



Missouri Department of Natural Resources  
Division of State Parks  
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# **1999 Harry S Truman State Park Visitor Survey**

## **Project Completion Report**

**Submitted to**

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

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## Executive Summary

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

An on-site survey of adult visitors to TSP was conducted September and October 1999. One hundred thirty-eight (138) surveys were collected, with an overall response rate of 52%. Results of the survey have a margin of error of plus or minus 9%. The following information summarizes the results of the study.

### Socio-demographic Characteristics

- TSP visitors were comprised almost equally of males (52%) and females (48%), and the average age of the adult visitor to TSP was 51.
- Over half (52%) of the visitors reported a household income of between \$25,000 and \$50,000, and over two-fifths (44%) reported having completed grade school or high school as the highest level of education completed.
- The majority (97%) of visitors was Caucasian. Three percent (3%) of visitors reported being Native American.
- Eight percent (8%) of the visitors reported having a disability.

- Sixty-four percent (64%) of the visitors were from Missouri, 16% were from Kansas, and almost 6% were from Nebraska.

### Use-Patterns

- The majority (69%) of visitors drove less than a day's drive (less than 150 miles) to visit TSP. Within Missouri, almost half (45%) of the visitors came from the Kansas City region.
- Four-fifths (81%) of TSP visitors had visited the park before.
- TSP visitors had visited the park an average of about 6 times in the past year.
- Eighty-five percent (85%) of the visitors were staying overnight during their visit. Most (94%) stayed in the campground at TSP. The average number of nights overnight visitors stayed was 2.7 nights.
- The majority of TSP visitors visited the park with family and/or friends.
- The most frequent recreation activities in which visitors participated were camping, walking, fishing, picnicking, viewing wildlife, boating, and hiking.

### Satisfaction and Other Measures

- Ninety-nine percent (99%) of TSP visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied overall.

- Of the nine park features, the campground was given the highest satisfaction rating and the swimming beach was given the lowest satisfaction rating.
- Visitors gave higher performance ratings to the park being free of litter and trash, having clean restrooms, being safe, and upkeep of park facilities.
- Visitors gave a lower performance rating to the care of the natural resources at the park.
- Less than one-fourth (24%) of the visitors to TSP felt some degree of crowding during their visit. Of those who felt crowded, the campground was where most felt crowded.
- Less than one-fourth (23%) of the visitors at TSP did not give park safety an excellent rating.
- Of those visitors responding to the open-ended opportunity to express their safety concerns (only 13 visitors), about one-third commented on needing improved facilities at TSP.
- Although two-fifths (43%) of the visitors felt that nothing specific could increase their feeling of safety at TSP, 17% did indicate that more lighting at TSP would increase their feeling of safety.
- Visitors who felt the park was safe were less crowded, gave higher satisfaction ratings to the nine park features, and gave higher performance ratings to all of the park attributes as well.
- Over half (53%) of visitors reported that TSP campgrounds are superior to Army Corps of Engineers campgrounds.
- Two-thirds (63%) of visitors reported they would not support a “carry in and carry out” trash removal system.
- Thirty percent (30%) 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. Over 2,000 visitors to Missouri State Parks participated in the 1999 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey. Over 100 visitors to Truman 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 Truman 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 students at the University of Missouri who assisted in computer data entry of the questionnaires. They are: 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 Truman State Park (TSP), 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 TSP during the study period of September through October, 1999.
2. Describing the socio-demographic characteristics of visitors to TSP.
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**

Home to several unique prairie grasses and flowers, the landscape at Harry S Truman State Park also provides open woodland and savanna. Combining these diverse landscape types with the vast Truman Lake has created an exceptional recreational area where visitors can camp, picnic, swim, boat, fish, watch wildlife, and enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings. A campground, swimming beaches, boat ramps, picnic areas, and a full-service marina are all offered in the park.

#### **SCOPE OF STUDY**

The population of the visitor study at TSP consisted of visitors who were 18 years of age or older (adults), and who visited the park during the study period September through October 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 September and October, it was estimated that approximately 125,000 visitors would visit TSP during the period between September 1 and October 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 TSP during the study period were the respondents for this study.

To ensure that visitors leaving TSP 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 TSP was administered on-site, to eliminate the non-response bias of a mail-back survey. Because access to Truman State Park is from Highway UU and not from a clearly defined entrance gate, an exit survey was not feasible. Therefore, two recreation areas within the park were identified in which to survey: Recreation Area 1 (a day use area consisting of picnic areas, a shelter house, a swimming beach, and the marina and boat ramps); and Recreation Area 2 (the campground).

To ensure that visitors at the two recreation areas would have an equal opportunity for being surveyed, surveying alternated between the areas. Only one area was surveyed during each time slot. All adults (18 years of age and older) in the two areas were asked to participate in the survey.

### DATA COLLECTION

The surveyor wore a state park t-shirt and walked a roving route in Recreation Area 1 and conducted an exit survey in Recreation Area 2 (surveying every vehicle that exited the campground). During the selected time slot, the surveyor asked every visitor who was 18 years of age and older to voluntarily complete the questionnaire, unless he or she had previously filled one out.

To increase participation rates, respondents were given the opportunity to enter their name and address into a drawing for a prize package and were

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

An observation survey was also conducted to obtain additional information about: date, day, time slot, and weather conditions of the survey day; the number of adults and children in each group; 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 TSP 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 weekday versus weekend, by time slot, and by recreation area 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 7), ratings of park attributes (question 8), overall satisfaction (question 13), and perceptions of crowding (question 14). The selected groups include:

1. First time visitors versus repeat visitors (question 1).
2. Campers versus non-campers (question 3). Non-campers include both day-users and the overnight visitors who did not stay overnight in the campground at TSP.
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 “carry in and carry out” trash system.

An additional independent sample t-test was conducted comparing overall satisfaction between visitors who felt some degree of crowding and those who were not at all crowded during their visit.

The selected groups include:

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

## Results

This section describes the results of the Truman 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 138 surveys were collected at TSP during the time period of September and October 1999. Tables 1 and 2 show surveys collected by time slot and by area, respectively. Of the 138 surveys collected, 82 (59.4%) were collected on weekends (Saturday and Sunday) and 56 (40.6%) were collected on weekdays (Monday through Friday). The overall response rate was 52.1%. This lower response rate may be due in part to the difficulty of the surveyor to survey visitors at the marina and boat ramps.

