

# Chapter 5:

## OUTDOOR RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### 5.1 Introduction

Outdoor recreational needs within Wood County were analyzed in several ways. Public input was gathered through a survey and daily staff interactions to determine how well their outdoor recreational needs are being met. A park standards analysis identifies how each standard was applied to County facilities. A summary exists of the outdoor recreational needs in Wisconsin's Central Sands region and an overview shows how Wood County accommodates some of the most popular outdoor activities. These assessments provide valuable insights into current recreational offerings and helps identify opportunities for future improvements in Wood County.

### 5.2 Public Participation

#### Informal Public Input

In the regular course of business, Wood County Parks and Forestry Department staff have received public input about its parks, campgrounds, trails, and forest. That input and staff's professional experience will also shape what recommendations are made.

#### Summary of Survey Responses

In late winter 2024-2025, this survey was sent out for customer feedback. Wood County Parks and Forestry advertised the survey on Facebook, sent a press release to CVB's, chambers, news outlets – print, radio, TV; schools; volunteer clubs; and adjoining county park and recreation departments. An email was also sent to all Wood County staff and Board members. NCWRPC mailed or emailed survey notices to every local government in Wood County.

All local governments in Wood County were mailed or emailed survey notices by NCWRPC. Marshfield added the survey link to their homepage, Facebook, and in the weekly City newsletter. Wisconsin Rapids also added the survey link to their Facebook page.

The survey was open initially for 3 weeks to get the public's sentiment on what CERA Park should be called. The survey remained open for another week and an additional 13 responses came in that final week.

We received **584 responses** to the survey. Although not statistically significant of the whole population, this survey does provide a much deeper understanding of the wants and needs for outdoor recreation than a public hearing, so the results are very valuable. Respondents were allowed to skip questions, so several questions had smaller amounts of responses. 75% of respondents who began the survey also finished the survey. This is a good completion rate.

Answered: 438 Skipped: 146

About 75% of respondents live in Wood County, and 25% do not or did not answer. Most municipalities (31 of 34) were represented with about 26% coming from Wisconsin Rapids, about 14% from Town of Grand Rapids, 10% from Marshfield, and 8% not living in Wood County.

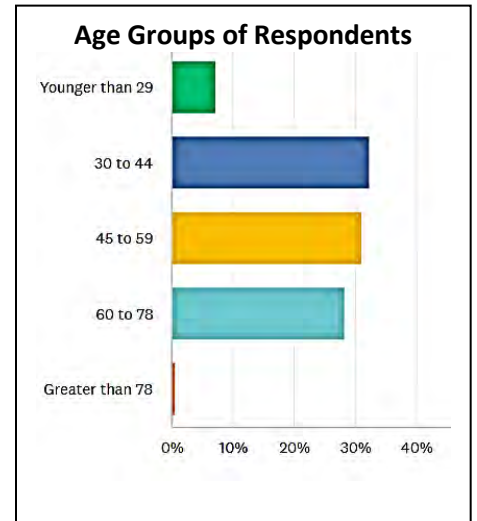
Answered: 437 Skipped: 147

About 37% of respondents were male, and about 60% were female, with 3% preferring not to answer.

Answered: 437 Skipped: 147

Respondents came from all age groups, with a strong showing of at least 25% in the 30 to 44 (Millennials), 45 to 59 (Gen X), and 60 to 78 (Baby Boomers) groups.

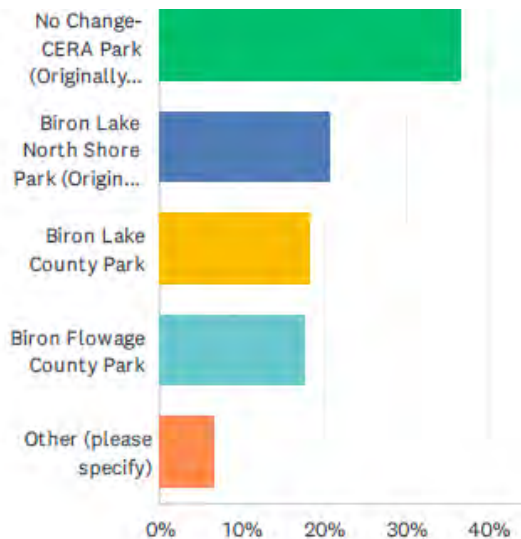
Through an IP address analysis of those who took the survey it appears that 36 IP addresses are duplicated, which could mean that a husband and wife both took the survey. 3 IP addresses had 3 responses, 1 IP had 4 responses, 1 IP had 5 responses, and 1 IP had 6 responses. 1 IP address had 103 responses, which may be people possibly taking the survey from their Wood County computer after they got an email. All of those duplicate IP addresses did not have the same answers, so it appears that nobody “stuffed the ballot box.”



### **Key Findings of the Parks & Trails Survey**

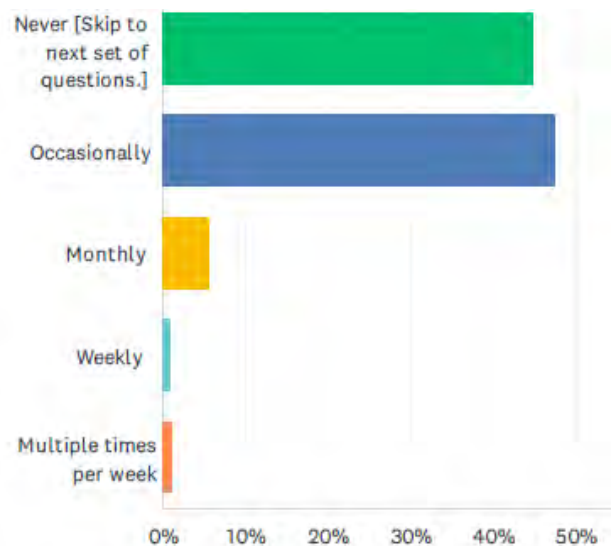
**Q1. Wood County is considering renaming CERA Park. Please select one of the following options:**

Answered: 550 Skipped: 34



**Q2. How often do you use CERA Park or Campground?**

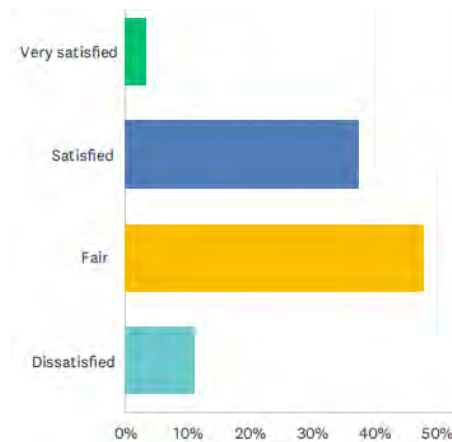
Answered: 584 Skipped: 0



***Campground questions follow these general questions...***

**Q3. Rate your overall satisfaction with CERA Park:**

Answered: 296 Skipped: 288



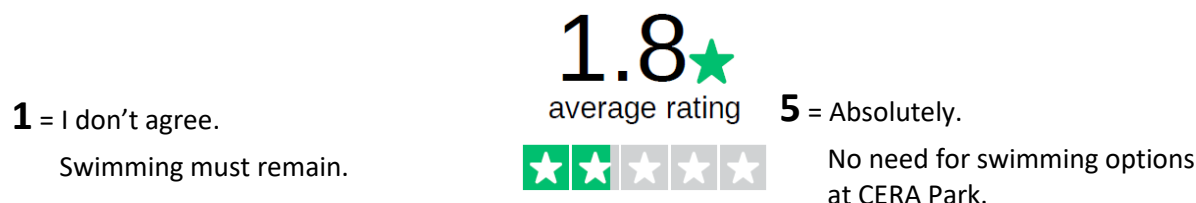
**Q4. Rate how strongly you would like to keep or improve the following amenities at CERA Park: (Not the campground area.):**

