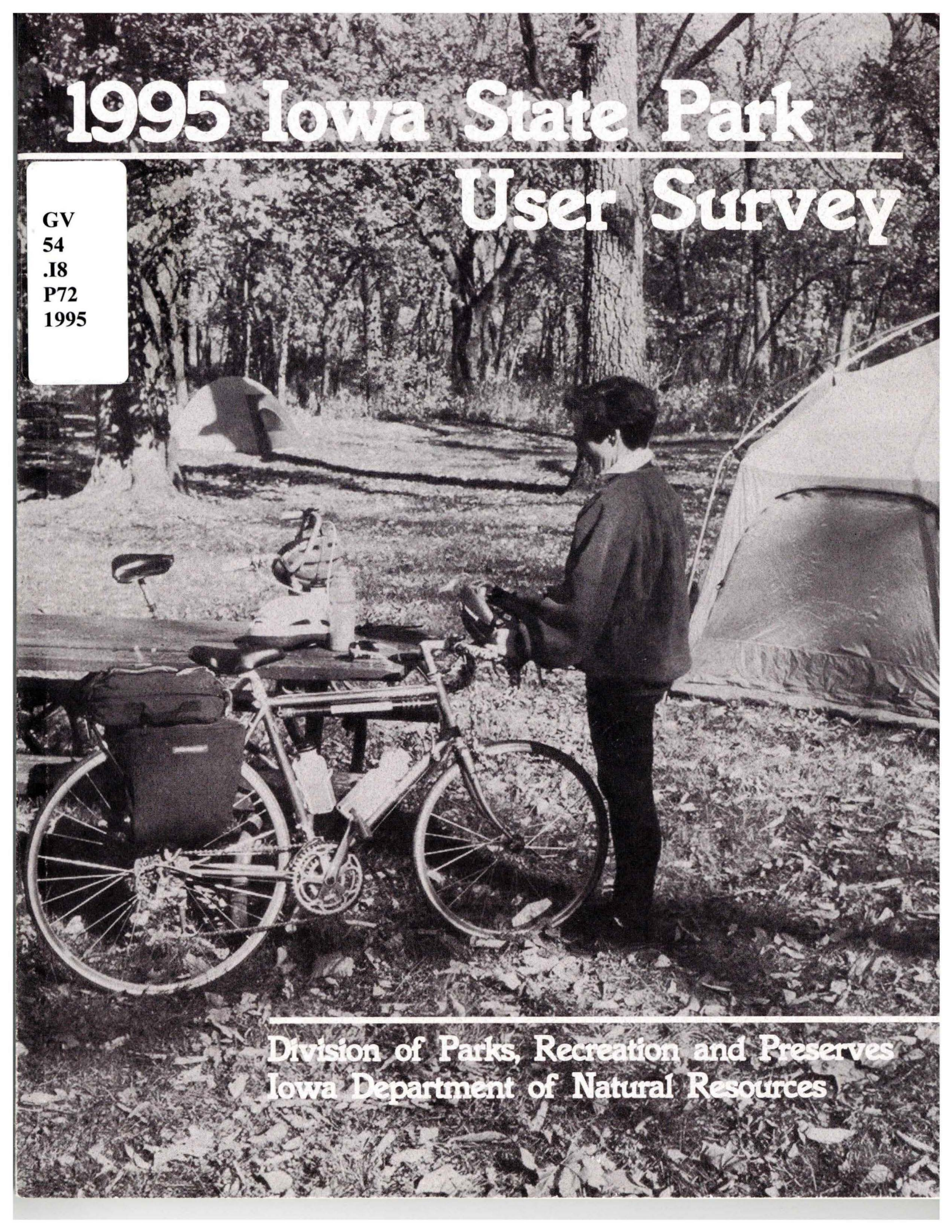
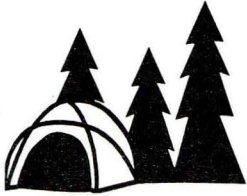


# 1995 Iowa State Park User Survey

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Division of Parks, Recreation and Preserves  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources



## ***1995 Iowa State Park User Survey***

**Prepared by**

**Robert E. Kramer  
Gene M. Lutz  
Brian A. Johnson  
Glen L. Lantz  
Jacki K. Buffington  
Michael D. Moriarty  
Xiaohui (Angela) Yu  
Walter C. Stembridge**

**Center for Social and Behavioral Research  
University of Northern Iowa**

**For**

**Division of Parks, Recreation and Preserves  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
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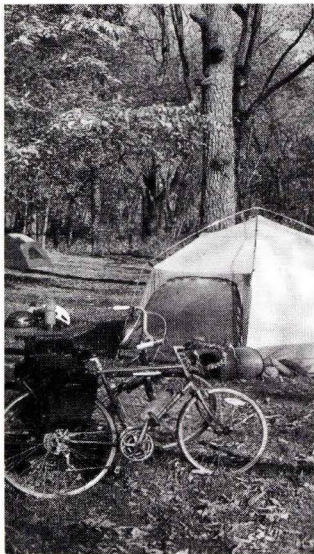
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## Executive Summary



***A sample of 863 people who visited Iowa state parks and recreation areas in 1995 were asked their opinions about the parks they visited, including general park usage, park management, and ways parks could be improved.***

In the summer of 1995, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted a survey among 863 people who visited Iowa state parks and recreation areas between May 21 and September 16. The study asked survey respondents to provide information about their park usage, to share their opinions regarding park management, and how the parks and recreation areas could be improved.

### ***Characteristics of Survey Respondents and Park Visitors***

- Nearly one in three park visitors (29.1%) lived in a small town. One in four (24.7%) lived in a medium sized town, while one in six (16.7%) lived in metropolitan areas. One in ten (9.6%) respondents said they lived in a large town.
- Almost seven in ten visitors respondents (68.5%) had lived at their current residences more than five years, one in four (26.0%) between one and five years, while almost 6 percent said they had lived at their current home for less than one year.
- About one in seven (14.8%) park visitors were less than 30 years old. Nearly two in five (38.1%) were between the ages of 31 and 45, while one in three (33.1%) were between the ages of 46 and 64. Fourteen percent of the persons completing the questionnaires were 65 years old or older.
- The average age of children who visited the parks and recreation areas was 14, and the average age of adults was 47.
- About two-fifths (42.1%) of the respondents reported household incomes between \$20,000-39,000. About one in six (17.2%) reported an income between \$40,000-49,000, while a lower percent (16.8%) reported household incomes between \$50,000-69,999.

## **The Park Visit**

- Over half the visitors (56.7%) learned about the park or recreation area they visited by living near it, while about one-third (32.8%) heard about it from friends or relatives.
- Half (50.2%) reported selecting the park or recreational area because it was close to their home, while one in three (32.3%) selected the park or recreation area because of past experience. Other reasons cited for selecting the park were that it had a lake and associated recreation (25.2%), or because of its scenery (24.8%).
- Few respondents (3.0%) reported any difficulty in finding the park, and among those citing problems about eight out of ten (84.6%) cited inadequate signs.
- Nearly one in four visitors (23.2%) reported the primary reason for coming to the park or recreation area was to camp in a camper-trailer or vehicle, followed by fishing (20.5%), and general relaxation (19.4%).
- Most of the park visitors (87.4%) did not participate in any programs while at the state parks or recreation areas. Of those who did, 46% viewed displays, 30% participated in talks, and 10% attended tours. Almost all respondents who participated in a program (97.0%) said the program increased the enjoyment of their stay.
- Other activities that park users participated in included general relaxation (50.1%), driving through the park (37.7%), hiking (34.5%), fishing (32.4%), and picnicking (32.2%).
- Slightly less than half of the visitors (44.9%) spent between \$1-15 on gas/fuel, about 10% spent between \$16-30, and about one in six (16.8%) reported spending no money on fuel.
- Almost one-quarter of the park visitors (23.5%) spent no money on food, about the same percentage (22.1%) spent \$1-15, and almost one in five (19.1%) spent between \$16-30.
- Most visitors (96.5%) spent no money on motels; those that did usually spend more than \$60 (2.1%).
- Almost one-half (44.9%) of the respondents spent no money on campground fees, about one in ten (11.1%) spent between \$1-15, and nearly twice that many (18.4%) spent between \$16-30.
- Most visitors (63.9%) spent no money on fishing supplies, over one-fourth (27.0%) spent between \$1-15, and 5% spent between \$16-30.
- More than three-quarters (75.7%) of park visitors reported spending no money on special equipment, while one in seven (13.6%) spent between \$1-15, and about one in ten (10.2%) spent more than \$16.

## **General Park Use**

- Over one-fourth of the park visitors (25.8%) said they usually spent between one and seven days a year at state parks and recreation areas. A similar number reported spending between eight and fourteen days (24.2%). About one in five (22.9%) said they usually spent between fifteen and thirty days, while the remainder (23.6%) spend more than thirty days on average at state parks.
- Over half the respondents (55.1%) reported that a lack of leisure time prevented their visiting state parks, while other common barriers included weather conditions (35.5%), distance of the parks to their homes (29.3%), and condition of the park (28.0%).
- Almost three-fifths of park visitors (58.9%) stated that their park and campground visitation has increased since 1992.

- Nearly half the respondents (46.1%) reported spending more time traveling on vacation in 1995 than they did in 1992, while only 15.5% reported spending less time.
- One-quarter of the park visitors (25.0%) reported spending more time tent camping in 1995 than in 1992, 36% reported spending less time, and about one-third (30.7%) reported spending the same amount.
- About as many respondents (37.3%, respectively) reported an increase as well as a decrease in camping with a trailer or other vehicle between 1992 and 1995, it was the activity most likely to have shown a decrease.
- Just over two-fifths of the visitors (42.4%) indicated no change in the amount of time picnicking away from home in 1995 compared with 1992, while slightly more than one-third (36.0%) indicated an increase.
- More than four in ten of the respondents (43.7%) reported spending more time fishing in 1995 than in 1992, while under one-fifth (18.7%) reported a decrease.
- One-half (55.4%) of the visitors listed fishing, and general relaxation (53.8%) as activities their family will be more involved in, in the next five years. Other common predicted increases were trailer/vehicle camping (44.7%) and visiting with friends (42.3%).
- More than two-fifths of park visitors (43.5%) said they spent between \$100-499 on outdoor recreation in Iowa in 1994, while about three in ten (28.9%) spent more than \$500.
- About half the respondents (51.4%) reported spending less than \$100 on outdoor recreation outside Iowa in 1994 while about one quarter (26.5%) reported spending between \$100-500.
- Under one-half of the park visitors (48.9%) rated the overall condition of the parks as excellent, with nearly the same percent (47.3%) rating the parks and recreation areas as good. Less than 1 percent (0.5%) rated the overall condition of the parks as poor.
- Roads and parking lots were considered clean by more than nine out of 10 respondents (98.2% and 93.6%, respectively), while the facility rated most often, campgrounds, was considered clean by 84% of the park users.
- Most respondents judged park facilities to be in good rather than bad repair. Most impressively, nearly all respondents rated the roads (96%), parking lots (91.3%), and picnic tables (86.1%) as being in good repair.
- Nearly three-fourths of the visitors (72.7%) assessed the state parks to be appropriately developed.
- Over half of the respondents (51.7%) advocated active management of natural resources, nearly one-third (31.9%) favored limited management, while about one in seven (13.9%) promoted aggressive management.
- About three-fifths of park visitors (60.1%) supported the continuation of present deer management practices, while about one third (33.9%) urged more active management.
- Well over one-half (64.1%) of respondents recommended diverse forest management, about one-fifth (22.6%) endorsed species diversity, while 12% urged no active management.
- The most frequently cited park facilities users expected but found missing were showers, drinking water and restrooms. Another common facility expected but not found was a playground or playground equipment.

### ***Park Management***

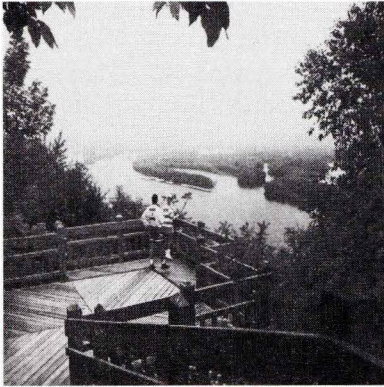
- About one-fifth of the park visitors cited highway signs (21.1%) and road maps (20.3%) as the best ways of getting park information to the public.

