

National Park System 2003 Visitor Survey Card Data Report



Introduction

To assist the National Park Service in complying with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), a visitor survey was conducted in 324 units of the National Park System in FY03. The survey was developed to measure each park unit's performance related to NPS GPRA Goals IIa1 (visitor satisfaction) and IIb1 (visitor understanding and appreciation).

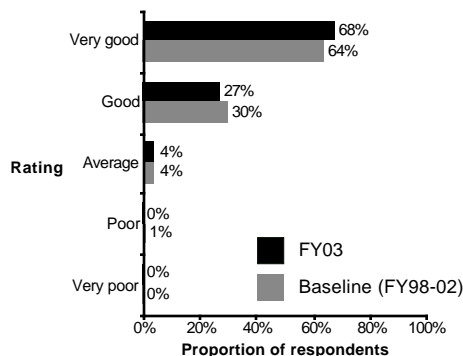
The results of the Visitor Survey Card (VSC) survey are summarized in this data report. A description of the research methods and limitations is on the back page.

Below (left) is a graph summarizing visitor opinions of the "overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities" in the system. This graph compares FY03 data (shown in black) with a five-year baseline data (FY98-02) shown in gray. The satisfaction measure below this graph is a combined percentage of "good" and "very good" responses. This is the primary performance measure for Goal IIa1. (The satisfaction measure may not equal the sum of "very good" and "good" percentages due to rounding.)

Below (right) is the FY03 GPRA reporting measure for Goal IIa1. The percentage included in the box should be used for reporting GPRA Goal IIa1 performance. The systemwide response rate was 26%.

Overall quality of facilities, services & recreational opportunities

FY03: 304 parks; 26064 respondents



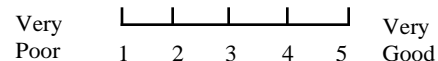
FY03: Satisfaction measure: 96%
Average evaluation score: 4.6

Understanding the Results

Inside this report are graphs that present the combined survey results for the National Park System. The report contains three categories of data—park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities. Within these categories are graphs for each indicator evaluated by park visitors. For example, the park facilities category includes indicators such as visitor center, exhibits, restrooms, and so forth. In addition, responses for indicators within each category are averaged into a combined graph for the category (e.g., combined park facilities).

Each graph includes the following information:

- the number of parks and visitor responses for the indicator;
- FY03 data (black), and baseline data (gray);
- the percentage of responses which were "very good," "good," "average," "poor," and "very poor;"
- a satisfaction measure that combines the percentage of total responses which were "very good" or "good;" and
- an average evaluation score (mean score) based on the following values: very poor = 1, poor = 2, average = 3, good = 4, very good = 5.



The higher the average evaluation score, the more positive the visitor response.

FY03 GPRA Reporting Measure for Goal IIa1

Percentage of park visitors satisfied overall with appropriate facilities, services, and recreational opportunities:

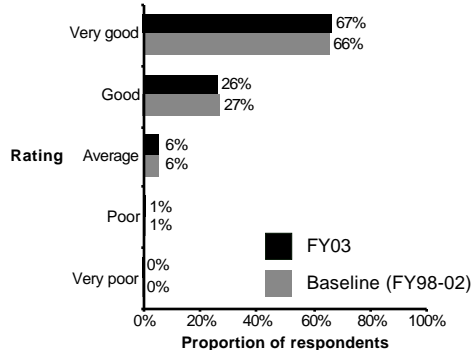
96%



National Park System Park Facilities

Visitor Center

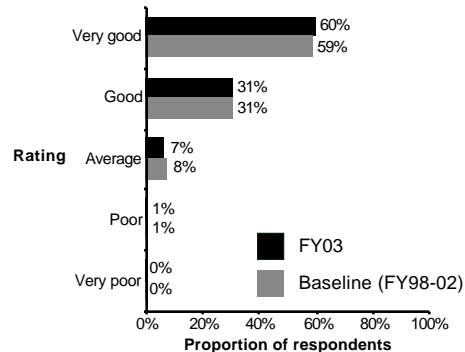
FY03: 304 parks; 25760 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 93%
Average evaluation score: 4.6

Exhibits

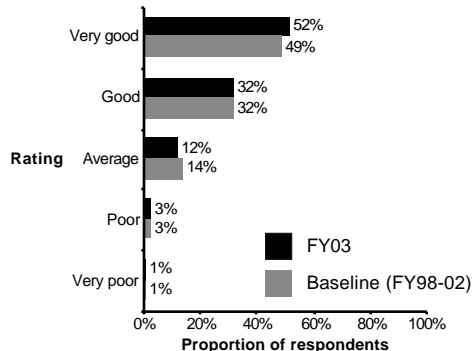
FY03: 304 parks; 25892 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 92%
Average evaluation score: 4.5

