

APPENDIX B-1

NH Outdoor Recreation Stakeholder Survey: A Summary Report

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Outdoor Recreation Stakeholder Study consists of two inter-related and mutually dependent components to assist in the development of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan through and expanded public involvement effort. The first component developed and compiled a comprehensive database identifying organizations that are, or should, be stakeholders in the outdoor recreation planning process in New Hampshire. The second component designed, implemented, and evaluated the effectiveness of a Web (and mail) based tool that was used to collect information from, and analyze data on, groups identified in the stakeholder database in order to improve the both the quality and quantity of public involvement. This summary report is intended to provide information that will assist in the integrating the results of this public involvement program into the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan is required to include the opportunity for public participation, involving all segments of the State's population. In preparing the updated SCORP for 2003-2007, the NH Office of State Planning has included several components that are geared towards gaining public input and participation. This research in one part of this process. This research sought input from stakeholder groups involved in outdoor recreation and the conservation of natural and cultural resources. Outdoor recreation is impacted by, and has an effect on, a wide range of interests or stakeholders across New Hampshire. As such, it is important to provide the opportunity for these stakeholder groups to participate in the statewide outdoor recreation planning process and to understand the perspectives of these stakeholder groups. It is also important to better understand how they relate to agencies that are responsible for managing outdoor recreation resources in the state, as well as examine the relationships between these different (sometimes complementary, sometimes competing) interests. Ultimately, these different interests are all stakeholders in the SCORP recreation planning process.

These stakeholder groups consist of many different interests including, for example, policy makers, regional, state and federal agencies, local officials, recreation providers, as well as a range of 'target' groups that ultimately participate in outdoor recreation. Gathering data from stakeholder groups and involving them up front helps assure that the SCORP correctly frames the recreation and conservation issues that New Hampshire faces. Also, if these groups are involved in the process they will more likely have a vested interest in management decisions, and will be more willing to partner in strategies to address critical issues.

This stakeholder group information can be used in conjunction with existing data depicting the general public's attitudes, participation levels and preferences for outdoor recreation. Having data available from different audiences (both general public and stakeholder groups) will help frame the range of issues, as well as target recommendations to address these issues. This public involvement strategy also provides an opportunity for different

interest groups to become involved and interested in the SCORP planning process. Involvement in the planning process will also make these organizations more likely to invest in strategies aimed at improving outdoor recreation in New Hampshire. This information also provides planners and managers with a more detailed understanding of critical issues, barriers to effective solutions and potential partnerships.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project was to provide a forum to collect information from a wide range of stakeholder groups and encourage public input into the SCORP planning process. Specifically, the objectives of this proposed project are to:

1. Compile a database that identifies stakeholders in the New Hampshire Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Planning process. This database will include descriptive and contact information on each organization identified.
2. Design, implement, analyze and evaluate a Web (and paper) data collection tool that provides the opportunity for stakeholder groups to identify and prioritize outdoor recreation issues of statewide importance and identify possible strategies for improving outdoor recreation opportunities in NH.

METHODS

Database Construction

To begin this process, a database was constructed that would contain all of the contact information about recreation-based clubs, organizations, associations, and similar groups in New Hampshire. This database contains several fields, including organization name, interest (ski club, snowmobile club, conservation commission, etc.), contact person, that person's relationship with the organization (director, president, contact person, etc.), website address, email address, mailing address, and mission statement. This information was collected primarily through the internet. Multiple search engines were used to search for these groups, and key words were used like "recreation NH" and "New Hampshire athletic association." Websites like New Hampshire's Tourism website were used to easily obtain large lists of groups, like lodgings. Other websites, like New Hampshire Snowmobile Association's (NHSA), was lacking in information, so contact was made with persons in NHSA's office and a database with current club information was sent. Additional information was gathered from members of the Steering Committee and Advisory Committee who felt that specific groups or persons were important to reach with this survey.

In this initial "stakeholder database," 3,400 stakeholder groups and individuals were identified. Of these, 146 were local athletic associations/clubs; 88 were water protection groups; 41 were water-based recreation; 111 were considered economic development; 12 were considered animal clubs (dog, horse, etc.); 13 were biking groups; 46 were focused on environmental education; 91 were businesses (equipment rental, guide service, campgrounds, etc.); 72 were winter sports-related (ski, snow-

board, snowshoe); 30 were hiking/trail groups; 249 were conservation commissions (including conservation districts); 232 were historical/cultural preservation (including historical societies, Main Street Programs, museums, etc.); 58 recreational committees/commissions (including recreation councils); 116 hunting and fishing groups; 224 motorized sports groups (ATV, OHRV, snowmobile); 97 environmental/land conservation groups; 821 government agencies (including school districts, planning boards, planning commissions, etc.); and 750 tourism groups (lodging, food service, marketing, etc.). Another 41 were considered “other” as they were not easily grouped into any of the aforementioned categories. Also, there were 54 individual contacts from the Advisory Committee and 108 other contacts generated from Advisory Committee members.

Survey Construction

The internet survey was an attempt to replicate the Advisory Committee meeting that was held in Concord, New Hampshire on June 21, 2002. Here, the heads (or representatives) from almost 50 recreation-focused groups in New Hampshire were divided into four focus groups, and were given the task of addressing two different pre-assigned topic areas. Each group had approximately 13 participants, and was charged with discussing the primary issues (good and bad) that they identify with the topics, and then discuss different barriers and actions that they associate with the topic. At the end of the meeting, participants were invited to vote to identify the groups’ top issues within each broader category.

This resulted in the four broad categories that are presented in the New Hampshire Outdoors Recreation Stakeholder Survey. This survey, as an attempt to duplicate the June 21 meeting, allows participants to choose a particular statement to rate their perspectives relating to an issue, as well as an opportunity to provide direct input (open-ended statements). Also, participants were asked to rate funding priorities (LOW, MED, HIGH) in New Hampshire, and were asked a wide range of questions. The Steering Committee was asked to submit potential questions to be included in the survey, and resulted in questions relating to participants’ previous knowledge of specific state and federal programs, as well as their opinions about the acquisition, maintenance and/or development of land in New Hampshire. Specific questions relating to their organization were asked, like geographic scope, membership numbers, number of paid staff members, etc. Finally, personal information was asked about the respondents, like their age, sex, and level of education. The survey was pre-tested to individuals involved in academia, as well as members of the public and the Steering Committee for final review and approval.

Survey Implementation

Two versions of the New Hampshire Outdoor Recreation Stakeholder Survey were created—one intended to be completed by a person in a leadership role within an organization, and one designed to be completed by the public (which did not contain specific questions relating to an organization). This survey was made available online to be viewed and approved by the Steering Committee. At the same time, 3,500 postcards were printed, to be mailed to specific organizations that were listed in the database after the website had been approved by the Steering Committee. Also, 200 surveys were printed to be made available to

organizational respondents who did not wish to complete the survey online. These surveys were available by calling a toll-free phone number (provided on the postcard) for them to leave their mailing information on, and a survey would be sent to them in 3-5 working days. Also, they would receive a pre-paid envelope to return the survey to UNH in. Approximately two weeks after the postcard was sent out, an email was distributed to all of the contacts where an email address was available with links to both internet surveys. Two weeks after that, another email was sent out, also with links. At the same time, several local newspapers had articles describing this process and providing the website address to the general public. In addition, announcements were made on NHPR encouraging the public to participate in this process and directing them to New Hampshire Office of State Planning’s website.

RESULTS

Two different surveys were conducted, each asking similar questions but aimed at different respondent types—organization leaders ($n=245$) versus organization membership and the public ($n=296$). These surveys yielded results of varying similarity.

Organization Responses

Participant Profiles

Respondents were first asked a few questions about the organization that they were responding on behalf of. 37.0% of the respondents ($n=88$) identified themselves as directors or executive directors of these organizations, while 18.1% ($n=43$) were board members, 12.2% ($n=29$) considered themselves as staff, 6.7% ($n=16$) as the contact person, and 4.6% ($n=11$) as members. 21.4% of respondents ($n=51$) identified themselves as having some other relationship with the organization. Participants were later asked specific information about their organizations. 44.8% of respondents ($n=99$) describe their organization as having a local geographic scope, while 24.0% ($n=53$) are regional in New Hampshire, 16.3% ($n=36$) are statewide in New Hampshire, 7.7% ($n=17$) are focused in New England, and 7.2% ($n=16$) describe themselves as being nationwide. Also, respondents were asked to identify their organizations as one of twenty that were listed. Table 2 shows the results. The bulk of the responses were from tourism groups (14.9%) and government agencies (14.5%), but responses from all of the categories were received in this study. See Appendix 1 for a complete listing of participating groups/organizations. It should be pointed

out that high response rates was not the goal of this survey. Additional information was collected regarding gender and level of education. This revealed that the organizations were represented by more males (62.2%, $n=140$) than females (37.8%, $n=85$). All of the organization participants have graduated from high school or have their GED, and nearly 40% ($n=86$) of organization participants had received their Bachelor's Degree (either BA or BS), while there were no respondents that were MD's.

Opinions About Recreation Issues in New Hampshire

In this section, the respondents were given the opportunity to provide input on four broad topics relating to recreation in New Hampshire. They were asked to read through the descriptions of each topic area, and think about the conditions, barriers, challenges and potential actions in New Hampshire related to that specific issues. They were then asked to rate the recreation-based issue, and invited to share their comments relating to each question in as much detail as possible.

