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VISITOR MONITORING

Visitor monitoring is essential for a range of planning tasks for park managers including:

- Scheduling of maintenance tasks;
- Optimising visitor flow;
- Staffing and resource allocation;
- Determining ways to increase or manage carrying capacity;
- Justifying visitor services, facilities and staffing;
- Planning for the reduction of conflict between user groups;
- Monitoring compliance with regulations (e.g. dog walking, recreation activity use);
- Trail, signage and amenity upgrades;
- Identifying trends and predictions of future use and areas of concentration; and
- Capital works expenditure.

Visitor monitoring works best when it is long term and seen as an essential part of management. For it to work effectively, there needs to be:



ORGANISATIONAL INTENT

- Internal organisational acknowledgement and prioritisation of the need and value of having current and accurate visitor use data;
- A balance of strategic, tactical and operational approaches;
- Respect and flexibility to accommodate to local conditions.



SUSTAINED COMMITMENT

- A long term view of data capture so trend information can be determined to manage for change.



RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Allocation of resources to enable visitor use data capture and analysis e.g. budgeted and expended funding, personnel time, staff training on available methods to collect and analyse visitation data.



SUSTAINED COMMITMENT

- Effective and systematic sampling frameworks and practices to ensure data capture is representative and reasonable;
- The development of standardised and systematic methodologies and toolkits to enable monitoring and measurement practices and enhance efficiency and effectiveness;
- Plan for comprehensive counting that includes capturing data from a range of complementary sources;
- The use of reliable and accurate techniques (not best guess or unsystematic monitoring).