



Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Division of State Parks
800-334-6946

1999 Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park Visitor Survey

Project Completion Report

Submitted to

**Missouri Department of Natural Resources
Division of State Parks**

Prepared by

**Dawn K. Fredrickson
C. Randal Vessell Ph.D.**

**Department of Parks, Recreation, & Tourism
School of Natural Resources
University of Missouri-Columbia**

January 2000

Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to describe visitors' socio-demographic characteristics, patterns of use, and satisfaction with park facilities, programs and services at Babler Memorial State Park (BMSP).

An on-site exit survey of adult visitors to BMSP was conducted July, August, and September 1999. Three hundred ninety-four (394) surveys were collected, with an overall response rate of 68%. Results of the survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 5%. The following information summarizes the results of the study.

Socio-demographic Characteristics

- BMSP visitors were comprised almost equally of males (52%) and females (48%), and the average age of the adult visitor to BMSP was 43.
- The largest percentage (37%) of visitors reported a household income of over \$75,000, and over half (55%) reported having completed a four-year college degree or post-graduate education.
- The majority (92%) of visitors were Caucasian, 3% were Hispanic, 2% were African American, 1% were Asian, and 1% were Native American.
- Four percent (4%) of the visitors reported having a disability.
- Most (90%) of the visitors to BMSP were from Missouri.

- Most (86%) of the visitors lived within 50 miles of BMSP, including most of the visitors from Illinois.

Use-Patterns

- The majority (89%) of visitors drove less than a day's drive (less than 150 miles) to visit BMSP. Of those driving 150 miles or less, 92% live within 25 miles of BMSP and 50% lived within the immediate vicinity (10 miles or less).
- Almost 80% of BMSP visitors had visited the park before.
- BMSP visitors had visited the park an average of 15 times in the past year.
- About four-fifths of the visitors were day-users.
- Of the visitors staying overnight, 99% stayed in the campgrounds at BMSP. The average number of nights visitors stayed was 3.6.
- The majority of BMSP visitors visited the park with family and/or friends.
- The most frequent recreation activities in which visitors participated were walking, picnicking, hiking, viewing wildlife, visiting the visitor center, studying nature, camping, biking, and swimming.
- About 64% of visitors indicated they were primarily participating in

activities in the surrounding metropolitan area.

Satisfaction and Other Measures

- Ninety-nine percent (99%) of BMSP visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied overall.
- Of the eight park features, the campground was given the highest satisfaction rating and the tennis court was given the lowest satisfaction rating.
- Visitors gave higher performance ratings to the following park attributes: being free of litter and trash, care of natural resources, and being safe.
- Visitors gave lower performance ratings to the following park attributes: clean restrooms and upkeep of park facilities. Disabled visitors gave lower performance ratings to the park providing disabled accessibility.
- Less than half (42%) of visitors to BMSP felt some degree of crowding during their visit. Of those who felt crowded, the campground was where most felt crowded.
- Visitors who did not feel crowded had a significantly higher overall satisfaction compared to visitors who did feel crowded.
- Less than 40% of the visitors at BMSP did not give park safety an excellent rating.
- Of those visitors responding to the open-ended opportunity to express their safety concerns (50% of those visitors not giving the park an excellent safety rating), a large percentage (21%) commented on dangerous traffic and what they perceived as a need for increased enforcement of speed limits.
- Although 33% of all visitors felt that nothing specific could increase their feeling of safety at BMSP, 32% of all visitors did indicate that an increased visibility of park staff and increased law enforcement patrol at BMSP would increase their feeling of safety.
- Visitors who felt the park was safe were more satisfied overall, gave higher satisfaction ratings to six of the eight park features, and gave higher performance ratings to the eight park attributes as well.
- The majority (73%) of visitors reported that they would support the proposed reservation system.
- Two-thirds of visitors would support a “carry in and carry out” trash system.
- Thirty-two percent (32%) of visitors provided additional comments and suggestions, the majority (38%) of which were positive comments about the park and staff.

Acknowledgements

Conducting and successfully completing a study of this magnitude and complexity could not have been accomplished without the cooperation of many individuals. Almost 2,000 visitors to Missouri State Parks participated in the 1999 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey. Almost 400 visitors to Babler Memorial State Park voluntarily agreed to provide the information upon which this report is based. It is clear from their input that these visitors care very much for the recreation resources in the Missouri State Park System. Their efforts will provide invaluable input into the planning process and providing for more effective and responsive management of these resources.

Many other individuals provided assistance during the 1999 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey, without whom the study would not have been a success. The following expressions of gratitude are in acknowledgement of their contributions. Special acknowledgement goes to the staff at Babler Memorial State Park for their willingness to accommodate the survey crew during the study period, and also for their assistance during sampling. Many thanks also go to the research assistants and park volunteers who assisted in data collection and the students at the University of Missouri who assisted in computer data entry of the questionnaires. They are: Shane Aumiller, Tucker Fredrickson, Dennis Stevenson, Debra Stevenson, Mary Howard, Kathleen Rosa, Carl Schumacher, Amy Mahon, Chis Thoele, and Laura Marsch. And finally, grateful recognition is given to David Vaught and Tony Spicci for their GIS technical assistance.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary ii

Acknowledgements iv

Table of Contents v

List of Tables vii

List of Figures viii

Introduction 1

 Need for Recreation Research 1

 Study Purpose 1

 Study Area 2

 Scope of Study 2

Methodology 3

 Sampling Procedures 3

 Questionnaire 3

 Selection of Subjects 3

 Data Collection 3

 Data Analysis 4

Results 6

 Surveys Collected & Response Rates 6

 Sampling Error 6

 Socio-demographic Characteristics 7

 Age 7

 Gender 7

 Education 7

 Income 7

 Ethnic Origin 7

 Visitors with Disabilities 8

 Residence 8

 Use Patterns 8

 Trip Characteristics 8

 Visit Characteristics 9

 Recreation Activity Participation 10

 Satisfaction Measures 10

 Overall Satisfaction 10

 Satisfaction with Park Features 10

 Performance Rating 11

 Importance-Performance Measures 12

 Crowding 13

 Crowding and satisfaction 13

 Safety Concerns of Visitors 14

 Support of Reservation System 15

 Support of “Carry in/Carry out” Trash System 16

 Additional Visitor Comments 17

Discussion 19

 Management Implications 19

Satisfaction Implications.....	19
Safety Implications	19
Crowding Implications.....	20
Performance Implications	20
Implications for BMSP’s Interpretive Programs and Information	21
Implementation of Reservation System	21
Implementation of “Carry In and Carry Out” Trash System	21
Conclusion	21
Research Recommendations	22
Methodology Recommendations and Considerations for BMSP and Other Parks	22
Survey Signage	22
Survey Administration	23
References.....	24
Appendix A. Babler Memorial State Park Visitor Survey.....	25
Appendix B. Survey Protocol	28
Appendix C. Prize Entry Form	30
Appendix D. Observation Survey	32
Appendix E. Responses to Survey Questions	34
Appendix F. List of Responses for Safety Concerns (Q 8).....	42
Appendix G. List of Responses for Additional Comments (Q 23).....	46

List of Tables

Table 1. Surveys Collected by Day of Week.....6
Table 2. Surveys Collected by Time Slot6
Table 3. Surveys Collected by Date.....7
Table 4. Mean Performance and Importance Scores for Park Attributes12
Table 5. Locations Where BMSP Visitors Felt Crowded During Their Visit.....14
Table 6. Locations Where Visitors Felt More Lighting Would Increase Safety15
Table 7. Frequency and Percentage of Comments and Suggestions from
BMSP Visitors18

List of Figures

Figure 1. Ethnic Origin of BMSP Visitors.....8
Figure 2. Residence of BMSP Visitors by Zip Code9
Figure 3. Participation in Recreational Activities at BMSP10
Figure 4. Satisfaction with BMSP Features11
Figure 5. Importance-Performance Matrix of Park Attributes.....13
Figure 6. Comments from Visitors Not Rating BMSP Excellent on Safety.....14
Figure 7. Percentage of Safety Attributes Chosen by Visitors15
Figure 8. Comparison of Support of Reservation System Between
Campers and Non-campers16
Figure 9. Comparison of Support of Reservation System Between
Weekend and Weekday Visitors16
Figure 10. Support for “Carry In/Carry Out” Trash System Between Groups.....17
Figure 11. Safety Ratings of BMSP.....19
Figure 12. Levels of Crowding and Satisfaction Ratings by Safety Concerns.....20
Figure 13. Overall Satisfaction is Lower For Those Who Felt Crowded20

Introduction

NEED FOR RECREATION RESEARCH

In 1939, 15 years after Missouri obtained its first state park, 70,000 visitors were recorded visiting Missouri's state parks (Masek, 1974). Today, the increase in demand for outdoor recreation experiences has given rise to over 16 million visitors who, each year, visit the 80 parks and historic sites in Missouri's state park system (Holst & Simms, 1996). Along with this increase in demand for outdoor recreation experiences are other highly significant changes in outdoor recreation. Some of these changes include a change in the nature of vacations with a trend toward shorter, more frequent excursions; an increasing diversity of participation patterns across groups; an increase in more passive activities appropriate for an aging population; an increased concern for the health of the environment; and a realization of the positive contributions the physical environment has on the quality of one's life (Driver, Dustin, Baltic, Elsner, & Peterson, 1996; Tarrant, Bright, Smith, & Cordell, 1999).

Societal factors responsible for these changes in the way Americans recreate in the outdoors include an aging population; a perceived decline in leisure time and a faster pace of life; geographically uneven population growth; increasing immigration; changes in family structures, particularly an increase in single-parent families; increasing levels of education; a growth in minority populations; and an increasing focus on quality "lifestyle management" (Driver et al., 1996;

Tarrant et al, 1999). These factors and their subsequent changes in outdoor recreation participation have important implications for recreation resource managers, who are now faced with recreation resource concerns that are "...people issues and not resource issues alone (McLellan & Siehl, 1988)." This growing social complexity combined with the changes it has created in outdoor recreation participation have given rise to the need for research exploring why and how people recreate in the outdoors as well as how these individuals evaluate the various aspects of their outdoor recreation experiences.

STUDY PURPOSE

Visitor satisfaction tends to be a primary goal of natural resource recreation managers (Peine, Jones, English, & Wallace, 1999) and has been defined as the principal measure of quality in outdoor recreation (Manning, 1986). Visitor satisfaction, however, can be difficult to define because individual visitors are unique. Each visitor may have different characteristics, cultural values, preferences, attitudes, and experiences that influence their perceptions of quality and satisfaction (Manning, 1986).

Because of these differences in visitors, a general "overall satisfaction" question alone could not adequately evaluate the quality of visitors' experiences when they visit Missouri's state parks and historic sites. For this reason, it is necessary to gather additional information about visitor satisfaction through questions regarding: a) visitors'

socio-demographic characteristics; b) visitors' satisfaction with programs, services and facilities; c) visitors' perceptions of safety; and d) visitors' perceptions of crowding. Thus, the purpose of this study is to gain information, through these and other questions, about the use patterns, socio-demographic characteristics, and satisfaction with park programs, facilities, and services, of visitors to ten of Missouri's state parks.

This report examines the results of the visitor survey conducted at Babler Memorial State Park (BMSP), one of the ten parks included in the 1999 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey. Objectives specific to this report include:

1. Describing the use patterns of visitors to BMSP during July, August, and September 1999.
2. Describing the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors to BMSP.
3. Determining if there are differences in select groups' ratings of park attributes, satisfaction with park features, overall satisfaction, and perceptions of crowding.
4. Determining any differences in select characteristics of visitors who rated park safety high and those who did not.
5. Gaining information about selected park-specific issues.

