

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Yosemite National Park

Wilderness Visitor Survey Results

Survey conducted by the University of Idaho
Summer 2013
by
Professor Troy Hall & MS student Susan Irizarry

2 November 2016

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

High & Moderate Use Trails Sampled

- Chilnualna Falls
- White Wolf
- Sentinel Dome/Taft Pt
- Upper Yosemite Falls
- Four Mile Trail
- Ten Lakes
- Porcupine Creek
- Sunrise Lakes
- May Lake
- Glen Aulin
- Lembert Dome
- Dog Lake
- Lyell Canyon
- Cathedral Lakes
- Elizabeth Lake
- Mono Pass/Parker Pass

Low Use Trails Sampled

- Alder Creek
- Aspen Valley
- Illilouette Creek
- Lukens Lake
- McGurk Meadow
- Mono Meadow
- Murphy Creek
- Old Big Oak Flat Rd
- Olmsted Point
- Ostrander Lake
- Pate Valley
- Pohono
- Smith Meadow
- Snow Creek
- South Fork of the Tuolumne
- Tamarack Creek
- West Fall Meadow

Wilderness Visitor Survey

- Sample Size (53-66% Response Rate)
 - 771 Day visitors
 - 430 Overnight (on-site) + 594 Overnight (mail)
 - 44 DNC stock trip; 12 private stock trip



