



Elk Meadow Park

Visitor Survey

Dates Saturday, June 6th, 2020 to Sunday, June 28th, 2020

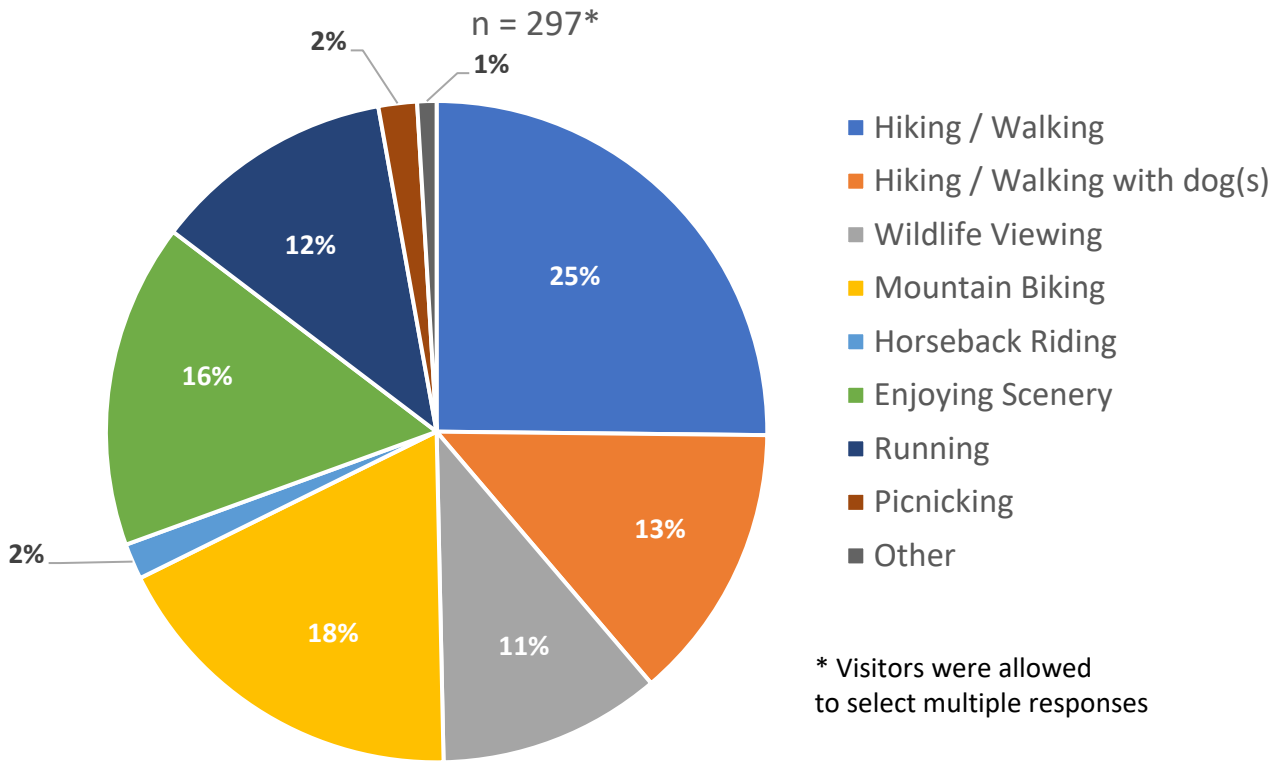
Objective To better understand park visitor behaviors, perception of the existing trails and the trailheads, as well as desired park improvements.

