



Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Division of State Parks  
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# **1998 Bennett Spring State Park Visitor Survey**

## **Project Completion Report**

**Submitted to**

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

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## 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 Bennett Spring State Park (BSSP).

An on-site survey of adult visitors to BSSP was conducted from July 1, to August 31, 1998. Four hundred fifteen surveys were collected, with an overall response rate of 99.0%. 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

- BSSP visitors were comprised of nearly equal numbers of males and females, and the average age of the adult visitors to BSSP was 48.
- The highest percentage had a high school education or less and had an annual household income of \$25,000-\$50,000.
- The majority of visitors (93%) were Caucasian, 3% were Native American, 2% were Hispanic, 1% were African American, and 0.5% were Asian.
- Four percent (4%) of the visitors reported having a disability.
- Almost three-quarters of the visitors (72%) were from Missouri, and 8% were from Illinois and Kansas.
- Most visitors came from St. Louis, Kansas city and Columbia area with

the remainder spread throughout the state.

### Use-Patterns

- Four-fifths of BSSP visitors had visited the park before.
- BSSP visitors had visited the park an average of 3.9 times in the past year.
- About three-fourths of the visitors were staying overnight.
- Of the visitors staying overnight, three-fourths stayed in BSSP, with over half staying in the campgrounds, 10% staying at the cabins, and 5% staying at the motel in BSSP. Almost one-third stayed two nights. The average number of nights visitors stayed was 3.9.
- The majority of BSSP visitors visited the park with family and/or friends. Less than 1% visited the park alone.
- The most frequent recreation activities in which visitors participated were fishing, camping, viewing visitor center exhibits, swimming in pool, viewing wildlife, and picnicking.

### Satisfaction and Other Measures

- Ninety-eight percent (98%) of the visitors were either very or somewhat satisfied overall.
- Non-campers at BSSP had a significantly higher overall

- satisfaction rating than campers. Weekend visitors also had a significantly higher overall satisfaction rating than weekday visitors.
- Visitors were most satisfied with the nature center and least satisfied with the dining lodge.
  - The majority of visitors gave high ratings on being free of litter and trash and being safe.
  - Clean restrooms and upkeep of park facilities were the areas identified as needing the most attention.
  - Almost half (47%) of visitors with safety concerns listed lack of law enforcement (lack of personnel/rangers patrolling the park and/or lack of enforcement of speed limits) as a major safety concern.
  - Almost 78% of visitors to BSSP felt crowded during their visit. More than half of them felt crowded in the spring and three fishing zones.
  - Visitors surveyed at the spring and three fishing zones had a higher perception of crowding than visitors at the three other recreation areas.
  - Visitors who felt the park was safe also were more satisfied overall and felt less crowded.
  - Almost half of BSSP visitors supported locating the amphitheater attached to the nature center.
  - Twenty-five percent (25%) of the respondents provided additional comments or suggestions, one-third of which were positive comments.

## Acknowledgements

Conducting and successfully completing a study of this magnitude and complexity could not have been accomplished without the cooperation of many individuals. About 3,900 visitors to Missouri State Parks participated in the 1998 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey. Over 400 visitors to Bennett Spring State Park voluntarily agreed to provide the information upon which this report is based. In many cases these individuals graciously extended their stay at particular recreation sites so that they could complete the questionnaire. 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 thanks also go to the numerous research assistants and students at the University of Missouri who collected the survey data and assisted in the coding and computer data entry of the questionnaires. They are: Li-chen Lin, Tucker Fredrickson, Carrie Robinett, Chris Thoele, and Casey Thornton.

**Table of Contents**

Executive Summary ..... ii

Acknowledgements ..... iii

Table of Contents ..... iv

List of Tables ..... vi

List of Figures ..... vii

Introduction ..... 1

    Background ..... 1

    Need for Recreation Research ..... 1

    Study Purpose ..... 2

    Study Area ..... 2

    Scope of Study ..... 2

Methodology ..... 3

    Sampling Procedures ..... 3

    Questionnaire ..... 3

    Selection of Subjects ..... 4

    Data Collection ..... 4

    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

        Visit Characteristics ..... 8

        Using the Reservation System ..... 9

    Recreation Activity Participation ..... 9

    Satisfaction Measures ..... 10

        Overall Satisfaction ..... 10

        Satisfaction with Park Features ..... 10

    Performance Rating ..... 10

    Importance-Performance Measures ..... 11

    Crowding ..... 13

        Crowding and satisfaction ..... 13

    Safety Concerns of Visitors ..... 14

    Support of Amphitheater Location ..... 14

    Additional Visitor Comments ..... 15

Discussion ..... 17

    Management Implications ..... 17

Research Recommendations .....19  
Methodology Recommendations and Considerations for Other Parks.....19  
    Survey administration .....19  
References.....21  
Appendix A. Bennett Spring State Park User Survey.....22  
Appendix B. Survey Protocol .....24  
Appendix C. Prize Entry Form .....26  
Appendix D. Observation Survey .....28  
Appendix E. Responses to Survey Questions .....30  
Appendix F. List of Responses for Safety Concerns (Q 9).....37  
Appendix G. List of Responses for Additional Comments (Q 22).....41

**List of Tables**

Table 1. BSSP Survey Schedule .....3  
Table 2. Surveys Collected by Day of Week.....6  
Table 3. Surveys Collected by Time Slot .....6  
Table 4. Surveys Collected by Date.....7  
Table 5. Surveys Collected by Recreation Area .....7  
Table 6. Mean Performance and Importance Scores for Park Attributes .....11  
Table 7. Locations Where BSSP Visitors Felt Crowded on Their Visits .....13  
Table 8. Frequency and Percentage of Comments and Suggestions from  
BSSP Visitors .....16

**List of Figures**

Figure 1. Ethnic Origin of BSSP Visitors .....8  
Figure 2. Residence of BSSP Visitors by Zip Code .....8  
Figure 3. Participation in Recreational Activities .....9  
Figure 4. Satisfaction with BSSP Features .....10  
Figure 5. Importance-Performance Matrix of Park Attributes.....12  
Figure 6. Comments from Visitors Not Rating BSSP Excellent on Safety .....14  
Figure 7. Amphitheater locations.....15  
Figure 8. Safety Ratings of BSSP .....17  
Figure 9. Levels of Crowding and Satisfaction Ratings by Safety Concerns .....18



## Introduction

### BACKGROUND

In 1939, 15 years after Missouri obtained its first state park, 70,000 visitors were recorded visiting Missouri's state parks (Masek, 1974). Today, more than 16 million people visit the 80 state parks and historic parks Missouri offers (Holst & Simms, 1996). The increase in visits to Missouri state parks and historic sites may be due in part to the diversity of sites, resources, and recreational opportunities provided by the state park system. Visitors to state parks have different characteristics and preferences (Donnelly, Vaske, De Ruiter, & King, 1996), and may be attracted to Missouri's state parks and historic sites because of the diversity of resources and recreational opportunities (Holst, 1991).

The DSP recognizes the importance of this diversity, as is evidenced by the mission of the state park system: "To preserve and interpret the finest examples of Missouri's natural landscapes; to preserve and interpret Missouri's cultural landmarks; and to provide healthy and enjoyable outdoor recreation opportunities for all Missourians and visitors to the state" (Holst, 1990, p. 7).

In order to fulfill its mission, state park managers are challenged to determine what recreational opportunities are most sought after by visitors to state parks and to determine how satisfied those visitors are with state park facilities, services, and programs. In order to ensure continued citizen support for the Parks and Soils sales tax, a tax funding state

parks, managers are further challenged to determine whether all demographic populations are benefiting from the recreational opportunities provided at state parks.

To aid in meeting these challenges and to aid in the planning and management processes at recreation sites, surveys of visitors to the various state parks and historic sites should be conducted (TRRU, 1983). Specific information provided by the surveys should include use patterns of visitors to state parks, socio-demographic characteristics of those visitors, and visitor satisfaction of facilities, services, and programs (Lucas, 1985).

### NEED FOR RECREATION RESEARCH

Recreation research has been identified as an important component in planning for recreational needs of visitors, particularly research that examines preferences and behaviors of visitors (Manning, 1986; Yoesting, 1981). In the past, it has been assumed that administrators of recreation sites were omniscient, knowing intuitively what the public wanted and should have in the way of recreational opportunities (Manning, 1986; Reid, 1963; Yoesting, 1981). Managers regarded visitors to recreation sites as static, and did not take into consideration that visitor preferences and desires can change. Because site administrators are not omniscient and visitor preferences do change (Cordell & Hartmann, 1983; Ditton, Fedler, Holland, & Graefe, 1982; Donnelly et al., 1996), studies examining the use patterns, socio-demographic

characteristics, and satisfaction of visitors are necessary for planning, implementing, and improving recreational opportunities.

Little site-specific information is available for state parks and historic sites in Missouri. Much of the survey work done for state parks and historic sites has focused on the state park system as a whole. A need exists for site-specific data to compare visitor information between parks, or to measure changing trends in these parks. Also, a need exists for consistent methodology in visitor surveys, in order that such comparisons and measurements can be made.

Manning (1986) reported that many surveys, even when conducted by the same agency, were methodologically inconsistent in recreational activity definitions, data collection techniques, sample sizes and response rates, age of respondents, and question wording and sequence. Any comparison of data would be difficult because of the inconsistent methodologies.

### **STUDY PURPOSE**

The purpose of this study is to gain information about visitor use patterns, socio-demographic characteristics, and satisfaction with park programs, facilities, and services.

This report examines the results of the visitor survey conducted at Bennett Spring State Park (BSSP), one of the eight parks and sites included in the

study. Objectives specific to this report include:

1. Describing the use patterns of visitors to BSSP during the period between July 1, and August 31, 1998.
2. Describing the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors to BSSP.
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 highly rate park safety and those who did not.