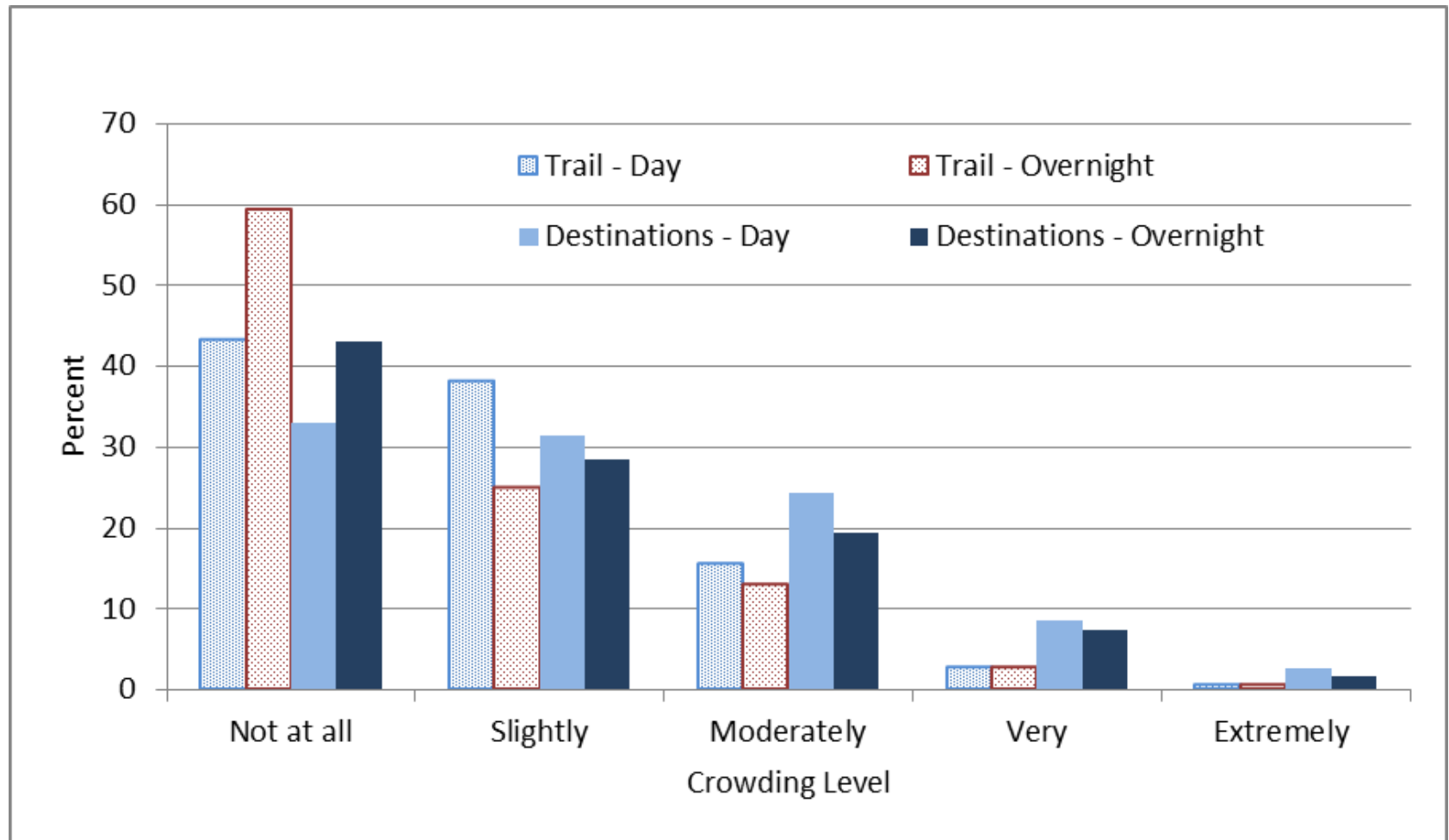
Demographics of Respondents

- 58% Day and 70% Overnight were male
- Highly educated
- Average age 40
- Predominately White
- 47% Day and 70% Overnight were from CA
- 26% Day and 4% Overnight non-USA

