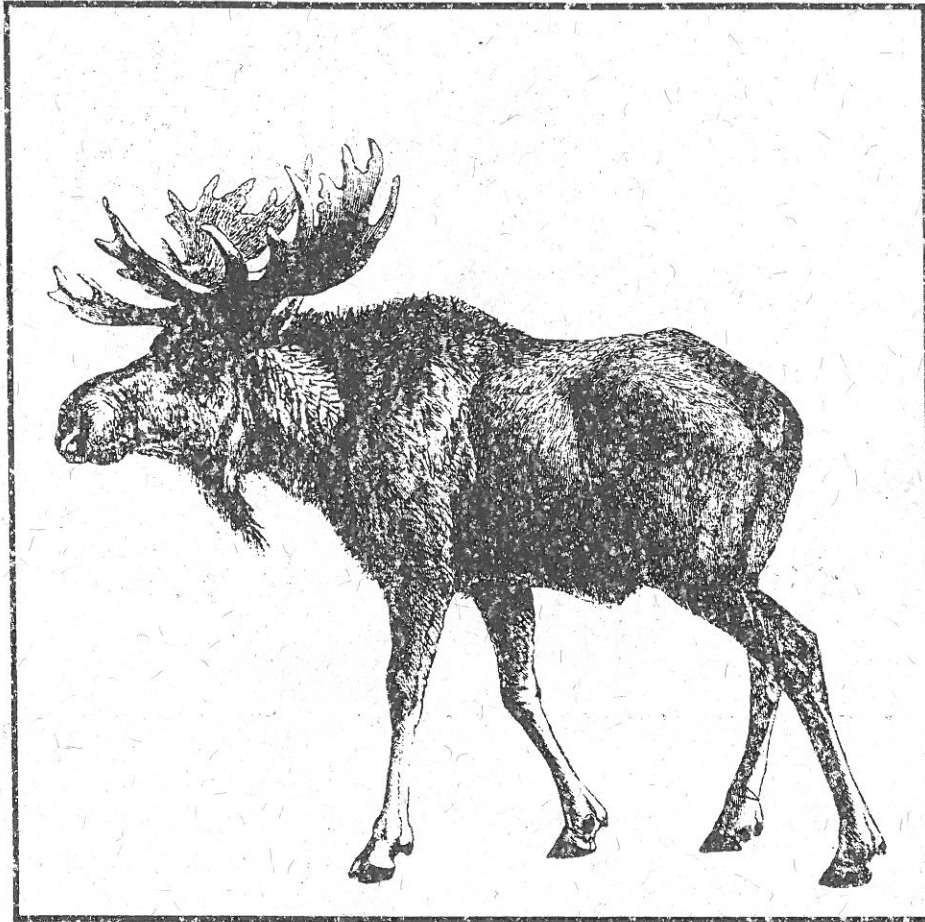


# Visitor Services Project Glacier National Park



Visitor Services Project Report 35  
Cooperative Park Studies Unit



University of Idaho



# **Visitor Services Project**

# **Glacier National Park**

Margaret Littlejohn

**Report 35**

March 1991

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# Visitor Services Project Glacier National Park

## Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a study of visitors to Glacier National Park during July 29 - August 4, 1990. Five hundred sixty-six questionnaires were distributed and 481 returned, an 85% response rate.
- This report profiles Glacier 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.
- Visitor groups were commonly families (71%); often in groups of two (43%) or four persons (20%). Thirty-one percent of the visitors were 31-45 years old and 21% were 15 years old or younger. Most (59%) were on their first Glacier visit.
- International visitors comprised 15% of the total visitation; 12% were Canadian visitors. U.S. visitors came from Montana (13%), Washington (8%), Minnesota (6%), and California (6%) and 45 other states.
- Sixty percent of all visitors spent one or more days in the park; of these 16% stayed 2 days; 14% spent 6 or more days. Forty percent of all visitors stayed less than one day, of these 27% stayed five to six hours; another 27% stayed four hours or less.
- Almost half of Glacier's visitors (49%) identified the park as their primary destination.
- Most visitors went sightseeing (97%), took photographs (89%), viewed wildlife (87%), and visited visitor centers/museums (72%). Most visitors (65%) said the primary reason they visited Glacier was to view wildlife/scenery.
- At Glacier, most visitors went to Logan Pass (80%) and St. Mary (68%). Sixty percent of the visitors first entered the park at West Glacier and 32% first entered the park at St. Mary.
- During their visit, the average visitor group spent \$253.00 in the Glacier area; the average per capita expenditure was \$82.00. Visitors commonly spent either \$1-50.00 (28%) or \$251.00 or more (28%). Visitors spent the greater proportion of their money for lodging (34%) and food (29%).
- The most important interpretive services to visitors were the park brochure and visitor center personnel; the least important was the park radio information station. Of the services they used, visitors rated ranger-led walks, the park brochure, self-guided trails, and evening programs as highest quality; the park radio information station was rated the lowest quality.
- The most important commercial visitor services were showers, grocery stores, and food service; the least important service was the red bus tours. Food service and boat tours were rated highest quality; showers were lowest quality. Visitors made many additional comments about their visits.

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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.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

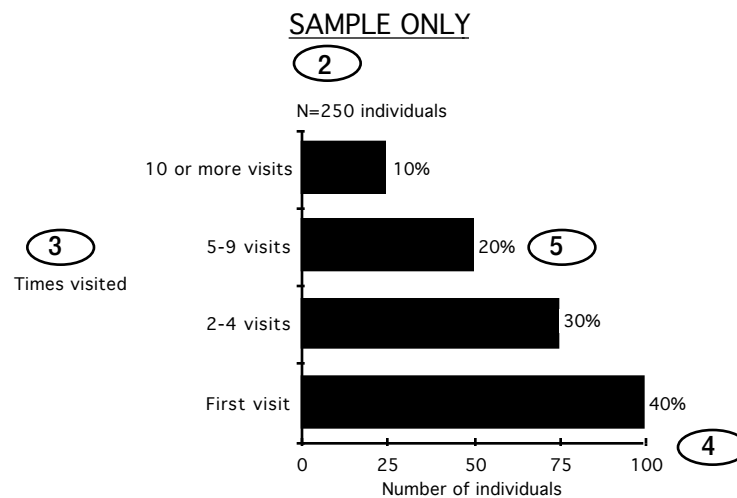
	Page
INTRODUCTION	1
METHODS	2
RESULTS	4
A. Visitors contacted	4
B. Characteristics	4
C. Length of stay	9
D. Activities	11
E. Sites visited; entrances/exits used	12
F. Source of park information	14
G. Primary destination	15
H. Primary reason for visit	16
I. Information/interpretive services: importance and quality evaluations	17
J. Commercial visitor services: importance and quality evaluations	30
K. Expenditures	44
L. Most and least liked features of campgrounds, picnic areas, and restrooms	48
M. Planning for future	51
N. Comment summary	54
MENU FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS	58
QUESTIONNAIRE	59

## INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of a study of visitors at Glacier National Park (referred to as "Glacier"). This visitor study was conducted July 29 - August 4, 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. A 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.
- 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 Glacier during July 29 - August 4, 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. See the end of this report for a copy of the questionnaire.

### **Sampling**

Visitors were sampled using a selected interval as they drove through the three main park entrances: West Glacier, St. Mary and Many Glacier. 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 reminder-thank you postcard was mailed to all participants. A replacement questionnaire was mailed to each participant who had not returned the questionnaire by four weeks after the survey. 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.

### **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 473 groups, Figure 3 presents data for 1547 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 481 questionnaires were returned, Figure 1 shows data for only 473 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 29 - August 4, 1990. The results do not necessarily apply to visitors using the park during other times of the year.

### **Special Conditions**

Extra sampling was done at the Many Glacier entrance at the request of the Denver Service Center, for use in the Assessment of Concession Facilities. Two hundred fifty-one questionnaires were distributed at the Many Glacier entrance; 223 questionnaires were returned. To keep the Many Glacier questionnaires in proper proportion (15%) with the questionnaires distributed at the other park entrances, 74 of the Many Glacier questionnaires were randomly selected to be included in this report.

## RESULTS

### A. Visitors contacted

Six hundred sixteen visitor groups were contacted; 92% accepted questionnaires. Four hundred eighty-one visitor groups completed and returned their questionnaires, an 85% response rate.

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

**Table 1: Comparison of total sample and actual respondents**

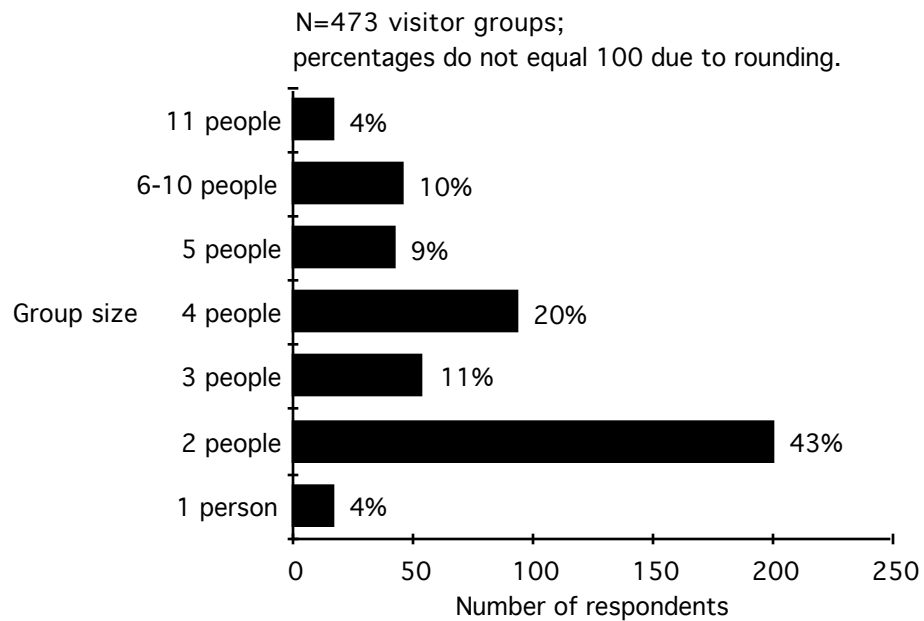
Variable	Total sample		Actual respondents	
	N	Avg.	N	Avg.
Age of respondent (years)	582	43.9	480	45.3
Group size	582	3.7	473	4.1

### B. Characteristics

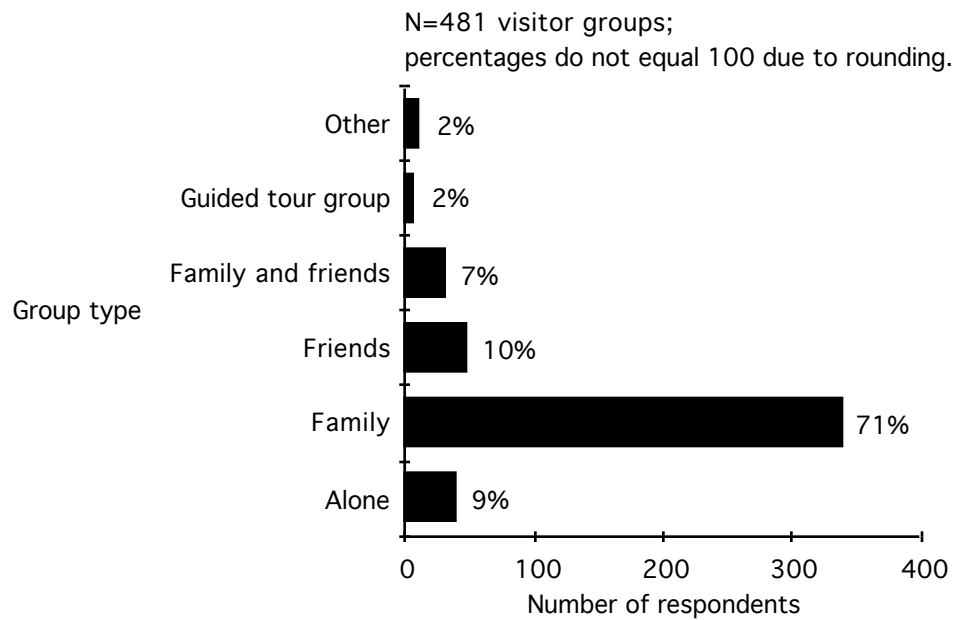
Figure 1 shows group sizes, which varied from one person to 90 people. Glacier visitor groups were of all sizes with 43% in groups of two people; 20% in groups of four. Seventy-one percent of visitors came in family groups, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 3 shows a wide range of age groups; the most common were visitors aged 31-45 (31%), followed by children aged 15 or younger (21%). Fifty-nine percent of visitors were at Glacier for the first time, although 29% had visited two to four times (Figure 4).

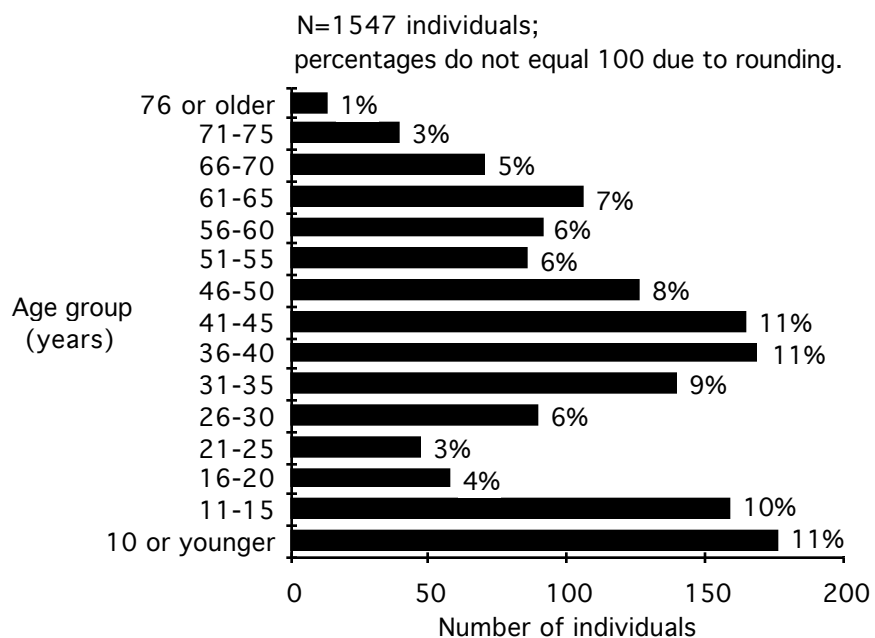
International visitors comprised 15% of all visitation. Map 1 and Table 2 show visitation by country, with most international visitors coming from Canada (12%). Only 3% of Glacier's total visitation is from outside North America (Canada and the U.S.). American visitors came from many states. Thirteen percent came from Montana, 8% from Washington, 6% from Minnesota, and 6% from California. Map 2 and Table 3 show these results.



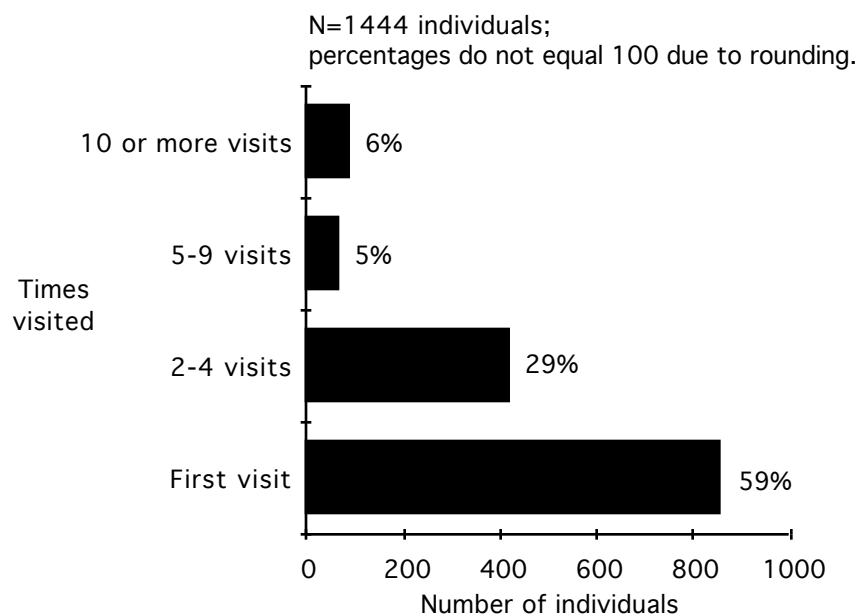
**Figure 1: Visitor group sizes**



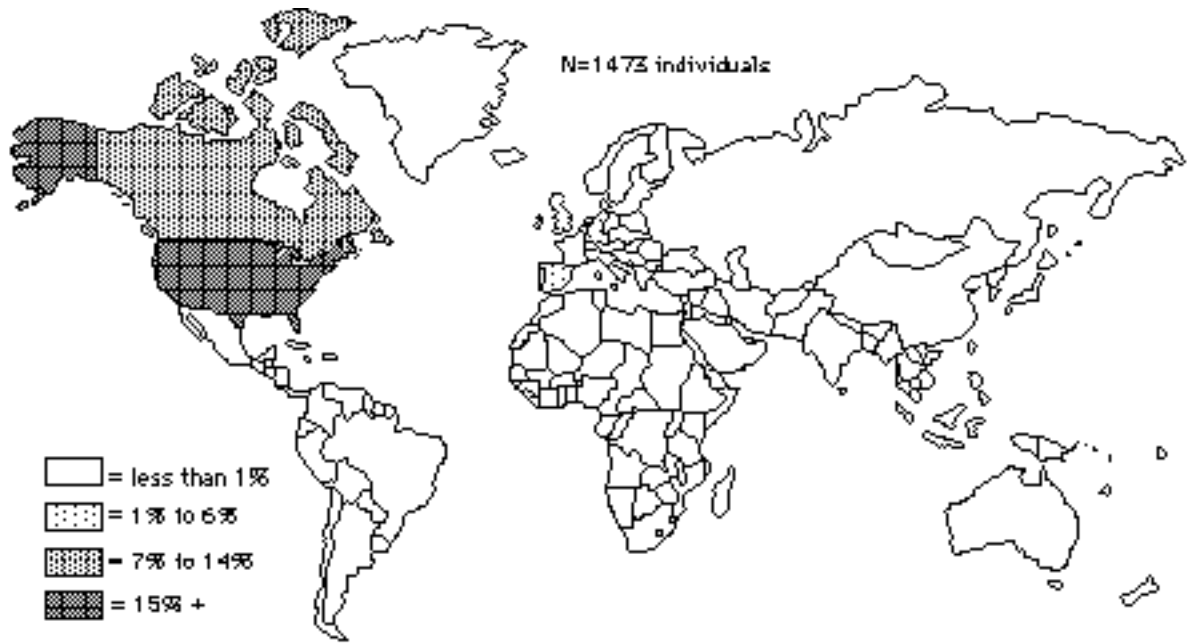
**Figure 2: Visitor group types**



**Figure 3: Visitor ages**



**Figure 4: Number of visits**

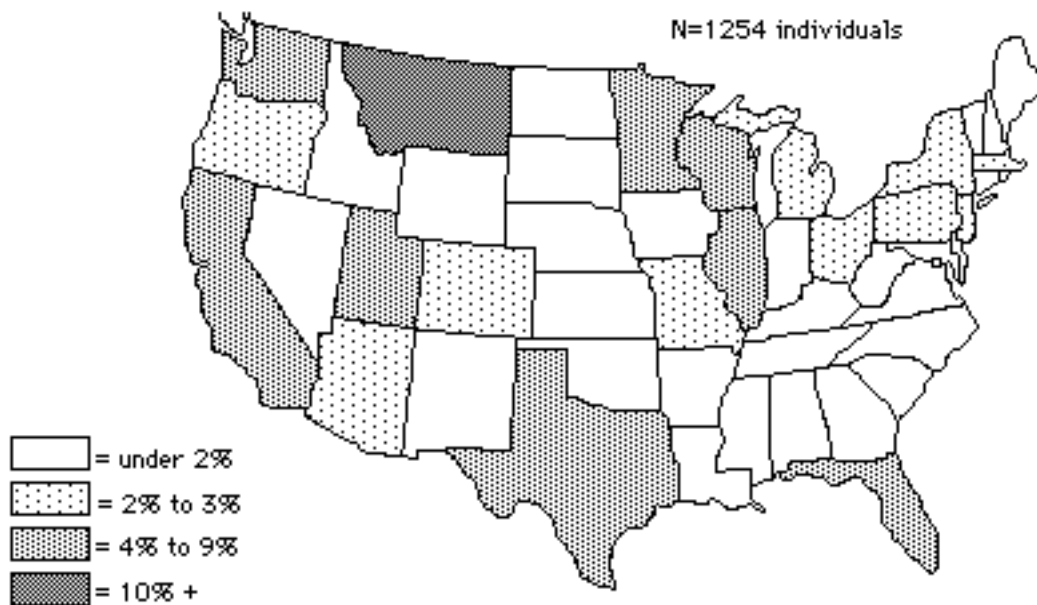


**Map 1: Proportion of Glacier visitors by country**

**Table 2: Glacier visitors by country of residence**

N=1473 individuals;  
individual country percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

