WASHINGTON STATE
Recreation and Conservation Office

OUTDOOR RECREATION IN WASHINGTON

THE 2013 STATE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN

FULL REPORT

May 2013

JAY INSLEE
Governor

STATE OF WASHINGTON
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June 19, 2013

Mr. Michael Linde
Community Assistance Programs
Pacific West Region
National Park Service
909 First Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

RE: Certification of Opportunity for Public Participation the Development of Washington State's Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Dear Mr. Linde:

It is my pleasure to present *Outdoor Recreation in Washington: The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*. This document provides the latest information on outdoor recreation participation and trends, key issues related to outdoor recreation, recreation supply and demand, and recommendations and actions for improving outdoor recreation in the state.

As Governor, I am committed to recognizing Washington's pristine natural resources and to deepening our understanding of the diverse people who live here. The public participation in developing Washington State's comprehensive outdoor recreation plan reflects key elements of the Washington Way – knowing our customers and using data to drive improvements. I am proud to note that thousands of residents of our great state participated in the process by visiting the town hall website, commenting on key questions, serving on advisory committees, and completing surveys. The process provided ample opportunity for public involvement through multiple venues. The information and data gathered through this process will benefit the residents served by state and local agencies for years.

We know that the benefits of outdoor recreation opportunities include physical and mental health benefits, educational value, economic contributions, and environmental stewardship. This plan will help recreation providers across the state meet the needs of our residents today and into the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many Washington residents who helped with this important effort. Their contributions were essential to producing a plan that reflects how important sustainable and high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities are to the enjoyment of this and future generations.

Very truly yours,

Jay Inslee
Governor

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Dear Outdoor Enthusiast:

We are pleased to present *Outdoor Recreation in Washington: The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan*.

Each year, nearly all Washingtonians participate in outdoor recreation. In fact, about 8 out of every 10 Washington residents visited a county, city, or state park in the past year. As the state's population grows and becomes more urban, older, and more diverse, the demand for outdoor recreation also increases and changes. The recreation plan notes that current facilities satisfy only 30 percent to 40 percent of demand for recreation across the state. This document sets forth a plan to help the state and its partners meet the needs for outdoor recreation so that everyone can enjoy the outdoors for generations to come.

Outdoor recreation has many important benefits, including physical and mental health benefits, educational value, environmental stewardship, and economic value. Outdoor recreation opportunities strengthen communities by providing a venue for festivals, social events, and concerts, all of which help encourage public investment in the community. Washington's economy benefits from outdoor recreation through consumer spending, tax revenue, and jobs. The *2012 Outdoor Recreation Economy* report found that in 2011, outdoor recreation contributed more than $22.5 billion in consumer spending to Washington's economy and supported more than 200,000 jobs.

There are many federal, state, tribal, and local governments, private companies, and nonprofit groups that provide outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in our great state. We take pride in knowing that the development of this plan involved partnerships and collaboration with many of these organizations and governments. We hope that the data and recommendations will be useful for planning at the regional and local level.

The plan offers a snapshot of outdoor recreation in Washington, including participation and trends, an assessment of supply, and current and future demand for recreational areas and facilities. Further, it considers challenges related to outdoor recreation in the state, such as barriers to recreation participation, recreation equity, sustainability, land supply and use, the balance between habitat protection and recreation opportunities, economic and funding issues, and technology. It concludes with recommendations for state agencies and their partners to meet the outdoor recreation needs of residents and visitors.

The process of developing this plan benefited from tremendous statewide public involvement. By using telephone surveys, advisory groups, and Web-based tools, we were able to incorporate the ideas and needs of thousands of Washington's citizens into this plan. We deeply appreciate the time, energy, and thoughtfulness of the people who participated in this year-long planning process.

We all play an important role in the conservation of our state's outdoor recreation resources. We invite you to partner with us to continue managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us in an effective, efficient, and open way and, in so doing, advance outdoor recreation opportunities for future Washingtonians.

Bill Chapman, Chair
Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

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Governor Jay Inslee

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We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the residents and recreationists of Washington for their contributions to this planning effort, including their involvement in Town Halls, the Advisory Group, the general population survey, and their contributions of photographs and personal stories. We also thank the recreation providers who participated in their own survey.

The preparation of this plan was financed in part through a planning grant from the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior, under the provisions of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (Public Law 88-578, as amended).

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Definitions

Recreation facilities: The land provided and infrastructure developed to support outdoor recreation.

Recreation opportunities: The availability of facilities and activities provided to participate in outdoor recreation.

Active recreation: Predominately muscle-powered activities such as jogging, cycling, field and court sports, etc.; they commonly depend on developed sites.

Passive recreation: Activities that require very little use of muscle power, such as nature viewing, photography, or picnicking.

Environmental sustainability: Preserving and protecting the longevity of environmental resources and assets. In other words, recreation facilities and opportunities that promote environmental sustainability, provide recreation designed to minimize environmental impacts, and encourage stewardship and ethical use.

Recreational sustainability: Preserving and protecting the longevity of recreational assets. In other words, recreation facilities and opportunities that promote recreational sustainability are designed to maximize the useful life of recreation facilities and opportunities into the future, thereby encouraging self-supporting design, maintenance, operation, and funding.

Latent demand: The demand for participation in new activities or increased participation in current activities.

In the state of Washington, outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities are managed by federal, state, local, and tribal governments, as well as by some nonprofit groups. Meeting outdoor recreation needs and demands of state residents requires an understanding of participation and a coordinated effort among providers. This Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) serves as a management tool to help decision-makers and providers better understand and prioritize the acquisition, renovation, and development of recreational resources statewide for the next 5 years.

Research conducted for this SCORP was designed to assess current outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities and to project future needs. This SCORP addresses key issues related to outdoor recreation in Washington:

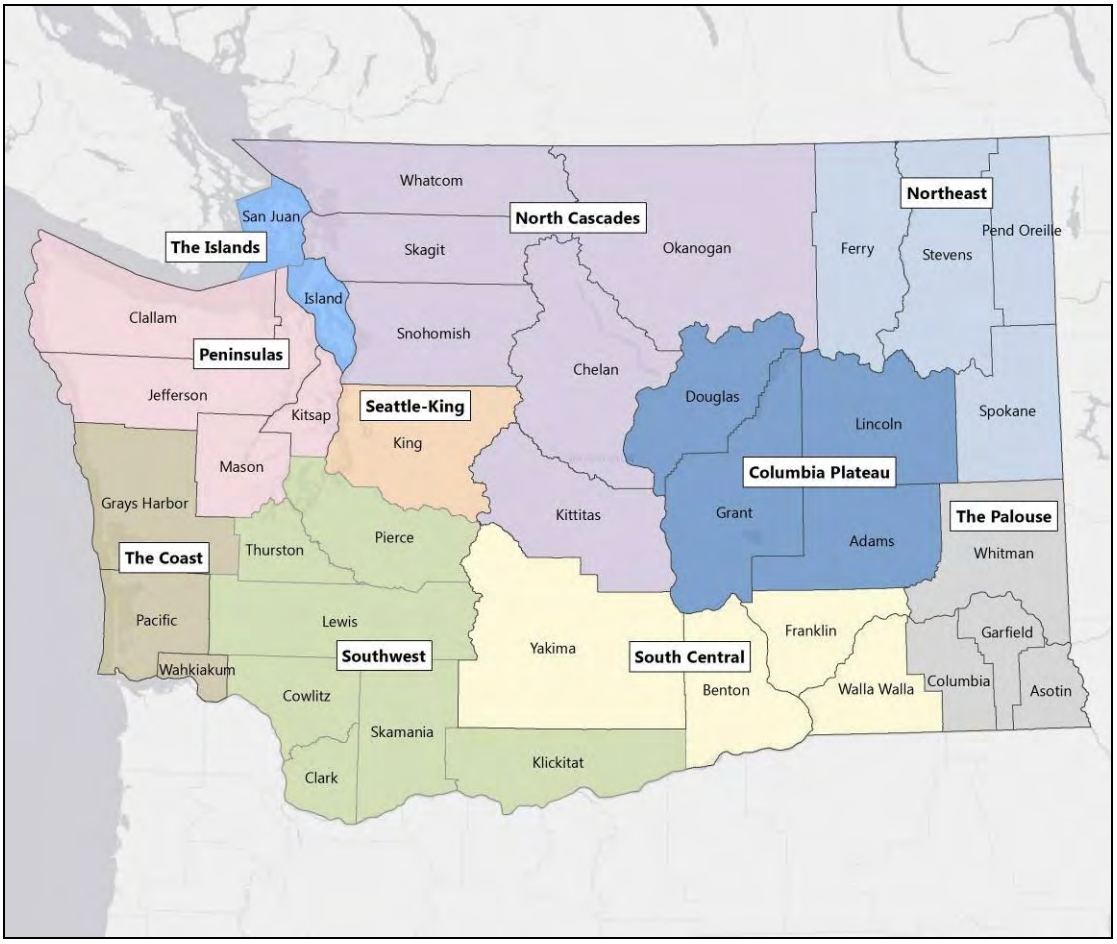
- Benefits of outdoor recreation
- Recreation participation
- Constraints to recreation participation
- Recreation equity
- Land supply and use
- Providing sustainable recreation opportunities
- Economics and funding
- Technology

The plan outlined in this SCORP provides recommendations to help improve outdoor recreation in the state, to enhance future outdoor recreation planning efforts, and to determine grant funding allocations for future projects and initiatives.

The public was directly involved in the SCORP planning process. Input was provided by an advisory group of key stakeholders through in-person meetings and an Internet discussion board (named the SCORP Advisory Group forum). Washington residents also participated in a large-scale scientific survey of Washington residents to assess participation in recreation and future needs. Input from the general public was solicited through a Blog website (named the SCORP Town Hall). Finally, the planning process also involved three in-person Advisory Group meetings that were open to the public. Several members of the public attended.

Recreation providers were also directly involved in the SCORP planning process. The researchers conducted two web-based surveys of outdoor recreation providers. One survey was of local recreation providers, the other survey was of federal and state government providers, tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations. The SCORP planning process and methodology meets the guidelines set forth by the National Park Service (2008).

In addition to the statewide assessment, the SCORP also examined outdoor recreation at the regional level. Washington was divided into 10 planning regions: The Islands, Peninsulas, the Coast, North Cascades, Seattle-King County, Southwest, Northeast, Columbia Plateau, South Central, and the Palouse (as shown in the map below).



Outdoor recreation is an integral part of life in Washington's communities. The vast majority of Washington residents (90%) participate in the most popular category of activities, which includes walking and hiking, demonstrating the pervasiveness of outdoor recreation in Washington's culture.

Outdoor recreation has many important benefits, including social interaction, physical and mental health benefits, educational value, economic contributions, and environmental stewardship. Social elements of outdoor recreation are very important to residents, particularly among youth and young adults. Research has also shown that nature and outdoor recreation have a significant positive impact on human health, both physical and mental health. Washington's economy also benefits directly and indirectly from outdoor recreation through consumer spending, tax revenue, and jobs. Finally, research suggests that outdoor recreationists are more connected to natural resources and tend to have more care and concern for the environment.

To maximize the benefits of outdoor recreation for the state's residents, economy, and environment, it is crucial that the SCORP identify and address issues that affect participation, supply, and demand. Overall, the greatest challenges among recreation providers over the next 5 years will be an increasing state population, changing demographics, unpredictable funding for facilities development and maintenance, and access to outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities.

As the population grows in Washington, several major demographic trends are taking place that will need to be considered in outdoor recreation planning: urbanization, increases in minority populations, and an aging population. Urbanization directly affects the amount of open space available for recreation as well as proximity and accessibility to facilities and opportunities. Increased urbanization also means changing recreation needs, often involving newly emerging or more diverse recreation interests.

To better address these issues, the Washington Legislature adopted the Growth Management Act in 1990, setting guidelines and criteria for the management of open spaces and the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities in the state, while also limiting development and urban expansion. The Growth Management Act sets policy for enhancing recreation opportunities with a particularly important impact on urban communities. In particular, the Growth Management Act requires communities to "include greenbelt and open areas within each urban growth area" and "identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas including lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas" (Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2005b). Working together, cities and counties can develop ways to identify, acquire, and develop open space corridors that will help connect the public with expanded recreational trail and park opportunities in the future, before the areas are developed for urbanization. In Washington, higher percentages of urban and suburban residents, compared with rural residents, participate in jogging and running activities, indoor community facility activities, hiking, other aerobic and fitness activities, and playground use.

Increases in minority populations result in an increased need to meet the recreation demands unique to those groups. This study shows that jogging/running and aerobics are more often pursuits of those ethnically non-white. Marketing recreation opportunities specifically in minority communities is important because research shows that people tend to participate in activities within their own communities and with members of their own ethnic or racial groups (Hunt & Ditton, 2002).

The aging population in Washington is also having a major impact on recreation in the state. Although recreation activities may decline with age, many older Washington residents remain very active and involved in outdoor recreation throughout the state. This study suggests that older residents are participating in nature-based activities at a higher rate than are younger residents, which is an important finding given that trends in participation among all residents show a dramatic increase in participation in many nature-based activities and a decline in team-based sports as one might expect with an aging population. These changes in demographics and participation have direct implications for recreation supply and demand in the state.

This study points to several additional trends for recreation providers to consider. The first includes activities showing marked increases in participation since the previous SCORP. The most notable increase in participation by activity is for picnicking, BBQing, and cooking out, which went from the ninth-ranked activity in 2002 to the top-ranked activity in 2012 among all Washington residents. Another notable trend is to consider is how gender differences relate to participation. For example, the results show that hunting is a primarily (but not an exclusively) male pursuit. Finally, another important consideration is encouraging more participation among commonly underserved groups. This study shows that five demographic groups have consistently lower participation rates: residents with disabilities, non-white residents, residents older than 46, females, and urban/suburban residents. Thus, while populations among some of these groups (e.g., non-white residents, residents older than 46, and urban/suburban residents) continue to grow, their participation rates remain lower than participation rates among whites, younger residents, and rural residents. As a result, this study identifies these population groups as underserved, or not participating in recreation at a level commensurate with their population.

Another challenge for recreation providers is funding, which repeatedly emerged as an important issue, especially among local providers. For the most part, the provider surveys suggest that funding goals are not being met, with averages of a third or more of goals remaining unmet. This estimate was calculated using the Level of Service (LOS) tools, an integrated approach developed by the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) as part of its support of the LWCF program to measure how well its facilities and opportunities meet public needs for outdoor recreation in Washington. The specific measure discussed here represents unmet goals, which are mostly due to lack of funding and issues related to funding.

Two issues related to funding that also repeatedly emerged throughout the SCORP planning process are inadequate facilities and access, both of which are directly related to recreation supply and demand. Overall, the assessment of the supply of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington suggests that the supply of recreation is not completely meeting public demand.

On average, recreation providers using the LOS estimate that approximately three quarters of facilities and sites managed by their agency or organization are fully functional. This means agencies or organizations need to increase or improve the functionality of approximately 25% of their facilities. Recreation providers also reported not meeting about a third or more of their development and/or land acquisition goals. The LOS scores suggest that current available facility capacity only satisfies 30% to 40% of demand for recreation across the state. Latent demand measures among Washington residents indicate that a third of Washington residents would either like to participate in additional activities or would like to participate more in their current activities. The research shows that the population in Washington will continue to grow and, as it does, demand will be further challenged by the pressure this growth puts on existing facilities and the need it creates for new facilities.

Access is also a very important issue among recreation providers and Washington residents. Providers rated access as very important and named it as a top issue of concern. Facilities and access will be crucial for providing opportunities for latent demand over the next 5 years. It is important to note that the top constraints to participation among residents are social issues and other issues over which providers have little influence, such as lack of time, financial reasons, health, age, and weather. Nonetheless, the survey of Washington residents also asked about problems with opportunities, and the top problems were related to facilities and access: lack of facilities or closed facilities, access or travel distance, costs, and poor quality of existing facilities.

While the SCORP is designed to assess supply and demand to meet outdoor recreation needs, the plan is also designed to address environmental and resource protection needs. The plan examines the environmental benefits of outdoor recreation, sustainable recreation needs, and wetlands management. The wetlands priority component of the SCORP is designed to augment the recreational experience in Washington. The purpose of this component is to determine the best use of wetlands areas. The wetlands priority component is developed to meet the requirements of the National Park Service, which has mandated a wetlands component for every state SCORP in response to the 1986 Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (EWRA, Public Law 99-645, S. 303).

By their very nature, parks, recreation areas, and open spaces provide more than just recreational opportunity, they provide protection of critical areas and natural resources as well as conservation of wildlife diversity and habitat. Acquiring more land and recreation sites in an effort to decrease the percentage of unmet goals among providers will increase the protection and conservation of resources. Increasing outdoor recreation opportunities and participation will also improve resource protection because outdoor recreation promotes environmental stewardship. As mentioned previously, research suggests that outdoor recreationists are more connected to natural resources and tend to have more care and concern for the environment.

This plan also examines sustainable recreation. When discussing sustainable recreation, it is important to realize that there are two primary and inter-related factors of sustainable recreation. Environmental sustainability focuses on preserving and protecting the longevity of environmental resources and assets. In other words, recreation facilities and opportunities that promote environmental sustainability provide recreation designed to minimize environmental impacts and encourage stewardship and ethical use.

Recreational sustainability focuses on preserving and protecting the longevity of recreational assets. In other words, recreation facilities and opportunities that promote recreational sustainability are designed to maximize the useful life of recreation facilities and opportunities into the future, thereby encouraging self-supporting design, maintenance, operation, and funding. The LOS helps measure sustainable access. The LOS defines sustainable access as the percentage of access/recreation areas/facilities that provide sustainable recreation opportunities (e.g., help protect natural and cultural resources, use green infrastructure to strengthen natural processes, minimize encroachment and/or user-developed facilities, prohibit poaching, etc).

Based on the LOS measurement, this plan has identified a need for more sustainable recreation opportunities, especially among local providers. While a majority of federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit providers (85.8%) support sustainable recreation, little more than half of local providers (58.2%) support sustainable recreation. There also appears to be a need for education, as some recreation providers seem to be unclear as to what sustainable

opportunities are and how they can meet sustainability goals while also providing quality recreation opportunities.

Wetlands are also an important part of outdoor recreation. In Washington, there is a requirement that potential effects to wetlands for any project be avoided, minimized, or mitigated. Wetlands are not just a priority to land managers and policymakers, they are also important to Washington residents. When asked to rate the importance of wetlands to their total outdoor recreation experience, about a third of residents gave wetlands the highest rating of importance. The survey of residents also shows that about a quarter of Washington residents participated in a recreation activity that involved a wetland, such as wildlife viewing, within the past year. In fact, the conservation of wetlands is an important priority for improving nature and wildlife viewing and for habitat enhancement for game species (e.g., ducks). For these and many other reasons, wetlands are an important component of outdoor recreation and recreation planning in Washington and should be protected and managed as a natural resource value for wildlife habitat, fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing.

IMPLICATIONS

To assist recreation providers at all levels across the state, this SCORP features a chapter dedicated to interpreting the findings and implications of research. Chapter 7 offers key recommendations for maintaining and improving outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington.

Perhaps the broadest, most crucial recommendation for all areas is that Washington should continue its investment in outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. This recommendation is the foundation for fulfilling all other outdoor recreation needs and expectations in the state. The full scope of findings and implications are detailed in Chapter 7, but priorities for the next five years include:

- Promote the economic benefits of outdoor recreation in communication and outreach.
- Maximize sustainability and environmental stewardship.
- Continue to offer diverse outdoor recreation activities and opportunities.
- Take advantage of current technology by using a map-based information system to provide an inventory of outdoor recreation supply.
- Recognize there are two inter-related factors of sustainable recreation.
- Follow the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's guidelines for sustainability.
- Use the National Park Service's *Green Parks Plan* and the Washington State *Planning for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space in Your Community* as touchstones for promoting environmental sustainability and stewardship.
- Continue support of *America's Great Outdoors Initiative.*
- Consider the implications of changing demographics when making recreation decisions.
- Increase and improve access for disabled recreationists in Washington.

Based on scientific research and a comprehensive planning process, these recommendations are intended to contribute knowledge and guidance to the future development of outdoor recreation in Washington for the benefit of both residents and the natural environment.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Chapter Highlights

- The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965 provides funding to the states for planning, acquiring, and/or developing land and water area facilities designed to encourage participation in outdoor recreation.
- The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) assesses current outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities and projects future needs. States are required to submit a SCORP to be eligible for LWCF grants.
- The public participated in the SCORP planning process through an Advisory Group, Advisory Group meetings open to the public, an online SCORP Town Hall, and a large-scale telephone survey.
- Recreation providers participated in the SCORP planning process through online recreation provider surveys conducted to obtain information about recreation supply and need.
- This SCORP addresses key issues related to outdoor recreation in Washington:
    - Benefits of outdoor recreation
    - Recreation participation
    - Constraints to recreation participation
    - Recreation equity
    - Land supply and use
    - Providing sustainable recreation opportunities
    - Economics and funding
    - Technology
- Research suggests that the social elements of outdoor recreation are very important to residents, particularly among youth and young adults.
- Research has shown that natural areas and physical activities have a significant positive impact on human health, including both physical and mental health benefits.
- Washington's economy benefits from outdoor recreation: In 2011, outdoor recreation contributed more than $22.5 billion in consumer spending to Washington's economy, as well as $1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue.
- Outdoor recreation promotes environmental stewardship and volunteerism, and research suggests that outdoor recreationists are more connected to natural resources and tend to have more care and concern for their environment.
- One of the greatest challenges among recreation providers over the next decade will be meeting the demands of an ever-increasing population in Washington, especially increases in urban residents, older residents, and minority residents.
- This SCORP is designed to help decision-makers better understand the most important recreation issues statewide and make funding decisions based on public priorities and expectations.

The Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1965 is designed to conserve outdoor recreation resources for all residents and future generations in the United States. To this end, the LWCF assists states by providing funding for the planning, acquisition, and development of land and water area facilities designed to encourage participation in outdoor recreation. The LWCF requires that states, to be eligible for LWCF grants, prepare a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to assess current outdoor recreation opportunities and project future needs for the delivery of recreational opportunities.

The SCORP was developed to meet the requirements of the LWCF; however, the SCORP also serves the broader purpose of providing a plan for meeting public demand and determining priorities for the acquisition, renovation, and development of recreational resources. Not only does the SCORP serve as a statewide management tool to help decision-makers better understand and prioritize recreation issues statewide, but it also ensures the state's eligibility for LWCF dollars and reinforces the guidelines for recreation providers seeking grant funding through the LWCF.

In the State of Washington, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, a governor-appointed board composed of five residents and the directors of three state agencies (the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission) administers the LWCF program. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) supports the Board, which uses the SCORP to manage LWCF funding, making decisions on funding allocations and supporting planning, acquisition, and development projects throughout the state based on the standards set in the SCORP. The LWCF is used to fund land acquisition, facilities development or renovation, wildlife habitat conservation, and the provision of new outdoor recreation opportunities in the state. Since Fiscal Year 2000, the LWCF has provided more than $36 million funding for parks, recreation, and trails projects in Washington, with more than half of this funding going toward development (RCO, 2013). The SCORP sets the guidelines for funding, serving as both a tool for state and local agencies seeking LWCF grant funding, as well as the benchmark by which the Board evaluates funding applications and determines funding allocations.

As part of its support of the LWCF program, the RCO has developed an integrated approach, known as the Level of Service, for measuring how well its facilities and opportunities meet public needs for outdoor recreation in Washington. The Level of Service uses measurable indicators to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of parks, recreation, and trails systems and identify where additional resources may be needed. Unique to Washington, the Level of Service measures several criteria, including the *quantity* of facilities and opportunities, the *quality* of facilities and opportunities, and distribution and access. Offering a balanced approach for evaluating outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, the Level of Service is used by federal, state, local, and tribal providers for recreation planning. The RCO and Funding Board also use the Level of Service as an evaluation tool for determining LWCF funding allocations. This year, the Level of Service has been fully integrated into the SCORP planning process and provides additional guidelines to help the RCO determine where outdoor recreation needs exist in Washington.

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGIES

To provide guidance for LWCF grant funding, the SCORP is designed to assess current outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities and project future needs for the delivery of recreational opportunities that most directly meet public priorities at local, regional, and state levels. To this end, this SCORP meets the requirements outlined in the LWCF Program. A detailed explanation of the methodology is included as Appendix A.

Ensuring Public Participation in the SCORP Planning Process
To ensure adequate public participation in the SCORP planning process, a 24-member Advisory Group was created. This group consisted of representatives from existing RCO standing committees and key stakeholders from local jurisdictions, which provided topical and geographical diversity and a knowledgeable membership for providing advice. A public engagement process was implemented to include qualitative input from an advisory group of key stakeholders through in-person meetings and an Internet discussion board. The planning process also involved three in-person Advisory Group meetings that were open to the public. Several members of the public attended. The Advisory Group also provided input via an Internet discussion tool (named the SCORP Advisory Group forum) to allow interaction and input without face-to-face meetings and to facilitate feedback on draft research and SCORP documents.

Some of the general public input was collected using a blog website known as the "SCORP Town Hall." Questions were posted on the SCORP Town Hall for the public to consider and comment upon. This website received more than 14,000 visits, and more than 700 people provided over 1,000 comments.

To further engage the public in the SCORP process, the researchers conducted a large-scale scientific survey of Washington residents to assess participation in recreation, their future needs for recreation, their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, their issues of concern, and any constraints they had in participating in outdoor recreation in Washington. The survey of residents was conducted from August to October 2012.

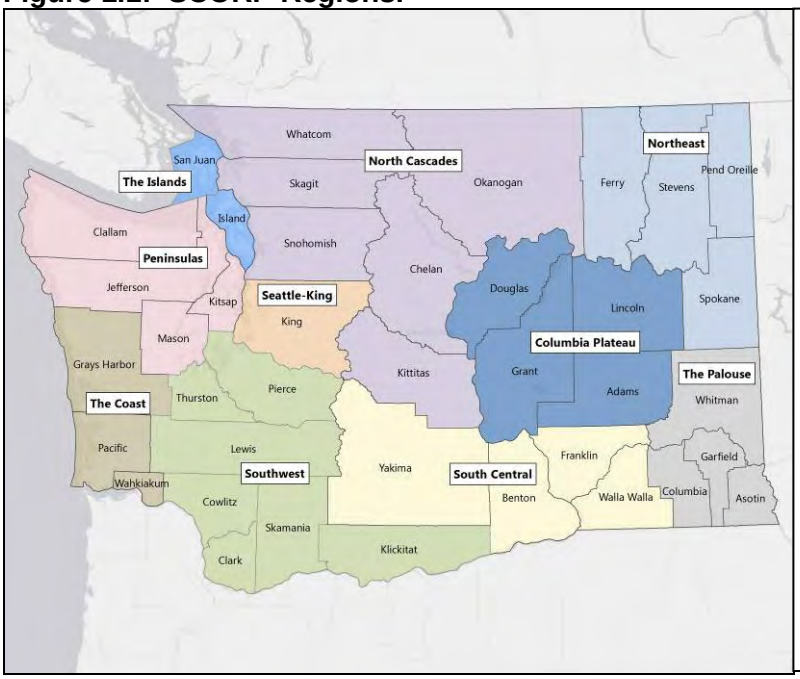
Evaluating Supply and Demand for Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Opportunities
This SCORP evaluates recreation supply and demand on a statewide basis but also includes a regional analysis. Results were examined based on the 10 planning regions identified by the RCO (moving in general from west to east): The Islands, Peninsulas, The Coast, North Cascades, Seattle-King, Southwest, Northeast, Columbia Plateau, South Central, and The Palouse (Figure 1.1).

"In my opinion, education is most important, as users must be aware of their role in recreation. They must be familiar with both positive and negative use impacts and how they can become a partner in providing a safe, environmentally friendly area for the present and for the future."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"I recommend a guiding principle that nature protected by public parks should continue to be protected for current and future generations, and it should be accessible to everyone without regard to income."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"The parks are natural classrooms. …Create educational events like bird-watching tours, nature hikes, inquiry-based nature classes for children, lectures about the history of the parks, watersheds, biomes, the species that live in parks, etc. Charging nominal fees for these types of activities will give back to the community and create a long-term connection with community members, as well as give them a sense of pride in their neighborhood park."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Figure 1.1: SCORP Regions.



The Islands: Island and San Juan Counties
Peninsulas: Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, and Mason Counties
The Coast: Grays Harbor, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties
North Cascades: Chelan, Kittitas, Okanogan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties
Seattle-King: King County (including the City of Seattle)
Southwest: Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Pierce, Skamania, and Thurston Counties
Northeast: Ferry, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties
Columbia Plateau: Adams, Douglas, Grant, and Lincoln Counties
South Central: Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, and Yakima Counties
The Palouse: Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Whitman Counties

Note: Map was produced in color; may not be legible in black and white.

To obtain information about recreation supply at statewide and regional levels, the researchers conducted two web-based surveys of outdoor recreation providers. One survey was of local recreation providers, and the other survey was of federal and state government providers, tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations. A multiple-contact strategy was used to conduct the web-based surveys, with respondents being contacted a minimum of five times (three emails and two rounds of telephone follow-up calls). The surveys of providers were conducted from July to October 2012, and 213 completed questionnaires were received from providers statewide. Each provider was asked for the estimated number of sites or miles (or whatever the unit of measurement was) for 45 major recreation activities or activity groups, and the data were used to assign aggregate Level of Service scores.

In addition to a comprehensive assessment of supply in the state, this SCORP assessed public demand for outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington through the survey of state residents, conducted from August to October 2012. To support accurate trends analyses, the survey used the same categories and 147 activities used in Washington's previous SCORP: *Defining and Measuring Success: The Role of State Government in Outdoor Recreation*. A few new activities, such as disc golf and swimming in natural waters, were added in the current SCORP. In addition to actual participation, the resident survey collected data about other topics, including children's participation, public satisfaction with recreation facilities and opportunities, latent demand, modes of transportation, barriers to recreation opportunities, recreation locations, access to parks, and participation in activities involving a wetland and the value of wetlands to the recreation experience. The researchers obtained 3,114 completed surveys of residents statewide (at least 300 per region) age 18 years and older. The statewide results have a sampling error of at most plus or minus 1.76 percentage points.

Identifying Key Issues Regarding Outdoor Recreation

This SCORP also addresses key issues of importance to Washington that help set the stage for strategic investments for outdoor recreation and the preservation and conservation of open

space over the next 5 years. The researchers gathered information regarding key issues by engaging the SCORP Advisory Group and the public, gathering data via the surveys of recreation participants and providers, and researching existing studies and literature. Key issues addressed throughout the SCORP are included in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Key Issues Addressed in the SCORP.

Benefits of outdoor recreation
- Social benefits
- Mental and physical health benefits
- Educational value
- Economic contributions
- Ecosystem value
- Environmental sustainability and stewardship

Recreation participation
- Overall recreation participation
- Children's participation
- Recreation trends
- Latent and future demand for recreation

Constraints to recreation participation
- Problems related to access
- User fees and specific-use taxes
- Permitting

Recreation equity
- User conflicts
- Changing demographics
- Underserved populations
- Aging population

Land supply and use
- Land conversion
- Land acquisition versus development

Providing sustainable recreation opportunities
- Sustainability initiatives
- America's Great Outdoors Initiative
- The role of different habitat types in enhancing the recreation experience
- The role of created wetlands in public outdoor recreation

Economics and funding
- Maintenance
- Acquisition
- Development
- Corporate funding and/or sponsorships

Technology
- Meeting users' technological needs
- Attracting more users while retaining a natural experience

Assessing Public Priorities and Needs for Outdoor Recreation Facilities and Opportunities
In previous years, the state has not had a model in place for measuring the effectiveness of its investments in outdoor recreation sites and facilities. Traditional supply-demand and other models have been inadequate in the outdoor recreation context mainly because they often consider recreation indicators in isolation.

To this end, the 2008 SCORP proposed a Level of Service tool that uses several indicators of need to more accurately assess the complex task of providing recreation facilities and opportunities. This SCORP applied the RCO's Level of Service tool to assess recreation need. The tool provides one set of indicators for federal and state agencies and another for local agencies. It provides a set of standards for measuring strengths and weaknesses of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, suggesting where additional resources may be needed. Using the results of the surveys of recreation providers, the researchers assigned an aggregate regional score following the guidelines of the Level of Service tool.

Developing a Wetlands Priority Component
The wetlands priority component of the SCORP is designed to augment the recreational experience in Washington. The purpose of this component is to determine the best use of wetlands areas. The wetlands priority component is developed to meet the requirements of the National Park Service, which has mandated a wetlands component for every state SCORP in response to the 1986 Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (EWRA, Public Law 99-645, S. 303).

Under this mandate, each state is required to develop a wetlands priority component as part of its SCORP, which achieves the following:

- Being consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan developed by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Working in consultation with the state's game and fish management agency.
- Developing a list of the types of wetlands that are priorities for acquisition.

Meeting the requirements of the National Park Service, this SCORP provides an overview of the types and classes of wetlands in Washington and explores wetlands management in the state. The SCORP provides recommendations to address the key issues identified by the SCORP Advisory Group and recreation surveys. Specifically, this SCORP explores wetland types in Washington that are a priority from a recreation perspective and related funding priorities.

The researchers used a broad definition of wetlands, matching the common perceptions that a wetland includes an area of saturated soils with distinctive water-tolerant vegetation but also includes lands that provide access to water such as ponds, creeks, rivers, shorelines, and the ocean. To arrive at recommendations regarding wetlands, the researchers considered SCORP Advisory Group input, planning discussions with RCO staff, the public opinion and provider surveys, the opinions of residents providing input at the SCORP Town Hall website, and direct consultations with the State Departments of Ecology and Fish and Wildlife.

Designing a Comprehensive Implementation Plan for Allocating LWCF Grant Funding
The comprehensive implementation plan outlined in this SCORP provides recommendations to help improve outdoor recreation in the state, enhance future outdoor recreation planning efforts, and determine LWCF grant funding allocations for future projects and initiatives. Within the context of outdoor recreation services, strategic planning is the deliberate and orderly step-by-step process of defining availability of and current demand for recreation, understanding different groups of constituents (markets) through research, and then determining the best methods to meet future needs and expectations.

This SCORP considers the needs of four distinct audiences: (1) the National Park Service as the manager of LWCF grant funds, (2) the RCO and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board as the distributors of LWCF grant funds, (3) recreation providers as the recipients of LWCF grant funds, and (4) the public as the beneficiary of projects supported through LWCF grant funds. To this end, the recommendations provided in the SCORP are designed to foster partnerships among these groups and to encourage a balanced approach at meeting the needs and priorities of those served by LWCF grant funds.

The results of the research and the public engagement process provide important touchstones for the development of a comprehensive strategic plan to guide outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington. Taking into account all the research conducted for the SCORP, combined with additional research on other state programs and initiatives, the researchers developed a draft SCORP document that set forth a comprehensive implementation plan that outlined strategic goals and action items.

IMPORTANCE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

Outdoor recreation is an integral part of life in Washington's communities. It is not a sidebar to the human experience, but rather a central element impacting residents' quality of life. In a 2006 study of Washington State Parks visitors, the top reasons for visiting State Parks related to the naturalistic experience rather than utilitarian reasons. Specifically, the top reasons for visiting State Parks were to enjoy nature and the outdoors; to get away, reduce stress, or relax; to spend time with family and friends; and to be active and healthy (Responsive Management, 2006). As suggested by these results, outdoor recreation provides numerous social, health, educational, economic, and environmental benefits. This section explores the many ways in which outdoor recreation is a top-of-mind resource that positively affects the quality of life in Washington.

Social Value of Outdoor Recreation

In a 2006 study of Washington residents, 84% indicated that spending time with family and friends was a very important reason that they participated in outdoor recreation in Washington (Responsive Management, 2006). Further, research suggests that the social elements of outdoor recreation are particularly important among youth and young adults. In a study conducted by The Outdoor Foundation (2011), first-time participants were asked why they decided to participate in an outdoor recreation activity. More than half of all respondents between the ages of 6 and 24 (53.9%) indicated that they participated because their friends and/or family participate in outdoor recreation—the top motivating factor among this age group. More than a third of recreationists 25 and older (34.9%) gave this reason for first-time participation.

Outdoor recreation helps promote a sense of community and create a shared sense of place. It brings together like-minded people with a similar connection to the outdoors, and it is common for those participating in specific activities to work cooperatively in developing new opportunities and maintaining existing infrastructure. In this way, outdoor recreation provides a catalyst for uniting user groups and their larger communities. Furthermore, outdoor recreation opportunities strengthen community by providing a venue for community events, such as festivals, social events, and concerts, all of which help encourage public investment in community.

Other social values attributed to outdoor recreation include reduction of crime in a community and encouragement of volunteerism. Studies in California show that 80% of mayors and Chambers of Commerce in the state believe that recreation areas and programs reduce crime and juvenile delinquency. The presence of well-maintained parks tends to deter crime in urban

areas (California State Parks, 2005). In addition to curbing crime, outdoor recreation is cited as fostering volunteerism in communities. A 2001 study suggests that adults who use outdoor recreation areas are more likely to volunteer than those who do not (Busser and Norwalk, 2001).

In short, recreation opportunities encourage and foster social relationships among friends, family, and communities as a whole. Furthermore, investing in outdoor recreation opportunities in our communities demonstrates a tangible commitment to future generations of Washingtonians.

Health Benefits of Outdoor Recreation

Research has shown that natural areas and physical activities have a significant positive impact on human health. Historically, recreation opportunities were developed for health reasons, such as addressing concerns about sedentary lifestyles, escaping issues related to industrial society, and providing leisure activities for the public. Recreation is provided for many of these same reasons today.

In an increasingly sedentary American society, opportunities to recreate in the outdoors have the potential to play an important role in health and wellness. Studies show that today's youth are spending about half as much time outside as their parents did. In place of the outdoors, they are spending more than 7 hours per day in front of a computer or television screen (Rideout, Foehr, and Roberts, 2010). In the past 30 years, childhood obesity rates have tripled, leading to a current epidemic among American youth. It is estimated that about one-third of American children are overweight or obese, leading to susceptibility to heart disease, asthma, cancer, and other health problems (Daniels et al., 2009).

It is not surprising that this trend is mirrored in adults, many of whom work at a desk for more than 8 hours a day and then spend their leisure hours in front of a computer or a television. The dangerous correlation to this sedentary trend is rising obesity rates among adults as well. More than 25% of adults, or approximately 78 million Americans, are considered obese, according to a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study (Ogden, Carrol, Kit, and Flegal, 2012). Among Washington's population, 27% are considered obese, according to a 2011 study by the Trust for America's Health and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. This rate is projected to more than double to 56% by the year 2030 and is tied to health care costs in Washington that are expected to climb 22% by 2030.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, in 2008, the annual healthcare cost of obesity in the U.S. was estimated to be as high as $147 billion a year. The annual medical burden of obesity increased to 9.1 percent in 2006 compared to 6.5 percent in 1998 (CDC, 2011). Increased participation in outdoor recreation, however, offers an opportunity to curb these trends in rising health care costs.

Exercise counteracts many of these health risks and helps diminish the risk of obesity-related chronic diseases, such as heart disease, hypertension, arthritis, diabetes, cancer, and osteoporosis. Not only does exercise and outdoor recreation result in better health for the individual, but it also helps minimize the health care costs required to prevent and/or treat obesity-related illnesses and improves productivity, resulting in significant economic benefits to the state. Even an activity as simple as walking outdoors—the top outdoor recreation activity among Washington residents—is a pleasurable, inexpensive, and simple antidote that all ages can enjoy.

In addition to the physical health benefits, there are mental health benefits to engaging in outdoor recreation. In particular, exposure to natural areas and outdoor recreation has been shown to help minimize stress and to alleviate stress-related diseases and disabilities, including depression. A study conducted by Grahn and Stigsdotter (2003) suggests that there exists a positive correlation between the number of times a subject visits urban green areas and a decrease in self-reported stress-related illness. Similarly, research has shown that spending time outdoors helps reduce the symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in children (Kuo and Taylor, 2004).

According to the United States Forest Service, "outdoor recreation is the natural solution—a disease prevention solution—and a part of the nation's existing wellness infrastructure" (2010). In truth, outdoor recreation does have special benefits. A systematic review of most exercise trials held inside and outside showed that participating outdoors resulted in an improvement in mental well-being, feelings of revitalization, increased energy, and release of tension, as well as decreases in anger, tension, confusion, and depression (The Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry, 2011). In addition, studies show that even as few as 5 minutes outside has distinct mental health benefits, including reduction of stress and depression, as well as improvement in self-esteem, creativity, and life satisfaction. These feelings were heightened for those who exercised in a wilderness area or near water (Barton and Pretty, 2010).

Nature and outdoor recreation has such a profound impact on human health that in 2005 Richard Louv coined the term *nature deficit disorder* to explain the negative health consequences of *not* being exposed to the outdoors. Louv explains that nature deficit disorder results in "diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties, and higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses" (Louv, 2005).

In recognizing the role that recreation can play in healthy communities, First Lady Michelle Obama initiated the *Let's Move Initiative*, which is focused on improving nutrition, physical activity, and health of our families and communities. This initiative encourages participation in active recreation. With a focus on kids and families, the initiative offers the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award to those who make the commitment to document their activities for six weeks (Schulman, 2010).

Similarly, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sponsors the ACHIEVE Healthy Communities Initiative. ACHIEVE is an acronym for **A**ction **C**ommunities for **H**ealth, **I**nnovation, and **E**n**V**ironmental chang**E**. ACHIEVE's main focus is to support local communities in the promotion of "policies, systems, and environmental change strategies—focusing on issues such as physical fitness and obesity, nutrition, and tobacco cessation—to advance the nation's efforts to prevent chronic diseases and related risk factors" (National Recreation and Park Association, 2013).

Currently eight Washington localities benefit from their designation as ACHIEVE communities. Local ACHIEVE teams partner with six select national organizations, which provide funding and mentorship to bring about objective goals focused on decreasing chronic disease, increasing physical activity, and improving access to healthy food. Among those eight communities are two paired with the National Recreation and Park Association, with specific focus on creating, developing, and promoting outdoor recreation opportunities through safe routes for biking and walking.

Exposure to natural areas, green spaces, and outdoor recreation helps counteract negative health problems by engaging people in physical activity and by offering an escape from the

stressors of our daily lives. As such, outdoor recreation provides a cost-effective method of proactively addressing our communities' most urgent health issues, impacting not only individual health but the health of our communities as a whole.

Educational Value of Outdoor Recreation

Outdoor recreation and education are mutually supportive. Outdoor recreation provides a unique active learning environment through direct experience, with positive outcomes that range from the broader impact of encouraging investment in one's environment to the more individualized outcome of improving one's physical and mental health. For these reasons, there has been considerable focus on the importance of environmental education and how to integrate outdoor recreation into the classroom setting.

Many sedentary and indoor activities compete for people's time and interest, and this is especially true among today's youth who have been exposed to a diverse array of video games, computers, and other electronic and digital media at a very young age. As noted in a white paper produced for the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies: "It is clear that Americans of all ages, but particularly the generation now in its early years of formal education, stand to benefit considerably from a greater willingness to engage in outdoor activities and a more sophisticated appreciation of the natural world" (Responsive Management, 2010).

An unintended effect of the implementation of "No Child Left Behind" education requirements was that many schools began sacrificing time spent on outdoor recreation and environmental education to accommodate more focus on core subjects such as math and reading. In response, the No Child Left Inside Coalition was launched to provide incentives and support for schools to provide environmental education to students. This Coalition includes more than 2,000 business, recreational, environmental, youth, and educational groups that support a mission to devote more time and funding to environmental education. At its core, environmental education offers students an opportunity to learn outside as well as in the classroom and combats "nature deficit disorder" by actively engaging students in stewardship and environmental ethics (No Child Left Inside Coalition, 2013). The Coalition is making significant advances in environmental education, including the first-ever White House Summit on Environmental Education, which was conducted on April 16, 2012. In an unprecedented effort at advancing the mission for environmental education, the White House announced the development of a Federal Interagency Task Force on Environmental Education. With the institution of this new Task Force, the Coalition is working toward the development of a comprehensive plan to increase environmental education and expand the Department of Education's efforts toward achieving this goal.

Similar efforts are also being undertaken by other agencies and organizations. Recognizing the importance of developing a Conservation Education Strategy to guide the development of classroom curriculum, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has defined a series of benchmarks and indicators. Often used to develop and evaluate conservation and environmental public education programs, these benchmarks take a three-pronged approach to conservation education, focusing on outdoor participation, conservation literacy, and civic participation and stewardship. These benchmarks are specific to each grade level and focus on the benefits of outdoor participation, knowledge of ecological systems, and engagement in stewardship and environmental ethics (Responsive Management, 2010).

The State of Washington has mandated environmental and sustainability education learning standards, which promote three interrelated areas: ecological, social, and economic systems; the natural and built environment; and sustainability and civic responsibility. Similarly, the

Environmental Education Association of Washington is leading efforts to improve comprehensive environmental education standards in the state's schools. Its E3 Washington plan seeks to provide environmental education in all Washington schools. In addition to the health benefits of outdoor recreation, the Environmental Education Association of Washington credits the effectiveness of conservation and environmental education with improving students' scores on standardized tests.

For the past few decades, there have been numerous efforts to increase the role of outdoor recreation and environmental education in the classroom. With so many agencies and individuals devoted to providing these opportunities, the key to successful implementation and the development of an effective curriculum is collaboration and cooperation among these varied and diverse groups. With a renewed focus on environmental education, the educational value of outdoor recreation is perhaps more important than ever, and the advancement of No Child Left Inside legislation is timely and relevant.

Economic Contribution of Outdoor Recreation to Washington in General

As one would expect, the economic benefit of outdoor recreation to individual states is dependent upon land area, population size, the availability of popular recreational opportunities or unique geographic features suited to specific activities, and other qualities that vary from state to state. With its considerable size, highly active population of residents, and diverse offering of facilities and opportunities, Washington benefits considerably from outdoor recreation.

The 2012 *Outdoor Recreation Economy* report provides economic impact data at the state level. The results for Washington reveal that in 2011 (the year of data collection) outdoor recreation contributed more than $22.5 billion in consumer spending to Washington's economy, as well as $1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue. Further, outdoor recreation directly supported 227,000 jobs across the state, along with $7.1 billion in wages and salaries.

It is worth noting that the Western Governors' Association, in 2011, created the Get Out West! Initiative with the purpose of identifying the economic contributions of outdoor recreation and tourism to the health of local economies and communities. In addition to promoting outdoor recreation and tourism across the West, the initiative was designed to highlight successful strategies for managing the recreational assets that serve as the foundation of the outdoor recreation and tourism sectors.

This overall economic impact of outdoor recreation opportunities raises the question of whether it is good business for Washington to invest in an economic sector that accounts for 3.5% of its gross state product. The evidence suggests that it is. In addition to looking at recreation overall, specific activities also contribute significantly to the overall economy, as discussed below.

Economic Contribution of Boating

While Washington is a highly popular destination for boaters and participants in boating-related recreation, there are few resources available pointing to the specific economic benefits of boating recreation to the state. A 2011 study was commissioned by the Northwest Marine Trade Association and Northwest Yacht Brokers Association to determine the economic impacts of recreational boating in Washington. The study, conducted by Hebert Research, Inc., produced several important findings with implications on boating participation in general.

The Hebert Research study determined that boating in Washington produces almost $4 billion in annual economic activity for the state (this estimate takes into account manufacturing, boat ownership and operating costs, and revenue from boating-related businesses and industries). The study also found that Washington's recreational boating industry employs around 28,000 people in various marine-related jobs.

Economic Contribution of Hiking, Trail Use, and Park Visitation

Research compiled in 2007 by Jeannie Frantz of the Washington Trails Association and the University of Washington Political Science Department suggests some key economic contributions associated with hiking activities. Using findings produced through the Outdoor Recreation Association studies discussed previously as well as National Park Service and United States Forest Service visitation data, Frantz (2007) estimates that Washington trail users spend an average of $39.05 per hiking trip and about $409 annually in travel expenditures and equipment costs. Additionally, National Forest day hikers and bikers spend between $20 and $37 per visit, while overnight visitors to National Forests spend between $87 and $246.

Updated data regarding visitor spending and the economic impacts of Washington's National Parks are available through the National Park Service's Money Generation Model. This model, developed by Ken Hornback, Daniel Stynes, and Dennis Propst of Michigan State University, incorporates data from National Park Service annual visitation estimates, including the proportion of day and overnight visitors, park visitor spending profiles, regional economic multipliers, and park payrolls. The most recent year for which model data are available is 2010.

The model measures the economic impact of a representative sample of ten National Park sites in Washington. The National Park Service model considered visitation data for Fort Vancouver National Historical Site, Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park (Seattle), Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area, Mount Rainier National Park, North Cascades National Park, Olympic National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, San Juan Island National Historical Park, and Whitman Mission National Historical Site. In this analysis, the researchers determined that there were 7,281,785 visits resulting in total expenditures of $264 million. Direct effects of these expenditures include 3,066 jobs supported, $76 million in labor income, and $121 million in added value (i.e., the total income to the region including wages and salaries to employees, profits and rents to businesses, and sales and business taxes).

Finally, the Trust for Public Land's Center for City Park Excellence has made available research focusing on the health and economic benefits associated with city parks. In a 2011 report calculating the economic impact of Seattle city parks, the Center assessed the city's parks based on seven key attributes including property value, tourism, direct use, health, community cohesion, clean water, and clean air. In reporting the analysis, the Center states that two of the seven factors, property value and tourism, provide Seattle with direct income; two more factors, direct use and health, provide the city with direct savings; finally, community cohesion, clean water, and clean air are factors providing savings to the city government.

Using this model, the study estimates that Seattle's city parks produced $19 million in revenue for the city (including $15 million in increased property value and $4 million in tourism) and $12 million in cost savings for the city ($2 million in stormwater management value, $500,000 in air pollution mitigation, and $10 million in community cohesion value). Wealth-increasing factors and costs savings were also substantial for Seattle residents: the city's parks produce $111 million for residents (including $81 million in additional property value due to park proximity and $30 million in profits from park-related tourism) and save them an additional $512 million

(including $448 million in direct use value and $64 million in health value) (Trust for Public Land, 2011).

Economic Contribution of Hunting, Fishing, and Wildlife-Viewing

Because the results of the general population survey of Washington State residents conducted in support of this SCORP found that hunting and fishing participation are on the upswing in Washington, the economic impacts associated with these activities are of particular interest. The *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* is the best data source measuring state-specific expenditure estimates for hunting and fishing, and the survey also collects expenditure data for wildlife viewing. *National Survey* estimates are derived from hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing participation data for residents 16 years old and older.

The recently released 2011 *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* provides total participation rates and expenditure figures for hunting and fishing activities in Washington State during 2011. Even more beneficial are follow-up studies using the *National Survey* data to calculate the total economic impacts for each activity. These studies, produced by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and the American Sportfishing Association in cooperation with Southwick Associates, a firm specializing in natural resource and outdoor recreation economic impact studies, consider retail sales, total multiplier effects (i.e., the total amount of spending that occurs in the economy as a result of hunter/angler spending), salaries and wages, jobs, and tax revenues.

In total, all Washington State hunting activities in 2011 generated $370 million in retail sales, leading to a total multiplier effect of $614 million. This spending supported 5,612 jobs in the state and $211 million in salaries and wages. Finally, 2011 hunting activities in Washington generated $40 million in state and local taxes and $51 million in federal taxes (NSSF/AFWA, 2013).

Additionally, all Washington State fishing activities in 2011 generated $1.19 million in retail sales, leading to a total multiplier effect of nearly $1.96 million. This spending supported 16,211 jobs in the state and $625 million in salaries and wages. Fishing activities in 2011 generated $120 million in state and local taxes for Washington and $150 million in federal taxes (ASA, 2013).

Expenditure data for wildlife viewing participants is limited to the estimates outlined in the *National Survey* report itself, as no follow-up analysis has determined the total economic impacts from the activity. Total expenditures from wildlife-watching participants in Washington State in 2011 amounted to $3,173 million. The survey breaks down this total amount into trip-related and equipment-related expenditures. Washingtonians' total trip-related expenditures for wildlife viewing in 2011 came to $507 million, including $310 million for food and lodging, $158 million for transportation, and $39 million for other trip costs. Total equipment expenditures amounted to $2,386 million, including $200 million for wildlife-watching equipment, $126 million for auxiliary equipment, and $280 million for other items (USFWS, 2012).

Contribution of Outdoor Recreation to Ecosystem Values

In addition to its many economic benefits, outdoor recreation also supports ecosystem values by preserving lands and open spaces for recreation. Ecosystem values measure the economic benefit of environmental factors that impact quality of life, fish and wildlife, and habitat. Ecosystem values can range from the aesthetic value of a view experienced at the peak of a backcountry hiking trail to ecosystem services provided by watersheds, such as flood protection, drinking water filtration, support for biodiversity, and local weather and climate stability (Earth

Economics, 2010a). These values are difficult to measure in quantitative terms, and thus, they are not often considered in key decision-making regarding outdoor resources. Take, for example, the decision to designate the use of a forest for timber harvest and logging. While this use of forestland may provide quantifiable dividends, it may not consider important ecosystem values, such as the services the forest offers "in terms of flood control, water purification, or habitat for migratory songbirds" (PBS, 2013).

Many resist putting a price on these resources, contending that the economic benefits of ecosystems are priceless. The fact of the matter is, however, that land managers are tasked with the difficult role of allocating funding and resources based on economic data, and ecosystem valuation is becoming an increasingly important consideration in balancing both human and environmental benefits. To this end, extensive research has been and is being conducted to measure ecosystem values by assigning use and non-use values. Use values include direct (i.e., direct human interaction with the ecosystem) and indirect use (i.e., services provided by the ecosystem) values. Non-use values include the intrinsic value of knowing the ecosystem exists (i.e., existence value), the value of knowing ecosystems can by valued by future generations (i.e., bequest value), and value of knowing that users can enjoy goods and services provided by the ecosystem (i.e., altruistic value) (EFTEC, 2005).

In Washington, ecosystem valuation is being used more and more to inform decision-making regarding the state's natural resources. A 2010 study of the Snoqualmie Basin estimated that the watershed provides at least $265 million in ecosystem benefits each year (Earth Economics, 2010a). Similarly, a study conducted to determine the ecosystem value of the Puget Sound region concluded: "14 goods and services provided by nature within the Puget Sound Basin provide benefits worth between $9.7 billion and $83 billion every year . . . the natural capital of the Puget Sound Basin, as if it were a capital asset shows it would be valued between $305 billion and $2.6 trillion (at a 3% discount rate)" (Earth Economics, 2010b). More recently, Clallam County briefed residents on its ecosystem values, which measured "somewhere between $12 billion and $45 billion worth of non-tangible ecosystem services" (Ollikainen, 2013). In terms of dollars, these studies suggest that the ecosystem values of Washington's natural resources and open spaces clearly have tremendous impact on the state's economy, making ecosystem values an important consideration for outdoor recreation opportunities.

Value of Outdoor Recreation

Clearly, providing outdoor recreation opportunities is economically beneficial to Washington and its residents. However, the economic benefits are only some of the major contributions that outdoor recreation provides to the quality of life in Washington. As the Trust for Public Land has outlined in its studies of city parks throughout the United States, outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities provide other benefits that are not easily quantifiable. For example, outdoor recreation contributes to public health and well-being, community cohesion, and pollution reduction (Trust for Public Land, 2011). While the Trust for Public Land has tried to put an economic value on these benefits, it is arguable that the personal lifestyle and social benefits of outdoor recreation opportunities far outweigh the economic dividends.

Environmental Sustainability and Stewardship

By their very nature, parks, recreation areas, and open spaces provide direct health and safety benefits, protection of critical areas and natural resources, and conservation of wildlife diversity and habitat. Thus, one of the most important benefits of outdoor recreation is its promotion of environmental sustainability and stewardship. Environmental sustainability and stewardship focus on providing or participating in recreation while also minimizing impacts to or protecting natural, cultural, and historic resources.

Sustainability and stewardship are more than just environmental buzzwords; they are the key to connecting people with nature. As the United States Forest Service proposes, "[R]ecreation is the portal for understanding and caring for natural resources and public lands. It provides opportunities and motivation to advance from fun and attraction, through awareness, education and understanding, to a role of citizen stewardship—one of 'giving back' and supporting sustained management of natural resources" (2010).

When the National Park Service (2012a) developed its *Green Parks Plan* in April 2012, the agency provided a roadmap for the long-term strategic practice of sustainable management of outdoor recreation. The key to environmental sustainability and stewardship is partnership among federal, state, local, and tribal governments and private outdoor recreation providers, their partners, key stakeholders, communities, and recreationists. Even more important, sustainability and stewardship require residents and leaders at all levels to cooperatively invest in Washington's natural, cultural, and scenic resources.

