



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE VISITOR SURVEY

*2018 Results for
Dungeness
National Wildlife Refuge*



**THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY**



Acknowledgments

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Front cover: A lighthouse, which is a popular hiking destination at Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge. Photo credit: James Puckett.

Contents

Acknowledgments	ii
Understanding Wildlife Refuge Visitors & Their Experiences	1
Surveying Visitors at This Wildlife Refuge	3
Visitor Characteristics	5
Trip Characteristics	6
Information Sources Used for Trip Planning.....	9
Use of Social Media	11
Participation in Recreational Activities	12
Comfort in Nature/Feeling Safe & Welcome	14
Satisfaction with Refuge Experiences	16
Economic Benefits to Local Communities & Visitors.....	20
Encouraging Return Visits & Future Recreation Participation.....	22
Conclusion.....	25
References	26
Appendix A: Survey Methodology	27
Appendix B: Response Frequencies and Averages by Survey Question	29
Appendix C: Open-Ended Survey Responses by Question.....	41

Understanding Wildlife Refuge Visitors & Their Experiences

A hundred years in the making, the National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) is a vast network of habitats that supports over 2,000 species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, and fish across the United States on national wildlife refuges (wildlife refuges). Wildlife refuges also provide unparalleled outdoor recreation experiences and health benefits to people by offering a chance to unplug from the stresses of modern life and reconnect with their natural surroundings. The National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997 specifically identified six priority recreational uses: hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, environmental education, and interpretation (Fig. 1). These recreational activities are prioritized on every refuge where compatible with the refuge's stated purposes. Visitors may also engage in many other activities (for example, hiking, paddling, boating, and auto tour routes) where compatible.

At least one wildlife refuge exists within an hour's drive of most major metropolitan areas. With over 55 million visits per year, the Refuge System is committed to maintaining customer satisfaction and public engagement while helping people and wildlife to thrive. Increased

visitation is not limited to the Refuge System—over the past few years, there has been a rise in the number of people traveling to public lands and waters for recreation (Outdoor Foundation, 2018). This nationwide trend demands effective management of visitor access and use to ensure benefits for present and future generations.

The need to understand visitors and their experiences, as well as preferences for future opportunities, is further underscored by widespread societal changes that are shaping how people engage with nature and wildlife (Kellert et al., 2017; Manfredo et al., 2018). Researchers and land management professionals alike recognize the need to connect the next generation to nature and wildlife to enhance mental and physical well-being and build a broader conservation constituency (Charles & Louv, 2009; Larson, Green, & Cordell, 2011).

The National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey is a Refuge System-wide effort to monitor visitor characteristics, experience, and satisfaction with refuge experiences, as well as visitor economic contributions to local communities. The survey is conducted every five years on a rotating basis on wildlife refuges that have at least 50,000 visits per year. This effort provides refuge professionals with reliable baseline information and trend data that can be used to plan, design, and deliver quality visitor experiences, communicate the value of wildlife refuges to different audiences, and set future priorities. The National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey is a collaboration between the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service), The Ohio State University (OSU), and American Conservation Experience (ACE).

This report summarizes visitors and their experiences at Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge, referred to as “this wildlife refuge” or “refuge” throughout this report. Percentages noted throughout the report were rounded



Fig. 1: Priority recreational uses of National Wildlife Refuges.

to the nearest whole number and, when summarized per survey question, may not equal 100%. Additionally, most figures do not display a percentage for any category containing less than 5% of visitors. See Appendix A for the

survey methodology and limitations of findings. See Appendix B and C for visitor responses to specific survey questions for this wildlife refuge.



2018 National Visitor Survey interns in action at wildlife refuges across the United States. Photo credit: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Surveying Visitors at This Wildlife Refuge

REFUGE DESCRIPTION

Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge is located on the Olympic Peninsula in Sequim, WA. This refuge was established in 1915 to preserve the unique habitat of the Dungeness Spit, the longest natural sand spit in the United States. The gravel beaches of the spit and the surrounding tide flats, eel beds, and bay provide habitat and nesting ground for a variety of birds and other species. Many different migratory species are seasonally present on this 773-acre wildlife refuge while others call the refuge home year round. Shorebirds migrate to the wildlife refuge in the spring and fall to feed in the highly productive tide flats while waterfowl spend their winters in the calm waters of the Dungeness Bay. Perhaps the most charismatic wildlife to call the refuge home are harbor seals who raise their pups on the isolated tip of the spit. Young salmon and steelhead feed and grow in the eelgrass beds surrounding the spit. In addition, the second oldest lighthouse in the state of Washington still shines bright on the refuge. Built in 1857, the lighthouse is a popular hiking destination. The spit continues to grow each year as the



View of the Dungeness Spit from the forested bluffs above the beach at Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge. Photo credit: Kylie Campbell.

sandy bluffs along the Washington coast erode and are deposited along the spit.

Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge attracts over 101,000 visitors annually (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2018, written comm.). Visitors flock from around the world to hike along the refuge's scenic beach. The 10 mile hike out and back to the lighthouse is an exciting challenge for all ages, including youth scouts and retirees. Along the beach, visitors can watch bald eagles soar overhead and see flocks of gulls resting along the driftwood. Visiting this wildlife refuge is often part of a trip to nearby Olympic National Park, and many visitors camp at the neighboring county park.

SAMPLING

Refuge professionals at this wildlife refuge identified two separate 14-day sampling periods and one or more sampling locations that best reflected the primary uses of the refuge as well as the diversity of activities that occur (Fig. 2). For more details on methodology for the National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey, see Appendix A.

- During the two sampling periods, a total of 380 visitors agreed to participate in the survey by providing their names and addresses.
- In all, 222 visitors completed the survey online (55%) or by mail (45%) after their refuge visit, resulting in a 60% response rate.
- Results for this wildlife refuge have a $\pm 5\%$ margin of error at the 95% confidence level. For more details on limitations of results and survey methodology, see Appendix A.

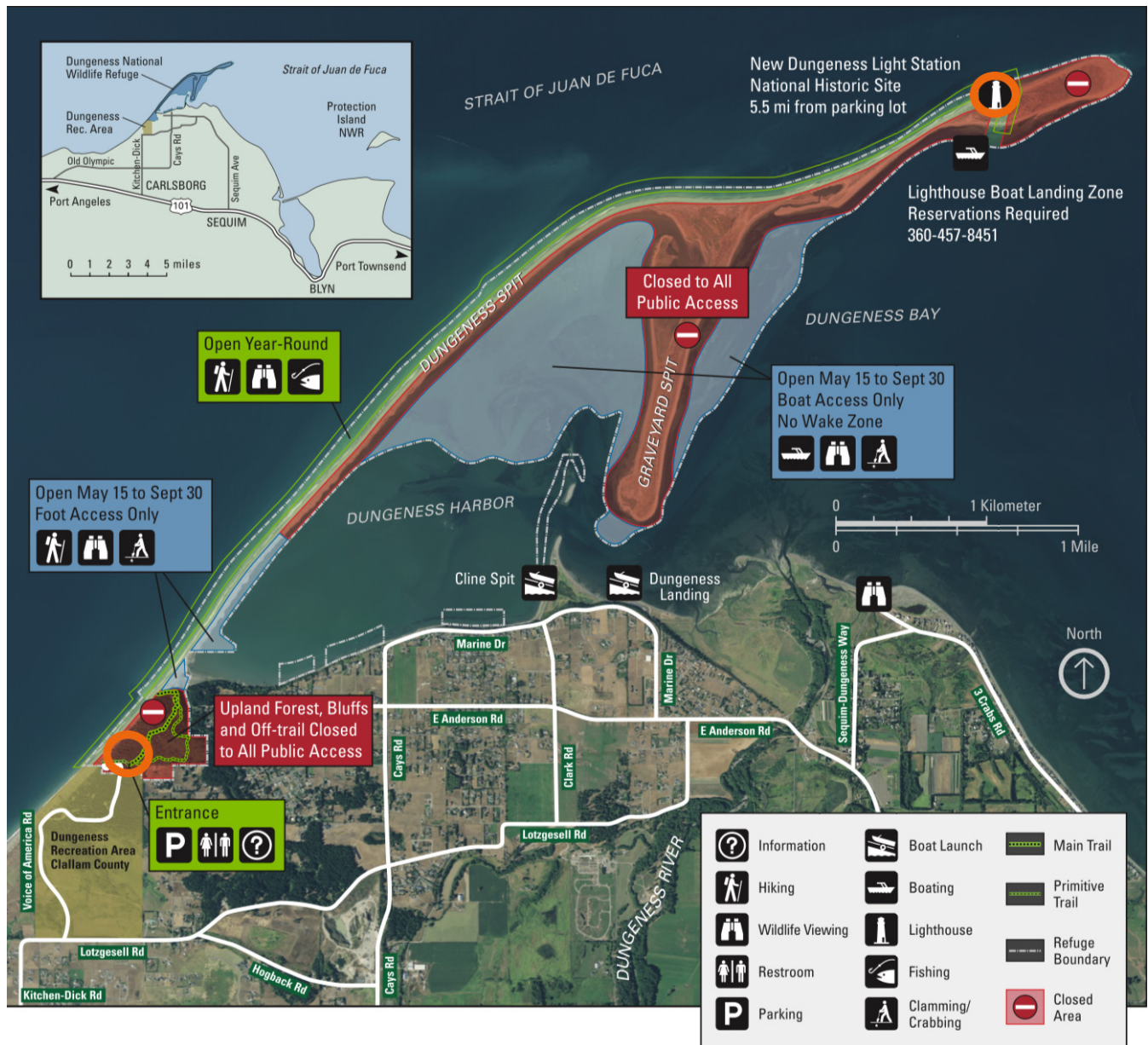


Fig. 2: Map of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors were contacted at the circled locations from 6/28/2018–7/7/2018 and 7/26/2018–8/3/2018.

Visitor Characteristics

An important first step in managing visitor experiences is to understand the characteristics of those who currently visit wildlife refuges. Refuge professionals can compare visitor demographics to the demographic composition of nearby communities or the nation to inform engagement efforts with new audiences. Useful tools for these comparisons include Headwaters Economics' Economic Profile System and their Populations at Risk (<https://headwaterseconomics.org>) or U.S. Census Bureau products (www.census.gov; www.socialexplorer.com).

AGE & GENDER

- 62% of visitors were female with an average age of 55 years (Fig. 3).
- 38% were male with an average age of 61 years.

EDUCATION

- 5% of visitors had a high school degree or less.
- 41% had at least some college.
- 54% had an advanced degree.

RACE & ETHNICITY

Most prevalent race or ethnicity (Fig. 4):

- White (91%).

INCOME

- Visitors had a mean income range of \$75,000-\$99,999 (Fig. 5).

OTHER TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

- Average group size of 3 people.
- 11% visited the refuge alone.
- 66% visited with at least one other adult.
- 23% visited with a combination of at least 1 adult and 1 child.

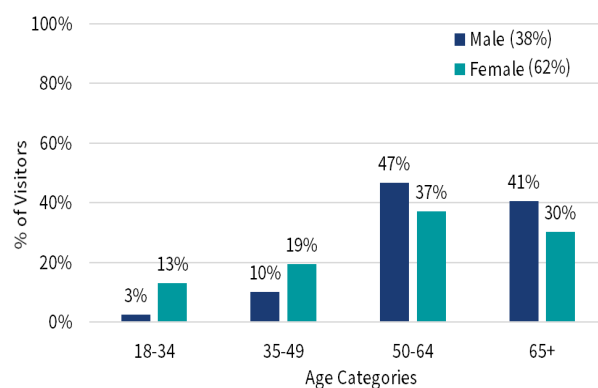


Fig. 3: Distribution of visitors to this refuge by gender and age group.

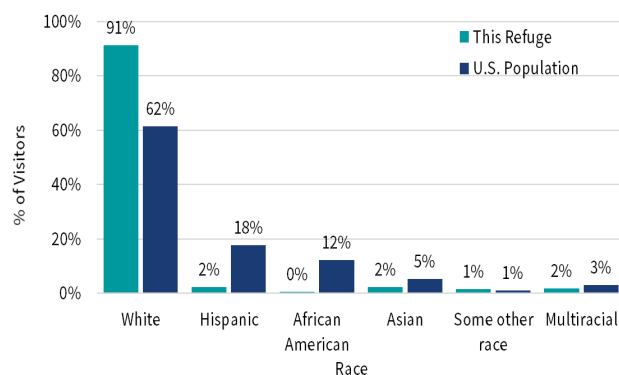


Fig. 4: Race and ethnicity of visitors to this refuge compared to the national average.

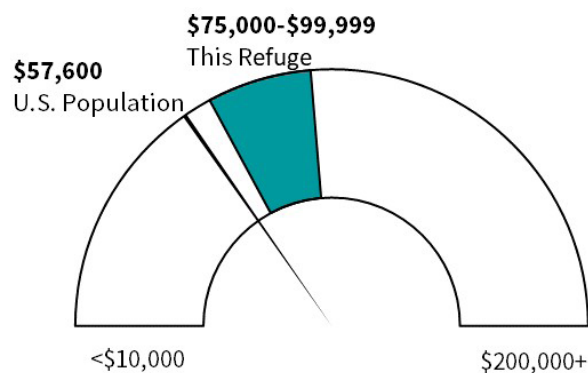


Fig. 5: Mean income range of visitors to this refuge compared to the national median income.

Trip Characteristics

Understanding the travel patterns of visitors and why they choose to visit wildlife refuges is important for effective visitor use management. Comparisons of responses from local visitors (those living ≤ 50 miles from the refuge) and nonlocal visitors (those living > 50 miles from the refuge) can inform communication efforts with current visitors and those who have yet to visit. Understanding seasonality helps refuge professionals better understand visitor use patterns and gauge supply and demand.

LOCAL VISITORS

Highlights of trip characteristics for local visitors to this wildlife refuge (22%) include:

- For locals, this refuge was the primary reason for their trip (83%) (Fig. 6).
- Local visitors traveled an average of 19 minutes to arrive at this refuge (Fig. 7).

NONLOCAL VISITORS

Highlights of trip characteristics for nonlocal visitors to this wildlife refuge (78%) include:

- For nonlocals, this refuge was an incidental stop as part of a trip for other purposes (41%) (Fig. 6).
- Nonlocal visitors traveled an average of 7 hours to arrive at this refuge (Fig. 8).
- Of the 97% of visitors who lived in the U.S., nonlocal visitors were most often from Washington (56%) and California (8%).
- 3% of respondents were international visitors.

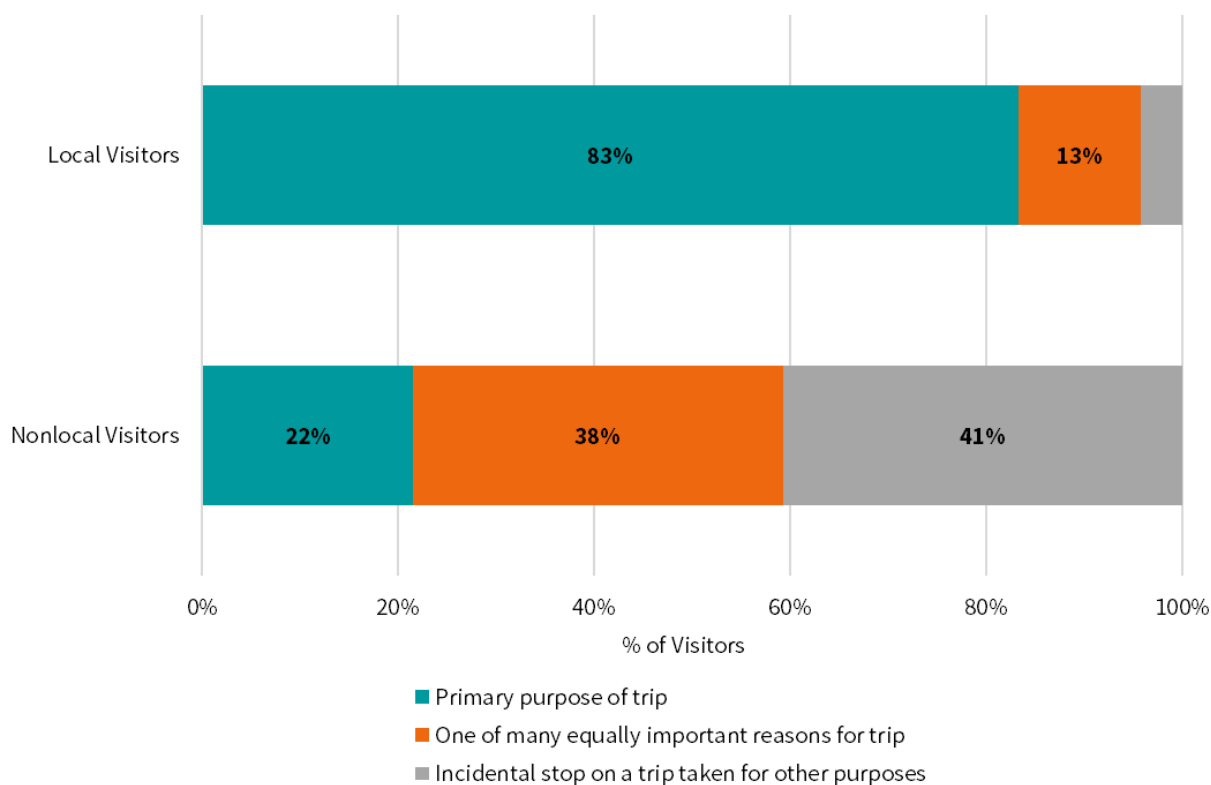


Fig. 6: Purpose of most recent refuge visit for local (living ≤ 50 miles from the refuge) and nonlocal (living > 50 miles from the refuge) visitors.