Answered: 294 Skipped: 290

	1 (LOW PRIORITY)	2	3	4	5 (HIGH PRIORITY)	TOTAL
Boat docks (Boat launch will remain.)	9.22% 27	10.24% 30	19.45% 57	22.53% 66	38.57% 113	293
Shelterhouses (small & large)	3.08% 9	6.16% 18	26.37% 77	24.66% 72	39.73% 116	292
Mini Golf course	10.62% 31	7.19% 21	23.97% 70	26.71% 78	31.51% 92	292
Volleyball courts	18.56% 54	18.90% 55	30.24% 88	21.99% 64	10.31% 30	291
Basketball courts	18.97% 55	16.90% 49	33.45% 97	18.97% 55	11.72% 34	290
Ball Diamond	19.31% 56	17.59% 51	33.10% 96	17.93% 52	12.07% 35	290

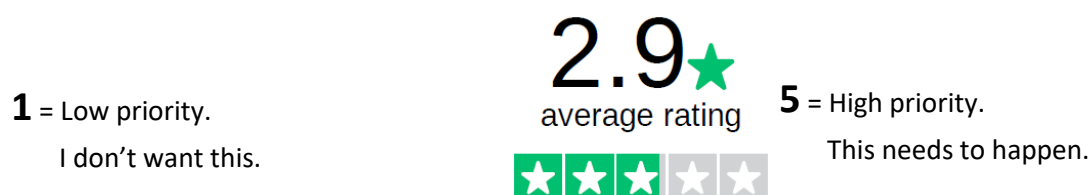
**Q5. No need for swimming option at CERA Park.**

Answered: 290 Skipped: 294



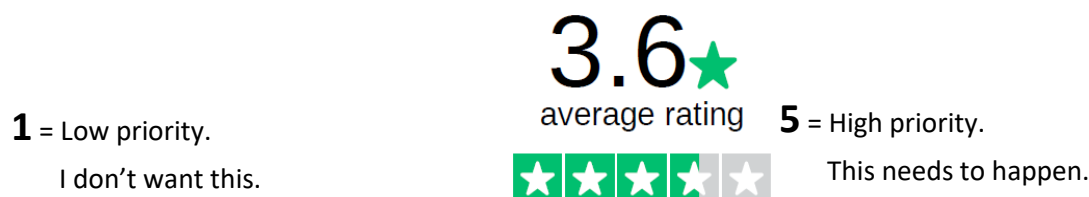
**Q6. Develop a Splash Pad at CERA Park**

Answered: 283 Skipped: 301



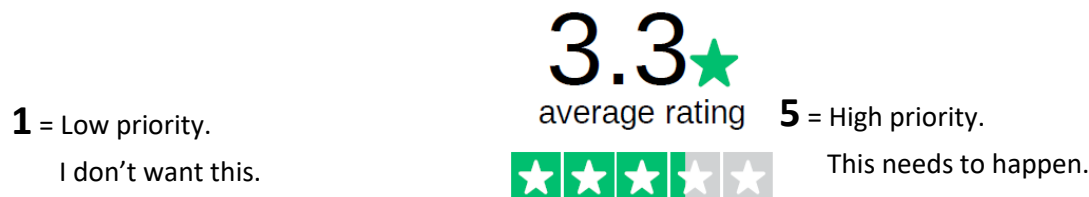
**Q7. Create a beach on Wisconsin River at CERA Park. (Area is not in main river channel.)**

Answered: 290 Skipped: 294



**Q8. Build a swimming pond (not concrete) at CERA Park that looks more natural with a sand beach. (NOT on the Wisconsin River.)**

Answered: 293 Skipped: 291

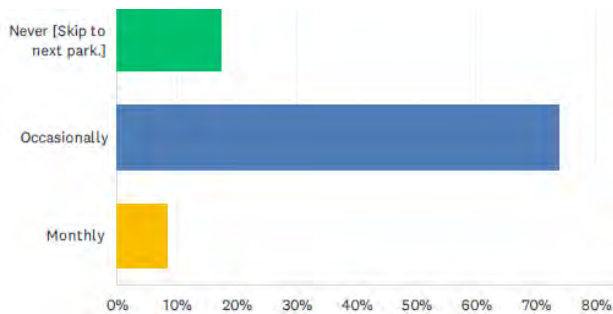


**Q9 (Optional) Any other comments about CERA Park?**

**Note: 66 respondents made comments.**

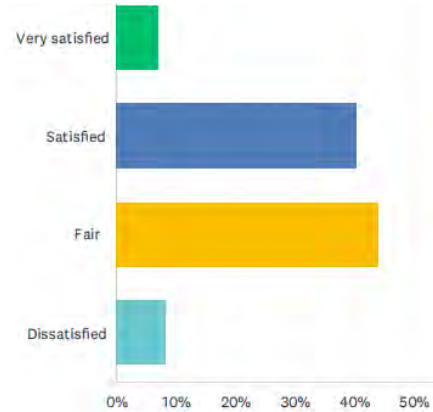
**Q10. How often do you use CERA Park Campground?**

Answered: 296 Skipped: 288



**Q11. Rate your overall satisfaction with CERA Park Campground:**

Answered: 229 Skipped: 355



**Q12. For your most recent visit to CERA Park Campground, how many nights did you camp?**

Answered: 213 Skipped: 371

- 1 night 12 responses
- 2 nights 97 responses
- 3 nights 57 responses
- 4 nights 13 responses
- 5-6 nights 10 responses
- 7 or more nights 14 responses

**Q13. How many times a year do you camp at CERA Park Campground?**

Answered: 200 Skipped: 371

- Once (81 responses)
- Twice (49 responses)
- 3 times (40 responses)
- 4 times (11 responses)
- 5 times (8 responses)
- More than 5 times (6 response)

**Q14. Rate your satisfaction with the following amenities at CERA Park Campground:***Answered: 218 Skipped: 366*

	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE.	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Picnic Tables & Fire Rings at campsites	2.30% 5	7.83% 17	40.09% 87	42.40% 92	7.37% 16	217
Wilderness Camping Area	40.28% 87	7.41% 16	25.93% 56	23.61% 51	2.78% 6	216
Restrooms & Showers	5.56% 12	40.74% 88	38.89% 84	14.35% 31	0.46% 1	216
Dump Station	20.19% 43	6.57% 14	43.66% 93	27.70% 59	1.88% 4	213
Playground	8.80% 19	16.67% 36	41.67% 90	28.70% 62	4.17% 9	216
Firewood availability	21.86% 47	13.02% 28	39.53% 85	21.40% 46	4.19% 9	215
Reservation Process	9.86% 21	14.08% 30	36.62% 78	34.27% 73	5.16% 11	213
Campsite fees	6.51% 14	18.14% 39	48.37% 104	22.79% 49	4.19% 9	215
Customer Service	14.69% 31	22.75% 48	39.81% 84	18.96% 40	3.79% 8	211

**Q15. (Optional) Any other comments about CERA Park Campground?****Note: 52 respondents made comments.****Q16. Which recreational activities did you participate in during 2024?***Answered: 492 Skipped: 92*

1. Walking / Hiking 80% of responses
2. Swimming 54% of responses
3. Events / Festivals / Fairs 54% of responses
4. Fishing 53% of responses
5. Camping (RV) 46% of responses
6. Boating 45% of responses

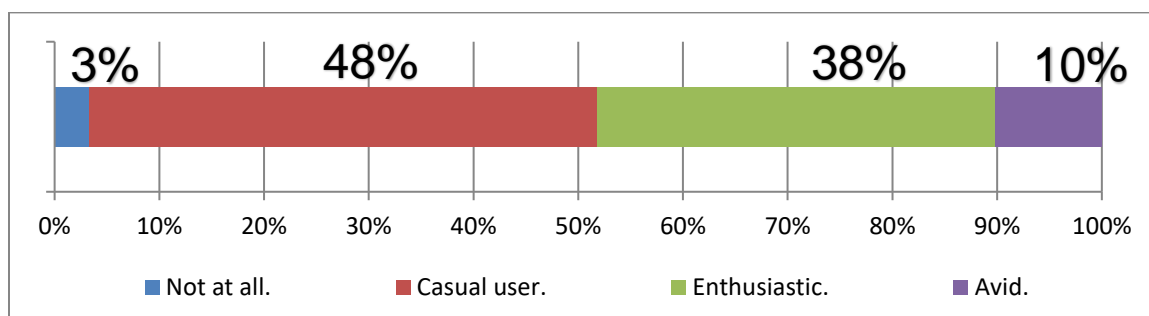
**Q17. What potential outdoor recreational opportunities should be developed in Wood County?**

