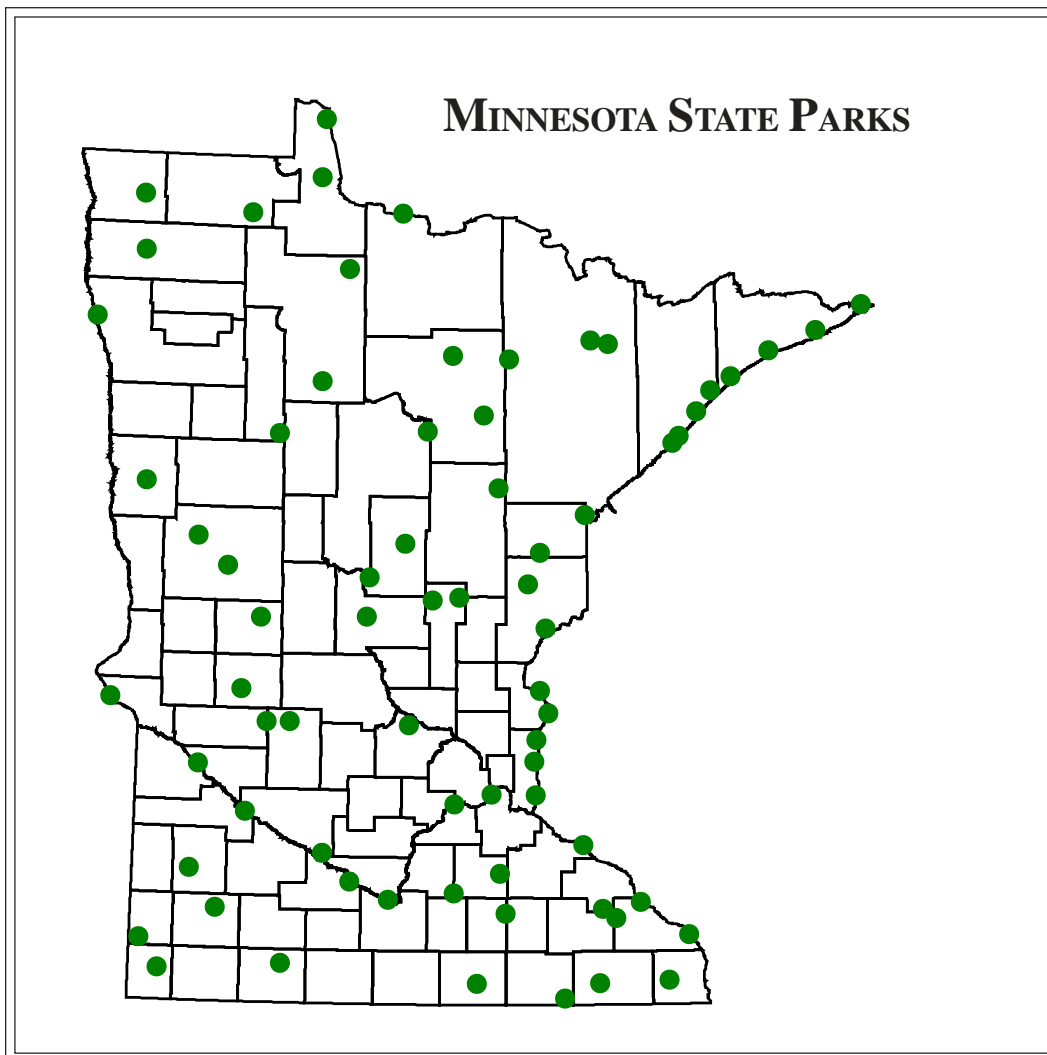


# 2001 Minnesota State Park Visitor Survey Summary Report



Report prepared by:  
Minnesota Department of Natural Resources  
Office of Management and Budget Services

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## SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

The 2001 Minnesota state park visitor survey is the most recent in a series of efforts—dating back to 1987—to better understand the visitors that state parks serve. The survey was designed to accomplish two major goals:

- Gain a current understanding of the characteristics of state park visitors, of what visitors desire in state parks, and of how well visitors believe state parks are meeting their needs.
- Update the economic effects of state park visitor spending on state and regional economies in Minnesota, and extend the examination of economic effects to incorporate state park operations spending, including spending on capital improvements in the parks.

Results concerning the first goal are presented in this document, which is a summary document. For those who desire more detailed information, a tabulation document, with full methodological descriptions, is available from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR): *2001 Minnesota State Park Visitor Survey: Tabulation of Survey Results*, 2002. Results for the second goal concerning economic effects are in a separate document from the MN DNR: *Contributions of the Minnesota State Park System to State and Regional Economies*, 2002.

### ACTIVITIES IN STATE PARKS

Park visitors participate in many different activities, but a few activities are shared widely among visitors, and form a basic set of park-related activities. The basic set is comprised of three activities, which are the top three activities for both campers and day users: hiking, sight seeing, and nature observation. Altogether, 76 percent of all visitors and 86 percent of campers participate in at least one of these basic activities during their visit. Camping is engaged in by some 14 percent of visitors.

Learning-related activities are a staple of the park visit, with 73 percent of all park visitors participating in one or more of these activities. Land-based activities, including hiking, tend to be more popular park activities than water-based activities. Nearly 30 percent (28%) of all park visitors and nearly half of campers (48%) engage in some form of water recreation during the park visit.

### EXPERIENCES SOUGHT AND ATTAINED BY STATE PARK VISITORS

When people visit state parks they attain experiences that add value to their lives. Attaining these beneficial experiences is the underlying motivation behind the park visit. To ensure these beneficial experiences can be attained is a goal of the parks, and provides a rationale for the types of recreational opportunities, facilities and services that are offered in the parks.

The leading experiences visitors seek at state parks are to enjoy nature, escape pressures of daily life, bond with family and friends, learn and explore new things, and get some exercise.

A clear majority of visitors are able to “fully attain” each of their “very important” experiences.

And for the very top-ranked experiences, over 80 percent are able to “fully attain” the experience. Some of the experiences, however, have lower attainment than others, and low attainment may provide an indication of areas of concern to visitors that may warrant further scrutiny. Experiences that stand out in terms of relatively low attainment include two in the escape pressures category: “experience silence and quiet” and “experience solitude.” Also included in the relatively low attainment group are two experiences in the learn and explore category: “explore and discover new things” and “learn more about nature.”

## VISITOR SATISFACTION

Visitor satisfaction remains high in 2001 and, in fact, is slightly higher than in any previous year for which measurements exist (history goes back to 1987). The large majority of visitors are at least “completely satisfied” with their visit (77% of visitors), with the rest being “mostly satisfied” (18%). Few visitors (5%) were less than satisfied (fair/OK or dissatisfied responses).

High visitor satisfaction is pervasive. It extends across types of visitors (campers, day users), days of the week, regions of the state, park attendance classes, and frequency of visiting state parks (regular versus new visitors to a park). Only one individual park (Itasca) had enough responses in the survey to have a satisfaction level reported, and it had a visitor satisfaction level near, but slightly above, the state-wide park average.

## IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE OF ITEMS THAT ADD TO VISITOR ENJOYMENT

Visitors were asked—in addition to their overall satisfaction, as noted above—to indicate the major items that add to their enjoyment of the parks, and to rate how well these items are being supplied by the parks.

Many of the most important items for an enjoyable visit are the natural landscape features, including “beauty of the park”, “a natural setting for the park”, and “lakes and rivers in the park”. As important, however, are staffing and maintenance items, which include cleanliness of the parks, protection of natural resources, helpfulness of park staff, and items related to visitor disturbances and security provide by park staff. Of the recreation opportunity items, “trails in the park” is the leading item, which is consistent with the leading park activity of hiking. Hiking along trails is the way most visitors appreciate the natural features of the park. Of the information and interpretation items, informational brochures/maps are judged by nearly half of visitors as “very important” to an enjoyable park visit.

