

# Bureau of Reclamation: Visitor Satisfaction Survey Instructions



*(Image from the Bureau of Reclamation)*



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## Overview

The purpose of the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) Visitor Satisfaction Survey is to measure visitors' opinions about BOR facilities, services, and recreational opportunities. This effort helps BOR meet requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) and other BOR and Department of the Interior (DOI) strategic planning efforts. The results are used to measure performance related to the GPRA goal to enhance public satisfaction at DOI sites and to measure satisfaction with facilities and recreational opportunities. The results will also be used by BOR managers to improve services and recreational opportunities provided to visitors.

This will be an on-site intercept and interview format survey. It is a one-time survey where a BOR representative reads questions to a visitor at a BOR managed or partner managed recreation area. The survey data collection will be distributed at locations with high concentrations of visitors such as popular boat launches, marinas, trail heads, visitor centers, and campgrounds. The survey coordinator in each recreation area will randomly schedule the required survey days during a high-usage part of the recreation season. All data will be collected electronically using a tablet and Survey123. Completed surveys will be transferred from each tablet to secure storage facilities using approved data transmission and storage processes.

## Survey Staff

Each recreation area will have one point of contact that will serve as the survey coordinator. The survey coordinator is responsible for the Visitor Satisfaction Survey project in that recreation area and will serve as the contact person for the regional recreation and GPRA coordinators. The survey coordinator will establish the survey schedule, as well as select and train field surveyors to administer the survey in the field. Field surveyors are responsible for conducting the on-site survey. They should inform the survey coordinator of any problems, as well as daily response totals.

The individuals conducting the survey in the field should:

- be able to follow the survey distribution instructions and keep good records;
- be a uniformed employee or uniformed volunteer;

- be dedicated to the surveying duty during the survey day;
- have excellent interpersonal skills;
- have experience using the tablet technology and survey software;
- be familiar with all questions on the survey prior to going out into the field.

## Conducting the Survey

### Tablet Management

Each recreation area will have a hand-held, touch screen tablet dedicated to collecting data. The tablet should have a protective case and a screen protective covering. To conserve battery, field surveyors may want to turn off unnecessary services (e.g., Bluetooth, Wi-Fi) and close out of other applications or programs before taking the tablet in the field. The survey coordinator is responsible for management of the tablet. The tablet should be stored in a secure location when not in the field. Each field surveyor is responsible for managing the tablet in the field. The instructions included with the tablet describing appropriate use and storage of the tablet should be followed. Extra care should be used when in the field to prevent exposing the tablet to excessive the heat, debris, and water.

### Sampling Day Estimation

The target number of visitors to contact during the survey period at each recreation area is 400 and the target minimum number of completed surveys is 200. The survey period will consist of no fewer than 8 days and no more than 60 days during which time it is anticipated at least 400 visitors will be contacted. Based on previous collections we expect a response rate of approximately 50%. A minimum sample of 200 completed surveys from each recreation area should provide an adequate sample. If a particular location is having trouble obtaining the minimum goal of 200 completed surveys, they can add more survey dates, extend the sampling period, or survey for more hours each day (up to four hours daily).

A maximum of 50 surveys can be collected in one day and should not be exceeded. If 50 surveys are collected prior to the end of the day within the scheduled sampling period, the field surveyor should stop collecting data for that day. The survey coordinator at the recreation area should

estimate the number of survey days necessary to contact a minimum of 400 visitors based on known visitation rates at the area. The survey coordinator must ensure that a total of 400 visitors are contacted during the sampling period and that at least 200 visitors complete the survey. Obtaining 200 completed surveys is the minimum target; if visitation is high and more visitors can be surveyed, this is encouraged and will reduce the margin of error on satisfaction estimates. It is not possible to calculate a GPRA score with insufficient data, and the margin of error on the satisfaction estimates will be higher for sample sizes below 200. A GPRA score and report will not be generated for sites that do not collect a sufficient number of completed survey questionnaires.

