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# Death Valley National Park Wilderness/Backcountry Users Visitor Study

*Spring 2010 and Fall 2009*

Natural Resource Report NPS/NRPC/SSD/NRR—2010/143/105771

**ON THE COVER**
Hiker at Death Valley National Park
Photograph courtesy of Death Valley National Park

# Death Valley National Park Wilderness/Backcountry Users Visitor Study

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# Contents

Page

**CONTENTS** (continued)

# Executive Summary

- This report describes the results of two visitor studies at Death Valley National Park (NP) during March 18-24, 2010 and November 22 - December 8, 2009. During the spring survey, a total of 371 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 304 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 81.9% response rate. During the fall survey a total of 360 questionnaires were distributed to visitor groups. Of those, 271 questionnaires were returned resulting in a 75.2% response rate.

- This report profiles a systematic random sample of Death Valley NP wilderness/ backcountry users during two survey periods. Most results are presented in graphs and frequency tables. Summaries of visitor comments are included in the report and complete comments are included in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

- Forty-eight percent of spring visitor groups and 46% of fall visitor groups consisted of two people. Forty-four percent of spring visitor groups and 51% of fall visitor groups were in family groups.

- Forty-nine percent of spring visitors and 39% of fall visitors were in the 46 to 65 year age group while 29% of spring visitors and 32% of fall visitors were in the 21 to 40 year age group.

- For 44% of spring visitors and 45% of fall visitors, this was their first visit to Death Valley NP, while 17% of spring visitors and 18% of fall visitors had visited seven or more times.

- United States visitors during the spring survey were from 37 states and Washington, D.C. In the fall survey, U.S. visitors were from 34 states. The highest proportion of visitors was from California (53% spring, 62% fall). International visitors during the spring survey were from eight countries and comprised 5% of spring visitation, with the highest proportion (44%) from Canada. Similarly, during the fall survey, international visitors were from ten countries and comprised 5% of fall visitation, also with a majority from Canada (43%).

- Ninety-one percent of spring visitor groups and 95% of fall visitor groups stayed overnight away from home within Death Valley NP and/or in the surrounding area. The most common type of lodging used inside the park was tent camping in developed campgrounds (38% spring, 38% fall). The most common types of lodging used outside the park were lodges, hotels, cabins, vacation rentals, B&B, etc. (57% spring, 64% fall).

- Of the visitor groups that spent more than 24 hours visiting the park, 28% of spring visitor groups and 27% of fall visitor groups spent three days. The average length of stay in the park was 4.3 days for spring visitor groups and 4.2 days for fall visitor groups.

- Most visitor groups (94% spring, 94% fall) obtained information about Death Valley NP prior to their visit. A majority of visitor groups (69% spring, 72% fall) used the park website to obtain their information.

- The most common activities in the park were: “walking/hiking” (spring 89%, fall 87%); “driving on backcountry roads” (spring 86%, fall 85%); and “viewing scenic attractions” (spring 82%, fall 81%). The most important activities at the park were “walking/hiking” (34% spring, 37% fall), followed by ”viewing scenic attractions” (15% spring, 19% fall).

- Eighty percent of spring visitor groups and 82% of fall visitor groups were aware of the protected wilderness areas in Death Valley NP. A majority of all visitor groups said they were aware of “Leave No Trace” principles (97% spring, 96% fall) and a majority also followed these principles (99% spring, 97% fall).

- Seventeen percent of spring visitor groups and 13% of fall visitor groups backpacked overnight in the park wilderness, and about half of these (49% spring, 51% fall) obtained voluntary backcountry camping permits.

- The most used visitor services and facilities included restrooms (81% spring, 80% fall) and backcountry roads passable to non-4x4 vehicles (77% spring, 73% fall).

- Regarding ratings of the importance and quality of visitor services and facilities, it is important to note that the number of visitor groups that responded to each question varies with each service/facility. The service/facility that received the highest combined proportions of “extremely important” and “very important” ratings was open camping (88% spring, 82% fall).

- The services/facilities that received the highest combined proportions of “very good” and “good” quality ratings by spring visitors was the Death Valley backcountry road map and assistance from park staff (88%). For fall groups, the highest quality rating was for the visitor center (89%).

- Most visitor groups (96% spring, 95% fall) rated the overall quality of services, facilities, and recreational opportunities at Death Valley NP as “very good” or “good.” Less than one percent of spring visitor groups, and no fall groups, rated the overall quality as “very poor” or “poor.”

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the Park Studies Unit at the University of Idaho at (208) 885-7863 or the following website http://www.psu.uidaho.edu./

## Acknowledgements

We thank Douglas Eury for overseeing the fieldwork, Cynthia Jette, Martha Siebe, and the staff and volunteers of Death Valley National Park for assisting with the survey, and David Vollmer and Matthew Strawn for data processing.

## About the Authors

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# Introduction

This report describes the results of a visitor study of wilderness/backcountry users at Death Valley NP, conducted March 18-24, 2010 and November 22 - December 8, 2009, by the National Park Service (NPS) Visitor Services Project (VSP), part of the Park Studies Unit (PSU) at the University of Idaho.

The National Park Service website for Death Valley NP describes it: "A superlative desert of streaming sand dunes, snow-capped mountains, multicolored rock layers, water-fluted canyons and 3 million acres of wilderness. Home to the Timbisha Shoshone people and to plants and animals unique to the harshest desert" (www.nps.gov/deva, retrieved June 2010).

## Organization of the report

The report is organized into three sections.

Section 1: Methods. This section discusses the procedures, limitations, and special conditions that may affect the study results.

Section 2: Results. This section provides summary information for each question in the questionnaire and includes visitor comments to open-ended questions. The presentation of the results of this study does not follow the order of questions in the questionnaire.

Section 3: Appendices

Appendix 1: The Questionnaire. A copy of the questionnaire distributed to visitor groups.

Appendix 2: Additional Analysis. A list of sample questions for cross-references and cross comparisons. Comparisons can be analyzed within park or between parks. Results of additional analyses are not included in this report.

Appendix 3: Decision rules for checking non-response bias. An explanation of how the non-response bias was determined.

Appendix 4: Visitor Services Project Publications. A complete list of publications by the VSP. Copies of these reports can be obtained by visiting the website: www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp/reports.htm or by contacting the VSP office at (208) 885-7863.

Visitor Comments Appendix: A separate appendix provides visitor responses to open-ended questions. It is bound separately from this report due to its size.

## Presentation of the results

Results are represented in the form of graphs (see example below), scatter plots, pie charts, tables, or text.

SAMPLE

1. The figure title describes the graph's information.

2. Listed above the graph, the "N" shows the number of individuals or visitor groups responding to the question. If "N" is less than 30, "CAUTION!" is shown on the graph to indicate the results may be unreliable.

   * appears when total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding.

   **appears when total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer choice.

3. Vertical information describes the response categories.

4. Horizontal information shows the number or proportions of responses in each category.

5. In most graphs, percentages provide additional information.

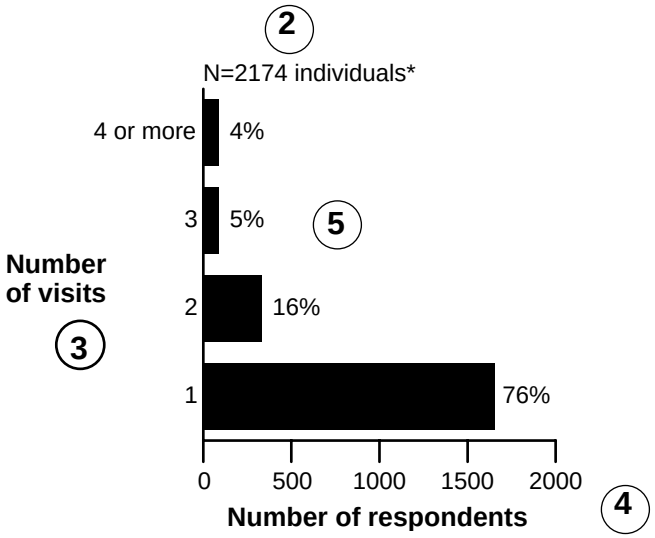


Figure 14. Number of visits to the park in past 12 months

# Methods

## Survey Design

### *Sample size and sampling plan*

All VSP questionnaires follow design principles outlined in Don A. Dillman's book *Mail and Internet Surveys: The Tailored Design Method* (2007). Using this methodology, the sample size was calculated based on the park visitation statistics of previous years.

Brief interviews were conducted with a systematic, random sample of visitor groups that arrived at selected locations in Death Valley NP during March 18-24, 2010 and November 22 - December 8, 2009. Tables 1a and 1b show the locations, the number of questionnaires distributed at each location, and the response rate for each location. Visitors were surveyed between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. during both survey periods. During the spring survey, 375 visitor groups were contacted and 371 of these groups (98.9%) accepted questionnaires. Questionnaires were completed and returned by 304 visitor groups resulting in an 81.9% response rate for the spring study. During the fall survey, 364 visitor groups were contacted and 360 of these groups (98.9%) accepted questionnaires (average acceptance rate for 211 VSP visitor studies conducted from 1988 through 2009 is 91.3%). Questionnaires were completed and returned by 271 visitor groups resulting in a 75.2% response rate for the fall study. The average response rate for the 211 VSP visitor studies is 73.7%.

**Table 1a**. Questionnaire distribution, spring 2010 ($N_1$=number of questionnaires distributed; $N_2$=number of questionnaires returned)

| | Distributed | | Returned | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sampling site** | **$N_1$** | **%** | **$N_2$** | **%** |
| Butte Valley/Warm Springs Road | 17 | 5 | 12 | 4 |
| Echo Canyon Road | 24 | 6 | 22 | 7 |
| Eureka Dunes | 24 | 6 | 23 | 8 |
| Furnace Creek Visitor Center | 59 | 16 | 45 | 15 |
| Mosaic Canyon | 57 | 15 | 51 | 17 |
| Racetrack Road | 60 | 16 | 46 | 15 |
| Stovepipe Wells Ranger Station | 22 | 6 | 16 | 5 |
| Telescope Peak Trail | 27 | 7 | 18 | 6 |
| Titus Canyon | 62 | 17 | 55 | 18 |
| West Side Road (near north entrance by Badwater Rd Junction) | 19 | 5 | 16 | 5 |
| Total | 371 | 99* | 304 | 100 |

*Total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**Table 1b**. Questionnaire distribution, fall 2009 ($N_1$=number of questionnaires distributed; $N_2$=number of questionnaires returned)

| | Distributed | | Returned | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sampling site** | **N[1]** | **%** | **N[2]** | **%** |
| Butte Valley/Warm Springs Road | 17 | 4 | 12 | 4 |
| Cottonwood Canyon Road | 17 | 4 | 12 | 4 |
| Echo Canyon Road | 17 | 4 | 15 | 6 |
| Eureka Dunes | 22 | 6 | 14 | 5 |
| Furnace Creek Visitor Center | 30 | 8 | 27 | 10 |
| Mosaic Canyon | 33 | 9 | 28 | 10 |
| Racetrack Road | 60 | 16 | 44 | 16 |
| Stovepipe Wells Ranger Station | 27 | 8 | 20 | 7 |
| Telescope Peak Trail | 31 | 9 | 25 | 16 |
| Titus Canyon | 85 | 23 | 60 | 22 |
| West Side Road (near north entrance by Badwater Rd Junction) | 21 | 6 | 14 | 5 |
| Total | 360 | 97* | 271 | 98* |

*Total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

### *Questionnaire design*

The Death Valley NP questionnaire was developed at a workshop held with park staff to design and prioritize the questions. Some of the questions were comparable with VSP studies conducted at other parks while others were customized for Death Valley NP. Many questions asked visitors to choose answers from a list of responses, often with an open-ended option, while others were completely open-ended.

No pilot study was conducted to test the Death Valley NP questionnaire. However, all questions followed Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines and/or were used in previous surveys, thus the clarity and consistency of the survey instrument have been tested and supported.

### *Survey procedure*

Visitor groups were greeted, briefly introduced to the purpose of the study, and asked to participate. If visitors agreed, they were asked which member (at least 16 years old) had the next birthday. The individual with the next birthday was selected to complete the questionnaire for the group. An interview, lasting approximately two minutes, was conducted with that person to determine group size, group type, and the age of the member completing the questionnaire. These individuals were asked for their names, addresses, and telephone numbers or email addresses in order to mail them a reminder/thank you postcard and follow-ups. Visitors were asked to complete the survey after their visit, and return the questionnaire by mail. The questionnaires were pre-addressed and affixed with a U.S. first class postage stamp.

Two weeks following the survey, a reminder/thank you postcard was mailed to all participants who provided a valid mailing address (see Tables 2a and 2b). Replacement questionnaires were mailed to participants who had not returned their questionnaires four weeks after the survey.

**Table 2a.** Follow-up mailing distribution, spring 2010

| Mailing | Date | U.S. | International | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Postcards | 8 April 2010 | 352 | 19 | 371 |
| 1st Replacement | 22 April 2010 | 134 | 3 | 139 |
| 2nd Replacement | 12 May 2010 | 86 | 0 | 86 |

**Table 2b**. Follow-up mailing distribution, fall 2009

| Round 1 mailing | Date | U.S. | International | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Postcards | 14 December 2009 | 249 | 7 | 256 |
| 1st Replacement | 5 January 2010 | 126 | 4 | 130 |
| 2nd Replacement | 25 January 2010 | 81 | 0 | 81 |

| Round 2 mailing | Date | U.S. | International | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Postcards | 28 December 2009 | 79 | 10 | 89 |
| 1st Replacement | 12 January 2010 | 25 | 5 | 30 |
| 2nd Replacement | 1 February 2010 | 14 | 0 | 14 |

### *Data analysis*

Returned questionnaires were coded and the visitor responses were processed using custom and standard statistical software applications—Statistical Analysis Software® (SAS), and a custom designed FileMaker Pro® application. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulations were calculated for the coded data and responses to open-ended questions were categorized and summarized. Double-key data entry validation was performed on numeric and text entry variables and the remaining checkbox (bubble) variables were read by optical mark recognition (OMR) software.

### *Limitations*

Like all surveys, this study has limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results.

1. This was a self-administered survey. Respondents completed the questionnaire after the visit, which may have resulted in poor recall. Thus, it is not possible to know whether visitor responses reflected actual behavior.
2. The data reflect visitor use patterns to the selected sites during the study period of March 18-24, 2010 and November 22 - December 8, 2009. The results present a 'snapshot-in-time' and do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year.
3. Caution is advised when interpreting any data with a sample size of less than 30, as the results may be unreliable. Whenever the sample size is less than 30, the word "CAUTION!" is included in the graph, figure, table, or text.
4. Occasionally, there may be inconsistencies in the results. Inconsistencies arise from missing data or incorrect answers (due to misunderstood directions, carelessness, or poor recall of information). Therefore, refer to both the percentage and N (number of individuals or visitor groups) when interpreting the results.

### *Special conditions*

During the spring 2010 survey period, the weather was sunny and warm. The weather during the fall 2009 survey period was generally sunny, sometimes cool, with occasional high winds. No special events occurred in the area that would have affected the type and the amount of visitation to the park, however, the fall survey period included the Thanksgiving holiday.

### *Checking non-response bias*

Three variables were used to check non-response bias: respondents' age, travel distance from home to the park, overall quality rating score, and level of education. There were no significant differences between early and late responders in any of these variables (see Tables 3 and 4). Non-response bias is thus judged to be insignificant. See Appendix 3 for more details of the non-response bias checking procedures.

**Table 3**. Comparison of respondents at different mailing waves

| | Variable | Respondents | Nonrespondents | p-value (t-test) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall | Age (years) | 47.83 (N=271) | 40.15 (N=89) | <0.001 |
| | Group size | 3.05 (N=265) | 3.27 (N=89) | 0.535 |
| Spring | Age (years) | 49.57 (N=304) | 41.73 (N=67) | <0.001 |
| | Group size | 2.89 (N=304) | 3.21 (N=67) | 0.552 |

**Table 4**. Comparison of respondents at different mailing waves

| | Education level | Before postcard | Between postcard and 1st replacement | After 1st replacement | p-value (chi-square) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Fall | Some high school | 0 | 0 | 1 | |
| | High school diploma/GED | 10 | 1 | 3 | |
| | Some college | 23 | 17 | 11 | |
| | Bachelor's degree | 45 | 19 | 23 | |
| | Graduate degree | 56 | 32 | 28 | 0.358 |
| | Total | 134 | 69 | 66 | |
| Spring | Some high school | 1 | 0 | 0 | |
| | High school diploma/GED | 8 | 1 | 2 | |
| | Some college | 37 | 9 | 9 | |
| | Bachelor's degree | 60 | 17 | 30 | |
| | Graduate degree | 75 | 2 | 31 | 0.802 |
| | Total | 181 | 50 | 72 | |

# Results

## Group and Visitor Characteristics

### *Visitor group size*

**Question 24b**

On this visit, how many people were in your personal group, including yourself?

Results

- As shown in Figure 1, the most common visitor group sizes were:

  Spring
  48% groups of two

  Fall
  46% groups of two

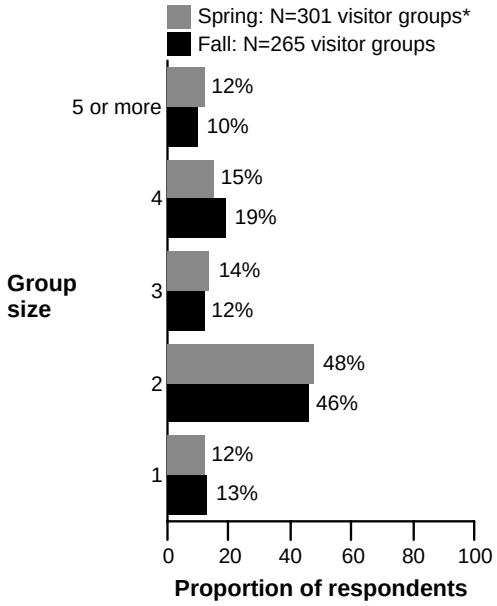


**Figure 1**. Visitor group size

### *Visitor group type*

**Question 24a**

On this visit, what kind of personal group (not guided tour/school/other organized group) were you with?

Results

- As shown in Figure 2, the most common visitor group types were:

  Spring
  44% family
  28% friends

  Fall
  51% family
  19% friends

- "Other" group types were:

  Spring (2%)
  California Native Plant Society
  Geology class field trip

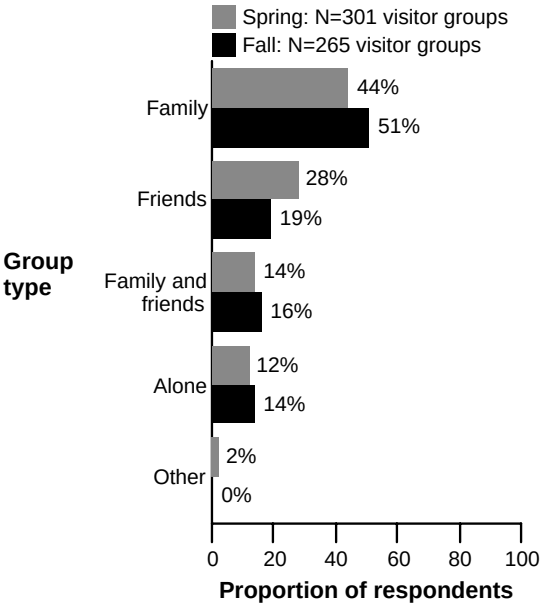


**Figure 2**. Visitor group type

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Tahuya Trail Riders

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Visitors with organized groups*

**Question 23a**

On this visit, were you and your personal group part of a commercial guided tour group?

Results

- As shown in Figure 3, the proportion of visitor groups with a commercial guided tour group were:

  1% Spring
  1% Fall

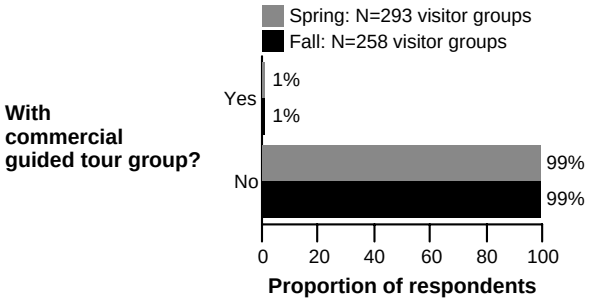


**Figure 3**. Visitors with a commercial guided tour group

**Question 23b**

On this visit, were you and your personal group part of a school/educational group?

Results

- As shown in Figure 4, the proportion of visitor groups with a school/educational group were:

  2% Spring
  2% Fall

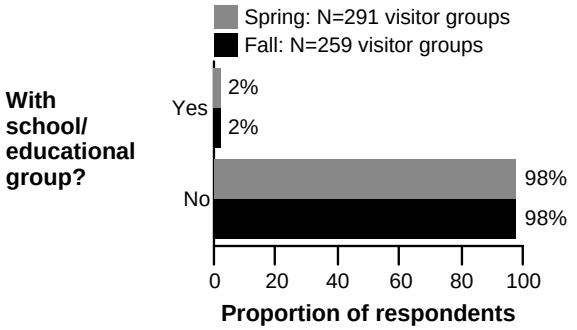


**Figure 4**. Visitors with a school/educational group

**Question 23c**

On this visit, were you and your personal group part of an "other" organized group (scouts, work, church, etc.)?

Results

- As shown in Figure 5, the proportion of visitor groups with an "other" organized group (scouts, work, church, etc.) were:

  3% Spring
  2% Fall

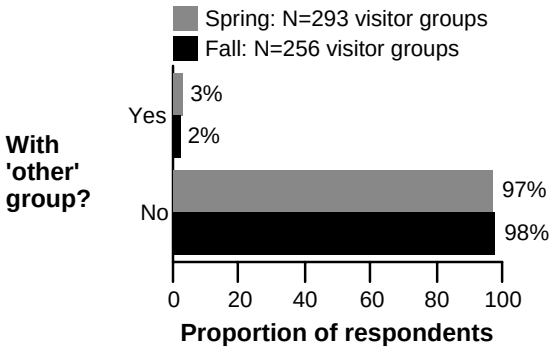


**Figure 5**. Visitors with an "other" organized group

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 23d**

If you were with one of these organized groups, how many people, including yourself, were in this group?

Results – CAUTION!

- Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 6).

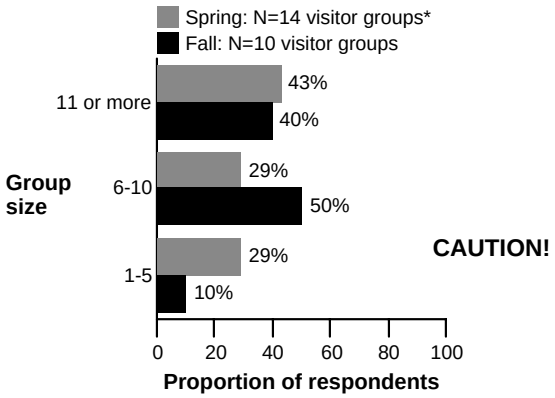


**Figure 6**. Organized group size

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *United States visitors by state of residence - spring 2010*

**Question 26b**

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your state of residence?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- U.S. visitors were from 37 states and Washington, D.C. and comprised 95% of total visitation to the park during the spring survey period.
- 53% of U.S. visitors came from California (see Table 5a and Figure 7).
- 13% came from Oregon.
- Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 35 other states and Washington, D.C.

**Table 5a**. United States visitors by state of residence* (spring 2010)

| State | Number of visitors | Percent of U.S. visitors N=724 individuals | Percent of total visitors N=765 individuals |
|---|---|---|---|
| California | 384 | 53 | 50 |
| Oregon | 91 | 13 | 12 |
| Nevada | 44 | 6 | 6 |
| Colorado | 28 | 4 | 4 |
| Washington | 26 | 4 | 3 |
| Arizona | 20 | 3 | 3 |
| Ohio | 11 | 2 | 1 |
| Virginia | 10 | 1 | 1 |
| Minnesota | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| North Carolina | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| Idaho | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Illinois | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Maryland | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| New Jersey | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Pennsylvania | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Delaware | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Maine | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| New York | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Texas | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Utah | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| 17 other states and Washington, D.C. | 28 | 4 | 4 |

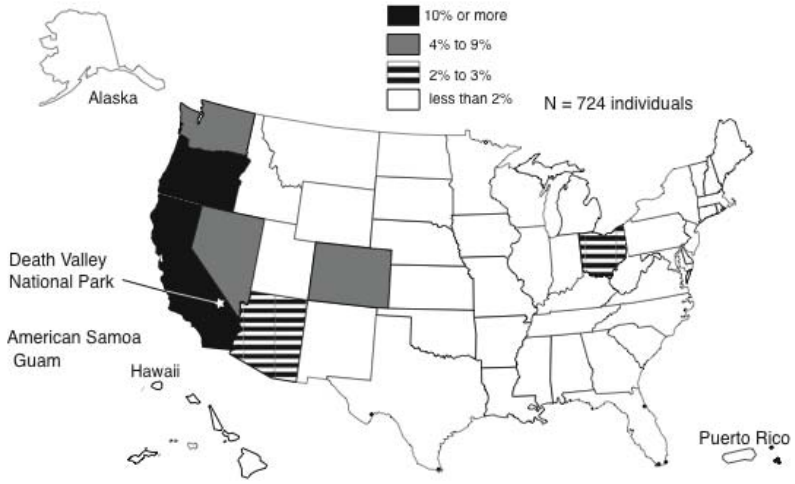


**Figure 7.** Proportions of United States visitors by state of residence – spring survey

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *United States visitors by state of residence - fall 2009*

**Question 26b**

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your state of residence?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- U.S. visitors were from 34 states and comprised 95% of total visitation to the park during the fall survey period.
- 62% of U.S. visitors came from California (see Table 5b and Figure 8).
- 9% came from Nevada.
- 3% came from Oregon.
- 3% came from Illinois.
- Smaller proportions of U.S. visitors came from 31 other states.

**Table 5b**. United States visitors by state of residence* (fall 2009)

| State | Number of visitors | Percent of U.S. visitors N=655 individuals | Percent of total visitors N=690 individuals |
|---|---|---|---|
| California | 408 | 62 | 59 |
| Nevada | 59 | 9 | 9 |
| Oregon | 22 | 3 | 3 |
| Illinois | 19 | 3 | 3 |
| Arizona | 14 | 2 | 2 |
| Utah | 11 | 2 | 2 |
| Washington | 11 | 2 | 2 |
| Colorado | 10 | 2 | 2 |
| Florida | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| Michigan | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| Texas | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| Idaho | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Massachusetts | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| Connecticut | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| New York | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| North Carolina | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Maryland | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| New Jersey | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| New Mexico | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| Ohio | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| 14 other states | 31 | 5 | 4 |

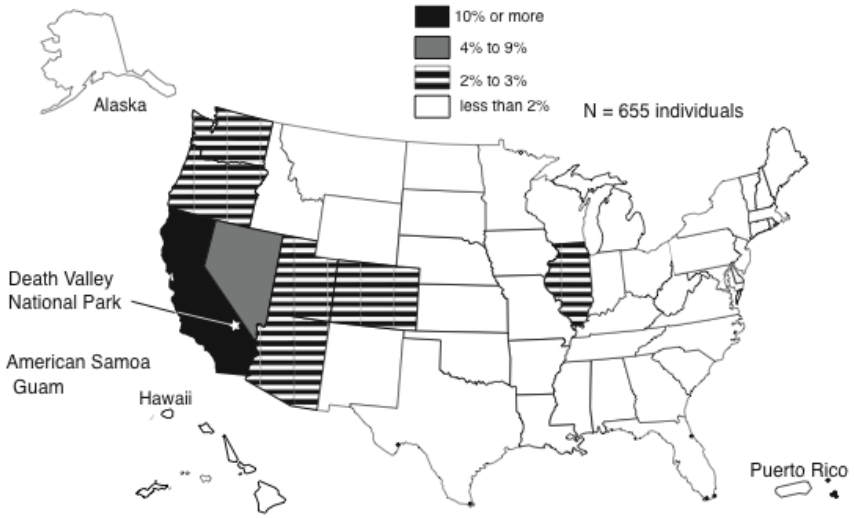


**Figure 8.** Proportions of United States visitors by state of residence – fall survey

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *International visitors by country of residence - spring 2010*

**Question 26b**

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your country of residence?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- International visitors came from 8 countries and comprised 5% of the total visitation during the spring survey period.
- 44% of international visitors came from Canada (see Table 6a.)
- 17% were from the United Kingdom.
- 12% were from Germany.

**Table 6a**. International visitors by country of residence* (spring 2010)

| Country | Number of visitors | Percent of international visitors N=41 individuals | Percent of total visitors N=765 individuals |
|---|---|---|---|
| Canada | 18 | 44 | 2 |
| United Kingdom | 7 | 17 | 1 |
| Germany | 5 | 12 | 1 |
| France | 3 | 7 | <1 |
| Poland | 3 | 7 | <1 |
| Finland | 2 | 5 | <1 |
| Switzerland | 2 | 5 | <1 |
| Italy | 1 | 3 | <1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *International visitors by country of residence - fall 2009*

**Question 26b**

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your country of residence?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- International visitors came from 10 countries and comprised 5% of the total visitation during the fall survey period.
- 43% of international visitors came from Canada (see Table 6b).
- 23% were from Germany.
- Smaller proportions were from 8 other countries.

