



## WHAT WE HEARD

# BC Parks Day-Use Pass Public Engagement Summary 2022

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## IMPROVING VISITOR EXPERIENCE IN BC PARKS

BC Parks is responsible for managing and protecting the province's natural and cultural environments and offering enriching outdoor experiences across 14 million hectares of protected land.

Over the past decade, **BC Parks has experienced a significant increase in the use of provincial parks**, from approximately 20 million visitors in 2012 to 27 million in 2022. This growth has impacted visitor experiences and stewardship of the province's cultural and natural resources.

**BC Parks proactively manages visitors within the park system**, conserving and protecting these spaces for future use by fostering responsible recreation, sustainable management and advancing reconciliation efforts with Indigenous Peoples. **Through initiatives like day-use passes, BC Parks can better manage the increase in visitors** and the potential impacts.

**Day-use passes were introduced at select popular parks in 2020**, requiring visitors to reserve a trail or vehicle pass in advance of their trip. This initiative is one of many that BC Parks has implemented **to help address crowding and congestion in parks and alleviate pressure** placed on park rangers and emergency responders.

This report provides **an overview of the feedback received on day-use passes from individuals who use and value our parks**. The insights gathered are critical to BC Parks' ongoing learning and continuous improvement.



## Our Commitment to Visitors

BC Parks is committed to serving British Columbians and visitors by:



**Protecting and managing for future generations** a wide variety of outstanding park lands which represent the best natural features and diverse wilderness environments of the province.



Providing province-wide opportunities for a **diversity of high-quality and safe outdoor recreation** that is compatible with protecting the natural environment.



**Committing to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.** We honour their connection to the land and respect the importance of their diverse teachings, traditions and practices within these territories



## DAY-USE PASS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

This report presents insights collected from respondents to the 2022 BC Parks Day-Use Pass Survey. **The feedback gathered will inform improvements to day-use passes** and support future actions to enhance visitor experiences at parks.

### Day-Use Pass Overview

In response to the challenges posed by COVID-19 in 2020, **BC Parks implemented day-use passes to manage peak visitation periods in popular parks.**

Park visitors were **required to reserve a day-use pass at seven of B.C.'s provincial parks** – Cypress, Garibaldi, Golden Ears, Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes, Mount Robson, Mount Seymour and Stawamus Chief.

As of 2024, **day-use passes continue to remain active** at Garibaldi, Golden Ears, and Pipi7iyekw/Joffre Lakes Parks in the summer, and at Mount Seymour Park in the winter.

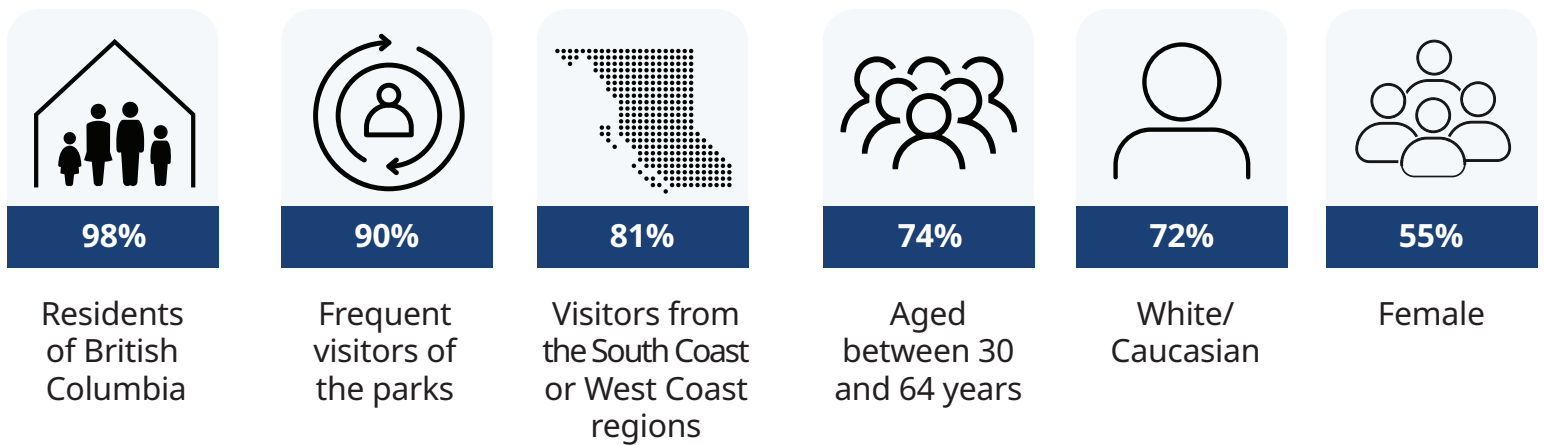
### Public Engagement Approach

To gather public feedback on the **day-use passes, BC Parks conducted an online survey from August 2022 through October 2022.** The survey was available on BC Parks' engagement website [helpshapebc.gov.bc.ca](https://helpshapebc.gov.bc.ca) and was promoted through email, social media and other channels. The feedback from respondents offered valuable insights on how to enhance day-use passes and general operations related to visitors' experiences.

# DAY-USE PASS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## Who We Heard From

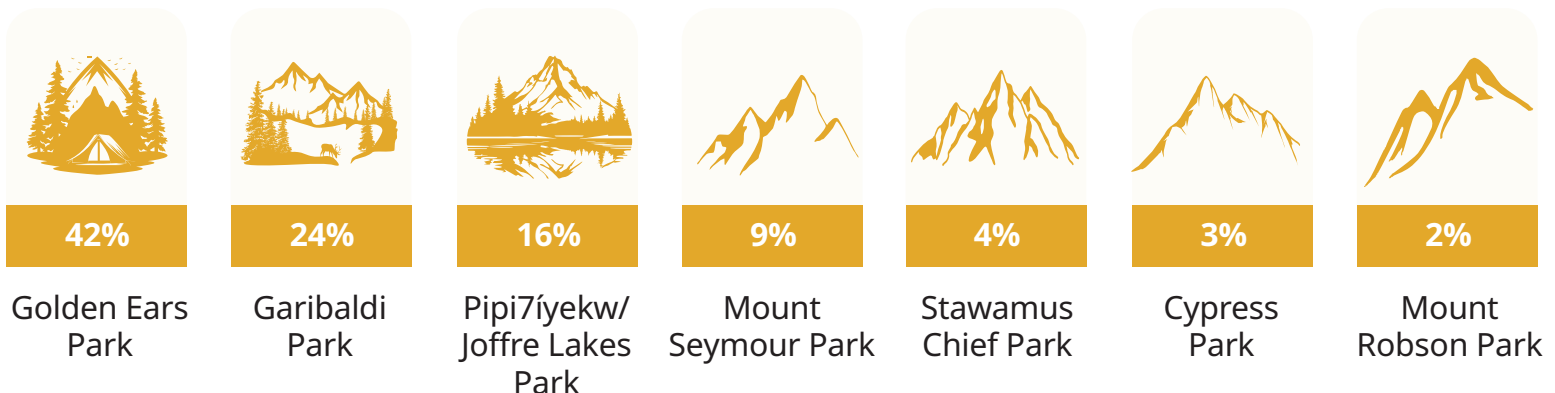
This survey gathered responses from 964 participants and was open to anyone who had visited a provincial park. The data presented in this report includes the experiences of those who visited a park requiring a day-use pass, visited during a time when a pass was not required, or visited a park that did not require a pass at all.