Country	Number of individuals	% of visitors
United States	1254	85
Canada	176	12
Germany	8	1
Spain	1	
Other countries (9)	29	2



**Map 2: Proportion of visitors from each state**

**Table 3: Proportion of visitors from each state**

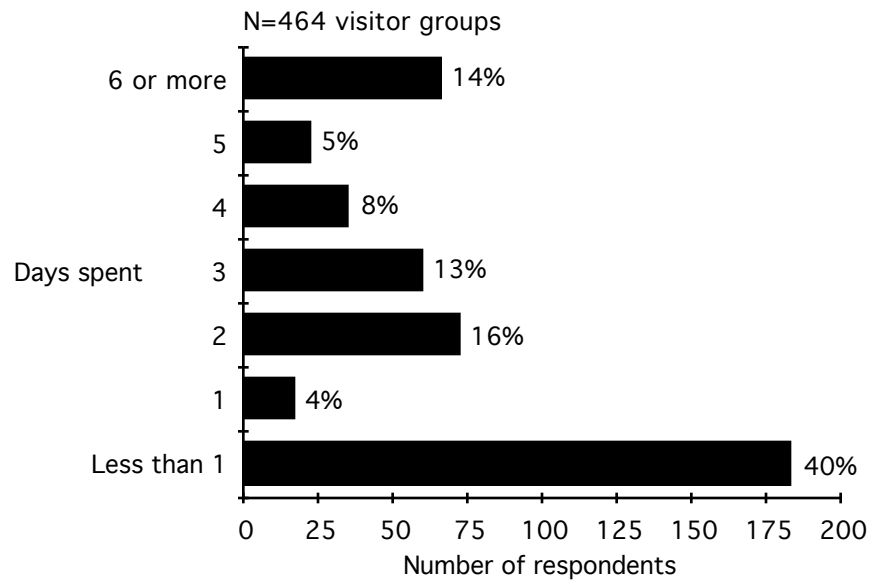
N=1254 individuals;  
individual state percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

State	Number of individuals	% of visitors
Montana	167	13
Washington	97	8
Minnesota	81	6
California	79	6
Illinois	58	4
Florida	54	4
Texas	54	4
Utah	44	4
Wisconsin	44	4
Oregon	41	3
Ohio	38	3
Missouri	37	3
Michigan	35	3
Colorado	34	3
Pennsylvania	29	2
Arizona	26	2
New York	25	2
New Jersey	25	2
Massachusetts	24	2
Other states (30)	262	21

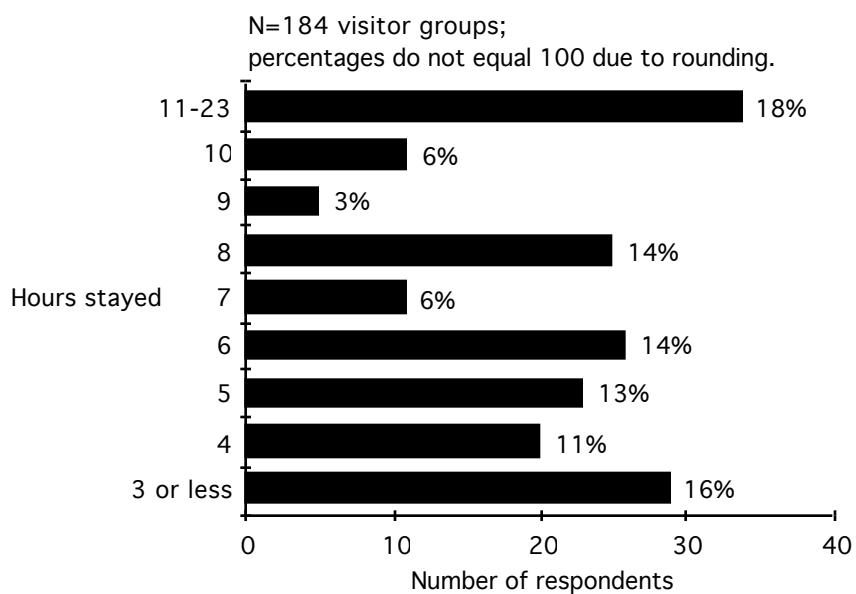
### C. Length of stay

Sixty percent of Glacier's visitors stayed one full day or more. Twenty-nine percent of visitors stayed two to three days. Fourteen percent stayed six days or more (see Figure 5). The average length of stay for these visitors was 5 days.

Figure 6 shows that among Glacier's day users, 18% stayed 11 to 23 hours, while 16% stayed less than three hours. The average length of stay for day users was 7 hours.



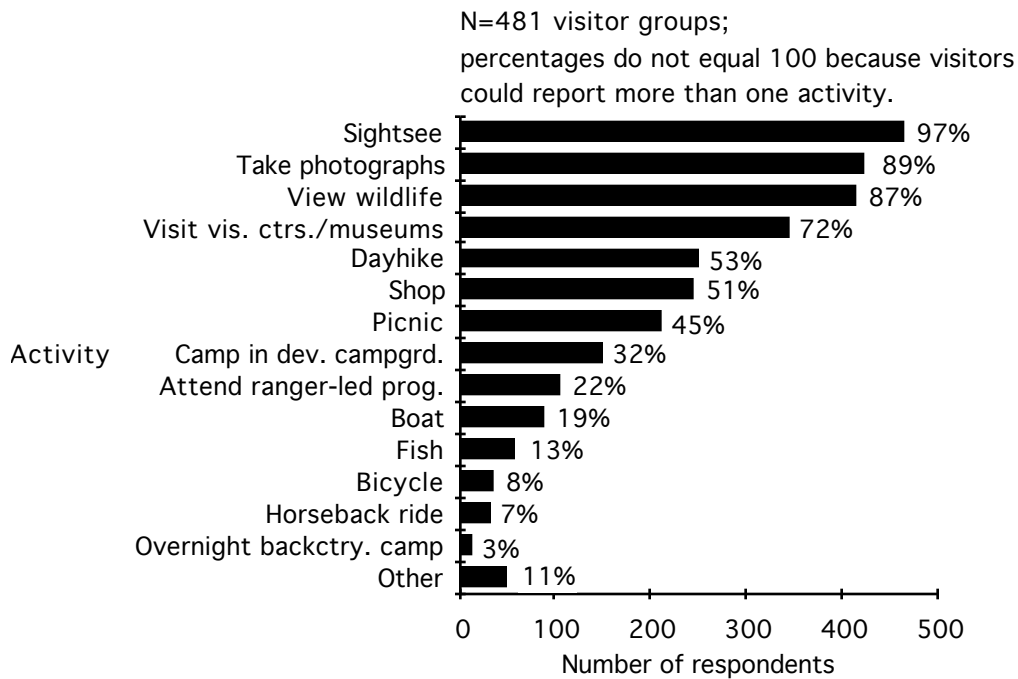
**Figure 5: Length of stay by Glacier visitors**



**Figure 6: Length of stay for visitors who spent less than 24 hours at Glacier**

#### D. Activities

Figure 7 shows the proportion of visitor groups who participated in each activity during their visit. Common activities were sightseeing (97%), taking photographs (89%), viewing wildlife (87%), visiting visitor centers/museums (72%), dayhiking (53%), and shopping (51%). Visitors listed other activities they participated in: whitewater rafting, taking tour boat, swimming, attending naturalist programs, and viewing wildflowers.

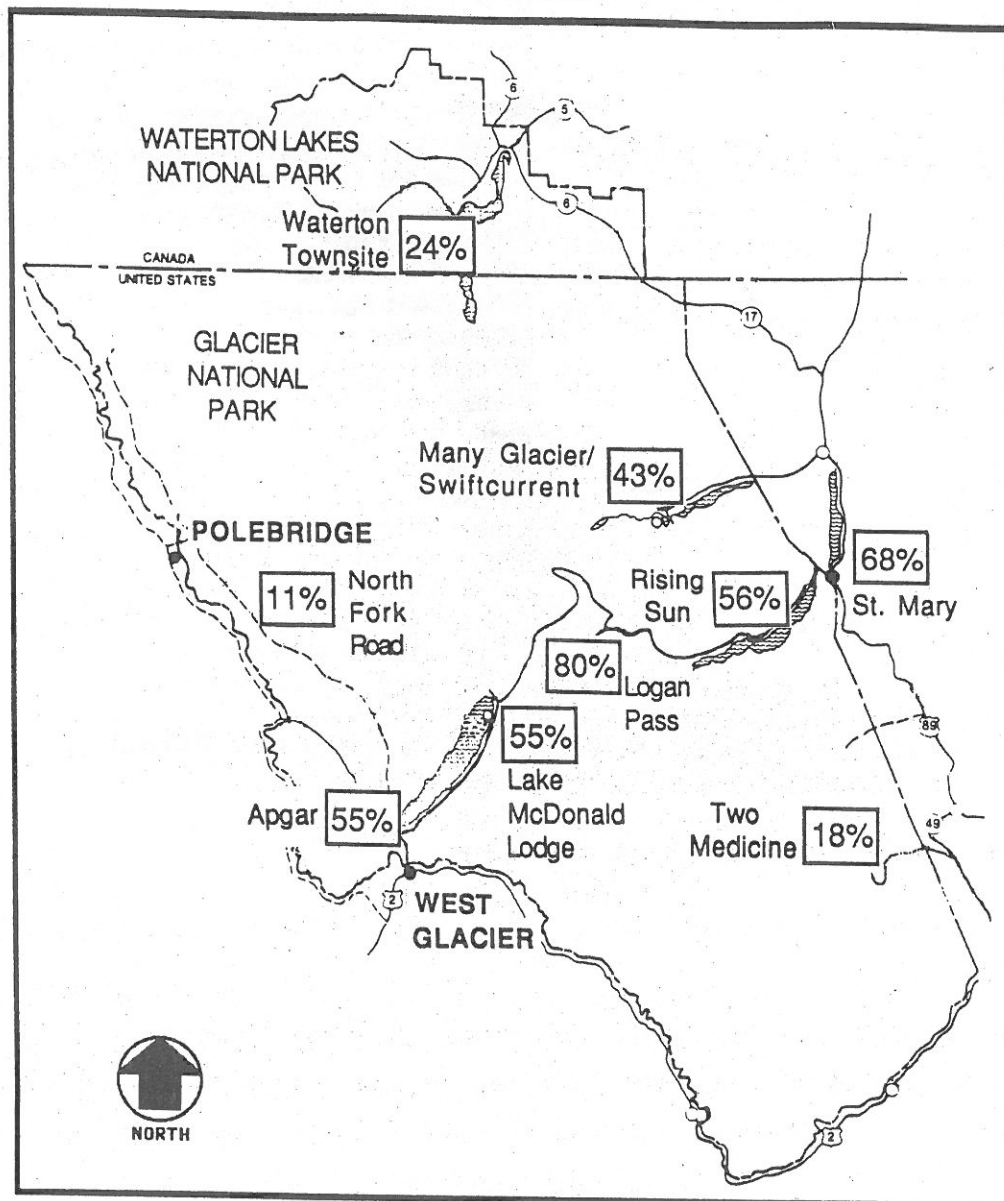


**Figure 7: Proportion of visitor groups participating in each activity**

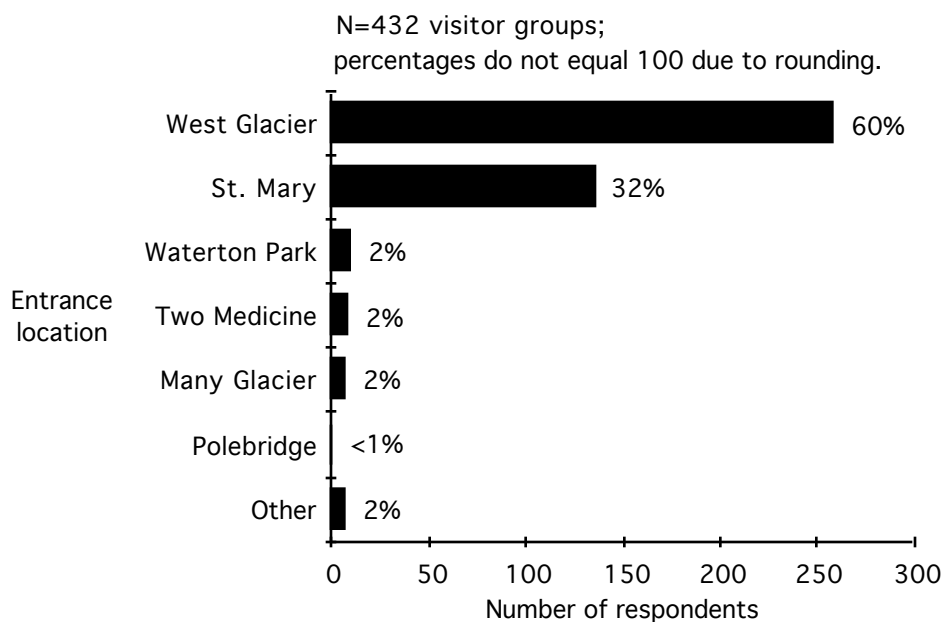
### E. Sites visited; entrances/exits used

Map 3 shows the proportion of visitor groups that visited selected sites at Glacier. Most visitors went to Logan Pass (80%) and St. Mary (68%). Many visited Rising Sun (56%), Lake McDonald Lodge (55%), and Apgar (55%). The least visited site was the North Fork Road (11%). Sixty percent of visitors first entered Glacier at West Glacier, 32% first entered via St. Mary. Fifty-two percent of visitors exited Glacier at West Glacier, 39% left via St. Mary.

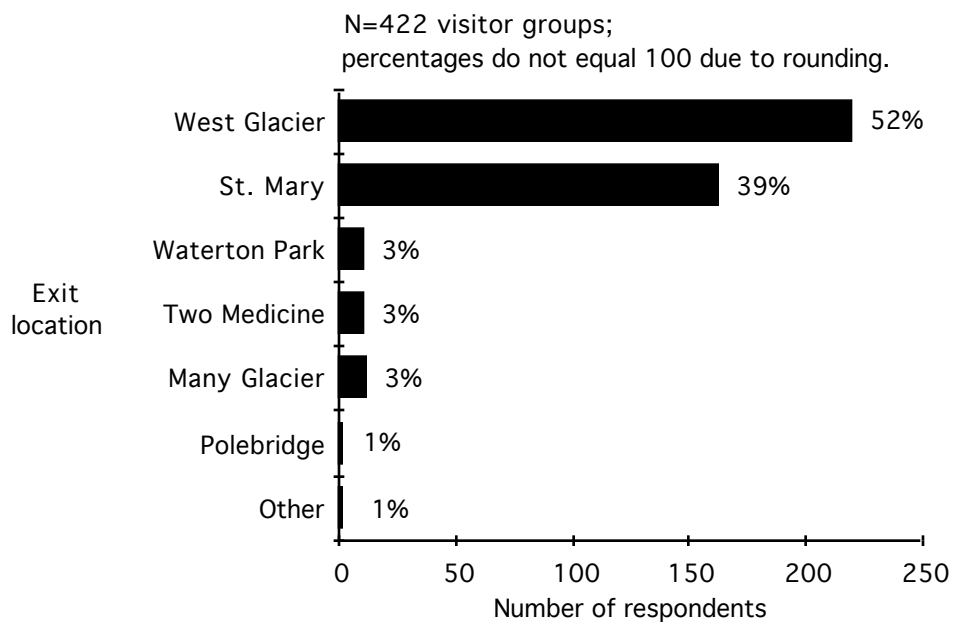
N=481 visitor groups;  
percentages do not equal 100 because  
visitors could visit more than one site.



Map 3: Proportion of visitors who visited each site



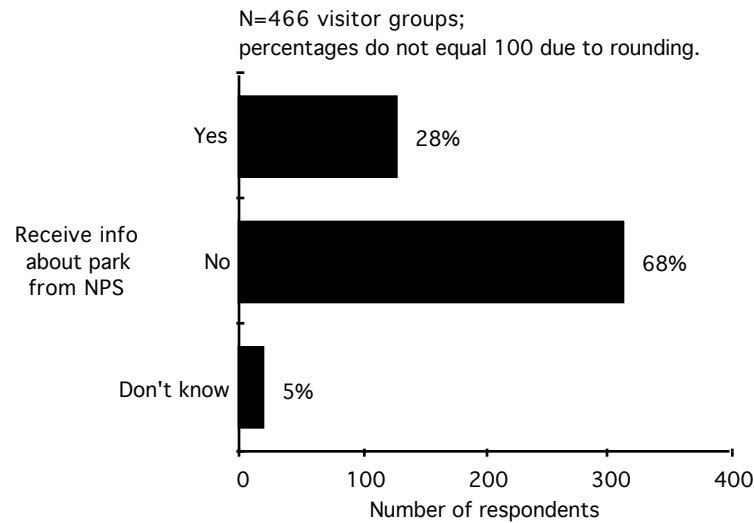
**Figure 8: Proportion of visitors who first entered Glacier at each location**



**Figure 9: Proportion of visitors who exited Glacier at each location**

#### F. Source of park information

Most visitor groups (68%) did not receive information about Glacier from the National Park Service prior to their visit, as Figure 10 shows. Table 4 shows the sources where visitors got information about the park, with prior visits, friends/relatives, and motor clubs being the most common responses.



**Figure 10: Receipt of NPS park information prior to visit**

**Table 4: Sources of park information**

N=411 responses; some visitors cited more than one source.

Source	Number of responses
Prior visit(s)	98
Friends/relatives	72
Motor club	39
Live(d) in area	27
Word-of-mouth	27
Park entrance/visitor center/employees	26
Travel guidebooks/agents	22
Reading books/research	19
Magazines/newspapers	16
Maps/brochures	15
Montana tourism sources	12
Local merchants/services/residents	10
Had prior information (source unknown)	7
Canadian park/tourism sources	6
Television programs	3
School studies	3
Others	9

### G. Primary destination

Visitor groups were asked if Glacier was their primary destination on this trip; 51% said no and 49% (231 of 467 respondents) said yes. Primary destinations other than Glacier included multiple destinations, Banff NP, and Yellowstone NP (see Table 5).

**Table 5: Primary destinations other than Glacier**

N=544 responses; some visitor groups had more than one response

<u>Primary destination other than Glacier</u>	<u>Number of responses</u>
Glacier NP	231
Multiple destinations	53
Banff NP	25
Yellowstone NP	25
Canada	17
Alberta	16
British Columbia	16
Washington	15
Jasper NP	14
Alaska	14
Whitefish, MT	10
Montana	8
Kalispell, MT	8
Grand Tetons NP	8
Oregon	8
Idaho	6
Wyoming	5
Waterton NP	5
California	4
Visit relatives	3
No destination	2
Other MT destinations (27)	35
Other states (8)	15
Other Canadian provinces	1

#### H. Primary reason for visit

Most visitors (65%) said viewing wildlife and scenery was the primary reason which brought them to Glacier. Eighteen percent came to participate in recreation (hike, boat, camp, etc.) and 11% were passing through to another destination. Other reasons identified included to enjoy the park, visit relatives, show the park to their children, and "get away from masses of humanity."

