

Alternative Camping at California State Parks



The Cottages at Crystal Cove State Park

A Report on Results of a 2009-2010 Visitor Survey and a 2010 Management and Maintenance Survey



California State Parks

Planning Division

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Executive Summary



Trails near the secluded rustic cabins at Mount Tamalpais SP offer visitors the chance for a quiet stroll.



Executive Summary

This study surveyed over 3,000 people who stayed in California State Parks' 108 alternative camping facilities from 2007 to 2010 and surveyed 67 California State Parks staff and concessionaires responsible for their management or maintenance.

Key findings

Key findings include:

- Some staff commented that the alternative camping facilities are a good source of revenue for the Department and some support adding facilities.
- The most popular alternative camping facilities, like those at Crystal Cove State Park, Mount Tamalpais State Park and Lake Oroville State Recreation Area, are located near urban areas and/or near some kind of water feature—a river, reservoir or ocean.
- The vast majority (94.5%) of visitors are from California.
- The demographics of the alternative camping visitors (predominately white, aged 35-54, with a combined household income of \$75,000 or greater, experienced or occasional campers) don't reflect the state's diverse ethnicity or age and income ranges. Additionally, alternative camping facilities are not attracting visitors new to camping.
- Most management and maintenance staff agree that vandalism and maintenance needs are low and the structures are durable.
- The additional amenities most requested by visitors for each facility include more alternative camping units, electricity, and a sink with running water, although most respondents said they wouldn't change a thing.
- Current alternative camping facilities attract shoulder season (spring and fall) visitors.
- Some open-ended visitor comments suggest that the Department needs to provide more information on alternative camping amenities so visitors can better prepare for their visits.

Recommendations

The above findings support the following recommendations:

1. Add more alternative camping facilities to the State Park System (in addition to those already planned) and consider including amenities most valued by visitors.
2. Target matching funds to complete facilities already planned and designed, and assign a high priority to facilities that are near urban areas and/or near water features.



Executive Summary

3. Improve promotion of and increase information and education and outreach on alternative camping facilities to maximize facility use, increase revenue and broaden the demographics of alternative camping visitors.
4. Conduct further analysis of survey data and disseminate this information in additional formats through newsletter articles and a Department *Recreation Opportunities* bulletin. Additionally, build on the data collected and lessons learned from these surveys when designing the upcoming State Park Visitor Camping Survey.



Purpose

The alternative camping study, consisting of two surveys and this report, was designed for these purposes:

1. Evaluate whether the Department's alternative camping facilities address the need for alternative camping opportunities, per the 2008 *California Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP)** ("Issues and Actions" section, "Issue 1, Lack of Access to Public Park and Recreation Resources": *Increase the number of available campsites in popular and emerging camping areas and provide cabins, tent cabins, yurts, or other affordable lodging for park visitors who prefer these camping alternatives*, page 66. Text on page 90 refers to the need for this survey.)
2. Evaluate the need to respond to California's changing demographics and help the Department monitor its efforts in addressing demand for alternative camping opportunities, per the 2002 CORP. ("Issues and Actions" section, Issue 3, Access to Public Park and Recreation Resources": *The standards used in designing many of the current parks and outdoor recreation facilities may no longer be applicable or relevant to Californians of today or of future generations. These changing demographics should cause all park and recreation providers to re-assess their service population to make their facilities more inviting and relevant to broader segments of the population.*)
3. Help guide planning for the Department and other recreation providers.
4. Help the Department's Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS) evaluate Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grant applications for alternative camping projects that state and local recreation providers submit to OGALS.

*The California Outdoor Recreation Plan (CORP) reports for 2002 and 2008 are available at http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=23880.



Background and Scope

This section briefly describes current camping trends and Department alternative camping facilities, study funding, as well as the scope of the surveys.

Background

Along with a worldwide decline in *per capita* participation in outdoor recreation, traditional camping (camping in tents or in the open air) is declining in popularity. Alternative camping—staying overnight in tent cabins, cabins, cottages, etc.—is an option that many U.S. states offer. In addition to offering more comfort and convenience to those who enjoy traditional camping, alternative camping facilities may attract non-campers.

In California, a major shift in ethnic demographics is a large factor in recreation planning. Statewide, the white (non-Hispanic) population (the majority for generations and primary supporter of traditional outdoor recreation) is decreasing and the percentage of Hispanics is increasing.

California State Parks (the Department) offers 108 alternative camping facilities at 9 parks. Offerings range from rustic miner's cabins to amenity-rich cottages. The planned addition of more alternative camping facilities has been delayed by budget constraints.

This study was partially funded by the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Scope

This study of the Department's alternative camping facilities consists of a Visitor Survey, a Management and Maintenance Survey, and this report on survey findings, which will be made available online on the Department website and distributed to Department staff and park and recreation providers statewide through the California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS).

The Department conducted two online surveys:

1. A Visitor Survey of 3,405 people—the vast majority of them Californians—who stayed overnight at state parks with existing alternative camping facilities between March 2007 and May 2010. Email survey invitations were sent to 22,361 visitors who had registered for alternative camping using ReserveAmerica, a private corporation. Survey questions were on topics such as level of satisfaction with facilities and visitor demographics. See Appendix A for survey questions.



Background and Scope

2. A Management and Maintenance Survey of 67 Department staff and concessionaires involved with alternative camping operations at the nine parks, conducted between January and April 2011. This online survey was emailed to 330 Department field personnel. Invitees were chosen by job titles and classifications that were generally directly or indirectly involved with alternative camping operations at the nine parks. Concessionaires that operate alternative camping at 3 parks (Big Basin Redwoods SP, Crystal Cove SP, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP) were also surveyed. Survey questions were on topics such as facility durability, frequency of repair, and level of satisfaction with housekeeping procedures. See Appendix B for survey questions.

Additionally, related Department data from other surveys, occupancy rates, etc., were examined.

Appendixes include survey questions, selected comparisons of findings with other, similar surveys, and background information on maintenance tasks.



Findings Summary



Cottage at Crystal Cove State Park. Cottages available for overnight rental include studios, one- and two-bedroom houses, and hostel-style dormitories. Prices for overnight rentals have been kept relatively low to provide this fabulous beach experience to as many Californians as possible. The cottages opened for overnight lodging in June, 2006. Reservations for stays up to seven months in advance are taken through the California State Parks reservations contractor, ReserveAmerica. The park features three miles of Pacific coastline, plus wooded canyons, open bluffs, and offshore waters designated as an underwater park.



Findings Summary

This section summarizes findings by each study purpose. See the Executive Summary for a high-level summary of findings.

Findings Summary for Study Purpose 1

Purpose 1 of the study was to evaluate whether the Department's alternative camping facilities address the need for alternative camping opportunities, per the 2008 CORP.

Visitor Survey findings summary

Two findings are most interesting:

- Over half of respondents had to call back several times to make their reservation. (Question 4.) This suggests that some people who want to use alternative camping facilities are likely not able to do so.
- About 30% of respondents wanted alternative camping facilities added to the system. (Question 14.)

Management and Maintenance Survey

Among staff and concessionaires, these findings are most interesting:

- Some staff see a need for additional alternative camping facilities at state parks. Most of those who responded to open-ended Question 23 commented on the need for more facilities.
- Alternative camping facilities attract visitors during the shoulder season. About 72% of respondents indicated that their parks attract visitors outside of the peak camping seasons due to the availability of alternative camping facilities. (Question 20.)

Other Department data

Department data on occupancy rates and alternative camping information on the Department website provided information for these conclusions:

- Alternative camping facilities at state parks that are both near population centers and feature water were the most popular. As Map 1 shows, occupancy rates (obtained from Department database) at alternative camping facilities vary widely. Facilities at parks near urban areas that feature lakes or beaches had the highest average occupancy rates for 2009-2010.
- Information available for the public is lacking on current alternative camping facilities in state parks.
- While alternative camping facilities are included in a Camping page online (http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1029), there is no central location for



Findings Summary

- information devoted to alternative camping and specific amenities at each park. Marketing of alternative camping facilities is minimal.
- There is a need for more alternative camping facilities.

Findings Summary for Study Purpose 2

Purpose 2 of the study was to evaluate the need to respond to California's changing demographics and monitor the Department's efforts in addressing demand for alternative camping opportunities, per the 2002 CORP.

Visitor Survey

These findings are most interesting:

- Alternative camping facilities may not be attracting the state's Hispanic or Latino communities. Most respondents (almost 83%) identified themselves as white (non-Hispanic) – a group that made up 76.4% of the state's population in 2009. Only about 5% (4.94%) of the respondents were Hispanic or Latino, which in 2009 made up 37% of the state's population. (Question 20.)
- Alternative camping facilities are not necessarily attracting non-campers. Only 9.5% of alternative campers were inexperienced campers. (About half (53.3%) of respondents were experienced campers and 37.2% were occasional campers.) (Question 6.)
- Alternative camping facilities are not attracting the younger demographic. Over half (64.3%) of respondents were between the ages of 35 and 54. (Question 18.)

Other Department data

These findings from Department data are most interesting:

- There is a potential market for alternative camping among those in the 18-34 age group; those in the Hispanic, African American, and Other/multi-racial ethnic groups; and those with combined household incomes of less than \$50,000. (See Appendix C for data based on a comparison of the Visitor Survey with another Department survey of state parks visitors.)
- It's possible that alternative campers view the park as more of a "destination" than campers overall. For Mount Tamalpais SP, Visitor Survey respondents overwhelmingly (94.5%) indicated the park was their primary destination, compared with 73.4% of respondents to another Department survey who were camping at the park and were asked the same question. (Results for the other survey were for all campers, not just alternative campers.) (See Appendix D for more information.)



Findings Summary

Findings Summary for Study Purpose 3

Purpose 3 of the study was to help guide planning for the Department and other recreation providers. While all the study results can potentially guide recreation planning, highlights are outlined here.

Visitor Survey

Findings that can help guide planning are summarized below.

Decision points

- About half of respondents stayed overnight at Crystal Cove SP cottages (32.0%) or Big Basin Redwoods SP tent cabins (24.2%). About one-fifth (17.3%) stayed at Mount Tamalpais SP. A total of 13 cottages are available at Crystal Cove SP, 38 tent cabins are offered at Big Basin Redwoods SP, and 9 rustic cabins are at Mount Tamalpais SP. (Question 2.)
- The top three reasons visitors chose the park were 1) location (29.5%), 2) presence of alternative camping facilities (25.3%), and 3) the natural or cultural features that make the park special (20.6%). (Question 3.)
- The most common reason that visitors chose alternative camping was convenience (20.1%). (Question 5.)
- Most (76.6%) respondents had been to the park before. (Question 9.)
- More than half of respondents found out about the park because it was recommended by family or friends or they grew up/live nearby (27.3% and 26.3% respectively). (Question 10.)
- More than half (58.7%) of respondents indicated they had to call back several times to make their reservation. (Question 4.)

Trip characteristics

- Respondents tended to reserve alternative campsites in spring, summer, and fall, with summer the most popular season. (Question 13.)
- About half (45.6%) of respondents stayed two nights, the most popular length of stay. (Question 12.)

Satisfaction with and importance of facilities

- The top five additional amenities that respondents wanted were 1) nothing, I liked it just the way it was (49.8%); 2) more alternative camping units (29.8%); 3) electricity (lights or outlets) (16.5%); 4) sink (including running water) 10.6%; and 5) barbecues (9.1%).(Question 14.)
- Most respondents were “satisfied” with all aspects of the lodging experience—such as outward appearance, cleanliness, and feeling of safety and security. (Question 15.) Most rated all aspects as “important.” (Question 16.)