Outdoor recreation promotes environmental stewardship and volunteerism, which leads to cooperation. The research suggests that outdoor recreationists are more connected to natural resources and tend to have more care and concern for their environment. As the green infrastructures of our communities, outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities play an important role in the conservation of natural, open spaces and land. Because they hold the shared goal of environmental sustainability, outdoor recreation providers, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders throughout the state have an incentive to cooperate in realizing that goal. The focus on environmental sustainability and stewardship has resulted in several initiatives that are helping to ensure outdoor recreation issues are a top-of-mind priority in Washington.

Through major programs and initiatives aimed at youth and adults, Washington is attempting to eliminate *nature deficit disorder*. This effort is having an impact:

- Brownfields revitalization is an effort by the state in which underused properties, where there may be environmental contamination, are being turned into community assets, often through habitat restoration or park creation. According to the Washington Department of Ecology (2011), more than 6,400 cleanups have been completed. Cleanups have resulted in the creation of open space and waterfront access, including Seattle's Olympic Sculpture Park and Tacoma's Thea Foss Waterway.
- Washington Trails Association volunteers maintained and improved a record 170 trails this year. The Washington Trails Association connected nearly 2,700 volunteers with needed trail projects across the state in 2012, contributing close to 100,000 hours of work. These volunteers contributed $2 million worth of service to Washington's public lands in 2012 (Washington Trails Association, 2012).

These are just several examples of how the public is working together with agencies and nonprofit organizations to improve outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship in Washington. As the population swells and the demographic characteristics of our state change, however, it becomes even more important to involve our residents in maintaining an abundance of diverse outdoor recreation opportunities. Why? These recreation opportunities are the major recruiting force for community caring and involvement.

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT WASHINGTON

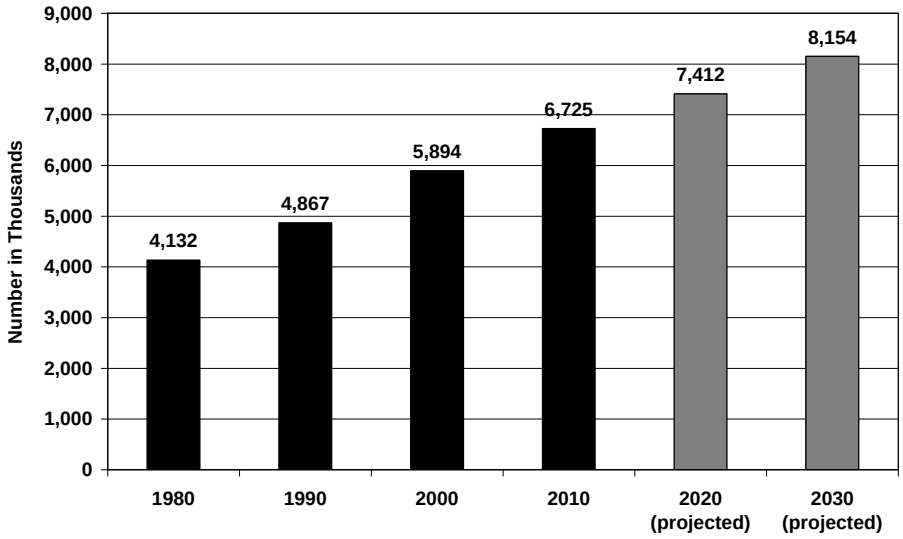
Washington offers an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities that cater to a diverse resident population. Many factors impact recreation, including population growth, urbanization, and changing demographics, among others. This section of the SCORP explores the

environmental, social, and cultural factors of the state's population that influence outdoor recreation demand.

Population Growth

The population in Washington has increased dramatically during the past three decades. With a gain of 2,592,384 residents between 1980 and 2010, the state has experienced a 63% increase in its population, almost double the population increase in the United States as a whole (36%) (United States Census, 2010). Further, as shown in Figure 1.2, Washington's population is expected to increase from 6,725,000 in 2010 to 8,154,000 in 2030, an increase of 21.2%.

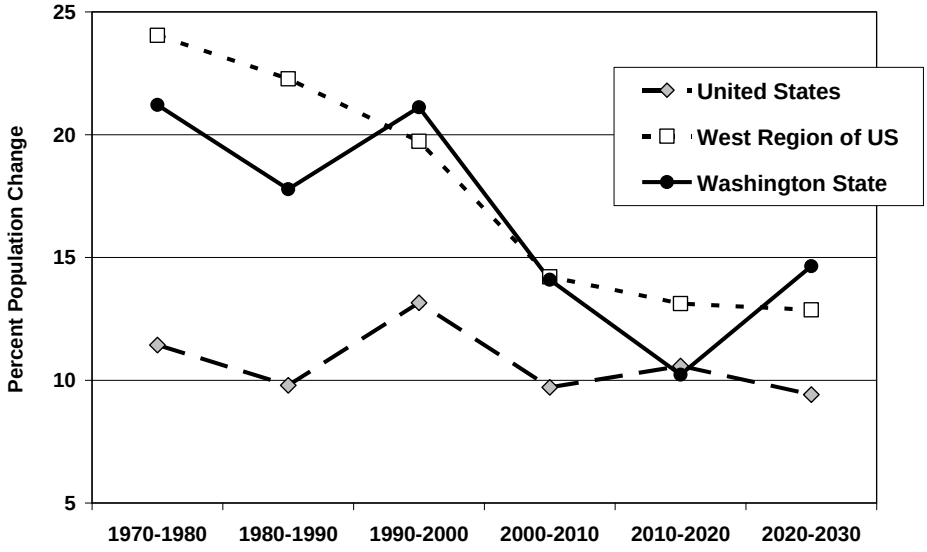
Figure 1.2: Population in Washington from 1980 to 2030.



Source: U.S. Census, 2000, 2005, 2010; Washington Office of Financial Management, 2012.

As shown in Figure 1.3, according to the Census Bureau, between 2020 and 2030, Washington's population is projected to continue increasing faster than in the United States as a whole.

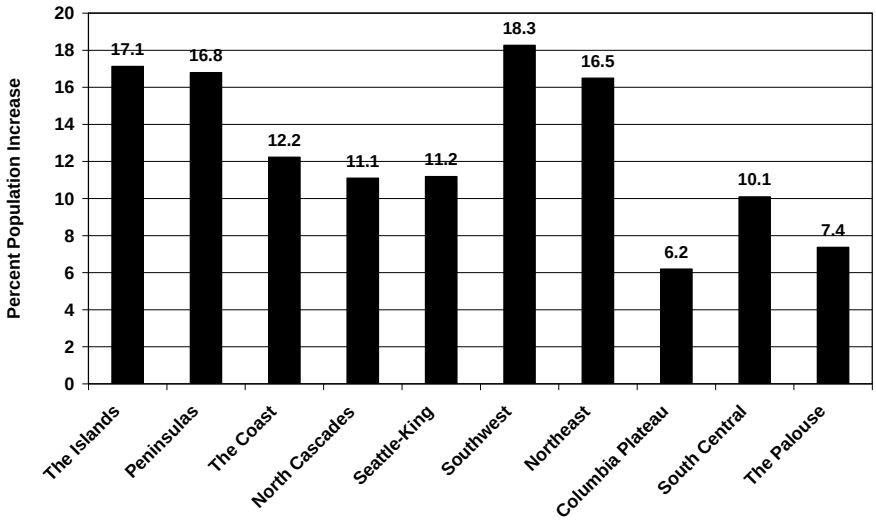
Figure 1.3: The Percent of Population Change for the United States, the West Region of the United States, and Washington From 1970-2030.



Source: U.S. Census, 2000, 2005, 2010.

There are also important regional differences to consider when examining population growth in Washington. Across the state, the Southwest region grew the fastest from 2000 to 2010, experiencing an 18.3% overall increase (Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.4: The Percent of Population Increase From 2000 to 2010 in Washington's SCORP Regions.

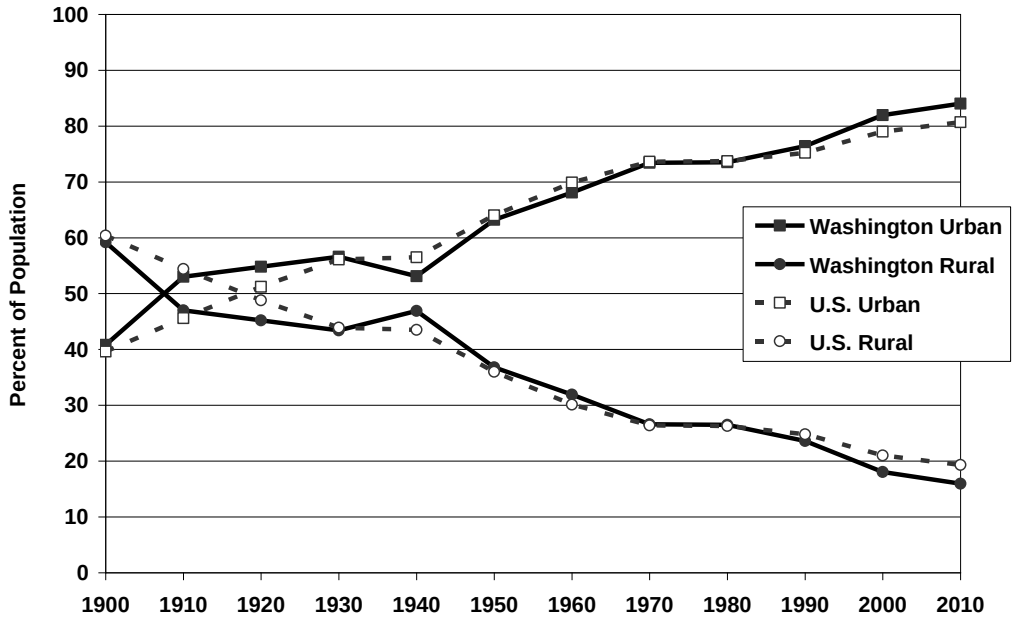


Source: U.S. Census, 2000, 2005, 2010; Washington Office of Financial Management, 2012.

In addition to population growth in Washington, the rate of urbanization has implications for recreation supply and demand in the state. Figure 1.5 shows the percent of the population living in urban and rural housing in the United States and in Washington, with a clear pattern of

a reduced proportion of rural housing in both the United States overall and in the state. Since 1940, the percent of the population living in rural housing has declined at approximately the same rate in Washington as it has across the United States; however, the 2000 and 2010 censuses suggest that the population living in rural housing in Washington appears to be trending downward at a more rapid pace than in the United States overall.

Figure 1.5: The Percent of Washington Population and the United States Population in Urban Versus Rural Housing.



Source: U.S. Census, 2000, 2010.

The aforementioned population changes necessarily impact the future of recreation supply and demand in the State of Washington. With more pressure on resources in the state, as well as increased demand for recreational opportunities, there is a clear need for a long-term recreation plan that will guide federal, state, and local recreation providers' decisions.

In addition to considering changes in population, the SCORP must also consider the changing demographics in the state in an effort to better meet the needs of its residents. Two demographic changes in particular are an aging population and increasing ethnic diversity.

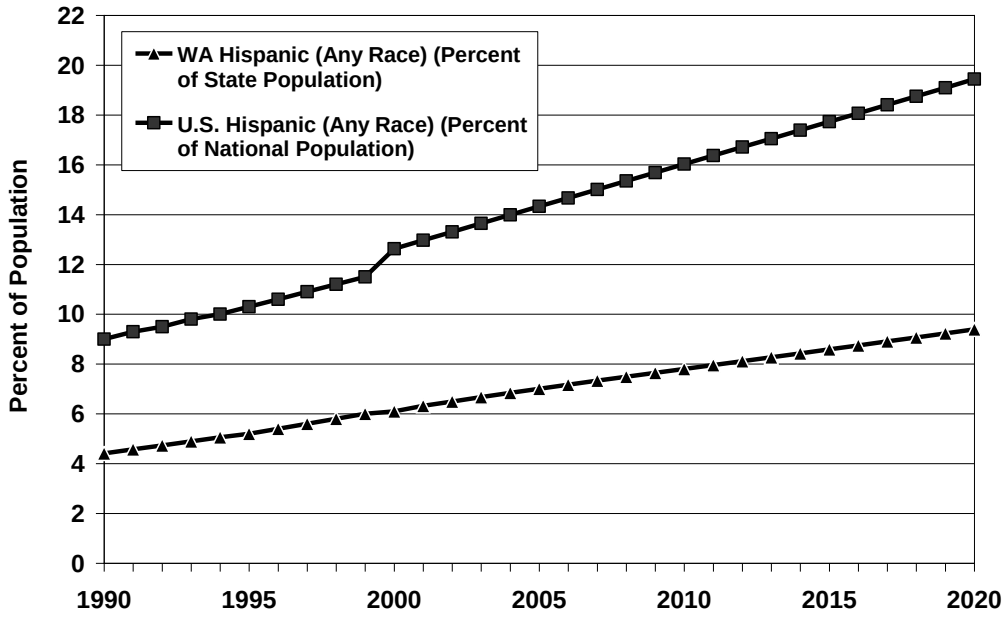
Age

One well-documented trend is the aging of the United States society. The 2010 United States Census reports that more than a quarter of the population (26.4%) is between the ages of 45 and 64 years. In line with national trends, the median age of the population in Washington is trending upward, too. In 1990, the median age in Washington was 32.9 years, but the median age increased to 37.3 years in 2010, and the median age of Washington's population is slightly higher than the median age of the United States population. Factors contributing to the steady increase in the median age nationwide include the aging baby boomer generation, stabilized birth rates, and longer life expectancy. Thus, an aging population should be a major element considered in the planning horizon of Washington's recreation managers.

Ethnicity

Although the majority of the population in Washington identify themselves as white (77.3%), minority populations are increasing. Hispanics/Latinos are projected to be one of the fastest growing populations in Washington over the next decade. Figure 1.6 shows projections for the Hispanic/Latino population in Washington and the United States. As shown, Washington has a lower percentage of Hispanics as a percentage of the state population (11.2%) than the United States overall (16.3%); however, there is a notable upward trend in the Hispanic/Latino population in Washington that mirrors the growing Hispanic/Latino population nationwide.

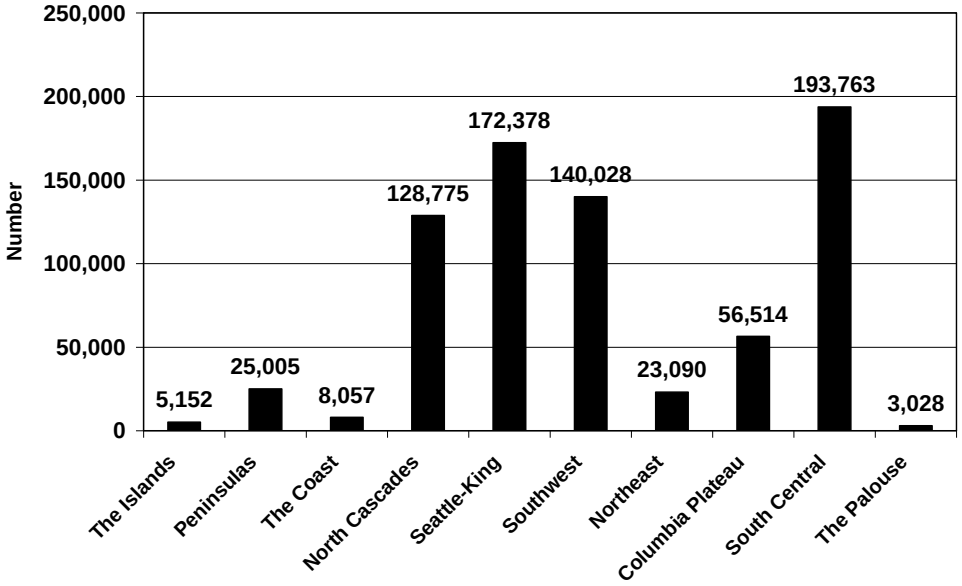
Figure 1.6: The Percent of Hispanics in the Washington Population and the United States Population.



Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

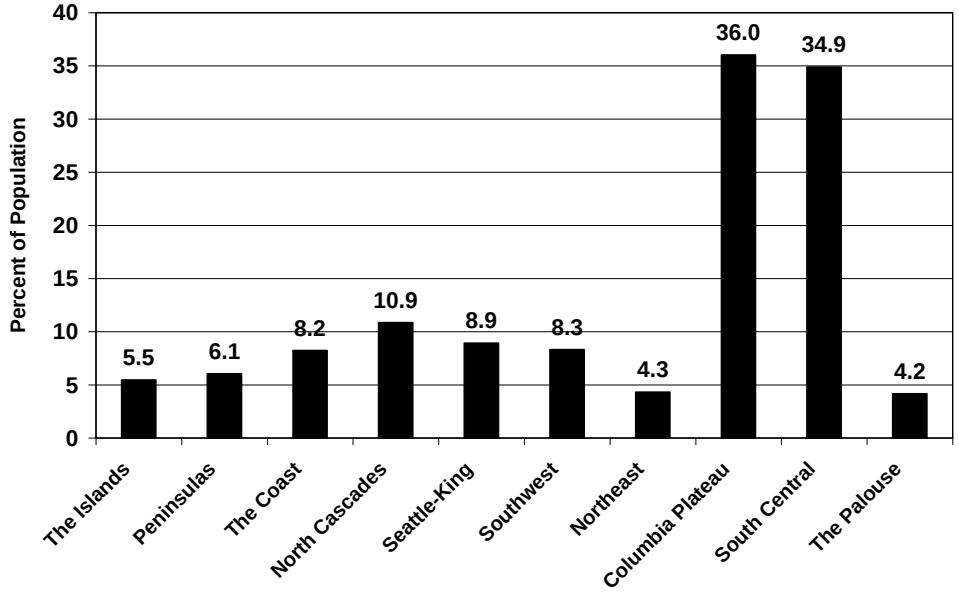
The Hispanic/Latino population differs among the regions of the state. The Seattle-King, South Central, Southwest, and North Cascades regions of Washington have the largest Hispanic/Latino populations (Figure 1.7). As shown in Figure 1.8, however, the Columbia Plateau and South Central regions have the highest percentage of Hispanics/Latinos among each region's total population, both with more than a third of the population of Hispanic ethnicity (36.0% and 34.9% respectively). Conversely, the lowest percentage of Hispanics/Latinos among each region's total population is in the Northeast (4.3%) and the Palouse (4.2%).

Figure 1.7: Hispanic/Latino Population in Washington's SCORP Regions in 2010.



Source: U.S. Census, 2010.

Figure 1.8: Percent of Population That Is Hispanic/Latino in Washington's SCORP Regions in 2010.

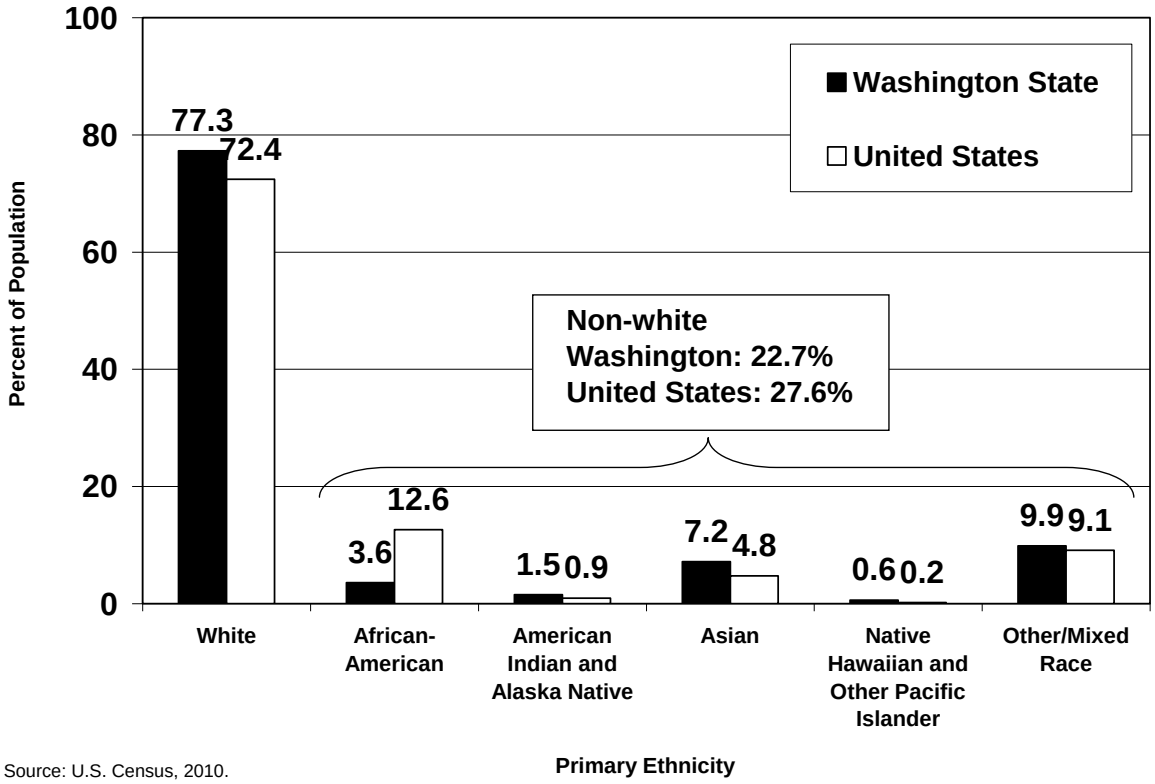


Source: U.S. Census, 2010.

Compared with the United States, Washington has a substantially lower percentage of the population who identify themselves as African-American: 3.6% of Washingtonians are African-American, while more than triple this percentage of the United States population identify themselves as African-American (12.6%). Conversely, Washington has a higher percentage of

people identifying themselves as Asian (7.2%) than does the United States (4.8%) (Figure 1.9). Still, the vast majority of the population in Washington identify themselves as white (77.3%)

Figure 1.9: Ethnicity of Washington's Population Compared to the United States' Population in 2010.

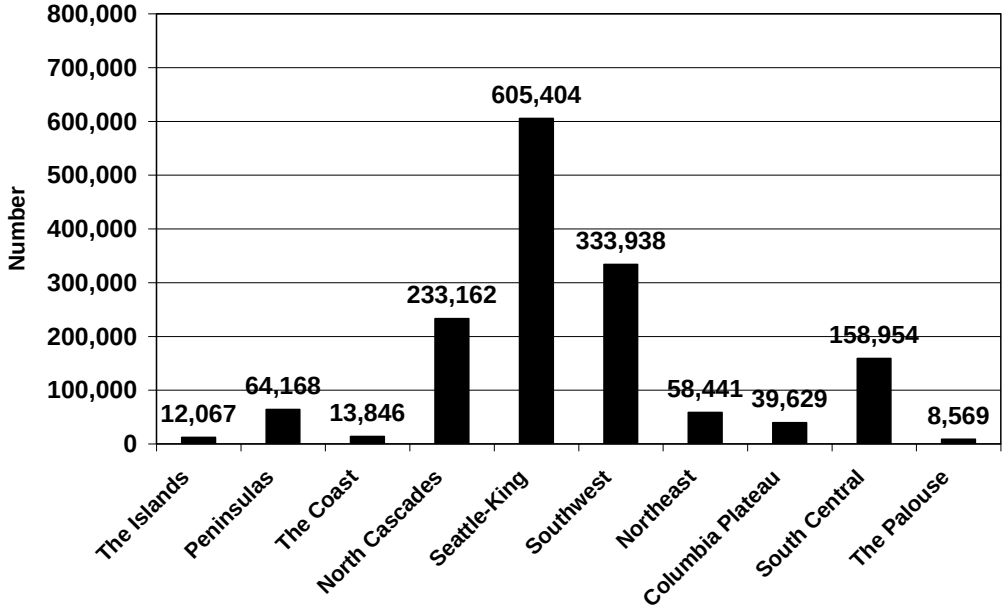


Source: U.S. Census, 2010.

Rounding on graph may cause apparent discrepancy in sum.

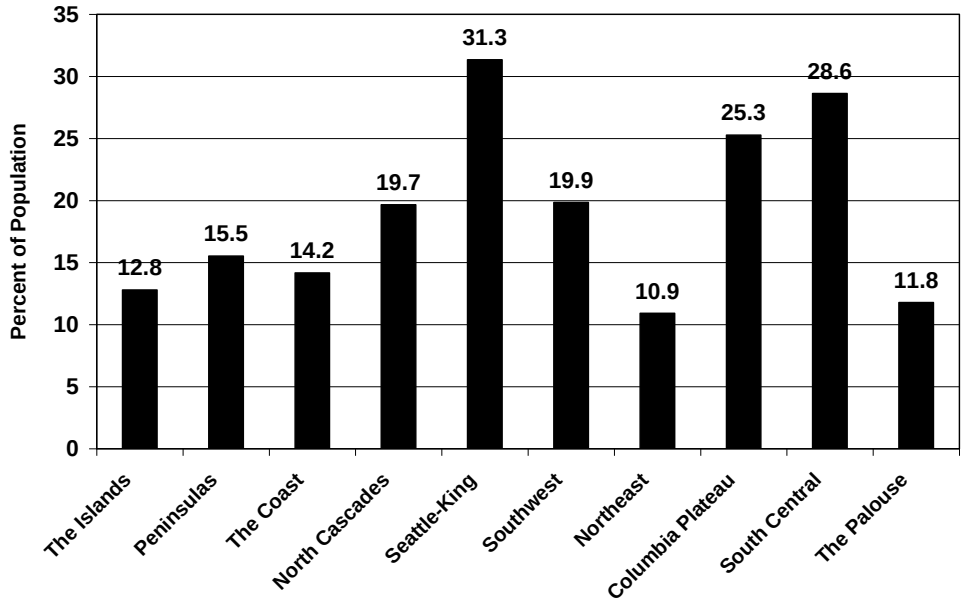
Approximately 22.7% of Washington's population is non-white or a mix of ethnicity. The Seattle-King region has the largest non-white population, by far. The North Cascades and Southwest regions also have large non-white populations, while the Palouse has the lowest non-white population (Figure 1.10). As shown in Figure 1.11, in the following SCORP regions, more than a quarter of the population is non-white and/or mixed race: Seattle-King (31.3%), South Central (28.6%), and Columbia Plateau (25.3%).

Figure 1.10: Number of People of Non-White and/or Mixed Ethnicity in Washington's SCORP Regions in 2010.



Source: U.S. Census, 2010.

Figure 1.11: Percent of the Population That Is of Non-White and/or Mixed Ethnicity in Washington's SCORP Regions in 2010.



Source: U.S. Census, 2010.

These trends suggest that ethnic diversity changes should be a major element considered in the planning horizon of Washington's recreation managers.

Summary of Demographic Trends
As shown above, one of the greatest challenges among recreation providers over the next decade will be meeting the demands of an ever-increasing population. The state has experienced a 63% increase in its population between 1980 and 2010, and its population is expected to increase an additional 21% by 2030. Currently, the largest population growth is occurring in the Southwest, Islands, Peninsulas, and Northeast regions. These regions experienced almost 20% population growth between 2000 and 2010.

In addition to this growth, changing ethnic demographic characteristics necessitate a better understanding of recreation supply and user demands. The key demographic changes that will challenge recreation providers in the next decade include increasing urbanization, the aging population in the state, and increasing minority populations.

THE ROLE OF SCORP IN AGENCY PLANNING

The SCORP is an important tool in the planning and management of more than 43.1 million acres of upland (non-aquatic) land statewide. The SCORP guides the management of more than 20.2 million acres of public land in the state and also provides a resource for private landowners who own approximately 23 million of acres of land—a diversity of lands that range from commercially owned water parks to privately owned timberland and backyards, all of which support highly popular forms of recreation, from swimming, to hunting, to picnicking, to mountaineering, to skiing, and so much more. Table 1.2 shows the distribution of land in Washington.

Table 1.2: Distribution of Land in Washington.

Owner/Manager of Land	Acres
Federal Habitat and Recreation Lands	9,200,000
Other Federal Lands	3,800,000
State Habitat and Recreation Lands	727,000
Other State Lands	3,100,000
Local Government Lands	659,000
Subtotal for Government Agencies	**17,486,000**
Tribal Lands	**2,700,000**
Private Lands	**23,000,000**
TOTAL	**43,186,000**

Source: Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2005a.

Federal Government
The National Park Service, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and, to a lesser extent, the Fish and Wildlife Service offer resource-oriented recreation opportunities on a broad scale. These resources include recreation that depends on sustainable management of natural, cultural, historic, and other resources. Some examples include forests, ocean beaches, historic sites and structures, and cultural resources. The large, open landscapes provide visual and aesthetic interest, watershed functions such as stormwater retention and water filtration, and carbon sequestration, among other non-recreational benefits. Recreational opportunities on the federal landscape take many forms, from mountaineering to motorcycle or horseback

riding, from camping to sightseeing, and from rock climbing to walking. Forest and park roads are important for sightseeing, watching wildlife, and other dispersed recreation.

State Government
The State of Washington recognizes recreation as a priority of government. State government has two important roles in outdoor recreation. Its first important role is as the owner and manager of lands and facilities for recreation. The second important state role is funding and providing other support for federal, local, and private recreation providers.

As the manager of lands and facilities as well as a source of funding for the work of others, the state has developed the following recreation priorities for the next five years:

- Promote the economic benefits of outdoor recreation in communication and outreach
- Maximize sustainability and environmental stewardship
- Continue to offer diverse outdoor recreation activities and opportunities
- Take advantage of current technology by using a map-based information system to provide an inventory of outdoor recreation supply
- Recognize there are two inter-related factors of sustainable recreation
- Follow the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's guidelines for sustainability
- Use the National Park Service's *Green Parks Plan* and the Washington State *Planning for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space in Your Community* as touchstones for promoting environmental sustainability and stewardship
- Continue support of *America's Great Outdoors Initiative*
- Consider the implications of changing demographics when making recreation decisions
- Increase and improve access for disabled recreationists in Washington

Local Government
Local government agencies, such as public utility districts, port districts, counties, cities, and towns, also provide and manage recreation facilities and opportunities. Local agency recreation opportunities tend to be service- and facility-driven (e.g., recreation programming, ball fields, courts, pools, trails, paths). Efforts important to the priorities of local government include providing close-to-home recreation opportunities, supporting public health through facilities that encourage physical activities, and providing facilities that encourage personal mobility. Local sidewalks, streets, and roads are important for walking, jogging, and bicycling. Local schools are important providers of playgrounds and ball fields, and many communities sponsor organized recreation activities.

Private Providers
Whether a family gathering in the backyard or golf at a members-only club, recreation in all its forms is critical to the mental and physical health and well-being of the state's residents. Commercial ventures offer recreation opportunities as a business. These recreation opportunities can range from highly-developed water parks to convenient recreational vehicle parking for visitors. Some private entities, especially large-tract commercial forest owners, often find that managing access is a challenge but, at the same time, see the provision of recreation as a way to protect their lands and provide income.

Use of SCORP in Grants Administration
The SCORP is the planning document that helps guide recreation providers in fulfilling recreation goals. As such, the SCORP is designed to help decision-makers better understand the most important recreation issues statewide and make funding decisions based on public

priorities and expectations. Under the LWCF Program, the following types of projects are eligible for funding (RCO, 2012):

- Acquisition: the acquisition of real property.
- Development: the development or renovation of public outdoor recreation facilities.
- Combination: both acquisition and development in the same project.

Organizations must establish eligibility by producing a plan before they may apply for grants. Project proposals must be consistent with the outdoor recreation goals and objectives contained in the SCORP and recreation elements of local comprehensive plans. Grant applications are evaluated by the LWCF Advisory Committee against criteria called the "Priority Rating Analysis," which was developed by the RCO and the National Park Service. The criteria are presented as questions and are used to score and rank project proposals.

For the LWCF Program, grant proposals are evaluated to determine how and to what extent each project addresses one or more LWCF priorities identified in the SCORP. The SCORP identifies four priorities for LWCF grant support (RCO, 2012):

- Maximize sustainability and environmental stewardship. One of the most important benefits of outdoor recreation is its promotion of sustainability and environmental stewardship. The key to sustainability and stewardship is a partnership among federal, state, local, tribal, and private outdoor recreation providers, their partners, key stakeholders, communities, and recreationists. Even more important, sustainability and stewardship require residents and leaders at all levels to cooperatively invest in our natural, cultural, and scenic resources.
- Continue to offer diverse outdoor recreation activities and opportunities. Washington residents participate in a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities. Offering diverse opportunities is important to managing user conflict and meeting the demands of underrepresented populations, such as urban residents, minorities, and others.
- Increase and improve access for disabled recreationists in Washington. Research suggests there is a need to increase support to disabled recreationists, such as providing barrier-free recreation access and facilities for residents with disabilities. In addition, access can be improved, such as by providing access that allows disabled recreationists to easily and naturally be included in family and friendship activities.
- Consider the implications of changing demographics when making recreation decisions. One of the greatest challenges among recreation providers over the next decade will be meeting the demands of an ever-increasing and diverse population in Washington. Washington is becoming more urban, older, and more diverse. It is important for providers to understand how these demographic changes impact recreation demand and to address these growing needs.

Proposals are also evaluated based on need, design, urgency, viability, and alignment with federal grant program goals. This evaluation rubric is used to determine whether outdoor recreation providers will be awarded grant funding (RCO, 2011).

"For me, quality of life is almost synonymous with outdoor recreation opportunities."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

CHAPTER 2: ASSESSMENT OF SUPPLY OF OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN WASHINGTON

Chapter Highlights

- Public lands make up a total of 17.5 million acres in Washington. Public lands are managed by federal, state, and local agencies, and tribal governments.
- Private lands make up 23.0 million acres or 53% of the total land supply in Washington. There are a large number of private recreation providers, such as not-for-profit organizations, land trusts, and more.
- According to the *1999 Public and Tribal Lands Inventory,* almost half of all public lands in the state are used for outdoor recreation, habitat, and environmental protection.
- When providers were asked to indicate the percent of their facilities that are fully functional, the average of the responses is 77% among local providers and 78% among federal/state/tribal/not-for-profit providers.
- Recreation providers were also asked to estimate the number of sites they manage that support sustainable recreation. For the purposes of the survey, sustainable recreation opportunities were defined as opportunities for a maximum recreation experience that also minimize impacts to or protect natural, cultural, and historic resources (environmental sustainability). Sustainable recreation is more common among federal/state/not-for-profit providers: 85.8% support sustainable recreation while 58.2% of local sites support sustainable recreation.
- The assessment of the supply of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington suggests that the supply of recreation is not completely meeting public demand, and meeting that demand is further challenged by the pressure of population growth and urbanization in Washington.
- Several elements should be considered when planning for an adequate outdoor recreation supply: recreation potential, availability and access, conservation, land use, and economic feasibility.

Washington offers a diverse landscape, from the marine coastal climate and temperate rainforests of the western part of the state and the high mountains of the Cascades Range to the dry, arid climate of the eastern portion and the farmlands of the Palouse. Its unique variation in climates and landscapes offers an abundance of outdoor recreational activities with marked regional differences in recreation opportunities. Just as the land itself is diverse, so too is the ownership of that land. Many federal, state, and local agencies and tribal governments own and manage land in Washington State. While the purview and mission of these individual agencies and organizations may differ, the combined objective among public land managers is to provide sustainable land use (that is, land use that minimizes environmental impacts), with recreation being a fundamentally valued use by all residents. In addition to the array of public land ownership, there are many private landowners who also provide recreation opportunities. This chapter assesses the supply of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington and explores how well the supply is meeting public demand for these activities.

LAND SUPPLY IN WASHINGTON

Public lands comprise a total of 17.5 million acres. Approximately 13.0 million acres are federal (74% of all public land in Washington), 3.8 million are state (22%), and 659,000 are locally owned or managed (4%) (Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2005a).

Federal lands are primarily managed by the United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, and the United States Department of Interior, as well as government agencies that fall under the larger umbrella of the Department of Interior, including the National Park Service, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Bureau of Reclamation. Together, these recreation providers work to supply recreational opportunities while also conserving natural, aquatic, and environmental resources. With a focus on open, natural spaces and resource management, federal land managers typically manage nature-based recreation opportunities, such as hiking, camping, wildlife viewing, hunting, fishing, boating, and similar activities. Interested recreationists can purchase passes from a suite of annual and lifetime passes through the *America the Beautiful—the National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass* or "Interagency" pass program. Each pass covers entrance fees at National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges as well as standard amenity fees at National Forests and Grasslands, and at lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management and Bureau of Reclamation (U.S. Department of Interior, 2013).

State-owned lands in Washington are primarily owned and managed by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (2013) owns 109,002 upland and aquatic acres and manages a state parks system that includes 117 developed parks, recreation programs, trails, boating safety programs, and winter recreation. The State Parks and Recreation Commission focuses on land acquisition designed to protect recreational, cultural, historical, and natural sites for the enjoyment and enrichment of state residents and future generations (WPRC, 2008). While focused on land acquisitions to provide nature-based activities, the state parks system also promotes the exercise and lifestyle benefits of outdoor recreation by providing jogging and biking trails, conserves the state's past by conserving cultural and historical areas, and fosters awareness through its interpretive and educational parks programs.

The Department of Natural Resources manages 5.6 million acres of state-owned lands, including forest, range, agricultural, aquatic, and commercial lands. Most recreation managed by the agency takes place in the 2.2 million acres of forests that are state trust lands. These trust lands provide income to support public schools, state institutions, and county services. The Department also provides low impact recreation to significant numbers of users on Natural Resources Conservation Areas (NRCA), such as Mt. Si and West Tiger Mountain NRCAs. The agency manages its lands to provide fish and wildlife habitat, clean and abundant water, and public access for recreation. The Department provides recreation opportunities throughout Washington for hiking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, camping, off-road vehicle riding, mountain biking, and boating. These opportunities include the management of 1,100 miles of trails and 143 recreation sites in a wide variety of landscapes.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife owns or manages nearly a million acres of land and public access sites apportioned among 32 designated Wildlife Areas across the state. The Department operates under a dual mission: To conserve and protect critical habitat and fish and wildlife species, while at the same time providing opportunities for residents to participate in hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-related recreation activities. To this end, the

Department is responsible for fish and wildlife management and for the implementation and enforcement of fish and wildlife management regulations, including licensing for hunting and fishing, setting the hunting and fishing seasons, and determining catch or harvest limits. Often, land is acquired by the Department of Fish and Wildlife for the provision of or access to hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-related recreation activities (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2013a).

In addition to lands managed by federal and state governments, local municipalities such as counties, cities, and towns manage outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. Local governments provide outdoor recreation opportunities on a smaller scale, usually managing a much smaller land area. Yet local governments may manage many facilities or open spaces for recreation activities. Local outdoor recreation providers play an important role in providing recreation opportunities close to home and at community levels. Opportunities provided by local agencies typically include recreation facilities such as sports fields, playgrounds, skate parks, and public pools. Figure 2.1 shows a map of the supply of public lands in Washington (Washington Department of Ecology, 2011).

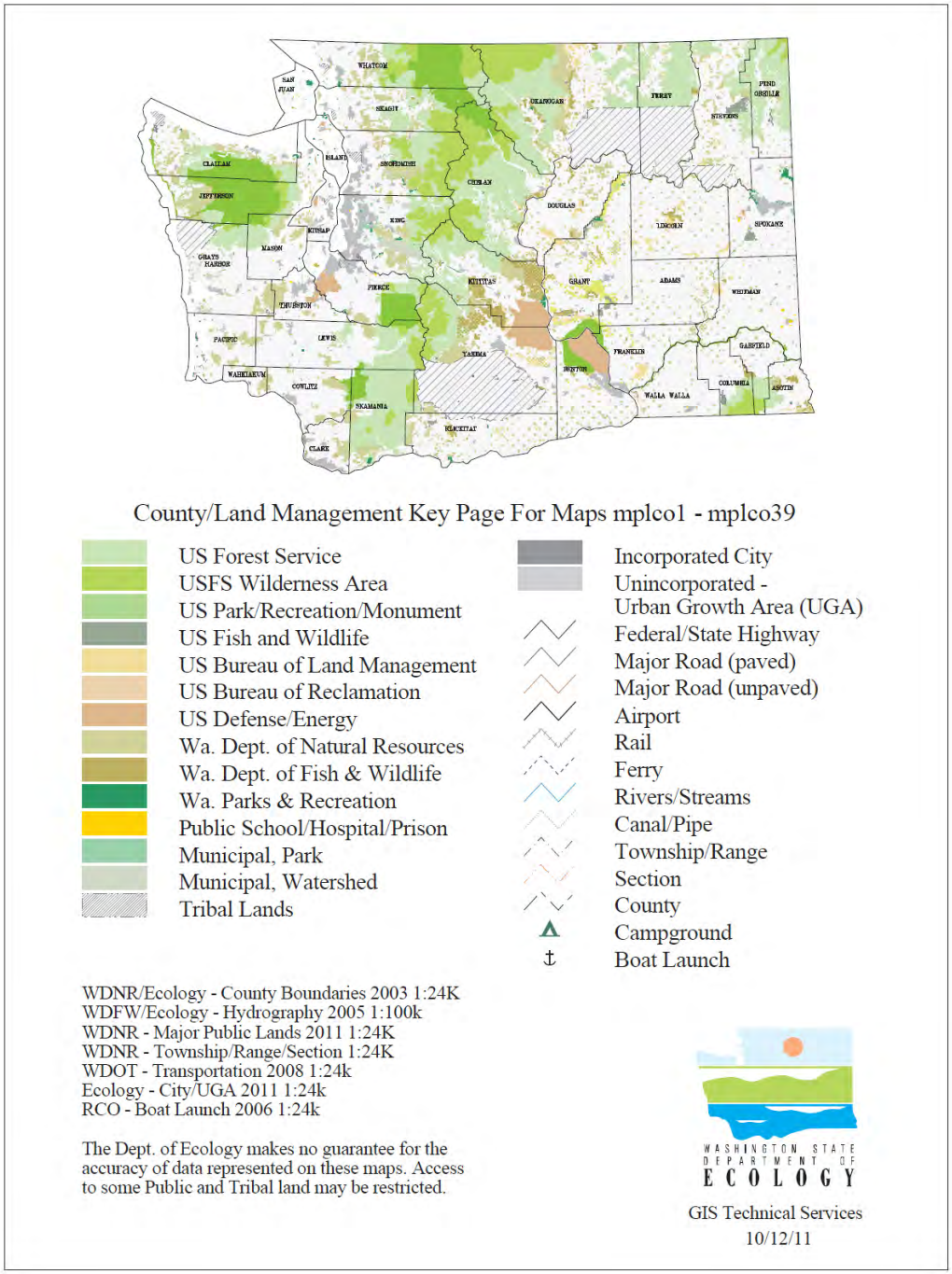
Private lands comprise 23.0 million acres or 53% of the total land supply in the State of Washington. While most of these lands are owned privately or by corporations for non-public purposes, there are also a large number of private recreation providers. In general, there are three types of private lands: (1) private land, not for recreation (e.g., residences, stores); (2) private land specifically for recreation, and (3) private land that has ancillary recreation use (e.g., a timber company allowing hunting). These include non-governmental recreation providers that are either nonprofit or for-profit organizations. Some examples of private recreation providers include land trusts, clubs and conservation organizations, and religious organizations.

"In this time of reduced budgets, maintaining what we have is crucial. Our parks are being used very heavily, and we are constantly finding ways of doing more with less. We have fewer employees doing more work with less money on old equipment. In the meantime, our population has been consistently growing, which further puts strain on the facilities. There is a push to provide more park facilities, but the money to develop and maintain them is difficult to come by."
—South Central Recreation Provider

"The ability to optimally maintain and care for our assets (parks and facilities) during challenging budget times when local budgets have been reduced significantly; hence, hammering our ability to keep up with maintenance and service levels. Another related issue is the need for more grant dollars to help with renovating and preserving existing public assets. While acquisition is still important, major urban cities such as Seattle are having a harder time protecting and preserving our recreation assets."
—Seattle-King Recreation Provider

"… how much more recreational opportunities and wildlife habitat will be lost as our population continues to expand and consume space and resources in the name of growth? We should continue to use every opportunity and avenue to protect our natural resources and spaces while we can. We can always change our mind about those reservations in the future. On the contrary, it is difficult and expensive to reclaim areas that we let slip through our grasp and are now industrialized or otherwise developed."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Figure 2.1: Supply of Public Lands in Washington.



SUPPLY OF OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES

An assessment of the supply of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities should consider the quantity of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities as well as the quality and condition of these facilities and opportunities. For the assessment of the supply of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington, the researchers consulted Washington's *1999 Public and Tribal Lands Inventory* and two web-based surveys of recreation providers: (1) a survey of local recreation providers and (2) a survey of federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation

providers. The *1999 Public and Tribal Lands Inventory* was consulted instead of the 2005 update because of the level of detail provided in the 1999 report. An update to the *1999 Public and Tribal Lands Inventory* is available at http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/hrlcg/LandsFinal.pdf.

The surveys of recreation providers were conducted for the SCORP to assess outdoor recreation supply in the state and provide a measure for assigning regional Level of Service scores for recreation facilities and opportunities. The results reported are based on information provided by these recreation providers; in some cases, providers have incomplete information.

The survey of local recreation providers consisted of the following:

- Park department directors and other administrative personnel (those with project management or park management responsibilities) in local counties, cities, and towns.
- Directors and project managers of districts, such as parks districts, port districts, public utility districts, or irrigation districts.

The survey of federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers consisted of the following:

- Federal and state agency personnel (those with project management, park management, or administrative responsibilities).
- Tribal representatives.
- Nonprofit organization administrators (nonprofits concerned with outdoor recreation and natural resources).

This assessment considers recreation functionality, environmental sustainability, and public access to outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities as a measure of the quantity and/or quality of supply.

Although an update of state-owned lands was provided in 2005, a comprehensive public lands inventory has not been conducted in Washington since 1999. This lands inventory is useful for determining the quantity of lands available for different uses. For this inventory, Washington's public lands were categorized into four land-use designations (Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2001):

- Outdoor recreation, habitat, and environmental protection (e.g., parks, trails, camping, wildlife areas, environmental restoration, mitigation sites).
- Resource production or extraction (e.g., agriculture lands, timber production, harvest lands, hatcheries and fish culture facilities, game farms).
- Transportation or utilities infrastructure (e.g., roads, airports, railroads, transit centers, sewage treatment plants, irrigation facilities, water supply facilities).
- Other government services or facilities (e.g., offices, city halls, courthouses, community centers, interpretive centers, stadiums, schools, hospitals).

The lands inventory showed that, at that time, almost half of all public lands in the state were used for outdoor recreation, habitat, and environmental protection. Table 2.1 shows public lands, and Table 2.2 shows tribal lands. At the time of the land inventory, 91% of land used for outdoor recreation, habitat, and environmental purposes was managed by the federal government (Figure 2.2).

Table 2.1: Summary of 1999 Public Land Inventory Data.

Landowner	Outdoor Rec., Habitat, Environmental Protection	Resource Production and Extraction	Transportation and Utilities Infrastructure	Other Government Services and Facilities	Unknown Non-Aquatic Uses	Total Non-Aquatic Acres	Reported Aquatic Acres	Total
FEDERAL ACRES (in thousands)								
U.S. Forest Service	6,887	2,115	83	1	19	9,104	85	9,189
National Park Service	1,831	0	0	0	0	1,831	0	1,831
Bureau of Reclamation	0	0	469	0	0	469	11	480
U.S. Army	0	0	0	404	0	404	0	404
Bureau of Land Management	74	318	0	0	0	393	3	396
U.S. Department of Energy / Hanford	163	0	1	199	0	363	1	364
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	1	0	85	0	0	86	6	92
All Other Federal Agencies	187	2	10	37	0	235	2	237
FEDERAL TOTAL	9,143	2,436	647	640	19	12,885	108	12,994
STATE ACRES (in thousands)								
Washington Department of Natural Resources	82	2,830	18	4	41	2,975	2,407	5,382
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	456	5	0	0	0	461	1	462
Washington Department of Transportation	0	0	151	2	0	152	0	152
Washington State Parks*	109	0	0	0	0	94	15	109
All Other State Agencies	2	2	0	29	0	33	12	45
STATE TOTAL	648	2,837	169	35	41	3,730	2,419	6,149
LOCAL ACRES (in thousands)								
Counties	47	46	91	14	16	213	4	217
Cities and Towns	167	15	120	12	3	317	3	320
Port Districts	4	3	18	17	0	42	4	46
All Other Local Governments	19	2	14	24	1	61	15	76
LOCAL TOTAL	237	66	243	67	19	632	27	659
TOTAL PUBLIC ACRES (in thousands)	10,029	5,338	1,059	742	79	17,247	2,554	19,802

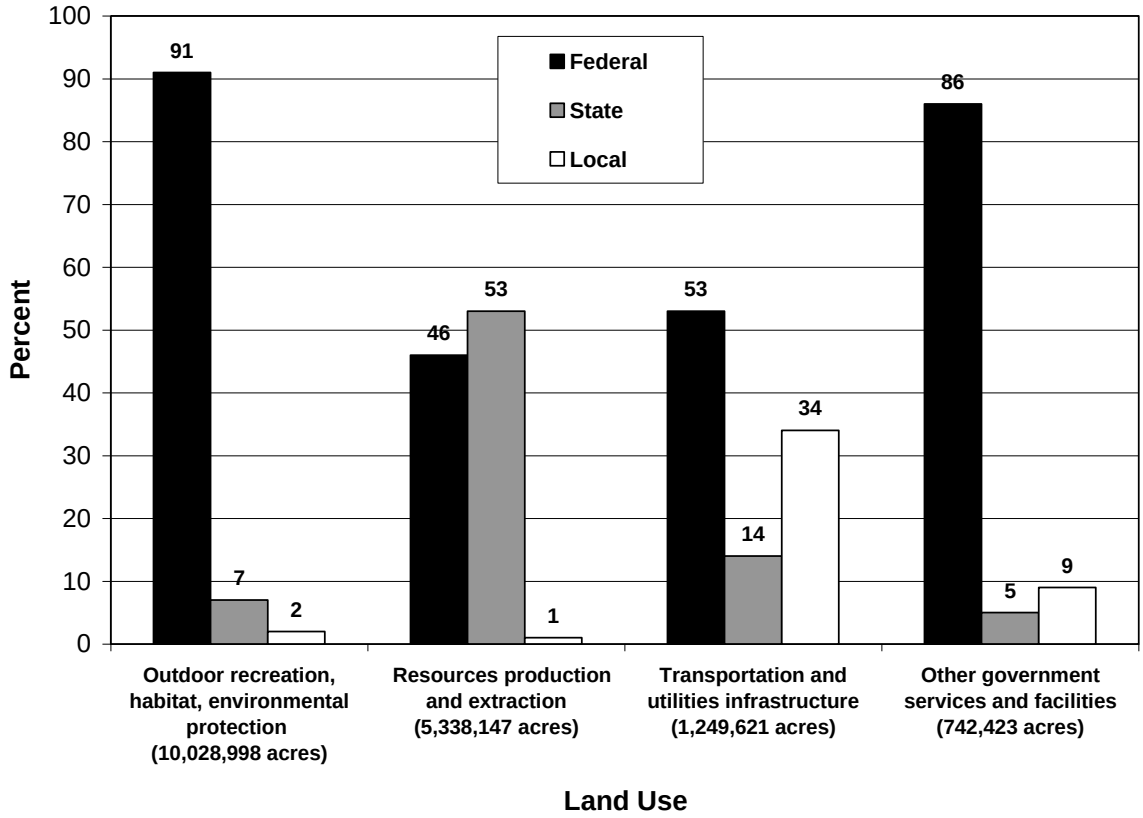
Easement acres not included. Source: Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2001.
*Updated based on State Parks inventory information provided on March 19, 2013.

Table 2.2. Summary of 1999 Tribal Land Inventory Data.

Landowner	Outdoor Rec., Habitat, Environmental Protection	Resource Production and Extraction	Transportation and Utilities Infrastructure	Other Government Services and Facilities	Unknown Non-Aquatic Uses	Total Non-Aquatic Acres	Reported Aquatic Acres	Total
TRIBAL ACRES (in thousands)								
Yakama Nation	0	0	0	0	1,153	1,153	0	1,153
Colville Confederated Tribes	0	0	0	0	1,119	1,119	0	1,119
Quinault Nation	21	160	0	0	0	181	0	181
Spokane Tribe	0	0	0	0	132	132	0	132
All Other Tribes	27	46	1	10	8	92	0	92
TRIBAL TOTAL*	47	206	2	10	2,412	2,677	0	2,677

Source: Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2001.
*Rounding may cause apparent discrepancy in sums.

Figure 2.2: Proportions of Public Land Uses Managed by Types of Government.



Source: Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2001.

The top landowning agencies in Washington include three federal agencies (United States Forest Service, National Park Service, and the United States Bureau of Reclamation) and three state agencies (the Washington Department of Natural Resources, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission) (Recreation

and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2001). These recreation providers and land managers are facing increasing challenges in the provision of recreation opportunities, due in large part to population growth, urbanization, and land conversion from a natural to a built environment, which limit the amount of natural land available for acquisition or that can otherwise be used for outdoor recreation.

Given the importance of forests and woodlands to recreation providers, it is important to consider land conversion, particularly as it pertains to forests in Washington. Many of the forests in the state are being converted into non-forestry uses (e.g., housing), and this has resulted in loss of timberland, wildlife habitat, and recreation opportunities. According to a report conducted by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (with the University of Washington), each year approximately 0.37% to 1.04% of forestland is converted to residential or commercial use. According to the research, this resulted in a decline in timberland (not including National Forest land) from approximately 8 million acres in 1978 to 7 million acres in 2001 (Partridge and MacGregor, 2007). Further, the report indicates that much of Washington's forestland is in areas that are experiencing urban growth, and 17% of forestland in Western Washington was converted for other use from 1988 through 2004. Several factors drive the conversion of forestland, including population growth, urbanization, and zoning, as well as the economic pressures felt by private landowners.

THE ABILITY OF RECREATION SUPPLY TO MEET PUBLIC DEMAND

Recreation providers were asked to estimate the percentage of outdoor recreation facilities and sites managed by their agency or organization that are fully functional. Among those who provided a response to the survey, the mean percent of facilities considered fully functional among local recreation providers is 76.6%; similarly, the mean percent of sites considered fully functional among federal/state/nonprofit providers is 77.8%. For the most part, it appears that the majority of facilities and sites meet the design and safety guidelines assigned by their agency or organization. However, there are many facilities and sites in need of renovation, repair, or maintenance to meet their goals and guidelines.

Recreation providers were also asked to estimate the number of sites they manage that support sustainable recreation. When discussing sustainability, it is important to realize that there are two primary and inter-related factors of sustainable recreation: (1) preserving and protecting the longevity of environmental resources and assets (environmental sustainability) and (2) preserving and protecting the longevity of recreational assets (recreational sustainability). For the purposes of the survey, sustainable recreation opportunities were defined as opportunities for a maximum recreation experience that also minimize impacts to or protect natural, cultural, and historic resources (environmental sustainability). Among local providers, a mean of 58.2% of sites support sustainable recreation, while a mean of 85.8% of federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers support sustainable recreation. For the local survey, providers were asked to rate the importance of 45 activities. Table 2.3 shows the activities, ranked by importance.

"Everyone deserves access to public lands to enjoy their recreational pursuits."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Table 2.3: Importance of Activity.

	Rank in importance	Total number rating importance high or medium
Picnic areas	1	57
Equipped playgrounds/play areas	2	47
Surfaced trails	3	42
Unsurfaced trails	3	42
Boat access sites for non-motorized boats	5	41
Boat access sites that accommodate motorized craft	6	39
Baseball/softball	7	38
Sports fields with soccer goals	8	37
Sports fields	9	35
Sports fields for multipurpose use	9	35
Basketball	11	32
Cultural and/or historic sites	12	30
Freshwater beach access	13	29
Saltwater beach access	13	29
Designated sightseeing areas	15	28
Fishing piers	15	28
Roller skating/skateboard parks	17	27
Surfaced trails appropriate for bicycles	18	26
Outdoor tennis courts	18	26
Community gardens or pea patches	20	23
Dog parks	21	20
Unsurfaced trails appropriate for bicycles	21	20
Campgrounds	23	18
Nature interpretive centers	24	17
Pump-out stations	24	17
Outdoor swimming pools	26	14
Disc golf	27	12
Sports fields with lacrosse goals	28	11
Designated bridle trails	29	10
Equestrian facilities	30	9
Golf courses	30	9
Sports fields with football goals	32	7
Air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.) sites	33	6
Outdoor tracks for running/jogging	34	5
Shooting ranges	35	3
Sports fields with rugby goals	35	3
Designated snow and ice trails	37	2
Designated hunting areas	37	2
Shooting ranges that accommodate rifle/handgun	37	2
Shooting ranges that accommodate skeet/trap/clay/target games	37	2
Outdoor ice skating rinks	41	1
Downhill skiing areas	41	1
Designated motorized areas without trails	41	1
Shooting ranges that accommodate archery	41	1
Designated motorized trails	45	0

The results of the outdoor recreation provider surveys cannot be generalized to all recreation providers in Washington because not all providers responded to the survey. However, the findings suggest that the top recreation facilities or opportunities of importance among providers include picnic areas, equipped playgrounds/play areas, surfaced and unsurfaced trails, and boat access sites that accommodate non-motorized boats and motorized crafts. As Chapter 3 shows, these facilities and opportunities help support some of the most popular activities in the state. For example, as shown in Figure 3.1 in Chapter 3, 81% of residents participate in picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out, all of which are supported by picnic areas. Similarly, surfaced and unsurfaced trails support the 90% of residents who participate in walking, hiking, climbing, and mountaineering.

