

# National Park System 1999 Visitor Survey Card Data Report



## Introduction

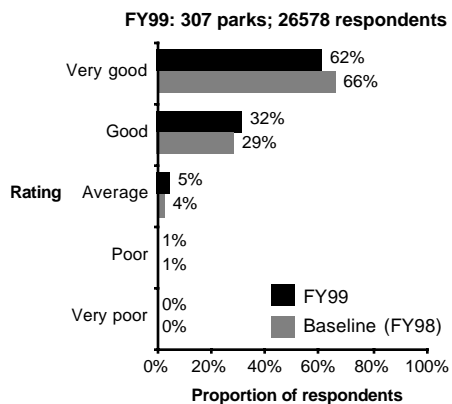
To assist the National Park Service in complying with the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), a visitor survey was conducted in 324 units of the National Park System in FY99. The survey was developed to measure each park unit's performance related to NPS GPRA Goals IIa1 (visitor satisfaction) and IIb1 (visitor understanding and appreciation).

The results of the Visitor Survey Card (VSC) survey are summarized in this report. A description of the research methods and limitations is on the back page.

Below (left) is a graph summarizing visitor opinions of the "overall quality of facilities, services, and recreational opportunities" in the National Park System. This graph compares FY99 data (shown in black) with FY98 data (shown in gray). The satisfaction measure is the combined percentage of "good" and "very good" responses. This is the primary performance measure for Goal IIa1. (The satisfaction measure may not equal the sum of "very good" and "good" percentages due to rounding.)

Below (right) is the FY99 GRPA reporting measure for Goal IIa1. The percentage included in the box should be used for reporting GPRA Goal IIa1 performance. The systemwide response rate was 25%.

### Overall quality of facilities, services & recreational opportunities



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 94%  
Average evaluation score: 4.6

## Understanding the Results

Inside this report are graphs that present the combined survey results for the National Park System. The report contains three categories of data—park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities. Within these categories are graphs for each indicator evaluated by park visitors. For example, the park facilities category includes indicators such as visitor center, exhibits, restrooms, and so forth. In addition, responses for indicators within each category are averaged into a combined graph for the category (e.g., combined park facilities).

Each graph includes the following information:

- the number of parks and visitor responses for the indicator;
- FY99 data (black) and baseline FY98 data (gray);
- the percentage of responses which were "very good," "good," "average," "poor," and "very poor;"
- a satisfaction measure that combines the percentage of total responses which were "very good" or "good;" and
- an average evaluation score (mean score) based on the following values: very poor = 1, poor = 2, average = 3, good = 4, very good = 5.

Very Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Very Good

The higher the average evaluation score, the more positive the visitor response.

### FY99 GPRA Reporting Measure for Goal IIa1

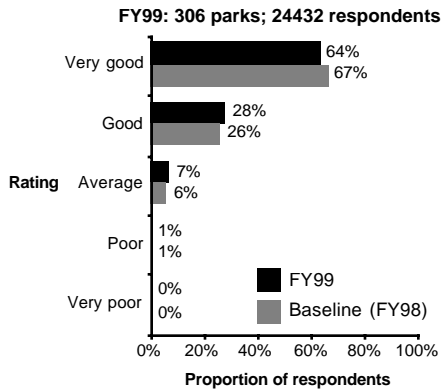
Percentage of park visitors satisfied overall with appropriate facilities, services, and recreational opportunities:

**94%**



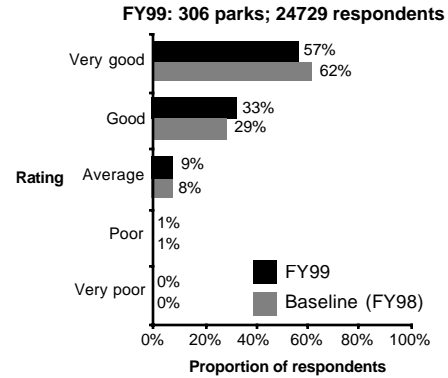
# National Park System Park Facilities

## Visitor center



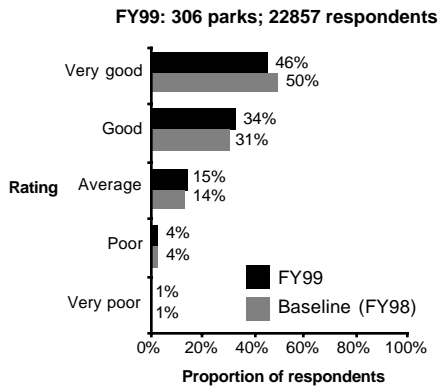
FY99: Satisfaction measure: 92%  
Average evaluation score: 4.6

