



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

1999 Long Branch State Park Visitor Survey

Project Completion Report

Submitted to

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

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March 2000

Executive Summary

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

An on-site exit survey of adult visitors to LBSP was conducted June, July, and August 1999. Three hundred one (301) surveys were collected, with an overall response rate of 71%. Results of the survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 6%. The following information summarizes the results of the study.

Socio-demographic Characteristics

- LBSP visitors were comprised almost equally of males (54%) and females (46%), and the average age of the adult visitor to LBSP was 47.
- About 40% of the visitors reported a household income of between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and almost half (47%) reported having completed grade school or high school as the highest level of education completed.
- The majority (90%) of visitors was Caucasian. Almost two percent (1.5%) were African American and 7% were Native American. One percent (1%) of visitors reported being Asian and less than 1% reported being of Hispanic ethnic origin.
- Eight percent (8%) of the visitors reported having a disability.

- Eighty-eight percent (88%) of the visitors were from Missouri, 5% were from Illinois, 3% were from Iowa, and almost 2% were from Texas.
- Almost two-thirds (62%) of the visitors lived within 50 miles of LBSP.

Use-Patterns

- The majority (86%) of visitors drove less than a day's drive (less than 150 miles) to visit LBSP. Of those driving 150 miles or less, 44% lived within 25 miles of the park. Within Missouri, 42% of the visitors came from the immediate vicinity (within 15 miles) of the park.
- Over four-fifths (85%) of LBSP visitors had visited the park before.
- LBSP visitors had visited the park an average of 39 times in the past year.
- Almost three-fourths of the visitors were day-users. Of the visitors staying overnight, 81% stayed in the campground at LBSP. The average number of nights overnight visitors stayed was 4 nights.
- The majority of LBSP visitors visited the park with family and/or friends.
- The most frequent recreation activities in which visitors participated were swimming, picnicking, walking, viewing wildlife, fishing, camping, and boating.

Satisfaction and Other Measures

- Ninety-nine percent (99%) of LBSP visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied overall.
- Of the six park features, the campground and picnic areas were given the highest satisfaction ratings and the boat launches were given the lowest satisfaction rating.
- Visitors gave higher performance ratings to the park being free of litter and trash. Disabled visitors also gave a high performance rating to the park for providing disabled accessibility.
- Visitors gave a lower performance rating to the park having clean restrooms, and a marginal performance rating to park safety.
- Less than half (44%) of the visitors to LBSP felt some degree of crowding during their visit. Of those who felt crowded, the campground and swimming beach were where most felt crowded.
- Visitors who did not feel crowded had a significantly higher overall satisfaction compared to visitors who did feel crowded.
- Over one-third (38%) of the visitors at LBSP did not give park safety an excellent rating.
- Of those visitors responding to the open-ended opportunity to express their safety concerns (41% of those visitors not giving the park an excellent safety rating), 14% commented on the lack of lifeguards at the swimming beach.
- Although 36% of the visitors felt that nothing specific could increase their feeling of safety at LBSP, 19% did indicate that more lighting at LBSP would increase their feeling of safety.
- Visitors who felt the park was safe were more satisfied overall, less crowded, gave higher satisfaction ratings to the six park features, and gave higher performance ratings to all of the park attributes as well.
- Two-thirds (66%) of visitors reported that they would support the proposed reservation system.
- Almost two-thirds (64%) of visitors reported they would support a “carry in and carry out” trash removal system.
- Seventy-one percent (71%) of visitors felt that a marina at LBSP is either important or very important to their enjoyment of their park visits.
- Twenty-seven percent (27%) of visitors provided additional comments and suggestions, the majority (35%) of which were positive comments about the park and staff.

Acknowledgements

Conducting and successfully completing a study of this magnitude and complexity could not have been accomplished without the cooperation of many individuals. Almost 2,000 visitors to Missouri State Parks participated in the 1999 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey. Over 300 visitors to Long Branch State Park voluntarily agreed to provide the information upon which this report is based. It is clear from their input that these visitors care very much for the recreation resources in the Missouri State Park System. Their efforts will provide invaluable input into the planning process and providing for more effective and responsive management of these resources.

Many other individuals provided assistance during the 1999 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey, without whom the study would not have been a success. The following expressions of gratitude are in acknowledgement of their contributions. Special acknowledgement goes to the staff at Long Branch State Park for their willingness to accommodate the survey crew during the study period, and also for their assistance during sampling. Many thanks also go to the research assistants who assisted in data collection and the students at the University of Missouri who assisted in computer data entry of the questionnaires. They are: Shane Aumiller, Amy Mahon, Chis Thoele, and Laura Marsch.

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Introduction

NEED FOR RECREATION RESEARCH

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

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

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

STUDY PURPOSE

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

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

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

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

1. Describing the use patterns of visitors to LBSP during the study period of June through August, 1999.
2. Describing the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors to LBSP.
3. Determining if there are differences in select groups' ratings of park attributes, satisfaction with park features, overall satisfaction, and perceptions of crowding.
4. Determining any differences in select characteristics of visitors who rated park safety high and those who did not.

5. Gaining information about selected park-specific issues.

STUDY AREA

Set amongst woodland and restored prairie, Long Branch State Park borders the 2,450-acre Long Branch Lake well known for its great fishing opportunities. Besides fishing, Long Branch also offers access for boating, a swim beach, camping, picnicking, and an exercise trail along the lake. At one time, a marina was also located on the lake in the park, but has since been closed. Park managers concerned with providing enjoyable recreational experiences to visitors are interested in determining how important a marina is to Long Branch's visitors. For this reason, a question regarding the importance of the marina was included on the questionnaire for the 1999 Long Branch State Park Visitor Survey.

SCOPE OF STUDY

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

Methodology

SAMPLING PROCEDURES

A 95% confidence interval was chosen with a plus or minus 5% margin of error. Based upon 1998 visitation data for June, July, and August, it was estimated that approximately 176,000 visitors would visit LBSP during the period between June 1 and August 31, 1999 (DNR, 1998). Therefore, with a 95% confidence interval and a plus or minus 5% margin of error, a sample size of 400 visitors was required (Folz, 1996). A random sample of adult visitors (18 years of age and older) who visited LBSP during the study period were the respondents for this study.

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

QUESTIONNAIRE

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

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

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

DATA COLLECTION

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



Survey Station at Long Branch State Park

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.



Visitor filling out survey at Long Branch State Park

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

DATA ANALYSIS

The data obtained for the LBSP study was analyzed with the Statistical

Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) (SPSS, 1996).

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

Comparisons using independent sample t-tests for each group were also made to determine any statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) in the following selected groups' satisfaction with park features (question 6), ratings of park attributes (question 7), overall satisfaction (question 14), and perceptions of crowding (question 15). The selected groups include:

1. First time visitors versus repeat visitors (question 1).
2. Campers versus non-campers (question 3). Non-campers include both day-users and the overnight visitors who did not stay overnight in the campground at LBSP.
3. Weekend visitors versus weekday visitors. Weekend visitors were surveyed on Saturday and Sunday, weekday visitors were surveyed Monday through Friday.

Other comparisons were made using independent sample t-tests to determine any statistically significant differences in visitors who rated the park as excellent on being safe versus visitors who rated

the park as good, fair, or poor on being safe, for the following categories:

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

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

The selected groups include:

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

Additional comparisons include:

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

Results

This section describes the results of the Long Branch 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 301 surveys were collected at LBSP during the time period of June, July, and August 1999, with 84 collected in June (27.9%), 117 collected in July (38.9%), and 100 collected in August (33.2%). Tables 1, 2, and 3 show surveys collected by day of week, by time slot, and by date, respectively. Of the 301 surveys collected, 194 (64.5%) were collected on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) and 107 (35.5%) were

collected on weekdays (Monday through Friday). The overall response rate was 70.7%, with daily response rates ranging from 65.7% (July 2) to 81.8% (June 17).

SAMPLING ERROR

With a sample size of 301 and a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error increases from plus or minus 5% to plus or minus 6%. For this study, there is a 95% certainty that the true results of the study fall within plus or minus 6% of the findings. For example, from the results that 46.4% of the visitors to LBSP during the study period were female, it can be stated that between 40.4% and 52.4% of the LBSP visitors were female.