### **STUDY AREA**

One of the oldest state parks in Missouri, BSSP is a popular destination for trout fishermen. Because of this popularity, the 3,100-acre park offers many extra amenities besides the usual picnic areas and campgrounds: a motel, cabin rentals, a dining lodge, and a swimming pool. As visitors discover all this park has to offer, BSSP has become increasingly crowded, a concern for park managers.

### **SCOPE OF STUDY**

The population of the visitor study at BSSP consisted of all BSSP visitors who were 18 years of age or older (adults), and who visited BSSP from July 1, to August 31, 1998. These results only reflect summer visitors.

## Methodology

### SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A 95% confidence interval was chosen with a plus or minus 5% margin of error. Based upon 1997 visitation data for July and August at BSSP, it was estimated that a population size of approximately

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 (Time Slot 2) and assigned to the first of the scheduled survey dates. Thereafter, time slots were assigned in ranking order based on the first time slot. For example, the second

*Table 1. Bennett Spring State Park Survey Schedule*

Date	Day	Time slot
July 17	Friday	2. 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. 3. 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
July 19	Sunday	1. 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 2. 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.
August 2	Sunday	1. 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 3. 4:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
August 4	Tuesday	2. 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. 3. 4:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
August 9	Sunday	1. 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 2. 12:00 p.m. - 4 p.m.
August 11	Tuesday	1. 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. 3. 4:00 p.m. - 8 p.m.

300,000 visitors would visit BSSP during the period between July 1 and August 31, 1998 (DNR, 1998). Therefore, with a 95% confidence interval and a plus or minus 5% margin of error, a sample size of 400 was required (Folz, 1996). A random sample of adult visitors (18 years of age and older) who visited BSSP during the study period were the respondents for this study.

Table 1 shows the survey schedule along with the time slots used. Three time slots were chosen for surveying and two time slots were surveyed per day. The three time slots were as follows: Time Slot 1 = 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m., Time Slot 2 =

time slot on the first survey date would be Time Slot 3, the second survey date would be surveyed during Time Slot 1 and Time Slot 2, the third date during Time Slot 3 and Time Slot 1, and so on. This method was chosen to allow each of the three time slots to be surveyed at least once during the two-day block, and each time slot to be surveyed four times over the 6 days. This method was also chosen to allow visitors leaving the park at various times of the day an equal opportunity for being sampled.

### 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 BSSP was administered on-site, to eliminate the non-response bias of a mail-back survey. Because an exit survey at the entrance of the park would not have been feasible due to the many entrances into the park, four recreation areas were identified as areas to survey. Area 1 included the five campgrounds in BSSP; Area 2 included the spring and its three fishing zones; Area 3 included the fish hatchery, nature center, and store; and Area 4 included the picnic areas and playground. All adults (18 years of age and older) in these areas were asked to participate in the survey.

### **DATA COLLECTION**

The surveyor wore a state park t-shirt and walked a roving route encompassing all four recreation areas. During the selected time slot, the surveyor asked every visitor who was 18 years of age and older and in these areas 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 group of survey participants; 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 useable 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 BSSP 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 two open-ended questions, questions 9 and 22, were listed as well as grouped into categories for frequency and percentage calculations. The number of surveys completed by month, by date, by day of week, by weekend versus weekday, by time slot, and by recreation area were also determined.

Comparisons using 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 7), ratings of park attributes (question 8), overall satisfaction (question 12), and perceptions of crowding (question 13). The selected groups included:

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 BSSP campground.
3. Weekend visitors versus weekday visitors. Weekend visitors were surveyed on Saturday and Sunday, weekdays were Monday through Friday.

Other comparisons were made using 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, and measures of satisfaction with park features and overall satisfaction of visitors with safety concerns.

Additional comparisons include: perceptions of crowding between visitors at each of the four recreation areas; and overall satisfaction between visitors who felt some degree of crowding and those who were not at all crowded on their visit.

## Results

This section describes the results of the Bennett Spring 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 415 surveys were collected at BSSP during July and August, with 157 collected in July (37.8%) and 258 collected in August (62.2%). Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 show surveys collected by day of week, by time slot, by date, and by recreation area, respectively. Of the 415 surveys collected, 214 (51.6%) were collected on weekends (Sunday) and 201 (48.4%) were collected on weekdays (Tuesday and Friday).

The overall response rate was 99.0% (only four visitors refused to participate in the survey).

### **SAMPLING ERROR**

With a sample size of 415, a confidence interval of 95%, and a margin of error of plus or minus 5%, there is a 95% certainty that the true results of this study are within plus or minus 5% of the study findings. For example, from the results that 47.1% of the visitors to BSSP during the study period were female, it can be stated that between 42.1% and 52.1% of the BSSP visitors were female.

*Table 2. Surveys Collected by Day of Week*

Day	Frequency	Percent
Sunday	214	51.6%
Tuesday	116	28.0%
Friday	85	20.5%
Total	415	100.0%

*Table 3. Surveys Collected by Time Slot*

Time Slot	Frequency	Percent
1. 8 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	146	35.2%
2. 12:00 p.m. -- 4 p.m.	135	32.5%
3. 4:00 p.m. - 8 p.m.	134	32.3%
Total	415	100.0%

education or less. Another third (33.4%)

**Table 4. Surveys Collected by Date**

Day and Date	Frequency	Percent
Friday, July 17	85	20.5%
Sunday, July 19	72	17.3%
Sunday, August 2	89	21.4%
Tuesday, August 4	57	13.7%
Sunday, August 9	53	12.8%
Tuesday, August 11	59	14.2%
Total	415	100.0%

**Table 5. Surveys Collected by Recreation Area**

Recreation Area	Frequency	Percent
Area 1. Campgrounds	140	33.7%
Area 2. Spring & Zones 1, 2, & 3	144	34.7%
Area 3. Hatchery, Nature Center, & Store	85	20.5%
Area 4. Picnic Areas/Playground	46	11.1%
Total	415	100.0%

**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

**Age**

The average age of adult visitors to BSSP was 47.8. When grouped into four age categories, 23.6 % of the adult visitors were between the ages of 18-34, 46.5% were between the ages of 35-54, 14.2% were between the ages of 55-64, and 15.7% were between the ages of 65-85.

**Gender**

Visitors to BSSP were almost equally male and female. Male visitors comprised 52.8% of all visitors, and female visitors comprised 47.3% of all visitors.

**Education**

One third (35.2%) of visitors to BSSP indicated they had a high school

indicated they had completed vocational school or some college, and the last third (31.4%) indicated having completed a four-year college or a post-graduate education.

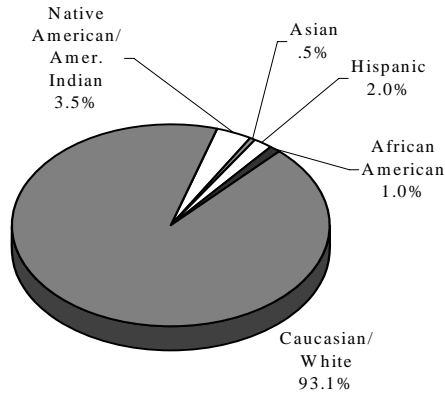
**Income**

The largest percentage (44.1%) of visitors to BSSP reported they had an annual income of between \$25,000 and \$50,000. The second largest percentage (27.1%) of visitors had an income of between \$50,001 and \$75,000. Visitors falling into the "less than \$25,000" category and into the "more than \$75,000" category were 17.6% and 11.2% respectively.

**Ethnic Origin**

Figure 1 indicates the ethnic origin of BSSP visitors. The vast majority (93.1%) of visitors was Caucasian. Less than one percent (.5%) were Asian, 2.0% were Hispanic, 1.0% were African American, and 3.5% were Native American.

**Figure 1. Ethnic origin of BSSP visitors.**



were Hispanic, 1.0% were African American, and 3.5% were Native American.

**Visitors with Disabilities**

Only 4.0% of the visitors to BSSP reported having some type of disability that substantially limited one or more life activities or that required special accommodations. The majority (38.5%)

of the disabilities reported were mobility-impairing disabilities, but other disabilities included arthritis, diabetes, poor eyesight, old age, and heart problems.

**Residence**

The majority of visitors were from Missouri (71.6%) followed next by Kansas (8.4%) and Illinois (8.2%). Figure 2 shows the residence of visitors by zip code. Most visitors came from Kansas City and St. Louis with the remainder spread out around the state.

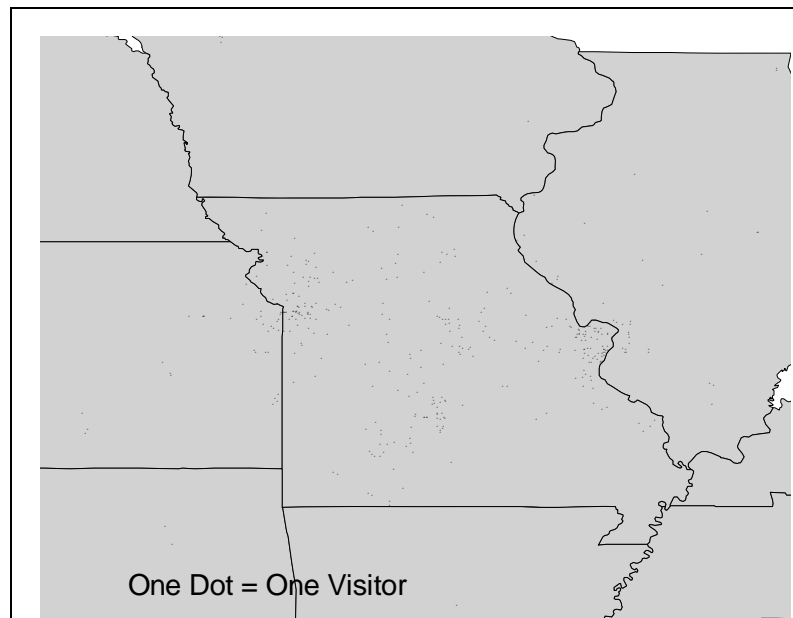
**USE PATTERNS**

**Visit Characteristics**

Four-fifths (81.2%) of the visitors to BSSP were repeat visitors, with a little less than one-fifth (18.8%) of the visitors being first time visitors. The average number of times all visitors reported visiting BSSP within the past year was 3.9 times.

