



2009/10 NWT Park User Satisfaction Survey Report

Industry, Tourism and Investment
Government of the Northwest Territories



Table of Contents

Survey Methodology	3
Survey Sample	3
Satisfaction with Services and Facilities	3
Satisfaction scores	4
Recommending and Returning to parks	5
Visiting the Park	6
Park Visitation	6
Main Motivations for Visiting the Park	6
Important Aspects of Camping	7
En-route Stopover or Destination	8
Main Reason for Choosing the Park	9
Preferred Method of Making Reservations	9
How did you find out about this park?	10
Park Users by Parties	11
Party Size	11
Visitor Country of Origin	11
2009 Highlights	12
Appendix: NWT Map – Territorial Parks	13

Survey Methodology

Short self-administered surveys were distributed to park visitors at each Territorial Park that has a campground during the 2009 parks operational season, which runs from May to September. The survey was completed voluntarily by visitors and returned to the park contractor directly or dropped off at the park office before their departure. Some surveys were mailed by respondents directly to the Tourism and Parks Headquarters office in Yellowknife as well. The objective of the survey was to assess visitors' level of satisfaction with the services and facilities at campgrounds in Northwest Territories (NWT) Territorial Parks. The survey also included some demographic questions about the respondents.

Survey Sample

Table 1: Parks Visited by Respondents

Park	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Blackstone Territorial Park	1	0.6%
Fort Providence Territorial Park	45	26.7%
Fred Henne Territorial Park	4	2.3%
Happy Valley Territorial Park	14	8.1%
Hay River Territorial Park	35	20.3%
Ja'k Territorial Park	3	1.7%
Lady Evelyn Territorial Park	5	2.9%
Nitainlaih Territorial park	17	9.9%
Prelude Lake Territorial Park	11	6.4%
Queen Elizabeth Territorial Park	1	0.6%
Reid Lake Territorial Park	11	6.4%
Twin Falls Territorial Park	25	14.5%
Total	172	100%

Most satisfaction survey responses came from Fort Providence Territorial Park (26.7%), Hay River Territorial Park (20.3%) and Twin Falls Territorial Park (14.5%). Only one survey was collected from Blackstone Territorial Park (1) and Queen Elizabeth Territorial Park (1). Very few were collected from Ja'k, Fred Henne and Lady Evelyn Territorial Park, but all responses were included in an overall Northwest Territories (NWT) analysis due to small sample size. In some cases, individual parks will be discussed but Blackstone, Fred Henne, Ja'k, Lady Evelyn and Queen Elizabeth Territorial Park will not be included in these discussions because there were not enough respondents from these parks to identify any trends.

Satisfaction with Services and Facilities

Measuring Satisfaction

Campground user satisfaction ratings were determined and based on the same green light (area is satisfactory), yellow light (area may require some attention), and red (area is not satisfactory) scale found in the Alberta Parks (2009) Campground Satisfaction Report. The same three measures of satisfaction were used: average score (mean rating), top box (percentage of respondents giving area highest possible

rating) and low box (percentage of respondents giving area unsatisfactory ratings, 1 or 2 in our survey). In order for an area to get a “green light” (high satisfaction) all three measures must meet a specific threshold. If only one or two thresholds are met, the area will be given a “yellow light” (moderate satisfaction). If no thresholds are met, the area is given a “red light” (low satisfaction).

Measure 1: Average score

All items were answered on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 indicates “Very Poor” and a 5 indicates “Excellent.” Any average score on any item below 4.0 is considered to not be satisfactory and does not meet the necessary threshold.

Measure 2: Top Box

If less than 40% of respondents rate any area as being less than a 5 (“Excellent”), this area is deemed to be unsatisfactory and the second measure does not meet the necessary threshold.

Measure 3: Low Box

If more than 10% of respondents rate any area as “Poor” or “Very Poor” (1 or 2), this area is deemed to not be satisfactory and the measure does not meet the necessary threshold.

