

# East Sooke Regional Park

## Management Plan Initial Engagement Report

Capital Regional District | February 2021



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# 1. Executive Summary

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Board initiated three regional park management planning processes in May 2020 for East Sooke, Mount Work, and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional parks. The project scope and engagement process for the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan was provided to the Board in June 2020, and the project was started thereafter.

Two rounds of engagement opportunities are scheduled as part of the preparation of the park management plan for East Sooke Regional Park. This report includes a summary of the initial engagement activities completed and responses received. The aim of this engagement process is to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park management planning process, to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups, and to discuss various interests and ideas about the park.

First Nations, stakeholders and the public were notified of opportunities for engagement by letter, email, advertising and social media. An online survey was available from August 17-September 18, 2020 and meetings and interviews were held between July and November 2020, with First Nations, government agencies and stakeholder groups.

Initial conversations have taken place with T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and building a government to government relationship. Meetings were held with three local government agencies and two provincial ministries. Twelve interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups representing local conservation, recreation or service delivery interests in the park. One on-site meeting was held with local residents with an interest in park access. In total, 813 online survey responses and 14 written comments were received from residents and interest groups.

# 2. Introduction

Regional Parks is developing a management plan for East Sooke Regional Park (Map 1). The CRD Board approved initiation of the planning process for the park, as well as for Mount Work and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional parks, in May 2020. The project scope and engagement process were accepted by the Board in June 2020. Public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement was undertaken through the summer and fall of 2020. Feedback from the initial engagement period is summarized in this report and will be used to inform the next step of drafting the management plan. A second round of engagement will be undertaken upon completion of the draft plan.

# 3. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to summarize the initial engagement process and to highlight responses and key themes received related to the development of a management plan for East Sooke Regional

Park. Although many of the opportunities for engagement were combined with the Matheson Lake/Roche Cove management planning process due to the proximity of the parks and the concurrent planning processes, this report only summarizes the engagement process for East Sooke Regional Park.

## 4. Engagement Period

The engagement process approved by the CRD Board in June 2020 includes two rounds of engagement opportunities scheduled as part of the preparation of the park management plan for East Sooke Regional Park. This report includes a summary of the initial engagement activities completed and responses received until the end of January 2021.

The first round of public, stakeholder and First Nations engagement for the development of the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan commenced in June 2020 with the launch of a project webpage. Communication materials were prepared and circulated between June and September 2020. An online survey was available on the CRD website from August 17-September 18, 2020. Interviews and meetings occurred between June and November 2020.

There will be a second public engagement period for review and comment on the draft management plan, and another summary report will be prepared.

## 5. Focus of Engagement

CRD Regional Parks is committed to involving First Nations, stakeholders and the public in the development of park management plans. The aim of this engagement process is to inform First Nations, stakeholder groups and the public about the park management planning process for East Sooke Regional Park, to seek input and information from affected individuals and groups and to discuss interests and ideas in order to assist Regional Parks with future decision making about the park. Other goals of the engagement process include information sharing, dialogue and discussion, building ongoing relationships, developing understanding and trust, and producing management plans that reflect organizational needs and public interests.

The initial engagement process allows interested community members to actively contribute to the planning for a park before the plan is written. Initial engagement is one of the early steps in the planning process and is used to gather traditional and local knowledge about the park, learn what is important to people, identify issues and seek a range of suggestions for what should be considered in developing the park management plan.

## 6. Who Was Engaged

### 6.1. First Nations

The Scia'new and T'Sou-ke First Nations have been invited to participate in the management planning process, as East Sooke Regional Park is part of the Nations' traditional territories and expressed area of interest. Initial conversations have taken place with each Nation and the CRD is looking forward to further dialogue and building a government-to-government relationship.

### 6.2. Government Agencies

Various government agencies with direct or overarching jurisdiction, or a related interest, in the park have been invited to provide input and expertise in the management plan. These include: the District of Sooke; District of Metchosin; the CRD Juan de Fuca Electoral Area; BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development; BC Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation; and BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure. These agencies received written notification of the project and a request for an interview or to provide information.

### 6.3. Stakeholders

Stakeholders in East Sooke Regional Park are individuals and groups with a higher degree of interest and/or expertise in the park, including its natural environment, visitor experience or management.

Groups known by Regional Parks to be actively involved in local conservation, recreation and service delivery, or groups recommended by other stakeholders, were selected to provide input through interviews. These groups include: Coexisting with Carnivores Alliance; Habitat Acquisition Trust; Rocky Point Bird Observatory; the Land Conservancy of BC; Juan de Fuca Search and Rescue; Juan de Fuca Emergency Program; Metchosin Search and Rescue; Sooke Bike Club; South Island Climbing Association; South Island Mountain Bike Association; and the Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition.

Stakeholders with specific expertise related to the park were contacted to provide relevant information. These groups or individuals were selected from existing contact lists and other public agency networks. They include: BC Conservation Officer Service; CRD Volunteer Park Stewards; Sooke Region Museum & Visitor Centre; Silver Spray Development; and relevant CRD departments.

### 6.4. Interest Groups

A broad range of user groups known by Regional Parks that may have an interest in the park management plan project were selected to be notified by email about the engagement process and opportunities for input. The identified user groups were selected from a contact list maintained by Regional Parks based on whether they have a local or regional scale focus, represent a recreation, conservation, youth or accessibility interest, and are currently active. Private businesses were not

selected to be contacted; however, park permit holders and individuals requesting to be updated about the project have been added. The list currently includes approximately 75 contacts and will be added to upon request.

## 6.5. General Public

The general public in the CRD was notified of the park management plan project and opportunities for input. Park neighbours, including property owners and occupants within 300 metres of the park boundary, were also directly notified of the project. Park visitors and residents of the surrounding communities of East Sooke, Metchosin, Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area were also notified.

# 7. Engagement Methods

The project scope and engagement process for the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan were approved by the CRD Board in June 2020. A number of tools and approaches were used to engage First Nations, public, interest groups, stakeholders and agencies in the project. The following sections describe in more detail the engagement methods used to inform the public about the project, to gather information, views and opinions, and to discuss stakeholder interests.

## 7.1. Website

A project webpage was established on the CRD website in June 2020 and will be updated for the duration of the management planning project (<https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/east-sooke-management-plan>). The webpage includes an overview of the management planning process, the current status of the plan, opportunities for engagement and staff contact information. Information about the park is also included.

Between June 22, 2020 and January 19, 2021, there were 1,652 number of visits to the East Sooke Regional Park management planning process project webpage.

## 7.2. Online Survey

An online survey was made available through a link on the project webpage and on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. The survey included 28 questions with both quantitative and qualitative responses. To accompany the survey, an information booklet was also posted on the project webpage that provided additional context about the management planning process, an overview of the park's environmental features, cultural heritage and visitor uses, and direction to the project webpage and online survey. Options were made available for completing the survey by phone or in writing.

## 7.3. Letters/Emails

Direct written outreach, by letter mail and email, was sent to First Nations, government agencies, stakeholders, interest groups and the public informing them of the project and opportunities for input.

Eight letters were sent to First Nations, government agencies and stakeholder groups with a direct interest in the park. There were 696 letters mailed to park neighbours (Appendix 1). Email notices were sent to approximately 75 interest groups plus 20 stakeholders with specific interest or expertise related to the park.

## 7.4. Social Media

Social media posts were made on CRD’s Facebook and Twitter accounts during August and September 2020 directing people to the project webpage and online survey. These posts went out to 6,623 followers on Twitter and 3,607 followers on Facebook. Facebook ads were boosted throughout the survey process, with a link to the project webpage to complete the online survey. The targeted demographic for these ads were people living in the region aged 18-65+.

Facebook Ads			
Dates	Reach	Post Engagements*	Link Clicks
August 18 - 22	6,722	414	108
September 1 - 5	8,536	596	71
September 8 - 12	5,112	439	36
September 14-18	7,330	499	53
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>27,700</b>	<b>1,948</b>	<b>268</b>

Figure 1 – Facebook Ads (\*Post engagements refer to someone liking, sharing, commenting on or otherwise engaging with the post.)

## 7.5. Advertising

A [media release](#) was issued by the CRD on August 18, 2020 outlining the management planning process and encouraging the public to complete the online survey. Multiple news outlets received the media release. An article was published in the Times Colonist on August 18, 2020.

Print ads were published in multiple newspapers during August and September 2020, while the online survey was available (Appendix 2). The ads directed readers to the project webpage to complete the online survey. Ads were posted in the Goldstream News Gazette and Saanich News on September 9 and 16, 2020 and September 10 and 17, 2020 in the Victoria News.

Posters were placed at various entrances to East Sooke Regional Park notifying park visitors about the management planning process and directing them to the webpage and online survey.

Postcards were mailed to approximately 2,500 residents who accept postal flyers in East Sooke, Metchosin, Sooke and the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area on August 20, 2020. The postcards directed recipients to the project webpage and informed them of the opportunity to complete the online survey (Appendix 3).

## 7.6. Community Events

Staff hosted a booth at the Sooke Night Market on September 3, 2020, from 5-8 pm. The event provided an opportunity to set up displays about the park management planning process and to speak with the public about opportunities for input, such as the online survey. Staff engaged directly with approximately 50 people.

## 7.7. Interviews and Meetings

Meetings were requested with T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations, government agencies and stakeholders with direct interest in the park, to share relevant information and to discuss ideas and issues pertaining to management of the land.

Two online meetings were held with the T'Sou-ke First Nation Leadership in July and October 2020. One online meeting was held with Scia'new First Nation Leadership in May 2020. Additional contact has been made by phone and email with both T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations between June and October 2020 to check in, and to facilitate opportunities for future meetings.

A meeting was held with representatives from each local government agency with an interest in the park, these included: the District of Sooke, District of Metchosin and the CRD Juan de Fuca Electoral Area.

Interviews were also requested with provincial government agencies having related interest or expertise related to the park. Two interviews were conducted.

Interviews were requested with 12 stakeholder groups deemed to have local or specific interest in the park, or at the recommendation of other key stakeholders. Five interviews were conducted with recreation-oriented stakeholder groups and two interviews were held with conservation-oriented stakeholder groups. All others contacted for interviews declined or did not respond to the request.

Interviews were held with five individuals or groups perceived to have expertise or direct knowledge relating to management of the park. These included: CRD Volunteer Park Stewards, BC Conservation Officer Service, the Sooke Region Museum and Visitor Centre, Silver Spray Development and relevant CRD departments.

Staff from Regional Parks have met frequently to exchange information, discuss issues and strategies to advance the park management planning project. These ongoing meetings are not included in this initial engagement report.

## 8. Limitations

The management planning process for East Sooke Regional Park was initiated in May 2020 at the same time as the management planning processes for Mount Work and Matheson Lake/Roche Cove regional

parks. While synergies and efficiencies were realized by launching the three projects together, it is possible that levels of engagement were affected by multiple planning processes occurring along the same timeline.

Significant limitations to in-person engagement were experienced due to COVID-19 public safety measures. A COVID-19 Safety Plan was prepared and approved in September 2020 outlining protocols for in-person engagement, such as meetings. While one opportunity to host a booth at a community market was realized, many of the typical community events and open houses utilized during a management planning process were not feasible.

Technological tools were heavily relied on during this initial round of engagement due to COVID-19 public safety measures. Lack of access to, and knowledge of, technology can be a limitation to those wishing to participate. Communication materials offered alternatives to participating online, such as by phone or mail.

Finally, the project timeline and allocated resources constrain the project to an extent. Although the timeline for engagement spanned the summer months when many are on vacation or have other priorities, opportunity for completing the online survey was available into September 2020 and meetings and interviews have been accommodated throughout the summer and fall of 2020.