Most of the visitors (77.2%) to BSSP during the study period indicated that they were staying overnight, with only

**Figure 2. Residence of BSSP Visitors by Zip Code.**





22.8% indicating that they were day-users. Of those staying overnight during their visit, 72.8% stayed in BSSP, with 57.8% of the visitors staying in the campgrounds at BSSP, 10.3% staying in the cabins at BSSP, and 4.7% staying in the motel at BSSP. Of the other overnight visitors, 13.4% stayed in nearby lodging facilities, 10.0% stayed in a nearby campground, and 3.8% stayed at either a friend's or relative's house or at another type of facility.

Of those reporting overnight stays, less than ten percent (7.2%) stayed one night, 28.3% stayed two nights, 25.8% stayed three nights, 14.0% stayed four nights, 8.8% stayed five nights, 9.7% stayed 6-10 nights, and 3.1% stayed more than 10 nights. The average stay for overnight visitors was 3.9 nights.

More than half (54.0%) of the visitors to BSSP visited the park with family. Approximately one-fourth (24.2%) visited with family and friends, while 10.0% visited with friends, and 8.1% visited the park alone. Only 2.9% indicated visiting the park with a club or organized group, and less than one percent (0.7%) visited the park with "other" during their visit to BSSP.

Using the Reservation System

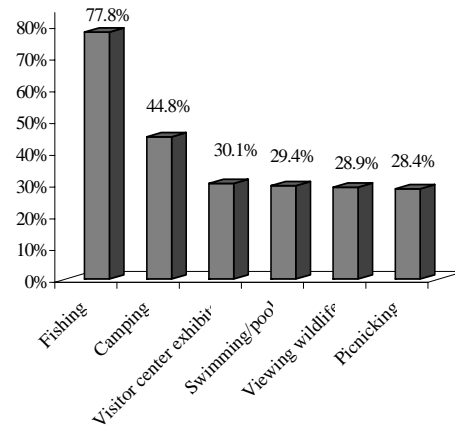
Of the visitors indicating they were staying at the campgrounds in BSSP, these visitors were asked to indicate whether or not they had used the reservation system, and if so, whether they were satisfied with the system. Almost one-third (28.9%) of the visitors responding to this question indicated they used the reservation system, and 72.5% of the respondents answering whether or not they were satisfied with the system indicated that they were indeed satisfied. However, there was a

small percentage (2.1%) of visitors who, although not using the reservation system, indicated they were dissatisfied with the system. When asked to identify why they were not satisfied, dissatisfied visitors (27.5%) gave answers ranging from the reservation fee, to the two-weeks notice required for reservations, to not being able to get reservations.

**RECREATION ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION**

Respondents to the survey were asked what activities they participated in during their visit to BSSP. Figure 3 shows the percentage of visitor participation in the six highest activities.

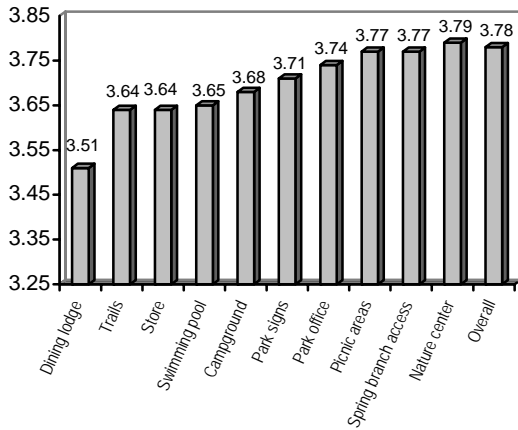
**Figure 3. Participation in recreation activities at BSSP.**



Fishing was the highest reported (77.8%) and camping was second (44.8%). Viewing visitor center exhibits, swimming in the pool, viewing wildlife, picnicking and hiking were next at 30.1%, 29.4%, 28.9%, 28.4%, and 24.3% respectively.

BSSP visitors reported engaging in other activities, including rafting/canoeing (18.3%), studying nature (17.3%), attending a nature program (10.0%),

**Figure 4. Satisfaction with BSSP features**



attending a special event (6.3%), and going on a guided nature hike (4.1%). Only 5.3% of visitors reported engaging in an "other" activity, and these included: bike riding, bird watching, visiting the fish hatchery and/or feeding the fish, attending a family reunion, and visiting the playground.

**SATISFACTION MEASURES**

**Overall Satisfaction**

When asked about their overall satisfaction with their visit, only 2.0% of visitors were somewhat or very dissatisfied with their visit, whereas 98.0% of visitors were either somewhat or very satisfied. Visitors' mean score for overall satisfaction was 3.78, 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 visitors and repeat visitors, both with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.78. Non-campers had a significantly higher ( $p < .01$ ) overall satisfaction rating (3.85) than campers (3.71). Surprisingly, weekend visitors also had a significantly

higher ( $p < .05$ ) overall satisfaction rating (3.83) than weekday visitors (3.73).

**Satisfaction with Park Features**

Respondents were also asked to express how satisfied they were with ten park features. Figure 4 shows the mean scores for the ten features and also for visitors' overall satisfaction. The satisfaction score for the nature center (3.79) was the highest, with the other scores ranging from 3.77 (spring branch access and picnic areas) to the lowest of 3.51 (the dining lodge).

No significant differences were found in mean satisfaction ratings of park attributes between weekend visitors and weekday visitors to BSSP. There were significant differences between campers and non-campers and how satisfied each group was with park signs and the park store. Non-campers had a significantly higher ( $p < .01$ ) satisfaction rating (3.79) of the park's signs than campers (3.63), and non-campers also rated the park store higher ( $p < .05$ ) than campers, with mean satisfaction ratings of 3.71 and 3.54 respectively. No significant differences were found in mean satisfaction ratings of park attributes between first time visitors and repeat visitors, except for each group's rating of satisfaction with the visitor center. Repeat visitors had a significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) satisfaction rating (3.81) than had first time visitors (3.67).

**PERFORMANCE RATING**

Visitors were asked to rate the park's performance of nine select park attributes (question 8): being free of litter and trash, having clean restrooms, upkeep of park facilities, having a helpful and friendly staff, access for persons with disabilities, care of trails

and natural resources, care of picnic areas and green space, the park’s interpretive programs, and being safe. Performance scores were based on a 4.0 scale, with 4 being excellent and 1 being poor.

There were significant differences between campers and non-campers regarding their performance ratings of having clean restrooms, upkeep of park facilities, having a helpful and friendly staff, care of trails and natural resources, and care of picnic areas and green space. Non-campers had a significantly higher ( $p < .001$ ) mean performance rating (3.31) of BSSP having clean restrooms than had campers (2.83). Non-campers also had a significantly higher ( $p < .001$ ) performance rating (3.54) of the upkeep of park facilities than the performance rating of campers (3.27). Non-campers also rated BSSP significantly higher ( $p < .01$ ) on having helpful and friendly staff, with a mean performance rating of 3.63 compared to the 3.46 mean rating of campers. Both care of trails and natural resources and care of picnic areas and green space were given significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) performance ratings by

non-campers also. For care of trails and natural resources and care of picnic areas and green space, non-campers gave mean performance ratings of 3.58 and 3.65 respectively, whereas campers gave both a mean performance rating of 3.42.

Respondents who were first time visitors had a significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) performance rating (3.55) regarding upkeep of park facilities than the performance rating (3.38) of repeat visitors. Surprisingly, weekend visitors had a significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) mean performance rating (3.56) of BSSP being free of litter and trash than had weekday visitors (3.41).

**IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The Importance-Performance (I-P) Analysis approach was used to analyze questions 8 and 11. Mean scores were calculated for the responses of the two questions regarding visitors’ ratings of the performance and importance of nine select park attributes. Table 6 lists the scores of these attributes, which were based on a 4.0 scale of 4 being excellent

**Table 6. Mean Performance and Importance Scores for Park Attributes**

Attribute	Mean Performance Score*	Mean Importance Score*
A. Being free of litter/trash	3.49	3.95
B. Having clean restrooms	3.08	3.95
C. Upkeep of park facilities	3.41	3.89
D. Having a helpful & friendly staff	3.55	3.81
E <sub>1</sub> . Access for persons with disabilities	3.53	3.60
E <sub>2</sub> . Access for persons with disabilities	3.62	3.93
F. Care of trails & natural resources	3.50	3.72
G. Care of picnic area/green space	3.53	3.78
H. Interpretive programs	3.50	3.49
I. Being safe	3.63	3.94

E<sub>1</sub> = All visitors

E<sub>2</sub> = Disabled visitors only

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

and 1 being poor, and 4 being very important and 1 being very unimportant.

