

2000 PEER Survey of Maine Department of Conservation Park Managers & Rangers

In March, 2000 Maine PEER surveyed park managers and rangers within the Department of Conservation on compliance and enforcement issues. Of the 28 year- round and seasonal employees we sent to, 16 employees returned our survey--a 57% response rate. Results are recorded below.

1. Do visitors express concerns about their safety in your park?

1 (6%) never 7 (44%) seldom 7 (44%) occasionally 1 (6%) often

2. Approximately how many incidents occurred in your area last season in which enforcement action could have been taken?

4 (25%) 0 -5 2 (13%) 6-10 3 (19%) 11-20 2 (13%) 21-30 4 (25%) More than 30 1 (6%) We don't keep track

3. Approximately how many incidents occurred in your area last year in which enforcement action was taken?

8 (50%) 0 -5 6 (38%) 6-10 0 (0%) 11-20 1 (6%) 21-30 0 (0%) More than 30 1 (6%) We don't keep track

4. Please identify the frequency of enforcement-related incidents that your park experiences:

a) Public intoxication, operating a boat or vehicle under the influence or other alcohol-related violations

0 (0%) never 4 (25%) seldom 8 (50%) occasionally 4 (25%) often

b) Possession or sale of drugs, overdoses or other illegal substance-related problems

4 (25%) never 7 (44%) seldom 5 (31%)occasionally 0 (0%) often

c) Violation of park rules relating to vandalism, camp/fires, pets, oversized parties or other problems related to resource protection

0 (0%) never 2 (13%) seldom 2 (13%) occasionally 12 (75%)often

d) Theft

0 (0%) never 7 (44%) seldom 8 (50%) occasionally 1 (6%) often

e) Domestic violence or physical assaults

3 (19%) never 11 (69%) seldom 2 (13%) occasionally 0 (0%)often

f) Stalking, child molestation, indecent exposure, sexual assault or other sex-related incidents

4 (25%) never 9 (56%) seldom 2 (13%) occasionally 1 (6%)often

5. Do you feel that law enforcement is a necessary part of your work?

14 (87%) yes 2 (13%) no 0 (0%) no opinion

6. Do you feel there is potential for significant law enforcement problems in Maine State Parks?

14 (87%) yes 2 (13%) no 0 (0%) no opinion

7. When was the last time you had law enforcement training? Within:

0 (0%) the past year 0 (0%) the past two years 0 (0%) past three years 0 (0%) past four or five years 11 (73%) more than five years ago 4 (27%) I have never had training

8. Do you have clear guidance from the Bureau about how to handle law enforcement issues?

3 (19%) yes 12 (75%) no 1 (6%) don't know

9. Are you supported by the Regional Manager and Bureau Director in conducting law enforcement activities in your area?

6 (38%) yes 6 (38%) no 4 (25%) don't know

10. In my opinion, the views of park managers are seriously considered in setting law enforcement policy.

7 (44%) yes 7 (44%) no 2 (12%) no opinion

11. Do you think that it would be practical for other agencies, such as the Maine Forest Service Rangers and Game Wardens, to do parks law enforcement work in Maine State Parks?

4 (25%) yes 11 (69%) no 1 (6%) no opinion

12. In my experience, local law enforcement agencies are willing to do routine parks law enforcement work in Maine State Parks.

7 (44%) yes 9 (56%) no 0 (0%) no opinion

13. Providing training and law enforcement authority to park rangers and managers is the most effective way to address law enforcement problems in Maine State Parks.

9 (56%) yes 4 (25%) no 2 (12%) no opinion

14. In my opinion, visitor safety is well protected in Maine State Parks.

8 (53%) yes 5 (33%) no 2 (13%) no opinion

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Results for Year-Round Employees Only

In March, 2000 Maine PEER surveyed park managers and rangers within the Department of Conservation on compliance and enforcement issues. Of the 15 year-round employees we sent to, 9 employees returned our survey--a 60% response rate. Results are recorded below.

