

Waraporn Senakhun 2009: Recreational Value of Phu Chong Nayoi National Park, Changwat Ubon Ratchathani. Master of Science (Resource Management), Major Field: Resource Management, Interdisciplinary Graduate Program. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Vute Wangwacharakul, Ph.D. 83 pages.

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the recreational value of Phu Chong Nayoi National Park, Changwat Ubon Ratchathani. Direct interviews by pre-constructed questionnaire are used to collect data from 318 on-site visitor samples in 2007. The individual travel cost method under travel cost approach is used to estimate the recreational value of the park.

The study found that most visitor samples live in Changwat Ubon Ratchathani. The shares of male and female visitors to total are about the same. The average age of the samples is 30 years old and mostly studying at undergraduate level. Most of the visitors are students with average income of 12,000 baht per month. Most of them traveled to this national park mostly by private cars and mainly in groups of not more than 5 persons each. They received information about this Park from friends or relatives. The average frequency of visits is 3 times/person/year.

The result of an analysis of factors affecting the individual travel indicates that only travel cost significantly affects the travel of the visitors. Other factors such as income or education level are not significant. The recreational value of the Phu Chong Nayoi National Park in 2007 is estimated as 83.03 millions bath. This value is very high compared to development budget of the Phu Chong Nayoi National Park of a few millions baht per year.

The results of the study reflect the importance of the Phu Chong Nayoi National Park as a recreational site to the local people. This suggests the justification of the Park for development supports from the government and related agencies. Among others are promotion of public relation and park management, especially to prevent encroachment. This would ensure the sustainability of natural recreational values of the Phu Chong Nayoi National Park.

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