**Proposal for an Organized Session**

9th International Conference on Monitoring and Management of Visitors in Recreational and Protected Areas, August 2018, Bordeaux, France

**Session Title:**

Knowledge mobilization for park visitation management and monitoring

**Session Length:**

This is envision to be a 120 minute session but it could be lengthened to two 120 minute time slots if a sufficient number of papers were submitted to the general MMV9 Call for Papers that aligned with this topic. We note that “Knowledge Management” was a sub-theme at MMV 5.

**Session Purpose and Content:**

Through short presentations and a workshop discussion, this special session is designed to enhance the generation and use of knowledge, but especially social science, Indigenous and local knowledge for tourism and recreation management and monitoring in parks and protected areas. The majority of parks-related scientific effort has focused on the monitoring and management of natural systems and elements. Yet, the conservation and protection of this natural heritage is intertwined with economic, social, and cultural interests, and thus knowledge from outside the natural science disciplines is also needed to achieve effective park visitation management. Unfortunately, the use of Indigenous- (Berkes et al., 2000; Ens et al., 2015; Houde, 2007), local- (Charnley et al., 2007; Failing et al., 2007; Raymond et al., 2010) and social science- (Bennett et al., 2016; Gruby et al., 2015) sourced knowledge to inform park management remains limited.

Park-related knowledge mobilization (KM) challenges are extensively documented (Fazey et al., 2013; Segan, 2011; Sutherland et al., 2012). However, this dialogue has largely focused on the (a) use of natural science research, and (b) achieving nature conservation rather than other park mandates such as social equity, recreation, and health promotion. Conservation organizations are realizing that equally important is an understanding of social forces that affect park management, and how parks in turn affect human outcomes.

With a specific focus on how park agencies use, generate, and exchange information on monitoring and managing visitors in protected areas, this special session will host 3 to 4 short papers designed to highlight key issues related to this topic. These will be followed by a facilitated dialogue designed to (1) identify best practice, and (2) establish a network of researchers and partitioners interested in tackling the challenge of effective park-related knowledge mobilization.

**Contingent upon papers submitted to the general Call for Papers to MMV9 topics may include:**

* Priorities for park visitor related knowledge mobilization research questions
* The role of power, socio-political and historical legacies in knowledge production and exchange
* How epistemological perspectives vary between actors, and the challenges this presents for park visitation management and research
* Best practice in knowledge exchange with local actors, visitors, and Indigenous communities
* Theoretical models of practice-research knowledge mobilization to explain how we use knowledge to monitor and manage park visitors
* KM best practice from other fields, their application in monitoring and managing park visitors
* Storing and sharing park visitor related data
* Case studies of inter-agency and inter-sectorial collaboration in KM related to park visitor monitoring and management
* Park agency frameworks/policies designed to foster evidence-informed management of park tourism/recreation

**Dr. Elizabeth Halpenny, Clara Jane (CJ) Blye and a third Canadian park-tourism delegate (TBD) will initiate the presentations in this session. Topics will include:**

* A systematic review of the use of social science to inform visitor management in protected areas
* Knowledge mobilization best practice from other fields, their application in monitoring and managing park visitors
* A case study of a Alberta Parks’ science strategy as a framework designed to foster evidence-informed management of park tourism/recreation

**Proposer:**

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