- Playgrounds and playground equipment were cited by a number of respondents (14.2%) as facilities they would most like to see added in some parks and recreation areas. Approximately one in ten (11.6%) said they would like to have more shower, drinking water, and restroom facilities.
- About one-fourth of the respondents said they would like to have more lakes for fishing, and RV hookups in state parks and recreation areas (24.8 and 23.8, respectively). Other facilities and activities cited included more swimming areas, and hiking trails.
- Better and/or more fishing, along with more showers, drinking water, and restrooms, were both reported as the specific things that could be changed to make visiting a state park more enjoyable.
- Most park visitors considered the park staff to be helpful (88.6%), available (88.9%), neatly dressed (93.2%), and courteous (94.3%).
- About four-tenths of the respondents (39.9%) considered maintaining the facilities in good condition as the most important duty of park employees, while just over one-quarter of the respondents (27.5%) considered ensuring visitor safety as the most important duty.
- About one in three visitors (33.2%) did not have an opinion about the fishing in parks and recreation areas, while about the same percent (32.1%) rated the fishing as fair.
- Asked to compare with five years ago, one-third (32.9%) of the respondents who had an opinion rated the fishing in parks and recreation areas to be as good as or better in 1995.
- About half the respondents (50.8%) reported that they would visit the state parks more often if the fishing was better.
- About two-thirds of the visitors (64.3%) rated the lakes in parks and recreation areas as in good condition, while just less than one third (27.9%) rated the lakes as fair.
- The majority of campers (54.5%) considered the cost of camping fees at parks to be satisfactory (i.e., neither "too high" or "too low").
- A greater percentage of respondents (53.3%) were willing to pay a \$3-4 fee for camping reservations than were not willing (46.6%), but nearly three-fifths of respondents (58.8%) did not feel a reservation system was needed.
- Well over one-half of the park visitors reported a desire for canoe or shoreline campgrounds (59.8%), and cabins (55.7%) as some camping alternatives.



## **Methods and Procedures**

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***Visitors at 50 of the 68 Iowa park and recreation areas were surveyed between May and September, 1995.***

***Survey questionnaires were distributed in a predetermined random manner by day of week and time of day.***

***One thousand nine hundred and ninety-six questionnaires were distributed, of which 863 (43.2%) were returned.***

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Visitors at Iowa's 68 major park and recreation areas have accounted for an average of more than 11 million visitor days each year for the last five years. In an effort to better understand the strengths and weaknesses of the state recreation system and the needs, activities and level of park visitors' satisfaction, the Parks, Recreation and Preserves Division of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources conducted a park visitor survey during a five-month period from May 21 through September 16, 1995. This time was selected as it coincides with months of high visitation.

As some visitors left a park, they were asked if they would be willing to complete and return, in a postage paid envelope, a take home questionnaire. If the park visitor declined the questionnaire, park staff asked the next visitor leaving the area if they would be willing to complete a questionnaire. This process continued until 1,996 questionnaires were distributed.

Questionnaires were distributed in a predetermined random manner by day of week and time of day at 50 state park and recreation areas. Random distribution by specific days of the week and hours of the day was to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that a mixture of day use and overnight park visitors were represented. The number of questionnaires distributed at each of the survey sites was based on previous years' visitor records, and the 1990 *Park Visitor Survey* distribution records. Appendix A contains the list of park and recreation areas where questionnaires were distributed in 1995. The locations of these sites are shown on page 6.

The number of questionnaires distributed was determined to be of adequate size to represent statewide park visitation and usage. Of the 1,996 questionnaires distributed, 863 (43.2%) were returned and tabulated. No actions were taken that would allow for follow-up contact with those accepting take-home questionnaires who did not respond within a reasonable length of time. The park visitor survey instrument was divided into four areas of interest, (1) questions specific to the park where the user was contacted (2) questions concerning the visitor's park use in general, (3) questions specific to the park visitor and (4) questions concerning management of the natural resources within the parks.

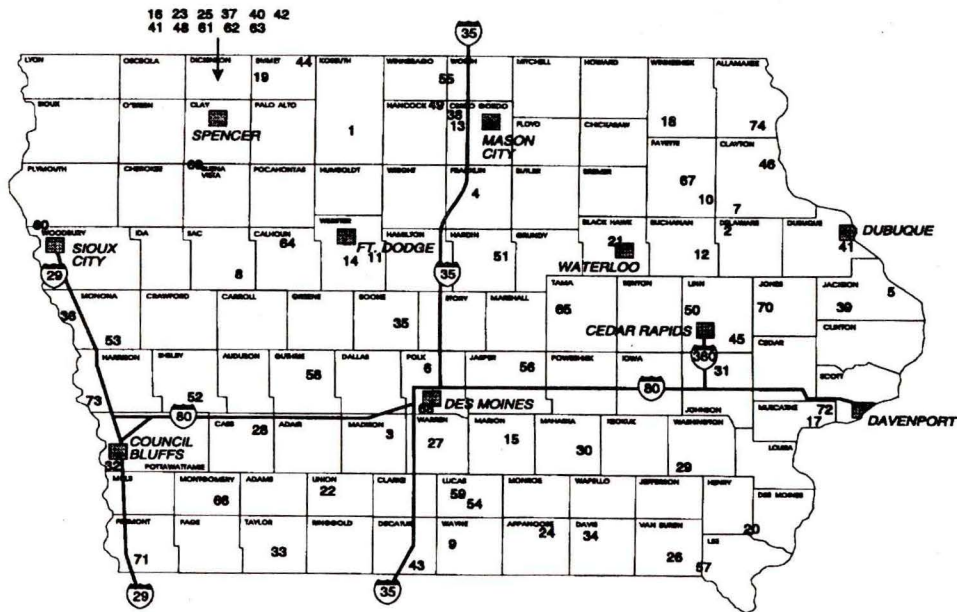


### Iowa State Parks and Recreation Areas\*

	Survey Locations	16	Emerson Bay-Lighthouse	32	Lake Manawa	48	Pillsbury Point	64	Twin Lakes
1	Ambrose A. Call	17	Fairport**	33	Lake of Three Fires	49	Pilot Knob	65	Union Grove
2	Backbone	18	Fort Atkinson	34	Lake Wapello	50	Pleasant Creek	66	Viking Lake
3	Badger Creek Rec. Area	19	Fort Defiance	35	Ledges	51	Pine Lake	67	Volga River Rec. Area
4	Beeds Lake	20	Geode	36	Lewis and Clark	52	Prairie Rose	68	Walnut Woods
5	Bellevue	21	George Wyth Memorial	37	Lower Gar Access	53	Preparation Canyon	69	Wanata
6	Big Creek	22	Green Valley	38	McIntosh Woods	54	Red Haw	70	Wapsipinicon
7	Bixby	23	Gull Point	39	Maquoketa Caves	55	Rice Lake	71	Waubonsie
8	Black Hawk	24	Honey Creek	40	Marble Beach	56	Rock Creek	72	Wildcat Den**
9	Bobwhite	25	Isthmus Access	41	Mines of Spain E.B. Lyons Nature Center	57	Shimek Forest Camping	73	Wilson Island Rec. Are
10	Brush Creek Canyon	26	Lacey-Keosauqua	42	Mini-Wakan	58	Springbrook	74	Yellow River Forest
11	Brushy Creek Rec. Area	27	Lake Ahquabi	43	Nine Eagles	59	Stephens Forest Camping		
12	Cedar Rock	28	Lake Anita	44	Okamanpedan	60	Stone		
13	Clear Lake	29	Lake Darling	45	Palisades-Kepler	61	Templar Park Rec. Area		
14	Dolliver Memorial	30	Lake Keomah	46	Pikes Peak	62	Trappers Bay		
15	Elk Rock (Red Rock)	31	Lake Macbride	47	Pikes Point	63	Triboji Beach		

\*List includes state preserves.

\*\* Fairport and Wildcat Den were combined and treated as one sampling location.





# Findings



**Most park visitors have been living in small and medium sized towns for more than five years.**

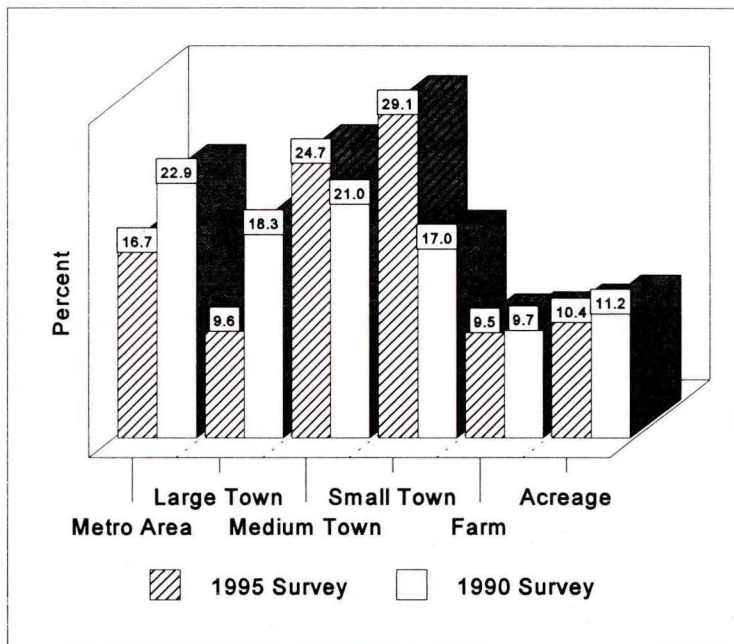
**The average age of children visiting parks was 14, while that of the adult was 47. About 14% of the park visitors were 65 years old or older.**

**Approximately 66% of the respondents had annual household incomes of \$30,000 or more.**

## Part 1: Characteristics of Park Visitors

**Place of Residence**—Among those survey respondents who provided information describing their current place of residence\* almost 30% said they lived in a small town (Figure 1). One-fourth said they lived in a medium sized town, and one in six said they live in a metro area. As compared to the data from the 1990 survey, more park users came from small or medium sized towns. There was a decrease in the percentage of park users who live in a metro area or large town. (Note: This comparative observation is based upon the assumption that the number of returned questionnaires was proportionate to the level of visitation for both the 1990 and 1995 surveys.)

**Figure 1**  
Respondents' Place of Residence  
by Size of Community



\*All data reported are based upon respondents who provided answers to the questions. Excluded from all figures and tables are "no data."

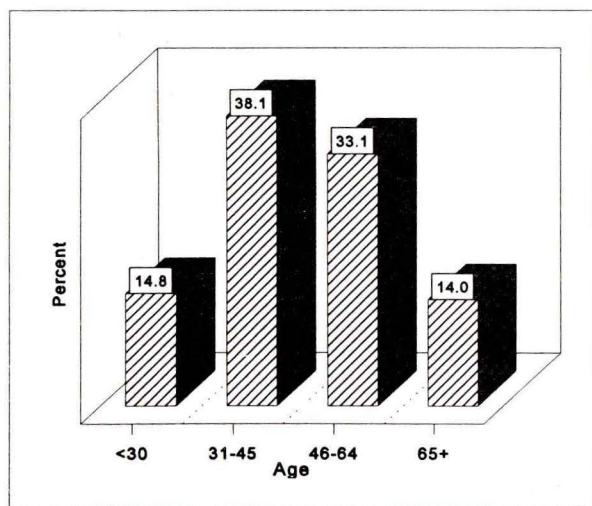
**Length of Residence**—Almost two-thirds (67.5%) of the people surveyed said they had been living at their present residence for more than five years (Table 1). Almost one-fourth said they had lived at their current residence from one to five years, while approximately 7% lived there less than one year. There was little variation between the 1990 and 1995 survey data.

