



Climate Change Education Partnership Visitor Survey Technical Report: Olympic National Park

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This research is funded through a grant from the National Science Foundation, award number DBI-1059654.

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Project Introduction

The Climate Change Education Partnership (CCEP) is a National Science Foundation funded research project involving Colorado State University, the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Parks Conservation Association. The purpose of this nationwide, collaborative effort is to scope the communication challenges, opportunities, and needs among park and refuge staff when discussing climate change impacts on America's public lands. This effort is funded as a "Phase 1 Project", and the data we have gathered regarding our regional site partners and site-specific information will inform a "Phase 2 Proposal" to be submitted in March 2012. If funded, Phase 2 of the CCEP would provide the resources to implement ideas generated through our Phase 1 research at your site.

Including your region, we have five pilot site areas across the country (northern Colorado, southern Florida, District of Columbia, Puget Sound in western Washington, and Kenai Fjords in Alaska). We have engaged each region in a similar process, beginning in late March 2011 and continuing through January of 2012. Your site is one of five protected areas in western Washington that was selected because agency leadership at the Washington D.C. office highlighted your park or refuge as an important place to invest resources in building capacity or enhancing ongoing efforts to communicate about climate change in your region.

Because our goal is to engage you, your staff, managers, volunteers, and partners at adjacent public lands in a "landscape-scale" approach to climate change education, a significant part of our effort to achieve this goal has been to collect quantitative and qualitative data regarding national park and wildlife refuge visitor perceptions of specific effects of climate change on America's public lands. During our visit to your site, we conducted 413 visitor surveys. This report provides a short description of our visitor survey and a summary of our results from your site. The survey data we have collected at each park or refuge within our pilot site locations is very important as we begin to brainstorm and collaboratively develop education tools for your unique visitor population.

Introduction of Study

Methods

The CCEP core team developed an on-site visitor survey to assess national park and wildlife refuge visitors' awareness and knowledge of place-specific climate change impacts, as well as their level of concern and willingness to act in response to these impacts. Over a six month period, our survey team administered this visitor survey at each park and refuge within our six pilot site locations (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Participating parks and refuges in the 2011 Visitor Concerns about Climate Change Survey

Northern Colorado
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (CO)
Rocky Mountain National Park (CO)
Southern Florida
Biscayne National Park (FL)
Everglades National Park (FL)
National Key Deer Refuge (FL)
Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge (FL)
District of Columbia
Harpers Ferry National Historic Park (WV)
National Capitol Parks East (DC)
Prince William Forrest Park (VA)
Kenai Peninsula Alaska
Kenai Fjords National Park (AK)
Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (AK)
Puget Sound Area
Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge (WA)
Mount Rainier National Park (WA)
Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge (WA)
North Cascades National Park (WA)
Olympic National Park (WA)

Survey Development. The survey used in this study was first created in paper form using basic word processing software, and was later converted into an electronic form using an online template from iSURVEY and an accompanying app for Apple iPads. The iSURVEY app allows for the electronic survey to be presented on iPads as well as other handheld electronic devices. Following the purchase of this app, the survey team was able to administer the survey on each of 10 iPads and gather an unlimited number of responses within the allowable one-month license period, which we renewed as necessary. All of the results are saved, synced and uploaded to an automatically generated data file, accessed on the iSURVEY password protected website.

Procedure. Over three thousand (3118) surveys were administered in 11 different refuges and parks from May 6, 2011 to September 11, 2011, using a convenience sampling method. The total response rate for the sample was 68%. The following script was used by the survey team for recruiting participants:

Hello, we are students from Colorado State University conducting visitor surveys at [this park/refuge]. Would you like to take our survey about landscape changes at this [park/refuge]? The survey takes about five to ten minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and you can stop taking the survey at any time.

The survey team protocol for answering participants' questions during the course of the survey was to answer any question that pertained to technical operation of the iPads and to supply any needed clarification regarding questions and response options. The survey team was not to offer any opinions or facts pertaining to specific questions while the survey was in progress. When all of the iPads were in use, the survey team protocol was to administer paper versions of the same survey. Most visitors surveyed (91%) completed the electronic version of the survey on the iPad while the remaining 280 participants (9%) completed the survey on paper.

