

## **Visitor Satisfaction: A Methodology for Determining the Reasons for Visitation and the Influence of Environmental Factors on Visitor Satisfaction.**

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### **Abstract**

The estate managed by the Department of Conservation (DoC) is large and diffuse in character and it caters for a wide variety of activities and experiences. The Department has come under increasing pressure due to a decreasing budget, increasing use of the estate and changing preferences on how the estate should be used.

To manage the conservation estate effectively it is necessary to have information about who the resource users are, and what their preferences are. For this to be done practically in the present economic environment, it is necessary that the information be collected and analysed as inexpensively as possible. This means that the inputs of time, finance, and expertise must be kept to a minimum.

The purpose of this research is to develop a survey methodology that reveals: the reasons for visitation to a particular site; the contribution of environmental factors to satisfaction/dissatisfaction; the overall satisfaction; and relevant demographics. The driving themes of this methodology are economy, simplicity, and transferability.

Three sites were chosen for this research: Katiki Point Historic Reserve, Grave's Walkway, and the Moeraki Boulders Reserve. These sites were chosen because they are within the Otago Conservancy of the Department of Conservation and because of their accessibility to Dunedin. Surveys were conducted at each site during the shoulder season of 1994. As such, the results are only representative of the shoulder season and not the whole year. A multiple satisfactions model was used employing a five point Likert scale.

It is concluded that gentle, restorative and passive experiences in an environmentally stimulating area are sought by visitors to all sites. The greatest potential risk to visitor satisfaction is litter and vandalism.