Table 1. Surveys Collected by Day of Week

Day of Week	Frequency	Percentage
Sunday	71	23.6%
Thursday	61	20.3%
Friday	46	15.3%
Saturday	123	40.9%
Total	301	100.0%

Table 2. Surveys Collected by Time Slot

Time Slot	Frequency	Percent
1. 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	72	23.9%
2. 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.	111	36.9%
3. 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.	118	39.2%
Total	301	100.0%

Table 3. Surveys Collected by Date

Day, Date, and Time Slots	Frequency	Percentage
Thursday, June 17, time slots 1 & 2	30	10.0%
Saturday, June 19, time slots 1 & 3	54	17.9%
Friday, July 2, time slots 2 & 3	46	15.3%
Sunday, July 4, time slots 1 & 2	71	23.6%
Thursday, August 5, time slots 1 & 3	31	10.3%
Saturday, August 7, time slots 2 & 3	69	22.9%
Total	301	100.0%

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Age

The average age of adult visitors to LBSP was 47. When grouped into four age categories, 30.4% of the adult visitors were between the ages of 18-34, 31.9% were between the ages of 35-54, 18.3% were between the ages of 55-64, and 19.4% were 65 or over.

Gender

Visitors to LBSP were almost equally male and female. Male visitors comprised 53.6% of all visitors, while female visitors comprised 46.4% of all visitors.

Education

Almost half (47.4%) of visitors to LBSP indicated they had grade school or high school as the highest level of education completed. Less than one-third (31.7%) indicated having completed vocational school or some college, while 21% indicated having completed a four-year college degree or post-graduate education.

Income

About 40% (39.1%) of the visitors to LBSP reported they had an annual household income of between \$25,000 and \$50,000. One-fourth (25.9%) of visitors had an income of less than \$25,000. Less than 20% (17.7%) of visitors had an income of between \$50,001 and \$75,000, and less than 20% (17.3%) had a household income of over \$75,000.

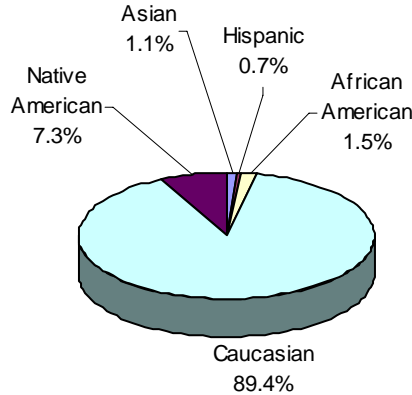
Ethnic Origin

Figure 1 indicates the ethnic origin of LBSP visitors. The vast majority (89.5%) of visitors was Caucasian. Almost two percent (1.5%) of the visitors were African American, and 7.3% of the visitors reported being of Native American descent. One percent (1.1%) of visitors reported being Asian, and less than 1% (0.7) of visitors were Hispanic.

Visitors with Disabilities

Eight percent (8.2%) of the visitors to LBSP reported having some type of disability that substantially limited one or more life activities or that required special accommodations. Most of the disabilities reported were mobility-

Figure 1. Ethnic Origin of LBSP visitors.



impairing disabilities, but also included other disabilities such as heart and lung diseases, cancer, and diabetes.

Residence

Almost 90% (87.9%) of LBSP visitors were from Missouri, while 12.1% of visitors were from out of state including Illinois (5.3%), Iowa (2.7%), and Texas (1.5%). Two-thirds (62.3%) of the visitors to LBSP lived within 50 miles of the park. Figure 2 shows the residence of visitors by zip code.

USE PATTERNS

Trip Characteristics

The majority (85.6%) of visitors to LBSP traveled less than a day’s drive to visit the park (a day’s drive is defined as 150 miles or less, not exceeding 300 miles round trip). Of those traveling less than a day’s drive, 44.3% lived within 25 miles of the park. Within Missouri, 41.8% came from the immediate vicinity (within 15 miles) of the park, including Macon, Bevier, and Callao. In fact,

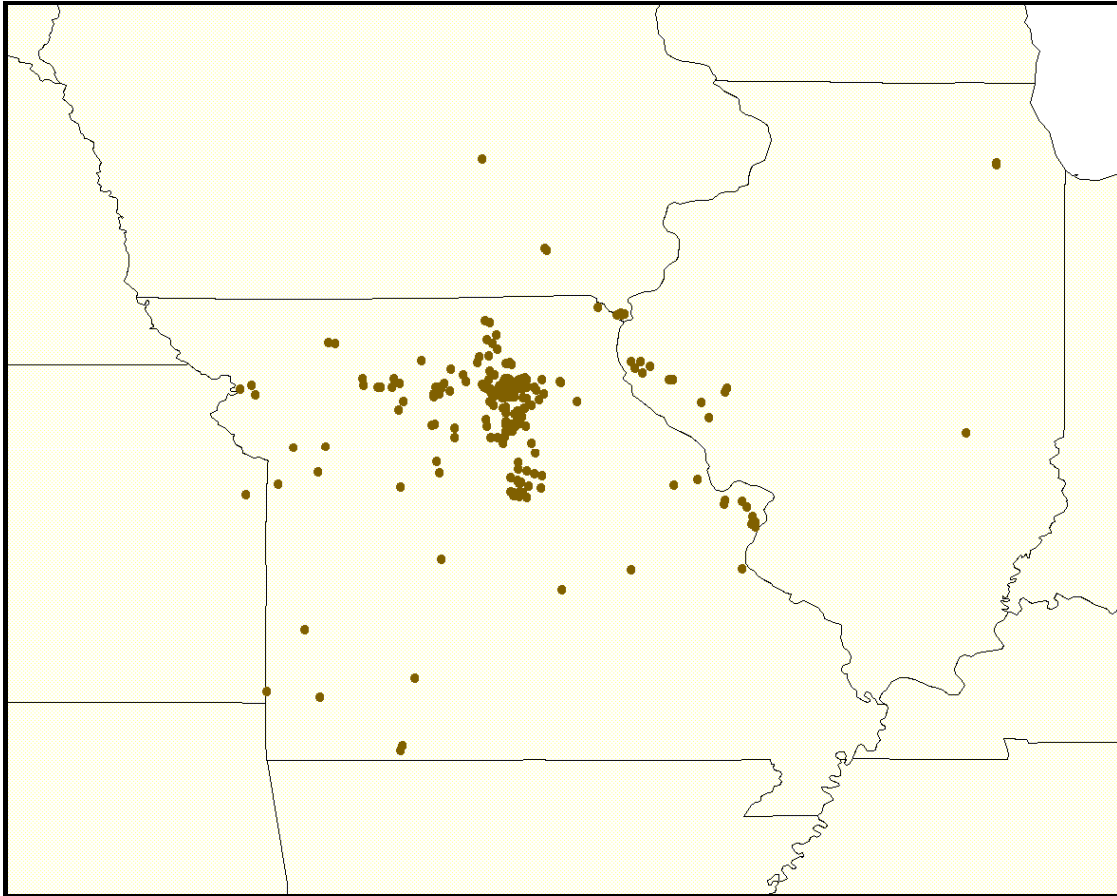
Macon accounted for 33.2% of Missouri visitors.

Sixty percent (60.7%) of visitors either drove cars, vans, jeeps, or sport utility vehicles. One-fourth (25.9%) of visitors drove pickup trucks, while 1.6% drove RVs. Eight percent (8.1%) of the vehicles towed some type of trailer. The average number of axles per vehicle was 2.1, the average number of adults per vehicle was 1.8, and the average number of children per vehicle was 1.6.

Visit Characteristics

Over four-fifths (85%) of the visitors to LBSP were repeat visitors, with 15% of the visitors being first time visitors. The average number of times all visitors reported visiting LBSP within the past year was 38.5 times.

Most of the visitors (71.1%) to LBSP during the study period indicated that they were day-users, with 28.9% indicating that they were staying overnight. Of those staying overnight during their visit, most (81.3%) stayed in

Figure 2. Residence of LBSP Visitors by Zip Code

the campground at LBSP. Of those camping in the campground at LBSP, 46.3% reported camping in a tent and 53.7% reported staying in a RV, trailer, or van conversion.

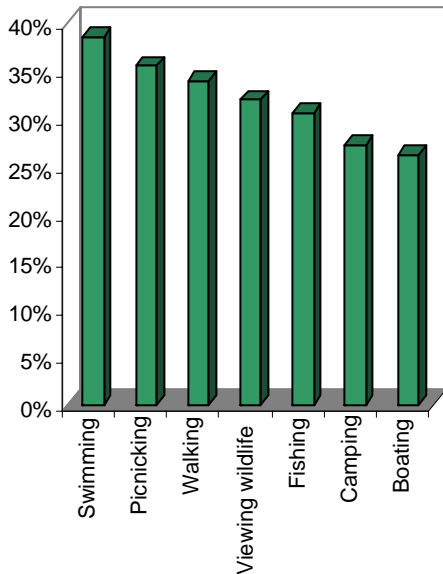
Of those reporting overnight stays, 16.9% stayed one night, 26.2% stayed two nights, 30.8% stayed three, and 25.9% stayed four or more nights. The average stay for overnight visitors was 3.9 nights. The median number of nights was three nights, indicating that half of the overnight visitors stayed less than three nights and half of the overnight visitors stayed more than three nights. The highest percentage of visitors stayed three nights.