Recreation Opportunities for All

This section of the survey deals with the challenge of providing and maintaining a wide range of recreation opportunities for all citizens, regardless of socioeconomic circumstances. Specifically, "a wide range of recreational preferences exist across age, ability, etc. Issues exist related to the roles of state lands, federal lands, and local lands in providing these different, often competing, opportunities as well as understanding the role of private lands in public recreation provision. Park and facility maintenance, as well as self-funding of State Parks, are also important issues." Nearly 60% of the organizations ($n=142$)

Organization Classification	Stakeholder Database	Actual Participants
Local Adult Athletic Assoc./Club	4.3% ($n=146$)	0.5% ($n=1$)
Local Youth Athletic Assoc./Club		2.3% ($n=5$)
Water Protection	2.6% ($n=88$)	1.4% ($n=3$)
Water-Based Recreation	1.2% ($n=41$)	0.9% ($n=2$)
Economic Development	3.3% ($n=111$)	0.9% ($n=2$)
Animal Clubs (dog, horse, etc.)	0.4% ($n=12$)	1.4% ($n=3$)
Biking	0.4% ($n=13$)	1.4% ($n=3$)
Environmental Education	1.4% ($n=46$)	2.3% ($n=5$)
Business (equipment rental, guide service, etc.)	2.7% ($n=91$)	2.3% ($n=5$)
Winter Sports (ski, snowboard, snowshoe)	2.1% ($n=72$)	2.7% ($n=6$)
Hiking/Trail	0.9% ($n=30$)	2.7% ($n=6$)
Conservation Commission	7.3% ($n=249$)	5.0% ($n=11$)
Historical/Cultural Preservation	6.8% ($n=232$)	4.5% ($n=10$)
Recreation Committee/Commission	1.7% ($n=58$)	5.0% ($n=11$)
Hunting & Fishing	3.4% ($n=116$)	4.5% ($n=10$)
Motorized Sport (ATV, OHRV, snowmobile)	6.6% ($n=224$)	5.9% ($n=13$)
Environmental/Land Conservation	2.9% ($n=97$)	8.1% ($n=18$)
Government Agency (including elected officials)	24.1% ($n=821$)	14.5% ($n=32$)
Tourism (lodging, food service, marketing, etc.)	22.1% ($n=750$)	14.9% ($n=33$)
Other	1.2% ($n=41$)	19.4% ($n=43$)

Table 1. Response rates by organization type, as defined in the stakeholder database and by each participant.

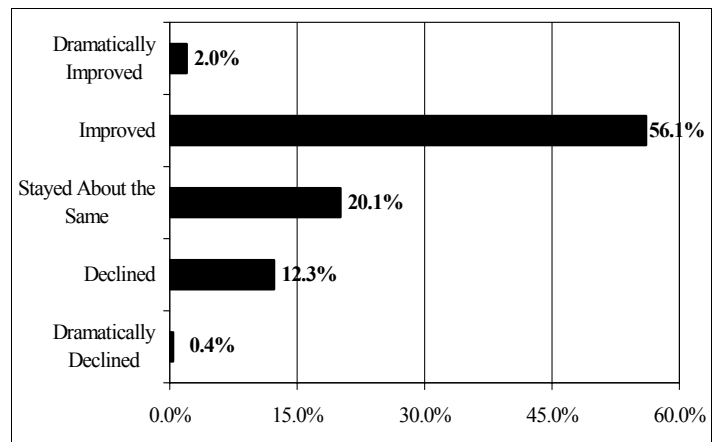


Figure 1. Organization ratings for the "range of outdoor recreation opportunities."

feel that the overall range of outdoor recreation opportunities in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has improved, while only 12.7% ($n=31$) indicated that they believe that these opportunities have declined. After rating the range of outdoor recreation opportunities in New Hampshire, participants were asked to describe why they responded in that way. 207 people provided comments relating to the rating of this issue. One respondent said that "Access and up-keep have improved overall. It is apparent when I visit many facilities that an effort is being made to promote our resources to visitors." Another said that "Opportunities for wide range of recreational activities seems to have grown." On the other end, another summed up their opinion by saying that "Sprawl, lack of funding to upgrade, conflicts between users for limited space" helped to shape their

opinion.

Barriers. Nearly three-quarters of the respondents (72.6%, $n=156$) indicated that there are specific barriers or challenges, and provided 357 comments relating to this issue. Common

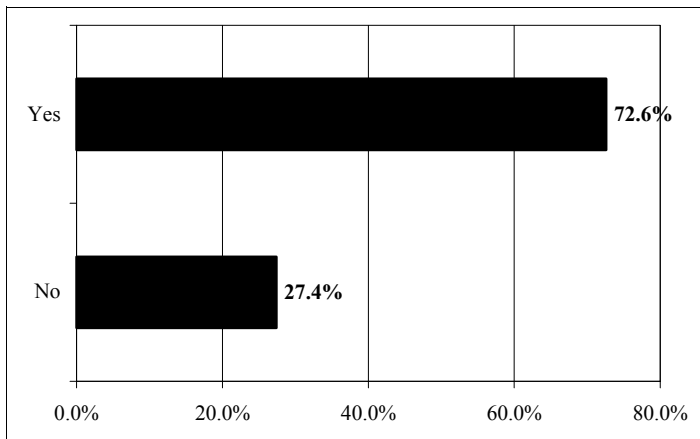


Figure 2. Barriers to the range of outdoor recreation opportunities as identified by organization participants.

themes in these comments included finding a “balance between various users to minimize environmental impacts”; a variety of “conflicts”; “costs” and “money”; “education”; “funding”; “lack of access”; “lack of knowledge” on the part of the public; and “staffing.”

Actions. Also, over 80% ($n=151$) responded that there are specific actions that could be taken to address this topic, and offered 325 comments, including “access to all land and water”;

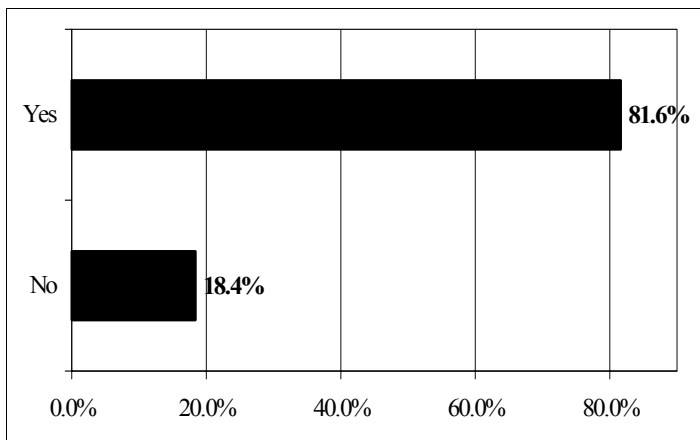


Figure 3. Actions to address the range of outdoor recreation opportunities as identified by organization participants.

“better access to state resources”; “acquisition of lands” for a variety of purposes; “better cooperation between agencies”; “education”; “incentives”; “better planning”; “money” and “funding”; “provide more publicity,” and “restrictions” on development and land use for recreation.

Public Use and Resource Conservation

This section of the survey deals with balancing the conservation and value of natural and cultural resources with public recreational access and tourism. More specifically, “this topic might include issues related to land and water conservation, open space protection, public recreational access, and balancing public use and resource conservation for public lands. Recreational access includes both motorized and non-motorized recreation.

This topic also includes sustainable tourism development and the importance of natural and cultural resources in attracting tourism to New Hampshire. Resources include wetlands, lakes, rivers, coastal areas, forests, cultural/historic resources, rare/endangered species, etc.” Over 80% of the participants ($n=192$) indicate that the relationship between public recrea-

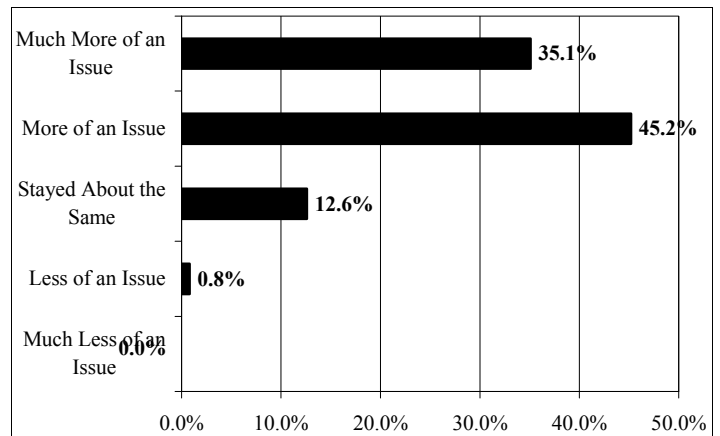


Figure 4. Organization ratings for the “relationship between public recreational use and resource conservation.”

tional use and resource conservation in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has become more of an issue, while less than 1% of respondents feel that it has become less of an issue. 184 respondents provided statements describing the way that they rated public use and resource conservation. Opinions included “Increased development has put pressure on natural and cultural resources.” On the other hand, another participant said that “I don’t think it’s much of an issue. A very good job has been done.” Another respondent said that “LCHIP, and other funding/awareness initiatives have made this a more important topic.”

