

Community Survey Summary

Wood County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan

May 2018



Compiled by:

Wood County Department of Planning & Zoning



In collaboration with:

Wood County Parks and Forestry Department



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INTRODUCTION

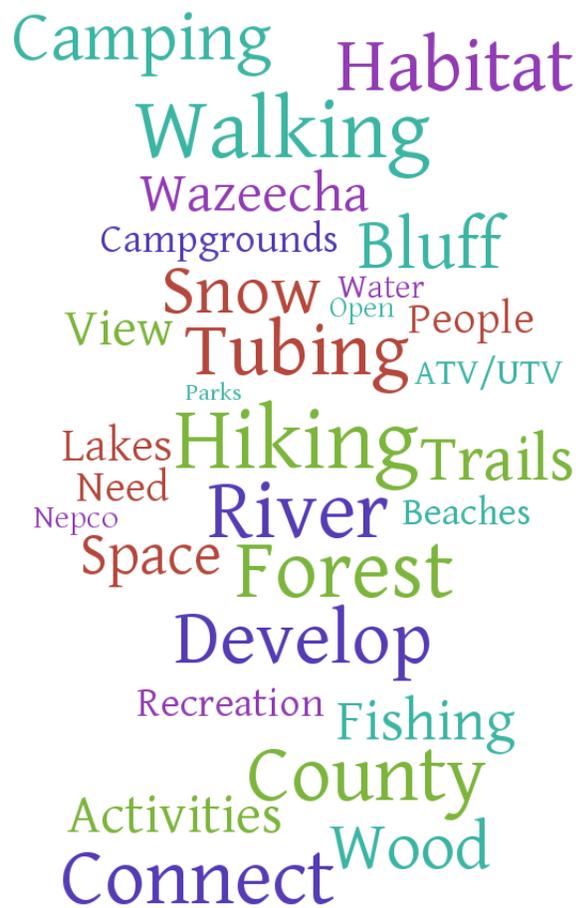
In 2017 Wood County began updating its 2011 Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan. A public participation strategy was identified early in the planning process to foster public involvement at all stages of the plan update. Public participation helps to ensure that the plan truly reflects the needs, opportunities and desires of the community. Furthermore, it is essential to the overall success of the plan. A community survey was one means of collecting public opinion.

The purpose of the community survey was to gather resident and visitor input for the Wood County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces Plan - 2018. Specifically, the survey gathered information on county park usage, preferred outdoor recreation amenities/activities, community values, and attitudes towards future recreational development in Wood County.

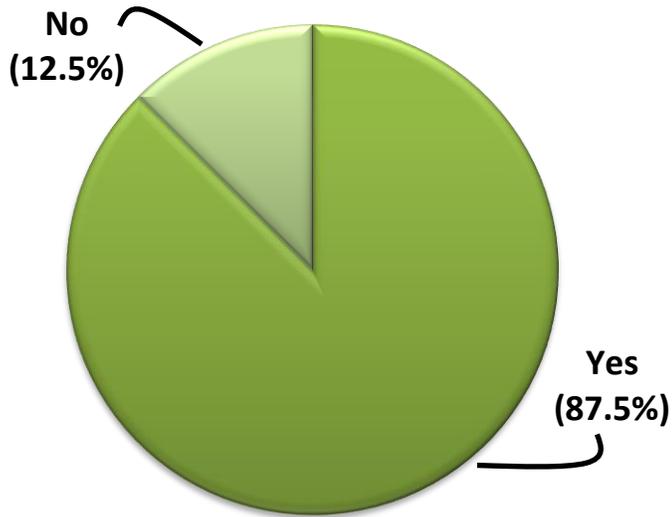
The survey was available to Wood County residents and visitors from January 26th to March 1st, 2018. The survey was available online or by hard copy upon request. Survey notice platforms included: email, Facebook, radio, local newspapers, Wood County website, and others. Additionally, 500 postcards were sent out randomly to residents located in all of Wood County's local communities (city, village, and town).

A total of 591 surveys were completed.

This report summarizes the needs, desires and attitudes of the general public in regard to the Wood County recreation system. The report presents numeric tabulation and graphic representation of the questions and answers in the community survey. In addition to numeric data, respondent's additional comments are provided. The input collected through this survey will be incorporated into the 2018 plan update. Results of this survey will provide guidance for recreational decisions over the next (5) five years.

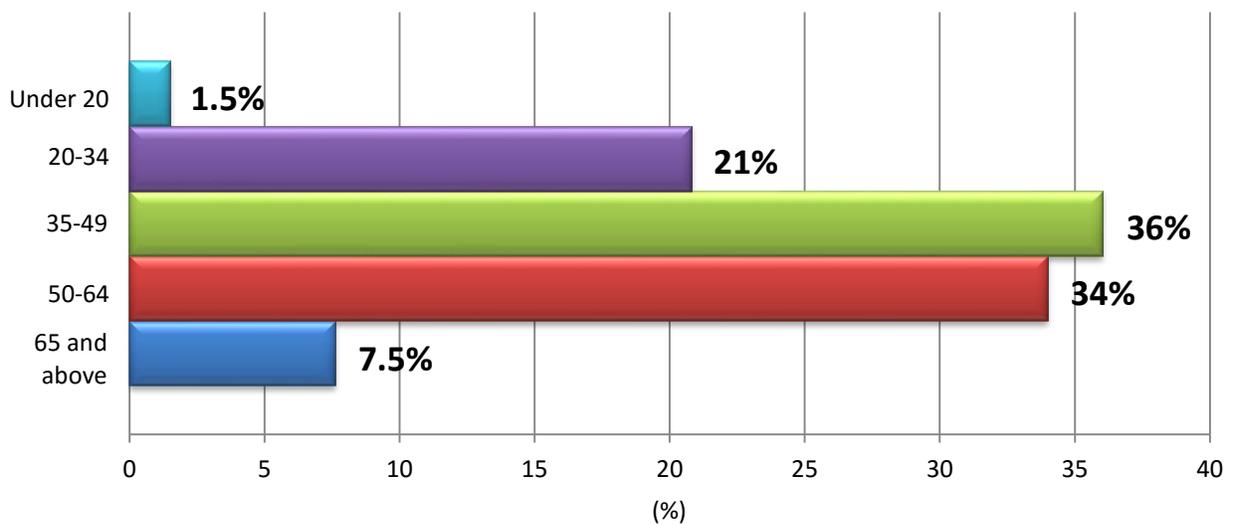


Question 1: Are you currently a Wood County, Wisconsin resident?



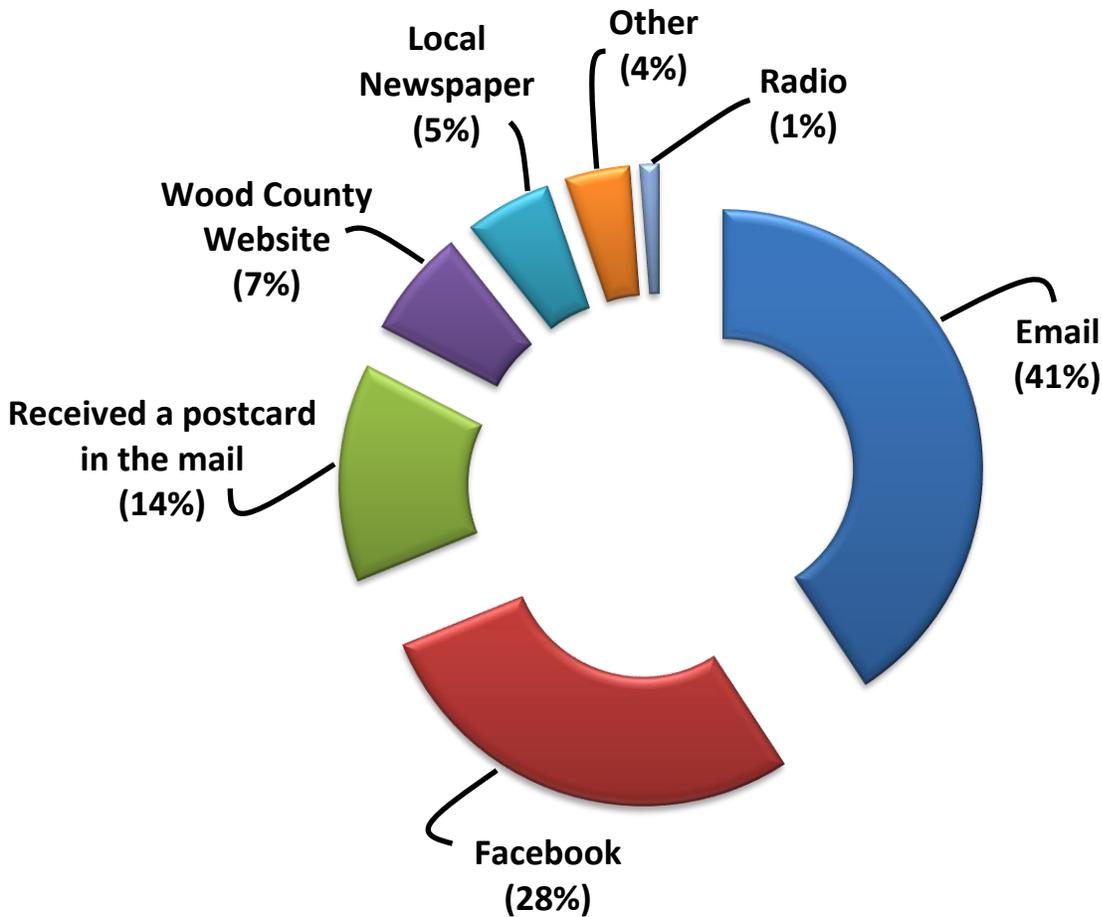
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	87.5%
No	12.5%

Question 2: What is your current age?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Under 20	1.5%
20-34	21%
35-49	36%
50-64	34%
65 and above	7.5%

Question 3: How were you made aware of this survey?



