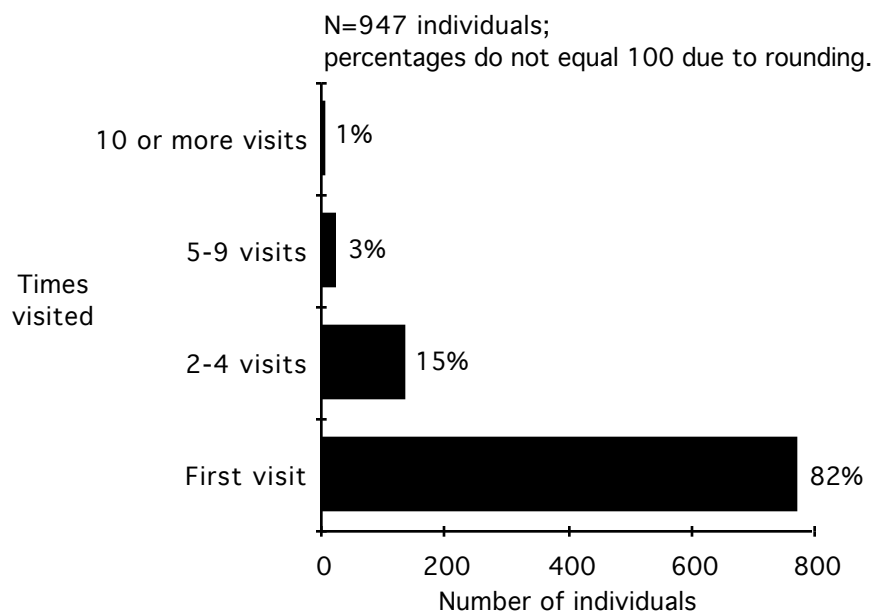


Figure 4: Number of visits

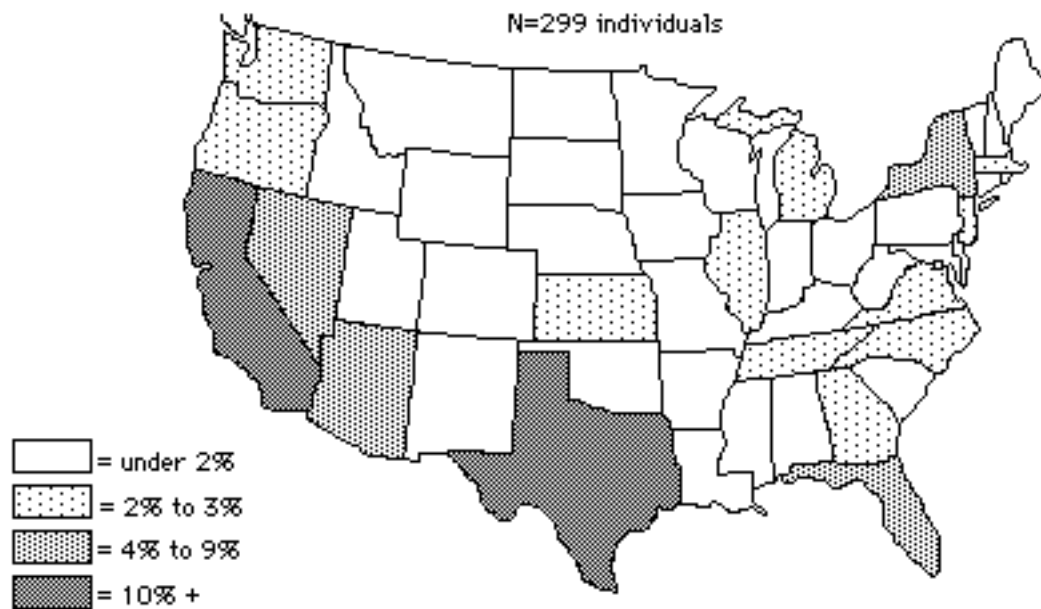


Map 1: Proportion of foreign visitors by country

Table 2: Proportion of visitors from foreign countries

N=760 individuals from foreign countries

Country	Number of individuals	% of foreign visitors
France	219	29
Germany	161	21
Switzerland	79	10
Belgium	60	8
Holland	58	8
Great Britain	53	7
Austria	33	4
Canada	26	3
Italy	17	2
Australia	13	2
Sweden	10	1
Norway	8	1
Denmark	7	1
Luxembourg	7	1
Taiwan	5	1
Other countries (4)	4	1



Map 2: Proportion of visitors from each state

Table 3: Proportion of visitors from each state

N=299 individuals

State	Number of individuals	% of visitors
California	63	21
Texas	29	10
Nevada	20	7
Florida	19	6
New York	19	6
Arizona	12	4
Michigan	10	3
Oregon	10	3
Washington	10	3
Illinois	8	3
Kansas	8	3
North Carolina	8	3
New Jersey	8	3
Tennessee	8	3
Virginia	7	2
Georgia	6	2
Massachusetts	6	2
Other states (14)	33	11
Unspecified state	15	5

C. Length of stay

Seventy-two percent of the visitors spent less than one day at Death Valley, while 21% spent one to two days, as in Figure 5. In Figure 6, 47% of the visitors who stayed less than one day spent four to six hours. Seventeen percent spent 17-23 hours.

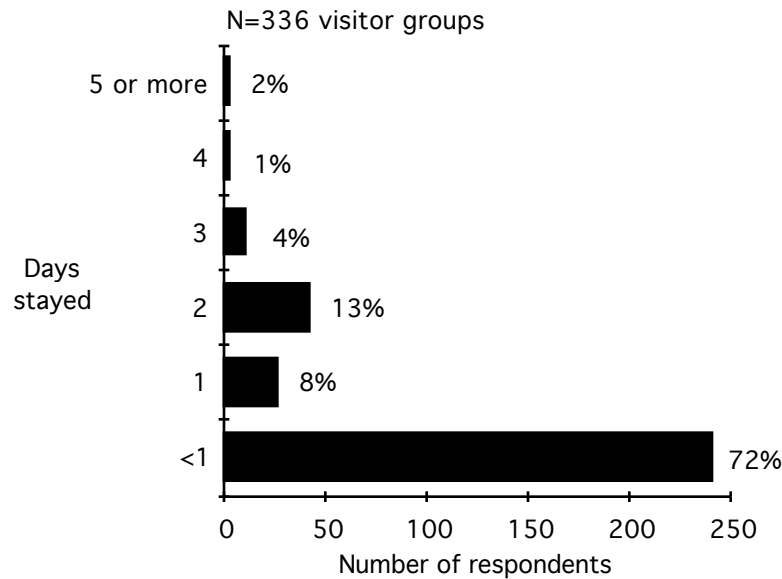


Figure 5: Length of stay by Death Valley visitors

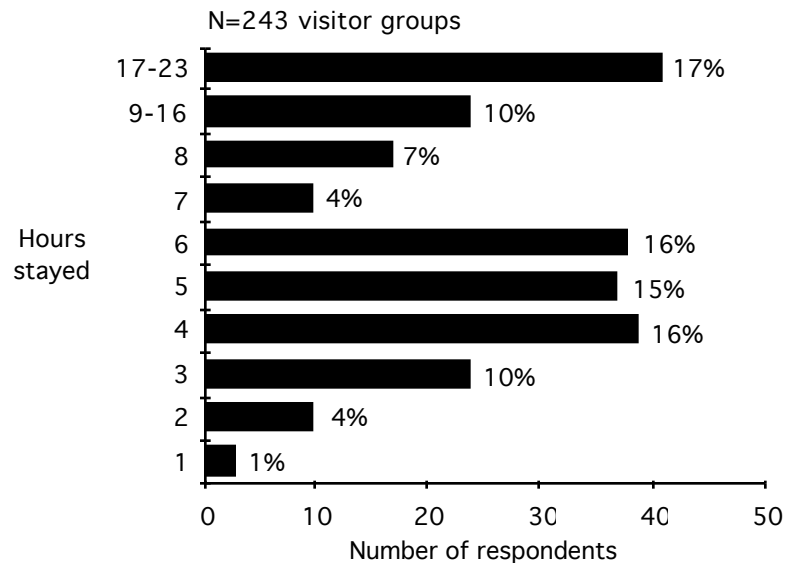


Figure 6: Length of stay for visitors who spent less than one day at Death Valley

D. Activities

Figure 7 shows the proportion of visitor groups who participated in each activity during their visit. Common activities were viewing scenery (96%), taking photographs (91%), and shopping (50%). Visitors listed "other" activities they did: visiting friends, visiting visitor center/museum, picnicking, and camping.

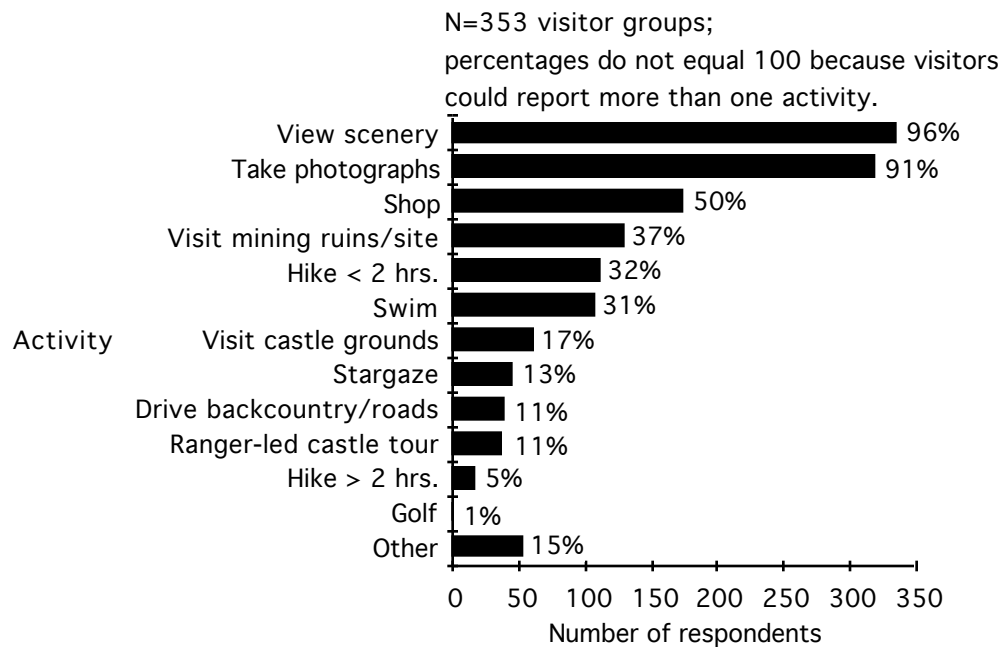


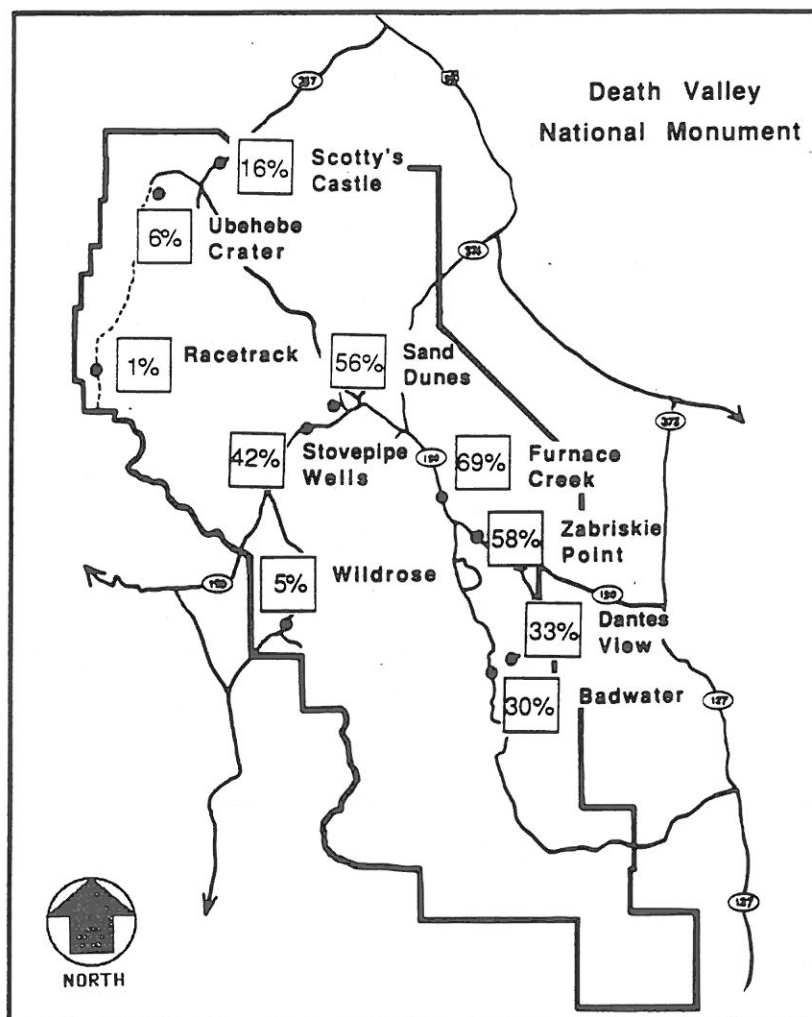
Figure 7: Proportion of visitor groups participating in each activity

E. Sites visited and order visited

Map 3 shows the proportion of visitor groups that visited selected sites at Death Valley. Most visitor groups went to Furnace Creek (69%), Zabriskie Point (58%), and Sand Dunes (56%). Map 4 shows that visitors' first stop was Stovepipe Wells (21%), Zabriskie Point (21%), and Furnace Creek (16%).