Barriers. Over 80% ($n=155$) of participants feel that specific barriers or challenges exist, and 287 comments were provided on this issue, like “competing interests”; “education” of environmentally-conscious individuals, across agencies, and town

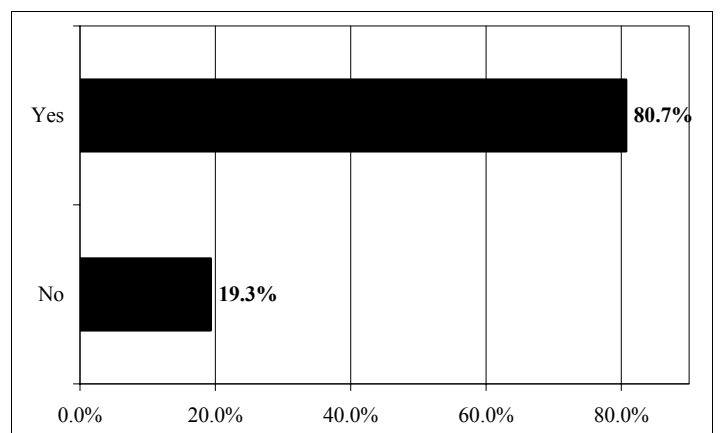


Figure 5. Barriers to public recreational use and resource conservation as identified by organization participants.

planning, conservation, etc. boards and officials; “communication”; “funding”; “lack of enforcement personnel” and “politics.”

Actions. Almost 85% ($n=141$) of respondents believe that there are specific actions that can be taken to address this topic. 253 action-oriented recommendations were made by respon-

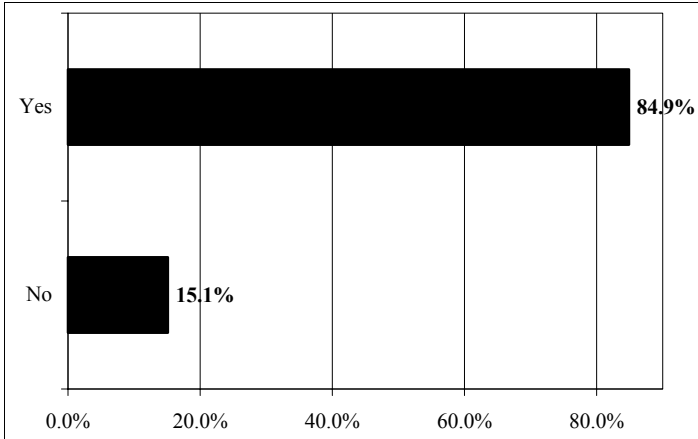


Figure 6. Actions that can be taken to address public recreational use and resource conservation as identified by organization participants.

dents. For example, “communication”; “education” of ATV riders, conservationists and the public; “increased funding”; “limit use” and access; “more public participation,” and implement or increase “user fees” were popular suggestions.

Community Recreation, Health and Well-Being

This section deals with the promotion of livable, healthy communities (and people) and supporting community-based recreation opportunities close to home. To be more specific, “this topic includes understanding local priorities for Land and Water Conservation Fund monies, maintaining existing local facilities, developing new local recreation sites, and securing sufficient funds for local recreation needs. This topic also includes the importance of outdoor recreation in promoting healthy communities and families, with a focus on the relationship between land use and the quality of life.” Over 35% of respondents ($n=84$) believe that community-based recreation, health and well-being in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has improved; 31.1% ($n=70$) believe that it has stayed about the same;

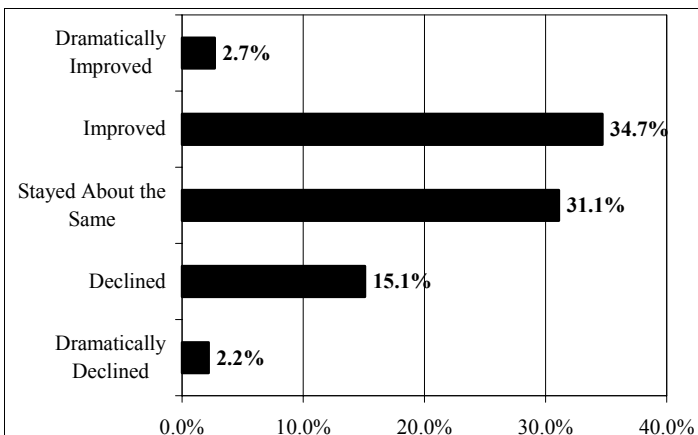


Figure 7. Organization ratings of “community-based recreation, health and well-being.”

and 17.3% ($n=39$) say that it has declined. 161 additional comments were offered by the respondents. One said that “Communities are being designed for auto travel and not walking.” Another said that “Increased growth and development is eating up open space and diminishing access to private land and the rural quality of life.” Someone else said that “There seems

to be more awareness of the importance of physical well-being, and livable/walkable communities.”

Barriers. Over 75% of respondents ($n=120$) say that specific barriers or challenges exist, and provided 215 comments, like “adequate funding and planning”; “cost,” “finances,” and “lack

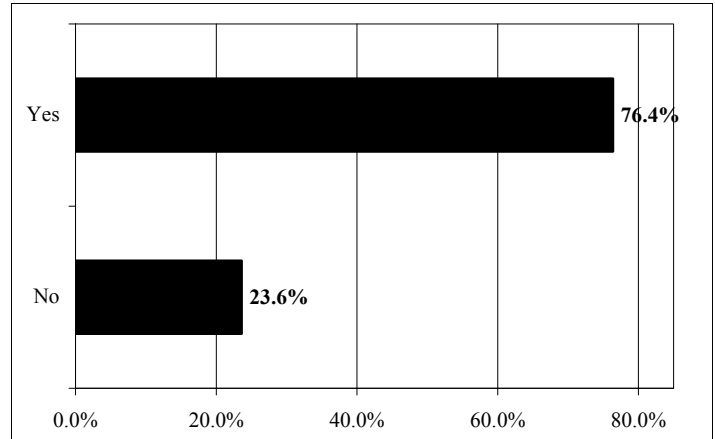


Figure 8. Barriers to community-based recreation, health and well-being as identified by organization participants.

of funding”; “lack of education”; “lack of good zoning and planning”; “no local support”; “no social capital”; “loss of sense of place”; “population pressures” and “sprawl”; and that “recreation funding at local level not a priority.”

Actions. Also, almost 80% ($n=93$) believe that there are specific actions that can be taken to address this topic, and provided 175 recommendations relating to community recreation,

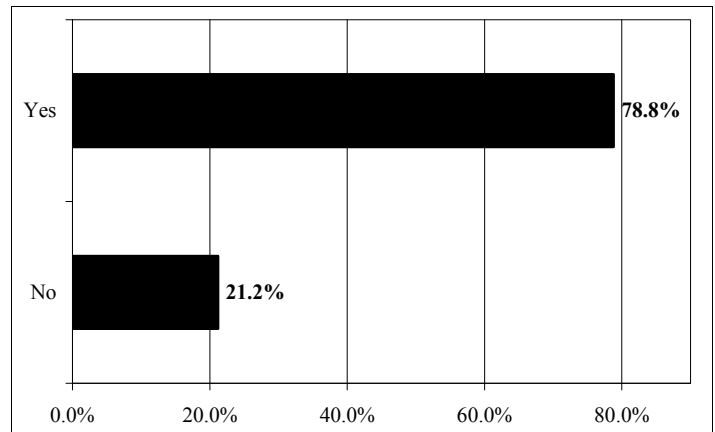


Figure 9. Actions to addressing community-based recreation, health and well-being as identified by organization participants.

health and well-being. Some of these recommendations include “adequate funding” for transportation/transit-related issues; “better planning” at local and regional levels; “better local zoning and growth ordinances”; “education”; “increase funding”; “plan based on long term sustainability rather than short term gain” and to “promote this issue more in the state.”

Recreation Corridors and Linkages

This section deals with the promotion of recreational/conservation corridors and linkages within a community, as well as linkages between communities and regions. More specifically, “this topic includes recreation and conservation issues related to trails, recreation corridors and greenways, across a range of motorized and non-motorized recreational activities.

This topic also includes the role that trails play in linking and connecting places within a community and between communities and regions. These corridors also play a role in promoting healthy communities and families, and making more livable/walkable communities, with a focus on the relationship between land use and the quality of life.” Over 45% of the organizations ($n=104$) say that the quantity and quality of recreation corridors and linkages in New Hampshire over the past 10 years have improved; 26.2% ($n=58$) feel that they have stayed about the

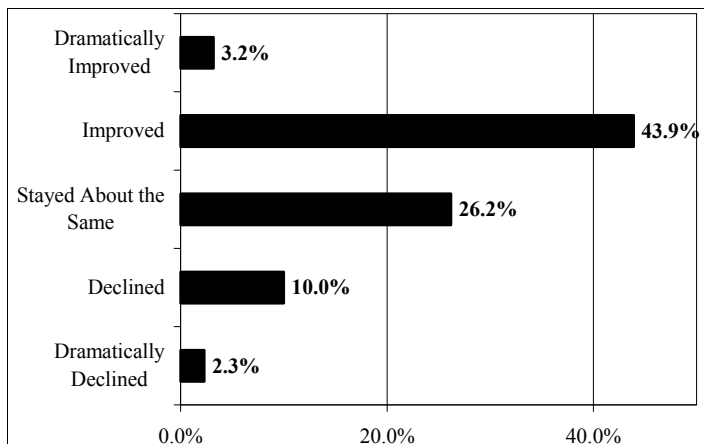


Figure 10. Organization ratings of the “quantity and quality of recreation corridors and linkages.”

same; and 12.3% ($n=27$) believe that they have declined. 156 comments were provided, including “Development has eliminated many unofficial corridors and linkages. In the planning and development process this is usually not considered.” Another respondent says that “Efforts to improve linkages like the Heritage Trail seem to be moving slowly.” Someone else said that “I have seen little improvement in recreational corridors (i.e. bike lanes, trails) despite increased press coverage and local advocacy (in Seacoast area). Some new construction includes bike access, but then doesn’t link with trails on either side.”