Over forty percent (42.4%) of the visitors to LBSP visited the park with family. Nineteen percent (18.8%) visited with family and friends, while 16.5% visited with friends, and 20.8% visited the park alone. Less than two percent (1.2%) of visitors indicated visiting the park with a club or organized group.

RECREATION ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Respondents to the survey were asked what activities they participated in during their visit to LBSP. Figure 3 shows the percentage of visitor participation in the seven highest activities. Swimming was the highest

Figure 3. Participation in Recreational Activities at LBSP



reported (38.5%), picnicking was the second (35.5%), and walking was third (33.9%). Viewing wildlife (31.9%), fishing (30.6%), camping (27.2%), and boating (26.2%) were next.

LBSP visitors reported engaging in other activities, including hiking (8.3%), running/jogging (4.7%), and attending a special event (3.0%). Nine percent (9.3%) of visitors reported engaging in an "other" activity, including driving through the park and sightseeing.

SATISFACTION MEASURES

Overall Satisfaction

When asked about their overall satisfaction with their visit, only one percent (1.0%) of visitors reported being dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their visit. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of LBSP visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied. Visitors' mean score for

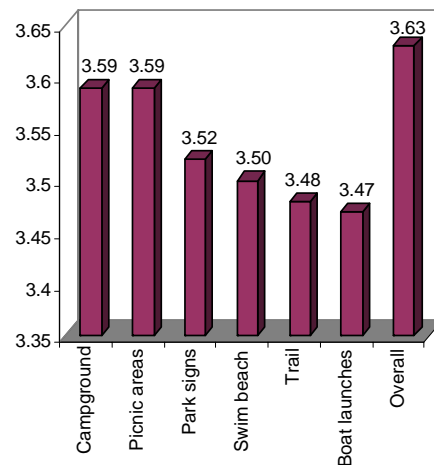
overall satisfaction was 3.63, based on a 4.0 scale with 4 being very satisfied and 1 being very dissatisfied.

No significant difference ($p < .05$) was found in overall satisfaction between first time and repeat visitors, with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.74 and 3.61 respectively. Nor was there any significant difference in overall satisfaction between campers and non-campers, with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.67 and 3.62 respectively. There was no significant difference between weekend and weekday visitors either, with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.62 and 3.66 respectively.

Satisfaction with Park Features

Respondents were also asked to express how satisfied they were with six park features. Figure 4 shows the mean scores for the six features and also for visitors' overall satisfaction. The satisfaction scores for the campground and the picnic areas (3.59) were the highest, with the other scores ranging from 3.52 (park signs) to the lowest of 3.47 (boat launches). A multiple linear

Figure 4. Satisfaction with LBSP Features



regression analysis ($r^2=.19$) of the six park features showed that all the variables combined to only marginally account for the variation in overall satisfaction. No significant differences were found in mean satisfaction ratings of park features between first time and repeat visitors, between campers and non-campers, or between weekend and weekday visitors.

PERFORMANCE RATING

Visitors were asked to rate the park’s performance of seven select park attributes (question 7): being free of litter and trash, having clean restrooms, upkeep of park facilities, having helpful and friendly staff, access for persons with disabilities, care of natural resources, and being safe. Performance scores were based on a 4.0 scale, with 4 being excellent and 1 being poor.

No significant differences were found between weekend and weekday visitors and their performance ratings of the eight park attributes. Repeat visitors,

however, had a significantly higher ($p=.01$) performance rating (3.49) regarding the park having clean restrooms than had first time visitors (3.16). Campers had a significantly higher ($p<.05$) performance rating (3.77) regarding the park being free of litter and trash than non-campers (3.59). A multiple linear regression analysis ($r^2=.26$) showed that the eight performance attributes combined to account for only about one-fourth of the overall satisfaction rating.

IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MEASURES

The Importance-Performance (I-P) Analysis approach was used to analyze questions 7 and 13. Mean scores were calculated for the responses of the two questions regarding visitors’ ratings of the performance and importance of the seven select park attributes. Table 4 lists the scores of these attributes, which were based on a 4.0 scale of 4 being excellent and 1 being poor, and 4 being very important and 1 being very unimportant.

Table 4. Mean Performance and Importance Scores for Park Attributes

Attribute	Mean Performance Score*	Mean Importance Score*
A. Being free of litter/trash	3.63	3.82
B. Having clean restrooms	3.46	3.87
C. Upkeep of park facilities	3.61	3.79
D. Having helpful & friendly staff	3.59	3.65
E ₁ . Access for persons with disabilities	3.55	3.58
E ₂ . Access for persons with disabilities	3.74	3.83
F. Care of natural resources	3.55	3.77
G. Being safe	3.60	3.85

E₁ = All visitors

E₂ = Disabled visitors only

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

Figure 5. Importance-Performance Matrix of Park Attributes

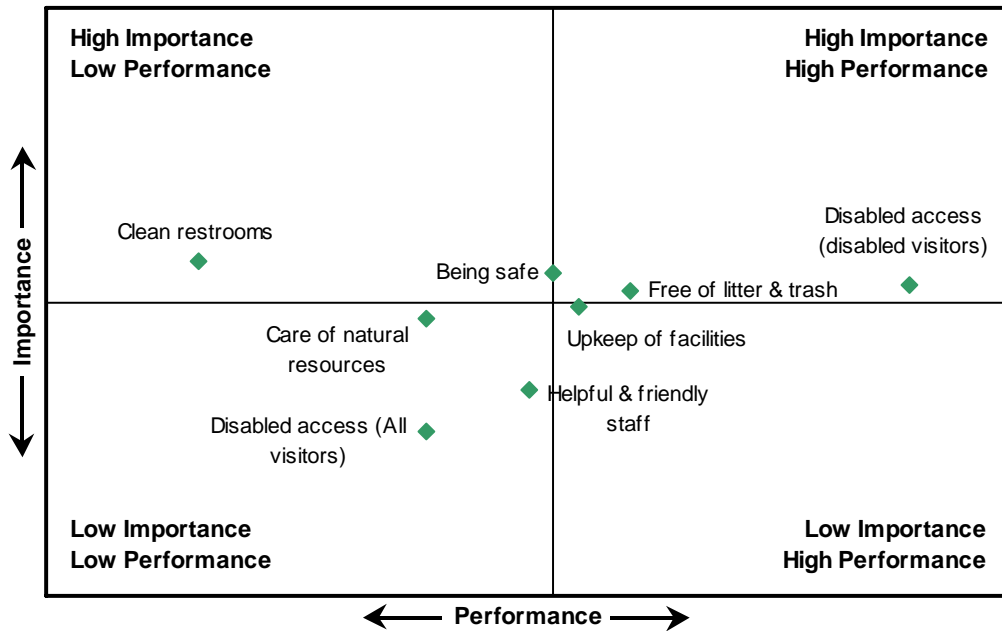


Figure 5 shows the Importance-Performance (I-P) Matrix. The mean scores were plotted on the I-P Matrix to illustrate the relative performance and importance rating of the attributes by park visitors.

The I-P Matrix is divided into four quadrants to provide a guide to aid in possible management decisions. For example, the upper right quadrant is labeled “high importance, high performance” and indicates the attributes in which visitors feel the park is doing a good job. The upper left quadrant indicates that management may need to focus on these attributes, because they are important to visitors but were given a lower performance rating. The lower left and right quadrants are less of a concern for managers, because they exhibit attributes that are not as important to visitors.

LBSP was given high performance and importance ratings for being free of litter and trash. Disabled visitors also gave high performance and importance ratings to the park providing disabled accessibility. The characteristic that visitors felt was important but rated LBSP low on performance was having clean restrooms. LBSP visitors also felt that being safe was of high importance, but gave the park a marginal performance rating regarding being safe.

