

The “New Normal” in Demand for Outfitting and Guiding Services in the U.S.

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Overview

1. History of guides to present
2. Research on guides
3. Purpose of guides
4. Public demand for these services
5. How demand is changing
6. Factors influencing demand
7. Tools to predict future demand
8. ITRR research on demand for outfitted services in a Montana forest

History

- Direct historical origins from the 17th and 18th centuries
- Pathfinder and mentor
- Pathfinders originally had no training but knew their native land
- Role as a mentor is both spiritual and geographical
- Guides of today possesses and expands on both of these roles

Research on Guides

- Cohen's 1985 model of roles of guides
- Weiler's 1993 reexamination of Cohen's model
- Oschell's 2003 evaluation of guide roles and their effect on the recreation experience
- Oschell's 2009 research on competent communication of outfitters and guides.
- Not nearly enough research is done on the outfitting and guiding sector

Purpose of Guides

- From the USFS- outfitters and guides provide visitors seeking their assistance a quality experience as an extension of the agency's mission.
- From the USNPS- in a manner that furthers the protection, conservation, and preservation
- Common thread- guides and outfitters are expected to assist in mitigating resource impacts

The Need for an Outfitter

- Guided trips vary widely in length, seasonality, location, type, transportation, terrain, and clientele (Weiler and Ham, 2001)
- Need for outfitted services varies widely as well.
- Purpose of the research we did was to determine the need for outfitters in a Montana forest.
- Need is defined by current supply of outfitters, current demand for outfitted services, and the complexity of the activity

Demand

- The focus today is on demand
- Considering the importance of outfitting and guiding and the recent economic changes keeping track of demand is critical
- ITRR research on demand for outfitted services in a Montana forest
- Methods

Findings

- 38 outfitters
- 21 activities
- Use days ranged from 20 to 2,600
- 77% did not use their allocated days
- Days remaining=5,711
- Decline in expenditures (2%) by Montana visitors on outfitted services
- Is this the “new normal” for guiding services in MT?

Predictions

- Guided tours to remote destinations will continue to thrive and vice versa (Weiler and Ham, 2001)
- Demand for tour guides will fluctuate with tourism
- Areas where tourism is vibrant will see the demand for guides increasing
- Factors which will influence demand for outfitted services are: the economy, the characteristics of clients, and public sentiment

Thank You!

Questions???