



# National Visitor Use Monitoring RESULTS

cover pages for user-created reports

## Introduction to Round 2 Reports

The National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) program provides science-based estimates of the volume and characteristics of recreation visitation to the National Forest System, as well as the benefits recreation brings to the American public. Information about the quantity and quality of recreation visits is required for National Forest plans, Executive Order 12862 (Setting Customer Service Standards), and implementation of the National Recreation Agenda. The NVUM Program ensures that all visitor statistics for National Forests and grasslands produced by the Forest Service use a standardized measure. These standards were established by the Forest Service in the 1970's; however their application is now stricter than in the past. For example, visitors must be physically recreating on Forest Service managed lands for a visit to count. They cannot be passing through, viewing from a non-Forest Service managed road, or just using restroom facilities.

## Background and Methods

Results in this report are from NVUM data collection completed from FY2005 through FY2009 (Round 2). Any single forest gets sampled one time in 5 years, so in a given year about two dozen forests are engaged in NVUM field data collection. Those forests that completed their NVUM work in 2009 were updating visitation estimates from about 5 years earlier. Thus, this report does not yet provide any true 'trend' measures; it is not a final report. Rather, it represents a 'snapshot' of the most current visitation patterns and activities on National Forest land.

The NVUM methodology is explained in detail in: Forest Service National Visitor Use Monitoring Process: Research Method Documentation; English, Kocis, Zarnoch, and Arnold; Southern Research Station; May 2002 (<http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/nvum>). In essence, visitation is estimated through a combination of traffic counts and surveys of exiting visitors. Both are obtained from a random sample of locations and days distributed over an entire forest for a year, and stratified by site type and expected use level.

All of the surveyed recreation visitors are asked about their visit duration, activities, demographics, travel distance, and annual usage. About one-third were also asked a series of additional questions about satisfaction. Another one-third was asked to provide additional information about their income, spending while on their trip, and the next best substitute for the visit.

## Terms Used in NVUM Reports

The basic measurements of visitation for the NVUM process are *National Forest visits* and *site visits*. A *National Forest visit* is "one person participating in one or more recreation activities on a National Forest or grassland for an unspecified period of time. A National Forest visit can be composed of multiple site visits." A *site visit* is "one

person participating in one or more recreation activities at a particular National Forest or Grassland site or area for an unspecified period of time.”

**Confidence interval** is statistical term that describes an interval or a range of values that is likely to include an unknown population value, where the range is calculated from a given set of sample data. Confidence intervals are always accompanied by a **confidence level**, which tells the degree of certainty that the true population value lies in the interval. For example, the 2009 national visitation estimate is 173.5 million visits, with a 90% confidence interval of  $\pm 3.1\%$ . In other words, given the NVUM data, our best estimate is 173.5 million visits, with 90% confidence that the true number is between 168.1 million and 178.9 million (173.5 million  $\pm 0.031 \times 173.5$  million).

**Local visitors** travel less than 50 road miles from home to the recreation site; **non-local visitors** travel greater than 50 road miles.

**Non-primary visitors** have a primary trip purpose that is something other than recreating on the National Forest – it could be to some other recreation destination, or for some reason other than recreation.

**Average** values for visit characteristics are calculated by expanding the sample values gathered from Forest visitors interviewed to the total population of National Forest visits (the number that represents all Forest visits). On some tables in the NVUM and reports, **median** values (the value of the 50th percentile) are also provided, because the averages can be greatly influenced by a few very large or very small values.

**FY** indicates a **fiscal year**. The federal **fiscal year** is defined as ending September 30 of the given year and beginning October 1 of the previous year. For example, FY2009 began October 1, 2008 and ended September 31, 2009. **CY** indicates a **calendar year** beginning January 1 and ending December 31.

## Using the Data

It is important to note that the NVUM process is still relatively new. An initial application occurred nationwide from 2000 to 2003. Significant refinements and improvements to the process were instituted in 2004, and implementation of the revised process began in 2005. Trend information regarding recreation visitation is thus not yet available; rather, these data provide a ‘snapshot’ of annual National Forest visitation.

We have tried to ensure that terms are defined within each report. Please be sure to include these terms when using data outside the reports.

## Reports

This table contains all possible user -created reports generated by the USDA Forest Service's NRM-NRIS NVUM Results application. One or more of the following reports may be included for one or more selected national forest units.

Category	Report Title
<b>Demographics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gender Distribution of Visits</li> <li>Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Visits</li> <li>Age Distribution of Visits</li> <li>Zip Codes, States, and Counties of Survey Respondents</li> <li>Percent of Visits from Foreign Visitors</li>   <li>Distance Travelled Report</li> <li>Gender Distribution of Wilderness Visits</li> <li>Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Wilderness Visits</li> <li>Age Distribution of Wilderness Visits</li> <li>Zip Codes, States, and Counties of Wilderness Survey Respondents</li>   <li>(Regional) Gender Distribution of Visits</li> <li>(Regional) Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Visits</li> <li>(Regional) Age Distribution of Visits</li> </ul>
<b>Economics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribution of Visits by Market Segment</li> <li>Average Spending by Market Segment</li> <li>Downhill Skier Spending by Market Segment</li> <li>Annual Total Spending by Spending Category</li> <li>Annual Total Spending by Market Segment</li>   <li>Annual Household Income</li> <li>(Regional) Annual Total Spending by Market Segment</li> <li>(Regional) Distribution of National Forest Visits by Market Segment</li> <li>Visitor Trip Information and Lodging Usage</li> <li>Substitute Behavior Choices</li> </ul>
<b>Sampling Strata</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Summary Results by Sampling Stratum</li> <li>Proxy Summary Results</li> </ul>

Category	Report Title
	<p>Results from Each Completed Nonproxy Survey Day Average Daily Visits for Nonproxy Sites by Site Type</p> <p>DUDS Site Visit Use Estimate by Proxy OUDS Site Visit Use Estimate by Proxy Wilderness Site Visit Use Estimate by Proxy GFA Site Visit Use Estimate by Proxy</p>
<b>Satisfaction</b>	<p>Percent Satisfied Crowding Rating DUDS Satisfaction OUDS Satisfaction GFA Satisfaction</p> <p>Wilderness Satisfaction Overall Satisfaction Road Conditions &amp; Signage Satisfaction Accessibility of Forest Facilities by Persons with Disabilities Percent Meets Expectations</p> <p>DUDS Importance – Performance Ratings OUDS Importance – Performance Ratings GFA Importance – Performance Ratings Wilderness Importance – Performance Ratings Percent of Visits by Overall Satisfaction Rating</p>
<b>Sample Population</b>	<p>Site Days and Percentage Sampled by Stratum Number of Individuals Contacted by Site Type Number of Complete Interviews by Site Type and Form Type Purpose of Visit</p>
<b>Visit Description</b>	<p>Visit Duration Group Characteristics Visits by Annual Visit Frequency Activity Participation Special Facility Use</p>

Category	Report Title
	(Regional) Visit Duration Activity Days for 50% Market Area Activity Days for 75% Market Area
<b>Visitation Estimates</b>	Annual Visitation Estimate (Regional) Annual Visitation Estimate (Regional) Annual Visitation Estimate by Site Type National Forest Visits With and Without Downhill Skiing Special Events
<b>Maps</b>	Survey Respondents by Zip Code Survey Respondents by County Survey Respondents by State Wilderness Survey Respondents by Zip Code Market Areas  Annual Visitation Estimates Market Segments