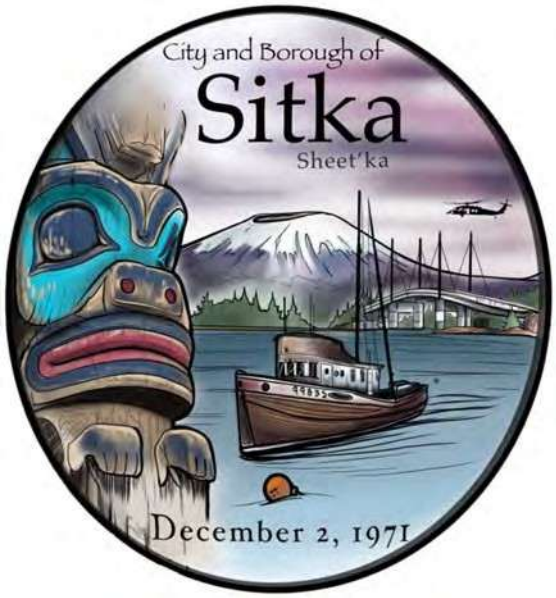


CITY & BOROUGH OF SITKA

DRAFT 2027 COMMERCIAL LAND USE PLAN

Parks & Recreation Committee Recommendation for Approval

November 10, 2026

Assembly Adoption

(Planned) November 24, 2026

COMMERCIAL RECREATIONAL LAND USE PLAN

2027 CHANGE HIGHLIGHTS

SURVEY FEEDBACK

Results from the 2026 survey revealed a generally favorable level of satisfaction regarding the current use plan's effectiveness in managing most commercial and public recreation.

SEAWALK AND DOWNTOWN SIDEWALKS

AREAS

Seawalk and sidewalks to popular sites along Lincoln, Seward, Observatory, and Katlian Streets.

LEVELS OF SERVICE

Target level of service is medium to high density when considering tour operator and simultaneous public use

TAKATZ BAY

Takatz Bay was permitted in 2026 under special consideration by the P&R Committee, the 2027 Land Use Plan aligns directly with USFS group size guidelines.



WATER USES

Increased allowable group size limits for human powered craft and guides at Herring Cove Beach, Blue Lake and Green Lake.



WHALE PARK PERMIT

TOUR OPERATOR FLAT FEE PERMIT

Commercial Tour Operators utilizing Whale Park as a point of interest or restroom stop will be assessed a flat-rate fee. This fee is intended to help offset ongoing custodial and maintenance costs for the facilities.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PERMITTABLE COMMERCIAL USE

Asset	Commercial Carrying Capacity		Special Guidance**	Special Conditions***	Fees	
	Max Group Size*	Max Groups per Week			Annual Minimum	Additional Fees
Cross Trail North	12	26	• Hours of Use • Weekends	• Bike & e-bike limitations • Vehicle parking • Proof of additional authorization	$400	$5/client
Cross Trail South	8	23	• Hours of Use • Weekends	• Bikes & e-bikes • Vehicle parking		
Sea Walk/ Downtown Sidewalks	12	-	• Residential area privacy	• Bike & e-bike not authorized • No amplification		
Gavan Hill Trail Access	7	19	• Hours of Use	• Bikes & e-bikes • Vehicle parking • Proof of additional authorization		
Indian River Trail	7	23	• Hours of Use	• Bikes & e-bikes • Vehicle parking • Proof of additional authorization		
Thimbleberry Lake/Heart Lake Trail	14	24	• Hours of Use	• Bikes & e-bikes • Proof of additional authorization		
Herring Cove/Beaver Lake Trail	7	18	• Hours of Use	• Vehicle parking • Proof of additional authorization		
Medvejie Trail & Lake	6	16	• Hours of Use	• Bikes & e-bikes • Proof of additional authorization		
Herring Cove Beach	12/6	24	• Hours of Use	• Human-powered craft group size 12 • Powered watercraft group size 6		
Blue Lake (Road/Lake)	8/12	25/20		• No Fuel-powered watercraft • No Commercial Jet Ski Use		
Green Lake (Road/Lake)	8/6	26/20		• No Commercial Jet Ski Use		
Swan Lake	6	16	• Hours of Use	• Vehicle parking		
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach")	6	18	• Hours of Use			
Sitka Sound Islands	6	18				
Baranof Warm Springs	6	18	• Hours of Use • Stakeholder meeting	• Bathing instruction • Guide restriction		$10/client
Takatz Bay	20	9	• USFS BMPA †			
Goddard Hot Springs	6††	††	• Weekends	• Groups allowed per week varies with use type and seasonality		
Whale Park	14	-	• Hours of Use			$300/year

*All maximum group sizes are based on recommended client number, not including guide(s) e.g. Baranof Warm Springs maximum group size six (6) equates to six (6) clients plus one (1) guide.

**Special Guidance includes preferred/best practices for permittees conducting activity on a particular asset. See Use Plan Section III for a special guidance overview, and the Permittable Commercial Use for each asset for applicable special guidance provisions.

***Special Conditions are additional conditions of approval associated with commercial recreational use at a particular asset. See Use Plan Section IV for a special conditions overview, and the Permittable Commercial Use for each asset for applicable special conditions.

† Reference: USFS Outfitter/Guide Best Management Practices Agreement (BMPA)
https://www.fs.usda.gov/r10/tongass/projects/outfitter-guide-best-management-practices-agreement-bmpa
Best Management Practices Agreement for Hunting Season Operations on the Tongass National Forest
https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/nfs/files/r10/tongass/publication/2025BMPAgreement20250515.pdf

††Goddard Hot Springs allowed commercial use: Water taxi services (point to point drop off and pick up only) and human powered watercraft outfitter/guides (kayak, canoe, SUP) allowed during peak season. More expansive use allowed in shoulder seasons.

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Term / Abbreviation / Acronym	Definition
Bikes	A wheeled vehicle that is propelled by human power, typically through pedals.
Carrying Capacity	The maximum number of visitors a site can accommodate without causing unacceptable environmental degradation or social conflict
CBS	City and Borough of Sitka
Commercial Recreational Land Use	Offering commercial guiding, outfitting, and transportation services on City and Borough of Sitka recreational assets. Fully defined in Sitka General Code 14.10.
Commercial Use Groups	Groups of people who are paying to use recreational assets.
Conditions of Approval	Requirements that must be complied with to operate under a permit.
Cross Trail North	The section of the Sitka Cross Trail that spans from Starrigavan to Kramer Avenue North.
Cross Trail South	The section of the Sitka Cross Trail that spans from Kramer Avenue South to Indian River Trail.
DNR	State of Alaska Department of Natural Resources
E-Bikes	A bicycle equipped with an electric motor that assists the rider's pedaling or propels the bike independently.
Guiding	Providing services or assistance (such as supervision, protection, education, training, packing, touring, transporting people of interpretation) for monetary or other gain to individuals or groups on municipal lands.
Human-Powered Watercraft	A non-motorized watercraft propelled solely by manual physical effort, including canoes, kayaks, and stand-up paddleboards (SUPs).
Maximum Group Size	The maximum number of people allowed in a commercial use group for each asset. The maximum group size includes only clients, not guides.
Maximum Groups Per Week	The maximum total number of commercial client groups allowed per week for each asset.
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
Outfitting	Renting on or delivering to municipal lands for monetary or other gain any vehicle, bicycle, e-bike, boat, kayak, canoe (motorized or human-powered), camping gear, or other similar supplies or equipment.
Permittee or permit holder	The business entity or its authorized representative conducting commercial activities in a recreation area according to a permit issued under these regulations.
Recreation assets	A City and Borough of Sitka owned/ managed recreational area such as trails, parks, beaches, lakes, roads, docks, boardwalks, bathhouses, etc.
SGC	Sitka General Code
Sitka Sound Islands	City-owned islands in Sitka Sound
Special Conditions	Conditions that apply to permits issued for particular assets.
Special Guidance	Guidance that should be largely adhered to, but with understanding there is accommodation and flexibility for unforeseen circumstances.
Standard Conditions	Conditions that apply to all permits and all assets.
Trail	Footpaths, bridle paths, bicycle paths, ski trails, dog sled trails, motorized vehicle trails, a road or street that is open to public and used as a trail and other paths and trails along highways, streets, roads or boardwalks maintained by the City and Borough of Sitka.
Use Plan	Commercial Recreational Land Use Plan
USFS	United States Forest Service
Water Taxi	An inspected or uninspected passenger vessel used to transport passengers to on-demand or point-to-point destinations in exchange for compensation, including cash, shared fuel costs, or indirect contributions.
Wilderness	(U.S. Wilderness Act of 1964) an area "untrammeled by man“ - meaning unhindered and uncontrolled by human action - that retains its primeval character and offers opportunities for solitude or primitive, human-powered recreation.

I. Introduction

The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) recognizes the significant role that recreational activities play in the community's well-being and quality of life, as well as the visitor industry. To ensure sustainable and equitable management of recreational resources, this Commercial Recreational Land Use Plan ("Use Plan") aims to establish a comprehensive framework for permitting and managing commercial recreational activities on and in CBS lands and facilities.

A. Background

Sitka has experienced a surge in its visitor industry, resulting in increased demand for commercial recreational activities. Addressing the growth and complexities of modern recreational use—particularly concerning capacity limits, types of use allowed, mitigation of negative environmental impacts, and user experience—it is important for CBS and the community to build management tools for overall use.

As outlined in SGC 14.10, commercial recreational users of all municipal lands, facilities, and trails (together, "recreation assets"), as well as joint-jurisdiction recreation assets, must apply for a permit. The Parks and Recreation Committee is charged with developing, maintaining, and recommending for adoption, a Use Plan that identifies recreation assets at which commercial recreational use may be permitted. The Use Plan may also contain limitations on commercial recreational use at each recreational site or facility including but not limited to hours of operation, use of recreational equipment, size and number of client groups, etc.

B. Goals and Objectives

1) Prioritize Community Quality of Life
   a) Management practices match the community's desired level and type of commercial use.
   b) Facilitate robust community input and engagement in the continued development of the Use Plan.

2) Protect Natural and Cultural Resources
   a) Minimize negative impacts on sensitive ecosystems and cultural sites.
   b) Promote responsible and sustainable recreational practices.

3) Balance Competing Uses
   a) Accommodate diverse recreational interests.
   b) Manage conflicts between commercial and non-commercial users.

4) Visitor Industry Considerations
   a) Provide high-quality recreational opportunities.
   b) Provide sufficient business opportunities for commercial operators while adhering to community-desired capacity restrictions.
   c) Ensure safe and enjoyable experiences for all users.

C. Key Components of the Use Plan

1) Inventory and Assessment of Recreational Assets
   a) Develop a comprehensive inventory of CBS recreational lands and facilities.
   b) Collect public comment to assess desired levels and types of use.
   c) Assess each asset's carrying capacity and desired allowance of use.
   d) Identify potential conflicts and opportunities for improvement.

2) Permitting Process
   a) Develop clear and concise permit application guidelines.
   b) Establish standardized permit conditions, including fees and operational standards.
   c) Base permit issuance on the community input for carrying capacities and other management practices.
   d) Create a transparent and efficient review process.

3) Monitoring and Enforcement
   a) Monitor compliance with permit conditions and regulations. For 2027, explore opportunities to utilize the TBMP Concern Hotline to direct citizen concerns and inquiries (https://www.tbmpsitka.com/submitconcern).
   b) Enforce regulations through education, warnings, and, if necessary, penalties.
   c) Collect data on recreational use patterns and impacts.

4) Public Involvement and Education
   a) Annually engage with stakeholders, including commercial operators, recreational users, and community members, to gather input for future planning and revisions to Use Plan.
   b) Develop educational materials and outreach programs to promote responsible recreational practices.

5) Adaptive Management
   a) Regularly review and update the Use Plan to reflect changing conditions and needs.
   b) Implement a flexible and adaptive approach to management.

Through adoption of the Use Plan, a comprehensive and adaptive approach to commercial recreational land use, CBS can ensure the long-term sustainability of its valuable recreational resources while supporting the local economy and enhancing resident and visitor experiences.

II. Determining Carrying Capacity

A. General Approach

In the context of commercial recreational land use, carrying capacity is the maximum number of visitors a site can accommodate without causing unacceptable environmental degradation or social conflict.

Considerations to determine carrying capacity generally include physical characteristics such as unique geological features, terrain and natural resource constraints, and supporting infrastructure. Additionally, non-physical elements such as community preferences in the level of activity combined with the interest and demand of the visitor industry are critical in determining carrying capacity.

To determine the carrying capacity of each recreational asset, CBS studied current levels of trail use through deployed trail counters and mobile analytic data, and also reviewed past permitting data. Community preferences were collected through a public survey, in-person meetings and discussions, and testimony received at Parks and Recreation Committee meetings during permit hearings in 2024. Specific stakeholders including the Parks and Recreation Committee, USFS, DNR and permit holders were also engaged. The *USFS Commercial Use Allocation on Sitka Area Trails and Roads Environmental Assessment* (2019) was also a key data source used. Additionally, CBS staff knowledge of trail conditions, traffic flows, use patterns, visitor industry trends, and existing infrastructure was leveraged in the analysis.

B. Seawalk and Downtown Sidewalks

Determination of group size for downtown sidewalks and Seawalk were derived from the Levels of Service (LOS) standards for sidewalk capacity from the *Journal of Engineering Research and Studies* (included in appendices). The core rationale is to quantify pedestrian comfort, safety, and mobility based on the relationship between available space and pedestrian flow rates. Recognizing the intent of this area, management provisions do not aim to constrain visitation to the area but rather improve congestion and flow through size management of concentrated, guided groups.

LOS standards for sidewalks range from level A, the highest level of service, to Level F. Analysis conducted in Sitka's Short-Term Tourism Plan and staff analysis put current LOS for the Seawalk as Level C on lighter visitor days, drifting to Level D on busy days. Current LOS for other downtown sidewalks is typically a Level D throughout the visitor season with slippage to Level E on the largest visitor days and within particularly constrained sidewalk sections.

As several operators who utilize these assets will take clients on both the Seawalk and downtown sidewalks, it was most practical to assign one maximum group size to the entire area. However, it is notable that the Seawalk is wider than most downtown sidewalks and, correspondingly, recent community survey results favor larger group sizes for this asset. The recommended maximum group size of 12 maintains a LOS D rating for the Seawalk, and E for downtown sidewalks.

In this Use Plan, commercial carrying capacity has two primary components:

1) **Maximum Group Size**: The maximum number of people allowed in a commercial use group for each asset. The maximum group size includes only clients, not guides.
2) **Maximum Groups per Week**: The maximum total number of commercial client groups allowed per week for each asset. Some assets are not assigned a maximum group per week.

III. Special Guidance

Special guidance may be issued for certain assets. Special guidance is used for defining preferred or best practices that include the following circumstances:

- May be more general in nature rather than specific and enforceable like a condition of approval.
- Should be adhered to as much as possible with the understanding that there is flexibility for unforeseen circumstances.

The following contains anticipated types of special guidance, though more may be applied on a case-by-case basis:

1) Hours of Use: Assets may have preferred hours of use for commercial purposes. Permittees should schedule activities accordingly with the understanding that unexpected issues (e.g. a delayed cruise ship arrival, a guest group moving slower than anticipated) might warrant deviation from preferred hours of use.
2) Weekends: Assets may have a preference for weekday, rather than weekend, commercial use. Permittees should schedule activities accordingly with the understanding that unexpected issues (e.g. accommodating a week-of tour rebooking, closure of another asset that would usually allow weekend use) could warrant deviation from non-weekend use.

While limited and infrequent deviations from special guidance are permissible, reports of permittees frequently/regularly operating outside of special guidance provisions may be grounds for indefinite permit suspension and/or permit denial in the future year in accordance with SGC 14.10.

IV. Conditions of Approval

A. Standard Conditions

The following operating requirements apply to activities conducted under all permits unless otherwise specified in an issued permit:

1) No one may litter, obstruct traffic, use glass containers; disturb, damage, deface or remove natural objects including trees, plants, animals, moss, rock, shells, gravel, or minerals; disturb or remove cultural, archaeological, or historical material.
2) Activities conducted under the permit shall be confined to the area stipulated in the permit application except as required for safety reasons.
3) No alterations or improvements to the permitted area are allowed, nor may anything be posted or signs of any kind be installed in the area unless expressly allowed by written permission of CBS.
4) No one may fish or hunt under this permit unless expressly allowed by the written permission of the municipality. No one may harass wildlife. Camping or lighting fires may be permitted in designated areas or in areas stipulated in the permit application and subject to approval of the municipality.
5) The Permit Holder shall promptly notify the municipality of any accident, injury, or claim relating to the permitted activity.

6) The Permit Holder shall promptly notify the municipality of any repair or maintenance needed in the permitted area, or any natural condition which constitutes a hazard.
7) Permit holders shall comply with all state, federal, and local laws applicable to their activities.
8) All use will incorporate “Leave No Trace” practices into all activities in accordance with the Appendix D: Leave No Trace document.
9) The permit holder shall reimburse CBS for any damage to municipal property caused by the permit holder while engaged in permit activities, including the cost of litter abatement, removal of structures or remediation of the site to its original condition.
10) No pets shall accompany any person engaged in permit activities unless the pet is restrained on a leash and all fecal material is promptly removed and properly disposed.
11) No equipment or supplies may be stored at any municipal facility or permit area unless written approval by the municipality is secured in advance.
12) All vehicles under the ownership or control of the permit holder shall be lawfully operated or legally parked while the permit holder is engaged in permit activities. The permit holder shall be responsible for following all parking restrictions and requirements imposed by permit conditions.
13) Deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6-8 inches deep at least 200 feet from water, camp, and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished. Bury toilet paper deep in a cathole or pack the toilet paper out along with hygiene products.
14) Permit holders utilizing assets that carry special guidance provisions under the Commercial Recreational Land Use Plan are expected to adhere to said special guidance. While limited, infrequent deviations from special guidance are permissible, reports of permittees frequently or regularly operating outside of special guidance provisions may be grounds for indefinite permit suspension and/or permit denial in the future year in accordance with SGC 14.10.

B. Special Conditions

Particular assets may also carry special conditions. The following list contains anticipated types of special conditions, though more may be applied on a case-by-case basis or listed in each asset’s permittable commercial use as found later in this plan:

1) Bikes & E-Bikes Limitations: Assets may have limitations regarding commercial recreational bike/e-bike use including only allowing guided bike and/or e-bike use, or not allowing any commercial bike and/or e-bike use.
2) Vehicle Parking: Assets may have limitations regarding which parking lots, if any, can be used.
3) Land Ownership and Access: Land ownership can often be mixed. It is the responsibility of the permit holder to determine ownership and obtain proper authorization for use of private, native, and/or other government-held lands. For assets with joint jurisdiction and/or property ownership, proof of authorization from other agencies or property owners must be provided before the permit can be utilized.
4) Areas of Authorized Use: The City and Borough of Sitka only authorizes use on CBS lands. The permit holder must understand where they are authorized to take clients under the terms of their permit.
5) Stakeholder Meeting: Assets with sensitive uses and/or CBS maintenance agreements may require permittee participation in a pre-season stakeholder meeting.
6) Bathing Instruction: Baranof Warm Springs and Goddard Hot Springs require permittees to submit with their application a copy of instructional bathing etiquette that will be provided to all guests. This bathing etiquette will address food and drink use, soaking times, where to wait when tubs or springs are full, and any other considerations the permittee deems appropriate.

V. Plan Use for Permit Issuance

In accordance with SGC 14.10, commercial recreational use permits will be issued in accordance with this Plan, adhering to the permittable commercial use provisions for each asset. Group sizes under issued permits shall not be larger than the maximum group sizes, and the total use for each asset across all issued permits shall not exceed the maximum groups per week. Standard conditions of approval will be applied to all permits, and any asset-specific special guidance and/or conditions will also be applied accordingly. Exceptions may be granted if Use Plan permitted commercial use is in conflict with permit provisions as issued by other agencies for joint-jurisdictional assets if the applicant can demonstrate that: they have an existing, valid permit from other joint-jurisdictional agencies that was issued in 2025 or earlier, that adhering to Use Plan permitted commercial use limitations would present a significant financial and/or administrative burden, and the joint- jurisdictional agency confirms that the permit holder is in good standing.

In cases where the total requested amount of commercial use for an asset exceeds Use Plan permittable commercial use, CBS staff will use the following methods to make final determinations:

- Negotiate with applicants to come to a consensus decision wherever possible
- Consider available alternatives for applicants (i.e. those that can or cannot easily utilize other assets instead)
- Honoring established/historic use
- Providing opportunities for new businesses
- Membership and standing in the Sitka Tourism Best Management Practices (TBMP) program, additional information for which can be found at https://www.tbmpsitka.com/

For requests to use any CBS recreational assets that are not included in the Use Plan, the Parks and Recreation Committee will review the application and make recommendations to CBS staff on permit issuance.

VI. Asset Profiles and Permittable Commercial Use

As follows, pages 6-41, grouped together as; Trail Assets, Water Access, Special Use Areas, Flat Fee Permit Area. Each asset profile contains considerations, description, 5 year estimated levels of use and historical use data. Permittable commercial use includes findings from carrying capacity analysis, recommended commercial carrying capacity, permitted special guidance and special conditions to be administered with each permit application.

Cross Trail: Kramer Avenue North to Starrigavan



CONSIDERATIONS

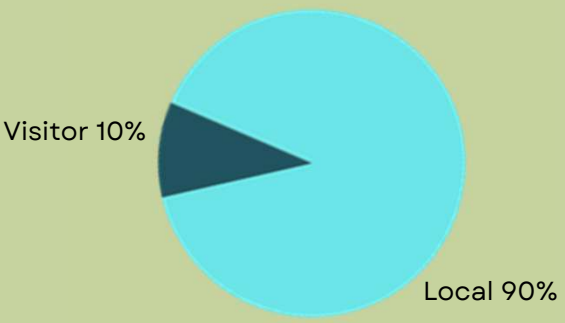
- This page is only concerning the northern Cross Trail from Starrigavan to Kramer Ave.
- Multiple trailheads along trail allow access with varying levels of parking

DESCRIPTION

- 2.5 mile section of 8 mile gravel pathway, with many trailheads and connections along the way including Starrigavan, Cruise Dock Connector, Harbor Mountain Road, Kramer Ave. North
- Used for hiking, hunting, fishing, foraging, biking, transportation, connection to other recreational areas
- Bike use is allowed

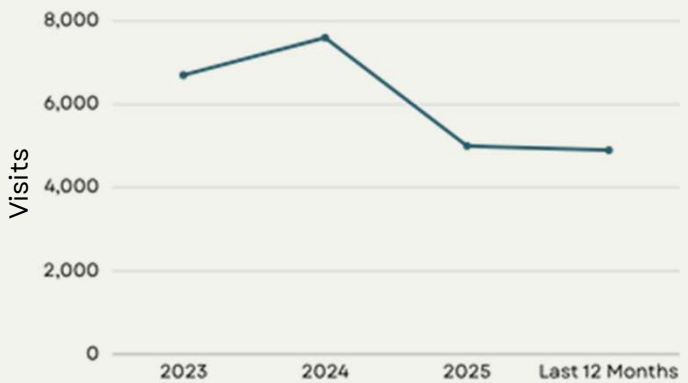
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Sunday
- Peak levels of use at 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Avergage dwell time 20 mins
- Cruise Connector trail - 2025 1,100 visits, YTD 1,200 visits.



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 8 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 12 clients
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 3790
  - 2024: 2750
  - 2025: 4615
  - 2026: 2070

Cross Trail:
Kramer Ave North to Starrigavan

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Value:** The Sitka Cross Trail is a popular recreational resource used by locals, businesses, and tourists for hiking, running, biking, and other outdoor activities.
2. **Strong Public Demand:** The trail's heavy usage reflects strong public demand for outdoor recreation opportunities in Sitka.
3. **Balancing Usage and Preservation:** While the trail's condition and width could accommodate more use, survey respondents prioritize low-impact use and solitude.
4. **Group Size Preferences:** Most sections of the Northern Cross Trail favor medium to large group sizes, with a slight preference for larger groups on the Cruise Dock Connector.
5. **Group Frequency:** A preference for medium to low group frequency was expressed, with the Cruise Dock Connector showing a slight preference for more groups per day.
6. **Bike Use:** Bike use, including e-bikes, is generally more acceptable on the Northern Cross Trail, though e-bikes, especially non-guided, are less favored.
7. **Proximity to City Center:** As the trail segments get closer to the city center, the preference for bike use (all types) decreases.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
12 + guide(s)	26

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
- Weekday use is preferred. (Weekend use is discouraged.)

Special Conditions

- Only guided commercial bike and e-bike permits.
- Commercial vehicle parking is not allowed at the Cruise Connector and Harbor Mountain Road Connector Parking areas. All other Cross Trail access point parking is for commercial use passenger drop off only.

Cross Trail: Kramer Avenue South to Indian River Trail



CONSIDERATIONS

- This page is only concerning the southern Cross Trail from Kramer Ave. to Yaw Drive
- Multiple trailheads along trail allow access with varying levels of parking
- Connects to Forest Service owned land with Gavan Hill Trail where the group size limit is 7 visitors + 1 guide

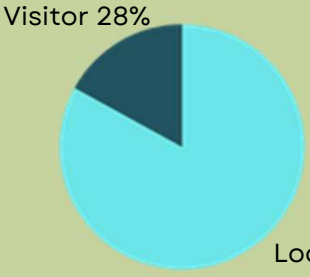
DESCRIPTION

- 6.5 mile long section of 8 mile gravel pathway, with many trailheads and connections along the way including Kramer Ave. Benchlands, Cascade Creek, Charteris Street, Kimsham Ballfields, Sitka High School, Baranof St., Yaw Drive
- Used for hiking, hunting, fishing, foraging, biking, transportation, connection to other recreational areas
- Recreational bike use is allowed

2021-2026 USE

Kramer Ave to Sitka High School

- Busiest day on Saturday
- Peak use at 12 p.m. and 2 p.m.
- 2300 unique visitors

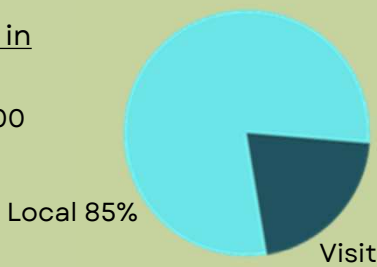


Average Users Per Day in Peak Season 2024:

- Baranof Connector: 100
- Yaw Drive: 55

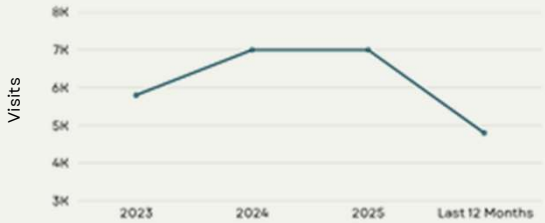
Sitka High School to Yaw Drive

- Busiest day on Monday
- Peak use at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- 4400 unique users

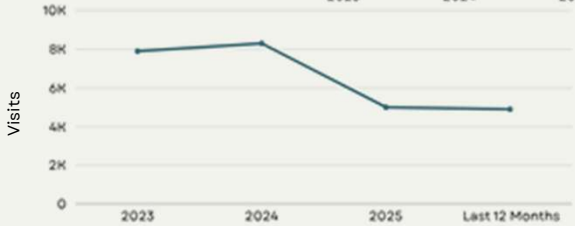


HISTORICAL USE

Sitka High School to Yaw Drive



Kramer Ave to Sitka High School



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 9 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 8 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 3790
  - 2024: 2750
  - 2025: 5365
  - 2026: 1644

Cross Trail:
Kramer Ave South to Indian River Trail

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Value:** The Sitka Cross Trail is a highly valued recreational asset that attracts both local residents, commercial users, and visitors.
2. **Strong Public Demand:** The trail is one of the more heavily used in the Sitka Trail system for hiking, running, biking, and other outdoor activities, demonstrating strong public demand.
3. **Balancing Usage and Preservation:** Trail condition and its generally wide path footprint do allow for higher allocations of use, however, general survey responses seem to focus on keeping it as a low-impact path and high value on solitude.
4. **Group Size Preferences:** Most sections of the Southern segments of the Cross Trail favored medium group sizes.
5. **Group Frequency:** Low to medium frequency of groups were preferred, with most areas slightly favoring lower group numbers per day.
6. **Bike Use:** This section of the Cross Trail heavily favored not allowing any commercial bike permits, particularly e-bike use.
7. **Guided Bike Use:** Permitting guided bikes (non-e-bikes) showed some interest in allowance.
8. **Vehicle Access:** Commercial vehicle parking at most access points was generally not favored, with Walk-In/Bike-In or Drop-Off favored in some locations.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
8 + guide(s)	23

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
- Weekday use is preferred. (Weekend use is discouraged.)

Special Conditions

- No commercial bike and e-bike permits.
- Commercial vehicle parking allowed at Indian River, Kimsham Ball Fields back parking lot, and SHS parking lot when school is not in session. All other Cross Trail access point parking is for commercial use passenger drop off only.

Seawalk and Downtown Sidewalks



CONSIDERATIONS

- Seawalk and Downtown Sidewalks have heavy, mixed uses (general tourism, guided tourism and public use)
- Permit issuance under this plan and SGC 14.10 are only for walking tours - vehicle and other tours are regulated by Harrigan Centennial Hall permitting and/or taxicab permitting

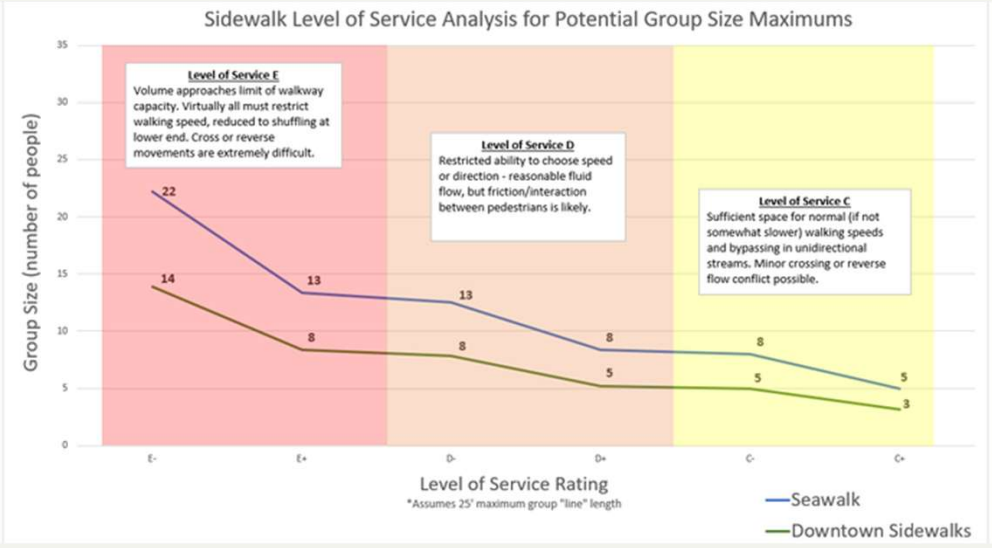
DESCRIPTION

- Seawalk - The CBS portion of the Seawalk currently begins at Harrigan Centennial Hall and terminates at the Lincoln Street and Kelly Street intersection.
- Downtown Sidewalks - Includes generally Lincoln, Seward, Marine, Observatory, and Katlian Streets, as well as minor or feeder streets needed for access.
- Operators are advised that land owner permission, entry fees, and/or commercial permits for historical, cultural, and scenic points in the downtown area such as the Sitka National Historical Park, Castle Hill, Totem Square, the Sheldon Jackson Museum, and the Russian Orthodox Cemeteries may be required from the owners/managing agencies. Issuance of permits under this Plan do not guarantee access to or use of such sites.

2021 - 2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Seawalk: Monday - Thursday see highest use between hours of 11:00 am - 2:00 pm, Local resident use 32%, non resident 68%
- Lincoln Street: Monday tends to be highest, Tuesday - Saturday follow closely in visit numbers – 12:00 pm – 4:00 pm busiest - 60% local/40% non-resident visits

LEVEL OF SERVICE - GROUP SIZES



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 1 commercial permit issued in 2026
- 2026 Permit:
  - Estimated Clients: 1,140
  - Max group size: 20
  - Tours per week: 7

Sea Walk & Downtown Sidewalks

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Current Use:** These assets are in Sitka's downtown corridor, a mixed-use but primarily commercial zone intended to concentrate retail, dining, professional, visitor, and residential uses. High pedestrian density is expected, the majority of which is non-guided/public.
2. **Commercial Use:** Guided walking tours for historic, cultural, and natural site seeing and education.
3. **Management Priorities:** Recognizing intent of area, management provisions do not aim to constrain visitation to the area but rather manage congestion and flow through management of guided group sizes. Additionally, conditions to lessen noise pollution have been included in response to public comments.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
12 + guide(s)	No established limits

Special Guidance

- Guides and operators are reminded that as a mixed-use zone, residential and professional office uses are prevalent in the area. Care should be taken to respect residents' privacy and working nature of the downtown area.
- When more than one group are within visible distance of one another, guides will aim to leave reasonable space (approximately 20') between groups to preserve passing space by non-guided pedestrians.

Special Conditions

- Guides must follow all traffic control signals and devices including crosswalks and signalized intersections.
- Voice and other sound amplification such as speakers, bullhorns, etc., are not allowed. Individual user headsets or other devices that turn speech to text, or broadcast voice/sound into another user's headphones, are permitted.

Gavan Hill Trail



CONSIDERATIONS

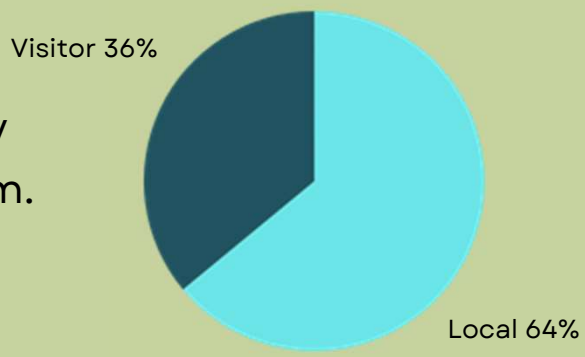
- Connected to Sitka Cross Trail
- Connected to Harbor Mountain Trail Loop
- Connected to Forest Service owned land, where max group size is 7 visitors + 1 guide

DESCRIPTION

- Trail is 6 miles one way to Harbor Mountain Trailhead
- Gravel trail with wood bridges and wooden boardwalk sections throughout
- Used for hiking, hunting, backpacking, foraging, connection to other recreational areas
- Leads to Forest Service shelter on Harbor Mountain

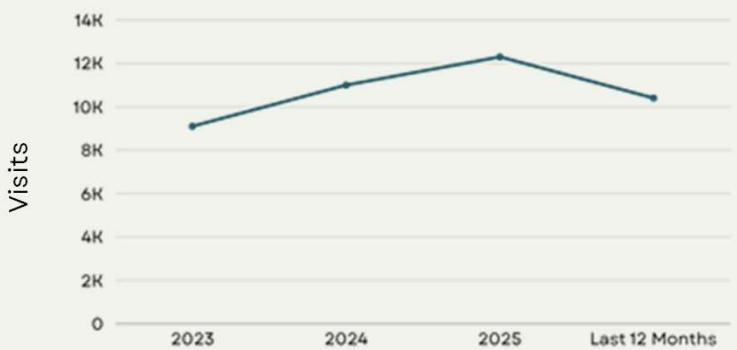
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest days of use on Saturday/Sunday
- Peak levels of use 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
- 41% increase in use 2021 - August 2026
- 36 users per day on average in peak season 2024



Split of visits by *origin of user.*

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 7 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 7 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 3790
  - 2024: 2750
  - 2025: 4390
  - 2026: 1012

Gavan Hill Trail Access

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Value:** The Gavan Hill Trail Access and the Gavan Hill Trail are popular recreational resources, with peak usage occurring in June and July, exceeding an Average Daily Traffic (ADT) of 50 in 2024.
2. **Strong Public Demand:** Projected annual ADT for connecting trail systems to Gavan Hill is estimated to be over 100, with daily peaks surpassing 139 users.
3. **Balancing Usage and Preservation:** While the trail's capacity can accommodate increased use, CBS, as a governing body for connecting trails, must align permit allocations with USFS guidelines to ensure sustainable usage.
4. **Group Size and Frequency:** Respondents generally favor medium group sizes with low frequency.
5. **Preferred Time:** Most users prefer accessing the trail between 9:00 am and 4:00 pm.
6. **Preferred Day:** Weekdays are the preferred day for trail use, accounting for 46% of total usage.
7. **User Patterns:** Daily traffic is relatively evenly distributed throughout the week, with slightly higher usage on weekends.
8. **USFS Allocations:** Max group size: 8 | May 1 - Sept 30 Allocation: 1554 (10 per day)

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
7 + guide(s)	19

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Special Conditions

- No commercial bike or e-bike use allowed on or to approach of Gavan Trail
- Commercial vehicle parking allowed at Kimsham fields back parking lot, SHS parking lot when school is not in session. All other Cross Trail access point parking is for commercial use passenger drop-off only.
- Proof of additional authorization for joint jurisdiction and/or property ownership is required before permit can be utilized.

Indian River Trail



CONSIDERATIONS

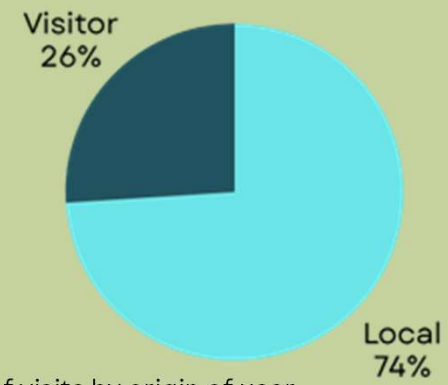
- Connected to Sitka Cross Trail
- Connected to Forest Service owned land, where max group size is 7 visitors + 1 guide,
- Concrete parking lot at trailhead

DESCRIPTION

- Trail is 4.5 miles one way, 9 miles out and back
- Gravel trail with wood bridges and wooden boardwalk sections throughout
- Used for hiking, hunting, fishing, foraging, connection to other recreational areas
- Biking only allowed on first 1500 ft of trail

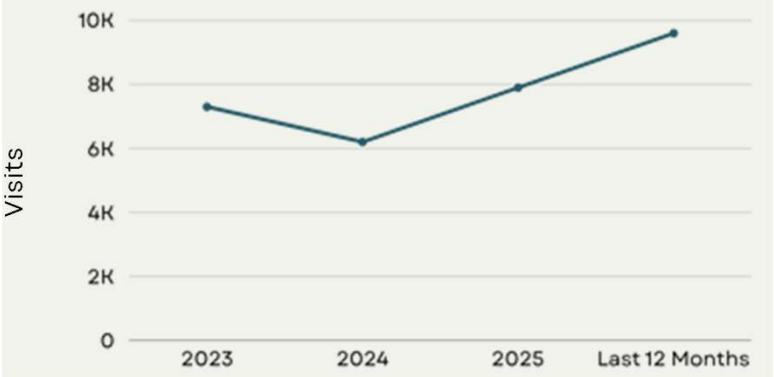
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Saturday/Sunday
- Peak levels of use 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- 6000 unique users of the trail
- 81 users per day on average in peak season 2024



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 10 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 7 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 270
  - 2024: 500
  - 2025: 925
  - 2026: 2209

Indian River Trail

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage & Demand:** Heavy daily use, increasing commercial interest, popular for various activities.
2. **Public Preference:** Prioritizes low-impact use and solitude, favors medium-large groups with moderate frequency.
3. **Bike Use:** Bike use is prohibited on Indian River Trail.
4. **Usage Patterns:** Peak usage during daytime hours, no strong preference for weekdays or weekends.
5. **Management:** Permitted by both City of Sitka and US Forest Service, with bike prohibitions on Indian River Trail.
6. **USFS Allocations:** Max group size: 8 | May 1 - Sept 30 Allocation: 1554 (10 per day)

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
7 + guide(s)	23

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Special Conditions

- No bike or e-bike use allowed on Indian River Trail
- Commercial vehicle parking allowed at Indian River Parking Trailhead only, no parking at the end of Indian River Rd.
- Proof of Additional Authorization for joint jurisdiction and/or property ownership is required before permit can be utilized.

