SCIENCE AND RESEARCH INTERNAL REPORT 10

RECREATION AND TOURISM RESEARCH
FOR CONSERVATION

by

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1.   INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to:

(i)   define key management questions in the field of outdoor
       recreation and tourism which require research

(ii)   state progress towards answering these questions;

(iii) suggest a research strategy for the future.

Its objective is to discuss recreation/tourism research from the
manager's perspective. Previous description of recreation research
has primarily been from the researcher's viewpoint (eg Rea, 1984).

This paper updates the earlier 'Status Report on Recreation and
Tourism Research' (Clark and Booth, 1986). The revision was
considered worthwhile owing to:

*   results from a survey of DOC managers which asked about their
       visitor information needs

*   the imminent arrival of a new social scientist to DOC

*   the operation of the Department of Conservation (DOC) for nearly
       a full year

*   the desire to integrate science and management within DOC

*   the usefulness of the previous paper as a descriptive and
       explanatory document.

This paper focuses on recreation and tourism research. Appendix 1
outlines other social science needs in DOC.

2.   FORMAT

In the original 1986 paper, a four-tier structure of management
information needs was outlined. This structure is amended to a five-
tier framework in this paper. In essence the previous Level 2
information has been This fine-tuning follows managers' own
statements of their visitor information needs, in response to a
questionnaire recently analysed. The detailed classification of data
needs designed from these responses is presented in Appendix 2.

The five types of management information needs range from:
(1) the most basic needs for day to day management decision making
to (5) more sophisticated needs for decision making in a broader,
more political arena.

After each type of information need is explained, progress towards
answering management's questions is outlined and some future research
directions suggested.

The paper concludes with a summary of a future departmental research strategy.

(Note: Whenever the word 'park' is used in the following please read 'national park or reserve or reserve complex or forest park or farm park or historic site…etc.)

3. TYPE 1 - NUMBERS OF VISITORS/LOCATION/TIME PERIOD

Many of the most basic park management decisions require a good knowledge of VISITOR NUMBERS. The first type of information needs then is simple head counting. To be of value, however, visitor statistics need to provide data specific to key locations (or types of area) within the park as well as aggregate data for the whole park. Park use statistics also need to recognise a time element, as visits may vary markedly according to time of day, day of week, season of the year, etc.

Type 1 questions are:

- HOW MANY PEOPLE USE THE PARK?
- WHERE DOES THIS USE OCCUR?
- WHEN DOES THIS USE
- HOW WILL THIS USE CHANGE OVER TIME?

The answers to these questions are particularly important to management for:

- Identification of use level trends and predicting pressure points and facility needs.
- Making comparisons between areas of a park or between parks particularly in the process of allocating management resources.

Progress to Date

A visitor statistics collection programme has been operating in a standardised form in national parks since 1965. 'Head-counting' has also been undertaken in some other parks as required. However all data are of dubious validity owing to the lack of a rigorous collection system.

Recognition of this problem led to approval of a visitor monitoring review in DOC in July 1987. A project team has been established with the objective of 'developing and providing a monitoring system for collection, analysis and use of data on the number of visitors to an area in a given time period'. (Visitor Monitoring System Brief -DOC, Output will be a do-it-yourself manual and training workshops, scheduled for late 1988.

Future Research Prospects

The visitor monitoring review will provide a STANDARDISED, CO-ORDINATED, RIGOROUS methodology for managers to use. This should answer the needs for information of this type. It is envisaged that

the system will be flexible enough to respond to future needs, for example, monitoring the collection of user charges. Continual evaluation of methods should follow on from the review.

4. TYPE 2 -VISITOR AND VISIT CHARACTERISTICS

Visitor numbers become much more valuable to management if they can be in conjunction with some depth of understanding of park visitors. The second type of information needs is the <u>description</u> of the

CHARACTERISTICS AND BEHAVIOUR OF VISITORS AND THEIR VISIT.

Type 2 questions are:

- WHO ARE THE PARK USERS?
- WHAT DO THEY DO IN THE PARKS?
- WHAT FACILITIES AND SERVICES DO THEY USE'?

The answers to these questions help management to:

- Cater for their clients.
- Predict changes in use patterns.

Progress to Date

These questions have been addressed by site-specific visitor surveys collecting data including:

- visitor demographics eg. age, gender, occupation
- patterns of movement
- activities undertaken
- facilities used
- transport and accommodation types.

This type of information has largely been collected in response to management planning needs. Questionnaire surveys (and counting procedures where type 1 data is not available) have been implemented, normally on a one-off basis and often restricted to the high-use times.