Findings Summary

Visitor demographics

- Age distribution of respondents followed a bell-shaped curve, with the largest two percentages of respondents being between 45 and 54 years of age (34.4%), and 35-44 (29.9%). (Question 18.)
- Most respondents rated themselves as experienced (53.3%) or occasional (37.2%) campers. (Question 6.)
- Respondents were mostly (82.8%) of the white ethnic group (Question 20).
- About three-quarters (73.1%) of respondents reported combined annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more. (Question 21.)
- The vast majority (94.5%) of respondents were California residents (Question 23).
- About half of respondents stayed overnight in groups of 2 (29%) or 4 (25.3%). (Question 7.)
- About half (47.8%) of respondents camped with family, and about a third (32.4%) camped with both family and friends. (Question 8.)
- The most common ages of respondents' companions were 35-44, 45-54, and 1-9 years of age. (Question 19.)

Management and Maintenance Survey

A total of 67 staff and concessionaires responded to the survey. Findings that can help guide planning are summarized below.

Staff/concessionaire information

- Many respondents were either State Park Peace Officer/Rangers (22.5%) or Park Maintenance Workers (16.9%). (Question 1.)
- Most respondents were located at Lake Oroville State Recreation Area (SRA) (21.4%), Big Basin Redwoods SP (18.6%), or Mount Tamalpais SP (16%). (Question 2.)
- Almost half (43.7%) of respondents had been managing or maintaining alternative camping sites for five years or more. (Question 4.)

Facilities

- Check-in and check-out procedures are used at 81.4% of parks. (Question 9.)
- Campsites are "holding up well and are durable," according to most (80.1%) respondents. (Question 17.)
- Most respondents rated all aspects of the alternative camping facilities (such as feeling of safety and security, convenience and comfort of facilities) as "important." (Question 19.)



Findings Summary

- Alternative camping facilities attract visitors during the shoulder seasons (spring and fall). About 72% of respondents indicated that their parks attract visitors outside of the peak camping seasons due to the availability of alternative camping facilities. (Question 20.)

Housekeeping and maintenance

- About half (51.5%) of respondents reported that Maintenance staff maintains the housekeeping system. (Question 6.)
- Housekeeping systems are working well; 62.0% of respondents reported a satisfaction level of “satisfactory” and 35.2% reported a level of “excellent” with the housekeeping system at their park. (Question 7.)
- More than half (64.2%) of respondents reported that housekeeping occurs once a day at their facility. (Question 11.)
- About half (46.3%) of the respondents agreed that maintenance tasks take only a little time each day. (Question 16.) More research is required to determine the time required for daily maintenance and whether additional facilities would place an undue burden on staff.

Repairs

- Most (82.1%) respondents reported that major repairs are done annually or every few years, about half of respondents (46.3%) reported they do minor repairs annually, and most (74.7%) report that vandalism/damage from occupants occurred either annually or monthly. (Question 14.)

Comparison of “aspect importance” for the two surveys

Both surveys asked respondents to rate the importance of various aspects of the facilities, such as facility condition. (Visitor Survey, Question 16; Management and Maintenance Survey, Question 19.) The percentages were similar for the two groups, and most rated all aspects as important. Differences in the “important” percentages were:

- Outward appearance of the facility is much more important to Management and Maintenance staff. About 90% of Management and Maintenance Survey respondents thought it important, compared to about 60% of Visitor Survey respondents.
- Feeling of safety and security of the facility is more important to Management and Maintenance Survey respondents. About 96% of Management and Maintenance Survey respondents thought it important, compared to about 82% of Visitor Survey respondents.
- Location of the alternative camping facility in relation to the rest of the park is somewhat more important to visitors than management/maintenance staff, but still not nearly as important as most other aspects for visitors. Only about half (51%) of Management and Maintenance Survey



Findings Summary

respondents rated this aspect as important, compared to about 62% of Visitor Survey respondents. Outward appearance of the cabin was the only aspect less important to visitors.

Other Department data

These findings are most interesting:

- Occupancy rates vary at the parks. Parks near urban areas with water nearby were the most popular during the summers of 2009 and 2010.
- Information about current alternative camping offerings and amenities is lacking on the Department website. Additionally, not all brochures contain comprehensive information.

Findings Summary for Study Purpose 4

Purpose 4 of the study was to help the Department's Office of Grants and Local Services (OGALS) evaluate LWCF grant applications for alternative camping projects that state and local recreation providers submit to OGALS.

Visitor Survey

These findings are most interesting:

- Facilities that are both near population centers and feature water had the highest average occupancy rates for the summers of 2009 and 2010. (See Map 1 later in this document.)
- The top five additional amenities that respondents wanted were 1) nothing, I liked it just the way it was (49.8%); 2) more alternative camping units (29.8%); 3) electricity (lights or outlets) (16.5%); 4) sink (including running water) 10.6%; and 5) barbecues (9.1%).(Question 14.)
- Groups of 2 and groups of 4 were the most popular group sizes. These findings should be tempered by research that shows that those in ethnic groups not currently using the alternative camping facilities may enjoy recreating in larger groups. (Question 7.)
- Most visitors indicated they were Californians of the White race/ethnic group, between the ages of 35 and 54, with combined annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more. These findings suggest that facilities should be sited and designed to attract underserved Californians such as other ethnic groups, low-income groups and more diverse age groups. (Question 20.)



Findings Summary



Recommendations



Floating campsite, Lake Oroville SRA. From the park brochure: “You will need your own boat to reach the ten 20’ x 24’ floating sites. Each site sleeps up to 15 people with a camp table, sink, propane barbecue grill (the park provides the propane), a food locker, a lockable closet, an accessible restroom, a covered living area, an upper sun deck/sleeping area and room for tents. Bring your own drinking water.”



Recommendations

The Department should consider the following recommendations, based on survey findings and related Department data.

Recommendation 1. Add more alternative camping facilities.

In addition to facilities already planned (and currently delayed by budget constraints), more facilities are needed. The Management and Maintenance Survey shows that some staff support additional facilities to bring in additional revenue, and that vandalism and maintenance needs are relatively low. In planned and current facilities, consider duplicating the mix of existing amenities since most Visitor Survey respondents said they wouldn't change a thing.

Recommendation 2. Target matching funds to complete facilities already planned and designed.

Use survey findings as appropriate to refine existing plans or designs. For example, consider assigning high priority to camping facilities near urban population centers and water, as occupancy rates were highest for these facilities in the peak season (summer) of 2009 and 2010.

Recommendation 3. Improve promotion of and increase information and education and outreach on alternative camping facilities.

This effort would provide potential visitors with better amenities information, help target and educate underserved groups, and help maximize facility use and revenue.

Such efforts might include making materials available online and/or in print that:

- describe in detail alternative camping amenities such as size and number of platforms and mattresses, type of heating, etc.,
- increase awareness of facilities with relatively low occupancy rates (such as those at rural parks),
- emphasize the comfort and convenience of the facilities and those that target groups currently underusing facilities (for example, the Hispanic ethnic group and residents that are younger than 35 and older than 54), and
- publicize shoulder season availability.

Recommendation 4. Conduct further analysis of survey data.

Conduct further analysis of survey data and disseminate this information in additional formats through newsletter articles and a Department *Recreation Opportunities* bulletin. Build on data collected and lessons learned from these surveys when designing the upcoming State Park Visitor Camping Survey.



Program Overview



Cabin at Brannan Island SRA. At the gateway to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, the waterways of 336-acre Brannan Island State Recreation Area offer camping, picnicking, boating, fishing, and swimming. Currently this is the only cabin at this park.



Program Description

While traditional camping involves spending the night outdoors in a tent or in the open air, alternative camping involves a more permanent structure, such as a cabin, tent cabin, cottage, yurt, or floating campsite. The Department offers a total of 108 alternative camping facilities (such as cabins and cottages) at nine parks. Offerings range from rustic miner's cabins to comfortable cottages. See tables in this section for more facility information.

Facility development. Most facilities were developed by Department districts as funding, land, or facilities became available. Some facilities (such as the rustic cabins at Mount Tamalpais State Park), predate the state park. Other factors that determine whether a park offers alternative camping include whether the park's General Plan calls for alternative camping, whether a desirable location is available, and whether construction funding or staff support is available. In some cases, concessionaires develop and run the facilities. For example, a concessionaire developed and runs the cabins at McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP. Significantly, current state budget constraints are hindering the development of planned additional alternative camping facilities in State Parks.

Occupancy rates. Occupancy rates vary widely within the system. Occupancy rates as low as 39% (Cuyamaca Rancho SP cabins) and as high as 96% (Crystal Cove SP cottages) were recorded for the summers of 2009 and 2010.

Marketing. The Department does not market its alternative camping facilities. Limited information is available on the California State Parks website (www.parks.ca.gov) and on the ReserveAmerica site, www.reserveamerica.com.

Target audiences and benefits

Target audiences for alternative camping facilities are 1) people who want to spend the night in a park but either don't want to camp or don't have the equipment, and 2) those who have camped out in the past but want a different overnight experience. Such visitors might include baby boomers, retirees, new immigrants, campers with disabilities, and families with young children.





Compared to traditional camping, alternative camping offers these benefits (in varying degrees, depending on the facility):

- Less equipment requirements
- Less set-up time (no tent to set up)
- Increased comfort
- Increased feeling of safety and security (due to a more solid structure and the lockable entry door on many facilities).



Program Overview

Table 1. Alternative camping facility types and examples.

Facility type and features	State parks with this facility type	Photo of typical facility
<p>Rustic cabin. Built with solid walls, facilities usually have wood or propane heating; some have electricity. Bed(s) are inside; cooking area and restrooms are outside. Some have tables and benches inside, some have them outside.</p>	<p>Brannan Island SRA, Cuyamaca Rancho SP, Hendy Woods SP, Malakoff Diggins SHP, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP, Mount Tamalpais SP</p>	 <p>Brannan Island SRA</p>
<p>Tent cabin. Built of wood and canvas, facilities have wood heating and table and benches inside. Cooking area and restrooms are outside.</p>	<p>Big Basin Redwoods SP</p>	
<p>Cottage. These fully furnished facilities have dormitory and family style floor plans, electricity, and restrooms, showers, and kitchens inside.</p>	<p>Crystal Cove SP</p>	
<p>Floating campsite. Restroom and food preparation areas are inside; sleeping, cooking and eating areas are outside. Solar powered electric light inside.</p>	<p>Lake Oroville SRA</p>	

Abbreviations in this document

State Park classifications are abbreviated as follows: State Historic Park: SHP; State Park: SP; State Recreation Area: SRA.

Program Overview

Example of tent cabin amenities (sleeping platforms with mattress pads, table and bench)

The photo below shows the interior of a tent cabin at Big Basin Redwoods SP.

Built in the 1990s by a concessionaire, each tent cabin features a lockable front door, sleeping platforms with mattresses, a wood stove inside the cabin, a table and benches, and a fire pit with a BBQ grill outside the cabin. Each cabin sleeps a maximum of 8 people.



Park Locations

Map 1. Locations and average occupancy rates (summers of 2009 and 2010) of state parks with alternative camping facilities.

Source: Department data.



Program Overview

These two regions have no alternative camping facilities:

- The southern Central Valley (which includes Fresno, Bakersfield, and Stockton)
- The Central Coast region (which includes Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles)

Occupancy rates vary widely at the parks, as Map 1 on the previous page shows. Parks that are near urban centers and feature water had the highest average occupancy rates for summer 2009 and summer 2010. For example, Mount Tamalpais SP, Crystal Cove SP and Big Basin Redwoods SP are near large urban areas and close to the ocean. Hendy Woods SP and Cuyamaca Rancho SP had the lowest occupancy rates; both are rural parks without significant water features.



Existing Alternative Camping Facilities

The next table shows existing types and numbers of alternative camping facilities at state parks.