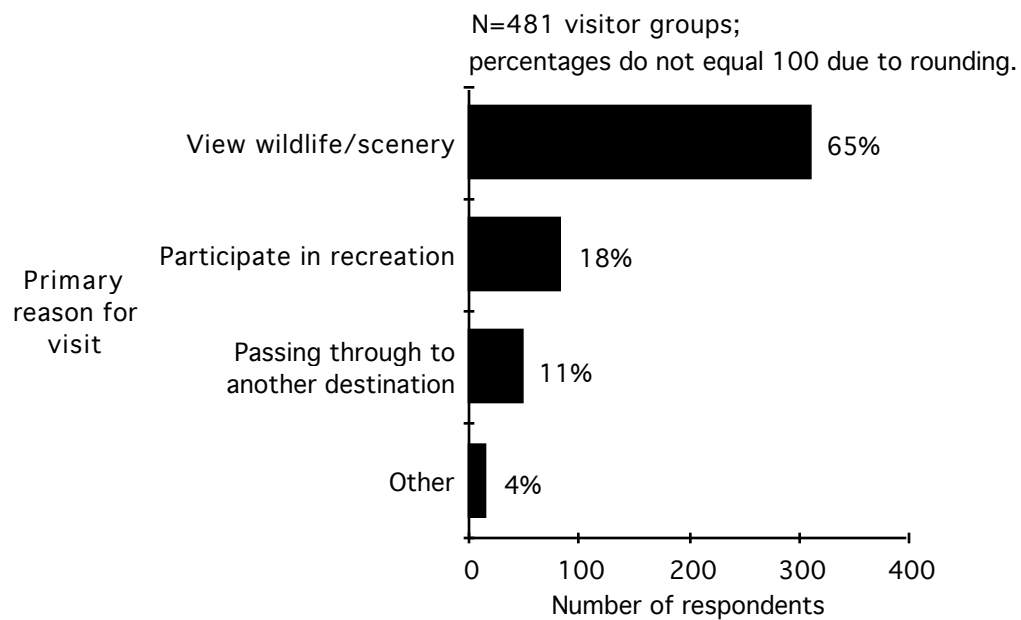


Figure 11: Visitors' primary reason for visiting Glacier

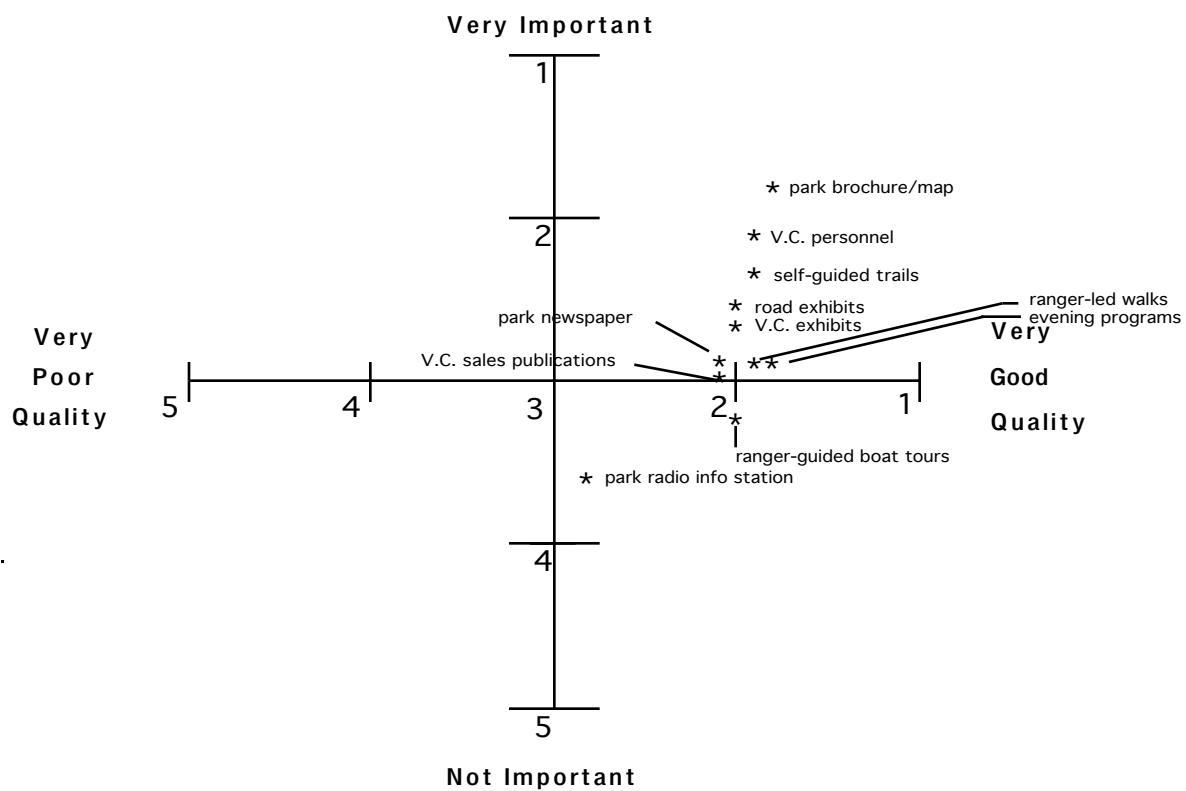
### **I. Information/interpretive services: importance and quality evaluations**

Visitors rated the importance and quality of the information and interpretive services they used. They used a five point scale to rate the importance of the services they used: 1=extremely important, 2=very important, 3=moderately important, 4=somewhat important, and 5=not important. Visitors also used a five point scale to rate the quality of the services they used: 1=very good, 2=good, 3=average, 4=poor, 5=very poor.

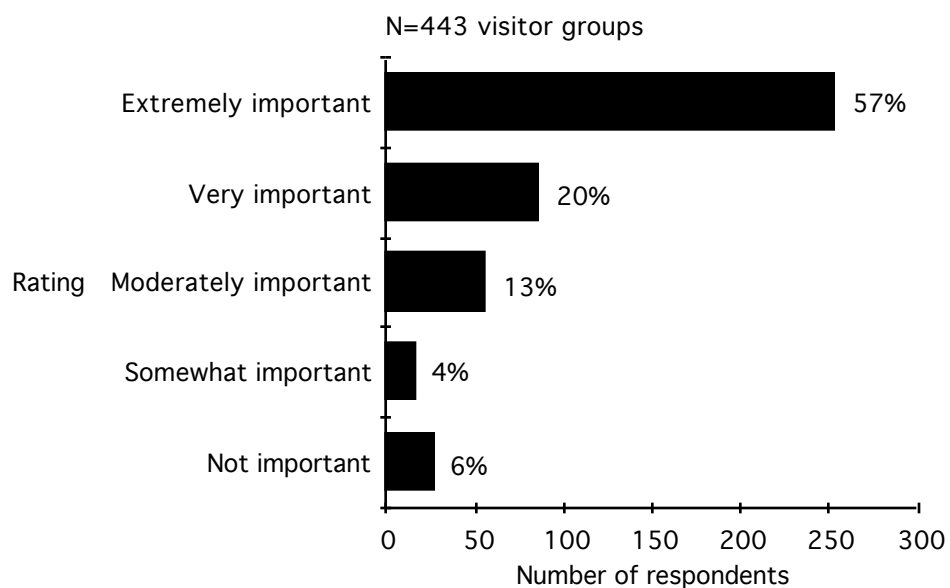
Figure 12 shows the average importance and quality rating for each service. The figure was created by first separately averaging each services' numerical scores for both quality and importance. Then the location for the placement of each services upon the graphy was plotted according to the scales on the "X" axis (importance) and the "Y" axis (quality). The park brochure/map was the most important and highest quality service. The park radio information station was considered less important than other services rated.

Figures 13-23 show that several services were considered "very important" to "extremely important:" the park brochure/map (77%), visitor center personnel (69%) and self-guided trails (62%). The service with the greatest proportion of "somewhat important" to "not important" ratings was the park radio information station (57%).

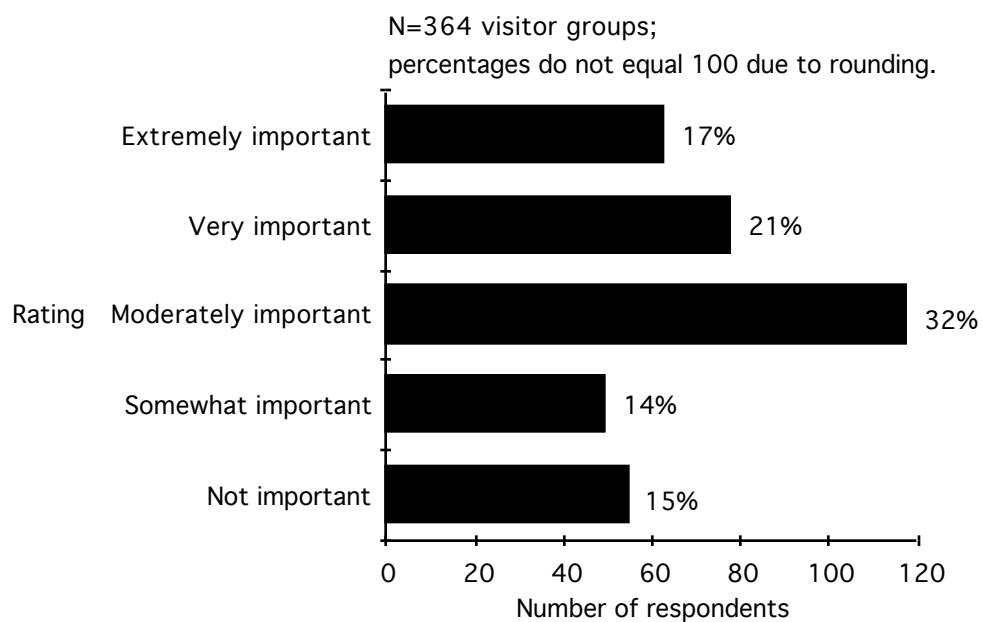
Figures 24-34 show that several services were given high "good" to "very good" quality ratings: ranger-led walks (81%), the park brochure/map (80%), self-guided trails (80%), and evening programs (77%). The service receiving the greatest proportion of "poor" to "very poor" quality ratings was the park radio information station (26%).



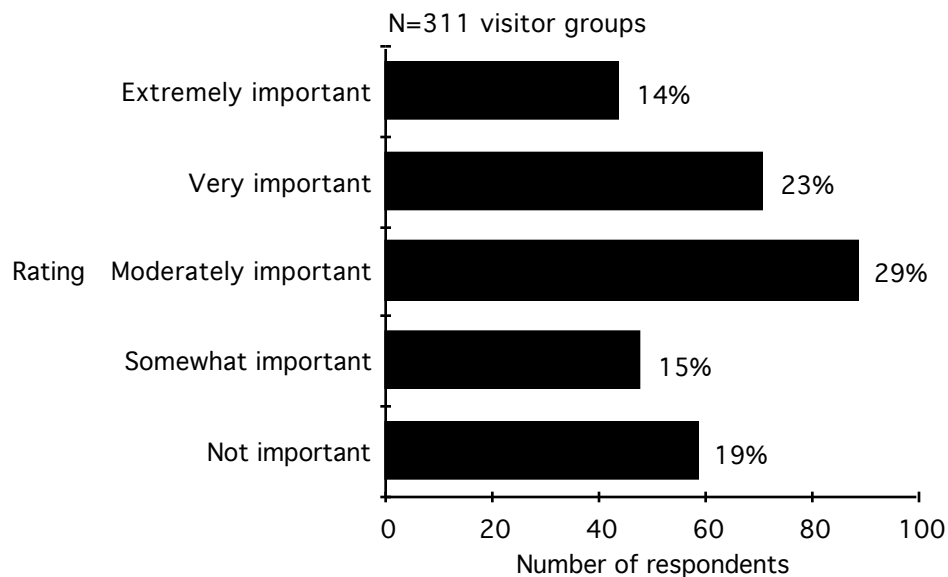
**Figure 12: Average ratings of information/interpretive service importance and quality**



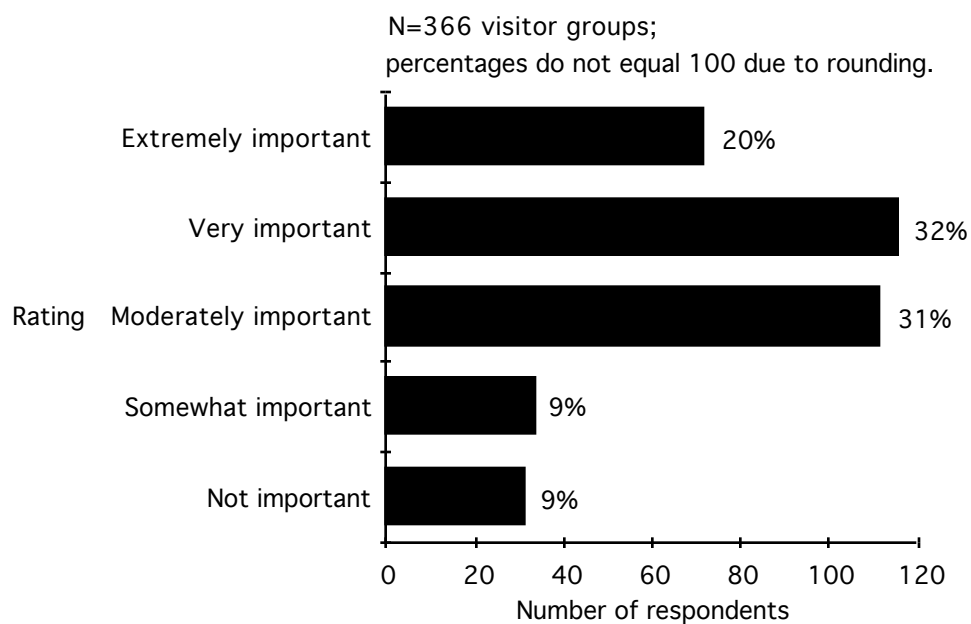
**Figure 13: Importance ratings of park brochure/map**



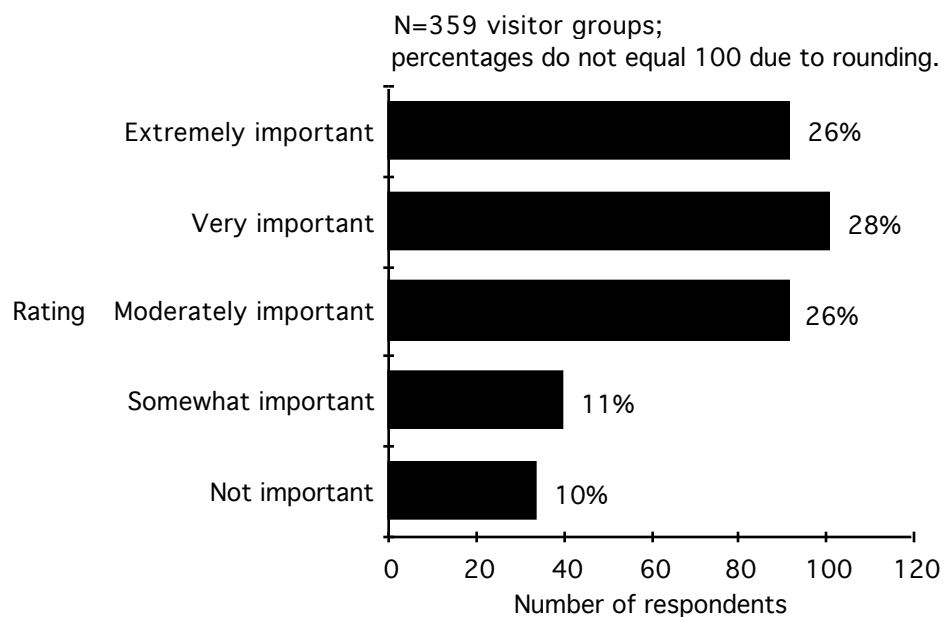
**Figure 14: Importance ratings Waterton/Glacier Guide (park newspaper)**



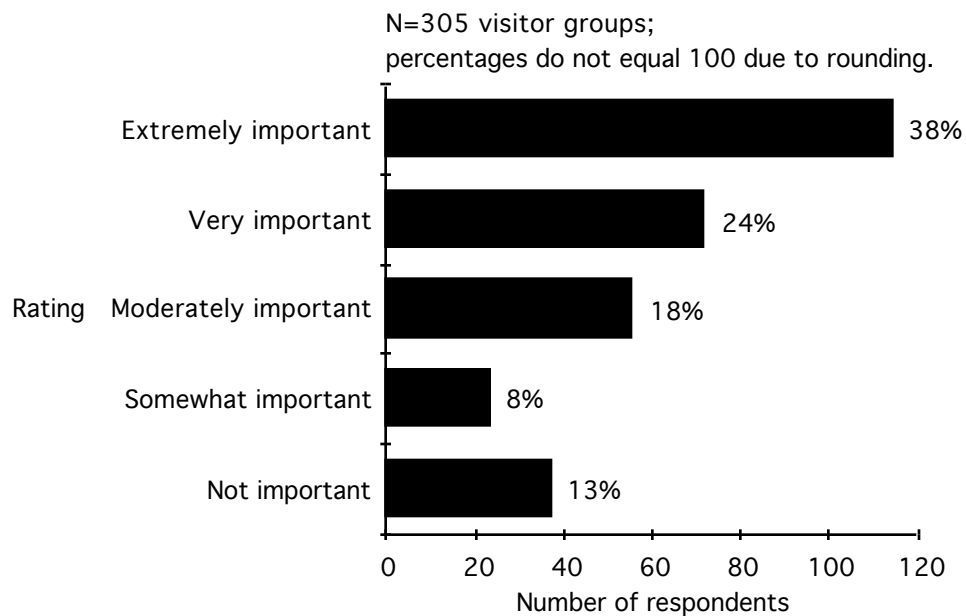
**Figure 15: Importance ratings of visitor center sales publications**



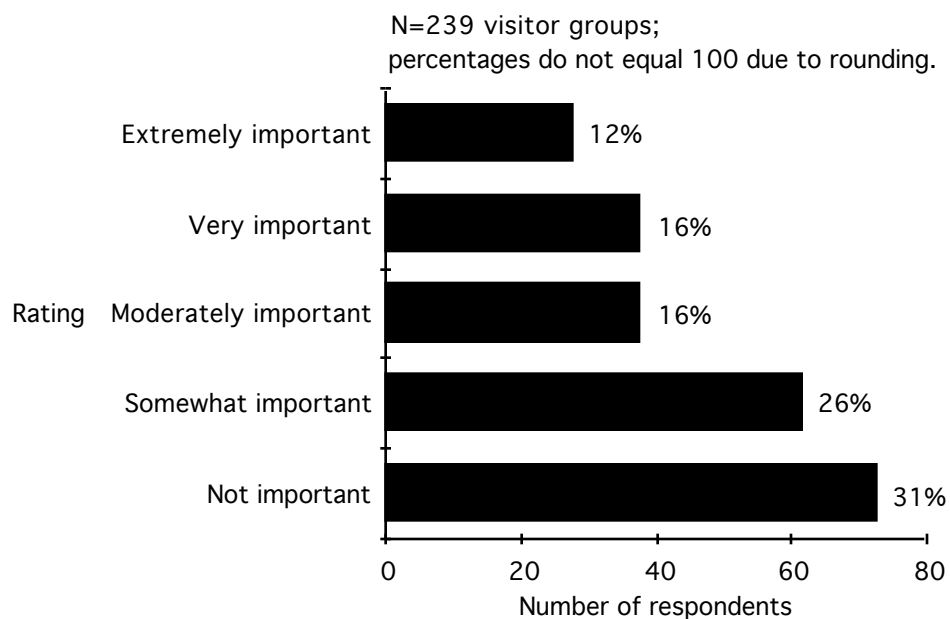
**Figure 16: Importance ratings of visitor center exhibits**



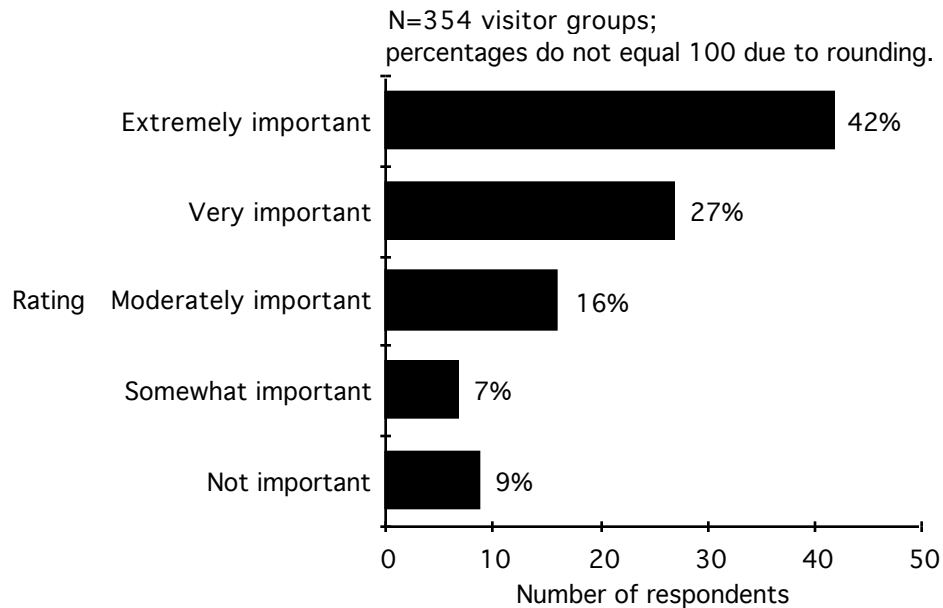
**Figure 17: Importance ratings of roadside exhibits**



