



Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys (OMB # 1024-0224) Fiscal Year 2004 Annual Report



Keweenaw National Historical Park, Photo courtesy of the NPS Visitor Services Project

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Background on Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys

The National Park Service (NPS) preserves the nation's natural and cultural heritage and provides for its enjoyment by citizens and visitors from throughout the world. An accurate understanding of the relationship between people and parks is critical to achieving the mission of the National Park System: protecting resources unimpaired and providing for public enjoyment, education, and inspiration. Such understanding requires a sound scientific basis. Hence, social science research is a necessary and important function of the National Park Service.

As part of its Social Science Program, the NPS sponsors surveys of the public to provide park managers with information for improving the quality and utility of NPS programs. All information collection activities funded or sponsored by the NPS must be done in compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (P.L. 104-13) and implementing rules (5 CFR 1320) written by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

Since many of the NPS surveys are similar in terms of the populations being surveyed, the types of questions being asked, and research methodologies, the NPS, in cooperation with the Department of the Interior (DOI), proposed to OMB and received clearance for a program of approval for NPS visitor surveys (OMB# 1024-0224 exp. 8/31/2001). The program presented an alternative approach to complying with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). The program was designed to

provide several specific benefits. First, it would improve the opportunity for meaningful public comment by offering one public review period for the entire program of similar surveys. Second, it would increase federal government efficiency by reducing the personnel time and funding necessary to prepare and review the proposed collections of information. Third, it would assist researchers by simplifying the approval process for social science research. Fourth, it would improve the timely delivery of usable knowledge to NPS managers.

In 2001, the NPS Social Science Program submitted an extension request for the program of expedited approval. That extension request expanded the program to include surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and residents of communities near parks. OMB clearance was granted on 19 September 2001 (OMB# 1024-0224 exp. 9/30/04). A second three-year extension request was delivered to OMB on 29 September 2004.

The positive result is more savings in time and cost to the federal government (NPS, DOI, and OMB) and principal investigators, and a further reduction in burden on the public.

Annual reports are required as a component of the approval. This is the fifth annual report, summarizing activities in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004. In this report, the program is referred to as the Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys.

Management and Oversight

Separate management, oversight, and approval responsibilities are held by the NPS Social Science Program, DOI, and OMB.

The NPS Visiting Chief Social Scientist, with the assistance of Social Science Program staff, provides guidance for submission and reviews all survey instruments for compliance with technical standards and program guidelines. The staff responsibility for the Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys has been assigned to Brian Forist, Senior Research Associate.

For submissions that comply with program requirements, the Visiting Chief Social Scientist determines the appropriate number of burden hours for the information collection, certifies that the survey instrument and research methodology is technically acceptable and in compliance with the PRA, and transmits the individual survey package to OMB for final approval. If the NPS receives approval from OMB, the NPS allocates the OMB control number (and an NPS tracking number), survey expiration date, and designated burden hours, and authorizes the principal investigator to use the approved instrument.

The DOI office responsible for oversight of information collection activities (the Office of Policy Analysis) monitors NPS activities within the program, provides policy guidance, and reviews annual reports.

The OMB Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) provides expedited review of NPS submissions under the program and notifies the Visiting Chief Social Scientist of approval (or the need

for revision) within five working days.

The NPS Social Science Program developed guidelines which describe the authorities, scope, and the submission process for the program. The document, *Guidelines and Approval Form for Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys*, was published and widely disseminated in December 2001. The guidelines and associated forms are available as downloadable files on the NPS Social Science Program website at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/survey.htm>.

Fiscal Year 2004 Activities

FY 2004 activities under the Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys are summarized in Table 1. In FY 2004, 51 surveys were approved. Approved surveys were conducted in, or for 44 units of the National Park System. The total estimated burden on the public for all surveys approved in FY 2004 was 11,161 hours. The average survey in FY 2004 placed a burden on the public of 280 hours. The mean burden on each individual respondent in FY 2003 was 24 minutes.

Effects of the Expedited Approval Process

There are several immediate effects derived from this program. These include time savings, cost savings, reduction in burden on the public, and increased peer review. The standard PRA survey approval process takes approximately six months once the first *Federal Register* notice is published. Under the expedited program, the approval time has been reduced to 45 days or less once a survey has been submitted to the NPS for review.

