

ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF THE POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPING
OVERNIGHT CAMPING FACILITIES ON OR NEAR
MAJOR HIGHWAYS IN OKLAHOMA

By

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Bachelor of Science

Oklahoma State University

Stillwater, Oklahoma

1966

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate College
of the Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
May, 1968

OCT 29 1968

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Sincere appreciation is extended to Dr. Richard Schermerhorn, Graduate Committee Chairman, for his supervision and guidance in writing of this thesis. His willingness to counsel with me at any time was greatly appreciated. Appreciation is also extended to the other members of my committee, Dr. Vernon Eidman and Dr. Louis Parcher, for their editing of and suggestions for this thesis.

Special thanks are due to Dr. Danial Badger for his advice, help, and encouragement through the author's graduate study.

The author is also indebted to all personnel with the Oklahoma Highway Department for their fine cooperation in this study. Special thanks are due to Bob Dafforn, of the Planning Division, for his cooperation and assistance in supplying information and to the Traffic Data Section of the Planning Division for distribution of the questionnaires.

Thanks is also extended to the secretarial staff of the Department of Agricultural Economics for preparing the early drafts of this thesis and to Miss Velda D. Davis for typing the final thesis.

Deepest appreciation is extended to the author's wife, Brenda, for her encouragement and understanding throughout the graduate program.

Finally, appreciation is extended to the Department of Agricultural Economics for making this study possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Camping	4
Types of Campgrounds	6
Objectives	8
Problems and Potentials	9
Procedure	13
II. RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRES	17
Types of Questions Asked	17
Preferences of Potential Users	18
Willingness to Use Overnight Camping Areas	19
Purpose of Trip	21
Origin and Destination	21
Nights Away From Home on Trip and Accommodations Used	24
Reason for Selecting Campsite	27
Type of Camping Equipment Used	27
Highways Traveled Most Frequently in Oklahoma	27
Preferences for Facilities and Accommodations	30
Distance Respondents are Willing to Travel to an Overnight Area	30
Preferences to Pay	33
Summary of Major Findings	36
III. LOCATION AND DEMAND ASPECTS OF TRANSIENT CAMPGROUNDS IN OKLAHOMA	38
Future Demand	41
IV. TRANSIENT CAMPGROUND BUDGET	48
Investment Requirements and Costs	48
Estimated Annual Operating Costs	51
Estimated Annual Total Returns	55
Estimated Annual Net Returns	57
Breakeven Levels	57
Returns to Management	60

Chapter	Page
V. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	64
LITERATURE CITED	69
APPENDIX A - QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE	71

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. Total Attendance Figures for State Parks and Recreation Areas, Corp of Engineers Reservoirs, and Platt National Park, 1962 to 1966	2
II. Total Campers at all State Parks and Recreation Areas in Oklahoma, 1961 to 1966.	5
III. Total Sales in United States of Travel Trailers, Camping Trailers, and Pick-up Coaches, 1961 to 1966	7
IV. Location, Highways, and Dates of Questionnaire Distribution	15
V. Response to Questionnaires Based on Willingness to Use Overnight Camping Areas Along Highways if They Existed	20
VI. Purpose of Trip Which Respondents are Presently On	22
VII. Origin of Respondents Indicating They Would Use Overnight Camping Areas	23
VIII. Destination of Respondents Indicating They Would Use Overnight Camping Areas.	25
IX. Nights Away From Home on Trip and Accommodations Used	26
X. Sources of Information Used by Those who Camped in Choosing Their Campground	28
XI. Type of Camping Equipment Presently Used by Campers	29
XII. Main Highways Traveled in Oklahoma by Respondents Who Indicated They Would Use Overnight Areas	31
XIII. Type of Facility or Accommodation Desired at Campsite	32
XIV. Maximum Distance Off of Highway Users Would be Willing to Travel to an Overnight Campsite	34

Table	Page
XV. Amount Users Willing to Pay Per Night for Use of Overnight Campsite With Desired Facilities	35
XVI. Distance Traveled and Time Away From Home on Vacation and Outdoor Trips by Persons 12 Years and Over: 1960, 1976, and 2000.	43
XVII. Estimated Changes in Population, Income and Leisure for the U. S. for the Years 1976 and 2000 as Compared to 1960	44
XVIII. Number of Out-of-State Passenger Cars Entering Oklahoma and Number Staying Overnight	46
XIX. Estimated Investment and Depreciation for a Transient Campground of 30 Campsites	49
XX. Estimated Annual Operating Costs for a Transient Campground With 30 Campsites	52
XXI. Labor Requirements for Operation and Maintenance of a Private Campground With 30 Improved Campsites With Shower and Toilet Facilities	54
XXII. Estimated Annual Total Returns for Three Levels of Occupancy and Four Levels of Camping Fees	56
XXIII. Annual Net Returns to Family Labor and Management for a Transient Campground With 30 Campsites	58
XXIV. Breakeven Levels of Uses for Budgeted Campground	59
XXV. Returns to Management	63

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1. Public Areas That Provide Overnight Camping in Oklahoma	40
2. Breakeven Levels of Campsite Use for Various Operating Costs and Camping Fees	61

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the end of World War II, people throughout the country have been seeking more total outdoor recreation. The main factors contributing to this increasing demand have been population increases, higher per capita incomes, improved transportation and more leisure time available due to shorter workdays, longer vacations, and earlier retirements.

In 1965, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (1) based on data gathered during the summer months of June, July, and August, predicted a fourfold increase in participation of 19 major summertime outdoor recreation activities between 1960 and the year 2000. In 1960, the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission predicted only a threefold increase for the same period. The increased estimate was based on a 51 per cent increase in total public participation in these activities from 1960 to 1965.

Oklahoma has shared in this increase in demand for recreation as shown by attendance figures for the past five years at State parks and recreation areas, Corp of Engineer reservoirs, and Platt National Park. These figures are shown in Table I.

Since all of these areas provide space for camping, a portion of the increase in attendance is due to campers.

Most of these areas are located near some body of water and are

TABLE I

TOTAL ATTENDANCE FIGURES FOR STATE PARKS AND RECREATION AREAS,
CORP OF ENGINEER RESERVOIRS, AND PLATT NATIONAL PARK
1962 to 1966

State Parks	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
Alabaster Caverns	17,266	18,896	21,318	23,619	25,689
Beavers Bend	677,840	775,598	911,144	989,752	1,139,770
Black Mesa	13,201	9,380	6,962	14,889	3,112
Boiling Spring	150,150	128,770	102,969	105,424	112,286
Arrowhead	-	-	-	110,000	260,942
Fountainhead	-	-	-	140,000	361,891
Great Salt Plains	552,639	616,505	585,763	570,600	532,800
Greendale Lake	92,547	102,008	107,800	136,658	127,885
Keystone	-	-	-	40,000	165,400
Lake Murray	1,463,838	1,591,146	1,639,836	1,661,470	1,747,000
Little River	-	-	-	128,000	984,996
Osage Hills	69,013	56,100	60,794	72,116	83,484
Quartz Mountain	1,245,079	1,182,000	834,600	714,275	885,050
Red Rock Canyon	43,500	101,367	103,690	95,101	89,772
Robbers Cave	468,923	480,101	466,967	345,008	383,808
Roman Nose	297,907	392,492	451,518	215,309	382,992
Sequoyah	819,541	576,00	609,100	526,700	443,100
Tenkiller	489,500	442,700	626,200	655,360	797,840
Texoma	862,800	896,900	909,520	968,000	732,400
Will Rogers	8,227	58,087	85,500	130,000	127,600
Wister Lake	546,636	482,332	512,800	596,800	678,873
<u>Recreation Areas</u>					
Boggy Depot	5,378	5,519	8,815	10,904	5,573
Cherokee	76,280	85,296	110,423	94,980	103,659
Clayton Lake	38,014	34,277	34,619	24,125	22,696
Fort Cobb	57,600	172,500	198,000	308,800	339,100
Foss Reservoir	12,923	57,684	83,732	84,288	116,243
Heyburn Lake	55,654	75,478	79,074	78,976	78,520
Honey Creek	52,125	67,445	100,435	71,758	88,408
Little Shara	36,842	17,021	19,081	28,658	26,747
Okmulgee Lake	-	79,215	20,033	21,565	25,095
Raymond Gary	26,013	18,718	17,201	21,447	26,369
Sequoyah Bay	201,600	108,900	204,300	202,300	204,400
Spavinaw	28,395	28,950	31,890	34,398	32,702
Twin Bridges	75,845	86,360	122,290	96,889	121,927
<u>Corp of Engineer</u>					
Canton Lake	914,800	1,057,200	790,800	782,900	935,000
Tenkiller Ferry	1,841,000	1,662,800	1,636,200	1,778,900	1,842,100
Heyburn	476,500	376,900	347,600	340,500	393,100
Oologah	-	323,600	718,800	1,148,400	936,900

TABLE I (CONTINUED)

	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966
Eufaula	-	-	167,500	2,305,100	2,157,600
Fort Supply	334,800	294,800	331,200	344,600	317,400
Fort Gibson	3,736,300	2,476,300	2,806,400	2,466,300	2,427,300
Keystone	-	-	478,600	1,582,200	2,001,100
Great Salt Plains	334,000	294,800	331,200	344,600	634,200
Wister	481,900	403,500	490,900	484,600	612,500
Hulah	431,400	402,900	382,000	539,200	389,400
Denison	6,743,100	7,333,200	8,197,400	8,905,400	8,287,400
Platt National Park	1,218,558	1,422,640	1,316,327	1,460,486	1,233,820
Total Recreation Attendance (000) in Oklahoma					
State Parks	8,630.2	9,018.8	9,247.6	9,563.7	11,592.9
Corp of Engineers	15,467.9	15,005.5	16,952.0	21,390.0	20,934.0
Platt National	1,218.6	1,422.6	1,316.3	1,460.5	1,233.8

SOURCE: Recreational Attendance Data obtained from the three respective agencies, Oklahoma Park Department in Oklahoma City; National Park Service, Sulphur; Corp of Engineers, Tulsa.

more oriented to the family type weekend camper as opposed to the traveling vacationer. The traveling vacationer, who camps overnight, would also utilize such facilities if conveniently available. This study deals primarily with camping as it relates to overnight tourist travel.