Thimbleberry Lake / Heart Lake Trail



CONSIDERATIONS

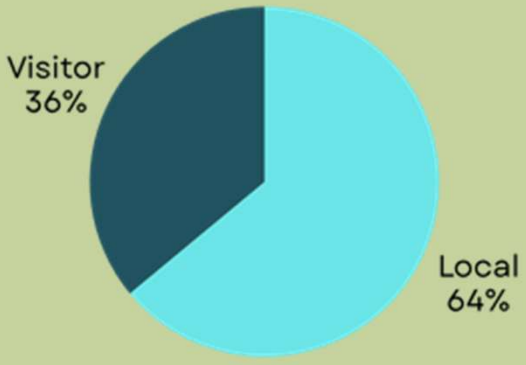
- Trail up to first waterfall is city owned, beyond that is Forest Service owned, with a group size limit of 14 visitors + 1 guide
- Two trailheads split traffic
- Survey responses continue to flag this trail as being over-crowded

DESCRIPTION

- 1.6 mile trail, with two separate trailheads, on Sawmill Creek Road and on Blue Lake Road
- Paved parking lot off of Sawmill Creek Road and a few parking spaces on the side of Blue Lake Road
- Gravel trail with wood bridges throughout
- Used for hiking, hunting, fishing, foraging, ice skating in the winter
- Docks on each lake, summer use for swimming at Heart Lake peak levels in July/August

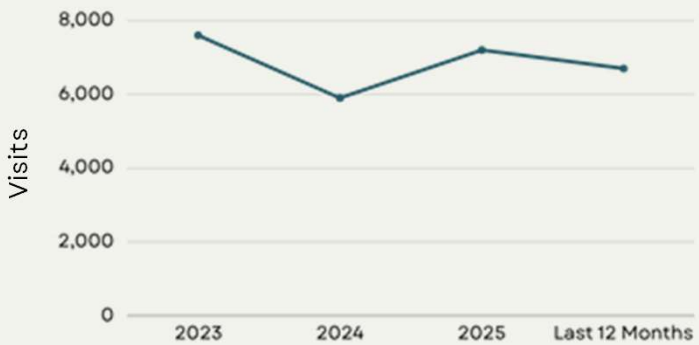
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Monday/Sunday
- Peak levels of use 11:00 am – 3:00 pm
- 10,400 unique users of the trail
- 100 users per day on average in peak season 2025
- 26 minute average dwell time.



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 10 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 14 clients
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 3790
  - 2024: 2500
  - 2025: 4975
  - 2026: 7783

Thimbleberry Lake/ Heart Lake Trail

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Local Popularity:** The Thimbleberry Trail and Heart Lake is a heavily used trail in the Sitka system, particularly popular among local residents.
2. **Strong Public Demand:** The trail's high usage reflects strong public demand for outdoor recreation opportunities in Sitka.
3. **Balancing Usage and Preservation:** Management aims to balance trail use and preservation by limiting group sizes to medium or low levels and reducing group frequency.
4. **Commercial Bike Use:** There is a strong desire to prohibit permitted commercial bike use on the Thimbleberry Trail and Heart Lake.
5. **USFS Allocations:** Max group size: 15

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
14 + guide(s)	24

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Special Conditions

- No guided or unguided bike or e-bike permits to be issued
- Proof of additional authorization for joint jurisdiction and/or property ownership is required before permit can be utilized.

Herring Cove/ Beaver Lake Trail



CONSIDERATIONS

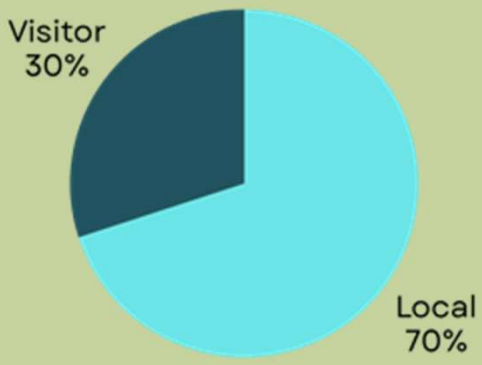
- Two starting points, Blue Lake Trailhead and Herring Cove Trailhead
- Connected to Forest Service owned land, where max group size is 7 visitors + 1 guide

DESCRIPTION

- Trail is a 3.6 mile gravel loop with wood bridges and wooden boardwalks
- Used for hiking, hunting, fishing, foraging, connection to other recreational areas
- Biking is prohibited on the trail
- Small gravel parking lot at Herring Cove Trailhead and campground parking lot off of Blue Lake Road
- ADA accessible trail to the first waterfall starting at Herring Cove owned by the city

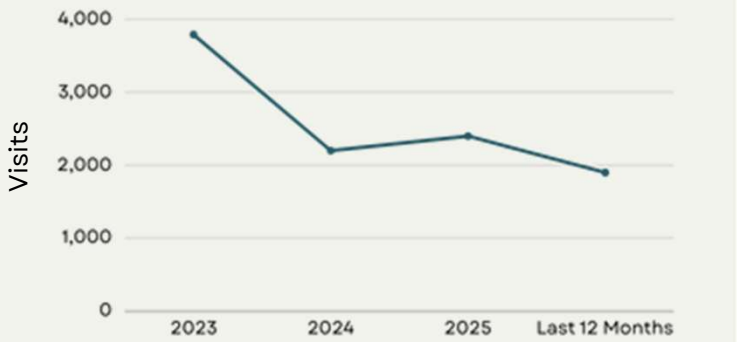
2021-2026 USE LEVELS

- Busiest days of use on Saturday/Sunday
- Peak levels of use at 11:00 am to 3:00 pm
- 4,400 unique users of the trail
- Average dwell time 63 mins



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 10 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 7 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 3790
  - 2024: 2500
  - 2025: 4525
  - 2026: 3402

Herring Cove/Beaver Lake Trail

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Value:** Herring Cove to Beaver Lake is similarly popular for use as Thimbleberry, though has a higher percentage of visits by visitors than Thimbleberry.
2. **Strong Public Demand:** High predicted commercial levels is largely due to one operator indicating a desired use for tours.
3. **Balancing Usage and Preservation:** Management desires focus mainly on keeping group sizes medium to low and frequency of groups low as well.
4. **Group Size Preferences:** Later afternoon peak use is different from other trail systems, however community survey results indicate a desire to allow permitted use between 9:00 am - 4:00 pm.
5. **Group Frequency:** Similar to other trails, there is a preference towards permitted commercial use during the weekday and less on the weekends.
6. **USFS Allocations:** Max group size: 8

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
7 + guide(s)	18

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Special Conditions

- Proof of additional authorization for joint jurisdiction and/or property ownership is required before permit can be utilized.

Medvejie Trail and Lake



CONSIDERATIONS

- Medvejie Lake Trail is not an established trail and therefore is not regularly maintained
- Users must traverse through stream as the old bridge washed out

DESCRIPTION

- Medvejie trail is 0.75 miles one way of infrequently maintained trail
- Used for hiking, hunting, foraging, and back country access
- Users must make their way through NSRAA hatchery property to get to trail
- Users get to trail by using Green Lake Road

RECENT LEVELS OF USE

Current levels of use calculated by the same methods as the other assets in this list are not available for this one due to its remote nature.

HISTORICAL USE

Historical data for this asset is not currently available.

COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- No commercial permit issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 8 clients
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 50
  - 2024: 150
  - 2025: no permits issued
  - 2026: no permits requested

Medvejie Trail and Lake

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Limited Use Data:** Remote nature of trail limits mobile analytic data collection, unable to collect use data with sufficient confidence to publish or provide specific guidance.
2. **Mixed Use Preferences:** While Medvejie had the highest percentage of respondents selecting "No Allowed Use," a majority still favored medium group sizes and low frequency of use.
3. **Complex Use Considerations:** Use of this area is complicated by potential conflicts with NSRAA Hatchery operations and nearby caretaker housing.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
6 + guide(s)	16

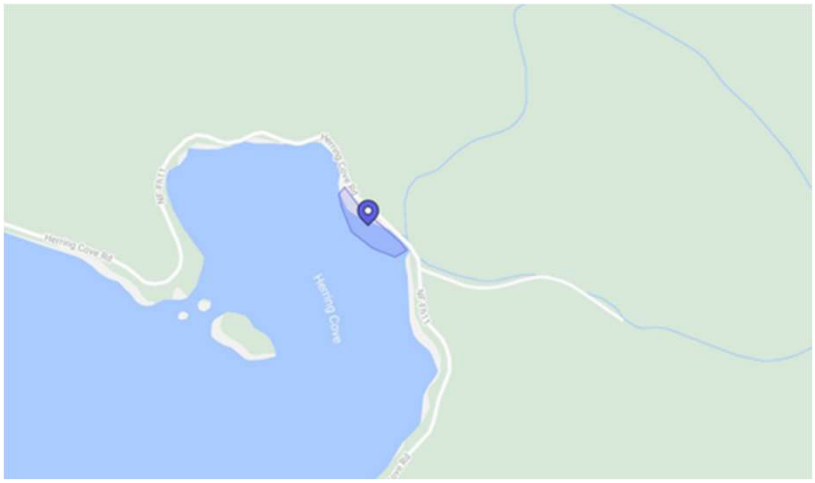
Special Guidance

- Preferred hours of use: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm.
- All use will incorporate “Leave No Trace” practices into all activities in accordance with Appendix D: *Leave No Trace*.

Special Conditions

- Guided and nonguided bike and e-bike use allowed on approach to Medvejie trail.
- Permit does not authorize any use or approach through the Medvejie Hatchery property and such permission must be obtained through NSRAA.

Herring Cove Beach



CONSIDERATIONS

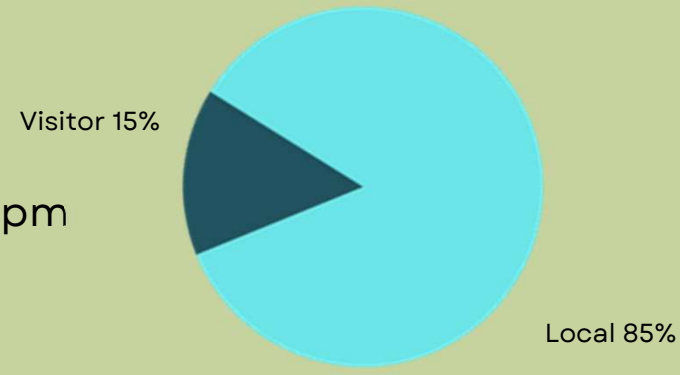
- No separate parking lot from Beaver Lake trailhead and beach area has significant nail debris from pallet burning.
- Popular evening recreation spot for locals

DESCRIPTION

- Herring Cove is an entry point for water access
- Launch site for boats, motorized watercraft, and kayaks
- Popular bonfire site, though lacks established fire rings/pits
- Site is outside of town so experiences less traffic than in town launches

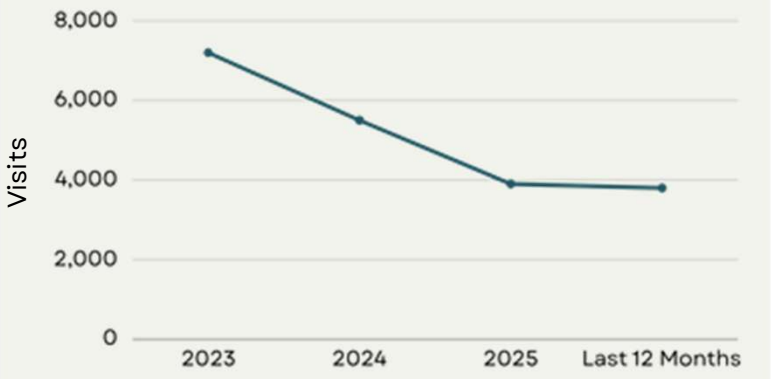
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Saturday
- Peak levels of use 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm
- 3600 unique users



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 3 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 6 clients
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 50
  - 2024: 75
  - 2025: 100
  - 2026: 1214

Herring Cove Beach

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Value:** Herring Cove Beach is a popular recreational resource used by locals for bonfires and small watercraft launches.
2. **Strong Public Demand:** The beach's heavy usage, particularly in the late evening, reflects strong public demand for water access recreation in Sitka.
3. **Balancing Usage and Preservation:** While the beach's condition could accommodate more use, survey respondents prioritize medium levels of use and group size to maintain the area's natural character.
4. **Group Size Preferences:** Medium group sizes are preferred for Herring Cove Beach.
5. **Group Frequency:** Medium group frequency is preferred for Herring Cove Beach.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
12/6 + guide(s)	24

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
- Group size limit for human powered watercraft: 12 + guide(s)
- Group size limit for powered watercraft: 6 + guide(s)

Special Conditions

Blue Lake and Blue Lake Road



CONSIDERATIONS

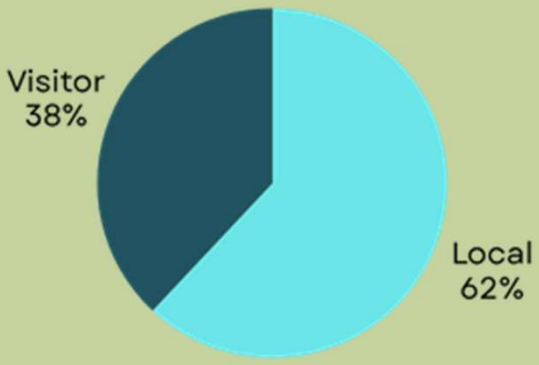
- Blue Lake is a drinking water source for the city
- Forest Service limits commercial use of the road - 6 vehicles/day - group size max 8

DESCRIPTION

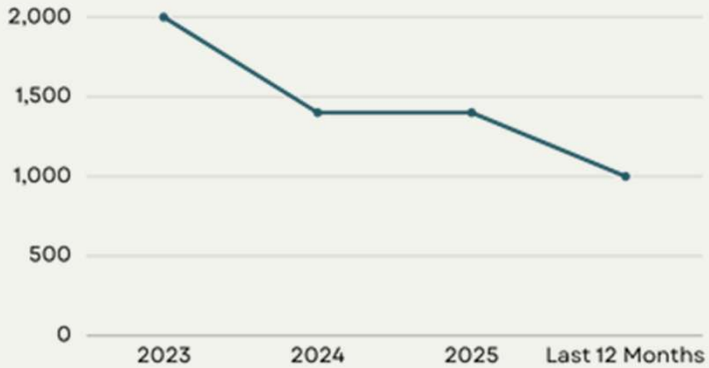
- Lake access for kayaking and watersport recreation
- Swimming and motorized watercraft use is prohibited
- Area includes the Blue Lake Campground and Picnic area
- Popular recreation activities include paddleboarding, kayaking, and fishing

2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest days of use on Friday-Monday
- Average dwell time 3.25 hours
- Majority of use is likely on the road
- Visitor numbers on lake unknown
  - 1 kayak guide permit issued in 2026



HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 7 commercial permit issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 12/6 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 50
  - 2024: 50
  - 2025: 4190
  - 2026: 2135

Blue Lake and Blue Lake Road

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Limited Data Availability:** CBS has limited data available to inform use on Blue Lake Road and on Blue Lake.
2. **Current Permittees:** There is currently only one permit that has been historically issued for this area.
3. **Management Priorities:** Most interested in medium group sizes with moderate frequency.
4. **Survey feedback:** High approval in survey for allowed guided kayaks.
5. **Other permit alignment:** USFS Maximum Group size 8 and Maximum number of vehicles of 6 vehicles per day.

Commercial Carrying Capacity Blue Lake Road

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week*
8/12 + guide(s)	25 / 20

*The maximum groups per week for the road and lake are not additive; of the 25 maximum groups per week that could be permitted on the road, only 20 may be permitted for the lake.

Special Guidance

Special Conditions

- No fuel powered watercraft is allowed on Blue Lake.
- Electric powered watercraft maybe considered except for jet skis.

Green Lake and Green Lake Road



CONSIDERATIONS

- Green Lake road is used by city and hatchery staff in motorized vehicles, but is closed to public traffic
- Hikers and bikers need to be vigilant for car traffic

DESCRIPTION

- Green Lake road is 7 miles of gravel road closed to public motorized vehicles leading to NSRAA hatchery and Green Lake Hydroelectric Project
- Used for hiking, walking, biking, foraging, hunting, back country access

RECENT LEVELS OF USE

Current levels of use calculated by the same methods as the other assets in this list are not available for this one due to its remote nature.

HISTORICAL USE

Historical data for this asset is not currently available.

COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 3 commercial permit issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 8/6 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 50
  - 2024: 150
  - 2025: 3890
  - 2026: 244

Green Lake and Green Lake Road

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Limited Data Availability:** CBS has limited data available to inform use on Green Lake Road and on Blue Lake.
2. **Current Permitees:** One commercial permit operator with stated use only for Green Lake Road to Medvejie
3. **Management Priorities:** Green Lake Road: Medium group sizes with low frequency, very strong preference in allowing guided bikes and e-bikes on Green Lake Road
4. **Management Priorities:** Green Lake: Medium group sizes with medium frequency, very strong preference for allowing guided kayaks and very strong preference to not allow commercial jet ski use.

Commercial Carrying Capacity Green Lake Road

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week*
8 + guide(s)	26 / 20

*The maximum groups per week for the road and lake are not additive; of the 25 maximum groups per week that could be permitted on the road, only 20 may be permitted for the lake.

Special Guidance

Special Conditions

- No commercial jet ski use is allowed.

Swan Lake



CONSIDERATIONS

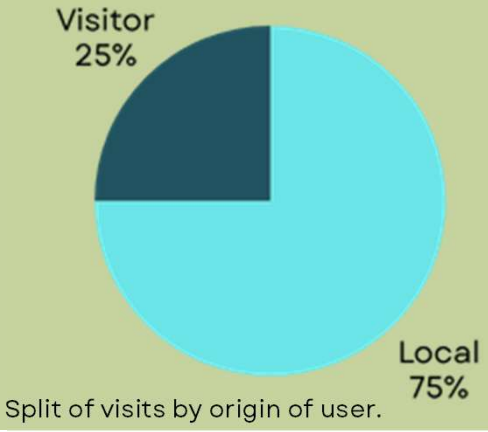
- Only street parking available
- Swan Lake is in a residential area
- Popular recreation spot for locals in town

DESCRIPTION

- Swan Lake consists of a dock and small park with benches
- Lake access for kayaking, swimming, fishing, watersport recreation, and ice skating in the winter
- Swan Lake has no parking lot

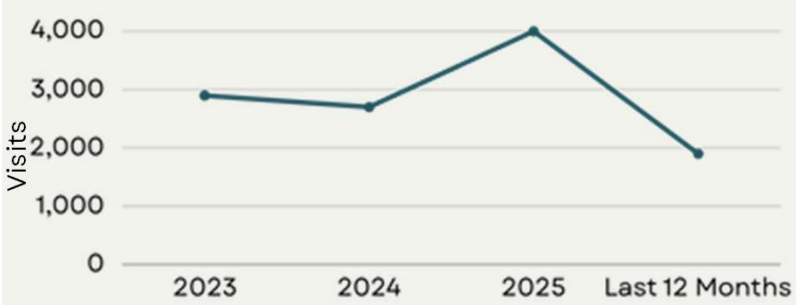
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Saturday
- Peak levels of use 12:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- 2700 unique visitors
- 1 hour average dwell time



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 2 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 6 clients
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 50
  - 2024: 50
  - 2025: 100
  - 2026: 828

Swan Lake

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Preferred Group Size and Frequency:** A preference for medium to small group sizes and low-frequency use was expressed, with no clear preference for specific days of the week when commercial use should be permitted.
2. **Guided vs. Unguided Kayak Use:** There is a general desire to allow guided kayak groups, with moderate approval for unguided kayak use.
3. **Historical Usage Patterns:** Historical use data indicates that the vast majority of year-round use is by local residents, with significant increases in nonresident use during the summer months.
4. **Public Perception of Kayak Use:** Survey data indicates some approval of kayak use, with higher approval for guided use.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
6 + guide(s)	16

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Special Conditions

- Parking of commercial vehicles is prohibited and drop-off/pick-up services are preferred.
- No use of motorized watercraft is allowed.

Eagle Beach (Back Beach)



CONSIDERATIONS

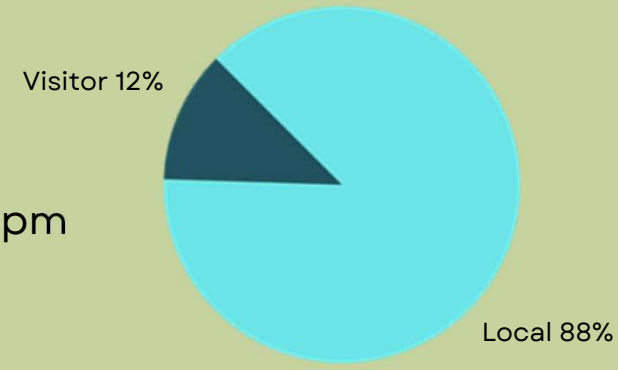
- Popular water access for locals
- Permits have been issued but not used to their potential
- Very close to residential property
- Limited parking in area

DESCRIPTION

- Water access for kayaks, jet skis, motorized watercraft
- Parking lot has limited space and street parking can be crowded
- Beach is used as a gathering spot by locals

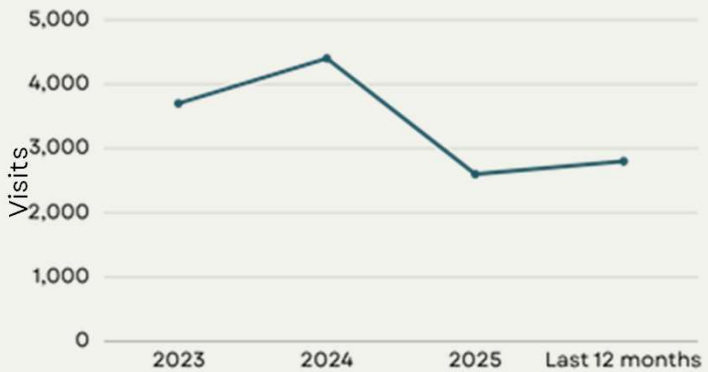
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Sunday
- Peak levels of use at 1:00 pm to 8:00 pm
- 3000 unique visitors
- 40 minute average dwell time



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 3 commercial permits issued in 2025
- Maximum group size of 6 clients
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 50
  - 2024: 50
  - 2025: 100
  - 2026: 1502

Eagle Beach (Back Beach)

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Local Demand:** Eagle Beach is a popular recreational resource used primarily by locals, with a significant increase in usage over the past two years.
2. **Growing Commercial Interest:** Permit requests for commercial activities on Eagle Beach have also increased, with permits granted for kayak and guided jet ski tours in 2024 and 2025.
3. **User Preferences:** Public sentiment leans towards medium to small group sizes and a medium to low frequency of use on Eagle Beach.
4. **Jet Ski Operations:** Public comments generally express disapproval of jet ski operations on Eagle Beach and other public areas, favoring restrictions to harbor launches only.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
6 + guide(s)	18

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Special Conditions

Sitka Sound Islands



CONSIDERATIONS

- Remote nature of these islands makes management difficult
- Minimal to no man made structures or amenities exist
- Popular with locals for picnics and camping

DESCRIPTION

- There are many remote islands that are owned by the city
- Crow Island, Calligan Island, Gagarin Island, Middle Island, Little and Big Gavanski Island are all islands that commercial permits have been requested
- Popular kayak camping and boat camping spots

RECENT LEVELS OF USE

Current levels of use calculated by the same methods as the other assets in this list are not available due to the remote and spread-out nature of these islands.

HISTORICAL USE

Historical data for these assets is not currently available.

COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 3 commercial permit issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 6 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 40
  - 2024: 25
  - 2025: 62
  - 2026: 820

Sitka Sound Islands

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Limited Data Availability:** CBS has limited data available to inform use of most of the island groups near Sitka (Crow Island, Gagarin, Middle and Big Gavanski, Calligan Islands).
2. **Missing Reconciliation Reports:** The historical permit applicant has not submitted reconciliation reports for 2023 or 2024.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
6 + guide(s)	18

Special Guidance

Special Conditions

- All use will incorporate “Leave No Trace” practices into all activities in accordance with the Appendix D: Leave No Trace document.
- Permits will not be issued for commercial use of Chaichei Islands, Parker Group, Gagarin Island/Clam Shell Beach Island.

Baranof Warm Springs



CONSIDERATIONS

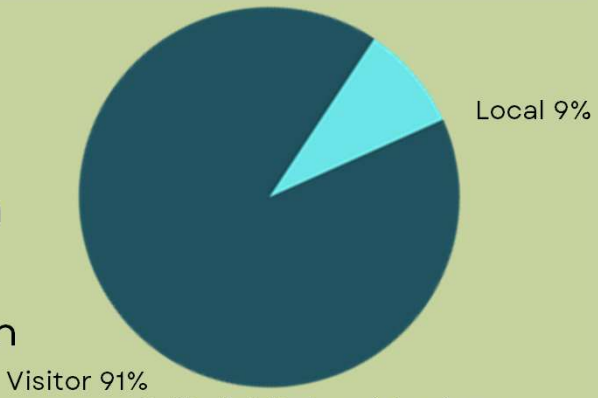
- Remote nature of this site makes management difficult
- Maintenance done by residents
- City owned area surrounded by private property

DESCRIPTION

- Baranof Warm Springs is a remote recreation site on the east side of Baranof Island
- It consists of a short trail, boardwalk, dock, three tubs, and a picnic shelter
- Under an agreement with Alaska DNR, the City also manages commercial recreation on the Baranof Lake Trail and Grotto soaking pools
- Home to a small seasonal community

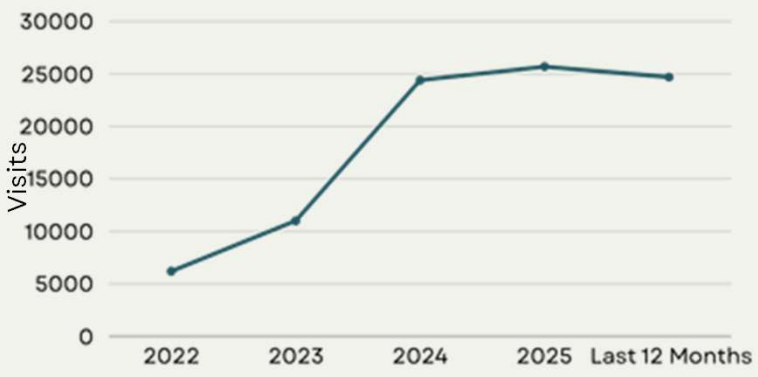
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Wednesday
- Peak levels of use at 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- 13000 unique users
- 259 average users per day in peak season
- 6 hour average dwell time



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 27 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 6 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 361
  - 2024: 802
  - 2025: 1125
  - 2026: 1753

Baranof Warm Springs

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Group Size and Frequency:** Management priorities are focused on group sizes and number of groups per day.
2. **Group Preference:** Medium to small group sizes are preferred, and low numbers of groups per day were most favored.
3. **User Management:** Managing health, safety, and outdoor etiquette has a high first and third priority ranking.
4. **Baranof Warm Springs Usage:** The Baranof Warm Springs area has seen a remarkable increase in summer use, as well as permit applications. Most of the increase in permit applications over the past year is due to awareness efforts around permitting requirements.
5. **Permit Requirements:** USFS and CBS all require commercial use permits for this area. CBS and Alaska DNR have entered into cooperative agreement to manage DNR area lands.
6. **USFS Non-Wilderness Allocations:** Max group size: 20

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
6 + guide(s)	18

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
- Participation in the pre-season stakeholder and community meeting is highly encouraged.
- Peak season: May 1 - September 30
- Shoulder season: October 1 - April 31 (maximum group size 10 plus guide, allocation resets)

Special Conditions

- All use will incorporate “Leave No Trace” practices into all activities in accordance with the Appendix D: *Leave No Trace*.
- Bathing Instruction: Etiquette will be provided to all guests to address food and drink use, soaking times, where to wait when tubs/springs are full, and other considerations the permittee deems appropriate.
- Proof of Additional Authorization for joint jurisdiction and/or property ownership is required before permit can be utilized.

Takatz Bay



CONSIDERATIONS

- Very remote and specialized use area
- Majority of permit requests come from small cruise and charter vessels

DESCRIPTION

- City of Sitka owns the area surrounding Takatz Bay and Lake from an ownership conveyance from Alaska DNR for potential hydro development of Takatz Lake.
- Steep-sided fiord and popular marine anchorage located on the east coast of Baranof Island, about 4 miles north of Baranof Warm Springs.
- Popular desitination for small cruises, charters and bear hunting guides.

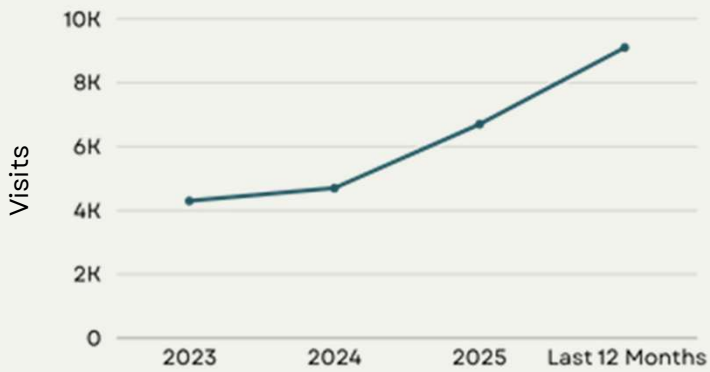
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest days of use are mid week
- Average dwell time about 7 hours
- Peak month is July most years
- YoY increase from 2024-2025 - 17.6%

Split of visits by origin of user.



HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 3 commercial permits issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 12 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  2026: 850 (estimated)

Takatz Bay

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Current Use:** Remote access tourism and hunting guide activity is the predominant use. Area also offers a protected anchorage for transiting vessels.
2. **Commercial Use:** 3 permits issued in 2026 with a group size maximum of 12.
3. **Management Priorities:** Parks and Recreation Committee granted 3 permits for cruise/ charter/outfitter use in 2026. Survey respondents preferred small group sizes of less than 10, however, to align with USFS Non-Wilderness allocations a group size of 20 is recommended. Most respondents preferred low groups per week allocations of 3 or less.
4. **USFS Non-Wilderness Allocations:** Maximum group size: 20

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
20 + guide(s)	9

Special Guidance

- When more than one group are within the bay, best practice is to remain out of sight and sound of other groups or at minimum to leave reasonable space (100 yards or more) between groups to preserve a wilderness experience.
- Review and follow voluntary recommendations in the *USFS Tongass Outfitter/Guide Best Management Practices Agreement* is recommended during Spring and Fall hunting seasons within Takatz Bay. *(see notes on Executive Summary of Permittable Commercial Use Table)*

Special Conditions

- All use will incorporate “Leave No Trace” practices into all activities in accordance with the Appendix D: *Leave No Trace*.

Goddard Hot Springs



CONSIDERATIONS

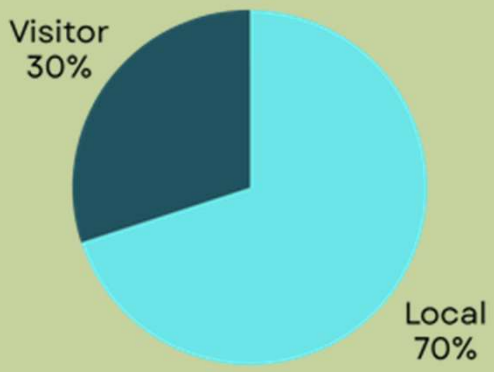
- Remote nature of this site makes management difficult
- Limited tub space can cause overcrowding to happen quickly

DESCRIPTION

- Recreation site approximately 15 miles south of town
- Goddard Hot Springs consists of a boardwalk, walking trail, and two bath houses
- Popular recreation spot for locals

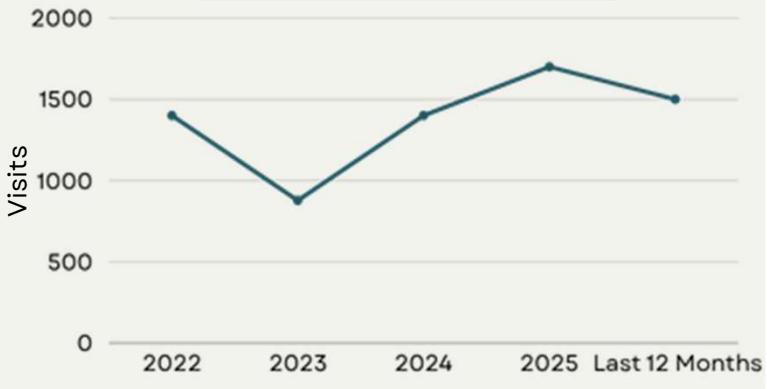
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest day of use on Saturday
- Peak levels of use at 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
- Monthly peaks can reach 325-450 unique users
- 3-hour average dwell time



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 3 commercial permit issued in 2026
- Maximum group size of 6 visitors
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 0
  - 2024 : 50
  - 2025: 12
  - 2026: 934

Goddard Hot Springs

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **Current Use:** Monthly peak levels from 325-450 users, 3-hour dwell time average.
2. **Commercial Use:** The majority of survey and public comment respondents preferred no allowed commercial use for Goddard. However, some respondents commented that limited human-powered craft (kayak) outfitter/guide use should be considered as well as seasonal commercial use options for all outfitter/guide operations outside of summer season.
3. **Management Priorities:** Under the direction of the 2026 Land Use Plan, permits were restricted to water taxis only. Intention was to limit commercial activities at Goddard while preserving resident access to the area when water taxi service is the only means for local access to Goddard Hot Springs. 3 water taxi permits were issued for 2026. Estimated service numbers approached 1000 clients, however end-of-season reconciliation was not required of these permits so actual service numbers are unknown.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
6	*See Special Conditions notes

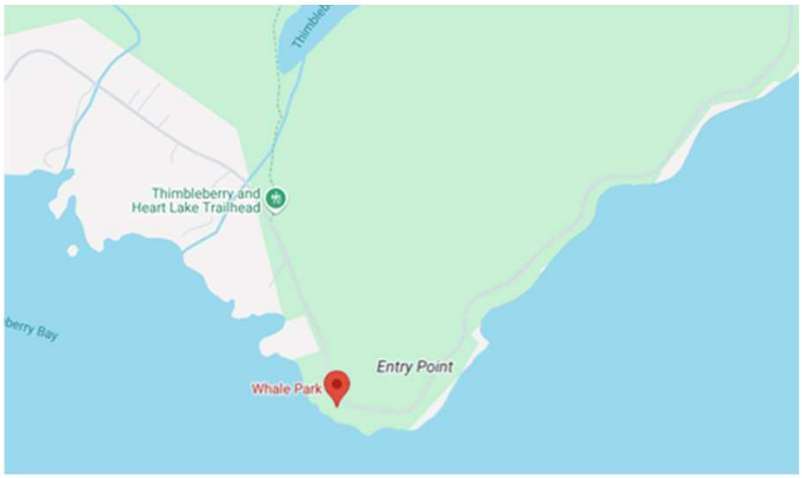
Special Guidance

- Weekday use is preferred. (Weekend use is discouraged.)

Special Conditions

- Peak season: May 1 - September 30: Water taxi and human-powered watercraft permits only.
  - Water taxi groups are limited to a total of 14 groups/week.
  - Human powered watercraft outfitter/guides limited to 1 group per month.
- Shoulder seasons: October 1 - April 31: Water taxi and all outfitter/guide permits allowed.
  - Water taxi groups are limited to 14 groups/week
  - All outfitter/guide groups are limited to 1 group per permit per month.
- All use will incorporate “Leave No Trace” practices into all activities in accordance with Appendix D: *Leave No Trace*.
- Bathing Instruction: Etiquette will be provided to all guests to address food and drink use, soaking times, where to wait when tubs/springs are full, and other considerations the permittee deems appropriate.

Whale Park



CONSIDERATIONS

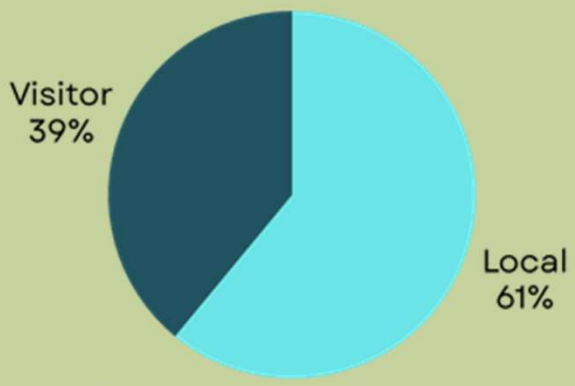
- Connects to city bus line
- Used as a parking spot for people walking, running, and biking Silver Bay
- Only public restrooms south of town

DESCRIPTION

- Boardwalk trails, picnic shelters, lookout spots, and asphalt parking lot owned by the city
- Public restrooms and water fountain open year-round.
- Offers gathering point, water access, wildlife viewing, and foraging spot

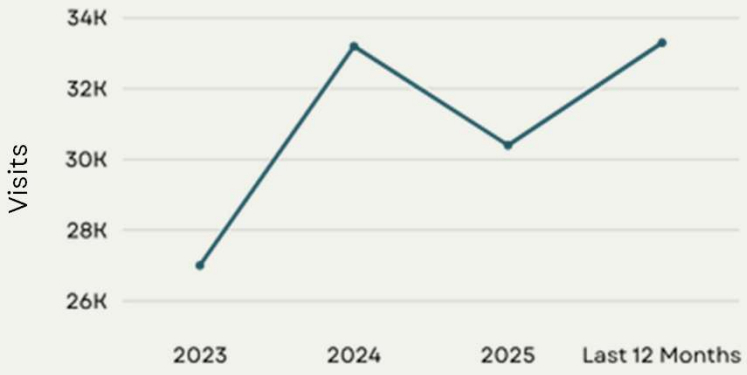
2021-2026 LEVELS OF USE

- Busiest days of use on Monday & Sunday
- Peak levels of use at 12:00 pm to 3:00 pm
- 29,100 unique users
- 46 minutes average dwell time



Split of visits by origin of user.