## Day-Use Pass Users vs. Non-Users

- 53% of respondents reported having booked a day-use pass
- 46% of respondents reported having never booked a day-use pass

## Most Recent Park Visited with a Day-Use Pass



Overall, the use of **day-use passes received positive feedback, with a majority (53%) viewing it as an equitable way to address concerns about the increase in visitation** that impacts both the natural environment and the visitor experience [Section 3.10].

## What We Heard

### BC Parks Visitor Experience

People who secured a day-use pass identified hiking as their primary recreational activity [Section 3.4].



#### Motivation for Park Visit

- Main motivations for a park visit were hiking, physical activity, nature experience, quality time with family and friends, and scenic views [Section 3.4].



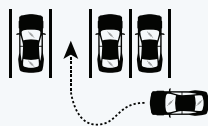
#### Overall Experience

- The large majority (83%) of respondents were very satisfied with their most recent visit to a BC Park [Section 3.8].
- Most respondents [93%] successfully accomplished what they hoped during their visit [Section 3.5].
- Only 6% were unable to achieve their goals, citing overcrowding, difficulty securing a day-use pass, park/trail closure and limited parking [Section 3.5].



#### Crowding

- Overall, 60% of respondents reported seeing more visitors on the trail than they would have preferred [Section 3.9].



#### Parking

- 71% of respondents appreciated having the assurance of guaranteed parking that accompanies the day-use pass [Section 3.10].
- 20% of day-use pass users reported carpooling more than they would have otherwise [Section 2.7].
- 91% of respondents who used a day-use pass on their most recent visit reported everyone in their group traveled together, compared to 74% of respondents who did not reserve a day-use pass [Section 3.6].



#### Indigenous Territories

- 45% of survey respondents reported being aware of the Indigenous territory they visited during their most recent BC Parks visit [Section 3.3].

# DAY-USE PASS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT



## Day-Use Pass Satisfaction

Day-use passes are seen as a fair way to manage visitor activity in provincial parks by 53% of respondents [Section 3.10].

Day-use pass holders expressed moderate to high satisfaction regarding various park features, such as park safety, trail cleanliness and clear signage. However, **pass users were less satisfied with crowding due to the high number of visitors in parks** and the length of time allotted for a visit [Section 2.9].

## Pass Endorsement

When asked about the number of visitors and impact, two-thirds of respondents agreed that increased visitors [Section 3.10]:

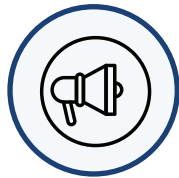
- Negatively impact park ecosystems (66%)
- Negatively impact their personal experience when visiting a park (66%)
- Raise concerns around their environmental impact when visiting a BC Park (66%)

## Day-Use Pass Challenges

Feedback and concerns primarily focused on **improving pass availability, ease of reservation, time limits and management of pass reservations** [Section 3.10].

Common challenges included **difficulties securing passes online, dissatisfaction with the time allotted for a visit, confusion around the check-in process** and how these factors create barriers to last-minute planning. Some respondents felt that day-use passes presented a barrier to accessing recreational opportunities [Section 3.10].

### Awareness



- Although most respondents were aware of day-use pass requirements, 21% reported arriving at a park unaware [Section 2.4].

### Unused Passes



- 46% of respondents reported attempting to book a pass but were unsuccessful, with a majority cancelling their plans or visiting another trail, recreation area, or provincial park [Section 2.3].
- Of all respondents who booked a pass, 11% indicated they did not use it [Section 2.4]. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of that 11% did not cancel their pass, leading to fewer available passes for other potential park visitors.

### Cancellation Process



- Respondents indicated the cancellation process could be difficult; 40% of respondents who did not cancel were unsure of the cancellation process, found it confusing, or thought they had cancelled when they hadn't. Almost a fifth were unaware that cancelling the pass would result in its return into inventory for others to use [18%] [Section 2.4].



# DAY-USE PASS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

## Day-Use Pass Improvements

BC Parks will continue to improve day-use passes based on data and feedback from users. The survey results highlighted some areas of action for BC Parks:



Evaluate the check-in process. 59% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the check-in process.



Assess the allotted time windows for entry to parks based on demand and feedback. The current system received a 49% approval rating.



Pursue a more diverse array of experiences and perspectives in feedback opportunities on day-use passes.

Other recommendations from survey respondents included:



Optimize unused passes and revise the pass release schedule.



Increase on-site staffing at checkpoints.



Improve park infrastructure to support the growing number of visitors.

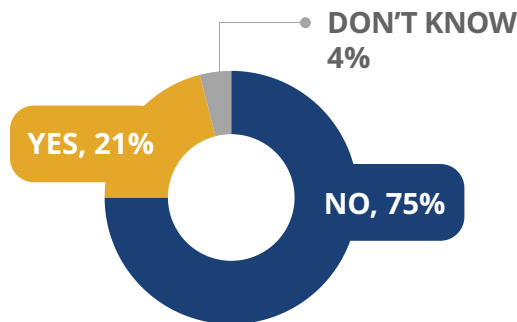
For an overview of day-use pass enhancements in response to these identified needs, see the Day-Use Passes 2020-2023 Stats Report.

## Detailed Survey Results

### Section 2.1 Day-use pass awareness

Have you ever arrived at a B.C. provincial park unaware that a day-use pass was required to access the park?

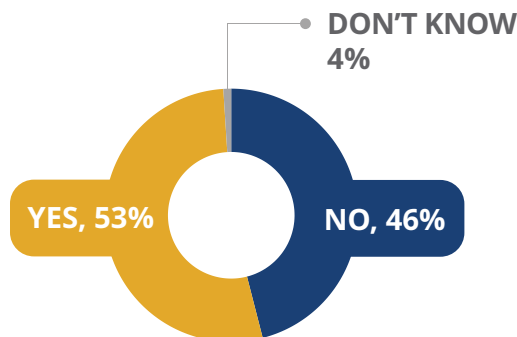
- ▶ One in five respondents (21%) reported arriving at a park unaware of the day-use pass requirement.



### Section 2.2 Day-use pass usage

Have you ever booked a day-use pass?

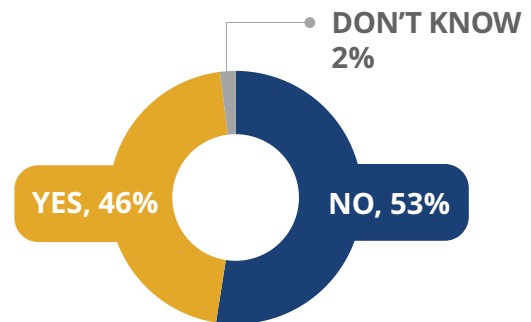
- ▶ 53% of respondents reported having booked a day-use pass.
- ▶ 46% of respondents reported having never booked a day-use pass.
- ▶ The remaining 1% were unsure if they had booked a pass or not.



### Section 2.3 Day-use pass booking success and behaviour

Have you ever tried to book a day-use pass but were unsuccessful?

- ▶ Almost one-half of respondents (46%) reported they had tried to book a pass but were unsuccessful.



Total exceeds 100% due to rounding.