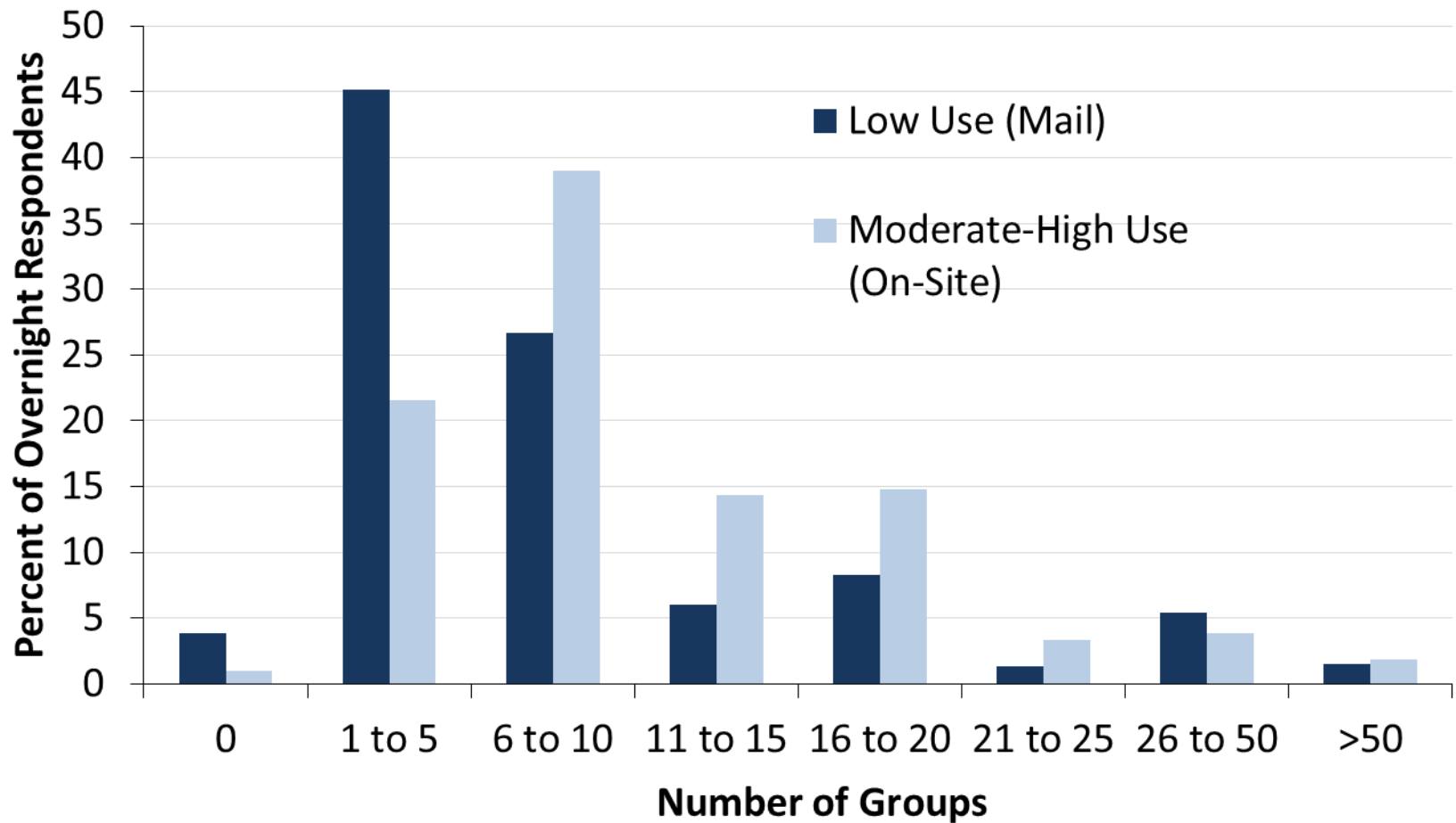
Wilderness Activities

	Day (n=766)	Overnight (n=1014)
	-----Percent-----	
Hiking on trails	94.8	98.4
Wildlife viewing	32.4	48.9
Swimming, water play	17.4	52.0
Hiking in a trailless area	6.5	29.7