HISTORICAL USE



COMMERCIAL LEVELS OF USE IN 2026

- 3 commercial permits issued in 2026
- No maximum group size set
- Maximum Commercial Visitors:
  - 2023: 0
  - 2024: 150
  - 2025: 3875
  - 2026: 4934

Whale Park

Permittable Commercial Use

Findings from Carrying Capacity Analysis

1. **High Usage and Value:** Whale Park is a heavily used recreational resource, serving as a popular starting and ending point for walking and biking along the Saw Mill Creek multi-use path.
2. **Strong Public Demand:** The significant increase in park usage over the past three years, particularly by non-resident visitors, demonstrates strong public demand for this recreational space.
3. **Balancing Usage and Preservation:** While the park's current condition can accommodate increased use, managing potential impacts, such as those from commercial use, will be crucial to balance usage with preservation. Increased use also has a significant impact on restroom facilities that will need to be addressed.

Commercial Carrying Capacity

Maximum Group Size	Maximum Groups per Week
14 + guide(s)	No guidance

Special Guidance

- Preferred times of use: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Special Conditions

- Seasonal fee applies to all permit applications regardless of payment of a per-client fee for other areas of use. Permittee will be provided a vehicle designation/sticker for allowed use of Whale Park.

Commercial recreational use of municipal lands and facilities

Fee Schedule

FEES	APPLICATION FEE	PER CLIENT
ALL PROPOSED CLIENT NUMBERS	$400	$5

Special Use Areas:
Baranof Warm Springs, Takatz Bay, and Goddard Hot Springs

FEES	APPLICATION FEE	PER CLIENT
ALL PROPOSED CLIENT NUMBERS	$400	$10

**Per-client fee will not be charged for permitted water taxi operators at Goddard Hot Springs. Human-powered watercraft outfitter/guides and shoulder seasons outfitter/guide permits pay application fee and per-client fee.*

Whale Park
Vehicle Tour Operators

FEES	APPLICATION FEE	PER PERMIT
ALL PROPOSED CLIENT NUMBERS	$400	$300

In accordance with Sitka General Code, Chapter 14.10.040, fees will be set in the Use Plan established by the City and Borough Assembly. The 2026 recommended fee schedule includes an annual filing fee and per-client fee. The permit holder shall use its best estimate of the number of clients and days they will be guiding for each season. The $400 annual application fee is non-refundable. All fees are subject to tax.

2027 Public Survey

2026 Commercial Land Use Plan follow-up for 2027

Thank you for taking this survey from the City & Borough of Sitka's (CBS) Parks and Recreation Office. This survey allows users of CBS-owned and managed recreational areas and facilities to provide their input, priorities, and preferences regarding permitted commercial uses—such as guided hikes, bike tours, and kayak rentals—through the CBS commercial recreational land use permit process.
Areas, trails, and roads outlined in this survey are often under the jurisdiction of multiple organizations (CBS, State of Alaska, BIHA, USFS, etc.). The questions in this survey focus only on locations where the CBS requires a permit for commercial recreation operations.
These results, coupled with input received during recent 2026 public workshops, will be presented to the Parks & Recreation Committee and the Assembly to guide how CBS updates and issues these permits for the 2027 season and beyond.
Survey includes sections regarding Cross Trail, local roads and trails, water access points and special use areas. There is a section addressing new areas of inclusion for the 2027 Land Use Plan, including the Sea Walk, Downtown Sidewalks, Whale Park and Takatz Bay. Total survey should take 12-18 minutes to complete.

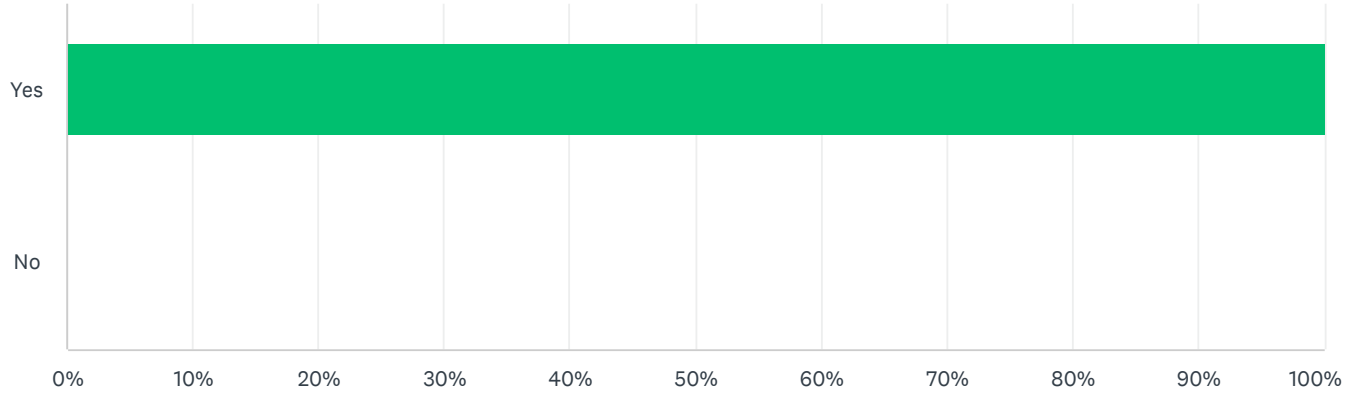
Survey Topics & Sections

- Screening & General preferences
- Permit Fee Schedule & Stucture
- Cross Trail Commercial Use
- Other Local Roads and Trails
- Local Water Access Points
- Special Use Areas & Locations
- High-Traffic Pedestrian Zones, Parks & Walkways
- Demographics & General Feedback

Survey was published via Survey Monkey, collecting responses from August 25, 2026 thru October 15, 2026. Stakeholder groups, 2026 permit applicants were notified of the survey via email, public service announcements, social media posts and partner organizational outreach in August and September.

Q1 I am a human user completing this survey.

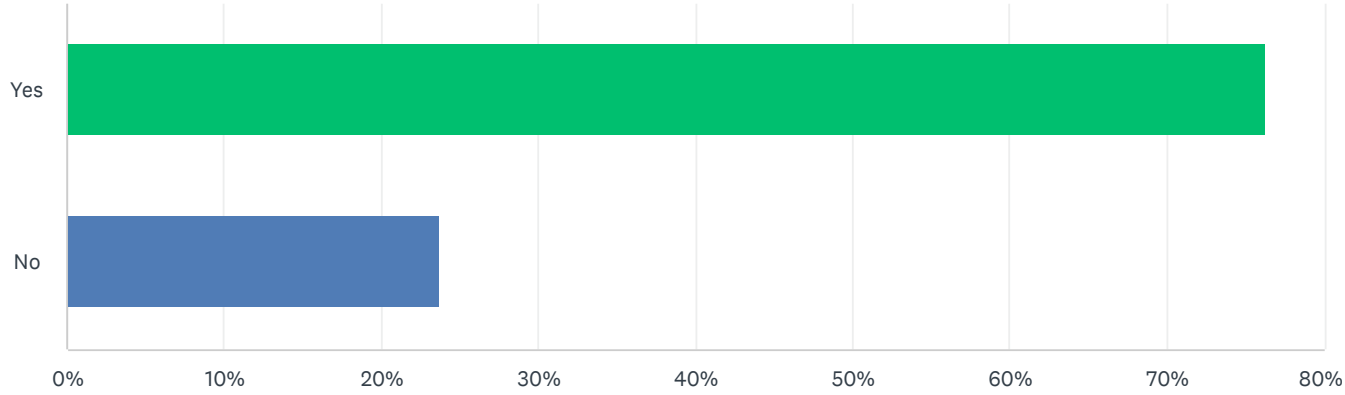
Answered: 86 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	86
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		86

Q2 Is Sitka your primary place of residence?

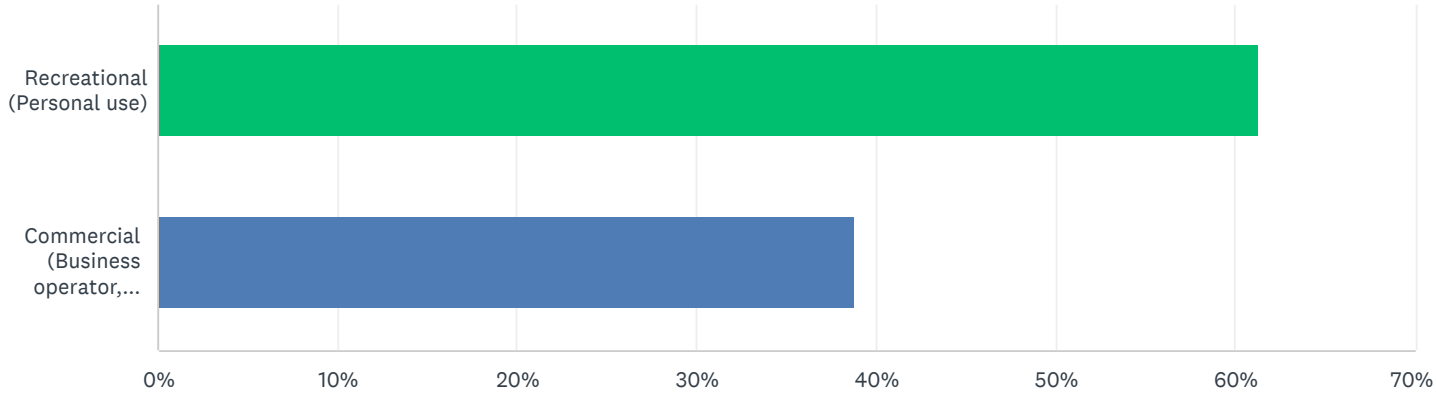
Answered: 80 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	76.25%	61
No	23.75%	19
TOTAL		80

Q3 How would you describe your primary use of, or interest in, city recreational areas and facilities?

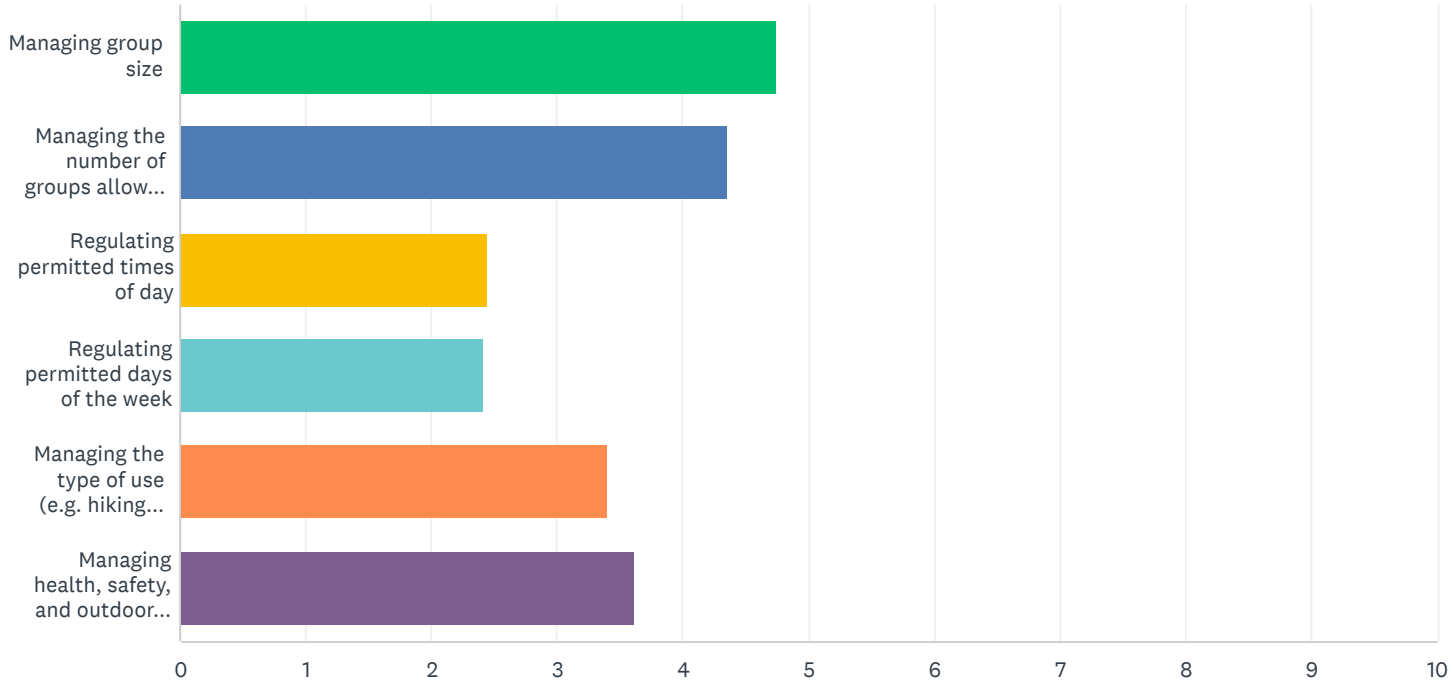
Answered: 80 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Recreational (Personal use)	61.25%	49
Commercial (Business operator, guide, etc.)	38.75%	31
TOTAL		80

Q4 What are your priorities in managing commercial use of city recreational areas and facilities? (Please rank your priorities from highest to lowest)

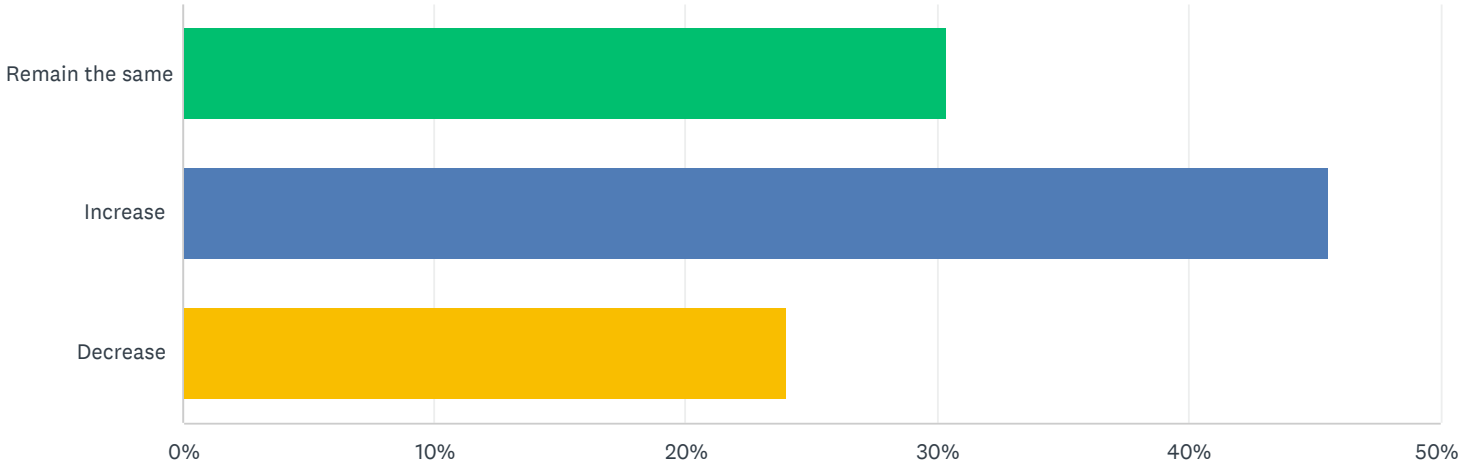
Answered: 77 Skipped: 9



	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Managing group size	33.77% 26	35.06% 27	16.88% 13	6.49% 5	2.60% 2	5.19% 4	77	4.75
Managing the number of groups allowed per day	23.38% 18	27.27% 21	20.78% 16	20.78% 16	5.19% 4	2.60% 2	77	4.35
Regulating permitted times of day	0.00% 0	3.90% 3	15.58% 12	24.68% 19	33.77% 26	22.08% 17	77	2.45
Regulating permitted days of the week	2.60% 2	6.49% 5	10.39% 8	20.78% 16	29.87% 23	29.87% 23	77	2.42
Managing the type of use (e.g. hiking, biking, e-bikes, kayaking, etc.)	15.58% 12	14.29% 11	15.58% 12	18.18% 14	22.08% 17	14.29% 11	77	3.40
Managing health, safety, and outdoor etiquette	24.68% 19	12.99% 10	20.78% 16	9.09% 7	6.49% 5	25.97% 20	77	3.62

Q5 The current fee schedule for a commercial permit is a non-refundable $400 annual fee plus $5.00 per client regular areas (Sitka trails, beaches, downtown) or $10 per client for special use areas (Baranof Warm Springs, Goddard Hot Springs). Should this fee:

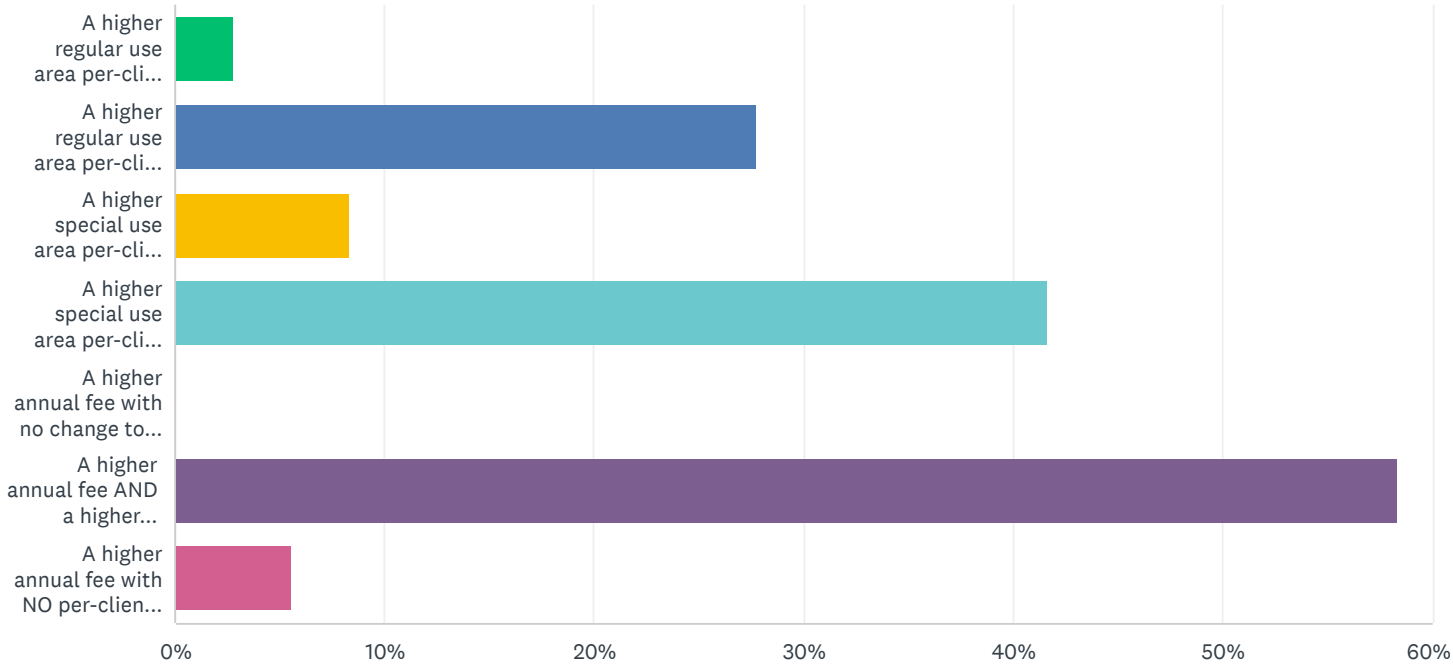
Answered: 79 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Remain the same	30.38%	24
Increase	45.57%	36
Decrease	24.05%	19
TOTAL		79

Q6 If you believe the permit fee should be HIGHER, what increase should the Committee and Assembly consider?

Answered: 36 Skipped: 50

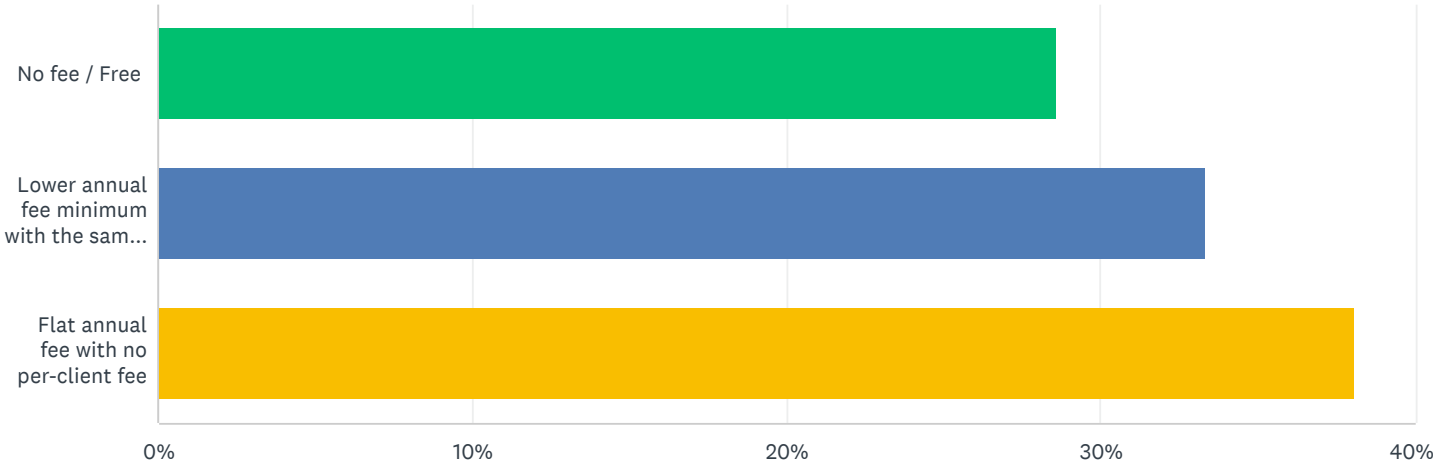


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A higher regular use area per-client fee of $6.00–$8.00	2.78%	1
A higher regular use area per-client fee of $8.00–$10.00	27.78%	10
A higher special use area per-client fee of $12.00 - $15.00	8.33%	3
A higher special use area per-client fee of $16.00 - $20.00	41.67%	15
A higher annual fee with no change to the per-client fee	0.00%	0
A higher annual fee AND a higher per-client fee	58.33%	21
A higher annual fee with NO per-client fee	5.56%	2
Total Respondents: 36		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Year round residential business owners should have a lower annual fee, and out of state business owners should have a higher annual fee. Year round local business owners often take care of this land and encourage their clients to do the same.	9/23/2026 10:51 PM
2	I'm concerned the per person rate is not being captured. How can we inforce that these permits are required? Perhaps having guides where them visibly so those who don't have them can be held accountable?	9/10/2026 12:43 PM

Q7 If you believe the permit fee should be LOWER, what range would be reasonable for the Committee and Assembly to consider?

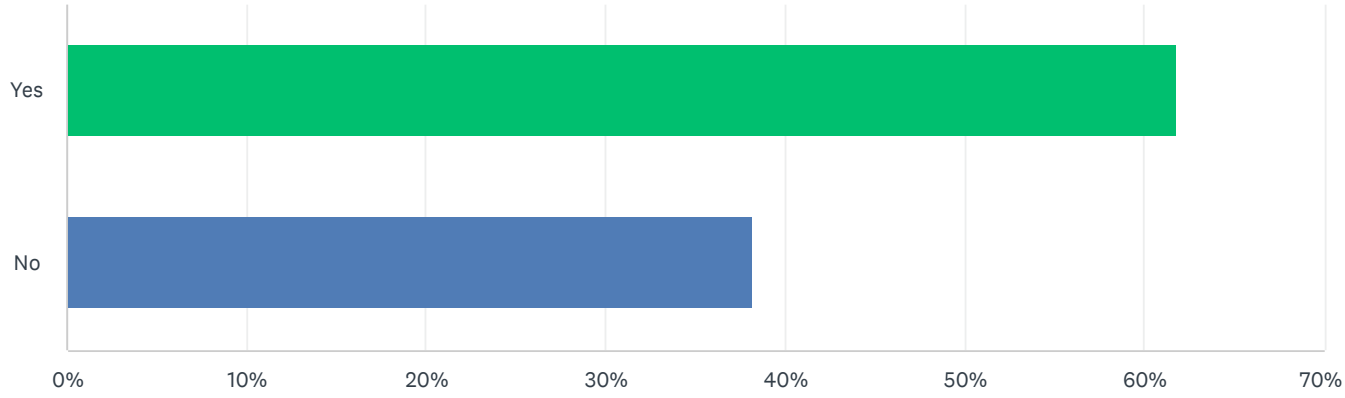
Answered: 21 Skipped: 65



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No fee / Free	28.57%	6
Lower annual fee minimum with the same per-client fee	33.33%	7
Flat annual fee with no per-client fee	38.10%	8
TOTAL		21

Q8 Would you like to provide input on commercial recreational use of the Cross Trail?

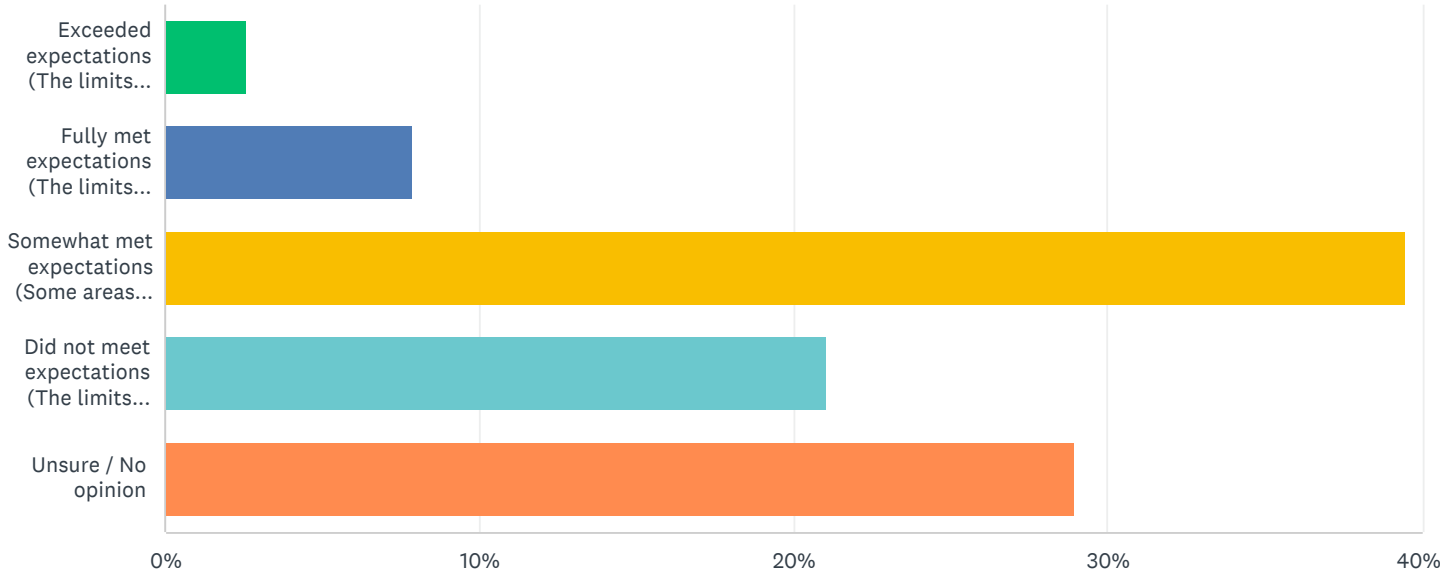
Answered: 76 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	61.84%	47
No	38.16%	29
TOTAL		76

Q9 Overall, do you feel like the 2026 season commercial use limits for the Cross Trail met your needs and expectations?

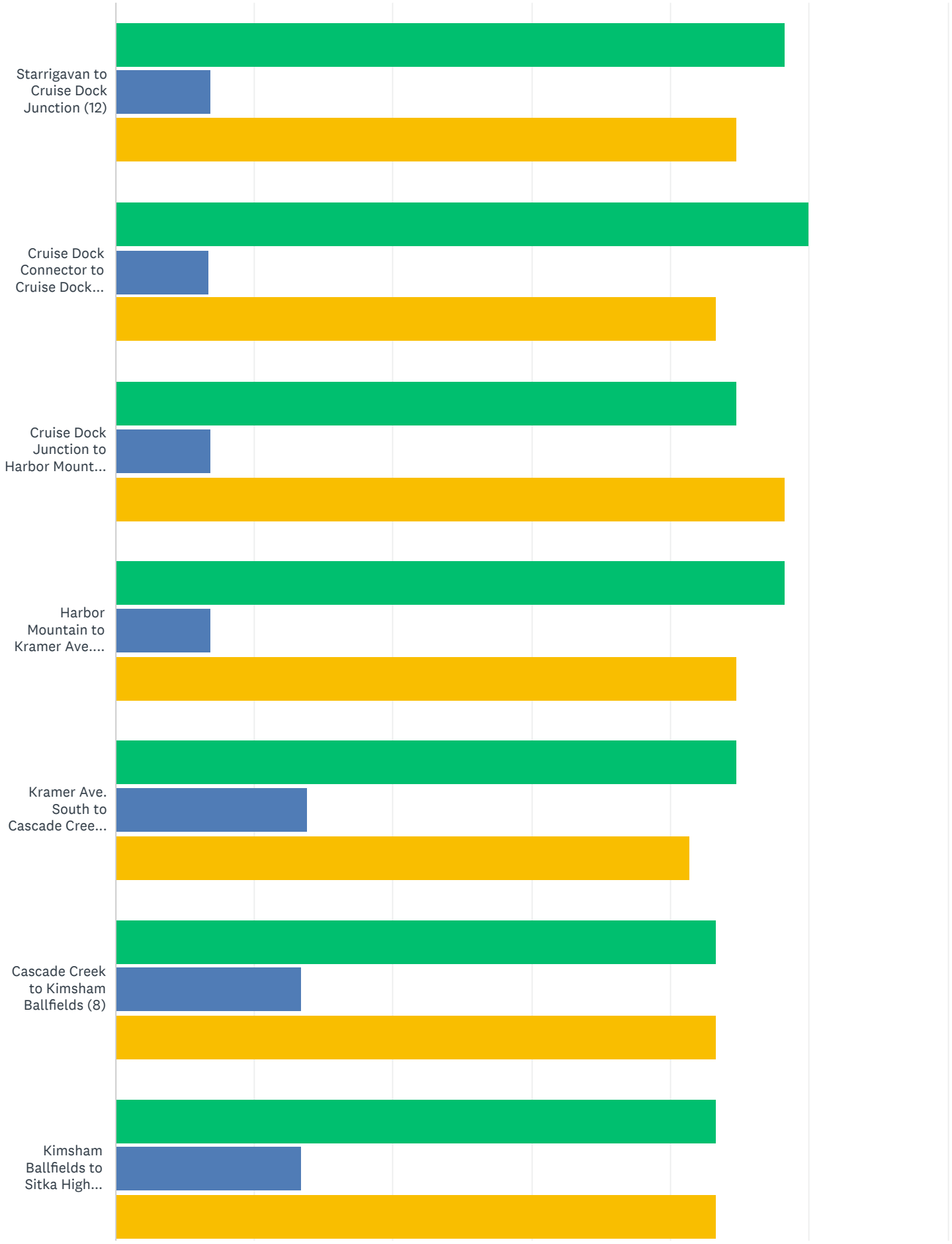
Answered: 38 Skipped: 48

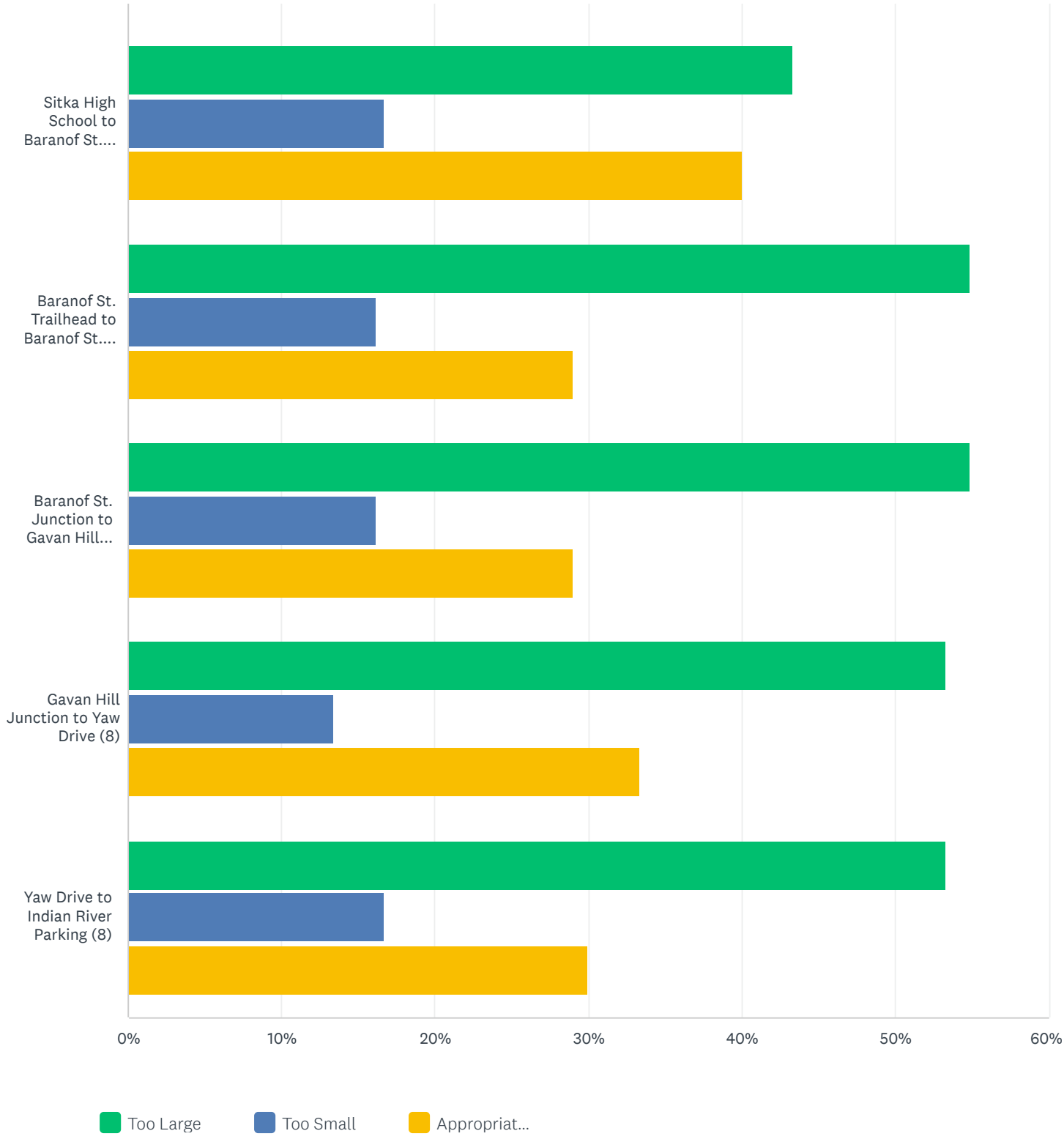


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Exceeded expectations (The limits effectively balanced commercial activity and community access)	2.63%	1
Fully met expectations (The limits were fair and appropriate)	7.89%	3
Somewhat met expectations (Some areas were well-managed, but others need adjustments)	39.47%	15
Did not meet expectations (The limits were either too restrictive or not restrictive enough)	21.05%	8
Unsure / No opinion	28.95%	11
TOTAL		38

Q10 Each segment of the Cross Trail and its 2026 group size limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the group size limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback for particular segments).

Answered: 32 Skipped: 54


Starrigavan to Cruise Dock Junction (12)
Cruise Dock Connector to Cruise Dock...
Cruise Dock Junction to Harbor Mount...
Harbor Mountain to Kramer Ave....
Kramer Ave. South to Cascade Cree...
Cascade Creek to Kimsham Ballfields (8)
Kimsham Ballfields to Sitka High...