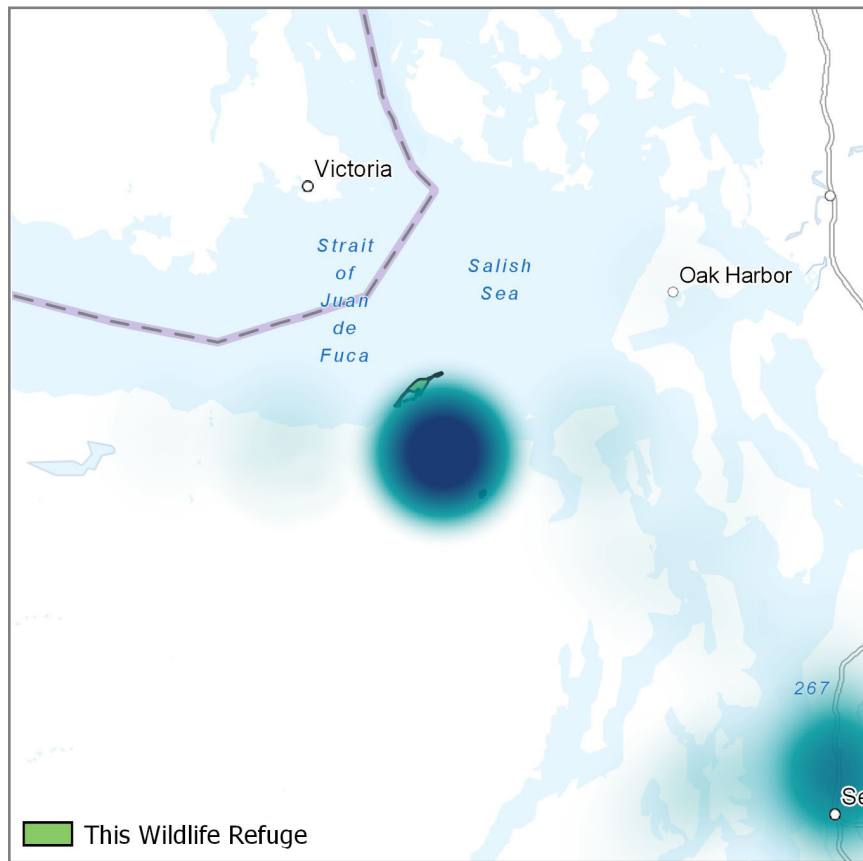


Fig. 7: Map showing residence of local visitors to this refuge. Darker shading represents relatively higher visitation from that area.

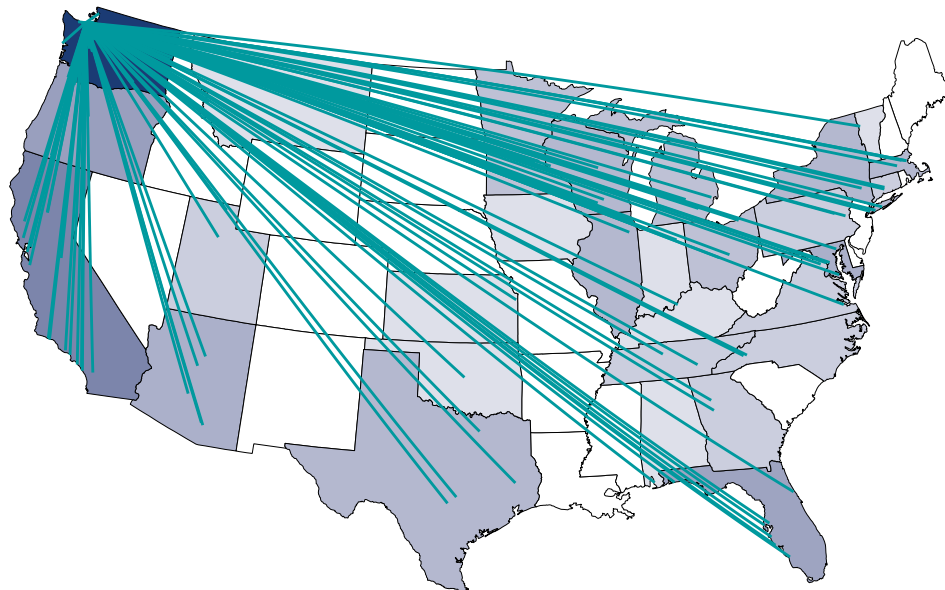


Fig. 8: Map showing residence of visitors to this refuge by zip code, with each line representing visitation from a different zip code. The convergence point of the lines is the geographical center of the refuge. Darker shading of the states represents higher visitation from that state.

OTHER TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

Other trip characteristics include:

- To get to this wildlife refuge, visitors primarily traveled by private vehicle without a trailer (89%) and by foot (12%) (Fig. 9).
- Once on the refuge, visitors primarily traveled by foot (59%) and by private vehicle without a trailer (53%) (Fig. 9).
- Visits occurred during winter (12%), spring (19%), summer (99%), and fall (16%).
- 95% of visitors made a single-day trip to this refuge, spending an average of 3 hours, while 5% of visitors were on a multi-day trip to this wildlife refuge that averaged 3 days.

During the 12 months prior to completing the survey, visitors also made multiple trips to this wildlife refuge, other wildlife refuges, and other public lands:

- 30% were repeat visitors to this wildlife refuge, visiting an average of 12 times.
- 57% visited other national wildlife refuges, averaging 2 visits.
- 90% visited other public lands, averaging 9 visits.

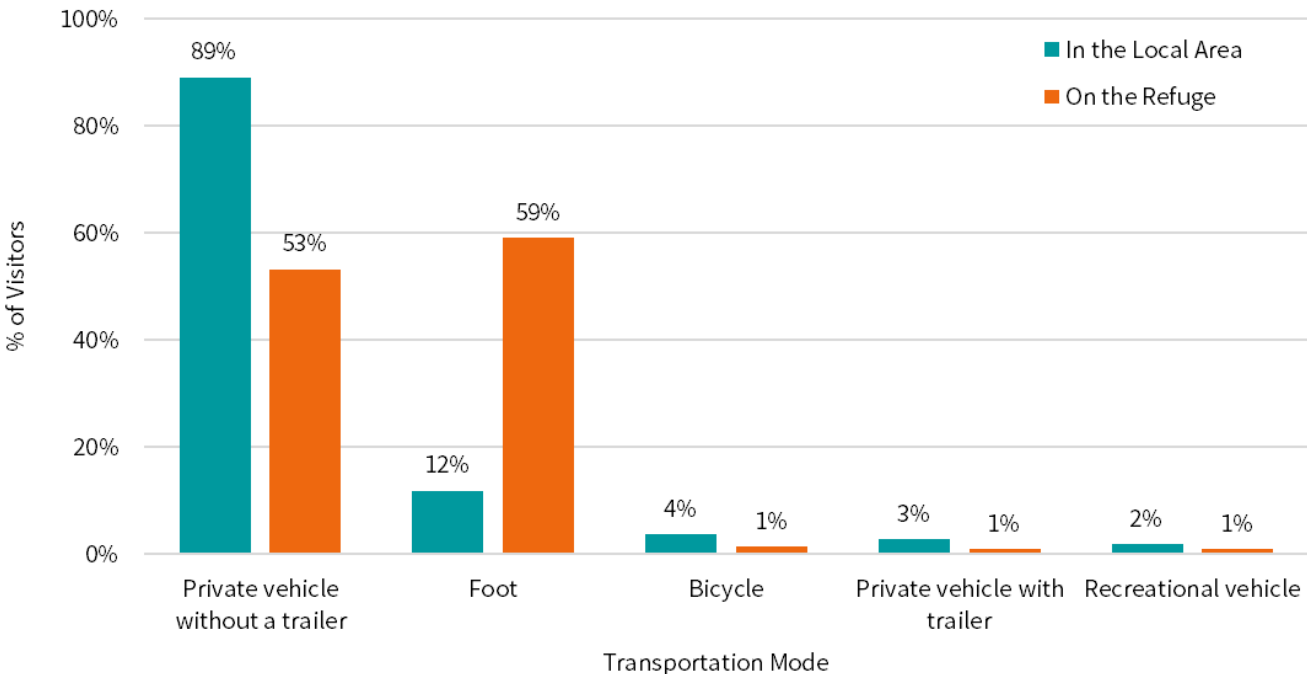


Fig. 9: Modes of transportation used by visitors to get from the local area to this refuge and within the boundaries of this refuge.

Information Sources Used for Trip Planning

Knowing more about which information sources visitors use (or do not use) to plan their trips can improve communication strategies and facilitate positive experiences on refuges. The Refuge System's success in reaching new and diverse audiences as well as current visitors also depends on its ability to keep pace with communication trends (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2016a).

Visitors to this wildlife refuge found a variety of in-person, print/internet, and refuge-specific information sources helpful when planning their trips. Details for information sources identified as very or extremely helpful include:

- In-person sources that were most helpful to visitors regardless of age included word of mouth and tourist information/welcome center.
- Print and internet sources that were most helpful to visitors regardless of age included web-based map and printed map/atlas.
- Refuge-specific sources that were most helpful to visitors regardless of age included refuge employees/volunteers and kiosks/displays/exhibits at this refuge.
- Use of information sources varied by age groups (see Figs. 10-12 for details).

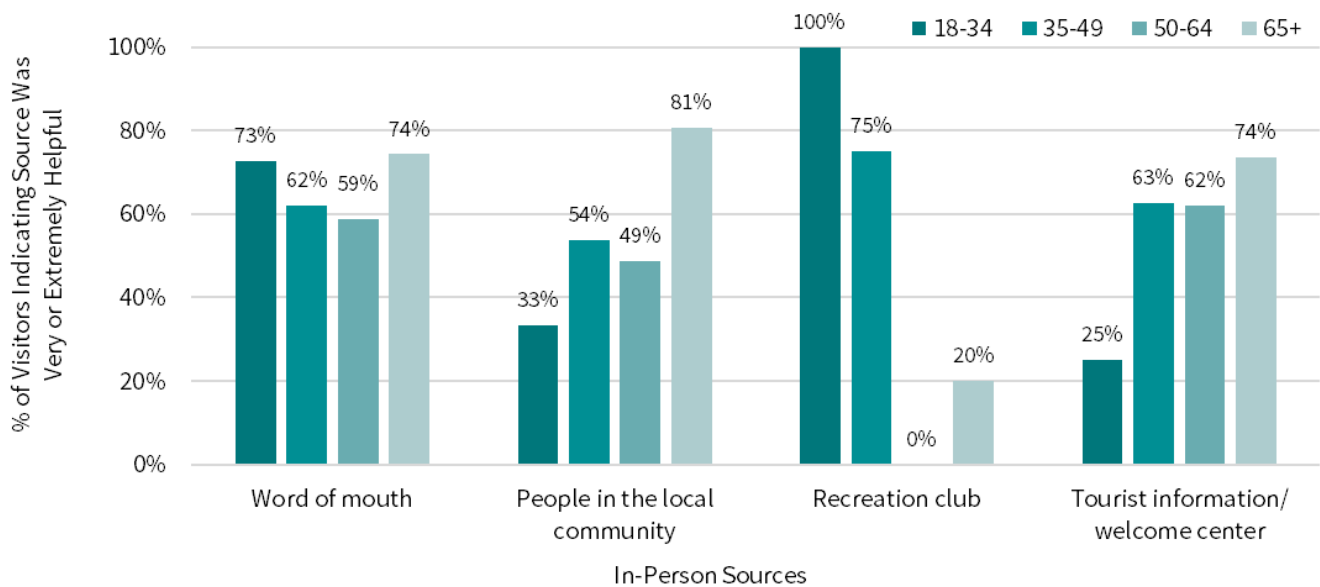


Fig. 10: Percent of visitors by age group who found in-person information sources very or extremely helpful in planning their trip.

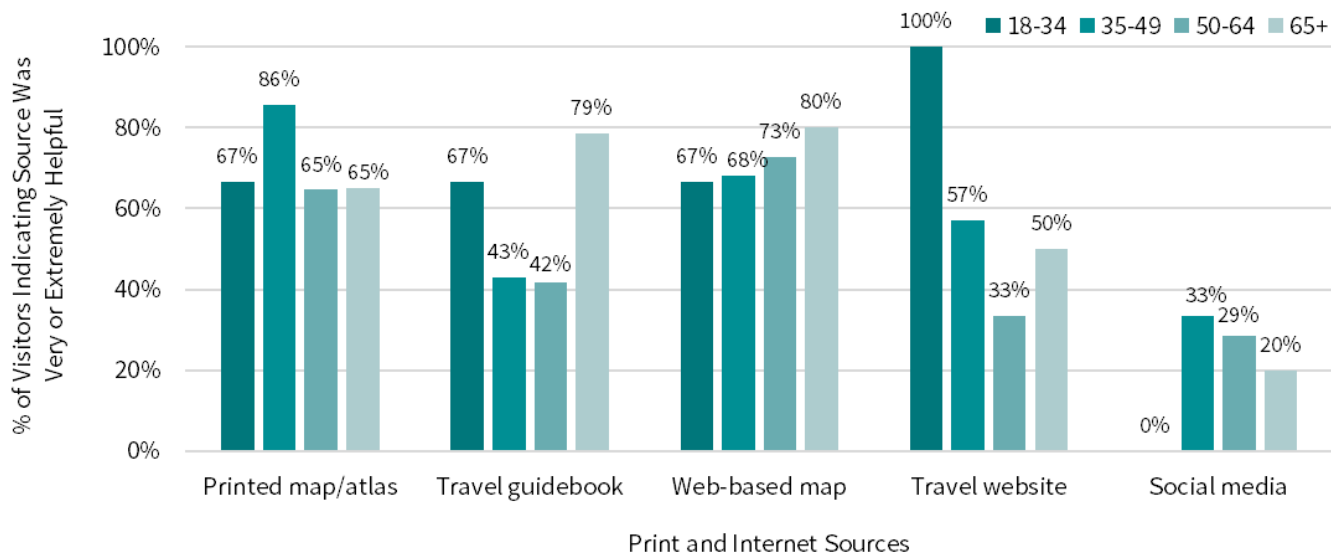


Fig. 11: Percent of visitors by age group who found print and internet information sources very or extremely helpful in planning their trip.

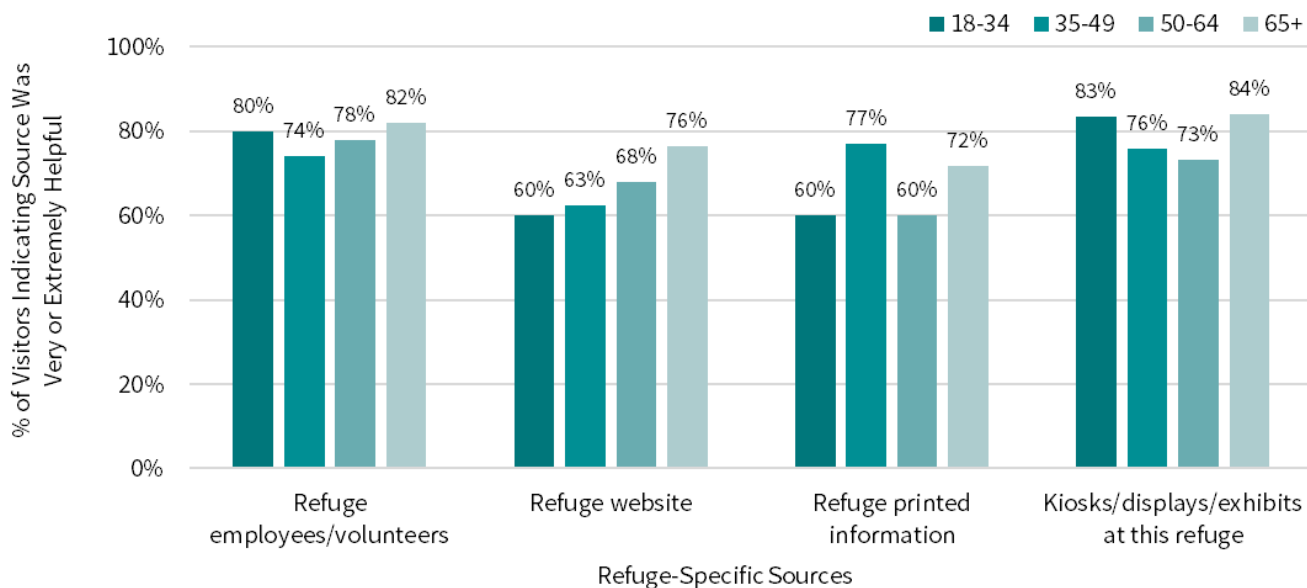


Fig. 12: Percent of visitors by age group who found refuge-specific information sources very or extremely helpful in planning their trip.