Visitors in these areas were generally engaged in launching their boats or pulling them out of the lake and were not as willing to participate in the survey.

### **SAMPLING ERROR**

With a sample size of 138 and a confidence interval of 95%, the margin of error increases from plus or minus 5% to plus or minus 9%. For this study, there is a 95% certainty that the true results of the study fall within plus or minus 9% of the findings. For example, from the results that 47.6% of the visitors to TSP during the study period were female, it can be stated that between 38.6% and 56.6% of the TSP visitors were female.

*Table 1. Surveys Collected by Time Slot*

Time Slot	Frequency	Percent
1. 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.	51	37.0%
2. 12 p.m. - 4 p.m.	46	33.3%
3. 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.	41	29.7%
Total	138	100.0%

*Table 2. Surveys Collected by Area*

Recreation Area	Frequency	Percent
Recreation Area 1 (day use area )	22	15.9%
Recreation Area 2 (campground)	116	84.1%
	138	100.0%

**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

**Age**

The average age of adult visitors to TSP was 50.9. When grouped into four age categories, 13.8% of the adult visitors were between the ages of 18-34, 45.5% were between the ages of 35-54, 22% were between the ages of 55-64, and 18.7% were 65 or over.

**Gender**

Visitors to TSP were almost equally male and female. Male visitors comprised 52.4% of all visitors, while female visitors comprised 47.6% of all visitors.

**Education**

Over two-fifths (44.3%) of visitors to TSP indicated they had completed grade school or high school as the highest level of education completed. Over one-third (38.4%) indicated having completed vocational school or some college, while 17.3% indicated having completed a four-year college degree or post-graduate education.

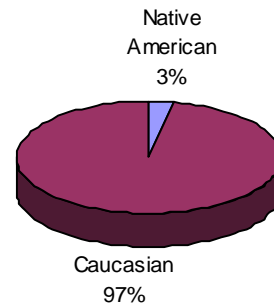
**Income**

Over half (52.1%) of the visitors to TSP reported they had an annual household income of between \$25,000 and \$50,000. One-fifth (21.4%) of the visitors had an annual household income of between \$50,001 and \$75,000. Less than 20% (16.2%) had an income of over \$75,000 and 10.3% had an income of less than \$25,000.

**Ethnic Origin**

Figure 1 indicates the ethnic origin of TSP visitors. The vast majority (97%) of visitors was Caucasian. Three percent (3%) of the visitors reported being of Native American descent. There were no African American, Asian, or Hispanic visitors.

**Figure 1. Ethnic Origin of TSP visitors.**

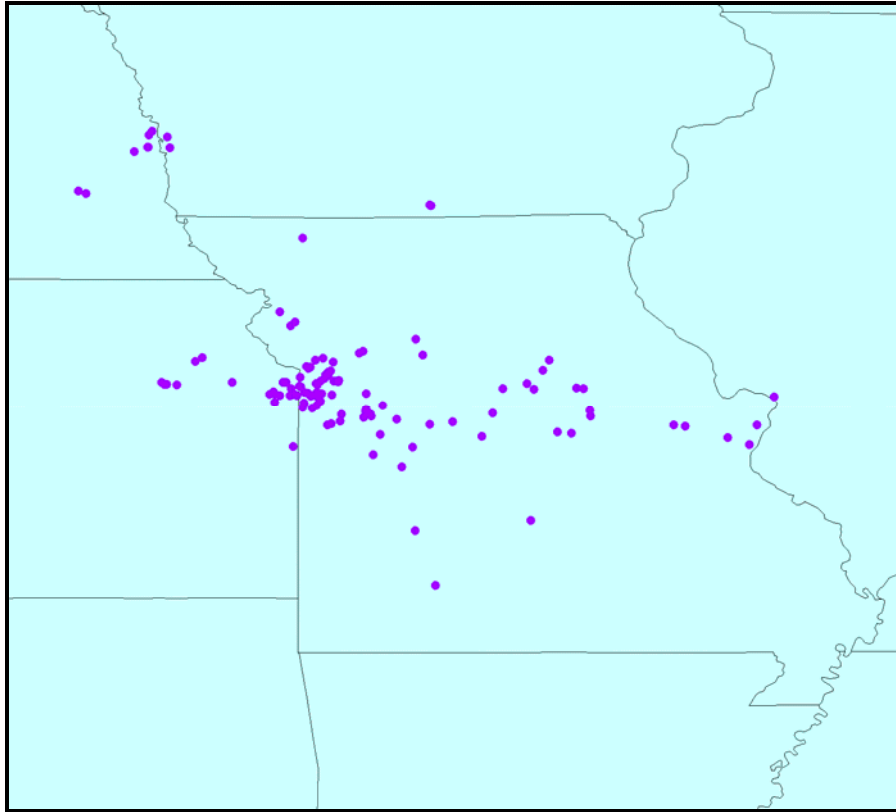


**Visitors with Disabilities**

Eight percent (8.3%) of the visitors to TSP reported having some type of disability that substantially limited one or more life activities or that required special accommodations. Most of the disabilities reported were mobility-impairing disabilities but also included heart disease.

**Residence**

Two-thirds (64%) of TSP visitors were from Missouri, while 36% of visitors were from out of state including Kansas (16%) and Nebraska (5.6%). Figure 2 shows the residence of visitors by zip code.

**Figure 2. Residence of TSP Visitors by Zip Code****USE PATTERNS*****Trip Characteristics***

The majority (68.8%) of visitors to TSP 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). Within Missouri, almost half (45%) of the visitors came from the Kansas City region, including Kansas City, Independence, and Lee's Summit. An average group of visitors at TSP consisted of 2.1 adults and 1.9 children.

***Visit Characteristics***

Over 80% (81.2%) of the visitors to TSP were repeat visitors, with 18.8% of the visitors being first time visitors. The average number of times all visitors

reported visiting TSP within the past year was 6.1 times.

Eighty-five percent (85%) of the visitors to TSP during the study period indicated that they were staying overnight, while 15% indicating that they were day-users. Of those staying overnight during their visit, the majority (93.8%) stayed in the campground at TSP. Of those camping in the campground at TSP, 33.7% reported camping in a tent and 66.3% reported staying in a RV, trailer, or van conversion.