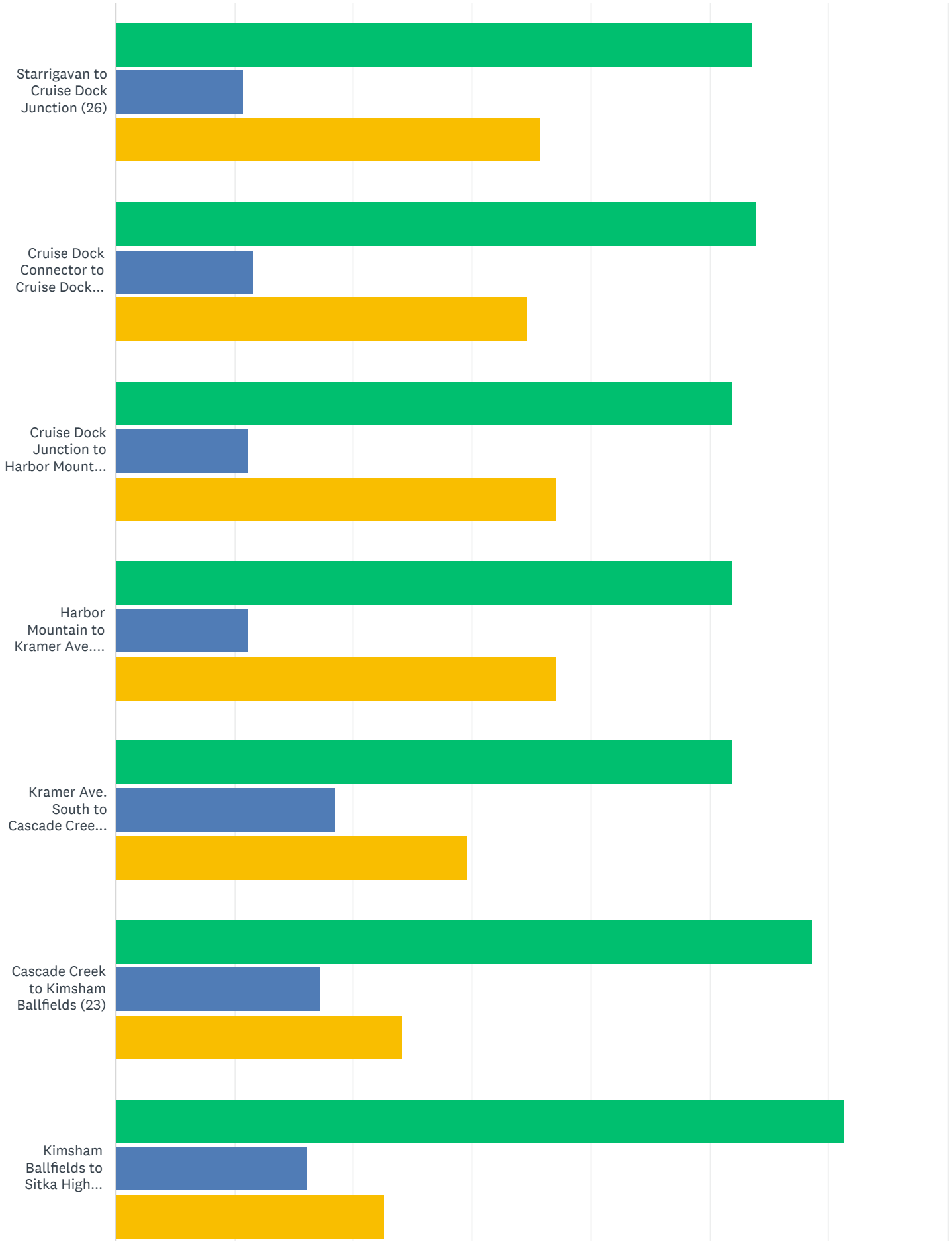


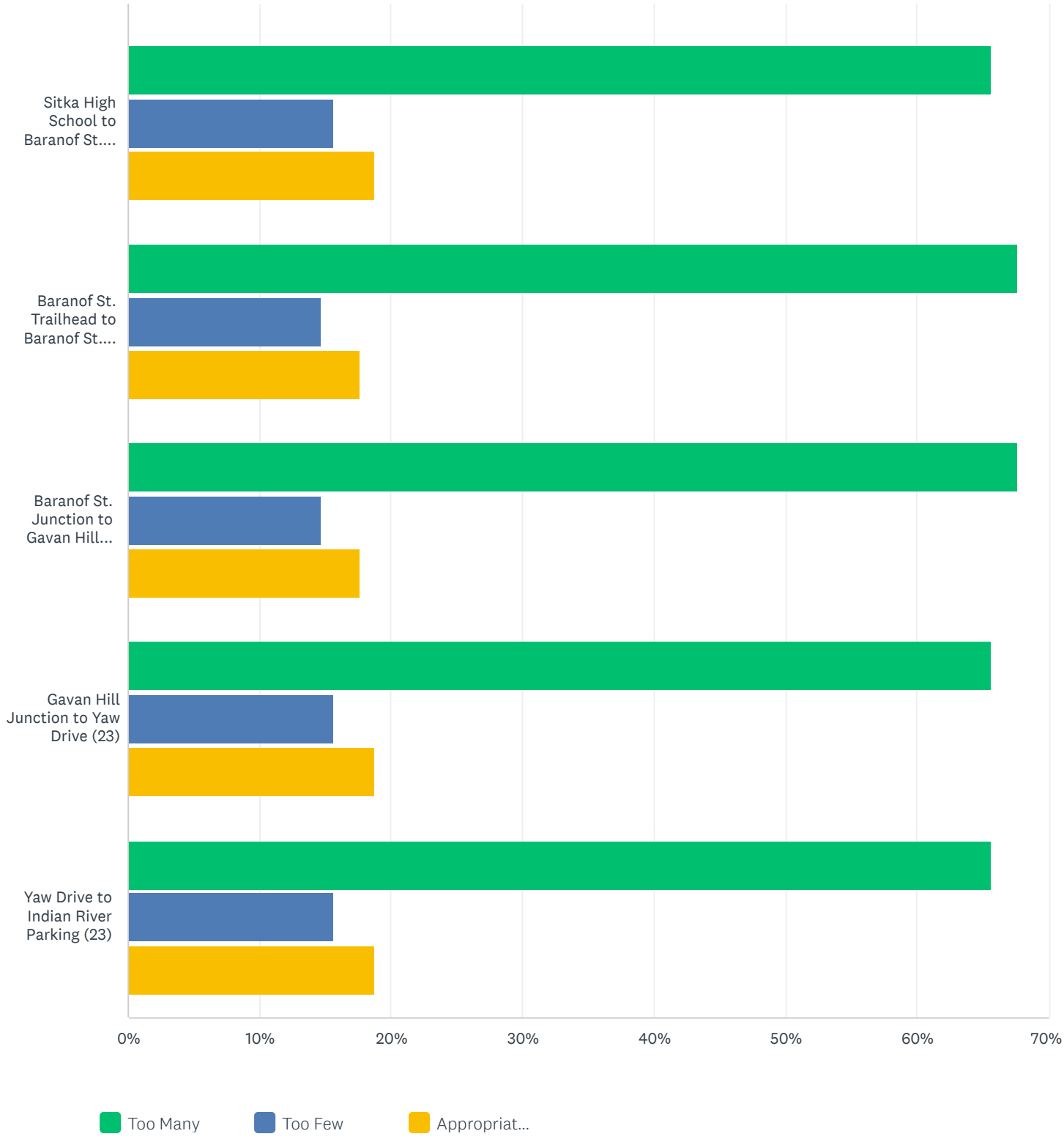
	TOO LARGE	TOO SMALL	APPROPRIATE SIZE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Starrigavan to Cruise Dock Junction (12)	48.28% 14	6.90% 2	44.83% 13	29	1.97
Cruise Dock Connector to Cruise Dock Junction (12)	50.00% 15	6.67% 2	43.33% 13	30	1.93

Cruise Dock Junction to Harbor Mountain (12)	44.83% 13	6.90% 2	48.28% 14	29	2.03
Harbor Mountain to Kramer Ave. South (12)	48.28% 14	6.90% 2	44.83% 13	29	1.97
Kramer Ave. South to Cascade Creek (8)	44.83% 13	13.79% 4	41.38% 12	29	1.97
Cascade Creek to Kimsham Ballfields (8)	43.33% 13	13.33% 4	43.33% 13	30	2.00
Kimsham Ballfields to Sitka High School (8)	43.33% 13	13.33% 4	43.33% 13	30	2.00
Sitka High School to Baranof St. Junction (8)	43.33% 13	16.67% 5	40.00% 12	30	1.97
Baranof St. Trailhead to Baranof St. Junction (8)	54.84% 17	16.13% 5	29.03% 9	31	1.74
Baranof St. Junction to Gavan Hill Junction (8)	54.84% 17	16.13% 5	29.03% 9	31	1.74
Gavan Hill Junction to Yaw Drive (8)	53.33% 16	13.33% 4	33.33% 10	30	1.80
Yaw Drive to Indian River Parking (8)	53.33% 16	16.67% 5	30.00% 9	30	1.77

Q11 Each Cross Trail segment and its 2026 groups per week limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the groups per week limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback to share on that particular segment).

Answered: 34 Skipped: 52


Starrigavan to Cruise Dock Junction (26)
Cruise Dock Connector to Cruise Dock...
Cruise Dock Junction to Harbor Mount...
Harbor Mountain to Kramer Ave....
Kramer Ave. South to Cascade Cree...
Cascade Creek to Kimsham Ballfields (23)
Kimsham Ballfields to Sitka High...

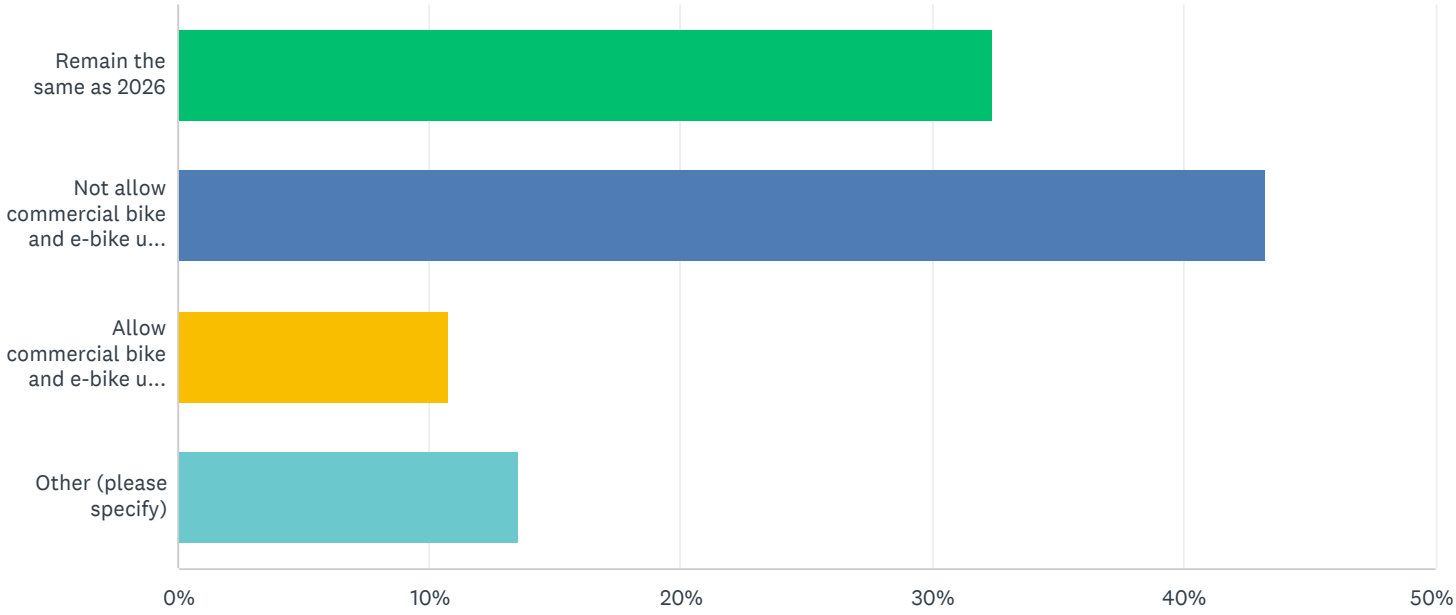


	TOO MANY	TOO FEW	APPROPRIATE NUMBER PER WEEK	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Starrigavan to Cruise Dock Junction (26)	53.57% 15	10.71% 3	35.71% 10	28	1.82
Cruise Dock Connector to Cruise Dock Junction (26)	53.85% 14	11.54% 3	34.62% 9	26	1.81

Cruise Dock Junction to Harbor Mountain (26)	51.85% 14	11.11% 3	37.04% 10	27	1.85
Harbor Mountain to Kramer Ave. South (26)	51.85% 14	11.11% 3	37.04% 10	27	1.85
Kramer Ave. South to Cascade Creek (23)	51.85% 14	18.52% 5	29.63% 8	27	1.78
Cascade Creek to Kimsham Ballfields (23)	58.62% 17	17.24% 5	24.14% 7	29	1.66
Kimsham Ballfields to Sitka High School (23)	61.29% 19	16.13% 5	22.58% 7	31	1.61
Sitka High School to Baranof St. Junction (23)	65.63% 21	15.63% 5	18.75% 6	32	1.53
Baranof St. Trailhead to Baranof St. Junction (23)	67.65% 23	14.71% 5	17.65% 6	34	1.50
Baranof St. Junction to Gavan Hill Junction (23)	67.65% 23	14.71% 5	17.65% 6	34	1.50
Gavan Hill Junction to Yaw Drive (23)	65.63% 21	15.63% 5	18.75% 6	32	1.53
Yaw Drive to Indian River Parking (23)	65.63% 21	15.63% 5	18.75% 6	32	1.53

Q12 In 2026, guided bike and e-bike use was allowed on the Cross Trail North (Kramer Avenue to Starrigavan), and not allowed on Cross Trail South (Kramer Avenue to Indian River Parking Lot). Bike and e-bike use for 2027 should:

Answered: 37 Skipped: 49



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Remain the same as 2026	32.43%	12
Not allow commercial bike and e-bike use on Cross Trail North	43.24%	16
Allow commercial bike and e-bike use on Cross Trail South	10.81%	4
Other (please specify)	13.51%	5
TOTAL		37

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	e-bikes should be restricted	9/21/2026 11:50 AM
2	No e-bikes period! Way too fast!	9/21/2026 8:43 AM
3	Less in number and size on the North crosstrail, please.	9/17/2026 9:11 PM
4	Not allow any commercial e-bikes. Only allow commercial pedal-only bikes.	9/6/2026 9:50 PM
5	Allow non e-bikes	9/4/2026 8:35 AM

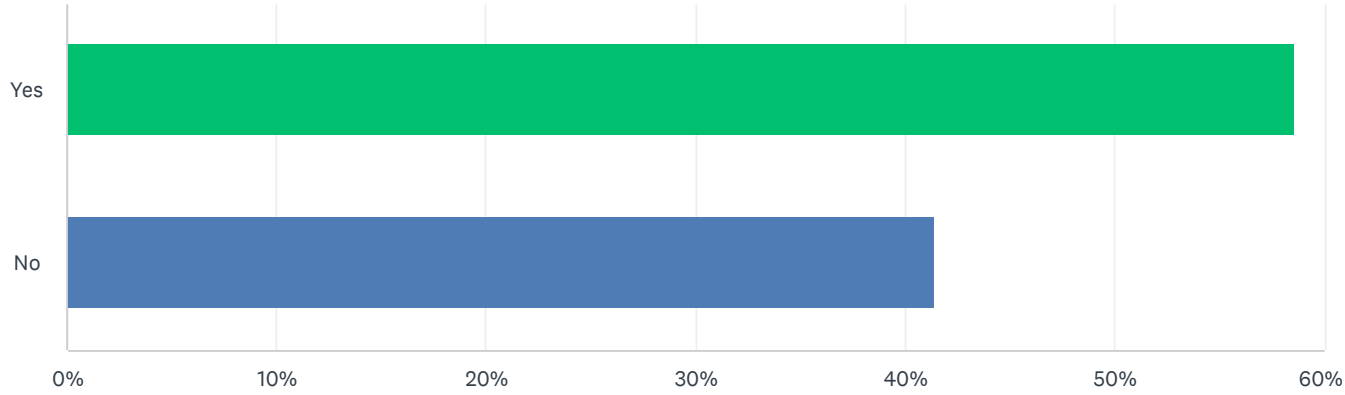
Q13 Provide any additional feedback, input, or concerns you have about commercial use on the Cross Trail:

Answered: 17 Skipped: 69

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	As a commercial operator, it can be hard to keep track of the rules when they're different for every section of trail and different for every permit we hold. If you want groups to follow the rules, make sure they are consistent across trails and permits (state, USFS).	9/30/2026 11:17 AM
2	Keep e-bikes off the Cross Trail! They go too fast! It's a hazard for children & dogs! And it wrecks the joy of walking in the trails!	9/27/2026 7:19 PM
3	As we phase out cruise ship visits due to green house effects and scrubber pollution until they repower with batteries or hydrogen we need to prepare the businesses catering to cruise ship tourists for the reductions.	9/26/2026 9:18 AM
4	I think cross trail south could be managed at the same limits as cross trail north sections.	9/25/2026 4:33 PM
5	E-bikes are extremely dangerous for runners, hikers, and walkers	9/24/2026 12:15 AM
6	We need bear appropriate trash receptacles at all the trailheads. With more traffic on the trails, both guided and unguided, we need to give people the option to be responsible by providing a place to dispose of trash. I am on the Cross Trail every day, often multiple times a day, and I did not notice a substantial uptick in tourists (mostly because I am on the trails before they arrive and after they leave), but I did see a large number of e-bikers on the north end of town. I have a dog, and the speed with which the ebikes travel is a constant concern to me. If I had to choose between HPR and the Crosstrail for e-bikes, I would choose the Crosstrail. I absolutely hate riding on HPR because the shoulder isn't wide enough, and the speed difference between cars and bikers isn't enough for safe passing.	9/23/2026 11:06 PM
7	There’s just too much.	9/21/2026 1:26 PM
8	It’s an off leash area and should stay that way. Bikes and off-leash don’t mix well.	9/21/2026 8:43 AM
9	No ebikes on any trails.	9/20/2026 1:06 PM
10	I think it’s good for e-bikes to have the ability to transit from the cruise dock to town on the cross trail but when they are in big groups and cruising fast it can be dangerous. Perhaps they need committee created education trail etiquette education	9/10/2026 12:47 PM
11	Please instruct all patrons to ride on premises that is with flow of traffic prior to rides.	9/10/2026 9:02 AM
12	No e-bikes.	9/6/2026 9:50 PM
13	The damage to our trail systems is obvious. The muskeg along the cross trail is getting trampled and beat down, the older parts of the trail are falling apart. There is more garbage than we’ve ever seen.	9/1/2026 12:33 PM
14	The bikes are terrible!!!	9/1/2026 5:20 AM
15	No evoke or bikes and no demarcates either	8/31/2026 9:33 PM
16	It is unfair to deny guided bike usage on a bike route that everyone else can use without just cause. It either needs to be bikeable for all or none.	8/28/2026 3:15 PM
17	I believe this is important to continue as the cross trail becomes more narrow the furhter south one proceeds. Additionally, the south end of the cross trail has higher local community traffic especially in/around areas like Kimsham due to neighborhoods and schools.	8/27/2026 11:53 AM

Q14 Would you like to provide input on commercial recreational use of other city-managed local roads and trails? (Includes: Gavan Hill, Kaasda Heen (Indian River), Thimbleberry/Heart Lake, Beaver Lake, Herring Cove, Blue Lake Road, Green Lake Road, and Medvejie Lake Trail)

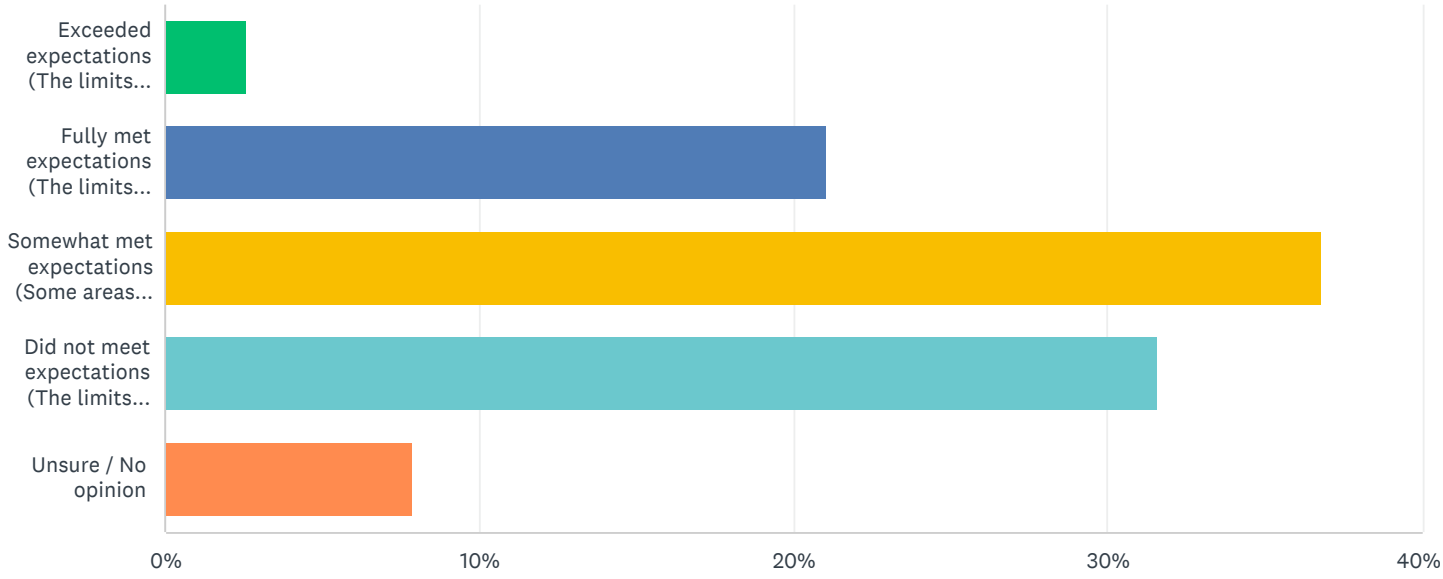
Answered: 70 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	58.57%	41
No	41.43%	29
TOTAL		70

Q15 Overall, do you feel like the 2026 season commercial use limits for other local access trails/roads met your needs and expectations?

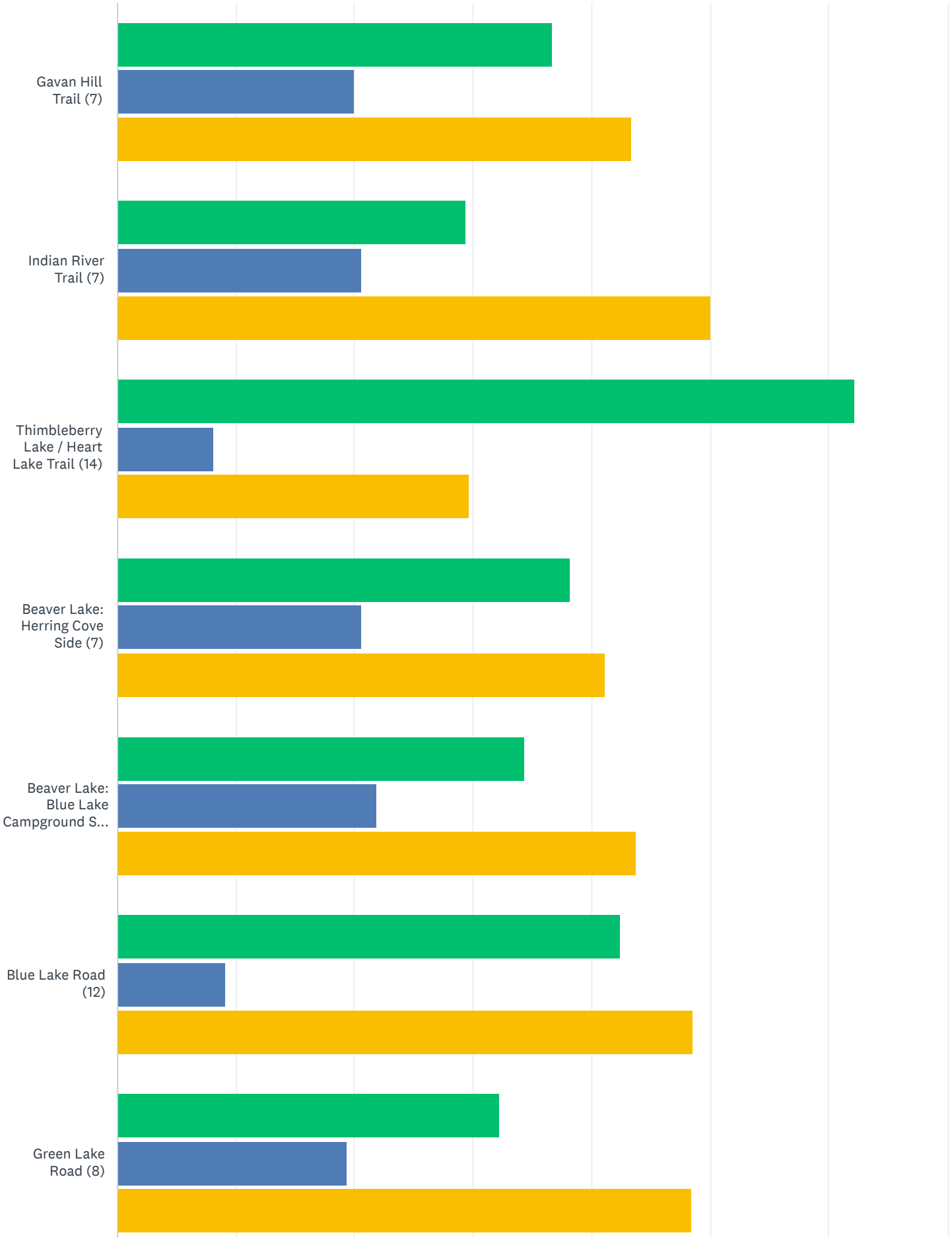
Answered: 38 Skipped: 48

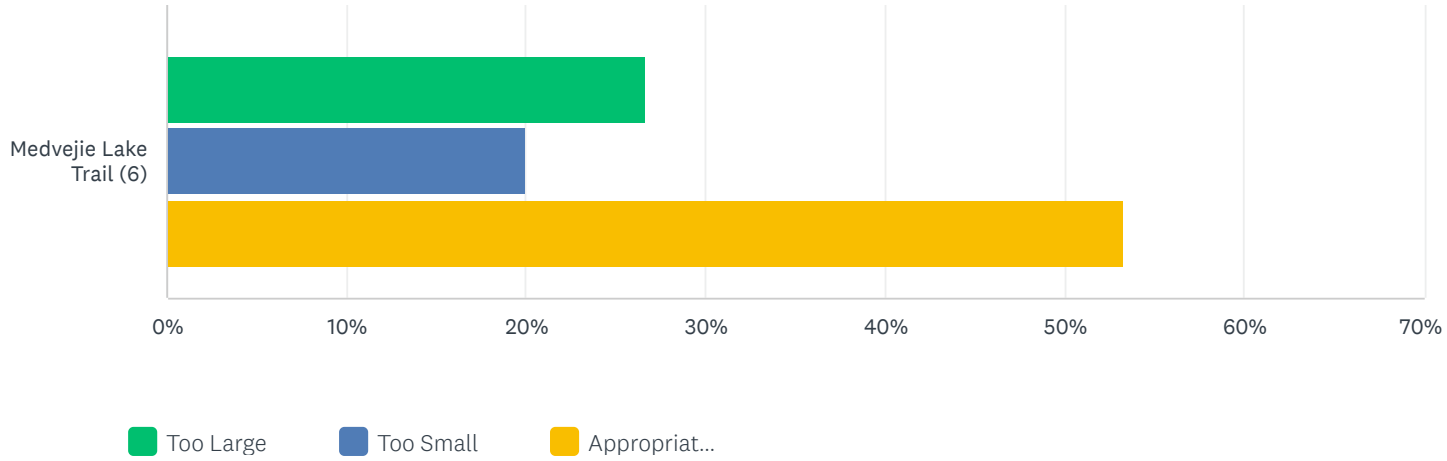


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Exceeded expectations (The limits effectively balanced commercial activity and community access)	2.63%	1
Fully met expectations (The limits were fair and appropriate)	21.05%	8
Somewhat met expectations (Some areas were well-managed, but others need adjustments)	36.84%	14
Did not meet expectations (The limits were either too restrictive or not restrictive enough)	31.58%	12
Unsure / No opinion	7.89%	3
TOTAL		38

Q16 Each local access road/trail and its 2026 group size limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the group size limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback for particular trails/roads).

Answered: 39 Skipped: 47

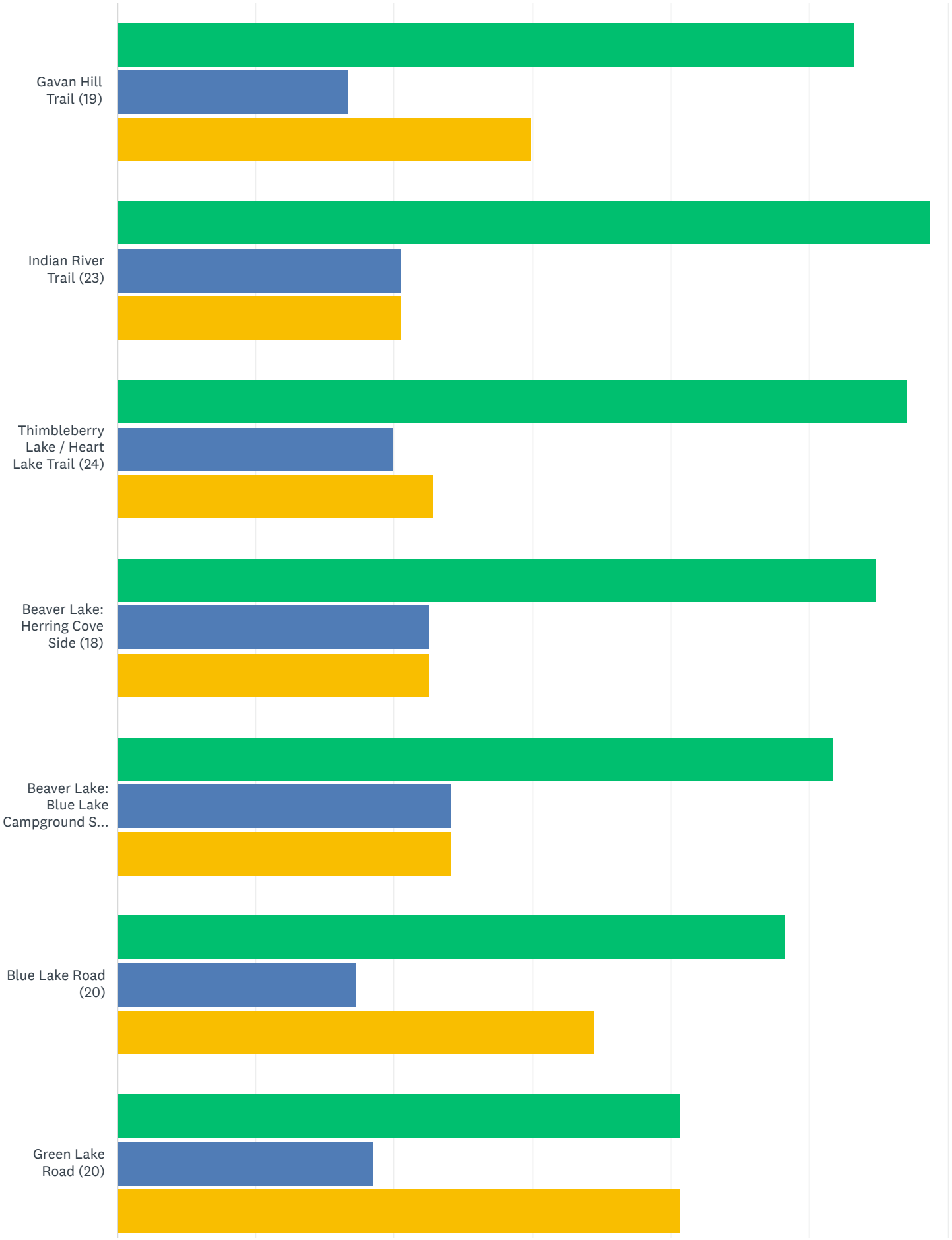

Gavan Hill Trail (7)
Indian River Trail (7)
Thimbleberry Lake / Heart Lake Trail (14)
Beaver Lake: Herring Cove Side (7)
Beaver Lake: Blue Lake Campground S...
Blue Lake Road (12)
Green Lake Road (8)

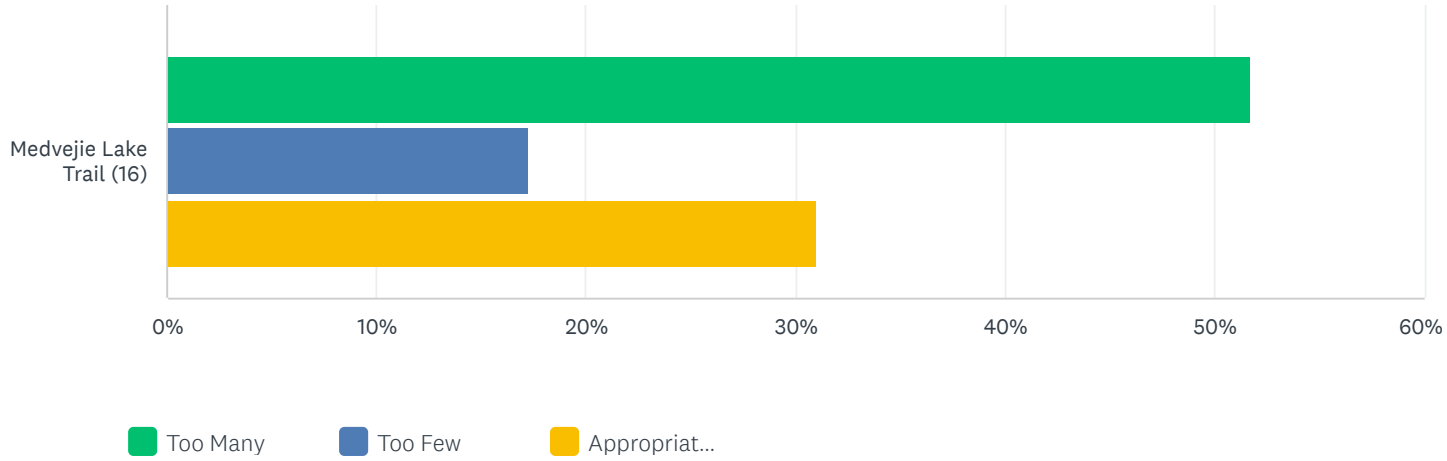


	TOO LARGE	TOO SMALL	APPROPRIATE SIZE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Gavan Hill Trail (7)	36.67% 11	20.00% 6	43.33% 13	30	2.07
Indian River Trail (7)	29.41% 10	20.59% 7	50.00% 17	34	2.21
Thimbleberry Lake / Heart Lake Trail (14)	62.16% 23	8.11% 3	29.73% 11	37	1.68
Beaver Lake: Herring Cove Side (7)	38.24% 13	20.59% 7	41.18% 14	34	2.03
Beaver Lake: Blue Lake Campground Side (7)	34.38% 11	21.88% 7	43.75% 14	32	2.09
Blue Lake Road (12)	42.42% 14	9.09% 3	48.48% 16	33	2.06
Green Lake Road (8)	32.26% 10	19.35% 6	48.39% 15	31	2.16
Medvejie Lake Trail (6)	26.67% 8	20.00% 6	53.33% 16	30	2.27

Q17 Each trail/road and its 2026 groups per week limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the groups per week limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback to share on that particular trail/road).