STUDY AREA

Located in St. Louis County, Babler Memorial State Park provides an oasis of greenspace in a growing suburban area of the St. Louis metropolitan region. Nearly 2,500 acres of a heavily wooded landscape with a campground and a riding stable, Babler also provides amenities more typical of urban parks: a swimming pool, picnic areas, a tennis court, and biking and hiking trails. Babler is also unique in its providing a camp for campers with special needs, the Jacob L. Babler Outdoor Education Center.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The population of the visitor study at BMSP consisted of BMSP visitors who were 18 years of age or older (adults), and who visited BMSP during the study period of July through September 1999.

Methodology

SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A 95% confidence interval was chosen with a plus or minus 5% margin of error. Based upon 1998 visitation data for July, August, and September at BMSP, it was estimated that approximately 170,000 visitors would visit BMSP during the period between July 1 and September 30, 1999 (DNR, 1998). Therefore, with a 95% confidence interval and a plus or minus 5% margin of error, a sample size of 400 visitors was required (Folz, 1996). A random sample of adult visitors (18 years of age and older) who visited BMSP during the study period were the respondents for this study.

To ensure that visitors leaving BMSP during various times of the day would have equal opportunity for being surveyed, three time slots were chosen for surveying. The three time slots were as follows: Time Slot 1 = 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Time Slot 2 = 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m., and Time Slot 3 = 4:00 p.m. - 8 p.m. A time slot was randomly chosen and assigned to the first of the scheduled survey dates. Thereafter, time slots were assigned in ranking order based upon the first time slot. One time slot was surveyed during each survey day.

QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire used in this study was based on the questionnaire developed by Fink (1997) for the Meramec State Park Visitor Survey. A copy of the questionnaire for this study is provided in Appendix A.

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

The survey of visitors at BMSP was administered on-site, to eliminate the non-response bias of a mail-back survey. An exit survey of visitors leaving the park was conducted through a systematic sample of every fifth vehicle exiting the park.

DATA COLLECTION

The surveyor wore a state park t-shirt and was stationed near the entrance to the park. At the survey station, a "Visitor Survey" sign was used to inform visitors of the survey. During the selected time slot, the surveyor stopped every fifth vehicle and asked every visitor who was 18 years of age and older to voluntarily complete the questionnaire, unless he or she had previously filled one out.

To increase participation rates, respondents were given the opportunity to enter their name and address into a drawing for a prize package and were assured that their responses to the survey questions were anonymous and would not be attached to their prize entry form. Willing participants were then given a pencil and a clipboard with the questionnaire and prize entry form attached. Once respondents were finished, the surveyor collected the completed forms, clipboards, and pencils. Survey protocol is given in Appendix B and a copy of the prize entry form is provided in Appendix C.

An observation survey was also conducted to obtain additional

information about: date, day, time slot, and weather conditions of the survey day; the number of adults and children in each vehicle; and the number of individuals asked to fill out the questionnaire, whether they were respondents, non-respondents, or had already participated in the survey. This number was used to calculate response rate, by dividing the number of surveys collected by the number of adult visitors asked to complete a questionnaire. A copy of the observation survey form is provided in Appendix D.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained for the BMSP study was analyzed with the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (SPSS, 1996).

Frequency distributions and percentages of responses to the survey questions and the observation data were determined.

The responses to the open-ended questions were listed as well as grouped into categories for frequency and percentage calculations. The number of surveys completed by month, by day of week, by weekday versus weekend, and by time slot was also determined.

Comparisons using independent sample t-tests for each group were also made to determine any statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the following selected groups' satisfaction with park features (question 6), ratings of park attributes (question 7), overall satisfaction (question 13), and perceptions of crowding (question 14). The selected groups include:

1. First time visitors versus repeat visitors (question 1).

2. Campers versus non-campers (question 3). Non-campers include both day-users and the overnight visitors who did not camp in the BMSP campground.
3. Weekend visitors versus weekday visitors. Weekend visitors were surveyed on Saturday and Sunday, weekday visitors were surveyed Monday through Friday.

Other comparisons were made using independent sample t-tests to determine any statistically significant differences in visitors who rated the park as excellent on being safe versus visitors who rated the park as good, fair, or poor on being safe, for the following categories:

1. First time versus repeat visitors.
2. Campers versus non-campers.
3. Weekend versus weekday visitors.

Differences between visitors who rated the park as excellent on being safe versus those who did not were also compared on the following questions: differences in socio-demographic characteristics, perceptions of crowding, measures of satisfaction with park features, measures of performance of park attributes, and overall satisfaction. Chi-square tests were conducted comparing responses between select groups regarding support for a reservation system and support for a "carry in and carry out" trash system. The selected groups include:

1. First time versus repeat visitors.
2. Campers versus non-campers.
3. Weekend versus weekday visitors.

Additional comparisons include:

1. Multiple linear regression analyses to determine which of the satisfaction variables and which of the performance variables most accounted for variation in overall satisfaction.
2. An independent sample t-test comparing overall satisfaction between visitors who felt some degree of crowding and those who were not at all crowded during their visit.

Results

This section describes the results of the Babler Memorial State Park Visitor Survey. For the percentages of responses to each survey question, see Appendix E. The number of individuals responding to each question is represented as "n=."

SURVEYS COLLECTED & RESPONSE RATES

A total of 394 surveys were collected at BMSP during the time period of July, August, and September 1999, with 105 collected in July (26.6%), 124 collected in August (31.5%), and 165 collected in September (41.9%). Tables 1, 2, and 3 show surveys collected by day of week, by time slot, and by date, respectively. Of the 394 surveys collected, 238 (60.4%) were collected on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) and 156 (39.6%)

were collected on weekdays (Monday through Friday). The overall response rate was 68.2%, with daily response rates ranging from a low of 36.4% (July 12, 1999) to a high of 82.7% (September 6, 1999).

SAMPLING ERROR

With a sample size of 394 and a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error is plus or minus 5%. For this study, there is a 95% certainty that the true results of the study fall within plus or minus 5% of the findings. For example, from the results that 47.8% of the visitors to BMSP during the study period were female, it can be stated that between 42.8% and 52.8% of the BMSP visitors were female.

Table 1. Surveys Collected by Day of Week

Day of Week	Frequency	Percent
Sunday	141	35.8%
Monday	95	24.1%
Tuesday	15	3.8%
Thursday	15	3.8%
Friday	31	7.9%
Saturday	97	24.6%
Total	394	100%

Table 2. Surveys Collected by Time Slot

Time Slot	Frequency	Percent
1. 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	72	18.3%
2. 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.	188	47.7%
3. 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.	134	34.0%
Total	394	100.0%

Table 3. Surveys Collected by Date

Day, Date, and Time Slot	Frequency	Percent
Friday, July 9, time slot 1	10	2.5%
Saturday, July 10, time slot 2	28	7.1%
Sunday, July 11, time slot 3	63	16.0%
Monday, July 12, time slot 1	4	1.0%
Thursday, August 19, time slot 2	15	3.8%
Friday, August 20, time slot 3	21	5.3%
Saturday, August 21, time slot 1	34	8.6%
Sunday, August 22, time slot 2	54	13.7%
Saturday, September 4, time slot 3	35	8.9%
Sunday, September 5, time slot 1	24	6.1%
Monday, September 6, time slot 2	91	23.1%
Tuesday, September 7, time slot 3	15	3.8%
Total	394	100.0%

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Age

The average age of adult visitors to BMSP was 43. When grouped into four age categories, 23.1 % of the adult visitors were between the ages of 18-34, 59.3% were between the ages of 35-54, 10.4% were between the ages of 55-64, and 7.2% were 65 or over.

Gender

Visitors to BMSP were almost equally male and female. Male visitors comprised 52.2% of all visitors, and female visitors comprised 47.8% of all visitors.

Education

The majority (55.5%) of visitors to BMSP indicated they had completed a four-year college degree or post-graduate education. Less than 15% (14.7%) reported having completed

grade or high school, and 29.8% indicated having completed vocational school or some college.

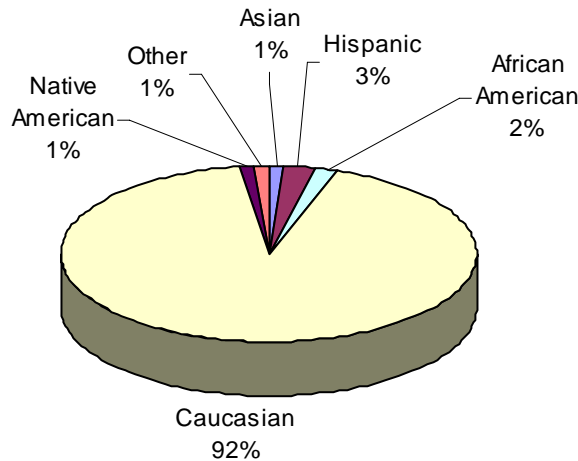
Income

The largest percentage (37.4%) of visitors to BMSP reported they had an annual household income of over \$75,000. The second largest percentage (27.2%) of visitors had an income of between \$25,000 and \$50,000. Almost 27% (26.7%) of visitors had an income of between \$50,001 and \$75,000 and less than 10% (8.7%) had a household income less than \$25,000.

Ethnic Origin

Figure 1 indicates the ethnic origin of BMSP visitors. The vast majority (92.2%) of visitors was Caucasian. Almost 3% (2.6%) of visitors were Hispanic, 1.8% were African American, 1.3% were Native American, and 1.0% were Asian. One percent (1.0%) of visitors indicated being of an "other" ethnic background.

Figure 1. Ethnic Origin of BMSP visitors.



Visitors with Disabilities

Less than 4% (3.9%) of the visitors to BMSP reported having some type of disability that substantially limited one or more life activities or that required special accommodations. Most of the disabilities reported were mobility-impairing disabilities, but other disabilities included heart problems and hearing impairments.

Residence

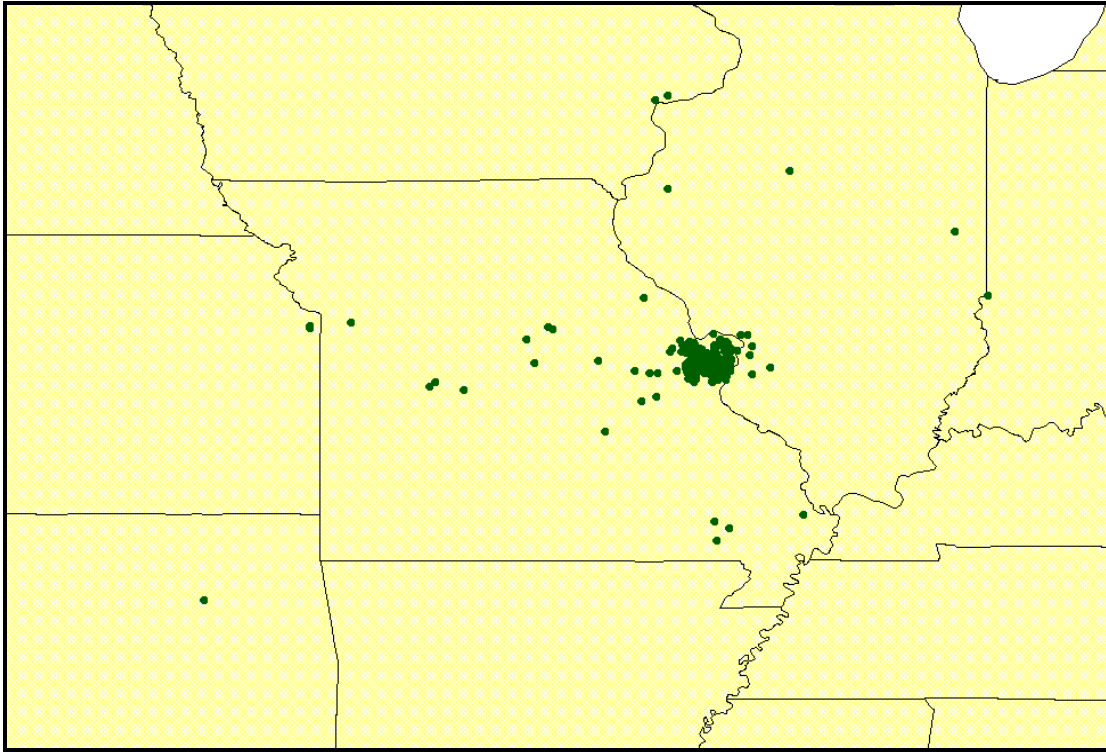
Almost 90% (89.4%) of the visitors to BMSP were from Missouri with the rest (10.6%) coming from other states, including Illinois (2.3%). One visitor was from Great Britain. Most (85.5%) of the visitors to BMSP lived within 50 miles of the park, including 66.7% of the visitors from Illinois. Figure 2 shows the residence of visitors by zip code.