Answered: 152 Skipped: 432

- |                                   |                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>1. Walking / Hiking trails</b> | <b>42 responses</b>       |
| <b>2. Bicycling trails</b>        | <b>26 total responses</b> |
| <b>3. Pickleball</b>              | <b>16 responses</b>       |
| <b>4. ATV/UTV routes/trails</b>   | <b>16 responses</b>       |
| <b>5. Swimming / beach access</b> | <b>16 responses</b>       |

**Q18. What type of water enthusiast are you?**

Answered: 481 Skipped: 103



**Not at all.** (I'm not interested in water recreation at all, not even with friends.)

**Casual user.** (I like to use the water, but only do so occasionally.)

**Enthusiastic.** (I access or go on the water regularly in summer, and I might occasionally access the ice in winter.)

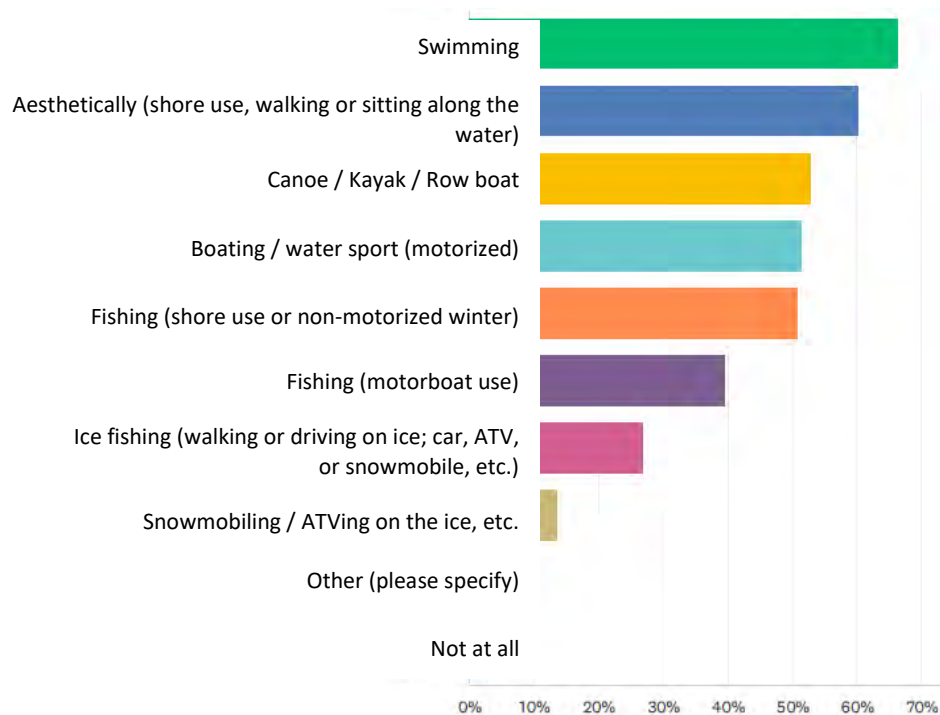
**Avid.** (I am always on the water or ice every chance I get.)

### Q19. How do you use the water?

(Choose all that apply.)

Answered: 479

Skipped: 105



### Q20. What improvements may be needed to public boat landings or water access points in Wood County?

Answered: 80

Skipped: 504

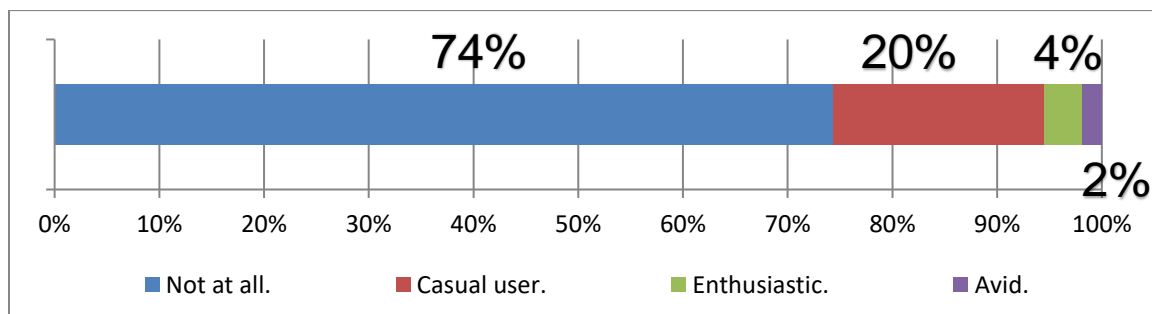
**Note: 80 respondents made comments.**



(Word Cloud – The larger the word the more mentions)



**Q21. What type of snowmobile enthusiast are you?** Answered: 475 Skipped: 109



**Not at all.** (I'm not interested in snowmobiling at all, not even with friends.)

**Casual user.** (I like snowmobiling for fun, but **only** do so occasionally, **OR only** on my own land.)

**Enthusiastic.** (I access or go on snowmobile routes and trails regularly.)

**Avid.** (I am always on a snowmobile every chance I get – all season long.)

**Q22. How often do you use snowmobile trails in Wood County?**

Answered: 451 Skipped: 133

	NEVER	OCCASIONALLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY	MULTIPLE TIMES PER WEEK	TOTAL
Wood County Snowmobile Trails	80.71% 364	15.30% 69	0.67% 3	1.33% 6	2.00% 9	451

**Q23. Rate your overall satisfaction with the snowmobile trails in Wood County:**

Answered: 445 Skipped: 139

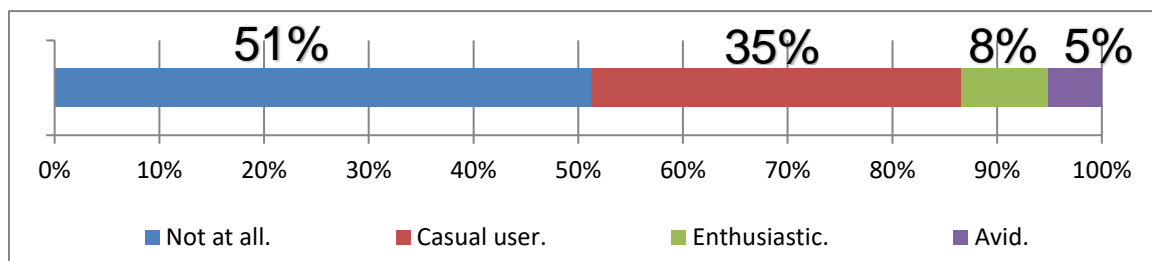
	NOT APPLICABLE (I DO NOT USE THIS.)	VERY SATISFIED	GOOD	FAIR	DISSATISFIED	TOTAL
Wood County Snowmobile Trails	81.35% 362	4.27% 19	8.99% 40	4.49% 20	0.90% 4	445

**Q24. Any comments about snowmobile trails in Wood County?**

**Note: 36 respondents commented about snowmobile trails.**

**Q25. What type of motorized vehicle (ATV/UTV/Off-Highway Motorcycle) enthusiast are you?**

Answered: 468 Skipped: 116



**Not at all.** (I'm not interested in motorized recreation at all, not even for recreation.)

**Casual user.** (I like using motorized vehicles for fun, but **only** do so occasionally, **OR only** on my own land.)

**Enthusiastic.** (I access or go on motorized routes and trails regularly in summer, and I might occasionally access the ice in winter.)