Campers judge the “quality of the campground” and “good facilities in the campground” as the key items for an enjoyable park outing.

The question of “How well are these items being provided by state parks?” was answered by asking visitors to indicate their satisfaction with the provision of each item. The large majority of visitors are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their most important items for an enjoyable park visit. Satisfaction is especially high for the top-ranked natural landscape items, and is also high for leading staff items, including cleanliness of the parks, well maintained natural resources, and helpfulness of park staff.

However, some items—even though the majority of visitors are “satisfied” or “very satisfied”—receive relatively low “very satisfied” percents. This may be an indication of items in need of some type of attention. Standing out in this way are two staffing and maintenance items (“lack of disturbance by other users” and “security provided by park staff and other security personnel”), one recreational opportunity item (“safe places to swim”), one information and interpretation item (“interpretive program”), and one camping item (“secluded campsites”).

### ITEMS THAT DETRACT FROM THE PARK VISIT

In a further effort to gauge the performance of parks, visitors were asked to rate the degree to which various items detract from the enjoyment of the park visit. From the listing of 16 potential detractors, major detractors, however, were not found. The largest detractor had only 10 percent of visitors indicating that it “moderately” or “strongly” detracted from their enjoyment. And, it is not until an item “strongly detracts” that a sizable share of visitors indicate they might not visit the park again under the same conditions.

### VISITOR SENTIMENTS FOR THE PARK THEY VISITED

Visitors value parks in manifold ways. A previous section described the experiences visitors seek in the parks. Attaining these experiences adds value to visitors’ lives. The value derives from the use of the park.

Visitors also ascribe strong bequest value to the park they visited. They desire to pass on the parks to future generations. Over half of visitors (55%) “strongly agreed” that “it is very important that my children and my children’s children will be able to visit this park.” Many protected places, such as state parks, have significant bequest value.

Frequently visitors feel attached to the park they visited, and this attachment provides a special meaning and value to the park: 28 percent “strongly agreed” with the statement that “I am very attached to this park.” This figure rises to 63 percent for visitors who come to the park regularly (6 or more times a year).

Although they feel attached to the park, the strength of the attachment does not appear to be extreme. Most visitors do not feel strongly that “this park is part of me”, nor do they agree strongly that “no other place can compare to this park” nor “I can’t imagine a better place for what I like to do”, nor “I get more satisfaction out of visiting this park than from visiting any other.”

### VISITOR SUPPORT/OPPOSITION TO POSSIBLE STATE PARK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Visitors were asked their opinion on a variety of potential park management actions. The results indicate, overall, that management actions that further the park system’s core mission—as currently defined—are widely supported, while actions that alter this mission are widely opposed. In the former group are actions that expand opportunities for wildlife viewing, quiet/solitude, hiking, education and interpretation. At the same time, visitors support far more than they oppose the idea

of *not* expanding the amount of development in the state parks in order to protect remaining resources. In the latter group, visitors strongly oppose the idea of expanding hunting opportunities in the parks, and especially strongly oppose the idea of providing more opportunities to ride off-highway vehicles in the parks.

Visitors are ambivalent about specific recreation development options, including additional rustic cabins, more swimming beaches, more paved trails, more mountain biking opportunities, and more horse trails. Consistent with these specific options, visitors are on the fence concerning the general idea of developing more land in state parks for recreation use.

Concerning potential camping-related actions, campers strongly support more spacing between campsites, but they are more ambivalent about the other possible actions, including providing more electric hook-ups, walk-in/cart-in campsites, and large-rig campsites for RVs and similar large vehicles.

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT STATE PARKS

As is common for this type of recreational offering, the informal information source of “family and friends” is the leading source. Among the leading formal sources are a number from the MN DNR: state parks brochure, information at the state parks themselves, the DNR web site, and the *Traveler* newspaper, which is sent to all annual permit holders and any others who desire the publication. Outside the DNR, the major sources are Tourism’s *Explorer* newspaper, and the MN state highway map.

New to the list of major information sources is the MN DNR web site, which has become a leading information source in just a few years of existence. Other web sites, too, show up as important sources of state park information.

### VISITOR OPINIONS ON VALUE RECEIVED FROM STATE PARK FEES

To update information from 1996, visitors were asked about the value they believe they are receiving for the park fees paid. Overall—and as in 1996—a large majority of visitors believe they are receiving a good value for the basic park fees they pay: camping permit, daily entrance permit, and annual entrance permit. Few believe the value received is poor.

Visitors who believe they are receiving a good value (benefits outweigh costs) are more likely to go along with at least small fee increases. This was a finding of the 1996 MN State Park Fee Study. Since the 2001 results are about the same or better than those in 1996 in terms of “good value” responses, it is reasonable to expect that small fee increases would not be widely opposed at this time.

### STATE PARK VISITATION FREQUENCY

First time visitors are common in the state parks (28% of all visitors), indicating that many visitors are out exploring for different recreational opportunities. Infrequent visitors, who come to this park

once a year, are common, too, comprising 23 percent of all visitors. The more frequent visitor, who visits the park two or more times a year, comprises half of all visitors.

State park visitors go to *any* of the parks an average of 12 times a year, and a median of 5 times a year. Visitors, on average, visit some four *different* parks a year; the median is 3 *different* state parks a year.

### STATE PARK TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

Day users comprise the bulk of park use (86%), with large numbers of day users coming from home and large numbers on trips away from home. Campers makeup 14 percent of overall park use in the May to September period of this study. It is interesting to note that about half of park visitation is local (day users coming from home) and about half is tourist, comprised either of day users on trips away from home or campers, who are similarly on trips away from home.

Most park visitors are Minnesotans (84%), with 16 percent coming from outside the state. The typical party size has a median of 2 to 3, and a mean of 4 to 5. About 60 percent of parties contain adults only, and about 40 percent contain teens or children under 13 years of age.

Duration of the park visit is 3 to 4 hours for day users. The median length of camper stay is two nights, and the mean is 3.1 nights.

Nearly half of all state park campers use tents (49%), while most of the remainder use a pop-up trailer (18%) or a RV, 5th wheel or hard-sided trailer (29%). Just over 40 percent (42%) of campers use an electrical hook-up.

### STATE PARK DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMPARISONS WITH THE GENERAL MINNESOTA POPULATION

State parks draw visitors from broad segments of the general Minnesota population; they broadly serve Minnesotans. Visitors come in large number from all parts of the state, from all age classes, genders, and socioeconomic levels. Compared with its population, the seven-county Twin Cities metro region contributes fewer visitors. Few of the state parks are located in the metro region, but the metro region is home to half of Minnesotans. Parks, also, attract fewer Minnesotans who are non-white and/or Hispanic than their population representation. At least in part, the lower non-white and/or Hispanic draw of parks may be due to the lower overall draw of state parks in the Twin Cities metro region, where 84 percent of the non-white and/or Hispanic population in Minnesota resides.

In terms of age, the parks draw more children and middle-aged adults, and fewer young and old adults than their respective population representations. The educational attainment of state park visitors is high compared with the general population. A majority (56%) of state park visitors from Minnesota have completed college, while 27 percent of the general population has completed college. The income levels of state park visitors from Minnesota tend to be more middle-income than the overall population. There are fewer lower-income park visitors than in the general population, and about the same proportion of higher-income visitors as in the general population.