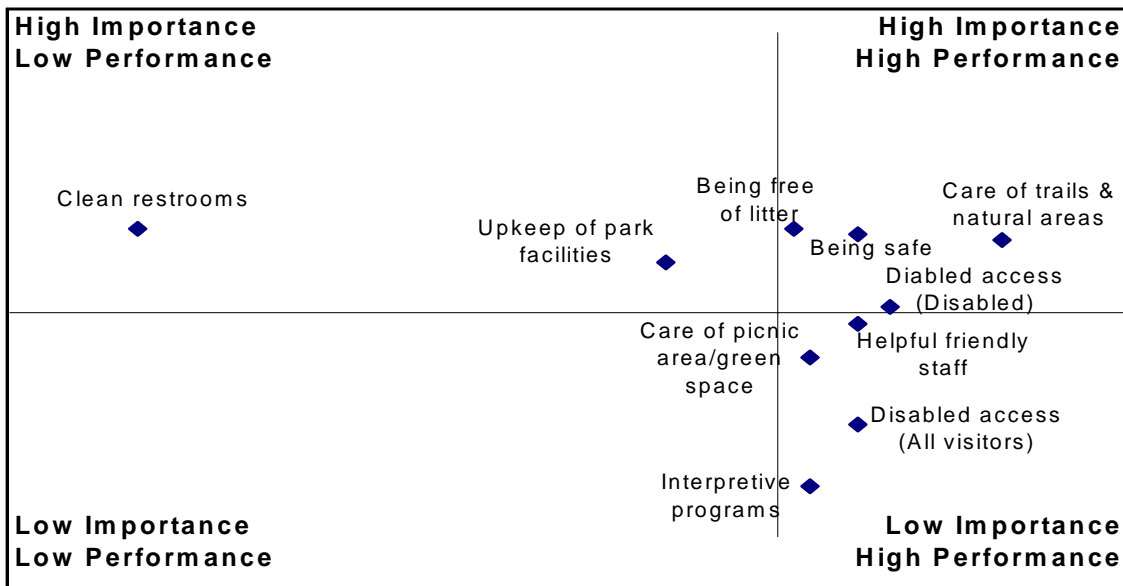
Figure 5 shows the Importance-Performance (I-P) Matrix. The mean scores were plotted on the I-P Matrix to illustrate the relative performance and importance rating of the attributes by park visitors.

The I-P Matrix is divided into four quadrants to provide a guide to aid in

exhibit attributes that are not as important to visitors.

BSSP is rated high on the important attributes of being free of litter and trash, and being safe. BSSP is also rated high by disabled visitors regarding its disabled accessibility. Characteristics that visitors felt were important but rated BSSP low on performance were having clean restrooms and upkeep of park facilities.

**Figure 5. Importance-Performance Matrix of Park Attributes**



possible management decisions. For example, the upper right quadrant is labeled “higher importance, higher 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 management, because they

There were no significant differences between the ratings of importance regarding clean restrooms for first time visitors and repeat visitors, campers and non-campers, or weekend and weekday visitors. There were no significant differences between the ratings of importance regarding upkeep of park facilities for first time visitors and repeat visitors, campers and non-campers, or for weekend and weekday visitors.

**CROWDING**

Visitors to BSSP 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		Slightly		Moderately		Extremely		
Crowded		Crowded		Crowded		Crowded		

Visitors' overall mean response to this question was 4.21. A little over one-fifth (22.4%) of visitors to BSSP did not feel at all crowded (selected 1 on the scale) during their visit. The rest (77.6%) 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 14). Almost two-thirds (60.3%) of the visitors who indicated some degree of crowding answered this open-ended question. Table 7 lists the locations where visitors felt crowded at BSSP. Of those who reported feeling crowded, the majority (58.5%) felt crowded in the spring and three fishing zones, and 20.3% felt crowded in the campgrounds. Only 4.2% indicated they

felt crowded in an "other" location, and these included: on canoe or float trips, at the picnic areas, and during the weekend.

There were no significant differences in visitors' perceptions of crowding between first time visitors and repeat visitors, campers and non-campers, or weekday and weekend visitors. There were significant differences ( $p < .001$ ) in visitors' perceptions of crowding between visitors surveyed at the four recreation areas. Visitors surveyed at the spring and three fishing zones had a higher mean overall crowded score of 4.84, compared to those visitors surveyed in the campgrounds (4.26); those visitors surveyed at the hatchery, store, and nature center (3.78); and the visitors surveyed at the picnic areas and playground (2.86).

*Crowding and satisfaction*

No significant difference 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 had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.81, and visitors who felt some degree of crowding had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.78.

**Table 7. Locations Where BSSP Visitors Felt Crowded During Their Visit**

Location	Frequency	Percent
Spring/fishing zones	127	58.5%
Campgrounds/campsites	44	20.3%
Park store/buying fishing tags	12	5.5%
Restrooms/shower houses	9	4.2%
Everywhere	7	3.2%
On roads/in parking lots	6	2.8%
Swimming pool	3	1.4%
Other	9	4.2%
Total	217	100.0%

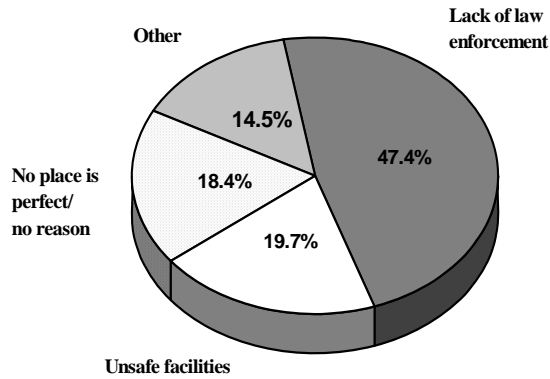
**SAFETY CONCERNS OF VISITORS**

Only a third (33.4%) of the visitors to BSSP did not rate the park as excellent for safety. Of those, 48.5% 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.

Almost half (47.4%) of the responses were related to the lack of law enforcement, particularly lack of park personnel or rangers patrolling the park and preventing people from breaking park rules; lack of enforcement regarding visitors obeying the speed limits so that pedestrians would be safe on the roads, bridges, and other high traffic areas; and lack of attentive lifeguards at the swimming pool. Almost one-fifth (19.7%) of the responses fell into a category that included unsafe facilities, poor maintenance, campgrounds and campsites being too crowded, confusing signs, and the spring and fishing zones being unsafe. Another category reflects those visitors (18.4%) who couldn't give a specific reason or felt that no place could be perfect. A fourth category includes those comments that could not be categorized (14.5%) into the above categories.

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. To determine if there were differences in socio-demographic characteristics, perceptions of crowding, satisfaction with park features, and overall satisfaction, responses were divided into two groups based on how they rated BSSP on being safe. Group 1

**Figure 6. Comments from Visitors Not Rating BSSP Excellent on Safety**



included those who rated the park excellent, and Group 2 included those who rated the park as good, fair, or poor.

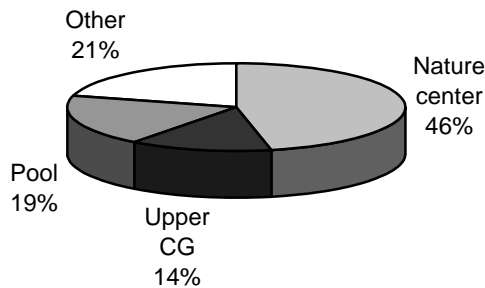
A significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) was found between the two groups and their perceptions of crowding. The mean crowded score for Group 1 was 4.0, and the mean crowded score for Group 2 was 4.66, indicating that those who rated the park as excellent on being safe also felt less crowded. Group 1 also had a significantly ( $p < .01$ ) higher satisfaction rating of all ten park features, had a significantly higher ( $p < .001$ ) rating of park attributes, and had a significantly higher ( $p < .001$ ) overall satisfaction rating.

**SUPPORT OF AMPHITHEATER LOCATION**

BSSP visitors were asked where they would like to see the amphitheater located if it was to be moved (question 10). Of the four choices of locations given to respondents, 46.7% chose the

option that would locate the amphitheater attached to the nature center (Figure 7). Locating the amphitheater in one of the upper campgrounds was chosen by 13.5% of the visitors, and locating it near the pool was supported by 18.9% of the visitors.

**Figure 7. Amphitheater locations.**



One-fourth (20.8%) of the visitors responding to this question supported an “other” location. Of those respondents who specified in what “other” location they would like to see the amphitheater, 49.0% said they either did not know or had no preference, 26.5% either didn’t know where the present amphitheater was or didn’t realize BSSP had one, and 20.4% supported leaving it where it was. Only two respondents suggested either putting it somewhere in the shade or locating it in the middle of the park.

**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 BSSP a better one (question 22). One-third (35.4%) of the total survey participants responded to this question, with 185 responses given by 147 respondents. The comments and suggestions were listed and grouped by similarities into 9 categories for frequency and percentage calculations. The list of comments and suggestions is found in Appendix G. Table 8 lists the frequencies and percentages of the comments and suggestions by category. Over one-fourth (29.2%) of the comments were positive comments, including such comments as: “Keep up the good work,” “This place is fantastic,” and “Super place.” The rest (70.8%) of the comments were categorized based on similar suggestions or complaints, such as law enforcement suggestions and complaints about the park facilities or an “other” category for suggestions and complaints not fitting into any other category.

**Table 8. Frequency and Percentage of Comments and Suggestions from BSSP Visitors**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
1. General positive comments	54	29.2%
2. Need newer/additional facilities such as campgrounds, campsites, cabins, and picnic areas; better maintenance/care of facilities & park grounds	50	27.0%
3. Restrooms/shower houses not clean and/or other problems	18	9.7%
4. More/bigger fish	14	7.6%
5. Problems with reservation system	9	4.9%
6. Better enforcement/higher profile of park personnel and/or rangers	8	4.3%
7. Problems with concessionaire services	5	2.7%
8. Park personnel not helpful/friendly	2	1.1%
9. Other	<u>28</u>	<u>15.1%</u>
Total	185	100.0%



## Discussion

### MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study provide relevant information concerning BSSP visitors. However, the results should be interpreted with caution. The surveys were collected only during the summer months of July, and August; 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 these two months.