**Table 6b**. International visitors by country of residence* (fall 2009)

| Country | Number of visitors | Percent of international visitors N=35 individuals | Percent of total visitors N=690 individuals |
|---|---|---|---|
| Canada | 15 | 43 | 3 |
| Germany | 8 | 23 | 1 |
| Australia | 2 | 6 | <1 |
| France | 2 | 6 | <1 |
| India | 2 | 6 | <1 |
| Switzerland | 2 | 6 | <1 |
| Belgium | 1 | 3 | <1 |
| Japan | 1 | 3 | <1 |
| Singapore | 1 | 3 | <1 |
| United Kingdom | 1 | 3 | <1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Number of visits*

**Question 26c**

For you and your personal group on this visit, how many times have you visited Death Valley NP in your lifetime (including this visit)?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- As shown in Figure 9, the proportion of visitors who had visited the park once was:

  41% Spring
  42% Fall

- The proportion of visitors who had visited the park twice was:

  18% Spring
  15% Fall

- The proportion of visitors who had visited the park seven or more times was:

  18% Spring
  19% Fall

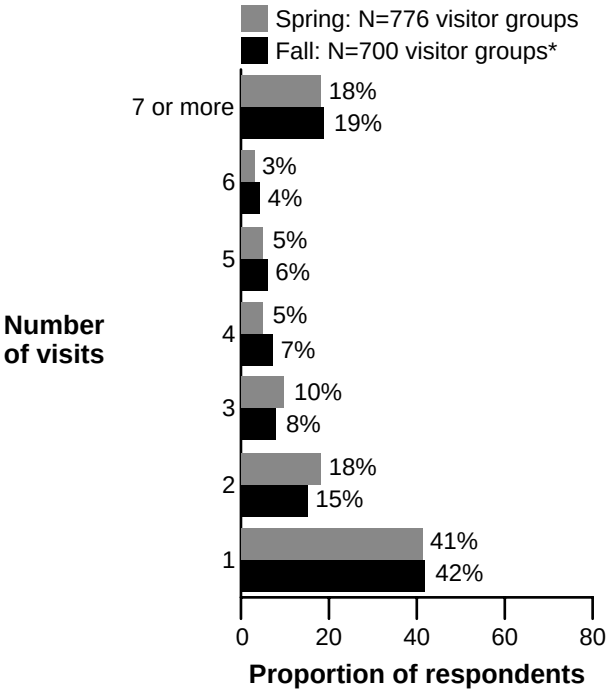


**Figure 9**. Number of visits to park in lifetime

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Visitor age*

**Question 26a**

For you and your personal group on this visit, what is your current age?

Note: Response was limited to seven members from each visitor group.

Results

- Visitor ages ranged from:

  Spring: 1 - 90 years
  Fall: 1 - 83 years

- As shown in Figure 10, visitor age groups included:

  Spring
  49% 46 - 65 years
  29% 21 - 40 years
  5% 15 and younger
  9% 66 and older

  Fall
  39% 46 - 65 years
  32% 21 - 40 years
  10% 15 and younger
  7% 66 and older

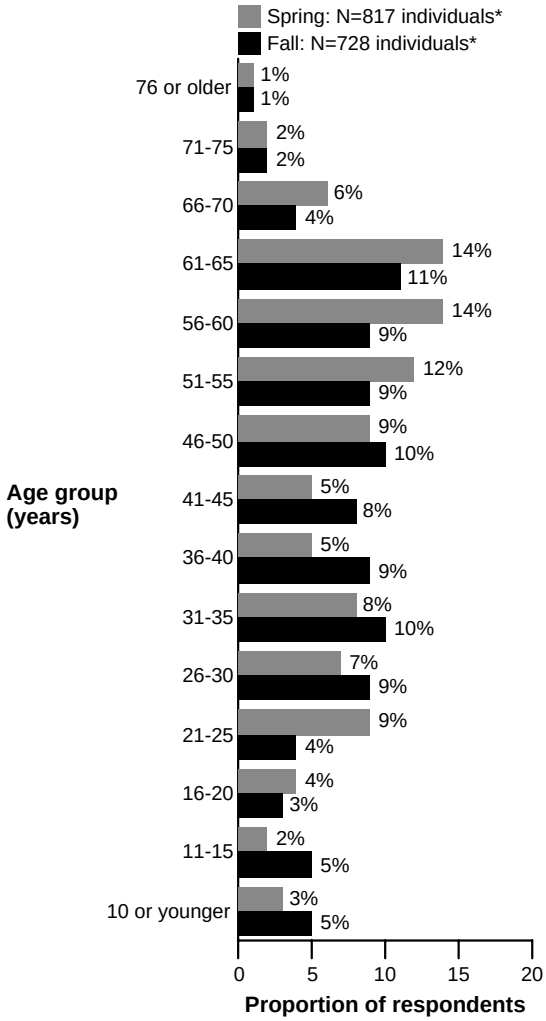


**Figure 10**. Visitor age

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Visitor ethnicity*

**Question 27a**

Are you or members of your personal group Hispanic or Latino?

Results

- As shown in Figure 11, the proportion of Hispanic or Latino visitors was:

  2% Spring
  4% Fall

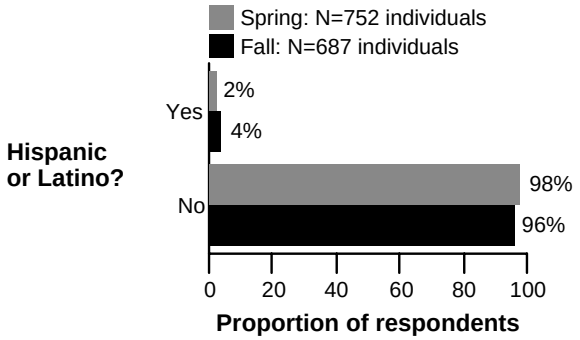


**Figure 11**. Ethnicity

## *Visitor race*

**Question 27b**

What is your race? What is the race of each member of your personal group?

Results

- As shown in Figure 12, the most common races represented among visitors to Death Valley NP were:

  Spring
  95% White
  4% Asian

  Fall
  90% White
  9% Asian

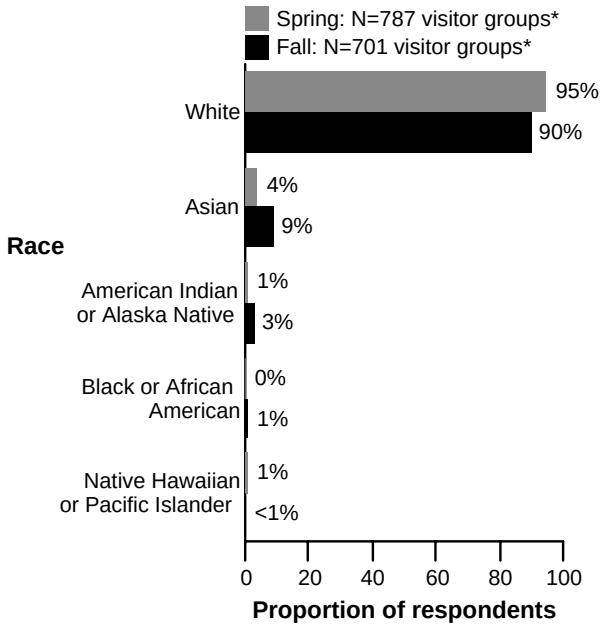


**Figure 12**. Race

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Respondents' level of education*

**Question 25**

For you only, what is the highest level of education you have completed?

Results

- As shown in Figure 13, the highest level of education completed by most respondents was:

  Spring
  43% Graduate degree
  35% Bachelor's degree

  Fall
  43% Graduate degree
  32% Bachelor's degree

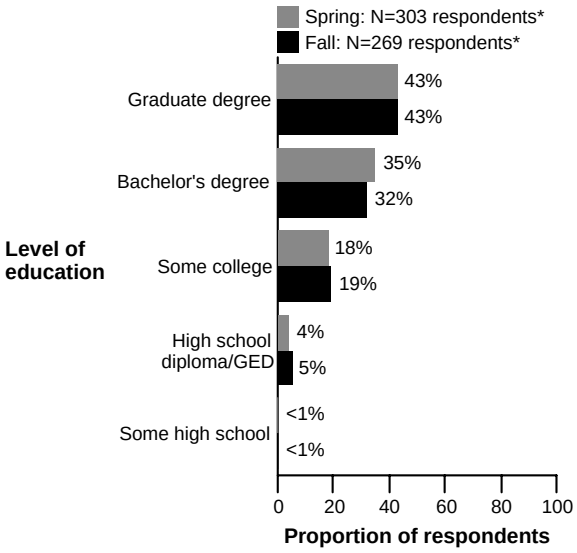


**Figure 13**. Respondents' level of education

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Household income*

**Question 28a**

Which category best represents your annual household income before taxes?

Results

- As shown in Figure 14, the most common annual household income ranges were:

  Spring
  20% $50,000 - $74,999
  18% $75,000 - $99,999
  14% $100,000 - $149,999

  Fall
  22% $100,000 - $149,999
  16% $75,000 - $99,999
  16% $50,000 - $74,999

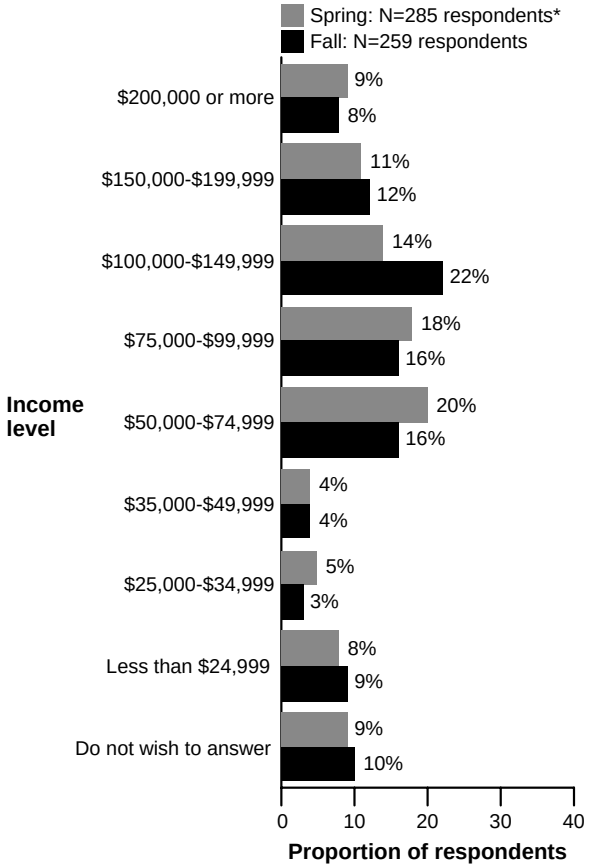


**Figure 14**. Annual household income

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Household size*

**Question 28b**

How many people are in your household?

Results

- As shown in Figure 15, the most common household sizes were:

  Spring
  55% Two members
  23% One member

  Fall
  53% Two members
  24% One member

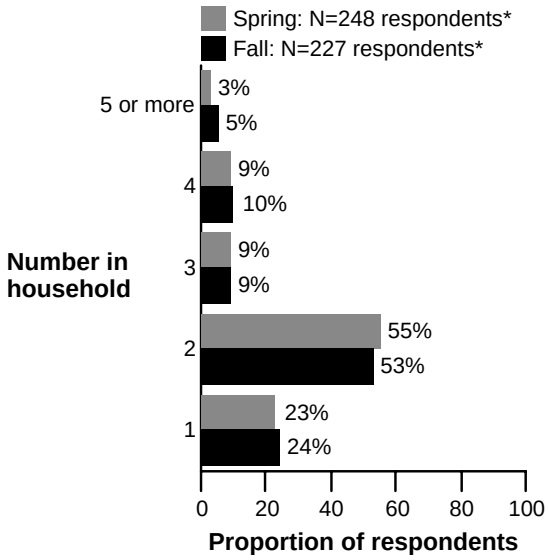


**Figure 15**. Number of people in household

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## Trip/Visit Characteristics and Preferences

### *Information sources prior to visit*

**Question 1a**

Prior to your visit, how did you and your personal group obtain information about Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 16, the proportion of visitor groups that obtained information about Death Valley NP prior to their arrival was:

  94% Spring
  94% Fall

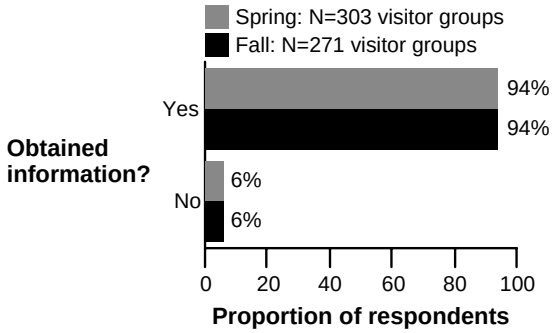


**Figure 16**. Visitor groups that obtained information about Death Valley NP prior to visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 1a**

Prior to your visit, how did you and your personal group obtain information about Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 17, among those visitor groups that obtained information about Death Valley NP prior to their visit, the most common sources were:

  Spring
  69% Park website
  61% Previous visits
  43% Maps/brochures

  Fall
  72% Park website
  61% Previous visit
  48% Maps/brochures

- "Other" sources were:

  Spring (6%)
  AAA
  Explorer's Guide to Death Valley NP
  Books
  Frommer's
  Library
  Map software
  Photographer's guide to Death Valley
  Travel guides

  Fall (7%)
  Books
  AAA
  Michel DiGonnet books
  National Geographic map
  Pink Jeep tours
  Travel guides

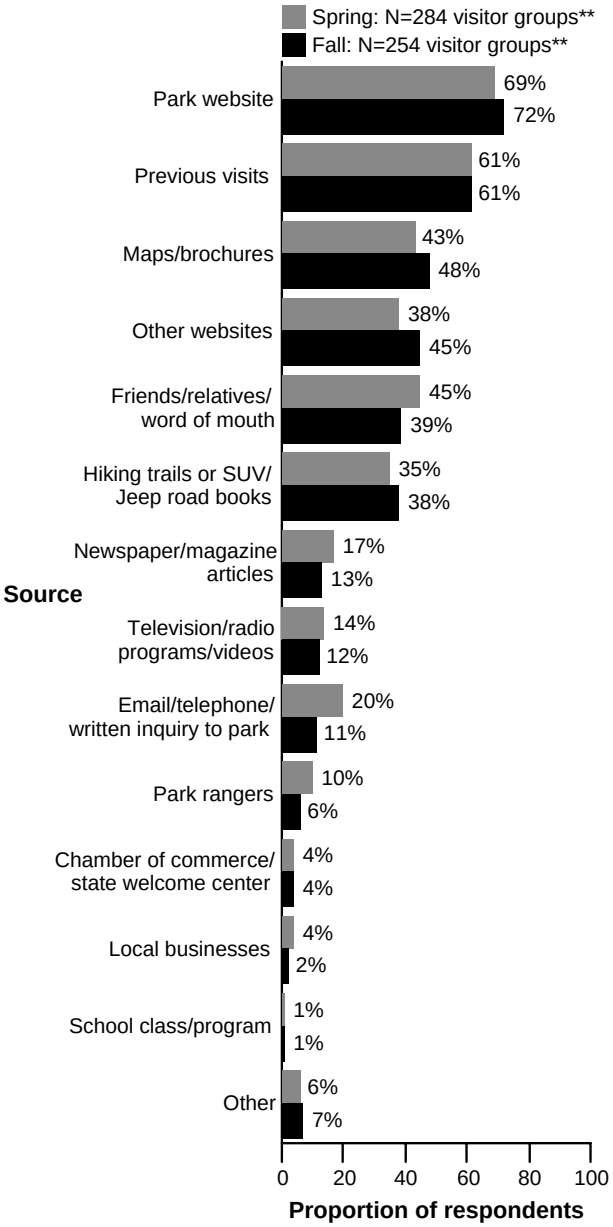


**Figure 17**. Sources of information used by visitor groups prior to visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 1c**

From the sources you used prior to this visit, did you and your personal group receive the type of information about the park that you needed?

Results

- As shown in Figure 18, the proportion of visitor groups that received needed information prior to their visit was:

  86% Spring
  88% Fall

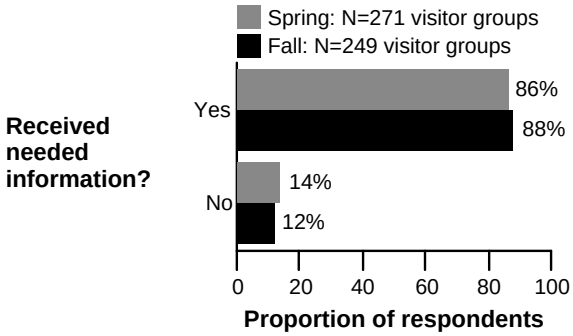


**Figure 18.** Visitor groups that received needed information prior to their visit

**Question 1d**

If NO, what type of park information did you and your personal group need that was not available? (open-ended)

Results

- 35 spring visitor groups listed information they needed but was not available (see Table 7a).

- 26 fall visitor groups listed information they needed but was not available (see Table 7b).

**Table 7a**. Needed information – spring (N=42 comments; some visitors made more than one comment.)

| Type of information | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Updated road closure information | 10 |
| Updated site closure information | 5 |
| More information on backcountry roads | 3 |
| Online morning report | 3 |
| Specific campground information: temperature, elevation, availability, reservations | 3 |
| Campsite availability | 2 |
| Specifics on backcountry camping | 2 |
| Accurate snowfall information | 1 |
| Cell phone service availability | 1 |
| More specific information | 1 |
| Park geography | 1 |
| Ranger contact information | 1 |
| Recommendations for what to see/do in 3 days | 1 |
| Road conditions | 1 |
| Specific information on backcountry trails | 1 |
| Specific information on backcountry trails/hiking | 1 |
| Topographic maps sold out at visitor center | 1 |
| Vehicle repair options/services | 1 |
| Water availability on trails | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 7b**. Needed information – fall (N=33 comments; some visitors made more than one comment.)

| Type of information | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Current road information/conditions | 6 |
| Weather information | 5 |
| Current camping information/availability | 2 |
| Water sources | 2 |
| Backcountry options | 1 |
| Details about campgrounds (i.e., wind protection, surface type, etc.) | 1 |
| Drive time estimations to remote sites | 1 |
| Exact difficulty of getting to the Race Track | 1 |
| High resolution USGS maps | 1 |
| Hiking maps | 1 |
| Hiking times for specific trails | 1 |
| Information about backcountry camping | 1 |
| Information about concession-run RV sites (conflicted with NPS information) | 1 |
| Information on Hanuapah Springs | 1 |
| Information on Shorty's Well | 1 |
| Internet service availability | 1 |
| Local map | 1 |
| Mountain biking information | 1 |
| Road requirements | 1 |
| Snow conditions on Telescope Peak | 1 |
| Specific hiking opportunities | 1 |
| Specific sites to see | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Information sources used after arrival*

**Question 1b**

After you arrived at Death Valley NP, which sources did you and your personal group use to obtain information about the park?

Results

- As shown in Figure 19, the most common sources of information about the park, used after visitor groups' arrival, were:

  Spring
  69% Maps/brochures
  68% Park rangers

  Fall
  70% Maps/brochures
  70% Park rangers

- "Other" sources were:

  Spring (4%)
  Campground host
  Jeep rental shop
  Visitor center
  Books
  Concessionaires
  Frommer's
  Glazener's Book on geology
  GPS
  Park's welcome center

  Fall (3%)
  Books
  Travel guides
  AAA
  Camp host
  GPS
  Michel DiGonnet books
  Pink Jeep tours

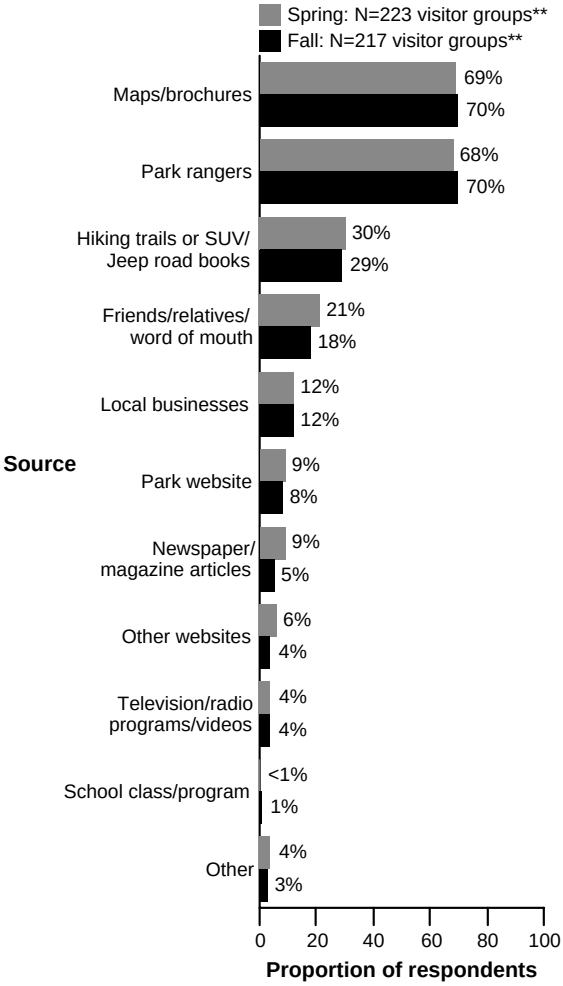


**Figure 19**. Sources of information used after arrival

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Primary reason for visiting Death Valley*

**Question 5**

On this trip, what was the primary reason that you and your personal group came to Death Valley?

Results

- As shown in Figure 20, the most common primary reasons for visiting Death Valley were:

  Spring
  43% Enjoy recreation in the park
  25% View scenic attractions
  20% Experience wilderness and open space

  Fall
  55% Enjoy recreation in the park
  19% Experience wilderness and open space
  16% View scenic attractions

- "Other" reasons were:

  Spring (3%)
  Artistic work
  Enjoy warm weather
  Enjoyment
  Explore
  Geological research
  Geology
  Photography
  See Titus Canyon/Playa
  Wedding anniversary

  Fall (4%)
  '49er encampment
  Enjoy the beauty
  EnvironSports marathon
  High school field studies
  Photography
  Relaxation
  Study geology
  To experience time
  Visit a friend
  Visit ranger station

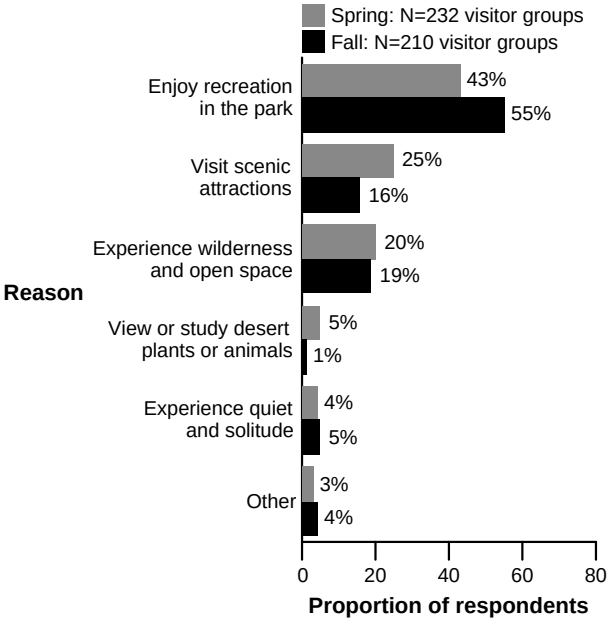


**Figure 20**. Primary reason for visiting Death Valley

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Number of vehicles*

**Question 24c**

On this visit, how many vehicles did you and your personal group use to arrive at the park?

Results

- As shown in Figure 21, the proportion of visitor groups that used one vehicle to arrive at the park was:

  72% Spring
  77% Fall

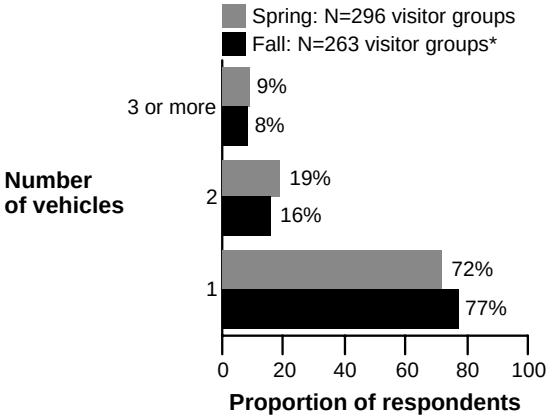


**Figure 21**. Number of vehicles used to arrive at the park

## *Overnight stays*

**Question 6a**

On this trip, did you and your personal group stay overnight away from your permanent residence either inside Death Valley NP or within the nearby area (a two-hour drive outside of Death Valley NP)?

Results

- As shown in Figure 22, the proportion of visitor groups that stayed overnight either inside Death Valley NP or within the nearby area (a two-hour drive outside of Death Valley NP) was:

  91% Spring
  95% Fall

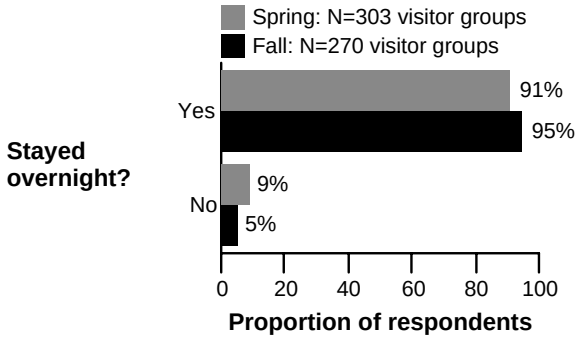


**Figure 22**. Visitor groups that stayed overnight inside the park or outside the park within a two-hour drive

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 6b**

If YES, please list the number of nights you and your personal group stayed in Death Valley NP and/or within a two-hour drive.

Results

Number of nights in Death Valley NP

- As shown in Figure 23, the number of nights spent inside Death Valley NP included:

  Spring
  25% Three nights
  20% Two nights
  17% Four nights
  17% Six or more nights

  Fall:
  24% Three nights
  22% Two nights
  21% Four nights

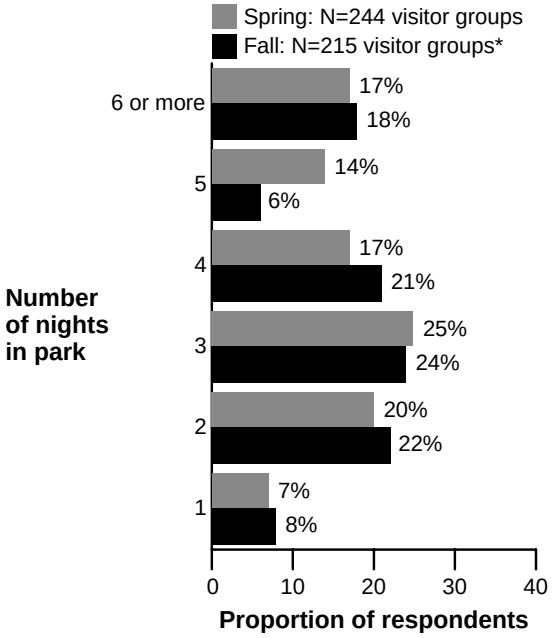


**Figure 23**. Number of nights spent in Death Valley NP

Number of nights outside Death Valley NP within a two-hour drive

- As shown in Figure 24, the number of nights spent outside the park within a two-hour drive included:

  Spring
  50% One night
  20% Two nights

  Fall:
  44% One night
  23% Two nights

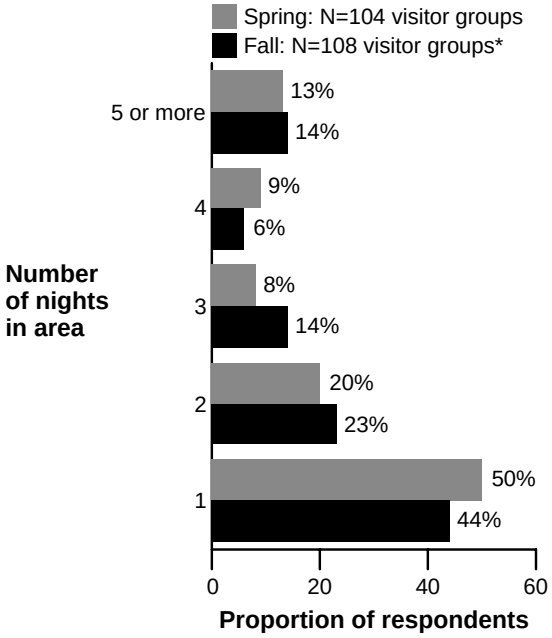


**Figure 24**. Number of nights spent outside the park within a two-hour drive

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Lodging used inside the park*

**Question 6c**

In which types of lodging did you and your personal group spend the night(s) in Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 25, the most common types of lodging used by visitor groups inside the park were:

  Spring
  - 38% Tent camping in developed campground
  - 36% Camping in a backcountry roadside campsite
  - 25% Lodge/hotel/motel/vacation rental/B&B

  Fall
  - 38% Tent camping in developed campground
  - 28% Lodge/hotel/motel/vacation rental/B&B
  - 25% RV/trailer camping

- "Other" types of lodging were:

  Spring (1%)
  - Backcountry tent (unspecified location) In car

  Fall (1%)
  - No "other" lodging was specified

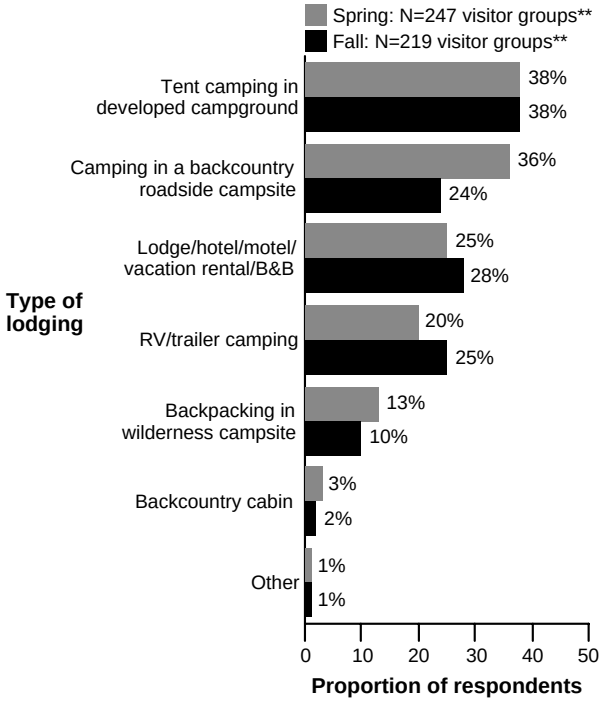


**Figure 25**. Lodging used inside the park

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Lodging used outside the park*

**Question 6d**

In which types of lodging did you and your personal group spend the night(s) outside the park within a two-hour drive?