## 9. Responses

The following is a summary of the responses received through the public engagement process.

### 9.1. First Nations

Both Scia'new and T'Sou-ke First Nations stated having a strong interest in East Sooke Regional Park in regards to its historical importance and current connection to their cultures. There was a recognition of traditional cultural use in the park and an interest in finding ways to highlight that connection in public education and information. Both Nations stated a strong desire to protect archaeological and cultural resources in the park. High-level aspirations for future protection of lands and resources and for identifying ways to be involved in the park were noted by both Nations, including employment, restoration, monitoring, continuation of harvesting and education. All parties stated an interest in continuing to find ways to work together to protect the land for future generations and to maintain the cultural connection to homelands.

### 9.2. Government

Staff and elected officials from three local governments and two provincial government departments responded to the request to provide information and ideas. Responses include comments relating to the following topics:

- **Natural environment:** protection of the park’s natural environment and species at risk, removal of invasive species, habitat protection for large carnivores.
- **Social context:** use of Aylard Farm to promote agriculture-related education and activities, protection and interpretation of cultural heritage values, safety issues (Aylard Farm access on Becher Bay Road).
- **Facilities:** increased visitation putting pressure on facilities and maintenance, parking situation at Aylard Farm, need for alternative transportation options to the park, interest in connecting park to Silver Spray development and to the District of Sooke.
- **Land management:** opportunities for land acquisition and connectivity of protected areas, risk of wildfire, need for coordinated emergency response protocols, need for consistent bylaw enforcement (dog management, parking, camping).

### 9.3. Stakeholders

Interviews were conducted with stakeholder groups with a heightened interest in the park. Highlights from these responses include:

- **Natural environment:** maintain wilderness values in the park, protect sensitive ecosystems, remove invasive species, and monitor environmental conditions in the park.
- **Social context:** consider other types of recreational opportunities in the park, don’t over-develop the park, keep the park natural, manage dogs in the park, and provide easy access to Aylard Farm amenities.
- **Facilities:** improve access and parking situation at Aylard Farm, maintain trail system to a wilderness standard, maintain built facilities at Aylard Farm, improve transportation options to the park, and consider parking issues at other park entrances.
- **Land management:** explore connectivity and land acquisition in vicinity of the park, improve safety and emergency response, consider potential fire risk to adjacent properties.

Seven stakeholder groups having local conservation, recreation or service delivery interest in the park were interviewed. These included: Habitat Acquisition Trust, Coexisting with Carnivores, Metchosin Search and Rescue, South Island Climbing Association, Sooke Bike Club, South Island Mountain Bike Association, and Greater Victoria Cycling Coalition. The following summarizes the responses received:

- **Natural environment:** wilderness designation is a big draw for tourists and park visitors; need to balance this visitor demand with increased protection and monitoring of the park environment, protect the park from habitat fragmentation due to unauthorized trail building.

- **Social context:** conflicts between users (dogs, unprepared visitors, misuse of park resources), encourage alternative modes of transportation to the park, offer appropriate mountain biking opportunities, recognize rock climbing destinations in the park, maintain interpretive programs.
- **Facilities:** improve park maps and signage, name unofficial trails on the park map, improve trail conditions in many locations (erosion, lack of drainage, trail brushing), provide emergency phone in the park.
- **Management:** risk of wildfire, establish emergency response protocols, visitor safety concerns (specifically in interior sections of the park and Coast Trail due to poor cell coverage and challenging terrain), solicit volunteer help to undertake research, restoration and maintenance activities in the park.

Groups and individuals with specific knowledge or expertise related to the park were interviewed. These included: CRD Volunteer Park Stewards, Conservation Officer Service, Sooke Region Museum, a large carnivore expert, Silver Spray developer, and park neighbors. Responses are summarized, as follows:

- **Natural Environment:** increased visitation and development pressures are impacting habitat, the park is important to maintain large carnivores, implement a research program to document wildlife presence/distribution in the park, protect seasonal turkey vulture roosting trees, and maintain Aylard Farm open fields.
- **Social Context:** provide opportunities for educational programs, acknowledge rich cultural heritage, limit wildlife conflicts (education, signage, dog management), keep Aylard Farm accessible to all types of park visitors, keep remainder of park wild and rugged, connect to Silver Spray development and offer recreational opportunities for resort visitors.
- **Facilities:** address trail maintenance issues (erosion, drainage), improve maps and signage, name all official park trails, maintain and/or improve minor park access points.

## 9.4. Public and Interest Groups

### 9.4.1. Public comments

Fourteen written comments were received from residents and interest groups. The main themes reflected in the comments include:

- **Natural Environment:** pressures from increased visitation, presence of invasive species.
- **Social Context:** some desire to allow mountain biking, equestrian use and slacklining in the park; addressing conflicts between users (increased visitation, unprepared visitors, dog management).
- **Facilities:** improve signage, overflow parking issues, and improve parking at secondary accesses.
- **Management:** wildfire risk, dog management, improve parking at Aylard Farm.

### **9.4.2. Online Survey**

A 28-question online survey was available through the project webpage and highlighted on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. A total of 813 online surveys were completed and submitted. Response analysis of the online survey is provided in Appendix 4. Details on survey methodology are provided in Appendix 5.

## **10. Conclusion**

There was a moderate to high level of participation in the initial engagement process for East Sooke Regional Park. A variety of methods were used to engage with First Nations, stakeholders and the public, including advertising, an online survey, meetings and interviews. Input has been received from T'Sou-ke and Scia'new First Nations, government agencies, a wide range of stakeholders, and over 800 members of the public. Comments received as part of the initial engagement process will inform the preparation of a draft management plan for East Sooke Regional Park.

# Appendix A – Park Neighbour Letter



Regional Parks  
490 Atkins Avenue  
Victoria, BC V9B 2Z8

T: 250.478.3344  
F: 250.478.5416  
www.crd.bc.ca/parks

**FILE COPY**

August 13, 2020

File: 6130-30

Dear Park Neighbor:

**RE: PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT FOR EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK AND ROCHE COVE & MATHESON LAKE REGIONAL PARKS**

The Capital Regional District (CRD) recently initiated projects to develop a park management plan for East Sooke Regional Park and for Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks. As a neighbor to these parks, the CRD invites you to participate in the park management planning process. Please see the attached map showing the locations of the three regional parks.

The CRD public engagement process provides two key opportunities to provide input through the planning process. First, we are interested in receiving information and suggestions from the public before the management plans are drafted. To collect that information, park specific comment forms will be posted to the project webpages between August 17 and September 18, 2020.

The project team will consider all input received as we begin drafting the park management plans in early 2021. We anticipate that the draft management plans will be completed in summer 2021. At that time, another review and comment opportunity will be provided. Depending on the circumstances surrounding COVID-19, a decision will be made about whether we can also host in-person meetings to discuss the draft management plans.

We invite you to participate in one or both of these park management planning processes. Please feel free to pass this information on to others whom you think might be interested in being involved.

For up to date information please visit the project webpages at:

East Sooke Regional Park: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/east-sooke-management-plan>.

Roche Cove & Matheson Lake: <https://www.crd.bc.ca/project/roche-cove-and-matheson-lake-management-plan>

If you have any questions or are interested in receiving additional information about the processes please contact the following:

East Sooke Regional Park - Lynn at 250.360.3369 or [lwilson@crd.bc.ca](mailto:lwilson@crd.bc.ca)

Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks - Emma at 250.642.8102 or [etaylor@crd.bc.ca](mailto:etaylor@crd.bc.ca)

Sincerely,

Emma Taylor  
Park Planner

Lynn Wilson  
Park Planner



## Appendix B – Print Ad



### **PROVIDE YOUR INPUT**

#### **East Sooke, Roche Cove & Matheson Lake Regional Parks**

The Capital Regional District (CRD) is preparing management plans for East Sooke, Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks. These plans will provide strategic guidance for on-going management of these parks for the next 15-20 years.

The CRD is gathering initial input from the public on their interests, ideas and concerns. On-line comment forms will be available on the CRD website. Your suggestions will be considered in developing the draft management plans. Once the plans are drafted, they will be posted online for public review.

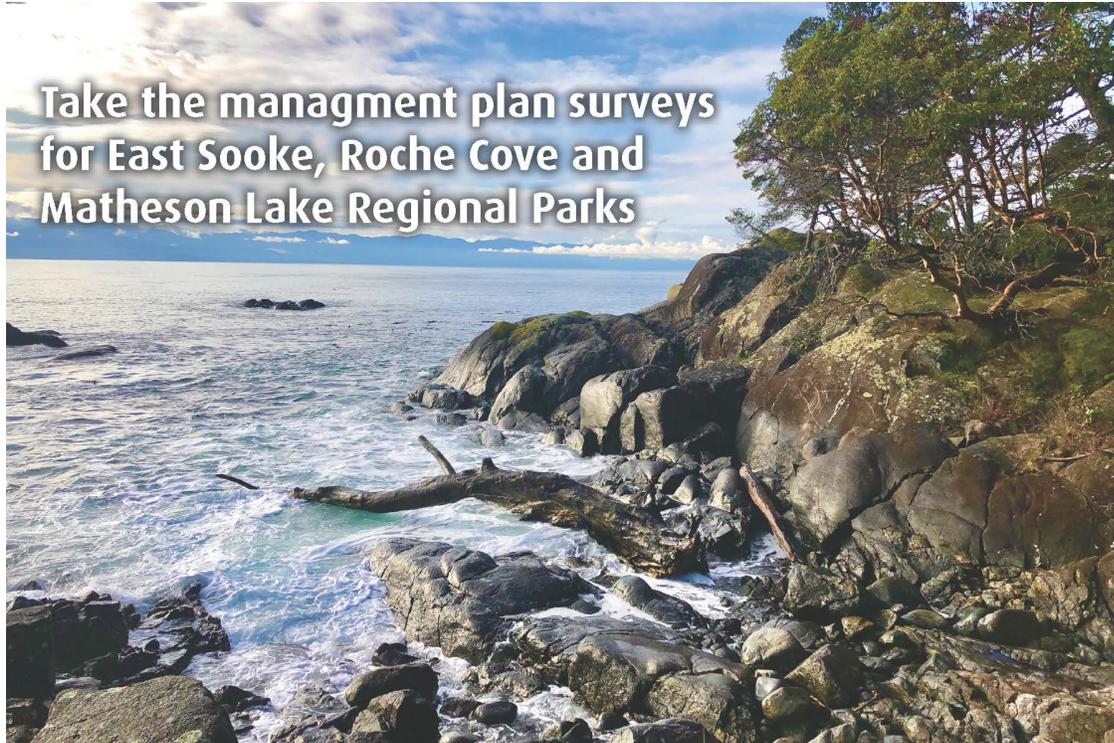
**Provide your initial input online between August 17 - September 18, 2020.**

**[www.crd.bc.ca/eastsooke-plan](http://www.crd.bc.ca/eastsooke-plan)**

**[www.crd.bc.ca/roche-matheson-plan](http://www.crd.bc.ca/roche-matheson-plan)**



## Appendix C – Postcard



### Take the CRD Regional Parks Survey!

Help us plan for the future of East Sooke, Roche Cove and Matheson Lake regional parks

By completing the survey you are helping the CRD to establish a vision and objectives for managing the parks and to understand priorities for environmental conservation, cultural heritage protection, recreation and facilities.

The deadline to complete the survey is September 18, 2020

[www.crd.bc.ca](http://www.crd.bc.ca)



## Appendix D – Online Survey Responses

A total of 813 online surveys were filled out between August 17 and September 18, 2020. Below is a summary of the online survey responses.

