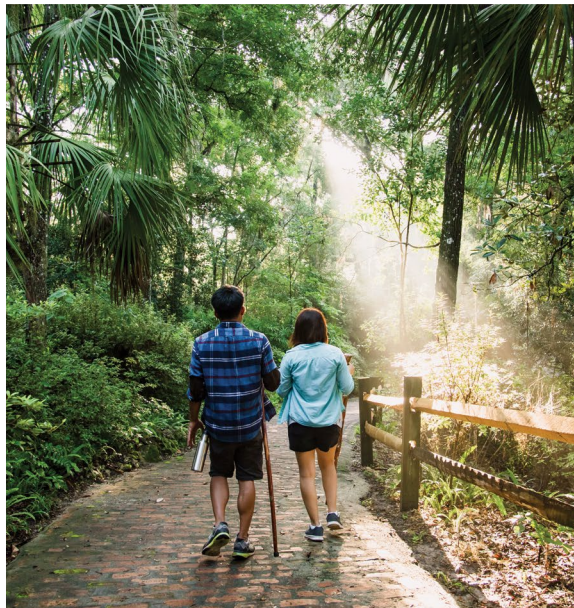
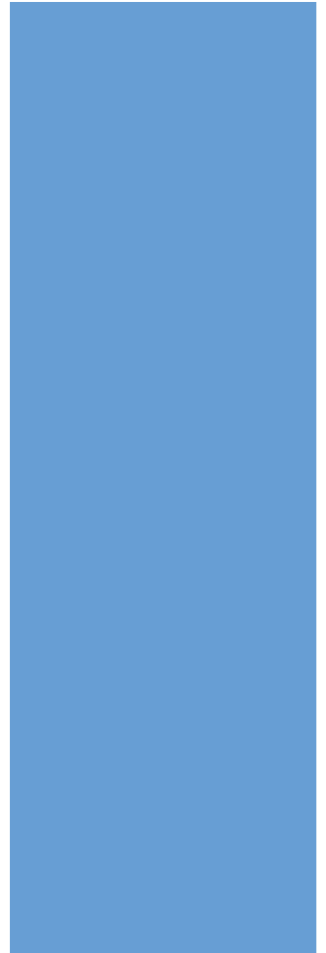
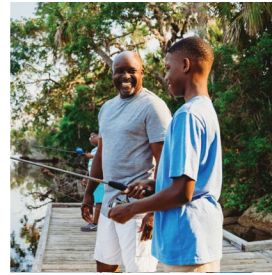


SCORP

2023-2027 STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN



OUTDOOR RECREATION IN FLORIDA

To download this plan, or for more information about Florida's recreation planning efforts, visit www.floridadep.gov/ogt or call the Office of Greenways and Trails at 850-245-2052.



RON DeSANTIS
GOVERNOR

June 14, 2023

Dear Fellow Floridians:

Florida's prosperity and way of life is deeply integrated with, and enriched by, outdoor recreation. Floridians and visitors from across the globe enjoy our beautiful beaches, parks, trails and excellent sports facilities, helping to make Florida the world's top travel destination.

Every five years, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, with help from many integral partners, develops the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. Members of the public and numerous stakeholders, including recreation businesses and local governments, contributed their time and talent to help craft this important plan for 2023 through 2027.

This plan outlines Florida's bold vision for a thriving and diverse outdoor recreation system, focusing on and encouraging the following:

- Increasing health and well-being through active outdoor activities and lifestyles;
- Improving public access;
- Promoting economic opportunities, adventures travel and ecotourism;
- Expanding outdoor recreation opportunities through grant programs and public land acquisition; and
- Supporting green infrastructure and low impact development that creates new outdoor recreation opportunities.

A key part of this plan's foundation is the conservation of natural and cultural resources upon which we all depend. By employing sound resource management and stewardship practices, we can help ensure high-quality recreation experiences for our residents and visitors for generations to come.

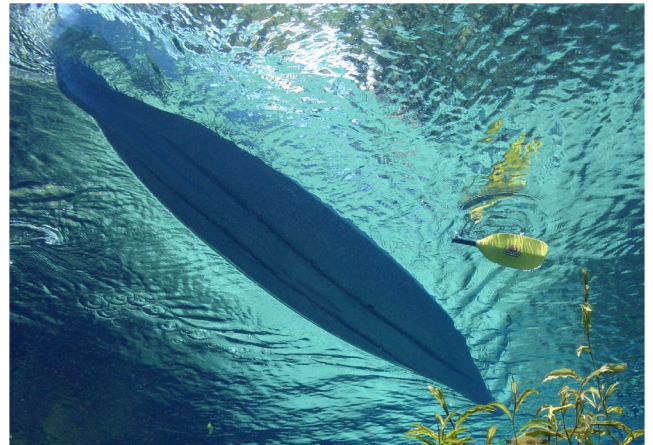
I encourage all Floridians to get outside and enjoy all that Florida's unique natural resources have to offer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron DeSantis".

Ron DeSantis
Governor

TABLE OF CONTENTS



6-9

10-11

12-20

21-28

29-31

32-91

Introduction & Background

Chapter 1

Florida's Outdoor Recreation Setting

Chapter 2

Outdoor Recreation Programs & Supply

Chapter 3

Outdoor Recreation Demand & Need

Chapter 4

Outdoor Recreation Priorities & Recommendations

Appendix

Wetlands, Survey Data, Bibliography & Acknowledgments

LIST OF ACRONYMS

- CERP:** Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan
- CMP:** Clean Marina Program
- DEO:** Division of Economic Opportunity
- DEP:** Department of Environmental Protection
- DHR:** Division of Historical Resources
- DOT:** Department of Transportation
- DRP:** Division of Recreation and Parks
- DSL:** Division of State Lands
- DWRM:** Division of Water Resource Management
- FGTS:** Florida Greenways and Trails System
- FFS:** Florida Forest Service
- FHWA:** Federal Highway Administration
- FIND:** Florida Inland Navigation District
- FNST:** Florida National Scenic Trail
- FORI:** Florida Outdoor Recreation Inventory
- FRDAP:** Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program
- FWC:** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- LWCF:** Land and Water Conservation Fund
- NOAA:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- NPS:** National Park Service
- OGT:** Office of Greenways and Trails
- OHV:** Off-Highway Vehicle
- ORCP:** Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection
- RC:** Remote-Controlled
- RTP:** Recreational Trails Program
- SCORP:** Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- SFWMD:** South Florida Water Management District
- SUN:** Shared-Use Non-Motorized Trail Funding Program
- TAP:** Transportation Alternatives Program
- USACE:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- USDOD:** U.S. Department of Defense
- USFS:** U.S. Forest Service
- WCIND:** West Coast Inland Navigation District

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND



“The Sunshine State,” is one of Florida’s many popular nicknames, conjuring images of sunny beaches and mild winter weather. Florida can also be called the “Outdoor Recreation State” due to its abundant public lands and waters and wide range of year-round recreational opportunities.

Climate and geography play a big part in this, but they are far from the only reasons. Beginning in the early 20th century, Florida established state agencies to acquire and manage lands to protect historic sites, further wildlife conservation and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation. In 1963, the Florida Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Act formalized the state’s outdoor recreation planning efforts and enabled a series of land acquisition programs for conservation and recreation purposes.

Thanks to the success of these early endeavors, and to newer programs such as Florida Forever and federal and local government initiatives, approximately 14 million acres of public lands are available today for outdoor recreation, more than a third of Florida’s total acreage.¹¹ Additional private acreage is also available for public recreation, such as in certain wildlife management areas.

Purpose

For decades, all 50 states have produced policy plans commonly known as the Statewide Comprehensive

Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The purpose of these plans, which are updated every five years, is to guide the development of diverse and balanced statewide outdoor recreational opportunities. SCORP serves as a framework for recreation planning and helps orchestrate the implementation of each state’s goals and recommendations.

For Florida, a state with a growing number of both residents and annual visitors, SCORP is a vital planning tool. Florida’s SCORP tracks recreational supply and demand, describes current recreational opportunities, estimates the need for additional recreational opportunities and proposes means for meeting those identified needs. This fulfills the vision of section 375.021, Florida Statutes,¹² along with the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965,¹³ which was established to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness, wetlands and refuges, preserve wildlife and enhance recreational opportunities. Under this program, Florida is eligible to receive matching grants to acquire and develop outdoor recreation lands and facilities.

Florida’s 2023-2027 SCORP, the state’s 12th official plan, will focus on providing significant benefits to local communities, especially low-population rural areas and urban core environments.

Outdoor Recreation

Broadly speaking, outdoor recreation is any leisure activity conducted outdoors. These outdoor activities fall into two basic categories:

- User-oriented outdoor recreation is provided for the convenience of the participant. These activities and facilities can be accommodated as long as adequate physical space and funding exists. Examples include playground activities, swimming (in pools) and tennis.
- Resource-based outdoor recreation is dependent upon some element, or combination of elements, in natural or cultural environments that cannot be easily replicated or provided elsewhere. Local, state and federal agencies provide a significant portion of these opportunities, which often include activities such as kayaking, hunting, hiking and horseback riding. Opportunities for resource-based recreation tend to be more limited due to the natural and cultural resources involved.

Recreation facilities and activities are especially important in urban and suburban areas, where 90% of Floridians reside. A rise in urbanization often leads to an increase in user-oriented outdoor recreation facilities and programs to help meet the needs of expanding populations. However, as populations grow, suitable lands for recreation are often converted to development or other uses. This creates greater demand for resource-based recreation opportunities.

Both user-oriented and resource-based outdoor recreation are crucial to the health and wellness of America's citizenry. The management of natural resources is also a matter of public interest in Florida for the ecological and health benefits afforded to our residents and visitors. Additionally, governments play a major role in preserving and interpreting historic and prehistoric resources. These resources tell the story of our history and culture, providing a means for individual citizens to understand the events that have shaped Florida through the ages.

Planning

Florida is a major travel destination for outdoor recreation enthusiasts from around the world.

User-oriented outdoor recreation can be provided almost anywhere for the convenience of the participant. Recreation facilities and activities are especially important in urban and suburban areas, where 90% of Floridians reside. As with other urban services, user-oriented facilities and programs are most often provided by local governments. Examples include:



**Swimming
(in pools)**



Skateboarding



Pickleball

Resource-based outdoor recreation (the narrower of the two categories) is dependent upon some element or combination of elements in the natural or cultural environments that cannot be easily replicated or provided just anywhere. State and federal agencies provide a significant portion of these opportunities. Examples include:



Hiking



Kayaking

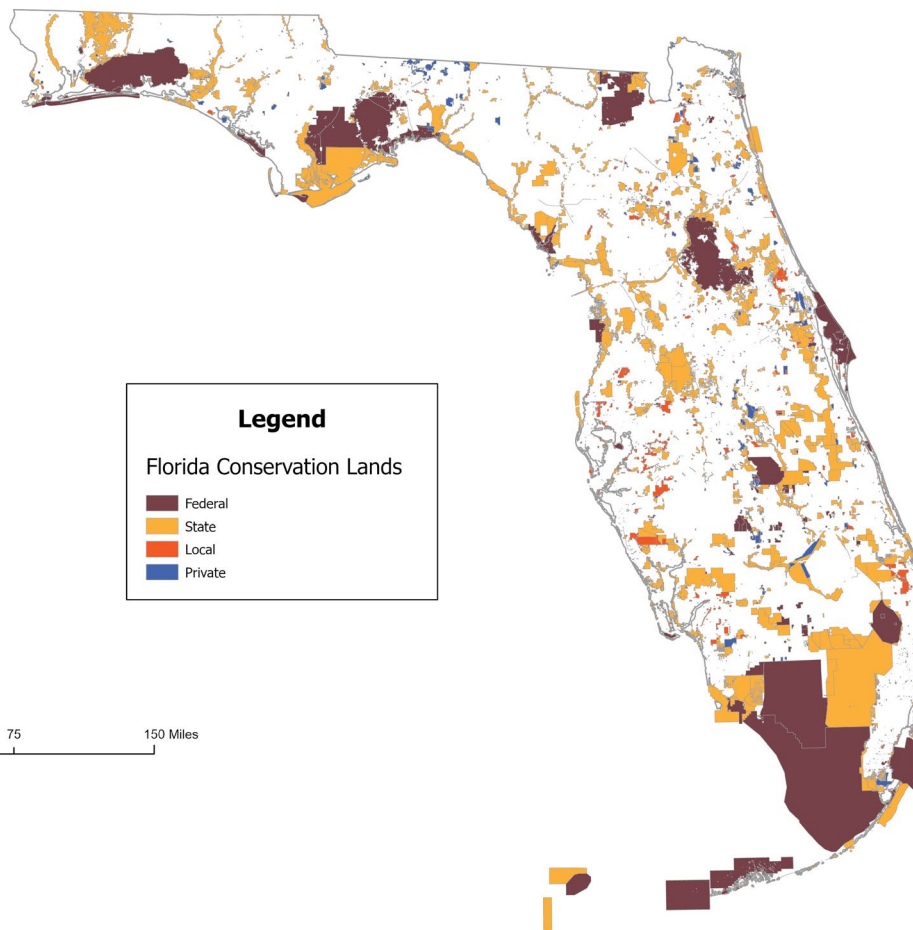


Bicycling

According to VISIT FLORIDA, the state's official tourism marketing corporation, more than 100 million tourists visit Florida annually, thanks in large part to our subtropical climate, abundant sunshine, sandy beaches, scenery and wildlife. Florida's 22 million residents enjoy these resources as well.

Due to the continued growth, urbanization and diversification of the population, more recreation facilities and services are needed today than ever before. Longer life expectancies, greater mobility and a growing appreciation for the health benefits of recreation also generate the additional need for facilities and programs. As a result, social and environmental conflicts may occur, and these must be addressed through comprehensive and coordinated efforts by recreation managers at many levels of government.

Effective coordination among the state's recreation



More than a third of Florida’s acreage is in public ownership, managed by local, state and federal agencies. This map shows the more than 14 million acres of Florida’s public lands. Private conservation lands are typically those with conservation easements, ensuring they will remain undeveloped.

providers is critical to maximize the health, economic and environmental benefits derived from recreation. Professional, systematic planning and program implementation are necessary to guide communities, government agencies and other organizations.

Process

While the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Division of Recreation and Parks (DRP), Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) has coordinated the 2023-2027 SCORP, the plan’s development is the result of a concerted effort to gain input from recreation users, as well as local, regional and state recreation providers. The process included public workshops and online surveys along with regular consultations with recreation professionals from around the state. This continued engagement is key to the plan’s success and implementation.

Additionally, DEP and the University of Florida’s Research Design and Data Coordinating Center conducted the 2021-2022 Outdoor Recreation

Participation Study. This study provides an in-depth look at participation in a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities, explores changes in trends, examines opinions regarding a variety of issues and offers quantitative insight on the recreational demands of Floridians.

The survey methodology employed random sampling and is statistically representative of residents at the state level. The results of the participation study are used in this document to provide a statewide analysis that will be a helpful tool to a wide variety of public and private recreation providers. The complete report is in the appendix and is posted on [DEP’s SCORP webpage](#).

Participation and Coordination

One of the most important aspects of outdoor recreation planning is coordination between governments. Many county and municipal governments assisted in the development of the 2023-2027 SCORP by contributing to the statewide inventory



of outdoor recreation resources and facilities known as the Florida Outdoor Recreation Inventory (FORI).

Private outdoor recreation enterprises constitute a significant element of Florida’s economy and will continue to provide a major share of the outdoor recreation supply. Coordination with the private sector is necessary to achieve more efficient development and operation of mutual programs, to improve and expand the ongoing inventory of private recreation sites and facilities, and to implement major recreation action program objectives.

State and private partnerships are established primarily through trade organizations, conferences

and networking opportunities such as the Governor’s Conference on Tourism and VISIT FLORIDA, which is primarily involved with tourism promotion and an array of commercial recreation enterprises. State representatives also attend various gatherings of private organizations to present and discuss state recreation policies and programs.

Whether for the welfare of Florida’s residents, the health of its economy or the management of its natural resources, a comprehensive outdoor recreation system is a major necessity. Florida’s 2023-2027 SCORP provides a foundation and direction for such a system.



Photo Credit: Bill Stanton

Yulee Sugar Mill Historical Site

The 2021-2022 Florida Outdoor Recreation Participation Study revealed that a large majority (88%) of those who travel more than 100 miles for recreation enjoy visiting historical and/or cultural sites. This photo is from Yulee Sugar Mill Ruins Historic State Park near Homosassa Springs which preserves the remnants of a steam driven sugar mill that operated from 1851 to 1864.



CHAPTER 1: Florida's Outdoor Recreation Setting

Physical Geography and Climate

Florida, the second-largest state east of the Mississippi River, has an elongated peninsula stretching 447 miles from north to south and 361 miles from east to west. Florida's diverse coastline extends 1,350 miles around the peninsula with 825 miles of sandy beaches.^{1.1}

Florida's climate is one of its primary assets, enabling residents and visitors to enjoy year-round outdoor activities. Florida lies within the temperate zone, yet its climate is subtropical with wet, humid summers and relatively dry, cool winters. The Gulf of Mexico on the west and the Atlantic Ocean on the east help moderate seasonal temperature extremes.

Florida is known for its abundant seasonal rainfall. The average annual rainfall is around 54 inches, most of which occurs during the summer months, whereas the winter months show the greatest average percentage of sunshine in the eastern United States.

Florida's geography makes it extremely vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes. These cyclonic weather systems impact both inland and coastal areas, making resiliency planning as it relates to the State's outdoor recreation important. Changes in climate can affect water temperatures, salinity and can influence coastal erosion. The state is divided into the north and central highlands and coastal lowlands.^{1.2}

Wildlife and Natural Resources

Florida has abundant water resources that provide opportunities for water-related activities. Beyond its vast shoreline, more than 12,500 miles of rivers, streams and waterways wind through the state, mostly in the northern half, and the state has approximately 7,700 lakes.^{1.3} South Florida's unique geologic history and flatter terrain have created a relative lack of river systems.

In addition to its lakes, rivers and streams, Florida's wetlands and their associated open waters account for about 11 million acres.^{1.4} A considerable amount of Florida's waters percolate through underlying limestone rock, forming groundwater reservoirs that discharge freshwater to springs. Florida has 33 first magnitude springs, more than any other state.^{1.5}

Vegetation is one of the most significant features of Florida's landscape, with a tremendous variety of natural vegetation that covers about 58% of the state.^{1.6} A significant number of these native plants hold ethnobotanical values like food, shelter, medicine, clothing, fiber and dyes.

Florida's wildlife is as varied as the habitats that support it. Species range from those common throughout the southeastern United States, such as the American alligator, to endemic species such as the Florida scrub-jay. Florida's native species include a multitude of saltwater fish and marine invertebrates.

The state's diverse wildlife resources provide a major attraction for many outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

People and History

Florida's history and culture are interwoven in a vibrant tapestry where federal, state and local parks, along with public lands and museums, help interpret Florida's past and present.

Archaeological research indicates that humans have inhabited the state for approximately the last 14,500 years, with cultures like Apalachee, Timucua, Calusa and Tequesta among those who made their homes in what is now the state of Florida.^{1.7} Mounds, middens, earthworks and other archaeological sites continue to be a source of wonder and curiosity. More than 100 locations on the Division of Historical Resources' (DHR) Florida Native Heritage Trail provide excellent opportunities to learn more about these native people. However, native cultures in Florida are not all lost, as tribes including the Seminole, Miccosukee and Muscogee (Creek) persist today. Florida has written history extending more than 500 years, with the flags of five nations having flown within its borders. Florida's culture and nationalities contributed heavily to the development of the Sunshine State.

Population

Florida reached a milestone in 2014 when it surpassed New York to become the country's third-

most populous state,^{1.8} and it continues to grow. According to the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, Florida's population grew to 21.5 million in 2020, a 14.6% increase from 2010.^{1.9} Florida is projected to have approximately 24.4 million residents by 2030 and 27.1 million by 2045.^{1.10} These population projections make the importance of SCORP even more vital if outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities are to keep up with projected rises in demand.

Economy

Tourism is Florida's number one economic driver, and, according to a 2017 study, outdoor recreation is a key component of Florida's tourism industry, contributing more than \$145 billion to the state's economy each year.^{1.11} About \$60 billion of this spending occurred in parks and other public lands. This same study determined that outdoor recreation in Florida supported 1.2 million jobs and generated tax revenue impacts of nearly \$10 billion. The state's overall economy ranks as the fourth-largest in the nation and if it were a country, Florida—with a gross domestic product of more than \$1 trillion—would rank number 17 in the world.^{1.12}



Photo Credit: Rachel Skeen

CHAPTER 2: Outdoor Recreation Programs & Supply



Roles

Florida's outdoor recreation programs are the result of collaborative efforts between federal, state and local governments, as well as private institutions, businesses and non-governmental organizations. To efficiently meet the state's diverse outdoor recreation needs, division of responsibility is sometimes required.

The state's core responsibility is to ensure that needs are met through the planned and coordinated efforts of all recreation providers, both public and private.

Local governments are tasked with providing a wide range of recreational opportunities that are important to the well-being of their citizens. To assist, the state can often serve as a bridge between large, federally managed parks and forests and community playgrounds and recreation facilities commonly provided by local governments.

Private and commercial recreation providers are also essential, meeting a significant portion of the overall demand for both resource-based and user-oriented outdoor recreation, particularly tourist generated demand. Non-profit organizations, clubs and other groups include private and quasi-public institutions and facilities that acquire lands exclusively for the use of their members, but in some cases also for the public. In addition, private industry lands can be used for resource-based recreation.

Programs

Most formal outdoor recreation programs have been instituted by various levels of government. Florida's outdoor recreation providers can be classified into five categories: federal, state, county, municipal government and private sector.

Federal programs provide public facilities and services that range from dredging waterways to protecting threatened or endangered wildlife. Federal agencies often coordinate projects with state agencies.

U.S. Department of the Interior

National Park Service (NPS)

- Manages national parks and monuments and designates significant properties and landmarks to conserve their natural and/or historic qualities. In Florida, the NPS manages the Biscayne, Everglades and Dry Tortugas National Parks, the Canaveral and Gulf Islands National Seashores, the Big Cypress National Preserve, the Castillo de San Marcos and Fort Matanzas National Monuments, the De Soto and Fort Caroline National Memorials, and the Timucuan Ecological Historic Preserve.
- Collaborates with agencies and programs to provide assistance and preserve natural/historic resources.

SCORP Participating Agencies

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services – Florida Forest Service
- Florida Department of Economic Opportunity
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Division of Water Resource Management, Division of Recreation and Parks, Florida Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection, Division of State Lands
- Florida Department of State – Division of Historical Resources
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Public Access Services Office
- Local Governments
- Regional Planning Councils
- State University System
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- Water Management Districts

- Coordinates the [National Trails System](#), comprised of [National Recreation Trails](#), National Scenic Trails and National Historic Trails. Almost 50 land and water trails in Florida are designated National Recreation Trails, including the 1,515-mile Florida Circumnavigational Saltwater Paddling Trail. Florida has two federally-designated wild and scenic rivers, the Loxahatchee and Wekiva.
- Manages LWCF and oversees SCORP planning by the states. An approved SCORP plan is required for a state to receive grant money from the fund.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- Conserves and enhances wildlife species and habitats by enforcing federal laws to protect, manage and restore species and habitats.
- Manages 30 national wildlife refuges and promotes recreation opportunities like hunting, fishing and other activities.

- Administers federal aid programs and grants such as the Clean Vessel Act, which is managed by the Clean Marina Program (CMP) in DEP's [Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection \(ORCP\)](#).
- Manages the [CMP](#). In 1992, the Clean Vessel Act established a grant program that would provide marinas with pump-out equipment to reduce aquatic pollution. CMP is a voluntary initiative that provides assistance and education regarding marine and freshwater environments and designates and publicizes those marinas, boatyards and marine retailers that have adopted best management practices.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

- Provides leadership in the management, protection and use of the nation's forests and grasslands.
- In the field of outdoor recreation, USFS is responsible for sustainably developing the recreational potential of national forests while protecting their scenic character.
- Manages Florida's Apalachicola, Ocala and Osceola National Forests, which contain some of the most pristine woodlands, swamps, springs and streams in the state.
- Administers the [Florida National Scenic Trail \(FNST\)](#), a non-motorized footpath extending from the Big Cypress National Preserve north to the Gulf Islands National Seashore. USFS partners with public and private landowners to ensure trail access and partners with the nonprofit Florida Trail Association regarding trail management and promotion.

U.S. Department of Defense

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)

- Primary responsibilities toward recreation facilities focus on flood risk management, navigation and environmental restoration.
- In partnership with the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), DEP and other agencies, USACE implemented the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan

(CERP), a project that covers 16 counties and over 18,000 square miles.

U.S. Department of Transportation

- The [Federal Highway Administration \(FHWA\)](#) provides grants to state and local governments for recreational projects that include bicycle and pedestrian facilities. They provide funds to the states for the [Recreational Trails Program \(RTP\)](#) to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both non-motorized and motorized trail uses.

U.S. Department of Commerce

- [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#) is a scientific and technical organization whose mission is to provide products, services and information that promotes safe navigation, supports coastal communities, sustains marine ecosystems and mitigates coastal hazards.
- The [National Estuarine Research Reserve System](#) is a network of ecological research reserves that includes three in Florida: Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas and Rookery Bay.
- The [National Marine Sanctuary Program](#) designates and manages marine areas such as the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, which covers 3,800 square miles and encompasses the most extensive living coral reef system in the nation.
- The [National Coastal Zone Management Program](#) fosters an effective partnership with state, local and federal governments. Through matching funds, the capabilities of each partner are strengthened to address coastal issues.

The State of Florida has numerous state programs responsible for providing public recreation.

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Division of Recreation and Parks

- Charged with the protection, administration, management, supervision, development and conservation of a sizeable portion of Florida's state-owned natural and cultural resources.

- Develops and operates Florida's 175 state parks and trails, encompassing more than 800,000 acres and drawing about 30 million visitors annually. Florida is the first park system in the nation to win four gold medals from the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration.

Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT)

- Provides leadership and coordination to establish, expand and promote the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS), a vast network of non-motorized recreation trails. OGT also promotes outdoor recreation through webinars and online materials, coordinates the state's designated paddling trails and develops the state's SCORP.

Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (ORCP)

- Principal manager of submerged lands and their associated marine and aquatic resources. ORCP manages Florida's 42 aquatic reserves, which encompass more than 2 million acres of sovereign submerged lands. In cooperation with NOAA, ORCP manages more than 420,000 acres of submerged lands and coastal uplands in the Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas, and Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserves, along with the [Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary](#).
- [Coastal protection and restoration are vital in preserving one of Florida's most valuable natural resources - its 825 miles of sandy shoreline fronting the Atlantic Ocean, the Gulf of Mexico and the Straits of Florida.](#)

Division of State Lands (DSL)

- Administers land acquisition programs, such as Florida Forever, on behalf of DEP. DSL provides administrative oversight for approximately 12 million acres of state-owned lands, including hundreds of freshwater springs, lakes and islands. Programs include:
 - [Florida Forever](#) was established in 2001 after the Florida Forever Act was passed by the Florida Legislature in 1999. The program has since acquired approximately 900,000 acres. The program focuses on the acquisition of conservation and recreation land.

- [Recreational Trails Program \(RTP\)](#) is a federally funded competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to local communities for the development of motorized and non-motorized trails.

- [Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program \(FRDAP\)](#) is a state competitive grant program that provides financial assistance to local governments to develop and/or acquire land for public outdoor recreational purposes.

- [Land and Water Conservation Fund \(LWCF\)](#), administered by DSL, provides federal grant funding to local governments for acquisition or development of land for public outdoor recreation.

Division of Water Resource Management (DWRM)

- Responsible for protecting the quality of Florida's drinking water, as well as its rivers, lakes and wetlands, and for reclaiming lands after they have been mined for phosphate and other minerals. DWRM's programs are critical to maintaining the viability of water resources for public outdoor recreational use and for providing recreation on restored mining lands.

Water Management Districts

- Provides public access and recreational facilities. Opportunities like hiking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, camping, canoeing, bicycling and wildlife viewing are managed on district-owned lands in coordination with state agencies, federal governments, counties and the private sector.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)

- Responsible for conserving the state's fish and wildlife resources. Central to FWC's role in outdoor recreation is the management of hunting, fishing, boating and wildlife viewing opportunities. From federal funding programs such as the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration program and the Federal Aid in Wildlife

Restoration Trust Fund, FWC provides grants and technical assistance for preservation, restoration, and enhancement of Florida's sportfishing, boating facilities, and endangered species.

- FWC oversees more than 6 million acres throughout the state that are established [wildlife management areas and wildlife and environmental areas](#). It is the largest state system in the country. A wide variety of outdoor recreation activities occur on these lands, including hunting, fishing, birding, camping, paddling, horseback riding, bicycling and hiking.
- [Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail](#) is a 2,000-mile, self-guided highway trail that covers nearly 500 sites to view native birds and wildlife.
- FWC has established several [paddling trails](#), including ones along the lower Apalachicola River, Fisheating Creek, Big Bend Coast and the Aucilla, Wacissa and Econfina Rivers. Many of these locations include primitive campsites.
- [Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network](#) teaches young people valuable outdoor recreation skills such as hunting, fishing, hiking and paddling. Four youth conservation centers operate in the state: Everglades, Suncoast, Joe Budd and Ocala.
- [Florida Boat Ramp Finder](#) provides descriptive information, maps and photographs of hundreds of public boat ramps throughout Florida.

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Florida Forest Service (FFS)

- Manages more than 1 million acres of state forests. These lands are open for a variety of public recreation uses including hiking, bicycling, horseback riding, hunting and fishing.
- Three state forest tracts feature off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation: Clear Creek OHV Riding Area at Blackwater River State Forest, Croom Motorcycle Area at Withlacoochee State Forest and the OHV trail system at Tate's Hell State Forest.



Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail

The Great Florida Birding and Wildlife Trail is a network of nearly 500 sites throughout Florida selected for their excellent birdwatching, wildlife viewing or educational opportunities. This 2,000-mile, self-guided highway trail is designed to conserve and enhance Florida's wildlife habitats by promoting birdwatching and wildlife viewing activities, conservation education and economic opportunity.

- Several state forests offer developed campgrounds and both primitive and improved campsites.
- FFS coordinates [Operation Outdoor Freedom](#) with several partners to provide recreational and rehabilitative opportunities to wounded veterans on state and private lands across Florida at no cost.

Florida Department of State

- [Division of Historical Resources \(DHR\)](#) is responsible for preserving and promoting Florida's historical, archaeological and cultural resources. DHR manages several museums in Tallahassee, including the Florida History Museum. They coordinate the wording and placement of historical markers throughout Florida, as well as the Florida Main Street designed to preserve community historic resources and boost local economies. DHR has also produced several [Florida Heritage Trail publications](#) that promote self-guided tours around the state.

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO)

- Assists communities through a variety of grants and assistance programs. [Community planning technical assistance grants](#) to local governments or regional planning councils working on behalf of local governments may be up to \$75,000. They can fund planning for parks and recreation.
- Other funding opportunities include Community Development Block Grants, Community Service Block Grants, State Small Business Credit Initiative, Rural Development Grants and Rural Infrastructure Fund.
- Identified rural counties are eligible for a reduction or waiver of matches for grants provided by the DEO.
- DEO provides assistance to workers, businesses and communities after devastating natural disasters such as hurricanes.
- [Competitive Florida Partnership](#) assists communities through funding and technical

assistance to create and implement an economic development strategy. A vital key is input from a wide variety of community stakeholders, including those representing parks and recreation.

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)

- FDOT promotes bicycle and pedestrian safety through public information, innovative roadway designs and funding for recreational trails.
- [Complete Streets](#) program seeks to design safe roadways throughout the state for a variety of users including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit vehicles, freight handlers and motorists.
- [Shared-Use Non-Motorized \(SUN\) Trail Program](#) funds the paved trail component of the Florida Greenways and Trails Priority System for bicyclists and pedestrians throughout the state.
- An [interactive map](#) showing bicycle friendly roads helps long-distance bicyclists plan trips around

the state, and ConnectPed displays pedestrian and bicycle related data on a map.

- [Florida Scenic Highways Program](#) promotes scenic, historic, environmental and cultural information along designated routes, as well as recreational opportunities. There are 27 state designated scenic highways and of these, six are federally designated National Scenic Byways.
- FDOT also administers federal programs such as the [Transportation Alternatives Program \(TAP\)](#) that provides funding for smaller scale transportation projects including recreational trails and related facilities.