Of those reporting overnight stays, 12.9% stayed one night, 46.5% stayed two nights, 23.8% stayed three, and 16.9% stayed four or more nights. The average stay for overnight visitors was



2.7 nights. The median number of nights was two nights, indicating that half of the overnight visitors stayed less than two nights and half of the overnight visitors stayed more than two nights. The highest percentage of visitors stayed two nights.

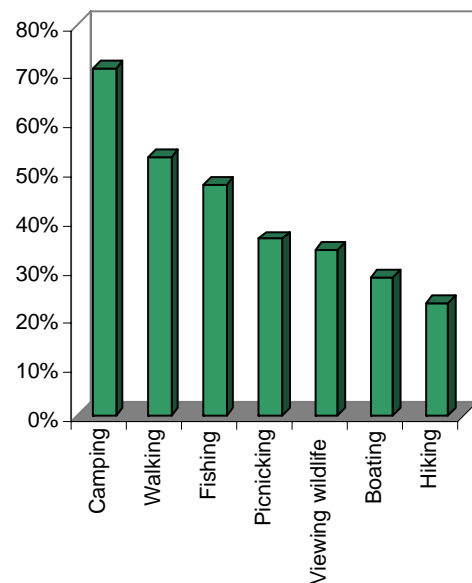
Over half (58%) of the visitors to TSP visited the park with family. Fifteen percent (15.3%) visited with family and friends, while 6.1% visited with friends, and 19.1% visited the park alone. Less than two percent (1.5%) of visitors indicated visiting the park with a club or organized group.

### RECREATION ACTIVITY PARTICIPATION

Respondents to the survey were asked what activities they participated in during their visit to TSP. Figure 3 shows the percentage of visitor participation in the seven highest reported activities. Camping was the highest reported (71%), walking was the second (52.9%), and fishing was third (47.1%). Picnicking (36.2%), viewing wildlife (34.1%), boating (28.3%), and hiking (23.2%) were next.

TSP visitors reported engaging in other activities, including swimming (15.2%), studying nature (14.5%), bird watching (13.8%), attending a special event (14.5%), attending an interpretive program (4.3%), and boat rental (4.3%). Thirteen percent (13%) of visitors reported engaging in an "other" activity, including attending Heritage Days in Warsaw, driving through and sightseeing, and riding bicycles.

**Figure 3. Participation in Recreational Activities at TSP**



### SATISFACTION MEASURES

#### *Overall Satisfaction*

When asked about their overall satisfaction with their visit, less than one percent (0.8%) of the visitors reported being very dissatisfied with their visit. Almost all (99.2%) of TSP visitors were either satisfied or very satisfied with their visit. Visitors' mean score for overall satisfaction was 3.79, 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 3.88 and 3.76 respectively. Nor was there any significant difference in overall satisfaction between weekend and weekday visitors, with mean overall satisfaction scores of 3.75 and 3.85 respectively. There was a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ), however, between

campers and non-campers. Campers had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.82, whereas non-campers had an overall satisfaction score of 3.59.

**Satisfaction with Park Features**

Respondents were also asked to express how satisfied they were with nine park features. Figure 4 shows the mean scores for the nine features and also for visitors' overall satisfaction. The satisfaction score for the campground (3.72) was the highest, with the other scores ranging from 3.66 (park signs) to the lowest of 3.44 (swimming beach). No significant differences were found in mean satisfaction ratings of park features between first time and repeat visitors. Campers, however, were significantly ( $p < .05$ ) more satisfied (3.75) with the campground than non-campers (3.46)

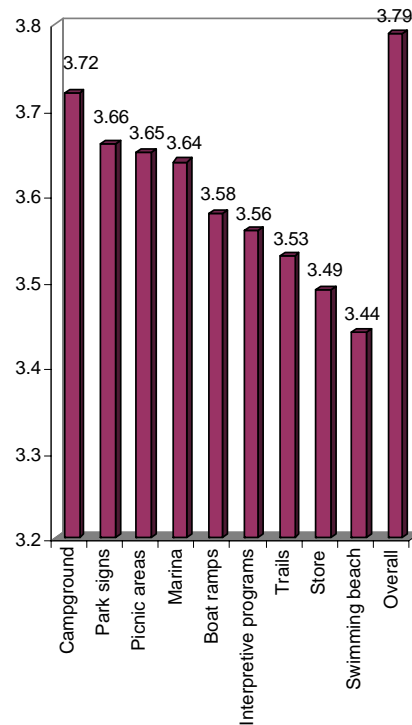
Significant differences in satisfaction ratings were also found between weekend and weekday visitors. Weekday visitors were significantly ( $p < .05$ ) more satisfied with the campground (3.83) than weekend visitors (3.64), were more satisfied with the park signs (3.78 and 3.58 respectively), and were more satisfied with the boat ramps as well (3.74 and 3.46 respectively). Weekday visitors were also significantly ( $p < .01$ ) more satisfied with the store (3.70) than weekend visitors (3.27), as well as being more satisfied with the trails (3.79) than weekend visitors (3.41).

**PERFORMANCE RATING**

Visitors were asked to rate the park's performance of eight select park attributes (question 8): being free of litter and trash, having clean restrooms, upkeep of park facilities, having helpful

and friendly staff, access for persons with disabilities, care of natural resources, providing interpretive programs, and being safe. Performance scores were based on a 4.0 scale, with 4 being excellent and 1 being poor. No significant differences were found between first time and repeat visitors, between campers and non-campers, or between weekend and weekday visitors and their performance ratings of the eight park attributes.

**Figure 4. Satisfaction with TSP Features**



**IMPORTANCE-PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

The Importance-Performance (I-P) Analysis approach was used to analyze questions 7 and 12. Mean scores were calculated for the responses of the two questions regarding visitors' ratings of the performance and importance of the

eight select park attributes. Table 3 lists the scores of these attributes, which were based on a 4.0 scale of 4 being excellent and 1 being poor, and 4 being very important and 1 being very unimportant. Figure 5 shows the Importance-Performance (I-P) Matrix. The mean scores were plotted on the I-P Matrix to illustrate the relative performance and importance rating of the attributes by park visitors.

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

TSP was given high performance and importance ratings for being free of litter and trash, being safe, having clean restrooms, and upkeep of facilities. TSP visitors also gave high performance ratings but marginal importance ratings to the park having helpful and friendly staff. The characteristic that visitors felt was important but rated TSP low on performance was care of the natural resources.