Examples include:

- Bay of Island visitor surveys (Department of Lands and Survey, 1980-1984)

- The Wanganui River -a recreation survey (Devlin et al., n.d.)

These surveys have been conducted in-house as well as by university-based students/researchers.

Off-site surveys augment this work, capturing a large sample which includes park visitors. Examples are:

- International Visitors Product Survey (NZ Tourist and Publicity Department, 1986)

- Awareness Monitor (Colmar and Brunton, 1987).

Both of these surveys sampled a population (the former international visitors, the latter New Zealanders) and asked questions of their use of national parks (and forest parks in the former case). Information from these surveys include:

- a profile of national park use (parks collectively and individually) activities undertaken

- a profile of park users, e.g. age, gender, nationality

- an estimate of the number of international visitors/New Zealanders who visit national parks.

Future Research Prospects

Two complementary approaches are suggested:

1. On-site visitor surveys: while a considerable amount of effort has gone into such surveys, because of their ad hoc approach, the resultant database is fragmented and unco-ordinated. To rectify this problem, visitor survey guidelines are currently being prepared. It is envisaged that they will STANDARDISE questionnaire design, sampling method, analysis and reporting.

    The result will be a database able to answer park specific visitor information needs.

2. Off-site surveys: The NZ Tourist and Publicity Department conduct periodic domestic and international visitor surveys. Both offer the opportunity to add questions onto the survey document. This facility can be used to obtain information from respondents who have visited a park, as done for the International Visitors Product Survey.

Utilising Tourist and Publicity Department resources in this manner would induce considerable savings compared with an alternative of systematically surveying parks. However, the population-based sample restricts the amount of information that can be collected owing to the small numbers visiting some parks.

Type 2 data for specific parks will enhance the benefits of type 1 data. For example, type 2 information on 'average number of visits per person' will convert type 1 data on 'number of visits' to 'number of visitors'.

5. TYPE 3 -VISITOR EXPERIENCE

Visitors' behaviour in parks is a manifestation of their recreational needs. Type 3 information focuses upon RECREATIONAL NEEDS AND MOTIVATIONS, thereby attempting to explain the picture of visits and visitors described by Type 2 data. It relates to the visitor's total 'park experience'.

Type 3 questions are:

- WHY DO PEOPLE VISIT PARKS?
- WHAT ARE THEIR EXPECTATIONS OF THEIR VISIT?
- ARE THEIR EXPECTATIONS SATISFIED?

Managers require answers to these questions in order to:

- Understand visitors needs
- Appreciate the benefits provided to users by the resource
- Understand the effects of policy
- Interpret changes in use level data -why changes have occurred.

Progress to Date

As for type 2 information, data has been collected by both visitor surveys and population-oriented surveys that have included park visitors in the sample.

New Zealand research (notably Devlin, 1976; Simmons, 1980) has followed on from overseas work such as ORRRC (1962) and Hendee et al (1968). These studies have sought reasons why people visit parks and identified motivations such as exit-civilisation (getting away from it all), aesthetic-religious (spiritualism) and pioneer-spirit.

Inextricably linked to why people visit parks, is why people do not visit. Population-based research has begun to address both visitors and non-visitors to investigate this question (e.g. Booth, 1986).

Future Research Prospects

The focus of type 3 information is the individual rather than aggregate datasets about visitors. Survey methodology therefore has limited scope to address type 3 information needs. In-depth with visitors is a more appropriate technique. Longitudinal BEFORE AND AFTER studies would be a useful tool to investigate expectations and satisfactions with the park visit.

6. TYPE 4 - DEMAND AND SUPPLY

Individuals often express their recreational needs and expectations of the park experience, in terms of WANTS or DEMANDS for facilities and services. By the provision (or conversely, the absence) of facilities and services, certain needs can be fulfilled.

Type 4 information focuses on visitors' DEMANDS of the resource, including their motivation, expectations and satisfaction with facilities and services. This type of data recognises the non-vi where there is a latent (unrealised) demand.

DEMAND information may be matched with an assessment of the total SUPPLY of areas, facilities and services. Decisions on the physical planning of parks often require this information on a regional or national scale, which puts resource management decisions in their proper context.

Type 4 questions are:

- WHAT IS THE DEMAND (BOTH REAL AND LATENT) FOR PARK FACILITIES AND SERVICES?
- WHAT RESOURCES ARE PROVIDED IN THE REGION?
- ARE THE DEMANDS BEING MET?
- WHAT ELSE IS NEEDED?
- WHERE IS IT BEST PROVIDED?