For more information on the methods used in this section, please refer to (2009) “How are we doing?” from Alberta Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Parks Division, Government of Alberta, available online at http://www.albertaparks.ca/pubsandmedia/2009_prov_summary.pdf

Table 2: Campground User Satisfaction with Services and Facilities

Park Services or Facilities	Average Score	Top Box %	Low Box %	Rating
Condition of your site	4.59	64.5%	0.6%	●
Condition of kitchen shelter	4.03	46.2%	12.8%	●
Condition of showers	4.27	47.7%	4.6%	●
Condition of boat launch	4.14	45.5%	9.1%	●
Condition of trails	4.30	39.6%	1.8%	●
Condition of the beach	4.39	61.3%	6.5%	●
Cleanliness of washrooms	4.42	54.7%	1.9%	●
Overall cleanliness of park	4.69	73.5%	1.2%	●
Availability of firewood	3.64	24.8%	16.5%	●
Friendliness of staff	4.47	57.2%	0.6%	●
Helpfulness of staff	4.38	54.6%	4.3%	●
Park Information services	4.40	48.1%	1.9%	●
Control of noise	4.35	46.3%	2.4%	●
Safety and security	4.22	42.4%	7.9%	●
Value for camping fee	4.17	49.4%	6.0%	●
Overall Services	4.44	50.3%	0.6%	●
Overall Facilities	4.40	52.1%	2.4%	●

User Satisfaction

Overall, campers rated services and facilities within NWT parks quite highly; only three out of 15 items were given yellow or red lights. “Condition of kitchen shelters” was given a yellow light because more than 10% of respondents rated this item to be either “Very Poor” or “Poor.” However, the number of people who used the kitchen shelter and then rated it was very small (39). “Condition of Trails” was also given a yellow light because just slightly less than the 40% threshold rated it a 5 or “Excellent.” The parks with trails most frequently rated below 5 were Fort Providence Territorial Park (40.3% of respondents) and Hay River Territorial Park (26.9% of respondents). The only item that was given a red light was “Availability of firewood.” The overall average score across all NWT parks was 3.64; the lowest ratings were in Nitainlaih Territorial Park (2.86), Fort Providence Territorial Park (3.00), Happy Valley Territorial Park (3.13) and Prelude Lake Territorial Park (3.20). The only parks that scored a 4 or higher on “Availability of firewood” were Hay River Territorial Park (4.41) and Reid Lake Territorial Park (4.64). Moreover, only 24.8% of respondents gave this item a rating of 5, while nearly 17% gave it a 2 or 1. Although this was largely due to higher numbers of lower scores in the Fort Providence Territorial Park where nearly 60% of respondents rated the “Availability of firewood” a 1 or 2, Hay River Territorial Park was the only NWT park where over 40% of respondents rated this service as “Excellent.”

Table 3: Returning and Recommending parks

Territorial Park	Will you visit this park again?			Would you recommend this park to a friend?		
	Yes	No	Unknown	Yes	No	Unknown
Blackstone Territorial Park	0	0	1	1	0	0
Fort Providence Territorial Park	45	0	0	45	0	0
Fred Henne Territorial Park	3	0	1	4	0	0
Happy Valley Territorial Park	5	2	5	13	0	0
Hay River Territorial Park	34	1	0	35	0	0
Ja’k Territorial Park	2	0	1	3	0	0
Lady Evelyn Territorial Park	5	0	0	5	0	0
Nitainlaih Territorial Park	11	1	4	13	1	0
Prelude Lake Territorial Park	9	0	2	10	0	1
Queen Elizabeth Territorial Park	0	0	1	1	0	0
Reid Lake Territorial Park	9	0	1	11	0	0
Twin Falls Territorial Park	24	0	0	25	0	0
Territorial Parks Overall	147	4	16	166	1	1