### QUESTION 1: WHAT MAKES EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK IMPORTANT TO YOU?

A total of 766 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question about the importance of East Sooke Regional Park to them. Each comment entailed multiple themes.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Experiences**: respondents described experiencing the park as wild, beautiful, large, pristine, rugged, and remote. They highly value the park for its mix of rocky bluffs, sandy beaches, riparian areas, dense forests and hilly terrain, and as a special place to be in close contact with nature. Many value the solitude and quiet of the park and the chance of encountering all types of wildlife, while others value visiting the park with friends and family. The park offers a sense of exploration and discovery, while still being accessible. Many described the park as the “gem” of the regional parks system.
- **Outdoor recreation**: respondents repeatedly mentioned how important the park is to them as a place for walking, hiking, beach activities and nature study in a wilderness setting. Respondents particularly like the trail system, with its diversity of trail types, distances and difficulty levels. They like being able to select an experience based on their interests and abilities. They particularly like hiking the Coast Trail with its outstanding views and its challenging terrain. They consider it to be a world class trail and truly representative of Vancouver Island’s west coast experience. Respondents like the easy accessibility, history, beach and beauty of Aylard Farm.
- **Natural environment**: respondents describe the park as a magnificent wilderness park that has functional ecosystems and provides habitat for a wide variety of plant and animal species, including large carnivores, migratory birds and species at risk. They are aware of the uniqueness of the park ecosystems and want to ensure they are preserved for future generations to enjoy.
- **Accessibility**: respondents highly value this park because of its proximity to where they live. They noted that they can leave home and be in the park within an hour of Victoria. They value the accessibility of the trail system and the accessibility of Aylard Farm’s beach area and open fields. Some say that the park is why they live where they do – they chose to live near to the park so that they can enjoy its wilderness setting as often as they want to.

### QUESTION 2: APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU VISITED EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS?

The majority of respondents (58%) visited the park between 1-10 times in the past twelve months, with 34% visiting more than ten times.

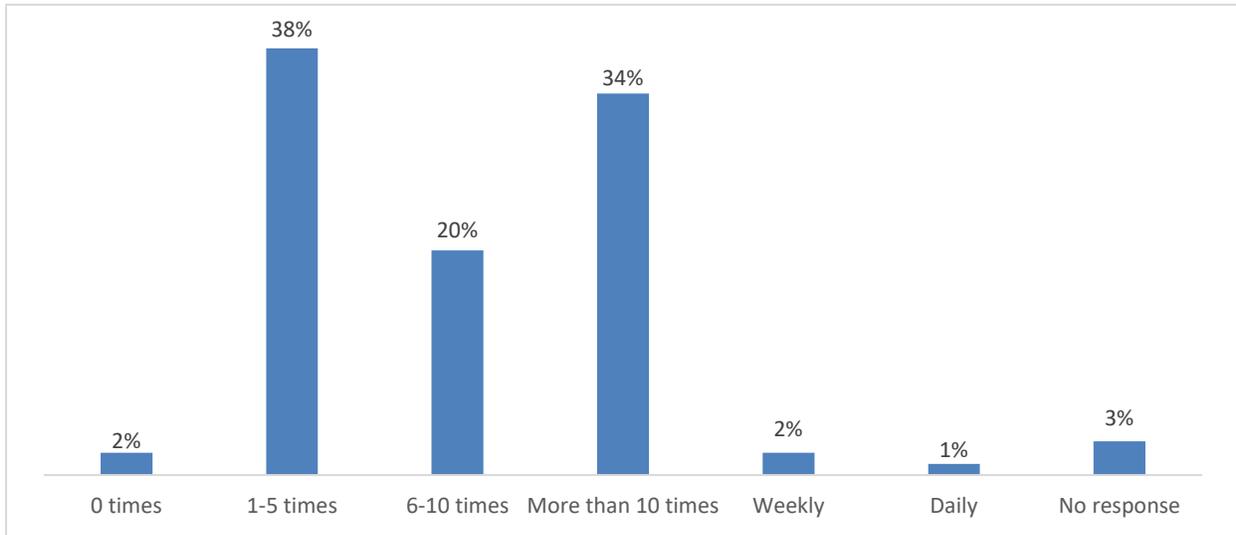


Figure 1: Frequency of visitation by survey respondents to East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 3: WHY DO YOU VISIT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of respondents visit to experience a wilderness area (92%) and remoteness and solitude (80%), while many visit for the beach (47%) and because it is close to home (49%).

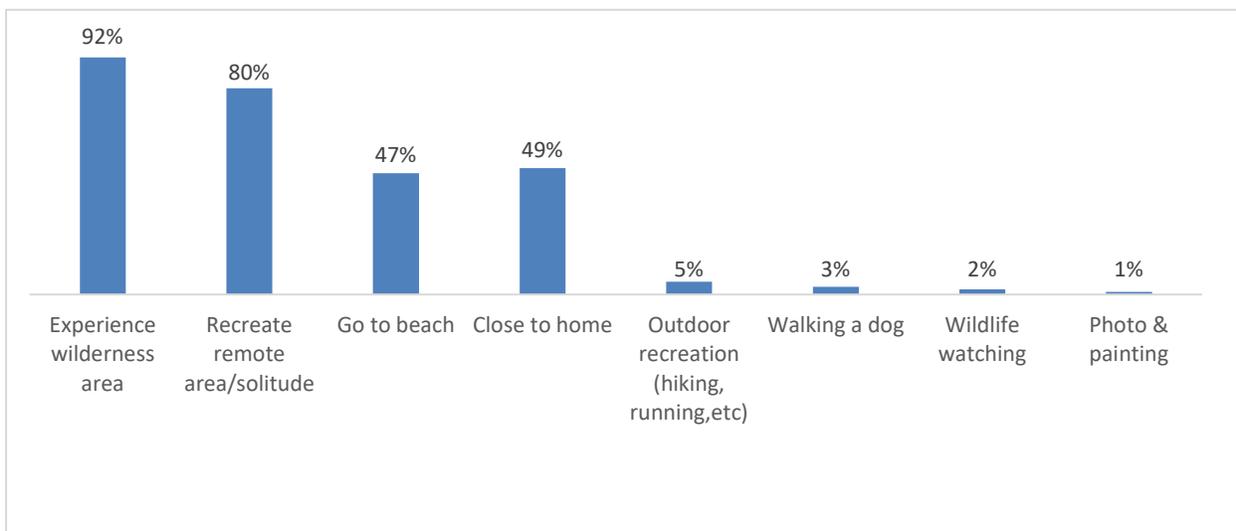


Figure 2: Breakdown of why survey respondents visit East Sooke Regional Park.

#### QUESTION 4: APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK WHEN YOU VISIT?

Just over half of respondents spend 3-4 hours in the park (51%), while 25% spend up to 2 hours, and 20% spending 5 or more hours in the park.

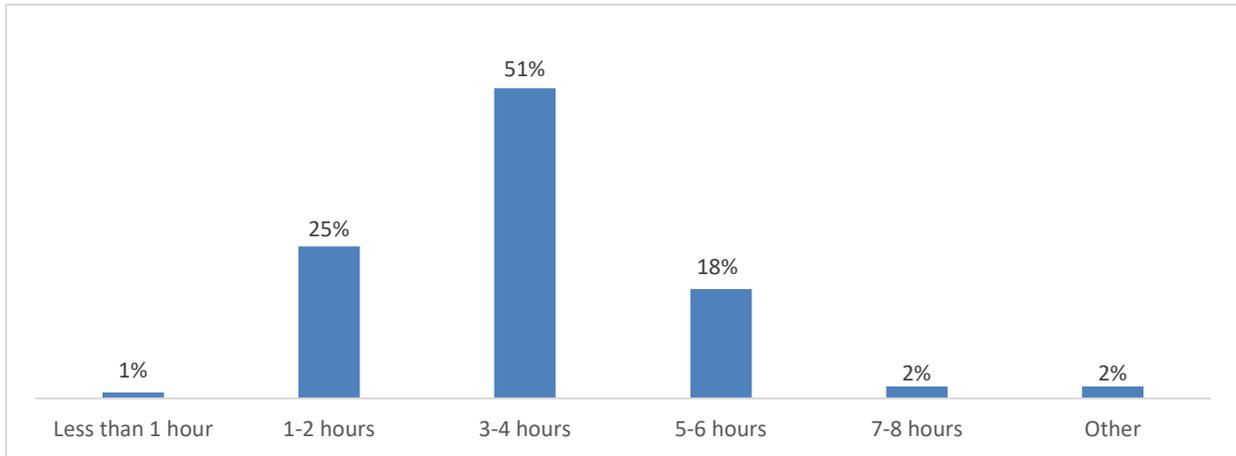


Figure 3: Breakdown of amount of time spent in East Sooke Regional Park by respondents.

#### QUESTION 5: WHAT DO YOU USE TO NAVIGATE INSIDE THE PARK?

The majority of respondents use their experience or knowledge of the area to navigate inside the park (77%), while many also use CRD wayfinding signs (53%) and CRD maps (38%) to navigate.

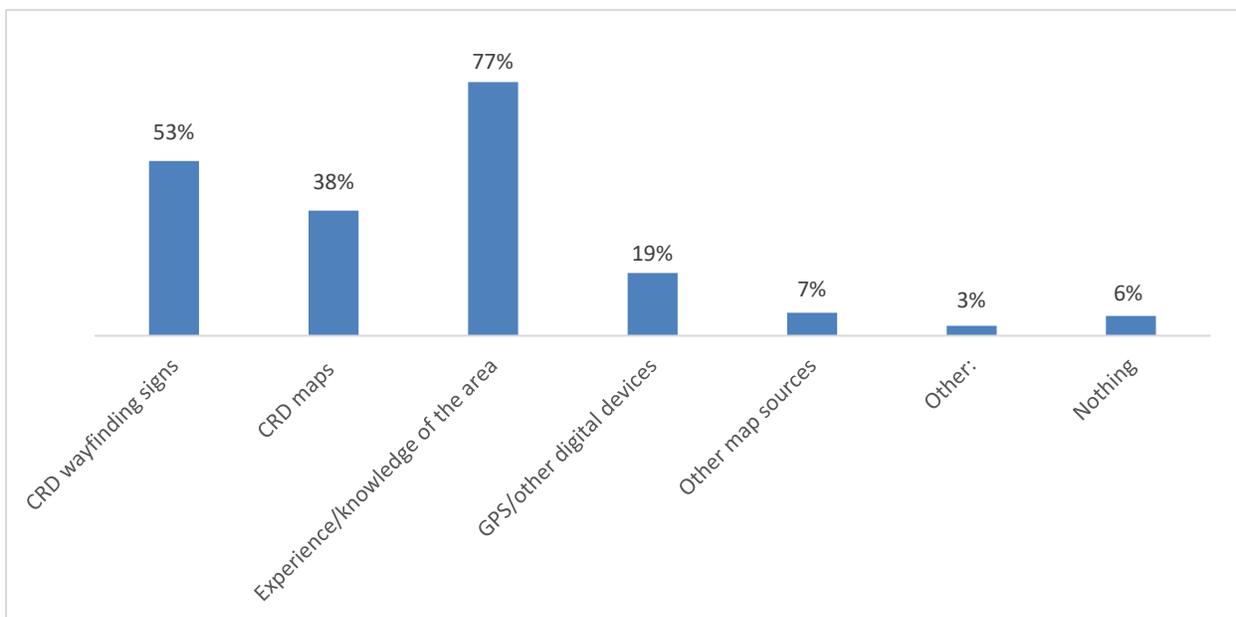


Figure 4: Tools used by respondents to navigate East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 6: WHAT ACTIVITIES DO YOU DO IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

Virtually every respondent hikes or walks in the park (98%), while many also view plants, animals and the petroglyphs. Half of respondents picnic in the park, while many walk a dog in the park.