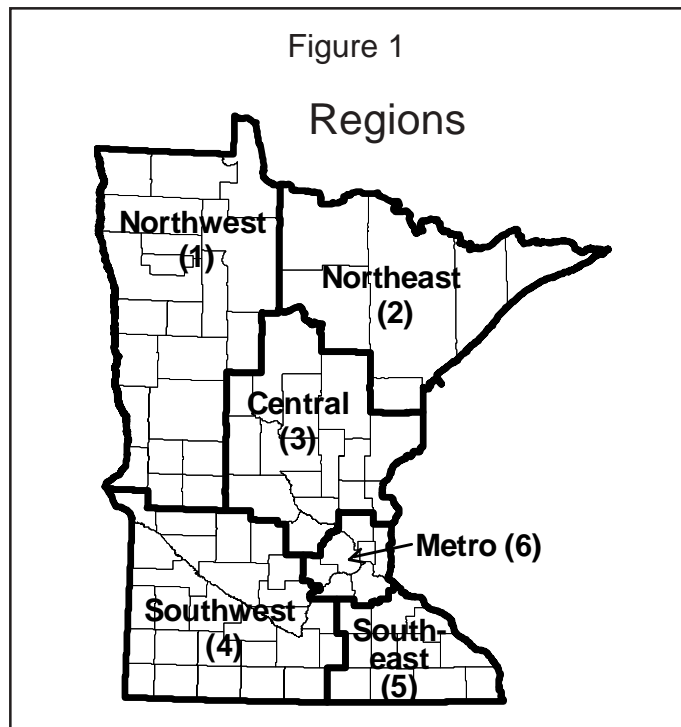


## INTRODUCTION

The 2001 Minnesota state park visitor survey is the most recent in a series of efforts—dating back to 1987—to better understand the visitors that state parks serve (Reference 1). The survey was designed to accomplish two major goals. The first goal was to gain a current understanding of the characteristics of state park visitors, of what visitors desire in state parks, and of how well visitors believe state parks are meeting their needs. Results concerning this first goal are presented in this document.

The second major goal of the survey was to update the economic effects of state park visitor spending on state and regional economies in Minnesota. The previous effort on economic effects dates back over 15 years. In addition to examining the effects of visitor spending, the current effort extends the examination of economic effects to incorporate state park operations spending, including spending on capital improvements in the parks. Results on economic effects are in a separate document from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR): *Contributions of the Minnesota State Park System to State and Regional Economies*, 2002.

The 2001 survey was a relatively large, formal survey designed to gather information from a broad representation of state park users. Some 3000 surveys were distributed to park visitors during the study. The study was designed to produce standard regional descriptions of information from park visitors (Figure 1). The study, however, was also designed to permit the grouping of parks into other arrangements, such as landscape groupings or park size groupings. The survey was not designed to produce park-by-park results; the scale of the effort to produce reliable park by park results is very large, many times larger than the current effort. The survey was expanded in one park



(Itasca), and results are available for that park.

What follows is a summary description of findings from the survey. After a brief description of methodology, the topics are presented in the following sequence:

- Activities in state parks
- Experiences sought and attained by state park visitors
- Visitor satisfaction
- Importance and performance of items that add to visitor enjoyment
- Items that detract from the park visit
- Visitor sentiments for the park they visited
- Visitor support/opposition to possible state park management actions
- Sources of information about state parks
- Visitor opinions on value received from state park fees
- State park visitation frequency
- State park trip characteristics
- State park demographics and comparisons with the general Minnesota population

For those who desire more detailed information than the high-level summary presented here, a tabulation document, with breakdowns, is available from the MN DNR: *2001 Minnesota State Park Visitor Survey: Tabulation of Survey Results, 2002*. The tabulation document contains the survey instruments used in the study and a complete description of study methodology.

## METHODOLOGY

The 2001 state park visitor survey was conducted during the high-use season (May to September), during which three-fourths of total annual park use occurs and over 90 percent of annual park camping occurs. All parks in the system participated in the survey.

The survey consisted of two survey instruments, with a core set of questions in both instruments. The core set of questions covered visitor demographics, activities, experiences, trip satisfaction, and trip characteristics. Specific to one survey instrument were questions on trip-related spending, while the other instrument contained questions on park fees and management actions. The two survey instruments were distributed in equal numbers, and the distribution of one instrument was always followed by the distribution of the other instrument.

Based on a sampling schedule, park visitors were stopped as they exited the park and presented with a self-administered survey to fill out and mail back. Names and addresses of visitors were collected at the same time; reminders and an additional survey were sent to nonrespondents. Overall, some 3000 surveys were distributed, and 2286 ultimately returned, for a return rate of 76 percent. One survey instrument had a return rate of 74 percent and the other 78 percent. The return rate is sufficiently high (above 70 percent) to allay concerns about nonresponse bias.

Because park visitors were not sampled in proportion to park use, surveys were weighted by 2000 attendance figures, the latest figures available when analysis of the survey results commenced. Such weighting ensures that the survey results are free from the effects of over or under sampling a particular visitor group, place or time. Survey weightings were done by all combinations of the following: individual park, type of park user (camper or day user), and day of week (weekday or weekend/holiday). Only weighted survey results are presented in this document.

A more detailed discussion of survey methodology is contained in the survey tabulation document for the study.

## ACTIVITIES IN STATE PARKS

Park visitors participate in many different activities. Some of the activities, however, are shared widely among visitors, and form a basic set of park-related activities (Table 1). The basic set is comprised of three activities, which are the top three activities for both campers and day users. Hiking is the most common activity and is participated in by 60 percent of all visitors and 73 percent of campers. The two other basic activities are learning-related: sightseeing and nature observation. Altogether, 76 percent of all visitors and 86 percent of campers participate in at least one of these basic activities during their visit.

Camping is engaged in by some 14 percent of visitors. Campers participated in more activities during their visits than day users, especially water and learning activities, probably because their stays at the park are typically longer than those of day users.

Learning-related activities are a staple of the park visit, with 73 percent of all park visitors participating in one or more of these activities. The most popular activities are two of the basic activities: sightseeing and nature observation. Other activities include looking at visitor center exhibits (25% of all visitors), taking a self-guided nature walk (24%), bird watching (20%), visiting historic sites (19%), and participating in a naturalist-led program (3%).

Land-based activities, including hiking, tend to be more popular park activities than water-based activities. The top land activities are hiking, picnicking and biking. For water activities, swimming, fishing and boating/canoeing have similar participation rates for all visitors and for campers. Nearly 30 percent (28%) of all park visitors and nearly half of campers (48%) engage in some form of water recreation during the park visit.

Table 1

Which of the following activities did you participate in while visiting this park on this trip?

(the percent participating in the shaded "activity group" is the percent that participated in any of the specific activities in the group)

<b>Activity group</b>	<b>Specific activity</b>	<i>---- Percent participating ----</i>	
		<u>All park visitors</u>	<u>Campers</u>
<b>Basic</b>		<b>76</b>	<b>86</b>
	Hiking	60	73
	Sightseeing	46	50
	Nature observation	42	48
<b>Learning-related</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>82</b>
	Sightseeing	46	50
	Nature observation	42	48
	Looking at kiosks or visitor center exhibits	25	31
	A self-guided nature walk	24	31
	Bird watching	20	28
	Visiting historic sites	19	25
	A naturalist-led program	3	9
<b>Land-based</b>		<b>76</b>	<b>86</b>
	Hiking	60	73
	Picnicking	30	30
	Bicycling	12	30
	Roller-blading	3	3
	Horseback riding	2	2
<b>Water-based</b>		<b>28</b>	<b>48</b>
	Swimming	16	26
	Fishing	13	28
	Boating/canoeing	10	22
<b>Camping</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>100</b>
	Camping	14	100
<b>Others (ungrouped)</b>		<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>
	Shopping in the park's nature store	17	26
	Did nothing/relaxed	14	29

## EXPERIENCES SOUGHT AND ATTAINED BY STATE PARK VISITORS

When people visit state parks they attain experiences that add value to their lives. Attaining these beneficial experiences is the underlying motivation behind the park visit. To ensure these beneficial experiences can be attained is a goal of the parks, and provides a rationale for the types of recreational opportunities, facilities and services that are offered in the parks.

