



ZION NATIONAL PARK VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT PLAN

PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENT SUMMARY REPORT JANUARY 2017



Contents

SUMMARY	1
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	3
PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENTS	3
TOPIC QUESTION 1: THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS EVALUATING A RESERVATION AND/OR TIMED-ENTRY SYSTEM DURING PERIODS OF HIGH USE TO PROTECT PARK RESOURCES AND IMPROVE VISITOR EXPERIENCE IN ZION CANYON. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THESE TYPES OF SYSTEMS? WHAT IDEAS DO YOU HAVE ON HOW THESE TYPES OF SYSTEMS MIGHT BE IMPLEMENTED?	3
GENERAL COMMENTS	3
<i>Support and opposition for managing visitor use levels</i>	3
<i>No reservation system needed</i>	4
<i>Concern for current visitor experience</i>	4
<i>Desired conditions</i>	4
ADVANTAGES OF DIRECTLY MANAGING VISITATION	4
<i>Protection of resources and experiences</i>	4
<i>Trip planning</i>	4
<i>Timed entry or queueing</i>	5
DISADVANTAGES OF DIRECTLY MANAGING VISITATION	5
<i>Abuse and lack of fairness</i>	5
<i>Prior knowledge of reservation system</i>	5
<i>Economic impacts</i>	5
<i>Timed entry</i>	5
CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF A RESERVATION SYSTEM / TIMED ENTRY	5
<i>Flexibility in travel</i>	5
<i>Preference for locals</i>	6
<i>Preference to US citizens</i>	6
<i>Visitor diversity</i>	6
<i>Effects to other sites and local areas</i>	6
<i>Online reservations</i>	6
<i>Follow examples of existing reservation systems</i>	6
<i>Through-travelers</i>	6
<i>Tour bus access</i>	7
<i>Commercial operators</i>	7
<i>Coordination with other permits or reservations</i>	7
<i>Length of required reservation</i>	7
<i>Reservation window</i>	7
<i>Multi-modal trail</i>	7
<i>Shuttle system integration</i>	8
<i>Unintended Impacts</i>	8
<i>Weather or other closures</i>	8
<i>Additional detailed considerations</i>	8
TOPIC QUESTION 2: WHICH OF THE OTHER POTENTIAL ZION CANYONWIDE STRATEGIES DO YOU FEEL WOULD BE MOST HELPFUL IN MEETING THE PLAN PURPOSE AND NEED?	8
<i>General comments on canyonwide strategies</i>	8

<i>General comments on visitor capacity determination</i>	8
<i>Requiring reservations for camping</i>	9
<i>Eliminating all first-come, first-served access</i>	9
<i>Multi-modal trail development</i>	9
<i>Redesign of the South Entrance</i>	9
<i>Pre-pay entrance fees and automatic gate</i>	9
<i>Additional development, particularly parking</i>	10
<i>Dispersing use to other areas</i>	10
<i>Pre-trip planning efforts</i>	10
<i>Suggested changes to shuttle system</i>	10
TOPIC QUESTION 3: WHICH OF THE DESTINATION-SPECIFIC POTENTIAL MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES DO YOU FEEL WOULD BE MOST	
HELPFUL IN MEETING THE PLAN PURPOSE AND NEED AND WHY?	10
<i>Support for most or all strategies listed in newsletter</i>	10
<i>Bypass lane at entrance for people with reservations</i>	10
<i>Improve safety and accessibility</i>	11
<i>Limiting use on specific trails</i>	11
SITE-SPECIFIC PERMITS	11
<i>Support for site-specific permits</i>	11
<i>Concerns regarding site-specific permits</i>	11
<i>Considerations for implementation of site-specific permits</i>	11
<i>Specific suggestions for managing Angels Landing</i>	12
SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR THE NARROWS	12
<i>Specific changes to the Narrows</i>	12
<i>Concerns regarding water quality in the Narrows</i>	12
DISCUSSION REGARDING EAST SIDE OF THE PARK	12
<i>Support for development and improved access at the East Entrance</i>	12
<i>Concern for the future of the East Entrance area</i>	12
<i>Suggestions for Mt. Carmel Highway Tunnel</i>	13
<i>Increased wait time, queue system, or pilot car for oversized vehicles</i>	13
<i>No timed entry for tunnel</i>	13
<i>Discussion regarding signal or automated system</i>	13
<i>Eliminate access for oversized vehicles</i>	13
<i>Reroute oversized vehicles around park</i>	13
<i>Support for alternative transportation within the park</i>	14
<i>Expanded parking and turnouts along roads and other modifications to existing roads</i>	14
<i>Changes to existing shuttle system</i>	14
<i>Changes to existing shuttle system routes</i>	14
<i>Waste management suggestions</i>	15
<i>Improvements to Kolob Terrace and Kolob Canyons</i>	15
<i>Suggestions for additional trails</i>	15
<i>Expand interpretation and education to new areas and for new topics</i>	15
<i>No need for additional construction</i>	16
<i>Expand and leverage partnerships</i>	16
<i>Improve trailhead parking/signage</i>	16
<i>Suggested changes to entrance fees</i>	16
<i>Build new visitor center and/or additional facilities to support visitor use</i>	17

<i>Increase visitation on shoulder seasons/change visitation hours</i>	17
TOPIC QUESTION 4: ARE THERE OTHER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES WE SHOULD CONSIDER AS WE DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES FOR THE PLAN?	17
<i>Reduce number of visitors</i>	17
<i>Reduce number of tour buses</i>	17
<i>Prioritize the protection of resources</i>	17
<i>Consider soundscapes</i>	18
<i>Work with volunteers</i>	18
<i>Additional reservation systems to consider</i>	18
<i>Other commercial services</i>	18
<i>Increased awareness of Human History Visitor Center</i>	18
<i>Limit group size</i>	18
<i>Discussion regarding fee-free days</i>	18
<i>Additional camping opportunities</i>	19
<i>Encourage consistent information</i>	19
<i>Exception for educational groups if reservation system is implemented</i>	19
<i>Addition visitor services and opportunities</i>	19
<i>New workforce housing</i>	19
<i>Require pre-visit course</i>	19
<i>Implement an even/odd days for different user groups</i>	19
<i>Eliminate or reduce advertising</i>	20
<i>Support for dispersing visitors to areas outside of main canyon</i>	20
<i>Concern for effects of dispersing visitation</i>	20
<i>Request more funding and staff</i>	20
<i>Increase enforcement or NPS presence</i>	20
<i>Designate new trails</i>	20
<i>Discussion regarding additional camping opportunities</i>	21
<i>Open more areas for access</i>	21
<i>Encourage and enhance cycling opportunities</i>	21
<i>Support and suggestions for additional facilities</i>	21
<i>Increase real-time media presence</i>	21
<i>Implement carbon tax</i>	22
<i>Periodically close the park</i>	22
<i>Continue public engagement</i>	22
<i>Changes to backcountry permit system and office</i>	22

SUMMARY

During the fall of 2016, Zion National Park formally began development of a visitor use management plan and environmental assessment through a public scoping effort. Previous to public scoping, the public was asked to provide their thoughts on what they value, have experienced, and would like to see at Zion National Park during public listening sessions. Much of the public input provided during this initial step helped inform the development of the NPS proposed action, which was presented to the public during public scoping. The public was asked to share their thoughts on a proposed action, as outlined in a newsletter, between October 23 and November 23, 2016.