Barriers. Over 80% of respondents ($n=125$) believe that specific barriers or challenges exist, and provided 196 comments. Common themes among these comments include “education”

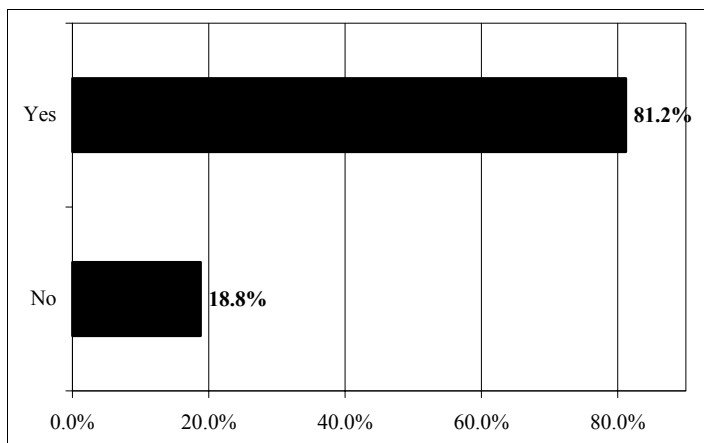


Figure 11. Barriers relating to community-based recreation, health and well-being as identified by organization participants.

of property owners, public officials and trail users (ethics); “funding”; “inadequate enforcement”; “inadequate penalties”; “lack of coordination” between towns and between state agencies; “lack of regional planning”; “lack of zoning/planning regulations”; “sprawl” and “un-smart growth.”

Actions. 80% of respondents ($n=92$) say that there are specific actions that can be taken to address this topic, and provided 131 recommendations relating to the quantity and quality of recrea-

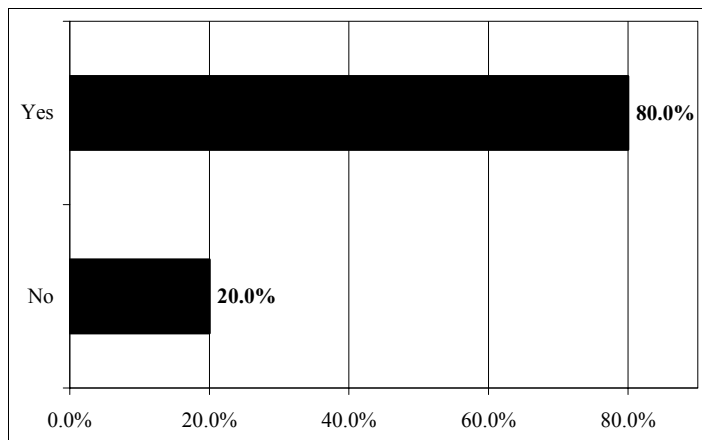


Figure 12. Proposed actions relating to community-based recreation, health and well-being as identified by organization participants.

tion corridors and linkages. Some of these include “coordination”; “create master plans for recreational uses”; “education”; “enforcement”; “increased funding” for a variety of state programs; “regional planning” and “smart growth planning.”

Outdoor Recreation Priorities

In this section, respondents were asked to rate funding priorities in New Hampshire, ranging from LOW to HIGH. **Table 2** indicates the percentages of responses for each question. The top five responses in each category (LOW, MED, HIGH) are highlighted in bold-face type. Responses of particular interest include question C, “Multi-purpose trail systems (e.g. hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling)”. Nearly half of the respondents (48.9%, $n=107$) rated this as a HIGH funding priority, and only 16.0% ($n=35$) identified this as a LOW priority. The responses to question F, “Develop a wide range of recreational opportunities for those who are disabled (e.g. fishing platforms, trails, etc.)” indicates that over 50% ($n=116$) of the respondents feel that this is a MEDIUM funding priority. Also, question J, “Maintenance of existing park (federal, state, and local) facilities and trails” is seen as something that should receive a HIGH funding priority (66.8%, $n=149$), as well as the acquisition and protection of undeveloped lands with provisions for public access (question N), with 61.7% ($n=137$) identifying this as HIGH. Question Q, “Motorized recreational trails,” is perceived as a LOW funding priority (65.9%, $n=147$), with only 8.5% ($n=19$) giving this topic a HIGH priority. Over 60% ($n=141$) of respondents identified question W, “Promote smart growth planning and zoning approaches in communities” as a HIGH priority, and over half of surveyors (52.9%, $n=188$) feel that question V (“Comprehensive state planning for greenways and recreation corridors”) should be considered a HIGH funding priority.

Did You Know...

In this section, respondents were asked about their previous knowledge of SCORP and LWCF-related issues. Only 30% ($n=67$) of respondents indicated that they were familiar or extremely familiar with the LWCF, while 28.7% ($n=64$) were not at all familiar. Only 18.5% ($n=42$) considered themselves to be familiar or extremely familiar with New Hampshire’s SCORP,

	c	LOW	MED	HIGH
a. Recreational opportunities and facilities for small children and youth (n=221)		18.6%	45.2%	36.2%
b. Local recreation corridors and trail linkages between community resources (n=221)		15.4%	40.7%	43.9%
c. Multi-purpose trail systems (n=219)		16.0%	35.2%	48.9%
d. Access to New Hampshire's public waters for boating, fishing and other recreational uses (n=224)		21.9%	39.7%	38.4%
e. Areas/opportunities for wildlife watching (n=217)		36.9%	41.9%	21.2%
f. Develop a wide range of recreational opportunities for those who are disabled (n=223)		25.1%	52.0%	22.9%
g. Education programs on natural resource conservation/protection (n=224)		15.6%	42.4%	42.0%
h. Education programs on cultural resource conservation/protection (n=220)		25.0%	45.9%	29.1%
i. Incentives to encourage the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities on private lands (n=220)		21.4%	32.7%	45.9%
j. Maintenance of existing park facilities and trails (n=223)		4.9%	28.3%	66.8%
k. Safety and law enforcement in outdoor recreation areas (n=223)		13.9%	43.9%	42.2%
l. Education programs for New Hampshire residents about outdoor recreation opportunities (n=222)		39.6%	39.6%	20.7%
m. Enforcement of environmental laws and land use regulations (n=224)		7.6%	37.5%	54.9%
n. Acquire and protect undeveloped lands with provisions for public access (n=222)		7.7%	30.6%	61.7%
o. Acquire lands for organized outdoor recreation sports and activities (n=223)		33.2%	39.0%	27.8%
p. Develop facilities for organized outdoor recreation sports and activities (n=220)		37.7%	41.4%	20.9%
q. Motorized recreational trails (n=223)		65.9%	25.6%	8.5%
r. Sponsor outdoor education and skills courses for New Hampshire residents (n=223)		40.8%	43.9%	15.3%
s. Identify and establish visitor/recreational use capacity for public lands and waters (n=220)		25.9%	42.7%	31.4%
t. Education programs for recreational users on user etiquette and current laws (n=224)		18.3%	37.9%	43.8%
u. Support facilities at existing recreational areas (n=222)		14.0%	49.5%	36.5%
v. Comprehensive state planning for greenways and recreation corridors (n=223)		11.7%	35.4%	52.9%
w. Promote smart growth planning and zoning approaches in communities (n=222)		11.7%	24.8%	63.5%
x. Non-motorized recreational trails (n=225)		11.6%	44.0%	44.4%
y. Areas/opportunities for hunting and fishing (n=223)		29.6%	44.4%	26.0%
z. Education programs for private landowners and communities about public access liability (n=223)		23.3%	43.5%	33.2%
aa. Outdoor recreation planning to determine how to wisely invest in tourism (n=223)		21.5%	37.2%	41.3%

Table 2. Organization-identified funding priorities for outdoor recreation in New Hampshire.

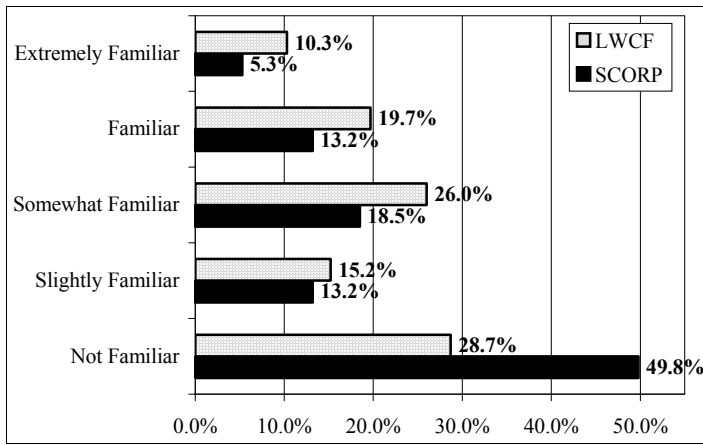


Figure 13. Organization ratings of their previous knowledge of the LWCF and New Hampshire's SCORP.

while nearly half (49.8%, $n=113$) of the respondents said that they were not familiar with the program. When asked if they knew that local communities and school districts could apply to the DRED for LWCF funds for acquisition and/or development

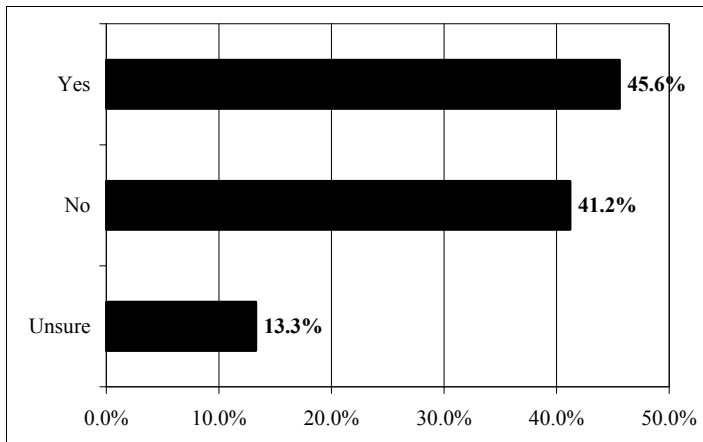


Figure 14. Organization participants' familiarity with the 50/50 matching grants programs through DRED for LWCF funds.

of outdoor recreation areas through a 50/50 matching grants program, 45.6% ($n=103$) said YES, 41.2% ($n=93$) said NO, and 13.3% ($n=30$) said that they were UNSURE.