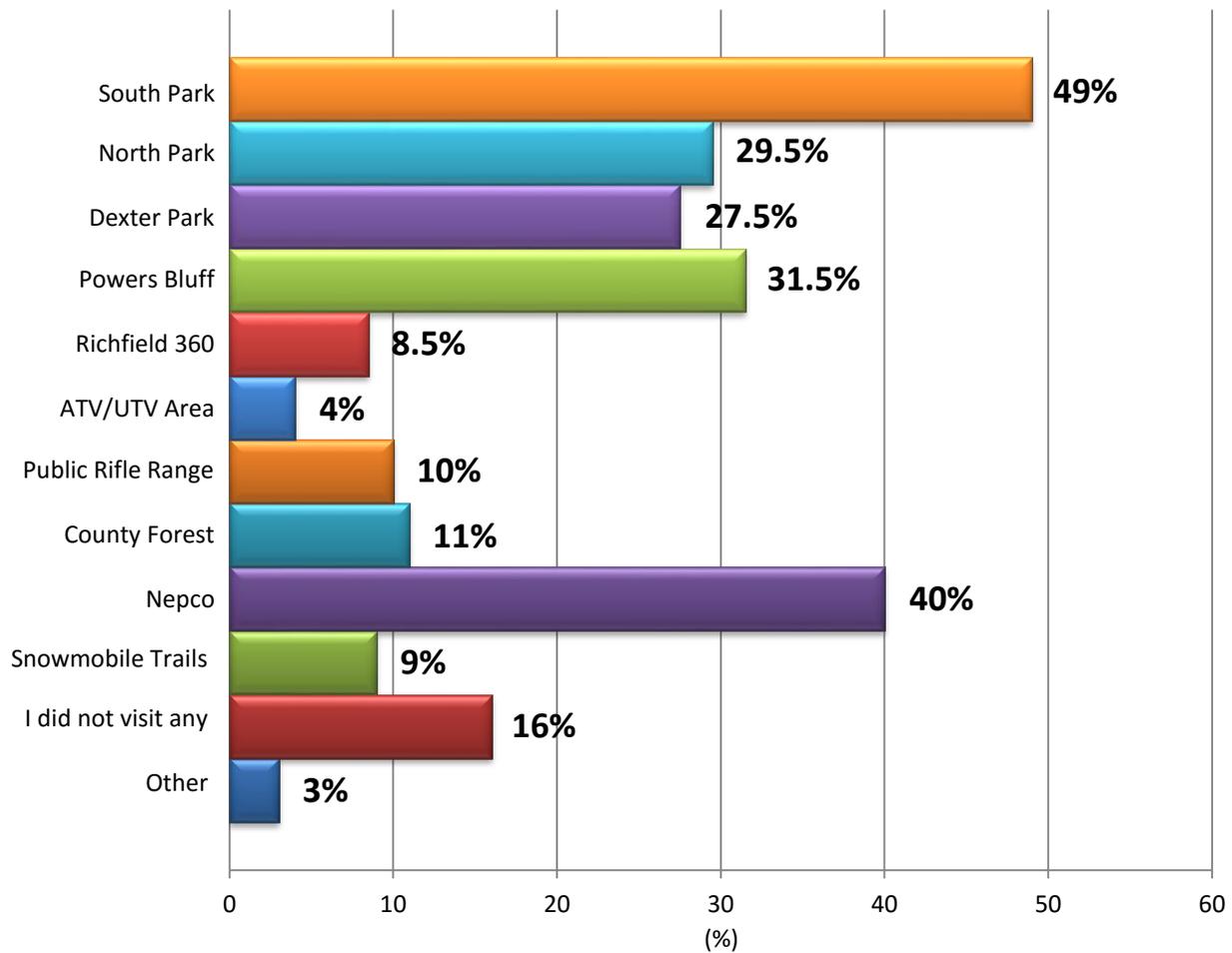
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Received a postcard in the mail	14%
Radio	1%
Wood County Website	7%
Email	41%
Facebook	28%
Local Newspaper	5%
Other (please specify)*	4%

*NOTE: Other ways survey participants were made aware of the survey included, but are not limited to: word of mouth, friends, teachers, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wisconsin Rapids Mayor Blog, and Incurage Community Foundation

FURTHER STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:

Interestingly, 58% of survey respondents 50 years of age and older were made aware of the survey by the mailed postcard.

Question 4: During the months of December, 2016 – May, 2017 (winter/spring), which parks and forestry areas did you visit? (Check all that apply)?

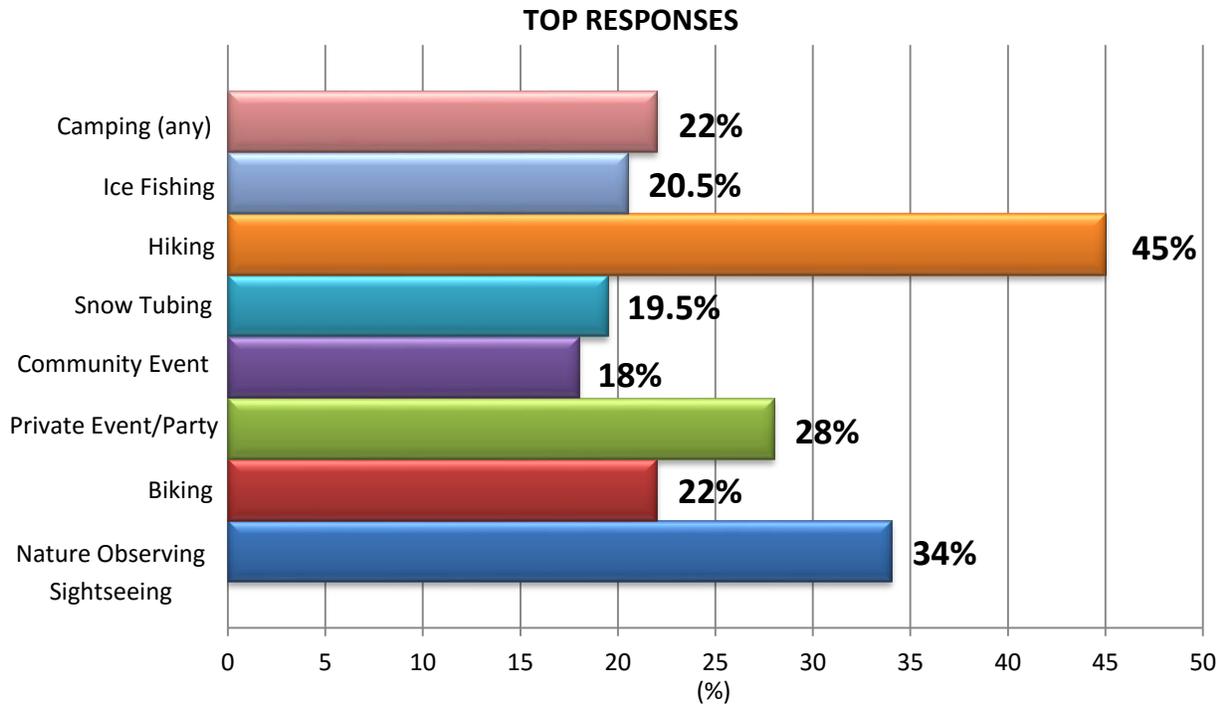


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
South Park (Wazeecha)	49%
North Park	29.5%
Dexter Park	27.5%
Powers Bluff	31.5%
Richfield 360	8.5%
Highway 54 ATV/UTV Area	4%
Public Rifle Range	10%
Wood County Forest Area	11%
Nepco	40%
Wood County Snowmobile Trails	9%
I did not visit any	16%
Other (please specify)*	3%

*NOTE: Other recreation areas/comments included, but are not limited to: local municipal parks (town, village, and city), Wisconsin River, and Sandhill State Wildlife Area.

FURTHER STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: Interestingly, Nepco County Park was the most visited by nonresidents.

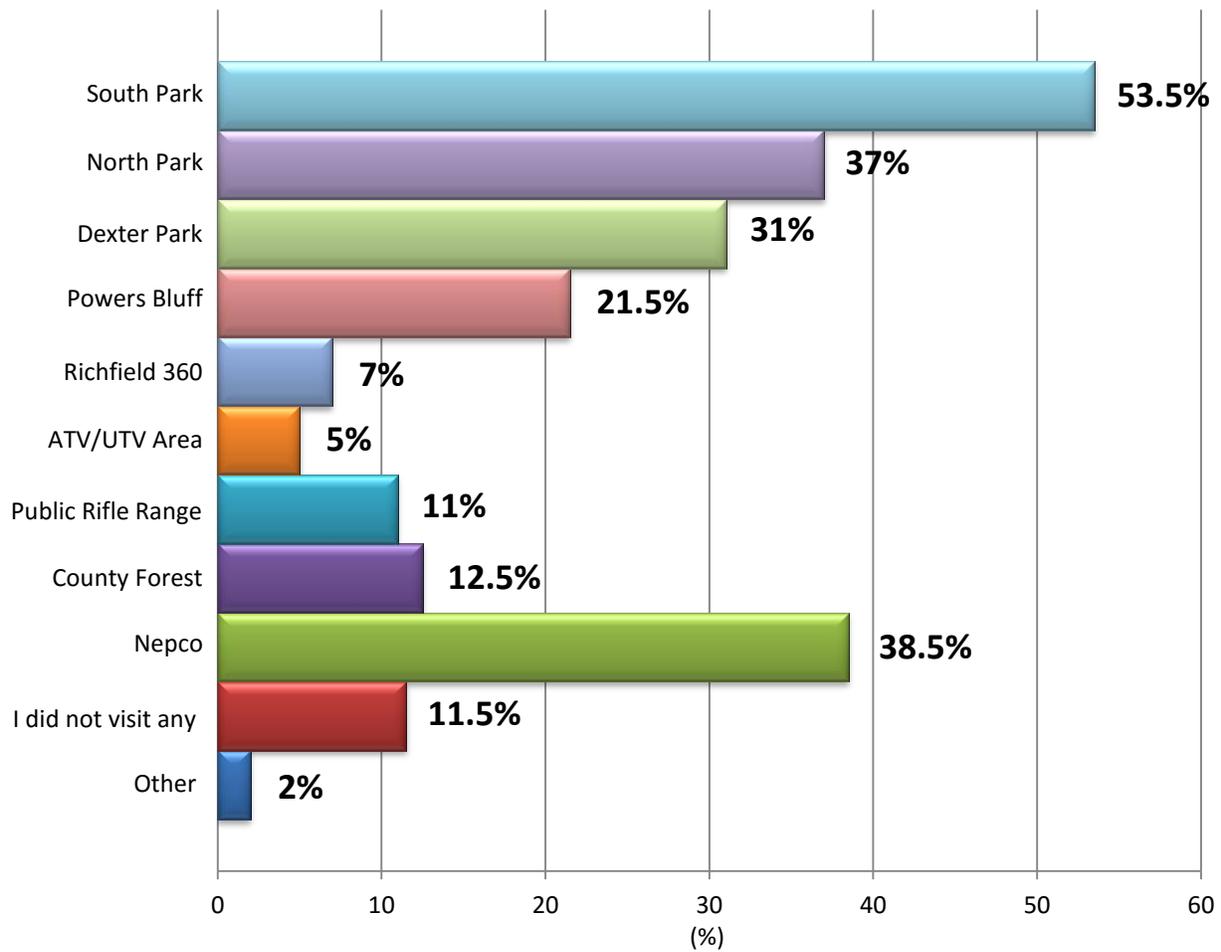
Question 5: During your December, 2016 – May, 2017 (winter/spring) visit, what facility/activity did you participate in? (Check all that apply)?



ALL ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Camping (any)	22%
Ice Fishing	20.5%
Snowmobiling	9%
Hiking	45%
Snowshoeing	11.5%
Cross Country Skiing	7.5%
Downhill Skiing/Snow Boarding	4.5%
Snow Tubing	19.5%
Community Event	18%
Private Event/Party	28%
ATV/UTV Riding	8%
Hunting/Trapping	8%
Biking	22%
Target Shooting	7%
Nature Observing/Sightseeing	34%
Did not participate in any activities	15.5%
Other (please specify)*	7%

*NOTE: Other activities/comments included, but are not limited to: walking, running, disc golf, horseback riding, and geocaching.

Question 6: During the months of June, 2017 – November, 2017 (summer/fall), which parks and forestry areas did you visit? (Check all that apply)?