During the public scoping period, approximately 470 people provided their comments by entering them into the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment (PEPC) website, providing them at a public meeting, or mailing or emailing a comment directly to Zion National Park. The PEPC site received comments directly from 128 people; approximately 277 people attended public scoping meetings. See table 1 for additional information. In addition, the National Park Service offered another online public meeting through WebEx attended by 45 people. During the open houses, approximately 845 comments were captured on flip charts (not counting people who agreed with what was previously written). All handwritten comments received during the public scoping open houses were transcribed and entered into the PEPC system. In addition, 16 emails and hard copy letters received by the National Park Service were entered into the PEPC system. In total, we received approximately 150 individual correspondences and over 900 comments during the public meetings.

TABLE 1. PUBLIC MEETING INFORMATION

Location of Public Meeting	Date of Meeting	Number of Attendees	Number of Comments
Las Vegas	10/24/16	14	53
Hurricane	10/25/16	42	144
Springdale	10/26/16	56	170
Zion Lodge	10/26/16	50	156
Cedar City	10/27/16	68	143
Salt Lake City	10/28/16	27	96
WebEx	10/31/16	45	103
Kanab	11/1/16	20	83
Total		322	948

To inform the public of the scoping process, a newsletter describing the purpose and need for the plan, key planning objectives, a proposed action, how to comment, where public open houses would be held, and a general project schedule was distributed.

In order to reach a broad audience, the newsletter and information about public scoping were shared with the public in a variety of ways. More than 200 hard copy and/or email versions of the newsletter were distributed by mail or email to local, state, and federal governmental officials, tribal representatives, local business leaders, commercial users, and other individuals who had previously expressed interest in the planning process. A press release was also distributed to all major local and regional news outlets. Additionally, information on the public open house meetings was provided via the park's Facebook page, which has more than 700,000 followers.

The National Park Service collected public comments during this scoping phase of the planning effort in order to understand the public's perspectives on potential management options for Zion National Park. In implementing the NEPA process, thoughts and ideas from individuals,

organizations, and agencies are analyzed and considered equally. For this reason, the unique content of comments, rather than the number of times a comment was received, would be used to guide the development of a range of reasonable management alternatives for the plan. This scoping report summarizes all public comments received during the public scoping period.

The following table provides the distribution by state of public comments that were submitted to the PEPC system, by email, and US mail.

DISTRIBUTION BY STATE OF PUBLIC COMMENTS SUBMITTED TO THE PEPC SYSTEM

State	Percentage	Number of Correspondence
Utah	56.2%	81
California	8.3%	12
Nevada	5.5%	8
Arizona	4.2%	6
Washington Texas Colorado Oregon	2.1% (per state)	3 (per state)
Illinois New Mexico Oklahoma Rhode Island North Carolina	1.4% (per state)	2 (per state)
Maryland Tennessee Idaho Missouri Montana Pennsylvania Kentucky Virginia New Hampshire Florida	0.7% (per state)	1 (per state)
Unidentified	3.5%	5
Total 144		

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Correspondence. A correspondence is the entire document received from a commenter. It can be in the form of a letter, written comment form, note card, or open house transcript.

Comment. A comment is a portion of the text within a correspondence that addresses a single subject or issue. It could include such information as an expression of support or opposition to the use of a potential management tool, additional data regarding the existing condition, or an opinion debating the adequacy of an analysis.

Comment Summary. A grouping that is centered on a common subject. Comment summaries combine similar comments. Example quotes from the comments used to create a comment summary may also be presented to highlight the type of sentiments that went into the comment summary.

PUBLIC SCOPING COMMENTS

The following topic questions were posed to the public to frame and begin the conversation surrounding visitor use management within Zion National Park.

1. The National Park Service is evaluating a reservation and/or timed-entry system during periods of high use to protect park resources and improve visitor experience in Zion Canyon. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of these types of systems? What ideas do you have on how these types of systems might be implemented?
2. Which of the other potential Zion canyonwide strategies do you feel would be most helpful in meeting the plan purpose and need?
3. Which of the potential destination-specific potential management strategies do you feel would be most helpful in meeting the plan purpose and need and why?
4. Are there other management strategies that we should consider as we develop alternatives for the plan?

Comments received under one topic question were at times repeated or applicable to other topic questions. To reduce redundancy, comments have been summarized and placed under the most applicable topic question below.

Topic Question 1: The National Park Service is evaluating a reservation and/or timed-entry system during periods of high use to protect park resources and improve visitor experience in Zion Canyon. What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of these types of systems? What ideas do you have on how these types of systems might be implemented?

General Comments

Support and opposition for managing visitor use levels

Commenters expressed both support and opposition to directly managing visitor use levels through a reservation or other system—often describing both the advantages and disadvantages of doing so.

Some commenters believe limiting use is necessary to have a good experience without frustrating crowds and lines. Others stressed the importance of protecting natural resources by limiting use. Some commenters believe use levels should be capped below current use levels through the system. Some expressed support for a site-specific reservation system as well as a parkwide one. Others were dismayed at the need to implement any limits to visitation but recognize the need for the park to better manage use levels. Some commenters strongly believe that any system that limits visitors to the park should not be implemented. These commenters believe any restrictions to access are against the park service mission and deny Americans access to their lands. Some of these commenters support a timed-entry system where people can wait to get into the park if they choose. Others believe the park needs to better manage crowds by adding staff and buses but to not place limits on visitation.

No reservation system needed

A few commenters believe that crowding and congestion issues are isolated to certain areas outside the park or are not truly a large enough issue to warrant direct management of visitation through establishment of a visitor capacity. One commenter said that issues of crowding and congestion only occur at the entrance station and visitor center and does not believe use levels are a problem elsewhere in the park. This commenter believes that a lack of parking creates a frustrating situation for visitors in that area alone and that it should be resolved by adding parking. One commenter believes the shuttle is the only crowded place in the park and that by running shuttles more frequently or efficiently crowding problems would be resolved. Another believes any issues of crowding could be addressed through education.

Concern for current visitor experience

Some commenters expressed concern over the current quality of visitor experience at Zion National Park. Commenters cited crowded conditions and visitors who cause impacts to resources. Multiple commenters recounted their experiences and described how they have stopped or limited their visits due to negative experiences.

Desired conditions

One commenter believes the park should let visitors decide for themselves if it is too crowded and that managing to desired conditions is undemocratic since it would make it harder for some to visit.

Advantages of directly managing visitation

Protection of resources and experiences

Multiple commenters expressed their support for managing visitation levels as a way to protect both resources and visitor experiences and improve visitor safety. Multiple commenters described experiencing crowded conditions at the park and believe managing use levels directly would help address issues of safety on dangerous trails. Some commenters were hopeful that visitors would be able to experience quiet and nature without crowds. One commenter believes state parks and other local destinations would benefit as visitors seek out alternative destinations.

Trip planning

Multiple commenters believe an advantage of a reservation or timed-entry system would be visitors being able to better plan their trips and ultimately have better experiences while at the park. Some commenters expressed their support of being able to make a reservation for an entire day rather than a specific time slot to still allow some flexibility.

Timed entry or queueing

Some commenters expressed their support to manage use levels to a certain visitor capacity through timed entry. Commenters suggested that once the capacity is reached, visitors could wait to enter the park when others leave. Some suggested a combination of a reservation system and a queuing system. Other commenters oppose a timed-entry system and believe it would result in lines of cars and crowds of people waiting to enter the park.