Table 1 – Fiscal Year 2004 Activities

NPS Survey #	Survey Title	Start Date	End Date	Expiration	Burden Hours
04-001	Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Historic Site Visitor Center Formative Evaluation Study	04-Nov-03	07-Nov-03	31-May-04	26
04-002	Friends of Homestead National Monument of America: Preliminary Historical Information Submission Form	05-Jan-04	05-Jan-07	31-Jul-07	150
04-003	Phase 1: Buckland Family Networks Study	01-Feb-04	15-Mar-04	30-Sep-04	108
04-004	Public Knowledge, Attitude, and Perception of the American crocodile (<i>Crocodylus acutus</i>) in South Florida	Withdrawn by Principal Investigator			
04-005	Shenandoah National Park: Entrance Station Visitor Information Collection	17-Feb-04	16-Feb-05	31-Dec-05	3,015
04-006	Winter Road Users at Denali National Park and Preserve and their Perceptions of the Aufeis Removal Project	01-Feb-04	31-Mar-05	30-Sep-04	9
04-007	Observer Reaction to "Spaces of Slavery" Interpretation Program at Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve	Withdrawn by Principal Investigator			
04-008	Visitor Services Facility Evaluation-Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park	22-Jan-04	23-Jan-04	31-Jul-04	39
04-009	Visitor Services Facility Evaluation-Timpanogos Cave National Monument and Uinta National Forest	03-Feb-04	04-Feb-04	31-Aug-04	39
04-010	Cuyahoga Valley National Park MGM2 Visitor Survey	01-Apr-04	30-Jun-04	31-Dec-04	36
04-011	National Park Service South Florida Population Survey	27-Feb-04	30-Mar-04	31-Dec-06	470
04-012	Shiloh National Military Park Visitor Study	01-Mar-04	15-Jul-04	30-Jun-05	212
04-013	Presenting Race and Slavery at Historic Sites: Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial and Frederick Douglass NHS	27-Mar-04	02-May-04	30-Nov-04	19
04-014	Joshua Tree National Park Visitor Study (VSP)	03-Apr-04	09-Apr-04	31-Oct-04	211
04-015	Grand Canyon National Park Overnight Backcountry Visitor Study	01-Apr-04	31-Mar-05	30-Sep-05	1,042
04-016	Virgin Islands National Park MGM2 Visitor Survey	12-Apr-04	18-Apr-04	31-Oct-04	67
04-017	Formative Evaluation of 14 Waysides Interpreting the Potomac Gorge-Great Falls Park (GWMP)	01-May-04	16-May-04	30-Nov-04	33
04-018	Lowell National Historical Park Interactive Exhibits Formative Evaluation	15-May-04	15-Jun-04	31-Dec-04	14
04-019	Muir Woods National Monument Visitor Survey-2004	23-Apr-04	31-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	104

04-020	Grand Canyon National Park Backcountry Day-Hiker Study	15-May-04	31-Oct-04	30-Apr-05	310
04-021	A Survey of Visitors to the Dyea Area of Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park	19-May-04	30-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	55
04-022	Survey of Visitors to Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park	22-May-04	22-May-04	30-Nov-04	62
04-023	Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve Visitor Study (VSP)	10-Jul-04	17-Jul-04	31-Jan-05	181
04-024	Keweenaw National Historical Park Visitor Study (VSP)	24-Jul-04	01-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	211
04-024	Cultural Tourism in Louisiana: A Study of Economic Impact (Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve)	31-May-04	31-May-05	28-Feb-05	667
04-026	New River Gorge National River Visitor Study (VSP)	19-Jun-04	27-Jun-04	31-Dec-04	429
04-027	The Mount Rainier National Park Backpacker Map Diary	14-Jun-04	01-Oct-05	31-Mar-05	184
04-028	Mount Rainier National Park Climber Survey	31-May-04	30-Dec-05	31-Mar-05	430
04-029	Dyea Area Attraction Site Use Survey, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park	19-Jun-04	30-Sep-04	31-Mar-05	24
04-030	Visitor Use Survey for Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites	15-May-04	30-Oct-04	30-Apr-05	53
04-031	George Washington Birthplace National Monument Visitor Study (VSP)	01-Jul-04	07-Jul-04	31-Jan-05	106
04-032	Visitor Preferences for Interpretation at Wrangell-St. Elias National Park	30-May-04	06-Sep-04	31-Mar-05	156
04-033	Natchez Trace Parkway Viewshed Survey 2004	15-Sep-04	15-Nov-04	31-May-05	208
04-034	A Waypoint Card Study of Visitor Itineraries in Paradise Meadow at Mount Rainier National Park	21-Jun-04	06-Sep-04	31-Mar-05	113
04-035	Apostle Islands National Lakeshore Visitor Study (VSP)	24-Jul-04	01-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	241
04-036	Cape Cod National Seashore-Qualitative Interviews of Off-Road Vehicle Users	01-Jul-04	15-Nov-04	31-May-05	32
04-037	Market Demand/Financial Feasibility Study for an Alternative Transportation System-Keweenaw National Historical Park	24-Jun-04	17-Jul-04	31-Jan-05	51
04-038	Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park Visitor Study (VSP)	10-Jul-04	18-Jul-04	31-Jan-05	211
04-039	Visitor Use Patterns Along the Highway 7 Corridor to Rocky Mountain National Park (Lily Lake, Longs Peak, and Wild Basin)	01-Jul-04	31-Mar-05	31-Mar-06	533