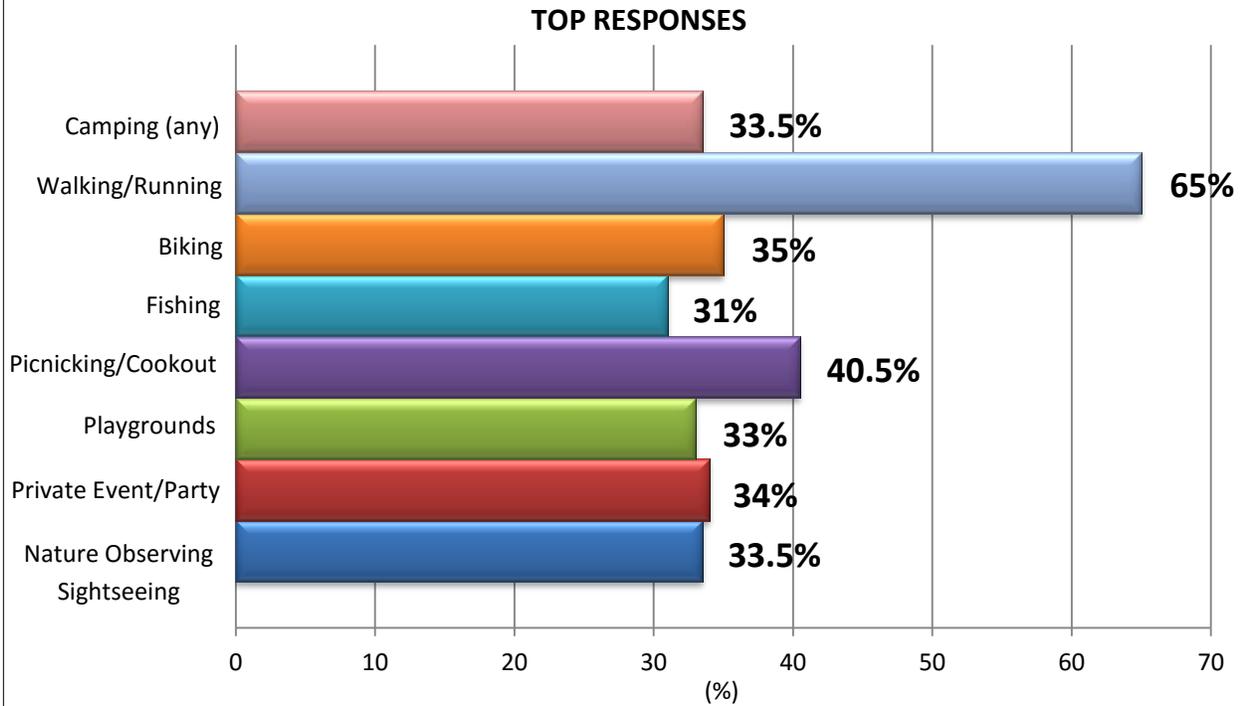


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
South Park (Wazeecha)	53.5%
North Park	37%
Dexter Park	31%
Powers Bluff	21.5%
Richfield 360	7%
Highway 54 ATV/UTV Area	5%
Public Rifle Range	11%
Wood County Forest Area	12.5%
Nepco	38.5%
I did not visit any	11.5%
Other (please specify)*	2%

*NOTE: Other recreation areas/comments included, but are not limited to: local municipal parks (town, village, and city), Wisconsin River, and Sandhill State Wildlife Area.

FURTHER STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: Interestingly, Nepco & North County Parks tied for the most visited by nonresidents.

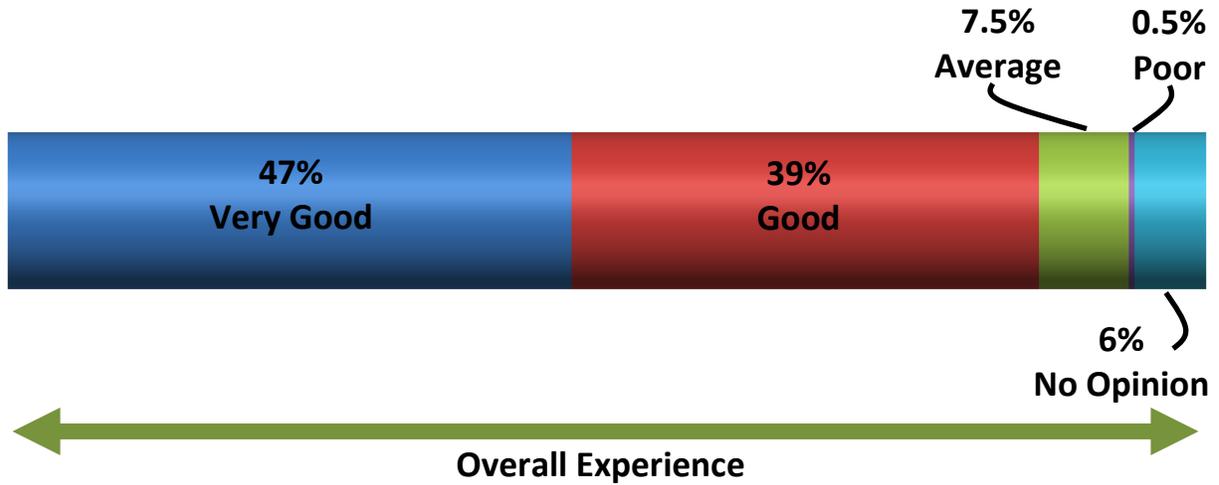
Question 7: During your June, 2017 – November, 2017 (summer/fall) visit, what facility/activity did you participate in? (Check all that apply)?



ALL ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Camping (any)	33.5%
Walking/Running/Hiking	65%
Biking	35%
Motor Boating	16.5%
Target Shooting	9%
Disc Golf	11.5%
Fishing	31%
Hunting/Trapping	8%
Swimming	30.5%
Picnicking/Cookout	40.5%
Playgrounds	33%
Community Event	20%
Private Event/Party	34%
Nature Observing/Sightseeing	33.5%
Kayak, Paddle Board, Canoeing	22.5%
ATV/UTV Riding	6%
Did not participate in any activities	9%
Other (please specify)*	4%

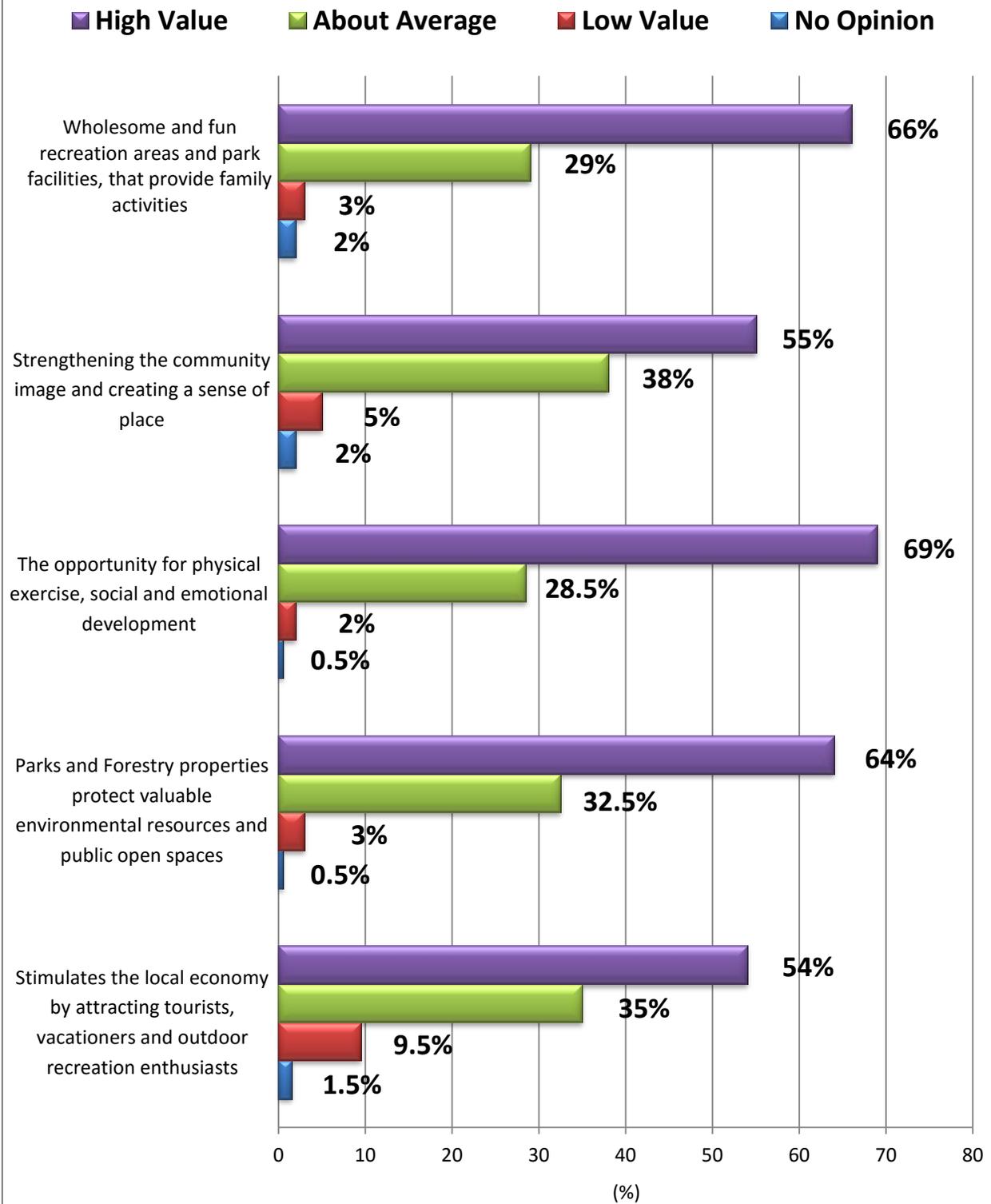
*NOTE: Other activities/comments included, but are not limited to: Wisconsin Rapids Aqua Skiers shows, horseback riding, metal detecting, and geocaching.

Question 8: How would you rate your overall experience in these parks and forestry areas?