Camping

One recreational activity now sought by many families is camping. The Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission showed in 1960 that 8 per cent of all persons 12 years and older participated in camping (2). Recent data showed a 62 per cent increase for the period 1960 to 1965 with 10 per cent of the population participating in camping (1, p. 19). Revised projections estimate there will be a 78 per cent increase in camping participation for the period 1965 to 1980 and a 238 per cent increase from 1965 to the year 2000 (1, p. 21). The expected rate of increase in camping over this period of time will be second only to water skiing which is expected to increase 363 per cent.

Figures on campers in Oklahoma have been kept only at State parks and recreation areas. These figures, in Table II, show a 121 per cent increase in total campers over the past five years.

Several factors might explain the vast increase in camping.

Walking for pleasure and driving for pleasure ranked one and three, respectively, in popularity of outdoor recreation activities in 1965 (1, p. 14). This indicates that people have become more mobile. Other evidence of their mobility was shown in a study in 1964, where 44 per cent of all people traveling by car on their vacation trips, traveled over 500 miles and 25 per cent traveled 1,000 miles or more (2). As

the mobility of people increases so does their nights spent away from home. Since many of these people have a natural attraction for the outdoors and many may be trying to stretch their vacation dollars farther, they choose camping as a way of spending the night.

TABLE II
TOTAL CAMPERS AT ALL STATE PARKS AND
RECREATION AREAS IN OKLAHOMA, 1961
TO 1966

Year	Total Campers
1961	635,873
1962	742,226
1963	871,787
1964	890,410
1965	1,041,390
1966	1,407,116

Another reason for the increase in camping has been the availability of new and modern camping vehicles. Today, very few modern conveniences need to be sacrificed in order to camp overnight. In the past, tents have been the most widely used type of camping shelter, but with the growth of camping has come a rapid increase in the variety of camping shelters used. The most important of these has been the travel trailers, pickup coaches, and camping trailers. The Mobile Homes Manufacturers Association (3) defines each of these as:

A travel trailer is a vehicular, portable structure built on a chassis, designed to be used as a temporary dwelling

for travel, recreational, and vacation use, permanently identified "Travel Trailer" by the manufacturer on the trailer. When factory equipped for the road, it has a body width not exceeding eight feet, and a body length not exceeding 32 feet. All have sleeping accommodations for from two to nine people; with some having a complete kitchen with sink, stove, and refrigerator, cabinets, furniture, electrical outlets, and heating unit.

A pick-up coach is a structure designed primarily to be mounted on a pick-up or truck chassis and with sufficient equipment to render it suitable for use as a temporary dwelling for travel, recreational, and vacation use.

A camping trailer is a canvas, folding structure, mounted on wheels, and designed for travel use.

There are more travel trailers, pick-up coaches, and camping trailers on the highways now than ever before. This is evident from their volume of total sales which have more than tripled since 1961. These figures are shown in Table III. The total units of all recreational vehicles in use as of January 1, 1967 was 1,250,000 (3). This number is expected to increase to 7.5 million between 1975 and 1980.

Types of Campgrounds

Campgrounds may be classified into two types: vacation campgrounds and transient campgrounds.

Vacation campgrounds are usually a destination in themselves. They may be located near a major highway, but are generally near some unique natural attraction such as a stream, lake, or forest. People using these areas usually spend two or more nights at the same campground -- many time a week or more. Types of activities carried on at a vacation campground might include swimming, fishing, boating, hiking, horseback riding, and nature studies. Vacation campgrounds require high investments since only a few individual sites can be

TABLE III
TOTAL SALES IN UNITED STATES OF TRAVEL TRAILERS,
CAMPING TRAILERS, AND PICK-UP COACHES,
1961 TO 1966

Year	Travel Trailers	Camping Trailers	Pick-up Coaches
1961	40,500	29,000	18,000
1962	58,200	31,500	29,000
1963	73,370	50,000	40,000
1964	90,370	65,000	50,000
1965	107,580	85,000	67,220
1966*	126,000	100,000	81,000
Total	496,020	360,500	285,520

*11-month preliminary estimate, Jan. 1 through Nov. 30, 1966.

Source: "Flash Facts About Mobile Homes and Recreational Vehicles," Mobile Homes Manufacturers Association, Chicago, Illinois, December, 1966.

constructed on a given tract of land, and with the varied activities, several facilities must be provided to meet the recreation needs of the entire camping family. Some private vacation campgrounds exist in Oklahoma, but State parks provide the best examples.

Transient campgrounds may be considered as a substitute for motels. They are used by people not primarily concerned with participation in recreational activities, but are mainly interested in overnight camping facilities. These people may be traveling for almost any reason, such as a business trip or vacation trip. With the increased use of various types of recreation vehicles, several special and convenient facilities are needed. Special facilities such as ice dispensers, automatic laundries, sewage disposal connections, showers, and electrical hookups may be demanded by users of these areas. Investment for this type of campground is generally less than for the vacation type since several sites can be constructed in a small area and the emphasis is on simplicity and convenience of facilities.

Currently, little is known in Oklahoma about the economics of development and use of overnight camping facilities. Private landowners seeking ways to increase their incomes by serving the traveling public are in need of economic information concerning the profitability of providing such overnight facilities. Also public agencies are in need of information to aid in the planning of future overnight camping facilities.

Objectives

The general objective of this study is to determine the economic potential for developing private overnight camping facilities on or

near major highways in Oklahoma. Specific objectives are to: (1) determine the types of facilities preferred by the traveling public, (2) determine the general location of overnight camping facilities to best serve the needs of travelers passing through Oklahoma, (3) estimate the profit potential from establishing overnight camping facilities, and (4) establish guidelines for development of overnight camping facilities by both public agencies and private landowners in Oklahoma.

While previous research provides some useful information on travel trends and cost of developing camping sites, it is inadequate for accomplishing the objectives of this study.

The remainder of the thesis is devoted to fulfilling the stated objectives presented above. The rest of Chapter I will contain certain problems and potentials of developing overnight camping facilities which are pertinent to Oklahoma, and the procedures followed in collecting the data on which the remainder of the thesis is based. The analysis of the data collected is presented in Chapter II. Location and demand aspects for transient campgrounds in Oklahoma are discussed in Chapter III. Budgets for a transient campground in Oklahoma concerned with estimating profitability levels are presented in Chapter IV. The summary and conclusions are presented in Chapter V. Included in the conclusion will be guidelines for the establishment of a transient campground.

Problems and Potentials

Considering past data and future projections, there will be a pressing need in the United States for increased recreation areas and facilities. With this growing demand for recreation services on one

side and demands on the public budget on the other, future public support for free recreation facilities will be reduced. This is already becoming evident by such bills as the Federal Water Project Recreation Act (P.L. 89-72), passed in July of 1965 (4). The Act states that not more than one-half of the separable cost allocated to recreation shall be borne by the United States Government. The state or some other non-Federal agency must provide the remainder of the construction cost and agree to provide all operation and maintenance funds. Failure of a non-Federal agency to express an intent to participate will result in no facilities being provided for recreation. This act applies to all Federal water projects approved or authorized after its passage.

The State of Oklahoma presently does not charge fees to enter any of its State parks or recreation areas, nor does it charge for camping in any of these areas. The philosophy in Oklahoma has been to provide access to these areas and the use of developed facilities in the areas at no cost to the user. Appropriations from the State legislature for construction, operation, and maintenance, and development by Federal construction agencies, have provided the bulk of Oklahoma's public recreation facilities. The requirement of the Federal Water Project Recreation Act will put added pressure on many states' legislature to provide more financial support if the State's systems of parks and recreation areas are to keep pace with the increasing use of such areas.

One alternative for providing the funds necessary for cost sharing in recreational development, is for the State to charge user fees at State parks and recreational areas.

Due to the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, Federal recreation fees are now being charged in Oklahoma at 39 selected Corp of

Engineer sites at seven reservoirs (5). The permits available are annual permits, temporary permits, and day use permits. The annual permit (\$7.00) is for a non-commercial vehicle and all its occupants good for admission to all Federally designated areas located anywhere in the United States. Temporary permits (\$3.00) are for a non-commercial vehicle and all its occupants good for six months at one project only. Day use permits (\$1.00) are for a non-commercial vehicle and all its occupants good for entrance on one day at one project only. Proceeds from the charge of these fees will go into the Land and Water Conservation Fund to help provide more national and local outdoor recreation opportunities for the entire population.

With this initiative by the Federal Government, the possibility exists that State parks and recreation areas may start charging a user fee in the near future. If this occurs, the opportunity for the private sector to provide more of the needed recreational facilities will be improved. As the situation exists, with the free admission policy to our State parks and recreation areas in Oklahoma, the charging of fees by the private sector is not going to attract many local people unless the site has exceptional attractions or facilities, or unless it receives the overflow from a State area. At present, their best customers are out-of-staters who are accustomed to paying admission and user fees. The charging of a fee by the State would put the private sector on a more competitive basis for local as well as out-of-state trade.

Since most transient campers tend to be out-of-state travelers, tourist traveled highways are vital for transient camping potential. Several major North-South and East-West highways cross Oklahoma which

are tourist routes where potential for transient campgrounds might exist. Since most of the land along these major highways is privately owned, it offers a good opportunity for the private sector to develop such areas. Also, transient campgrounds located near the highways would be in a much better location to serve the traveling public than most of the public operated camping areas.

The Oklahoma Highway Department is in the process of building ten pairs of improved rest stops along Oklahoma highways, but they plan to prohibit over night camping at these areas. They also have no plans in the foreseeable future of developing any overnight camping areas along Oklahoma highways.¹

Tourism and travel are gaining more importance in the United States as the increasing population finds more leisure time and money to spend, together with better travel facilities including improved nationwide roads. As such activities usually bring valuable social and economic benefits to the states that provide adequate and appealing facilities for the travelers, income from tourism and travel is becoming an important factor in States' economies. A study conducted in Oklahoma during 1962-63 showed an out-of-state person staying overnight in Oklahoma spent three times as much money as a person just traveling through (6, p. 43).

