Research Update

College of Education and Human Development
School of Recreation, Health, and Tourism

National Mall and Memorial Parks
Tour Bus Study

Did you know approximately 25 million visits are made to the National Mall area of Washington, DC every year? One-third of the visiting public arrives via tour bus, which can total 1,200 buses or more a day operating in and around the National Mall area during the peak spring-summer tourist season.

Overview

George Mason University researchers are part of a study that will analyze and make recommendations for improving tour bus operations within the National Mall. The recently completed National Mall Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (NPS 2010) confirmed tour bus parking and traffic congestion problems. The current project will quantitatively and qualitatively document existing conditions and set forth a plan of action for short-term and long-term improvements in tour bus operations.

- **Areas of study:** operational efficiency, mobility, access, safety, education, recreation, health benefits, and protection of sensitive natural, cultural, and historical resources.
- **Methodologies:** ethnographic observations, interview data/self-reports, counting methods, photographic documentation, mapping, and spatial analysis.
- **Data collection sites:** gateway points for tour buses, loading and unloading zones, on-bus tours, and parking areas.

Partners

The National Park Service (NPS), National Mall and Memorial Parks, was awarded a grant by the Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks Program. NPS is partnering with researchers from George Mason University who will gather and analyze data in collaboration with the District Department of Transportation, the National Capital Planning Commission, Destination DC, and other key stakeholders.

Project dates

September 2012 – August 2014

Contacts

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