Use of Social Media

Around 70% of Americans use social media to connect with one another, engage with news content, share information, and entertain themselves (Smith & Anderson, 2018). Social media posts can act as a virtual “word of mouth” method for increasing awareness about the refuge to the visitor’s network and beyond. A social media presence can further generate awareness of the refuge and its resources among audiences that do not use or did not otherwise learn about the refuge through traditional advertising outlets.

Social media was used by 49% of visitors to share their experience on this refuge with others. Use of specific social media platforms varied by age group (Fig. 13):

- Visitors 18-34 years old preferred to use Instagram (47%) and Facebook (24%).
- Visitors 35-49 years old preferred to use Facebook (50%) and Instagram (10%).
- Visitors 50-64 years old preferred to use Facebook (45%) and Instagram (15%).
- Visitors 65 or older preferred to use Facebook (31%) and Instagram (8%).

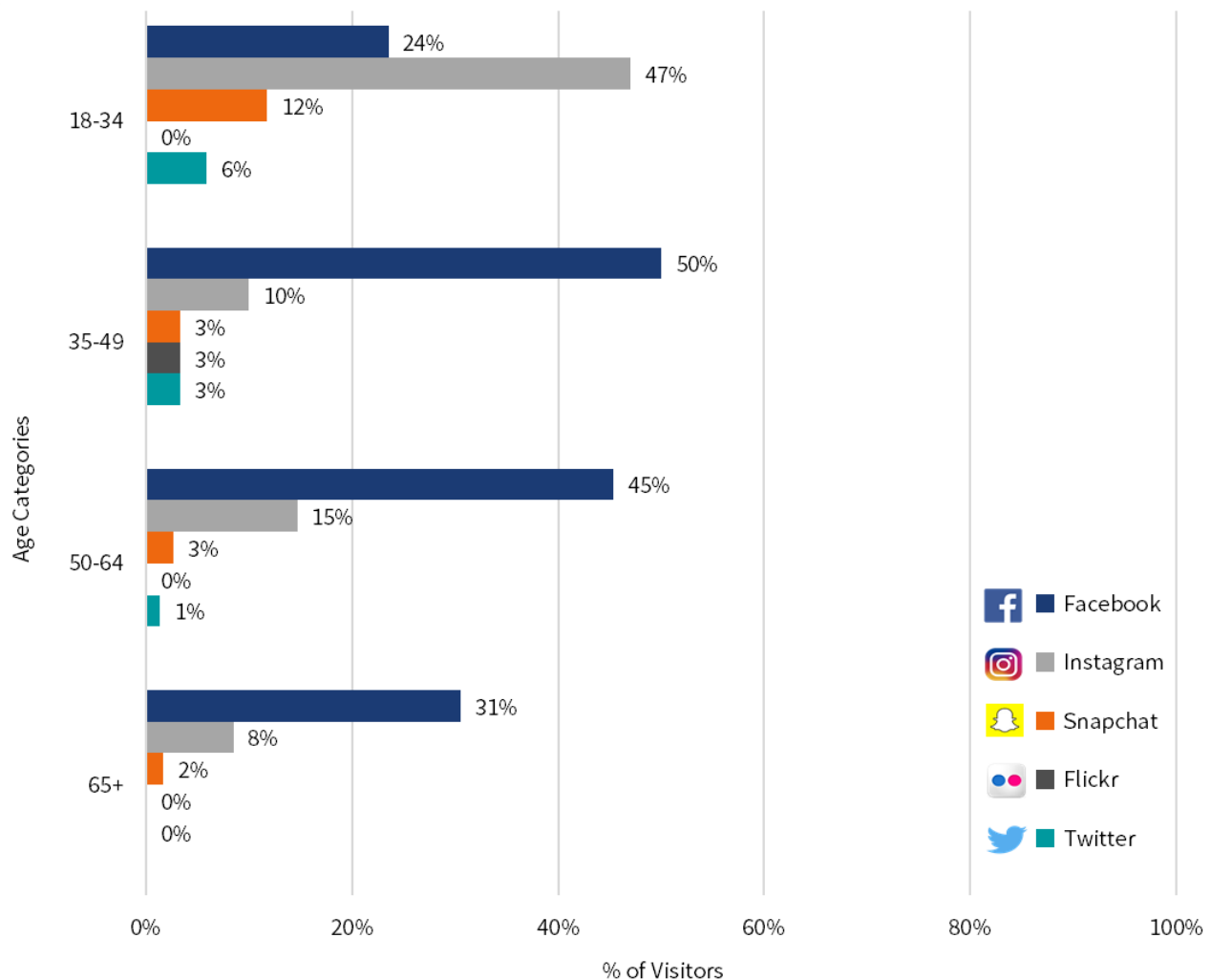


Fig. 13: Percent of visitors by age group who used various social media platforms to share their experience on this refuge with others.

Participation in Recreational Activities

Some research shows that rates of participation in outdoor recreation activities have increased (Outdoor Foundation, 2018), while other studies have indicated declines in participation in heritage activities such as hunting (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2016a). In light of these trends it is important to understand recreation participation on refuges to create quality visitor experiences and foster personal and emotional connections to the refuge and its resources (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2011). Understanding what people do while visiting refuges can also aid in developing programs that facilitate meaningful interactions between visitors and refuge professionals. Finally, such information can help to ensure impacts to resources and conflicts among visitor groups are minimized.

Participation in recreational activities at this wildlife refuge can be characterized as follows:

- The top three activities in which visitors participated during the past 12 months were hiking (96%), wildlife observation (70%), and photography (48%) (Fig. 14).
- The top three activities noted as their primary activity on the day visitors were contacted to participate in the survey were hiking (75%), wildlife observation (8%), and bird watching (3%) (Fig. 14).
- Approximately 64% of visitors went to the visitor center, and they most often used the facilities (54%), asked for information (51%), and viewed the exhibits (49%) (Fig. 15).



Photo credit: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

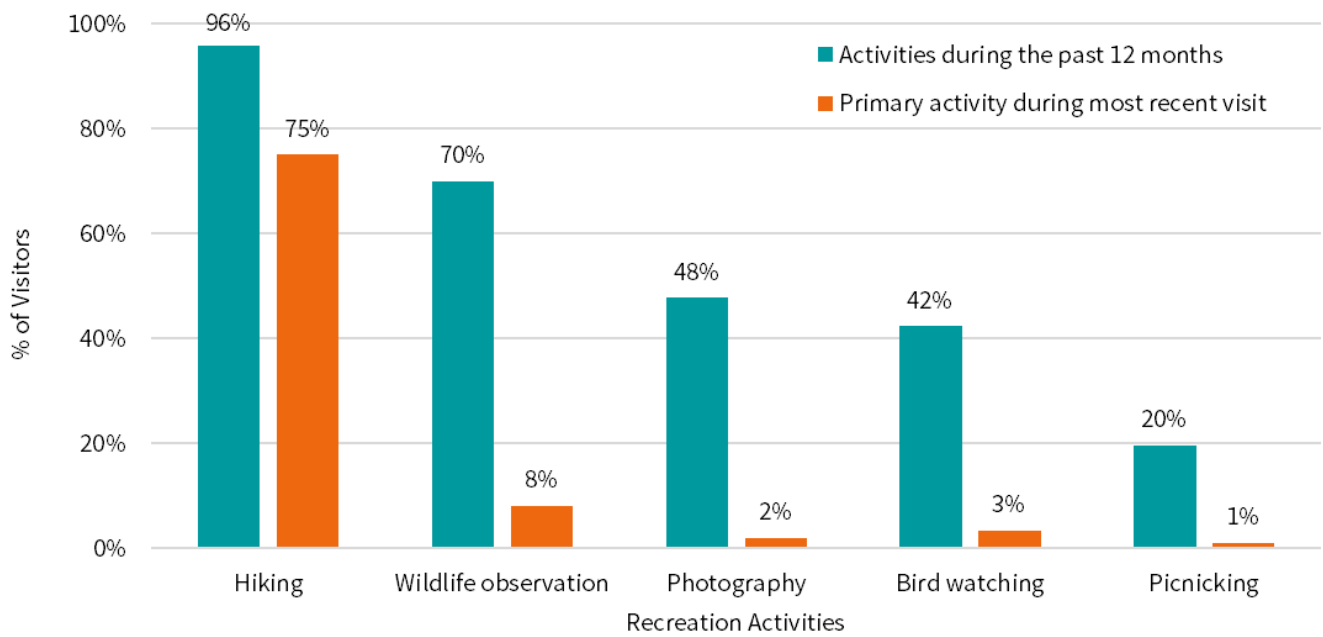


Fig. 14: Recreational activities visitors participated in during the past 12 months and their primary activity during their most recent visit to this refuge.

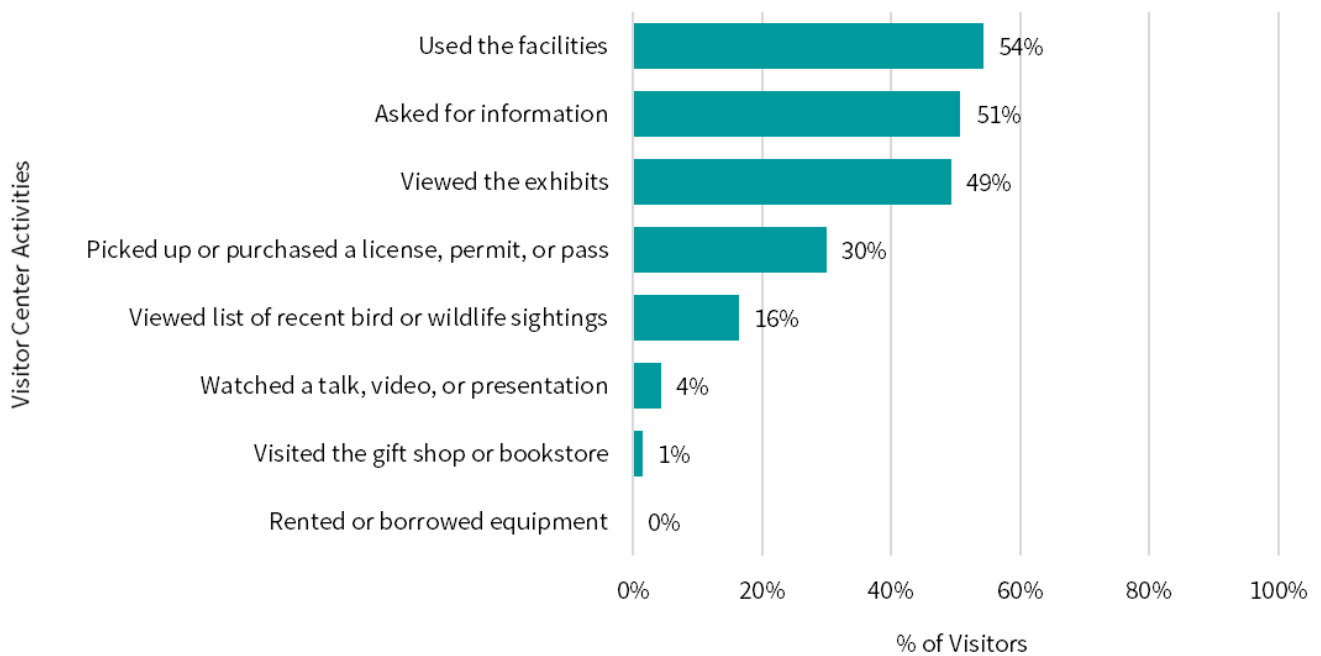


Fig. 15: Reasons visitors used the visitor center during their most recent visit to this refuge.

Comfort in Nature/Feeling Safe & Welcome

While many people are repeat visitors to refuges, each year thousands of people experience these lands and waters for the first time. One barrier for some visitors, particularly those living in urban areas or with little past exposure to nature-based recreation, is the perception that being in nature is dangerous or unsafe (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2014). There may also be negative stigmas associated with outdoor spaces that arise from social contexts (for example, people associating being outdoors with poverty or ‘dirty’ contexts) and historical contexts in which being ‘in the woods’ was dangerous and unsafe (Sexton, Ross-Winslow, Pradines, & Dietsch, 2015).

While ensuring that visitors feel safe and welcome is a foundational standard of the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program (<https://www.fws.gov/urban>), these basic needs apply across the Refuge System.

Before visitors can appreciate the wonders of nature, their basic need for safety and belonging must be met. Thus, an understanding of how visitors perceive safety, belonging, accessibility, and comfort in nature is critical to ensure real threats to safety are minimized, and that individuals from all demographic groups feel as welcome and comfortable in nature as possible.

Visitors to this wildlife refuge shared the following about safety, belonging, and their comfort while being in nature:

- 97% of visitors felt welcome during their refuge visit (Fig. 16).
- 100% of visitors felt safe during their refuge visit (Fig. 16).
- 99% of visitors felt comfortable in nature, but 7% did not like being in nature alone (Fig. 17).

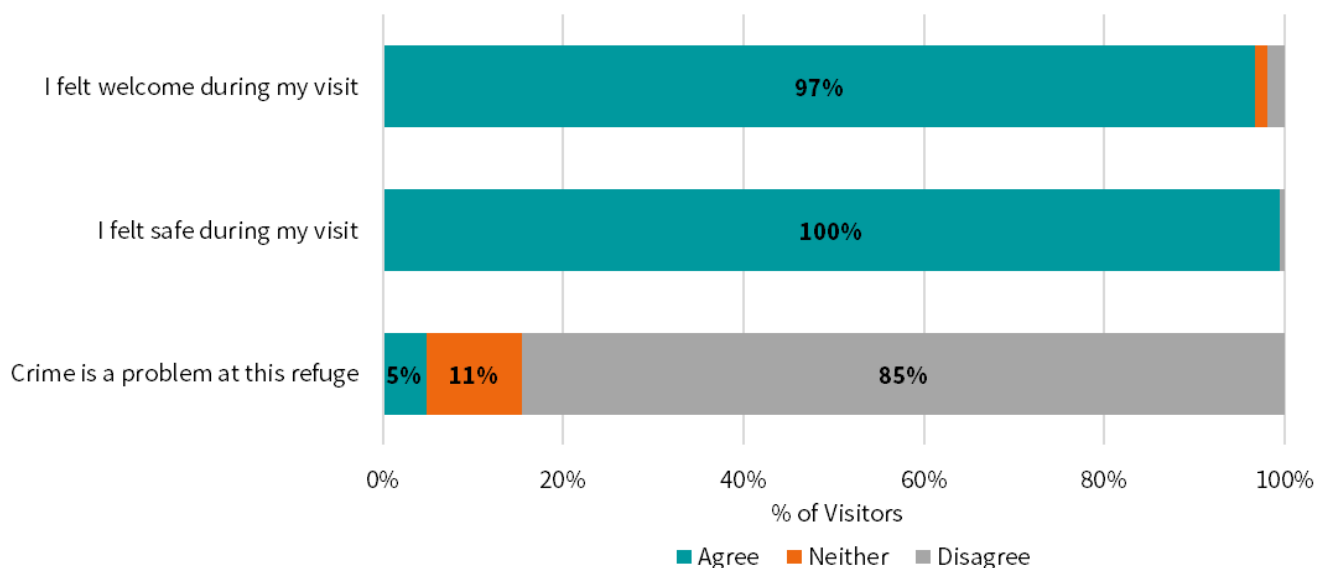


Fig. 16: Visitors' perceptions of safety and feeling welcome at this refuge during their visit.