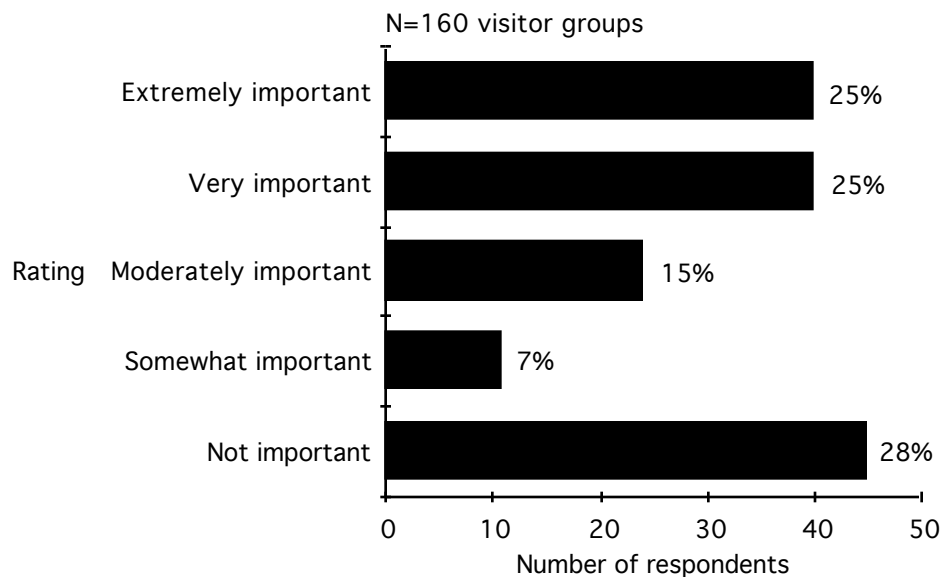
**Figure 18: Importance ratings of self-guided trails**



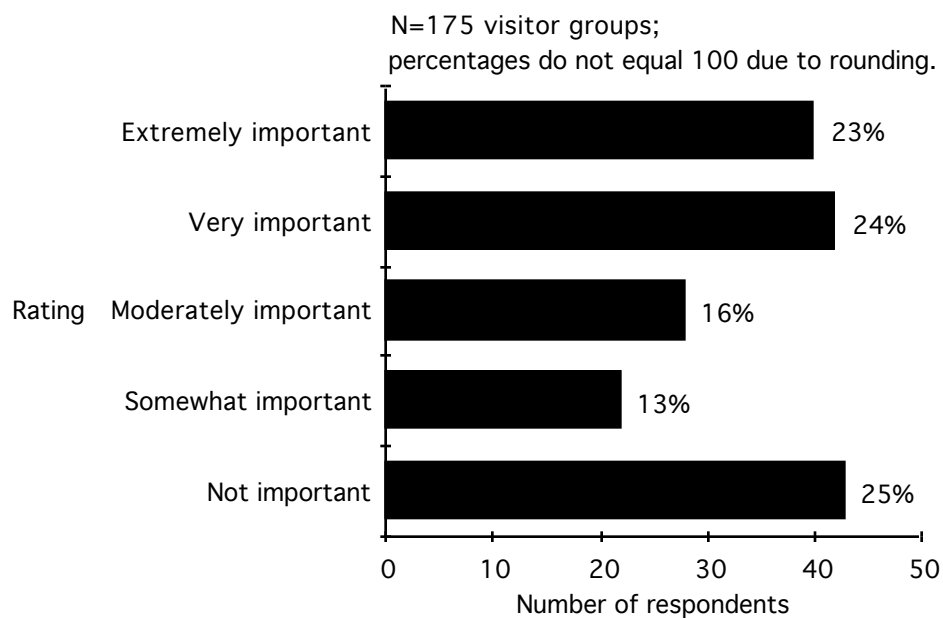
**Figure 19: Importance ratings of park radio information station**



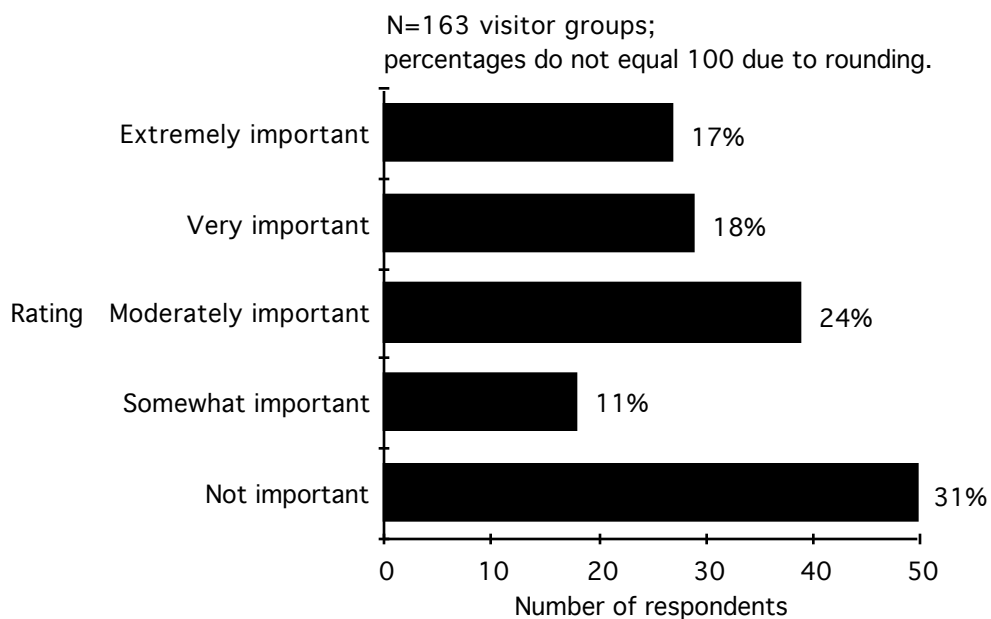
**Figure 20: Importance ratings of visitor center personnel**



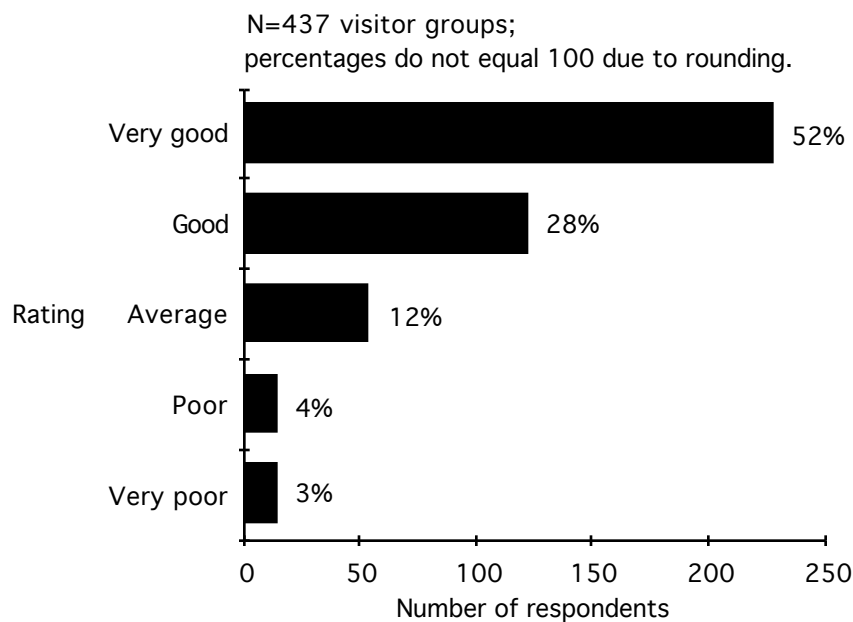
**Figure 21: Importance ratings of ranger-led walks**



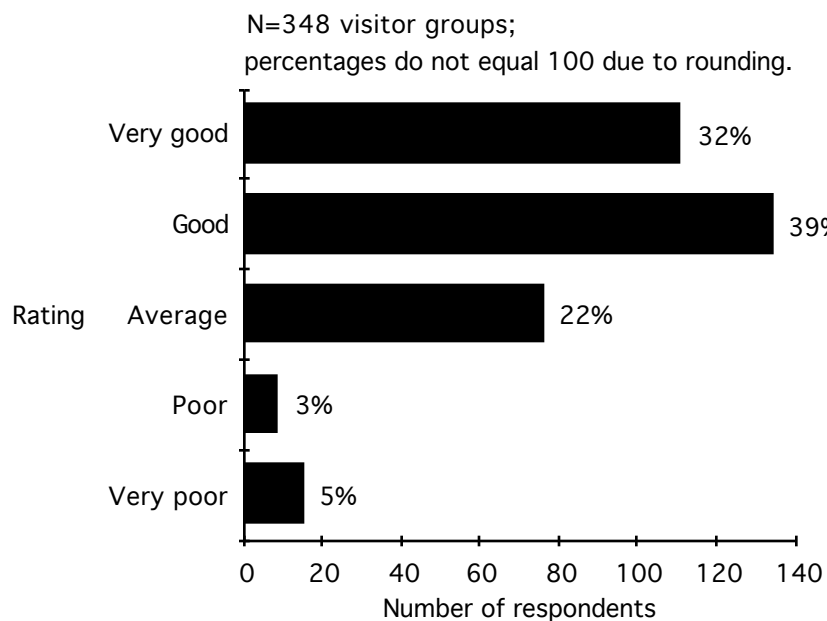
**Figure 22: Importance ratings of evening programs**



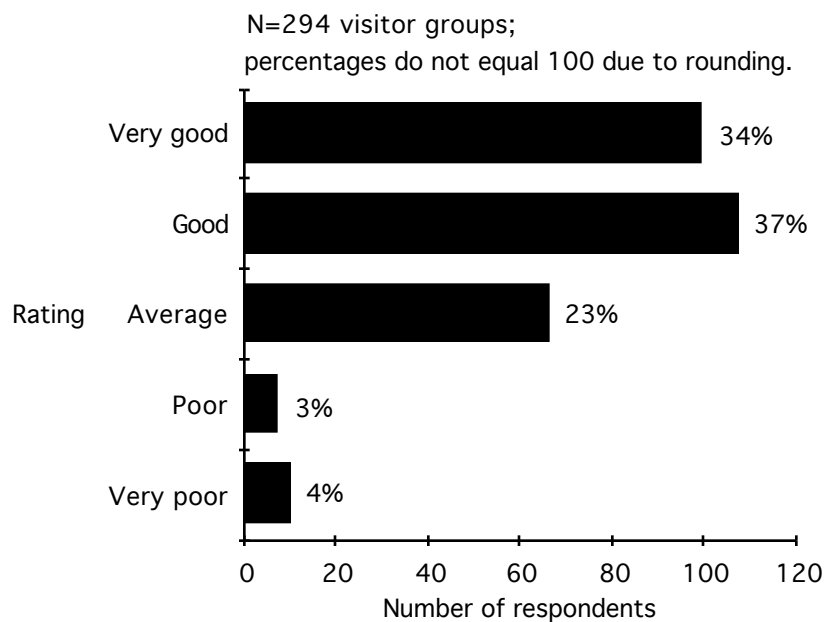
**Figure 23: Importance ratings of ranger-guided boat tours**



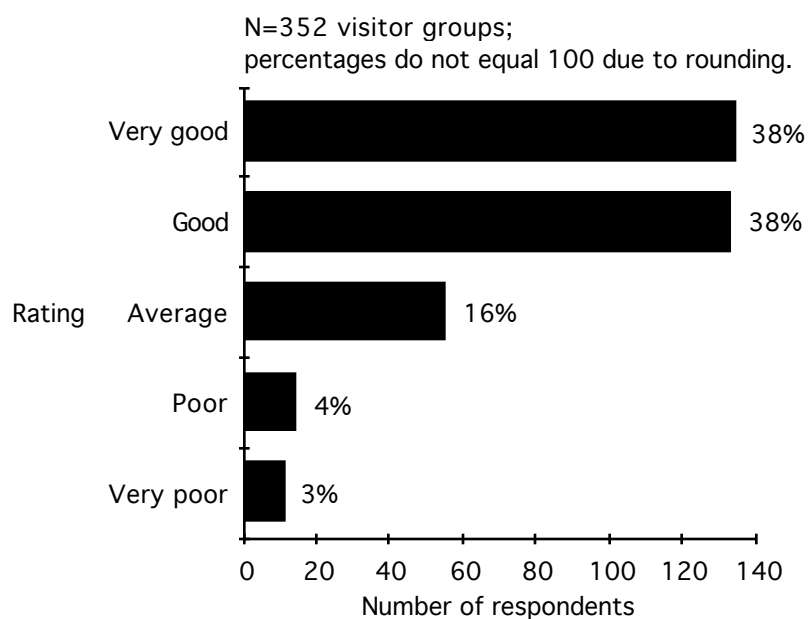
**Figure 24: Quality ratings of park brochure/map**



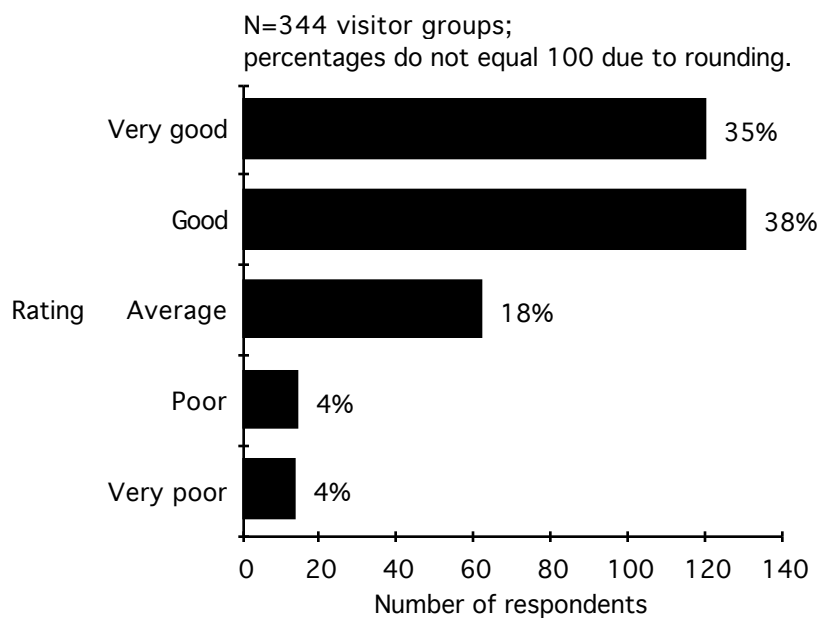
**Figure 25: Quality ratings of Waterton/Glacier Guide  
(park newspaper)**



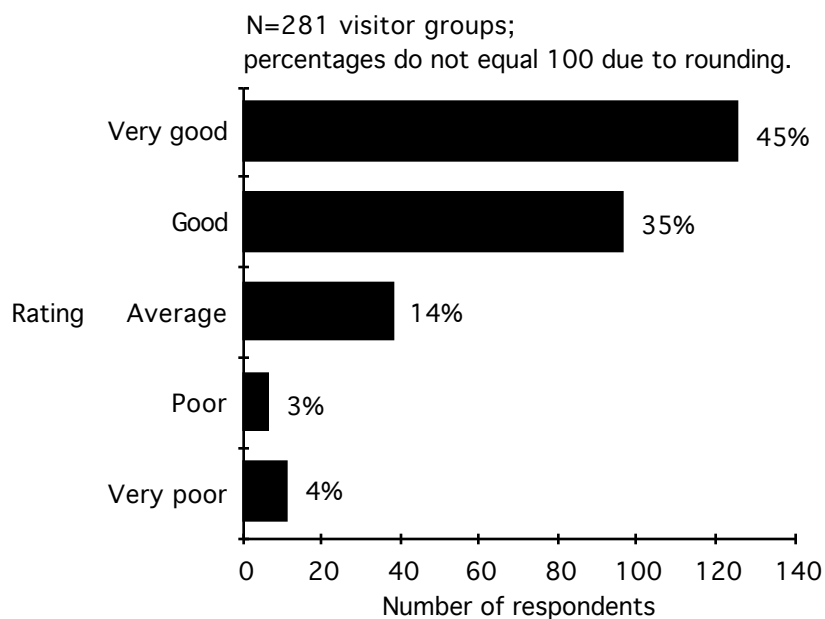
**Figure 26: Quality ratings of visitor center sales  
publications**



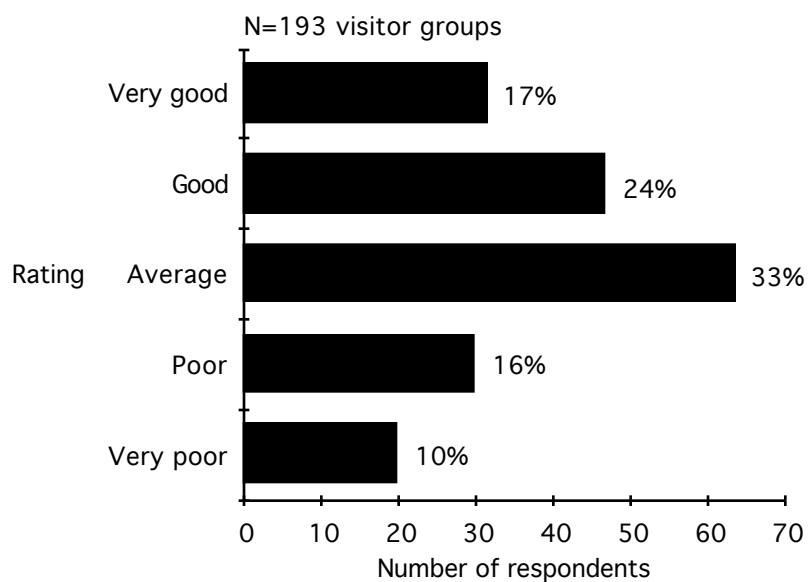
**Figure 27: Quality ratings of visitor center exhibits**



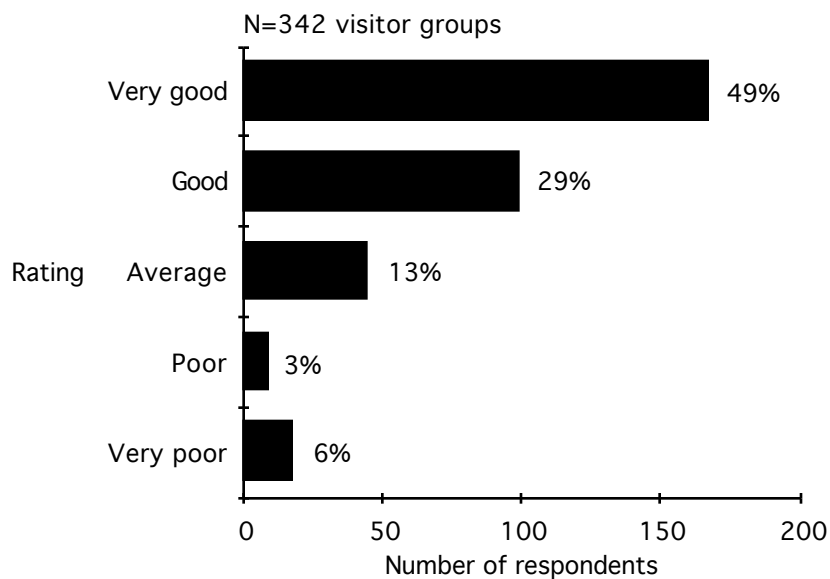
**Figure 28: Quality ratings of roadside exhibits**