CROWDING

Visitors to LBSP 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	

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

Location	Frequency	Percent
Campground	16	28.6%
Swimming beach	12	21.4%
Restrooms/shower houses	7	12.5%
Parking lots	5	8.9%
Boat ramps	4	7.1%
On the lake	3	5.4%
Crowded because of weekend	2	3.6%
Dam	2	3.6%
Park roads	2	3.6%
Other	3	5.4%
Total	56	100.0%

Visitors' overall mean response to this question was 2.2. Over half (55.8%) of the visitors to LBSP did not feel at all crowded (selected 1 on the scale) during their visit. The rest (44.2%) 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 16). Forty-three percent (43.1%) of the visitors who indicated some degree of crowding answered this open-ended question. Table 5 lists the locations where visitors felt crowded at LBSP. Of those who answered the open-ended question, the majority felt crowded in the campground (28.6%) and at the swimming beach (21.4%).

No significant differences in perceptions of crowding were found between first time and repeat visitors, and between campers and non-campers. Weekend visitors had significantly higher ($p < .05$) perceptions of crowding when compared to weekday visitors. Weekend visitors had a mean crowded score of 2.4, while

weekday visitors had a mean crowded score of 1.9.

Crowding and satisfaction

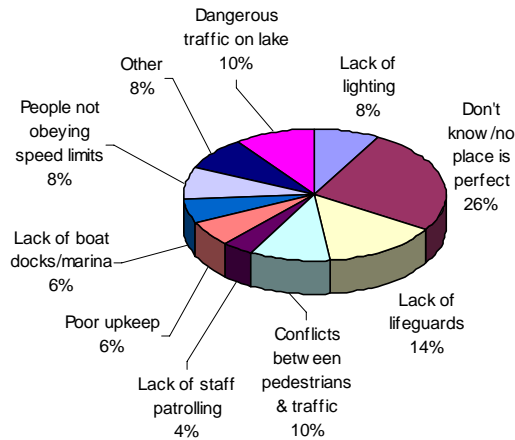
A significant difference ($p < .05$) was found in visitors' mean overall satisfaction with their visit and whether they felt some degree of crowding or not. Visitors who did not feel crowded had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.72, whereas visitors who felt some degree of crowding had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.57.

SAFETY CONCERNS OF VISITORS

Over one-third (37.8%) of the visitors to LBSP did not rate the park as excellent for safety. Of those, 41.4% 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.

One-fourth (26%) of the open-ended responses were from visitors who either had no reason for not rating safety excellent, or who felt that no place was

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



perfect and could always improve. Fourteen percent (14%) of the open-ended responses, however, were from visitors who commented on the lack of lifeguards at the swimming beach.

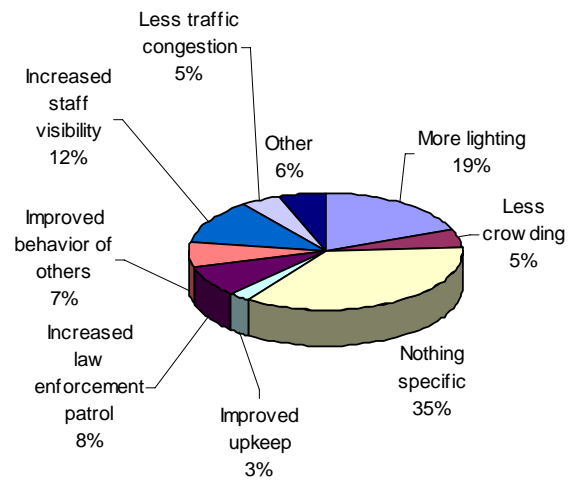
Visitors were also given a list of nine attributes and were asked to indicate which of the nine would most increase their feeling of safety at LBSP. Although instructed to select only one attribute, many visitors selected more than one; consequently, 284 responses were given by 241 visitors. Figure 7 shows the percentage of responses given by visitors. Most (35.6%) felt that nothing specific would increase their feeling of safety, but 18.7% felt that more lighting would increase safety.

Visitors who felt that more lighting in the park would most increase their feeling of safety were asked to indicate where they felt more lighting was necessary. Over two-thirds (69.8%) of those visitors who felt more lighting would increase safety answered this open-ended question. Their comments

include more lighting at the campground (35.1%), along the bridge/dam (27%), everywhere in the park (13.5%), at the restrooms/shower houses (8.1%), at the boat ramps (8.1%), and other places in the park (8.1%).

Almost 6% (5.6%) of visitors chose an “other” safety attribute that would most increase their feeling of safety at LBSP. The majority of the “other” safety attribute comments regarded providing lifeguards at the swimming beach.

Figure 7. Percentage of Safety Attributes Chosen by Visitors



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 visitors. There were no significant differences ($p < .05$) in safety ratings by socio-demographic characteristics.

To determine if there were differences in perceptions of crowding, satisfaction with park features, and overall satisfaction, responses were divided into two groups based on how they rated

LBSP on being safe. Group 1 included those who rated the park excellent, and Group 2 included those who rated the park as good, fair, or poor.

Group 1 was significantly ($p < .01$) more satisfied overall and significantly less crowded than Group 2, with an overall satisfaction score of 3.77 and a mean crowded score of 2.0, whereas Group 2 had an overall satisfaction score of 3.42 and a mean crowded score of 2.7. Group 1 also had significantly ($p < .01$) higher satisfaction ratings for all of the satisfaction features than Group 2, as well as significantly higher ($p < .001$) performance ratings for all of the park attributes.

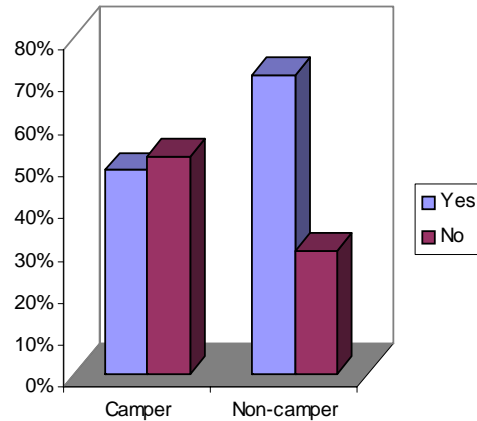
SUPPORT OF RESERVATION SYSTEM

LBSP visitors were asked whether they would support setting aside at least 50% of all campsites in a reservation system, and charging a reservation fee not to exceed \$7.00. Sixty-six percent (65.7%) of visitors would support such a system, while 34.3% reported that they would not.

There was no significant difference between first time and repeat visitors and the percentage of each that would or would not support a reservation system, both more likely to support (69.8% and 64.7% respectively) than oppose (30.2% and 35.3% respectively) a reservation system. There was a significant difference ($p < .001$) between campers and non-campers, however, and the percentage of each that would or would not support a reservation system. Non-campers were much more likely to support (70.8%) than oppose (29.2%) a reservation system, while campers were slightly more likely to oppose (51.6%)

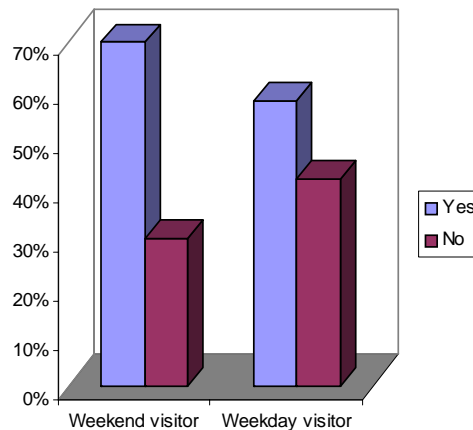
than support (48.4%) implementing a reservation system (Figure 8).

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



Weekend and weekday visitors also showed a significant difference ($p < .05$) between their percentage of support of a reservation system. While weekend visitors were significantly more likely to support (69.9%) than oppose the proposed reservation system, weekday visitors were only slightly more likely to support (58%) rather than oppose (42%) it (Figure 9).

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



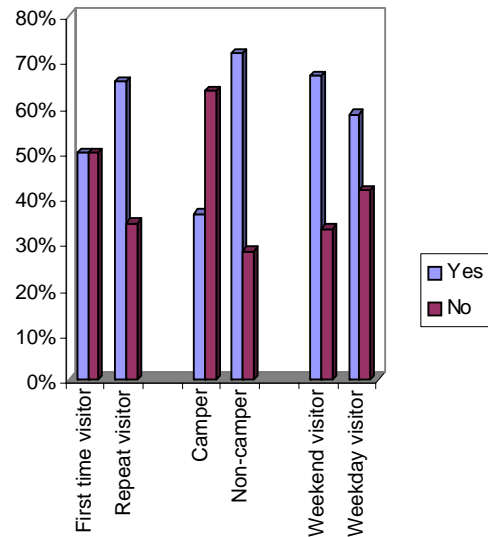
SUPPORT OF “CARRY IN/CARRY OUT” TRASH SYSTEM

LBSP visitors were also asked to indicate whether they would be willing for the park to establish a “carry in and carry out” trash removal system, thereby promoting recycling and reducing the burden of handling trash in the park. Visitors were more likely to support (63.8%) the carry in/carry out trash system than oppose it (36.2%).

