



## PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW AND CLEARANCE PROCESS FOR NPS-SPONSORED PUBLIC SURVEYS



*The scope of the Programmatic Review and Clearance Process for NPS-Sponsored Public Surveys is limited and will only include individual surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and residents of communities near parks. Use of the programmatic review will be limited to non-controversial surveys of park visitors, potential park visitors, and/or residents of communities near parks that are not likely to include topics of significant interest in the review process. Additionally, this process is limited to non-controversial information collections that do not attract attention to significant, sensitive, or political issues. Examples of significant, sensitive, or political issues include: seeking opinions regarding political figures; obtaining citizen feedback related to high-visibility or high-impact issues like the reintroduction of wolves in Yellowstone National Park, the delisting of specific Endangered Species, or drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.*

**SUBMISSION DATE: 8-16-2023**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park Visitor Use Study

**ABSTRACT: (not to exceed 150 words)**

*Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (KEMO) is a heavily visited park located in suburban Atlanta, GA. KEMO is a unique park in that it is both home to one of the most pivotal battles in the Civil War and serves as a nature-based attraction for locals and tourists looking for hiking, equestrian, and trail running opportunities close to Atlanta, GA. The last visitor intercept study at KEMO was conducted in 2008 and little is known about who the current visitor is and how they interact with the visitor center or use the park. This project seeks to understand visitors' demographic characteristics and use of KEMO, provide a profile of visitors, and assess visitors' satisfaction with their experience, as well as identify areas of improvement to enhance visitor experiences.*

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## PROJECT INFORMATION:

**Where will the collection take place?** Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park

**Sampling Period Start Date:** 10/1/2023

**Sampling Period End Date:** 11/31/2023

**Type of Information Collection Instrument: (Check ALL that Apply)**

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mail-Back Questionnaire | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> On-Site Questionnaire | <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone Survey |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Face-to-Face Interview  | <input type="checkbox"/> Focus Groups                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (List)     |

Will an electronic device be used to collect information? ☐ No ☒ Yes

## SURVEY JUSTIFICATION:

*Social science research in support of park planning and management is mandated in the NPS Management Policies 2006 (Section 8.11.1, "Social Science Studies"). The NPS pursues a policy that facilitates social science studies in support of the NPS mission to protect resources and enhance the enjoyment of present and future generations (National Park Service Act of 1916, 38 Stat 535, 16 USC 1, et seq.). NPS policy mandates that social science research will be used to provide an understanding of park visitors, the non-visiting public, gateway communities and regions, and human interactions with park resources. Such studies are needed to provide a scientific basis for park planning and development.*

It has been over 15 years since Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (KEMO) had a visitor survey. As such, the park is lacking reliable information about visitors and the visitor experience. This project will provide information about visitor use, experience, satisfaction, and demographics to guide management and planning at KEMO now and into the future. Ultimately, outcomes from this work will be used to inform potential management options regarding visitor use and interpretation, as well as inform strategies for engagement of current and future visitors. Many of the questions are focused on visitor's perceptions of the visitor center and the museum. Based on park manager input, the museum is woefully out of date and managers and planners need visitor input on how to make the experience more engaging, educational and enjoyable. This will eventually lead to a planning effort to rethink the museum and visitor center experience. Additionally, managers need to know how the visitor center and museum impacts the overall visitor experience. Without this critical input from the public, the park will struggle to meet the needs of current and future visitors. This work is guided by the steps and principles of the Interagency Visitor Use Management Framework, which identifies the interdependent relationship between resource conditions, visitor experiences, and management actions as a strategic area of focus.

The proposed research will use visitor input to inform management strategies for increasing visitor access while maintaining high quality visitor experiences. The main goal of this project is to provide park managers with information on how visitors perceive the state of the park for recreational and educational opportunities. Results from this study will be used by the park to inform and/or identify:

- management for different recreational uses (including sightseeing, hiking, biking, education, etc.),
- creation of a visitor profile—baseline information regarding visitor demographics, characteristics, and interests,
- improvements to services and facilities (specifically surrounding the visitor center and the museum), and
- opportunities to improve communication (in reference to trip planning and on-site communication).

The results from this survey give park managers the information needed to make data-driven decisions and maximize the utility of their financial and personnel resources to improve overall management and visitor experiences at the park, including improvements to trip planning information resources and visitor center and museum exhibits and services.

