

RECREATION: PROVIDE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR AMERICA

The merchant John Wanamaker once said, “People who cannot find time for recreation are often obliged sooner or later to find time for illness.” Complementary to Mr. Wanamaker’s observation, Webster defines recreation as a means “to refresh strength and spirits after toil.” Every year, close to 500 million people from all over the world renew their spirits on lands and waters managed by the Department of the Interior. Interior maintains and manages thousands of recreation areas, including 390 units within the National Park Service, 547 National Wildlife Refuges, 308 Bureau of Reclamation recreation areas, and close to 3,500 public land recreation sites administered by the BLM. These areas offer countless ways to renew the spirit and energize the body as well as mind. Boating, hiking, mountain climbing, hunting, fishing, swimming, wildlife viewing, bicycling, and horseback riding—the opportunities are endless and diverse—and many are available within only an hour’s drive.

FIGURE 1-35

Not Just for the Birds: Factoring Customer Input into Wildlife Management Decisionmaking

Results of the first ever National Duck Hunter Survey suggest that the majority of the hunting public agrees with recent waterfowl season lengths and bag limits set by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The independent survey was commissioned by the National Flyway Council and the Wildlife Management Institute. Responses were received from more than 10,000 duck hunters representing 49 States.

Waterfowl hunting is regulated by the FWS in cooperation with State fish and wildlife agencies. These agencies work through structures called flyway councils, which geographically represent the general north-south migration patterns of waterfowl. Together, these agencies, along with non-profit organizations and conservation organizations, will review and discuss the survey findings to inform future decisions regarding waterfowl hunting and management.



FIGURE 1-36

Take a Virtual Vacation: Check Out a National Park Webcam

Did you know that you can visit several units of the National Park System without even leaving your arm chair? Check out Interior's park webcams at <http://www.doi.gov/webcam.html>. You can take a "virtual" trip to Glacier National Park in Montana for real-time vistas from six different park locations. Zoom over to the Grand Canyon in Arizona for an entirely different experience—the expanse of a water-carved canyon with its large buttes, rocky spires, and towering cliffs. Visit Point Reyes National Seashore and the scenic panorama of rugged ocean coastline, thundering waves, and foggy horizons. Go east to North Carolina and Tennessee to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park for a relaxing glimpse of ancient mountains, endless forests, and the simple pleasures of nature. Each of the webcam sites provides links to the National Park Service website for additional information, current weather, including air quality measurements, and park maps showing the camera field of view. It's a cyber vacation that makes you want to be there in person!



In FY 2006, we met 100% of our performance targets for our Recreation Mission Area (Figure 1-41). This compares with 87% of targets met, and 13% of targets for which we had preliminary data or no reports in FY 2005. There were no unmet targets in FY 2005. Of the measures against which we reported performance in FY 2006, four exceeded performance targets by 5% or more. In one case, this is attributable to our increased emphasis on educating the public regarding Interior on-line recreation systems (Ref. #92), resulting in a milestone number of on-line recreation transactions supported by Interior in 2006. In another case, Interior was able to exceed the percent of universally accessible facilities we targeted for 2006, in relation to our total number of recreation areas (Ref. #91), by making this a priority goal.

Measuring the Quality of Visitor Services

One of Interior's goals is to improve visitor services at national parks, refuges, and other public lands in response to growing visitation and use. Interior's NPS has conducted over 150 in-depth visitor studies in more than 130 units of the National Park System through its Visitor Services Project (VSP). The studies provide park managers with accurate information about visitors—who they are, what they do, and their needs and opinions (Figures 1-37 and 1-38). Park managers use this information to improve visitor services, protect resources, and manage parks more efficiently. The VSP produces an annual report, *Serving the Visitor*, which describes how well the NPS is serving its customers. Copies of that report and survey instruments are available at <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.htm>. In FY 2006, an estimated 93% of visitors responding to surveys indicated they were satisfied with the quality of their experience (Ref. #88).

Providing and Receiving Fair Value in Recreation

Late in 2005, Interior transitioned its recreation fee operations from the Recreational Fee Demonstration Program to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (REA), enacted in December 2004. The Fee Demo Program enabled agencies to charge user fees for recreation sites and to retain revenues collected to improve those sites. The Act extends the recreation fee authority for 10 years and makes a

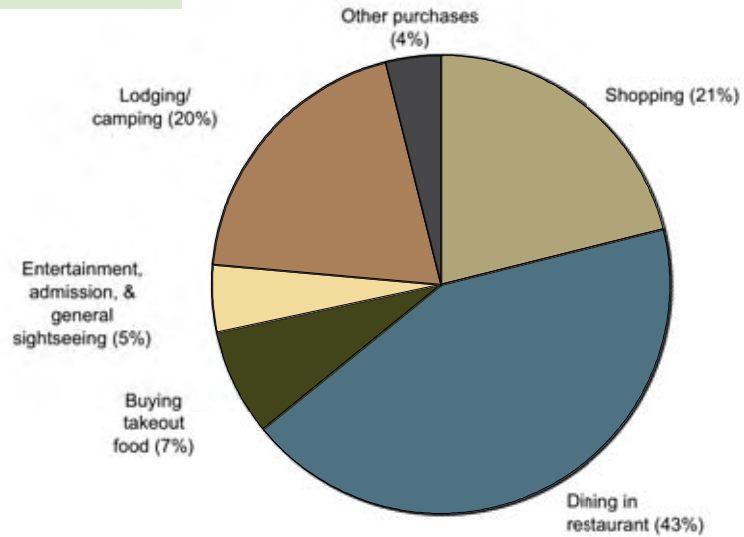
FIGURE 1-37/38

Cuyahoga Valley National Park visitor study results

Study dates: July 23-31, 2005
79% response rate from
1,294 visitor groups contacted

