



2023 Socioeconomic Research of Everglades National Park

Report on 2023 Data Collection



Camping at Sweetwater Chickee on the Wilderness Waterway in Everglades National Park.

NPS / JANE GAMBLE

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Abstract

A strong mandate and need for socioeconomic monitoring have been expressed in the National Park Service (NPS) strategic goals for science, in statements by NPS leadership, and in various official reports. Since such monitoring began in 2022, the NPS has conducted visitor surveys at 24 parks per year across the United States and associated territories. Everglades National Park (Everglades) was selected as one of these units for 2023 implementation. This socioeconomic monitoring at Everglades uses a two-step survey methodology to capture a representative sample of visitor information, characteristics, and behavior. This process includes (1) an on-site intercept survey conducted via tablet, and (2) a post-trip survey (completed either by mail-back or online) for more in-depth trip details. The types of data collected include visitor demographics, trip characteristics/planning, and experience evaluations. Results are organized by these two survey instruments and are aimed to assist park managers in understanding current utilization and perception of park resources, assessing operations and potential issues, and facilitating communication and decision-making processes within the park and between the park and its local partners and stakeholders. Results of this and studies at the 23 other park units sampled for 2023 contribute to a SEM National Technical Report that produces national-level findings on an annual basis.

Introduction

Social science research has become increasingly recognized as a crucial component of park planning, amplifying its significance for the National Park Service (NPS). With the ever-changing landscape of visitation and a desire to provide transformative visitor experiences, understanding the needs and expectations of the visiting public has become more important than ever. The agency seeks to provide the highest quality visitor experience while also protecting the important natural and cultural resources that make these sites special.

This resounding call for nationwide socioeconomic research to help the agency better serve its visitors has garnered substantial support from external reviews and various discussions held by the Department of the Interior. As a result of this ongoing need, a pilot visitor study was conducted in 2015/2016 across selected park units throughout the United States. Building upon the valuable insights gleaned from the pilot study, the Socioeconomic Monitoring Program (SEM) Visitor Survey has been carried out in 2022 and 2023 at 24 NPS units across the country per year. Everglades National Park (Everglades) was selected as one of these 24 units in 2023. The study aims to deepen understanding of visitor demographics and characteristics at Everglades.

The 2023 SEM Visitor Survey gathers data at a comprehensive agency level, effectively addressing the informational needs of park managers throughout the vast National Park System. The data collected during the sampling period in March 2023 is intended to provide park managers at Everglades with data-supported insights into their visitors while enabling robust data analysis at the agency level and beyond for future applications.

This study gathers a wealth of knowledge about visitor use, aids in finding effective management solutions, and offers insights into the visitors who experience NPS sites. The findings empower NPS managers to better comprehend visitor behaviors, inform park operations, and identify areas for enhancing the visitor experience. Moreover, these results are intended to facilitate communication and foster informed decision-making processes, both within Everglades and in collaboration with local partners and stakeholders.

The research was carried out by a large team including Otak, Inc., RRC Associates, Inc., the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research at the University of Montana, and GAIA Environmental Consulting.

Methods

The SEM Visitor Survey methodology is designed to capture a representative sample of visitor information, characteristics, and behavior at each sampled park through:

1. An onsite intercept survey conducted via tablet, and
2. A post-trip follow-up survey (mail-back or online) for full trip details.

This comprehensive approach provides the necessary information to make on-the-ground decisions in parks using immediate feedback from the intercept survey, while also capturing key in-depth information on visitor spending and trip characteristics for long-term planning from the post-trip survey. Additionally, the intercept survey is designed to be brief so as not to fundamentally affect visitors' experiences. The methods also permit a larger sample to be collected on key questions of interest.

Study Area

The Everglades local area map is shown in Figure 1. The local area around Everglades consists of the following counties in the state of Florida: Miami-Dade, Monroe, Collier, Broward, and Lee. Within Everglades, the study area was comprised of six locations. Table 1 lists those sites and the number of onsite intercept surveys completed at each. Locations and volumes of surveyor effort were determined based on historic visitor volumes and distribution across the park's main areas. Where feasible, Visitor Use Statistics estimates for monthly visitation per site were used to station surveyors proportionally across sites. Park staff were consulted prior to study launch to confirm visitor use statistics metrics to ensure the most popular and representative locations were captured in the sampling plan.

Table 1. Information about sampling locations for intercept surveying within Everglades.

Intercept Site	Number of Completed Intercept Surveys	Percent of Completed Intercept Surveys
Air Boat Rentals	434	25.9%
Royal Palm/Anhinga	326	19.4%
Homestead Entrance/Ernest F Coe Visitor Center	289	17.2%
Shark Valley	256	15.3%
Flamingo	208	12.4%
Everglades City/Gulf Coast Visitor Center Area	164	9.8%



Figure 1. Everglades local area map.

Sampling Period and Procedure

Intercept Survey

The on-site intercept survey is designed to rapidly collect visitor information as tablet-based responses. The intercept sampling was conducted during the period of March 17th through 31st, 2023. A sample of visitors were intercepted while visiting Everglades across the designated locations listed in Table 1, above. The majority of respondents were visitors on foot to these locations.

Surveyors approached potential respondent groups at the site to introduce the purpose of the study and ask them to participate in a short 5–7-minute survey about their experience in Everglades (NPS 2023a). Within the group, the adult with the next upcoming birthday was asked to participate. If the visitor was eligible (at least 18 years of age, not an Everglades employee, and had not previously taken the survey) and agreed to participate in the study, the surveyor verbally administered the survey questions and recorded the responses on a handheld tablet device. If the visitor did not agree, surveyors asked if they would be willing to answer three non-response bias questions (see the Nonresponse Bias Analysis section, below). Upon complete or partial refusal, the surveyor would thank the visitor for their time, log the nonresponse, and approach the next visitor group.

At the end of the intercept survey, respondents were invited to participate in a post-trip survey by mail-back or online response. Those who agreed to participate were given an envelope containing a printed copy of the post-trip survey with a postage paid envelope for mailing it back, as well as a hyperlink and instructions for accessing it online. As part of the intercept protocol, surveyors logged a unique identifier (four-digit code) from the envelope into the tablet for future connection to the post-trip survey.

Therefore, four potential outcomes were possible when intercepting visitors (see Table 2):

1. Complete refusal, refused to answer any questions, including non-response bias questions;
2. Partial refusal, answered non-response bias questions but nothing further;
3. Completed intercept, but refused to take post-trip survey; or
4. Completed intercept and took post-trip survey.

During the sampling period, six surveyors were stationed simultaneously at different sampling sites. Start times varied day-to-day and by location to capture a diverse sample of visitors across Everglades. Each surveyor worked 13 seven-hour days (approximately six hours of data collection and a one-hour lunch break) and rotated among several sites. Each surveyor had two days off during the 15-day sampling window.

Table 2. Response outcomes – Everglades intercept survey.

Outcome	Total
Eligible visitors contacted	2,039
Complete refusals	248
Partial refusals (non-response bias questions completed)	114
Intercept surveys completed	1,677
Post-trip surveys distributed	1,625
Intercept response rate	82.2%
Post-trip acceptance rate	96.9%

Post-trip Survey

The post-trip survey was distributed to participating respondents who completed the intercept survey and then agreed to take a follow-up survey after completing their trip to Everglades. This method extended data collection and asked participants to complete the survey after their visit, either through a postage-paid envelope provided to them, or online via a provided survey link. The post-trip survey covers visitor trip spending details, travel patterns, and perceptions of their recent visit (NPS 2023b). Both the intercept survey and the post-trip survey were tagged with a unique identifier (four-digit code) for each respondent so their onsite intercept responses could be paired with their post-trip

responses. Numbers were assigned at random to the individual. The use of this code allows the data to be joined, while keeping all surveys confidential and removing respondents' identifiable information. Joining the two datasets provides a more complete picture of connecting in-park experiences and post-visit perceptions.

At the end of the intercept survey, respondents were asked for their physical mailing address or email address. This allowed for a reminder postcard or email to be sent to all contacts who provided contact information about a week following the end of each onsite data collection period. This postcard or email thanked respondents for their original participation and encouraged them to complete the post-trip survey if they had not already done so.

Three weeks after postcard mailing, a second contact (with the same unique IDs) was delivered to all outstanding addresses/emails, noting that the individual's completed questionnaire had yet to be received. The mailed survey packets included replacement surveys and postage-paid, self-addressed return envelopes. A final contact was mailed/emailed to all remaining non-respondents four weeks after sending the second contact (i.e., first full replacement survey). Table 3 shows response rate for the post-trip survey.

Table 3. Response outcomes – Everglades post-trip survey.

Outcome	Total
Post-trip surveys distributed	1,625
Valid post-trip surveys completed	585
Response rate	36.0%

Nonresponse Bias Analysis

To account for potential biases between respondents and non-respondents, three questions were asked of eligible visitors contacted who did not wish to participate in the survey. The responses to these three questions can then be compared to both the larger group of respondents who completed the intercept survey, and the smaller group who completed both the intercept and post-trip surveys.

The Office of Management and Budget recommends testing for non-response bias when a response rate is less than 80%. With an intercept survey response rate of 82.2%, concern over intercept nonresponse is muted. However, because the post-trip survey response rate (36.0%) did not meet the minimum threshold, bias testing was conducted to evaluate differences between those respondents who completed the full survey (both intercept and post-trip), and those who only completed the intercept portion.

A chi-square test for homogeneity was performed for each of the three questions to evaluate differences between the groups. A p-value of .05 is used as the indicated threshold of significance; p-values of .05 or lower indicate significant difference between groups.

The distribution of responses among full survey respondents and intercept-only respondents differed significantly for all three questions. Therefore, permanent or seasonal residents of the local area, international visitors/non-US residents, and day visitors are not as well represented in the full responses as desired, based on their proportion among intercept survey respondents. Results of the bias testing are shown in Tables 4 through 6.

Table 4. Post-trip survey non-response bias question: “Are you a permanent or seasonal/second home resident of the local area around Everglades?”.

Response	Frequency: Full survey respondents	Percent: Full survey respondents	Frequency: Intercept-only respondents	Percent: Intercept-only respondents
Yes	71	12.2%	203	18.6%
No	513	87.8%	890	81.4%

*p-value: <0.01

Table 5. Post-trip survey non-response bias question: “Do you currently live in the United States?”.

Response	Frequency: Full survey respondents	Percent: Full survey respondents	Frequency: Intercept-only respondents	Percent: Intercept-only respondents
Yes	529	90.6%	880	80.5%
No	55	9.4%	213	19.5%

*p-value: <0.01

Table 6. Post-trip survey non-response bias question: “On this trip away from home, have you [and your personal group] stayed, or will you stay overnight away from your permanent residence either in Everglades and/or within the local area?”.

Response	Frequency: Full survey respondents	Percent: Full survey respondents	Frequency: Intercept-only respondents	Percent: Intercept-only respondents
Yes	493	84.4%	857	78.4%
No	91	15.6%	236	21.6%

*p-value: <0.01

Results

Results are presented separately for both the intercept and post-trip survey throughout the following section. To preserve the data for additional analyses, outliers for open-ended numeric questions (e.g., nights spent, days in local area, etc.) have not been removed. Given these outliers, medians are shown instead of means throughout the report, in order to better represent the central tendency.

Intercept Survey Results

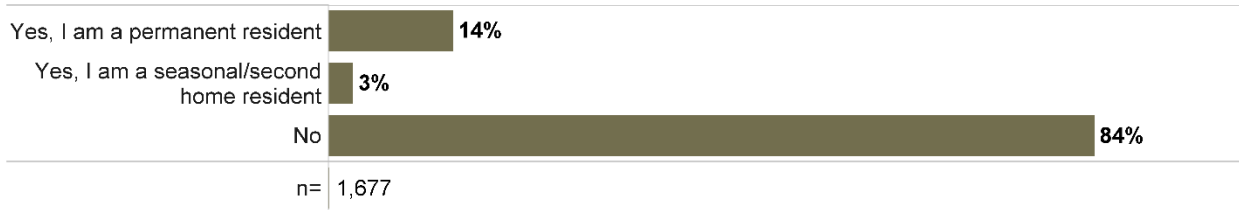
The following section provides results of the 1,677 visitor intercept surveys conducted in Everglades from March 17th through 31st, 2023. All results are presented in this report, regardless of sample

size, which varies by question. Caution is recommended in the interpretation of figures with sample size lower than n=30. Categories on some questions may not sum to 100% due to rounding differences and/or the opportunity to select more than one response option.

Questions 1-2: Visitor Residency

First, respondents were asked to indicate if they were permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around Everglades. Permanent and seasonal residents were then asked for their ZIP code within the local area. Respondents who do not reside permanently or seasonally in the local area were asked if they currently live in the U.S., and if so, for their ZIP code. Figure 2 depicts responses to this group of questions.

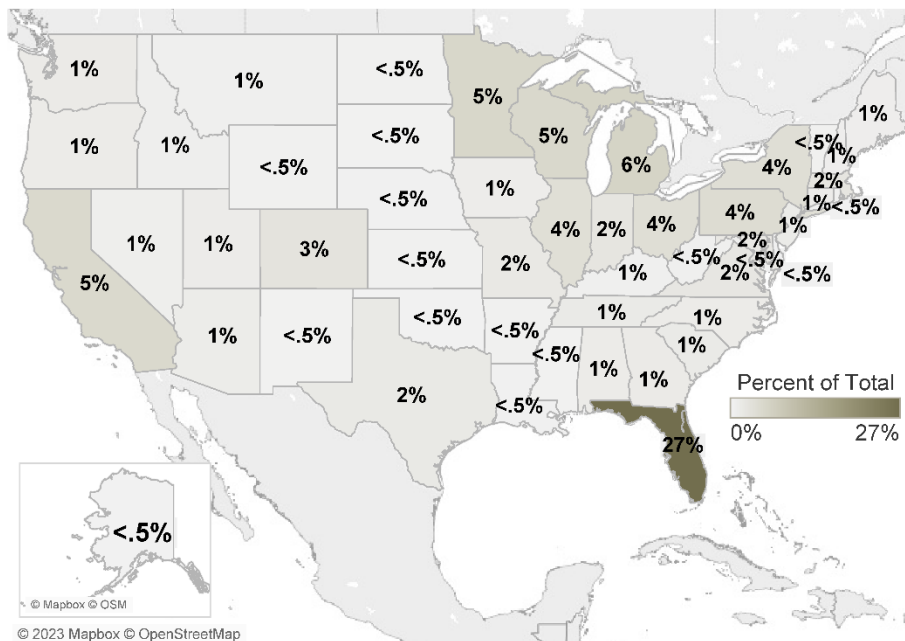
Are you a permanent or seasonal/second home resident of the local area around Everglades National Park?