**CROWDING**

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

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

Visitors’ overall mean response to this question was 1.5. Three-fourths (75.8%) of the visitors to TSP did not feel at all crowded (selected 1 on the scale) during their visit. The rest (24.2%) felt some

**Table 3. Mean Performance and Importance Scores for Park Attributes**

Attribute	Mean Performance Score*	Mean Importance Score*
A. Being free of litter/trash	3.80	3.87
B. Having clean restrooms	3.78	3.89
C. Upkeep of park facilities	3.77	3.82
D. Having helpful & friendly staff	3.76	3.77
E <sub>1</sub> . Access for persons with disabilities	3.81	3.59
E <sub>2</sub> . Access for persons with disabilities	3.91	3.60
F. Care of natural resources	3.68	3.83
G <sub>1</sub> . Providing interpretive programs	3.52	3.47
G <sub>2</sub> . Providing interpretive programs	3.33	3.50
H. Being safe	3.80	3.84

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

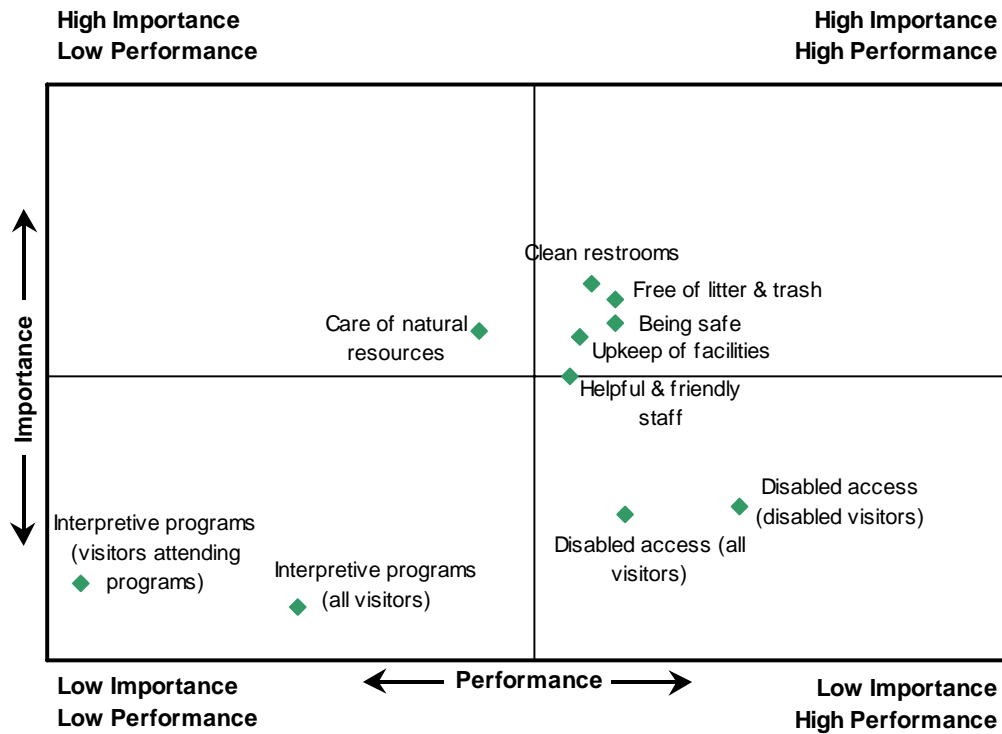
G<sub>1</sub> = All visitors

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

G<sub>2</sub> = Visitors attending interpretive programs

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

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



degree of crowding (selected 2-9 on the scale) during their visit.

Visitors who indicated they felt crowded during their visit were also asked to specify where they felt crowded (question 15). Only eight visitors responded to this open-ended question. For a list of their responses, see question 15 in Appendix E. Of those who answered the open-ended question, most felt crowded in the campground. No significant differences in perceptions of crowding were found between first time and repeat visitors or between campers and non-campers. Weekend visitors, however, had a significantly ( $p < .01$ ) higher crowded score (1.7) than weekday visitors (1.1), although both scores were relatively low.

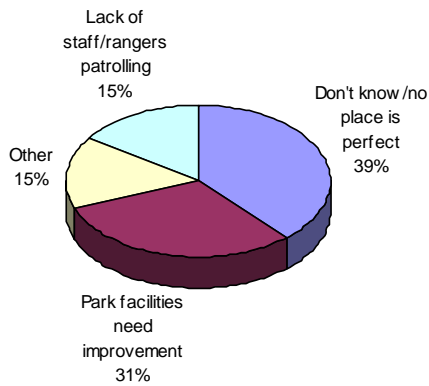
**Crowding and satisfaction**

No 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 3.81 and visitors who felt some degree of crowding had a mean overall satisfaction score of 3.75.

**SAFETY CONCERNS OF VISITORS**

Less than one-fourth (22.9%) of the visitors to TSP did not rate the park as excellent for safety. Of those, only 13 visitors noted what influenced their rating. Their comments were grouped into categories and are shown in Figure 6. Appendix E, question 9, provides a list of the comments.

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



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 TSP. Although instructed to select only one attribute, many visitors selected more than one; thus, 120 responses were given by 108 visitors. Figure 7 shows the percentage of responses given by visitors. Most (43%) felt that nothing specific would increase their feeling of safety, but 17% felt that more lighting would increase safety.

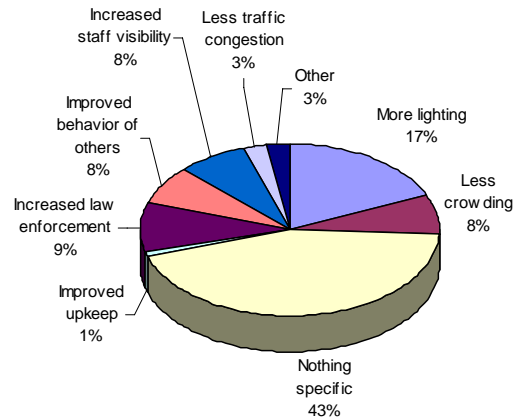
Visitors who felt that more lighting in the park would most increase their feeling of safety were asked to indicate where they felt more lighting was necessary. Thirteen of those visitors who felt more lighting would increase safety answered this open-ended question. Their comments include more lighting in the campground, along park roads, at the marina and boat ramps, and at other places throughout the park.

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 in safety ratings by any of the 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 TSP 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.