Table 2. Alternative camping facilities by park, California State Parks System, 2010.

Source: Reserve America, www.reserveamerica.com

Park name	No. of tent cabins	No. of rustic cabins	No. of cottages	No. of floating campsites	Total
Big Basin Redwoods SP	38				38
Brannan Island SRA		1			1
Crystal Cove SP			13		13
Cuyamaca Rancho SP		6			6
Hendy Woods SP		4			4
Lake Oroville SRA				10	10
Malakoff Diggins SHP		3			3
McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP		24			24
Mount Tamalpais SP		9			9
Totals	38	47	13	10	108



Program Overview

This table describes facility amenities at each park with alternative camping.

Table 3. Summary of facility amenities, California State Parks with alternative camping facilities.

Park name and facility type	Construction information	Lockable front door?	Furniture, other features	Heating	Restroom location	Maximum occupancy per facility (no. of persons)
Big Basin Redwoods SP Tent cabins	Built from about 1990 to 1995 by a concessionaire.	Yes	Movable benches and tables Sleeping platforms with mattresses	Wood stove inside cabin Fire pit with BBQ grill outside cabin	Outside	8
Brannan Island SRA One rustic cabin	Single cabin was built by Department staff in about 2003 from a kit.	Yes	Electric outlets and lights Bunk bed (no mattress) Free-standing bed (no mattress)		Outside	4
Crystal Cove SP Cottages	Built in the 1930s by individual families, before park was established.	Yes	Some original cottages are restored and furnished, dormitory and family-style accommodations available. Electric lights and outlets Sinks, kitchens, bathrooms with showers, trash cans Chairs and tables Beds or bunk beds with mattresses	Electric heating	Inside	Varies: Regular cottages, 4-9 Dorm-style cottages, 2-6 ADA cottages, 4-6



Program Overview

Park name and facility type	Construction information	Lockable front door?	Furniture, other features	Heating	Restroom location	Maximum occupancy per facility (no. of persons)
Cuyamaca Rancho SP Rustic cabins	Constructed from kits in the 1990s by Dept. staff and repaired following a 2003 fire.	Yes	Bunk beds without mattresses Fire pit and BBQ grill next to each cabin	Wood stove	Outside	8
Hendy Woods SP Rustic cabins	Built in 1990s by Dept. staff	No	Bunk bed with mattresses Picnic table outside cabin	Wood stove	Outside	6
Lake Oroville SRA Floating campsites	Built in 1996 by Dept. of Water Resources	Yes	Solar powered electric light BBQ grill with propane tank Countertop for food preparation Trash can Attached picnic table outside the 'cabin' portion of the campsite (No sleeping platforms or beds)	No	Inside	15
Malakoff Diggins SHP Rustic cabins	Built in 1969 (2 cabins) and 1980 (1 cabin) by Dept. staff.	Yes	Chairs, tables, countertop for food preparation Bunk bed with mattresses BBQ grills and fire pits available outside the cabins	Wood stove	Outside	4



Program Overview

Park name and facility type	Construction information	Lockable front door?	Furniture, other features	Heating	Restroom location	Maximum occupancy per facility (no. of persons)
McArthur Burney Falls Memorial SP Rustic cabins	Pre-fabricated structures were installed on site by the concessionaire in 2008	Yes	Sleeping platforms with mattresses Picnic table with benches, BBQ grill and fire pit are located outside each cabin.	Propane heater	Outside	12 cabins, 6 12 cabins, 4
Mount Tamalpais SP Rustic cabins	Built in the 1930s by William Kent; Dept. acquired them when area became a state park.	Yes	Fixed table and benches Sleeping platforms (no mattresses) Countertop, trash can BBQ grill located outside each cabin	Wood burning stove	Outside	5

Source: Department documents. Consolidated information such as that in this table is not currently available to the public.



Survey Methodology, Visitor Survey



Tent cabin, Big Basin Redwoods SP. *The establishment of Big Basin Redwoods SP in 1902 was an early success of the preservation and conservation movement in California and provided the vision for the hundreds of subsequent California State Parks.*



Survey development

Survey development began shortly after approval of the LWCF grant in August 2008. The project team consisted of staff from the Planning Division and the Park Operations Division.

The Visitor Survey consisted of 22 qualitative and quantitative questions, selected for their relevance to both California State Parks, other recreation providers and for use in grant selection criteria. Demographic questions were modeled after those in the Department's recent California State Park Visitor Survey (SPVS). See Appendix A for survey questions.

Survey delivery and analysis

The Planning Division project team coordinated survey delivery, using survey software from the online survey provider Zoomerang (<http://www.zoomerang.com/>). Zoomerang also provided some survey management and data analysis tools. Project team staff downloaded the Microsoft Excel data from the Zoomerang online server and imported them into a statistical software program for more analysis.

Survey participants

The Concessions, Reservations and Fees Division provided the list of invitees for the Visitor Survey. Invitees had made alternative camping reservations through ReserveAmerica, a private company that provides an online and telephone-based reservation system for the Department. Others who use ReserveAmerica include the National Park Service, most state park systems, many local and regional park and recreation agencies, and private camping facilities. When a visitor to the California State Parks website (www.parks.ca.gov) clicks a link to reserve a stay at a state park, the link takes the visitor to the ReserveAmerica site. Those who made reservations by telephone were included in the survey if they provided their email address.

Planning Division staff contacted invitees by email. A link in the email directed invitees to the web-based survey.

Survey response rates

To collect data from visitors across each of the four seasons, the Visitor Survey periodically surveyed visitors during a two-year period from July 2009 through August 2010.

Of 22,361 total invitations 3,405 people responded, an overall response rate of about 15%.



Survey Methodology, Management and Maintenance Survey



One of three miner's cabins at Malakoff Diggins SHP. This park preserves and interprets the 1850s-1880s hydraulic mining era, when gold seekers combed the Sierra foothills. The legacy of hydraulic gold mining can still be seen in the gouged hillsides and choked streambeds around Malakoff Diggins SHP.



Survey development

Developed by Department staff in much the same way as the Visitor Survey, the Management and Maintenance Survey consisted of 23 qualitative and quantitative questions, selected for their relevance to the Department and recreation providers statewide.

This survey focused on obtaining information from field staff and concessionaires who either managed the alternative camping facilities or performed maintenance, housekeeping, and check-in and check-out procedures.

See Appendix B for the survey questions.

Survey participants

Invitees included 330 staff and concessionaires from the nine parks with alternative camping and serving in these jobs or job classifications:

- Administration/Business & Fiscal Officer
- Concessionaire
- Management Service Technician
- Park Aide
- Park Maintenance Assistant
- Park Maintenance Chief
- Park Maintenance Supervisor
- Park Maintenance Worker
- State Park Peace Officer Supervisor/Ranger
- State Park Superintendent
- Visitor Services Staff

Survey delivery

The Management and Maintenance Survey launched in January 2010 and closed in April 2011.

Survey response rate

A total of 67 invitees responded for a 20% response rate. Response numbers by park are shown in the next table.



Table 4. Management and Maintenance Survey, number of responses.

Park name	Number of responses
Big Basin Redwoods SP	14
Brannan Island SRA	5
Crystal Cove SP	4
Cuyamaca Rancho SP	3
Hendy Woods SP	8
Lake Oroville SRA	15
Malakoff Diggins SHP	5
McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP	4
Mount Tamalpais SP	11
Other	8
Total (exceeds number of survey participants since some staff are associated with more than one park).	77





Results, Visitor Survey



Rustic cabins, Mount Tamalpais SP. The Rocky Point-Steep Ravine Environmental Campground, on a marine terrace one mile south of Stinson Beach, has seven primitive campsites and nine rustic cabins. Each cabin has a small wood stove, picnic table, sleeping platforms and an outdoor barbecue, but no running water. Restrooms and water faucets are nearby.



How Responses are Presented in this Report

Responses are organized in these categories:

- Where visitors stayed
- Decision points: why visitors chose that park, why they chose alternative camping, whether they had been to the park before, how they learned about the park, feedback on their reservation experience
- Trip characteristics: when they stayed at the park, whether the park was their primary destination or a stop along the way, length of stay
- Satisfaction with and importance of facilities: additional amenities they would like, level of satisfaction with facility aspects, level of importance of facility aspects
- Visitor demographics: gender, age, level of camping experience, ethnicity, combined household income, residence, group characteristics (size of group, composition of group, ages of group members)



Where Visitors Stayed

When asked which park they had visited to use alternative camping facilities, 3,405 people answered.

Question 2. At what State Park did you stay in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin?

Park	Percentage of visits	Number of visits
Crystal Cove SP	32.0%	1,164
Big Basin Redwoods SP	24.2%	881
Mount Tamalpais SP	17.3%	634
Lake Oroville SRA	8.7%	316
McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP	7.0%	254
Cuyamaca Rancho SP	4.6%	167
Hendy Woods SP	3.4%	123
Malakoff Diggins SHP	2.2%	81
Brannan Island SRA	0.6%	23
Totals *	100.0%	3,643

*Total is greater than number of respondents due to visits to more than one park.

Respondents reported they visited Crystal Cove SP the most (1,164 responses), followed closely by Big Basin Redwoods State Park (881).

The relatively large number of alternative camping sites and the parks' features (including access to water) and location (near urban areas) may contribute to the popularity of facilities at these two parks. Crystal Cove SP has quaint cottages on an Orange County beach. Big Basin Redwoods SP, with 38 tent cabins, is near two large urban areas, San Francisco and San Jose. On the other hand, while McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP has 24 rustic cabins, it is in Northeastern California and far from a large urban area.



Decision Points

The following questions asked visitors about decisions they made about their trip, such as why they chose the park.

Question 3. What made you choose this State Park to camp in?
(Select all that apply.)

Reason	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
Location of park (anything about where the park is located such as "it is close to home or family or its proximity to the festival or Lake Tahoe or it's where I find happiness" that made you choose this park)	29.5%	2,734
This park had tent cabins, cottages, floating campsites or cabins (you chose this park because it offered this type of camping option)	25.3%	2,343
Natural or cultural features that make this park special (anything that is specific to this park such as "it has a museum, it is located on the ocean or it's where the big trees are" that made you choose this park)	20.6%	1,910
Cost compared to other choices (motel/hotel, cruise, etc.)	8.6%	796
Previous visit (you've stayed at this park or another park with cabins, cottages and/or tent cabins)	7.2%	662
Activities and programs at this park (anything about what is going on or what happens at the park that made you choose it to camp at such as the swimming, fishing, hiking, Junior Ranger program or the friendly staff)	4.5%	416
It was recommended to me (whether by a friend, family member, magazine article or television show)	2.6%	240
Other*	1.7%	155
Totals	100.0%	9,256

*Other responses such as park location, camping options, and natural or cultural features received the most responses. Interestingly, just 4.5% of the respondents indicated "activities and programs" as the reason they chose that park.



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 5. Why did you choose to camp in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin instead of a traditional campground using a tent or RV? (Select all that apply.)

Reason	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
Tent cabins or cottages are more convenient than using a recreational vehicle or pitching a tent	20.1%	1,383
Tent cabins or cottages offer a cleaner experience than tenting	13.6%	935
I don't like sleeping on the ground and wish to experience a 'softer' sleeping experience	12.2%	842
Cabins or cottages provide better protection from the weather	10.7%	734
I feel safer and more secure in a cabin or cottage	8.5%	582
I wanted to try something new and/or different	7.8%	534
I don't own or have access to necessary camping equipment	7.4%	513
It is easier to camp with children in cabins or cottages	5.6%	383
Other*	14.1%	972
Totals	100.0%	6,878

*The top reasons in the Other category were: location, being on or near the water, the availability of the historical qualities of the cabins or cottages, and the amenities of restrooms, showers, or stoves.