Respondents who were unsuccessful in booking a pass reported that they decided to:

	COUNT (n)
Not visit a trail/park that day	227
Visit a different trail/recreation area	193
Check the website frequently to see if new passes have become available	163
Visit a different BC Park	102
Don't know	2
Other	30

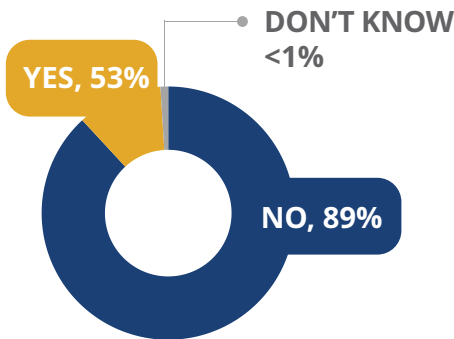
Multi-response question.

## Detailed Survey Results

### Section 2.4 Unused day-use passes

Have you ever booked a day-use pass but did not use it?

- ▶ Approximately one in ten respondents (11%) reported having booked a day-use pass that they ended up not using.



When you did not use your day-use pass, did you cancel the pass?

- ▶ 35% canceled the pass.
- ▶ 63% did not cancel the pass.
- ▶ 2% were unsure.

Why did you not cancel the pass? Please select all that apply.

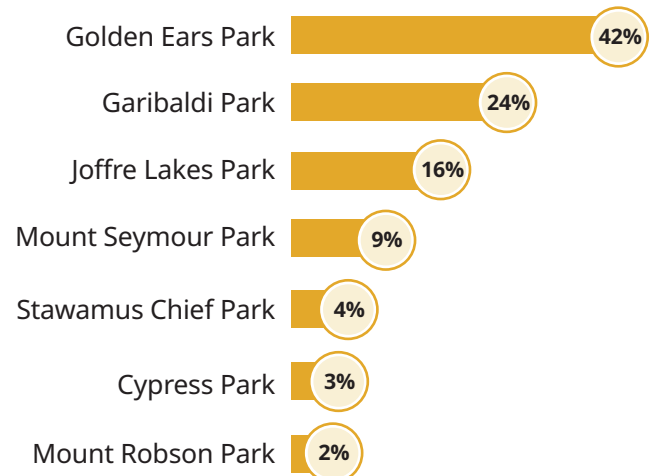
	COUNT (n)
Respondent didn't know the pass would go back into the inventory to be used by others	16
Cancelling didn't occur to respondent	14
Respondent didn't know how	13
Respondent thought they had canceled but later realized that they hadn't	12
The process to cancel was confusing	11
There are no consequences for not canceling	9
This function was not available	1
Other	5
Don't know	8

Multi-response question.

### Section 2.5 Most recent park visited with a day-use pass

Thinking of your most recent visit to a BC Park, which park did you visit?

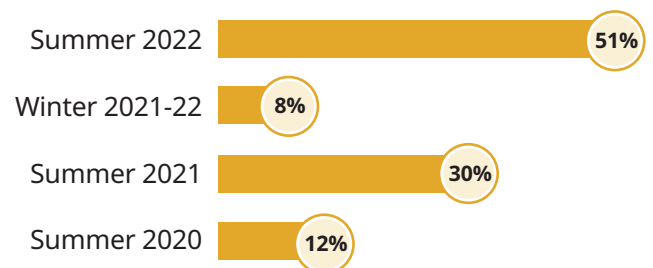
- ▶ Of those respondents who had visited BC Parks with a day-use pass, two-thirds were visitors to Golden Ears Park or Garibaldi Park.



### Section 2.6 Most recent season visited with a day-use pass

When was the visit to the park?

- ▶ Of those respondents who had visited BC Parks with a day-use pass, just over one-half visited in the summer of 2022.



Total exceeds 100% due to rounding.

## Detailed Survey Results

### Section 2.7 Carpooling

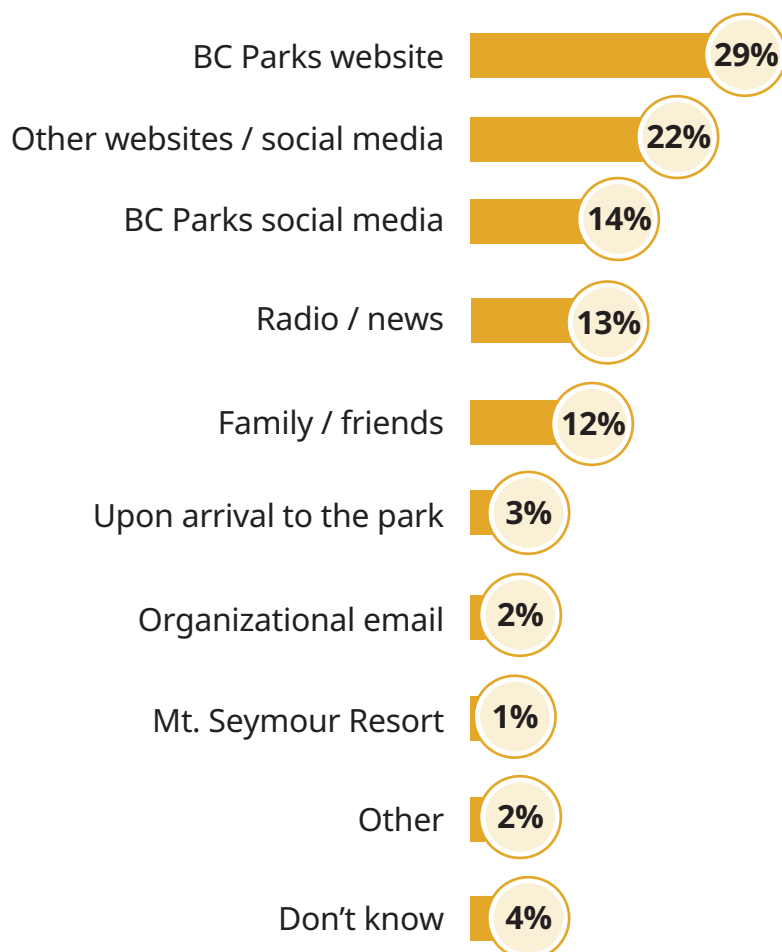
Did booking a day-use pass encourage you to carpool more than you would have in previous years?

- ▶ One in five day-use pass holders (20%) reported that booking a pass encouraged them to carpool more than they would have previously.
- ▶ 74% said “No” the pass did not encourage them to carpool more often.
- ▶ 6% were unsure.

### Section 2.8 Day-use pass awareness

How did you hear about the required day-use pass?

- ▶ The majority of respondents who had used a day-use pass heard about requirement through BC Parks’ website or social media, or some other organizations’ website or social media.