At the other end of the spectrum, recreation providers rated shooting ranges, outdoor ice skating rinks, downhill skiing areas, designated motorized areas without trails, and designated motorized trails as less a priority among all of the activities. It is important to note that this rating of importance is also reflected by the percent of estimated demand being met for these activities. As Figure 2.4 shows, the percent of demand being met for designated motorized trails is among the lowest. This is a particularly interesting finding, considering that many off-roading activities had a significant drop in participation from 2002/2006 to 2012, as discussed in Chapter 3 (see Figure 3.17 for reference). Off-road 4-wheel driving fell 10.5 in ranking, while off-road motorcycling fell 12.5 in the ranking. Consider, too, that off-road driving / dirt biking activities were among the top 10 activities that residents identified as activities they would like to do more of in Washington, among those who indicated that there is an activity that they currently do but would like to do more of. This begs the question of whether or not this decrease is a result of less interest among residents in off-road activities, or if it is because of the lack of facilities and opportunities offered to this user group, as suggested by the low percent of demand being met.

Again, the results of the outdoor recreation provider surveys cannot be generalized to all recreation providers in Washington because not all providers responded to the survey or some provided incomplete responses. Still, the findings suggest that the supply of recreation is not completely meeting public demand. Additionally, the ability of providers to meet public demand is being further challenged by the pressure of population growth and urbanization. Recreation providers are being asked to meet increasing demand, despite working with limited supply.

"[The most important issue facing my area is] increasing capacity of existing facilities to meet increased demand for use, maintaining and restoring natural and cultural resources on parklands, and maintaining an aging infrastructure."
— Washington Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

"[The most important issue facing my area is] the ability to optimally maintain and care for our assets (parks and facilities) during challenging budget times when local budgets have been reduced significantly; hence, hammering our ability to keep up with maintenance and service levels. Another related issue is the need for more grant dollars to help with renovating and preserving existing public assets. While acquisition is still important, major urban cities such as Seattle are having a harder time protecting and preserving our recreation assets."
— Washington Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

Table 2.4: Mean Percentage of Estimated Demand Met (Ranked Lowest to Highest).

	Mean percent of demand met
Designated snow and ice trails	40
Designated motorized trails	46.67
Sports fields with rugby goals	47.25
Designated bridle trails	48.25
Dog parks	50
Designated motorized areas without trails	50
Unsurfaced trails appropriate for bicycles	51.15
Surfaced trails appropriate for bicycles	52.23
Surfaced trails	53.59
Fishing piers	54.07
Unsurfaced trails	56.59
Boat access sites for non-motorized boats	58.95
Nature interpretive centers	59.72
Shooting ranges that accommodate skeet/trap/clay/target games	62.5
Cultural and/or historic sites	62.69
Campgrounds	63.06
Sports fields with lacrosse goals	64.1
Sports fields with soccer goals	64.18
Community gardens or pea patches	64.5
Designated hunting areas	65
Outdoor ice skating rinks	65
Freshwater beach access	65.2
Saltwater beach access	66.89
Sports fields	68.97
Roller skating/skateboard parks	69.21
Sports fields for multipurpose use	69.25
Equipped playgrounds/play areas	69.46
Basketball	69.58
Designated sightseeing areas	70
Equestrian facilities	70
Outdoor tennis courts	72.14
Boat access sites that accommodate motorized craft	74.09
Outdoor swimming pools	75.46
Disc golf	75.94
Sports fields with football goals	76
Picnic areas	77.46
Baseball/softball	79.33
Pump-out stations	80.8
Outdoor tracks for running/jogging	81.25
Golf courses	86.2
Downhill skiing areas	90
Shooting ranges that accommodate archery	90
Shooting ranges	91.67
Air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.) sites	94.09
Shooting ranges that accommodate rifle/handgun	100

ELEMENTS FOR DETERMINING FUTURE NEED

Several elements should be considered when planning for an adequate outdoor recreation supply. These elements necessarily impact pressure on outdoor recreation resources and should be considered in evaluating the need for acquiring and/or developing additional recreation opportunities.

Recreation Potential and Capacity

Surveys such as the one conducted for this SCORP are important for measuring recreation potential and capacity. Recreation potential focuses on demand for facilities and opportunities and recreation capacity focuses on whether the supplies of facilities and opportunities are meeting public demand. The findings from this survey help to determine facility capacity, defined by the Level of Service tool as the percent of demand met by existing facilities. As a measurement of actual use of facilities in comparison to capacity, this Level of Service measurement sets a benchmark for achieving facility capacity. However, recreation capacity considers more than just the actual number of recreationists a facility can accommodate; it also considers the quantity and diversity of outdoor recreation opportunities as a whole. To this end, understanding recreation potential is an essential element of recreation planning. Accurately tracking trends in participation rates and understanding the popularity of outdoor recreation activities will help recreation providers determine priorities for providing recreational facilities and opportunities. Participation rates should be explored on a number of levels, including participation regionally, participation by various demographic groups and socioeconomic characteristics related to participation. These analyses will help determine recreation potential and highlight priorities for increasing recreation capacity.

Availability and Access

Every effort should be made to ensure the availability of and access to recreation sites for all Washington residents. This is a key component to the Level of Service tool used to evaluate outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington. Access criteria identified in the Level of Service focus on the quantity, proximity, and ease of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. Several criteria are used to measure access, including the number of facilities and opportunities, the number of facilities and opportunities that support active recreation, and even facility capacity, to a certain extent. Additionally, separate Distribution and Access Criteria focus on travel distance and transportation to recreation sites. Availability and access is a key factor in determining the feasibility of acquiring and/or developing new recreation facilities and opportunities. First and foremost, it is important to assess population and development pressures in the area. Additionally, planning should consider creative approaches to providing outdoor recreation opportunities, including access to the opportunities among underserved populations. By considering these factors and using Level of Service guidelines, recreation providers will help ensure that access is a primary goal for increasing outdoor recreation opportunities for all residents.

Sustainability

In the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, it is important to consider both elements of sustainability (recreational and environmental). To this end, Washington's Level of Service tool focuses on measuring sustainable access, which is defined as the percentage of access/recreation areas/facilities that provide sustainable recreation opportunities (e.g., help protect natural and cultural resources, use green infrastructure to strengthen natural processes, minimize encroachment and/or user-developed facilities, prohibit poaching). Recreation providers' decisions regarding facilities and opportunities must be balanced with the conservation of resources, including open-space, fish and wildlife species, and their habitat.

Land Use
Land use is an important consideration in decisions regarding increased outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. Some activities may have a negative impact on the landscape or resources of the land, or they may not be compatible with uses of adjacent land. Additionally, some land is designated wilderness, and site development is limited due to federal guidelines. This consideration is especially relevant when considering recreation and wetlands issues, as further discussed in Chapter 6.

Economic Feasibility
A primary consideration in the acquisition or development of recreation sites or facilities is the economic feasibility. Economic feasibility takes all the previous conditions into account, including recreation potential and capacity, availability and access, sustainability, and land use, as well as the cost of acquisition and the cost to develop the site.

SUMMARY OF THE ASSESSMENT OF SUPPLY
This chapter explored the quantity and quality of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in Washington. Additional research is needed to better understand Washington's capacity to meet the demands brought by future changes in participation and demographics throughout the state. The *1999 Public and Tribal Lands Inventory* provided a helpful measure of public lands.

To assess supply, this chapter examined the findings of the recreation provider surveys. It is important to note that this chapter represents only a portion of stakeholders. The provider surveys were conducted primarily to provide quantitative measurements for the Level of Service tool. Still, the provider surveys were useful in better understanding some of the quality issues related to outdoor recreation supply. The findings show that functionality, sustainability, and public access are key assessment measures with which outdoor recreation providers will likely continue to struggle.

"As an outdoor recreation enthusiast I don't think there could ever be enough parks; however, with limited budgets I understand the limitations."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"As 'development' gobbles up more and more natural areas, we need to protect as many remaining natural areas as possible—for future generations of native plants and the birds and other wildlife that depend on them. Parks in natural areas provide important ecological and life-support functions—for humans and wildlife—and we must be sensitive to the impacts of recreation."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Populations are growing, with the consequence that public lands seem to be diminishing."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

CHAPTER 3: ASSESSMENT OF DEMAND

Chapter Highlights

- Low-cost activities, less strenuous activities, or activities that can be done close to home (activities with any of these characteristics) have high participation rates among Washington residents. These include activities such as walking, recreational activities (jogging and fitness activities), nature activities, and picnicking/BBQing/cooking out.
- More specialized activities, those with high equipment demands, or those that require extensive travel have lower participation rates. Examples include horseback riding and air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc).
- The highest participation rates overall are for picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out, walking without a pet, observing or photographing wildlife, sightseeing, gardening, hiking, and walking with a pet.
- Activities with the highest average number of days of participation specifically *among those who participate in the activity* are walking without a pet, aerobics/fitness activities, and weight conditioning. Participants like to do these activities several times a week.
- The activity with the highest average number of days of participation by far *among all Washington residents* is walking (with or without a pet). Walking is distantly followed by wildlife viewing or photographing, aerobics or fitness activities, jogging or running, and weight conditioning.
- The most intensive users of public facilities and lands are participants in hiking, beachcombing, picnicking/BBQing/cooking out, wildlife viewing, and swimming in pools or natural waters.
- A large majority of Washington residents had visited a park in the past year, the most popular being a county or city/municipal park and a State Park.
- Four demographic characteristics appear to markedly affect the participation rates in some of the activities: gender, age, ethnicity, and the residential character of the neighborhood (i.e., rural vs. urban).
- A quarter of Washington residents said that there are outdoor activities that they currently do not do but that they would like to do. Leading the list are air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.), hiking, skiing, hunting, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, camping, and other boating.
- A third of residents have activities in which they participate at a level lower than they would like to participate. Leading the list are hiking, camping, fishing, walking, bicycling, off-road driving, and hunting.
- Some activities have had a marked increase in ranking since the previous SCORP, including fishing for shellfish, visiting a nature interpretive center, climbing or mountaineering, firearms use (hunting or shooting), inner tubing or floating, and camping in a primitive location. It is also worth noting that picnicking, BBQing, and cooking out went from the ninth-ranked activity in 2002 to the top-ranked activity in 2012.
- There has been a dramatic increase in participation in many nature-based activities and notable declines in participation in team-based activities.
- Five demographic groups emerge as having consistently lower participation rates than the rest. Residents with disabilities show markedly lower participation rates more often than any of the other demographic groups.

The assessment of demand for outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities has four primary components: participation in recreation among residents; latent demand and interest in participating; trends in participation and demand; and future demand, including future demand for new forms of recreation.

PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION

The first primary component of this assessment of demand to be examined is current participation in outdoor recreation. As a whole, outdoor recreation in the resident survey encompassed 71 activities, grouped into 16 activity categories. Appendix B shows the full list of activity categories (e.g., water-related activities), individual activities (e.g., water skiing), and then subsets within those individual activities (e.g., water skiing, saltwater; water skiing, freshwater).

Participation in these 71 activities has five aspects that will be examined. The first is straightforward: the current rate of participation among residents in each of the activities. The second aspect looks at the days of participation, as demand for a recreational activity on any given day depends both on the number of people who do the activity and the number of times those people do the activity. Likewise, the seasons in which people participate affects demand and is the third aspect that is examined. The fourth aspect is the location where people recreate, particularly whether they participate on public or private land. The fifth, and final, aspect looks at demographic characteristics of participants in various types of recreation.

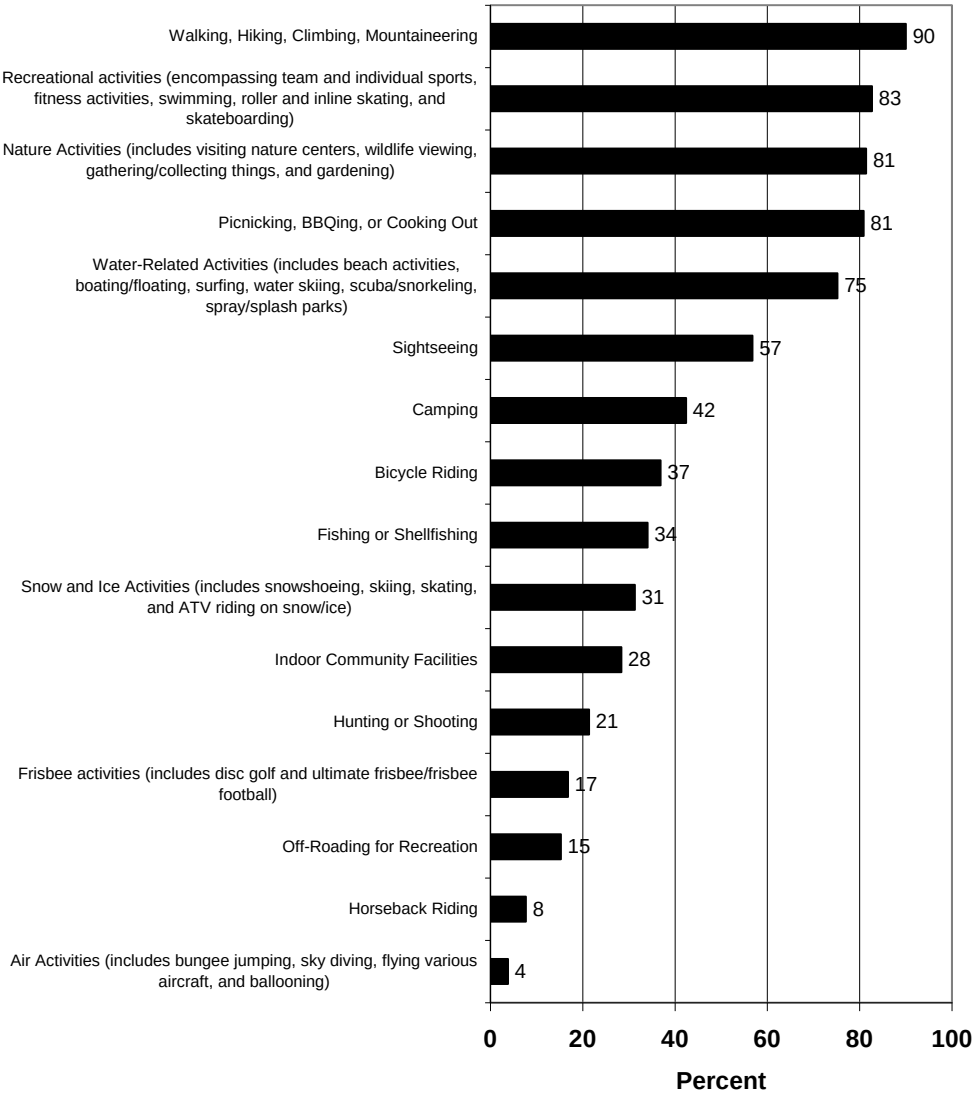
Current Participation Rates in Recreation

A primary component of assessing demand for outdoor recreation is first examining current participation in outdoor recreation in the state among residents. Figure 3.1 looks at 16 broad categories of activities, with many individual activities encompassed within each category. Not surprisingly, low-cost activities, easy or less strenuous activities, or activities that can be done close to home have relatively high participation rates: the category that includes walking is at the top, with a 90% participation rate among Washington residents, but also near the top are recreational activities (which includes jogging), nature activities, and picnicking/BBQing. Conversely, more specialized activities, those with high equipment demands, or those that require extensive travel have lower rates, with the very specialized categories of horseback riding and air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.) having the lowest participation rates.

"The role of recreation in society is undervalued today. There's no immediate ROI [return on investment] of a child playing on a team, a teen spending a night under the stars, or a family exploring a stream, desert, or woodlot together."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"We need to continue to protect our public lands from development and support the people and agencies that work to keep recreation open and available to the public, including our financial support whenever possible. The cost of a Discover Pass [or a] hunting or fishing license is minimal for the return we receive."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Figure 3.1: Participation Rates in the Outdoor Activity Categories.



A better understanding of participation in outdoor recreation in Washington requires a breakdown of several of those categories into their constituent activities. Figures 3.2 through 3.7 show the constituent activities that make up the broad categories. Note that residents could name multiple activities; for this reason, the graphs sum to more than 100%. The grey bars are subsets of the overall category shown in the black bar for Figures 3.2 through 3.7.

The first of those figures shows that the overall category of walking (in which 90% of Washington residents engaged) is made up largely of those walking without a pet (71% of

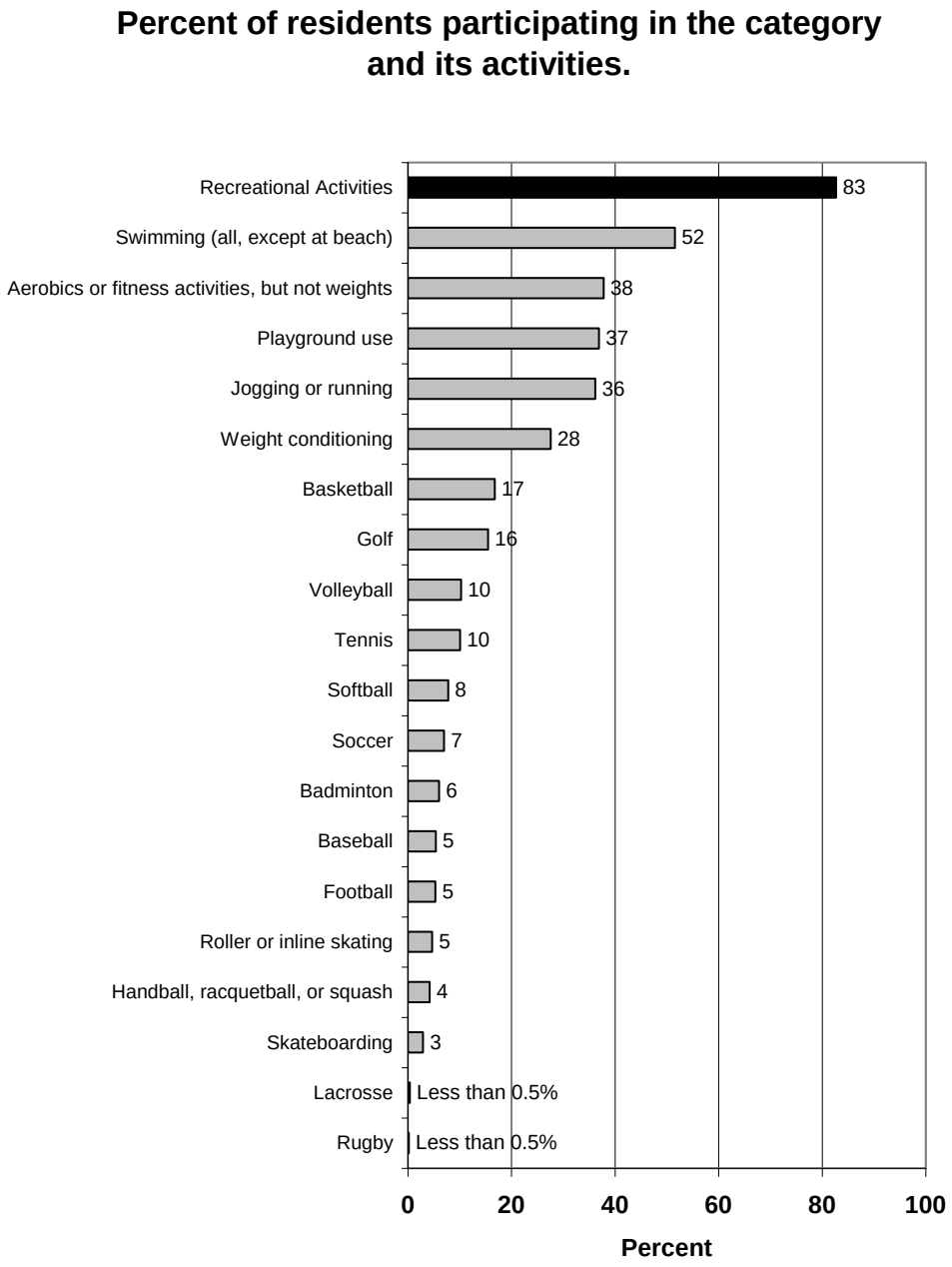
residents do this), with hiking (54%) and walking with a pet (52%) being of medium importance, and climbing or mountaineering (10%) being of minor importance (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Participation in Walking, Hiking, and Climbing/Mountaineering.

"I like to hike, but I also like to ride ATV's and go exploring in my Jeep. I am fully supportive of parks that are developed to enhance all varieties of outdoor experiences."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

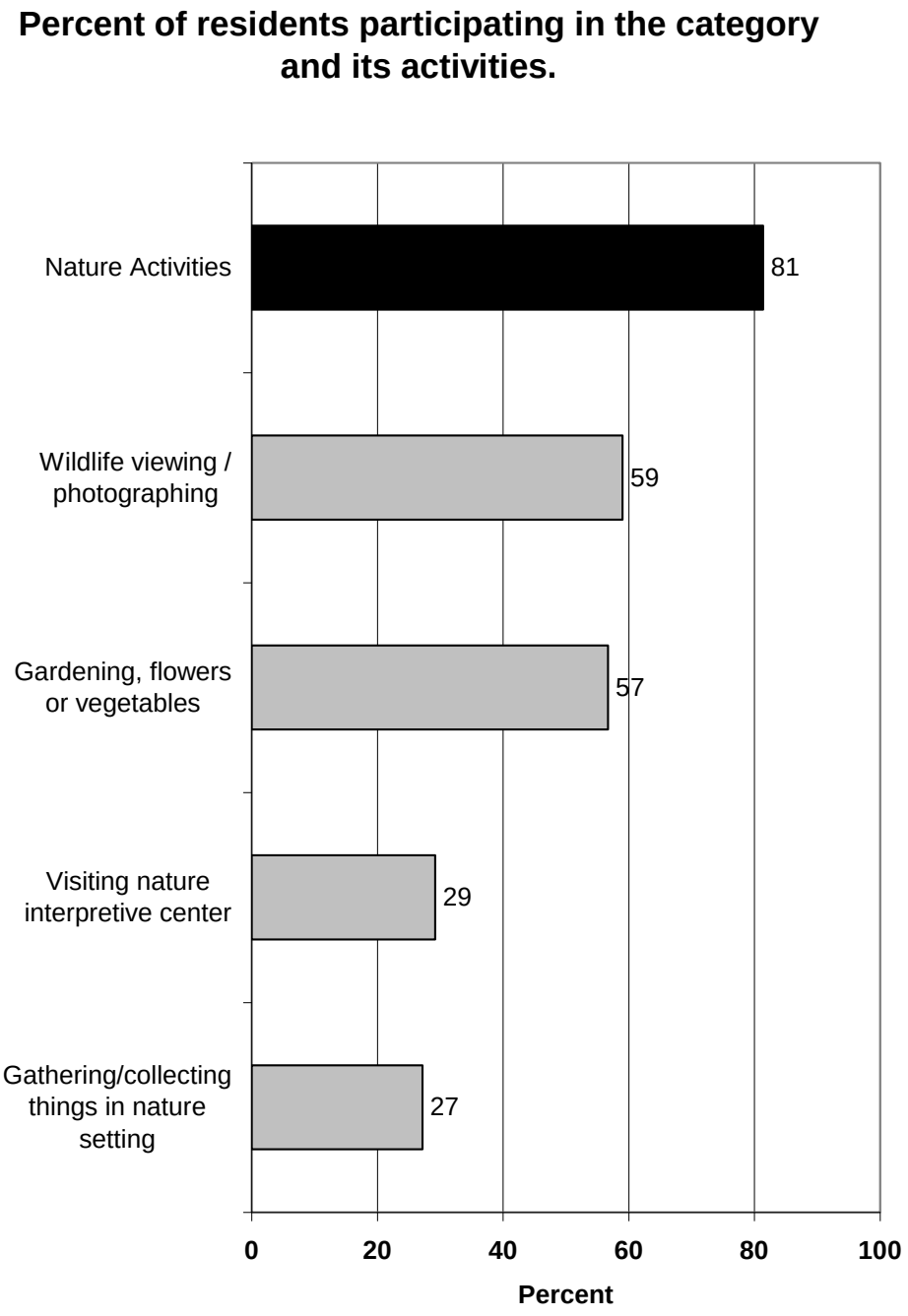
The broad category of recreational activities, with a participation rate of 83% of Washington residents, encompasses a wide range of physical activities, both sports and fitness activities (Figure 3.3). The top tier includes swimming (both in natural waters and in pools) (52%), aerobics/fitness (excluding weights) (38%), playground use (37%), jogging/running (36%), and weight conditioning (28%). Under those are the many team and individual sports (with basketball and golf at the top of this second tier at 17% and 16%, respectively).

Figure 3.3: Participation in Recreational Activities.



Also shown is the breakdown of nature-based activities, in which 81% of Washington residents participated (Figure 3.4). Wildlife viewing and photography (59%) and gardening (57%) each has a majority of residents participating.

Figure 3.4: Participation in Nature-Based Activities.

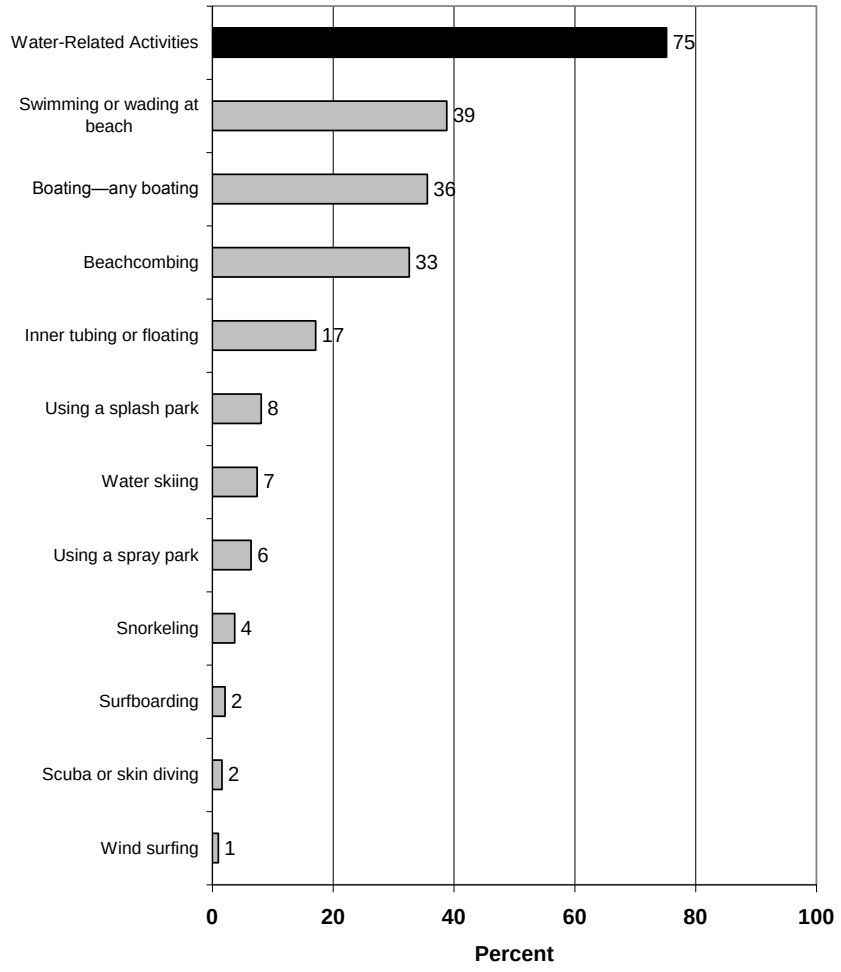


Three quarters of Washington residents (75%) engage in water-related recreation (Figure 3.5) (note that this category does not include swimming in pools or natural waters—other than at the beach—or fishing, which are categorized elsewhere). The major individual activities within this

category are swimming or wading at the beach (39%), boating (36%), and beachcombing (33%). Because boating as a whole encompasses many types of boating, a breakdown of boating is shown in Figure 3.6, with using a motorboat at the top of the list (25% of Washington residents).

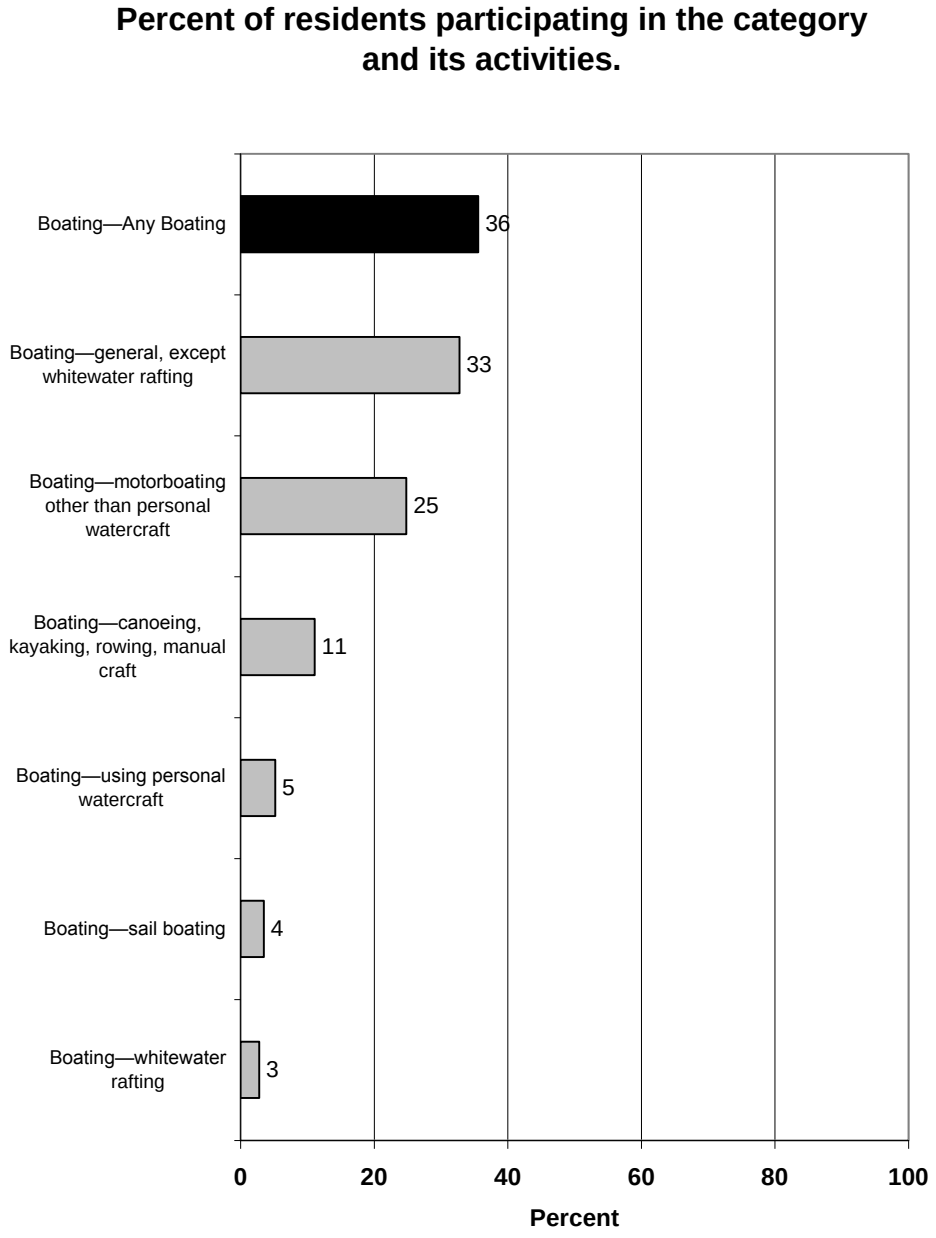
Figure 3.5: Participation in Water-Related Activities.

Percent of residents participating in the category and its activities.



"I love to hike and bike, but find my self constantly having to revisit the same trail series over and over when mountain biking. Sure there are some good trails close to Seattle, but there aren't nearly enough to keep the variety. There are plenty of places to add more trails for mountain bikers or hikers. I have no problem with mixed use in urban areas."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Figure 3.6: Participation in Boating.



Another category for which a full breakdown is shown is the snow and ice activities category (Figure 3.7). Sledding, inner tubing, or other snow play (15%) is the most popular snow and ice activity—its inexpensiveness likely accounting for its relatively high participation rate among the snow and ice activities. This is followed by the much more expensive downhill skiing (10%).

Figure 3.7: Participation in Snow and Ice Activities.

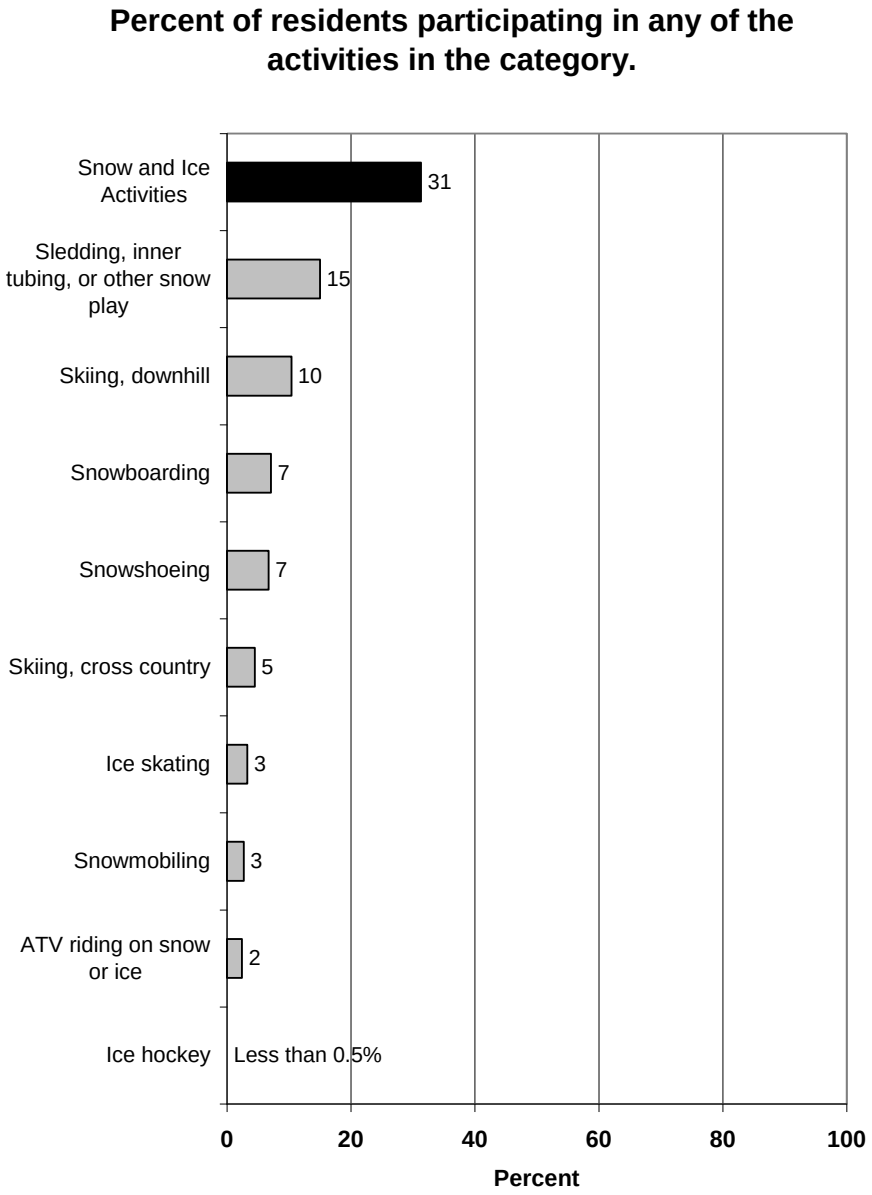


Table 3.1 puts the above data together and shows all of the 71 individual activities that make up the 16 broad categories. This comparison shows that the highest participation rates are for picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out (81% of Washington State residents), walking without a pet (71%), observing or photographing wildlife (59%), sightseeing (57%), gardening (57%), hiking (54%), and walking with a pet (52%)—each with more than half of residents engaging in it. (See Appendix B for a listing of all categories and a complete breakdown of all activities).

Table 3.1a: Participation Rates in Outdoor Recreation in Washington.

Activity	Activity Category	Percent of Washington State Residents Participating in Activity
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out	Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out	80.9
Walking without a pet	Walking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering	71.3
Wildlife viewing/photographing	Nature activities	59.0
Sightseeing	Sightseeing	56.8
Gardening, flowers or vegetables	Nature activities	56.7
Hiking	Walking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering	53.9
Walking with a pet	Walking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering	51.6
Camping	Camping	42.4
Swimming or wading at beach	Water-related activities	38.8
Swimming in pool	Recreational activities	38.2
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	Recreational activities	37.8
Bicycle riding	Bicycle riding	36.9
Playground use	Recreational activities	36.9
Jogging or running	Recreational activities	36.2
Swimming in natural waters	Recreational activities	35.7
Fishing or shellfishing	Fishing or Shellfishing	34.1
Beachcombing	Water-related activities	32.6
Visiting nature interpretive center	Nature activities	29.2
Indoor community facilities	Indoor community facilities	28.4
Weight conditioning	Recreational activities	27.6
Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	Nature activities	27.2
Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	Water-related activities	24.8
Shooting	Hunting or shooting	17.4
Inner tubing or floating	Water-related activities	17.1
Basketball	Recreational activities	16.8
Sledding, inner tubing, or other snow play	Snow and ice activities	15.5
Golf	Recreational activities	15.5
Off-Roading for Recreation	Off-roading for recreation	15.3
Boating—canoeing, kayaking, rowing, manual craft	Water-related activities	11.1
Skiing, downhill	Snow and ice activities	10.4
Volleyball	Recreational activities	10.3
Tennis	Recreational activities	10.1
Climbing or mountaineering	Walking, hiking, climbing, mountaineering	10.0
Hunting	Hunting or shooting	9.4
Using a splash park	Water-related activities	8.1
Softball	Recreational activities	7.8
Horseback riding	Horseback riding	7.7
Water skiing	Water-related activities	7.4
Snowboarding	Snow and ice activities	7.1
Soccer	Recreational activities	7.0
Snowshoeing	Snow and ice activities	6.7
Using a spray park	Water-related activities	6.4
Badminton	Recreational activities	6.0

Table 3.1b: Participation Rates in Outdoor Recreation in Washington (continued).

Activity	Activity Category	Percent of Washington State Residents Participating in Activity
Baseball	Recreational activities	5.4
Football	Recreational activities	5.3
Boating—using personal watercraft	Water-related activities	5.2
Roller or inline skating	Recreational activities	4.7
Skiing, cross country	Snow and ice activities	4.5
Frisbee—disc golf (also called frisbee golf)	Frisbee activities	4.5
Handball, racquetball, or squash	Recreational activities	4.2
Snorkeling	Water-related activities	3.7
Boating—sail boating	Water-related activities	3.5
Ice skating	Snow and ice activities	3.3
Frisbee—ultimate frisbee or frisbee football	Frisbee activities	3.0
Skateboarding	Recreational activities	2.9
Boating—whitewater rafting	Water-related activities	2.8
Snowmobiling	Snow and ice activities	2.7
ATV riding on snow or ice	Snow and ice activities	2.4
Surfboarding	Water-related activities	2.1
Scuba or skin diving	Water-related activities	1.6
Flying gliders, ultralights, or other aircraft	Air activities	1.5
Wind surfing	Water-related activities	1.0
Sky diving/parachuting from plane/glider	Air activities	0.8
Bungee jumping	Air activities	0.6
Ice hockey	Snow and ice activities	0.5
Lacrosse	Recreational activities	0.4
Paragliding or hang gliding	Air activities	0.2
Hot air ballooning	Air activities	0.2
Taking chartered sightseeing flight	Air activities	0.2
Rugby	Recreational activities	0.2
Base jumping	Air activities	0.0

Another aspect of participation is league play. Table 3.2 shows the percent of residents overall and activity participants who participate in a league, such as a softball league. Softball, soccer, and baseball leagues all have participation rates of at least 1.0% in Washington State. In examining participants, both rugby and softball have relatively high rates of league participation among those who do the activity.

Table 3.2: Participation in Leagues.

Activity	Percent of Washington State Residents Who Participate in a League for the Activity	Percent of *Participants* in the Activity Who Participate in a League in Washington State
Ice hockey	0.1	12.5
Baseball	1.0	19.2
Softball	2.9	37.3
Basketball	0.8	4.7
Volleyball	0.9	8.9
Football	0.8	15.1
Lacrosse	0.1	27.2
Rugby	0.1	41.8
Soccer	1.7	23.8

The data above regarding participation pertain to *adult* participation in activities. Another facet to this analysis is children's participation, and the survey asked parents in which activities their children participated, restricted to participation other than in school. The most important children's activities in Table 3.3 are picnicking/BBQing/cooking out (45% of residents with children say that their children participate in this activity), walking (43%), hiking (41%), playground use (39%), sightseeing (39%), camping (38%), and swimming (37%).

Table 3.3a: Children's Participation in Outdoor Recreation in Washington.

Activity	Percent of Residents With Children Whose Children Participate in the Activity
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out	45
Walking	43
Hiking	41
Playground use	39
Sightseeing	39
Camping	38
Swimming	37
Bicycle riding	29
Boating	27
Nature activities	25
Fishing or shellfishing	22
Jogging or running	21
Beachcombing	20
Gardening, flower or vegetable	17
Sledding, inner tubing, or other snow play	16
Basketball	16
Soccer	14
Indoor community facility use	13
Frisbee activities	12
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	12
Using a splash or spray park	12
Baseball	11
Skiing or snowboarding	10
Dog park use	9
Off-roading for recreation	9
Hunting or shooting	8
Horseback riding	8
Skateboarding	7
Football	7
Tennis	7
Volleyball	6
Climbing or mountaineering	6
Roller or inline skating	5
Golf	5
Skiing, cross country	5
Weight conditioning	5
Ice skating	5
Softball	4
Badminton	4
Water skiing	3
Snowmobiling or ATV riding on snow or ice	3
Snorkeling	3

Table 3.3b: Children's Participation in Outdoor Recreation in Washington (continued).

Activity	Percent of Residents With Children Whose Children Participate in the Activity
Snowshoeing	2
Handball	2
Surfboarding	1
Air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.)	1
Wind surfing	1
Racquetball	1

Days of Participation in Recreation

The data above examined overall participation rates. Another component of participation in recreation is the number of days that participants engage in the activities. The analysis looked at days of participation in two ways: among participants in the activities, which shows the frequency in which participants like to do the activity, and among residents overall, which shows the demand that the activity places on the community's and the state's resources. Both analyses have bearing on the provision of recreation.

Figures 3.8 through 3.10 show the days of participation among those who engaged in the activity, and the results have implications for providers of recreation. For instance, those who do any of the top tier of activities, walking without a pet (97.8 mean days participation among walkers), aerobics/fitness activities (86.6 mean days), and weight conditioning (82.5 mean days), like to do them several times a week. At the other end of the scale, some recreational activities are done about once a year, such as wind surfing or hot air ballooning.

Figure 3.8: Days of Participation in the Activities (Part 1).

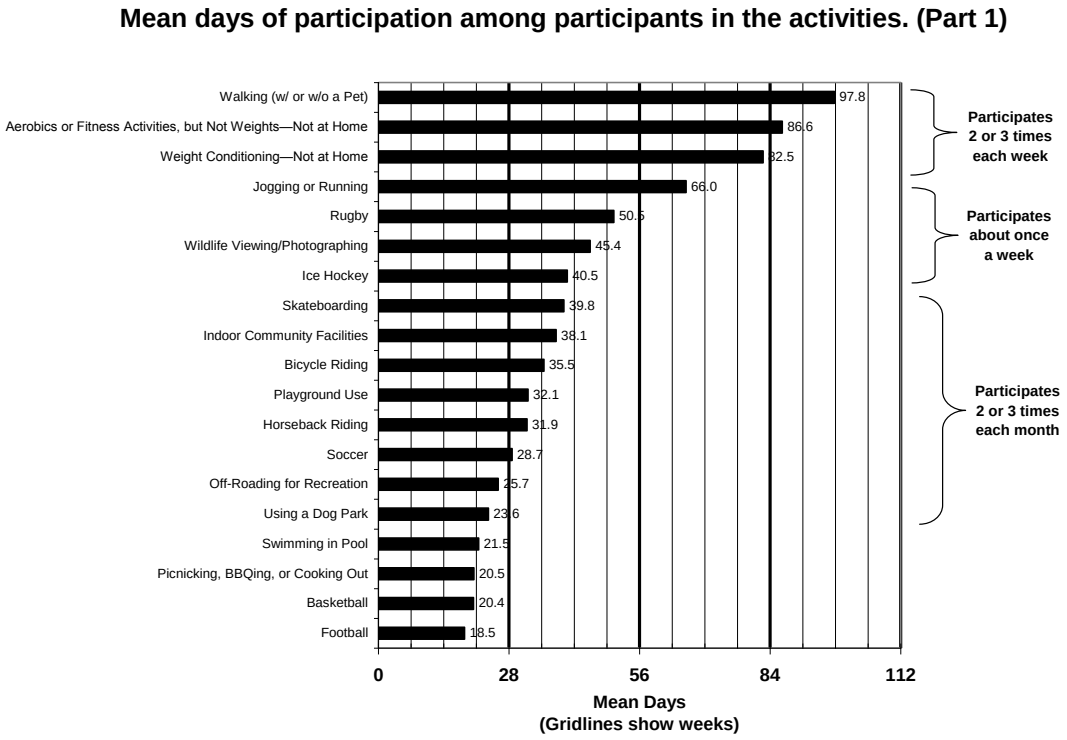


Figure 3.9: Days of Participation in the Activities (Part 2).

Mean days of participation among participants in the activities. (Part 2)

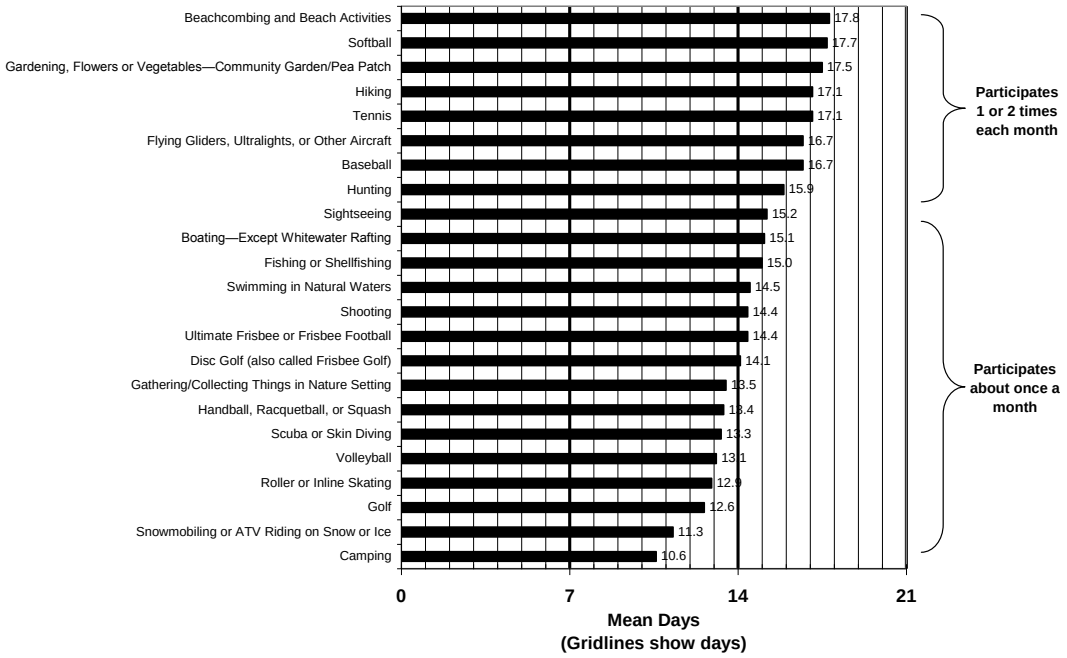
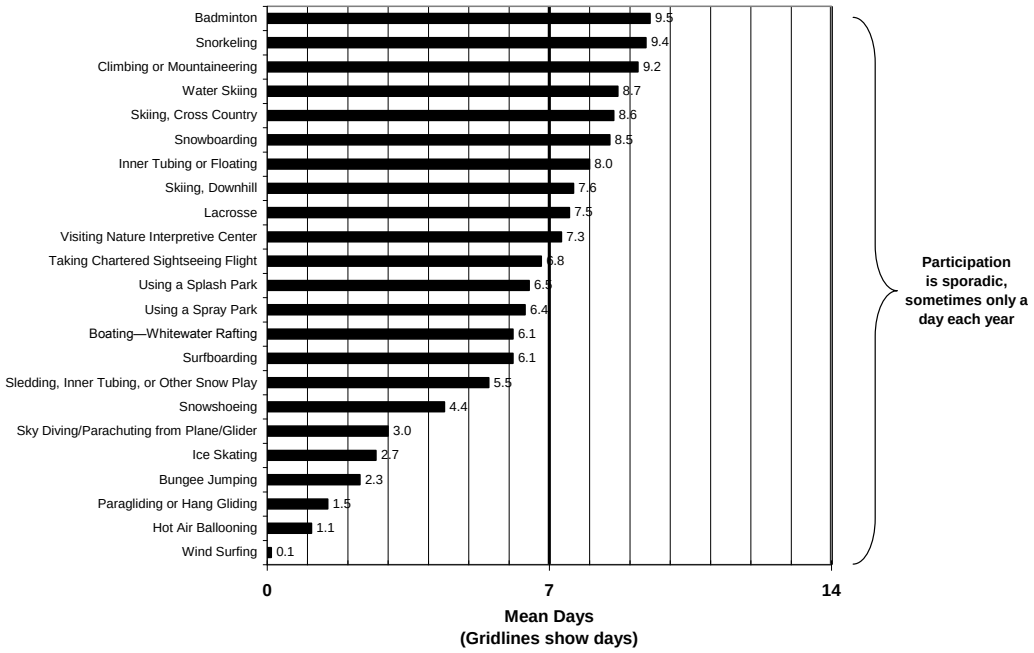


Figure 3.10: Days of Participation in the Activities (Part 3).

Mean days of participation among participants in the activities. (Part 3)



Another consideration in looking at the days of participation takes into account both the *frequency with which participants do* the activities and the *number of participants who do* the activity. Obviously, an activity frequently done by only a few may place less demand on resources than an activity done infrequently but done by many, many people. By looking at the days of participation among *all residents* rather than just the participants in the activities, a ranking can be made of the activities based on the total days of demand.

Figures 3.11 through 3.13 show the mean days of participation among all residents in the state—in other words, the calculation of the mean includes those who did not do the activity (i.e., they did the activity 0 days). The activities that account for the most person-days of recreation are walking without a pet (76.7 mean days per resident), wildlife viewing or photographing (24.3 mean days), aerobics or fitness activities away from home (24.0 mean days), jogging or running (22.3 mean days), and weight conditioning away from home (21.4 mean days).

Figure 3.11: Days of Participation in the Activities Among All Residents (Part 1).

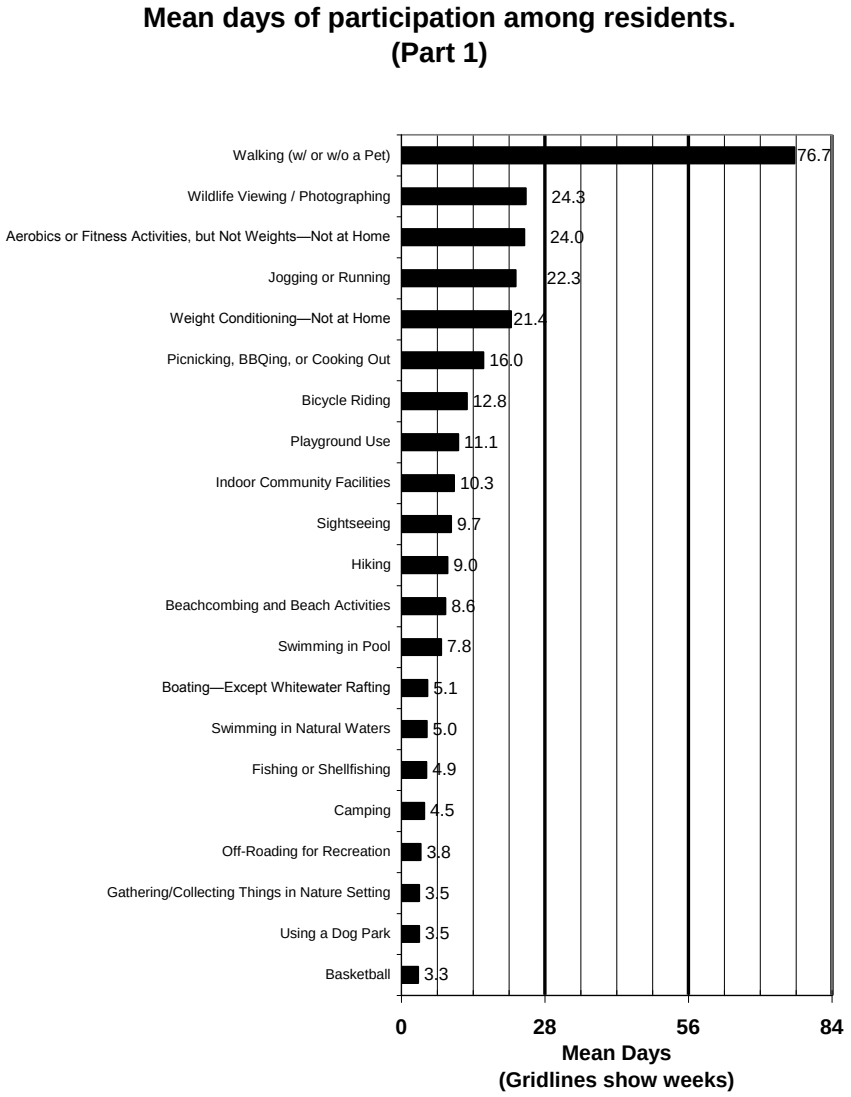


Figure 3.12: Days of Participation in the Activities Among All Residents (Part 2).