USE PATTERNS

Trip Characteristics

The majority (89.3%) of visitors to BMSP traveled less than a day’s drive to visit the park (a day’s drive is defined as 150 miles or less, not exceeding 300 miles round trip). Of those traveling less than a day’s drive, 92.1% lived within 25 miles of the park, and 50.1% lived within the immediate vicinity (10 miles or less) including visitors from Chesterfield, Wildwood, and Ballwin.

The majority (81.4%) of visitors either drove cars, vans, jeeps, or sport utility vehicles. Almost 15% (14.2%) drove pickup trucks. Less than 1% (0.6%) of visitors drove RVs, and only 1.2% of visitors drove vehicles towing trailers. The average number of axles per vehicle was 2.02, the average number of adults per vehicle was 1.6, and the average number of children per vehicle was 1.7.

Figure 2. Residence of BMSP Visitors by Zip Code**Visit Characteristics**

About 79% of the visitors to BMSP were repeat visitors, with a little over 21% of the visitors being first time visitors. The average number of times all visitors reported visiting BMSP within the past year was 15.3 times.

Most of the visitors (79.2%) to BMSP during the study period indicated that they were day-users, with only 20.8% indicating that they were staying overnight. Of those staying overnight during their visit, most (98.7%) stayed in the campground at BMSP. Of those camping in the campground at BMSP, 65.7% reported camping in a tent, while 34.3% reported camping in an RV, trailer, or van conversion.

Of those reporting overnight stays, 27.7% stayed one night, 18.5% stayed two nights, 23.1% stayed three, and

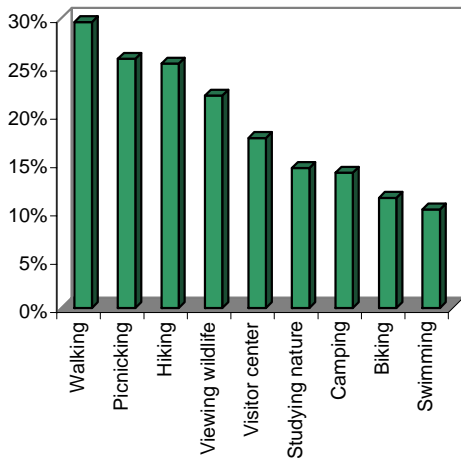
30.7% stayed four or more nights. The average stay for overnight visitors was 3.6 nights. The median number of nights was 3, indicating that half of the overnight visitors stayed less than three nights and half of the overnight visitors stayed more than three nights. The highest percentage of visitors stayed one night.

About 54% of the visitors to BMSP visited the park with family. Eleven percent (11.2%) visited with family and friends, while another 11.2% visited with friends, and 13.3% visited the park alone. Less than 10% (8.5%) of visitors indicated visiting the park with a club or organized group.

RECREATION ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Respondents to the survey were asked what activities they participated in during their visit to BMSP. Figure 3 shows the percentage of visitor participation in the nine highest activities. Walking was the highest reported (29.6%), picnicking was the second (25.8%), and hiking was the third (25.3%). Viewing wildlife (22%), visiting the visitor center (17.6%), studying nature (14.5%), camping (14%), biking (11.4%), and swimming in the pool (10.2%) were next.

Figure 3. Participation in Recreational Activities at BMSP



BMSP visitors reported engaging in other activities, including horseback riding (5.5%), jogging or running (5.4%), horseback riding rental (2.9%), attending an interpretive program (2.2%), attending a special event (1.6%), and playing tennis (1.0%). Only 7.3% of visitors reported engaging in an "other"

activity, including just driving through and sightseeing, playing softball, and using the playground.

Visitors were also asked if they were primarily participating in activities in the surrounding metropolitan area. About 64% of visitors answered yes to this question, while 36% answered no.

SATISFACTION MEASURES

Overall Satisfaction

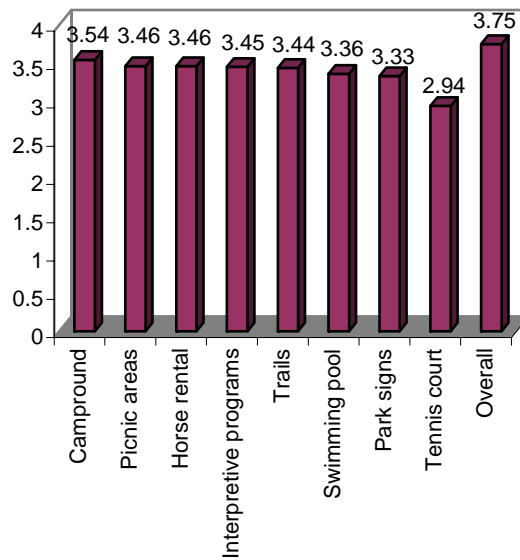
When asked about their overall satisfaction with their visit, only 1% of visitors was either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their visit, whereas 99% of visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied. Visitors' mean score for overall satisfaction was 3.75, based on a 4.0 scale with 4 being very satisfied and 1 being very dissatisfied.

No significant difference ($p < .05$) was found in overall satisfaction between first time and repeat visitors, both with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.75. Nor was there any significant difference in overall satisfaction between campers and non-campers, with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.70 and 3.76 respectively. There was no significant difference in overall satisfaction between weekday and weekend visitors either, with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.77 and 3.72 respectively.

Satisfaction with Park Features

Respondents were also asked to express how satisfied they were with eight park features. Figure 4 shows the mean scores for the eight features and also for visitors' overall satisfaction. The satisfaction score for the campground (3.54) was the highest, with the other

Figure 4. Satisfaction with BMSP Features



scores ranging from 3.46 (picnic areas and horseback riding rental) to the lowest of 2.94 (tennis court). A multiple linear regression analysis ($r^2=.61$) of the 8 park features showed that all the variables combined to account for about two-thirds of the overall satisfaction rating.

No significant differences were found in mean satisfaction ratings of park features between first time and repeat visitors, or between campers and non-campers. Weekend visitors (3.60), however, were significantly ($p<.05$) more satisfied with the campground than weekday visitors (3.45).

PERFORMANCE RATING

Visitors were asked to rate the park’s performance of eight select park attributes (question 7): being free of litter and trash, having clean restrooms, upkeep of park facilities, having helpful

and friendly staff, access for persons with disabilities, care of natural resources, providing interpretive information, and being safe. Performance scores were based on a 4.0 scale, with 4 being excellent and 1 being poor.

No significant differences were found between first time and repeat visitors and between weekend and weekday visitors and their performance ratings of the eight park attributes. Non-campers gave significantly higher performance ratings ($p<.001$) than campers regarding the park having clean restrooms (3.23 and 2.74 respectively). A multiple linear regression analysis ($r^2=.53$) showed that the eight performance attributes combined to account for half of the overall satisfaction rating.

Table 4. Mean Performance and Importance Scores for Park Attributes

Attribute	Mean Performance Score*	Mean Importance Score*
A. Being free of litter/trash	3.66	3.86
B. Having clean restrooms	3.11	3.78
C. Upkeep of park facilities	3.47	3.77
D. Having helpful & friendly staff	3.65	3.58
E ₁ . Access for persons with disabilities	3.44	3.44
E ₂ . Access for persons with disabilities	3.40	3.79
F. Care of natural resources	3.57	3.81
G. Providing interpretive information	3.48	3.32
H. Being safe	3.63	3.81

E₁ = All visitorsE₂ = Disabled visitors only

* 1 = Poor performance or low importance rating, 4 = excellent performance or high importance rating

IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Importance-Performance (I-P) Analysis approach was used to analyze questions 7 and 12. Mean scores were calculated for the responses of the two questions regarding visitors' ratings of the performance and importance of the eight select park attributes. Table 4 lists the scores of these attributes, which were based on a 4.0 scale of 4 being excellent and 1 being poor, and 4 being very important and 1 being very unimportant.

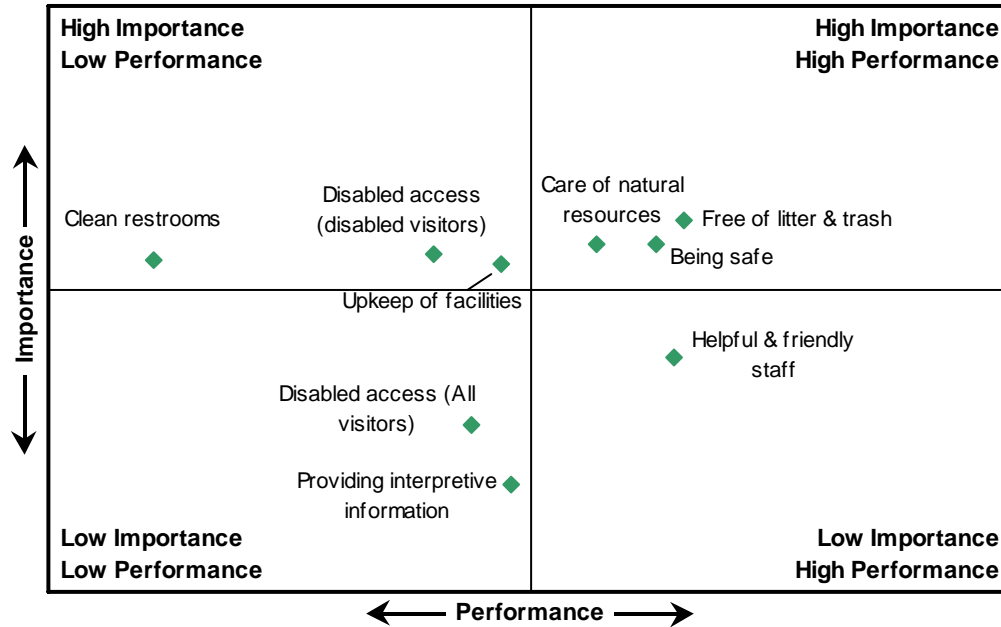
Figure 5 shows the Importance-Performance (I-P) Matrix. The mean scores were plotted on the I-P Matrix to illustrate the relative performance and importance rating of the attributes by park visitors.

The I-P Matrix is divided into four quadrants to provide a guide to aid in possible management decisions. For

example, the upper right quadrant is labeled "high importance, high performance" and indicates the attributes in which visitors feel the park is doing a good job. The upper left quadrant indicates that management may need to focus on these attributes, because they are important to visitors but were given a lower performance rating. The lower left and right quadrants are less of a concern for managers, because they exhibit attributes that are not as important to visitors.

BMSP was given high importance and performance ratings for being free of litter and trash, care of natural resources, and being safe. Characteristics that visitors felt were important but rated BMSP low on performance were having clean restrooms and upkeep of park facilities. Disabled visitors also gave BMSP a lower rating on providing accessibility.

