



PROGRAMMATIC REVIEW AND CLEARANCE PROCESS FOR NPS-SPONSORED PUBLIC SURVEYS



**FOR QUESTIONS/FOLLOW-UP ON PROGRAMMATIC SUBMISSIONS,
PLEASE CONTACT: NPS Information Collection Review Coordinator,
Megan McBride; megan_mcbride@nps.gov; 970-502-7353**

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: 10/11/2023

PROJECT TITLE: Identifying visitor services and opportunities at Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site

ABSTRACT: (not to exceed 150 words)

This project will provide managers with needed information about visitor preferences for services and experiences and inform the application of the National Park Service Intermountain Region's Tourism Toolkit to Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site (BEOL). There is very limited data about visitor use and experiences for BEOL. Collection of this information will inform a strategy for tourism development. The project will consist of on-site exit surveys of visitors to BEOL.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR CONTACT INFORMATION:

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PARK OR PROGRAM LIAISON CONTACT INFORMATION:

NAME:	Eric Leonard		
TITLE	Group Superintendent		
AFFILIATION:	National Park Service		
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EMAIL:	Eric_Leonard@nps.gov	PHONE:	719-383-5012

PROJECT INFORMATION:

Where will the collection take place? Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site (La Junta CO)

Sampling Period Start Date: 05/14/2024

Sampling Period End Date: 09/05/2024

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

☐ Mail-Back Questionnaire

☒ On-Site Questionnaire

☐ Telephone Survey

☐ Face-to-Face Interview

☐ Focus Groups

☐ Other (List)

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

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.

The information collected from this survey will serve as a means to assess current visitor use and needs at Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site (BEOL). To date, there has not been a comprehensive visitor use study of BEOL to evaluate visitors' service and experience preferences. Further, the information collected will inform the NPS Intermountain Region Tourism Toolkit with BEOL serving as a pilot site for implementation. The ultimate goal of the Tourism Toolkit is to inform the development of a tourism strategy for NPS sites, such as BEOL.

While many parks have experienced increasing numbers of visitors in recent years, BEOL has experienced a 25% decline in visitation from 2009 to 2019. The Tourism Toolkit is an inaugural effort by the NPS to more closely engage with tourism and tourists in an effort to enhance visitation at lesser visited parks. Park managers need this data collection in order to better understand current visitors as a means to help grow visitation both in numbers and diversity of visitors. This study will allow park managers to gain a profile of visitors to BEOL and their interest in current and potential visitor services, opportunities, and activities. The study findings will be used to:

- create a demographic profile of high season visitors;
- obtain information regarding high season visitors' travel characteristics;
- document visitors' trip planning and decision-making behavior;
- determine visitors' interest in, and satisfaction with, existing services, facilities, and experiences;
- identify visitors' preferences for additional facilities and experiences.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

(A) Respondent Universe:

The respondent universe for the survey consists of all adults (aged 18 and older) visiting Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site during the study period from mid-May 2024 through the beginning of October 2024.

(B) Sampling Plan / Procedures:

A systematic sampling approach will be employed to intercept visitors exiting the park. On-site sampling will occur during the high-use period at BEOL (mid-May through early October) over weekday and weekend days to reflect typical visitation patterns proportional to NPS visitation statistics. To determine monthly sampling proportions, visitation in 2019, 2021 and 2022 were averaged with 2020 omitted to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism. The following tables list summer visitation estimates for these years, (Table 1) and anticipated visitor intercept numbers (Table 2).