Speed hiking	5.0	9.0
Non-technical climbing	4.8	17.0
Trail running	4.0	2.7
Fishing	2.2	17.5
Technical climbing	1.8	1.7
Other	4.2	7.3

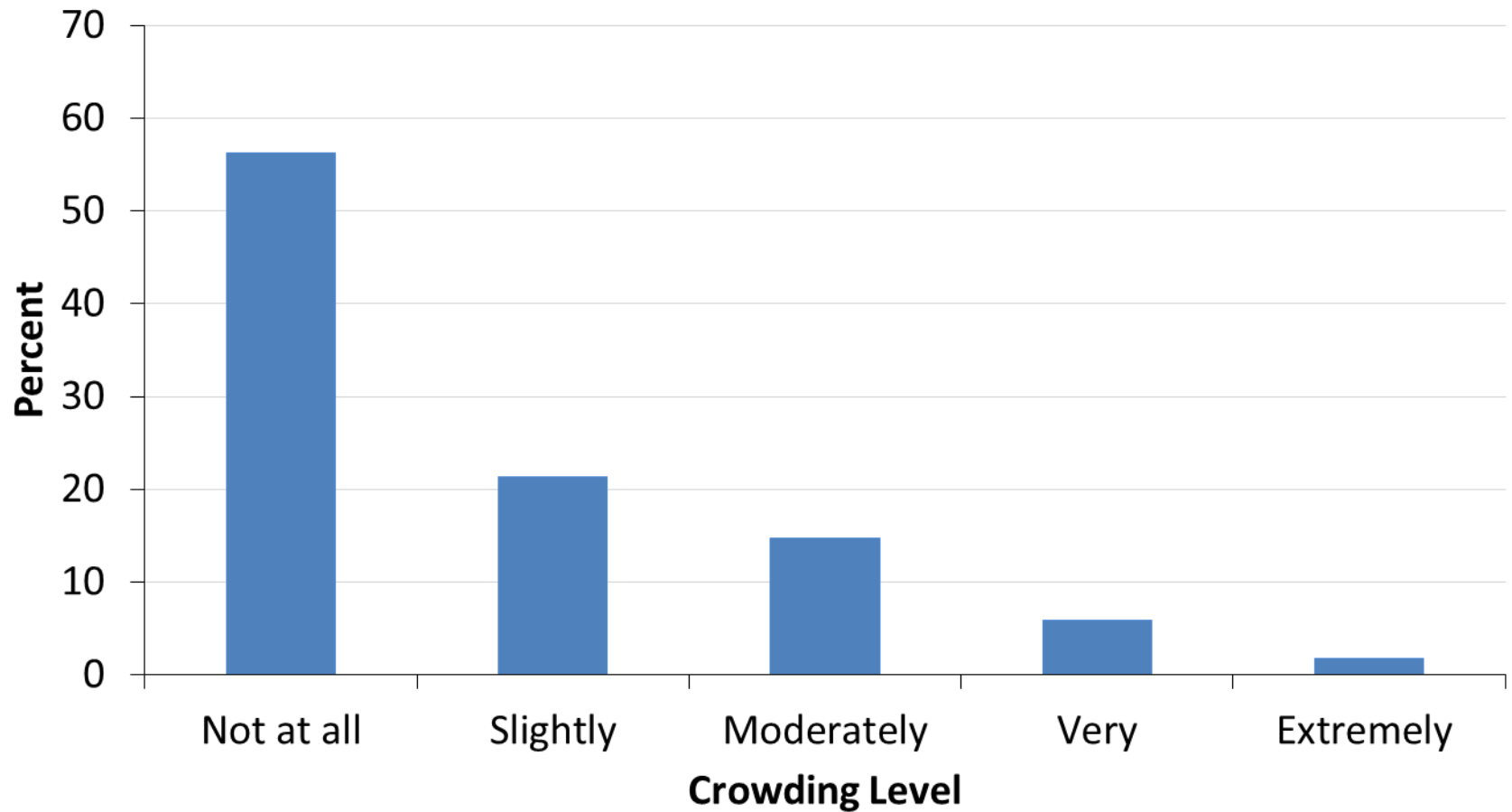
How “Crowded” did hikers feel?