Survey Sites. Survey administration locations were unique at each refuge and park, though the team targeted popular trailheads, visitor centers, campsites, and viewpoints. In each case, recommendations were sought and followed from managers at each site for popular and diversified locations for surveying. Most surveys were collected during the weekends for greater visitor numbers and convenience; however, efforts were made to have both weekends and weekdays represented at each site. The specific areas where we administered surveys in your site include: Hurricane Ridge, the Hoh Rainforest, and the Kalaloch Campgrounds.

Response Rates and Confidence Interval. The survey team collected a total of 413 surveys at Olympic National Park. The response rate for this sample was 70%. The sample from your site reflects the total population of visitors at a 95% confidence level with $\pm 5\%$ margin of error using a 50/50 split.

Visitor Survey Results

Visitor Demographics

The following demographic characteristics were gathered from respondents: age, gender, education, ethnicity, political affiliation, frequency of visits, and zip codes. Most visitors surveyed were in the age bracket of age 26 – 35 (22%). The highest percentage of visitors surveyed was female (50%). Many respondents had completed a Graduate or Professional degree (45%). Most visitors surveyed self-identified as White or Caucasian (84%) as well as Democratic (37%, Table 1). Many visitors indicated that this was their first visit (53%).

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N =391)

Characteristic	<i>n</i>	%
Age at time of survey (years)		
10 – 17	16	4
18 – 25	40	10
26 – 35	84	22
36 – 45	65	17
46 – 55	70	18
56 – 65	83	21
66 – 75	31	8
76 – 85	2	1
86 – 95	0	0
Gender		
Male	196	50
Female	198	50

Highest education level completed

Less than high school	7	2
Some high school	9	2
High school graduate	18	5
Some college	46	12
Two-year college degree	27	7
Four-year college degree	106	27
Graduate or professional degree	175	45

Ethnicity

American Indian or Alaska Native	2	1
Asian	26	7
Black or African American	1	0
Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1	0
Hispanic or Latino/Latina	7	2
White or Caucasian	329	84
Do Not Wish to Answer	16	4
Other	9	2

Political Affiliation

Republican	56	15
Democrat	142	37
Independent	64	17
No affiliation	68	18
Do Not Wish to Answer	43	11
Other	7	2

Visitor Opinions on Parks/Refuges

The following eight statements are 'sense of place' variables employed to assess visitor levels of place attachment and place dependence (Table 2). The first four statements listed are scalable items for the concept of place attachment while the last four statements are for the concept of place dependence. The more visitors agree with these statements, the more attached to and dependent upon the Park they are respectively.

Table 2

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Response Percentage (%)				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
This Park/Refuge is very special to me (<i>n</i> = 409)	44	37	19	0	0
I identify strongly with this Park/Refuge (<i>n</i> = 405)	31	40	27	2	0
I am very attached to this Park/Refuge (<i>n</i> = 403)	26	36	34	5	0
This Park/Refuge means a lot to me (<i>n</i> = 402)	30	39	28	3	0
This Park/Refuge is the best place for what I like to do (<i>n</i> = 404)	15	37	41	6	1
No other place can compare to this Park/Refuge (<i>n</i> = 405)	18	24	42	15	2
I get more satisfaction out of visiting this Park/Refuge than any other (<i>n</i> = 406)	7	18	53	19	3
Doing what I do in this Park/Refuge is more important to me than doing it in any other place (<i>n</i> = 383)	7	15	53	21	4

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of the National Park System, the National Wildlife Refuge System, and Olympic National Park. Many respondents thought the National Park System was extremely important (69%) and the National Wildlife Refuge System was extremely important (66%). Most respondents stated that Olympic National Park is extremely important to themselves and their family (55%, Table 3).

Table 3

Please rate the importance of the following to you and your family.

Categories	Response Percentage (%)				
	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Slightly important	Not important
Our National Parks System (<i>n</i> = 410)	69	26	5	0	0
Our National Wildlife Refuge System (<i>n</i> = 401)	66	27	6	1	0
This Park/Refuge (<i>n</i> = 399)	55	34	9	1	1

Respondents were asked to rate a number of different threats to parks and refuges as a whole as well as to the park they were visiting. Most respondents thought lack of funding was the greatest threat to National Parks and Refuges (52%). Visitors perceived that the greatest threat to Olympic National Park was lack of funding (46%, Table 4).

Table 4

What do you think is the greatest threat to the following?

