



**OHMVR COMMISSION MEETING
Palmdale, CA 93551**

March 13, 2015

STAFF REPORT: OHMVR Division Attendance Study
STAFF: Natalie Lohi, Outreach & Education Manager
SUBJECT: 2012-2013 CSUS Attendance Study

Summary

The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation (OHMVR) Division contracted with California State University Sacramento (CSUS), to provide a Statewide Attendance Study. The study looked at current attendance measuring methodologies as well as visitor usage information at the eight State Vehicular Recreation Areas (SVRAs). CSUS was asked to look at the accuracy and efficiency of current methodologies, develop new approaches to attendance data collection, and collect visitor information through surveys. The study was completed in December 2014. This final report contains information and recommendations that will be highly valuable for current and future SVRA management.

Discussion

California State Parks has an existing policy in place for the collection of attendance data. However, this policy is very basic, dated (the last revision of this policy occurred in 1996), and lends itself to subjectivity, and thus, inaccuracy. Park managers throughout the department have realized this for some time. The existing policy (attached) requires each unit to conduct an internal survey two times per year—once during the “busy” season and once during the “slow” season. The surveys are supposed to be conducted for six hours on a busy weekday and four hours on a Saturday and Sunday. Camping attendance surveys are slightly different. There is no required method for these surveys. The surveyor can use pencil and paper, manual counter, etc., and there is no standard form used for these surveys. As a result, most of these bi-yearly surveys are not documented and different employees use different methods from one survey to the next.

OHMVR Division leadership recognized the potential for inaccuracy given the above described policy and methods. In 2012, the Division established a contract with CSUS for a long-term, comprehensive attendance study of the eight SVRAs. The study objectives were to confirm existing, or establish new, conversion factors, recommend new attendance collection methods, and complete visitor surveys to clarify attendance estimation and support other management decisions.

The study was completed in December 2014. In addition to the main report, CSUS also provided a supplemental forecasting report. This is a tool that may help SVRA managers in anticipating possible future attendance trends. In summary, the study recommends revised conversion factors, customized attendance collection methods for the SVRAs based on access types, and recommends ideal survey intervals. The forecasting report provides possible attendance trends into the future. The complete report can be accessed on the OHMVR Division website at www.ohv.ca.gov .

Commission Action

For information only.

Attachments

Attendance Policy (DN 96-24)
Conversion Factor Revision Document
Attendance Study Survey Example

State of California - The Resources Agency CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS		MANUAL
DEPARTMENTAL NOTICE		Operations
No. 96-24		
SUBJECT		CHAPTER
VISITOR ATTENDANCE REPORTING		1400, Field Operations
ISSUED	EXPIRES	REFERENCE
July 16, 1996	When Incorporated	DOM 1491 et seq., Departmental Notice 95-21

DPR 375 (Rev. 11/97)(Word, 12/3/97)

WHEN APPLICABLE, ENTER THE NUMBER AND DATE OF THIS DEPARTMENTAL NOTICE IN THE MARGIN OF THE MANUAL PAGE, ADJACENT TO THE SECTION(S) AFFECTED BY IT.

This Departmental Notice has been re-created for transmittal in electronic format. The original notice was signed by Kenneth B. Jones, Deputy Director for Park Stewardship.

The Visitor Attendance Reporting System is being further modified to allow for more efficient collection, reporting and analysis, with a provision for electronic storage/transfer of information and an enhanced database format software attendance reporting program.

The DPR 449, Monthly Visitor Attendance Report (Rev. 7/95) and a quarterly report summary is available in electronic (EXCEL 5.0) format. Copies of the electronic form and summary sheet were distributed to Districts at the Chief Ranger's workshop in May.

Effective July 1, 1996, Park Services will require Districts to submit only the electronic quarterly summaries. Units should complete the DPR 449s, then compile the quarterly report summary for submittal to their District. The District will forward the electronic quarterly reports to the Park Services Division, Administrative Support Section, by the 10th day following the end of the quarter.

Instructions on how to use both unit and District electronic reports are provided on the program disks. If you have questions or need assistance with completing the electronic reports, contact Ted Reinhardt, Sierra District, at (916) 525-9524, or by e-mail at TedR@sierra.net.

DPR 449 COMPLETION INSTRUCTIONS

- **HEADER INFORMATION:** Complete blocks as appropriate. Use two-digit numbers to indicate the month and year.
- **PAID DAY USE:** Applies to all day use facilities; recreational, historical, or natural. Paid day use includes sales of individual tickets/receipts, Annual Use/Limited Use Golden Bear/Disabled Discount Pass admittance, and valid tickets/receipts purchased at other park units.
 - **VEHICLE:** For attendance reporting purposes, a "vehicle" shall be as defined by the current year California Vehicle Code. Enter the total number of paid day use vehicles including tickets/receipts sold, annual use passes admitted, and valid tickets/receipts purchased at other units. Buses are excluded from this column.
 - **NON VEHICLE (NON VEH):** Enter the total number of paid individuals entering the unit on foot, bicycle, or other non-vehicular means.
 - **NUMBER OF GROUPS (# GROUPS):** Enter the total number of groups that have paid to use unit group facilities, including those entering by bus.
 - **NUMBER OF GROUP PERSONS (# GROUP PER):** Enter the total number of individuals participating in the paid groups.
- **FREE DAY USE:**