Information of this type is required because an individual park cannot be viewed as providing 'all things to all people'. It is also a prerequisite for:

- park systems planning
- regional recreation planning
- tourism planning.

Progress to Date

These information needs broaden the scope beyond visitor studies to population-oriented research, which includes people not currently visiting parks. The focus is on DEMAND rather than USE.

The NZ Forest Service has conducted research at this level (Murphy, 1981) while a few university theses have also responded to type 3 needs (Gilmour, 1982; Booth, 1986; Davison, 1986). Additionally, Tourist and Publicity data provide a broad-brush picture of tourism, however the information relate to regions and cities rather than parks.

To date, type 4 needs remain wanting.

Future Research Prospects

To obtain information at this level, data collection needs to address the GENERAL POPULATION at either the regional or national level.

At the regional level, either in-house or contract research are possibilities. At a national level, however, the cost of conducting our own research becomes prohibitive and once again the best alternative appears to be close co-operation with NZ Tourist and

Publicity Department or a market research company that conducts nation-wide surveys. Some changes to the NZ Tourist and Publicity Department's surveys would make much of the demand information already collected, relevant to parks.

7. TYPE 5 -BENEFITS AND VALUE

People derive benefit from parks beyond the recreational use described in the previous types of information. Type 5 needs are associated with demonstrating the BENEFITS AND VALUE of parks. This is important for the advocacy role of DOC.

Studies of this type involve complex data analysis. The essential concern is to 'prove the worth' of parks.

Type 5 questions are:

- WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS BENEFITS OF PARKS — TO THE INDIVIDUAL?
                                        — TO THE COMMUNITY?
- WHAT VALUES ARE ASCRIBED TO PARKS?

This information is primarily of importance for the political component of parks management.

Progress to Date

The economic value of parks has received the most research effort with several studies commissioned by the Department of Lands and Survey, for example:

- The Economic Impact of National Park (Pearce, 1982)

- Economic Benefits of Mt Cook National Park (Kerr et al. 1986)

- Final Report on the Whakapapa Area Economic Benefits Study: Winter 1985 and Summer 1985/86 (Clough and Meister, 1987).

These studies estimate the expenditure within the region by park visitors. The latter two studies utilise economic techniques to place a dollar value on the benefits derived from park use.

While apparently distinct from the previous types of information, this research requires visitor infomation, so therefore collects types 1 and 2 data in conjunction with specific data requirements.

Some insight into the human/social values of parks has resulted from work focused upon visitors to parks and also one study of both users and non-users. This area has been neglected within New Zealand although some work has been done overseas.

Future Research Prospects

To justify cases to Treasury and the like some degree of economic benefits study may need to continue.

Research into the other benefits of parks has hardly begun, and this area demands attention. Broadly, these benefits may be categorised as:

- use benefits -obtained from visiting the resource
- option benefits -obtained from an expectation of future use of the resource
- quasi-option benefits -obtained from maintaining the option of future use and can be thought of as the value of information
- existence benefits -obtained from knowing that the resource exists
- bequest benefits -obtained from endowing future generations with a conservation resource.

(Kerr et al.1986).

8. CONCLUSION

Reflecting on these five types....

They are ordered in the sense that types 1 and 2 information are prerequisites for types 3, 4 and 5.

Each information type responds to management needs and so action should proceed on all fronts at once -as far as is practicable.

Type 1 information is fundamental to management and an in-house responsibility. The need is for STANDARDISATION and CO-ORDINATION of methods.

Systematic coverage, via co-ordination in-house and with NZ Tourist and Publicity Department, is the ideal for type 2. Again, the need is for STANDARDISATION and CO-ORDINATION of (survey) methods.

Investigation of individual's motivations (type 3 information) requires QUALITATIVE RESEARCH methods. Expertise in this area is available via contract research.

Type 4 information focuses on DEMAND rather than USE and therefore the POPULATION rather than just VISITORS. Co-ordination with NZ Tourist and Publicity Department will be beneficial and in-house or contract research may be utilised effectively at the regional level.

Type 5 information is the domain of postgraduate or contract research, although only occasional work will be required. It is essential that ALL BENEFITS (both recreational and non-recreational) are recognised.

Research aims to provide the information necessary to facilitate management's decision making. To do this effectively there needs to be good communication between researchers and managers. Researchers must express what is possible in recreation and tourism research and present the research in a useful form, while managers need to carefully define their information needs and use the information for the best result.

9. COMMENTS PLEASE....

It is hoped that the framework presented in this paper will evolve into a standardised nomenclature for recreation and tourism researchers and managers. Furthermore that the use of a 'common language' will assist to further integrate science and management.