Restrooms

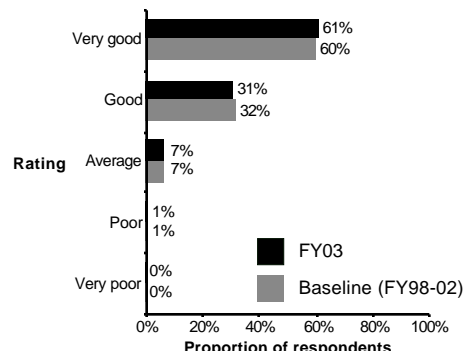
FY03: 304 parks; 23693 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 84%
Average evaluation score: 4.3

Walkways, trails, and roads

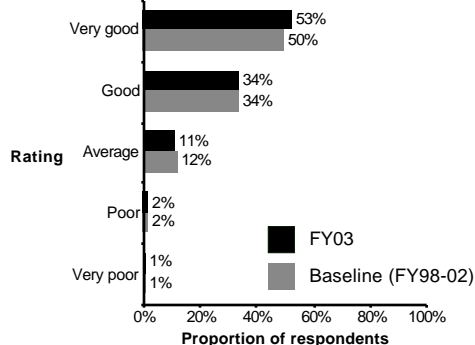
FY03: 304 parks; 25617 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 92%
Average evaluation score: 4.5

Campgrounds and/or picnic areas

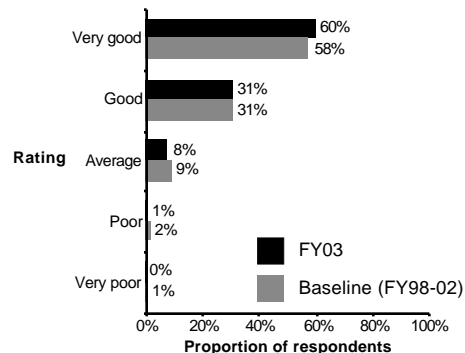
FY03: 304 parks; 11177 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 87%
Average evaluation score: 4.4

Combined park facilities

FY03: 25892 responses (based on 5 indicators)



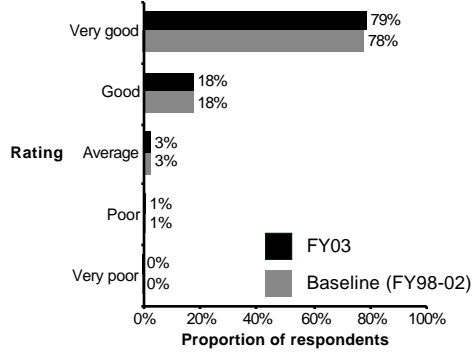
FY03: Satisfaction measure: 90%
Average evaluation score: 4.5

National Park System Visitor Services



Assistance from park employees

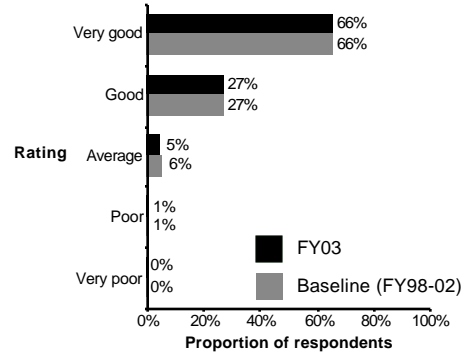
FY03: 304 parks; 24199 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 96%
Average evaluation score: 4.7

Park map or brochure

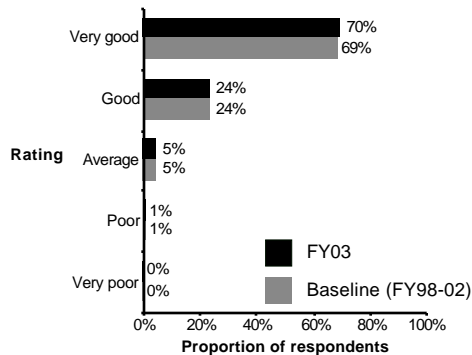
FY03: 304 parks; 22488 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 94%
Average evaluation score: 4.6

Ranger programs

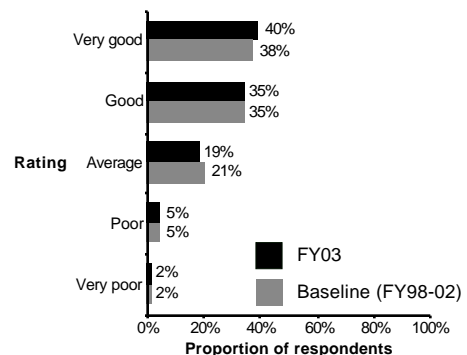
FY03: 304 parks; 13070 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 94%
Average evaluation score: 4.6