Important caution: *Many of these sites were closed during at least a portion of the survey week.*

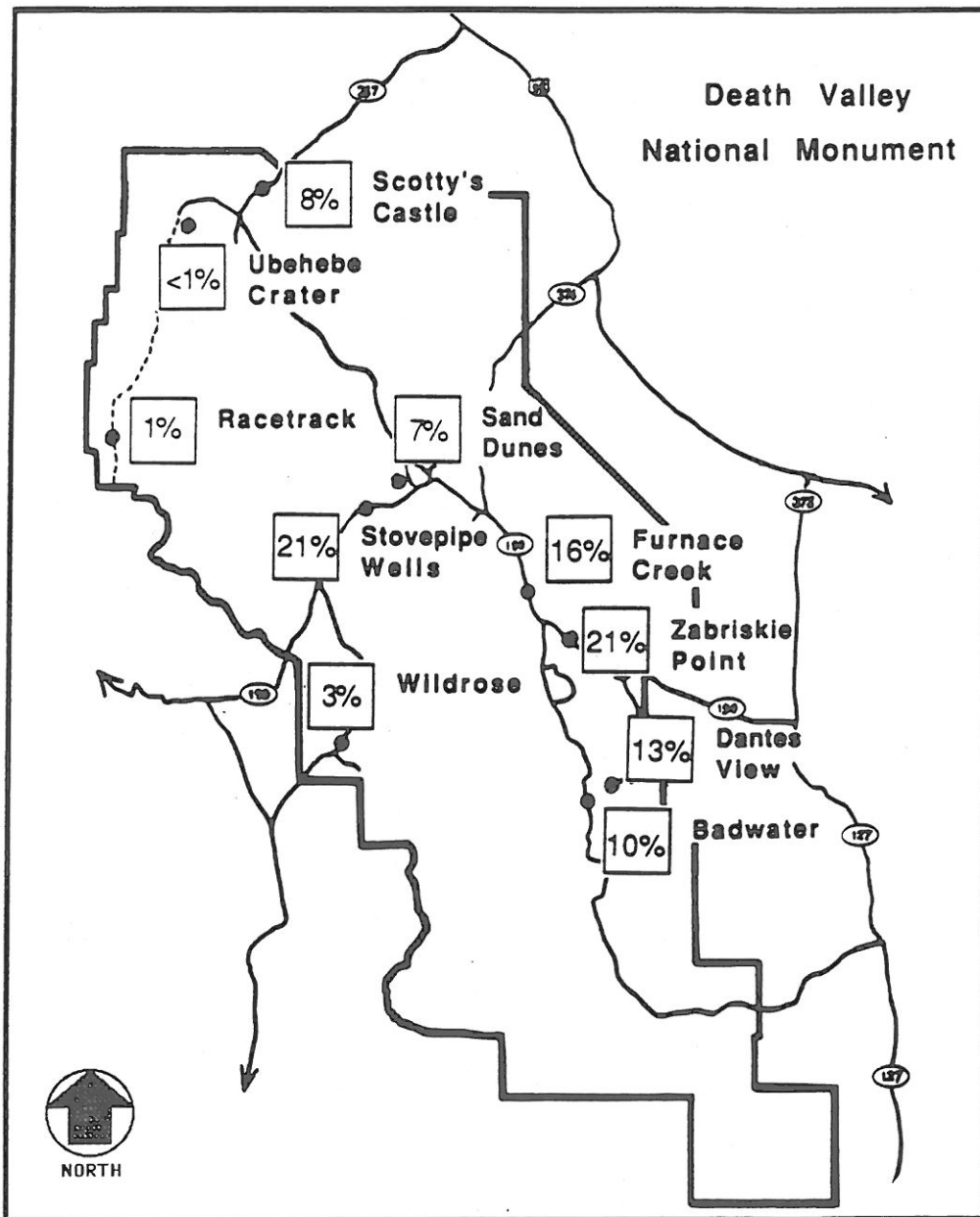
N=353 visitor groups;
percentages do not equal 100 because
visitors could visit more than one site.



Map 3: Proportion of visitors who visited each site

Important caution: Many of these sites were closed during at least a portion of the survey week.

N=256 visitor groups;
percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.



Map 4: Proportion of visitors who visited each site first

F. Languages understood and spoken fluently

Figure 8 shows most visitors understood and fluently spoke English (86%), followed by French (48%) and German (40%). Under "other," sixteen additional languages were listed, including Danish, Swedish, Swiss-German, and Norwegian.

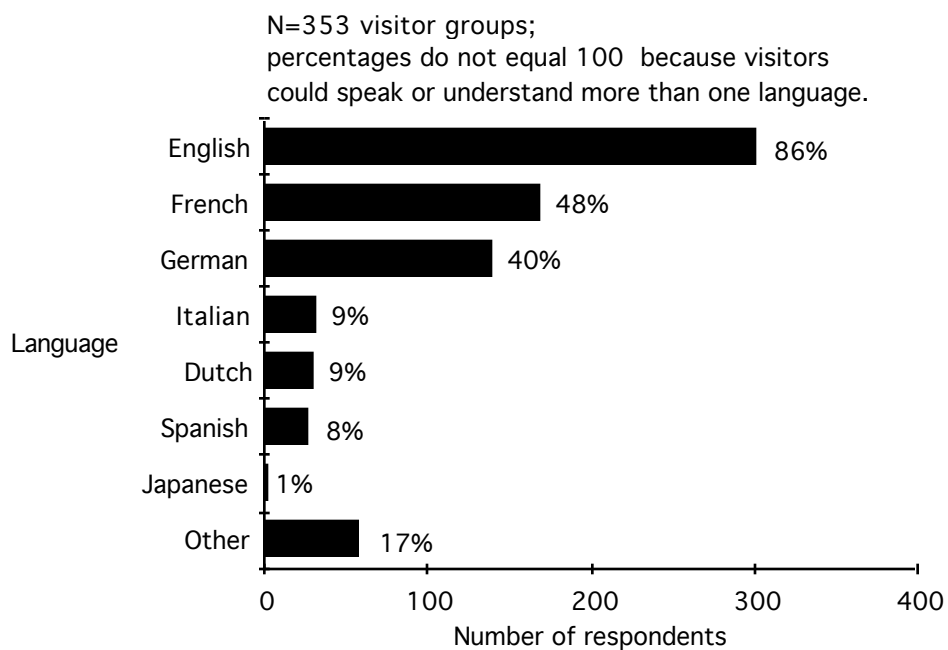


Figure 8: Foreign languages understood and spoken fluently

G. Number of nights in types of accommodations

If visitors stayed overnight in Death Valley, they were asked to list the number of nights spent in each type of accommodation. Figures 9-12 show the number of nights visitors spent in each type of accommodation. Of those staying in a motel, 82% spent one night, as in Figure 9. A "caution" was added to Figures 10-12 since the number of visitor groups using the tent or RV campgrounds or other types of accommodations was too small to provide reliable results.

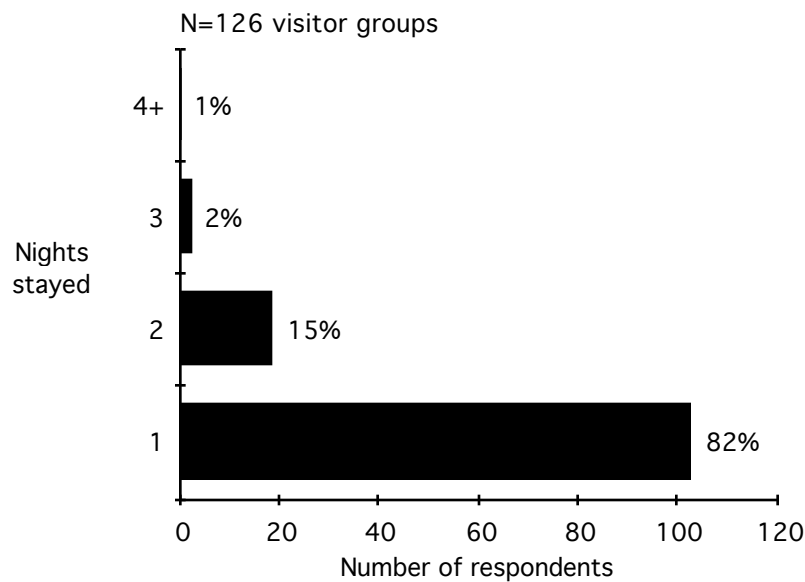


Figure 9: Number of nights in a motel

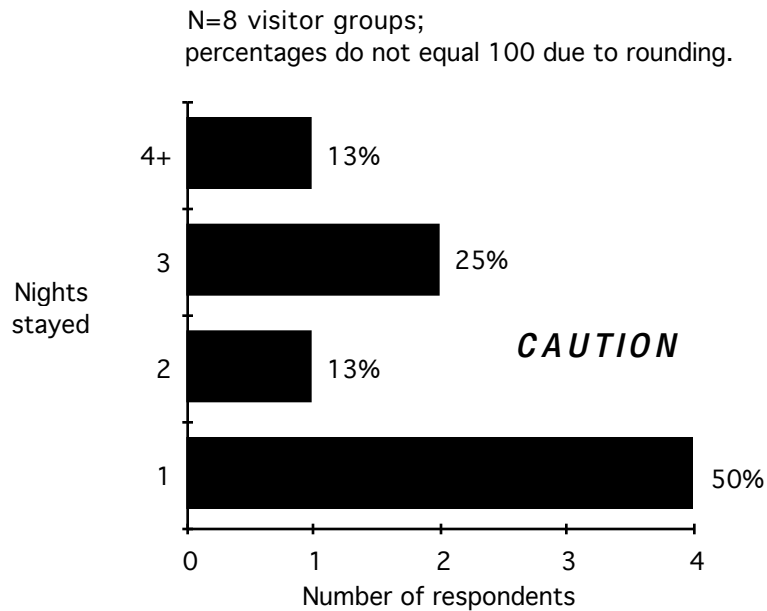


Figure 10: Number of nights at a tent campground

CAUTION: *The number of visitor groups who answered this question is too small to provide reliable results.*

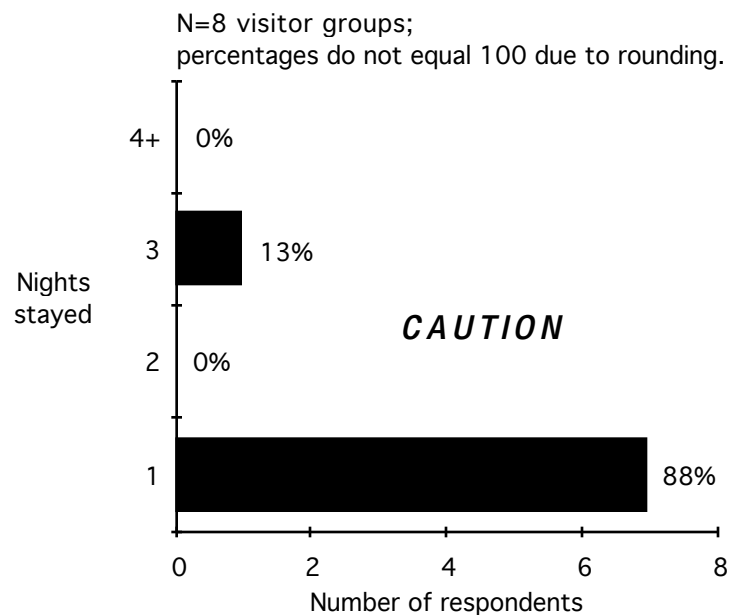


Figure 11: Number of nights at an RV campground

CAUTION: *The number of visitor groups who answered this question is too small to provide reliable results.*