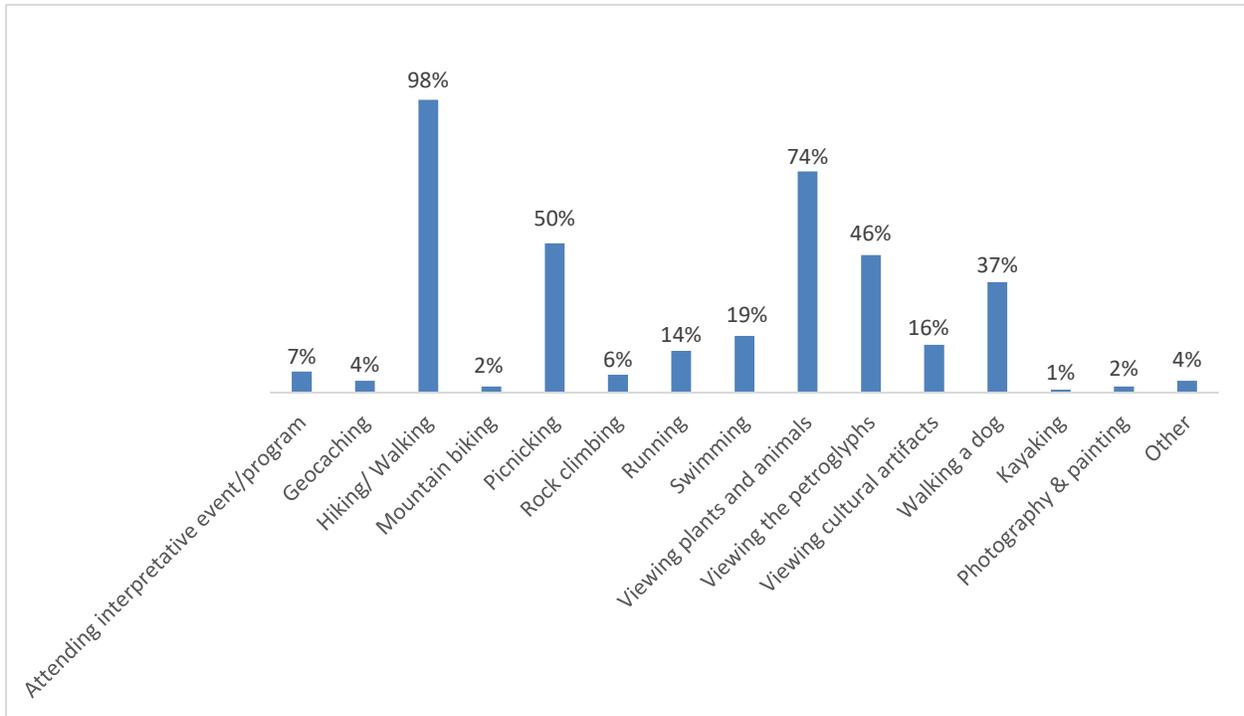


Figure 5: Breakdown of activities survey respondents do in East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 7: DO YOU VISIT THE PARK WITH A DOG?

More than half of the survey respondents indicated that they do visit the park with a dog (59%), while 39% said that they do not visit with a dog.

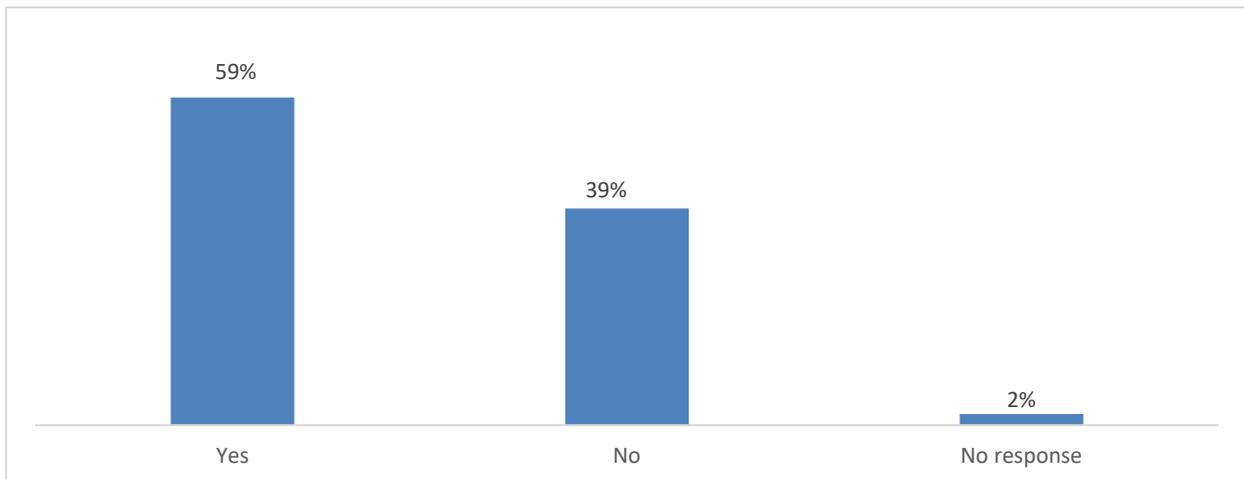


Figure 6: Breakdown of respondents with dogs in East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 8: HOW MANY DOGS DO YOU BRING TO THE PARK?**

The majority of respondents who bring a dog to the park only bring one (25%), while 12% bring up to two dogs to the park.

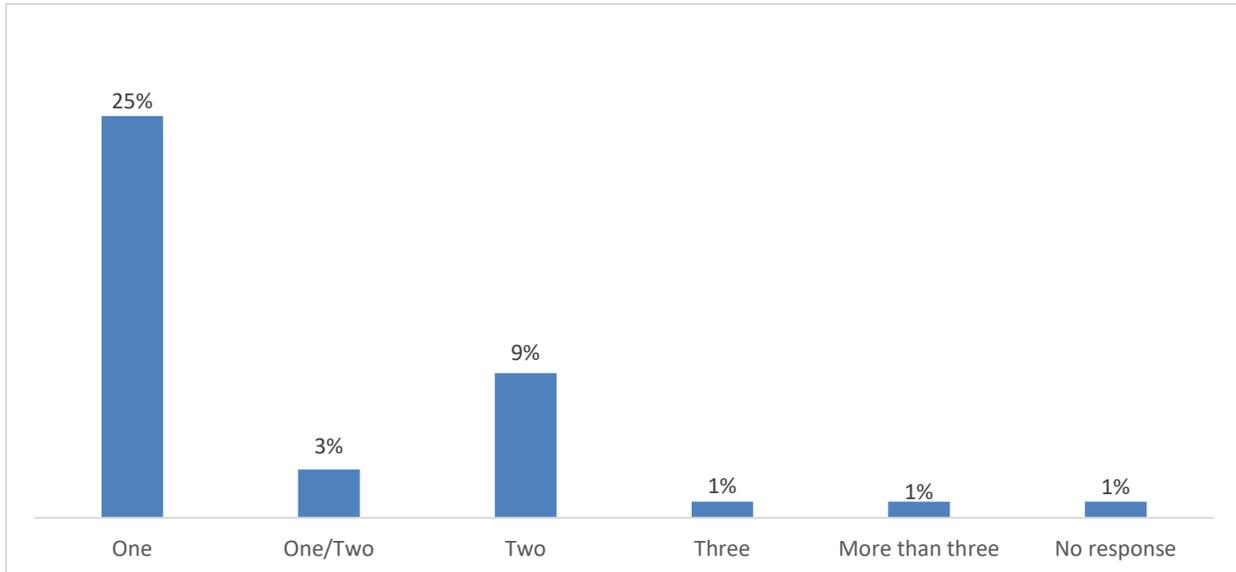


Figure 7: Breakdown of number of dogs respondents bring to East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 9: HOW DO YOU WALK THE DOG IN THIS PARK?**

Most respondents walk their dog(s) both on-leash and off-leash in the park (21%), with some only walking their dog on a leash (11%), and a 7% only walking their dog off-leash.

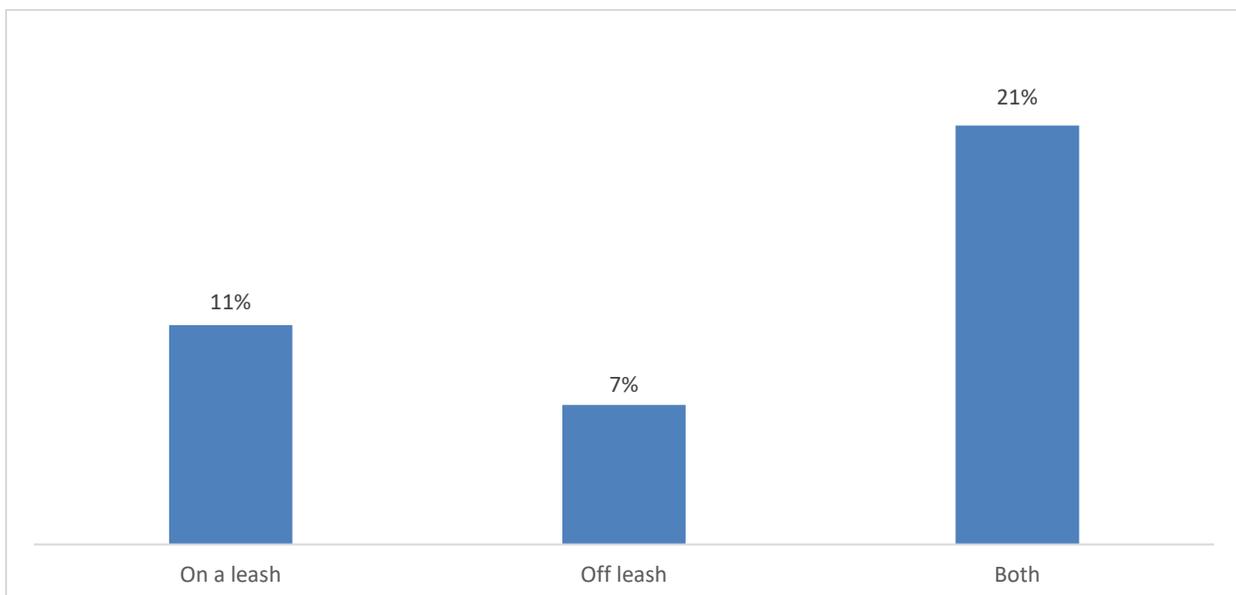


Figure 8: Breakdown of how respondents walk dogs in East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 10: ARE YOU A COMMERCIAL DOG WALKER?

Only one response was received for this question.

### QUESTION 11: WHERE DO YOU WALK THE DOG?

Respondents to this question walk their dog in a variety of places in the park, with the Coast Trail being the most frequently mentioned location (32%), followed by Anderson Cove (27%) and general trails in the park (23%).