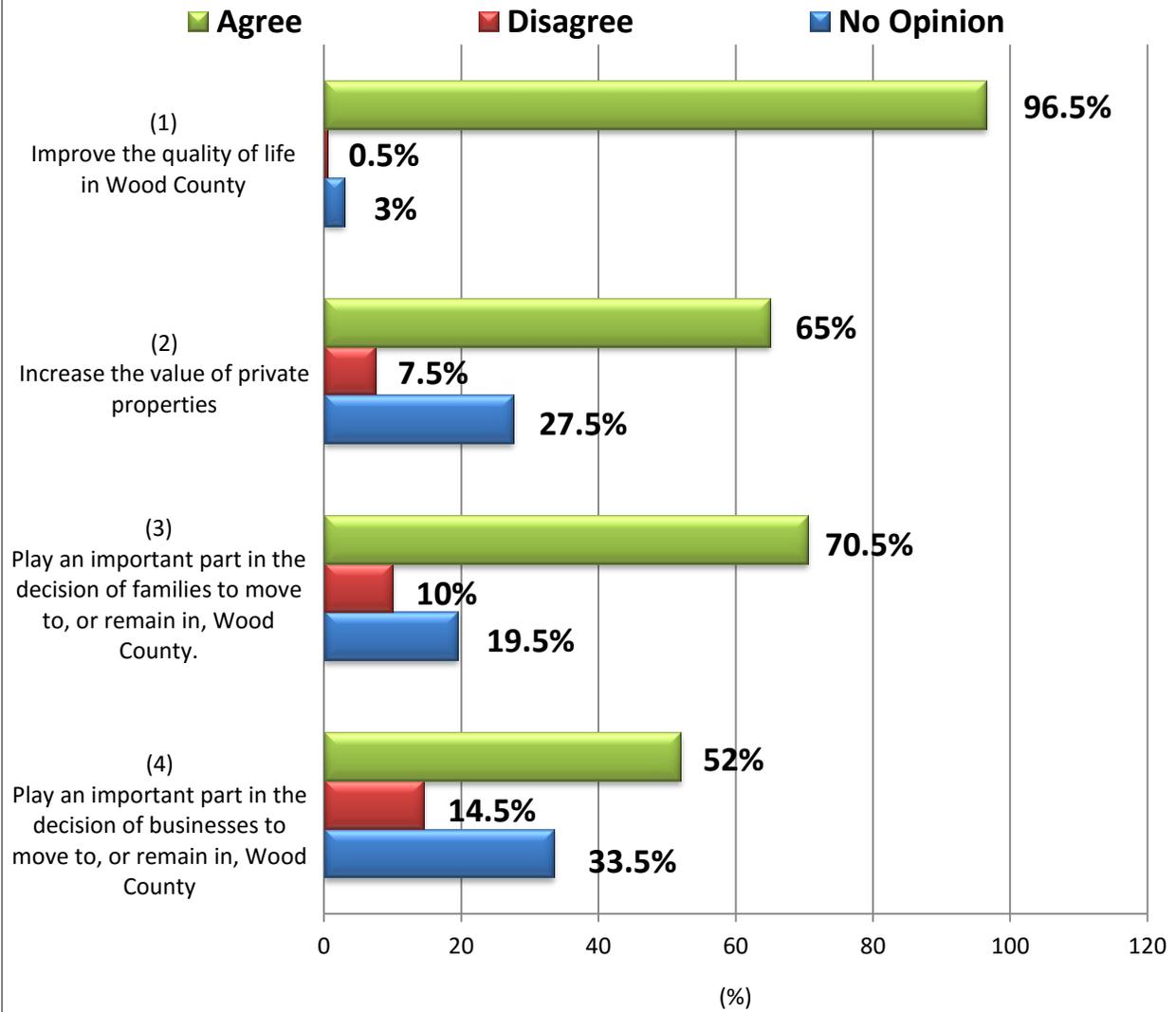


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Very Good	47%
Good	39%
Average	7.5%
Poor	0.5%
No Opinion	6%

Question 9: Please indicate your sense of the value parks, trails and outdoor recreation hold for the residents and visitors of Wood County:

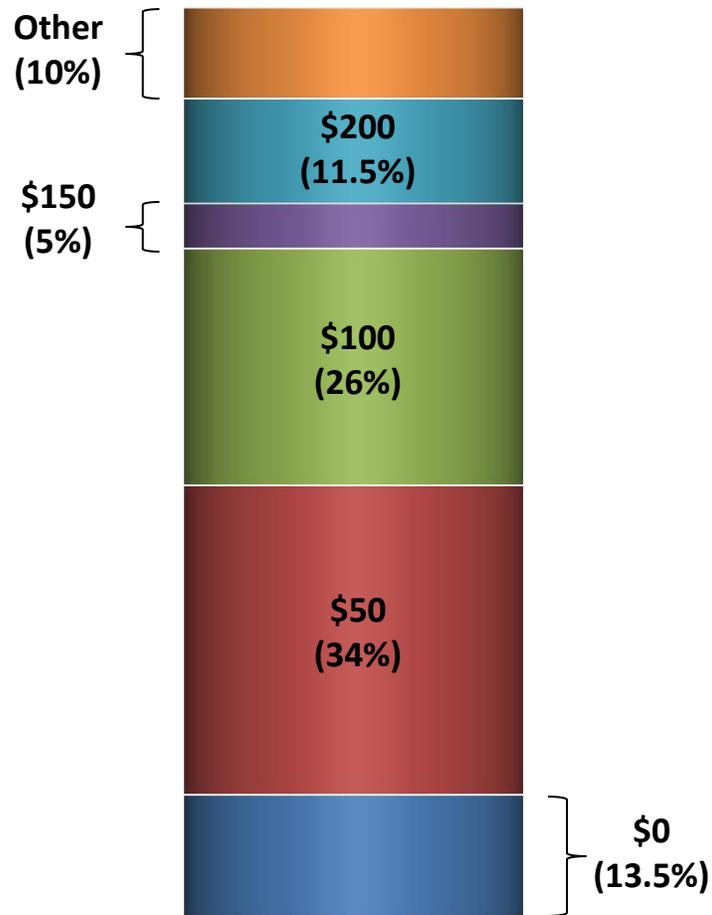


Question 10: Following is a list of statements regarding parks, recreation, and open spaces in Wood County. What is your opinion?



STATEMENT	AGREE	DISAGREE	NO OPINION
(1)	96.5%	0.5%	3%
(2)	65%	7.5%	27.5%
(3)	70.5%	10%	19.5%
(4)	52%	14.5%	33.5%

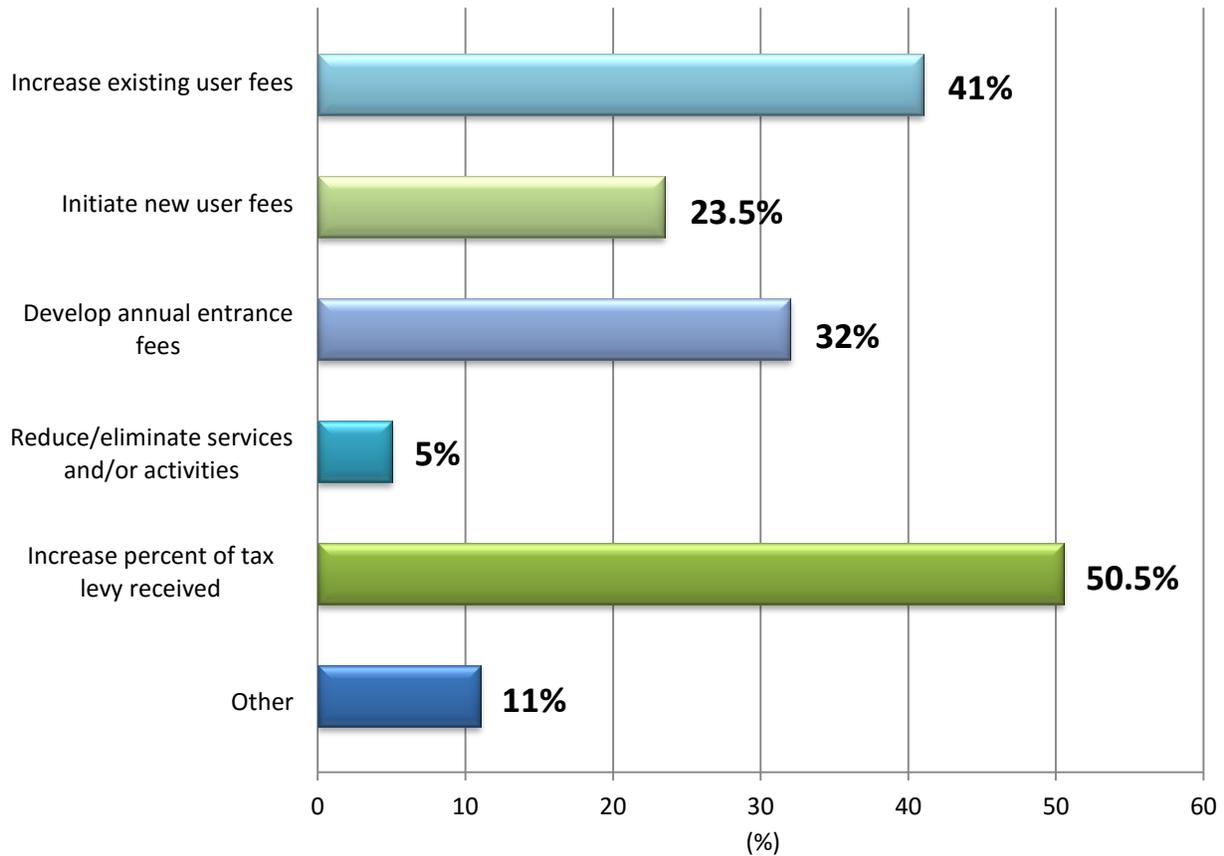
Question 11: FUNDING: Currently, the Wood County Parks and Forestry Department is funded with a combination of: user fees, timber sales, grants and tax levy dollars from property and sales tax. If you could decide, how much of your household tax dollars would go towards maintaining the parks and forestry areas in Wood County every year?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Other (please specify)*	10%
\$200	11.5%
\$150	5%
\$100	26%
\$50	34%
\$0	13.5

*NOTE: Other amounts/comments included, but are not limited to: \$10, \$20, \$25, \$30, less than \$50, same as current amount, increase from current amount, and no opinion/not sure.

Question 12: FUNDING: In your opinion, how should future operating cost increases be paid for? (Check all that apply)