State University System of Florida

The State University System of Florida consists of 12 institutions that serve more than 300,000 students, the second largest system in the country. Each university has an approved master plan that addresses outdoor recreation space. Recreational facilities maintained by each university provide



Atlantic Greenway Trail in Miami



Florida lawmakers established the Shared-Use Nonmotorized (SUN) Trail funding program in 2015 to help communities expand a safe statewide system of interconnected, high priority and strategic paved multi-use trails for bicyclists and pedestrians. The SUN Trail program provided six million dollars between 2018 and 2019 to reconstruct the Atlantic Greenway Trail network in Miami Beach. The Atlantic Greenway Trail (pictured) extends from the northern Miami city limits to connect business districts, cultural and tourism centers, residential neighborhoods, parking facilities and natural beach areas with those at South Beach.

opportunities for participation in a variety of athletic activities such as tennis, basketball, baseball, softball, soccer and football. Many state universities also operate resource-based recreation areas detached from the main campus for use by students, alumni and in some instances, the general public. These areas provide opportunities for both active and passive outdoor recreation activities, such as golfing, swimming, canoeing, hiking, camping, nature study and picnicking. There are also smaller public and private colleges in Florida that offer recreation facilities for their students.

Florida Regional Planning Councils

Florida is divided into 10 regional planning councils. Each one is governed by a body comprised of two-thirds county and municipal officials and one-third gubernatorial appointees. Additionally, the council includes ex-officio members from FDOT, DEP, DEO and corresponding water management districts. One of the primary functions of each council is the preparation and adoption of a strategic regional policy plan which guides the economic, physical and social development of the region.

Special Districts

Over 1,600 special districts exist statewide, providing infrastructure and services in a wide range of areas including fire control, ports and inlets, water control, community development, roads and hospitals. Navigation districts like [**Florida Inland Navigation District \(FIND\)**](#) and [**West Coast Inland Navigation District \(WCIND\)**](#) provide assistance programs that develop waterway access projects such as boat ramps, marinas, boardwalks, waterfront parks, navigation channels and environmental restoration projects. FIND is the state sponsor of the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway from the Georgia border to the southern end of Miami-Dade County. WCIND stretches from the northern border of Manatee County to the southern border of Lee County and contains the 152-mile Gulf Intracoastal Waterway.

Local Governments

Local governments are critically important in achieving a community's goals for environmental preservation, recreation, open space and growth management. Acquisition programs enacted by local governments have generated billions of dollars to

acquire conservation and recreation lands. Most of Florida's counties manage conservation lands comprising more than half a million acres.

County governments are key components of Florida's recreation and park system. Every county in the state has an officially established outdoor recreation program, and these may vary by county. They range from densely populated metropolitan areas like Pinellas or Miami-Dade counties to sparsely populated rural areas like Glades and Liberty counties. Counties are primarily concerned with the local outdoor recreation needs expressed by the unincorporated and incorporated populations within their jurisdictions. Generally, counties are an ideal level of government to provide regional or large community parks. Unlike cities, the larger acreage of counties provides a wider range of resources and a greater variety of outdoor recreation venues.

Nearly all of Florida's municipalities have developed recreation programs and facilities of one type or another. Many cities have established park and recreation programs with trained staff who administer parks, facilities and programs. Due to population densities and the lack of large open space areas that support resource-based recreation opportunities, municipal recreation systems tend to concentrate on providing more intensive user-oriented facilities that require relatively little space. Typical municipal outdoor recreation facilities include playgrounds, swimming pools, ball fields, golf courses and tennis courts, whereas coastal communities provide many excellent public beach facilities. Those municipalities located along navigable waters (coastal or inland) often operate marinas, boat ramps, docks, mooring fields and other boating facilities.

Municipal programs play a primary role in the provision of user-oriented recreation opportunities in Florida. The importance of municipal and county programs will continue to grow as Florida population increases.

Private Providers

Private providers and facilities range from for-profit recreational enterprises like golf courses and marinas to non-profit conservation and advocacy organizations. Industries with extensive landholdings, notably the forest products industry in Florida,

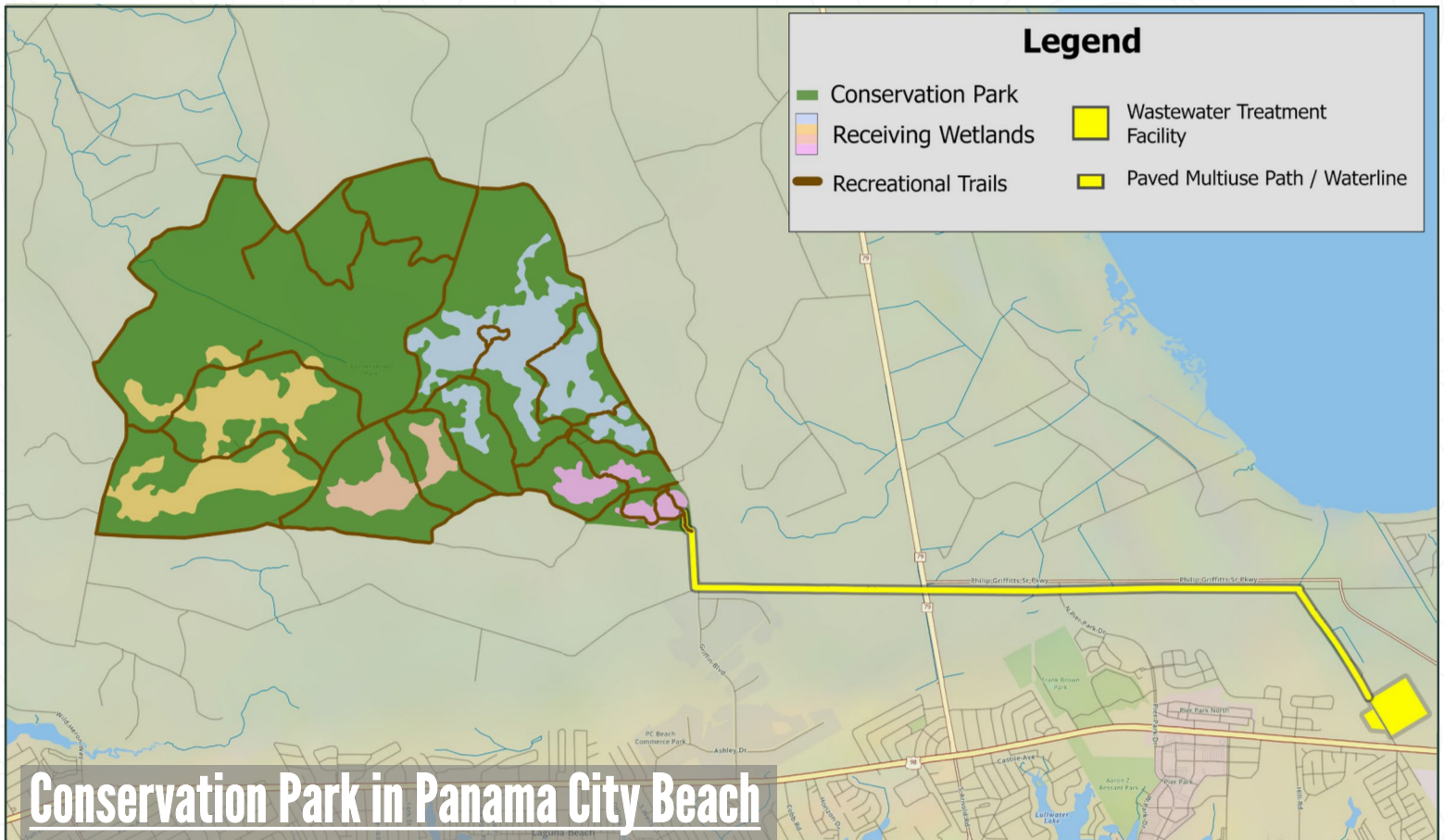
provide vast recreation resources and excellent facilities for the use of the public, often at a nominal fee. However, this resource is quickly disappearing in many parts of the state as timberlands are being converted to private access leases or developed for residential and commercial purposes. In addition to its direct delivery of outdoor recreation programs, rental equipment, tours and other opportunities, the private sector can respond quickly to opportunities for acquiring property for subsequent donation or resale.

Private organizations can also include quasi-public organizations, scouting organizations, faith-based and veteran groups and foundations. These groups provide a wide array of outdoor programs that include health and fitness and recreation therapy, and they also often acquire and manage conservation lands. These groups provide land and facilities

primarily for the use of their members, but in some cases for the public.

Florida’s commercial outdoor recreation providers are a vital component of the state’s economy. Commercial providers meet a significant portion of the overall demand for both resource-based and user-oriented outdoor recreation in Florida, particularly tourist-generated demand. Because of their capabilities and further potential for fulfilling demand, the private commercial sector must bear a large share of the responsibility for meeting the demand for both resource-based and user-oriented recreation.

FORI is a comprehensive inventory of existing outdoor recreation resources and facilities across the state. This is the primary database used to develop SCORP. This [interactive map](#) allows users to locate public lands and thousands of recreation facilities.

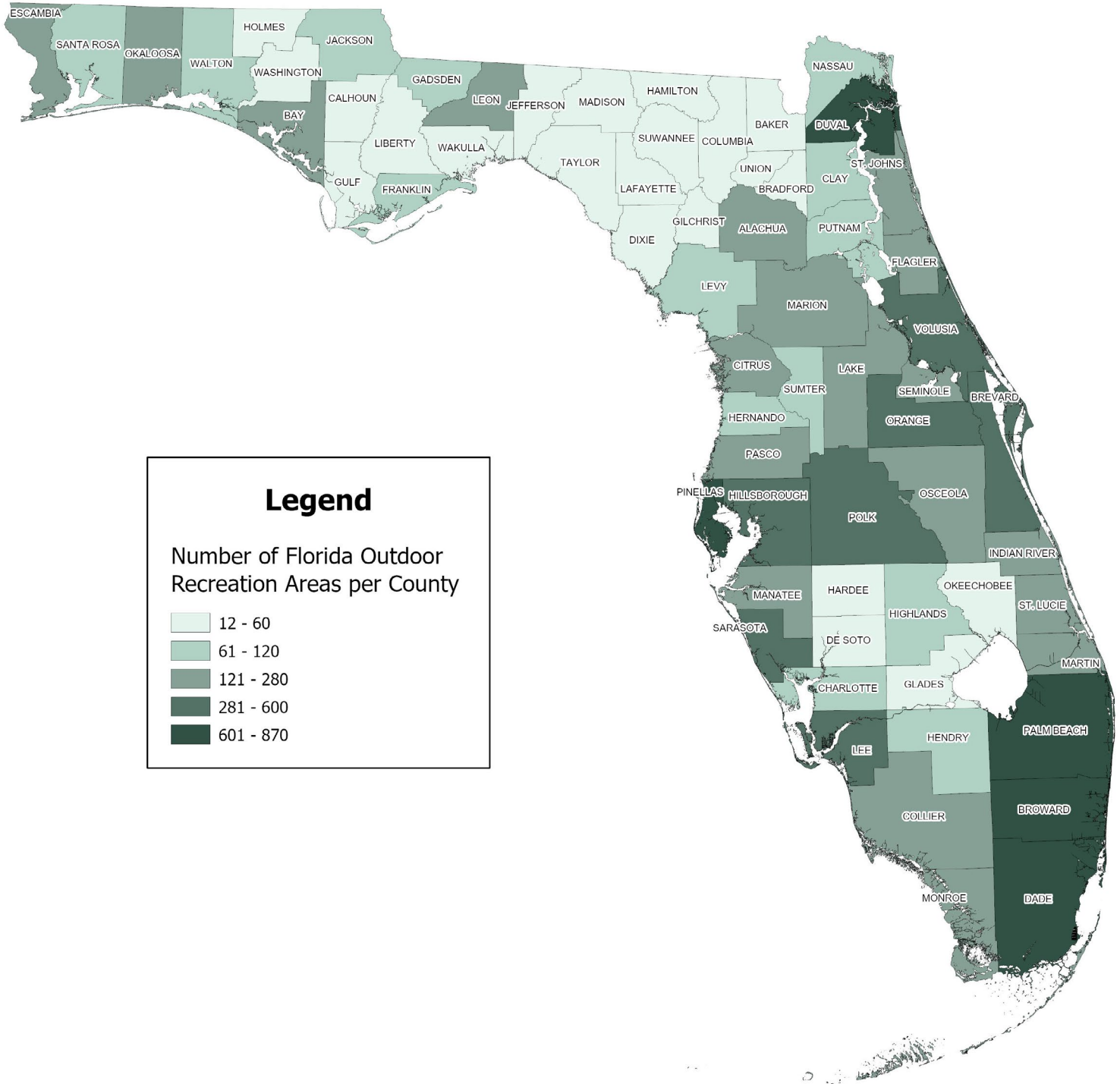


Conservation Park in Panama City Beach

In the city of Panama City Beach’s Conservation Park, wastewater is pumped from the treatment plant to the park under a paved multi-use path where it is distributed to specific zones. As a result, Panama City Beach’s wastewater treatment facility no longer discharges wastewater effluent into the West Bay of Saint Andrews Bay. As part of the project, the city also created over 25 miles of multi-purpose biking and hiking trails, including new boardwalks through watery cypress domes.

Source: Bomar, Michael B. and William D. Musser, “Reclaiming Water to Rehydrate Wetlands: Panama City Beach’s Conservation Park.” *Journal-American Water Works Association*, vol. 109, April 2017, pages 55-63. Accessed March 30, 2020.

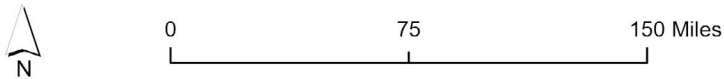
Example of FORI Resources



Legend

Number of Florida Outdoor Recreation Areas per County

	12 - 60
	61 - 120
	121 - 280
	281 - 600
	601 - 870



CHAPTER 3: Outdoor Recreation Demand & Need



From small towns to large cities to vast areas of public lands, Florida’s recreation providers work hard to deliver high-quality outdoor recreation experiences for both residents and visitors. SCORP provides a chance to periodically assess the demand and need for these activities, determine if the supply is adequate and how best to go about making improvements.

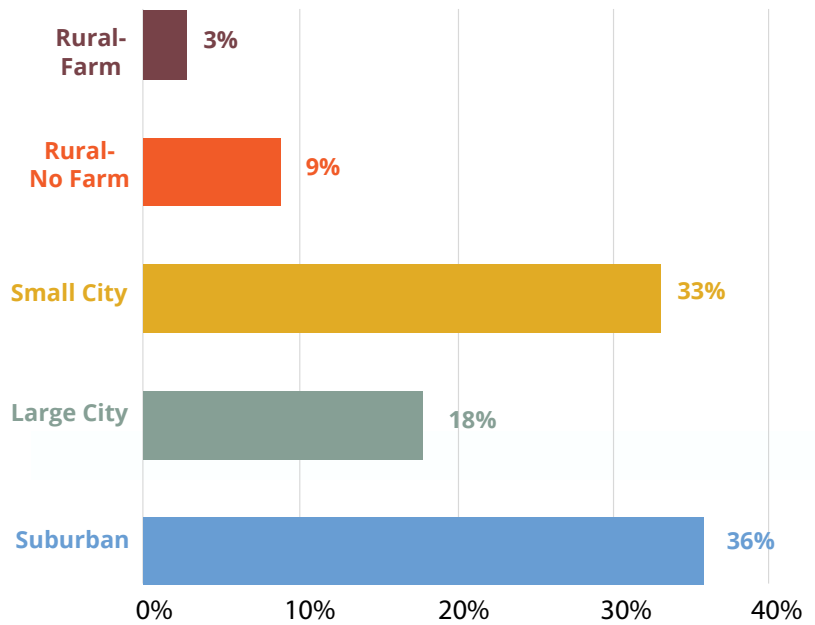
Measuring current and future demand for Florida’s outdoor recreation resources and facilities is challenging. Resources and facilities are generally considered “free” goods and services, and “demand,” as an economic concept, is difficult to calculate. Whether on a statewide or regional basis, a method for determining the amount of outdoor recreation a person would “consume” under certain conditions of cost and availability remains elusive.

Consequently, the term “demand” in this document represents a means of expressing the actual participation in a recreation activity by a defined group or population over a fixed time period. These measurements can provide satisfactory estimates of recreation demand helpful for long-range planning efforts.

Outdoor Recreation Demand

Periodic surveys of Florida’s residents and tourists are conducted to estimate recreation demand in

How would you describe the place where you live?

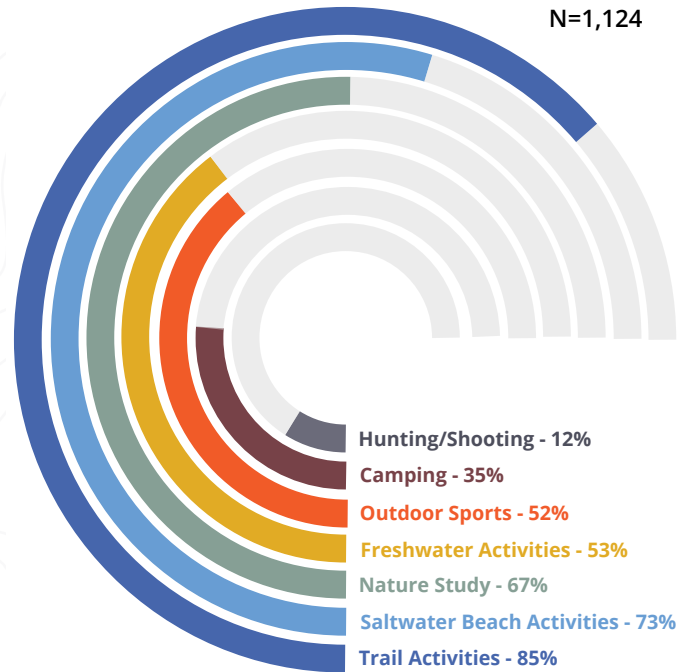


Florida. The 2021-2022 Florida Outdoor Recreation Participation Study was conducted from Oct. 26, 2021, to May 6, 2022, by the Research Design and Data Coordinating Center at the University of Florida. For this study, 1,236 people provided feedback about their participation in 34 different outdoor recreation activities. Respondents were asked to identify each activity they or someone in their household participated in during the preceding 12 months. In addition, respondents were asked why they recreate in the outdoors, what would encourage them to engage in more outdoor recreation and the types

Top Outdoor Recreation Activities in Florida

(Participants could choose more than 1 category)

N=1,124



of outdoor recreation facilities they would like to see built or provided. There were also a number of economic questions.

Of the respondents, 97% were full-time Florida residents, 3% were part-time residents, and four were non-residents, so this can largely be viewed as a residential survey. The largest number of people were from suburban locations, followed by small cities or towns. The majority of respondents were over 50 years old and almost three-fourths did not have children under the age of 18 living in their household. A summary of the results is presented in this chapter. For the complete survey results, see the appendix.

Top Recreation Activities

For the 2023-2027 SCORP, the survey asked for results in seven broad categories: trail activities, nature study, saltwater beach activities, freshwater activities, outdoor sports, camping and hunting/shooting. Each of these was broken down into sub-categories for more specific results. For example, camping was divided into tent camping, RV camping, primitive camping and horseback camping.

Eighty-five percent of respondents indicated that they participated in trail activities, the largest figure in the survey. Trail activities included running/walking, bicycling, skateboarding/rollerblading, geocaching and OHV (off-highway vehicle) riding. The number of those who ran or walked on a natural surface was slightly higher than those who used a paved surface. Regarding bicycling, most people rode on a maintained trail followed by a road with no bike lane, paved greenway, sidewalk, bike lanes and natural surface trails. Most respondents used road bikes followed by mountain bikes, hybrid bikes and electric bikes.

The results, ranked in order of highest to lowest after trail activities, were saltwater beach activities, nature study, freshwater activities, outdoor sports, camping and hunting/shooting.

The most popular saltwater beach activities were walking, swimming, boating, fishing, paddling, snorkeling/diving and surfing. Paddling and fishing were broken down for more specific results.

In the nature study category, bird watching ranked

highest followed by gardening, wildflower viewing and nature photography.

The highest result for freshwater activities was paddling, so this was broken down into paddling by kayak, stand up paddleboard, canoe and motorless boat. Fishing was also broken down into different types of fishing with bank/shore fishing ranking highest followed by boat fishing, fishing from a pier, dock or jetty, kayak/canoe fishing and fishing from a stand up paddle board.

Golf ranked highest in outdoor sports followed by pickleball, tennis, soccer, basketball, baseball/softball, disc golf, volleyball and football. Pickleball was featured as an emerging trend in the 2019 SCORP, so its second-place ranking in outdoor sports is not surprising.

Tent camping was slightly more popular than RV camping, followed by primitive camping and horseback camping.

Importance of Recreation

According to the participation survey, nearly all respondents (88%) said that outdoor recreation is very important to them. Twelve percent said it was somewhat important, while 1% indicated it was not important.

By comparison, in the 2016 survey, 61% of Florida

residents thought outdoor recreation was very important, a drop from 72% in 2011.

Motivations for Participation

A central aspect of planning for outdoor recreation is understanding why people recreate. What motivates someone to go outside and participate? According to the participation survey, Florida residents consider enjoying the scenery the most important reason for participating in outdoor recreation, followed by mental health, general health, being with family and friends, proximity and affordability. About 61% expect to recreate in Florida more often while 38% believe their level of recreation will be about the same. Only 1% expected to recreate less. The majority of respondents recreate with their family.

Satisfaction with Opportunities and Facilities

Regarding satisfaction with outdoor recreation opportunities near their home, 32% of respondents were very satisfied, 55% were somewhat satisfied, and 13% were not satisfied. In order of response, here are the top four improvements that would encourage respondents to recreate more near their homes: more outdoor facilities, better information, fewer crowds and cleaner facilities. Regarding outdoor

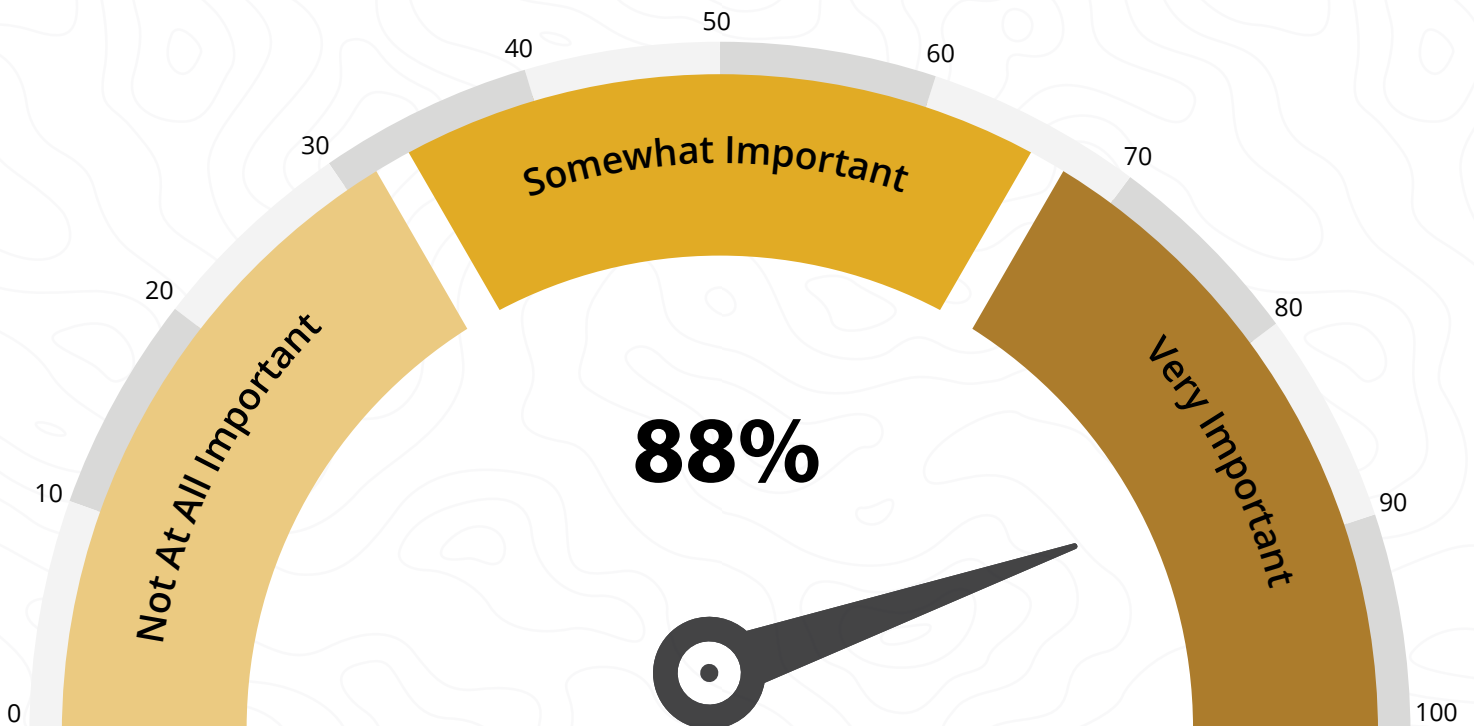
facilities, most would like to see more greenways and trails followed by wildlife viewing areas, community parks, boat and kayak access, historic and cultural sites and off-leash dog areas.

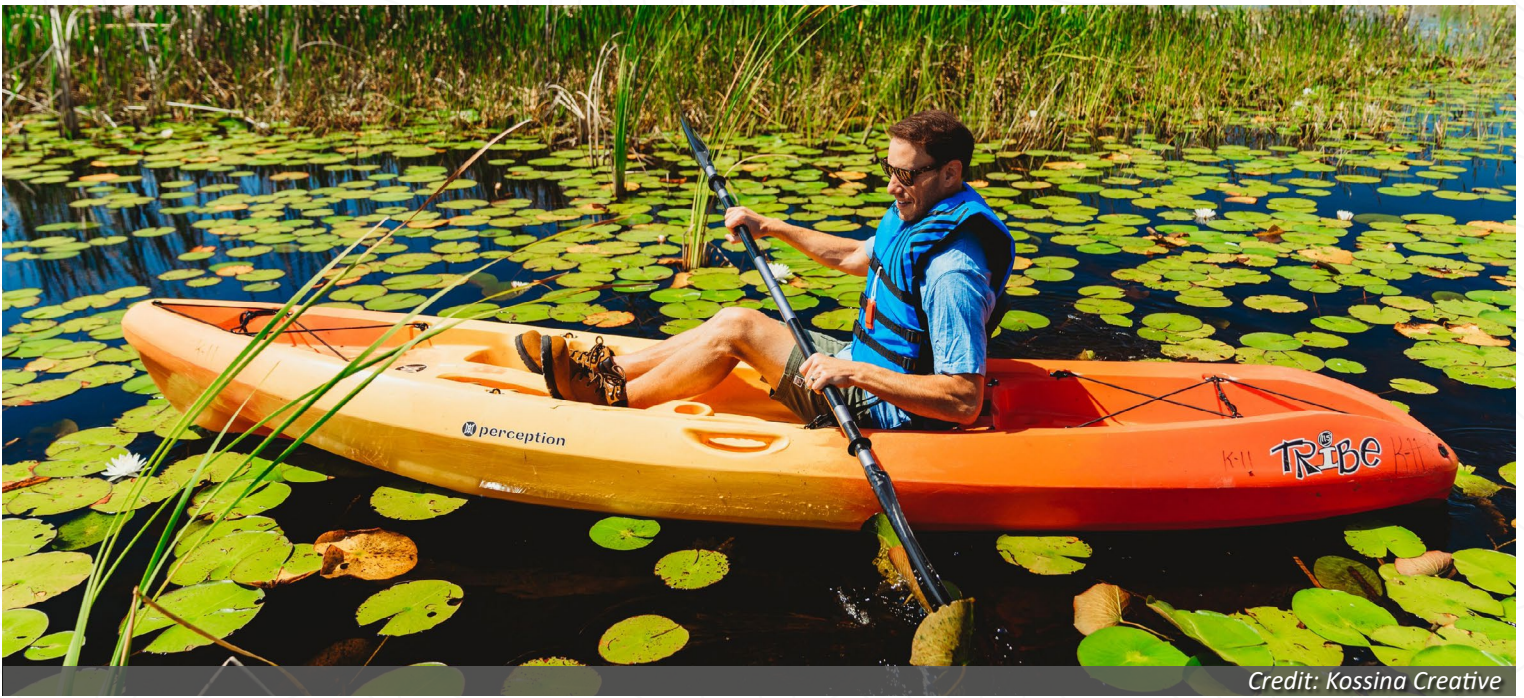
Economic Impacts

In order to gain a greater understanding of the economic impacts of outdoor recreation, the survey found that 63% of the respondents indicated they traveled more than 100 miles to recreate outdoors in Florida in the past 12 months. Of these, 88% said they stayed overnight. The majority (57%) stayed in a motel or hotel while 25% stayed with friends or family and 25% camped. A large majority, 88%, like to visit historical and/or cultural sites on these trips.

Thirty-three percent of overnight travelers spent between \$100 and \$250 on these trips while 22% spent between \$251 and \$500, and 22% spent more than \$500. Only 23% spent less than \$100. The large majority of travelers also spent money on gear, fees and food. While this is not an extensive economic study such as what was featured in the 2019 SCORP and is available for viewing on the [SCORP webpage](#), the responses do support the widespread conclusion that outdoor recreation has a sizeable economic impact.

How important is outdoor recreation to you?





Credit: Kossina Creative

Trend: COVID-19 and Outdoor Recreation

When the coronavirus pandemic struck in 2020, a surprising trend emerged – people began flocking to the outdoors, especially to locations close to home.

According to the [Outdoor Industry Association](#), more than half of Americans above the age of six participated in at least one outdoor recreation experience in 2020, the highest level the group recorded. Many were nontraditional users who were new to certain activities.^{3.1} In 2021, National Park Service Deputy Director Shawn Benge commented on the surge: “This past year has reminded us how important national parks and public lands are to overall wellbeing. Throughout the country, national parks provided close-to-home opportunities for people to spend much needed time outdoors for their physical and psychological health.”^{3.2}

In Florida, like in most states, this trend put a strain on many local, state and national parks and private outdoor venues. Many high-profile parks experienced record numbers of visitors in 2021. These included Canaveral National Seashore and Big Cypress National Preserve.^{3.3} The outdoor industry also experienced a surge with items such as kayaks, bicycles and camping equipment often selling out while manufacturers were overwhelmed to the point where supply chain issues emerged, partly due to

shipping and employment issues.

While the pandemic helped create a surge in outdoor pursuits, many of the new people are considered casual participants rather than dedicated outdoor users. This may result in a plateau or decline in future years.

Florida Pandemic Study

For a Florida-specific “pandemic” SCORP outdoor recreation study, the Research Design and Data Coordinating Center at the University of Florida did a participation survey of both residents and visitors from March 30, 2021, to July 21, 2021. A total of 2,122 residents and 114 visitors participated in the survey.

Like the Florida Outdoor Recreation Participation Study that followed this study, the largest percentage of resident respondents participated in trail activities (82%). Trail activities included running/walking, bicycling, geocaching, OHV riding and skateboarding/roller blading. Nature study, saltwater beach activities, freshwater activities, outdoor sports, camping and hunting/shooting were the other categories ranked in order of highest to lowest results.

Tent camping was more popular than RV camping, followed by primitive camping and horseback camping. Many camping providers, however, report a higher demand for RV camping.

Ninety-seven percent of resident respondents said

it was important to access recreation opportunities through greenways and trails. Greenways and trails were the number one outdoor recreation facility respondents would like to see built in their communities. Regarding outdoor sports, 49% wanted to see more pickleball courts followed closely by outdoor basketball courts and soccer fields. Some of these results may have reflected the age of the respondents. Thirty percent were 66 or older, 28% were between the ages of 56 and 65, and 18% were between 46 and 55. Only 2% were in the 18 to 25 age group.

According to the resident survey, COVID did affect recreational activity. Among residents, 42% said they recreated more than usual during the previous year while 43% said about the same and 15% said they recreated less.

Among visitors, trail activities (primarily running, walking and bicycling) had the highest level of participation followed by saltwater beach activities, nature study, outdoor sports, freshwater activities and camping. In the nature study category, birdwatching ranked the highest followed by nature photography and wildflower viewing. Respondents indicated that paddling in a kayak was both their number one outdoor sport and number one freshwater activity. Similar to the residential survey, 98% said that access to recreation opportunities through greenways and trails was important. Also, 82% of visitors indicated they visited historical and/or cultural sites while in Florida. The highest number of visitor respondents were in the 46 through 55 age group (31%) followed by 56 through 65-year-olds (29%) and 66-and-older persons (26%).