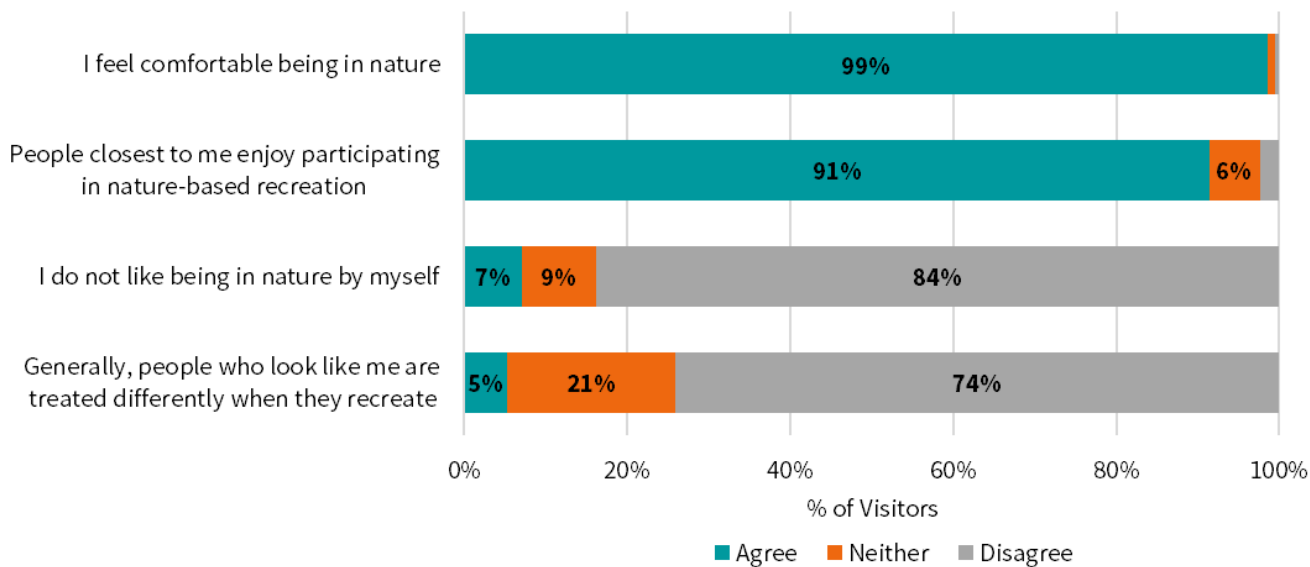


Fig. 17: Visitors' comfort with being in nature.



Photo credit: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Satisfaction with Refuge Experiences

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Refuge professionals strive to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction by operating visitor centers; designing, installing, and maintaining accessible trails; constructing viewing blinds; and much more to facilitate quality recreational experiences. A solid understanding of visitors' perceptions of their experiences provides a framework for monitoring and responding to trends across time. Overall satisfaction with this wildlife refuge is summarized as follows:

- 94% of visitors were very or extremely satisfied with the overall experience at this wildlife refuge (Fig. 18).
- 87% of visitors were very or extremely satisfied with this wildlife refuge's job of conserving fish, wildlife, and their habitats (Fig. 18).

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Refuge professionals regularly interact with visitors and maintain facilities to ensure high quality experiences. From greeting visitors, to keeping bathrooms clean, to clearly stating regulations, providing quality customer service is important to ensuring overall satisfaction.

Satisfaction with customer service was highest among visitors for the following (Fig. 19):

- refuge hours/days of operation (98%),
- courteous and welcoming employees/volunteers (94%),
- availability of employees/volunteers (92%),
- signage stating rules and regulations (92%).

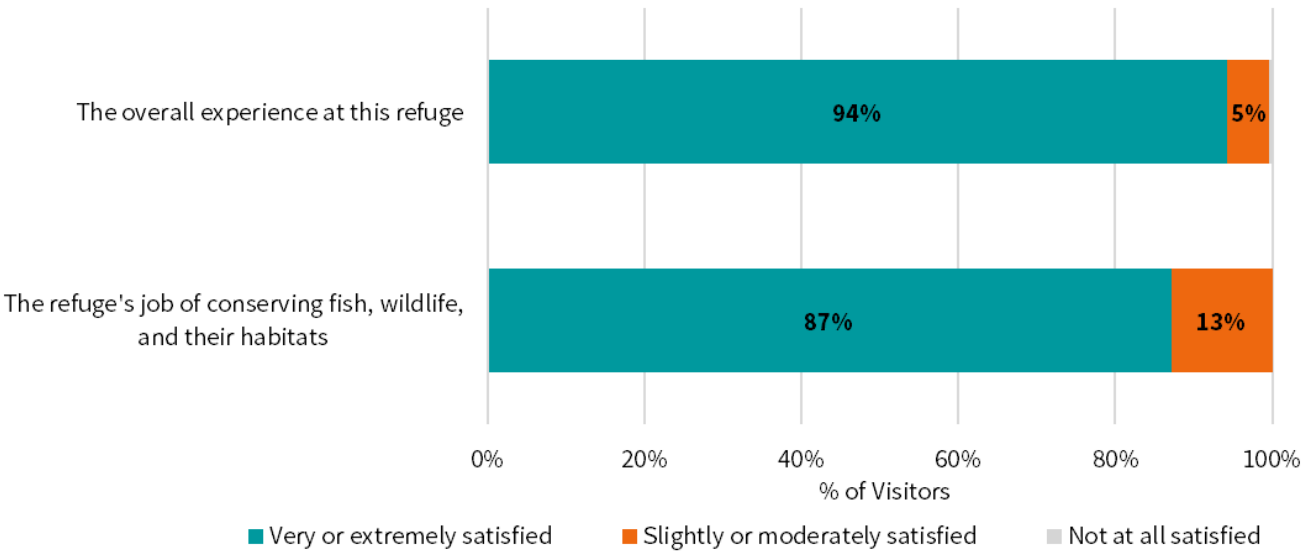


Fig. 18: Visitors' satisfaction with their experience at this refuge and with this refuge's job of conserving fish, wildlife, and habitats.

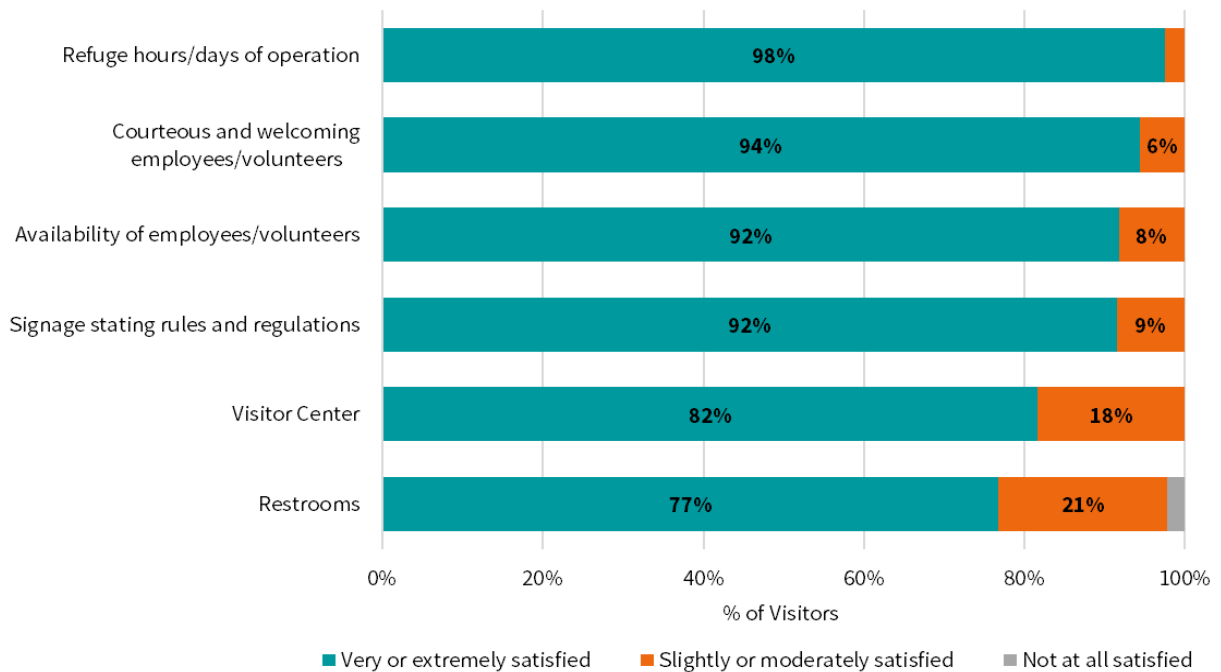


Fig. 19: Visitors' satisfaction with customer service and amenities at this refuge.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Outdoor recreation on wildlife refuges is a fundamental part of a visit. As American's values toward wildlife and their relationship with nature continue to shift (Kellert et al., 2017; Manfredo et al., 2018), public desires for recreational experiences on public lands are also likely to shift. In addition, researchers and land management professionals recognize the need to connect the next generation to nature and wildlife (Charles & Louv, 2009; Larson et al., 2011). A solid understanding of visitors' perceptions of their experiences provides a

framework for monitoring and responding to these recreation trends across time.

Satisfaction with recreation opportunities among visitors who had participated in the activity during the last 12 months was highest for the following (Fig. 20):

- hiking (90%),
- photography (86%), and
- observation deck/blinds (85%).

"My husband and I enjoy visiting the refuge...It's great for fresh, natural air, exposure to wildlife and beautiful scenery, well maintained, and an important place to get much needed exercise. These kinds of places are becoming fewer so [Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge] is a sacred and special escape from an otherwise hectic life." – Visitor to Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge

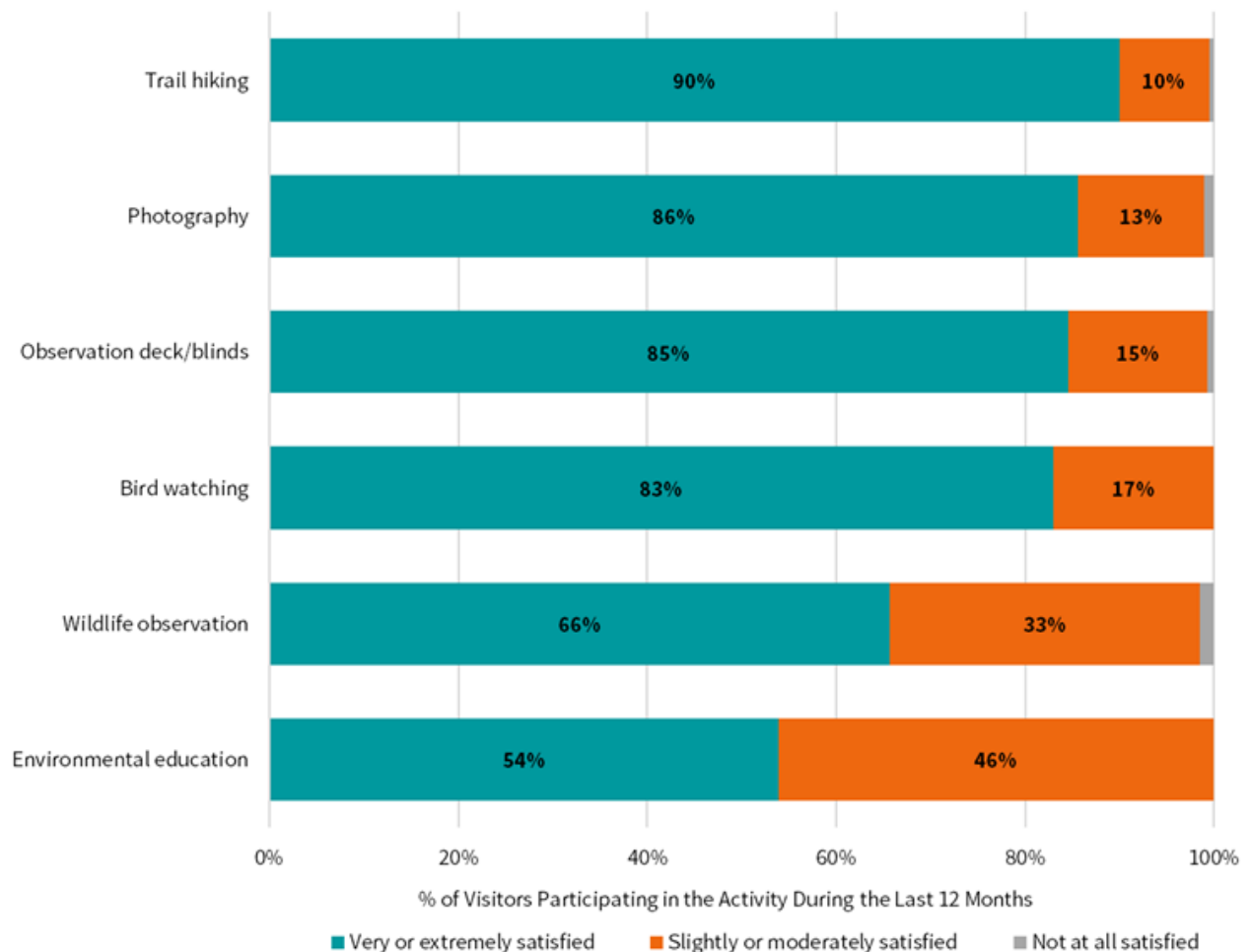


Fig. 20: Visitors’ satisfaction with recreational opportunities at this refuge. Only visitors (10 or more) who participated in activities related to each opportunity at this refuge during the last 12 months were included.

TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & ACCESS

Transportation networks connect local communities to refuges and are critical to visitors’ experiences there. Visitors access refuges by plane, car, train, boat, bike, and foot. The Service works to ensure that the roads, trails, and parking areas are welcoming and safe for visitors of all abilities. A goal of the Service’s National Long-Range Transportation Plan is to enhance experiences on wildlife refuges and fish hatcheries through improvement to the transportation network (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2016b). How visitors perceive different transportation features can be used to prioritize access and transportation improvements.

Visitors were satisfied with transportation safety and access at this wildlife refuge as follows (Fig. 21):

- Getting to this wildlife refuge, visitors were most satisfied with safety of refuge road entrances and exits (94%) and directional signs on highways (72%).
- Getting around this wildlife refuge, visitors were most satisfied with safety of driving conditions on refuge roads (92%), condition of parking areas (91%), and condition of refuge roads (91%).
- Accessing recreation on this wildlife refuge, visitors were most satisfied with condition of trails and boardwalks (95%), safety of roads or trails for nonmotorized use (91%), and directional signs on trails (83%).

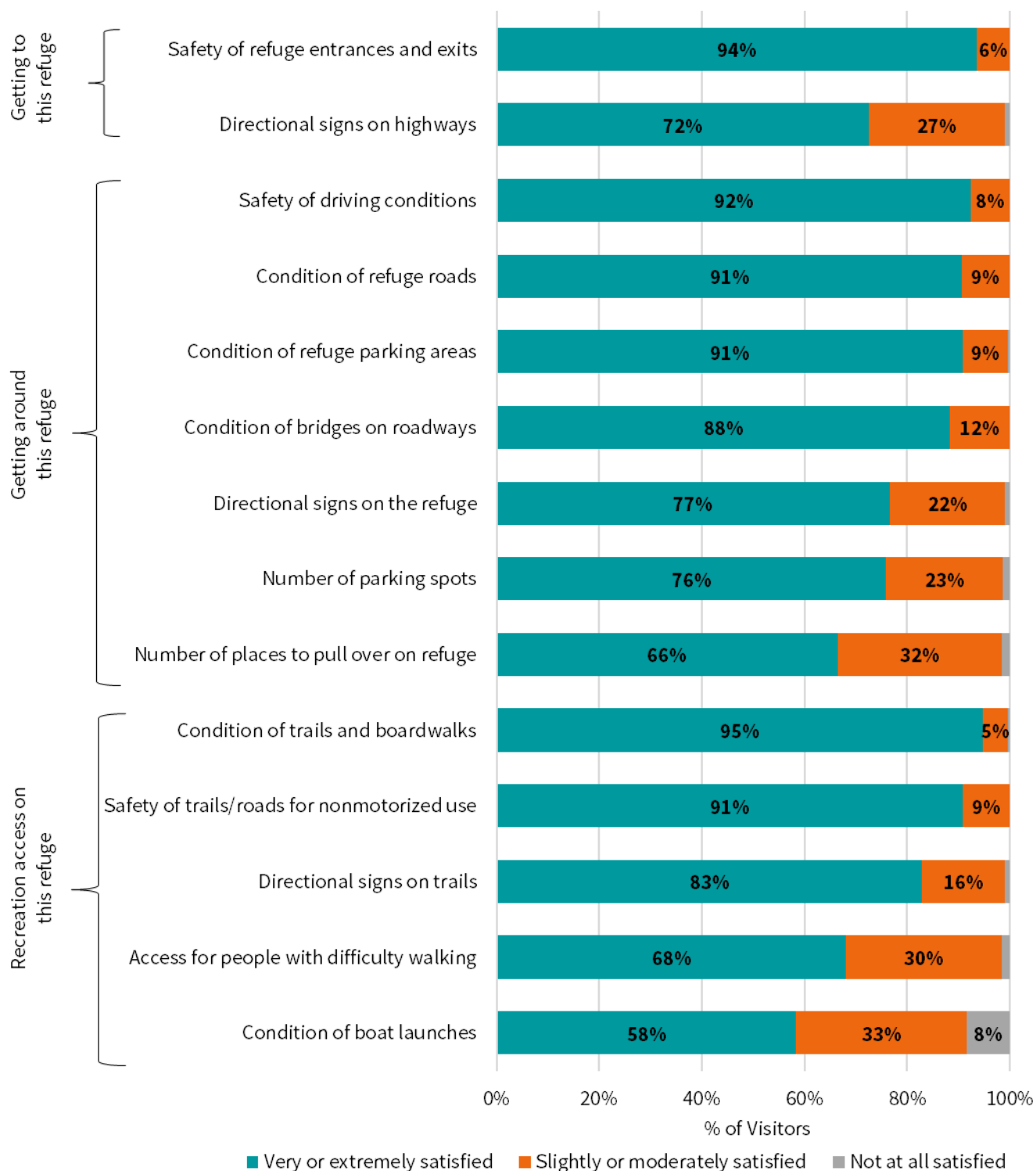


Fig. 21: Visitors' satisfaction with how the refuge is managing transportation-related features.