Proportions of total expenditures within park and nearby communities

N=409 visitor groups**



Harpers Ferry National Historic Park visitor study results

Study dates: July 23-31, 2005
61% response rate from
645 visitor groups contacted



Visitor ages

N=1252 individuals*

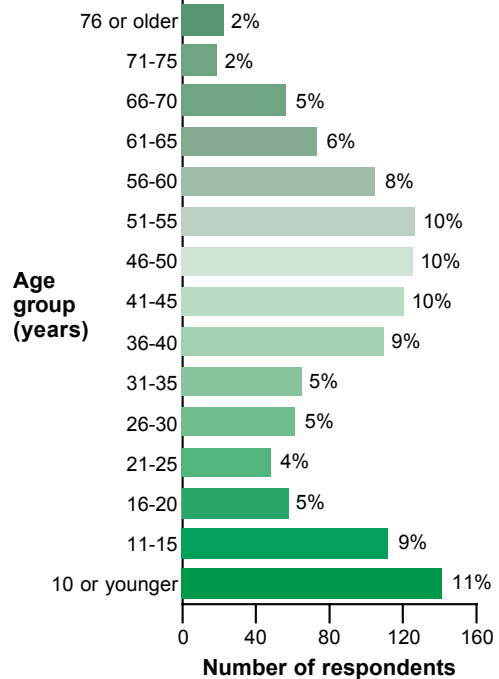



FIGURE 1-39

Jewel Cave Just Got Longer

Far below the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming lies a gem of nature aptly named Jewel Cave. A unit of the National Park System, Jewel Cave National Monument features the world's second longest cave—and it just got longer. Modern day explorers of this dark, mineralized world recently pushed its known length to just more than 135 miles after 4-day expedition. Their journey of discovery took these cavers “where no man (or woman) has gone before, ” and into an awesome world of flower-like mineral deposits, crystal-crusted walls, and even a mummified bat, hanging still and alone from a roof filled with fossils from the even more distant past.

As a recreational activity, caving is not for everyone. Cavers often must crawl hundreds of feet on their bellies, carrying critical equipment like head lamps, food, and special equipment. And they pack out any waste. But for many, the thrill of discovery more than makes up for discomfort associated with this hobby.

The exploration of Jewel Cave will continue as scientists and National Park Service managers work to understand the lost world tucked away beneath the splendors of Mount Rushmore, Black Hills National Forest, and Custer State Park.



number of adjustments to the program. For example, the Act establishes additional parameters to ensure that fees are charged only in appropriate locations and assures revenues are appropriately spent on infrastructure and services that directly benefit the public. It also authorizes the creation of a new pass, which will cover entrance and standard amenity fees for the five Departments of the Interior and Agriculture bureaus authorized under the Act. The pass, once established, will replace the existing Golden Eagle, Golden Age, Golden Access, and National Park Pass. The new pass should be available to the public by January 1, 2007.

In FY 2006, 20% of recreation fee program receipts were spent on fee collection (Ref #102), meeting our target for the year. The remainder was reinvested to improve visitor services and facilities. Visitors surveyed reported an estimated 87% satisfaction level with value for the fee they paid, just shy of our target of 88% (Ref #99).

FIGURE 1-40

Which Park Is It?

This was America's first National Park. It was established in 1872 by President Ulysses S. Grant. It sits in the middle of a large caldera, the remains of a huge volcano that exploded more than 640,000 years ago. Which park is it?

Answer: Yellowstone

FIGURE 1-41

Recreation—Provide recreation opportunities for America				
Performance and Cost Scorecard				
End Outcome Goal	Number of Goals Met	Number of Unmet Goals	Number of No Reports*	Goal Activity Costs (rounded to thousands)
Goal #1: Provide for a Quality Recreation Experience, Including Access and Enjoyment of Natural and Cultural Resources on DOI Managed and Partnered Lands and Waters	11	0	0	\$1,641,905
Goal #2: Provide for and Receive Fair Value in Recreation	4	0	0	\$138,789
TOTAL	15	0	0	\$1,780,694
Percentage of Measures Out of a Total of 15	100%	0	0	

* For the purpose of this chart, preliminary data are considered a “no report.”

FIGURE 1-42

How Interior Performed at a Glance: FY 2005-2006		
Selected Performance Measures from Recreation Mission Area		
Performance Measure	FY 2005	FY 2006
Legend: □ = No Report ■ = Target Not Met ■ = Target Met ■ = Target Exceeded		
#88: Satisfaction with quality of experience	94%	93% E
#99: Customer satisfaction with value for fee paid	89%	87% E
#102: Percent of recreation fee program receipts spent on fee collection	17%	20% E