Trend: E-Bikes, Scooters and other Electric Mobility Devices

In recent months and years, a wide variety of electric mobility devices have flooded the recreation market. These are giving users many new choices to enjoy the outdoors, especially those who might have mobility challenges, but they have also created a safety concern among trail managers and traditional trail users due to the speed some of these devices can travel. How compatible are they on shared-use trails that may include equestrians? What are these emerging

electric mobility devices and how fast can they move?

Types of E-Bikes

Styles

Cruiser: Built for comfort with wide tires and high handlebars. Good for flat surfaces and mostly seen on bike paths and paved roads.

Commuter: Seats and tires are narrower than cruisers and generally run faster.

Road: Narrow tires and drop handlebars for paved surfaces. Built for speed.

Mountain: Wide tires and flat handlebars for off-road, unpaved terrain.

Classes

Class 1: Assists when pedaling up to 20 mph.

Class 2: Equipped with a throttle and assists up to 20 mph.

Class 3: Pedal-assist bike equipped with a speedometer and assists up to 28 mph. Often used by commuters.

Note: some e-bikes feature “race mode,” which is meant for private property and racetracks. These e-bikes can go up to 40 mph.

Most charges will last 20-70 miles depending on terrain, type of bike and how often the assist function is engaged.

Hunting E-bikes

Hunters are increasingly using all-terrain e-bikes to gain access to backcountry areas where motorized vehicles are not allowed. Several models of these camo-colored, fat-tired e-bikes are on the market. Some models feature a 1,000-watt motor that can reach 35 mph without pedaling. A walk-assist feature on one model allows the user to walk along the e-bike and engage the motor at 2.5 mph. Many hunting e-bikes have a heavy-duty rack above the back tire for loading gear and game, and many can pull a small trailer. Some models have two front tires for greater stability in rough terrain. Since e-bikes enable a larger number of hunters greater access to remote areas, some land managers worry about increased pressure

on wildlife populations. The USFS updated its [e-bike policy](#) in 2022, stating, "As use trends change with time and new technologies, the way we manage lands to ensure their long-term health and resilience must change as well."^{3,4}

E-bike Regulations

Local, state and federal laws and regulations are frequently updated as managers seek to keep up with emerging trends. Users need to check the rules of specific trails and lands they intend to access before embarking. Many trail managers are trying to regulate e-bikes with speed limits of 15 to 20 mph, but enforcement is often difficult. According to a 2022 Pinellas Trail System e-bike survey, about a quarter of both e-bike and traditional bicycle respondents said they did not know the speed limit on the Pinellas Trail (20 mph).

For the federally funded [RTP](#), applicants may check the mixed use, non-motorized/motorized category if e-bikes are allowed on the trail for which they are applying, possibly enhancing their chances of receiving funding.

Types of Electric Scooters

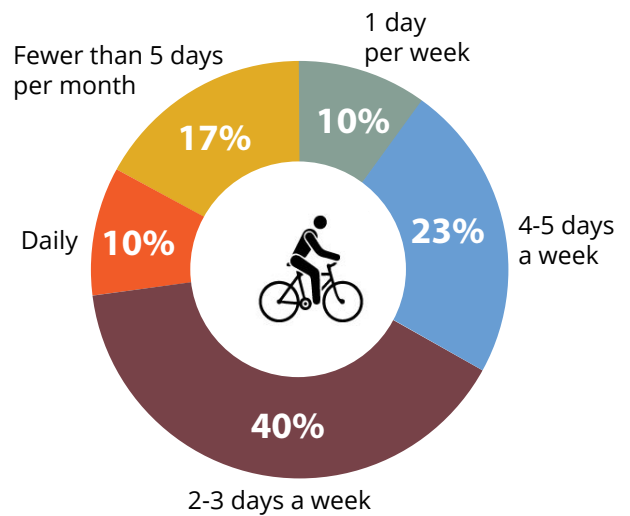
There are several brands of adult electric scooters. Most weigh under 30 pounds and have a 250-watt motor. Top speeds range from 12 to 19 mph, and distances per charge range from 7 to 25 miles. Most have a weight limit of 220 pounds.

An intermediate scooter has a 500-watt motor and an extreme performance scooter has dual 1600-watt motors. This high-end scooter has a range of up to 52 miles, can reach speeds of up to 56 mph and has a 385-pound weight limit. It has a bright LED headlight for night riding. At 100 pounds, this scooter weighs much more than most.

Electric scooters for children weigh less and are generally not as durable. Their top speed is around 10 mph with a range of around 8 miles.

The majority of electric scooters have two wheels, but there is also a one-wheel variety with a 13-mile range. More stable three- and four-wheel scooters, popular with seniors, are similar to electric wheelchairs.

How often do you ride your E-Bike?



Source: Pinellas Trail E-Bike Survey 2022

Electric Skateboards

Unlike scooters, electric skateboards are hands-free, meaning they have a wireless remote that controls every aspect of the ride. The fastest ones can zoom along at 29 mph with a range per charge of around 20 miles. Most electric skateboards have four wheels.



Credit: Fabien Burgue

Electric Unicycles

Electric unicycles have become popular. Some can reach speeds of 31 mph, with a maximum range per charge of 75 miles. They come with bright, automotive-quality headlights. Electric unicycles have fold-down foot pedals and are self-balancing. They have a handle at the top for easy carrying.

Hoverboards

Hoverboards come in two-wheel and one-wheel varieties. For the two-wheel hoverboards, the user's feet are placed between the two wheels facing forward, and for the one-wheel version, one foot is placed in front and the other behind the wheel with the rider riding like they would on a skateboard or surfboard, a different position than for a unicycle. Some hoverboards have wide tires for off-road use. Some one-wheel hoverboards can reach 19 mph and travel up to 25 miles on a charge. The two-wheel hoverboards are similar to the Segway, first unveiled in 2001, but without the stem and handlebars. There is also a variety that features "electric roller skate hovershoes," that have two separate independent wheels.

Trend: Pump Tracks

A pump track is a small circular trail of rollers and berms for wheeled sports equipment. If ridden properly, a user only needs to pedal or push in the beginning, followed by a pumping action to maintain momentum. Roller skates, roller blades, bicycles, scooters and skateboards can all be used on pump tracks. And it's not just for kids, adults use them as well. Competitions are sometimes held on pump tracks. Pump tracks can be built as permanent infrastructure as part of a public space or they can be set up as a temporary mobile structure designed to fit in a specific space. They can be built cheaply from dirt or clay, requiring periodic maintenance, or they can be made from wood, concrete, asphalt, fiberglass or other composite materials. They can be incorporated into the landscape or installed above ground.

Pump tracks serve all ages and abilities, and their benefits are well documented. They can help improve bike handling skills, spatial awareness and cooperation, and the space needed is often slightly larger than a baseball diamond.



Credit: Doug Alderson



Credit: FSU Campus Recreation

Trend: Technology Innovations and Outdoor Recreation

How is technology affecting outdoor recreation? If you are reading this online, that is one way. If you use your computer or smartphone to plan an outing or download a map, that is another example. While printed materials may never completely fall out of favor, more and more people are relying on digital devices to find locations for outdoor recreation and to guide them once there. People are also buying outdoor recreation merchandise online and using instructional videos for education on outdoor skills in place of or in addition to personal instruction.

Technology is also helping outdoor recreation providers gauge the use of a particular activity, like sophisticated trail counters that determine if a person is walking, riding a bike, or on a horse. Reservation systems can also be made quick and easy online, and some outdoor activities, such as geocaching, can be done with a mobile phone or GPS tracking device. Recreation providers must constantly be on the lookout for the latest trends in technology and how they might affect outdoor pursuits.

Drones continue to be an emerging trend in outdoor recreation, with new models becoming available each year along with new regulations for their use. Drones can also assist recreation providers in gauging use and impacts.

Sophisticated remote-controlled (RC) airplanes and boats are on the market with the advent of lighter weight rechargeable batteries. While these hobbies may not yield high cardiovascular rewards, they are getting more people outdoors. There are several RC clubs around the state and most have designated areas where they can safely pursue their hobby.

Trend: Pickleball Still Growing

As reported in the 2019 SCORP, pickleball is an emerging outdoor sport, having grown an average of 11.5% per year from 2016 through 2021. Invented in 1965 by three dads to entertain their kids in the summer, there were an estimated 4.8 million pickleball players in the country in 2022. From 2020 through 2021, it has grown fastest among players under 24 years of age (21%).^{3,5} There are professional pickleball tournaments with prize money and players on tour.

Pickleball is being played by all ages and the demand for more pickleball courts has increased. Many say it is easy to learn but difficult to master. It is played with solid rackets and a type of whiffle ball on a court divided by a low net. The court is almost half the size of a tennis court. Like tennis, two or four people can play in a match. There is a “no-slam” zone known as “the kitchen” near the net, and serves must be underhand, so finesse is emphasized more than power. It is easier on the body than traditional racket sports and seniors can often play on equal footing with younger people.

CHAPTER 4: Outdoor Recreation Priorities & Recommendations



Our Vision

Florida is among the most populous and dynamic states in the nation, and perpetual changes (social, technological, economic and environmental) continue to affect our lives, including how and where we recreate.

Florida's diverse public and private outdoor recreation lands, facilities, programs and managing agencies collectively contribute to the state's wealth of recreational opportunities and to the health and wellness of its citizens. However, outdoor recreation providers and the natural and cultural resources upon which they depend face many challenges. While tremendous progress has been made in acquiring needed lands and providing facilities and programs to support public use of these lands, more work is required to improve accessibility for all Floridians and to bring high-quality recreation experiences to those living in underserved communities. Many neighborhoods, particularly those in low-income and rural areas, need additional parks and trails close to home, as well as the means to safely connect to them.

The statement below describes the vision for an ideal, but as yet unrealized, outdoor recreation system for the Sunshine State.

Florida's ideal outdoor recreation system will be a diverse, connected, accessible and balanced system of resources, facilities and programs that provide the

state's residents and visitors with a wide range of local recreation opportunities. This outdoor recreation system will improve the health, well-being and quality of life of Florida's citizens, regardless of age, gender, ethnic background, economic status, physical or mental ability or location within the state. The system will be coordinated at the state level with all agencies and suppliers working in concert, with ample opportunities for the public to participate in decision making. Florida's outdoor recreation system will continue to be a major contributor to the state's economy and tourism industry, and it will further the public's understanding, appreciation and stewardship of our environment and outdoor recreation resources.

Priority Areas, Goals and Strategies: A Method of Implementation

In early 2020, the SCORP workgroup began meeting quarterly to provide input on the plan. The workgroup identified four priority areas covering a broad range of outdoor recreation topics to develop for Florida's 2023-2027 SCORP. The goals and strategies in the 2023-2027 plan also resulted from many additional forms of input, including the 2021-2022 Outdoor Recreation Participation Survey, research of nationwide trends and issues, public workshops, open house events, discussions with outdoor recreation stakeholders and online questionnaires. The public was given several opportunities to comment on the 2023-2027 plan, and

those comments resulted in a much-improved SCORP.

For each priority area, specific goals and strategies are included to address the identified challenges and issues. Most strategies are to be undertaken by a wide spectrum of public and private recreation providers and partners. Recreation partners are those groups, organizations and agencies that promote and support outdoor recreation. All recreation providers and partners throughout Florida have been called upon to help implement the 2023-2027 plan.



Priority Area 1: Health and Well-Being

- Identify and communicate the benefits of high quality outdoor recreational experiences on all aspects of health, including mental health and the health of children, aging populations and people with disabilities.
- Collaborate to develop a statewide campaign that promotes the whole-health benefits of outdoor recreation.
- Work with the private sector and local governments to create healthy, active and walkable communities.
- Partner with organizations and agencies to establish specific, widely available programs for all populations and persons with disabilities.
- Promote outdoor recreation as a means to improve

both community and individual health.

- Partner with the Florida Department of Health and local health care providers on promotional campaigns.
- Promote joint outings with health care organizations and providers.
- Promote field trips, projects and outings with youth groups and school systems to introduce young people to trails and outdoor pursuits.

Priority Area 2: Public Access, Accessibility and Connectivity

- Provide high quality trail information.
 - Ensure information at trailheads is clear, accessible and up to date and is consistent between webpages, trail signage, apps, brochures and other means of communication.
 - Develop high quality trail apps for trail users.
 - Develop communication toolkits and aesthetically pleasing guides to better inform the public about trail opportunities.
 - Advertise and highlight trails and associated amenities that have a high degree of accessibility.
 - Use QR codes and other digital means to convey information.
 - Ensure trail information is clear regarding location and accommodations for parking oversized vehicles and those with trailers, such as for boats and horses.
- Identify and retain first-time outdoor recreation users through programming and partnerships.
 - Utilize technology to provide new users with quality outdoor recreation information so they feel comfortable and more empowered to participate.
 - Provide wildlife encounter information to empower new users to feel safer and more confident in natural environments.
 - Provide user compatibility and etiquette tips for safe and enjoyable encounters with other types of trail users.

- Develop short trail loops and featured trail sections that have a high degree of accessibility.
- **Improve overall connectivity and infrastructure.**
 - Embrace the Complete Streets program to enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety and access.
 - Support expansion of public transportation to improve physical access to outdoor recreation opportunities.
 - Strive to provide access for all levels of ability.
- **Utilize technology to improve access to information about the opportunities and benefits of outdoor recreation.**
 - Maintain and update FORI to improve knowledge and accessibility to local recreation opportunities.
 - Ensure that FORI and SCORP are user friendly.

Priority Area 3: Economic Opportunities, Adventure Travel and Ecotourism

- **Promote the economic benefits of Florida's recreation opportunities.**
 - Promote the Trail Town program as a way to encourage local business buy-in and growth revolving around outdoor recreation.
 - Distribute information and provide up-to-date web information about economic benefits.
 - Create outdoor recreation community alliances to connect providers and developers.
 - Promote and participate in the creation of city and county comprehensive outdoor recreation plans.
 - Partner with VISIT FLORIDA, Florida Main Street, tourist development councils and chambers of commerce to promote outdoor recreation and associated ecotourism benefits.
 - Promote the development of long-distance trails and regional trail networks that can attract adventure travel users throughout the country and the world.

- Promote the use of trail counters, random surveys and tracking through smartphone apps to gauge trail use and trends.

Priority Area 4: Resource Management and Stewardship

- **Support grant programs and public land purchases that will create new outdoor recreation opportunities.**
 - Provide information on grant opportunities and work to increase awareness of funding sources.
- **Enhance the ecological and aesthetic environment of public spaces.**
 - Prioritize the development of green spaces that provide a sense of place in local communities.
 - Focus on the balance between outdoor recreation and respecting wildlife and wildlife habitat.
 - Develop plans to adapt to sea level rise and increase resiliency.
 - Focus on invasive species removal, prescribed fire management and hydrological restoration.
- **Merge environment-based outdoor recreation with a focus on culture and heritage.**
 - Highlight the Florida Scenic Highways Program as a prime example of merging recreation with culture and heritage education.
 - Highlight public historic sites that combine historic preservation with outdoor recreation.
 - Highlight Florida Heritage Trail publications that promote self-guided tours around the state.
 - Support Florida Main Street to preserve and revitalize historic downtowns.
- **Support green infrastructure and low-impact development of new outdoor recreation opportunities.**
 - Educate developers through forums and other means of green development and incorporating outdoor recreation infrastructure.



APPENDIX

TABLE OF CONTENTS



34-41

42-43

44-90

91

Assessment & Protection of Wetlands

Bibliography

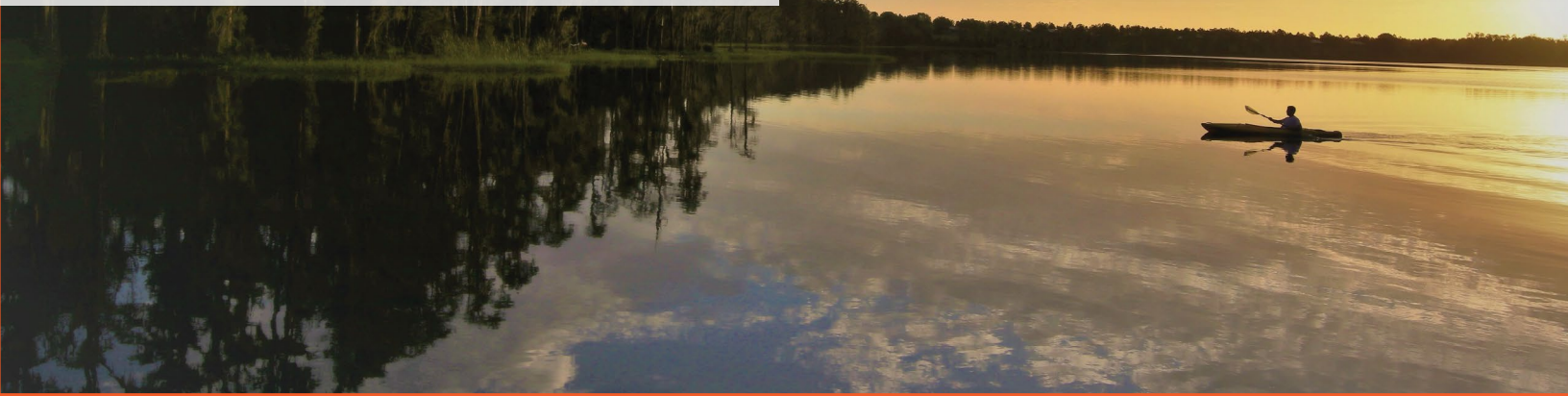
Survey Data

Participation Study & Pandemic Study

Acknowledgements



Assessment & Protection of Wetlands



The federal Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 (PL 99-645) requires each state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan to include a component that identifies wetlands as a priority concern within that state. To fulfill these requirements, sections of Florida's 2016-2020 Coastal Zone Management Act (Section 309 Assessment and Strategies) and information from DEP's Office of Submerged Lands and Environmental Resources are used. This chapter identifies Florida's wetlands communities, discusses major threats and describes the state's current wetlands protection programs and efforts.

Introduction

Given their many economic, environmental and aesthetic benefits, wetlands are some of Florida's most important natural resources. Not only do wetlands protect against storm surge, flooding and erosion, they filter pollutants, reduce siltation of rivers and lakes, furnish food and habitat for wildlife and provide ideal places for a multitude of outdoor recreation activities. Wetlands also contribute to Florida's scenic beauty – from majestic bald cypress swamps to tranquil salt marshes. As some of the most biologically productive ecosystems on Earth, wetlands serve as valuable nurseries for fish and shellfish that are vital to Florida's seafood industry. In light of their importance, and the significant threats they face today, numerous agencies, organizations and citizens are making concerted efforts

to safeguard Florida's wetlands for the future.

Type and Extent of Florida's Wetlands

Prior to European settlement, Florida contained an estimated 20.3 million acres of wetlands covering approximately 48% of the state's total land surface. Once viewed as useless wastelands, development of wetlands occurred virtually unchecked during much of the 19th and 20th centuries. As a result, almost half or 9.3 million acres of Florida's wetlands have been lost since 1845. Beginning in the early 1970s, however, passage of federal and state legislation brought increased protection for wetlands and surface waters. Among the most important legislation for Florida wetlands protection were the Federal Clean Water Act in 1972, the Warren S. Henderson Act of 1984 and the state's Environmental Resource Permitting (ERP) rules in 1995, all of which significantly slowed Florida's loss of wetland acreage.

As of 1996, Florida contained approximately 11.4 million acres of wetlands covering 29% of the total land area. Ninety percent (90%) of those wetlands were freshwater, including approximately 49% forested wetlands (swamps), 23% emergent (marshes and sloughs), 16% shrub and 2% ponds. The other 10% were marine and estuarine wetlands.

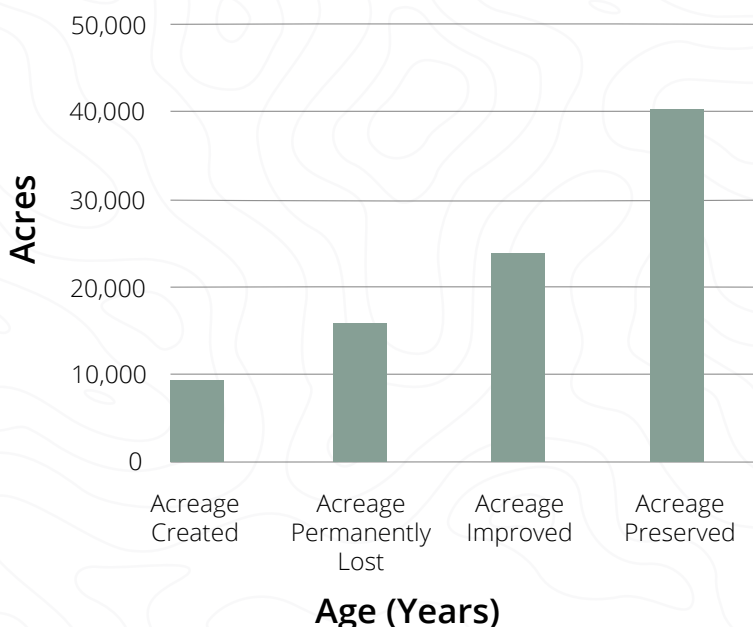
Florida's Wetlands: Gains and Losses

FDEP and Florida's five water management districts track the acreage of wetlands permitted to be dredged, filled and mitigated through their permit application tracking systems. Wetland status reports are prepared annually.

The data do not provide a full picture of wetland gains and losses in Florida. This is because those status and trends reports, based on permitting data, do not account for:

- Wetland losses from exempt activities (for which work may occur without notice to the agencies) or activities qualifying for general permits. This is particularly significant considering wetland losses from exempt agricultural activities.
- Unauthorized dredging and filling.
- Whether the dredging, filling or mitigation, once permitted, was ever implemented.
- Whether the permitted mitigation was successful or the degree of success.

Wetlands Gains & Losses 2016-2021



The reported data also do not account for the gains or losses of wetland functions. They do not, for example, provide status and trends for:

- Wetland acreage degraded by drainage or impoundment.
- Wetland acreage degraded by exotic infestation.
- Wetland acreage restored or in need of restoration.

Today's federal dredge and fill program and the statewide ERP program work toward the goal of no net loss of wetland functions. To obtain a dredge and fill or ERP permit, an applicant must eliminate or reduce their wetland impacts to the greatest extent practicable, and then provide mitigation to offset any loss of wetland functions that cannot be avoided. Wetland functions include flood storage; fish, wildlife and listed species habitat; and water quality. Mitigation may include creation, enhancement, restoration or preservation of wetlands that provide similar functions to those that are lost through development.

Wetland functions are different than wetland acres. Wetland functions are assessed using a rapid assessment method called the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method (UMAM). UMAM is used to determine the amount of wetland functions that will be lost through permitted impacts, and to determine the amount of wetland functional gain that can be expected to be provided through mitigation. Often, more acres of wetland creation, enhancement, restoration or preservation are required to be provided as mitigation than acres lost.

Enhancement, restoration or preservation of existing wetlands may not increase the number of acres of wetlands in Florida, but may provide higher quality functions instead. Wetland creation as mitigation is often discouraged, because creation carries a high risk of failure. This type of assessment makes it difficult or impossible to track the actual number of wetlands lost or gained through permitting with any statistical accuracy. In addition, many activities in wetlands are exempt from permitting, or are minor activities that qualify for general permits without mitigation requirements. The wetland acreage lost through these exempt or minor activities is not tracked by agencies.

Monitoring Efforts

The Florida Geological Survey (FGS) conducts field work to characterize the interaction of coastal wetlands with groundwater and the nearshore environment, with special emphasis on karst settings. This activity is largely research-oriented and its continuation will depend upon the availability of research funds, primarily from federal sources. Another FGS effort is the maintenance of a downloadable database known as the Subsidence Incident Report. This project tracks sinkholes and other subterranean events, and is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

Florida's three National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRs)- Apalachicola, Guana Tolomato Matanzas and Rookery Bay- map and monitor the resources within their designated areas. Several of the state's aquatic preserves also regularly monitor seagrass and water quality within their boundaries.

FWC, in partnership with DEP's Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (ORCP), has completed extensive mapping projects in southeast Florida, the Dry Tortugas, Biscayne National Park and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Now a more robust and comprehensive dataset is available to resource managers, stakeholders and the public. This multiyear project was funded using Coastal Zone Management (CZM) 309 funds.

Significance of Threats to Florida's Wetlands

Threats to Florida's wetlands are both natural and anthropogenic. The predominant sources of naturally-caused impacts are tropical storms, hurricanes, sinkholes and subsidence. Human-caused threats include excessive withdrawal of groundwater, mining, toxic spills, runoff, boating activities and development in vulnerable areas. Development can result in multiple impacts such as paving of groundwater recharge areas, increased water usage, and increased runoff containing nutrients, bacteria, pesticides, fertilizers and other chemical pollutants.

Agricultural runoff, along with septic tanks and lawn nutrients, have been a major cause of algae blooms and changes to wetland plant communities and

habitat types because of added nutrients.

Development of water budgets for Florida's coastal watersheds are important to safeguard wetlands. Water budgets are essential for the effective implementation of environmental regulatory programs such as Minimum Flows and Levels and Total Maximum Daily Loads for these watersheds.

The rating for alteration of hydrology is based upon the prevalence of mosquito and drainage ditches in certain areas. These impacts are less severe in other areas. Isolated and ephemeral wetlands, especially in pine flatwoods and sandhills, are important breeding sites for amphibians, including the flatwoods salamander, striped newt, gopher frog and chorus frogs. Isolated and ephemeral wetlands are often overlooked as resources important to wildlife and may be degraded or lost through fire suppression, logging, ditching and other hydrological alterations. For example, wetlands may be lost due to draw-down of aquifers from development, agriculture and industry.

Loss of seasonal flooding alters plant composition; future impacts may continue from changes in rainfall patterns due to climate change. Karst (limestone) wetlands, including freshwater caves and sinkholes that connect to underground aquifers are habitat for rare species (crayfish, cave shrimp, isopods, amphipods and cave salamanders). Wildlife associated with karst features are threatened by changes in water quality (surface-derived contaminants and siltation) and quantity (groundwater removal to support development and agriculture). Coastal wetlands may be threatened by saltwater intrusion due to sea level rise and groundwater removal.

Wetland Regulatory Program Implementation, Policies and Standards

The statewide environmental resource permitting program came into effect on October 1, 2013. All wetlands, including isolated wetlands became protected statewide when the Northwest Florida ERP program came into effect in 2010. Prior to 2010, impacts to isolated wetlands in northwest Florida were not regulated. Isolated wetlands had been



Credit: Doug Alderson

regulated throughout the rest of the state since 1995. The legislature directed the FDEP to roll the northwest ERP and ERP in the rest of the state into a statewide environmental resource permitting program. Since October 1, 2013, the entire state uses Chapter 62-330, F.A.C. to regulate wetland impacts. In 2018, the legislature directed DEP to pursue the assumption of the Federal Section 404 program (dredge and fill) from the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and US Army Corps of Engineers. EPA approved the program in December 2020 and DEP began implementing it statewide for projects that occur within assumed waters.

Wetland Restoration and Enhancement Programs

DEP's aquatic preserves are restoring submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) populations in St. Joseph Bay because the shallow bay can lead to heavy propeller scarring. Scars were identified through analysis of aerial imagery, and sediment tubes were planted in the scars.

Since 2005, DEP's Division of Recreation and Parks has continued seagrass restoration activities in the 10,000-acre Lignumvitae Key Botanical State Park Submerged Land Managed Area to restore habitat damaged by boat groundings. In addition to restoration measures at 26 sites, the park continues to maintain navigation markers and "No Motor Zone" signs where needed.

Additional law enforcement presence on the water acts as a preventive measure and aids in the protection of the park's submerged communities. Education also plays an important role in the protection of this habitat. Park staff is involved with the Seagrass Outreach Partnership, a consortium of government, non-government, private and local citizens whose goal is educating the public on the importance of protecting Florida's seagrass beds.

FWC's Florida Wildlife Research Institute has continued development of the Seagrass Integrated Mapping and Monitoring (SIMM) program to enable resource managers to track changes in the distribution, abundance and species composition of



Credit: James Frazier

seagrass meadows around the state. Approximately 2.5 million acres of seagrass have been mapped in estuarine and nearshore Florida waters. Several aquatic preserves on both coasts of Florida are conducting sampling and supplying data from within their preserves to this FWC program.

Elements of the SIMM program include:

- Mapping all seagrasses in Florida waters every six years (or less).
- Annual monitoring of seagrasses throughout Florida.
- Publishing a comprehensive report every two years.

Future SIMM reports will combine site intensive monitoring data and trends with statewide estimates of seagrass cover and maps showing seagrass gains and losses.

Significant changes to seagrass beds continue along portions of Florida's coasts due to extensive population growth, increased recreational boating

and effects from multiple hurricanes and tropical storms. Overall, however, seagrass acreage increased from 2013 to 2016 by approximately 13.8 percent; Tampa Bay and Pensacola Bay showed the greatest improvement. Florida's seagrasses provide ecological services worth more than \$20 billion annually.

At Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (Rookery Bay NERR), the top restoration priority is a large mangrove forest near Fruit Farm Creek. Road construction limited tidal flushing, and construction has begun to install culverts and ditches to restore natural tidal activity. Previous research has shown this will lead to natural mangrove recruitment and recolonization.

Another effort to protect coastal wetlands is the Pensacola Bay Living Shoreline Project, a joint effort between the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustees (including DEP) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. DEP will use living shoreline restoration techniques to provide shoreline habitat and reduce erosion at the Project GreenShores Site II within Pensacola Bay.

Approximately 6 to 8 acres of salt marsh habitat and 4 acres of reef habitat are being created along this urban shoreline.

DEP's ORCP, in cooperation with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, manages 42 aquatic preserves, three NERR's and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, totaling more than 5 million acres of sovereign submerged lands and select coastal uplands. ORCP manages and restores submerged and upland resources through adaptive, science-based resource management programs such as prescribed burning, removal of invasive species, re-vegetation and restoration of degraded habitats and water regimes. ORCP also conducts applied coastal research to contribute valuable knowledge that addresses ORCP's management program needs and those of the coastal and ocean science community at large.

Management plans for each of ORCP's areas have either been recently updated or are in the process of being updated. Updates are based on data and information on current ecosystem health, land use, water resource management, human activities and geophysical conditions affecting the managed areas. The management plans identify issues affecting the managed area and strategies to address those issues within a 10 year timeframe. Public involvement in the management plan development process is extremely important and a valued component to the process.

Education and outreach are just as critical to the protection of Florida's wetlands. If the public are not cognizant of the importance of wetlands to our economy and environment, and to our health and well-being, then protection efforts will face additional challenges. Fortunately, there are numerous agencies and organizations working to raise awareness and appreciation of wetlands; below are a few examples:

- At Audubon Florida's Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary, a 14,000 acre Ramsar Designated Wetland of International Importance, naturalists and partner educators take elementary school and university students through a unique outdoor classroom to study and explore this exemplary conservation area. The sanctuary includes wet prairie, freshwater marsh and the largest intact stand of virgin bald cypress in the country. Staff and volunteers also provide guided walks and interpretive programs for adults at the sanctuary's

nature center. Rookery Bay NERR and non-profit organizations like Conservancy of Southwest Florida also have nature centers and educational programs about wetlands for kids and adults, along with summer camp experiences for youth. They also offer a variety of guided walks, canoe/kayak tours and ecotours by pontoon boat.

Missions of both the National Park Service (NPS) and Florida Park Service include interpreting natural and cultural resources, and wetlands are an important focus of those efforts. On-site interpretive programs and guided walks, as well as educational kiosks and panels, provide park visitors with a plethora of natural history information on everything from springs to wetland plants to wildlife. Naturalist-led swamp walks at Big Cypress National Preserve and at Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park (which protects the world's largest strand swamp) are but one way for visitors to literally "immerse" themselves in learning about Florida's wetlands ("high and dry" tram and boardwalk tours are also available for the less adventurous).

The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), through its Blue School Grant Program, awards funding to middle and high school teachers to enhance student knowledge of Florida's water resources through hands-on learning. The University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) Extension makes available a series of educational materials for teachers and students, including activities for classrooms and outdoor settings, such as Project WET and U.S. Geological Survey's The Fragile Fringe – A Guide for Teaching About Coastal Wetlands.

The IFAS Extension service also offers the Florida Master Naturalist Program (a statewide adult education program) with courses in freshwater and coastal wetlands. These courses are taken by resource management professionals, volunteers and ecotourism guides, all of whom help interpret the significance of Florida's wetlands to the public. All three Florida NERRs offer a Coastal Training Program (CTP) designed to help natural resource professionals, leaders and other attendees make informed, science based decisions regarding coastal resources. Single-day classes and multi-day workshops cover topics such as best management practices, coastal community resilience, watershed planning, stormwater management and ecosystem studies.