No significant difference was found between the percentages of weekend and weekday visitors and whether each would support or oppose this type of trash system. Both were more likely to support than oppose the proposed system. There was, however, a significant difference ($p=.056$) between first time and repeat visitors, and whether each group would support this type of trash system. First time visitors were equally divided on this issue, with 50% for and 50% against the proposed trash removal system. Repeat visitors were more likely to support (65.5%) the carry in/carry out trash system than oppose it (34.5%).

There was also a significant difference ($p<.001$) between whether campers and non-campers would support the carry in/carry out trash system. Campers were more likely to oppose (63.5%) than support (36.5%) the proposed system, while non-campers were significantly more likely to support (71.8%) the system rather than oppose it (28.2%). Figure 10 shows the percentage of support or opposition between each group.

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

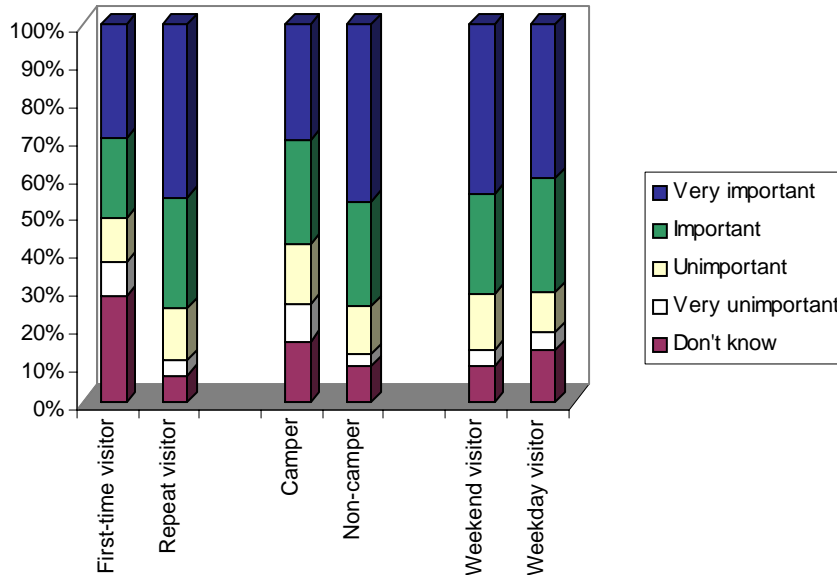


IMPORTANCE OF MARINA TO VISITORS

LBSP visitors were asked to describe how important a marina is to their enjoyment of their visits to the park. Two-fifths (43.3%) of visitors felt that a marina is very important to their enjoyment, while over one-fifth (27.8%) felt that a marina is important. Only 18% of visitors felt that a marina is unimportant or very unimportant to their enjoyment, and 10.9% didn’t know. No significant differences were found between weekend and weekday visitors and how important each felt a marina would be to their enjoyment of their visits. Both were more likely to feel that a marina is very important to their enjoyment.

There was a significant difference ($p<.001$) between first time and repeat visitors and the importance of a marina to each group. More first time visitors didn’t know (27.9%) how important a marina is to them compared to repeat visitors (7.2%), while more repeat

Figure 11. Comparison of Marina Importance Between Each Group



visitors felt that a marina is very important (45.8%) compared to first time visitors (30.2%).

A significant difference ($p < .05$) was also found between campers and non-campers regarding the importance of a marina at LBSP. Non-campers (46.8%) were more likely to feel that a marina is very important when compared to campers (30.6%), while a larger percentage of campers (16.1%) didn't know how important a marina is when compared to non-campers (9.5%). Figure 11 shows the percentages of importance between each group.

ADDITIONAL VISITOR COMMENTS

Respondents to the survey were also given the opportunity to write any additional comments or suggestions on how DNR could make their experience at LBSP a better one (question 24). Over one-fifth (27.2%) of the total survey participants responded to this question, with 100 responses given by

82 respondents. The comments and suggestions were listed and grouped by similarities into 10 categories for frequency and percentage calculations. The list of comments and suggestions is found in Appendix G. Table 6 lists the frequencies and percentages of the comments and suggestions by category.

The majority (35%) of comments were general positive comments, such as: "Beautiful! Keep up the good work", "Great place to visit," and "Very proud of our park". The rest of the comments were categorized based on similar suggestions or comments, such as comments or suggestions about the campground, needing improvement to present facilities or providing additional facilities, needing a marina, and other suggestions not falling into any other category.

Table 6. Frequency and Percentage of Comments and Suggestions from LBSP Visitors

Category	Frequency	Percent
1. General positive comments	35	35%
2. Comments/suggestions about campground	18	18%
3. Improve facilities/provide additional facilities	13	13%
4. Need a marina	12	12%
5. Comments/suggestions about restrooms/shower houses	6	6%
6. Suggestions about stocking the lake	4	4%
7. Need better signage	3	3%
8. Comments/suggestions about swimming beach	3	3%
9. Comments/suggestions about reservation system	2	2%
10. Other	4	4%
Total	100	100%

Discussion

MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

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

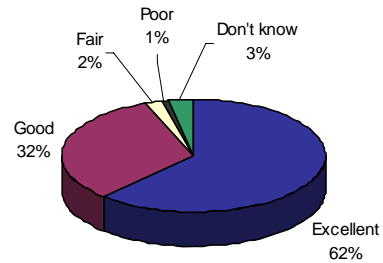
Satisfaction Implications

Two-thirds (65%) of visitors reported that they were very satisfied with their park visit. Williams (1989) states that visitor satisfaction with previous visits is a key component of repeat visitation. The high percentage of repeat visitation (85%) combined with their positive comments provide evidence that LBSP visitors are indeed satisfied with their park experience.

Safety Implications

Although almost two-thirds (62%) of visitors gave park safety an excellent rating (Figure 12), the I-P Matrix showed park safety having a marginal performance rating and a high importance rating. Visitors' perception of safety should be a management concern as visitors' safety concerns influenced their overall satisfaction and perceptions of crowding (Figure 13). Of particular concern to visitors is the lack

Figure 12. Safety Ratings of LBSP.

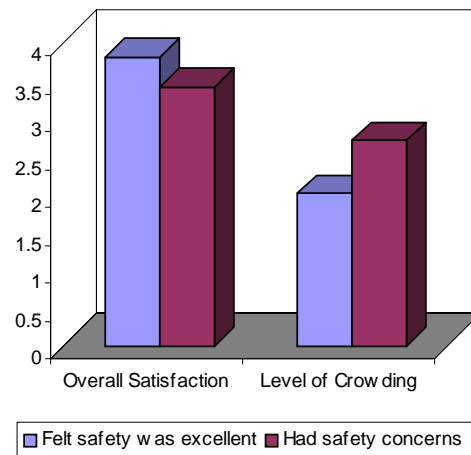


of lifeguards at the swimming beach and the lack of lighting throughout the park.

Crowding Implications

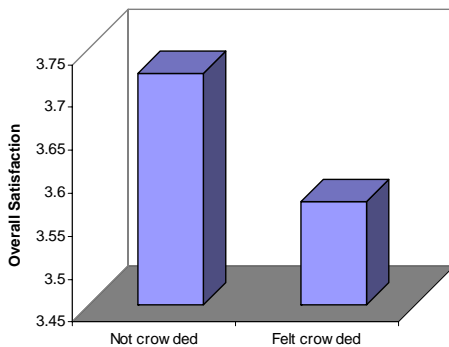
Visitors' perceptions of crowding at LBSP were fairly low. Over half (56%) of visitors did not feel at all crowded, and the mean crowded score for visitors was only 2.2. However, visitors' perceptions of crowding did influence

Figure 13. Levels of Crowding and Satisfaction Ratings by Safety Concerns



their overall satisfaction at LBSP, indicating that visitors' perceptions of crowding should be a management concern. Visitors who felt crowded had a significantly lower overall satisfaction than visitors who did not feel crowded (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Overall Satisfaction is Lower for Those Who Felt Crowded



Crowding is a perceptual construct not always explained by the number or density of other visitors. Expectations of visitor numbers, the behavior of other visitors, and visitors' perception of resource degradation all play a significant role in crowding perceptions (Armistead & Ramthun, 1995; Peine et al., 1999). In addressing the issue of crowding, one option is to review comments relating to crowding and consider options that would reduce crowding perceptions. For example, most of the comments from those visitors who felt crowded listed the campground and swimming beach as where they felt crowded. Further study could determine if crowding perceptions here are due to the number of people or perhaps the behavior of those in the campground or at the swimming beach.