Results

- As shown in Figure 26, the most common types of lodging used by visitor groups outside the park (within a two-hour drive) were:

  Spring
  57% Lodge/hotel/motel/vacation rental/B&B
  21% Camping in a backcountry roadside campsite
  17% RV/trailer camping

  Fall
  64% Lodge/hotel/motel/vacation rental/B&B
  16% Camping in a backcountry roadside campsite
  12% RV/trailer camping

- "Other" types of lodging were:

  Fall (10%)
  Residence of a relative/friend
  Along a Forest Service road
  Backcountry tent (unspecified location)
  Campsite (unspecified location)
  Research station
  Tent camping in undeveloped areas
  Tent camping on BLM land

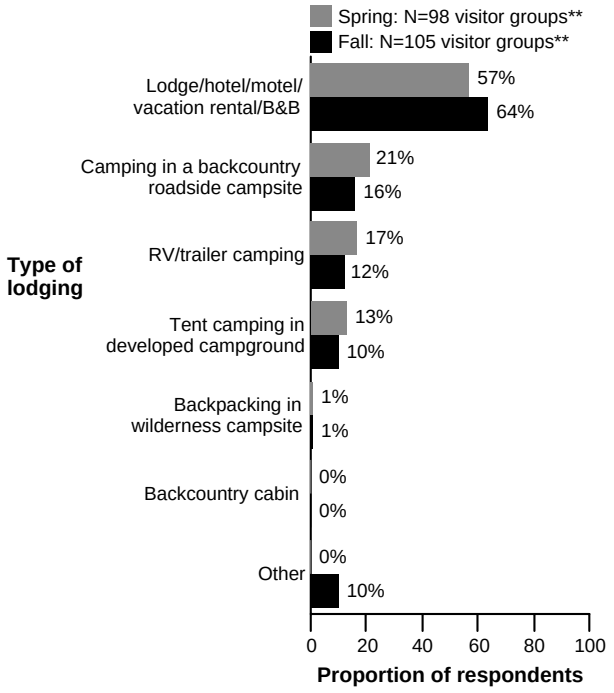


**Figure 26**. Lodging used outside the park within a two-hour drive

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Use of backcountry cabins*

**Question 21a**

During this visit to Death Valley NP backcountry did you and your personal group visit any backcountry cabins?

Results – **CAUTION**!

- Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 27).

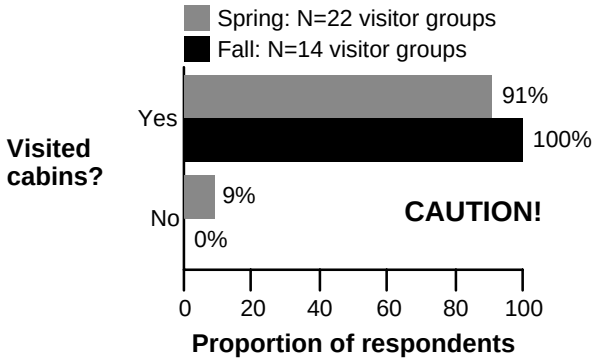


**Figure 27**. Visitor groups that visited backcountry cabins

**Question 21b**

Please list cabins in which you and your personal group stayed on this visit.

Results

- Tables 8a and 8b show the backcountry cabins used by spring and fall visitor groups were:

**Table 8a**. Backcountry cabins used-spring (N=20 comments) **CAUTION!**

| Cabin | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Warm Springs | 6 |
| Geologist's Cabin | 4 |
| Anvil Springs | 1 |
| Corona Mine/Jail Canyon | 1 |
| Inyo Mine | 1 |
| Near Jubilee Pass | 1 |
| Panamint City | 1 |
| Russells Camp | 1 |
| Trail Canyon | 1 |
| Tucki | 1 |
| Warm Springs Camp | 1 |
| World Beater Mine | 1 |

**Table 8b**. Backcountry cabins used-fall (N=12 comments) **CAUTION!**

| Cabin | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Geologist's Cabin | 3 |
| Russells Camp | 2 |
| Striped Butte | 2 |
| Butte Valley | 1 |
| Leadfield | 1 |
| Mengal's Cabin | 1 |
| Talc Mine | 1 |
| Warm Springs Canyon | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 21c**

Please list number of nights that you and your personal group spent in each cabin.

Results – **CAUTION**!

- Tables 9a and 9b show the number of nights that visitor groups stayed in backcountry cabins.

**Table 9a**. Nights spent in backcountry cabins – spring (N=number of visitor groups) **CAUTION**!

| Cabin | N | 1 night | 2 nights |
|---|---|---|---|
| Corona Mine/Jail Canyon | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Geologist's Cabin | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Near Jubilee Pass | 1 | 1 | - |
| Panamint City | 1 | 1 | - |
| Quail Spring Cabin | 1 | 1 | - |
| Russell's Camp | 2 | 1 | - |
| Trail Canyon | 1 | 1 | - |
| Warm Springs Canyon | 3 | 1 | - |
| Warm Springs Camp | 1 | 1 | - |
| World Beater Mine | 1 | 1 | 1 |

**Table 9b**. Nights spent in backcountry cabins – fall (N=number of visitor groups) **CAUTION**!

| Cabin | N | 1 night | 4 nights | 5 nights |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Briggs | 1 | 1 | - | - |
| Geologist's Cabin | 2 | 1 | 1 | |
| Greater View | 1 | - | - | 1 |
| Russell's Camp | 1 | - | - | - |
| Striped Butte | 1 | - | - | - |
| Warm Springs Canyon | 1 | 1 | - | - |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Condition of backcountry cabins*

**Question 21d**

Please rate the condition of the cabin.

Results – **CAUTION**!

- Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 28).
- Tables 10a and 10b show the visitor ratings of backcountry cabin conditions.

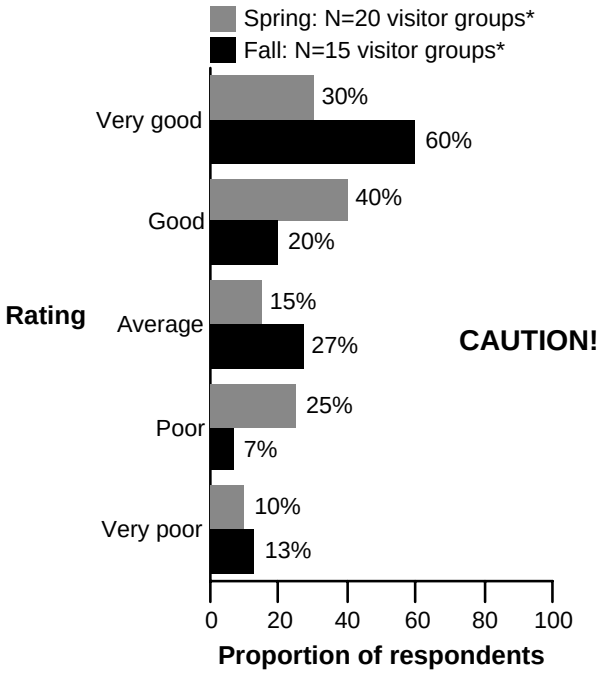


**Figure 28**. Condition of backcountry cabins

**Table 10a**. Visitor ratings of backcountry cabin condition – spring (N=number of visitor groups that rated the condition of backcountry cabins) **CAUTION**!

| | | Rating (%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cabin** | **N** | **Very poor** | **Poor** | **Average** | **Good** | **Very good** |
| Briggs | 1 | - | - | - | - | 100 |
| Butte Valley | 1 | - | - | - | 100 | - |
| Corona Mine/Jail Canyon | 1 | - | - | - | 100 | - |
| Geologist's Cabin | 5 | 0 | 0 | 20 | 40 | 40 |
| Jubilee Pass | 1 | - | 100 | - | - | - |
| Panamint City | 1 | - | - | - | 100 | - |
| Quail Spring Cabin | 1 | 100 | - | - | - | - |
| Russell's Camp | 2 | - | - | 50 | - | 50 |
| Stella's | 1 | - | - | - | 100 | - |
| Trail Canyon | 1 | - | - | 100 | - | - |
| Tucki | 1 | - | 100 | - | - | - |
| Warm Springs Canyon | 7 | 14 | 43 | - | 29 | 14 |
| World Beater Mine | 1 | - | - | - | - | 100 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 10b**. Visitor ratings of backcountry cabin condition – fall (N=number of visitor groups that rated the condition of backcountry cabins) **CAUTION**!

| | | Rating (%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cabin** | **N** | **Very poor** | **Poor** | **Average** | **Good** | **Very good** |
| Barker Ranch | 1 | - | 100 | - | - | - |
| Briggs | 1 | - | - | - | - | 100 |
| Butte Valley | 1 | - | - | - | - | 100 |
| Geologist's Cabin | 4 | - | - | - | - | 100 |
| Greater View | 1 | - | - | - | - | 100 |
| Leadfield | 1 | 50 | - | 50 | - | - |
| Newman | 1 | - | - | 100 | - | - |
| Russell's Camp | 2 | - | - | 50 | - | 50 |
| Striped Butte | 2 | - | - | - | 50 | 50 |
| Talc Mined | 1 | 100 | - | - | - | - |
| Warm Springs Canyon | 1 | - | - | 100 | - | - |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Length of visit*

**Question 7**

On this visit, how much time did you and your personal group spend at Death Valley NP?

Results

Number of hours, if less than 24 hours

- **CAUTION**!
  Not enough visitor groups responded to this question to provide reliable results (see Figure 29).

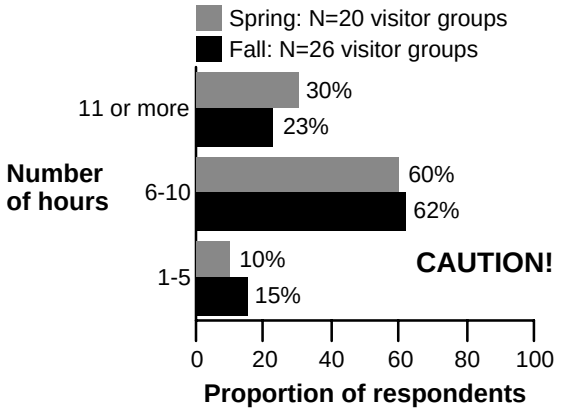


**Figure 29**. Number of hours spent visiting the park

Number of hours, if more than 24 hours

- As shown in Figure 30, the number of days spent visiting the park included:

  Spring
  28% Three days
  18% Four days

  Fall
  27% Three days
  25% Four days

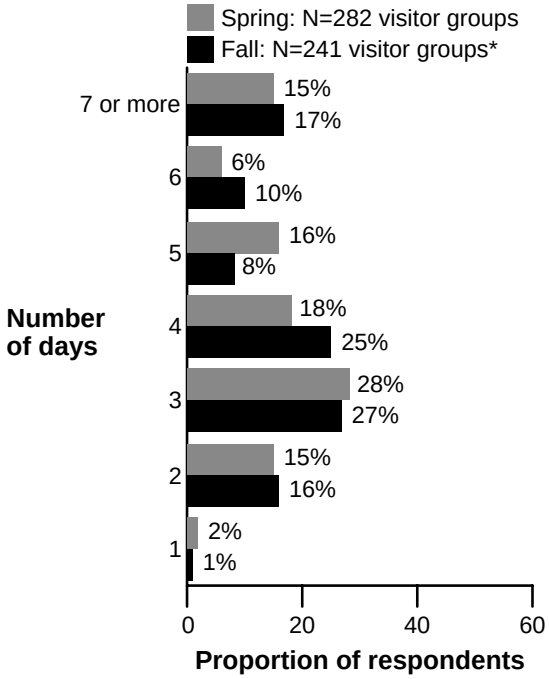


**Figure 30**. Number of days spent visiting the park

The average length of stay

- The average length of stay for all visitor groups was:

  Spring: 104 hours, or 4.3 days
  Fall: 101.4 hours, or 4.2 days

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Backcountry roads or wilderness destinations*

**Question 9a**

On this visit, what was/were your destination(s) along the backcountry roads or in the wilderness of Death Valley NP? (Open-ended)

Results

- Tables 11a and 11b show visitor groups' most common destinations along backcountry roads or in the wilderness of Death Valley NP.

**Table 11a**. Destinations – spring (N=1,037 comments)

| Destination | Number of times mentioned | % |
|---|---|---|
| Titus Canyon Road | 106 | 10 |
| Racetrack | 75 | 7 |
| Mosaic Canyon | 56 | 5 |
| Eureka Dunes | 36 | 3 |
| Golden Canyon | 36 | 3 |
| Badwater | 32 | 3 |
| Artist's Drive | 28 | 3 |
| Charcoal Kilns | 28 | 3 |
| Cottonwood Canyon Road | 27 | 3 |
| Marble Canyon | 27 | 3 |
| Darwin Falls | 26 | 3 |
| Warm Springs Canyon Road | 26 | 3 |
| Echo Canyon | 23 | 2 |
| Fall Canyon | 18 | 2 |
| Wildrose Peak Trail | 16 | 2 |
| Dante's View | 15 | 1 |
| Zabriskie Point | 14 | 1 |
| Mequite Flat Sand Dunes | 13 | 1 |
| Aguereberry Point | 12 | 1 |
| Hole in the Wall Road | 12 | 1 |
| Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes | 12 | 1 |
| Natural Bridge Canyon | 12 | 1 |
| Salt Creek Interpretive Trail | 12 | 1 |
| Saline Valley Warm Springs | 11 | 1 |
| West Side Road | 11 | 1 |
| Scotty's Castle | 10 | 1 |
| Chloride City (Ghost Town) | 9 | 1 |
| Hanaupah Canyon | 9 | 1 |
| Trail Canyon | 9 | 1 |
| Ubehebe Crater | 9 | 1 |
| Twenty Mule Team Canyon | 7 | 1 |
| Furnace Creek | 6 | 1 |
| Greenwater Valley | 6 | 1 |
| Hunter Mountain Road | 6 | 1 |
| Inyo Mine | 6 | 1 |
| Rhyolite | 6 | 1 |
| Skidoo | 6 | 1 |
| Steel Pass | 6 | 1 |
| Telescope Peak | 6 | 1 |
| Other | 252 | 24 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 11b**. Destinations – fall (N=942 comments)

| Destination | Number of times mentioned | % |
|---|---|---|
| Titus Canyon Road | 83 | 9 |
| Racetrack | 62 | 7 |
| Mosaic Canyon | 42 | 4 |
| Badwater | 33 | 4 |
| Eureka Dunes | 31 | 3 |
| Fall Canyon | 26 | 3 |
| Ubehebe Crater | 26 | 3 |
| Golden Canyon | 23 | 2 |
| Marble Canyon | 21 | 2 |
| Telescope Peak | 20 | 2 |
| Wildrose Charcoal Kilns | 20 | 2 |
| Cottonwood Canyon Road | 18 | 2 |
| Darwin Falls | 16 | 2 |
| Artist's Drive | 15 | 2 |
| Dante's View | 15 | 2 |
| Echo Canyon | 15 | 2 |
| Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes | 15 | 2 |
| Zabriskie Point | 15 | 2 |
| Saline Valley Warm Springs | 14 | 1 |
| Scotty's Castle | 14 | 1 |
| Hole in the Wall Road | 13 | 1 |
| Natural Bridge Canyon | 13 | 1 |
| Hanaupah Canyon | 12 | 1 |
| West Side Road | 12 | 1 |
| Chloride City (Ghost Town) | 10 | 1 |
| Gower Gulch | 8 | 1 |
| Rhyolite | 8 | 1 |
| Salt Creek Interpretive Trail | 8 | 1 |
| Twenty Mule Team Canyon | 8 | 1 |
| Butte Valley | 7 | 1 |
| Goler Wash | 7 | 1 |
| Inyo Mine | 7 | 1 |
| Warm Springs Canyon Road | 7 | 1 |
| Wildrose Peak Trail | 7 | 1 |
| Furnace Creek | 6 | 1 |
| Striped Butte | 6 | 1 |
| Trail Canyon | 6 | 1 |
| Devil's Golf Course | 5 | 1 |
| Eureka Mine | 5 | 1 |
| Hunter Mountain Road | 5 | 1 |
| Other | 258 | 27 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Reasons for choosing backcountry roads or wilderness destinations*

**Question 9b**

Why did you and your personal group choose the above destination(s)?

Results

- As shown in Figure 31, the most common reasons for choosing a particular backcountry road or wilderness destination were:

  Spring
  73% Had never visited before
  35% A favorite place to visit

  Fall
  69% Had never visited before
  36% A favorite place to visit

- Tables 12a and 12b show the "other" reasons for choosing a particular backcountry road or wilderness destination.

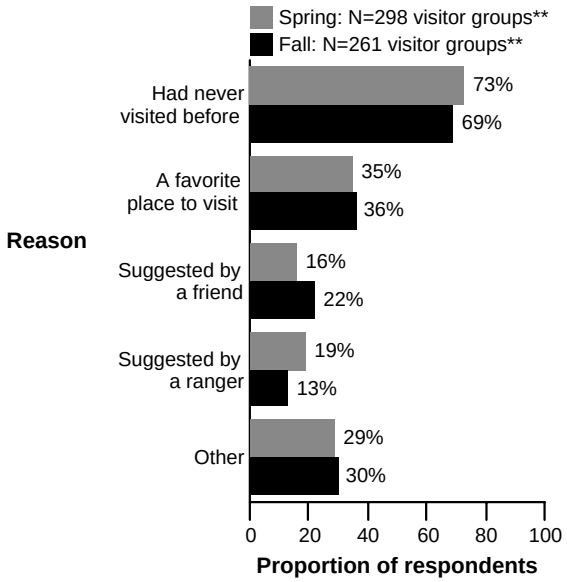


**Figure 31**. Reasons for choosing particular backcountry roads or wilderness destinations

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 12a**. "Other" reasons for choosing backcountry roads or wilderness destinations – spring N=87 comments)

| Reason | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Recommended/read about in guide book | 17 |
| Previous visit/experience | 6 |
| Accessibility | 4 |
| Word of mouth/other visitors | 4 |
| Book(s) | 3 |
| Saw trail on map | 3 |
| Web research | 3 |
| Availability of water | 2 |
| Brochures | 2 |
| Park brochure | 2 |
| Park newspaper | 2 |
| Remoteness | 2 |
| Research prior to visit | 2 |
| SUV/Jeep road books | 2 |
| Wanted to visit Racetrack | 2 |
| Areas that allowed dogs | 1 |
| Backpacking | 1 |
| Beautiful place | 1 |
| Birding website | 1 |
| Camping | 1 |
| Challenging hike | 1 |
| Death Valley TV video in hotel | 1 |
| Easy | 1 |
| Enjoy slot canyons | 1 |
| Friend's first hike | 1 |
| Geology | 1 |
| Hedid Canyons were nice | 1 |
| Herpetofauna | 1 |
| Highest peak | 1 |
| Needed camping spot | 1 |
| New place | 1 |
| NPS handout | 1 |
| On DPS list | 1 |
| On tour | 1 |
| Park information booklet | 1 |
| Park website | 1 |
| Photograph | 1 |
| Postcard photograph | 1 |
| Seeking solitude | 1 |
| Showed examples of natural history | 1 |
| Sierra Club guide | 1 |
| Suggested by Jeep rental | 1 |
| To understand how park was named | 1 |
| Travel article | 1 |
| TV shows and movies | 1 |
| Wildflower blooms | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 12b**. "Other" reasons for choosing backcountry roads or wilderness destinations – fall (N=78 comments)

| Reason | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Recommended/read about in guide book | 16 |
| Web research | 10 |
| For the quiet/solitude/beauty | 7 |
| Read about in park newspaper/literature | 4 |
| On a backpacking route | 3 |
| Wanted to show friends/family | 3 |
| Geological interest | 2 |
| Interest in history | 2 |
| Near Telescope Peak | 2 |
| Wanted to return | 2 |
| Because it has challenging roads | 1 |
| Because it's a great backcountry road | 1 |
| Close to Stovepipe | 1 |
| Closed our eyes and pointed | 1 |
| For a new experience | 1 |
| For the plants and nice temperatures | 1 |
| Good hiking possibilities | 1 |
| Good photography opportunities | 1 |
| Great for kids | 1 |
| Had a water source | 1 |
| Hiking peaks | 1 |
| Listed as a good hike | 1 |
| Low usage | 1 |
| Nearby (had limited time) | 1 |
| On mountain bike route | 1 |
| One in party wanted to camp and one wanted to stay in lodge | 1 |
| Pre-run of a future group trip | 1 |
| Recommended by a park-goer | 1 |
| Recommended by a topography map | 1 |
| Recommended by Backpacker magazine | 1 |
| Saw the national park documentary on TV | 1 |
| Sounded interesting | 1 |
| Suggested by store employee | 1 |
| Support educational objectives | 1 |
| To see a different landscape | 1 |
| Wanted to see the largest dunes | 1 |
| Wanted to visit before park closes area to motorized vehicles | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Accessing backcountry roads or wilderness destinations*

**Question 9c**

How did you and your personal group access your destination?

Results

- As shown in Figure 32, the most common methods for accessing backcountry roads or wilderness destinations were:

  Spring
  89% Drove backcountry dirt roads
  54% Hiked established trails

  Fall
  89% Drove backcountry dirt roads
  54% Hiked established trails

- "Other" methods were:

  Spring (4%)
  Biked
  Drove on paved roads
  Hiked backcountry roads
  Hiked on existing roads because we had our dogs
  Hiked up dirt road, biked down
  Motorcycled
  Pink Jeep tour for Racetrack
  Rappelled into and down canyons
  Ran
  Technical canyoneering

  Fall (2%)
  Drove paved roads
  Hiked backcountry roads
  Mountain biked

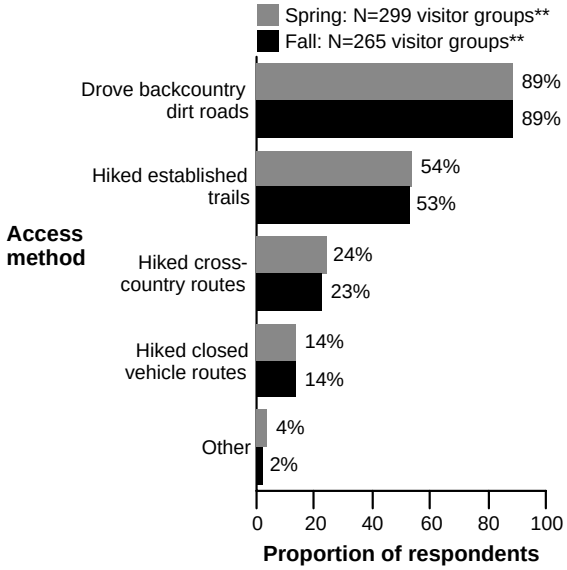


**Figure 32**. Methods used for accessing backcountry roads or wilderness destinations

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Crowding at backcountry road or wilderness locations*

**Question 10a**

On this visit, how crowded was (were) the backcountry road(s) or wilderness location(s) that you and your personal group visited in Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 33, the most common level of crowding at backcountry roads or wilderness locations was:

  Spring
  68% Not at all crowded

  Fall
  57% Not at all crowded

- Tables 13a and 13b show how visitor groups rated the level of crowding at individual sites. Use **CAUTION**! for most sites listed since not enough visitor groups rated the site to provide reliable results.

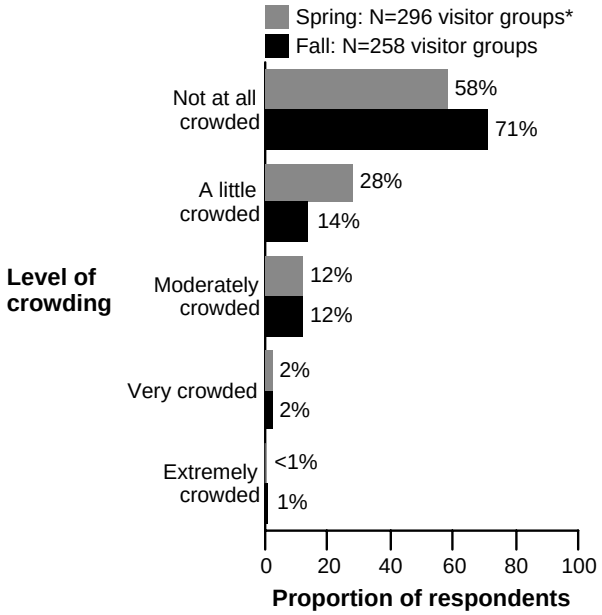


**Figure 33**. Level of crowding at backcountry roads or wilderness locations

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 13a**. Visitor ratings of crowding on backcountry roads or wilderness locations – spring (N=number of visitor groups that rated crowding) **CAUTION**!

| | | Rating (%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Location** | **N** | **Not at all crowded** | **A little crowded** | **Moderately crowded** | **Very crowded** | **Extremely crowded** |
| Titus Canyon Road | 87 | 57 | 29 | 13 | 1 | 0 |
| Racetrack | 58 | 41 | 36 | 21 | 2 | 0 |
| Mosaic Canyon | 39 | 28 | 36 | 21 | 15 | 0 |
| Eureka Dunes | 30 | 60 | 33 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Marble Canyon | 22 | 41 | 36 | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| Echo Canyon | 21 | 71 | 14 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Golden Canyon | 21 | 33 | 38 | 29 | 0 | 0 |
| Cottonwood Canyon Road | 17 | 47 | 41 | 12 | 0 | 0 |
| Fall Canyon | 17 | 53 | 41 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Warm Springs Canyon Rd | 17 | 65 | 18 | 12 | 0 | 6 |
| Darwin Falls | 15 | 40 | 20 | 27 | 7 | 7 |
| West Side Road | 14 | 79 | 14 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Badwater | 11 | 18 | 55 | 18 | 9 | 0 |
| Hole in the Wall Road | 11 | 36 | 27 | 36 | 0 | 0 |
| Charcoal Kilns | 10 | 60 | 20 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Wildrose Peak Trail | 9 | 89 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| All | 7 | 57 | 29 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Wildrose Charcoal Kilns | 7 | 43 | 14 | 43 | 0 | 0 |
| Aguereberry Point | 6 | 83 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Dante's View | 6 | 33 | 17 | 33 | 17 | 0 |
| Hanaupah Canyon | 6 | 67 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Artist's Drive | 5 | 60 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Unspecified | 5 | 60 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wildrose Campground | 5 | 40 | 20 | 20 | 2 | 0 |
| All other locations | 4 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Big Pine Road | 4 | 50 | 25 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Chloride City (Ghost Town) | 4 | 75 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Greenwater Valley | 4 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes | 4 | 25 | 75 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Natural Bridge Canyon | 4 | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Saline Valley Warm Springs | 4 | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Salt Creek Interpretive Trail | 4 | 25 | 0 | 25 | 50 | 0 |
| Trail Canyon | 4 | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Furnace Creek | 3 | 67 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Grotto Canyon | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hunter Mountain Rd | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Johnson Canyon Road | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Steel Pass | 3 | 67 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Various canyons | 3 | 67 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Willow Canyon | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 13b**. Visitor ratings of crowding on backcountry roads or wilderness locations – fall (N=number of visitor groups that rated crowding) **CAUTION**!

| | | Rating (%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Location** | **N** | **Not at all crowded** | **A little crowded** | **Moderately crowded** | **Very crowded** | **Extremely crowded** |
| Titus Canyon Road | 74 | 68 | 15 | 12 | 5 | 0 |
| Racetrack | 54 | 46 | 20 | 30 | 4 | 0 |
| Mosaic Canyon | 30 | 60 | 17 | 10 | 10 | <1 |
| Eureka Dunes | 23 | 74 | 26 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Fall Canyon | 19 | 68 | 26 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Badwater | 17 | 53 | 24 | 18 | 6 | 0 |
| Golden Canyon | 15 | 67 | 13 | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| Marble Canyon | 15 | 73 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wildrose Charcoal Kilns | 14 | 64 | 21 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Ubehebe Crater | 13 | 31 | 46 | 23 | 0 | 0 |
| Cottonwood Canyon Road | 12 | 92 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| West Side Road | 11 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hole in the Wall Road | 10 | 80 | 10 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| Scotty's Castle | 10 | 60 | 30 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| Telescope Peak | 10 | 50 | 20 | 20 | 10 | 0 |
| Echo Canyon | 9 | 67 | 22 | 11 | 0 | 0 |
| Hanaupah Canyon | 9 | 67 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Saline Valley Warm Springs | 8 | 50 | 13 | 25 | 0 | 13 |
| Warm Springs Canyon Rd | 8 | 50 | 38 | 0 | 13 | 0 |
| Chloride City (Ghost Town) | 7 | 86 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Darwin Falls | 7 | 57 | 0 | 29 | 14 | 0 |
| Gower Gulch | 7 | 71 | 14 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Dante's View | 6 | 33 | 33 | 33 | 0 | 0 |
| Goler Wash | 6 | 67 | 0 | 33 | 0 | 0 |
| Inyo Mine | 6 | 83 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wildrose Peak Trail | 6 | 50 | 33 | 17 | 0 | 0 |
| Zabriskie Point | 6 | 33 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 17 |
| Butte Valley | 5 | 60 | 40 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mahogany Flats Campground | 5 | 80 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Trail Canyon | 5 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Big Pine Road | 4 | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Greenwater Valley | 4 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Harry Wade Road | 4 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Johnson Canyon Road | 4 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Lost Burro Mine | 4 | 50 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mequite Flat Sand Dunes | 4 | 25 | 50 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Unspecified | 4 | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Artist's Drive | 3 | 33 | 33 | 33 | 0 | 0 |
| Charcoal Kilns | 3 | 67 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hunter Mountain Road | 3 | 67 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Indian Pass Canyon | 3 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 10b**

If you marked "very crowded" or "extremely crowded" above, would you and your personal group support use restrictions to limit the number of visitors who use a given site at one time?