Credit: Park Brags Survey

CTP also fosters networking and collaboration between stakeholders across each region. Florida Coastal Management Program has provided Section 306 funds to assist in CTP activities. Each NERR also reaches K-12 students by hosting field trips and through teacher development workshops, Teachers on the Estuary or TOTE.

Priority Needs and Information Gaps

While the state's regulatory program is effective in protecting wetlands, several needs have been identified that should be addressed to provide a comprehensive wetlands protection effort. For example, one major gap is a lack of consistent wetland survey and mapping. Wetlands also provide essential habitat for threatened and endangered species, which continue to be impacted by habitat loss.

Wetlands protection continues to be a high priority in the state. Florida has a comprehensive state regulatory program that regulates most land (upland, wetland and other surface water) alterations throughout the state. The regulatory program also includes a State Programmatic General

Permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers along with implementation of a statewide National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program. In addition, activities located on or using state-owned submerged lands also require applicable proprietary authorizations (including consent, leases and easements).

Florida does not have a goal of no net loss or gain of wetland acreage. However, the regulatory rules are written so as to be implemented in a manner that achieves a programmatic goal, and a project permitting goal, of no net loss in wetland or other surface water functions (not including activities that are exempt from regulation or that are authorized through a general permit).

Although a variety of public and private estuarine habitat restoration activities (SAV, oyster reef, salt marsh, mangroves, coral reef) occur in Florida primarily as stand-alone or regional efforts, Florida had lacked a statewide planning and guidance document focused on coordinated estuarine habitat restoration. As a collaborative effort, SJRWMD, ORCP and FWC staff developed a statewide planning and guidance document focused on coordinated estuarine habitat restoration called Estuarine Habitat

Restoration Planning Guide for Florida.

The Guide provides a basic planning and guidance template for estuarine habitat restoration that can be used throughout Florida. The restoration team then tested the Guide through the preparation of the Northeast Florida Estuarine Habitat Restoration Plan. It followed a vision-based planning approach in which the stated mission, vision and goals established were used to develop applicable objectives and strategies. The Guide can now be utilized in other regions to develop regional specific restoration plans. The development of the Guide and Plan was funded through CZM 309 funds.

Each NERR also maintains sentinel sites. Surface Elevation Tables (SETs) were installed to measure water levels, surface elevation, sediment accretion or erosion, and measurements of nearby vegetation. The earliest SETs were established in Rookery Bay NERR by USGS in the 1990s, but have since been transferred to be monitored in partnership with USGS and NPS. Additional sites have been set up at Rookery Bay NERR as well as the other two, Apalachicola NERR and Guana Tolomato Matanzas NERR.



Credit: Chuck Crutchfield

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Introduction

i1: Nelson, Robert H. State-owned Lands in the Eastern United States. PERC Public Lands Report. March 2018. <https://www.perc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/PERC-ELR-web.pdf>

i2: Section 375.021, Florida Statutes. http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0300-0399/0375/Sections/0375.021.html.

i3: Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-78/pdf/STATUTE-78-Pg897.pdf>

Chapter 1

1.1: Dempsey, Caitlin. Interesting Geography Facts About Florida. October 3, 2020. <https://www.geographyrealm.com/interesting-geography-facts-about-florida/>.

1.2: Allen, Ginger M. and Martin B. Main. Florida's Geological History. University of Florida IFAS Extension. https://chnep.wateratlas.usf.edu/upload/documents/257_Florida_Geological_History.pdf

1.3: Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Florida's Lands and Water – Brief Facts. https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/FloridaNumbers_022015.pdf

1.4: U.S. Geological Survey. National Water Summary on Wetland Resources. https://water.usgs.gov/nwsun/WSP2425/state_highlights_summary.html

1.5: Florida Department of Environmental Protection. 2020 Florida Forever Five-Year Plan: Florida's First Magnitude Springs. May 2020. https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/FLDEP_DSL_OES_FF_FloridasFirstMagnitudeSprings.pdf

1.6: Southeast Environmental Research Program, Florida International University, Center for Plant Conservation. An Action Plan to Conserve the Native Plants of Florida. <http://everglades.fiu.edu/serp/>

<action/current.html#:~:text=Thus%2C%2058%25%20of%20Florida%2C,CAB%3B%20see%20Cox%20et%20al.>

1.7: Florida State University. Pre-Clovis civilization in Florida; settlement 1,500 years earlier than previously believed. Science Daily. May 13, 2016. <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/05/160513151221.htm>

1.8: Begley, Sarah. Florida Surpasses New York to Become 3rd Most Populous State. Time Magazine. December 23, 2014. <https://time.com/3645739/florida-third-most-populous/>.

1.9: University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research. Florida Population: Census Summary 2020. Copyright 2021. https://www.bebr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/census_summary_2020.pdf.

1.10: University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research. Florida Population. Projections of Florida Population by County, 2025-2050, with Estimates for 2021. February 2022. Bureau of Economics and Business Research, Florida Population Studies, Bulletin 174 (ufl.edu) https://www.bebr.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/projections_2022.pdf

1.11: Balmoral Group. Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation Activities in Florida. August 2017. <https://floridadep.gov/sites/default/files/Economic-Study-Appx-A-w-tags.pdf>

1.12: McCamy, Laura. "13 mind-blowing facts about Florida's economy." Markets Insider Oct. 31, 2019. <https://markets.businessinsider.com/news/stocks/florida-economy-facts-2019-5-1028214563>

Chapter 3

3.1: Outdoor Industry Association. "2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report." June 22, 2021. 2021 Outdoor Participation Trends Report - Outdoor Industry Association. <https://outdoorindustry.org/>

[resource/2021-outdoor-participation-trends-report/](#)

3.2: National Park Service. "National Parks Hosted 237 Million Visitors in 2020." Office of 47 Communications, February 25, 2021. <https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1207/02-25-21-national-parks-hosted-237-million-visitors-in-2020.htm#:~:text=WASHINGTON%20%E2%80%93%20Outdoor%20experiences%20provided%20refuge,response%20to%20the%20coronavirus%20pandemic.>

3.3: National Park Service. "National Park Service Visitor Use Statistics." 2021. <https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/>

3.4: United States Forest Service. "Electronic Bicycle Use (2022)." Electronic Bicycle Use | US Forest Service (usda.gov). <https://www.fs.usda.gov/visit/e-bikes>

3.5: USA Pickleball. "2022 Pickleball Fact Sheet." Updated 5.5.22. <https://usapickleball.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/2022-Pickleball-Fact-Sheet-updated-5.5.22.pdf>.

Picture Sources

Cover:

Kossina Creative

Table of Contents:

Top left: Justin Doyle

Top right: Kossina Creative

Bottom Right: Resilience and Coastal Protection

Introduction & Background Chapter Header:

Kossina Creative

Chapter 1 Header:

Kossina Creative

Chapter 2 Header:

Kossina Creative

Chapter 3 Header:

Casey Tucker

Chapter 4 Header:

Kossina Creative

Appendix:

Top right: Lisa Yetter

The rest: Kossina Creative

Appendix Table of Contents:

Top Left: Kossina Creative

Top Right: Kossina Creative

Middle Right: Kossina Creative

Bottom: Heather Chadwick

Assessment and Protection of Wetlands Header:

Linda Wilinski

Back Cover:

Kossina Creative

PARTICIPATION STUDY

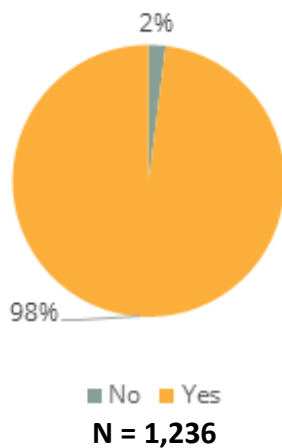
N = Number of Respondents

A simple random sample was selected using ArcGIS and the layer "Cadastral 2020 (Property Appraiser Parcels)". First, this layer was divided into eight regions. From there, a query was conducted for single family, mobile homes and multifamily. This resulted in new totals. OGT then used a random function in Microsoft Excel to select a 1% sample from this pool of eligible residents.

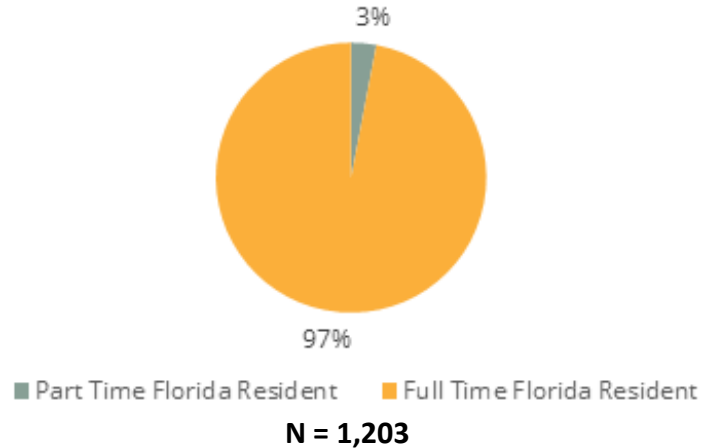
OGT mailed a postcard to a sample number of residents that directed them to the online survey. The survey was hosted on Survey123 and respondents could complete the survey via computer, tablet or mobile device. Respondents could also request a paper copy of the survey.

For more details on survey methodology please contact DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails.

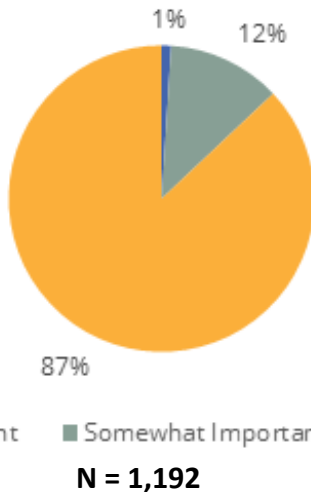
Are you at least 18 Years Old?



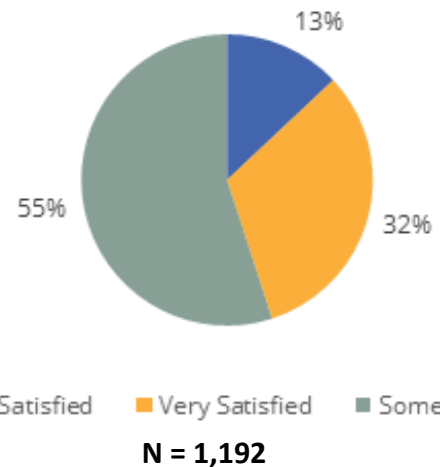
Do you live in Florida?



How important is outdoor recreation to you personally?

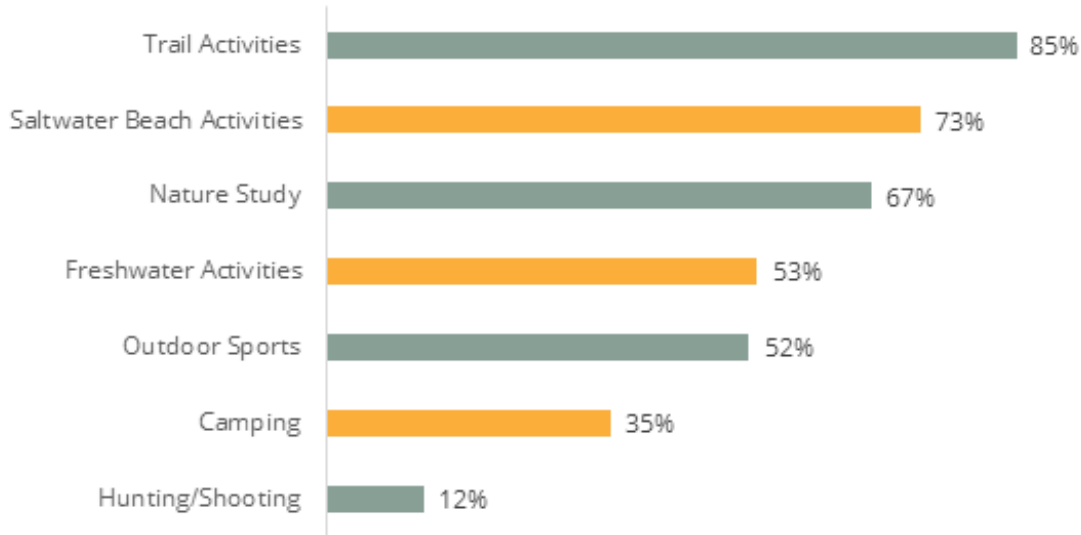


In general, how satisfied are you with outdoor recreation opportunities near your home?



In the past year, what activities have you (or someone in your household) participated in? N = 4,236

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



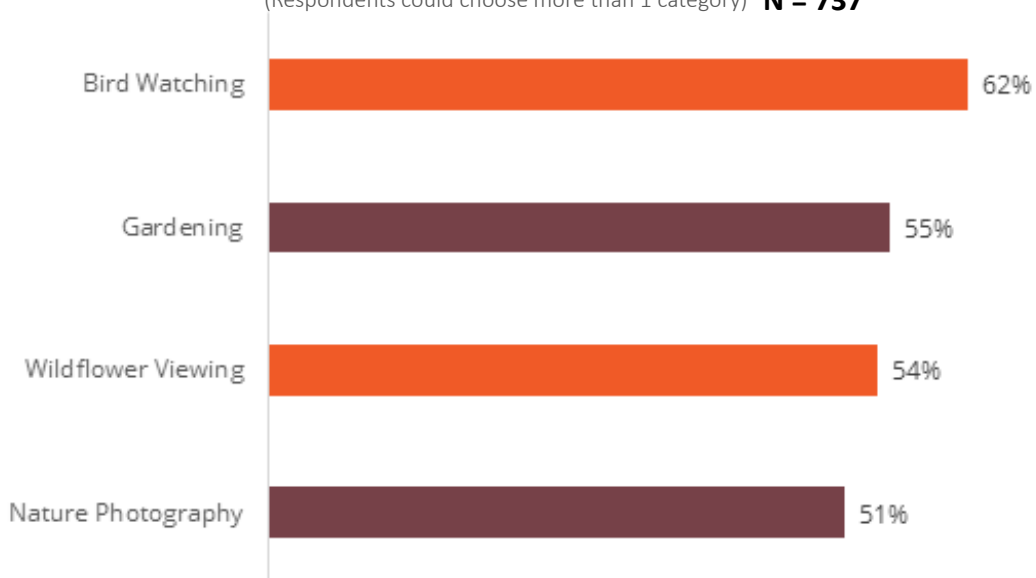
Word cloud of all answers received:



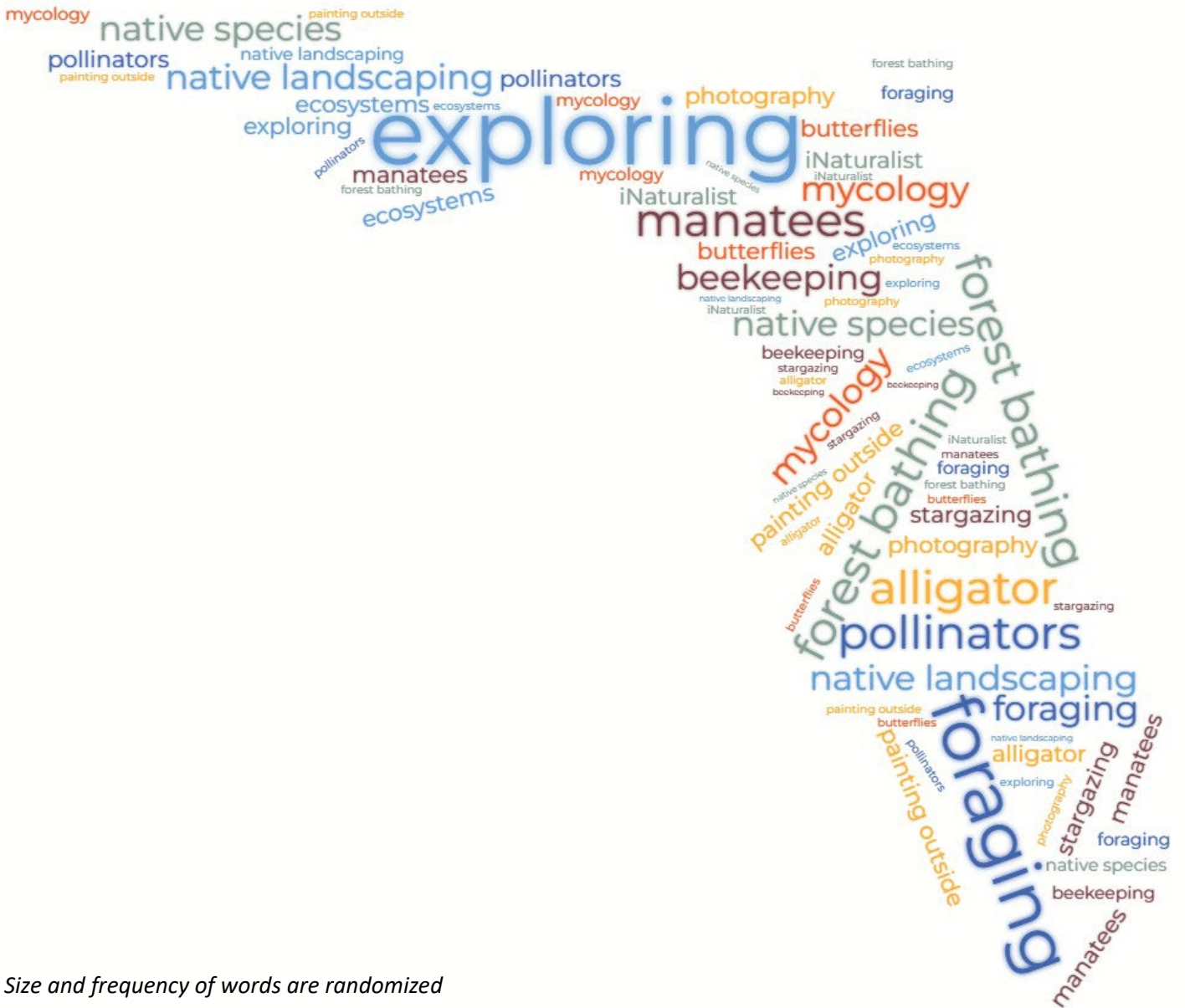
Size and frequency of words are randomized

What type of nature study did your household participate in?

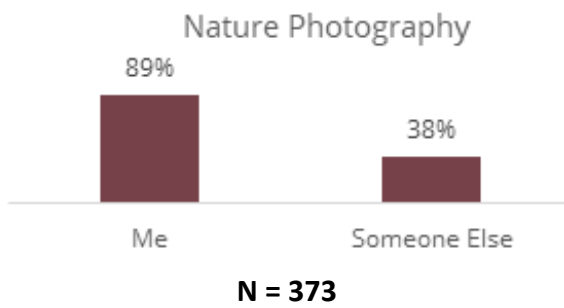
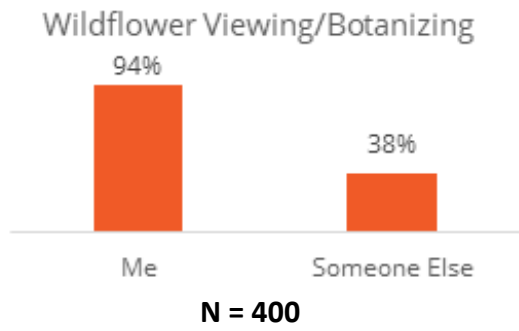
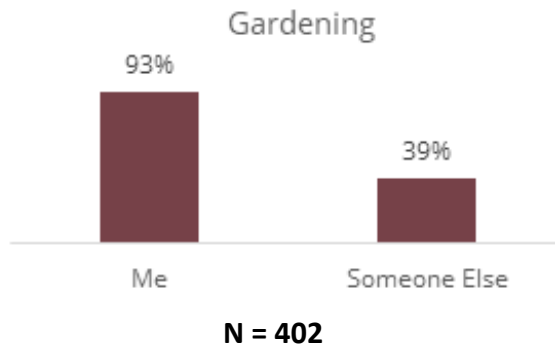
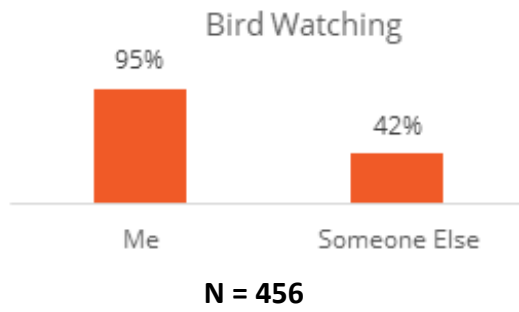
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) N = 737



Word cloud of all answers received:

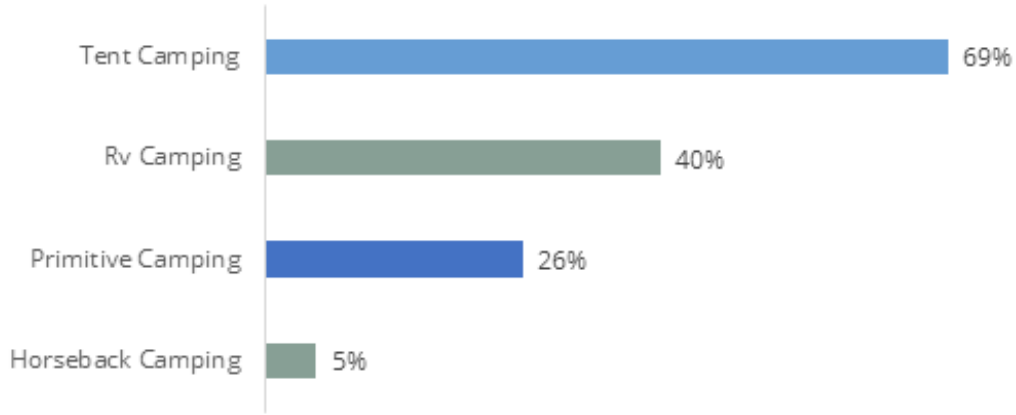


Size and frequency of words are randomized



What type of camping did your household participate in?

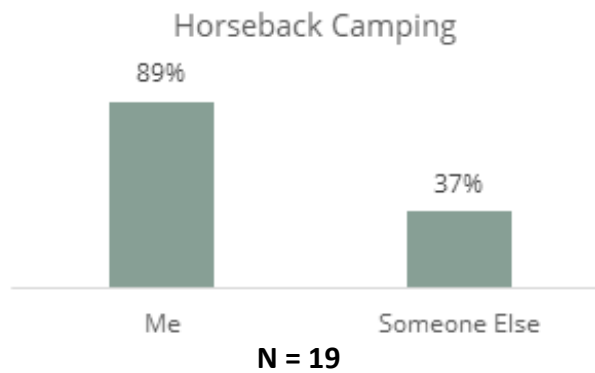
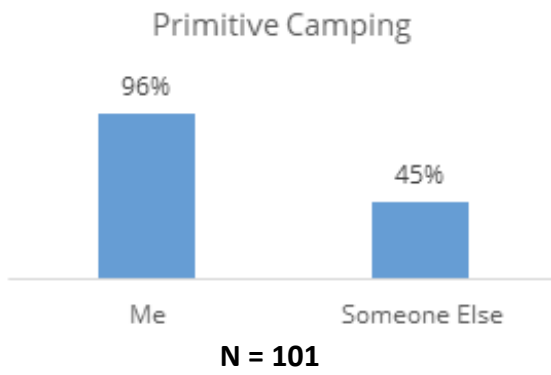
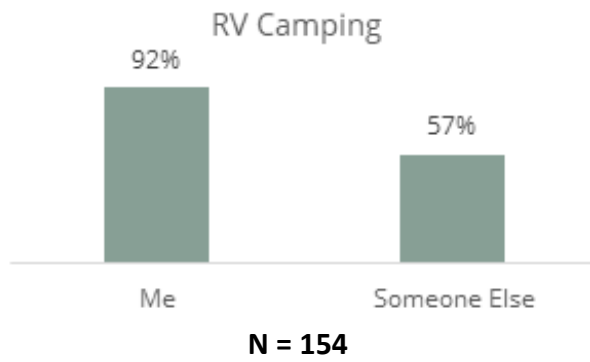
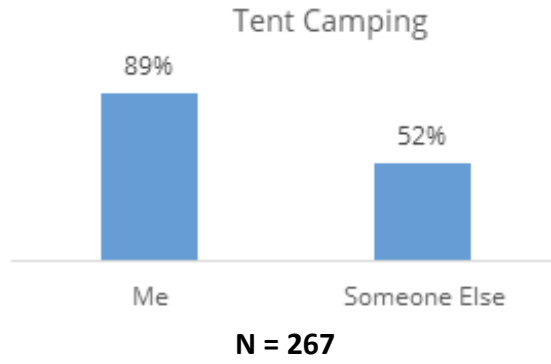
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 390**



Word cloud of all answers received:



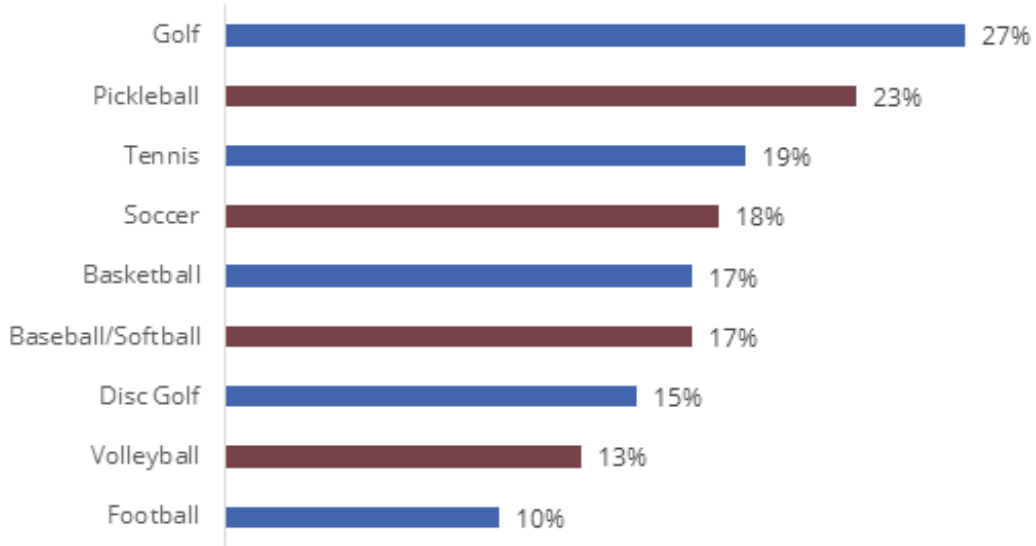
Size and frequency of words are randomized



What type of outdoor sports did your household participate

in? N = 562

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

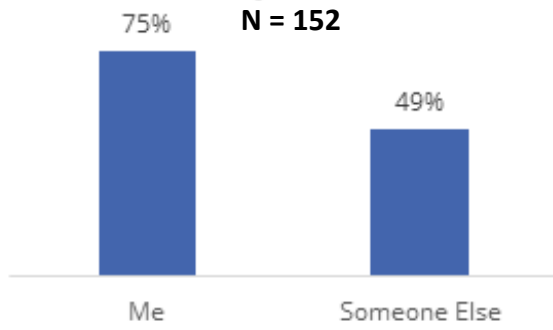


Word cloud of all answers received:

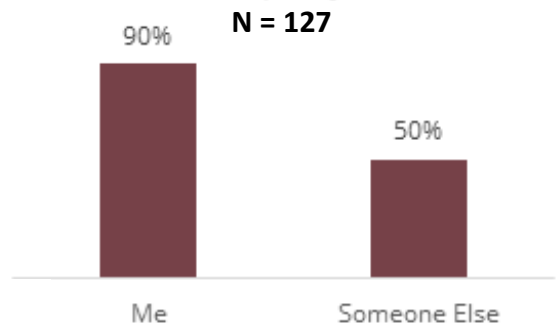


Size and frequency of words are randomized

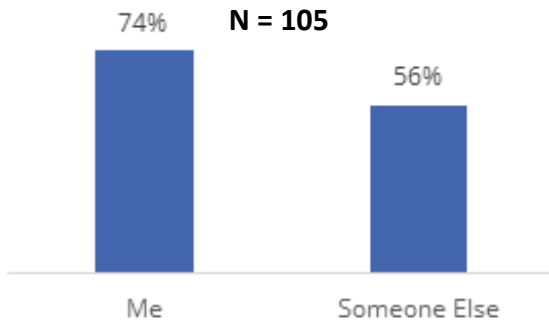
Who participated in Golf this past year?



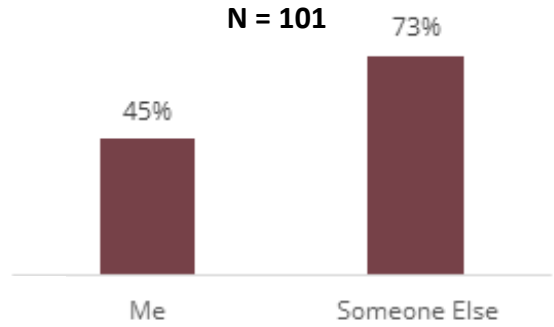
Who participated in Pickleball this past year?



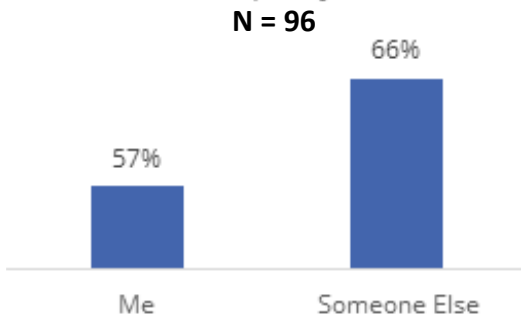
Who participated in Tennis this past year?



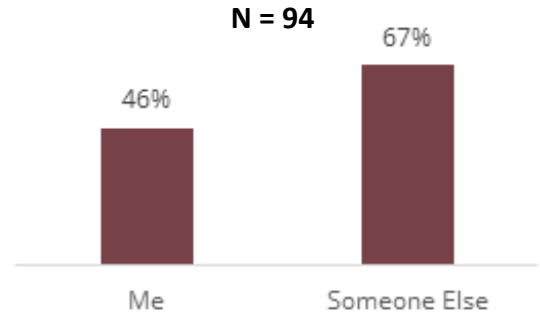
Who participated in Soccer this past year?



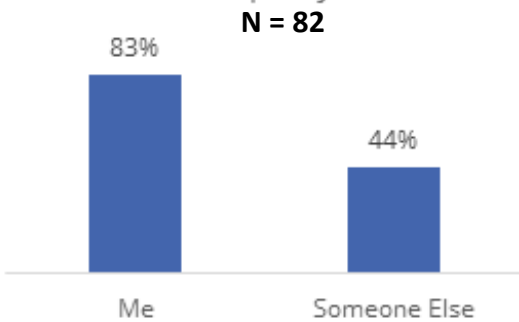
Who participated in Basketball this past year?



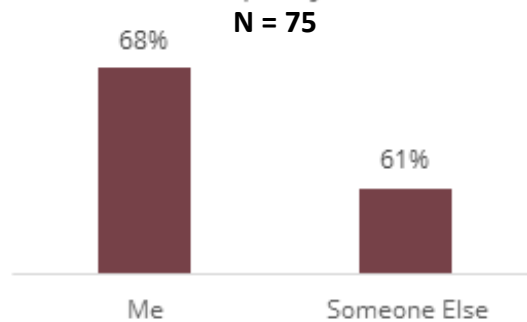
Who participated in Baseball/Softball this past year?



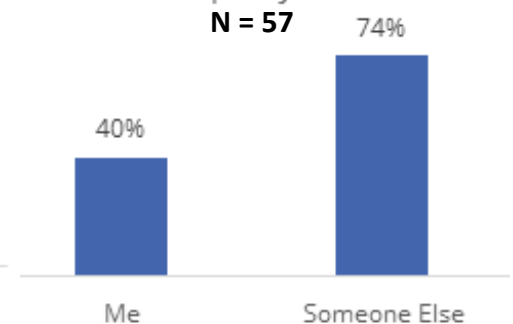
Who participated in Disc Golf this past year?



Who participated in Volleyball this past year?