### Scheduling Days

The distribution of the sample days will be evenly spread out between weekends and weekdays. Blocks of time for data collection should not be less than two hours and not more than four hours. The survey will be administered at locations with high concentrations of visitors such as popular boat launches, trail heads, visitor centers, and campgrounds. The survey coordinator in each recreation area will randomly schedule a minimum of eight survey days during the identified sampling period. In addition, equal numbers of mornings and afternoons should be included in the schedule. If additional sampling days are needed (based on individual circumstances such as weather, visitor attendance fluctuations, and construction), the next available same day of the week should be scheduled with the same time blocks (e.g., if a weekend day is cancelled, choose the next available weekend day; if a weekday is cancelled, choose the next available weekday). It is the responsibility of the survey coordinator to retain copies of the sampling schedule for records management.

Example eight-day sampling schedule:

<b>Survey Site Location</b>	<b>Day</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time Block</b>	<b>Surveyor</b>
Visitor Center	Saturday	8/27/2022	AM: 8:00-12:00	Maggie
Boat Ramp	Tuesday	8/30/2022	AM: 8:00-12:00	Rod
Visitor Center	Thursday	9/1/2022	PM: 2:00-5:00	Rod
Boat Ramp	Sunday	9/4/2022	PM: 1:00-5:00	Maggie
Visitor Center	Wednesday	9/7/2022	PM: 1:00-4:00	Rod
Boat Ramp	Friday	9/9/2022	AM: 9:00-12:00	Maggie
Visitor Center	Saturday	9/10/2022	AM: 8:00-12:00	Maggie
Boat Ramp	Saturday	9/17/2022	PM: 1:00-5:00	Rod

### Survey Schedule Adjustments

The survey coordinator will regularly review progress on overall administration of survey questionnaires. If survey progress is on track, or ahead of schedule, no adjustment to the survey schedule is necessary. If sampling is behind and it is unlikely that 200 completed surveys will be collected by the end of the originally identified survey period, the survey coordinator should increase the frequency of survey administration. This may include additional survey days or extending the duration of the survey day, up to four hours maximum per day. If the survey coordinator still believes the necessary sample will not be collected with added time, they should contact the regional recreation coordinator and the U.S. Geological Survey. The survey sampling schedule should be updated with the added sampling days and times to maintain a record of the changes.

### Survey Location

The field surveyor will be in the same location for the entire sampling period. There may be periods of inactivity when no visitors are passing by. The field surveyor should plan to have ample water, food, access to restroom facilities, a resting spot (e.g., a chair), and protection from the sun (if necessary). The location must be safe and should not be positioned to intercept visitors in automobiles. The area should be near where visitor movement can be observed, it is easy to intercept visitors, and comfortable to stand or sit for the period of time necessary to complete the survey. Make it easy for the respondent to take the survey. If available, the field surveyor can provide two or three chairs for the respondents to sit in while answering the

questions. The location should be comfortable; if possible in a flat area, with shade, and free from distracting noise or other sources of interference.

The field surveyor should define an imaginary line between two stationary landmarks that visitors regularly cross. This line will be used as a reference point as part of the process to randomly select potential survey respondents. There may be survey locations where an imaginary line may not work efficiently due to dispersed visitor use patterns. Below are guidelines for surveying in these locations.

- *Open areas such as a field or meadow:*  
Select a survey area, determine a reasonable, consistent boundary and follow survey questionnaire distribution guidelines below.
- *Campgrounds or picnic areas:*  
Select a survey area, determine a reasonable, consistent boundary such as specific picnic tables, or randomly selected campsites, and follow survey questionnaire distribution guidelines below.
- *Visitors in waiting lines:*  
Treat the line as your survey location.

### Selecting Visitors to Participate in the Survey: Sampling

Use the following guidelines to identify potential survey respondents:

- For all locations, every adult exiting the location that crosses a pre-established reference marker or imaginary line is a potential respondent.
- Only people who are exiting, or are within 2 hours of ending their visit, should be surveyed because the survey asks about their experiences that day. Visitors just arriving at the location will not be able to accurately answer questions about their experiences.
- Potential respondents must be at least 18 years of age.
- Select only one visitor per visitor group as a respondent. A group might be a family, a couple, group of friends, or an organized tour group. Individual respondents in a group should be selected by identifying the person with the next birthday. Only allow one respondent per group, even if multiple

people in the same group offer to take the survey.

