

# Visitors of Parque Florestal Quedas Do Rio Bonito, Lavras (Mg), Brazil: A Management Planning Based on Profile, Perceptions, Needs and Motivations

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As form of assisting the needs of the tourists that visits the protected areas, becomes important the existence of a suitable management planning, providing the public use, but in a way to conciliate the recreational opportunities and educational needs with the conservation of the natural resources. The research was carried out in the Parque Florestal Quedas do Rio Bonito, located in Lavras city (Minas Gerais - Brazil) with emphasis in its visitors. Several steps were taken to clarify the structure of visitation, desires, interests, motivations, perceptions, needs and the profile of the visitors groups. Participatory research methods and techniques such as analysis of secondary sources and questionnaire surveys were used in research in an integrated and iterative way. Responses were obtained from a total of 9549 individuals and according to this study a large of proportion of visitors visited the area around 1 to 3 times in the last year and spend around 1 to 2 hours with the visit. Most of people visit the area with a special interest on enjoyment of natural environment. Besides, leisure opportunities (29.2 %) and seeing scenery (26.1 %) are also important motivations. In a variety of activities, the visitors appreciate walking on the trails (43.5 %), swimming in the waterfall (46.1 %) and relaxing (46.7 %). Most of visitors exhibited a high level of interest and involvement in conservation. The overall quality of the visit to the forest complex is evaluated very positive. In conclusion, this study represents one of the first efforts, designed appropriately, for providing the local foundation for a comprehensive framework for outdoor recreation management from the perspective of visitors. More generally, the visitor approach taken in this study contributes to a greater understanding of implications of the visitor experience for tourism management in the natural environments of Brazil.

Key-words: tourism, natural place, visitor's profile, outdoor recreation management, motivation, perceptions, needs