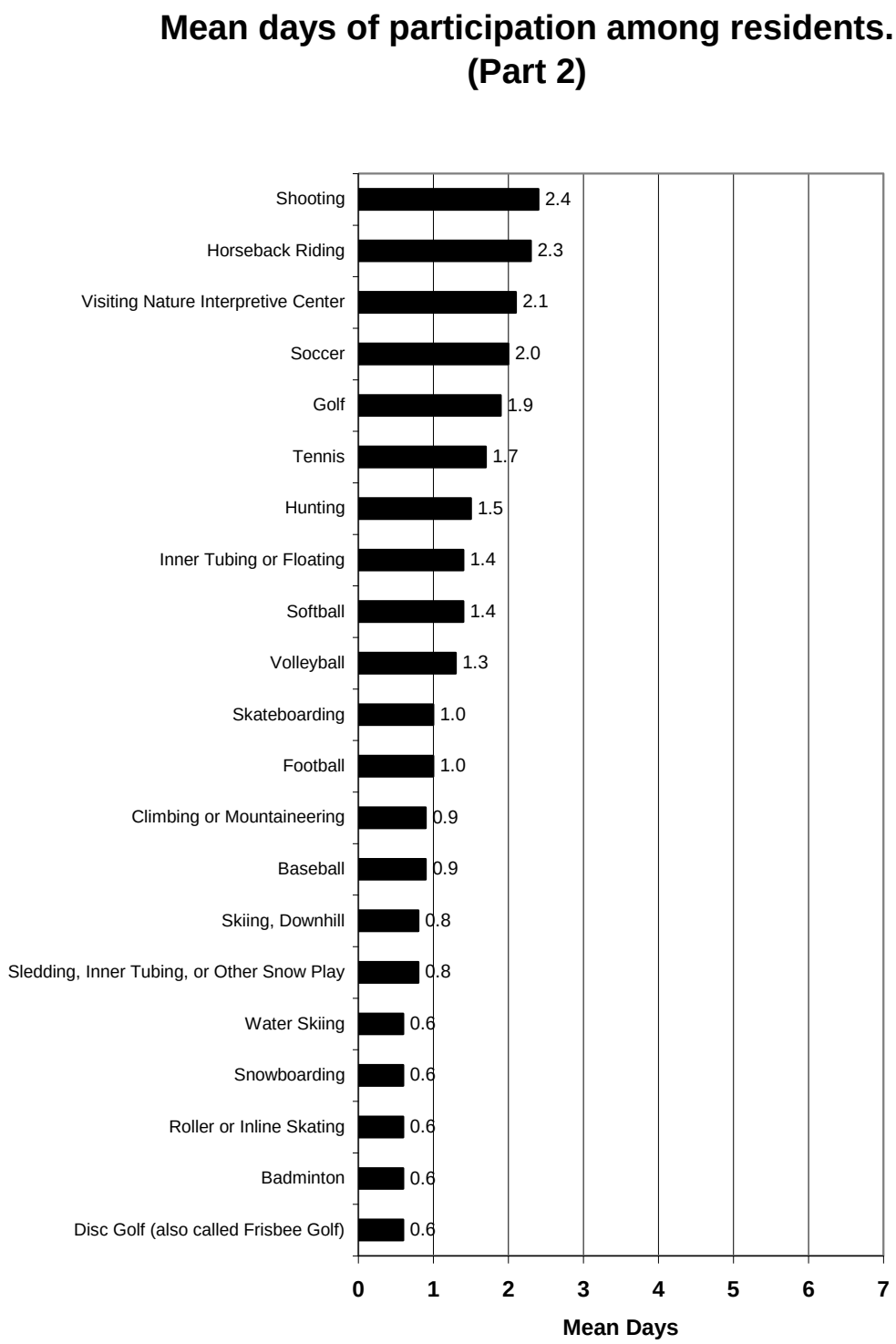
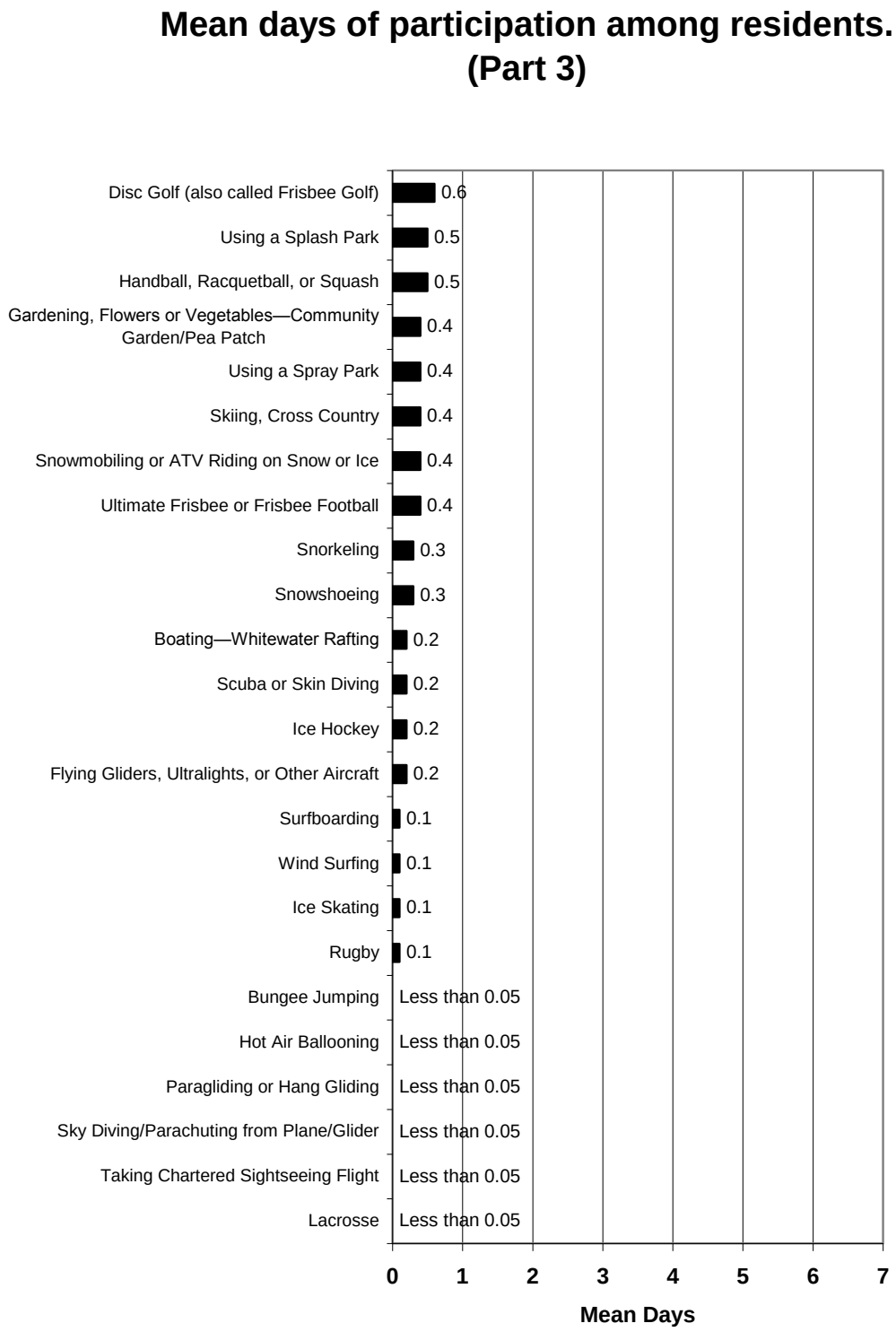


Figure 3.13: Days of Participation in the Activities Among All Residents (Part 3).



Seasonal Information About Participation

The survey of residents obtained information about participation and a number of other topics, but the survey could not explore every aspect of participation without becoming too unwieldy to administer. For this reason, the seasonal information contained herein is from the 2006 SCORP, in which seasonal information was obtained. The assumption is that the seasonal information about participation obtained in 2006 still holds some validity. Seasonal information has implications on demand because the seasons affect demand unevenly throughout the year.

Table 3.4 shows the activities that had a statistically significant difference in participation according to season, either those that have a peak or an off-season (or trough, so to speak). The table is arranged with activities that have a spring peak first, followed by those that have a summer peak, and then winter (no activities in the 2006 analysis had a peak in the fall). At the bottom of the table are the many activities that had no seasonal peaks or troughs. The implication is that some activities will have greater peaks of participation than other activities, even if the former activities have fewer overall days of participation.

Table 3.4a: Seasonal Aspects of Participation in Activities.

Activity	Peak season overall*	Off season overall*	Peak or trough for some aspect of the activity
Activities with a seasonal peak or trough overall			
Gardening, flowers or vegetables	Spring, summer	Winter	
Softball	Spring, summer	Winter, fall	
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out	Summer, spring	Winter, fall	Location not specifically designated, spring, summer, not winter, not fall / Designated site, summer, not winter, not fall / Group facility, summer, not winter, not fall
Badminton	Summer	Winter, fall	Outdoor facility, summer, not winter, not fall
Baseball	Summer	Winter, fall	
Beachcombing	Summer	Winter, fall	
Bicycle riding	Summer	Winter	Urban trail, summer
Boating—canoe, kayak, rowing, manual craft	Summer	Winter, fall	
Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	Summer	Winter, fall	
Boating—sail boating	Summer	Winter, fall, spring	
Boating—using personal watercraft	Summer	Winter	
Camping, tent camping with car or motorcycle	Summer	Winter, fall, spring	
Camping, RV	Summer	Winter	
Fishing for shellfish	Summer	Winter	
Fishing from bank, dock, or jetty	Summer	Winter, fall	
Fishing from private boat	Summer	Winter, fall	
Golf	Summer	Winter, fall	Driving range, summer, not fall / Pitch-n-putt course, summer, not winter, not fall / 9- or 18-hole course, summer, not winter
*If season showed a statistically significant effect on participation			

Source: 2006 Outdoor Recreation Survey, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office / Clearwater Research, Inc.

Table 3.4b: Seasonal Aspects of Participation in Activities (continued).

Activity	Peak season overall*	Off season overall*	Peak or trough for some aspect of the activity
Activities with a seasonal peak or trough overall (continued)			
Hiking	Summer	Winter	Mountain or forest trail, summer, not winter / No established trail, fall
Inner tubing or floating	Summer	Winter, fall	
Sightseeing	Summer	Fall	Public facility, summer / Cultural or historical facility, summer, not fall / Scenic area, summer, not fall
Swimming in pool	Summer	Winter, fall	Outdoors, summer, not winter, not fall
Swimming or wading at beach	Summer	Winter, fall	
Tennis	Summer	Fall	Outdoor facility, summer, not winter, not fall
Volleyball	Summer	Fall	Outdoor facility, summer, not winter, not fall
Water skiing	Summer	Winter, fall	
Basketball	No peak	Fall	Outdoor facility, spring, not fall
Playground use	No peak	Winter	Park facility, not winter / School facility, spring
Soccer	No peak	Winter	Outdoors, not winter
Sledding, inner tubing, or other snow play	Winter, fall	Spring, summer	
Skiing	Winter	Summer, fall	Downhill, winter, not summer, not fall
Snowboarding	Winter	Summer, fall	
Snowmobiling	Winter	Summer, fall	
Activities in which some aspect has a seasonal peak or trough (but no peak or trough overall)			
Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	None	None	Berries/mushrooms, summer, not winter / Firewood, summer
Roller or inline skating	None	None	Trail or outdoor facility, not winter, not fall
Walking without a pet	None	None	Park or trail setting, not winter
Wildlife viewing/photographing	None	None	Land animals, not winter
Horseback riding	None	None	Mountain or forest trail, not spring, not fall
Off-roading for recreation, 4-wheel drive vehicle	None	None	Off-road facility, not summer, not fall
*If season showed a statistically significant effect on participation			

Source: 2006 Outdoor Recreation Survey, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office / Clearwater Research, Inc.

"I feel that the world in general has become very hectic and artificial. People are seeking meaning in life and are seeking to be 'grounded' in something real. As a backcountry horseback rider, I know exactly where to find peace and serenity. Being surrounded by nature is the only place where I feel whole. I feel hope and peace when I am in the woods hearing only the natural sounds."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Table 3.4c: Seasonal Aspects of Participation in Activities (continued).

Activity	Peak season overall*	Off season overall*	Peak or trough for some aspect of the activity
Activities with no seasonal peaks or troughs			
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	None	None	
ATV riding on snow or ice	None	None	
Boating—whitewater rafting	None	None	
Bungee jumping	None	None	
Climbing or mountaineering	None	None	
Flying gliders, ultralights, or other aircraft	None	None	
Football	None	None	
Handball, racquetball, or squash	None	None	
Hot air ballooning	None	None	
Ice skating	None	None	
Indoor community facilities	None	None	
Jogging or running	None	None	
Lacrosse	None	None	
Off-roading, motorcycle	None	None	
Off-roading, ATV or dune buggy	None	None	
Paragliding or hang gliding	None	None	
Rugby	None	None	
Scuba or skin diving	None	None	
Skateboarding	None	None	
Sky diving/parachuting from plane/glider	None	None	
Snowshoeing	None	None	
Surfboarding	None	None	
Visiting nature interpretive center	None	None	
Walking with a pet	None	None	
Weight conditioning	None	None	
Wind surfing	None	None	
*If season showed a statistically significant effect on participation			

Source: 2006 Outdoor Recreation Survey, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office / Clearwater Research, Inc.

The Locations in Which Residents Recreate

The above discussion of participation looked at the number of participants, the number of days that they do the activities, and the seasons in which they participate in various activities. The *location* where people participate in recreation also plays a part in demand for facilities and opportunities, as well. It may be that largely at-home activities have little to no effect on demand for public facilities; on the other hand, sizeable participation in those activities may mask a latent demand.

The analysis examines participation in various activities at publicly owned places (as opposed to "public" places that are privately owned, such as a shopping mall), as this use of public facilities and lands directly relates to our assessment of demand. This analysis looks at 32 activities or activity groups (some activities were grouped in the survey when questions about locations were asked; for instance, both those who went snowshoeing and those who went cross country skiing were asked about the types of lands and trails they used for either activity). At the bottom of the table are activities for which data were not gathered, but some assumptions can be made about several of them. Most importantly, there are several that are, for the overwhelming majority of participants, entirely dependent on public land and public resources. These include

activities such as sightseeing, fishing, or wind surfing—all of which typically entail use of public land for much if not all of the activity.

As Table 3.5 shows, 31 activities were examined that are typically done in both public and private locations, based on follow-up questions that ascertained where respondents had done them, at least some of the time. Those intensive users of public facilities and lands (based on the percent of all residents using public facilities or lands for the activities) are participants in hiking, beachcombing, picnicking/BBQing/cooking out, wildlife viewing, and swimming in pools or natural waters. The table shows, for each activity, the percent who named a public place as the location of their participation. The percent naming a public place forms the lower range of public facility/land use, as these people are *certain* that the location was public. Actual use of public facilities and lands may be higher, as there may be respondents who used a public place but were unsure and who, therefore, could not be selected as definitely using a public location (the resident survey accounted for use of locations for which the respondent was unsure of ownership).

Table 3.5a: Rates of Use of Public Facilities and Lands for Outdoor Recreation in Washington.

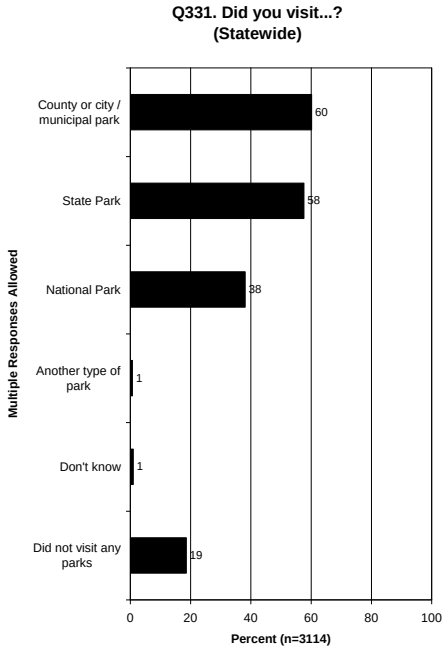
Activity	Percent of All Residents Using Public Facilities for This Activity
Hiking	48.0
Beachcombing / swimming or wading at beach	46.6
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out	46.5
Wildlife viewing/photographing	44.5
Swimming in pool or natural waters	42.7
Bicycle riding	36.0
Playground use	35.2
Boating—using a charter service or guide, marina, transient moorage facilities, boat ramp	23.9
Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	19.5
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	17.3
Golf	12.8
Basketball	11.8
Weight conditioning	9.0
Tennis	8.8
Snowshoeing / cross country skiing	6.6
Softball	6.1
Volleyball	6.1
Soccer	5.8
Baseball	4.9
Football	4.7
Frisbee—disc golf (also called frisbee golf)	3.8
Gathering/collecting—firewood	3.1
Ice skating	2.7
Snowmobiling / ATV riding on snow or ice	2.7
Handball, racquetball, or squash	2.5
Roller or inline skating	2.3
Badminton	1.8
Skateboarding	1.6
Gathering/collecting—Christmas tree	1.4
Ice hockey	0.3
Lacrosse	0.3
Rugby	0.1

Table 3.5b: Rates of Use of Public Facilities and Lands for Outdoor Recreation in Washington (continued).

Activity
Locational Information for Other Activities
Assumed to be mostly done on public land
Boating—whitewater rafting
Climbing or mountaineering
Fishing or shellfishing
Indoor community facilities
Inner tubing or floating
Jogging or running
Scuba or skin diving
Sightseeing
Snorkeling
Surfboarding
Visiting nature interpretive center
Walking with a pet
Walking without a pet
Wind surfing
Assumed to be mostly done on private land
Skiing, downhill
Snowboarding
Using a splash park
Using a spray park

Another question in the survey of residents asked about park use, regardless of the particular activities in which respondents had participated. A large majority of Washington residents (80%) had visited a park in the year prior to being surveyed, the most popular being a county or city/municipal park (60% had visited this type of park) and a State Park (58%) (Figure 3.14). Meanwhile, 38% had visited a National Park. Note that respondents could have visited more than one type of park.

Figure 3.14: Residents' Visitation to Parks in Washington.



Other locational information about where residents of Washington participate in outdoor recreation is contained in Tables 3.6 through 3.14.

Table 3.6: Locations for Various Nature-Based Activities.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Participants Participating in the Locations Indicated				
	Collecting / Gathering*	Viewing / Photo-graphing Wildlife*	Picnicking, BBQing, Cooking Out*	Beachcombing, Wading or Swimming at Beach*	Hiking*
Beach, freshwater, public				37	
Beach, freshwater, private				7	
Beach, freshwater, unknown if public or private				1	
Beach, ocean, public	19			51	
Beach, ocean, private				4	
Beach, ocean, unknown if public or private				1	
Beach, saltwater (other than ocean), public				31	
Beach, saltwater (other than ocean), private				4	
Beach, saltwater (other than ocean), unknown if public or private				1	
Public land, park, National Park or Monument	8	20	7		25
Public land, park, State Park	18	29	30		38
Public land, park, county/city/municipal	8	14	28		16
Public land, National Forest	18	20	6		29
Public land, State Forest	8	12	4		13
Public land, National Wildlife Refuge	1	5	1		3
Public land, BLM	1	2	1		2
Other public land (in general)	19	22	0		16
Private land, home/own property	14	33	53		2
Private land, other than home	27	18	18		10
Trail, paved					38
Trail, unpaved					77
Informal trail (not built)					34
Off-trail / no trail					20

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.7: Locations for Various Snow and Ice Activities.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Participants Participating in the Locations Indicated			
	Snowshoeing or Cross Country Skiing*	Snowmobiling / ATV Riding on Ice/Snow*	Ice Hockey*	Ice Skating*
Rink, indoor, public			65	50
Rink, indoor, private			5	10
Rink, outdoor, public			4	34
Rink, outdoor, private			20	8
Not at rink, outdoors, public land			0	4
Not at rink, outdoors, private land			7	6
Trail, public	66	59		
Trail, private	16	19		
Trail, unknown if public or private	5	2		
Off-trail / no trail, public land	18	24		
Off-trail / no trail, private land	13	29		
Off-trail / no trail, unknown if public or private land	2	2		

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.8: Locations for Various Recreational Activities.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Participants Participating in the Locations Indicated									
	Aerobics and fitness*	Badminton*	Basketball*	Handball, Racquetball, or Squash*	Volleyball*	Weightlifting*	Football*	Rugby*	Lacrosse*	Soccer*
Beach (in general)					8	0				
Field, established, public							72	42	65	66
Not on established field, public land							23	6	16	13
Indoor facility, public (including community center)	36	9	36	52	26	32				7
Indoor facility, private	37	3	12	32	7	43				3
Public land (in general)	15	21	45	7	34	2				
Private land, home/own property	29	56	18	5	23	29	16	5	0	12
Private land, other than home	5	15	13	3	16	0	14	20	24	11

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.9: Locations for Baseball and Softball.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Participants Participating in the Locations Indicated	
	Baseball*	Softball*
Batting cage, public	5	3
Batting cage, privately run	1	1
Public land (in general)	88	78
Private land, other than home	3	12
Home/own property	13	7

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.10: Locations for Swimming.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Swimmers Participating in the Locations Indicated*
Natural waters, public land	54
Natural waters, private land	8
Natural waters, not sure if public / private	2
Pool, indoor, public	30
Pool, indoor, private	16
Pool, indoor, unknown if public or private	1
Pool, outdoor, public	17
Pool, outdoor, private	14
Pool, outdoor, at home	6
Pool, outdoor, unknown if public or private	0
Beach, at ocean	11
Splash park	3

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.11: Locations for Golfing.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Golfers Participating in the Locations Indicated*
Driving range, public	27
Driving range, private	10
Driving range, unknown if public or private	1
Golf 9- or 18-hole, municipal or public course	72
Golf 9- or 18-hole, private country club	31
Golf 9- or 18-hole, unknown if public or private course	1
Golf pitch-n-putt, municipal or public course	8
Golf pitch-n-putt, private country club	2
Golf pitch-n-putt, unknown if public or private	2

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.12: Locations for Skateboarding.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Skateboarders Participating in the Locations Indicated*
Skate park, public	42
Skate park, private	5
Skate park, unknown if public or private	6
Trail, skateboarding	17
Outdoors, not at designated park	36
Indoor facility, public (including community center)	0
Indoor facility, private	3

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.13: Locations for Tennis.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Tennis Players Participating in the Locations Indicated*
Courts, outdoors, public	81
Courts, outdoors, private	21
Courts, indoors, public	15
Courts, indoors, private	12

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Table 3.14: Locations for Disc Golf.

Facility / Land (Statewide)	Percent of Disc Golf Players Participating in the Locations Indicated*
Public land (in general)	22
Private land (in general)	11
Course, public	65
Course, private	15

*Does not sum to 100% down the columns because multiple places could be selected in survey.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants Overall

Previously, we have examined participation rates overall. However, various demographic groups participate in the individual activities at varying rates. Four demographic characteristics in particular appear to markedly affect the participate rates in some of the activities: gender,

age, ethnicity, and the residential character of the neighborhood (i.e., rural vs. urban). For this analysis, comparisons of rates of participation among demographic groups, such as males and females, shows that some activities tend to be more popular than others among some groups (this analysis only considers those 18 years old and older; children's participation could not be included in the analysis). For instance, hunting is a primarily (but not an exclusively) male pursuit and is more predominant among rural people than among urban. Some of the important findings of this analysis are discussed below.

Table 3.15 shows gender as it affects participation. At the top are the activities that have greater participation rates among females than among males, including gardening, aerobics (excluding weightlifting), playground use, and gathering in a nature setting. On the other hand, activities with more male participation than female include fishing/shellfishing, hunting/shooting, golf, boating in general, basketball, and camping.

Table 3.15: Activities With Marked Differences in Participation Between Males and Females.

	Activity	Percent Participation by Males	Percent Participation by Females	Percentage Point Difference
More Female	Gardening, flowers or vegetables	48.33	64.98	16.65
	Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	31.72	43.57	11.84
	Playground use	31.98	41.65	9.67
	Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	22.47	31.84	9.37
	Beachcombing	28.90	36.16	7.25
	Walking with a pet	48.74	54.37	5.63
	Swimming or wading at beach	36.00	41.50	5.50
Excludes all activities with a difference of less than 5.00 percentage points				
More Male	Frisbee activities	19.42	14.20	5.21
	Weight conditioning	30.31	24.85	5.46
	Jogging or running	39.04	33.38	5.66
	Snow and ice activities	34.70	27.96	6.75
	Field sports	14.37	7.59	6.78
	Snowboarding	10.62	3.68	6.94
	Football	8.85	1.80	7.05
	Climbing or mountaineering	14.41	5.56	8.85
	Bicycle riding	41.97	31.78	10.20
	Off-roading for recreation	20.61	10.14	10.47
	Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	30.25	19.30	10.94
	Camping	47.98	36.92	11.06
	Basketball	22.42	11.34	11.09
	Boating—any boating	42.12	29.10	13.02
	Golf	22.16	9.02	13.14
	Hunting or shooting	32.91	10.27	22.63
	Fishing or shellfishing	45.80	22.63	23.17

Some activities are more popular among older recreationists than among younger recreationists, and vice-versa. As Table 3.16 shows, gardening, visiting nature interpretive centers, and beachcombing have greater participation rates among older residents than among younger residents. On the other hand, quite a few activities have higher participation rates

among younger residents, particularly jogging/running (younger people have more than double the rate of older people), playground use, swimming in natural waters and in pools, field sports, and hiking.

Table 3.16: Activities With Marked Differences in Participation Between Younger and Older Residents.

	Activity	Percent Participation by Those Younger Than the Mean Age*	Percent Participation by Those Mean Age* or Older	Percentage Point Difference
More Older	Gardening, flowers or vegetables	49.96	64.90	14.94
	Visiting nature interpretive center	25.24	31.89	6.65
	Beachcombing	29.71	36.03	6.32
Excludes all activities with a difference of less than 5.00 percentage points				
More Younger	Walking without a pet	74.74	69.63	5.11
	Frisbee activities	19.73	14.60	5.12
	Boating—any boating	38.68	33.30	5.39
	Softball	10.78	5.19	5.60
	Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	41.12	35.35	5.77
	Baseball	8.45	2.52	5.93
	Fishing or shellfishing	38.09	31.77	6.33
	Roller or inline skating	7.94	1.57	6.37
	Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	28.66	21.98	6.69
	Climbing or mountaineering	13.75	6.96	6.80
	Weight conditioning	31.54	24.49	7.05
	Volleyball	14.81	6.78	8.03
	Using a spray park	10.98	2.65	8.33
	Hunting or shooting	26.74	18.05	8.69
	Off-roading for recreation	20.84	11.90	8.94
	Using a splash park	12.80	3.76	9.04
	Tennis	15.32	5.84	9.47
	Snowboarding	11.99	2.42	9.58
	Football	10.32	0.72	9.60
	Soccer	12.39	2.01	10.38
	Bicycle riding	42.65	31.95	10.70
	Inner tubing or floating	23.14	12.38	10.76
	Swimming or wading at beach	45.77	33.01	12.76
	Snow and ice activities	38.54	25.35	13.19
	Basketball	24.72	10.74	13.98
	Camping	50.21	35.98	14.22
	Sledding, inner tubing, or other snow play	24.00	8.58	15.42
	Hiking	63.53	46.46	17.07
	Field sports	20.08	2.50	17.58
	Swimming in pool	48.18	29.01	19.17
	Swimming in natural waters	45.95	26.46	19.49
	Playground use	47.75	26.83	20.93
	Jogging or running	50.90	22.86	28.05

*The mean age in the survey is among residents 18 years old and older; for this reason, the mean age in the survey is older than the mean age overall, which includes children.

Table 3.17 suggests that jogging/running and aerobics are more often pursuits of those ethnically non-white. Conversely, activities in which the participation rate is greater among whites, compared to non-whites, include boating, beachcombing, gathering/collecting in a nature setting, motorboating, walking with a pet, and snow/ice activities. In the survey, non-white included black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Native Americans, Asians, and other ethnicities.

Table 3.17: Activities With Marked Differences in Participation Between White and Non-White Residents.

	Activity	Percent Participation by Those Identifying Themselves as White	Percent Participation by Those Identifying Themselves as Non-White	Percentage Point Difference
More Non-White	Jogging or running	34.44	46.22	11.77
	Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	36.86	46.94	10.09
	Tennis	9.95	15.82	5.87
	Swimming in pool	38.45	44.30	5.85
	Basketball	16.01	21.62	5.61
	Weight conditioning	26.71	32.28	5.57
	Surfboarding	1.67	6.75	5.08
Excludes all activities with a difference of less than 5.00 percentage points				
More White	Visiting nature interpretive center	29.13	23.55	5.59
	Skiing, downhill	10.82	4.21	6.61
	Inner tubing or floating	18.53	11.66	6.87
	Gardening, flowers or vegetables	58.12	51.09	7.02
	Boating—canoeing, kayaking, rowing, manual craft	12.08	4.20	7.88
	Hunting or shooting	23.01	14.88	8.13
	Swimming or wading at beach	40.36	32.18	8.19
	Wildlife viewing/photographing	61.25	52.29	8.96
	Snow and ice activities	33.29	23.91	9.38
	Walking with a pet	53.50	44.06	9.45
	Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	26.07	15.25	10.82
	Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	28.49	17.28	11.22
	Beachcombing	34.09	21.03	13.06
	Boating—any boating	37.36	21.69	15.67

The final demographic comparison is by the residential character of the respondents' neighborhoods (Table 3.18). Specifically, the sample was divided between those who live in a large city/urban area or suburban area versus those who live in a small city/town or rural area. The more rural pursuits include fishing/shellfishing, hunting/shooting, camping, and off-roading. Meanwhile, activities that are more popular among urban/suburban residents include walking with a pet at an off-leash dog park, jogging/running, walking without a pet, and tennis.

Table 3.18: Activities With Marked Differences in Participation Between Urban or Suburban Residents and Small City/Town or Rural Residents.

	Activity	Percent Participation by Those Identifying Themselves as Urban or Suburban	Percent Participation by Those Identifying Themselves as Small City/Town or Rural	Percentage Point Difference
More Small City/Town or Rural	Fishing or shellfishing	25.27	39.41	14.14
	Hunting or shooting	15.22	25.72	10.50
	Camping	37.19	45.63	8.44
	Off-roading for recreation	10.87	19.01	8.14
	Walking with a pet	47.68	54.92	7.24
	Horseback riding	3.25	10.38	7.13
	Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	20.44	27.51	7.06
	Inner tubing or floating	13.49	19.58	6.09
	Gardening, flowers or vegetables	53.86	59.64	5.78
	Swimming in natural waters	32.25	37.97	5.72
	Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	23.88	29.30	5.42
Excludes all activities with a difference of less than 5.00 percentage points				
More Urban or Suburban	Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	41.13	35.83	5.31
	Tennis	14.43	8.03	6.40
	Walking without a pet	75.82	68.60	7.22
	Jogging or running	40.79	33.46	7.33
	Walking with a pet—off leash in dog park	20.46	12.39	8.07

Demographic Characteristics of Participants in Specific Activities

Another way to examine demographic characteristics is to look at the 16 primary activity categories and the groups most likely to participate in them. This section provides an overview of the demographic groups within the overall resident survey sample that are *most* and *least* likely to participate in each of the 16 major SCORP activity categories. A discussion of potentially underserved demographic groups follows the discussion of each activity category.

The categories are discussed in this order:

- Sightseeing
- Nature Activities
- Fishing or Shellfishing
- Picnicking, BBQing, or Cooking Out
- Water-Related Activities
- Snow and Ice Activities
- Air Activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.)
- Walking, Hiking, Climbing, Mountaineering
- Bicycle Riding
- Horseback Riding
- Off-Roading for Recreation
- Camping
- Hunting or Shooting
- Recreational Activities
- Indoor Community Facilities
- Frisbee Activities

Sightseeing: In total, 57% of Washington residents participate in sightseeing, such as at a cultural or historical facility or scenic area (note that this overall category includes three different types of sightseeing activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in sightseeing (i.e., groups with at least 60% of individuals participating in the activity) include those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher, those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year, those who live in an urban or suburban area, and those the mean age of 46 or older. Meanwhile, the groups *least likely* to participate in sightseeing (i.e., groups with less than 50% of individuals participating) include those with a household income of less than $50,000 per year and non-white/non-Caucasian residents.

Nature Activities: In total, 81% of Washington residents participate in nature activities, such as visiting a nature interpretive center or viewing or photographing wildlife (note that this overall category includes 16 different types of nature activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in nature activities (i.e., groups with at least 85% of residents participating in the activity) include those the mean age of 46 or older, those who own their place of residence, those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year, and females. On the other hand, the groups *least likely* to participate in nature activities (i.e., groups with 75% of individuals or less participating) include non-white/non-Caucasian residents, those who rent their place of residence, and residents with disabilities.

Fishing or Shellfishing: In total, 34% of Washington residents participate in fishing or shellfishing activities, such as freshwater or saltwater fishing (note that this overall category includes 12 different types of fishing/shellfishing activities). Males are the group most likely to engage in fishing or shellfishing, with nearly half of all males participating in this activity. Otherwise, the demographic groups *most likely* to engage in fishing or shellfishing are those who live in a small city/town or rural area and those younger than the mean age of 46. Meanwhile, the groups *least likely* to participate in fishing or shellfishing (i.e., groups with less than 33% participating) are those the mean age of 46 or older, non-white/non-Caucasian residents, those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher, those living in an urban or suburban area, and females.

Picnicking, BBQing, or Cooking Out: In total, 81% of Washington residents participate in picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out (note that this overall category includes three different types of picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out (i.e., groups with at least 85% of residents participating in the activity) include those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year and those with children under the age of 18 living in the household. By contrast, the groups *least likely* to participate in picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out (i.e., groups with less than 80% of individuals participating) include those without children under the age of 18 living in the household, non-white/non-Caucasian residents, and residents with disabilities.

Water-Related Activities: In total, 75% of Washington residents participate in water-related activities, such as beachcombing or swimming (note that this overall category includes 47 different types of water-related activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in water-related activities (i.e., groups with at least 80% of residents participating in the activity) include those with children under the age of 18 living in the household, those younger than the mean age of 46, and those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year. Meanwhile, the groups *least likely* to participate in water-related activities (i.e., groups with less than 70% of individuals participating) include those the mean age of 46 or older, non-white/non-Caucasian residents, and residents with disabilities.

Snow and Ice Activities: In total, 31% of Washington residents participate in snow and ice activities, such as snowshoeing or sledding (note that this overall category includes 15 different types of snow and ice activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in snow and ice activities (i.e., groups with more than 35% of residents participating in the activity) include those with children under the age of 18 living in the household, those younger than the mean age of 46, those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher, and those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year. Meanwhile, the groups *least likely* to participate in snow and ice activities (i.e., groups with 25% of individuals participating or less) include those the mean age of 46 or older, non-white/non-Caucasian residents, and residents with disabilities.

Air Activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.): In total, just 4% of Washington residents participate in air activities, such as bungee jumping or hang gliding (note that this overall category includes seven different types of air activities). Just one demographic group has more than 4% of individuals participating in air activities: males are the group *most likely* to engage in this type of activity, with 5% of all males in Washington participating. On the other hand, the groups *least likely* to participate in air activities (i.e., groups with 3% of individuals participating or less) include those the mean age of 46 or older, those with a household income of less than $50,000 per year, residents with disabilities, non-white/non-Caucasian residents, and females.

Walking, Hiking, Climbing, Mountaineering: In total, 90% of Washington residents participate in walking, hiking, climbing, or mountaineering, such as walking with a pet or hiking on trails (note that this overall category includes 20 different types of walking, hiking, climbing, or mountaineering activities). While virtually all demographic groups show robust levels of participation in this category, the groups *most likely* to engage in walking, hiking, climbing, or mountaineering activities (i.e., groups with at least 93% of residents participating in the activity) include those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher, those younger than the mean age of 46, and those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year. Meanwhile, just one group has less than 88% of individuals participating in walking, hiking, climbing, or mountaineering activities: only 79% of residents with disabilities participate in this type of activity, making it the group *least likely* to engage in walking, hiking, climbing, or mountaineering.

Bicycle Riding: In total, 37% of Washington residents participate in bicycle riding activities, such as riding a bicycle on a street or trail (note that this overall category includes 12 different types of bicycle riding activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in bicycle riding activities (i.e., groups with more than 40% of residents participating in the activity) include those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher, those with children under the age of 18 living in the household, those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year, those younger than the mean age of 46, and males. By contrast, the groups *least likely* to participate in bicycle riding activities (i.e., groups with less than 33% of individuals participating) include those the mean age of 46 or older, females, those who rent their place of residence, those with an education level of less than a bachelor's degree, and residents with disabilities.

Horseback Riding: In total, 8% of Washington residents participate in horseback riding activities, such as riding a horse on grounds or trails (note that this overall category includes seven different types of horseback riding activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in horseback riding activities (i.e., groups with at least 10% of residents participating in the activity) include those who live in a small city/town or rural area and females. Meanwhile, the groups *least likely* to participate in horseback riding activities (i.e., groups with less than 7% of individuals participating) include those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or

higher, males, non-white/non-Caucasian residents, and those living in an urban or suburban area.

Off-Roading for Recreation: In total, 15% of Washington residents participate in off-roading for recreation activities, such as off-roading with a motorcycle or ATV (note that this overall category includes 24 different types of off-roading for recreation activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in off-roading for recreation activities (i.e., groups with more than 20% of residents participating in the activity) include those younger than the mean age of 46, those with an education level of less than a bachelor's degree, and males. On the other hand, the groups *least likely* to participate in off-roading for recreation activities (i.e., groups with 12% of individuals participating or less) include non-white/non-Caucasian residents, residents with disabilities, those the mean age of 46 or older, those living in an urban or suburban area, females, and those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher.

Camping: In total, 42% of Washington residents participate in camping activities, such as camping or backpacking in a primitive location (note that this overall category includes 20 different types of camping activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in camping activities (i.e., groups with at least 48% of residents participating in the activity) include those younger than the mean age of 46, those with children under the age of 18 living in the household, males, and those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year. Meanwhile, the groups *least likely* to participate in camping activities (i.e., groups with less than 40% of individuals participating) include those without children under the age of 18 living in the household, those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher, those living in an urban or suburban area, females, those the mean age of 46 or older, and residents with disabilities.

Hunting or Shooting: In total, 21% of Washington residents participate in hunting or shooting activities, such as hunting big game or target shooting (note that this overall category includes 29 different types of hunting or shooting activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in hunting or shooting activities (i.e., groups with at least 25% of residents participating in the activity) include males, those younger than the mean age of 46, those who live in a small city/town or rural area, and those with an education level of less than a bachelor's degree. By contrast, the groups *least likely* to participate in hunting or shooting activities (i.e., groups with 15% of individuals participating or less) include those living in an urban or suburban area, non-white/non-Caucasian residents, and females.

Recreational Activities: In total, 83% of Washington residents participate in recreational activities, such as volleyball, basketball, or tennis (note that this overall category includes 58 different types of recreational activities). The demographic groups *most likely* to engage in recreational activities (i.e., groups with more than 90% of residents participating in the activity) include those younger than the mean age of 46 and those with children under the 18 living in the household. While most demographic groups have at least 80% of individuals participating in recreational activities, three groups show a lower rate of participation: residents who do not have children under the age of 18 living in the household, those the mean age of 46 or older, and residents with disabilities are the groups *least likely* to participate in recreational activities.

Indoor Community Facilities: In total, 28% of Washington residents participate in activities involving indoor community facilities, such as an arts and crafts class at an activity center (note that this overall category includes four different types of activities associated with indoor community facilities). The demographic groups *most likely* to participate in activities involving indoor community facilities (i.e., groups with at least 33% of residents participating in the

activity) include those with an education level of a bachelor's degree or higher and those with a household income of at least $50,000 per year. On the other hand, the groups *least likely* to participate in activities involving indoor community facilities (i.e., groups with less than 25% of individuals participating) include those who rent their place of residence, those with a household income of less than $50,000 per year, those with an education level of less than a bachelor's degree, and residents with disabilities.

Frisbee Activities: In total, 17% of Washington residents participate in Frisbee activities (note that this overall category includes both disc golf and ultimate Frisbee/Frisbee football). The demographic groups *most likely* to participate in Frisbee activities (i.e., groups with at least 20% of residents participating in the activity) include those younger than mean age of 46, those with children under the age of 18 living in the household, and those who rent their place of residence. Meanwhile, the groups *least likely* to participate in Frisbee activities (i.e., groups with 15% of individuals participating or less) include those who do not have children under the age of 18 living in the household, those the mean age of 46 or older, females, and residents with disabilities.

Common Underserved Groups

Based on these participation rates, five demographic groups emerge as having consistently lower participation rates than the rest. First, residents with disabilities show markedly lower participation rates compared to other demographic groups. Non-white/non-Caucasian residents are the next potentially underserved group, as these individuals fall at or near the bottom of the participation rankings more often than any group except residents with disabilities. Rounding out the list of potentially underserved groups are residents older than the mean age of 46, females, and residents who live in urban or suburban areas.

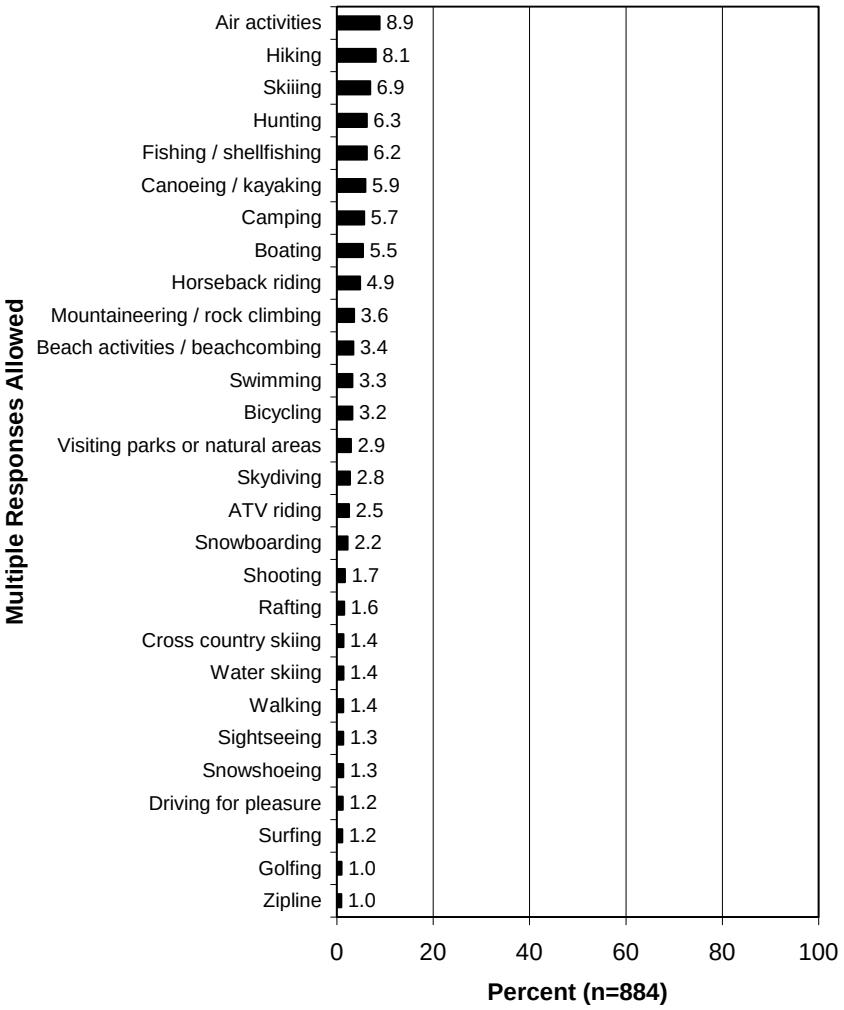
It is possible that participation rates among these groups are affected by either a lack of awareness of opportunities or a lack of access to facilities and locations for outdoor recreation. External factors such as a lack of free time and/or poor health may also present challenges for these groups. The research suggests that there is a need to increase support to residents with disabilities. The Advisory Group contended that "there remains a need to develop and improve special-needs opportunities for disabled recreationists, such as providing barrier-free recreation access and facilities for physically disabled citizens." Additionally, several Town Hall contributors mentioned concerns for residents with disabilities, usually in the context of how to make outdoor recreation accessible so users with disabilities are easily and naturally included in family and friendship activities.

LATENT DEMAND

The survey of residents had two measures of latent demand. In the first, more than a quarter (29%) of Washington State residents said that there are outdoor activities that they currently do *not* do but that they would like to do. Leading the list are air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.), hiking, skiing, hunting, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, camping, and other boating (Figure 3.15). It may be that some respondents answered with activities that they wish that they could do, regardless of the feasibility of actually being able to do them.

Figure 3.15: Activities in Which Residents Currently Do Not Participate but in Which They Would Like to Participate.

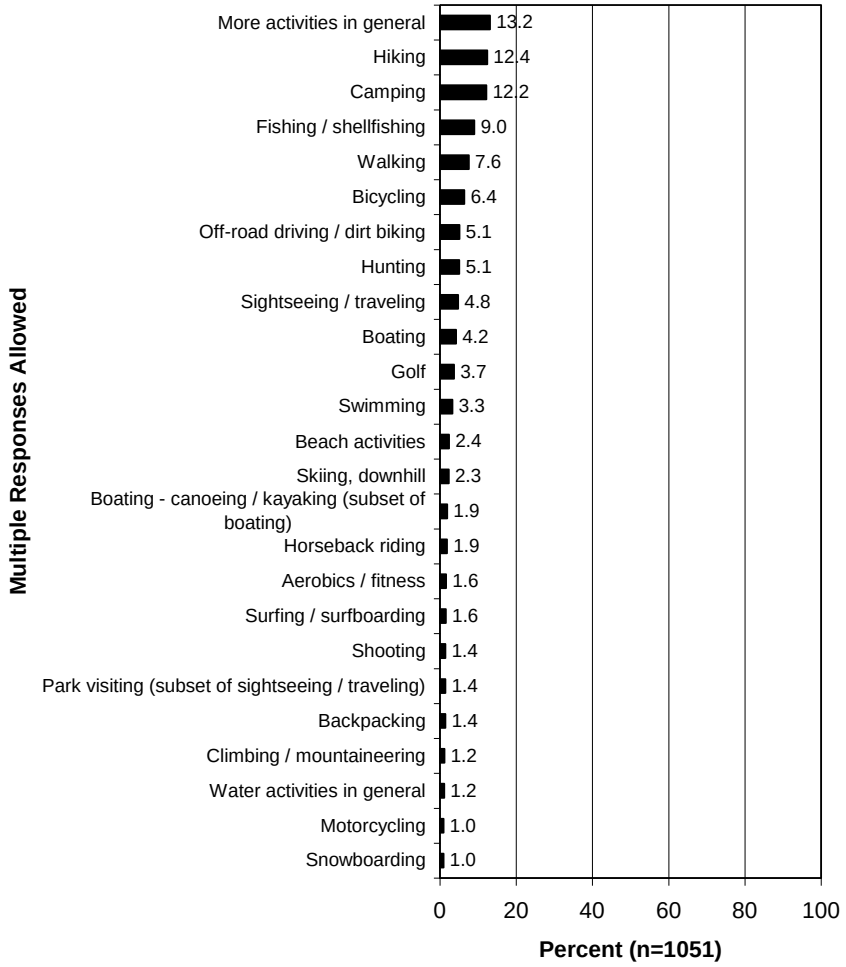
Q341. Which outdoor activities do you think you'd like to do? (Asked of those who indicate that there is an activity(ies) that they do not currently do but would like to do in Washington.) (Shows only those named by at least 1.0% of respondents.)



The second measure of latent demand asked residents to name activities in which they currently participate but in which they would like to participate more. A third of residents (33%) have activities in which they participate at a level lower than they would like to participate. Figure 3.16 shows the listing of activities named in the follow-up question; leading the list are hiking, camping, fishing, walking, bicycling, off-road driving, and hunting.

Figure 3.16: Activities in Which Residents Participate but in Which They Would Like to Participate More.

Q344. Which outdoor activities do you think you'd like to do more of in Washington? (Asked of those who indicate that there is an activity(ies) that they currently do but would like to do more of in Washington.) (Shows only those named by at least 1.0% of respondents.)



TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION AND DEMAND

Previous SCORP surveys were conducted in 2002 and 2006, and it is interesting to compare participation in activities from one survey to the next. Because of methodological differences between the three surveys, a direct comparison of participation *rates* was not possible; however, a comparison of the relative *rankings* was made. This analysis of rankings looked only at those activities with at least 4.0% participation in 2012 (a very small percentage change for those activities with relatively low participation rates can cause a huge swing in ranking; for this reason, those activities with less than 4.0% participation in 2012 were excluded from the analysis).

Table 3.19 shows the top 53 activities in 2012 and where those activities would be ranked (out of 53 activities) in 2002 and 2006; it also shows the differences in ranking (one column compared 2002 and 2012; one column compares 2006 and 2012; the final column compares the mean of 2002 and 2006 to the 2012 ranking). Some activities with a marked increase in ranking include fishing for shellfish, visiting a nature interpretive center, climbing or mountaineering, firearms use (hunting or shooting), inner tubing or floating, and camping in a primitive location. It is also worth noting that picnicking, BBQing, and cooking out went from the ninth-ranked activity in 2002 to the top-ranked activity in 2012. Figure 3.17 graphically shows the top and bottom of the table—those activities with large changes in ranking. Note that the top ranking is "1" and the lowest ranking is "53."

Table 3.19a: Changes in Rankings of Activities.

Activity	2002 Rank	2006 Rank	2012 Rank	Difference in rank from 2002 to 2012	Difference in rank from 2006 to 2012	Difference in rank: mean of 2002 and 2006 rankings compared to the 2012 ranking	
Fishing for shellfish	39	45	29	10	16	13	Greatest gain in ranking
Visiting a nature interpretive center	20	33	14	6	19	12.5	
Climbing or mountaineering	49	42	34	15	8	11.5	
Firearms (hunting or shooting)	22	41	21	1	20	10.5	
Inner tubing or floating	42	25	23	19	2	10.5	
Camping—backpacking/primitive location	46	47	36	10	11	10.5	
Snowshoeing	52	52	44	8	8	8	
Softball	48	40	37	11	3	7	
Camping—tent camping with car/motorcycle	26	19	16	10	3	6.5	
Volleyball	43	34	32	11	2	6.5	
Hiking	8	16	6	2	10	6	
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights—at a facility	33	13	17	16	-4	6	
Water skiing	40	49	39	1	10	5.5	
Fishing from a bank, dock, or jetty	17	31	19	-2	12	5	
Beachcombing	21	14	13	8	1	4.5	
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out	9	1	1	8	0	4	
Horseback riding	34	50	38	-4	12	4	
Wildlife viewing/photographing	2	11	3	-1	8	3.5	
Boating—canoeing, kayaking, rowing, manual craft	38	28	30	8	-2	3	
Badminton	53	43	45	8	-2	3	
Fishing from private boat	19	30	22	-3	8	2.5	
Jogging or running	15	12	12	3	0	1.5	
Snowboarding	41	46	42	-1	4	1.5	
Weight conditioning—at a facility	24	18	20	4	-2	1	
Tennis	32	36	33	-1	3	1	

Table 3.19b: Changes in Rankings of Activities (continued).

Activity	2002 Rank	2006 Rank	2012 Rank	Difference in rank from 2002 to 2012	Difference in rank from 2006 to 2012	Difference in rank: mean of 2002 and 2006 rankings compared to the 2012 ranking	
Swimming or wading at beach	14	3	8	6	-5	0.5	
Playground use	13	8	10	3	-2	0.5	
Swimming in pool	12	6	9	3	-3	0	
Basketball	28	20	24	4	-4	0	
Walking without a pet	1	2	2	-1	0	-0.5	
Sightseeing	3	4	4	-1	0	-0.5	
Gardening, flowers or vegetables	4	5	5	-1	0	-0.5	
Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	18	17	18	0	-1	-0.5	
Walking with a pet	5	7	7	-2	0	-1	
Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	7	21	15	-8	6	-1	
Skiing, downhill	25	35	31	-6	4	-1	
Handball, racquetball, or squash	51	51	52	-1	-1	-1	
Boating—using personal watercraft	47	48	49	-2	-1	-1.5	
Sledding, inner tubing, or other snow play	31	15	25	6	-10	-2	
Bicycle riding	6	9	10	-4	-1	-2.5	
Archery (hunting or shooting)	44	53	51	-7	2	-2.5	
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy	37	39	41	-4	-2	-3	
Football	50	37	48	2	-11	-4.5	
Golf	10	24	25	-15	-1	-8	
Baseball	45	32	47	-2	-15	-8.5	
Camping—RV camping	16	22	28	-12	-6	-9	
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle	23	26	35	-12	-9	-10.5	
Soccer	36	27	43	-7	-16	-11.5	
Off-roading—motorcycle	35	44	52	-17	-8	-12.5	
Class or instruction at community center	29	23	39	-10	-16	-13	
Roller or inline skating	30	38	50	-20	-12	-16	Greatest decline in ranking
Social event at community center	11	10	27	-16	-17	-16.5	
Activity center	27	29	46	-19	-17	-18	

Figure 3.17: Activities With the Greatest Changes in Rank, 2002/2006 to 2012.

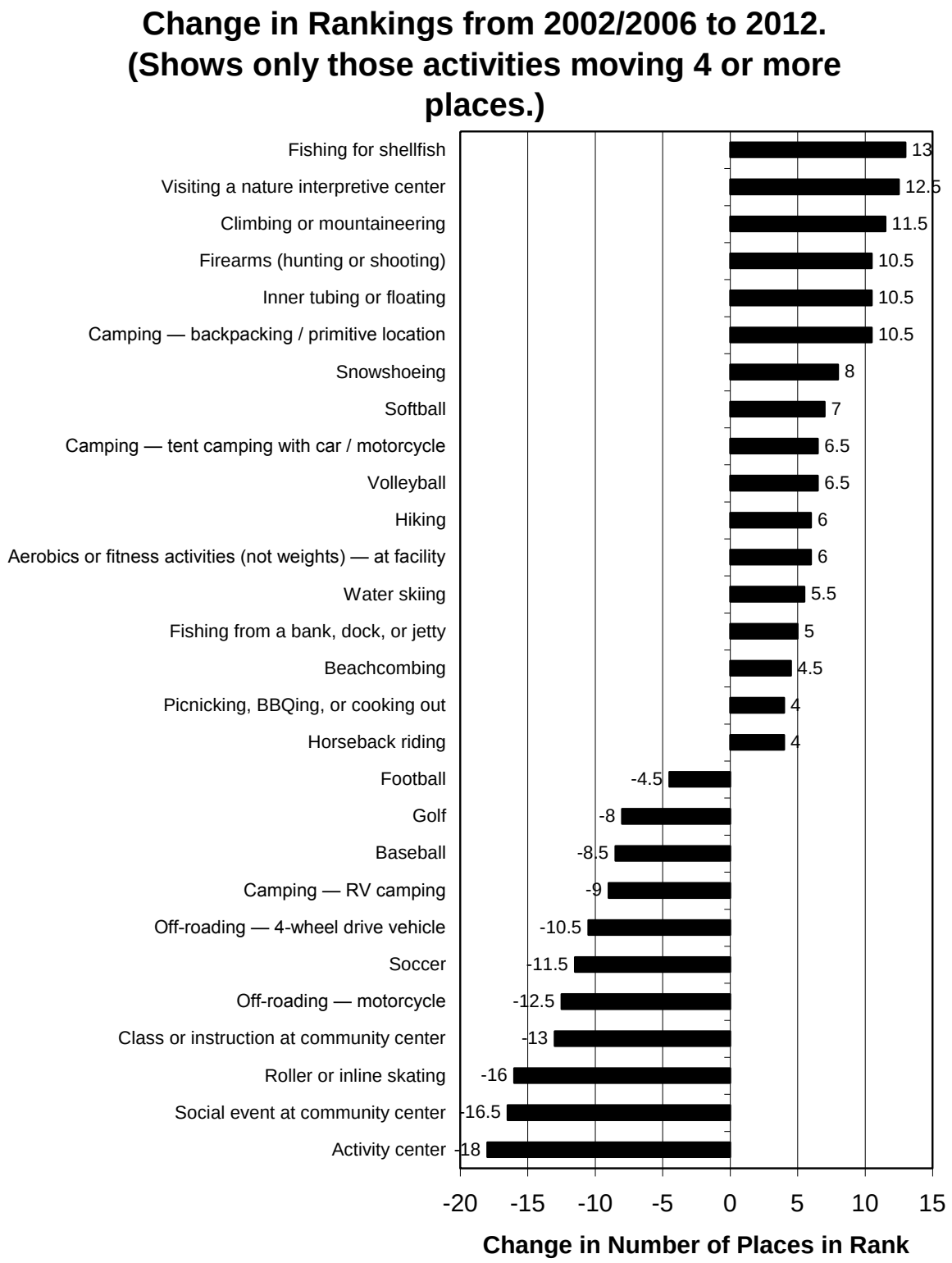
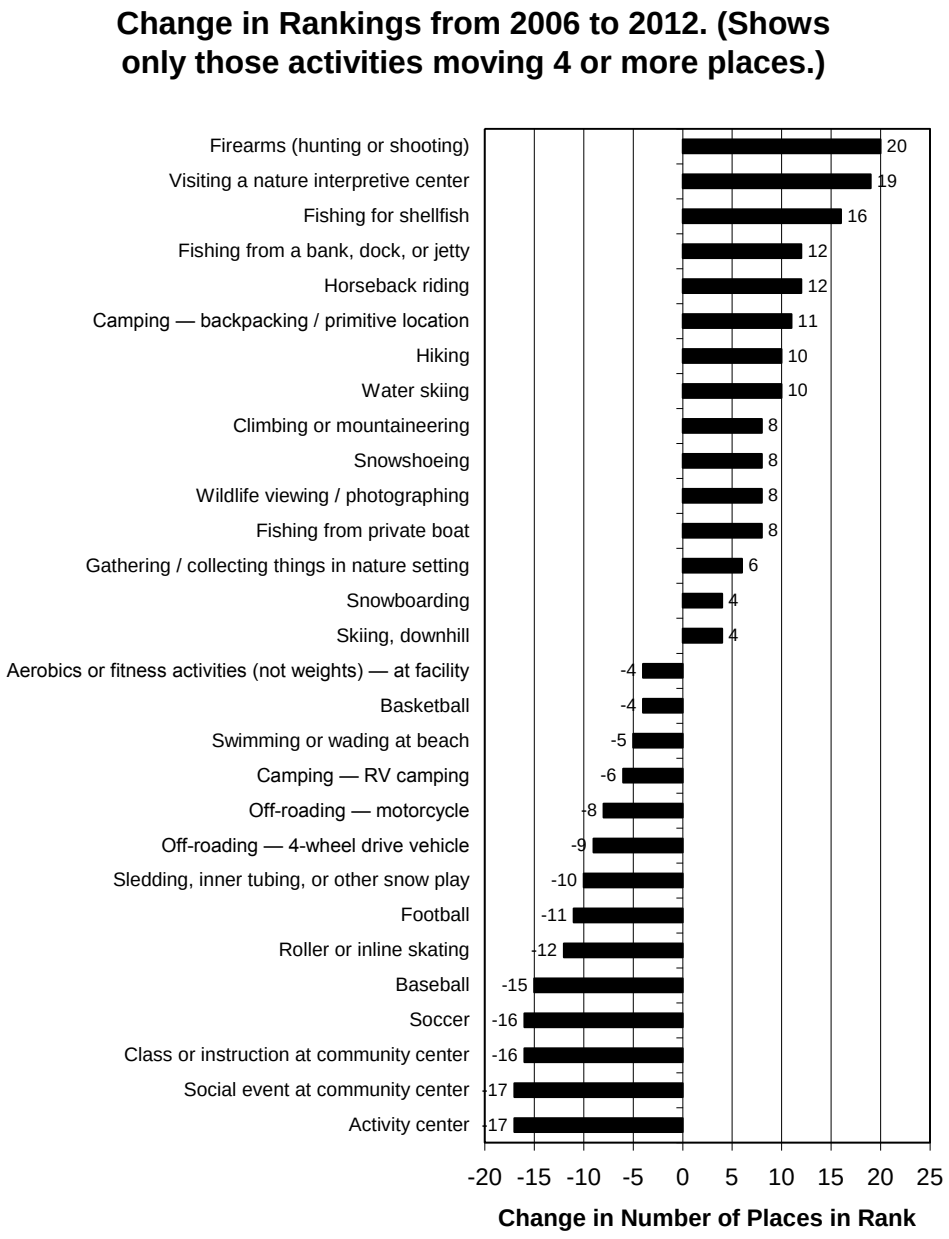


Figure 3.18 shows the change in rankings from 2006 to 2012. It shows the dramatic increase in many of the activities based in nature (including activities that are not encompassed by the more narrow definition of "nature-based activities" used in categorizing activities in the SCORP), such as hunting, visiting a nature interpretive center, fishing, camping, and hiking.

