

Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Demand Analysis –Polk County Summary

2013-2017 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan Supporting Documentation

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Background

In preparation for the 2013-2017 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) contracted with Oregon State University (OSU) to conduct a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their 2011 outdoor recreation participation in Oregon, as well as their opinions about parks and recreation management. This report summarizes key findings of the survey for Polk County. For review of statewide survey results, please see the full survey report, Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Demand Analysis, online at: http://www.oregon.gov/oprd/PLANS/docs/scorp/2013-2018_SCORP/Demand_Analysis.pdf

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted using a random sample of Oregon households. In order to generate sufficient responses for each county, the sample was stratified by county. Separate random samples were drawn from each county. Surveying Oregonians consisted of 50,150 mail outs, with 46,348 of the surveys deliverable (92%). Of those delivered, 8,860 completed surveys were obtained, for an overall response rate of 19%. This response rate is typical of statewide, general population surveys that are long and do not include token financial incentives. Sample data were weighted to represent county-level population proportions and statewide age-related proportions. For a detailed description of the survey methodology, please see the full survey report at the web link provided above.

Outdoor Recreation Activities

Based on previous SCORP outdoor recreation activity lists and input from the SCORP steering committee comprised of parks and recreation managers across Oregon, seventy (70) recreation activities were identified as important recreation activity types. These activities were grouped into eight (8) categories, including Non-motorized Trail Activities, Motorized Activities, Non-motorized Snow Activities, Outdoor Leisure / Sporting Activities, Nature Study Activities, Vehicle-based Camping Activities, Fishing / Hunting / Shooting Activities, and Non-motorized Water-based and Beach Activities.

User Occasions and Participation in Outdoor Recreation

User occasions (number of times people engage in an activity) and percent of the population that participates in an activity are presented for Polk County in the following tables. The top activities for Polk County both user occasions (based on where the activity occurred) and proportion of Polk County residents are included in Table 1. County totals for all seventy recreation activities are included in Table 2.

Table 1. Top Ten Activities in Polk County, 2011

User Occasions Where Activity Occurred		% Population Participating	
Activity	User Occasions	Activity	% Population Participating
Walking on local streets / sidewalks	4,768,423	Walking on local streets / sidewalks	74.5
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc.	1,318,295	Beach activities – ocean	68.0
General play at a neighborhood park / playground	1,245,124	Walking on local trails / paths	64.6
Walking on local trails / paths	1,222,461	Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, festivals	61.8
Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas	1,069,213	Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc	57.8
Bicycling on roads, streets /sidewalks	924,021	Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	54.6
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	858,899	Walking / day hiking on non-local trails / paths	51.3
Jogging / running on streets / sidewalks	608,756	General play at a neighborhood park / playground	48.2
Bird watching	570,821	Picnicking	44.9
Other nature / wildlife / forest / wildflower observation	491,826	Car camping with a tent	43.0

Table 2. User Occasions and Participation in Outdoor Recreation Activities, Polk County Residents, 2011

Activity	User Occasions	% Population Participating
Non-motorized Trail Activities		
Walking on local streets / sidewalks	4,768,423	74.5
Walking on local trails / paths	1,222,461	64.6
Walking / day hiking on non-local trails / paths	306,391	51.3
Long-distance hiking (back packing)	1,945	12.8
Jogging / running on streets / sidewalks	608,756	18.0
Jogging / running on trails / paths	193,743	13.2
Horseback riding	39,304	3.9
Bicycling on unpaved trails	57,797	10.2
Bicycling on paved trails	142,993	18.7
Bicycling on roads, streets / sidewalks	924,021	28.7
Bicycle touring on paved roads / paths (long day / multi-day rides)*		10.0
Motorized Activities		
Class I – All-terrain vehicle riding (3 & 4 wheel ATVs, straddle seat and handle bars)	93,534	13.3
Class II – Off-road 4-wheel driving (jeeps, pick-ups, dune buggies, SUVs)	15,053	7.8
Class III – Off-road motorcycling	5,627	1.7
Class IV – Riding UTVs / side-by-side ATVs (non-straddle seat, driver and passenger sit side-by-side in the vehicle, steering wheel for steering control)	<1,000	<1.0
Snowmobiling	1,168	2.4
Personal water craft – jet ski	16,335	7.0
Power boating (cruising / water skiing)	14,479	17.8
Non-motorized Snow Activities		
Downhill (alpine) skiing / snowboarding	<1,000	13.5
Cross-country / Nordic skiing / skijoring on groomed trails	<1,000	2.7
Cross-country / Nordic skiing / skijoring on ungroomed trails / off designated trails	<1,000	1.3
Snowshoeing	<1,000	3.2
Sledding, tubing, or general snow play	42,008	20.8
Outdoor Leisure / Sporting Activities		
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure	858,899	54.6
Picnicking	207,466	44.9
General play at a neighborhood park / playground	1,245,124	48.2
Dog walking / going to dog parks / off-leash areas	1,069,213	36.3
Relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat / noise, etc.	1,318,295	57.8
Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, festivals	146,688	61.8
Tennis (played outdoors)	23,327	10.2
Outdoor court games other than tennis (basketball, beach volleyball, badminton, etc.)	237,438	13.9
Baseball / softball	186,451	7.1
Football, soccer, lacrosse, rugby, ultimate frisbee	67,766	6.4