Responses reveal that visitors enjoy the convenience, cleanliness and comfort of alternative camping facilities.

Question 9. Have you been to this State Park before?

Response	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
Yes	76.6%	2,656
No	22.8%	793
Don't remember / maybe	0.6%	20
Totals	100.0%	3,469

Most respondents had visited the park before. It's possible that for some visitors, a previous visit using traditional camping facilities may have inspired them to return and try alternative camping.



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 10. How did you learn about this park? (Select all that apply.)

How learned about park	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
Recommended by family or friends	27.3%	1,405
Grew up nearby / live nearby	26.3%	1,357
Internet / California State Parks web site	18.1%	933
Newspaper	7.4%	381
Magazine or publication	6.9%	353
Tour book / map (e.g., AAA guide)	4.4%	228
By chance (drove by, etc.)	3.4%	173
Don't remember (forget, been so long ago I don't remember, etc.)	1.6%	83
Road sign	1.0%	52
TV / radio	1.0%	50
Travel agency	0.0%	2
Other*	2.6%	135
Totals	100.0%%	5,152

*The top three answers in the Other category were from those who 1) had been coming to the park for years, 2) had visited nearby, and 3) had visited the park as a child.

The two main ways visitors learned about the park were by growing up/living nearby or hearing about the park from family or friends. Learning about the park on the Internet or California State Parks website was the next-most-frequent response.

Question 4. How difficult was it to reserve your cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin?

Difficulty/ease of reservation system	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
I was able to confirm my reservation at the location I wanted, the first time I tried	35.1%	1,216
I had to call back several times to make my reservation	58.7%	2,036
This reservation location wasn't my first choice	6.3%	217
Totals	100.0%	3,469



Results, Visitor Survey

Results show that over half (58.7%) of respondents had to call back several times to complete their reservation. While reasons for this are not known, possible reasons include:

- Reservations for alternative camping facilities typically open seven months in advance and so a rush of people seeking reservations all at the same time can tie up the reservation system and cause busy signals.
- The Department lacks an adequate supply of alternative camping facilities.



Trip Characteristics

The following questions gathered information about the visitor's trip. Although Question 13 did ask visitors when they stayed in their cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin, tabulating the complete set of raw reservation data gives a more complete picture of the seasonal variations. The reservation data are summarized in the table below.

When did visitors reserve their cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin?

Time of Visit	Percentage of reservations	Number of reservations
Spring 2007 (March - May)	2.7%	782
Summer 2007 (June - August)	8.8%	2,572
Fall 2007 (September - November)	8.0%	2,332
Winter 2007/08 (December - February)	7.5%	2,183
Spring 2008 (March - May)	9.7%	2,839
Summer 2008 (June - August)	14.7%	4,290
Fall 2008 (September - November)	9.2%	2,673
Winter 2008/09 (December - February)	8.1%	2,375
Spring 2009 (March - May)	9.9%	2,887
Summer 2009 (June - August)	11.3%	3,311
Fall 2009 (September - November)	5.1%	1,494
Winter 2009/10 (December - February)	2.4%	698
Spring 2010 (March - May)	2.6%	760
Totals	100.0%	29,196

For study purposes, data from reservations was combined into three-month "seasons." Not surprisingly, the data show that most visitors made their alternative camping reservations for the summer season, when many children are out of school, and that fall and spring were less popular, followed by the least popular winter season.



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 11. Was this State Park your primary destination or was this one of several stops along an extended trip?

	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Primary destination	92.2%	3,121
One of several stops	7.8%	265
Totals	100.0%	3,386

Overwhelmingly, the park where respondents stayed was their primary destination.

Question 12. How many nights did you stay in your cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin?

Number of nights	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
1	19.1%	649
2	45.6%	1,547
3	21.0%	711
4	7.5%	256
5	3.3%	110
6	1.2%	40
7	1.6%	53
8	0.1%	3
9	0.2%	5
10	0.1%	3
11	0.0%	0
12	0.1%	2
13	0.1%	3
14+	0.1%	4
Totals	100.0%	3,386

Length-of-stay data are valuable in managing reservation systems and facilitating maintenance and housekeeping as well as developing programs and activities.

Responses show that a 2-night stay is most popular, with a 3-night stay second in popularity and a 1-night stay a close third. Most likely these two-night stays correspond to weekends, but day-of-the-week data were not collected. Because the majority of alternative camping facility visitors stay two nights, the Department (and other providers or partners) could potentially promote weekend package deals.



Satisfaction with and Importance of Facilities

This section of the Visitor Survey focuses on visitor experience.

Question 14. What would you like California State Parks to add to its cabins, cottages, floating campsites or tent cabins offered at this park? (Select all that apply.)

Amenity	Percentage of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Respondents Surveyed
Nothing, I liked it just the way it was	49.8%	1816	3643
More units (tent cabins, cottages, yurts, floating or cabins)*	29.8%	408	1369
Electricity (lights or outlets)*	16.5%	226	1369
Sink (including running water)	10.6%	385	3643
Barbecue*	9.1%	124	1369
Shower	8.7%	317	3643
Toilet	8.4%	305	3643
A porch with furniture	7.2%	262	3643
Kitchenette (including stove, table, etc.)	7.1%	260	3643
Mattress	6.1%	222	3643
Chair*	4.4%	60	1369
Air conditioning/heater	4.3%	156	3643
Other**	12.4%	453	3643

*Because so many survey respondents early in the survey period wrote in these answers, they were given their own categories midway through the survey period.

** Some of the top responses for the Other category were: stove or oven, better mattresses, removal of mice, and curtains or shades.

About half of the respondents liked the cabins, cottages, floating campsites or tent cabins the way they were and almost a third (29.8%) asked for more units to be added. Electricity was also a relatively popular amenity. The relatively large percentage of visitors asking for more units is reinforced by the high percentage of people having to call back repeatedly to make reservations, the high occupancy rates for facilities in desirable areas, numerous staff suggestions for adding more facilities, and the greater revenue potential from alternative camping facilities. The table on the next page shows responses by park.



Results, Visitor Survey

Table 5. Additional amenities desired, by park.

Amenity	Percentages of Responses (Respondents could choose all that apply)								
	Crystal Cove SP	Big Basin Redwoods SP	Mount Tamalpais SP	Lake Oroville SRA	McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP	Cuyamaca Rancho SP	Hendy Woods SP	Malakoff Diggins SHP	Brannan Island SRA
Nothing, I liked it just the way it was	50.9%	51.1%	63.2%	38.6%	45.7%	41.3%	56.9%	45.7%	26.1%
More units (tent cabins, cottages, yurts, floating campsites or cabins)	47.4%	16.0%	13.6%	51.3%	27.3%	41.2%	32.4%	27.3%	57.1%
Barbecue	16.7%	7.4%	2.9%	0.9%	4.5%	5.9%	5.9%	4.5%	0.0%
Kitchenette (including stove, table, etc.)	8.5%	6.9%	2.8%	3.5%	2.5%	7.8%	4.1%	2.5%	30.4%
Air conditioning/heater	4.6%	3.0%	0.9%	1.3%	6.2%	10.8%	1.6%	6.2%	21.7%
Mattress	2.7%	7.2%	6.5%	0.9%	12.3%	16.2%	19.5%	12.3%	13.0%
Shower	2.4%	6.0%	15.0%	17.1%	17.3%	9.6%	5.7%	17.3%	8.7%
Electricity (lights or outlets)	2.2%	23.8%	9.3%	16.8%	22.7%	35.3%	32.4%	22.7%	42.9%
Toilet	2.1%	11.2%	8.4%	2.2%	16.0%	16.8%	8.9%	16.0%	17.4%
A porch with furniture	2.1%	13.3%	5.0%	2.2%	11.1%	12.0%	11.4%	11.1%	17.4%
Sink (including running water)	1.4%	13.8%	11.2%	15.2%	9.9%	18.0%	12.2%	9.9%	30.4%
Chair	1.3%	4.9%	3.2%	5.3%	4.5%	5.9%	8.8%	4.5%	28.6%

Many respondents liked the alternative camping facilities the way they were, but large percentages of respondents at the more popular parks, such as Crystal Cove SP and Lake Oroville SRA, also asked for more alternative camping facilities (“more units”). *Note: Because respondents were encouraged to check all the amenities they wanted, the percentage totals add up to more than 100%.*



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 15. Concerning your stay in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin while camping at this State Park, please indicate how satisfied you were.

Lodging aspect	Percentage of respondents		
	Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Unsatisfied / Don't care	Unsatisfied
Outward appearance of the tent cabin, cottage or cabin	94.5%	4.1%	1.4%
Feeling of safety and security during your visit	91.4%	6.3%	2.3%
Cleanliness of your unit (was it tidy when you arrived?)	91.0%	6.3%	2.7%
Overall condition of the unit (was the unit in good repair?)	89.8%	7.4%	2.7%
Location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park	89.1%	9.0%	1.9%
Were the existing facilities in the unit convenient and comfortable?	86.4%	9.9%	3.7%
Availability of restroom and/or shower nearby	83.3%	12.1%	4.6%
Fees you paid compared to the value of your experience (was it worth the money?)	72.9%	18.1%	9.0%

Most respondents were satisfied with all aspects of their stay. The lowest level of satisfaction was with “fee compared to the value” (72.9%).



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 16. Concerning your stay in a tent cabin, cottage, floating campsite or cabin while camping at this State Park, please indicate how important that aspect of the lodging was to you.

Lodging aspect	Percentage of respondents		
	Important	Neither Important or Unimportant / Don't care	Unimportant
Overall condition of the unit (was the unit in good repair?)	92.6%	6.5%	0.9%
Cleanliness of your unit (was it tidy when you arrived?)	91.78%	7.3%	1.0%
Were the existing facilities in the unit convenient and comfortable?	85.76%	13.1%	1.2%
Feeling of safety and security during your visit	82.0%	15.2%	2.8%
Availability of restroom and/or shower nearby	81.8%	15.8%	2.4%
Fees you paid compared to the value of your experience (was it worth the money?)	77.9%	19.4%	2.7%
Location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park	62.1%	32.7%	5.2%
Outward appearance of the tent cabin, cottage or cabin	60.4%	34.7%	4.9%

While most respondents indicated that all aspects were important, the five most important aspects of the lodging were:

- overall condition,
- cleanliness,
- convenience and comfort,
- feeling of safety and security, and
- restroom availability.

Outward appearance and location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park were clearly less important than the other aspects.



Visitor Demographics

Demographic questions help the Department understand park visitors.

Question 17. What is your gender?

Gender	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Female	60.9%	2,029
Male	39.1%	1,305
Totals	100.0%	3,334

More than half (61%) of respondents were female.

Question 18. What is your age?