What Do You Think?

This section asked respondents their opinions of particular land-acquisition scenarios in New Hampshire. The results of each question are shown in **Table 3**. 65.3% of respondents ($n=149$) agree that New Hampshire State Parks should focus funding on acquiring more land for the purpose of developing outdoor recreation areas, while only 12.2% ($n=28$) disagree with the statement. 88.6% ($n=202$) of respondents agree that New Hampshire State Parks should focus funding on maintaining/refurbishing existing outdoor recreation areas, while only 2.7% ($n=6$) disagreed. When asked if communities should be acquiring more conservation land for passive outdoor recreation,

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
NH State Parks should focus funding on acquiring more land for the purpose of developing outdoor recreation areas ($n=228$)	30.7%	34.6%	22.4%	8.3%	3.9%
NH State Parks should focus funding on maintaining/refurbishing existing outdoor recreation areas ($n=228$)	50.9%	37.7%	8.8%	1.8%	0.9%
Communities should be acquiring more conservation land for passive outdoor recreation ($n=225$)	49.8%	32.0%	12.0%	5.3%	0.9%
Communities should be acquiring more land for developed athletic/organized outdoor recreation ($n=229$)	20.5%	38.9%	28.4%	9.2%	3.1%

Table 3. Organization participants' ratings of funding and land acquisition priorities.

81.8% ($n=184$) of respondents agree, while only 6.2% ($n=14$) disagreed with the statement. Over half of the respondents (59.4%, $n=136$) agree that communities should be acquiring more land for developed athletic/organized outdoor recreation, while 12.3% ($n=28$) disagree.

Public Responses

Participant Profile

A variety of methods were used as an attempt to gain public input for this survey. As a result, 296 citizens completed the online survey. The version of the survey was designed for public responses and included questions relating to participants' recreation interests and behaviors, as well as basic demographic information. Nearly 65% of respondents ($n=175$) were male, and nearly 35% ($n=94$) said that their highest education level is a Bachelor's Degree. Over 40% of the participants ($n=116$) said that the White Mountains region is their favorite destination in New Hampshire to participate in outdoor recreation activities. The Dartmouth-Lake Sunapee ($n=12$) and the Merrimack Valley ($n=16$) regions were the lowest rated destinations in the State.

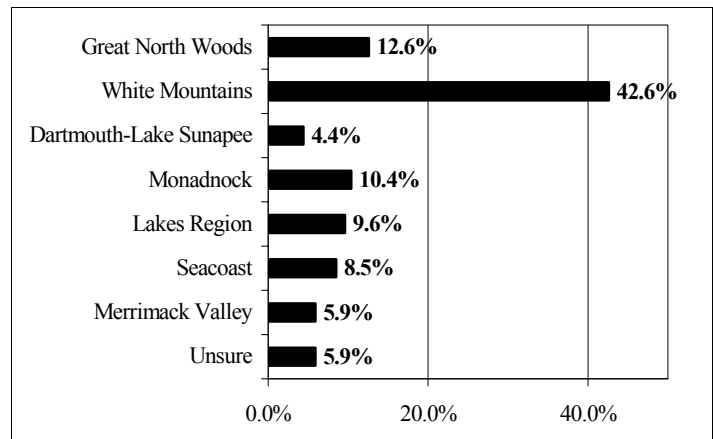


Figure 15. Public participants' favorite outdoor recreation destination in New Hampshire.

Also, participants were asked to identify the types of recreation equipment owned by them or a member of their household. **Table 4** shows the top ten recreation equipment items owned by respondents. Tents (72.6%, $n=215$) and backpacks (73.0%, $n=216$) were by far the most popular item to own, while more expensive items were generally the least common. These include ATVs (23.0%, $n=68$); motorized boats (18.2%, $n=54$); OHRVs (16.6%, $n=49$); snowmobiles (13.9%, $n=41$); motorcycles (12.8%, $n=38$); campers (10.1%, $n=30$); motor homes (6.8%, $n=20$), and jet skis (2.4%, $n=7$).

Additionally, participants were asked about their involvement in specific recreational interests, like ownership of homes or businesses, membership in athletic teams/clubs, fishing/

Backpack	73.0% (n=216)
Tent	72.6% (n=215)
Skis/snowboard	57.8% (n=171)
Mountain bicycle	54.4% (n=161)
Fishing equipment	53.0% (n=157)
Non-motorized boat	52.0% (n=154)
Touring bicycle	42.6% (n=125)
Hunting equipment	29.7% (n=88)
Golf equipment	28.7% (n=85)
Baseball equipment	25.0% (n=74)

Table 4. Public participants' recreation equipment ownership (top ten).

hunting/gun clubs, etc. **Table 5** shows that many respondents are members of a voluntary conservation organization (39.1%, n=86) and/or members of a voluntary outdoor recreation committee (37.3%, n=82) and/or are members of a motorized recreation club (36.8%, n=81).

Own or rent a boat slip on a New Hampshire lake	6.8% (n=20)
Own or work in a business that depends on outdoor recreation	8.8% (n=26)
Own or rent a second home or condo in New Hampshire	8.4% (n=25)
Own or lease a camp/campsite	9.8% (n=29)
Member of a voluntary outdoor recreation committee	31.4% (n=93)
Member of a voluntary historical preservation committee	7.8% (n=23)
Member of a voluntary conservation organization	34.8% (n=103)
Member of a non-motorized recreation club	18.6% (n=55)
Member of a lake association	7.8% (n=23)
Member of a fishing, hunting or gun club	13.5% (n=40)
Member of an athletic team or league	10.5% (n=31)
Member of a motorized recreation club	30.4% (n=90)
Hold an elected or appointed office	21.3% (n=63)

Table 5. Public participants' involvement in specific recreational interests.

Opinions About Recreation Issues in New Hampshire

In this section, the respondents were given the opportunity to provide input on four broad topics relating to recreation in New Hampshire. They were asked to read through the descriptions of each topic area, and think about the conditions, barriers, challenges and potential actions in New Hampshire related to that specific issues. They were then asked to rate the recreation-based issue, and invited to share their comments relating to each question in as much detail as possible.

Recreation Opportunities for All

This section of the survey deals with the challenge of providing and maintaining a wide range of recreation opportunities for all citizens, regardless of socioeconomic circumstances. Specifically, "a wide range of recreational preferences exist across age, ability, etc. Issues exist related to the roles of state lands, federal lands, and local lands in providing these different, often competing, opportunities as well as understanding the role of private lands in public recreation provision. Park and facility maintenance, as well as self-funding of State Parks, are also important issues." Over 35% of the public participants (n=104) feel that the overall range of outdoor recreation opportunities in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has improved, while nearly 25% (n=72) indicated that they believe that these opportunities have declined. After rating the range of outdoor recreation opportunities in New Hampshire, participants were asked to describe why they responded in that way. 235 people provided comments relating to the rating of this issue. One respondent said that "Development has basically destroyed the opportunity for non-organized outdoor activities in the southern part

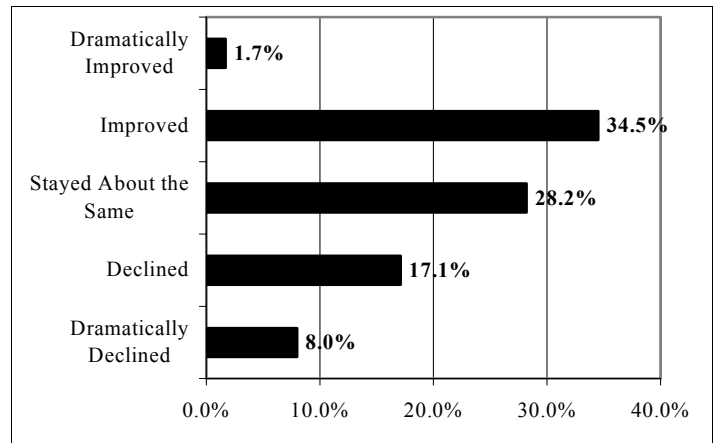


Figure 16. Public ratings for the "range of outdoor recreation opportunities." of the state. Virtually all biking/hiking trails south of Concord seem to have been built on." Another said that "Different groups are fighting for the same uses of land instead of cooperating." This participant identified several barriers: "Poor management and overuse exhibited; more "forcing" of incompatible activities squeezed within trail system. Non-Motorized modes of activities cannot compete with OHRV users. More upland hunting areas posted." On the other end, another summed up their opinion by saying that "Fish and Game has done a super job (since I was a kid, where as in the 60s and 70s things were not very well managed. Plus law enforcement has been stepped up around illegal activities around recreation and the environment."