Economic Benefits to Local Communities & Visitors

The value of any commodity is comprised of two elements: 1) the amount paid and 2) the additional benefit derived above and beyond what is paid. The first element equates to direct expenditures. Visitors to wildlife refuges pay for a variety of things, including nearby lodging, gas, food, and other purchases from local businesses. This spending has a significant positive contribution to local economies. The *Banking on Nature* report (Caudill & Carver, 2017) highlights how nearly 54 million visits to wildlife refuges during 2017 generated \$3.2 billion of economic output in local communities and supported over 41,000 jobs. The report further indicates that recreational spending on wildlife refuges generated \$229 million in tax revenue at the local, county, and state levels.

Determining benefits derived above and beyond what is paid is commonly estimated by “willingness to pay” for an experience. Studies show people are often willing to pay more for a recreational experience than what they actually spent (Neher, Duffield, & Patterson, 2011; Rosenberger & Loomis, 2001). For example, a visitor may have spent \$500 on lodging, food, and gasoline to make the trip possible, while also indicating that they would be willing to pay an additional \$50 to visit this wildlife refuge if total trip costs were to increase.

Results for local visitors (those living ≤ 50 miles from this wildlife refuge; 22%) are as follows:

- On average, local visitors accounted for 1% of expenditures.
- Top trip expenditures by locals were for food/drink and transportation (Fig. 22).
- The average amount paid by locals to visit this wildlife refuge was \$16 per person per day (Fig. 22).
- Local visitors were personally willing to pay an additional \$45 per day on average to visit this wildlife refuge (Fig. 23).

Results for nonlocal visitors (those living >50 miles from this wildlife refuge; 78%) are as follows:

- On average, nonlocals accounted for 99% of expenditures.
- Top trip expenditures by nonlocals were for lodging and food/drink (Fig. 22).
- The average amount paid by nonlocals to visit this wildlife refuge was \$75 per person per day (Fig. 22).
- Nonlocal visitors were personally willing to pay an additional \$134 per day on average to visit this wildlife refuge (Fig. 23).
- Nonlocal visitors spent an average of 4 days in the local community during this visit.



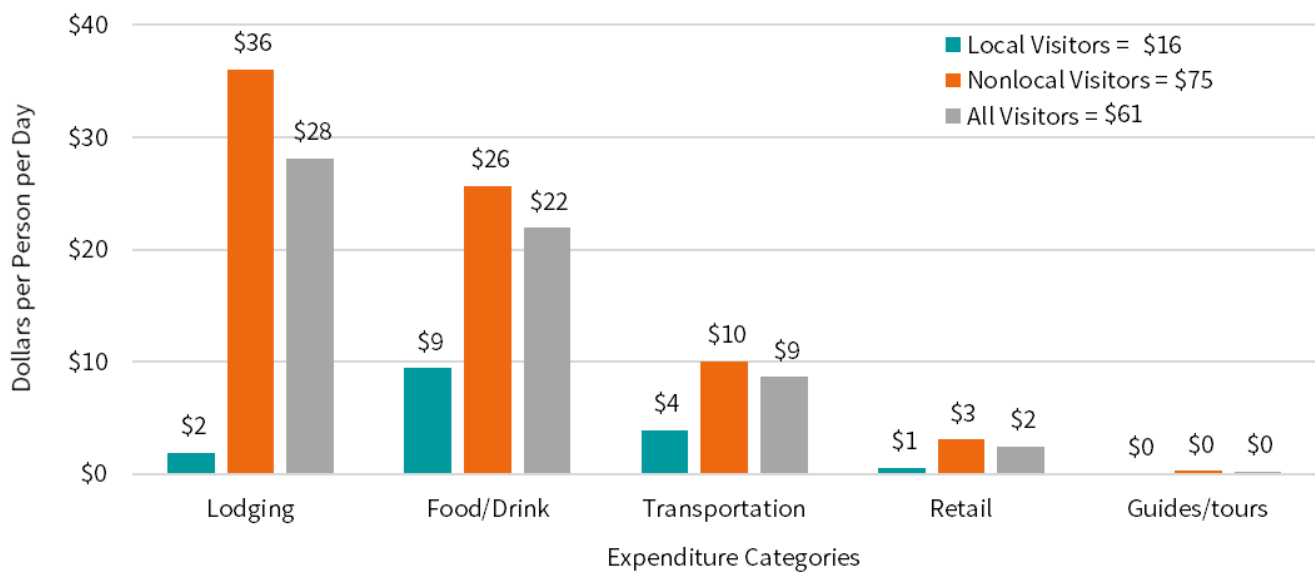


Fig. 22: Individual daily expenditures in the local community for local, nonlocal, and all visitors. Expenditures were reported by respondents on a per group basis; the total expenditures were divided by the number of people in the group who shared trip expenditures and the number of days spent in the local community. The number of people sharing trip expenditures was often smaller than the total group size.

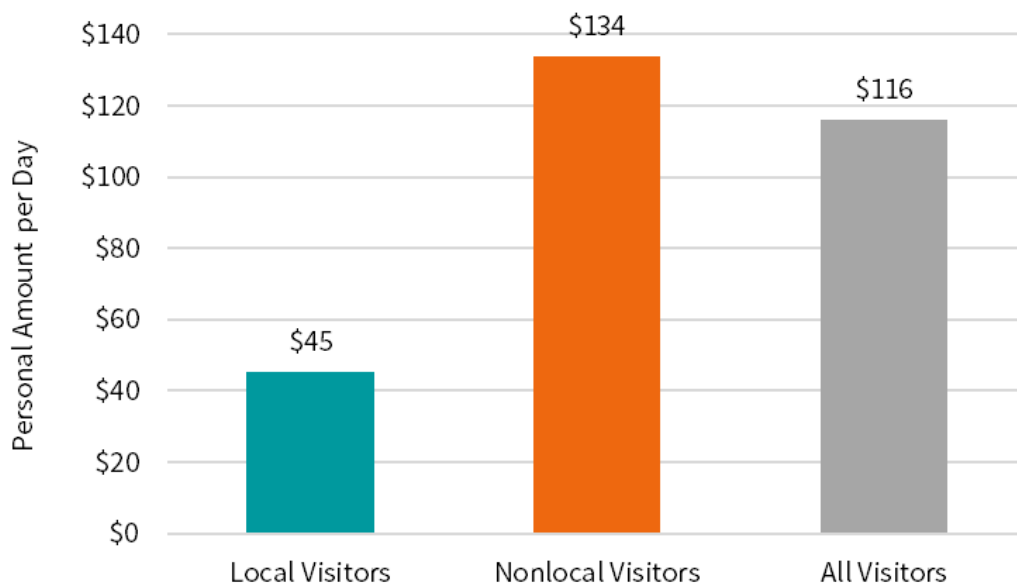


Fig. 23: Total personal willingness to pay per day above and beyond most recent trip expenses if costs were to increase for local, nonlocal, and all visitors. Due to the fixed-response question format, estimates of willingness to pay may underestimate the amount visitors would actually pay. Responses were divided by the number of days spent at the refuge.

Encouraging Return Visits & Future Recreation Participation

Public land managers strive to maximize benefits for visitors while achieving and maintaining desired resource conditions. This complex task requires that managers accurately estimate visitor numbers, as well as where visitors go, what they do, their impacts on resources, how they perceive their experiences, and their desires for future visits. Gaining a sense of what would encourage visitors to return and how management activities affect their likelihood of returning can lead to improved visitor use and resource management (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2014).

PROGRAMS AND OTHER OFFERINGS

Programming and other offerings that are compatible with the purpose of a refuge and the Refuge System mission can encourage people to continue visiting the refuge. Additionally, changes to regulations and access for improving resource availability may increase or decrease future participation, or have little effect at all.

In the future, changes in programming, offerings, or regulations would have an effect on visitation to this wildlife refuge as follows:

- Programs most likely to encourage visitors to return to this wildlife refuge included those focused on highlighting unique local culture (61%), skill-building (44%), and creative pursuits (33%) (Fig. 24).
- The top two factors likely to increase visitors' future participation in their primary recreation activity were recreation equipment available for rent (16%) and more infrastructure (16%) (Fig. 25).
- The top two factors likely to decrease visitors' future participation in their primary recreation activity were less regulations on hunting (48%) and more people participating in their primary activity (36%) (Fig. 25).

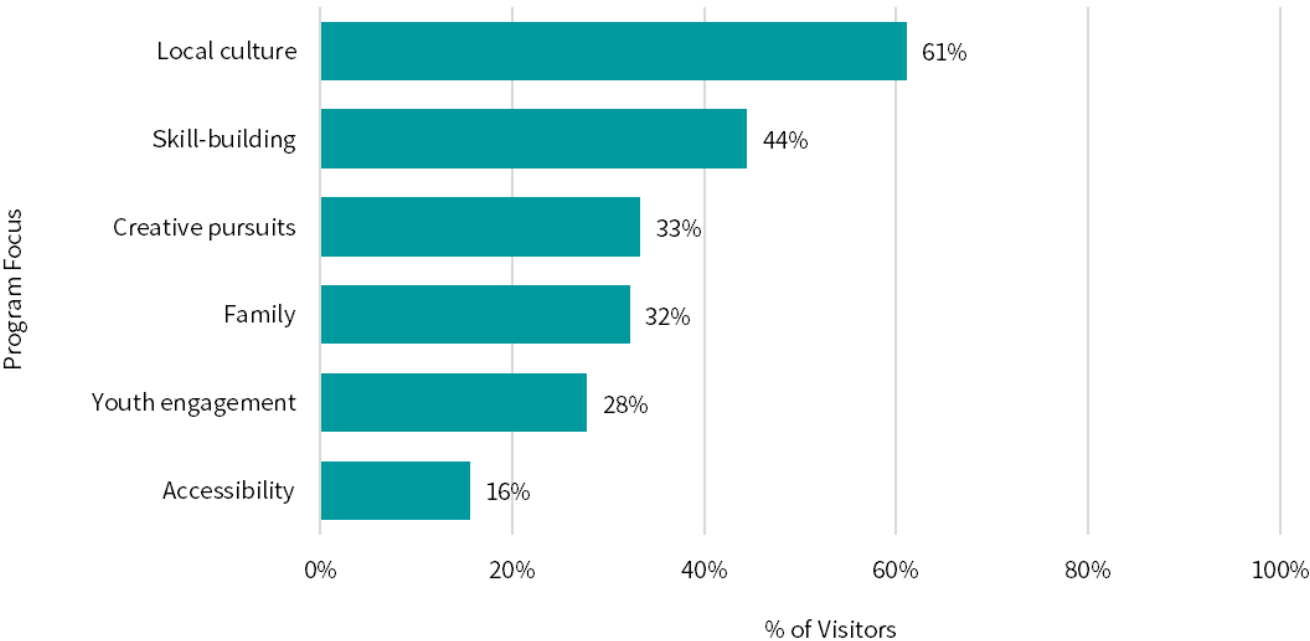


Fig. 24: Types of programs that would encourage visitors to return to this refuge.

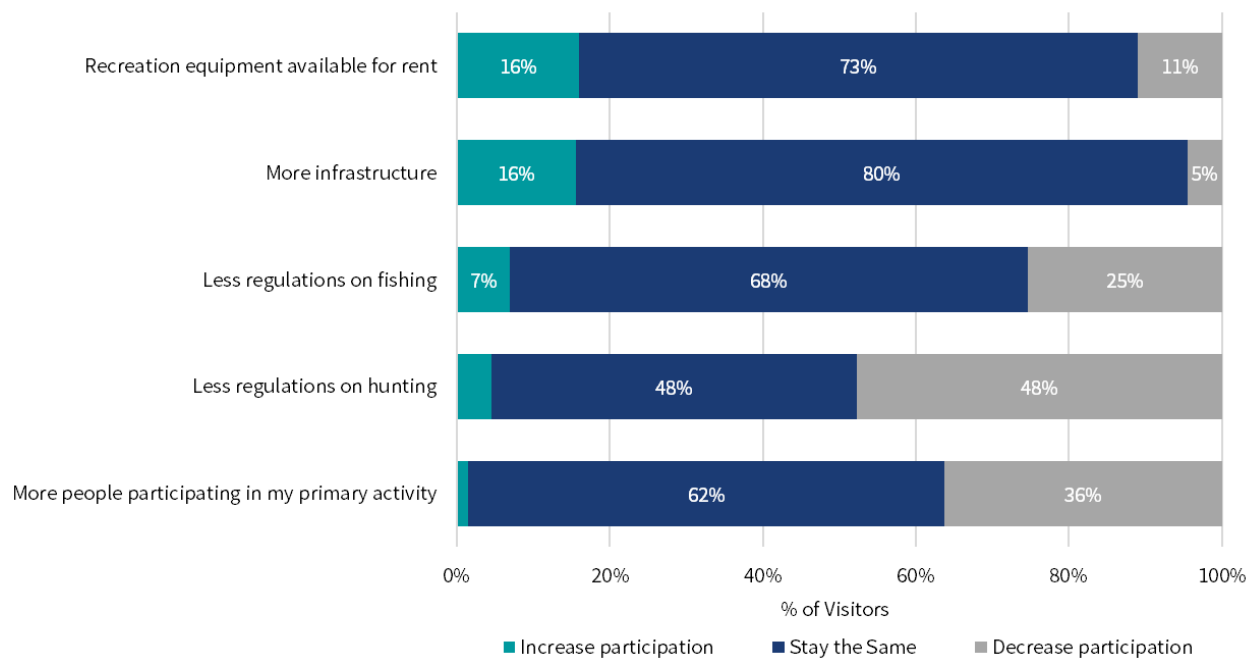


Fig. 25: Changes in visitors’ participation in their primary activity if the listed recreation factors were to change.

ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

Understanding visitor demand for alternative transportation options is a goal of the Service’s National Long-Range Transportation Plan (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, 2016b). Alternative transportation options can be valuable in realizing refuge goals to conserve natural resources, reduce visitors’ carbon footprint (Volpe Center, 2010), and improve visitor experiences. Even though demand may be relatively small, any use of alternative transportation that is feasible at a wildlife refuge can help to meet goals.

The top future alternative transportation options supported by visitors at this wildlife refuge included:

- pedestrian paths (26%), a bike-share program (14%), and bus or tram that provides a guided tour (11%) (Fig. 26).

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES

Natural processes associated with wildlife refuges can provide benefits to people, including provisioning services such as food and water; regulating services such as flood

and disease control; cultural services such as spiritual, recreational, and educational benefits; and supporting services such as nutrient cycling (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). Understanding how changes in natural resources and related processes may impact future visitation and participation in certain recreation activities can improve resource and visitor management, as well as inform communication efforts with stakeholders and policy-makers (Patton, Bergstrom, Covich, & Moore, 2012).

In the future, changes to resources would affect visitation to this refuge as follows (Fig. 27):

- The top two resource changes likely to increase visitors’ future participation in their primary recreation activity were a greater diversity of species (60%) and an improvement in the quality of wildlife habitat other than wetlands (55%).
- The top two resource changes likely to decrease visitors’ future participation in their primary recreation activity were more acreage open to hunting and fishing (53%) and less water available for recreation (34%).