Key Findings

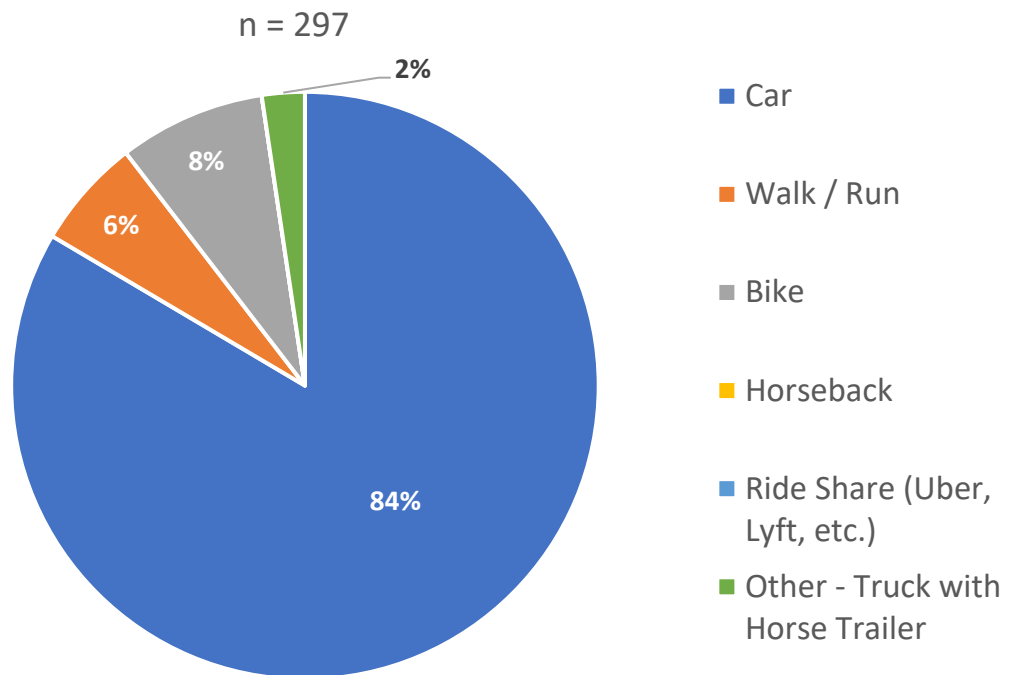
297 online surveys were completed

- Most popular forms of activities:
 - Hiking (25%)
 - Hiking with Dogs (13%)
 - Mountain Biking (18%)
- How people arrive: 84% by car
- Where people typically park:
 - 58% at Lewis Ridge
 - 31% at Stagecoach
 - 8% at Buchanan Recreation Center
- 65% said it was easy or very easy to find parking
- When lot is full:
 - 30% go to another park
 - 27% check the other Elk Meadow trailhead
 - 14% park on road
 - 12% go home
 - 6% leave with the intent to return later
- 63% of respondents support or strongly support designated trails at Elk Meadow