Eighty-one percent (81%) of BSSP 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 (81%) combined with their positive comments provide evidence that BSSP visitors are indeed satisfied with their park experience. Over one-fourth of the visitors who gave comments or suggestions provided positive comments concerning BSSP and its staff.

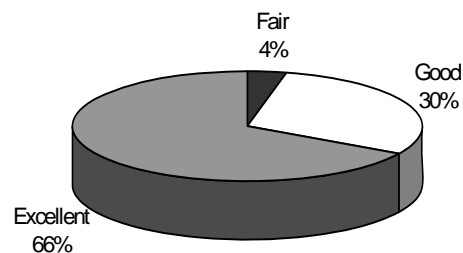
Interestingly, day users were significantly more satisfied with their visits than campers. Surprisingly, weekend visitors were also significantly more satisfied with their visits than weekday visitors.

Although only a third (33%) of visitors did not report an excellent rating of the park as being safe, management should not dismiss their safety concerns. While these visitors have a variety of reasons

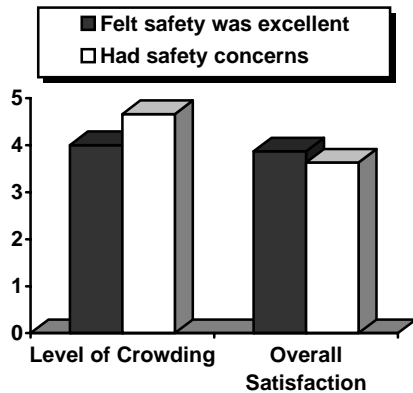
for not rating the park as excellent, a significant percentage of the visitors' responses (47%) were related to a lack of rangers patrolling or park personnel presence, a lack of enforcement, and/or people breaking rules. Another 20% of safety comments were directed at unsafe facilities, poor maintenance, or crowding. To address the safety concerns of BSSP visitors, one solution would be a greater park personnel presence, which could be accomplished by increasing ranger patrols and more enforcement of park rules and regulations. Maintenance schedules of park facilities might need to be reviewed.

To put the issue of park safety into perspective, 96% rated the park as good or excellent, while 4% of visitors gave the park a fair rating (Figure 8). No one gave the park a poor rating regarding safety. Visitor comments indicate that safety is largely a perceptual issue. Those with safety concerns also felt more crowded and less satisfied than those that rated safety as excellent (Figure 9). Additional research could focus on the effectiveness of approaches

**Figure 8. Safety ratings of BSSP.**



**Figure 9. Levels of Crowding and Satisfaction Ratings by Safety Concerns**



that address visitor safety perceptions (e.g., personnel uniform policies, regularly scheduled patrols, or increased signage).

Crowding is also an issue identified by many BSSP visitors. Crowding is a perceptual construct not always explained by the number or density of other visitors. Expectations of visitor numbers and the behavior of other visitors also play a significant role in crowding perceptions. For instance, visitors at the spring and three fishing zones felt more crowded than the other three recreation areas, and visitors would often comment to the surveyor that they were frustrated by the lack of “fishing etiquette” exhibited by other visitors.

While perceptions of crowding did not influence visitors’ overall satisfaction at BSSP, park managers should still address 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 spring and three fishing zones 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 at these areas.

Visitors felt that clean restrooms were very important but rated BSSP’s as needing attention. Visitors also felt that upkeep of the park’s facilities was very important, but did not rate BSSP very high in this area. Campers rated the park lower (2.8) on having clean restrooms than non-campers (3.3), and also rated park upkeep lower (3.3) than non-campers (3.5). Since non-campers typically do not use the restroom facilities or other facilities in the campground, this finding suggests more time could be spent on cleaning campground restrooms and better maintenance of other campground facilities.

Weekend visitors surprisingly rated BSSP higher (3.6) on being free of litter and trash than weekday visitors (3.4), and were also more satisfied (3.8) than weekday visitors (3.7). Weekday visitors would often comment to the surveyor about their surprise at how crowded BSSP was during the weekdays, contrary to their expectations. Many would further comment that their whole reason for visiting BSSP during the weekday was to avoid crowds. Although there were no differences between weekday and weekend visitors’ perceptions of crowding, further study could determine if weekday visitors’ lower satisfaction and lower rating of litter and trash are due to the park not meeting their expectation of fewer crowds.

The results of the present study suggest some important management and planning considerations for BSSP. Even though BSSP visitors rated their visits and the park features relatively high, attention to crowding and facility maintenance can positively effect these ratings.

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 BSSP. The frequency and percentage calculations of survey responses provide useful information concerning socio-demographic characteristics, use patterns, and satisfaction of BSSP visitors. In addition, the “sub-analysis” of data is important in identifying implications for management of BSSP. (The sub-analysis in the present study included comparisons using Chi-square and ANOVA between selected groups 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.

Additional visitor surveys at BSSP should also be conducted on a regular basis (e.g., every three, four, or five years). Future BSSP studies can identify changes and trends in socio-

demographic characteristics, use patterns, and visitors’ satisfaction at BSSP.

The methodology used in this study serves as a standard survey procedure that the DSP can use in the future. Other Missouri State Parks 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 summer season. Therefore, user studies in parks and historic sites might be conducted during other seasons for comparison between summer visitors and visitors during other seasons.

#### **METHODOLOGY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR OTHER PARKS**

The on-site questionnaire and the methodology of this study were designed to be applicable to other Missouri State Parks.

*Survey administration*

The prize package drawing and the one-page questionnaire undoubtedly helped attain the response rate in the present study. Also, the fact that the surveyor approached visitors on foot while they were in the various recreation areas greatly contributed to the high response rate. Many visitors expressed appreciation that they were being asked their opinion, and would often take the opportunity to further comment to the surveyor their feelings about BSSP. For this reason, and because the surveyor was required to walk a roving route between the recreation areas, an assistant to help administer the surveys would be helpful.

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.

Although only four visitors declined to participate in the survey, their most frequent reason for declining was because they were in a hurry. Most were very cooperative and provided positive comments about the park. Some non-respondents 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 a non-respondent.

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**Appendix A. Bennett Spring State Park User Survey**

**BENNETT SPRING STATE PARK**

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources is seeking your evaluation of Bennett Spring 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 Bennett Spring 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?**  
 yes **If yes, how many nights are you staying at or near the park during this visit?** \_\_\_\_\_  
 no *(If no, skip to question 5.)*

**3. If staying overnight, where are you staying?** *(Check only one box.)*  
 campground in Bennett Spring State Park  nearby campground  
 cabin in Bennett Spring State Park  nearby lodging facilities  
 motel in Bennett Spring State Park  other *(Please specify.)* \_\_\_\_\_  
 friends/relatives \_\_\_\_\_

**4. If staying at the Bennett Spring State Park campground, did you use the campground reservation system?** *(Check only one box.)*  
 yes **If yes, were you satisfied with the procedure?** *(Check only one box.)*  yes  no **If no, what dissatisfied you?** *(Please specify.)* \_\_\_\_\_  
 no

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

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

- hiking
- studying nature
- viewing visitor center exhibits
- picnicking
- rafting/canoeing
- attending special event
- camping
- viewing wildlife
- going on guided nature hike
- fishing
- swimming in pool
- attending nature program
- other *(Please specify.)* \_\_\_\_\_

**7. How satisfied are you with each of the following in Bennett Spring State Park?** *(Check one box for each feature.)*

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
a. campground	<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. Spring Branch access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. trails	<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. nature center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. park office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. dining lodge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**8. How do you rate Bennett Spring 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 trails & natural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. care of picnic area/green space	<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"/>
i. being safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**9. If you did not rate this park as excellent on being safe, what influenced your rating?**  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE TURN SURVEY OVER.**

**10. If the amphitheater at Bennett Spring State Park was moved, where would you like to see it located?**

- attached to the nature center       near the pool  
 in the upper campground       other (*Please specify.*)
- 

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

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat 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 trails & natural resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. care of picnic area/ green space	<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"/>
i. being safe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**12. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Bennett Spring State Park? (Check only one box.)**

- Very Satisfied       Somewhat Satisfied       Somewhat Dissatisfied       Very Dissatisfied

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

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

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

---

**15. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_**      **16. Gender?**     female     male

**17. 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

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

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

**19. 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      \_\_\_\_\_

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

**21. What is your annual household income?**

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

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

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



**Appendix B. Survey Protocol**

## Protocol for Bennett Spring State Park User 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 Bennett Spring 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 Bennett Spring 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, 1998.  
Winners will be notified by telephone or mail.  
Redemption of gift certificates is based on dates of  
availability through August 31, 1999.**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone #:** (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix D. Observation Survey**

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Day of Week \_\_\_\_\_ Time Slot \_\_\_\_\_  
 Weather \_\_\_\_\_ Temperature \_\_\_\_\_ Park/Site \_\_\_\_\_

	Survey #'s	# of Adults	# of Children	Area
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

**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**

## Bennett Spring State Park Visitor Survey

**1. Is this your first visit to Bennett Spring State Park? (n=414)**

yes	18.8%
no	81.2%

**If no, how many times have you visited this park in the past year? (n=297)**

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

0	6.1%
1	28.3%
2	25.6%
3-5	25.3%
6-10	9.8%
11-156	5.1%

The average # of times repeat visitors visited the park in the past year was 3.8 times.  
 The average # of times all respondents visited the park in the past year was 3.9 times.