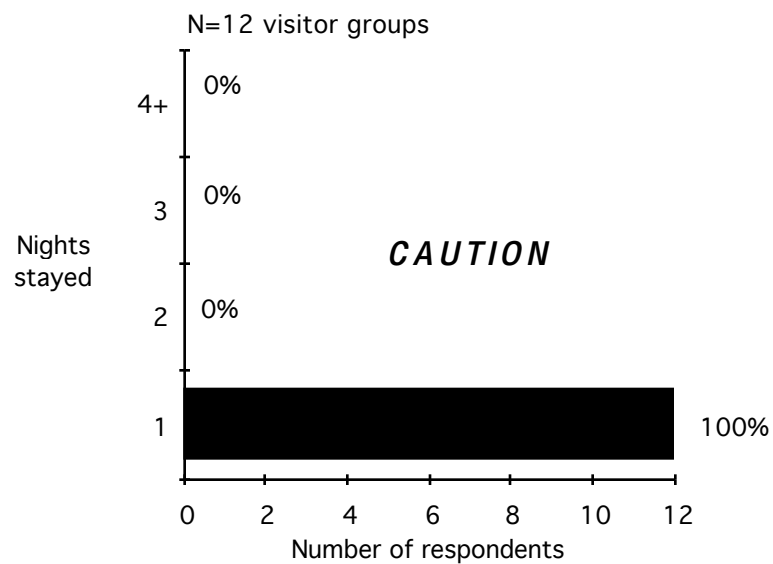


Figure 12: Number of nights at other type of accommodation

CAUTION: *The number of visitor groups who answered this question is too small to provide reliable results.*

H. Features and activities which visitors were unable to see and do; the reasons which prevented them

Visitors were asked if there was anything specific which they wanted to see or do during this visit to Death Valley, but were not able to. Fifty-eight percent of the visitors said they were unable to see or do something they had planned to see or do (Figure 13). In Table 5, visitors commonly identified Badwater, Scotty's Castle, and Artist's Drive as features they wanted to see, but had not seen. Visitors most often listed the flashflooding and closed roads as the reasons they were unable to see the features or do the activities they wanted, as in Table 6.

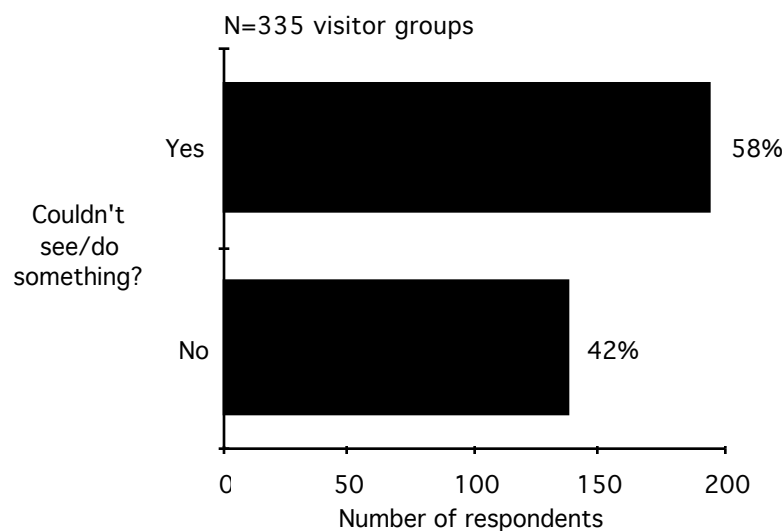


Figure 13: Visitors who wanted to see or do something but were unable

Table 5: Features not seen/activities not done

N=285 comments;
visitors could list more than one feature/activity.

Feature not seen/ Activity not done	Number of respondents
Badwater	49
Scotty's Castle	40
Artist's Drive	38
More scenic/historic sites	31
Devil's Golf Course	18
Sand Dunes drive	15
All of Death Valley	9

Natural Bridge	7
Dantes View	6
Hiking	6
Twenty Mule Team Canyon/trail	5
Backcountry roads	5
Southern part of Death Valley	5
Titus Canyon	5
Racetrack	3
Ubehebe Crater	3
View wildlife	3
Borax Museum	2
Charcoal Kilns	2
Furnace Creek	2
Keane Wonder Mine	2
Mining ruins	2
Mosaic Canyon	2
Stovepipe Wells	2
Wildrose	2
Zabriskie Point	2
Ranger-led talks/programs	2
Visitor center film/slide show	2
Camp	2
Other features/activities listed	13

Table 6: Reasons for being unable to see feature or do activity

N=210 comments;
visitors could list more than one reason.

<u>Reason feature not seen/ activity not done</u>	<u>Number of respondents</u>
Flashflooding closed roads	122
Not enough time	34
Too hot	25
Museum closed	4
Car problems	4
Road closed during summer	3
Arrived after 4 p.m. (too late for show)	2
Closed road not advertised in visitor center	2
Wildlife not where visitors were	2
Detour too long	2
No lodging/camping available	2
Other single comments	8

I. Importance of features

Visitors were asked to rate the importance of the following features to their visit: experiencing the desert, clean air, viewing wildlife, visiting mining/historic sites, solitude, interpretive publications, night sky views, and other features. A five point scale was provided: 1=extremely important, 2=very important, 3=important, 4=somewhat important, and 5=not important.

As shown in Figures 14-21, most visitors rated experiencing the desert (84%) as "extremely important" or "very important." Night sky views received the largest proportion of "somewhat important" and "not important" ratings (56%). "Other" features included taking photographs, silence, heat, and the dunes.