Disadvantages of directly managing visitation

Abuse and lack of fairness

Commenters who opposed a reservation system most frequently raised concerns that the system could be taken advantage of by some tour companies and individuals and that, in general, such a system would not be fair to local residents. They worried that people would attempt to abuse a reservation system by making reservations and then selling them to others who were not able to find them, creating a black market. One commenter advised that this would be a complex system to put in place and would require national and international outreach efforts to make visitors aware of it so they could plan their trips accordingly. One commenter stressed that whatever system is put in place, transparency and fairness needs to be focused on to avoid frustrations.

Prior knowledge of reservation system

Commenters expressed their support for a reservation system but raised concerns over visitors knowing about the system before they arrived. Commenters suggested that a robust education program to national and international visitors would be needed.

Economic impacts

Some commenters believe that a reservation system could result in negative economic impacts. One commenter said costs would increase for visitors as a system is handled through a third party. Other commenters were concerned that limitations would affect the local community and its residents that are tied to a tourist and recreation economy.

Timed entry

Some commenters believe that a timed-entry system would be too complicated. One commenter contended that there was not enough information presented on this strategy to fully comment on it. Another commenter said that timed entry would create lines of waiting vehicles. For these reasons, some commenters supported a reservation system rather than timed entry.

Considerations for Implementation of a reservation system / timed entry

Flexibility in travel

Commenters frequently raised concern over the potential loss of travel flexibility with any system that would require visitors to be at the park at a certain time or day. Some of the commenters supported the idea of managing visitation levels but were concerned that they would lose the ability to spontaneously visit the park. Some of these commenters recommended that a portion of reservations be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, with some distributed the day-of on a lottery system. One commenter suggested that day-of visitors could be allowed entry as those with reservations leave, or if a visitor with a reservation does not arrive. For other commenters, the need to make a reservation ahead of time makes such a system entirely unacceptable. These commenters believe the need to make a reservation in advance restricts freedom in travel plans and would have

negative effects to visitor experience as visiting the park would feel more like a theme park and make any last minute trips nearly impossible. Some commenters were particularly concerned over locals not being able to freely visit the park.

Preference for locals

Multiple commenters were concerned that managing the park through a reservation or timed-entry system would disproportionately affect state and local residents. Some commenters supported a reservation system if it accounted for local access to the park differently than with visitors from out of state or international. Some commenters said locals should be exempt from a reservation system. One commenter suggested that reservations be made available to Utah residents a day earlier when reservations become available. Another suggested there be Utah resident-only days at the park. Another commenter does not believe that locals or commercial guide services should receive any preference over other types of visitors.

Preference to US citizens

Some commenters believe that in order to reduce visitation to Zion fees should be raised for visitors who are not from North America and that preference to access should be given to US citizens. Commenters believe that US citizens should be prioritized in visiting the national parks their tax dollars support. Some commenters suggested that US citizens be given preference when determining a visitor capacity by providing a lower number of passes to foreign visitors. One suggested that reservations not taken by US citizens could then be given to foreign visitors.

Visitor diversity

A few commenters urged the National Park Service to carefully consider a diversity of audiences when developing a reservation or permitting system. They believe any such system should not inadvertently discourage one user type and should rather encourage a variety of user groups.

Effects to other sites and local areas

One commenter raised concern over the potential impacts that a reservation system would have on other areas of Zion National Park in addition to other local attractions. They suggested that a plan for the regional areas be developed before a system is put in place at Zion.

Online reservations

Multiple commenters expressed support for managing visitation through reservations, but raised concerns over the thought of such a system being implemented solely online. Commenters suggested that reservations should be available in multiple ways, including over the phone. Other commenters do not support a reservation system of any kind because they believe it would require the use of technology that would leave themselves or others at a disadvantage. Others expressed support for online reservations and one commenter suggested that a bypass lane be constructed to quickly allow access for visitors with a reservation.

Follow examples of existing reservation systems

A few commenters made specific recommendations based on other reservation systems that the National Park Service could follow such as the Getty Villa and Getty Museum in California, Australian National Parks, Mesa Verde and Carlsbad Caverns national parks.

Through-travelers

A few commenters suggested allowing nonstop travelers between the south and east gate without a reservation would offset those who arrive without reservations or were unaware of a park quota. A

commenter suggested through traffic be allowed at any time without reservations, saying this is a good option for those who do not stop for extended hikes. A commenter suggested if there were limits on visitation, the park needs to find a way to accommodate the through traffic.

Tour bus access

Commenters raised concern over large numbers of tour buses operating in the park. Commenters believe that such commercial operations add to crowded conditions by dropping off large numbers of visitors at a time, causing congestion. Some commenters stated that the number of buses per hour should be limited as part of a reservation system. Others generally stated that bus access should be limited whether through a permit system or reservation system. One commenter suggested buses meeting certain emission standards could be allowed to drive to Temple of Sinawava. Another suggested that all tour buses should be banned from the park.

Commercial operators

Some commenters raised concern over commercial tour operators potentially taking advantage of a reservation system. One commenter described an encounter with visitors who believed they could access a permitted area through the commercial operator. Other commenters asked for clarification on how commercial use authorization (CUA) holders would operate within a reservation or timed-entry system and raised concern over how commercial tour operators would be affected.

Coordination with other permits or reservations

A few commenters described the need for any reservation system to take into account site-specific permits or lodging reservations. One commenter suggested that a visitor could automatically be given a reservation when they get a permit for a specific destination. Others suggested that the park coordinate lodging reservations with park entry reservations and provide a pass to these visitors. A commenter suggested the park consider all user groups when implementing the permit system, including commercial users and private groups.

Length of required reservation

Commenters expressed a variety of opinions as to what time frame a reservation should correspond. Some visitors suggested that visitors be able to enter the park within a two-hour window to allow flexibility. Some commenters believe making reservations for certain time slots would be difficult as arrival times vary due to travel factors. Multiple commenters suggested that a reservation be for an entire day to allow flexibility.

Reservation window

Commenters provided a variety of suggestions for how long of a time frame visitors should have to make a reservation. Some visitors believe that the public should be able to make reservations as far in advance as one year.

Multi-modal trail

One commenter asked how a multi-modal trail development would be considered in a potential reservation system. The commenter believes more people may use this type of trail to enter the park to bypass the need for a reservation.

Shuttle system integration

One commenter said that the shuttle system is a crucial tool and supported its continued use. The commenter encouraged the National Park Service to continue exploring how the shuttle system could be leveraged within a reservation or timed-entry system.

Unintended Impacts

Some commenters raised concern over unintended consequences that may arise from directly managing visitor use levels at the park. One commenter noted that if visitors cannot enter the park they are likely to go to other areas of the park or local sites that are currently not busy or seeing negative impacts. Other commenters noted that the park may inadvertently create demand by limiting access. Another warned that managing use in the canyon could encourage unprepared visitors to go to backcountry.

Weather or other closures

A few commenters questioned how weather or other closures at the park would be accounted for under any system that directly manages visitor use. The commenter wondered if refunds would be made to visitors not able to use their reservations.