**Figure 7. Percentage of Safety Attributes Chosen by Visitors**



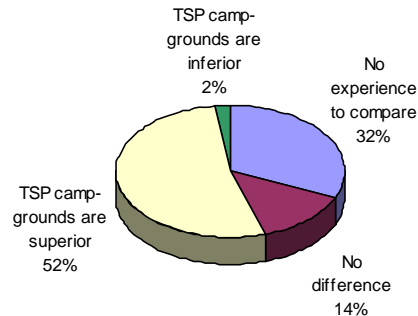
There were no differences in overall satisfaction between the two groups, but Group 1 had a significantly ( $p < .05$ ) lower crowded score (1.4) than Group 2 (1.8). Group 1 also had significantly ( $p < .05$ ) higher satisfaction ratings for all of the satisfaction features than Group 2, as well as significantly higher ( $p < .01$ ) performance ratings for all of the park attributes.

**VISITORS' RATINGS OF TSP CAMPGROUNDS**

Visitors were asked to rate the campgrounds in TSP in comparison to Army Corps of Engineers (COE) campgrounds. Figure 8 shows their responses to this question. Over half (52.6%) of the visitors felt that TSP campgrounds are superior to COE campgrounds, while 13.5% of visitors felt there is no difference between the two and 31.6% of visitors had no previous experience in which to compare the two. Only 2.3% of visitors felt that TSP campgrounds are inferior to COE campgrounds.

reasons were that TSP does not offer as good a senior discount as COE campgrounds.

**Figure 8. Visitors' Ratings of TSP Campgrounds in Comparison to COE Campgrounds**



Visitors were also asked to describe why they felt TSP campgrounds were either superior or inferior. Table 4 shows the frequency and percentage of the responses from visitors who felt TSP was superior. Of those who answered the open-ended question asking why they felt that TSP campgrounds are superior, one-third (33%) reported that TSP campgrounds have better upkeep and cleanliness. Over one-fourth (29.1%) felt that TSP has better facilities and campsites. Only three visitors answered the open-ended question asking them to describe why they felt TSP campgrounds are inferior, and their

**SUPPORT OF "CARRY IN/CARRY OUT" TRASH SYSTEM**

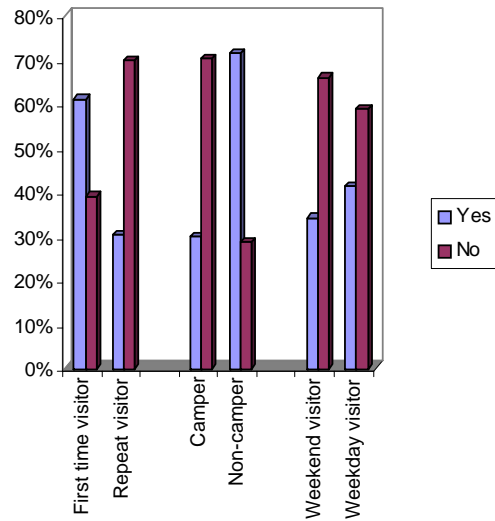
TSP visitors were also asked to indicate whether they would be willing for the park to establish a "carry in and carry out" trash removal system, thereby promoting recycling and reducing the burden of handling trash in the park. Visitors were more likely to oppose (62.9%) the carry in/carry out trash system than support it (37.1%).

**Table 4. Frequency and Percentage of Responses from Visitors Who Rated TSP Campgrounds Superior**

Category	Frequency	Percent
1. Better upkeep and cleanliness	34	33.0%
2. Better facilities and campsites	30	29.1%
3. Better/more attractive surroundings/more shade	14	13.6%
4. Friendlier staff and visitors	10	9.7%
5. Safer	5	4.9%
6. More convenient	2	1.9%
7. Other	8	7.8%
Total	103	100%

A significant difference ( $p < .01$ ) was found between first time and repeat visitors and the percentage of each in support of a carry in/carry out trash removal system. First time visitors were more likely to support (60.9%) than oppose (39.1%) the carry in/carry out system, while repeat visitors were more likely to oppose (69.7%) than support (30.3%) the proposed trash system. Campers also were significantly ( $p < .001$ ) more likely to oppose (70.1%) the proposed trash system, whereas non-campers were more likely to support it (71.4%). 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 more likely to oppose (65.8% and 58.8% respectively) than support (34.2% and 41.2% respectively) it. Figure 9 shows the percentage of support or opposition between each group.

**Figure 9. Support for “Carry In/Carry Out” Trash System Between Groups**



with 48 responses given by 41 respondents. The comments and suggestions were listed and grouped by similarities into 7 categories for frequency and percentage calculations. The list of comments and suggestions is found in Appendix F. Table 5 lists the frequencies and percentages of the comments and suggestions by category.

**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 TSP a better one (question 23). Thirty percent (29.7%) of the total survey participants responded to this question,

The majority (35.4%) of comments were general positive comments, such as: “Great job”, “Very nice park,” and “Your state parks are the best we’ve seen in our travels”. The rest of the

**Table 5. Frequency and Percentage of Comments and Suggestions from TSP Visitors**

Category	Frequency	Percent
1. General positive comments	17	35.4%
2. Comments/suggestions about campgrounds	7	14.6%
3. Need improved or additional facilities	7	14.6%
4. Comments about park staff/rangers	5	10.4%
5. Comments/suggestions about restrooms/shower houses	5	10.4%
6. Other	7	14.6%
Total	48	100%

comments were categorized based on similar suggestions or comments, such as comments or suggestions about needing improvement to present

facilities or providing additional facilities, comments about the campgrounds, and other suggestions not falling into any other category.



## Discussion

### MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study provide relevant information concerning TSP visitors. However, the results should be interpreted with caution. The surveys were collected only during the study period of September and October 1999; therefore, visitors who visit during other seasons of the year are not represented in the study's sample.

#### *Satisfaction Implications*

Four-fifths (80.5%) 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 (81.2%) combined with their positive comments provide evidence that TSP visitors are indeed satisfied with their park experience.

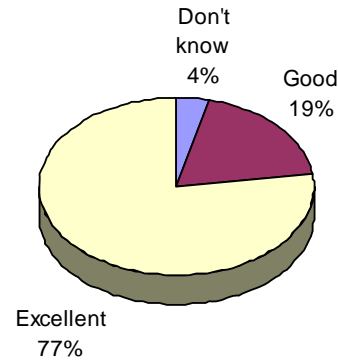
#### *Safety Implications*

TSP managers should be commended for providing an atmosphere in which visitors feel safe. The I-P Matrix showed park safety having a high performance and importance rating, and less than one-fifth of visitors did not give park safety an excellent rating (Figure 10).