Activity	User Occasions	% Population Participating
Golf	44,136	7.7
Disc golf	191,549	10.6
Skateboarding, inline skating, roller skating, roller skiing	231,459	5.0
Rock climbing, bouldering, mountaineering	<1,000	2.9
Orienteering, geocaching	3,181	6.5
Hang gliding, sky diving, paragliding	<1,000	<1.0
Visiting historic sites / history-themed parks (history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers, etc.)	83,088	40.3
Nature Study Activities		
Bird watching	570,821	16.1
Whale watching	-	17.3
Exploring tidepools	-	40.2
Other nature / wildlife / forest / wildflower observation	491,826	30.0
Visiting botanical gardens	23,355	13.1
Visiting nature centers	18,843	11.7
Outdoor photography, painting, drawing	258,352	18.1
Collecting (rocks, plants, mushrooms, berries)	249,147	24.7
Vehicle-based Camping Activities		
RV / motorhome / trailer camping	<1,000	23.0
Car camping with a tent	24,981	43.0
Motorcycle camping with a tent	<1,000	1.2
Yurts / camper cabins	<1,000	6.9
Fishing, Hunting, Shooting Activities		
Fly fishing	6,746	6.1
Fishing from a boat (other than fly fishing)	24,518	15.6
Fishing from a bank or shore (other than fly fishing)	48,100	18.1
Crabbing	-	14.1
Shellfishing / clamming	-	5.0
Big game hunting with a gun	107,652	10.4
Big game hunting with a bow	14,787	<1.0
Waterfowl hunting	54,689	1.1
Upland bird or small game hunting	23,844	2.8
Target / skeet shooting / archery	209,035	10.9
Non-motorized Water-based and Beach Activities		
White-water canoeing, kayaking, rafting	<1,000	13.1
Flat-water canoeing, sea kayaking, rowing, stand-up paddling, tubing / floating	3,392	8.1
Surfing / ocean stand-up paddling	-	<1.0
Windsurfing / kiteboarding	<1,000	<1.0
Sailing	<1,000	<1.0
Beach activities – ocean	-	68.0
Beach activities – lakes, reservoirs, rivers	61,902	31.2
Swimming / playing in outdoor pools / spray parks	220,013	16.2
Snorkeling / SCUBA diving	<1,000	3.1

*Bicycle touring was asked as a separate question regarding participation only.

Camping Likelihood and Priority Needs

This set of questions asked people to rate various camping types using 5-point Likert scales according to the likelihood of using a type of camping when or if the individual went camping at an Oregon State Park campground (1 = Not at all likely to 5 = Very likely), and to rate their perceived need for more of each type of camping near the individual’s community (1 = Lowest priority need to 5 = Highest priority need).

For Polk County residents, drive-in tent sites had the highest likelihood of use, while hiker-biker sites had the lowest likelihood of use (Table 3). Drive-in tent sites had the highest priority need, while RV and hiker-biker sites had the lowest priority need.