**Table 1**  
Length of Time Lived at Current Residence

	Year of Survey		
	1995		1990
	f	%	
Less than 1 year	47	5.5	6.9
1 to 5 years	221	26.0	25.5
Over 5 years	582	68.5	67.5
Totals	850	100.0	99.9

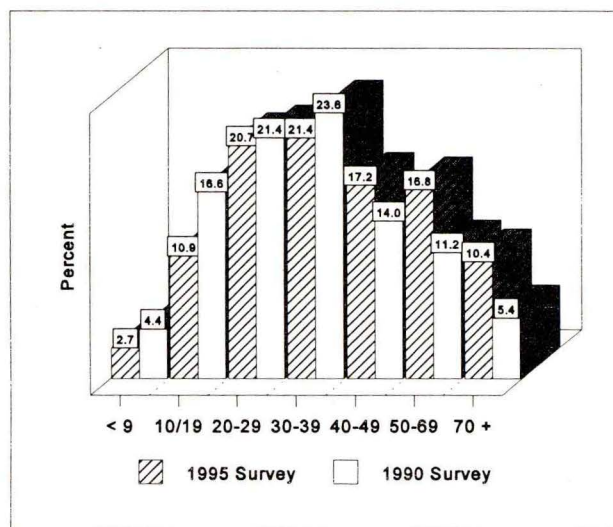
**Age of Survey Respondents and Other Park Visitors**—Nearly 40% of the respondents were between the ages of 31-45, one-third were between the ages of 46-64, and 15% were less than 30 years old (Figure 2). The average age listed for the heads of household was 46.7, while that reported for children was 13.7

**Figure 2**  
Age of Person Completing Questionnaire



**Annual Household Income**—Approximately 42% of the respondents said that their annual gross family income was between \$20,000 and \$39,999 (Figure 3). Less than 14% reported incomes of less than \$20,000, while the remainder (44.4%) reported incomes of \$40,000 or more. Compared with the 1990 data, there has been an increase in state park visitation by individuals with a gross income of \$40,000 or more.

**Figure 3**  
Annual Gross Family Income (In Thousands of Dollars)





**People learn about parks by living near them and/or hearing about them from friends or relatives.**

**The primary reasons for selecting a park or recreation area are that it is close to home, people have visited it in the past, that there is a lake with an associated recreation area in the park, and because of the scenery.**

**Less than 3% of the people had trouble finding the park they used. Among those who did have problems most said there were inadequate signs directing them to the parks.**

**The primary reasons for coming to parks and recreation areas were to camp, fish, and general relaxation.**

## Part 2: The Park Visit

**Factors That Influence Visiting a State Park**—The two most common way's people learned about Iowa state parks and recreation areas were by living near them and having heard about them from friends or relatives (Table 2). Other common ways included "road map," "previous experience with the park or recreation area," and "highway signs."

**Table 2**  
How Respondents Learned of Park  
(Multiple Response Table\*)

	Year of Survey			
	f	1995		1990
		Percent of		
		Re-sponses	Cases (N=815)	Re-sponses
Live nearby	462	46.2	56.7	47.0
Friend/relative	267	26.7	32.8	27.7
Road map	54	5.4	6.6	5.3
Previous experience/visit	49	4.9	6.0	**
Highway sign	37	3.7	4.5	4.0
Brochures	23	2.3	2.8	2.9
Lived/grew up in area	20	2.0	2.5	**
Tourist information packet	18	1.8	2.2	2.4
Came here when young	14	1.4	1.7	**
Guides/magazines	9	0.9	1.1	**
Newspaper	9	0.9	1.1	1.1
Magazines	3	0.3	0.4	0.5
Ranger	2	0.2	0.2	**
Radio	1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Television	1	0.1	0.1	0.3
Other varied answers	32	3.2	3.9	8.7
Totals	1,001	100.1	NA	100.0

\* A multiple response table shows the data for a question in which the respondent could choose more than one answer.

\*\* Not reported for 1990 survey.

The four primary reasons given for selecting a state park or recreation area were "close to home," "past experience," "lake/associated recreation," and "scenery" (Table 3). The two primary reasons for

selecting a park remained the same for both the 1990 and 1995 surveys.

**Table 3**  
Reasons Selected Park  
(Multiple Response Table)

	Year of Survey			
	f	1995		1990
		Percent of		
		Responses	Cases (N=755)	Responses
Close to home	379	26.9	50.2	30.7
Past experience	244	17.3	32.3	20.2
Lake/associated recreation	190	13.5	25.2	*
Scenery	187	13.3	24.8	14.4
Available park facilities	133	9.4	17.6	13.0
Close to friend/relative's home	75	5.3	9.9	6.4
Part of a group attending this park	62	4.4	8.2	5.6
Close to vacation travel route	43	3.1	5.7	3.3
For facilities at campground	20	1.4	2.6	*
Fishing close to river	17	1.2	2.3	*
Family reunion/activities	6	0.4	0.8	*
Close to river	3	0.2	0.4	*
En route to destination	3	0.2	0.4	*
Previous experience	3	0.2	0.4	*
Never been here before	2	0.1	0.3	*
Relative suggestion	2	0.1	0.3	*
Live/work near park	1	0.1	0.1	*
Other varied reasons	38	2.7	5.0	6.4
Totals	1,408	99.8	NA	99.7

\* Not reported for 1990 survey.

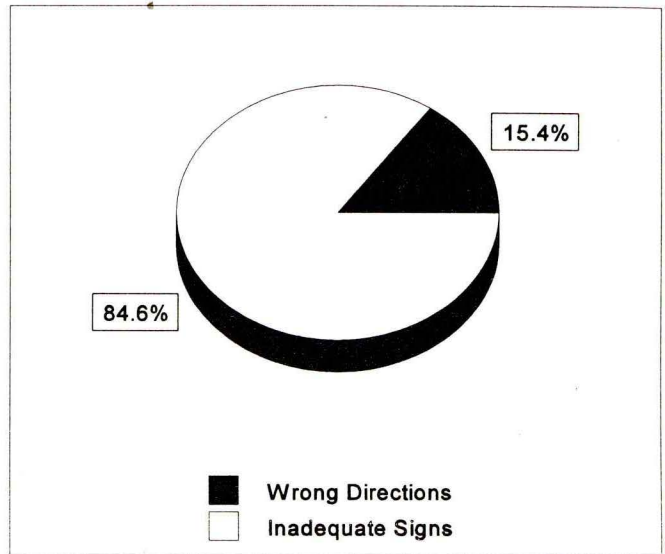
Few respondents (3.0%) reported having any difficulty in finding the state park or recreation area they visited (Table 4).

**Table 4**  
Trouble Locating State Park

	Year of Survey		
	1995		1990
	f	Percent	
Yes	26	3.0	6.2
No	829	97.0	93.8
Totals	855	100.0	100.0

Among those reporting difficulty in finding the park or recreation area (N=26), most reported "inadequate signs" followed by "poor directions" (Figure 4). (Note: Although approximately 8% of the respondents in the 1990 survey who reported having trouble locating parks cited "unclear brochure," no such answer was given by respondents in the 1995 survey.)

**Figure 4**  
Reasons for Having Trouble Locating Park



The three primary reasons for coming to parks and recreation areas were trailer or other vehicle camping, fishing, and general relaxation (Table 5, page 12). These three primary reasons for coming to parks and recreation areas were similar to those reported in the 1990 survey. Other reasons given in both surveys were picnicking, tent camping, visiting with friends and hiking.

**Table 5**  
**Primary Reason or Activity for Coming to Park**  
**(Multiple Response Table)**

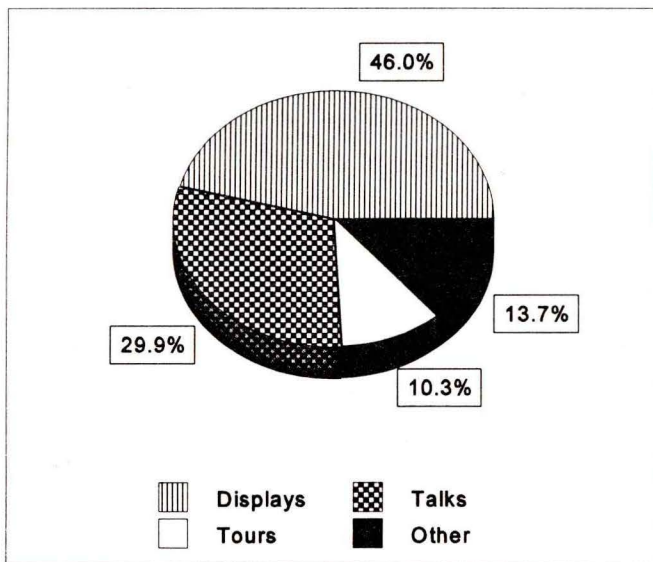
	Year of Survey			
	1995			1990
	f	Percent of		
		Responses	Cases (N=794)	Responses
Camp-trailer/vehicle	184	18.0	23.2	12.6
Fishing	163	15.9	20.5	13.9
General relaxation	154	15.1	19.4	11.4
Picnicking	75	7.3	9.4	9.6
Tent camping	74	7.2	9.3	4.1
Visit with friends	68	6.6	8.6	4.1
Hiking	67	6.5	8.4	4.4
Swimming	42	4.1	5.3	4.3
Drive through	36	3.5	4.5	3.9
Motor boating	30	2.9	3.8	4.0
Bicycling	17	1.7	2.1	0.7
Nature study	16	1.6	2.0	1.3
Horseback riding	10	1.0	1.3	1.5
Playground	10	1.0	1.3	0.1
Bird watching	8	0.8	1.0	0.3
Scenery	7	0.7	0.9	0.0
Canoeing	4	0.4	0.5	0.1
Sail boating	4	0.4	0.5	0.2
Cabins	3	0.3	0.4	0.0
Open area activities	2	0.2	0.3	0.3
Paddle boating	2	0.2	0.3	0.2
Sunbathing	0	0.0	0.0	1.4
Windsurfing	2	0.2	0.3	0.0
Climbing	1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Club activity	1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Jogging	1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Rollerblading	1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Triathlon	1	0.1	0.1	0.0
Other varied answers	39	3.8	4.9	4.7
"Too many chosen"	0	0.0	0.0	16.7
Totals	1,022	99.9	NA	99.8

**Participation in Park Programs**—Seven of eight (87.4%) respondents did not participate in any programs while at the state park (Table 6). Among those who said what program(s) they participated in (N=87), 46% viewed displays, while nearly 30% participated in talks, and 10% attended tours (Figure 5). In addition, almost all of the respondents (97.0%) who participated in a program said that the program increased their enjoyment of the park (Table 7).

**Table 6**  
Participated in Programs

	f	Percent
Yes	102	12.6
No	706	87.4
Totals	808	100.0

**Figure 5**  
Programs Participated In



**Table 7**  
Programs Increase Enjoyment of Park

	f	Percent
Yes	97	97.0
No	3	3.0
Totals	100	100.0

Table 8 (page 14) lists activities other than programs respondents participated in while visiting the parks and recreation areas. Popular activities included "general relaxation," "driving through the park," "hiking," "fishing," "picnicking," "camping," and "visiting with friends."





### Part 3: General Park Use

**Park Visitation: Present, Past, and Future**—Somewhat equal proportions of respondents reported spending between one and seven, or eight to 14 days at the state parks or recreation areas every year (Figure 7). From 1990 to 1995 there was an increase of approximately four percent in the number of people spending more than 30 days at state parks and recreation areas.