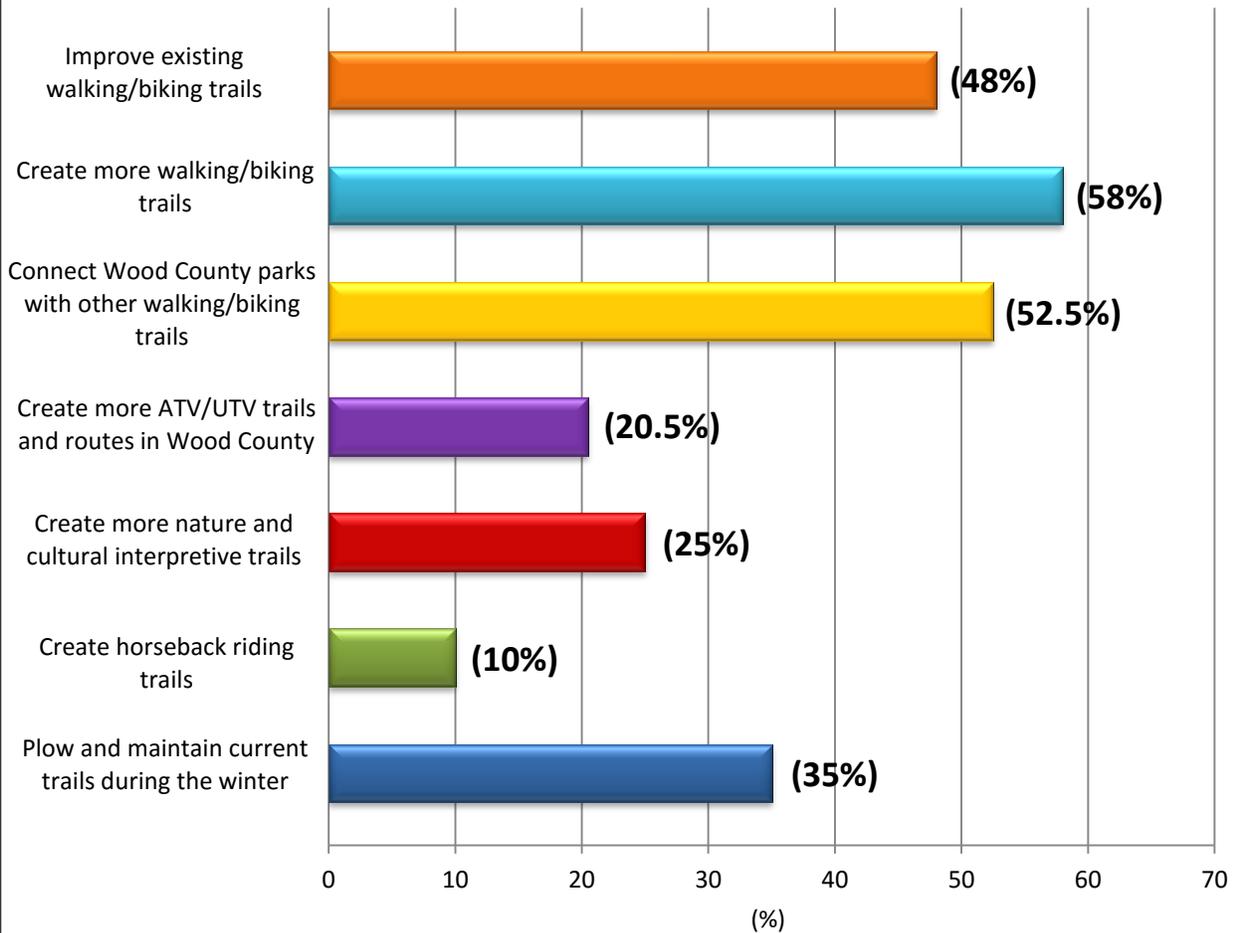
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Increase existing user fees (camping, skiing, tubing, etc.)	41%
Initiate new user fees (disc golf, single track bike trails, etc.)	23.5%
Develop annual entrance fee for parks (e.g. state park vehicle sticker)	32%
Reduce/eliminate services and/or activities	5%
Increase percent of tax levy received	50.5%
Other (please specify)*	11%

*NOTE: Other comments included, but are not limited to: donation boxes, grant funding, fundraising activities, rental equipment, volunteers, increase timber sales, spend responsibly, sponsorships, and develop activities/facilities that generate revenue.

FURTHER STATISTICAL ANALYSIS: Surprisingly, 48% of nonresidents survey respondents selected “increase existing user fees”. This was the top selection for nonresidents.

Question 13: Please select up to three issues/projects you would like addressed within the next five years. Please use the comments section to identify additional issues/projects.

TRAILS (Select up to 3)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Improve existing walking/biking trails	48%
Create more walking/biking trails	58%
Connect Wood County parks with other walking/biking trails	52.5%
Create more ATV/UTV trails and routes in Wood County	20.5%
Create more natural and cultural interpretive trails	25%
Create horseback riding trails	10%
Plow and maintain current walking trails during winter	35%

COMMENTS FOR QUESTION 13 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

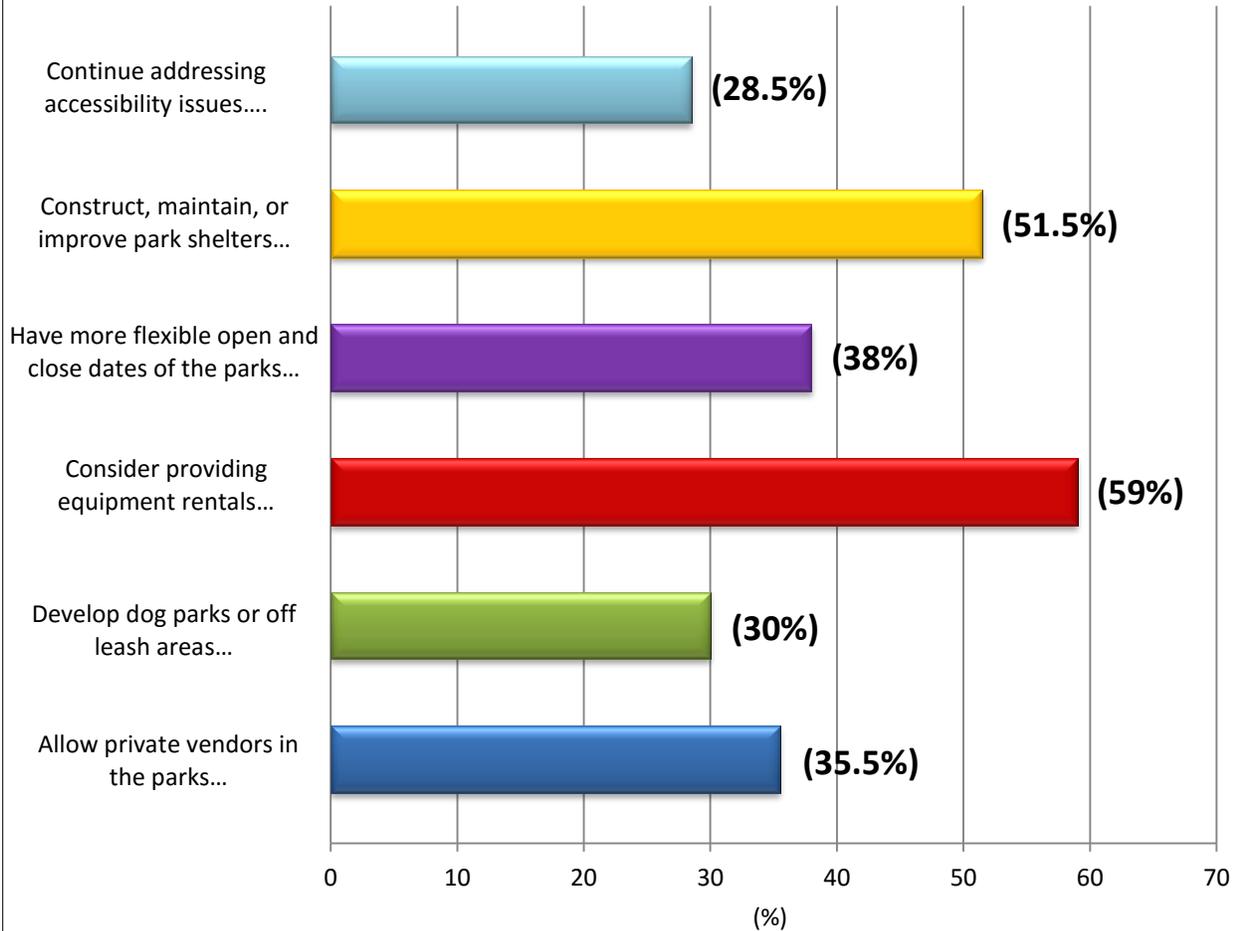
QUESTION 13 CONTINUED

Comments

- It would be nice if we could get the South Wood County bike trail paved in all areas. Gravel can be tough on little kids riding bikes.
- It's ridiculous the county doesn't have an ATV system.
- Trail connections make more tourists come in.
- Add more single track mountain bike trails like Wausau did (@Sylvan Hill).
- Keep in mind accessibility and ease of mobility.
- Wood County needs to develop ATV/UTV trails in the County Forest that connect into the Jackson County system.
- Connect only when distances are short and right of ways exist or are granted.
- None, if it increases cost.
- Market what you have. I grew up here and some of this is new to me.
- I'm involved with trails in the Village of Hewitt and I realize the challenges involved. Possibly improved coordination between municipalities would help.
- Leave them alone, I like the wild look.
- Nepco trail segments named (1,2,3,A,B,C,etc) mapped & signed.
- More mountain biking single track.
- I've had many people say they would like to see walking/biking trails connecting North Wood Co Park to Dexter Park and so on, to enable families to hike/bike in the area, without (minimize) having to be on State/Co. Highways to make biking/hiking safer for children and adults.
- I am involved in a local hiking group that meets weekly and we explore the hiking trails in Wood County. Powers Bluff is the premier and we have done wildflower and birding tours. Also the Puff Creek area was enjoyed (could improve direction signage in some spots).
- Connect Nepco/S. Wood Co Parks with a loop using available public lands (municipal wellheads and seasonal snow mobile trails) and ongoing private developments.
- Parks needs to keep hikers off groomed ski trails.
- Improve the cross country ski trails in Richfield.
- Connect 80th St/Cty. Hwy. U to sidewalks on Hwy. 54, open trail or sidewalk on N Biron Dr. between dam and 80th.
- Develop ATV/bike trails through more of Wood Co forests. Make them accessible from late spring until end of September. Gate them so no motorized vehicles can harass hunters or game using the forests. It would be nice to see connectivity between some of the trails entering Wood Co in west to areas near Wisconsin Rapids and Marshfield.
- Definitely need more biking and walking trails. La Crosse County and other counties have fantastic trails. Wood County does not. We need more trails in Marshfield!! Also, adding to ATV/UTV trails bring in tourists and money!
- Powers Bluff- Make it like Bruce mound!!
- I wish I could get from 80th/CTH U to 48th on a trail/sidewalk along Hwy 54.
- Plow and maintain current walking trails during winter months is something that should be being done already. That is why I didn't select it for a priority.
- Connect new developments on south side of Nepco to Nepco Park- there is no pedestrian safety to cross the existing bridge- only way to access the park is by vehicle.

Question 14: Please select up to three issues/projects you would like addressed within the next five years. Please use the comments section to identify additional issues/projects.

DAY USE (Select up to 3)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Continue addressing accessibility issues in all park facilities and areas	28.5%
Construct, maintain, or improve park shelters to accommodate seasonal and year-round use for private or community events	51.5%
Have more flexible open and close dates of the parks depending on the weather	38%
Consider providing equipment rentals (kayak, paddleboards, frisbee discs, bicycles, etc.)	59%
Develop dog parks or off leash areas within existing parks	30%
Allow private vendors in the parks for the purpose of selling food and beverages	35.5%