Figure 5. Importance-Performance Matrix of Park Attributes



CROWDING

Visitors to BMSP were asked how crowded they felt during their visit. The following nine-point scale was used to determine visitors’ perceptions of crowding:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Not at all Crowded		Slightly Crowded			Moderately Crowded			Extremely Crowded

Visitors’ overall mean response to this question was 2.1. Over half (58.3%) of the visitors to BMSP did not feel at all crowded (selected 1 on the scale) during their visit. The rest (41.7%) felt some degree of crowding (selected 2-9 on the scale) during their visit.

Visitors who indicated they felt crowded during their visit were also asked to specify where they felt crowded (question 15). One-third (35.6%) of the visitors who indicated some degree of

crowding answered this open-ended question. Table 5 lists the locations where visitors felt crowded at BMSP. Of those who answered the open-ended question, the majority (44.3%) felt crowded in the campground.

No significant differences were found between first time and repeat visitors, and between weekend and weekday visitors and their perceptions of crowding. Campers had significantly ($p < .001$) higher perceptions of crowding when compared to non-campers. Campers had a mean crowded score of 3.1, while non-campers had a mean crowded score of 1.9.

Crowding and satisfaction

A significant difference ($p < .001$) was found in visitors’ mean overall satisfaction with their visit and whether they felt some degree of crowding or not. Visitors who did not feel crowded

Table 5. Locations Where BMSP Visitors Felt Crowded During Their Visit

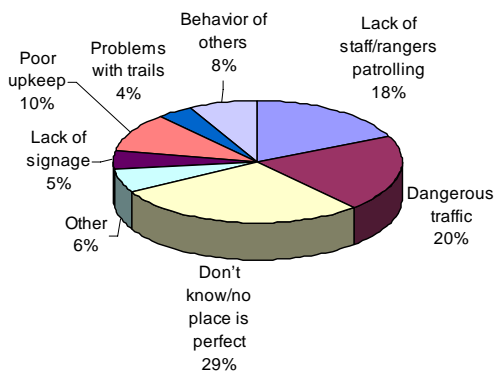
Location	Frequency	Percent
Campground/campsites	27	44.3%
Restrooms/shower houses	7	11.5%
Park roads	6	9.8%
Picnic areas	6	9.8%
Crowded because of behavior of others	5	8.2%
Trails	5	8.2%
Swimming pool	2	3.3%
Everywhere	2	3.3%
Crowded because of holiday	1	1.6%
Total	61	100.0%

had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.82, whereas visitors who felt some degree of crowding had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.65.

SAFETY CONCERNS OF VISITORS

A little over one-third (38.6%) of the visitors to BMSP did not rate the park as excellent for safety. Of those, 50.3% noted what influenced their rating. Their comments were grouped into categories and are shown in Figure 6. Appendix F provides a list of the comments.

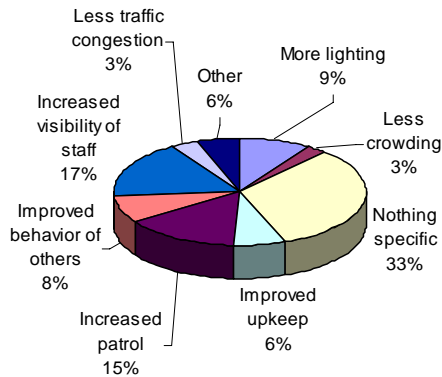
Figure 6. Comments from Visitors Not Rating BMSP Excellent on Safety



Over one-fourth (28.2%) of the open-ended responses were from visitors who either had no reason for not rating safety excellent, or who felt that no place was perfect and could always improve. A large percentage (20.5%) of the open-ended responses, however, was from visitors who commented on dangerous traffic and speed limits not being enforced. Another 18% of visitors commented on what they perceived as a lack of rangers and staff patrolling the park.

Visitors were also given a list of nine attributes and were asked to indicate which of the nine would most increase their feeling of safety at BMSP. Although instructed to select only one attribute, many visitors selected more than one; consequently, 341 responses were given by 270 visitors. Figure 7 shows the percentage of responses given by visitors. Most (32.6%) felt that nothing specific would increase their feeling of safety, but 17.3% felt that increased visibility of park staff would increase safety.

Figure 7. Percentage of Safety Attributes Chosen by Visitors



Visitors who felt that more lighting in the park would most increase their feeling of safety were asked to indicate where they felt more lighting was necessary. Sixty-five percent (64.5%) of those visitors answered this open-ended question. Table 6 shows the frequency and percentages of their responses. Of those visitors who indicated an “other” safety attribute would most increase safety, 42.1% suggested better signage, 21.1% suggested increased enforcement of speed limits, 15.8% suggested solutions to make the trails safer, 10.5% suggested better upkeep, and 10.5% had other suggestions.

There were no significant differences in the rating of safety by first time visitors

versus repeat visitors, by campers versus non-campers, or by weekend versus weekday users. There were no differences in safety ratings by socio-demographic characteristics. To determine if there were differences in perceptions of crowding, satisfaction with park features, and overall satisfaction, responses were divided into two groups based on how they rated BMSP on being safe. Group 1 included those who rated the park excellent, and Group 2 included those who rated the park as good, fair, or poor.

There were no significant differences in the perceptions of crowding between Group 1 and Group 2. However, Group 1 was significantly ($p < .001$) more satisfied overall than Group 2, with an overall satisfaction score of 3.88 whereas Group 2 had an overall satisfaction score of 3.56. Group 1 also had significantly ($p < .01$) higher satisfaction ratings for six of the eight park features than Group 2, as well as significantly higher ($p < .001$) performance ratings of the eight park attributes.

SUPPORT OF RESERVATION SYSTEM

BMSP visitors were asked whether they would support setting aside at least 50% of all campsites in a reservation system, and charging a reservation fee not to

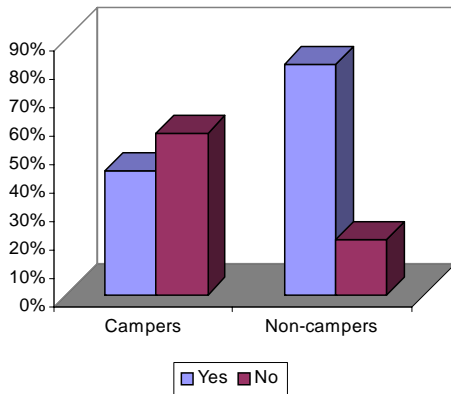
Table 6. Locations Where Visitors Felt More Lighting Would Increase Safety

Location	Frequency	Percent
Restrooms/shower houses	10	50%
Trails	4	20%
Campground	3	15%
Main entrance	2	10%
Other	1	5%
Total	20	100%

exceed \$7.00. Seventy-three percent (72.9%) of visitors would support such a system, while 27.1% reported that they would not.

There was no significant difference between first time and repeat visitors and the percentage of each that would or would not support a reservation system. There was a significant difference ($p < .001$) between campers and non-campers and the percentage of each that would or would not support a reservation system. Figure 8 shows the differences between the two groups. An almost equal number of campers either supported or didn't support a reservation system, with 43.4% and 56.6% respectively. However, many more non-campers (80.7%) supported a reservation system than didn't (19.3%).

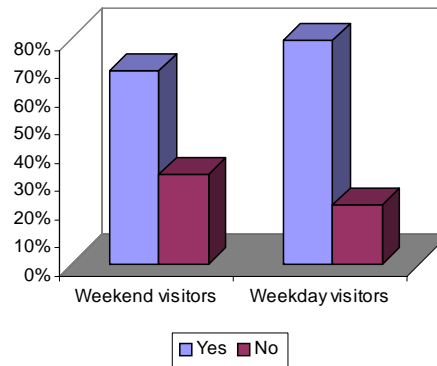
Figure 8. Comparison of Support of Reservation System Between Campers and Non-campers



There was also a significant difference ($p < .05$) in the percentage of weekend and weekday visitors who would support a reservation system and who would not support a reservation system. Both weekend and weekday visitors were more likely to support (68.5% and

79.3% respectively) than oppose (31.5% and 20.7% respectively) such a system. Figure 9 shows the differences in percentages. Further comparison showed that weekend campers were almost equally likely to support (49%) or oppose (51%) a reservation system, while weekday campers were more likely to oppose (68%) the system than support it (32%).

Figure 9. Comparison of Support of Reservation System Between Weekend and Weekday Visitors



SUPPORT OF “CARRY IN/CARRY OUT” TRASH SYSTEM

BMSP visitors were also asked to indicate whether they would be willing for the park to establish a “carry in and carry out” trash removal system, thereby promoting recycling and reducing the burden of handling trash in the park. The majority (62.3%) of visitors would support such a system, while 37.7% of visitors reported that they would not support a “carry in and carry out” system.

There were no significant differences between first time and repeat visitors, and whether each group would support

this type of trash system. Both first time and repeat visitors were more likely to support (65.9% and 61.4% respectively) than oppose (34.1% and 38.6% respectively) a carry in/carry out trash system).

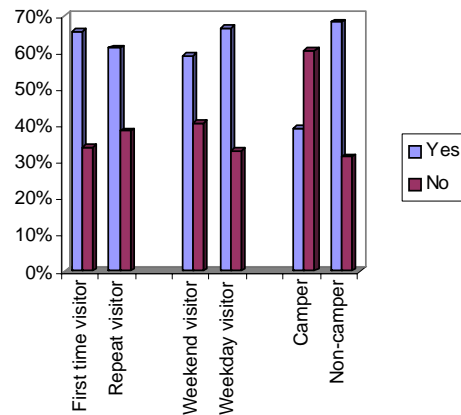
No significant difference was found between the percentages of weekend and weekday visitors and whether each would support or oppose this type of trash system. Weekend visitors were almost equally likely to support (59.3%) or oppose (40.7%) carrying out their trash, while weekday visitors were more likely to support (66.9%) than oppose (33.1%) the proposed trash system.

There was a significant difference ($p < .001$) between whether campers and non-campers would support the carry in/carry out trash system. Campers were more likely to oppose (60.8%) establishing this type of system, while non-campers were more likely to support it (68.6%). Further comparison between campers showed that weekend campers were almost equally likely to support (42.9%) or oppose (57.1%) this type of trash system, while weekday campers were more likely to oppose (68%) than support it (32%). Figure 10 shows the percentage of support or opposition between each group.

ADDITIONAL VISITOR COMMENTS

Respondents to the survey were also given the opportunity to write any additional comments or suggestions on how DNR could make their experience at BMSP a better one (question 23). One-third (32%) of the total survey participants responded to this question, with 144 responses given by 126 respondents. The comments and suggestions were listed and grouped by

Figure 10. Support for “Carry In/Carry Out” Trash System Between Groups



similarities into 11 categories for frequency and percentage calculations. The list of comments and suggestions is found in Appendix G. Table 7 lists the frequencies and percentages of the comments and suggestions by category.

The majority (37.5%) of comments were general positive comments, such as: “Great park”, “I love this park”, and “Keep up the good work”. The rest of the comments were categorized based on similar suggestions or comments, such as needing improved or additional facilities, enforcing the speed limits and other park rules, and other suggestions not falling into any other category.

**Table 7. Frequency and Percentage of Comments and Suggestions
from BMSP Visitors**

Category	Frequency	Percent
1. General positive comments	54	37.5%
2. Need improved/additional facilities	27	18.8%
3. Enforce speed limits and other park rules	10	6.9%
4. More/better signage	8	5.6%
5. Suggestions/comments about the campground	7	4.9%
6. Need more trash receptacles	6	4.2%
7. Comments about the restrooms/shower houses	5	3.5%
8. Better maintenance/upkeep	3	2.1%
9. Comments about park/concessionaire staff	2	1.4%
10. Comments in response to question 11 (carry in/carry out)	2	1.4%
11. Other	20	13.9%
Total	144	100.0%

Discussion

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study provide relevant information concerning BMSP visitors. However, the results should be interpreted with caution. The surveys were collected only during the study period of July, August, and September 1999; therefore, visitors who visit during other seasons of the year are not represented in the study's sample. The results, however, are still very useful to park managers and planners, because much of the annual visitation occurs during this period.