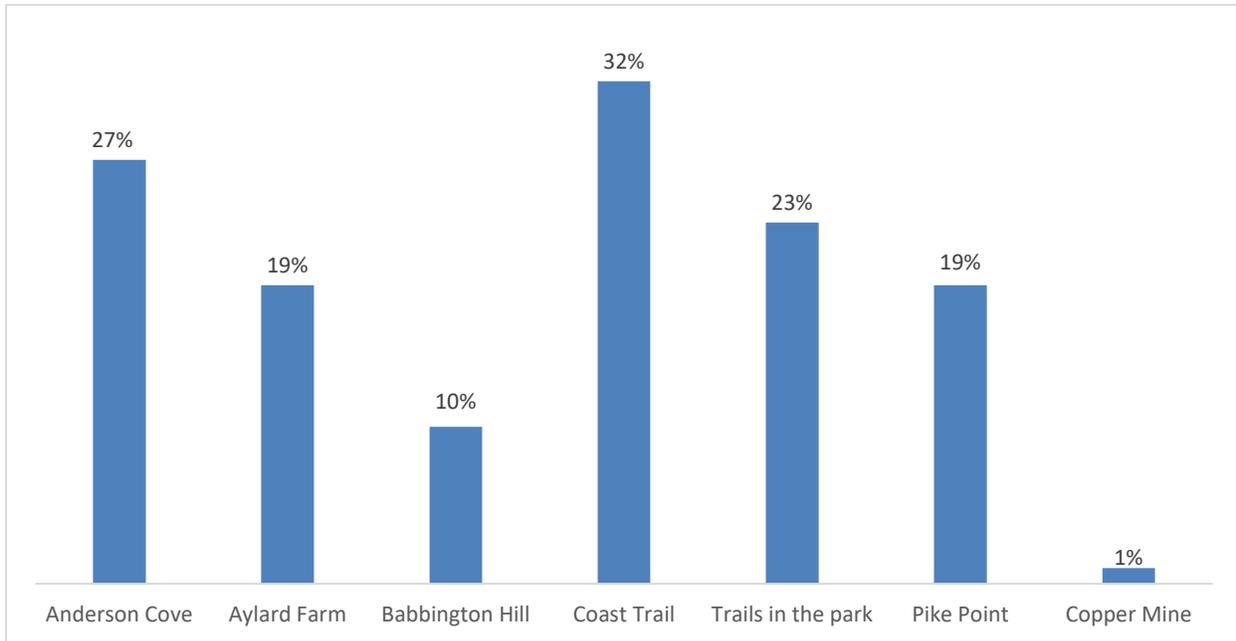


Figure 9: Breakdown of locations that respondents walk their dog in East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 12: PARK MANAGEMENT PLANS TYPICALLY INCLUDE POLICY DIRECTION AND/OR ACTIONS TO ADDRESS KNOWN ISSUES. PLEASE SHARE ANY ISSUES AT EAST SOOKE THAT YOU BELIEVE NEED TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH THE MANAGEMENT PLAN.

A total of 540 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question about issues that need to be addressed through the management plan. Each comment entailed multiple themes.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Experiences:** the wilderness values of the park need to be preserved at all costs; the trail system needs to be maintained year-round, but not improved to front-country standards on most park trails; keep Aylard Farm the way it is now—open, accessible, welcoming; maintain the ability of park visitors to fully experience the rugged Coast Trail and interior forest trails; maintain the ability to view wildlife (marine and terrestrial) as part of the park experience.

- **Outdoor recreation:** the park is fine the way it is now; do not change the mix of recreation activities; do not allow mountain biking or camping in the park; consider some mountain biking and a backcountry campground in the park; unmanaged dogs are a big issue – something needs to be done about them; continue to manage dogs as currently; manage litter in the park; address illegal camping; maintain solitude and quiet throughout the park.
- **Natural environment:** invasive species are becoming a problem in the park; overuse of the park is impacting the natural environment; human and dog feces are a growing issue; sensitive species need to be protected; do not build any new trails; keep the interior of the park undeveloped; maintain intact habitat for large carnivores and ungulates.
- **Facilities:** need better signage and maps in the park; sign all official trails in the park; keep the restrooms clean and pick up litter; improve the parking situation at Aylard Farm; the road accessing Aylard Farm is hazardous and needs to be fixed; car break-ins are a problem—need Park Watch back; maintain the trails to a rustic standard and clear off tree blow-downs after they happen; do not over-develop the park; keep park infrastructure to a minimum.
- **Accessibility:** maintain Aylard Farm as an accessible location and improve access to the beach; maintain the trail between Aylard Farm and Beechey Head so it is accessible to most people; improve transportation options to the park so people don't have to drive to there; keep the Aylard Farm fields mowed so that people can walk with or without dogs there.

**QUESTION 13: HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED ANY OF THE FOLLOWING SITUATIONS AT AYLARD FARM PARKING LOT?**

Q13a. Parking lot full: the majority of respondents (71%) replied that the parking lot is sometimes or often full.

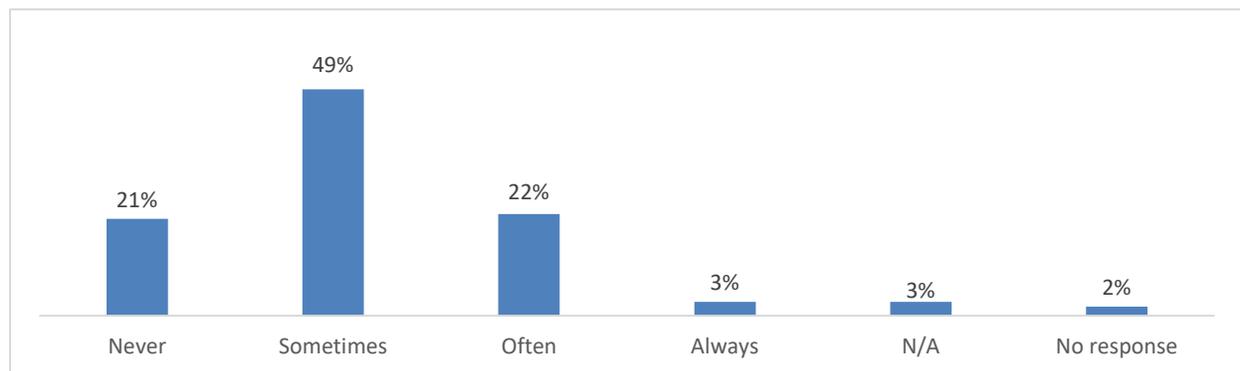


Figure 10: Breakdown of responses to experiencing a full parking lot at Aylard Farm.

Q13b. Cars parked on the side of the road: the majority of respondents (65%) replied that cars are sometimes or often parked on the side of the road.

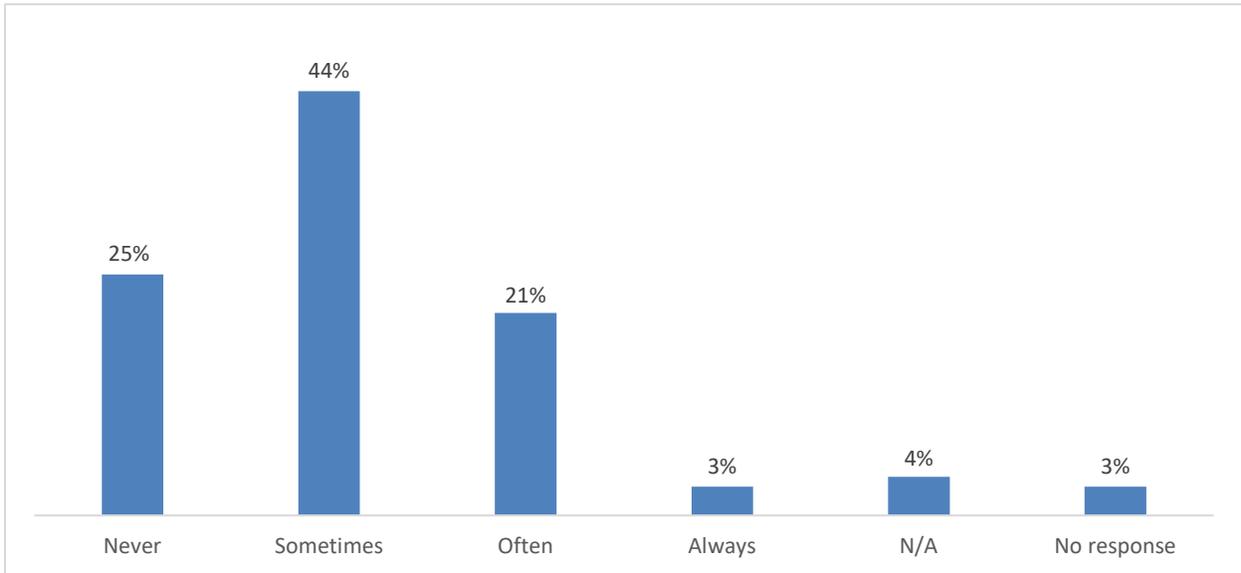


Figure 11: Breakdown of responses to experiencing cars parked on the side of the road.

Q13c. Cars blocking the road: the majority of respondents (65%) responded that cars never block the road, while 23% said that they sometimes or often do.

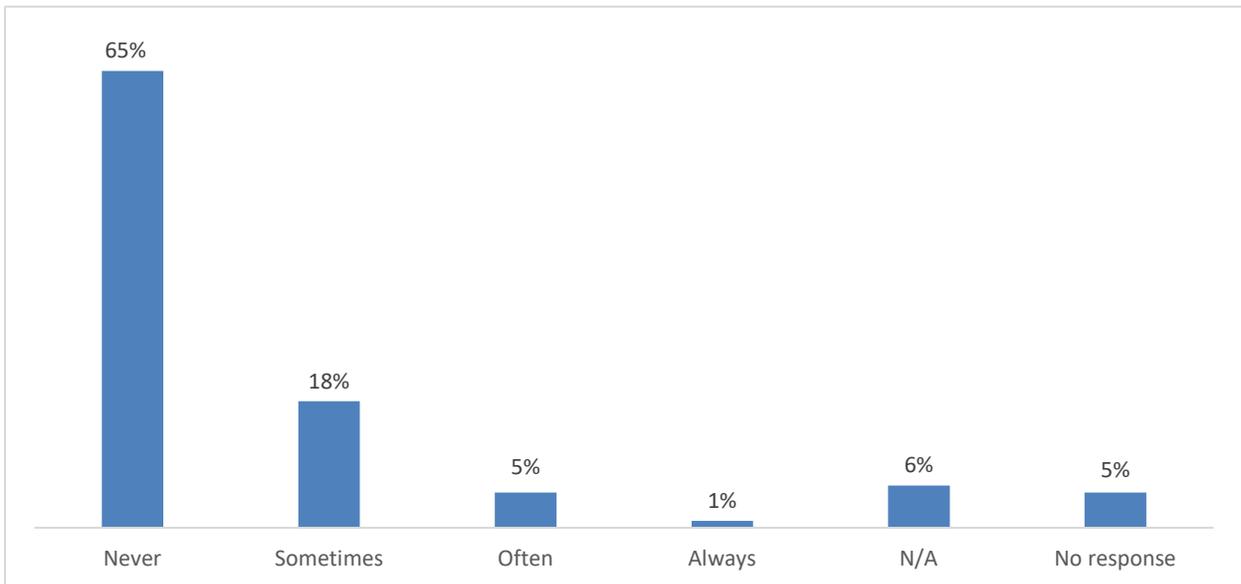


Figure 12: Breakdown of responses to experiencing to cars blocking the road.

**QUESTION 14: DID YOU KNOW THAT SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND SPECIES AT RISK ARE PRESENT IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?**

The majority of survey respondents indicated that they are aware that sensitive ecosystems and species at risk are in the park (82%).

