

Handling the Hordes

Lessons drawn from National Parks and natural World Heritage sites around the world on managing visitation

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Key Considerations

There are many aspects that need to be examined in how World Heritage and National Park managers in other parts of the world are handling the hordes

People at one time (PAOT)

There are lessons to be learnt on dispersing crowds and distributing them better. Shuttle buses, chairlifts and other strategies to limit or slow the numbers entering the parks are just some strategies employed.

Sustainable means for people movements

There needs to be strategies to minimize the environmental impacts of people with the sites. Some parks use hardening of roads and paths but there are other strategies

Public Safety

Various strategies are used in Shiretoko to separate people from Brown bear attacks including electrified elevated boardwalks, and viewing from boats. Elsewhere crowd control is necessary such as in Jiuzhaigou where the Red Army helps

Managing human waste and rubbish

Providing toilets in natural settings has produced a wide range of innovative solutions. Similarly there have been some very creative solutions to reduce and remove rubbish.

Managing pest species and other invaders

Many Japanese parks quarantine to prevent pathogens reaching islands.

Visitor centres and Volunteers

These shorten people's time in the field by letting them satisfy so much of their curiosity in an environment where there is minimal environmental impact. Volunteers play a large role in staffing Visitor Centres and helping in other aspects of management.

The growth in visitation to most areas when they are inscribed on the World Heritage List makes them a target destination

Jiuzhaigou National Park

Growth in Visitation

1984 — 5,000 Visitors
1991 — 170,000 Visitors
1992 — World Heritage listing.
2002 — 1,190,000 Visitors
2015 — 7,000,000 Visitors (30,000 most days)

Cost of visitation

\$Au80.00 per adult per 3 day ticket
\$Au40.00 per concession

Table 1

Fraser Island Visitor Number Trends *

	Total FITs	Total CTOs	Total
1992-93	111,199	127,775	239,974
1993-94	120,323	136,860	257,184
1994-95	122,797	141,434	264,231
1995-96	128,434	138,299	266,733
1996-97	130,163	143,459	273,622
1997-98	138,574	152,830	291,404
1978-99	135,763	161,585	297,348
1999-00	135,667	178,384	314,051
2000-01	150,765	180,887	331,652
2001-02	153,847	N/A	333,099
2002-03	169,000	185,551	345,337
2003-04	132,706	167,802	327,000
2004-05	189,000	174,057	319,500

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Fraser Island Visitor Statistics

derived from data provided by the EPA Office Maryborough to John Sinclair and from the EPA Annual Report

Year	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	Monthly Mean	% 5y Increase
July	28,632	29,179	30,337	27,988	33,089	29,845	1.15566499
August	28,143	29,351	28,851	25,695	31,810	28,770	1.13029883
September	28,568	31,653	31,396	29,843	30,676	30,427.2	1.07378855
October	39,186	33,840	27,863	29,072	34,827	32,958	0.88876129
November	22,849	22,507	27,325	27,688	28,534	32,225.75	1.24880739
December	31,492	27,747	31,215	29,397	33,488	30,667.8	1.06338118
January	26,198	24,091	33,732	34,964	35,253	38,559.5	1.34563707
February	16,113	18,539	N/A	34,994	22,445	23,022.75	1.39297462
March	23,341	18,932	N/A	22,549	25,525	23,022.75	1.09356926
April	23,532	27,046	N/A	28,815	30,584	27,494.25	1.29967704
May	18,130	19,319	N/A	21,046	19,585	19,520	1.08025372
June	19,533	19,439	N/A	21,048	19,521	19,885.25	0.99938566
Annual Total	305,717	301,643	333,099	345,337			1.12959698

Before everything was fully digitized, it was possible to know K'gari visitor numbers and analyze the trends. Surely there should be more transparency about the capture and release of data that is essential to the proper management of a World Heritage site.