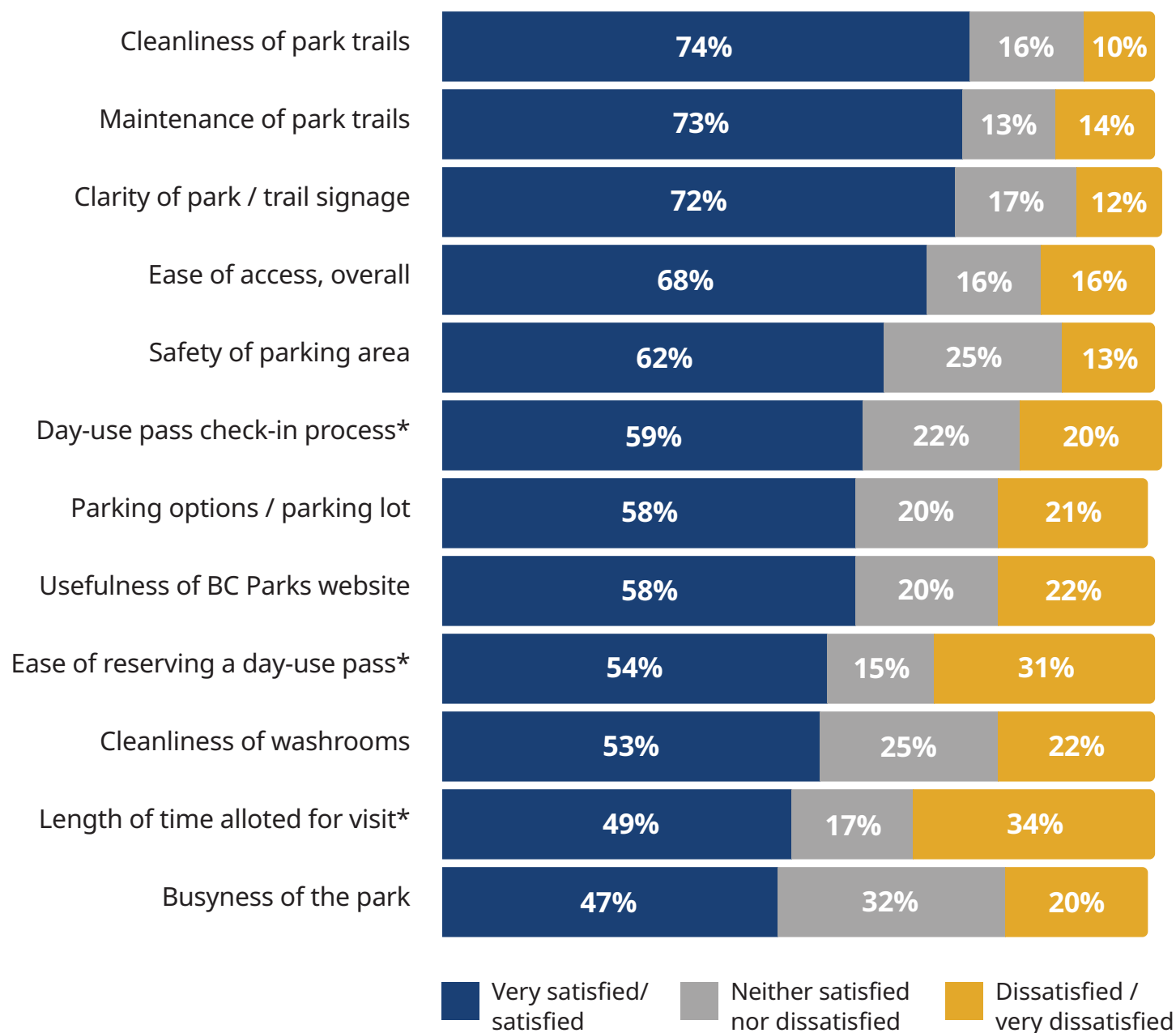


Total exceeds 100% due to rounding.

## Detailed Survey Results

### Section 2.9 Satisfaction with park experience (day-use pass users)

Survey respondents who indicated they had used a day-use pass were asked to rate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with a series of park and day-use pass attributes, based on their most recent park visit.



\* Indicates features specific to day-use passes.  
 Totals exceeds 100% due to rounding.

## Detailed Survey Results: Visiting BC Parks

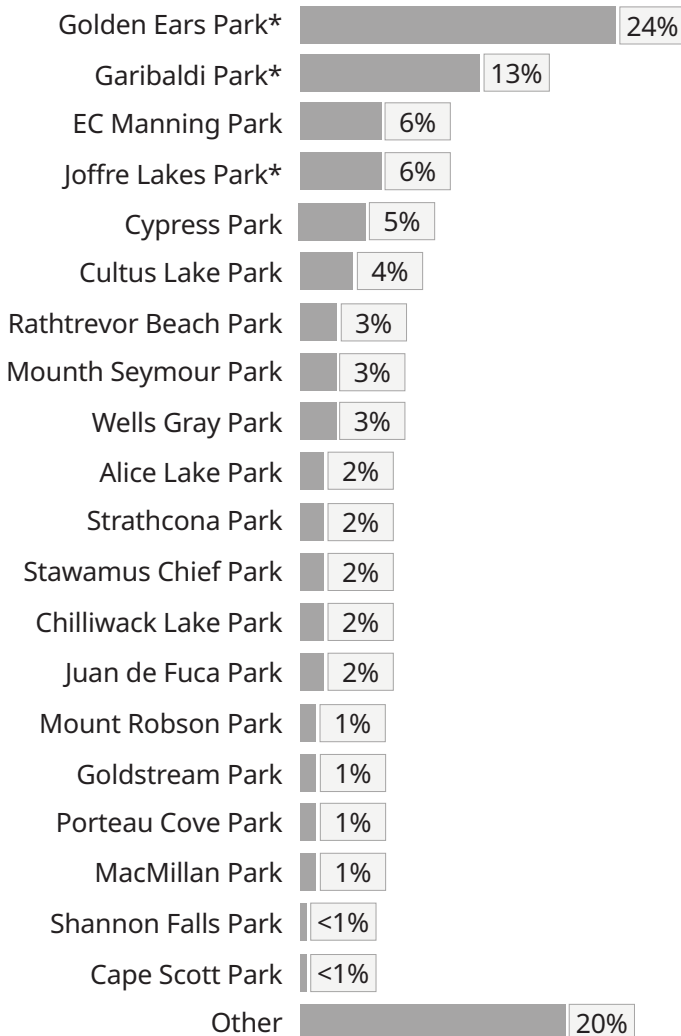
### Section 3.1 Most recent visit

Did you use a day-use pass for your most recent visit?

- ▶ 30% reported using a day-use pass for their most recent visit.
- ▶ 69% reported not using a day-use pass for their most recent visit.
- ▶ The remainder were unsure.

Survey respondents were asked what BC Park they most recently visited.

- ▶ 54% visited a park that requires a day-use pass.
- ▶ 46% visited a park that does not require a day-use pass.

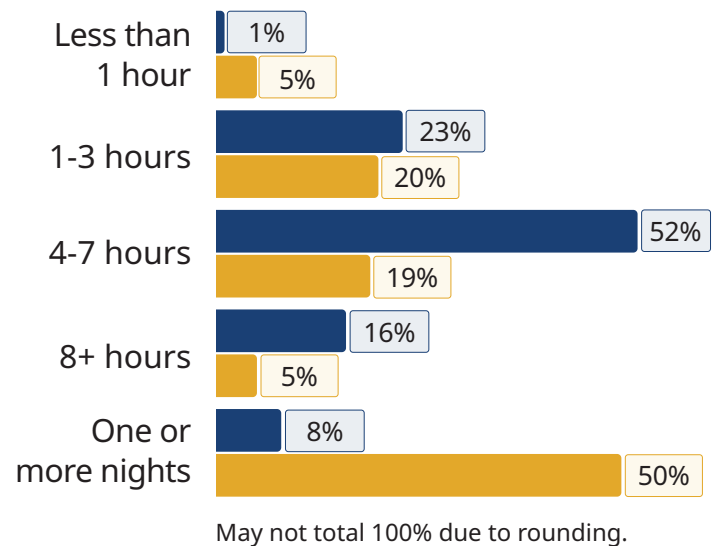


\* Indicates a park that required/requires a day-use pass during peak season.