Performance Implications

Visitors felt that clean restrooms were very important but rated LBSP lower in performance in this area. Restroom cleanliness is often given a lower rating by visitors to state parks (Fredrickson & Moisey, 1999), and in this case could be a result of the large number of visitors experienced by LBSP during the peak season. Noteworthy is the fact that repeat visitors gave a significantly higher performance rating than first time visitors regarding the park having clean restrooms, suggesting that repeat visitors are noticing an improvement in restroom cleanliness from previous visits.

Implementation of Reservation System

Although two-thirds (66%) of the visitors reported that they would support the proposed reservation system, campers (the users most likely to be affected by such a system) responded with a slight majority (52%) who would not support such a system.

Further analysis of campers was conducted comparing tent and RV campers and the percentage of each in support of or opposed to a reservation system. RV campers (those campers who might be expected to use the reservation system more) were more likely to oppose (72%) than support (28%) the proposed reservation system while tent campers were more likely to support (67%) than oppose (33%) the system.

However, the fact that weekend campers were more likely to support (63%) the proposed reservation system than weekday campers (25%) suggests that campers might appreciate the convenience of a reservation system. In

fact, two of the additional comments provided by visitors were in favor of implementing a reservation system.

Implementation of “Carry In and Carry Out” Trash System

Two-thirds (64%) of visitors favored the proposed trash removal system. Further analysis of the users who might be most affected by this type of trash removal system (picnickers and campers) revealed that a majority (64%) of campers opposed the proposal while a majority (61%) of picnickers supported it.

Implications of the Importance of a Marina at LBSP

The majority (71%) of visitors felt that a marina at the park either is important or very important to the enjoyment of their visits. In fact, several of the safety comments and 12% of the additional comments and suggestions provided by visitors were from visitors who felt that a marina is needed at LBSP.

Further analysis of those visitors who would most likely benefit from a marina at the park (fishermen and boaters) revealed that the majority (77%) of fishermen felt a marina was important (31%) or very important (46%) to their enjoyment. Not unexpectedly, the majority (85%) of boaters also felt that a marina was important to their enjoyment, with 23% indicating that a marina was important and 62% indicating that a marina was very important to their enjoyment of their visits.

Conclusion

LBSP managers should be commended in that LBSP visitors are very satisfied with LBSP, as evidenced by the high percentage of visitors who were repeat visitors, and also by their high satisfaction ratings and low crowding perceptions. The results of the present study suggest some important management and planning considerations for LBSP. Even though LBSP visitors rated their visits and the park features relatively high, felt fairly safe, and did not feel very crowded, continued attention to safety, crowding, and facility upkeep and 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 LBSP. The frequency and percentage calculations of survey responses provide useful information concerning socio-demographic characteristics, use patterns, and satisfaction of LBSP visitors. In addition, the “sub-analysis” of data is important in identifying implications for management of LBSP. (The sub-analysis in the present study included comparisons using Chi-square and ANOVA between selected groups, multiple linear regression, and the Importance-Performance analysis.) Additional relevant information may be determined from further sub-analysis of

existing data. Therefore, it is recommended additional sub-analysis be conducted to provide even greater insight to management of the park.

Data collection should be on a continuum (Peine et al., 1999), which is why additional visitor surveys at LBSP should also be conducted on a regular basis (e.g., every three, four, or five years). Future LBSP studies can identify changes and trends in socio-demographic characteristics, use patterns, and visitors' satisfaction at LBSP.

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

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

METHODOLOGY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR LBSP AND OTHER PARKS

The on-site questionnaire and the methodology of this study were designed to be applicable to other Missouri state parks. Exit surveys provide the most robust sampling strategy to precisely define the visitor population (Peine et

al., 1999); therefore, it is recommended that exit surveys be conducted at other state parks and historic sites if at all possible.

Survey Signage

It is recommended that adequate signage be utilized when collecting surveys on-site. A "Visitor Survey" sign was used in the present study to inform visitors exiting the park that a survey was being conducted. Having the sign for that purpose aided in the workability of the methodology, as many visitors slowed their vehicles and some stopped before being asked to do so. However, the "survey station" often became an "information station" when visitors would stop to ask questions. Many visitors would also engage the surveyor in conversation regarding their feelings about LBSP. For these reasons, an assistant to help administer the surveys would be helpful.

Survey Administration

Achieving the highest possible response rate (within the financial constraints) should be a goal of any study. To achieve higher response rates, the following comments are provided.

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

The most frequent reasons that visitors declined to fill out a survey were because they did not have enough time and because of the heat during the summer. Most non-respondents were very pleasant and provided positive comments about the park. Some even

asked if they could take a survey and mail it back. One recommendation would be to have self-addressed, stamped envelopes available in future surveys to offer to visitors only after they do not volunteer to fill out the survey on-site. This technique may provide higher response rates, with

minimal additional expense. One caution, however, is to always attempt to have visitors complete the survey on-site, and to only use the mail-back approach when it is certain visitors would otherwise be non-respondents.

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Appendix A. Long Branch State Park Visitor Survey



Long Branch State Park



The Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the University of Missouri are seeking your evaluation of Long Branch 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 Long Branch State Park? (Check only one box.)

yes no If no, how many times have you visited this park in the past year? _____

2. During this visit to the park, are you staying overnight? (Check only one box.)

yes If yes, how many nights are you staying at or near the park during this visit? _____
 no (If no, skip to question 4.)

3. If staying overnight, where are you staying? (Check only one box.)

campground in Long Branch State Park
 tent RV/trailer/camper
 nearby lodging facilities
 nearby campground
 friends/relatives
 other (Please specify.) _____

4. With whom are you visiting the park? (Check only one box.)

alone family and friends club or organized group
 family friends other (Please specify.) _____

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

picnicking hiking viewing wildlife
 fishing walking studying nature
 camping running/jogging attending special event
 swimming boating other (Please specify.) _____

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

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know
a. campgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. park signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. picnic areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. swim beach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. boat launches	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. trail	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

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

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

more lighting where? _____ improved behavior of others
 less crowding increased visibility of park staff
 nothing specific less traffic congestion
 improved upkeep of facilities _____
 increased law enforcement patrol _____



PLEASE TURN SURVEY OVER.



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

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

12. A marina area with boat slips and a store has been provided at Long Branch State Park in the past. How important is this service to your enjoyment of your park visit? (Check only one box.)

Very Important Important Unimportant Very Unimportant Don't Know

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

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

14. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Long Branch State Park? (Check only one box.)

Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied

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

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

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

17. What is your age? _____ 18. Gender? female male

19. 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

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

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

21. 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 _____

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

23. What is your annual household income?

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

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

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

Appendix B. Survey Protocol

Protocol for Long Branch State Park Visitor Survey

Hi, my name is _____, and I am conducting a survey of park visitors for Missouri state parks. The information that I am collecting will be useful for future management of Long Branch 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 Long Branch State Park. Would you be willing to help by participating in the survey?

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

[If yes,]

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

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

Appendix C. Prize Entry Form

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

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

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone #: () _____

Appendix D. Observation Survey

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

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

Time Slot Codes:

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

Weather Codes (examples):

Hot & Sunny Windy
 Cold & Rainy Sunny
 Cloudy Humid

Appendix E. Responses to Survey Questions

Long Branch State Park Visitor Survey

1. Is this your first visit to Long Branch State Park? (n=294)

yes	15%
no	85%

If no, how many times have you visited this park in the past year? (n=174)

The responses from this open-ended question were grouped into the following 10 categories:

0	5.7%
1	11.5%
2	10.3%
3	13.8%
4-5	12.6%
6-10	12.6%
11-20	10.3%
21-50	9.2%
51-100	6.3%
101+	7.5%

The average # of times repeat visitors visited the park in the past year was 38.5 times.