Table 1: Bent's Old Fort Visitation

Year	Visitation*						% of annual visitation
	May	June	July	August	September	Total	
2019	4,172	3,251	2,844	2,117	2,379	14,763	77%
2021	2,862	3,025	2,935	2,346	4,559	15,725	82%
2022	4,223	3,571	4,336	2,639	3,475	18,244	70%
Average	3,752	3,282	3,372	2,367	3,471	16,244	

*Retrieved from <https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/> (October 2023)

Table 2: initial Contacts and Completed Questionnaires

Number of Visitor Contacts/Completed Questionnaires						
	May	June	July	August	September	Total
Contacts	132	116	120	84	120	572
Completed	93	81	84	59	83	400

To ensure a representative sample of the visiting population, one adult member (18 and over) of every Nth 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 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 N exiting groups to pass the intercept location before asking the Nth group to participate in the survey. This approach will continue for the duration of the sampling period. Approximately 60% of the sample will be drawn from weekend days, with an assumption of an average of 16 and

24 digitized questionnaires completed on weekdays and weekend days, respectively. Thus, a total of 20 sample days (10 weekday and 10 weekend days) and 4 contingencies days are planned across the sampling period (Table 3).

Table 3. Example on-site intercept survey schedule with expected initial contacts

		May 2024 Data Collection		June 2024 Data Collection		July 2024 Data Collection		August 2024 Data Collection		September 2024 Data Collection	
Location	Day	9:00-12:00	12:00-3:30	9:00-12:00	12:00-3:30	9:00-12:00	12:00-3:30	9:00-12:00	12:00-3:30	9:00-12:00	12:00-3:30
Fort exit/ entrance door	Monday	13	13			12	12			12	12
	Tuesday	13	13			12	12			12	12
	Thursday			12	12			8	8		
	Friday			12	12			8	8		
	Saturday	20	20	17	17	18	18	13	13	18	18
	Sunday	20	20	17	17	18	18	13	13	18	18
	TOTALS	66	66	58	58	60	60	42	42	60	60
Totals per month		132		116		120		84		120	
Overall total		572									

(C) Instrument Administration:

The study will utilize a self-administered, on-site digitized questionnaire developed by Arizona State University and the NPS. The questionnaire will be administered using Qualtrics survey software installed on electronic tablets. A potential respondent for the questionnaire will be identified on site using the introductory statement and screening questions outlined at the end of this document. Once the respondent has answered the screening question and has been found to be eligible for the study, the survey administrator will provide a brief description of the study and request the visitor's participation.

If the visitor refuses, the survey administrator will ask if they would be willing to complete four short non-response questions and will record observable information. If the answer is again no, the administrator will record observable information and, if possible, note the reason for refusal (e.g., in a hurry, language barrier, etc.).

Survey administrators will be trained by the ASU investigators in cooperation with NPS staff from BEOL. Interviewers will be trained on every aspect of on-site surveying, including using sampling intervals, avoiding sampling bias, and how to handle all types of interviewing situations, especially safety of the visitors and the interviewers. Quality control will be ensured by monitoring interviewers in the field, and by checking their paperwork at the end of each survey day.

(D) Expected Response Rate / Confidence Level:

A total of 572 visitors will be contacted during the sampling periods. An estimated 400 (70%) visitors will agree on-site to participate in the survey. This estimate is based on previous literature as well as the response rates from other similar surveys. The number of refusals will be recorded and reported in a survey log and will be used in calculating the response rate. Based on the survey sample size, there will be 95% confidence that the survey findings will be accurate to within 5 percentage points.

Table 1a. Anticipated Onsite Survey Response Rates

Total Number of Visitor Contacts)	Completed Onsite Surveys (70% of contacts)	Soft Refusals (30% of contacts)	Completed Non-Response Surveys (50% of soft refusals)	Hard Refusals (50% of soft refusals)
572	400	172	86	86

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

To assess the potential non-response bias, visitors will be asked the following question which will be recorded on the onsite contact log:

- Are you a first-time visitor to Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site?
☐ Yes
☐ No
- Where is your permanent residence?
City/town _____ State _____ OR Country _____
- On this visit, how long did you and your personal group stay at Bent's Old Fort? (Note in partial hours as decimals. .25, .5 or .75)
_____ Number of **hours**
- Overall, how would you rate your overall experience at Bent's Old Fort today?
☐ Very Poor
☐ Poor
☐ Fair
☐ Good
☐ Excellent

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 BEOL managers and faculty at Arizona State University. The survey was tested with seven university students to estimate respondent burden and clarity of questions.