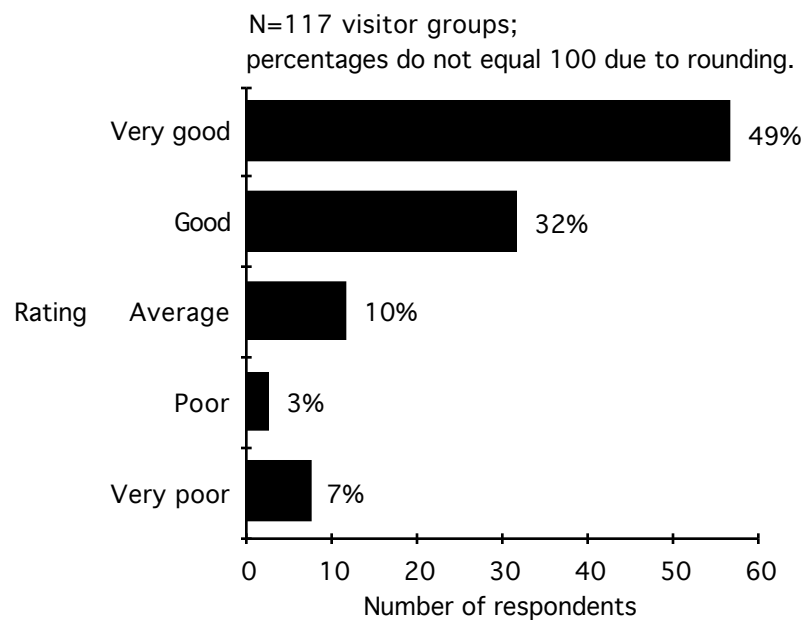
**Figure 29: Quality ratings of self-guided trails**



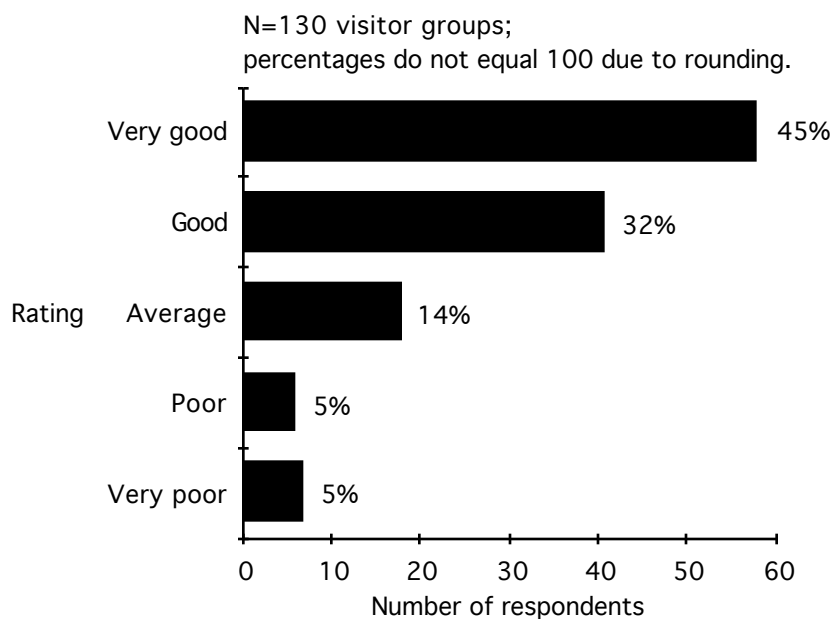
**Figure 30: Quality ratings of park radio information station**



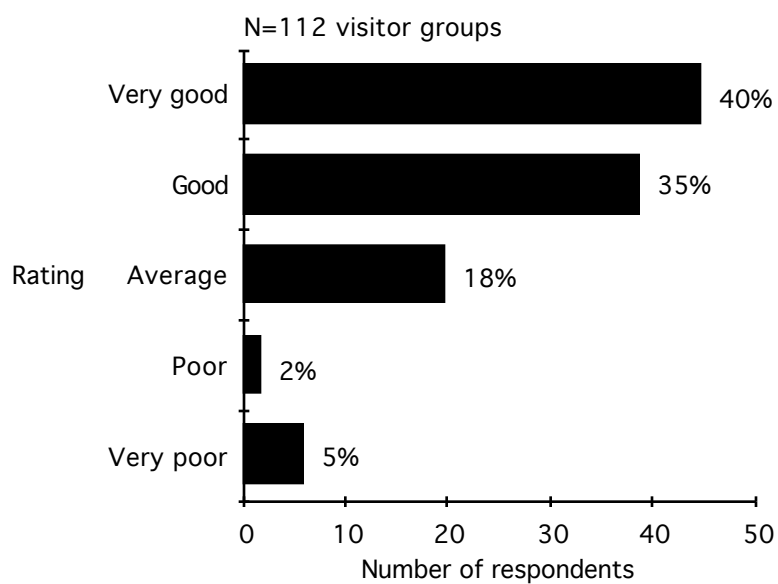
**Figure 31: Quality ratings of visitor center personnel**



**Figure 32: Quality ratings of ranger-led walks**



**Figure 33: Quality ratings of evening programs**



**Figure 34: Quality ratings of ranger-guided boat tours**

#### **J. Commercial visitor services: importance and quality evaluations**

Visitors rated the importance of commercial visitor services they used and the quality of those services. Visitors rated the services using a five point scale: 1=extremely important, 2=very important, 3=moderately important, 4=somewhat important, and 5=not important. Visitors also used a five point scale to rate the quality of the services they used: 1=very good, 2=good, 3=average, 4=poor, 5=very poor.

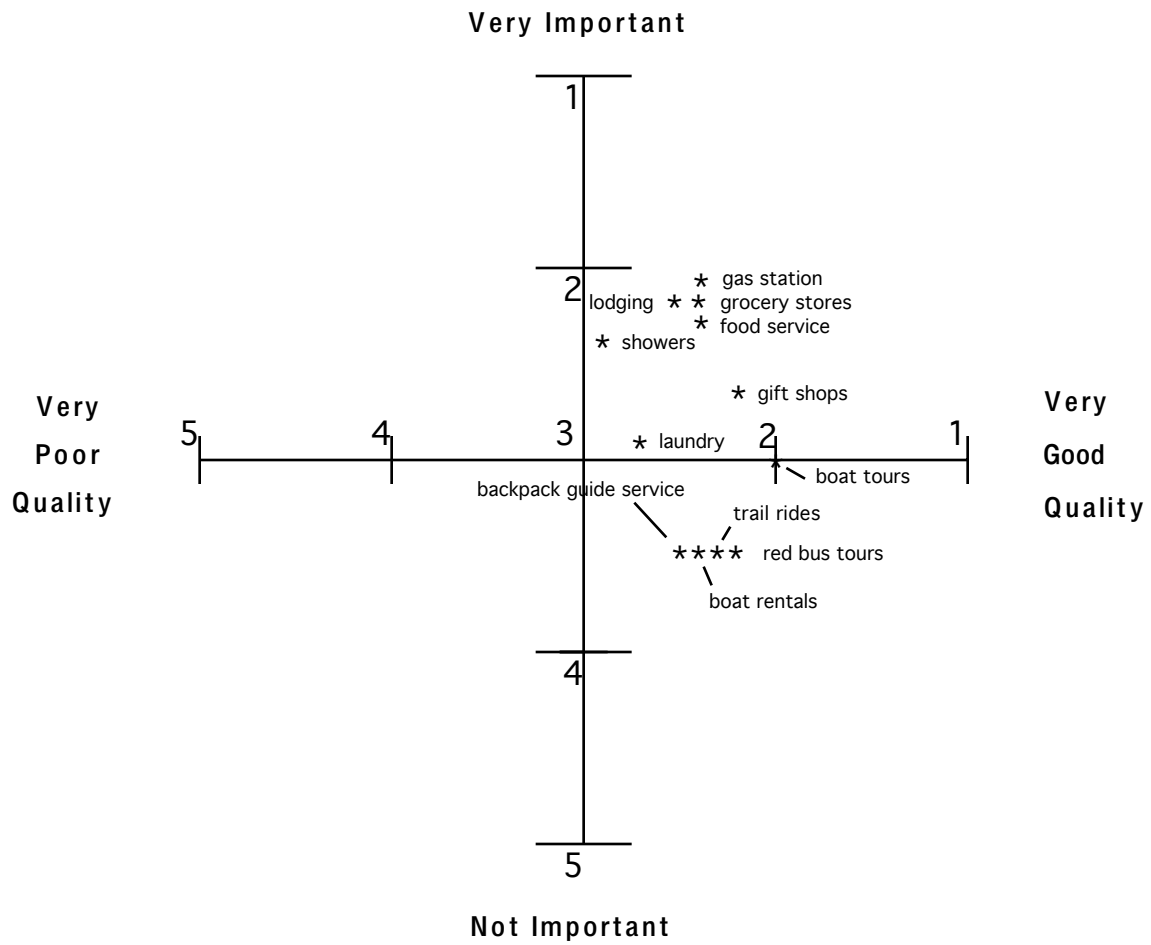
Figure 35 shows the average importance and quality rating for each service. Gas station, lodging and grocery stores were the most important services; boat tours was the highest quality service. Four services were rated less important than the other services: boat rentals, trail rides, red bus tours, and backpacking guide service.

Figure 35 was created by first separately averaging each service's numerical scores for both quality and importance. Then the location for the placement of each service upon the graph was plotted according to the scales on the "X" axis (importance) and the "Y" axis (quality).

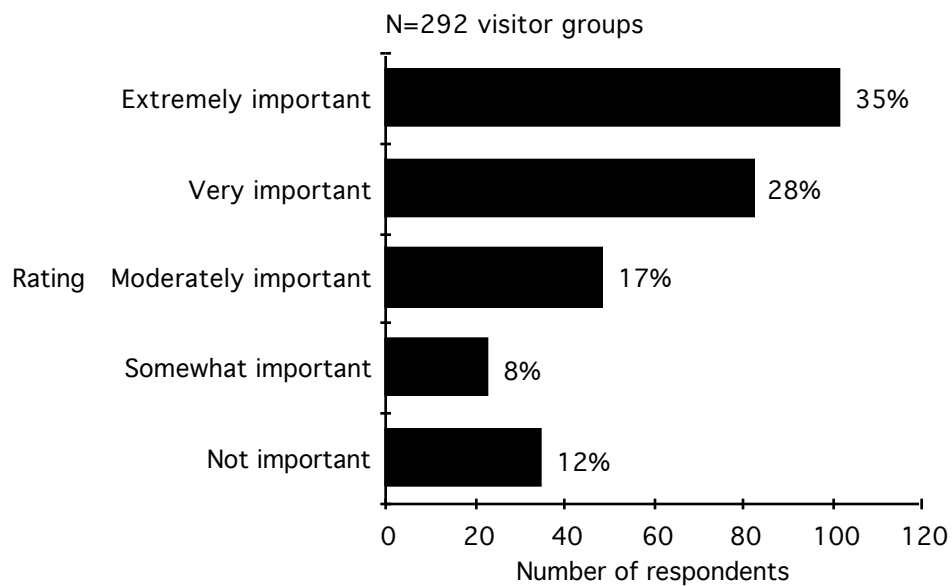
Figures 36-47 show that several services were considered "very important" to "extremely important:" showers (67%), grocery stores (65%) and food service (63%). Services receiving the greatest proportion of "somewhat important" to "not important" ratings were red bus tours (53%) and backpacking guide service (52%).

Figures 48-59 show that several services were rated highly (i.e., from "good" to "very good"): food service (75%), boat tours (74%), red bus tours (69%) and gift shops (67%). Services receiving the greatest proportion of "poor" to "very poor" quality ratings were showers (30%) and laundry (22%).

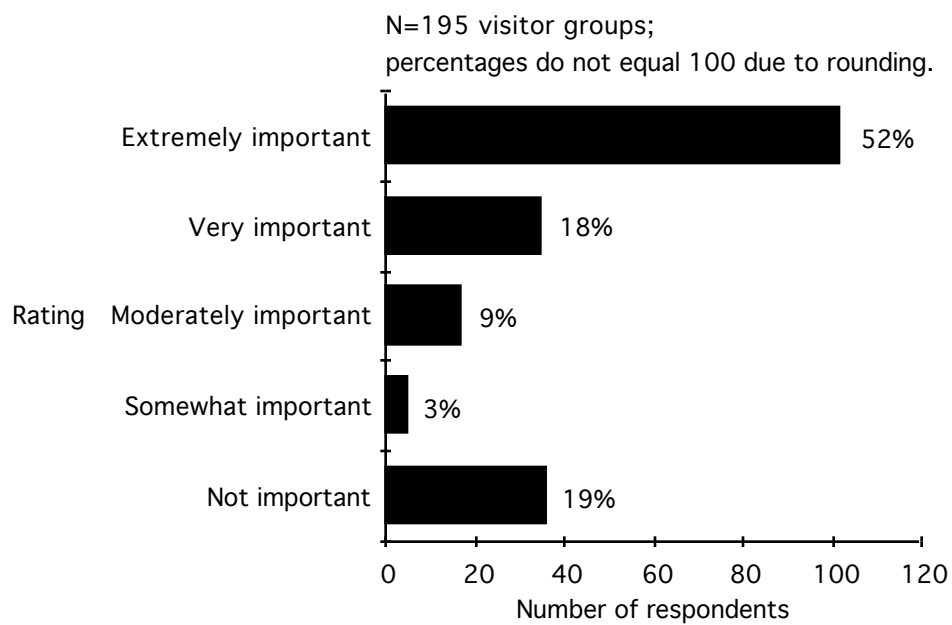
***CAUTION: Visitors may have rated the importance of commercial services which they did not use. Figures 35-47 may not accurately show the importance of these services to the visitors who used them. In Figures 35 and 48-59, visitors may have rated the quality of commercial services both inside and outside the park.***



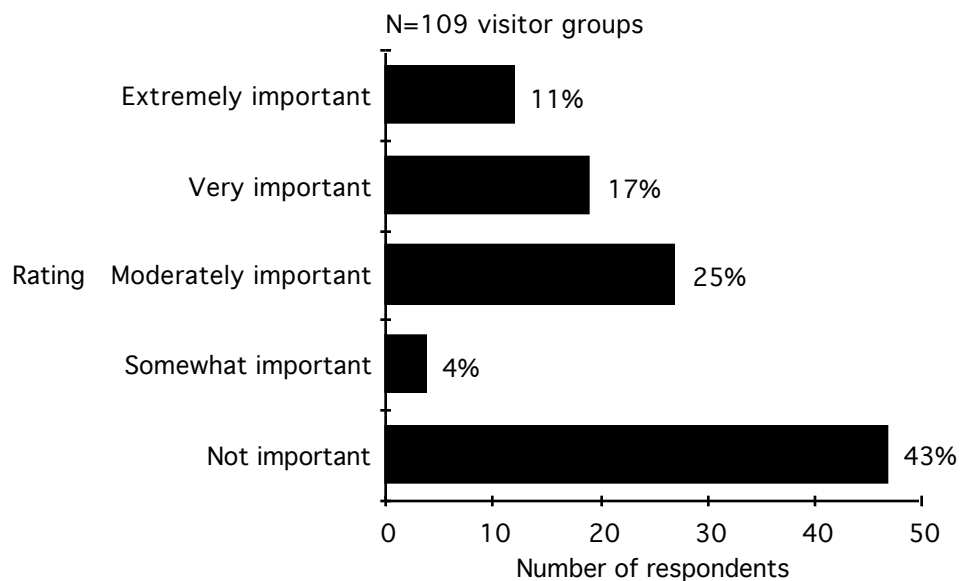
**Figure 35: Average ratings of commercial service importance and quality**



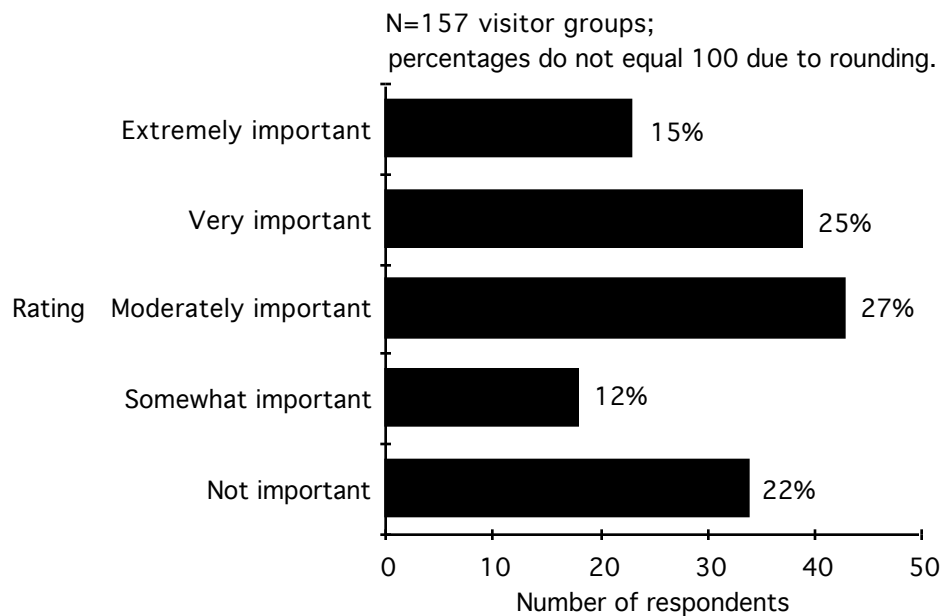
**Figure 36: Importance ratings of food service**



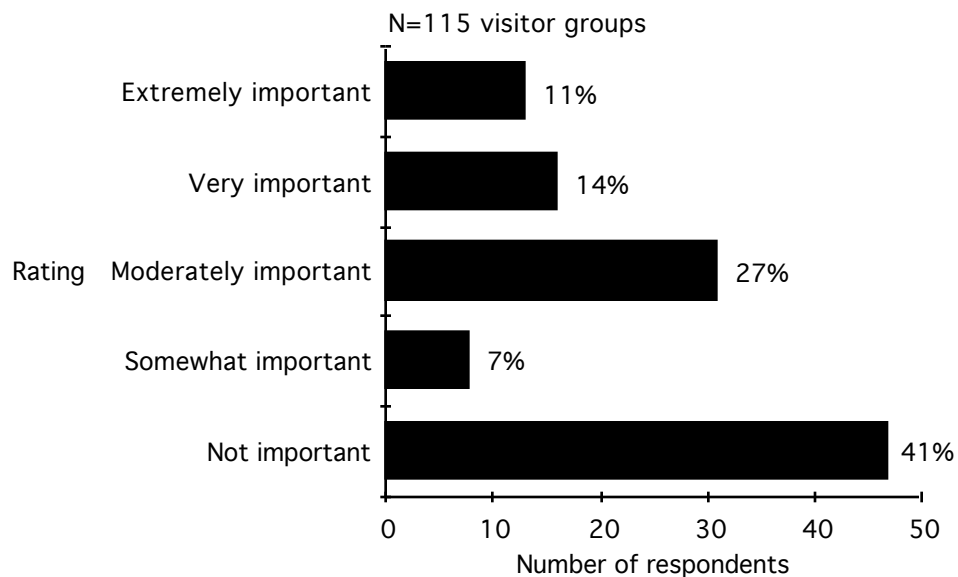
**Figure 37: Importance ratings of lodging**



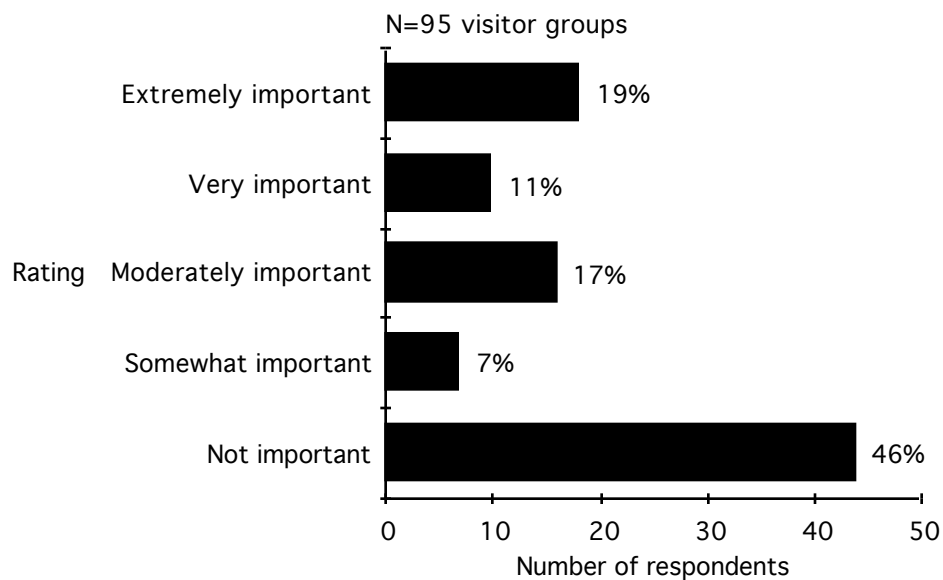
**Figure 38: Importance ratings of trail rides**