The survey queried visitors about 22 specific experiences that are relevant to a state park visit (Reference 2). For each experience in the survey the visitor indicated (i) the importance of the experience to their visit and (ii) the extent to which they were able to attain the experience on their visit. The importance of an experience is measured on a four-point scale from “not important” to “very important.” Attainment of an experience is also measured on a four-point scale, ranging from “did not attain” to “fully attained.” The extent of attainment is only examined when the experience is sufficiently important to the visitor, because there is little concern over a visitor’s ability to attain an experience the visitor does not think is personally important. When an experience is of high importance to the visitor, attainment of the experience is a key concern, and it provides an indication of the success of the park in providing what visitors most desire.

The leading experiences visitors seek at state parks—as judged by “very important” responses, which effectively differentiate the major from the minor experiences visitors seek—are to enjoy nature, escape pressures of daily life, bond with family and friends, learn and explore new things, and get some exercise (Table 2). At the other extreme, most visitors do not view parks as places to meet new people.

A strong relationship exists between the importance visitors ascribe to an experience and their ability to attain it (Table 3). When the experience is “very important”, the large majority of visitors are able to “fully attain” the experience; nearly all the rest are able to “moderately attain” the experience. Given that the norm for “very important” experiences is to “fully attain” the experience, any attainment less than “fully attain” for these “very important” experiences appears to be an indication of an attainment problem.

A clear majority of visitors are able to “fully attain” each of their “very important” experiences (Table 2). And for the very top-ranked experiences, over 80 percent are able to “fully attain” the experience. Some of the experiences, however, have

Table 2

Importance and Attainment of Park Visitor Experiences

		----- All park visitors -----	
<u>Category</u>	<u>Experience</u>	Experience "very important" to visit (percent)	"Fully attained" the "very important" experience (percent)
<b>Enjoy nature</b>			
	Enjoy natural scenery	80	86
	Enjoy smells and sounds of nature	69	73
<b>Escape personal, social and physical pressures</b>			
	Get away from life's usual demands	78	82
	Get away from crowds	62	68
	Rest mentally	58	66
	Experience silence and quiet	52	62
	Experience solitude	50	61
<b>Be with family and friends</b>			
	Spend leisure time with family	67	83
	Be with members of my group	50	91
<b>Learn and explore</b>			
	Enjoy different experiences from home	60	77
	Explore and discover new things	49	65
	Learn more about nature	37	63
	Experience a sense of history	29	74
<b>Exercise and feel healthier</b>			
	Feel healthier	49	73
	Get/keep physically fit	43	78
<b>Achieve and be stimulated</b>			
	Feel exhilarated	38	70
	Feel more self-confident	24	75
<b>Rest physically</b>			
	Rest physically	37	71
<b>Be introspective</b>			
	Experience spiritual renewal	29	67
<b>Teach others</b>			
	Help family, friends or others develop their outdoor skills	23	77
<b>Use equipment</b>			
	Get a chance to use or test my equipment	17	84
<b>Meet new people</b>			
	Interact with new and varied people	10	79

Table 3

Relationship between "importance of experience to your visit" and "extent to which attained experience"

(all 22 experiences combined)

<i>Importance of experience</i>	----- Extent to which attained experience (row percents) -----				Total percent
	Did not attain	Slightly attained	Moderately attained	Fully attained	
Not important	70	10	12	8	100
Slightly important	9	45	34	12	100
Moderately important	1	11	67	21	100
Very important	1	4	21	74	100

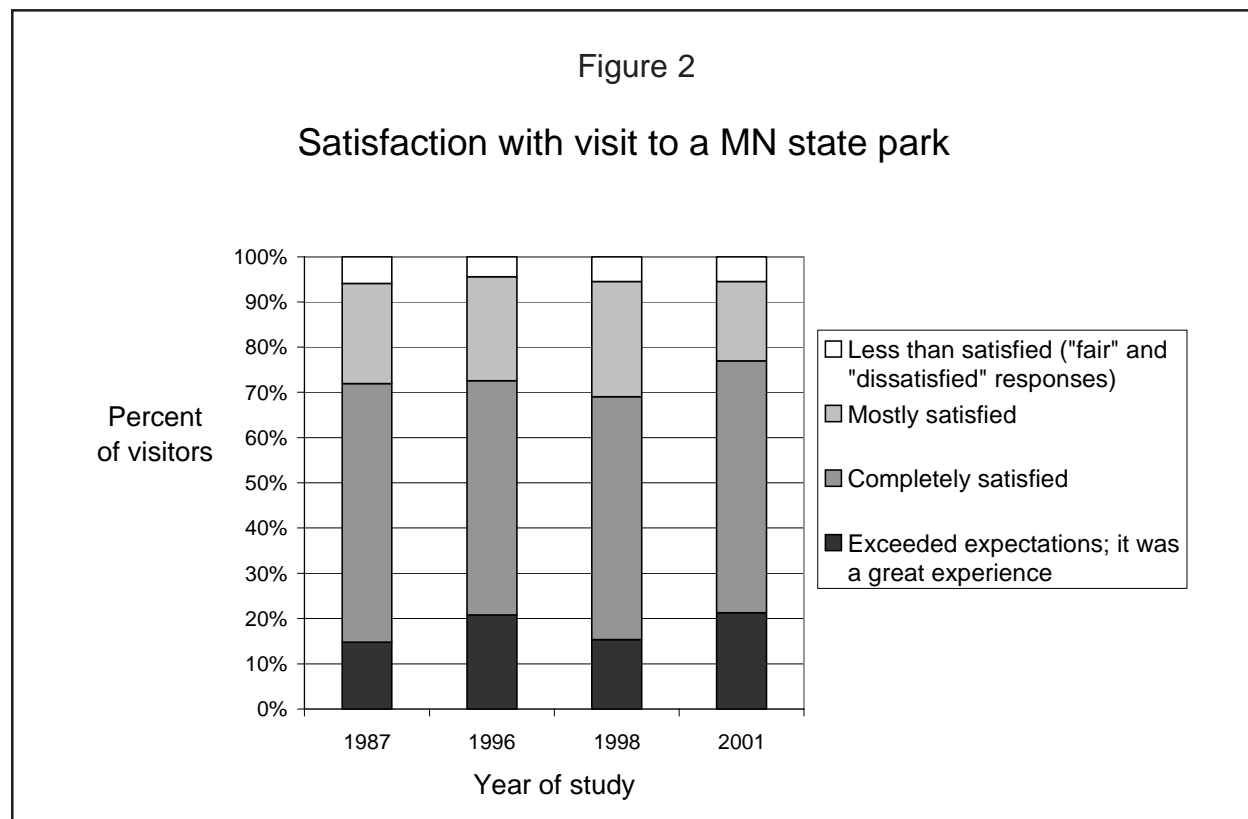
lower attainment than others, and low attainment may provide an indication of areas of concern to visitors that may warrant further scrutiny.

Experiences that stand out in terms of relatively low attainment include two in the escape pressures category: “experience silence and quiet” and “experience solitude.” Some 61 or 62 percent of visitors (a relatively low percent) who said these experiences were “very important” to their visit were able to “fully attain” these experiences. Also included in the relatively low attainment group are two experiences in the learn and explore category: “explore and discover new things” and “learn more about nature.” For any of these experiences with relatively low attainment, the reason for the low attainment is not known from the survey responses. The survey responses can only point out that these *may* constitute a problem area—an area that may be worthy of further scrutiny—not that they *do* constitute a problem.



## VISITOR SATISFACTION

Visitor satisfaction remains high in 2001 (Figure 2). In fact, it is slightly higher than in any previous year for which measurements exist. The large majority of visitors are at least “completely satisfied” with their visit (77% of visitors), with the rest being “mostly satisfied” (18%). Few visitors (5%) were less than satisfied (fair/OK or dissatisfied responses).