Answered: 36 Skipped: 50

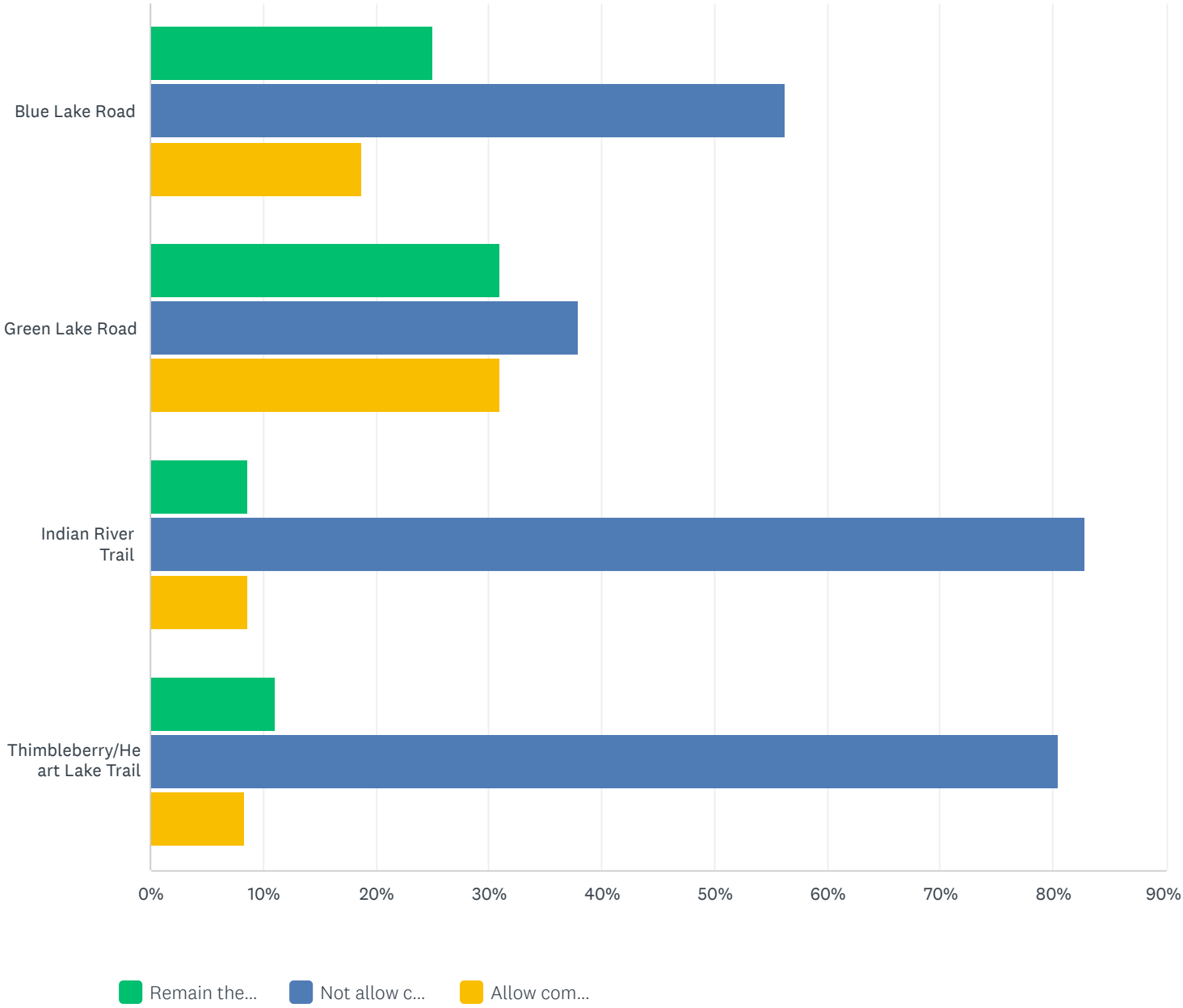

Gavan Hill Trail (19)
Indian River Trail (23)
Thimbleberry Lake / Heart Lake Trail (24)
Beaver Lake: Herring Cove Side (18)
Beaver Lake: Blue Lake Campground S...
Blue Lake Road (20)
Green Lake Road (20)



	TOO MANY	TOO FEW	APPROPRIATE NUMBER PER WEEK	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Gavan Hill Trail (19)	53.33% 16	16.67% 5	30.00% 9	30	1.77
Indian River Trail (23)	58.82% 20	20.59% 7	20.59% 7	34	1.62
Thimbleberry Lake / Heart Lake Trail (24)	57.14% 20	20.00% 7	22.86% 8	35	1.66
Beaver Lake: Herring Cove Side (18)	54.84% 17	22.58% 7	22.58% 7	31	1.68
Beaver Lake: Blue Lake Campground Side (18)	51.72% 15	24.14% 7	24.14% 7	29	1.72
Blue Lake Road (20)	48.28% 14	17.24% 5	34.48% 10	29	1.86
Green Lake Road (20)	40.74% 11	18.52% 5	40.74% 11	27	2.00
Medvejie Lake Trail (16)	51.72% 15	17.24% 5	31.03% 9	29	1.79

Q18 In 2026, guided bike and e-bike use was allowed on Blue Lake and Green Lake Road, and not allowed on other trails (some trails do not allow any bike use, commercial or personal). For roads and trails that allow Bike and e-bike use, for 2027 should:

Answered: 37 Skipped: 49



	REMAIN THE SAME AS 2026	NOT ALLOW COMMERCIAL BIKE AND E-BIKE USE	ALLOW COMMERCIAL BIKE AND E-BIKE USE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Blue Lake Road	25.00% 8	56.25% 18	18.75% 6	32	1.94
Green Lake Road	31.03% 9	37.93% 11	31.03% 9	29	2.00
Indian River Trail	8.57% 3	82.86% 29	8.57% 3	35	2.00
Thimbleberry/Heart Lake Trail	11.11% 4	80.56% 29	8.33% 3	36	1.97

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	The road to Katlian seems like a great multi-use trail for bikes and e-bikes.	9/23/2026 11:14 PM

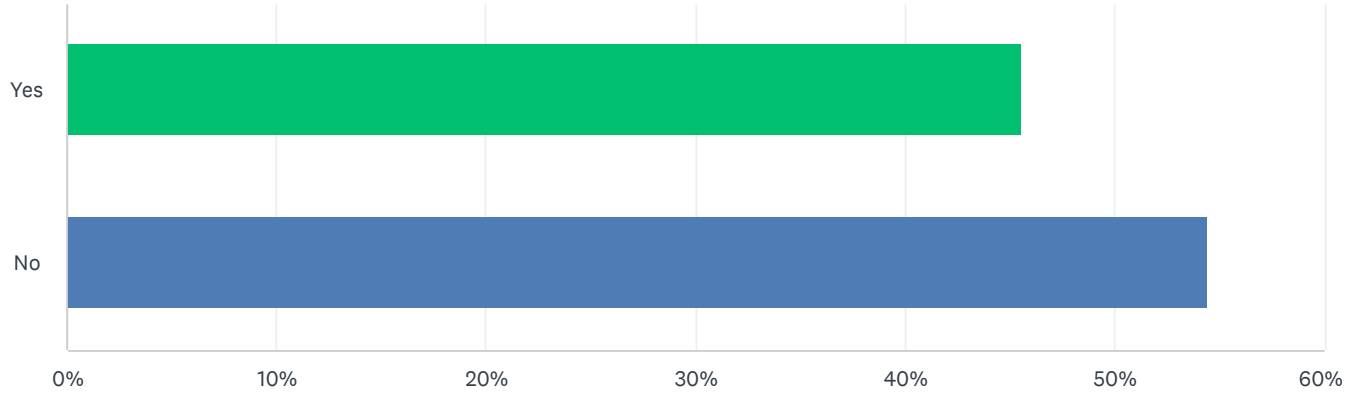
Q19 Provide any additional feedback, input, or concerns you have about commercial use on other local trails and roads:

Answered: 12 Skipped: 74

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	As a guide, groups of 7 feel appropriate on these trails. Again, I would ensure consistency between USFS, State, and also within your own permitting process. Like why is Medvejie one person less than the others? Also, I hesitate to support the 'number of groups' metric because as a small business like myself, most of my groups are 2 - 4 people but if I'm limited by number of groups in a week it makes me want to increase my group size. Doesn't that backfire a bit? Aren't I lower impact if I have couples and families of 4? Doesn't feel great to have pressure to have higher volume groups just to survive. Just want to raise that point.	9/30/2026 11:21 AM
2	We need places to go where we know there won't be tourists -can we pick some trails and leave some where they aren't in tours?	9/27/2026 7:22 PM
3	I hike for speed around here, often heading up the close mountains after work, and when you have to step off the trail for small groups, it isn't a big deal, but when I have to step aside for groups of 6-7 people, I get frustrated. On the wider trails, it isn't a problem, but on the narrow trails, it is scary at times and often frustrating. Gavan Hill/Harbor and Beaver Lake are narrow, steep trails; small group sizes work better.	9/23/2026 11:14 PM
4	Blue lake and Katlian should be open year round at the risk of individuals who use it. It is the responsibility of government to enable public areas for use, not restrict public areas for use because of the inherent risk involved in being in some areas.	9/23/2026 8:56 PM
5	I think the city should let all small businesses thrive. I do believe there is a balance of the right amount of use allowed on these trials but I don’t think small businesses should have to pay crazy fees to do this!	9/21/2026 9:07 AM
6	Very dangerous to mix walkers, bikes and vehicles on gravel roads. No bikes on trails!!	9/17/2026 9:21 PM
7	Overall over use was a concern and I find the suggested 2027 tourist numbers that exceed the MOU unacceptable	9/16/2026 7:11 AM
8	I believe that the rental companies tell tourists how to act on the road or give them their little safety video, but at the end of the day most of these folks seem to do whatever they want. And they just don't respect pedestrians, don't really get out of the way to one side when pedestrians are walking or running, ride in the middle of the sidewalk and on the wrong side of the road. It's like 90% wrong etiquette and 10% correct etiquette.	9/11/2026 10:07 AM
9	I have run into very large groups of tourists while on Thimbleberry trail with my minor child. It's too much getting passed by more than a dozen people at once. I think the size of the groups currently there is out-of-hand.	9/6/2026 9:52 PM
10	Thimbleberry trail is so beat up it’s hazardous. The trail is literally falling apart. The plastic webbing coming through tripped an older member of our group and she fell. Indian River is also showing signs of overuse.	9/1/2026 12:35 PM
11	mosquito cove trail over used	9/1/2026 9:51 AM
12	Keep Medvejie wild.	8/31/2026 7:28 PM

Q20 Would you like to provide input on commercial recreational use of local water access points? (Includes: Swan Lake, Crescent Harbor Boat Launch, Eagle Beach ["Back Beach"], Blue Lake, Herring Cove, and Green Lake)

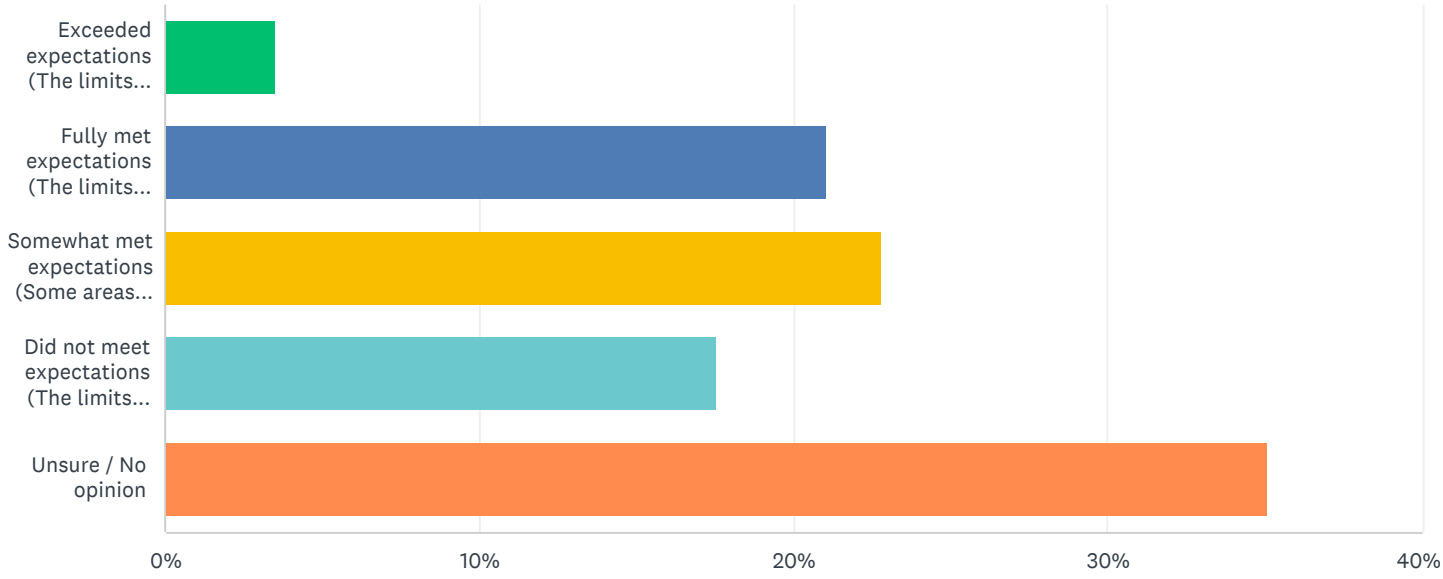
Answered: 68 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	45.59%	31
No	54.41%	37
TOTAL		68

Q21 Do you feel like the 2026 season commercial use limits for local water access points met your needs and expectations?

Answered: 57 Skipped: 29



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Exceeded expectations (The limits effectively balanced commercial activity and community access)	3.51%	2
Fully met expectations (The limits were fair and appropriate)	21.05%	12
Somewhat met expectations (Some areas were well-managed, but others need adjustments)	22.81%	13
Did not meet expectations (The limits were either too restrictive or not restrictive enough)	17.54%	10
Unsure / No opinion	35.09%	20
TOTAL		57

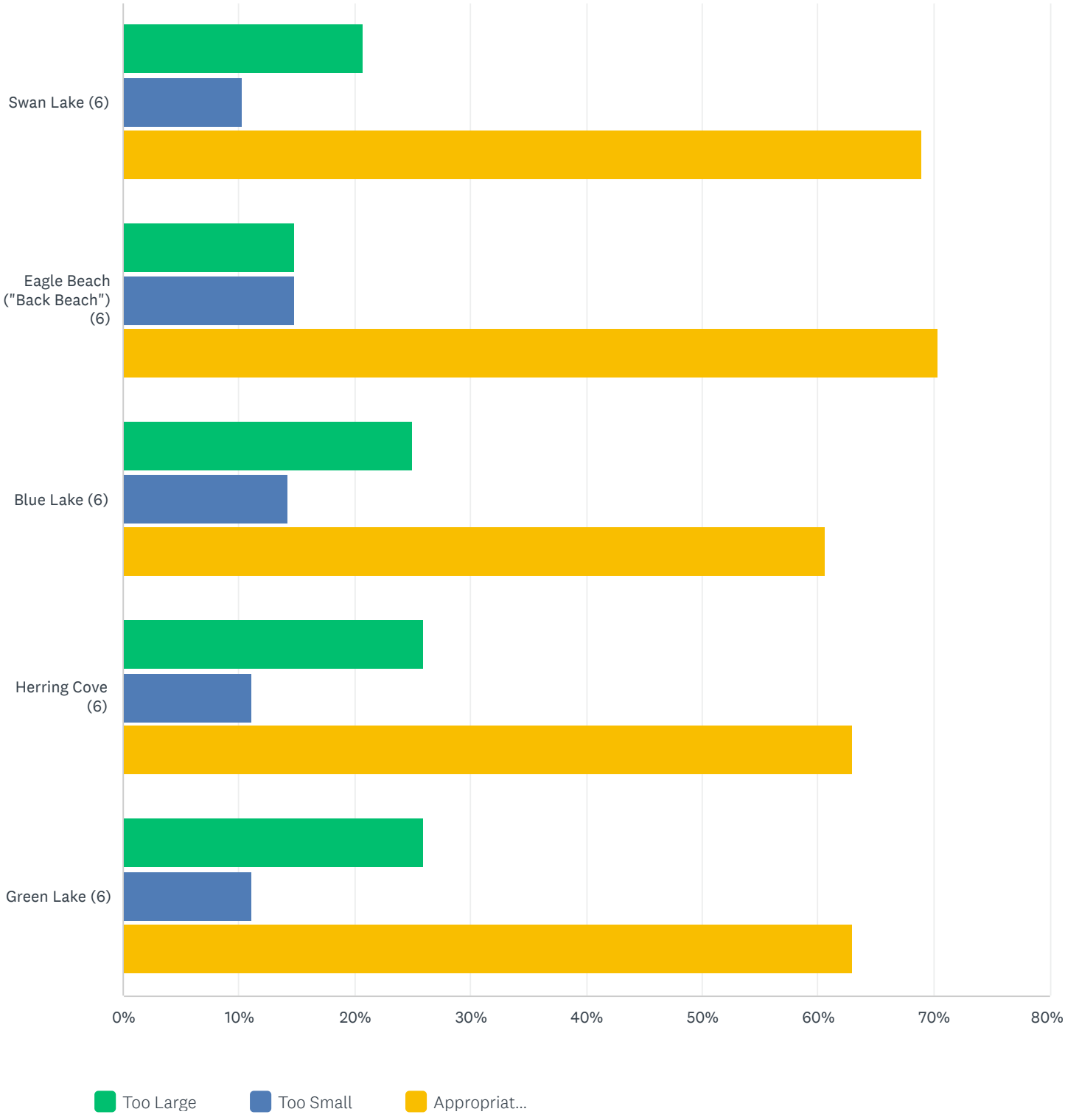
Q22 If the 2026 limits did not fully meet your expectations, please briefly explain why (e.g., specific trails felt over-congested, group sizes were too small/large, etc.):

Answered: 12 Skipped: 74

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	group sizes at Baranof Warm Springs is too small. The homeowners request was for group size if no more than 10 which would be adequate.	9/25/2026 3:25 PM
2	Group size was too small, I would like a group size to be limited to 10 guests	9/25/2026 3:20 PM
3	Not restrictive enough	9/24/2026 1:59 PM
4	There was so much water traffic this past year that I was terrified for paddle sports operating near the harbor.	9/23/2026 11:19 PM
5	Too many tourists everywhere	9/23/2026 9:56 PM
6	Crescent Harbor is WAY too crowded, fewer and smaller groups and LIMIT the number of vendors, please!	9/17/2026 9:34 PM
7	Over congested and now the 2027 season suggests the MOU will not be honored. Starrigavan was overrun when water was combined with land use.	9/16/2026 7:11 AM
8	Your policies appear to impact more severely, small operators whose use is far less impactful than larger operators	9/15/2026 9:38 AM
9	It is frustrating to not have access to the crescent harbor boat launch and the back parking lot available to residents.	9/10/2026 12:58 PM
10	Too much restrictions and excessive fees detrimental to business for public land use.	9/10/2026 9:08 AM
11	Baranoff Warm Springs has at times been inviting even though I have valid permits. Group size of less than 6 is too restrictive in my opinion	8/28/2026 8:35 PM
12	We over corrected on group size at Baranof Warm Springs, the residents there asked for group size of 10 and we restricted it to 6 which is too small and punishes the operators paying the fees and doing it correctly and doesn't address the real issue of lack of enforcement for non permitted operators. If we put some focus and effort in this arena the message would quickly get heard and the overage would stop as they would stop going there or hire a local permitted operator to do it the correct way with proper coordination, scheduling and respect.	8/28/2026 7:50 PM

Q23 Each local water access point and its 2026 group size limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the group size limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback for particular areas).

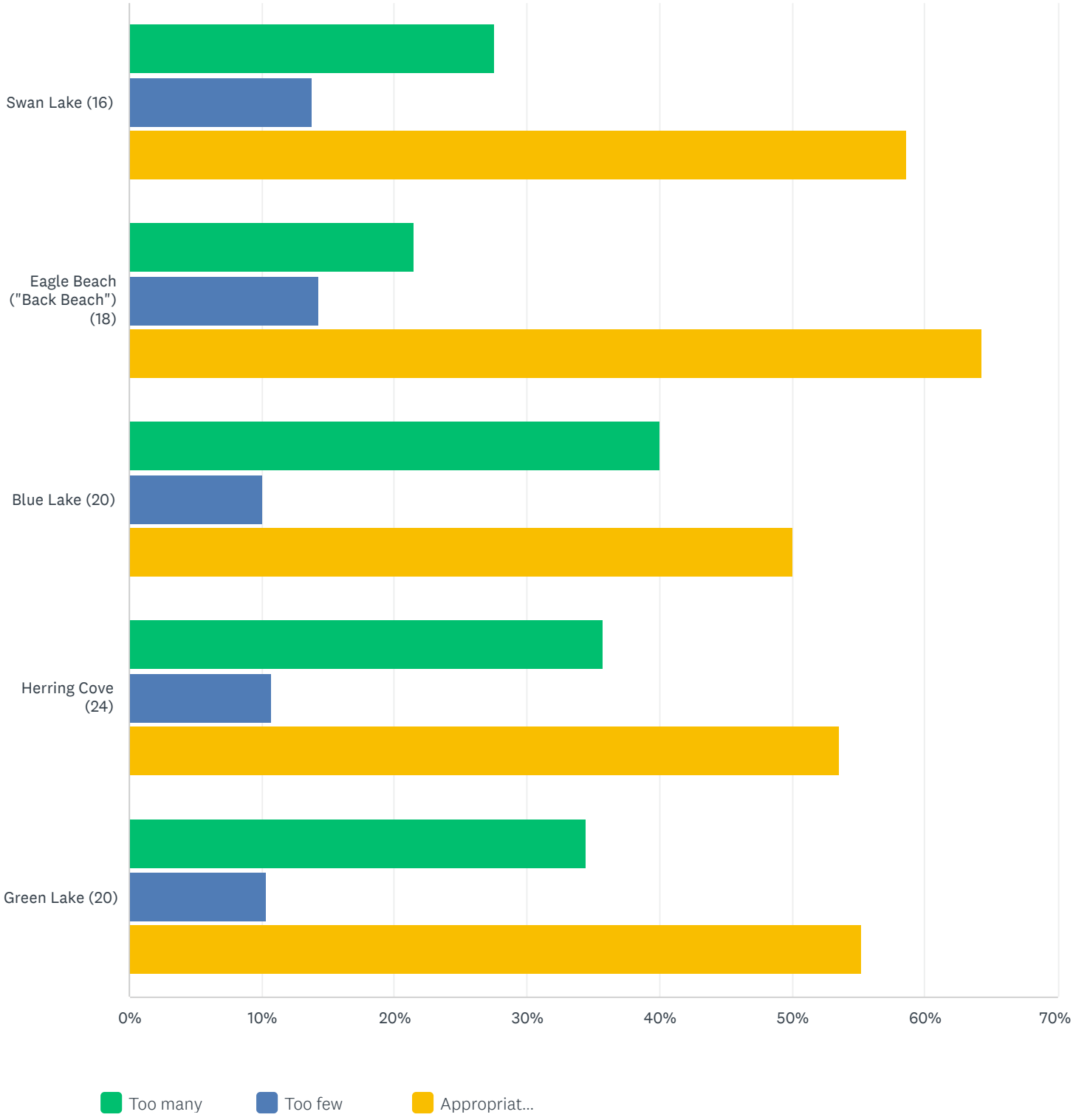
Answered: 29 Skipped: 57



	TOO LARGE	TOO SMALL	APPROPRIATE SIZE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Swan Lake (6)	20.69% 6	10.34% 3	68.97% 20	29	2.48
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach") (6)	14.81% 4	14.81% 4	70.37% 19	27	2.56
Blue Lake (6)	25.00% 7	14.29% 4	60.71% 17	28	2.36
Herring Cove (6)	25.93% 7	11.11% 3	62.96% 17	27	2.37
Green Lake (6)	25.93% 7	11.11% 3	62.96% 17	27	2.37

Q24 Each local water access point and its 2026 groups per week limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the groups per week limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback to share on that particular area).

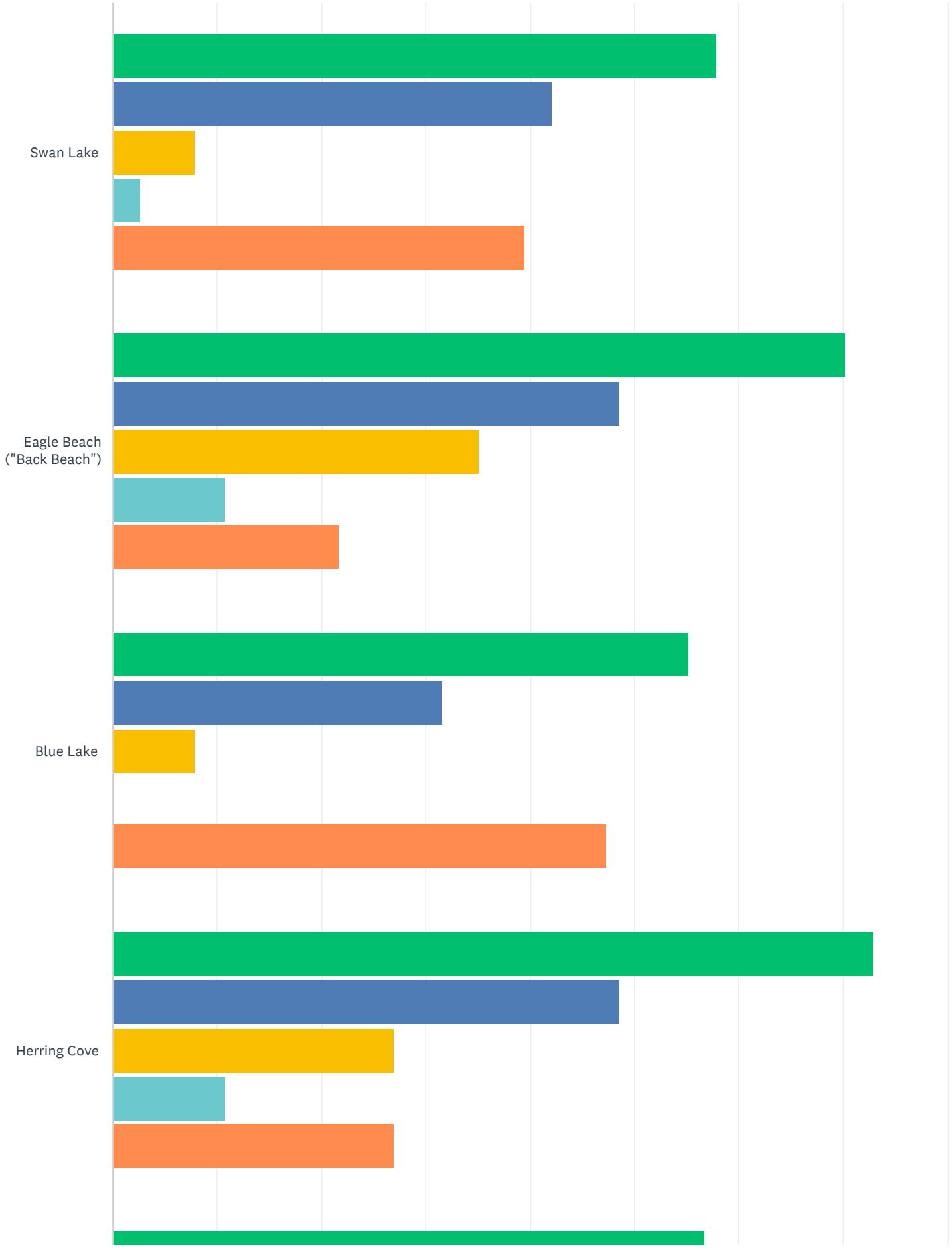
Answered: 30 Skipped: 56

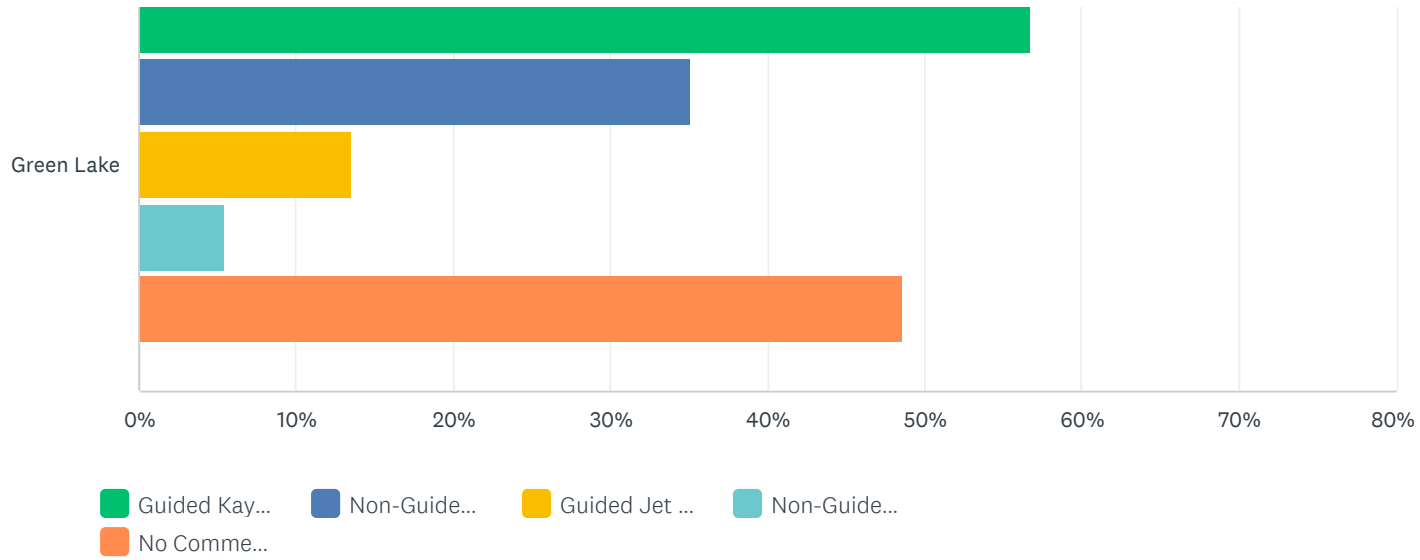

Swan Lake (16)
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach") (18)
Blue Lake (20)
Herring Cove (24)
Green Lake (20)
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
Too many
Too few
Appropriat...

	TOO MANY	TOO FEW	APPROPRIATE GROUPS PER WEEK	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Swan Lake (16)	27.59% 8	13.79% 4	58.62% 17	29	2.31
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach") (18)	21.43% 6	14.29% 4	64.29% 18	28	2.43
Blue Lake (20)	40.00% 12	10.00% 3	50.00% 15	30	2.10
Herring Cove (24)	35.71% 10	10.71% 3	53.57% 15	28	2.18
Green Lake (20)	34.48% 10	10.34% 3	55.17% 16	29	2.21

Q25 What types of commercial watercrafts should be permitted in these areas? (Note, SUP = stand-up paddle board).

Answered: 38 Skipped: 48


Swan Lake
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach")
Blue Lake
Herring Cove



	GUIDED KAYAKS/SUPS	NON-GUIDED KAYAKS/SUPS	GUIDED JET SKIS	NON-GUIDED JET SKIS	NO COMMERCIAL WATERCRAFT	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Swan Lake	57.89% 22	42.11% 16	7.89% 3	2.63% 1	39.47% 15	38
Eagle Beach ("Back Beach")	70.27% 26	48.65% 18	35.14% 13	10.81% 4	21.62% 8	37
Blue Lake	55.26% 21	31.58% 12	7.89% 3	0.00% 0	47.37% 18	38
Herring Cove	72.97% 27	48.65% 18	27.03% 10	10.81% 4	27.03% 10	37
Green Lake	56.76% 21	35.14% 13	13.51% 5	5.41% 2	48.65% 18	37

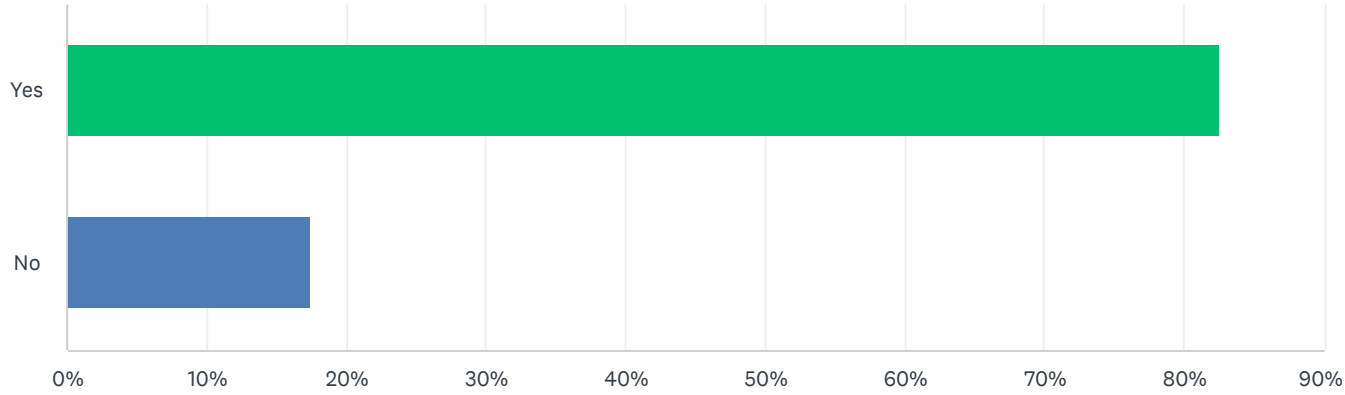
Q26 Provide any additional feedback, input, or concerns you have about commercial use at local water access points:

Answered: 10 Skipped: 76

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Please continue your appropriate controls at the Baranof Warm Springs dock.	9/28/2026 7:06 AM
2	OK this is not listed, but tribal tour's brings their tours to Sandy Beach-cameras the lot and crowds local experience! I	9/27/2026 7:24 PM
3	All water sports participants should be required to complete marine safety training, including rules of the road, local etiquette, and cold-water survival before being granted a permit.	9/23/2026 11:19 PM
4	During the summer season, is there any way to permit public access to the ramp behind HCH? For example, it could be open on days with fewer, or no cruise ships. This is an important local water access point for residents with small skiffs or non-motorized water craft, because Sealing cove is often congested.	9/19/2026 10:11 AM
5	Concerned about uses of Blue Lake by Commercial operators...WE DRINK that water!	9/17/2026 9:34 PM
6	In your current operating model you have disproportionately impacted small and part time operators through limits that do little or nothing to reduce the overall commercial-use impact on sites like Eagle Beach, Herring Cove and Goddard Hot Springs	9/15/2026 9:38 AM
7	Please contain the tourists to the zones they are already using and not allow them to spread to our quiet getaways like back beach, blue lake, green lake, etc	9/10/2026 12:58 PM
8	Pause water activities 2 weeks prior to expected return of spawn. Then discontinued till following season for business.	9/10/2026 9:08 AM
9	No jet skis. That's a recipe for disaster.	9/6/2026 9:53 PM
10	Jet skies are awful and many left Sitka and disturbed anchorages.	9/1/2026 5:26 AM

Q27 Would you like to provide input on commercial recreational use of remote municipal areas and locations? (Includes: Baranof Warm Springs, Goddard Hot Springs, Takatz Bay and Sitka Sound Islands)

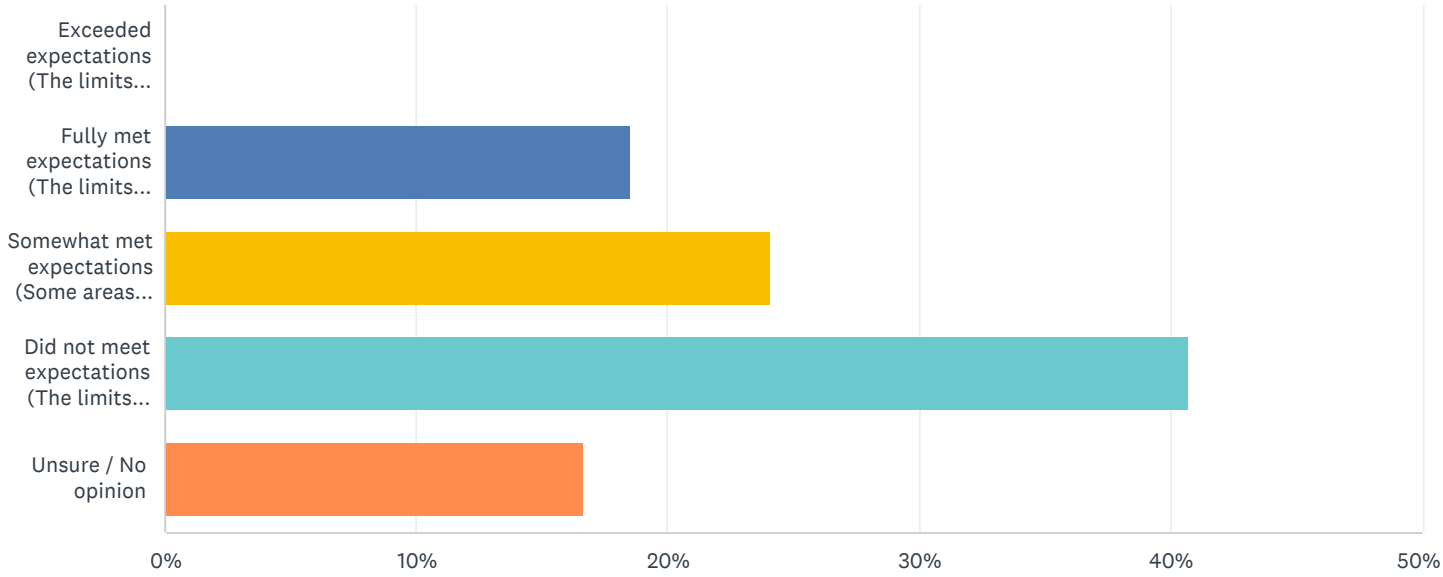
Answered: 69 Skipped: 17



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	82.61%	57
No	17.39%	12
TOTAL		69

Q28 Do you feel like the 2026 season commercial use limits for special use areas met your needs and expectations?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 32



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Exceeded expectations (The limits effectively balanced commercial activity and community access)	0.00%	0
Fully met expectations (The limits were fair and appropriate)	18.52%	10
Somewhat met expectations (Some areas were well-managed, but others need adjustments)	24.07%	13
Did not meet expectations (The limits were either too restrictive or not restrictive enough)	40.74%	22
Unsure / No opinion	16.67%	9
TOTAL		54

Q29 If the 2026 limits did not fully meet your expectations, please briefly explain why (e.g., specific trails felt over-congested, group sizes were too small/large, etc.):

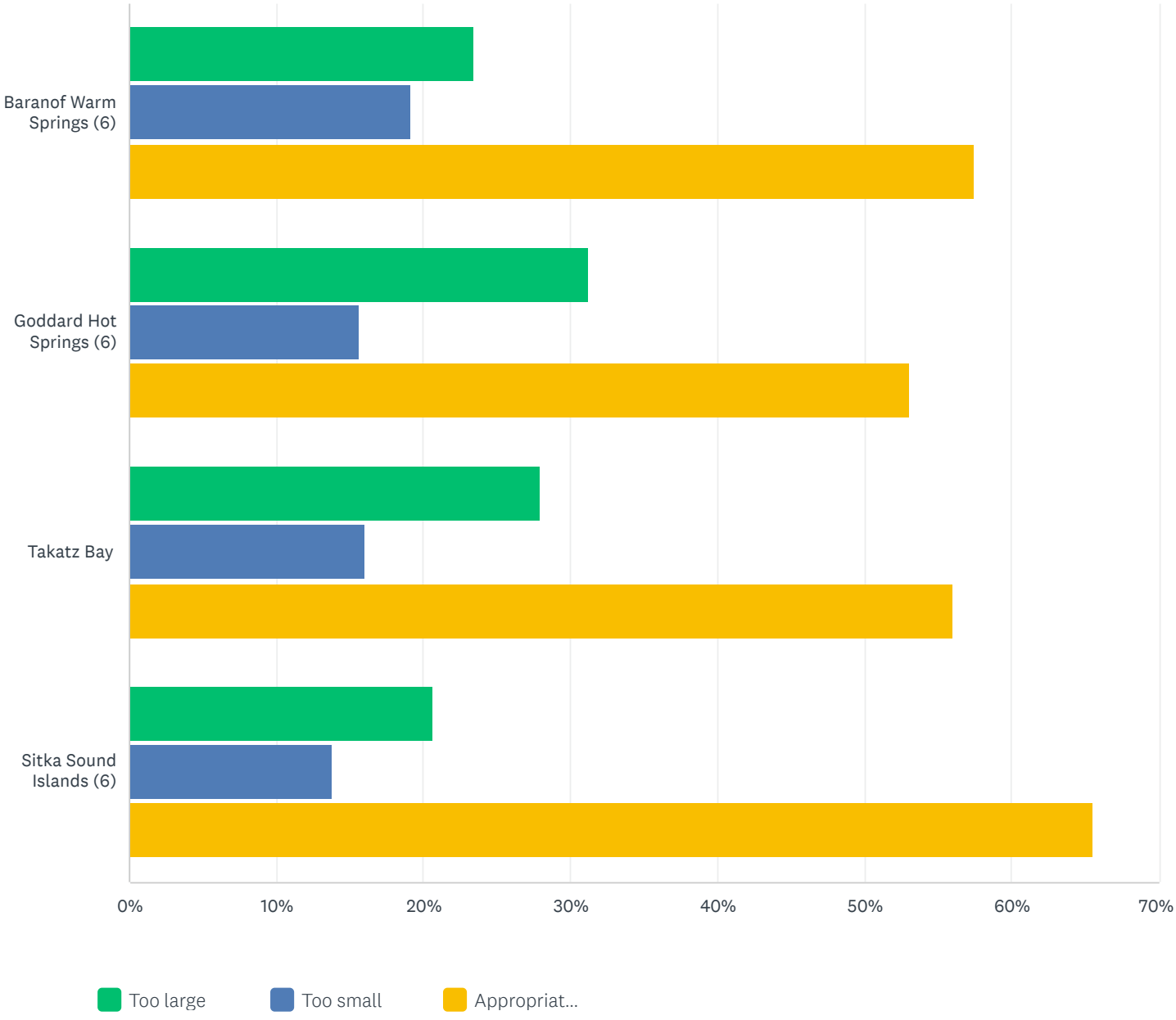
Answered: 28 Skipped: 58

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Takatz permitting process raised many concerns. 1) The board allocated usage inequitably based on order that operators presented - one operator received 500 while the next who presented was asked to reduce to 300. 2) The board did not seem prepared to make an informed evaluation of usage at Takatz - they were not aware of normal Tongass season usage and group size limits at this site. Concerningly, they adopted one operator's erroneous statement about Tongass group size limits as fact (the operator mistakenly stated that the Forest Service Service's group size limit at Takatz was 12. The group size limit of 12 was then written into the permit as "equivalent" to the Tongass group size limit, when in fact the Tongass group size limit is 20. It was concerning that this was not checked with the Forest Service.	9/30/2026 1:56 PM
2	Need a 12 hour limit per vessel. For all vessels. Need enforcement of fees for all users. Even short-time users.	9/28/2026 3:01 PM
3	Some operators made multable lands with multable with groups of 6	9/28/2026 12:33 PM
4	Trails eroding	9/28/2026 11:32 AM
5	Our group size for Baranof Warm Springs is 6 guests at a time. This is a very small group size, and while we understand, we also watched groups of larger quantities come in and out of the hot springs while we were held to 6. At one point we watched 3 vessels unload all of their people and go to the hot springs.	9/28/2026 9:35 AM
6	Baranof trail was way over used and commercial users didn’t pay	9/26/2026 1:27 PM
7	There was no apparent reduction in the number of groups or group size in Baranof Warm Springs last summer. There are many new boats guiding tours and it appears many don't have permits.	9/26/2026 10:19 AM
8	No one enforces this. Doubt all and probably none of the commercial operators that used Warm Spings had permit	9/25/2026 4:28 PM
9	group sizes at Baranof Warm Springs is too small. The homeowners request was for group size if no more than 10 which would be adequate.	9/25/2026 3:28 PM
10	I would like a group size limit of 20 guests	9/25/2026 3:21 PM
11	Too much too many	9/24/2026 2:02 PM
12	Too many tourists	9/23/2026 9:58 PM
13	Too many UN-permitted users at BWS. The number of groups FAR exceeds the number you're permitting!	9/17/2026 9:44 PM
14	Every guide/yacht does not have a permit and does not contribute to the cost of maintaining areas	9/17/2026 9:42 PM
15	There has been complaints of congestion in some areas and I find the suggestion that 2027 tourist numbers will exceed the MOU unacceptable	9/16/2026 7:15 AM
16	As an expedition kayak outfitter, previous to 2026, I was permitted to guide clients to Goddard. The largest group I ever took there was 4 people. Some years I did not go at all, the most I ever used Goddard was 3 times and we never stayed more than 2.6 hours from landing to leaving . With the exception of one trip in 2024 every use was as a final day water-taxi pickup site. Denying my company access does almost nothing to affect overall use of the HS but seriously affects my income potential.	9/15/2026 9:53 AM

17	People at Goddard don't understand local etiquette when there are multiple people waiting for tubs and they don't get out after a reasonable time, don't clean up after themselves, etc	9/11/2026 10:10 AM
18	Too much red tape to conduct business.	9/10/2026 9:12 AM
19	Commercial use is unfairly impacting the Baranof Warm Springs special use areas and the City and Borough of Sitka does not fairly represent that area with tax monies to offset that use.	9/7/2026 9:47 AM
20	Groups were continuous brought into warm springs bay after dropping off the 1st 6 guests.	9/6/2026 8:08 AM
21	I feel that a small group of around 5 Sitka boats are being targeted and regulated when we are a very small impact on the over all traffic. We dont go there every week but even if we did that is 30 people max in a week. We dont go there at the same time either cause we all talk and plan out going there at different times.	9/3/2026 1:12 PM
22	Everything felt appropriate other than the fact that the city parks and rec is so disconnected from the actual user group that they hold the meeting while most operators and commercial users of BWS are still conducting their seasons. If you want representation from the actual users and not just the “residents” of BWS, you should probably do better research. Asking around, we all feel slighted.	9/3/2026 11:47 AM
23	I do not think tours should be allowed to go to Chai Chis or Crow Island. These are local favorites. Stay away.	8/31/2026 7:34 PM
24	Goddard Hot springs should not treat vessels differently weather they are water taxi's or charter boats. Both should have access.	8/29/2026 11:05 AM
25	Shoulder (spring) season group sizes are too small - require a longer stay than needed.	8/29/2026 7:37 AM
26	Same as above. Baranoff Warm Springs was too restrictive and “local” residents made comments even with our permits	8/28/2026 8:40 PM
27	see previous notes	8/28/2026 7:59 PM
28	Areas like Goddard felt congested on certain summer days with both local and tourist traffic.	8/27/2026 12:03 PM

Q30 Each special use area and its 2026 group size limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the group size limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback for particular areas).