BURDEN ESTIMATES

Overall, we anticipate that a total of 572 individuals will be approached during the sample period. Among the 572 individuals, we expect that at least 400 (70%) will agree to participate and complete the survey while onsite. We expect the initial onsite contact time will be 1 minute per person. The questionnaire will take 10 minutes or less to complete, resulting in an estimated burden of 11 minutes per respondent and a total burden of 73 hours for the on-site survey. During the initial contact, each person who is not able to participate in the survey will be asked to answer the four non-response questions listed above in section (E), which will take 2 additional minutes, resulting in a total burden of 4 hours for the non-response survey. 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 4. Burden Estimates

	Completed Responses	Completion Time * (minutes)	Burden Hours (rounded up)
Onsite Survey	400	11	73
Onsite non-response survey	86	3	4
Total burden requested under this ICR:	486		77

* Initial contact time of one minute is added to the time to complete the surveys

REPORTING PLAN:

The final technical report, with data analysis, conclusions and recommendations will be prepared and distributed to the following: an electronic version (in PDF file format) and two hard copies for the NPS CPCEU Research Coordinator at Northern Arizona University; one electronic version and two hard copies of the final report will be provided to the Superintendent BEOL National Historic Site; one electronic version and two hard copies of the final report will be provided to the NPS Social Science Program for inclusion in the Social Science Studies Collection. If requested, investigators are willing to prepare a presentation of results for park staff and their partners in the development of the BEOL tourism strategy that can be offered as an online presentation.

Introductory statement and screening question to invite visitors to participate in the on-site survey:

Introductory Statement

"Hello! I hope you enjoyed your visit to Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site. My name is [...]. I am a student from Arizona State University conducting a survey about visitors to the Fort. This survey is a joint research project between Arizona State University and the National Park Service; the purpose is to learn visitors' opinions about Bent's Old Fort's programs, facilities, and services.

[Screening Question]

What is the purpose of your visit to the Fort today?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visit the Park | <input type="checkbox"/> Research, Commercial Services (Guides, etc.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Park/Concession Employee | <input type="checkbox"/> Park Business |

"Visit the Park" is a recreation visit-continue with survey (note on log sheet)." Research, Commercial Services (Guides, etc.)" will also continue with the survey (note on log sheet).

In the case of "Park/Concession Employee" or "Park Business"-no need to continue the survey – no need to note on log sheet.

Continuation of invitation

We are only talking with a small number of visitors, so your participation would be greatly appreciated. The survey will take about 10 minutes to complete. All of your answers are voluntary.

Would you be willing to participate in the survey?

If no, ask the visitor if he/she would be willing to answer four short questions. If yes, ask non-response questions (Section E) and note other observational information (i.e., group size and composition, comments regarding reason for refusal) on log sheet.

If no to answering the four questions, thank the visitor; stop the interview, and record observational information on log sheet.

If yes, confirm that visitor is at least 18 years old, record observational information on log sheet, and provide the questionnaire and instructions for completion.

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires approval of all federal government surveys by the Office of Management and Budget. This survey has been approved under this Act. The Office of Management and Budget control number and expiration date is included on the survey and available at your request. Additional information about this survey and its approval is included on the survey and available at your request.*

*Additional Information Provided upon Request.

OMB Approval number: (Not yet assigned)

Expiration Date: (Not yet assigned)

Person Collecting and Analyzing Information: Kathleen Andereck
Center for Sustainable Tourism
School of Community Resources and Development
Arizona State University
411 N. Central Ave.,
Phoenix, AZ 85004

16 U.S.C. 1a-7 authorizes collection of this information. This information will be used by park managers to better serve visitors to Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site. Response to this request is voluntary. No action may be taken against you for refusing to supply the information requested. No personal data will be recorded.

You may direct comments on the number of minutes required to respond, or on any other aspect of this survey to:

Eric Leonard, Group Superintendent
Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site
35110 State Highway 194
La Junta CO 81050
719-383-5012; Eric_Leonard@nps.gov

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.