Satisfaction Implications

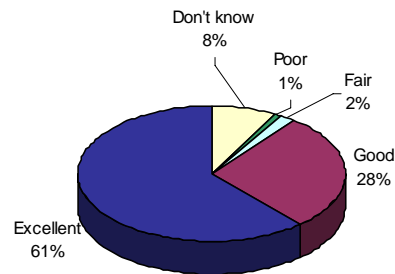
Seventy-six percent (76%) of BMSP visitors reported that they were very satisfied with their visit to the park. Williams (1989) states that visitor satisfaction with previous visits is a key component of repeat visitation. The high percentage of repeat visitation (79%) combined with their positive comments provide evidence that BMSP visitors are indeed satisfied with their park experience.

Safety Implications

BMSP managers should be commended for providing a park in which visitors feel safe. Only one-third (33%) of visitors did not give an excellent rating regarding safety, and the majority of those not giving an excellent rating gave a good rating instead (Figure 11). Safety was also given a "high importance, high performance" rating on the I-P Matrix. In fact, a large percentage (33%) of

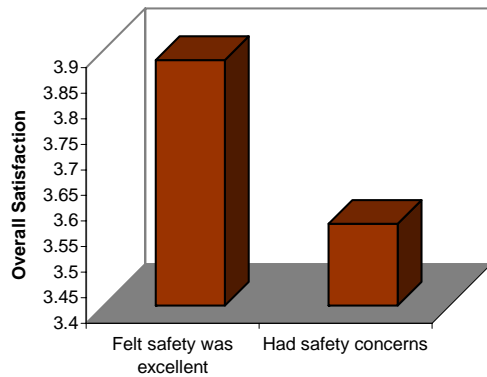
visitors indicated that nothing specific would increase their feeling of safety at BMSP.

Figure 11. Safety Ratings of BMSP.



There were some visitors, however, who did express safety concerns; and since visitors' perception of safety did affect their overall satisfaction of their visit at BMSP (Figure 12), it behooves managers to give consideration to their concerns. Twenty percent (20%) of visitors with safety concerns responded to an open-ended question with comments regarding dangerous traffic and what they perceived as a need for increased enforcement of speed limits. Another 18% commented on their perceptions of a lack of visible park staff or rangers patrolling the park. Out of a list of nine safety attributes, 32% of visitors selected either an increased visibility of park staff or increased law enforcement patrol as the two attributes that would most increase their feeling of safety at BMSP.

Figure 12. Levels of Satisfaction Ratings by Safety Concerns



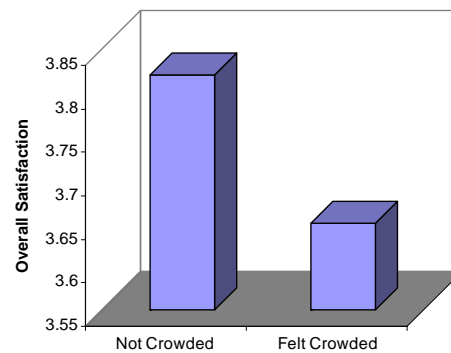
Crowding Implications

Surprisingly, visitors’ perceptions of crowding were not high considering the amount of use BMSP experiences. Over half (58%) of visitors did not feel at all crowded, and the mean crowded score for visitors was only 2.1. However, visitors’ perceptions of crowding did influence their overall satisfaction at BMSP, indicating that visitors’ perceptions of crowding should be a management concern.

Crowding is a perceptual construct not always explained by the number or density of other visitors. Expectations of visitor numbers, the behavior of other visitors, and visitors’ perception of resource degradation all play a significant role in crowding perceptions (Armistead & Ramthun, 1995; Peine et al., 1999). Campers had significantly higher perceptions of crowding than non-campers, and visitors who felt crowded had a significantly lower overall satisfaction than visitors who did not feel crowded (Figure 13). In addressing the issue of crowding, one option is to review comments relating to

crowding and consider options that would reduce crowding perceptions. For example, most comments listed the campgrounds as where visitors felt crowded. Further study could determine if crowding perceptions here are due to the number of people or perhaps the behavior of those in the campgrounds.

Figure 13. Overall Satisfaction is Lower for Those Who Felt Crowded



Performance Implications

Visitors felt that clean restrooms were very important but rated BMSP’s as needing attention. Visitors also felt that upkeep of the park’s facilities was very important, but did not rate BMSP as high in this area. Disabled visitors also gave disabled access a lower performance rating, but felt that this was an important attribute.

Restroom cleanliness is often given a lower rating by visitors to state parks (Fredrickson & Moisey, 1998), and in this case could be a result of the large number of daily visitors BMSP experiences during peak season. Campers gave restroom cleanliness a significantly lower rating than non-campers, suggesting that restrooms in

the campground may require different management considerations.

Although only 4% of visitors to BMSP reported having some type of disability, providing disabled accessibility is still an important concern for managers. BMSP is unique in the state park system for providing the Jacob L. Babler Outdoor Education Center for special needs campers and should be commended for their extra efforts to provide accessibility to all their visitors. However, disabled visitors gave disabled accessibility a lower performance rating. One disabled visitor suggested providing disabled access to the pool itself and not just the pool area.

Implications for BMSP's Interpretive Programs and Information

Another area of concern for managers at BMSP is the low performance and importance ratings given by visitors regarding BMSP providing interpretive information. Only 2% of visitors indicated attending an interpretive program, although almost 18% of visitors indicated visiting the visitor center. About 75% of visitors, when asked how satisfied they were with BMSP's interpretive programs, reported that they didn't know. Another 46% of visitors, when asked to rate BMSP on providing interpretive information, again reported that they didn't know how to rate this attribute. These results suggest that visitors may not be aware of the interpretive programs, and thus do not attend them.

Implementation of Reservation System

Although a majority (73%) of visitors reported that they would support the proposed reservation system, campers

(the users most likely to be affected by such a system) responded with a slight majority (57%) who would not support such a system. RV campers (those campers who might be expected to use the reservation system more) were more likely to oppose (71%) than support (29%) the proposed reservation system, while tent campers were almost equally likely to support (47%) or oppose (53%) the system.

Implementation of "Carry In and Carry Out" Trash System

Visitors were overwhelmingly in support (62%) of the proposed "carry in/carry out" trash removal system. Further analysis of the users who might be most affected by this type of trash removal system (picnickers and campers) revealed that a majority (60%) of picnickers supported the proposal but a majority of campers (61%) did not support the proposal.

Conclusion

BMSP visitors are very satisfied with BMSP, as evidenced by the high percentage of visitors who were repeat visitors, and also by their high satisfaction ratings. BMSP visitors also gave high performance ratings to the park being free of litter and trash, caring for its natural resources, and being safe. The majority of BMSP visitors also did not feel very crowded during their visits.

The results of the present study suggest some important management and planning considerations for BMSP. Even though BMSP visitors rated their visits and the park features relatively high, felt fairly safe, and did not feel very crowded, continued attention to safety, crowding, facility upkeep and

maintenance, and disabled accessibility can positively effect these ratings. Consideration might also be given as to whether implementation of a reservation system is necessary, particularly as most visitors to BMSP are day-users and those visitors who were campers tended to not support the idea of a reservation system.

Just as important, on-going monitoring of the effects of management changes will provide immediate feedback into the effectiveness of these changes. On-site surveys provide a cost effective and timely vehicle with which to measure management effectiveness and uncover potential problems.

RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the present study serve as baseline visitor information of BMSP. The frequency and percentage calculations of survey responses provide useful information concerning socio-demographic characteristics, use patterns, and satisfaction of BMSP visitors. In addition, the “sub-analysis” of data is important in identifying implications for management of BMSP. (The sub-analysis in the present study included comparisons using Chi-square and ANOVA between selected groups, multiple linear regression, and the Importance-Performance analysis.) Additional relevant information may be determined from further sub-analysis of existing data. Therefore, it is recommended additional sub-analysis be conducted to provide even greater insight to management of the park.

Data collection should be on a continuum (Peine et al., 1999), which is why additional visitor surveys at BMSP should also be conducted on a regular basis (e.g., every three, four, or five

years). Future BMSP studies can identify changes and trends in socio-demographic characteristics, use patterns, and visitors’ satisfaction at BMSP.

The methodology used in this study serves as a standard survey procedure that the DSP can use in the future. Because consistency should be built into the design of the survey instrument, sampling strategy and analysis (Peine et al., 1999), other Missouri state parks and historic sites should be surveyed similarly to provide valid results for comparisons of visitor information between parks, or to measure change over time in other parks.

The present study was conducted only during the study period of July, August, and September 1999. Therefore, user studies at BMSP and other parks and historic sites might be conducted during other seasons for comparison between seasonal visitors.

METHODOLOGY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR BMSP AND OTHER PARKS

The on-site questionnaire and the methodology of this study were designed to be applicable to other Missouri state parks. Exit surveys provide the most robust sampling strategy to precisely define the visitor population (Peine et al., 1999); therefore, it is recommended that exit surveys be conducted at other state parks and historic sites if at all possible.

Survey Signage

It is recommended that adequate signage be utilized when collecting surveys on-site. A “Visitor Survey” sign was used

in the present study to inform visitors exiting the park that a survey was being conducted. Having the sign for that purpose aided in the workability of the methodology, as many visitors slowed their vehicles and some stopped before being asked to do so. However, the “survey station” often became an “information station” when visitors would stop to ask questions. Many visitors would also engage the surveyor in conversation regarding their feelings about BMSP. The park volunteers who assisted the surveyor were very helpful in answering visitors’ questions and collecting the surveys. Without their assistance, it would have been difficult to conduct the survey during busy survey days. For these reasons, an assistant to help administer surveys at other parks and sites would be helpful.

Survey Administration

The prize package drawing and the one-page questionnaire undoubtedly helped attain the high response rate in the present study. Continued use of the one-page questionnaire and the prize package drawing is suggested.

Achieving the highest possible response rate (within the financial constraints) should be a goal of any study. To achieve higher response rates, the following comments are provided. The most frequent reasons that visitors declined to fill out a survey were because they did not have enough time or because of the heat. Most non-respondents were very pleasant and provided positive comments about the park. Some even asked if they could take a survey and mail it back. One recommendation would be to have self-addressed, stamped envelopes available in future surveys to offer to visitors only after they do not volunteer to fill out the survey on-site. This technique may provide higher response rates, with minimal additional expense. One caution, however, is to always attempt to have visitors complete the survey on-site, and to only use the mail-back approach when it is certain visitors would otherwise be non-respondents.