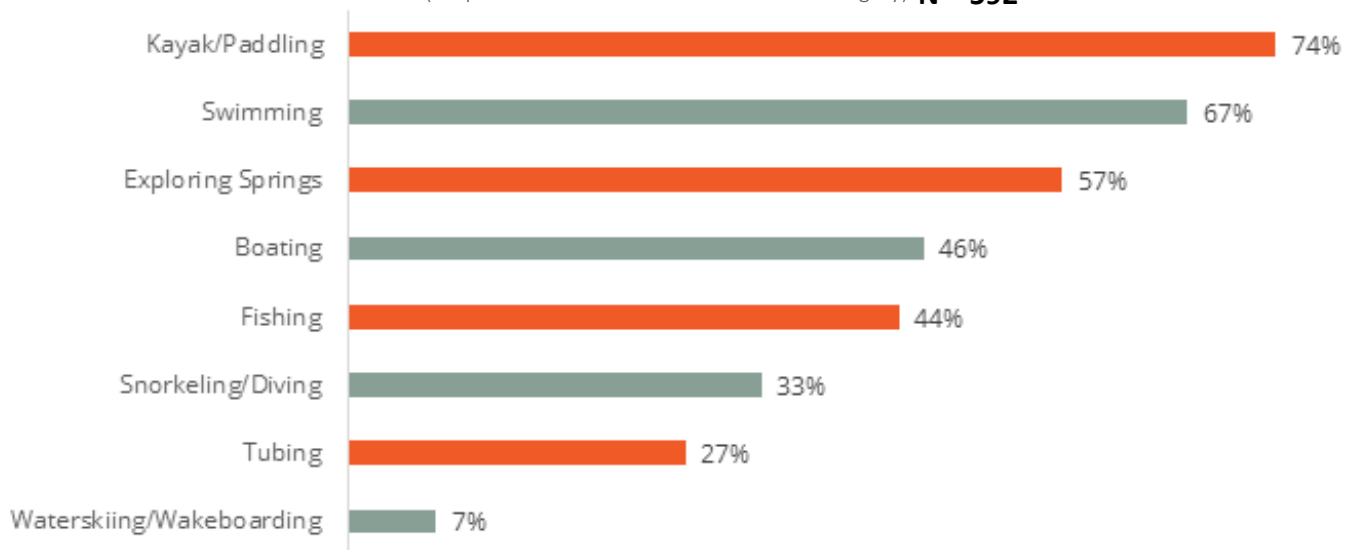


Who participated in Football this past year?



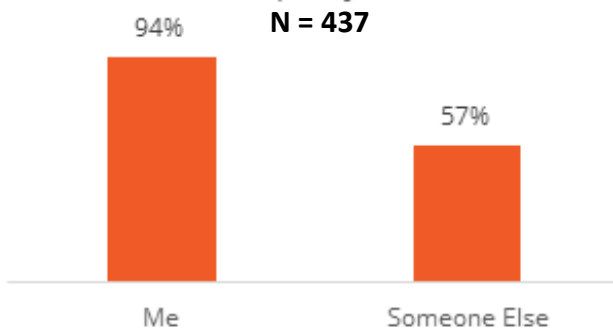
What type of freshwater activities did your household participate in?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 592**



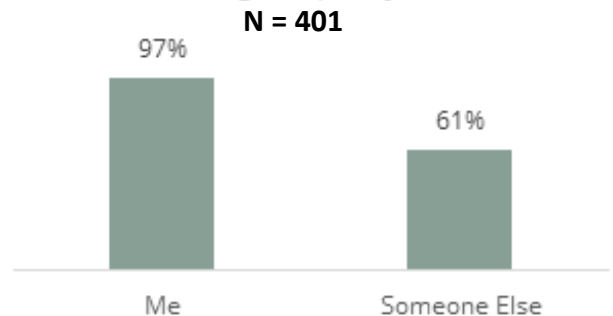
Who participated in Kayak/Paddling this past year?

N = 437



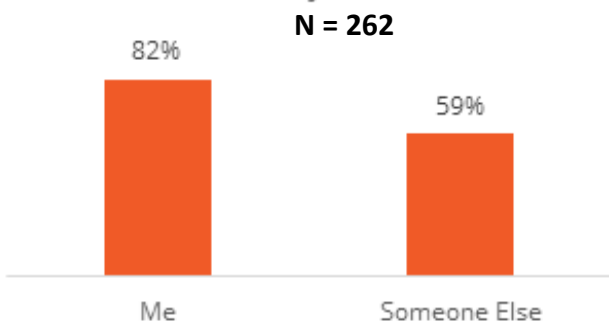
Who participated in Freshwater Swimming this past year?

N = 401



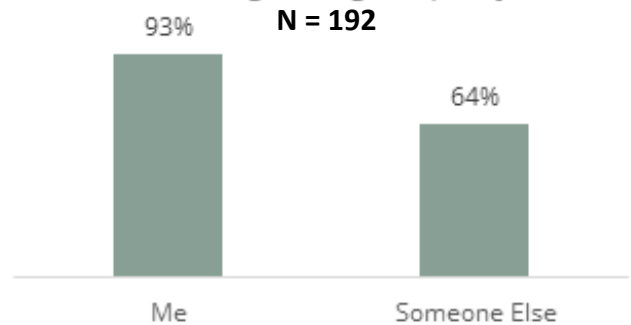
Who participated in Fishing this past year?

N = 262



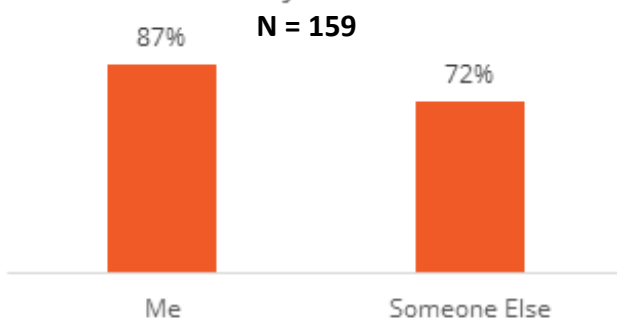
Who participated in Snorkeling/Diving this past year?

N = 192



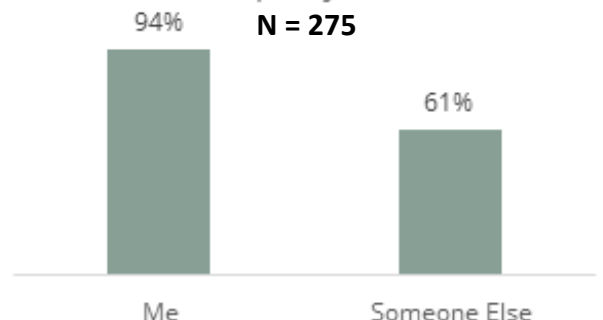
Who participated in Tubing this past year?

N = 159



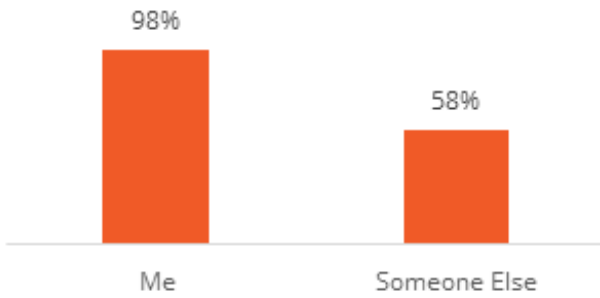
Who participated in Boating this past year?

N = 275



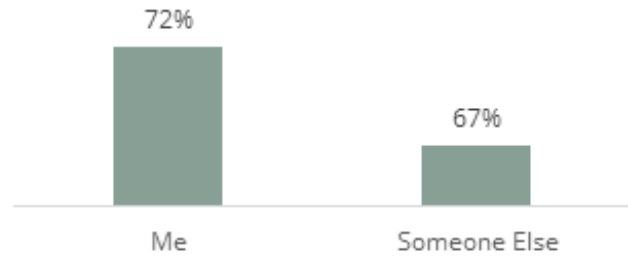
Who participated in Exploring Springs this past year?

N = 336



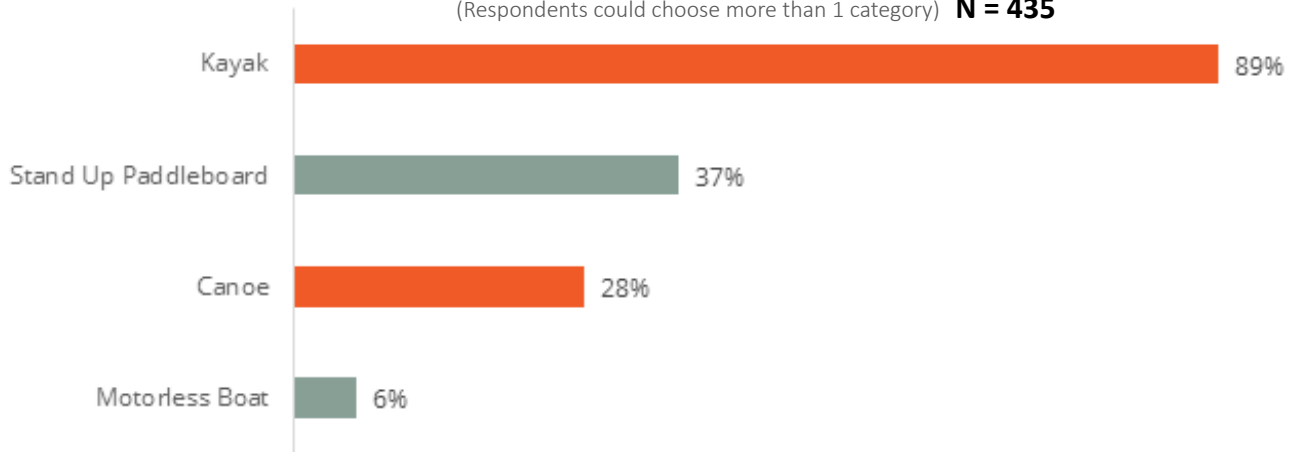
Who participated in Waterskiing/Wakeboarding this past year?

N = 43



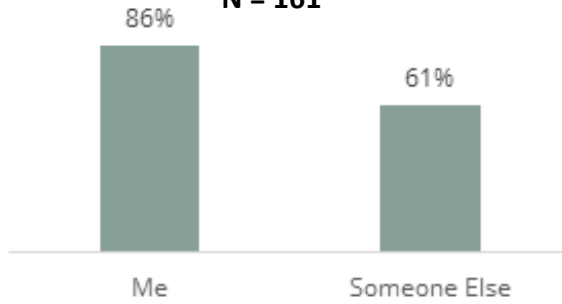
What type of freshwater paddling activity did your household participate in?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 435**



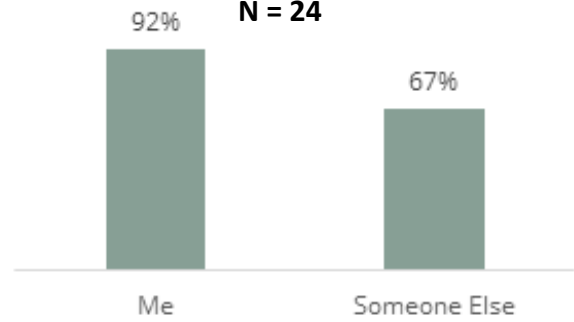
Who paddled on a Stand Up Paddleboard this past year?

N = 161



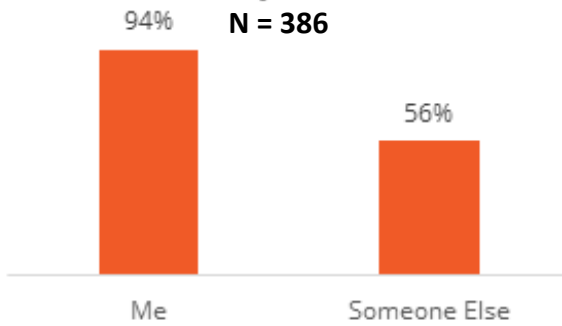
Who paddled in a Motorless Boat this past year?

N = 24



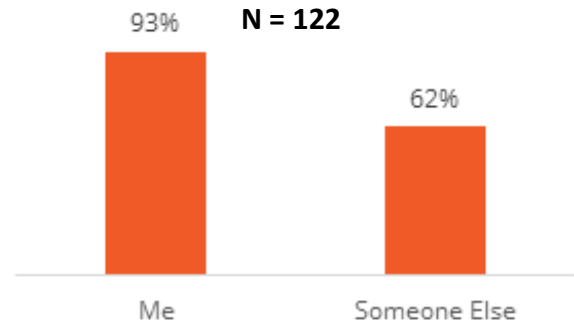
Who paddled in a Kayak this past year?

N = 386



Who paddled in a Canoe this past year?

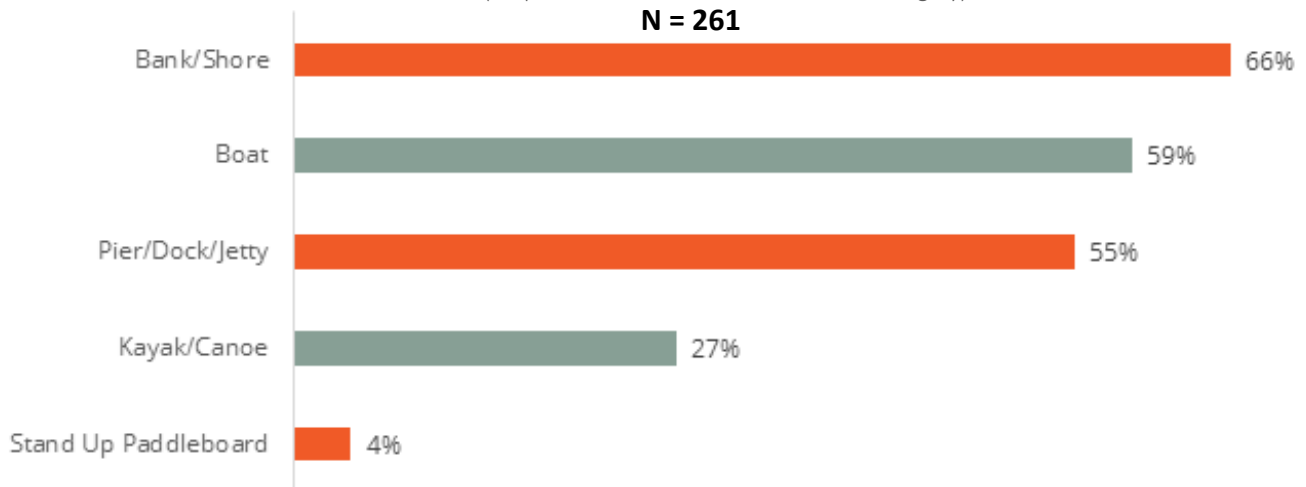
N = 122



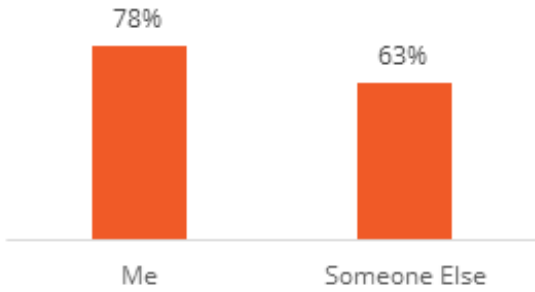
Where did your household fish from in freshwater?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

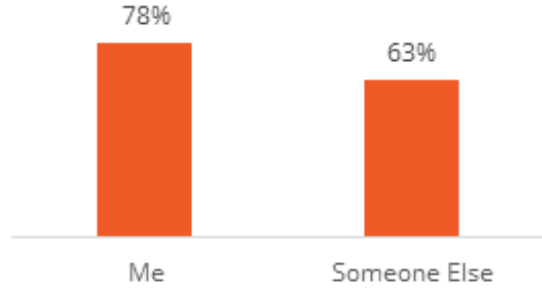
N = 261



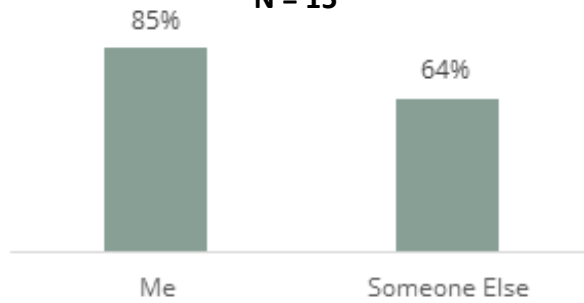
Who fished from the Bank/Shore this past year?
N = 172



Who fished from a Pier/Dock/Jetty this past year?
N = 144

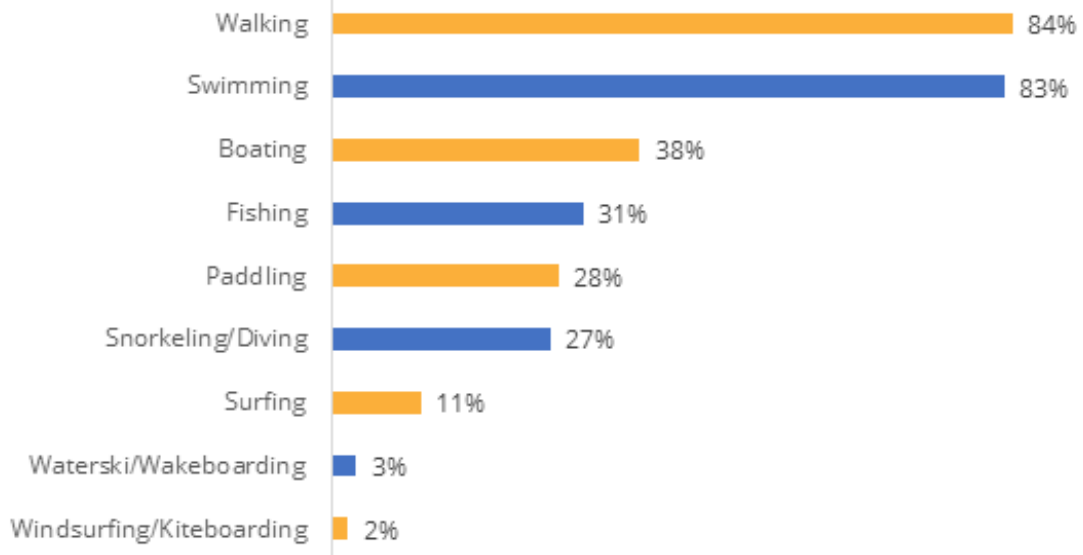


Who fished from a Boat this past year?
N = 15

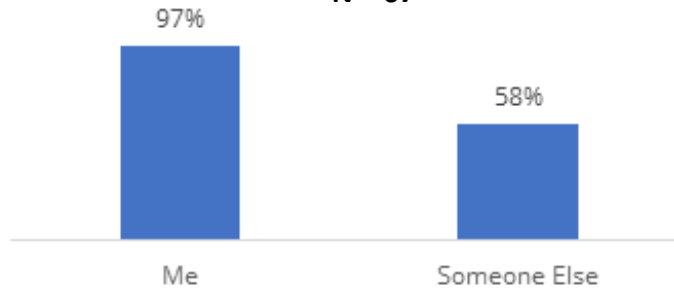


What type of saltwater beach activities did your household participate in? N = 816

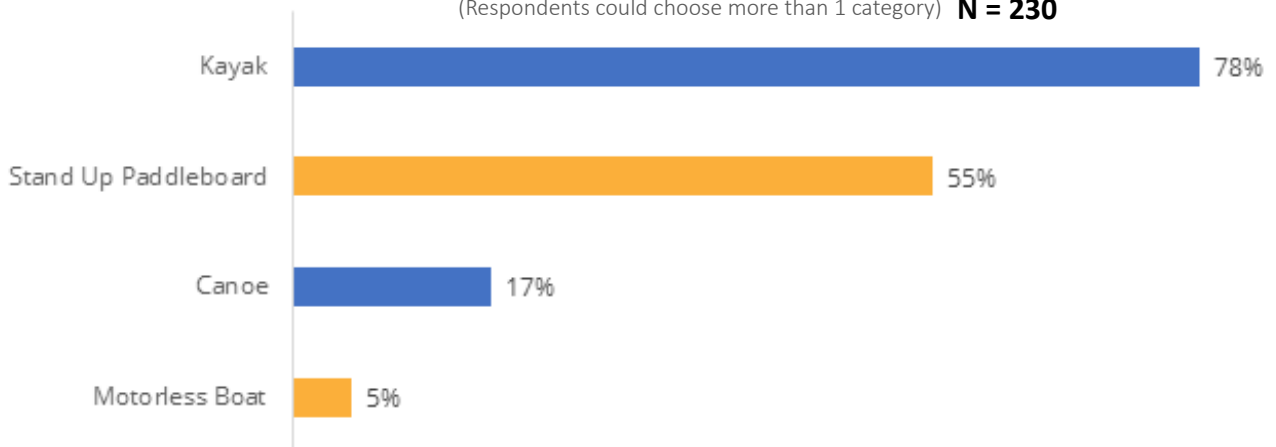
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



Who participated in Saltwater Swimming
this past year?
N = 67

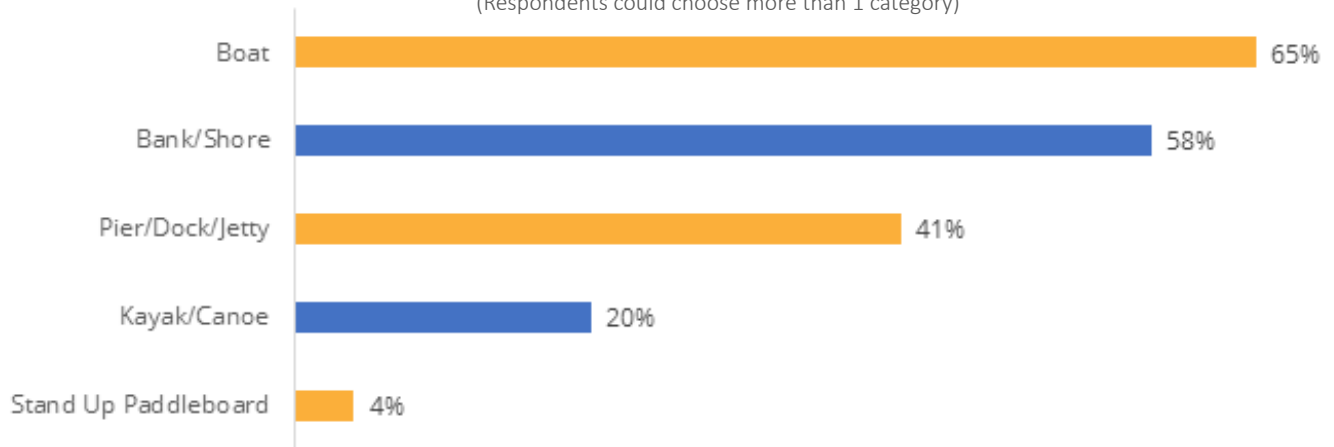


What type of saltwater paddling activity did your household participate in?
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 230**



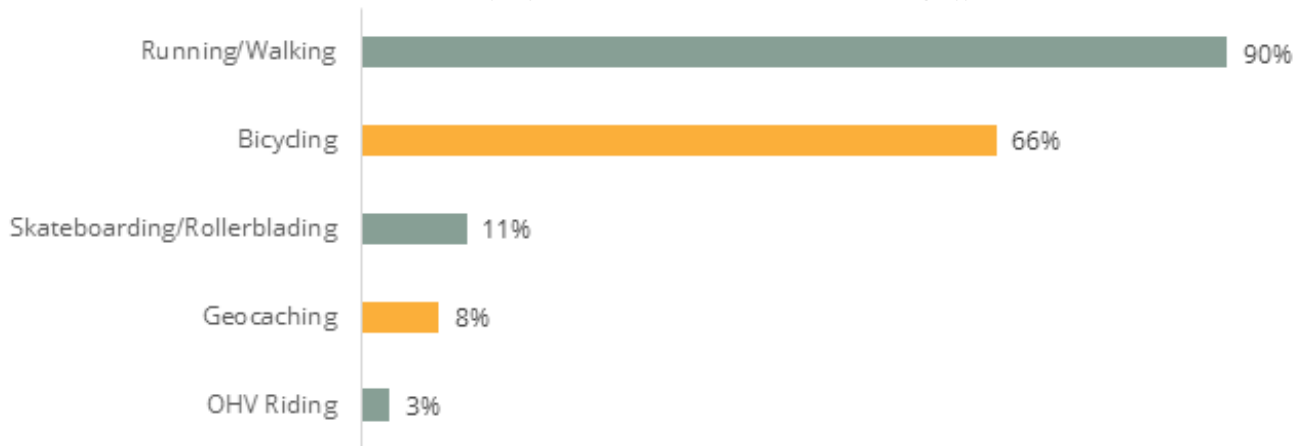
Where did you/they fish from in saltwater? N = 249

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



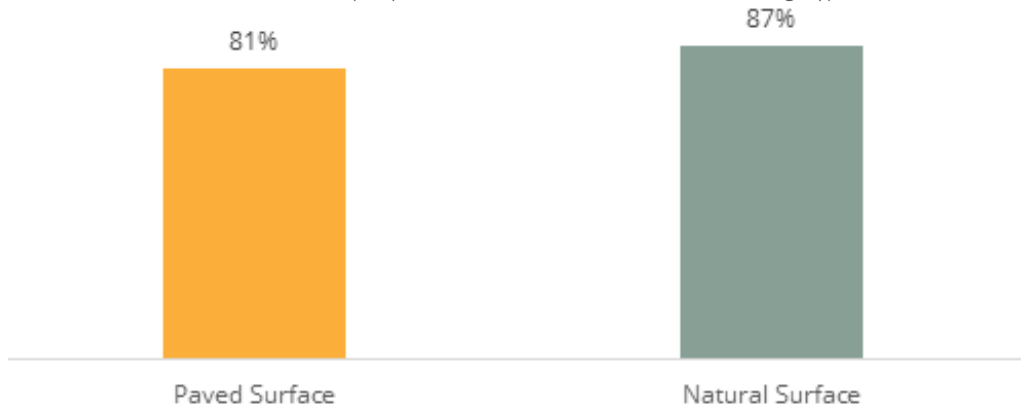
What type of trail activities did your household participate in? N = 948

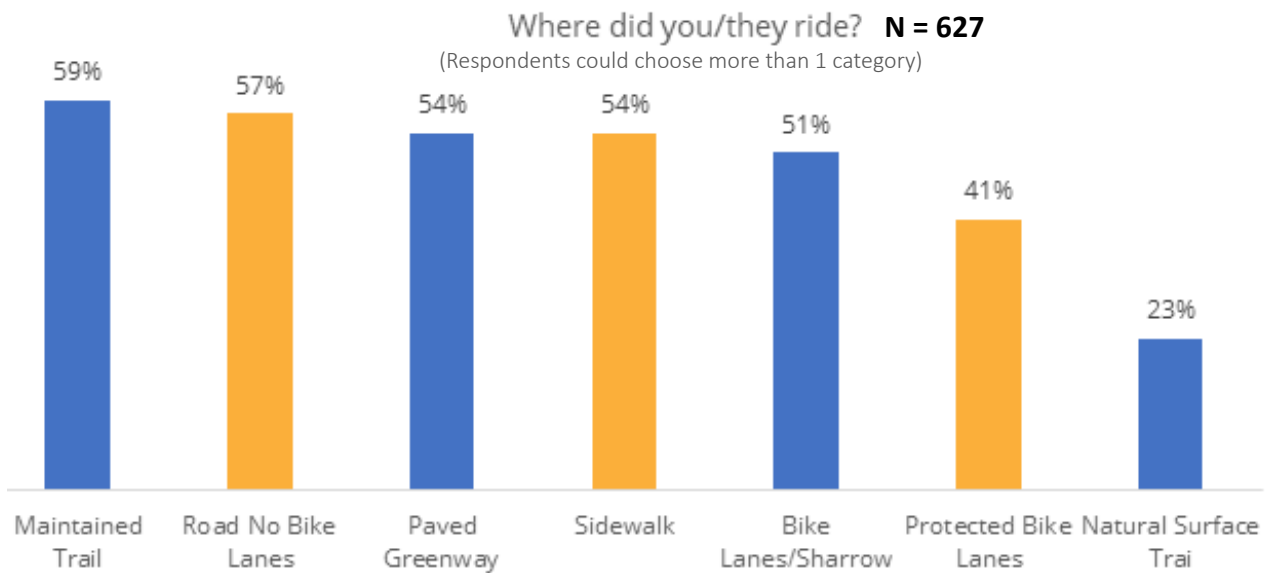
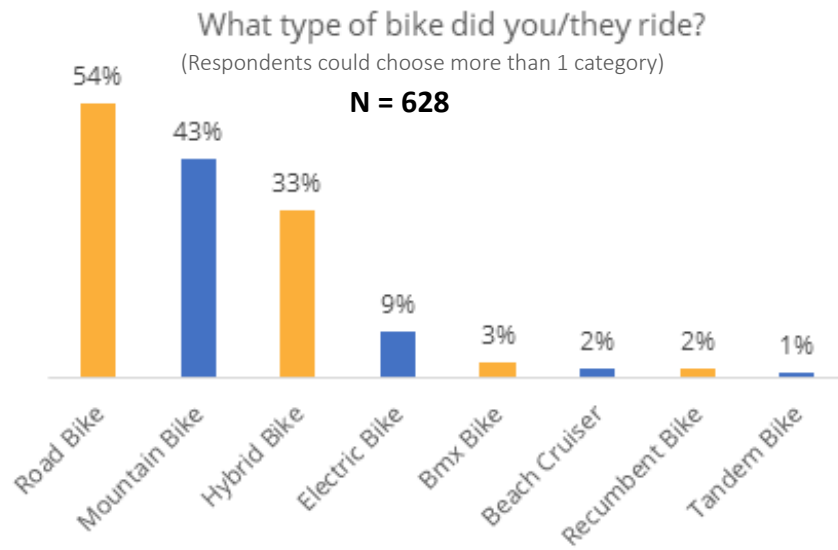
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



What type of running/walking did your household participate in? N = 856

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

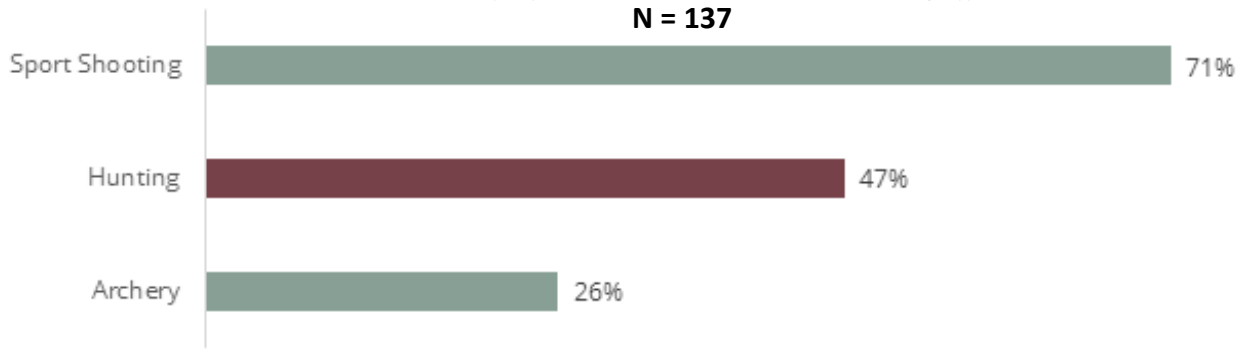




Which hunting/shooting activities did your household participate in?

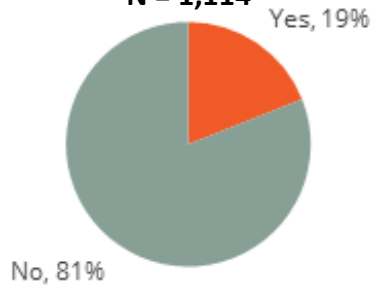
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 137



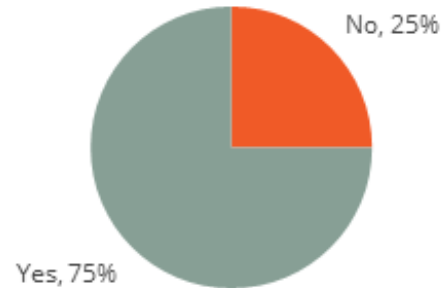
Is there any other form of outdoor recreation you participated in Florida in the past 12 months that was not given as an option?

N = 1,114



Are there any outdoor recreation facilities you would like to see built or provided in your community?