Transient campgrounds could aid in promoting tourism and travel in Oklahoma. They could provide a place for people with camping equipment to stay while seeing sights in Oklahoma or provide road weary travelers passing through Oklahoma a place to stop and rest or spend the night.

¹Interview with Verne Bradley, Assistant Planning Engineer, Oklahoma Highway Department.

Although a person camping out overnight would not be expected to spend as much as one spending the night in a motel, he would substantially increase the contribution out-of-state motorists make to the economy of Oklahoma.

Transient overnight campgrounds in Oklahoma could also provide one potential for supplementing income of farmers and ranchers with land adjacent to or near major highway interchanges or tourist traveled highways. In some cases, it could enable them to divert less productive crop or pasture land to a more rewarding use.

Procedure

Primary data for this study were obtained from post card questionnaires (Appendix A) distributed at six locations in Oklahoma during the summer of 1967. These locations include Hominy, Pawhuska, Checotah, Locust Grove, Clinton, and Alva. The questionnaires were designed to obtain the needed information to fulfill the stated objective with a minimum of questions asked due to the size of the questionnaire. They were distributed by the Traffic Data Section in the Planning Division of the Oklahoma Department of Highways, in conjunction with their 1967 Origin and Destination Studies. These areas were selected by the Highway Department, but were all satisfactory for this study since all locations had major highways passing through them. Interstate highways could not be used for questionnaire data due to Federal regulations.

When conducting the origin and destination studies at one of the selected areas, the highway department first divided the survey Area into major areas called zones. These zones were determined by

delineating the Central Business District and by establishing sector lines along major streets and permanent barriers. These zones were further divided into sub-zones in order to distinguish areas of unusual land use and to separate areas of various traffic generating characteristics. Interview stations were then set up on each of the routes radiating from and external to the survey area. Each interview station was operated for a period of sixteen hours, from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., during a normal weekday. At Checotah and Locust Grove, interviews were also conducted on weekends for the same length of time.

After the origin and destination interview was completed, the post card questionnaire designed for this study was given to all people with recreational vehicles and/or all out-of-state cars. Out-of-state cars were included to take account of the people who might have a tent in the trunk of their car and for people who might use transient overnight camping facilities if they knew they existed along major Oklahoma highways.

The location, highways, and date of questionnaire distribution are presented in Table IV.

A letter accompanied each questionnaire briefly explaining the purpose of the study and requesting that they complete it and drop it into the mail. A total of 10,000 were distributed of which 2,407 were returned. Two months after the last questionnaires were handed out, the data from the questionnaires that had been received were punched onto data processing cards and tabulated for analysis.

After the data were tabulated and analyzed, certain characteristics and preferences were indicated by those people who expressed a willingness to use overnight camping areas. Budgets were then prepared

TABLE IV
LOCATION, HIGHWAYS, AND DATES OF
QUESTIONNAIRE DISTRIBUTION

Location	Highways	Date
1. Hominy	SH 99 North-South SH 20 East-West	June 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 15
2. Pawhuska	SH 99 North SH 99 and 11 South US 60 and 11 West	June 16, 19, 20, 21
3. Checotah	US 69 North-South US 266 East-West I 40 West	July 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 20, 21
4. Locust Grove	SH 82 North-South SH 33 East-West	June 26, 27, 28, 29, 30 Aug. 12, 13
5. Clinton	US 183 North-South US 66 East-West US 66 and I 40 East-West SH 73 West	July 21, 25, 26, 27, 28 Aug. 8, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18
6. Alva	US 281 North-South US 64 East-West	Aug. 21, 22, 23, 25, 28

and guidelines established for a representative transient campground based on these characteristics and preferences.

Supplemental data for this study were obtained from personnel with the Oklahoma Department of Highways, Soil Conservation Service, Corp of Engineers, Oklahoma Industrial Development and Park Department, and Platt National Park.

CHAPTER II

RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE

This chapter is based upon the analysis of the answers to the questions on the questionnaires. Of the 2407 questionnaires returned, 495 were too incomplete to use leaving 1912 usable questionnaires.

Types of Questions Asked

Questions included on the questionnaire were designed to obtain some idea of the general characteristics and preferences that could be expected of typical transient campground users.

A knowledge of these general characteristics of a user can aid potential operators in locating, planning, and developing a campground. Questions asked to obtain general characteristics included: the purpose of the trip, origin and destination, nights spent away from home and nights in Oklahoma, accommodations used, how camping areas were selected, type of camping equipment used, and which Oklahoma highways they traveled most often.

The people were asked to give the purpose, origin, and destination of their trip to determine the reason they were traveling and to get a general idea of the flow of traffic and characteristics of the people who would be using transient campgrounds. Knowing the origin and destination of the people could also be useful when advertising to determine the best sources of new customers. The nights stayed in

Oklahoma and the accommodations used was included to determine the average nights spent away from home in Oklahoma and to see how many were paying for overnight accommodations opposed to staying with friends or relatives. How the people who camped selected their camping spot was included to determine what the best methods would be in advertising transient campgrounds. The type of camping equipment used by campers was asked to aid in determining what proportion of a campground should be allocated to tent sites and wheeled vehicles. Also, knowing the highways in Oklahoma which the potential transient campground customers travel can aid in locating a campground.

Preferences of Potential Users

Transient campgrounds must meet the needs and desires of users for return patronage and increasing popularity.

Facilities and accommodations are important to the majority of campers in selecting a campsite and are also important in terms of costs of constructing a campground. Costs can be kept to a minimum by knowing which facilities and accommodations are actually desired by the users. Another important consideration in establishing a campground is location. For example, the distance people are willing to travel to get to a transient campground from the highway is very important in terms of location of a site. On the other hand, availability of large quantities of water such as a lake, or scenic qualities of the area, would not be nearly as important in determining a location for a transient campground as for a vacation campground.

The amount charged to stay at a transient campground will also affect its use. After the campground is established, the charge must

at least cover costs of establishing and operating facilities over a long period. Knowing what the users would be willing to pay per night would be helpful in determining this charge and also in estimating expected income from the campground.

In view of these factors, the people who indicated they would use overnight areas were asked to give their preferences concerning facilities and accommodations desired at an area, location with respect to distance off the highway, and their willingness to pay for staying one night at such an area.

Willingness to Use Overnight Camping Areas

Transient campgrounds must have sufficient customers to be successful. To obtain an indication of the potential demand for transient campground facilities, the question was asked, "Would you use areas for overnight camping if they existed on or near major Oklahoma highways?" Based on 1912 questionnaires, 70 per cent or 1332 indicated yes they would use the areas and 30 per cent or 580 indicated no they would not use the areas (Table V).

Of the 580 negative responses, 85 resided in Oklahoma, 155 listed Oklahoma as their destination, which might imply they were staying with relatives or friends, and only 70 of the 580 owned camping equipment. Only 28 of the 580 were passing through Oklahoma destined for another state, owned camping equipment and indicated they would not use overnight camping areas if they existed along or near major highways.

All questions analyzed in the remainder of this chapter, are based on the 1332 questionnaires that responded yes to the use of overnight camping areas. Not every question was answered on each

TABLE V

RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE BASED ON WILLINGNESS TO USE OVERNIGHT
CAMPING AREAS ALONG HIGHWAYS IF THEY EXISTED

Response to Question	Number	Per cent
Yes	1,332	69.67
No	580	30.33
Total	1,912	100.00

questionnaire causing a difference in total response to each question, where this occurred, the number not responding is listed at the bottom of each table.

Purpose of Trip

Based on 1,324 total responses, 902 or 68 per cent of the people indicated they were on a vacation trip, 12 per cent a business trip, 8 per cent were traveling for recreational purposes, and the remaining 12 per cent gave their purpose as some combination of the three. A summary of the purposes of trips reported is presented in Table VI.

Origins and Destinations

People indicating they would use transient campgrounds originated from one foreign country and 49 states, excluding only North Dakota. California ranked first in origin states accounting for 232 or 17 per cent of the total volume. Oklahoma was second with 14 per cent followed by the bordering states of Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, and Kansas, respectively, with a combined total of 27 per cent of the vehicles. States east of the Mississippi River represented 30 per cent and those west of the Mississippi, other than the six states named above, were the starting points for 12 per cent of all recreational vehicles or out-of-state cars traveling in Oklahoma. A summary of the proportion of people originating from each state is presented in Table VII.

The number of respondents that had a primary destination in Oklahoma was 324 or 24 per cent of the total. Twenty-six per cent of these respondents indicated Oklahoma as their origin, implying they were people returning from a trip or were people traveling throughout

TABLE VI
PURPOSE OF TRIP WHICH RESPONDENTS ARE PRESENTLY ON

Purpose of Trip	<u>People reporting specific purpose</u>	
	Number	Per cent
Vacation	902	68.13
Business	153	11.56
Recreation	108	8.15
Vacation - Recreation	86	6.50
Vacation - Business	63	4.75
Recreation - Business	12	.91
Total	1,324 ^a	100.00

^{a/} Eight respondents did not answer the question.

TABLE VII
ORIGIN OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING THEY WOULD USE
OVERNIGHT CAMPING AREAS

Home State	Number	Per cent	Ranking
California	232	17.48	1
Oklahoma	185	13.94	2
Texas	147	11.08	3
Arkansas	86	6.48	4
Missouri	62	4.67	5
Kansas	61	4.60	6
Arizona	54	4.07	7
Illinois	52	3.92	8
Ohio	52	3.92	9
Tennessee	39	2.94	10
New Mexico	34	2.56	11
Indiana	34	2.56	12
Michigan	30	2.26	13
Pennsylvania	25	1.88	14
New York	22	1.66	15
Others ^a	212	15.98	
Total	1,327 ^b	100.00	

^a/Others include Canada and every state except North Dakota.