- VEHICLE: Per current year California Vehicle Code definition of "vehicle," enter the total number of non-paying vehicles entering the unit (include Disabled Veteran/POW, Golden Bear and Complimentary Pass admittance, and those using State Park Foundation Coupons). Buses are excluded from this column.
 - NON VEHICLE (NON VEH): Enter the total number of unpaid individuals entering the unit on foot, bicycle, or other non-vehicular means.
 - NUMBER OF GROUPS (# GROUPS): Enter the total number of groups that have not paid to use unit group facilities, including those entering by bus.
 - NUMBER OF GROUP PERSONS (# GROUP PER): Enter the total number of individuals participating in the unpaid groups.
- OVERNIGHT: These columns are used to record unit overnight use.
 - SITES: Enter the total number of individual family campsites occupied (or unoccupied but reserved).
 - OTHER: Enter the total number of non-family campsites occupied, including but not limited to, hike-in, bicycle equestrian, boat, en route, and overflow sites. Overflow camping is counted as the number of sites used in excess of the number of sites available.
 - NUMBER OF GROUPS (# GROUPS): Enter the total number of groups camping in unit group facilities.
 - NUMBER OF GROUP PERSONS (# GROUP PER): Enter the total number of individuals participating in the camping groups.
 - BOATS: Enter the total number of boat launchings for the day, including both tickets/receipts sold and annual use passes admitted. At Angel Island SP and Brannan Island SRA, the use of one mooring slip is recorded as one boat launching.
 - CONVERSION FACTORS: Some of the raw data reported on the DPR 449 in terms of vehicles and sites must be converted into estimates of persons for visitor attendance usage. Conversion factors are therefore used to change this data into figures which are in terms of individual persons. Each unit develops, reports and regularly updates three conversion factors, and reports them on the DPR 449. Conversion factors are established to one decimal place of accuracy and are submitted only for the columns used by the unit. Lines for which there are no factors are to be left blank.

Conversion factors are established anew twice a year, on the assumption that there will be significant differences between figures relating to the recreation season and the off season. Conversion factors are derived during the last half of the first month of each of the two seasons and are recorded on that month's completed attendance report. For many units the recreation season will be June through September, and the off season from October through May. Due to climate or proximity to urban areas, some units have on and off seasons different from this pattern. Each unit may select for itself (on a full month basis) its own seasons. The recreation season and off season must not be confused with other types of "seasons" which exist in park operations. Time periods or "seasons" pertinent to charges for facilities or the changes in camping limits are two examples. Such "seasons" may coincide with the recreation seasons and the on and off seasons used in this data system, but in many units this will not be the case.

Conversion factors are considered valid until mandatorily updated at the beginning of each season, but may be updated at any other time that a change in conditions warrants it.

Methods for developing conversion factors are as follows:

- PAID DAY USE CONVERSION FACTOR: This factor is based on an actual count made by the person selling tickets or operating the kiosk. Record the actual number of vehicles and the total number of occupants (all ages) for the following time periods: 1 busy weekday - 6 consecutive hours; 1 Saturday and Sunday - 4 consecutive hours each day. At those few units where a significant share of patronage is in the evening, an appropriate share of this period must be included in the sample. Method of count (hand counter, pencil and paper) is optional. Divide the total number of occupants by the total number of vehicles for the period recorded to obtain the paid day use conversion factor.

- **FREE DAY USE CONVERSION FACTOR:** Make a survey in the same manner as described for paid day use above.
- **SITES CONVERSION FACTOR:** This factor is based on an actual count of the number of campers, as recorded on DPR 53, 453, and R453 forms. On the days of the survey, at any point in time where the campground is about as full as it will get, use the active or current registration forms to give the total number of campers in each occupied camping unit, add up the totals of campers and occupied sites, then divide the total number of campers by the total number of occupied sites. Make this count on two weekdays and two Saturdays.
- **CONVERSION FACTOR TOTALS:** Multiply the total number of vehicles/sites by the appropriate conversion factor to arrive at the conversion factor total for each category.