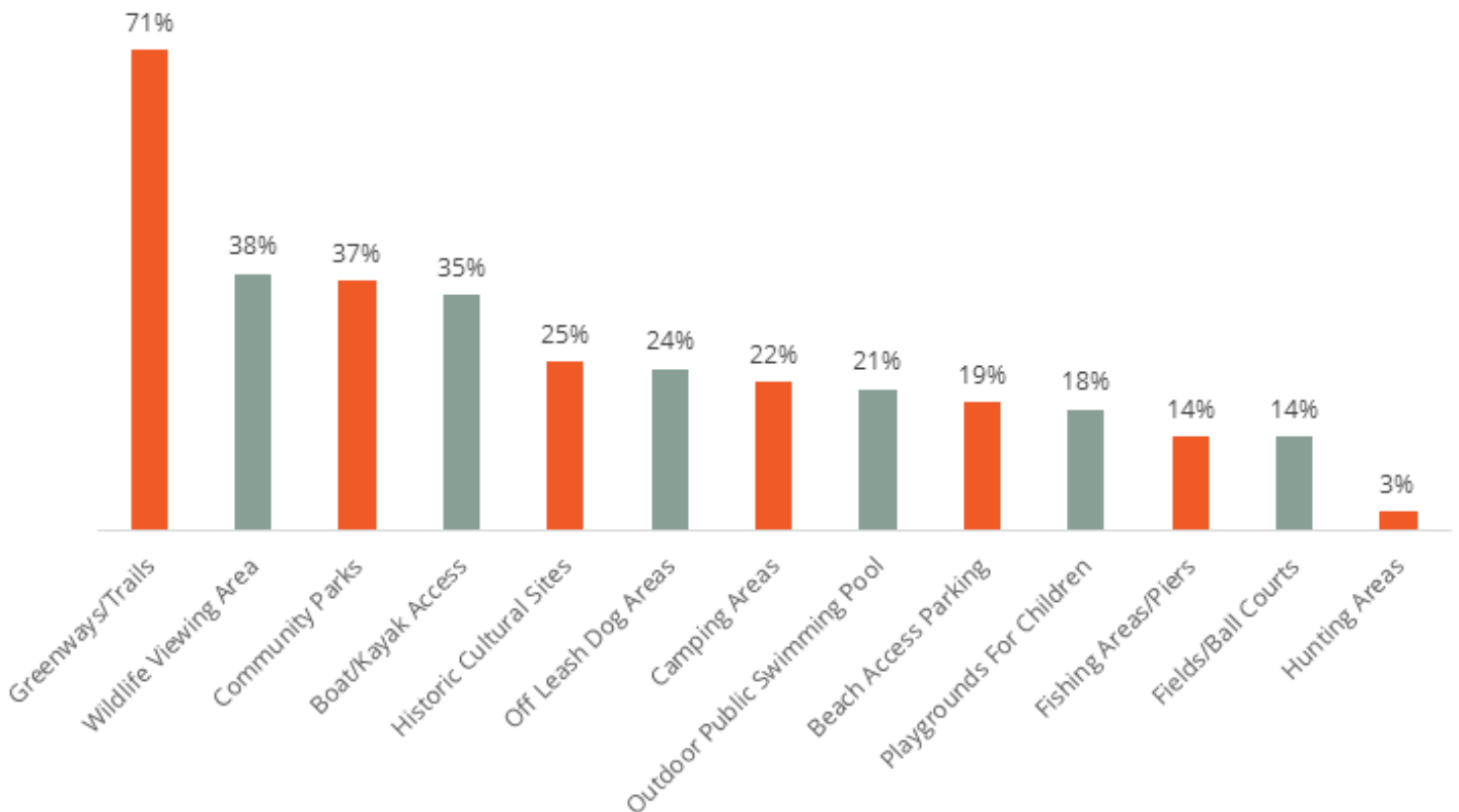
N = 1,107



What outdoor recreation facilities would you like to see built or provided for in your community?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

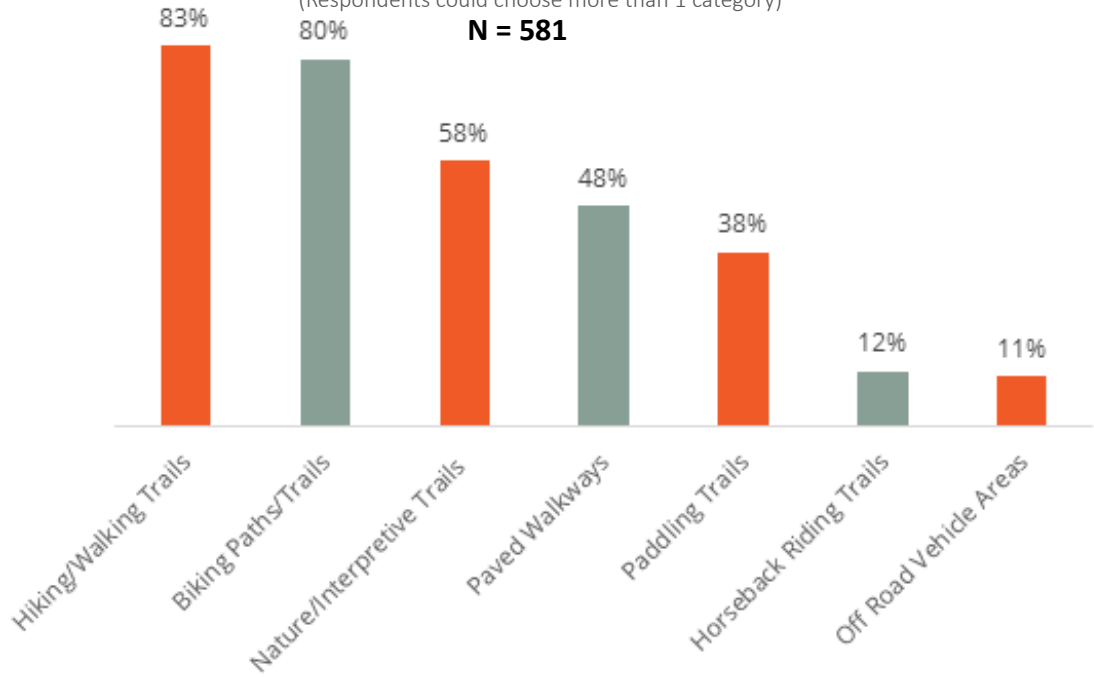
N = 825



What type of greenways/trails would you like to see in your community?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

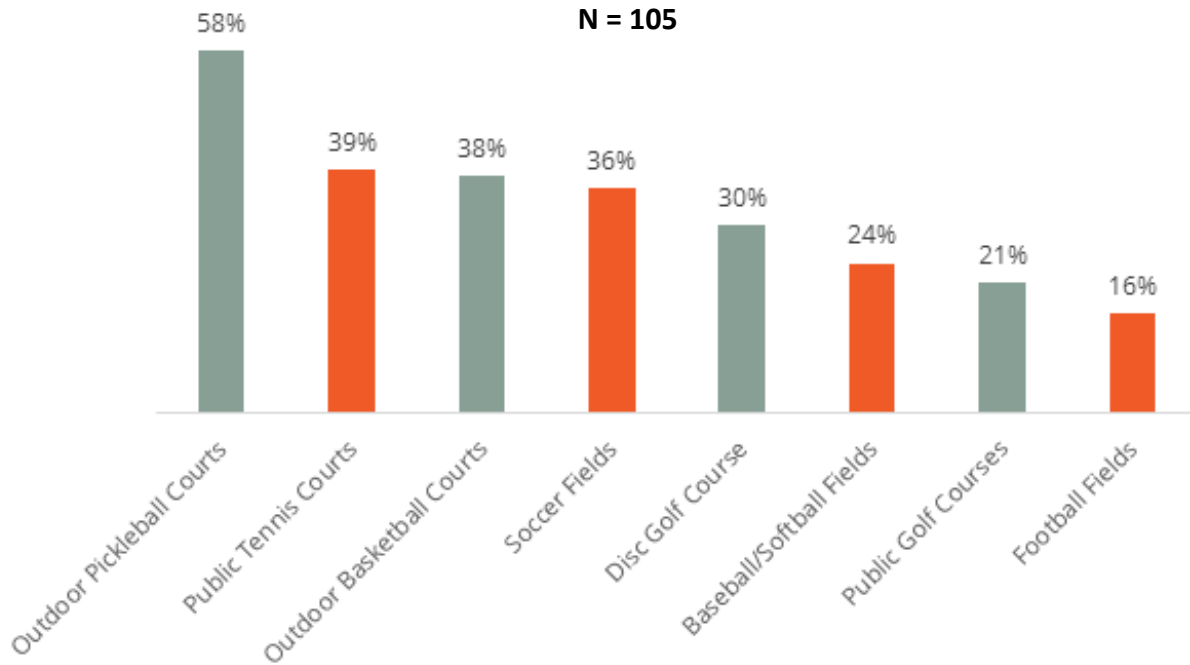
N = 581



What type of fields/courts would you like to see in your community?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

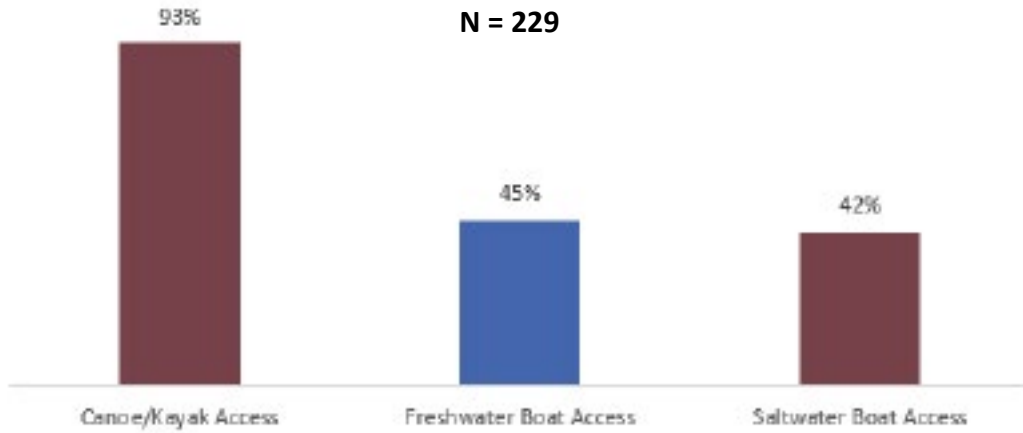
N = 105



What type of boat/kayak access would you like to see in your community?

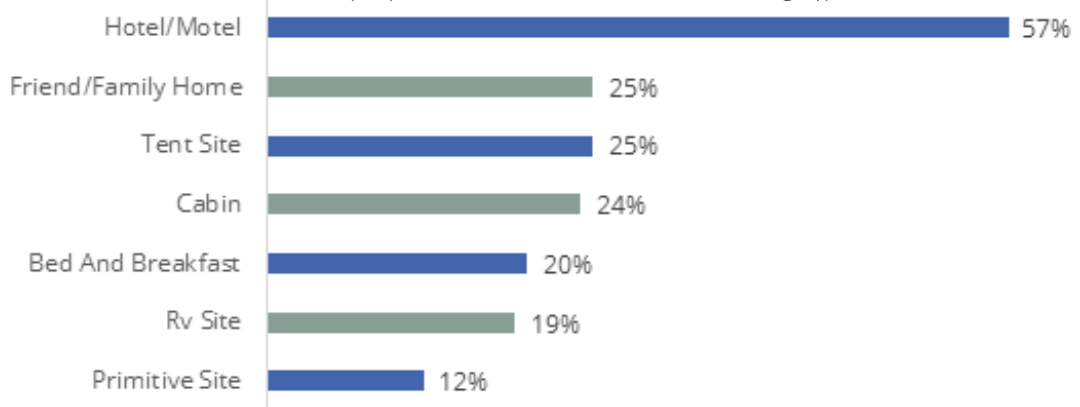
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 229



What type of lodging did you prefer while traveling the past 12 months? **N = 620**

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



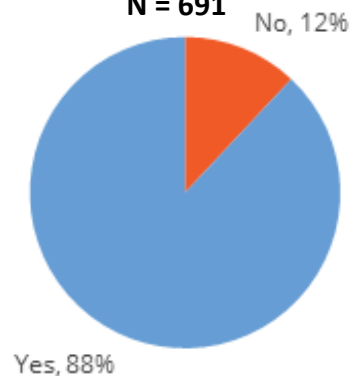
In the past 12 months, have you traveled over 100 miles from your home to recreate outdoors in Florida?

N = 1,121

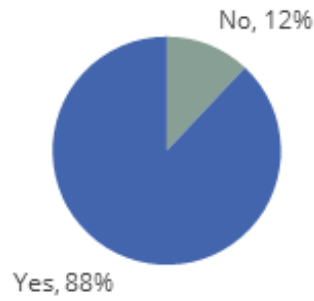


Did you stay overnight on any of these trips?

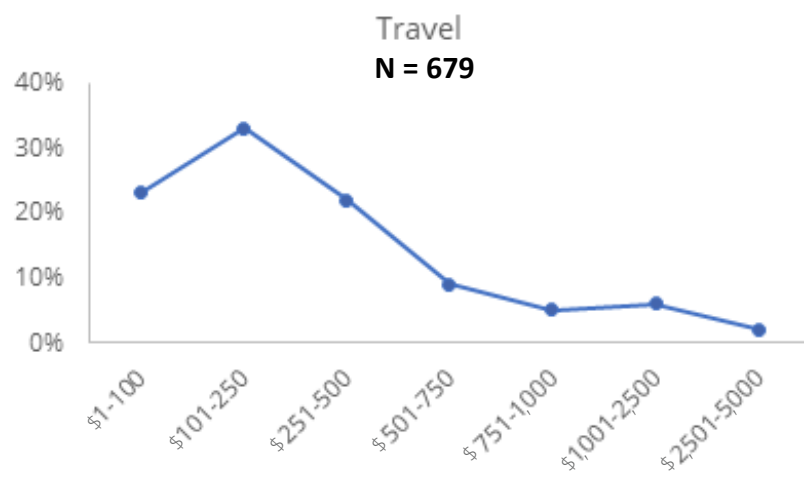
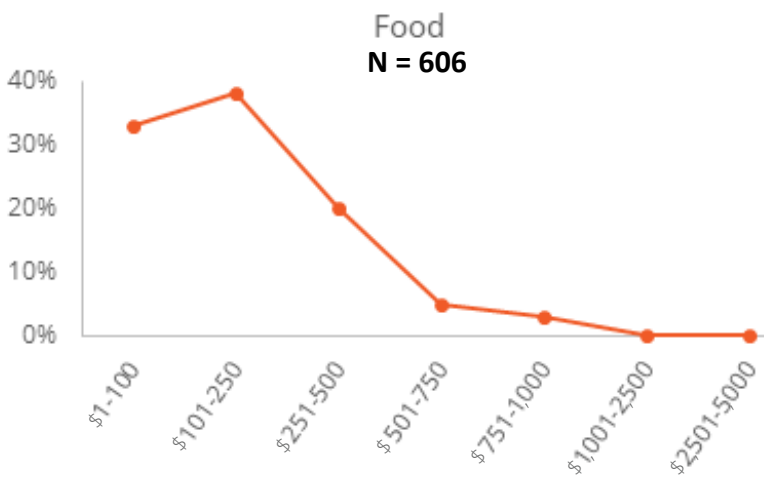
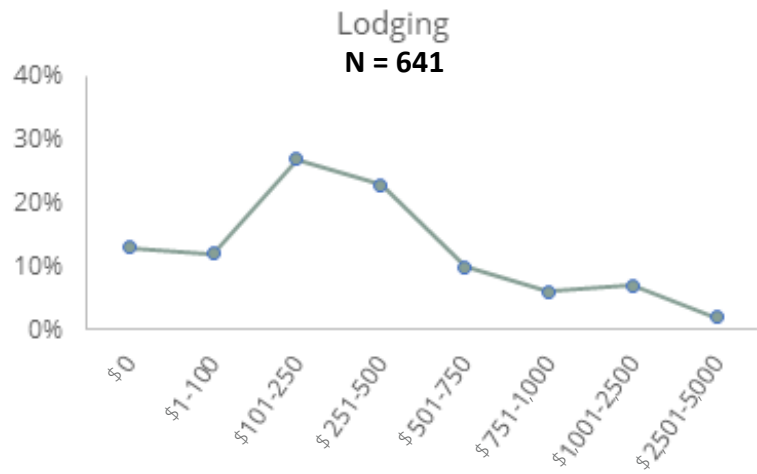
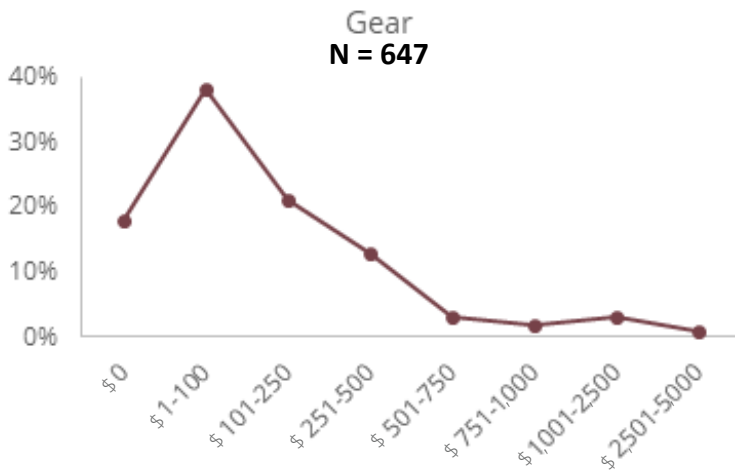
N = 691



Do you like to visit historical and/or cultural sites on these trips? **N = 701**



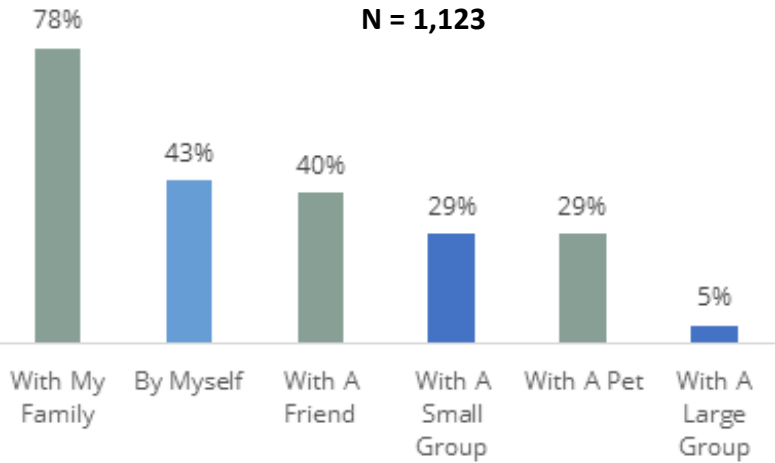
While on these trips, how much in USD (\$) do you typically spend on:



With whom did you typically recreate outdoors in Florida?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 1,123

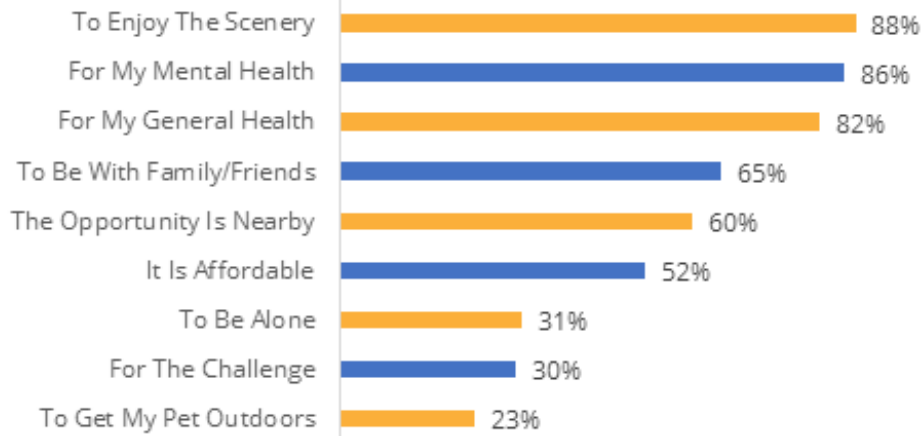


Do you typically bring a smart phone with you to recreate outdoors? **N = 1,117**

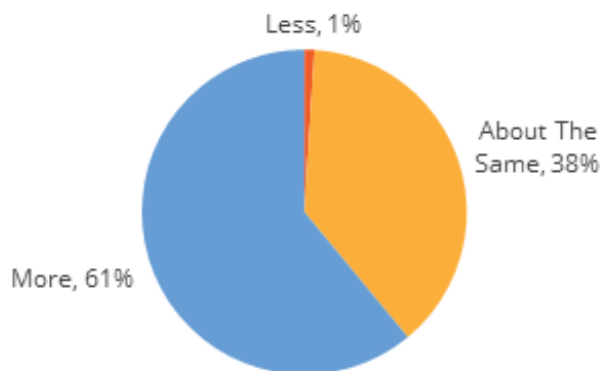


Why do you recreate outdoors in Florida?

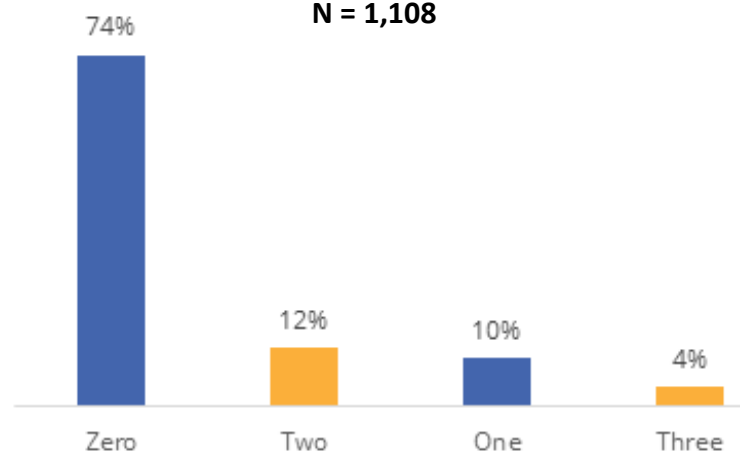
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 1,119**



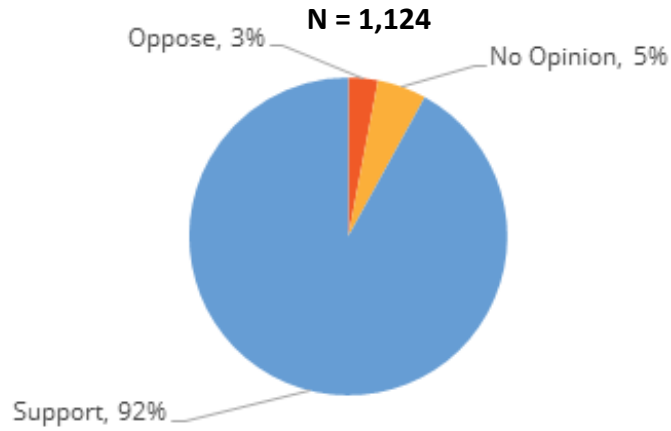
In the future, do you expect to recreate outdoors in Florida: **N = 961**



How many children (under 18) live in your household? **N = 1,108**

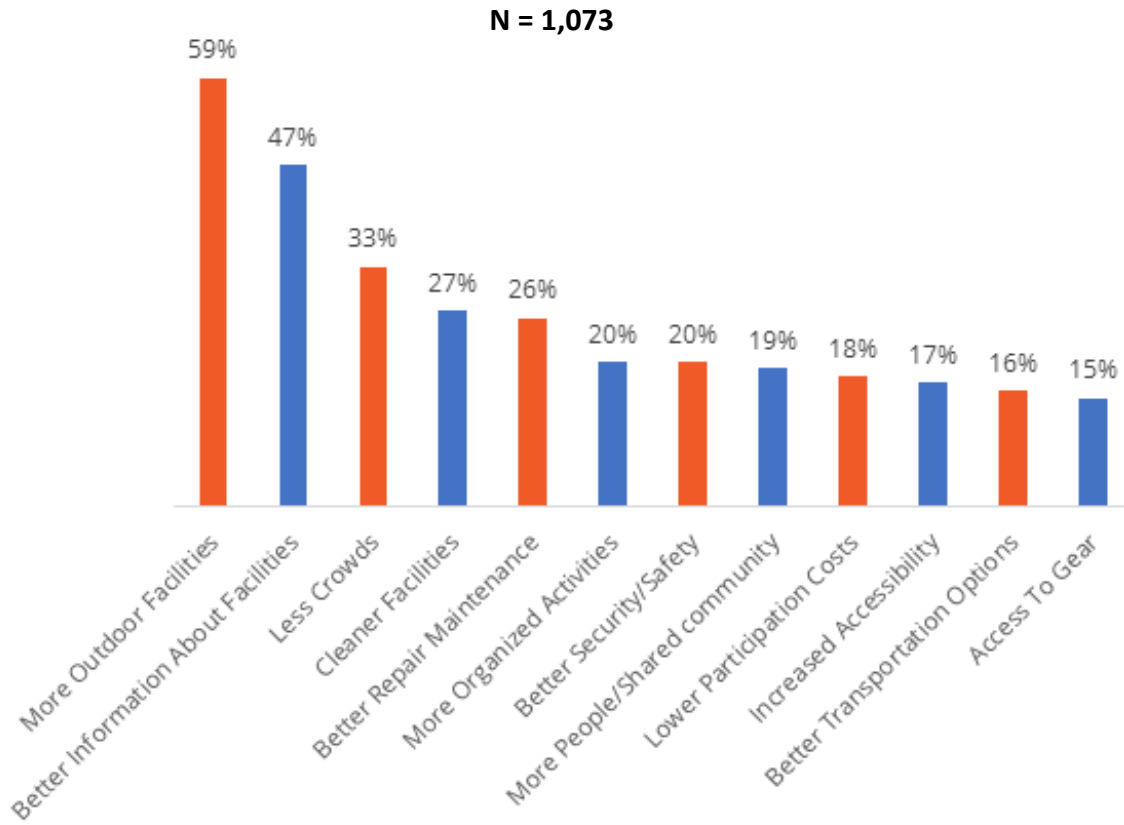


Do you support or oppose maintaining the current levels of outdoor recreation services and opportunities in Florida?



What would encourage you to recreate outdoors more in Florida?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



Florida Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan Participation Study – Resident Questionnaire (2021)

Thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions about outdoor recreation opportunities in Florida. Your answers will help guide improvements to Florida’s outdoor recreation amenities.

First, a couple questions to be sure you qualify to take the survey...

1. Are you at least 18 years old? Yes No
2. Do you live in Florida...? Full-time Part-time I don’t live in Florida

Recreation near your home

3. How would you describe the place where you live? *(Circle only ONE response per item)*

Large city/urban
Suburban
Small city/town
Rural (not a farm)
Rural (farmland)

4. What county do you live in? _____
5. Have you recreated outdoors in Florida in the past 12 months? Yes No

6. How important is outdoor recreation to you personally?
Very Important
Somewhat Important
Not at all

7. In general, how satisfied are you with outdoor recreation opportunities near your home?
Very Satisfied
Somewhat Satisfied
Not at all

8. Overall, how satisfied are you with outdoor recreation opportunities in Florida?
Very Satisfied
Somewhat Satisfied
Not at all

9. What would you encourage you to recreate outdoors more in Florida? (Check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Cleaner facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation options	<input type="checkbox"/> More organized activities	
<input type="checkbox"/> More outdoor facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Access to equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Increased accessibility/ inclusive facilities	
<input type="checkbox"/> Less crowds	<input type="checkbox"/> Lower participation fees	<input type="checkbox"/> Shared community/more people	
<input type="checkbox"/> Better info about facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Better security/safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Better repair/maintenance of facilities	

In the past year, what activities have you (or someone in your household) participated in?
(Check all that apply)

Trail activities include walking, bicycling and other activities that may take place outside of designated trails. (Only select activities that you participated in, NOT activities in which you were a spectator.)

<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Sports	<input type="checkbox"/> Freshwater Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Saltwater Beach Activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Trail Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Hunting/Shooting Activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Nature Study /Wildlife Viewing
<input type="checkbox"/> Camping		

10. What type of nature study did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)
 - Bird Watching
 - Nature Photography
 - Wildflower Viewing/ Botanizing
 - Gardening
 - Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in ‘Bird Watching’ this past year? _____

Who participated in ‘Nature Photography’ this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Wildflower Viewing' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Gardening' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

11. What type of camping did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Horseback Camping
- RV Camping
- Primitive Camping
- Tent Camping
- Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in 'Horseback Camping' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'RV Camping' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Primitive Camping' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Tent Camping' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

12. What type of outdoor sports did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Basketball
- Golf
- Tennis
- Baseball/softball
- Football
- Soccer
- Pickleball
- Volleyball
- Disc Golf
- Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in 'Basketball' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Golf' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Tennis' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Football' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Baseball/softball' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Soccer' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Pickleball' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Volleyball' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Disc Golf' this past year? _____
Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

13. What type of freshwater activities did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Tubing
- Swimming
- Snorkeling/Diving
- Kayak/Paddling
- Water-skiing/Waterboarding
- Exploring Springs
- Fishing
- Boating
- Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in 'Tubing' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Swimming' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Snorkeling/Diving' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Kayak/Paddling' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Water-skiing/Waterboarding' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Exploring Springs' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Fishing' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Boating' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

14. What type of paddling activity did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Kayak
- Canoe
- Stand-Up Paddleboard
- Motorless Boat
- Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in 'Kayak' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Canoe' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Stand-Up Paddleboard' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Motorless Boat' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

15. Where did your household fish from? (Check all that apply)

- Bank/Shore
- Pier/Dock/Jetty
- Boat
- Other (please describe) _____

Who fished from the 'Bank/Shore' this past year? _____
 Who fished from the 'Pier/Dock/Jetty' this past year? _____
 Who fished from the 'Boat' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

16. What type of saltwater beach activities did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Swimming
- Walking/Wading
- Paddling
- Boating
- Snorkeling/Diving
- Surfing
- Water-skiing/Wakeboarding
- Windsurfing/Kite Boarding
- Fishing
- Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in 'Swimming' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Snorkeling/Diving' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Paddling' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Water-skiing/Wakeboarding' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Windsurfing/Kite Boarding' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Surfing' this part year? _____
 Who participated in 'Walking/Wading' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Fishing' this past year? _____
 Who participated in 'Boating' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

Paddling Page Saltwater

17. What type of paddling activity did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Kayak
- Canoe
- Stand-Up Paddleboard
- Motorless Boat
- Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in 'Kayak' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Canoe' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Stand-Up Paddleboard' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Motorless Boat' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

Saltwater Fishing Page

18. Where did you/they fish from? (Check all that apply)

- Bank/Shore
- Pier/Dock/Jetty
- Boat
- Other (please describe) _____

Who fished from the 'Bank/Shore' this past year? _____

Who fished from the 'Pier/Dock/Jetty' this past year? _____

Who fished from the 'Boat' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

Trails Page

(Trail activities include walking, bicycling and other activities that may take place outside of designated trails.)

19. What type of trail activities did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Bicycling
- Running/Walking
- Skateboarding/Rollerblading
- Geocaching
- OHV Riding
- Other (please describe) _____

Who participated in 'Bicycling' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Running/Walking' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Skateboarding/Rollerblading' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Geocaching' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'OHV Riding' this past year? _____

Who participated in 'Other' this past year? _____

Running Page

20. What type of running/walking did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Paved surface
- Natural surface (hiking, trail running)
- Other (please describe) _____

Bicycling Page

21. What type of bike did you/they ride? (Check all that apply)

- Road Bike
- Mountain Bike
- Hybrid Bike
- Electric Bike
- Recumbent Bike
- Other (please describe) _____

22. Where did you/they ride? (Check all that apply)

- Road (no bike lanes)
- Bike lanes or sharrows
- Protected bike lanes
- Paved greenway
- Sidewalk
- Natural surface (maintained trail)
- Natural surface (not maintained)
- Other (please describe) _____

Hunting Page

23. Which hunting/shooting activities did your household participate in? (Check all that apply)

- Hunting
- Sport shooting
- Archery
- Other (please describe) _____

Other forms of Outdoor Recreation

24. Is there any other form of outdoor recreation you participated in Florida in the past 12 months that was not given as an option?

Yes No

Please describe this activity: _____

25. If you had to pick just one, what would you say your **favorite** outdoor recreation activity is?

Recreation in Your Community

26. Are there any outdoor recreation facilities you would like to see built or provided in your community?

Yes No

What outdoor recreation facilities would you like to see built or provided for? (Check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Fields/Ball Courts	<input type="checkbox"/> Camping Areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Historic/Cultural Sites
<input type="checkbox"/> Greenways/Trails	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor public swimming pools	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife viewing areas/overlooks
<input type="checkbox"/> Community parks	<input type="checkbox"/> Beach access/parking	<input type="checkbox"/> Off-leash dog areas
<input type="checkbox"/> Playgrounds	<input type="checkbox"/> Hunting areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Area/Pier
<input type="checkbox"/> Boat/Kayak Access	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	

What type of fields/courts would you like to see in your community? (Check all that apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Football Fields	<input type="checkbox"/> Soccer Fields	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Tennis Courts
<input type="checkbox"/> Baseball/Softball Fields	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Golf Courses	<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Basketball Courts
<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor Pickleball Courts	<input type="checkbox"/> Disc Golf Course	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

What type of greenways/trails would you like to see in your community? (Check all that apply)		
Paddling Trails	Paved Walkways	Nature/Interpretive trails
Horseback riding trails	Hiking/Walking Trails	Off-road vehicle area/trails
Biking Paths/Trails	Other	

What type of boat/kayak access would you like to see in your community? (Check all that apply)	
Saltwater boat access or ramps	Freshwater boat access or ramps
Access for canoes or kayaks	Other

Next, we would like to ask you about how you recreate outside of your community.