^b/Five respondents did not answer this question.

the state and were willing to use transient campgrounds. This could be due to the fact that many State camping areas are too far off the well-traveled highways or are many times overcrowded.

California followed in second place as a destination with 15 per cent of the vehicles, with Arkansas and Texas next with 8 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively. All except the five states of Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, North Dakota, and West Virginia were represented. A summary of the proportion destined for each state is presented in Table VIII.

Nights Away From Home on Trip and Accommodations Used

The total nights spent away from home by the 1,241 respondents who answered the question was 17,857. The range was from 0 to 90 nights, with the average being 14 nights. The nights stayed in Oklahoma accounted for 3,241 or 18 per cent of the total nights. The range of the number of nights stayed in Oklahoma was from 0 to 60 with the average being 2.6 nights. Two-hundred ninety, or 23 per cent, of the total questionnaires that indicated they would use transient campgrounds in Oklahoma were not staying overnight in Oklahoma on their present trip.

Motels represented 36 per cent of the accommodations used during the nights stayed in Oklahoma. Camping accounted for 32 per cent, hotels for less than 1 per cent, and some combination of the three for 13 per cent. Other accommodations made up the remaining 18 per cent of which friends or relatives were most frequently mentioned. A summary of the nights away from home and the accommodations used are presented in Table IX.

TABLE VIII
 DESTINATION OF RESPONDENTS INDICATING THEY WOULD
 USE OVERNIGHT CAMPING AREAS

Destination	Number	Per cent	Ranking
Oklahoma	324	24.32	1
California	200	15.02	2
Arkansas	113	8.48	3
Texas	95	7.13	4
Arizona	93	6.98	5
Missouri	64	4.80	6
New Mexico	50	3.75	7
Colorado	36	2.70	8
Illinois	34	2.55	9
Tennessee	31	2.33	10
Kansas	28	2.10	11
Ohio	26	1.95	12
Canada	21	1.58	13
Michigan	19	1.43	14
Virginia	16	1.20	15
Others ^a	182	13.68	
Total	1,332	100.0	

^a/Others include Canada, Mexico and every state except Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, North Dakota, and West Virginia.

TABLE IX
NIGHTS SPENT AWAY FROM HOME ON TRIP
AND ACCOMMODATIONS USED

	Number	Per cent
Total nights away from home	17,857 ^a	
Number of total nights stayed in Oklahoma	3,241 ^b	18.15
Number of total nights stayed in other states	14,616	81.85
<hr/>		
Type of Accommodation	People reporting specific type	
	Number	Per cent
Motel	439	35.98
Camping	390	31.97
Motel-Hotel	77	6.31
Motel-Other	37	3.03
Camping-Other	34	2.79
Motel-Camping	14	1.15
Hotel	4	.33
Other	225	18.44
Total	1,220 ^c	100.00

^a/14.40 = average nights spent away from home based on 1,241 responses.

^b/2.61 = average nights stayed in Oklahoma based on 1,241 responses.

^c/112 respondents did not answer the question.

Reason for Selecting Campsite

Of the 762, who indicated they camped while on their trip, 321 or 42 per cent selected their campsites due to road signs. Thirty-six per cent indicated camping guides and 22 per cent indicated some other reason such as friends telling them, previous knowledge, maps, or brochures, for selecting the campsite where they stayed. A summary of the reasons for selecting campsites is presented in Table X.

Type of Camping Equipment Used

Results from 853 people using camping equipment revealed 247 or 29 per cent of them used tents. Pick-up campers followed closely with 22 per cent followed by camping trailers and travel trailers with 17 per cent and 15 per cent, respectively. Others accounted for the remaining 18 per cent of which cars and station wagons were the most frequently mentioned. A summary of the types of camping equipment used is presented in Table XI.

Highways Traveled Most Frequently in Oklahoma

Since most people indicated they traveled more than one highway frequently, there was a total of 2,330 responses to this question of which nearly 50 per cent indicated they traveled highways 66 and I-40 most frequently. Highway 66 was mentioned by 637 or 27 per cent and I-40 by 473 or 20 per cent. Following next were highways 69 with 8 per cent, 64 with 5 per cent, and 44 with 5 per cent. Interstate 35 was the sixth most mentioned highway with 4 per cent of the response. One reason for its low percentage was due to the fact that no questionnaires were distributed at locations that would intercept traffic

TABLE X
SOURCES OF INFORMATION USED BY THOSE WHO CAMPED
IN CHOOSING THEIR CAMPGROUND

Source of Information	<u>Campers reporting specific source</u>		Ranking
	Number	Per cent	
Road Signs	321	42.13	1
Camping Guides	272	35.69	2
Others ^a	169	22.18	3
Total	762 ^b	100.00	

^a/ Others include such sources as friends, previous knowledge, and chance.

^b/ 570 respondents did not answer the question.

TABLE XI
TYPE OF CAMPING EQUIPMENT PRESENTLY USED BY CAMPERS

Equipment Type	Campers reporting each type		Ranking
	Number	Per cent	
Tent	247	28.95	1
Pick-up and Camper	186	21.80	2
Camping Trailer	141	16.53	3
Travel Trailer	125	14.66	5
Other	154	18.05	4
Total	853 ^a	100.00	

^a/479 respondents did not answer the question.

entering or leaving it. Since Federal regulations prohibits use of interstate highways in conducting studies where traffic is stopped, much of the North-South traffic in Oklahoma was not included in the survey. However, due to coverage, it is assumed that the same characteristics would prevail on the North-South traffic. A summary of the proportion of people using each highway is presented in Table XII.

Preferences for Facilities and Accommodations

To identify the primary accommodations and facilities desired by campers, three items were listed on the questionnaire to check and space was left available to list others.

The items desired most were showers and tables. Of the 1,313 responding, 1,103 or 84 per cent desired showers and 1,043 or 79 per cent desired tables. Food service, such as a general store or snack bar, ranked third in preference with 31 per cent and restrooms were fourth with 25 per cent of the response. One reason for the lower response to restrooms might be that some people assumed restrooms are always present or they are present in conjunction with the showers. Other items listed, in order of their ranking, were water outlets 12 per cent, electrical hook-ups 8 per cent, cooking pits 5 per cent, and a swimming area was mentioned by 4 per cent of the people. A summary of the type of facility or accommodation desired at a campsite is presented in Table XIII.

Distance Respondents are Willing to Travel to an Overnight Area

The majority of the users indicated they were willing to drive 5

TABLE XII

MAIN HIGHWAYS TRAVELED IN OKLAHOMA BY RESPONDENTS
WHO INDICATED THEY WOULD USE OVERNIGHT AREAS

Highways Traveled	<u>People reporting specific highways</u>	
	Number	Per cent
66	637	27.34
I-40	473	20.21
69	184	7.90
64	122	5.24
44	116	4.98
I-35	104	4.46
33	95	4.08
75	90	3.86
60	73	3.13
Turner T.P.	63	2.70
Rogers T.P.	60	2.58
99	33	1.41
20	31	1.33
270	31	1.33
77	28	1.20
Others	192	8.25
Total	2,330 ^a	100.00

^{a/} Many of the 1,332 responding mentioned more than one highway.

TABLE XIII
TYPE OF FACILITY OR ACCOMMODATION DESIRED
AT CAMPSITES

Type of Accommodation	Respondents desiring facility	Percentage of total Respondents ^a	Ranking Received
Shower	1,103	84.00	1
Tables	1,043	79.44	2
Food Supplies	401	30.54	3
Rest Rooms	325	24.75	4
Water Outlets	153	11.65	5
Electrical hook-ups	107	8.15	6
Barbecue pits	63	4.80	7
Swimming area	57	4.34	8
Laundry	41	3.12	9
Shade	41	3.12	10
Sewage Disposal	24	1.83	11
Ice	18	1.37	12
Playground	14	1.07	13
Lighting	12	.91	14
Firewood	12	.91	15
Telephone	4	.31	16

^a/ Computed on 1,313 total camper basis, 19 respondents did not answer the question.

5 miles or less to get to an overnight camping area from the highway. Eighty-four per cent of the responses fell within this range. Of this amount, 24 per cent fell within the range of two miles or less and 34 per cent in the range of one mile or less.

All distances over five miles accounted for only 16 per cent of the response, with the distance of ten miles accounting for 11 per cent of this amount. The most anyone was willing to travel was 25 miles and the least anyone would travel was one-fourth of a mile. The average distance they all would travel off the highway was 3.9 miles. A summary of the maximum distances off the highway people were willing to travel is presented in Table XIV.

Preferences to Pay

In obtaining the willingness of people to pay to stay one night at an overnight campground, the amounts of \$1.50, \$2.00, and \$2.50 were listed on the questionnaire with space available to indicate the maximum amount they would pay.

Considering the willingness of the people to pay one of the three amounts, 41 per cent indicated they would pay \$2.00 for one night, 39 per cent would pay \$1.50, and 20 per cent would pay \$2.50.

Based on the 314 responses, which indicated the maximum amount they would pay, 84 per cent fell in the range of \$3.00 or less. Only 16 per cent indicated they would pay over \$3.00 to stay one night. The average maximum amount they would pay was \$2.56. A summary of the amounts users would pay is presented in Table XV.

TABLE XIV
 MAXIMUM DISTANCE OFF OF HIGHWAY USERS WOULD BE
 WILLING TO TRAVEL TO AN OVERNIGHT CAMPSITE

Distance in Miles	<u>Campers reporting specific distances</u>	
	Number	Per cent
1	417	33.88
2	298	24.21
3	42	3.41
4	23	1.87
5	254	20.63
6	11	.89
10	140	11.37
15	17	1.38
20	24	1.95
25	5	.41
Total	1,231 ^a	100.00

^{a/} 101 respondents did not answer the question.