If you have general questions on visitor attendance reporting, Contact the Park Services Division at (916) 653-4272 or CALNET 453-4272

original signed by

Kenneth B. Jones
Deputy Director
Park Stewardship

**Previous and Updated Conversion Factors
(Taken from Final Report)**

Table 3.20 Previously Used Conversion Factors

SVRA	High Season	Low Season	Conversion Factors					
			Paid Day Use		Free Day Use		Camping (sites)	
			High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Carnegie	10/1-4/30	5/1-9/30	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Claypit	9/1-6/30	7/1-8/31	None	None	2.5	2.5	None	None
Heber Dunes	Spring/Fall	Summer	None	None	3.5	3.5	None	None
Hollister Hills	10/1-5/31	6/1-9/30	2.5	2.5	2.0	2.0	3.0	3.0
Hungry Valley	10/1-4/30	5/1-9/30	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Oceano Dunes	Year Round	Year round	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.8
Ocotillo Wells	10/1-5/31	6/1-9/30	None	None	5.0	3.0	5.0	3.0
Prairie City	Oct/1-4/30	5/1-9/30	2.5	2.5	2.0	2.0	None	None

Table 3.21 Updated Conversion Factors Generated from 2012-13 Study

SVRA	High Season	Low Season	Conversion Factors					
			Paid Day Use		Free Day Use		Camping (sites)	
			High	Low	High	Low	High	Low
Carnegie	10/1-4/30	5/1-9/30	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8
Claypit	9/1-6/30	7/1-8/31	None	None	2.0	2.0	None	None
Heber Dunes	Spring/Fall	Summer	None	None	2.6	2.6	None	None
Hollister Hills	10/1-5/31	6/1-9/30	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9
Hungry Valley	10/1-4/30	5/1-9/30	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
Oceano Dunes	Year Round	Year round	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.7	2.7
Ocotillo Wells	10/1-5/31	6/1-9/30	None	None	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2
Prairie City	Oct/1-4/30	5/1-9/30	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	None	None

Ocotillo Wells SVRA Survey Thank you for helping with this important survey. The information you provide will be used by State Park's Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division to maintain and manage motorized recreation areas in California. ***Your time and perspective is important to us!***



1. What is your home city and zip code? City: _____ Zip code: _____
2. How far did you travel (*one-way*) to reach Ocotillo Wells? _____ miles
3. Are you camping here or on a day trip to the park?
 - Day: how many hours do you expect to be here? _____ hours
 - Camping: how many days will you be here? _____ days
 - ↳ What camping accommodations are you using? (*check all that apply*)
 - travel trailer motor home tents Other _____
4. How many times will you enter and exit the park on this trip? _____ times
5. When you entered the park, how many people (*including yourself*) were in your vehicle? _____ men _____ women _____ kids
6. What is your age? _____ years _____ (under 18 years)

For questions #6 and #7, answer the questions to reflect the typical person in your group.

7. In the past 12 months, how many days did you ride at Ocotillo Wells? _____ days
8. How much time are you riding on-trail vs. off-trail _____ % on-trail _____ % off-trail
(these should total 100%)

9. How much money are you spending on this trip? Provide a rough estimate of your trip purchases (*yourself and people in your vehicle*) while on your trip to this SVRA and in the nearby communities.

	In this SVRA and nearby communities <i>(within 25 miles, e.g. Borrego Springs, Salton City)</i>	Outside of this SVRA/nearby communities while on this trip <i>(outside of 25 miles, e.g. Julian, Westmorland, etc.)</i>
Overnight lodging at motels, resorts, and private campgrounds	\$	\$
Food and beverages at restaurants and snack stands	\$	\$
Supplies such as groceries, batteries, gifts, souvenirs, etc.	\$	\$
Gasoline, vehicle repairs, OHV parts/supplies, parking	\$	\$
Recreation purchases such as equipment rentals and tours	\$	\$

10. Where have you gotten information about SVRA news (use regulations, events)? (*check all that apply*)
 - Facebook
 - Twitter
 - State Park website
 - Other websites (list below)
 - Blogs (list below)
 - Word of mouth
 - Trailhead signs/kiosks
 - OHV safety training
 - I have no information
 - Other: _____

11. Tell us about the types of vehicles you and people in your vehicle are using for recreation on this visit. Use the table below to give information about each vehicle, but include your primary transport vehicle only if it is being used on recreational rides (*e.g. a 4x4 truck for trail use*) while in the park. If it's only used to drive to and from the park, don't list it.

Off Highway Vehicle	Number of vehicles	Model year(s)	Hours will be used this trip	Approx. gallons of fuel used
2-Wheel drive (street licensed)				
4-Wheel drive (street licensed)				
Buggy/fabricated OHV				
ATV				
Dirt bike				
ROV/UTV/Side-by-side				
Dune buggy/Sand rail				
Dual sport motorcycle				
Go-kart/mini-bike				
Other:				
Other:				

12. What improvements, if any, would you like to see at Ocotillo Wells? (*Any other feedback is welcome*)

Using this map, tell us where you're entering/exiting the park, riding, staging, and camping (if applicable):

1. Draw lines on the map showing your travel routes on this visit. This can be an approximation of where you'll ride if you haven't completed your trip yet.
2. Write "Enter" and "Exit" to show where you arrived and left on this visit.
3. If you are camping, mark the location of your camp with a "▲"
4. Mark an "X" where you are staging your trip. If your staging area isn't on the map, write out the name below.