27. In the past 12 months, have you traveled over 100 miles from your home to recreate outdoors in Florida?

Yes No

28. Did you stay overnight on any of these trips?

Yes No

What type of lodging did you prefer while traveling the past 12 months?	
Primitive Campsite	Tent Campsite
RV Campsite	Hotel/motel
Bed and Breakfast	Cabin
A friend/family member's house	Other

29. Do you like to visit historical and/or cultural sites on these trips?

Yes No

30. While on these trips, how much in USD (\$) do you typically spend on: *(Circle only ONE response per item)*

Travel	\$0	\$1 - \$100	\$101- \$250	\$251- \$500	\$501- \$750	\$751- \$1000	\$1001- \$2500	\$2501- \$5000	\$5001- \$10000	More than \$10000
Gear	\$0	\$1 - \$100	\$101- \$250	\$251- \$500	\$501- \$750	\$751- \$1000	\$1001- \$2500	\$2501- \$5000	\$5001- \$10000	More than \$10000
Lodging	\$0	\$1 - \$100	\$101- \$250	\$251- \$500	\$501- \$750	\$751- \$1000	\$1001- \$2500	\$2501- \$5000	\$5001- \$10000	More than \$10000
Fees	\$0	\$1 - \$100	\$101- \$250	\$251- \$500	\$501- \$750	\$751- \$1000	\$1001- \$2500	\$2501- \$5000	\$5001- \$10000	More than \$10000
Food	\$0	\$1 - \$100	\$101- \$250	\$251- \$500	\$501- \$750	\$751- \$1000	\$1001- \$2500	\$2501- \$5000	\$5001- \$10000	More than \$10000

Now that you've had a chance to think about your outdoor recreation experiences in Florida...

31. With whom did you typically recreate outdoors in Florida? *(Circle only ONE response per item)*

Alone (6+) with a Pet Friends Family Small Group (2-5) Large Group

32. Do you typically bring a smart phone with you to recreate outdoors?

Yes No

33. Why do you recreate outdoors in Florida? (Check all that apply)	
<input type="checkbox"/> The opportunity is nearby	<input type="checkbox"/> To be alone
<input type="checkbox"/> To get my pet outdoors	<input type="checkbox"/> To enjoy the scenery/be close to nature
<input type="checkbox"/> It is affordable	<input type="checkbox"/> For my general health/physical fitness
<input type="checkbox"/> For my mental health/relaxation	<input type="checkbox"/> For the challenge
<input type="checkbox"/> To be with family/friends	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

The next few questions are for statistical purposes and helps the state of Florida provide better outdoor recreation experiences for ALL residents and visitors. The information that you provide will remain **STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL**.

34. In the future, do you expect to recreate outdoors in Florida: *(Circle only ONE response per item)*

More About the same Less Not at all

35. Do you support or oppose maintaining the current levels of outdoor recreation services and opportunities in Florida?

Support Oppose No Opinion

36. How many children (under 18) live in your household? *(Circle only ONE response per item)*

None 1 2 3 4 More than 4

37. In what year were you born?

That completes our survey. Thank you very much for your assistance!

PANDEMIC STUDY

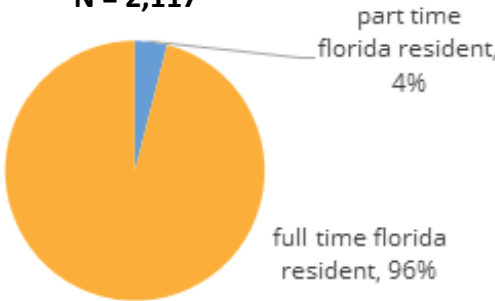
N = Number of Respondents

A specific survey was created to better understand how Florida residents and visitors recreated outdoors during the pandemic. This survey utilized convenience sampling by recruiting respondents via web, email and social media. The survey was created in Survey123.

For more details on survey methodology please contact DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails.

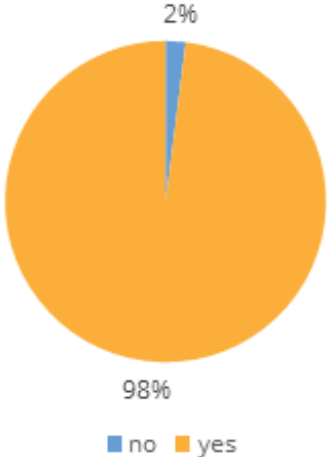
Are you a resident of Florida?

N = 2,117

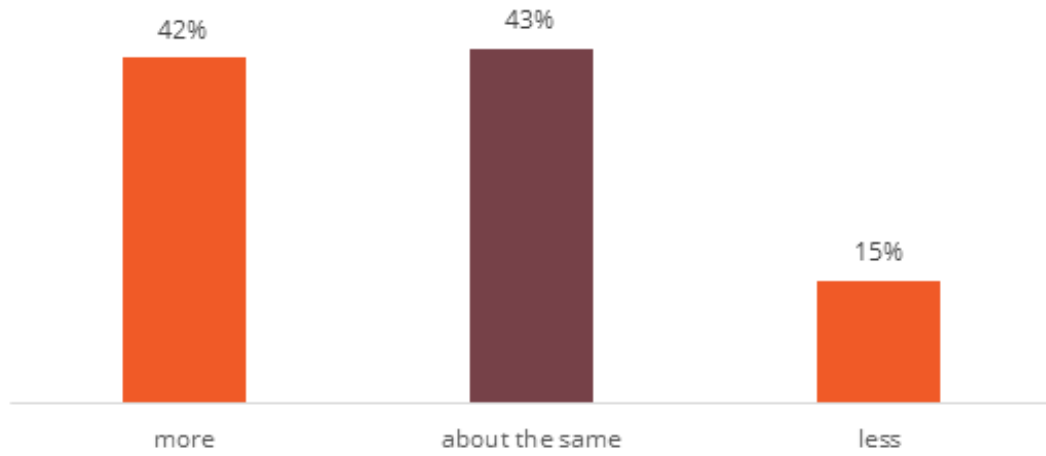


Have you recreated outdoors in the past 12 months?

N = 2,110

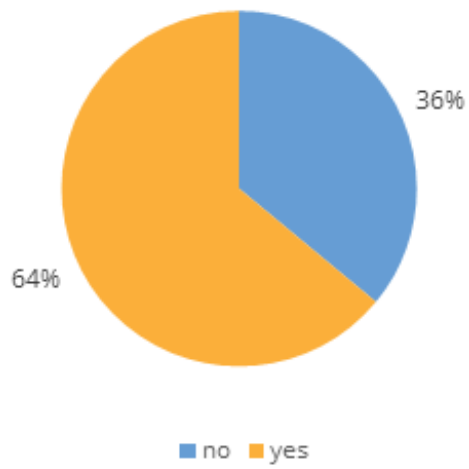


Have you recreated outdoors more or less than usual in the past year? **N = 2,065**



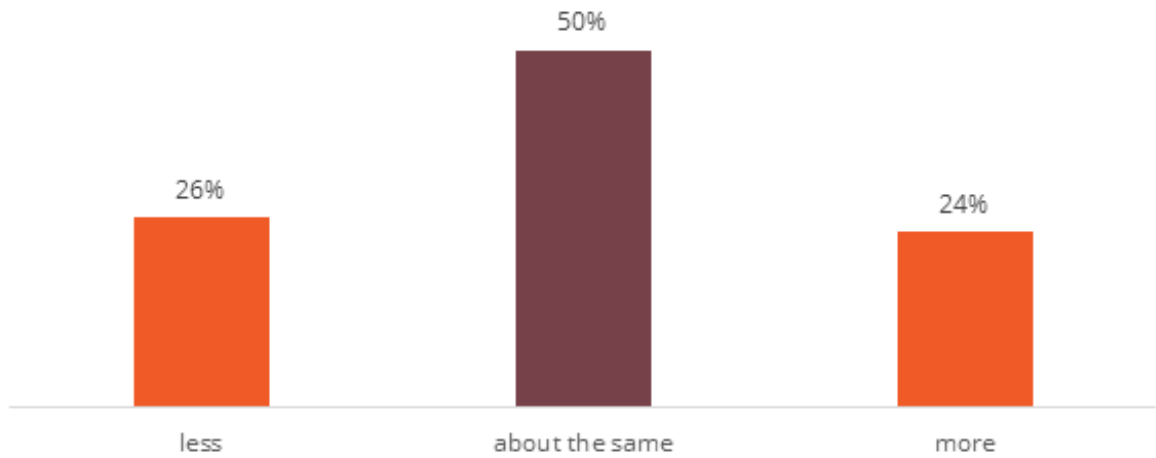
Has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted how you recreate outdoors in Florida?

N = 2,097



Do you feel like you have more or less opportunities to recreate outdoors since the beginning of the pandemic (in the past year)?

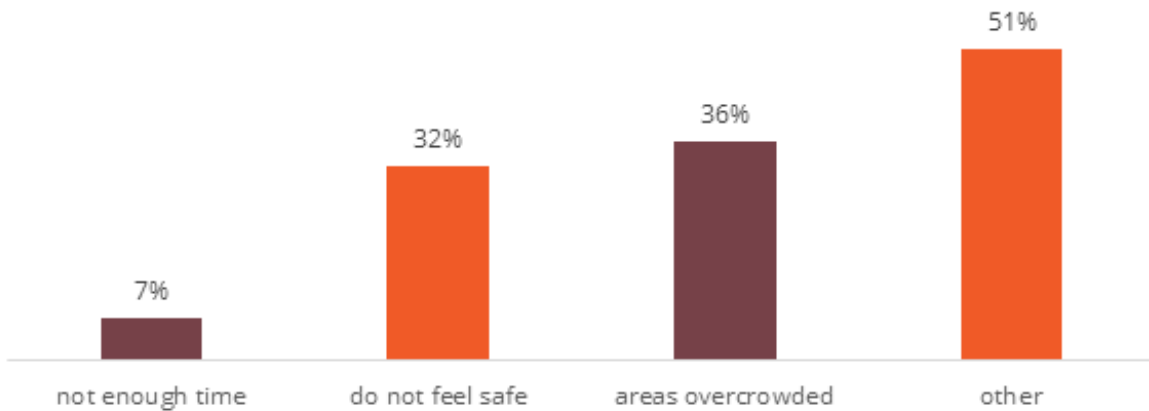
N = 2,096



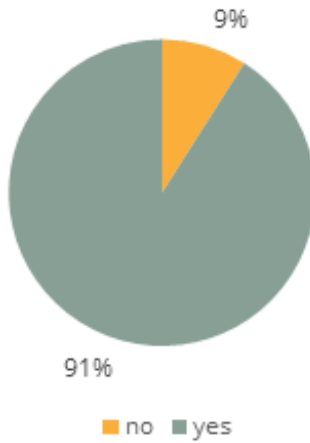
What do you feel has contributed to this?
(For those that responded "less" to the previous question)

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 544

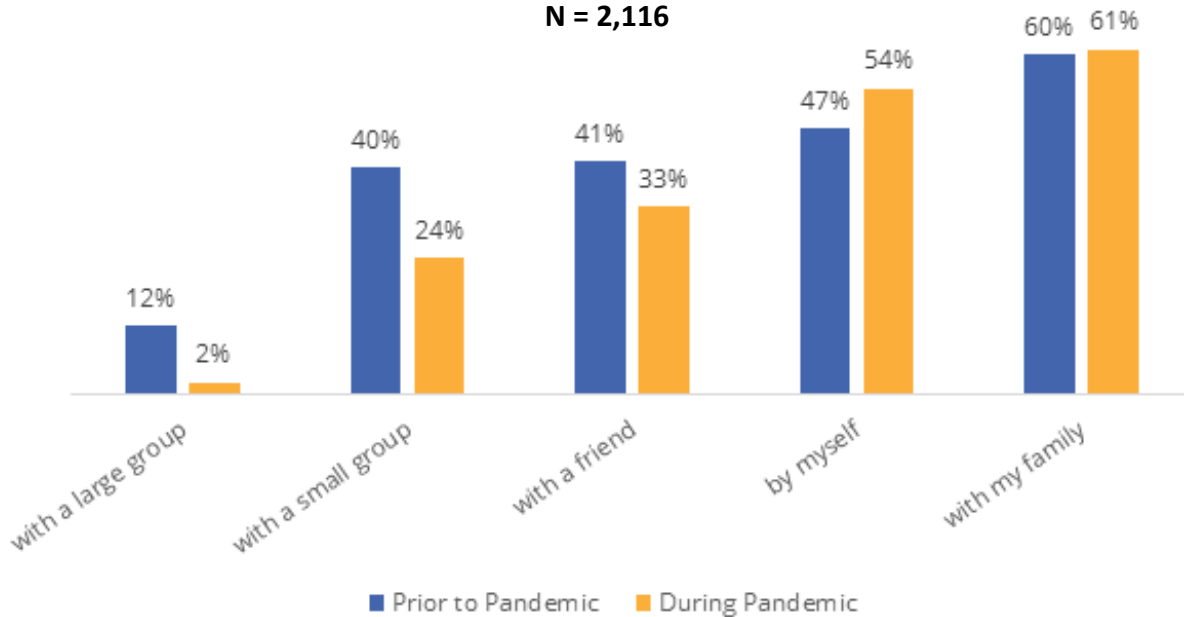


Do you typically bring a smart phone with you to
recreate outdoors? **N = 2,115**



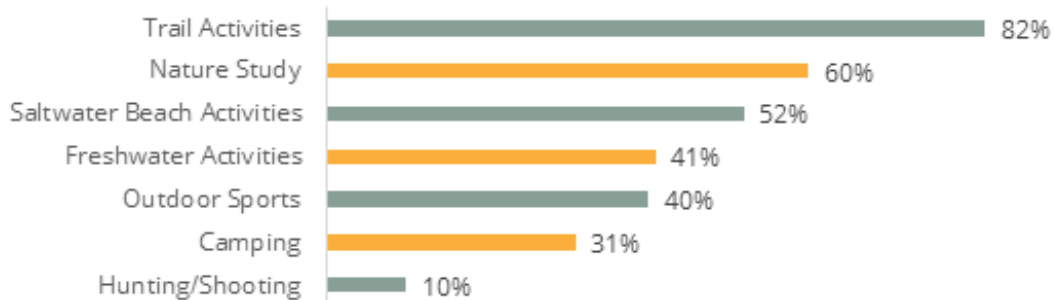
With whom do you typically recreate?
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 2,116



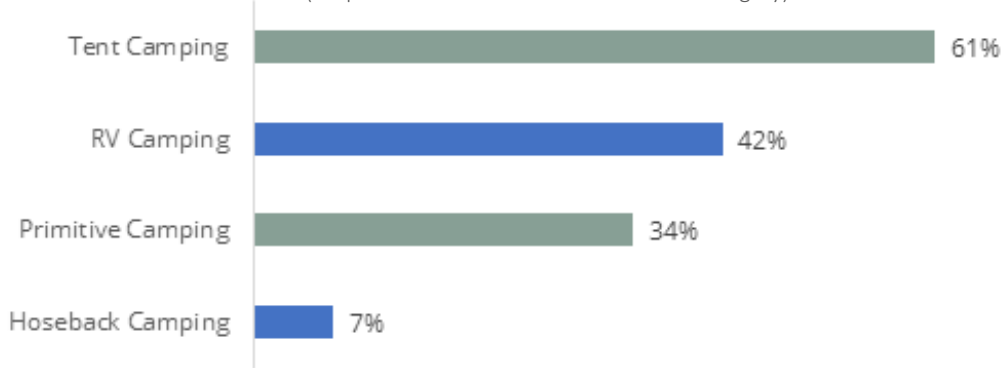
In the past year (since March 2020), what activities have you
participated in? **N = 2,134**

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



What type of camping did you participate in?

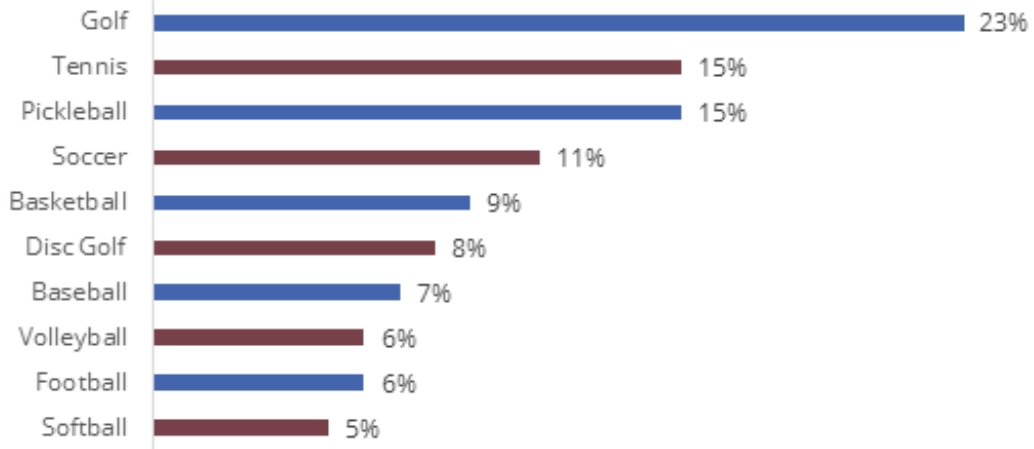
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 667**



(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

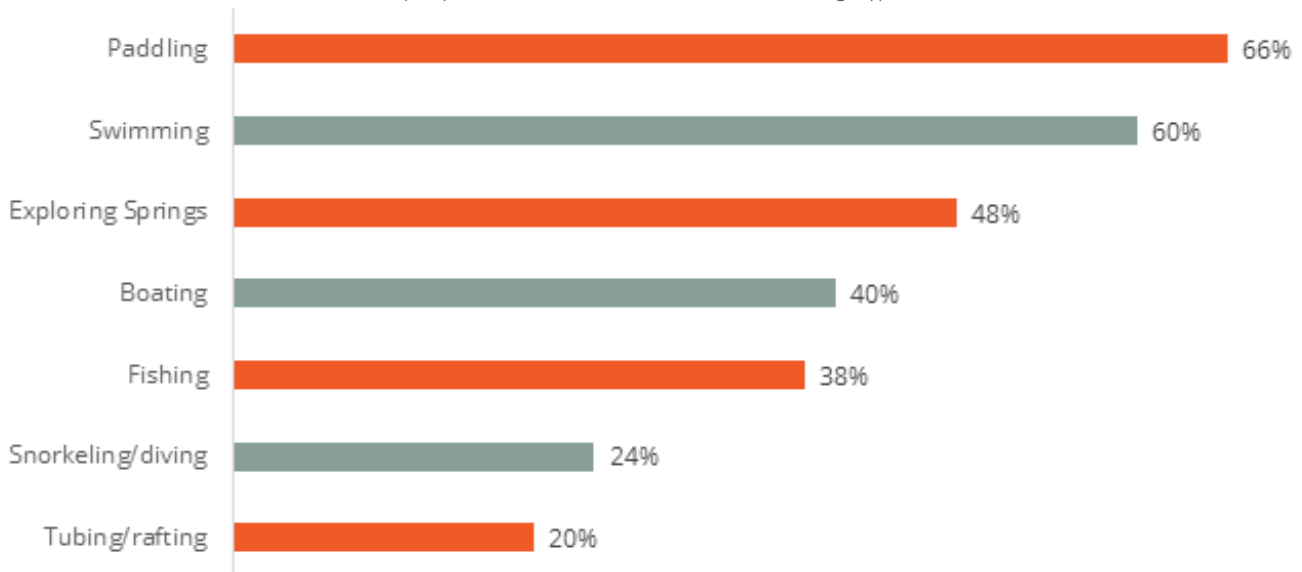
What type of outdoor sports did you participate in? **N = 809**

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



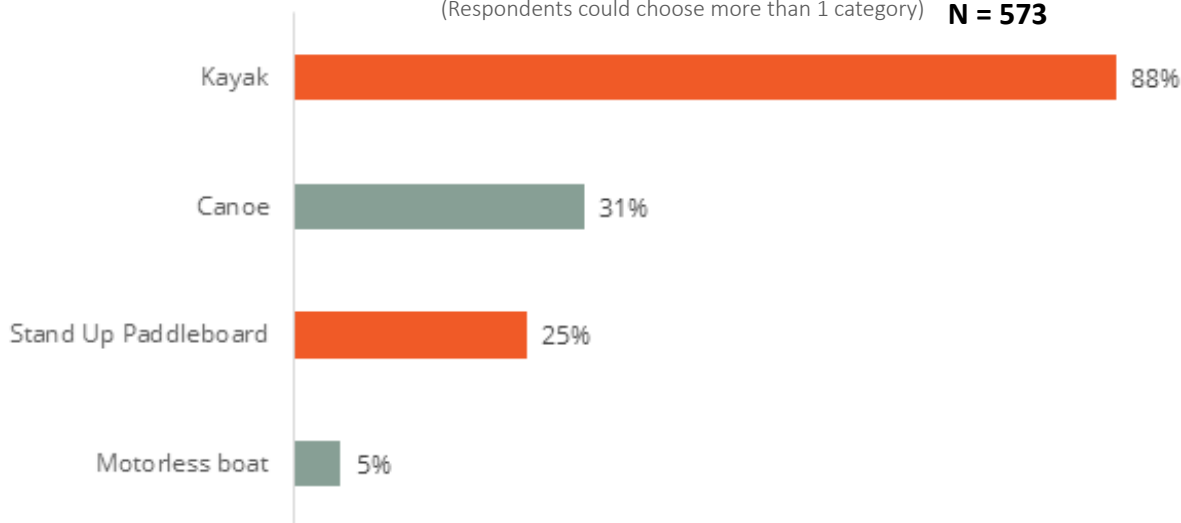
What type of freshwater activities did you participate in?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 865**



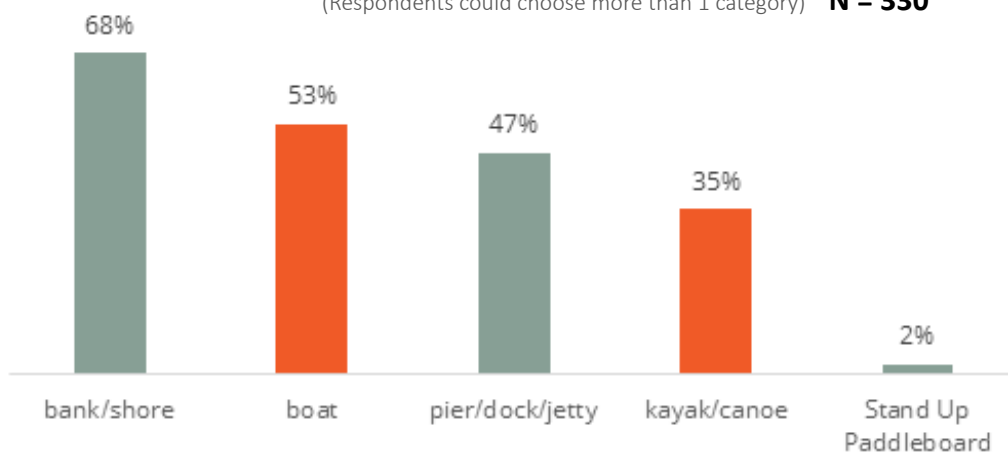
What type of freshwater paddling activity did you participate in?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 573**



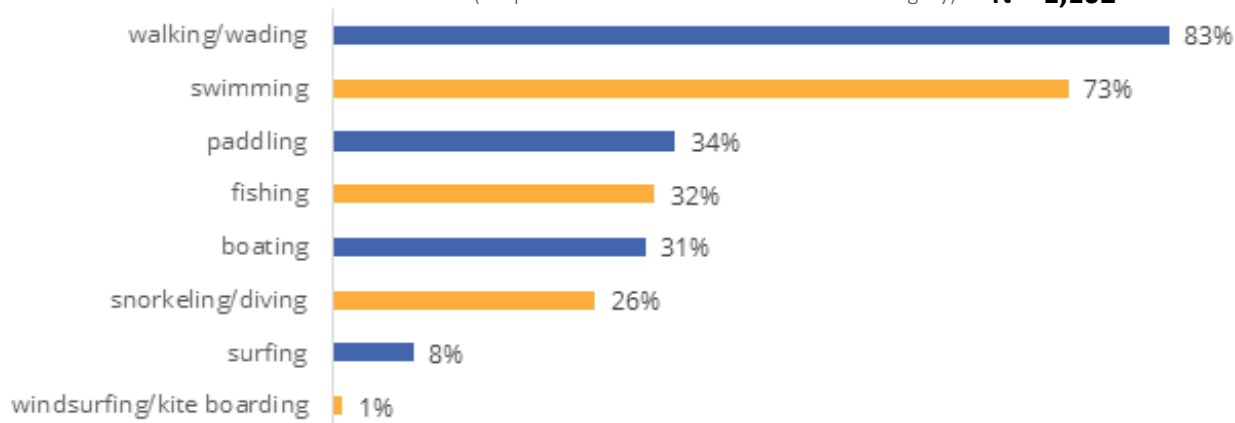
Where did you fish from in freshwater?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 330**



What type of saltwater beach activities did you participate in?

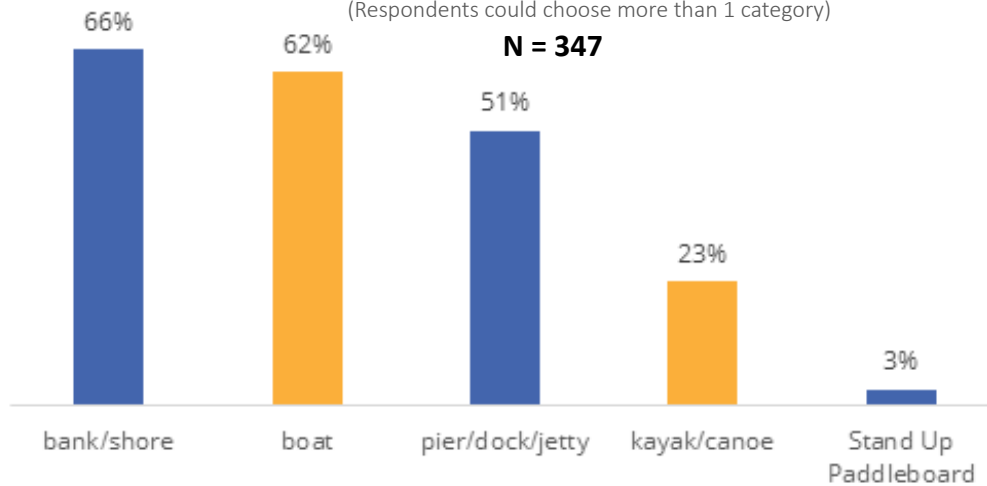
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) **N = 1,102**



Where did you fish from in saltwater?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

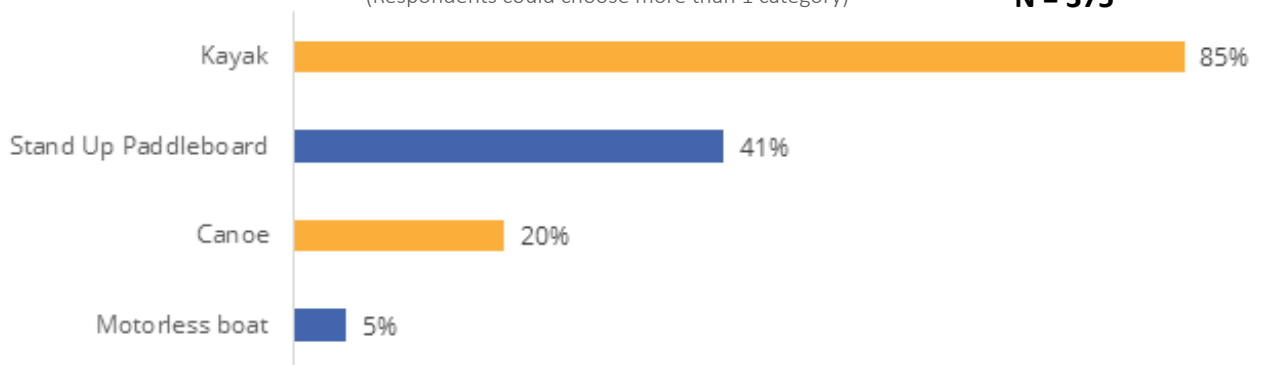
N = 347



What type of saltwater paddling activity did you participate in?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

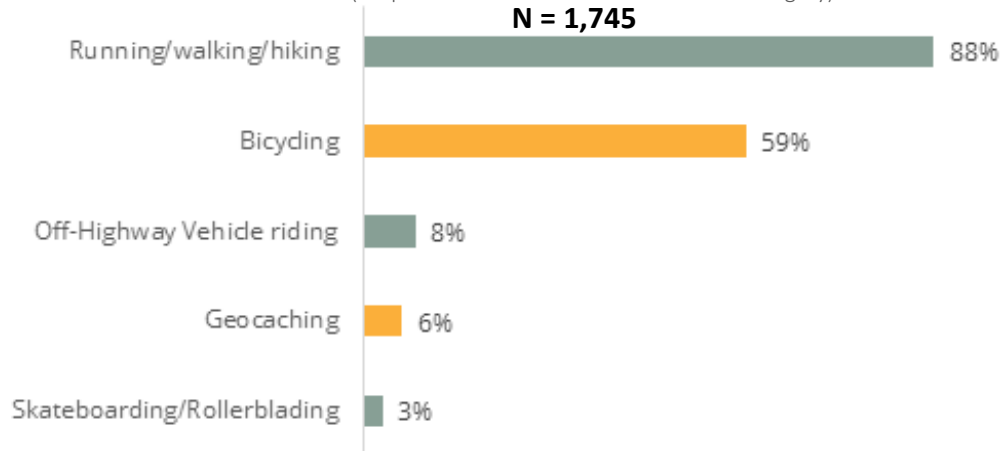
N = 375



What type of trail activities did you participate in?

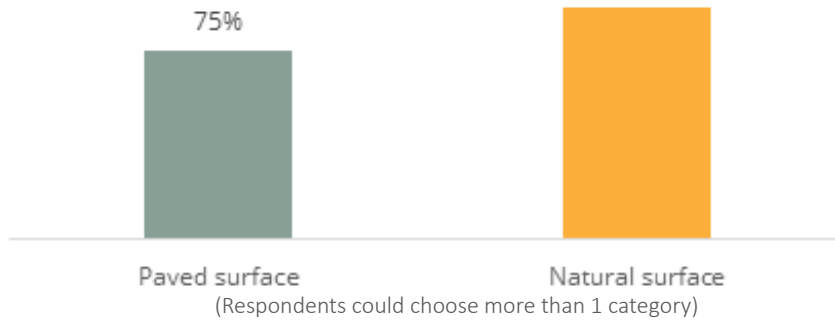
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 1,745

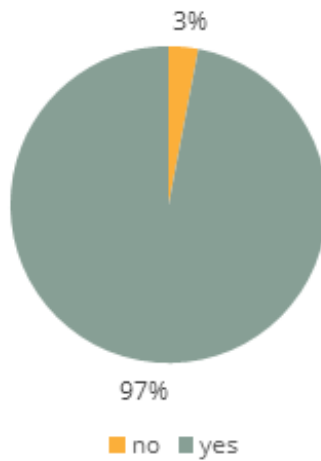


What type of running/walking did you participate in?