## Exhibits



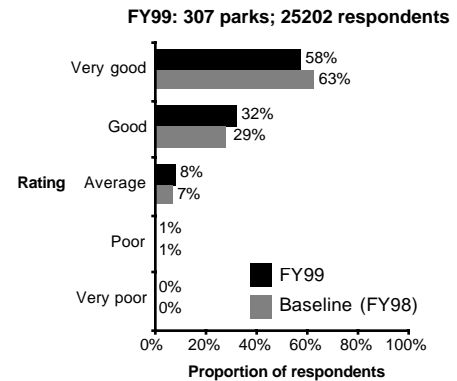
FY99: Satisfaction measure: 90%  
Average evaluation score: 4.4

## Restrooms



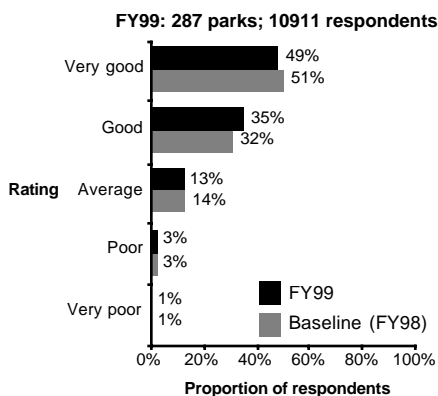
FY99: Satisfaction measure: 80%  
Average evaluation score: 4.2

## Walkways, trails, and roads



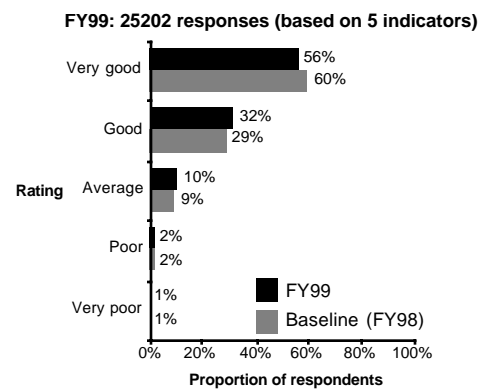
FY99: Satisfaction measure: 91%  
Average evaluation score: 4.5

## Campground and/or picnic areas



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 83%  
Average evaluation score: 4.3

## Combined park facilities



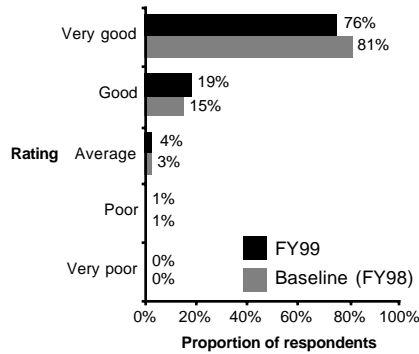
FY99: Satisfaction measure: 88%  
Average evaluation score: 4.4

# National Park System Visitor Services



## Assistance from park employees

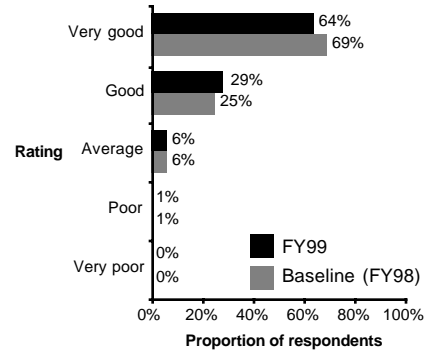
FY99: 307 parks; 25411 respondents



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 96%  
Average evaluation score: 4.7

## Park map or brochure

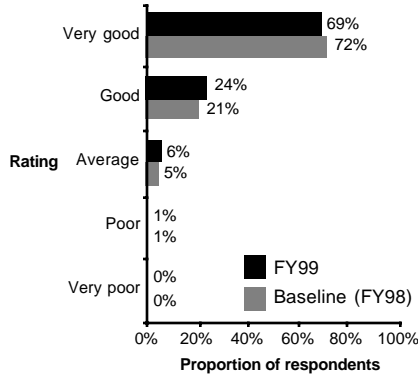
FY99: 307 parks; 23954 respondents



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 93%  
Average evaluation score: 4.6

## Ranger programs

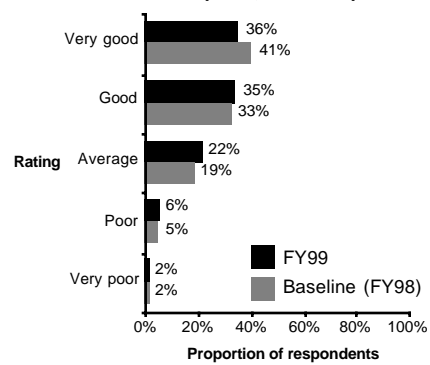
FY99: 307 parks; 12797 respondents



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 93%  
Average evaluation score: 4.6