Do you currently live in the United States?



Respondent States (Percentage of U.S. respondents only)



Top 10 States

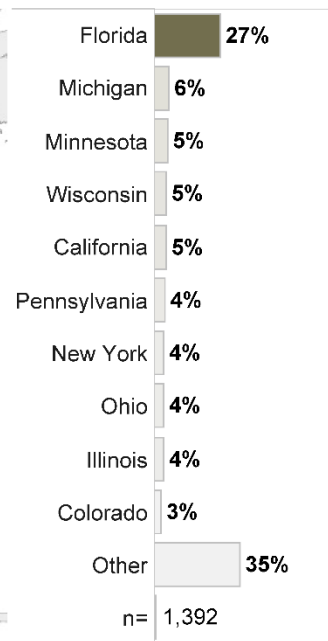


Figure 2. Respondent local residency status and geographic origin of domestic respondents surveyed at Everglades.

- Just under one-fifth of respondents (a combined 17%) stated that they were either permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around Everglades.
- There was a large geographic concentration of respondents from Florida (where Everglades is located).
- Among the 84% of respondents currently residing in the U.S., 27% reside in Florida, followed by 6% from Michigan, and 5% from Minnesota, Wisconsin, and California.

Question 3: Trip Purpose

Respondents who are not permanent or seasonal residents of the local area were asked about the overall purpose for their trip away from home (Figure 3).

[If not local/seasonal resident] Was your visit to Everglades National Park...?

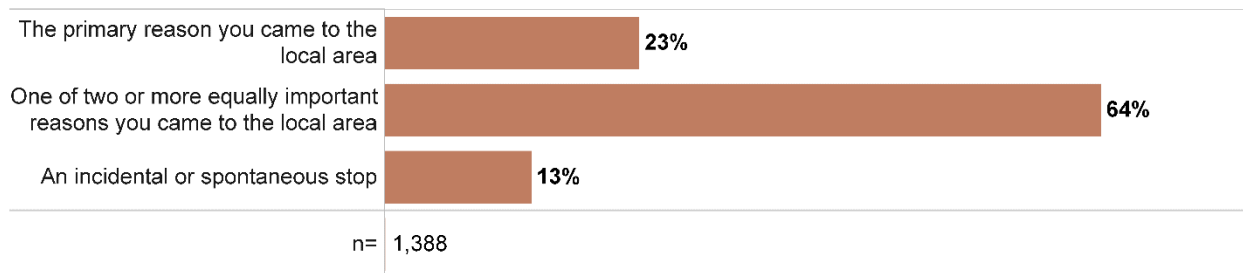


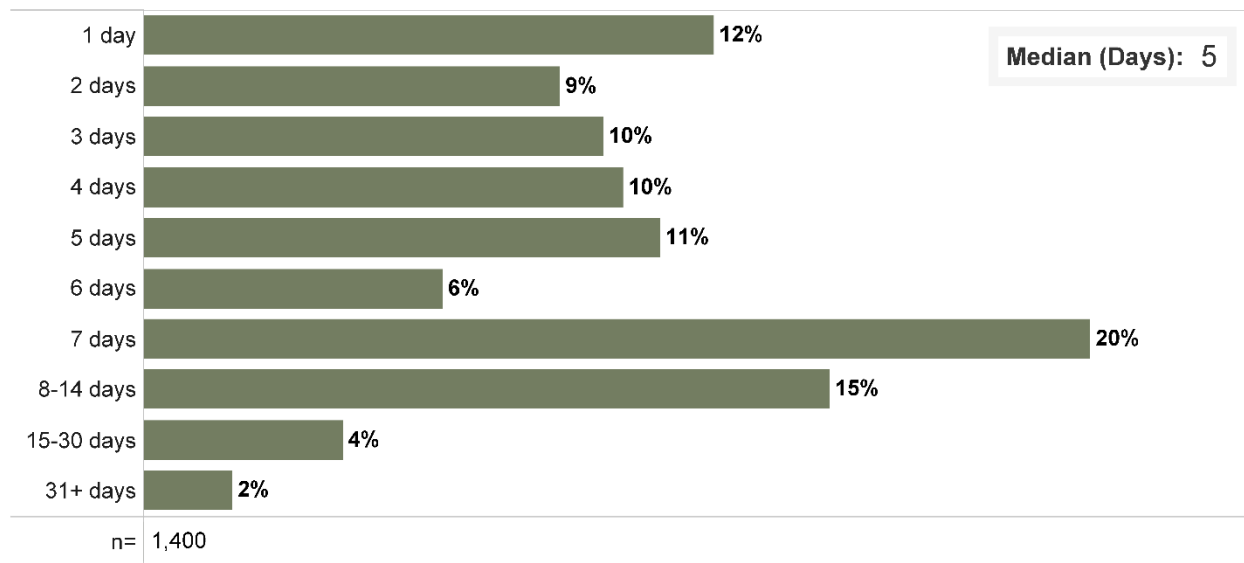
Figure 3. Role of Everglades in overall trip purpose.

- For just under one-quarter of non-local respondents (23%), visiting Everglades was the primary reason they came to the local area (i.e., the southern Florida peninsula, as depicted in Figure 1).
- The majority of non-local respondents (64%) stated that their visit to Everglades was one of two or more equally important reasons that brought them to the local area, while the remaining 13% indicated that Everglades it was an incidental or spontaneous stop while they were already in the area.

Question 4: Length of Stay

Respondents who are not permanent or seasonal residents of the local area around Everglades were also asked how many days they planned to spend within that local area, including days spent in the park. All respondents, regardless of residency, were asked whether they would be staying overnight away from their permanent residence within the local area. Responses to both of these questions are depicted in Figure 4.

[If not local/seasonal resident] How many days are you planning to spend in the local area (including the days you spend in Everglades National Park) on this trip away from home?



On this trip away from home, have you stayed, or will you stay overnight away from your permanent residence in Everglades National Park and/or within the local area?

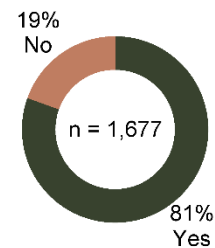


Figure 4. Time spent in the local area around Everglades.

- Small percentages of non-local respondents (12%) spent one day in the local area, while 9% spent two days, and 10% spent three days. A plurality of non-local respondents (41%) spent seven days or more in the local area. The median length of stay was five days.
- Additionally, more than three-quarters of all respondents (81%; including permanent/seasonal residents) had stayed or planned to stay overnight away from their permanent residence in the park and/or in the local area.

Questions 5-6: Overnight Visitors

If respondents indicated that they stayed overnight in the local area, they were asked about the type(s) of accommodation they used or planned to use while there (Figure 5).

[If staying overnight in local area] On this trip, what type of accommodations do you expect to use while in the local area? Please mark all that apply

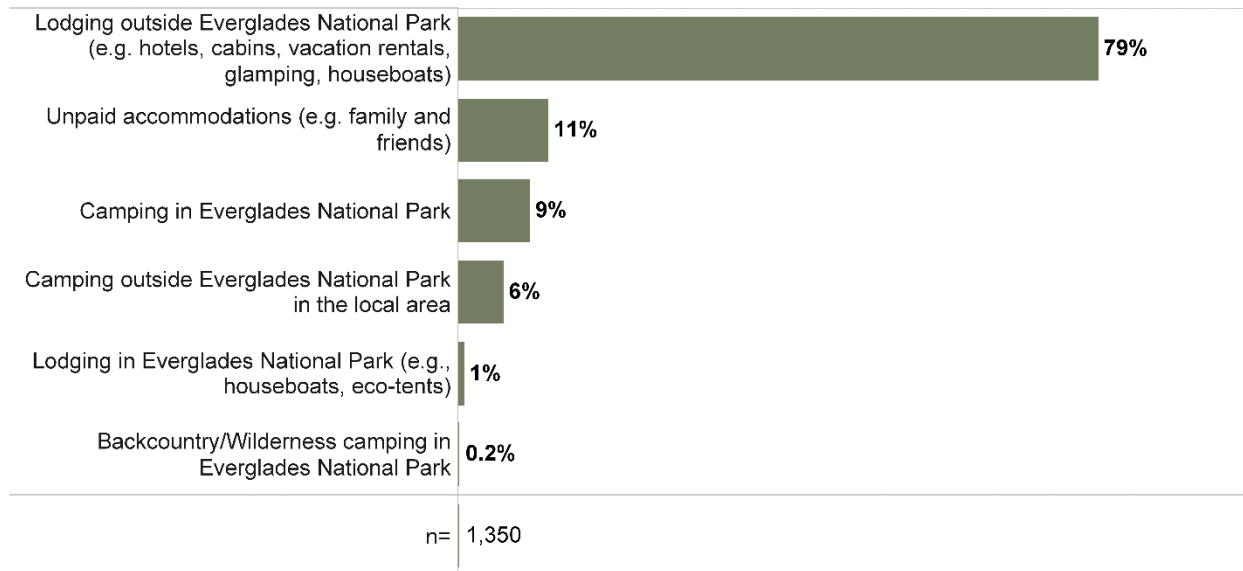


Figure 5. Accommodation types used by overnight visitors within Everglades and in the local area surrounding it.

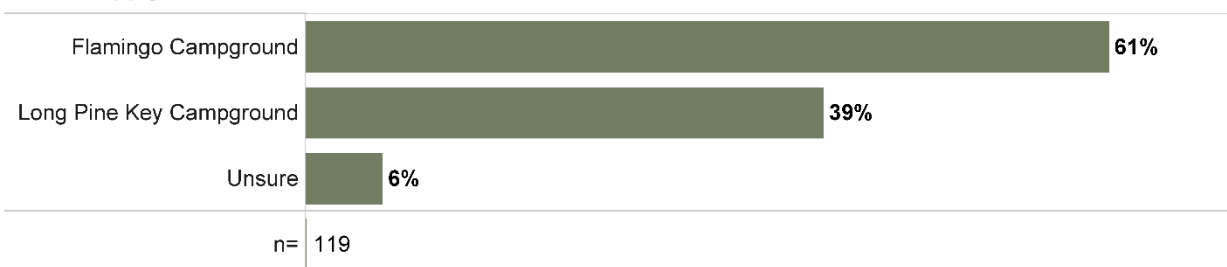
- More than three-quarters of overnight respondents (79%) stayed in lodging outside Everglades National Park.
- This was followed in prevalence by unpaid accommodations (11%) and camping in Everglades National Park (9%).

Respondents who engaged in backcountry/wilderness camping and/or park lodging in Everglades were asked about what type(s) of sites they used, while those who camped in Everglades were asked in which campground(s) they had stayed or planned to stay. Respondents who stayed in local area lodging outside Everglades were asked specifically if they stayed in a houseboat. Responses to these additional questions regarding in-park and local area lodging are shown in Figure 6.

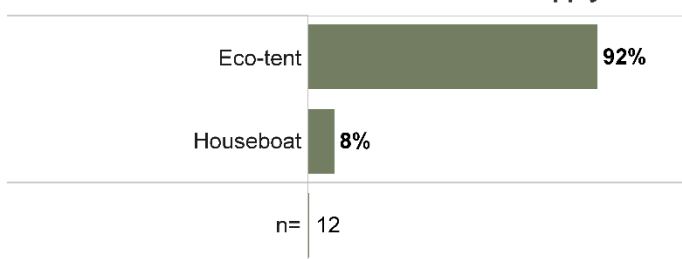
[If backcountry/wilderness camping in Everglades National Park] Did you stay in a boat-in or hike-in site? Please mark all that apply



[If camping in Everglades National Park] In which campground(s) did you or will you stay? Please mark all that apply



[If lodging in Everglades National Park] Did you stay in a houseboat or eco-tent? Please mark all that apply



[If lodging outside Everglades National Park] Did you stay in a houseboat while lodging outside Everglades National Park?

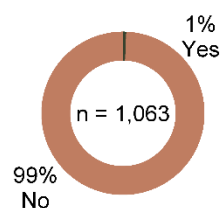


Figure 6. Additional questions regarding use of in-park and local area lodging.

- All of the three respondents (100%) who camped in the backcountry/wilderness in Everglades National Park stayed at boat-in sites.
- Just under two-thirds of respondents (61%) who camped in Everglades National Park campgrounds stayed in the Flamingo Campground, while 39% stayed in Long Pine Key Campground. A small percentage of respondents (6%) were unsure which campground they were staying in.
- Most respondents (92%) who stayed in lodging in Everglades National Park stayed in eco-tent lodging, while 8% stayed in a houseboat.
- Of those respondents who stayed in lodging outside the park, only 1% indicated they stayed in a houseboat.

Respondents were then asked to indicate the number of nights they spent or would spend in each accommodation type (Figure 7).