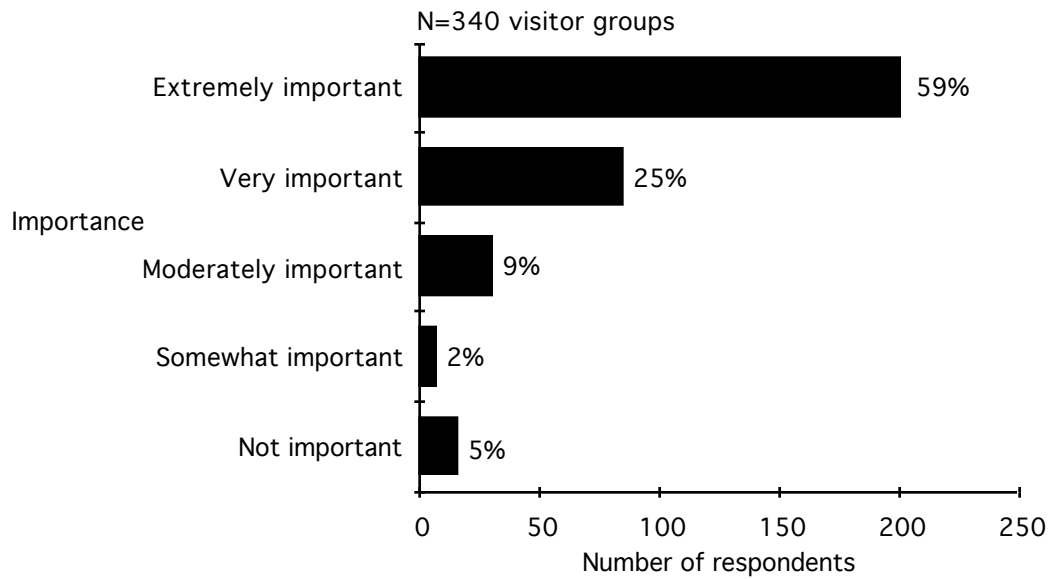


Figure 14: Importance of experiencing the desert

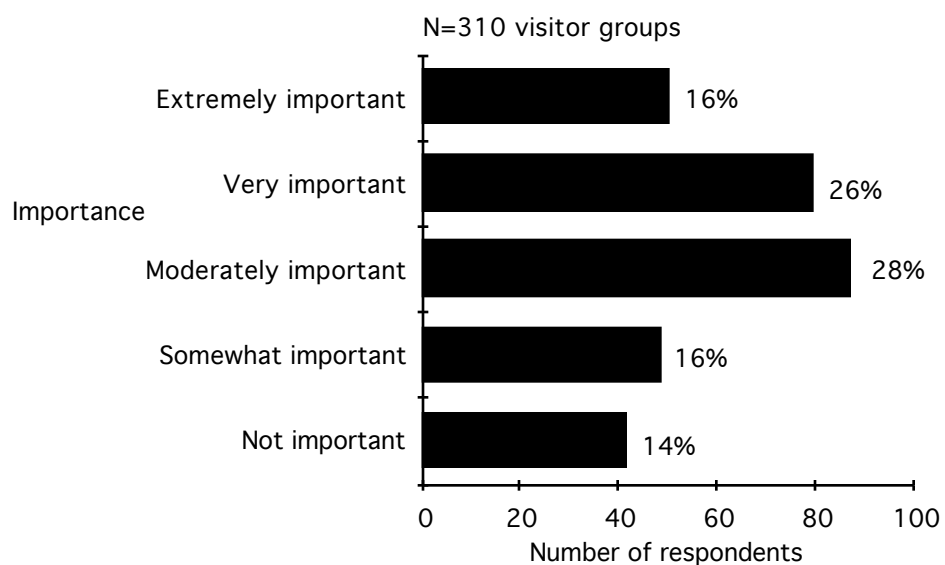


Figure 15: Importance of clean air

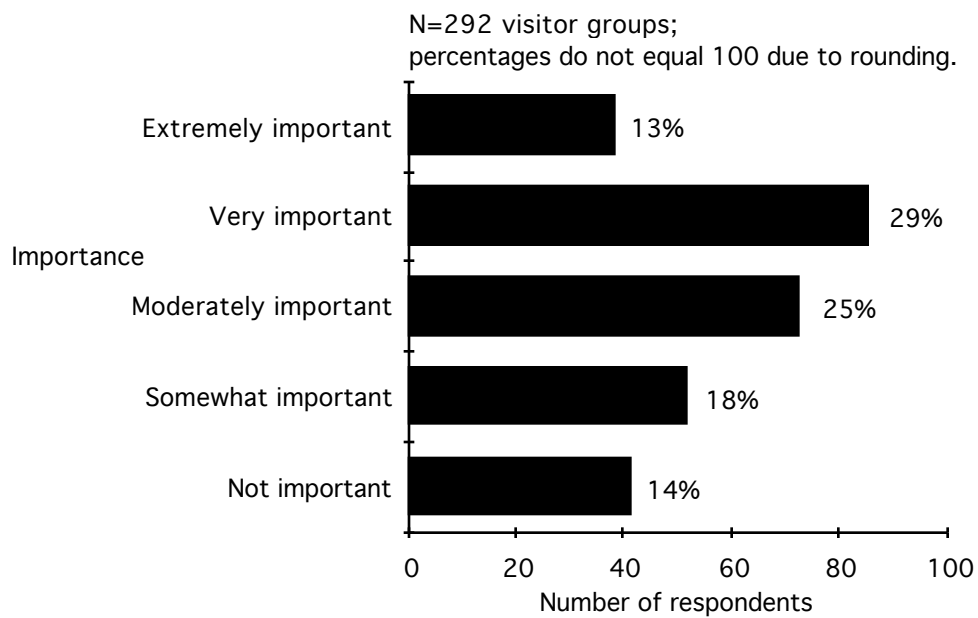


Figure 16: Importance of viewing wildlife

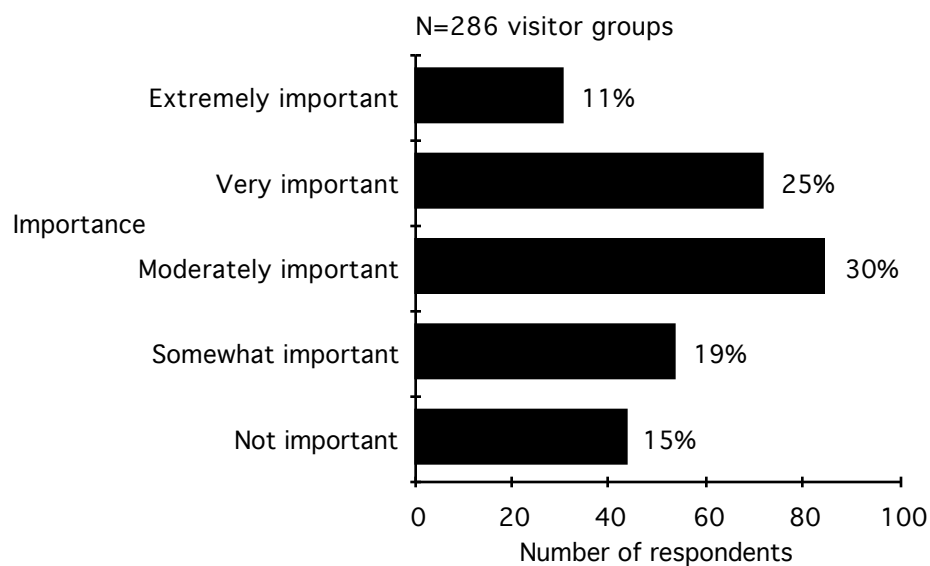


Figure 17: Importance of visiting mining/historic sites

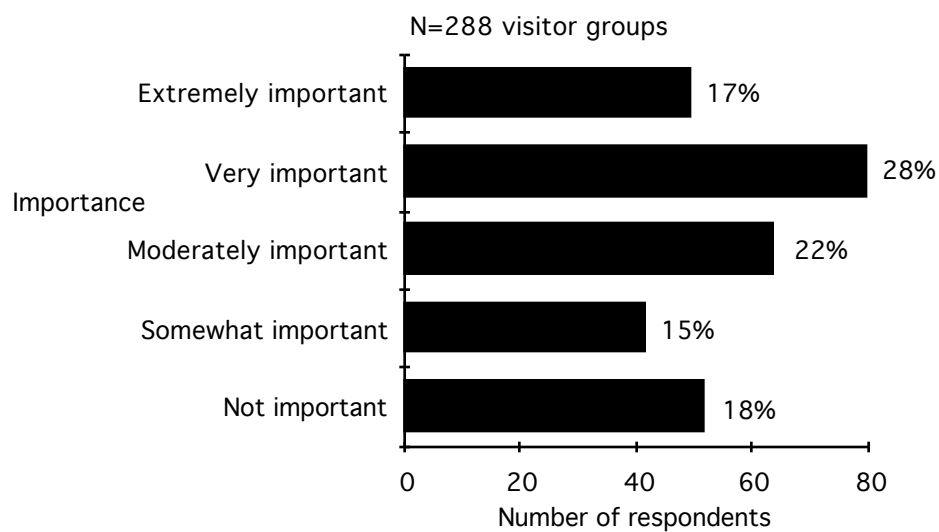


Figure 18: Importance of solitude

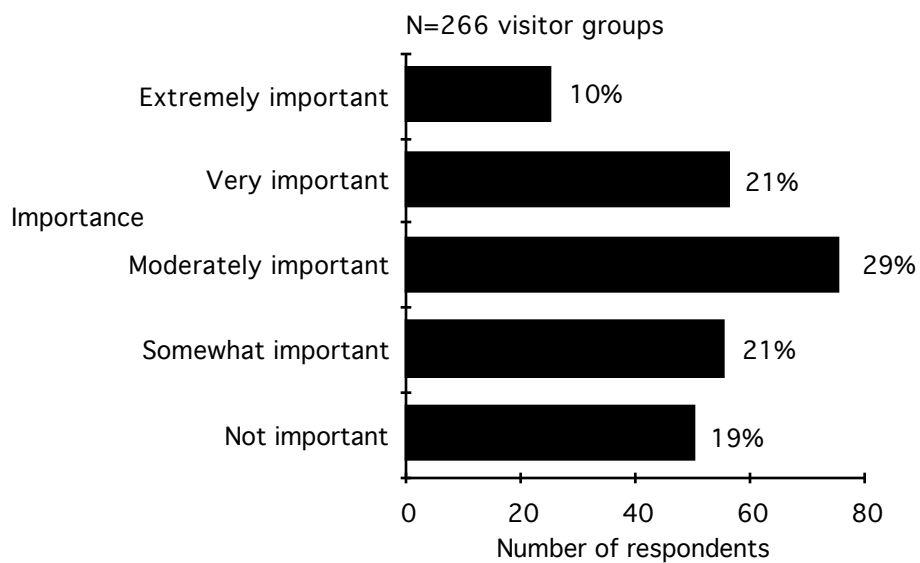


Figure 19: Importance of interpretive publications

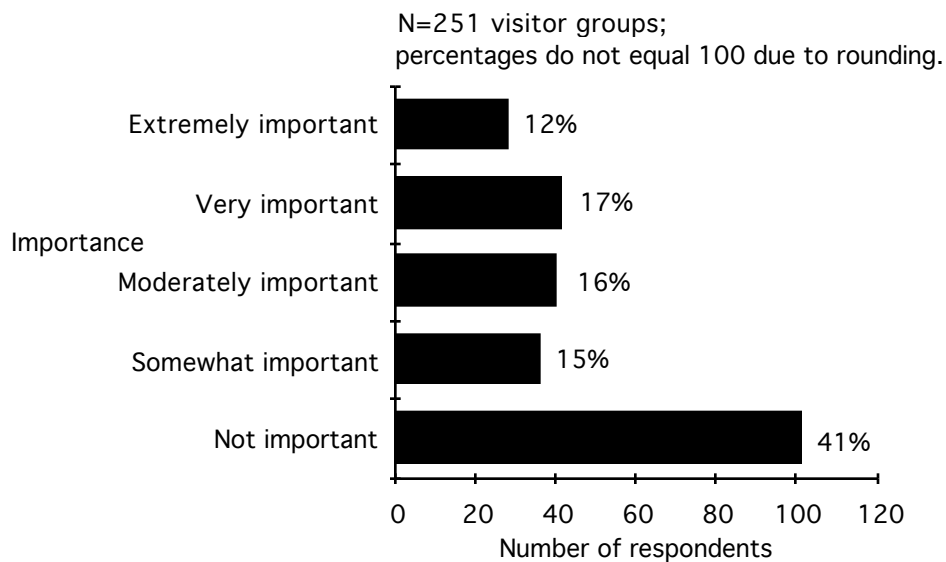


Figure 20: Importance of night sky views

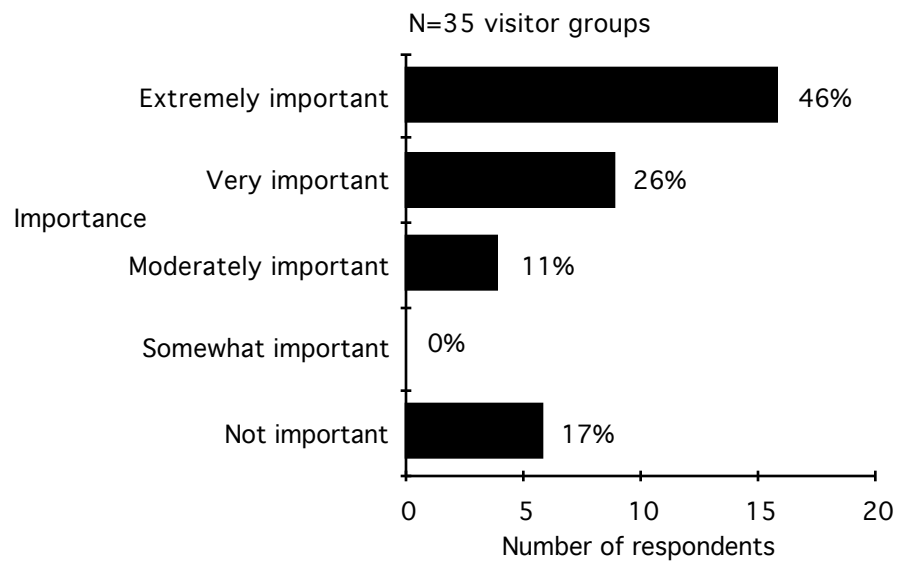


Figure 21: Importance of other experiences

J. Bookstore purchase and future sales items

Visitors were asked if they made any purchases at the visitor center or Scotty's Castle bookstores during this visit. Fifty-nine percent responded that they had made purchases, as in Figure 22.

Visitors were also asked to identify the most useful interpretive or educational sales items for future visits. They identified maps (35%), and publications on specific subjects, e.g. desert life, history, etc., (33%) as the most useful items for future visits (see Figure 23).

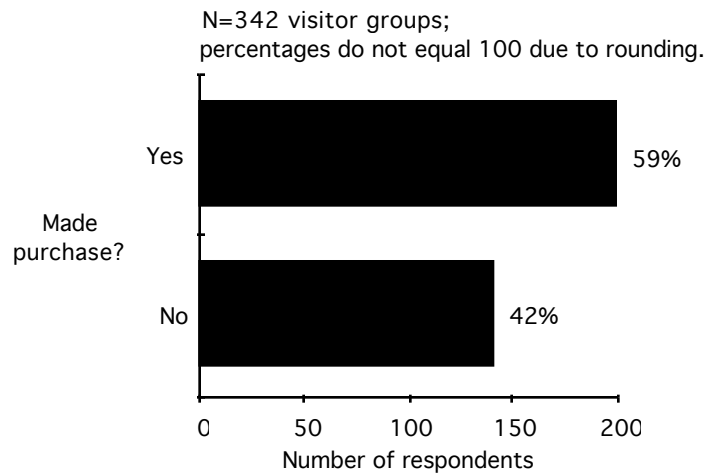


Figure 22: Bookstore purchases made

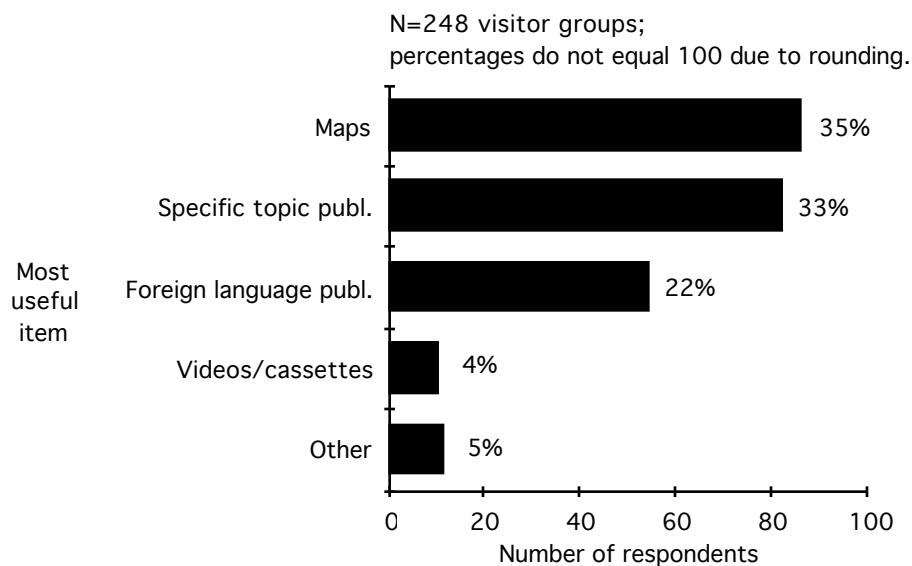


Figure 23: Most useful sales item for future visits

K. Usefulness of interpretive or information services

Visitors rated the usefulness of various interpretive or information services which they used. They rated the services using a five point scale: 1=extremely useful, 2=very useful, 3=useful, 4=somewhat useful, and 5=not useful.

The park map/brochure was the most used service (86%), followed by the visitor center bookstore (78%), visitor center museum (76%), information signs (73%), and ranger personnel (71%), as Figure 24 shows. The least used services were the Borax Museum (44%) and Scotty's Castle exhibit room (34%).

The interpretive or visitor services with the highest proportion of "extremely useful" or "very useful" ratings included the park map/brochure (88%) and ranger personnel (78%), as in Figures 25-35. The services which received the highest proportion of "somewhat useful" and "not useful" ratings included Scotty's Castle exhibit room (51%) and the Borax Museum (36%).