Results

- As shown in Figure 34, the proportions of visitor groups that would support use restrictions to limit the number of visitors who use a given site at one time were:

  29% Spring
  21% Fall

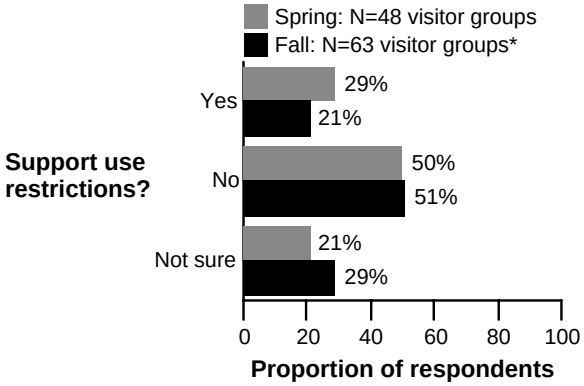


**Figure 34**. Visitor groups that would support use restrictions at backcountry roads or wilderness locations

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Activities on this visit*

**Question 8a**

On this visit, in which activities did you and your personal group participate within Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 35, the most common activities in which visitor groups participated were:

  Spring
  89% Walking/hiking
  86% Driving on backcountry dirt roads
  82% Visit scenic attractions

  Fall
  87% Walking/hiking
  85% Driving on backcountry dirt roads
  81% Visit scenic attractions

- "Other" activities are shown in Tables 14a and 14b.

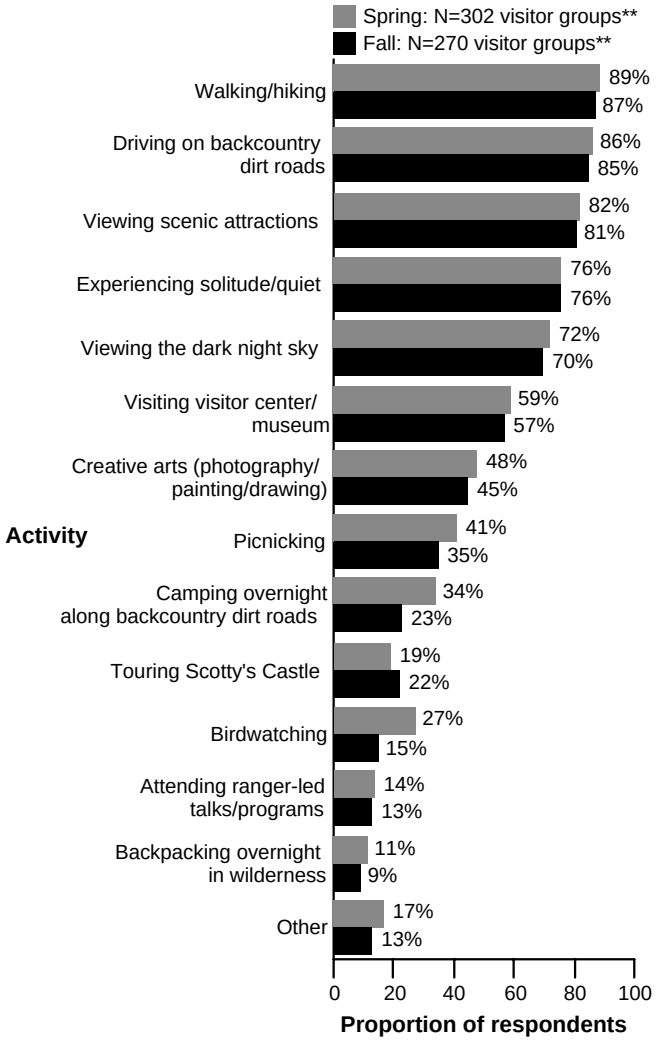


**Figure 35**. Activities on this visit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 14a**. "Other" activities – spring (N=59 comments)

| Destination | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Looking at wildflowers | 8 |
| Botany | 6 |
| Viewing wildlife | 5 |
| Geology | 4 |
| Canyoneering | 3 |
| Climbing | 3 |
| Exploring mine camps | 3 |
| Swimming | 3 |
| Gift shopping | 2 |
| Looking for petroglyphs | 2 |
| Mountain biking | 2 |
| Running | 2 |
| Biking | 1 |
| Climbing sand dunes | 1 |
| Dining at Furnace Creek Inn | 1 |
| Enjoying the sun | 1 |
| Enjoyment of the heat | 1 |
| Experiencing Death Valley as a whole environment | 1 |
| Geological research | 1 |
| Golfing | 1 |
| Kayaking Badwater | 1 |
| Looking at rocks | 1 |
| Motorcycling | 1 |
| Reading/enjoying the sun | 1 |
| Resting/recharging | 1 |
| Science class study of desert systems | 1 |
| Sky/sunset watching | 1 |
| Staying hydrated | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 14b**. "Other" activities – fall (N=28 comments) **CAUTION**!

| Destination | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Geologic studies | 5 |
| Biking | 4 |
| Exploring | 3 |
| Experiencing wilderness | 2 |
| Mountain bike riding | 2 |
| Rock climbing | 2 |
| Running | 2 |
| '49er activities | 1 |
| Camping (location unspecified) | 1 |
| Changing tires | 1 |
| Horseback riding | 1 |
| Mining history | 1 |
| Motorcycle riding | 1 |
| Plant studies | 1 |
| Wildlife viewing | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Most important activity*

**Question 8b**

Which one of the above activities was the most important to you and your personal group on this visit to Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 36, visitor groups' most important activities on this visit to Death Valley NP were:

  Spring
  34% Walking/hiking
  16% Driving on backcountry roads

  Fall
  37% Walking/hiking
  19% Viewing scenic attractions

- "Other" activities were:

  Spring (7%)
  Biking
  Botany
  Canyoneering
  Climbing sand dunes
  Experiencing Death Valley as a whole environment
  Geology
  Golfing
  Looking for petroglyphs
  Looking for wildflowers
  Natural history
  Peak climbing
  Running on trails/dirt roads
  Science class
  Swimming
  Viewing wildlife
  Wildflower blooms

  Fall (4%)
  4WD Trails
  Climbing Eureka Dunes
  Enjoying the beauty
  Geology
  Motorcycle riding
  Mountain biking
  Road running race

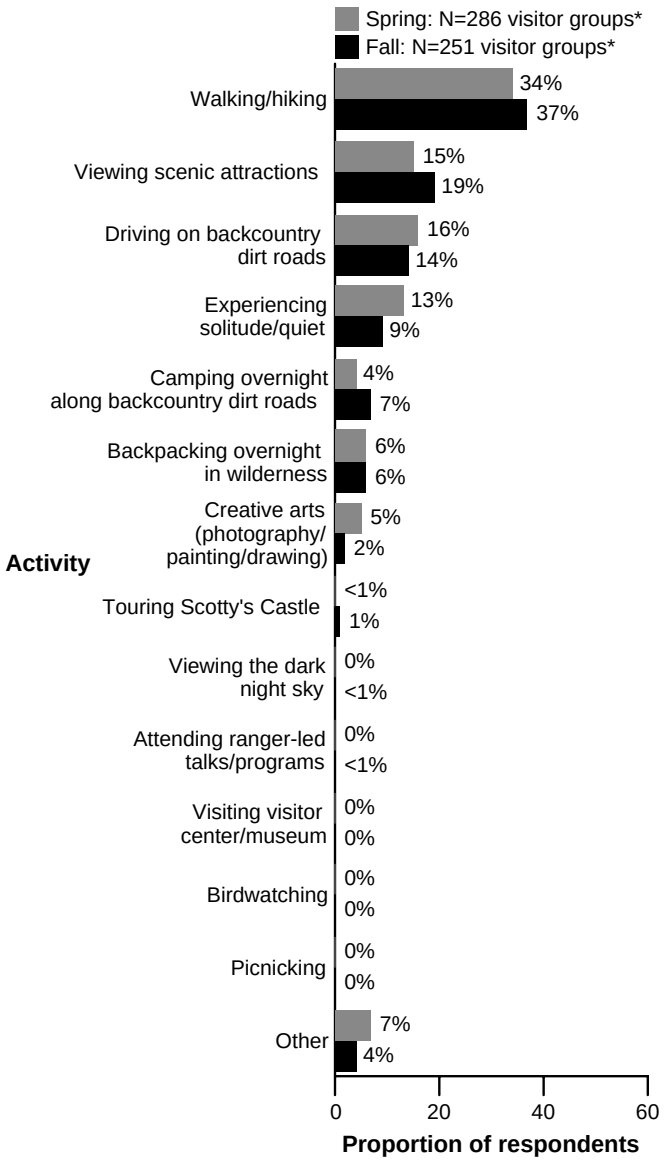


**Figure 36**. Most important activity

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Awareness of backcountry/wilderness management*

**Question 2a**

Prior to this visit, were you and your personal group aware that most of the undeveloped areas of Death Valley NP are protected as wilderness?

Results

- As shown in Figure 37, the proportion of visitor groups that were aware that most of the undeveloped areas of Death Valley NP are protected as wilderness were:

  81% Spring
  82% Fall

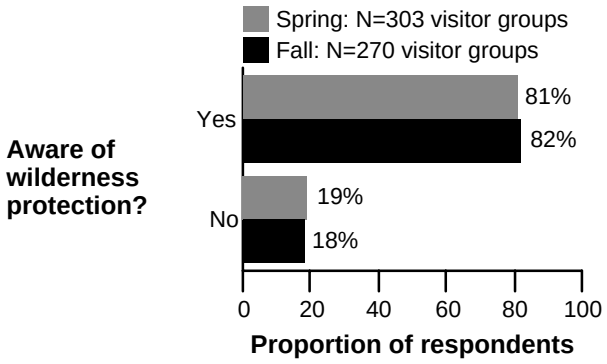


**Figure 37**. Visitor groups that were aware that most undeveloped areas of Death Valley NP are protected as wilderness

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Awareness and use of "Leave No Trace" principles*

**Question 2b**

Visitors accessing the backcountry roads or wilderness are expected to follow "Leave No Trace" principles. Prior to your visit, were you and your personal group aware of "Leave No Trace" principles?

Results

- As shown in Figure 38, the proportion of visitor groups that were aware of "Leave No Trace" principles prior to their visit were:

  97% Spring
  96% Fall

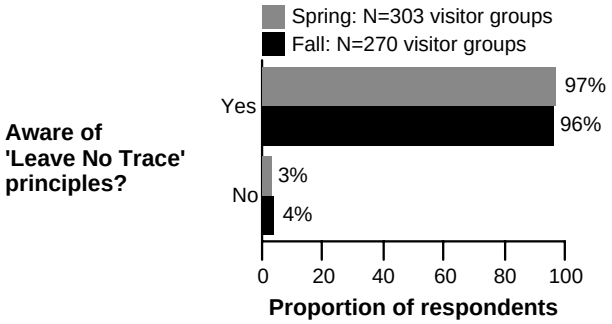


**Figure 38**. Visitor groups that were aware of "Leave No Trace" principles

**Question 2c**

On this trip, did you and your personal group follow "Leave No Trace" principles while you were on backcountry roads or in the wilderness of Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 39, the proportions of visitor groups that followed "Leave No Trace" principles were:

  99% Spring
  97% Fall

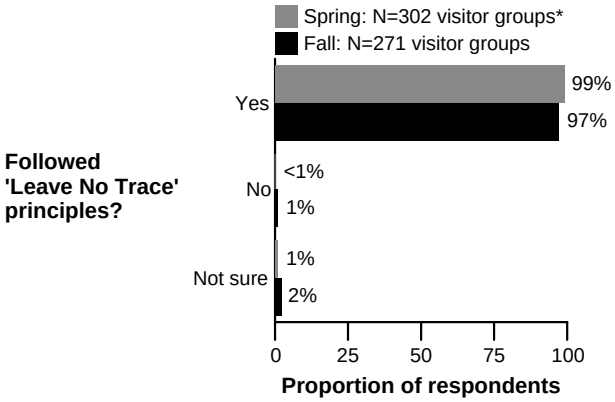


**Figure 39**. Visitor groups that followed "Leave No Trace" principles

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Use of backcountry permits*

**Question 3a**

On this visit, did you or your personal group backpack overnight in the wilderness of Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 40 the proportions of visitor groups that backpacked overnight in the wilderness of Death Valley NP were:

  17% Spring
  13% Fall

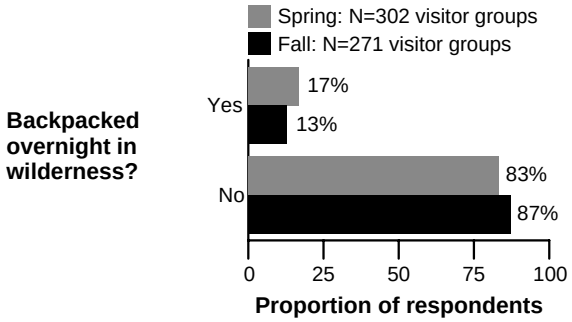


**Figure 40**. Visitor groups that backpacked in the wilderness of Death Valley NP

**Question 3b**

If YES, did you get a voluntary backcountry camping permit?

Results

- As shown in Figure 41, the proportions of visitor groups that obtained a voluntary backcountry camping permit were:

  49% Spring
  64% Fall

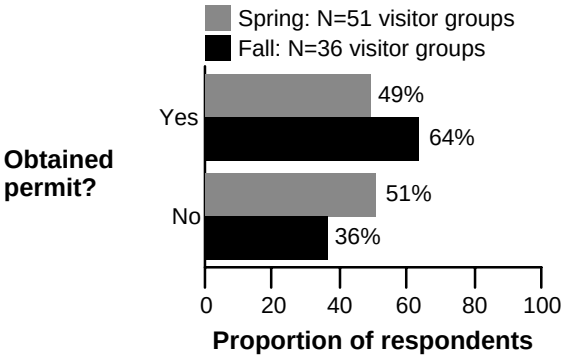


**Figure 41**. Visitor groups that obtained a voluntary backcountry camping permit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 3c**

If YES, where did you obtain the permit?

Results

- Tables 15a and 15b show the locations where visitor groups obtained voluntary backcountry camping permits.

**Table 15a**. Backcountry permit location – spring (N=21 comments) **CAUTION**!

| Location | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Furnace Creek Visitor Center | 12 |
| Stovepipe Wells Visitor Center | 4 |
| Ranger station (unspecified) | 3 |
| Visitor center (unspecified) | 2 |

**Table 15b**. Backcountry permit location – fall (N=26 comments) **CAUTION**!

| Location | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Furnace Creek Visitor Center | 13 |
| Visitor center (unspecified) | 5 |
| Stovepipe Wells | 4 |
| Ranger station (unspecified) | 2 |
| By mail | 1 |
| Kiosk | 1 |

**Question 3d**

If NO, why didn't you get a permit?

Results

- Tables 16a and 16b show visitor groups' reasons for not obtaining voluntary backcountry camping permits.

**Table 16a**. Reasons for not obtaining backcountry permit – spring (N=12 comments) **CAUTION**!

| Reason | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Didn't know it was needed | 5 |
| Arrived too late | 1 |
| Didn't want to backpack | 1 |
| No park services available (entered through Goler Canyon) | 1 |
| Not necessary | 1 |
| Ranger said no need to | 1 |
| Thought okay to camp off unimproved road | 1 |
| Too much hassle | 1 |

**Table 16b**. Reasons for not obtaining backcountry permit – fall (N=16 comments) **CAUTION**!

| Reason | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Visitor center too far away | 3 |
| Did not know about permits | 5 |
| Did not seem necessary | 2 |
| Ranger said was no need to | 2 |
| Visitor center was closed | 2 |
| Did not hike overnight | 1 |
| Didn't know where to get permit | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 3e**

Would you and your personal group support a free mandatory permit system to backpack overnight in the wilderness of Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 42, the proportions of visitor groups that would support a free mandatory permit system to backpack overnight in the wilderness were:

  78% Spring
  79% Fall

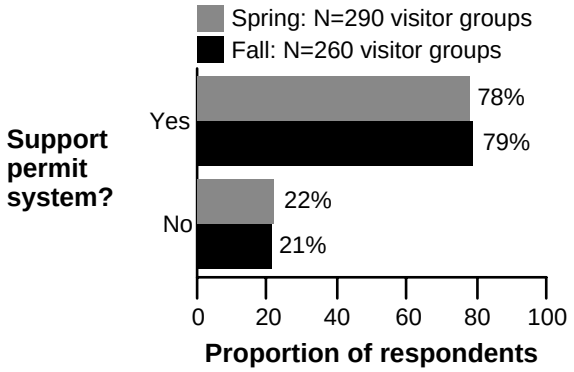


**Figure 42**. Visitor groups that would support a free mandatory backcountry camping permit system

**Question 3f**

If YES, where would you and your personal group prefer to obtain a permit?

Results

- As shown in Figure 43, the most common locations preferred by visitor groups to obtain a permit were:

  Spring
  58% Online
  49% Visitor center

  Fall
  55% Online
  45% Visitor center

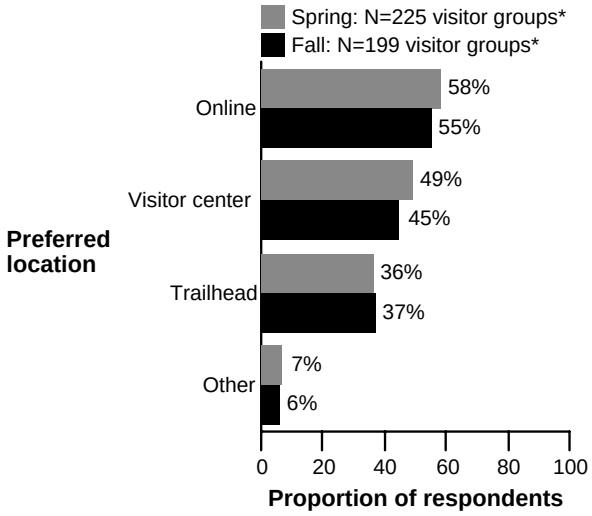


**Figure 43**. Locations preferred to obtain backcountry camping permits

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 3g**

If you visit in the future, would you and your personal group be willing to pay for an overnight wilderness permit (e.g., $10/permit/group for up to 14 people)?

Results

- As shown in Figure 44, the proportion of visitor groups that would be willing to pay for an overnight wilderness permit were:

  51% Spring
  52% Fall

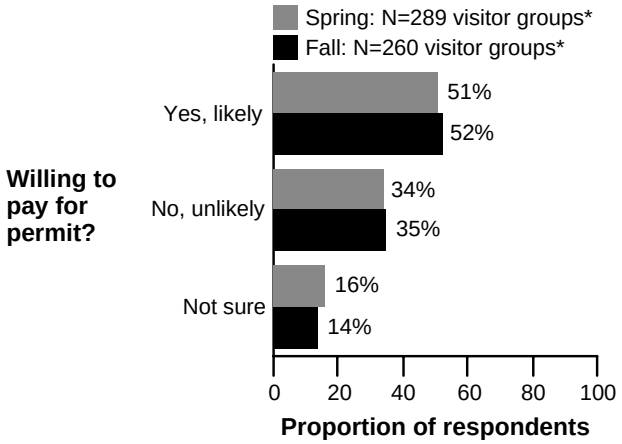


**Figure 44**. Visitor groups willing to pay for an overnight wilderness permit

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Group size in wilderness*

**Question 4a**

The maximum allowed group size in the wilderness is currently 15 people. What do you think the maximum group size should be?

Results

- As shown in Figure 45, the maximum wilderness group sizes preferred by most visitor groups were:

  Spring
  49% Smaller than fifteen per group
  44% Fifteen per group

  Fall
  49% Fifteen per group
  44% Smaller than fifteen per group

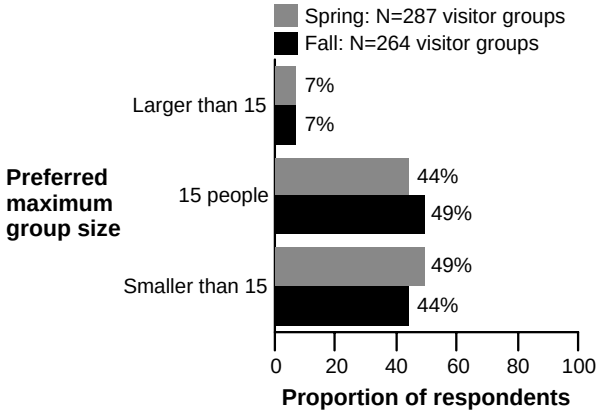


**Figure 45**. Preferred maximum wilderness group size

**Question 4b**

If you answered "smaller" or "larger" above, what maximum allowed group size would you suggest?

Results

- As shown in Figure 46, the maximum group size suggested by most visitor groups was:

  Spring
  83% Six to ten people per group

  Fall
  82% Six to ten people per group

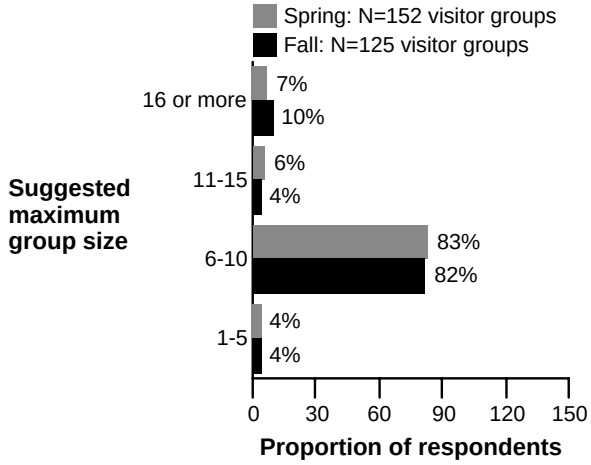


**Figure 46**. Suggested maximum group size

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Number of developed trails*

**Question 16a**

What is your opinion about the number of developed hiking trails used to access the wilderness?

Results

- As shown in Figure 47, visitor groups' most common opinion on the number of hiking trails was:

  Spring
  61% Current number is adequate

  Fall
  62% Current number is adequate

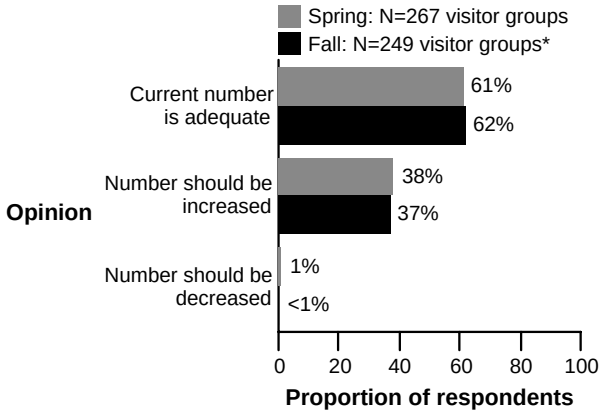


**Figure 47**. Opinions on the number of hiking trails used to access the wilderness

**Question 16b**

Comments about the number of developed trails.

Results

- Tables 17a and 17b show visitor groups' comments about the number of developed trails.

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 17a**. Comments about the number of developed trails – spring (N=72 comments)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Do not add more trails | 8 |
| Do not know | 5 |
| Add trails | 4 |
| Better signage for developed trails | 4 |
| Trails are adequate | 3 |
| Add developed trails that are safe for average hikers | 2 |
| Do not over use | 2 |
| More easy, day hikes | 2 |
| More two-wheel low-clearance roads to access backpack trails | 2 |
| Need more trails that allow dogs | 2 |
| Add a trail to Telescope Peak from Hanaupah Canyon | 1 |
| Add developed trails - safe for average hikers | 1 |
| Add longer backpacking trails | 1 |
| Cottonwood is crowded | 1 |
| Cottonwood/Marble Canyon should have a few directional signs | 1 |
| Developed trails seem to get a lot of use | 1 |
| Did not experience many trails | 1 |
| Did not find trails | 1 |
| Did not use trails | 1 |
| Do not decrease number of trails | 1 |
| Excellent | 1 |
| Few trails are listed | 1 |
| Fewer trails than expected | 1 |
| Hiking opportunities should be a priority | 1 |
| Leave wilderness areas out of books/maps | 1 |
| More loop trails for overnight hiking | 1 |
| More picnic tables | 1 |
| More trails with water/snake/heat warnings | 1 |
| More wheelchair accessible trails | 1 |
| Need access trails | 1 |
| Need better road access to canyons | 1 |
| Need more information about trails | 1 |
| Need more information on cross-country routes | 1 |
| Need motorcycle-only trails | 1 |
| Need one trail in each area of park | 1 |
| Open old mining roads | 1 |
| Protect the environment | 1 |
| Reopen Keane Wonder Mine | 1 |
| Road to Racetrack needs maintenance | 1 |
| Trailheads increase traffic | 1 |
| Trails are crowded | 1 |
| Trails are not sufficiently developed | 1 |
| Trails are well maintained | 1 |
| Trails minimize impact | 1 |
| Unable to walk | 1 |
| Wildrose was difficult to follow | 1 |
| Would like trail in Marble Canyon area | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 17b**. Comments about the number of developed trails – fall (N=48 comments)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| More trails would provide more access to the park | 6 |
| Developed trails were adequate | 5 |
| Need more developed trails with better signs | 3 |
| Would like more trails in Death Valley | 3 |
| Hardly any developed trails | 2 |
| Increase number of hiking (not ORV) trails | 2 |
| Trails are not really necessary in Death Valley | 2 |
| A blazing system would make it easier to hike | 1 |
| Cross-country (or rarely traveled jeep roads) suffice | 1 |
| Death Valley is developed enough | 1 |
| Death Valley is very large and has enough trails to hike | 1 |
| Developed trails are good for popular sites; the more adventurous visitors don't need them | 1 |
| Developed trails not as important | 1 |
| Developed trails not well-marked | 1 |
| Don't damage nature with by creating more trails | 1 |
| Enjoyed not having developed trails | 1 |
| For the size of the park, it has very few hiking trails | 1 |
| In two days we ran out of places to visit | 1 |
| It was important to make our own way | 1 |
| Main trails are too crowded; more trails would alleviate this issue | 1 |
| More developed trails might help decrease trampling | 1 |
| More trails not needed; area is readily accessible | 1 |
| Need more longer trails | 1 |
| Not enough time to hike all the trails | 1 |
| Surprised that there are so few trails | 1 |
| The park is a cross-country hiker's paradise | 1 |
| The park is so large; it would be nice if there were more developed trails | 1 |
| Trail development should be secondary to wilderness | 1 |
| Travel in Death Valley seems dangerous without trails | 1 |
| We don't usually use developed trails | 1 |
| What is the difference between developed and undeveloped trails? | 1 |
| Would be nice to see more of the West side of the park | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Experiencing wilderness characteristics*

**Question 15**

Were you and your personal group able to experience any of the following wilderness characteristics during your visit to Death Valley NP?

Results

- As shown in Figure 48, the wilderness characteristics most commonly experienced by visitor groups were:

  Spring
  91% Opportunities for solitude
  88% Undeveloped/natural lands

  Fall
  86% Opportunities for solitude
  85% Undeveloped/natural lands

- "Other" wilderness experiences were:

  Spring (6%)
  Fear of death
  Great hiking
  Hiking cross country routes
  Nice light for photography
  Opportunity to explore
  Peacefulness
  Plants
  Starry nights/star gazing
  Totally unexpected sights
  Uncrowded trails
  Very photogenic views
  Viewing wildlife

  Fall (4%)
  A clean national park
  Beautiful sunsets
  Challenging roads
  Hiking for exercise
  Historic settings
  Natural beauty of Death Valley
  Prime soaking opportunities
  The awesome open expanse
  Vehicular access to wilderness
  Wildlife

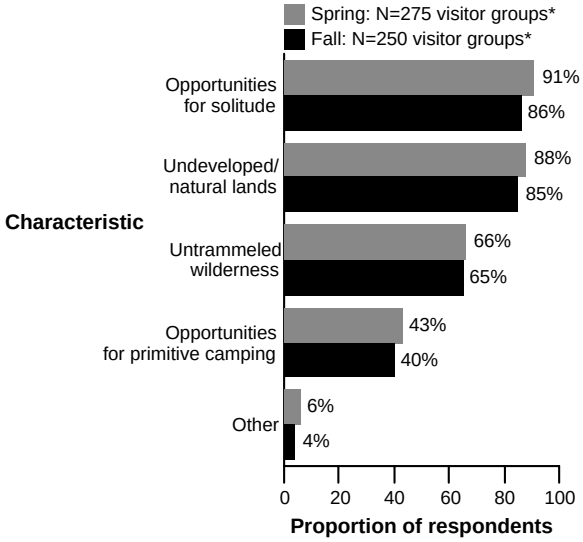


**Figure 48**. Wilderness characteristics experienced

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Factors preventing visitors from seeing features or engaging in activities*

**Question 22a**

During this visit to Death Valley NP backcountry roads or wilderness, was there anything that you or your group wanted to see or do but were unable to?