References

- Armistead, J., & Ramthun, R. (1995). Influences on perceived crowding and satisfaction on the Blue Ridge Parkway. In Proceedings of the 1995 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium (Forest Service General Technical Report NE-128, pp. 93-95). Saratoga Springs, NY: Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station.
- Driver, B.L., Dustin, D., Baltic, T., Elsner, G., & Peterson, G. (1996). Nature and the human spirit: Overview. In B.L. Driver, D. Dustin, T. Baltic, G. Elsner, & G. Peterson (Eds.), Nature and the human spirit: Toward an expanded land management ethic (pp. 3-8). State College, PA: Venture Publishing, Inc.
- Fink, D. A. (1997). Meramec State Park user survey. Unpublished master's research project, University of Missouri, Columbia.
- Fredrickson, D. K. & Moisey, R. N. (1998). 1998 Missouri State Parks Visitors Survey. Report submitted to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.
- Folz, D. H. (1996). Survey research for public administration. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Holst, S., & Simms, L. (1996). Park & soils: A decade of success for camps and crops. Missouri Resources, 13(2), 8-15.
- Manning, R. E. (1986). Studies in outdoor recreation. Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press.
- Masek, M. L. R. (1974). A park user fee survey for the Missouri state parks. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Missouri, Columbia.
- McLellan, G., & Siehl, G. (1988). Trends in leisure and recreation: How we got where we are. Trends, 25 (4), 4-7.
- Missouri Department of Natural Resources (DNR) (1998). [Missouri state park attendance]. Unpublished raw data.
- Peine, J. D., Jones, R. E., English, M. R., & Wallace, S. E. (1999). Contributions of sociology to ecosystem management. In H. K. Cordell & J. C. Bergstrom (Eds.), Integrating social sciences with ecosystem management: Human dimensions in assessment, policy, and management (pp. 74-99). Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publishing.
- Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (1996). Version 6.1 [Computer software]. Chicago: SPSS.
- Tarrant, M. A., Bright, A. D., Smith, E., & Cordell, H. K. (1999). Motivations, attributes, preferences, and satisfactions among outdoor recreationists. In H. K. Cordell (Ed.), Outdoor recreation in American life: A national assessment of demand and supply trends (pp. 403-431). Champaign, IL: Sagamore Publishing.
- Williams, D. R. (1989). Great expectations and the limits to satisfaction: a review of recreation and consumer satisfaction research. Outdoor Recreation Benchmark 1988: Proceedings of the National Outdoor Recreation Forum, Tampa, Florida, 422-438.

Appendix A. Babler Memorial State Park Visitor Survey



Dr. Edmund A. Babler Memorial State Park



The Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the University of Missouri are seeking your evaluation of Babler Memorial State Park. This survey is voluntary and completely anonymous. Your cooperation is important in helping us make decisions about managing this park. Thank you for your time.

1. Is this your first visit to Babler Memorial State Park? (Check only one box.)
 yes no If no, how many times have you visited this park in the past year? _____

2. During this visit to the park, are you staying overnight? (Check only one box.)
 yes If yes, how many nights are you staying at or near the park during this visit? _____
 no (If no, skip to question 4.)

3. If staying overnight, where are you staying? (Check only one box.)
 campground in Babler Memorial State Park
 tent RV/trailer/camper
 Jacob L. Babler Outdoor Education Center (group camp for persons with disabilities)
 nearby lodging facilities
 nearby campground
 friends/relatives
 other (Please specify.) _____

4. With whom are you visiting the park? (Check only one box.)
 alone family and friends club or organized group
 family friends other (Please specify.) _____

5a. Which recreational activities have you engaged in during this park visit? (Check all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> picnicking	<input type="checkbox"/> jogging/running	<input type="checkbox"/> attending interpretive program
<input type="checkbox"/> hiking	<input type="checkbox"/> studying nature	<input type="checkbox"/> visiting visitor center
<input type="checkbox"/> camping	<input type="checkbox"/> viewing wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> attending special event
<input type="checkbox"/> tennis	<input type="checkbox"/> horseback riding	<input type="checkbox"/> other (Please specify.) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> bicycling	<input type="checkbox"/> horseback riding rental	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> walking	<input type="checkbox"/> swimming in pool	_____

5b. Are you primarily participating in activities in the surrounding metropolitan area? (Check only one box.) yes no

6. How satisfied are you with each of the following in Babler Memorial State Park? (Check one box for each feature.)

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
a. campgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. park signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. picnic areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. tennis court	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. swimming pool	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. horseback riding rental	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. interpretive programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How do you rate Babler Memorial State Park on each of the following? (Check one box for each feature.)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
a. being free of litter/trash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. having clean restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. upkeep of park facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. having a helpful & friendly staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. access for persons with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. care of natural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. providing interpretive information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. being safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. If you did not rate this park as excellent on being safe, what influenced your rating?

9. Which of the following would most increase your feeling of being safe at Babler Memorial State Park? (Check only one box.)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> more lighting where? _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> improved behavior of others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> less crowding | <input type="checkbox"/> increased visibility of park staff |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nothing specific | <input type="checkbox"/> less traffic congestion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> improved upkeep of facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> other (Please specify.) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> increased law enforcement patrol | _____ |

PLEASE TURN SURVEY OVER.

10. Do you support setting aside at least 50% of all campsites in a reservation system in order to guarantee a site, and charging a reservation fee not to exceed \$7.00? (Check only one box.) yes no

11. Do you support establishing a "carry in and carry out" system as a means of promoting recycling and reducing the burden of handling trash in this park? (Check only one box.) yes no

12. When visiting any state park, how important are each of these items to you? (Check one box for each feature.)

	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Don't Know
a. being free of litter/trash	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. having clean restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. upkeep of park facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. having a helpful & friendly staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. access for persons with disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. care of natural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. providing interpretive information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. being safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Babler Memorial State Park? (Check only one box.)

Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

14. During this visit, how crowded did you feel? (Circle one number.)

1 Not at all Crowded 2 3 Slightly Crowded 4 5 6 Moderately Crowded 7 8 9 Extremely Crowded

15. If you felt crowded on this visit, where did you feel crowded?

16. What is your age? _____ 17. Gender? female male

18. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Check only one box.)

grade school vocational school graduate of 4-year college
 high school some college post-graduate education

19. What is your ethnic origin? (Check only one box.)

Asian African American Native American/American Indian
 Hispanic Caucasian/White Other (Please specify.) _____

20. Do you have a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities or might require special accommodations?

yes If yes, what disability or disabilities do you have?
 no _____

21. What is your 5-digit zip code (or country of residence, if you live outside the U.S.)? _____

22. What is your annual household income?

less than \$25,000 \$50,001 - \$75,000
 \$25,000 - \$50,000 over \$75,000

23. Please write any additional comments about your park visit or suggestions on how the Missouri Department of Natural Resources can make your experience in Babler Memorial State Park a better one.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.
 YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME IN MISSOURI STATE PARKS.

Appendix B. Survey Protocol

Protocol for Babler Memorial State Park Visitor Survey

Hi, my name is _____, and I am conducting a survey of park visitors for Missouri state parks. The information that I am collecting will be useful for future management of Babler Memorial State Park.

The survey is one page, front and back side, and only takes about 3-5 minutes to complete. Anyone who is 18 or older may complete the survey, and by completing the survey, you have the opportunity to enter your name in a drawing for a prize package of \$100 worth of concession coupons. Your participation is voluntary, and your responses will be completely anonymous.

Your input is very important to the management of Babler Memorial State Park. Would you be willing to help by participating in the survey?

[If no,] Thank you for your time. Have a nice day.

[If yes,]

Here is a pencil and clipboard with the survey attached (for each respondent). Please complete the survey on both sides. When finished, return the survey(s), clipboard(s), pencils, and prize entry form(s) to me.

Thank you for taking time to complete the survey. Your help is greatly appreciated. Have a nice day.

Appendix C. Prize Entry Form

**WIN A PRIZE PACKAGE OF CONCESSION COUPONS
WORTH \$100**

Enter a drawing to win \$100 worth of gift certificates! These certificates are good for any concessions at any state park or historic site. Concessions include cabin rentals, canoe rentals, boat rentals, restaurant dining, horseback riding, etc.

You may enter the drawing by simply filling out the back of this entry form and returning it to the surveyor. Your name, address, and telephone number will be used only for this drawing; thus, your survey responses will be anonymous. The drawing will be held November 1, 1999. Winners will be notified by telephone or mail. Redemption of gift certificates is based on dates of availability through August 31, 2000.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: () _____

Appendix D. Observation Survey

Date _____ Day of Week _____ Time Slot _____
 Weather _____ Temperature _____ Park/Site _____

	Survey #’s	# of Adults	# of Children	Vehicle Type	Additional Axles	# of Visits Today
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						
26						
27						
28						
29						
30						
31						
32						
33						
34						
35						

Time Slot Codes:

Time Slot 1 = 8:00 - 12:00 p.m.
 Time Slot 2 = 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.
 Time Slot 3 = 4:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Weather Codes (examples):

Hot & Sunny Windy
 Cold & Rainy Sunny
 Cloudy Humid

Appendix E. Responses to Survey Questions

Babler Memorial State Park Visitor Survey

1. Is this your first visit to Babler Memorial State Park? (n=394)

yes 21.3%
no 78.7%

If no, how many times have you visited this park in the past year? (n=257)

The responses from this open-ended question were grouped into the following 9 categories:

0 11.3%
1 16.3%
2 11.7%
3-5 15.6%
6-10 16.4%
11-20 12.5%
21-50 11.4%
51-100 3.5%
101+ 1.6%

The average # of times repeat visitors visited the park in the past year was 15.3 times.

2. During this visit to the park, are you staying overnight? (n=385)

yes 20.8%
no 79.2%

If yes, how many nights are you staying overnight at or near the park during this visit? (n=65)

The responses from this open-ended question were grouped into the following 6 categories:

1 27.7%
2 18.5%
3 23.1%
4-5 18.4%
6-10 4.6%
11+ 7.7%

The average # of nights respondents visiting the park for more than one day stayed was 3.6.

3. If staying overnight, where are you staying? (n=79)

campground in Babler Memorial State Park 98.7%
tent 65.7%
RV 34.3%
Jacob L. Babler Education Center 0.0%
nearby lodging facilities 0.0%
nearby campground 0.0%
friends/relatives 1.3%

4. With whom are you visiting the park? (n=375)

alone	13.3%	family & friends	11.2%	club or organized group	8.5%
family	53.9%	friends	11.2%	other	1.9%

5. Which recreational activities have you engaged in during this park visit?

picnicking	25.8%	jogging/running	5.4%	attending interpretive program	2.2%
hiking	25.3%	studying nature	14.5%	visiting visitor center	17.6%
camping	14.0%	viewing wildlife	22.0%	attending special event	1.6%
tennis	1.0%	horseback riding	5.5%	other	7.3%
bicycling	11.4%	horseback riding rental	2.9%		
walking	29.6%	swimming in pool	10.2%		

41 visitors participated in an "other" activity. Their responses are as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Art show. | Orienteering meet. |
| Baseball. | Play with dogs. |
| Community activities. | Played with dogs and used rollerblades. |
| Drive around. | Playground area. |
| Drive through. | Playground for kids. |
| Drive through. | Playground. |
| Driving. | Playground. |
| Driving through. | Riding around. |
| Driving through. | Riding motorcycle through the park. |
| Driving through. | Riding through. |
| Drove through to see what the park offers. | Rollerblading. |
| Enjoying solitude and playing guitar. | Sight-seeing. |
| Exploring. | Soccer. |
| Football. | Softball and volleyball. |
| Group meeting. | Softball fields. |
| Inspecting facilities to plan for future visit. | Softball. |
| Just dropping child off. | Volleyball and frisbee. |
| Just enjoying God's beauty. | Walking my dog. |
| Just relaxing. Trying to locate employment opportunities. | Walking the dog. |
| Just riding around. | We just enjoy the beautiful timber. |
| Motorcycle touring. | |

5a. Are you primarily participating in activities in the surrounding metropolitan area? (n=637)

yes	63.8%
no	36.2%

In addition to percentages of responses, a mean score was calculated for each feature in questions 6, 7, 12, and 13. The score is based on a 4.0 scale with 4 = very satisfied, 3 = satisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, and 1 = very dissatisfied (Q. 6 & 13); 4 = excellent, 3 = good, 2 = fair, and 1 = poor (Q. 7); and 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, and 1 = very unimportant (Q. 12). The mean score is listed in parenthesis following each feature.

