



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Mount Rushmore National Memorial
Keystone, South Dakota 57751

IN REPLY REFER TO:

K-1815

September 15, 1972

Mr. Robb DeWall
Post Office Box 1341
Rapid City, South Dakota 57701

Dear Mr. DeWall:

To be sure, the publicity surrounding the June 9th flood had a disastrous effect on the recreational travel industry of the Black Hills region. Mount Rushmore particularly noticed a decline in visitors. It is the first year we have had a decline since a very slight one in 1960 when total yearly visitation figures were only around the million range.

Quoted below are some statistics which might help you paint the picture for your thesis:

Travel through: May 1971 - 177,850 Up 19% over 1970
May 1972 - 177,068 About even with 1971

Travel during: June 1971 - 443,008 Up 15% over 1970
June 1972 - 261,566 Down 41% from 1971
July 1971 - 711,472 Up 17% over 1970
July 1972 - 546,105 Down 23% from 1971
Aug. 1971 - 703,559 Up 29% over 1970
Aug. 1972 - 611,076 Down 13% from 1971

Travel through: Aug. 1971 - 2,035,889 Up 21% over 1970
Aug. 1972 - 1,595,815 Down 21% from 1971

Total Travel 1971 - 2,314,822 Up 18% over 1970

Estimated Total Travel 1972 - 1,800,000 to 1,900,000

As you can see, the period of time right after the flood (June) was the hardest hit, with a gradual recovery trend since then, but never fully recovering the loss or even coming close to our usual yearly gain.



National Parks Centennial 1872-1972

As a matter of note, the flood never completely stopped the flow of visitors to the sculpture. Out-of-Staters were arriving at Mount Rushmore the very next day after the flood devastation of the night before.

On the whole, I believe the local stations performed a commendable service to the local communities during a time of dire need.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benson V. Holmes", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Benson V. Holmes
Acting Superintendent