2. During this visit to the park, are you staying overnight? (n=284)

yes	28.9%
no	71.1%

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

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

1	16.9%
2	26.2%
3	30.8%
4	9.2%
5-6	9.2%
7+	7.5%

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=80)

campground in Long Branch State Park	81.3%
tent	46.3%
RV	53.7%
nearby lodging facilities	3.8%
nearby campground	5.0%
friends/relatives	6.3%
other	3.8%

4. With whom are you visiting the park? (n=255)

alone	20.8%	family & friends	18.8%	club or organized group	1.2%
family	42.4%	friends	16.5%	other	0.4%

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

picnicking	35.5%	hiking	8.3%	viewing wildlife	31.9%
fishing	30.6%	walking	33.9%	studying nature	10.3%
camping	27.2%	running/jogging	4.7%	attending special event	3.0%
swimming	38.5%	boating	26.2%	other	9.3%

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

Bike riding.	Metal detecting.
Boat watching.	Observing.
Browsing.	Playing games.
Checking new campsites & wondering why they are not electric.	Sightseeing.
Driving through.	Sightseeing.
Driving through.	Sightseeing.
Driving through.	Viewing campgrounds.
Driving through.	Viewing campgrounds.
Driving,	Visited.
Drove around lake.	Visited.
Drove around lake.	Visiting and enjoying the park.
Family reunion.	Visiting and sightseeing.
Family reunion.	Visitors' center.
Just looking around.	

In addition to percentages of responses, a mean score was calculated for each feature in questions 6, 7, 13, and 14. The score is based on a 4.0 scale with 4 = very satisfied, 3 = satisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, and 1 = very dissatisfied (Q. 6 & 14); 4 = excellent, 3 = good, 2 = fair, and 1 = poor (Q. 7); and 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, and 1 = very unimportant (Q. 13). The mean score is listed in parenthesis following each feature.

6. How satisfied are you with each of the following in Long Branch State Park?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know	
a. campgrounds (3.59)	51.7%	32.3%	0.7%	0.4%	14.9%	n=269
b. park signs (3.52)	54.3%	42.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.4%	n=278
c. picnic areas (3.59)	56.2%	38.3%	0.4%	0.0%	5.1%	n=274
d. swim beach (3.50)	48.3%	37.3%	2.2%	0.7%	11.4%	n=271
e. boat launches (3.47)	41.9%	37.4%	1.9%	0.8%	18.1%	n=265
f. trail (3.48)	37.1%	35.1%	1.6%	0.0%	26.3%	n=251

7. How do you rate Long Branch State Park on each of the following?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.63)	66.7%	30.0%	3.0%	0.3%	0.0%	n=300
b. having clean restrooms (3.46)	51.2%	34.7%	6.5%	1.0%	6.5%	n=291
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.61)	61.5%	35.5%	1.4%	0.0%	1.7%	n=296
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.59)	57.7%	29.0%	3.5%	0.3%	9.4%	n=286
e. access for persons with disabilities (3.55)	48.4%	27.6%	3.9%	0.4%	19.8%	n=283
f. care of natural resources (3.55)	53.9%	36.5%	2.0%	0.3%	7.2%	n=293
g. being safe (3.60)	62.2%	32.0%	1.7%	1.0%	3.1%	n=294

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

49 visitors (41.4% of those who did not rate the park as excellent on being safe) responded to this with 50 comments. The 50 responses were divided into 10 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. Don't know/no place is perfect	13	26%
2. Lack of lifeguards	7	14%
3. Conflicts between pedestrians and traffic	5	10%
4. Dangerous traffic on lake	5	10%
5. Lack of lighting	4	8%
6. People not obeying speed limits	4	8%
7. Lack of boat docks/marina	3	6%
8. Poor upkeep	3	6%
9. Lack of staff patrolling	2	4%
10. Other	<u>4</u>	<u>8%</u>
Total	50	100%

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

284 responses were given by 241 visitors.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. More lighting	53	18.7%
2. Less crowding	15	5.3%
3. Nothing specific	101	35.6%
4. Improved upkeep of facilities	8	2.8%
5. Increased law enforcement patrol	23	8.1%
6. Improved behavior of others	21	7.4%
7. Increased visibility of park staff	34	12.0%
8. Less traffic congestion	13	4.6%
9. Other	<u>16</u>	<u>5.6%</u>
Total	284	100.0%

37 visitors (69.8% of those who indicated more lighting would most increase their feeling of safety) reported where they felt more lighting was necessary. Their answers were grouped into the following 6 categories. Frequencies and percentages of each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. In the campground	13	35.1%
2. Along the dam	10	27.0%
3. Everywhere	5	13.5%
4. By the boat ramps	3	8.1%
5. Restrooms/shower houses	3	8.1%
6. Other	<u>3</u>	<u>8.1%</u>
Total	37	100.0%

16 visitors reported that an “other” safety attribute would most increase their feeling of safety. The following are their responses:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Better swim area. | Speed. |
| Don't let people walk on entry road. | Cleaner restrooms and water. |
| Parking close to fishing area. | Much trash under where old marina was. We've pulled out chairs, parts of buildings, steel. Unsafe for fish. Much fishing line buildup from catfishing. |
| Lifeguard. | Boat dock. |
| Lifeguards on duty during weekends at least. | More boat docking facilities. |
| Lifeguards. | Decreased law enforcement patrol. |
| Lifeguard. | Decreased law enforcement patrol. |
| Lifeguard. | |
| Obey speed limit. | |

10. Do you support setting aside at least 50% of all campsites in a reservation system in order to guarantee a site, and charging a reservation fee not to exceed \$7.00? (n=283)

- yes 65.7%
- no 34.3%

11. Do you support a “carry in and carry” out system as a means of promoting recycling and reducing the burden of handling trash in this park? (n=276)

- yes 63.8%
- no 36.2%

12. A marina area with boat slips and a store has been provided at Long Branch State Park in the past. How important is this service to your enjoyment of your park visit? (n=284)

Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Don't Know
43.3%	27.8%	13.4%	4.6%	10.9%

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

	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Don't Know	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.82)	81.8%	17.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	n=285
b. having clean restrooms (3.87)	87.0%	12.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	n=285
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.79)	78.4%	20.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.7%	n=283
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.65)	68.0%	28.2%	3.2%	0.0%	0.7%	n=284
e. access for disabled persons (3.58)	61.1%	28.3%	4.9%	0.7%	4.9%	n=283
f. care of natural resources (3.77)	76.4%	21.5%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4%	n=284
g. being safe (3.85)	84.6%	14.3%	0.3%	0.0%	0.7%	n=286

14. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Long Branch State Park?

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
(Mean score = 3.63)	64.6%	34.4%	0.7%	0.3%	n=288

15. During this visit, how crowded did you feel? (n=278)

On a scale of 1-9, with 1 = Not at all crowded and 9 = Extremely crowded, the mean response was 2.2.

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

A total of 56 open-ended responses were given. The 56 responses were divided into 10 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
campground	16	28.6%
swimming beach	12	21.4%
restrooms/shower houses	7	12.5%
parking lots	5	8.9%
boat ramps	4	7.1%
on the lake	3	5.4%
crowded because of weekend	2	3.6%
dam	2	3.6%
park roads	2	3.6%
other	<u>3</u>	<u>5.4%</u>
Total	56	100.0%

17. What is your age? (n=273)

Responses were divided into the following 4 categories:

18-34	30.4%	55-64	18.3%
35-54	31.9%	65+	19.4%

(Average age = 47)

18. Gender? (n=274)

Female	46.4%
Male	53.6%

19. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (n=281)

grade school	3.6%	vocational school	10.0%	graduate of 4-year college	10.0%
high school	43.8%	some college	21.7%	post-graduate education	11.0%

20. What is your ethnic origin? (n=275)

Asian	1.1%	African American	1.5%	Native American/American Indian	7.3%
Hispanic	0.7%	Caucasian/White	89.5%	Other	0.0%

21. Do you have a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities or might require special accommodations? (n=282)

yes	8.2%
no	91.8%

If yes, what disability or disabilities do you have? (n=17)

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

Access to the oxygen hookup.	Heart and lung. Arthritis.
Arthritis.	Heart surgery.
Back and heart.	Heart, cancer, diabetes.
Back and knee problems.	Hip, two artificial knees, and heart.
Bad back and bad knees.	I don't walk too good – bad left leg.
DJD.	MR.

Emphysema, diabetes. Tire easily; found a spot where could rest for half hour or so.
 Emphysema. Walking.