Additional detailed considerations

Some commenters raised questions over how the details of a reservation or timed-entry system would work. Some commenters raised concern over what would happen if a visitor failed to show up for their reservation or if they missed their specific time slot. One commenter asked how prices would be determined and how the number of reservations or permits would change over seasons. One suggested that a reservation system consider both pedestrians and visitors in vehicles. Another suggested that any changes be made in phases with limits to visitation being the last. Other comments included if reservation type system could be done on a more national NPS level and if demand-based pricing could be implemented. In addition, commenters questioned how missed or canceled reservations would be handled.

Topic Question 2: Which of the other potential Zion canyonwide strategies do you feel would be most helpful in meeting the plan purpose and need?

General comments on canyonwide strategies

Commenters both supported and opposed canyonwide management strategies outlined in the proposed action. Multiple commenters expressed their general approval, often noting that they believe congestion and crowding would be reduced. Some other commenters expressed opposition to any limitations being placed on visitor use, often recounting sentiments expressed under topic question one. One commenter urged the National Park Service to develop additional strategies that would more holistically look at local communities and the region.

General comments on visitor capacity determination

Some commenters provided general thoughts on the strategy of directly managing visitor use through a capacity determination. For the most part, these comments echoed or repeated those found under topic question one within this report. In addition, commenters asked for more information on what the visitor capacity determination is likely to be. Others echoed sentiments previously listed of not wanting any limitations to be put in place. One commenter raised concern over special interests within the town of Springdale pressuring the National Park Service to keep a

high visitor capacity determination to support businesses. Another suggested that the National Park Service should simply limit the daily number of visitors allowed in and that parking spaces should be tallied to determine that daily number.

Requiring reservations for camping

Commenters expressed both support and opposition to all camping being reservable. Other commenters believe an all-reservation system would better allow visitors to plan their trips. Other commenters believe that the park should continue to have both reservation and first-come, first-served camping and should account for visitors who do not use their reservations. Commenters believe all-reservation camping would require heavy trip planning in order to be able to stay at the park. Commenters on both sides of the issue urged the National Park Service to work with other agencies and towns to provide camping in other areas. A few commenters believe the current system should remain and that the park has the ability to expand camping in the park. Another was worried a reservation-only system would increase costs to the public.

Eliminating all first-come, first-served access

A few commenters provided general comments and support on the idea that all first-come, first-served access to Zion be eliminated over time. One commenter suggested that use be further restricted by how often a person could visit over a year or more.

Multi-modal trail development

Visitors expressed a variety of opinions on a potential multi-modal trail being developed in the park. Multiple commenters supported the idea of a new recreation opportunity as a way to disperse use, protect resources on other trails, and encourage the use of alternative transportation. Multiple commenters generally expressed support for more biking opportunities in the canyon with some suggesting bike rentals be an option. One commenter suggested a trail be connected from Springdale and another noted that additional parking may be needed. Others were concerned that such a trail would attract additional visitors and would be used as a way to bypass a reservation system or the shuttle if the trail were not included in visitation limits. Some questioned how many people would use it. Other commenters believe adding a trail would cause serious resource impacts and would be difficult to manage. One commenter said the trail would be unsustainable because of costs.

Redesign of the South Entrance

Multiple commenters expressed support for a redesign of the South Entrance to the park while some raised opposition or concern. Multiple commenters believe improvements to the entrance would benefit visitors and help reduce congestion. Multiple commenters supported a bypass lane for pass holders being part of this redesign. One suggested a traffic circle be added. One commenter noted that a queuing lane may be necessary with timed-entry type systems. Some commenters opposed a redesign as it would increase development which they believe would negatively impact natural resources and viewscapes. A few commenters believe a redesign would not be necessary if visitation levels were directly managed through a reservation or other system.

Pre-pay entrance fees and automatic gate

Multiple commenters supported the idea of an automated gate system being added to the South Entrance for pass holders and those with reservations to be able to quickly enter the park. Multiple commenters believe this would help with congestion. A few commenters suggested kiosks be available in local towns to purchase entrance fees before arriving while another worried that Springdale and other local communities would be further complicated by such kiosks. One commenter was worried that prepaying fees would increase costs to the public and a few others were

worried about the visual impacts it might have. Another was concerned that a bypass lane could reduce visitor education that contact with a ranger at the entrance gate provides.

Additional development, particularly parking

Commenters most frequently discussed parking when providing comments on additional development in Zion National Park. Some commenters supported additional parking being added to the canyon to help with congestion. Many others expressed opposition to additional parking being developed in the canyon. Commenters were concerned that additional parking would damage resources and believe other solutions should be sought including parking outside of the park. One commenter recognized that issues surrounding parking are currently impacting Springdale as well as the park.

Dispersing use to other areas

A few commenters expressed support for dispersing visitor use to other areas of the park to relieve crowding in the main canyon. Others opposed dispersing use to areas, fearing resource impacts. One commenter expressed support for the park to receive adequate staffing resources to adequately manage increases in visitation during shoulder seasons.

Pre-trip planning efforts

Commenters urged the National Park Service to ensure that visitors are given information about the park and any potential reservation system in advance of their visit to Zion National Park. Commenters support visitors receiving real-time information on their way to the park, information once at the park, and on various platforms such as the park's website. One commenter urged the National Park Service to focus on messaging about stewardship of park resources and to provide information in multiple languages.

Suggested changes to shuttle system

Some commenters provided ideas on if and how the shuttle system should be modified under the plan. Some suggested increasing the number of shuttles running during peak seasons and days. A few commenters were particularly interested in photography opportunities and would like the shuttle system to run earlier and later to allow enough time to capture photographs at certain times of day. A few others suggested the shuttle travel to the eastern portion of the park. One commenter suggested a shuttle system running only to the upper canyon be considered.

Topic Question 3: Which of the destination-specific potential management strategies do you feel would be most helpful in meeting the plan purpose and need and why?

Support for most or all strategies listed in newsletter

There was general support for most of the destination-specific management strategies noted in the proposed action. Multiple commenters expressed support for all of the strategies suggested.

Bypass lane at entrance for people with reservations

Commenters suggested the park consider a fast-pass system similar to what they have at Disney parks. This could also be in the form of an automated gate and could also be applied to trails. A commenter suggested that if a fast-pass system were implemented, visitors with a senior pass should also be able to use this lane.

Improve safety and accessibility

Commenters expressed safety concerns for Angels Landing, the Narrows, and the tunnel. Commenters suggested safety would be improved if congestion was dealt with on Angels Landing. A commenter expressed concern about the level of skill visitors have on Angels Landing, suggesting the park find solutions for hikers who are not equipped for this type of hike. Commenters suggested the park make more areas accessible and provide more vehicle pull-outs for safety concerns. A commenter stated if pull-outs were paved then the park should paint lines in the pull-outs for safety reasons. A commenter suggested the park take management actions that ensure safety for pedestrians and vehicles in the tunnel. A commenter suggested the park add parking railings at visitor-created pull-outs because of safety concerns.

Limiting use on specific trails

Commenters both supported and opposed limitations being placed on how visitor access specific trails or sites such as Angels Landing and the Narrows. Some commenters supported limiting use at Angels Landing and the Narrows, suggesting the current use is diminishing the visitor experience and having an adverse impact on resources. Multiple commenters supported limiting use on specific trails during peak visitation. There was general support for both a timed-entry system as well as a permit system on specific trails. A commenter suggested a roving ranger in the Narrows who would stop visitors from walking past Orderville Canyon and said they would be willing to pay a higher fee for that particular hike. A few commenters expressed opposition for any direct limits to use at these areas as they do not believe crowding is truly an issue and do not want visitors limited in where they can go. One commenter suggested that visitors who feel it is too crowded could be directed to the east side of the park.