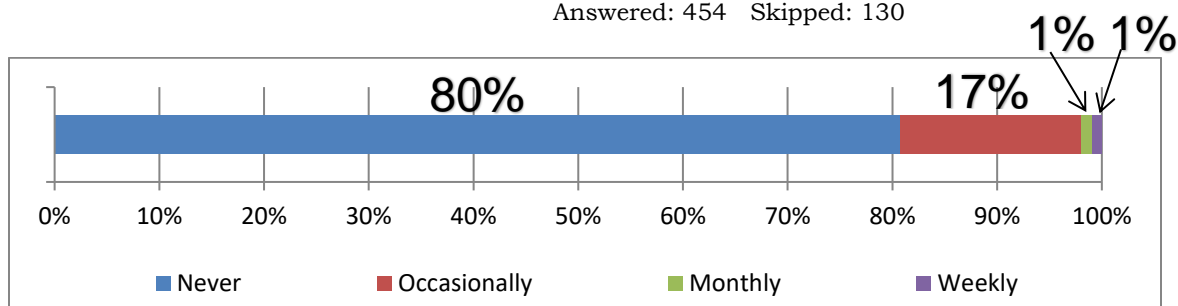
**Avid.** (I am always on a motorized vehicle every chance I get – all year long.)

**Q26. Any comments about motorized sport trails in Wood County?**

**Note: 54 respondents commented about motorized sport trails.**

**Q27. How often do you use the Wood County ATV Intensive Use Area?**

Answered: 454 Skipped: 130



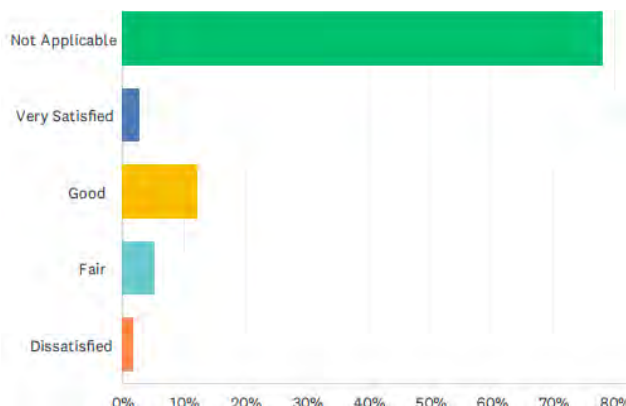
**Q28. Rate your overall satisfaction with Wood County ATV Intensive Use Area:**

Answered: 446 Skipped: 138



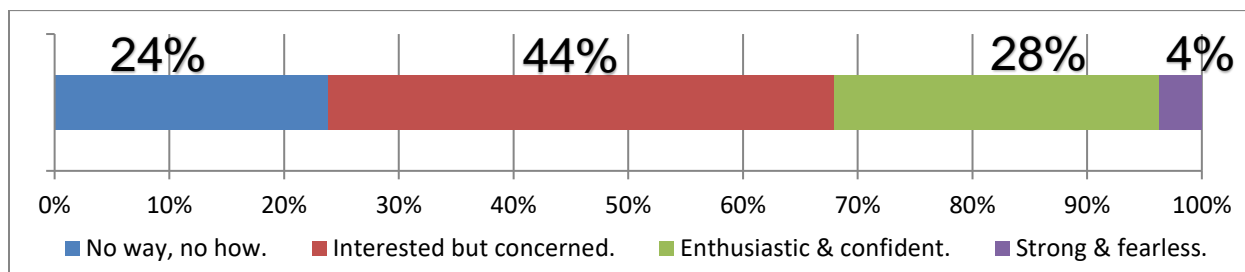
**Q29. Any comments about Wood County ATV Intensive Use Area?**

**Note: 26 respondents commented about snowmobile trails.**



### Q30. What type of bicyclist are you?

Answered: 462 Skipped: 122



**No way, no how.** (I'm not interested in biking at all, not even for recreation.)

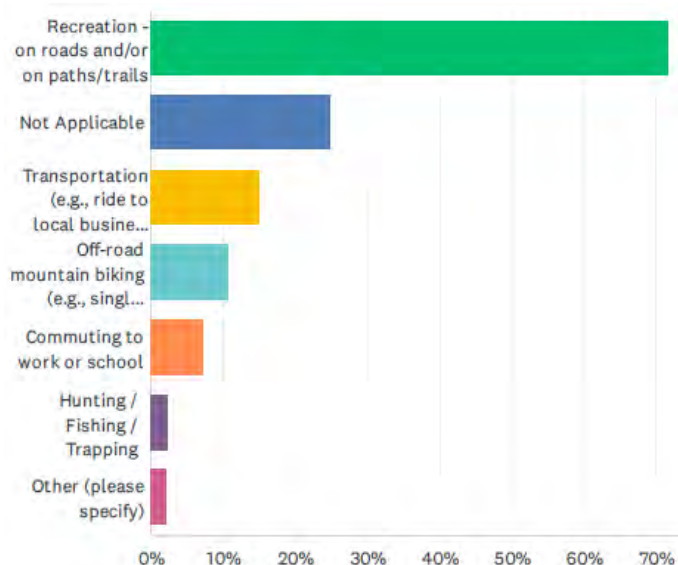
**Interested but concerned.** (I like riding, but don't do it regularly. I'm generally concerned that my route is not safe to ride, so I don't ride often. I definitely do not ride when the weather is bad.)

**Enthusiastic and confident.** (I feel comfortable sharing the road with motor vehicles, but I prefer to ride on separate facilities like bike lanes. I may or may not ride in inclement weather.)

**Strong and fearless.** (I am confident in my abilities and will ride regardless of roadway conditions, amount of traffic, or inclement weather.)

### Q31. What are you using your bicycle for?

Answered: 453 Skipped: 131

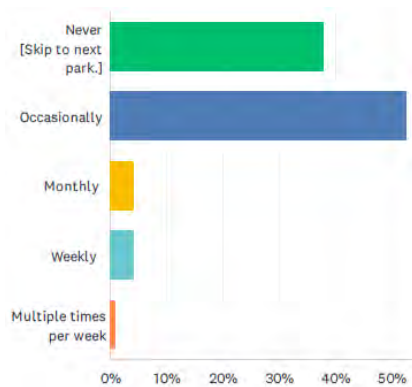


### Q32. Any comments about bicycling in Wood County?

**Note: 92 respondents commented about bicycling in Wood County.**

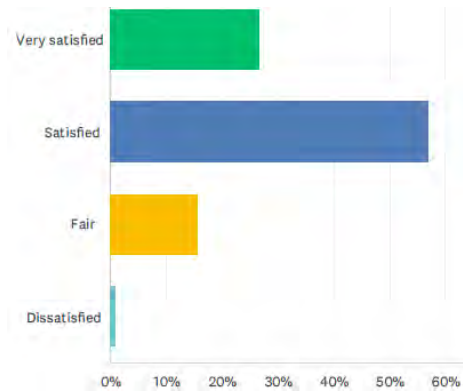
**Q33. How often do you use Powers Bluff Park?**