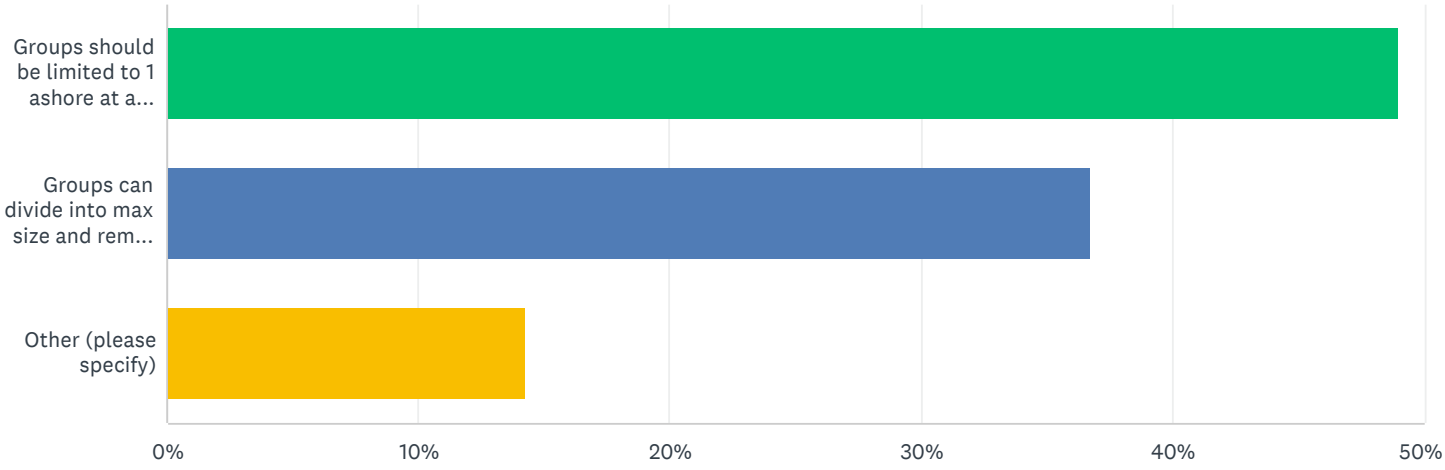
Answered: 50 Skipped: 36



	TOO LARGE	TOO SMALL	APPROPRIATE SIZE	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Baranof Warm Springs (6)	23.40% 11	19.15% 9	57.45% 27	47	3.34
Goddard Hot Springs (6)	31.25% 10	15.63% 5	53.13% 17	32	3.22
Takatz Bay	28.00% 7	16.00% 4	56.00% 14	25	3.28
Sitka Sound Islands (6)	20.69% 6	13.79% 4	65.52% 19	29	3.45

Q31 How would you prefer groups from larger vessels manage their groups?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 37

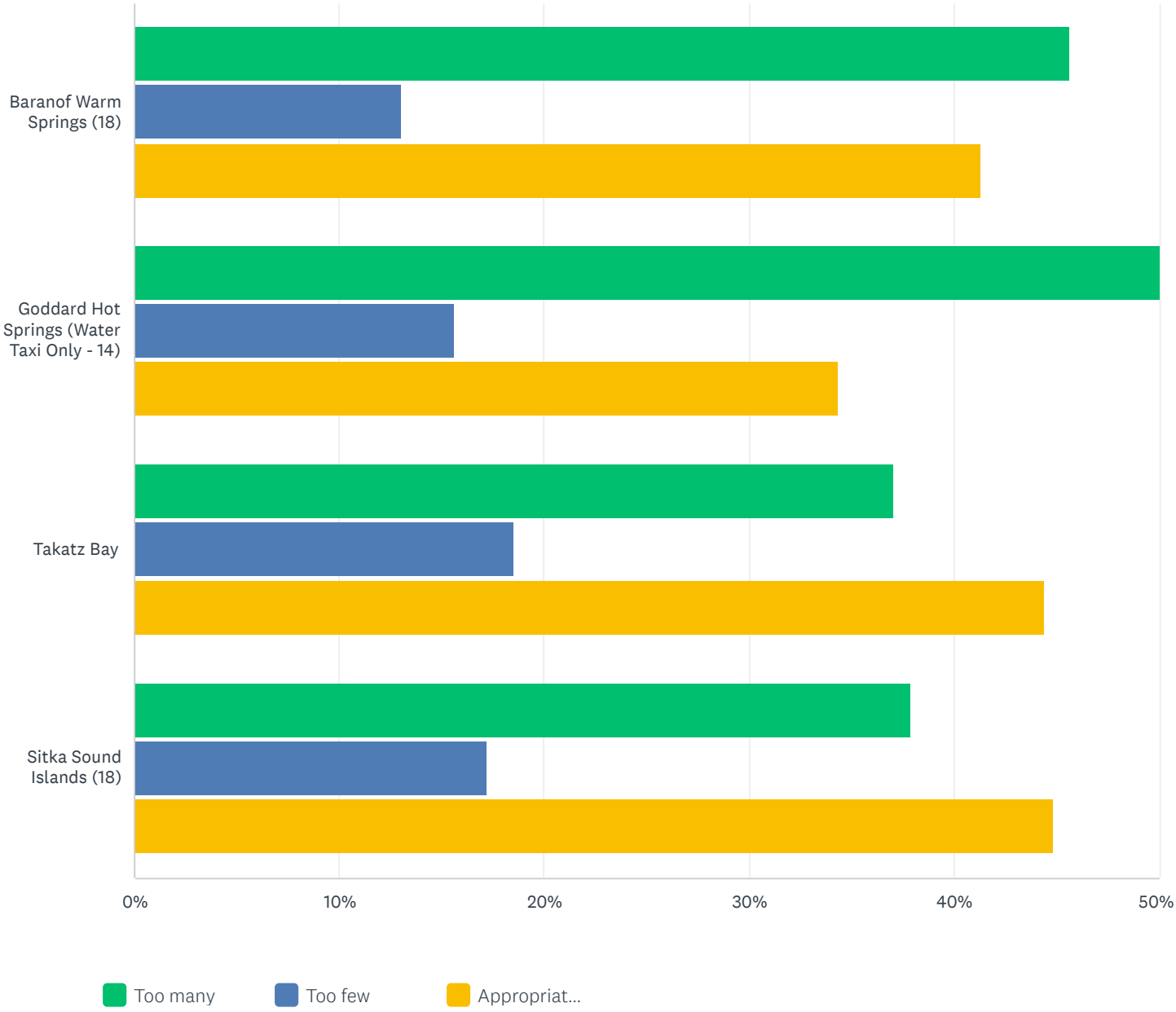


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Groups should be limited to 1 ashore at a time.	48.98%	24
Groups can divide into max size and remain separate and not visit similar areas at the same time.	36.73%	18
Other (please specify)	14.29%	7
TOTAL		49

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Please keep this exactly equivalent to how the Forest Service managed usage at this semi-primitive site - groups of 20 out of sight and sound of each other.	9/30/2026 1:56 PM
2	I can only speak to the Goddard site which I currently use for personal recreation and formerly used commercially. I think the problem is greater than commercial operations. This year for a birthday surprise I took my niece and her family to Goddard/Tom Young for two nights. We hired a water taxi to get us there and paddled our kayaks around. Day one we soaked for 2 hours in the evening- no one else was there. That night 3 private yachts pulled in and for the next two days the people from the yachts occupied both tubs all day long. On top of that water taxis kept ferrying groups in and out. Without someone there to manage use I do not see how you are going to control impact and abuse .	9/15/2026 9:53 AM
3	8 person count or vessel max including captain	9/10/2026 9:12 AM
4	Go after the mega yachts and out of town boats that are operating with out a permit	9/3/2026 1:12 PM
5	Groups are fine. Allow self management between users. This is all common sense.	9/3/2026 11:47 AM
6	I’ve heard of smaller cruise ships (80 guests or so), bringing groups of 10 at a time to shore in places like Kalinin Bay. They do this to stay within their max group size. I want to make sure that nowhere turns into this. Just constant traffic dropping people off. It ruins why it is so special to live here and impacts nature.	8/31/2026 7:34 PM
7	Groups of 12 to BWS seems appropriate to me	8/28/2026 8:40 PM

Q32 Each special use area and its 2026 groups per week limit is listed below. Please give us your feedback on the groups per week limits (you may leave any rows blank if you don't have feedback to share on that particular area).

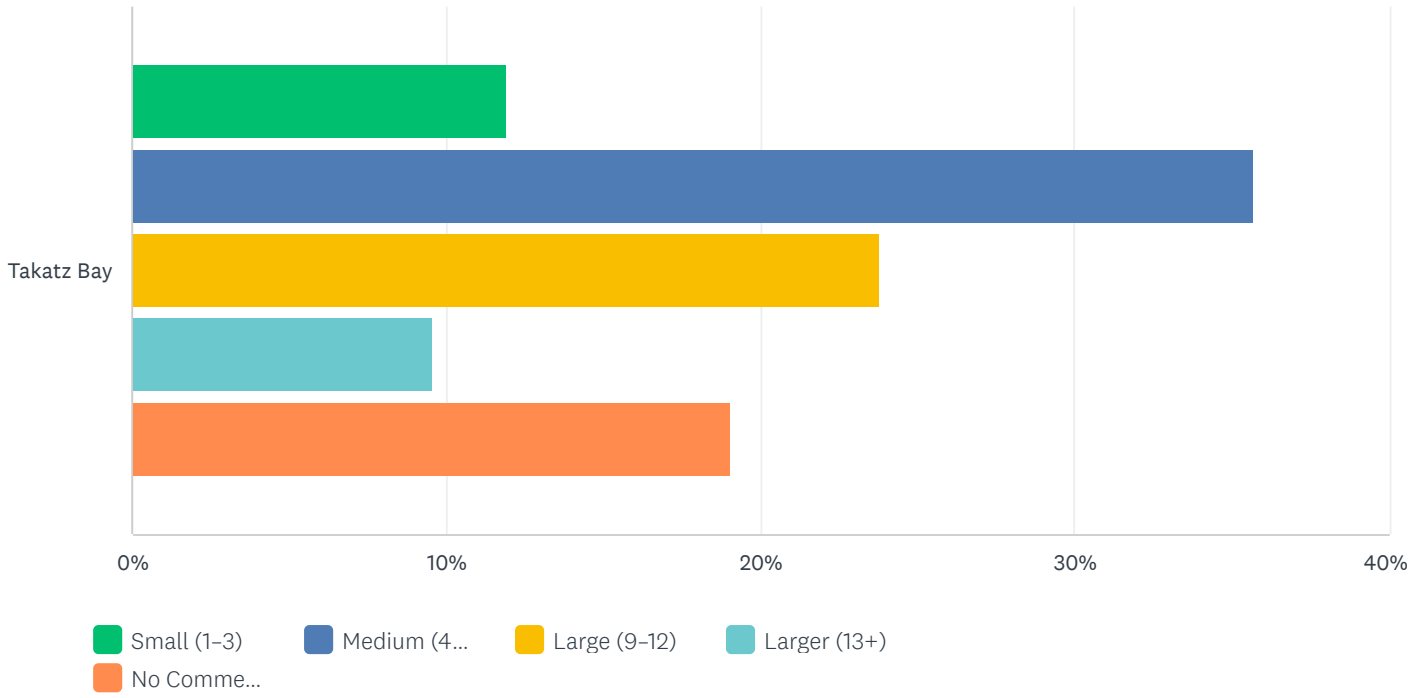
Answered: 49 Skipped: 37



	TOO MANY	TOO FEW	APPROPRIATE GROUP PER WEEK	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Baranof Warm Springs (18)	45.65% 21	13.04% 6	41.30% 19	46	2.96
Goddard Hot Springs (Water Taxi Only - 14)	50.00% 16	15.63% 5	34.38% 11	32	2.84
Takatz Bay	37.04% 10	18.52% 5	44.44% 12	27	3.07
Sitka Sound Islands (18)	37.93% 11	17.24% 5	44.83% 13	29	3.07

Q33 Preferred Maximum Group Size Allowed

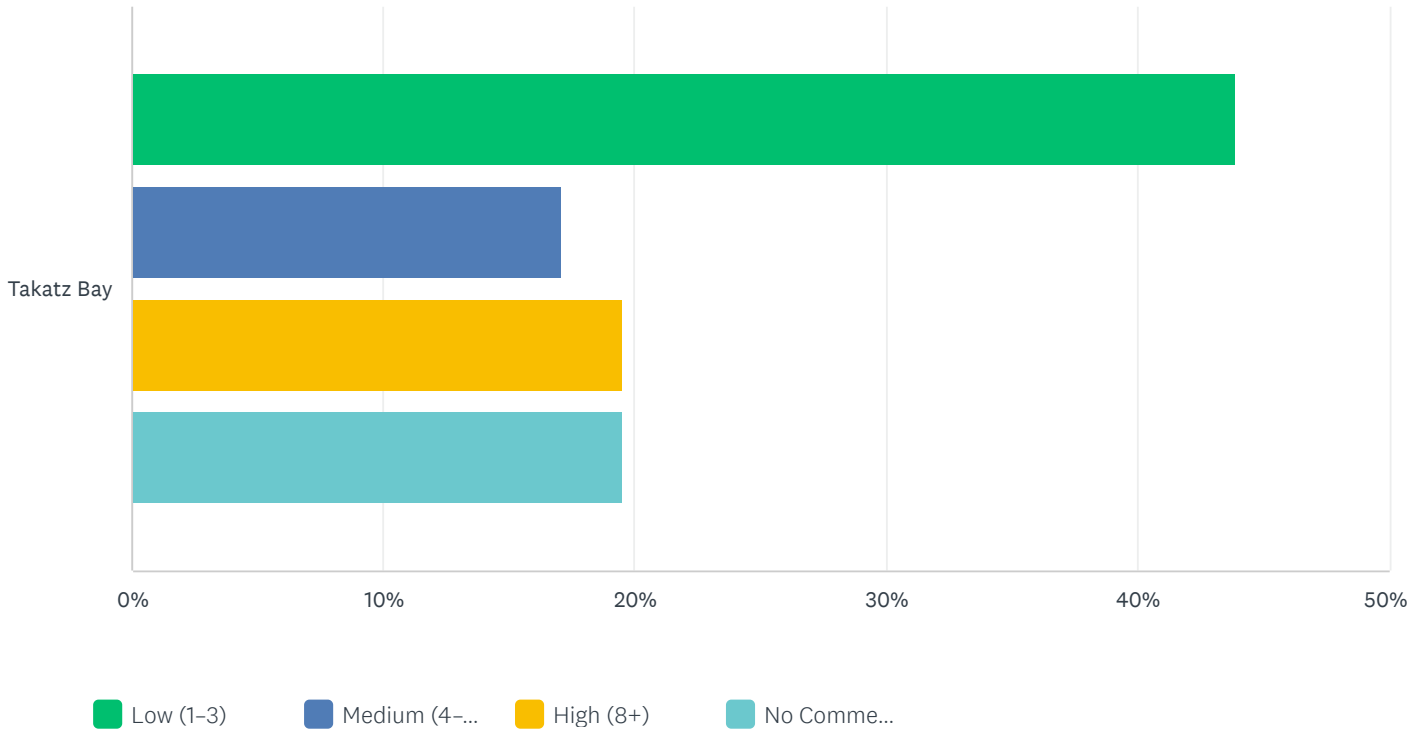
Answered: 42 Skipped: 44



	SMALL (1–3)	MEDIUM (4–8)	LARGE (9–12)	LARGER (13+)	NO COMMERCIAL ALLOWED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Takatz Bay	11.90% 5	35.71% 15	23.81% 10	9.52% 4	19.05% 8	42	2.88

Q34 Preferred Number of Commercial Groups Per Day

Answered: 41 Skipped: 45



	LOW (1–3)	MEDIUM (4–7)	HIGH (8+)	NO COMMERCIAL ALLOWED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Takatz Bay	43.90% 18	17.07% 7	19.51% 8	19.51% 8	41	2.15

Q35 Provide any additional feedback, input, or concerns you have about commercial use at remote municipal locations:

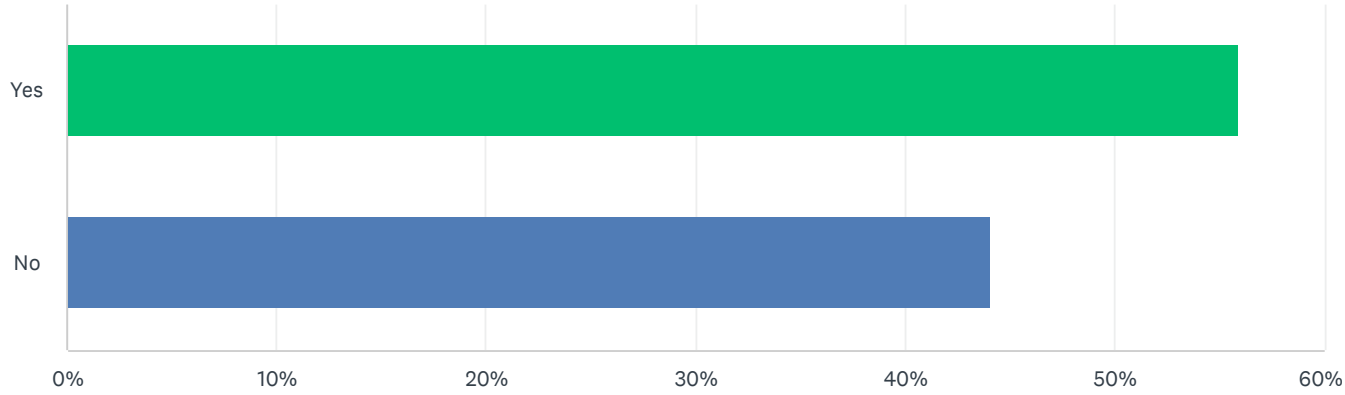
Answered: 15 Skipped: 71

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	For Takatz, please carry over the SAME usage that the Forest Service allowed at this site, which is typical for all semi-primitive Tongass sites: groups of 20, including guides, dispersed out of sight and sound of one another. Recommend speaking with a USFS Recreation Special Uses Specialist to advise on the standard group size limits and seasonal limitations here.	9/30/2026 1:56 PM
2	There are no trails in Takatz. No shore access should be allowed.	9/28/2026 3:01 PM
3	The east side of Baranof Island is hammered by the small cruise ships and charter vessels. I often see two or more small cruise ships per day in Takatz each discharging 12-15 passengers.	9/26/2026 10:19 AM
4	There seems to be more commercial use than actually permitted in Warm Springs Bay,	9/26/2026 10:17 AM
5	The main challenge of Goddard Hot Springs is the general lack of etiquette and sharing of the tubs. We've gone out there several times and large groups have not been willing to share even when several groups are waiting. Its not clear if these groups are there as a result of a water taxi or private users, but signage should be added at the tubs for etiquette and general usage. Education for the public thru PSA's and water taxi's.	9/25/2026 4:53 PM
6	With no dock the activity is not concentrated in one area of the Bay. It is super remote and you'll have ZERO Enforcement.	9/17/2026 9:44 PM
7	This is a very remote area. Managing 12 guests if anything goes wrong would be a bit much.	9/17/2026 9:42 PM
8	I suggest that guides have to stay with their groups at goddard to mitigate local concerns and interface respectfully	9/11/2026 10:10 AM
9	Please have finalized in time for businesses to conduct bookings and schedules to advertise and promote. Thank you.	9/10/2026 9:12 AM
10	Water taxi only at Goddard allows guests to be unsupervised and unfairly allows some businesses (taxis) over others (charters).	9/8/2026 10:38 AM
11	I hear a lot of complaints from fellow locals about the hot tubs at Goddard and lack of private resident access due to commercial operations.	9/6/2026 9:54 PM
12	There is nothing over there so not bothering anyone by going in there. All of us overnight boats sitka or not self police ourselves to not overcrowd anything. We want to give our guests a remote Alaskan experience so we all work together with the same goal.	9/3/2026 1:12 PM
13	For Baranof Warm Springs, regulations for groups ashore should mirror those used by the Forest Service and Alaska DNR - several groups can be on the trail at one time so long as they are separate. If it is just one group at a time, the result will be the opposite of what summer vacation home owners want because it will take more time to take multiple separate groups ashore. This location is only usable for many operators during shoulder season, because of "bareboat" chartered yachts that are unpermitted but actually guiding. The City needs to find a way to redefine guided use or otherwise capture revenues from these users, as they are preventing lawfully permitted operators from using this area, and are responsible for the crowding issues, etc. We would like to see more flexible group size limits, at least through shoulder season (May - June 15th).	8/29/2026 7:37 AM
14	I use Takatz bay frequently over the summer and feel that it has been properly used. Operators have self regulated the space and it has not felt overcrowded. I disagree with more restrictions. We currently have forest service permits to operate in Takatz	8/28/2026 8:40 PM
15	There needs to be signage about required necessary permits to access the lands and who the approved operators are this will go a long way in stopping people from illegally commercially guiding as their guests would ask why they are not listed and wouldn't feel comfortable	8/28/2026 7:59 PM

breaking the laws. We also need to have some sort of enforcement as that would get the message across. Everyone knows you're supposed to have the permits however most do not as there have been no consequences for violation. This could be as simple as picking the busiest day of the week and having an officer onsite one day per month to check permits and issue violations and turn people away. this would be incredibly well received by the residents in these local rural communities and we could source the funds front the large increase we have seen in the permit fees in these areas this past season. I am sure that the permitted operators would agree to share the costs for this as it will greatly improve all our clients experience and be a huge benefit to the local communities.

Q36 Would you like to provide input on commercial recreational use of high-visibility pedestrian zones and developed municipal parks? (Includes: Whale Park, the Sea Walk, and Downtown Sidewalks)

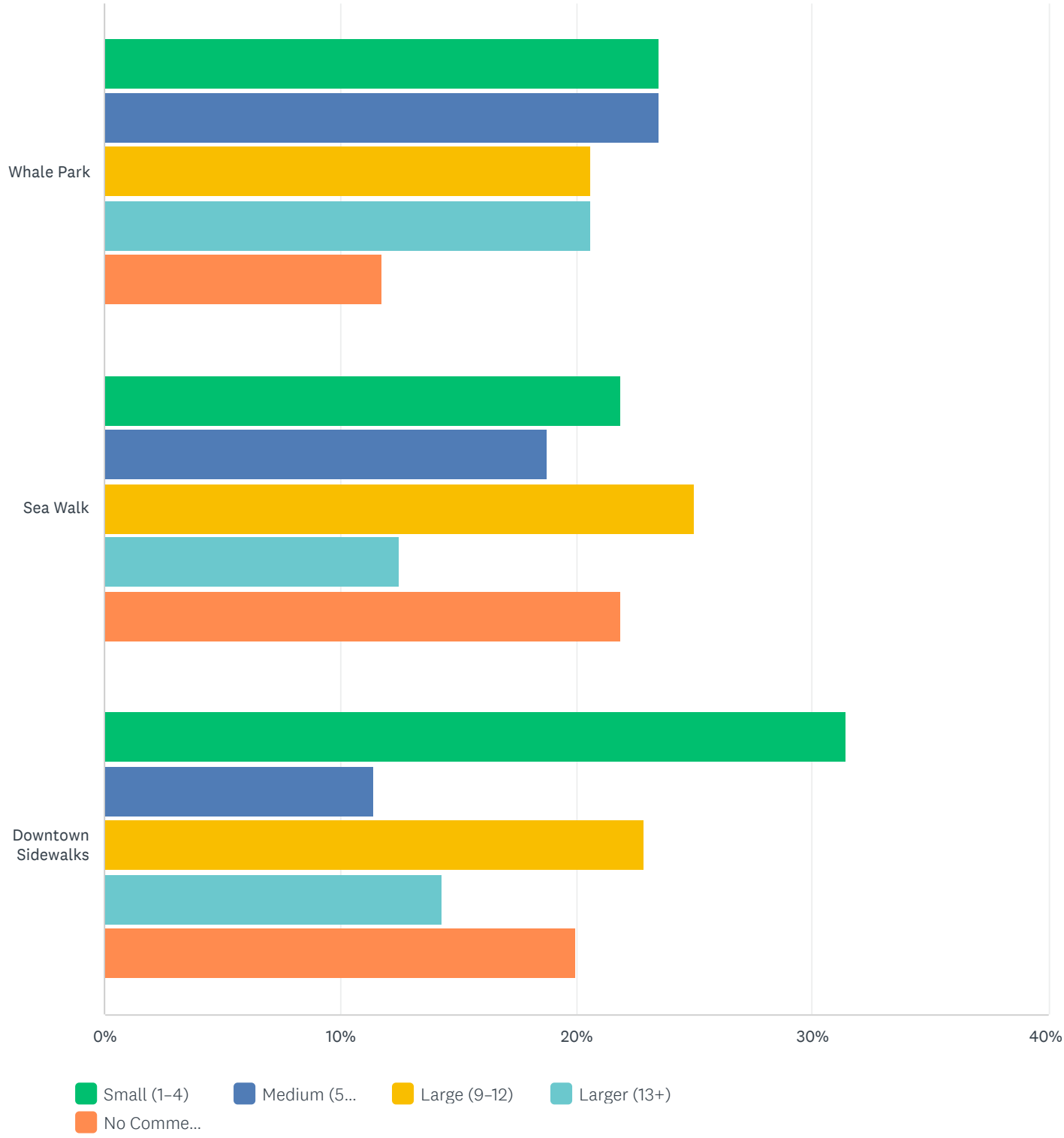
Answered: 68 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	55.88%	38
No	44.12%	30
TOTAL		68

Q37 What should be the maximum group size allowed in these areas for 2027?

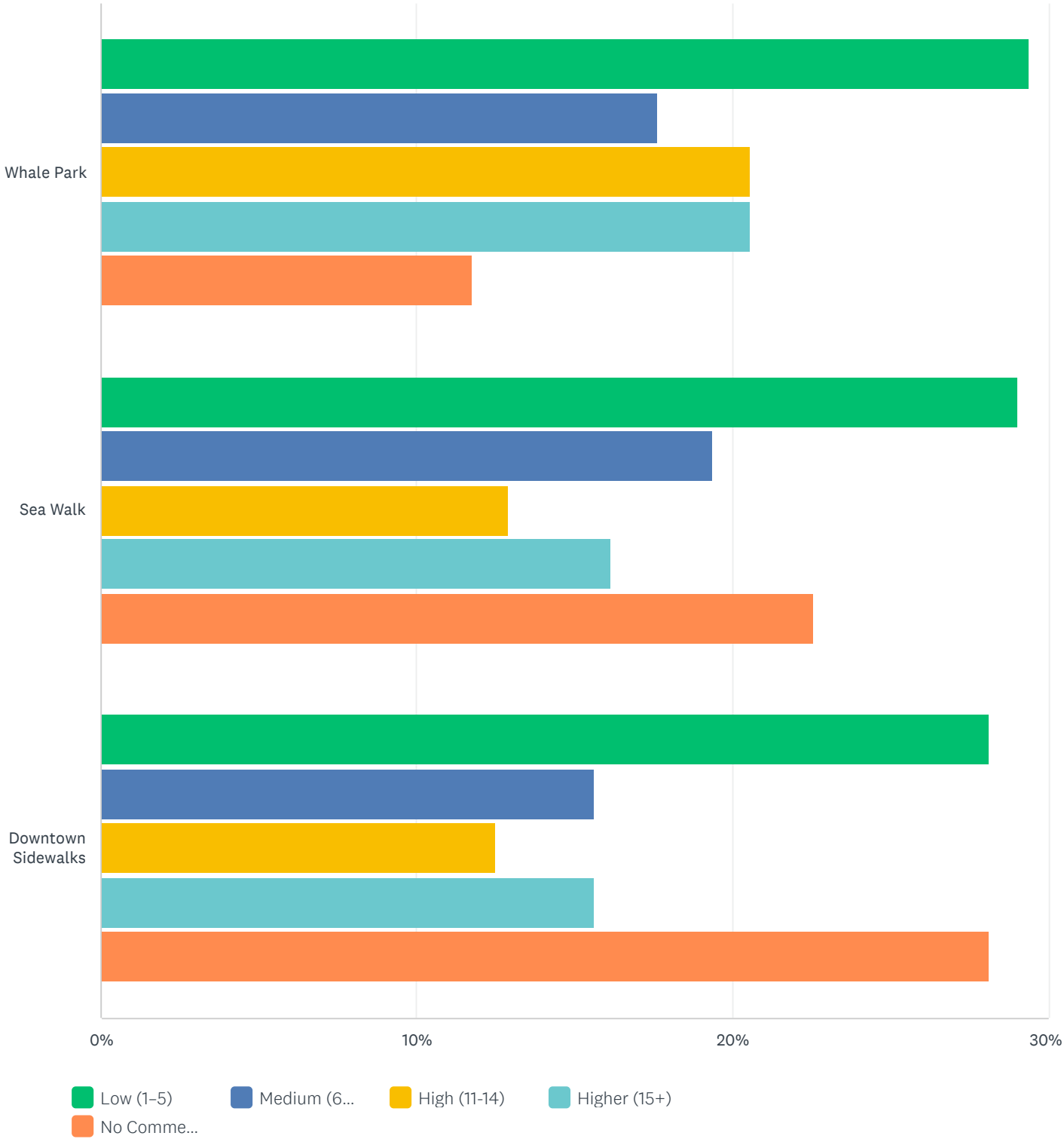
Answered: 37 Skipped: 49



	SMALL (1–4)	MEDIUM (5–8)	LARGE (9–12)	LARGER (13+)	NO COMMERCIAL ALLOWED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Whale Park	23.53% 8	23.53% 8	20.59% 7	20.59% 7	11.76% 4	34	2.74
Sea Walk	21.88% 7	18.75% 6	25.00% 8	12.50% 4	21.88% 7	32	2.94
Downtown Sidewalks	31.43% 11	11.43% 4	22.86% 8	14.29% 5	20.00% 7	35	2.80

Q38 What should be the maximum number of commercial groups per day for these areas in 2027?

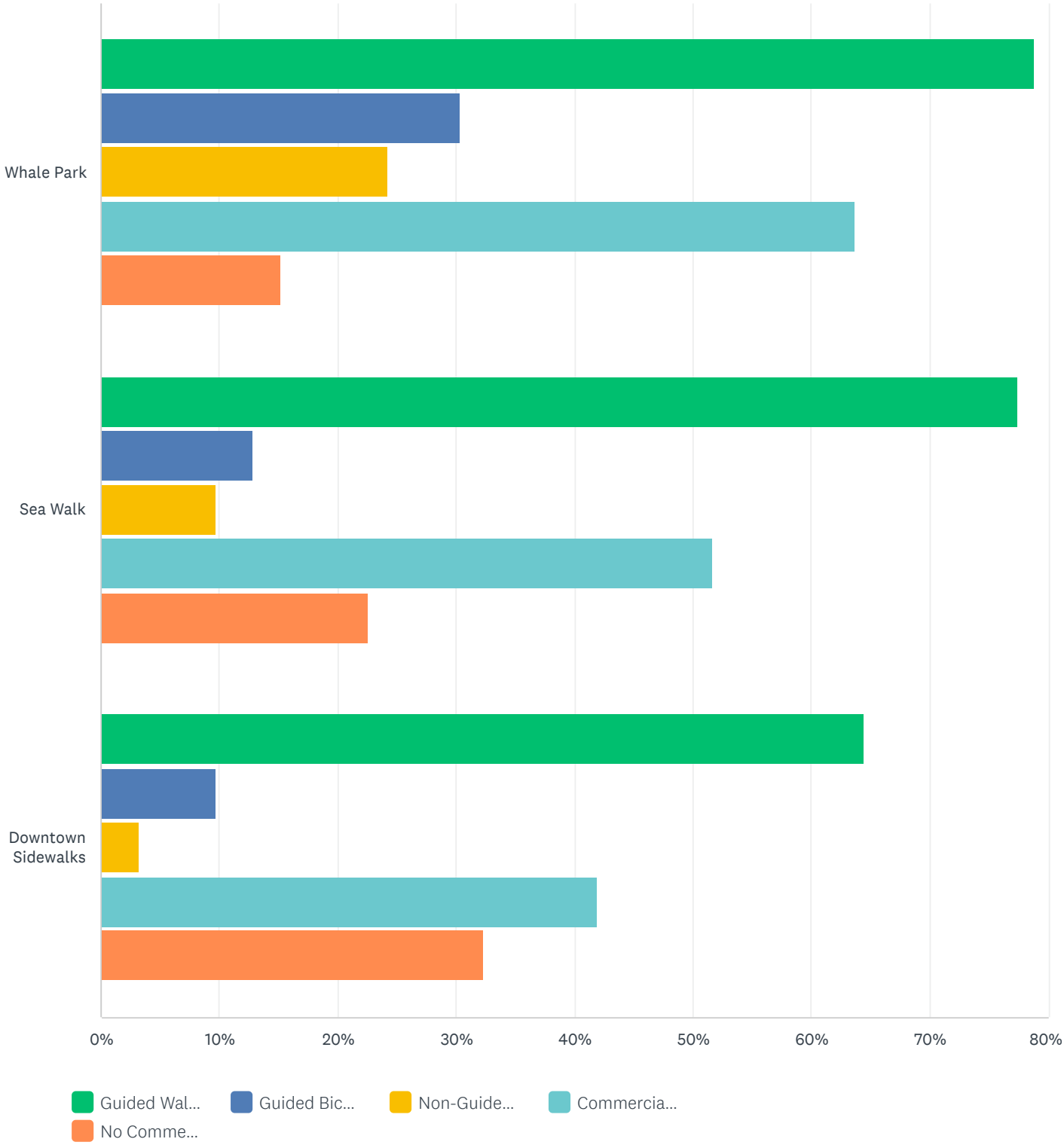
Answered: 35 Skipped: 51



	LOW (1–5)	MEDIUM (6–10)	HIGH (11-14)	HIGHER (15+)	NO COMMERCIAL ALLOWED	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Whale Park	29.41% 10	17.65% 6	20.59% 7	20.59% 7	11.76% 4	34	2.56
Sea Walk	29.03% 9	19.35% 6	12.90% 4	16.13% 5	22.58% 7	31	2.61
Downtown Sidewalks	28.13% 9	15.63% 5	12.50% 4	15.63% 5	28.13% 9	32	2.72

Q39 What types of commercial activities should be permitted in these areas? (Please note: Areas currently designated as "no bike use" such as sidewalks or the Sea Walk would not be eligible for commercial bike use).