#### *Crowding Implications*

Crowding was not a significant issue at TSP during the study period. Visitors' perceptions of crowding at TSP were fairly low, with a mean crowded score of 1.5. Only one-fourth (24.2%) of visitors reported feeling some degree of

*Figure 10. Safety Ratings of TSP.*



crowding. However, during peak use of the summer months crowding may become an issue for visitors at TSP; therefore, visitors' crowding perceptions should still be a management concern for TSP managers.

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). Further study of visitors could determine potential crowding issues and also if crowding perceptions at TSP are due to the number of people or perhaps the behavior of those in the park.

### ***Performance Implications***

Visitors felt that care of the natural resources was very important but rated TSP lower in performance in this area. Managers should be commended, however, on the high performance and importance ratings given to clean restrooms and upkeep of facilities, particularly since restroom cleanliness and facility upkeep are often given lower ratings by visitors to state parks (Fredrickson & Moisey, 1999).

### ***Implications for TSP's Interpretive Programs***

Another area of concern for managers is the low performance and importance ratings given by visitors regarding TSP's interpretive programs. Less than 5% (4.3%) of visitors to TSP reported attending an interpretive program. When asked how satisfied they were with TSP's interpretive programs, 75.5% of visitors said they didn't know. When asked to give performance ratings for the interpretive programs at TSP, again a large percentage (55.8%) of visitors didn't know how to rate this attribute. These results suggest that visitors may not be aware of the interpretive programs, and thus do not attend them.

### ***Implementation of "Carry In and Carry Out" Trash System***

Almost two-thirds (63%) of visitors would not support implementing a "carry in/carry out" trash removal system. Further analysis of the users who might be most affected by this type of trash removal system (picnickers and campers) revealed that a majority of both campers (70%) and picnickers (60%) opposed the proposal.

### ***Conclusion***

TSP managers should be commended in that TSP visitors are very satisfied with TSP, as evidenced by the high percentage of visitors who were repeat visitors, and also by their high satisfaction ratings, high performance ratings, low crowding perceptions, and superior ratings of the campgrounds. The results of the present study suggest some important management and planning considerations for TSP. Even though TSP visitors rated their visits and the park features relatively high, felt fairly safe, and did not feel very crowded, continued attention to safety, facility upkeep and improvement, and care of the natural resources can positively effect these ratings. Consideration should also be given as to whether implementation of a carry in/carry out trash removal system at TSP is necessary.

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 TSP. The frequency and percentage calculations of survey responses provide useful information concerning socio-demographic characteristics, use patterns, and satisfaction of TSP visitors. In addition, the "sub-analysis" of data is important in identifying implications for management of TSP. (The sub-analysis in the present study included

comparisons using Chi-square and ANOVA between selected groups, and the Importance-Performance analysis.) Additional relevant information may be determined from further sub-analysis of existing data. Therefore, it is recommended additional sub-analysis be conducted to provide even greater insight to management of the park.

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

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 September and October 1999. Therefore, user studies at TSP and other parks and historic sites might be conducted during other seasons for comparison between seasonal visitors.

## **METHODOLOGY RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR TSP 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 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 rates in the 1998 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey as well as in the 1999 Missouri State Parks Visitor Survey. Continued use of the one-page questionnaire and the prize package drawing is suggested.

In order to increase response rates at TSP, it is recommended that an alternative sampling methodology be developed for surveying visitors in the day use areas, particularly at the marina and boat ramps. Visitors in this area were generally occupied in launching or docking their boats and were unable to fill out surveys. Another recommendation would be to have self-addressed, stamped envelopes available in future surveys to offer to non-respondents 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. Truman State Park Visitor Survey**



# Harry S Truman State Park



The Missouri Department of Natural Resources and the University of Missouri are seeking your evaluation of Truman 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 Truman 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 Truman State Park  
 tent  RV/trailer/camper  
 nearby lodging facilities  
 nearby campground  
 friends/relatives  
 other (Please specify.) \_\_\_\_\_

4. In your experience, how would you rate the Truman State Park campgrounds in comparison with Army Corps of Engineers campgrounds? (Check only one box.)  
 no experience to compare  
 no difference  
 Truman State Park campgrounds are superior why? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Truman State Park campgrounds are inferior why? \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

- picnicking  swimming  attending interpretive program
- fishing  boating  attending special event
- camping  boat rental  other (Please specify.)  
\_\_\_\_\_
- hiking  viewing wildlife  
\_\_\_\_\_
- walking  studying nature

7. How satisfied are you with each of the following in Truman 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. swimming beach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. marina	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. boat ramps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. park store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. interpretive programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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

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

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

10. Which of the following would most increase your feeling of being safe at Truman State Park? (Check only one box.)
- more lighting where? \_\_\_\_\_
- less crowding
- nothing specific
- improved upkeep of facilities
- increased law enforcement patrol
- improved behavior of others
- increased visibility of park staff
- less traffic congestion
- other (Please specify.) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

13. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Truman State Park? (Check only one box.)
- Very Satisfied  Satisfied  Dissatisfied  Very Dissatisfied

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

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9

Not at all      Slightly      Moderately      Extremely

Crowded      Crowded      Crowded      Crowded

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

16. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Gender?  female  male

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

grade school  vocational school  graduate of 4-year college

high school  some college  post-graduate education

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

Asian  African American  Native American/American Indian

Hispanic  Caucasian/White  Other (Please specify.) \_\_\_\_\_

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

yes  no

If yes, what disability or disabilities do you have? \_\_\_\_\_

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

22. What is your annual household income?

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

\$25,000 - \$50,000  over \$75,000

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

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



**Appendix B. Survey Protocol**

## Protocol for Truman 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 Truman 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 Truman 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	Area
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
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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**

## Truman State Park Visitor Survey

### 1. Is this your first visit to Truman State Park? (n=133)

yes	18.8%
no	81.2%

### If no, how many times have you visited this park in the past year? (n=102)

*The responses from this open-ended question were grouped into the following 8 categories:*

0	14.7%
1	15.7%
2	29.4%
3-5	19.6%
6-10	11.8%
11-20	5.9%
21-100	2.0%
101+	1.0%

The average # of times repeat visitors visited the park in the past year was 6.1 times.