Answered: 213 Skipped: 371



**Q34. Rate your overall satisfaction with Powers Bluff Park:**

Answered: 128 Skipped: 456



**Q35. For your most recent visit, please rate the following amenities at Powers Bluff Park:**

Answered: 123 Skipped: 461

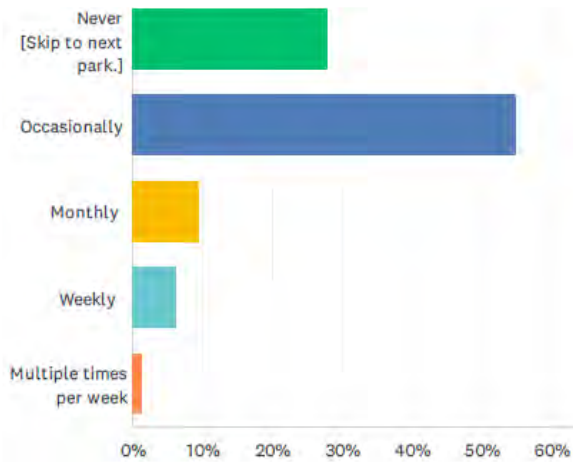
	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Snow tubing hill	38.60% 44	0.00% 0	14.04% 16	30.70% 35	16.67% 19	114
Downhill skiing	72.32% 81	4.46% 5	15.18% 17	6.25% 7	1.79% 2	112
Cross-country skiing trail	73.21% 82	2.68% 3	6.25% 7	13.39% 15	4.46% 5	112
Multi-Use Trail	33.33% 39	1.71% 2	17.09% 20	31.62% 37	16.24% 19	117
Single Track Bike Trail	64.86% 72	1.80% 2	11.71% 13	9.91% 11	11.71% 13	111
Shelter Building	23.28% 27	0.00% 0	27.59% 32	32.76% 38	16.38% 19	116

**Q36. Any other comments about Powers Bluff Park?**

**Note: 37 respondents commented about Powers Bluff Park.**

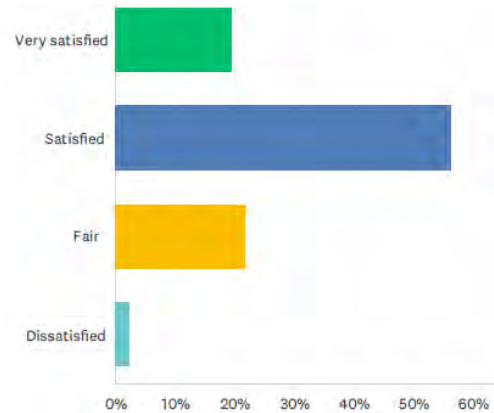
**Q37. How often do you use Nepco Lake Park?**

Answered: 240 Skipped: 344



**Q38. Rate your overall satisfaction with Nepco Lake Park:**

Answered: 174 Skipped: 410



**Q39. For your most recent visit, please rate the following amenities at Nepco Lake Park:**

Answered: 170 Skipped: 414

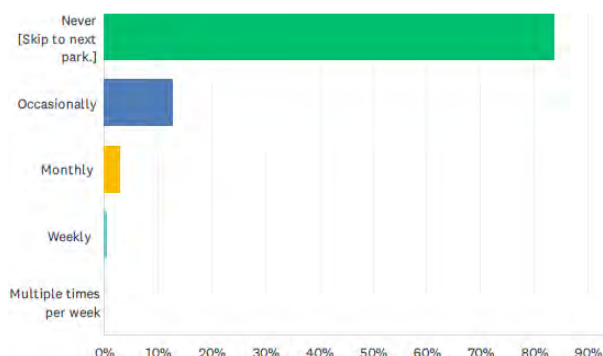
	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Boat Launch	38.99% 62	5.03% 8	22.01% 35	26.42% 42	7.55% 12	159
Beach, Restroom, & Changing Facilities	22.01% 35	10.69% 17	31.45% 50	28.30% 45	7.55% 12	159
Playground Equipment	30.32% 47	8.39% 13	34.19% 53	21.29% 33	5.81% 9	155
Multi-Use Trail	33.97% 53	5.13% 8	14.74% 23	36.54% 57	9.62% 15	156
Single Track Trail	47.02% 71	5.30% 8	15.23% 23	28.48% 43	3.97% 6	151
Enclosed Shelter	14.72% 24	1.23% 2	15.34% 25	27.61% 45	41.10% 67	163

**Q40. Any other comments about Nepco Lake Park?**

**Note: 37 respondents commented about Nepco Lake Park.**

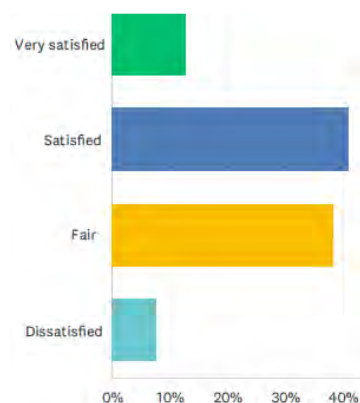
**Q41. How often do you use Richfield 360 County Forest?**

Answered: 241 Skipped: 343



**Q42. Rate your overall satisfaction with Richfield 360 County Forest:**

Answered: 39 Skipped: 545



**Q43. Rate the following amenities at Richfield 360 County Forest:**

Answered: 38 Skipped: 546

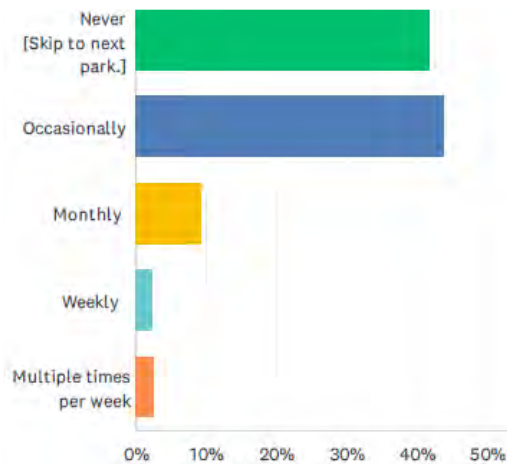
	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Primitive Camping	45.95% 17	13.51% 5	16.22% 6	16.22% 6	8.11% 3	37
Trailhead & Multi-Use Trail	11.11% 4	11.11% 4	33.33% 12	33.33% 12	11.11% 4	36
Cross-Country Skiing	55.26% 21	5.26% 2	7.89% 3	23.68% 9	7.89% 3	38
Grounds maintenance	5.41% 2	16.22% 6	35.14% 13	32.43% 12	10.81% 4	37
Signage and maps on/for the property	5.41% 2	27.03% 10	27.03% 10	29.73% 11	10.81% 4	37
County employee customer service	47.22% 17	8.33% 3	11.11% 4	13.89% 5	19.44% 7	36

**Q44. Any other comments about Richfield 360 County Forest?**

**Note: 10 respondents commented about Richfield 360 County Forest.**

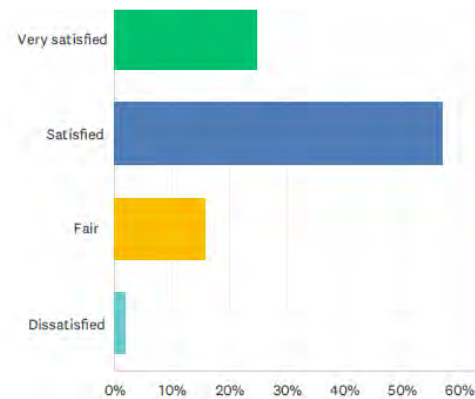
**Q45. How often do you use North Park or Campground?**

Answered: 266 Skipped: 318



**Q46. Rate your overall satisfaction with North Park:**

Answered: 152 Skipped: 432



**Q47. For your most recent visit, please rate the following amenities at North Park:**

Answered: 147 Skipped: 437

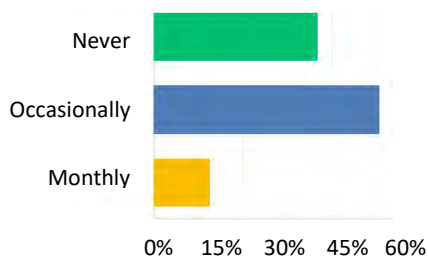
	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Beach	33.10% 48	18.62% 27	26.21% 38	16.55% 24	5.52% 8	145
Enclosed Shelter	32.41% 47	2.07% 3	15.86% 23	35.86% 52	13.79% 20	145
Playgrounds and Restrooms	8.90% 13	6.16% 9	26.03% 38	39.04% 57	19.86% 29	146
Disk Golf Course	53.74% 79	1.36% 2	8.16% 12	24.49% 36	12.24% 18	147
Signage and maps on/for the property	16.44% 24	2.74% 4	18.49% 27	42.47% 62	19.86% 29	146