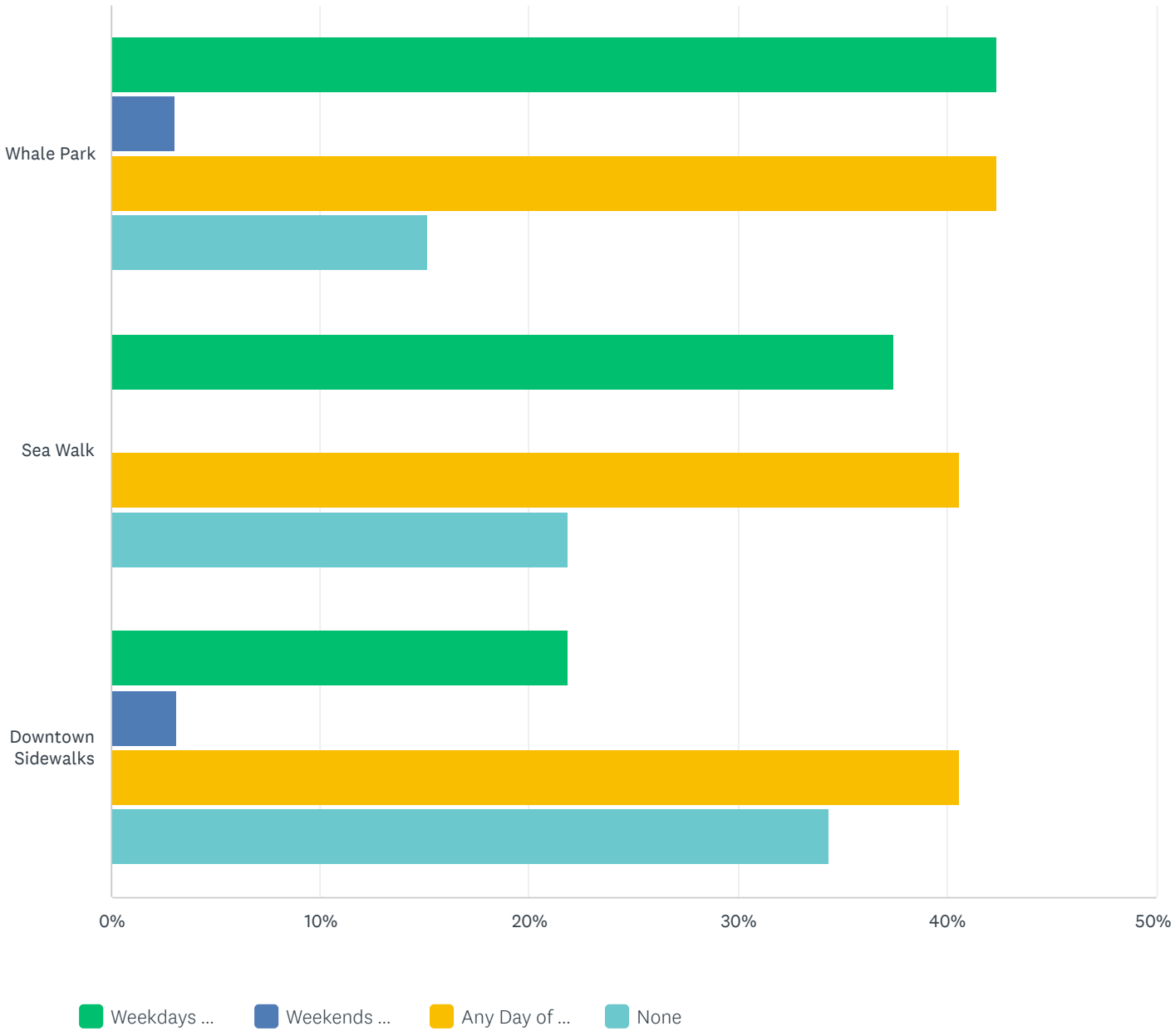
Answered: 35 Skipped: 51



	GUIDED WALKING / HISTORIC TOURS	GUIDED BICYCLE / E-BIKE TOURS	NON-GUIDED COMMERCIAL RENTALS	COMMERCIAL PHOTOGRAPHY / ART GROUPS	NO COMMERCIAL USE ALLOWED	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Whale Park	78.79% 26	30.30% 10	24.24% 8	63.64% 21	15.15% 5	33
Sea Walk	77.42% 24	12.90% 4	9.68% 3	51.61% 16	22.58% 7	31
Downtown Sidewalks	64.52% 20	9.68% 3	3.23% 1	41.94% 13	32.26% 10	31

Q40 Preferred days of the week for commercial use:

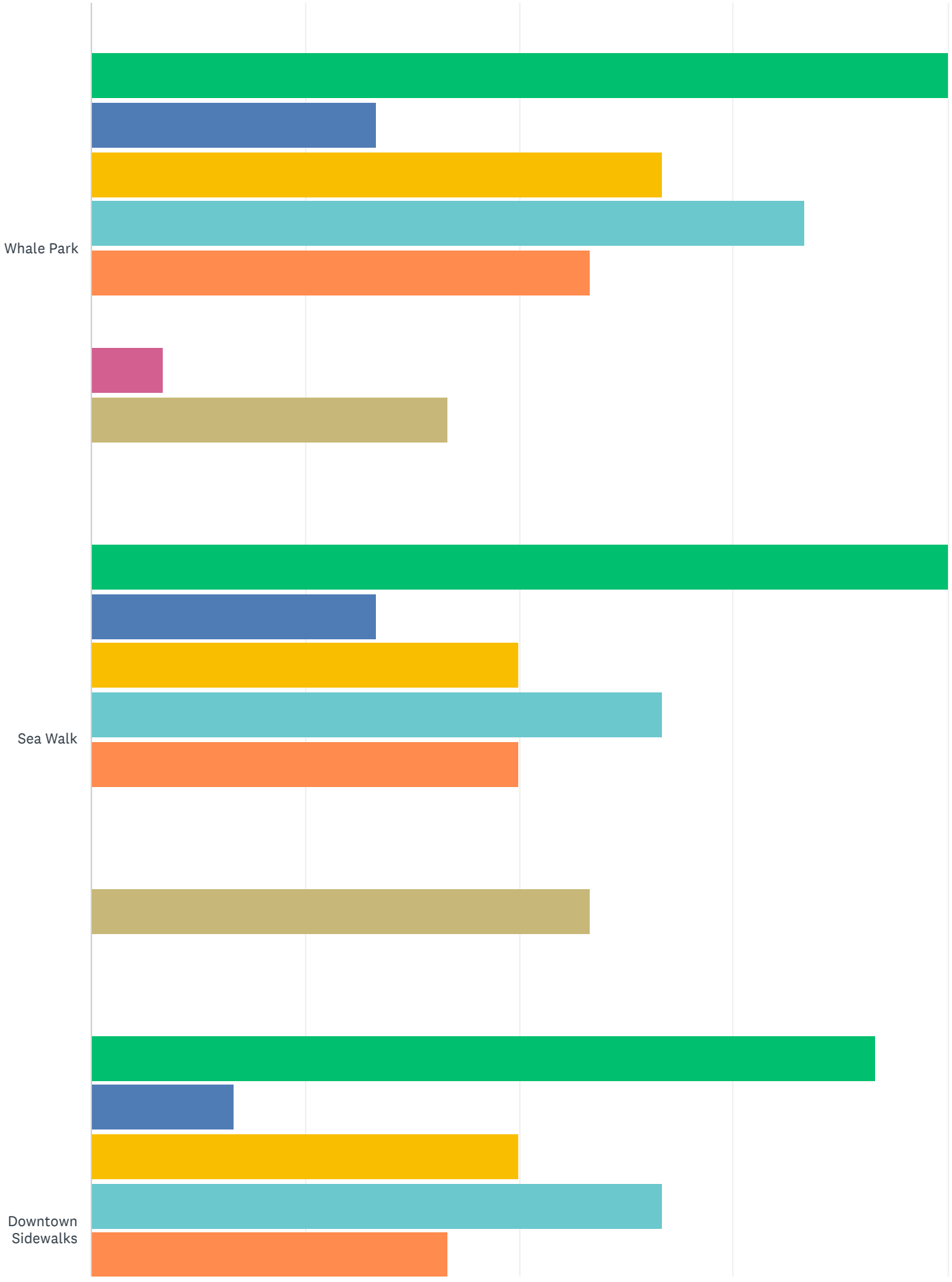
Answered: 34 Skipped: 52

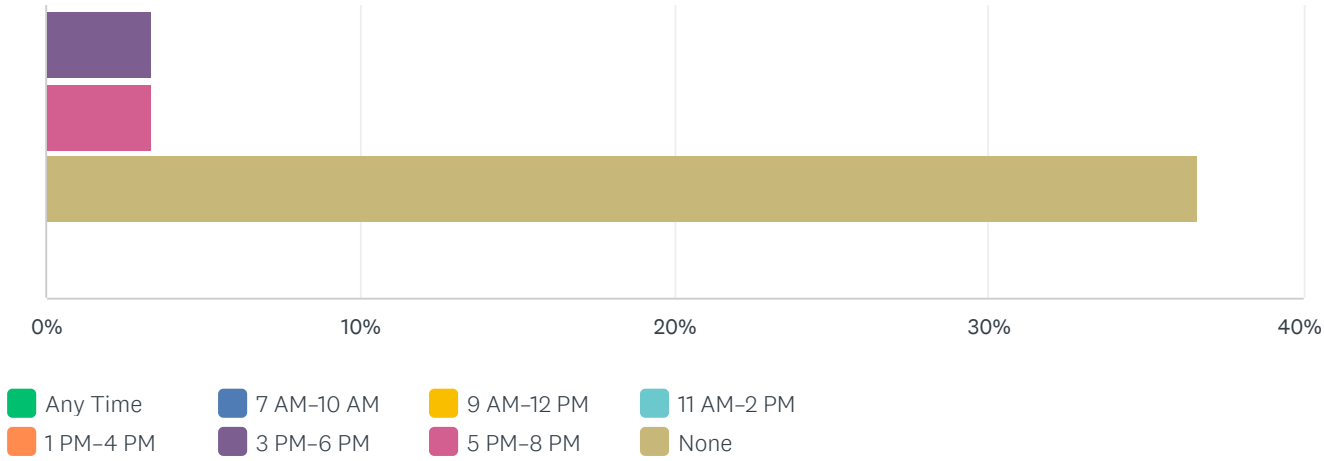


	WEEKDAYS ONLY	WEEKENDS ONLY	ANY DAY OF WEEK	NONE	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Whale Park	42.42% 14	3.03% 1	42.42% 14	15.15% 5	33
Sea Walk	37.50% 12	0.00% 0	40.63% 13	21.88% 7	32
Downtown Sidewalks	21.88% 7	3.13% 1	40.63% 13	34.38% 11	32

Q41 Preferred times of day for commercial use:

Answered: 32 Skipped: 54


Whale Park
Sea Walk
Downtown Sidewalks



	ANY TIME	7 AM–10 AM	9 AM–12 PM	11 AM–2 PM	1 PM–4 PM	3 PM–6 PM	5 PM–8 PM	NONE	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Whale Park	40.00% 12	13.33% 4	26.67% 8	33.33% 10	23.33% 7	0.00% 0	3.33% 1	16.67% 5	30
Sea Walk	40.00% 12	13.33% 4	20.00% 6	26.67% 8	20.00% 6	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	23.33% 7	30
Downtown Sidewalks	36.67% 11	6.67% 2	20.00% 6	26.67% 8	16.67% 5	3.33% 1	3.33% 1	36.67% 11	30

Q42 Provide any additional feedback, input, or congestion concerns regarding commercial operations at Whale Park, the Sea Walk, or Downtown Sidewalks:

Answered: 15 Skipped: 71

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Shut down the street or consider it in days with 4K or more	9/27/2026 7:27 PM
2	The Sea Walk and Downtown Sidewalks are part of the commercial area used by all citizens and tourists. You should not penalize or limit commercial use in these areas at all.	9/25/2026 4:56 PM
3	Why can business put out a sign on side walks anc nog havd to have liability insurance like this tour operators at HCH? City is targeting certain businesses	9/25/2026 4:33 PM
4	Tour groups lack basic manners in whale park	9/24/2026 12:22 AM
5	Downtown is so congested on big cruise ship days that locals avoid it when they can. Whale Park is enjoyed by everyone, has plenty of space, and should be used. It is a great place to walk, take toddlers, enjoy the view with elders, whale park should be enjoyed.	9/23/2026 11:25 PM
6	Group uses of downtown sidewalks and the Seawalk create blockages and bottlenecks causing spillover into unsafe street/traffic .	9/17/2026 9:52 PM
7	Commercial groups and walking tours block the sea walk and downtown sidewalks making 'just walking' a challenge. The groups block local walking traffic and overflow the sidewalks into the streets and onto the grass forcing locals to walk on the grass to get around groups.	9/17/2026 9:52 PM
8	Congestion downtown is absolutely insane. Our sidewalks are WAY TOO SMALL to allow for the transit of groups of people / the levels of tourism that we have. Not comfortably transit - in general transit. Every day I have to walk in the street. Every day tourists are also walking in the street except for that they are getting in the way of cars, don't know when to hop up on the sidewalk to let someone pass, don't know how to use crosswalks, the lack of awareness is wild. I don't think there should be guided commercial use of the sidewalks downtown because they DO NOT have capacity for people in general - unguided tourists and locals - to move around effectively	9/11/2026 10:13 AM
9	I’m not sure if this is the appropriate audience for this feedback, but when the charter fisherman are picked up from the small parking lots at crescent harbor they block the whole lot. Can we build a pull out parking lot for them? Also, where community ride parks to pick people up on Lincoln across from the Pub creates a complete blind spot for people turning out of crescent harbor on your Lincoln street. I’ve been in many near accidents	9/10/2026 1:13 PM
10	I do believe the community should have after work hours and weekends in particular spaces.	9/10/2026 9:16 AM
11	What are "Non-Guided Commercial Rentals" in reference to these sites?	9/8/2026 10:39 AM
12	Bikes are not permitted by law for riders over the age of 10 in Sitka on ANY sidewalks. There should therefor be absolutely no bike usage by adults on the seawalk nor downtown sidewalks. The multi-use path by whale park is another story. However, we have BAD pedestrian safety due to overtourism at this time. Therefore we cannot add to it by making sidewalks and multiuse paths even more congested.	9/6/2026 9:57 PM
13	terrible E-bike overload on SMC road-whale park-silver bay!	9/1/2026 9:56 AM
14	Honestly, it’s disappointing that my kids can’t bike to the playground or library. The roads are full of buses. The sidewalks are full of people. I, myself, don’t know where to bike with them. I wish there was a better plan for this.	8/31/2026 7:37 PM
15	We do not conduct tours of downtown sidewalks, but do walk with guests from a small cruise ship to their hotels. This should not require a permit; it's just a walk to a hotel, not a tour.	8/29/2026 7:43 AM

Q43 Please leave any final comments you have regarding the commercial use of city recreational areas and facilities:

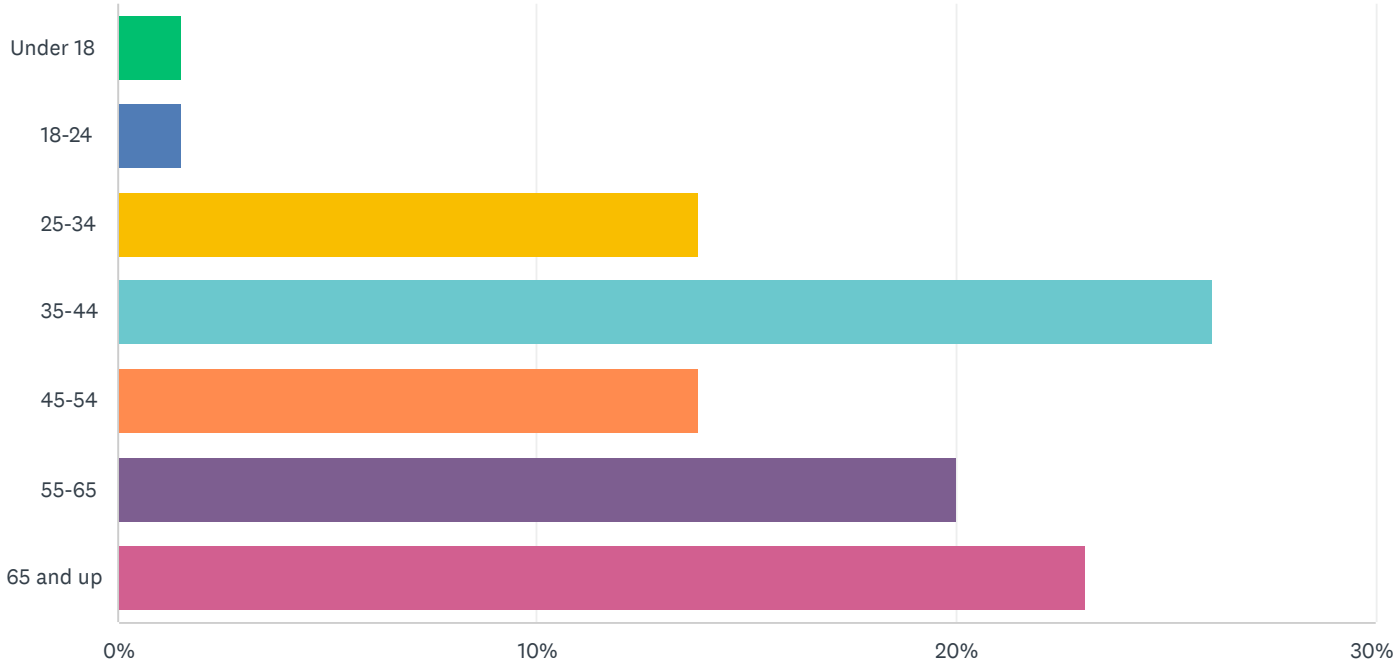
Answered: 20 Skipped: 66

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The dock at Baranof Warm Springs is a free-for-all. Boaters and fishing boats flaunt the rules and don't pay the fees because there is no enforcement.	9/28/2026 3:03 PM
2	Really appreciate all your time and efforts in help keeping thease special places special	9/28/2026 12:35 PM
3	As a resident of Warm Springs Bay I feel like I have a house on Main Street USA in Disneyland with people everywhere, most guided, sometimes peering into windows of cabins. There even taking people to the far end of the lake now.	9/26/2026 10:22 AM
4	I believe there should be a reasonable permit fee each year for commercial users and no per client fees. The city already charges a 6% sales tax on all transactions (such as someone purchasing a tour) and then charges another $5 per client use fee. The city should choose one or the other in addition to a ~reasonable~ annual fee. It seems unfair to charge 6% sales tax on the transaction for a guided tour, client use fees and an annual fee.	9/25/2026 5:02 PM
5	My only general complaint is dog poop along trails (Thimbleberry in particular) and at Blue Lake. This isn't a commercial use issue, but it is an issue that I'd like to see the Parks Dept address.	9/25/2026 4:59 PM
6	Make more spaces for boat operators in crescent harbor.	9/25/2026 4:35 PM
7	There are three families in our extended family living in Sitka. We did not approve of the conversion of Sitka into a version of Main Street Disney. We all leave Sitka in the summer and boycott downtown businesses year round. The cruise ship buses are an abomination and pollute the air our children breathe at Blatchley and Xoots. 200 to 300 trips a day.	9/24/2026 2:16 PM
8	I think you/we are doing pretty good considering we seem to have no real control over the numbers of visitors - but those e-bikes have to go! Too fast, too careless and they should use the sidewalk from Jeff Davis to the post office	9/21/2026 8:55 AM
9	The overcrowding that already exists and negative impacts locals and visitors experience is already a concern. The suggestion that the 2027 numbers will exceed the MOU is unacceptable. Quality of life and the impacts these visitors will have both on the land, ocean and natural resources should be an upmost concern.	9/16/2026 7:23 AM
10	Managing the commercial impact on local favorite spots is a reasonable and prudent thing to do and has precedent nationally and internationally in high-tourist areas. In order to implement policies that work, larger tour operators need to be more limited and monitored. The latter may not be practical but setting stricter limits on the biggest operators makes more sense than denying small operators any access or limiting their group size without considering actual use time.	9/15/2026 10:01 AM
11	Please get tourists off the sidewalks Please use tourists fees to pay for someone to clean up dogshit	9/11/2026 10:14 AM
12	Thank you for requesting feedback. Local business matters year round. The summer business gives a boost of financial protection when the community is leading to each other in hardship. The tourism income is what is a guarantee.	9/10/2026 9:20 AM
13	I believe the cruise industry is set to blow the MOU we have with them out of the water in 2027 and 2028. That's the source of the problem, not what little regulations we can as a municipality implement. In general, I would advocate for a hard cap on the number of persons ashore from all vessel each day. Barring that, I would like to see severe limitations on motorized uses of Sitka like reductions in e-bike rentals/tours a moratorium on jet skis. Hiking tours are okay with small group sizes of up to about 8 clients. Lastly - there are some non-permitted operators doing something akin to tours on some trails. Like I have run into massive groups from Sitka Fine Arts Camp where it has to be more than one busload of kids visiting at once - and a camp	9/6/2026 10:01 PM

	is a product they are selling. I wonder if they could stagger visits to make less impact for residents that happen to be going up the trail at the same time as their campers.	
14	I think Warm springs and Goddard numbers need to be looked into more i feel as someone who has been going there my whole life and seeing how the operation is ran compared to the people making the rules some people have never even been there. Im not going to take a job for Yellowstone national park about traffic if i have never been there.	9/3/2026 1:15 PM
15	It seems to me that the city has absolutely no idea of what the commercial use is in Baranof w springs. We were only in warm springs 4 times this season and every time we saw multiple launches off of yachts on and off loading passengers. All operators should have access to this public area but it seems just local operators are being regulated and charged.	9/3/2026 12:22 PM
16	Parks and rec is doing a disservice to local operators. Baranof Warm springs is being used heavily by for-charter yachts that are operating under the table. They anchor out of sight and drop clients off in tenders. These boats are not registered with the city for use. The only money you are getting is from local operators. We are tired of paying for a permit that essentially gets us nothing but regulated and limited.	9/3/2026 11:55 AM
17	We are moving out of Sitka because I overtourism has destroyed everything we loved about this town. We'd hoped to raise our kids here.	9/1/2026 12:37 PM
18	The per person fee is much too high. With already paying fees for USFS, Alaska state parks, and Totem park (national park fees), in addition to the 6% tax that is already being made on the sales the fees and taxes per hike has gotten so completely out of control. Also, there is no regulation on the group sizes and from what I can understand no repercussions from companies who continue to operate outside of the max group size limits.	9/1/2026 11:18 AM
19	I know we need to have a balance with tourism, but it's disappointing when I can't walk my dog without running into hoards of people. Even on the cross trail. I'm also really worried about local islands, hikes and other areas that are remote and should stay that way. It's hard enough getting out and it's so weather dependent. We shouldn't have to fight for spots with the tourists. I also truly want to see how all of these tourists are benefitting our town. I want to see the extra money from taxes being put to benefit every age group and not just people who own businesses.	8/31/2026 7:42 PM
20	Strongly support different shoulder season regulation, at least for remote areas. Yachts and overcrowding and summer vacation home occupancy don't really begin until June 15th.	8/29/2026 7:49 AM

Q44 What is your age?

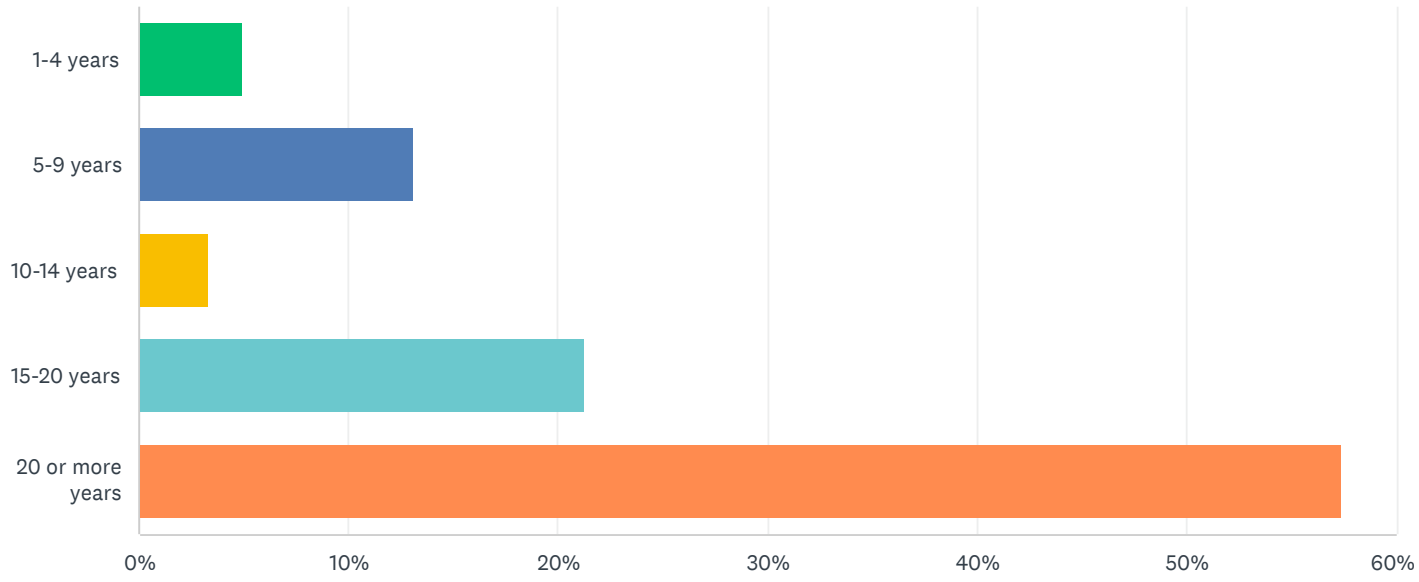
Answered: 65 Skipped: 21



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Under 18	1.54%	1
18-24	1.54%	1
25-34	13.85%	9
35-44	26.15%	17
45-54	13.85%	9
55-65	20.00%	13
65 and up	23.08%	15
TOTAL		65

Q45 How long have you lived in Sitka?

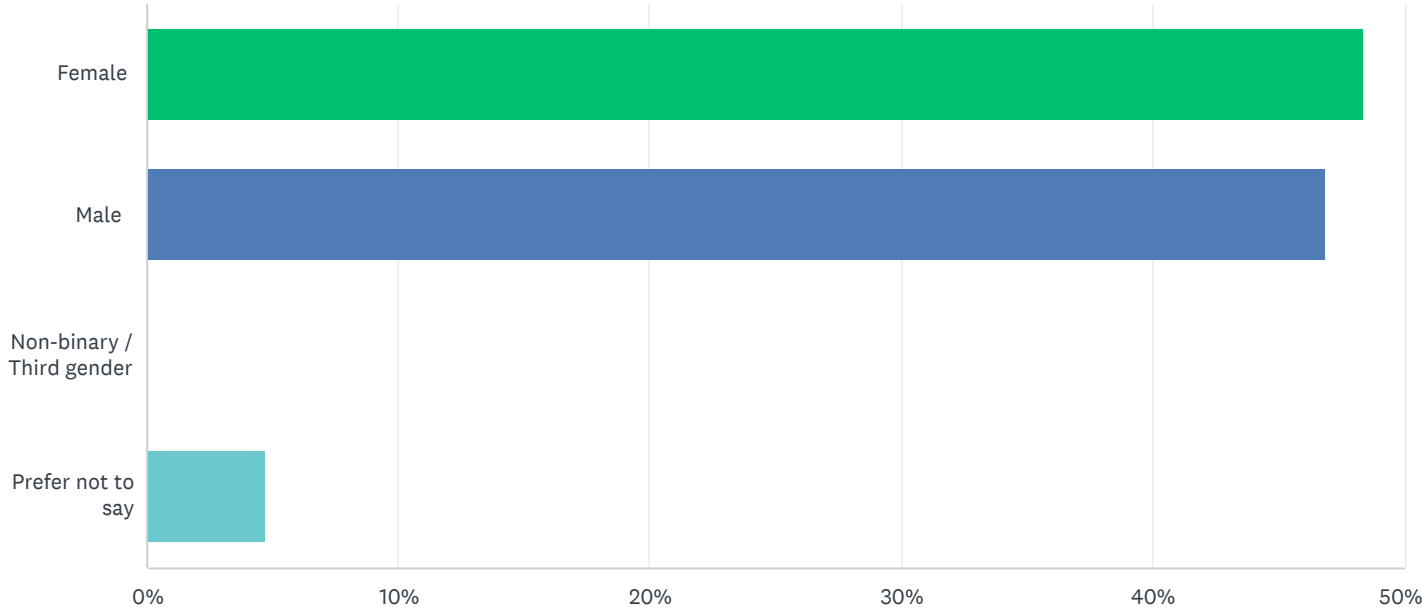
Answered: 61 Skipped: 25



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
1-4 years	4.92%	3
5-9 years	13.11%	8
10-14 years	3.28%	2
15-20 years	21.31%	13
20 or more years	57.38%	35
TOTAL		61

Q46 What is your gender?

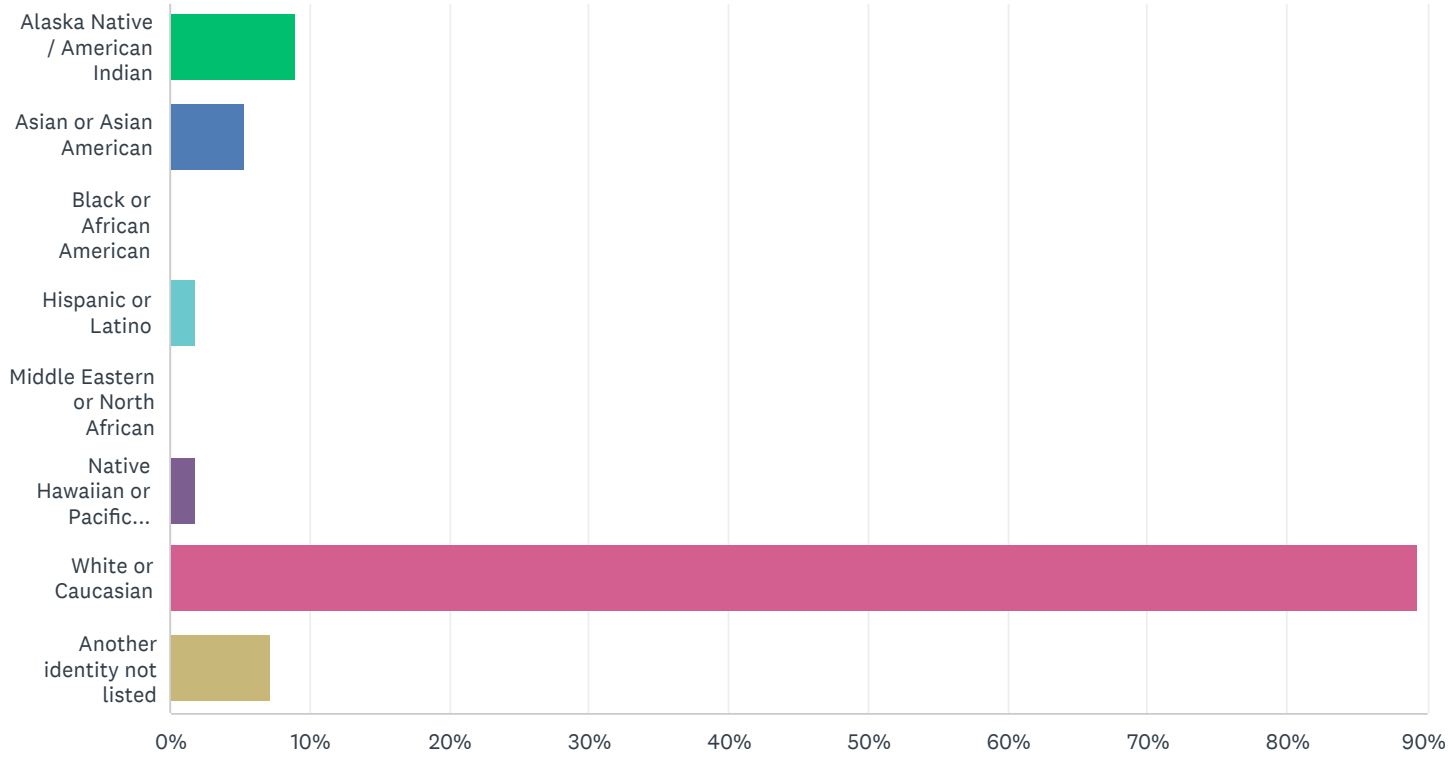
Answered: 64 Skipped: 22



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	48.44%	31
Male	46.88%	30
Non-binary / Third gender	0.00%	0
Prefer not to say	4.69%	3
TOTAL		64

Q47 What is your race/ethnicity? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 56 Skipped: 30

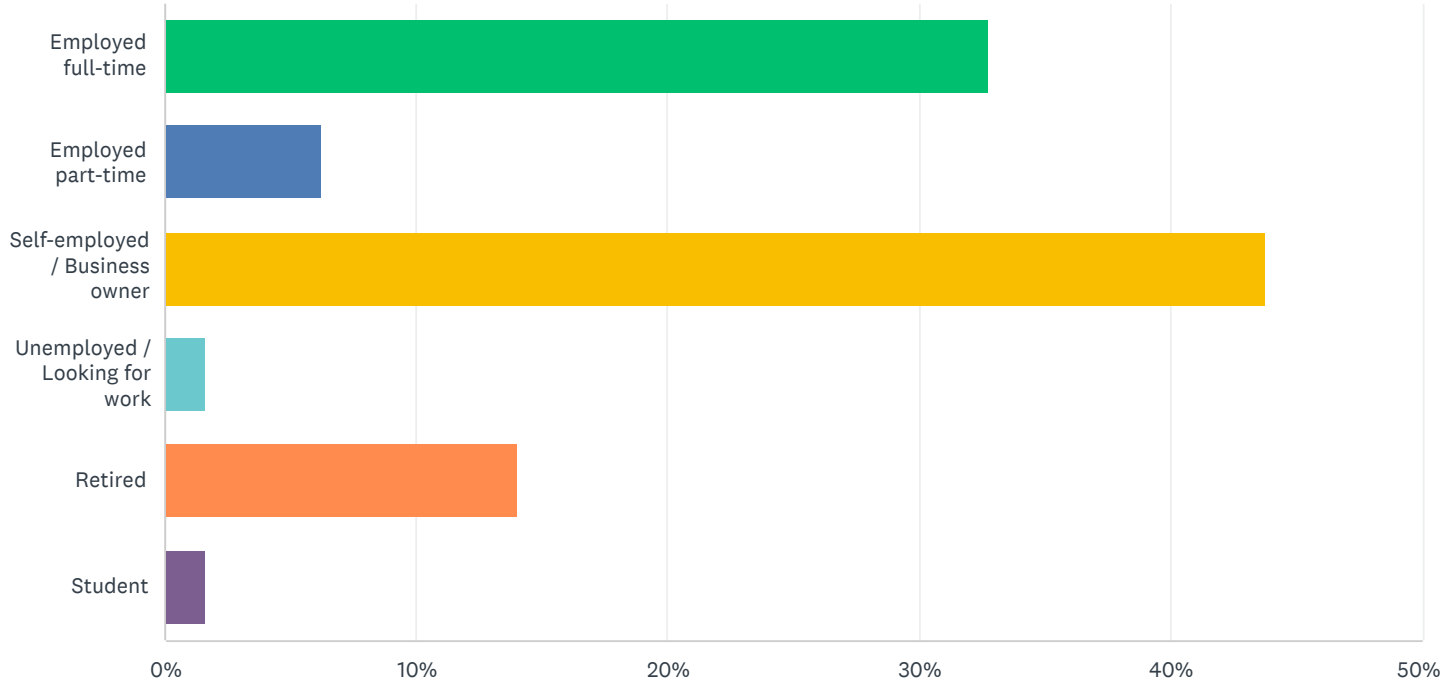


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Alaska Native / American Indian	8.93%	5
Asian or Asian American	5.36%	3
Black or African American	0.00%	0
Hispanic or Latino	1.79%	1
Middle Eastern or North African	0.00%	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1.79%	1
White or Caucasian	89.29%	50
Another identity not listed	7.14%	4
Total Respondents: 56		

#	ANOTHER IDENTITY NOT LISTED	DATE
1	A a	9/27/2026 7:27 PM
2	Why do you need this?	9/25/2026 4:35 PM
3	Of European descent	9/17/2026 9:54 PM
4	What does this have to do with anything	8/31/2026 9:38 PM

Q48 What is your primary occupational status?

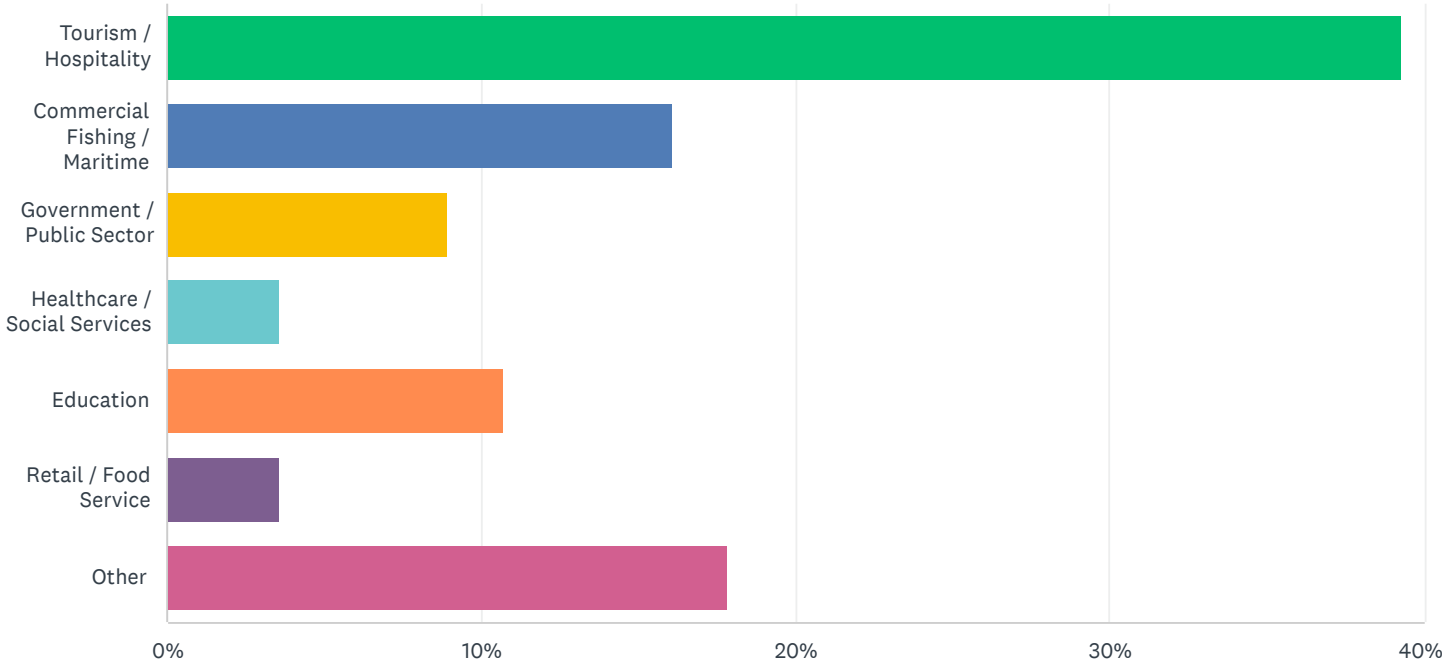
Answered: 64 Skipped: 22



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Employed full-time	32.81%	21
Employed part-time	6.25%	4
Self-employed / Business owner	43.75%	28
Unemployed / Looking for work	1.56%	1
Retired	14.06%	9
Student	1.56%	1
TOTAL		64

Q49 What industry do you primarily work in?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 30



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Tourism / Hospitality	39.29%	22
Commercial Fishing / Maritime	16.07%	9
Government / Public Sector	8.93%	5
Healthcare / Social Services	3.57%	2
Education	10.71%	6
Retail / Food Service	3.57%	2
Other	17.86%	10
TOTAL		56

#	OTHER	DATE
1	Education in school year + tourism in summers	9/30/2026 11:22 AM
2	Arts-humanities	9/27/2026 7:27 PM
3	Arts	9/26/2026 10:19 AM
4	Construction	9/24/2026 5:49 AM
5	mail delivery	9/20/2026 1:16 PM
6	Construction	9/19/2026 10:15 AM
7	nonprofit	9/11/2026 10:14 AM

8	other not listed	9/6/2026 10:01 PM
9	Research & Development/ Defense Research	9/1/2026 9:34 PM
10	I work in both commercial fishing and tourism. Do not currently live in Sitka but lived here for 25 years; 1994-2019	8/29/2026 7:49 AM

United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service

March 2019

Commercial Use Allocation on Sitka Area Trails and Roads

Environmental Assessment

Sitka Ranger District
Tongass National Forest

Sitka, Alaska



Guided clients on trail near Sitka, AK

For Information Contact: Mike Mullin
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INTRODUCTION

The Forest Service (FS) has prepared this Environmental Assessment in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other relevant Federal and State laws and regulations. This Environmental Assessment discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative environmental impacts that would result from the proposed action and alternatives. For this project, the responsible official is the Sitka District Ranger.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR ACTION

The purpose and need for action is to consider commercial use on Sitka area trails, roads and in campgrounds managed by the Sitka Ranger District.