Figure 3.18: Activities With the Greatest Changes in Rank, 2006 to 2012.



The increases in participation that the data above suggest are mirrored by national trends. For instance, recent research indicates that Americans' participation in hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing is increasing. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Census Bureau's *National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation* is a nationwide trend survey administered every 5 years and represents the largest and most comprehensive measurement

of Americans' participation in these activities. The *National Survey* was most recently conducted in 2011, and these results indicate that the percentage of Americans ages 16 and older participating in hunting increased by 9% since 2006: in 2011, 13.7 million Americans took part in hunting, compared to 12.5 million Americans in 2006.

The 2011 *National Survey* results for fishing also show an increase in participation. According to the survey, the 33 million Americans ages 16 and older who went freshwater or saltwater fishing in 2011 marked an 11% increase over the 30 million Americans who fished in 2006.

The *National Survey* measures wildlife viewing in two ways: wildlife viewing within a mile of home and wildlife viewing more than a mile from home. The recent *National Survey* results for wildlife viewing indicate that participation since 2001 has increased by 9%: in 2011, 71.8 million Americans ages 16 and older engaged in around-the-home or away-from-home wildlife viewing, compared to 71.1 million Americans in 2006 and just 66.1 million Americans in 2001.

It is worth noting that many of the *declines* in activities in Washington State are matched by national trends as well. For instance, Figure 3.17 shows a decline in the ranking of golf; this is matched by National Golf Foundation statistics, which show that golfing participants numbered over 30 million in 2003 (a peak year) but then steadily declined each year through 2009 (Beditz 2010). Likewise, the Outdoor Foundation's 2012 Outdoor Recreation Participation Report shows decreased participation for several of the same activities that saw lowered participation across the 2006 and 2012 SCORP surveys. For example, the most recent Outdoor Foundation data shows that the 14.6 million Americans ages 6 and older who participated in baseball in 2006 declined to 12.6 million participants in 2011. Similarly, 12.3 million participants in touch football in 2006 declined to just 7 million participants in 2011; for tackle football, 8.4 million participants in 2006 went to just under 6 million in 2011. For roller skating with inline wheels (another activity that saw a notable decline across the two SCORP surveys), the Outdoor Foundation survey determined that while 12.3 million Americans ages 6 and older participated in 2006, the number had decreased to just 6.9 million by 2011.

Other data reflective of the participation declines from the SCORP surveys are available in the Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association's (SGMA) 2010 Sports & Fitness Participation Topline Report: this survey found that participation in basketball decreased from 26.2 million Americans in 2000 to 24 million Americans in 2009. Participation data for some of the other activities mentioned in both the SCORP and Outdoor Foundation surveys were also measured in the SGMA, and the declines are again consistent across all three data sources. For example, the SGMA survey showed that baseball had 15.8 million participants in 2000 and just 13.8 million in 2009. Similarly, the SGMA determined that 8.2 million Americans engaged in tackle football in 2000, compared to 6.8 million in 2009. Finally, while 21.9 million Americans participated in roller skating with inline wheels in 2000, only 8.3 million individuals engaged in the activity in 2009. As with the Outdoor Foundation survey, all results from SGMA survey are among Americans ages 6 and older.

FUTURE DEMAND AND NEW FORMS OF RECREATION

It would appear that most people will continue to engage in the outdoor activities in which they previously participated. After listing the activities in which they participated, residents were then asked if they planned to do those activities in the coming year. An overwhelming majority of them (91%) indicated that they planned to do *all* of the same activities in which they had participated in the previous year, and another 3% indicated that they planned to do most of

those activities. Therefore, it is likely that rates of planned participation would be roughly the same as the actual participation rates discussed previously in this section of the SCORP.

Regarding new forms of recreation, several activities were newly tracked in the 2012 resident survey, including general frisbee play, with a participation rate of 16.8%, disc golf or frisbee golf (4.5%), and ultimate frisbee or frisbee football (3.0%). While ultimate frisbee requires nothing more than a field, disc golf requires infrastructure for the tees and the baskets, which has implications for recreation providers.

Another activity that is eons old but newly tracked in 2012 is swimming in natural waters, in which 35.7% of residents participated. While this activity does not require any facility for the activity itself, it may benefit from some infrastructure, including access to water. Likewise, snorkeling was also newly tracked (3.7%), as were two other water-related activities: using a splash park (8.1%) and using a spray park (6.4%).

Ice hockey was included in the 2012 study. However, only 0.5% of residents indicated playing ice hockey.

It is impossible to say what new forms of recreation will emerge in the next decades, or whether some older forms of recreation may take on new life. It is hoped that the extensive public input during the development of the SCORP will ensure that new forms of recreation that should be included in the next SCORP will be included.

"I feel that we as a state could benefit from establishing more trails and recreation areas. My opinion is that communities and their citizens would benefit from more trails that connect to urban areas to encourage people to get outside without having [to] spend so much time on the freeway. Please develop more trails for the full spectrum of users that promote connections between communities and public lands."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"It's all about need and meeting people's expectations for recreation services. As the baby boomers continue to retire, there is an expectation that low-cost recreation opportunities will be available. Unfortunately, the declining economy and tax base make it difficult to provide parks and recreation services when competing for funding for other municipal services such as fire, police, and utilities."
—Southwest Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

"Washington state has one of the best park systems in the entire country when it comes to mountain bike and motorcycle access to near wilderness areas. The only issues I have seen lately are conflict with DNR land use for recreation vs. timber harvesting. We have demonstrated in areas like Galbraith and the Pilchuck Tree farm that resource development and recreation can coexist through active involvement and cooperation from all interested parties. We should all strive to cooperate in this manner for all multi-use areas and limit urban growth into forest lands."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

CHAPTER 4: ISSUES IN PROVIDING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Chapter Highlights

- Among local providers, three issues repeatedly emerged as the most important: funding, maintenance of existing facilities, and problems related to access.
- Among federal, state, and not-for-profit recreation providers, public access is by far the top issue of concern.
- Among all providers, creating new partnership opportunities and increasing public access are priorities.
- Most local recreation providers are only able to meet about a quarter of their funding goals.
- The public recognizes that funding limitations have an impact on parks and recreation opportunities, and they are open to discussing creative solutions to funding issues.
- Among Washington residents, the top constraints to outdoor recreation participation are social issues and other issues over which agencies/organizations have little influence, such as weather. However, other constraints that agencies can address are primarily related to access to recreation facilities and opportunities.
  - Top problems were lack of facilities or closed facilities, access or travel distance, costs, and poor quality of existing facilities.
- Five factors related to access and how they impact outdoor recreation should be considered: availability, accessibility, accommodation, awareness, and assumptions.
- User fees and specific-use taxes also emerged as a constraint during discussions among Town Hall contributors.
- Recreation equity involves assessing unmet demand. Planning for recreation trends may require multiple techniques to detect unmet demand.
- User conflicts and recreation compatibility are key issues of concern to providing quality outdoor recreation experiences to user groups. User conflicts can have serious consequences, including safety issues, user displacement, and even participation desertion.
- There are three trends that may pose challenges to outdoor recreation providers in the future: increasing demand for outdoor recreation due to population growth, increasing diversity of recreation experiences, and the contemporary retraction of government programs (e.g., anti-tax initiatives in Washington).
- As the population grows, several major demographic trends are taking place in the state that will need to be considered in outdoor recreation planning: urbanization, increases in minority populations, and an aging population.
- Two factors of sustainability should be considered in outdoor recreation planning: (1) the impact of recreation on the environment (environmental sustainability) and (2) the longevity of recreational assets (recreational sustainability).
- Opinions on technological issues range from those who wholly embrace technology as a new opportunity for open space enjoyment to those who insist that technology be restricted as an interference to the outdoor recreation experience.
- A high priority for recreation providers is providing access to an abundance of diverse opportunities.
- The public would like to see an increase in the quantity and diversity of recreation opportunities provided.

This chapter explores issues related to providing outdoor recreation, including constraints and barriers, challenges, and other concerns related to outdoor recreation. The survey research, meetings with RCO staff and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, the SCORP Advisory Group, and public comments posted on the SCORP Town Hall have proven useful in identifying the issues that are important in providing outdoor recreation in Washington. In some cases, as in the survey of residents and the web-based surveys of recreation providers, quantitative data are presented to support the conclusions. In many cases, however, qualitative research has been highlighted based on the SCORP Town Hall, in which members of the public participated during the research and planning process. Consequently, in some cases, it is not appropriate to ascribe *quantitative* meanings to these issues. Rather, the goal of this chapter is to provide a context for better understanding outdoor recreation issues in Washington, for exploring their impact on resources and the public, and for investigating future opportunities or potential solutions.

TOP CHALLENGES AMONG RECREATION PROVIDERS

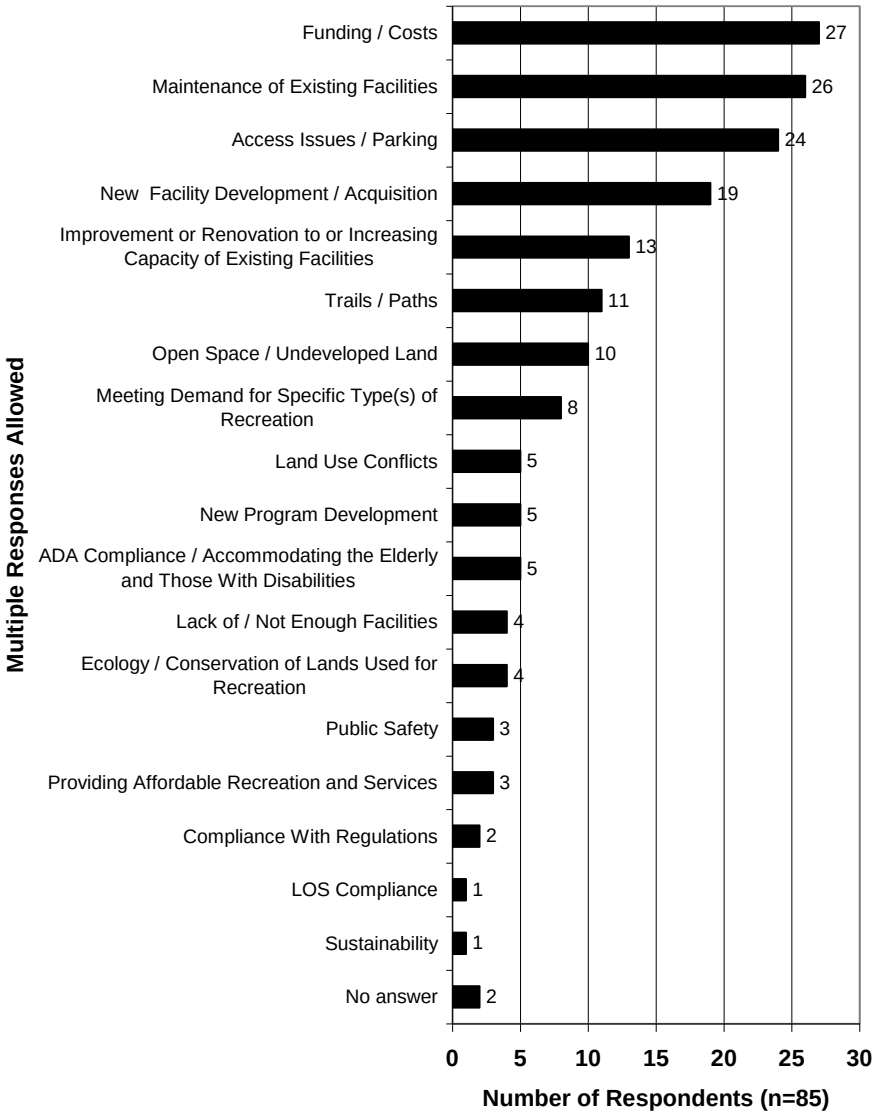
Local providers were asked about issues of concern and challenges facing the area they serve in the next 5 years. This was asked in an open-ended question to determine top-of-mind concerns and challenges. Among local providers who responded to the survey, the top three *issues of concern* facing their areas in the next 5 years are funding and/or costs, maintenance of existing facilities, and access and parking (Figure 4.1). When asked about *challenges or obstacles* they face in the next 5 years, local providers identified funding/costs as the top challenge by far, followed by maintenance of existing facilities (Figure 4.2).

In the surveys, other notable issues of concern include new facility development and acquisition, improvement or renovation to or increasing the capacity of existing facilities, trails/paths, open space/undeveloped land, and meeting the demand for a multitude of recreational activities. These concerns for future challenges suggest that recreation providers recognize that these issues will likely become greater priorities in the future due to increasing populations in Washington.

"The Columbia River Gorge is loved, but is it on its way to being loved to death? Trends show that the Portland-Vancouver metro area is set to double in size over the next 50 years, and with that comes the need for more managed recreation. Recently, public land managers are encountering user-made trails and access points to public lands, causing problems in managing and protecting public land. We believe this is a crucial time to rein in these behaviors by implementing managed corridors of recreation to address needs."
—Conservation Trust Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

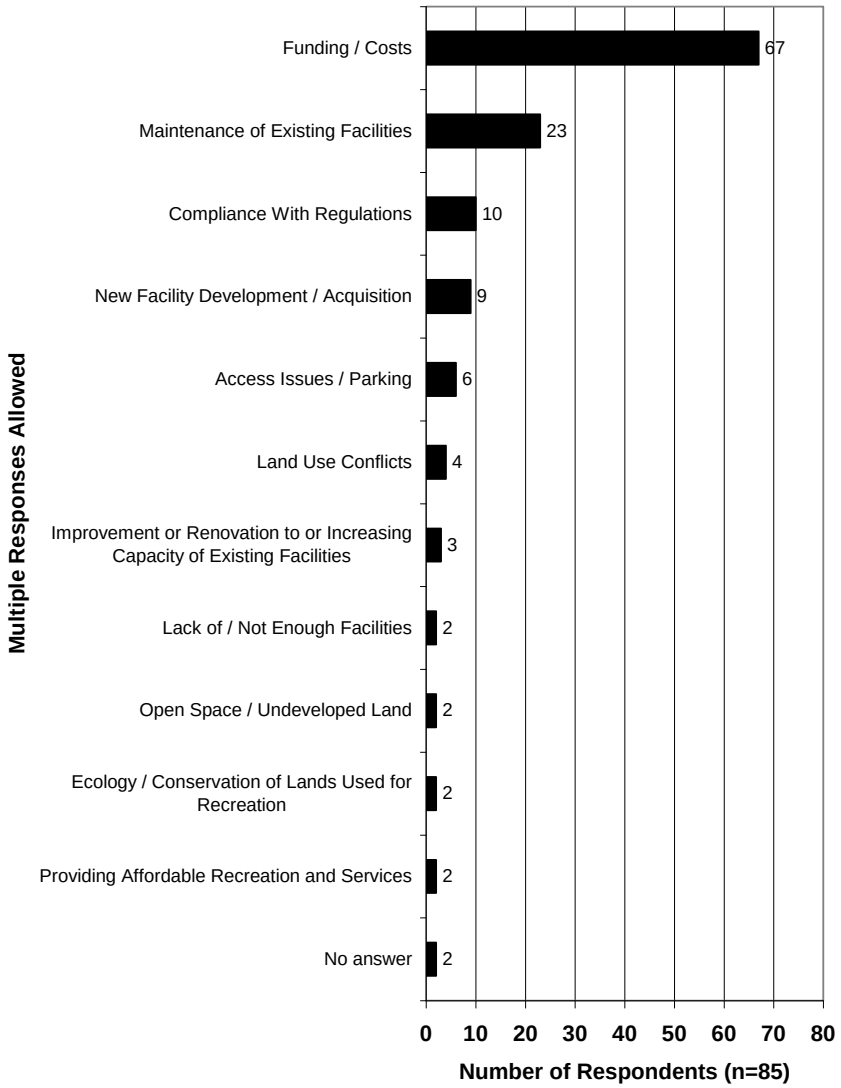
"There are several public lands within a 15-30 minute drive from our community, yet few have adequate parking or are even recognizably marked as public lands. There are incredible outdoor recreation opportunities close by, but people first need to know that they are available and accessible, and then, once the people know the opportunities are there, the people need to be welcomed by appropriate signage that identifies boundaries, rules regarding use, safety precautions, etc."
—Northeast Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

Figure 4.1: Issues of Concern Among Local Recreation Providers in the Next 5 Years.



"The amount of maintenance can always be improved. There is always a need for more maintenance in one place or another. When I see something that is not maintained to its highest level, I am assuming it is because of reduced resources."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

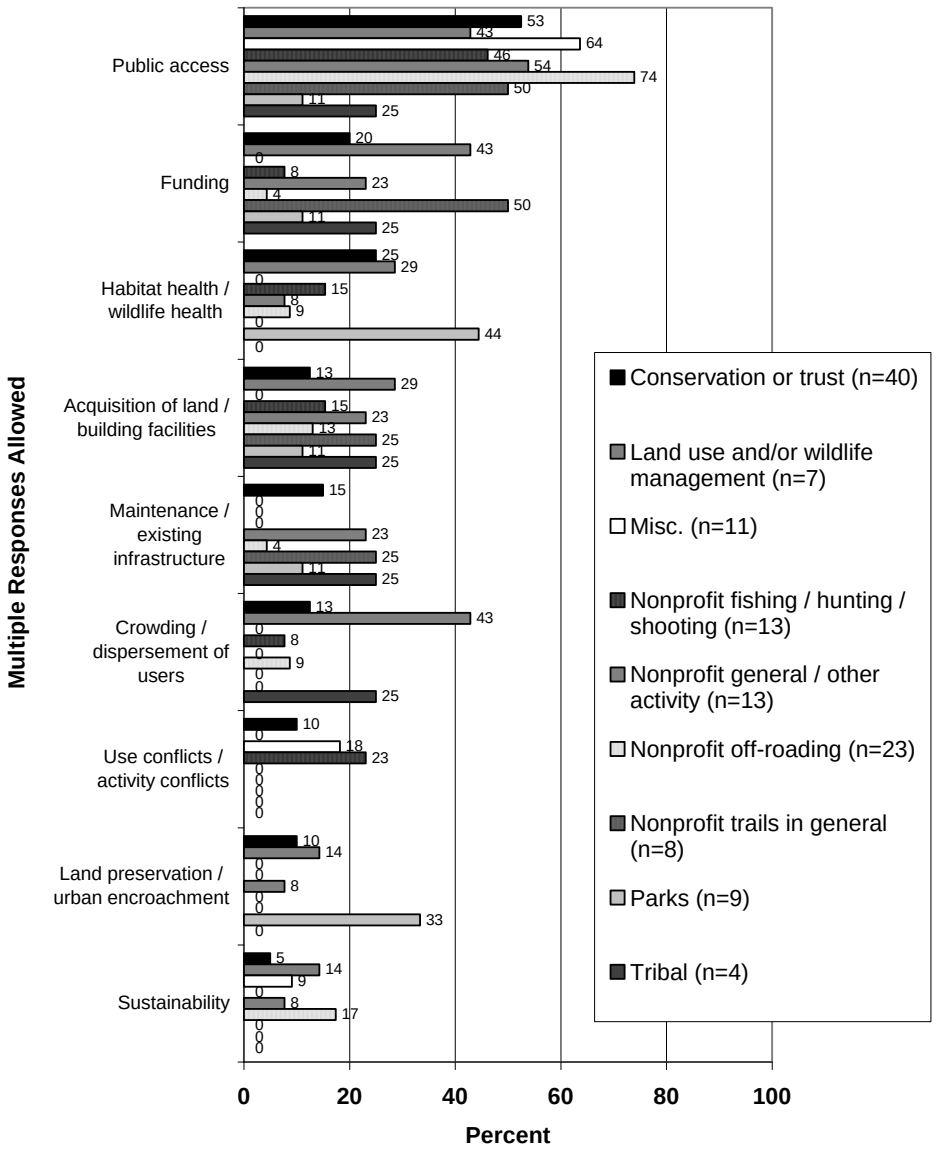
Figure 4.2: Challenges or Obstacles Among Local Recreation Providers in the Next 5 Years.



Local providers were asked specifically about their agency's funding goal for developing capital facilities for public outdoor recreation. The mean percent of funding goals being met statewide is 27.1%. In a similar question, the mean percent of funding goals for acquiring land for public outdoor recreation being met statewide is 24.4%. In short, most local recreation providers are only able to meet about a quarter of their funding goals.

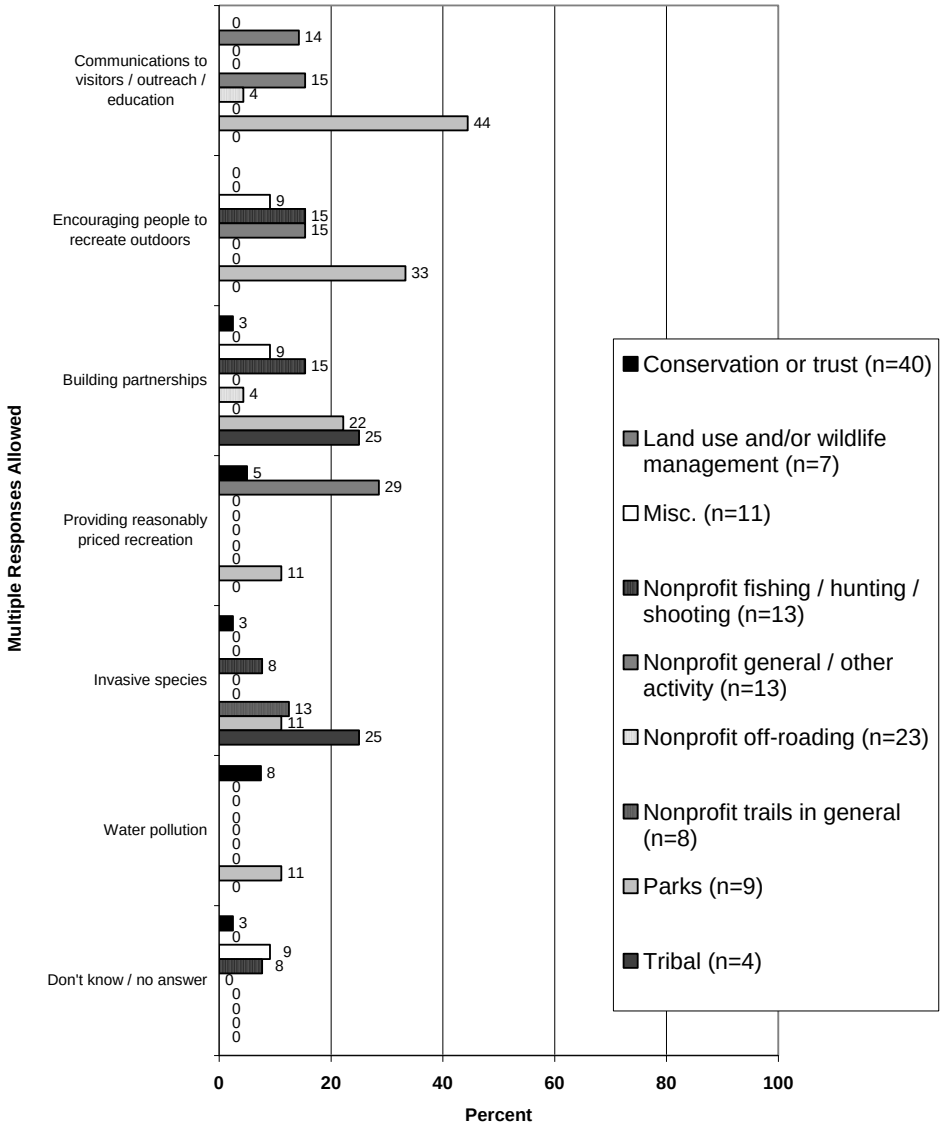
Federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit providers were also asked about issues of concern and challenges facing the area they serve in the next 5 years. As shown in Figures 4.3 and 4.4, the survey of federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers found that public access is the top *issue of concern* facing their area in the next 5 years, followed by funding, acquisition of land/building facilities, habitat and/or wildlife health, maintenance of existing infrastructure, and user conflicts or crowding.

Figure 4.3: Issues of Concern Among Federal, State, Tribal, and Nonprofit Recreation Providers in the Next 5 Years (Part 1).



"I generally find that the trails we have are well-maintained. Having a perfectly graded/paved path and super clean restrooms at every parking area is not what I want; having access to be able to explore the land is… Also I firmly believe that more trails will disperse our use over a greater area and actually help/improve the conditions on the trails we do have currently."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Figure 4.4: Issues of Concern Among Federal, State, Tribal, and Nonprofit Recreation Providers in the Next 5 Years (Part 2).



Other questions in the surveys also highlighted funding as an issue. Again, for the most part, the surveys suggest that funding goals are not being met. The biennial average percent of unmet capital facility development reported by federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers shows a mean of 40.5% for unmet goals for public outdoor recreation. Although less, the biennial average percent of unmet land acquisition goals for public outdoor recreation was still calculated as a mean percent of 32.6%. As with local recreation providers, federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers are struggling with funding issues and are unable to meet their annual funding goals.

Both the survey of local providers and the survey of federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers asked respondents to rate 16 issues regarding their importance in providing outdoor recreation in their service area, using a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the highest importance. Among the top issues in both surveys were creating new partnership opportunities and increasing public access. With the exception of these issues, the lists diverge a bit, with local providers being concerned with tangible, concrete issues (maintaining existing facilities, providing more access for persons with disabilities) and federal/state/nonprofit being concerned with more abstract issues (providing more sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities, increasing natural resource protection).

Figure 4.5 shows results among local providers. Figure 4.6 shows the results among federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit providers.

Figure 4.5: Mean Ratings of Importance of the Following Issues to Local Recreation Providers.

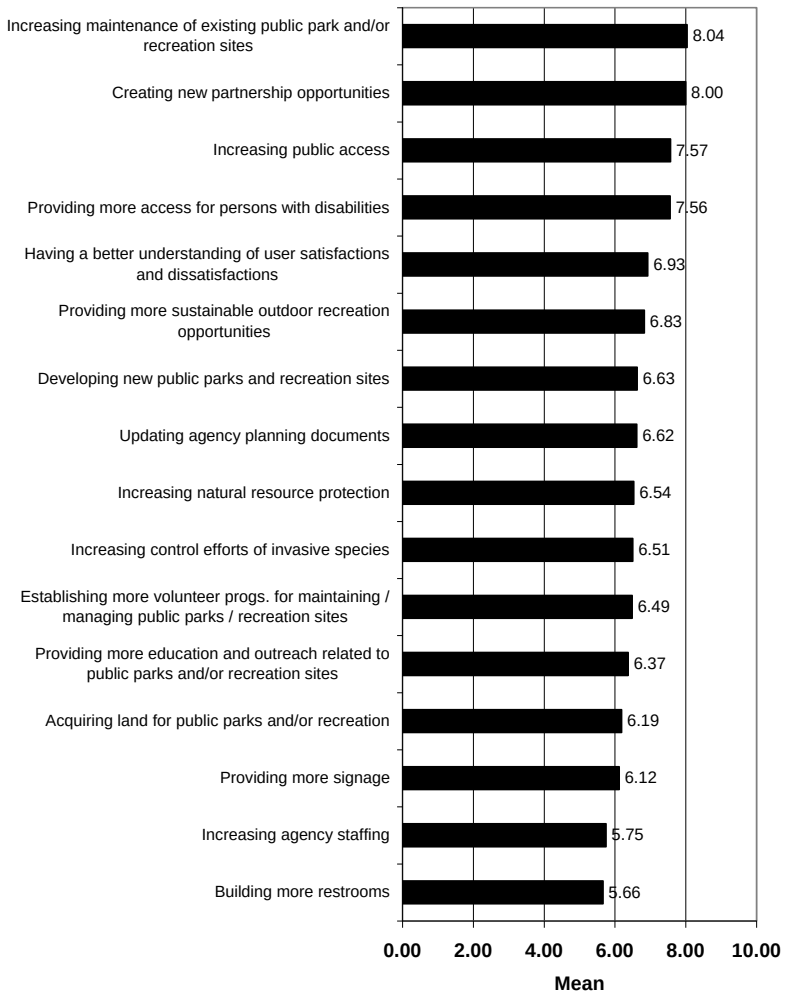
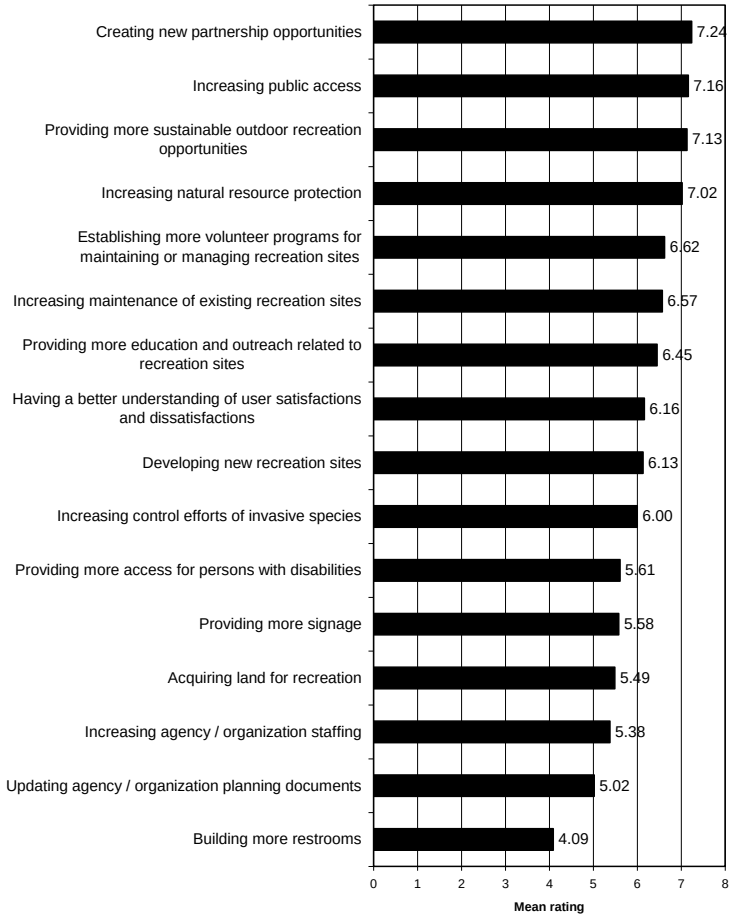


Figure 4.6: Mean Ratings of Importance of the Following Issues to Federal, State, Tribal, and Nonprofit Recreation Providers.



With the economic slowdown and the political climate regarding taxes, creating new partnerships is an important issue to many recreation providers, as partnerships allow the pooling of resources and/or sharing of costs. Additionally, maintenance of existing public parks and/or recreation facilities and opportunities is an issue expressed in the provider surveys as well the SCORP Town Hall, and may have been affected by the economy and political climate as well. Increasing public access is also a top concern among recreation providers who work to keep access open, available, and accommodating for a diverse public.

Public input was solicited on funding and potential solutions to curb problems with outdoor recreation funding. The SCORP Town Hall engaged the public in a discussion regarding possible ways to generate revenue for providing outdoor recreation in the state, including advertising in parks, corporate names for public parks, the availability of commercial businesses in outdoor recreation areas, and the provision of new types of recreation or new technologies at recreation sites. The SCORP Town Hall provided additional information on issues asked about in the telephone survey of Washington residents, and it also provided qualitative information on issues that were not addressed through the survey. For this reason, the SCORP Town Hall was valuable in understanding recreationists' perspectives on various topics and issues. While the SCORP Town Hall provides helpful qualitative data in understanding these issues, it is

important to note that these opinions are not representative of Washington residents as a whole. Public comment was available throughout the SCORP planning process, but the opinions and attitudes expressed in the SCORP Town Hall should be considered representative of only those who engaged in this public participation process. Therefore, opinions are not representative of the entire population in Washington and should be interpreted with caution.

SCORP Town Hall contributors recognize that funding limitations have an impact on outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, and they are open to discussing creative solutions to funding issues. However, when these potential solutions were raised, reactions from those who responded were mixed, with strong opinions in support of and in opposition to developing new infrastructure, service, and experiences at public recreation sites. In this way, the audience at these meetings was segmented, without consensus.

Nonetheless, there was general agreement among those who commented that any consideration of business activity being developed at publicly owned facilities requires a comprehensive, rigorous business approach that considers the capital, operation, and maintenance costs against projected revenue generation and liability exposure.

Although many people who commented were against development encroaching on natural areas, supporters indicated that small concessions, such as grocery and supply stores, may be considered but should support the mission of the facility; there was opposition to development specifically for commercial purposes. The general consensus, at least on this issue, is that enterprises should be complementary or consistent with the predominant use of the recreation area.

CONSTRAINTS TO PARTICIPATION AMONG RESIDENTS

There are numerous constraints to participation among Washington State residents, some of which recreation providers can address, but many of which are social issues that providers cannot greatly influence. The survey of residents provided quantifiable measures of latent demand and explored constraints and obstacles to participation. More than a quarter (29%) of Washington residents say that there are outdoor activities that they currently do not do but that they would like to do. Leading the list are air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.), hiking, skiing, hunting, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, camping, and other boating. A third (33%) say that they want to do more of some activities that they currently do. Leading this list are hiking, camping, fishing, walking, bicycling, off-road driving, and hunting.

The follow-up questions to both of the above explored constraints to participation in outdoor recreation. One question asked for the reasons Washington residents did not do the activities in which they expressed interest (29% of residents overall indicated that there were such activities and received the follow-up question). Social issues top the list of reasons that residents did not engage in activities in which they expressed interest: lack of time/other obligations (32% of those who received the follow-up question), financial reasons (15%), and health/age (12%). Rounding out the list of important constraints are a lack of the necessary equipment (10%), not being aware of opportunities (9%), travel distance (4%), lack of access (4%), not having a companion to go with (3%), and not knowing where to go (3%). Because provider agencies and organizations have little influence over social issues, the constraints of note for providers are a lack of the necessary equipment, lack of awareness of opportunities and places to go, and access issues.

Another follow-up question asked about reasons that respondents did not do *more of* the activities in which they already participated (33% of residents received the follow-up question).

Again, social issues top the list of reasons that residents did not do more of the activities in which they currently engage: lack of time/other obligations (43% of those who received the follow-up question), health/age (12%), and weather (8%). Rounding out the list are lack of access (8%), financial reasons (7%), lack of facilities/locations (5%), travel distance (4%), lack of awareness of opportunities (4%), and a lack of the necessary equipment (3%).

Social issues and other issues over which agencies/organizations have little influence, such as weather, top the list of constraints to participation. However, other constraints that agencies can address are primarily related to access to recreation facilities and opportunities.

Access

The survey asked residents about problems with opportunities for outdoor recreation, and in follow-up, the top problems were lack of facilities or closed facilities, access or travel distance, costs, and poor quality of existing facilities. As this shows, access is certainly an important issue.

A 2010 report by the National Shooting Sports Foundation and Responsive Management developed a typology of access factors: availability, accessibility, accommodation, awareness, and assumptions. Table 4.1 shows the typology of access factors, and the following section discusses the ways in which these factors impact outdoor recreation.

Table 4.1: Typology of Factors Related to Access.

Physical Aspects of Access

- **Availability** pertains to the actual facilities and opportunities available for outdoor recreation.
- **Accessibility** pertains to the ability to get to the facility or opportunity. For example, problems of accessibility may include public recreation areas or trails that are distant from roads and difficult to access or roads and trails that are gated or restricted to specific outdoor recreation uses or activities.
- **Accommodation** pertains to the ease of mobility and the experience once recreationists are at the recreation site. For example, recreationists may be able to access the site but the conditions of roads and trails may make maneuverability difficult. In the case of outdoor recreation, accommodations include the adequacy of facilities such as restrooms, picnic tables, shelters, etc.

Social/Psychological Aspects of Access

- **Awareness** pertains to information and knowledge—to recreationists' awareness of access options. Lack of *knowledge* of a place to recreate can be just as effective as an actual lack of places to recreate in preventing outdoor activities. Awareness also pertains to knowing where information can be found and how to use it. For example, hikers may not be aware of existing trails nearby or boaters may not know where boating access sites are located.
- **Assumptions** pertain to recreationists' perceptions about facilities and opportunities. These include prevalent ideas that opportunities are being threatened or other perceived barriers, regardless of whether they actually exist.

Adapted from NSSF/Responsive Management (2010).

Availability was considered in-depth in the assessment of supply in Chapter 2. However, qualitative research was also conducted through the SCORP Town Hall. When asked about the

availability of recreation facilities and opportunities in the state, Town Hall contributors had varied opinions. Discussion of availability often focused on the Town Hall contributor's recreation activity of choice, with many Town Hall contributors calling for more ORV, mountain biking, and horseback riding opportunities. Some thought there was a serious shortage of opportunities, others thought there was an adequate supply, and others thought that there was an adequate supply but an inequitable geographic distribution. Despite their opinions on the adequacy of supply, there was general consensus that demographic and population changes are having the greatest impact on the availability of facilities and opportunities.

Accessibility is another factor, and this includes what activities are allowed on public lands. Several Town Hall contributors voiced their concerns regarding trails or areas that were closed to specific activities. The major themes that emerged include a perceived lack of opportunity among equestrians, mountain bikers, and motor-sport trail users. There were also concerns raised about the conditions of roads and access to recreation areas. Several Town Hall contributors raised concerns about hindrances that impact accessibility, including public gates, lack of easements, impassable roads or trails, and even financial limitations. Similarly, travel distance appears to be an issue limiting accessibility of recreation areas.

As some of the Town Hall contributors suggested, some of the state's best efforts to increase recreation opportunities may have backfired. For example, the state's Open Space Taxation Act, enacted in 1970, allows for current use assessment, which values property at its current use rather than its highest and best use. This offers incentives to landowners whose properties qualify as one of the following classifications: open space land, farm and agricultural land, or timberland. One of the many qualifying factors for classification is enhancing recreation opportunities. In other words, among its many advantages, the Open Space Taxation Act encourages increases in recreation lands. However, as noted by some of the SCORP Town Hall contributors, there is a trend in private land ownership to limit public recreational access to no-entry or to a pay-to-enter model. This occurs despite the fact that similar taxation acts were enacted to encourage public recreation on these lands. As one contributor noted, "as timberlands are gated, public land often becomes landlocked and inaccessible by the actions of private companies [or landowners]. In effect, the loss of use of private timberlands, coupled with landlocked public lands has drastically reduced the 'recreational' spaces available to the public in the last 10-15 years." It becomes important for the state to look at this and other similar programs designed to enhance public recreation opportunities to evaluate whether or not the goals of these efforts are being met.

Related to the accommodation factor is maintenance, which affects the ability of sites to accommodate users' needs. Issues related to accommodations include lack of needed facilities and problems with the condition of facilities. Among the Town Hall contributors, one respondent tempered the divergence in opinion by saying, "Adequate maintenance is in the eye of the beholder. The standard should be such that those values we sought to protect in the first place [are] not degraded or irretrievably damaged." Yet another issue related to accommodations discussed by several Town Hall contributors was the provision of facilities and opportunities for residents with disabilities. As was clearly discussed in the SCORP Town Hall, the state should continue to improve and enhance recreation opportunities for this underserved population of residents.

Awareness, or not knowing where to go, is another issue related to access cited by the public in the SCORP Town Hall. A person's not knowing about a recreation facility or opportunity can be as much of an obstacle as an actual, physical barrier to his/her participation. The state has made numerous efforts to keep the public informed, providing online maps, Internet links to

recreation sites, handouts, and brochures to increase communications regarding recreation opportunities. Still, several people mentioned that people may not know where to go to recreate. Continued education and resources on where and how to take advantage of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities is important to maintaining participation levels and public satisfaction.

Assumptions can also impact outdoor recreationists' participation in activities. Assumptions include prevalent ideas that opportunities are being threatened or the perception that there are other barriers, regardless of whether they actually exist. Land conversion from agricultural and forest land to residentially zoned or developed land have made more prevalent the idea that outdoor recreation opportunities are being threatened. As recreationists increasingly see the encroachment of development in their communities, they may assume that access is being threatened, even if they themselves have not experienced access problems. Assumptions may also include perceived conflicts among users of recreation facilities and opportunities.

"Everyone deserves access to public lands to enjoy their recreational pursuits. There does seem to be an imbalance to that access."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"The bigger problem is not the lack of trails, but the lack of accessible areas in which to build trails. There are many groups (motorized, MTB, horse, etc.) who are more than willing to build and maintain trails on their own time, from their own budget, if we could only get into more areas to build them."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"As a hiker, I have access to the vast acreage locked up as wilderness which I have been using for forty years and there are still many trails on my 'bucket list' I have yet to hike just in Washington State alone.

"In general the maintenance has declined with the state's budget. Many access roads are ungraded and make use difficult."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"I personally would love to be able access parks in multiple forms. Hiking, Climbing, Biking and Snowmobiling. I am just now beginning to learn what is all available for summer and winter recreation."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"I would like to see more disabled access to public lakes in Eastern WA."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"The trail that is accessible is not always well-maintained because the USFS and DNR simply don't have the funds to handle this."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"We need parks that offer real activities and challenges as well as easier access for disabled and children activities. They need bathroom facilities with showers. Many people do not partake in outdoor activities because it is a little rough for them. Some people want the tougher experience. Need a balance, something to encourage those less able and challenging areas for those who are more able. The more people we can encourage to experience the great outdoors, the more support we will receive.'
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

User Fees and Specific-Use Taxes

Although they were not asked about in the survey of Washington residents, user fees and specific-use taxation were a focus of discussion among Town Hall contributors. There were highly divergent opinions about the merit of various direct fees (e.g., Good To Go Pass) and indirect fees (e.g., allocations of gas taxes) that support recreation development, especially for trails and associated infrastructure. While some stakeholders are opposed to fees, most contributors expressed some level of willingness to pay a fee, with the caveat that the fee provide access across multiple providers in the state.

Several Town Hall contributors mentioned the State Parks Discover Pass, with divergent opinions about its merit and the merit of similar passes. Opinions in the SCORP Town Hall ranged from support for paying more in exchange for additional access to recognition that the current state government fiscal situation means new money has to come from somewhere. Opposition to fees were generally because of concerns that too much money is being spent already or that the money was not being used to support these recreation opportunities. Another difficulty opponents had regarding similar fees and passes was their inability to see "on-the-ground" efforts on which their fees were being used. As one recreationist explained, "I paid extra attention after I bought the Discover Pass, and found that most of the recent work involved putting up the signs requiring the pass. Beyond that….not a lot of other work was being done..." In other words, it would be useful to these recreationists to see where and how their fees are being spent to enhance recreation facilities and opportunities.

Additionally, opponents of user fees were perplexed and frustrated by the many different kinds of access passes and fees associated with outdoor recreation. The difficulty of navigating their way through what they perceive as a maze of differing fee requirements that span the various federal, state, and local recreation providers was sometimes a deterrent to their outdoor recreation participation. One Town Hall contributor voiced his/her frustration, saying, "Another complicated aspect to us typical trail users is the complex network of land owners. Each owner has different rules and it's really difficult to figure out where you need a pass, where you can park, what's allowed, etc." As a solution, several Town Hall contributors supported the idea of a "one pass" approach that allows access to all public lands. As one recreationist suggested, "The Discovery Pass, in my opinion, was a good idea, but didn't go far enough in reducing the pass confusion that exists. We have purchased them since they have been available, and yet many places we go are still asking for some other pass or fee. I don't mind paying for access, [as] those who use the facilities should share in the cost of those facilities, but if we can't get to 'One Pass for All Facilities', then folks will tend not to buy the passes and overall revenue will suffer. I realize the system can't afford to staff each site to collect fees but I don't feel the present system of multiple passes works either and I think it discourages folks from buying any passes, as whichever one they have is the wrong one."

Town Hall contributors also pointed to what they perceived as the social inequity of requiring the public to pay a fee, which makes it difficult for lower-income families to afford to go to a park. These contributors advocated that outdoor recreation is a resource for all the public to enjoy, and access passes and fees make it difficult for poorer families to engage in recreation activities. As one Town Hall contributor stated, "The parks used to be the last place that families could go for free recreation." Another Town Hall contributor lamented, "What I do not want to see are the increasing user fees of one kind or another – increased to the point where young families with children can no longer afford to enjoy the great outdoors. (Camping fees have tripled from the time we camped with our kids in the early 80′s)."

Town Hall contributors shared similar concerns about Washington's Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program, which is partially funded by the state's gasoline tax and off-road vehicle use permits. Some recreationists who were taxed and paid for vehicle use permits contend that NOVA funding shifts in the recent past are not aligned with the goals to which these recreationists thought they were contributing. From their perspective, they supported a new tax and permit on their activity with the understanding that these new monies would be dedicated support for their recreation activities. Some of the Town Hall contributors felt that the revenue from these sources have been inappropriately allocated to other purposes in recent years. As a result, some of these Town Hall contributors are frustrated to have supported these changes without a return on their investment.

"Do not limit the people's access to recreation by imposing fees and regulations that prevent the people from free and easy access to OUR RESOURCES."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"I would like to see that the fees we pay be spent in a proportional manner for maintenance of these trails and trailheads. We find that the fees we pay often are spent largely in areas that we do not use, or even absorbed somewhere other than where they were intended as sold to us when these fees were created."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"I want just as much land available for future lovers of the wilderness as I had to discover and slowly explore. I'm happy to donate funds with my vehicle tabs and even purchased my Discovery Pass with them last month. I'm happy to help, in other words, but I realize that user fees cannot generate all the revenue needed to maintain state parks and DNR access."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Although my family has the economic resources to pay park fees, the cost of an annual pass is high enough to price many others out of the park user market. Families struggling with economic issues should not be precluded from using invaluable public resources that provide opportunities for fresh air and exercise, exposure to physical beauty, and the power to educate through experience."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"We need to continue to protect our public lands from development and support the people and agencies that work to keep recreation open and available to the public, including our financial support whenever possible. The cost of a Discover Pass, hunting or fishing license is minimal for the return we receive."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Due to these cutbacks most agencies and private land owners charge fees to use their lands, but these funds don't seem to be applied to keeping the trails open and maintained. I am willing to support our parks and trail system though volunteer efforts and funding but there needs to be accountability to the use of these funds."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Balance is key. We should maintain what we have and charge reasonable access fees when necessary. When people have to pay a small fee to use parks and campgrounds, there's a better appreciation of the cost to maintain our limited natural resources — I know we pay taxes, but the connection isn't as obvious compared to an immediate fee and usage experience."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Refine the Discover Pass–use it as a marketing tool to encourage visitation."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

RECREATION EQUITY

That recreation opportunities be equitably distributed is the focus of this section. There are diverse communities that seek recreational opportunities that providers must consider.

Addressing Recreation Trends and Demands

Recreation managers are planning under uncertainty when responding to trends. A cause of this uncertainty comes from an imperfect ability to detect unmet needs. The SCORP Advisory Group, in its discussions, noted how it can be difficult to spot and, therefore, respond to some trends in recreation. Town Hall contributors made the same point that sometimes an unmet recreation need is not apparent from the regular course of business of recreation providers. The case history cited most in Town Hall comments was the Duthie Hill Mountain Biking Park in King County. From these stakeholders' perspective, there was a known demand for such a facility, but the intensity of this demand, as verified by the very high use of the facility after it was built, is an indication that there was an unmet need that went undetected. Thus, planning for recreation trends may require multiple techniques. For example, the City of Renton's approach is multi-pronged. The city uses statistically valid surveys, customer satisfaction surveys, exit questionnaires at major facilities, focus groups, resident advisory groups, and general public participation projects. Despite this, there is an element of uncertainty in planning for recreation trends, and the Advisory Group's recommendation encourages recreation providers to "…when feasible, experiment with innovations for detecting unmet needs that may not be accessible with traditional [planning] methods."

"Accommodating newer uses without displacing existing heritage uses can be a challenge without adequate recreation planning and new site development."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Non-profit shooting facilities offer the public an incredible resource for recreational sports. They are great institutions for partnership with public entities for the collaboration of funds and volunteer resources that provide for the continued development and stewardship of recreational activities. Every recreational alternative can benefit from these kinds of public/private partnerships – be it a hiking trail, a public horseback riding facility or whatever your favorite recreational pastime. With today's financial shortages for all government services every avenue of funding for all outdoor recreational opportunities should be considered to help recreational resources stay open and accessible to the public."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"The greatest challenge is finding ways to satisfy people's need to get outdoors and recreate while managing use of available areas and resources to avoid overcrowding. There is currently too high a demand and too few opportunities and places to enjoy the outdoors."
—Nonprofit Fishing / Hunting / Shooting Recreation Provider

"As 'development' gobbles up more and more natural areas, we need to protect as many remaining natural areas as possible—for future generations of native plants and the birds and other wildlife that depend on them. Parks in natural areas provide important ecological and life-support functions—for humans and wildlife—and we must be sensitive to the impacts of recreation."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

User Conflicts and Recreation Compatibility

User conflicts and recreation compatibility are key issues of concern to providing quality outdoor recreation experiences to user groups. While the research shows that recreationists are generally satisfied with their outdoor experiences, user conflict is still cited as a concern or issue. User conflicts can have serious consequences, including safety issues, user displacement, and even participation desertion.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (2005) provided a spectrum for user interactions. As shown in Table 4.2, the four types of interactions include (1) complementary, (2) supplementary, (3) competitive, and (4) antagonistic interactions.

Table 4.2: Spectrum of Interaction Types and Their Recreational Outcomes.

Interaction Type	Key Characteristic of Interaction Type	Outcome	Example
Complementary	Increasing participation in one activity may increase participation in another activity	No conflict	Camping and hiking
Supplementary	Neutral interaction; increase in one activity will probably not increase participation in the other activity	Minor conflict	Snowmobiling and all-terrain vehicle use
Competitive	Increase in one activity will likely decrease activity in the other activity	Conflict	Fishing and jet skiing
Antagonistic	Activity of one activity drives the other toward zero participation	Strong Conflict	Wilderness camping and ATV use

Source: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (2005).

Accordingly, the goal of recreation providers is to manage resources to keep user interactions complementary or supplementary. In their 2005-2010 SCORP, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources applied compatibility ratings to various outdoor recreation activities, resulting in a helpful resource for outdoor recreation providers and land managers to support complementary or supplementary outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities.

As resources become more limited and development of land increases, creating complementary and supplementary opportunities for outdoor recreation is becoming more challenging for recreation providers. Despite recreation providers' best efforts to minimize user conflicts, these conflicts still occur. In the SCORP Town Hall, user conflicts became a clear issue among participants, having a significant impact on whether or not these users support or oppose the development of new recreation facilities or opportunities and also on whether or not they continue to recreate at the same sites or locations. User conflicts arise due to several factors, as defined by Jacob and Schreyer in their 1980s study of conflicts in outdoor recreation:

1. Activity style: The various personal meanings assigned to an activity.
2. Resources specificity: The significance attached to using a specific recreation resource for a given recreation experience.
3. Mode of experience: The varying expectations of how the natural environment will be perceived.
4. Lifestyle tolerance: The tendency to accept or reject lifestyles different from one's own.

The interplay between these factors sometimes creates conflicts among users. The provision of facilities and opportunities that mediate these factors is important for several reasons. Most

importantly, addressing user conflict is important for recreation providers to ensure that recreationists have high-quality outdoor experiences. To this end, user conflicts have to be addressed to improve user safety, protect natural resources, minimize crowding, and address threats to quality experiences.

The public involvement on this project revealed that there are three trends that may pose challenges to outdoor recreation providers in the future. The first is the increasing demand for outdoor recreation (population growth in Washington), combined with the second trend, increasing *diversity* of recreation experiences (e.g., the relatively recent popularity of mountain biking), combined with the third trend, the contemporary retraction of government programs (e.g., anti-tax initiatives in Washington). These trends come together on a background of a relatively fixed base of recreation assets.

To make matters worse, old management methods, such as zoning to separate user groups, are also losing effectiveness as user-group footprints increasingly overlap. Using trail management as an example, a simple thought experiment helps clarify this challenge: What is the *right* way to manage trails to accommodate pressures for simultaneous use by increasing numbers of hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, motorcyclists, and quad riders? The upshot is that there has been a breakdown in whatever level of historic consensus existed about how to spend government monies for recreation or about what constitutes appropriate use of an existing asset. The current atmosphere of conflict among user groups that surfaced in the Town Hall comments is an expected outcome from these circumstances.

Many respondents to the SCORP Town Hall commented on conflicting use for the same site. In response to these conflicts, the findings suggest that people are making active choices to self-manage their experiences by choosing different recreation sites. The challenge in managing user conflicts is the varied and divergent views on the issues. While some users are pushing for cooperation among user groups and more integrated recreation facilities and opportunities, there are other users that support segregating recreation and the management of sites for specific recreation activities. Many Town Hall contributors acknowledged that Washington's recreation assets cannot be all things to all people. Essentially supporting a "fit-for-purpose" rationale, one recreationist made this point: "Concerning trail maintenance, different levels of maintenance should be applied to different trails. With some trails, such as those in National and State Parks, there is an expectation for the trails to be kept in a high level of maintenance, but more remote trails don't need the intense grooming."

In general, however, there were many recreationists who indicated that there was an unequal distribution of opportunity among user groups. A frequently cited criterion for locating facilities was the driving distance for users to access their style of recreation, and there were many who called for more multiple-use trails. Despite frustrations over user conflicts, Town Hall contributors also voiced concerns over a lack of cooperation among user groups and missed recreation opportunities due to infighting. These stakeholders understand that all user groups stand to lose if infighting gets in the way of collective action in support of outdoor recreation.

In general, respondents to the SCORP Town Hall agreed that recreationists in Washington need to work cooperatively to accommodate recreation activities and maintain the facilities and opportunities provided by the state. As stated by one recreationist, who strongly advocated for his preferred activity but, in the same comment, made an appeal for cooperation: "Whatever decision is made [about allocations to different kinds of recreation], it needs to be made to balance the rights we all have relative to each trail and its natural suitability…. Can't we all just get along and share?" This raises a question about the fundamental job description of

managers who serve this diversity of clientele—should they define their primary job as the arbitrator of this dispute or should they view their role as increasingly about building a sense of community around the shared interest that Washington residents have in outdoor recreation? That is a question worthy of reflection by institutions like the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

Town Hall contributors suggested several solutions for minimizing user conflict. Numerous respondents suggested expanding the recreation resource base and its diversity as a way to manage conflict. This included the acquisition and development of more facilities and opportunities, particularly trails opportunities. There was also some interest in zoning to address incompatible recreation activities or sequestering days to separate conflicting dual use (e.g., motorcycles versus mountain bikers) on the same trail.

The research has shown that this can work. In Washington, a study of user conflicts between mountain bikers and other users explored the outcomes of a trial period in which mountain bikers were allowed access to the recreation site on odd-numbered calendar days. The study showed that recreationists "felt safe, had a high level of enjoyment, experienced positive interactions with other trail users, and favored the every-other-day policy over closing or opening the trail full-time to mountain bikes." The study recommended that mountain bikers continue to be allowed trail access on odd calendar days but also conceded the necessity of additional research on the issue (Jellum, 2007).