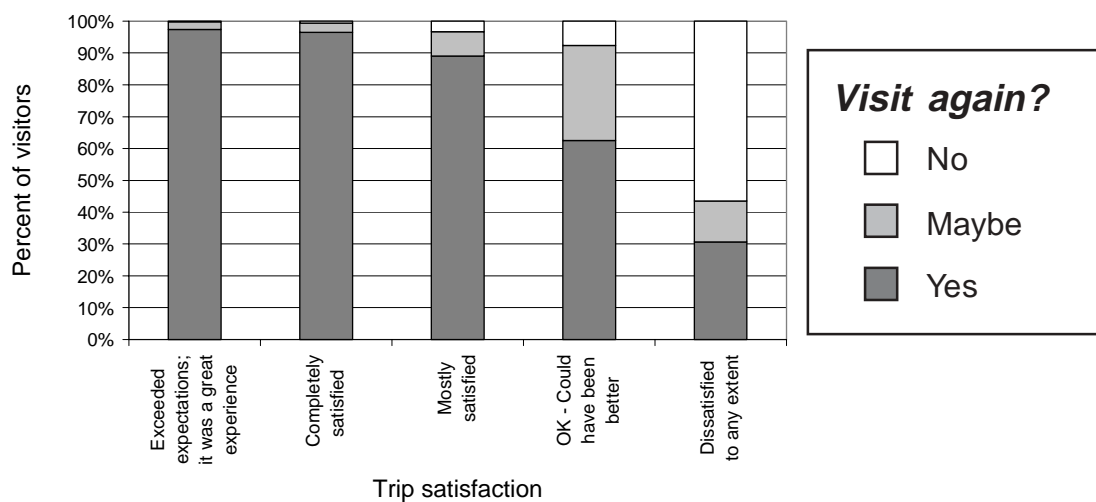


The importance of high satisfaction to repeat visitation is quite evident (Figure 3). As satisfaction falls into the fair range (“OK - could have been better”) and on into “dissatisfied” responses, increasing numbers of visitors will either not visit a state park again or will think twice before doing so.

High visitor satisfaction is pervasive (Table 4). It extends across types of visitors (campers, day users), days of the week, regions of the state, park attendance classes, and frequency of visiting state parks. The largest differences in any breakdown occur for regions of the state: northeast parks have higher visitor satisfaction, and seven-county Twin Cities metro parks have lower satisfaction.

Figure 3

Relationship between trip satisfaction and willingness to visit again under the same conditions



Metro parks, as a group, receive lower visitor satisfaction ratings for key items for an enjoyable park visit (this is the next topic): natural landscape features, cleanliness of grounds and facilities, and the quality of campground facilities.

Only one individual park (Itasca) had enough responses in the survey to have a satisfaction level reported, and it had a visitor satisfaction level near, but slightly above, the state-wide park average. If more parks could be reported individually, the results may show patterns similar to those found for state bicycle trails, which had overall visitor satisfaction levels that varied substantially from trail to trail (Reference 3).

Table 4

Satisfaction Rating of Visit to the State Park

(rating scale: 1=exceeded expectations, 2=completely satisfied, 3=mostly satisfied, 4=OK - could have been better, 5=somewhat dissatisfied, 6=very dissatisfied, 7=most dissatisfied; it was a miserable experience)

<u>Breakdown Category</u>	<u>Rating of visit (average)</u>
<b>Overall (all visitors to all parks)</b>	2.1
<b>By type of user:</b>	
Camper	2.1
Day user on trip away from home	2.1
Day user from home	2.2
<b>By day of week:</b>	
Weekends/holidays	2.1
Weekdays	2.1
<b>By region of park:</b>	
Northwest	2.1
Northeast	1.9
Central	2.2
Southwest	2.3
Southeast	2.0
Metro	2.4
<b>By park visitation level (May to September 2000):</b>	
Highest use parks (>150,000)	2.1
Medium-high use parks (100,000 to 150,000)	2.1
Medium-low use parks (50,000 to 100,000)	2.1
Lowest use parks (<50,000)	2.2
<b>By individual park (must have at least 250 surveys):</b>	
Itasca (331 surveys)	2.0
<b>By frequency of visiting <i>this</i> park:</b>	
First visit ever	2.1
One time in last 12 months (not first visit ever)	2.2
Two to five times in last 12 months	2.1
Six or more times in last 12 months	2.0

## IMPORTANCE AND PERFORMANCE OF ITEMS THAT ADD TO VISITOR ENJOYMENT

Visitors were asked—in addition to their overall satisfaction, as noted above—to indicate the major items that add to their enjoyment of the parks, and to rate how well these items are being supplied by the parks.

Many of the most important items for an enjoyable visit—identified by the frequency of “very important” responses—are the natural landscape features, including “beauty of the park”, “a natural setting for the park”, and “lakes and rivers in the park” (Table 5). As important, however, are staffing and maintenance items, which include cleanliness of the parks, protection of natural resources, helpfulness of park staff, and items related to visitor disturbances and security provide by park staff. Of the recreation opportunity items, “trails in the park” is the leading item, which is consistent with the leading park activity of hiking. Hiking along trails is the way most visitors appreciate the natural features of the park. Of the information and interpretation items, informational brochures/maps are judge by nearly half of visitors as “very important” to an enjoyable park visit.

Campers judge the “quality of the campground” and “good facilities in the campground” as the key items for an enjoyable park outing.

The question of “How well are these items being provided by state parks?” was answered by asking visitors to indicate their satisfaction with the provision of each item. Satisfaction levels were only examined when the item was sufficiently important to the visitor, because there is little concern over a visitor’s rating of items they do not think are personally important. When an item is of high importance to the visitor, satisfaction with the item is of primary concern, and it provides an indication of the success of the park in providing what visitors desire as part of an enjoyable park outing.

The large majority of visitors are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their most important items for an enjoyable park visit (Table 5). Satisfaction is especially high for the top-ranked natural landscape items, and is also high for leading staff items, including cleanliness of the parks, well maintained natural resources, and helpfulness of park staff.

However, some items—even though the majority of visitors are “satisfied” or “very satisfied”—receive relatively low “very satisfied” percents. This may be an

Table 5

How important is this item to making your visit to the park enjoyable?  
&

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this item in the park?

(importance scale: 1=not important, 2=slightly important, 3=moderately important, 4=very important)

Item group	Specific item	Percent of importance responses "very important"		Satisfaction ratings for "very important" responses (percent)				
		All users	Campers	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
<b>Natural landscape</b>								
	Beauty of the park	81		73	24	2	1	0
	A natural setting for the park	79		74	23	2	1	0
	Lakes and rivers in the park	69		63	30	4	2	0
<b>Staffing and maintenance</b>								
	Cleanliness of grounds and facilities	79		61	34	4	1	1
	Well protected natural resources	73		60	34	5	2	0
	Lack of disturbances by other users	61		45	44	8	2	1
	Helpfulness of park staff	58		70	26	4	1	0
	Security provided by park staff and other security personnel	48		54	34	12	1	0
<b>Recreation opportunities</b>								
	Trails in the park	69		55	40	3	2	1
	Water recreation opportunities (fishing, boating, swimming)	42		51	37	8	3	1
	Good facilities in the picnic grounds	42		55	37	6	3	0
	Safe places to swim	42		45	35	14	3	3
<b>Information and interpretation</b>								
	Informational brochure/maps provided	47		56	35	6	2	1
	Visitor center	38		70	24	5	1	0
	Interpretive program	16		42	39	14	3	2
<b>Camping (camper responses only)</b>								
	Quality of the campground	85		55	39	4	1	0
	Good facilities in campground	76		53	38	7	2	1
	Secluded campsites	53		43	35	12	7	2
	Campground near lake or river	49		59	29	7	4	1

indication of items in need of some type of attention. Standing out in this way are two staffing and maintenance items (“lack of disturbance by other users” and “security provided by park staff and other security personnel”), one recreational opportunity item (“safe places to swim”), one information and interpretation item (“interpretive program”), and one camping item (“secluded campsites”).