Any comments would be appreciated, including your thoughts on:

- The five-tier framework   - is it useful?
                              - how can it be improved?
- What research directions should be given priority?
- How can research and management better work together?

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APPENDIX 1: OTHER SOCIAL SCIENCE AREAS RELEVANT TO DOC.

It is important to realise that DOC's social science needs are not limited to recreation and tourism research and advice. The department has a mandate for conservation which by its very nature implies an interaction between humans and the environment.

The following list, while not exhaustive, at least serves to indicate the breadth of the areas in which social science research can assist DOC:

- social impact analysis

- environmental education

- cultural environmentalism

- resource economics

- conservation advocacy

- interpretation.

**APPENDIX 2: CLASSIFICATION OF MANAGER'S NEEDS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT
(POTENTIAL) VISITORS**

As part of the DOC Visitor Monitoring Review, DOC managers in the
eight regional offices and 34 district offices were asked:

What do you need to know about visitors or potential visitors to your
area to successfully carry out your job?

Responses were classified into different information types, as
follows. The information needs relate to visitors or potential
visitors, so type 5 information (Benefits and Value) is not
represented. Note that a full report on the analysis of the visitor
monitoring questionnaire will be produced as part of the Visitor
Monitoring Review.

VISITOR MONITORING QUESTIONNAIRES: Q1 CLASSIFICATION

1. Numbers of Visitors/Location/Time Period

1.1   Current Numbers of Visitors

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sch    school group numbers
not    how many people are in the area at any one time
met    methods of assessing current and future visitor numbers
rel    relative numbers to assess
res    what % of total visitors to the island use our resource
prc    no.s using public and camping areas
day    day visitor numbers
cnt    how many visitors use the visitor centre
nvf    numbers of visitors using current facilities
acn    the actual number visiting a specified area (see sheet)
u/t    no.s using tracks
sho    short walk usage eg Ohau, Ohihi, Hinau
ser    usage numbers for our full range of services and facilities
ord    locations and numbers of visitors in priority order of usage
ssn    seasonal use of reserve
pea    peak and low use periods
oca    period of year vs location (nos of people)
cti    period of year vs activity (nos of people)
ref    period of year vs preferences (nos of people) .
hom    period of year vs hometown (nos visiting each area)
gea    period of year vs age (nos visiting each area)
m/f    period of year vs male/female (nos visiting each area)
tat    period of year vs status of visitor (no.s visiting each area)
occ    period of year vs occupation (nos visiting each area)
tra    period of year vs transport (nos visiting each area)
tay    duration of stay vs location (nos of people)
tiv    duration of stay vs activity (nos of people)
fer    duration of stay vs preferences (no.s of people)
ome    duration of stay vs hometown (nos visiting each area)
eag    duration of stay vs hometown (no.s visiting each area)
exs    duration of stay vs male/female (no.s visiting each area)
atu    duration of stay vs status (nos visiting each area)
ccu    duration of stay vs occupation (nos visiting each area)
ran    duration of stay vs transport (no.s visiting each area)
tot    total numbers of visitors
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1.2   Projected Numbers of Visitors
       pot   the potential no. that would use a specified area (see sheet)
       rpt   how many will come in the future
       chg   how will future visitor numbers behaviour and expectations
              change in the future
       tnd   trends in use

2.   <u>Visitor and Visit Characteristics</u>

2.1   Demographics - Miscellaneous
       dem   demographic characteristics of visitors
       typ   type of visitor-finances ability etc.
       xpe   their experience in back country walking, safety and their well
              being important
       grs   who (groups within society)
       hab   visitor habits
       aad   holiday type

2.2   Age
       age   age structure

2.3   Gender
       sex   sex of visitor

2.4   Place of Origin
       sou   source of visitors (country)
       per   what type of person eg tourist,local etc
       nal   understanding which nationalities are coming through at specific
              times of the year
       cus   understanding any special customs (for dift . nationalities) or
              ways of doing things that effect how well we successfully carry
              out our job
       ers   overseas visitors
       d/o   domestic vs overseas visitors
       loc   whether the people visiting the park are locals or are from
              outside the area
       fro   where the visitors are coming from

2.5   Group Type
       grp   what groups other than schools are visiting
       how   are visitors coming to parks etc. privately, commercially
       cop   group composition
       siz   information on group size and experience
       agg   how many in party
       vis   type of visitors eg family groups etc

2.6   Mode of Transport
       mod   how they come here?-mode of travel
       tra   how do they travel around while they're here

