

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Social Science Program



Expedited Review for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys (OMB # 1024-0224) Fiscal Year 2007 Annual Report



Yosemite National Park (photo courtesy NPS Social Science Program)

November 2007

Background on Expedited Review 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 review 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 review. 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 in September 2001. Clearance of a second three-year extension was granted on 10 January 2005 (OMB# 1024-0224 exp. 1/31/08)

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 review. This is the eighth annual report, summarizing activities in Fiscal Year (FY) 2007. In this report, the program is referred to as the Expedited Review 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, Dr. James Gramann, provides guidance for submissions and reviews all survey instruments for compliance with technical standards and program guidelines. For FY 2007, the staff responsibility for the Expedited Review for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys was assigned to Megan McBride, Senior Research Associate.

For submissions that comply with program requirements, the Visiting Chief Social Scientist determines the appropriate number of burden hours, certifies that the survey instrument and research methodology are 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 Social Science Program of approval (or the need for revision) within 10 working days.

The NPS Social Science Program developed guidelines describing the authorities, scope, and submission process for the program. The current document, *Guidelines and Approval Form for Expedited Review for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys, Focus Groups and Field Experiments*, was published and widely disseminated in January 2005 and revised in June 2006. The guidelines and associated forms are available on the NPS Social Science Program Web site at: <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/expedited.cfm>

Fiscal Year 2007 Activities

FY 2007 activities under the Expedited Review for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys are

summarized in Table 1. In FY 2007, 57 surveys were received and 50 were approved. Approved surveys were conducted in or for 51 units of the National Park System. The total estimated burden on the public for all surveys approved in FY 2007 was 7,333 hours. The average survey in FY 2007 placed a burden on the public of 147 hours. The mean burden on each individual respondent in FY 2007 was 17 minutes.

Effects of the Expedited Review 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 review process takes approximately six months once the first *Federal Register* notice is published. Under the expedited program, the review time has been reduced to approximately 60-days or less, once a survey has been submitted to the NPS for review.

Table 1 – Fiscal Year 2007 Activities

NPS Survey #	Survey Title	Start Date	End Date	Expiration	Burden Hours	
07-E-001	Formative Evaluation for Navel Live Oaks Visitor Center	7-Dec-06	9-Dec-06	1-Jun-07	15	
07-E-002	Winter Visitors Experiences In Yellowstone National Park: The roles of the Natural Soundscape and of Wildlife Interactions	SUBMISSION SENT THROUGH FULL PRA PROCESS				
07-E-003	Evaluation of Pilot Project on Community-based Promotion of Healthful Recreation in Cuyahoga Valley NP	1-Nov-06	15-Dec-06	1-Jun-07	23	
07-E-004	Evaluation of Partnership System of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network	2-Dec-06	31-Mar-07	1-Sep-07	31	
07-E-005	African Burial ground National Monument Formative Evaluation	26-Dec-06	30-Dec-06	1-Jun-07	22	
07-E-006	San Juan National Historic Site: Front-end Evaluation of the Forts of Old San Juan	15-Dec-06	30-Dec-06	1-Jun-07	41	
07-E-007	San Juan National Historic Site: Front-end Evaluation for Teachers	27-Dec-06	19-Jan-07	1-Jun-07	7	
07-E-008	Hawaii Volcanoes National Park Visitor Study	21-Jan-07	27-Jan-07	1-Aug-07	305	
07-E-009	Kiana Family Networks Study	15-Feb-07	31-Mar-07	1-Sep-07	125	
07-E-010	A Network Analysis of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor	25-Jan-07	25-Mar-07	1-Sep-07	19	
07-E-011	Boott Cotton Mills Museum: Visitor Connections to Meanings through Personal & Non-personal Interpretive	1-Feb-07	31-Jan-08	1-Jul-07	14	