Barriers. Nearly 80% of the respondents (n=210) indicated that there are specific barriers or challenges, and provided 426 comments relating to this issue. Common themes in these com-

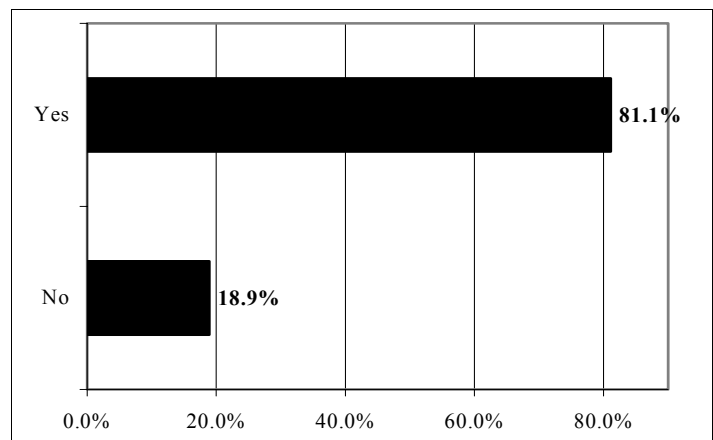


Figure 17. Barriers to the range of outdoor recreation opportunities as identified by public participants.

ments included finding a "lack of access" for land and water, for disabled people, and to information; "lack of coalitions among interested groups"; "lack of communication to public about activities"; "limited funding"; "poorly maintained" state access facilities; "population growth" and the increase of "private land being posted."

Actions. Also, over 90% (n=206) responded that there are specific actions that could be taken to address this topic, and offered 411 comments, including the acquisition of "more public lands" and of "building rights to land"; the designation of specific "recreational sporting areas"; "education" of the public and uneducated environmentalists; federal and state "funding";

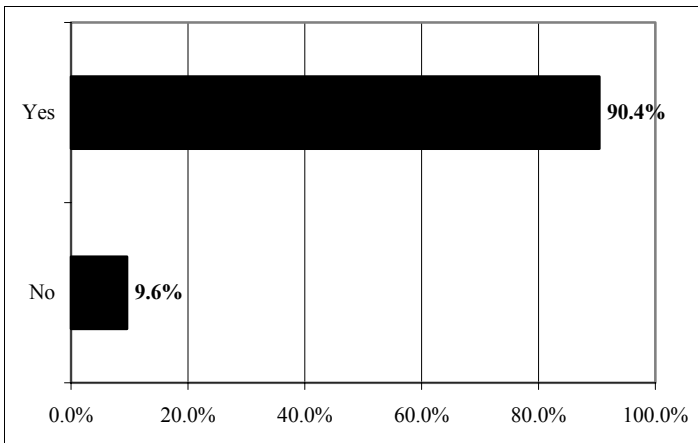


Figure 18. Actions to address the range of outdoor recreation opportunities as identified by public participants.

“improve public access sites”; “improve disabled access” and implement “user fees.”

Public Use and Resource Conservation

This section of the survey deals with balancing the conservation and value of natural and cultural resources with public recreational access and tourism. More specifically, “this topic might include issues related to land and water conservation, open space protection, public recreational access, and balancing public use and resource conservation for public lands. Recreational access includes both motorized and non-motorized recreation. This topic also includes sustainable tourism development and the importance of natural and cultural resources in attracting tourism to New Hampshire. Resources include wetlands, lakes, rivers, coastal areas, forests, cultural/historic resources, rare/endangered species, etc.” Over 80% of the participants (n=224) indicate that the relationship between public recrea-

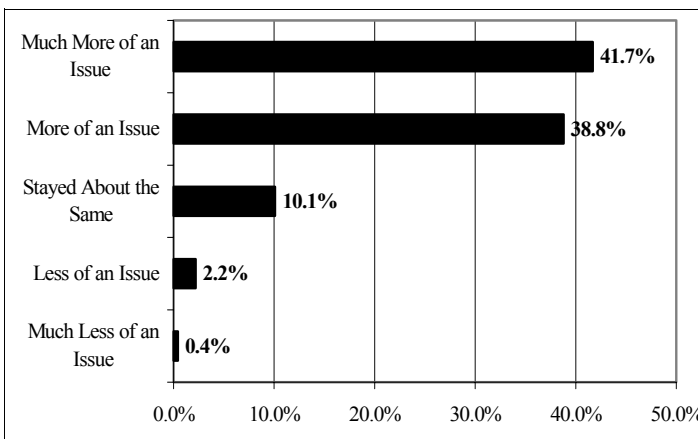


Figure 19. Public ratings for “public use and resource conservation.”

tional use and resource conservation in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has become more of an issue, while only 2.6% of respondents (n=7) feel that it has become less of an issue. 222 respondents provided statements describing the way that they rated public use and resource conservation. One participant said that “Increased public awareness, increased demand due to population, accessibility, income, and free time” all helped to shape their opinion, while another said that “More fees, less access. Trailhead parking fees, high registration fees.” Conversely, a respondent felt that “There is a more balanced approach and more appreciation of the others perspective.”

Barriers. Over 85% (n=194) feel that specific barriers or challenges exist, and 354 comments were provided on this issue, like “balance” between a variety of interests; “education”;

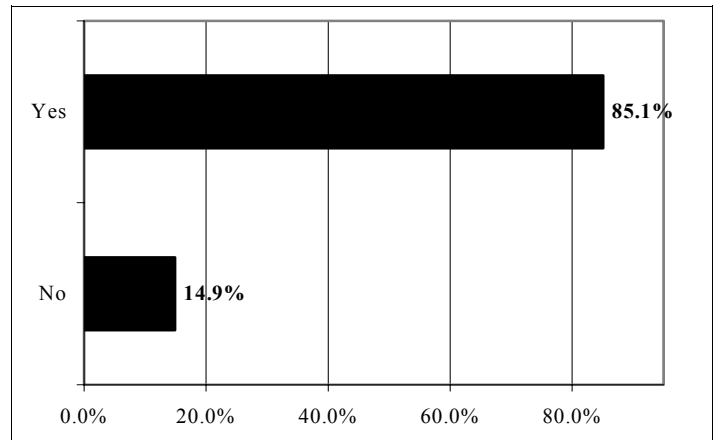


Figure 20. Barriers to public use and resource conservation as identified by public participants.

“funding”; “growing population”; “growing tourism”; lack of “public access,” “public information,” and “maintenance”; lack of “law enforcement”; “property rights”; and public “misconceptions,” “misinformation,” “perceptions,” and “opinions.”

Actions. Over 85% (n=175) of respondents believe that there are specific actions that can be taken to address this topic. 314 action-oriented recommendations were made by respondents.

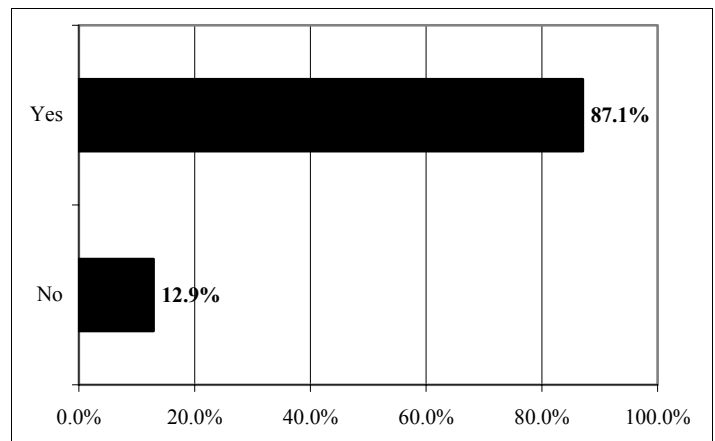


Figure 21. Actions to address public use and resource conservation as identified by public participants.

For example, “education,” the “improvement” of interagency cooperation, “regulations,” and “land conservation” were popular suggestions.

Community Recreation, Health and Well-Being

This section deals with the promotion of livable, healthy communities (and people) and supporting community-based recreation opportunities close to home. To be more specific, “this topic includes understanding local priorities for Land and Water Conservation Fund monies, maintaining existing local facilities, developing new local recreation sites, and securing sufficient funds for local recreation needs. This topic also includes the importance of outdoor recreation in promoting healthy communities and families, with a focus on the relationship between land use and the quality of life.” 31.8% of respondents (n=82) believe that community-based recreation, health and well-being

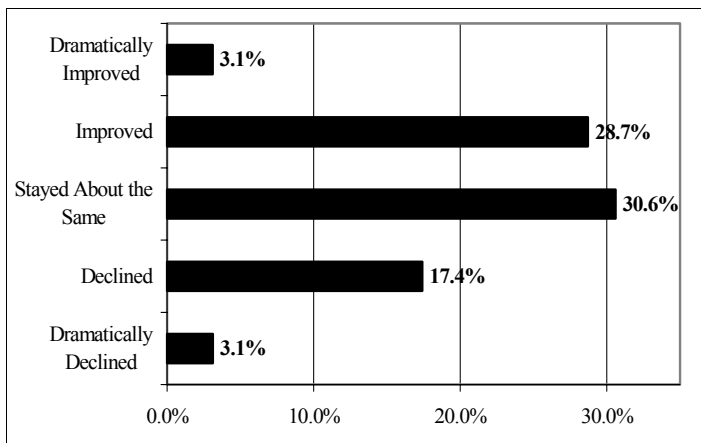


Figure 22. Public ratings for “community recreation, health and well-being.”

in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has improved; 30.6% ($n=79$) believe that it has stayed about the same; and 20.2% ($n=52$) say that it has declined. 164 additional comments were offered by the respondents. One respondent feels that “Continued development of open space has neutralized many of the improvements made by communities.” Another said that “I see more parks in local areas but also much more urban sprawl in the southern part of the state.” Another participant said that “In my area, state funding has been decreasing, but local efforts are keeping resources available. It is a fragile and unsatisfactory solution. Consistent state funding is important.”

