National Park System Advisory Board Questionnaire on "Overcrowding" in the Parks

Questionnaires were sent to all parks. Ninety-four percent of the parks responded.

Forty-two percent of the respondents indicated that they have no overcrowding problem. Twenty-two percent see crowds as a problem only in summer months. Twenty-four percent are crowded occasionally during the summer, especially on weekends and at special events.

The majority indicated that they would welcome additional visitation at certain times of the year.

The following methods are used most frequently to determine whether conditions of overcrowding have occurred (listed in order of most frequently mentioned):

- personal observation/judgement
- conditions of parking lot(s)
- visitor/vehicle counts
- length of waiting lines at various facilities
- scientific studies of human impacts on resources; carrying capacity studies
- impacts on sewer systems; human waste accumulations
- visitor comments
- numbers of permits issued
- attendance at programs
- campground use levels
- survey of visitor experiences
- use reports from commercial operators/concessioners

With few exceptions, the problem occurs only in the developed areas of the parks.

Parks use the following techniques to control the flow of visitors where overcrowding has occurred:

- Traffic control: staff supervision of traffic in and near parking lots to enforce parking limitations.
- Limits are set on numbers of visitors permitted to enter specific areas/structures.
- Shuttle bus systems are used to limit access to some sites.
- Visitors are provided with information on alternative sites/programs.
- Grass is left long in certain areas to discourage use.
- Site bulletins are posted.
- School (and other) groups must make reservations.
- New interpretive programs are developed in less-used areas, if available.
- Additional staff are assigned in crowded areas, if available.
- Entry is controlled in some parks.
Some parking lots and campsites have been redesigned.
Illegally parked vehicles are ticketed.

Several parks indicated that they would never have overcrowding problems if they had adequate staff and/or if certain facilities (i.e., campgrounds, parking lots, restrooms, auditoriums) were re-designed. One park, for example, has a theatre that can accommodate more people than the parking facilities can handle. Most parks would rather redesign or add facilities than turn visitors away.

Some parks feel that increases in entrance and user fees may affect attendance.

Some Superintendents indicated that they "...believe that effective marketing of under-visited parks is in the interest of the public and our resources."

The 306 Survey Respondents are Listed Below According to the General Characteristics of their Visitation Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>NO. OF PARKS</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Crowding Problem</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Crowding Problem</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional Summer Crowding</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Weekends/Special Events</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Holidays Only</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring and/or Fall Season Crowding</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter Crowding</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year Round Crowding</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Summer Crowding in National Park System Areas