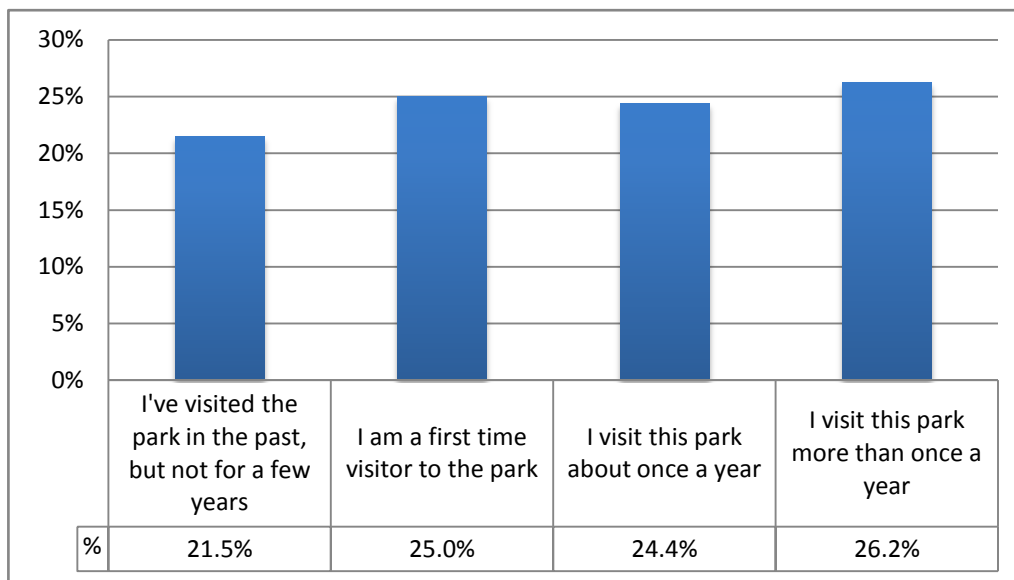
Overall, the vast majority of NWT park users surveyed (84.0 %) indicated that they would return to the park they visited and only one person indicated that they would not recommend it to a friend.

Visiting the Park

Park Visitation

In the NWT, there are four almost equal groups of park users; those who are first time visitors (25.0%), those who visit the park about once a year (24.4%), those who visit the park more than once a year (26.2%) and those who have visited the park in the past but not for a few years (21.5%). Fort Providence Territorial Park had the highest number of visitors who had been to the park in the past but not for a number of years (40.5% of respondents), Nitainlaih Territorial Park and Happy Valley Territorial Park had the most first time visitors (30.2% and 25.6%, respectively), Fort Providence and Hay River Territorial Parks had the highest number of campers who visit the park once a year (47.6% and 38.1%, respectively) and over 20% of visitors to Twin Falls, Hay River and Reid Lake visited more than once a year.

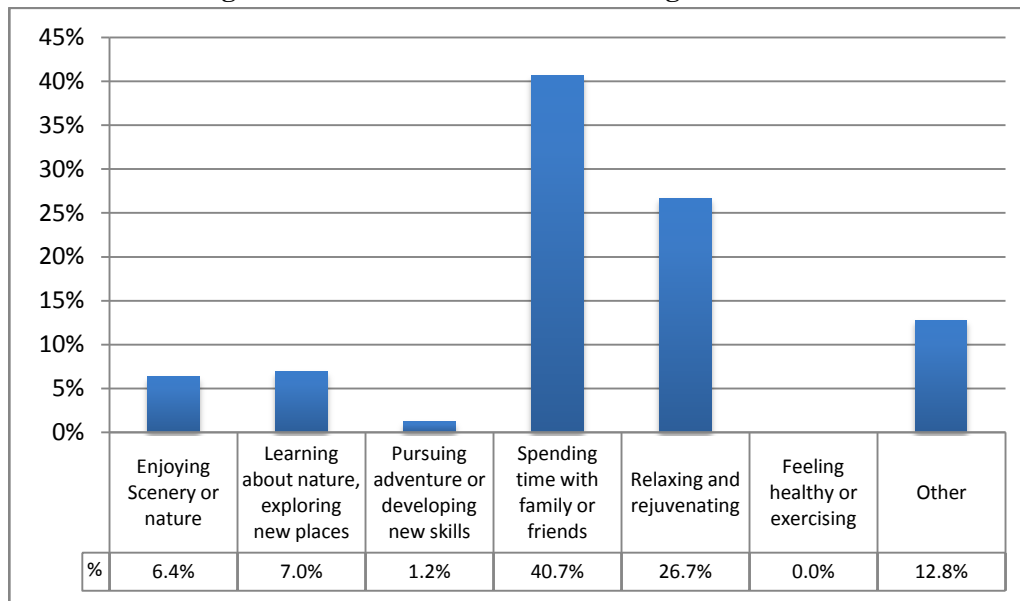
Figure 1: Park Visitation



Main Motivation

Approximately 40% of respondents visited the park with the main goal of spending time with family or friends. Nearly 27% indicated that they camped mainly to relax and rejuvenate. Among the 13% that gave another reason than those listed, the most popular answer by far was “fishing.”