CAUTION: Visitors may have rated the usefulness of services which they did not use.

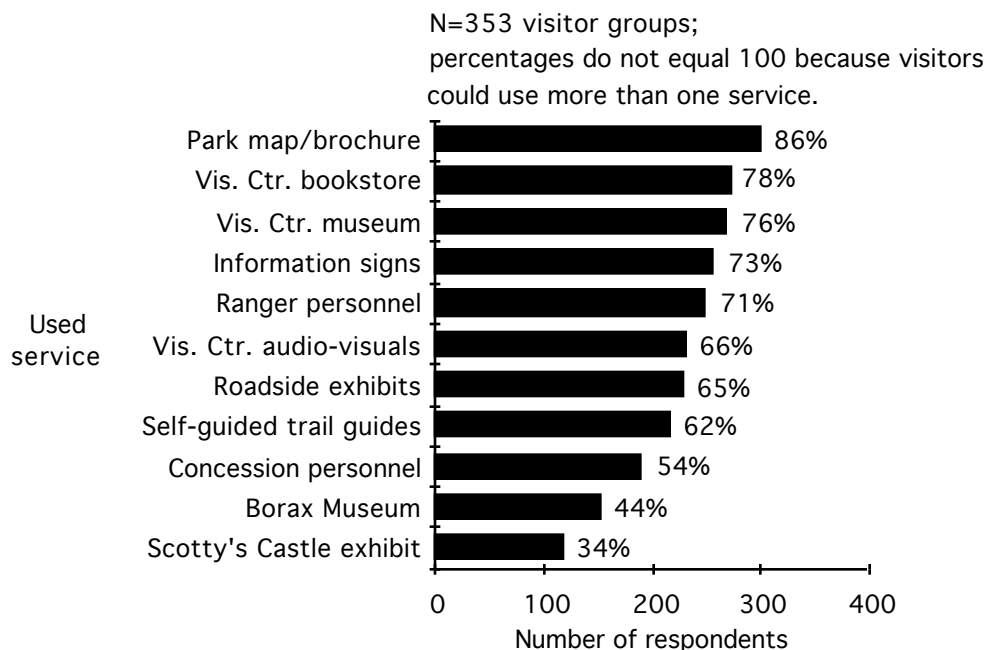


Figure 24: Proportion of visitors using interpretive/information services

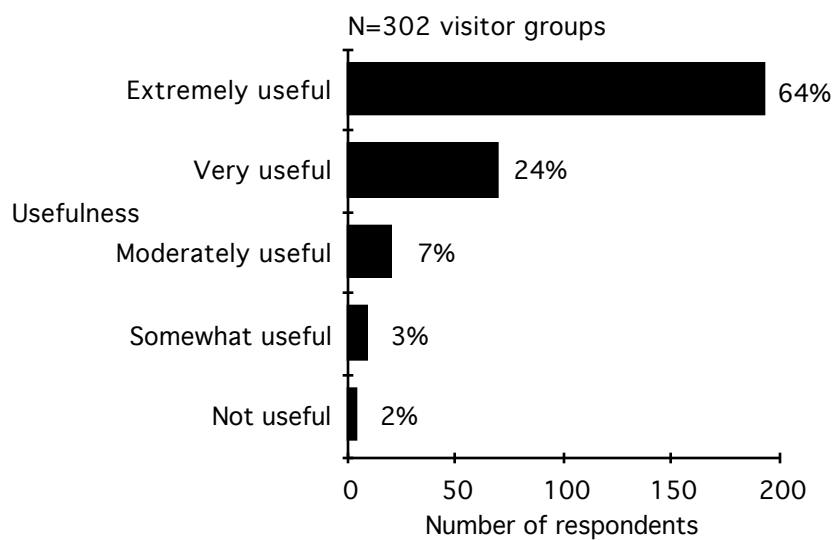


Figure 25: Usefulness of park map/brochure

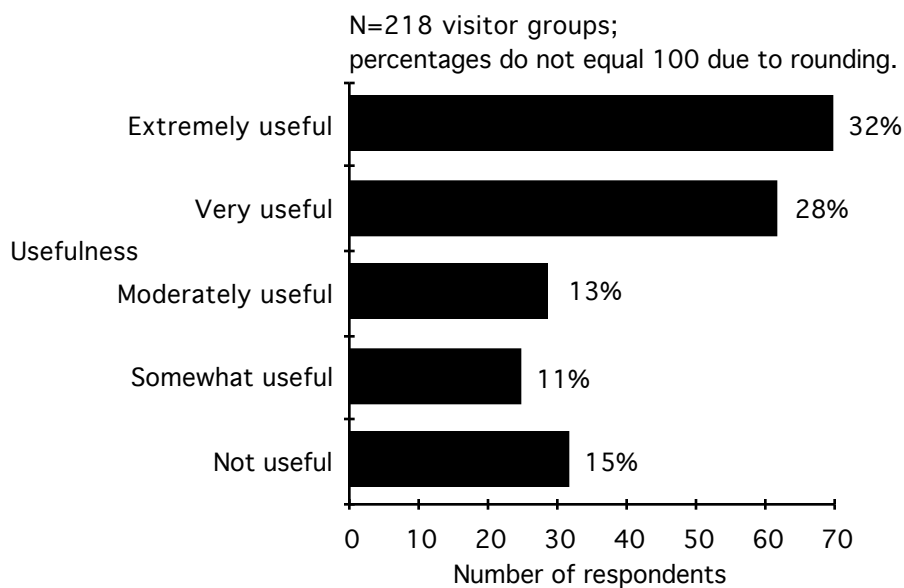


Figure 26: Usefulness of self-guided trail guides

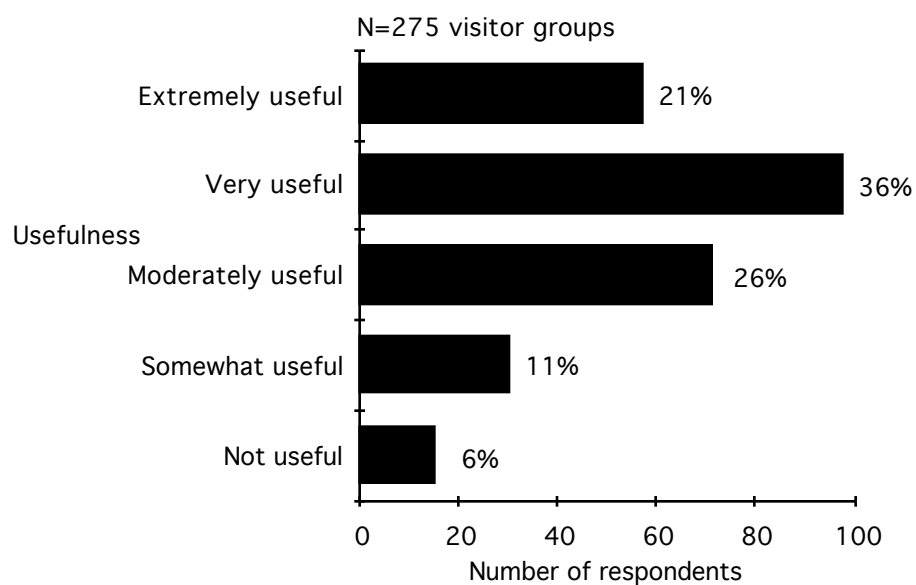


Figure 27: Usefulness of visitor center bookstore

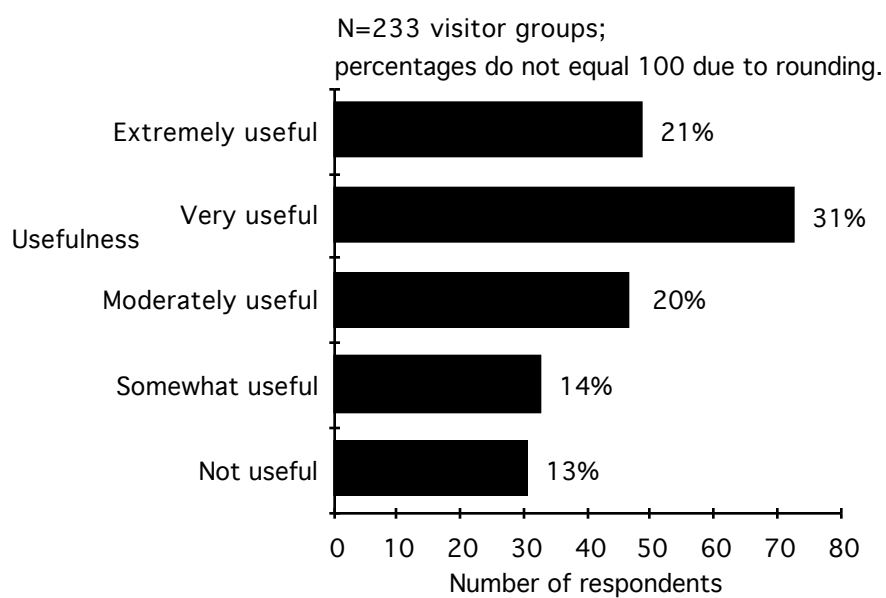


Figure 28: Usefulness of visitor center films/slide shows

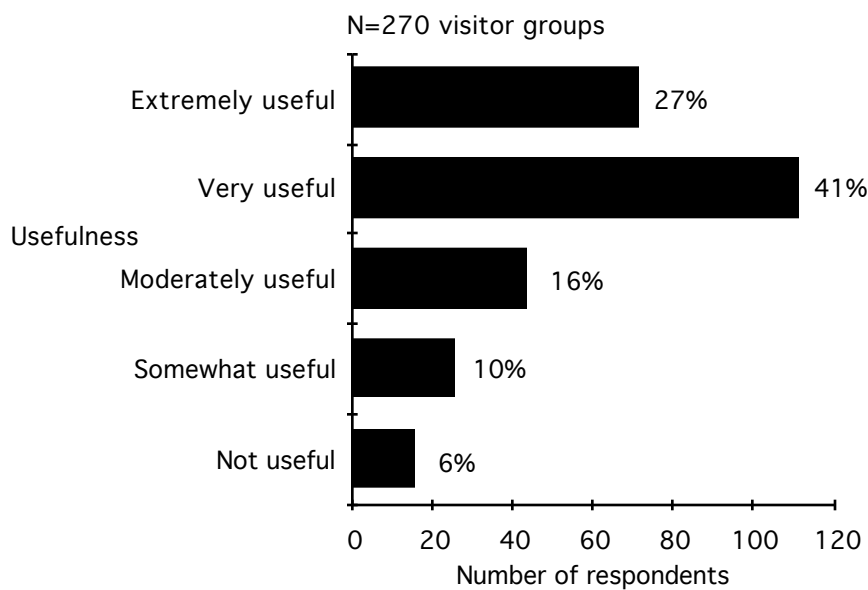


Figure 29: Usefulness of visitor center museum

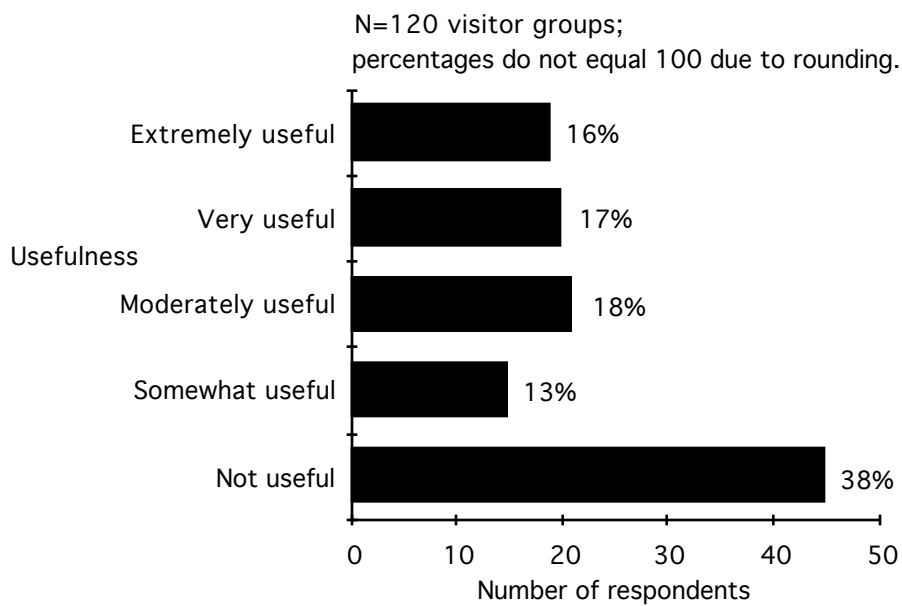


Figure 30: Usefulness of Scotty's Castle exhibit room

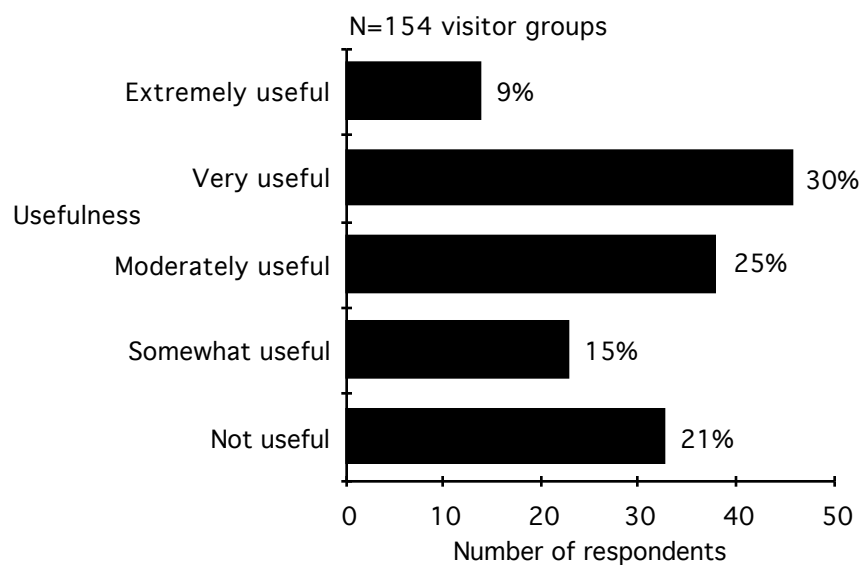


Figure 31: Usefulness of Borax Museum

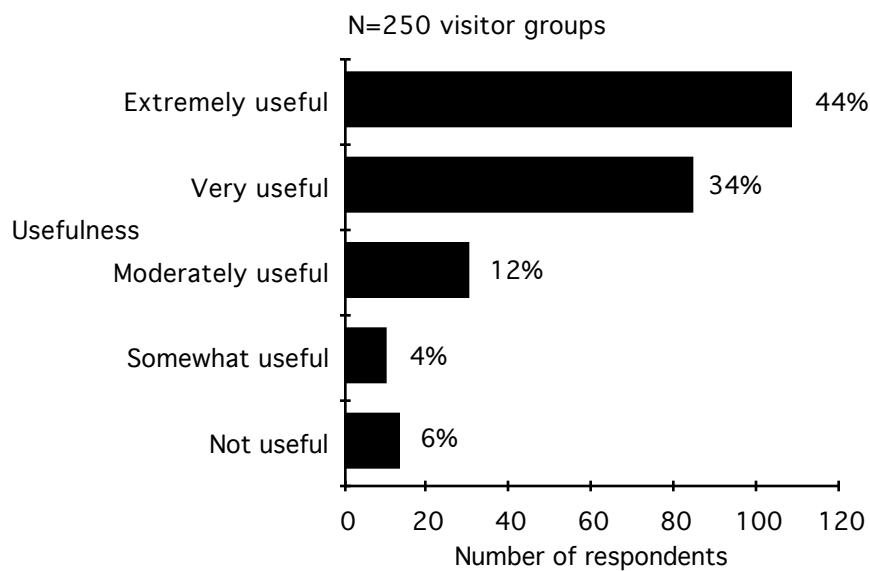


Figure 32: Usefulness of ranger personnel