6. How satisfied are you with each of the following in Babler Memorial State Park?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know	
a. campgrounds (3.54)	31.5%	24.2%	0.8%	0.0%	43.5%	n=359
b. park signs (3.33)	41.9%	47.3%	7.3%	1.3%	2.2%	n=372
c. picnic areas (3.46)	46.4%	42.0%	1.4%	1.4%	8.8%	n=362
d. trails (3.44)	39.9%	37.9%	2.2%	0.8%	19.1%	n=356
e. tennis court (2.94)	7.3%	6.7%	4.2%	2.2%	79.6%	n=313
f. swimming pool (3.36)	19.9%	21.5%	1.2%	1.5%	55.9%	n=331
g. horseback riding rental (3.46)	15.3%	12.9%	0.6%	0.6%	70.6%	n=326
h. interpretive programs (3.45)	12.1%	12.7%	0.6%	0.0%	74.5%	n=322

7. How do you rate Babler Memorial State Park on each of the following?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.66)	70.8%	24.8%	3.1%	1.0%	0.3%	n=391
b. having clean restrooms (3.11)	32.4%	28.6%	10.6%	6.6%	21.8%	n=377
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.47)	53.8%	36.6%	4.9%	1.8%	2.9%	n=385
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.65)	61.2%	23.5%	1.8%	1.1%	12.4%	n=379
e. access for persons with disabilities (3.44)	20.6%	16.9%	2.3%	0.3%	60.0%	n=355
f. care of natural resources (3.57)	55.9%	34.1%	1.8%	0.5%	7.6%	n=381
g. providing interpretive information (3.48)	29.2%	22.1%	2.5%	0.3%	45.9%	n=353
h. being safe (3.63)	61.4%	28.0%	2.1%	0.8%	7.8%	n=386

8. If you did not rate this park as excellent on being safe, what influenced your rating?

75 visitors (50.3% of those who did not rate the park as excellent on being safe) responded to this question with 78 responses. The 78 responses were divided into 8 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. No reason/no place is perfect	22	28.2%
2. Dangerous traffic/speed limits not enforced	16	20.5%
3. Lack of staff/rangers patrolling the park	14	18.0%
4. Poor upkeep	8	10.3%
5. Behavior of others	6	7.7%
6. Lack of signage	4	5.1%
7. Problems with trails	3	3.9%
8. Other	5	6.4%
Total	78	100.0%

9. Which of the following would most increase your feeling of being safe at Babler Memorial State Park?

341 responses were given by 270 visitors.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. More lighting	31	9.1%
2. Less crowding	9	2.6%
3. Nothing specific	111	32.6%
4. Improved upkeep of facilities	22	6.5%
5. Increased law enforcement patrol	50	14.7%

6. Improved behavior of others	28	8.2%
7. Increased visibility of park staff	59	17.3%
8. Less traffic congestion	12	3.5%
9. Other	<u>19</u>	<u>5.6%</u>
Total	341	100.0%

20 visitors (64.5% of those who indicated more lighting would most increase their feeling of safety) reported where they felt more lighting was necessary. Their answers were grouped into the following 5 categories. Frequencies and percentages of each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Restrooms/shower houses	10	50.0%
2. Trails	4	20.0%
3. Campground	3	15.0%
4. Main entrance	2	10.0%
5. Other	<u>1</u>	<u>5.0%</u>
Total	20	100.0%

19 visitors (100% of those who indicated that an "other" safety attribute would most increase their feeling of safety) reported what other attribute would increase safety. The answers were grouped into the following 5 categories. Frequencies and percentages of each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Better signage	8	42.1%
2. Enforcement of speed limits/other park rules	4	21.1%
3. Suggestions about trail safety	3	15.8%
4. Better upkeep	2	10.5%
5. Other	<u>2</u>	<u>10.5%</u>
Total	19	100.0%

10. Do you support setting aside at least 50% of all campsites in a reservation system in order to guarantee a site, and charging a reservation fee not to exceed \$7.00? (n=361)

yes 72.9%
no 27.1%

11. Do you support a "carry in and carry" out system as a means of promoting recycling and reducing the burden of handling trash in this park? (n=377)

yes 62.3%
no 37.7%

12. When visiting any state park, how important are each of these items to you?

	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Don't Know	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.86)	85.9%	13.1%	0.0%	0.3%	0.8%	n=390
b. having clean restrooms (3.78)	78.5%	19.5%	0.8%	0.3%	1.0%	n=390
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.77)	77.1%	21.8%	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%	n=385
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.58)	62.9%	32.2%	3.4%	0.8%	0.8%	n=388
e. access for disabled persons (3.44)	48.0%	27.6%	6.8%	1.9%	15.7%	n=369
f. care of natural resources (3.81)	80.7%	17.7%	0.3%	0.3%	1.0%	n=384
g. providing interpretive information (3.32)	43.4%	37.2%	9.8%	1.9%	7.7%	n=376
i. being safe (3.81)	82.6%	15.3%	0.8%	0.5%	0.8%	n=385

13. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Babler Memorial State Park?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
(Mean score = 3.75)	76.2%	22.8%	0.8%	0.3%	n=390

14. During this visit, how crowded did you feel? (n=391)

On a scale of 1-9, with 1 = Not at all crowded and 9 = Extremely crowded, the mean response was 2.1.

15. If you felt crowded on this visit, where did you feel crowded?

A total of 61 open-ended responses were given by 58 visitors. The 61 responses were divided into 9 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
campgrounds/campsites	27	44.3%
restrooms/shower houses	7	11.5%
picnic areas	6	9.8%
park roads	6	9.8%
crowded because of behavior of others	5	8.2%
trails	5	8.2%
swimming pool	2	3.3%
everywhere	2	3.3%
crowded because of holiday	<u>1</u>	<u>1.6%</u>
Total	61	100.0%

16. What is your age? (n=376)

Responses were divided into the following 4 categories:

18-34	23.1%
35-54	59.3%
55-64	10.4%
65-85	7.2%

(Average age = 43)

17. Gender? (n=379)

Female	47.8%
Male	52.2%

18. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (n=389)

grade school	0.8%	vocational school	2.8%	graduate of 4-year college	27.0%
high school	14.7%	some college	27.0%	post-graduate education	28.5%

19. What is your ethnic origin? (n=386)

Asian	1.0%	African American	1.8%	Native American/American Indian	1.3%
Hispanic	2.6%	Caucasian/White	92.2%	Other	1.0%

20. Do you have a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities or might require special accommodations? (n=384)

yes	3.9%
no	96.1%

If yes, what disability or disabilities do you have? (n=15)

The following is a list of all responses to this open-ended question.

Arthritis.	Loss of hearing in one ear.
Blind, crippled.	Coronary disease.
Can't walk.	Diabetic, epilepsy, and depression.
Knee problems.	Five small children. We appreciate the stroller-friendly
Legs and back.	trails, playgrounds, baby pool.
Legs and back.	Hearing impaired.
One of us has cerebral palsy.	Heart.
Trouble walking.	Need oxygen.

21. What is your 5-digit zip code (or country of residence, if you live outside the U.S.)? (n=385)

The states with the highest percentages of respondents were:

Missouri (89.4%)
Illinois (2.3%)

22. What is your annual household income? (n=356)

less than \$25,000	8.7%	\$50,001 - \$75,000	26.7%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	27.2%	over \$75,000	37.4%

23. Please write any additional comments about your park visit or suggestions on how the Missouri Department of Natural Resources can make your experience in Babler Memorial State Park a better one.

126 of the 394 visitors (32%) responded to this question. A total of 144 responses were given, and were divided into 11 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. General positive comments	54	37.5%
2. Need improved/additional facilities	27	18.8%
3. Enforce speed limits and other park rules	10	6.9%
4. More/better signage	8	5.6%
5. Suggestions/comments about campground	7	4.9%
6. Need more trash receptacles	6	4.2%
7. Comments about restrooms/shower houses	5	3.5%

8. Better maintenance/upkeep	3	2.1%
9. Comments about park/concessionaire staff	2	1.4%
10. Comments in response to question 11 (carry in/carry out)	2	1.4%
11. Other	<u>20</u>	<u>13.9%</u>
Total	99	100.0%

Appendix F. List of Responses for Safety Concerns (Q 8)

Responses to Question # 8

If you did not rate this park as excellent on being safe (Question 7, letter h.), what influenced your rating?

No reason/no place is perfect and can always improve

- "Excellent" implies strong feelings on the issue. I have none.
- Depending on the individual host, the safety varies. Not as aware of potential problems.
- Didn't know enough about the park for an excellent rating.
- Don't know enough to comment. Only at one site for four hours.
- Don't know.
- Have only been here an hour.
- I don't know so I can't rate this part.
- I have not been here enough to know.
- I haven't had a situation to be able to say.
- I'm not that familiar with everything. I just walk and hike and have an occasional lunch.
- It seems safe, but I don't know about the night security.
- Just went to stables.
- Lack of specific knowledge.
- No public facility is excellent on safety.
- No where is completely safe and it is pretty isolated in some places, park clientele is good though.
- Not much experience.
- One night is hard to judge.
- Safe for what?
- Since it is a natural area, there are natural hazards such as slippery trails, but this is to be expected.
- The unfamiliarity when no one's around makes me nervous about what lies around the corner. I think it's more in my head though.
- Well, where is anyone safe?
- What is your definition of safe?

Dangerous traffic and lack of enforcement of speed limits

- Cars drive too fast, average 40 mph not 20. Some cars "cruise" the park. How about speed bumps?
- Cars drive too fast.
- Lack of patrolling rangers, beer cans, drive through trucks.
- Motorists often speed.
- People drive too fast. The speed limit should be enforced. Also dogs should be leashed.
- Several times I've been followed while on my bike -- usually early a.m. Typical -- park on side -- I ride by, soon they pass and park again ahead of me.
- Some cars drive too fast.
- Some drive too fast.
- Some people drive very fast.
- Speed limits obviously not enforced.
- Speed of drivers in park.
- Speeding vehicles.

- The police and others driving who patrolled drove too fast.
- Trash trucks fly through the park too fast.
- Trash trucks, etc, come through too fast.
- Walkers and car traffic mixed.

Lack of park staff/rangers patrolling the park

- Are there rangers who patrol at night?
- Did not see any park staff.
- Did not see any security/rangers but we have only been here for awhile.
- Did not see many staff/people.
- Did not see park rangers or police except at exit.
- Didn't see one park ranger.
- Have not seen any park rangers; have been alone in desolate areas.
- Lack of patrolling rangers, beer cans, drive through trucks.
- Need more officers for a large park.
- No night patrol I saw.
- No security patrol visible.
- No visible security except exit and entrance.
- No visible staff.
- Presence of DNR personnel at parking areas.

Poor upkeep

- Broken beer bottles on trail.
- Good road maintenance.
- Restrooms need updating.
- The only thing that I saw were that the bathrooms were filthy.
- Trash
- Upkeep at park has been lacking as of late.
- Upkeep not optimal. Trails sometimes poorly marked.
- We rented a pavilion a couple times and they needed some work. Especially the grills.

Behavior of others

- Groups of rowdy/rough youths witnessed during summer visits.
- Had cooler and medications stolen in broad daylight.
- Lack of patrolling rangers, beer cans, drive thru trucks.
- People drive too fast. The speed limit should be enforced. Also dogs should be leashed.
- Sometimes worried about other visitors.
- Teens or others have access after closing of gate hours. Need security cameras at gate to video and prosecute whoever is damaging the gate at entrance.

Lack of signage

- Signage.
- There isn't a sign that says what to do in an emergency, is really dark further away from host.
- Trails are unmarked.
- Upkeep not optimal. Trails sometimes poorly marked.

Problems with trails

- Concrete blocks at beginning of paved bike trail. Coming down hill at 20-25 mph and hitting blocks could be deadly.
- Fear of what might happen to a woman walking the trails alone.
- Just would feel somewhat nervous walking trails alone as a female.