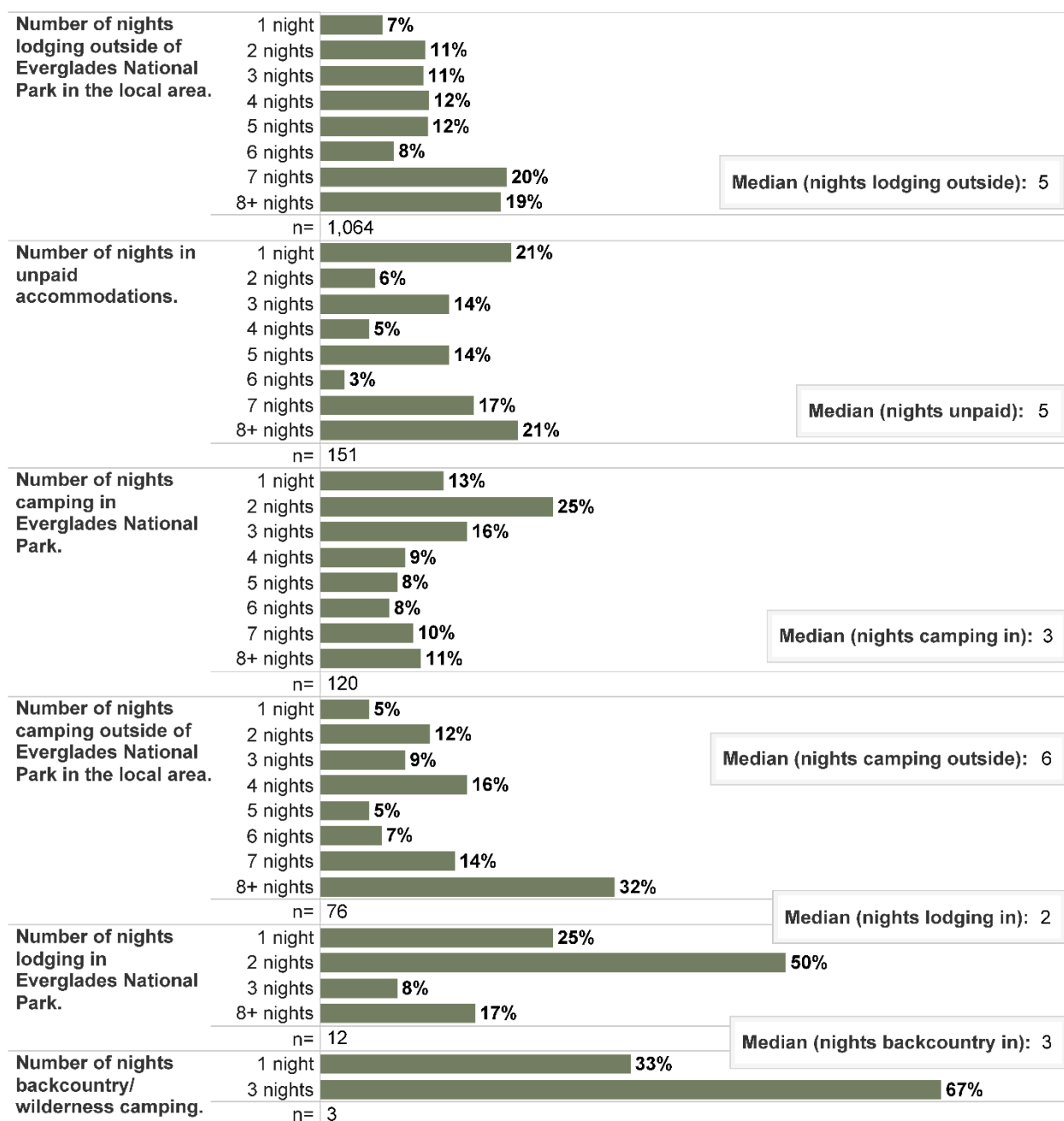


Figure 7. Number of nights spent within Everglades and in the local area surrounding it, by accommodation type. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 8.

- Among the 79% of overnight respondents who lodged outside of Everglades in the local area (per Figure 5), median length of stay was five nights. Less than one-fifth (18%) lodged two nights or fewer in the local area, while 39% spent seven nights or more.
- Among the 11% of overnight respondents who stayed in unpaid accommodations in the local area (per Figure 5), median length of stay was five nights. There was much broader spread in

length of overnight stay among those staying in unpaid accommodations than those in paid options, with 21% staying one night, while 21% also staying eight or more nights.

- Among the 9% of overnight respondents who camped in Everglades (per Figure 5), median length of stay was three nights. Over one-third (38%) of campers spent two nights or fewer camping in the park; 54% spent three nights or fewer.
- Among the 6% of overnight respondents who camped outside of Everglades (per Figure 5), median length of stay was six nights, with a majority (53%) spending six nights or more.
- Among the 1% of overnight respondents who lodged in Everglades National Park (per Figure 5), median length of stay was two nights. Three-quarters (75%) lodged two nights or fewer in the park.
- Among the 0.2% of overnight respondents who camped in the backcountry/wilderness of Everglades National Park (per Figure 5), median length of stay was three nights. Two-thirds (67%) of campers spent three nights, while one-third (33%) of campers spent one night.

Questions 9-11: Party Characteristics

Respondents were asked to indicate how many adults (18 or older) and children (under 18) were in their personal group during their visit to Everglades (Figure 8). A personal group was defined as the visitor and companions with whom they visited the park, such as a spouse, family, and/or friends, but respondents were informed not to account for the larger group with whom they may have traveled, such as a school, church, scout, or tour group.

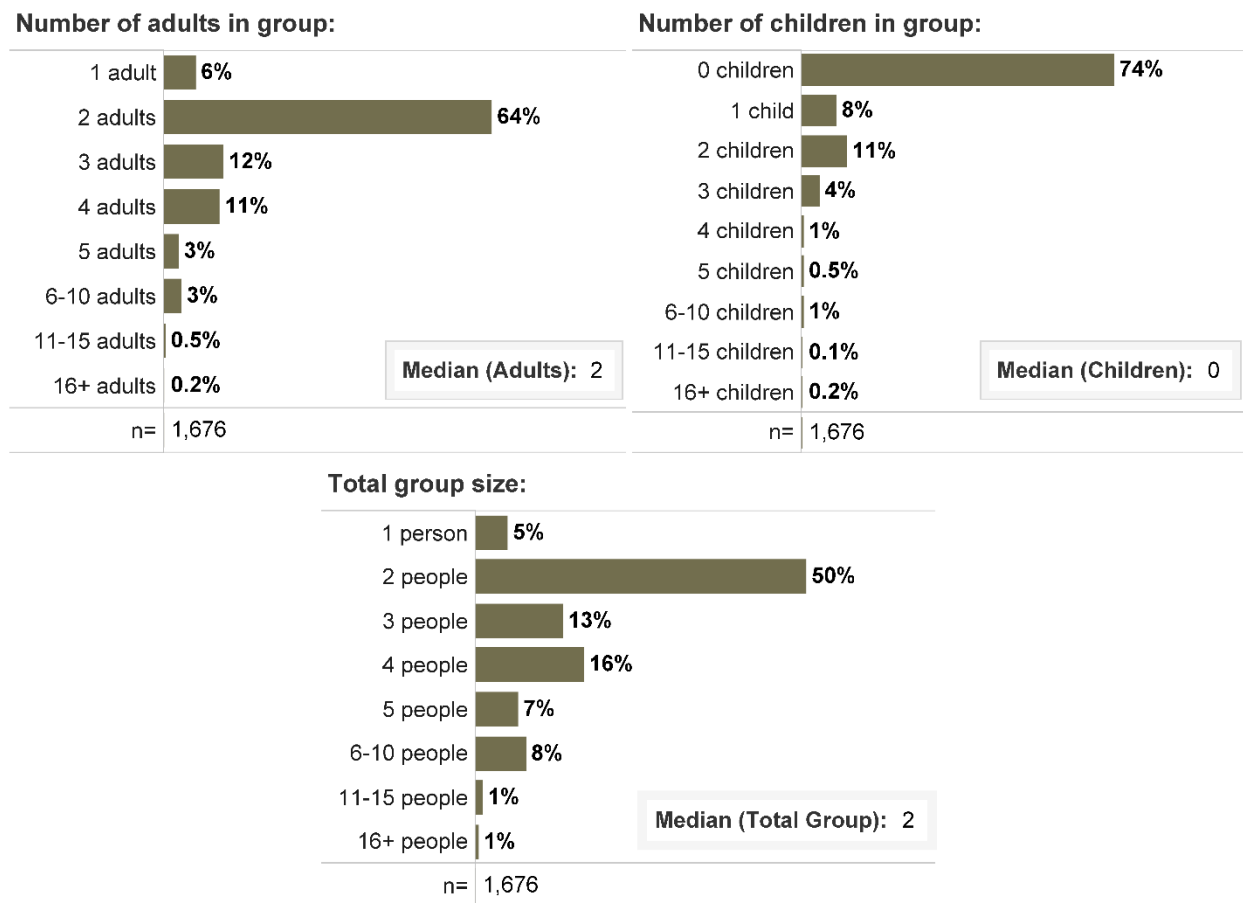


Figure 8. Number of adults and children in respondent's personal group, and total group size, while visiting Everglades. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 9.

- The median number of adults per group was two. Most groups (64%) included two adults.
- Most groups (74%) did not include any children.
- The median total group size was two. A majority of groups (55%) included two or fewer people.

Respondents were then asked to provide the age of each member of their group (Figure 9). These data show the true age distribution of respondent groups sampled at Everglades National Park.

What are the ages of each of the adults and children in your group?

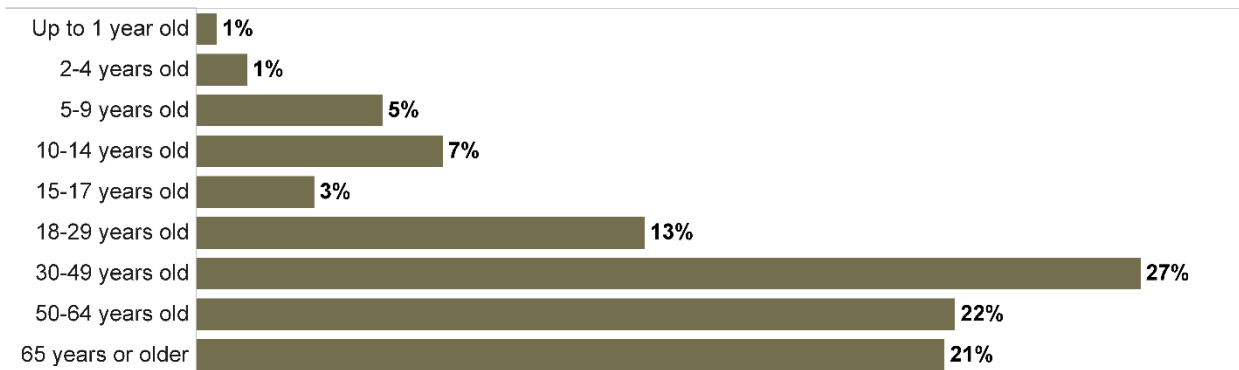


Figure 9. Age distribution of all members of respondent's personal group while visiting Everglades.

- The most common age of the adults and children in a personal group was 30 to 49 years old (27%), followed by 50 to 64 years old (22%), and 65 years or older (21%).
- Children (i.e., visitors under 18 years old) accounted for a combined total of just 17% of group members.

Questions 13-17: Park Use Characteristics

Respondents were asked to indicate which type of entrance fees applied to them personally on their most recent trip to Everglades (Figure 10).

On this trip to Everglades National Park, which one of the following entrance fees applied to you personally?

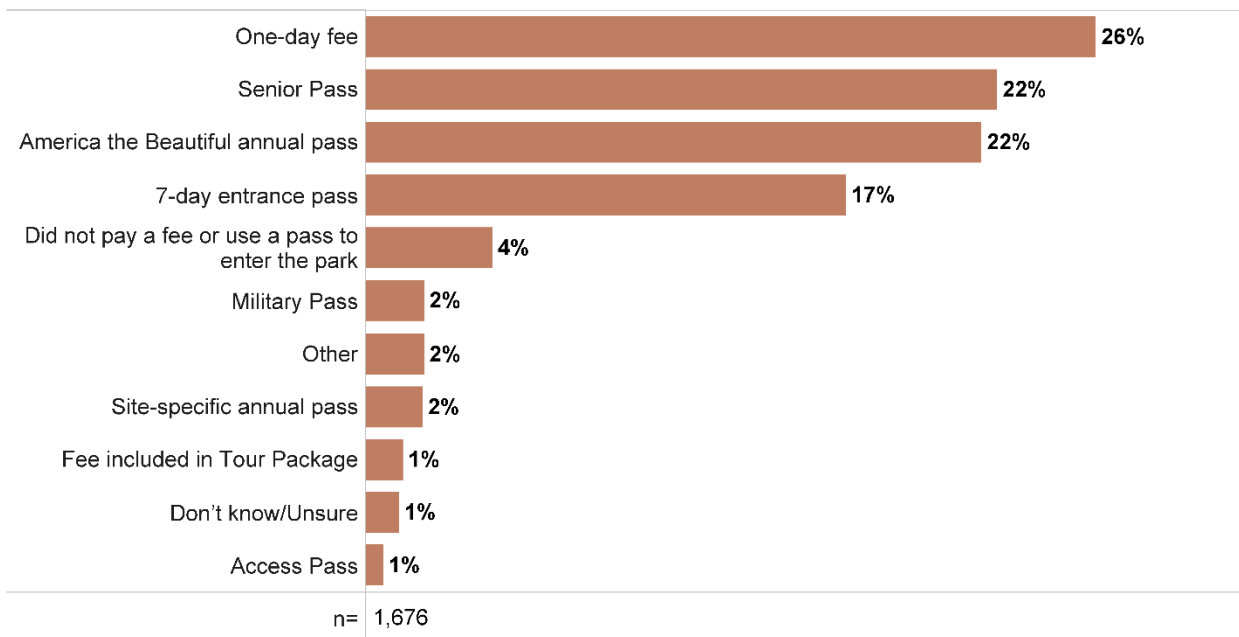


Figure 10. Entrance fees paid to enter Everglades on the most recent trip.

- Nearly a quarter of respondents (22%) reported using an America the Beautiful annual pass, and another 25% entered using a Senior Pass, Access Pass, or Military Pass.
- In contrast, 45% of respondents entered using an Everglades-specific pass or fee (i.e., annual pass, 7-day, or single-day entrance fee).

Then, respondents were asked to indicate if they planned to visit Everglades for more than one day, and then a series of follow-up questions about the length of time they might spend in the park (Figure 11 and Table 7).

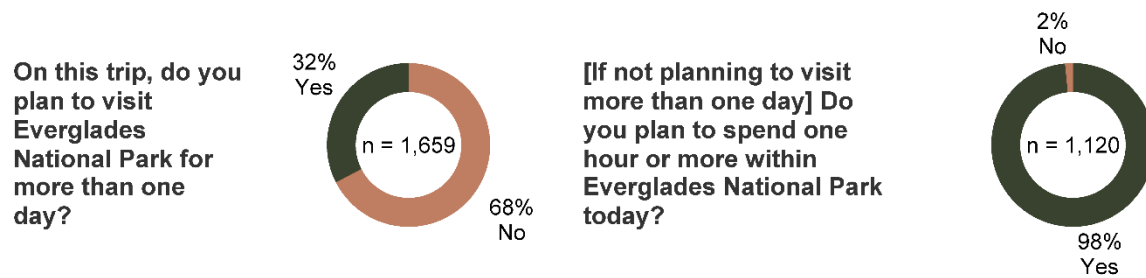


Figure 11. Length of time spent within Everglades on this trip.

Table 7. Length of time spent within Everglades on this trip.