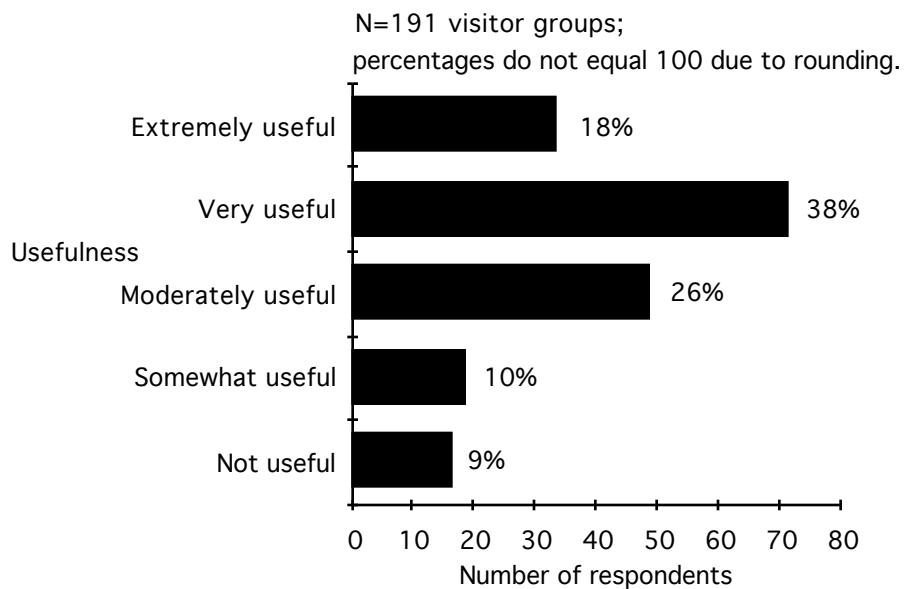


Figure 33: Usefulness of concession personnel

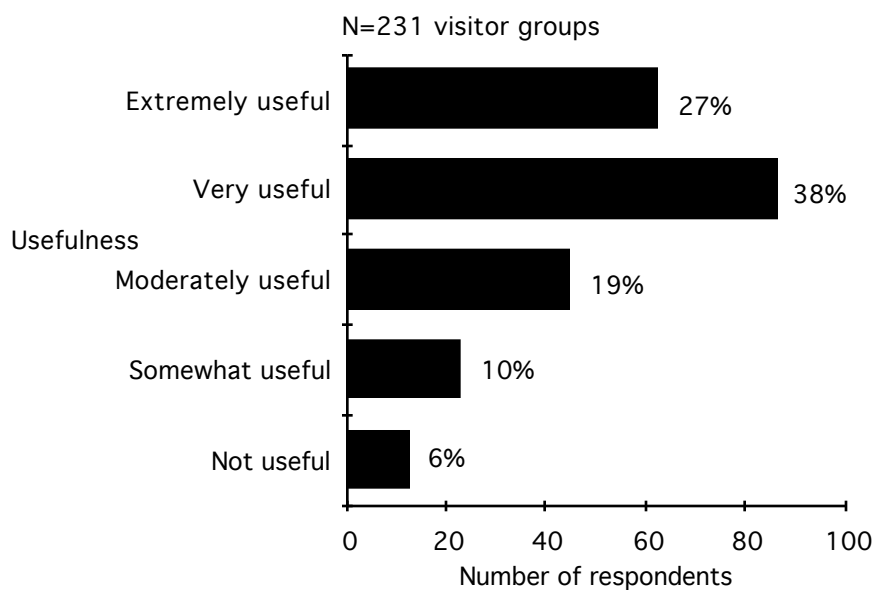


Figure 34: Usefulness of roadside exhibits

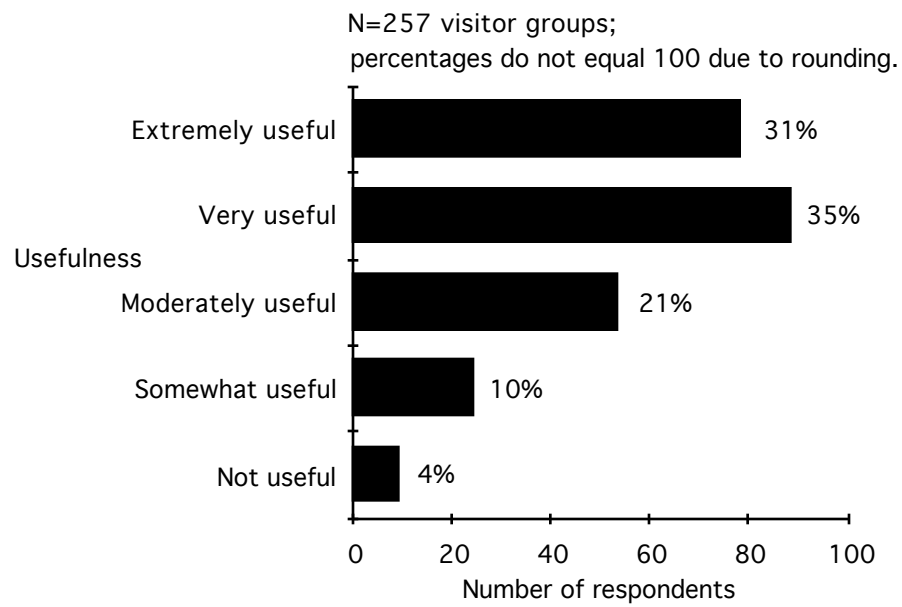


Figure 35: Usefulness of informational signs

L. Scotty's Castle visits and evaluations

The majority of visitors (84%) did not visit Scotty's Castle during this visit, as Figure 36 shows. Visitors identified what they liked most about Scotty's Castle tours and services: excellent guides and the guided tours, as in Table 7. Visitors listed the things they liked least about Scotty's Castle tours and services; several answered "nothing" and others said the tour was too hot (see Table 8).

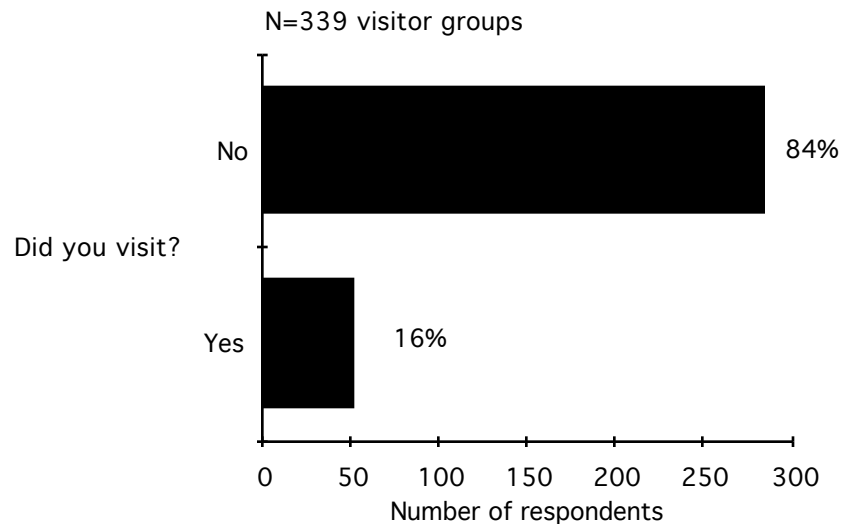


Figure 36: Visited Scotty's Castle

Table 7: Visitors' likes about Scotty's Castle tours and services

N=67 comments;
visitors could make more than one comment.