Site-Specific Permits

Support for site-specific permits

Multiple commenters believe that a permit system that would regulate the number of visitors on popular and potentially dangerous trails such as Angels Landing and the last few miles of the Narrows is necessary. Some commenters provided specific recommendations such as requiring visitors to carry out human waste.

Concerns regarding site-specific permits

Multiple commenters expressed concern about a permit lottery system and urged the park to move forward with a reservation system. Commenters expressed concern about the implementation of a permit system for a trail like Angels Landing that also provides access to the west rim trail; one commenter urged the park to consider these visitors if this system is implemented. A commenter expressed concern about site-specific limitations on commercial use operators.

Considerations for implementation of site-specific permits

Commenters provided a range of suggestions for things that should be considered when developing a permit system. Suggestions included: recommendations for existing systems to copy; giving preference to locals or those who visit frequently; reserving some permits for special uses such as photography; making permits available online, over the phone, or in person; considering a range of visitor experiences and expectations when developing the system; considering diverse perspectives such as race and age when developing the system; keeping costs to visitors minimal; aligning shuttles with permits for certain trails; making permits available far in advance, and making permits available 24 hours beforehand; studying visitor use at key sites and establishing thresholds to monitor use; and allowing larger group permits.

Specific suggestions for managing Angels Landing

One commenter suggested an access management system for Angels Landing but not the Narrows. A commenter suggested there should be more restrooms on Angels Landing. Another commenter suggested that children should be 12 years or older to hike Angels Landing.

Specific suggestions for the Narrows

Specific changes to the Narrows

A commenter suggested the park not limit access to the first part of the Narrows hike where folks wade in water. A commenter suggested the park consider education at the Narrows before limiting use. A commenter suggested the park require visitors to the Narrows to have a tour or park ranger as a guide. A commenter suggested that the entry to the Narrows be limited to 200-400 people per day. A commenter suggested the park charge bottom-up hikers for the Narrows \$5 per person and this money could support the waste management efforts.

Concerns regarding water quality in the Narrows

Multiple commenters expressed concerns about the water quality in the Narrows. Commenters urged the National Park Service to test water quality regularly, add more testing stations and make sure it is safe for hikers and skin contact. Another commenter suggested a composting toilet one mile up the Narrows hike and wag bag depositing locations every mile.

Discussion regarding east side of the park

Support for development and improved access at the East Entrance

Multiple commenters suggested the park consider increasing opportunities at the East Entrance. Another commenter suggested the park seek opportunities for partnerships to help establish a visitor orientation facility and public restrooms. Some suggested shuttle stops, more parking, pull-outs, a lodge, a picnic area, and opportunities to view the geological treasures of the east side. Multiple commenters suggested a visitor orientation facility or visitor center with additional parking and restrooms. A commenter also suggested that new services to the East Entrance should be fee-free. Multiple commenters suggested the park work with Zion Mountain Ranch to establish a visitor orientation facility and public restrooms near the East Entrance to better support visitor use. Another commenter suggested that Zion Mountain Ranch could also provide lodging, public shuttle service, and vehicle parking outside the park that could include staging for oversized vehicles and tour buses as well as support for alternative transportation such as bicycle and pedestrian access. A commenter suggested the park convert the lodge to employee housing and move lodge amenities to the east side of the park.

Concern for the future of the East Entrance area

Multiple commenters expressed concern in increasing development near the East Entrance, suggesting this area of the park is still undisturbed and should remain that way. In addition, multiple commenters were concerned that reducing visitor use in the main canyon would disperse visitors to the east side of the park. Another commenter added that seeing a flashing red light from a traffic signal is not part of their desired visitor experience, and asked the National Park Service to please leave the east side without human touch. Some commenters suggested that limiting use in the main canyon could increase traffic, parking, and other congestion related issues on the east side. Another commenter suggested the park consider downstream effects of changes to Mount Carmel Highway and also Kolob Terrace areas.

Suggestions for Mt. Carmel Highway Tunnel

Multiple commenters supported timed entry for the Mt. Carmel Highway Tunnel or expressed support for an established time for oversized vehicles through the tunnel. There was also a suggestion to change tunnel access to prohibit oversized vehicle access or limit access to low traffic windows. Multiple commenters suggested charging higher entrance fees to larger vehicles, for example \$100. Commenters suggested the park only allow oversized vehicles access after dark, before 8 am and after 5 pm, or just specific times throughout the day. A commenter suggested timed entry is a good option for the tunnel but if the park implements this plan that it needs to be well advertised, with advance notice, so trucks are not delayed too long. A commenter suggested the park consider a time at the end or beginning of every hour for oversized vehicles. Another commenter suggested the park restrict access for oversized vehicles to three times a day. One commenter stated that it is also an amazing historic feature in itself. A commenter suggested the tunnel only be open for visitors with reservations and local drive-through traffic. Commenters suggested the park build a new and larger tunnel for oversized vehicles. Multiple commenters suggested the park review how other states, parks, and cities handle similar situations, such as Seattle's strategy for bridge openings.

Increased wait time, queue system, or pilot car for oversized vehicles

Multiple commenters supported an increased wait time for oversized vehicles. Another commenter suggested a large queuing or staging area for oversized vehicles that would then funnel all oversized vehicles through the tunnel at once. A commenter suggested additional parking on either side of the tunnel for oversized vehicles. Another commenter suggested a pilot car that would lead the queued buses through the tunnel. A commenter suggested a queue lane be provided for RVs at the tunnel.

No timed entry for tunnel

A commenter expressed concern over the timed entry for oversized vehicles, suggesting that those who arrive in RVs often travel from far away and would have trouble timing their arrival to match the timed-entry system.

Discussion regarding signal or automated system

Some commenters suggested the park consider a signal system. A commenter suggested an automated signal coordinated with arrival times for oversized vehicle passage would help RV drivers. There were also commenters who were concerned with a potential signal system and didn't think it was the right option for the tunnel.

Eliminate access for oversized vehicles

Numerous commenters suggested the park eliminate tunnel access for oversized vehicles. Another commenter suggested prohibiting oversized vehicles in the park and suggested they park at the visitor center and take a shuttle. A commenter suggested the park go back to the historic use of the tunnel and prohibit oversized vehicles.

Reroute oversized vehicles around park

Multiple commenters suggested RVs be encouraged to drive around to other entrances to eliminate the tunnel wait time. A commenter suggested the park reroute oversized vehicles around the park and do so through online map services that would provide information to oversized vehicles. A commenter suggested the park install a gate and overhead bar at the East Entrance that would prevent large vehicles at the canyon junction if they are a safety hazard.

Support for alternative transportation within the park

Commenters expressed support for alternative forms of transportation including new and safe opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians. Multiple commenters suggested the park define pedestrian-only walkways or quiet walkways. A commenter suggested the park allow e-bike assisted outfitters (not throttle bikes) to drive the road at 10 mph. Multiple commenters suggested a train or rail system to eliminate traffic, parking lot capacity, and congestion concerns. This system could also link to other parks and key destinations in the nearby area.

