

## Project Summary

### Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit

**Title:** Visitor Use Patterns Along the Highway 7 Corridor to Rocky Mountain National Park (Lily Lake, Longs Peak, Wild Basin)

**Discipline:** social science

**Type of Project:** Research

**Funding Agency:** National Park Service

**Other Partners/Cooperators:** University of Wyoming

**Effective Dates:** 4/15/2003-6/31/2007

**Funding Amount:** \$68,019

**Investigators and Agency Representative:**

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**Project Abstract:** Rocky Mountain NP and the University of Wyoming will cooperate to conduct a social science project to determine the recreational use of hikers along the Highway 7 Corridor and the Longs Peak trail. There were two task agreements in FY 03 and FY06 to complete the following tasks: (1) to obtain, through an intercept survey, and to analyze the opinions of visitors to Lily Lake, the Longs Peak Ranger Station, and Wild Basin, (2) to report findings relevant to the foregoing objectives, with an emphasis on implications for site-management planning for the Highway 7 corridor and Longs Peak trail of Rocky Mountain National Park, (3) To estimate statistically, using observational data and intercept interviews, key parameters reflecting usage and congestion in the area of the Longs Peak trail and trailhead, such as: How many vehicles and people visit the trailhead; How many people hike from the trailhead; The relative frequencies of various intended activities, routes and destinations; How many hikers make it to specific destinations along the trail (Chasm Lake, the Keyhole formation, the summit, etc.); (4) to evaluate statistical prediction models for the number of hikers and for the number of successful summiters (as measured in the observational and interview data), predicted from routinely collected data (traffic counter data, summit register figures, trail head register, etc.), and (5) to provide qualitative interpretation of the hiking experience of Longs Peak hikers, based on intercept interviews with outbound and returning hikers.

**Outcomes with Completion Dates:**

Products for this specific Task Agreement will include a report of findings relevant to the stated objectives, with an emphasis on implications for site-management planning for the Highway 7 corridor and Longs Peak trail of Rocky Mountain National Park. Researchers will also provide a presentation to park staff on the management significance of their findings.

**Keywords:** Rocky Mountain NP, visitor surveys, Longs Peak, Highway 7 corridor, hiking experience, University of Wyoming