Question	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If not planning to spend one hour or more] How many minutes do you plan to spend within Everglades today?	16	30
[If planning to spend less than a day, but one hour or more] How many hours do you plan to spend within Everglades today?	1102	4
[If planning to visit more than one day] How many days do you plan to spend within Everglades on this trip?	539	2
[If planning to visit more than one day] On how many different days do you expect to enter the park?	539	2

- While visiting Everglades, most respondents (68%) did not plan to spend more than one day in the park.
- Among the 68% of respondents who did not spend more than one day in Everglades, nearly all (98%) planned to spend one hour or more in the park. The median length of time spent in the park among this group was four hours, while respondents who did not plan to spend at least an hour in the park had a median length of stay of 30 minutes.
- The remaining 32% of respondents planned to visit for more than one day; among those respondents, the median length of stay was two days.

- Those respondents who spent more than one day in the park were also asked on how many different days they expected to enter the park; the median answer was two days.

Next, respondents were asked to indicate the most recent entrance they used to enter Everglades (Figure 12).

Which was the most recent entrance you used to enter Everglades National Park?

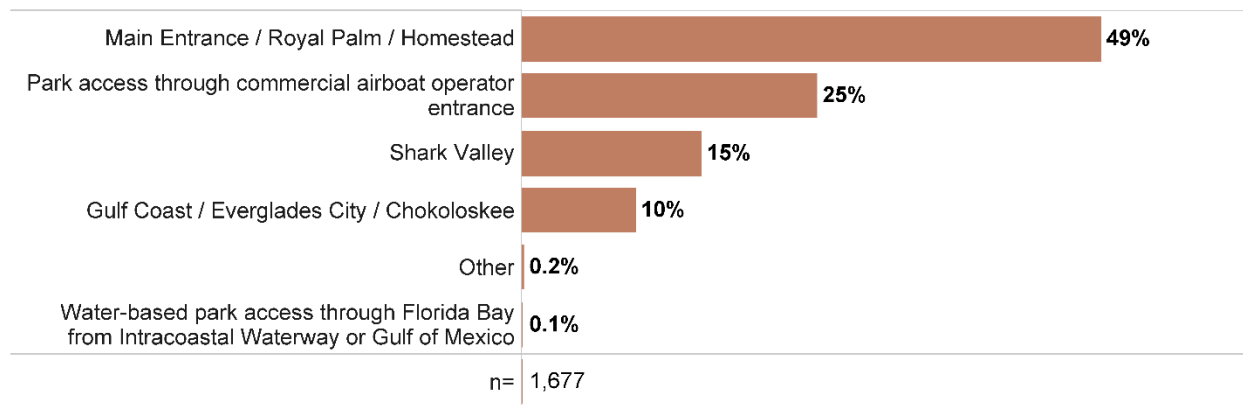


Figure 12. Most recent entrance used to enter Everglades.

- The Main Entrance/Royal Palm/Homestead entrance was the most commonly used entrance to Everglades (49%).
- A quarter of respondents (25%) reported entering the park through a commercial airboat operator entrance, while 15% entered through the Shark Valley entrance and 10% entered through the Gulf Coast/Everglades City/Chokoloskee entrance.
- Due to park geography and proximity of intercept sites to entrances, the results for most recent entrance used were impacted by the volume of respondents intercepted at various sites.

Respondents were also presented with a list of locations within Everglades and asked to indicate if they had been to, or planned to visit them, that day (Figure 13).

Considering your visit today, have you been to or do you plan to visit any of the following locations within Everglades National Park? Please mark all that apply

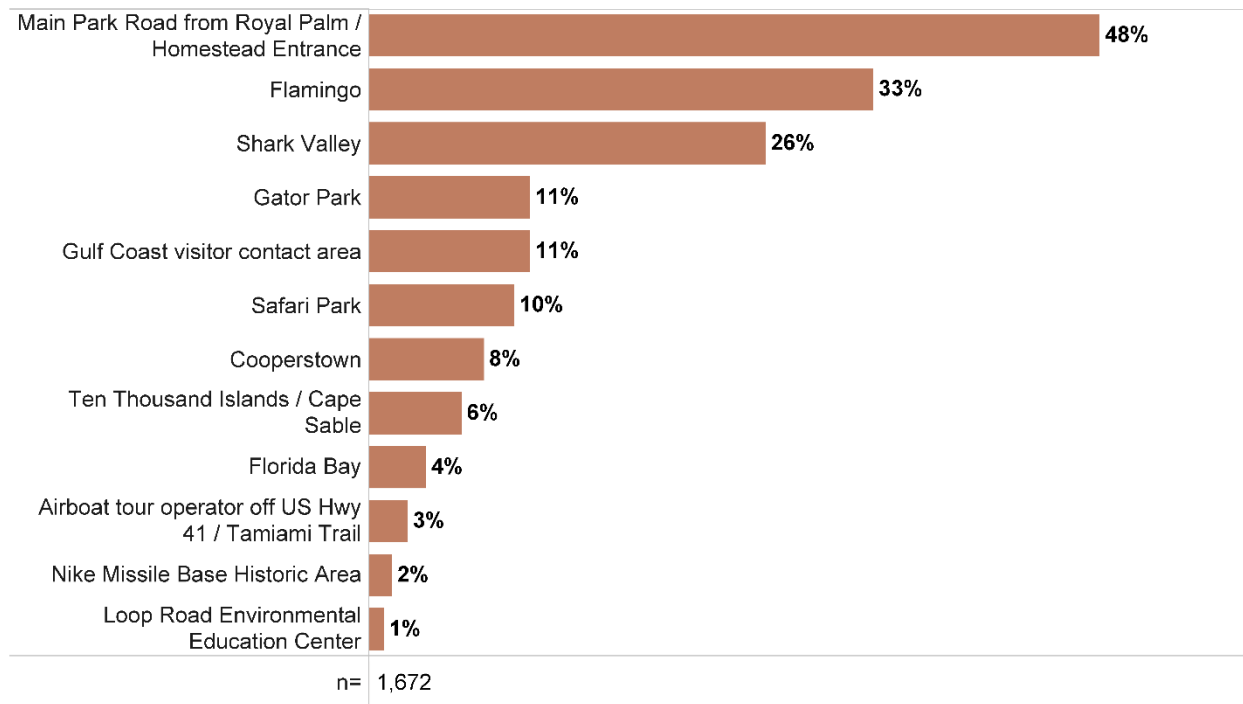


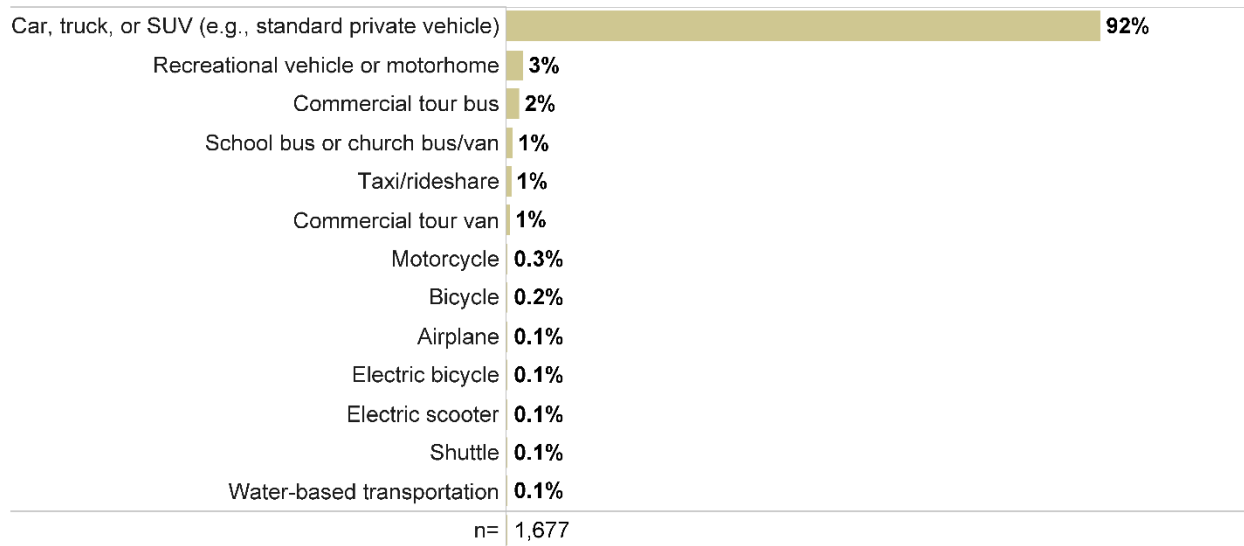
Figure 13. Park locations visited during the most recent trip to Everglades.

- The most commonly visited location in Everglades was the main park road from Royal Palm/Homestead entrance (48% of respondents had either been there or planned to visit it on their trip), followed by Flamingo (33%) and Shark Valley (26%).
- Loop Road Environmental Education Center was the least-visited location from the list provided, with only 1% of respondents reporting having visited or planning to visit.

Question 18: Transportation

Respondents were asked about the form of transportation they used to enter Everglades on the day they were surveyed (Figure 14).

Which of the following forms of transportation did you personally use to arrive or enter Everglades National Park today?



[If entered by water] Which of the following forms of water-based transportation did you use to arrive or enter Everglades National Park?

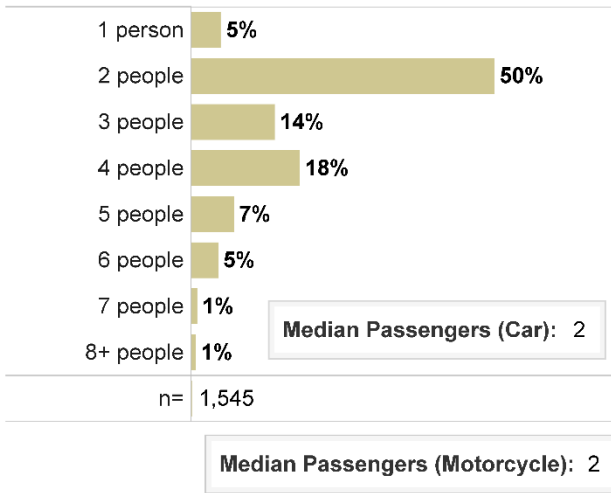


Figure 14. Form of transportation used to enter Everglades on the day of the survey.

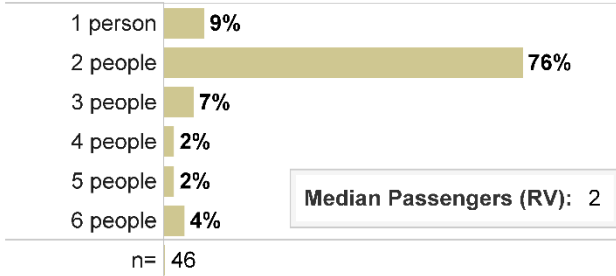
- Most respondents (92%) reported that they used their car, truck, or SUV to enter Everglades on the day of the survey.
- This was followed distantly by use of a recreational vehicle or motorhome (3%), and commercial tour bus (2%).
- One respondent entered the park using a personal boat.

If respondents entered the park using a multi-passenger private vehicle (i.e., car, truck or SUV, recreational vehicle or motorhome, or motorcycle), they were asked to indicate how many people were travelling in or on that vehicle (Figure 15).

[If entered by car, truck, or SUV] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your vehicle when you entered Everglades National Park?



[If entered by RV/motorhome] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your RV when you entered Everglades National Park?



[If entered by motorcycle] Including yourself, how many people were traveling on your motorcycle when you entered Everglades National Park?



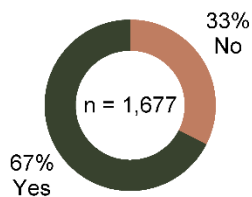
Figure 15. Number of people in or on respondent's vehicle when entering Everglades. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 10.

- Half of respondents traveling by car reported two people. The next common group size was four people (18%), followed by three people (14%).
- Three quarters of respondents entering Everglades by RV/motorhome reported travelling in a group of two people (76%), followed by one person (9%) or three people (7%).
- Most motorcyclists (60%) traveled in groups of two.

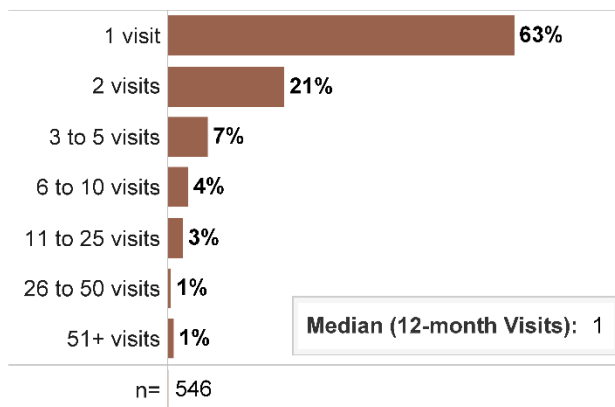
Question 20: Previous Visits to Everglades

Respondents were asked if they were first time visitors to Everglades. Repeat visitors were then asked how many visits they have made to Everglades in the last 12 months and the last five years (Figure 16).

Are you a first-time visitor to Everglades National Park?



[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to Everglades National Park over the past 12 months?



[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to Everglades National Park over the past five years?

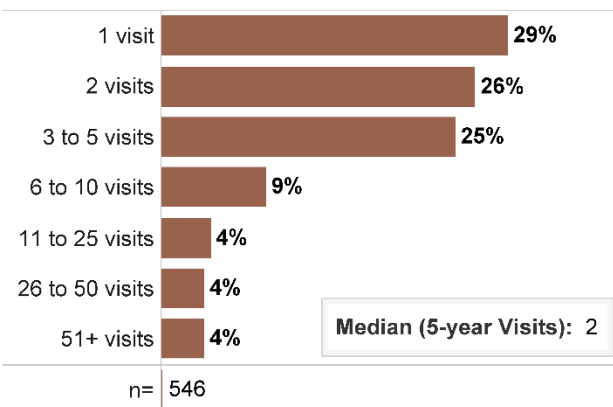


Figure 16. Previous visits to Everglades. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 11.

- Most respondents (67%) were on their first ever trip to Everglades.
- Among the 33% of respondents who were repeat visitors, the majority (63%) were on their first visit in the past 12 months (i.e., had last visited more than a year ago).
- However, the majority of repeat visitors (71%) had visited at least one prior time in the past five years.
- The median number of visits made in the past five years was two, including the current trip; 12% of repeat visitors had made more than 10 visits in the past five years.