Camped Within Sight and Sound



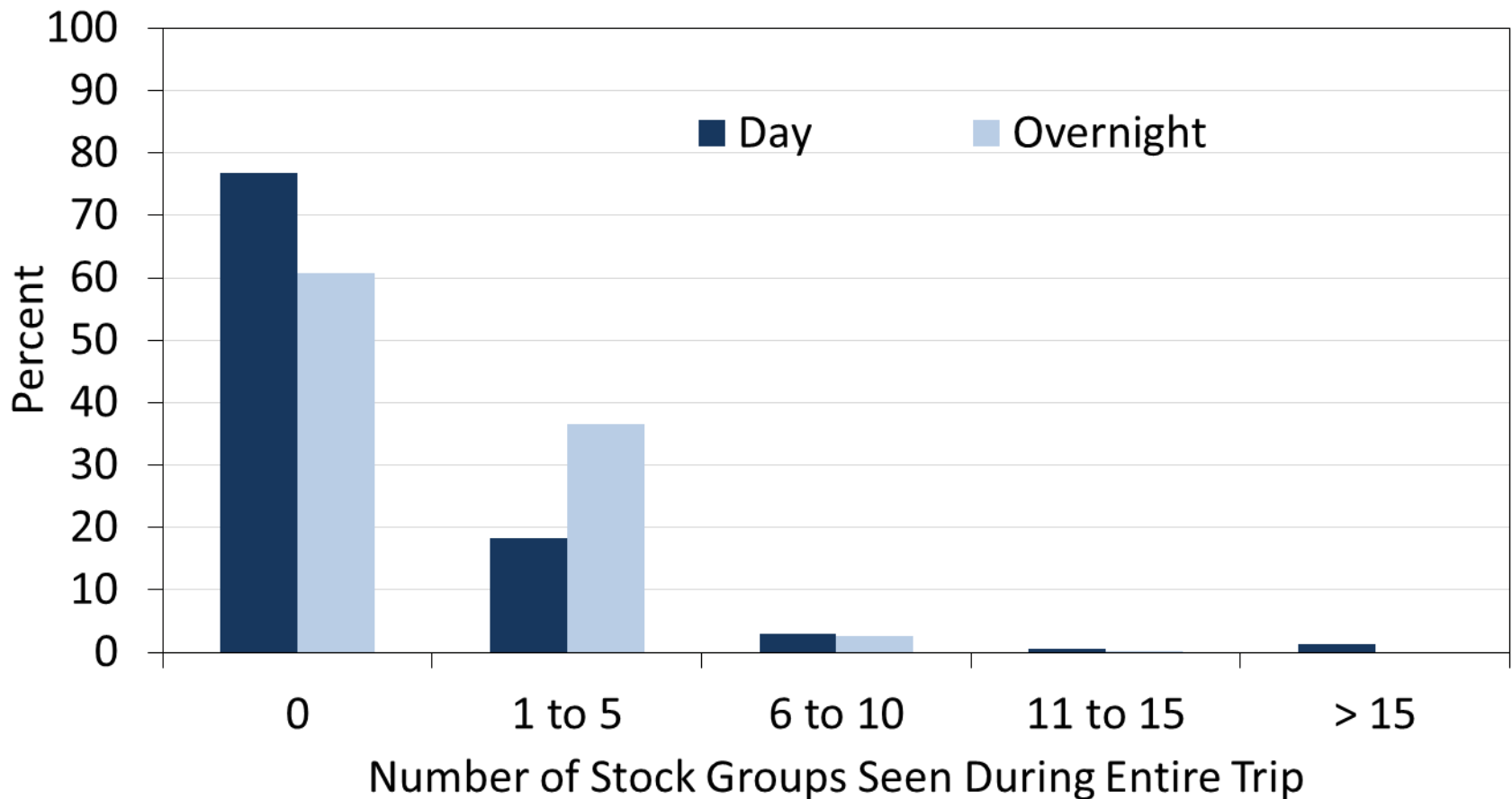
Crowding Perception at Campsites



Displacement

	Day (n=769)	Overnight (n=1013)
Type of displacement:	-----Percent-----	
Visit earlier or later in the season to avoid seeing other people	38.4	55.5
Visit on weekdays to avoid weekend crowds	49.8	66.2
Go to trails that are less crowded	56.1	77.8
Avoid attractions that are crowded	55.6	79.0

How many stock groups were seen?



Percent who noticed impacts - Day

Types of Impacts

Resource

Managerial

Stock-related

Non-stock conflict

Many day hikers	88.8
Trail wear & tear	84.1
Many backpackers	79.6
Poorly marked trails	79.3
Large groups	77.1
Noisy groups	76.0
Litter	74.1
Stock manure on trails	73.9
Inconsiderate behavior	71.6
Too many rules	70.8
Ranger contact	69.1
Trampled areas	67.2
Rules not enforced	65.5
Organized/outfitted groups	65.5
Rules restricting camping	63.8
Human waste	62.0
Many stock users	59.6
Hiker/stock conflict	58.1
High Sierra Camps	52.0
Stock impacts at High Sierra Camps	50.5
Trampling from stock	51.6

Percent who noticed impacts - Overnight

Types of Impacts

Resource

Managerial

Stock-related

Non-stock conflict

Having to obtain a permit	88.6
Rules restricting camping	83.5
Stock manure on trails	79.8
Trail wear & tear	78.1
Trampled areas	78.0
Many day hikers	77.9
Many backpackers	73.5
Litter	72.8
Too many rules	72.3
Poorly marked trails	71.9
Large groups	68.0
Inconsiderate behavior	63.0
Noisy groups	58.1
Ranger contact	57.9
Rules not enforced	57.9
Organized/outfitted groups	54.4
Human waste	53.6
Many stock users	51.3
High Sierra Camps	50.8
Stock impacts at High Sierra Camps	45.8
Trampling from stock	45.7
Hiker/stock conflict	42.9

Support for Management Actions

	Day		Overnight	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
Policy:	-----Percent-----			
If visitor-causes resource impacts are high, impose use limits****	78.9	27.6	82.7	29.1
Require camping at designated backcountry campsites to concentrate resource impacts	54.3	25.1	27.8	31.0
If people feel crowded, limit overnight use	46.9	7.2	46.2	5.7
If people feel crowded, limit day use****	44.5	58.9	47.9	75.5
More trails should be added to reduce the number of people seen	32.2	15.4	19.7	50.2
Reduce the number of trails that allow horseback riding	26.8	35.0	42.6	48.5
Allow use to increase without controls	14.5	20.7	7.9	16.0
Increase the number of trails that allow horseback riding	8.2	38.0	4.3	55.8

****Cautionary note: Some of these have percentages that add up to >100%, which we don't fully understand.

Preferences for Solitude Management

Which option strikes the best balance between use and solitude?	Day (n=729)	Overnight (n=980)
	Percent	
Do not restrict use to manage for solitude, even if use is heavy	24.6	6.7
Manage for solitude along a few wilderness trails. The number of people allowed to use these few trails will be limited, but the majority of trails will have not use limits and may be heavily used	52.0	30.3
Manage for solitude on most wilderness trails, by limiting the number of people using these trails. A few trails will have unrestricted use. Use levels will be high on these trails	20.3	53.6
Manage for solitude everywhere in wilderness, even though this may mean that use will be restricted and people will be turned away	3.2	9.4

Dr. Karen Hockett

Social Scientist

Karen_hockett@nps.gov

(209) 379-1394



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