As the discussion above indicates, perhaps the greatest problems with user conflicts occur on multiple-use trails. To address these issues, the Federal Highway Administration and the National Recreational Trails Advisory Committee (1994) partnered to develop 12 guiding principles for minimizing conflicts on multiple-use trails.

1. **Recognize Conflict as Goal Interference—**Do not treat conflict as an inherent incompatibility among different trail activities but a *goal interference* attributed to another's behavior.
2. **Provide Adequate Trail Opportunities—**Offer adequate trail mileage and provide opportunities for a variety of trail experiences. This will help reduce congestion and allow users to choose the conditions that are best suited to the experiences they desire.
3. **Minimize Number of Contacts in Problem Areas—**Each contact among trail users (as well as contact with evidence of others' use) has the potential to result in conflict; therefore, as a general rule, reduce the number of user contacts whenever possible. This is especially true in congested areas and at trailheads. Disperse use and provide separate trails where necessary after careful consideration of the additional environmental impact and lost opportunities for positive interactions this may cause.
4. **Involve Users as Early as Possible—**Identify the present and likely future users of each trail and involve them in the process of avoiding and resolving conflicts as early as possible, preferably before conflicts occur. For proposed trails, possible conflicts and their solutions should be addressed during the planning and design stage with the involvement of prospective users. New and emerging uses should be anticipated and addressed as early as possible with the involvement of participants. Likewise, existing and developing conflicts on present trails need to be faced quickly and addressed with the participation of those affected.
5. **Understand User Needs—**Determine the motivations, desired experiences, norms, setting preferences, and other needs of the present and likely future users of each trail. This "customer" information is critical for anticipating and managing conflicts.

6. **Identify the Actual Sources of Conflict—**Help users identify the specific tangible causes of any conflicts they are experiencing. In other words, get beyond emotions and stereotypes as quickly as possible and get to the root of any problems that exist.
7. **Work with Affected Users—**Work with all parties involved to reach mutually agreeable solutions to these specific issues. Users who are not involved as part of the solution are more likely to be part of the problem now and in the future.
8. **Promote Trail Etiquette—**Minimize the possibility that any particular trail contact will result in conflict by actively and aggressively promoting responsible trail behavior. Use existing educational materials or modify them to better meet local needs. Target these educational efforts, get the information into users' hands as early as possible, and present it in interesting and understandable ways.
9. **Encourage Positive Interaction Among Different Users—**Trail users are usually not as different from one another as they believe. Providing positive interactions both on and off the trail will help break down barriers and stereotypes and build understanding, good will, and cooperation. This can be accomplished through a variety of strategies, such as sponsoring "user swaps," joint trail-building or maintenance projects, filming trail-sharing videos, and forming Trail Advisory Councils.
10. **Favor "Light-Handed Management"—**Use the most light-handed approaches that will achieve area objectives. This is essential to provide the freedom of choice and the natural environments that are so important to trail-based recreation. Intrusive design and coercive management are not compatible with high-quality trail experiences.
11. **Plan and Act Locally—**Whenever possible, address issues regarding multiple-use trails at the local level. This allows greater sensitivity to local needs and provides better flexibility for addressing difficult issues on a case-by-case basis. Local action also facilitates involvement of the people who will be most affected by the decisions and most able to assist in their successful implementation.
12. **Monitor Progress—**Monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the decisions made and programs implemented. Conscious, deliberate monitoring is the only way to determine if conflicts are indeed being reduced and what changes in programs might be needed. This is only possible within the context of clearly understood and agreed upon objectives for each trail area.

"Recreation of ALL KINDS should be available to everyone. It is important to me, that as a community of riders, hikers and skiier's, along with the other outdoor enthusiasts, we do not take away opportunities for people to do what they love, but instead, create a win/win for every type of user group, so we all can enjoy the recreation/therapies we love so much."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"I understand the need for public lands that are multi-use, but I find [horse] riding with motorized vehicles too dangerous for my liking."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"We lack respect for what other people enjoy. User groups [are] lobbying against each other instead of banding together for everyone."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

Aligning Recreation Investments With Changing Demographics

The research shows that the population in Washington will continue to grow, and as it does, so too will the number of outdoor recreationists. This poses a challenge for recreation providers in that it puts pressure on existing infrastructure and necessitates the development of new opportunities. As the population grows, several major demographic trends are taking place in the state that will need to be considered in outdoor recreation planning: urbanization, increases in minority populations, and an aging population. This section considers the impact of these demographic changes on recreation planning and management.

Meeting the needs of urban residents requires consideration of the complex issues and challenges related to urbanization, including a decrease in open space, diverse recreation needs, and proximity and accessibility to facilities and opportunities. To better address these issues, the Washington Legislature adopted the Growth Management Act in 1990, setting guidelines and criteria for the management of open spaces and the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities in the state, while also limiting development and urban expansion. The Growth Management Act sets policy for enhancing recreation opportunities with a particularly important impact on urban communities. In particular, the Growth Management Act requires communities to "include greenbelt and open areas within each urban growth area" and "identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas including lands useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas" (Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, formerly Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, 2005b). According to the survey of Washington residents, higher percentages of urban/suburban residents, compared with rural residents, participate in jogging and running activities, indoor community facility activities, hiking, walking without a pet, aerobics and fitness activities, and playground use. Higher participation among urban residents in these activities further emphasizes the importance of providing greenbelts and trails in urban and suburban areas.

In 2012, *Parks & Recreation* magazine explored approaches to encourage outdoor recreation participation among urban and minority groups (Lynn, 2012). The article suggests that a major difference in getting urban and minority groups involved in outdoor recreation, as compared with other outdoor recreationists, is that recreation providers have to take the opportunities to these groups. The article implies that the key to getting these populations involved is to expose them to varied activities and see where interest is sparked. Seattle was featured in the article for its approach to meeting the needs of its diverse population. Seattle has developed a comprehensive strategic plan for meeting its outdoor recreation goals. The new plan features specific action items for increasing opportunities for underserved populations. For example, Seattle's Outdoor Opportunities (O2) program is designed to "expose multi-ethnic teens to environmental education, urban conservation, and stewardship, while encouraging community leadership and empowerment" (Seattle Parks and Recreation, 2008). One of Seattle Parks and Recreation's major goals is to actively engage its diverse populations. To this end, several efforts have been undertaken to increase outreach and communications to underserved populations and to encourage partnerships and public engagement. These strategies help to engage urban and minority groups and also encourage their investment in outdoor recreation planning.

It is also important to refine the focus of marketing efforts when targeting minorities. It is not enough to market only in large urban areas and expect to increase outdoor recreation participation among minorities. Rather, it is important to market specifically in minority communities because research shows that people tend to participate in activities within their own communities and with members of their own ethnic or racial groups (Hunt & Ditton, 2002). Based on research on fishing participation among racial and ethnic groups in Texas, Hunt and

Ditton (2002) recommend four key considerations in developing marketing strategies aimed at minority populations. First, they recommend stratified market research that over-represents minority groups because random sampling and insufficient sample size affect the accuracy of results. Second, they advise that, instead of merely focusing on increasing overall participation, agencies should direct their efforts toward bringing the non-Anglo participation rates closer to that of Anglo males. Third, they suggest that more research is needed to understand initiation among minority groups. Finally, Hunt and Ditton caution researchers to look at ethnic and racial groups separately when conducting research on recreational specialization. All of these factors are important in designing the most effective marketing strategies for minority groups in Washington.

Many Town Hall contributors were advocates for activities targeted to groups they perceived as currently having disadvantaged access to outdoor recreation. While users with disabilities were most frequently cited as having needs, Town Hall contributors recognize the need for providing outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities that attract demographic groups that are not participating in outdoor recreation at rates commensurate with their population in the State, such as Hispanics/Latinos and African Americans. These needs were most frequently expressed in terms of a gap in services and in a social equity context.

The aging population in Washington is also having a major impact on recreation in the state. Studies show that, although participation in recreation activities declines with age, many older residents remain very active and involved in outdoor recreation throughout the state. Older residents are retired, increasing the time they have available to participate in leisure activities, and some have a high disposable income, which may affect ownership rates of recreational vehicles such as boats or campers. The survey of Washington residents showed that, in general, participation in outdoor recreation among populations in Washington at the mean age or older is lower than among populations below the mean age. The survey also showed that older residents are participating in some activities at higher rates than their younger counterparts. Survey findings suggest that older residents are participating in nature activities, such as gardening, at a higher rate than are younger residents. Similarly, a higher percentage of older residents are participating in sightseeing than are younger residents. In a study conducted in Oregon, the researchers highlighted the most important outdoor recreation needs for aging populations, including clean and maintained facilities, opportunities close to home, free and inexpensive recreation, and safety and crime-free opportunities (Lindberg, 2007).

"As the population ages they see the value of the peace and tranquility of nature-based outdoor recreation and have the ability to do it in a less structured and scheduled manner. It appears that kids organized sports are as popular as ever, but I think parents can get burned out on organized sports when they run their kids here and there and then find nature activities more appealing."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"As our world becomes much more crowded especially in urban environments, the outdoors is a attractive alternative for finding peace, new challenges and renewal, away from the maddening crowd, as they say, giving us the fortitude to return to the urban environments where we live and work."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

PROVIDING SUSTAINABLE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Recreation providers have the dual mission of ensuring the stability and longevity of the state's resources while simultaneously providing outdoor recreation opportunities and managing the public's use of these resources. Their role of balancing these sometimes competing goals and objectives effectively has become increasingly complex due to the challenges and issues surrounding recreation management efforts, including increasing populations that increase pressure on resources as well as land supply and land conversion issues that limit resources.

When discussing sustainable recreation, it is important to realize that there are two primary and inter-related factors of sustainable recreation: (1) preserving and protecting the longevity of environmental resources and assets (environmental sustainability) and (2) preserving and protecting the longevity of recreational assets (recreational sustainability). The second factor is somewhat dependent on the first: The longevity of recreational assets cannot be ensured without the preservation of the resource itself. However, recreational sustainability also involves recreational planning and funding to ensure recreation opportunities into the future.

In its sustainability policy, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board develops a dual mission of sustainability, requiring LWCF grant recipients to "design and build projects *to maximize the useful life* of what they build and *do the least amount of damage to the environment*" (RCO, 2010). The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board developed a sustainability policy "to promote and reward sustainable practices in grant programs." (RCFB Memo, 2011). To this end, recreation providers are evaluated based in part on the sustainability of their project design, practices, and elements (recreational sustainability) as well as the impacts of their project on natural, cultural, and historic resources (environmental sustainability).

Similarly, The National Park Service's *Green Parks Plan* sets forth nine strategic goals designed to improve environmental sustainability and stewardship among outdoor recreation providers. These goals provide a foundation for improving recreational sustainability while also adhering to federal mandates for environmental standards. While the plan focuses specifically on steps the National Park Service will take to minimize its environmental footprint, these steps are also important to other outdoor recreation providers and the citizenry, as well. Fortunately in Washington, many recreationists recognize that they are part of the solution. As the research suggests, recreation providers have a partner in their efforts at resource conservation—their public.

As many people observed in the SCORP Town Hall, outdoor recreation is a shared resource; as stewards of this resource, recreationists have an obligation to strive toward sustainable use and ethical stewardship. Recreationists suggested that partnerships between recreation providers, landowners, and user groups are paramount to both environmental and recreational sustainability. Citing the benefits of user groups and associations willing to volunteer to maintain trails and outdoor recreation facilities, many recreationists believe that this could be a way to address issues with recreational sustainability, including a lack of personnel resources and funding. At the same time, however, other respondents expressed concern about the efficiency of using volunteers, about the reliability of volunteers for maintenance over long periods of time, and about the reality of landowner liability if volunteers are injured.

Town Hall comments focused on the two factors of sustainability: environmental quality and recreation assets. Stakeholders are interested in sustainability of the natural environment as part of recreation management. One Town Hall contributor succinctly stated this dual responsibility: "A delicate balance of recreation and conservation, managed carefully to preserve the environment while maximizing the recreational value on a case-by-case basis, will

best serve the public. Neither locking people out nor allowing unrestricted use will prove the right answer over time." A Town Hall contributor was also clear about the importance of environmental stewardship, saying "…some parks should be used for habitat enhancement and stewardship. Access does not mean everyone should be able to access every place all the time."

Similarly, a city parks and recreation manager made the point that taxpayers are looking for confirmation that recreation providers are taking care of recreation assets (recreational sustainability): "We need to be good stewards and maintain our current infrastructure. This demonstrates to the taxpayer that we do take care of what we have and that long-term sustainability of those facilities is important." One city recreation manager and Advisory Group member noted that 81% of her community identified maintaining existing assets as their number one priority. A public works director made the case for sustainability of recreation assets as a good business decision. "If I have learned anything as a public works director for the last 25 years, it is that current assets need to be maintained or decommissioned. If you don't maintain, it becomes both a safety liability and, worse, a huge financial liability. It costs much, much more to replace than to repair and maintain."

Some recreationists also contend that maintenance should not trump long-term stewardship. The most environmental stewardship comments were received when recreationists were asked for their opinions about providing recreation in wetlands. One contributor spoke of his desire for wetlands stewardship but acknowledged that these environments are also valued recreation opportunities: "We have some wonderful wetland natural areas in our small city that are enjoyed tremendously for bird watching, hiking, and bicycling on trails that stay on higher ground, even occasional paddling. The main focus of these areas is to provide habitat, nesting, and winter refuge, but we humans hugely enjoy the opportunities provided by access into them for wildlife observation and connection to nature." Despite divergent viewpoints, clearly the commitment to environmental sustainability and even the impetus to assist in providing recreational sustainability exists among these recreationists.

America's Great Outdoors Initiative: A Promise to Future Americans, launched by the United States Department of Interior in 2011, affirmed public lands and waters as invaluable assets, promoting both the environmental and recreational sustainability of America's natural resources. As stated in the initiative goals, "This initiative is about the government empowering and partnering with people and communities to protect and restore the places they cherish" (U.S. Department of Interior, 2011). The initiative focuses on connecting people with nature and preserving recreational opportunities and assets in perpetuity for future generations. In truth, the goal of America's Great Outdoors Initiative is pragmatic: to develop a national management strategy for the country's outdoor recreation assets and, in doing so, to rework inefficient policies, target investments, and leverage the government's interactions with states, tribes, and local communities.

Its founding ideals highlight the strong connection that Americans make between the wellness of their society and the wellness of the natural world they inhabit. In laying the groundwork for America's Great Outdoors Initiative, representatives gathered extensive public input, hosting 61 sessions around the country (21 with youth) and hearing from more than 10,000 Americans about the impact of the natural world on their lives. In these conversations, Americans affirmed the inestimable value of outdoor spaces and pristine natural places.

Among other state-specific projects, two in Washington were selected as "showcase" investments, fulfilling the Initiative's goals "to reconnect Americans to the natural world through

parks, trails, and rivers and to conserve and restore working lands and wildlife habitat" and "to create jobs through travel, tourism, and outdoor recreation activities" (U.S. Department of Interior, 2011). These two projects are:

- The Pacific Northwest Trail-Olympic Discovery Trail Convergence ties together 1,200 miles of national, state, and local trails, including the 120-mile Olympic Discovery Trail, connecting the cities of Sequim and Port Angeles to the Sequim Bay Area. An additional 120 miles of trail are planned.

- The Lower Columbia River Water Trail, managed by the Lower Columbia River Estuary Partnership, travels through inland Washington along 146 miles of the Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. The goal of the project is a Water Trail along the Columbia River's entire length through Washington and designation as a National Water Trail.

Both projects invest in the development of trails networks. By facilitating partnerships among key stakeholders and constituents, these initiatives are having a significant and positive impact on the conservation of Washington's most treasured recreation resources.

"Bikers, equestrians, hikers, dirt bikers all have one thing in common: a love of playing outside. With so many pressures on the local land and with so many open spaces disappearing, we all need to recognize what we have in common – protecting our open spaces and keeping them healthy enough for all to enjoy."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"A delicate balance of recreation and conservation, managed carefully to preserve the environment while maximizing the recreational value on a case-by-case basis, will best serve the public. Neither locking people out, nor allowing unrestricted use will prove the right answer over time."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"In my opinion, education is most important, as users must be aware of their role in recreation. They must be familiar with both positive and negative use impacts and how they can become a partner in providing a safe, environmentally friendly area for the present and for the future."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Increased maintenance means an increase in investment and labor. Both BCHW and WTA provide volunteer crews, which along with youth crews and other user crews can tremendously help address the backlog of work. What can be very frustrating is that the volunteer groups may have the labor, and they may even be able to secure funding through grants, but sometimes they can't get the go-ahead to do the work from the agencies even for existing trails in serious need. Agency rules or management may require oversight of the work, but there may not be enough field staff, rangers, or environmental planners to provide that oversight. During fiscally lean years, management rules themselves may prevent the very upgrades that need to happen."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

TECHNOLOGY

Recreation providers have had to address issues related to the intersection of technology and outdoor recreation since the development and expansion of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. From the decision to allow new forms of transportation and/or recreation into parks to the more contemporary considerations of providing Wi-Fi technology in natural areas, recreation providers struggle with the tension between providing new opportunities while also minimizing the negative consequences, environmental impacts, and commercialism related to new technologies. New technologies can have many impacts on outdoor recreation, including the level at which opportunities are available to the mass market, the social (e.g., crowding) and environmental (e.g., disturbance of wildlife) impacts, and the impact on the outdoor experience and its structural, cultural, and/or natural role (Shultis, 2001). Opinions on technological issues range from those who wholly embrace technology as a new opportunity for open space enjoyment to those who insist that technology be restricted as an interference to the outdoor recreation experience. These conflicts have even more direct implications for the provision of recreation activities where some land managers have banned snowmobiles and jet skis or disallowed base jumping, slack lining, or mountain biking (Shultis, 2001).

For the Washington SCORP, the public participated in the Town Hall that asked specifically about providing opportunities for new types of recreation and technologies in parks. The response mirrored the findings highlighted above. There were strong opinions on both sides of the issue, with sizable populations for and against such additions to the recreation experiences provided. Supporters of new types of experiences and technologies contend that making these changes is providing a positive service to visitors, since technological access is a part of who we are in our contemporary society. These supporters also believe that this new capacity makes it easier to visit recreation facilities because it accommodates users' work schedules and ensures connectivity, allowing recreationists flexibility and convenience to manage other parts of their life as well. In general, supporters are concerned with the outdoor recreationists' ease and experience, advancing the argument that public use is the highest priority for outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. Supporters offer ideas for improving outdoor recreation opportunities through new technologies by offering online audio or visual interpretive applications, allowing access to information in much the same way that museums do when they give visitors devices to carry to access audio interpretations at various stations as visitors walk through a gallery.

At the other end of the spectrum, those opposing adding new types of recreation or technologies tend toward traditional values for natural areas and landscapes. These users are visiting outdoor recreation sites to get away from the technological intrusions in their lives. Opponents view these types of recreation or technologies as antithetical to the mission of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities providing natural experiences. In general, opponents are primarily concerned with preserving the natural setting and landscape to allow users to participate more fully in the opportunities provided at the site or area. Again, the opposition is focused on the experience of the end-user, but they are also taking into account the impact on the natural setting and environment.

Despite varied opinions on the issue, there was recognition among these Town Hall contributors that the financial needs of recreation providers may necessitate increased technological opportunities. Opponents concede that if new types of recreation and new technologies are allowed, they should support the mission of the recreation provider, especially at sites where recreation facilities and opportunities were designed with a specific purpose in mind. The controversy over new types of recreation and new technologies highlights the duality of recreation providers' mission. On the one hand, recreation providers have a responsibility to

provide diverse recreation facilities and opportunities, while they are also expected to preserve natural, cultural, and historical resources, minimizing negative user impacts on these resources.

"I believe that the value of a public park or any sort of protected public land lies in the therapeutic nature of it being undisturbed and in its natural state. Natural spaces are a way to get away from our daily lives that are filled with media, advertising, business, etc. Nature is best left as it is, without technology encroaching on the last places where we can get away from it."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Nature provides an escape from our urban (built environments) can not provide."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"I think we do need to keep up with technology and changing expectations for people, but would still like to see more remote sites remain natural and less commercial. I would rather pay higher taxes to support public parks than worrying about whether I have the right 'pass' when I want to go hiking or picnicking."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Limited wi-fi/cell service is good. It's helpful for getting additional info about the park so visitors can plan their visits. Also, some cell service could be helpful for people needing to call for help (lost, injured, etc). I don't have a problem with other activities as long as they make sense within the context of the park and, as before, don't overwhelm the natural offerings of the park. They shouldn't impinge on views, wildlife, dark night skies or the natural sounds. I'd say no to thrill rides (like roller coasters) or immersive video experiences, or anything else that detracts from or obscures the natural offerings of the park."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Keep the parks natural. People should go to parks to get out in nature and nature provides many things to do without adding activities, such as zip lines that are better left to a commercial enterprise. A definite no to wi-fi. People today, particularly children, are too disconnected from nature as it is. Adding technology will defeat the purpose of having the park in the first place."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"As for Wifi, I can see both sides to this argument. I love being able to get away from all my electronics but, it could be very helpful for things like search and rescue amongst many others. Also, unlike advertising or branding, Wifi effectively disappears into the landscape if you are not using it. I could see this making more sense on a case by case basis rather than one blanket policy."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Leave them natural. If folks want zip lines, WI FI, etc., let the private sector businesses provide these. Again, keeping parks natural provides such a respite from the busy world we all live in day-to-day and state parks should be a place to get away from all that and be part of nature again."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Every park is different, usage is different, people's needs are different. Any changes would need to be considered carefully. I do feel, though, that these ideas might be good options for some parks. Something needs to be done in order to be able take the general usage fees off of the parks."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

ACTIVE AND PASSIVE RECREATION

Active recreation refers to predominately muscle-powered activities such as jogging, cycling, field and court sports; they commonly depend on developed sites. Passive recreation refers to activities that require very little use of muscle power, such as nature viewing, photography, or picnicking. Providing active recreation facilities and opportunities is important to getting Washington residents moving, thereby having a positive impact by minimizing chronic illnesses and healthcare costs. However, providing active recreation facilities also tends to require more development, maintenance, and upkeep than passive recreation facilities.

Recognizing the complexity and challenges of providing active recreation facilities and opportunities with limited funding and resources, the RCO developed a Level of Service benchmark for meeting active recreation needs. According to the Level of Service, the goal of Washington outdoor recreation providers is to ensure that at least 60% of the facilities they manage offer active recreation. Several regions appear to be meeting this goal. When a mean was taken of the responses regarding the percent of the providers' sites that support active recreation, the ranking thereby produced found the Islands at the top (a mean of 68.75%), closely followed by the North Cascades (63.37%) and South Central (65.83%)—all above the 60% goal. Other regions that are nearing this goal include the Northeast (55.00%) and the Palouse (56.00%). Although half of the regions are close to or are meeting the goal for active recreation in the state, there is substantial room for improving and increasing opportunities for active recreation in the state.

In general, Washington is not meeting Level of Service goals for providing active recreation facilities and opportunities. Again, pointing to the problem of access, the public response to the SCORP Town Hall almost unanimously echoed this call for more active recreation opportunities. Many respondents commented that more active recreation areas are needed throughout the state. There is clearly a tension at play between the public call for more recreation and their level of satisfaction. The research suggests that the public would like to see an increase in the quantity and diversity of recreation opportunities provided. It is important to note that this does not always mean that the acquisition and development of new facilities is always the top priority among recreationists. In fact, maintenance of existing facilities and opportunities is clearly an important issue among providers as well as Town Hall contributors. The most important issue to recreationists appears to be providing opportunities for all users, whether this means managing existing facilities to offer additional activities or acquiring new lands.

THE ROLE OF FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL AGENCIES IN PROVIDING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

There is a gap that, if filled, would improve coordination and collaboration across government sectors (federal, state, and local). The Advisory Group considered this issue in detail and crafted two detailed recommendations about the State's role in making good things happen across this diversity of recreation providers. In its recommendation on Statewide Policy, the Advisory Group observed that there is no mechanism or forum for providers to provide input or to discuss the plans of other providers. Two potential problems arise because of this gap. First, a decision by one provider (e.g., reducing support for one user group) can have a ripple effect on another provider (e.g., that reduction disperses demand onto other providers). Another potential problem is missing easy opportunities for collaboration, since one set of providers simply may not know what other providers are doing, thereby missing easy partnership opportunities. As a solution, the Advisory Group recommended creation of a forum where this cross-provider coordination could occur.

In a second recommendation, the Advisory Group considered the shared challenges of regional and local providers. These included themes like an accruing maintenance backlog, unstable planning horizons, and budget issues, which are making it more difficult to participate in grant opportunities that require matching funds. In their recommendation, the Advisory Group suggests that at least partial relief can come from revisions to state matching requirements, providing direct support for cultivating volunteer services, and providing liability relief so risks associated with using volunteers can be more easily managed.

CONCLUSIONS REGARDING ISSUES IN PROVIDING OUTDOOR RECREATION

The successful provision of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities requires the consideration of many complex and multi-faceted issues. While there are many benefits to outdoor recreation, there are also challenges and obstacles to meeting public demand. The research suggests that there are social challenges to outdoor recreation over which recreation providers do not have control, such as a lack of time and health issues. Still, there are several key issues that recreation providers should address in their management of recreation opportunities. Access, user conflicts, and funding are issues in which recreation providers need a better understanding because these are issues that can be addressed through planning. These issues are further complicated by diversity in public values and opinions regarding outdoor recreation. The qualitative findings suggest, however, that despite divergence in public opinion, respondents recognize the limitations of funding and resources, and there is willingness to compromise to keep outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities available to all users.

The research conducted for this plan suggests that a high priority for recreation providers is providing access to an abundance of diverse opportunities. There are many residents who have interest in activities but have not been able to pursue these activities. While many give social reasons for their lack of participation in these activities, access issues are also named as a deterrent. The qualitative findings suggest that one of the limitations identified by Town Hall respondents was a shortage of opportunities for specific recreation activities, in particular equestrian activities, mountain biking, and motor-sport trail use.

Recreation equity is another key issue explored during the SCORP Town Hall. The challenge in managing user conflicts is the varied and divergent views on the issues. While some users are pushing for cooperation among user groups and more integrated recreation facilities and opportunities, there are other users who support segregating recreation and the management of sites for specific recreation activities. In general, respondents to the SCORP Town Hall agreed that recreationists in Washington need to work cooperatively to accommodate recreation activities and maintain the facilities and opportunities provided by the state.

Funding and the cost of providing outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities and maintenance of existing facilities are top issues among recreation providers. The public also recognizes that funding limitations have an impact on outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, and they are open to discussing creative solutions to funding issues. Recreationists tend to agree that new types of recreation and new technologies, if allowed in outdoor recreation areas, should support the mission of the recreation provider, especially at sites where recreation facilities and opportunities were designed with a specific purpose in mind.

The research suggests that the public would like to see an increase in the quantity and diversity of recreation opportunities provided. It is important to note that this does not always mean that the acquisition and development of new facilities is always the top priority among recreationists. In fact, maintenance of existing facilities and opportunities is clearly an important issue among providers as well as Town Hall contributors. The most important issue to recreationists appears

to be providing opportunities for all users, whether this means managing existing facilities to offer additional activities or acquiring new lands.

Another key finding of the research is that the public is invested in outdoor recreation. Despite diverse backgrounds and preferred activities, the public values the resources and outdoor recreation opportunities. Wherever possible, recreation providers should involve the public to help resolve conflicts, maintain natural areas, and maximize funding and resources. As one Town Hall contributor explained, "My second concern is compassion and respect for all user groups. We all have the same common interest—the natural outdoors and the protection of this asset. Working together and building on our common interest will get us much further. Bicycles and horses probably shouldn't share the same trails, but this doesn't mean we can't work together to help save or build trails."

"I am a hiker and maintained trails are a portal to physical health and mental sanity for me. I will go out in rain or shine. I certainly cannot fix roads leading to trailheads myself and I am grateful for the funding that allows the outdoor aspects of our beautiful state to be enjoyed."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"The parks are natural classrooms. …Create educational events like bird-watching tours, nature hikes, inquiry-based nature classes for children, lectures about the history of the parks, watersheds, biomes, the species that live in parks, etc. Charging nominal fees for these types of activities will give back to the community and create a long-term connection with community members, as well as give them a sense of pride in their neighborhood park."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Dividing trails up for individual user groups creates a charged environment with one group attacking the efforts of another in order to protect an area for one user type."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"If a group wants to recreate on public lands, then they should be willing to spend their time and money to maintain their recreation areas. I have spent numerous hours over the years cleaning up trails and parking areas along with other members of my chosen form of recreation (off-road motorcycle) only to have the areas which we are legally allowed to ride shrunk more each year."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"We are all simply short-term borrowers of nature. We [are] working together to enjoy it."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Yes we need more useable trails for all groups. I realize that keeping these trails repaired is the largest issue we have to getting more trails put in. This can only be resolved by all user groups work[ing] harder together."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

"Being able to ski on beautifully groomed trails has been a mental (and physical) health lifesaver for our family for years. It's hard to know how people who don't ski survive our winters. We are extremely fortunate that state recreation funders realize that even people far from urban population centers need places to play."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

CHAPTER 5: ASSESSMENT OF NEEDS USING THE LEVEL OF SERVICE FRAMEWORK

Chapter Highlights

- The Level of Service (LOS) tool uses several indicators of need to capture the complex nature of providing outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities.
- RCO's current LOS tool provides federal, state, and local agencies with specific criteria to assess three primary areas: quantity, quality, and access.
- LOS indicators were measured in conjunction with data collected in the statewide outdoor recreation provider surveys.
- Priorities for Outdoor Recreation Improvements:
  - Overall, the LOS scores indicate that the highest priority for planning for and improving outdoor recreation in Washington is the quantity and capacity of outdoor recreation facilities.
  - Using the LOS criteria and scores as a guide, agencies and providers should focus on facility capacity first because it received the lowest overall score (D), followed by the number of parks and recreation facilities (C).
  - Although geographic factors and actual levels of demand should be examined as well, priorities for developing new or additional facilities include designated motorized and off-roading trails and areas, shooting ranges, hunting areas, outdoor tracks for running or jogging, air activity (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.) facilities, and disc golf activity facilities.
  - Additional activities to examine for demand and to consider for facility development where appropriate are snow and ice activity facilities, designated bridle or horse trails, and sports fields.
  - Based on LOS data from local agencies and providers, priorities for increasing parks and recreation facilities should focus on acquiring more acres of land in general.

As a source of funding for many recreation agencies and providers, the State of Washington has a vested interest in determining the effectiveness of its investments in park and recreation sites and facilities. At the time of the 2008 Washington SCORP, the state did not have a model with which to measure this effectiveness because traditional supply-demand models had been inadequate, considering recreation indicators only in isolation from one another. Therefore, the 2008 Washington SCORP proposed using a Level of Service (LOS) tool that uses several indicators of need to capture the complex nature of determining and providing recreation opportunities and access. Since then, the LOS was developed, tested, and revised based on input from recreation providers and the public (RCO, 2008; Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, 2011a). The completed LOS tool is an essential component of this 2013 SCORP process.

UNDERSTANDING THE LEVEL OF SERVICE TOOL

The LOS tool is found in RCO (2011b) *Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines* and is recommended as a planning tool for grant recipients. The tool provides one set of indicators for federal and state agencies and another for local agencies. It provides a set of standards for measuring strengths and weaknesses of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, suggesting where additional resources may be needed.

RCO's current LOS tool provides federal, state, local, and tribal governments with specific criteria to assess three primary areas: quantity, quality, and access (Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, 2011a; 2011b). According to RCO (2011b) *Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines 2*, each of these areas are measured to meet specific criteria:

- Quantity criteria includes one measurement among federal and state providers.
  - **Capital Facility Development:** Biennial average percentage of unmet capital facility development (redevelopment, renovation, and/or restoration) goals.

- Quality criteria includes two measurements among federal and state providers.
  - **Agency-Based Assessment:** Percentage of facilities that are fully functional per their specific design and safety guidelines.
  - **Public Satisfaction:** Percentage of visitor population satisfied with existing park and outdoor recreation facilities/experiences/opportunities.

- Access criteria includes one measurement among federal and state providers.
  - **Sustainable Access:** Percentage of access/recreation areas/facilities that provide sustainable recreation opportunities (e.g., help protect natural and cultural resources, use green infrastructure to strengthen natural processes, minimize encroachment and/or user-developed facilities, prohibit poaching).

- Quantity criteria includes three measurements among local providers.
  - **Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities:** Percent difference between existing quantity or per capita average of parks and recreation facilities and the desired quantity or per capita average.
  - **Facilities that Support Active Recreation Opportunities:** Percent of facilities that support or encourage active (muscle-powered) recreation opportunities
  - **Facility Capacity:** Percent of demand met by existing facilities.

- Quality criteria includes two measurements among local providers.
  - **Agency-Based Assessment:** Percentage of facilities that are fully functional for their specific design and safety guidelines.
  - **Public Satisfaction:** Percentage of population satisfied with the condition, quantity, or distribution of existing active park and recreation facilities.

- Distribution and access criteria includes two measurements among local providers.
  - **Population within Service Areas:** Percentage of population within the following services areas (considering barriers to access): 0.5 mile of a neighborhood park/trail, 5 miles of a community park/trail, and 25 miles of a regional park/trail.
  - **Access:** Percentage of parks and recreation facilities that may be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation.

The LOS tool uses an A to E grading system similar to that used in many schools, with "A" being the highest possible score and "E" being the lowest possible score. A lower score indicates the need for more investment to achieve a target level of service (RCO, 2008).

LOS indicators were measured in conjunction with additional recreation data collected in the statewide outdoor recreation provider survey conducted for the 2013 SCORP study and the recommendations of the SCORP Advisory Group. One of the major difficulties in assigning LOS scores is the limited amount of data that could be obtained from providers. Two surveys of

recreation providers were administered for this study: (1) a survey of local recreation providers and (2) a survey of federal, state, and tribal governments and nonprofit recreation providers. Researchers used a multiple-contact strategy in which recreation providers were contacted a minimum of five times and encouraged to complete the survey. Despite efforts to increase the response rate, the researchers obtained a 38% response rate among local providers and a 31% response rate among federal and state providers. In the future, participation in the survey should be incentivized (e.g., monetary compensation for completing the survey) to increase the response among recreation providers. Another challenge in implementing the LOS tool is that, even among recreation providers who responded to the survey, many agencies could not provide the necessary data for all the parts of the analysis.

A limited sample as well as the lack of data provided should be taken into consideration while reviewing the LOS scores. This consideration is especially important when examining regional scores for local agencies and providers since some regions had limited samples. It is important to note that among all the recreation providers in Washington, a total of 213 responded to the survey.

Despite these challenges, the researchers believe that the LOS tool provides an important measurement for evaluating outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in the state. The data obtained was analyzed, and the findings among recreation providers often supported the results of the survey of residents. The researchers believe that the statewide LOS scores are representative of recreation providers; however, a larger sample size in each region will help to improve the representativeness of the LOS at the regional level. If the state can increase the response to the recreation provider survey, the researchers believe that the LOS findings will identify important, measurable needs and recreation priorities regionally.

In short, the findings suggest that the LOS is a valid tool to assist recreation providers in evaluating their services. The researchers recommend that the state educate recreation providers on the importance of providing information related to the LOS and that the state ontinue improvements to this measurement tool. The following section highlights the major findings from application of the LOS; details regarding LOS scores are discussed in Appendix C.

USING LEVEL OF SERVICE TO ASSESS RECREATION

Assessment of Quantity

The LOS Quantity criterion for federal and state agencies measures the percent of unmet capital facility development. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages among responding federal and state agencies, is a D. For this criterion, a D represents the agencies' average assessment that 51% to 60% of capital facility development goals are *not* met.

At the local agency and provider level, the LOS measures quantity using three criteria: the number of outdoor recreation facilities, facilities that support active recreation opportunities, and facility capacity. The LOS Quantity criterion for number of outdoor recreation facilities measures the percent difference between existing quantity or per capita average of outdoor recreation facilities and the desired quantity or per capita average. The statewide grade for responding local agencies and providers is an A. The LOS grade indicates local agencies and providers have 21% to 30% fewer outdoor recreation facilities than they want or have planned for.

Although the statewide survey of Washington residents conducted for the current SCORP does not measure opinions on what the goal for outdoor recreation facilities should be, it does measure opinions on facilities in general. As we saw in previous chapters, in a direct question

about whether there were any problems with facilities, the top problem named is a need for more facilities/more availability. Only a small percentage of the population named problems with facilities, but among those who did, more facilities/more availability was the top problem. Overall, approximately 6% of *all* Washington residents feel there is a need for more facilities. In short, not many residents cite problems with outdoor recreation, but among those who do, more facilities/more availability is the top issue. Therefore, the LOS score is consistent with the finding that the top facility problem is the need for more, even if only a small percentage of residents expressed this need. Local agencies indicate they have 21% to 30% fewer outdoor facilities than they need or want to provide residents with recreation.

The LOS Quantity criterion for facilities that support active recreation opportunities measures the percent of facilities that support or encourage active recreation opportunities. The statewide grade for responding local agencies and providers is a B. The LOS grade is slightly higher than the other two Quantity criteria and indicates that 51% to 60% of local facilities support or encourage active recreation opportunities.

As previously discussed, the assessment of local agencies and providers entailed a survey using the LOS criteria as well as other measures of recreation. For these non-LOS measures, local agencies and providers were asked to estimate the percent of current demand being met for individual activities, opportunities, and facilities. With the exception of snow and ice trails, local recreation providers estimate meeting at least 50% of demand for all activities, opportunities, and facilities asked about in the survey. For more than half of the individual activities, opportunities, and facilities asked about, approximately 70% to 100% of demand is being met (see Chapter 2). The LOS score for facilities that support active recreation opportunities is consistent with the finding that providers are meeting at least 50% of demand for nearly all activities.

Perhaps the most direct LOS measure of supply and demand is the facility capacity criterion for local agencies and providers, which measures the percent of demand met by existing facilities. The statewide facility capacity grade is a D, and grades across the regions were mostly C's and D's. For this criterion, a C represents 46% to 60% of demand being met and a D represents 30% to 45%.

The LOS grades suggest that current available facility capacity only satisfies 30% to 45% of demand for recreation across the state, although some regions appear to be meeting approximately half of demand in the region. However, additional non-LOS measures of supply and demand for the SCORP indicate that higher percentages of demand are being met across the state than the LOS scores suggest. Again, non-LOS measures for local agencies and providers indicate that providers estimate meeting at least 50% of demand for nearly all activities, opportunities, and facilities and 70% to 100% of demand for more than half of those (see Chapter 2). This finding suggests the LOS grade for facility capacity may be somewhat low.

Another effective method for measuring demand and the percentage being met is to examine self-reported participation and interest among Washington residents. The survey of Washington residents conducted for the current SCORP measured current recreation participation and latent demand (previously discussed in Chapter 4). The study found that a third (33%) of Washington State residents have activities that they participate in but want to do more of, and more than a quarter (29%) say that there are outdoor activities that they currently do *not* do but that they would *like to do*. Note that there is overlap among these two groups; the overall percentage of Washington residents expressing latent interest in recreation activities is 48%. This finding

implies that demand is being met among those who do *not* want to participate or participate more often, which is approximately 52%.

Although the LOS score for facility capacity (i.e., 30% to 45% of demand met) may appear low in comparison to the non-LOS measures of demand being met for individual activities among local agencies and providers, it could be considered comparable to the measure of latent demand among Washington residents (i.e., up to 45% of demand met reported by providers compared to 52% of demand met among the public).

Also recall Washington residents were directly asked about problems with facilities and opportunities for outdoor recreation, which resulted in 16% indicating a problem with facilities and 11% indicating a problem with opportunities (also in Chapter 4). These percentages, combined with U.S. Census data, suggest that approximately 823,000 of the 5,143,186 Washington residents ages 18 or older statewide experience problems with facilities and approximately 566,000 residents experience problems with opportunities.

Regarding latent demand among Washington residents, however, it is important to note that the study found that factors related to unmet demand are *not* primarily problems with facilities and opportunities. When those with interest in other activities or interest in participating more often were asked about constraints to participation, they most commonly cited social issues and other issues over which agencies and providers have little influence, such as lack of time, financial reasons, health, age, and weather. Among those who participate in activities but want to participate more, only 5% of those getting the follow-up question (because they want to participate more) reported a lack of facilities/locations and 4% of them reported not being aware of or not enough existing opportunities. Among residents who did not engage in activities in which they expressed interest, 9% of them reported not being aware of or not enough existing opportunities and only 1% of them reported poor quality of opportunities/facilities as constraints.

The high percentages of demand met for individual activities by local agencies and providers, the assessment of latent demand among the public, and the assessment of related constraints, as well as somewhat lower percentages of public problems with facilities and opportunities, all indicate that, overall, recreation providers across the state may be meeting more facility demand than the LOS Quantity criteria scores alone suggest. Although the reasons LOS Quantity scores are lower than the general population's assessment are not known, it may be that local agencies and providers are underestimating their success or have ideal goals that may be above and beyond what is necessary to meet demand.

Assessment of Quality

The LOS measures quality using two criteria: agency-based assessment and public satisfaction. These two criteria examine quality through the percentage of fully functional facilities and estimated public satisfaction.

The LOS Quality criterion for agency-based assessment measures the percent of facilities that are fully functional for their specific design and safety guidelines. The statewide grade for responding federal and state agencies is an A, and the statewide grade for responding local agencies and providers is a B. The LOS grades suggest that more than 80% of federal and state agencies' and 61% to 80% of local providers' facilities are fully functional. This assessment is supported by the lower percentage of Washington state residents (16%) who reported problems with facilities in the study of outdoor recreation use and needs among Washington residents for the SCORP (see Chapter 4).

The LOS Quality criterion for public satisfaction measures the percent of the population the agency estimates is satisfied with existing park and recreation facilities. The statewide grade for both responding federal and state agencies and for responding local agencies and providers is an A. For this criterion, an A represents the agencies' estimation that more than 65% of the population is satisfied with existing park and recreation facilities.

A non-LOS measure of satisfaction is to examine self-reported levels of satisfaction among the general population. Although a few of the agencies may have conducted surveys independently, the study of outdoor recreation use and needs among Washington residents for the SCORP asked residents directly about satisfaction with facilities and opportunities for individual activities statewide. In general, dissatisfaction is low for both facilities and opportunities for most activities (see Chapter 4), and the high LOS scores for public satisfaction are consistent with this finding.

Assessment of Access

The LOS Access criterion for federal and state agencies for sustainable access measures the percent of access/recreation areas/facilities that provide sustainable recreation opportunities. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages among responding federal and state agencies, is an A. For this criterion, an A represents the agencies' assessment that more than 65% of access/recreation areas/facilities provide sustainable recreation opportunities.

The LOS measures access for local agencies and providers using two distribution and access criteria: population within service areas and access. The LOS distribution and access criterion for local agencies for population within service areas measures the percent of the population within the following service areas: 0.5 mile of a neighborhood park/trail, 5 miles of a community park/trail, and 25 miles of a regional park/trail. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages among responding local providers, is a B. For this criterion, a B represents the agencies' assessment that 61% to 75% of the population is within all three of the service areas.

The study of outdoor recreation use and needs among Washington residents for the current SCORP found that 25% of Washington residents live less than 1 mile from any public park and 52% live no more than a mile. On average, all residents live within 3.71 miles of any public park. Although these SCORP results do not precisely correspond to all of the LOS service areas, the results do show 80% of Washington residents live within 5 miles of *any* public park, which does correspond with an LOS service area and the LOS grade is consistent with this finding (see Chapter 4).

The LOS distribution and access criterion for local agencies for access measures the percent of outdoor recreation facilities that may be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages among responding local agencies and providers, is a B. For this criterion, a B represents the agencies' assessment that 61% to 80% of the population can safely access parks or recreation facilities via foot, bicycle, or public transportation.

The study of Washington residents for the current SCORP found that an overwhelming majority (95%) use an automobile, truck, or motorcycle to get to recreation areas in Washington for at least some of their visits. Nonetheless, nearly half access recreation areas on foot at times (49% walk or jog), 21% use a bicycle, and 10% use public transportation (see Chapter 4). Overall, 55.4% use at least one of the three types of access for the Access criteria. While residents' choice of transportation does not necessarily reflect the percent of facilities that may

be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation (i.e., higher percentages of facilities may have the types of access required than the percentage of residents who actually use them), the results that 55.4% use at least one of the three types of access is nearly within the range indicated by the LOS score (i.e., 61% to 80%). Assuming at least a small but substantial percentage *can* access recreation areas using one of these three methods but choose to use a vehicle instead, the LOS score appears to be a fair assessment.

Finally, the study of Washington residents for the current SCORP, as mentioned previously, examined constraints to participation and found that very few cited lack of access as a constraint to participation. Among those who participate in activities but want to participate more, 8% cited a lack of access as a reason for not doing so. Among residents who did not engage in activities in which they expressed interest, only 4% cited a lack of access as a reason for not doing so (see Chapter 4). Again, the LOS scores for the access criterion appear to be a fair assessment.

PRIORITIES FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION IMPROVEMENTS

The LOS scores suggest that certain priorities for providing outdoor recreation should be considered.

Facilities Capacity and Quantity

Overall, the LOS scores indicate that the highest priority for planning for and improving outdoor recreation in Washington are facilities capacity and quantity. While public satisfaction and access scores are B's, which would be considered "above average" on many school grading scales, the LOS scores for the quantity criteria suggest that recreation providers need to focus on facilities. Using the LOS criteria and scores as a guide, agencies and providers should focus on facility capacity first because it received the lowest overall score (D), followed by the number of outdoor recreation facilities (C). The quantity criterion measuring the percentage of facilities that support active recreation opportunities, however, did receive a B.

For the facility capacity criterion (overall score D), the local provider survey asked respondents to indicate how much of their demand for specific outdoor activities is met by their existing outdoor recreation facilities for 45 specific types of outdoor recreation activities. The types of outdoor recreation facilities with the most unmet demand include snow and ice activity facilities; designated motorized trails and areas; hunting areas; shooting ranges; outdoor tracks for running or jogging; and designated bridle trails. Many of these categories are consistent with the findings of the statewide survey of Washington residents. The survey of residents asked about satisfaction or dissatisfaction with facilities for activities and then for opportunities for participating in the activities. In general, results are positive, with dissatisfaction being low among Washington residents for most activities, but the following activities have dissatisfaction rates of at least 20%: shooting opportunities, disc golf opportunities, off-roading facilities and opportunities, and hunting facilities and opportunities. Although geographic factors and actual levels of demand should be examined as well, priorities for developing new or additional facilities should include designated motorized and off-roading trails and areas, shooting ranges, hunting areas, outdoor tracks for running or jogging, and disc golf facilities.

For the number of outdoor recreation facilities criterion (overall score C), the local provider survey asked respondents to indicate their agency's planned goal(s) and their current status in relation to that goal to measure the percent difference between the existing quantity or per capita average of outdoor recreation facilities and the desired quantity or per capita average of outdoor recreation facilities. Based on those facilities goals that were not met among local agencies and providers, priorities for increasing outdoor recreation facilities should focus on

acquiring more acres of land in general. A few of those meeting lower percentages of their goals, however, did specifically cite unmet goals for trails and community or neighborhood parks. When acquiring acreage, developing some of the priority facilities discussed above, such as designated motorized and off-roading trails and areas, shooting ranges, hunting areas, and outdoor tracks for running or jogging, should be considered.

Regional Focus

Although factors influencing recreation in each region differ, it may be worth examining the recreation plans of those regions that did well in each category to identify any useful approaches or guidelines that could be potentially applied in other regions. Again, it is important to keep in mind that low sample size may impact LOS results in different regions. However, it is heartening that the LOS measurements suggest that some regions are excelling at providing of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities.

Among local agencies and providers, two regions were well above the average score for the number of outdoor recreation facilities criterion and received A's: the Southwest and Northeast. For the facilities that support active recreation opportunities criterion, three regions were well above average and received A's: the Islands, North Cascades, and South Central. The Seattle-King area scored the highest (B) on facility capacity, which was the criterion with the lowest score statewide.

"[The most important outdoor recreation issues facing my area over the next 5 years] is adequate funding for care and maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities. Improvement of access (parking, trailheads, etc.) to newly acquired natural areas and open space to meet rising demand for hiking trails and passive recreational experiences in Spokane County."
—Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

"[The most important outdoor recreation issues facing my area over the next 5 years] is the ability to continue providing parks for people to enjoy. Our county, like so many others, is feeling the impacts of reduced funding. Being a "non-mandated" department places us in a position to be one of the first to be eliminated and/or closed down as the situation dictates."
—Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

"[The most important outdoor recreation issues facing my area over the next 5 years] is the ability to optimally maintain and care for our assets (parks and facilities) during challenging budget times when local budgets have been reduced significantly; hence, hammering our ability to keep up with maintenance and service levels. Another related issue is the need for more grant dollars to help with renovating and preserving existing public assets. While acquisition is still important, major urban cities such as Seattle are having a harder time protecting and preserving our recreation assets. … Development of local parks would be helpful to tackle these concerns.
—Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

"[The most important outdoor recreation issues facing my area over the next 5 years] is preservation of open space within or adjacent to urban growth areas. Preservation and development of regional trails—particularly rail-banked corridors. Encouraging ethnically diverse populations to take advantage of outdoor recreation opportunities."
—Recreation Provider, Providers Survey

CHAPTER 6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS IN PROVIDING OUTDOOR RECREATION IN WASHINGTON

Chapter Highlights

- Three important issues that need to be considered in the provision of outdoor recreation in Washington are sustainability, wetlands, and the use of a map-based information system.
- Providing more sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities is a higher priority among federal, state, and not-for-profit providers than among local providers.
- Some recreation providers seem to be unclear as to what sustainable opportunities are and how they can meet sustainability goals.
- Wetlands are an important part of outdoor recreation in Washington.
- Balancing recreational activities involving wetlands with wetland conservation is important to the public.
- Recreation providers, recreation businesses, and stakeholders need a better way to inventory outdoor recreation supply.
- One of the major challenges in using a map-based information system is to get the recreation providers to participate in this collective, statewide effort.
- The goals of a collective map-based information system should support the needs of these key stakeholders: recreationists and recreation providers. Such a system should be designed to keep three primary goals in mind:
  - Educate the public (e.g., How/where can I recreate? What facilities are there?)
  - Inform state decision-making (e.g., What is the distribution of spending and where have investments been made? Are recreation opportunities being provided equitably?)
  - Support local agency needs (e.g., Where should we develop a park or trail?)

This chapter examines three issues that need to be considered in the provision of outdoor recreation in Washington. The first is sustainability—that recreation facilities and opportunities be provided in a way that sustains both the environment and the recreation resources themselves. The chapter also looks at wetlands as a part of outdoor recreation in Washington. Finally, the chapter discusses a map-based information system and its role in assessing supply.

PROVISION OF OUTDOOR RECREATION IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY

The National Park Service defines sustainability as “the capacity to endure,” stating, “Our ability to preserve cultural landscapes in perpetuity is inextricably tied to achieving sustainable stewardship.” As such, the National Park Service’s mission for sustainability is to achieve environmental, economic, and social durability into perpetuity (National Park Service, 2012b). Following similar guidelines, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board requires LWCF grant recipients to “design and build projects to maximize the useful life of what they build and do the least amount of damage to the environment” (RCO, 2010). The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board developed a sustainability policy “to promote and reward sustainable practices in grant programs.” (RCFB Memo, 2011). To this end, recreation providers are evaluated based in part on the sustainability of their project design, practices, and elements. Sustainability, therefore, becomes an important recreation goal among recreation providers.

As shown in the survey of recreation providers, providing more sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities ranked as an important issue/challenge among local recreation providers, but it was a much more important issue among federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit providers. On a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is not at all important and 10 is extremely important, providing more sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities had a mean rating of 6.83 among local providers, suggesting that, although sustainability is an important issue among local providers, it is not a top-ranked issue. On the other hand, providing more sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities was rated a little higher, with a mean of 7.13 among federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit providers. Among these recreation providers, sustainability was among the top three issues of importance.

These differences in the level of importance of sustainability are also reflected in recreation providers' responses regarding the percentage of existing sites they manage that support sustainable recreation. For local providers, there is a wide range of answers, with means for the various regions ranging from a low of 36% in the Northeast to a high of 81% in the Islands. Among federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers, however, mean percentages are all at 75% or higher among the various groups. The findings suggest that, in general, sustainability is a lower priority among local recreation providers than it is among federal, state, tribal, and nonprofit recreation providers.

Recreation providers were asked to provide information regarding some of the approaches they are taking to ensure the provision of sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities. Many of these providers have guiding principles and policies in place designed to inform development and construction decisions. Several also indicated that they conduct extensive environmental impact and sustainability analyses before development of a new property. Others listed specific initiatives and programs designed to ensure the sustainability of their recreation opportunities. One point to make about the open-ended comments made by these recreation providers is that there may be additional education opportunities regarding sustainability. Some recreation providers seem to be unclear as to what sustainable opportunities are and how they can meet sustainability goals.

WETLANDS

Wetlands provide valuable recreation opportunities, educational opportunities, and environmental services to be managed for these values. In addition, the LWCF Act identifies wetlands as a suitable replacement for LWCF lands slated for conversion to non-recreational uses provided the state's SCORP specifically addresses which wetlands are priorities for acquisition. Wetlands are automatically considered to be of reasonably equivalent utility as the property proposed for conversion, regardless of the nature of that property. For example, a city may wish to use a portion of a park acquired with LWCF funds for a non-outdoor recreation use such as city offices. The law permits the acquisition of wetlands of at least equal fair market value and of reasonably equivalent location to be used as replacement lands.

This wetlands component addresses whether and how recreation sites with wetlands should be prioritized for LWCF grants by addressing these questions:

- Are there wetlands types in Washington that are a priority for recreation acquisition or conversion? If so, should funding priority be given to these wetland types?
- Does the ecological value of the wetlands in question matter?
- Should projects receive lower scores for negative impacts to wetlands?
- Should the state develop criteria for prioritizing wetlands on conversion replacement properties?

In this section we describe:

- Wetlands in Washington—how wetlands are defined and managed in Washington.
- Wetlands and recreation—how wetlands are important in outdoor recreation and how residents encourage a balanced approach to the use of wetlands for recreation.
- How this section meets the federal requirements for the wetlands component of a SCORP.

Definitions

Most residents envision wetlands as marshes, swamps, or small ponds. This aligns with the Washington State Department of Ecology's biological definition for wetlands as an area that encompasses water-saturated soils and water areas themselves, often with water-loving plants. For public input on wetlands recreation, the researchers used a broad definition of what constitutes a wetland, one that matches this commonly held perception.

The Department of Ecology also recognizes jurisdictional wetlands—ones that a particular law or regulation has determined should be maintained as a wetland. For making recommendations about wetland types that should receive priority for recreation acquisition and about environmental impact management, the researchers used the Department of Ecology's wetlands rating system.

Originating from law (WAC 365-190-090), these administrative definitions reflect if and how wetlands are to be regulated (Department of Ecology, 1998). As shown in Table 6.1, the Department of Ecology uses definitions that describe features of wetlands and how they are regulated (Department of Ecology, 2013). For the purposes of this SCORP, wetlands are places where land meets water, and wetlands "are areas where water is present long enough to form distinct soils and where specialized 'water loving' plants can grow" (Department of Ecology, 1998).

Table 6.1. Types of Wetlands in Washington (Department of Ecology 2004).

Category I wetlands for both Eastern and Western Washington "… are those that 1) represent a unique or rare wetland type; or 2) are more sensitive to disturbance than most wetlands; or 3) are relatively undisturbed and contain ecological attributes that are impossible to replace within a human lifetime; or 4) provide a high level of functions…"

Category II wetlands for both Eastern and Western Washington "… are difficult, though not impossible, to replace, and provide high levels of some functions. These wetlands occur more commonly than Category I wetlands, but still need a relatively high level of protection."

Category III wetlands,

> For Eastern Washington "… are 1) vernal pools that are isolated, and 2) wetlands with a moderate level of functions…. Wetlands… [in this category] …generally have been disturbed in some ways, and are often smaller, less diverse and/or more isolated from other natural resources in the landscape than Category II wetlands."
>
> For Western Washington "… are 1) wetlands with a moderate level of functions … and 2) interdunal wetlands between 0.1 and 1 acre in size. Wetlands… [in this category] …generally have been disturbed in some ways, and are often less diverse or more isolated from other natural resources in the landscape than Category II wetlands."

Category IV wetlands for both Eastern and Western Washington "… have the lowest levels of functions … and are often heavily disturbed. These are wetlands that we should be able to replace, and in some cases be able to improve. However, experience has shown that replacement cannot be guaranteed in any specific case. These wetlands may provide some important functions, and also need to be protected."

Overview of Wetlands in Washington

Wetlands cover approximately 938,000 acres in Washington, or about 2% of the state's land (Department of Ecology, 2012a). About two-thirds of original wetlands acreage remains intact (Canning and Stevens, 1989).