TABLE XV

AMOUNT USERS ARE WILLING TO PAY PER NIGHT
FOR USE OF OVERNIGHT CAMPSITE
WITH DESIRED FACILITIES

Range in Dollars	Campers Reporting Specified Amounts	
	Number	Per cent ^a
1.50	441	39.03
2.00	463	40.97
2.50	226	20.00

Range in Dollars	Campers Reporting Maximum Amounts	
	Number	Per cent ^b
0 to 1.00	50	15.93
1.01 to 1.50	4	1.27
1.51 to 2.00	74	23.57
2.01 to 2.50	44	14.01
2.51 to 3.00	92	29.30
3.01 to 3.50	9	2.87
3.51 to 4.00	24	7.64
4.01 to 5.00	17	5.41

^a/ Computed on 1,130 total basis.

^b/ Computed on 314 total basis.

Summary of Major Findings

The major findings obtained in the analysis of the 1,332 questionnaires from the people expressing a willingness to use transient campgrounds form the basis for further recommendations relative to location and planning of a campground, facilities at a campground, fees to charge at a campground, and method of advertising to use. The implications of these findings will be incorporated into the transient campground budget in Chapter IV. The results obtained support the following findings:

- (1) Of the total 1912 usable questionnaires returned, 1332 or 70 per cent indicated they would use transient type campgrounds if they were available.
- (2) More than 75 per cent of the people were traveling only on a vacation trip or a vacation trip with some other purpose.
- (3) Over 40 per cent of the people originated from either California, Oklahoma, or Texas and 48 per cent were destined for either Oklahoma, California, or Arkansas.
- (4) The average number of nights stayed away from home on trips was 14.4 nights and the average number stayed in Oklahoma was 2.6 nights.
- (5) Thirty-two per cent of the people who stayed in Oklahoma camped out.
- (6) Tents accounted for approximately 30 per cent of the total type of camping equipment used while wheeled camping vehicles made up more than 50 per cent of the total. The remaining 20 per cent included such things

as station wagons and cars.

- (7) Road signs and camping guides were used most often in selecting a campground.
- (8) Highways 66, I-40, 69, and 64 were the four most traveled highways in Oklahoma by the people responding favorably to the use of transient campgrounds.
- (9) People prefer to travel no more than five miles off the highway to get to a camping area and 58 per cent preferred two miles or less.
- (10) The four most desired facilities at an overnight campground were showers, tables, food supplies, and restrooms.
- (11) The amount specified by most people that they preferred to pay to stay one night at a campground was \$2.00. When indicating the maximum amount they would pay, \$3.00 was the limit mentioned by the most people.

CHAPTER III

LOCATION AND DEMAND ASPECTS OF TRANSIENT CAMPGROUNDS IN OKLAHOMA

The location of a transient campground is of paramount importance in assessing the potential profitability of the enterprise. No attempt is made in this study to determine a present or future demand for transient campgrounds for a specific farm location or for Oklahoma. Each farm location involves a unique relationship to the existing or potential demand for a campground. Also, complete data are not available to determine a specific demand for transient campgrounds in Oklahoma. In general, the demand for a transient campground would be a relation describing demand behavior of campground users and expresses the quantity of services users are willing to purchase as a function of price per unit of service and other demand determining variables. Other variables, which will determine demand behavior of users for a transient campground might include such variables as: price and availability of alternatives (other campgrounds or motels); ownership of camping equipment; variables related to location of site, such as distance from highway or environmental topography; variables measuring quality of facilities at campground, such as flush toilet opposed to pit type; length of trip away from home; and possible other socioeconomic variables such as occupation, age, education, and income.

Since the traveling public is the source of most of the users of

such an area, location with respect to well-traveled highways and distance from the highway are of primary concern. Also, being located near a town would be advantageous, if food supplies were not furnished at the campground. The proximity of a proposed campground to similar facilities, either privately or government owned, should also be considered. One transient campground near a small town might be profitable, but the establishment of a similar facility near by could cause both to be unprofitable. State or Federally owned facilities would not be as great a concern in Oklahoma since few are located adjacent to the main traveled highways (Figure 1). Most of them are five miles or more off the highway or are not located on the main tourist highways. Exact locations for transient campgrounds cannot be selected since their location along Oklahoma highways is limited by a sufficient supply of usable water and limited access on interstate highways. The Oklahoma Highway Department lists finding a sufficient supply of water as their biggest problem in establishing their improved rest stops in Oklahoma. Based on the response from the questionnaires on most traveled highways in Oklahoma and the distance off the highway people are willing to travel to a campground, general areas in Oklahoma can, however, be selected as potential sites.

In selecting a location with respect to distance off the highway, response from potential users indicated the nearer the highway the better the opportunities for obtaining customers, with the ideal location being adjacent to the highway. However, the location should be far enough from the highway to avoid traffic noise. Since transient campground customers are generally people traveling who stop one night, few of them are willing to drive very far off their selected routes of

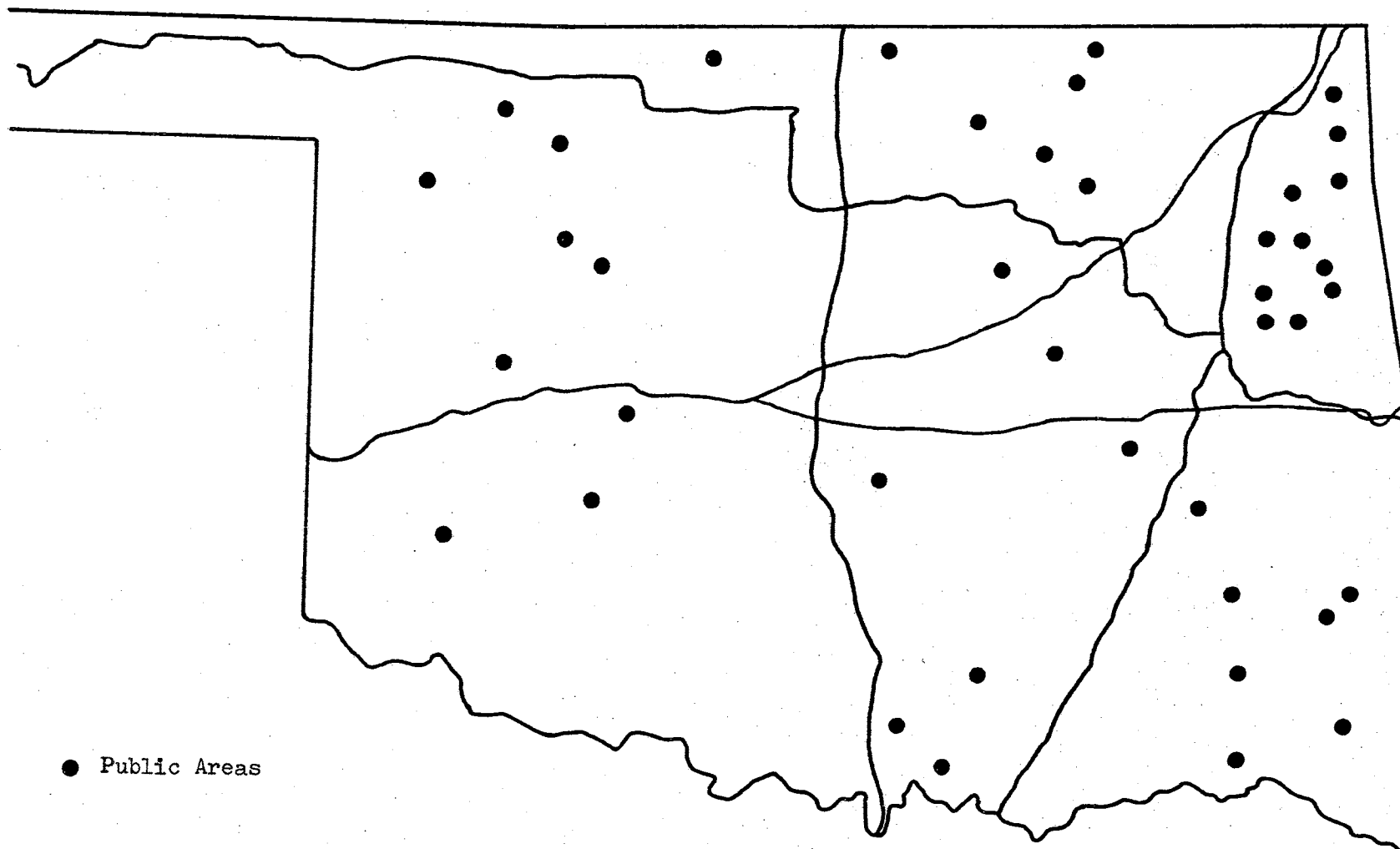


Figure 1. Public Areas That Provide Overnight Camping in Oklahoma

travel. Also, being located adjacent to a highway will make campgrounds easier to see and locate, and less advertising is necessary than one hidden from the traveler's view.

Since U. S. Highways 66, 64, 69 and I-40 were indicated as the four most traveled highways in Oklahoma, they would seem to be the choice locations for transient campgrounds. Since I-40 has controlled access, locations along it would be limited to areas adjacent to or near highway interchanges. One potential location would be near Henryetta where I-40 intersects with the Indian Nation Turnpike and Highway 62. Here, the possibility exists to obtain customers traveling north-south or east-west across Oklahoma. Other potential locations exist along Highway 66, since it was mentioned as the most frequently traveled highway in Oklahoma. Here, the possibility exists for location near a town such as Clinton or Elk City which would provide a place for campground users to buy needed food or camping supplies. Also, no State operated areas lie adjacent to the highway along this route. Other general areas similar to the one mentioned can also be selected for the other highways keeping in mind volume of travel on highway, distance off highway, access from highway, other similar facilities, and water supply.

Future Demand

Presently, there is no generally accepted method of estimating patronage for particular recreational enterprises. However, there are some general indicators that can help estimate future patronage and the resulting income potential for a transient campground. Among these are patronage levels of existing facilities, mobility of the people, and

number of recreational vehicles in use.

Since there are no strictly transient campgrounds existing in Oklahoma, it is difficult to obtain patronage levels. However, a franchised campground organization in California¹ with approximately 150 existing campgrounds across the United States, states that out of all the units open, only one has failed financially and that was attributed to poor management.