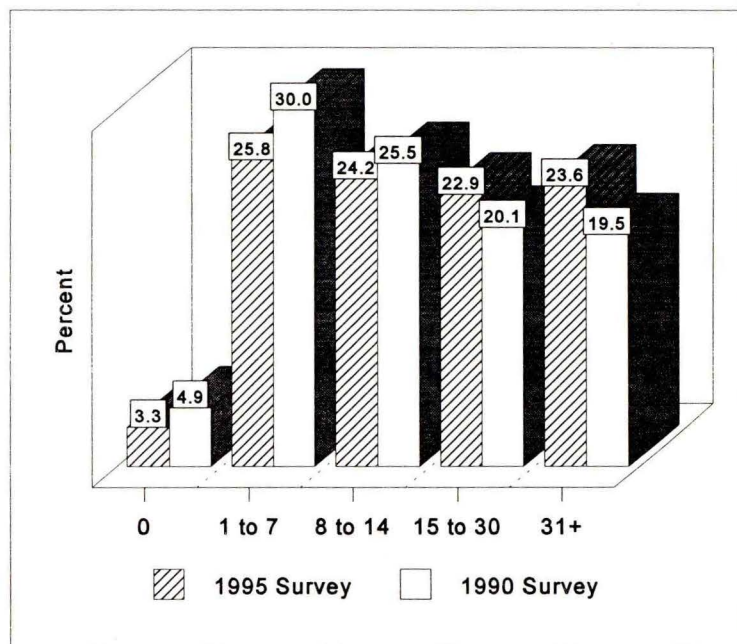
**About one-fourth of the visitors spend between one and seven days at a park or recreation area. A somewhat equal number spend between seven and 14 days.**

**Factors that most affect how much a person uses state parks includes the availability of leisure time, general weather conditions, the proximity of the park to their home, the general condition of the park and condition of associated lakes and fishing activities.**

**About three-fifths of the visitors said their use of parks and recreation areas has increased since 1992, and almost half the visitors said they spent more time traveling now on vacations than they did in 1992.**

**Future recreational activities that will increase in the next five years include fishing, general relaxation, and trailer/vehicle camping.**

**Figure 7**  
Number of Days Per Year Visit State Parks



Factors affecting how much respondents visit state parks and recreation areas range from "leisure time" to "lack of equipment." Over half (55.1%) of the respondents cited "leisure time," with 36% saying "weather," followed by "proximity to home," "condition of park," and "condition of lake and fishing" (29.9%, 28.0%, and 27.7% respectively; Table 10, page 17). "Leisure time" and "weather" remained the two most important factors for both the 1995 and 1990 surveys.

**Table 10**  
**Factors Affecting Respondents' Visitation to State Parks**  
**(Multiple Response Table)**

	Year of Survey			
	1995			1990
	f	Percent of		
		Responses	Cases (N=828)	Responses
Leisure time	456	19.0	55.1	24.4
Weather	294	12.2	35.5	14.6
Proximity to home	243	10.1	29.3	*
Condition of the park	232	9.7	28.0	11.5
Condition of lake and fishing	229	9.5	27.7	*
Park facilities	199	8.3	24.0	11.9
Condition of facilities	193	8.0	23.3	*
Money	150	6.2	18.1	9.5
Travel time	149	6.2	18.0	11.9
Crowded parks	149	6.2	18.0	6.7
Use of county/federal parks	41	1.7	5.0	1.9
Change of recreation interests	26	1.1	3.1	4.1
Use of private campground	24	1.0	2.9	1.1
Lack of equipment	17	0.7	2.1	*
Other varied answers	**	**	**	2.1
Totals	2,402	99.9	NA	99.7

\* Not reported for 1990 survey.

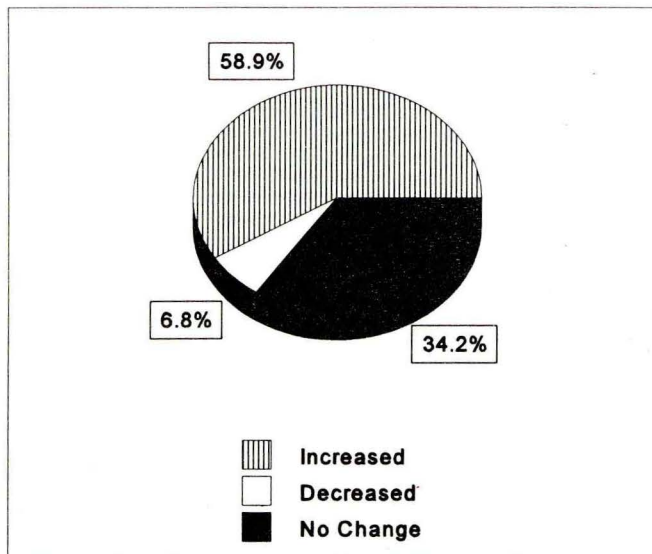
\*\* Not use in 1995 survey.

Almost three-fifths of the respondents stated that their park and campground visitation has increased since 1992 (Figure 8).

When compared with three years ago, time spent traveling on vacation and on fishing were reported to have increased for most respondents. Although just as many respondents reported increasing the time spent camping by a trailer or other vehicle, it is the activity most likely to have shown a decrease (Table 11).

"Fishing," "general relaxation," "trailer/vehicle camping," and "visits with friends" are the four recreation activities that respondents predicted would increase most for their families in the next five years (Table 12, page 19). "Fishing" and "general relaxation" were also the two most often predicted increases in 1990.

**Figure 8**  
Park and Campground Visitation  
Changes from 1992 to 1995



**Table 11**  
Time Pursuing Activities as Compared to Three Years Ago  
(1995 Compared with 1992)

	More		Same		Less		Unsure	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Vacation traveling	372	46.1	295	36.6	125	15.5	15	1.9
Camping-tent	157	25.0	193	30.7	225	35.8	53	8.4
Camping-trailer/vehicle	257	37.3	231	33.5	257	37.3	83	12.0
Picnicking away from home	255	36.0	300	42.4	114	16.1	39	5.5
Fishing	325	43.7	245	33.0	139	18.7	34	4.6
Hunting	102	16.5	237	38.3	179	28.9	101	16.3
Bicycling	199	30.7	220	33.9	164	25.3	66	10.2
Power boating	117	19.5	236	33.9	141	23.5	106	17.7
Sail boating	15	2.9	207	39.3	128	24.4	175	33.3
Snowmobiling	23	4.4	203	39.0	129	24.8	166	31.9
Cross-country skiing	41	7.8	199	30.9	122	23.3	162	30.9
Driving for pleasure	296	41.4	285	39.9	93	13.0	41	5.7
Attending outdoor sporting events	184	29.8	248	40.1	117	18.9	69	11.2
Hiking	250	37.3	245	36.6	114	17.0	61	9.1
Nature study	199	31.2	275	43.1	83	13.0	81	12.7
Visiting historical areas	285	40.7	278	39.7	79	11.3	59	8.4
Attending fairs	167	24.4	325	47.4	147	21.5	46	6.7
Visiting theme parks	118	18.3	268	41.5	197	30.5	63	9.8
Attending festivals	187	28.3	268	41.5	118	17.9	68	10.3

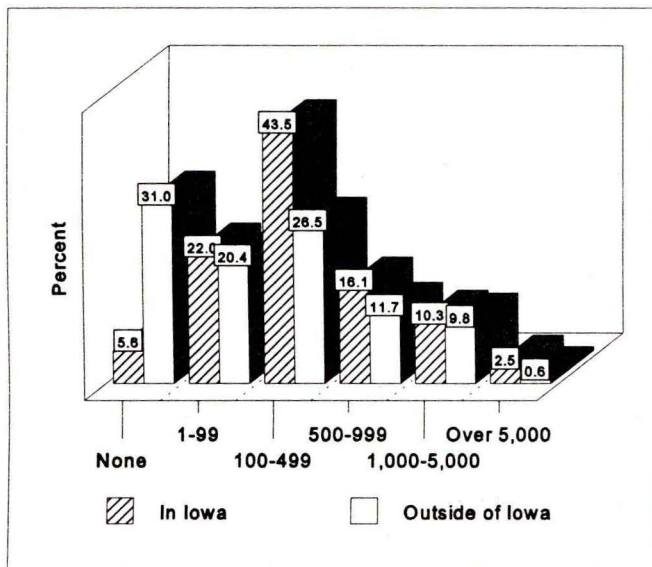
**Table 12**  
**Type of Recreation That Will Increase in Next Five Years**  
**(Multiple Response Table)**

	Year of Survey			
	f	1995		1990
		Responses	Percent of Cases (N=821)	Responses
Fishing	455	9.5	55.4	9.8
General relaxation	442	9.2	53.8	9.1
Trailer/vehicle camping	367	7.6	44.7	6.1
Visit with friends	347	7.2	42.3	8.1
Picnicking	316	6.6	38.5	8.9
Hiking	299	6.2	36.4	6.7
Swimming	286	5.9	34.8	6.9
Bicycling	266	5.5	32.4	4.7
Tent camping	216	4.5	26.3	*
Drive through	203	4.2	24.7	6.1
Nature study	175	3.6	21.3	3.8
Motor boating	164	3.4	20.0	4.4
Bird watching	146	3.0	17.8	2.4
Playground	146	3.0	17.8	3.1
Canoeing	135	2.8	16.4	2.5
Soft/baseball	123	2.6	15.0	2.0
Open area activities	102	2.1	12.4	1.8
Sunbathing	98	2.0	11.9	3.9
Horseback riding	95	2.0	11.6	1.5
Water skiing	91	1.9	11.1	*
Paddle boating	68	1.4	8.3	1.2
Cross country skiing	51	1.1	6.2	*
Row boating	28	0.6	3.4	0.5
ATV riding	27	0.6	3.3	*
Sail boating	27	0.6	3.3	0.4
Snowmobiling	24	0.5	2.9	*
Hunting	7	0.1	15.6	*
Other varied types	38	0.8	4.6	*
Totals	4,742	98.5	NA	99.9

\* Not reported for 1990 survey.

**Money Spent on Recreation**—Slightly more than 40% of the respondents reported spending between \$100 and \$499 for outdoor recreational activities in 1994 (Figure 9). Nearly 30% spent \$500 or more on such activities. When considering out-of-state spending for recreational activities, one in five spent between \$1 and \$99, while slightly more than one-fourth spent between \$100 and \$499.

**Figure 9**  
Amount of Money Household Spent on Recreation in 1994 in Iowa and Out-of-State (Dollars)

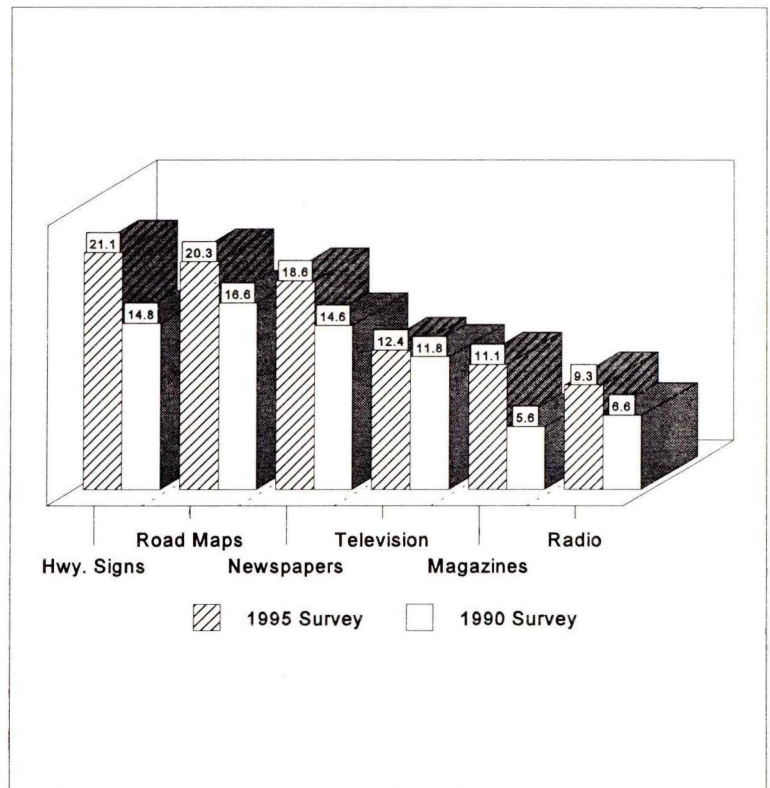




## Part 4: Park Management

**Marketing State Parks**—Slightly more than one in five cited highway signs and road maps as the best ways of getting information to visitors about state parks (Figure 10, and Table 13 page 22). The next most common method suggested were newspapers, followed by television, magazines, and radio.