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## **SURVEY METHODOLOGY**

### **(A) Respondent Universe:**

Based on the 2022 NPS Visitor Use Statics Report, KEMO recorded approximately 1,322,003 visitors. The respondent universe for this collection will be all adult visitors (18 and older) at the sample location (visitor center parking lot) during the sampling period.

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### **(B) Sampling Plan / Procedures:**

A systematic sampling approach will be employed to intercept visitors exiting the park at the Visitor Center parking lot (exit survey). This location was identified by park staff and planners as the ideal location to intercept the majority of visitors exiting the park, specifically those who have engaged with the visitor center and museum (as well as other areas in the park). On-site sampling will be conducted on weekends and weekdays throughout the 3-month sampling period. On each sampling day, two teams of two trained research technicians will recruit study participants as they exit the sampling location. To ensure a representative sample of the visiting population, one adult member (18 and over) of every 3<sup>rd</sup> visitor group exiting the park will be asked to participate in the study. The adult within the group with the next birthday will be asked to participate. If this individual accepts, they will be handed a tablet to self-administer the survey and the surveyor will remain nearby the respondent to answer any questions. All interactions will be recorded by the surveyor on a contact log. Individuals who do not wish to participate will be asked if they would answer the non-response bias questions, which will be recorded by the research team member. Refusal to respond to the non-response bias questions will be recorded as a hard refusal. Once an intercept is complete, the surveyor will allow two exiting groups to pass the intercept location before asking the 3<sup>rd</sup> group to participate in the survey. This approach will continue for the duration of the sampling period.

In order to capture as diverse of a group of visitors as possible, three, six-day collections will take place over the course of the sampling period. Each collection will include both weekends and weekdays. Table 1 includes an example sampling schedule. We expect sampling quotas will be met for sampling days and location. However, there is the capacity to add sampling day(s), as needed and in alignment with the systematic sampling plan, should quotas not be met for a particular time period.

**Table 1. Example on-site intercept survey schedule with expected initial contacts**

		October 2024 Collection			November 2024 Collection			December 2024 Collection		
Location	Day	8:00-12:00	12:00-4:00	4:00-8:00	8:00-12:00	12:00-4:00	4:00-8:00	8:00-12:00	12:00-4:00	4:00-8:00
Visitor Center Parking Lot	Tuesday	5	5	10	5	5	10	5	5	10
	Wednesday	5	5	10	5	5	10	5	5	10
	Thursday	5	5	10	5	5	10	5	5	10
	Friday	15	15	10	15	15	10	15	15	10
	Saturday	20	30	30	20	30	30	20	30	30
	Sunday	20	30	30	20	30	30	20	30	30
	TOTALS	70	90	100	70	90	100	70	90	100
Total per Collection		260			260			260		
OVERALL TOTAL = 780										

### (C) Instrument Administration:

Participants will be intercepted on site at the visitor center parking lot. The initial contact will be used to explain the study and determine if visitors are interested in participating (see below). If the group agrees, the adult within the group with the next birthday will be selected. That individual will then be handed a tablet to use to respond to the survey. Individuals who decline to participate will be asked if they would be willing to answer 3 non-response bias questions, which will be recorded directly by the team member and be counted as soft-refusals on the contact log. Individuals who decline to answer the non-response bias questions will be recorded as hard-refusals on the contact log. All contacts with park visitors eligible to participate in the survey and their group size will be recorded on the contact log.

While on site, research team members will identify visitor groups, approach them, and say:

*“Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am conducting a survey for the National Park Service to better understand your use of the park. Your participation is voluntary, and all responses will be kept anonymous. Would you be willing to take a 10-minute survey?”*

- If yes – the research team member will make sure no one in the group has already been asked to take the survey - then say, "Thank you for agreeing to participate. Who in your group that is at least 18 years old has the next birthday?" The team member will then provide that individual with a tablet to take the survey.
- If no: Surveyor will ask, “Instead of completing the full survey, could I ask you three quick questions?”
  - If yes (soft refusal)- ask 3 non-response questions (below).
  - If no (hard refusal) - end the contact and thank them for their time.

The number of participants and refusals will be recorded and used to calculate the overall response rate.