Table 3. Likelihood and Priority Need for Camping Type, Polk County

Camping Type	How likely to use camping type in state park*	Level of priority need for camping type near your community*
RV sites	2.2	2.2
Cabins or yurts w/ heat, lights	3.0	2.9
Cabins or yurts w/ heat, lights, bathroom, kitchen	3.0	2.9
Drive-in tent sites	3.9	3.4
Hike-in tent sites	2.6	2.8
Hiker-biker sites	1.9	2.2
Other type	2.4	2.4

* Means scores for 5-point Likert Scale (1 = "Not at all likely" or "Lowest priority need" to 5 = "Very likely" or "Highest priority need")

Priorities for the Future

Survey participants were asked about their opinions on priorities for the future in and near their community. Respondents were asked to rate several items for investment by park and forest agencies using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Lowest priority need to 5 = Highest priority need). Items were developed by the steering committee, representing several municipal-type areas and beyond.

Table 4 reports Polk County results, with items listed in descending order by mean priority ratings. The top priority needs for Polk County residents are soft surface walking trails, access to waterways, playgrounds with natural materials (Natural Play Areas) and nature and wildlife viewing areas. Picnic areas for small groups, paved walking trails, off-street bicycle trails and nature and wildlife viewing areas rated high as well. Outdoor tennis and basketball courts and baseball / softball fields rated the lowest on priority investments.

Table 4. Priorities for the Future, What Park and Forest Agencies Should Invest In, Polk County—Mean For 5-Point Likert (1 = “Lowest priority need” to 5 = “Highest priority need”)

Item	Mean
Dirt / other soft surface walking trails and paths	3.9
Public access sites to waterways	3.6
Children’s playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	3.5
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	3.5
Picnic areas and shelters for <u>small</u> visitor groups	3.3
Off-street bicycle trails and pathways	3.2
Paved / hard surface walking trails and paths	3.1
Children’s playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	3.0
Community gardens	3.0
Off-leash dog areas	3.0
Picnic areas and shelters for <u>large</u> visitor groups	2.9
Designated paddling routes for canoes, kayaks, rafts, driftboats	2.9
Multi-use fields for soccer, football, lacrosse, etc.	2.6
Baseball / softball fields	2.5
Off-highway vehicle trails / areas	2.5
Basketball courts	2.4
Outdoor tennis courts	2.3

Value and Delivery for Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services

Polk County residents that participated in outdoor recreation activities were also asked their opinions related to the benefits provided by park and recreation agencies. First, respondents were asked to rate each benefit type based on how valued it is using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Least valued to 5 = Most valued). Next, they were asked to rate how well park and recreation agencies are currently delivering each benefit type using a similar scale (1 = Currently does not deliver at all to 5 = Currently delivers extremely well).

Ranging from a mean score of 3.1 to 4.3 on the 5-point scale, improving physical health, community desirability and preserve open space rated the highest valued in Polk County. Lowest valued benefits in Polk County included help promote tourism, help attract new residents / businesses and provide opportunities for social interaction. Delivery of benefits ranged from a mean score of 2.8 to 3.3, with improving physical health, community desirability and preserve open space rated the highest delivered in Polk County. Lowest delivered benefits in Polk County included help attract new residents / businesses, increase property values and promote tourism.

Table 5. Value and Delivery for Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services, Polk County

Value For Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services—Mean for 5-point Likert (1 = "Least valued" to 5 = "Most valued")		Delivery of Benefits of Parks and Recreation Services—Mean for 5-point Likert (1 = "Currently does not deliver at all" to 5 = "Currently delivers extremely well")	
Benefit	Value Mean	Benefit	Delivery Mean
Improve physical health and fitness	4.3	Improve physical health and fitness	3.3
Make your community a more desirable place to live	4.3	Make your community a more desirable place to live	3.3
Preserve open space and the environment	4.3	Preserve open space and the environment	3.3
Help reduce crime	4.1	Preserve historical features in your community	3.2
Improve mental health and reduce stress	3.9	Provide opportunities for social interaction	3.1
Preserve historical features in your community	3.8	Enhance a sense of place and community	3.1
Enhance a sense of place and community	3.7	Help reduce crime	3.0
Increase property values in your community	3.5	Improve mental health and reduce stress	3.0
Provide opportunities for social interaction	3.2	Promote tourism	2.9
Help attract new residents and businesses	3.1	Increase property values in your community	2.8
Promote tourism	3.1	Help attract new residents and businesses	2.8