Results

- As shown in Figure 49, the proportion of visitor groups that were unable to see features or engage in activities was:

  46% Spring
  40% Fall

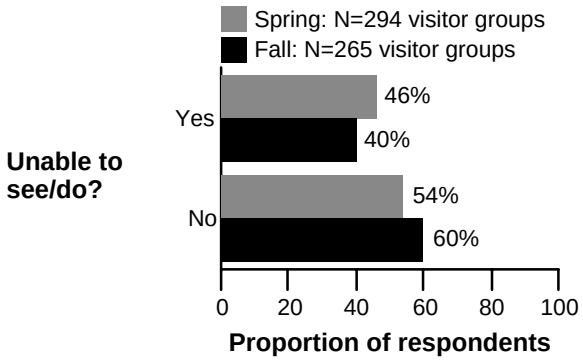


**Figure 49**. Visitor groups that were unable to see features or engage in activities

**Question 22b**

If YES, what was it?

Results

- 128 spring visitor groups listed activities and features they were unable to see or engage in (see Table 18a).

- 100 fall visitor groups listed activities and features they were unable to see or engage in (see Table 18b).

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 18a**. Features/activities visitor groups were unable to see/engage in – spring (N=162 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Activity/feature | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Racetrack | 33 |
| Ubehebe Crater | 30 |
| Saline Valley | 6 |
| Titus Canyon | 6 |
| Devil's Golf Course | 5 |
| Marble Canyon | 5 |
| Scotty's Castle | 5 |
| Eureka Dunes | 4 |
| Darwin Falls | 3 |
| Hike more | 3 |
| Panamint City | 3 |
| Wildflowers | 3 |
| Cottonwood/Marble Canyon Loop | 2 |
| Fall Canyon | 2 |
| Golden Canyon | 2 |
| See wildflowers at full bloom | 2 |
| 4-wheel drive | 2 |
| See more wildlife | 2 |
| Big Horn Sheep | 1 |
| Bill's Ranch | 1 |
| Butte Valley - too rough | 1 |
| Camp at Furnace Creek | 1 |
| Canyon | 1 |
| Chloride City | 1 |
| Cottonwood | 1 |
| Crankshaft Junction | 1 |
| Dante's View | 1 |
| Didn't make it to Slit Canyon | 1 |
| Dry waterfall | 1 |
| Exit Hidden Valley via Hunter Mountain | 1 |
| Going past Charcoal Kilns via 4X4 road | 1 |
| Going to Skidoo | 1 |
| Goler Canyon Road had three terrible spots | 1 |
| Hear the singing dunes | 1 |
| High clearance roads | 1 |
| Hunter Mountain road via south pass | 1 |
| Keane Wonder Mine | 1 |
| Leadfield | 1 |
| Leadville Ghost Town | 1 |
| Little Hebe Crater | 1 |
| Long backcountry walk | 1 |
| More backcountry exploring | 1 |
| Mosiac Canyon | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

Table **18a**. Features/activities visitor groups were unable to see/engage in – spring (continued)

| Activity/feature | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Natural Bridge | 1 |
| No moving rocks on Racetrack | 1 |
| Nothing specific | 1 |
| Pass over Hunter Mountain | 1 |
| Primrose Peak | 1 |
| Schwab Peak | 1 |
| See bats | 1 |
| Sentinel Peak | 1 |
| Signs | 1 |
| Sleep in the desert | 1 |
| Stay at Geologist or other cabins | 1 |
| Stovepipe Well | 1 |
| Take 4 X 4 trail from Playa | 1 |
| Telescope Peak | 1 |
| Traveled by car | 1 |
| Traverse from Scotty's Road to Mesquite Flat | 1 |
| Ubehebe Peak | 1 |
| Visit the southern part of the park, like more | 1 |
| Wildrose Peak | 1 |
| Willow Canyon waterfall | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 18b**. Features/activities visitor groups were unable to see/engage in – fall (N=119 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Activity/feature | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Racetrack | 18 |
| Visit more park locations | 7 |
| Telescope Peak | 6 |
| Keane Wonder Mine | 5 |
| Dante's View | 4 |
| Eureka Dunes | 4 |
| Hike trails | 4 |
| Cottonwood Canyon | 3 |
| Wanted to see a bighorn sheep | 3 |
| Fall Canyon | 2 |
| Ghost towns | 2 |
| More exploration | 2 |
| Natural Bridge | 2 |
| Panamint Dunes | 2 |
| Scotty's Castle | 2 |
| The crater | 2 |
| Wildlife watching | 2 |
| Wildrose Peak | 2 |
| 4x4 in remote areas | 1 |
| Artist's Palette | 1 |
| Borax Mine | 1 |
| Camp an extra day | 1 |
| Charcoal kilns | 1 |
| Chloride Cliffs | 1 |
| Cottonwood/Marble Canyon loop | 1 |
| Dante's Peak | 1 |
| Drive all the way to Crawler Point | 1 |
| Drive on sand dunes | 1 |
| Fenced off area north of Grapevine Ranger Station | 1 |
| Fivemile Spring | 1 |
| Furnace Creek Resort | 1 |
| Geologist cabin | 1 |
| Go off-roading | 1 |
| Golden Canyon | 1 |
| Greenwater Valley | 1 |
| Hanupah Springs | 1 |
| Hike to end of Redlands Canyon | 1 |
| Hunter Canyon | 1 |
| Hunter's Cabin | 1 |
| Leadville | 1 |
| Long hikes in the backcountry | 1 |
| Marble Canyon | 1 |
| More 4x4 trails | 1 |
| Multiple landmarks | 1 |
| Racetrack Playa | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 18b**. Features/activities visitor groups were unable to see/engage in – fall (continued)

| Activity/feature | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| See a pup fish | 1 |
| See a wild burro | 1 |
| See fossils | 1 |
| Several canyons | 1 |
| Singing sand dunes | 1 |
| Squaw Spring | 1 |
| Star viewing | 1 |
| Stay another week | 1 |
| Stovepipe Wells | 1 |
| Striped Butte | 1 |
| Take dogs on a hike | 1 |
| The Keane Wonder upper trail area | 1 |
| Titus Petroglyphs | 1 |
| Too many to list | 1 |
| Travel more backcountry | 1 |
| Twenty Mule Team Mines | 1 |
| Ubehebe Peak | 1 |
| Upper Titus Canyon | 1 |
| Warm Springs | 1 |
| West end road | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 22c**

What prevented you from being able to see that feature or do that activity?

Results

- 129 fall visitor groups listed reasons for not being able to see features or engage in activities (see Table 19a).
- 96 fall visitor groups listed reasons for not being able to see features or engage in activities (see Table 19b).

**Table 19a**. Reasons for not being able to see/do features/activities – spring (N=134 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Feature/activity | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Road closure | 28 |
| Lacked time | 27 |
| Road construction | 24 |
| Did not have high clearance/4x4 vehicle | 11 |
| Road too rough | 7 |
| Too much snow | 3 |
| Misinformed by ranger about road conditions | 3 |
| Dogs not allowed on trail | 2 |
| Road closed due to snow | 2 |
| Animals are nocturnal | 1 |
| Campground was full | 1 |
| Car broke down | 1 |
| Chose wrong ascent | 1 |
| Dry waterfall was too high | 1 |
| Flat tires - no auto service | 1 |
| Gate closed | 1 |
| Injury | 1 |
| Keane Wonder Mine area closed | 1 |
| Lack of information | 1 |
| Long distances | 1 |
| Nature | 1 |
| Nature does not move rocks | 1 |
| No information on wildflower bloom times | 1 |
| No information signs on roads | 1 |
| No luck | 1 |
| No topographic maps available | 1 |
| One group member not in shape | 1 |
| Personal reasons | 1 |
| Poor signage | 1 |
| Rangers not helpful | 1 |
| Rangers were staying at cabins | 1 |
| Road too narrow | 1 |
| Sand too wet | 1 |
| Too early | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 19b**. Reasons for not being able to see/do features/activities – fall (N=112 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Feature/activity | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Lack of time | 33 |
| Poor weather | 15 |
| Vehicle not appropriate for road condition | 10 |
| Closed | 9 |
| Too far away | 7 |
| Roads in poor condition | 6 |
| Closed to vehicle traffic | 3 |
| Didn't see sign | 3 |
| Had our dog with us | 3 |
| Fear of a flat tire | 2 |
| Sheep were not around/illusive | 2 |
| Bad luck | 1 |
| Cost | 1 |
| Decided not to risk driving those roads | 1 |
| Demands of modern life | 1 |
| Didn't have climbing equipment | 1 |
| Got a flat tire | 1 |
| Inside a mine | 1 |
| Lack of information | 1 |
| No access | 1 |
| No access to habitat | 1 |
| Not on map | 1 |
| Parking area full | 1 |
| Received incorrect information from a park ranger | 1 |
| Restrictive road access | 1 |
| Road ended | 1 |
| Scared of getting stranded | 1 |
| Too difficult | 1 |
| Trail not clearly marked | 1 |
| Was alone | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Campfires at backcountry roadside campsites*

**Question 18a**

Campfires are currently prohibited in the Death Valley NP wilderness. Do you think that wood campfires should be allowed at the park backcountry roadside campsites?

Results

- As shown in Figure 50, the proportion of visitor groups that thought wood campfires should be allowed at the park backcountry roadside campsites was:

  37% Spring
  46% Fall

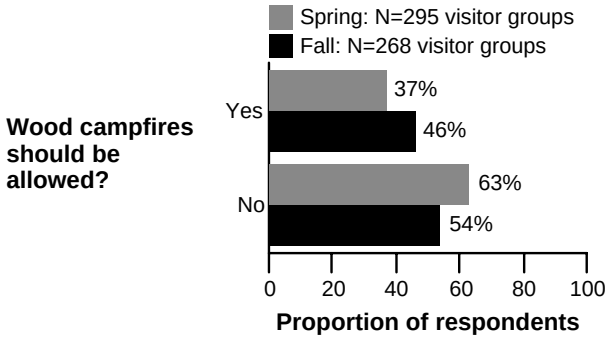


**Figure 50**. Visitor groups' opinions on allowing wood campfires at park backcountry roadside campsites

**Question 18b**

If YES, would you be willing to bring and use a fire pan and remove your wood campfire ashes from the backcountry?

Results

- As shown in Figure 51, the proportion of visitor groups that would be willing to bring and use a fire pan and remove wood campfire ashes from the backcountry was:

  58% Spring
  70% Fall

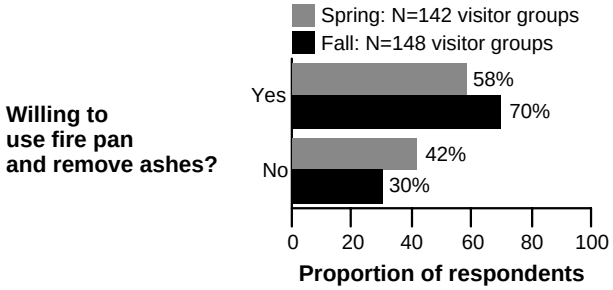


**Figure 51**. Visitor groups' willingness to bring and use a fire pan and remove wood campfire ashes from the backcountry

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Adequacy of directional signs*

**Question 11a**

On this visit, were the signs directing you and your personal group around the backcountry roads in Death Valley NP adequate?

Results

Backcountry road signs

- As shown in Figure 52, the proportion of visitor groups that felt the backcountry road signs were adequate were:

  Spring: 74%
  Fall: 74%

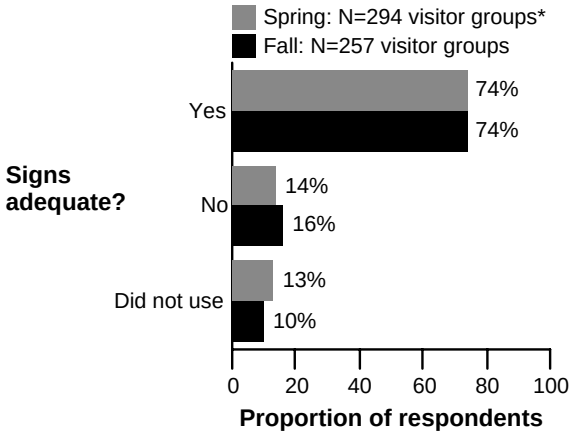


**Figure 52**. Visitor groups' opinions on adequacy of backcountry road signs

Trailhead signs

- As shown in Figure 53, the proportion of visitor groups that felt the trailhead signs were adequate were:

  Spring: 64%
  Fall: 64%

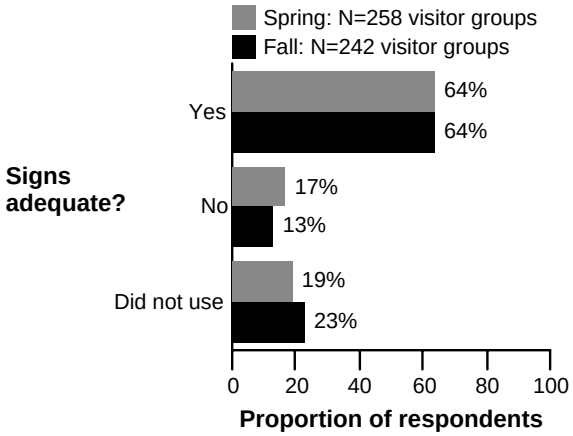


**Figure 53**. Visitor groups' opinions on adequacy of trailhead signs

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Question 11b**

If you answered NO for the above, please explain.

Results

- 60 spring visitor groups listed reasons for inadequacy of signs (see Table 20a).
- 62 fall visitor groups listed reasons for inadequacy of signs (see Table 20b).

**Table 20a**. Comments on directional signs – spring (N=73 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Sign type | Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|---|
| Backcountry road signs | Many unmarked roads | 9 |
| | Darwin Falls poorly marked | 3 |
| | Need warning signs for rough, 4x4 only roads | 3 |
| | Did not see signs | 2 |
| | More mile makers/distances | 2 |
| | No clear direction at Stovepipe Wells to Cottonwood/Marble Canyon road | 2 |
| | No sign at Y to Chloride City | 2 |
| | Better signage for Lake Hill and Tucki Mine | 1 |
| | Desolation Canyon | 1 |
| | Did not see sign for Wildrose | 1 |
| | Inadequate | 1 |
| | More signage and mile markers | 1 |
| | Need direction sign to park at Goler Wash Canyon and Butte Valley | 1 |
| | Need more frequent signs | 1 |
| | Need signs at junctions | 1 |
| | No sign at Hidden Valley road | 1 |
| | No sign at Mengel Pass | 1 |
| | Poor sign at junction of Marble Canyon and Cottonwood Canyon roads | 1 |
| | Poor signage for Chinese Garden | 1 |
| | Titus needs a one-way sign | 1 |
| Trailhead signs | Fall Canyon - no sign | 4 |
| | No sign seen | 3 |
| | Grotto Canyon not marked | 2 |
| | Almost missed route to the Red Cathedral Formation | 1 |
| | Clearer markings needed for 4x4 roads | 1 |
| | Confusing or non-existent at Cottonwood Canyon and Red Wall Canyon | 1 |
| | Corkscrew/Thimble - no trailhead sign | 1 |
| | Couldn't find Marble Canyon trailhead | 1 |
| | Couldn't find sign for waterfalls in west central area of park | 1 |
| | Fall Canyon - a bit obscure | 1 |
| | Goler Canyon intersections not marked | 1 |
| | Gower Canyon - few signs | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 20a**. Comments on directional signs – spring (continued)

| Sign type | Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|---|
| Trailhead signs (cont.) | Lack of trail signs throughout the park | 1 |
| | Marble Canyon | 1 |
| | Marble Canyon loop not well marked at spring | 1 |
| | Need more signs and mile markers (e.g., Skidoo) | 1 |
| | No information at Darwin Falls | 1 |
| | No sign at Little Arch Canyon | 1 |
| | No signs indicating the roads to Marble Canyon | 1 |
| | No signs indicating the roads to Panamint Dunes | 1 |
| | No signs on Surprise Canyon Trail | 1 |
| | No signs to Surprise Canyon Trailhead | 1 |
| | No trailhead sign | 1 |
| | No trail signs at Willow Canyon | 1 |
| | No trail signs for Bighorn | 1 |
| | No trail signs for Red Wall Canyon | 1 |
| | No trailhead sign for Desolate Canyon | 1 |
| | Not existent | 1 |
| | Sign was not obvious - trail poorly marked | 1 |
| | Signs covered in snow or completely lacking | 1 |
| | Some trails on National Geographic Trails map weren't trails | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 20b**. Comments on directional signs – fall (N=83 comments)

| Sign type | Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|---|
| Backcountry road signs | Not enough signs | 12 |
| | Mile markers would be helpful | 2 |
| | No signs seen | 2 |
| | No signs to Hole in the Wall | 2 |
| | Signs too small | 2 |
| | Cutoffs in canyons not clearly marked | 1 |
| | Did not see any signs at the hotspring | 1 |
| | Entrance to Titus Canyon needs a better sign | 1 |
| | Goler Canyon and Butte Valley had no signs | 1 |
| | Marble Canyon needs a sign saying you arrived at the canyon | 1 |
| | Need a sign at Marble/Cottonwood Canyon junction | 1 |
| | Need new park sign at Goler Canyon/Mengel Pass | 1 |
| | Needed a map on sign | 1 |
| | Needed a sign on Steel Pass Road | 1 |
| | No signs at Hunter Mountain | 1 |
| | No signs on road to Chloride City | 1 |
| | No signs on road to Darwin | 1 |
| | Not enough signs from Scotty's Castle to Stovepipe | 1 |
| | Only sign seen was at Teakettle Junction | 1 |
| | Roads not well-marked (but adds to exciting experience) | 1 |
| | Roads that cannot accommodate two vehicles were not clearly marked (Lost Burro Mine) | 1 |
| | Sign too small at road junction of Echo/ Cottonwood | 1 |
| | Signs could be improved | 1 |
| | Signs difficult to see | 1 |
| | Signs were not helpful | 1 |
| | Sunset campsite did not have good signs | 1 |
| | Titus Canyon needs better signs | 1 |
| Trailhead signs | Not enough signs | 6 |
| | Need sign at Fall Canyon | 5 |
| | No signs at Titus Canyon Narrows verses Fall Canyon trails | 3 |
| | Signs were small/need improvements | 3 |
| | Did not see any | 2 |
| | Beginning of trails not well-marked | 1 |
| | Golden Canyon signs not clear | 1 |
| | Inadequate signs at Ubehebe Peak, Virginia Dry Lakes, and Teakettle Junction | 1 |
| | Marble Canyon not well-marked | 1 |
| | Need better signs at Hole in the Wall | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 20b**. Comments on directional signs – fall (continued)

| Sign type | Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|---|
| Trailhead signs (cont.) | Need sign at Stovepipe Well | 1 |
| | No sign at Echo Trailhead | 1 |
| | No signs to Darwin Falls | 1 |
| | Skidoo needs a sign | 1 |
| | Titus Canyon trailhead sign is confusing | 1 |
| | Trailhead signs didn't give enough information about the hike | 1 |
| | Trailhead signs not adequate | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Tools used to navigate the backcountry or wilderness*

**Question 13**

Which tools did you and your personal group use to find your way through the Death Valley NP backcountry or wilderness?

Results

- As shown in Figure 54, the tools most commonly used by visitor groups to navigate through the backcountry or wilderness of Death Valley NP were:

  Spring
  - 62% Death Valley NP brochure/ newspaper
  - 50% Death Valley NP backcountry roads map

  Fall
  - 60% Death Valley NP brochure/ newspaper
  - 50% Death Valley NP backcountry roads map

- "Other" tools used to navigate are shown in Tables 21a and 21b.

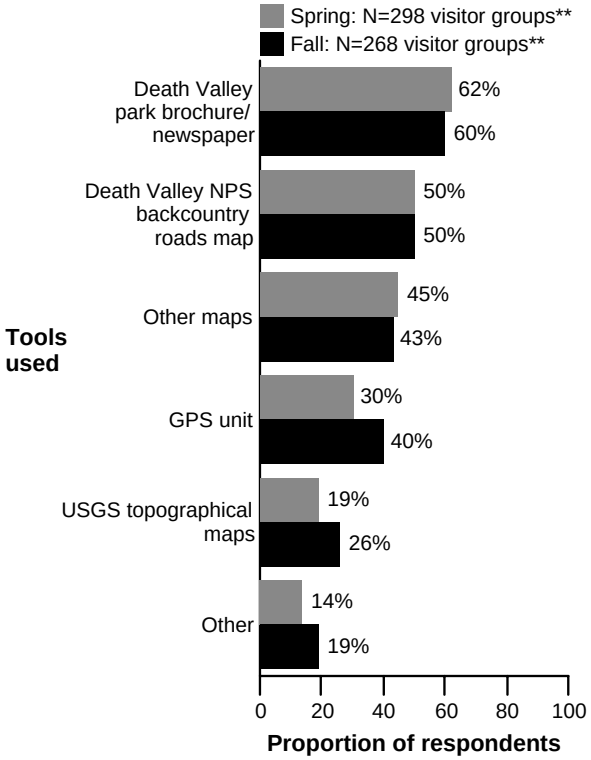


**Figure 54**. Tools used by visitor groups to navigate the backcountry or wilderness

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 21a**. Other tools used to navigate – spring (N= 39 comments)

| Tool | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Guide/trail books | 16 |
| Compass | 6 |
| Past experience | 4 |
| SUV/Jeep road books | 4 |
| Followed trip leader | 2 |
| Internet trail descriptions | 2 |
| DVNPS Cottonwood-Marble Canyon sheet | 1 |
| Google Earth | 1 |
| Las Vegas visitor website | 1 |
| Personal knowledge | 1 |
| Software maps | 1 |

**Table 21b**. Other tools used to navigate – fall N=49 comments)

| Tool | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| Hiking/off-road guide books | 26 |
| Atlas/gazetteer | 5 |
| Previous visits | 5 |
| Google Earth | 3 |
| Ranger guide | 2 |
| Backpacking Magazine | 1 |
| Book from visitor center | 1 |
| Computer programs | 1 |
| i-Phone | 1 |
| Internet sites | 1 |
| National Geographic | 1 |
| Signs | 1 |
| Websites | 1 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## Ratings of Services, Facilities, Attributes, and Resources

### *Visitor services and facilities used*

**Question 12a**

Please indicate all the visitor services and facilities that you and your personal group used at Death Valley NP during this visit.

Results

- As shown in Figure 55, the most common visitor services and facilities used by visitor groups were:

  Spring
  - 81% Restrooms
  - 78% Backcountry roads passable to vehicles without 4x4
  - 70% Trails

  Fall
  - 80% Restrooms
  - 73% Backcountry roads passable to vehicles without 4x4
  - 68% Visitor center (other than restrooms)

- The least used service/facility was:

  Spring
  - 2% Access for people with disabilities

  Fall
  - 1% Access for people with disabilities

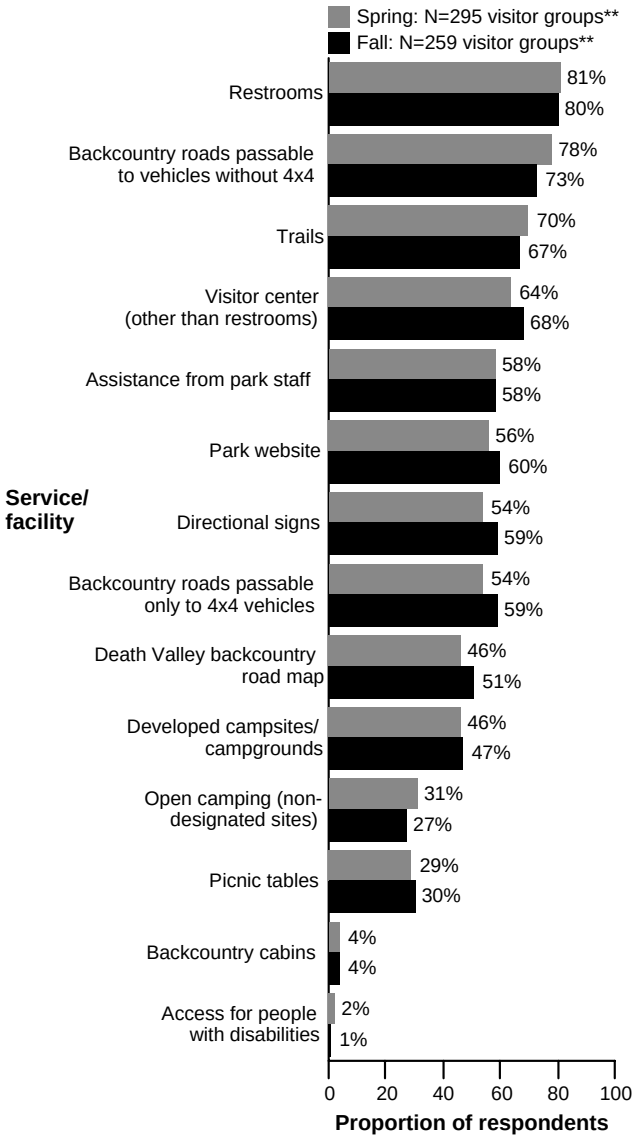


**Figure 55**. Visitor services and facilities used

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Importance ratings of visitor services and facilities*

**Question 12b**

Next, for only those services and facilities that you and your personal group used, please rate their importance to your visit from 1-5.

1=Not important
2=Somewhat important
3=Moderately important
4=Very important
5=Extremely important

Results

- Figure 56 shows the combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings for visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.

- The services and facilities receiving the highest combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings were:

  Spring
  88% Open camping (non-designated sites)
  82% Death Valley backcountry road map

  Fall
  97% Open camping (non-designated sites)
  82% Trails

- Figures 57 to 70 show the importance ratings for each service and facility.