### 2. During this visit to the park, are you staying overnight? (n=133)

yes	85%
no	15%

### If yes, how many nights are you staying overnight at or near the park during this visit? (n=101)

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

1	12.9%
2	46.5%
3	23.8%
4-5	11.9%
6-10	4.0%
11+	1.0%

The average # of nights respondents visiting the park for more than one day stayed was 2.7.

### 3. If staying overnight, where are you staying? (n=113)

campground in Truman State Park	93.8%
tent	33.7%
RV	66.3%
nearby lodging facilities	2.7%
nearby campground	0.9%
friends/relatives	0.0%
other	2.7%



**4. In your experience, how would you rate the Truman State Park campgrounds in comparison with Army Corps of Engineers campgrounds? (n=133)**

no experience to compare	31.6%
no difference	13.5%
Truman State Park campgrounds are superior	52.6%

**why?** 103 responses were given by 61 respondents (87.1% of those visitors rating TSP campgrounds superior). Their responses were placed in the following categories:

1. Better upkeep and cleanliness	29.1%
2. Better facilities/campsites	33.0%
3. Better/more attractive surroundings/more shade	13.6%
4. Friendlier staff and visitors	9.7%
5. Safer	4.9%
6. Convenience	1.9%
7. Other	7.8%
Total	100%

Truman State Park campgrounds are inferior 2.3%

**why?** Only three respondents answered this open-ended question. Their responses are as follows.

Elderly discounts and more freedom to get wood.

Narrow roads.

On account of higher priced senior citizen discount.

**5. With whom are you visiting the park? (n=123)**

alone 19.1%	family & friends 15.3%	club or organized group 1.5%
family 58.0%	friends 6.1%	other 0.0%

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

picnicking 36.2%	swimming 15.2%	attending interpretive program 4.3%
fishing 47.1%	boating 28.3%	attending special event 11.6%
camping 71.0%	boat rental 4.3%	other 13.0%
hiking 23.2%	viewing wildlife 34.1%	
walking 52.9%	studying nature 14.5%	

*In addition to percentages of responses, a mean score was calculated for each feature in questions 7, 8, 12, and 13. The score is based on a 4.0 scale with 4 = very satisfied, 3 = satisfied, 2 = dissatisfied, and 1 = very dissatisfied (Q. 7 & 13); 4 = excellent, 3 = good, 2 = fair, and 1 = poor (Q. 8); and 4 = very important, 3 = important, 2 = unimportant, and 1 = very unimportant (Q. 12). The mean score is listed in parenthesis following each feature.*

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

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Don't Know	
a. campground (3.72)	65.2%	25.8%	0.0%	0.0%	9.1%	n=132
b. park signs (3.66)	68.8%	28.1%	1.6%	0.8%	0.8%	n=128
c. picnic areas (3.65)	52.9%	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	18.5%	n=119
d. swimming beach (3.44)	25.9%	24.1%	2.6%	0.0%	47.4%	n=116
e. marina (3.64)	40.5%	23.3%	0.0%	0.0%	36.2%	n=116
f. boat ramps (3.58)	37.4%	24.3%	0.9%	0.0%	37.4%	n=115
g. park store (3.49)	26.2%	21.5%	1.9%	0.0%	50.5%	n=107
h. trails (3.53)	34.8%	27.8%	0.9%	0.0%	36.5%	n=115
i. interpretive programs (3.56)	13.7%	10.8%	0.0%	0.0%	75.5%	n=102

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

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.80)	80.7%	18.5%	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	n=135
b. having clean restrooms (3.78)	77.4%	19.5%	0.8%	0.0%	2.3%	n=133
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.77)	77.1%	21.4%	0.8%	0.0%	0.8%	n=131
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.76)	78.0%	19.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	n=132
e. access for persons with disabilities (3.81)	67.7%	15.7%	0.0%	0.0%	16.5%	n=127
f. care of natural resources (3.68)	67.7%	28.6%	1.5%	0.0%	2.3%	n=133
g. providing interpretive programs (3.52)	24.8%	17.7%	1.8%	0.0%	55.8%	n=113
h. being safe (3.80)	77.1%	19.1%	0.0%	0.0%	3.8%	n=131

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

*13 visitors responded to this question. Their responses are as follows.*

Don't know/No reason/no place is perfect

First time staying overnight; always room for improvement.

Just got here.

Not sure what security/safety measures are in place that would be above normal standards.

Nothing specific, no place is perfectly safe.

With two little girls, I think no place is excellent in safety.

Park facilities need improvement

Conditions at campsites from previous campers.

Improve on signs going back out of areas allowing for easier return access -- no guessing.

Lack of lighting along roadways inside campground area.

Roads are narrow for vehicles towing.

Lack of staff/rangers patrolling

Security.

Too few patrols.

Other

Have small baby; not a lot of safe, flat areas to play in.

Park staff did not inform guests of bad weather (tornado).

**10. Which of the following would most increase your feeling of being safe at Truman State Park?**

120 responses were given by 108 respondents.

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. More lighting	22	18.3%
2. Less crowding	9	7.5%
3. Nothing specific	53	41.2%
4. Improved upkeep of facilities	1	0.8%
5. Increased law enforcement patrol	11	9.2%
6. Improved behavior of others	9	7.5%
7. Increased visibility of park staff	9	7.5%
8. Less traffic congestion	3	2.5%
9. Other	<u>3</u>	<u>2.5%</u>
Total	120	100.0%

13 visitors (59% 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. Along park roads	4	30.8%
2. In campground	4	30.8%
3. At marina and boat ramps	2	15.4%
4. Other	<u>3</u>	<u>23.1%</u>
Total	13	100.0%

**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? (n=124)**

yes 37.1%  
no 62.9%

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

	Very Important	Important	Unimportant	Very Unimportant	Don't Know	
a. being free of litter/trash (3.87)	88.5%	10.8%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	n=130
b. having clean restrooms (3.89)	90.8%	6.9%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	n=130
c. upkeep of park facilities (3.82)	83.7%	15.5%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	n=129
d. having a helpful/friendly staff (3.77)	79.1%	19.4%	0.8%	0.8%	0.0%	n=129
e. access for disabled persons (3.59)	64.2%	22.8%	6.5%	0.8%	5.7%	n=123
f. care of natural resources (3.83)	84.3%	15.0%	0.0%	0.8%	0.0%	n=127
g. providing interpretive information (3.47)	49.6%	28.1%	7.4%	0.8%	14.0%	n=121
h. being safe (3.84)	84.7%	13.7%	0.0%	0.8%	0.8%	n=131

**13. Overall, how satisfied are you with this visit to Truman State Park?**

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	
(Mean score = 3.79)	80.5%	18.8%	0.0%	0.8%	n=133

**14. During this visit, how crowded did you feel? (n=132)**

On a scale of 1-9, with 1 = Not at all crowded and 9 = Extremely crowded, the mean response was 1.5.