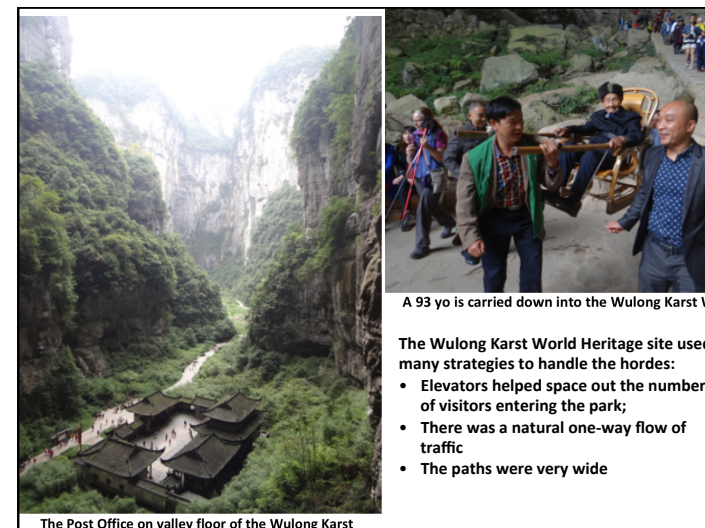
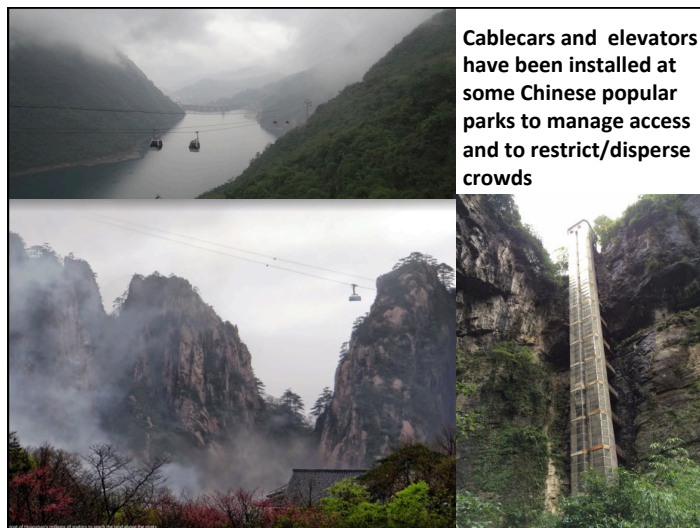
People at One Time and Crowd dispersal

- Need an efficient transport system to disperse the crowds within the Park and the environmental impacts of the means of accessing the park need to be a critical consideration.
- Need bottlenecks help regulate the entry into parks e.g. gates, lifts,
- Shuttles within the park are critical
- One way traffic stops congestion
- At Plum Island (Massachusetts) when the car park are full no more vehicles are admitted until ten (10) vehicles exit and then another ten are admitted
- At Ogasawara pebbles are drawn out of the entry can and placed in the waiting to exit can. If there are no pebbles left in the entry can people have to wait until some visitors exit.
- Strategically placed park accommodation and infrastructure in some cases helps crowd dispersal

Public Safety

Larger crowds require more management to contain and control the crowds. Visitor safety is a critical aspect. Crowd control ranges from deploying The Red Army troops at Juizhaigou to minimizing the threats from bears in Shiretoko

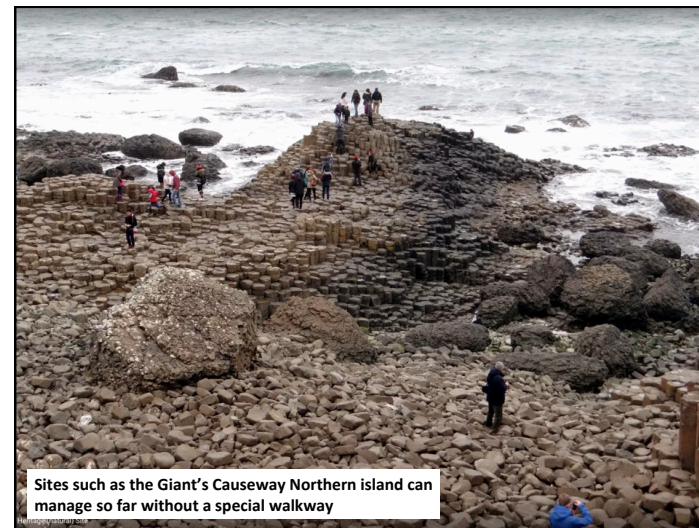






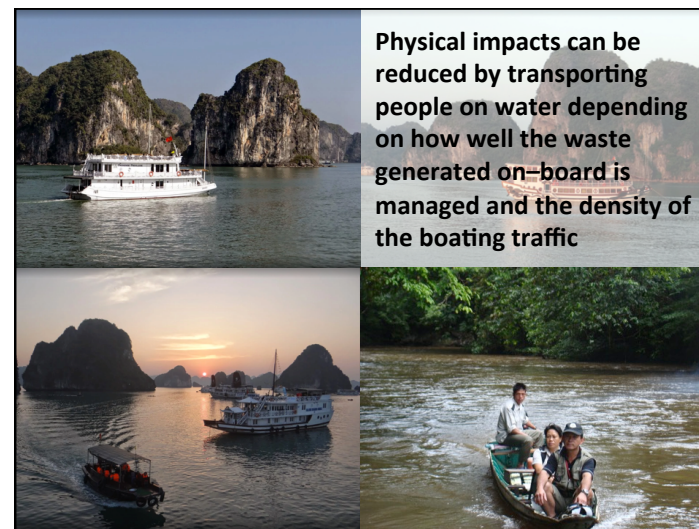


Boardwalks allow access to delicate areas for closer inspection, contain crowds to the path and stop the natural environment being trampled to death



