

FYI DENSITY

In China, almost all workers have their holidays at the same time, during the so-called Golden Weeks. These week-long periods are the Chinese New Year holiday (usually in February), Labor Day holiday (May 1), and National Day

holiday (October 1). Even if only a portion of the 1.3 billion people take a vacation during these periods, that's a lot of people on the go and at tourist attractions. For example, at the peak of the Golden Weeks, the Badaling

portion of the Great Wall receives about 65,000 visitors a day and the Imperial Palace would see about 128,000 vacationers walking through the front gate each day.

Source: Based on National Day Golden Week Holiday Crowds Throughout China by Paul, published by chinaSMACK.

that this would stop or limit the number of visitors. Would hoping that no one else will come be the right thing to do? The answer, is no.

The solution lies in planning and management. To determine the carrying capacity, planners must look at a variety of factors, including:

- The number of visitors,
- The amount of “use” by the average visitor,
- The quality of resource management and facility development/design,
- The number of area residents and their quality-of-life needs, and
- The number of other users of the area and its resources; for example, industrial users and farmers/ranchers.⁷



Great Wall of China. Overcrowding can negatively impact the enjoyment of the experience. Wong Chi Chiu/Fotolia

The historic old town area in Charleston, South Carolina, provides an excellent example of destination management. The numbers of people, both tourists and residents, who flock to see and enjoy this well-preserved charming southern city could soon overwhelm and destroy its very character if limits were not in place. The city has taken proactive steps to preserve this charm by limiting things such as the number of carriages (a popular way to enjoy the architecture and history of the area) that are allowed in the historic district by the use of a restricted number of medallions. At the entry point to the district, carriages wait in line to be issued a medallion before entering. This medallion must be displayed on the rear of the carriage as long as it is in the district. Once the carriage leaves the district, the medallion is returned at the entry point to be used by the next carriage in line. Not only are the number of carriages limited, but the drivers must also alert cleanup crews to pick up after their horses when they stop to relieve themselves.

Wyoming's Grand Teton National Park provides another good example of capacity control in practice. About 3.5 million visitors arrive each year to play and marvel at the mountain majesty of the area. At the same time, the nearby town of Jackson Hole has exploded with new full- and part-time residents. The area also supports its