### Section 3.2 Visit duration

How long did you spend at the park?

- ▶ Respondents that used a day-use pass were more likely to have visited for a 4 to 7-hour interval, while visitors without a day-use pass generally stayed for a longer duration.

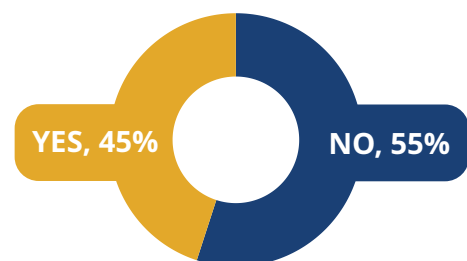


Legend: ■ Used a day-use pass for most recent visit, ■ Did not use a day-use pass for most recent visit

### Section 3.3 Traditional territory awareness

BC Parks is committed to reconciliation with Indigenous people. Did you know whose traditional territory you were on when you visited this park?

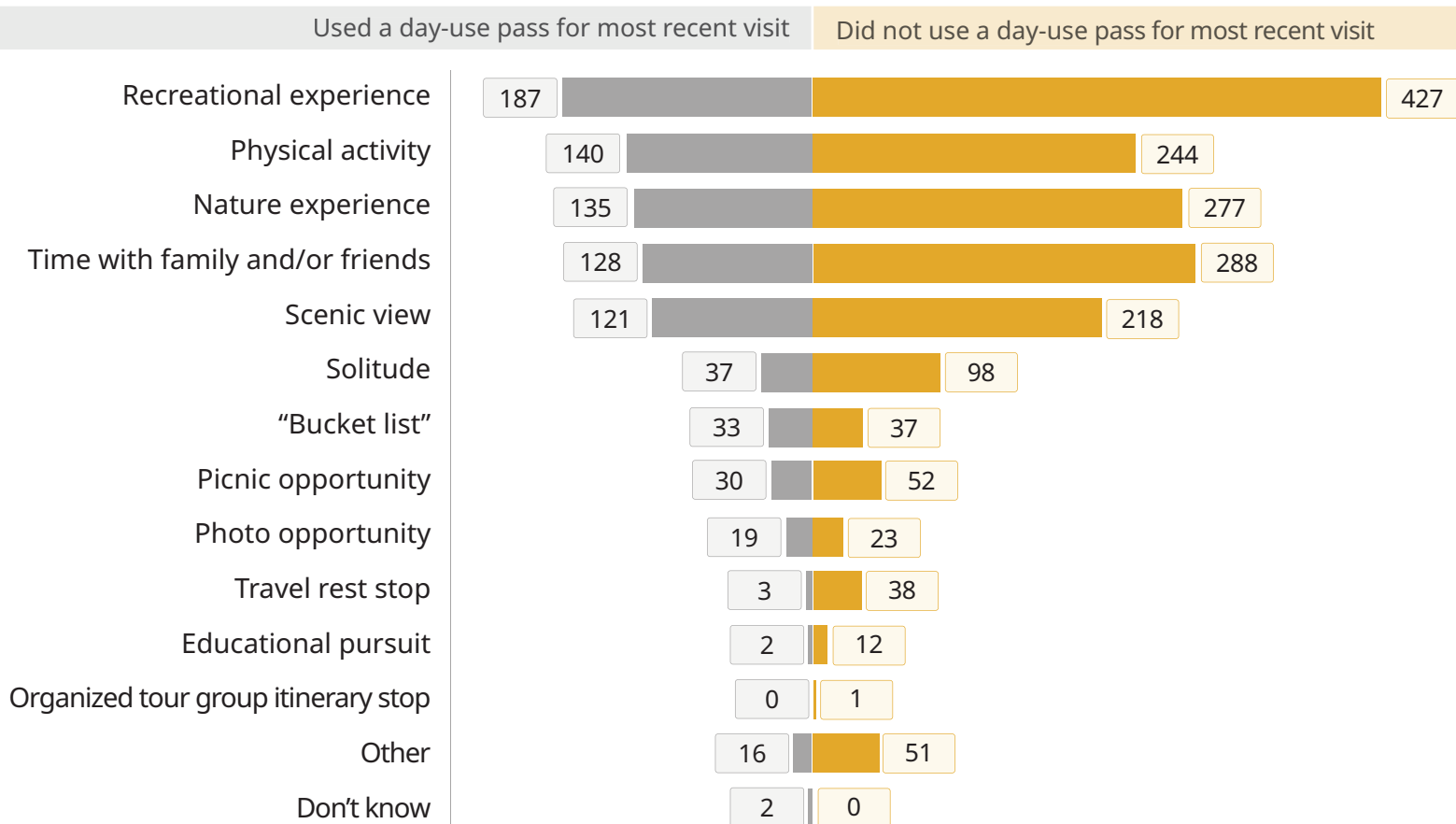
- ▶ 45% of survey respondents indicated they knew whose traditional territory they were on when visiting the park.



## Detailed Survey Results: Visiting BC Parks

### Section 3.4 Motivation for visiting

What would you say was your main motivation for visiting the park on your most recent visit?  
Please select all that apply.



Multi-response question.

### Which recreational experience motivated your visit to the park?

	Used a day-use pass for most recent visit COUNT (n)	Did not use a day-use pass for most recent visit COUNT (n)
Hiking	118	222
Swimming	55	108
Backcountry	53	102
Camping	35	218
Mountaineering	9	18
Skiing	7	11
Snowshoeing	7	9
Other	27	57
Don't know	0	1

Multi-response question.

### Detailed Survey Results: Visiting BC Parks

#### Section 3.5 Visit goals

Were you able to achieve what you were hoping to during the visit to the park?

- ▶ The majority (93%) of survey respondents reported they were able to achieve what they had hoped during their park visit.
- ▶ Only 6% of respondents reported they did not achieve their goal during their park visit.

The 6% of respondents who indicated they did not achieve their goal were asked why. The most common reasons cited were:

- ▶ Park crowded / too busy (n=14)
- ▶ Difficulty securing a day-use pass (n=9)
- ▶ Trail/park closure (n=7)
- ▶ Limited parking (n=5)
- ▶ Day-use pass time limit not long enough to complete the activity (n=4)

#### Section 3.6 Group composition

How many people were in your group?

- ▶ 87% of respondents who used a day-use pass on their most recent visit traveled with one or more other persons.
- ▶ 89% of respondents who did not use a day-use pass on their most recent visit traveled with one or more other persons.

#### Section 3.6 Group composition

Survey respondents were asked if everyone in their group traveled together to the park.

- ▶ 91% of respondents who used a day-use pass on their most recent visit reported everyone in their group traveled together.
- ▶ 74% of respondents who did not use a day-use pass on their most recent visit reported the same.