Barriers. Over 70% of respondents ($n=122$) say that specific barriers or challenges exist, and provided 215 comments. Com-

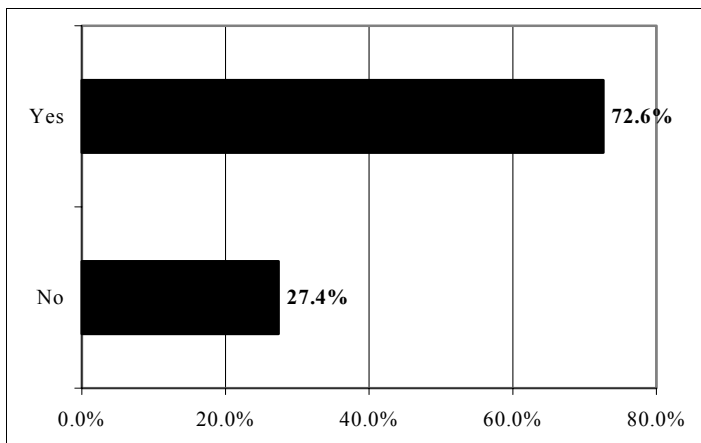


Figure 23. Barriers to community recreation, health and well-being as identified by public participants.

mon themes include “lack of funding”; “growth and sprawl”; improving “mass transit” and “urban planning” and “education.”

Actions. Also, nearly 75% ($n=104$) believe that there are specific actions that can be taken to address this topic, and provided 192 recommendations relating to community recreation, health and well-being. Some of these recommendations include “better education” and “better communication”; “increase funding sources”; “public awareness”; “land use planning” to control sprawl; and “zoning restrictions.”

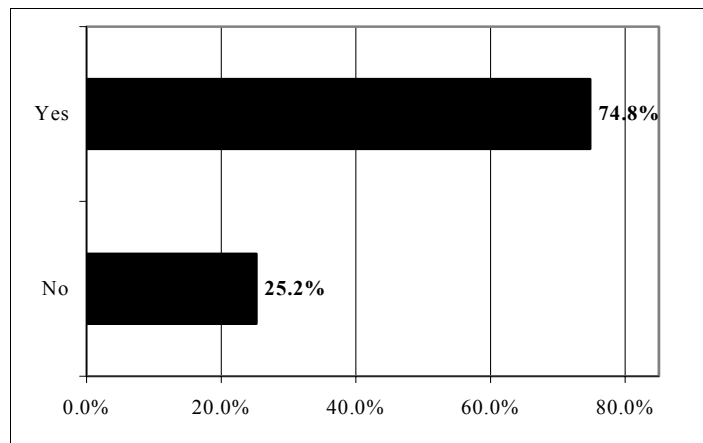


Figure 24. Actions to address community recreation, health and well-being as identified by public respondents.

Recreation Corridors and Linkages

This section deals with the promotion of recreational/conservation corridors and linkages within a community, as well as linkages between communities and regions. More specifically, “this topic includes recreation and conservation issues related to trails, recreation corridors and greenways, across a range of motorized and non-motorized recreational activities. This topic also includes the role that trails play in linking and connecting places within a community and between communities and regions. These corridors also play a role in promoting healthy communities and families, and making more livable/walkable communities, with a focus on the relationship between

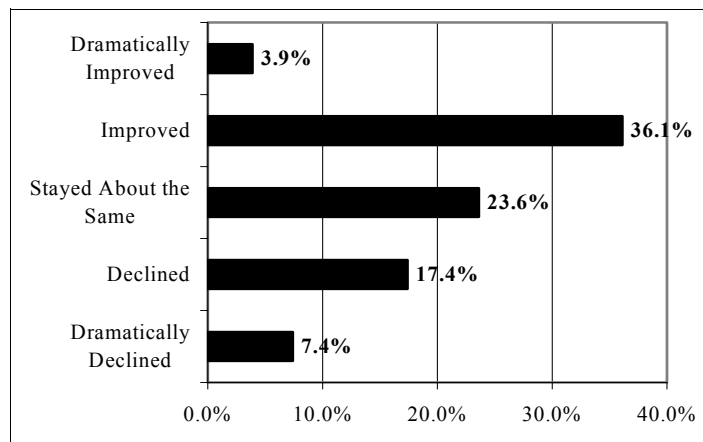


Figure 25. Public ratings for “recreation corridors and linkages.”

land use and the quality of life.” 40% of the public respondents ($n=103$) say that the quantity and quality of recreation corridors and linkages in New Hampshire over the past 10 years have improved; 23.6% ($n=61$) feel that they have stayed about the same; and almost 25% ($n=64$) believe that they have declined. 194 comments were provided, including “I see little if any improvements, and no linkage between or within communities.” Another participant feels that “Highway construction, parks, et al all must meet the needs of the pedestrians, handicap, bikers, etc. There must be opportunities for all.” Alternatively, one respondent said that “In Amherst and surrounding towns, wildlife and recreation corridors have been specifically addressed and considerable progress made.”

Barriers. Almost 85% of respondents ($n=149$) believe that specific barriers or challenges exist, and provided 255 comments. Common themes among these comments include “public awareness”; “development and lack of planning”;

	LOW	MED	HIGH
a. Recreational opportunities and facilities for small children and youth (n=265)	20.0%	47.9%	32.1%
b. Local recreation corridors and trail linkages between community resources (n=263)	17.1%	34.2%	48.7%
c. Multi-purpose trail systems (n=266)	16.2%	30.8%	53.0%
d. Access to New Hampshire's public waters for boating, fishing and other recreational uses (n=269)	23.8%	40.1%	36.1%
e. Areas/opportunities for wildlife watching (n=268)	26.5%	42.9%	30.6%
f. Develop a wide range of recreational opportunities for those who are disabled (n=269)	27.9%	54.3%	17.8%
g. Education programs on natural resource conservation/protection (n=271)	18.5%	41.3%	40.2%
h. Education programs on cultural resource conservation/protection (n=266)	31.2%	42.1%	26.7%
i. Incentives to encourage the provision of outdoor recreation opportunities on private lands (n=269)	20.8%	33.1%	46.1%
j. Maintenance of existing park facilities and trails (n=270)	2.6%	37.8%	59.6%
k. Safety and law enforcement in outdoor recreation areas (n=267)	15.4%	40.4%	44.2%
l. Education programs for New Hampshire residents about outdoor recreation opportunities (n=264)	38.6%	39.0%	22.3%
m. Enforcement of environmental laws and land use regulations (n=269)	8.6%	30.5%	61.0%
n. Acquire and protect undeveloped lands with provisions for public access (n=269)	10.4%	25.7%	63.9%
o. Acquire lands for organized outdoor recreation sports and activities (n=267)	32.2%	39.0%	28.8%
p. Develop facilities for organized outdoor recreation sports and activities (n=267)	44.9%	39.3%	15.7%
q. Motorized recreational trails (n=273)	59.3%	11.0%	29.7%
r. Sponsor outdoor education and skills courses for New Hampshire residents (n=265)	38.9%	37.7%	23.4%
s. Identify and establish visitor/recreational use capacity for public lands and waters (n=266)	25.6%	48.1%	26.3%
t. Education programs for recreational users on user etiquette and current laws (n=268)	18.7%	36.6%	44.8%
u. Support facilities at existing recreational areas (n=264)	22.0%	52.3%	25.8%
v. Comprehensive state planning for greenways and recreation corridors (n=264)	16.7%	32.2%	51.1%
w. Promote smart growth planning and zoning approaches in communities (n=263)	16.3%	25.9%	57.8%
x. Non-motorized recreational trails (n=268)	24.6%	24.6%	50.7%
y. Areas/opportunities for hunting and fishing (n=266)	40.2%	37.6%	22.2%
z. Education programs for private landowners and communities about public access liability (n=264)	22.7%	43.2%	34.1%
aa. Outdoor recreation planning to determine how to wisely invest in tourism (n=261)	27.2%	44.4%	28.4%

Table 6. Public-identified funding priorities for outdoor recreation in New Hampshire.

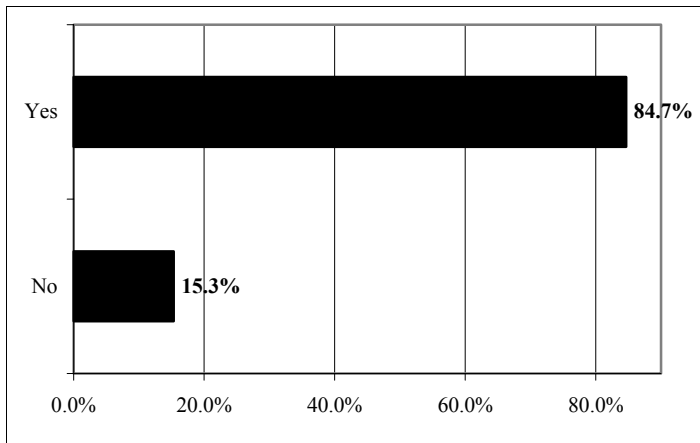


Figure 26. Barriers to address recreation corridors and linkages as identified by public respondents.

“education”; “funding” for a variety of actions; “lack of awareness” and “knowledge”; “lack of leadership” at the state and community levels; “lack of cooperation” between recreation clubs and between landowners; “local planning regulations”; and “population growth” and “sprawl.”