2.7   Accomodation
       acc   key accommodation locations
       sta   where do they stay while they're here
       zzb   standard of accommodation (motor camp)
       zza   their accommodation requirements eg huts, power, caravan sites,
              tent sites, motel standard accomm
       aaa   previous camping useage
       aab   accommodation types

2.8   Length of Visit
      lgt   length of stay

2.9   Frequency of Visit
      oft   how often do they come to the area

2.10 Movement Patterns
      rou   what routes used
      mov   visitor movements & flow patterns

2.11 Expenditure/User Pays
      mon   how much they spend
      whe   where they spend
      wil   what are they willing to pay for

2.12 Locations Visited
      are   areas to be visited
      sit   particular site to be visited e.g. gold mining area, waterfall
      par   where in the park do these visitors go ie roadside, backcountry
      zzc   throughout the region area visited

2.13 Activities
      pat   patterns of activity
      act   activity type
      cla   classification of visitors' activities - how many hunting,
            fishing, campers etc.
      peo   people that traverse walkways, trampers, organised parties,
            causal users
      arr   what they do when they arrive
      fli   types of use eg hunters, trampers, fishermen, cyclists to
            identify conflicts
      zzd   visitor intentions
      cat   catering for daytrippers, or backpackers on a 3-4 day trip

2.14 Facilities/Services Used
      fus   facilities used
      m/l   what facilities they use most/least when they arrive
      kno   how did they find out about the area
      gof   where do they go for information
      aac   cooking methods

3.   Visitor experience

3.1   Motivations
      rsn   reasons for visiting reserves
      mot   their motivations
      nds   visitor needs
      sts   visitor recreational and cultural needs and interests

3.2   Expectations
      wha   what did they come for, to look, to experience, to touch
      agt   what are they expecting, as against what they got
      wan   want do they want

3.3   Satisfaction
      sat   satisfaction
      mea   methods of measuring user satisfactions
      aae   satisfaction of expectations

3.4   Aspirations, Preferences, Attitudes, Awareness
      asp   aspirations of visitors
      pre   their preferences
      adt   visitor attitudes
      man   what are the attitudes of these users to management issues such
            as payment of hut fees, rubbish disposal, provision of
            facilities
      awe   awareness of the Park
      aaf   attitude/opinion on use of area
      aah   desired activities

4.   Demand and Supply

4.1   Demand for Facilities/Services
      fac   what visitor facility demands are
      use   facilities that visitors would like to be able to use
      dmd   demand for other facilities
      req   what facilities do they require
      lev   what level of facilities the visitors require
      f/i   what facilities and information are needed by these users
      mat   information needs
      int   visitor requirements for interpretation
      phi   public desires for any marketable service compatable with DOC
            philosophy
      acl   activities they would like to carry out
      rec   recreational opportunities they like to enjoy
      lik   what they like to do
      cre   their recreational aspirations eg short walks, guided walks,
            overnight walks
      con   what these visitors require or expect from Conservation areas
            within the district
      pu   what are they in the area to do or see

4.2 Motivation for Using Facilities/Services
      why   why did they use particular facilities
      att   why do they come - attractions

4.3   Expectations of Facilities/Services
      hop   what they expect from the recreation facilities
      cil   what facilities do they expect
      exp   expectations activities they would like to see provided for
      fut   futures aspirations for area
      ins   visitors interests and inspirations relating to a particular
            area
      doc   what is the public expectation of DOC

4.4   Satisfaction with Facilities/Services
- ter   do they feel they are being catered for, if not what do they feel we should supply/provide
- f/t   facilities and tracks visitors would like to see improved
- nec   are the facilities adequate -are there too many or too few - what are their needs?
- nfo   was there enough info available on the area or too much
- ion   provision of suitable standard of tracking eg route, track, walk
- cta   what areas do they want to use & can't
- cha   what users would like changed or provided
- imp   where they deem lacking (facilities) i.e. improvement required
- deg   degree of satisfaction with those existing services
- rea   visitor reactions to staff efforts
- fed   feedback

4.5   Latent Demand
- num   non visitors' motivations-why don't they visit DOC land
- non   what individuals, groups or sectors of society are non-users and why?
- idt   ways of identifying non-user as well as user needs
- com   why don't they come

5.   Other

- zze   impacts
- env   what is the environmental impact
- wha   publicity has the most impact
- tou   tour operator requirements
- mar   market research for Morere Rip station
- pri   pricing implications of marketable services
- enc   what could we be doing to encourage more usage
- ass   how can they assist us in our management