

FY12 BLM Visitor Survey - Instructions for On-Site Visitor Survey Administration

Getting Started

- Since every BLM site is unique, these procedures were developed by the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit (UI PSU) as a general set of guidelines. To ensure that all surveys distributed in the FY 2012 field season can be aggregated, it's important to follow the guidelines at all sites. However, if you experience problems or have any questions regarding your site, please contact Jennifer Hoger Russell, telephone: 208-885-4806 at the University of Idaho for suggestions and directions on how to adapt the methods for your site.
- Approximately 2 weeks prior to the survey start date, the University of Idaho will ship each site contact person a package containing: surveys, two locked drop boxes, script, return Federal Express label (paid), and surveyor and site-coordinator report forms. A checklist of materials will be included to ensure each site has the full complement of materials. Please verify that you have received all materials before beginning survey distribution.
- It is critical that these surveys represent a cross-section of all visitors to your BLM area, i.e. age, race, gender, activity. To reach this cross-section of visitors, select a sampling period (with the guidance of the UI PSU) between 30-60 days. If visitation to your site(s) is low, you can contact the UI PSU for an extension of up to 30 days.

Survey Administration

- During the Survey Period, a minimum of sampling days should be used to collect the surveys. A sampling day should consist of at least a 4-hour period of time that may occur in the morning, afternoon, or evening, depending on hours of visitation to that site. This may be extended for areas that have sporadic visitation throughout the day. Select sampling days that represent a mix of weekend days and weekdays spread out across the sampling period. The goal here is to get the broadest mix of visitors possible to reduce the sampling bias.
- Use an objective method of selecting visitors to survey. Instead of just surveying those who appear friendly or approachable or who have extra time to complete a survey, employ one of the following approaches:
 - ~ Every n^{th} ¹ visitor to exit a specific area
 - ~ A visitor at every n^{th} campsite
 - ~ Every n^{th} visitor past an imaginary line across a trail
- Give the survey to only one person, 18 years or older, in each group. Do not give the survey to more than one person in each group. Groups should **NOT** collaborate on responses to survey questions.

¹ N^{th} equals a predetermined number, for example- every 4th person, to ensure a randomized sample.

- Visitors who wish to volunteer to fill out the survey are **NOT** allowed to participate in order to maintain a scientific sample. Explain to the visitor that this is a scientific sample that does not allow for volunteers; however, their opinions are very important to the BLM, and they should be directed to whom they can address their concerns and suggestions. Visitors should be selected to complete the survey after they have spent some time in the area. Visitors will not be able to accurately comment on the area if they have not yet experienced it.
- To ensure confidentiality and security, locked drop boxes will be provided. All completed surveys are to be deposited in the locked drop box by the respondent. Surveys will arrive at the sites folded in half to fit easily into the boxes. **Please encourage respondents to not add additional folds in order to maximize drop box space.** Do not leave the locked drop boxes unattended at any time.
- Make it easy for visitors to complete the survey by providing clipboards and pencils; and allowing sufficient time and privacy to complete the survey. In areas that are hot or have limited shade, set up hospitality station in a shady area and provide water for the survey respondents. Have the respondents deposit surveys directly into the locked drop box.
- The UI PSU will provide the locked drop boxes to the BLM. Two drop boxes and all other relevant survey material will arrive at the commencement of the survey campaign. As a drop box becomes full, contact Jennifer Hoger Russell for a replacement at 208-885-4806. These boxes will be exchanged via Federal Express services to maintain efficiency.
- **Keep Accurate Records. This is extremely important!** Record your progress daily by completing the “Daily Surveyor Report.” At the completion of the survey period, the site coordinator must complete the “Coordinator Report” which will summarize the daily reports. All reports must be returned in to Jennifer Hoger Russell at the UI PSU in an enveloped that will be supplied.
- **To contact Jennifer Hoger Russell**, UI PSU, call 208-885-4806 or email at jhoger@uidaho.edu.
- **To contact David Baker**, BLM Visitor Survey Lead, call 303-236-6313 or email at djbaker@blm.gov.