Question 21: Previous Visits to Other NPS Units

Finally, respondents were asked how many visits they made to other NPS sites over the past 12 months (Figure 17).

How many visits have you made to other NPS sites over the past 12 months?

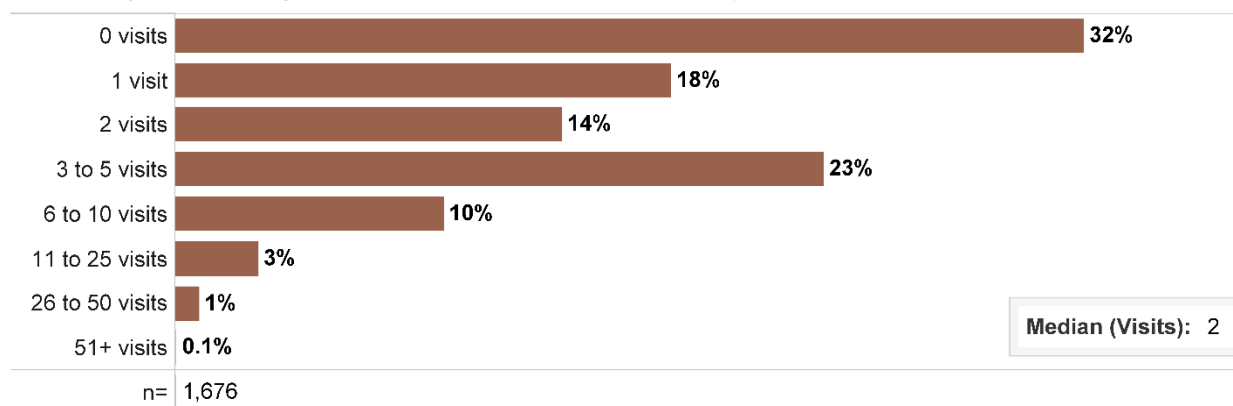


Figure 17. Visits made to other NPS sites within the past year. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 12.

- About two-thirds of respondents (68%) had made at least one visit to other NPS site(s) in the past year.
- The median number of visits made to other NPS site(s) in the past 12 months was two, though a combined 37.1% had made three or more visits to other NPS sites in the past year.

Post-trip Survey Results

The following section provides results of the 585 post-trip visitor surveys received by mail-back or online following fieldwork conducted in Everglades in spring 2023. Again, caution is recommended in the interpretation of figures with sample size lower than $n=30$, and categories on some questions may not sum to 100% due to rounding differences and/or the opportunity to select more than one response option.

Questions 1-2: Information about Everglades

First, respondents were asked what sources they used to obtain information about Everglades prior to their trip, and whether they had the information they needed on their trip (Figure 18).

Prior to this trip, how did you obtain information about Everglades National Park? Please mark all that apply

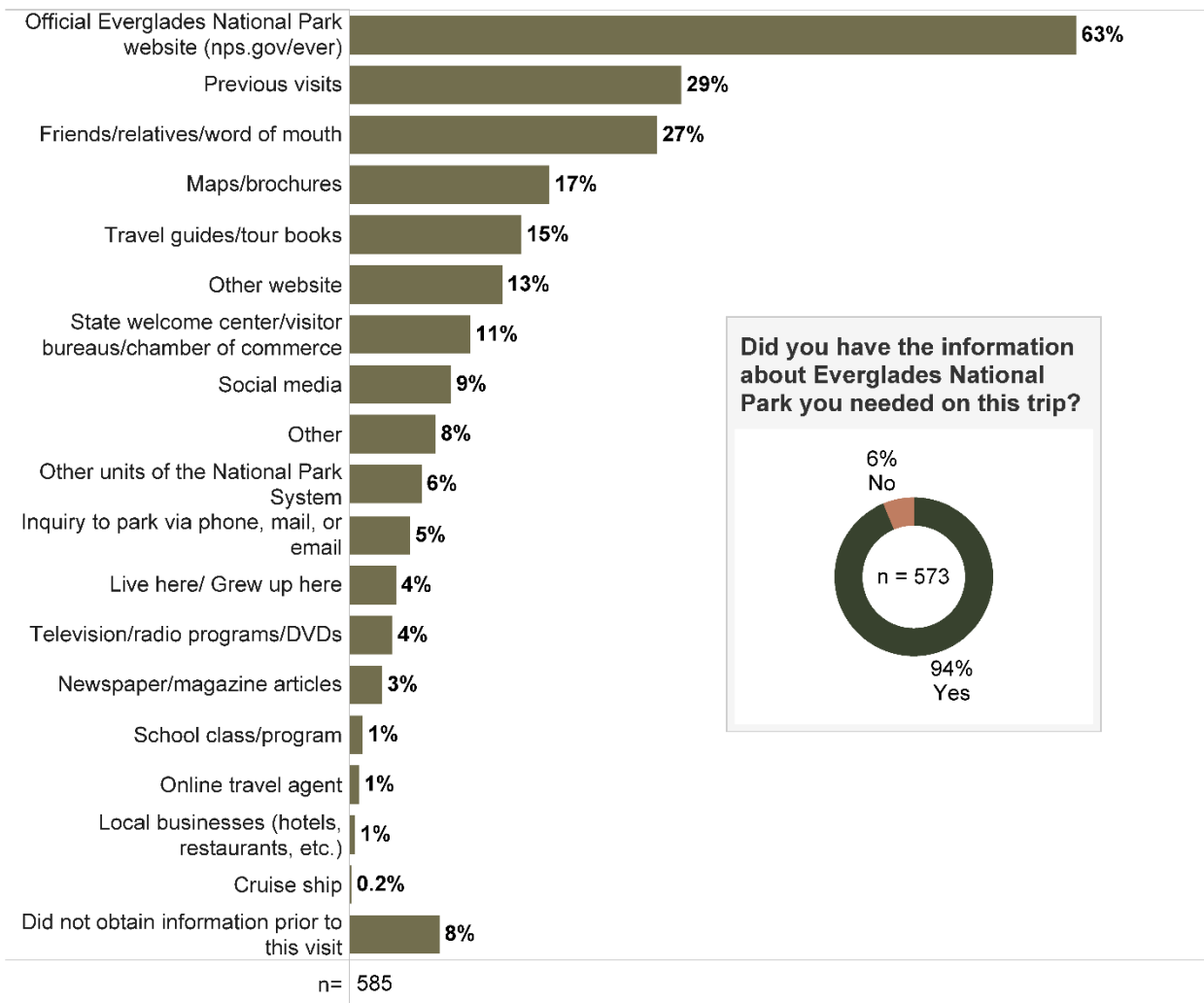


Figure 18. Sources used to obtain information about Everglades prior to the trip.

- The most used resource was the official Everglades National Park website, with 63% of respondents reportedly using it. The second most common source was knowledge from a previous visit (29%), followed by friends/relatives/word of mouth (17%), travel guides/tour books (15%), and other websites (13%).
- In a follow-up question, 94% of respondents said that they had the information about Everglades that they needed on their trip, while 6% indicated that there was information that they needed but did not have.
- In an open-ended follow-up question, those who did not have the information they needed on this trip were asked to elaborate.

Question 3: Transportation

While in the intercept survey, respondents indicated a mode of transportation they used to enter the park on the day of the intercept, the post-trip survey asked respondents to select all forms of transportation they personally used to travel from their home to Everglades on their trip (Figure 19).

Please list all forms of transportation you personally used to travel from your home to Everglades National Park on this trip. Please mark all that apply

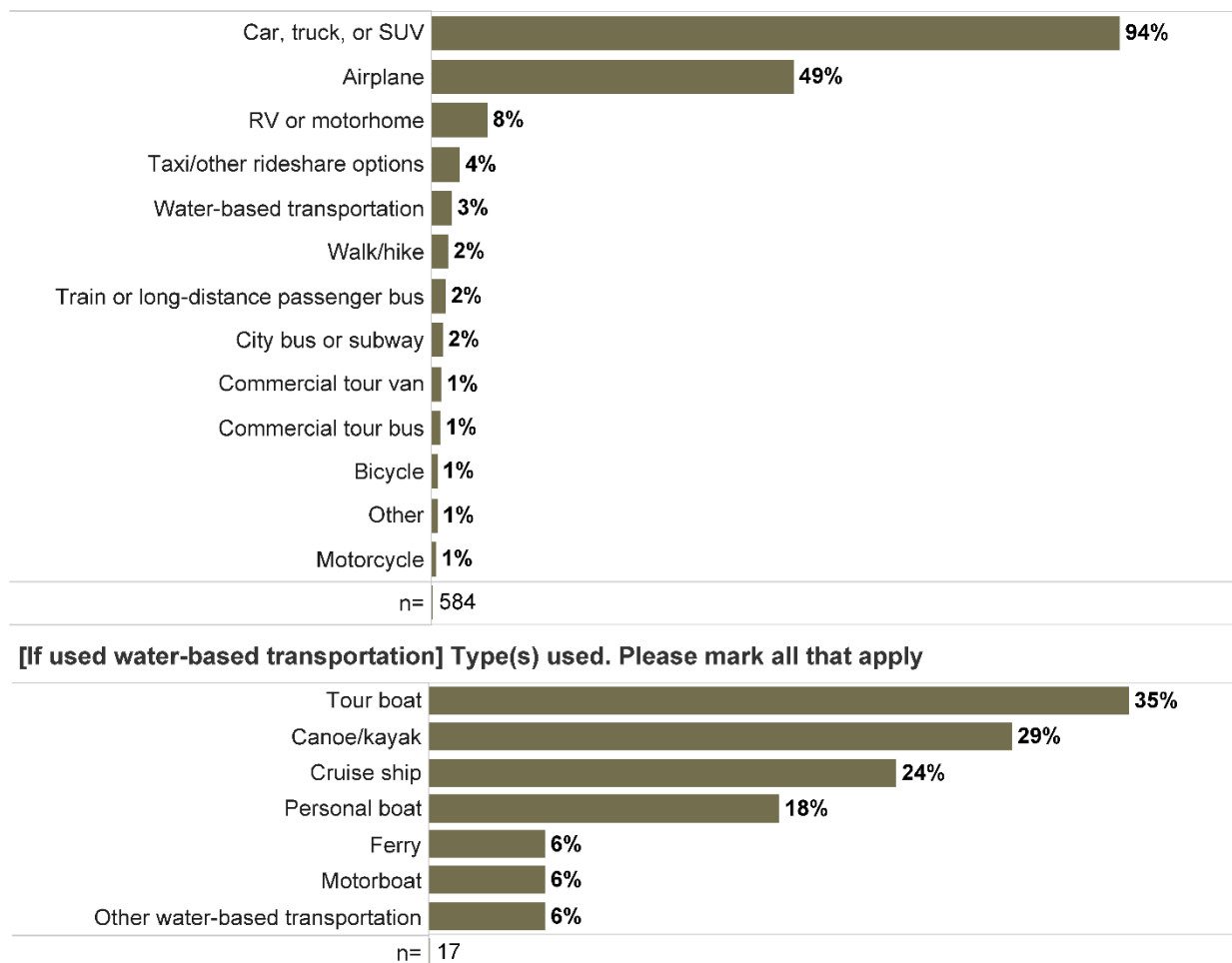


Figure 19. Forms of transportation used to travel from home to Everglades on the recent trip.

- Nearly all respondents (94%) used a personal vehicle, such as a car, truck, or SUV, at some point during their trip from home to Everglades.
- The second most common mode of travel was an airplane (49%), followed by an RV or motorhome (8%).
- A small percentage of respondents (3%) indicated that they used water-based transportation as part of their travel from their home to Everglades National Park. The most common water-based transportation used was a tour boat (35% of respondents using water-based

transportation), followed by canoe/kayak (29%), cruise ship (24%), and a personal boat (18%).

Question 4: Travel Party Composition

Respondents were asked what type of group they were with during their visit to Everglades on the day of the survey (Figure 20).

What type of group were you with, during your visit to Everglades National Park on the day you were contacted for this survey?

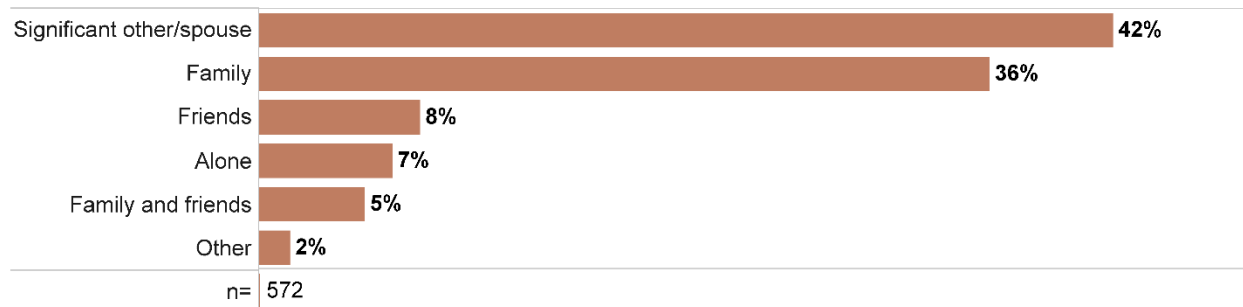


Figure 20. Travel party composition during Everglades visit.

- A plurality of respondents (42%) visited Everglades with their significant other or spouse on the day of the survey.
- Just over one-third of respondents (36%) explored Everglades with their family, and another 8% visited the park with their friends.

Questions 11-13: Trip Characteristics

Respondents were asked if they visited other National Park Service sites on their trip away from home (Figure 21).