**Q48. Any other comments about North Park?**

**Note: 37 respondents commented about North Park.**

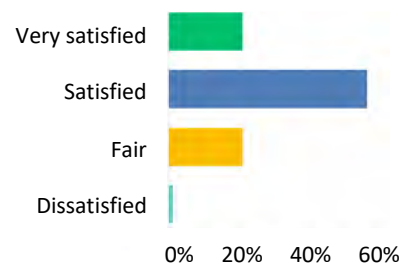
**Q49. How often do you use North Park Campground?**

Answered: 152 Skipped: 432



**Q50. Rate your overall satisfaction with North Park Campground:**

Answered: 95 Skipped: 489



**Q51. For your most recent visit to North Park Campground, how many nights did you camp?**

Answered: 79 Skipped: 505

- 1 night (7 responses)
- 2 nights (35 responses)
- 4 or more nights (17 responses)

**Q52. How many times a year do you camp at North Park Campground?**

Answered: 81 Skipped: 503

- Once (43 responses)
- 2-4 times (26 responses)
- 5 or more times (6 responses)

**Q53. Rate your satisfaction with the following amenities at North Park Campground:**

Answered: 91 Skipped: 493

	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE.	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Campsites	5.49% 5	3.30% 3	25.27% 23	45.05% 41	20.88% 19	91
Group Campsite	51.65% 47	1.10% 1	16.48% 15	21.98% 20	8.79% 8	91
Dump Station	24.44% 22	2.22% 2	16.67% 15	40.00% 36	16.67% 15	90
Picnic tables & fire rings at campsites	4.44% 4	3.33% 3	24.44% 22	50.00% 45	17.78% 16	90
Firewood availability	12.22% 11	3.33% 3	15.56% 14	44.44% 40	24.44% 22	90
Playground	18.89% 17	2.22% 2	18.89% 17	41.11% 37	18.89% 17	90
Reservation process	5.68% 5	4.55% 4	27.27% 24	38.64% 34	23.86% 21	88
Campsite fees	4.49% 4	5.62% 5	23.60% 21	51.69% 46	14.61% 13	89
Customer Service	7.87% 7	5.62% 5	22.47% 20	41.57% 37	22.47% 20	89

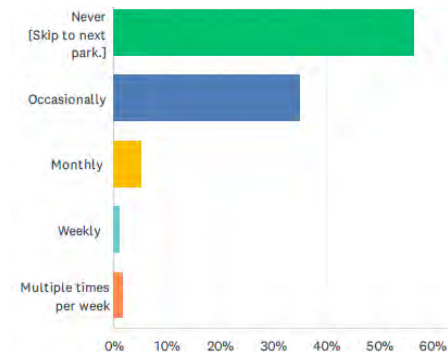


#### Q54. Any other comments about North Park Campground?

**Note: 19 respondents commented about North Park Campground.**

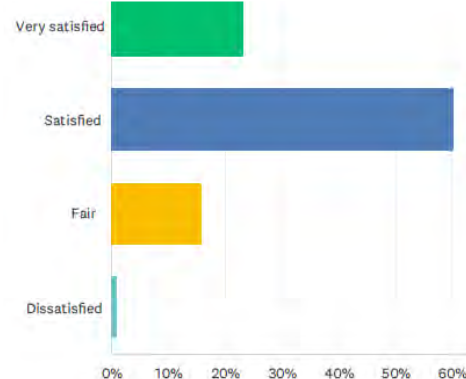
#### Q55. How often do you use Dexter Park or Campground?

Answered: 281 Skipped: 303



#### Q56. Rate your overall satisfaction with Dexter Park:

Answered: 121 Skipped: 463



#### Q57. For your most recent visit, please rate the following amenities at Dexter Park:

Answered: 118 Skipped: 466

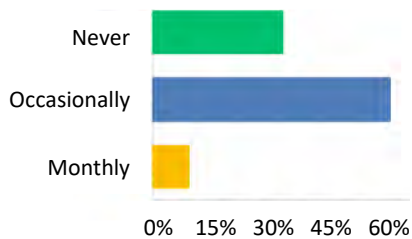
	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Beach	22.41% 26	5.17% 6	25.86% 30	39.66% 46	6.90% 8	116
Enclosed Shelter	53.85% 63	1.71% 2	12.82% 15	22.22% 26	9.40% 11	117
Boat Landings	46.61% 55	0.85% 1	15.25% 18	32.20% 38	5.08% 6	118
Playground	36.21% 42	2.59% 3	18.97% 22	29.31% 34	12.93% 15	116
Restrooms	13.79% 16	3.45% 4	23.28% 27	40.52% 47	18.97% 22	116
Signage and maps on/for the property	9.65% 11	3.51% 4	19.30% 22	51.75% 59	15.79% 18	114

#### Q58. Any other comments about Dexter Park?

**Note: 21 respondents commented about Dexter Park.**

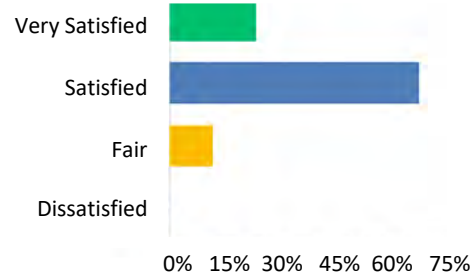
**Q59. How often do you use Dexter Park Campground?**

Answered: 121 Skipped: 463



**Q60. Rate your overall satisfaction with Dexter Park Campground:**

Answered: 79 Skipped: 505



**Q61. For your most recent visit to Dexter Park Campground, how many nights did you camp?**

Answered: 69 Skipped: 515

- 1 night (3 responses)
- 2 nights (26 responses)
- 3 nights (20 responses)
- 4 or more nights (16 responses)

**Q62. How many times a year do you camp at Dexter Park Campground?**

Answered: 68 Skipped: 516

- Once (38 responses)
- Twice (15 responses)
- 3 or more times (12 responses)

**Q63. Rate your satisfaction with the following amenities at Dexter Park Campground:**

Answered: 75 Skipped: 509

	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE.	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Campsites	2.67% 2	2.67% 2	21.33% 16	46.67% 35	26.67% 20	75
Group Campsites	64.86% 48	1.35% 1	8.11% 6	17.57% 13	8.11% 6	74
ATV Camping Area	75.68% 56	1.35% 1	6.76% 5	9.46% 7	6.76% 5	74
Dump Station	24.66% 18	0.00% 0	15.07% 11	46.58% 34	13.70% 10	73
Picnic Tables & Fire Rings at campsites	2.78% 2	1.39% 1	23.61% 17	50.00% 36	22.22% 16	72
Restroom & Shower Facilities	1.37% 1	4.11% 3	21.92% 16	43.84% 32	28.77% 21	73
Playground	26.03% 19	1.37% 1	16.44% 12	39.73% 29	16.44% 12	73
Firewood Availability	6.85% 5	2.74% 2	10.96% 8	54.79% 40	24.66% 18	73
Reservation Process	2.74% 2	5.48% 4	13.70% 10	53.42% 39	24.66% 18	73
Campsite Fees	2.74% 2	5.48% 4	24.66% 18	47.95% 35	19.18% 14	73
Customer Service	18.06% 13	2.78% 2	11.11% 8	44.44% 32	23.61% 17	72

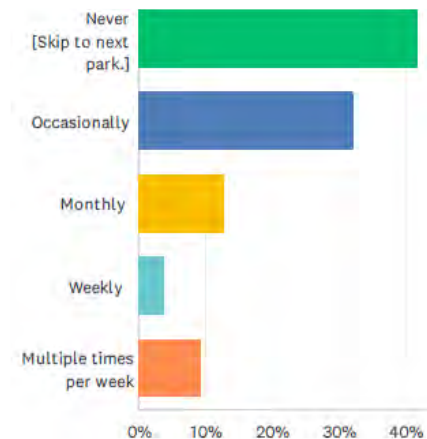
**Q64. Any other comments about Dexter Park Campground?**

