

NPS proposes limits
at Rainbow Bridge

Surf's Up but Recreation Is Down
The solitude of surf fishing in North Carolina is being interrupted by influx of vehicles on the beach.

Travelers Increasingly Favor
Weekend Trips, Survey Finds

**A NEED FOR
ACCURATE
STATISTICS**

Americans pummel parks
with conflicting goals

Avoiding Gridlock at Gettysburg

Tons of trampling tourists

'The Visitor Experience'
What Do We Really Mean?

America Faces Middle Age

A glimpse of the '90s



United States Department of the Interior



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IN REPLY REFER TO:

November 2, 1990

Memorandum

To: Park Superintendents

From: Assistant to the Director for Science and Technology

Subject: THE NEED FOR ACCURATE PUBLIC USE REPORTING

At the recent Regional Directors' meeting in Vermont, I discussed with the Regional Directors and with WASO managers some of the problems and issues associated with collecting, reporting and analyzing park visitation statistics and visitor public use data.

Director Ridenour also addressed this matter with the RD's, emphasizing two things: First, that NPS visitation statistics and visitor use data are used in many important ways, both within the Service for planning and management purposes, and also outside the Service by groups such as the Commerce Department, Federal Reserve officials, the Congressional Research Service, the Council of Economic Advisors, the U. S. Travel Data Center, Congressional Budget Committees, etc.

Secondly, the Director emphasized that each manager has a responsibility to assure the accuracy and the reliability of visitation data that initially are reported by the parks, and that subsequently are distributed within and outside the Department.

Many Superintendents have asked the Denver Statistical Office to conduct on-site audits of visitor counting procedures, and to develop surveys for updating persons-per-vehicle multiplier factors. We will help the parks here as much as we can, but we ask that Superintendents please be patient because we have a large backlog of projects, including a substantial amount of high priority work that must be carried out to support ongoing planning activities.

Finally, it is my understanding that visitor public use reporting activities are to be included this fiscal year as a component of the Department's Internal Control Program. This action is being taken because of recognition that accurate visitation data are needed to support various decisions Servicewide involving fee collections, visitor health and safety, design specifications for new visitor support facilities, internal allocation of FTE and dollar resources, etc. This again serves to emphasize the importance of Director Ridenour's call for each manager to take all necessary steps to assure the reliability and the accuracy of park visitation statistics.

Richard H. Briceland