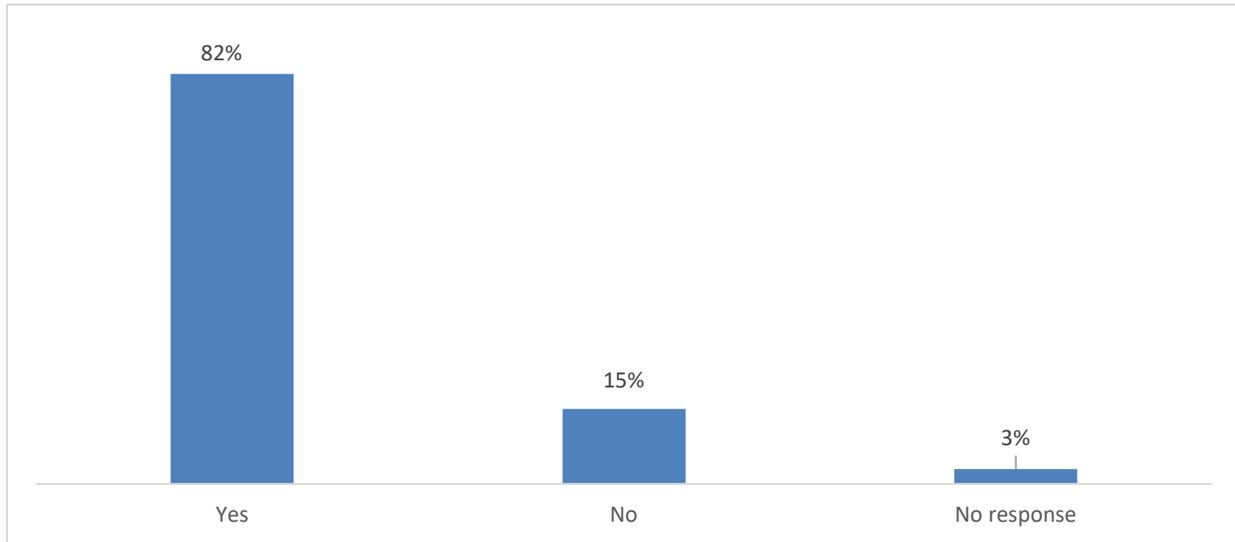


Figure 13: Breakdown of responses to knowledge about sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 15: WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE FOLLOWING MEASURES TO PROTECT SENSITIVE ECOSYSTEMS AND SPECIES AT RISK IN THIS PARK?**

Q15a. Providing additional park signage: The majority of survey respondents (75%) support providing additional park signage to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

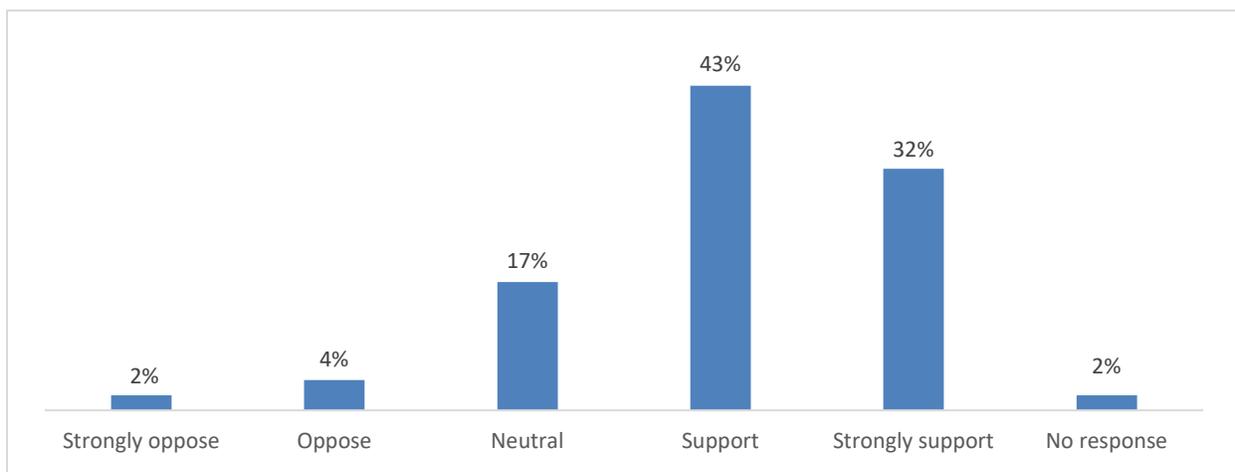


Figure 14: Breakdown of responses to providing additional park signage to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15b. Installing interpretive panels: The majority of survey respondents (74%) support installing interpretive panels to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

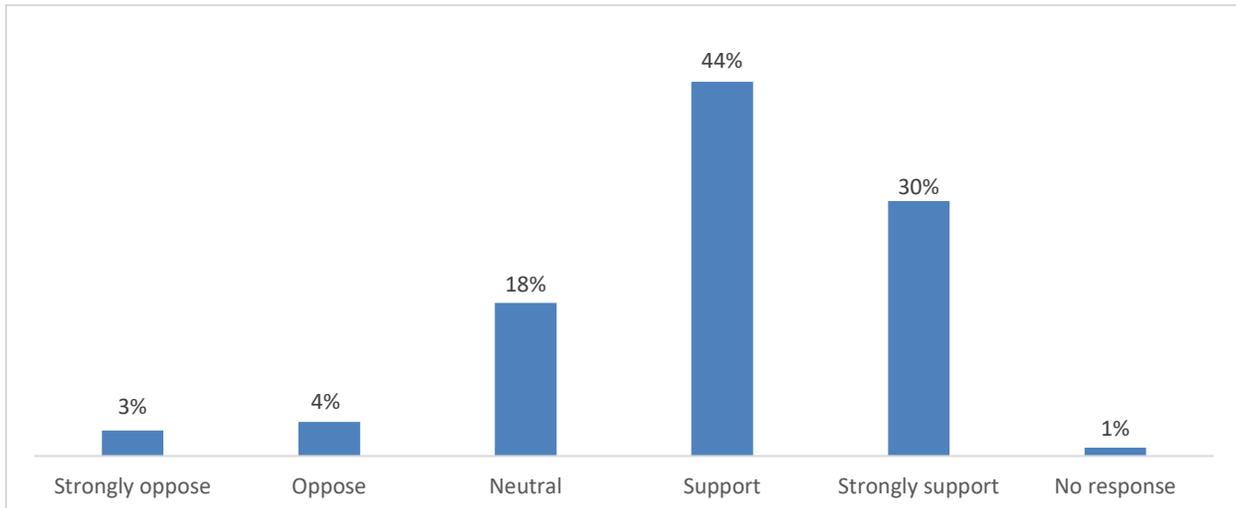


Figure 15: Breakdown of responses to installing interpretive panels to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15c. Offering interpretive programs: Most respondents to this survey indicated that they supported or strongly supported offering interpretive programs (58%) to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park, while 32% were neutral about it.

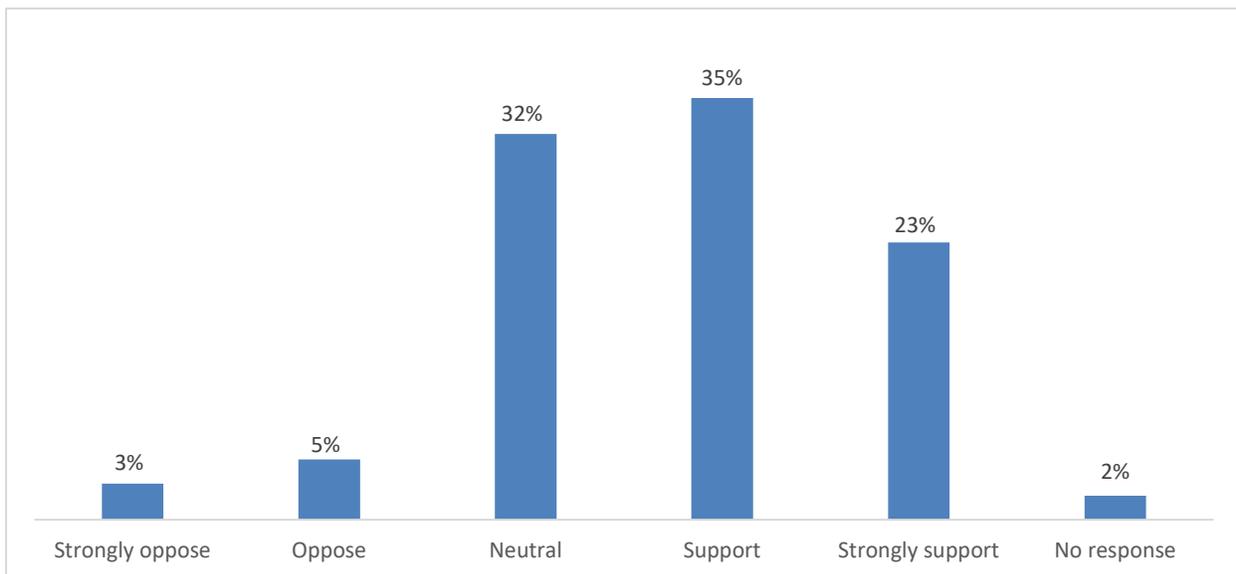


Figure 16: Breakdown of responses to offering interpretive programs to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15d. Closing areas for habitat protection: The majority of respondents to this survey (73%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported closing areas for habitat protection to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

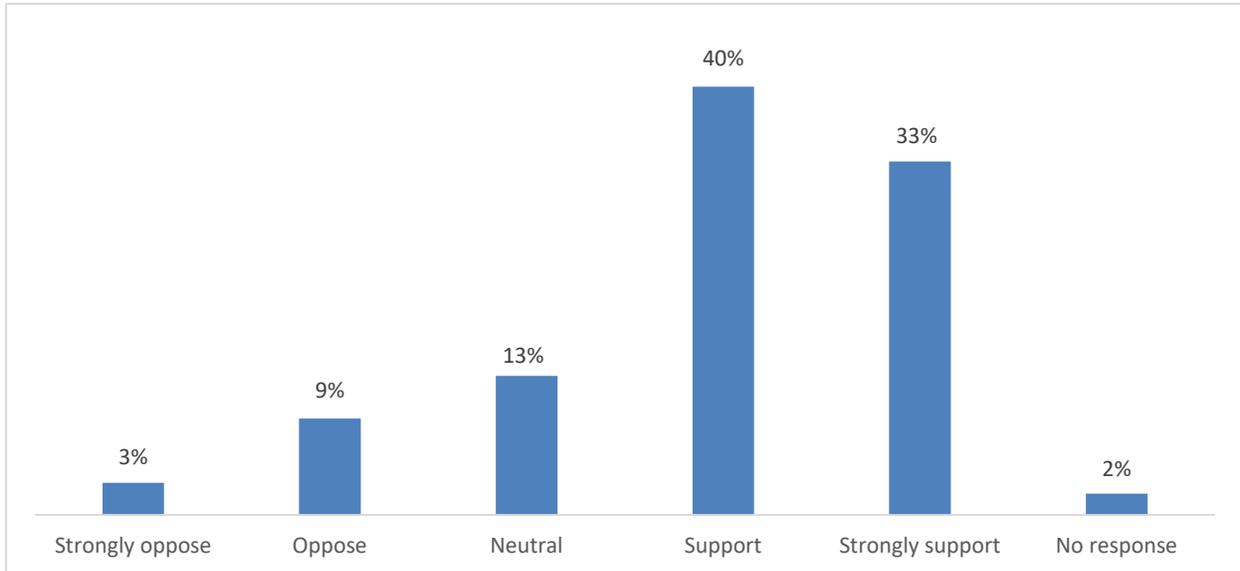


Figure 17: Breakdown of responses to closing areas for habitat protection to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15e. Limiting certain types of recreational activities: The majority of respondents to this survey (71%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported limiting certain types of recreational activities to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