1. What are your primary activities when you visit Elk Meadow Park?

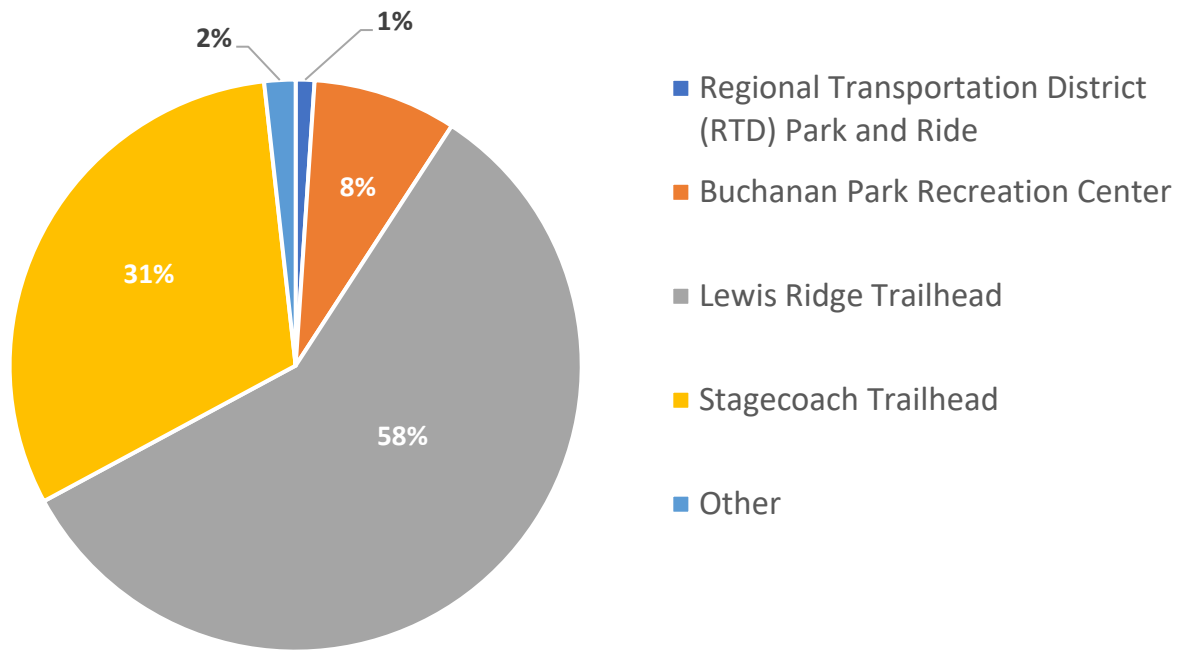


2. What method of transportation do you typically use to get to Elk Meadow Park?



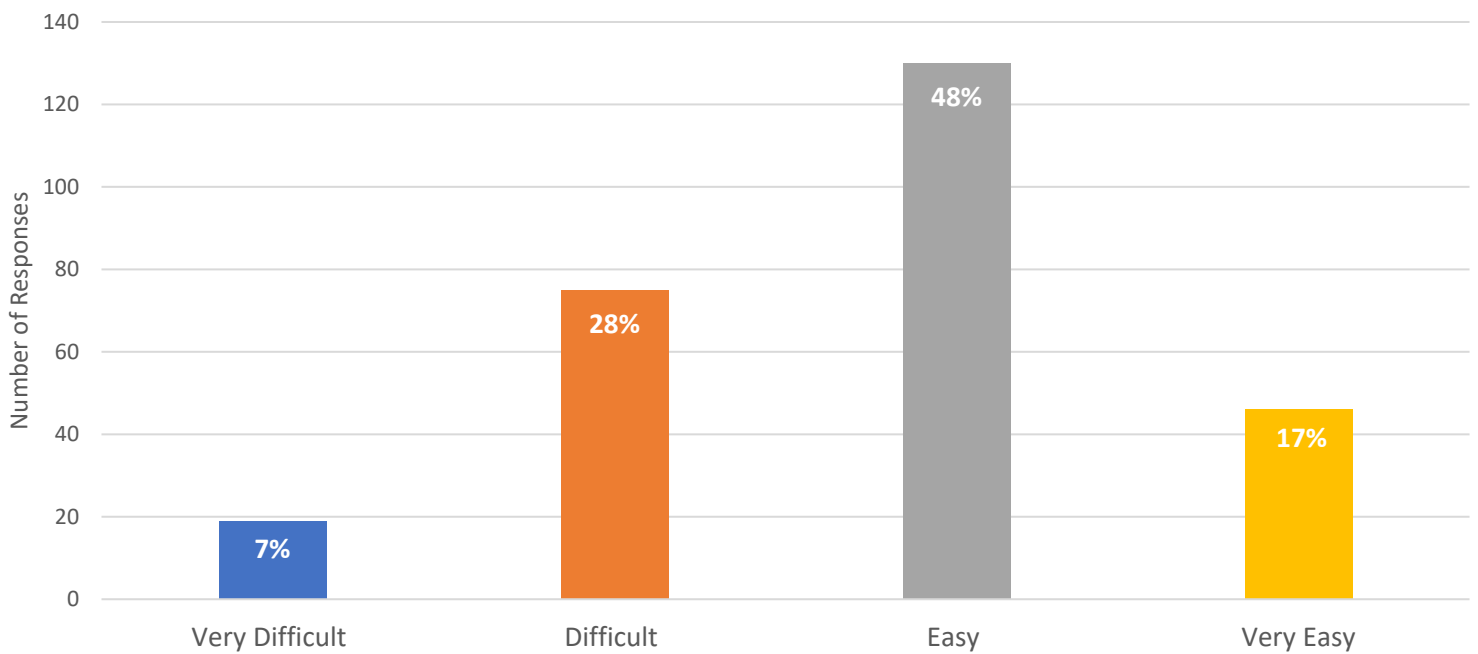
3. If you typically drive, where do you usually park?