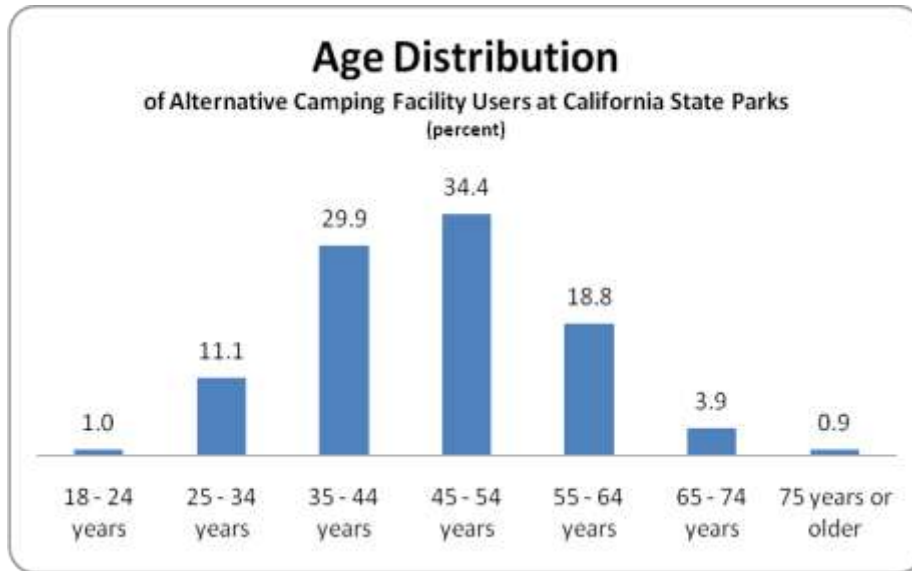
Age range	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
18 - 24 years	1.0%	32
25 - 34 years	11.1%	374
35 - 44 years	29.9%	1,003
45 - 54 years	34.4%	1,153
55 - 64 years	18.8%	631
65 - 74 years	3.9%	132
75 years or older	0.9%	30
Totals	100.0%	3,355

As shown in the next graph, the age distribution of respondents follows a fairly bell shaped curve. The highest percentage of respondents was those between the ages of 45 and 54 years of age.



Results, Visitor Survey

Graph 1. Age Distribution of Respondents, Visitor Survey.



Question 6. How would you rate your personal experience as a camper?

Experience as camper	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Inexperienced Camper	9.5%	328
Occasional Camper	37.2%	1,291
Experienced Camper	53.3%	1,851
Totals	100.0%	3,470

This question was included to determine whether less experienced campers are using alternative camping as a lodging option, which does not appear to be the case. Alternative camping facilities were used primarily by experienced campers.

Results show that over half of respondents were experienced campers, and about a third were occasional campers.

Among individual parks, Crystal Cove SP had the highest percentage by far of inexperienced campers (20.7%).



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 20. In terms of your racial/ethnic identity, which group do you individually belong to?

Racial/ethnic identity	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
White (non-Hispanic)	82.8%	2,684
Asian	5.2%	168
Other / Multi-racial	5.2%	169
Hispanic or Latino	4.9%	160
American Indian and/or Alaska Native	0.8%	25
Black or African American	0.7%	21
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.4%	14
Totals	100.0%	3,241

Most (almost 83%) respondents were of the “White (non-Hispanic)” ethnic group. Only 4.9% of respondents indicated they were “Hispanic or Latino” despite the relatively large percentage of Hispanic/Latinos in California.

Question 21. What is your combined household income?

Combined household income	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Less than \$20,000	2.1%	64
\$20,000 to \$49,999	8.8%	265
\$50,000 to \$74,999	16.0%	484
\$75,000 to \$99,999	19.8%	598
\$100,000 to \$149,999	28.1%	847
\$150,000 to \$199,999	15.7%	473
\$200,000 or more	9.5%	287
Totals	100.0%	3,018

Results show that 73.1% of visitors indicated household incomes of \$75,000 or greater. Sixteen percent reported household incomes of between \$50,000 and \$74,999 per year. Only a small percentage (10.9%) indicated annual household incomes of between \$0 and \$49,999.



Results, Visitor Survey

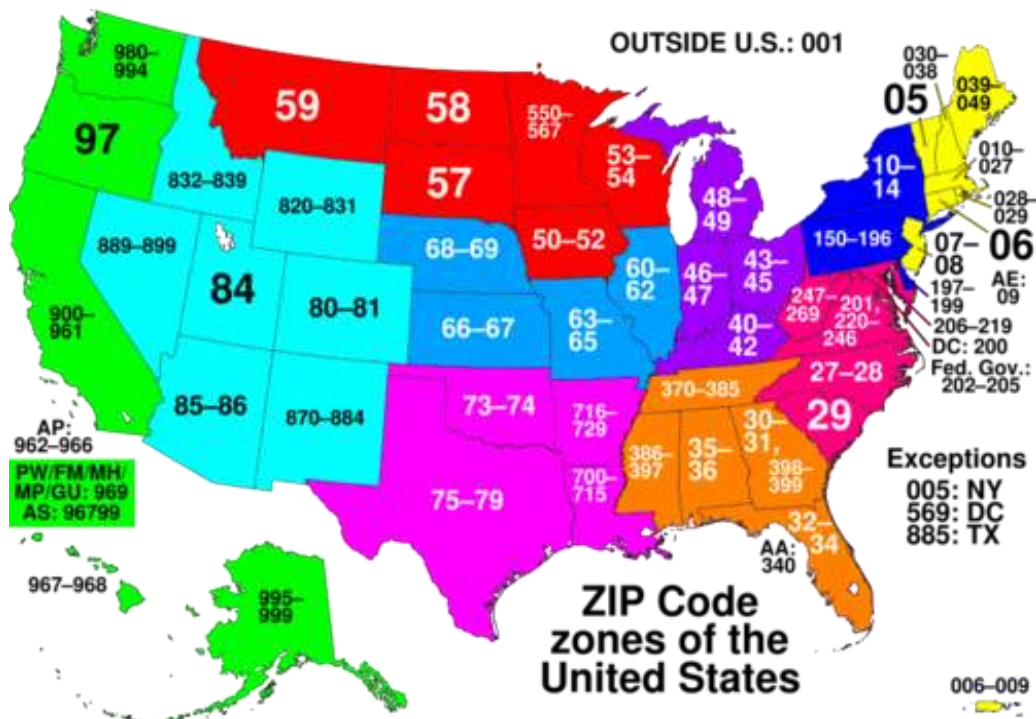
Question 22. Are you a resident of the United States or are you visiting from abroad?

Residency	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Yes, I live in the United States	99.4%	3,365
No, I'm visiting from abroad	0.6%	2
Totals	100.0%	3,367

It was assumed that most visitors lived in the United States, and survey results show this to be true.

The map here shows the locations of ZIP Code zones, which start with a number from 0 to 9. (Source: U.S. Postal Service.)

Map 2. Locations of U.S. ZIP Code Zones.



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 23. What's your zip code at home?

ZIP code zone	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
0	0.3%	11
1	0.6%	19
2	0.2%	8
3	0.2%	8
4	0.1%	3
5	0.2%	7
6	0.3%	10
7	0.2%	8
8	2.3%	74
9	95.6%	3,148
Totals	100.0%	3,296

Visitor ZIP codes, provided during the survey, can determine how far visitors traveled to an alternative camping facility.

ZIP codes for the West Coast, Alaska, Hawai'i, Guam and American Samoa start with 9. Over 95% of respondents indicated these ZIP codes.

The vast majority (3,116) or 94.5% of respondents were from California. (This information is not shown on above table.)

Question 24. Please tell us what country you are visiting from.

Of non-U.S. residents, respondents reported these countries of residence:

- Austria (1)
- Canada (6)
- France (1)
- Germany (1)
- Mexico (3)
- New Zealand (1)
- Scotland (1)
- Singapore (1)



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 7. How many are in your group, including yourself on this trip?

No. in group	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
1	3.2%	110
2	29%	1,008
3	11.5%	399
4	25.3%	878
5	8.5%	296
6	6.6%	229
7	2.4%	83
8	4.2%	144
9	1.4%	47
10	2.0%	69
11	0.5%	18
12	1.5%	52
13	0.4%	15
14	0.7%	24
15	0.6%	20
16	0.5%	17
17	0.1%	3
18	0.2%	7
19	0.1%	5
20+	1.3%	45
Totals	100.0%	3,469

The size of camping groups provides information that can be helpful for facilities maintenance, such as “wear and tear” on facilities and housekeeping requirements, and use patterns, which can help guide future development.

Responses show that groups of between two and four visitors are most typical. These group sizes suit many alternative camping accommodations. For example, rustic cabins and tent cabins frequently consist of only one room and are relatively small. There were only a few respondents who indicated they stayed alone at the park.



Results, Visitor Survey

Question 8. Are you camping with: (Select all that apply.)

Who camping with	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
Family only	47.8%	1,953
Both Family and Friends at the same time	32.4%	1,325
Just Friends	13.3%	542
No one (I usually go alone)	3.4%	137
Organized group	2.5%	102
Other*	0.6%	26
Totals	100.0%	4,085

*Top responses in this category came from those camping with dogs.

Responses show that almost half of respondents came with only their families. Those staying with both family and friends also represented about a third of respondents. Information about respondents' groups can be used for marketing and help guide design of lodging furnishings and lodging setup. Privacy dividers, for example, might be attractive to certain groups.

Question 19. What is the age range for each other member of the party who stayed with you? How many in your party are:

Age range of other group members	Average no. of people in group in that age range	Number of respondents
Under 1 year	1.2	110
1 - 9 years	1.9	1,026
10 - 14 years	1.8	726
15 - 24 years	2.2	665
25 - 34 years	2.1	681
35 - 44 years	1.9	1,214
45 - 54 years	1.8	1,209
55 - 64 years	1.6	740
65 - 74 years	1.5	229
75 years or older	1.2	100

Each respondent was asked to provide age ranges for each other person in their group. Results suggest that facilities are popular with families with young children. Among parks, the highest percentage of youth aged 15-24 years old was at Lake Oroville SRA (22.2%), and the lowest was at Hendy Woods SP (6.9%) and Mount Tamalpais SP (6.8%). These results suggest that families with children may be more attracted to water than to wooded parks.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey



Cabin, McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP. From the park brochure: “Nestled within the 128 campsites you will find 24 one- and two-room cabins within walking distance of the falls and the camp store. Each of these cabins is well-insulated against chilly nights, and is equipped with propane heaters, platform bunk beds with foam pads, wood floors, and covered porches. Cabins, which are offered in two sizes, 18 feet and 24 feet, come with a fire ring for campfires, outdoor table, and space to pitch a tent outside. All rental cabins are a short walk from a restroom with flush toilets and showers. All you need to bring are some sleeping bags and a battery-powered lantern or two (the cabins have no electricity or running water).”



Staff/Concessionaire Information

These questions provide information about the respondents to the management and maintenance survey.

Question 1. What is your role in the management and/or maintenance of alternative campsites within the State Parks System?

Role	Percentage of respondents	No. of respondents
Administration/Business & Fiscal Officer	4.3%	3
Concessionaire	4.3%	3
Maintenance	1.4%	1
Management Service Technician	1.4%	1
Park Aide	4.2%	3
Park Maintenance Assistant	4.2%	3
Park Maintenance Chief	8.5%	6
Park Maintenance Supervisor	7%	5
Park Maintenance Worker	16.9%	12
State Park Peace Officer Supervisor/Ranger	5.6%	4
State Park Peace Officer/Ranger	22.5%	16
State Park Superintendent	5.6%	4
Visitor Services	2.8%	2
Other, please specify	11.3%	8
Totals	100.0%	71

Responses to "Other, please specify":

- State Park Interpreter I (1)
- Water and Sewage Plant Supervisor (2)
- Office Technician (1)
- Heavy Equipment Mechanic (1)
- Regional Interpretive Specialist (2)
- Staff Park and Recreation Specialist (1)

Park maintenance classifications were the largest portion of respondents (45%); 28% of the respondents stated their job classification as State Park Peace Officer Supervisor/Ranger or State Park Peace Officer/Ranger.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Question 2. At what State Park unit did you in any way manage and/or maintain alternative campsites? (Select all that apply.)

State park	Percentage of respondents	Number of responses
Lake Oroville SRA	21.4%	16
Big Basin Redwoods SP	18.6%	14
Mount Tamalpais SP	16%	12
Hendy Woods SP	12%	9
Brannan Island SRA	9.3%	7
Malakoff Diggins SHP	6.7%	5
Crystal Cove SP	6.7%	5
Cuyamaca Rancho SP	4%	3
McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP	5.3%	4
Totals	100.0%	75

Most respondents were located at Lake Oroville SRA, Big Basin Redwoods SP or Mount Tamalpais SP.