04-040	Acadia National Park (Mount Desert Island Section) Use and User Survey	05-Jul-04	15-Sep-04	30-Mar-05	234
04-041	Effigy Mounds National Monument Visitor Study (VSP)	25-Jul-04	31-Jul-04	31-Jan-05	121
04-042	Sequoia National Park Visitor Study	01-Aug-04	04-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	95
04-041	Muir Woods National Monument Visitor Survey 2004	Clearance Declined by NPS			
04-044	Anza Trail User Survey	01-Jul-04	01-Oct-04	30-Apr-05	41
04-045	An Exploration of Place Attachment Among Visitors to Isle Royale National Park	Withdrawn by Principal Investigator			
04-046	Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site Visitor Study (VSP)	14-Aug-04	22-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	115
04-047	Colonial NHP Alternative Transportation System Phase II Study, Yorktown, Virginia: Summer Demonstration Shuttle	09-Aug-04	13-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	8
04-048	Visitor Services Facility Formative Evaluation: Klondike National Historical Park (Seattle Unit)	24-Aug-04	25-Aug-04	28-Feb-05	39
04-049	NPS Visitor Survey Card Revision Pilot Test	01-Sep-04	30-Sep-04	31-Mar-05	18
04-050	Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site Issues Survey	Clearance Declined by OMB			
04-051	Petrified Forest National Park Wood Theft Visitor Survey	01-Aug-04	31-Jul-05	28-Feb-06	267
04-052	John Day Fossil Beds National Monument Visitor Study (VSP)	29-Aug-04	04-Sep-04	31-Mar-05	134
04-053	Manzanar National Historic Site Visitor Study (VSP)	28-Aug-04	05-Sep-04	31-Mar-05	108
04-054	World War II Memorial Brochure Evaluation	13-Sep-04	26-Sep-04	31-Mar-05	16
04-055	Rocky Mountain National Park: Longs Peak Hiker/Climber Survey	Moved to FY 2005			
04-056	Rocky Mountain National Park: Longs Peak Experience Survey	Withdrawn by Principal Investigator			
04-057	Grand Canyon National Park Mule Rider and Phantom Ranch Visitor Study	22-Sep-04	30-Apr-05	31-Oct-05	107
04-058	Grand Canyon Trail of Time Phase One Formative Evaluation	02-Oct-04	04-Oct-04	30-Apr-05	7
04-059	Curriculum, On-Site, and In-Class Evaluation: Central High School National Historic Site	Moved to FY 2005			
					11,161

A conservative estimate nets a time savings of approximately four and one half months per survey. In FY 2004, 51 surveys were approved under the program with an estimated time savings of 230 months. On average, it took 29 calendar days from initial submission for a survey to be reviewed by the NPS Social Science Program staff, revised by the Principal Investigator as needed, certified by the NPS Visiting Chief Social Scientist, and approved by OMB. This reflects a reduction from FY03 during which it took, on average, 38 days from initial submission to final OMB approval.

The expedited approval process provides substantial cost savings for the federal government by reducing staff time required to review submissions. Table 2 shows that the approval process saves approximately \$1,729 per study.