n = 283



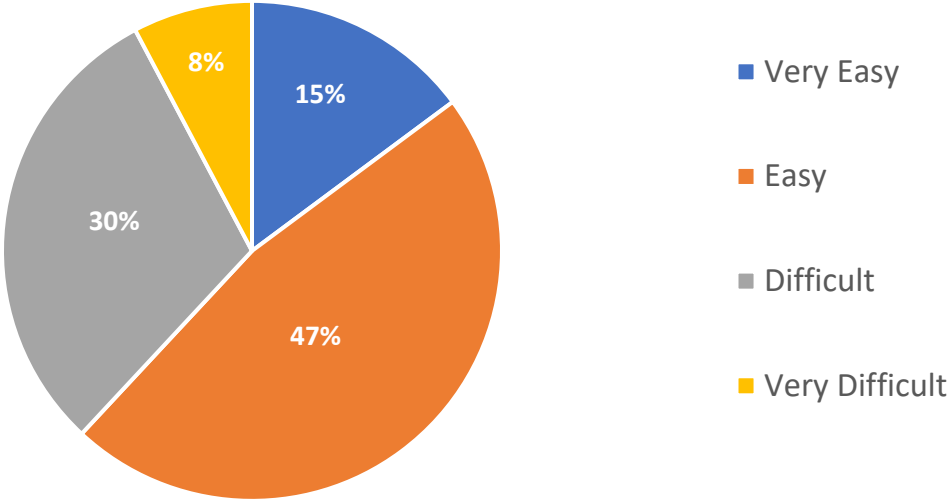
4. If you typically drive, how easy or difficult was it to find parking?

n = 270



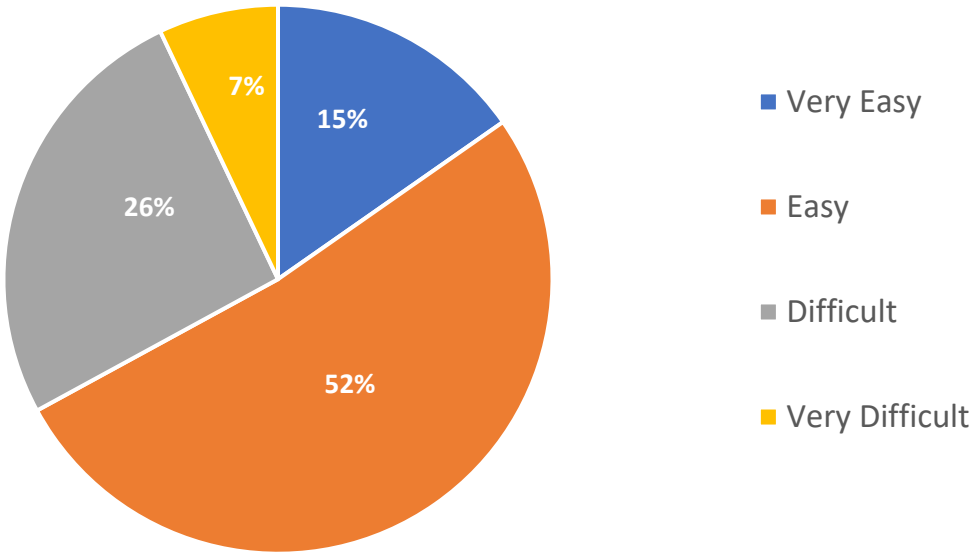
4a. Perception of Parking Availability: Lewis Ridge Trailhead