**Figure 10**  
Best Method of Getting Park Information  
to Potential Park Visitors



*Most visitors rated the overall condition of parks to be excellent or good. Roads, parking lots and campgrounds were considered clean, and most thought the facilities were in good repair.*

*The vast majority thought the parks were appropriately developed, and most people advocated an active management of the parks' natural resources.*

*A number of people said that there should be more showers, drinking water, restrooms, and playground equipment at some parks and recreation areas.*

*State park staff were rated highly by most visitors. They found the staff to be friendly and courteous, and thought they were doing a good job.*

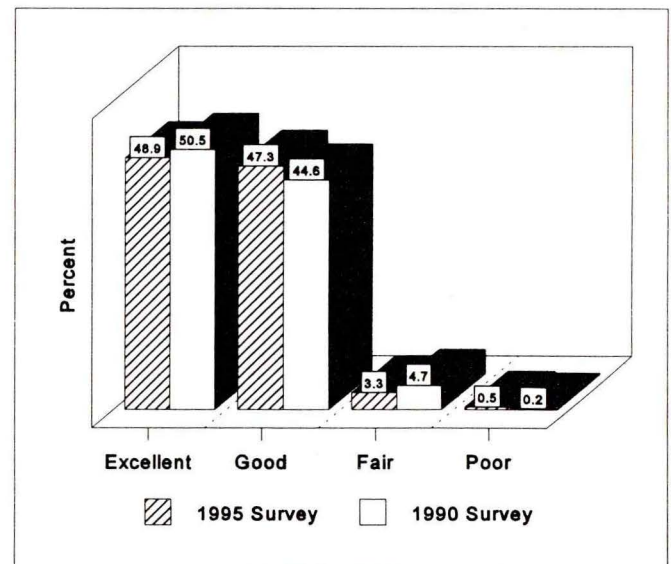
**Table 13**  
**Best Methods of Getting Information to Potential Park Visitors**  
*("Other varied suggestions"; Multiple Response Table)*

	Year of Survey			
	f	1995		1990
		Responses	Cases (N=836)	Responses
Guides/brochures	52	2.3	6.2	2.0
Word of mouth	32	1.4	3.8	*
Mail information to people	26	1.1	3.1	*
Miscellaneous	25	1.1	3.0	*
Tourist Center/information	16	0.7	1.9	*
DNR staff gives information	10	0.4	1.2	*
Other varied methods	4	0.2	0.5	*
Computer information	1	0.0	0.1	*
Live close to state park	1	0.0	0.1	*
Totals	167	7.2	NA	*

\* Not reported for 1990 survey.

**Respondent Assessment of Park Condition and Facilities**—Slightly less than half the respondents rated the overall condition of the park or recreation area they visited as "excellent," with nearly the same percent rating it as "good" (Figure 11). Less than 4% rated the overall condition of the park as either "fair," or "poor." These findings were comparable to those observed in the 1990 survey.

**Figure 11**  
**Overall Condition of the Park**



Overall, all park facilities also were rated favorably by the majority of respondents (Table 14). Roads and parking lots were rated clean by more than nine out of 10 respondents.

When considering the general repair of park facilities, roads and parking lots were rated in "good repair" (96.0 and 91.3%, respectively), followed by "picnic tables," "restrooms," and "campgrounds" (86.1%, 65.7%, and 61.4%, respectively; Table 15). Proportionately many more respondents rated all park facilities as in "good" rather than "poor" repair.

**Table 14**  
Condition of Park Facilities—Cleanliness

	Clean		Littered/ Dirty		No Opinion	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Campground	624	84.0	9	1.2	110	14.8
Restrooms	585	81.0	70	9.7	67	9.3
Showers	398	60.9	34	5.2	221	33.8
Cabins	62	13.7	1	0.2	389	86.1
Trails	338	65.9	6	1.2	169	32.9
Beach	302	54.6	43	7.8	208	37.6
Roads	491	98.2	0	0.0	9	1.8
Parking lots	480	93.6	6	1.2	27	5.3
Picnic tables	442	87.0	21	4.1	45	8.9
Picnic shelters	292	55.0	5	0.9	234	44.1
Grills/fire rings	304	63.5	37	7.7	138	28.8
Boat ramps	213	42.1	2	0.4	291	57.5
Lodge area	109	20.9	2	0.4	410	78.7
Group camps	106	20.0	2	0.4	421	79.6

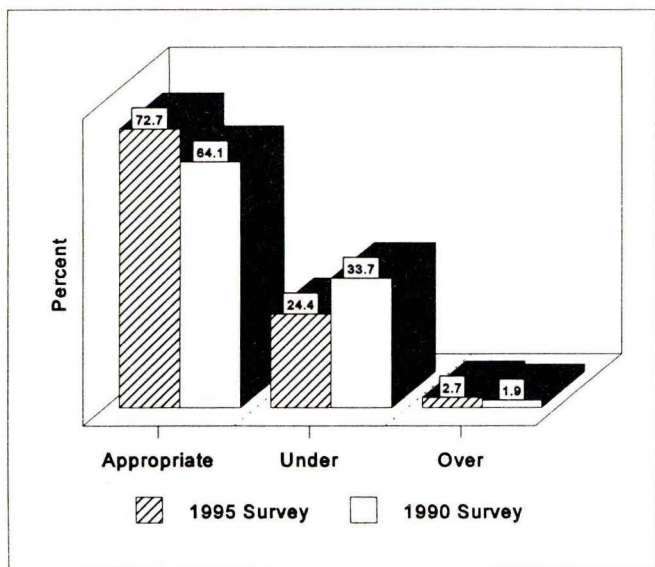
**Table 15**  
Condition of Park Facilities—Repair

	Good Repair		Poor Repair		No Opinion	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Campground	197	61.4	13	4.0	111	34.6
Restrooms	209	65.7	40	12.6	69	21.7
Showers	121	32.7	28	7.6	221	59.7
Cabins	33	7.8	3	0.7	385	91.4
Trails	224	54.1	21	5.1	169	40.8
Beach	99	28.5	43	12.4	205	59.1
Roads	500	96.0	11	2.1	10	1.9
Parking lots	452	91.3	13	2.6	30	6.1
Picnic tables	458	86.1	29	5.5	45	8.5
Picnic shelters	241	50.3	7	1.5	231	48.2
Grills/fire rings	299	59.0	71	14.0	137	27.0
Boat ramps	229	43.6	7	1.3	289	55.0
Lodge area	64	13.5	2	0.4	409	86.1
Group camps	42	9.1	1	0.2	420	90.7



Nearly three in four respondents assessed the state parks and recreation areas as “appropriately developed” (Figure 12). This was an 8.6% increase in this assessment as compared with the 1990 data.

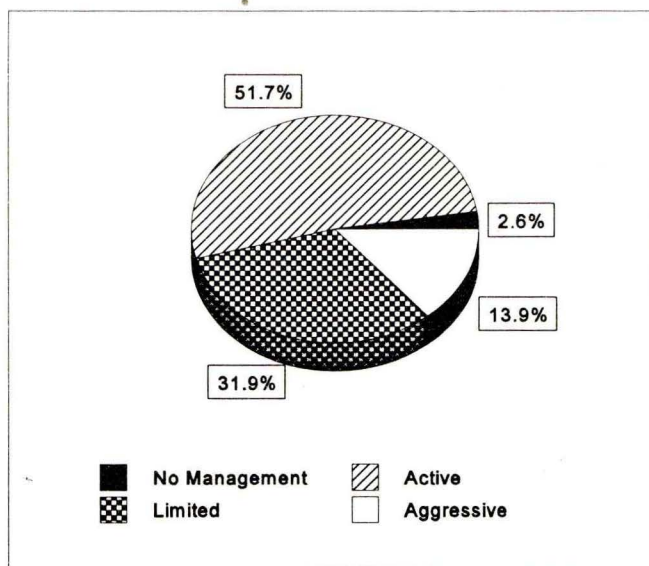
**Figure 12**  
Development of Parks



Survey respondents were asked a series of questions regarding the management of park resources. Included were attitudes regarding natural resource management of areas outside the developed areas in state parks, the management of excessive deer populations in state parks, and the management of forest communities in state parks for multiple benefits.

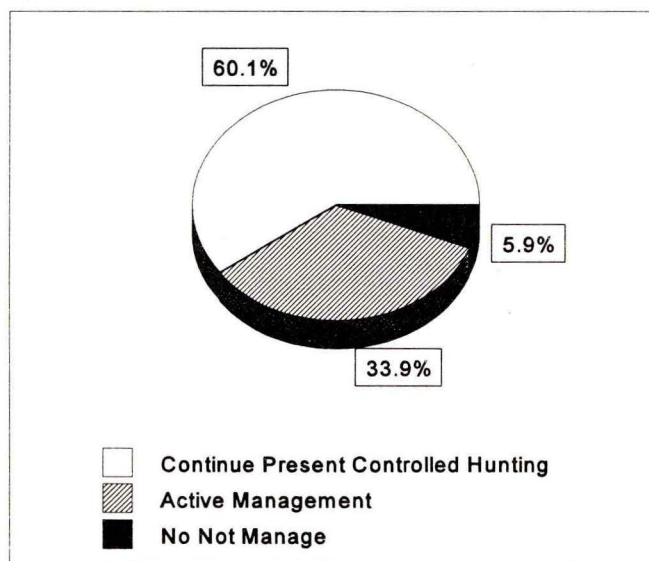
About half the respondents (51.7%) advocated “active management” of natural resources (Figure 13). Nearly one in three favored “limited management,” with about 14% recommending “aggressive management.”

**Figure 13**  
Attitudes Toward Natural Resource Management



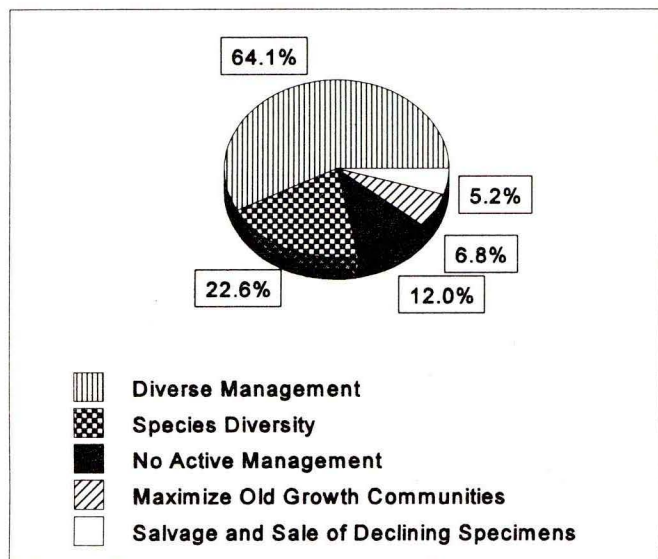
Regarding controlled hunting of the deer population, three in five respondents supported the “continuation of present management practices,” which is controlled hunting (Figure 14). One-third urged “active management” to prevent the excess number of the deer population, while 6% did not favor any deer management practices in parks.

**Figure 14**  
Management of Deer Populations



Well over half the respondents (64.1%) recommended a *"diverse forest management"* (a program that balances wildlife, wood utilization, climax forests, and species diversity objectives; Figure 15). One in five endorses species diversity management, while 12% urged *"no active management,"* (that is, trees and forests should be preserved (no manmade changes)).

**Figure 15**  
Park Forest Management



In an open-ended question, survey respondents were asked to list those facilities and activities that they expected but did not find in state parks and recreation areas. The two items mentioned most often were *"more showers, drinking water, and restrooms"* followed by *"playgrounds and playground equipment"* (Table 16, page 26). Consistently, when asked to list those facilities they would like to see in state parks, *"playground and playground equipment," "showers, drinking water and restrooms,"* plus *"swimming/beach areas"* were mentioned most often (Table 16, page 26).

**Table 16**  
**Facilities and Activities Not Found, and Facilities Would Like Added**  
 (Multiple Response Table)

	Facilities Expected/Not Found			Facilities Like Added		
	f	Percent of		f	Percent of	
		Responses	Cases (N=217)		Responses	Cases (N=217)
More showers/drinking water/restrooms	37	14.5	17.1	37	9.4	11.6
Playgrounds/playground equipment	21	8.2	9.7	45	11.4	14.2
Hook-ups for camper/RVs	15	5.9	6.9	17	4.3	5.3
Fish cleaning station or facilities	14	5.5	6.5	12	3.0	3.8
More trash cans/ dumpsters	12	4.7	5.5	13	3.3	4.1
Boat/paddle boat/water ski/jet ski rentals	11	4.3	5.1	10	2.5	3.1
Swimming/beach areas	11	4.3	5.1	24	6.1	7.5
Better sign designation of area/campground	11	4.3	5.1	11	2.8	3.5
Better restrooms	11	4.3	5.1	16	4.1	5.0
More trails	9	3.5	4.1	18	4.6	5.7
Better electrical camp sites	7	2.7	3.2	17	4.3	4.1
Phone in campground in case of emergency	5	2.0	2.3	0	0.0	0.0
More boat docks/fishing piers	5	2.0	2.3	8	2.0	2.5
Fire rings	2	0.8	0.9	0	0.0	0.0
Programs/tours/guide	0	0.0	0.0	22	5.6	6.9
Store to sell various items/concessions	0	0.0	0.0	13	3.3	4.1
Better shower areas	0	0.0	0.0	8	2.0	2.5
Dump stations	0	0.0	0.0	4	1.0	1.3
Handicap accessible areas	0	0.0	0.0	1	0.3	0.3
Other varied answers	84	32.9	38.7	118	29.9	37.1
Totals	171	67.0	NA	166	99.9	NA

In a related question, survey respondents were asked to suggest the facilities or activities they would like to see more of in Iowa state parks and recreation areas. Among the relatively few

suggestions, "lakes for fishing," "RV hookups," "swimming areas," and "playground equipment" were mentioned most often (Table 17, page 27).