Other

- Always visit during daylight hours; lots of people around.
- Need more children activities.
- Need more disability access for the pool.
- Not enough activity around.

Appendix G. List of Responses for Additional Comments (Q 23)

Responses to Question #23

Please write any additional comments about your park visit or suggestions on how the Missouri Department of Natural Resources can make your experience in Babler Memorial State Park a better one.

General positive comments

- A very nice place to be.
- ALL Missouri State Parks I've been are more excellent than any other state. More reasonably priced, cleaner, better maintained, especially far better than any federal park I've seen.
- Beautiful park, healthy animals, friendly people.
- Enjoy driving through park.
- Family visiting from UK who were very impressed.
- First time visit...I enjoyed the park very much. Will make another trip and camp next time.
- Glad to live near such a nice park.
- Good park.
- Great park!
- Great park!
- Great park! I've been coming here for years.
- Great park.
- Great park.
- Great park. I ride my motorcycle here every time and go out for a ride.
- I bike in this park 3+ mornings a week and love it!
- I come here at least twice a week. I love this jewel of a park, and I hope it keeps its "naturalness" as the area grows. Thanks for maintaining this excellent park.
- I enjoy living close and visiting Babler Park. Thank you.
- I like it - it's pretty well kept.
- I love it like it is.
- I love this park.
- I only recently started using the park to walk in. I love it and can't wait to see the fall colors in a few weeks!
- I think this park is a place where you can bring your family and enjoy a good time.
- It was nice. Thank you. It was hard to get in late at night.
- It's a great park!
- It's beautiful and well kept.
- Keep up the good work!
- Keep up the good work!!!
- Love the park. This is our first visit since we moved into the area. We will be back many times in the near future.
- Nice facility to have such good access.
- None, thank you.
- Our experience was overall pleasant, but had experienced very rowdy camping neighbors that partied late (or early in the morning) after curfew.
- Outstanding facility. I plan to return.
- Really like pool. Intend to take advantage of more in fall.
- Seems to be a very nice park; thanks for letting us visit.

- Thanks for asking!
- Thanks.
- The grounds seem to have been better maintained this year than last. We appreciate that!
- The park looks great and has for the 20 years I have been coming.
- The staff was very helpful when we locked our keys in the car.
- This is a great place to get away and relax and the price is always right.
- Very enjoyable.
- Very nice park and campground.
- Very pleased with the work that has been done on the horse trails-the cutting of brush, repairing the bad spots on the trail and good work to improve drainage of water.
- We are from the Boston Mts. of Arkansas. We moved here to be close to our son. Their park has kept us from feeling so lonely. We dearly love to come and visit it.
- We enjoy the park.
- We like the park. We've been coming here for 25 years.
- We live within one mile of Babler and love to come and walk in the park.
- We love this park and the pool.
- We love this park. Park staff has always been helpful and friendly.
- We love this park-would be so nice if there was a "dog" area for pets to run free.
- We use the pool nearly every day it is open and have grown to love the park through lifeguard staff. I also bike ride in the park on an average of 200 times per year and love it.
- We visit whenever possible and enjoy all the park offers.
- We were surprised at how well maintained the facilities were and the campground hostess- park staff. But, we were also surprised at the fact the American flag was flown at night without a light on it.

Need improved/additional facilities

- Add lake for fishing.
- Adding a fishing lake would be nice.
- Additional playground equipment, including some for toddler-sized kids (like swings).
- Another playground and more trashcans are needed.
- Discourage motorists from speeding. Possibly raise the speed limit to 25 and strictly enforce it. Possibly establish a dedicated portion of trails to off-road bicyclists.
- I think that a larger children's playground would be an asset.
- I would like to see more and larger, nicer playgrounds. Hiking trails need additional development. (Unpaved trails, that is.) Additional trails would help, too. Existing trails are very nice.
- Improve quality of campsites and facilities. Design more trails with better markings.
- Level and longer bike trails.
- More bike trails that loop back to parking area.
- More bike trails.
- More facilities, recreational areas.
- More playground equipment for small/young children would be nice.
- Need a pond or lake with fishing.
- Need more playground equipment.
- Playground for children.

- Possibly adding more children's play areas.
- Should have a camp store with firewood and ice. According to the internet, the pool appeared free and didn't know there was a fee. Also didn't like fee for parents to watch children in their street clothes inside fence. Many watering sites in campground are inoperative and bath house is too small for women.
- Thanks. We would like to bring back diving boards and merry-go-rounds. Maybe an observation tower. Thank you.
- The playground should be larger. The bike paths could be more conducive to children's riding. Create bike/rollerblade paved path. *Model after Hennepin County parks in Minneapolis, MN.
- The restrooms and campsites needed to be cleaner (especially pit toilets) Cans and bottles at our campsite and others. Playgrounds would be nice.
- We love this park-would be so nice if there was a "dog" area for pets to run free.
- What happened to the kid's playground?
- Would like to have a bike trail.
- Would like to have a bike trail.
- You need a new playground.
- You need to build a new playground with modern equipment.

Enforce speed limits and other park rules

- Camping area...little more noise control in late evening.
- Didn't appreciate extremely loud rock music in the middle of a nice nature park.
- Discourage motorists from speeding. Possibly raise the speed limit to 25 and strictly enforce it. Possibly establish a dedicated portion of trails to off-road bicyclists.
- Do NOT allow radios in the camp area (head phones only.) Fix the level of water in the swimming pool so that it does not make a sucking noise!
- Enforce quiet hours and remind visitors to respect the other campers.
- Loud music! Boom box should not be allowed in the park.
- Need to enforce quiet in campgrounds after 10 p.m.
- Our experience was overall pleasant, but had experienced very rowdy camping neighbors that partied late (or early in the morning) after curfew.
- Please get people to slow down and leash their dogs. Enforce the 20 mph speed limit please.
- To limit excess noise such as loud music and partying.

More/better signage

- Better road signs...existing hard to see. Better info about trails, bike and hiking. Distance markers would be good on trails.
- Better signs showing locations of facilities.
- Improve quality of campsites and facilities. Design more trails with better markings.
- It would be nice to map out walking routes with miles such as: It's 1 mile from visitor parking lot to such and such, etc.
- Please improve signs to help with getting around at night.
- Signs indicating approaches to park need to be more numerous and more accurately placed.
- The signs are not placed far enough from the turn area you are looking for. Also, signs on dogwood trail are confusing and misleading. We were worried about getting lost.

- The signs on Highway 109 do not make it clear where to turn. Also, really wanted to camp here but you were full.

Suggestions/comments about the campground

- Bathrooms very dirty and campsite did have a little trash. Would be nice if you got firewood later than 6:30pm. Some campsites aren't private and very few have a level area to set up a tent.
- Do NOT allow radios in the camp area (head phones only.) Fix the level of water in the swimming pool so that it does not make a sucking noise!
- More electric sites.
- Need water on each campsite.
- Should have a camp store with firewood and ice. According to the internet, the pool appeared free and didn't know there was a fee. Also didn't like fee for parents to watch children in their street clothes inside fence. Many watering sites in campground are inoperative and bath house is too small for women.
- Tentsites have no room for tents -- should have electric sites in woods and tentsites in open electric site area.
- Voltage in campground is very low--107 to 108 volts--when campground is full it goes as low as 104 volts. The turn into the campground is difficult. The road is not wide enough at the curb.

Need more trash receptacles

- Another playground and more trash cans are needed.
- Have cleaner, airier bathrooms, more trash facilities, bins for recycling...this is promoting conservation. More wood on a crowded weekend, there was none.
- Lack of trashcans at out site.
- Picnic area very clean, but no trashcans, had to take trash home.
- Provide trash cans.
- We had no trashcans in our picnic area. There was simply a large container away from the shelter.

Comments about the restrooms/shower houses

- Bathrooms very dirty and campsite did have a little trash. Would be nice if you got firewood later than 6:30pm. Some campsites aren't private and very few have a level area to set up a tent.
- Have cleaner, airier bathrooms, more trash facilities, bins for recycling...this is promoting conservation. More wood on a crowded weekend, there was none.
- I am shocked at the bathroom facilities that children in park camp are expected to use. Unbelievable.
- Make bathroom larger, more ventilated, more stalls, sinks and showers.
- Put soap in bathroom (campground) and handicapped stall at campground.

Better maintenance/upkeep

- I felt the camp fee collector was quite rude to a family camped in the handicapped lot with a handicapped individual. The old well/fountain by the visitor center did not appear to be sturdily covered. A tree was down on the Memorial Trail impeding foot

traffic. When we called about horseback trail rides, we were told prices but not about the need for reservations. The pony rides were good.

- Please have fire pits cleaned more often. Our site was full of trash.
- The restrooms and campsites needed to be cleaner (especially pit toilets) Cans and bottles at our campsite and others. Playgrounds would be nice.

Comments about park/concessionaire staff

- I felt the camp fee collector was quite rude to a family camped in the handicapped lot with a handicapped individual. The old well/fountain by the visitor center did not appear to be sturdily covered. A tree was down on the Memorial Trail impeding foot traffic. When we called about horseback trail rides, we were told prices but not about the need for reservations. The pony rides were good.
- We came to the park to use the swimming pool and were told that we could not have a t-shirt on. One of our people burns very easily and had to keep his t-shirt on. I asked for our money back because she would not let him in.

Comments in response to question 11 (carry in/carry out)

- "Trash bag" program encourages visitors to be responsible for picking up trash while visiting by providing free litter bag. Would also like to see further maintenance on horse and hiking trails by reducing low and muddy spots.
- Carry in and carry out is more suited to REMOTE areas.

Other

- "Trash bag" program encourages visitors to be responsible for picking up trash while visiting by providing free litter bag. Would also like to see further maintenance on horse and hiking trails by reducing low and muddy spots.
- Bring on the turkeys. Bring on the deer.
- Camping/Boy Scout area had 1/2 of the fence closed, I pulled into the area and the other 1/2 of the fence was closed. I hit the fence and it damaged my hood, and it did not hurt the fence. Keep the whole fence opened or closed.
- Could I run after dark during the winter?
- Decrease size of bump to get into camp.
- Do NOT allow radios in the camp area (head phones only.) Fix the level of water in the swimming pool so that it does not make a sucking noise!
- Don't freak out when someone is playing frisbee with their dog.
- Get more wood.
- Have cleaner, airier bathrooms, more trash facilities, bins for recycling...this is promoting conservation. More wood on a crowded weekend, there was none.
- I felt the camp fee collector was quite rude to a family camped in the handicapped lot with a handicapped individual. The old well/fountain by the visitor center did not appear to be sturdily covered. A tree was down on the Memorial Trail impeding foot traffic. When we called about horseback trail rides, we were told prices but not about the need for reservations. The pony rides were good.
- I would like to have access to bonfires in other areas besides campgrounds and shelters.
- It was nice. Thank you. It was hard to get in late at night.
- Not 50%. Maybe 25% at most. Not for a metropolitan area like this.

- Note: Who is responsible for the seepage from wastewater treatment lagoon? It floods the little backroad. Not good!
- Put fence around park and allow deer and wildlife to return. All the deer were killed off.
- Should have a camp store with firewood and ice. According to the internet, the pool appeared free and didn't know there was a fee. Also didn't like fee for parents to watch children in their street clothes inside fence. Many watering sites in campground are inoperative and bath house is too small for women.
- The signs on Highway 109 do not make it clear where to turn. Also, really wanted to camp here but you were full.
- Waste treatment lagoon is leaking sewage.
- We live in neighborhood and only use pool. Need disability access to pool itself and not just pool area.
- We were surprised at how well maintained the facilities were and the campground hostess- park staff. But, we were also surprised at the fact the American flag was flown at night without a light on it.