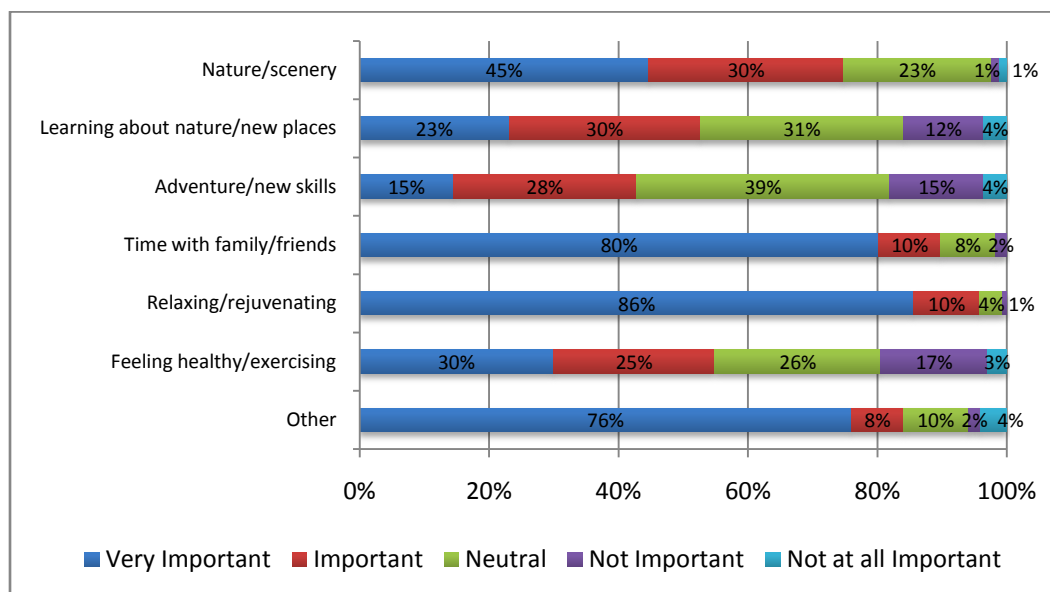
Figure 2: Main Motivation for Visiting a NWT Park



Aspects of Camping

In accordance with the most popular reasons for visiting the parks (*see Figure 2*), “Spending time with family and friends” and “Relaxing and rejuvenating” were rated the most important aspects of camping for respondents; 80.1% indicated that spending time with family and friends was “Very important” to them, while relaxing and rejuvenating was “Very important” to 85.5% of campers. Those that were most frequently rated not important were: “Experiencing adventure and developing new skills”, “Feeling healthy/exercising” and “Learning about nature and new places.” Over 15% rated these items as “Not important” or “Not at all important.”

Figure 3: Important Aspects of Camping



Visit Planning

Almost all park visits were planned; only 7.6% of visits were spontaneous (*see Figure 4*). Also, the park visited was the main destination for most respondents (*see Figure 5*). Another 25.6% used the park as an en-route stopover to another destination. Nitainlali Territorial Park was the park most commonly used as an en-route stopover; 12 of the 17 campers at Nitainlali (70.6%) indicated that they camped there en-route to another destination and were likely driving the Dempster highway.

Figure 4: Planned or Spontaneous

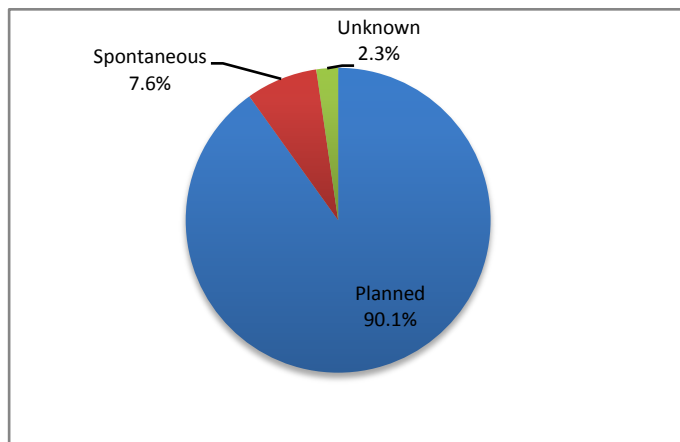
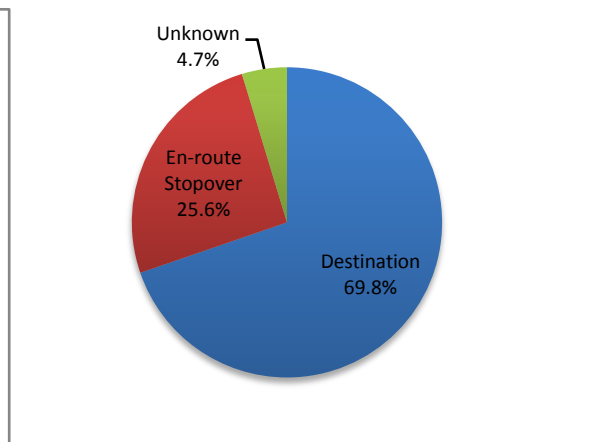