Expanded parking and turnouts along roads and other modifications to existing roads

A commenter suggested the park provide more parking and pull-outs along the road for oversized vehicles. Another commenter suggested more turnouts on the east side as well as the Kolob section. Another commenter suggested additional parking along roads throughout the park. A commenter suggested the park create a road that bypasses Zion. A commenter suggested the park add wildlife crossings for small wildlife if the park has big curbs anywhere in the park. A commenter suggested that the park remove the road through the canyon and only allow four-wheel-drive vehicles or foot and bike traffic.

Changes to existing shuttle system

Commenters provided a variety of suggestions to improve the existing shuttle system. A commenter suggested the park add more bike racks to the shuttles. Another commenter suggested all park roads be shuttle-only. Commenters suggested the speaker system in the shuttle is challenging to hear and suggested the park consider a video with closed captioning or provide audio ports so visitors could plug in and have better sound quality. A commenter suggested the park allow 15-passenger vans to access Kolob Canyon for a driving tour. A commenter suggested that the best mechanism to manage visitation is to scale back the number of shuttles. A commenter suggested the park add more buses to the shuttle system. One commenter suggested that local buses be used on busy weekends to move people into the canyon as the shuttles are overwhelmed. A commenter suggested the park allow cars with six passengers to drive into the park during high use times to reduce some of the wait time for shuttles. Another commenter suggested that vehicles carrying less than a certain number of people be required to use the shuttle. A commenter suggested the park partner with Zion Lodge to provide an electric shuttle system to the main canyon. A commenter suggested keeping the shuttle running year-round. A commenter suggested the park provide an open-air rim tour from the visitor center to Temple Sinawava and back. A commenter suggested the park reduce the shuttle speed for safety reasons. A commenter suggested the park run shuttles in the morning, break during the day for pedestrians and bicycles, and then run shuttles again in the afternoon and evening.

Changes to existing shuttle system routes

Another commenter suggested the park have shuttles go different routes; for example, one shuttle would go straight to Stop Nine. A commenter stated there is confusion about the town and park shuttle and that color coding of buses could alleviate this confusion. Another commenter said the existing shuttle system could provide opportunities for visitors to reach the east side of the park. Another commenter suggested the shuttle end at the lodge. A commenter suggested the park provide an employee shuttle from Springdale to the park to reduce traffic both in the park and in Springdale. A commenter suggested the park set a shuttle aside for bicycles only to get cyclists up to the Temple. A commenter suggested the park provide a shuttle that provides just a driving tour without stops and has an audio presentation for those who do not want to hike. A commenter suggested the park eliminate the shuttle and thereby eliminate congestion at Angels Landing and the Narrows. A commenter suggested the park provide a shuttle to Virgin and St. George where there is more parking. Multiple commenters suggested that creating a parking base and shuttle system from Springdale or from somewhere outside of the park could alleviate problems. A commenter suggested

the park expand shuttles to areas outside of the park, such as Cedar City, St. George, and Kanab. Another commenter stated the shuttle service should not extend outside of the park. A commenter suggested the park eliminate the Grotto Stop to reduce use at Angels Landing. There was a suggestion to increase the bus routes at the end of the day to bring more visitors out of the canyon. One commenter suggested that the park implement an express shuttle to bring visitors to the end of the canyon during peak times.

Waste management suggestions

A commenter suggested that buses pick up full trash cans as they drive through the canyon. A commenter suggested solar outhouses or composting toilets in various areas of the park. A commenter suggested the park provide porta-potties at the beginning of Refrigerator Canyon. Another commenter suggested all hikers to the Narrows be issued a wag bag. Another commenter suggested the park pursue programs that discourage and even prohibit leaving waste in the park, to encourage visitors to reduce acquisition/consumption of disposable packing materials, save money, and prevent visitors from depositing waste within the park. Another commenter stated the restrooms at Scout Lookout are necessary but are visually obtrusive. A commenter suggested the park consider installing pit toilets at Stave Spring and Observation Point trailheads on the east side of the park. A commenter stated that pollution is ruining the experience and suggested the park be closed. There was strong support from commenters at the Las Vegas public meeting for waste removal in the Narrows. Commenters suggested the park require all human waste be carried out of the Narrows and Angels Landing or increase the frequency of taking human waste off of Scout Lookout. A commenter suggested the park require visitors to carry wag bags on all canyon hikes. Another commenter suggested the park pursue a public/private partnership with WAG Bag, the company. A commenter suggested the park discuss waste management issues at the Narrows with visitors to inform and educate them before they hike. A commenter suggested the park provide pit toilets at East Mesa and the parking area from Ponderosa Ranch. A commenter suggested the park sign the porta-potties on the east side as “for public use.” A commenter suggested the park provide waste receptacles in the backcountry for people to discard waste so they do not have to carry it out.

Improvements to Kolob Terrace and Kolob Canyons

A commenter suggested the park advertise existing opportunities in the Kolob Terrace Area. A commenter suggested a campground at Kolob Terrace. A commenter suggested the park provide a visitor center on Kolob Terrace Road. A commenter suggested the park monitor the social trailing in the Kolob Canyon area. A commenter suggested the park include winter closures for the Kolob Terrace area to give the residents a break.

Suggestions for additional trails

Commenters suggested better definition of trailhead parking and parking areas, as well as increased enforcement. A commenter also suggested more pull-offs with short hikes to interesting viewpoints for wildlife viewing opportunities. A commenter suggested more trails and another suggested the park revitalize Lady Mountain route. Another commenter suggested the park add more trails to the Kolob Canyon Area and Kolob Terrace area. A commenter suggested the park encourage more walking between shuttle stops by connecting trails. A commenter suggested the park expand the multiuse trail.

Expand interpretation and education to new areas and for new topics

A commenter suggested providing pamphlets about what exists in the entire park instead of just what exists in Zion Canyon. Another commenter suggested the park implement a visitor training program to inform visitors about acceptable behavior. A commenter suggested the park educate visitors about appropriate behavior to reduce noise and improve the soundscape as well as find more appropriate

places to accommodate large groups. A commenter suggested the park provide more hard-hitting, blunt displays that could include images of graffiti as an education tool for visitors. A commenter suggested the park have signs in multiple languages throughout the park saying that there are fines associated with graffiti. A commenter suggested the park use an interpretive theme based around the word “legacy” so people move throughout the park thinking about future generations. A commenter suggested the park work with younger generations and international audiences to promote education in addition to enjoyment. A commenter suggested the park use the potential permit system to educate visitors about the areas they plan to hike. A commenter also suggested the park provide educational opportunities with every reservation; these could include topics such as restoration or leave no trace ethics. A commenter suggested the park emphasize leave no trace to visitors and consider including it in advertising for the park. A commenter suggested the park provide or require education for commercial tour leaders. A commenter suggested the park require a video for all visitors before stepping in line or joining a commercial group.

No need for additional construction

Numerous commenters expressed concern for development of any sort and stated the park should not build any additional facilities or parking.

