Introduction

To assist the National Park Service in complying with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), a visitor survey was conducted in 328 units of the National Park System in FY09. The survey was developed to measure each park unit’s performance related to NPS GPRA Goals IIa1 (visitor satisfaction) and IIb1 (visitor understanding and appreciation).

The results of the Visitor Survey Card (VSC) survey are summarized in this data report. A description of the research methods and limitations is on the back page.

Below (left) is a graph summarizing visitor opinions of the "overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities" in the system. This graph compares FY09 data (shown in black) with an four-year baseline data (FY05-08) shown in gray. The satisfaction measure below this graph is a combined percentage of "good" and "very good" responses. This is the primary performance measure for Goal IIa1. (The satisfaction measure may not equal the sum of "very good" and "good" percentages due to rounding.)

Below (right) is the FY09 GRPA reporting measure for Goal IIa1. The percentage included in the box should be used for reporting GRPA Goal IIa1 performance. The systemwide response rate was 30%.

Understanding the Results

Inside this report are graphs that present the combined survey results for the National Park System. The report contains three categories of data—park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities. Within these categories are graphs for each indicator evaluated by park visitors. For example, the park facilities category includes indicators such as visitor center, exhibits, restrooms, and so forth. In addition, responses for indicators within each category are averaged into a combined graph for the category (e.g., combined park facilities).

Each graph includes the following information:

- the number of parks and visitor responses for the indicator;
- FY09 data (black), and baseline data (gray);
- the percentage of responses which were "very good," "good," "average," "poor," and "very poor;"
- a satisfaction measure that combines the percentage of total responses which were "very good" or "good;" and
- an average evaluation score (mean score) based on the following values: very poor = 1, poor = 2, average = 3, good = 4, very good = 5.

The higher the average evaluation score, the more positive the visitor response.

- graph percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding

Overall quality of facilities, services & recreational opportunities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>FY09: 314 parks; 33304 respondents</th>
<th>Baseline (FY05-08)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very good</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very poor</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

FY09: Satisfaction measure: 97%
Average evaluation score: 4.7

FY09 GPRA Reporting Measure for Goal IIa1

Percentage of park visitors satisfied overall with appropriate facilities, services, and recreational opportunities:

97%

Report prepared by the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit for the National Park Service, Department of the Interior

Report #: NAPA09
### Visitor Center

**FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 96%

Average evaluation score: 4.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY09</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Exhibits

**FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 93%

Average evaluation score: 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY09</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Restrooms

**FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 87%

Average evaluation score: 4.4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY09</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Walkways, trails, and roads

**FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 94%

Average evaluation score: 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY09</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Campgrounds and/or picnic areas

**FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 89%

Average evaluation score: 4.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY09</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Combined park facilities

**FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 92%

Average evaluation score: 4.6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Very poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FY09</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This graph is a combined percentage of “good” and “very good” overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational experiences summarized in this data report. A description of the research methods and findings is included.

### Assistance from park employees

- **FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 97%
- **Average evaluation score:** 4.8

### Park map or brochure

- **FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 95%
- **Average evaluation score:** 4.7

### Ranger programs

- **FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 95%
- **Average evaluation score:** 4.7

### Commercial services in the park

- **FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 77%
- **Average evaluation score:** 4.1

### Value for entrance fee paid

- **FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 94%
- **Average evaluation score:** 4.7

### Combined visitor services

- **FY09:** Satisfaction measure: 95%
- **Average evaluation score:** 4.7
Survey cards were distributed to a random sample of visitors in 328 units in the system during the periods from February 1- August 31, 2009. At each park, visitors were sampled at selected locations representative of the general visitor population.

Returned cards were electronically scanned and the data analyzed. Responses from individual parks in the system were combined into one dataset. Data from parks with less than 30 returned cards, or from park with discrepancies in the data collection methods, were omitted from this report. frequency distributions were calculated for each indicator and category.

Results reported for the survey questions: "Value for entrance fee paid" and "Commercial services in the park" consist of only parks that charge an entrance fee or offer commercial services. For this reason the number of parks and number of respondents will be lower in these charts than in others in this report.

All percentage calculations were rounded to the nearest percent. Therefore, individual percentages in each graph may not add to 100 percent.

The response rate was calculated by dividing the total number of returned survey cards by the total number of survey cards distributed. The sample size (“N”) varies from figure to figure, depending on the number of responses.

For most indicators, the survey data are expected to be accurate within ±6% with 95% confidence. This means that if different samples had been drawn, the results would have been similar (±6%) 95 out of 100 times.

The results do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year, to park visitors who did not visit the survey locations, or to park units in the system that did not participate in the survey.

Low survey response rates increase the probability of non-response bias. Non-response bias occurs when those who choose to participate in a survey differ substantially and systematically from those who choose not to participate. If these differences are related to GPRA measures, the results may be unreliable.

Please note: Baseline data for this report has been normalized to begin in FY05 due to the addition of the "Value for entrance fee paid" question and the inclusion of "Sightseeing" in the Outdoor Recreation survey question in 2005.

Research Methods
The table below shows the percentages of visitors' responses to the National Park System Visitor Satisfaction Survey (VSS) from FY05 to FY09. The data is categorized into three main areas: park facilities, visitor services, and recreation areas. The ratings range from "good," "average," "poor," and "very poor;" with "very good" typically being the highest rating.

### National Park System Visitor Satisfaction Survey (VSS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>FY05-08 Combined</th>
<th>FY09: 314 Parks</th>
<th>FY09: 21583 Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rating:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Poor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for Money</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job of Charge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### FY05-08 Average:

- **Good:** 0%
- **Average:** 0%
- **Poor:** 0%
- **Very Poor:** 0%
- **Value for Money:** 0%
- **Job of Charge:** 0%
- **Satisfaction:** 0%

### FY09:

- **Good:** 4%
- **Average:** 4%
- **Poor:** 4%
- **Very Poor:** 4%
- **Value for Money:** 4%
- **Job of Charge:** 4%
- **Satisfaction:** 4%

### FY09: 314 Parks:

- **Good:** 18%
- **Average:** 24%
- **Poor:** 22%
- **Very Poor:** 4%
- **Value for Money:** 23%
- **Job of Charge:** 23%
- **Satisfaction:** 23%

### FY09: 21583 Respondents:

- **Good:** 100%
- **Average:** 100%
- **Poor:** 100%
- **Very Poor:** 100%
- **Value for Money:** 100%
- **Job of Charge:** 100%
- **Satisfaction:** 100%

The higher the average evaluation score, the more visitors rate their satisfaction and understanding of the park areas. The satisfaction measure below the graph is a combined percentage of "good" and "very good."