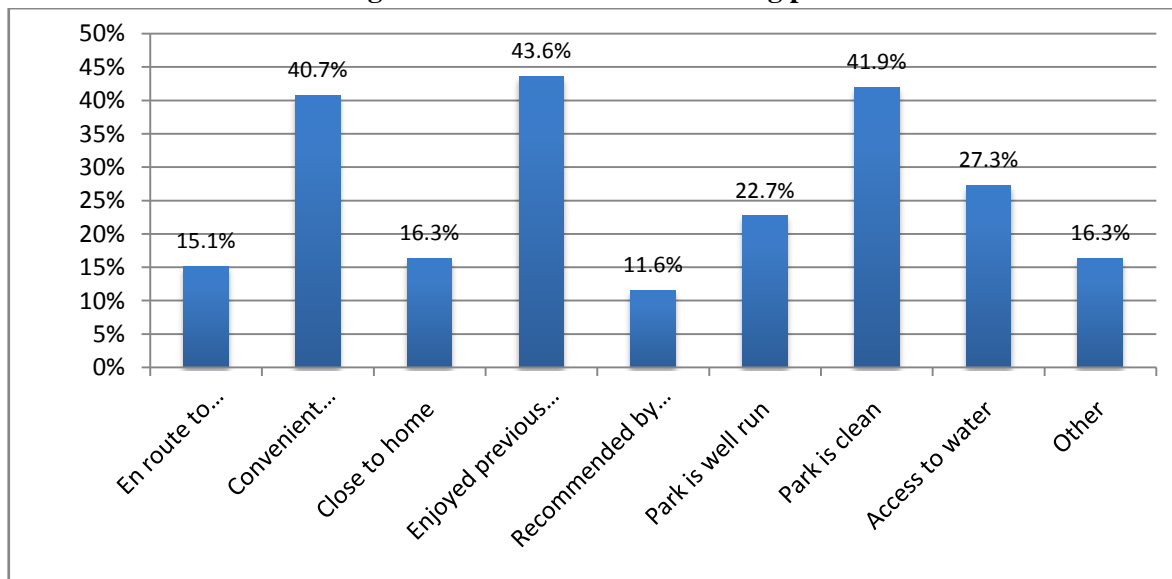
Figure 5: En-route or Destination



Choosing a park

Respondents chose to stay at a NWT park for three main reasons: the location was convenient, they had enjoyed previous visits and the park was clean. Over 40% of respondents indicated that these aspects contributed to their decision to stay at a specific park. Access to water was also an important factor for 27.3% of respondents and knowing that the park is well-run was important to 22.7%.