[Read the Essay Results](#)

1. Do visitors express concerns about their safety in your park?

0 (0%) never 3 (33%) seldom 6 (67%) occasionally 0 (0%) often

2. Approximately how many incidents occurred in your area last season in which enforcement action could have been taken?

0 (0%) 0-5 1 (11%) 6-10 3 (33%) 11-20 0 (0%) 21-30 4 (44%) More than 30 1 (11%) We don't keep track

3. Approximately how many incidents occurred in your area last year in which enforcement action was taken?

2 (22%) 0-5 5 (56%) 6-10 0 (0%) 11-20 1 (11%) 21-30 0 (0%) More than 30 1 (6%) We don't keep track

4. Please identify the frequency of enforcement-related incidents that your park experiences:

a) Public intoxication, operating a boat or vehicle under the influence or other alcohol-related violations

0 (0%) never 1 (11%) seldom 6 (67%) occasionally 2 (22%) often

b) Possession or sale of drugs, overdoses or other illegal substance-related problems

1 (11%) never 5 (56%) seldom 3 (33%)occasionally 0 (0%) often

c) Violation of park rules relating to vandalism, camp/fires, pets, oversized parties or other problems related to resource protection

0 (0%) never 0 (0%) seldom 1 (11%) occasionally 8 (89%)often

d) Theft

0 (0%) never 4 (44%) seldom 5 (56%) occasionally 0 (0%) often

e) Domestic violence or physical assaults

3 (19%) never 8 (89%) seldom 1 (11%) occasionally 0 (0%)often

f) Stalking, child molestation, indecent exposure, sexual assault or other sex-related incidents

1 (11%) never 7 (78%) seldom 1 (11%) occasionally 0 (0%)often

5. Do you feel that law enforcement is a necessary part of your work?

9 (100%) yes 0 (0%) no 0 (0%) no opinion

6. Do you feel there is potential for significant law enforcement problems in Maine State Parks?

9 (100%) yes 0 (0%) no 0 (0%) no opinion

7. When was the last time you had law enforcement training? Within:

0 (0%) the past year 0 (0%) the past two years 0 (0%) past three years 0 (0%) past four or five years 8 (89%) more than five years ago 1 (11%) I have never had training

8. Do you have clear guidance from the Bureau about how to handle law enforcement issues?

1 (11%) yes 7 (78%) no 1 (11%) don't know

9. Are you supported by the Regional Manager and Bureau Director in conducting law enforcement activities in your area?

2 (22%) yes 4 (44%) no 3 (33%) don't know

10. In my opinion, the views of park managers are seriously considered in setting law enforcement policy.

3 (33%) yes 4 (44%) no 2 (22%) no opinion

11. Do you think that it would be practical for other agencies, such as the Maine Forest Service Rangers and Game Wardens, to do parks law enforcement work in Maine State Parks?

2 (22%) yes 7 (78%) no 0 (0%) no opinion

12. In my experience, local law enforcement agencies are willing to do routine parks law enforcement work in Maine State Parks.

3 (33%) yes 6 (67%) no 0 (0%) no opinion

13. Providing training and law enforcement authority to park rangers and managers is the most effective way to address law enforcement problems in Maine State Parks.

6 (67%) yes 2 (22%) no 1 (11%) no opinion

14. In my opinion, visitor safety is well protected in Maine State Parks.

4 (50%) yes 3 (38%) no 1 (13%) no opinion

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[Read the Survey Results](#)

Essay responses to the statement - "In my opinion, the single biggest improvement in Maine State Parks would be. . . "

Staff Resources

Adequate Staffing!

Create, hire train a law enforcement position to be stationed at large parks who could also, when needed, assist at other parks in the region.

To add more personnel

More staffing

Increase staff coverage to include the entire visitor day within all parks for the entire season.

Clear Direction

Additional Training and clear guidelines for rules enforcement authority

To completely understand the policies set by the Bureau to do with Law Enforcement

Clear direction from the Bureau and respect for managements decisions which right now isn't always there

Consistency between parks

Uniform staff training

Consistent enforcement between areas

In the law enforcement area, Parks need to be considered on an individual basis depending on location, co-operation (or lack of) by local law enforcement agencies, staffing at the park. One Parks policy statewide for enforcement will not work.

Miscellaneous

1. Replace regional structure with something similar to structure before reorganization. 2. Set up work groups to address "issues" important to Park Managers.

Some form of law enforcement that the public takes seriously. We may have authority as law enforcers, however the public does not take that authority seriously. I would have to wonder if a warden or forest service ranger would be any more productive. As park rangers we have not been able to uphold park laws because there are no repercussions to the culprits.

Put more value on park employees, better communication, less politics involved