**Table 17**  
**Facilities and Activities Would Like to See More of in Iowa State Parks**  
**(Multiple Response Table)**

	Year of Survey			
	f	1995*		1990
		Percent of		
	Responses	Cases (N=759)	Responses	
Lakes for fishing	188	9.4	24.8	*
RV hookups	181	9.1	23.8	8.1
Swimming areas	171	8.6	22.5	9.9
Playground equipment	170	8.5	22.4	11.2
Hiking trails	155	7.8	20.4	7.4
Overnight cabins	147	7.4	19.4	9.0
Nature centers/museums	132	6.6	17.4	7.3
Evening nature programs	104	5.2	13.7	5.1
Self-guided nature hike	97	4.9	12.8	7.4
Separate tent campground	84	4.2	11.1	4.0
Picnic shelters	82	4.1	10.8	6.8
Mountain bike trails	80	4.0	10.5	*
Lakes for boating activities	78	3.9	10.3	*
Guided nature hike	49	2.5	6.5	*
Handicapped accessible fishing piers	49	2.5	6.5	*
Handicapped accessible facilities	40	2.0	5.3	*
Miscellaneous	36	1.8	4.7	*
Equestrian trails	29	1.5	3.8	*
Cross country ski trails	27	1.4	3.6	2.2
Backpack camping	27	1.4	3.6	2.5
Snowmobile trails	14	0.7	1.8	0.7
ATV riding	14	0.7	1.8	*
Lakes for wind surfing	9	0.5	1.2	*
Bicycle trails	6	0.3	0.8	*
More electrical sites	6	0.3	0.8	*
Better fishing/fisheries	4	0.2	0.5	*
Paved trails	3	0.2	0.4	*
Horse rental	3	0.2	0.4	*
Other	1	0.1	0.1	7.6
Fishing piers	1	0.1	0.1	*
4x4 trails	1	0.1	0.1	*
Fire pits/rings	1	0.1	0.1	*
"Fine as is"	1	0.1	0.1	*
Totals	1990	100.4	NA	100.2

\* Not reported for 1990 survey.

When asked to suggest what one thing in the park could be changed to make their visit more enjoyable, 339 suggestions were made. The two items mentioned most often were "better/more

fishing," and "more water/restrooms" (Table 18).

showers/drinking

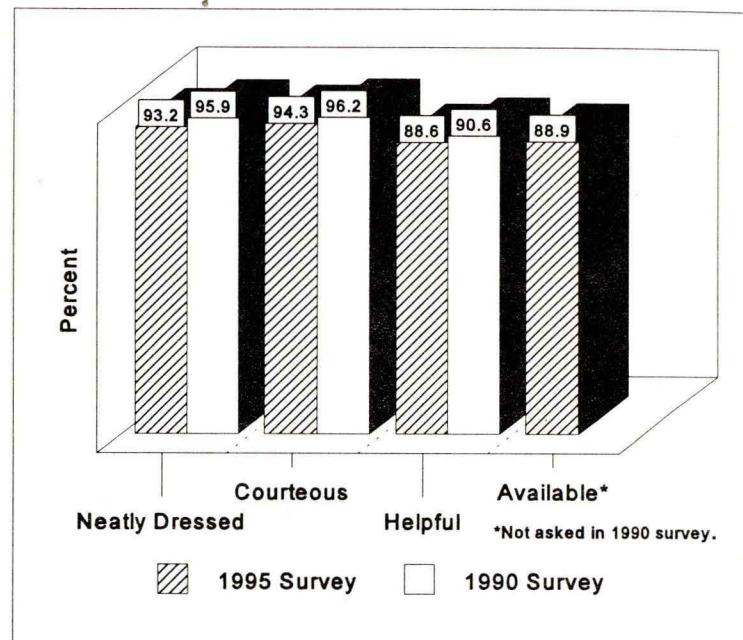
**Table 18**  
One Thing Would Change to Make Visit More Enjoyable

	f	Percent
Better/more fishing	39	7.5
More showers/drinking water/restrooms	36	7.0
Beach/swimming area	23	4.4
Clean/dredge lake	23	4.4
Better restrooms	21	4.1
Hook-ups for camper/RVs	20	3.9
Level camping spots	17	3.3
Better shower area	17	3.3
Better sign designation of area/campground	16	3.1
Lower price of camping fee/offer discounts	15	2.9
Enforcement of rules/regulations	14	2.7
Insect/mosquito control	14	2.7
Playgrounds/playground equipment	11	2.1
Better electrical camp sites/power	11	2.1
More campsite selection	11	2.1
More trash cans/dumpsters	10	1.9
More trails	9	1.7
Cleaner campground	9	1.7
More dock space	5	1.0
No wake lake	5	1.0
No animals	5	1.0
More handicap accessibility to different areas	4	0.8
More parking	3	0.6
Phone in campground in case of emergency	1	0.2
Other varied suggestions	178	34.4
Totals	339	65.5

**Respondent Assessment of Park Staff**—The staff at the Iowa state parks and recreation areas were judged to be “courteous,” and “neatly dressed” by more than 90% of the respondents (Figure 16). Staff also received favorable ratings on being “available,” and “helpful” (by more than 88%) of the respondents. These 1995 ratings were only slightly below those reported in 1990, where the staff was rated “courteous,” “neatly dressed,” and “helpful” (96.2%, 95.9%, and 90.6%, respectively). Rating on “availability” was not asked in the 1990 survey.

When asked to rank in order of importance five job duties of park employees, most of the survey respondents rated “maintaining facilities in good condition” as the most important duty (Table 19). This was followed by “ensuring visitor safety,” “enforcing park rules,” “protecting parks’ natural features from over use,” and “providing information”

**Figure 16**  
Assessment of Park Staff



**Table 19**  
Ranking of Importance of State Park Employee Job Duties  
(Rank Order Table)

Rank (Order of Importance)	Choice					Weighted Score*	Rank Order
	1	2	3	4	5		
Weight	5	4	3	2	1		
Frequency							
Maintain facilities in good condition	222	148	116	55	16	2176	1
Ensure visitor safety	150	132	103	87	74	1835	2
Enforcement of park rules	87	132	134	126	71	1688	3
Protect park's natural features from over use	82	87	115	141	122	1507	4
Provide information	13	59	92	143	248	1214	5

\* Weighted score is determined by multiplying each choice frequency by the choice weight and summing these products for all five choices.

Besides asking specific questions about the park staff and their duties, respondents were also provided with an open-ended question asking them to make other comments about the staff. Most of these comments were also favorable, again

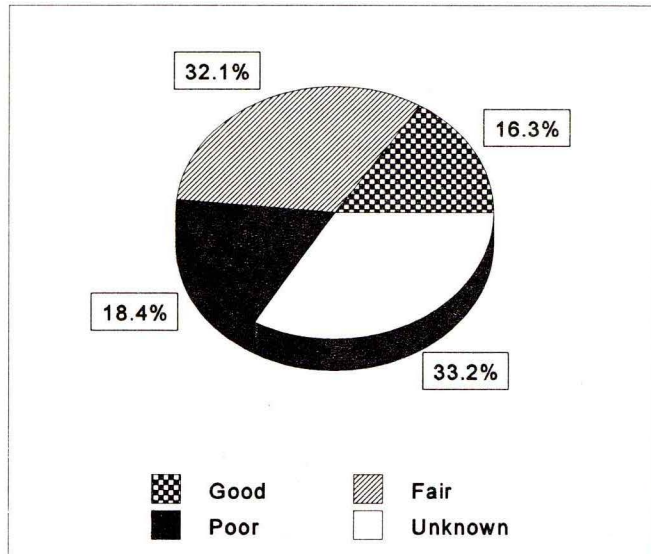
praising the staff as friendly, courteous, personable, pleasant, doing a good job, and helpful (Table 20). Less than 8% of the responses were considered negative.

**Table 20**  
Comments About Staff  
(Multiple Response Table)

	f	Percent of	
		Responses	Cases (N=254)
Friendly/courteous/personable/pleasant	107	32.9	42.1
Do a wonderful/excellent job	51	15.7	20.1
Helpful	50	15.4	19.7
Never/rarely saw park rangers/staff person	18	5.5	7.1
Patrolled often/made feel safe or secure	15	4.6	5.9
Knowledgeable	10	3.1	3.9
Enforced rules	7	2.2	2.8
Not interested/don't care what happens	6	1.8	2.4
Professional	5	1.5	2.0
Needs money/manpower to maintain area	5	1.5	2.0
Rude	4	1.2	1.6
"Ok"	3	0.9	1.2
Some friendly, some not	3	0.9	1.2
Few staff considering crowd size	3	0.9	1.2
Other varied comments	38	11.7	15.0
Totals	325	99.8	NA

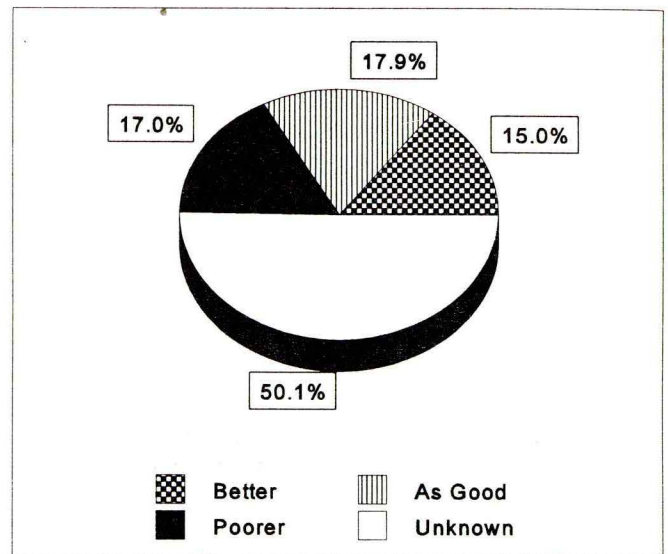
**Respondent Assessment of Fishing in State Parks**— While one-third of the respondents did not know about the fishing in Iowa state parks, another one-third assessed it as “fair” in quality, while lesser but somewhat equal percents rated it as “poor” or “good” (Figure 17).

**Figure 17**  
Fishing Now in Parks



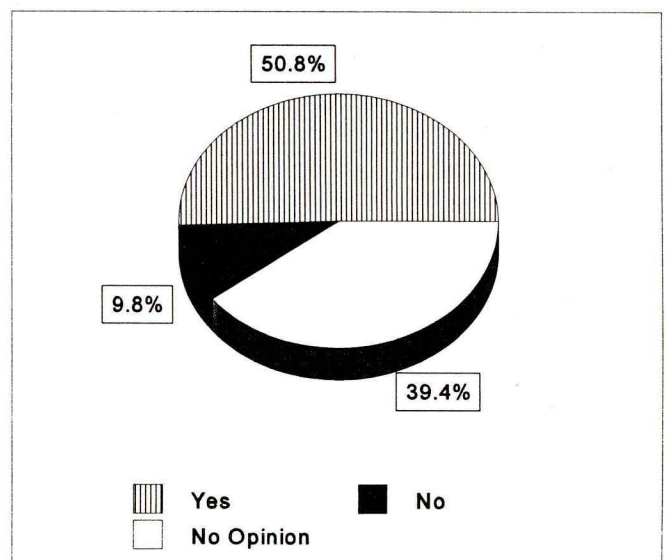
When asked to compare the current fishing conditions with those five years ago, approximately one-third rated it as either “as good as” or “better” than five years ago (Figure 18). Less than one in five rated it as “poorer.”