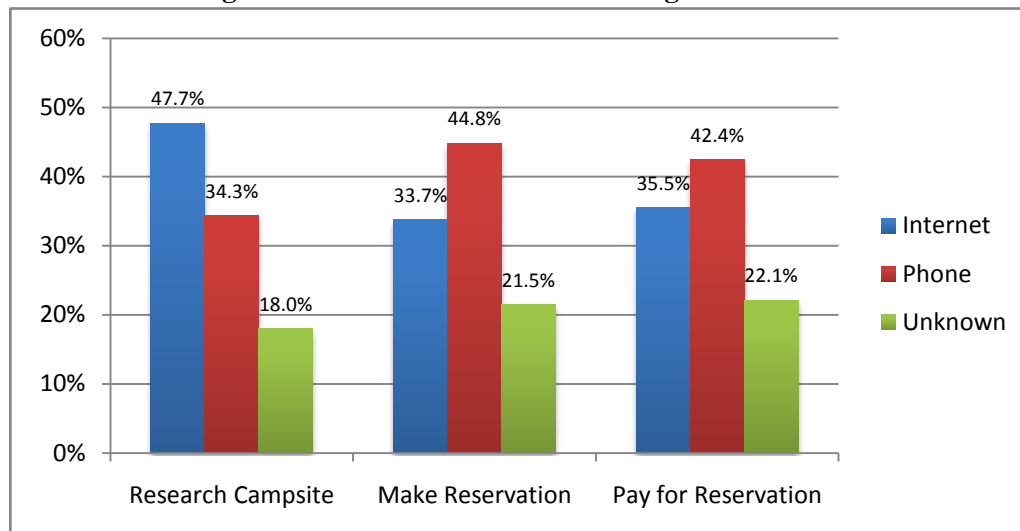
Figure 6: Main reason for choosing park



Reservation Preferences

Although the preferences are not very strong, NWT park users prefer to research campsites on the internet, make reservations on the phone and pay for reservations over the phone.

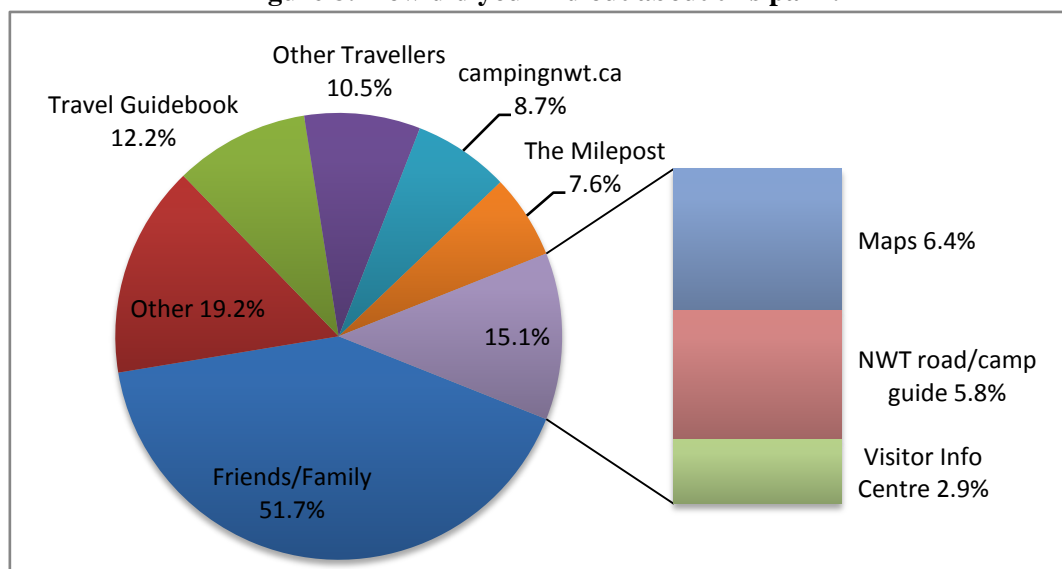
Figure 7: Preferred method of Making Reservations



Sources of Information

Most people surveyed found out about the park from friends and family (51.7%). Only 12.2% found out about the park through travel guidebooks, while 10.5% found out from other travellers. Fewer than 10% found out about the park from any of the other areas listed: the camping NWT website, the Milepost, maps, NWT road and camping guide or visitor information centres. Nearly 20% indicated that they found out about the park from a source not listed, the most popular response in the other category was that the respondent had previously visited the park or that it was close to home.

Figure 8: How did you find out about this park?