- Those who cannot participate in the survey include BOR employees, volunteers, commercial vendors, concessioners, tour guides, tour bus drivers, and anyone visiting the BOR recreation area for business-related reasons.
- If the person selected declines to participate in the survey, simply thank them, attempt to ask the non-response questions, and then identify the very next potential respondent.
- If the identified respondent does not read or understand English, the field surveyor should identify a person in the group who does. If there is a person who speaks English, they may either participate in the survey or translate the information for the identified respondent. If no one in the group speaks English, treat the situation as if the visitor declined to participate. Thank them and go to the next potential respondent.

### Approaching Visitors

How a field surveyor appears, approaches, and interacts with visitors has an influence on the response rate. The individual conducting the survey should be approachable, polite, professional, and be able to clearly explain the purpose and value of the survey.

The following script is a guideline of what to say to potential respondents. This will appear at the top of the tablet. If the potential respondent is clearly above the age of 18, the field surveyor does not need to ask if they are over 18 before beginning the survey; however, this should be asked if they may be under 18 years old.

#### *Visitor Intercept Sample script:*

“Hello! My name is \_\_\_\_\_ . The Bureau of Reclamation is conducting an important survey. We are asking visitors about their experiences to understand how satisfied they are with the facilities and opportunities provided at our recreation areas. Your participation is voluntary and you can complete the survey questionnaire in about 3 minutes. Your opinions are important, and your response to the survey will help improve

the opportunities and facilities here.”

“Would you be willing to participate in this survey?”

If the visitor’s response is “Yes,” the surveyor will offer the participants a seat (if available), ask who has the most recent birthday (if there is more than one person in the group), read the questions, and record answers of the person with the most recent birthday.

*[If they plan to stay longer than another 2 hours]:*

“Thank you – at this time, we are only surveying visitors who are at the end of their visit. Have a good day!”

If the visitor’s response is “No,” ask if they would be willing to answer just three questions. This is called a non-response check, and the purpose of this is to see if there are any differences between people who responded to the survey and those who declined the survey.

### Survey Administration Using Survey123

The first time surveys are conducted on a particular tablet, the survey coordinator should download the Survey123 app while on Wi-Fi. Then, they should go into the application and download the surveys titled: “USBR Visitor Satisfaction Survey” and “USBR Visitor Satisfaction Surveyor Log.” Once these are downloaded on the tablet, they can be used while in the field without Wi-Fi. If the application asks to allow Survey123 to use your location, please select “Allow While Using App,” because the coordinates of the survey will be stored along with each survey response.

The survey coordinator will determine how accounts for Survey123 are managed at the recreation area. Each field surveyor must log into Survey123 at the beginning of the day and select the “USBR Visitor Satisfaction Survey” icon to open the survey data collection page. There should be a “Collect” button at the bottom left corner of the screen to start a single data collection event. Input data as necessary. Follow the on-screen instructions at the end of the data



collection event to save and upload the data.

If the potential respondent agrees to take the survey, follow these steps:

1. Select the “Accept” button at the top of the survey
2. Begin with the first question and read each question to the respondent and record all answers.

If the potential respondent refuses to participate, click the “Reject” button at the top of the survey. It is important to make sure to click “Reject” and accurately record each refusal, since this will be used to calculate survey response rates. Then ask if they would be willing to answer just three questions; click “yes” and ask the questions if they agree, or click “no” if they decline. If the potential respondent indicates they are not exiting, or within 2 hours of leaving the location, click the “Not yet exiting” button at the top of the survey.

### Daily Surveyor Log

The field surveyor must complete the daily surveyor log at the end of each survey day. The daily log form is a separate survey on Survey123. The purpose of this is to retain records for where surveys are taking place, how many hours surveys are conducted, and if there is anything to note.

On the Survey123 app, follow these steps:

1. Select the “USBR Visitor Satisfaction Daily Surveyor Log” icon.
2. Click the “Collect” button in the bottom left corner.
3. Answer the seven questions.
4. Click the “Submit” button at the bottom.

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