#### (D) Expected Response Rate / Confidence Level:

We plan to intercept 780 individuals over the duration of the study. We anticipate a response rate of 50% (n=390). We anticipate that of the 50% who do not wish to complete the survey, 25% (n=98) will complete the non-response survey and 75% (n=292) will be hard refusals (Table 2). The response rate for this collection is based on on-site surveys at similar park sites (ex. *Social Science Research to Support Visitor Use Management at Monocacy National Battlefield 2021*; OMB Control #: 1024-0224, exp. 05/31/2023). Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the survey findings will be accurate within 3-5 percentage points.

**Table 2. Anticipated Response Rates**

Sampling Location	Initial Contacts	Completed On-site Surveys 50%	Refusals 50%	Completed Non- Response Survey (25% of refusals)	Hard Refusals (75% of refusals)
Visitor Center Parking Lot	780	390	390	98	292

#### (E) Strategies for dealing with potential non-response bias:

Non-response bias questions contain two demographic questions from the questionnaire and one park usage question. Non-response bias questions will be recorded on the contact log by the research team.

The following questions will serve as the non-response bias check for this collection:

1. Are you a first-time visitor to Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
2. What is your year of birth? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your zip-code? \_\_\_\_\_

The responses to the non-response bias questions by the soft-refusal group will be compared to the sample collected from participants that completed the full questionnaire. Any implications of non-response bias will be reported in the final report and discussed with park managers.

#### (F) Description of any pre-testing and peer review of the methods and/or instrument:

All questions are from the currently approved NPS Pool of Known Questions (1024-0224; ex. 8/31/2026) and have been reviewed by KEMO managers and faculty at the University of Georgia and University of Tennessee. The questions were tested on six members of the general public to estimate respondent burden and clarity of questions.

#### BURDEN ESTIMATES:

The total estimated burden for this study is 75 hours (Table 3). We plan to intercept 780 total visitors at the sampling location to reach our sampling goal of 390 completed surveys at the park. The initial contact time (1 minute) will be used to explain the purpose of the study and provide instruction. Based on the pretest, we estimate that the questionnaire will take 10 minutes to complete, leading to 11 minutes per respondent (11 minutes X 390 participants = 71.5 hours) for an estimated burden of 72 hours for the on-site survey. The non-response bias check for this collection will take 2 minutes per respondent (n=98), one minute for the intercept and an additional minute to answer the

questions, resulting in a burden of 3 hours (98 non-response participants X 2 minute = 3.2 hours). The burden for the remaining visitors completely refusing to participate in the collection will not be estimated due to the de minimis nature of their participation.

**Table 3. Burden Estimates for Survey**

	Completed Responses	Completion Time (minutes)	Burden Hours (rounded)
On-site Survey	390	11	72
Non-response survey	98	2	3
<b>Total burden requested under this ICR:</b>			<b>75 hours</b>

#### REPORTING PLAN:

The study results will be presented in internal agency reports for NPS managers within the network. Response frequencies will be tabulated, and measures of central tendency (e.g., mean, median, mode) will be reported as appropriate. The reports will be archived with the NPS Social Science Program for inclusion in the NPS Social Science Studies Collection as required by the NPS Programmatic Approval process. Hard copies will be available upon request.

#### NOTICES

##### Privacy Act Statement

**General:** This information is provided pursuant to Public Law 93-579 (Privacy Act of 1974), December 21, 1984, for individuals completing this form.

**Authority:** National Park Service Research mandate (54 USC 100702)

**Purpose and Uses:** This information will be used by The NPS Information Collections Coordinator to ensure appropriate documentation of information collections conducted in areas managed by or that are sponsored by the National Park Service.

**Effects of Nondisclosure:** Providing information is mandatory to submit Information Collection Requests to Programmatic Review Process.

##### Paperwork Reduction Act Statement

We are collecting this information subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501) and is authorized by the National Park Service Research mandate (54 USC 100702). This information will be used by The NPS Information Collections Coordinator to ensure appropriate documentation of information collections conducted in areas managed by or that are sponsored by the National Park Service. All parts of the form must be completed in order for your request to be considered. We may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to, this or any other Federal agency-sponsored information collection unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. OMB has reviewed and approved The National Park Service Programmatic Review Process and assigned OMB Control Number 1024-0224.

### **Estimated Burden Statement**

Public Reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 60 minutes per collection, including the time it takes for reviewing instructions, gathering information and completing and reviewing the form. This time does not include the editorial time required to finalize the submission. Comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form should be sent to the Information Collection Clearance Coordinator, National Park Service, 1201 Oakridge Dr., Fort Collins, CO 80525.