This sixth year of the program yielded a direct cost savings to the federal government of approximately \$88,179 (51 studies X \$1,729 per study). In addition to these direct cost savings, principal investigators also benefit by a significant reduction in labor required to prepare approval packages.

The project manager for the NPS-sponsored Visitor Services Project (VSP) estimates a savings of 15 hours at an estimated cost of \$446 per study. The VSP conducted 11 studies in FY 2004 for a total cost savings of approximately \$4,906. Estimating similar time savings to principal investigators for the 40 remaining studies conducted in FY 2003, an additional cost savings of approximately \$17,840 was incurred. The total cost savings to principal investigators is estimated

to be \$22,746. Hence, the total amount of dollars saved by the federal government and principal investigators in FY 2004 is estimated to be at least \$110,925.

In six years, a total of 244 individual surveys have been approved, providing the federal government and principal investigators a time and cost saving estimated to be at least \$458,926.

Burden on the public has been reduced by eliminating the repetitive *Federal Register* publications for substantially similar survey research. Extensive public review of the program as a whole resulted in effective and efficient public comment. Those comments were incorporated into the final submission to OMB.

Finally, the expedited approval process encourages principal investigators to have their survey instruments peer-reviewed prior to submission. This has resulted in higher quality studies that reduce burden on the public and ensure more accurate data.



Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
Photo courtesy of the NPS Visitor Services Project

Table 2 – Fiscal Year 2004 Costs and Savings

Activity	Approx. Salary	Standard Approval		Expedited Approval		Cost Savings
		Average Review Time Per Study	Cost Per Study	Average Review Time Per Study	Cost Per Study	
Review and handling by Social Science Program staff (GS-11 Step 5)	\$27.47/hr*	12.5 hours	\$343.38	3 hours	\$82.41	\$260.97
Review by Chief Social Scientist (GS-14 Step 6)	\$47.63/hr*	7.5 hours	\$357.23	3 hours	\$142.89	\$214.34
Review by NPS Information Collection Clearance Officer (GS-13 Step 5)	\$39.16/hr*	3 hours	\$117.48	None	None	\$117.48
Review by DOI Information Collection Clearance Officer (GS-15 Step 10)	\$62.44/hr*	2 hours	\$124.88	None	None	\$124.88
Review by OMB OIRA Desk Officer for DOI (GS-15 Step 5)	\$54.43/hr*	3 hours	\$163.29	1 hour	\$52.13	\$111.16
<i>Federal Register</i> Notice Publication	\$450 per notice	2 per study	\$900	None	None	\$900
Total Cost Savings Per Study						\$1,728.83
* Salary estimates based on 2004 OPM Salary Tables for Washington DC Area						

Progress on NPS Initiatives

The NPS Social Science Program has undertaken several initiatives as part of this approval program. The major initiative undertaken in FY04 included continued development of an archive of survey results.

The NPS Social Science Program has established a social science data and information archival system in consultation with scientists conducting NPS-sponsored public surveys and NPS library programs. The Social Science Studies Collection has been established with hard copies of reports housed in libraries in the NPS Social Science Program Washington, DC office and the Harpers Ferry Center (HFC) in Harpers Ferry West Virginia. To date, more than 250 reports have been digitized and made available on the NPS Focus Digital Library and Research Station. NPS Focus is currently on the

NPS Intranet only at <http://focus.inside.nps.gov>. It is expected that public access to the Social Science Studies Collection and NPS Focus will be available in early 2005.

The NPS Visitor Services Project (VSP) based at the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit has developed an archival portion of their Web site, providing access to survey instruments, executive summaries, and full reports. The VSP Web site is located at <http://www.psu.uidaho.edu>.

The NPS Social Science Program Web site at <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience> includes links to the Social Science Studies Collection on NPS Focus and the VSP website.

In addition to the initiatives mentioned above, the NPS Social Science Program has prepared an extension request for the Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys.

After public, NPS, and DOI review that request was delivered to OMB on 29 September 2004.

In its sixth year, the Expedited Approval for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys has proven to be useful, effective, and efficient. The NPS Social Science Program looks forward to continuing to work with NPS managers, social scientists, DOI, OMB and the public to ensure the success of this valuable program.

For Additional Information

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Keweenaw National Historical Park
Photo courtesy of the NPS Visitor Services Project