Expand and leverage partnerships

A commenter suggested the park seek opportunities to partner with a group outside the park to support a visitor orientation facility / visitor center to protect natural resources and eliminate some of the congestion. A commenter suggested that land be purchased west of Springdale to provide overflow parking and shuttle stops. Another commenter suggested the park work with Springdale to encourage visitors to park at the far end of Springdale by incentivizing it with a reduced price. A commenter suggested the park consider promoting new and existing trail opportunities outside of the park such as Huber and the Coalpits. A commenter suggested the park pursue a cooperative transportation system that would integrate state, county, and other federal agencies into regional transportation planning. A commenter suggested the park collaborate with Springdale to make sure people waiting for their entry times are offered activities in town. A commenter suggested the park work with partners outside the park to develop more facilities such as campgrounds, motels, hotels, or an RV park. A commenter suggested the park work with staff from Disney World to manage the large crowds effectively. A commenter suggested the park review how Yosemite National Park managed the Half Dome Trail in their GMP for potential guidance. A commenter suggested the park work with neighboring communities to improve the visitor experience, consider community support for additional shelter, parking, transportation, restrooms, park education and a source for additional information about places of interest in the Zion/Springdale area. A commenter suggested the park outsource different elements of park management; that an outside organization could create greater incentive to get attendance and maintenance under control.

Improve trailhead parking/signage

A commenter suggested the park define trailhead parking and also mark trailheads so they are more visible to hikers. A commenter suggested the east rim trail is underused and the park should encourage visitors to explore that area. A commenter suggested the park improve the signage regarding parking restrictions. There were also suggested changes to the shuttle stop signs.

Suggested changes to entrance fees

Numerous commenters suggested the park increase entrance fees. A commenter expressed support for different entrance fees for those driving through the park versus those stopping to hike and explore the park. Another commenter suggested that park entrance be contingent on emissions and noise standards, with no high-emissions and high-noise vehicles allowed within the park. A

commenter suggested the park charge a flat rate for four people in a car and then charge for each additional person. A commenter suggested that buses have higher entrance fees and be required to have reservations. A commenter suggested there be a lower entrance fee for locals who live within 100 miles of the park. A commenter suggested the National Park Service consider increasing the cost of the senior pass. Another commenter suggested a change to the cost of passes on a national basis. Another commenter suggested the park charge a premium for buses, recreational vehicles, and campers. A commenter suggested the park increase entrance fees to \$35 and tour bus fees to \$1,000. A commenter suggested that the park should seek to reduce increases in basic use fees around the park (i.e., tent camping, small RVs, and hiking) and keep any additional funds from commercial services in-house for future maintenance and basic operations. A commenter suggested that entrance fees should be per-person, not per-carload, and backcountry permits issued on a per-person basis. Multiple commenters suggested surge or variable pricing, suggesting the park charge a higher fee during peak times, similar to the way toll roads work. Another commenter suggested the park lower entrance fees in the off-season to encourage use at those times.

Build new visitor center and/or additional facilities to support visitor use

Commenters suggested a variety of locations for new facilities to support visitor services in various places. A commenter suggested the park hire an architect to design a new visitor center, observation area, scenic overlooks, and child-friendly facilities. A commenter suggested an interagency contact station or new visitor center at the La Verkin SR9 Junction. A commenter suggested there be additional parking at Canyon Overlook. A commenter suggested the park add bathrooms, trash cans, and other visitor services at the Emerald Pools trailhead.

Increase visitation on shoulder seasons/change visitation hours

A commenter suggested the park be a 12-month park and increase visitation in shoulder seasons. A commenter suggested the park keep visitor centers and contact stations open longer to spread out use. A commenter also suggested interpretive talks in the evenings to reduce daytime crowds. A commenter suggested the park advertise Zion in the winter to help move more visitors from the high season to a shoulder season. A commenter suggested the state advertise other state areas for visitors to see during peak times.

Topic Question 4: Are there other management strategies we should consider as we develop alternatives for the plan?

Reduce number of visitors

A number of commenters suggested the park limit the number of visitors. One commenter suggested the park go to pre-2006 levels. A commenter suggested the park determine the visitor capacity for each trail, campground, and roadway in the park and use the reservation/permit system to manage to that level.

Reduce number of tour buses

A commenter suggested there is overcrowding when multiple tour buses disembark at the same time. A commenter suggested the park limit the number of buses through the tunnel.

Prioritize the protection of resources

Multiple commenters urged the park to protect both natural and cultural resources. Commenters suggested that as the park moves forward with some of the proposed strategies, to consider implication to park resources as visitors disperse, especially on the east side of the park and

backcountry areas. A commenter suggested the park prioritize rehabilitation of already impacted areas. Commenters were concerned about the potential dispersal of visitors and wanted the park to not push the problem into other areas. A commenter suggested predators of the canyon are being impacted by too many visitors and the park should protect both flora and fauna.

Consider soundscapes

Multiple commenters suggested the park keep soundscapes in mind because the increase in visitation has led to an extreme increase in road noise. A commenter suggested the park revisit helicopter and fixed-wing tours during this planning process because they are contributing to the loss of visitor enjoyment, affecting soundscapes, and the commenter felt they are not flying within altitude restrictions.

Work with volunteers

A commenter suggested the park work with Kane County volunteers to alleviate personnel pressures and provide more opportunities on the east side of the park; for instance, trail maintenance, cleanup, or assistance with any new development. A commenter suggested the park work with visitors while they wait to enter the park to accomplish volunteer work.

Additional reservation systems to consider

Some commenters suggested that additional reservation systems be considered within the park. A few suggested that management of certain trails such as Angels Landing and the Narrows go beyond a permit system and be under a reservation system to manage use levels. One commenter noted that for commercial users / CUA holders, reservation systems are preferred wherever possible so they can plan itineraries for guests more precisely in advance. A few commenters suggested all campgrounds be on a reservation system. Other commenters believe that some first-come, first-served camping spaces should remain available. Other commenters do not believe that reservations should be required for all camping.

Other commercial services

A commenter suggested the park consider opening other areas of the park for guided hiking, such as Checkerboard Mesa and Gifford Canyon, to relieve some congestion in the high-volume use areas. A commenter suggested that Boy Scout groups be required to hire a guiding service. Multiple commenters suggested that private buses be allowed access to the main canyon.

Increased awareness of Human History Visitor Center

Commenters suggested the park encourage and expand awareness of the Human History Visitor Center and consider adding more information about ecosystem recovery.

Limit group size

A commenter suggested the park limit group size because large groups of people are affecting the visitor experience of others. A commenter suggested the park limit commercial group sizes to 12-24 people. A commenter encouraged the National Park Service to focus on the individual's experience and less on the bucket list hikes that Zion has to offer; help create a one-of-a-kind trip, vacation, or experience for those that seek it. A commenter wanted the park to not lose sight of providing the once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Discussion regarding fee-free days

Multiple commenters suggested the park consider reducing fee-free days or limiting the number of people on fee-free days. Another commenter suggested the park eliminate free passes for special

groups, such as the fourth grader free park pass. Other commenters suggested the park keep the fee-free days because some visitors cannot afford daily entrance fees.

Additional camping opportunities

A commenter suggested the park increase camping fees. Another commenter suggested the park consider expanding the campsites in the valley as well as on the east side. Consider limiting how many camping days a visitor can have. A commenter suggested the park work with other agencies to expand camping opportunities. A commenter suggested the park add designated tent camping areas for self-contained bicycle tourists or backpackers. A commenter suggested the park expand RV parking. A commenter suggested the park partner with a private landowner on the east side to establish a suitable campground.

Encourage consistent information

A commenter was concerned that outfitting companies are dispersing misinformation and it is changing the climate within the park.