<u>Comment</u>	<u>Number of times mentioned</u>
Guide excellent	12
Guided tour	9
Personnel friendly/helpful	8
Historical information given on tour	6
Glad it exists, liked everything	5
Well maintained/clean	5
Glad castle has original artifacts	4
Castle beautiful	4
Room furnishings	2
Learning about life in 30's and 40's	2
Life of Scotty	2
Other comments	8

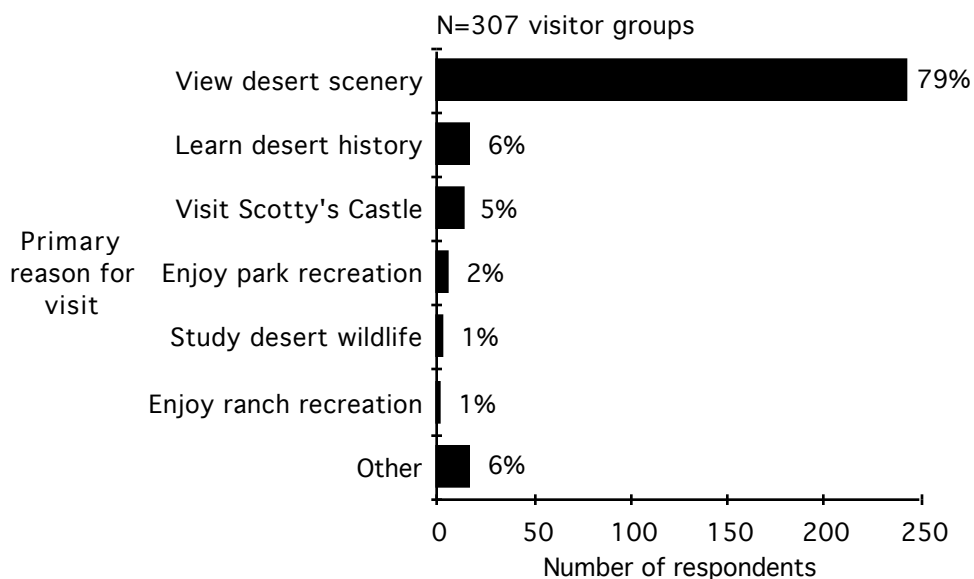
Table 8: Visitors' dislikes about Scotty's Castle tours and services

N=41 comments;
visitors could make more than one comment

<u>Comment</u>	<u>Number of times mentioned</u>
Nothing	8
Tour hot	6
Roads closed	5
Expensive	2
Tour should be longer, more detailed	2
Lack of lodging/camping	2
Noticed deterioration of facilities	2
Provide more information	2
Improve concessions	2
Information inconsistent	2
Other comments	8

M. Primary reason for visiting

Most visitors (79%) cited viewing desert scenery as the primary reason they visited Death Valley, as Figure 37 shows. Visitors identified "other" primary reasons as visiting friends, seeing the lowest point, experiencing desert summer temperatures, and testing vehicle performance in hot weather.

**Figure 37: Primary reason for visiting Death Valley**

N. Comment summary - Introduction

The separate appendix of this report contains unedited visitors' comments. A summary of their comments appears below, and in the appendix. Some comments offer specific suggestions on how to improve visitors' visits; others describe what visitors enjoyed or did not enjoy.

Visitor Comment Summary

N=460 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
PERSONNEL	
National Park Service	
All personnel friendly/helpful	13
Rangers gave inaccurate information about closures	3
Commended interpretive personnel	2
Concerned about lack of ranger visibility	2
Other comments	5
INTERPRETIVE SERVICES	
Nonpersonal	
Provide maps/information at park entrances/boundaries	8
Improve maps, provide more detail	5
Visitor center exhibits interesting	4
Needed more written information	4
Make maps available at other parks/locations	3
Improve exhibits	3
Map/brochure should be more readily available	2
Visitor center should be near entrance	2
Wanted information on seeing ghost towns/mines	2
Need foreign language brochure	2
More publications needed	2
Other comments	9
Personal	
Comments	6
FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE	
General	
Didn't understand why roads closed	6
Provide shaded parking/rest stops/campsites	5
Need more road signs	4
Closed roads should be opened more quickly	3

Well maintained/clean	2
Roads good	2
Post road closures at park entrances	2
Replace stolen/damaged signs	2
Appreciated signs about overheated vehicles	2
Glad radiator water provided	2
Sign side roads to scenic points with distances	2
Sign unpaved roads with difficulty ratings	2
Improve road signs	2
Other comments	6

POLICIES

Warn of summer driving dangers/advise remedies	3
Other comments	5

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Protect/preserve park	6
Good balance of preservation/development	4
Enjoyed lack of commercialization	2
Don't allow air/garbage pollution in park	2
Other comments	3

CONCESSIONS

Advertise facilities more, especially reservation info	6
Enjoyed Furnace Creek ranch facilities	5
Lodging expensive	3
Improve restaurant operations	3
Food expensive	2
Disappointed facilities not open in summer	2
Provide additional services	2
Other comments	6

VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT

Difficult to understand/answer survey	3
Other comments	2

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Comments	2
----------	---

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Enjoyed visit	60
Will/hope to return	30
Enjoyed Scotty's Castle	23
Sorry roads closed because of flooding	22
Too hot to enjoy desert	20
Not enough time	19
Impressed with heat/desert	13
Thank you	9
Enjoyed uniqueness of park	8
Enjoyed park history	8
Enjoyed services provided	6
Car problems prevented in-depth exploration	4
Would have liked to see Badwater	4
Would have liked to see Scotty's Castle	4
Good job	3
Admire pioneers for surviving	3
Highlight in my life	3
Park well organized	3
Return visit	3
Overwhelmed by large size of park	3
On guided tour	2
Impressed with number of foreign visitors	2
Dangerous to visit desert in summer	2
Arranged tours should allow more time in park	2
Enjoyed comparing to Australia	2
Excellent area for meditation/solitude	2
European came to experience desert/heat	2
Enjoyed Dantes View	2
Would like to learn more about desert	2
Other comments	14

MENU FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS

Park personnel who wish to see other tables, graphs, and maps to learn more about their visitors may request such information from the VSP. Two kinds of analyses are available:

1) Two-way comparisons compare two characteristics. For example, to learn about the primary reasons foreign visitors visited, request a comparison of country of residence by primary visit reason; to help learn what languages future sales items should be printed in, request a comparison of language spoken by foreign language publications as future sales item.

2) Three-way comparisons compare a two-way comparison to a third characteristic. For example, to learn about the site activities of visitor group types, request a comparison of (activity by site visited) by group type; to learn about age group participation in a site activity, request a comparison of (age group by activity) by site visited.

Consult the complete list of characteristics from Death Valley visitors; then write those desired in the appropriate blanks on the order form. Two order forms follow the example below.

SAMPLE

Analysis Order Form
Visitor Services Project
Report 34 (Death Valley)

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 for naming the characteristics of interest when requesting additional two-way and three-way comparisons.

• Group size	• Activity	• Feature importance
• Group type	• Site visited	• Bookstore purchase
• Age	• Order sites visited	• Future sales item
• State residence	• Language understood/spoken	• Interp. service usefulness
• Country residence	• Number of nights spent	• Scotty's Castle visit
• Number of visits	• Type of accommodation	• Primary visit reason
• Length of stay	• Frustrated activity/feature	

Two-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list):
age group by country of residence
 _____ by _____
 _____ by _____

Three-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list):
age group by activity by site visited
 _____ by _____ by _____
 _____ by _____ by _____

Special instructions
(it may be helpful to know what format you need
the purpose for the information, and so forth)

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

**Analysis Order Form
Visitor Services Project
Report 34 (Death Valley)**

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 for naming the characteristics of interest when requesting additional two-way and three-way comparisons.

- | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Group size | • Activity | • Feature importance |
| • Group type | • Site visited | • Bookstore purchase |
| • Age | • Order sites visited | • Future sales item |
| • State residence | • Language understood/spoken | • Interp. service usefulness |
| • Country residence | • Number of nights spent | • Scotty's Castle visit |
| • Number of visits | • Type of accommodation | • Primary visit reason |
| • Length of stay | • Frustrated activity/feature | |

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 _____

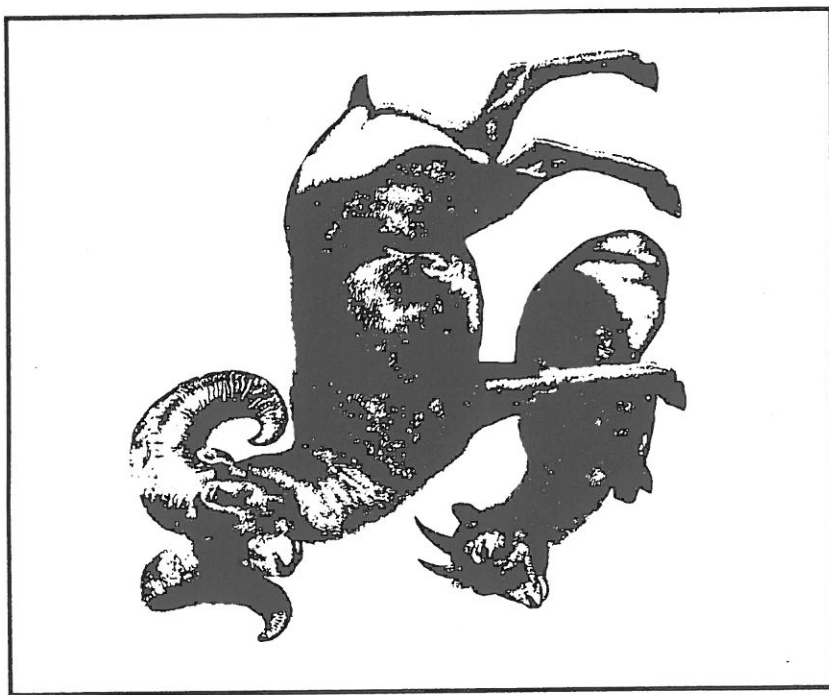
_____ by _____ by _____

Special instructions

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

QUESTIONNAIRES

Death Valley Visitor Study



The
Visitor Services
Project

OMB Approval 1024-0061
Expiration Date: 09-30-90



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL MONUMENT
DEATH VALLEY, CALIFORNIA 92328

IN REPLY REFER TO:

August 1990

Dear Visitor:

Thank you for taking time to participate in this study. Our objective is to learn about the expectations, opinions, and interests of visitors to Death Valley National Monument. This will assist us in our efforts to better manage Death Valley and serve you, the visitor.

This questionnaire is only being given to a select number of visitors. Your participation is very important! It should only take a few minutes of your time during your visit to Death Valley National Monument.

When your visit is over, please complete the questionnaire. Then, seal it with the sticker provided on the last page and simply drop it in any U.S. mailbox.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Gary E. Machlis, Sociology Project Leader, Cooperative Park Studies Unit, Idaho, Moscow, Idaho 83843.

We appreciate your help.

Sincerely,

Edwin L. Rothuss
Superintendent

DIRECTIONS

One adult in your group should complete the questionnaire. It should only take a few minutes. When you have completed the questionnaire, please seal it with the sticker provided and drop it in any U.S. mailbox. We appreciate your help.

PRIVACY AND PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACTS STATEMENT:

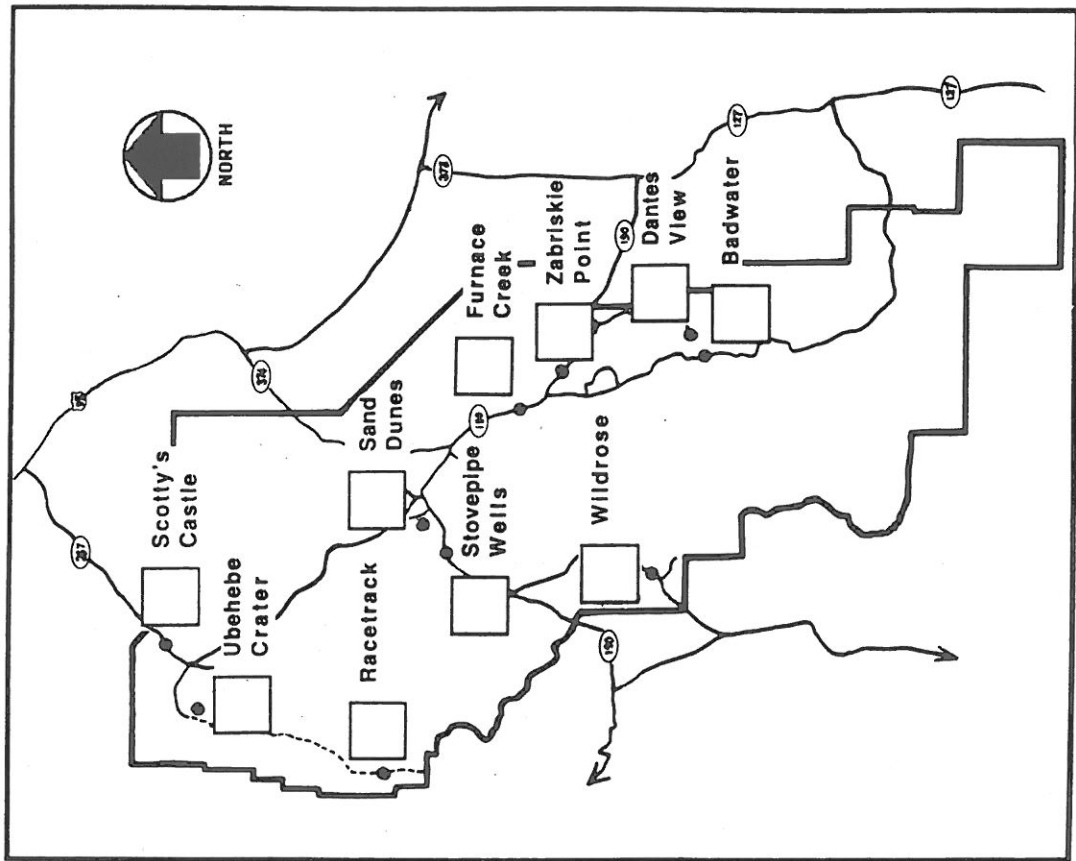
16 U.S.C. 1a-7 authorizes the collection of this information. The primary use of this information is to learn about the expectations, opinions and interests of visitors to this park and will be used by park managers to better manage this park. Response to this request is voluntary. No action may be taken against you for refusing to supply the information requested. The information may also be provided to appropriate Federal, State, local or foreign agencies responsible for investigating or prosecuting a violation of law; to the Department of Justice when relevant to litigation or anticipated litigation.