Sites such as the Giant's Causeway Northern island can manage so far without a special walkway

Despite the difficult terrain there are many kilometres of walks through Huang Shan National Park. Some had to be cut into the rock face and elsewhere cantilevered out from the cliffs. These mountains in the mist attract millions of visitors annually



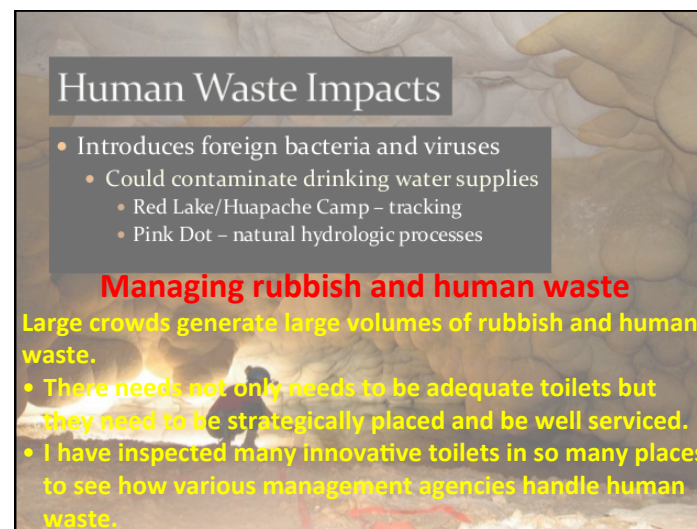
Physical impacts can be reduced by transporting people on water depending on how well the waste generated on-board is managed and the density of the boating traffic



Even on the water there can be crowding as in Halong Bay and China's Ligang River

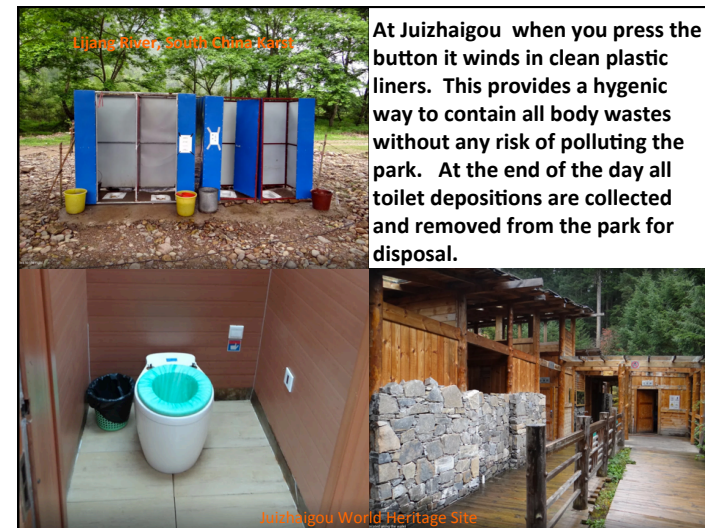


Servicing infrastructure especially accommodation within parks provides special challenges

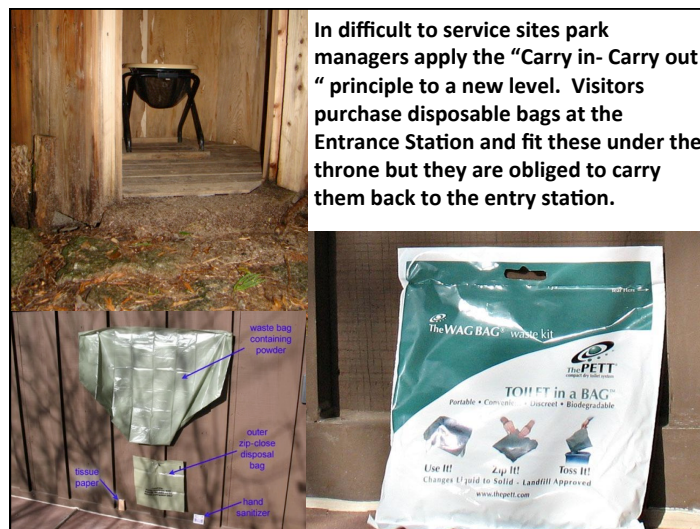




The Carry in- Carry out policy is now practiced in most natural parks around the world. Bins are still provided in more easily serviced urban parks



At Juizhaigou when you press the button it winds in clean plastic liners. This provides a hygienic way to contain all body wastes without any risk of polluting the park. At the end of the day all toilet depositions are collected and removed from the park for disposal.