Categories	Response Percentage (%)							
	Lack of funding	Natural disasters	Invasive species	Pollution within the area	Pollution from nearby sources	Climate change	Overuse	Other
Our National Parks and Refuges (<i>n</i> = 407)	52	3	4	5	13	12	8	3
This Park or Refuge (<i>n</i> = 404)	46	5	6	4	10	19	9	2

Respondents were asked to rate their level of concern for the future of the National Park Service, The National Wildlife Refuge Service, and the park they were visiting. Many respondents were extremely concerned about the future of the National Park System (39%) and were extremely concerned for the future of the National Wildlife Refuge System (37%). Most respondents were extremely concerned about the future of Olympic National Park (32%, Table 5).

Table 5

How concerned are you about the future of the following? (n = 413)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)				
	Extremely concerned	Very concerned	Somewhat concerned	Slightly concerned	Not concerned
Our National Park System	39	38	17	5	1
Our National Wildlife Refuge System	37	35	23	3	2
This Park/Refuge	32	32	30	4	2

Respondents were asked to select a degree to which they thought climate change was or was not happening. Current scientific consensus indicates that climate change is occurring. Most visitors surveyed were extremely sure that climate change is happening (39%, Table 6).

Table 6

Do you think climate change is happening? (n = 413)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)
Extremely sure it is happening	39
Very sure climate change is happening	26
Somewhat sure climate change is happening	13
Not Sure	13
Somewhat sure climate change is not happening	4
Very sure climate change is not happening	2
Extremely sure it is not happening	3

Visitor Knowledge and Opinions on Climate Change

Respondents were asked how well informed they felt about the causes, consequences, and mitigation of climate change. Many visitors felt very informed about the causes of climate change (43%) as well as the consequences of climate change (43%). Additionally, most visitors felt very informed about ways in which we can mitigate climate change (39%, Table 7).

Table 7

Personally, how well informed do you feel about the following? (n = 412)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)				
	Extremely informed	Very informed	Somewhat informed	Slightly informed	Not informed
The different causes of climate change	21	43	31	4	2
The different consequences of climate change	21	43	30	5	1
Ways in which we can reduce climate change	20	39	32	9	1

Respondents were asked to indicate the causes of climate change. Current scientific consensus is that climate change is mostly caused by human activities. Most visitors surveyed indicated that climate change was caused by both human activities and natural changes in the environment (52%, Table 8).

Table 8

Assuming climate change is happening, do you think it is... (n = 410)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)
Caused mostly by human activities	34
Caused mostly by natural changes in the environment	10
Caused by both human activities and natural changes in the environment	52
None of the above because climate change isn't happening	3
Don't Know	1
Other	0

Respondents were asked to indicate how worried they are about climate change. This item, when combined with the following two items regarding importance and prevalence of thought, may be interpreted as visitor level of concern about climate change. Most visitors surveyed indicated they were very worried about climate change (37%, Table 9).

Table 9

How worried are you about climate change? (n = 412)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)
Extremely worried	19
Very worried	37
Somewhat worried	28
Slightly worried	9
Not worried	7

Respondents were asked to rate how important the issue of climate change is to them. Most visitors surveyed indicated that climate change was very important to them (39%, Table 10).

Table 10

How important is the issue of climate change to you personally? (n = 412)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)
Extremely important	19
Very important	39
Somewhat important	29
Slightly important	9
Not important	4

Respondents were asked how often they think about climate change. Most visitors surveyed indicated they thought about climate change frequently (41%, Table 11).

Table 11

How often do you think about climate change? (n = 412)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)
All the time	7
Frequently	41
Occasionally	37
Rarely	10
Never	5

Respondents were asked to indicate how responsible they felt for climate change. The three statements in Table 8 are scalable items for the concept on responsibility for climate change. The first statement, 'Because my contribution is very small I do not feel responsible for climate change' should be reverse coded when creating a scale as it is negatively worded comparative to the other two items. Therefore, visitors who feel responsible for climate change would generally disagree with the first statement and agree with the last two statements (Table 12).

Table 12

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Response Percentage (%)				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Because my contribution is very small I do not feel responsible for climate change (<i>n</i> = 403)	5	15	23	46	12
I feel somewhat responsible for the presently occurring environmental problems (<i>n</i> = 401)	6	57	23	11	4
I feel responsible for contributing to the condition of the climate (<i>n</i> = 381)	10	49	26	10	5

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which climate change would harm future generations, themselves, and Olympic National Park. Of particular interest is how much visitors believe climate change is harming the Park. Most visitors surveyed indicated that climate change would harm this Park a moderate amount (43%, Table 13).

Table 13

How much do you think climate change will harm the following?