The mobility of people is expected to increase greatly in the future. The miles of intercity travel by auto is expected to grow from 670 billion passenger miles in 1960 to 2800 billion in the year 2000 [2, p. 44]. Distance traveled and time spent away from home on vacations and outdoor recreation trips are both expected to increase more than 50 per cent per person and more than double in total from 1960 to 2000 (Table XVI).

As previously stated, the total volume of all recreational vehicles in use in 1967 (1.25 million) is expected to increase to 7.5 million between 1975 and 1980.

These are indicators that point to an increase in the need for transient campgrounds. Along with these are also estimated increases in population, incomes, and leisure (Table XVII). All projections presented here are for the United States as a whole, but all have an indirect bearing on the number of people traveling in or through Oklahoma in the future.

Considering only Oklahoma, projections of future out-of-state travel by people with camping vehicles (pick-up campers or cars pulling

¹Kampgrounds of America, Inc.

TABLE XVI

DISTANCE TRAVELED AND TIME AWAY FROM HOME ON VACATION AND OUTDOOR RECREATION TRIPS
BY PERSONS 12 YEARS AND OVER: 1960, 1976, and 2000

		P e r P e r s o n					T o t a l						
		Units	1960	1976	2000	per cent change		Units	1960	1976	2000	per cent change	
						1960-	1960-					1960-	1960-
					1976	2000						1976	2000
Distance Traveled	Miles	1290	1730	2280	34	76	Bil. Miles	168	297	583	77	246	
Vacations	"	780	1080	1460	38	88	"	102	185	373	82	268	
Trips	"	490	260	330	35	72	"	25	45	84	77	237	
Outings	"	320	400	490	25	52	"	42	69	125	64	197	
Time Away From Home ^a	Days	14.6	18.1	22.4	24	54	Mil. Days	1905	3104	5733	63	202	
Vacation	"	6.4	8.0	10.1	25	58	"	835	1372	2581	65	210	
Trips	"	2.0	2.6	3.3	32	66	"	261	446	843	73	225	

SOURCE: 1960 National Recreation Survey data for the year June 1960 through May 1961. 1976 and 2000 estimated by ORRRC.

^{a/} Each person-outing is included as one day in the time away from home total.

TABLE XVII

ESTIMATED CHANGES IN POPULATION, INCOME, AND LEISURE FOR THE
U. S. FOR THE YEARS 1976 AND 2000 AS COMPARED TO 1960^a

	1960	1976	2000
Population (millions)	180	230	350
Per Capita Disposable Income	\$1970	\$2900	\$4100
Work Week (hours)	39	36	32
Paid Vacation (weeks)	2.0	3.8	3.9

^a/Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, "Outdoor Recreation," ORRRC Study Report, Page 45.

trailers) cannot be estimated since no records have previously been kept. However, estimates of the total number of out-of-state passenger cars entering Oklahoma have been made annually since 1962, although the number of cars pulling a trailer was not recorded and pickup trucks were not included. The study upon which subsequent years are based was conducted in Oklahoma during the period from July, 1962 to June, 1963, and includes estimates of the total number of out-of-state passenger cars entering Oklahoma and the number of them staying overnight [6]. Each successive year since 1963, traffic volume figures have been updated according to traffic growth during the period based upon permanent traffic counters located throughout the state. The figures for the years 1962-63 through 1966 are presented in Table XVIII. These figures show nearly constant increases each year until 1966. In 1966 there was only a 3 per cent increase in total number entering Oklahoma and the number staying overnight. 1967 figures are not available at this time.

In summary, the major factors to consider when evaluating a potential transient campground site are: location with respect to a well traveled highway and distance off the highway; access from the highway; a sufficient supply of usable water; distance from a town; and distance from another private or public owned campground. While no attempt is made to estimate a demand for a specific campground in Oklahoma, estimated increases in population, per capita disposable incomes, mobility of people, recreational vehicles, distance traveled on vacations and outings, and time spent away from home on vacation trips, for the entire U. S. should all increase the need for transient campgrounds. In Oklahoma alone, the number of out-of-state cars

TABLE XVIII
NUMBER OF OUT-OF-STATE PASSENGER CARS ENTERING
OKLAHOMA AND NUMBER STAYING OVERNIGHT

Year	Total Number Entering Oklahoma		Number Staying Overnight	
	Number	Per Cent Increase	Number	Per Cent Increase
1962-63	7,712,499		3,099,521	
64	8,175,248	5.99	3,262,986	5.27
65	8,665,763	6.00	3,458,765	5.99
66	8,925,736	3.00	3,562,528	3.00

SOURCE: State of Oklahoma Department of Highways.

entering and the number staying overnight have been steadily increasing over the past several years. If it is assumed these two items continue to increase, they alone should generate significant demands for transient campgrounds in Oklahoma.

CHAPTER IV

TRANSIENT CAMPGROUND BUDGET

The budgets for a representative private transient campground having 30 improved campsites are presented in this chapter. Estimated investment requirements, annual ownership costs, annual operating costs, labor requirements, annual total returns, annual net returns, breakeven points, and returns to management are computed for the campground. A 30 campsite campground was used so it could be handled along with other farming operations by the farm family without hiring large amounts of labor. It is assumed that the farm would qualify for Farmers Home Administration loans for this size of campground.¹ All figures used in the budgets were rounded to the nearest dollar.

Investment Requirements and Costs

Investment requirements for a transient campground may differ somewhat for each particular site depending on such factors as location or existing facilities. The investment requirements listed in Table XIX are what might be expected when a campground is established starting with no existing facilities other than land. Based on the results of the questionnaires, the campground is assumed to be divided in the

¹A Farmers Home Administration representative stated that enterprises requiring large amounts of hired labor probably would not be eligible for F.H.A. Loans.

TABLE XIX

ESTIMATED INVESTMENT AND DEPRECIATION FOR A TRANSIENT CAMPGROUND
OF 30 CAMPSITES

Item	Number Units	Unit <u>Cost</u> (dollars)	Total <u>Cost</u> (dollars)	Est. <u>Life</u> (years)	Annual <u>Depreciation</u> (dollars)
Land improvements	-	-	2,115	20	106
Sanitary facilities	-	-	7,800	20	390
Water supply	-	-	2,100	20	105
Electricity	-	-	450	10	45
Picnic tables	30	15	450	5	90
Fireplaces	30	10	300	10	30
Garbage containers	30	3	90	3	30
Roadside signs	4	40	160	5	32
Total	-	-	13,465	-	828

proportion of one-third tent sites and two-thirds sites for wheeled vehicles such as pickup campers or camping trailers. Five acres of land are assumed to be used for the total campground. Less land could be used since privacy is not an important factor at a transient campground, but the extra land allows room for future expansion, if necessary. The Soil Conservation Service (7) recommends 14 campsites per acre or 3,000 square feet per site. This includes tent space, vehicle parking space, and use area for a fireplace, table, wood storage and trash container.

Cost figures used for the capital investments were collected by the Soil Conservation Service and represent average costs gathered from various public agencies that plan, develop, and operate recreation areas and facilities. Construction of the facilities are in accordance with standards of the U. S. Forest Service, U. S. Corp of Engineers, or State Park Services. The cost of capital investment items could be reduced considerably in some instances if the operator supervised construction and used family labor where possible. Also, costs of the facilities and improvements are subject to change due to such factors as variation in size, quality and kinds of material used in construction, and location and topography of the land. The capital investments included in this budget are for land improvements, sanitary facilities, water supply, electricity, picnic tables, fireplaces, garbage containers, and roadside signs.

Land improvement costs include clearing and leveling the land to provide campsites and an access road. This cost will vary considerably depending on the topography of the land and the length of access road required.

Since showers were the most desired facility by the potential users, a better than average shower and toilet facility was included. It is of sufficient size for a 30 campsite campground, constructed of concrete blocks on concrete slab with a ceramic tile floor and a plexaglass roof. It provides separate facilities for men and women with a total of four flush toilets, one urinal, four laboratories, and six showers. The cost of a septic tank of sufficient size and a drainage field is also included in the cost of sanitary facilities. The costs and size of all the sanitary facilities could vary depending on different county and health standards. It is important to point out here that counties do have varied standards and must be incorporated in the planned establishment of the campground.

The water supply costs include drilling a well, a pump, a well house, a storage tank, water line, and faucets. Electricity costs include poles, line, and connections. Picnic tables, fireplaces and garbage containers were also included for each of the 30 campsites since they ranked high on the list of preferred facilities. Food service was not included since the campground is assumed to be located near some town and due to the added investment and labor requirements involved. Four metal signs were assumed to be placed along the roadside for advertising and directional purposes.

Estimated Annual Operating Costs

The annual operating costs (Table XX) of the campground are divided into fixed annual costs and variable annual costs. The operating costs used are from a study on farm based recreational enterprises in Oklahoma (8) and estimates obtained in interviews with actual

TABLE XX
ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING COSTS FOR A
TRANSIENT CAMPGROUND WITH 30
CAMPSITES

dollars			
<u>Annual Fixed Costs:</u>			
Depreciation (Table XIX)	828		
Insurance	125		
Taxes	80		
Interest on average investment 6%	<u>404</u>		
Total Annual Fixed Costs	1,437		
	25	Levels of Use 40	55
<u>Annual Variable Costs:</u>			
Hired Labor (Table XXI) 1.50 per hour	-	-	240
Utilities	60	70	80
Repairs	130	150	170
Advertising	130	130	130
Miscellaneous	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>50</u>
Total Annual Variable Costs	370	400	670
Total Annual Fixed Costs	<u>1,437</u>	<u>1,437</u>	<u>1,437</u>
Total Annual Operating Expenses	<u>1,807</u>	<u>1,837</u>	<u>2,107</u>

operators of campgrounds in Oklahoma.

Fixed annual costs are those which do not vary because of use. Included in the budget are depreciation, insurance, taxes, and interest on investment.

The annual cost of buildings and facilities is reflected as depreciation cost. The straight-line method was used to compute depreciation with the assumption of no salvage value.

Insurance costs and taxes will vary a great deal depending on such factors as the insurance company, the taxing authority, size of investment, and location of campground. Average figures for campgrounds in Oklahoma were used in this budget. The interest on investment used was 6 per cent of average investment. This charge is made whether borrowed money is used or not because of the opportunity cost involved.