In difficult to service sites park managers apply the "Carry in- Carry out" principle to a new level. Visitors purchase disposable bags at the Entrance Station and fit these under the throne but they are obliged to carry them back to the entry station.

Visitor Centres

Visitor Centres are helpful in more ways than simply providing good interpretation.

- They help handle the hordes.
- By letting people gain much of their park experience in a well presented way, visitor centres where there is minimal impact
- The satisfy so much of much of the visitor curiosity through good interpretation

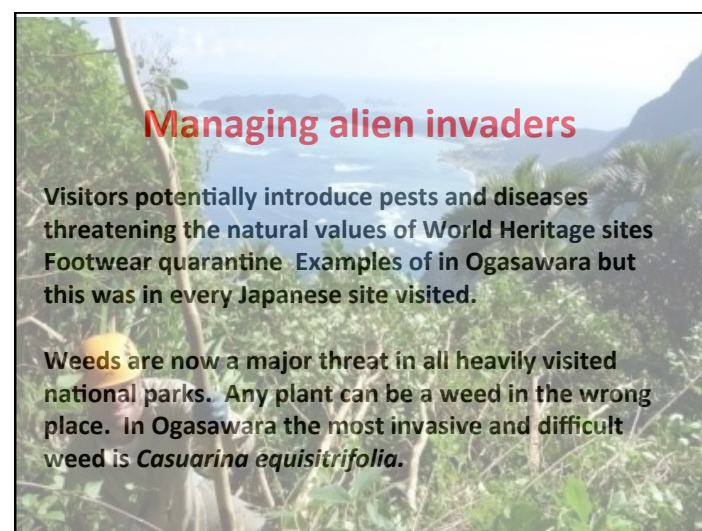




Visitor Centres provide an opportunity for detailed interpretation of natural park and sites. Many are used as a learning resource. They reduce environmental impacts in the parks.



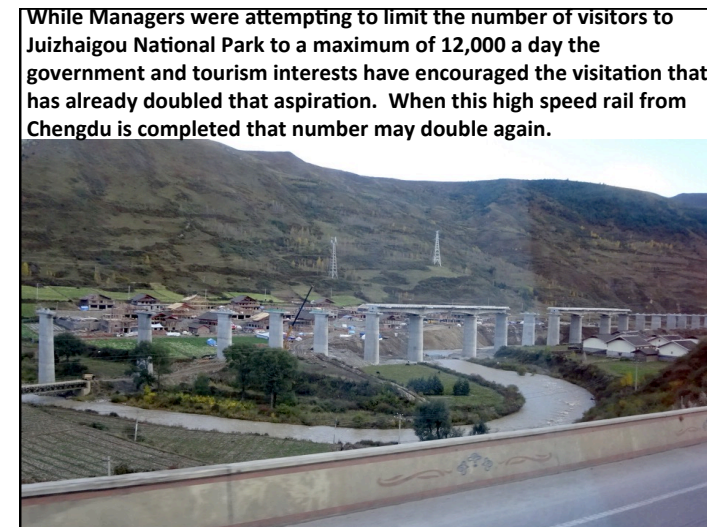
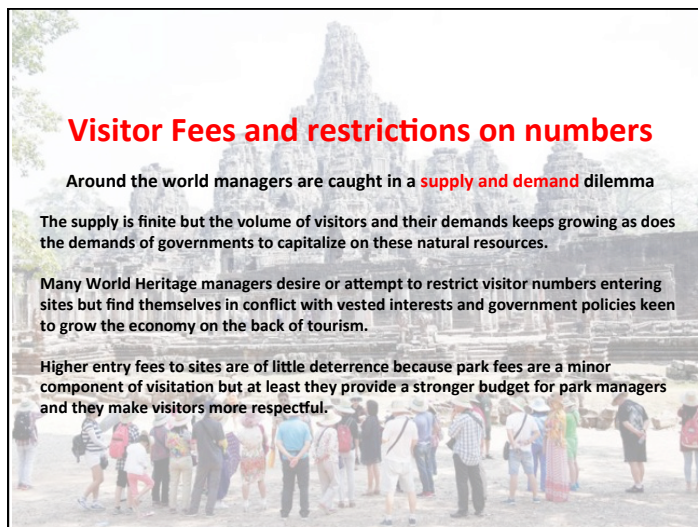
Almost every overseas World Heritage site visited encouraged volunteers to help with management and interpretation



Managing alien invaders

Visitors potentially introduce pests and diseases threatening the natural values of World Heritage sites
Footwear quarantine Examples of in Ogasawara but this was in every Japanese site visited.

Weeds are now a major threat in all heavily visited national parks. Any plant can be a weed in the wrong place. In Ogasawara the most invasive and difficult weed is *Casuarina equisetifolia*.





Good badging of World Heritage sites encourages tourists to become more proprietorial and respectful when visiting.