#### Section 3.7 Accessibility requirements

Did you or anyone in your group have accessibility requirements (e.g., a physical condition that affects mobility or requires the use of an aid such as a stroller, wheelchair, cane, or walker)?

- ▶ 6% of respondents who used a day-use pass on their most recent visit reported someone in their group had accessibility requirements.
- ▶ 8% of respondents who did not use a day-use pass on their most recent visit reported someone in their group had accessibility requirements.

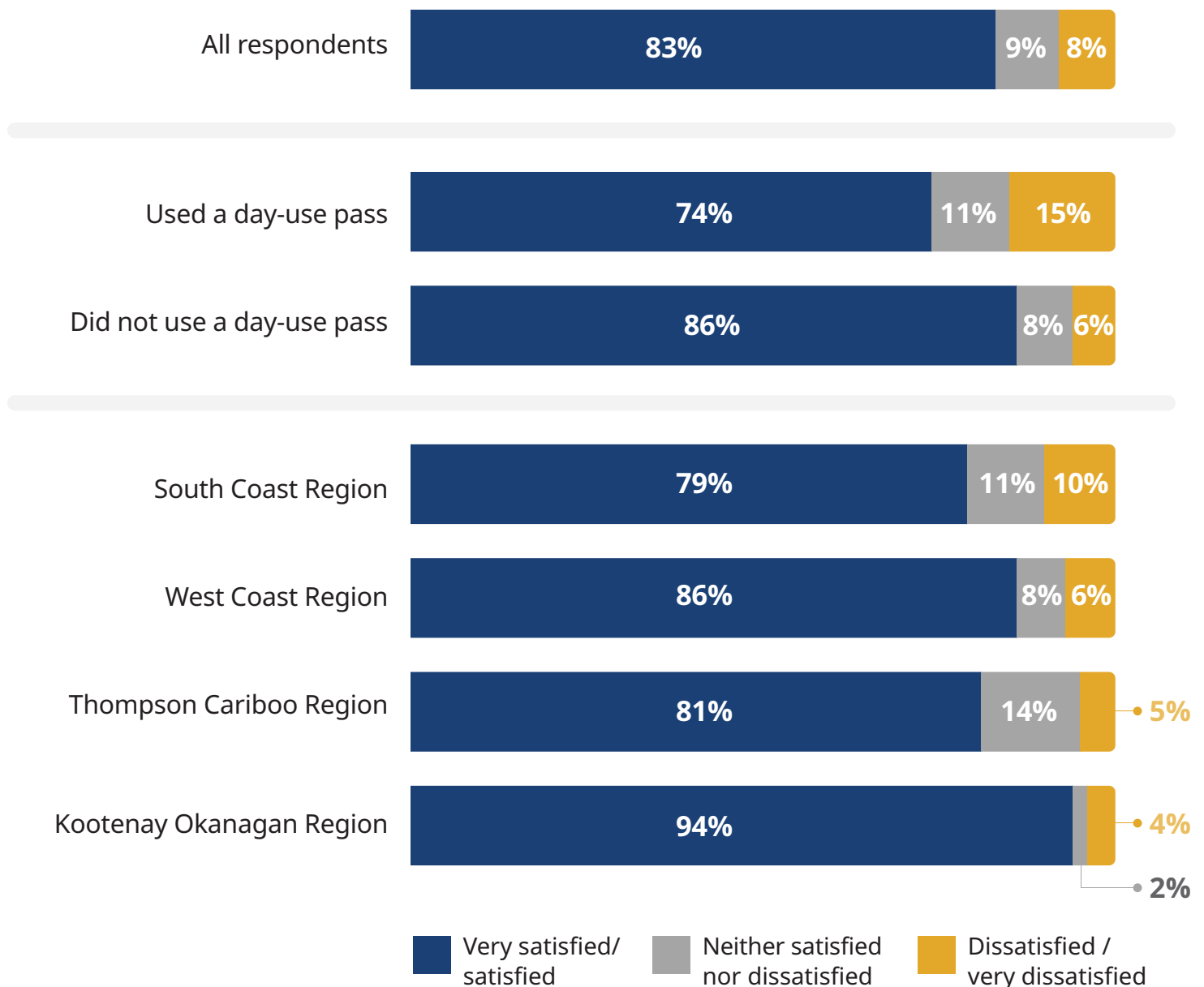


## Detailed Survey Results: Visiting BC Parks

### Section 3.8 Overall satisfaction with most recent visit

How satisfied or dissatisfied were you, overall, with your recent visit to the park?

- ▶ The large majority (83%) of respondents were (very) satisfied with their most recent visit to a BC Park.
- ▶ Visitors who used a day-use pass noted lower satisfaction rates than those who did not use a day-use pass; 74% compared to 86% of respondents.
- ▶ Respondents who visit parks most frequently in the South Coast Region expressed the lowest level of satisfaction compared to those in other regions.



\*Note: The Omineca Peace Region and North Coast Skeena Region are excluded from the above breakout due to low sample sizes.

## Detailed Survey Results: Visiting BC Parks

### Section 3.9 Trail crowding / busyness

Survey respondents were shown a series of photos (pictured below) depicting varying levels of visitors on the trail, ranging from no visitors (Image 1) to a high number of visitors (Image 6).

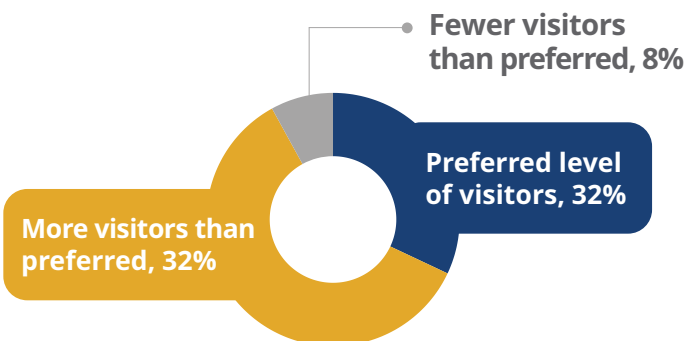
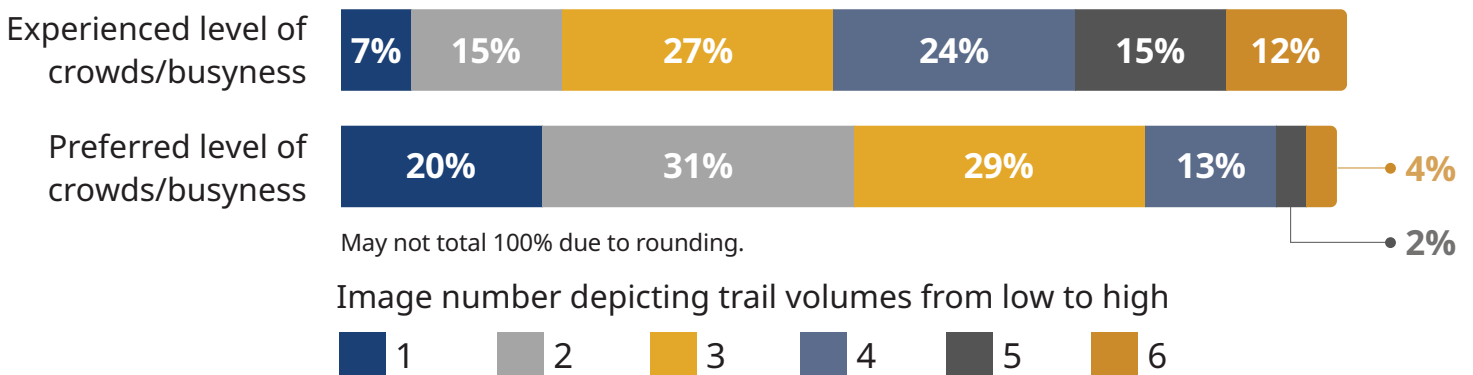