- The services and facilities receiving the highest "not important" ratings that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups were:

  Spring
  7% Picnic tables
  Fall
  9% Picnic tables

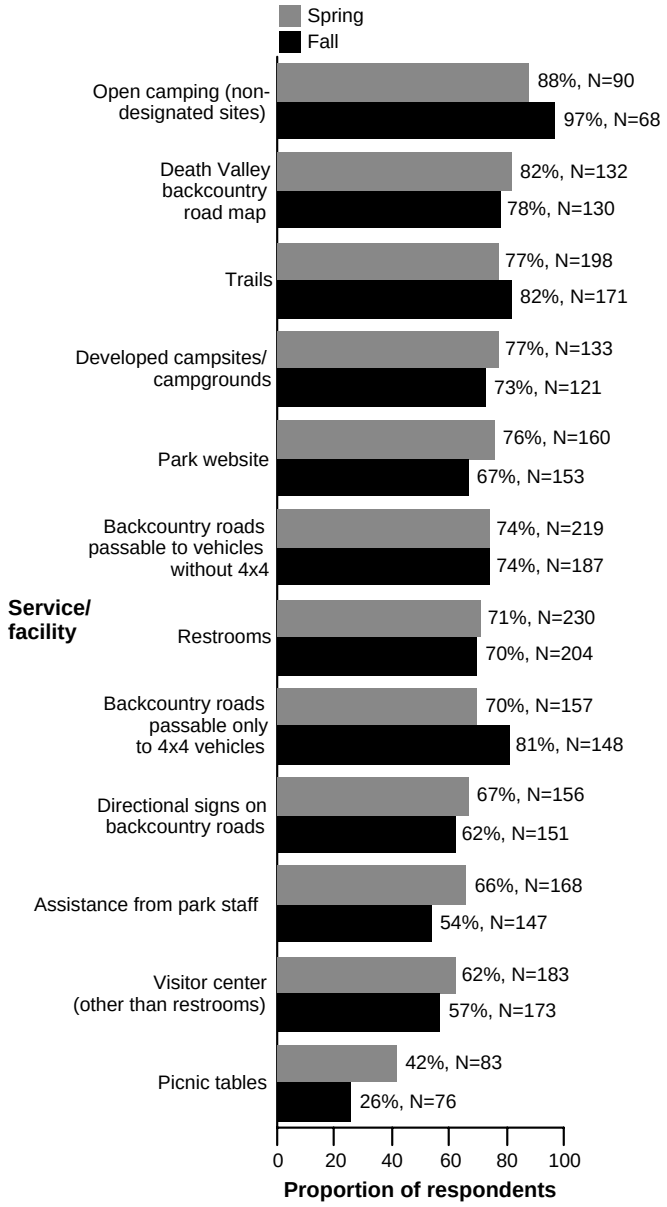


**Figure 56**. Combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings of visitor services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

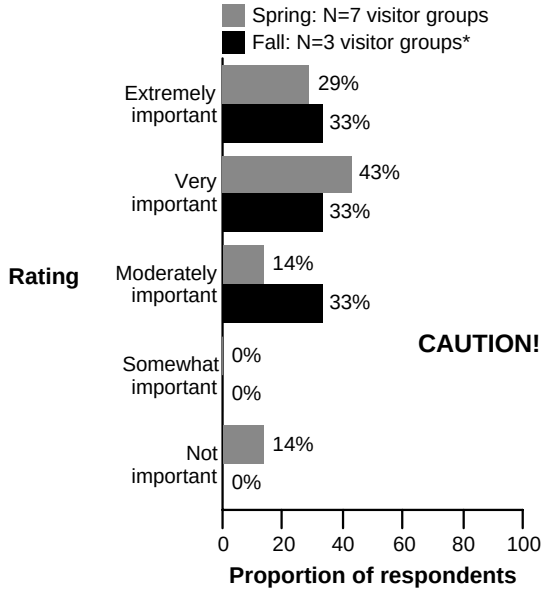


**Figure 57**. Importance of access for people with disabilities

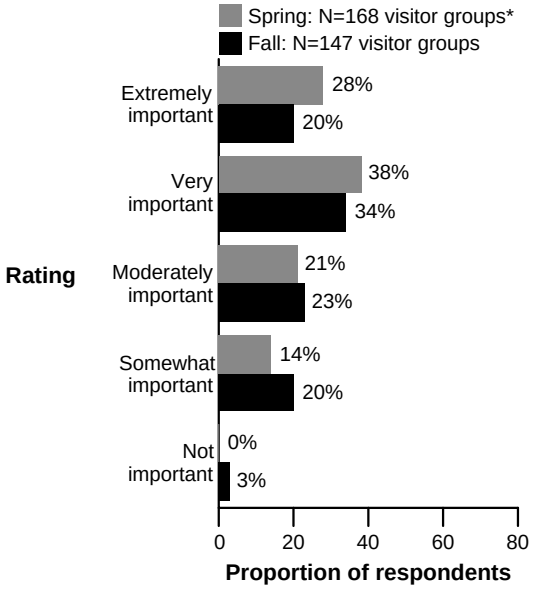


**Figure 58**. Importance of assistance from park staff

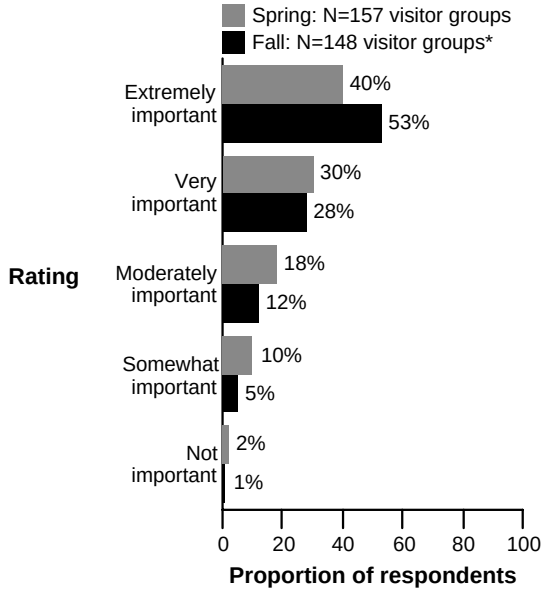


**Figure 59**. Importance of backcountry roads passable only to 4x4 vehicles

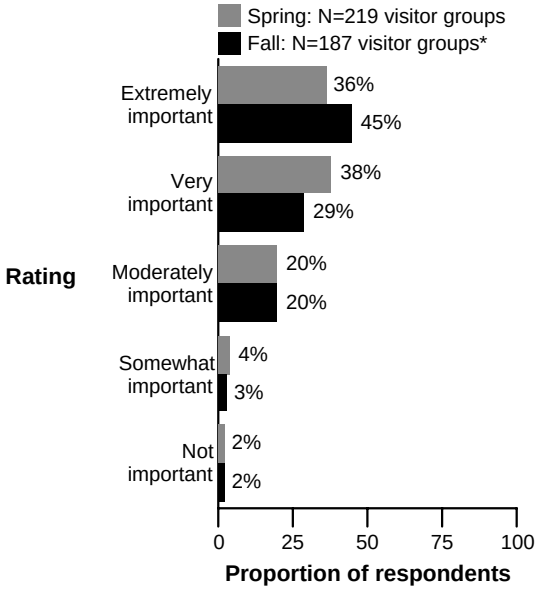


**Figure 60**. Importance of backcountry roads passable to vehicles without 4x4

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

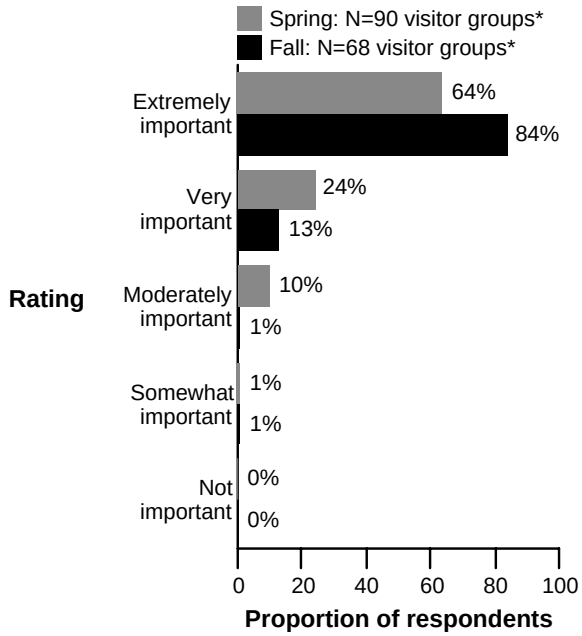


**Figure 61**. Importance of open camping (non-designated sites)

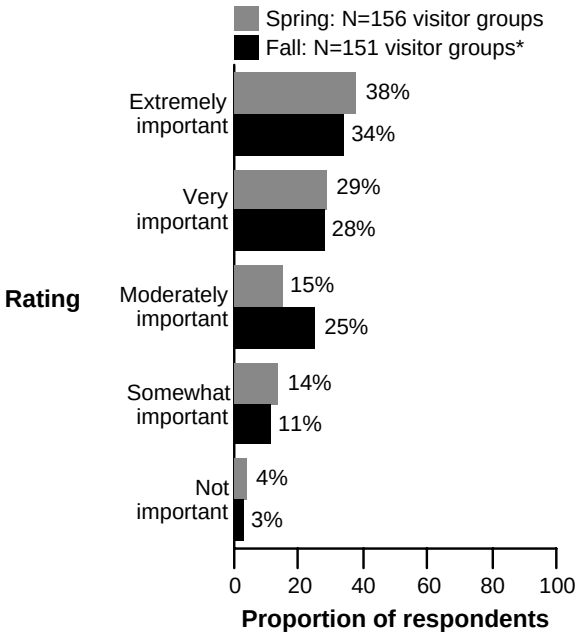


**Figure 62**. Importance of directional signs on backcountry roads

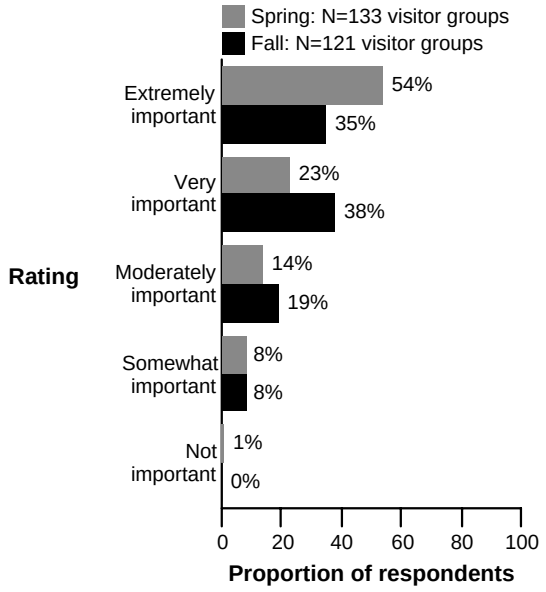


**Figure 63**. Importance of developed campsites or campgrounds

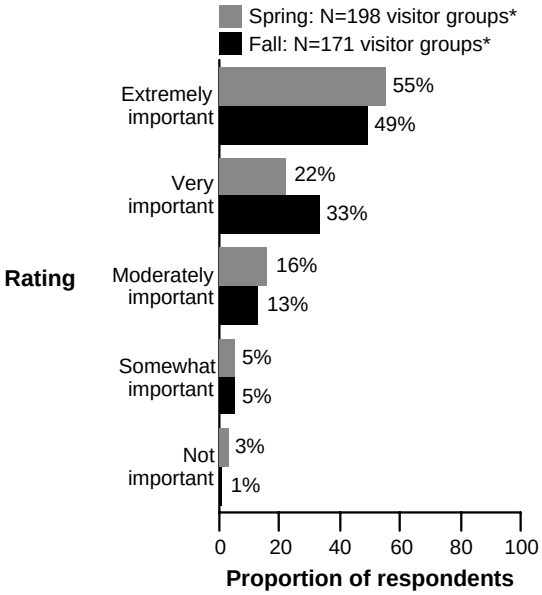


**Figure 64**. Importance of trails

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

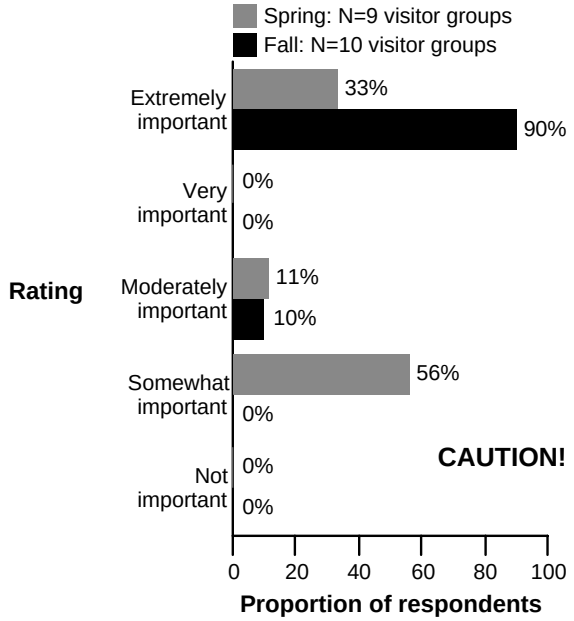


**Figure 65**. Importance of backcountry cabins

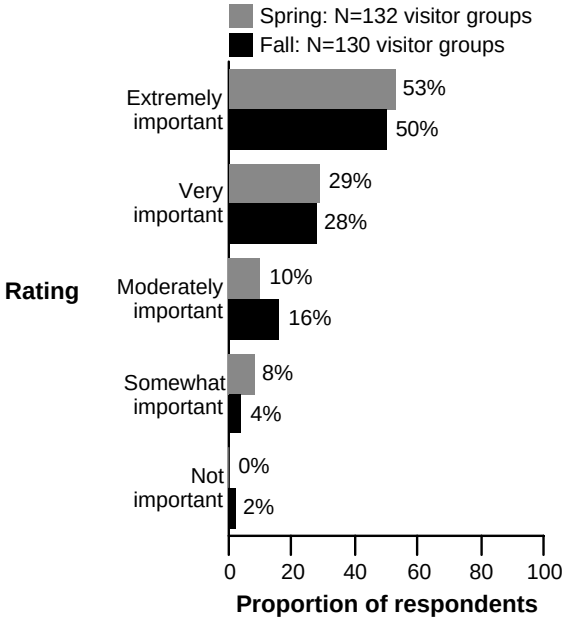


**Figure 66**. Importance of Death Valley backcountry road map

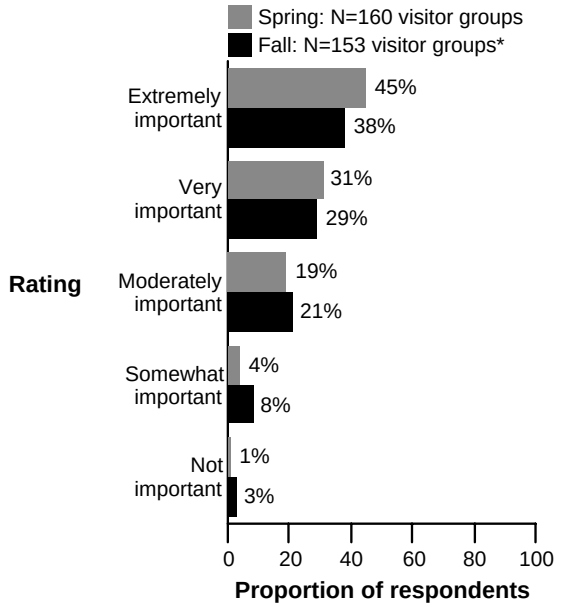


**Figure 67**. Importance of park website: www.nps.gov/deva (used before or during visit)

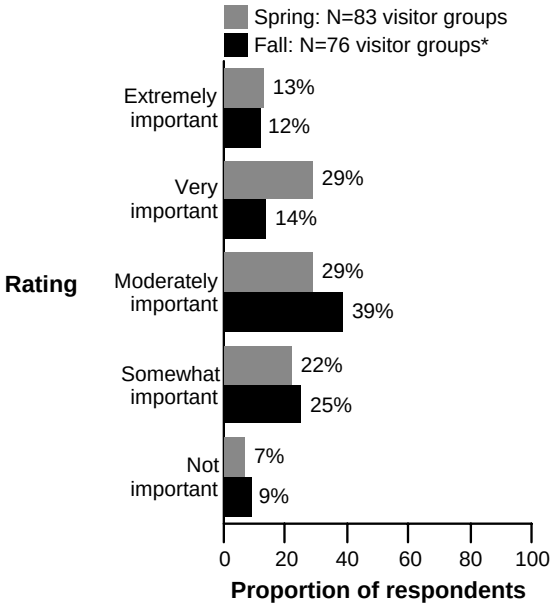


**Figure 68**. Importance of picnic tables

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

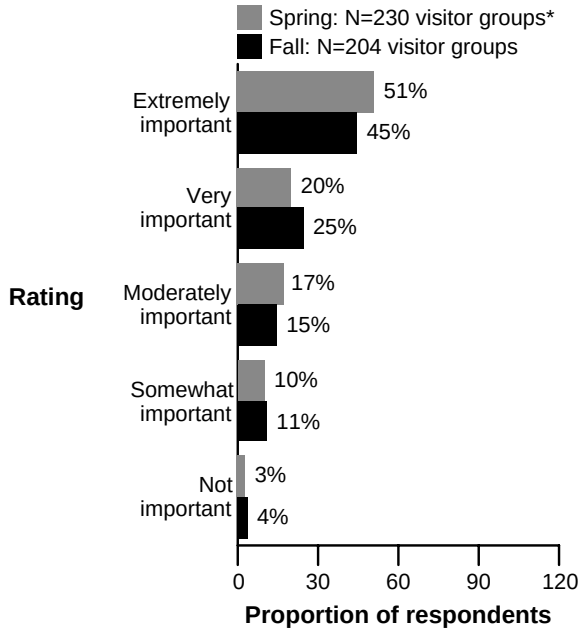


**Figure 69**. Importance of restrooms

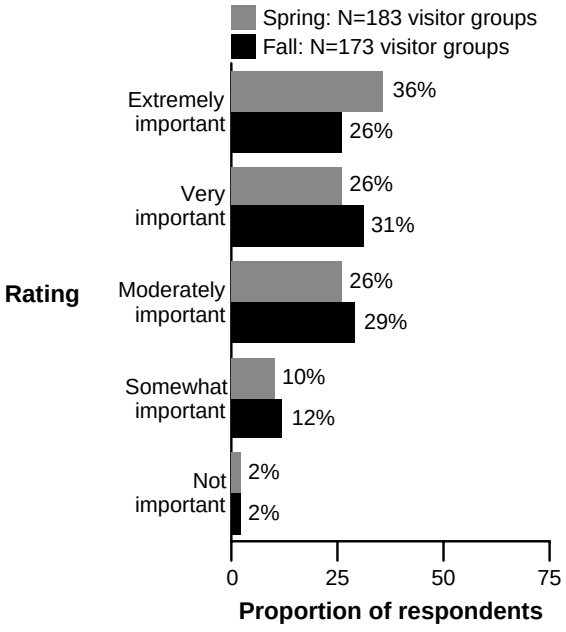


**Figure 70**. Importance of visitor center (other than restrooms)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Quality ratings of visitor services and facilities*

**Question 12c**

Finally, for only those services and facilities that you and your personal group used, please rate their quality from 1-5.

1=Very poor
2=Poor
3=Average
4=Good
5=Very good

Results

- Figure 71 shows the combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings for visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.

  Spring
  86% Death Valley backcountry road map
  86% Assistance from park staff
  85% Visitor center (other than restrooms)

  Fall
  89% Visitor center (other than restrooms)
  86% Assistance from park staff
  85% Open camping (non-designated sites)

- Figures 72 to 85 show the quality ratings for each service and facility.

- The services and facilities receiving the highest "poor" quality ratings that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups were:

  Spring
  5% Picnic tables

  Fall
  5% Directional signs on backcountry roads

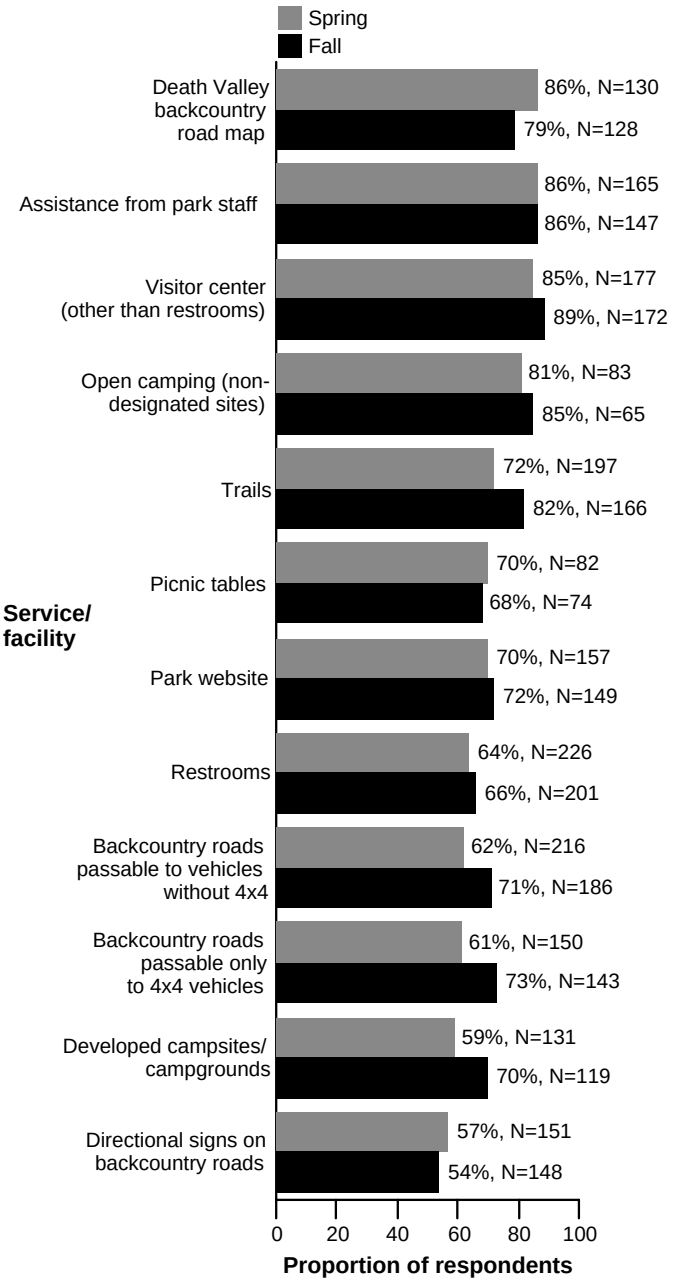


**Figure 71**. Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings of visitor services and facilities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

