

Eldorado Forest asking users to take survey

Every five years, the Forest Service conducts voluntary visitor use surveys to learn from forest visitors about their experience. This on-going survey has already been conducted twice on every national forest in the country. The survey team is returning to the Eldorado National Forest to update the information previously gathered, as well as to look at recreation trends over time.

During the last survey in 2012 on the Eldorado, 1,889 individuals were interviewed who reported their primary activities were downhill skiing (42 percent) and hiking-walking (17 percent). This last study estimated a total of approximately 900,000 Eldorado National Forest visits for the year.

Forest Service and contract employees will be working on the new survey at developed and dispersed recreation sites and along Forest Service roads where they will gather more than 200 samples of information from visitors on different days throughout the next year. The survey team will be wearing bright orange vests and have a sign that says "Traffic Survey Ahead". Visitors are encouraged to participate in the survey by pulling over and doing an interview.

The basic interview lasts about eight minutes. Every other visitor is asked a few additional questions which may take an additional five minutes. The questions visitors are asked include: Where did you recreate on the forest? How many people traveled with you? How long were you on the forest? What other recreation sites did you visit while on the forest? How satisfied were you with the facilities and services provided? About a third of forest visitors will also be asked to complete a survey on recreation spending during their trip.

All responses are totally confidential. A person's name is never written anywhere on the survey.

Information collected in this national study will be used for local forest planning and community tourism efforts, as well as at the state planning level, and by Congress.