The satisfaction ratings in Table 5 provide valuable system-wide norms against which items in individual parks or park groupings could be compared to find what is performing well and performing less well. In a similar fashion, the overall satisfaction ratings presented earlier provide norms against which individual parks and park groups can be compared.

## ITEMS THAT DETRACT FROM THE PARK VISIT

In a further effort to gauge the performance of parks, visitors were asked to rate the degree to which various items detract from their enjoyment of the park visit. From the listing of 16 potential detractors, major detractors, however, were not found (Table 6). The largest detractor had only 10 percent of visitors indicating that it “moderately” or “strongly” detracted from their enjoyment. And, it is not until an item “strongly detracts” that a sizable share of visitors indicate they might not visit the park again under the same conditions; examples are provided for two items (Table 7). Similarly, it is not until an item “strongly detracts” that a sizable share of visitors indicate lower overall satisfaction with their visit to the park.

The example items in Table 7, demonstrate that “strongly detract” noise response has a much larger effect on willingness to return than a “strongly detract” number of people response. Some items appear to have more impact on prospective behavior than others, even when the response is the same. Joining “level of noise in the park” are some other items that have a relatively large effect on prospective visitor behavior in terms of willingness to return: “occurrence of non-permitted park uses (firecrackers, loudspeakers, weapons)”, “too much development (e.g., roads and buildings) in the park”, and “way I was treated by other park visitors.” Campers would add “amount of litter in the park” to this listing of larger impact items for all visitors.

Table 6

How much (if at all) did the following items detract from you enjoyment of this park on your visit?

<u>Detractor category</u>	<i>Response to strength of detractor</i>					Total (percent)
	Did not detract (percent)	Slightly detracted (percent)	Moderately detracted (percent)	Strongly detracted (percent)	Don't know (percent)	
<b>Other people and their behavior</b>						
Number of people encountered in the park	65	21	8	2	3	100
Other people's pets	76	12	6	2	4	100
Level of noise in the park	79	13	4	2	3	100
Actions by others that affected my feeling of safety	86	6	2	0	5	100
Occurrence of non-permitted park uses	86	3	2	1	8	100
Amount of vandalism or graffiti in the park	89	4	1	1	5	100
Way I was treated by other park visitors	91	3	1	1	4	100
<b>Facility maintenance</b>						
Odors from restrooms	74	13	5	3	6	100
Odors from trash disposal sites/dumpsters	82	7	2	1	8	100
Quality of facility maintenance	87	5	3	1	4	100
Amount of litter in the park	87	8	2	1	3	100
<b>Park design and programming</b>						
Lack of interpretive programs	72	7	4	2	16	100
Too much development (e.g., roads and buildings) in the park	82	10	3	2	4	100
Inability to find my way around the park using the park's directional signs	85	7	5	1	3	100
Too little development (e.g., roads and buildings) in the park	84	7	2	2	6	100
Too much artificial lighting in the park	84	3	0	1	12	100

Table 7

Relationship between detractor item and willingness to visit park again under the same conditions

**Visitor responses to potential detractor: "level of noise in the park"**

<i>Visit again?</i>	----- <i>Strength of detractor</i> -----				Total (percent)
	Did not detract (percent)	Slightly detracted (percent)	Moderately detracted (percent)	Strongly detracted (percent)	
"Yes "	95	93	91	57	94
"Maybe"	1	3	1	18	2
"No"	4	4	8	25	4
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100

**Visitor responses to potential detractor: "number of people encountered in the park"**

<i>Visit again?</i>	----- <i>Strength of detractor</i> -----				Total (percent)
	Did not detract (percent)	Slightly detracted (percent)	Moderately detracted (percent)	Strongly detracted (percent)	
"Yes "	94	95	89	82	94
"Maybe"	2	1	3	3	2
"No"	4	4	7	15	4
Total percent	100	100	100	100	100

As with other measures in the survey, responses to these potential detractor items provide valuable system-wide norms against which items in individual parks or park groupings could be compared to find what is performing well and performing less well.



## VISITOR SENTIMENTS FOR THE PARK THEY VISITED

Visitors value parks in manifold ways. A previous section described the experiences visitors seek in the parks. Attaining these experiences adds value to visitors' lives, and provides the underlying motivation for visiting the parks. This value derives from the use of the park.

Visitors also ascribe strong bequest value to the park they visited (Table 8). They desire to pass on the parks to future generations. Over half of visitors (55%) "strongly agreed" that "it is very important that my children and my children's children will be able to visit this park." Many protected places, such as state parks, have significant bequest value.

Frequently visitors feel attached to the park they visited, and this attachment provides a special meaning and value to the park (Reference 4): 28 percent "strongly agreed" with the statement that "I am very attached to this park." This figure rises to 63 percent for visitors who come to the park regularly (6 or more times a year). Visitors are in moderate agreement that the park helps them attain the life they desire, and in moderate disagreement that the time in the park could have been easily spend somewhere else. For regular visitors, just over 40 percent strongly agree (44%) or disagree (44%), respectively, with these forms of place attachment.

Although they feel attached to the park, the strength of the attachment does not appear to be extreme. Most visitors do not feel strongly that "this park is part of me", nor do they agree strongly that "no other place can compare to this park" nor "I can't imagine a better place for what I like to do", nor "I get more satisfaction out of visiting this park than from visiting any other." Even visitors who visit regularly (6 or more times a year) do not in large proportions strongly agree with these statements (none is over 40% "strongly agree" for regular visitors). For example, only 18 percent of regular visitors "strongly agreed" with the statement that "no other place can compare with this park."

Table 8

Visitor sentiments for this state park  
(percent agreement/disagreement with each statement)

Statement	Strongly disagree (percent)	Mildly disagree (percent)	Neither agree nor disagree (percent)	Mildly agree (percent)	Strongly agree (percent)	Don't know (percent)	Total (percent)
<b>Very strong agreement</b>							
● It is important that my children and my children's children will be able to visit this park.	5	2	15	21	55	3	100
<b>Strong agreement</b>							
● I am very attached to this park.	6	7	28	30	28	2	100
<b>Moderate agreement/disagreement</b>							
● Visiting this park helps me attain the life I strive for.	8	8	34	28	20	2	100
● The time I spent here could have just as easily been spent somewhere else.	29	24	24	15	7	2	100
<b>Ambivalence</b>							
● No other place can compare to this park.	7	14	32	30	13	4	100
● I can't imagine a better place for what I like to do.	9	19	34	20	15	3	100
● I feel like this park is part of me.	14	12	36	20	15	3	100
● I get more satisfaction out of visiting this park than from visiting any other.	8	18	40	21	8	4	100

## VISITOR SUPPORT/OPPOSITION TO POSSIBLE STATE PARK MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

Visitors were asked their opinion on a variety of potential park management actions. The results indicate, overall, that management actions that further the park system's core mission—as currently define—are widely supported, while actions that alter this mission are widely opposed (Table 9). In the former group are actions that expand opportunities for wildlife viewing, quiet/solitude, hiking, education and interpretation. At the same time, visitors support far more than they oppose the idea of *not* expanding the amount of development in the state parks in order to protect remaining resources.

Visitors strongly oppose the idea of expanding hunting opportunities in the parks, and especially strongly oppose the idea of providing more opportunities to ride off-highway vehicles in the parks.

Visitors are ambivalent about specific recreation development options, including additional rustic cabins, more swimming beaches, more paved trails, more mountain biking opportunities, and more horse trails. Consistent with these specific options, visitors are on the fence concerning the general idea of developing more land in state parks for recreation use; just about as many visitors oppose this general idea as support it. The strength of support and opposition to all these development-related actions is moderate. Visitors are not strongly polarized. Most visitors are in the middle, with opinions ranging from mild opposition to mild support.