Categories	Response Percentage (%)				
	A great deal	A moderate amount	Only a little	Not at all	Don't know
Future generations of people (<i>n</i> = 399)	62	28	5	3	3
You personally (<i>n</i> = 396)	9	52	29	8	2
This Park/Refuge (<i>n</i> = 404)	39	43	10	4	4

Respondents were asked when they thought climate change would start to harm both people in the U.S. and Olympic National Park. Most visitors surveyed indicated that Olympic is being harmed now (33%, Table 14).

Table 14

When do you think climate change will start to harm the following (n = 413)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)						
	They are being harmed now	In 10 years	In 25 years	Don't know	In 50 years	In 100 years	Never
People in the United States	36	19	16	17	6	3	4
This Park/Refuge	33	17	12	26	4	4	3

Visitor Willingness to Help Mitigate Climate Change

Visitors were asked “*How much money, in addition to the entrance fees you currently pay, would you be willing to pay per visit to support additional conservation efforts related to climate change at this Park/Refuge?*” (n = 374). The average amount of additional fees respondents were willing to pay was \$1.00 – 10.00 per visit (see Table 15). Similarly, visitors were asked “*How much time, in days per year, would you be willing to volunteer at this Park/Refuge to support additional conservation efforts related to climate change?*” (n = 377). Respondents gave an average of 0 days they would be willing to volunteer. Finally, visitors were asked how willing they were to change their behaviors to help reduce the impacts of climate change. Most respondents answered very willing (39%, Table 16).

Table 15

How much money, in addition to the entrance fees you currently pay, would you be willing to pay per visit to support additional conservation efforts related to climate change at this Park/Refuge? (n =374)

U.S. Dollars	Response Percentage (%)
0	14
1-5	26
6-10	26
11-15	7
16-20	9
> 21	19

Table 16

How willing are you to change your behaviors in this Park/Refuge to help reduce the impacts of climate change? (n = 413)

Categories	Response Percentage (%)
Extremely willing	29
Very willing	39
Somewhat willing	23
Slightly willing	5
Not willing	3

Respondents were asked to indicate what they have done from a list of individual actions known to mitigate climate change. Visitors were allowed to select as many actions that applied to them specifically. Most visitors indicated that they switch from regular (incandescent) to compact fluorescent bulbs (73%, Table 17).

Table 17

Which of the following actions have you taken? (n = 391)

Actions	Response Percentage (%)
Switching from fossil fuels to renewable energy at home	19
Planting trees	56
Insulating you home	60
Switching from a gasoline to an electric or hybrid car	15
Driving less	55
Walking, riding a bike, or using public transportation instead of driving	58
Switching from regular (incandescent) to compact fluorescent bulbs	73
Reducing the amount of beef you eat	36
Reducing airplane travel	18
Reducing energy use at home	70

Note. Percentages do not sum to 100 as multiple selections were allowed.

Visitor Perception of Climate Change Impacts and Education

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with four statements involving their desire to learn about climate change impacts and visible effects of climate change. Most respondents agree that they would like to learn more about climate change at Olympic National Park (49%). Many of the visitors surveyed agree that the effects of climate change can already be seen at this park (40%), Table 18).

Table 18

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Response Percentage (%)				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I would like to learn more about climate change impacts in our national parks/refuges (<i>n</i> = 394)	15	55	23	5	3
I would like to learn more about climate change impacts in this Park/Refuge (<i>n</i> = 392)	15	49	28	5	3
I believe that some of the effects of climate change can already be seen at our national parks/refuges (<i>n</i> = 392)	24	47	22	5	2
I believe that some of the effects of climate change can already be seen at this Park/Refuge (<i>n</i> = 388)	18	40	34	6	2

Respondents were asked what specific effects of climate change they have seen at Olympic National Park. Some of options will not apply to Olympic as the list is comprehensive of all areas included in the study. Most visitors reported seeing loss of snow or ice at this Park (40%, Table 19).

Table 19

What specific effects of climate change have you seen at this Park/Refuge? (n = 327)

Effects of climate change	Response Percentages (%)
Increasing ocean temperature	14
Increasing areas affected by drought	20
Increasing air temperature	21
Thawing of permanently frozen soil	19
Loss of snow and/or ice	40
Increasing number of flooding events	17
Rising sea level	10
Coral bleaching on reefs	5
Change in plant and animal populations	28
More intense storms	16
None of the above	26
Other	3

Respondents were asked to indicate any efforts to reduce impacts of climate change employed by Olympic National Park. The effort most visitors surveyed recalled seeing was recycling (73%, Table 20).