n = 155



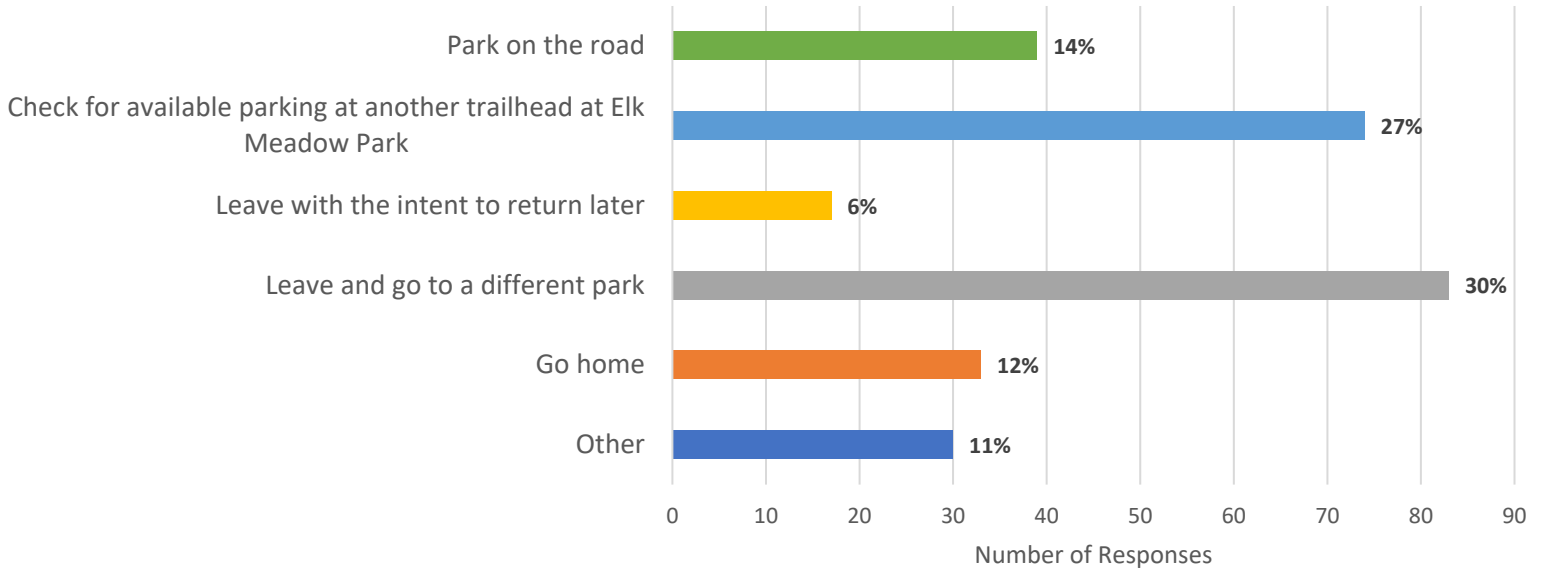
4b. Perception of Parking Availability: Stagecoach Trailhead