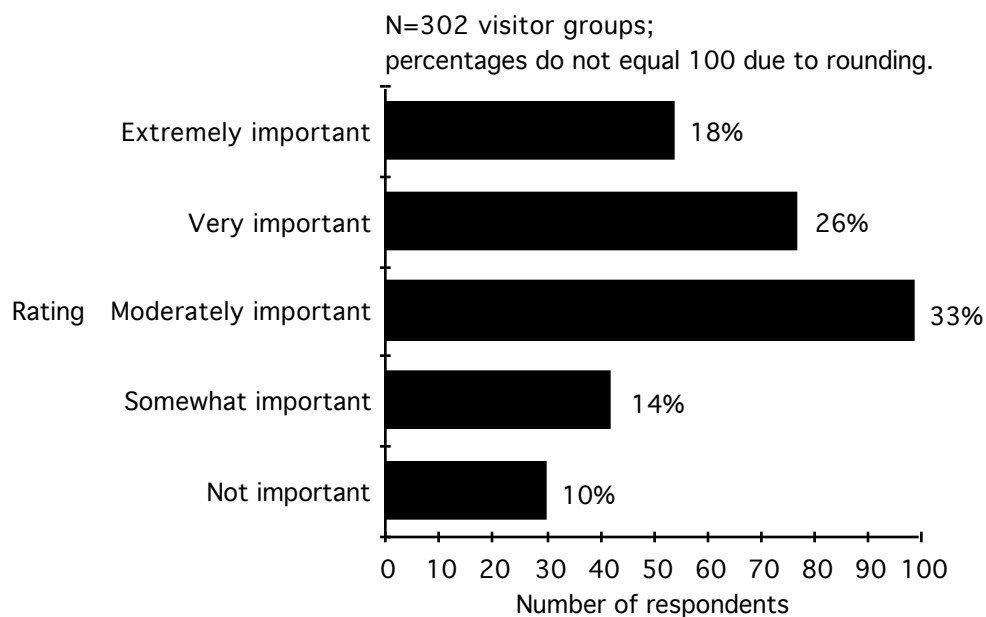
**Figure 39: Importance ratings of boat tours**



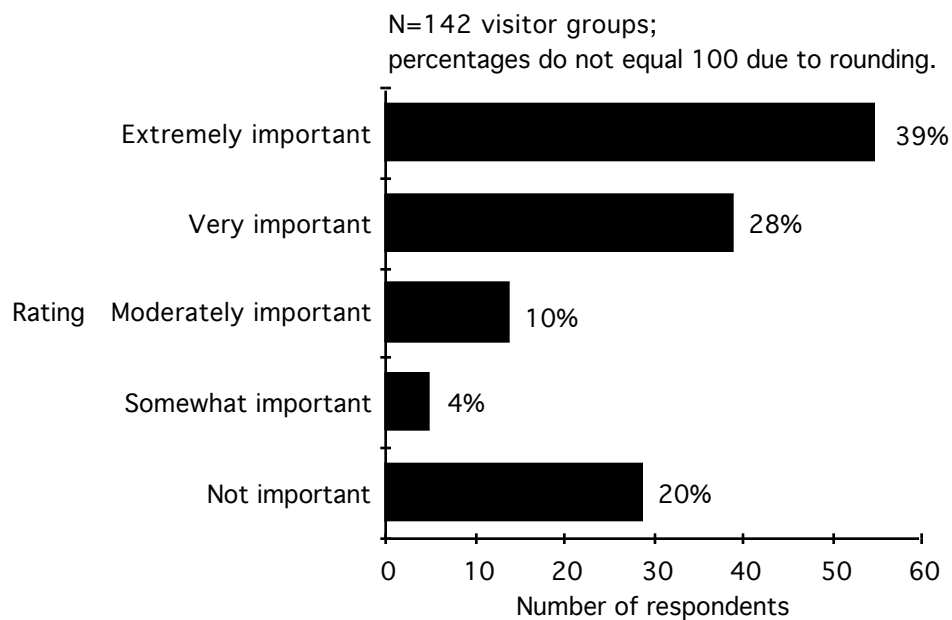
**Figure 40: Importance ratings of boat rentals**



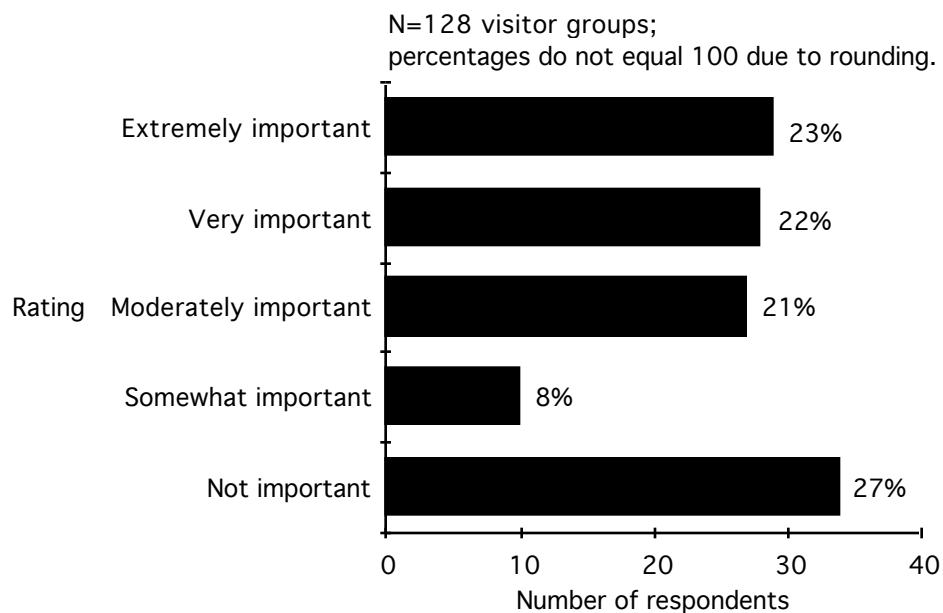
**Figure 41: Importance ratings of red bus tours**



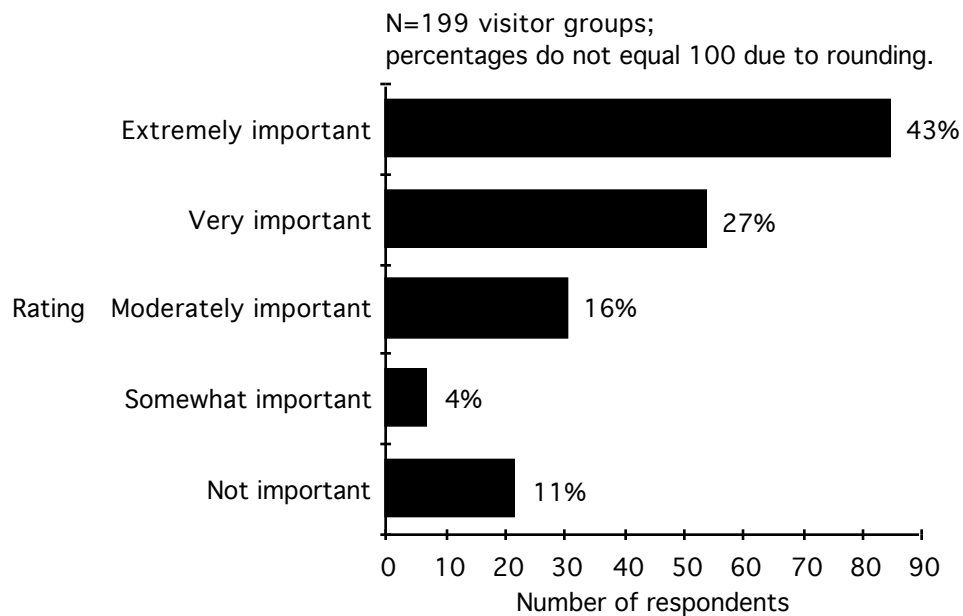
**Figure 42: Importance ratings of gift shops**



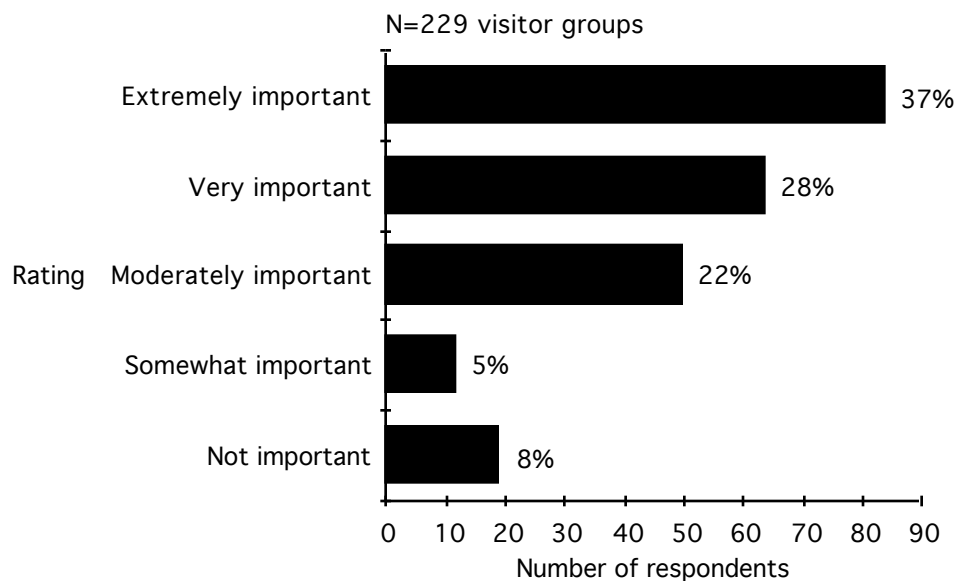
**Figure 43: Importance ratings of showers**



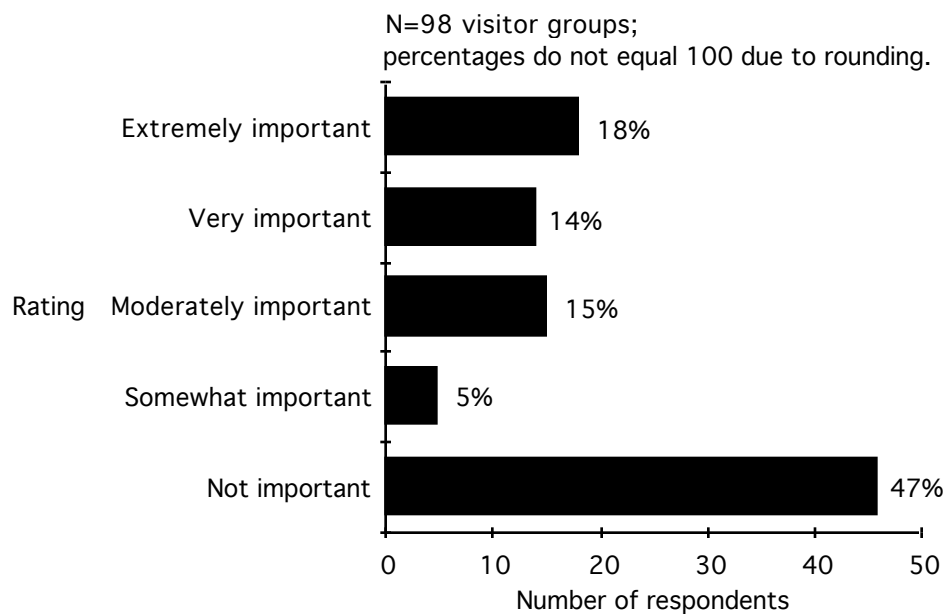
**Figure 44: Importance ratings of laundry**



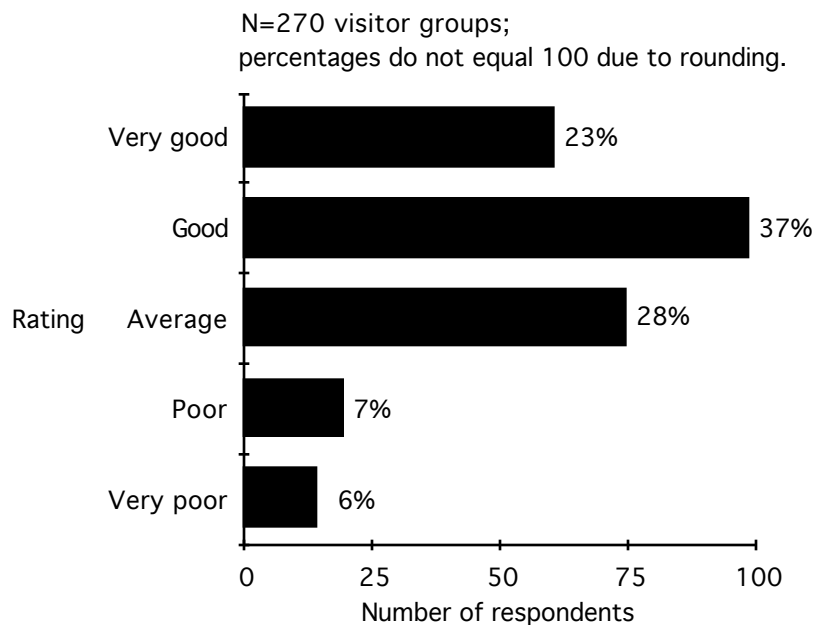
**Figure 45: Importance ratings of gas station**



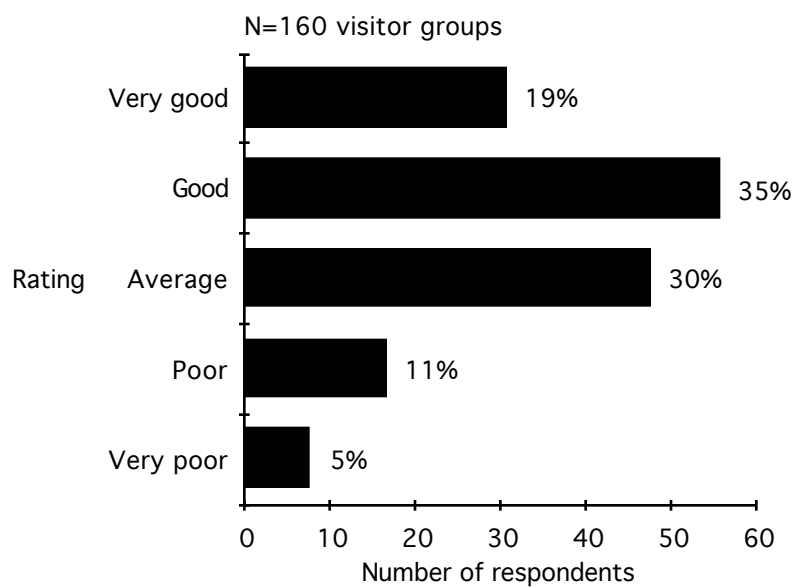
**Figure 46: Importance ratings of grocery stores**



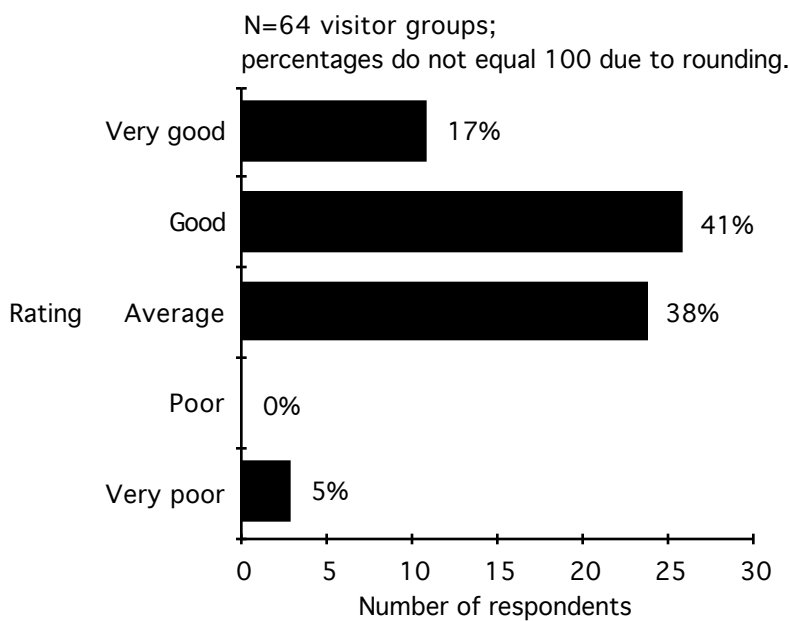
**Figure 47: Importance ratings of backpacking guide service**



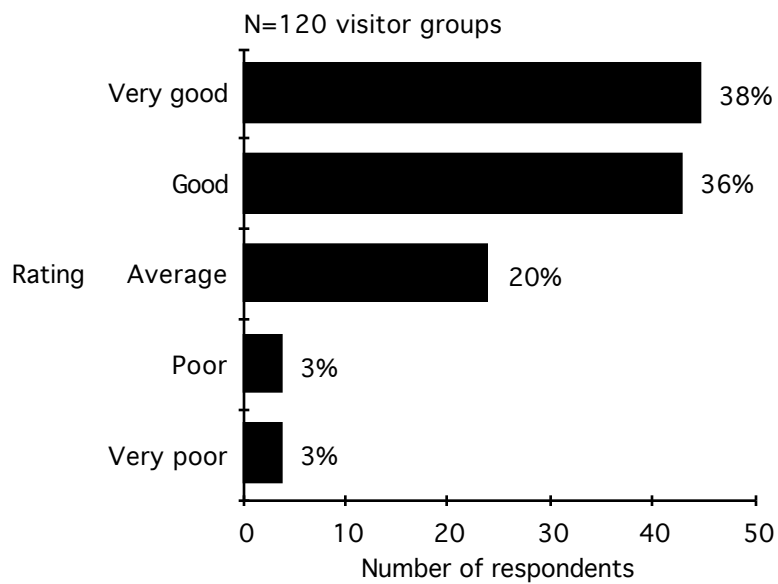
**Figure 48: Quality ratings of food service**



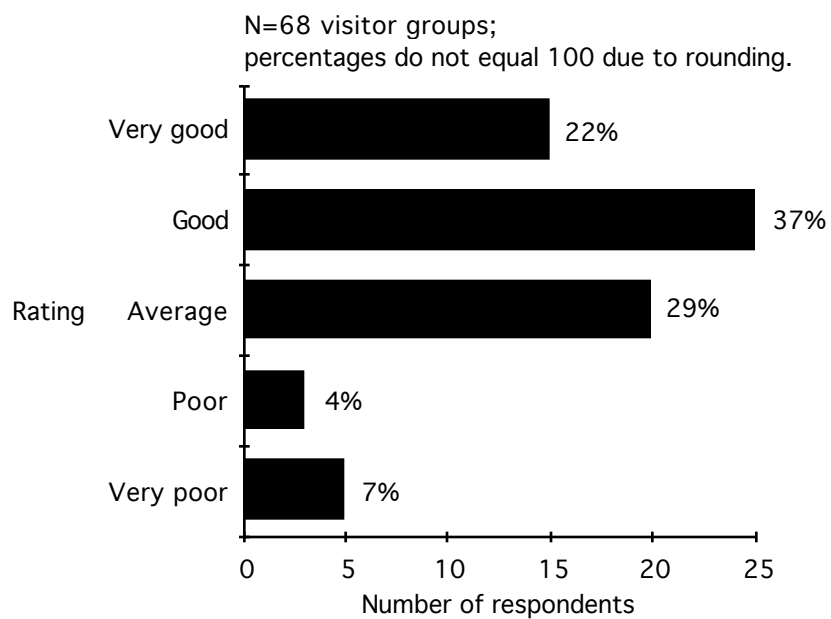
**Figure 49: Quality ratings of lodging**