Wetlands perform many important functions, such as maintaining stream flows, slowing and storing floodwaters, stabilizing stream banks, and reducing the erosion of shorelines. They recharge groundwater and improve water quality by filtering out sediments, excessive nutrients, and toxic chemicals. For a diverse array of wildlife, wetlands are essential habitat for feeding, nesting, and for cover. More than 315 species of wildlife use the state's wetlands as primary feeding or breeding habitat (USGS 2012). Wetlands are also nursery and feeding areas for anadromous fish such as salmon. Wetlands are critical habitats for at least one-third of the state's threatened or endangered species of wildlife (Puget Sound Water Quality Authority 1990). The number and diversity of plants and animals found in wetlands make them excellent places for active and passive recreation activities such as wildlife viewing, nature appreciation, camping, boating, fishing, nature study, hiking, photography, and hunting, as well as for teaching and research.

How Wetlands Are Managed in Washington

The Department of Ecology is the primary state agency for wetlands management in Washington. Two state laws, the State Water Pollution Control Act and the Shoreline Management Act, give the Department of Ecology the authority to regulate wetlands. Under the Clean Water Act, the Department of Ecology also has the authority to ensure that activities

permitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers meet state water quality standards. The Department of Ecology uses the State Environmental Policy Act process to identify potential wetland-related concerns when issuing development permits.

The Shoreline Management Act requires local jurisdictions to create an approved Shoreline Master Program. These programs carry out the policies of the Shoreline Management Act, at the local level, regulating use and development of shorelines. Local shoreline programs include policies and regulations based on state laws and rules but tailored to the unique geographic, economic, and environmental needs of each community. Under the Act, each town, city and county with "shorelines of the state" must develop and adopt its own shoreline program. "Shorelines of the state" generally refers to rivers, larger lakes, and marine waterfronts along with their associated shorelands, wetlands, and floodplains.

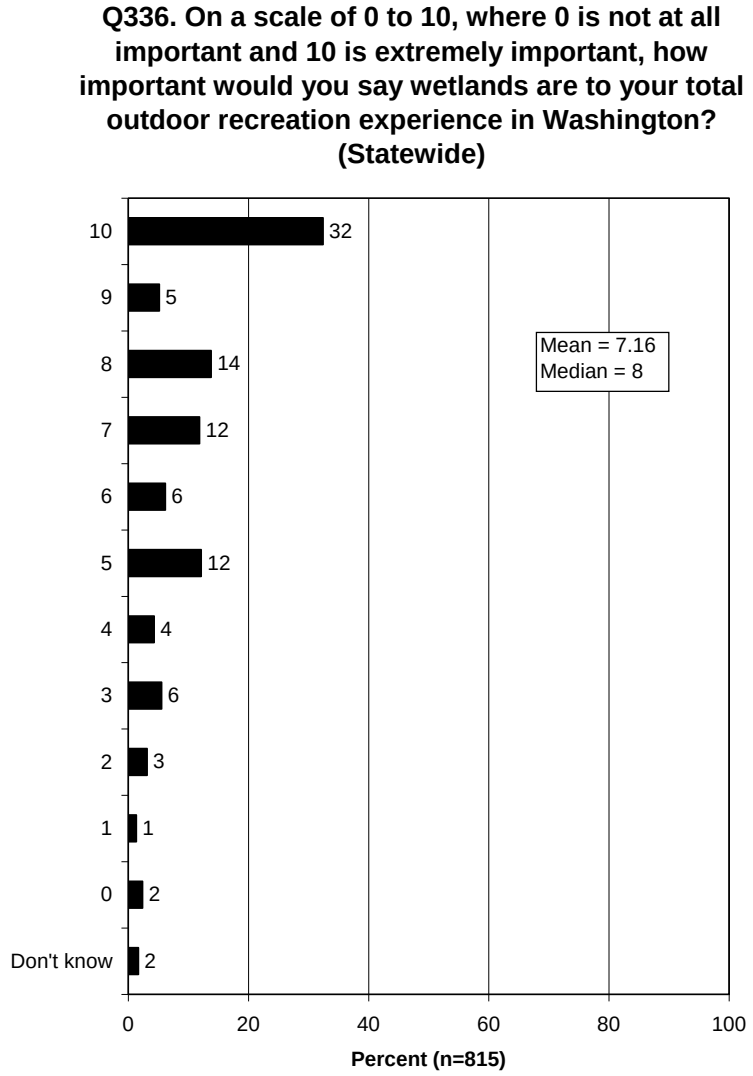
Local governments are responsible for starting the shoreline master program planning, deciding which areas are in shoreline jurisdiction, analyzing the present uses and long-term needs for waterfront lands, and locally adopting a Shoreline Master Program. Local governments must consult with other agencies, tribal governments, and all individuals interested in developing their shoreline master programs. Once adopted, the local government is the program administrator. The local government reviews new development proposals and uses the permit system to decide if development is consistent with state law and the local program. Shoreline Master Programs help local governments avoid or lessen environmental damage as shoreline areas are developed. Based on current conditions and long-term needs, shoreline master programs reserve appropriate areas for water-oriented uses and promote public access opportunities. Shoreline Master Programs include requirements for new development to stay well away from flood, landslide, erosion hazard, and wetland areas. They are more than simply plans. Shoreline Master Programs combine local plans for future shoreline development and identify areas appropriate for restoration and preservation. They include statewide as well as local policies and related specific permitting requirements.

The Department of Ecology has wetlands specialists throughout the state who review applications for projects, such as recreation development projects, that involve wetlands. Where a project has a potential to affect wetlands, such as disturbance from people, there is a requirement that these be minimized. In some cases, compensatory mitigation is required to offset those lost functions. The Department of Ecology also provides technical assistance to local governments under the Growth Management Act. This includes assistance in developing policies for comprehensive plans, developing regulations, and in implementing local wetlands mitigation.

Wetlands and Recreation

In the survey of residents to develop the SCORP, residents rated the importance of wetlands to their total outdoor recreation experience. About one-third of residents give wetlands the highest rating of importance (Figure 6.1), and the importance is similar across the state's regions. The survey also showed that, during the last 12 months, 26% of Washington residents participated in a recreation activity that involved a wetland. In fact, the conservation of wetlands is an important priority for improving nature and wildlife viewing and for habitat enhancement for game species (e.g., ducks). For these and many other reasons, wetlands are a big part of outdoor recreation in Washington.

Figure 6.1: Statewide Importance of Wetlands in Outdoor Recreation.



To explore the role of wetlands recreation in the public's mind, the SCORP Town Hall asked the following questions:

> Wetlands, which in Washington are often marshes, swamps, or small ponds, are important for wildlife and for recreation. People go there to watch birds and wildlife or to hike near them. We have a two part question for you about wetlands:
>
> 1. Do you visit wetlands for recreation and why are they important to you?
> 2. What role should wetlands play in enhancing outdoor recreation?

In total, 65 people responded and most commonly said that it is important to consider wetlands values, balance expectations for recreational access, and manage appropriate recreational use of wetlands to prevent degradation.

The SCORP Town Hall also discussed values of wetlands. The public indicated that wetlands provide multiple benefits, including environmental services, education, and recreation.

- For environmental services, the public said wetlands are important in buffering the intensity of stormwater runoff (in both natural and constructed wetlands) as biodiversity repositories, as groundwater recharge sites, as critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and for water purification, among other services.
- For educational values, the public said that wetlands are ready-made classrooms for teaching environmental lessons, especially about wise water management.
- For recreation values, the public said that water features like wetlands are an integral part of the outdoors in the Northwest; wetlands are generally easy to access, especially for the physically challenged; wetlands support destination recreation activities like wildlife viewing, hiking, fishing, hunting, kayaking, and horse riding; and wetlands are a place where people can go to immerse themselves in a peaceful outdoor setting.

Recreationists expressed a range of expectations about access that raises the unanswered question: What is the appropriate balance between leaving wetlands undisturbed versus recreation use? Many people at the SCORP Town Hall recognized that their recreational activities can have a negative environmental impact but said that access to wetlands recreation is important to them. Another concern was about using the same wetland for multiple recreation activities, with some Town Hall contributors wanting simultaneous use and others not wanting such use.

Another concern in using wetlands for recreation is managing appropriate use, as well as access and degradation. Many Town Hall contributors noted that recreation managers have an obligation to prevent degradation of wetlands when creating recreation facilities and opportunities. A typical comment was, “Recreational development should not hurt wetlands.” At the same time, other contributors said that their recreation access is too limited. People gave suggestions for managing recreation to protect wetlands, such as limiting total use, limiting uses that degrade the quality of a wetland, visitor behavior management, developing peripheral lands, confining access to designed facilities (e.g., boardwalks over the wetlands, spur trails), and zoning to avoid disturbing the most sensitive areas and species.

Consistency With Federal Law

Federal law directs each state to include a wetlands component as part of its SCORP and stipulates several requirements for a SCORP (National Park Service, 2008). These requirements, and how they are addressed in this SCORP, are briefly described in Table 6.2.

Table 6.2: National Park Service Requirements Met in the SCORP.

Requirement 1 - Be consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1991).	Use of the Washington Department of Ecology's wetlands rating system is consistent with this requirement. In addition, when a local jurisdiction proposes wetlands development and that jurisdiction has an approved Shoreline Master Program consistency with national standards administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is assured.
Requirement 2 - Provide evidence of consultation with the state agency responsible for fish and wildlife resources.	Department of Fish and Wildlife staff was consulted as part of the preparation of this SCORP, and their feedback was incorporated. In addition, routine consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife occurs *via* the normal permitting process for projects requiring a Hydraulic Project Approval under State law (Department of Fish and Wildlife, 2013b).
Requirement 3 - Develop a listing of wetland types that should receive priority for acquisition.	Use of the Washington Department of Ecology's wetlands rating system is consistent with this requirement.
Requirement 4 - Consider outdoor recreation opportunities associated with its wetlands resources for meeting the State's public outdoor recreation needs.	The Advisory Group and the general public encouraged the use of the unique recreation values provided by wetlands in recreation planning while appropriately protecting wetlands from environmental impacts.

Wetlands Summary

Wetlands are important in Washington's outdoor recreation. They are widely used, and residents say that wetlands are valued as part of their recreation. At the same time, these residents made it clear that they want wetlands to be managed for environmental and recreation values with a call for balance between the two. Wetlands ecological functions should not be impaired by recreational development, but should be preserved and enhanced for the values provided to wildlife viewing, particularly birding activities. Similarly, the SCORP Advisory Group advocated a carefully balanced approach to wetlands recreation, but emphasized broader values of wetlands, including their educational importance.

The State of Washington also defines wetlands as a priority and, largely through the Department of Ecology, has expressed this priority through law and policy. The federal government requires that the wetlands component in a SCORP be consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan and that there be coordination with the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Taken together, existing state law and policy combined with recommendations made in this SCORP provide for these public, state, and federal needs.

USING A MAP-BASED INFORMATION SYSTEM TO ASSESS SUPPLY

Recreation providers, recreation businesses, and stakeholders need a better way to inventory outdoor recreation supply. This inventory needs to be put into a usable format that will include and integrate other inventories previously compiled by federal, state, local, and tribal providers. Additionally, the map-based information system should consider the National Park Service's LWCF need for a usable recreation supply tool. While creating this database capacity is a significant undertaking, there is a greater need to provide incentives to encourage provider participation in this system. A map-based information system will only work if providers are willing to invest in this tool by contributing *and* maintaining up-to-date data. This section discusses a framework to build the capacity to support a map-based information system to assess supply.

Currently, the state's objective has been to make map-based information data more accessible to recreation providers. To this end, the state is publishing maps associated with its initiatives (e.g., RCO's salmon recovery work). In this case, the RCO uses a Geographic Information System (GIS) database, and RCO staff regularly coordinate with the state's GIS office to update information. In addition, RCO is using some county data layers, but this information is not comprehensive. Data from counties are expected to improve as more counties are able to provide parcel-level data. While some data for publicly owned lands are available from counties, the data are incomplete because there is no incentive to collect these data (counties do not tax public lands). In addition, the RCO maintains its PRISM (**PR**oject **I**nformation **S**yste**M**) database, but this information only covers properties where RCO funds have been spent. Therefore, the PRISM database is incomplete. The RCO also has expertise providing an analogous, statewide map-based information system for the boating community (see http://boat.wa.gov). These map-based information efforts involve sharing and coordination among agencies.

For the proposal presented here, two needs-assessment meetings were conducted: one meeting with RCO staff, and a second meeting with recreation managers from federal, state, and local agencies who were knowledgeable about map-based information systems. The second meeting featured a demonstration of the PRORAGIS software. This software was developed and is maintained by the National Recreation and Park Association. PRORAGIS is a searchable, online database where the recreation provider enters data into their profile and controls those data. The data can then be used to generate a variety of reports and users have access to GIS mapping tools.

Key Finding Regarding a Map-Based Information System

Based on the consultation with these representatives, it was determined that one of the major challenges in using a map-based information system is to get the recreation providers to participate in this collective, statewide effort. Federal, state, local, and tribal recreation managers have differing missions and differing data management needs, which might make it difficult to encourage partnerships in an effort that may not fall under the purview of their current mission and goals. Further, and perhaps more importantly, recreation providers have already fully allocated their budget resources, and it is not likely that they have planned for or even have the resources necessary to contribute to the development and/or use of a map-based information system. While there are many other issues that should be considered in the development of a collective map-based information system, all of these are secondary to ensuring participation by the diverse array of providers. Keeping this in mind, discussions regarding participation in a map-based information system should include input and investment by recreation providers. This will be the best way to incentivize these efforts and encourage buy-in from those on which the state will depend for maintaining and updating the system.

Goals That a Map-Based Information System Supports

A key purpose of a map-based information system is to inform the end user (the recreationists). Although a map-based information system serves the purpose of meeting the needs of the recreationists served, however, it should also help inform investment needs and priorities among recreation providers. The goals of a collective map-based information system should support the needs of these key stakeholders: recreationists and recreation providers. Such a system should be designed to keep three primary goals in mind:

- Educate the public (e.g., How/where can I recreate? What facilities are there?)
- Inform state decision-making (e.g., What is the distribution of spending and where have investments been made? Are recreation opportunities being provided equitably?)
- Support local agency needs (e.g., Where should we develop a park or trail?)

CHAPTER 7. FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter outlines key recommendations supported by the findings of the SCORP research. The sources of these recommendations come from the compilation of research conducted for the SCORP, including discussions with the SCORP Advisory Group, SCORP Town Hall, the scientific survey of Washington residents, the survey of recreation providers, and discussions with the RCO.

As the research clearly shows, Washington should continue its investment in outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. While this is the most basic of all recommendations, it is the foundation for fulfilling all other outdoor recreation needs and expectations. The SCORP Advisory Group contended that it is worth reminding the state of the necessity of its continued investment in outdoor recreation, especially considering future challenges and issues.

Specifically, the SCORP Advisory Group discussed investments that the state needs to keep in mind as priorities for outdoor recreation. First, the Advisory Group focused on the importance of new acquisition, development of sites and facilities, and the maintenance of existing facilities, contending that the increased pressure on existing facilities (due to population growth) will be reflected in deterioration of those recreation resources due to overuse. Second, the Advisory Group concurred that, even with current satisfaction levels being high for most forms of outdoor recreation, continued investment in outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities is necessary to maintain these levels of satisfaction. A full report of the recommendations provided by the SCORP Advisory Group is included in Appendix D.

The public, in their comments at the SCORP Town Hall, made a strong business case for recreation investment. The reasons most frequently stated by these Town Hall contributors were that recreation opportunities bring in direct economic activity (e.g., local business sales to recreation customers) and the presence of recreation assets helps their communities attract businesses.

Finally, the SCORP Advisory Group emphasized continued investment in outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities to meet the diversified demands of all users. To this end, they discussed the importance of investing in amenities to meet the needs of changing demographics, the need to develop and improve opportunities for residents with disabilities, and the need to ensure that diversity continues to be a statewide priority for outdoor recreation.

All of these priorities for meeting public demand for outdoor recreation, and many more, are discussed further as individual recommendations in the remainder of this chapter. Recommendations marked with an asterisk are actions that should be prioritized statewide over the next five years.

IMPLICATIONS: PARTICIPATION AND SATISFACTION

- **Recognize a return to nature-based activities.**
  The survey results and associated trends analysis point to an increase in nature-based activities. A major focus on recreation planning over the next 5 years should be in providing these nature-based activities for Washington residents and maintaining the integrity of the ecosystems upon which these recreational activities depend. Chapter 3 shows that there were notable increases in participation in hunting, shooting, and fishing, and this is similar to national trends. Similarly, a number of Town Hall contributors in the

Town Hall responses to this question said that they are doing more activities like trail hiking because it is more affordable in the current difficult economic climate.

- **Understand that the top constraints to participation are social factors, such as lack of time/other obligations, financial reasons, and health/age, as opposed to facility-based or opportunity-based factors.**
  As discussed in Chapter 4, more than a quarter of residents (29%) say that there are outdoor activities that they do not do but that they would like to do. However, findings regarding latent demand do not seem to point toward an overwhelming need for more facilities. Social factors top the list of reasons that residents did *not* engage in activities in which they expressed interest, including lack of time/other obligations, financial reasons, and health/age. It is clear that interest in participation in outdoor recreation is high, and the top constraints to participation appear to be social and psychological in nature as opposed to facility-based.

- **Realize that no one activity or group of activities dominates latent demand needs.**
  As shown in Chapter 3, the activities Washington residents have not done but are interested in doing are relatively evenly distributed among a variety of activities, with no one activity dominating this list for latent demand. Still, activities leading the list include air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.), hiking, skiing, hunting, fishing, canoeing/kayaking, camping, and boating. (It is worth noting that most of these activities are nature-based). Similarly, when asked about activities in which they currently participate but in which they would like to participate more, 33% of residents have activities in which they participate at a level lower than they would like. Among these residents, 13% indicated that they would like to participate in more recreation activities in general. No one or two activities surfaced as specific activities in which there was a particularly high rate of interest in participation.

- **Continue information and outreach on outdoor recreation opportunities.**
  Washington residents want to participate in outdoor recreation activities, as demonstrated by the number of participants as well as the number of people who wish to participate more. As mentioned in a previous recommendation, social constraints often impede participation. An important approach recreation providers can take to minimize social constraints is to keep outdoor recreation a top-of-mind priority among residents. Residents need information and a reminder to encourage their participation in outdoor recreation. It is important for recreation providers to continue their efforts to inform and communicate with recreationists, possibly including marketing and outreach that specifically addresses the top social constraints to participation. Additional marketing research may be conducted to inform information and outreach efforts.

- **Use caution when interpreting trends.**
  It is important to be aware of the limitations of decision-making based on participation trends. Trying to understand future recreational demand based on past trends is a bit like driving a vehicle forward while looking in the rear-view mirror. Although the past can give you an idea of the general path of recreation, it does not mean that these trends will continue into the future. Social, cultural, and demographic factors can impact trends in participation. A particularly relevant example of this is the decline of hunting and shooting over the past few decades. Although on a general decline since 1990, participation in hunting has started to increase in recent years both in Washington and nationally, a trend that few people predicted. Studies are currently being conducted to

determine factors impacting this apparent rise in hunting participation; possible factors influencing the recent uptick in hunting participation include the economic recession as well as the locavore movement (eating only locally produced food), to name just a couple of possible factors impacting the recent increase.

- **Maintain high levels of satisfaction.**
  The majority of Washington outdoor recreationists are quite satisfied, with a few small exceptions. This has a couple of important implications. The challenge now is to maintain these high levels of satisfaction, meaning that we should not assume that outdoor recreation goals have been met and, therefore, budgets in these areas can be cut; instead, it is important to continue or increase the current level of maintenance and provision of these activities.

- **Work toward decreasing dissatisfaction in selected activities where dissatisfaction was high.**
  In general, dissatisfaction is low for most activities. Nonetheless, the following activities have dissatisfaction rates of at least 20%: shooting opportunities, disc golf opportunities, off-roading facilities and opportunities, and hunting facilities and opportunities. Providers should be aware of those opportunities with which residents are dissatisfied and continue efforts to develop new facilities or to improve existing facilities and opportunities.

- **Continue to rely on traditional methods of detecting user needs.**
  The SCORP Advisory Group is aware that recreation managers are planning under uncertainty when responding to recreation trends. One cause of this uncertainty comes from the imperfect ability to detect unmet needs. The SCORP Advisory Group recommends that recreation providers continue to rely on traditional methods of detecting user needs, such as using expected population and recreation trends from surveys and other statistically valid research projects, personal interviews, public participation projects with regional and local providers, and other user groups to obtain the most up-to-date data on which to base decisions regarding outdoor recreation. As previously mentioned, however, it is important to be aware of the limitations of trends data. While these data offer the most comprehensive information on which to base decisions, it is important to understand that social, cultural, and demographic factors can impact trends in participation.

IMPLICATIONS: BENEFITS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

- **Capitalize on the social benefits of outdoor recreation in communications and outreach.**
  As outlined in Chapter 1, there are many social benefits to outdoor recreation. Outdoor recreation helps promote community and create a shared sense of place. It brings together like-minded people with a similar connection to the outdoors, and it is common for those participating in specific activities to work cooperatively in developing new opportunities and maintaining existing infrastructure. Communications and outreach should promote these social benefits by demonstrating the importance of outdoor recreation opportunities to local communities and by encouraging recreationists to become more invested in outdoor recreation resource management.

- **Continue to support health initiatives.**
  As outlined in Chapter 1, the health benefits of outdoor recreation include reducing major health problems through activity and exercise, as well as the potential to impact health care spending. Washington supports and promotes the Centers for Disease Control's ACHIEVE Healthy Communities Initiative. Currently eight Washington localities benefit from their designation as ACHIEVE communities. The state should continue supporting this initiative by expanding its reach throughout the state.

- **Increase youth exposure to outdoor recreation opportunities with greater focus on outdoor experiences in the classroom.**
  Like Americans as a whole, Washington youth are experiencing *nature deficit disorder* at high percentages due, in part, to our society's dependence on technology for entertainment. Washington should increase efforts to encourage children and youth to get outdoors. An important approach to increasing participation among children and youth in outdoor recreation activities is providing opportunities for outdoor recreation and education in the classroom. The State of Washington has mandated environmental and sustainability education learning standards, which promotes three interrelated areas: ecological, social, and economic systems; the natural and built environment; and sustainability and civic responsibility. Washington should continue its efforts in maintaining education learning standards and increase opportunities for children and youth to engage in outdoor experiences via schools.

- **Expand the educational value of outdoor recreation through partnerships with environmental, conservation, and educational organizations.**
  It is imperative that Washington link its efforts with other national and/or broad outdoor education initiatives and develop partnerships to help support and fund these educational approaches. A committed, cohesive effort to promote environmental education may best be applied through partnerships among the various environmental, conservation, and educational organizations seeking to improve and enhance environmental education in Washington's schools. Many of these organizations are working toward the same goal of increasing environmental stewardship and awareness, and combining efforts will help improve results. Consider developing a Task Force in the state to work toward improvements to environmental education programs and standards. To this end, environmental education standards should consider a three-pronged approach focused on outdoor participation, conservation literacy, and civic participation and stewardship.

- **Promote the economic benefits of outdoor recreation in communications and outreach.***
  The results of a 2012 report show that outdoor recreation contributed more than $22.5 billion in consumer spending to Washington's economy, as well as $1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue. Further, outdoor recreation directly supported 227,000 jobs across the state, along with $7.1 billion in wages and salaries. Chapter 1 shows that outdoor recreation is a major economic engine that produces jobs and tax revenues, especially in local economies and in many instances in rural areas where these jobs and tax revenues are needed. Promote the economic benefits of outdoor recreation in communications and outreach to help increase participation and public investment in outdoor recreation opportunities.

- **Maximize sustainability and environmental stewardship.***
  One of the most important benefits of outdoor recreation is its promotion of sustainability and environmental stewardship. The key to sustainability and stewardship is a partnership among federal, state, local, tribal, and private outdoor recreation providers, their partners, key stakeholders, communities, and recreationists. Even more important, sustainability and stewardship require residents and leaders at all levels to cooperatively invest in our natural, cultural, and scenic resources. As discussed in Chapter 1, the state's focus on sustainability and ethical stewardship has resulted in several initiatives that are helping to ensure outdoor recreation issues are a top-of-mind priority. The state should continue supporting these initiatives and work collaboratively with Washington residents to expand major programs and initiatives focused on improving outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship.

IMPLICATIONS: RECREATION TYPES

- **Focus on increasing and/or improving recreation facilities and opportunities that support active recreation.**
  The majority of residents are participating in active recreation. As shown in Chapter 3, an overwhelming majority of residents are participating in activities that fall under the broad active recreation categories of "walking, hiking, climbing, and mountain biking" (90% of residents participated in activities under this category) and "recreational activities" (83%), which include activities such as swimming, aerobics, jogging, and running. Chapter 5 shows that the mean of providers' answers regarding the percent of their facilities that support active recreation statewide is 54.04% (a B score on the Level of Service).

- **Continue to offer diverse outdoor recreation activities and opportunities.***
  Washington residents participate in a wide variety of outdoor recreation activities. As explored in Chapter 4, many of the Town Hall contributors emphasized the importance of expanding the number and diversity of recreation opportunities as a way to manage user conflict. Offering diverse opportunities is also important in meeting the demands of underrepresented populations (as identified in Chapter 3), such as urban residents and minorities.

- **Stay true to the outdoor recreation base—traditional users.**
  A word of caution on the previous recommendation is not to focus on new and emerging activities *at the expense of* traditional, popular recreation activities. Although the outdoor recreation opportunities in Washington are diverse and there is a natural inclination to cater to new and emerging recreation activities, it is important for recreation providers to focus on traditional users. As discussed in Chapter 3, the highest recreation participation rates are for picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out (81% of Washington residents), walking without a pet (71%), observing or photographing wildlife (59%), gardening (57%), hiking (54%), and walking with a pet (52%). While it is important to keep up with new and emerging demands in recreation, it is equally important to ensure high quality experiences for traditional users.

- **Explore the geographic distribution of recreation facilities to ensure that recreation is not too distant for recreationists.**
  Some urban residents in the Town Hall comments were frustrated by the distance they had to travel to participate in their preferred recreation activity. Thus, the need to

continue offering diverse outdoor recreation within a reasonable travel distance is important to ensuring quality recreation experiences. The Town Hall findings suggest that recreationists would like to see an increase in the quantity and diversity of recreation opportunities provided. It is important to remember, however, that the Town Hall findings are not quantifiable and are only representative of the opinions of those who participated in the SCORP Town Hall.

- **Keep priorities in mind when developing new or additional facilities.**
  The Level of Service analysis in Chapter 5 explored priorities for developing new or additional facilities. Although geographic factors and actual levels of demand should be examined as well, priorities for developing new or additional facilities should include designated motorized and off-roading trails and areas, shooting ranges, hunting areas, and outdoor tracks for running or jogging. Additional activities to examine for demand and to consider for facility development where appropriate are snow and ice activity facilities, designated bridle or horse trails, and sports fields. The Town Hall findings showed a perceived lack of opportunity among equestrians, mountain bikers, and motor-sport trail users. Keep in mind, however, that just as important as focusing on unmet demand is a continued focus on meeting demand for the most popular activities in the state, such as walking, picnicking, hiking, etc.

IMPLICATIONS: OUTDOOR RECREATION SUPPLY IN WASHINGTON

- **Recognize the need for an accurate inventory of outdoor recreation supply.**
  One of the difficulties in the development of this SCORP was determining outdoor recreation supply in the state. This need is broadly shared across recreation providers. The benefits of a comprehensive and up-to-date inventory include,
  - Allowing stakeholders a single resource for learning about recreation opportunities,
  - Allowing managers to assess the appropriateness of their inventory given demographic, economic, land-use, and other variables impacting their service area, and
  - Allowing managers to assess where the pooling of resources is a good idea.

  An assessment of supply depends primarily on two measures: (1) the supply of lands for recreation and (2) the supply of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities. Many of the resources used to assess land supply are outdated. Information provided by the state regarding lands in Washington is based on a 1999 lands survey and an update to this inventory in 2005.

- **Take advantage of current technology by using a map-based information system to provide an inventory of outdoor recreation supply.***
  To address some of the challenges highlighted above, it is important for the state to move toward developing a map-based information system to support recreation planning needs of the state. As discussed in Chapter 6, the map-based information system should support federal, state, local and tribal governments as well as non-governmental organizations. The system should be standardized across all users so that participants know what to expect, what information can be provided, and the ease with which they can contribute information to the system. The system should make all partners' information identifiable and readily available so that recreation providers can access the information for their own use. Additionally, the system should be adaptable at each level, providing data exporting capabilities that will allow users to manipulate exported

data and information in their own database management software. The RCO should start with a core system designed to meet the needs for SCORP planning and build from that point to meet wider needs.

- **Create a development and implementation plan for the map-based information system.**
  The state should determine the funding needs for the development of a map-based information system for recreation and make it a specific budget item. To this end, the state should create an explicitly funded and detailed planning project to select a platform and decide what data elements will be included. The PRORAGIS system is a viable alternative that should be on this evaluation list. The purpose for this project should be to put the public lands inventory into a useable format and integrate federal, state, local, and tribal supply inventories.

- **Develop the map-based information system to meet SCORP requirements.**
  Consult with the National Park Service to determine the design elements and map-based information management capacity necessary to meet their requirements for a SCORP-supporting map-based information system. Chapter 6 suggests that the map-based information system provide an opportunity for tiered participation, wherein an organization can choose among levels of data detail to input in the system, with the minimum level being useful for statewide SCORP planning. High-level SCORP needs will be required for minimum data input; however, the map-based information system should also provide an opportunity to input local data and to manage detailed information that local jurisdictions will find relevant and beneficial to outdoor recreation planning.

- **Encourage recreation providers to participate in a collective map-based information system.**
  As discussed in Chapter 6, the map-based information system needs to involve an appropriate cross-section of recreation providers and data users. To this end, all recreation providers in the state should be encouraged to participate in a collective map-based information system.

- **Update the *1999 Public and Tribal Lands Inventory*.**
  The existing inventory of recreation assets in Washington is 14 years old and there was concern this information is out of date. In fact, a comprehensive public lands inventory in Washington has not been conducted since 1999. Additional research, as well as an updated public lands inventory, is needed to better understand Washington's capacity to meet the demands brought by future changes in participation and demographics. A complementary project with developing a map-based information system should be created to provide up-to-date inputs to such a system and to provide recreation managers with current information for their strategic and operational planning.

- **Recognize recreation types in which supply may not be meeting demand.**
  Chapter 2 identifies several areas in which the mean percent of demand being met is less than half. These include designated bridle trails, sports fields with rugby goals, designated motorized trails, and designated snow and ice trails. It should be noted that several of these activities were also mentioned by Town Hall contributors as needing more opportunity.

- **Recognize regions in which supply may not be meeting demand.**
  Chapter 5 shows that most of the state's regions do not appear to be meeting public demand, with the opportunity for the greatest improvement in the Columbia Plateau region.

IMPLICATIONS: RECREATION SITES AND FACILITIES

- **Focus on the capacity of existing facilities.**
  Facility capacity measures the percent of demand met by existing facilities, and it appears to be the biggest gap that recreation providers feel. In other words, there is the perception among recreation providers that there is an unmet demand pressure that they are unable to address. As discussed in Chapter 5, the research found that 16% of residents said that there were problems with facilities for outdoor recreation in their community. The top problems include a need for more facilities/more availability (35% of those who received the follow-up question), poor state of facilities (21%), restricted access (13%), difficulty with access (4%), and broken equipment/poor maintenance (4%)—all items that pertain directly or tangentially to facility capacity. As shown in Chapter 5, the Level of Service scores show that the highest priorities for planning for and improving outdoor recreation in Washington are facilities capacity and quantity. Agencies and providers should focus on facility capacity first because it received the lowest overall score, followed by the number of outdoor recreation facilities.

- **Focus on increasing the number of facilities and opportunities.**
  The results of the surveys and Town Hall comments suggest that recreationists themselves hold the opinion that the top problem is a need for more facilities or more availability of existing facilities. As mentioned above, among the 16% of residents who said that there were problems with facilities for outdoor recreation in their communities, 35% said there was a need for more facilities/more availability; this amounts to about 6% of *all* Washington residents. It should be noted, however, that the Level of Service criteria and scores showed that the number of outdoor recreation facilities earned only a C on the Level of Service scale, suggesting that this is a primary concern among recreation providers.

- **Create a forum where cross-provider coordination could occur.**
  In its recommendation on Statewide Policy, the Advisory Group observed that there is no mechanism or forum for providers to provide input or to discuss the plans of other providers. Two potential problems arise because of this gap. First, a decision by one provider (e.g., reducing support for one user group) can have a ripple effect on another provider (e.g., that reduction disperses demand onto other providers). Another potential problem is missing easy opportunities for collaboration, since one set of providers simply may not know what other providers are doing, thereby missing easy partnership opportunities. As a solution, the Advisory Group recommended creation of a forum where this cross-provider coordination could occur.

- **Recognize that maintaining existing facilities and opportunities is important to recreationists.**
  Taken as a whole, the results suggest that, although the public is seeking more facilities and opportunities, maintenance of existing facilities is also important. More than a quarter of residents (29%) mentioned problems related specifically to facility maintenance, including the poor state of facilities, difficulty with access, and broken

equipment/poor maintenance. Among local providers, maintenance of existing facilities was one of the top three priorities. These concerns also appeared in the Town Hall comments. In general, the importance of maintaining the existing facilities should be balanced with acquiring new facilities. While LWCF funding is not for routine maintenance, avenues for funding maintenance should be explored.

- **Continue to provide functional facilities that meet the needs of all users.**
  In keeping with improving the capacity of facilities, the data in Chapter 2 show that the mean of local providers' answers regarding the percent of facilities considered fully functional is 77%; similarly, the mean of federal/state/nonprofit providers' responses regarding the percent of sites considered fully functional is 78%. Still, there was concern among residents that recreation facilities and opportunities be accessible to all users (i.e., be functional for all users). Several Town Hall contributors voiced concerns over access to recreation facilities and opportunities by residents with disabilities. This should continue to be a priority as it was defined as a measure of success in the 2008 SCORP: "The facilities people use [should be] functional according to specific design and safety guidelines, including the Americans with Disabilities Act."

IMPLICATIONS: SUSTAINABILITY

- **Recognize there are two inter-related factors of sustainable recreation.***
  When discussing sustainable recreation, it is important to realize that there are two primary and inter-related factors of sustainable recreation: (1) longevity of environmental resources and assets and (2) the longevity of recreational planning and funding. Environmental sustainability focuses on providing recreation designed to minimize environmental impacts and encourage stewardship and ethical use. Recreational sustainability focuses on providing recreation facilities and opportunities that are designed to maximize the useful life of the facilities and opportunities into the future, thereby encouraging self-supporting design, maintenance, operation, and funding. The second factor is dependent on the first: The longevity of recreation planning cannot be ensured without the preservation of the resource itself. Recreation providers and the public provided insight regarding sustainability, both in terms of providing opportunities for a maximum recreation experience that also minimize impacts to or protect natural, cultural, and historic resources and in terms of providing lasting recreation opportunities through long-term planning and funding for the future. Many of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's guidelines regarding sustainability focus on both environmental and recreational sustainability. Recreation providers should continue to make sustainability a top priority in recreation design, acquisition, and development.

- **Get recreationists involved.**
  The SCORP Town Hall clearly show that recreationists are concerned about their environment and the impact of recreation on resources, including fish, wildlife, and habitat. Recreationists are interested in sustainability of the natural environment as part of recreation management, to the degree that they are willing to forego additional recreation opportunities to ensure the sustainability of the resources. As one Town Hall contributor conceded, "Some parks should be used for habitat enhancement and stewardship. Access does not mean everyone should be able to access every place all the time." Accordingly, recreationists appear to understand their responsibility to environmental stewardship and have a willingness to get involved. Recreation providers

should work toward getting recreationists involved through volunteer and joint venture opportunities supporting environmental sustainability and stewardship initiatives.

- **Increase the ability of jurisdictions to use volunteers.**
  Volunteers already play an integral role in maintaining and enhancing existing recreation assets. This recommendation focuses on methods for maximizing the use of volunteers, thereby mitigating some of the funding and resource limitations that recreation providers have experienced. Citing the benefits of user groups and associations willing to volunteer to maintain trails and outdoor recreation facilities, Chapter 4 shows that some Town Hall contributors thought that this could be a way to address agency resource and funding limitations. At the same time, however, other respondents expressed concern about the efficiency of using volunteers, about the reliability of volunteers for maintenance over long periods of time, and about the reality of liability of the owners of land/facilities if volunteers are injured.

  The SCORP Advisory Group also discussed the importance of volunteer work in providing additional resources for outdoor recreation maintenance and support. To this end, the Advisory Group made two recommendations for implementing policy improvements to achieve the following objectives:
  - Provide or make eligible monetary support and staffing to cultivate and maintain volunteer involvement in recreation asset management, and
  - Provide risk and liability relief for recreation providers to remove this exposure as an impediment to using volunteer resources.

- **Follow the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's guidelines for sustainability.***
  The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board requires LWCF grant recipients to "design and build projects to maximize the useful life of what they build and do the least amount of damage to the environment" (RCO, 2010). The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board developed a sustainability policy "to promote and reward sustainable practices in grant programs" (RCFB Memo, 2011). To this end, recreation providers are evaluated based in part on the sustainability of their project design, practices, and elements, meeting the goals of both environmental and recreational sustainability.

- **Use the National Park Service's *Green Parks Plan* and the Washington State *Planning for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space in Your Community* as touchstones for promoting environmental sustainability and stewardship.***
  These resources discuss specific measures for improving sustainability and stewardship among outdoor recreation providers. These goals provide a foundation for improving outdoor recreation sustainability while also adhering to federal mandates for environmental standards. In addition to recommendations provided by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, use the principles outlined in these documents to encourage sustainability and stewardship.

- **Continue support of *America's Great Outdoors Initiative*.***
  The goal of this initiative is to develop a national management strategy for the country's outdoor recreation assets. In doing so, this initiative works toward addressing inefficient policies, targeting investments, and leveraging the government's interactions with states, tribes, and local communities. Two state-specific projects in Washington were selected as showcase investments for this initiative. These projects include the Pacific Northwest

Trail and the Lower Columbia River Water Trail. The state should continue its support of such initiatives and pursue similar projects.

IMPLICATIONS: RECREATION EQUITY

- **Consider the implications of changing demographics when making recreation decisions.***
  One of the greatest challenges among recreation providers over the next decade will be meeting the demands of an ever-increasing and diverse population in Washington. As discussed in Chapter 1, Washington is becoming more urban, older, and more diverse. It is important for providers to understand how these demographic changes impact recreation demand. As the state becomes more urban, it will become more important for providers to address the growing needs of this population group.

- **Increase attention to segments of Washington's residents that are not participating in outdoor recreation at rates commensurate with their population proportions in the State.**
  As discussed in Chapter 4, an analysis of demographic characteristics from the survey of residents identified five demographic groups that have consistently lower participation rates when compared to other demographic groups. Specifically, residents with disabilities, non-white residents, older residents, females, and residents who live in urban or suburban areas emerge as underserved populations in Washington. It is important to consider that cultural tastes and preferences may be a large determinant of this result, so the right response is not necessarily to position grant making to target these residents. Rather, it is advisable for the state to explore the reasons for lower participation rates among these groups, perhaps through a research project that provides a statistically valid analysis of the reasons for non-participation and, more importantly, helps determine the types of outdoor recreation investments that meet their needs.

  The research conducted for this study shows that rural residents and suburban/urban residents participate in many of the same activities, with several notable exceptions. Some activities in which participation is notably lower among urban/suburban residents when compared to rural residents include fishing and shellfishing, hunting and shooting, camping, off-roading for recreation, and horseback riding.

  As the population in Washington continues to age, it becomes important for parks and recreation providers to have a better understanding of what activities are important to meeting the needs of older recreationists. The survey of Washington residents suggests that older residents are participating in nature activities, such as gardening, at a higher rate than are younger residents. Similarly, a higher percentage of older residents are participating in sightseeing than are younger residents. Conversely, older residents are participating in recreational activities, which include physical activities such as running, jogging, playground use, and swimming, at a lower rate when compared to younger residents. With the exception of nature activities and sightseeing, in general, participation in outdoor recreation among populations in Washington at the mean age or older is lower than among populations below the mean age. Some activities in which participation is notably lower among older residents when compared to younger residents include playground use (accompanying children), swimming in natural waters, swimming in a pool, hiking, camping, snow and ice activities, and swimming or wading at the beach.

The population in Washington is becoming more ethnically diverse, with a substantial and consistent increase in Hispanic/Latino populations as well as in other minority groups. This change necessitates a closer look at the differences between whites and non-whites and their participation in outdoor recreation activities. Compared with whites, non-whites have notably lower participation rates in the following activities: sightseeing; snow and ice activities; hunting and shooting; wildlife viewing/photographing; gardening, flowers or vegetables; and boating. On the other hand, compared with whites, non-whites have notably higher participation rates in aerobics/fitness activities and jogging/running.

Additionally, Town Hall contributors lamented missed opportunities among youth, such as young people from the inner-city and those who are too tied to electronic recreation, suggesting that these youths are not participating in the full range of outdoor recreation available in Washington often because they simply do not have an ability or impetus to access these opportunities. It is also recommended that the state undertake more detailed research efforts to determine if there is youth demand, the nature of that demand, and an assessment of the kinds of investments that might be appropriate to support this demand.

- **Increase and improve access for residents with disabilities.***
  The research suggests that there is a need to increase support to residents with disabilities. The Advisory Group contended that "there remains a need to develop and improve special-needs opportunities for disabled recreationists, such as providing barrier-free recreation access and facilities for physically disabled citizens." Additionally, several Town Hall contributors mentioned concerns for residents with disabilities, usually in the context of how to make outdoor recreation accessible so users with disabilities are easily and naturally included in family and friendship activities. It is recommended that the state continue to increase and/or improve access for residents with disabilities.

IMPLICATIONS: USER CONFLICTS

- **Foster collaboration and cooperation among user groups.**
  As discussed in Chapter 4, addressing user conflict is important for recreation providers to ensure that recreationists have high-quality outdoor experiences. User conflicts are the result of the interplay between several factors, including activity style, resources specificity, mode of experience, and lifestyle tolerance. An example of user conflict would be the tension between a quiet, fast mountain biker coming into contact on a blind curve with horses that can have an instinctive fear response. Conflict management should continue to be an explicit effort for recreation providers using the tools they already apply such as advisory groups, and resident participation. But the government sector cannot solve perceived user group conflicts on its own. It is especially important for user groups who perceive themselves as in direct conflict for access to the same recreation assets and funding resources to show initiative in solving this problem. In general, respondents to the SCORP Town Hall agreed that recreationists in Washington need to work cooperatively to accommodate recreation activities and maintain the facilities and opportunities provided by the state. Therefore, there is a willingness among users to work together for the benefit of the whole. The findings suggest that recreationists understand that all user groups stand to lose if infighting gets in the way of collective action in support of outdoor recreation. User groups should meet to work out how cooperative sharing can evolve across the array of recreation activities where there are perceived conflicts, perhaps beginning with collaboration among stakeholder groups

and the recreation industry to prepare and promote a program of best recreation-use practices (i.e., norms of behavior) their users can follow to improve inter-group relationships in the field.

- **Increase attention to footprint management.**
  As discussed in Chapter 4, there was interest among Town Hall contributors in zoning to address incompatible recreation activities and sequestering days to separate conflicting dual use (e.g., motorcycles on odd days, mountain bikers on even days) on the same trail. This is an important consideration, especially where speed-of-use and noise conflicts exist between motorized recreation and non-motorized recreation (e.g., ATVs versus mountain bikes) or even between wheeled recreation and non-wheeled recreation (e.g., mountain bikes versus hikers). Research has shown that this can work. In Washington, a study of user conflict between mountain bikers and other users explored the outcomes of a trial period in which mountain bikers were allowed access to the recreation site on odd-numbered calendar days. The study showed that recreationists "felt safe, had a high level of enjoyment, experienced positive interactions with other trail users, and favored the every-other-day policy over closing or opening the trail full time to mountain bikes."

IMPLICATIONS: ACCESS

- **Understand that access issues encompass an array of physical and psychological issues.**
  As discussed in Chapter 4, access involves the physical access issues, such as availability, accessibility, and accommodation, with which recreation providers are already familiar. However, access also involves psychological (or non-physical) issues as well: awareness and assumptions. Awareness pertains to information and knowledge—to recreationists' awareness of access options. Lack of knowledge of a place to recreate can be just as effective as an actual lack of places to recreate in preventing outdoor activities. Awareness also pertains to knowing where information can be found and how to use it. For example, hikers may not be aware of existing trails nearby or boaters may not know where boating access sites are located. Assumptions pertain to recreationists' perceptions about facilities and opportunities. These include prevalent ideas that opportunities are being threatened or other perceived barriers, regardless of whether they actually exist. It is important for recreation managers to understand the full array of these issues when addressing access to outdoor recreation.

- **Improve availability of outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities.**
  Facility-based or opportunity-based constraints were notably less important than social constraints among recreationists, but facility/opportunity constraints are ones over which providers may have some control. Important facility-based or opportunity-based constraints include not being aware of opportunities, travel distance, lack of access, and not knowing where to go. Level of Service data from local agencies and providers and Town Hall comments suggest that many Washington residents would like to see an increase in the number of outdoor recreation opportunities. This includes more opportunities to participate in different activities as well as additional physical locations and/or lands for participation.

- **Improve public knowledge regarding outdoor recreation opportunities.**
  While some of these access issues discussed in Chapter 4 include physical factors such as travel distance and lack of access, being aware of opportunities and not knowing where to go are psychological issues of access that need to be addressed (and which may alleviate some of the physical factors). Washington State Parks provides a useful interactive map for users to locate specific outdoor recreation opportunities. Similarly, the National Park Service provides information on outdoor recreation supported by the federal government. Federal, state, local, and tribal recreation providers should partner with non-governmental recreation providers to develop a "one stop" website for identifying outdoor recreation opportunities and locations in the state. However, it is not enough to develop such a resource, but it must also be promoted so that recreationists know where to go to find the most up-to-date information on outdoor recreation in Washington. It is important to note that promoting outdoor recreation opportunities is a challenge in Washington because the state's tourism department suffered budget cuts to the point of non-existence. As a result, recreation providers may need to consider creative methods for reaching the public, using partnerships with other agencies/organizations in the tourism industry, Chambers of Commerce, and local travel agencies.

- **Improve the ease with which users can obtain the necessary permits to ensure that they have legal access to the multiple jurisdictions that provide fee-based recreation access.**
  Chapter 4 reports that many Town Hall contributors expressed some level of willingness to pay for passes, as long as the fees that they pay provide broad access across the multiple providers in the state. For example, some contributors were frustrated that they paid a fee but that many recreation areas were still requiring them to purchase additional access passes or pay additional fees. Some Town Hall contributors were perplexed and frustrated by the many different kinds of access passes and fees associated with outdoor recreation. The difficulty of navigating their way through what they perceive as a maze of differing fee requirements that span the various federal, state, local, and tribal recreation providers was sometimes a deterrent to their outdoor recreation participation. Recreation providers should consider ways of improving the permitting and user pass approach to ensure that multiple jurisdictions recognize passes, permits, and user fees.

- **Increase recreation accessibility for the financially challenged.**
  In Chapter 4, Town Hall contributors pointed to the social inequity of requiring the public to pay a user fee. These recreationists noted the exclusivity of a fee being required to access State Parks that makes it difficult for lower-income families to afford recreation opportunities. These contributors advocated that outdoor recreation is a resource for all the public to enjoy, and access passes and fees make it difficult for poorer families to engage in recreation activities. As one Town Hall contributor stated, "The parks used to be the last place that families could go for free recreation." Though not one of the key underserved groups identified in Chapter 4, residents with a household income of less than $50,000 per year fall at or near the bottom of the participation ranking for the following activities: sightseeing; air activities (flying, parachuting, bungee jumping, etc.); and activities associated with indoor community facilities.

- **Provide resources and funding to improve access in the Seattle-King and Columbia Plateau regions.**
  The access criterion for local agencies and providers measures the percent of outdoor recreation facilities that may be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation. As shown in Chapter 5, the Level of Service identified a priority need for resources and funding to improve access to outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities in the Seattle-King and Columbia Plateau regions. Other regions in which access was identified as a priority need include the Peninsulas, the North Cascades, South Central, and the Palouse.

IMPLICATIONS: TECHNOLOGY AND OUTDOOR RECREATION

- **Increase the availability of new technology and experiences (e.g., wifi, zip lines) when it is complementary to the mission of the recreation site under question.**
  As discussed in Chapter 4, despite varied opinions on the issue, there was recognition among Town Hall contributors that the financial needs of recreation providers may necessitate increased technological opportunities. Opponents of technology concede that if new types of recreation and new technologies are allowed, they should support the mission of the recreation provider, especially at sites where recreation facilities and opportunities were designed with a specific purpose in mind. The controversy over new types of recreation and new technologies highlights the duality of recreation providers' mission. On the one hand, recreation providers have a responsibility to provide diverse recreation facilities and opportunities, while they are also expected to preserve natural, cultural, and historical resources, minimizing negative user impacts on these resources. Recreation providers should cautiously introduce technology at existing recreation sites and, when they do so, establish clear guidelines about that technology complementing the mission of the site.

IMPLICATIONS: WETLANDS

- **Increase priority of wetlands management as a recreation asset for providing wildlife habitat and for wildlife viewing.**
  Wetlands are important to the public and they enhance the outdoor recreation experience in Washington. Management should support the State's and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's existing priorities for wetlands protection. For recreation planning use a broad definition of what constitutes a wetland, one that matches the common vision held by users. For evaluation purposes use the Washington State Department of Ecology's wetlands rating system to identify wetland types that should receive priority for recreation acquisition. Preference should be given to projects that improve or, at least, do not downgrade a wetland's category or significantly affect the wetland functions provided while avoiding the implicit use of LWCF as a conservation grants program.

- **Ensure that wetlands recreation conforms to the sensitive nature of these habitats and to the distinctive values they provide.**
  Three questions were of particular interest for the SCORP:
  - What kinds of amenities and what kinds of wetlands should be considered for LWCF investments?
  - Does the ecological value of the wetlands in question matter?
  - Should projects receive lower scores for negative impacts to wetlands?

The State of Washington has identified wetlands as "critical habitat." In response, the state has developed a substantial regulatory process to ensure wetlands protection. The system adopted by the state ranks wetlands by rarity and sensitivity. Advice received from the Department of Fish and Wildlife is that, generally, "many or most Ecology Category 1 wetlands would not be where you would want to overlay more human access.... The wetlands that might be able to sustain additional recreational use are those [that are already] disturbed, such as reed canary grass dominated wetlands or wetlands isolated from the systems by existing diking (Category 3 Wetlands in the Ecology Ranking System, see Figure 6.1). It would also make sense for some increased but limited recreational access in degraded wetlands being restored...like boardwalks at Nisqually." Projects negatively impacting wetlands should receive lower scores using a scoring rubric that reflects logic such as this.

As part of the discussion of managing wetlands for recreation, the SCORP Advisory Group focused on the importance of recreation development that embodies a long-term commitment for visitor management, resources for consistent monitoring, and active management including the ability to close areas when necessary. In keeping with the sensitive nature of these habitats, the SCORP Advisory Group focused on the importance of environmental sustainability as an important consideration in the management of wetlands resources. Promoting the unique values that the wetlands environment provides, the SCORP Advisory Group also discussed the importance of managing the intersection of recreation and environmental stewardship goals by treating wetlands under an outdoor-recreation-saves-conservation concept—a sparse development approach that fosters public education, interest, and support for wetlands but, at the same time, protects conservation values through low-impact public use.

Although a few Town Hall contributors suggested having broader access to wetlands for sports like motorcycle and horse use, uses such as these carry a probability of physical impacts (tire tracking) and invasive plant impacts (seed dispersal in feces) in sensitive wetland habitats. A scoring process should be used to ensure that recreation activities that modify the wetland landscape or present secondary risks will do no harm. If a jurisdiction has an approved Shoreline Master Program that approval should, *a priori*, meet the preservation needs of wetlands management. The RCO should not add another layer of potential negative scoring in an RCO process. If a jurisdiction meets the requirements of other regulators of wetlands, these approvals should mark the project as an eligible candidate for use as conversion replacement.

The Town Hall contributors pointed out that wetlands offer the distinctive asset of being good venues for environmental education. These stakeholders want environmental education to be paired with wetland recreation access. The RCO should give preferential consideration to project proposals that provide this added value. Before modifying RCO's grant-making criteria, consultations between RCO and the Departments of Ecology and Fish and Wildlife should occur to bring these agencies into agreement on a vision for recreation investments in wetlands.

- **Increase the use of the "replacement" provision in federal statutes.**
  The LWCF program identifies wetlands as a suitable replacement for LWCF lands slated for conversion to other uses. As Chapter 6 suggests, it is recommended that the state increase the use of this replacement provision both for sustainability needs of wetlands and for recreation access. To this end, the state should establish that wetlands will be automatically eligible as conversion replacements with conditions ensuring protection of wetland values and consistency with the state's requirements for environmental

protection and mitigation. A wetland that is a candidate for conversion, however, should not be automatically approved. Rather, a candidate wetland should be entered into the agency's normal decision-making process in which the value of a conversion is weighed against competing values for agency resources. If there is a potential for recreational use in a wetland such use should be encouraged, subject to provisions for environmental protections appropriate for the differing classes of wetlands defined by the Department of Ecology. In addition, wetland recreation funding decisions should not automatically supplant the prioritization systems used by recreation providers for balancing among the choices for their expenditures.

- **Combine "appropriate" recreation access to wetlands with a mission broader than just providing recreation.**
  The number and diversity of plants and animals found in wetlands make them excellent places for active and passive recreation activities such as wildlife viewing, nature appreciation, camping, boating, fishing, nature study, hiking, photography, and hunting, as well as for teaching and research. However, access to wetlands for recreation access should also focus on the broader benefits of wetlands. For example, the SCORP Advisory Group and Town Hall contributors mentioned the educational value of wetlands recreation opportunities. Wetlands are ready-made classrooms for teaching environmental lessons, especially about wise water management. In addition to their educational value, the SCORP Advisory Group focused on the importance of wetlands in connecting people to nature and creating a sense of community in support of sensitive areas. Additionally, the SCORP Advisory Group supported using wetlands to increase interest in stewardship and environmental sustainability by promoting volunteerism and community commitment to preserving wetlands areas.

IMPLICATIONS: ECONOMIC AND FUNDING ISSUES

- **Explore alternatives for funding unmet capital facilities development and acquisition through a ballot initiative.**
  As Chapter 5 suggests, adequate funding for outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities as well as for maintenance of existing facilities is problematic: local providers were asked about their agency's funding goal for developing capital facilities for public outdoor recreation, and the mean percent of their responses regarding funding goals being met statewide is 27.1%. In a similar question, the mean percent of funding goals for acquiring land for public outdoor recreation being met statewide is just 24.4%.

  These findings reinforce the substantial and ongoing challenge of ensuring financial support for recreational facilities and open spaces, particularly during a period characterized by limited grant funding and renewed interest in austerity and budget-cutting. However, the effect of a state ballot initiative in support of funding for capital facility development and upkeep should be assessed. Although the state itself cannot initiate, develop, nor advocate for a ballot initiative, residents themselves have the opportunity to directly influence funding for outdoor recreation based on popular support throughout the state (Washington State, Secretary of State Website, 2013).

  The rate at which recent ballot initiatives pertaining to open spaces and outdoor recreation issues have been passed is highly encouraging: in the 2012 election, 46 of 57 statewide, municipal, and county ballot initiatives across the country concerning funding and support for conservation-related causes passed, an 81% passage rate. In total, these ballot initiatives allocated about $2 billion toward the health and availability of

parks, open spaces, and water quality, of which nearly $800 million was entirely new funding (Wildlife Management Institute, 2012).

Indeed, since 2000, municipalities and counties throughout Washington State alone have passed 18 ballot initiatives designating real estate transfer tax, property tax, or bond measure funding mechanisms for the support or creation of parks, facilities, and open spaces (The Trust for Public Land, 2013). Given continued support among Washington residents, such mechanisms could prove critical in the future for increasing the percentage of funding goals met for land acquisition and capital facility improvement throughout the state.

- **Increase the affordability of matching grant requirements.**
  As the SCORP Advisory Group discussed, grant matching requirements to apply for state-administered grants is increasingly difficult for local agencies to provide due to the significant reduction in funding resources during recent years. The consensus among the Advisory Group members was that the state needs to consider how to make matching grant requirements achievable for recreation providers. To this end, the SCORP Advisory Group recommended the first step for the state to undertake would be to review grant funding requirements, especially matching requirements, to determine if the current structure meets today's statewide needs. The Advisory Group did not identify a source of these funds.