**2. During this visit to the park, are you staying overnight? (n=408)**

yes	77.2%
no	22.8%

**If yes, how many nights are you staying overnight at or near the park during this visit? (n=279)**

*The responses from this open-ended question were grouped into the following 4 categories:*

1	7.2%
2	28.3%
3	25.8%
4-5	24.0%
6-10	9.7%
11-21	3.1%

The average # of nights respondents visiting the park for more than one day stayed was 3.9.

**3. If staying overnight, where are you staying? (n=320)**

campground in Bennett Spring State Park	63.5%
cabin in Bennett Spring State Park	10.3%
motel in Bennett Spring State Park	4.7%
nearby campground	10.0%
friends/relatives	1.9%
nearby lodging facilities	13.4%
other	1.9%



**4. If staying at the Bennett Spring State Park campground, did you use the campground reservation system? (n=190)**

yes	28.9%
no	68.9%
didn't use, but expressed dissatisfaction with system	2.1%

**If yes, were you satisfied with the procedure? (n=51)**

yes	72.5%
no	27.5%

**If no, what dissatisfied you?**

*10 visitors responded to this question. Their answers were categorized, and are listed here by frequencies and percentages.*

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Reservation fee.	1	10.0%
2. Two-week notice/waiting period.	3	30.0%
3. Too many campsites are reservable.	2	20.0%
4. Other.	1	10.0%
5. Unable to get reservation.	3	30.0%

**5. With whom are you visiting the park? (n=409)**

alone	8.1%	family & friends	24.2%	club or organized group	2.9%
family	54.0%	friends	10.0%	other	0.7%

**6. Which recreational activities have you engaged in during this park visit? (n=415)**

hiking	24.3%	studying nature	17.3%	viewing visitor center exhibits	30.1%
picnicking	28.4%	rafting/canoeing	18.3%	attending special event	6.3%
camping	44.8%	viewing wildlife	28.9%	going on a guided nature hike	4.1%
fishing	77.8%	swimming in pool	29.4%	attending nature program	10.0%
other	5.3%				

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

Bike riding.	Played with granddaughter while others fished.
Biking.	Playground.
Bird watching.	Playground, feed fish.
Birding.	Playground.
Drag racing in park.	Relaxing.
Family reunion.	Swam in river access.
Family reunion.	Swimming in river.
Hatchery.	Viewing hatchery.
Husband fishing.	Visiting with family.
Kareoke.	Watching people fish.
Photography.	We just arrived late last night so we have only eaten at the lodge and gone to the hatchery.

In addition to percentages of responses, a mean score was calculated for each feature in questions 7, 8, 11, and 12. The score is based on a 4.0 scale with 4 = very satisfied, 3 = somewhat satisfied, 2 = somewhat dissatisfied, and 1 = very dissatisfied (Q. 7 & 12); 4 = excellent, 3 = good, 2 = fair, and 1 = poor (Q. 8); and 4 = very important, 3 = somewhat important, 2 = somewhat unimportant, and 1 = very unimportant (Q. 11). The mean score is listed in parenthesis following each feature.

**7. How satisfied are you with each of the following in Bennett Spring State Park?**

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
a. campground (3.68)	72.4%	23.6%	3.7%	0.3%	n=301
b. park signs (3.71)	74.7%	22.7%	1.8%	0.8%	n=379
c. picnic areas (3.77)	78.5%	20.2%	1.0%	0.3%	n=302
d. Spring Branch access (3.77)	78.8%	19.9%	1.0%	0.3%	n=302
e. Trails (3.64)	66.8%	30.4%	2.8%	0.0%	n=217
f. swimming pool (3.65)	70.6%	25.2%	3.3%	0.9%	n=214
g. nature center (3.79)	79.8%	19.5%	0.7%	0.0%	n=267
h. store (3.64)	67.8%	28.9%	3.3%	0.0%	n=363
i. park office (3.74)	75.7%	23.0%	1.3%	0.0%	n=305
j. dining lodge (3.51)	64.3%	25.8%	6.8%	3.2%	n=221

**8. How do you rate Bennett Spring State Park on each of the following?**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.49 )	56.8%	36.5%	5.6%	1.2%	n=414
b. having clean restrooms (3.08)	36.7%	41.5%	15.2%	6.6%	n=381
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.41)	49.1%	44.2%	5.4%	1.2%	n=405
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.55)	60.0%	35.4%	3.8%	0.8%	n=390
e. access for disabled persons (3.53)	59.8%	34.1%	5.1%	1.1%	n=276
f. care of trails/natural resources (3.50)	54.0%	42.6%	3.0%	0.3%	n=298
g. care of picnic area/green space (3.53)	58.0%	37.6%	3.7%	0.6%	n=348
h. interpretive programs(3.50)	54.3%	41.8%	3.8%	0.0%	n=208
i. being safe (3.63)	66.6%	29.9%	3.5%	0.0%	n=395

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

64 visitors (48.5% of those who did not rate the park as excellent on being safe) responded to this question with 76 responses. The 76 responses were divided into 4 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.

	Frequency	Percent
1. Lack of law enforcement	36	47.4%
2. Unsafe facilities	15	19.7%
3. No place is perfect/no reason	14	18.4%
4. Other	11	14.5%
Total	76	100%

**10. If the amphitheater at Bennett Spring State Park was moved, where would you like to see it located?**

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
attached to the nature center	121	46.7%
in the upper campground	35	13.5%
near the pool	49	18.9%
other	54	20.8%

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

	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.95 )	95.0%	5.0%	0.0%	0.0%	n=354
b. having clean restrooms (3.95)	95.5%	4.2%	0.2%	0.0%	n=402
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.89)	89.4%	10.6%	0.0%	0.0%	n=398
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.81)	82.2%	16.8%	1.0%	0.0%	n=398
e. access for disabled persons (3.60)	70.9%	20.1%	6.8%	2.3%	n=354
f. care of trails/natural resources (3.72)	73.7%	24.1%	2.1%	0.0%	n=373
g. care of picnic area/green space (3.78)	80.4%	17.6%	1.8%	0.3%	n=397
h. interpretive programs(3.49)	58.5%	32.9%	7.8%	0.9%	n=347
i. being safe (3.94)	94.9%	4.3%	0.8%	0.0%	n=396

**12. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Bennett Spring State Park?**

	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
(Mean score = 3.78)	81.0%	17.0%	1.5%	0.5%	n=405

**13. During this visit, how crowded did you feel? (n=406)**

On a scale of 1-9, with 1 = Not at all crowded and 9 = Extremely crowded, the mean response was 4.21.

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

*A total of 217 open-ended responses were given by 190 visitors. The 217 responses were divided into 8 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.*

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Spring/fishing zones	127	58.5%
campgrounds/campsites	44	20.3%
park store/buying fishing tags	12	5.5%
restrooms/shower houses	9	4.2%
everywhere	7	3.2%
on roads/in parking lots	6	2.8%
swimming pool	3	1.4%
other	9	4.2%
Total	217	100%

**15. What is your age?** (n=402)

*Responses were divided into the following 4 categories:*

18-34	23.6%
35-54	46.5%
55-64	14.2%
65-85	15.7%

(Average age = 46.8)

**16. Gender?** (n=400)

Female	47.3%
Male	52.8%

**17. What is the highest level of education you have completed?** (n=404)

grade school	3.7%	vocational school	4.5%	graduate of 4-year college	19.6%
high school	31.4%	some college	29.0%	post-graduate education	11.9%

**18. What is your ethnic origin?** (n=405)

Asian	.5%	African American	1.0%	Native American/American Indian	3.5%
Hispanic	2.0%	Caucasian/White	93.1%	Other	0.0%

**19. Do you have a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities or might require special accommodations?** (n=398)

no	96.0
yes	4.0

**If yes, what disability or disabilities do you have?** (n=13)

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

Diabetic	Paraplegic
My wife	Degenerative arthritis of the spine
Stroke, heart trouble	Lumbo-sacral strain – pinched nerves
Old age	Artificial knees
Walking	Walking
Daughter in wheel chair	Poor eyesight and heart problems
Heart and lungs	

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

*The states with the highest percentages of respondents were:*

Missouri (71.6%)
Kansas (8.4%)
Illinois (8.2%)
Ohio (1.2%)
Iowa (1.0%)
Indiana (1.0%)

**21. What is your annual household income? (n=347)**

less than \$25,000	17.6%	\$50,001 - \$75,000	27.1%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	44.1%	over \$75,000	11.2%

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

*147 of the 415 visitors (35.4%) responded to this question. A total of 185 responses were given, and were divided into 9 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.*

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. General positive comments	54	29.2%
2. Need newer/additional facilities/better maintenance	50	27.0%
3. Restrooms/shower houses not clean/other problems	18	9.7%
4. More/bigger fish	14	7.6%
5. Problems with reservation system	9	4.9%
6. Better enforcement/higher profile of staff/rangers	8	4.3%
7. Problems with concessionaire services	5	2.7%
8. Park personnel not helpful/friendly	2	1.1%
8. Other	<u>28</u>	<u>15.1%</u>
Total	185	100%

**Appendix F. List of Responses for Safety Concerns (Q 9)**

**Responses to Question # 9**

**If you did not rate this park as excellent on being safe (Question 8, letter i.), what influenced your rating?**

**Lack of law enforcement (lack of personnel/rangers patrolling park; people not obeying speed limits, being inconsiderate, & breaking rules; pedestrians unsafe on roads, bridges, & other high traffic areas)**

- A few people drinking inside the park area.
- Bridges and bicycles.
- Have not observed any park rangers or enforcement officials during stay.
- Kids coming through park & speeding -- occurs late evening. Probably not people actually using the park.
- Kids on bikes and rollerblades in the middle of road.
- Lifeguards could be more attentive.
- Like to see more rangers on duty.
- Lots of traffic to look out for.
- More police on fishing violations.
- More visible patrols.
- No bike trails -- not much security in camping area.
- No walking zones along fishing stream -- have to walk around.
- (Opinion) Rangers should make more passes through campgrounds.
- Past experiences with noise and rowdy behavior.
- People do not obey 10 mph limit (even some park rangers) and driving the wrong way.
- People not observing the speed limit.
- Rarely see a park ranger just walking or driving around to check on things.
- Roadways while walking, speed limit is not enforced with speed limit.
- Security patrols or check at entrance.
- Speed control in campgrounds.
- Speed of vehicles in park, fishing with vehicle very close, fishing on dam.
- Speeding cars at night - non-campers in the camping area.
- The cars drive too fast.
- The homeless staying at #308 and the drunks driving in the park.
- There are no bike trails, children ride bikes in the street. We have not seen security patrol rangers.
- They need walkways along road side.
- Traffic speed too fast, not enough patrolling, stricter housekeeping.
- Walkways for bridges. People fishing off bridge.
- Widen the bridge to more than 1 lane.
- Would like safer pedestrian areas to cross high volume traffic areas. Ex. pedestrian bridge over road.
- You're never safe everywhere. A trail up to shelter house a long side the road would be good. As we were arriving some kids were riding their bikes in the road, not too good.