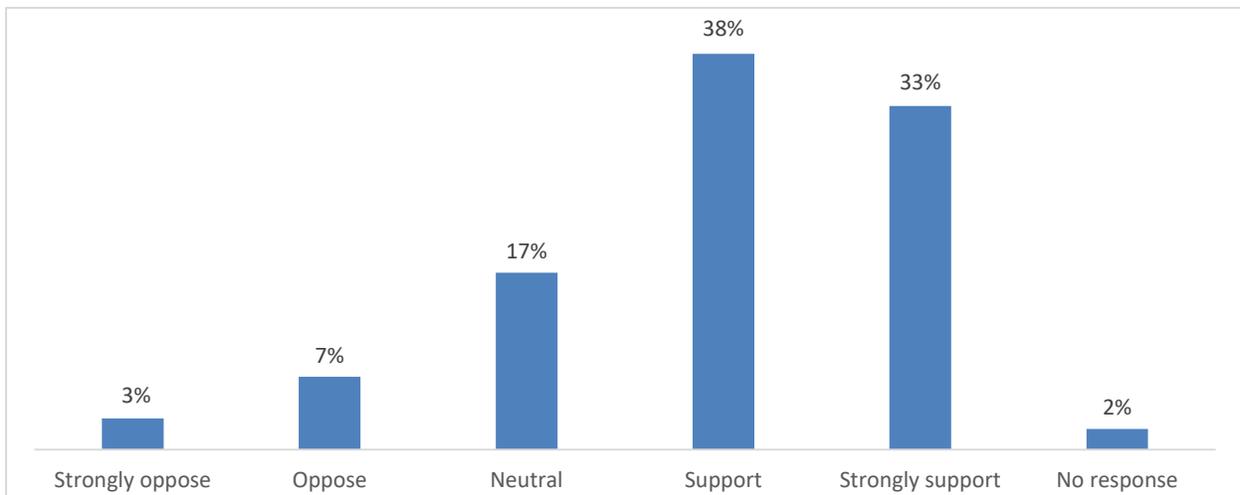
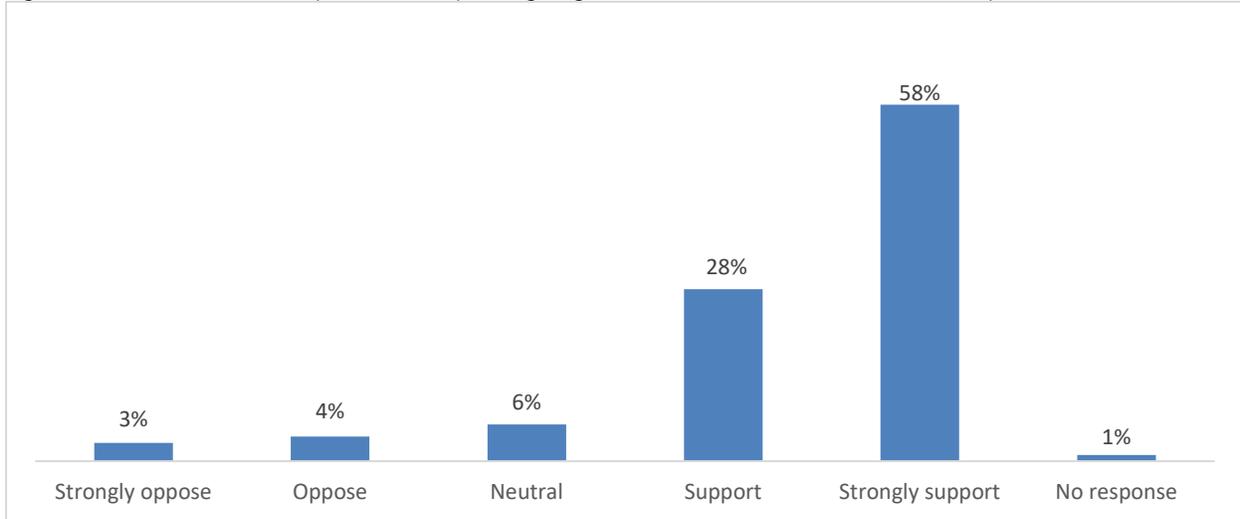


Figure 18: Breakdown of responses to limiting certain types of recreational activities to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15f. Requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas: The majority of respondents to this survey (86%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

Figure 19: Breakdown of responses to requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect sensitive



ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15g. Allowing seasonal closures for species protection: The majority of respondents to this survey (67%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported allowing seasonal closures to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

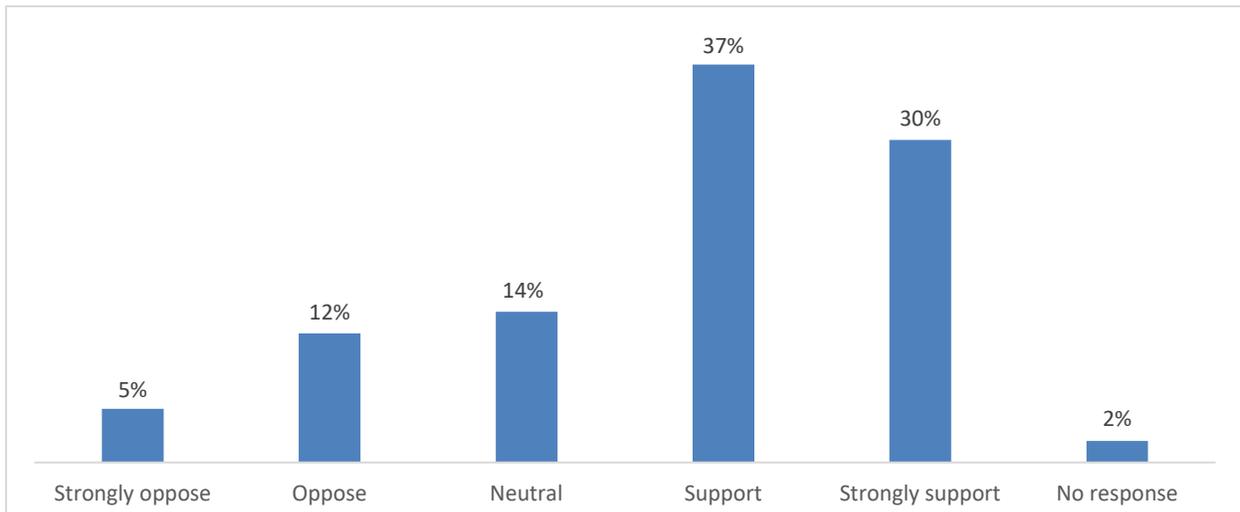


Figure 20: Breakdown of responses to allowing seasonal closures for species protection in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q15h. Restoring habitat: The majority of respondents to this survey (88%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported restoring habitat to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in the park.

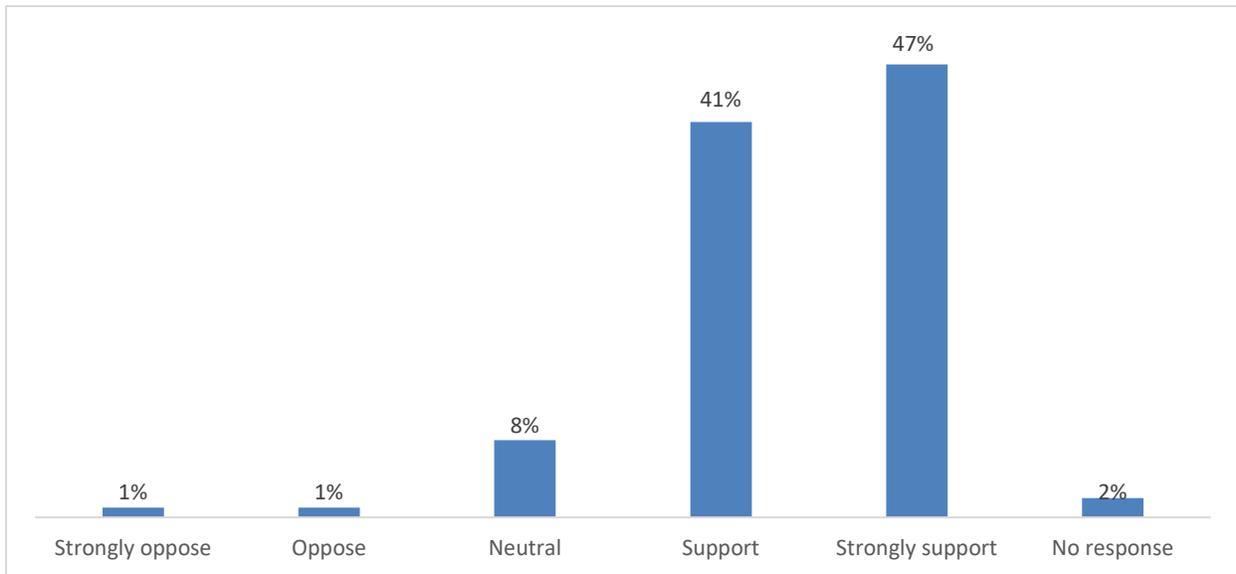


Figure 21: Breakdown of responses to restoring habitat to protect sensitive ecosystems and species at risk in East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 16: DID YOU KNOW THAT CULTURAL HERITAGE SITES ARE PRESENT IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?**

The majority of respondents (85%) stated that they were aware that cultural heritage sites are present in the park.

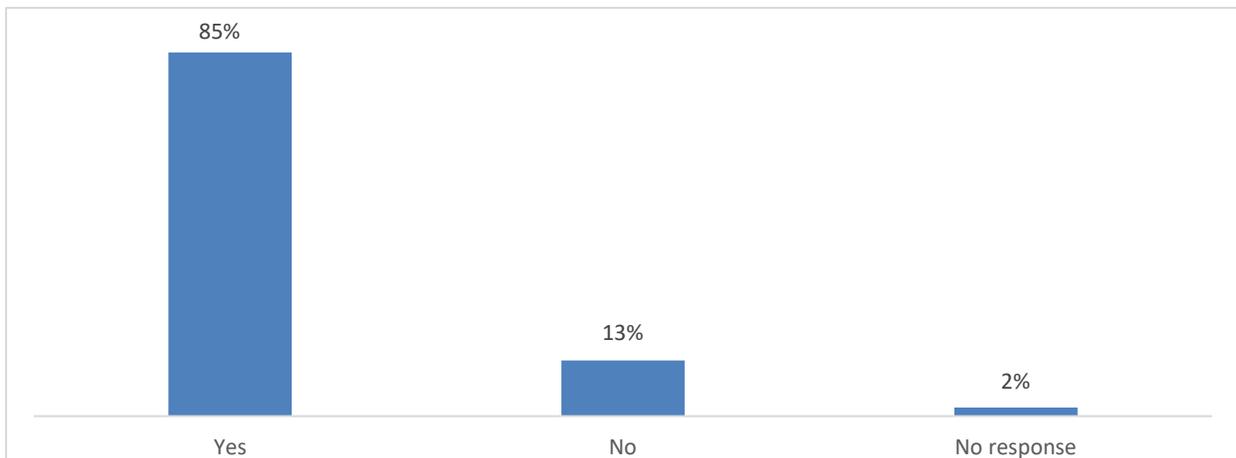


Figure 22: Breakdown of responses to knowing that cultural heritage sites are present at East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 17: WOULD YOU SUPPORT OR OPPOSE THE FOLLOWING MEASURES TO PROTECT CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THIS PARK?**

Q17a. Providing additional park signage: The majority of respondents to this survey (77%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported providing additional park signage to protect cultural heritage in the park.