**Note: 12 respondents commented about Dexter Park Campground.**

\*\*\*\*\*

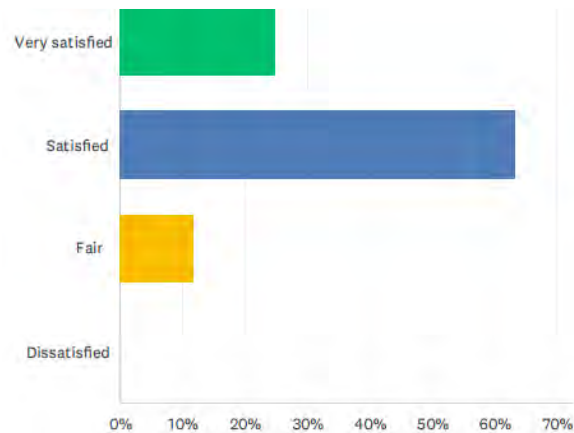
**Q65. How often do you use South Park or Campground?**

Answered: 311 Skipped: 273



**Q66. Rate your overall satisfaction with South Park:**

Answered: 180 Skipped: 404



**Q67. For your most recent visit to South Park, please rate the following amenities:**

Answered: 179 Skipped: 405

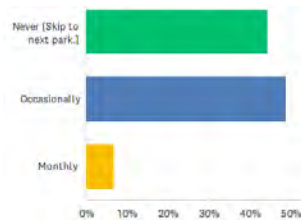
	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Beaches	9.71% 17	3.43% 6	21.71% 38	50.86% 89	14.29% 25	175
Boat Launch	34.66% 61	1.14% 2	11.93% 21	39.77% 70	12.50% 22	176
Playground	23.98% 41	6.43% 11	31.58% 54	31.58% 54	6.43% 11	171
Disk Golf course	59.41% 101	0.00% 0	8.24% 14	24.71% 42	7.65% 13	170
Shelters and Restroom maintenance	8.47% 15	4.52% 8	22.60% 40	42.94% 76	21.47% 38	177
Customer Service	48.52% 82	2.37% 4	12.43% 21	26.04% 44	10.65% 18	169

**Q68. Any other comments about South Park?**

**Note: 50 respondents commented about South Park.**

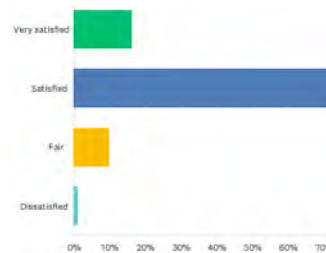
**Q69. How often do you use South Park Campground?**

Answered: 180 Skipped: 404



**Q70. Rate your overall satisfaction with South Park Campground:**

Answered: 99 Skipped: 485



**Q71. For your most recent visit to South Park Campground, how many nights did you camp?**

Answered: 83 Skipped: 501

- 1 night (6 responses)
- 2 nights (29 responses)
- 3 nights (23 responses)
- 4 or more nights (11 responses)

**Q72. How many times a year do you camp at South Park Campground?**

Answered: 83 Skipped: 501

- Once (41 responses)
- Twice (15 responses)
- 3 or more times (11 responses)

**Q73. Rate your satisfaction with the following amenities at South Park Campground:**

Answered: 92 Skipped: 492

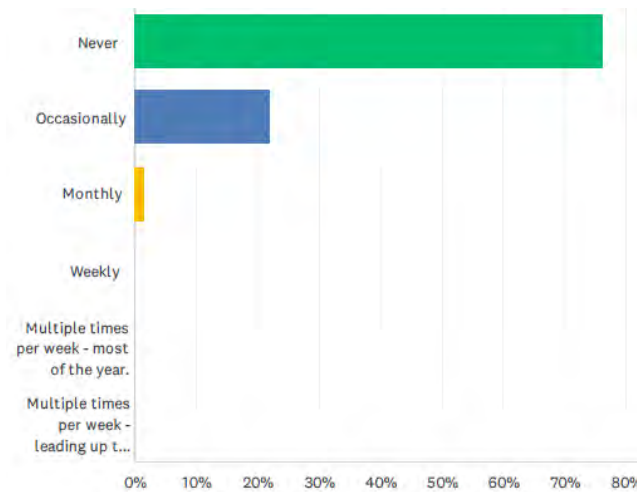
	NOT APPLICABLE / UNSURE.	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	TOTAL
Picnic Tables & Fire Rings at campsites	3.26% 3	3.26% 3	25.00% 23	54.35% 50	14.13% 13	92
Restrooms & Showers	3.26% 3	5.43% 5	32.61% 30	45.65% 42	13.04% 12	92
Playground	20.22% 18	6.74% 6	30.34% 27	38.20% 34	4.49% 4	89
Firewood availability	5.56% 5	5.56% 5	11.11% 10	53.33% 48	24.44% 22	90
Reservation Process	7.69% 7	3.30% 3	16.48% 15	52.75% 48	19.78% 18	91
Campsite fees	5.49% 5	2.20% 2	29.67% 27	48.35% 44	14.29% 13	91
Customer Service	15.73% 14	4.49% 4	21.35% 19	42.70% 38	15.73% 14	89

**Q74. Any other comments about South Park Campground?**

**Note: 14 respondents commented about South Park Campground.**

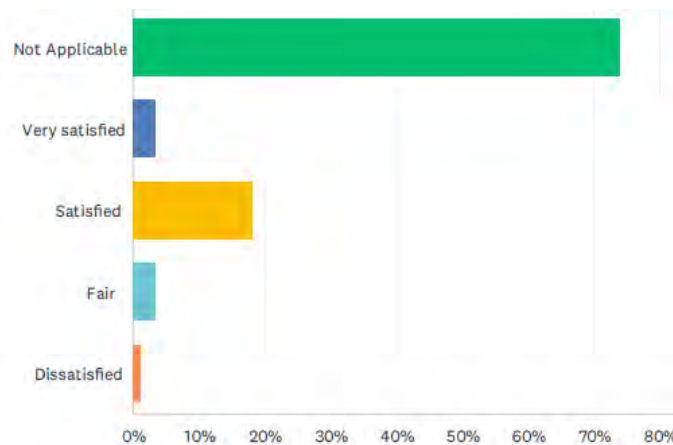
**Q75. How often do you use Wood County Rifle Range?**

Answered: 315 Skipped: 269



**Q76. Rate your overall satisfaction with Wood County Rifle Range:**

Answered: 293 Skipped: 291



**Q77. Any other comments about Wood County Rifle Range?**

**Note: 12 respondents commented about Wood County Rifle Range.**

**For the full survey results (153 pages) and written comments go online here:**  
[ncwrpc.org/wood-county-parks-recreation-and-open-spaces-plan-2026-2030/](http://ncwrpc.org/wood-county-parks-recreation-and-open-spaces-plan-2026-2030/)

## 5.3 Park Standards Analysis

This section identifies the standards used to analyze the need for park sites and outdoor recreational facilities in Wood County. The standards corresponding with each analysis provide the basis for evaluating how well each standard is met as it is applied to County facilities.

**Local governments** may compare their own parks to the Park Design and Location Criteria in **Appendix A**.

Park standards include a) classifying each park, b) geographic distribution of parks in a system, c) park facilities, & d) universal design.

### A. Park Classification

Each county recreation property was categorized by type using a combination of DNR's Park Design and Location Criteria (see **Appendix A**), and County Forest Land Use Plan headings.

All county parks and facilities were designed for different purposes. For example, every county park is not designed as a countywide destination park. Smaller parks were created to serve local pockets of the county's population, and came about through different ownership patterns (e.g., local creation and deeded to the county, direct donation to county, county acquisition due to a local need).