N = 1,527 92%



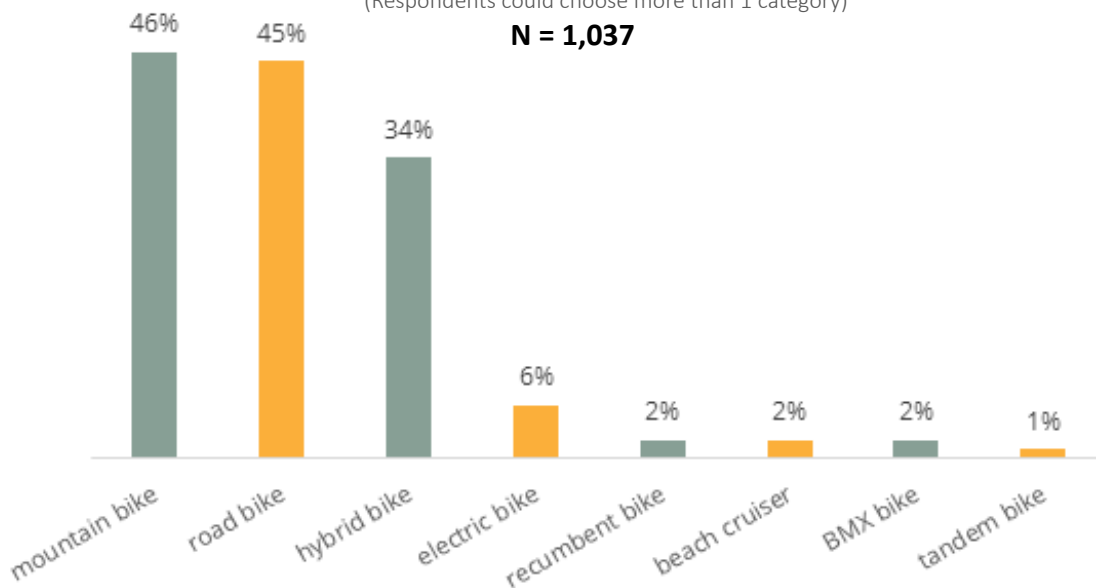
Is it important for you to be able to access recreation opportunities by greenways/trails? **N = 1,743**

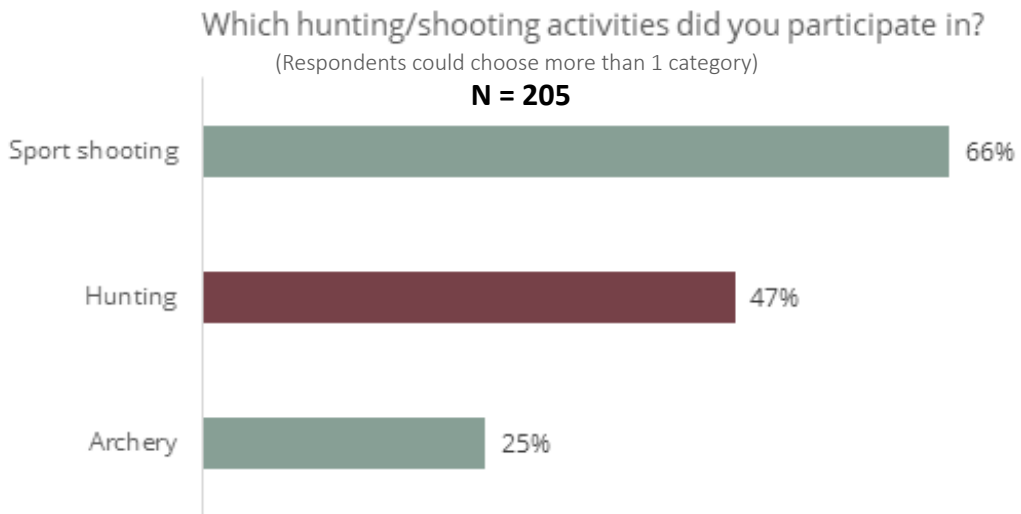
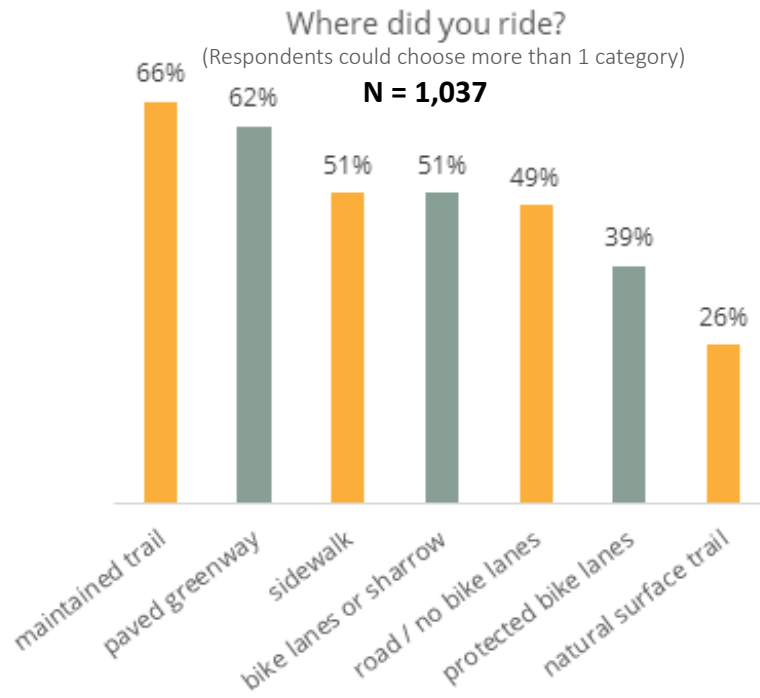


What type of bike did you ride?

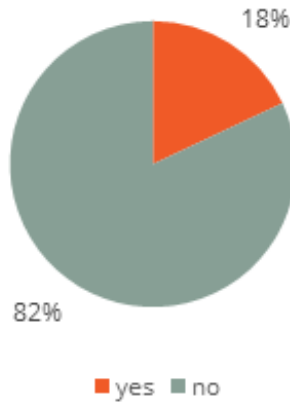
(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 1,037

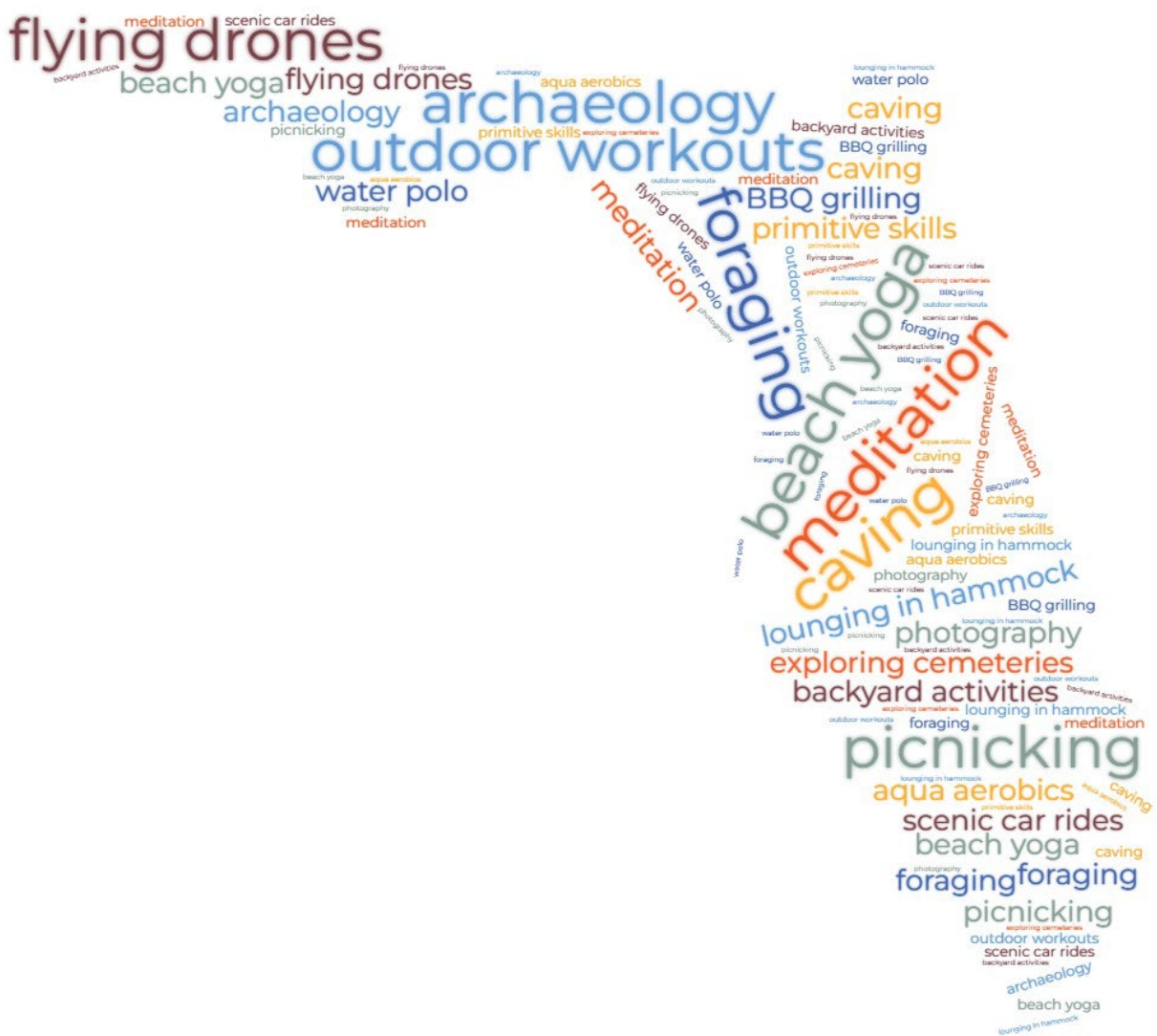




Is there any other form of outdoor recreation you participated in Florida in the past 12 months that was not given as an option? **N = 2,065**



Word cloud of all answers received:

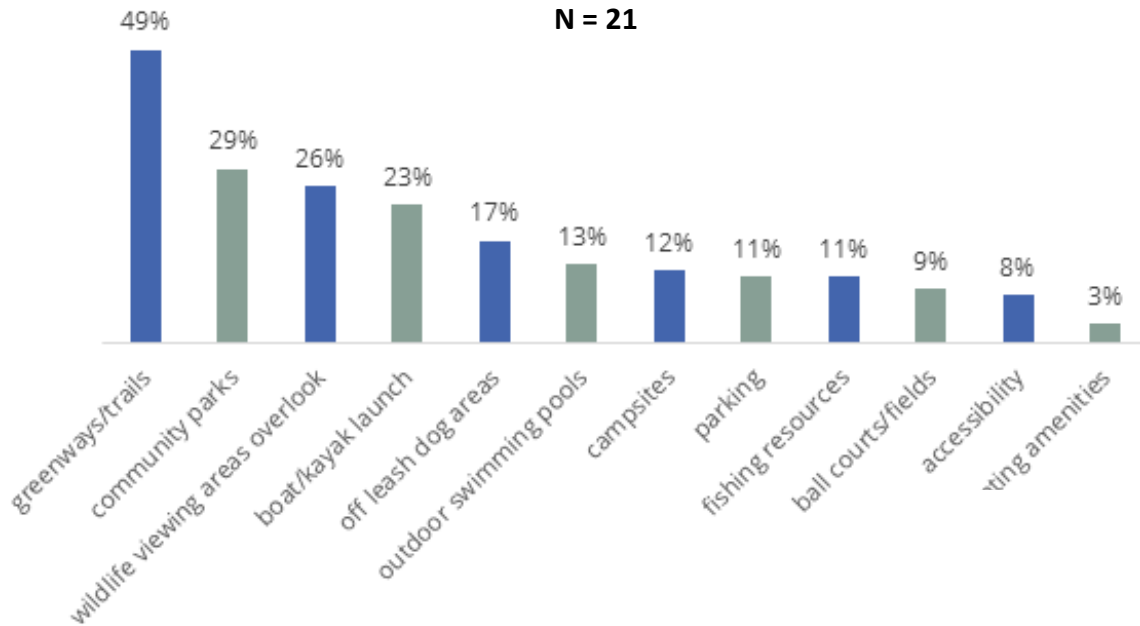


Size and frequency of words are randomized

What outdoor recreation facilities would you like to see built or provided in your community?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)

N = 21



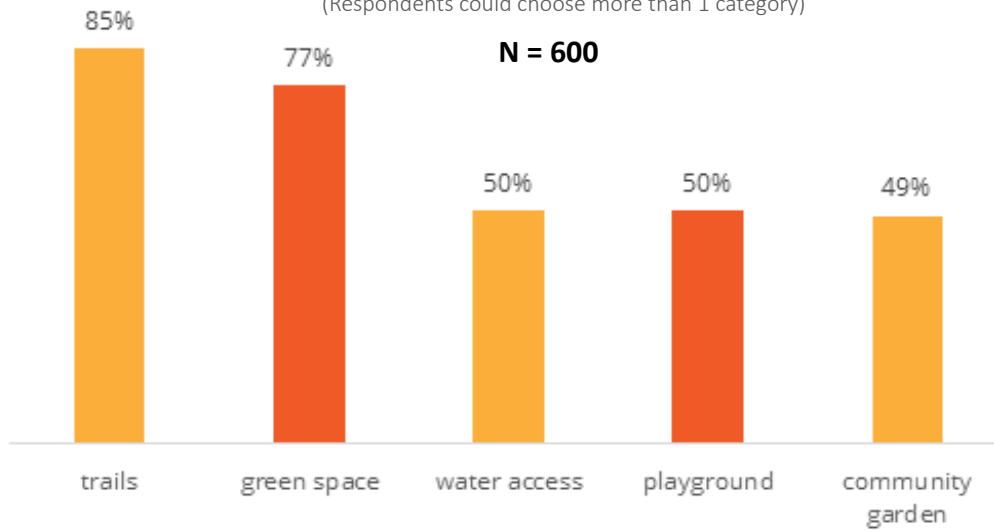
Word cloud of all answers received:



Size and frequency of words are randomized

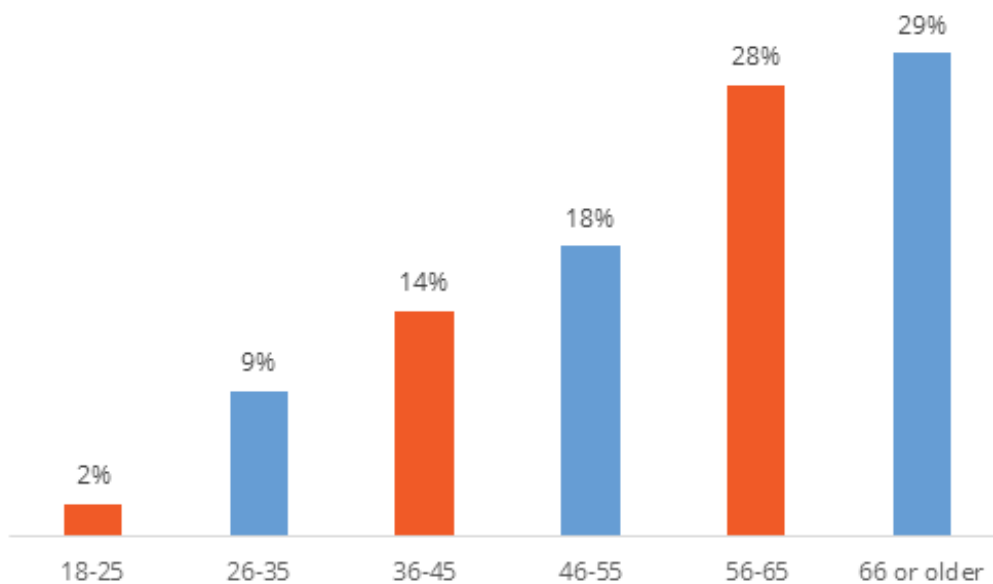
What would you like to see in a community park where you live?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category)



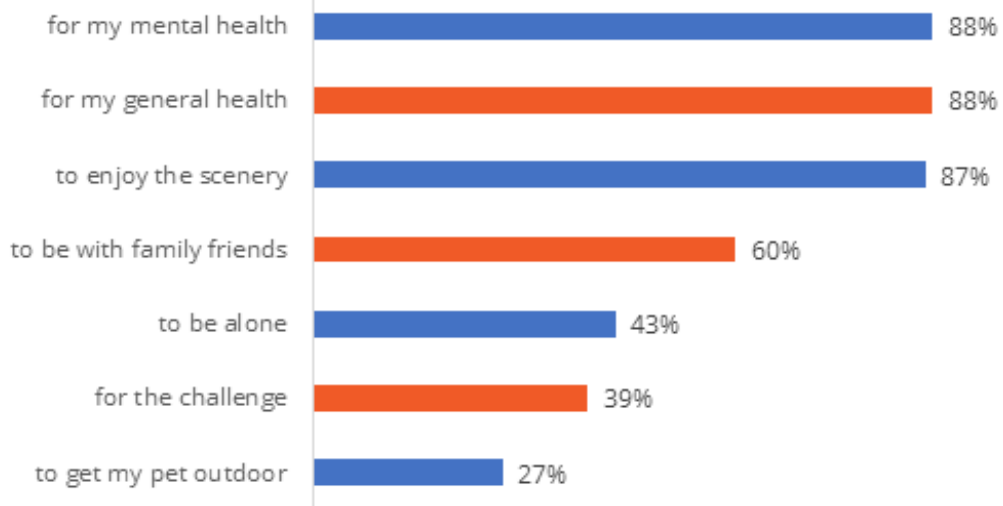
How old are you?

N = 2,083

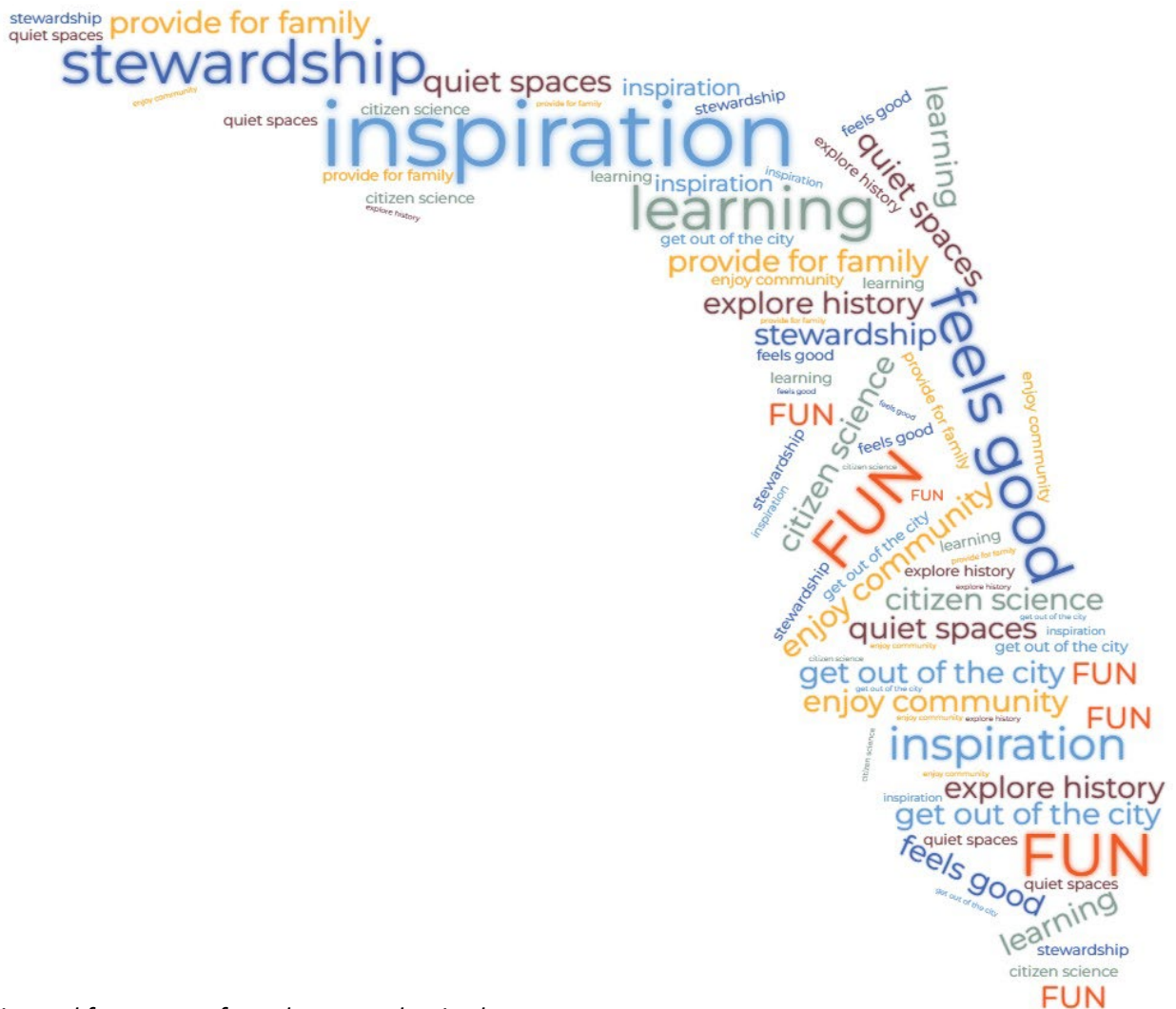


Why do you recreate outdoors in Florida?

(Respondents could choose more than 1 category) N = 2,134



Word cloud of all answers received:



Size and frequency of words are randomized

Florida Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan Pandemic Study –

Resident Questionnaire (2020)

Thank you for taking the time to answer a few questions about outdoor recreation opportunities in Florida. Your answers will help guide improvements to Florida's outdoor recreation amenities.

We are so glad you found our survey! Please take a few minutes to tell us about outdoor recreation opportunities in Florida.

First, a couple questions to be sure you qualify to take the survey...

1. Are you at least 18 years old? Yes No
2. Do you live in Florida...? Full-time Part-time I don't live in Florida

Recreation near your home

3. How would you describe the place where you live? *(Circle only ONE response per item)*
Large city/urban Suburban Small city/town
Rural (not a farm) Rural (farmland)
4. Have you recreated outdoors in Florida in the past 12 months? Yes No
5. Have you recreated outdoors more or less than usual in the past year?
More About the same Less
6. Has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted how you recreate outdoors in Florida? _____
7. Do you feel like you have more or less opportunities to recreate outdoors since the beginning of the pandemic (in the past year)?
8. More About the same Less
9. If fewer opportunities, what do you feel has contributed to this?
Areas overcrowded not enough time do not feel safe other
10. If other, please describe: _____

Now a few questions about who you like to recreate outdoors with:

11. Do you typically bring a smart phone with you to recreate outdoors? Yes No
12. Prior to the pandemic, with whom did you typically recreate outdoors in Florida?
By myself with my family with a friend with a small group
With a large group
13. During the pandemic, with whom do you typically recreate outdoors with in Florida?
By myself with my family with a friend with a small group
With a large group

In the past year (since March 2020), what activities have you participated in?

14. Please select all that apply (Trail activities include walking, running, bicycling and other non-motorized activities that take place outside of designated trails):
Nature Study Camping Outdoor Sports Freshwater Activities
Saltwater Beach Activities Trail Activities Hunting and Shooting Activities

What type of wildlife/nature study did you participate in?

15. Please select all that apply:
Birdwatching Nature photography Wildflower viewing/botanizing Gardening Other
16. If other, please describe: _____

What type of camping did you participate in?

17. Please select all that apply:
Horseback camping RV camping Primitive camping Tent camping Other
18. If other, please describe: _____

What type of outdoor sports did you participate in?

- 19. Please select all that apply:
 Golf Tennis Baseball Softball Basketball Football
 Soccer Pickleball Volleyball Disc Golf Other
- 20. If other, please describe: _____

What type of freshwater activities did you participate in?

- 21. Please select all that apply:
 Swimming Tubing/rafting Snorkeling/diving Paddling
 Exploring Springs Fishing Boating Other
- 22. If other, please describe: _____

What type of freshwater paddling activity did you participate in?

- 23. Please select all that apply:
 Kayak Canoe Stand Up Paddleboard Motorless_boat Other
- 24. If other, please describe: _____

Where did you fish from in freshwater?

- 25. Please select all that apply:
 Bank/shore pier, dock or jetty boat kayak/canoe Stand Up Paddleboard Other
- 26. If other, please describe: _____

What type of saltwater beach activities did you participate in?

- 27. Please select all that apply:
 Swimming walking/wading snorkeling/diving surfing
 Windsurfing/kite boarding fishing boating paddling

What type of saltwater paddling activity did you participate in?

- 28. Please select all that apply:
 Kayak Canoe Stand Up Paddleboard Motorless_boat Other
- 29. If other, please describe: _____

Where did you fish from in saltwater?

- 30. Please select all that apply:
 Bank/shore pier, dock or jetty boat kayak/canoe Stand Up Paddleboard Other
- 31. If other, please describe: _____

What type of trail activities did you participate in?

- 32. Please select all that apply:
 Bicycling Running/walking/hiking Skateboarding/Rollerblading Geocaching
 Off-Highway Vehicle riding Other
- 33. If other, please describe: _____

What type of running/walking did you participate in?

- 34. Please select all that apply:
 Paved surface Natural surface (hiking, trail running) Other
- 35. If other, please describe: _____

What type of bike did you ride?

- 36. Please select all that apply:
 Road Bike Mountain Bike Hybrid Bike Electric Bike Recumbent Bike Beach Cruiser (3 wheeled)
 BMX Bike Tandem Bike Unicycle Other
- 37. If other, please describe: _____
- 38. Where did you ride? Note: sharrow refers to a roadway shared by bicycles and automobiles. Please describe:
 Road (no bike lanes) Bike lanes or sharrow Protected bike lanes Paved greenway
 Sidewalk Natural surface (maintained trail) Natural surface (not maintained)

Other

39. If other, please describe: _____

Which hunting/shooting activities did you participate in?

40. Please describe:

Hunting Sport_shooting Archery Other

41. If other, please describe: _____

Thanks for letting us know about your outdoor activities!

42. Is there any other form of outdoor recreation you participated in Florida in the past 12 months that was not given as an option? Yes no

43. Please describe this activity: _____

Next, we would like to ask you about how you recreate outside of your community.

44. In the past 12 months, have you traveled over 100 miles from your home to recreate outdoors in Florida? yes no

45. Did you stay overnight on any of these trips? Yes no

46. What type of lodging did you prefer while traveling the past 12 months? Please describe:

Primitive Campsite Tent Campsite RV Campsite Hotel/motel
Bed and Breakfast Cabin A friend/family member's house Other

47. If other, please describe: _____

48. Do you like to visit historical and/or cultural sites on these trips? Yes no

49. While on these trips, how much in USD (\$) do you typically spend on travel:
\$0 \$1 - \$100 \$101-\$250 \$251-\$500 \$501-\$750 \$751-\$1000
\$1001-\$2500 \$2501-\$5000 \$5001-\$10,000 More than \$10,000

50. Gear?
\$0 \$1 - \$100 \$101-\$250 \$251-\$500 \$501-\$750 \$751-\$1000
\$1001-\$2500 \$2501-\$5000 \$5001-\$10,000 More than \$10,000

51. Lodging?
\$0 \$1 - \$100 \$101-\$250 \$251-\$500 \$501-\$750 \$751-\$1000
\$1001-\$2500 \$2501-\$5000 \$5001-\$10,000 More than \$10,000

52. Fees?
\$0 \$1 - \$100 \$101-\$250 \$251-\$500 \$501-\$750 \$751-\$1000
\$1001-\$2500 \$2501-\$5000 \$5001-\$10,000 More than \$10,000

53. Food?
\$0 \$1 - \$100 \$101-\$250 \$251-\$500 \$501-\$750 \$751-\$1000
\$1001-\$2500 \$2501-\$5000 \$5001-\$10,000 More than \$10,000

Children and pets also love to get outside and play!

54. How many children do you have?
0 1 2 3 4 more than 4

54. What are your kid's favorite outdoor recreation activities? _____

55. Does your community offer outdoor recreation programs for children? Yes no

56. Please tell us about these programs if you would like: _____

57. Do you have any pets? Yes no

58. What are your pet's favorite outdoor recreation activities? _____

59. Does your community offer a safe place to get your pet outdoors? Yes no

60. Please tell us about this place if you would like: _____

We are getting close to the end of the survey. Just a few questions about outdoor recreation near your home.

61. Are you able to safely recreate outdoors within your neighborhood? Yes no

62. What prevents you from recreating outdoors in your neighborhood? Please describe:

I feel unsafe Lack of access No amenities provided Other

63. If other, please describe: _____

64. Would you like to see any outdoor recreation facilities built in your community? Yes no

65. What outdoor recreation facilities would you like to see built or provided in your community? Please describe:

Community parks / Playgrounds Fishing Amenities Campsites
Boat/kayak launch sites Greenways/trails/paths Beach access/parking
Hunting Amenities Wildlife viewing areas/overlooks Off-leash dog areas
Ball courts/fields More accessibility resources/facilities Outdoor Swimming Pool
Other

66. If other, please describe: _____

What would you like to see in a community park where you live?

67. Please describe:

Playground trails community garden green space water access
Other

68. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of greenways or trails are needed in your community?

69. Please describe:

Biking paths/trails Paved Walkways Hiking/Walking Trails
Horseback riding trails Nature/Interpretive trails Off-road Vehicle Area trails
Other

70. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of camping facilities are needed?

71. Please describe:

Tent sites RV sites Primitive sites Cabins Equestrian sites
Other

72. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of boat/kayak launch facilities are needed?

73. Please describe:

Saltwater boat ramps Freshwater boat ramps Canoe/kayak launch sites
Other

74. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of fishing facilities are needed?

75. Please describe:

Fishing piers Bank fishing areas other

76. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of hunting facilities are needed?

77. Please describe:

Hunting lands Shooting ranges Other

78. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of parking is needed?

79. Please describe:

Bike Parking Beach Parking Other

80. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of accessibility facilities are needed?

81. Please describe:

Wheelchair beach access Kayak launch assistance Other

82. If other, please describe: _____

What sort of ball court/field facilities are needed?

83. Please describe:

Outdoor basketball courts Soccer fields Baseball/softball fields
Public tennis courts Disc golf course Pickleball courts
Football fields Public golf courses Other

84. If other, please describe: _____

85. How old are you?

Under 18 18-25 26-35 36-45 46-55 56-65 66 or older

86. Why do you recreate outdoors in Florida?

to get my pet outdoors to be with family/friends to be alone
to enjoy the scenery/be close to nature for my general health/physical fitness
for my mental health/relaxation for the challenge Other

87. If other, please describe: _____

88. Which county do you live in? _____

89. Lastly, in 1-3 words, how does outdoor recreation in Florida make you feel? _____

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

SCORP Workgroup and Contributors

Daniel Alsentzer – DEP, Division of Recreation and Parks

Don Arellano – Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Robin Birdsong – Florida Department of Transportation, SUN Trail Program

Vincent “Chip” Birdsong – Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources

Sean Bricker – Florida State University Campus Recreation

Deborah Burr – DEP, Division of State Lands

Jennifer Butler – DEP, Division of Water Resource Management

Mellisa Corbett – Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Rick Durbrow – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Chris Fowler – Florida Department of State, Division of Historical Resources

James Gaddis – DEP, Division of Recreation and Parks

Mitchell Greenberg – Southern Off-Road Bicycling Association

Martha Guyas – American Sportfishing Association

Allison Jones – DEP, Division of Recreation and Parks

Anna Jane Jones – The Nature Conservancy

David Jones – Sportsability Alliance

Jerrie Lindsey – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Public Access Services Office

Philip Marley – U.S. Forest Service, Florida National Scenic Trail

Tara McCue – East Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Lizzie Milkas – Florida State University

Marti Miller – Florida Forest Service

Sue Noyes – Southern Trailriders Association

Felicia Nudo – Southwest Florida Water Management District

Joyce Papp – Southern Trailriders Association

Earl Pearson – DEP, Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection

Rachel Penrod – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Public Access Services Office

Timothy Rach – DEP, Division of Water Resource Management

Lorna Radcliff – Florida Forest Service

Linda Reeves – DEP, Division of State Lands

Keith Singleton – DEP, Division of State Lands

Nancy Stephens – North Florida Back Country Horsemen

Shawn Thomas – U.S. Forest Service, Florida National Scenic Trail

Gabrielle Trace – FDEP, Division of Recreation and Parks

Bin Wan – Florida Forest Service

Eleanor Warmack – Florida Recreation and Parks Association

Kaylene Wheeler – Dewberry

Katie White - DEP, Division of Recreation and Parks

Sean Wilkinson – Florida State University Campus Recreation

Research Design and Data Coordination Center provided contractual services – University Of Florida

Shawn Hamilton, Secretary, DEP
Mara Gambineri, Deputy Secretary, Land and Recreation, DEP

Chuck Hatcher, Director, Division of Recreation and Parks, DEP

Parks Small, Assistant Director, Division of Recreation and Parks, DEP

Doug Alderson – Editor, DEP

Justin Baldwin – Project Manager, DEP

Samantha Browne and Britney Moore – Project Supervisors, DEP

Kari Baasch – Graphic Design and Layout, DEP