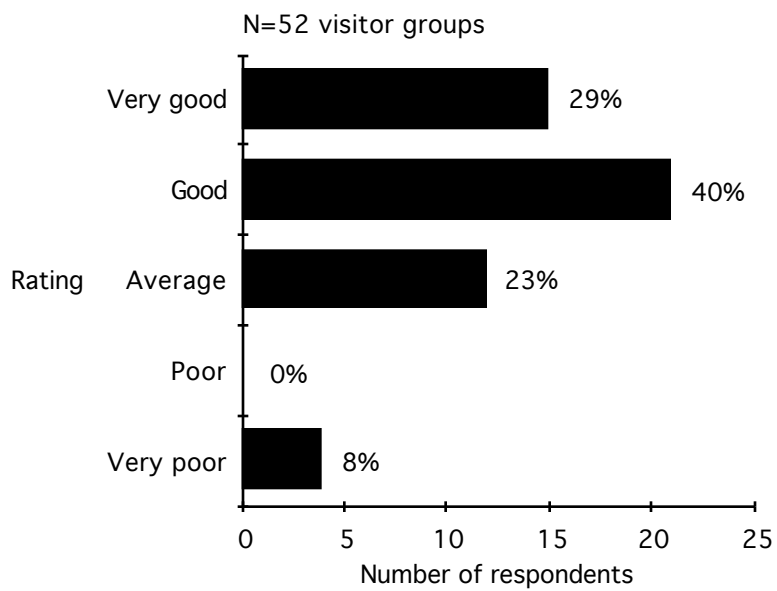
**Figure 50: Quality ratings of trail rides**



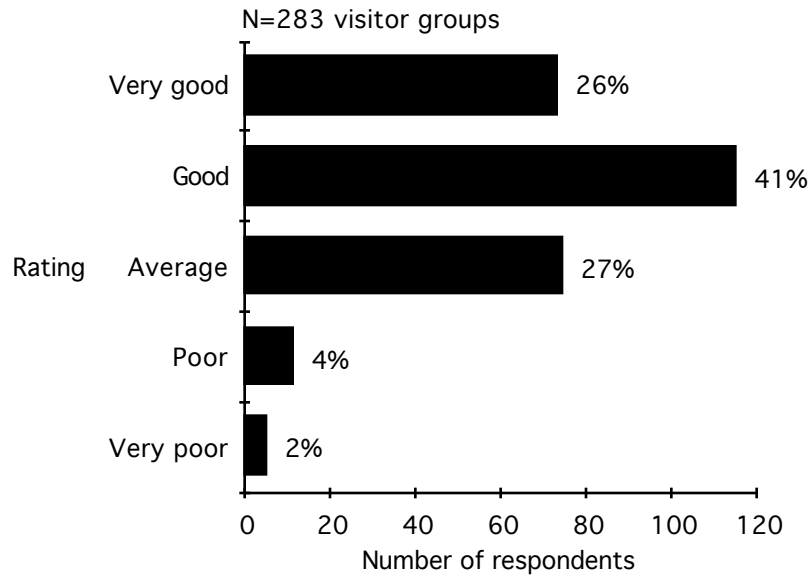
**Figure 51: Quality ratings of boat tours**



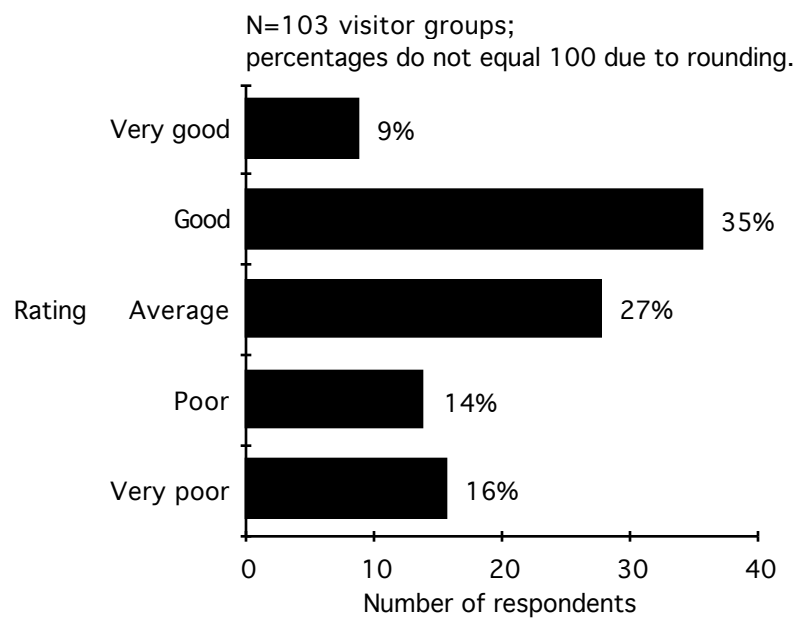
**Figure 52: Quality ratings of boat rentals**



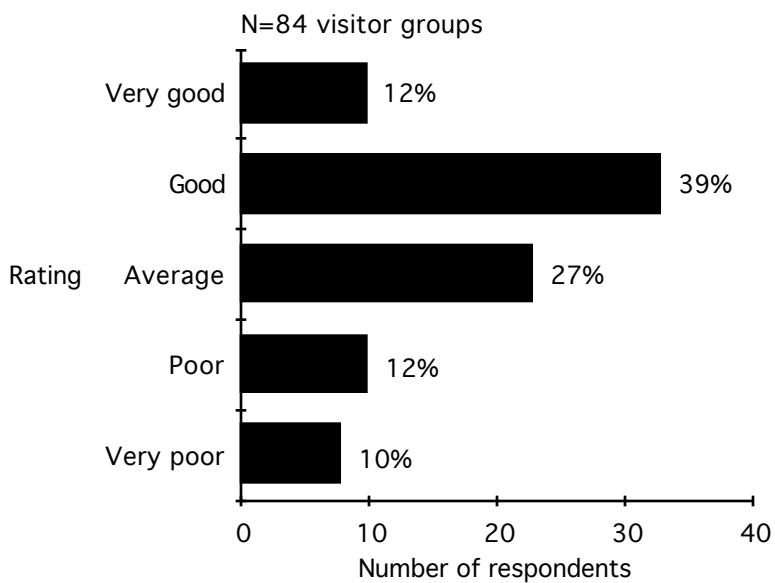
**Figure 53: Quality ratings of red bus tours**



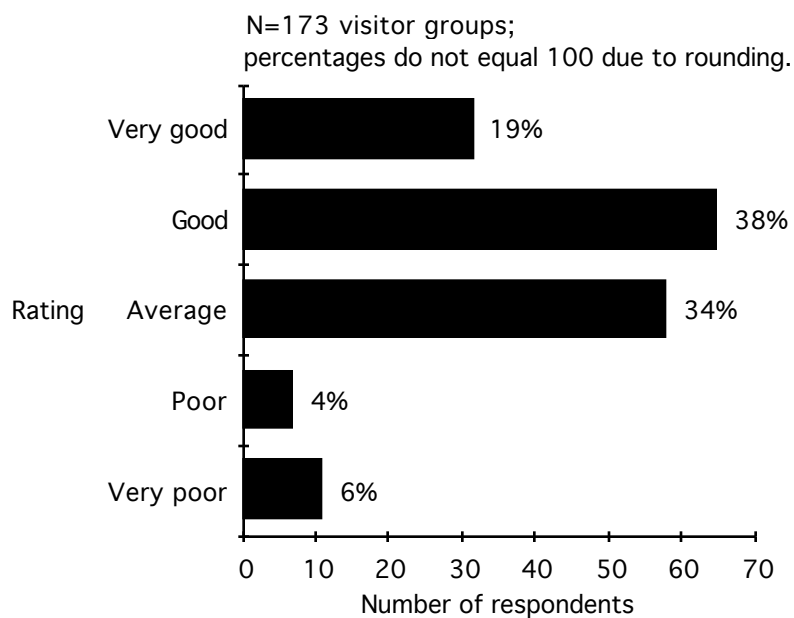
**Figure 54: Quality ratings of gift shops**



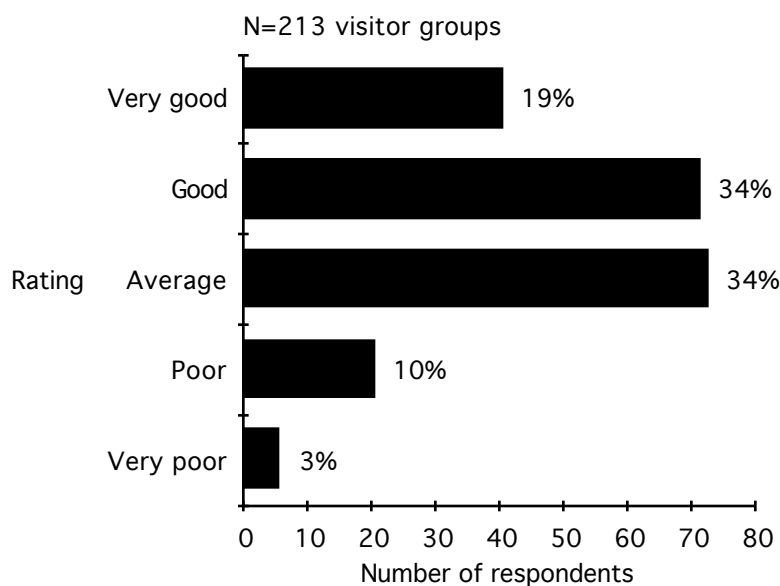
**Figure 55: Quality ratings of showers**



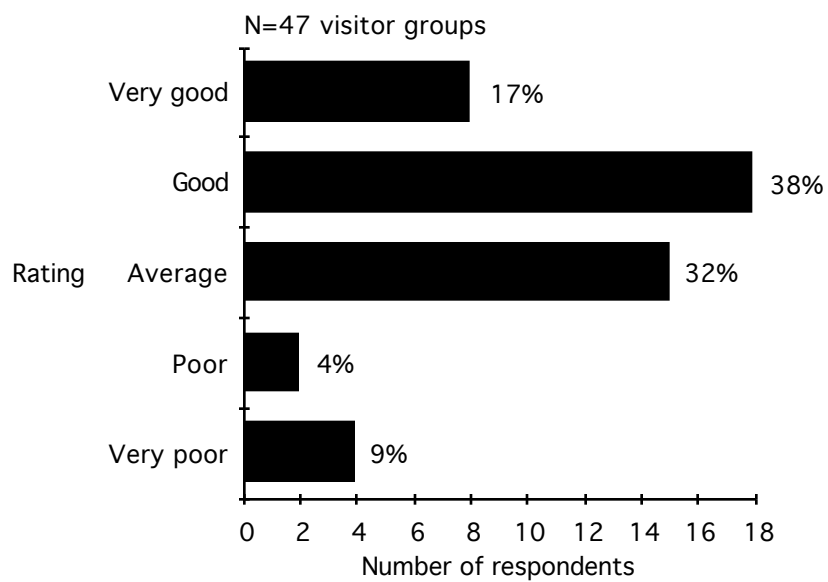
**Figure 56: Quality ratings of laundry**



**Figure 57: Quality ratings of gas station**



**Figure 58: Quality ratings of grocery stores**



**Figure 59: Quality ratings of backpacking guide service**

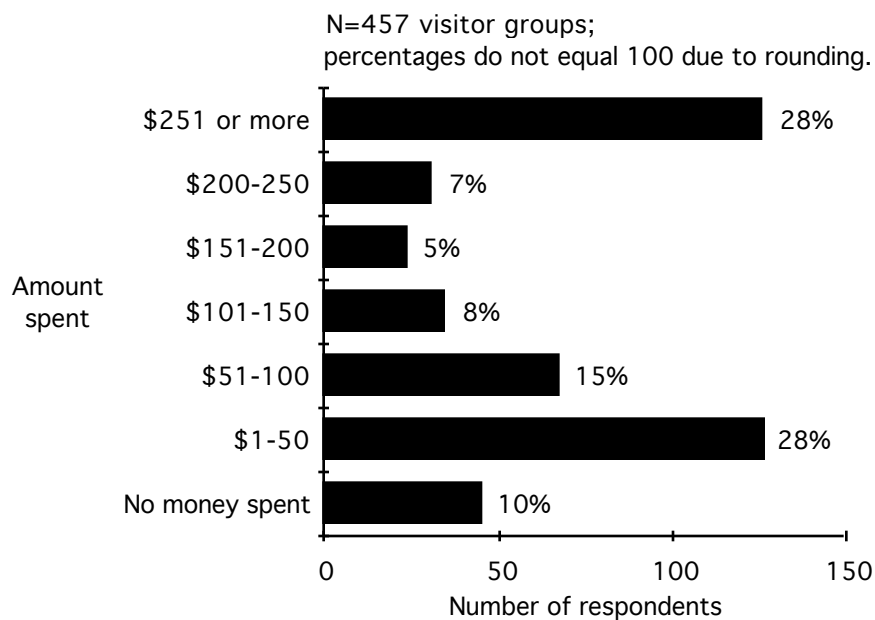
### K. Expenditures

The average visitor group expenditure for the visit was \$253.00; the average per capita amount spent was \$82.00. The average categorical expenditures by visitor groups were: \$95.00 for lodging, \$79.00 for food, \$42.00 for travel, and \$62.00 for "other" items (e.g., recreation, tours, film, gifts, etc.).

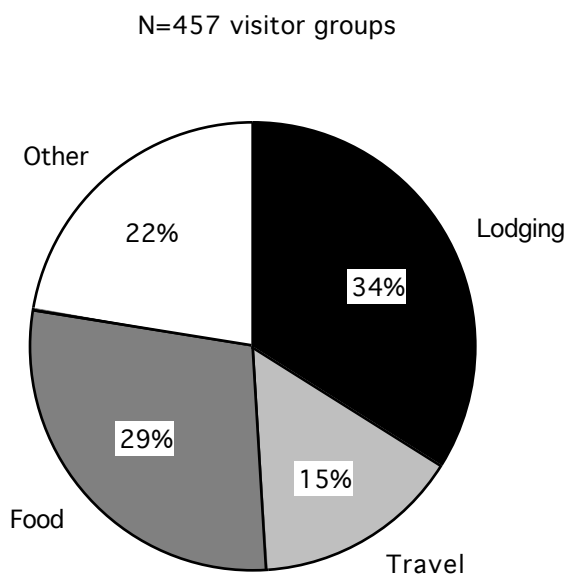
Twenty-eight percent of Glacier National Park visitor groups spent a total of \$1-50.00 during their visit to the Glacier area. Similarly, Figure 60 also shows that another 28% spent a total of \$251.00. Figure 61 shows that the largest proportions of money were spent for lodging (34%) and food (29%).

Of the visitor groups who reported on their lodging expenditures during their Glacier visit, 34% spent no money and 16% spent \$151.00 or more for lodging (see Figure 62).

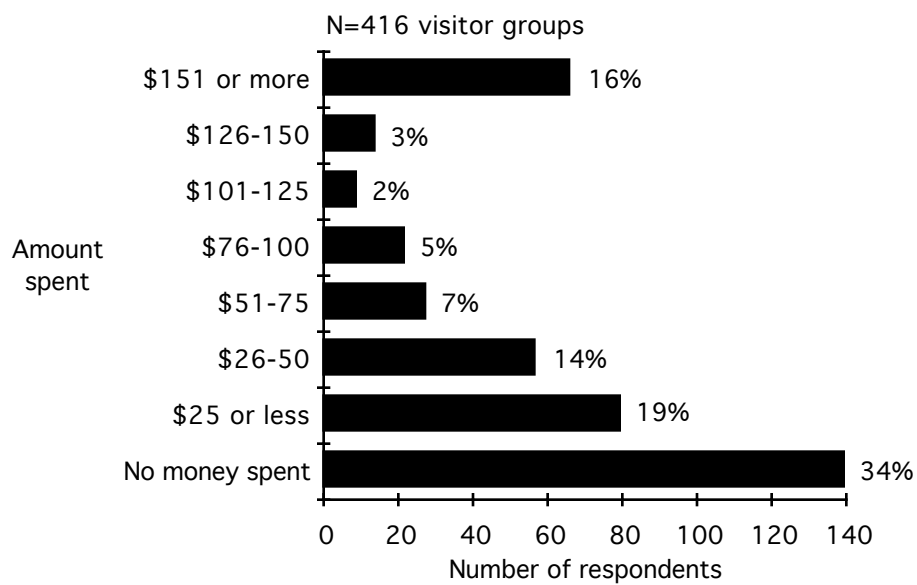
Figures 63-65 show that during their visit to Glacier National Park visitor groups commonly spent \$25.00 or less for travel (38%), food (31%), and "other" items, e.g., recreation, tours, film, gifts, etc. (29%) in the Glacier area .



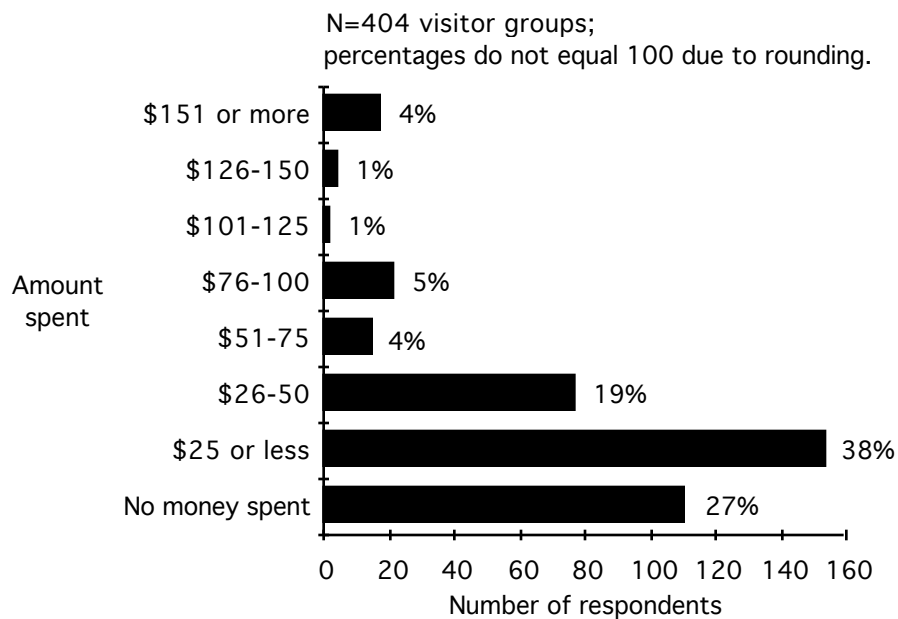
**Figure 60: Total visitor expenditures**



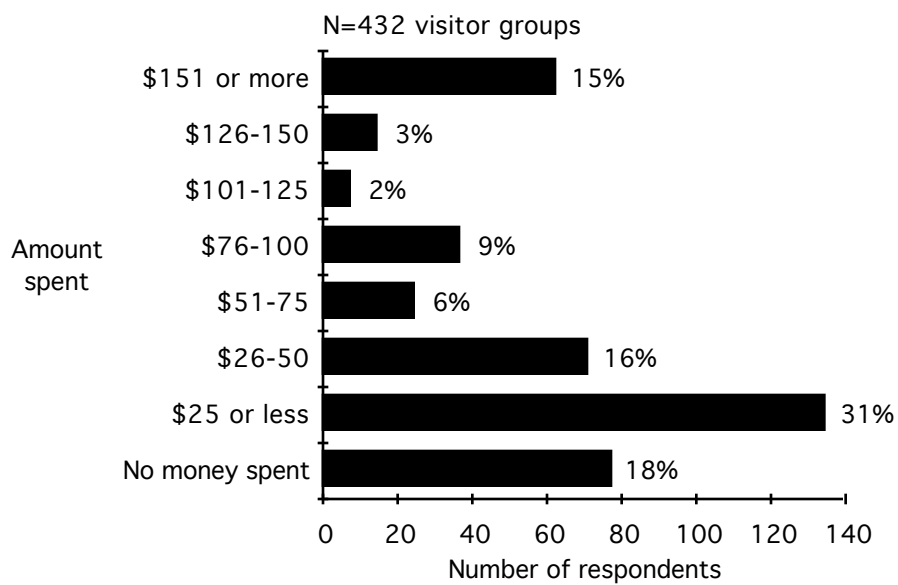
**Figure 61: Proportion of visitor expenditures by category**



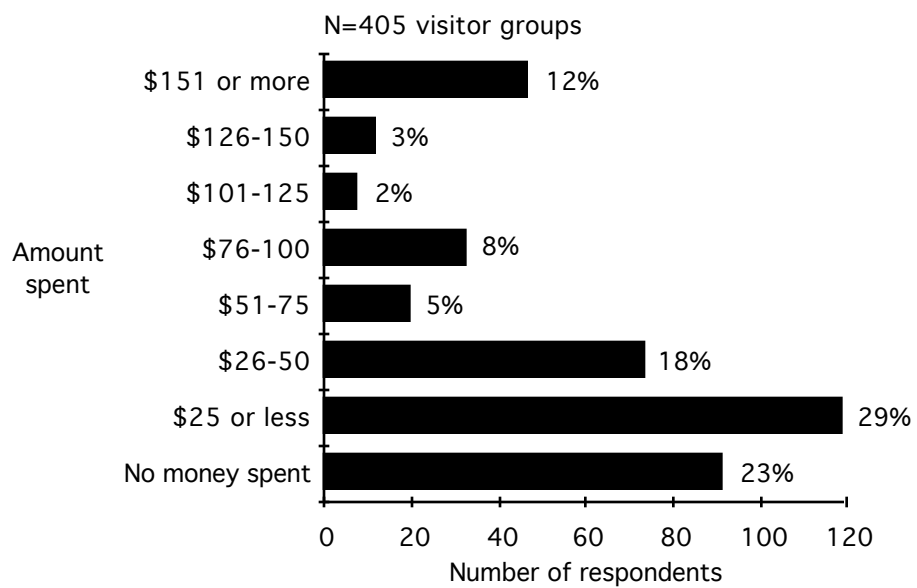
**Figure 62: Total visitor expenses for lodging**



**Figure 63: Total visitor expenses for travel**



**Figure 64: Total visitor expenses for food**



**Figure 65: Total visitor expenses for other items**

#### L. Most and least liked features of campgrounds, picnic areas, and restrooms

One of the most liked features of campgrounds, picnic areas, and restrooms was their cleanliness. A variety of other comments were made as listed in Table 6. The least liked features were not enough campsites, not enough showers and hot water, and that these facilities were too crowded; see Table 7.