n = 85



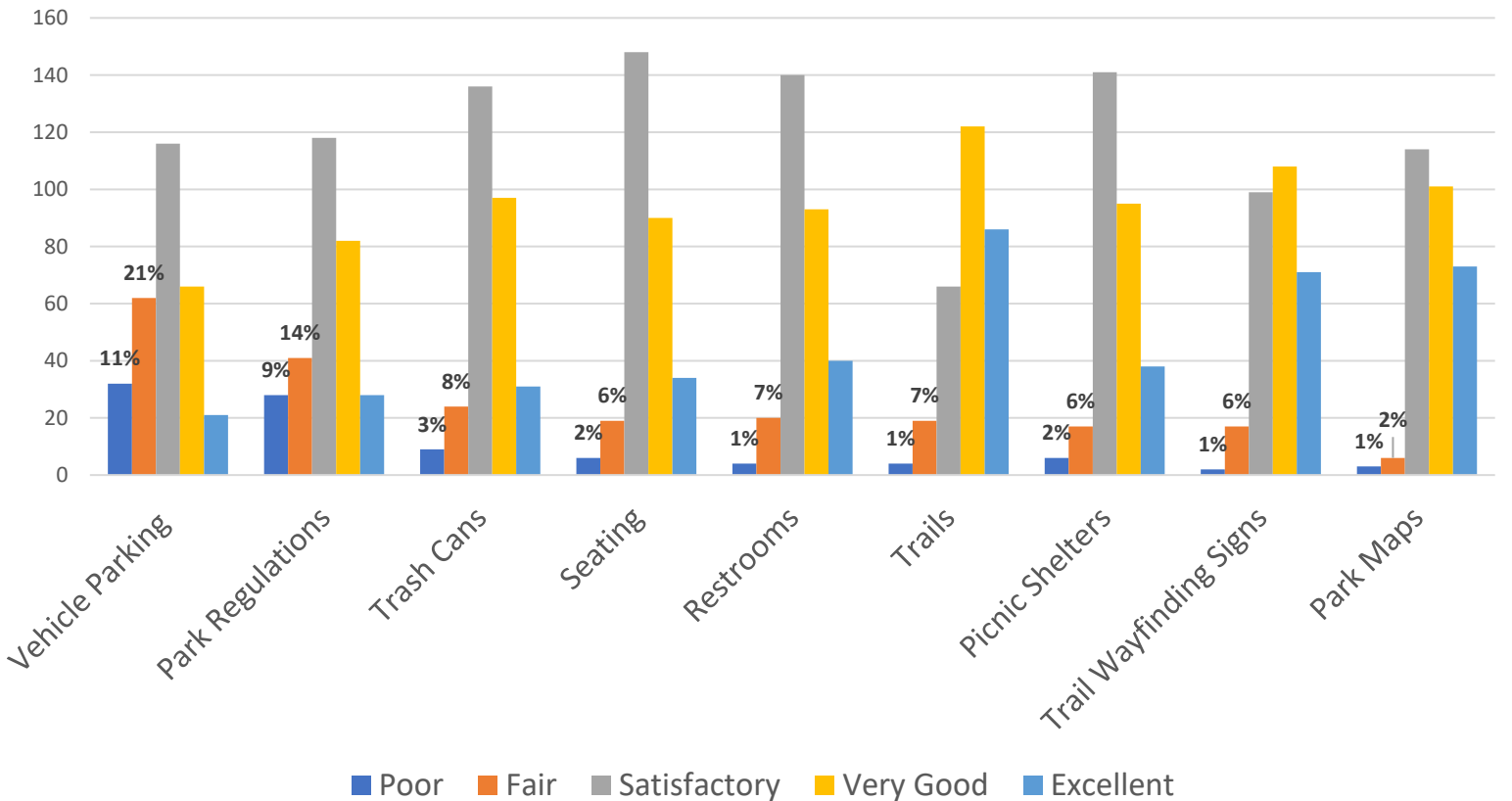
5. When parking is not available, what do you typically do?

