

**Visitation Estimation and Reporting System (VERS)
Modernization Effort Summary Status
29 April 2011**

Products, Programs and Efforts:

Current Status / Activity Completed-to-date:

- ❖ Recreation Area and Traffic Meter Evaluation Exercise
 - Projects currently reporting visitation through VERS
- ❖ Development / training of VERS-CATT Team

FY11 - Estimated Activity Completion:

- ❖ Revise definitions / descriptive fields of OMBIL Project Site Areas (*PDT comprising OMBIL, ERDC, and field initiated in FY11*)
- ❖ Development / field testing of day-use survey instrument and procedures
- ❖ Revise monthly visitation data input capability / database management system for day-use visitation

FY12 Estimated Activity Start:

- ❖ Initiate regional visitation surveys

FY12 Estimated Activity Completion:

- ❖ Assess existing visitation monitoring procedures against Best Practices (*Additional steps requiring field participation added to finalize project maps and workbooks*)
- ❖ Data acquisition / software / management system for fee camping data (*Reschedule development activities to follow after initiation of pilot day-use surveys*)
- ❖ Re-align visitation monitoring practices at parks, as necessary (*under the supervision of VERS-CATT with support from ERDC*)
- ❖ Revise / upgrade visitation reporting capability

FY13 Estimated Activity Start

- ❖ **Implement New VERS in 2013 Recreation Season**
- ❖ Model variability in load-factors as a function of site characteristics
 - Use survey / modeling results to guide selection of load-factors at areas not surveyed
- ❖ Monitor, maintain, and adjust, as necessary

Ongoing Activity:

- ❖ User-interface to historical visitation and activity estimates
- ❖ Recreation Area and Traffic Meter Evaluation Exercise
 - Projects currently reporting visitation directly to OMBIL
- ❖ Recreation Area and Traffic Meter Data Cleanup
- ❖ VERS Best Practices
- ❖ Geo-spatial data platform to support traffic meter realignment and VERS-CATT oversight responsibilities.
- ❖ Transfer VERS data entry VERS Data Entry
- ❖ Initiate contract support for conducting visitation surveys

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Program Overview:

Since the 1960's, each successive modernization of our visitation estimation and reporting process has incorporated new features and requirements needed to meet the changing needs of the Corps recreation business line. The next generation of the currently-used Visitation Estimation and Reporting System (VERS) will continue this evolution along two fronts. First, it will estimate and report visitation separately for different categories of managing agency (CE, concessions, Federal non-Corps, State gov., Local gov., and Quasi-public entities). Second, it will employ a new approach to estimating fee camping visitation, incorporating business data from CEFMS and the NRRS.

The newest modernization effort will also build on groundwork laid by VERS in the early 1990's to increase consistency of visitation estimates across projects, by improving the level of standardization and transparency in the application of procedures used for visitation use estimation and reporting. While new field surveys are certainly needed to update load-factors that have changed over time, improvements in basic procedures and processes, such as better alignment of traffic meter locations with best practices, automated tools for survey planning and implementation, and more rigorous methods of assigning load-factors to recreation areas that will not be surveyed, will likely have a greater impact on achieving more consistent visitation estimates than will the updated load-factors produced from a new round of surveys.

VERS Team Members:

- ❖ **ERDC POC- Richard Kasul**
- ❖ **ERDC Team Members-** most members of ERDC Recreation Team actively participate in one or more parts of this effort.
- ❖ **VERS Coach, Assist Train Team (VERS-CATT) Leaders-** one from each District
<http://corplakes.usace.army.mil/employees/usurveys/usurveys.cfm>

Gateway Page:

<http://corplakes.usace.army.mil/employees/usurveys/modern-over.html>
<http://corplakes.usace.army.mil/employees/usurveys/meter.html>