COMMENTS FOR QUESTION 14 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

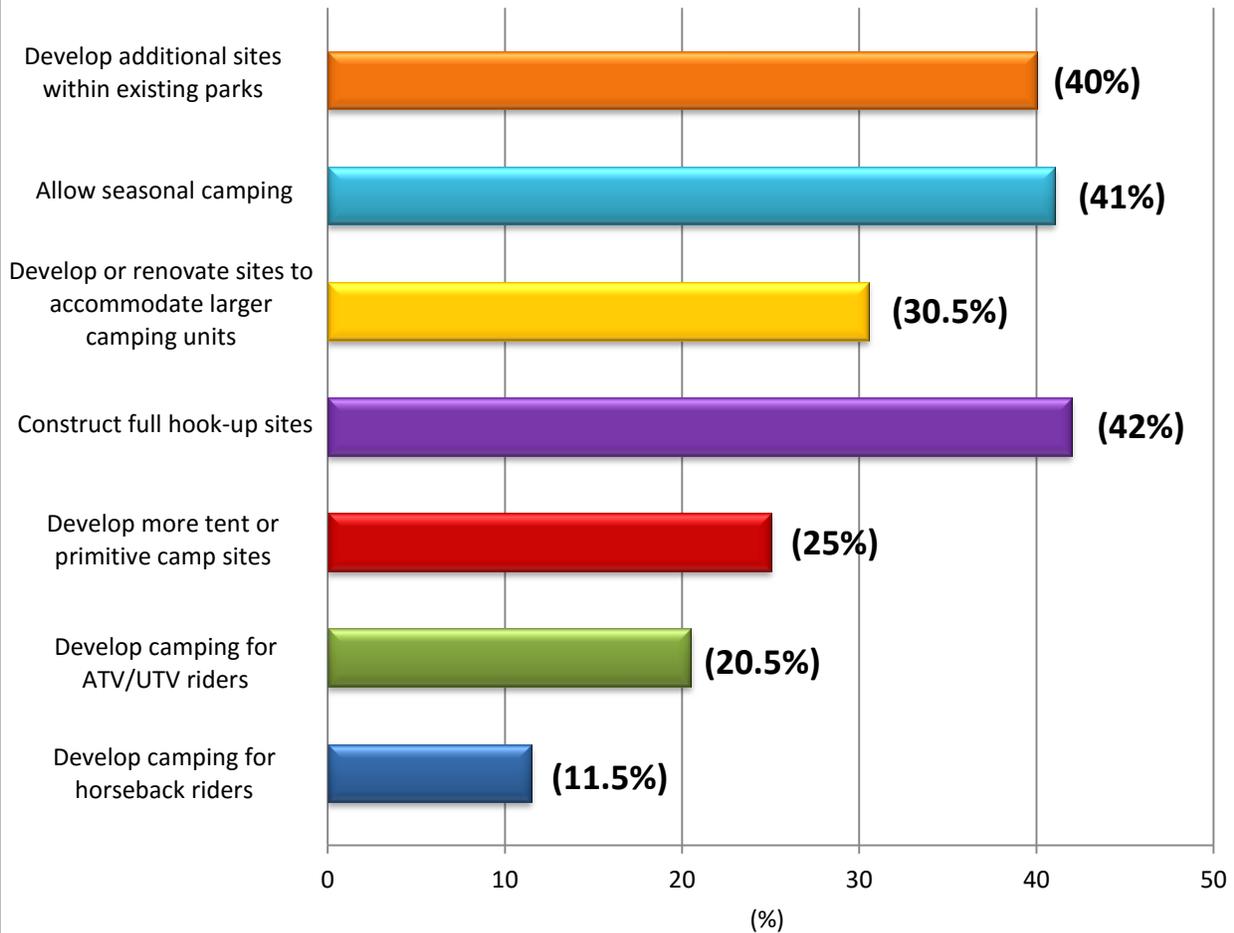
QUESTION 14 CONTINUED

Comments

- Keep the parks open in the winter for snowshoeing.
- I was at a wedding twice at the shelter at Richfield Park, it was wonderful there. But could be so much more, and available for rental. Just needs a little improvement. But what a beautiful area!
- It would be really nice if the play equipment was upgraded.
- Park closed means little, they are used year round.
- Food Trucks with public notice draw more attention to parks.
- Rentals are a nice idea, but better in coordination with private partnership agreement.
- Improve park shelters - not sure that "year round" is needed? What is your demand for this?
- All of the above.
- ATV/UTV trails
- Put the garbage cans back in the parks.
- Do not want off leash dogs, I think they are a law suit waiting to happen. I could see a food vender adding value, but would want them very limited in number and presence as I don't want to be at an amusement park when I'm at a county park.
- Frisbee golf at dexter, update Basketball area at dexter, add covered area at dexter beach for sitting during hot days.
- Would it be possible to utilize parks as an event venue to turn them into destinations?
- Outside groups may spend their own money towards park improvements if allowed more access.
- Keep the restrooms clean and modern.
- I wish that more trails and nature areas would be open for biking and walking after August 31. The most beautiful time of the year to hike is closed off I presume for hunting purposes.
- Repair and or update existing shelters, beach bathrooms/changing areas, etc. that are now in need of repairs.
- Would LOVE a dog area! Also, just more activities in general- would be willing to pay a fee for additional activities.
- Keep north park open.
- Living across from Powers Bluff, I see many people parked at the gates, walking in to use the park. I believe park usage would increase if this park didn't close so early.
- Allowing private vendors may be a good idea. It may be worth investigating Private/Public partnerships first. Meaning private funding with public (County) personnel involved. I possibility is constructing swimming pools at parks so campers have options if water quality in the lakes or river are suspect.
- Please make the water available for swimming if possible.
- Improve/add bathroom facilities at Lake Wazeecha (NE end).
- Improve existing playgrounds.
- If white sands were more fully developed, fenced and fee imposed a rental shack + food could be worth exploring.

Question 15: Please select up to three issues/projects you would like addressed within the next five years. Please use the comments section to identify additional issues/projects.

CAMPGROUNDS (Select up to 3)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Develop additional sites within existing parks	40%
Allow seasonal camping	41%
Develop or renovate sites to accommodate larger camping units	30.5%
Construct full hook-up sites	42%
Develop more tent or primitive camp sites	25%
Develop camping for ATV/UTV riders	20.5%
Develop camping for horseback riders	11.5%

COMMENTS FOR QUESTION 15 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

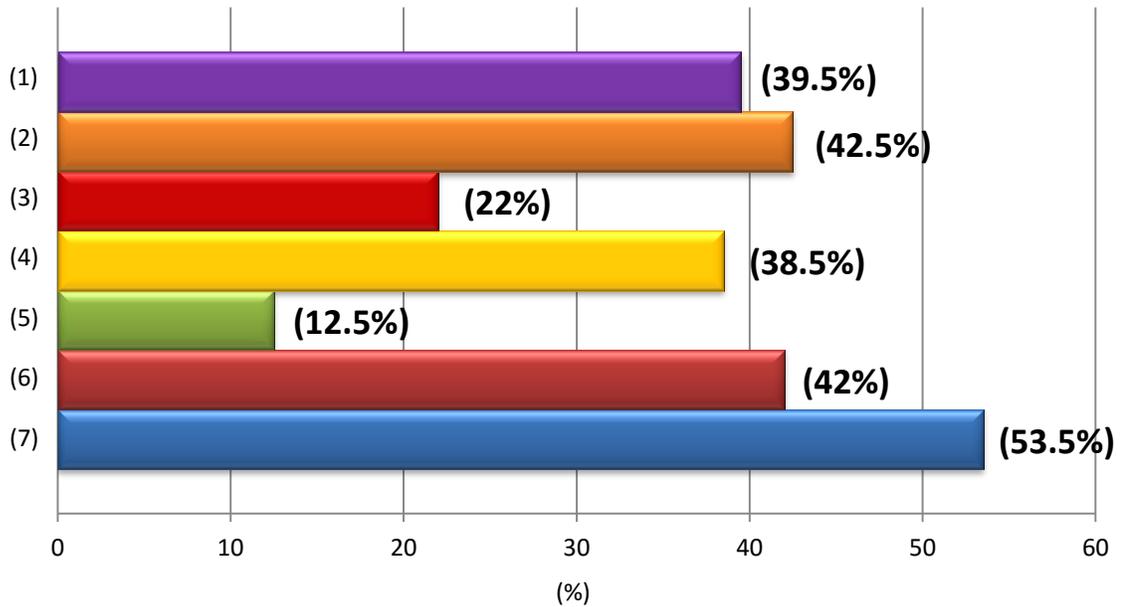
QUESTION 15 CONTINUED

Comments

- Maybe add in more for kids at the campground.
- Maintain and upgrade existing.
- Improve existing camping sites with raised and level gravel pads for campers so they are not muddy during wet weather conditions.
- Good as is.
- I don't participate in either of these, but I understand the need which would be a draw for visitors.
- Easy access ability.
- Would like to see the bridge at North Wood County improved.
- Have camping options where the sites have more privacy.
- Add additional camping sites at South Park to the east of red beach in old existing picnic area.
- More sites, more dollars.
- Connect campgrounds to ATV/UTV trails and routes.
- No camping for ATV riders.
- Provide small cabins for people to rent. Make handicap accessible.
- I didn't like changing rustic area west of river road to developed campground. It lost something. (Richfield).
- Don't allow seasonal camping.
- Plant more privacy vegetation between campsites.
- Please no ATV's at north wood cty park.
- Make camping sites farther apart to allow more privacy from other campers.
- We love the group site areas at Dexter. Makes for great fun for multiple families.
- Okay as it is.
- Need additional tree trimming in campgrounds for larger campers! Even on main access roads.
- Develop more group area campsites.
- I think current camping options are adequate and affordable at Wazeecha, I have not been to any others in Wood County.
- Do the projects that will generate the most revenue.
- On county forest land.
- Rustic cabins/tee Pee's for rent.
- Do not increase sites.
- Clark Co has some remote ATV campsites and they are very popular. If we had connectivity to Clark or Jackson Co trails, it may develop into a profitable condition.
- Continue to upgrade and improve bathroom & shower facilities.
- I don't think crowded campgrounds or cramped sites are a draw for more tourists.
- Wood County has wonderful camping facilities.
- Trim the trees and make pull through for 5th wheels!
- Would like to see a pool or swimming area at campgrounds and cabins for rentals.
- Hike/Ride/Boat to sites would offer a unique experience to the area since most are up north. There seems to be plenty of space for that activity in the southern portion of Wood County.
- Allow firewood to be brought in for camping purposes.
- Primitive hike in campsite in county forests.
- Renovate existing sites, flat elevated pads for drainage.
- Camping at Nepco?

Question 16: Please select up to three issues/projects you would like addressed within the next five years. Please use the comments section to identify additional issues/projects.

WATER ACTIVITIES (Select up to 3)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
(1) Establish "blue ways" or mapped routes for canoes, kayaks and other watercraft	39.5%
(2) Develop accessible kayak/canoe launch docks	42.5%
(3) Improve access to areas of the Wisconsin River to alleviate boat traffic on small lakes in the county	22%
(4) Monitor shoreline erosion and lake depths to ensure continued long-term recreational use and water quality of lakes in county parks	38.5%
(5) Work with local ski club/organizations on balancing use of waterways with Wood County resident use	12.5%
(6) Work with the Land and Water Conservation Department and the Department of Natural Resources to monitor and address surface water quality issues of lakes adjoining Wood County Parks	42%
(7) Improve fishing opportunities in area lakes through fish stocking and habitat improvement	53.5%