- Acadia NP
- Antietam NB
- Assateague NS
- Arlington House
- Bandelier NM
- Big South Fork NP
- Bryce Canyon NP
- Cabrillo NM
- Canyon de Chelly NM
- Cape Cod NS
- Cape Hatteras NS
- Custer Battlefield NP
- Denali NP
- Eleanor Roosevelt NHS
- Fort McHenry NM
- Frederick Douglas Home NHS
- Fire Island NS
- Fort Clatsop NM
- Fredericksburg/Spots NMP
- Home of FDR NHS
- Ice Age NSR
- Indiana Dunes NL
- J. D. Rockefeller Mem. Pkw.
- Jewel Cave NM
- Katmai NP & Preserve
- Lake Meredith NRA
- Lincoln Home NHS
- Lower St. Croix NSR
- Lyndon B. Johnson Mem. Grove
- Mount Ranier NP
- Mount Rushmore NM
- Muir Woods NM
- NCP—East
- National Mall
- Oregon Caves NM
- President's Park
- Rock Creek Parkway
- Rocky Mountain NP
<table>
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<tr>
<th>National Park System Areas</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>George Washington Mem Parkway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gettysburg NMP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Glacier Bay NP and Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glacier NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Gate NRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand Canyon NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Teton NP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Falls Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Sand Dunes NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Great Smoky Mountains NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gulf Islands NS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haleakala NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Harpers Ferry NHP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Croix NSR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salem Maritime NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sequoia/Kings Canyon NPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shenandoah NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>USS Arizona Memorial</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vanderbilt NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whiskeytown-Shasta NRA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wind Cave NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wolf Trap Farm Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wright Brothers NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yellowstone NP</td>
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<td>Yosemite NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aniakchak NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abraham Lincoln Birthplace NHS</td>
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<td>Adams NHS</td>
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<td>Agate Fossil Beds NM</td>
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<td>Allegheny Portage RNHS</td>
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<td>Alibates Flint Quarries NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrew Johnson NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apostle Islands NL</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bering Land Bridge N Preserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Bend NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Cypress N Preserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Booker T. Washington NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Boston-African American NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Big Hole NB</td>
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<td>Big Thicket NP</td>
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<td>Biscayne NP</td>
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<td>Black Canyon of the Gunnison NM</td>
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<td>Cape Krusenstern NM</td>
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<td>Canaveral NS</td>
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<td>Casa Grande NM</td>
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<td>Chicago Portage NHS</td>
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<td>Colorado NM</td>
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<td>Capulin Mountain NM</td>
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<td>Christiansted NHS</td>
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<td>Clara Barton NHS</td>
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<td>Coronado NM</td>
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<td>Cowpens NB</td>
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<td>Crater Lake NP</td>
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<td>Craters of the Moon NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuyahoga Valley NRA</td>
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<tr>
<td>DeSoto NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edgar Allen Poe NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Day Fossil Beds NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>John F. Kennedy NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kobuk Valley NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kalaupapa NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kanai Fjords NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Klondike Gold Rush NHP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knife River Indian Village NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Chelan NRA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lake Clark NP &amp; Preserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lowell NHP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lava Beds NM</td>
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<td>Lincoln Boyhood NM</td>
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<td>Maggie L. Walker NHS</td>
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<td>Martin Van Buren NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mound City Group NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nez Perce NHS</td>
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<td>Ninety Six NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Cascades NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Noatak N Preserve</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ocmulgee NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Post Office Tower</td>
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<td>Oregon NHT</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pu<code>uhonau O</code> Honaunau NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piscataway Park</td>
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<td>Obed Wild &amp; Scenic River</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pipe Springs NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Palo Alto Battlefield NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pecos NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petersburg NB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Petrified Forest NP</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pipestone NM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prince William Forest Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Puukohola Heiau NHS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Richmond NBP</td>
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E bey's Landing NH Reserve
Edison NHS
Eisenhower NHS
El Morro NM
Eugene O'Neill NHS
Fort Scott NHS
Frederick Law Olmsted NHS
Fort Bowie NHS
Father Marquette NM
Fort Davis NHS
Fort Donelson NB
Fort Jefferson NM
Fort Lamed NHS
Fort Point NHS
Fort Raleigh NHS
Fort Stanwix NM
Fort Union Trading Post NHS
Fossil Butte NM
George Rogers Clark NHS
Golden Spike NHS
Grand Portage NM
Grant-Kohrs Ranch NHS
Guilford Courthouse NMP
Hamilton Grange NM
Herbert Hoover NHS
Homestead NM
Independence NHP

Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River
Roger Williams NM
Russell Cave NM
Sagamore Hills NHS
St. Gaudens NHS
Salinas NM
San Juan NHS
San Juan Island NHP
Santa Monica Mountains NRA
Saratoga NHP
Saugus Iron Works NHS
Stones River NB
Theodore Roosevelt NP
Theodore Roosevelt BP NHS
Tonto NM
Touro Synagogue NHS
Tumacacori NM
Tuskegee Institute NHS
Tuzigoot NM
Valley Forge NHP
Voyageurs NP
Walnut Canyon NM
White Sands NM
Whitman Missions NHS
William Howard Taft NHS
Women's Rights NHS
Wrangell-St. Elias NP/Preserve
Wupatki/Sunset Crater NM
Yukon Charlie Rivers National Preserve

NP System Areas Occasionally Crowded in the Summer

Capitol Reef NM
Carl Sandburg NHS
Castillo de San Marcos NM
Cedar Breaks NM
Channel Islands NP
Devils Tower NM
Fort Vancouver NHS
General Grant NM
Hubbell Trading Post NHS
Isle Royale NP
Jean Lafitte NHP & Preserve
Mesa Verde NP
Minute Man NHP
Navajo NM
New River Gorge NR
Ozark NSR
Petersburg NB
Pictured Rocks NL
Redwood NP
Sitka NHP
Upper Delaware Scenic River

