

Sirada Naipongsri 2011: Valuing Protected Area by Users: A Case Study of Khao Yai National Park. Master of Science (Parks, Recreation, and Tourism), Major Field: Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, Department of Conservation. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Noppawan Tanakanjana Phongkhieo, Ph.D. 162 pages.

The objectives of this research were to investigate the characteristics of protected area valuing by visitors to Khao Yai National Park and local people associated with the park, behavioral responses toward protected area management of those users and to study about the influence of protected area valuation on behavioral responses toward protected area management. Data were collected through personal interview survey. Two hundred park visitors and 247 local people participated in the survey. The survey data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, t-test, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis.

Factor analysis found 4 groups of protected area valuation. These included recreational value, natural resource and biodiversity conservation value, environmental service and life support value, and nature and historical learning value. The 4 groups of protected area values accounted for 57% of variance in protected area users. T-test found that the average score of protected area valuation by park visitors and local people were not significantly different. The majority of park visitor and local people had moderate level of behavioral responses toward protected area management with 81.5% and 93.4%, respectively. Correlation analysis found that the 4 groups of protected area values significantly correlated to the behavioral responses of both visitors and local people groups. While multiple regression analyses found different results. Natural resource and biodiversity conservation value and nature and historical learning value significantly influenced the behavioral responses of park visitors and accounted for 16% of variance in the responses ($F= 9.381$; $P\text{-value}= 0.000$; $R^2=0.16$). Nature resource and biodiversity conservation value and environmental service and life support value significantly influenced the behavioral responses of local people and accounted for 15% of variance in the responses ($F= 10.220$; $P\text{-value} =0.000$; $R^2=0.15$)

Student's signature

Thesis Advisor's signature