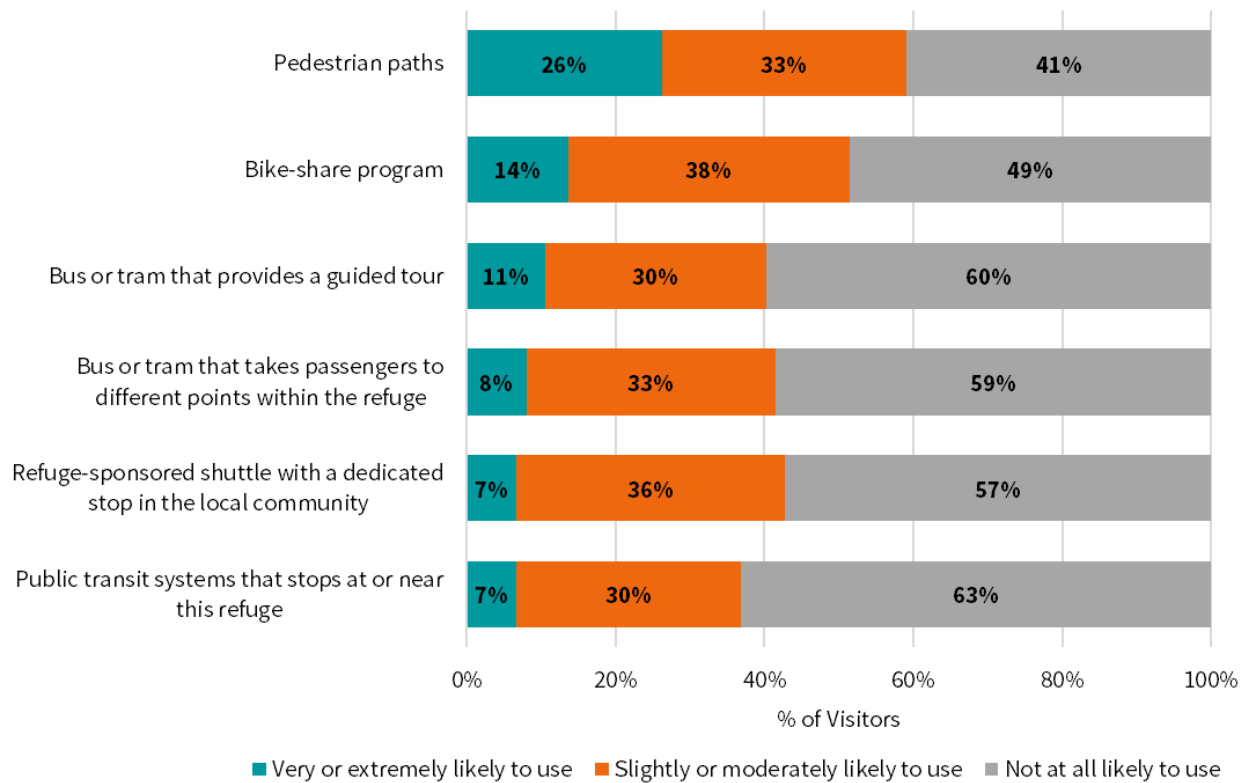


Fig. 26: Visitors' likelihood of using alternative transportation options if offered at this refuge.

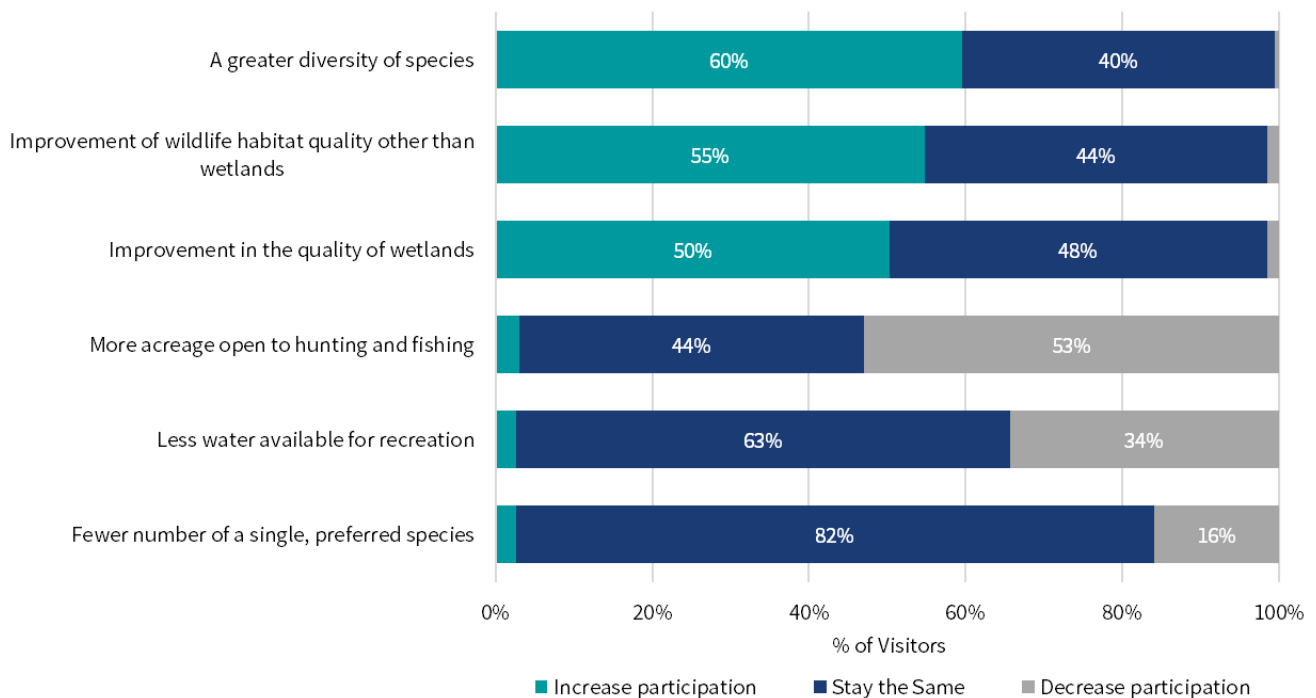


Fig. 27: Changes in visitors' participation in their primary activity if the listed resources were to change.

Conclusion

These individual refuge results provide a summary of trip characteristics and experiences of a sample of visitors to Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge during 2018. They are intended to inform refuge planning, including the management of natural resources, recreation, and the design and delivery of programs for visitors. These results offer a baseline that can be used to monitor and evaluate efforts over time. Refuge professionals who understand

visitor demographics, trip characteristics, and desires for future conditions can make informed decisions for proactive visitor management and resource protection. Integrating this social science with biophysical science ensures that management decisions are consistent with the Refuge System mission while fostering a continued public interest in and connection with these special places we call national wildlife refuges.



Photo credit: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

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Appendix A: Survey Methodology

The National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey (NVS) team consisted of staff from The Ohio State University (OSU), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (Service), and American Conservation Experience (ACE) who collectively developed the following NVS methodology. Staff from OSU and the Service designed the survey instrument with multiple reviewers within the Refuge System providing feedback about content and wording. The logistical coordinator and interns from ACE conducted sampling on refuges. OSU staff coordinated survey mailings, analyzed data, and in cooperation with Service staff, designed the report template and created each refuge report.

SAMPLING SCHEDULE

Interns (survey recruiters) sampled on each participating refuge for two 14-day sampling periods between March 2018 and February 2019. Refuge staff identified the sampling periods and locations that best reflected the diversity of use and visitation patterns of the refuge.

The national visitor survey team developed a sampling schedule for each refuge that included eight randomly selected sampling shifts during each 14-day sampling period. Shifts were four-hour time bands stratified across mornings and afternoons/evenings. The NVS team customized the schedule as needed to accommodate the individual refuge sampling locations and specific spatial and temporal patterns of visitation. The target number of contacts was 25 adult visitors (18 years of age or older) per shift for a total of 375 participants contacted per refuge. Shifts were moved, added, or extended to address logistical limitations (for example, bad weather or low visitation).

CONTACTING VISITORS ONSITE

ACE interns received a multi-day training that included role-play exercises on a refuge to

simulate engagement of visitors. Once onsite, the interns contacted visitors following a protocol developed by OSU and Service staff. Interns surveyed across the entire sampling shift and only one visitor per group was asked to participate. If a visitor declined to participate, interns recorded a direct refusal. Visitors willing to participate provided their name, mailing address, language preference (English or Spanish), and answered a few initial questions about their experience that could be used for nonresponse comparisons. Willing visitors were also given a small token incentive (for example, sticker) as a thank you and reminder of their participation.

COMPLETING A SURVEY AT HOME

All visitors that agreed onsite to participate in the survey received a postcard mailed to their address within 10 days. The postcard thanked visitors for agreeing to participate, provided a weblink and unique password, and invited the visitor to complete the survey online. All participants then received the following sequence of correspondence by mail from OSU until a survey was returned and the address removed from the mailing list (as suggested by Dillman et al., 2014):

- 1) A packet consisting of a cover letter, survey, and postage-paid return envelope approximately seven days after the first postcard was mailed.
- 2) A reminder postcard mailed 14 days after the first packet was mailed.
- 3) A final packet consisting of a cover letter, survey, and postage-paid return envelope mailed seven days after the reminder postcard.

All printed correspondence and online material were provided in the language chosen by visitors onsite; however, visitors who went online to complete the survey were able to switch between English and Spanish. The

survey was designed to take no more than 25 minutes to complete, and the average completion time recorded by the online survey software was approximately 20 minutes.

DATA ENTRY & ANALYSIS

The NVS team used Qualtrics survey software to collect survey data online. OSU staff then exported the data for cleaning (for example, treatment of missing data) and analyses. The team entered data from the paper surveys into Microsoft Excel using a standardized survey codebook and data entry procedures. All data from the two sources (paper and online) were merged and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, v.25) software.

LIMITATIONS OF RESULTS

The degree to which these results represent overall visitation at a wildlife refuge depends on the number of visitors who completed the survey (sample size), and how well the sample reflects the degree of use at the refuge (Scheaffer et al., 2011). Many respondents completing the survey will produce a smaller margin of error, leading to greater confidence in results, but only to a point. For example, a margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ at a 95% confidence level signifies that if a reported percentage is 55%, then 95 out of 100 times that sample estimate would fall between 50% and 60% (if the same question was asked in the same way of the same sample). The margin of error for this survey was calculated with an 80/20

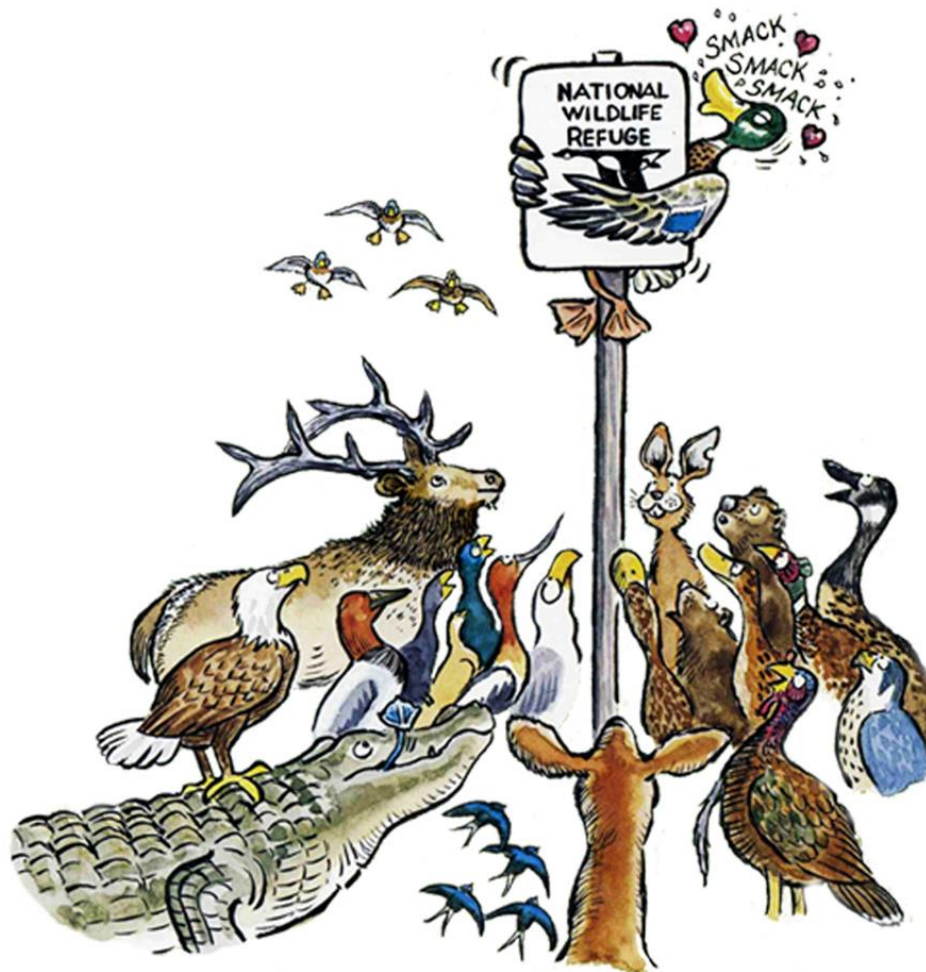
response distribution, meaning if respondents were given a dichotomous choice question, approximately 80% of respondents would select one choice and 20% would select the other (Salant & Dillman, 1994).

While OSU designed the standardized sampling protocol to account for spatial and temporal visitation patterns, the geography and infrastructure of wildlife refuges vary widely. This variation can affect who is ‘captured’ as part of the survey. For example, contacting visitors is much easier if everyone must pass through a single-entry point and much more difficult if a refuge has multiple access points over a large area. Additionally, the two 14-day sampling periods may not have effectively captured all visitor activities throughout the year on some wildlife refuges (for example, visitors who solely engage in ice fishing). As such, results presented in any one of these reports are aimed at representing overall visitation at a wildlife refuge while recognizing that particular visitor groups may vary in their beliefs and activities.

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National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey



Front cover of the 2018 National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey instrument. Artwork credit: Kent Olson.

PLEASE READ THIS FIRST:

Thank you for visiting a national wildlife refuge and agreeing to participate in this study! We hope that you had an enjoyable experience. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and The Ohio State University are conducting this survey to learn more about refuge visitors and their experiences in order to improve management and enhance visitor opportunities.

Please respond regarding the refuge and the visit for which you were asked to participate in this survey. The cover letter indicates the refuge you visited.

SECTION 1. Your visit to this refuge

1. Including your most recent visit, which activities did you participate in during the past 12 months at this refuge?
(Mark all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> 70% Wildlife observation	<input type="checkbox"/> 96% Hiking/Walking	<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Volunteering
<input type="checkbox"/> 42% Bird watching	<input type="checkbox"/> 9% Jogging/Running/Exercising	<input type="checkbox"/> 3% Environmental education program (classroom visits, labs)
<input type="checkbox"/> 48% Photography	<input type="checkbox"/> 8% Bicycling	
<input type="checkbox"/> 0% Big game hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> 8% Auto tour route/Driving	<input type="checkbox"/> 6% Interpretative program (bird walks, staff/volunteer-led talks)
<input type="checkbox"/> 0% Upland/Small game hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> 1% Motorized boating	
<input type="checkbox"/> 0% Waterfowl/Migratory bird hunting	<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Nonmotorized boating (canoeing, kayaking)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Refuge special event (<i>specify</i>) <u>See Appendix C</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 1% Freshwater fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> 4% Foraging (berries, nuts, other)	<input type="checkbox"/> 6% Other (<i>specify</i>) <u>See Appendix C</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 0% Saltwater fishing	<input type="checkbox"/> 20% Picnicking	

2. Which of the activities above was the primary purpose of your most recent visit to this refuge?

(Please write **only one activity** here.) See Appendix C

3. Which of the following best describes your most recent visit to this Refuge? (*Mark only one.*)

<input type="checkbox"/> 35% It was the primary purpose or sole destination of my trip.
<input type="checkbox"/> 33% It was one of many equally important reasons or destinations for my trip.
<input type="checkbox"/> 33% It was just an incidental or spur-of-the-moment stop on a trip taken for other purposes or to other destinations.

4. How many people were in your personal group, including yourself, on your most recent visit to this refuge?
(Please answer each category.)

3 number of people 18 years and older 0 number of people under 18 years

5. Did you go to a visitor center at this refuge during your most recent visit?

☐ 36% No / Not Applicable

☐ 64% Yes → If yes, what did you do there? (*Mark all that apply.*)

☐ 51% Asked information of employees/volunteers

☐ 16% Looked at list of recent bird/wildlife sightings

☐ 4% Attended a talk/video/presentation

☐ 54% Stopped to use the facilities (for example, got water, used restroom)

☐ 49% Viewed the exhibits

☐ 30% Picked up/purchased a license, permit, or pass

☐ 0% Rented/borrowed equipment (for example, binoculars, fishing rod, snowshoes)

☐ 1% Visited the gift shop or bookstore

☐ 4% Other (*specify*) See Appendix C

6. How much time did you spend **at this refuge** during your most recent visit?

If you spent less than one day at this refuge, enter the number of hours: 3 hour(s)

If you spent one day or more at this refuge, enter the number of days: 3 day(s)

7. Do you live in the local area (within 50 miles of this refuge)?

☐ 22% Yes

☐ 78% No → How much time did you spend in **the local area** on this trip?

