

ABSTRACT

National Parks are natural resources and are limited, their reckless use may result in rapid depletion and exhaustion. For this, minimum intrusion into protected areas should be allowed. Tourism is being seen and perceived as an instrument for the conservation of environment. The balance between tourism and environment is very fragile one. A slight disturbance of this balance can spell disaster for environment.

In 2001, The Ministry of the Forestry Department and TAT initiated a campaign called 'Visit National Parks' Year'. Sri Nakharin Dam National Park was also considered in the campaign and tried to emphasize on ecotourism. The number of tourists started increasing with the passage of time due to awareness; the area faced many environmental problems along nature trail and recreational activities around camping sites. These problems have led the researcher to study how incoming visitors understand Park activities and the perception of weekend visitors about the environmental impact in Sri Nakharin Dam National Park. In this research, the researcher has focused on **A study about Perception of Weekend Visitors about Ecotourism Activities and Environmental Impacts in Sri Nakharin Dam National Park, Kanchanaburi Province.**

The study objectives aimed to find out demographic characteristics of weekend visitors, to identify the relationship between demographic characteristics of weekend visitors' with their perception about activities, and to identify the relationship between demographic characteristics of weekend visitors' with their perceptions about the environmental conditions in the Sri Nakharin dam National Park.

The result of hypothesis testing indicated that there were no differences in perception about activities based on demographic characteristics. In addition, the length of stay was the only factor that affected weekend visitors' perspectives on environmental impacts.

In order to sustain the environment in the national park, the researcher has suggested that Sri Nakharin Dam National Park should take into consideration practices of ecotourism management. Also the park should understand the activities and perceptions of weekend visitors about environmental impacts because visitors are the center of ecotourism management. Finally, some provision for education about the park environment for visitors should be done and could prevent deterioration of environment.