Annual variable costs are those which vary because of volume of business. These costs were computed for three use levels of 25 per cent, 40 per cent, and 55 per cent, to represent a range of operating conditions. Capacity is considered to be full occupancy for 138 days beginning on May 1 and ending September 15. The variable costs included were hired labor, advertising, utilities, repairs, and miscellaneous.

The labor requirement was based on a season of 138 days of operation with 40 hours allowed to prepare for opening and 40 hours allowed to repair, paint, and store equipment at the end of the season. Hired labor is required only for the campground operating at 55 per cent capacity. The labor requirements for the operation and maintenance of a transient campground with 30 improved campsites with showers and toilet facilities for three use levels is presented in Table XXI.

The other variable costs of utilities, repairs, advertising, and

TABLE XXI

LABOR REQUIRED FOR OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF A PRIVATE CAMPGROUND WITH 30 IMPROVED CAMPSITES
WITH SHOWER AND TOILET FACILITIES^a

Month	Days of Operation	Type of work	Average per cent of season capacity rented					
			25 per cent		40 per cent		55 per cent	
			Family	Hired	Family	Hired	Family	Hired
			Labor	Labor	Labor	Labor	Labor	Labor
			(hours)					
April		Preparing for opening on May 1	40	--	40	--	40	--
May	31	Renting campsites and cleaning	149	--	174	--	174	40
June	30	Renting campsites and cleaning	144	--	168	--	168	40
July	31	Renting campsites and cleaning	149	--	174	--	174	40
August	31	Renting campsites and cleaning	149	--	174	--	174	40
September	15	Close Sept. 15 and use 40 hrs. to store equipment	116	--	124	--	124	--
Total	138		747		854		854	160

^a/M. R. Jordan. 1963. Opportunities for improving rural family income through recreation enterprises. Agricultural Experiment Station Bulletin 683, University of Arkansas, Division of Agriculture, Fayetteville.

miscellaneous are difficult to judge except by experience. The figures used in the budget are based on actual campground operations in Oklahoma.

Estimated Annual Total Returns

Since the sale of food supplies was not included in the budget, the rental of campsites was considered to be the only source of income from the campground. Total returns from the rental of campsites was computed using three levels of occupancy and four levels of camping fees (Table XXII).

The different levels of occupancy were computed on the basis of 138 operating days times 30 available campsites to determine the total possible uses of sites at full capacity. This amounted to 4,140 total uses. The levels of occupancy used were 25, 40, and 55 per cent. Twenty-five per cent occupancy amounted to 1,035 uses or an average of 7.5 uses per day. Forty per cent occupancy was 1,656 uses or an average of 12 uses per day and 55 per cent amounted to 2,277 uses or 16.5 uses per day.

The fees assumed to be charged per campsite were \$1.50, \$2.00, \$2.50, and \$3.00. No levels greater than three dollars were used since the questionnaire indicated only 15 per cent of the people were willing to pay over \$3.00 to stay one night. Although charges might vary for campsites depending on whether it is a tent site or trailer site or whether electricity was desired or not, these charges are assumed to be average fees charged per site.

TABLE XXII

ESTIMATED ANNUAL TOTAL RETURNS FOR THREE LEVELS
OF OCCUPANCY AND FOUR LEVELS OF CAMPING FEES

<u>Camping Fees</u> (dollars)	<u>Levels of Campground Use^a</u>		
	25% (1,035 uses)	40% (1,656 uses)	55% (2,277 uses)
	(dollars)	(dollars)	(dollars)
1.50	1,553	2,484	3,416
2.00	2,070	3,312	4,554
2.50	2,588	4,140	5,693
3.00	3,105	4,968	6,831

^a/ Based on 138 days x 30 campsites = 4,140 possible uses of campsites at full capacity.

Estimated Annual Net Returns

Annual net returns were estimated by deducting total estimated annual costs from total estimated annual returns. The difference represents net returns to family labor and management. As shown by Table XXIII, there are negative returns at only the 25 per cent occupancy level and \$1.50 fee level.

As shown in Table XX, annual fixed costs are much higher than annual variable costs at each patronage level. It was noted earlier that costs of capital items were based on Soil Conservation Service figures and that these costs might be significantly reduced where family labor is used in construction. Such a reduction could have a large effect on net revenue. If annual fixed costs were reduced by 25 per cent, for example, net revenue would be increased at the 40 per cent patronage and \$2.00 fee level from \$1,475 to \$1,834 or 24 per cent.

Breakeven Levels

A simple breakeven chart can also be useful to a potential operator in determining pricing possibilities. It indicates the number of times that campsites must be used to break even or just cover annual operating expenses. Table XXIV presents the breakeven number of campsite uses for the three patronage levels and four levels of camping fees. It shows as the camping fee increases at each level of occupancy, fewer uses are required to cover operating expenses. However, the higher fees may discourage many potential customers. The average uses per day for these amounts range from 4 uses at the 25 per cent, \$3.00 level to 10 uses at the 55 per cent, \$1.50 level.

These breakeven levels for each camping fee will change with any

TABLE XXIII
ANNUAL NET RETURNS TO FAMILY LABOR AND MANAGEMENT
FOR A TRANSIENT CAMPGROUND WITH 30 CAMPSITES

Fee	Level of Occupancy		
	25%	40%	55%
	dollars		
Total Returns at - - - - 1.50	1,553	2,484	3,416
Total Annual Costs	<u>1,807</u>	<u>1,837</u>	<u>2,107</u>
Net Returns	- 254	647	1,309
Total Returns at - - - - 2.00	2,070	3,312	4,554
Total Annual Costs	<u>1,807</u>	<u>1,837</u>	<u>2,107</u>
Net Returns	263	1,475	2,447
Total Returns at - - - - 2.50	2,588	4,140	5,693
Total Annual Costs	<u>1,807</u>	<u>1,837</u>	<u>2,107</u>
Net Returns	781	2,303	3,586
Total Returns at - - - - 3.00	3,105	4,968	6,831
Total Annual Costs	<u>1,807</u>	<u>1,837</u>	<u>2,107</u>
Net Returns	1,298	3,131	4,724

TABLE XXIV
BREAKEVEN LEVELS OF USES FOR BUDGET CAMPGROUND^a

Annual Operating Costs for Three Levels of Use		Camping Charge per Night			
		\$1.50	\$2.00	\$2.50	\$3.00
		Total Annual Uses			
25%	\$1,807	1,205	904	723	602
40%	1,837	1,225	919	735	612
55%	2,107	1,405	1,054	843	702

^{a/} These breakeven uses assume no charge for family labor.

change in the items included in the annual operating costs. For example, with a \$100 change in annual operating costs, the breakeven number of uses will change by 67 uses at the \$1.50 camping fee, 50 uses at the \$2.00 fee, 40 uses at the \$2.50 fee, and 33 uses at the \$3.00 fee. This indicates the great variability that can occur in breakeven uses for each specific campground depending on the level of operating costs.

A more general breakeven graph is presented in Figure 2. It offers a range of operating costs from \$1,000 to \$10,000 and the gross return lines of four levels of camping fees. The breakeven level of uses for any operating cost between \$1,000 and \$10,000 can be determined by drawing a horizontal line from the vertical axis to any of the gross income lines and then extending the line down to the horizontal axis. The example used shows the breakeven level of uses for a \$2,107 annual operating costs at each of the four fee levels. The graph shows it requires 702 total uses to just cover the operating costs charging \$3.00 per campsite, 843 uses charging \$2.50 per site, 1,054 uses at \$2.00 per site, and 1,405 uses at \$1.50 per site. These breakeven levels correspond to the 55 per cent occupancy level used in Table XXII but a graph such as this may be used to determine breakeven uses for any number of different operating costs, camping fees, and sizes of campground.

Returns to Management

If a charge of \$1.50 per hour is made for all labor and subtracted from net returns, the result obtained is returns to management. This is a typical charge for labor for recreational enterprises in Oklahoma.

