

Ravinan Phota 2014: Elements of Tourism and Tourism Impact Perception of Visitors, Thai-Samakki Subdistrict, Wang Nam Keaw District, Nakorn Ratchasima Province. Master of Science (Park, Recreation, and Tourism), Major Field: Park, Recreation, and Tourism, Department of Conservation. Thesis Advisor : Sangsan Phumsathan, Ph.D. 139 pages.

Understanding elements of tourism and visitors' perceptions of tourism impacts in a tourism destination can underpin the proactive sustainable tourism management. The purposes of this study were to analyze the elements of tourism and examine tourism impact perceptions of visitors to Thai Samakki Subdistrict, one of the popular tourism destinations located in Dong Phrayayen-Khao Yai world heritage site, and also determine factors affecting their perceptions. Field survey and questionnaire survey were conducted during August 2013 - March 2014. A total of 915 questionnaires were distributed to domestic visitors. The results found that there are four elements of tourism including tourist attraction, facilities, visitors and management. For impact perception, overall, visitors recognized positive impacts brought by tourism activities more than negative side. Visitors perceived positive impacts in high level. Increasing income and revenue of local people and government, improving employment opportunities and promoting visitors' conservation awareness were the most positive perceived impacts, respectively. On the other hand, visitors rated negative impacts in moderate level. The most negative perceived impacts were trespassing National Park areas to tourism area, such as resorts, changing natural landscape, and visual pollution from billboards, respectively. Results of ordinal regression analysis indicated that impact perceptions of visitors were significantly influenced by level of education, number of sites that visitors visited, season of travel, and awareness of world heritage. For management recommendation, government sector needs to raise awareness and appreciation of World Heritage site of visitors that can improve their behavior's to be more environmentally friendly and respect to natural area.

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