BURDEN ESTIMATES: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 12 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this form to Service Information Collection Clearance Officer, National Park Service, Department of the Interior, Washington D.C. 20240; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project, 1024-0061, Washington D.C. 20503.

PLEASE GO ON TO NEXT PAGE →

VISITING DEATH VALLEY

1. On the map below, please indicate the order in which you and your group visited the places in Death Valley National Monument. Simply write 1, 2, 3, and so forth, in the box beside each place you visited. If you did not visit a place, leave the box blank.



YOUR ACTIVITIES

2. On the list below, please check the activities that you and your group did at Death Valley National Monument during this visit. Please check (✓) all that apply.

VIEW SCENERY

VISIT MINING RUINS/HISTORIC SITES

VISIT SCOTTY'S CASTLE GROUNDS

TAKE RANGER-LED TOUR OF SCOTTY'S CASTLE

DRIVE BACKCOUNTRY/UNPAVED ROADS

HIKE LESS THAN 2 HOURS

HIKE MORE THAN 2 HOURS

GOLF

SWIM

TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS

SHOP

STARGAZE

OTHER (Please describe: _____)

PLEASE GO ON TO NEXT PAGE ➡

YOU AND YOUR OPINIONS

3. What languages do you, or someone in your group, understand and speak fluently? Please check (✓) all that apply.

_____ FRENCH _____ ITALIAN

_____ GERMAN _____ SPANISH

_____ ENGLISH _____ JAPANESE

_____ OTHER (Please specify: _____)

4. How many hours did you and your group spend in Death Valley National Monument on this visit?

If less than 24 hours:

_____ NUMBER OF HOURS

If 24 hours or more:

_____ NUMBER OF DAYS

5. How many people were in your group?

_____ NUMBER OF PEOPLE

6. What kind of group were you with?

_____ ALONE

_____ FAMILY

_____ FRIENDS

_____ FAMILY AND FRIENDS

_____ GUIDED TOUR GROUP

_____ OTHER (Please describe: _____)

7. For you and your group, please indicate:

	CURRENT AGE	ZIP CODE OR COUNTRY	# TIMES VISITED (Including this visit)
YOURSELF	_____	_____	_____
MEMBER #2	_____	_____	_____
MEMBER #3	_____	_____	_____
MEMBER #4	_____	_____	_____
MEMBER #5	_____	_____	_____
MEMBER #6	_____	_____	_____
MEMBER #7	_____	_____	_____

8. If you and your group stayed overnight in Death Valley National Monument, please write the number of nights you spent in each type of accommodation

of nights?

_____ MOTEL

_____ TENT CAMPGROUND

_____ RV CAMPGROUND

_____ OTHER (Please specify: _____)

9. a) During this visit to Death Valley National Monument, was there anything specific which you and your group wanted to see or do, but were not able to?

_____ YES _____ NO → GO ON TO QUESTION 10

b) What was it? _____

c) What prevented you from being able to see that feature or do that activity? _____

PLEASE GO ON TO NEXT PAGE →

10. How important were the following features to you and your group during your visit to Death Valley National Monument? Please mark each item from 1 to 5 (1= EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, 2= VERY IMPORTANT, 3= MODERATELY IMPORTANT, 4= SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT, 5= NOT IMPORTANT).

How important?
(1-5)

____ EXPERIENCING THE DESERT
____ CLEAN AIR
____ VIEWING WILDLIFE
____ VISITING MINING/HISTORIC SITES
____ SOLITUDE
____ INTERPRETIVE PUBLICATIONS
____ NIGHT SKY VIEWS
____ OTHER (Please specify: _____)

11. a) During this visit, did you and your group purchase anything at the Visitor Center or Scotty's Castle bookstores?

____ YES ____ NO

- b) Which of the following interpretive or educational sales items would be the most useful for you on future visits? Please check (✓) **only one**.

____ FOREIGN LANGUAGE PUBLICATIONS
____ VIDEOS/CASSETTES
____ MAPS
____ PUBLICATIONS ON SPECIFIC SUBJECTS (e.g. desert life, history, etc.)
____ OTHER (Please specify: _____)

12. Please rate the usefulness of the interpretive or information services you and your group used during this visit to Death Valley National Monument. Mark each service used from 1 to 5 (1= EXTREMELY USEFUL, 2= VERY USEFUL, 3= MODERATELY USEFUL, 4= SOMEWHAT USEFUL, 5= NOT USEFUL).

How useful?
(1-5)

PARK BROCHURE/MAP _____
SELF-GUIDED TRAIL GUIDES _____
VISITOR CENTER BOOKSTORE _____
VISITOR CENTER FILMS/SLIDE SHOWS _____
VISITOR CENTER MUSEUM _____
SCOTTY'S CASTLE EXHIBIT ROOM _____
BORAX MUSEUM _____
RANGER PERSONNEL _____
CONCESSION PERSONNEL _____
ROADSIDE EXHIBITS _____
INFORMATIONAL SIGNS (entrance fee, campground registration, etc.) _____

PLEASE GO ON TO NEXT PAGE →

13. a) During this visit, did you and your group visit Scotty's Castle?

YES _____ NO  GO ON TO QUESTION 14



- b) What did you like **most** about the Scotty's Castle tours and services?

- c) What did you like **least** about the Scotty's Castle tours and services?

14. On this visit, what was the **primary** reason you and your group visited Death Valley National Monument? Please check (☒) **only one**.

- _____ TO SEE DESERT SCENERY
 _____ TO VIEW/STUDY DESERT PLANTS/ANIMALS
 _____ TO LEARN ABOUT/STUDY DEATH VALLEY HISTORY
 _____ TO VISIT SCOTTY'S CASTLE
 _____ TO ENJOY RECREATION AT RANCH (golf, swim, etc.)
 _____ TO ENJOY RECREATION IN PARK (hike, drive backcountry roads, etc.)

_____ OTHER (Please describe: _____)

15. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your visit to Death Valley National Monument?

Thank you for your help! Please seal the questionnaire with the sticker provided and drop it in any U.S. mailbox.

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**

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



printed on recycled paper

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.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park, 1983. | 20. Craters of the Moon National Monument, 1989. |
| 2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method, 1984. | 21. Everglades National Park, 1989. |
| 3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt. Rushmore National Memorial, 1984. | 22. Statue of Liberty National Monument, 1990. |
| 4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park, 1984. | 23. The White House Tours, President's Park, 1990. |
| 5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 1985. | 24. Lincoln Home National Historic Site, 1990. |
| 6. Crater Lake National Park, 1986. | 25. Yellowstone National Park, 1990. |
| 7. Gettysburg National Military Park, 1987. | 26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, 1990. |
| 8. Independence National Historical Park, 1987. | 27. Muir Woods National Monument, 1990. |
| 9. Valley Forge National Historical Park, 1987. | 28. Canyonlands National Park, 1990. |
| 10. Colonial National Historical Park, 1988. | 29. White Sands National Monument, 1990. |
| 11. Grand Teton National Park, 1988. | 30. National Monuments, 1991. |
| 12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, 1988. | 31. Kenai Fjords National Park, 1991. |
| 13. Mesa Verde National Park, 1988. | 32. Gateway National Recreation Area, 1991. |
| 14. Shenandoah National Park, 1988. | 33. Petersburg National Battlefield, 1991. |
| 15. Yellowstone National Park, 1988. | 34. Death Valley National Monument, 1991. |
| 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. | |

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.

Visitor Services Project

Death Valley National Monument

Appendix

Visitor Services Project

Death Valley National Monument

Appendix

Margaret Littlejohn

Report 34

May 1991

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.

Ms. Margaret Littlejohn, VSP Western Coordinator, National Park Service is with the Cooperative Park Studies Unit, University of Idaho. I thank the Death Valley '49ers, Inc., Dana E. Dolsen, Ahmed Fahsi, and the volunteers and staff at Death Valley National Monument 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.

Visitor Comment Summary

N=460 comments;
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
---------	------------------------------

PERSONNEL

National Park Service

All personnel friendly/helpful	13
Rangers gave inaccurate information about closures	3
Commended interpretive personnel	2
Concerned about lack of ranger visibility	2
Other comments	5

INTERPRETIVE SERVICES

Nonpersonal

Provide maps/information at park entrances/boundaries	8
Improve maps, provide more detail	5
Visitor center exhibits interesting	4
Needed more written information	4
Make maps available at other parks/locations	3
Improve exhibits	3
Map/brochure should be more readily available	2
Visitor center should be near entrance	2
Wanted information on seeing ghost towns/mines	2
Need foreign language brochure	2
More publications needed	2
Other comments	9

Personal

Comments	6
----------	---

FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

General

Didn't understand why roads closed	6
Provide shaded parking/rest stops/campsites	5
Need more road signs	4
Closed roads should be opened more quickly	3
Well maintained/clean	2
Roads good	2
Post road closures at park entrances	2
Replace stolen/damaged signs	2
Appreciated signs about overheated vehicles	2
Glad radiator water provided	2
Sign side roads to scenic points with distances	2
Sign unpaved roads with difficulty ratings	2

Improve road signs	2
Other comments	6

POLICIES

Warn of summer driving dangers/advise remedies	3
Other comments	5

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Protect/preserve park	6
Good balance of preservation/development	4
Enjoyed lack of commercialization	2
Don't allow air/garbage pollution in park	2
Other comments	3

CONCESSIONS

Advertise facilities more, especially reservation info	6
Enjoyed Furnace Creek ranch facilities	5
Lodging expensive	3
Improve restaurant operations	3
Food expensive	2
Disappointed facilities not open in summer	2
Provide additional services	2
Other comments	6

VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT

Difficult to understand/answer survey	3
Other comments	2

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Comments	2
----------	---

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Enjoyed visit	60
Will/hope to return	30
Enjoyed Scotty's Castle	23
Sorry roads closed because of flooding	22
Too hot to enjoy desert	20
Not enough time	19
Impressed with heat/desert	13
Thank you	9
Enjoyed uniqueness of park	8
Enjoyed park history	8
Enjoyed services provided	6
Car problems prevented in-depth exploration	4
Would have liked to see Badwater	4
Would have liked to see Scotty's Castle	4
Good job	3
Admire pioneers for surviving	3
Highlight in my life	3
Park well organized	3
Return visit	3
Overwhelmed by large size of park	3
On guided tour	2
Impressed with number of foreign visitors	2
Dangerous to visit desert in summer	2
Arranged tours should allow more time in park	2
Enjoyed comparing to Australia	2
Excellent area for meditation/solitude	2
European came to experience desert/heat	2
Enjoyed Dantes View	2
Would like to learn more about desert	2
Other comments	14

**Death Valley National Monument
Visitor Services Project**

English

Questions 3 and 9

**Death Valley National Monument
Visitor Services Project**

English

Questions 13 and 15

**Death Valley National Monument
Visitor Services Project**

French Translations

Question 3

**Death Valley National Monument
Visitor Services Project**

French Translations

Question 9

**Death Valley National Monument
Visitor Services Project**

French Translations

Question 13

**Death Valley National Monument
Visitor Services Project**

French Translations

Question 15