Actions. Over 86% of respondents ($n=130$) say that there are specific actions that can be taken to address this topic, and provided 204 recommendations relating to the quantity and quality

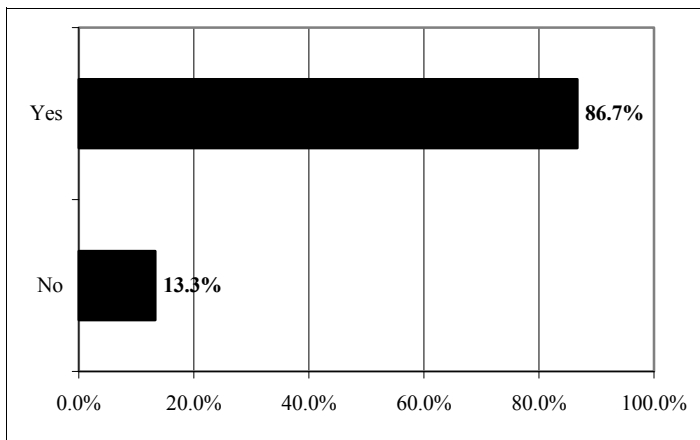


Figure 27. Actions to address recreation corridors and linkages as identified by public respondents.

of recreation corridors and linkages. Some of these include “education” of landowners, the public, communities and state agencies; encourage private land to be “opened up” to public use; “funding” to purchase land; “more planning” and “more public awareness.”

Outdoor Recreation Priorities

In this section, respondents were asked to rate funding priorities in New Hampshire, ranging from LOW to HIGH. **Table 6** indicates the percentages of responses for each question. The top five responses in each category (LOW, MED, HIGH) are highlighted in bold-face type. Responses of particular interest include question A, “Recreational opportunities and facilities for small children and youth,” where almost half (47.9%, $n=127$) rated this as a MEDIUM funding priority. Question C, “Multi-purpose trail systems (e.g. hiking, biking, horseback riding, snowmobiling)” shows that over half of the respondents (53.0%, $n=141$) rated this as a HIGH funding priority, and only 16.2% ($n=43$) identified this as a LOW priority. Question J, “Maintenance of existing park (federal, state, and local) facili-

ties and trails” is seen as something that should receive a HIGH funding priority (59.6%, $n=161$), as well as the enforcement of environmental laws and land use regulations (question M), with 61.0% ($n=164$) of participants identifying this as a HIGH priority. Also, Question N (the acquisition and protection of “undeveloped lands with provisions for public access”) is seen as a HIGH funding priority, receiving 63.9% of responses ($n=172$). Question P, the development of “facilities for organized outdoor recreation sports and activities,” is viewed as a LOW funding priority, indicated by 44.9% ($n=120$) of the respondents. Question Q, “Motorized recreational trails,” is perceived as a LOW funding priority (59.3%, $n=162$), with 29.7% ($n=81$) giving this topic a HIGH priority. Over 57.8% ($n=152$) of respondents identified question W, “Promote smart growth planning and zoning approaches in communities” as a HIGH priority.

Did You Know...

In this section, respondents were asked about their previous knowledge of SCORP and LWCF-related issues. Only 20.7% ($n=56$) of respondents indicated that they were familiar or extremely familiar with the LWCF, while 33.7% ($n=91$) were not

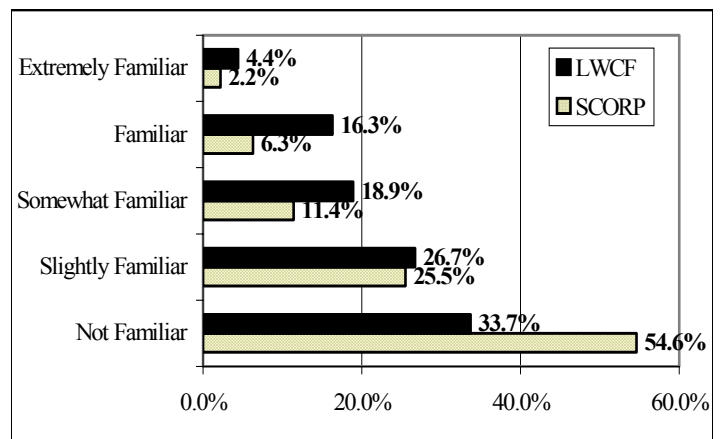


Figure 28. Organization ratings of their previous knowledge of the LWCF and New Hampshire’s SCORP.

at all familiar. Over half (54.6%, $n=148$) of the respondents said that they were not familiar with the SCORP, while only 8.5% ($n=23$) considered themselves to be familiar or extremely familiar with the program. When asked if they knew that local communities and school districts could apply to the DRED for LWCF funds for acquisition and/or development of outdoor recreation areas through a 50/50 matching grants program,

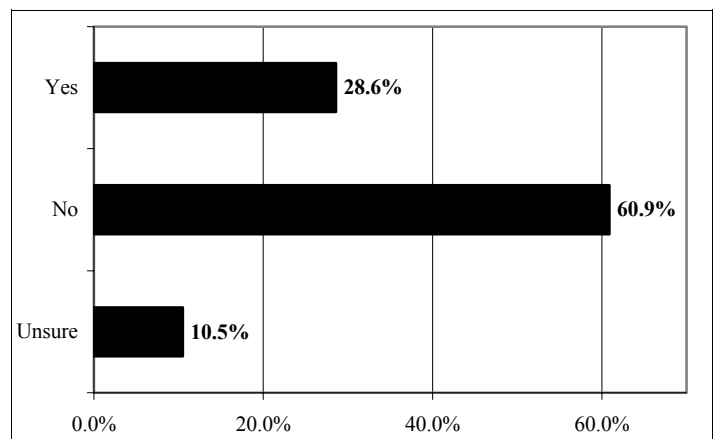


Figure 29. Organization participants’ familiarity with the 50/50 matching grants programs through DRED for LWCF funds.

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree
NH State Parks should focus funding on acquiring more land for the purpose of developing outdoor recreation areas	42.1%	35.4%	13.3%	7.0%	2.2%
NH State Parks should focus funding on maintaining/refurbishing existing outdoor recreation areas	43.4%	35.7%	16.5%	2.6%	1.8%
Communities should be acquiring more conservation land for passive outdoor recreation	57.8%	20.1%	10.8%	5.6%	5.6%
Communities should be acquiring more land for developed athletic/organized outdoor recreation	19.4%	27.2%	31.7%	16.0%	5.6%

Table 7. Organization participants' ratings of funding and land acquisition priorities.

28.6% ($n=76$) said YES, 60.9% ($n=162$) said NO, and 10.5% ($n=28$) said that they were UNSURE.

What Do You Think?

This section asked respondents their opinions of particular land-acquisition scenarios in New Hampshire. The results of each question are shown in **Table 7**. 77.5% of respondents ($n=210$) agree that New Hampshire State Parks should focus funding on acquiring more land for the purpose of developing outdoor recreation areas, while only 9.2% ($n=25$) disagree with the statement. Almost 80% of respondents ($n=215$) agree that New Hampshire State Parks should focus funding on maintaining/refurbishing existing outdoor recreation areas, with only 4.4% of participants ($n=12$) disagreeing. When asked if communities should be acquiring more conservation land for passive outdoor recreation, 77.9% ($n=209$) of respondents agree, while only 11.2% ($n=30$) disagreed with the statement. Nearly half of the respondents (46.6%, $n=125$) agree that communities should be acquiring more land for developed athletic/organized outdoor recreation, while 21.6% ($n=58$) disagree.

WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?

Perhaps the most important piece of information that can be taken away from this study is that so few New Hampshire residents are aware of the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the Land and Water Conservation Fund. 49.8% of respondents of the organization survey ($n=113$) said that that were not familiar with the SCORP, and only 13.2% ($n=30$) considered themselves to be slightly familiar with the program. 54.6% of respondents to the public survey ($n=148$) considered themselves to be unfamiliar with the SCORP, and only 25.5% ($n=69$) were slightly familiar. Only 10.3% of organization respondents ($n=23$) and 4.4% of the public respondents ($n=12$) say that they are extremely familiar with the LWCF.

Both groups say that the overall range of outdoor recreation opportunities in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has improved. The relationship between public recreational use and resource conservation in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has become more of an issue according to both groups. Many respondents in both groups said that community-based recreation, health and well-being in New Hampshire has improved over the past 10 years. Finally, many respondents believe that the quantity and quality of recreation corridors and linkages in New Hampshire over the past 10 years has improved to some degree. Both organization and public respondents said that specific barriers or challenges exist, and there are actions that can be taken to address each of these four topics.

Both surveys indicated that local recreation corridors and trail linkages between community resources should be a HIGH

funding priority for the State. Multi-purpose trail systems are also viewed as a HIGH funding priority by both groups. The development of a wide range of recreational opportunities for those who are disabled is viewed as a MEDIUM priority across cohorts, as well as education programs on cultural resource conservation/protection. Maintenance of existing park facilities and trails is overwhelmingly seen as a HIGH funding priority, in addition to the enforcement of environmental laws and land use regulations. Both groups indicated that motorized recreational trails should be given a LOW funding priority. The promotion of smart growth planning and zoning approaches in communities is seen as a HIGH funding priority.

Respondents indicated that they agree that New Hampshire State Parks should focus funding on acquiring more land for the purpose of developing outdoor recreation areas. Also, both groups agree that New Hampshire State Parks should focus funding on maintaining/refurbishing existing outdoor recreation areas. Further, it is agreed across cohorts that communities should be acquiring more conservation land for passive outdoor recreation.

FUTURE REPORTS AND STUDIES

Data used in this report was collected from August 15, 2002 to September 27, 2002. Further analysis might include a comparison of respondents versus non-respondents across organization type.

Future studies should consider the inclusion of day-care groups and facilities, as well as senior care facilities. It is believed that these groups are not represented in this current study, and could provide important input for this survey.

Full-text responses to open-ended questions are available upon request. Please contact Dr. Robert Robertson at UNH at (603) 862-1700 or at robertr@christa.unh.edu.