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

*Only the eight following comments were given.*

- Campsite.
- Campsites area a little too close together.
- Electric sites. Too many primitive sites.
- Electrical hookup areas were crowded.
- More space between sites.
- Parking vs. traffic on main roads.
- Too many campers.
- When park is full, specifically electric facilities, boats and cars parked on streets.

**16. What is your age? (n=123)**

*Responses were divided into the following 4 categories:*

18-34	13.8%	55-64	22.0%
35-54	45.5%	65+	18.7%

(Average age = 50.9)

**17. Gender? (n=126)**

Female	47.6%
Male	52.4%

**18. What is the highest level of education you have completed? (n=133)**

grade school	7.5%	vocational school	5.3%	graduate of 4-year college	8.3%
high school	36.8%	some college	33.1%	post-graduate education	9.0%

**19. What is your ethnic origin? (n=132)**

Asian	0.0%	African American	0.0%	Native American/American Indian	3.0%
Hispanic	0.0%	Caucasian/White	97.0%	Other	0.0%

**20. Do you have a disability that substantially limits one or more life activities or might require special accommodations? (n=132)**

yes	8.3%
no	91.7%

**If yes, what disability or disabilities do you have? (n=8)**

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

- Arthritis – knee replacement.
- Arthritis.
- Back.
- Back.
- Broken ankle and in wheelchair.
- Heart disease.
- Heart surgery.
- Multiple sclerosis.

**21. What is your 5-digit zip code (or country of residence, if you live outside the U.S.)? (n=125)**

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

- Missouri (64.0%)
- Kansas (16.0%)
- Nebraska (5.6%)

**22. What is your annual household income? (n=117)**

less than \$25,000	10.3%	\$50,001 - \$75,000	21.4%
\$25,000 - \$50,000	52.1%	over \$75,000	16.2%

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

*41 of the 138 visitors (30%) responded to this question. A total of 48 responses were given, and were divided into 6 categories. Frequencies and percentages of responses in each category are listed.*

	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percent</u>
1. General positive comments	17	35.4%
2. Comments/suggestions about campgrounds	7	14.6%
3. Need improved or additional facilities	7	14.6%
4. Comments about park staff/rangers	5	10.4%
5. Comments/suggestions about restrooms/shower houses	5	10.4%
3. Other	<u>7</u>	<u>14.6%</u>
Total	48	100%

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

### **Responses to Question #23**

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

#### **General positive comments**

- Charlie and Louise Curry are the greatest hosts! Friendly, helpful and fun!
- Don't like dedicated sales taxes generally, but will say that this shows a good use of the 1/10 cent tax.
- Good job.
- Great job!
- Great place to camp overall.
- Have a good day.
- Have a nice day!
- Just continue doing what you apparently are currently doing. Thank you, we will be back.
- Nicest and cleanest park I've seen. Enjoyed seeing flock of turkeys.
- Very nice and clean park.
- Very nice park!
- Very pleasant experience.
- Very pleased with the friendly staff.
- We always stay at state parks--we love Truman. Our son and his friend had some things stolen last year--but we've never had any problems. We've only had one unpleasant experience with unruly neighbors.
- We have enjoyed the Passport Program.
- We use the shower house because our houseboat doesn't have one. We are very pleased with that facility. Thank you.
- Your state parks are the best we have seen in our travels.

#### **Comments/suggestions about campgrounds**

- Adding water and sewer to the electric sites would enhance your great facility.
- Could use more electric sites to reduce the feeling of being crowded.
- Full hookups in the campgrounds.
- Increase number of electric sites.
- More electrical sites. Full hookups (including water) at the campsites.
- The restrooms could use a bench along the shower stall walls to put on shoes after showers, rest belongings or wait for an open shower. Restrooms -- additional hooks inside the shower stalls. Additional sites with full hookups for RVs: water, sewer, electric.
- Volunteers very friendly and helpful. Could use more water faucets in the camping area.

#### **Need improved or additional facilities**

- Fill the wood lot. What happened to the playground?
- More handicap parking areas. Fish cleaning area at boat ramp.
- More play areas closer to camp area!
- Need fishing cleaning in park.
- Playground equipment for kids.

- The staff has always been friendly and helpful. Fish cleaning station inside park would be helpful.
- Very happy with park hosts at Truman State Park. Need in park fish cleaning station.

**Comments about park staff/rangers**

- The staff has always been friendly and helpful. Fish cleaning station inside park would be helpful.
- Too many "signs." Not enough consideration for boaters/slip owners by park rangers. The marina personnel are great!
- Very happy with park hosts at Truman State Park. Need in park fish cleaning station.
- Volunteers very friendly and helpful. Could use more water faucets in the camping area.
- We really enjoy your camp hosts, especially Louise and her husband. Both are great!

**Comments/suggestions about restrooms/shower houses**

- Bathrooms in more frequent locations throughout the park.
- I am 6'1" tall! How come the shower heads are so low?
- Need center steps off of road at #3 shower house!!
- Outhouses in areas not close to shower house.
- The restrooms could use a bench along the shower stall walls to put on shoes after showers, rest belongings or wait for an open shower. Restrooms -- additional hooks inside the shower stalls. Additional sites with full hookups for RVs: water, sewer, electric.

**Other**

- Available tourist information for festivals.
- Fill the wood lot. It was a cool weekend to be without wood. Offer more recycling bins in park, such as a place to put plastics.
- Fill the wood lot. What happened to the playground?
- No firewood available this trip.
- Only disappointment--no wood.
- Too many "signs." Not enough consideration for boaters/slip owners by park rangers. The marina personnel are great!
- We always stay at state parks--we love Truman. Our son and his friend had some things stolen last year-but we've never had any problems. We've only had one unpleasant experience with unruly neighbors.