If you spent less than one day in the local area, enter the number of hours: 5 hour(s)

If you spent one day or more in the local area, enter the number of days: 4 day(s)

8. Approximately how many hours/minutes (one-way) did you travel from your home to this refuge?

If you travelled less than one hour, enter the number of minutes: 22 minutes

If you travelled more than one hour, round to the nearest hour: 7 hours

9. Including this visit, during which seasons did you visit this refuge in the last 12 months? (*Mark all that apply.*)

☐ 19% Spring
(March-May)

☐ 99% Summer
(June-August)

☐ 16% Fall
(September-November)

☐ 12% Winter
(December-February)

10. In the last 12 months, how many times have you visited...

...this refuge (including this visit?) 4 number of visits

...other national wildlife refuges? 2 number of visits

...other public lands (for example, national or state parks) to participate in the same primary activity as this visit? 9 number of visits

11. Which, if any, of the following social media outlets did you use to share your refuge experience with other people? (*Mark all that apply.*)

<input type="checkbox"/> 38%	Facebook	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	Snapchat	<input type="checkbox"/> 2%	Personal blog (for example, Tumblr, Wordpress)
<input type="checkbox"/> 1%	Flickr	<input type="checkbox"/> 2%	Twitter	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	Travel-related website (for example, Trip Advisor)
<input type="checkbox"/> 14%	Instagram	<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	Vimeo	<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	Other (<i>specify</i>) <u>See Appendix C</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	Pinterest	<input type="checkbox"/> 1%	YouTube	<input type="checkbox"/> 51%	I do not use social media

SECTION 2. Information about this refuge and its resources

1. How helpful was each of the following sources to get information about this refuge and its resources? (*Circle one number for each source, or mark the box if you did **not** use a source.*)

Information source	For those who used a source, the % who found it to be...					Did not use
	Not at all helpful	Slightly helpful	Moderately helpful	Very helpful	Extremely helpful	
Personal knowledge from previous visit(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> 10%	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%	<input type="checkbox"/> 12%	<input type="checkbox"/> 31%	<input type="checkbox"/> 41%	<input type="checkbox"/> 40%
Word of mouth (for example, a friend or relative)	<input type="checkbox"/> 7%	<input type="checkbox"/> 9%	<input type="checkbox"/> 18%	<input type="checkbox"/> 36%	<input type="checkbox"/> 30%	<input type="checkbox"/> 43%
People in the local community near the refuge	<input type="checkbox"/> 13%	<input type="checkbox"/> 8%	<input type="checkbox"/> 21%	<input type="checkbox"/> 33%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25%	<input type="checkbox"/> 60%
Refuge employees or volunteers	<input type="checkbox"/> 2%	<input type="checkbox"/> 4%	<input type="checkbox"/> 15%	<input type="checkbox"/> 40%	<input type="checkbox"/> 39%	<input type="checkbox"/> 26%
Printed map or atlas	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 24%	<input type="checkbox"/> 36%	<input type="checkbox"/> 31%	<input type="checkbox"/> 44%
Web-based map (for example, Google Maps, Waze)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 20%	<input type="checkbox"/> 43%	<input type="checkbox"/> 30%	<input type="checkbox"/> 45%
Refuge website	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 8%	<input type="checkbox"/> 20%	<input type="checkbox"/> 38%	<input type="checkbox"/> 29%	<input type="checkbox"/> 69%
Travel website (for example, TripAdvisor)	<input type="checkbox"/> 31%	<input type="checkbox"/> 9%	<input type="checkbox"/> 13%	<input type="checkbox"/> 31%	<input type="checkbox"/> 16%	<input type="checkbox"/> 85%
Other website (<i>specify</i>) <u>See Appendix C</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 23%	<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 8%	<input type="checkbox"/> 46%	<input type="checkbox"/> 23%	<input type="checkbox"/> 92%
Social media (for example, Facebook, Instagram)	<input type="checkbox"/> 50%	<input type="checkbox"/> 17%	<input type="checkbox"/> 11%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 17%	<input type="checkbox"/> 91%
Recreation club or organization	<input type="checkbox"/> 65%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 24%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 92%
Refuge printed information (for example, brochure)	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 23%	<input type="checkbox"/> 40%	<input type="checkbox"/> 26%	<input type="checkbox"/> 56%
Kiosks/displays/exhibits at the refuge	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 4%	<input type="checkbox"/> 17%	<input type="checkbox"/> 43%	<input type="checkbox"/> 34%	<input type="checkbox"/> 26%
Travel guidebook or other book	<input type="checkbox"/> 18%	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 24%	<input type="checkbox"/> 34%	<input type="checkbox"/> 21%	<input type="checkbox"/> 82%
Tourist information or welcome center	<input type="checkbox"/> 9%	<input type="checkbox"/> 7%	<input type="checkbox"/> 22%	<input type="checkbox"/> 33%	<input type="checkbox"/> 29%	<input type="checkbox"/> 74%
Other source (<i>specify</i>) <u>See Appendix C</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 13%	<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25%	<input type="checkbox"/> 25%	<input type="checkbox"/> 38%	<input type="checkbox"/> 94%

SECTION 3. Transportation and access at this refuge

1. First rate how important each of the following transportation-related features is to you when visiting this refuge; then rate how satisfied you are with the way this refuge is managing each feature. *If this refuge does not have a specific feature or you did not experience it during this visit, please rate how important it is to you and then circle NA “Not Applicable” under the satisfaction column.*

Importance <i>Circle one for each item.</i>					Transportation-Related Features	Satisfaction <i>Circle one for each item.</i>					
Not at all Important	Slightly Important	Moderately important	Very Important	Extremely Important		Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	Not Applicable
9%	23%	42%	18%	7%	Surface conditions of refuge roads	0%	1%	8%	62%	28%	NA
11%	26%	41%	17%	5%	Surface conditions of parking areas	0%	1%	8%	63%	28%	NA
6%	12%	36%	34%	13%	Condition of bridges on roadways	0%	4%	8%	60%	28%	NA
2%	7%	27%	48%	17%	Condition of trails and boardwalks	0%	1%	4%	53%	42%	NA
70%	8%	12%	7%	3%	Condition of boat launches	8%	0%	33%	50%	8%	NA
2%	9%	30%	42%	18%	Number of places for parking	1%	7%	16%	51%	25%	NA
18%	26%	32%	16%	8%	Number of places to pull over on refuge roads	2%	4%	28%	44%	23%	NA
2%	9%	28%	36%	25%	Safety of driving conditions on refuge roads	0%	0%	8%	61%	31%	NA
3%	9%	30%	35%	24%	Safety of refuge road entrances/exits	0%	0%	6%	58%	35%	NA
3%	4%	22%	38%	33%	Safety of roads/trails for nonmotorized users (for example, bicyclists and hikers)	0%	1%	9%	53%	38%	NA
2%	9%	25%	40%	24%	Signs on highways directing you to this refuge	1%	5%	21%	48%	24%	NA
2%	8%	26%	45%	18%	Signs directing you around refuge roads	1%	4%	19%	55%	21%	NA
3%	4%	21%	46%	26%	Signs directing you on trails	1%	4%	13%	58%	25%	NA
21%	14%	26%	25%	15%	Access for people with physical disabilities or who have difficulty walking	2%	8%	23%	48%	20%	NA

2. If you have any comments about transportation-related features at this refuge, please write them here.

See Appendix C

3. What modes of transportation did you use to travel from the local area to this refuge and within this refuge during your most recent trip? (*Mark all that apply.*)

Transportation modes used to travel...	...from the local area to this refuge	...within the boundaries of this refuge
Private/rental vehicle without a trailer	89%	53%
Private/rental vehicle with a trailer (for boat, camper, or other)	3%	1%
Recreational vehicle (RV)	2%	1%
Refuge shuttle bus/tram	0%	0%
Tour bus/van	0%	0%
Public transportation	1%	0%
Motorcycle	0%	0%
Bicycle	4%	1%
Foot (for example, walking/hiking)	12%	59%
Boat	0%	0%
Other (<i>specify</i>): <u>See Appendix C</u>	0%	0%
Other (<i>specify</i>): <u>See Appendix C</u>	0%	0%

4. Please tell us how likely you would be to use each transportation option **at this refuge** if it were available in the future. Not all options are currently available at every refuge. (*Circle one number for each option.*)

Transportation options	Not at all Likely	Slightly Likely	Moderately Likely	Very Likely	Extremely Likely
Bus or tram that takes passengers to different points within refuge boundaries (such as the Visitor Center)	59%	20%	14%	5%	3%
Bus or tram that provides a guided tour of the refuge with information about this refuge and its resources	60%	19%	11%	8%	2%
Refuge-sponsored shuttle with a dedicated stop in the local community for picking up people at set times	57%	21%	15%	5%	2%
Public transit system that stops at or near this refuge	63%	18%	12%	5%	1%
Bike-share program that offers bicycles for rent on or near this refuge	49%	17%	20%	9%	5%
Pedestrian paths for access to this refuge from the local community	41%	15%	18%	14%	12%

SECTION 4. Your expenses related to your refuge visit

1. Record the amount of money that you and other members of your group spent in the local 50-mile area during your most recent visit to this refuge. Your group would include you and those with whom you shared expenses (for example, family members, traveling companions). *Enter the amount spent or enter 0 (zero) if you did not spend any money in a particular category.*

Categories	Amount spent in the local area/communities & at this refuge (within 50 miles of this refuge)
Hotel, bed & breakfast, cabin, etc.	
Camping fees (for example, tent, RV)	
Restaurants and bars	
Groceries	
Gasoline and oil (for private vehicles, boats, RVs, or other motors)	
Local transportation (for example, public transit, rental car)	See report for summary of visitor expenditures
Guides and tour fees	
Equipment rental (for example, bicycle, canoe, kayak)	
Sporting goods (for example, bait, binoculars)	
Souvenirs/clothing and other retail	
Other (specify) <u>See Appendix C</u>	

2. Including yourself, how many people in your group shared these trip expenses?
- 2 number of people sharing expenses
3. As you know, costs of travel such as gasoline, hotels, and public transportation often increase. If your total trip costs were to increase, what is the maximum extra amount you would pay and still visit this refuge? (Mark the dollar amount that represents your response.)

<input type="checkbox"/> 7% \$0	<input type="checkbox"/> 17% \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> 17% \$100	<input type="checkbox"/> 4% \$250
<input type="checkbox"/> 4% \$5	<input type="checkbox"/> 2% \$45	<input type="checkbox"/> 1% \$125	<input type="checkbox"/> 3% \$350
<input type="checkbox"/> 10% \$10	<input type="checkbox"/> 7% \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> 3% \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> 3% \$500
<input type="checkbox"/> 7% \$20	<input type="checkbox"/> 3% \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> 7% \$200	<input type="checkbox"/> 4% \$750

SECTION 5. Your experience at this refuge

1. First rate how important each of the following services, facilities, and opportunities is to you when visiting this refuge; then rate how satisfied you are with the way this refuge is managing each item. *If this refuge does not offer a specific item or you did not experience it on this visit, please rate how important it is to you and then circle NA "Not Applicable" under the satisfaction column.*

Importance <i>Circle one for each item.</i>					Refuge Services, Facilities, and Opportunities	Satisfaction <i>Circle one for each item.</i>					
Not at all Important	Slightly Important	Moderately important	Very Important	Extremely Important		Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied	Not Applicable
2%	2%	14%	48%	34%	Convenient hours/days of operation for this refuge	0%	0%	3%	50%	48%	NA
9%	21%	42%	23%	5%	Availability of employees or volunteers	0%	1%	7%	47%	45%	NA
7%	16%	28%	35%	14%	Courteous and welcoming employees or volunteers	0%	1%	5%	37%	58%	NA
2%	11%	29%	39%	19%	Signs with rules/regulations for this refuge	0%	1%	8%	54%	38%	NA
6%	21%	44%	25%	6%	Visitor center	0%	2%	16%	52%	29%	NA
0%	3%	18%	44%	34%	Well-maintained restrooms	2%	5%	16%	46%	31%	NA
9%	16%	26%	37%	13%	Recreational structures (decks, blinds, platforms)	1%	3%	10%	53%	32%	NA
9%	17%	30%	26%	17%	Bird-watching opportunities	1%	4%	14%	52%	29%	NA
1%	10%	32%	36%	20%	Opportunities to observe wildlife other than birds	2%	9%	23%	41%	25%	NA
6%	4%	27%	35%	28%	Opportunities to photograph wildlife and scenery	1%	3%	11%	46%	40%	NA
8%	16%	41%	25%	10%	Environmental education opportunities	2%	4%	25%	48%	21%	NA
94%	2%	3%	1%	1%	Hunting opportunities	25%	0%	15%	30%	30%	NA
82%	6%	7%	3%	3%	Fishing opportunities	23%	5%	18%	23%	32%	NA
0%	0%	8%	33%	58%	Trail hiking opportunities	1%	1%	9%	38%	52%	NA
24%	14%	29%	20%	13%	Bicycling opportunities	14%	7%	25%	30%	25%	NA
28%	16%	31%	18%	7%	Water trail opportunities for canoeing or kayaking	14%	14%	20%	33%	18%	NA
43%	22%	20%	11%	5%	Volunteer opportunities	4%	2%	28%	39%	28%	NA
16%	10%	28%	27%	19%	Wilderness experience opportunities	4%	4%	25%	44%	23%	NA

2. If you have comments about the services, facilities, and opportunities at this refuge, please write them here.

See Appendix C

3. How much do you disagree or agree with each statement below? (*Circle one number for each statement.*)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither	Agree	Strongly Agree
I felt welcome during my visit to this refuge.	1%	1%	1%	37%	59%
I felt safe during my visit to this refuge.	0%	0%	0%	31%	68%
Crime <u>is</u> a problem at this refuge.	58%	26%	11%	1%	3%
I feel comfortable being in nature.	0%	0%	1%	27%	72%
I do <u>not</u> like being in nature by myself.	63%	21%	9%	4%	3%
People closest to me enjoy participating in nature-based recreation.	1%	1%	6%	39%	52%
Generally, people who look like me are treated differently when they participate in nature-based recreation.	57%	17%	21%	3%	2%

4. How satisfied are you with the following? (*Circle one number for each statement.*)

	Not at all Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Very Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied
The job this refuge is doing of conserving fish, wildlife, and their habitats.	0%	0%	12%	57%	30%
The quality of the overall experience when visiting this refuge.	0%	0%	5%	51%	44%

SECTION 6. Future visits to this refuge

1. Considering **the primary activity** you participated in during your most recent visit to this refuge, please tell us how the following factors, if they occurred, could affect your future participation in that activity at this refuge. (*Circle one number for each factor.*)

If there was...	My participation in my primary activity would...		
	Decrease	Stay the same	Increase
Less water in lakes, rivers, or streams available for recreation	34%	63%	3%
More acreage open to hunting and fishing	53%	44%	3%
More infrastructure (for example, bathrooms, observation decks)	5%	80%	16%
Recreation equipment available for rent (for example, fishing rods, binoculars, snowshoes)	11%	73%	16%
Less regulations on fishing	25%	68%	7%
Less regulations on hunting	48%	48%	4%
A greater diversity of species	1%	40%	60%
Fewer numbers of a single, preferred species	16%	82%	3%
More people participating in my primary activity	36%	62%	1%
An improvement in the quality of wetlands	2%	48%	50%
An improvement in the quality of wildlife habitat other than wetlands	2%	44%	55%

2. Do you plan to return to this refuge in the next 12 months?

41% Yes 25% No 34% Not sure

3. Which of the following types of programs, if offered, would encourage you to return to this refuge in the future? (*Mark all that apply.*)

55% I do not typically participate in refuge programs

For those that do participate in refuge programs, the % that would be encouraged to return if the following programs were offered:

28% Programs that engage youth	33% Programs that focus on creative pursuits (for example, art, writing, meditation)
32% Programs that focus on family/multiple-generations	16% Programs that support people with accessibility concerns (for example, difficulty walking, in a wheelchair)
44% Programs that teach skills to visitors	8% Other (<i>specify</i>) <u>See Appendix C</u>
61% Programs that highlight unique local culture	

SECTION 7. A little about you

**** Please tell us a little bit about yourself. Your answers to these questions will help us to know more about who visits national wildlife refuges. Answers will not be linked to any individual taking this survey. ****

1. Are you? ☐ 38% Male ☐ 62% Female

2. In what year were you born? 1961 (YYYY)

3. How many years of formal schooling have you had? (Circle one number.)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20+
(elementary)					(junior high or middle school)			(high school)				(college or technical school)				(graduate or professional school)			
					<input type="checkbox"/> 0%			<input type="checkbox"/> 5%				<input type="checkbox"/> 41%				<input type="checkbox"/> 54%			

4. What race or ethnicity do you consider yourself? (Mark all that apply.)

<input type="checkbox"/> 95% White	<input type="checkbox"/> 0% American Indian or Alaska Native
<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/> 0% Middle Eastern or North African
<input type="checkbox"/> 1% Black or African American	<input type="checkbox"/> 0% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
<input type="checkbox"/> 3% Asian	<input type="checkbox"/> 1% Some other race or ethnicity

5. How many people (including yourself) live in your household? 2 persons

6. What was your approximate household income from all sources (before taxes) last year? (Mark only one.)

<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Less than \$10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 6% \$35,000 - \$49,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 28% \$100,000 - \$149,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 4% \$10,000 - \$24,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 16% \$50,000 - \$74,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 12% \$150,000 - \$199,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 2% \$25,000 - \$34,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 15% \$75,000 - \$99,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 14% \$200,000 or more

7. Which of the following best describes your current employment situation? (Mark only one.)

<input type="checkbox"/> 30% Employed full-time	<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/> 39% Retired
<input type="checkbox"/> 10% Employed part-time	<input type="checkbox"/> 4% Homemaker/caregiver	<input type="checkbox"/> 1% Disabled/unable to work
<input type="checkbox"/> 9% Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Student	<input type="checkbox"/> 2% Other (specify): <u>See Appendix C</u>

Thank you for completing the survey.