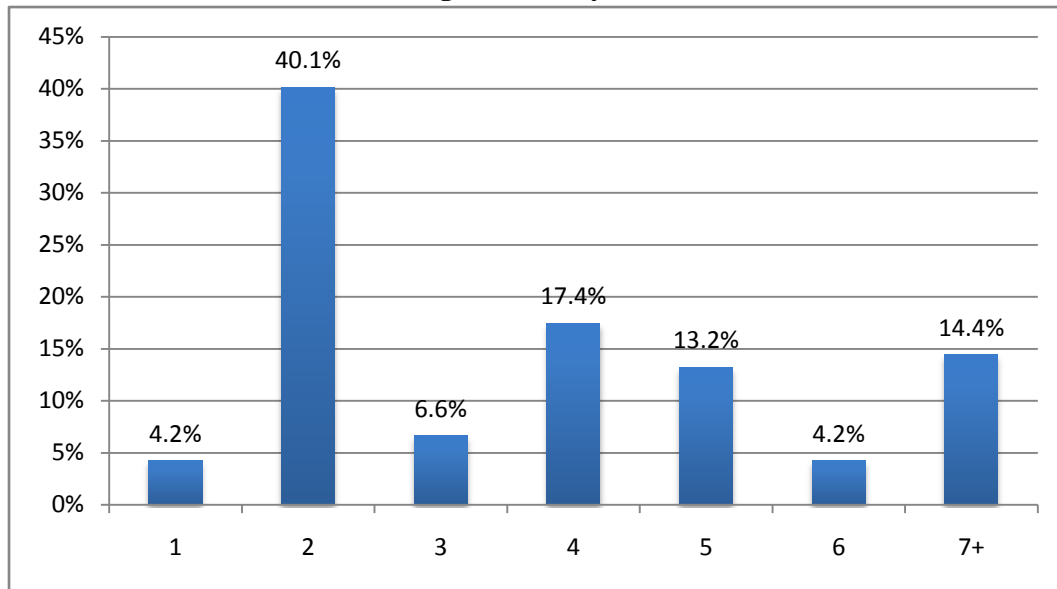


Park Users by Parties

Party Size

The average party size at NWT parks in 2009 was 3.87 people. However, approximately 40% of NWT parks users surveyed travelled in parties of two and this made up the largest proportion of respondents.

Figure 9: Party Size



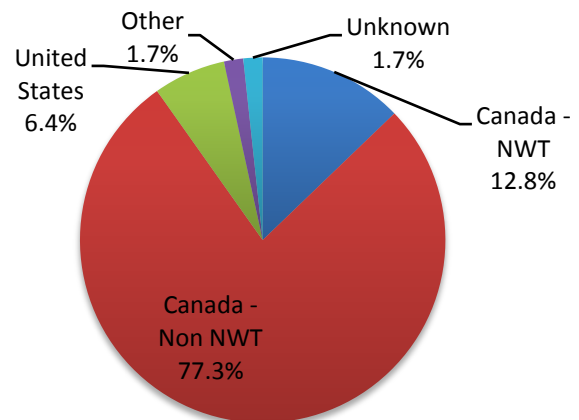
Country of Origin

Nearly 13% of respondents were from the NWT, but the vast majority were Canadian campers not from the NWT (77.3%). Very few respondents were from the United States or another country (*see Table 4 & Figure 10*).

Table 4: Visitor Country of Origin

Country	Number of Respondents	%
Canada – NWT	22	12.8%
Canada – Non-NWT	133	77.3%
United States	11	6.4%
Other	3	1.7%
Unknown	3	1.7%
Total	172	100%

Figure 10: Visitor Country of Origin



2009 Highlights/Summary

- NWT park users are satisfied with most of the services and facilities within the parks.
- Kitchen shelters and the condition of trails within NWT parks may need attention. The trails may especially need to be checked in Fort Providence Territorial Park and the Hay River Territorial Park.
- The availability of firewood at NWT parks is not satisfactory. Attention should be paid to this area to improve this service to park users. Focused attention should be given to Nitainlaii Territorial Park, Fort Providence Territorial Park and Happy Valley Territorial Park.
- Most visitors are satisfied and would return or recommend the park to their friends.
- Most people visit parks with the main goals of either spending time with friends and family or relaxing and rejuvenating and the most important aspects of camping for them are the same.
- The majority of visits made by respondents were planned and the park they camped at was their main destination, not an en-route stopover to somewhere else.
- The three main reasons respondents chose the specific park they stayed at was because they enjoyed previous visits to that park, it was clean and in a convenient location for them.
- In general, respondents preferred to research parks on the Internet but make a reservation and pay for the reservation over the phone.
- Most visitors found out about the park from friends and family.
- The average party size was 3.87 people but the largest proportion of parties were comprised of two people.
- Most respondents were Canadian; only 12.8% were from the NWT.

Appendix: NWT Map – Territorial Parks



NWT Map – Territorial Parks (Continued)