Concerning potential camping-related actions, campers strongly support more spacing between campsites (Table 10). They are more ambivalent about the other possible actions, including providing more electric hook-ups, walk-in/cart-in campsites, and large-rig campsites for RVs and similar large vehicles.

Table 9

How much do you support or oppose each possible management action being taken for the parks?

(oppose/support scale: 1=strongly oppose, 2=mildly oppose, 3=neither oppose nor support, 4=mildly support, 5=strongly support)

Possible management action	Average "oppose/support" response	Oppose/support response					Total (percent)
		Strongly oppose (percent)	Mildly oppose (percent)	Neither oppose nor support (percent)	Mildly support (percent)	Strongly support (percent)	
<b>RESPONSES OF ALL PARK VISITORS</b>							
<i>Actions visitors largely support</i>							
● Provide more opportunities to view wildlife.	4.2	0	2	16	39	41	100
● Provide more opportunities for quiet and solitude.	4.1	1	1	24	37	33	100
● Provide more hiking opportunities.	4.0	1	0	23	41	31	100
● Provide more educational opportunities.	3.9	0	1	29	38	26	100
● Use buffers to screen views of outside development.	3.7	2	3	35	34	20	100
● Provide additional interpretive exhibits.	3.6	1	3	39	37	14	100
● Do not expand the amount of development in state parks in order to protect remaining resources.	3.6	4	8	31	24	26	100
● Provide more trails for people with mobility impairments.	3.6	3	5	36	36	15	100
<i>Actions visitors are ambivalent about</i>							
● Provide additional rustic camper cabins.	3.5	2	7	42	29	13	100
● Provide more designated beach areas for swimmers.	3.4	2	8	46	28	12	100
● Remove non-native plants (e.g., buckthorn, purple loosestrife).	3.4	5	9	42	22	17	100
● Provide more paved trails.	3.2	8	16	30	26	14	100
● Develop more land in state parks for recreation use.	3.1	9	22	27	23	13	100
● Provide more opportunities to ride mountain bikes.	3.0	14	14	36	22	9	100
● Provide more horse trails.	2.9	8	14	56	9	4	100
<i>Actions visitors largely oppose</i>							
● Provide more hunting opportunities.	2.4	32	17	28	13	5	100
● Provide more opportunities to ride off-highway vehicles (e.g., motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles).	1.7	61	14	13	4	4	100

Table 10

How much do you support or oppose each possible management action being taken for the parks?

(oppose/support scale: 1=strongly oppose, 2=mildly oppose, 3=neither oppose nor support, 4=mildly support, 5=strongly support)

Possible management action	Average "oppose/support" response	Oppose/support response					Total (percent)	
		Strongly oppose (percent)	Mildly oppose (percent)	Neither oppose nor support (percent)	Mildly support (percent)	Strongly support (percent)		Don't know (percent)
<b>RESPONSES OF PARK CAMPERS</b>								
<i>Actions campers largely support</i>								
● Provide more spacing between campsites.	4.2	1	3	22	26	46	3	100
<i>Actions campers are ambivalent about</i>								
● Provide more electrical hook-ups for campers.	3.4	9	9	34	22	22	3	100
● Provide more walk-in/cart-in campsites.	3.4	2	4	55	16	13	10	100
● Provide more campsites for people camping in RVs and similar large rigs.	2.9	14	21	33	14	15	4	100
● Provide pull-through campsites for people camping in RVs and similar large rigs.	2.9	15	17	39	12	13	4	100

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION ABOUT STATE PARKS

As is common for this type of recreational offering, the informal information source of “family and friends” is the leading source (Table 11). Among the leading formal sources are a number from the MN DNR: state parks brochure, information at the state parks themselves, the DNR web site, and the *Traveler* newspaper, which is sent to all annual permit holders and any others who desire the publication. Outside the DNR, the major sources are Tourism’s *Explorer* newspaper, and the MN state highway map.

New to the list of major information sources is the MN DNR web site, which has become a leading information source in just a few years of existence. Other web sites, too, show up as important sources of state park information.

Table 11

When you obtain information on MN State Parks, what are your most important information sources?

<u>Category</u>	<u>Source</u>	<u>Percent of visitors indicating source</u>
<b>MN DNR sources</b>		
	Minnesota State Park brochure	55
	Information at one or more Minnesota State Parks	41
	The MN DNR web site	34
	Minnesota State Park Traveler newspaper	21
	The MN DNR telephone information center	7
	PRIM recreation maps	4
<b>MN Office of Tourism sources</b>		
	Minnesota Explorer newspaper	32
	Highway information centers	16
	The MN Office of Tourism web site	11
	The MN Office of Tourism telephone information center	6
<b>General sources</b>		
	Family and friends	58
	Minnesota’s State Highway Map	41
	Web sites	21
	Travel guides	20
	Recreational opportunity maps and directories	16
	Places I stay (e.g., resorts, campgrounds)	14
	Newspapers	12
	Other road maps	10
	Local chambers of commerce	8
	Boating/camping shows	4
	TV or radio	4

## VISITOR OPINIONS ON VALUE RECEIVED FROM STATE PARK FEES

To update information from 1996 (Reference 5), visitors were asked about the value they believe they are receiving for the park fees paid. Overall—and as in 1996—a large majority of visitors believe they are receiving a good value for the basic park fees they pay: camping permit, daily entrance permit, and annual entrance permit. Few believe the value received is poor (Table 12).

Visitors who believe they are receiving a good value (benefits outweigh costs) are more likely to go along with at least small fee increases. This was a finding of the 1996 MN State Park Fee Study. Since the 2001 results are about the same or better than those in 1996 in terms of “good value” responses, it is reasonable to expect that small fee increases would not be widely opposed at this time.

Table 12

### Value for state park fees paid

*Do you feel you are getting a good, fair, or poor value from MN State Parks for the money you paid for . . .*

<i>. . . camping?</i>		
<u>Response</u>	2001 survey (percent)	1996 survey (percent)
"Good"	74	68
"Fair"	23	29
"Poor"	3	2
"Don't know"	0	0
Total percent	100	100

<i>. . . daily entrance permit?</i>		
<u>Response</u>	2001 survey (percent)	1996 survey (percent)
"Good"	72	68
"Fair"	25	26
"Poor"	2	4
"Don't know"	1	3
Total percent	100	100

<i>. . . annual entrance permit?</i>		
<u>Response</u>	2001 survey (percent)	1996 survey (percent)
"Good"	82	85
"Fair"	17	15
"Poor"	1	0
"Don't know"	1	0
Total percent	100	100

## STATE PARK VISITATION FREQUENCY

First time visitors are common in the state parks (28% of all visitors), indicating that many visitors are out exploring for different recreational opportunities (Table 13). Infrequent visitors, who come to this park once a year, are common, too, comprising 23 percent of all visitors. The more frequent visitor, who visits the park two or more times a year, comprises half of all visitors.

<u>Response</u>	<u>Percent of visitors</u>
First time every	28
One time in last 12 months (but not first time ever)	23
Two to five times in last 12 months	30
Six or more times in last 12 months	<u>20</u>
Total percent	100

State park visitors go to *any* of the parks an average of 12 times a year, and a median of 5 times a year (Table 14). The mean is so much larger than the median due to some visitors who use state parks as a routine part of daily life.

Mean times =	12
Median times =	5

Visitors, on average, visit some four *different* parks a year; the median is 3 different state parks a year (Table 15).

Mean times =	4
Median times =	3



## STATE PARK TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

Day users comprise the bulk of park use (86%), with large numbers of day users coming from home and large numbers on trips away from home (Table 16). Campers makeup 14 percent of overall park use in the May to September period of this study. On an annual basis, campers comprise 11 percent of all park use.

It is interesting to note that about half of park visitation is local (day users coming from home) and about half is tourist, comprised either of day users on trips away from home or campers, who are similarly on trips away from home.

