

Resource Manager

The purpose of this message is to request your participation in a series of interviews with visitors this summer. In January 2000 CECW-ON established the Recreation Facilities Standards Committee to develop guidance for future development on Corps managed recreation areas. The Committee organized a public outreach activity to ensure that the guidance meets the needs of our visitors. A part of the public outreach activity, the Committee has recommended that informal interviews be conducted with visitors at recreation areas scheduled for modernization in FY2001.

The purpose of the interviews is to identify recreation facility and service requirements and improvements needed by our visitors. This not a formal visitor survey requiring approval from the Office of Management and Budget. The information we need can be acquired through informal discussions with visitors then recorded on the attached interview form. We have informed OMB staff of this effort and may use the results of these interviews to develop a more formal survey process in the future.

We are requesting that your staff conduct informal discussions with 20 visitors from each major activity group (i.e. campers, boat ramp users, and day users) that use the recreation area scheduled for modernization. If all activity groups are present at the recreation area we are requesting 60 interviews. If not all activity groups are present we are requesting only 20 interviews per activity group. We only need interviews from the recreation area undergoing modernization in FY01.

The interview recording form and instructions are attached to this message. The form can be printed and used to record information from the visitor. The instructions provide detailed procedures for selecting visitors and conducting the discussions. In the next week you will be receiving a CD that contains the data entry software. Please enter the interview results using the software and email the file to Mr. Sam Franco, francos@wes.army.mil by 15 August 2000. We will compile the results and provide you with a copy. Thank you for your support. If you have any questions about the discussion guide and instructions please call Ms. Bonnie Bryson at 502/582-5274 or me at 601/634-2105. Please call Mr. Franco (601/634-4205) if you have any questions or require additional information on the data entry software.

Scott Jackson

CE Facility Standards	Date:	Time:	Weekday	Weekend
VISITOR PROFILE	Project:		Area:	
Day Use ____ Campground ____	Campsite No.:		Campground Class: A B C	
• Camping Equipment on Site	Tent	Van	Pick-up Camper	Pop-up Camper Towable Trailer
	Class C Motor Home		Class A or Luxury Coach	Other _____
WHO:				
• Major rec. activities	Picnic	Camp	Swim	Water Ski Boat Sightsee Fish Hunt
	Other _____			
• Project(s) visited				
• Frequency of use	First Visit			
	<i>Holiday Use:</i>	All major holidays	Memorial Day	4 th of July Labor Day
	<i>Non-Holiday Use:</i>	1-3 visits/year	4-10 visits/year	More than 10 visits/year
• Group type	Single	Family	Friends	Family & Friends Multi-Family
	Other _____			
• Local Resident	Yes	No		
• Shoreline Resident	Yes	No		
• First time visitor	Yes	No		
• Only use CE projects?	Yes	No		
• Ethnicity	White	Hispanic	Black	Asian/Pacific Native American Other
WHAT:				
<i>Observations by the visitors on:</i>				
• Favorite facilities/services				
• Needed improvements				
• Problem areas				
• Concerns				
• Additional facilities/services needed				
• Things we do that are not needed				
WHY:				
• Reason visitor selected <i>this</i> area today				
• How this area compares to other areas they visit				
OTHER:				
• Additional comments				

**RAMP Public Outreach
Visitor Profile
Procedures and Description of Data Fields**

PROCEDURES: Following are recommended procedures for visitor contacts using the Visitor Profile format.

Give visitors advance notice: Customers need a heads up to be thinking along the lines of the Visitor Profile topics. Particularly for camping areas, you may have contract gate attendant distribute a card to incoming campers a day or so before sampling the area, with wording such as:

<p>Do you have ideas for improving and modernizing this recreation area? A Corps representative will be in the area to talk to campers on May 31st. Please be thinking about suggestions you can give if your campsite is selected for an interview.</p> <p>If you do not get to talk directly to the Corps representative you can still give us your ideas by jotting them down on this card and returning it to the Park Attendant before you leave.</p> <p>Thank you for your help.</p>

Sample selection: Consider using a random number generator to select customers to be interviewed, for instance to select campsites in a campground. This is not to imply statistical significance for the results, but works well to get a good distribution across the recreation area. Visitors also readily accept the answer that they were randomly selected when they ask, "Why did you pick me?" and those who ask, "Why didn't you pick me?"

Initiating visitor contact: An example of a simple script to start the conversation:

"Hello, my name is _____. I'm with the Corps of Engineers _____office. There is a possibility that the Corps is going to get some money from Congress to modernize our areas over the next few years, and we're talking to a random sample of visitors today to get ideas on what we should do (or not do) to meet your needs."

Recording results: Not every group or individual will give information to match each of the blocks on the format. Try to steer the discussion to get information, but depend on a conversational approach rather than a stream of direct questions. It may be most productive to record information after leaving the visitor(s), since otherwise they may become distracted or uncomfortable wondering what is being written down, and not give as much detail.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions are provided to assist in recording the results of customer interviews on the Visitor Profile format.

Date: Date of interview

Time: Time interview begins

Weekday/Weekend: Designate if interview occurs on weekday or weekend day

Project: Project name

Area: Name of the recreation area where interview occurs

Day Use/Campground: Recreation area type

Campsite No.: If interviewing a camper, the campsite they are occupying

Campground Class: If interviewing in a campground, indicate whether a Class A, B or C facility

Camping Equipment on Site: If interviewing a camper, from the choices provided on the format, circle the type of equipment they have on the site. Below are some examples to assist with determination of equipment type:



Towable Trailer



Class C Motor Home



Class A or Luxury Coach

WHO:

Major Rec. Activities: From the choices provided on the format, circle all the major recreation activities in which the visitors indicate they participate at the project.

Project(s) Visited: Write in names of other Corps projects that the visitors use.

Frequency of Use: Circle the choices that describe the visitors' frequency of use for both holidays and non-holidays.

Group Type: From the choices given on the format, circle the description of the group.

Local Resident: Prior to beginning interviews, the definition of "local" for this project needs to be determined by project personnel. On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the visitor meets that criterion.

Shoreline Resident: On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the visitor is a shoreline resident.

First time visitor: On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the visitor is a first time visitor to the project.

Only use CE projects: On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the visitor uses Corps projects exclusively for their major recreation activities.

Ethnicity: From the choices given on the format, circle the ethnicity of the visitor(s) being interviewed based on visual observation.

WHAT, WHY, and OTHER:

Observations by the visitors on: In the blocks provided, note visitor comments on the various topics listed.