n = 276



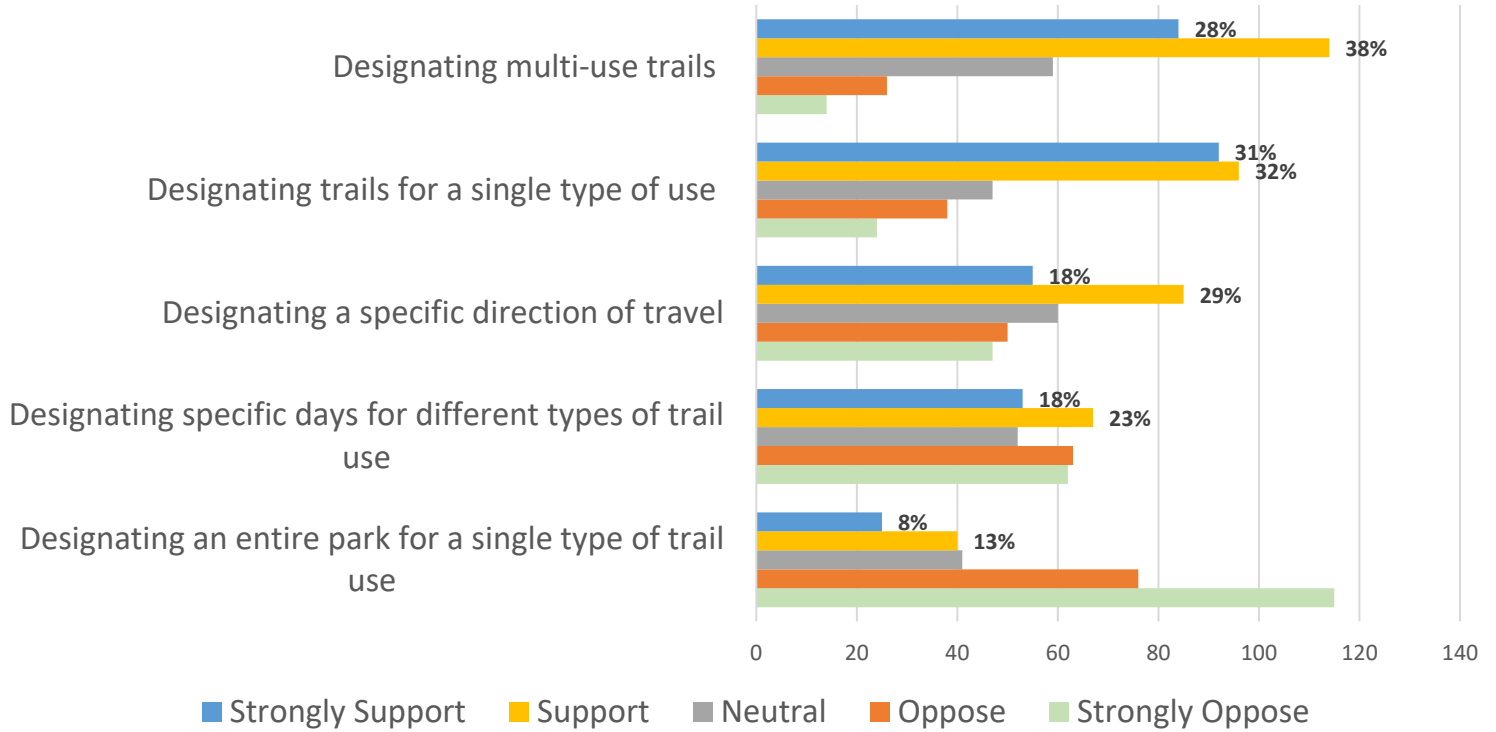
6. Please rate the quality of the park facilities used at Elk Meadow Park.