## Commercial services in the park

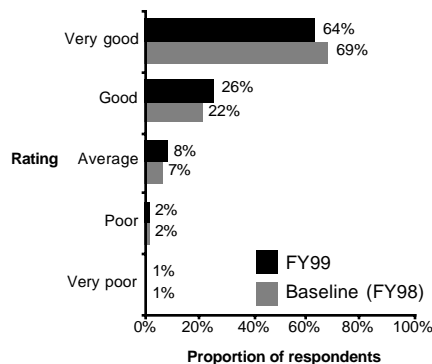
FY99: 304 parks; 12179 respondents



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 70%  
Average evaluation score: 4.0

## Combined visitor services

FY99: 25411 responses (based on 4 indicators)



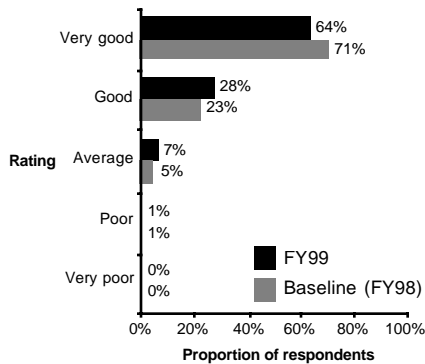
FY99: Satisfaction measure: 90%  
Average evaluation score: 4.5



# National Park System Recreational Opportunities

## Learning about nature, history, or culture

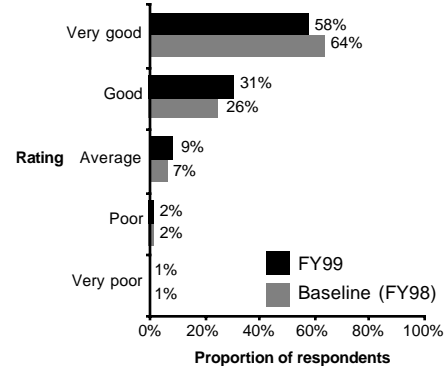
FY99: 307 parks; 22924 respondents



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 92%  
Average evaluation score: 4.5

## Outdoor recreation

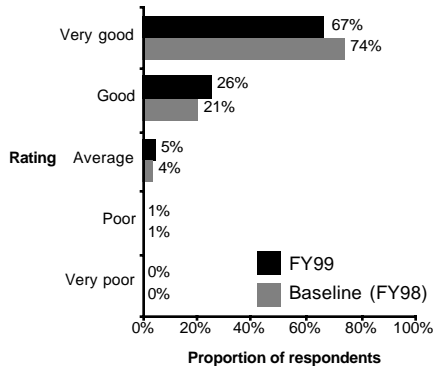
FY99: 290 parks; 13024 respondents



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 89%  
Average evaluation score: 4.4

## Sightseeing

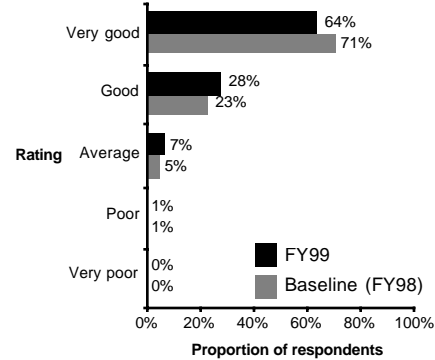
FY99: 307 parks; 22915 respondents



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 94%  
Average evaluation score: 4.6

## Combined recreational opportunities

FY99: 22924 responses (based on 3 indicators)



FY99: Satisfaction measure: 92%  
Average evaluation score: 4.5

## Research Methods

Survey cards were distributed to a random sample of visitors to 324 units in the National Park System during the period February 1 – September 30, 1999. At each park, visitors were sampled at selected locations representative of the general visitor population.

Returned cards were electronically scanned and the data analyzed. Responses from individual parks in the National Park System were combined into one dataset. Data from parks with less than 30 returned cards, or from parks with discrepancies in data collection methods, were omitted from

this report. Frequency distributions were calculated for each indicator and category.

All percentage calculations were rounded to the nearest percent. The response rate was calculated by dividing the total number of returned survey cards by the total number of survey cards distributed. The sample size (“N”) varies from figure to figure, depending on the number of responses.

The results do not necessarily apply to visitors during other times of the year, to park visitors who did not visit the survey locations, or to park units in the National Park System that did not participate in the survey.

For more information about the VSC contact the VSC Project Coordinator at the University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit (208) 885-7054