There is space on the next page for any additional comments you may have regarding your visit to this refuge.

Comments?

See Appendix C

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: The Paperwork Reduction Act requires us to tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether or not you have to respond. The information that we collect in this survey will help us understand visitor satisfaction with and use of national wildlife refuges and to inform management and policy decisions. Your response is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. We estimate it will take an average of 25 minutes to complete this survey. You may send comments concerning the burden estimate or any aspect of the survey to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, MS 222-ARLSQ, Arlington, VA 22203. OMB CONTROL # 0596-0236 EXPIRATION DATE 11/30/2020

Appendix C: Open-Ended Survey Responses by Question

Survey Section 1

Question 1: “Including your most recent visit, which activities did you participate in during the past 12 months at this refuge?”

Special Event	Frequency
Geological talk - bluff erosion	2
Rock talk	1

Other Activity	Frequency
Beach	2
Beach/water/mud play for grandchildren	1
Beautiful environment	1
Camping	1
Meditation	1
Picked up trash	1
Playing on the beach with my kid	1
Plein air painting	1
Sea glass hunting	1
See, hear, and feel waves	1
Showing visitors the area	1
Swimming	1
Visited the Dungeness Lighthouse	1
Yearly visit - children playing	1

Question 2: “Which of the activities above was the primary purpose of your most recent visit to this refuge?”

Primary Activity	Frequency
Auto tour route/driving	1
Beach activity	2
Bird watching	7
Camping	1
Environmental education	2
Exercising	1
Hiking	159
Interpretation	2
Nature observation	2
Other	2
Photography	4
Picnicking	2
Sightseeing	4
Special event	3
Visiting the lighthouse	3
Wildlife observation	17

Question 3: “Did you go to a visitor center at this refuge during your most recent visit?”; If Yes, “What did you do there?”

Other Visitor Center Activity	Frequency
Also ate a home brought lunch at the picnic tables	1
Donated to the refuge	1
Looked out from the top of the lighthouse	1
Went with a friend who volunteers there	1

Survey Section 2

Question 1. “How helpful was each of the following sources to get information about this refuge and its resources?”

Other Websites	Frequency
Bing	1
Google	2
Tide tables	1
Unable to recall birding information websites	1
Unknown	1
WTA.org	2

Other Information Sources	Frequency
AAA	1
eBird	1
Map of the area	1
Maps	1
Newspaper	1
Refuge signs	1
USNWR map	1

Survey Section 4

Question 1: “Record the amount of money that you and other members of your group spent in the local 50-mile area during your most recent visit to this refuge. Your group would include you and those with whom you shared expenses (for example, family members, traveling companions).”

Other Expenses	Frequency
Annual refuge entrance pass	1
Blueberry picking	1
Ferry	3
Ferry to Victoria	1
Refuge entrance fee	1

Survey Section 6

Question 3: “Which of the following types of programs, if offered, would encourage you to return to this refuge in the future?”

Other Programs	Frequency
Bird-related programs	1
Hiking-related programs	1
Local history programs	2
Nature-related programs	2
Wildlife-related programs	1

Survey Section 7

Question 7: “Which of the following best describes your current employment situation?”

Other Employment	Frequency
Looking for a part-time job	1
Volunteer	1

Survey Section 3

Question 2: "If you have any comments about transportation-related features at this refuge, please write them here."

Comments on Transportation-Related Features at This Refuge (n=19)

All such sights should have RV turnaround and RV parking. It is a deterrent if such is not noted, not available or too small. When RV'ing, a huge concern is parking and turning around. We don't want to get stuck! The trail at the bottom of the cliff splits, with no signage.

I enjoy that there is a primitive trail and paved trail. I think that people with physical limitations probably cannot make it down a steep hill. I think they could make it to platforms with telescopes. The hill can be difficult with a stroller in one area because the rocks are quite loose. I think there is limited parking but that is helpful for limiting the amount of people/traffic in the refuge, since it is for wildlife.

I had to park quite a way up the road, but at least there was parking there.

I have been at this place at least 10 times over the last 30 years, love the view and the wildlife and the hike.

I know it's a refuge and therefore needs to be less developed but the road into the refuge should be a little wider. I wish the service vehicles, which run out to the spit, could use a clean fuel rather than gas.

It's a beautiful place and deserves protection and preservation.

Need more parking - the number of spots available could be increased just by re-marking the parking lot as it currently exists. There is currently a lot of wasted space that is not being utilized for parking.

Not enough parking by a long shot. If the trail was wider, couple could pass, going in opposite directions.

Parking lots were full at 10:00 am!

Some places need road repair. Some places the roads are closed.

Some walking trails and stopping places for cars must be continuously repaired and their signage updated because of the cliff erosion of the park's border on the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Some of these often have to be closed. Too bad but necessary.

Speed bumps are always a good idea to keep traffic slowed down.

The refuge is beautiful, and we appreciated the kindness and professionalism of volunteers and staff. Thank you for seeking our feedback.

There are a number of people driving in and out of the "county park" adjacent to the preserve. This area is world class and underused comparatively.

This refuge was on the sand, so it was a more challenging walk.

Very easy to find parking! I was surprised, especially on a summer weekend.

Visited only one area of this refuge. Do not know the condition in other areas.

We made our first-ever and then our second visits to the refuge in the same week. Very easy to find (signs) and very easy to drive to.

We travelled from Massachusetts and enjoyed the visit as part of our trip to the area of the Olympic National Park.

Survey Section 5

Question 2: "If you have comments about these services, facilities, and opportunities at this refuge, please write them here."

Comments on Services, Facilities, and Opportunities at This Refuge (n=37)

Amaze balls.

Beautiful refuge.

Better than expected.

Could use a nicer restroom. I feel that very few of the volunteers ever leave the visitor's center and go into the refuge.

Day use area only has one restroom near the small parking lot. Both could be enlarged to support the number of people visiting at peak periods.

Due to bluff erosion, the trails (foot paths) are continually undergoing redirection, some thought should be considered to wind through the foliage and not just make it a straight shot foot path. More benches, lookouts, picnic tables for day use should be installed.

Dungeness NWR is an amazing, unique place which we visit every summer on our annual trip to Sequim. We love it and it deserves all the support it can get.

Friendly staff. Small visitor's center but really liked the educational component with local artifacts and animal remains (skeletons, skulls, teeth).

Had a ranger take me and others on a 1.5-mile hike to show and tell a shorebird nest with an egg in it. Super!!

Have been here many years before. A convenient place to walk and enjoy scenery on the way between Port Angeles and Pt. Townsend.

I belong to Daughters of the American Revolution and was looking for conservation material-pamphlets etc. Your staff was very helpful.

I thought it was strange that the volunteers were chastising the visitors about using driftwood as walking sticks. It was the only negative part of our experience. Also, we have a National Parks Pass but weren't informed that we needed to present it at the beginning of the trail. They need someone or a sign as you enter that there is a charge to hike there.

I was very pleased with the employees; they were knowledgeable and helpful and courteous. I was very happy that the fee was not too expensive. I thought everything was well maintained. Good job!

I wish the folks asking for us to participate in this survey knew more about the refuge. They were soliciting names/addresses. They did not know too much about the site.

Men's restroom toilet was clogged and had low flush pressure.

Men's restroom was closed, had to use the Sani-Kan. Ladies' restroom was not the cleanest and not up to date.

Restrooms need improvement. Waited until I found a Starbucks.

Restrooms need improvements. Not enough stalls during busy times/not cleaned frequently. Seats provide poor body mechanics. Please install 'squatty potty', as are common outside of us. Many international visitors frequent this refuge.

Signs for major languages providing information regarding wildlife - i.e. "please do not approach or feed wildlife" in multiple languages.

Spent several hours here and did not see any wildlife at all. Many of the areas were restricted or off limits to visitors.

The bathroom could use an upgrade and an additional stall.

The degradation of items in the environment was a very powerful display. We have stopped using one-use plastic plates, glasses and plasticware because of it.

The hardest part was figuring out if we had to pay a parking fee (we had an America Beautiful Pass) and the volunteers at the "visitor's center" (if that is what it was) were very helpful.

The restroom facilities are operated by the adjoining county park. They are definitely inadequate and need a serious upgrade, as in complete replacement of the building. That is the one big drawback of this premium wildlife refuge area, the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge.

The volunteers are very helpful, trails and restrooms are well-maintained.

The volunteers at the refuge are great!! Very friendly, helpful and informative, and it is good to see how much they care about this special place and about environmental issues generally.

This facility is well-designed and maintained at a high level. Easy access to "the spit" and adjacent lands.

This is a beautiful gem and I loved visiting! The info about decomposing each type of material was great.

This is a unique refuge. There is camping and walking to the spit and along spit. Protected environment so can't step on.

This is one of our favorite local hikes and beach walks, its available all year, every season to enjoy.

Trail is in good shape. Places to stop and view, take photographs, rest.

Very clean, nice and accommodating volunteers, very peaceful area.

Volunteers were helpful and full of information. Sign regarding campground fees and refuge fees was confusing.

We learn of programs through the local newspaper. If a program is not listed there, we probably miss it.

We saw a park ranger picking up trash along the beach, about 2 miles into the hike. There should not be any trash in the first place, but her effort to keep the refuge clean was appreciated.

We used Google Maps to locate the Dungeness Spit. Initially, the maps took us to another location, not the official refuge.

Well run so far.

Wonderful place... It is my refuge from the busy world.

End of Survey

General Comments (n=43)

Beautiful area. Would like to come again.

Being a wildlife refuge, I would have like to have seen more wildlife. We only saw a few birds, no animals of any kind. Other than that, that was a really nice park. We were visiting from Texas and really enjoyed our time hiking this park, no walking on the beach.

Conservation, conservation...conservation!

Didn't see any wildlife. Very disappointed.

Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge is a great place. Protect it and keep human impact to a minimum.

Dungeness Refuge was not a primary destination but a welcome one. We live in Chicago and a 1-day trip was to Olympic Peninsula and Victoria. Guidebooks and local brochures led us to the refuge.

During my undergrad years I volunteered at a wildlife refuge. The work you are doing is important. We need these ecosystems and habitats to be healthy and vibrant.

Friends and family vacation. Son lives close by. Rented cabin. Ate meals at cabin. Visited other national parks same time. Boated. Some members catch fish and crabs. Enjoyed view of parks and refuge.

Going to the refuge is a pure pleasure as it is, and I hope that it stays simple and beautiful. Making it more accessible for people with disabilities would be wonderful, but not adding amenities to rent equipment etc. The wildlife refuge needs to stay wild and not commercial. Thank you for the opportunity.

Good luck!

Hope to walk all the way to the lighthouse next time!

I am over 60. Thrilled to be able to hike here again after 2 years of decreased activity due to knee issues. I found the question regarding 'people who look like me' to be too vague. Treated differently by the staff? Other visitors? At the refuge? In the local area? I feel comfortable here because I have been to this location many times. Thank you for doing this important work that maintains and improves access to nature. Contact with nature is so important for health and well-being. Access to areas, such as this wildlife refuge, allows one to experience the fullest experience of being in nature which thereby provides the greatest benefits.

I preferred the trail as it was for many years. This trail seemed too much like a wide hard surface path. I understand that this is necessary for people with disabilities though navigating the hill at the end must still be challenging and the beach does not lend itself to wheelchairs, etc.

It was beautiful! We will definitely be back for a much longer stay.

Love the refuge.

Love the Spit!!!!

Loved it and will go back often as we plan on living in the area on a part-time basis.

My husband and I enjoy visiting the refuge, 'our neighborhood park.' It's great for fresh, natural air, exposure to wildlife and beautiful scenery, and well maintained, and also an important place to get much needed exercise. These kinds of places are becoming fewer, so the refuge is a sacred and special, well, refuge from an otherwise hectic life. We hope you don't offer more activities that will degrade the natural environment. Thank you for allowing me to comment.

My husband and I traveled to Washington on our honeymoon. While we were there, we really enjoyed our visit to the refuge and lighthouse. We would definitely do it again. Great eagle sighting location :)

Not one person welcomed us or even acknowledged us, until we were leaving, and a guy asked us if we'd do a survey.

Only comment would be that a sign could be posted as to the total mileage from beginning out to the lighthouse and to put up mile markers, so people know how far they have gone or still have to go. Other than that, it is beautiful.

Please keep the refuge itself as unspoiled and undeveloped as possible. If infrastructure must be added, add it to the entrance or park area so that the experience of being in a wild place can be preserved. Thank you.

Really enjoyed our visit, just wish we had had more time than we did.

Thank all of you for your continued efforts to keep our wildlife refuges so enjoyable to visitors, with the foremost focus being on the safety and preservation of the animals and environment. [name]

Thank you for caring.

Thank you for conducting this important survey. I feel very committed to the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge as it is one of the premier places to visit in this area.

Thank you for continuing to make the outdoors available to people who are not rich, not hunters, and/or not the powerful. It is important to keep these lands public and open to people who just want to enjoy nature and wildlife.

Thank you for doing the survey. We had a great time at the park. Met very nice and knowledgeable rangers.

Thank you for maintaining this beautiful place and managing it for the benefit of the public.

Thanks for protecting the beautiful Dungeness Spit and other wild and scenic areas! Keep up the good work!

Thanks!

The refuge had a beautifully kept main trail. Thanks to whoever maintains it. And thanks for conducting this carefully conceived visitor survey.

The road into the refuge could be a little wider, the restroom could be better maintained, only during summer is there a need for more parking and finally clean fuel service vehicles. The staff is very friendly and helpful. I have a National Park Pass and I am a senior and I wish I didn't have to fill out an envelope every time I entered the refuge.

This is a great camping, hiking, site seeing venue. You happen upon the cliff view of the Spit by careful design. I terrifically recommend the experience.

This is a wonderful example of putting natural features on display. This refuge was clean; the park employees were friendly and helpful, and the experience could not have been better.

This is such a beautiful refuge and we love to visit the area at least once a year since we have family who live nearby.

Very nice trails and visitor center. The staff was very helpful and informative.

Very well staffed and enjoyable!

Visited this and many other NWRs as part of a 9,200-mile trip from PA. Visited more out of curiosity than birding since visited in summer. Generally - the more bird species, I think, viewing towers, benches the more likely I am to return. Generally, (this is most other NWR's) the bigger problem is signage on roads to a smaller NWR, i.e. where it is located and how to get there. The biggest help for me is a USFWS map of the NWRs through the country. But this map shows the NWR is in the NW corner of a state and gives mailing address - both of little help when driving past an NWR and would like to check it out.

Was lovely to visit this area of the country on our recent visit to the states, hope to return one day.

We have a wheelchair bound 13-year old, I'd love to see some sort of beach access planking mat so wheelchairs (and also strollers) could get onto the beach if only for a limited distance...

We have fought since we moved to Sequim to ban hunting at this refuge - as it sent a bad message - refuge? Also increased use and walking paths made it very unsafe. There has been an increase in bluff erosion and some bluff trails have been redirected for safety, that is understandable, but there has been no thought put into these new paths, no winding, or interesting scenery - just a straight foot path - very boring. There has been increased discussion on taking out more woodlands to increase RV camping sites. I think that should be left alone, and not increased, this is what makes it so desirable - it will lose the ambiance and become a Walmart parking lot. I would hate to see this happen. Enhancing those woodlands, horse and foot trails would be greater money spent. Thank you!

We support wildlife efforts 100%.

We were very impressed with Dungeness NWR and hope to return to this NWR if we are back in the area. 5 stars, 10/10, A+. Keep up the good work :)