Most park visitors are Minnesotans (84%), with 16 percent coming from outside the state. Just over a third of all visitors come from the seven-county Twin Cities metro area (36%). Southern Minnesota contributes about one-fourth of all visitors, as does Central and northern Minnesota combined.

The typical party size has a median of 2 to 3, and a mean of 4 to 5. The mean is larger than the median due to large parties.

About 60 percent of parties contain adults only, and about 40 percent contain teens or children under 13 years of age. The most common parties are comprised of two or more adults with one of more teens/children (34%), or two adults by themselves (34%).

Duration of the park visit is 3 to 4 hours for day users. The median length of camper stay is two nights, and the mean is 3.1 nights.

Nearly half of all state park campers use tents (49%), while most of the remainder use a pop-up trailer (18%) or a RV, 5th wheel or hard-sided trailer (29%) (see Table 17). The typical length—including tow vehicle—of the RV, 5th wheel or hard-sided trailer averages 33 feet, and has a median length of 30 feet.

Just over 40 percent (42%) of campers use an electrical hook-up.

Table 16  
State Park Trip Characteristics

<u>Type of visitor</u>	<u>Percent of Park Use (May to September)</u>
Day user from home	49
Day user on trip away from home	<u>37</u>
<i>Day user subtotal</i>	86
Camper	<u>14</u>
Total percent	100

<u>Origin of visitor</u>	<u>Percent of Park Use (May to September)</u>
Northwest MN	8
Northeast MN	6
Central MN	11
Southwest MN	13
Southeast MN	11
Metro MN	<u>36</u>
<i>Minnesota subtotal</i>	84
Outside of Minnesota	<u>16</u>
Total percent	100

Origin Regions  
in Minnesota

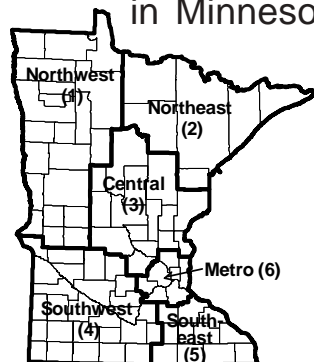


Table 16 (continued)

State Park Trip Characteristics  
(continued)

<b><u>Party size</u></b>	<b><u>Mean</u></b>	<b><u>Median</u></b>
All users	5.0	2.0
Day users	5.1	2.0
Campers	4.1	3.0

<b><u>Party composition</u></b>	<b><u>Percent</u></b>
<i>Adult only parties:</i>	
1 adult, 0 teens/children	14
2 adult, 0 teens/children	34
3+ adult, 0 teens/children	<u>11</u>
<i>Subtotal percent</i>	59
<i>Parties with teens/children:</i>	
1 adult, 1+ teens/children	6
2+ adult, 1+ teens/children	34
0 adult, 1+ teens/children	<u>2</u>
<i>Subtotal percent</i>	42
 Total percent	 100

<b><u>Duration of park visit</u></b>	<b><u>Mean</u></b>	<b><u>Median</u></b>
Hours in this park - day users	3.4	3.0
Nights in this park - campers	3.1	2.0

Table 17

Camper State Park Trip Characteristics

<u>Camping equipment</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Tent	49
Pop-up trailer	18
RV, 5th wheel, or hard-sided trailer*	29
Camper cabin	2
Other	<u>2</u>
Total percent	100

(\* Length including tow vehicle: mean = 33 feet; median = 30 feet.)

<u>Camper used electric hook-up?</u>	<u>Percent</u>
"Yes", used electric hook-up	42

STATE PARK DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMPARISONS WITH THE GENERAL MINNESOTA POPULATION

State parks draw visitors from broad segments of the general Minnesota population; they broadly serve Minnesotans. Visitors come in large number from all parts of the state, from all age classes, genders, and socioeconomic levels (Table 18). Compared with its population (Reference 6), the seven-county Twin Cities metro region contributes fewer visitors. Few of the state parks are located in the metro region, but the metro region is home to half of Minnesotans. Parks, also, attract fewer Minnesotans who are non-white and/or Hispanic than their population representation. At least in part, the lower non-white and/or Hispanic draw of parks may be due to the lower overall draw of state parks in the Twin Cities metro region, where 84 percent of the non-white and/or Hispanic population in Minnesota resides.

In terms of age, the parks draw more children and middle-aged adults, and fewer young and old adults than their respective population representations. The

educational attainment of state park visitors is high compared with the general population. A majority (56%) of state park visitors from Minnesota have completed college, while 27 percent of the general population has completed college. The income levels of state park visitors from Minnesota tend to be more middle-income than the overall population. There are fewer lower-income park visitors than in the general population, and about the same proportion of higher-income visitors as in the general population.

Table 18

Park visitors from MN compared with the general MN population  
(MN population data from the 2000 U.S. Census)

	Park visitors (percent)	MN population (percent)
<b><u>Region of origin</u></b>		
Northwest	9	8
Northeast	7	7
Central	13	12
Southwest	16	10
Southeast	13	9
Metro	<u>43</u>	<u>54</u>
Total percent	100	100
<b><u>Age</u></b>		
Children (<13)	27	19
Teens (13-18)	11	9
Adults (19-29)	7	15
Adults (30-39)	15	16
Adults (40-49)	20	16
Adults (50-59)	10	11
Adults (60+)	<u>10</u>	<u>16</u>
Total percent	100	100
<b><u>Gender</u></b>		
Male	47	50
Female	<u>53</u>	<u>51</u>
Total percent	100	100
<b><u>Race and ethnicity</u></b>		
White, Non-Hispanic	96	88
Non-white and/or Hispanic	<u>4</u>	<u>12</u>
Total percent	100	100

Table 18 (continued)

Park visitors from MN compared with the general MN population  
 (continued)  
 (MN population data from the 2000 U.S. Census)

	Park visitors (percent)	MN population (percent)
<b><u>Education (for people 25 years or older)</u></b>		
Some high school	1	12
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	11	29
Vocational/technical school, associate degree, or some college	32	32
Graduated from college	29	19
Some postgraduate study, including postgraduate degrees	<u>27</u>	<u>8</u>
Total percent	100	100
<b><u>Household income</u></b>		
Less than \$10,000	2	7
\$10,000 to \$19,999	3	11
\$20,000 to \$29,999	8	12
\$30,000 to \$39,999	14	12
\$40,000 to \$49,999	13	11
\$50,000 to \$74,999	29	22
\$75,000 to \$99,999	17	12
\$100,000 or more	<u>14</u>	<u>13</u>
Total percent	100	100

## REFERENCES

1. Previous Minnesota state park visitor survey efforts are as follows: 1987 (a general survey), 1996 (associated with the development of a fee strategy for state parks), and 1998 (associated with a state park land study). All studies were conducted during the summer, and all are available from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Division of Parks and Recreation.
2. Experiences relevant to a state park visit were selected from the wide range of leisure experiences found in: Driver, B., Tinsley, H., and Manfredo, M. Results from two inventories designed to assess the breadth of the perceived psychological benefits of leisure. In: Driver, B., Brown, P., and Peterson, G. (eds). 1991. *The Benefits of Leisure*. State College, PA. Venture Publishing, Inc. pp. 263-286.
3. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), Trails and Waterways Division, and Office of Management and Budget Services. 2000. *State Trail Use: Summary of Summer Trail Use and User Surveys Conducted in 1996, 1997 and 1998*. Available on MN DNR web site: [www.dnr.state.mn.us](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us) .
4. Items for measuring place attachment selected from: Williams, D., Anderson, B., McDonald, C., and Patterson, M. *Measuring Place Attachment: More Preliminary Results*. Presented at: Outdoor Recreation Planning and Management Research Session, 1995 NRPA Leisure Research Symposium, San Antonio, TX. October 4-8, 1995.
5. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR), Division of Parks and Recreation. 1997. *State Park Fee Strategy*. (the survey information for this document was collected in 1996).
6. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. 2000 *Census of the United States: Minnesota*.