**Unsafe facilities (poor maintenance & upkeep; campgrounds & park too crowded; signs confusing; spring & fishing zone unsafe; etc.)**

- Couldn't fish in handicap area because of the moss and weeds.
- Dirty restrooms, uneven parking.
- I bumped my head on a dead tree limb on the spring trail.
- Need more and slower speed signs.
- Need more road arrows.
- No reflectors or lighting at all to bathroom. It would be helpful.
- Not being able to fish in handicap area because of the moss at Suzee Hole
- Not many stop signs for traffic.
- Please make trails better.
- Slippery rocks.
- Some of the steps to creeks need repair.
- Speed of vehicles in park, fishing with vehicle very close, fishing on dam.
- The large number of people fishing on the dam and stream area make it hard to practice safe fishing techniques.
- Too crowded/not enough campsites.
- Too small, no camping places.
- Traffic speed too fast, not enough patrolling, stricter housekeeping.
- Updating restrooms.

**No reason/no place is perfect (don't know; haven't been here long enough to know; wild areas can't be safe; always room for improvement)**

- Didn't know.
- Having not paid much attention to safety.
- I've seen nothing unsafe in the park. I would believe it to be a safe park.
- Just got here.
- Lack of knowledge.
- Living here and watching the park grow, etc.
- No reason.
- Not all alone, here only one night.
- Nothing is excellent. There is always room for improvement.
- There is always room for improvement.
- There's always room for improvement on safety.
- Truly wild areas cannot be safe. Developed areas are excellent for safety.
- We haven't been here long enough to know whether it deserves excellent.
- We only arrived today. I'm not familiar with all the accesses yet.
- You're never safe everywhere. A trail is up to shelter house a long side the road would be good. As we were arriving some kids were riding their bikes in the road, not too good.



**Other**

- Alcoholic beverages.
- Beer.
- Homeless people in 308.
- No bike trails -- not much security in camping area.
- Some homeless people stayed in 308.
- Speeding cars at night -- non-campers in the camping area.
- The homeless staying at #308 and the drunks driving in the park.

**Appendix G. List of Responses for Additional Comments (Q 22)**

### Responses to Question #22

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

#### General positive comments

- After 10:30pm it was so quiet I thought I was here all by myself.
- Campgrounds need to be mowed more regularly & better litter clean up. Need more enforcement streamside for littering problems & less undercover after pts. at catching fishing violators. Park is our favorite park in MO.
- Enjoyed our stay.
- Get bigger trout. Good park.
- Good.
- Great park and very well maintained.
- Had fun.
- Have found staff much more willing and trying to please -- different from other years & good improvement. Also, cabin upgrades are appreciated.
- I come visit here at least once a year from Columbia. It's a nice visit.
- I have really enjoyed being at the park.
- I like the peace.
- I love to fish and really enjoy trout fishing.
- I think you should be able to reserve up till time to come. The first come, first serve method causes families to come and put chairs in front of a bunch of spots for family members to come later, then we can't find a spot. It's a great place to come.
- In bathroom area of restroom, need a shelf or hooks to hang toiletries. Sink area gets really wet. Shower area needs an outside the shower stall bench, where one can dress in a dry area. Showers were exceptionally clean.
- It keeps getting better. Thank you!
- It was nice to have fly-fishing instruction available through the park store (Jim Rogers).
- It's a lovely place to visit
- It's beautiful and we always look forward to coming here. It's so peaceful and the people and fisherman are friendly. Absolutely wonderful! Thank you for having the Catholic alter and other church centers in park.
- It's good.
- I've traveled extensively throughout Missouri, the lower 48 states and Canada. This park ranks among the best compared to national and state parks. We have friends from all over the U.S. who have visited and concur with this observation.
- Keep up the good work! People with waders on bank crowd out people who don't have waders. They should be in the stream.
- Keep up the good work.
- Loved it all my life.
- More chairs at the pool. Only dump station is at campground #1-- when we stay for extended times we empty the holding tanks by using our portable container -- would be great to not have to bring it down the hill. Bennett Spring is our favorite state park, we have spent 2 weeks a year here for the past 4 years. Even cooked our Thanksgiving turkey here last year.

- My family has come to Bennett every summer for 5 yrs. The new restrooms are great. This park is nice, but somewhat crowded at times. The rooms not what we hoped for.
- One of my most favorite places on earth & has been for 35 yrs.
- Park is a very nice place to visit, I wish I had come to the park sooner.
- Ron McCullough does a great job!
- Staff at the nature center have been wonderful! Great things for kids to see/do!
- Super place.
- Thanks.
- This is a great park!
- This park is the best thing in MO. I really enjoy and appreciate the DNR's efforts.
- This place is fantastic.
- This was my first visit to the park. Thought the park was very clean and well kept. It sure is beautiful.
- Very good. Keep up the good work!!
- Very interesting area. One of the largest and best kept state parks I have seen. A little commercialized and populated than the others, but still very clean and neatly kept. I enjoyed the day.
- Very nice stay and lovely park. Thanks, I have no suggestions except maybe make the river wider. My husband puts the lures in the trees.
- Very nice, well kept, streams are beautiful.
- Very satisfied. Better service in restaurant.
- We always enjoy our visits to the park.
- We appreciate the patrol throughout the night.
- We come here every year and really enjoy it.
- We enjoy Bennett, have been coming since 1949. If there is a heaven on earth for us it is Bennett Springs.
- We enjoy camping and fishing as a family at Bennett. We feel there should be more campsites.
- We have a very nice park; one that I'm very proud of.
- We love Bennett Spring State Park. We chose to come here for our honeymoon because of the beautiful scenery and excellent accommodations.
- We love Bennett Springs. This is our 15th year here!
- We love camping here. Keep up the good work.
- We love this place.
- We've always enjoyed our camping and fishing trips.
- We've been coming for over 40 years and enjoy it very much. Wish were closer to us so we could come more often.
- Wonderful.

**Need newer/additional facilities or better maintenance/care of facilities/park grounds**

- A volleyball sand court by cabins 60-67 would be nice.
- Add more cabins.
- Campgrounds need to be mowed more regularly & better litter clean up. Need more enforcement streamside for littering problems & less undercover after pts. at catching fishing violators. Park is our favorite park in MO.
- Clean out the handicap area for fishing at Suzy Hole
- Dumpster smell. This can be avoided.
- Each bait(s) for each of the three zones...needs clear and straight forward written definition; ie. Zone 1 Flies only...also include jigs and spinners.
- Easier access to fall hook-up campsite. Very hard to get in. Better is to add more sites.
- Fish cleaning facilities.
- Fish cleaning stations would be a big help in keeping the stream clean. Natural scavengers obviously can't consume all the offal thrown in the stream.
- Fix the water spigot at camp site 222 because it is wasting water and very inconvenient. It's been that way for years!
- Handicap parking places need to be marked better at store.
- Hard to find campsite for the weekend...limiting our visits to the park because we know there won't be any.
- I was not real happy with the sign up and stand or park in line till spot comes out, in the heat. Host wasn't very helpful and quite rude.
- If campground available at any time, so be it.
- More campsites and cabins.
- More campsites...not so many reserved sites.
- More chairs at the pool. Only dump station is at campground #1-- when we stay for extended times we empty the holding tanks by using our portable container -- would be great to not have to bring it down the hill. Bennett Spring is our favorite state park, we have spent 2 weeks a year here for the past 4 years. Even cooked our Thanksgiving turkey here last year.
- More trash cans at various locations. Additional restroom between spring and dam. One at nature cedar closes at 5:00pm. Additional picnic tables. More ranger patrol in stream area. Might cut down on trash on wing dams. I have picked up pop cans, etc. from these areas. Too often ends up in stream.
- More trash cans. Hire more people to pick up litter. Do something about unsupervised kids. Enforce stream etiquette and fishing regulations.
- More trout parks.
- Need more campsites.
- Need more picnic areas.
- Need more shelter houses.
- Need signs marked for disabled persons.
- Need to add more campsites. It is impossible to get reservations and sometimes to get a site at all. Maybe you could change check in time to earlier time so people would know what will be available after 3:00 and could enjoy park instead of being campsite "vultures".
- Night hikes!! More trails with scenic views and markings along the trails that tell about flora and fauna. What are we looking at? We had a great time and we will return.

