

# EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK

## VISITOR USE COUNTING AND REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS

Following are detailed instructions for collecting data and estimating visitor use statistics for **Everglades National Park**. These instructions are effective the date of issuance and will continue in effect unless changed by agreement between the NPS Social Science Program and the Park Superintendent.

### Recreation Visits

#### Homestead Entrance

1. A pneumatic tube traffic counter is installed at the entrance. The traffic count is divided by 2 to account for entry and exit. The adjusted traffic count is reduced for buses, and 200 non-recreation vehicles per month October through May and 100 non-recreation vehicles per month June through September. The traffic count is further reduced by 900 non-reportable (NPS) vehicles per month. The vehicle count is multiplied by 2.5 persons per vehicle<sup>1</sup> January through May, 2.7 persons per vehicle June through August, and 2.3 persons per vehicle September through December.
2. The number of bus passengers entering at the fee booth.
3. The number of pedestrians / cyclists entering at the fee booth (estimated from sales of park passes).

#### Shark Valley Entrance

4. A pneumatic tube traffic counter is installed across the access lane. The traffic count is divided by 2 to account for entry and exit. The adjusted traffic count is reduced by the number of buses, the number of bicycles counted when the entrance station is open, 127 bicycles per month to account for after-hours use, and by 200 non-recreation vehicles per month October through May and 100 non-recreation vehicles per month June through September. The traffic count is further reduced by 350 non-reportable (NPS) vehicles per month. The reduced count is multiplied by 2.17<sup>2</sup> persons per vehicle.
5. The number of bus passengers entering at Shark Valley.
6. The number of pedestrians entering at Shark Valley (estimated from sales of park passes).
7. The number of bicyclists counted when the entrance station is open.
8. 127 bicyclists to account for after-hours bicycle use.

#### Park Water Access

The higher of 9 or 10 is selected as recreation visits by water access:

9. The number of water access visits is estimated by rangers taking a daily count of boat trailers at the Flamingo parking area. The trailer count is multiplied by 1.3<sup>3</sup> to estimate the number of boats entering through the park water boundaries of Florida Bay and Ten Thousand Islands / Cape Sable. The estimated boat count is multiplied by 2.75<sup>3</sup> persons

per boat.

10. The number of water access visits is estimated by adding together the following:
  - The number of individual marine passes sold online and by third party fee agreements
  - The number of motor vessel marine passes sold online and by third party fee agreements is multiplied by 2.75<sup>3</sup> persons per boat
  - The number of annual marine passes sold online and by third party fee agreements is multiplied by 2. The expanded pass count is multiplied by 2.75<sup>3</sup> persons per boat.

### **Gulf Coast Entrance**

The higher of 11 or 12 is selected as recreation visits for the Gulf Coast area:

11. A pneumatic tube traffic counter is located on the entrance lane to the parking area. The traffic count is divided by 2 to account for entry and exit. The traffic count is reduced for 225 non-reportable (NPS) vehicles per month. The reduced traffic count is multiplied by 2.5 persons per vehicle<sup>1</sup>.
12. A manual count of visitors at the Gulf Coast Visitor Center.

### **East Everglades Entrance**

13. A pneumatic tube traffic counter is located across the access road to East Everglades / Chekika. The traffic count is divided by 2 to account for entry and exit. The adjusted traffic count is reduced by 243 non-reportable (NPS) vehicles per month. The reduced traffic count is multiplied by 2 persons per vehicle.

### **Airboats**

14. The number of visitors entering the park with Coopertown Airboats.
15. The number of visitors entering the park with Gator Park Airboats
16. The number of visitors entering the park with Everglades Safari Park Airboats.

### **Loop Road Environmental Education Center**

17. The number of visitors attending special programs.
18. The number of visitors attending camps.
19. The number of visitors attending teacher workshops.

### **Non-Recreation Visits**

The number of non-recreation vehicles at the main entrance is estimated to be 200 October through May and 100 June through September. The vehicle count is multiplied by 1.5 persons per vehicle.

The number of non-recreation vehicles at Shark Valley is estimated to be 200 October through May and 100 June through September. The vehicle count is multiplied by 1.5 persons per vehicle.

## Recreation Visitor Hours

Recreation visitor hours are determined by the locations visited or activities. The locations/activities and the average length-of-stay for each location are listed in Table 1. Total recreation visitor hours are the sum of hours for each category.

**Table 1**  
Location / Activities and Average Hours per Visit

Location	Hours per Visit
Main Park Entrance	5.0
Shark Valley	2.5
Boats and other Water Access	5.5
Gulf Coast	0.5
East Everglades / Chekika	4.0
Airboat Visits	3.0
Enviro Edu Center Day Use	4.0
Enviro Edu Center Overnights	24.0
Overnight Stays	28.8 (October-May) and 14.4 (June-September) <sup>4</sup>

## Non-Recreation Visitor Hours

Non-recreation visits are multiplied by 4.5 hours per visit.

## Overnight Stays

Concession Operated Campgrounds - Flamingo, Long Pine Key

The number of overnight stays as reported by the concessioner.

NPS Backcountry - Various Locations (hike-in, boat-in)

The number of overnight stays as determined by the permits issued.

NPS Miscellaneous

The number of nights stayed by Loop Road Environmental Education Center visitors – teacher workshops are one night; camps are two nights

<sup>1</sup> Source 1991 Traffic Study

<sup>2</sup> Source 1987 Traffic Study

<sup>3</sup> Source 2008 Boat Study

<sup>4</sup> Source 2008 Visitor Study