

Tourism Impacts in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area: A Resident Perspective

Researcher:

Sam Lankford, Ph.D., Professor
Department of Recreation Administration, Fresno State

Background: On-going monitoring of concerns for tourism, appropriate planning and civic engagement strategies and efforts, will help to alleviate the more negative actions of some stakeholders. Lankford (1991) developed and tested a scale – the Tourism Impact Attitude Scale (TIAS) to monitor resident concerns for tourism. The scale was pre-tested in two tourism communities, Bend (mountain community) and Cannon Beach (coastal community) Oregon. Both communities have been successful in delivering visitor services and are impacted by tourism. The scale was then tested in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (13 cities and 6 counties) resulting in a 27 item scale measured on a 5 point likert type format.

Method: The present study is designed to collect data from the same region and compare the scale findings to the 1989/90 data set. When the first study was conducted the National Scenic Area was newly formed, and oversight for economic development was given to the Columbia River Gorge Commission. Extensive recreation and tourism development has occurred since that time. What is unclear is the level of support for tourism and recreation development and whether or not the cities, counties and national agencies have and do manage the impacts appropriately. Findings will be presented to the Columbia River Gorge Commission in the fall of 2017.