COMMENTS FOR QUESTION 16 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

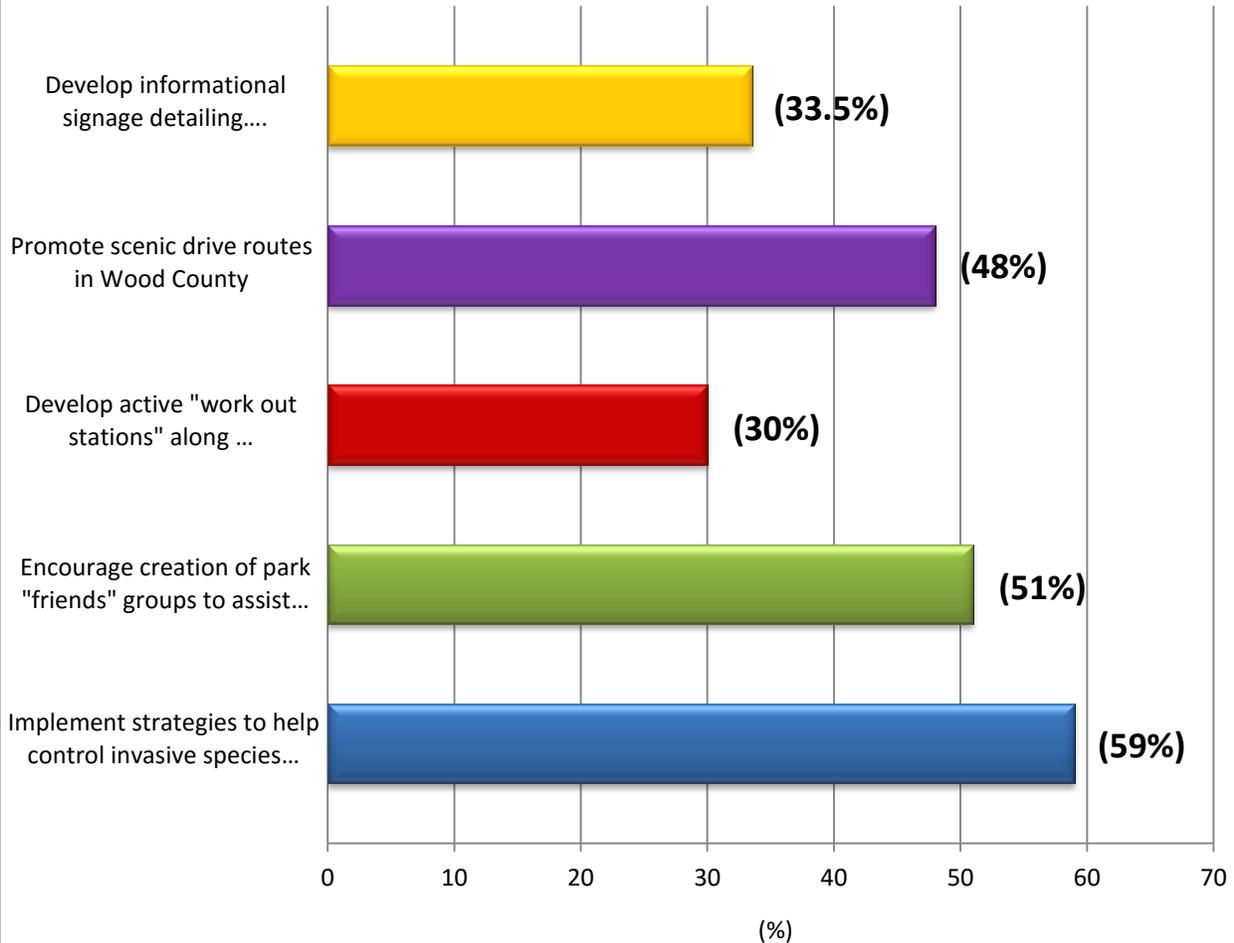
QUESTION 16 CONTINUED

Comments

- Keep water clean for swimming (North Park).
- Have a dredging plan for the lakes like Wazeecha and Nepco.
- Stop groundwater talk. We are wasting valuable resources on a non-existent perceived problems.
- Research McMillan Marsh reservoir potential for fish stocking. They are not currently deep enough and do not allow high enough oxygen levels for fish to survive. Research ecosystem impact by adding fish to this more-over marsh area.
- Redo the swimming area at North Wood Co Park so it doesn't need to be closed every year because it's unsafe to swim in due to stagnant water and runoff.
- Habitat is key, though getting people to see and engage with it is crucial too.
- Make Nepco Lake more accessible.
- It would be nice if water quality at swimming hole could be maintained. I know it's not easy. (Richfield).
- As for monitoring shoreline erosion, you wouldn't have as much erosion if you allowed more than one muskrat trapper in Nepco and Wazeecha.
- kayaks/canoes can launch anywhere & blueways unnecessary.
- Develop a permanent home for the local ski team. I see that group as a huge financial benefit to the community and they provide whole family opportunities.
- Health issues concerning water quality.
- Establish routes on the Wisconsin River for canoes.
- Improve swimming areas.
- Improving fishing opportunities would be a huge plus! My family often doesn't fish the lakes due to not being able to catch much off of the shoreline- you need a boat. Pan fish are about the only fish we catch on county lakes.
- If water issues can't be controlled in swimming areas due to geese, manure run off, etc.... consider pools for swimming.
- Make more beaches!!!
- Need more handicap piers for wheelchair users.
- Habitat improvement can be accomplished with little or no fish stocking and the end results could easily be the same with no extra money. i. e. they do not have to be lumped together.
- Swimming area at North Park is stagnant and disgusting. Would like to see an area developed ON the river south of the swinging bridge somewhere.
- Kayak/paddle boat/body board rentals
- The Aqua Skiers bring a lot of benefit from the ski shows and State Tournament.
- Support and encourage the Aqua Skiers to grow and bring in more revenue from hosting events like their tournament each year, Worlds, other invitational tournaments.
- To many practices various ski clubs.
- Two comments: 1) The west end of Nepco Lake continues to be largely inaccessible during winter months resulting in much greater fishing pressure on Wazeecha. The loss of this much larger section of Nepko Lake is a great loss to the south Wood Co. area and should be a priority project. 2) Lake Wazeecha is a great resource but is a problem for those who like to kayak and canoe during summer months.....especially weekends....due to ever increasing water sport usage (i.e. water skiing, tubing, wake boards, jet ski's, etc.) Would like to see some work done on making certain times of day "no-wake" times. Possibly before 10 am and after 6 pm? Thank-you.
- Improving the fish habitat should naturally improve fishing opportunities. I would like to see our LWC and DNR and fishing organizations work together and improve the County's waters for better fishing.
- Clean up Lake Dexter to make it more usable for other than fishing.
- Habitat improvement on Wisconsin River.
- Against #3-I use the WI River more than the lakes and the WI River has enough traffic.
- Do something to promote kids in the water. Regular water slides, water rafts, water fun stuff for them to do.
- Fishing has gone downhill in the last 10 years. Most of the fish in the Wood County lakes are stunted. With the recent land developments on the west side of Nepco, a lot of the natural fish habitat has been destroyed.
- Recognize the huge value that a ski club hosting a major revenue-generating events gives to our area.
- Allow the water ski team to use Wazeecha as it is a great organization for the community members and brings in big dollars with the tournaments.
- Control lake weeds and invasives.
- Clean up beaches and shore frontage (duck, goose feces)
- Clean up the beaches to be usable again!!
- Look for farm runoff that is contributing to ecoli related beach closures.
- It'd be nice to see an ordinance specifically prohibiting jet skis on Wazeecha. Given the max width of the lake it is nearly impossible to operate one with wake when there are no other boats on the lake...let alone when there are other boats/jet skis. Also, maybe signing the lake to indicate the desired max. number of tubers/skiers. It is a small lake and gets congested quickly.

Question 17: Please select up to three issues/projects you would like addressed within the next five years. Please use the comments section to identify additional issues/projects.

Other (Select up to 3)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Develop informational signage detailing the history of the parks	33.5%
Promote scenic drive routes in Wood County	48%
Develop active "work out stations" along existing trails	30%
Encourage creation of park "friends" groups to assist in funding and maintaining the parks	51%
Implement strategies to help control invasive species on both land and water in county parks	59%

COMMENTS FOR QUESTION 17 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

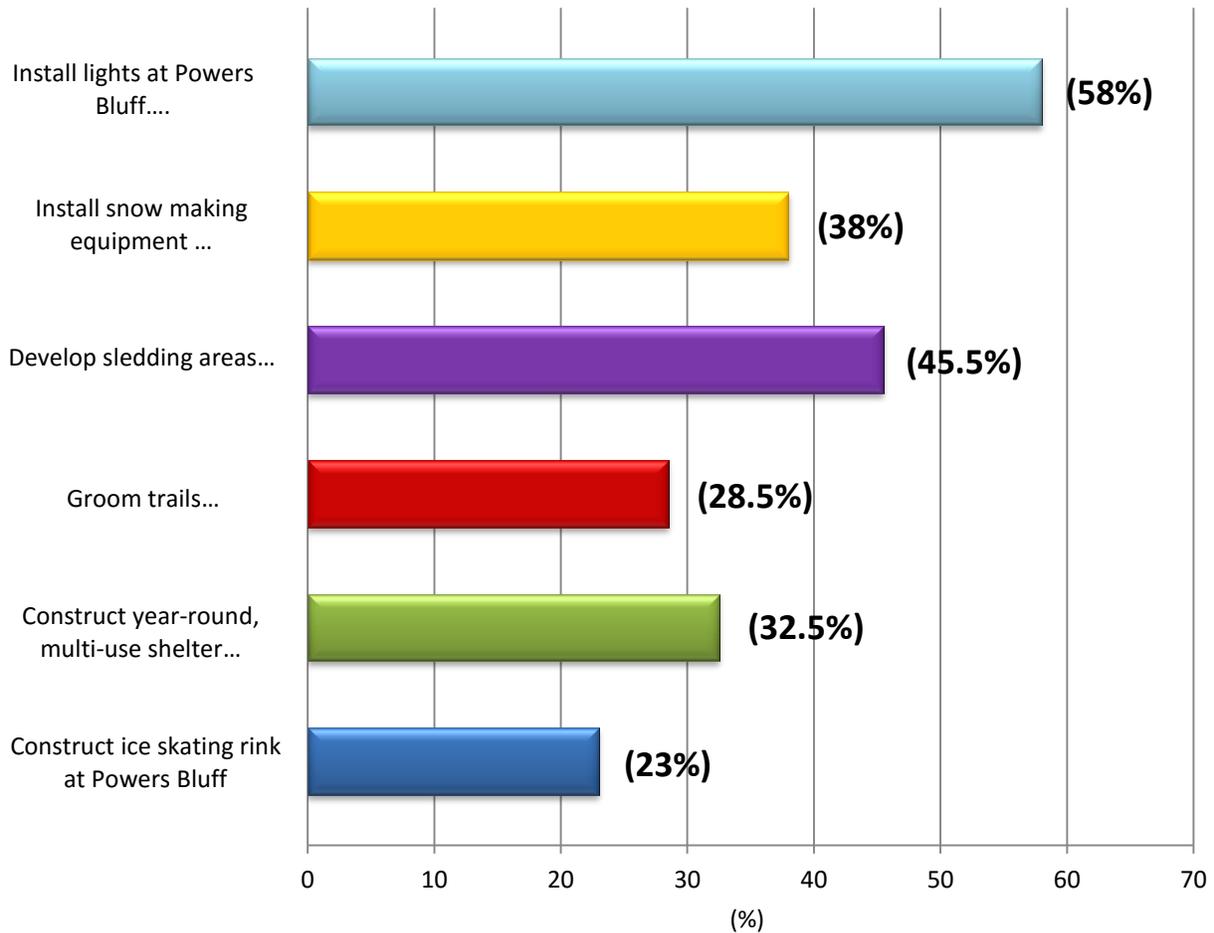
QUESTION 17 CONTINUED

Comments

- Build single track mountain bike trails.
- It would be great if at least one of the parks had a playground like Grove School.
- Promote scenic walking/biking/ATV trails! Again controlling invasive species.
- ATV/UTV trail in county forest.
- Better signs directing people to the local parks. Every year my home is treated as an information station, which I'm not.
- My reservation is that people get carried away with "development": widening trails formed by kids' feet, buildings, obtrusive signs. It's a park, not a shopping mall.
- They're all so good!
- I have been in parks where memorial benches exist to overlook scenic areas a nice tribute and addition.
- Beaches! For people to pull boats and other water craft up to.
- Watch and get rid of BUCKTHORN.
- Wazeecha's zebra mussels are really bad.
- Wood Co offers a lot of forest to hunters and wildlife viewers. It would be terrific to have Wood Co Forest partner with conservation organizations to develop atv/bike trails, conduct habitat improvements that target deer, turkey, partridge and ducks. There are 2.0 Million less hunters in the USA today than there were in 2005, however the number of atv/utv users continue to climb. If we make our forests and parks more attractive to these groups, the number of users would increase significantly. Elk are just on the fringe of Wood County in both Jackson and Clark Co. If somehow elk could be drawn into Wood Co forest, wildlife viewers would also increase significantly.
- better publicity of parks and what they have to offer.
- Powers bluff signs should include how land was obtained.
- Add garbage cans so park users are encouraged to not litter.
- The Boy Scouts could be a good partner for some of these programs. As well as Healthy People Wood County.