Question 3. When did you participate in the management and/or maintenance of alternative campsites? (Select all that apply.)

Season	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
Spring 2007 (March - May)	5.3%	10
Summer 2007 (June - August)	5.9%	11
Fall 2007 (September - November)	6.4%	12
Winter 2007/08 (December - February)	5.3%	10
Spring 2008 (March - May)	6.9%	13
Summer 2008 (June - August)	7.4%	14
Fall 2008 (September - November)	8.0%	15
Winter 2008/09 (December - February)	7.4%	14
Spring 2009 (March - May)	8.5%	16
Summer 2009 (June - August)	7.4%	14
Fall 2009 (September - November)	8.5%	16
All of the above	22.9%	43
Totals	100.0%	203

About 23% of the respondents indicated that they managed and/or maintained alternative camping facilities during the entire survey period.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Question 4. How long have you been managing and/or maintaining alternative campsites for California State Parks or any other agency/entity?

Length of time	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Less than 1 year	11.9%	8
1 - 2 years	14.9%	10
2 - 5 years	26.9%	18
5 years or more	46.3%	31
Totals	100.0%	67

About 73% of the respondents reported they had spent more than two years managing and/or maintaining alternative camping campsites.

Note: For Questions 5-23 (all remaining questions), respondents were asked to “please respond thinking about your most recent assignment involving alternative camping.”



Facilities

The questions focus on amenities, site arrangement, check-in and check-out procedures, and cost per night's stay.

Question 5. What are the typical amenities in each cabin, cottage and/or tent cabin at this park? (Select all that apply.)

Also see Table 3, which shows amenities by park.

Amenity	Percentage of responses	Number of responses
Wood burning stove	9.5%	37
Locking doors	9.3%	36
Fire pit	8.8%	34
Barbeque grill	8.0%	31
Toilet/restroom	5.9%	23
Fan	1.5%	6
Electricity (including lights)	5.2%	20
Trash can(s)	9.0%	35
Bed (without mattress)	4.6%	18
Sink (with hot/cold running water)	4.1%	16
Bed (with mattress)	4.4%	17
Table(s)	14.4%	56
Shower	3.1%	12
Kitchenette	2.1%	8
Heat (gas/propane)	1.6%	6
Heat (electric)	1.3%	5
Air conditioning	0.5%	2
Bunk	6.7%	26
Totals	100.0%	388



Question 22. How are the cabins, cottages and/or tent cabins arranged?

Arrangement of facilities	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
All together in their own area (grouped)	25.8%	17
In a loop	24.2%	16
Mixed together with other types of camping	27.3%	18
Stand alone	16.7%	11
Other, please specify	6.0%	4
Total	100.0%	66

The four responses to the “Other, please specify” option were:

- Bunched on a cliff side, camping nearby.
- Spread across the lake (Oroville) in various coves (try to be secluded).
- The area is a historic district. They are grouped together in a cove on the beach.
- Floating campsites dictated by current lake (Oroville) levels. Usually try to arrange campsites in different forks or branches of the lake.

Question 9. Does your unit have check in and check out procedures?

	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Yes	81.4%	57
No	18.6%	13
Totals	100.0%	70

Out of the nine parks, only two, Brannan Island SRA and Cuyamaca Rancho SP, do not have check-in and check-out procedures.

Question 10. Please describe the check in and check out procedures.

The responses to this question mostly included times and locations for check-in and check-out and the staff responsible.

Most visitors were allowed to check in by 4 p.m. and required to check-out by 12 noon. Some visitors could check in at park headquarters, the gift shop, museum or visitor center but most respondents reported that the entrance kiosk handled their alternative camping visitors.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Check-in and check-out duties were shared by park aides at an entrance kiosk, concessionaire staff, camp hosts on site, or by rangers or maintenance staff patrolling the campground.

Question 21. How much is being charged per night to stay in the cabins, cottages and/or tent cabins at your unit?

In hindsight, this question was not appropriate to ask survey participants, due to the wide variation in pricing responses. The next two tables show rental rates for the alternative camping facilities in the California State Parks system, based on data from ReserveAmerica.

Table 6. Rental rates for state park cabins and floating campsites.

Park name	Park/Campground	Site Type	Rate
Big Basin Redwoods SP	Big Basin Tent Cabins	Cabin	\$75.00
Brannan Island SRA	Hike-In Cabin	Cabin	\$50.00
Cuyamaca Rancho SP	Loop Cabins	Cabin	\$70.00
Cuyamaca Rancho SP	Nature Den	Cabin	\$75.00
Hendy Woods SP	Hendy Woods	Cabin	\$50.00
Lake Oroville SRA	Lake Oroville	Floating Campsite	\$150.00
Malakoff Diggins SHP	Malakoff Diggins	Cabin	\$40.00
McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP	McArthur Burney Cabin	Cabin: 4 person	\$71.50
McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial SP	McArthur Burney Cabin	Cabin: 6 person	\$93.50
Mount Tamalpais SP	Steep Ravine	Cabin	\$100.00

Source:

<http://www.reserveamerica.com/showPage.do?name=common&commonPath=/usa/ca/cafeesspecial.html>

Fees effective Aug 17, 2009.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Table 7. Rental rates for Crystal Cove SP cottages, studios and dorm rooms.

Cottage number	Type	Base rate	Base rate maximum occupancy	Maximum occupancy	Additional per person	Maximum rate
1 - Beach Pad	Individual Cottage	\$191	4	6	\$33	\$257
2 - Shell Shack	Individual Cottage	\$180	4	7	\$33	\$279
16 - Sand Castle	Individual Cottage	\$191	4	7	\$33	\$290
18 - Sunset Bungalow	Individual Cottage	\$180	4	6	\$33	\$246
19A - South Sea Shanty	Upstairs unit in individual cottage	\$191	4	8	\$33	\$323
19B - The Crew's Quarters	Downstairs studio unit in individual cottage	\$125	4	4	n/a	\$125
24 - Rustic Loft	Individual Cottage	\$180	4	5	\$33	\$213
27 - The Dive Shack	Individual Cottage	\$180	4	6	\$33	\$246
32 - Painter's Cottage	Individual Cottage	\$191	4	9	\$33	\$356
33 - Romantic Retreat	Individual Cottage	\$180	4	6	\$33	\$246
37 - Fisherman's Perch	Individual Cottage	\$191	4	8	\$33	\$323
29A - Long Board Lodge	Dorm room	\$98	3	6	\$23	\$167
29B - Long Board Lodge	Dorm room	\$65	2	4	\$23	\$111
38A - Beachcomber's Lodge	Dorm room	\$65	2	3	\$23	\$88
38B - Beachcomber's Lodge	Dorm room	\$65	2	4	\$23	\$111



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Cottage number	Type	Base rate	Base rate maximum occupancy	Maximum occupancy	Additional per person	Maximum rate
38C - Beachcomber's Lodge	Dorm room	\$33	1	2	\$23	\$56
38D - Beachcomber's Lodge	Dorm room	\$65	2	4	\$23	\$111
38E - Beachcomber's Lodge	Dorm room	\$33	1	2	\$23	\$56
39A - Paradise Lodge	Dorm room	\$65	2	4	\$23	\$111
39B - Paradise Lodge	Dorm room	\$65	2	4	\$23	\$111
39C - Paradise Lodge	Dorm room	\$33	1	2	\$23	\$56

Source: <http://www.reserveamerica.com/showPage.do?name=common&commonPath=/usa/ca/cafeesspecial.html>

Fees effective Aug 17, 2009



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Question 17. Do you agree? The alternative campsites at my unit are holding up well and are durable.

	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Agree	80.1%	54
Neither agree or disagree	11.9%	8
Disagree	7.5%	5
Totals	100.0%	67

Most respondents (80%) agreed that the Department's alternative camping sites were holding up well and were durable.

Question 18. Feel free to comment on why you think the alternative campsites at your unit aren't very durable (optional).

Staff from five of the nine park units responded "Disagree" to Question 17 and provided comments to that effect in their answers to Question 18:

- Staff from Malakoff Diggins SHP and Hendy Woods SP reported there was not enough staff time to maintain the cabins.
- A Lake Oroville SRA staff member reported a need for general infrastructure upgrades.
- Staff members from Cuyamaca Rancho SP and Big Basin Redwoods SP said that their cabins are suffering some damage from the weather and visitor abuse.



Housekeeping and Maintenance

Question 6. Who is maintaining the housekeeping system? (Select all that apply.)

Role	Percentage of respondents	Number of responses
Maintenance staff	51.5%	50
Camp host	19.6%	19
Concession	19.6%	19
A combination of the maintenance staff, volunteers and/or others	5.2%	5
Volunteers	3.1%	3
Ranger	1.0%	1
Totals	100.0%	97

About half of respondents indicated that Department Maintenance staff are responsible for the housekeeping system. The Department operates most parks surveyed, so this response was expected. Some alternative camping facilities are managed by concessionaires, who typically perform housekeeping functions.

Question 7. How well is the housekeeping system working?

Satisfaction level	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Excellent (It's working beyond expectations)	35.8%	24
Satisfactory (It's working okay)	61.2%	41
Unsatisfactory (It's not working very well)	3.0%	2
Totals	100.0%	67

Most respondents indicated that the housekeeping system was working well, with 97% responding "Satisfactory" or "Excellent." Respondents also could comment in Question 8.



Question 8. Why do you think the housekeeping system isn't working well? What would you change to make it better?

Following are the only two negative comments, submitted by the two respondents who indicated in Question 7 that the housekeeping system was unsatisfactory.

1. The housekeeping of our cabins and one of our restrooms is the concessions [concessionaire's] responsibility. They have a hired camp host for the housekeeping of all 24 cabins as well as one restroom. I do think in the summer prime time that this is too big of a load for 2-3 people. They need more staff. Their standards of housekeeping compared to a park employee are VERY LOW. And this reflects on the whole maintenance staff as it looks to a visitor or camper that this facility is being maintained and cleaned by park staff when it is taken care of by the concessionaire. Within our park we are known for our clean restrooms and litter free park and the cabin area and restroom are not up to the same standards as the rest of the park. And this problem has been addressed with park management and concession management and it's just an ongoing problem.
2. Not enough staff to clean cabins after each group departs. We sometimes miss cleaning them between groups so the incoming group finds them dirty.

Question 23. This is your chance to tell us what you think about alternative camping systemwide...

(Full text of the question: "This is your chance to tell us what you think about alternative camping systemwide. Is it working? Do you think our visitors are pleased with their experiences? Do the alternative camping facilities work for the park unit? Are visitors satisfied?")

Question 23, an open-ended question at the end of the survey, allowed respondents to provide comments.

Fifty maintenance and management staff and concessionaires responded.

The majority of the respondents agreed that the Department's alternative camping facilities are popular with visitors and that visitors are satisfied. Substantial numbers also said the units were working for the Department, worked well during the off season and for campers without tenting equipment and that the Department should add more alternative camping units.

A smaller number commented that the prices should be lowered to accommodate low-income visitors, that they should be open all year, and that more funding and



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

staffing are needed to adequately maintain them but that they were good revenue generators for the Department.

A small number of respondents thought that visitors were unsatisfied, that the cabins were not working for the Department and that their cabins should be returned to tent camping sites.

Question 11. On average, how frequently is housekeeping (sweeping, trash removal, etc.) being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?

Frequency of housekeeping	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Once a day	64.2%	43
More than twice a week	22.4%	15
Once every two weeks	11.9%	8
Once a month	1.5%	1
Totals	100.0%	67

Most (64%) respondents indicate that housekeeping at alternative campsites occurs once a day.