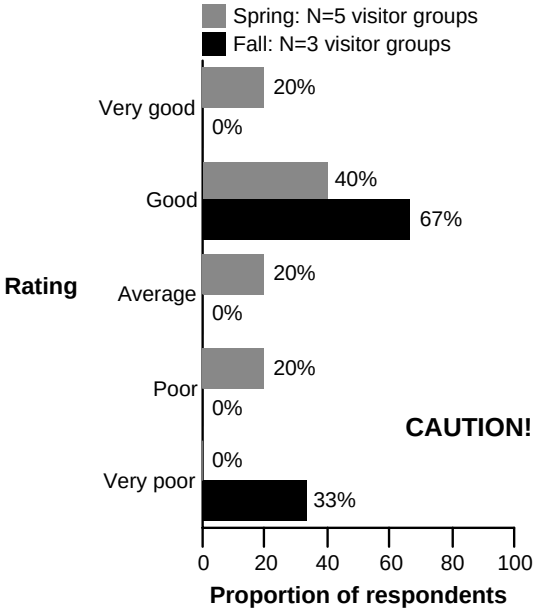


**Figure 72**. Quality of access for people with disabilities

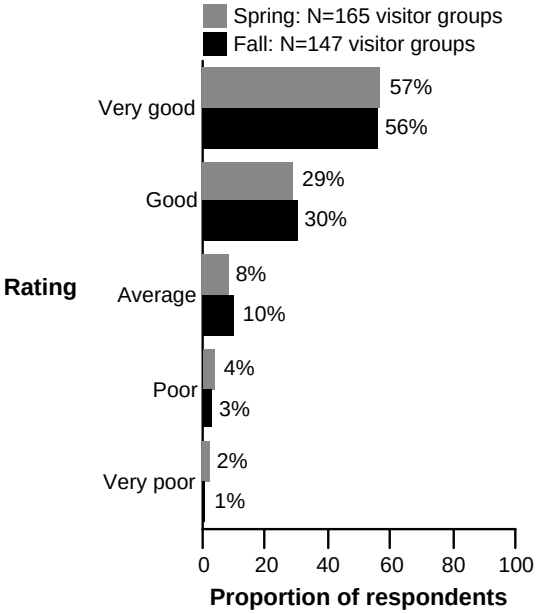


**Figure 73**. Quality of assistance from park staff

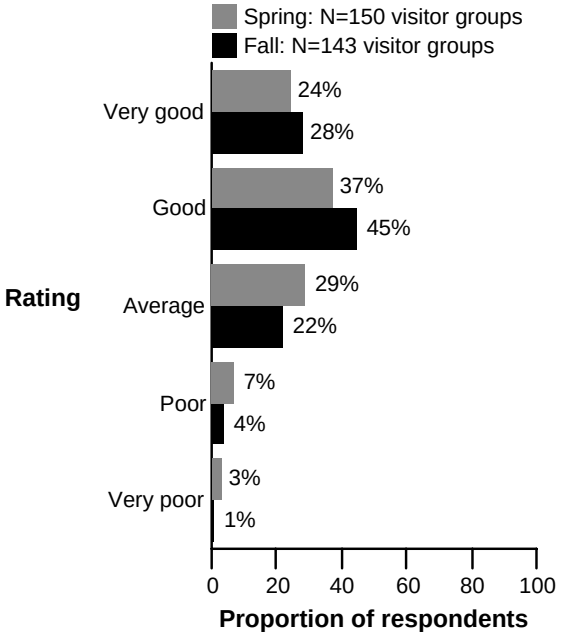


**Figure 74**. Quality of backcountry roads passable only to 4x4 vehicles

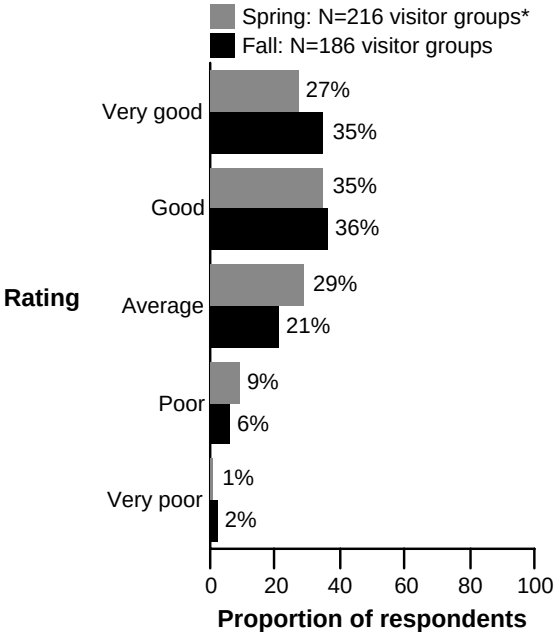


**Figure 75**. Quality of backcountry roads passable to vehicles without 4x4

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

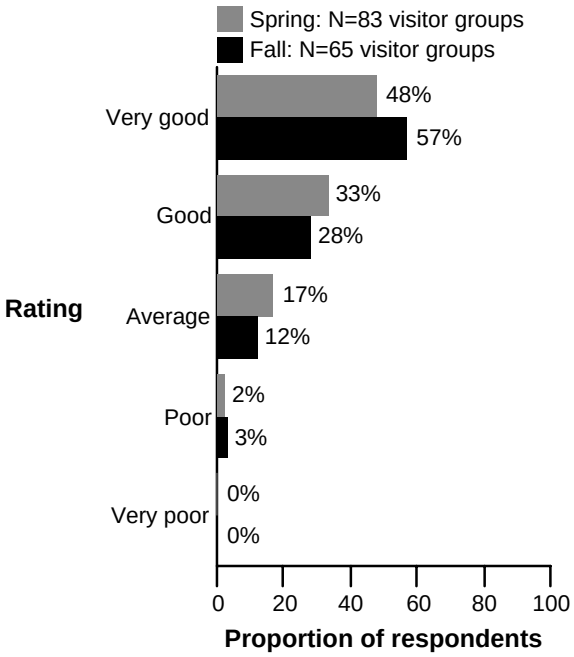


**Figure 76**. Quality of open camping (non-designated sites)

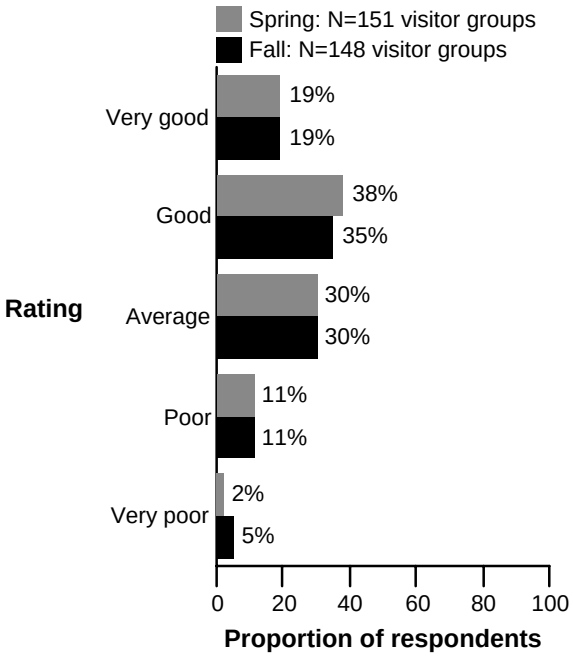


**Figure 77**. Quality of directional signs on backcountry roads

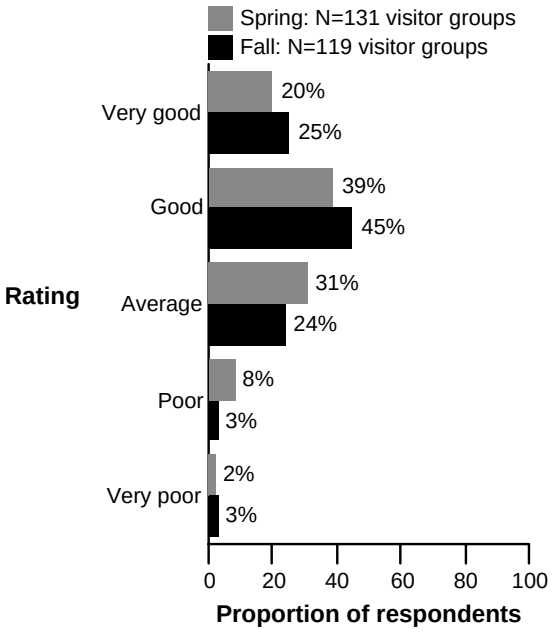


**Figure 78**. Quality of developed campsites or campgrounds

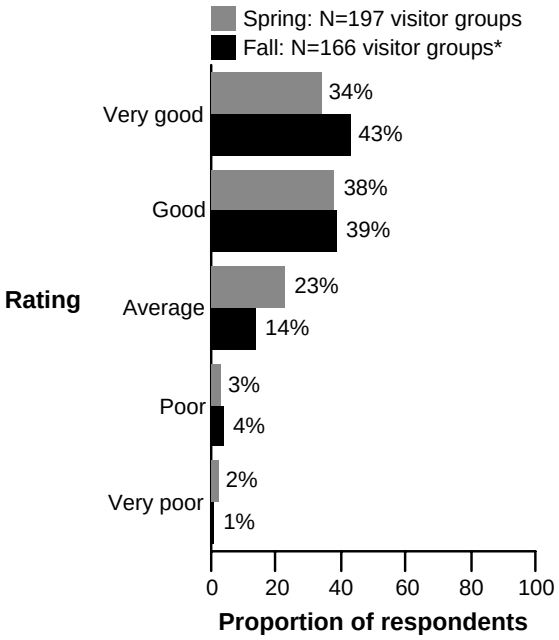


**Figure 79**. Quality of trails

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

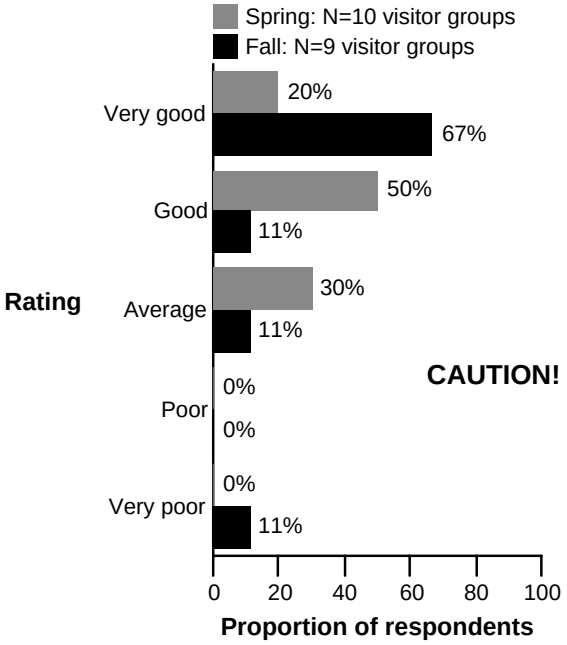


**Figure 80**. Quality of backcountry cabins

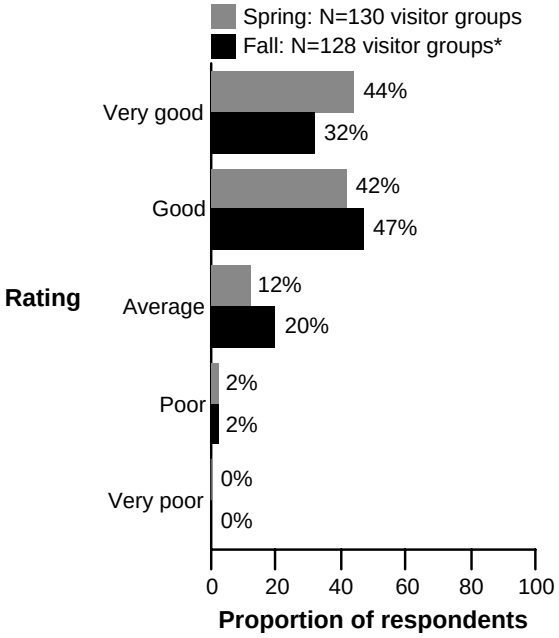


**Figure 81**. Quality of Death Valley backcountry road map

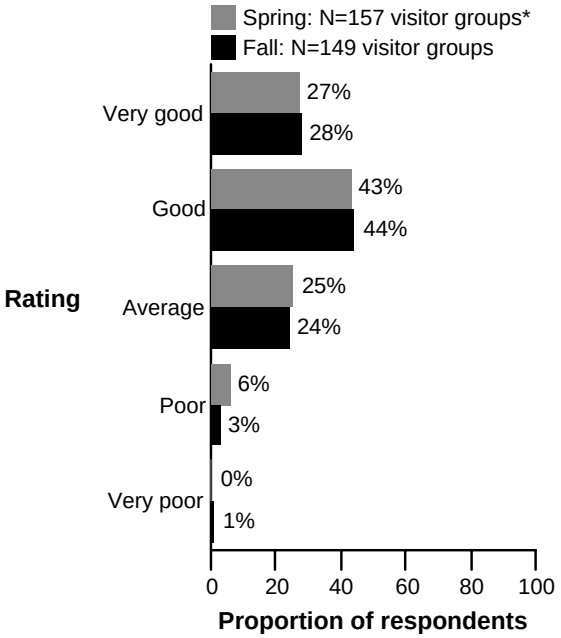


**Figure 82**. Quality of park website: www.nps.gov/deva (used before or during visit)

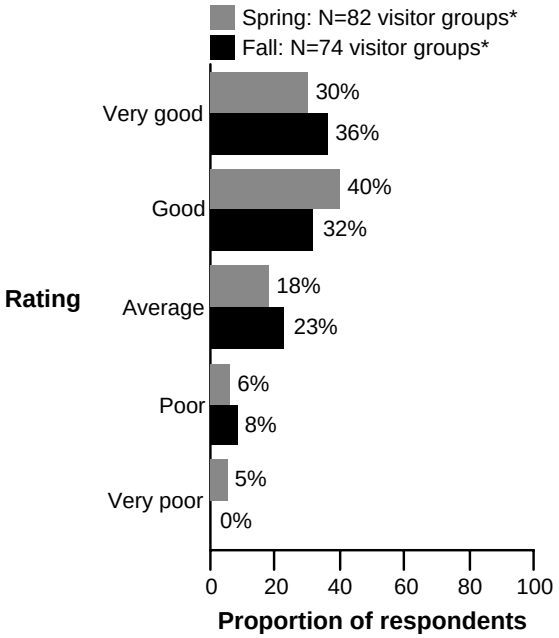


**Figure 83**. Quality of picnic tables

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

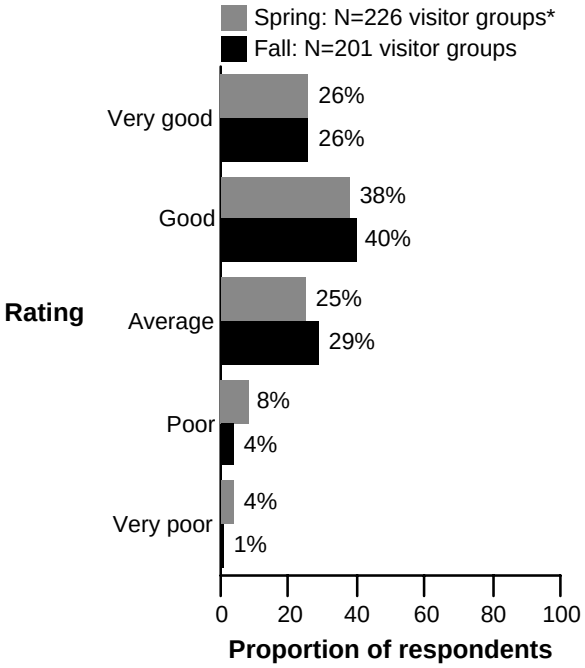


**Figure 84**. Quality of restrooms

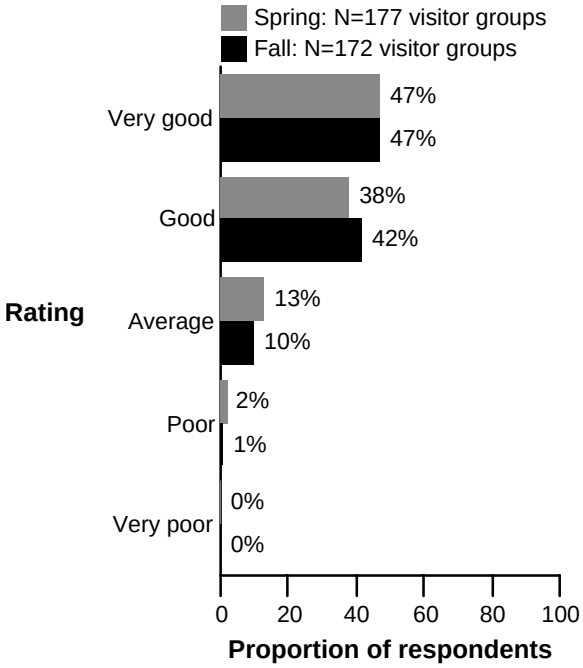


**Figure 85**. Quality of visitor center (other than restrooms)

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Mean scores of importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities - spring*

- Figures 86 and 87 show the mean scores of importance and quality ratings for all visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- All visitor services and facilities were rated above average.

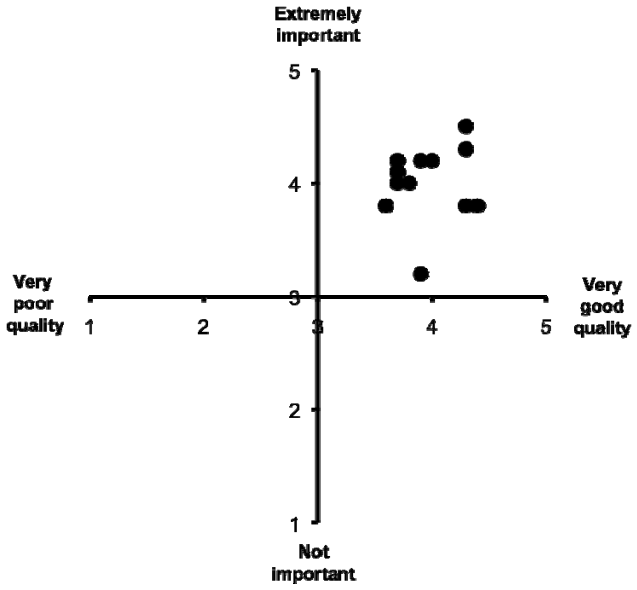


**Figure 86**. Mean scores of importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities - spring

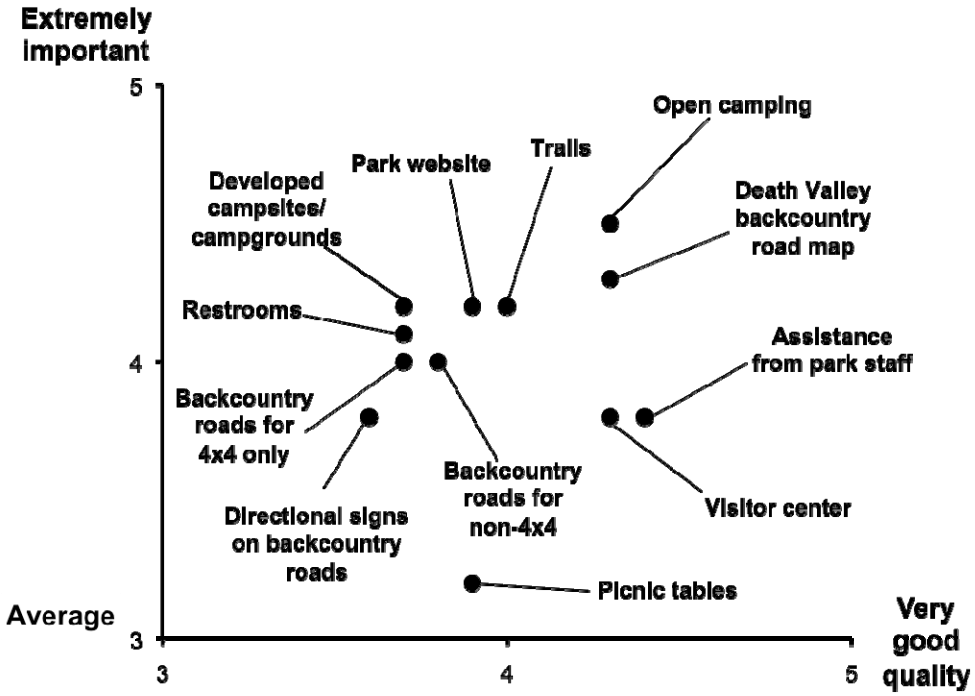


**Figure 87**. Detail of Figure 86

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Mean scores of importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities - fall*

- Figures 88 and 89 show the mean scores of importance and quality ratings for all visitor services and facilities that were rated by 30 or more visitor groups.
- All visitor services and facilities (except picnic tables) were rated above average.

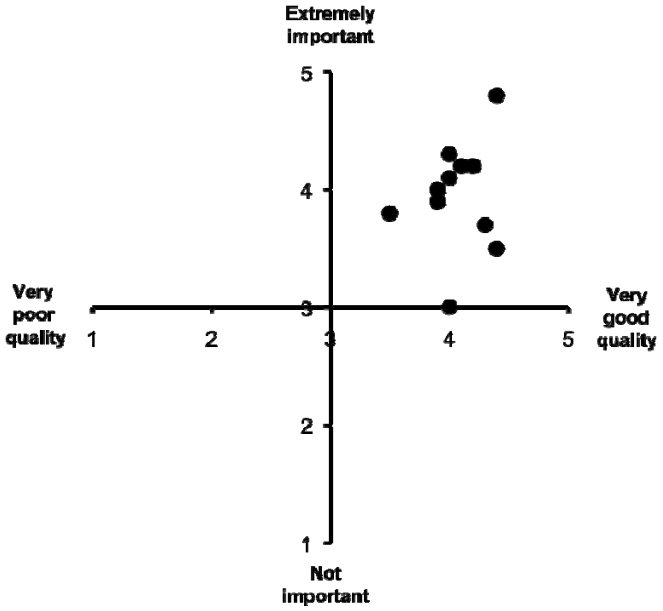


**Figure 88**. Mean scores of importance and quality ratings for visitor services and facilities - fall

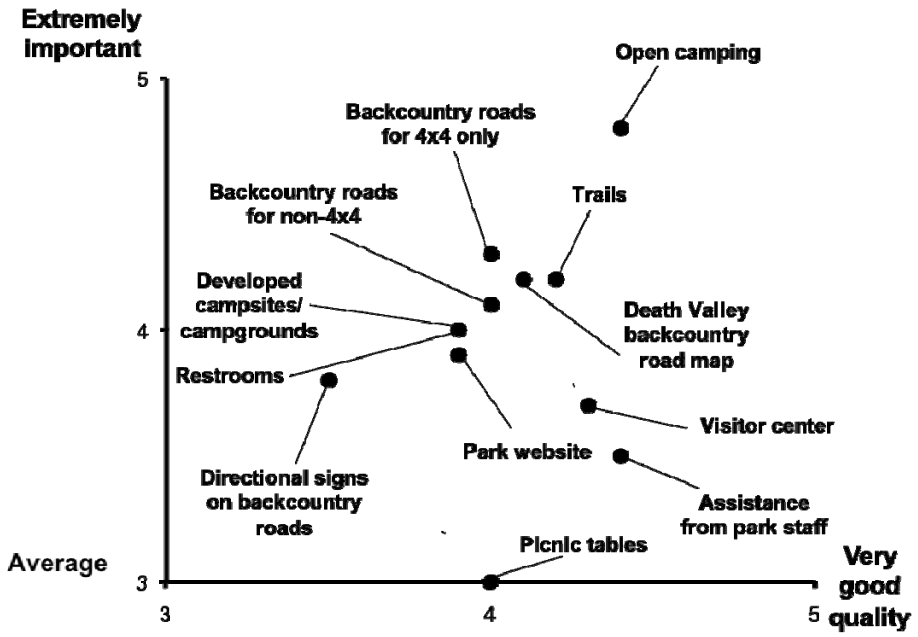


**Figure 89**. Detail of Figure 88

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Quality of personal interaction with a park ranger*

**Question 19a**

During this visit Death Valley NP, did you and your personal group have any personal interaction with a park ranger?

Results

- As shown in Figure 90, the proportion of visitor groups that had personal interactions with a park ranger was:

  Spring: 80%
  Fall: 83%

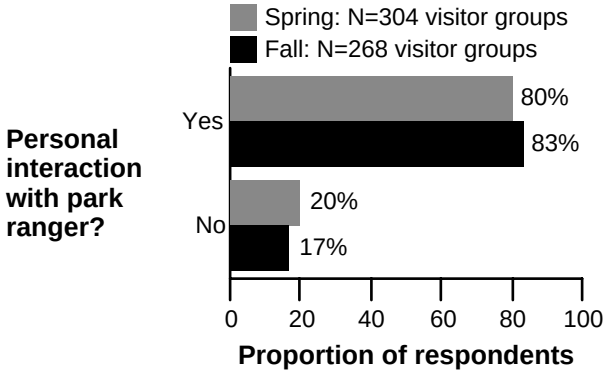


**Figure 90**. Visitor groups that had personal interactions with park rangers

**Question 19b**

If YES, please rate the quality of your interaction with the park ranger.

Results

- Visitor groups rated the quality of their interaction with park rangers as "very good" or "good" as follows (see Figure 91):

  Spring
  92% Courteousness
  88% Helpfulness
  86% Quality of information provided

  Fall
  95% Courteousness
  87% Helpfulness
  85% Quality of information provided

- Figures 92-94 show visitor groups' ratings of the quality of each element of interactions with park rangers.

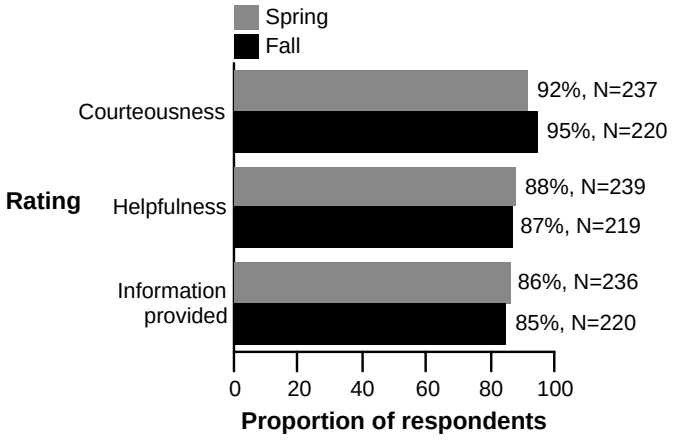


**Figure 91**. Combined proportions of "very good" and "good" quality ratings of personal interactions with park rangers

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

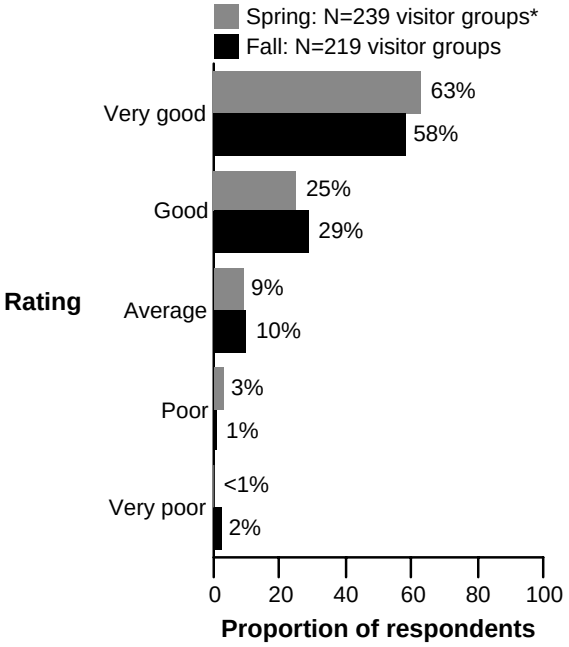


**Figure 92**. Quality of interaction: Helpfulness

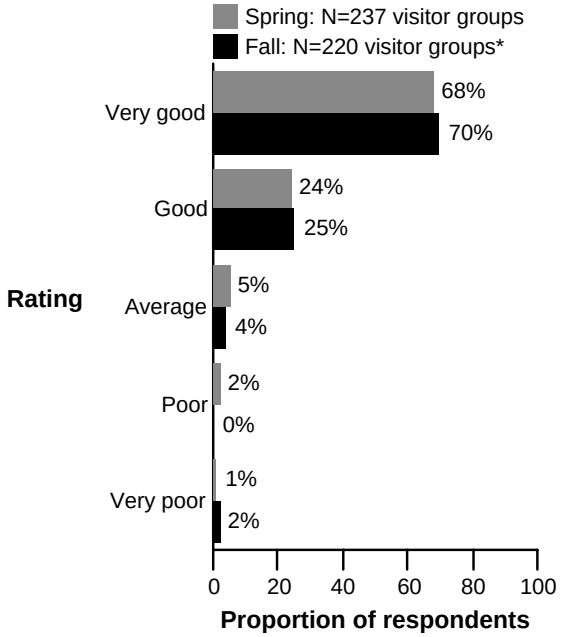


**Figure 93**. Quality of interaction: Courteousness

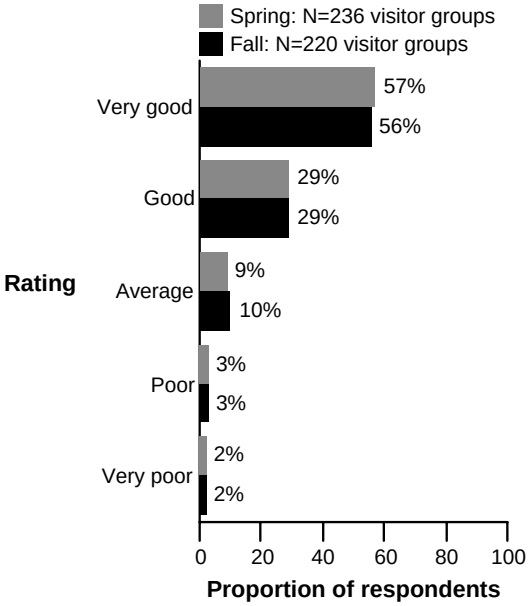


**Figure 94**. Quality of interaction: Information provided

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Importance of protecting park attributes and resources*

**Question 14**

Death Valley NP was established to preserve and protect outstanding geological features and scenery while conserving natural and cultural resources, and allowing for public enjoyment of the resources. On this visit, how important were the following attributes/resources to you?

Results

- As shown in Figure 95, the highest combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings of park attributes and resources included:

  Spring
  95% Recreational opportunities
  95% Scenic views
  90% Clean air/visibility
  90% Geologic features

  Fall
  95% Scenic views
  93% Recreational opportunities
  87% Clean air/visibility
  85% Geologic features

- The attribute/resource that received the highest "not important" rating were:

  Spring
  10% Educational opportunities
  10% Historic buildings/mining sites

  Fall
  11% Educational opportunities

- Tables 22a and 22b show the importance ratings of park attributes and resources.

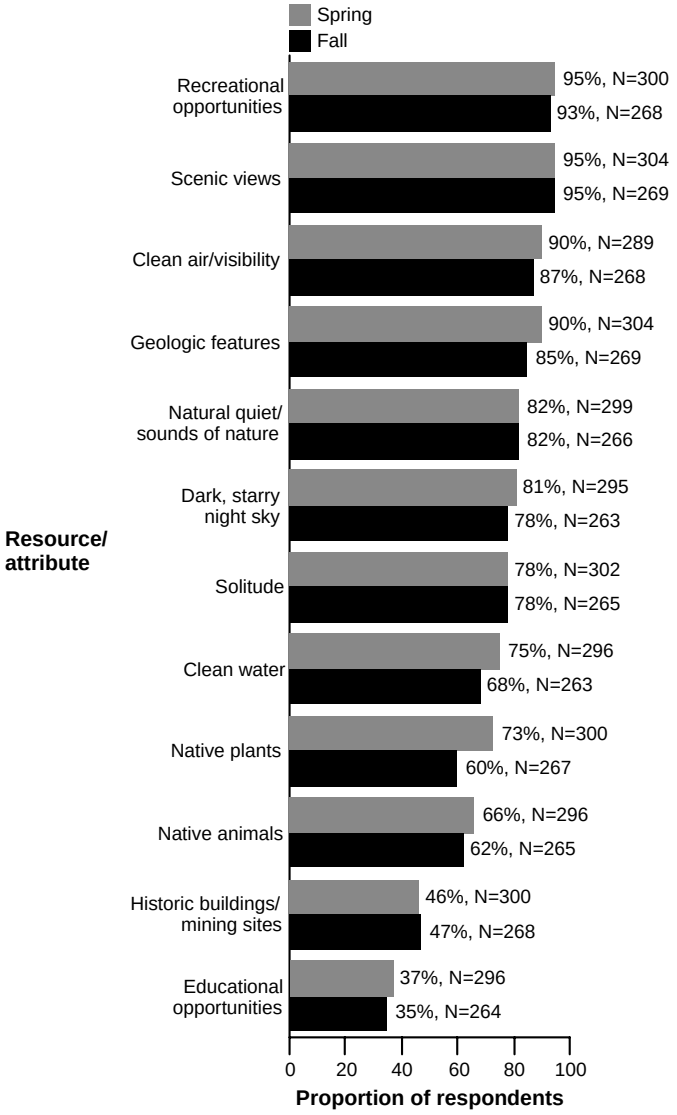


**Figure 95**. Combined proportions of "extremely important" and "very important" ratings of park attributes and resources

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

**Table 22a**. Ratings of the importance of protecting park attributes and resources – spring (N=number of visitor groups that rated each attribute/resource)

| | | Rating (%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Attribute/resource** | **N** | **Not important** | **Somewhat important** | **Moderately important** | **Very important** | **Extremely important** |
| Scenic views | 304 | <1 | 1 | 4 | 25 | 70 |
| Geologic features | 304 | <1 | 2 | 8 | 31 | 59 |
| Native animals | 296 | 4 | 7 | 23 | 27 | 39 |
| Native plants | 300 | 3 | 4 | 20 | 31 | 42 |
| Clean water | 296 | 7 | 5 | 13 | 23 | 52 |
| Clean air/visibility | 299 | 1 | 2 | 7 | 29 | 61 |
| Solitude | 302 | 2 | 4 | 16 | 30 | 48 |
| Natural quiet/sounds of nature | 299 | 2 | 5 | 11 | 29 | 53 |
| Dark, starry night sky | 295 | 2 | 4 | 13 | 30 | 51 |
| Historic buildings/mining sites | 300 | 10 | 18 | 26 | 27 | 19 |
| Educational opportunities | 296 | 10 | 22 | 31 | 21 | 16 |
| Recreational opportunities (hiking, camping, etc.) | 300 | <1 | 1 | 6 | 29 | 64 |

**Table 22b**. Ratings of the importance of protecting park attributes and resources – fall (N=number of visitor groups that rated each attribute/resource)

| | | Rating (%) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Attribute/resource** | **N** | **Not important** | **Somewhat important** | **Moderately important** | **Very important** | **Extremely important** |
| Scenic views | 269 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 31 | 64 |
| Geologic features | 269 | <1 | 3 | 12 | 34 | 51 |
| Native animals | 265 | 2 | 12 | 23 | 29 | 33 |
| Native plants | 267 | 3 | 12 | 25 | 29 | 31 |
| Clean water | 263 | 8 | 8 | 17 | 28 | 40 |
| Clean air/visibility | 268 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 34 | 53 |
| Solitude | 265 | 1 | 5 | 16 | 28 | 50 |
| Natural quiet/sounds of nature | 266 | 2 | 4 | 12 | 32 | 50 |
| Dark, starry night sky | 263 | 1 | 6 | 14 | 29 | 49 |
| Historic buildings/mining sites | 268 | 6 | 19 | 28 | 24 | 23 |
| Educational opportunities | 264 | 11 | 20 | 33 | 23 | 12 |
| Recreational opportunities (hiking, camping, etc.) | 268 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 29 | 65 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## *Effect of selected elements on park experience*

Question 17

During this visit to Death Valley NP, please indicate how the following elements affected your park experience.

Results

- Tables 23a and 23b show how selected elements affected visitors' experiences at the park.

**Table 23a**. How elements affected park experience – spring (N=number of visitor groups who rated each element)

| | | Rating (%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Element** | **N** | **Added to** | **No effect** | **Detracted from** | **Did not experience** |
| Vehicles on established roads | 300 | 6 | 85 | 9 | 1 |
| Evidence of illegal off-road activity | 300 | <1 | 20 | 26 | 54 |
| Evidence of mining activity | 297 | 33 | 34 | 8 | 25 |
| Utility corridors | 283 | 2 | 57 | 13 | 28 |
| Aircraft overflights | 300 | 8 | 42 | 31 | 18 |
| Trash along backcountry roadsides | 299 | 0 | 14 | 20 | 66 |
| Other – CAUTION! | 25 | 28 | 0 | 72 | 0 |

**Table 23b**. How elements affected park experience – fall (N=number of visitor groups who rated each element)

| | | Rating (%) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Element** | **N** | **Added to** | **No effect** | **Detracted from** | **Did not experience** |
| Vehicles on established roads | 264 | 7 | 80 | 12 | <1 |
| Evidence of illegal off-road activity | 263 | 1 | 21 | 21 | 57 |
| Evidence of mining activity | 259 | 35 | 29 | 8 | 27 |
| Utility corridors | 256 | 5 | 48 | 13 | 34 |
| Aircraft overflights | 263 | 8 | 38 | 27 | 27 |
| Trash along backcountry roadsides | 264 | 1 | 11 | 19 | 69 |
| Other – CAUTION! | 25 | 12 | 0 | 88 | 0 |

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding

**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

- "Other" elements listed by spring visitor groups were:

  Absence of litter and advertising
  Delays due to road construction
  Excess speed of 4x4s on backcountry trails
  Free campgrounds filled up
  Graffiti in Marble Canyon
  Ice cream at convenience store
  Lack of dog friendliness
  Lack of tent sites with firepits
  Limited signage to trailheads
  Loud, inconsiderate campers
  Low level military aircraft
  No toilet paper in restrooms
  Noisy motorcycles
  Number of RVs in campgrounds
  Smoke from campground fires
  Smokers
  So many old people
  Stovepipe Campground is cramped
  Too many resorts
  We saw the Space Station twice

- "Other" elements listed by fall visitor groups were:

  Airport in park
  Disrespectful tourists
  Dogs running loose
  Drilling in Echo Canyon
  Evidence of stones removed from Race Track
  Existing roads/trails closed to vehicular traffic
  Foot traffic near Devil's Golf Course parking
  General park maintenance
  Generators in campground
  Graffiti
  Human waste
  Illegal campfire near the South Racetrack Campground
  Illegal camping
  Large number of people
  Military aircraft detracted from natural quiet
  Noisy campers
  Park is covered with toilet paper
  Poor sites at Texas Springs
  Poor surface on unpaved roads
  Reverse osmosis facility
  Speed limits too fast
  Very crowded backcountry and visitor areas

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## Overall Quality

**Question 32**

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the facilities, services, and recreational opportunities provided to you and your personal group at Death Valley NP during this visit?

Results

- As shown in Figure 96, the proportion of visitor groups that rated the quality of the facilities, services, and recreational opportunities at Death Valley NP as "very good" or "good" was:

  96% Spring
  95% Fall

- Less than 1% of spring visitor groups rated the quality as "very poor" or "poor."

- No fall visitor groups rated the quality as nc"very poor" or "poor."