**Figure 18**  
Fishing Now Compared to Five Years



Slightly over one-half of the respondents said that they would visit the state parks more often if the fishing was better, while approximately 40% had no opinion on this issue (Figure 19).

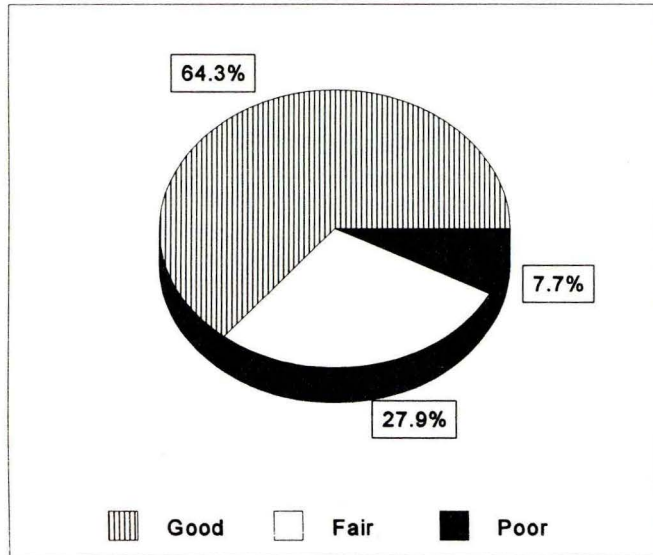
**Figure 19**  
Visit Parks More Often if Fishing Was Better





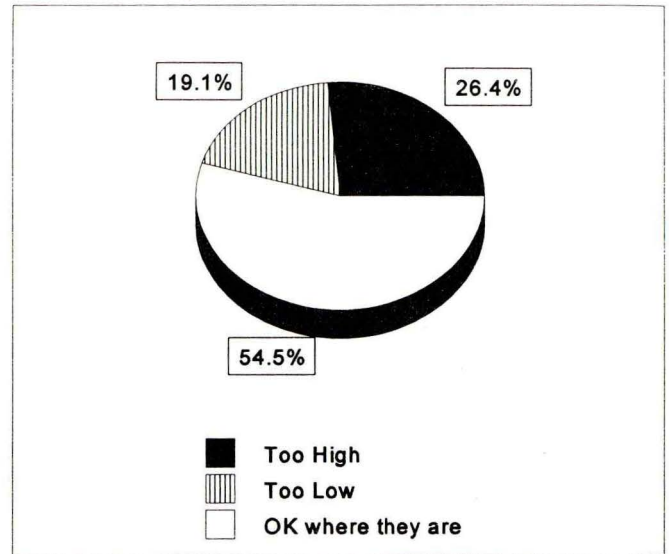
People who visited state parks and recreation areas that had a lake were asked to rate the condition of the lake. More than six in ten rated the condition of lakes as "good," with an additional three in ten rating it as "fair" (Figure 20).

**Figure 20**  
Condition of Lake



**Respondent Opinions Regarding Camping**—A series of questions was asked regarding camping fees, reserving campsites, and interest in alternative camping opportunities in Iowa park and recreation areas. When considering camping fee costs, the majority of respondents (54.5%) said the camping fees were "OK where they are" (Figure 22). Slightly more than one-fourth said they were "too high," with about one in five saying they were "too low."

**Figure 21**  
Cost of Camping Fees at Parks



When asked if they would be willing to pay a \$3 to \$4 fee for campsite reservations at state parks and recreation areas, a slight majority (53.5%) said they would pay this fee (Table 21).

**Table 21**  
Willing to Pay \$3 to \$4  
for Campsite Reservation

	f	Percent
Yes	412	53.3
No	360	46.6
Totals	772	99.9

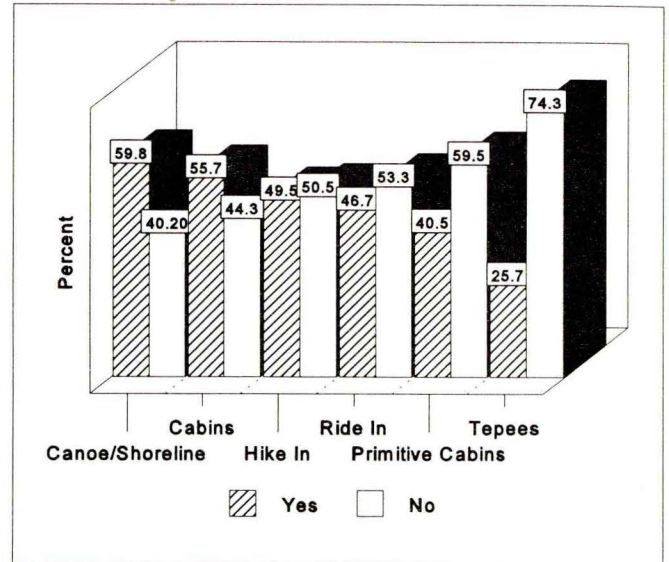
Although there was interest shown in the fee schedule, most survey respondents (58.8%) did not feel there was a need for a campground reservation system (Table 22).

**Table 22**  
Need Reservation System  
for Campgrounds

	f	Percent
Yes	301	41.2
No	429	58.8
Totals	730	100.0

Finally, regarding alternative camping opportunities in state parks, "canoe or shoreline campgrounds" and "cabins" were cited by more than 50 percent of the respondents as desirable (Figure 22). Except for "tepees," more than 40% of the respondents favored "hike in campgrounds," "Ride in (horse, bikes)," and "primitive cabins" as desirable additions to state park and recreation areas.

**Figure 22**  
Interested in Alternative Camping







## ***Appendix***

**Table A1**  
**Number of Questionnaires Distributed and Returned by Park and Recreation Areas**  
**(Ordered Alphabetically by Park/Recreation Area)**

Park/Recreation Area (Location)	Distributed		Returned		Percent Returned by Location
	f	Percent	f	Percent	
Backbone	108	5.4	52	6.1	48.1
Beeds Lake	31	1.6	17	2.0	54.8
Bellevue	23	1.2	12	1.4	52.2
Big Creek	120	6.0	43	5.0	35.8
Black Hawk	55	2.8	18	2.1	32.7
Bobwhite	11	0.6	6	0.7	54.5
Brushy Creek	9	0.5	3	0.4	33.3
Clear Lake	30	1.5	17	2.0	56.7
Dolliver	21	1.1	11	1.3	52.4
Elk Rock	31	1.6	4	0.5	12.9
Geode	56	2.8	20	2.3	35.7
George Wyth	118	5.9	50	5.9	42.4
Green Valley	29	1.5	8	0.9	27.6
Gull Point Complex	173	8.7	56	6.6	32.4
Honey Creek	30	1.5	12	1.4	40.0
Lacey-Keosauqua	30	1.5	13	1.5	43.3
Lake Ahquabi	50	2.5	19	2.2	38.0
Lake Anita	37	1.9	21	2.5	56.8
Lake Darling	34	1.7	14	1.6	41.2
Lake Keomah	17	0.9	11	1.3	64.7
Lake Macbride	79	4.0	31	3.6	39.2
Lake Manawa	109	5.5	32	3.7	29.4
Lake of Three Fires	10	0.5	6	0.7	60.0
Lake Wapello	16	0.8	6	0.7	37.5
Ledges	41	2.1	17	2.0	41.5
Lewis & Clark	25	1.3	13	1.5	52.0
Maquoketa Caves	27	1.4	14	1.6	51.9
McIntosh Woods	29	1.5	15	1.8	51.7
Nine Eagles	12	0.6	10	1.2	83.3
Palisades-Kepler	37	1.9	14	1.6	37.8
Pikes Peak	39	2.0	32	3.7	82.1
Pilot Knob	12	0.6	10	1.2	83.3
Pine Lake	48	2.4	23	2.7	47.9
Pleasant Creek	58	2.9	23	2.7	39.7

**Table A1 (continued.)**

Park/Recreation Area (Location)	Distributed		Returned		Percent Returned by Location
	f	Percent	f	Percent	
Prairie Rose	37	1.9	23	2.7	62.2
Red Haw	49	2.5	22	2.6	44.9
Rock Creek	59	3.0	16	1.9	27.1
Shimek Forest Camping	1	0.1	3*	0.4	100.0
Springbrook	30	1.5	14	1.6	46.7
Stephens Forest Camping	1	0.1	0	0.0	0.0
Stone Park	37	1.9	9	1.1	24.3
Union Grove	9	0.5	0	0.0	0.0
Viking Lake	46	2.3	23	2.7	50.0
Volga River	17	0.9	6	0.7	35.3
Walnut Woods	13	0.7	7	0.8	53.8
Wapsipinicon	56	2.8	28	3.3	50.0
Waubonsie	19	1.0	13	1.5	68.4
Wildcat Den & Fairport	47	2.4	29	3.4	61.7
Wilson Island	18	0.9	7	0.8	38.9
Yellow River Forest	2	0.1	1	0.1	50.0
Totals	1996	100.0	854	100.0	NA

\* Possible park coding error.

**Table A2**  
 Number of Questionnaires Distributed and Returned by Park and Recreation Areas  
 (Ordered by Number of Questionnaires Distributed)

Park/Recreation Area (Location)	Distributed		Returned		Percent Returned by Location
	f	Percent	f	Percent	
Gull Point Complex	173	8.7	56	6.6	32.4
Big Creek	120	6.0	43	5.0	35.8
George Wyth	118	5.9	50	5.9	42.4
Lake Manawa	109	5.5	32	3.7	29.4
Backbone	108	5.4	52	6.1	48.1
Lake Macbride	79	4.0	31	3.6	39.2
Rock Creek	59	3.0	16	1.9	27.1
Pleasant Creek	58	2.9	23	2.7	39.7
Wapsipinicon	56	2.8	28	3.3	50.0
Geode	56	2.8	20	2.3	35.7
Black Hawk	55	2.8	18	2.1	32.7
Lake Ahquabi	50	2.5	19	2.2	38.0
Red Haw	49	2.5	22	2.6	44.9
Pine Lake	48	2.4	23	2.7	47.9
Wildcat Den & Fairport	47	2.4	29	3.4	61.7
Viking Lake	46	2.3	23	2.7	50.0
Ledges	41	2.1	17	2.0	41.5
Pikes Peak	39	2.0	32	3.7	82.1
Prairie Rose	37	1.9	23	2.7	62.2
Palisades-Kepler	37	1.9	14	1.6	37.8
Stone Park	37	1.9	9	1.1	24.3
Lake Anita	37	1.9	21	2.5	56.8
Lake Darling	34	1.7	14	1.6	41.2
Beeds Lake	31	1.6	17	2.0	54.8
Elk Rock	31	1.6	4	0.5	12.9
Clear Lake	30	1.5	17	2.0	56.7
Lacey-Keosauqua	30	1.5	13	1.5	43.3
Honey Creek	30	1.5	12	1.4	40.0
Springbrook	30	1.5	14	1.6	46.7
Green Valley	29	1.5	8	0.9	27.6
McIntosh Woods	29	1.5	15	1.8	51.7
Maquoketa Caves	27	1.4	14	1.6	51.9

**Table A2 (continued.)**

Park/Recreation Area (Location)	Distributed		Returned		Percent Returned by Location
	f	Percent	f	Percent	
Lewis & Clark	25	1.3	13	1.5	52.0
Bellevue	23	1.2	12	1.4	52.2
Dolliver	21	1.1	11	1.3	52.4
Waubonsie	19	1.0	13	1.5	68.4
Wilson Island	18	0.9	7	0.8	38.9
Lake Keomah	17	0.9	11	1.3	64.7
Volga River	17	0.9	6	0.7	35.3
Lake Wapello	16	0.8	6	0.7	37.5
Walnut Woods	13	0.7	7	0.8	53.8
Pilot Knob	12	0.6	10	1.2	83.3
Nine Eagles	12	0.6	10	1.2	83.3
Bobwhite	11	0.6	6	0.7	54.5
Lake of Three Fires	10	0.5	6	0.7	60.0
Brushy Creek	9	0.5	3	0.4	33.3
Union Grove	9	0.5	0	0.0	0.0
Yellow River Forest	2	0.1	1	0.1	50.0
Shimek Forest Camping	1	0.1	3*	0.4	300.0
Stephens Forest Camping	1	0.1	0	0.0	0.0
Totals	1996	100.0	854	100.0	NA

\* Possible park coding error.



