

# Visitor Services Project Sitka National Historical Park

## Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Sitka National Historical Park during July 11-17, 1993. A total of 486 questionnaires were distributed and 402 returned, an 83% response rate.
- This report profiles Sitka visitors. A separate appendix has visitors' comments about their visit; this report and the appendix contain a comment summary.
- Visitors were often families (51%) and in groups of two (51%). Fifty-eight percent of visitors were 46-70 years old; 6% were 15 years or younger. Most (86%) were first-time visitors to Sitka.
- Visitors from foreign countries comprised 8% of the visitation, with 54% of the international visitors from Canada. U.S. visitors came from California (21%), and Alaska (13%), with smaller proportions from many other states.
- Most visitors (52%) spent up to one hour at the Russian Bishop's House. Sixty percent of the visitors stayed up to one hour at the park visitor center. Most visitors viewed the totem poles (87%), visited the visitor center (87%), walked park trails (74%) and took photographs (71%).
- Most visitors (67%) were not aware of the park's existence prior to their visit. Visitors (36%) often used travel guides/tour books as sources of information about the park.
- The most visited park sites were the visitor center (88%), totem trail (79%) and Russian Bishop's House (65%). In town, St. Michael's Cathedral was the most visited site.
- The most common form of transportation to get to Sitka was the cruise ship (51%). To get to the park, most visitors walked (64%).
- Visitors' main reasons for seeing the park were to learn about history (59%) and see exhibits (50%).
- The most used visitor services were the totem poles, park visitor center exhibits and trails. Information from park employees and trails were the most important services according to visitors. The first floor exhibits in the Russian Bishop's House were the least important service. Trails and second floor tour of the Russian Bishop's House received the highest quality ratings.
- Fourteen percent of visitors said they were Sitka residents. Of those, 89% participated in recreation in the park. Their main reasons for recreating in the park were because it provided needed facilities, they felt safe recreating there, and it was convenient to their neighborhood.
- Many visitors (48%) were undecided about whether exercise stations should be kept along a park trail. Forty-three percent of visitors favor keeping the exercise stations along the trail.
- Many visitors (44%) said it was unlikely that they would use a shuttle bus on a future visit. About one third of visitors (35%) said they would likely use such a bus in the future.
- Visitors made many additional comments.

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