- **Consider creating a grant category that allows jurisdictions to fund sanctioned volunteer work.**
  As discussed previously, Town Hall contributors were clear that they would like to see even more volunteer efforts brought to the maintenance of recreation assets in the state. Two main themes permeated these comments: put more volunteers on the ground and make it easier for volunteers to be involved. The state should consider creating a grant category for funding sanctioned volunteer work (e.g., a volunteer coordinator position) and the State Legislature should consider how the liability risks associated with increased volunteer use can be responsibly but more affordably managed.

IMPLICATIONS: LEVEL OF SERVICE

- **Continue with the Level of Service tool.**
  The SCORP shows the Level of Service to be a helpful evaluation tool that is standardized among government levels. The Level of Service tool was applied to recreation providers and offered both statewide and regional results on how well recreation providers are meeting the public's needs. In short, the findings suggest that the Level of Service is a valid tool to assist recreation providers in evaluating their services. The researchers recommend that the state educate recreation providers on the importance of providing information related to the Level of Service and that the state continue improvements to this measurement tool. While the Level of Service results were useful in this SCORP planning process, they should not be considered conclusive, especially at the regional level. As discussed in Chapter 5, one of the greatest challenges in applying the Level of Service tool was the response rate and lack of data provided among recreation providers. To most successfully apply the Level of Service tool, the state should work toward obtaining more complete data from providers.

- **Educate providers on the importance of the Level of Service and how to use it.**

The SCORP applied the Level of Service tool and found it to be helpful in determining areas of need among local and federal/state/nonprofit agencies and organizations. However, one of the major difficulties in assigning Level of Service scores is the lack of responses from providers. Two surveys of recreation provider surveys were administered for this study: (1) a survey of local recreation providers and (2) a survey of federal, state, and tribal governments and nonprofit recreation providers. As noted above, a more comprehensive assessment of supply could be obtained by encouraging more recreation providers to understand and apply the Level of Service tool. It is recommended that the state provide additional information and education on the significance of the Level of Service tool. The state should also offer additional information and education on how to *apply* the Level of Service tool to outdoor recreation planning.

- **Provide guidance to assist providers in acquiring the data they need to use the Level of Service tool.**
  Another challenge in implementing the Level of Service tool is that, even among recreation providers who responded to the survey, many agencies did not provide the necessary data for all the parts of the analysis. In addition to providing training on how to best use the Level of Service, it is important for the state to encourage providers to collect the data necessary to complete the Level of Service documents. The state should serve as a support for applying the Level of Service tool, offering additional information, education, and resources to recreation providers evaluating their recreation priorities through the Level of Service framework.

- **Have providers use the Level of Service.**
  As a requirement of fulfilling planning goals, it would be advisable to have recreation providers use the Level of Service tool as a standardized evaluation tool for determining planning outcomes, successes, and challenges. The researchers believe that the statewide Level of Service scores are representative of recreation providers; however, a larger sample size in each region will help to improve the representativeness of the Level of Service at the regional level. If the state can increase the response to the recreation provider survey, the researchers believe that the Level of Service findings will provide important, measurable needs and recreation priorities regionally.

- **Explore Level of Service successes to inform future planning.**
  Although factors influencing recreation in each region differ, it may be worth examining the recreation plans of those regions that did well in each category to identify any useful approaches or guidelines that could be potentially applied in other regions. Among local agencies and providers, two regions were well above the average score for the Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities criterion and received A's: the Southwest and Northeast. The Seattle-King area scored the highest (B) on Facility Capacity, which was the criterion with the lowest score statewide.

"I think people are hungry to reconnect with the natural world, especially people who live in urban environments (which is most of us). As an industrialized culture, we have so little connection to the earth and cosmos because of the way we live that we have lost amazing amounts of understanding of who we are and where we are. Only being in nature can remedy this disconnect."
—Washington Resident, Town Hall Contributor

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UNDER SEPARATE COVER

The research conducted for the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) was designed to assess current outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities and to project future needs for and challenges to the delivery of recreational opportunities. The SCORP study addresses key issues of importance to recreation planning and funding, including the benefits of outdoor recreation, recreation participation, constraints to recreation participation, recreation equity, land supply and use, protecting habitat while providing recreation opportunities, economic and funding issues, and technology. The SCORP planning process entailed a large-scale telephone survey of Washington residents, two web-based surveys of outdoor recreation providers, an advisory group of key stakeholders, and a community blog for the general public to provide qualitative input and comments. The study also examined outdoor recreation at the regional level for 10 SCORP planning regions. The recommendations of the *2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan* are based on several major reports, including a final report for the telephone survey of residents, a report on the findings from the provider surveys, a report on the Level of Service results, and a report on the Town Hall comments. These reports are accessible via hyperlinks below (click on the report title).

Results of General Population Survey in Support of the Development of the Washington State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. This survey was conducted for the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to determine resident participation in outdoor recreation in Washington, as well as residents' opinions on recreation facilities and opportunities. This survey is a component of the overall research being conducted in support of the Washington SCORP. Specifically, this report presents the results of a telephone survey of randomly selected residents of Washington State. The survey was conducted from August to October 2012. Responsive Management obtained a total of 3,114 completed interviews statewide.

Survey of Providers of Outdoor Recreation Conducted in Support of the Development of the Washington State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. This study was conducted for the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to help assess issues pertaining to providing outdoor recreation in the State of Washington. This study is a component of the overall research being conducted in support of the Washington SCORP. Specifically, this report presents the results of two separate web-based surveys of providers of outdoor recreation in Washington State: a survey of local recreation providers and a survey of federal and state government providers, tribal organizations, and nonprofit organizations (the latter survey for those working statewide or, at least, regionally, rather than strictly local). The purpose of the surveys of recreation providers is to provide detailed information on supply, capacity, and the demand met, as well as information about needs and challenges in providing outdoor recreation. The Local Provider Survey was conducted from July to October 2012. The Federal/State/Nonprofit Survey was conducted from August to October 2012. In total, Responsive Management obtained 213 completed questionnaires from providers, broken down as follows: 85 local providers and 128 state/federal/nonprofit providers.

Level of Service Scores Based on Surveys of Outdoor Recreation Providers as Part of the Development of the Washington State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. This evaluation of Washington State's outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities is guided by the Level of Service analysis. Note that the Level of Service is in the early stages of development and use. For this reason, many agencies do not yet have or collect the data necessary for all

the parts of the analysis. Nonetheless, the analysis was run on the limited data that the agencies were able to provide. This analysis has two parts: an analysis of local providers and an analysis of federal and state providers.

Results of the Public Input Received at the 2013 SCORP Town Hall Blog website. Part of the 2013 revision of Washington's SCORP was the use of an Internet blog website, named the SCORP Town Hall, to collect general public input. A blog (short for web log) is a discussion or informational web site consisting of discrete entries ('posts') displayed, in this case, in reverse chronological order and without the option for a give-and-take discussion between the contributors. The Town Hall was active from November 2012 through January 2013. Across that time the public was asked to respond to a series of seven questions posted at the site, with each question remaining active for approximately two weeks. To advertise the opportunity to contribute to the Town Hall, RCO distributed nearly 300 news releases to media centers across the state. The RCO asked about 30 partner organizations to post a notice about the Town Hall on their websites or in newsletters, and sent informational emails to the federally-recognized tribes. In addition, for each round of Town Hall questions, staff distributed emails to about 800 potential stakeholders; further, all previous Town Hall participants were notified of the new question and asked to invite others to comment on the new question. The Town Hall received 14,191 visits and 738 people provided 1,146 comments for this SCORP.

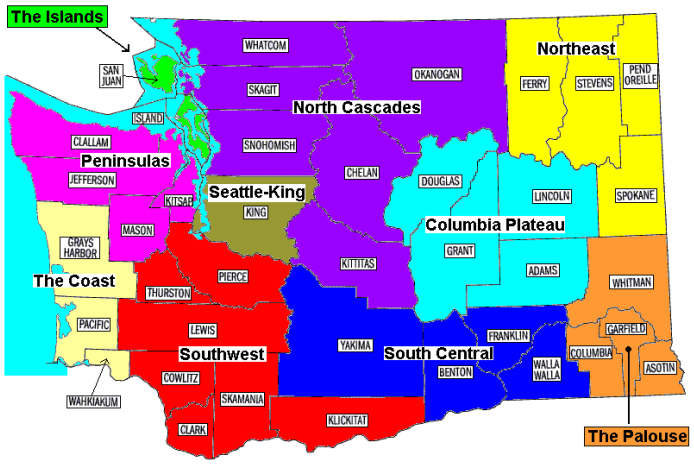
Washington State Trails Plan. [Source link available upon completion] Washington State's most recent trails plan was published in 1991. Since then, there has been increasing demand to use trails for a growing list of outdoor recreation, transportation, and other statewide and community needs. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) is working with Responsive Management, a nationally-recognized outdoor recreation and natural resource research firm, to update the state trails plan and set the stage for a comprehensive trails plan as part of the 2018 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The new trails plan is expected to be completed in July 2013, and a link to the report will be made available upon completion.

APPENDIX A: SCORP METHODOLOGY

The 2013 Washington SCORP is made up of several major components, including a scientific survey of randomly selected residents of Washington, a survey of outdoor recreation providers, and extensive input from both the SCORP Advisory Group as well as the general public. This appendix provides a discussion of the methodologies used to implement each of these components.

Some of the data from the various research components were broken down by the ten SCORP regions in Washington, shown in the map below.

Washington SCORP Regions



The Islands: Island and San Juan Counties
Peninsulas: Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap, and Mason Counties
The Coast: Grays Harbor, Pacific, and Wahkiakum Counties
North Cascades: Chelan, Kittitas, Okanogan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom Counties
Seattle-King: King County (including the City of Seattle)
Southwest: Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Lewis, Pierce, Skamania, and Thurston Counties
Northeast: Ferry, Pend Oreille, Spokane, and Stevens Counties
Columbia Plateau: Adams, Douglas, Grant, and Lincoln Counties
South Central: Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, and Yakima Counties
The Palouse: Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Whitman Counties

Note: Map was produced in color; may not be legible in black and white.

SURVEY OF RESIDENTS

To engage the public in the SCORP process, the researchers conducted a large-scale survey of Washington residents to assess participation in recreation, their future needs for recreation, their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities, their issues of concern, and any constraints they had in participating in outdoor recreation in Washington.

Use of Telephones for the Resident Survey

For the survey, telephones were selected as the preferred sampling medium because of the almost universal ownership of telephones among Washington residents (both landlines and cell phones were called). Additionally, telephone surveys, relative to mail or Internet surveys, allow for more scientific sampling and data collection, provide higher quality data, obtain higher response rates, are more timely, and are more cost-effective. Telephone surveys also have fewer negative effects on the environment than do mail surveys because of reduced use of paper and reduced energy consumption for delivering and returning the questionnaires.

Resident Survey Questionnaire Design
The survey questionnaire for residents was developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the RCO. Responsive Management conducted pre-tests of the questionnaire to ensure proper wording, flow, and logic in the survey.

Resident Survey Sample
The sample of randomly selected Washington residents was obtained from Survey Sampling International and DatabaseUSA, firms that specialize in providing scientifically valid telephone samples; the sample included landlines and cell phones, with cell phones sampled in the same proportion that they are owned in the state. The sample was obtained to provide a set amount of completed interviews in each of the ten SCORP regions in Washington. For overall results, the regions were weighted so that the sample was representative of all residents of the state.

Telephone Interviewing Facilities
A central polling site at the Responsive Management office allowed for rigorous quality control over the interviews and data collection. Responsive Management maintains its own in-house telephone interviewing facilities. These facilities are staffed by interviewers with experience conducting computer-assisted telephone interviews on the subjects of outdoor recreation and natural resources.

To ensure the integrity of the telephone survey data, Responsive Management has interviewers who have been trained according to the standards established by the Council of American Survey Research Organizations. Methods of instruction included lecture and role-playing. The Survey Center Managers and other professional staff conducted a project briefing with the interviewers prior to the administration of this survey. Interviewers were instructed on type of study, study goals and objectives, handling of survey questions, interview length, termination points and qualifiers for participation, interviewer instructions within the survey questionnaire, reading of the survey questions, skip patterns, and probing and clarifying techniques necessary for specific questions on the survey questionnaire.

Interviewing Dates and Times
Telephone surveying times were Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Saturday from noon to 5:00 p.m., and Sunday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., Pacific time. A five-callback design was used to maintain the representativeness of the sample, to avoid bias toward people easy to reach by telephone, and to provide an equal opportunity for all to participate. When a respondent could not be reached on the first call, subsequent calls were placed on different days of the week and at different times of the day. The resident survey was conducted from August to October 2012.

Telephone Survey Data Collection and Quality Control
The software used for data collection was Questionnaire Programming Language (QPL). The survey data were entered into the computer as each interview was being conducted, eliminating manual data entry after the completion of the survey and the concomitant data entry errors that may occur with manual data entry. The survey questionnaire was programmed so that QPL branched, coded, and substituted phrases in the survey based on previous responses to ensure the integrity and consistency of the data collection.

The Survey Center Managers and statisticians monitored the data collection, including monitoring of the actual telephone interviews without the interviewers' knowledge, to evaluate the performance of each interviewer and ensure the integrity of the data. The survey questionnaire itself contained error checkers and computation statements to ensure quality and

consistent data. After the surveys were obtained by the interviewers, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians checked each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness. Responsive Management obtained a total of 3,114 completed interviews statewide, broken down as shown in the tabulation that follows.

Region	**Number of Completed Interviews**
The Islands	310
Peninsulas	312
The Coast	314
North Cascades	310
Seattle-King	308
Southwest	318
Northeast	313
Columbia Plateau	313
South Central	307
The Palouse	309
STATEWIDE	3,114

Resident Data Analysis

The analysis of data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management. Within each region, the results were weighted by demographic characteristics so that the sample was representative of residents of that region. For statewide results, each region was weighted to be in proper proportion to the state population as a whole.

Resident Survey Sampling Error

Findings of the telephone survey are reported at a 95% confidence interval for the statewide results. For the entire sample of Washington residents statewide, the sampling error is at most plus or minus 1.76 percentage points. This means that if the survey were conducted 100 times on different samples that were selected in the same way, the findings of 95 out of the 100 surveys would fall within plus or minus 1.76 percentage points of each other. Sampling error was calculated using the formula described on the next page, with a sample size of 3,114 and a population size of 5,143,186 Washington residents 18 years old and older.

Sampling Error Equation

$$B = \left(\sqrt{\frac{\frac{N_p(.25)}{N_s} - .25}{N_p - 1}} \right)(1.96)$$

Where: B = maximum sampling error (as decimal)
N_P = population size (i.e., total number who could be surveyed)
N_S = sample size (i.e., total number of respondents surveyed)

Derived from formula: p. 206 in Dillman, D. A. 2000. *Mail and Internet Surveys*. John Wiley & Sons, NY.

Note: This is a simplified version of the formula that calculates the maximum sampling error using a 50:50 split (the most conservative calculation because a 50:50 split would give maximum variation).

SURVEYS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION PROVIDERS

To obtain information about recreation supply at statewide and regional levels, the researchers conducted two separate web-based surveys of providers of outdoor recreation in Washington: a survey of local recreation providers and a survey of federal and state government providers, tribal governments, and nonprofit organizations (the latter survey for those working statewide or, at least, regionally, rather than strictly local). The purpose of the surveys of recreation providers was to provide detailed information on supply, capacity, and the demand met, as well as information about needs and challenges in providing outdoor recreation.

Use of the Web for the Provider Surveys

To reach providers of outdoor recreation, web-based surveys were selected as the preferred sampling medium. Appropriately designed web-based surveys are methods of public opinion polling where a known group of potential respondents are invited to participate in completing a web-based survey, and their responses are submitted electronically by means of the Internet. Web-based surveys are an excellent survey method to use when the sample consists of *known* respondents with Web access, as is the case in these surveys of recreation providers. In the sample for these surveys, all potential respondents had guaranteed Internet access through their workplace. In addition, web-based surveys allow the respondent to complete the survey at a time (and often, place) most convenient to him or her.

Provider Survey Questionnaire Design

The provider survey questionnaires were developed cooperatively by Responsive Management and the RCO. Responsive Management conducted pre-tests of the questionnaires to ensure proper wording, flow, and logic.

Provider Survey Sample

The sample of providers of outdoor recreation in Washington State was obtained through cooperation with the RCO; additional research was conducted by Responsive Management to supplement the sample provided by the RCO.

The sample consisted of the following:

- Park department directors and other administrative personnel (those with project management or park management responsibilities).
- Directors and project managers of districts, such as public utility districts or irrigation districts.
- Federal and state agency personnel (those with project management, park management, or administrative responsibilities).
- Tribal representatives.
- Nonprofit organization administrators (nonprofits concerned with outdoor recreation and natural resources).

Survey Facilities

As with the resident survey, a central polling and data collection site at the Responsive Management office allowed for rigorous quality control over the surveys and data collection.

Survey Dates And Times

An advantage of a web-based survey is that respondents can complete the survey at a time most convenient to them. Nonetheless, staff members from Responsive Management were on call during the day, and via return email or telephone call (if a question arose during the evening or night), to assist respondents with any problems or questions they had with the survey.

To ensure a good response rate, Responsive Management used a multiple-contact strategy to conduct the web-based surveys, sending an initial email invitation to potential respondents to inform them of the survey and to encourage their participation. The invitation included information about the survey and an Internet link to the survey site. Shortly after distributing the initial email, a trained, professional interviewer contacted each respondent to confirm that he or she received the email and to encourage completion of the survey. The interviewer also maintained a log of contacts, which was updated daily with new information to ensure that the appropriate individuals were being re-contacted to complete the survey.

After two weeks, Responsive Management sent a second invitational email to all those who had not yet completed the survey to serve as a reminder and encourage their participation. The second email message was personalized (i.e., sent to specific, named people), and it provided an invitation to participate and the Internet link to the survey. In the week following the second email, a professional interviewer contacted each person who received the second email, confirmed receipt of the email, and encouraged them to complete the survey. Additionally in the second email, a specific deadline was given for survey completion, and the reminder highlighted the timeliness and importance of responding before the deadline. The contact log was updated after this second round of emails and reminder calls to track non-respondents to be targeted for further outreach. Finally, a third email was sent to all non-respondents as a final reminder to complete the survey, followed by a personal telephone call by a professional interviewer. Throughout the project, survey responses and contacts with respondents were recorded in the contact log to ensure that all non-respondents received several notifications and personal telephone calls to encourage survey completion.

After the surveys were obtained, the Survey Center Managers and/or statisticians checked each completed survey to ensure clarity and completeness. The Local Provider Survey was conducted from July to October 2012. The Federal/State/Nonprofit Survey was conducted from August to October 2012. In total, Responsive Management obtained 213 completed questionnaires from providers, broken down as follows: 85 local providers and 128 state/federal/nonprofit providers.

Provider Data Analysis

As with the resident survey, the analysis of provider survey data was performed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences as well as proprietary software developed by Responsive Management.

Assessment of Wetlands

The National Park Service is interested in enhancing the wetlands component of the SCORP to address whether and how sites with wetlands should be prioritized for Land and Water Conservation Fund grants. The process for creating the SCORP wetlands component entailed collecting data concerning wetlands through the provider and the general population surveys, documenting the SCORP Advisory Group's recommendations, using the SCORP Town Hall to collect opinions from the general public, conducting a review of statutory obligations, and directly consulting with wetlands managers in the Washington State Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Ecology and in the Region 1 Portland Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

INPUT FROM SCORP ADVISORY GROUP

A SCORP Advisory Group of 24 individuals knowledgeable about Washington recreation issues provided guidance on the development of the SCORP. These advisors represented a broad array of recreation users and providers with a diverse geographical distribution throughout the state. Advisors included members of five RCO standing advisory committees, including the

Land and Water Conservation Fund Advisory Committee, the Boating Programs Advisory Committee, the Firearms and Archery Range Recreation Advisory Committee, the Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program Advisory Committee, and the Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account Advisory Committee. Members of the SCORP Advisory Group are shown in the table below.

Membership of the SCORP Advisory Group	
Name	**Organization**
Rebecca Andrist	Washington Resident
Joseph Bee	Washington Resident
Leslie Betlach	City of Renton Parks and Recreation
Mike Blankenship	Washington Resident
Justin Bush	Skamania County
Sharon Claussen	King County Parks and Recreation
Kurt Dahmen	City of Pullman Parks and Recreation
Dave Erickson	City of Wenatchee
Nikki Fields	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
Nicole Hill	Nisqually Land Trust
Tana Inglima	Port of Kennewick
Mike Kaputa	Chelan County Natural Resources Department
Jon Knechtel	Pacific Northwest Trail Association
Kathy Kravit-Smith	Pierce County Parks and Recreation
Marilyn LaCelle	Washington Resident
Mark Levensky	Washington Resident
Michael O'Malley	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Bryan Phillippe	Evergreen Mountain Bike Alliance
Anna Scarlett	Washington Resident
Paul Simmons	City of Cheney Parks and Recreation
Dave Smith	Washington Resident
Pene Speaks	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Paul Whitemarsh	Washington Resident
Dona Wuthnow	San Juan County Parks

The Advisory Group was engaged through three in-person meetings held in March and November 2012 and again in March 2013, during which the Group discussed the planning approach, reviewed the survey data, and identified key issues relevant to the development of recommendations for the RCO. Additionally, the Advisory Group held continuous meetings using the SCORP Advisory Group Forum, a moderated online discussion tool. The online Forum allowed members to continue developing study recommendations; these findings are presented in Chapter 4.

INPUT THROUGH PUBLIC TOWN HALL WEBSITE

The general public was invited to provide input on specific SCORP topics via an Internet blog website designated the SCORP Town Hall. The Town Hall was regularly updated with questions on recreation and was active from November 2012 through January 2013.

To communicate the availability of the SCORP Town Hall, RCO distributed nearly 300 news releases to media centers across Washington. Additionally, about 30 partner organizations were contacted with a request to post a notice about the SCORP Town Hall on their websites or in member newsletters. RCO staff also sent informational emails to federally recognized tribes. For each round of Town Hall questioning, RCO staff distributed informational emails to about 800 stakeholders; additionally, all previous Town Hall participants were contacted each time new questions were posted to the Town Hall website. It should be noted that while most Town Hall participants did not distinguish SCORP issues from the general mission of the RCO, their comments helped to qualitatively identify issues relevant to the overall SCORP research (e.g., competition for recreational resources, support for sustainability, interest in volunteerism). The results from the Town Hall input are summarized in Chapter 4.

APPENDIX B: PARTICIPATION RATES IN ALL OF THE ACTIVITIES

The tabulation in this appendix shows the major activity categories (bolded) and the constituent activities that make up that category. The indentation shows where an activity is a subset of the main category or of another activity. For instance, “Visiting a nature interpretive center” is a subset of the large category of “Nature Activities”; within “Visiting a nature interpretive center” are two subsets: “Interpretive center—individual, family, or informal group” and “Interpretive center—organized club, group, or school.”

Participation Rates in All of the Activities

Activity	Percent of Residents in Washington State Participating in the Activity
Sightseeing	56.8
Sightseeing—public facility	23.7
Sightseeing—cultural or historical facility	25.3
Sightseeing—scenic area	47.7
Nature Activities	81.4
Visiting nature interpretive center	29.2
Interpretive center—individual, family, informal group	26.1
Interpretive center—organized club, group, or school	3.3
Wildlife viewing/photographing	59.0
Wildlife viewing/photographing—plants	9.1
Wildlife viewing/photographing—birds	34.1
Wildlife viewing/photographing—land animals	40.4
Wildlife viewing/photographing—marine life	6.4
Gathering/collecting things in nature setting	27.2
Gathering/collecting—berries or mushrooms	14.9
Gathering/collecting—shells, rocks, or vegetation	18.4
Gathering/collecting—firewood	6.7
Gathering/collecting—Christmas tree	4.2
Gardening, flowers or vegetables	56.7
Gardening, flowers or vegetables—community garden/pea patch	2.3
Gardening, flowers or vegetables—yard/home	55.5
Fishing or Shellfishing	34.1
Fishing for shellfish	11.3
Fishing for finfish	27.1
Fishing—total freshwater	26.3
Fishing—total saltwater	15.6
Fishing from bank, dock, or jetty—saltwater	7.4
Fishing from bank, dock, or jetty—freshwater	17.3
Fishing from private boat	18.5
Fishing from private boat—saltwater	9.2
Fishing from private boat—freshwater	13.0
Fishing with guide or charter	3.1
Fishing with guide or charter—saltwater	1.7
Fishing with guide or charter—freshwater	1.8
Picnicking, BBQing, or Cooking Out	80.9
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out—site specifically designated	43.2
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out—location not specifically designated	6.3
Picnicking, BBQing, or cooking out—group facility	26.6

Water-Related Activities	75.2
Beachcombing	32.6
Beachcombing—saltwater	28.2
Beachcombing—freshwater	11.4
Swimming or wading at beach	38.8
Swimming or wading at beach—saltwater	27.7
Swimming or wading at beach—freshwater	17.4
Surfboarding	2.1
Wind surfing	1.0
Wind surfing—saltwater	0.4
Wind surfing—freshwater	0.7
Inner tubing or floating	17.1
Boating—any boating	35.6
Boating—any boating—saltwater	13.5
Boating—any boating—freshwater	29.0
Boating—whitewater rafting	2.8
Boating—general, except whitewater rafting	32.8
Boating—canoeing, kayaking, rowing, manual craft	11.1
Boating—canoeing, kayaking, rowing, manual craft—saltwater	3.7
Boating—canoeing, kayaking, rowing, manual craft—freshwater	9.0
Boating—sail boating	3.5
Boating—sail boating—saltwater	2.1
Boating—sail boating—freshwater	1.9
Boating—sail boating—less than 26 feet	1.6
Boating—sail boating—26 feet or more	1.8
Boating—using personal watercraft	5.2
Boating—using personal watercraft—saltwater	1.0
Boating—using personal watercraft—freshwater	4.7
Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft	24.8
Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft—saltwater	9.3
Boating—motorboating other than personal watercraft—freshwater	21.3
Boating—motorboating—less than 26 feet	20.0
Boating—motorboating—26 feet or more	4.5
Boating—using a charter service or guide	1.8
Boating—using a marina	7.7
Boating—using public transient moorage facilities	2.3
Boating—using a boat ramp	22.5
Water skiing	7.4
Water skiing—saltwater	1.3
Water skiing—freshwater	6.8
Scuba or skin diving	1.6
Scuba or skin diving—saltwater	1.2
Scuba or skin diving—freshwater	0.7
Snorkeling	3.7
Snorkeling—saltwater	1.9
Snorkeling—freshwater	1.9
Using a splash park	8.1
Using a spray park	6.4
Snow and Ice Activities	31.3
Snowshoeing	6.7
Sledding, inner tubing, or other snow play	15.5
Snowboarding	7.1
Snowboarding—downhill facility	6.5

Snowboarding—location not specifically designated	1.1
Skiing, downhill	10.4
Skiing, cross country	4.5
Snowmobiling	2.7
ATV riding on snow or ice	2.4
Ice skating	3.3
Ice skating—outdoors	1.7
Ice skating—indoors	2.0
Ice hockey	0.5
Ice hockey—outdoors	0.1
Ice hockey—indoors	0.3
Air Activities	3.8
Bungee jumping	0.6
Paragliding or hang gliding	0.2
Hot air ballooning	0.2
Sky diving/parachuting from plane/glider	0.8
Base jumping	0.0
Flying gliders, ultralights, or other aircraft	1.5
Taking chartered sightseeing flight	0.2
Walking, Hiking, Climbing, Mountaineering	90.0
Walking with a pet	51.6
Walking with a pet—on leash in park	25.1
Walking with a pet—off leash in dog park	11.5
Walking with a pet—location not specifically designated	21.3
Walking without a pet	71.3
Walking without a pet—sidewalks	38.7
Walking without a pet—roads or streets	39.5
Walking without a pet—park or trail setting	35.3
Walking without a pet—outdoor track	2.9
Walking without a pet—indoor facility	0.9
Hiking	53.9
Hiking—trails	51.0
Hiking—urban trails	17.5
Hiking—rural trails	18.5
Hiking—mountain or forest trails	36.4
Hiking—off trail	10.9
Climbing or mountaineering	10.0
Climbing or mountaineering—alpine areas/snow or ice	3.6
Climbing or mountaineering—rock climbing indoors	1.9
Climbing or mountaineering—rock climbing outdoors	4.6
Bicycle Riding	36.9
Bicycle riding—roads or streets	26.6
Bicycle riding—trails	24.4
Bicycle riding—urban trails	17.3
Bicycle riding—rural trails	10.8
Bicycle riding—mountain or forest trails	8.0
Bicycle riding—no established trails	6.9
Bicycle riding—racing/on race course	0.9
Bicycle riding—velodrome	0.5
Bicycle riding—BMX	0.6
Bicycle touring	2.6
Bicycle touring—day trip	2.3
Bicycle touring—overnight trip	0.7

Horseback Riding	7.7
Horseback riding—stables or grounds	2.8
Horseback riding—roads or streets	1.3
Horseback riding—trails	3.9
Horseback riding—urban trails	0.5
Horseback riding—rural trails	2.3
Horseback riding—mountain or forest trails	2.7
Horseback riding—no established trails	2.7
Off-Roading for Recreation	15.3
Off-roading—motorcycle	4.2
Off-roading—motorcycle—off-road facility	0.9
Off-roading—motorcycle—roads or streets	2.0
Off-roading—motorcycle—trails	2.7
Off-roading—motorcycle—urban trails	0.9
Off-roading—motorcycle—rural trails	1.4
Off-roading—motorcycle—mountain or forest trails	1.8
Off-roading—motorcycle—no established trails	1.7
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy	7.3
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy—off-road facility	1.5
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy—roads or streets	1.8
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy—trails	5.2
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy—urban trails	1.4
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy—rural trails	2.3
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy—mountain or forest trails	4.0
Off-roading—ATV/dune buggy—no established trails	2.8
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle	9.5
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle—off-road facility	1.7
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle—roads or streets	1.8
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle—trails	6.6
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle—urban trails	1.4
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle—rural trails	3.0
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle—mountain or forest trails	4.0
Off-roading—4-wheel drive vehicle—no established trails	2.5
Camping	42.4
Camping—with a kayak/canoe	2.4
Camping—with a kayak/canoe—site specifically designated	1.2
Camping—with a kayak/canoe—location not specifically designated	1.4
Camping—in a boat	2.4
Camping—in a boat—on open water	0.6
Camping—in a boat—state park or site specifically designated	1.3
Camping—in a boat—location not specifically designated	0.8
Camping—in a boat—in a marina	0.7
Camping—with a bicycle	1.2
Camping—with a bicycle—campground	1.1
Camping—with a bicycle—location not specifically designated	0.4
Camping—backpacking/primitive location	8.3
Camping—backpacking/primitive location—self-carry packs	7.7
Camping—backpacking/primitive location—pack animals	0.3
Camping—tent camping with car/motorcycle	26.5
Camping—tent w/ car/motorcycle—campground	21.2
Camping—tent w/ car/motorcycle—location not specifically designated	7.9
Camping—RV camping	14.2
Camping—RV camping—campground	11.2

Camping—RV camping—location not specifically designated	4.7
Hunting or Shooting	21.4
Hunting	9.4
Hunting—archery equipment	2.2
Hunting—firearms	8.5
Hunting—modern firearms	8.0
Hunting—rifle	6.2
Hunting—shotgun	4.1
Hunting—handgun	1.0
Hunting—blackpowder firearms	1.2
Hunting—blackpowder rifle	1.2
Hunting—blackpowder shotgun	0.3
Hunting—blackpowder handgun	0.3
Hunting—big game	8.0
Hunting—birds or small game	4.8
Hunting—waterfowl	1.9
Shooting	17.4
Shooting—archery equipment	3.6
Shooting—modern firearms	15.7
Shooting—rifle	11.4
Shooting—shotgun	8.4
Shooting—handgun	10.9
Shooting—blackpowder firearms	2.5
Shooting—blackpowder rifle	2.4
Shooting—blackpowder shotgun	1.0
Shooting—blackpowder handgun	1.5
Target shooting	15.3
Trap shooting	4.6
Skeet	4.0
Sporting clays	3.5
Other target or clay sports	1.7
Recreational Activities	82.7
Playground use	36.9
Playground use—park facility	30.0
Playground use—school facility	13.8
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights	37.8
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights—at a facility	26.4
Aerobics or fitness activities, but not weights—not at home	30.1
Weight conditioning	27.6
Weight conditioning—at a facility	20.6
Weight conditioning—not at home	20.9
Jogging or running	36.2
Jogging or running—streets or sidewalks	23.2
Jogging or running—trails	17.2
Jogging or running—urban trails	11.4
Jogging or running—rural trails	7.8
Jogging or running—mountain or forest trails	4.9
Jogging or running—outdoor track	2.7
Jogging or running—indoor track	2.2
Swimming (all, except at beach)	51.6
Swimming in pool	38.2
Swimming in pool—outdoors	18.1
Swimming in pool—indoors	24.2

Swimming in natural waters	35.7
Roller or inline skating	4.7
Roller or inline skating—roads, sidewalks, other places	0.3
Roller or inline skating—trail at outdoor facility	1.8
Roller or inline skating—indoor facility	2.2
Skateboarding	2.9
Skateboarding—roads, sidewalks, places not specifically designated	1.1
Skateboarding—trail	0.6
Skateboarding—skate park or court	2.4
Badminton	6.0
Badminton—outdoor facility	2.2
Badminton—indoor facility	0.8
Handball, racquetball, or squash	4.2
Handball, racquetball, or squash—outdoor facility	0.4
Handball, racquetball, or squash—indoor facility	3.5
Volleyball	10.3
Volleyball—outdoor facility	5.8
Volleyball—indoor facility	3.3
Basketball	16.8
Basketball—outdoor facility	9.1
Basketball—indoor facility	7.8
Tennis	10.1
Tennis—outdoor facility	9.1
Tennis—indoor facility	2.2
Field sports	11.0
Football	5.3
Rugby	0.2
Lacrosse	0.4
Soccer	7.0
Soccer—outdoors	6.2
Soccer—indoors	0.7
Baseball	5.4
Softball	7.8
Golf	15.5
Golf—driving range	5.1
Golf—pitch-n-putt	1.6
Golf—9- or 18-hole course	13.3
Indoor Community Facilities	28.4
Activity center	5.5
Arts and crafts class or activity	3.5
Class or instruction	7.4
Social event	14.8
Frisbee Activities	16.8
Frisbee—disc golf (also called frisbee golf)	4.5
Frisbee—ultimate frisbee or frisbee football	3.0

APPENDIX C: LEVEL OF SERVICE RESULTS

This appendix discusses the analysis and results obtained trough the application of the Level of Service (LOS) tool. Please see Chapter 5 for a discussion of the challenges and limitations of the LOS.

FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS
Because the LOS tool has one set of indicators for federal and state agencies and another set for local agencies, the survey of providers was separated into two separate, but very similar, questionnaires, one for federal and state agencies and nonprofit organizations, and the second questionnaire for local governments. For additional information regarding the specific criteria assessed, please visit RCO *Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines*, which is available online at http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual_2.pdf.

The results regarding federal and state agencies are shown in Table C.1, and a discussion of the results follows.

Table C.1: LOS Criteria and Grades.

Criterion for Federal, State, Tribal, and Nonprofit Providers	Mean	Grade
Biennial average percent of organization's unmet capital facility development goals for public outdoor recreation	52%	D
Percent of public park and/or recreation sites managed by organization that are fully functional	81%	A
Percent of organization's visitor population satisfied with existing park and outdoor recreation facilities/experiences/opportunities	87%	A
Percent of public park and/or recreation sites managed by organization that provide sustainable outdoor recreation opportunities	83%	A

Quantity Criterion: Capital Facility Development (Statewide Level)
The federal and state LOS has a single Quantity criterion: *Capital Facility Development*. The LOS Capital Facility Development score is determined by the percent of capital facility development goals that are unmet (measured biennially), which can be measured using investment goals, project goals, or other quantifiable plan goals related to redevelopment, renovation, restoration, and other areas of development. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages, is a D (Table C.1).

Quality Criteria (Statewide Level)
The federal and state LOS has two Quality criteria: agency-based assessment of facility functionality, and public satisfaction with facilities and opportunities.

Agency-Based Assessment: The *Agency-Based Assessment* criterion measures the percent of facilities that are fully functional for their specific design and safety guidelines. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages, is an A (Table C.1).

Public Satisfaction: The *Public Satisfaction* criterion measures the percent of visitor population satisfied with existing park and outdoor recreation facilities, experiences, and opportunities. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages, is an A (Table C.1).

Access Criterion: Sustainable Access (Statewide Level)

The single Access criterion for federal and state agencies is *Sustainable Access*. This criterion measures the percent of access/recreation areas/facilities that provide sustainable recreation opportunities. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages, is an A (Table C.1).

LOCAL AGENCIES

The local providers LOS has a similar structure as the federal/state/nonprofit LOS, with recreation measurements and grades for quantity, quality, and access. Additionally, the local LOS looks at the ten SCORP regions separately. The local provider results are shown in Tables C.2 and C.3, and a discussion of those results follows.

Table C.2: LOS Criteria and Grades.

Criterion for Local Providers	Mean	Grade
Percent of unmet demand for the number of parks and recreation facilities	22%	C
Percent of facilities that support active recreation	54%	B
Percent of demand met by all existing facilities	44%	D
Percent of facilities that are fully functional	73%	B
Percent satisfied with park and recreation facilities	63%	B
Percent within agency's service area who live a specific distance from recreation sites	69%	B
Percent who can access recreation areas safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation	73%	B

Table C.3: LOS Criteria and Grades for Each SCORP Region (Local Providers).

		Islands	Peninsulas	The Coast	North Cascades	Seattle-King	Southwest	Northeast	Columbia Plateau	South Central	The Palouse
Percent of unmet demand for the number of parks and recreation facilities	Mean	NA	24%	NA	23%	34%	4%	0%	33%	28%	30%
	Grade	NA	C	NA	C	D	A	A	D	C	C
Percent of facilities that support active recreation	Mean	69%	45%	45%	63%	47%	50%	55%	44%	66%	56%
	Grade	A	C	C	A	C	C	B	C	A	B
Percent of demand met by all existing facilities	Mean	37%	41%	40%	60%	66%	52%	46%	26%	35%	37%
	Grade	D	D	D	C	B	C	C	E	D	D
Percent of facilities that are fully functional	Mean	100%	74%	72%	89%	83%	66%	66%	71%	62%	47%
	Grade	A	B	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	C
Percent satisfied with park and recreation facilities' condition	Mean	80%	66%	57%	71%	66%	74%	76%	63%	61%	80%
Percent satisfied with park and recreation facilities' quantity	Mean	55%	54%	47%	66%	64%	73%	80%	43%	61%	66%
Percent satisfied with park and recreation facilities' distribution	Mean	49%	60%	53%	65%	62%	67%	78%	40%	62%	62%
Percent satisfied with park/ rec. facilities (mean of the three means: condition, quantity, and distribution)	Mean of the means	61%	60%	52%	68%	64%	72%	78%	48%	61%	69%
	Grade	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	C	B	A
Percent of residents within agency's service area who live 0.5 mile of neighborhood park	Mean	55%	30%	37%	40%	55%	45%	50%	40%	53%	43%
Percent of residents within agency's service area who live 5 miles of community park	Mean	85%	45%	75%	72%	82%	73%	85%	63%	63%	89%
Percent of residents within agency's service area who live 25 miles of regional	Mean	100%	82%	87%	95%	93.%	96%	94%	76%	78%	87%

park											
Percent of residents within agency's service area who live a specific distance from recreation sites	Mean of the means	80%	53%	66%	69%	77%	72%	76%	60%	64%	73%
	Grade	A	C	B	B	A	B	A	C	B	B
Percent who can access recreation areas safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation	Mean	70%	82%	65%	79%	73%	76%	93%	63%	81%	50%
	Grade	B	A	B	B	B	B	A	B	A	C

Quantity Criteria (Local Level)
The local LOS has three Quality criteria: number of outdoor recreation facilities, active recreation goals, and facility capacity goals.

Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities: The Quantity criterion for the *Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities* for local agencies and providers measures the percent difference between the existing quantity or per capita average of outdoor recreation facilities and the desired quantity or per capita average of outdoor recreation facilities. It is important to note that many of the providers do not have goals that can be measured using the method indicated in the LOS tools and guide or could not state how much of each goal was currently being met. Some of the regions used for analysis did not provide any data for this criterion. Of the responses provided, regions most commonly scored a C, and the statewide grade is a C. Two regions, the Southwest and Northeast, scored an A (Tables C.2 and C.3).

Facilities That Support Active Recreation Opportunities: The *Active Recreation* criterion for local agencies and providers measures the percent of facilities that support or encourage active recreational opportunities. For the purposes of the LOS and SCORP, "active" recreation refers to muscle-powered recreation. Examples of active recreation include walking, jogging, field sports, court sports, paddling, bicycling, hiking, and swimming. The statewide grade, based on the mean of the regional means of all reported percentages, is a B (Table C.2). All ten regions scored a C or higher, based on the mean of all reported percentages by region. Three of these regions received an A (Islands, North Cascades, and South Central), and two received a B (Northeast and the Palouse) (Table C.3).

Facility Capacity: The *Facility Capacity* criterion for local agencies and providers measures the percent of demand met by existing facilities. The statewide grade, based on the mean of the regional means of all reported percentages, is a D (Table C.2). Grades across the regions for Facility Capacity, based on percentages provided by local agencies and providers for 45 different types of facilities, were mostly C's and D's . The Seattle-King region scored a B, which was the highest regional grade for this criterion. The Columbia Plateau region scored notably lower with an E (Table C.3).

Quality Criteria (Local Level)
Similar to the LOS for the statewide level, the local LOS measures quality using both agency-based assessments and public satisfaction data.

Agency-Based Assessment: The *Agency-Based Assessment* criterion measures the percent of facilities that are fully functional for their specific design and safety guidelines. The statewide grade, based on the mean of the regional means of all reported percentages, is a B (Table C.2). Grades across the regions for the Agency-Based Assessment criterion, based on the mean of all reported percentages by region, were mostly A's and B's . The three regions that received A's are Islands, North Cascades, and Seattle-King (Table C.3).

Public Satisfaction: The *Public Satisfaction* criterion measures the percent of the population satisfied with existing park and recreation facilities. Local agencies and providers were asked to indicate the estimated level of satisfaction for three factors individually: condition, quantity, and distribution of facilities. The statewide grade, based on the mean of the regional means of all reported percentages, is a B (Table C.2). Local agency and provider estimates of the population's satisfaction levels resulted in mostly A and B grades across the region, based on the mean of the means of estimates for each factor measured by the criterion (i.e., condition, quantity, and distribution) by region (Table C.3).

Distribution and Access Criteria (Local Level)
Distribution and Access criteria include assessment of the population within a service area and of the percent of outdoor recreation facilities that may be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation.

Population Within Service Areas: The *Population Within Service Areas* criterion for local agencies and providers measures the percent of the population within the following service areas: 0.5 mile of a neighborhood park/trail, 5 miles of a community park/trail, and 25 miles of a regional park/trail. Local agencies and providers were asked to indicate the percent of the population within each of these service areas. The statewide grade, based on the mean of the regional means of all reported percentages, is a B (Table C.2). Local agency and provider responses resulted in mostly A and B grades across the region, based on the mean of the means of percentages for each service area (i.e., 0.5 mile of a neighborhood park/trail, 5 miles of a community park/trail, and 25 miles of a regional park/trail) by region (Table C.3).

Access: The *Access* criterion for local agencies and providers measures the percent of outdoor recreation facilities that may be accessed safely via foot, bicycle, or public transportation. The statewide grade, based on the mean of all reported percentages, is a B (Table C.2). Grades across the regions for the Access criterion, based on the mean of all reported percentages by region, were mostly A's and B's (Table C.3).

AGGREGATE LEVEL OF SERVICE SCORES
The discussion below assesses all of the LOS scores in totality.

Federal and state Agency Scores
Federal and state providers received A's for three of the four LOS criteria overall but received a D for the Quantity criterion measuring Capital Facility Development, meaning the percentage of unmet capital facility development goals is approximately 51% to 60% statewide (Table 5.4). While the LOS scores for Quality and Access criteria indicate that the means are at least 80% or more for each criterion, the LOS score for Facility Capacity indicates that only slightly more than half of all planned recreation facility development goals for federal and state agencies are being completed or fulfilled across the state in Washington.

Local Agency and Provider Scores
A single, overall statewide grade and overall grades for all LOS criteria for each region were calculated for local agencies and providers by averaging the grades for each LOS criterion for each region. To calculate these overall grades, each letter grade on the scale was first assigned a value (A = 5, B = 4, C = 3, D = 2, and E = 1). Next, those values were summed and divided by the total number of grades received to determine the mean. The mean was used to determine the overall grade. For example, if the mean of all grade values is 3, then the overall grade is a C. As with the LOS system, no pluses or minuses were used, nor were any scores rounded (e.g., a mean of 4.9 is an overall B grade). This method was used to determine overall

grades because each LOS criterion grade corresponds to a different percentage range, meaning the means of responses could not be averaged for an overall grade. For example, a B for the Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities criterion corresponds to 11% to 20% while a B in Facility Capacity corresponds to 61% to 75%; therefore, means of actual responses could not be averaged across multiple criteria to determine an overall grade.

The single, overall statewide grade for local agencies and providers is a C (Table 5.5). Overall regional grades, based on the average of grades for all of the criteria by region, were mostly B's and C's . No region received an overall grade of A.

Statewide grades for individual criteria were also calculated and are based on the mean of regional means. Examining scores across regions for individual criteria, local agencies and providers have reported the highest grades for the LOS Quality criteria and the Distribution and Access criteria: grades for these criteria are mostly A's and B's . Quantity criteria, which are primarily related to facilities, ranked lowest overall across the regions. The Facility Capacity criterion received the lowest statewide grade with a D, followed by Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities with a C and Facilities That Support Active Recreation Opportunities with a B (Table C.5).

Table C.4: Federal and state Agency Level of Service Scores Summary.

Criterion	Level of Service Scores for Federal and state Agencies	
	Mean	Grade
Quantity Criteria		
Capital Facility Development	51.67	D
Quality Criteria		
Agency-Based Assessment	81.22	A
Public Satisfaction	86.70	A
Access Criteria		
Sustainable Access	82.75	A

Table C.5: Local Agency and Provider Level of Service Scores Summary.

Criterion	Level of Service Scores for Local Agencies by Region										
	Islands	**Peninsulas**	**The Coast**	**North Cascades**	**Seattle-King**	**Southwest**	**Northeast**	**Columbia Plateau**	**South Central**	**The Palouse**	**Statewide**
Quantity Criteria											
Number of Parks and Recreation Facilities	NA	C	NA	C	D	A	A	D	C	C	**C**
Facilities That Support Active Recreation Opportunities	A	C	C	A	C	C	B	C	A	B	**B**
Facility Capacity	D	D	D	C	B	C	C	E	D	D	**D**
Quality Criteria											
Agency-Based Assessment	A	B	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	C	**B**
Public Satisfaction	B	B	B	A	B	A	A	C	B	A	**B**
Distribution and Access Criteria											
Population Within Service Areas	A	C	B	B	A	B	A	C	B	B	**B**
Access	B	A	B	B	B	B	A	B	A	C	**B**
Average Score	**B**	**C**	**C**	**B**	**C**	**B**	**B**	**D**	**C**	**C**	**C**

APPENDIX D: ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS

In developing previous State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (SCORPs), the Recreation and Conservation Office held in-person meetings to collect public input. However, attendance at these meetings was typically quite low. For the 2013 SCORP, one of the public input methods included a 24-member Advisory Group. This group consisted of representatives from existing RCO standing committees and key stakeholders from local jurisdictions, which provided topical and geographical diversity and a knowledgeable membership for providing advice. Members were knowledgeable recreation providers and users well-grounded in the RCO's work and in the topic of outdoor recreation planning and management.

The Advisory Group provided guidance on the development of the SCORP through three in-person meetings and an Internet discussion site designated as the SCORP Advisory Group FORUM. The FORUM was an Internet message board where Advisory Group members could hold conversations in the form of posted messages. A moderator assisted the Advisory Group at the FORUM by managing the site and, at the direction of the participants, writing draft recommendations for them to discuss and approve. The Advisory Group came to five consensus recommendations, outlined below:

State Involvement with Local Priorities

Question Addressed: What are the challenges of regional and local providers now and in the near future that may change the role and actions of the state (such as regional and local providers supplying more or less of some kind of recreation)?

Various commenters at the Town Hall blog website expressed an appreciation of the increasing challenges facing recreation providers in an era of retracting government programs, increasing demand, and increasing conflicting uses of existing recreation resources. A recurring intervention advocated by these residents is the use of volunteer services from stakeholder organizations.

The Advisory Group observes that,

- The primary challenges in the recent past and the present and the foreseeable future are maintaining existing park assets and infrastructure, adding capacity to meet future population needs, and providing recreation programming with reduced funding and resources (staffing),
- Routine maintenance has decreased (maintenance frequency has decreased as well as the type of maintenance activities—some of which have been eliminated) thereby reducing the level of service,
- Volunteers now play an integral role in maintaining and enhancing existing assets,
- Capital funding for planning, acquisition, and new development has been substantially reduced along with funding for major maintenance and renovation,
- Prioritization and, therefore, the effective planning horizon managers can use has become less stable as re-prioritization is more frequently occurring based on the lack of funding and the status of existing assets,
- Recreation programming has shifted toward increased partnerships (good thing) as well as

program elimination (not so good) and more agencies are developing cost recovery models, and

- Grant matching requirements for state-administered grants is increasingly difficult for local agencies to provide due to the significant reduction in funding resources in recent years.

Recommendation: The Advisory Group recommends that the State implement policy improvements to,

- Review grant funding requirements, especially matching requirements, to determine if the current structure meets today's statewide needs,
- Provide or make eligible monetary support and staffing to cultivate and maintain volunteer involvement in recreation asset management, and
- Provide risk and liability relief for recreation providers to remove this exposure as an impediment to using volunteer resources.

Statewide Policy

Question Addressed: What is an appropriate response given there is no overall coordination mechanism among Washington's diverse recreation providers?

The Advisory Group observes that policies established by one agency can have an impact on other agencies and it can be difficult for recreation providers to have discussion or give input about the plans of other providers. For instance, if one land management agency or recreation provider decides not to allow a particular use, say a specific type of mountain bike trail, it puts pressure on other providers to meet that need. Coordination and communication across federal, state, and local providers would help resolve issues in advance and support partnership efforts. The State Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group is one example of such a coordination mechanism but its purview is confined to land transactions, not the broader topic of coordinated recreation planning. Thus there is a gap in the ability of all providers to coordinate with one another to avoid conflicts and to capture cooperation opportunities.

Recommendation: As the state's population increases and changes over time, there will be a greater need to plan and direct outdoor recreation activities toward the most appropriate landscape and toward the needs of communities. To best ensure that we are providing safe, sustainable, enjoyable recreation experiences and protecting the natural resources of our great outdoors, we need to have coordination and collaboration among the land management agencies and recreation providers on a statewide level. This should include an appropriate array of providers and key stakeholders. The Advisory Group recommends that the State create a mechanism and that it be led by a neutral entity like RCO.

High Satisfaction Ratings

Question Addressed: What is appropriate action in response to high satisfaction levels that Washington residents have about their recreation opportunities?

The General Population Survey recorded a statistically valid result that, overall, Washington residents are very satisfied with recreation opportunities in our State. Contrasting with this statistic is,

- Other survey results showing that demographics are changing, including an aging population and increasing racial diversity. These and other demographic changes will carry with them a changing set of recreation preferences of Washington's population,
- The experiences of local managers whose stakeholders want them to maintain current assets and infrastructure and to keep pace with future population growth and demand for access to recreation—i.e., acquisition and development still needs to occur despite difficulties such as the current economic downturn, and
- From the Town Hall comments compiled for this SCORP, individuals from selected recreation sectors complained about lack of opportunity for their preferred recreational experience.

Recommendation: The Advisory Group recommends continued investment in recreation opportunities. Making such investments is important because,

- Without new acquisition and development, recreation supply will not be able to keep up with demand. The increased pressure on existing facilities (due to population growth) will be reflected in deterioration of those recreation resources due to overuse,
- Even with current satisfaction levels being high, facilities and infrastructure need investments to maintain this level of satisfaction,
- Population demographics are projected to change significantly in the next decades and there is a need to invest in amenities to meet changing needs,
- There remains a need to develop and improve special-needs opportunities for disadvantaged populations such as providing barrier free recreation access and facilities for physically handicapped residents,
- We live in one of the most diverse landscapes on the continent and ensuring that the public can have access to and enjoy that diversity should continue to be a statewide priority, and
- Making sure we continue to maintain and support the investments we have already made makes good business sense and is cheaper than rebuilding or recovering facilities and areas that have been lost due to lack of funding.

Indoor Recreation

Question Addressed: The Advisory Group considered the survey results that 82% of Washington residents participate in 'recreational activities' and some of those activities require indoor facilities. Indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities complement and often overlap one another.

Under the current structure, local agencies (primarily cities and some counties) provide the majority of indoor recreation. State-administered grant funding is not available for indoor recreational facilities, leaving the funding of these entirely with local agencies. Local agencies have access to outdoor recreation survey data at the state level and also conduct local surveys for indoor and

outdoor use to obtain a comprehensive picture of their own local need. However, they are not able to practically compare the locally-collected data for indoor recreation with information from the state, causing a disconnect at the agency level in providing a comprehensive system.

The Advisory Group recognizes that there is a need/demand for indoor recreation as supported and evidenced by local agency surveys and that much of the responsibility for providing indoor facilities falls to local entities. The statewide planning process for SCORP and grant funding availability do not acknowledge this need.

Recommendation: While the Advisory Group sees the need for indoor recreation planning, indoor recreation is not currently within the scope of the SCORP. The Advisory Group would like the state to consider surveying and planning for indoor recreation needs in a separate and future process as the need is presently undefined at the state level. This process may lead to future grant funding for indoor recreation facilities to fill this unmet and presently undefined need for comprehensive indoor recreation planning.

Developing Sensitive Areas

Question Addressed: What is an appropriate response in addressing demand for creating recreation opportunities and facilities in association with wetlands?

The General Population Survey recorded a statistically valid result that 26% of Washington residents (18 years and older) recreate in wetlands. This group was asked, in the same survey, to rate the importance of wetlands to their total outdoor recreation experience. Using a scale from 0 (not at all important) to 10 (extremely important), 32% of Washington residents gave a rating of 10 with a mean rating of 7.16.

Providing ‘appropriate’ access to wetlands can be a challenge as there are differing opinions about what ‘appropriate’ means. A solution can emerge by ensuring public access is well directed and that the types of use are compatible.

The Advisory Group observes that,

- That crux of the management challenge is that the long-term protection and enjoyment of outdoor recreation resources go hand in hand, but these can oftentimes be difficult to balance,
- Given the environmental value and sensitivity of wetland areas, identifying opportunities to preserve and enhance wetland areas and minimize potential development impacts is as important to future generations as it is to today's outdoor enthusiast, and
- Managers acknowledge that wetland sites are costly to develop; funding wetland recreation access may impact other funding priorities.

Recommendation: The Advisory Group recommends,

- Managing the intersection of recreation and environmental stewardship goals by treating wetlands under an outdoor-recreation-saves-conservation concept—a sparse development approach that fosters public education, interest, and support for wetlands but, at the same time, protects conservation values through low-impact public use,

- Wetland recreation development should embody a long-term commitment for visitor management, resources for consistent monitoring, and active management including the ability to close areas when necessary (i.e., provision that monitoring and management can weather short-term budget problems), and
- Recreation access should be combined with a mission broader than just recreation (i.e., education, connecting people to nature, and creating a sense of community in support of the sensitive area increases interest in volunteering at these sites).

Detecting Unmet Needs

Question Addressed: How do we get from inventories and expected population and recreation trends to decision-making on the need for particular recreation facilities? In other words, how do we know if we have an unmet need?

Various commenters at the Town Hall blog website made the point that sometimes an unmet recreation need is not apparent from the normal course of business of recreation providers. Demographics and other research data are necessary, but sometimes they can miss a need. The case history cited most was the Duthie Hill Mountain Biking Park in King County. From these stakeholders' perspective there was a known demand for such a facility but the intensity of this demand, as verified by the very high use of the facility after it was built, is an indication that there was an unmet need that went undetected via the normal course of recreation planning.

The Advisory Group observes that recreation managers are planning under uncertainty when responding to trends. One cause of this uncertainty comes from this imperfect ability to detect unmet needs.

Recommendation: The Advisory Group recommends,

- Recreation providers should continue to rely on traditional methods of detecting user needs, such as using expected population and recreation trends from surveys and other statistically valid research projects; informal, key informant interviews; and public participation projects with regional and local providers and relevant user groups, and
- When feasible, experiment with innovations for detecting unmet needs that may not be accessible with traditional methods.