1995 STATE PARK VISITOR SURVEY

State Park code \_\_\_\_\_

INSTRUCTIONS

Please answer the following questions by placing an "X" in the parentheses ( ) next to the most accurate responses or write your answer in the available space. Some questions may require more than one response, so check or write in as many answers as appropriate.

Please return the survey in the attached pre-addressed, postage paid envelope. If the envelope is misplaced, you can return the completed survey to the address below. Your assistance in our attempt to provide the highest quality state park system is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Department of Natural Resources  
Janet Ott  
Parks, Recreation, and Preserves Division  
Wallace State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319

\*\*\*\*\*

Questions 1 through 18 concern the park where you were given this survey booklet. Your answers should pertain to that particular state park and visit. We ask that these questions be answered with respect to everyone in the vehicle at the time you received this booklet, to the best of your ability. In other words, when a question asks you for a response, it is asking you and the other people in the vehicle.

\*\*\*\*\*

Date(s) of visit? \_\_\_\_\_ Time of visit \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

1. How did you learn about this park?

- live nearby
- road map
- highway sign
- brochure(s)
- friend or relative
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- tourist information packet
- newspaper
- radio
- television
- magazine

2. Which 3 methods listed below are the best ways to get information to you about the state parks? Please mark no more than 3 answers.

- television
- radio
- newspaper
- magazines
- highway signs
- road maps
- other \_\_\_\_\_

3. Why did you select this park?

- close to home
- close to vacation travel route
- close to friend's or relative's home
- scenery
- other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- available park facilities
- part of a group attending this park
- past experience
- lake and associated recreation

4. Did you have trouble locating this park?  yes  no

4a. If yes, for what reason(s)

- inadequate signs
- unclear brochure
- other \_\_\_\_\_

5. What was the primary activity/reason for coming to this park? (**Check the one that best describes the activity.**)

- swim
- paddleboat
- rowboat
- motorboat
- sailboat
- canoe
- fish
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- picnic
- camp-tent
- camp-trailer/vehicle
- hike
- bird watch
- nature study
- horseback ride
- softball/baseball
- open area activities
- playground
- general relaxation
- visit with friends
- drive through
- bicycle

6. What other activities did you participate in while attending this park?

- swim
- paddleboat
- rowboat
- motorboat
- sailboat
- canoe
- fish
- other \_\_\_\_\_
- picnic
- camp-tent
- camp-trailer/vehicle
- hike
- bird watch
- nature study
- horseback ride
- softball/baseball
- open area activities
- playground
- general relaxation
- visit with friends
- drive through
- bicycle

7. State park lakes are managed to provide quality angling. Mark the statement that best expresses your opinion of fishing provided by this state park lake? (If one exists at the park)

- a. Fishing now is  good  fair  poor  unknown
- b. Compared to 5 years ago fishing is  better  as good  poorer  unknown
- c. Would you visit the park more often if fishing were better?  
 yes  no  no opinion

8. Did you participate in any programs available?  yes  no

8a. If yes, which types  tours  talks  displays

8b. Did you feel they increased your enjoyment of the park?  yes  no

9. Please list the facilities and activities you did not find in the park that you expected to be there \_\_\_\_\_ or would like to see in the park \_\_\_\_\_

10. Please mark the appropriate column(s) below to give us your opinion of the condition of the facilities in the park. Check those that apply.

	Clean	Littered or Dirty	Good Repair	Poor Repair	No Opinion
campground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
restrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
showers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
cabins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
trails	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
beach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
parking lots	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
picnic tables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
picnic shelters	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
grills/fire rings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
boat ramps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
lodge area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
group camps	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. If a lake is at the park and you used it please rate it as described below.

Good condition	Fair condition	Poor condition
( )	( )	( )

12. How would you rate the overall condition of the park?

( ) excellent    ( ) good    ( ) fair    ( ) poor

13. During your visit, was the park staff:

	Yes	No	No Opinion	Unsure
Available	( )	( )	( )	( )
Neatly dressed	( )	( )	( )	( )
Courteous	( )	( )	( )	( )
Helpful	( )	( )	( )	( )

14. Listed are job duties of park employees. Please rank (1-4) in relation to each other, their importance to you. (1 being most important, 2 second in importance, etc.)

- |   |                                       |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| _____ enforcement of park rules             | _____ ensure visitor safety           |
| _____ maintain facilities in good condition | _____ protect park's natural features |
| _____ provide information                   | from over use                         |

15. Please write in any comments you have about the park staff that were not asked in the survey. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

16. If you could change any one thing in the park to make your visit more enjoyable what would that change be? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Approximately how much money did you spend on the following items during this trip to the park or during this vacation?

- |                            |          |
|----------------------------|----------|
| gasoline/fuel              | \$ _____ |
| food                       | \$ _____ |
| motels                     | \$ _____ |
| campground and park fees   | \$ _____ |
| fishing supplies           | \$ _____ |
| equipment purchased        | \$ _____ |
| specifically for this trip | \$ _____ |

18. Over how many days was this money spent? \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*

Questions 19 through 32 concern overall public park and campground use. We ask that the person responding to this survey answer the questions with respect to members of your entire group.

\*\*\*\*\*

19. How many days a year do you typically visit Iowa state parks?

- 0 days
- 1 to 7 days
- 8 to 14 days
- 15 to 30 days
- more than 30 days

20. Approximately how much money did your household spend on outdoor recreation during 1994 in Iowa?

- none
- \$1 to \$99
- \$100 to \$499
- \$500 to \$999
- \$1000 to \$4999
- more than \$5000

21. Approximately how much money did your household spend on outdoor recreation during 1994 outside of Iowa?

- none
- \$1 to \$99
- \$100 to \$999
- \$500 to \$999
- \$1000 to \$4999
- more than \$5000

22. Which of the following facilities and activities would you most like to see more of in Iowa's state parks? **Please mark no more than 3 answers.**

- playground equipment
- picnic shelters
- separate tent campgrounds
- RV hookups
- overnight cabins
- backpack camping
- lakes for fishing
- lakes for boating
- swimming areas
- lakes for windsurfing
- self-guided nature hikes
- guided nature hikes
- activities
- hiking trails
- evening nature programs in campground
- nature centers or museums
- cross-country ski trails
- snowmobile trails
- mountain bike trails
- equestrian trails
- ATV riding
- Handicapped accessible fishing piers
- Handicapped accessible facilities
- other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

23. How has your public park and campground visitation changed over the past 3 years (1992 - 1995)?

- Increased
- Decreased
- No Change

24. Do you feel camping fees at the state parks are too high ( ), too low ( ) or OK where they are ( )?

25. To provide a system for reserving campsites it would cost \$3 to \$4 per reservation. Would you be willing to pay this extra cost for a reservation system?  
( ) yes ( ) no

25a. Do you feel a reservation system for campgrounds is needed? ( ) yes ( ) no

26. Would you be interested in other types of alternative camping opportunity in the park?

	yes	no		yes	no
Tepees	( )	( )	Hike in campground	( )	( )
Cabins	( )	( )	Ride in campground (horses, bikes)	( )	( )
Primitive Cabins	( )	( )	Canoe or shoreline campground	( )	( )

27. Do you feel that Iowa's state parks are:

- ( ) overdeveloped
- ( ) underdeveloped
- ( ) appropriately developed

28. What 3 factors most affect how much you visit state parks? Please mark no more than 3 answers.

- |                                     |                                    |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ( ) leisure time                    | ( ) travel time                    |
| ( ) money                           | ( ) change of recreation interests |
| ( ) weather                         | ( ) crowded parks                  |
| ( ) park facilities                 | ( ) condition of the park          |
| ( ) use of county and federal parks | ( ) use of private campgrounds     |
| ( ) proximity to home               | ( ) condition of facilities        |
| ( ) lack of equipment               | ( ) condition of lake and fishing  |

29. Are you and members of your group spending more, less, or the same amounts of time pursuing the following activities as you did 3 years ago?

	More	Less	Same	Unsure
vacation traveling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
camping-tent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
camping-trailer/vehicle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
picnicking away from home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
fishing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
hunting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
bicycling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
power boating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
sailboating	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
snowmobiling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
cross-country skiing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
driving for pleasure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
attending outdoor sporting events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
hiking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
nature study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
visiting historical areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
attending fairs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
visiting theme parks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
attending festivals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other (specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

30. What types of recreation do you think will increase for your family in the next 5 years?

- |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> swim               | <input type="radio"/> picnic               | <input type="radio"/> softball/baseball    |
| <input type="radio"/> sunbathe           | <input type="radio"/> camp-tent            | <input type="radio"/> open area activities |
| <input type="radio"/> paddleboat         | <input type="radio"/> camp-trailer/vehicle | <input type="radio"/> rowboat              |
| <input type="radio"/> hike               | <input type="radio"/> general relaxation   | <input type="radio"/> bird watch           |
| <input type="radio"/> visit with friends | <input type="radio"/> sailboat             | <input type="radio"/> motorboat            |
| <input type="radio"/> nature study       | <input type="radio"/> drive through        | <input type="radio"/> playground           |
| <input type="radio"/> bicycle            | <input type="radio"/> canoe                | <input type="radio"/> water ski            |
| <input type="radio"/> fish               | <input type="radio"/> horseback riding     | <input type="radio"/> cross-country ski    |
| <input type="radio"/> ATV riding         | <input type="radio"/> snowmobiling         | <input type="radio"/> Others _____         |

\_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\*  
Questions 31 - 33 deal with management of park resources. Please mark the statement which best expresses your attitude towards each statement.  
\*\*\*\*\*

31. Which statement best expresses your attitude regarding natural resource management of areas outside the developed areas in state parks: (These includes all resources; water, animals, vegetation)

- No management (Let nature take its course)
- Limited management (Manage only in cases where it is needed to protect the park and/or park visitors)
- Active management (Employ a variety of management techniques to achieve long-term benefits to vegetation and wildlife)
- Aggressive management (Manage all resources to achieve multiple benefits in the short and long-run)

32. In several parks, deer populations have grown so large that the deer are damaging vegetation in all areas of the park. These large numbers could also diminish the health of the herd. Controlled hunting has been employed to reduce excessive numbers of deer. Which one of the following best expresses your attitude towards managing deer populations.

- Continue present management practices (controlled hunts)
- Do not manage deer numbers in parks
- Actively manage deer populations in parks to prevent excessive numbers

33. Forest communities in state parks are managed for multiple benefits. These include recreation, such as hiking, wildlife habitat, aesthetics, protection of the resource and visitors and occasionally harvesting for timber products in declining areas. Please check the statements that you feel are appropriate for state park forest management.

- No active management. Trees and forests should be preserved - no man-made changes
- Manage to achieve species diversity (plants and animals)
- Utilize high value trees through salvage and sale of declining specimens
- Maximize the amount of forest land containing old growth tree communities
- Practice a diverse forest management program which balances wildlife, wood utilization, climax forests and species diversity objectives



\*\*\*\*\*

Questions 34 through 40 concern your background which will give us general information on the characteristics of people that use our state parks. Once again , we ask that the person completing this survey answer with respect to your entire group.

\*\*\*\*\*

34. Which best describes your current place of residence?

- farm
- acreage
- small town
- medium town
- large town
- metro area

35. How long have you lived at your present residence?

- less than 1 year
- 1 to 5 years
- over 5 years

36. Please list the ages of all your household members.

36a. Heads of household:   \_\_\_ years of age  
                                  \_\_\_ years of age

36b. Children's ages:       \_\_\_ years of age  
                                  \_\_\_ years of age  
                                  \_\_\_ years of age

37. What is the age of the person who completed this survey?

38. What is your annual gross family income?

- \$0 to \$9,999
- \$10,000 to \$19,999
- \$20,000 to \$29,999
- \$30,000 to \$39,999
- \$40,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$69,999
- \$70,000 and over

39. Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

40. Please write in the space provided any other comments you may have concerning state parks in Iowa.

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