**Table 6: Most liked features of campgrounds, picnic areas, and restrooms**

N=665 responses; some visitors listed more than one feature

Feature	Number of responses
<b>Campgrounds</b>	
Clean	16
Spacious sites	15
Scenic sites	15
Private/secluded	11
Well-spaced sites	10
Well-maintained	8
Campfire programs	7
Water	6
Quiet	5
Picnic tables/benches	5
Affordable	4
Fire rings	3
Employees friendly	3
Site availability	3
Not too many RV's	2
Campfire facilities	2
Accessibility	2
Liked selecting own site	2
Group camp area	2
Backcountry campsites clean	2
Backcountry campsites well-maintained	2
Backcountry campsites not crowded	2
Other comments	5
<b>Picnic Areas</b>	
Locations/scenic views	17
Clean	9
Well-maintained	3
Availability	3
Secluded sites	2
Other comments	3

<b>Restrooms</b>	
Clean	89
Well-maintained	10
Sufficient number of restrooms	10
Facility design	10
Well stocked	8
Convenient locations	7
Flush toilets	4
Running water/showers	4
Electricity	3
Pit toilets on dayhiking trails	2
Accessibility	2
<b>General</b>	
Clean	136
Well-maintained	35
Scenic areas	34
Secluded locations	19
Availability	15
Quiet	12
Accessibility	11
Trash containers convenient	10
Facilities fit into natural surroundings	10
Friendly/helpful employees/rangers	7
Convenient	7
People friendly/helpful	5
Organized	5
Signs	4
Well designed	4
Recreational activities	4
Trails/bridges well-maintained	4
Comfortable	2
Water availability	2
Well informed	2
Attractive facilities	2
Shade	2
Parking	2
Other comments	13

**Table 7: Least liked features of campgrounds, picnic areas, and restrooms**

N=347 responses; some visitors listed more than one feature

Feature	Number of responses
<b>Campgrounds</b>	
Not enough campsites	31
Campsites too close together	11
Campsites too small	9
Lack of reservation system	7
Lack of tent-only campsites	7
Enforce quiet hours	6

Crowded	5
Lack of campground availability information	4
Lack of hookups	3
Ground too hard for tents	2
Sites need to be leveled	2
Prices too expensive	2
Other comments	10
<b>Picnic Areas</b>	
Not enough	12
Not enough tables	6
Need more secluded tables	3
Other comments	4
<b>Restrooms</b>	
Lack of showers	47
No hot water	22
Not clean	14
Need more restrooms	9
No lights	7
Pit toilets need improved (control odor/clean)	7
Empty towel dispensers	5
No soap	4
Need shelves/hooks	3
Primitive restrooms	3
Lack of electrical outlets in restrooms	2
Restrooms too far from sites	2
Other comments	8
<b>General</b>	
Too crowded	29
Provide firewood	9
Inadequate parking	7
Add or improve facilities	5
Not enough facilities	4
Use of generators	3
Insects	3
Need designated water spigots	3
Improve maintenance	3
Dogs barking	2
People feeding animals	2
Inconsiderate visitors	2
Other campers leaving food out	2
Poor roads	2
Poor signing	2
Need shade at St. Mary's	2
Additional services needed	2
Other comments	8

### M. Planning for the future

Visitors were asked "If you were planning for the future of Glacier National Park, what would you propose? Please be specific." A summary of their responses is listed below in Table 8.

**Table 8: Planning for the future**  
N=725 comments;  
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
Need more rangers/personnel	5
Improve service	2
Concession staff need better training	2
Improve personnel use/training	2
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
Improve maps--need more detail	16
Improve information provided	11
Provide more ranger-led talks/hikes and more variety	9
Continue to educate visitors about park/ecology	9
Need more detailed trail information	6
Improve roadside exhibits/information	6
Provide more in-depth geology information in exhibits/guides	4
Improve radio station--advertise current information	4
Provide more information at visitor centers/in exhibits	3
Need more roadside exhibits	2
Provide info on fishing spots/baits	2
Other comments	1
<b>FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE</b>	
<b>General</b>	
Need more parking, especially at visitor centers	24
Need more picnic areas	8
Don't expand current facilities	8
Improve lake operations/boat facilities	6
Need more trailhead parking	4
Need more restrooms	4
Improve/enlarge visitor center/museum	3
Promote recycling with containers	3
Build more backcountry chalets/huts	3
Need cleaner restrooms	2
Maintain at current level	2
Improve handicapped access/parking	2
Limit backcountry facility development	2
Clear vistas	2
Other comments	5

**Campgrounds**

Need more campsites/campgrounds	29
Need more showers in campgrounds	18
Need tent-only campsites, separate from RV's	12
Improve campsites	8
Need campsites with hookups	7
Improve campground facilities	6
Need larger campsites/pull-throughs for RV's/trailers	6
Provide level campsites	4
Build no more campgrounds	3
Add electricity to restrooms	2
Provide free firewood	2
Other comments	3

**Roads and Trails**

Provide low cost/free shuttle on Going-to-the-Sun road	18
Widen Going-to-the-Sun road	16
Need more pullouts	15
Improve and maintain roads	15
Need more trails	11
Need secondary roads for use by smaller autos	11
Improve Going-to-the-Sun road signs	11
Improve trails signs	7
Need larger pullouts	7
Reduce traffic on Going-to-the-Sun road	7
Make Going-to-the-Sun road or parts of it one way	4
Make more trails accessible for older or handicapped visitors	4
Separate horse and hiking trails	4
Don't change roads	3
Pave/improve North Fork road	3
Sign/rail Logan Pass boardwalk to keep people on it	3
Improve Logan Pass boardwalk	2
Keep roads well-maintained	2
Improve trails/restrooms	2
Other comments	2

**POLICIES**

Change current regulations	14
Increase regulation enforcement	12
Too many large vehicles currently allowed on Going-to-the-Sun road	9
Need campground reservation system	9
Limit/prohibit number of large vehicles on Going-to-the-Sun road	7
Give incentives to visitors who bicycle/walk	5
Eliminate all private autos	5
Prohibit bicycles on Going-to-the-Sun road	5
Need longer season for facilities	4
Continue restrictions on vehicle size	4
Enforce no feeding of animals	3
Reduce entrance fee for locals/drive-throughs	3
Extend entrance station hours	3
Require quiet mufflers on all vehicles	2
Need better traffic control--require slow vehicles to use pullouts	2

Prohibit power boats on lakes	2
Higher entrance fees okay	2
Need first aid stations	2
Other comments	4

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Keep it natural--as it is	55
Prohibit more development	24
Protect environment first	14
Limit number of visitors in park	12
Eliminate some grizzly bears--need better management	8
Establish carrying capacities--limit/restrict use of areas	5
Manage animals better	5
Expand park	4
Reintroduce wolf	3
Increase opportunities to see wildlife	2
Eliminate/control exotic plants (knapweed/yellow spurge)	2
Maintain current vegetation management	2
Restrict access to protect animals	2
Fight all fires	2
Other comments	2

## CONCESSIONS

Provide more lodging in park	14
Park lodging needs to be updated/improved	8
Need more food services	7
No more concessions	6
Improve food quality and variety	4
Change concession/park policy	4
Build no more lodging in park	2
Improve laundry facilities	2
Add restaurant/snack bar at Logan Pass	2
Improve facilities	2
Accept dinner reservations at lodges	2
Lodges need elevators	2
Provide nighttime entertainment	2
Provide one telephone number for all lodging reservations	2
Reduce facilities	2
Other comments	5

## GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

Prohibit/limit building development outside park	2
Encourage campground development outside park	2
Increase park budget	2
Reduce fees for products/services	2
Other comments	3

## 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 their visits; others describe what they enjoyed or did not enjoy.

### Visitor Comment Summary

N=866 comments;  
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>National Park Service</b>	
Staff friendly/helpful	26
Rangers friendly/helpful/knowledgeable	9
Need more rangers--currently overworked	5
Rangers need to be more knowledgeable	3
Employees rude/discourteous	4
Other comments	2
<b>Concession</b>	
Concession employees friendly/helpful	4
Horseback guide friendly/helpful	2
Other comments	2
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>Nonpersonal</b>	
Need more information	5
Need more detailed map	5
Need more information on trails	3
Need more written information on safety hazards	2
Need plant identification signs on trails	2
Need printed campfire program schedule available at entrances	2
Need more information on unpaved roads, conditions	2
Information difficult to obtain	2
Provide clearer/more precise information on bears	2
Visitor center slide show should provide more information	2
Sell detailed geology guide to go with road markers	2
Visit educational	2
Enjoyed roadside exhibits	2
Visitor centers/information excellent	2
Other comments	5

**Personal**

Need more ranger-led hikes to more areas	7
Enjoyed ranger talks/hikes	6
Children enjoyed Junior Ranger program--advertise it	2
Preferred ranger-led hikes because of bear threat--explain safety	2

**FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE****General**

Park clean	10
Park well-maintained	8
Need more campgrounds	6
Need more services	5
Facilities excellent	2
Facilities adequate	2
Campgrounds need hookups	2
Other comments	6

**Roads and Trails**

Trails well-maintained	16
Roads good	14
Provide bike route--bikers hazardous	7
Enjoyed Hidden Lake boardwalk trail	6
Enlarge Logan Pass parking	6
Widen Going-to-the-Sun road	5
Enjoyed short trails for elderly	5
Enjoyed hiking	4
Current pullouts adequate	3
Road poorly maintained	3
Improve road signs	3
Paved trails/boardwalks help disabled	3
Need more restrooms on roads/trails	3
Need more short trails for elderly	2
Need larger pullouts	2
Trails well marked	2
Need more/higher guardrails on road	2
Need more pullouts	2
Keep Going-to-the-Sun road as is--don't widen/straighten	2
Road signs adequate	2
Need more "stay on trail" signs on Hidden Lake trail	2
Improve trail signing	2
Need secondary roads off of Going-to-the-Sun road	2
Trails need better maintenance	2
Other comments	7

**POLICIES**

Don't allow oversize vehicles on Going-to-the-Sun road	4
Ban power boats/jet skis on lakes	4
Need better enforcement of current regulations	3
Entrance fees reasonable	2
Use shuttle; charge toll for vehicles using Going-to-the-Sun road	2
Don't allow bikers on Going-to-the-Sun road during off-limit hours	2
Improve entrance station operations	2
Change entrance fees	2
Other comments	7

**RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Enjoyed wildlife	17
Preserve for future--no more development	16
Enjoyed wildflowers	8
Disappointed not to see more wildlife	4
Fear of bears/mt. lions affected enjoyment	3
Too crowded	3
Park does not seem overcrowded	2
Appreciate balance of visitors/resources	2
Need shuttle and/or one way hours	2
Disliked insects	2
Protect animals/vegetation from unthinking visitors/photographers	2
Unlikely to return due to overcrowding	2
Wish backcountry travel safer from grizzlies	2
Saw first bear	2
Other comments	7

**CONCESSIONS**

Need additional services provided	5
Lodges full--need more	4
Food service poor/slow	4
Enjoyed boat tours	3
Renovate lodge, especially for safety	3
Souvenir items too expensive	2
Food good	2
Need one phone number to call to locate vacant motel rooms in area	2
Concessions shouldn't have monopoly, need competition	2
Enjoyed hotel/lodge--costs reasonable	2
Other comments	6

**VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT**

Sorry for taking so long to return questionnaire	3
Other comments	4

**GENERAL IMPRESSIONS**

Beautiful, spectacular	160
Enjoyed visit	149
Hope/plan to return	57
Favorite park/place	26
Good job	16
This was return visit	12
Not enough time	7
Enjoyed peace, solitude, relaxation	7
Will tell friends/relatives	5
Enjoyed Many Glacier area most	3
Glad we live near park	3
Appreciate Golden Eagle/Golden Age passes	2
Enjoyed hospitality of local community/other visitors	2
Other comments	11

## 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 proportion of Canadians who entered at St. Mary, request a comparison of residence-country by entry location; to learn how total expenditures varied among group types, request a comparison of total expenses by group type.

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 Glacier 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 35 (Glacier)

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	• Interpretive service importance
• Group type	• Site visited	• Interpretive service quality
• Age	• Entry location	• Commercial service importance
• State residence	• Exit location	• Commercial service quality
• Residence-country	• Park information	• Total expenses
• Number of visits	• Primary destination	• Lodging expenses
• Length of stay	• Primary reason for visit	• Travel expenses
• Food expenses	• Other expenses	

Two-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list)  
residence-country by St. Mary entrance  
 \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Three-way comparisons (please write in the appropriate variables from the above list)  
activity by Logan Pass by family  
 \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Special instructions  
(tell us the format you need, the purpose  
of 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 35 (Glacier)**

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                 | • Interpretive service importance |
| • Group type        | • Site visited             | • Interpretive service quality    |
| • Age               | • Entry location           | • Commercial service importance   |
| • State residence   | • Exit location            | • Commercial service quality      |
| • Residence-country | • Park information         | • Total expenses                  |
| • Number of visits  | • Primary destination      | • Lodging expenses                |
| • Length of stay    | • Primary reason for visit | • Travel expenses                 |
| • Food expenses     | • Other expenses           |                                   |

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**

## 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

## 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.
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.
28. Canyonlands National Park, 1990.
29. White Sands National Monument, 1991.
30. National Monuments, 1991.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park, 1991.
32. Gateway National Recreation Area, 1991.
33. Petersburg National Battlefield, 1991.
34. Death Valley National Monument, 1991.
35. Glacier National Park, 1991.

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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.

# **Visitor Services Project**

# **Glacier National Park**

## **Appendix**

# Visitor Services Project

# Glacier National Park

## Appendix

Margaret Littlejohn

Report 35

February 1991

This volume contains a summary of comments to Question 15 made by visitors. The summary is followed by their unedited comments.

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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 Denver Service Center Central Team, Glacier Natural History Association, Dana E. Dolsen, Richard Vanderbeek, and the staff at Glacier 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.

## Visitor Comment Summary

N=866 comments;  
many visitors made more than one comment.

Comment	Number of times mentioned
<b>PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>National Park Service</b>	
Staff friendly/helpful	26
Rangers friendly/helpful/knowledgeable	9
Need more rangers--currently overworked	5
Rangers need to be more knowledgeable	3
Employees rude/discourteous	4
Other comments	2
<b>Concession</b>	
Concession employees friendly/helpful	4
Horseback guide friendly/helpful	2
Other comments	2
<b>INTERPRETIVE SERVICES</b>	
<b>Nonpersonal</b>	
Need more information	5
Need more detailed map	5
Need more information on trails	3
Need more written information on safety hazards	2
Need plant identification signs on trails	2
Need printed campfire program schedule available at entrances	2
Need more information on unpaved roads, conditions	2
Information difficult to obtain	2
Provide clearer/more precise information on bears	2
Visitor center slide show should provide more information	2
Sell detailed geology guide to go with road markers	2
Visit educational	2
Enjoyed roadside exhibits	2
Visitor centers/information excellent	2
Other comments	5
<b>Personal</b>	
Need more ranger-led hikes to more areas	7
Enjoyed ranger talks/hikes	6
Children enjoyed Junior Ranger program--advertise it	2
Preferred ranger-led hikes because of bear threat--explain safety	2

## FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

### General

Park clean	10
Park well-maintained	8
Need more campgrounds	6
Need more services	5
Facilities excellent	2
Facilities adequate	2
Campgrounds need hookups	2
Other comments	6

### Roads and Trails

Trails well-maintained	16
Roads good	14
Provide bike route--bikers hazardous	7
Enjoyed Hidden Lake boardwalk trail	6
Enlarge Logan Pass parking	6
Widen Going-to-the-Sun road	5
Enjoyed short trails for elderly	5
Enjoyed hiking	4
Current pullouts adequate	3
Road poorly maintained	3
Improve road signs	3
Paved trails/boardwalks help disabled	3
Need more restrooms on roads/trails	3
Need more short trails for elderly	2
Need larger pullouts	2
Trails well marked	2
Need more/higher guardrails on road	2
Need more pullouts	2
Keep Going-to-the-Sun road as is--don't widen/straighten	2
Road signs adequate	2
Need more "stay on trail" signs on Hidden Lake trail	2
Improve trail signing	2
Need secondary roads off of Going-to-the-Sun road	2
Trails need better maintenance	2
Other comments	7

## POLICIES

Don't allow oversize vehicles on Going-to-the-Sun road	4
Ban power boats/jet skis on lakes	4
Need better enforcement of current regulations	3
Entrance fees reasonable	2
Use shuttle; charge toll for vehicles using Going-to-the-Sun road	2
Don't allow bikers on Going-to-the-Sun road during off-limit hours	2
Improve entrance station operations	2
Change entrance fees	2
Other comments	7

## RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Enjoyed wildlife	17
Preserve for future--no more development	16
Enjoyed wildflowers	8
Disappointed not to see more wildlife	4
Fear of bears/mt. lions affected enjoyment	3
Too crowded	3
Park does not seem overcrowded	2
Appreciate balance of visitors/resources	2
Need shuttle and/or one way hours	2
Disliked insects	2
Protect animals/vegetation from unthinking visitors/photographers	2
Unlikely to return due to overcrowding	2
Wish backcountry travel safer from grizzlies	2
Saw first bear	2
Other comments	7

## CONCESSIONS

Need additional services provided	5
Lodges full--need more	4
Food service poor/slow	4
Enjoyed boat tours	3
Renovate lodge, especially for safety	3
Souvenir items too expensive	2
Food good	2
Need one phone number to call to locate vacant motel rooms in area	2
Concessions shouldn't have monopoly, need competition	2
Enjoyed hotel/lodge--costs reasonable	2
Other comments	6

## VISITOR SERVICES PROJECT

Sorry for taking so long to return questionnaire	3
Other comments	4

**GENERAL IMPRESSIONS**

Beautiful, spectacular	160
Enjoyed visit	149
Hope/plan to return	57
Favorite park/place	26
Good job	16
This was return visit	12
Not enough time	7
Enjoyed peace, solitude, relaxation	7
Will tell friends/relatives	5
Enjoyed Many Glacier area most	3
Glad we live near park	3
Appreciate Golden Eagle/Golden Age passes	2
Enjoyed hospitality of local community/other visitors	2
Other comments	11