	Services				
07-E-012	Survey to Evaluate the Efficacy of Persuasive Message and Onsite Information in Haleakala National Park	1-May-07	31-Aug-07	30-Jan-08	192
07-E-013	Haleakala National Park (Sliding Sands Trail and Kipahulu Area) Use and User Survey	1-May-07	31-Aug-07	30-Jan-08	54
07-E-014	Haleakala and Hawaii Volcanoes National Parks Soundscape Visitor Survey	1-May-07	31-Aug-07	30-Jan-08	250
07-E-015	Visitor Input on Exhibit Planning/Design at the USS Arizona Memorial	1-Feb-07	31-May-07	1-Nov-07	32
07-E-016	Field Trip Evaluation: Fort Scott NHS	26-Apr-07	11-May-07	1-Nov-07	5
07-E-017	Big Cypress National Preserve Visitor Study	3-Mar-07	11-Mar-07	1-Sep-07	306
07-E-018	Big Cypress National Preserve Visitor Study (ORV)	15-Mar-07	15-Jun-07	31-Jan-08	125
07-E-019	Glen Canyon National Recreation Area Visitor Study	2-May-07	17-Jul-07	18-Jan-07	728
07-E-020	Fort Donelson National Battlefield Visitor Study	3-Jul-07	16-Jul-07	1-Jan-08	103
07-E-021	Increasing walking at the C & O Canal National Historic Park: An intervention focused on local employees	SUBMISSION SENT THROUGH REGULAR PRA PROCESS			
07-E-022	Mount Rushmore National Memorial Visitor Study	11-Jul-07	17-Jan-07	1-Jan-08	295
07-E-023	Investigating and Managing Resource Impacts Associated with On- and Off-Trail Hiking within the Potomac Gorge	12-May-07	30-Jun-07	31-Dec-07	276
07-E-024	Comparison of 1st Person, 3rd Person, and Ranger Uniform Tour Experiences of Visitors to Scotty's Cave	14-Apr-07	7-Jan-07	1-Jan-08	191
07-E-025	Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site Visitor Study	14-Jun-07	14-Jul-07	1-Jan-08	102
07-E-026	Independence National Historical Park Visitor Study	30-Jul-07	5-Aug-07	1-Jan-08	471
07-E-027	Lava Beds National Monument Visitor Study	24-May-07	4-Jun-07	31-Dec-07	112
07-E-028	Visitor Experiences and Expectations of Bryce Canyon National Park Soundscape	CLEARANCE DECLINED BY OMB			
07-E-029	Minute Man National Historical Park Visitor Study	1-Aug-07	7-Aug-07	31-Jan-08	136
07-E-030	Rainbow Bridge National Monument Visitor Study	14-Jul-07	23-Apr-07	1-Jan-08	100
07-E-031	Linking Visitors to Bent's Old Fort NHS through Interpretive Wayside Design	15-Jun-07	15-Jun-07	31-Dec-07	55
07-E-032	Trail of time Goescience Exhibit at GRCA: Phase 2 Formative Evaluation	WITHDRAWN BY THE PI			
07-E-033	Trail Use and Visitor Experience Evaluation at Yosemite National Park	15-May-07	15-Jun-07	1-Jan-08	172
07-E-034	Visitor Services Facility Front-end Evaluation Fort Spokane, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area	30-Apr-07	4-May-07	31-Dec-07	27

07-E-035	A survey of visitors to Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve: Phase 1	1-Jun-07	31-Jul-07	31-Jan-07	38
07-E-036	Visitor Use Study in Yosemite Valley, Yosemite NP, CA	5-Jun-07	1-Aug-07	1-Nov-07	90
07-E-037	F-Line Historic Streetcar Extension Study, Fort Mason	1-Jun-07	30-Jun-07	1-Dec-07	36
07-E-038	Examining Backcountry Visitor Compliance with Recommended "Leave No Trace" Practices	22-Jun-07	28-Oct-07	31-Jan-08	284
07-E-039	Visitor Voices: Improving Interpretive Practices in the Intermountain Region of the NPS (Year 3 of 4)	11-Jul-07	31-Mar-08	31-Jan-08	623
07-E-040	John Muir National Historic Site VSP Visitor Study	28-May-07	5-Jun-07	1-Jan-08	102
07-E-041	Alcatraz Island Visitor Survey	1-Jul-07	11-Aug-07	1-Jan-08	180
07-E-042	Denali National Park--Survey of Denali Park Road Vehicle Users	1-Jul-07	30-Aug-07	1-Jan-08	241
07-E-043	Grand Teton National Park Public Transportation (Transit) Survey 2007	19-Jul-07	19-Aug-07	31-Jan-08	41
07-E-044	Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Visitor Study	13-Jul-07	26-Jul-07	1-Jan-08	102
07-E-045	An Assessment of the Economic Impact of the Blue Ridge Parkway	WITHDRAWN BY THE PI			
07-E-046	Visual estimate of Brazilian Free-tailed Bat Colony Size at Carlsbad Caverns National Park	CLEARANCE DECLINED BY OMB			
07-E-047	Assateague Island national Seashore Permit User Telephone Survey	15-Oct-07	15-Dec-07	31-Jan-08	29
07-E-048	Visitor Experiences and Transportation Systems in Yosemite National Park--Phase 2	15-Jul-07	15-Aug-07	1-Jan-08	177
07-E-049	Social Research in Support of Impact Mitigation on Restoration of the Going to the Sun Road in Glacier National Park	16-Jul-07	5-Sep-07	31-Jan-08	178
07-E-050	Agate Fossil beds National Monument Visitor Study (VSP)	7-Jul-07	20-Jul-07	1-Jan-08	102
07-E-051	Mission San Juan Capistrano Exhibits San Antonio National Historic Park	23-Jul-07	28-Jul-07	1-Jan-08	15
07-E-052	Mt. Rainier National Park Visitor and Transportation Survey	4-Aug-07	15-Sep-07	31-Jan-08	80
07-E-053	Yosemite National Park Visitor Group Use and Characteristics	WITHDRAWN BY THE PI			
07-E-054	Visitor Services Facility Formative Evaluation Fort Spokane, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area	20-Aug-07	24-Aug-07	1-Jan-08	44
07-E-055	St. Mary Visitor Center Formative Evaluation: Glacier National Park	10-Sep-07	10-Sep-07	1-Jan-08	44
07-E-056	National Park Service Visitor Services Project--Visitor Services Card (VSC)	SUBMISSION SENT THROUGH REGULAR PRA PROCESS			
07-E-057	Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Study	19-Oct-07	28-Oct-07	31-Jan-08	593
TOTAL BURDEN					7,333