> *Commercial uses or activities are defined as "any use or activity on National Forest System lands: a) where an entry or participation fee is charged, or b) where the primary purpose is the sale of a good or service and, in either case, regardless of whether the use or activity is intended to produce a profit" (36 CFR 251.51).*

The allocation of commercial use on area trails and roads is currently managed according to capacity levels derived from a 2006 capacity analysis and subsequent 2008 EA. Since implementation of the 2008 decision, changes to the recreation landscape in Sitka have ensued. Though Forest Service trail, road and facility maintenance budgets are trending steadily downward, cooperative efforts with partners including Sitka Trail Works (STW) and the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) have resulted in new and improved infrastructure. A National Forest System (NFS) trail was constructed (Herring Cove) and others have undergone major reconstruction efforts including Beaver Lake, Thimbleberry/Heart Lake and Harbor Mountain/Gavan Hill. The CBS managed Cross trail has been reconstructed and extended with several connector spurs incorporated to enable easy public access. CBS is expected to begin construction of the final phase of the project in 2019, which will see the trail extended from Harbor Mountain Road to the State of Alaska boat launch parking facility at Old Sitka and the Starrigavan Recreation Area complex.

A 2018 McDowell Group report highlights the growing importance of Alaska's visitor industry in terms of job growth, and state and municipal revenues. Not surprisingly, the report indicates a steady upward trend of visitors to Alaska over the last several years. Attractions abound for visitors to Southeast Alaska and many visitors choose to experience public lands using the services of an outfitter/guide.

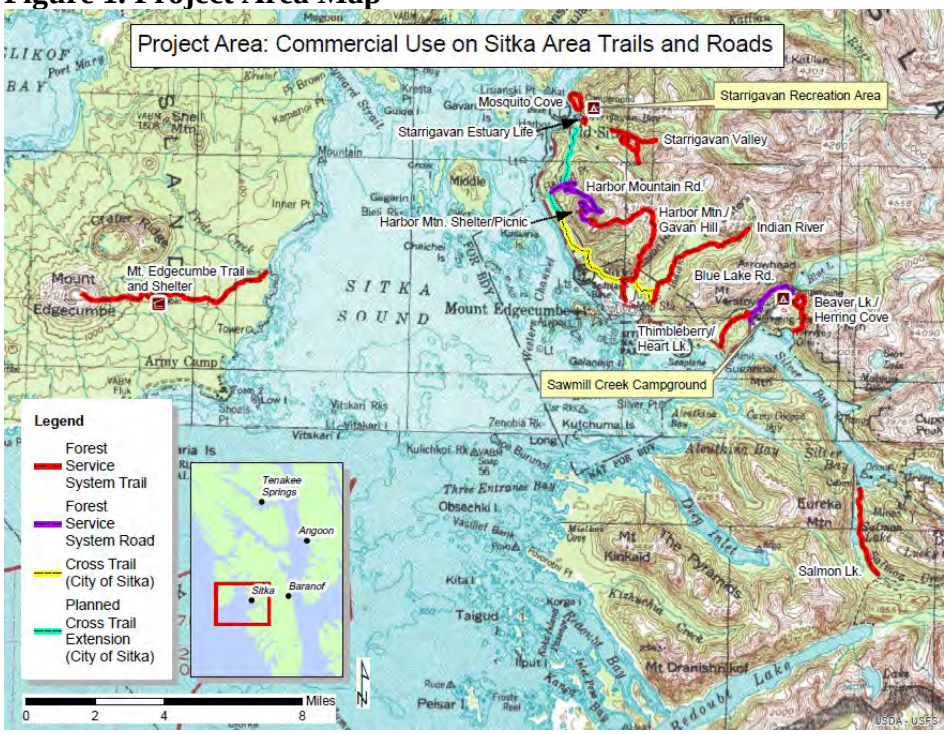
This action responds to the goals and objectives outlined in the Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan, 2016 (Forest Plan) and builds upon the 2008 outfitter/guide management plan to move the project area towards desired conditions described in the Forest Plan. A goal for recreation and tourism on the Tongass under the Forest Plan is to provide a range of recreation opportunities consistent with public demand, emphasizing

locally popular recreation places and those important to the tourism industry (Forest Plan, p. 2-4). Additional Forest Plan direction is to authorize outfitter/guide operations through the issuance of priority use permits (up to 10 years), whenever possible, supplemented with temporary permits. Priority use permits may only be issued if a proposed commercial use has been assessed through an environmental analysis. This action will consider the same trails, roads and activities as the 2008 EA and is expanded to include new trails and facilities in accordance with Forest Plan direction.

The project area includes the following NFS trails accessible from the Sitka road system: Herring Cove, Beaver Lake, Thimbleberry/Heart Lake, Indian River, Harbor Mountain/Gavan Hill, Harbor Mountain Shelter/Picnic, Starrigavan Estuary Life, Mosquito Cove and Starrigavan Valley Multi Use trail system. Trails remote from the Sitka road system, but also included within the project area due to their proximity to Sitka include Mount Edgecumbe and Salmon Lake. No commercial use is proposed on the Verstovia trail due to issues with legal parking availability and land ownership constraints. The Harbor Mountain and Blue Lake roads are part of the Forest Service transportation network in Sitka and are included in the project area in addition to the Mount Edgecumbe Shelter, Sawmill Creek Campground and Starrigavan Recreation Area.

Several of the road-system trails and trailhead parking areas lie on or traverse areas not owned by the FS. For some trails, the FS has a public use easement and is able to regulate activities occurring on these lands. In areas where no legal easement exists, the FS cannot authorize or manage commercial use. These jurisdictional trail segments without easements are identified on the maps in appendix A.

Figure 1. Project Area Map



PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Proposed Action

The 2006 capacity analysis was used as a template for determining proposed commercial allocation figures. Monitoring data collected since 2008 provided recent use estimates of the trails, roads, and facilities considered under the proposed action.

Trails

Outfitter/guides may be allocated use on Sitka area trails in the following manner:
Up to 25% of the total capacity of each trail may be allocated for outfitter/guide use on some trails and 12.5% of total capacity on trails where a more conservative allocation is warranted. Examples of issues that would result in a relatively lower capacity allocation for certain trails include presence of rare and/or sensitive plant populations, proximity to another recreation asset such as a rental cabin, and high potential for wildlife displacement.

Current Forest Plan guidance is to generally allocate no more than one-half the capacity of a recreation opportunity to outfitter/guide operations.

> *Recreation capacity is defined as the number of people that can take advantage of the supply of a recreation opportunity during an established use period without substantially diminishing the quality of the recreation experience or the resources.*

Outfitter/guide use would be allocated based on service days. A service day is defined as a day, or part of a day, on NFS lands for which an outfitter or guide provides services to a client (FSH 2709.14, 53.1e). One hundred service days, for example, would equal 100 guided clients on a given day. Although service days are based on the number of clients, guides are included in the group size maximums listed below.

Table 1. Existing and Proposed Allocation of Service Days on Sitka Area Trails

Trail Name	Existing Allocation May 1 – Sept 30 / (*Max. Group Size*) [1]	Proposed Allocation May 1 – Sept 30 / (*Max. Group Size)*	Proposed Allocation Oct 1 – April 30 / (*Max. Group Size)*
Herring Cove/Beaver Lake	2228 / (*8)*	3356 / (*8)*	926 / (*8)*
Thimbleberry/Heart Lake	4127 / (*15)*	4144 / (*15)*	1143 / (*15)*
Indian River	1032 / (*8)*	1554 / (*8)*	429 / (*8)*
Harbor Mtn./Gavan Hill	1032 / (*8)*	1554 / (*8)*	429 / (*8)*
Harbor Mtn. Shelter/Picnic	0	1492 / (*8)*	411 / (*8)*
Starrigavan Estuary Life	3095 / (*20)*	3108 / (*20)*	857 / (*20)*
Mosquito Cove	4127 / (*20)*	4144 / (*20)*	1143 / (*20)*
Starrigavan Valley	0	2238 / (*15)*	617 / (*15)*
Mount Edgecumbe	0	746 / (*8)*	206 / (*8)*
Salmon Lake	0	518 / (*8)*	143 / (*8)*

[1]No existing allocation exists for the Oct 1 – April 30 time period

The allocations shown in the table above represent the total service days available for the specified season: May 1-Sept 30 (153 days), and October 1-April 30 (212 days). To aid understanding of what the allocations might mean on a daily basis, a per day hypothetical amount of commercial use can be established by dividing service days by the number of days in the season. However, in practice, actual daily commercial use may be more or less than a hypothetical daily quota. Group size limitations effectively keep daily commercial use levels within an acceptable range for management purposes and preserve the recreational experience for other users.

The maximum group pertains both to weekdays and weekends. Proportionally fewer days would be available for commercial use during the non-peak season due to reduced daylight hours and vegetative screening.

Most of the NFS trails and roads in the project area cross multiple land owners. The proposed action applies only to activities conducted on NFS lands or on Non-NFS lands where the Forest Service has been granted management responsibility. However, outfitter/guides permitted on NFS lands are required to comply with state, county, and municipal laws.

Herring Cove and Beaver Lake are two separate NFS trails, but lumped together under this proposal. The existing allocation was developed for Beaver Lake trail only -- Herring Cove trail hadn't been constructed yet at the time of the 2008 allocation decision.

Roads

Outfitter/Guides may be allocated use on National Forest System roads as follows:

Table 2. Existing and Proposed Allocation of Vehicles and Service Days

Activity	Existing Allocation May 1 – Sept 30 / (*Max. Group Size*)[1]	Proposed Allocation May 1 – Sept 30 / (*Max. Group Size)*	Proposed Allocation Oct 1 – April 30 / (*Max. Group Size)*
Blue Lake Road			
Vehicles	306	1019	235
Hiking/Biking	300 / (*8)*	300 / (*8)*	150 / (*8)*
Harbor Mountain Road			
Vehicles	459	969	208
Hiking/Biking	0	300 / (*8)*	150 / (*8)*

[1]No existing allocation exists for the Oct 1 – April 30 time period

The allocation for trails and roads shown above include institutional outfitters (e.g., schools, youth groups, and therapeutic programs). Institutional outfitters are subject to the same group size requirements unless an exemption for a specific need is provided on a case-by-case basis.

Campgrounds and Dispersed Camping

There is no existing allocation of service days for overnight use at developed recreation facilities, or for dispersed camping off trails. Dispersed camping, where not prohibited by Forest special order, would continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis with one

exception. Outfitter/guides and institutional outfitters may use the Mount Edgecumbe shelter on a first-come, first-serve basis. Commercial operators shall not displace unguided users at the shelter. During emergency situations, commercial groups occupying these shelters shall make space available for persons seeking shelter. In addition, institutional outfitters would be allocated use for two overnight recreation facilities as follows:

Table 3. Proposed Allocation of service days for Institutional Outfitters

Facility	Proposed Allocation May 1 – Sept 30	Proposed Allocation Oct 1 – April 30
Sawmill Creek Campground	225	200
Starrigavan Recreation Area	300	200

Maximum group size at the overnight facilities would be in accordance with posted limits. Occupancy of the overnight group sites at Starrigavan Recreation Area is limited to 20 people and the overnight group site at Sawmill Creek Campground, once constructed, is anticipated to accommodate 30 people.

Recreation Events

Recreation events such as running races that fall under the definition of commercial use require a special use permit. Number of participants, rather than service days, is the allocable unit for this type of use.

Table 4. Allocation of Participants for Recreation Events

Route Name	Proposed Maximum number of participants per event	Proposed Allocation Jan 1 – December 31
Herring Cove/Beaver Lake	150	150
Thimbleberry/Heart Lake	150	300[1]
Harbor Mtn./Gavan Hill	150	150
Harbor Mtn. Shelter/Picnic	150	150
Mosquito Cove	150	150
Starrigavan Valley	150	300
Blue Lake Road	150	150
Harbor Mountain Road	150	150

[1]Includes the short segment of Blue Lake Road between trailhead and Sawmill Creek Road

No allocation for recreation events is provided for Verstovia, Indian River, Starrigavan Estuary Life, Mount Edgecumbe and Salmon Lake trails. Recreation event use on these trails would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

No Action

Under the No Action alternative, current management plans would continue to guide management of the project area. Priority special use permits could continue to be authorized for trails and roads covered under the 2008 commercial allocation decision. Temporary, one-year special use permits would be authorized on a case by case basis for all recreation facilities not covered under the 2008 decision.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE NO ACTION AND ACTION ALTERNATIVE

The environmental impacts of the No Action and Proposed action are described below. The discussion focuses on resources most likely to be affected by the alternatives.

Botany

No Action – Commercial activities would continue to occur as described above under the No Action alternative. Impacts to sensitive and rare plants or invasive plant risk would be similar to that described for the Proposed Action, except that the lower use allocation of the No Action alternative would result in less potential guided use, and therefore less likelihood of negative impacts. Permits will include stipulations to prevent impacts to sensitive and rare plants, and prevent the spread of invasive plants.

Proposed Action – Guided road and trail use under the proposed allocation will not have a significant impact on habitat of any rare or sensitive plant species that are known or suspected to occur in the project area, because outfitter guide permits will contain stipulations that restrict travel to established designated trails and roads. Guided trail use can potentially have beneficial effects by preventing off-trail or off-road excursions, unleashed pets, unauthorized plant collection, and other activities that may affect sensitive or rare plant habitat. As part of the permitting process, outfitter guides will be informed of their responsibility to avoid impacts to the known occurrences of sensitive and rare plants, including *Piperia unalascensis* on the Mt. Edgecumbe Trail and *Saussurea americana* near the Harbor Mt./Gavan Hill Trail, or any other sensitive or rare plants that may be documented in the future on or near the authorized trails and roads while a permit is active. Therefore, the Proposed Action may affect sensitive or rare plants in the project area, but the impact is expected to be negligible.

The overall risk of invasive plant establishment from the Proposed Action is low if all recommended mitigation measures in the project Invasive Plant Risk Assessment are implemented, and moderate if they are not or only partially implemented. This determination is based on the following:

- The current inventory of invasive plants indicate a few known infestations of high-priority invasive plants at road rights of way and trailheads.
- Current habitat vulnerability is low, and non-project dependent vectors present a low risk.
- Habitat alteration (exposure of mineral soil in off-trail or off-road areas) presents a moderate risk, but only in small areas that should recover to natural vegetation quickly.
- Increased vectors as a result of increased visitor use presents a moderate risk but can be mitigated by permit conditions for guided use.

Heritage and Cultural

No Action – Commercial activities would continue to occur as described above under the No Action alternative. Forest Service permits issued to commercial entities are defined as federal undertakings and as required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, the Forest Service is required to take into account the effects of those undertakings on historic properties eligible to the National Register of Historic Places (NR) and to provide the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) with a reasonable opportunity to comment. The Forest Service archaeologists in the Heritage Resources staff ensure that the Forest completes the required Section 106 obligations are completed and reported in the required manner.

Proposed Action – Under the proposed action there is the potential for increased usage of the trails and roads by Forest Service permitted commercial entities and their clients. This increased usage has the potential of causing an adverse effect to extant historic properties by the aforementioned commercial entities and their clients. Typically, cultural resources are considered for eligibility to the NR when they are 50 years or older in origin. At least some of the trails and roads listed in this EA had their origins over 50 years ago. The majority of the trails roads proposed in this EA have not been evaluated for eligibility to the NR. None of the trails and roads have been evaluated as NR-eligible.

To fulfill the Section 106 requirements of this proposed undertaking it is necessary to evaluate those trails and roads which have not been previously evaluated to the NR, and then determine the potential impact of the proposal on any resources determined NR-eligible. The Section 106 process requires the determination and examination of the undertaking's entire area of potential effects (APE) for NR-eligible properties that might be impacted by the proposed undertaking. The APE is the geographic area or areas within which an undertaking may directly or indirectly cause alterations in the character or use of historic properties, if any such properties exist. Any NR-eligible historic properties in reasonably close proximity to the trails and roads detailed in this EA might be indirectly impacted by the Forest Service permitted outfitter/guide usage. Further, the Section 106 requirement is not limited to just federally managed lands. This EA notes that most of the NFS trails and roads in the project area cross multiple land owners. If the proposal has the potential to impact NR-eligible historic properties on non-Forest Service managed lands, both directly or indirectly, then that impact needs to be analyzed in addition.

In order to comply with Section 106, upon application (or renewal of an existing permit) for use of a road or trail which has not been evaluated for eligibility to the NR and the resource in question is 45 years or older in origin, prior to the issuing of that permit Forest Service archaeologists will complete the Section 106 process detailed in 36 CFR 800. The primary steps of this process are as follows:

- Identification of historic properties (§ 800.4)
- Assessment of adverse effects (§ 800.4)
- Resolution of adverse effects (§ 800.6), if necessary

If the results of the Section 106 process determine that NR-eligible sites will be adversely affected by the proposed undertaking the Forest Service will work with the required Section 106 consultation partners to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to those resources. Mitigation measures might include limiting the number of outfitter/guides allocation days more than originally proposed or the development of a historic properties management plan to ensure the resource in question is managed correctly in the future.

Recreation

No Action – Actual service days of commercial use on area trails and roads would likely continue to vary year to year, but the allocation of service days would remain no higher than current management levels. The rate of wear and tear on trails and roads by guided activities is expected to remain similar to existing conditions. Fees collected from commercial operators help fund maintenance of roads, trails, and facilities. This maintenance funding stream is expected to remain relatively flat under No Action.

Proposed Action – Recent trends illustrate the importance of the visitor industry to Alaska in general, and Southeast Alaska in particular. Statewide, visitor-related employment increased approximately 9% between 2015 and 2017 while other sectors including oil and gas, construction, professional and business services, and state government each showed a net loss of jobs in that same period (McDowell Group, 2018). Data from 2017 indicate the visitor industry is responsible for 23% of employment in Southeast Alaska, which is almost double that of Interior Alaska, the region closest in terms of percentage of total employment attributable to the visitor industry (McDowell Group, 2018).

The demand for commercial use of Sitka area roads, trails and campgrounds is likely to rise for the foreseeable future contributing to a combined overall increase in public (guided/unguided) use of FS managed infrastructure in the project area. An increase in the number of people engaged in recreational opportunities is expected to create proportionately more wear and tear on infrastructure, but the need for additional maintenance is not expected to be significant. Should resource concerns arise from natural events and/or use patterns, special use permit managers have the flexibility to reduce authorized use until concerns are addressed.

An increase in commercial use would result in correspondingly more fees collected by the FS, with those added dollars available for maintenance of trails, roads and facilities used by the commercial operators. At the same time, more commercial use would presumably create more employment opportunities and generate additional revenue for the state and local economy.

An unknown percentage of unguided recreationists may choose to spend less time using Forest Service managed trails, roads and campgrounds considered in this proposal, but displacement of the unguided public is not expected to be significant. Commercial group size restrictions and a cap on commercial use (not to exceed 25% of a total trail capacity) will minimize impacts on unguided users. Future projects including the Cross trail

extension and Katlian road could spread out or reduce use on the trails and roads proposed for commercial use.

Wildlife

No Action – Existing conditions would remain. Both guided and unguided use would continue on area trails and roads. No habitat would be modified.

Proposed Action – All outfitter/guide activities would occur on infrastructure already in use by the public and/or commercial outfitters and guides so animals are familiar with some level of human presence. Direct and indirect effects of both alternatives are similar in that habitat would not be modified. Habitats that are key to Management Indicator Species (e.g. nesting habitats, winter use areas or habitat that is considered a limiting factor) will not be modified or affected. No productive old growth habitat would be modified. The main potential effects are disruption of feeding/breeding/nesting habits of wildlife from human presence or disturbance connected to outfitter/guide activities.

AGENCIES AND PERSONS CONSULTED

- The Commercial Use Allocation on Sitka Area Trails and Roads project has been listed on the Tongass National Forest schedule of proposed actions since July 7, 2017.
- Government-to-government consultation letters were sent to the Sitka Tribe of Alaska May 31, 2017.
- Consultation letters were sent to Sealaska Corporation and Shee Atika, Inc. on May 31, 2017.
- Public Scoping letters were emailed via the electronic mailing list management service GovDelivery to 546 individuals, organizations, institutions, and industry representatives on July 7, 2017.
- Public Scoping letters were mailed to 7 individuals, organizations, institutions, and industry representatives on July 7, 2017.
- The Forest Service received written comments from Shee Atika, Inc. Sitka Trail Works, Inc. and Blain Anderson of Sound Sailing.

Literature Cited

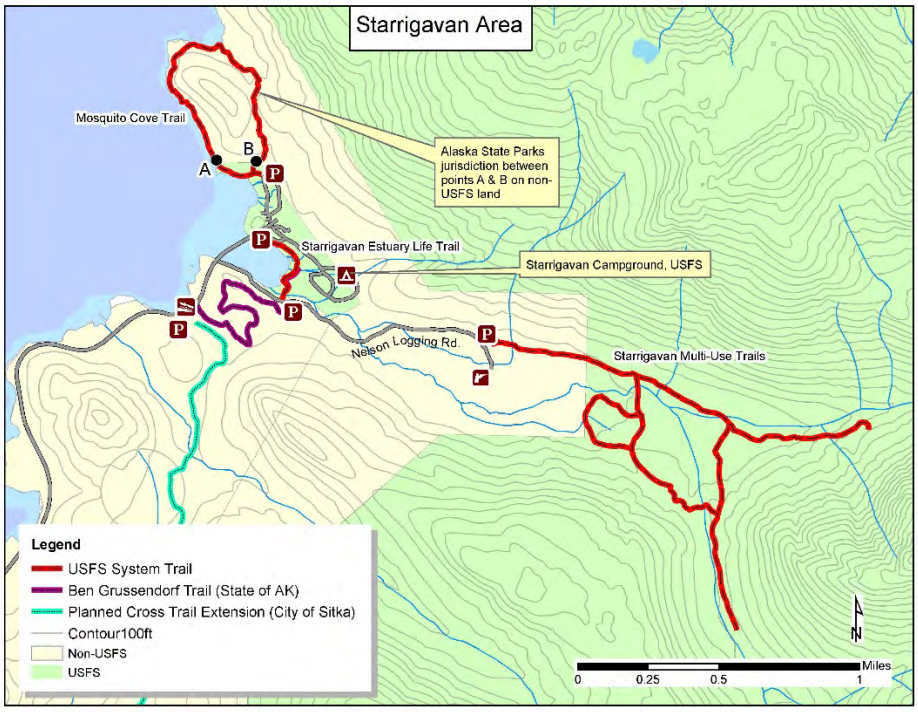
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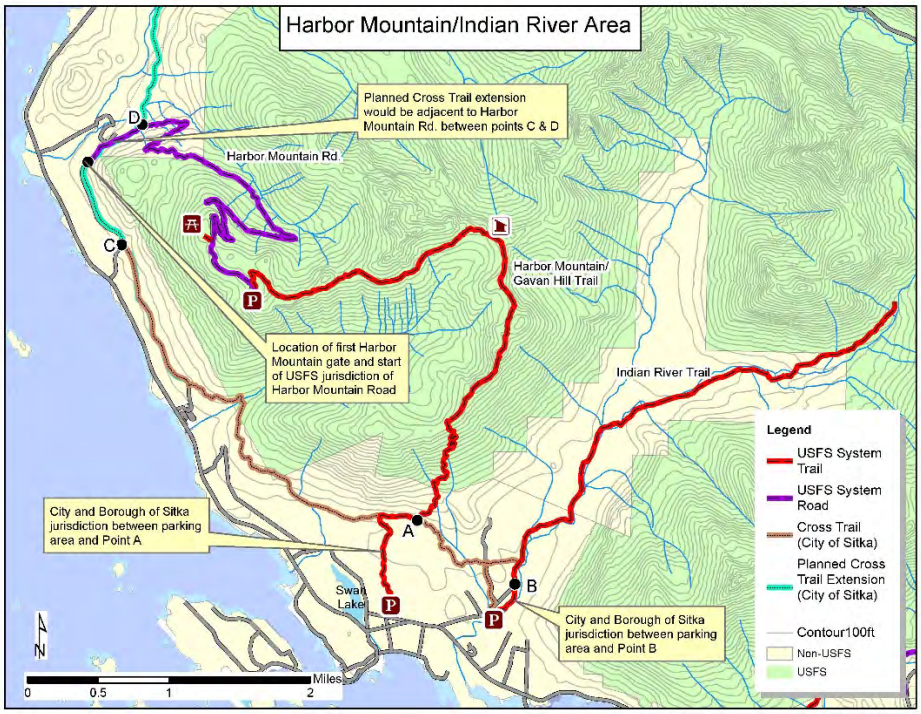
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APPENDIX A – ADDITIONAL MAPS






Blue Lake Road Area
Blue Lake
Sawmill Creek Campground, USFS
Blue Lake Rd.
Beaver Lake
Beaver Lake/
Herring Cove Trails
Heart
Lake
Thimbleberry/
Heart Lake Trail
A
City and Borough of Sitka
jurisdiction between parking
area and Point B
B
Thimbleberry
Lake
City and Borough of Sitka
jurisdiction between parking
area and Point A
Legend
USFS System
Trail
USFS System
Road
Contour100ft
Non-USFS
USFS
N
0
0.25
0.5
1
Miles

Commercial Recreational Land Use Plan

Appendix C: Considerations & Methodology for Determining Carrying Capacity

As the Use Plan continues to evolve, additional work to analyze and adjust carrying capacities for recreational assets will be essential to meet the plan's goals of prioritizing community quality of life, protecting natural and cultural resources, balancing competing uses, and making considerations for the visitor industry. This document captures key considerations to make, and methods to use, as carrying capacities are further studied and re-determined.

<u>Key Considerations for Commercial Recreational Land Use Carrying Capacities</u>

1) Physical Environment:
   a) Site Characteristics:
      i) Size, topography, vegetation, water bodies, and climate.
      ii) Unique features (e.g., historical sites, scenic viewpoints, wildlife habitats).
   b) Infrastructure:
      i) Capacity of parking lots, trails, restrooms, and other facilities.
      ii) Ability to handle waste disposal.
   c) Natural Resource Constraints:
      i) Water availability, soil erosion potential, and wildlife sensitivity.

2) Social and Cultural Factors:
   a) Visitor and Local Community Experience:
      i) Desired level of solitude, interaction, and activity intensity.
      ii) Cultural and historical significance of the area.
      iii) Tolerance for noise, crowding, and other disturbances.
      iv) Economic benefits, social impacts, and potential conflicts with residents.
      v) Cultural sensitivity to local customs and traditions.

3) Management and Operational Factors:
   a) Monitoring and Evaluation:
      i) Regular monitoring of visitor numbers, resource conditions, and user satisfaction.
      ii) Adaptive management to adjust strategies based on monitoring data.
   b) Regulations and Enforcement:
      i) Clear and enforceable rules and regulations to protect resources and ensure compliance with issued permit and permit conditions.
      ii) Adequate enforcement mechanisms to deter violations.

4) Economic Factors:
    a) Revenue Generation:
        i) Fees, permits, and other revenue sources.
        ii) Economic impact on local communities.
    b) Cost Recovery:
        i) Costs of infrastructure maintenance, staffing, and resource protection.
        ii) Balance between revenue generation and environmental sustainability.

Methods for Determining Carrying Capacity

1) Physical Site Capacity:
    a) Consider the physical limitations of the site, such as trail width, slope, and type of trail surface.

2) Social Carrying Capacity:
    a) Conduct surveys and interviews with visitors and local residents to assess their preferences and tolerance levels.

3) Managerial Carrying Capacity:
    a) Consider the capacity of staff to manage visitor use, maintain facilities, and enforce regulations.
    b) Assess the availability of resources for monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management.

Balancing Multiple Objectives

Determining carrying capacity involves balancing competing objectives, such as addressing resident concerns of overuse, protecting the environment, facilitating new business opportunities and economic growth, providing visitors with access to, and appreciation of, our beautiful natural surroundings, and administrative capacity. It's important to consider the trade-offs between these objectives and to develop a management plan that strikes a balance. By carefully considering these factors and employing appropriate methods, we are striving to develop effective carrying capacity strategies that ensure the long-term sustainability of an effective commercial recreational land Use Plan.

Following the Leave No Trace Seven Principles, summarized below, can help us minimize those impacts. They can be applied anywhere, at any time, while taking part in recreational activities.

- **Plan Ahead and Prepare**
    - Know the regulations and special concerns for the area you'll visit.
    - Prepare for extreme weather, hazards, and emergencies.
    - Schedule your trip to avoid times of high use.
    - Visit in small groups when possible. Consider splitting larger groups into smaller groups.
    - Repackage food to minimize waste.
    - Use a map and compass or GPS to eliminate the use of marking paint, rock cairns or flagging.

- **Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces**
    - Durable surfaces include maintained trails and designated campsites, rock, gravel, sand, dry grasses or snow.
    - Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
    - Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.
    - *In popular areas:*
        - Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
        - Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
        - Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.
    - *In pristine areas:*
        - Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
        - Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

- **Dispose of Waste Properly**
    - Pack it in, pack it out. Inspect your campsite, food preparation areas, and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.
    - Utilize toilet facilities whenever possible. Otherwise, deposit solid human waste in catholes dug 6 to 8 inches deep, at least 200 feet from water, camp and trails. Cover and disguise the cathole when finished.
    - Pack out toilet paper and hygiene products.
    - To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap. Scatter strained dishwater.

- **Leave What You Find**
    - Preserve the past: examine, photograph, but do not touch cultural or historic structures and artifacts.
    - Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.
    - Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.
    - Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.

- **Minimize Campfire Impacts**
    - Campfires can cause lasting impacts to the environment. Use a lightweight stove for cooking and enjoy a candle lantern for light.
    - Where fires are permitted, use established fire rings, fire pans, or mound fires.
    - Keep fires small. Only use down and dead wood from the ground that can be broken by hand.
    - Burn all wood and coals to ash, put out campfires completely, then scatter cool ashes.

- **Respect Wildlife**
    - Observe wildlife from a distance. Do not follow or approach them.
    - Never feed animals. Feeding wildlife damages their health, alters natural behaviors, [habituates them to humans], and exposes them to predators and other dangers.
    - Protect wildlife and your food by storing rations and trash securely.
    - Control pets at all times, or leave them at home.
    - Avoid wildlife during sensitive times: mating, nesting, raising young, or winter.

- **Be Considerate of Other Visitors**
    - Respect other visitors and protect the quality of their experience.
    - Be courteous. Yield to other users on the trail.
    - Step to the downhill side of the trail when encountering pack stock.
    - Take breaks and camp away from trails and other visitors.
    - Let nature's sounds prevail. Avoid loud voices and noises.

These principles were established by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics, and built on work by the US Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management in the mid 1980s. This relationship continues today and has been adopted by commercial operators, outdoor educators, not for profit organizations and many others worldwide. The principles are based on and informed by scientific research in the fields of recreation ecology and human dimensions of natural resources. The science behind the principles on the Leave No Trace website: https://lnt.org/learn/science-behind-principles

Leave No Trace Seven Principles © 1999 by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics: www.LNT.org.

Appendix E.

Historical Data Collection Methodology

Use numbers reported in the asset profiles were found using various methods of data collection including outside cellular data tabulation by the company called Placer.ai, commercial company records, and infrared trail counters placed at different locations. Placer.ai gave CBS reports about the use of different areas by providing packages of information about the geolocation of users from their cell phone data. This allowed CBS to obtain data about remote areas, specific sections of areas, and historical data about the use of an asset. Trail counters placed by CBS use infrared sensors to quantify the use of an asset. This data allows CBS to collect real time data in strategic places and validate some of the data from the Placer.ai reports. Placer.ai gave information on times of use, number of unique users of the trail, the split of local versus visitor trail user visits, and the historical number of visits for each trail.

Commercial levels of use in 2023 and 2024 were calculated from the commercial permits submitted by businesses. These permits do not require applicants to split up their predicted use of each individual asset they plan to use, rather they give a prediction of how many people they will serve in a season regardless of which asset they are using. Using these numbers creates a maximum number of users for each asset, however it is quite likely that the actual number for each trail is smaller as they are broken up into use for multiple trails.

For example, one company who wants to guide 300 people throughout the season and will take them either to Beaver Lake or Heart Lake report that they will possibly guide 300 people at both assets. However, in actuality, maybe only 100 were on Beaver Lake and 200 on Heart Lake. But for our purposes they would report, and we've reported here that there was a maximum of 300 people for both Beaver Lake and Heart Lake.

Cross Trail: Kramer Ave. North to Starrigavan

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Avg. Users Per Day	TRAfx	Jun. 10, 2024 – Nov. 4, 2024
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Cross Trail: Kramer Ave. South to Indian River Trail

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Avg. Users Per Day	TRAfx	Jun. 10, 2024 – Oct. 24, 2024
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Gavan Hill Trail Access:

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Avg. Users Per Day	TRAfx	Jun. 10, 2024 – Oct. 24, 2024
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Indian River

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Avg. Users Per Day	TRAfx	Jun. 10, 2024- Jul. 22,2024
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Thimbleberry Lake/ Heart Lake Trail

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Avg. Users Per Day	TRAfx	Jun. 10, 2024- Nov. 5, 2024
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Whale Park

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Herring Cove/Beaver Lake Trail

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Avg. Users Per Day	TRAfx	May 20, 2024- Nov. 23, 2024
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Herring Cove

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Swan Lake

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Eagle Beach (Back Beach)

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Baranof Warm Springs

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Avg. Users Per Day	TRAfx	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Goddard Hot Springs

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Takatz Bay

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Whale Park

Data	Source	Dates
Busiest Day	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Peak Time	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Unique Users	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Local/ Visitor Split	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026
Historical Use	Placer.ai	Jan.1, 2021- Aug 28, 2026

Table-1: Sidewalk Level of Service Classification

Sidewalk Level of Service	Characteristics of Sidewalk
LOS A	Pedestrian Space > 60 ft²/p, Flow Rate = 5 p/min/ft, pedestrians move in desired paths without altering their movements in response to other pedestrians. Walking speeds are freely selected, and conflicts between pedestrians are unlikely.
LOS B	Pedestrian Space > 40-60 ft²/p, Flow Rate > 5-7 p/min/ft, there is sufficient area for pedestrians to select walking speeds freely to bypass other pedestrians, and to avoid crossing conflicts. At this level, pedestrians begin to be aware of other pedestrians, and to response to their presence when electing a walking path.
LOS C	Pedestrian Space > 24-40 ft²/p, Flow Rate > 7-10 p/min/ft, space is sufficient for normal walking speeds, and for bypassing other pedestrians in primarily unidirectional streams. Reverse-direction or crossing movements can cause minor conflicts, and speeds and flow rate are somewhat lower.
LOS D	Pedestrian Space > 15-24 ft²/p, Flow Rate > 10-15 p/min/ft, freedom to select individual walking speed and to bypass other pedestrians is restricted. Crossing or reverse-flow movements face a high probability of conflict, requiring frequent changes in speed and position. The LOS provides reasonably fluid flow, but friction and interaction between pedestrians is likely
LOS E	Pedestrian Space > 8-15 ft²/p, Flow Rate > 15-23 p/min/ft, virtually all pedestrians restrict their normal walking speed, frequently adjusting their gait. At the lower range, forward movement is possible only by shuffling. Space is not sufficient for passing slower pedestrians. Cross- or reverse-flow movements are possible only with extreme difficulties. Design volumes approach the limit of walkway capacity, with stoppages and interruptions to flow.
LOS F	Pedestrian Space = 8 ft²/p, Flow Rate varies p/min/ft, all walking speeds are severely restricted, and forward progress is made only by shuffling. There is frequent unavoidable contact with other pedestrians. Cross-and reverse-flow movements are virtually impossible. Flow is sporadic and unstable. Space is more characteristic of queued pedestrians than of moving pedestrian streams.

Pedestrian LOS for sidewalks and sideways is calculated using the pedestrian unit flow rate. In addition to LOS grades A to F, space (ft²/p), speed (ft/s), and the volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio can also be derived from the Table-2.

Table-2: PLOS Criteria (HCM 2000)

LOS	Space (ft^2/ped.)	Flow Rate (Ped./min/ft)	Speed (ft/sec)	V/C Ratio
A	>60	≤5	>4.25	≤0.21
B	>40-60	>5-7	>4.17-4.25	>0.21-0.31
C	>24-40	>7-10	>4.00-4.17	>0.31-0.44
D	>15-24	>10-15	>3.75-4.00	>0.44-0.65
E	>8-15	>15-23	>2.50-3.75	>0.65-1.00
F	≥8	Variable	≤2.50	Variable