### Respondents were asked:

1. Which photo looks most like the number of visitors you typically experienced during your visit to the park?

2. Which of the following photos shows the level of use that you prefer when visiting a park or using a trail?

- ▶ One-half of respondents reported seeing a high numbers of visitors on the trail (i.e., image “4” or higher). However, far fewer respondents (almost one-in-five, 19%) indicated they prefer trails that busy.
- ▶ Four-in-five respondents (80%) indicated they prefer seeing few to no visitors when visiting BC Parks (i.e., images 1, 2 or 3). However, only approximately one-half (49%) reported actually experiencing trails with few to no individuals present.



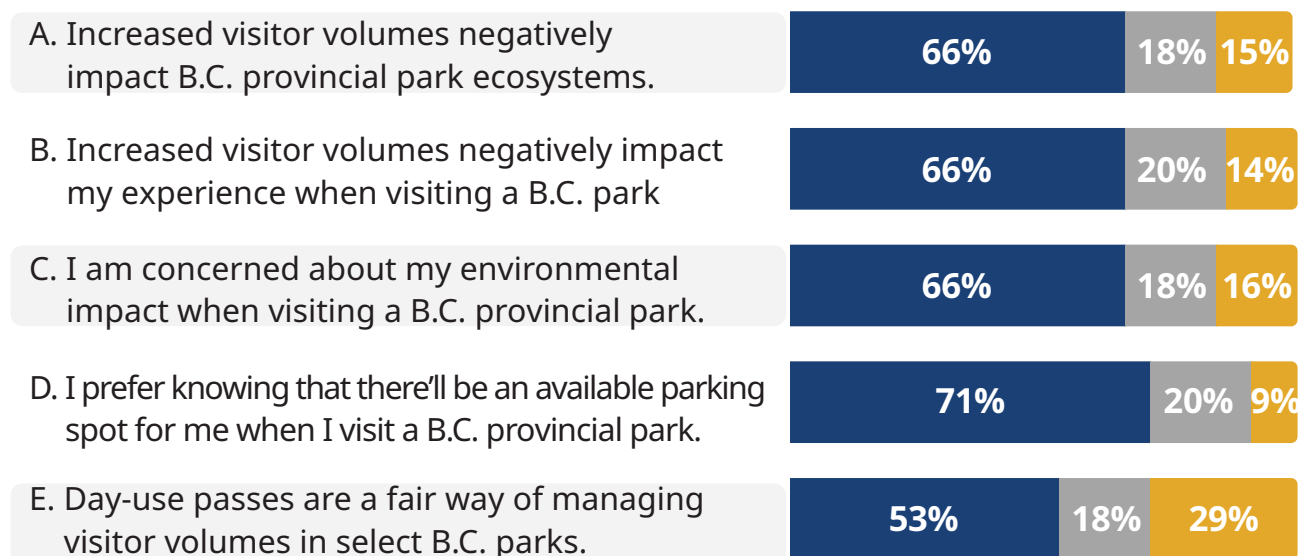
- ▶ 60% of respondents reported seeing more visitors on the trails than they preferred.
- ▶ Only one-in-three (32%) of respondents reported experiencing their preferred level of crowding during their most recent park visit.

## Detailed Survey Results: Visiting BC Parks

### Section 3.10 Visitor volumes, environmental impacts, and day-use pass fairness

Survey respondents were presented with a series of statements and asked to indicate their level of agreement.

- ▶ Two-thirds of respondents (66%) agreed that increased visitor volumes negatively impact both park ecosystems and their own visitor experience.
- ▶ Two-thirds of respondents (66%) also agreed with the statement that they are concerned about their environmental impact when visiting a BC Provincial Park.
- ▶ 71% of respondents agreed that they prefer knowing parking will be available for them when visiting a BC Provincial Park.
- ▶ Slightly over one-half of respondents (53%) agreed that day-use passes are a fair way to manage visitor volumes in select BC Parks.



May not total 100% due to rounding.

Strongly agree/agree
  Neither agree nor disagree
  Disagree/strongly disagree

### Respondents were asked:

Based on your response to statement "E" above, why do you agree or disagree with day-use passes as a fair way of managing visitor volumes in select BC Parks?

Common sentiments in support of day-use passes included:

- ▶ Support for limiting the number of visitors or reducing crowding (n=161)
- ▶ Likes guaranteed access or guaranteed parking (n=79)
- ▶ General positive sentiment towards the use of day-use passes (n=70)
- ▶ Supports reducing environmental impact within BC Parks (n=67)
- ▶ General agreement that day-use passes allow fair access (n=23)

### Detailed Survey Results: Visiting BC Parks

#### Section 3.10 Visitor volumes, environmental impacts, and day-use pass fairness

Common sentiments in opposition to day-use passes included:

- ▶ Passes do not allow for last-minute planning or visiting without pre-planning (n=69)
- ▶ Improve park infrastructure to support a higher number of visitors, rather than limiting visitor numbers (n=64)
- ▶ Passes are a barrier to access or disadvantage certain groups (n=37)
- ▶ Passes are difficult to secure (n=33)
- ▶ Technology requirement is an unfair barrier to access (n=31)
- ▶ General negative sentiment regarding the use of day-use passes (n=29)
- ▶ Access to public parks should not be limited (n=25)
- ▶ Unfair for residents who cannot access local parks (n=24)

#### Respondents were asked:

Do you have any suggestions on how to improve day-use passes or visitor experiences at BC Parks?

Common suggestions included:

- ▶ Improve the process for dealing with “no-shows” (n=39)
- ▶ Timing of pass release is unfair and should be revised (n=35)
- ▶ Revise time limits (n=18)
- ▶ Increase staffing at check-in (n=15)
- ▶ Passes should only be required for certain parks (ex. ecologically sensitive areas with high volumes) (n=13)

## Respondent Comments and Suggestions

### Section 4.1 Additional comments

Survey respondents were asked to provide additional comments about their responses to the survey questions. Sentiments expressed about the day-use passes include:

- ▶ Dissatisfaction with the deployment of day-use passes (n=46)
- ▶ Positive support for the deployment of day-use passes (n=31)
- ▶ Day-use passes difficult to secure (n=22)
- ▶ Trails/parks are too busy (n=18)
- ▶ Crowding is a non-issue or limiting access is not required (n=17)
- ▶ Parks should be open to everyone (n=16)
- ▶ Passes should prioritize local residents (n=14)
- ▶ Increase staffing at check-in or increase on-site monitoring (n=10)
- ▶ Pass time limit not long enough (n=9)
- ▶ Dissatisfaction with the need for pre-planning (n=7)
- ▶ Extend pass booking window farther in advance (n=6)
- ▶ Day-use pass system is unfair or inequitable (n=5)
- ▶ Dissatisfaction with the pass booking system or technical issues experienced (n=5)
- ▶ Improve process for dealing with “no-shows” (n=5)

Sentiments expressed about BC Parks in general include:

- ▶ Improve trails/park amenities (n=33)
- ▶ Increase number of parks/trails (n=22)
- ▶ Specific example of crowding at a provincial park (n=19)
- ▶ Improve the park and trail cleanliness and/or remove litter (n=18)
- ▶ General positive sentiment about BC Parks (n=17)
- ▶ Improve visitor education (responsible recreation/trail etiquette and safety) (n=7)
- ▶ Increase staffing at parks (n=7)
- ▶ Dissatisfaction with the campsite reservation system (n=6)
- ▶ Enforce pet policy in BC Parks (n=4)
- ▶ Improve funding for BC Parks (n=4)



## Respondent Comments and Suggestions

### Section 4.2 Final suggestions

Survey respondents were asked if they had any final suggestions on how to improve day-use passes or visitor experiences at BC Parks.

