



## **Solitude Monitoring Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What if I see the same group of people twice?**

If more than 15 minutes have passed since the most recent interaction, you should record the group as a new encounter.

### **What if I meet a group of people headed into the monitoring area that I just left? Can I still count them?**

No, for data consistency only people encountered or heard while the observer is within the boundary should be marked as an encounter for that monitoring session.

### **What if while monitoring, I come across an unoccupied campsite?**

In this circumstance, you should count the campsite as a group and assume one person per observed tent at the site.

### **Why count everyone seen, instead of only people passed on the trail?**

Counting everyone seen or heard avoids problems of having to decide whether to count someone as an encounter based on a subjective estimate of how far away they actually are. Additionally, in the wildest zones, seeing people in the distance may diminish the sense of solitude, even if they don't come very close to you.

### **Why do I need to be present for at least 4 hours when collecting solitude monitoring data?**

Analysis of comprehensive encounter data has shown that 3-4 hours is the minimum time block needed to gain a valid indication of the number of encounters a person would have over an 8-hour time period. Counting encounters for 4 hours is a strong indicator of (highly correlated with) the total number of encounters in a full day.



### **What if I lose track of encounters?**

It is important to be as accurate as possible in documenting encounters. However, if you lose track of numbers, make a note of the gap in data and simply subtract that amount of time from the overall monitoring session.