Exception for educational groups if reservation system is implemented

Multiple commenters suggested the park differentiate student groups from tourist groups and be aware of the different needs and purposes between the two groups. Commenters also suggested the park consider working with students to assess the effectiveness of the management plan. A commenter suggested the park consider educational groups an exception to potential restrictions.

Addition visitor services and opportunities

Commenters provided suggestions on additional visitor services they would like to see at Zion National Park. Suggestions included providing food trucks at popular destinations, encouraging tour bus access in the winter, working with Zion Mountain Ranch to use locally grown agriculture, allowing electric bicycles and mopeds for visitors who are limited physically, developing additional lodging in the park, providing bike rentals, developing a rail system to eliminate all vehicular use, and adding trash bins.

New workforce housing

Multiple commenters suggested the park improve staff housing for volunteers and interns and suggested the park consider canvas tents or yurts like those at Yosemite. A commenter suggested the park work with Zion Mountain Ranch to develop workforce housing that could fill the need for staff housing in a location with transportation or bicycle/pedestrian access that could reduce further private vehicle traffic entering the park.

Require pre-visit course

A few commenters believe that in order to protect resources the National Park Service should create a pre-visit education course so that visitors are educated on the park's history, rules and regulations, and expectations for their visit before they arrive. One commenter suggested the course would be required and that the number of times someone can visit be limited over time. Another suggested that online tests be required prior to one's visit.

Implement an even/odd days for different user groups

A commenter suggested even and odd days for cars/bikes and pedestrians and a nonshuttle month. A commenter suggested the park determine entry by even/odd license plate numbers.

Eliminate or reduce advertising

Many commenters suggested that recent advertising campaigns, some specifically naming the State of Utah Mighty 5 Campaign, have created multiple problems and should cease immediately. Other commenters suggested the park reduce overall marketing as a way to reduce visitation.

Support for dispersing visitors to areas outside of main canyon

A commenter suggested the National Park Service consider dispersing use throughout the park if it considers reducing the amount of visitation the park receives. A commenter suggested the park work with Bureau of Land Management or the US Forest Service to provide additional campground opportunities to help disperse visitation. A commenter suggested the park encourage visitation at Observation Point and other trails to balance out foot traffic. A commenter suggested the park consider promoting Kolob and the Kolob Terrace areas of the park and consider running a shuttle on a limited basis to these areas. Another commenter suggested the National Park Service work with other agencies to develop a Greater Zion Area Recreational Management Plan to undertake a comprehensive look at visitor use in the greater Zion area. A commenter suggested increasing backcountry options to reduce the number of visitors in the frontcountry. Multiple commenters suggested the park open Parunuweap Canyon.

Concern for effects of dispersing visitation

Multiple commenters stated they were concerned with the effects that dispersing visitation would have on surrounding areas. A commenter suggested the park make efforts to preserve current wilderness character, including the east side of the park. A commenter was concerned that the current waste management issues would become a larger problem if visitors were dispersed to other areas in the park, specifically the Kolob Terrace area. A commenter suggested the park work toward designating the canyon as wilderness to protect the entire canyon from overuse and abuse.

Request more funding and staff

Numerous commenters suggested the park demand more funding to maintain the park and more staff.

Increase enforcement or NPS presence

Multiple commenters suggested the park increase enforcement for littering offenses. Other commenters suggested the park increase enforcement for parking violations, including people driving into Zion Canyon when closed without red passes. Multiple commenters suggested the National Park Service increase the number of roving rangers, specifically at Scout Lookout and Angels Landing. Another commenter suggested the park limit the number of people on trails by enforcing a one-hiker-in and one-hiker-out type rule. A commenter suggested the National Park Service have a stronger presence at the East Entrance. A commenter suggested increased enforcement would support better response times for emergencies and improve preventive SAR operations.

Designate new trails

Multiple commenters suggested the park create additional trails. One commenter suggested adding more trails to limit use on some crowded hikes. For example, inside the main canyon, adding a trail that goes behind the museum to the base of the west temple area and a trail similar to Angels Landing that goes to the summit of Mount Spry. Other suggestions included the reopening of the Lady Mountain route, adding another family-friendly trail, and adding a trail to the South Guardian area. A commenter suggested the park add a multi-modal trail that would run parallel to the Pa'Rus trail on the opposite side of the river and suggested the park use the historic Rockville Bridge for the river

crossing. A commenter suggested a shared trail for bicyclists and hikers. A commenter suggested a paved trail up Oak Creek. Multiple commenters supported extending multi-modal Pa'Rus trail up to the lodge or further.

Discussion regarding additional camping opportunities

A commenter suggested larger campsite areas in less sensitive areas. Another commenter suggested the park work with Springdale to provide more opportunities for RV camping, thus removing some of the congestion in the park caused by RVs. A commenter suggested the park keep campgrounds open longer. A commenter requested the park not expand campgrounds.

Open more areas for access

A commenter suggested the park allow access to the east fork of the Virgin River (Parunuweap Canyon). Multiple commenters suggested the park open new areas for commercial access. This could include allowing commercial companies to guide in wilderness areas. A commenter suggested the park open areas on the west side for new opportunities.

Encourage and enhance cycling opportunities

Multiple commenters suggested the park encourage access to the park from bicyclists; some also suggested the park create a bikeshare program that would have the same route and stops as the shuttle. Commenters also suggested a shared hiking/biking path. A commenter suggested a bike trail to the east side of the park or a wider road with a larger shoulder. A commenter suggested the park stripe bike lanes along the scenic drive, enforce helmet use, and require rental companies to comply with helmet regulations. A commenter suggested the park encourage travel by alternative transportation by offering incentives.

Support and suggestions for additional facilities

A commenter suggested the park provide better restroom facilities at Angels Landing as well as the bottom of the Narrows. A commenter suggested the park enlarge the parking lot to the north of the employee housing near Canyon Junction. A commenter suggested the park improve infrastructure and access to many of the trails in the upper/east end of the park to disperse visitation. A commenter suggested the park pave new areas, including the visitor center, bathrooms, and food service area. A commenter suggested the park pave Cry Baby Hill near Rockville. A commenter suggested the park pave Gooseberry Mesa Road and move the access point to the south end of Rockville (near Coalpits). This would divert visitors who intend to just drive without seeing the park; and RVs and tour buses could visit the park and return back to the road instead of using the tunnel.

Increase real-time media presence

A commenter suggested the park consider webcams of the park entrances and shuttle lines to share current conditions with visitors. A commenter suggested the park work with Radio West for education outreach to inform the public about park issues and the planning process. A commenter suggested the park have more information about the park, weather, and current conditions when they arrive in Las Vegas. A commenter suggested the park provide real-time information about park conditions and consider using media such as the radio, especially if a reservation system were implemented. A commenter suggested the park use signs on I-15 to communicate existing conditions such as park traffic and parking information to visitors before they arrive.

Implement carbon tax

A commenter suggested the National Park Service implement a carbon tax on visitation.

Periodically close the park

A commenter suggested the park periodically close the park so it has time to heal.

Continue public engagement

A commenter suggested the park keep engaging with the public and providing opportunities for people to stay involved.

Changes to backcountry permit system and office

Multiple commenters suggested the park streamline the permit system at the wilderness desk to reduce wait time and improve efficiency. A commenter suggested the park open the backcountry desk earlier for backcountry visitors and late at night for next-day visitors. They also suggested the desk could be closed during the day.