Question 16. Do you agree? Maintenance requires very little of my daily time.

	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Agree	46.3%	31
Neither agree or disagree	25.4%	17
Disagree	28.3%	19
Totals	100.0%	67

Only about 28% of respondents disagreed with the statement that maintenance required “very little” of their daily time.



Repairs

Question 12. On average, how frequently are major repairs (new sinks, remodeling, roofing, etc.) being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?

Frequency of major repairs	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Several times a year	17.9%	12
Annually	31.3%	21
Every few years	50.8%	34
Totals	100.0%	67

Most respondents indicated that major repairs are typically done annually or every few years.

Question 13. On average, how frequently are minor repairs (painting, nailing boards, cleaning out drains, etc.) being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?

Frequency of minor repairs	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Daily	5.9%	4
Weekly	22.4%	15
Monthly	25.4%	17
Annually	46.3%	31
Totals	100.0%	67

About half of respondents (46%) stated that they do minor repairs annually.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Question 14. On average, how frequently is vandalism or damage from occupants being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?

Frequency of vandalism/damage from occupants	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Daily	2.9%	2
Monthly	30.0%	20
Annually	44.7%	30
Vandalism or damage from occupants never happens	22.4%	15
Total	100.0%	67

Results show that vandalism or damage from occupants is relatively infrequent; about 67% say it either happens annually or not at all.

Question 15. Feel free to comment on maintenance and vandalism (optional).

This question allowed respondents to provide comments. Thirty Maintenance and Management staff responded:

- The majority commented that vandalism is rare and only happens occasionally.
- A couple respondents stated that either maintenance is a huge problem, maintenance is expensive, or that more staff are needed to adequately maintain the cabins, cottages, or floating campsites.
- One respondent noted that some cabins need replacing, while another said the factory-built cabins “are like tanks—they are very solid and reliable and need little work.”



Importance of aspects to visitors and shoulder-season activity

Two questions related to how important staff and concessionaires thought various aspects of alternative camping were to visitors and whether they thought alternative camping attracted visitors during the shoulder season.

Question 19. Concerning your impression of the alternative campsites at this park, please indicate how important you think these aspects are to our visitors.

Aspect	Percentage of respondents		
	Important	Neither Important or Unimportant	Unimportant
Cleanliness of the unit	97%	3%	0%
Overall condition of the unit (was the unit in good repair?)	96%	4%	0%
Feeling of safety and security during their visit	96%	4%	0%
Outward appearance of the tent cabin, cottage or cabin	90%	7%	3%
Availability of restroom and/or shower nearby	90%	10%	0%
The existing facilities in the unit are convenient and comfortable	84%	15%	1%
Fees paid compared to the value of your experience (worth the money?)	81%	18%	1%
Location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park	51%	42%	7%

Results show that most respondents thought that most aspects were important to visitors, with “location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park” judged to be least important.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Question 20. Does your unit attract visitors outside of peak camping seasons because of the alternative campsites?

	Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
Yes	71.9%	46
No	28.1%	18
Totals	100.0%	64

ReserveAmerica data show that most parks offering alternative camping facilities offer them all year. Answers to this question indicate that at most parks, Management and Maintenance respondents thought that visitors are attracted to alternative camping outside the peak camping seasons.

Comparison of satisfaction and importance levels for the two surveys

A question on levels of satisfaction and importance was included in both surveys, so results are compared in the table on the next page.

Results show that both visitors and management and maintenance personnel assigned a high level of importance to most aspects. Both groups assigned lower importance to location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park. Visitors assigned a much lower level of importance to the outward appearance of the facility.



Results, Management and Maintenance Survey

Table 8. Comparison of level of importance of facility amenities between respondents to the two surveys.

Amenity	Percentage of respondents					
	Important		Neither Important or Unimportant/Don't care		Unimportant	
	Mgmt/Maint.	Visitors	Mgmt./Maint.	Visitors	Mgmt./Maint.	Visitors
Cleanliness of your unit (was it tidy when you arrived?)	97%	92%	3%	7%	0%	1%
Overall condition of the unit (was the unit in good repair?)	96%	93%	4%	7%	0%	1%
Feeling of safety and security during your visit	96%	82%	4%	15%	0%	3%
Outward appearance of the tent cabin, cottage or cabin	90%	60%	7%	35%	3%	5%
Availability of restroom and/or shower nearby	90%	82%	10%	16%	0%	2%
Were the existing facilities in the unit convenient and comfortable?	84%	86%	15%	13%	1%	1%
Fees you paid compared to the value of your experience (was it worth the money?)	81%	78%	18%	19%	1%	3%
Location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park	51%	62%	42%	33%	8%	5%



Appendixes



Cabin, Hendy Woods SP. Located less than three hours from the bustling San Francisco Bay Area, this state park protects two magnificent ancient redwood forests. Eighty-acre Big Hendy and twenty-acre Little Hendy groves offer peaceful surroundings and serenity broken only by the sounds of nature. The beautiful Navarro River plays a soothing counterpoint to the distant tapping of woodpeckers and the gentle wind in the trees.



Appendix A. Visitor Survey Questionnaire

California State Parks Alternative Camping Visitor Survey

- 1) Have you ever stayed in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin at a California State Parks unit?

- 2) At what State Park did you stay in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin? (If you stayed in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin at more than one State Park between 2007 and now, please select all that apply. The rest of the survey should be based on your most recent visit)
 - Big Basin Redwoods State Park
 - Brannan Island State Recreation Area
 - Crystal Cove State Park
 - Cuyamaca Rancho State Park
 - Hendy Woods State Park
 - Lake Oroville State Recreation Area
 - Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park
 - McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park
 - Mount Tamalpais State Park

- 3) What made you choose this State Park to camp in? (Select all that apply)
 - Location of park (anything about where the park is located such as "it is close to home or family or, its proximity to the festival or Lake Tahoe or it's where I find happiness" that made you choose this park)
 - This park had tent cabins, cottages, floating campsites or cabins (you chose this park because it offered this type of camping option)
 - Cost compared to other choices (motel/hotel, cruise, etc.)
 - Activities and programs at this park (anything about what is going on or what happens at the park that made you choose it to camp at such as the swimming, fishing, hiking, Junior Ranger program or the friendly staff)
 - Natural or cultural features that make this park special (anything that is specific to this park such as "it has a museum, it is located on the ocean or it's where the big trees are" that made you choose this park)
 - It was recommended to me (whether by a friend, family member, magazine article or television show)
 - Previous visit (you've stayed at this park or another park with cabins, cottages and/or tent cabins)
 - Other, please specify



Appendixes

- 4) How difficult was it to reserve your cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin?
- I was able to confirm my reservation at the location I wanted the first time I tried
 - I had to call back several times to make my reservation
 - This reservation location wasn't my first choice
- 5) Why did you choose to camp in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin instead of a traditional campground using a tent or RV? (Select all that apply.)
- I don't own or have access to necessary camping equipment
 - I feel safer and more secure in a cabin or cottage
 - Tent cabins or cottages offer a cleaner experience than tenting
 - Tent cabins or cottages are more convenient than using a recreational vehicle or pitching a tent
 - It is easier to camp with children in cabins or cottages
 - I don't like sleeping on the ground and wish to experience a 'softer' sleeping experience
 - Cabins or cottages provide better protection from the weather
 - I wanted to try something new and/or different
 - Other, please specify
- 6) How would you rate your personal experience as a camper?
- Inexperienced camper
 - Occasional camper
 - Seasoned camper
- 7) How many are in your group, including yourself on this trip?
- 8) Are you camping with: (Select all that apply.)
- No one (I usually go alone)
 - Family only
 - Just Friends
 - Both Family and Friends at the same time
 - Organized group
 - Other, please specify
- 9) Have you been to this State Park before?
- Yes
 - No
 - Don't remember / maybe
- 10) How did you learn about this park prior to your visit? (We are interested in how you first learned about this park even though it might have been many years ago.) (Select all that apply.)



Appendixes

- Grew up nearby / live nearby
 - Recommended by family or friends
 - Tour book / map (e.g., AAA guide)
 - Internet / California State Parks web site
 - Newspaper
 - Travel agency
 - TV / radio
 - Road sign
 - Magazine or publication
 - By chance (drove by, etc.)
 - Don't remember (forget, been so long ago I don't remember, etc.)
- 11) Was this State Park your primary destination or was this one of several stops along an extended trip?
- Primary destination
 - One of several stops
- 12) How many nights did you stay in your cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin?
- 13) When did you stay in your cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin?
- Spring 2007 (March - May)
 - Summer 2007 (June - August)
 - Fall 2007 (September - November)
 - Winter 2007/08 (December - February)
 - Spring 2008 (March - May)
 - Summer 2008 (June - August)
 - Fall 2008 (September – November)
 - Winter 2008/09 (December – February)
 - Spring 2009 (March – May)
 - Summer 2009 (June – August)
 - Fall 2009 (September – November)
 - Winter 2009/10 (December – February)
 - Spring 2010 (March – May)
 - Don't remember the season but it was in 2007
 - Don't remember the season but it was in 2008
 - Don't remember the season but it was in 2009
- 14) What would you like California State Parks to add to its cabins, cottages, floating campsites or tent cabins offered at this park? (Select all that apply.)
- Electricity (lights or outlets)
 - Sink (including running water)



Appendixes

- Toilet
- Shower
- Air conditioning/heater
- Kitchenette (including stove, table, etc.)
- A porch with furniture
- Mattress
- Chair
- More units (tent cabins, cottages, yurts, floating or cabins)
- Barbecue
- Nothing, I liked it just the way it was
- Other, please specify

15) Concerning your stay in a cabin, cottage, floating campsite or tent cabin while camping at this State Park, please indicate how satisfied you were.

1 Satisfied 2 Neither satisfied or unsatisfied / Don't care 3 Unsatisfied

- Outward appearance of the tent cabin, cottage or cabin
1 2 3
- Overall condition of the unit (was the unit in good repair?)
1 2 3
- Were the existing facilities in the unit convenient and comfortable?
1 2 3
- Feeling of safety and security during your visit
1 2 3
- Availability of restroom and/or shower nearby
1 2 3
- Location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park
1 2 3
- Fees you paid compared to the value of your experience (was it worth the money?)
1 2 3
- Cleanliness of your unit (was it tidy when you arrived?)
1 2 3

16) Concerning your stay in a tent cabin, cottage, floating campsite or cabin while camping at this State Park, please indicate how important that aspect of the lodging was to you.

1 Important 2 Neither important or unimportant / Don't care 3 Unimportant

- Outward appearance of the tent cabin, cottage or cabin
1 2 3
- Overall condition of the unit (was the unit in good repair?)
1 2 3



Appendixes

- Were the existing facilities in the unit convenient and comfortable?
1 2 3
- Feeling of safety and security during your visit
1 2 3
- Availability of restroom and/or shower nearby
1 2 3
- Location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park
1 2 3
- Fees you paid compared to the value of your experience (was it worth the money?)
1 2 3
- Cleanliness of your unit (was it tidy when you arrived?)
1 2 3

17) What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

18) What is your age?

- 18 - 24 years
- 25 - 34 years
- 35 - 44 years
- 45 - 54 years
- 55 - 64 years
- 65 - 74 years
- 75 years or older

19) What is the age range for each other member of the party who stayed with you? How many in your party are:

- Under 1 year
- 1 - 9 years
- 10 - 14 years
- 15 - 24 years
- 25 - 34 years
- 35 - 44 years
- 45 - 54 years
- 55 - 64 years
- 65 - 74 years
- 75 years or older

20) In terms of your racial/ethnic identity, which group do you individually belong to? (Choose one)

- Hispanic or Latino
- Asian
- Black or African American



Appendixes

- White (non-Hispanic)
- American Indian and/or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander
- Other / Multi-racial

21) What is your combined household income?