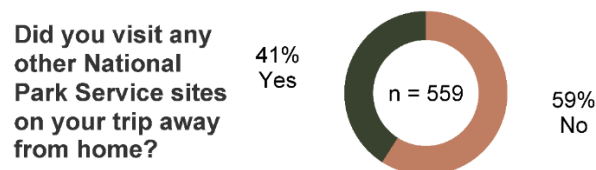
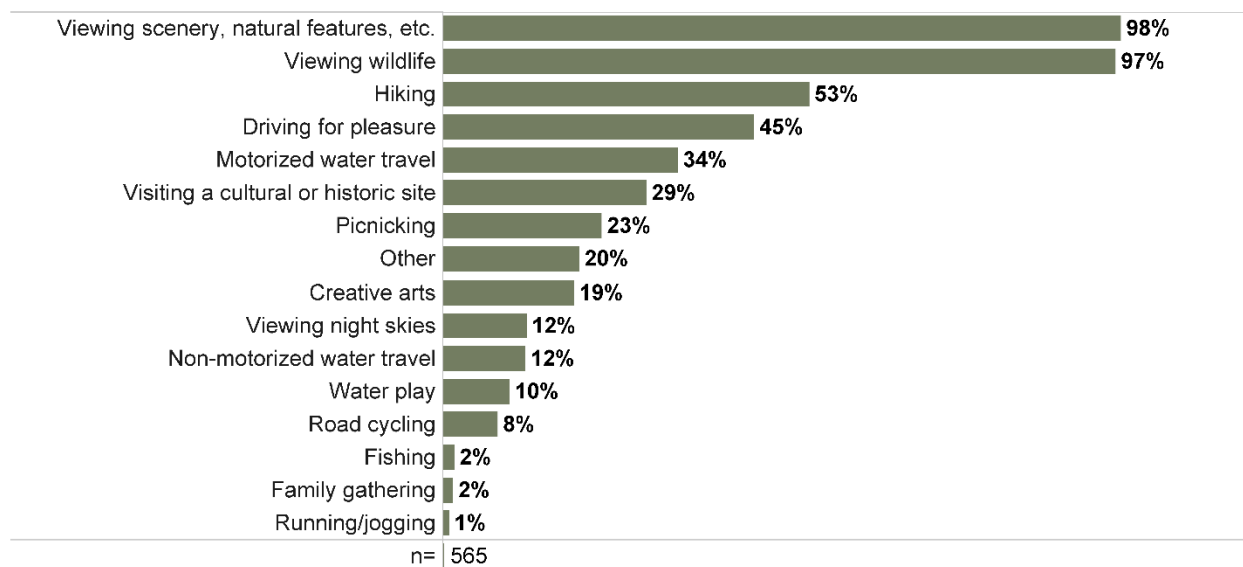


Figure 21. NPS sites visited on trip away from home.

- A plurality (41%) of all respondents had visited other NPS sites on their trip, while 59% identified Everglades as the only NPS site they visited while away from home.
- In an open-ended follow-up question, those who had visited other NPS sites on their trip were asked to list which one(s).

Survey respondents were then asked to identify all activities that they participated in while visiting Everglades, and which of those was their primary activity (Figure 22).

On this trip, in which of the following activities did you personally participate in while visiting Everglades National Park? Please mark all that apply



And which was your primary activity during your visit to Everglades National Park on the day you were contacted for this survey?

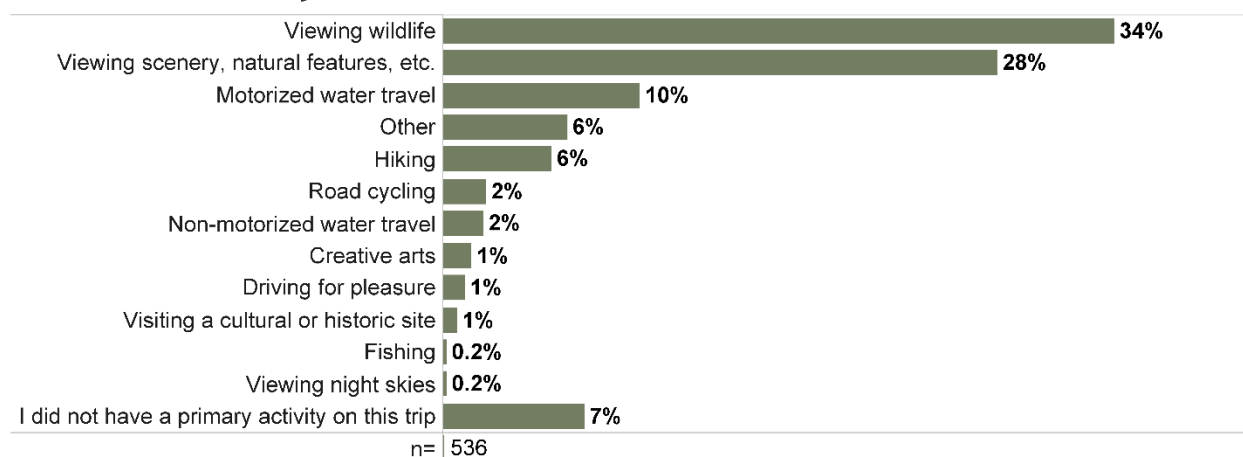


Figure 22. Participation in activities at Everglades.

- Almost all respondents reported viewing scenery, natural features, etc. (98%), and viewing wildlife (97%). A majority of respondents (53%) also reported hiking while visiting Everglades.
- Fishing, family gatherings, and running/jogging were all uncommon activities (reported by 2% or fewer of respondents).

- About one-third of respondents (34%) reported viewing wildlife as their primary activity, followed by viewing scenery, natural features, etc. (28%).

Questions 14-15: Reasons to Visit

Survey respondents were asked to rate the importance of various reasons to visit Everglades on their trip and were then asked which of those was the most important reason for them to visit Everglades (Figure 23).

How important to you were each of the following reasons or motivations for visiting Everglades National Park on this trip?

Rating Category	n=	Percent Responding				
		1 - Not at all important	2 - Slightly important	3 - Moderately important	4 - Very important	5 - Extremely important
To view wildlife or natural scenery	552	1%	1%	3%	23%	73%
To spend time with family/friends	541	9%	5%	14%	32%	40%
To visit a National Park Service site	544	7%	7%	18%	32%	35%
To learn more about nature	549	1%	5%	17%	43%	34%
To relax	540	6%	10%	23%	31%	30%
To hear the sounds of nature/quiet	548	7%	14%	24%	32%	24%
To learn more about American history and culture	543	6%	18%	32%	30%	13%
To get physical exercise	538	11%	15%	31%	30%	13%
To experience solitude	542	25%	24%	26%	14%	11%
To view dark night sky/stars	507	51%	20%	14%	8%	7%
Other (if specified)	66	26%	2%	5%	12%	56%

And which was the most important reason for you to visit Everglades National Park on this trip?

To view wildlife or natural scenery	54%
To visit a National Park Service site	17%
To spend time with family/friends	11%
To learn more about nature	8%
Other	4%
To learn more about American history and culture	2%
To relax	2%
To hear sounds of nature/quiet	1%
To experience solitude	1%
To get physical exercise	1%
To view dark night sky/stars	0.2%
n=	525

Figure 23. Reasons or motivations to visit Everglades. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 13.

- Most respondents chose to view wildlife or natural scenery (73%) as extremely important reasons for their trip to Everglades.
- Other important reasons were to spend time with family/friends, and to visit a National Park Service site (40% and 35% of respondents, respectively, rated them as extremely important).
- The least important reasons rated were to experience solitude and to view dark night sky (only 11% and 7% of respondents, respectively, reported them as extremely important, and 25% and 51% of respondents, respectively, rated them as not at all important).
- The most common response about the most important reason was to view wildlife or natural scenery (54%), followed by to visit a National Park Service site (17%), and to spend time with family/friends (11%).

Questions 16-18: Programs, Services, and Learning

Respondents were asked to identify all programs and services that they personally participated in in Everglades during their trip (Figure 24).

On this trip, in which of the following programs and services did you personally participate within Everglades National Park? Please mark all that apply

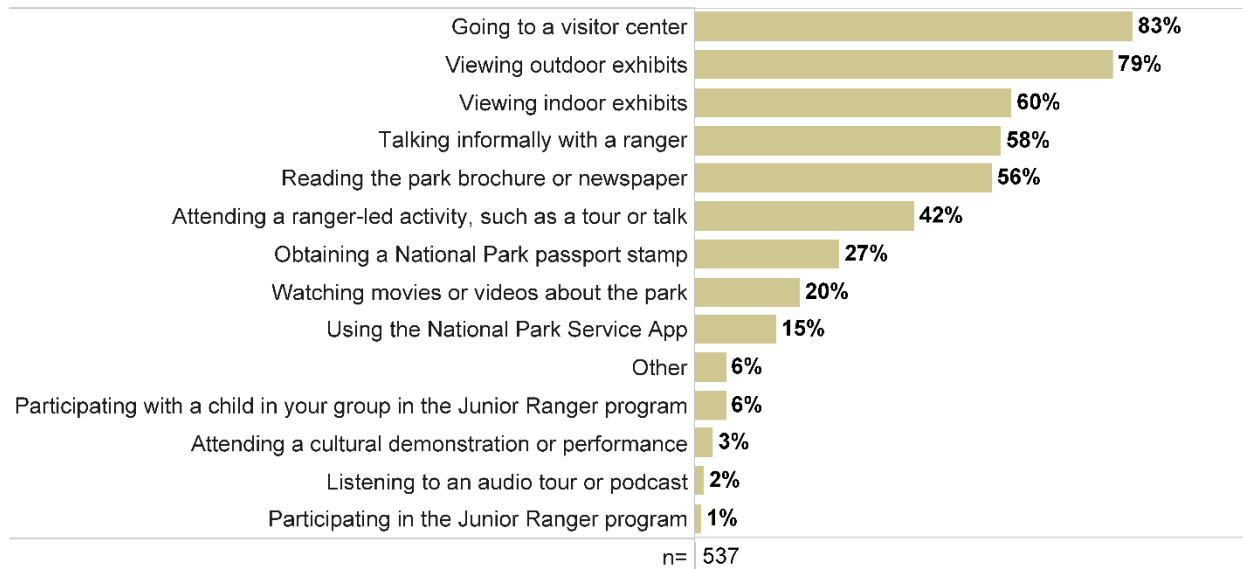


Figure 24. Participation in programs at Everglades.

- The two most-used programs were going to a visitor center and viewing outdoor exhibits, with more than three-quarters of respondents (83% and 79% respectively) reporting participating in each of them.

- Several other programs were engaged in by over half of respondents: viewing indoor exhibits (60%), talking informally with a ranger (58%), and reading the park brochure or newspaper (56%).

Two follow-up questions asked if respondents learned anything from park staff, programs, and/or exhibits about American history, nature, and/or culture, and what specific subjects they would like to learn about in the future (Figure 25).

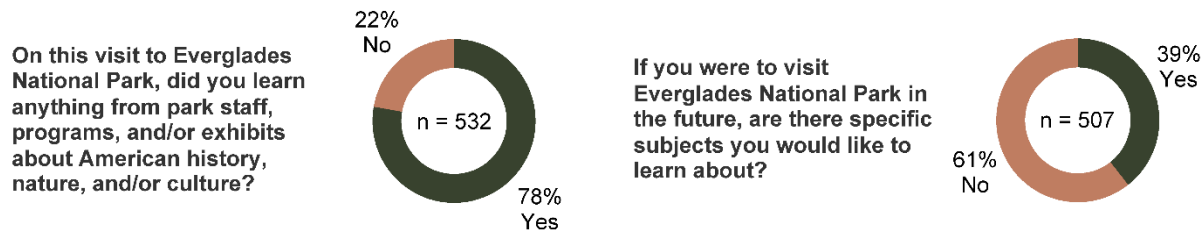


Figure 25. Learning.

- About three-quarters of respondents (78%) reported that they learned something from park staff, programs, and/or exhibits about American history, nature, and/or culture.
- Just over one-third of respondents (39%) reported that if they were to visit Everglades in the future, there are specific subjects they would like to learn about.
- Respondents who said yes to either of these two questions were asked to elaborate.

Questions 19-20: Use of Devices

Two survey questions were focused on the use of electronic devices, their importance, and the quality of service provided. First, respondents were asked which personal electronic devices they used while in Everglades (Figure 26).

Did you use a personal electronic device while in Everglades National Park to do any of the following actions?

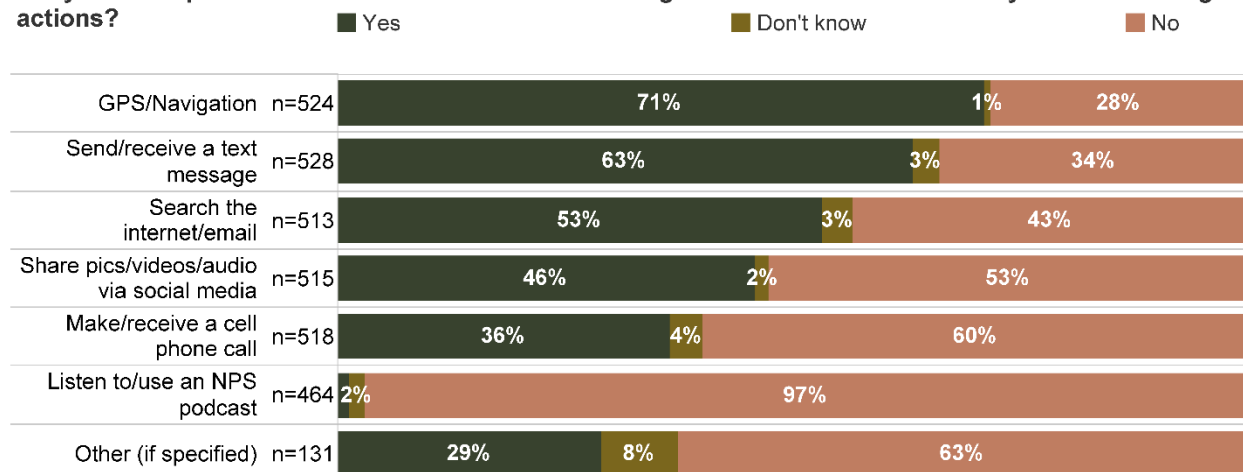
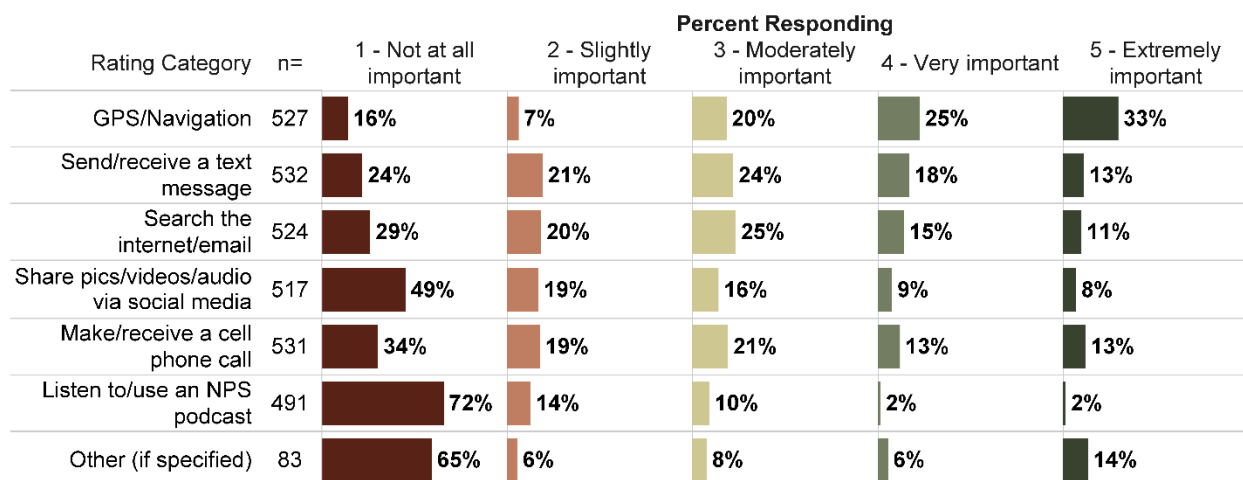


Figure 26. Use of personal electronic devices while visiting Everglades. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 14.