- No camping place.
- Not enough camping sites.
- Not enough campsites
- Only one water retrieval area per entire campsite is insufficient. Restrooms were cleaned once, on Sunday, and we were here since Thursday.
- People should clean up after their pets. Better drainage or gravel at campsite.
- Restrooms by bait area, zones.
- Sign in Zone 2 could be moved further away from water so it wouldn't be in way of casting. Not enough gulls by the picnic tables. Trash can by store over-flowing.
- They need maps of park to tell where things are.
- Traffic control. Better drainage and gravel at campsites.
- Trash cans along the banks so people won't dump their lines on garbage on the ground. Children under 12 should be supervised to keep them from interfering with adults' lines and space. Put more fish in Zone 3 because Zone 3 is family area with kids.
- Trash containers located in the fishing areas. Fish cleaning buildings instead of the stream cleaner park.
- We came in the entrance from Phillipsburg. Could have used better directions to the campgrounds once we were inside the park. You have a beautiful park.
- We couldn't find a camping place.
- We enjoy camping and fishing as a family at Bennett. We feel there should be more campsites.
- We had some difficulty getting a campsite for the duration of our stay. We had to move once. I don't have solution. The campsites we used were nice.
- When campgrounds get full, the first come, first serve basis should apply to handicapped campsites as well since they are not always filled.
- Would like to see Greg Bacon back. I know it takes time, but I think you could support more camping areas.
- Would like to see more trash cans
- You need more campsites.
- You need to mow and keep the woods away from the turns and trails. I'm very allergic to poison ivy.

#### **Restrooms/shower houses not clean and other problems**

- Don't like the unisex bathrooms by the store. Have men and women separate.
- Ever since we first came here in 1979, we have found it difficult to get a hot shower in the upper campgrounds. Why do they always run out of hot water?
- I think the bathroom/shower facilities need to be upgraded in the upper campground. Perhaps a ceiling fan would keep the floors drier.
- In bathroom area of restroom, need a shelf or hooks to hang toiletries. Sink area gets really wet. Shower area needs an outside the shower stall bench, where one can dress in a dry area. Showers where exceptionally clean.
- More shower/toilets are needed.
- More trash cans at various locations. Additional restroom between spring and dam. One at nature cedar closes at 5:00pm. Additional picnic tables. More ranger patrol in

stream area. Might cut down on trash on wing dams. I have picked up pop cans, etc. from these areas. Too often ends up in stream.

- Need more restrooms for handicapped; with showers.
- Need soap dispenser in restroom for washing hands.
- One of the new bathrooms, the handle on inside of door is coming off. The showers in campground & coat hooks in showers need maintenance. Don't like not being able to renew campsite until after 3 p.m. Bathrooms in campgrounds are atrocious.
- Only one water retrieval area per entire campsite is insufficient. Restrooms were cleaned once, on Sunday, and we were here since Thursday.
- Prefer more privacy/seclusion in camping sites. Showers were excellent, restrooms fair as far as cleanliness. Store staff could have been friendlier and more helpful.
- Programs at nature center expanded -- same programs are presented year after year. Exhaust fans in showers. Showers need to be upgraded. Campground 4 asphalted like 5. Lessons on trout fishing and fly fishing for all ages. I want a lunker!!!
- Put hooks on women's restroom doors.
- Restrooms & shower facilities could be cleaner and showers could work better.
- Restrooms are as clean as they can be unless you clean them more than once a day.
- Restrooms were messy. Need cleaning on a regular basis. Spiders in the showers. Water is either too hot or too cold. Restrooms don't look they've been cleaned for two or three weeks.
- Sign in zone 2 could be moved further away from water so it wouldn't be in way of casting. Not enough gulls by the picnic tables. Trash can by store overflowing. The male/female bathrooms were really a mess. The ladies only restrooms were fine.
- Upgrade the showers in the campgrounds. Very bad, please fix them.

### **More/bigger fish and other concerns relating to the fish**

- Bigger fish.
- Bigger trout.
- Get bigger trout. Good park.
- Make the fish take my lure.
- More fish -- fish that bite!
- More fish -- fish that bite.
- More fish.
- Need to train fish to bite more often.
- Put a little more fish in.
- Put more fish in the water & bigger.
- Put more fish in.
- Stock more and bigger trout.
- The fishing has been very poor. Are you sure you're stocking the stream? People with dogs should have to clean up poop.
- Trash cans along the banks so people won't dump their lines on garbage on the ground. Children under 12 should be supervised to keep them from interfering with adults' lines and space. Put more fish in Zone 3 because Zone 3 is family area with kids.

**Problems with reservation system**

- Having to make reservations so far in advance.
- I think you should be able to reserve up till time to come. The first come, first serve method causes families to come and put chairs in front of a bunch of spots for family members to come later then we can't find a spot. It's a great place to come.
- I was not real happy with the sign up and stand or park in line till spot comes, out in the heat. Host wasn't very helpful and quite rude.
- More campsites...not so many reserved sites.
- Need to add more campsites. It is impossible to get reservations and sometimes to get a site at all. Maybe you could change check in time to earlier time so people would know what will be available after 3:00 and could enjoy park instead of being campsite "vultures".
- One of the new bathrooms, the handle on inside of door is coming off. The showers in campground & coat hooks in showers need maintenance. Don't like not being able to renew campsite until after 3 p.m.. Bathrooms in campgrounds are atrocious.
- Reservations difficult -- so far in advance.
- Should have left top campground alone and not reserved. You already have one for reserved!
- The reservation system is awful. That area is the only one open this trip and our friends can't camp next to us. The other areas are quite full. We get to come on short notice and so this system works against us and most others I've talked with.
- The reserved areas were almost empty while the rest of campgrounds were full on Thursday evening.

**Better enforcement and/or higher profile of park personnel/rangers**

- Campgrounds need to be mowed more regularly & better litter clean up. Need more enforcement streamside for littering problems & less undercover after pts. at catching fishing violators. Park is our favorite park in MO.
- More trash cans. Hire more people to pick up litter. Do something about unsupervised kids. Enforce stream etiquette and fishing regulations.
- More trash cans at various locations. Additional restroom between spring and dam. One at nature cedar closes at 5:00pm. Additional picnic tables. More ranger patrol in stream area. Might cut down on trash on wing dams. I have picked up pop cans, etc. from these areas. Too often ends up in stream.
- Need to regulate late drive by through campgrounds 1:00 a.m. - 3:00 a.m. Don't need cars driving through for no reason than just cruising.
- Perhaps a higher profile of rangers to communicate wildlife in park, how it affects each and all of us and what the park/hatchery does to preserve that.
- There could be more interaction with the park rangers. The people (women) in the store were not friendly at all when we went to get our fishing tags.
- Traffic control. Better drainage and gravel at campsites.



**Problems with concessionaire services (cabins, dining lodge, canoe trips, etc.)**

- Build a bigger store. Dining lodge stay open later than 8 p.m. or later than when the horn goes. Open earlier, also.
- My family has come to Bennett every summer for 5 years. The new restrooms are great. This park is nice, but somewhat crowded at times. The rooms not what we hoped for.
- The camp store was particularly frustrating. Staff was less than courteous when we were looking for info regarding canoeing. We took our business somewhere else because of this. Priority service went to those buying fishing permits, etc.
- There could be more interaction with the park rangers. The people (women) in the store were not friendly at all when we went to get our fishing tags.
- Very satisfied. Better service in restaurant.

**Park personnel not helpful/friendly**

- I was not real happy with the sign up and stand or park in line till spot comes out, in the heat. Host wasn't very helpful and quite rude.
- Prefer more privacy/seclusion in camping sites. Showers were excellent..restrooms fair as far as cleanliness. Store staff could have been friendlier and more helpful.
- The camp store was particularly frustrating. Staff was less than courteous when we were looking for info regarding canoeing. We took our business somewhere else because of this. Priority service went to those buying fishing permits, etc.
- There could be more interaction with the park rangers. The people (women) in the store were not friendly at all when we went to get our fishing tags.

**Other**

- Campground renewal time at 10:00 a.m. Leave check out at 3:00 p.m. The people not renewing, sell site to next camper by 10:30 a.m.
- Define handicapped and wheelchair bound as two separate entities.
- Don't clean fish in the stream.
- Don't continue to think of tearing down Luther Hoffman's House
- I don't like the questions 17-21.
- I would like a copy of the results of this survey.
- If the handicap spots were reserved for wheelchairs, or spots designated for wheelchairs only.
- Income none of your business. Check tax return if needed.
- Keep up the good work! People with waders on bank crowd out people who don't have waders. They should be in the stream.
- More varieties of programs, especially bird programs and more games. It would be great if you would bring back the old amphitheater and still serve Kool-Aid and popcorn.
- Night hikes!! More trails with scenic views and markings along the trails that tell about flora and fauna. What are we looking at? We had a great time and we will return.
- Night hikes.
- People should clean up after their pets. Better drainage or gravel at campsite.
- Prefer more privacy/seclusion in camping sites. Showers were excellent..restrooms fair as far as cleanliness. Store staff could have been friendlier and more helpful.

- Programs at nature center expanded -- same programs are presented year after year. Exhaust fans in showers. Showers need to be upgraded. Campground 4 asphalted like 5. Lessons on trout fishing and fly fishing for all ages. I want a lunker!!!
- Stress to people, to not get in front of others while fishing.
- The fishing has been very poor. Are you sure you're stocking the stream? People with dogs should have to clean up poop.
- They close the ice cream machine too early in the office.
- Too many people.
- We have been coming here for about 30 years. We live and it is between an 8 & 9 hour drive to get here. My 3 children have been coming here since they were very young. My boys live out of state and many miles from here. My daughter & myself come at least 2 times each year and some times 3, if she can manage a 3 or 4 day weekend in October, we come.
- Would like to see Greg Bacon back. I know it takes time, but I think you could support more camping areas.
- Would like to see if everyone would turn in camping tag when leaving and maybe get some type of refund for doing so. That way people can purchase a tag before 3 p.m.