

North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department

NEWS RELEASE

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State parks see significant visitation increase in 3rd quarter

With summer-like conditions prevailing in September, North Dakota state parks had over 136,000 visitors for the month, an improvement of 70 percent over the same period last year. Third quarter visitation numbers show a 32 percent increase over 2008 third quarter numbers. With the September increase, expectations show the state park system will top a million visitors in 2009 given current visitation at over 960,000 through nine months.

“These are exciting statistics, not only do they follow a national trend in state park visitation, but in many cases exceed those benchmarks,” North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department director Doug Prchal says. “People are again discovering the value of state parks as travel destinations. State parks have a lot to offer, close to home, in an environment well-suited for families.”

The state park camp grounds experienced an increase of 7,695 campers from 2008 and an increase of 6,388 above 2007 data. While park services have been reduced in preparation for winter, camp grounds are still open and are being kept busy as hunters take to the fields.

For more information about North Dakota state park visitation contact public information officer Gordon Weixel at 701-328-5357 or e-mail him at gweixel@nd.gov. More information about the North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department can be found at www.parkrec.nd.gov.