- Nearly three-quarters of respondents (71%) reported using GPS/navigation, and nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) reported sending or receiving a text message.
- Conversely, only 2% of respondents listened to or used an NPS podcast.

Then, respondents were asked to rate both the importance of each of these electronic device uses (Figure 27), and the quality of their service (Figure 28).

How important to you was it during your visit to Everglades National Park to use personal electronic devices to do each of the following?



Categories sorted in descending order by percent answering "Yes" to "Did you use a personal electronic device while in the park to do any of the following actions?" (With "Other" anchored at bottom)

Figure 27. The importance of the use of personal electronic devices while visiting Everglades. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 15.

- The most important device uses were GPS/navigation and sending or receiving a text message (33% and 13% of respondents, respectively, rated them as extremely important).
- Listening to and using an NPS podcast was rated as extremely important only by 2% of respondents, and not at all important by 72% of respondents.

How would you rate the quality of service to do each of the following?

Rating Category	n=	Percent Responding				
		1 - No service	2 - Poor	3 - Average	4 - Good	5 - Very good
GPS/Navigation	376	9%	9%	23%	27%	33%
Send/receive a text message	367	10%	11%	27%	27%	25%
Search the internet/email	348	13%	14%	29%	24%	20%
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	266	13%	15%	27%	23%	23%
Make/receive a cell phone call	309	15%	14%	27%	24%	21%
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	113	25%	12%	32%	22%	10%
Other (if specified)	44	20%	9%	23%	30%	18%

Categories sorted in descending order by percent answering "Yes" to "Did you use a personal electronic device while in the park to do any of the following actions?" (With "Other" anchored at bottom)

Figure 28. Quality of service for personal electronic devices while visiting Everglades. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 16.

- GPS/navigation was rated as very good or good by 33% and 27% of respondents, respectively. However, 9% of respondents reported that they had no service for this.
- As many as a quarter of respondents (ranged from 10% to 25%, depending on the service) reported that they also had no service to send or receive a text message, search the internet/email, share photos, videos, or audio via social media, make or receive a cell phone call, or listen to an NPS podcast.
- However, a small percentage of respondents (ranging from 10% to 25%, depending on the service) rated these services as very good.

Question 21: Physical Difficulties

Respondents were asked if anyone in their personal group had a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services during their visit to Everglades. If such a condition was identified, respondents were asked to specify the type of difficulty (Figure 29).

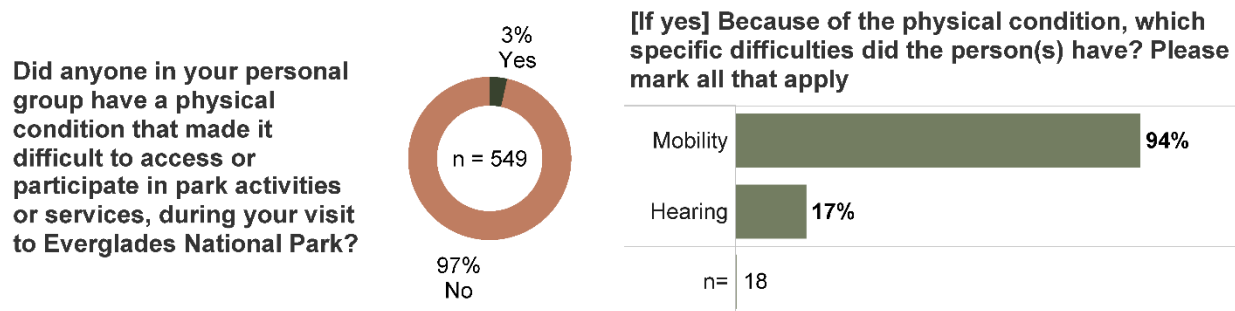


Figure 29. Physical difficulties while visiting Everglades.

- Most respondents (97%) reported that nobody in their personal group had a physical condition that made it difficult to access or participate in park activities or services during their visit to Everglades.
- Among the 3% of respondents who identified at least one difficulty, 94% reported mobility issues in their group, with a small portion (17%) also reporting hearing difficulties.

Questions 24-28: Visitor Experience

Respondents were asked if their visit to Everglades met their expectations (Figure 30).

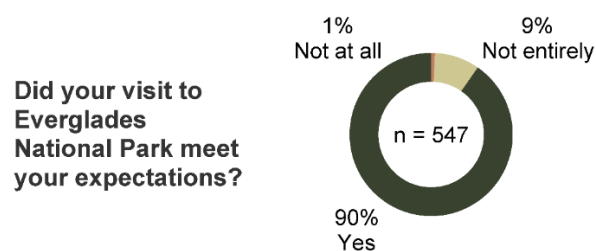


Figure 30. Meeting Everglades expectations.

- The majority of respondents (90%) reported that their visit to Everglades met their expectations, while 9% of respondents said it did not meet their expectations entirely, and 1% of respondents indicated that it did not meet their expectations at all.
- In an open-ended follow-up question, respondents were asked to elaborate.

Respondents were then given several statements about Everglades and asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with each given statement (Figure 31).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

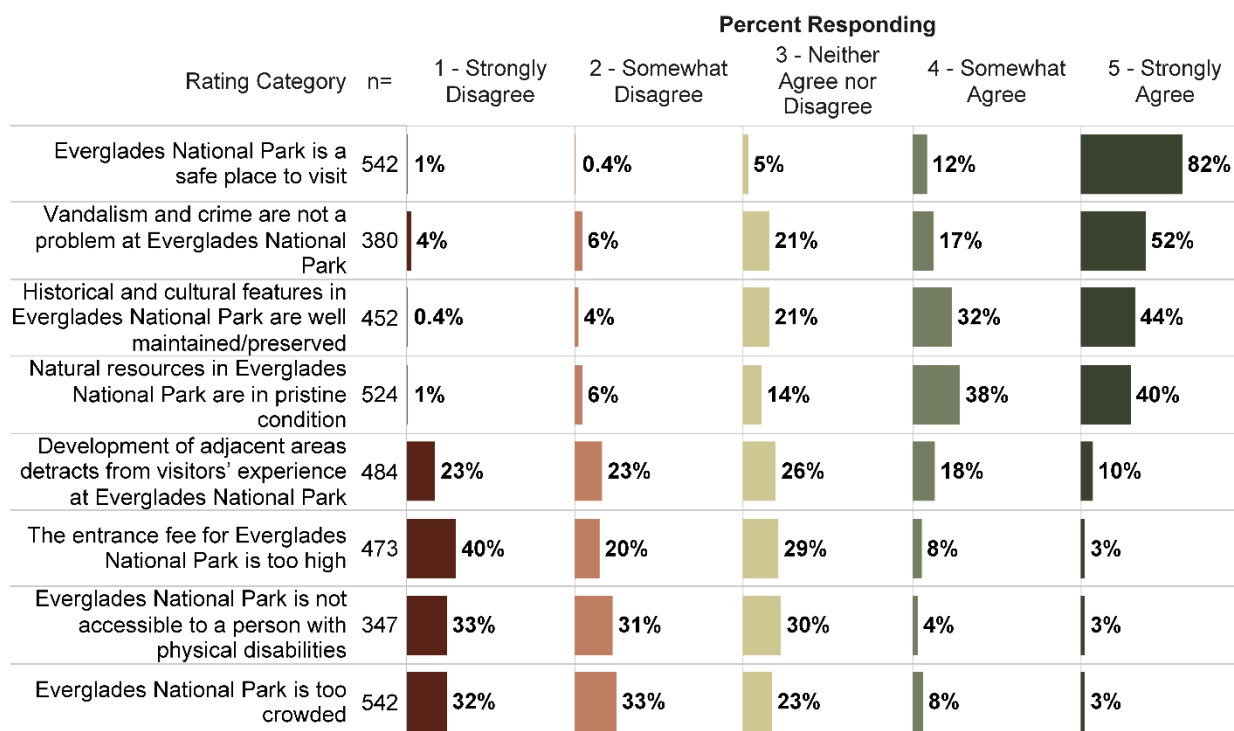


Figure 31. Rating Everglades experience. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 17.

- From all the statements listed, “Everglades National Park is a safe place to visit” received the most consensus with a combined 94% of respondents saying they either strongly or somewhat agree with it. That was followed by “natural resources in Everglades National Park are in pristine condition” and “historical and cultural features in Everglades National Park are well maintained/preserved” (78% and 76% of respondents, respectively, strongly or somewhat agreed with these statements).
- Conversely, “Everglades National Park is not accessible to a person with physical disabilities” received the least support, with only 7% of respondents either somewhat or strongly agreeing with this statement, and one-third of respondents (33%) strongly disagreeing with the statement.

Next, respondents were asked to rate the quality of park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in Everglades (Figure 32).

How would you rate the quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in Everglades National Park?

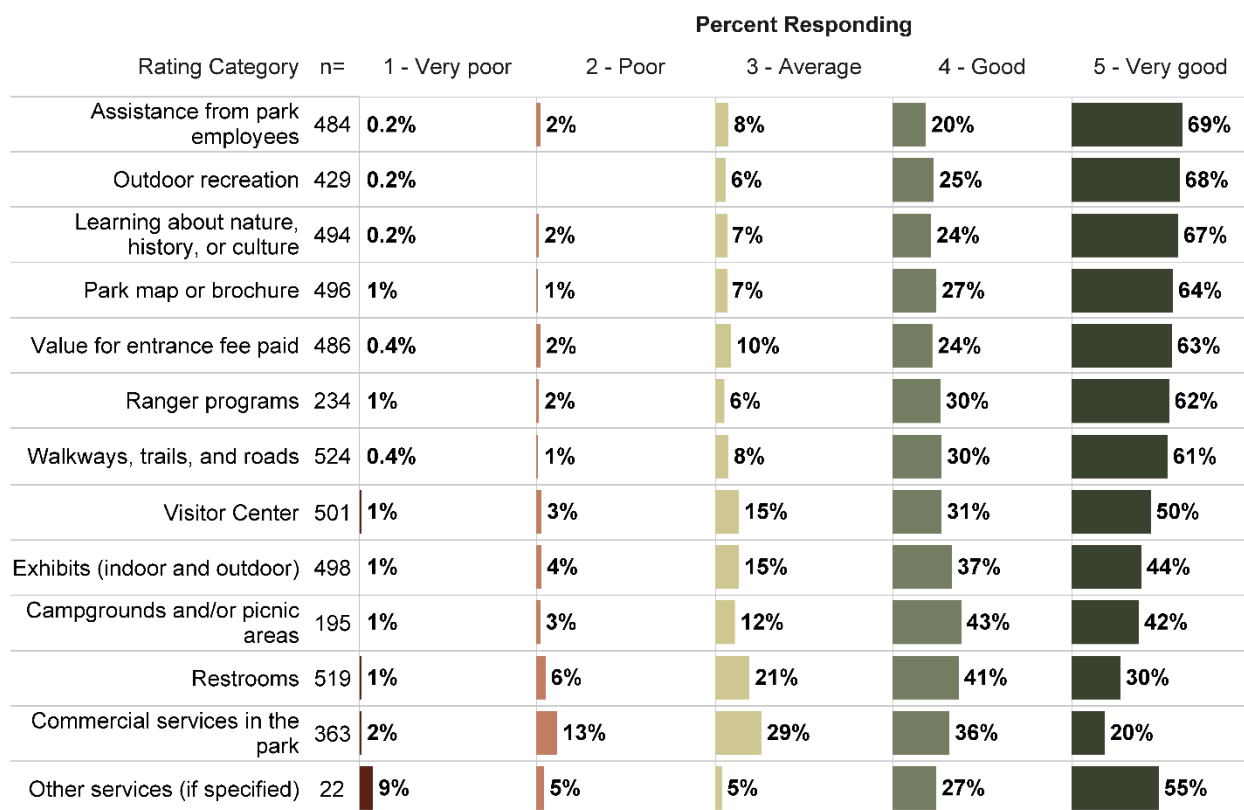


Figure 32. Rating the quality of specific Everglades facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 18.

- Over half of respondents (ranging from 61% to 69%) rated assistance from park employees, outdoor recreation, learning about nature, history, or culture, the park map or brochure, the value for entrance fee paid, ranger programs, and walkways, trails, and roads as very good.
- Half of respondents (50%) rated the visitor center as very good.
- Conversely, fewer than half of respondents rated indoor and outdoor exhibits, campgrounds and/or picnic areas, restrooms, and commercial services in the park as very good, but the overall sentiment was still quite positive.

Finally, respondents were asked to rate overall quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreation opportunities (Figure 33).

Overall, how would you rate the quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in Everglades National Park?