NP System Areas Crowded on Summer Weekends

American Memorial Park
Andersonville NHS
Appomattox NHP

and/or During Special Events

Everglades NP
Florissant Fossil Beds NM
Fort Laramie NHS
Arches NP
Aztec Ruins NM
Badlands NP
Benjamin Franklin NM
Bents Old Fort NHS
Bighorn Canyon NRA
Blue Ridge Parkway
Buck Island Reef NM
Buffalo National River
Canyonlands NP
Colonial NHP
Cape Lookout NS
Carlsbad Caverns NP
Chamizal NM
Chattahoochee River NRA
Coulee Dam NRA
Cumberland Gap NHP
Cumberland Island NS
Currecanti NRA
Delaware Water Gap NRA
Dinosaur NM

Fort Pulaski NM
Gila Cliff Dwellings NM
Gateway NRA
Glen Canyon NRA
Hampton NHS
Harry S. Truman NHS
Hopewell Furnace NHS
International Peace Garden
John Muir NHS
Lake Mead NRA
Longfellow NHS
Lyndon B. Johnson NHP
Mammoth Cave NP
Montezuma's Castle NM
Natural Bridges NP
Olympic NP
Pea Ridge NMP
Perry's Victory/Int'l Peace Mem
Scott's Bluff NM
Shiloh NMP
Sleeping Bear Dunes
Timpanogos Cave NM

**National Park System Areas Crowded on Some Holidays Only**

Amistad NRA
Arkansas Post NM
Fort Sumter NM
Fort Smith NHS
Hot Springs NP
Lehman Caves NM
Martin Luther King NM
Moores Creek NB
Padre Island NS
Saguaro NM
Zion NP

**National Park System Areas Crowded in the Spring and/or Fall Season**

Congaree Swamp NM
Catoctin Mountain Park
Effigy Mounds NM
Fort Frederica NM
Fort Vancouver NHS
Fort Caroline National Memorial
Fort Necessity NB
Friendship Hill NHS
G. Washington Birthplace NM
George Washington Carver NM
Guadalupe Mountains NP
Joshua Tree NM
Kennesaw Mountain NBP
Kings Mountain NMP
Manassas NBP
San Antonio Missions NHP
Vicksburg National Military Park

**National Park System Areas Crowded in the Winter**

Death Valley NM
Lassen Volcanic NP
Morristown NHP
Organ Pipe Cactus NM
Point Reyes NS
Virgin Islands NP

The George Wright FORUM
National Park System Areas Crowded Year-Round

Chickamauga & Chattanooga NMP  Hawaii Volcanoes NP
Natchez Trace Parkway

National Park System Areas that did not Respond to Survey

- Boston NHP
- Castle Clinton NM
- Chaco Culture NHP
- C & O Canal NHP
- Devils Postpile NM
- Federal Hall National Memorial
- Ford’s Theater NHS
- Fort Matanzas NM
- Gloria Dei Church NHS
- Hohokam Pima NM
- Home of FDR NHS
- Hovenweep NM
- James A. Garfield NHS
- Missouri Nat’l Recreational Riv.
- Pinelands National Reserve
- Rainbow Bridge NM
- Sewall-Belmont House NHS
- Thomas Stone NHS
- Tupelo NB
- War in the Pacific NHP
- White House

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New Options for Park Protection

**Robert H. Gartner and Theodore W. Sudia**

...it would be useful if each of the federal land-management agencies had authority, staff, and funding to provide technical assistance...to local, regional, and state governments to strengthen land-use and resource management planning for areas near and affecting the federal units.

After 50 years of effectively being hidden, it is time to bring P.L. 770 ½ out of mothballs and examine how this 1936 piece of legislation can be employed effectively to help protect the national parks.

P.L. 770 ½, passed on June 23, 1936 authorizes a study of the park, parkways, and recreational area programs in the United States. It grants the National Park Service authority to aid States and local government agencies in planning public park areas.

The original bill (H.R. 10104) easily passed the House in January 1936, supported by the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture, but was essentially gutted in the Senate. Among the provisions deleted were: 1) the acceptance by the Secretary (Interior and Agriculture) of