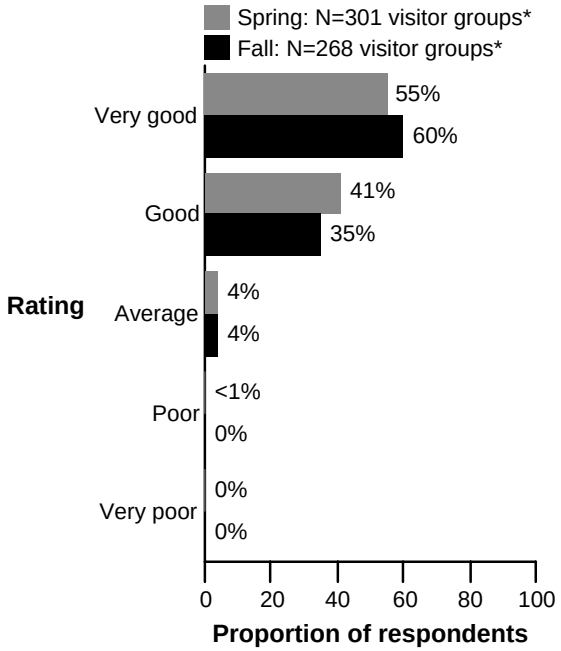


**Figure 96**. Overall quality rating of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities

*total percentages do not equal 100 due to rounding
**total percentages do not equal 100 because visitors could select more than one answer

## Visitor Comments

### *What visitors liked most*

**Question 29a**

What did you and your personal group like most about your backcountry road or wilderness experience at Death Valley NP? (open-ended)

Results

- 91% of spring visitor groups (N=278), and 89% of fall visitor groups (N=242) responded to this question.
- Tables 24a and 24b show a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments can be found in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

**Table 24a**. What visitors liked most – spring (N=484 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES** | |
| Comment | 1 |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| Backcountry/4WD roads | 16 |
| Cleanliness of park/lack of trash | 2 |
| Other comments | 6 |
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Access to backcountry/wilderness | 6 |
| Open/unregulated hiking | 4 |
| Uncrowded | 4 |
| Open/remote camping | 3 |
| Lack of development | 2 |
| Other comments | 3 |
| **CONCESSIONS** | |
| Jeep rental | 2 |
| Other comment | 1 |
| **GENERAL** | |
| Scenery | 68 |
| Solitude | 57 |
| Peace/quiet | 26 |
| Geology | 23 |
| Beauty | 19 |
| Stars/starry sky | 12 |
| Open space | 9 |

**Table 24a**. What visitors liked most – spring (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **GENERAL (continued)** | |
| Warm climate/nice weather | 9 |
| Wilderness/backcountry | 8 |
| Remote/desolate areas | 7 |
| Rocks | 7 |
| Landscape/geography | 6 |
| Discovery/exploration | 4 |
| History | 3 |
| Meeting other hikers | 3 |
| Contrasts in nature | 2 |
| Great place | 2 |
| Natural attractions | 2 |
| Natural environment | 2 |
| Vastness | 2 |
| | |
| **GENERAL – Park features** | |
| Titus Canyon | 12 |
| Racetrack | 11 |
| Geologic features | 9 |
| Mine sites | 8 |
| Sand dunes | 6 |
| Eureka Dunes | 4 |
| Fall Canyon | 3 |
| Aguereberry Point | 2 |
| Zabriskie Point | 2 |
| | |
| **GENERAL – Recreational opportunities** | |
| Hiking | 28 |
| Driving backcountry roads | 8 |
| Canyoneering | 3 |
| Backpacking | 2 |
| Camping | 2 |
| Mountains | 2 |
| Photography | 2 |
| Other comments | 56 |

**Table 24b**. What visitors liked most – fall (N=420 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **PERSONNEL** | |
| Comments | 2 |
| | |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| 4-wheel drive roads | 10 |
| Cleanliness | 4 |
| Minimal development | 4 |
| Accessibility | 2 |
| Cabins | 2 |
| Smooth/well-maintained road surface | 2 |
| Other comments | 5 |
| | |
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Access to remote locations/wilderness | 4 |
| | |
| **CONCESSIONS** | |
| Comment | 1 |
| | |
| **GENERAL** | |
| Solitude/quiet | 77 |
| Scenic views/beauty | 75 |
| Experiencing wilderness | 16 |
| Lack of people | 16 |
| Open space | 15 |
| Remoteness | 7 |
| Getting away from it all | 6 |
| Adventure | 4 |
| Experiencing a different environment | 4 |
| Great weather | 4 |
| Freedom | 3 |
| Climate | 2 |
| Everything | 2 |
| Other comments | 18 |
| | |
| **GENERAL – Park features** | |
| Geologic features | 17 |
| Extreme range in landscapes | 10 |
| Titus Canyon | 6 |
| Unique natural formations | 4 |
| Old mine sites | 3 |
| Racetrack | 3 |
| Eureka Dunes | 2 |

**Table 24b**. What visitors liked most – fall (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **GENERAL – Park features (continued)** | |
| Golden Canyon | 2 |
| Marble Canyon | 2 |
| Mosaic Canyon | 2 |
| Sand dunes | 2 |
| Zabriskie Point Trail | 2 |
| Other comments | 13 |
| | |
| **GENERAL – Recreational opportunities** | |
| Hiking | 28 |
| Seeing history/historical sites | 10 |
| Camping | 5 |
| Exploring | 5 |
| Star gazing/dark skies | 4 |
| Backcountry camping | 3 |
| Driving back roads | 2 |
| Hiking where there are no others | 2 |
| Other comments | 8 |

## *What visitors liked least*

**Question 29b**

What did you and your personal group like least most about your backcountry road or wilderness experience at Death Valley NP? (open-ended)

Results

- 73% of spring visitor groups (N=223) and 78% of fall visitor groups (N=212) responded to this question.
- Tables 25a and 25b show a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments can be found in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

**Table 25a**. What visitors liked least – spring (N=255 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **PERSONNEL** | |
| Comments | 5 |
| **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES** | |
| Comments | 4 |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| Road conditions (unspecified) | 23 |
| Road conditions at Racetrack | 9 |
| Lack of 4x4 vehicle to access | 6 |
| Lack of developed trails | 6 |
| Litter/trash | 6 |
| Road construction | 6 |
| Road closures | 5 |
| Inadequate signage | 4 |
| Lack of restrooms | 4 |
| Restrooms lack maintenance | 4 |
| Construction | 3 |
| Inadequate trail signage | 3 |
| Campsite | 2 |
| Lack of picnic tables | 2 |
| Lack of roadside campsites | 2 |
| Lack of tent campsites | 2 |
| Lack of water | 2 |
| Litter/trash in backcountry | 2 |
| Restrooms | 2 |
| Other comments | 17 |
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Aircraft/jet planes | 8 |
| Crowding | 6 |
| Crowding at viewpoints/trailheads | 5 |
| Noise in campgrounds | 5 |

**Table 25a**. What visitors liked least – spring (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT (continued)** | |
| No campfire policy | 4 |
| High speed of 4x4 traffic | 3 |
| Road closures | 3 |
| High volume of 4x4 traffic | 2 |
| Loud motorcycles | 2 |
| No pets on trail policy | 2 |
| Pet policy | 2 |
| Other comments | 25 |
| | |
| **CONCESSIONS** | |
| Lack of fuel at store | 4 |
| Other comments | 7 |
| | |
| **GENERAL** | |
| Nothing to dislike | 19 |
| Dust | 6 |
| Driving distances | 4 |
| Windy | 4 |
| Driving | 2 |
| Expected more wildflowers | 2 |
| Flat tire | 2 |
| Hot weather | 2 |
| Other comments | 17 |

**Table 25b**. What visitors liked least – fall (N=242 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment.)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **PERSONNEL** | |
| Comment | 1 |
| | |
| **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES** | |
| Lack of information | 2 |
| Lack of up-to-date road conditions | 2 |
| Visitor center | 2 |
| Other comments | 6 |
| | |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| Rough roads | 22 |
| Lack of signage | 7 |
| Trash | 5 |
| Lack of restrooms | 3 |
| Lack of roads | 2 |
| Lack of trails | 2 |
| Lack of wide spots for camping/parking on backcountry roads | 2 |
| Restrooms | 2 |
| Trails not well-maintained | 2 |
| Other comments | 14 |
| | |
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Road closures | 7 |
| Aircraft noise/overhead flights | 6 |
| Campfire ban | 5 |
| Footprints/tire tracks on Racetrack | 3 |
| Keane Wonder Mine closed | 3 |
| Knowledge that access may be further restricted | 2 |
| Lack of cell phone coverage | 2 |
| Lack of communication in case of emergency | 2 |
| Other comments | 10 |
| | |
| **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT** | |
| Vandalism (i.e., graffiti on rocks/petroglyphs) | 4 |
| Evidence of prohibited off-road vehicle use | 3 |
| Air pollution | 2 |
| Other comments | 1 |
| | |
| **CONCESSIONS** | |
| Lack of showers in campground | 3 |
| Expensive fuel | 2 |
| Other comments | 11 |

**Table 25b**. What visitors liked least – fall (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **GENERAL** | |
| Nothing to dislike | 27 |
| Crowds | 17 |
| Unable to access 4x4 roads (lack of vehicles) | 8 |
| Distances between locations | 5 |
| Disrespectful drivers/speeding | 4 |
| Other visitors | 3 |
| Poor weather | 3 |
| Traffic | 3 |
| Wind | 3 |
| Dust | 2 |
| Having to go home | 2 |
| Lack of time | 2 |
| Seeing other visitors | 2 |
| Unprepared visitors | 2 |
| Other comments | 19 |

## *Proposals for the future*

**Question 30**

If you were a manager planning for the future of Death Valley NP's backcountry roads and wilderness, what would you propose? (Open-ended)

Results

- 76% of spring visitor groups (N=231), and 72% of fall visitor groups (N=196), responded to this question.
- Tables 26a and 26b show a summary of visitor comments A complete copy of hand-written comments can be found in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

**Table 26a**. Proposals for the future – spring (N=344 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **PERSONNEL** | |
| More rangers on backcountry patrols | 7 |
| Need more backcountry staff at visitor center | 2 |
| Comment | 1 |
| | |
| **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES** | |
| More information on rules/preparedness/ethics | 7 |
| Information about weather conditions | 2 |
| More detailed hiking map | 2 |
| More information | 2 |
| More interpretive signs at pullouts | 2 |
| Ranger-led walks talks on plants/birds/geology | 2 |
| Other comments | 26 |
| | |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| More hiking trails | 16 |
| Better road maintenance | 11 |
| Improve Racetrack road | 10 |
| Do not expand/increase/improve backcountry roads | 8 |
| Better road grading techniques | 6 |
| Improve backcountry road signage | 6 |
| Improve backcountry roads for non-4x4s | 6 |
| Increase number of backcountry road campsites | 4 |
| Better marking/signage on trails | 3 |
| Improve restroom maintenance | 3 |
| More picnic facilities | 3 |
| More restrooms | 3 |
| Add bike lanes to paved roads | 2 |
| Better/more access to backcountry road campsites | 2 |
| Continue road maintenance | 2 |
| Drinking water on trails | 2 |

**Table 26a**. Proposals for the future – spring (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** (continued) | |
| Improve access to camping (farther from roads) | 2 |
| More bike trails | 2 |
| More roadside pullouts | 2 |
| More seclusion between backcountry sites | 2 |
| More tent sites | 2 |
| More trails | 2 |
| Other comments | 36 |
| | |
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Leave it as is | 12 |
| Allow backcountry fires | 8 |
| Keep current roads open | 7 |
| Keep it wild/natural | 7 |
| Limit activities that impact solitude/wilderness/resource | 6 |
| Maintain at current level | 6 |
| Do not over-regulate access | 5 |
| Limit road use/access | 5 |
| Prohibit off-road driving/vehicles | 5 |
| Do not advertise wilderness | 4 |
| Make backcountry/wilderness more accessible | 4 |
| Do not over-develop | 3 |
| Establish park transit/shuttle system | 3 |
| Restrict/eliminate air traffic over park | 3 |
| Do not allow backcountry campsite fires | 2 |
| Improve/increase access to mining towns | 2 |
| Keep it protected | 2 |
| More road access | 2 |
| More road closures | 2 |
| Provide cell phone service | 2 |
| Other comments | 40 |
| | |
| **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT** | |
| Monitor resource use/damage | 4 |
| Remove non-native plants/animals | 2 |
| Comment | 1 |
| | |
| **CONCESSIONS** | |
| Comments | 7 |
| | |
| **GENERAL** | |
| Other comments | 12 |

**Table 26b**. Proposals for future – fall (N=247 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **PERSONNEL** | |
| Increase ranger patrol | 5 |
| | |
| **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES** | |
| Better inform visitors about cautions and conditions | 3 |
| Add ranger programs | 2 |
| Provide more information about backcountry trips | 2 |
| Other comments | 14 |
| | |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| Add trails | 17 |
| Improve roads | 9 |
| Add restrooms | 6 |
| Add signage | 6 |
| Add roads | 5 |
| Add trail signage | 5 |
| Add signs about road conditions | 4 |
| Pave more roads | 3 |
| Add campgrounds/campsites | 2 |
| Add more access for high clearance vehicles only | 2 |
| Create more primitive campsites | 2 |
| Improve restrooms | 2 |
| Other comments | 23 |
| | |
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Keep it wild | 13 |
| Improve access | 9 |
| Allow campfires | 8 |
| Don't develop any more | 8 |
| Limit access | 7 |
| Improve access for non-4x4 cars | 6 |
| Provide cell phone service | 5 |
| Require registration and permits | 5 |
| Do not limit access | 4 |
| Do not close any more areas | 3 |
| Maintain current access | 3 |
| Restrict/eliminate overflights | 3 |
| Allow camping one mile from road | 2 |
| Allow dogs on some trails | 2 |
| Enforce Leave-No-Trace ethics (e.g., pack out toilet paper) | 2 |

**Table 26b**. Proposals for future – fall (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** (continued) | |
| Enforce park permit fees | 2 |
| Install shuttle buses | 2 |
| Reduce wilderness area | 2 |
| Other comments | 13 |
| | |
| **CONCESSIONS** | |
| Install showers at campground | 3 |
| Other comments | 7 |
| | |
| **GENERAL** | |
| Continue as is | 24 |
| Other comments | 3 |

## *Additional comments*

**Question 31**

Is there anything else you and your personal group would like to tell us about your visit to Death Valley NP? (open-ended)

Results

- 62% of spring visitor groups (N=188) and 64% of fall visitor groups (N=173) responded to this question.
- Tables 27a and 27b show a summary of visitor comments. A complete copy of hand-written comments can be found in the Visitor Comments Appendix.

**Table 27a**. Additional comments – spring (N=256 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **PERSONNEL** | |
| Helpful park staff | 5 |
| Ranger at Stovepipe Wells not friendly | 4 |
| Enjoyed rangers | 3 |
| Friendly park staff | 3 |
| Rangers at Stovepipe Wells gave misinformation | 3 |
| Rangers are low-key | 2 |
| Rangers at Stovepipe Wells not knowledgeable | 2 |
| Rangers at visitor center not friendly | 2 |
| Other comments | 6 |
| **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES** | |
| Comments | 11 |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| Campgrounds lacked showers | 4 |
| Campgrounds lacked tables | 3 |
| Campgrounds too crowded | 3 |
| Cell phone service needed | 2 |
| Furnace Creek restrooms need maintenance | 2 |
| Need additional backcountry campsites | 2 |
| Well-maintained | 2 |
| Other comments | 48 |

**Table 27a**. Additional comments – spring (continued)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Well-managed park | 4 |
| Advertise the park | 2 |
| Allow campfires in backcountry | 2 |
| Keep it as it is | 2 |
| Keep it wild | 2 |
| Protect the park | 2 |
| Other comments | 35 |
| | |
| **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT** | |
| Enjoyed seeing wildlife | 2 |
| Other comments | 2 |
| | |
| **GENERAL COMMENTS** | |
| Enjoyed visit | 35 |
| Love the park | 16 |
| Will return | 10 |
| Beautiful place/park | 6 |
| Keep up the good work | 3 |
| Thank you | 3 |
| Needed more time | 2 |
| Other comments | 21 |

**Table 27b**. Additional comments – fall (N=253 comments; some visitor groups made more than one comment)

| Comment | Number of times mentioned |
|---|---|
| **PERSONNEL** | |
| Park rangers were excellent | 4 |
| Park rangers were helpful | 4 |
| Park staff had limited knowledge | 2 |
| Other comments | 6 |
| **INTERPRETIVE SERVICES** | |
| Good literature/information in visitor centers | 2 |
| Other comments | 12 |
| **FACILITIES/MAINTENANCE** | |
| Clean park | 2 |
| Need more restrooms | 2 |
| Need shade structures in campground | 2 |
| Other comments | 8 |
| **POLICIES/MANAGEMENT** | |
| Keep it wild/undeveloped | 8 |
| Allow dogs in more areas of park | 3 |
| Don't close 4x4 roads | 3 |
| Prevent vandalism/theft | 3 |
| Add cell phone towers | 2 |
| Add signs | 2 |
| Don't close any more areas | 2 |
| Enforce entry fee/camping fees | 2 |
| Lower speed limit | 2 |
| Need a permitting system for backcountry use | 2 |
| Open Keane Wonder Mine area | 2 |
| Permitting system would be inconvenient | 2 |
| Re-open closed vehicle trails | 2 |
| Other comments | 18 |
| **GENERAL COMMENTS** | |
| Love park | 36 |
| Enjoyed visit | 31 |
| Will return | 21 |
| Thank you | 9 |
| Keep up the good work | 5 |
| Very unique experience | 5 |
| Unruly visitors disrupted park experience | 4 |
| Enjoyed opportunities for solitude | 3 |
| Beautiful | 2 |
| Didn't like Scotty's Castle | 2 |
| Other comments | 19 |

# Appendix 1: The Questionnaire

Identical questionnaires were used for the spring and fall surveys.

# Appendix 2: Additional Analysis

The Visitor Services Project (VSP) offers the opportunity to learn more from VSP visitor study data through additional analysis. Two-way and three-way cross tabulations can be made with any questions.

Below are some examples of the types of cross tabulations that can be requested. To make a request, please use the contact information below, and include your name, address and phone number in the request.

1. What proportion of family groups with children attend interpretive programs?

2. Is there a correlation between visitors' ages and their preferred sources of information about the park?

3. Are highly satisfied visitors more likely to return for a future visit?

4. How many international visitors participate in hiking?

5. What ages of visitors would use the park website as a source of information on a future visit?

6. Is there a correlation between visitor groups' rating of the overall quality of their park experience, and their ratings of individual services and facilities?

7. Do larger visitor groups (e.g., four or more) participate in different activities than smaller groups?

8. Do frequent visitors rate the overall quality of their park experiences differently than less frequent visitors?

For more information please contact:

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# Appendix 3: Decision Rules for Checking Non-response Bias

Non-response bias is one of the major threats to the quality of a survey project. It affects the ability to generalize from a sample to general population (Salant and Dillman 1994; Dillman, 2007; Stoop 2004; Filion 1976; Dey 1997). Since non-response bias is usually caused by participants failing to return their questionnaires, a higher response rate is more desirable. However, higher response rates do not guarantee low non-response bias. Researchers have suggested different methods to detect non-response bias. The most common variables used to detect non-response bias are demographic variables. Some researchers such as Van Kenhove (2002), Groves (2000) also suggest that saliency of topic has an effect on response rate. In this visitor study, visitor satisfaction (overall quality rating) could be considered as one of the salient factors as we aim to collect opinions from both unsatisfied and satisfied visitors. There are also several methods for checking non-response bias suggested in the literature. We decided to follow the method suggested by Groves (2006), De Rada (2005), and Rogelberg and Luong (1998) to compare the demographic characteristics as well as satisfaction scores of respondents in three different mailing waves. This seems to be the most suitable method because the visitor population is generally unknown.

Respondents were categorized based on the date their questionnaire was received. The first wave is defined as surveys received before the 1st replacement was mailed, the second wave is between 1st and 2nd replacement, and the third wave contains surveys received after the 2nd replacement. Analysis of variance was used to detect differences in age, distance of travel to the park, and overall quality rating scores among different mailing waves.

A Chi-square test was used to detect the difference in education levels at different mailing waves. The hypothesis was that group types are equally represented. If the p-value is greater than 0.05, the difference in group type is judged to be insignificant.

Therefore, the hypotheses for checking non-response bias are:

1. Respondents of different mailing waves had the same average age.
2. On average, respondents of different mailing waves traveled the same distance to the park.
3. Respondents of different mailing waves had the same average satisfaction scores.
4. Respondents of different education levels are equally represented in different mailing waves.

Tables 3 and 4 show no significant difference in age, travel distance, overall quality rating, and level of education. The non-response bias is thus judged to be insignificant.

## *References*

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Dey, E.L. (1997). Working with Low Survey Response Rates: The Efficacy of Weighting Adjustment. *Research in Higher Education*, 38(2): 215-227.

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Rogelberg, S. G. and Luong, A. (1998). Nonresponse to Mailed Surveys: A Review and Guide. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, Vol 7 (2): 60-65.

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Stoop, I. A. L. (2004). Surveying Non-respondents. *Field Methods*, 16 (1): 23.

Van Kenhove, P., Wijnen, K., and De Wulf K. (2002). The Influence of Topic Involvement on Mail-Survey Response Behavior. *Psychology and Marketing*, Vol 19 (3): 293-301.

# Appendix 4: Visitor Services Project Publications

VSP reports are available on the Park Studies Unit website at www.psu.uidaho.edu.vsp.reports.htm.

**1982**

1. Mapping interpretive services: A pilot study at Grand Teton National Park.

**1983**

2. Mapping interpretive services: Identifying barriers to adoption and diffusion of the method.
3. Mapping interpretive services: A follow-up study at Yellowstone National Park and Mt Rushmore National Memorial.
4. Mapping visitor populations: A pilot study at Yellowstone National Park.

**1985**

5. North Cascades National Park Service Complex
6. Crater Lake National Park

**1986**

7. Gettysburg National Military Park
8. Independence National Historical Park
9. Valley Forge National Historical Park

**1987**

10. Colonial National Historical Park (summer & fall)
11. Grand Teton National Park
12. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
13. Mesa Verde National Park
14. Shenandoah National Park (summer & fall)
15. Yellowstone National Park
16. Independence National Historical Park: Four Seasons Study

**1988**

17. Glen Canyon National Recreational Area
18. Denali National Park and Preserve
19. Bryce Canyon National Park
20. Craters of the Moon National Monument

**1989**

21. Everglades National Park (winter)
22. Statue of Liberty National Monument
23. The White House Tours, President's Park
24. Lincoln Home National Historic Site
25. Yellowstone National Park
26. Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area
27. Muir Woods National Monument

**1990**

28. Canyonlands National Park (spring)
29. White Sands National Monument
30. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
31. Kenai Fjords National Park
32. Gateway National Recreation Area
33. Petersburg National Battlefield
34. Death Valley National Monument
35. Glacier National Park
36. Scott's Bluff National Monument
37. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

**1991**

38. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park (spring)
39. Joshua Tree National Monument (spring)
40. The White House Tours, President's Park (spring)
41. Natchez Trace Parkway (spring)
42. Stehekin-North Cascades NP/Lake Chelan NRA
43. City of Rocks National Reserve
44. The White House Tours, President's Park (fall)

**1992**

45. Big Bend National Park (spring)
46. Frederick Douglass National Historic Site (spring)
47. Glen Echo Park (spring)
48. Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
49. Jefferson National Expansion Memorial
50. Zion National Park
51. New River Gorge National River
52. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
53. Arlington House-The Robert E. Lee Memorial

**1993**

54. Belle Haven Park/Dyke Marsh Wildlife Park (spring)
55. Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (spring)
56. Whitman Mission National Historic Site
57. Sitka National Historical Park
58. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
59. Redwood National Park
60. Channel Islands National Park

**Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**

**1993** (continued)
61. Pecos National Historical Park
62. Canyon de Chelly National Monument
63. Bryce Canyon National Park (fall)

**1994**
64. Death Valley National Monument Backcountry (winter)
65. San Antonio Missions National Historical Park (spring)
66. Anchorage Alaska Public Lands Information Center
67. Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts
68. Nez Perce National Historical Park
69. Edison National Historic Site
70. San Juan Island National Historical Park
71. Canaveral National Seashore
72. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (fall)
73. Gettysburg National Military Park (fall)

**1995**
74. Grand Teton National Park (winter)
75. Yellowstone National Park (winter)
76. Bandelier National Monument
77. Wrangell-St. Elias National Park & Preserve
78. Adams National Historic Site
79. Devils Tower National Monument
80. Manassas National Battlefield Park
81. Booker T. Washington National Monument
82. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park
83. Dry Tortugas National Park

**1996**
84. Everglades National Park (spring)
85. Chiricahua National Monument (spring)
86. Fort Bowie National Historic Site (spring)
87. Great Falls Park, Virginia (spring)
88. Great Smoky Mountains National Park
89. Chamizal National Memorial
90. Death Valley National Park (fall)
91. Prince William Forest Park (fall)
92. Great Smoky Mountains National Park (fall)

**1997**
93. Virgin Islands National Park (winter)
94. Mojave National Preserve (spring)
95. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Historic Site (spring)
96. Lincoln Boyhood National Memorial
97. Grand Teton National Park
98. Bryce Canyon National Park
99. Voyageurs National Park
100. Lowell National Historical Park

**1998**
101. Jean Lafitte National Historical Park & Park (spring)
102. Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (spring)
103. Cumberland Island National Seashore (spring)
104. Iwo Jima/Netherlands Carillon Memorials
105. National Monuments & Memorials, Washington, D.C.
106. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park, AK
107. Whiskeytown National Recreation Area
108. Acadia National Park

**1999**
109. Big Cypress National Preserve (winter)
110. San Juan National Historic Site, Puerto Rico (winter)
111. St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
112. Rock Creek Park
113. New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park
114. Glacier Bay National Park & Preserve
115. Kenai Fjords National Park
116. Lassen Volcanic National Park
117. Cumberland Gap National Historical Park (fall)

**2000**
118. Haleakala National Park (spring)
119. White House Tour and White House Visitor Center (spring)
120. USS Arizona Memorial
121. Olympic National Park
122. Eisenhower National Historic Site
123. Badlands National Park
124. Mount Rainier National Park

**2001**
125. Biscayne National Park (spring)
126. Colonial National Historical Park (Jamestown)
127. Shenandoah National Park
128. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
129. Crater Lake National Park
130. Valley Forge National Historical Park

**Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**

**2002**

131. Everglades National Park (spring)
132. Dry Tortugas National Park (spring)
133. Pinnacles National Monument (spring)
134. Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve
135. Pipestone National Monument
136. Outer Banks Group (Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Ft. Raleigh National Historic Site, and Wright Brothers National Memorial)
137. Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and Sequoia National Forest
138. Catoctin Mountain Park
139. Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
140. Stones River National Battlefield (fall)

**2003**

141. Gateway National Recreation Area: Floyd Bennett Field (spring)
142. Cowpens National Battlefield (spring)
143. Grand Canyon National Park – North Rim
144. Grand Canyon National Park – South Rim
145. C&O Canal National Historical Park
146. Capulin Volcano National Monument
147. Oregon Caves National Monument
148. Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site
149. Fort Stanwix National Monument
150. Arches National Park
151. Mojave National Preserve (fall)

**2004**

152. Joshua Tree National Park (spring)
153. New River Gorge National River
154. George Washington Birthplace National Monument
155. Craters of the Moon National Monument & Preserve
156. Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park
157. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
158. Keweenaw National Historical Park
159. Effigy Mounds National Monument
160. Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site
161. Manzanar National Historic Site
162. John Day Fossil Beds National Monument

**2005**

163. Congaree National Park (spring)
164. San Francisco Maritime National Historical Park (spring)
165. Lincoln Home National Historic Site
166. Chickasaw National Recreation Area
167. Timpanogos Cave National Monument
168. Yosemite National Park
169. Fort Sumter National Monument
170. Harpers Ferry National Historical Park
171. Cuyahoga Valley National Park
172. Johnstown Flood National Memorial
173. Nicodemus National Historic Site

**2006**

174. Kings Mountain National Military Park (spring)
175. John Fitzgerald Kennedy National Historic Site
176. Devils Postpile National Monument
177. Mammoth Cave National Park
178. Yellowstone National Park
179. Monocacy National Battlefield
180. Denali National Park & Preserve
181. Golden Spike National Historic Site
182. Katmai National Park and Preserve
183. Zion National Park (spring and fall)

**2007**

184.1. Big Cypress National Preserve (spring)
184.2. Big Cypress National Preserve (ORV Permit Holder/Camp Owner)
185. Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (spring)
186. Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (spring and summer)
187. Lava Beds National Monument
188. John Muir National Historic Site
189. Fort Union Trading Post NHS
190. Fort Donelson National Battlefield
191. Agate Fossil Beds National Monument
192. Mount Rushmore National Memorial
193. Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve
194. Rainbow Bridge National Monument
195. Independence National Historical Park
196. Minute Man National Historical Park

**Visitor Services Project Publications (continued)**

**2008**

197. Blue Ridge Parkway (fall and summer)
198. Yosemite National Park (winter)
199. Everglades National Park (winter and spring)
200. Horseshoe Bend National Military Park (spring)
201. Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site (spring)
202. Fire Island National Seashore resident (spring)
203. Fire Island National Seashore visitor
204. Capitol Reef National Park
205.1 Great Smoky Mountains National Park (summer)
205.2 Great Smoky Mountains National Park (fall)
206. Grand Teton National Park
207. Herbert Hoover National Historic Site
208. City of Rocks National Reserve

**2009**

209. Fort Larned National Historic Site
210. Homestead National Monument of America
211. Minuteman Missile National Historic Site

**2009 (continued)**

212. Perry's Victory & International Peace Memorial
213. Women's Rights National Historical Park
214. Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park Unit -Seattle
215. Yosemite National Park
216. Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
217. James A. Garfield National Historic Site
218. Boston National Historical Park
219. Bryce Canyon National Park
220. Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
221. Acadia National Park
222. Laurance S. Rockefeller Preserve
223. Martin Van Buren National Historic Site

**2010**

224.1. Death Valley National Park (fall 2009)
224.2. Death Valley National Park (spring 2010)

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit, website: **www.psu.uidaho.edu** or phone (208) 885-7863.

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