This shows that at the 25 per cent use level there are positive

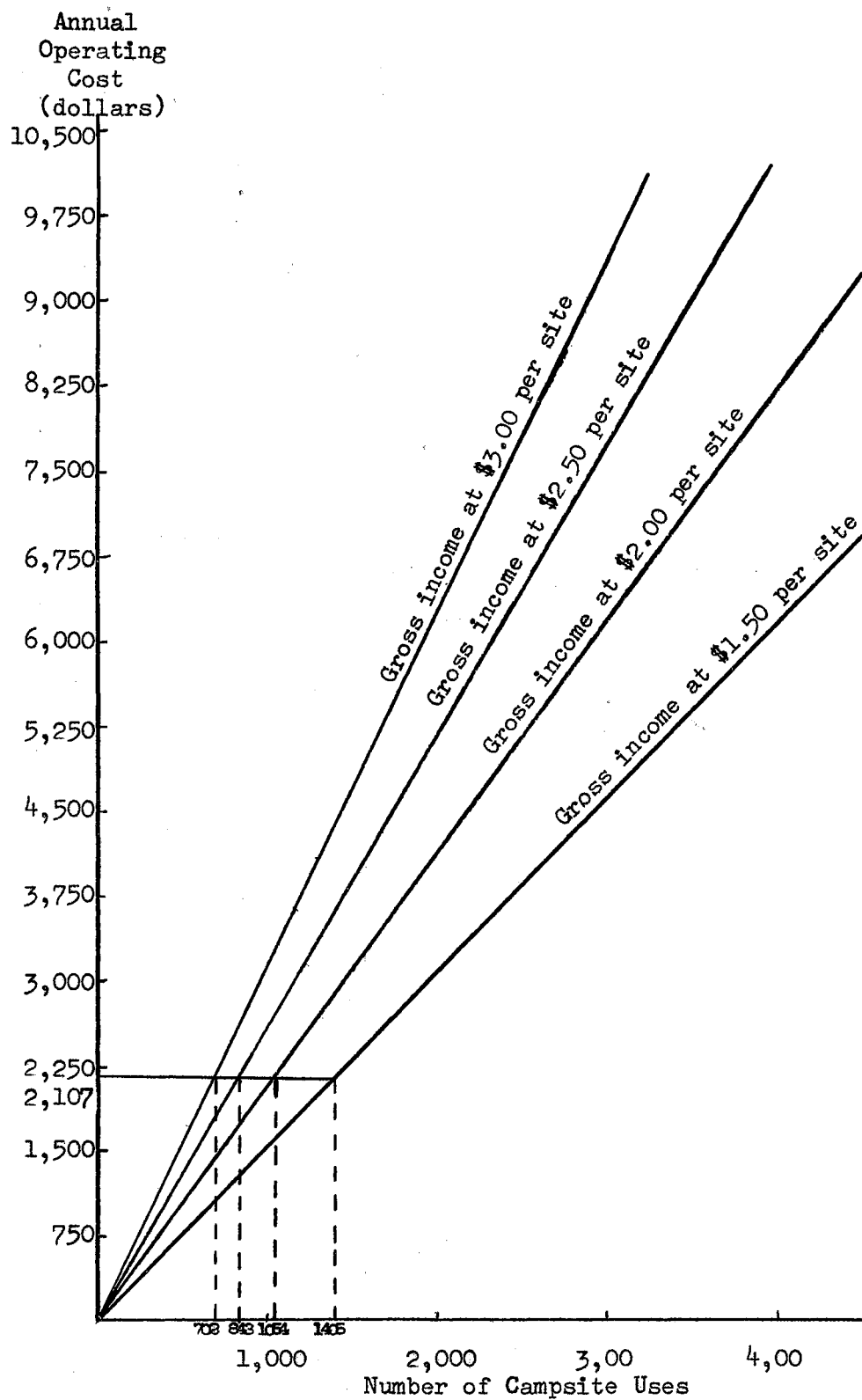


Figure 2. Breakeven Levels of Campsite Use for Various Operating Costs and Camping Fees

returns to management at only the \$3.00 camping fee. At the 40 per cent level there are positive returns to management at all fee levels except \$1.50 and at the 55 per cent use level there are positive returns at all four levels of camping fees. Based on the data used in these budgets, to obtain a favorable return to management at least a 40 per cent use level is necessary with a camping fee charged of \$2.00 or more. Considering the findings from the questionnaires and all other data gathered and assuming the campground had the improved facilities contained in the budgets, it is reasonable to believe that the 40 or 55 per cent occupancy levels could be obtained. Also the questionnaires indicate that fees of \$2.00 to \$3.00 can be charged for an improved campsite.

The transient campground budgeted here is only shown to be used as a guideline in the budgeting of an actual campground in Oklahoma. Since there is no typical transient campground, the figures used in the budgets can only approximate actual figures and are subject to a variety of changes. Three capacity levels and four fee levels were used in the budgets to represent a range of income levels. These budgets were based on a 30 campsite campground, but capacity usage will vary depending on the number of campsites. As shown by the budgets, in general net returns to the campground will depend mainly on the extent of annual fixed costs, level of camping fee charged, and occupancy level obtained.

TABLE XXV
RETURNS TO MANAGEMENT

	Levels of Camping Fee			
	\$1.50	\$2.00	\$2.50	\$3.00
	dollars			
Net returns at 25% use level	- 254	263	781	1,298
- labor (747 hrs. x \$1.50)	<u>-1,121</u>	<u>-1,121</u>	<u>-1,121</u>	<u>-1,121</u>
Returns to Management	-1,375	- 858	- 340	177
Net returns at 40% use level	647	1,475	2,303	3,131
- labor (854 hrs. x \$1.50)	<u>-1,281</u>	<u>-1,281</u>	<u>-1,281</u>	<u>-1,281</u>
Returns to Management	- 734	194	1,022	1,850
Net returns at 55% use level	1,309	2,447	3,586	4,724
- labor (854 hrs. x \$1.50)	<u>-1,281</u>	<u>-1,281</u>	<u>-1,281</u>	<u>-1,281</u>
	28	1,166	2,305	3,443

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The over-all objective of this study was to determine the economic potential for developing private overnight camping facilities on or near major highways in Oklahoma. Specific objectives were to: (1) determine the types of facilities preferred by the traveling public, (2) determine the general location of overnight camping facilities to best serve the needs of travelers passing through Oklahoma, (3) estimate the profit potential from establishing overnight camping facilities, and (4) establish guidelines for the development of overnight camping facilities by both public agencies and private landowners in Oklahoma.

Post card questionnaires were distributed at six different locations in Oklahoma during the Summer of 1967 to obtain the needed information. Questionnaires were given to all recreational vehicles plus out-of-state cars. From the 10,000 cards distributed, 1912 usable ones were returned, of which 1,332 or 70 per cent indicated they would use overnight camping areas in Oklahoma if they existed along or near major highways. The results, which are presented in the text of this thesis, were based on the 70 per cent that responded favorably. Additional data for the study was obtained from personnel with various state and federal agencies.

An analysis of the favorable questionnaires indicated that most of

the people that would use transient campgrounds in Oklahoma would be out-of-staters traveling through Oklahoma on a vacation trip of about two weeks. They would be traveling most frequently on highways 66, I-40, 69, or 64 and would spend approximately two nights in Oklahoma. They would choose their camping area by road signs or a camping guide and would prefer to drive no more than two miles off the highway to get to the area. Most of them would use some type of wheeled vehicle to camp and would desire showers, tables, food supplies, and rest rooms at the campground. They would be willing to pay \$2.00-\$3.00 per night to stay at the campground.

Based on these findings and other data, representative transient campground budgets were developed. Three levels of occupancy and four levels of camping fees were used to represent different levels of income. The budgets showed an operator of a campground with 30 improved campsites and a \$13,500 investment in facilities, must obtain at least an average 40 per cent occupancy level during a 138 day operation period and charge \$2.00 or more as a camping fee to obtain a favorable return to management.

No attempt is made in this study to determine a demand for a specific transient campground location in Oklahoma since each location involves a unique relationship to the existing or potential demand. Due to insufficient data, a general demand for transient campgrounds in Oklahoma is not determined although several indicators point to an increasing need. These include, for the U. S., the estimated increases in the number of recreational vehicles in use, the mobility of the people, and the patronage levels of existing facilities, and for Oklahoma, the number of out-of-state cars entering and the number

staying overnight.

Based upon the results of the questionnaires received and other data gathered from the Oklahoma Department of Highways and the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, it is concluded that transient overnight campgrounds have economic potential in Oklahoma for supplementing farm incomes. The development of a transient campground with private capital can be profitable and can provide an excellent alternative use for excess labor and land. However, it can be concluded that a transient campground as a primary source of income for farm families, is not feasible. Careful planning and good management are crucial factors in developing and operating a transient campground. It is unlikely that a transient campground would provide an alternative for marginal agricultural or rural entrepreneurship. Those people that are marginal in agriculture are likely to find themselves completely unable to cope with a still more complex type of industry, particularly in its marketing aspects. Personal characteristics are critical in a business like a transient campground where relations with the public are necessary. An operator must possess the ability to meet and work with customers in fulfilling their demands. Many farm operators due to their background of individualism and experience in dealing with non-human enterprises may lack the adaptability necessary to satisfy the paying public.

Implications for successful campground operations for either public or private sector can be drawn from this study. Chance for success in attracting local and out-of-state users should increase by following recommendations based upon such data.

Recommendations are as follows:

- (1) Locate campgrounds near well traveled tourist highways,

preferably 66, I-40, 64, or 69 in Oklahoma.

- (2) Locate campgrounds where they are easily accessible from the highway and there exists a sufficient supply of usable water.
- (3) Locate campgrounds no farther than five miles off the highway with the preferred distance being two miles or less. If located adjacent to the highway some distance should be allowed to avoid traffic noise.
- (4) Locate near a town if food supplies are not furnished at the campground.
- (5) Provide facilities or accommodations for at least hot showers, tables, and rest rooms at the campground.
- (6) Maintain a moderately to highly developed campground with special emphasis on clean and sanitary rest rooms and showers.
- (7) Design campground on the basis of approximately one-third of the spaces for tents and two-thirds of the spaces for wheeled recreation vehicles.
- (8) Base charges per site on investment and expenses, keeping in mind a maximum of \$3.00 for an improved campsite in Oklahoma.
- (9) Promote quality camping to build repeat patronage and word-of-mouth advertising.
- (10) Provide and maintain sufficient roadside signs on all access roads and approach highways when possible.

- (11) Advertise in camping guides to reach out-of-state people.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLE

June 1, 1967

Dear Traveler:

The Oklahoma Department of Highways is cooperating in a study with the Department of Agricultural Economics at Oklahoma State University on the potential for developing overnight camping facilities along major Oklahoma highways. Information received from this survey will be used to improve existing recreational facilities and to develop additional areas for your use. Please complete the postcard questionnaire and drop in the mail.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Detach

Jerry Williams
Department of Agricultural Economics
Oklahoma State University

Purpose of this trip? Vacation ____ Recreation ____ Business ____
Main highway(s) traveled in Oklahoma? ____
Home Address: City ____ State ____
Destination of trip? City ____ State ____
How many nights will you (do you) be away from home on this trip? ____ How many nights of this in Oklahoma? ____
Accommodations used? Motel ____ Hotel ____ Camping ____ Other ____
If you camped, how did you find out where camping facilities existed? Camping guide ____ Road Signs ____ Other ____
Type of recreation equipment owned? Pick-up Camper ____
Travel Trailer ____ Camping Trailer ____ Tent ____ Other ____
Would you use areas for overnight camping if they existed on or near major Oklahoma highways? ____
How far off the highway would you drive to get to such an area?
1 mi. ____ 2 mi. ____ Maximum Distance ____ mi.
Preference for facilities at camping areas? Shower ____ Tables ____
Food Service ____ List Others ____
If an area had desired facilities, how much would you pay to camp one night? \$1.50 ____ \$2.00 ____ \$2.50 ____ Maximum Amount ____

VITA

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Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

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