A conservative estimate nets a time savings of approximately six months per survey. In FY 2007, 50 surveys were approved under the program with an estimated time savings of 300 months. On average, it took 61 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 was 3 days longer than the previous year.

The expedited review process provides substantial cost savings for the federal government by reducing staff time required to review submissions. Table 2 shows that the review process saves approximately \$1,575 per study.

This ninth year of the program yielded a direct cost savings to the federal government of approximately \$78,750 (50 studies X \$1,575 per study). In addition to these direct cost savings, principal investigators also benefit by a significant reduction in labor required to prepare review 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 15 studies in FY 2007 for a total cost savings of approximately \$6,690. Estimating similar time

savings to principal investigators for the 35 remaining studies conducted in FY 2007, an additional cost savings of approximately \$15,610 was incurred. The total cost savings to principal investigators is estimated to be \$22,300. Hence, the total amount of dollars saved by the federal government and principal investigators in FY 2007 is estimated to be at least \$101,050.

In nine years, a total of 421 individual surveys have been approved, providing the federal government and principal investigators a time and cost saving estimated to be at least \$824,137.

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 review 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.



Visitor survey at Devils Postpile National Monument (courtesy of Visitor Services Project)

Table 2 – Fiscal Year 2007 Costs and Savings

Activity	Approx. Salary	Standard Review		Expedited Review		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 6)	\$31.14/hr*	12.5 hours	\$389.25	6 hours	\$186.84	\$202.41
Review by Chief Social Scientist (GS-14 Step 6)	\$52.45/hr*	7.5 hours	\$393.38	3 hours	\$157.35	\$236.03
Review by NPS Information Collection Clearance Officer (GS-13 Step 5)	\$43.12/hr*	3 hours	\$129.36	None	None	\$129.36
Review by DOI Information Collection Clearance Officer (GS-15 Step 10)	\$68.75/hr*	2 hours	\$137.50	None	None	\$137.50
Review by OMB OIRA Desk Officer for DOI (GS-15 Step 5)	\$59.93/hr*	3 hours	\$179.79	1 hour	\$59.93	\$119.86
<i>Federal Register</i> Notice Publication	\$75 per page (~5 pages)	2 per study	\$750.00	None	None	\$750.00
Total Cost Savings Per Study						\$1,575.16

* Salary estimates based on 2007 OPM Salary Tables for Washington DC Area

Progress on NPS Initiatives

The NPS Social Science Program has undertaken several initiatives as part of this review program. The major initiative undertaken in FY 2007 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, 331 reports have been digitized and made available on the NPS Focus Digital Library and Research Station. In FY 2006, NPS Focus (including the Social Science Studies

Collection) became available to the public at <http://npsfocus.nps.gov/>

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/activities.cfm> includes links to the Social Science Studies Collection on NPS Focus and the VSP website. In its ninth year, the Expedited Review for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys has proven to be useful 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 continued success of this valuable program.



For Additional Information

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