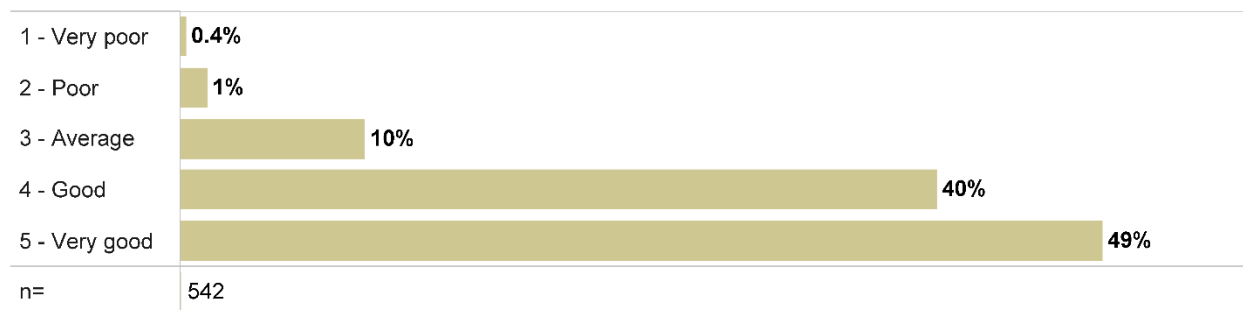


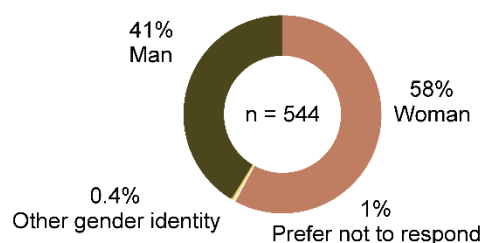
Figure 33. Rating overall quality of Everglades facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities.

- In general, about half of respondents (49%) rated the quality of the park facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities in Everglades as very good, and another 40% rated them as good.
- Just about one in eight respondents rated the overall quality as average or below.

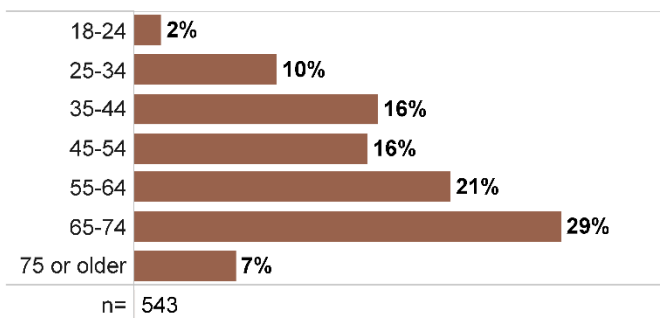
Questions 31-38: Background/Demographics

In the final section of the post-trip survey, respondents were asked various questions about their personal and household demographics. Figure 34 depicts descriptive statistics for respondent gender, age, and education.

What is your gender?



What is your age?



What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?

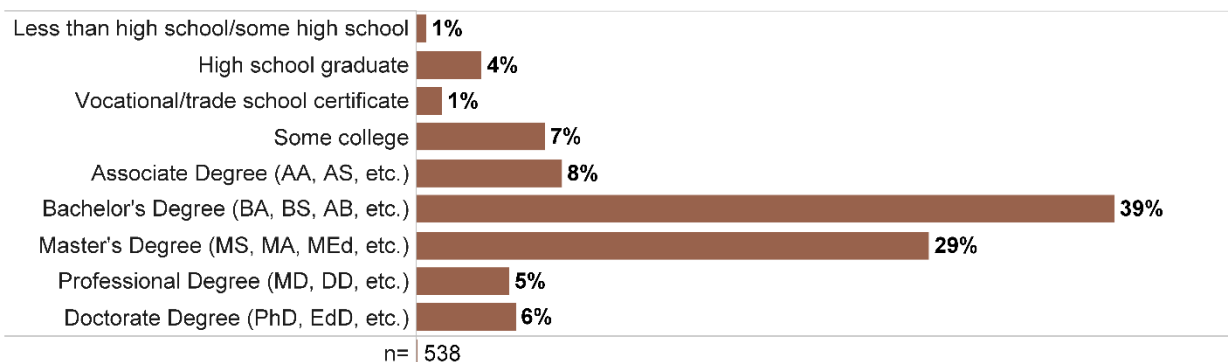
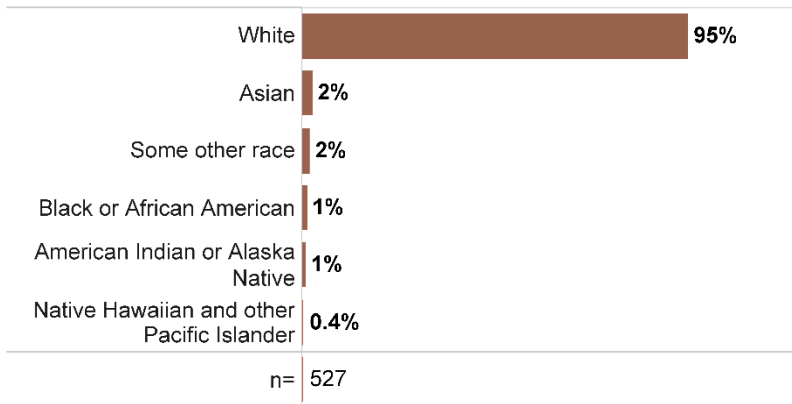


Figure 34. Respondent demographics: gender, age, and level of education.

- Post-trip survey respondents were more likely to be women than men (58% vs 41%). Another 0.4% had another gender identity, while 1% preferred not to disclose their gender identity.
- The most common age categories were 65 to 74 (29%), and 55 to 64 (21%). The least represented age group was 18 to 24 (only 2% of the participants surveyed).
- Most survey respondents reported obtaining higher education, with a combined 87% having some college degree, and a plurality (40%) holding a master's degree or higher.

Respondents were also asked to identify their race(s) and if they were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin (Figure 35).

What is your race? Please mark all that apply



Are you of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Origin?

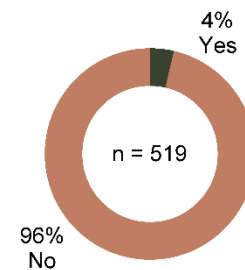
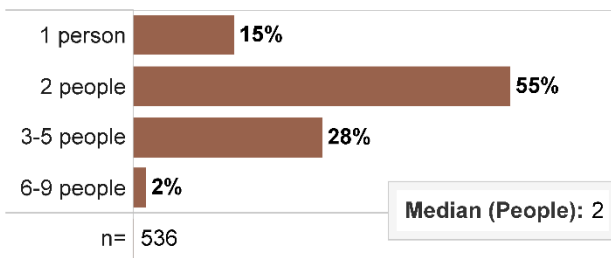


Figure 35. Respondent demographics: race and ethnicity.

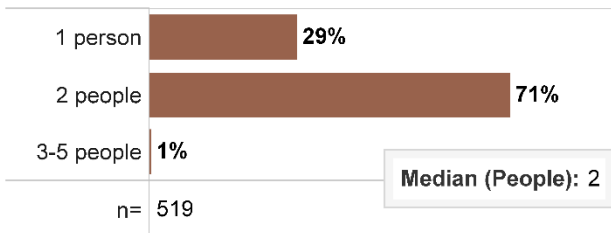
- The majority of respondents (95%) were White, while 2% were Asian or some other race.
- Most respondents (96%) were not of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin.

At a household level, respondents were asked to report annual income and number of contributors, as well as how many people (adults and children) live in their household (Figure 36).

Including yourself, how many people are in your household?



Including yourself, how many people contribute to your annual household income?



Which category best represents your annual household income?

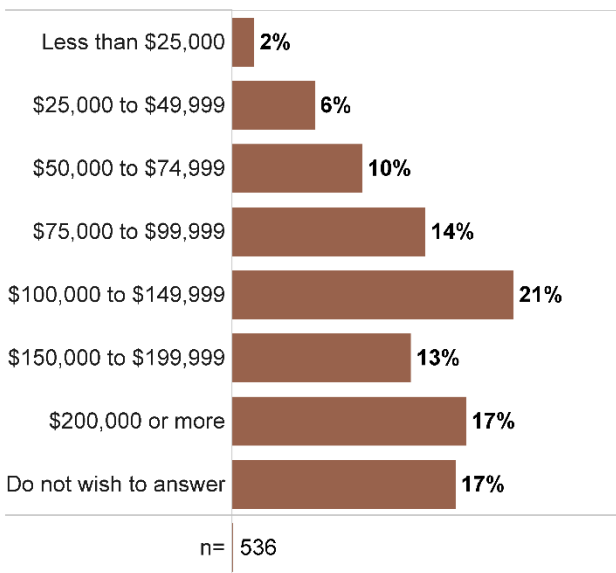


Figure 36. Household demographics: annual household income and household size. Tabular data shown in this figure are presented in Appendix A, Table 19.

- Over half of respondents (55%) had two people in their household, followed by three to five people (another 28%).

- In addition to obtaining higher education, Everglades visitors also tended to report relatively high income levels. About one in five respondents (21%) reported that their annual household income was between \$100,000 to \$149,999, 13% reported an annual household income between \$150,000 and \$199,999, and another 17% earned \$200,000 or more.
- Most respondents (71%) came from a dual-income household.

Finally, respondents were asked about their language preference (Figure 37).

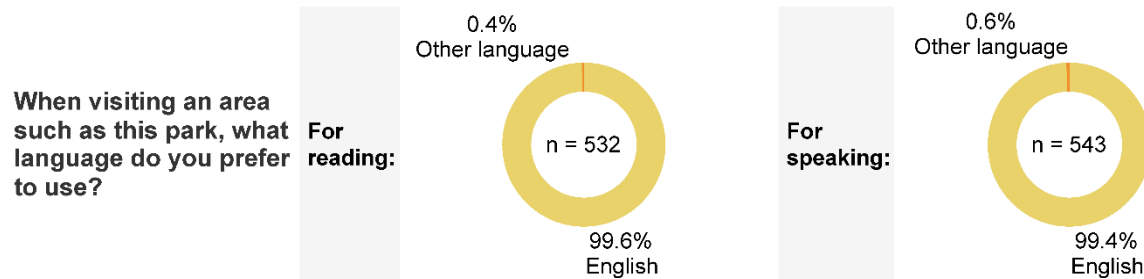


Figure 37. Respondent's language preference.

- While 4% of respondents were of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish, the overwhelming majority of respondents preferred to use English both for reading (99.6%) and speaking (99.4%) when visiting an area such as Everglades.
- Fewer than 1% of respondents preferred another language for either reading and/or speaking.

References

National Park Service (NPS). 2023a. 2023 socioeconomic monitoring of Everglades National Park: Visitor intercept survey. <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2301859>

National Park Service (NPS). 2023b. 2023 socioeconomic monitoring of Everglades National Park: Visitor post-trip survey. <https://irma.nps.gov/DataStore/Reference/Profile/2301860>

Appendix A: Accessible Tables

This appendix contains accessible tables with tabular data from figures found in the body of the report.

Table 8. Data from Figure 7. Number of nights spent in the local area around Everglades, by accommodation type.

Accommodation Type	Sample Size (n)	Median
Backcountry/Wilderness Camping in Everglades	3	3
Camping in Everglades	120	3
Camping outside Everglades	76	6
Lodging in Everglades	12	2
Lodging outside Everglades	1064	5
Unpaid accommodations	151	5

Table 9. Data from Figure 8. Number of adults and children in respondent's personal group, and total group size, while visiting Everglades.

Category	Sample Size (n)	Median
Adults	1676	2
Children	1676	0
Total group size	1676	2

Table 10. Data from Figure 15. Number of people in respondent's vehicle when entering Everglades.

Question	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If entered by car, truck, or SUV] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your vehicle when you entered Everglades?	1545	2
[If entered by RV/motorhome] Including yourself, how many people were traveling in your RV when you entered Everglades?	46	2
[If entered by motorcycle] Including yourself, how many people were traveling on your motorcycle when you entered Everglades?	5	2

Table 11. Data from Figure 16. Previous visits to Everglades.

Question	Sample Size (n)	Median
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to Everglades over the past 12 months?	546	1
[If not first-time visitor] Including this visit, how many visits have you made to Everglades over the past five years?	546	2

Table 12. Data from Figure 17. Visits made to other NPS sites within the past year.

Question	Sample Size (n)	Median
How many visits have you made to other NPS sites over the past 12 months?	1676	2

Table 13. Data from Figure 23. Reasons or motivations to visit Everglades.

Rating Category	Sample Size (n)
To visit a National Park Service site	544
To experience solitude	542
To hear the sounds of nature/quiet	548
To learn more about nature	549
To learn more about American history and culture	543
To spend time with family/friends	541
To get physical exercise	538
To view wildlife or natural scenery	552
To relax	540
To view dark night sky/stars	507
Other (if specified)	66

Table 14. Data from Figure 26. Use of personal electronic devices while visiting Everglades.

Device Use	Sample Size (n)
Make/receive a cell phone call	518
Send/receive a text message	528
Search the internet/email	513
GPS/Navigation	524
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	515
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	464
Other (if specified)	131

Table 15. Data from Figure 27. The importance of the use of personal electronic devices while visiting Everglades.

Device Use	Sample Size (n)
Make/receive a cell phone call	531
Send/receive a text message	532
Search the internet/email	524
GPS/Navigation	527
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	517
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	491
Other (if specified)	83

Table 16. Data from Figure 28. Quality of service for personal electronic devices while visiting Everglades.

Device Use	Sample Size (n)
Make/receive a cell phone call	309
Send/receive a text message	367
Search the internet/email	348
GPS/Navigation	376
Share pics/videos/audio via social media	266
Listen to/use an NPS podcast	113
Other (if specified)	44

Table 17. Data from Figure 31. Rating Everglades experience.

Rating Category	Sample Size (n)
Everglades is a safe place to visit	542
Everglades is too crowded	542
Natural resources in Everglades are in pristine condition	524
The entrance fee for Everglades is too high	473
Vandalism and crime are not a problem at Everglades	380
Everglades is not accessible to a person with physical disabilities	347
Historical and cultural features in Everglades are well maintained/preserved	452
Development of adjacent areas detracts from visitors' experience at Everglades	484

Table 18. Data from Figure 32. Rating the quality of Everglades facilities, visitor services, and recreational opportunities.

Rating Category	Sample Size (n)
Visitor Center	501
Exhibits (indoor and outdoor)	498
Restrooms	519
Walkways, trails, and roads	524
Campgrounds and/or picnic areas	195
Assistance from park employees	484
Park map or brochure	496
Ranger programs	234
Value for entrance fee paid	486
Commercial services in the park (food, lodging, gifts, rental, etc.)	363
Other services (if specified)	22
Learning about nature, history, or culture	494
Outdoor recreation (sightseeing, camping, bicycling, boating, hiking, etc.)	429

Table 19. Data from Figure 36. Household demographics: annual household income and household size.

Question	Sample Size (n)	Median
Including yourself, how many people are in your household?	536	2
Including yourself, how many people contribute to your annual household income?	519	2