Common suggestions include:

- ▶ Improve the park infrastructure and provide funding for new parks and trails (n=90)
- ▶ Eliminate the use of day-use passes (n=85)
- ▶ Increase staffing at check-in or increase on-site monitoring (n=40)
- ▶ Increase window for booking passes (n=36)
- ▶ Improve process for dealing with “no-shows” (n=35)
- ▶ Eliminate half-day passes. Full-day passes only (n=33)
- ▶ Reserve passes for residents or prioritize resident access to parks (n=30)
- ▶ Support for current use of day-use passes (n=28)

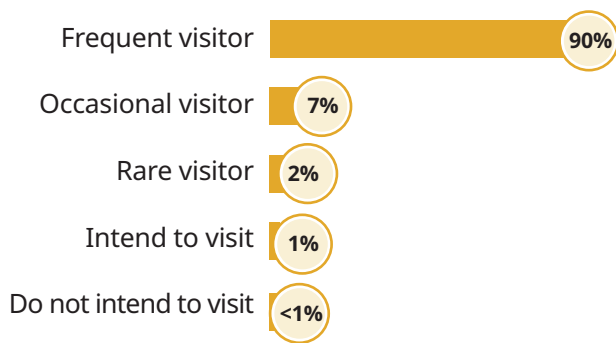
Additional suggestions include:

- ▶ Staggered release of passes (n=22)
- ▶ Apply a fee for passes, park entry, or parking (n=22)
- ▶ Improve visitor education (n=22)
- ▶ Ensure equitable distribution of passes (n=21)
- ▶ Increase public education around purpose of passes (n=15)
- ▶ Ensure online booking system is functional and easy to use (n=14)

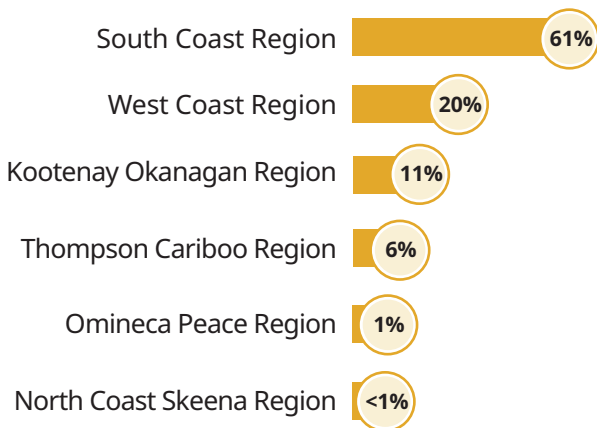
## Respondent Characteristics

### Section 5.1 Respondent characteristics

#### How often do you visit B.C.'s provincial parks?



#### Where in the province are the BC Parks located that you most frequently visit?



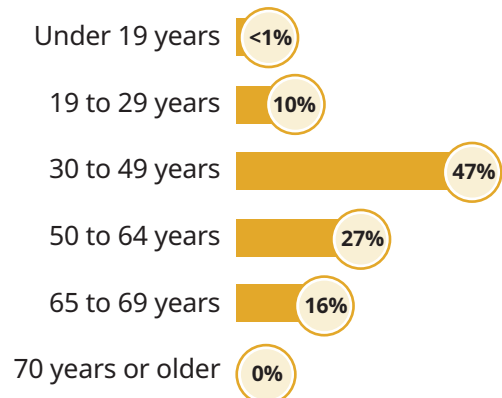
#### Are you a resident of B.C.?



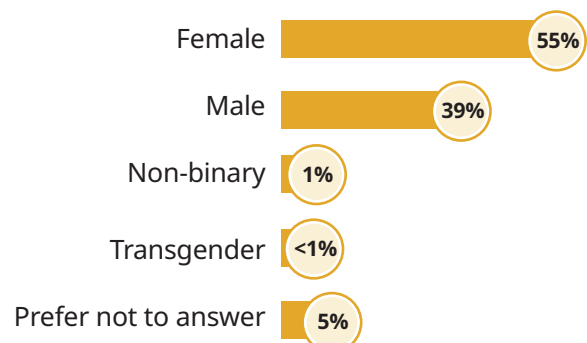
The remaining 2% were from:

- ▶ United States (33%)
- ▶ International (22%)
- ▶ Alberta (22%)
- ▶ Rest of Canada (17%)
- ▶ Preferred not to answer (6%)

#### Respondent age



#### Respondent gender identity





# APPENDIX

## Respondent Characteristics

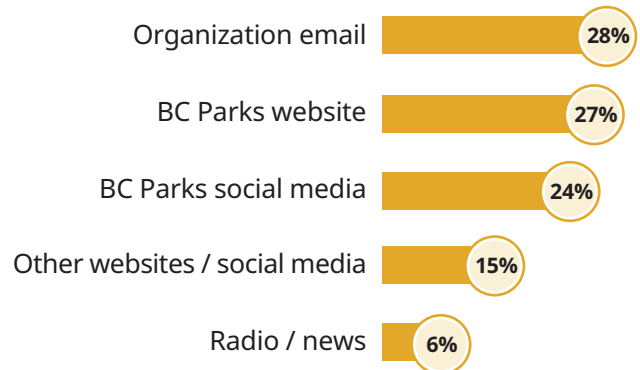
### Section 5.1 Respondent characteristics

Which of the following best describes you?

	COUNT (n)
White / Caucasian	715
Chinese	29
Latin America	27
South Asian	23
First Nations / Indigenous	16
Filipino	9
Southeast Asian	8
Japanese	7
Black	5
West Asian	5
Korean	4
Arab	3
Other	29
Don't know	4
I prefer not to answer	107

Multi-response question.

### Section 5.2 How did you hear about the survey?



Respondents who heard about the survey via email, received an email from:

- ▶ BC Parks (78%)
- ▶ BC Federation of Mountain Clubs (7%)
- ▶ Chilliwack Outdoor Club (6%)
- ▶ Other organization (9%)

Respondents who heard about the survey from non-BC Parks websites or social media, heard about it from:

- ▶ Facebook (unspecified) (30%)
- ▶ Outdoor / hiking club (various) (22%)
- ▶ Friends of Garibaldi Parks Society (10%)
- ▶ Backcountry BC (9%)
- ▶ BC Federation of Mountain Clubs (6%)
- ▶ Friends / family (5%)
- ▶ Other organization (18%)