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,000 to \$49,999
- \$50,000 to \$74,999
- \$75,000 to \$99,999
- \$100,000 to \$149,999
- \$150,000 to \$199,999
- \$200,000 or more

22) Are you a resident of the United States or are you visiting from abroad?

- Yes, I live in the United States
- No, I'm visiting from abroad

23) What's your zip code at home?

24) Please tell us what country you are visiting from.

- Australia
- Belgium
- Brazil
- Canada
- China
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- India
- Ireland
- Israel
- Japan
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Russia
- Scotland
- South Africa
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- The Netherlands



Appendixes

- United Kingdom
- Other, please specify



Appendix B. Management and Maintenance Survey Questionnaire

California State Parks Alternative Camping Management and Maintenance Survey

The Planning Division and Park Operations are seeking information on alternative camping, which includes these types of facilities:

- Cabins
- Cottages
- Tent Cabins/Yurts
- Floating campsites (like those at Lake Oroville SRA)

1) What is your role in the management and/or maintenance of alternative campsites within the State Parks System?

- Administration/Business & Fiscal Officer
- Concessionaire
- Maintenance
- Management Service Technician
- Park Aide
- Park Maintenance Assistant
- Park Maintenance Chief
- Park Maintenance Supervisor
- Park Maintenance Worker
- State Park Peace Officer Supervisor/Ranger
- State Park Peace Officer/Ranger
- State Park Superintendent
- Visitor Services
- Other, please specify

2) At what State Park unit did you in any way manage or maintain alternative campsites? (Select all that apply.)

- Big Basin Redwoods State Park
- Brannan Island State Recreation Area
- Crystal Cove State Park
- Cuyamaca Rancho State Park
- Hendy Woods State Park
- Lake Oroville State Recreation Area
- Malakoff Diggins State Historic Park
- McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park



Appendixes

- Mount Tamalpais State Park
- Other, please specify

3) When did you participate in the management or maintenance of alternative campsites? (Select all that apply.)

- Spring 2007 (March - May)
- Summer 2007 (June - August)
- Fall 2007 (September - November)
- Winter 2007/08 (December - February)
- Spring 2008 (March - May)
- Summer 2008 (June - August)
- Fall 2008 (September - November)
- Winter 2008/09 (December - February)
- Spring 2009 (March - May)
- Summer 2009 (June - August)
- Fall 2009 (September - November)
- All of the above

4) How long have you been managing or maintaining alternative campsites for California State Parks or any other agency/entity?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 - 2 years
- 2 - 5 years
- 5 years or more

For the remainder of this survey please respond thinking about your most recent assignment involving alternative camping.

5) What are the typical amenities in each cabin, cottage and/or tent cabin at this park? (Select all that apply.)

- Electricity (including lights)
- Sink (with hot/cold running water)
- Toilet/restroom
- Shower
- Air conditioning
- Heat (electric)
- Heat (gas/propane)
- Wood burning stove
- Barbeque grill
- Kitchenette
- Locking doors
- Fire pit
- Bed (with mattress)
- Bed (without mattress)
- Bunk



Appendixes

- Trash can(s)
 - Table(s)
 - Fan
- 6) Who is maintaining the housekeeping system? (Select all that apply.)
- Maintenance staff
 - Camp host
 - Volunteers
 - A combination of the maintenance staff, volunteers and/or others
 - Concession
 - Other, please specify
- 7) How well is the housekeeping system working?
- Excellent (It's working beyond expectations)
 - Satisfactory (It's working okay)
 - Unsatisfactory (It's not working very well)
- 8) Why do you think the housekeeping system isn't working well? What would you change to make it work better?
- 9) Does your unit have check in and check out procedures? Yes or No?
- 10) Please describe the check in and check out procedures.
- 11) On average, how frequently is housekeeping (sweeping, trash removal, etc.) being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?
- Once a day
 - More than twice a week
 - Once every two weeks
 - Once a month
- 12) On average, how frequently are major repairs (new sinks, remodeling, roofing, etc.) being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?
- Several times a year
 - Annually
 - Every few years
- 13) On average, how frequently are minor repairs (painting, nailing boards, cleaning out drains, etc.) being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?
- Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
 - Annually



Appendixes

14) On average, how frequently is vandalism or damage from occupants being done to the alternative campsites at your facility?

- Daily
- Monthly
- Annually
- Vandalism or damage from occupants never happens

15) Feel free to comment on maintenance and vandalism (optional).

16) Do you agree? Maintenance requires very little of my daily time.

- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree

17) Do you agree? The alternative campsites at my unit are holding up well and are durable.

- Agree
- Neither agree or disagree
- Disagree

18) Feel free to comment on why you think the alternative campsites at your unit aren't very durable (optional).

19) Concerning your impression of the alternative campsites at this park, please indicate how important you think these aspects are to our visitors.

1 Important 2 Neither important or unimportant 3 Unimportant

- Outward appearance of the tent cabin, cottage and/or cabin
1 2 3
- Overall condition of the unit
1 2 3
- The existing facilities in the unit are convenient and comfortable
1 2 3
- Feeling of safety and security during their visit
1 2 3
- Availability of restroom and/or shower nearby
1 2 3
- Location of the unit in relation to the rest of the park
1 2 3
- Fees paid compared to the value of the experience (worth the money?)
1 2 3
- Cleanliness of the unit
1 2 3



Appendixes

- 20) Does your unit attract visitors outside of peak camping seasons because of the alternative campsites? (Yes or No)
- 21) How much is being charged per night to stay in the cabins, cottages and/or tent cabins at your unit?
- \$20 - \$60
 - \$61 - \$100
 - \$101 - \$120
 - Over \$120
 - Don't know
- 22) How are the cabins, cottages and/or tent cabins arranged?
- All together in their own area
 - In a loop
 - Stand alone
 - Mixed together with other types of camping
 - Other, please specify
- 23) This is your chance to tell us what you think about alternative camping systemwide. Is it working? Do you think our visitors are pleased with their experiences? Do the alternative camping facilities work for the park unit? Are visitors satisfied?



Appendix C. Comparing Demographics of Respondents to Two Surveys: Visitor Survey Respondents vs. State Park Visitor Survey 2009 (SPVS) Respondents

To supplement Visitor Survey information, Department staff compared gender, age, ethnicity, income, and “how learned of the park” information for two groups:

- Visitor Survey respondents
- A select group of respondents to a 2009 Department survey, the State Park Visitor Survey (SPVS)—*those who expressed interest in alternative camping*

The comparison shows that *use* (Visitor Survey responses) of alternative camping facilities among those in these groups is less than *interest* (SPVS responses), suggesting untapped potential.

- 18-34 year olds. 12.1% of Visitor Survey respondents were in this age group, compared to 31.7% of SPVS respondents.
- Those belonging to the Hispanic or Latino, African American, and Other/Multiracial ethnic groups. Comparisons by ethnic group were: Hispanic or Latino (4.9% of Visitor Survey respondents vs. 11.3% of SPVS respondents who expressed interest in alternative camping), African American (0.5% vs. 2.0%), and Other/Multi-racial (5.2% vs. 8.1%).
- Those with combined household incomes of less than \$50,000. Almost 11 percent (10.9%) of Visitor Survey respondents were in this income range, compared to 22.0% of SPVS respondents.

Regarding how visitors found out about the park, the comparison suggests that encouraging recommendations to family and friends might help promote alternative camping facilities. A lower percentage of Visitor Survey respondents learned about the park through recommendations by family or friends than did those responding to the SPVS who were interested in alternative camping (27.3% vs. 50.8%).

Regarding gender, little difference was found among respondents for the two surveys.



Appendix D. Comparing Mount Tamalpais SP Visitors: Visitor Survey Respondents vs. State Park Visitor Survey 2009 (SPVS) Respondents

Notes:

- Because SPVS responses include all campers—traditional campers as well as alternative campers—a direct comparison of only alternative campers is not possible.
- There were 64 campers of all types who stayed at Mount Tamalpais SP and responded to the SPVS survey; there were 634 respondents in the Visitor Survey.

Overall, results are similar for both groups, with a few interesting differences.

Responses were similar in these areas:

- the length of stay in both surveys was typically 1 to 2 nights,
- the proportion of male to female respondents was about the same,
- the ethnicity breakdown was similar,
- and almost all respondents in both surveys were United States residents.

Responses differed in these areas:

- Visitor Survey respondents who had camped at Mount Tamalpais SP had higher percentages of groups of 2 persons (41.2% vs. 31.3%) or 3-5 persons (51.6% vs. 37.5%) compared to SPVS respondents who had camped at Mount Tamalpais SP. The SPVS survey reported a higher percentage of campers who were alone (9.4% vs. 4.1% for the Visitor Survey) and of those who were in larger groups (12.5% vs. 2.6% for the Visitor Survey). This may be partly due to the size of cabins, which typically accommodate 2 to 5 persons.
- Regarding how visitors found out about the park, a higher percentage of Visitor Survey respondents grew up or live near the park (26.3% vs. 23.4% for the SPVS) or used the Internet (18.0% vs. 12.5%) or a magazine or publication (6.9% vs. 0%) to find out about the park.
- Visitor Survey respondents overwhelmingly (92.2%) indicated the park was their primary destination, compared with 73.4% of SPVS respondents.



Appendixes

- Visitor Survey respondents reported higher percentages of household incomes in the \$50,000-\$99,000 range than SPVS respondents (35.8% vs. 28.1%). This may reflect the relatively high cost of alternative camping facilities (compared to the cost of camping) at the park.



Appendix E. Typical Maintenance Tasks

Maintenance tasks for alternative camping facilities include:

- Housekeeping
- Periodic maintenance
- Repairs

Housekeeping

Housekeeping consists mainly of sweeping out and tidying up facilities between visitor check-out and check-in. Other tasks include registering guests and tending to landscaping and decks.

In general, such tasks require 20-30 minutes to complete.

Not surprisingly, facilities with toilets require more maintenance than those without toilets.

Tasks for floating campsites at Lake Oroville SRA are more demanding than for other facilities: not only must a toilet be cleaned at each campsite, but travel by boat is required to reach each campsite.

Staff has found that simple furnishings are best. For example, in the 1990s, Patrick's Point SP offered alternative camping with bedding provided. Housekeeping tasks would have been reduced if campers had provided their own bedding.

Periodic maintenance

Periodic maintenance tasks for alternative camping facilities vary by facility. For example:

- Cabins have wood walls and roofing systems that need annual staining, caulking, gutter cleaning, patching, etc. Cabins sit on wood decks or on concrete slabs and may have concrete porches, ramps or steps and wood railings that require maintenance.
- Tent cabins at Big Basin Redwoods SP have partial wood walls with maintenance requirements similar to those of cabins. Additionally, canvas walls and roof skins need periodic replacement due to tears, mold, and mildew.
- Modern tent cabins have vinyl skins, which are relatively easy to maintain.
- Wood or propane stoves require routine servicing.
- Floating campsites are maintained much like boats. At Lake Oroville SRA, they are towed to a boatyard onshore for off-season maintenance.



Appendixes

Repairs

Survey questions address repairs and vandalism.

Major repair challenges include:

- Budget constraints
- Staff time and skills constraints
- Contracting requirements if repairs must be performed by others. Any required proposals, bids, contracts, and permitting take time. Additionally, such repairs can be more expensive.

Due to staffing shortages and budget limitations, keeping up with minor repairs can be challenging, but doing so is vital--even a small repair issue can impact visitor experience.

While visitors might overlook minor repair issues, vandalism or damage from occupants can easily and quickly turn visitors away, partly because it can make the facility feel unsafe.

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