n = 297



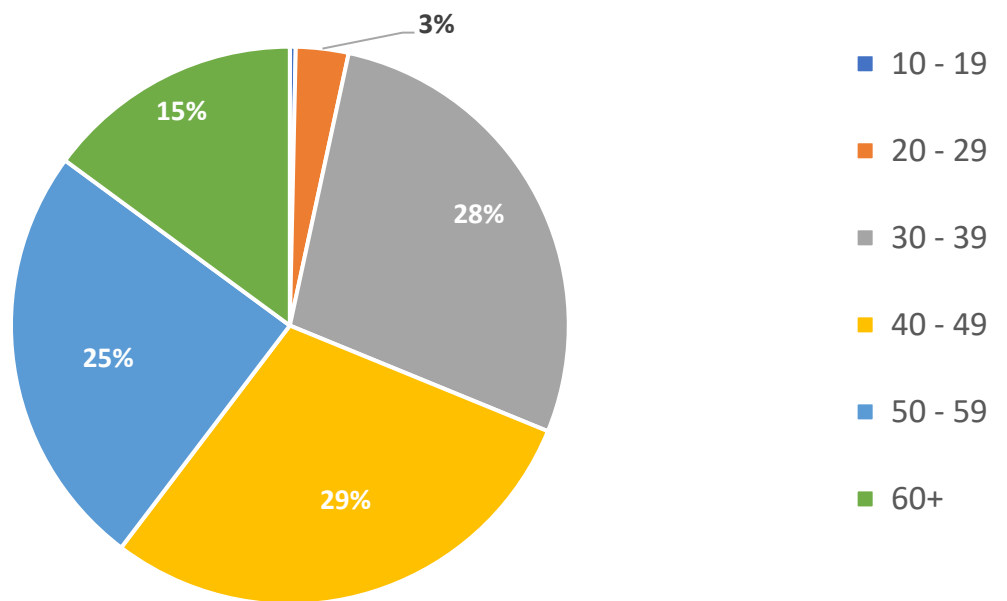
7. Please indicate your level of support for JCOS using the different tools listed.

n = 297



8. What is your age range?

n = 295



Methodology: A visitor survey was used to get public input on the type of experiences visitors are looking for when they use Elk Meadow Park and the types of improvements they would like to see in future park updates. Due to current events with the COVID-19 virus, the survey was conducted as an online survey using the Survey 123 platform. A sandwich board that included a QR code to the survey and general information about the project was produced and posted at both trailhead of Elk Meadow Park. Open Space staff also used social media and the Elk Meadow Park page of the Jefferson County Open Space website to advertise the project and availability of the survey. The physical and online postings were available for the full duration of the survey.

Considerations: Surveying for this visitor use survey was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has significantly increased visitation at parks across the Open Space system. It is likely that visitation at Elk Meadow Park has seen a significant increase, which may have impacted some visitor perceptions of the park's current conditions, including parking availability.

Results:

Trails: Visitors of Elk Meadow Park utilize the trails for various types of recreation, including hiking, mountain biking, trail running and horseback riding. Hiking is the most popular form of activity with 25 percent of visitors indicating that it is their primary activity, while 18 percent of visitors indicated that mountain biking was their primary activity. Sixty-three percent of visitors support or strongly support designating trails for specific types of use, such as hiking or mountain biking.

Trailheads: Unsurprisingly, 84 percent of visitors typically use a car to get to Elk Meadow Park. When visiting the park, most visitors (58 percent) use the Lewis Ridge Trailhead to find parking and 31 percent find parking at Elk Meadow's other official parking area, Stagecoach Trailhead. Although Open Space parks have been busier than ever, 48 percent of visitors said that they found it easy, but not very easy, to find parking while 28 percent said it was difficult to find parking. When looking at visitor perception of parking availability for specific trailheads, visitors seemed to view the perception of parking availability similarly between the two trailheads at Elk Meadow Park.

For both trailheads, about half (50 percent) of the visitors indicated that they found it easy, but not very easy, to find parking. Many visitors noted in the survey that they arrived early or avoided busy times at the park to have a better experience. When parking is not available in the trailhead parking lot, 30 percent of visitors stated that they left Elk Meadow Park to go to a less busy park, 27 percent indicated that they checked the other trailhead for parking and 14 percent stated that they parked on the road. When asked about the quality of park facilities, visitors indicated that vehicle parking was the worst of the listed facilities, usually because there is not enough parking to meet the demand.