For Wood County, each developed recreation area that the County maintains is listed and described by the following types:

- 4.2 County Parks and Recreation Areas
- 4.4 County Forest
- 4.5 Special Use Areas

### B. Geographic Distribution

- Every county property classified as a county park serves the whole county. See all county managed facilities on **Map 2**.
- Wisconsin Rapids has 2 county parks within 1.5 miles, and the closest county park to Marshfield is about 8 miles away where a group of 3 county parks exists.

## C. Individual Park Facilities

Park facilities encompass the buildings, structures, equipment, and amenities within a park designed for public recreation, leisure, and enjoyment, including playgrounds, sports fields, restrooms, and pathways.

The amount of land needed for many intensive use facilities, like a tennis court, are available in **Appendix B – Facility Development Standards**.


Wood County routinely identifies if changes to park facilities are necessary, then suggested improvements are listed under each park in Chapter 7.

## D. Accessibility Design

Accessibility is making facilities (e.g., pedestrian trails/paths, parking, tables, drinking fountains, restrooms, etc.) accessible to people with limited mobility or limited vision. Americans with Disabilities (ADA) standards are followed when purchasing or modifying facilities for universal accessibility.

**All local municipalities** must ensure that park and recreation programs and facilities are accessible to people with disabilities. If not done already, local municipalities shall complete an evaluation of the accessibility of their existing facilities, programs, and services. This evaluation will provide direction on how to achieve compliance with ADA requirements.

**Within the Wood County Recreation System**, improvements that target facility compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) have been identified in a thorough, countywide, planning process initiated in 1993. The "Americans with Disabilities Act Transition Plan, Wood County, Wisconsin" was created to address all facilities owned by Wood County, including the park system. Since 1993 all new park facilities have been constructed to meet ADA requirements, and many existing facilities have been modified to conform to ADA standards.

Overall, the implementation of the plan has been successful throughout the county park system. Here are the county park facilities that do not conform to ADA standards: 

### Non-ADA Compliant County Recreation Facilities:

**Dexter Park** – Loop 2 vault toilet, & Loop 3 vault toilet.  
**Powers Bluff** – Vault toilet.

All existing outdoor recreation facilities that are repaired, modified or reconstructed should meet the requirements of ADA. Furthermore, any new outdoor recreation development should meet ADA requirements. A few examples of accessible designs include: wide doorways, specialized playground equipment, ramps, wider parking spaces, etc. Trails shall be accessible to people with disabilities wherever possible. Trail surface, grade and width should meet or exceed ADA guidelines. Grades in excess of 5% may be unavoidable on some natural surfaced trails, but then a level area would be constructed every so often if walking and wheelchairs are possible.

Wood County routinely identifies If changes to park facilities are necessary to make them ADA compliant, then suggested improvements are listed under each park in Chapter 7.

# 5.4 Statewide Outdoor Recreation Trends

**2019 2023 Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)**  
*Wood County is in the Western Sands SCORP region. See **Appendix D**.*

Every five years the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) produces the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The plan provides recommendations to guide 1) public outdoor recreation policy and planning decisions, 2) the use of Land and Water Conservation Fund money that comes to Wisconsin, and 3) other Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administered grant programs. Although this SCORP provides some basic information on a wide variety of outdoor activities, the focus is on those activities that are related to natural resources and where experiences are enhanced with higher quality natural habitats. In this document, these are referred to as **nature-based** recreational activities.

To support the development of SCORP, a statewide survey of Wisconsin residents was conducted regarding their outdoor recreation participation and frequency, as well as their opinions about future needs. In addition, the DNR undertook an assessment of recreation opportunities and needs in each region of the state. See **Appendix D**.

## SCORP’s overarching goals for outdoor recreation:

- 1. Boost participation in outdoor recreation
- 2. Grow partnerships
- 3. Provide high-quality experiences
- 4. Improve data to enhance visitor experiences and benefits
- 5. Enhance funding and financial stability

### Wisconsin residents’ TOP 5

*nature-based outdoor activities*

**Favorite**

- Walking, hiking
- Fishing
- Hunting
- Bicycling
- Camping

**Most frequent participation**

- Bird/wildlife watching at home
- Hiking/walking/running on trails
- Picnicking/tailgating/cookout
- Visit a beach/beach walking
- Swimming in lakes/ponds/rivers

**Most needed in their home county**

- Hiking, walking, or running trails
- Bicycling trails
- Public shore access to lakes, rivers and streams
- Public campsites
- Public shooting ranges

## Highly desired regional recreation needs in **Western Sands Region**, (Regional survey responses)

More hiking/walking trails (348 responses)	More public shore access to lakes & rivers (123)
More natural surface bicycle trails (226 responses)	More developed campgrounds (116)
More rustic/quiet campgrounds (218 responses)	[electric hook-ups, flush toilets, showers]
[pit toilets, no electricity or generators allowed]	More local parks and playgrounds (83)
More horseback trails (200 responses)	More wildlife watching decks or platforms (78)
More paved bicycling trails (184 responses)	
More trails for motorized recreation (150 responses)	
[ATV, UTV, off-highway motorcycles]	

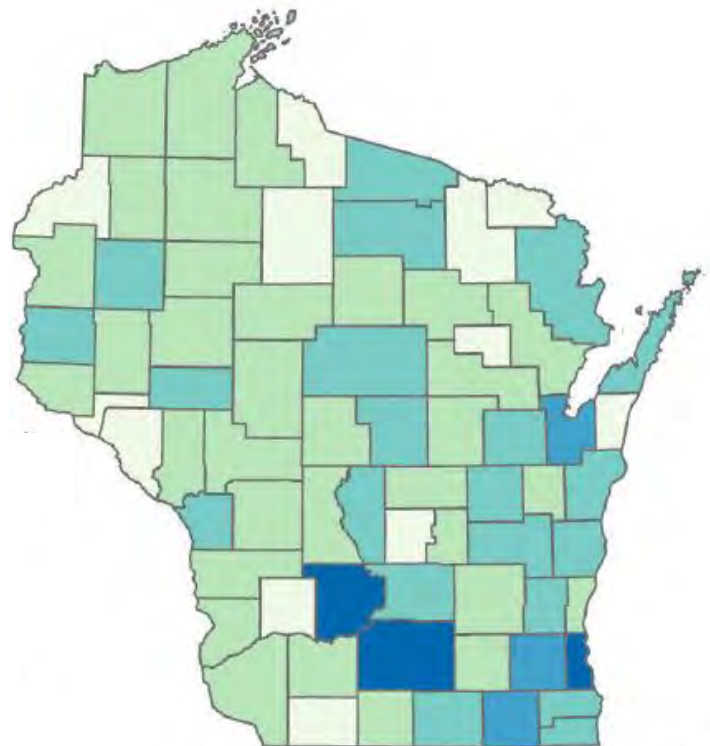


**Table 2: Wisconsin resident participation rates of the 25 most popular nature-based recreation activities**

Participation Rate	Activity
74%	Picnicking/tailgating/cookout
68%	Hiking/walking/running on trails
65%	Visiting a beach/beach walking
55%	Bird/wildlife watching at home
54%	Swimming in lakes/ponds/rivers
52%	Visiting a nature center
45%	Motor boating
40%	Lake fishing from shore or a pier
39%	Bird/wildlife watching away from home
37%	Lake fishing from a boat/canoe/kayak
37%	Nature photography
34%	Bicycling on rail-trails/developed trails
34%	Canoeing/kayaking
32%	Tent camping
32%	Dog walking on trails
31%	Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.
29%	Target firearm shooting
23%	Ice fishing
23%	Visiting a dog park
21%	Hunting big game on private land
21%	RV/pop-up camping
21%	Stream/river fishing from shore/wading
21%	Water skiing/tubing/wakeboarding
20%	River fishing from a boat/canoe/kayak
19%	Target archery outdoors

Source: SCORP 2019-2023

**Figure 9:  
Map of direct visitor spending in 2017,  
by county**



Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism, 2018

**2017 Visitor Spending  
(in millions of dollars)**



Source: SCORP 2019-2023