Question 18: Please select up to three issues/projects you would like addressed within the next five years. Please use the comments section to identify additional issues/projects.

WINTER RECREATION (Select up to 3)



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Install lights at Powers Bluff for night tubing, downhill skiing and snowboarding	58%
Install snow making equipment at Powers Bluff to increase length of season	38%
Develop sledding areas within the parks	45.5%
Groom trails for fat tire biking and/or snowshoeing	28.5%
Construct year-round, multi-use shelter building at Powers Bluff at the bottom of the hill	32.5%
Construct ice skating rink at Powers Bluff	23%

COMMENTS FOR QUESTION 18 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

QUESTION 18 CONTINUED

Comments

- Groom trails for walking and running in winter.
- Groom the trails around Wazeecha, recreational rental of snow shoes- host events.
- Safety at Powers Bluff needs to be improved. Control tubing hills better so people are landing on each other and also 'fix' the 2 runs so they don't combine into 1 at the end - too many collisions.
- All are good ideas.
- The Bluff should be snowy not just ice, if that is improved then lights could be installed.
- We need lights too, Copy Bruce Mound (Clark CO).
- Maybe not an ice skating rink at Powers Bluff but at another park possibly.
- Powers Bluff has so much value to the County, but lights on the tubing hill may deter from the beauty of the park. Extend the season by making snow instead.
- Snowshoe trails don't have to be groomed, just marked and keep motorized traffic off of them for safety
- Improve xc ski trails.
- Improve ski lodge first.
- All of these would really increase this parks usage and bring people from outside the area to the park. A ton of potential to develop this park with the land increase.
- Build an observation tower at powers bluff
- Grooming single-track unnecessary & would require some reroutes to accommodate equipment.
- More trails for x-country skiing
- Create a tubing hill at wazeecha park
- I wouldn't like to lose the "old-time" shelter - the ambience and history, so kids have some connection to what went before. I don't want to over-develop and lose the natural feel and beauty.
- None of the above.
- All of the above.
- Have park open for hiking all year. Opening in May at P.B. many wild flowers & plants are already up & blooming - I know - we should walk in but some people can't walk that far and enjoy to just look.
- This place is too far away, I think enough has been spent.
- Go big! Create something unique. Like a luge run!
- With any expansion of the winter recreation at Powers Bluff, please consider the associated (year round) maintenance needed as an ongoing expense.
- Leave more parks open for winter use (snowshoeing and skiing).
- Rinks should be in every park, boards on the ones near town so you can play hockey. Cheap and easy.
- Powers bluff can be so much more with a little help. Snowboarding skiing I think will bring more people. But you need the snow.

Wood County Parks & Forestry Open Spaces Plan Survey



Parks and Forestry Usage

1.) Are you currently a Wood County, Wisconsin resident?

Yes No

2.) What is your current age?

under 20 20-34 35-49 50-64 65 and above

3.) How were you made aware of this survey?

I received a post card in the mail

Radio

Wood County Website

Email

Facebook

Local Newspaper

Other: _____

4.) During the months of **December, 2016 – May, 2017 (Winter/Spring)**, which parks and forestry areas did you visit? (Check all that apply)

South Park
(Wazeecha)

North Park

Dexter Park

Powers Bluff

Richfield 360

Hwy 54 ATV Area

Public Rifle Range

Wood County Forests

Snowmobile Trails

Nepco

I did not visit any

Other: _____

5.) During your **December, 2016 – May, 2017 (Winter/Spring)** visit, what facility/activity did you participate in: (check all that apply)

camping

ice fishing

snowmobiling

hiking

snow shoeing

cross country skiing

downhill skiing/board

snow tubing

community event

private event/party

ATV/UTV riding

hunting/trapping

biking

target shooting

nature observing/sightseeing

other (please specify) _____

I did not participate in any of these activities.

6.) During the months of **June, 2017 – November, 2017 (Summer/Fall)**, which parks and forestry areas did you visit? (check all that apply)

- South Park (Wazeecha) North Park Dexter Park Powers Bluff
 Richfield 360 Hwy 54 ATV/UTV Area Public Rifle Range Wood County Forests
 Nepco I did not visit any Other: _____

7.) During your **June, 2017- November, 2017 (Summer/Fall)** visit, what facility/activity did you participate in: (check all that apply)

- camping walking/running/ hiking biking motor boating
 target shooting disc golf fishing hunting/trapping
 swimming picnicking/cookout playgrounds community event
 private event/party nature observing, sightseeing kayak, paddleboard, canoeing ATV/UTV riding
 other: _____
 I did not participate in any of these activities.

8.) How would you rate your overall experience in these parks and forestry areas:

- very good good average poor no opinion
If poor, please explain: _____

Value of Parks and Forestry Areas

9.) Please indicate your sense of the value parks, trails, and outdoor recreation hold for the residents and visitors of Wood County.

Wholesome and fun recreation areas, and park facilities, that provide family activities.

- high value about average low value no opinion

Strengthening the community image and creating a sense of place.

- high value about average low value no opinion

The opportunity for physical exercise, social and emotional development.

high value about average low value no opinion

Parks and Forestry properties protect valuable environmental resources and public open spaces.

high value about average low value no opinion

Stimulates the local economy by attracting tourists, vacationers and outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

high value about average low value no opinion

10.) Following is a list of statements regarding parks, recreation, and open spaces in Wood County. What is your opinion?

Parks, recreation, and open spaces:

Improve the quality of life in Wood County.

Agree Disagree No Opinion

Increase the value of private properties.

Agree Disagree No Opinion

Play an important part in the decision of families to move to, or remain in, Wood County.

Agree Disagree No Opinion

Play an important part in the decision of businesses to move to, or remain in, Wood County.

Agree Disagree No Opinion

Funding Parks and Forestry

11.) Currently, the Wood County Parks and Forestry Department is funded with a combination of: user fees, timber sales, grants, and tax levy dollars from property and sales tax. **If you could decide**, how much of your local tax dollars would go towards maintaining the parks and forestry areas in Wood County every year?

\$0 (no tax levy dollars) \$50 \$100 \$150 \$200

Other: _____

12.) In your opinion, how should *future* operating cost **increases** be paid for? (check all that apply)

Increase existing user fees (camping, skiing, tubing, etc.)

Initiate new user fees (disc golf, single track bike trails, etc.)

Develop entrance fee for parks (e.g. state park vehicle stickers)

Reduce/eliminate services and/or activities

Increase percent of tax levy received

Other: _____

Future Project Planning

Please select up to 3 issues/projects that you would like addressed within the next 5 years. Please use the comments section to identify additional issues/projects.

13.) Trails (Select up to 3)

- Improve existing walking/biking trails
- Create more walking/biking trails in County Parks
- Connect County Parks with other walking/biking trails
- Create more ATV/UTV trails and routes in Wood County
- Create more nature and cultural interpretive trails
- Create horseback riding trails
- Plow and maintain current walking trails during winter months

Comments: _____

14.) Day Use (Select up to 3)

- Continue addressing accessibility issues in all park facilities and areas
- Construct, maintain, or improve park shelters to accommodate seasonal and year round use by County residents for private or community events
- Have more flexible open and close dates of the parks depending on weather
- Consider providing equipment rentals (kayak, paddleboards, frisbee discs, bicycles, etc.)
- Develop dog parks or off leash areas within existing parks
- Allow private vendors in the parks for the purpose of selling food and beverages

Comments: _____

15.) Campgrounds (Select up to 3)

- Develop additional sites within existing parks
- Allow seasonal camping
- Develop or renovate sites to accommodate larger camping units
- Construct full hookup sites (water, sewer, electric)
- Develop more group sites
- Develop more tent or primitive camp sites
- Develop camping for ATV/UTV riders
- Develop camping for horseback riders

Comments: _____

Water Activities (Select up to 3)

- Establish “blue ways” or mapped routes for canoes, kayaks, and other water craft
- Develop accessible kayak/canoe launch docks
- Improve access to areas of Wisconsin River to alleviate boat traffic on small lakes in the County
- Monitor shoreline erosion and lake depths to ensure continued long-term recreational use and water quality of lakes in County Parks
- Work with local ski club/organizations on balancing use of waterways with Wood County resident use
- Work with Land and Water Conservation Department, and DNR, to monitor and address surface water quality issues of lakes adjoining Wood County Parks.
- Improve fishing opportunities in area lakes through fish habitat improvement and stocking

Comments: _____

16.) Winter Recreation (Select up to 3)

- Install lights at Powers Bluff for night tubing and skiing
- Install snow making equipment at Powers Bluff to increase length of season
- Develop sledding areas within parks
- Groom trails for fat tire biking and/or snow shoeing
- Construct year-round, multi-use shelter building at Powers Bluff at the bottom of the hill
- Construct ice skating rink at Powers Bluff

Comments: _____

17.) Other (Select up to 3)

- Develop informational signage detailing the history of the parks
- Promote scenic drive routes in Wood County
- Develop active “workout stations” along existing trails
- Encourage creation of park “friends” groups to assist in funding and maintaining parks
- Implement strategies to help control invasive species on both land and water in County Parks

Comments: _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Public input sessions will be scheduled soon. Please check our website or our Facebook page for updates.

As a token of our appreciation, we are entering those who complete this survey into a raffle to win a \$50 Parks & Forestry gift Certificate which can be used for camping, boat launch, hiking/ski trails, shelter reservations and Powers Bluff Recreation area.

If you would like to be entered into the prize drawing, please enter your name and preferred contact method in the space(s) below. If you provide your contact information, it will not be associated with your response to the survey. Your responses will remain anonymous.

Name:
Street Address:
City:
State:
Zip:
Phone:
Email:

**Return completed survey to:
Wood County Parks & Forestry
111 W. Jackson Street
Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495**

OR

Scan and email to parks@co.wood.wi.us

Thank you for your participation!

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The Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning along with the Parks and Forestry Department would like to thank all who participated in the planning process.



Wood County Department of Planning and Zoning

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<https://www.co.wood.wi.us/Departments/PZ/>
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Wood County Parks and Forestry Department

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Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495

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(715) 421-8422