22. What is your 5-digit zip code (or country of residence, if you live outside the U.S.)? (n=264)

The states with the highest percentages of respondents were:

- Missouri (87.9%)
- Illinois (5.3%)
- Iowa (2.7%)
- Texas (1.5%)

23. What is your annual household income? (n=243)

less than \$25,000	25.9%	\$50,001 - \$75,000	17.7%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	39.1%	over \$75,000	17.3%

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

82 of the 301 visitors (27.2%) responded to this question. A total of 100 responses were given, and were divided into 10 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. General positive comments	35	35%
2. Comments/suggestions about campground	18	18%
3. Improve facilities/provide additional facilities	13	13%
4. Need a marina	12	12%
5. Comments/suggestions about restrooms/shower houses	6	6%
6. Suggestions about stocking the lake	4	4%
7. Need better signage	3	3%
8. Comments/suggestions about swimming beach	3	3%
9. Comments/suggestions about reservation system	2	4%
10. Other	<u>4</u>	<u>4%</u>
Total	100	100%

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

Responses to Question # 8

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

Don't know/no place is perfect

- Always can improve.
- Always room for improvement.
- Didn't have enough knowledge to give excellent rating.
- I don't know of any information to make it unsafe.
- No body is or no place is excellent.
- No reason.
- Not enough time on site to know if excellent is accurate.
- Not familiar with any safety.
- Nothing in particular.
- Nowhere is excellent on being safe.
- Only been here one day.
- Only here a short time.
- Only rated on swimming did not use any other facilities.

Lack of lifeguards

- Drowning victims and no one for immediate first aid/CPR.
- Life guard at beach.
- My friend and I had to save someone's life.
- Needs a life guard.
- No lifeguard.
- People have drowned out here, a life guard would be nice.
- Someone drown last year.

Conflicts between pedestrians and traffic

- Motorist.
- No paths along roadside for people to walk by the dam.
- People walking on the entry road seemed somewhat dangerous.
- Traffic and having to cross road from parking to fishing area.
- Walk paths outside of curb on dam.

Dangerous traffic on lake

- Crazy speed boats.
- Jet skis not abiding to No Wake zone.
- Jet skis.
- Jet skis.
- People are unsafe on jet skis and wave runners.

Lack of lighting

- It is very dark around dam area at night where people walk.
- Need more lighting in campground.
- Needs more lighting.
- Very dark at night.

People not obeying speed limits

- Cars going above speed limit.
- Need more patrols--someone to control cars going TOO fast.
- People wanting to speed and riding our bumper with children.
- Traffic on dam; excessive speed.

Lack of boat docks/marina

- Lack of boat docking.
- Lack of facilities at boat ramp--lighting--docking--lack of marinas and bank fishing access.
- More boat docks.

Poor upkeep

- Sometimes there is broken glass beer bottles in swimming area.
- The trash along the water line.
- The trees in the middle of the lake need to be removed.

Lack of staff patrolling

- Lack of visible park staff.
- Need more patrols--someone to control cars going TOO fast.

Other

- By putting better locks on the bathroom.
- Lack of facilities at boat ramp--lighting--docking--lack of marinas and bank fishing access.
- No phone--pay phone.
- Poison ivy in close proximity to camp area.

Appendix G. List of Responses for Additional Comments (Q 24)

Responses to Question #24

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

General positive comments

- Advertise; this is a beautiful park and camping area!
- Beautiful! Keep up the good work.
- By being here only a short time and live within 25 miles of area (Keytesville) I feel like it is a good experience- keep it up.
- Doing a very fine job!
- Enjoyed the freshly cut lawns in activity areas and the shrubs artistically planted at Shelter House #1 and care of young trees and birds around; also a large bird flying maybe an eagle.
- Good time.
- Great place to visit.
- Had hard exiting need signs. Loved the park great resource.
- I enjoy all of Long Branch.
- I like it.
- I think LBSP is the nicest MO State Park I've ever encountered. A marine would really set it off. Keep up the good work staff!
- I think this place is a nice place to be.
- I'm very happy with Long Branch Park!
- Keep up the great care and safety. I appreciate the time and effort put in. Have a good day.
- Like it the way it is.
- Like the new camping area. Need shower house.
- Love the new campsites, it should really help.
- New campsites are really nice, should help with not so many people in overflow campground on holiday weekends.
- Some of your questions are too personal, but I like your parks.
- Thank you.
- The activities along the trail were quite funny.
- The park is great! Keep up the good work. Thanks for all the good times we've had here!
- The park is great.
- The superintendent does a great job- and all his employees Thanks.
- Very clean and safe.
- Very good and good park.
- Very good park.
- Very nice park!
- Very nice state park.
- Very proud of our park.
- Very relaxing place to visit.
- We enjoy this park very much.
- We love Long Branch and are proud to live so close to it. Your personnel are great!
- We think LBSP is a wonderful facility.

- You're Welcome.

Comments/suggestions about campground

- Addition of full hookups for camping (e.g. electric, water and sewer/septic system at every campsite.)
- Clean up the lower part of the older camp ground.
- Do not like the idea of no electric at new sites. Can't use bug zapper--why?
- Hope electricity and sewer can eventually be added to the new campsite additions.
- Install electricity and water to new camp sites.
- More camp sites.
- More camping spots and maybe some full hook-ups.
- Need electric at new sites--Quit allowing noisy generators but prohibiting bug zappers-- Both are VERY noisy when trying to relax and sleep. Bath house at new sites!
- Need electricity at new sites and also need bath facility at new sites.
- Need more campsites with electric.
- Need more electricity at campsites.
- Put water and sewer hookups in campgrounds.
- The new camp sites should be made electrical. And They need an additional shower house.
- Water and sewer hookups at campsites.
- We are senior citizen campers and were shocked when we saw the new sites were all good sites without electricity. Bad planning.
- We are senior citizens and are shocked to see there's no electric in some sites. They are beautiful camping sites otherwise.
- We stayed in lot 77. I would like to see a facility (bathroom) down there! Very unhandy. A shower would help, too.
- Why not install electric to new sites?

Improve facilities/provide additional facilities

- Adding additional picnicking areas would be nice.
- Additional boat ramp with beach and picnic area.
- All modern restrooms. More showers.
- Boat slips bigger boat docks small store, more small picnic shelter houses.
- I feel there should be a shoulder on the road all the way to the beach for us runners to run on. Plus a water fountain at the dam.
- Like the new camping area. Need shower house.
- More shower houses.
- Need electric at new sites--Quit allowing noisy generators but prohibiting bug zappers-- Both are VERY noisy when trying to relax and sleep. Bath house at new sites!
- Need electricity at new sites and also need bath facility at new sites.
- Put in more faucets.
- The new camp sites should be made electrical. And They need an additional shower house.
- We stayed in lot 77. I would like to see a facility (bathroom) down there! Very unhandy. A shower would help, too.
- Would like to reserve campsite and additional shower.

Need a marina

- Be nice to have a marina again.
- Boat slips bigger boat docks small store, more small picnic shelterhouses.
- Can you fire and take the pension away from the idiot that lost the marina.
- Get the marina back please!
- Have food and concessions available along a marina that rents things out. For example, boats, rafts, volleyball, horseshoes.
- I think LBSP is the nicest MO State Park I've ever encountered. A marina would really set it off. Keep up the good work staff!
- It really needs a full service marina.
- Need lifeguards on duty during beach hours and a marina put back.
- Need the marina back.
- This park needs a marina.
- Try for a marina.
- We need a marina.

Comments/suggestions about restrooms/shower houses

- All modern restrooms. More showers.
- Like the new camping area. Need shower house.
- More shower houses.
- The new camp sites should be made electrical. And They need an additional shower house.
- There could be more ventilation in the restroom too stuffy and odor.
- Would like to reserve campsite and additional shower.

Suggestions about stocking the lake

- Better cat fishing.
- Needs more bass.
- Needs more bass.
- Stock some catfish in the lake.

Need better signage

- Had hard exiting need signs. Loved the park great resource.
- Signs to Lake area on 63 HWY.
- Signs.

Comments/suggestions about swimming beach

- I think the summer of '96 this was a great beach. I attended daily with 4 children under age 7. I wouldn't now.
- It would be nice for a bigger swimming place.
- Need lifeguards on duty during beach hours and a marina put back.

Comments/suggestions about reservation system

- Reservation system would increase our use of campsite.
- Would like to reserve campsite and additional shower.

Other

- Do not like the idea of no electric at new sites. Can't use bug zapper--why?
- I feel there should be a shoulder on the road all the way to the beach for us runners to run on. Plus a water fountain at the dam.
- Some of your questions are too personal, but I like your parks.
- Why do you have the last questions (they are of no importance)?