

# **Planning for the Impact of Convention Caving**

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## **Abstract**

Annual NSS National Conventions are attracting larger attendance and it is estimated that 50% to 75% of cavers attending expect to go underground at least once during the five-day event. Often convention sites are chosen for the facilities with little attention being paid to the capacity of the caves in the area. Convention organizers may put pressure on cave managers to relax visitation limits in order to accommodate the increased demand. Those that do so may later regret their hospitable gestures when the caves are degraded.

Should cave managers and cavers be allowed or encouraged to voice their concerns about the potential impact of a proposed convention on caves in the area? What would be the best way to evaluate the impact of a proposed convention? What are the pros and cons of limiting convention caving? What is the responsibility of the NSS in making these decisions? These questions will be discussed in relation to past and future planned conventions.