Commercial services in the park

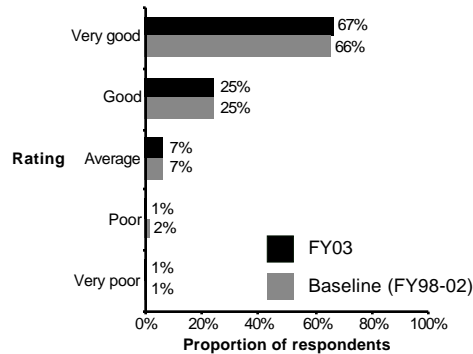
FY03: 304 parks; 12481 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 75%
Average evaluation score: 4.1

Combined visitor services

FY03: 24199 responses (based on 4 indicators)



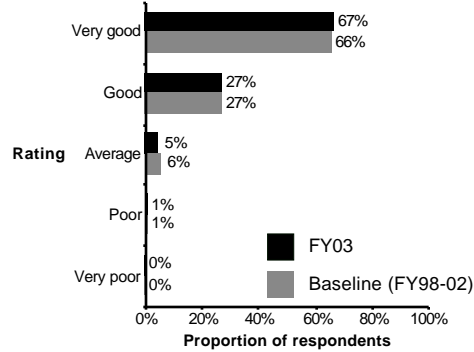
FY03: Satisfaction measure: 91%
Average evaluation score: 4.6



National Park System Recreational Opportunities

Learning about nature, history, or culture

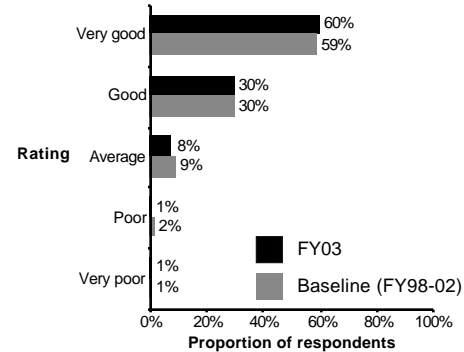
FY03: 304 parks; 24373 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 94%
Average evaluation score: 4.6

Outdoor recreation

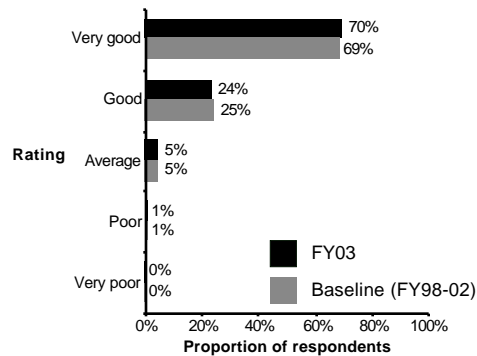
FY03: 304 parks; 13176 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 90%
Average evaluation score: 4.5

Sightseeing

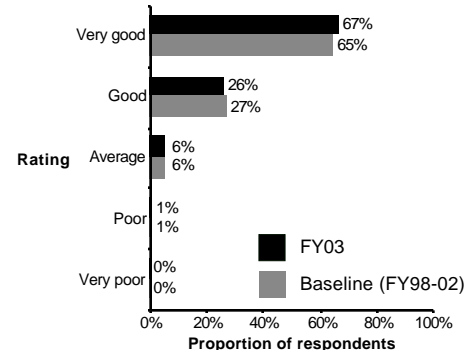
FY03: 304 parks; 23957 respondents



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 94%
Average evaluation score: 4.6

Combined recreational opportunities

FY03: 24373 responses (based on 3 indicators)



FY03: Satisfaction measure: 93%
Average evaluation score: 4.6

Research Methods

Survey cards were distributed to a random sample of visitors in 324 units in the system during the periods from February 1- August 31, 2003. At each park, visitors were sampled at selected locations representative of the general visitor population.

Returned cards were electronically scanned and the data analyzed. Responses from individual parks in the system were combined into one dataset. Data from parks with less than 30 returned cards, or from park with discrepancies in the data collection methods, were omitted from this report. Frequency distributions were calculated for each indicator and category.

All percentage calculations were rounded to the nearest percent. Therefore, individual percentages in each graph may not add to 100 percent. The response rate was calculated by dividing the total number of returned survey cards by the total number of survey cards distributed. The sample size ("N") varies from figure to figure, depending on the number of responses.

For most indicators, the survey data are expected to be accurate within $\pm 6\%$ with 95% confidence. This means that if different samples had been drawn, the results would have been similar ($\pm 6\%$) 95 out of 100 times.

The results do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year, to park visitors who did not visit the survey locations, or to park units in the system that did not participate in the survey.