Table 20

What specific efforts to reduce impacts of climate change have you seen employed at this Park/Refuge? (n = 354)

Efforts to reduce impacts	Response Percentage (%)
Use of hybrid or electric vehicles	17
Energy efficient or LEED certified buildings	19
Use of alternative renewable energy (ex: wind turbines, solar panels)	16
Recycling	73
None of the above	21
Other	2

Note. Percentages do not sum to 100 as multiple selections were allowed.

Respondents were asked to indicate how they have received information on climate change at Olympic National Park as well as how they would like to receive information on climate change in the future. Most visitors surveyed indicated that they have not received any information on climate change at the Park (63%). Many visitors indicated they would like to learn about climate change in Olympic National Park via the Park website (53%, Table 21).

Table 21

How have you received information on climate change at this Park/Refuge and how would you like to receive information on climate change in the future?

Ways of receiving information	Response Percentages (%)	
	How have you received information about climate change at this Park/Refuge? (n = 351)	In the future, how would you like to learn about climate change impacts and solutions at this Park/Refuge? (n = 376)
Have not received any information on climate change from this Park/Refuge.	63	-
I do not want to learn about climate change impacts and solutions at this Park/Refuge	-	9
Indoor exhibits	20	47
Roadside exhibits	7	32
Trailside exhibits	9	44
Films, movies, videos	12	33
Living history/costumed interpretive programs	2	16
Park website	9	53
Printed materials (brochures, books, maps, etc.)	14	34
Electronic media/devices available to visitors	2	26
As a volunteer in the park	1	10
Children's activities	2	15
Ranger guided walks/talks	7	29
Self-guided tours	7	22
Other	2	0

Note. Response percentages do not sum to 100 as multiple selections were allowed.

Respondents were asked to comment on their satisfaction with the quality and quantity of climate change education in Olympic National Park. Most visitors surveyed indicated that the quality of climate change education in Olympic was average (50%) whereas most visitors indicated the quantity of climate change education to be average (48%, Table 22).

Table 22

Please rate your satisfaction with the current climate change education at this Park/Refuge.

Categories	Response Percentages (%)				
	Very good	Good	Average	Poor	Very poor
Quality of education (n = 347)	9	24	50	13	4
Quantity of education (n = 342)	9	22	48	17	5

Respondents were asked to specify how important they believe each of several climate change related topics are for parks and refuges to address. Most visitors surveys indicated that actions visitors can take was the most important topic for parks/refuges to address (43%, Table 23).

Table 23

How important are the following topics for our parks/refuges to address?

Topics	Response Percentages (%)				
	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Slightly important	Not important
Climate science and atmospheric processes (<i>n</i> = 343)	26	45	21	6	2
Ways parks/refuges are reducing emissions (<i>n</i> = 344)	22	41	25	8	3
Sources of greenhouse gas emissions (<i>n</i> = 333)	25	38	24	9	4
Relevance for surrounding communities (<i>n</i> = 340)	28	40	24	5	2
Impact(s) on places managed by parks/refuges (<i>n</i> = 339)	29	43	21	6	1
Ways parks/refuges are adapting to climate change (<i>n</i> = 343)	29	41	22	6	2
Actions visitors can take (<i>n</i> = 345)	43	39	13	4	1

Respondents were asked to agree or disagree with statements regarding how the survey was employed. The three statements listed scale into the concept of survey preference. Higher percentages in agree categories refer to a greater visitor preference for using the iPad in taking surveys rather than paper (Table 24).

Table 24

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Statements	Response Percentage (%)				
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I enjoyed taking this survey on an iPad (<i>n</i> = 386)	44	36	16	4	1
I would rather take surveys on iPad than paper (<i>n</i> = 377)	50	29	12	6	3
I would enjoy taking future surveys on an iPad (<i>n</i> = 377)	48	35	12	4	2

Acknowledgements

Shawn Davis, Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, Colorado State University
Caroline Beard, Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, Colorado State University
Nicole Tilley, Department of Environmental Communication, Colorado State University
Brent Ryndak, Department of Environmental Communication, Colorado State University
Dr. Jessica Thompson, Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, Colorado State University

This project is funded through a grant from the National Science Foundation, Climate Change Education Partnership, award number DBI 1059654. The authors would also like to thank the members of the CCEP core research team, and Priscilla Williams and Aaron Edwards for their assistance and support in conducting this research.

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