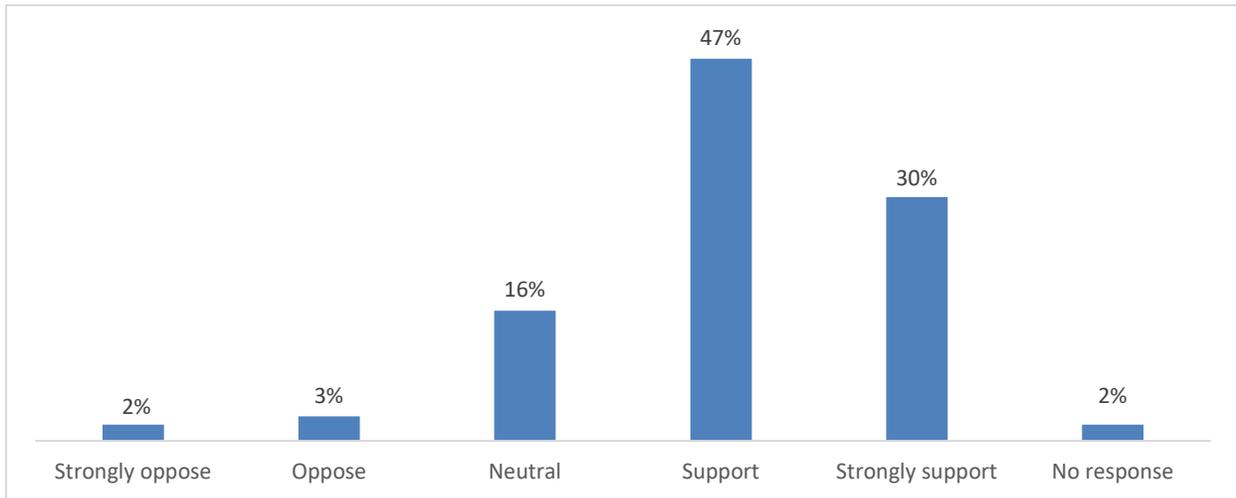


Figure 23: Breakdown of responses to providing additional park signage to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17b. Installing interpretive panels: The majority of respondents to this survey (78%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported installing interpretive panels to protect cultural heritage in the park.

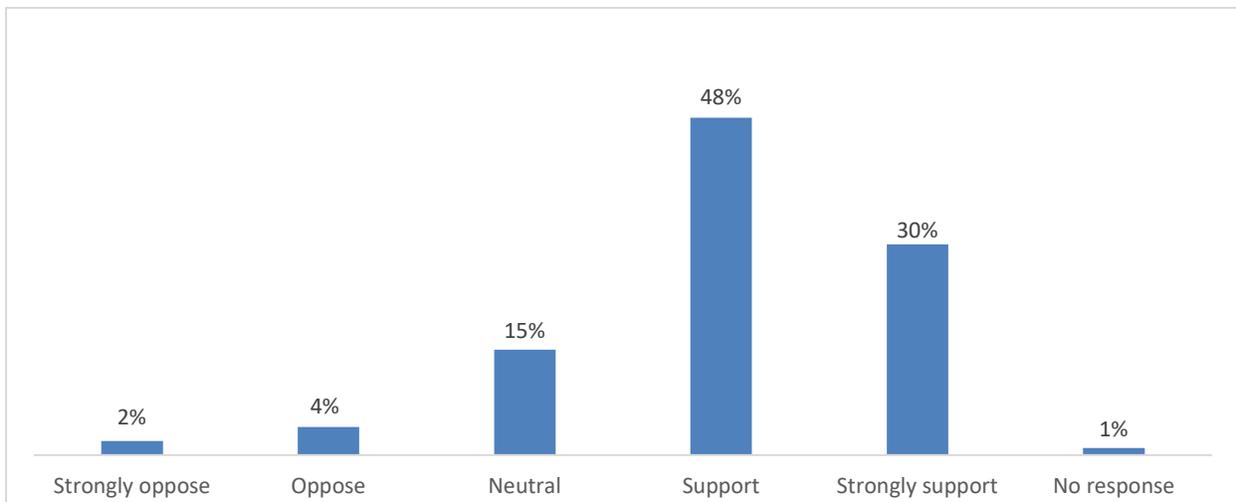


Figure 24: Breakdown of responses to installing interpretive panels to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17c. Offering interpretive programs: The majority of respondents to this survey (59%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported offering interpretive programs to protect cultural heritage in the park, while 30% were neutral.

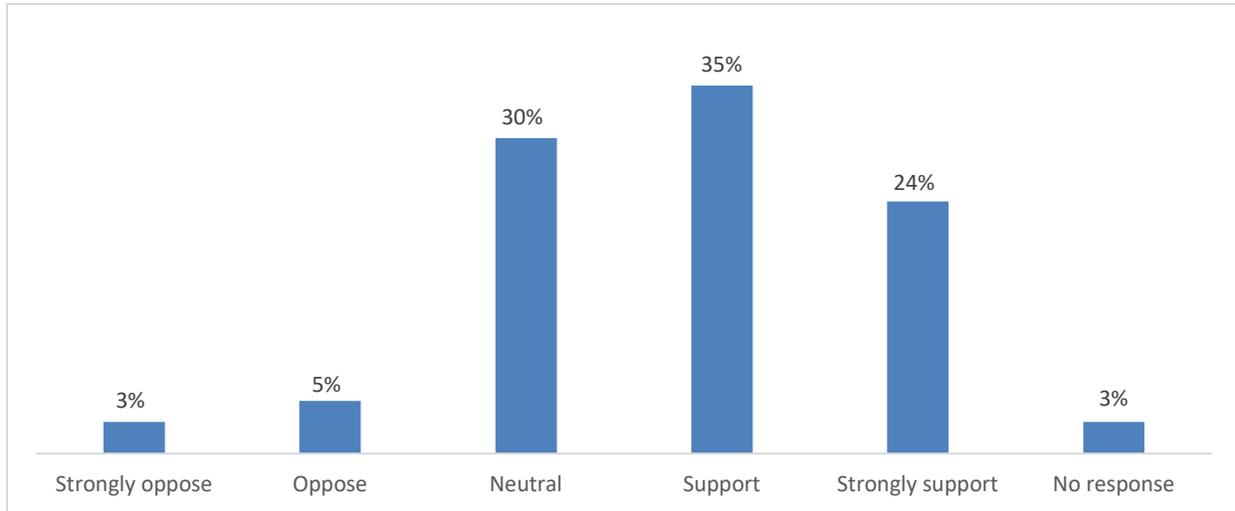


Figure 25: Breakdown of responses to offering interpretive programs to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17d. Information on social media and website: The majority of respondents to this survey (71%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported providing information on social media and website to protect cultural heritage in the park.

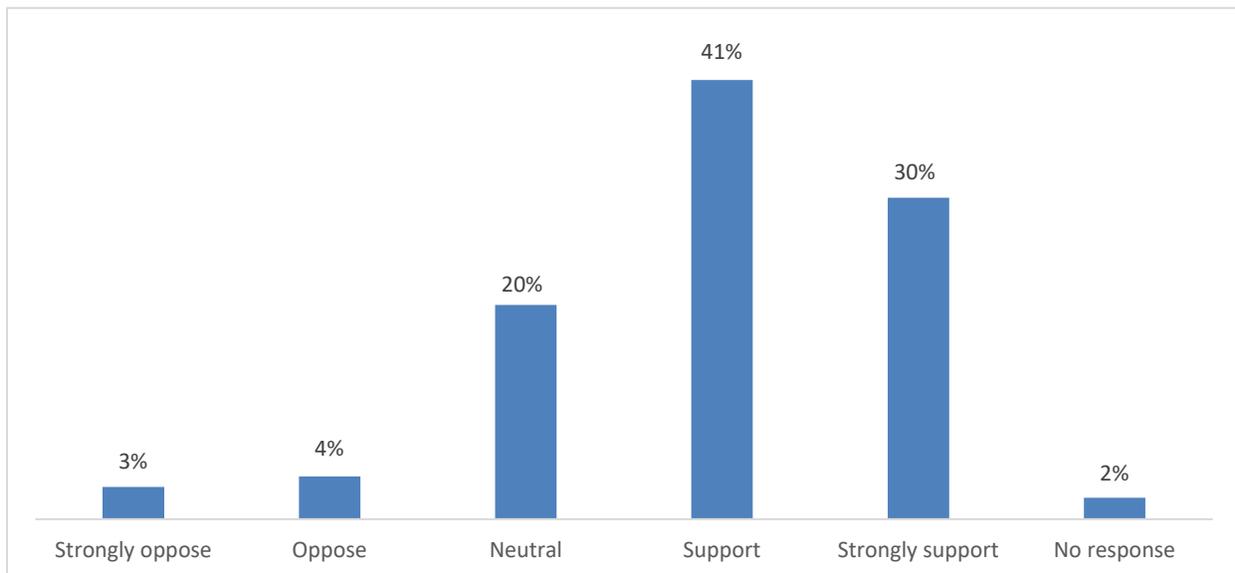


Figure 26: Breakdown of responses to providing information on social media and website to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q17e. Closing areas for cultural heritage protection: A little more than half of respondents (54%) support or strongly support closing areas for cultural heritage protection, while 38% oppose or strongly oppose this action.

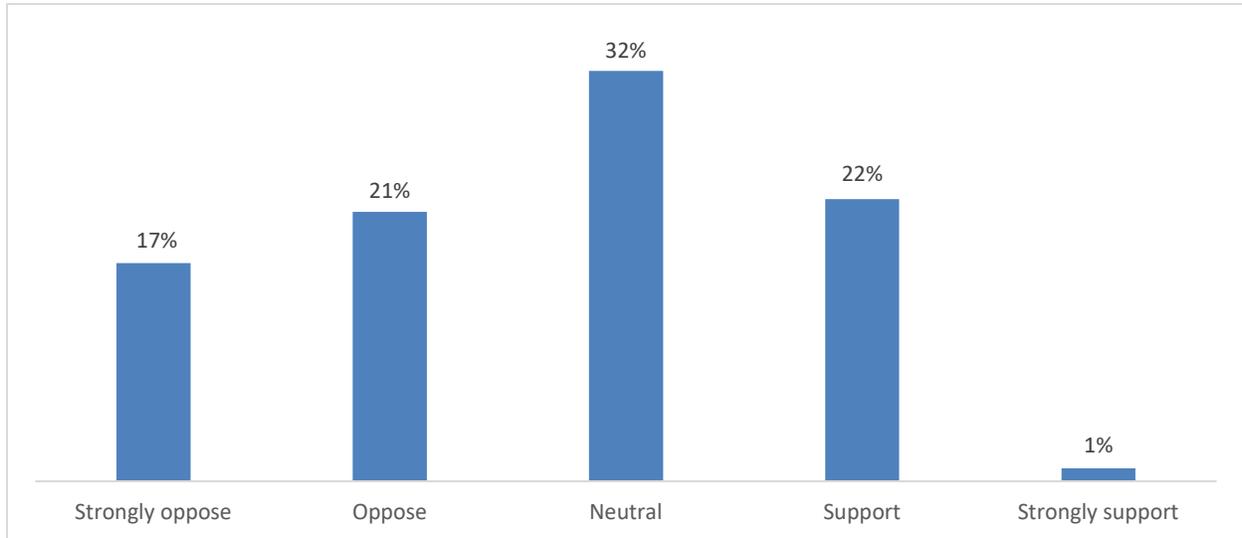


Figure 27: Breakdown of responses to closing areas for cultural heritage protection.

Q17f. Requesting dogs to be on leash in sensitive areas: The majority of respondents to this survey (82%) indicated that they supported or strongly supported requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect cultural heritage in the park.

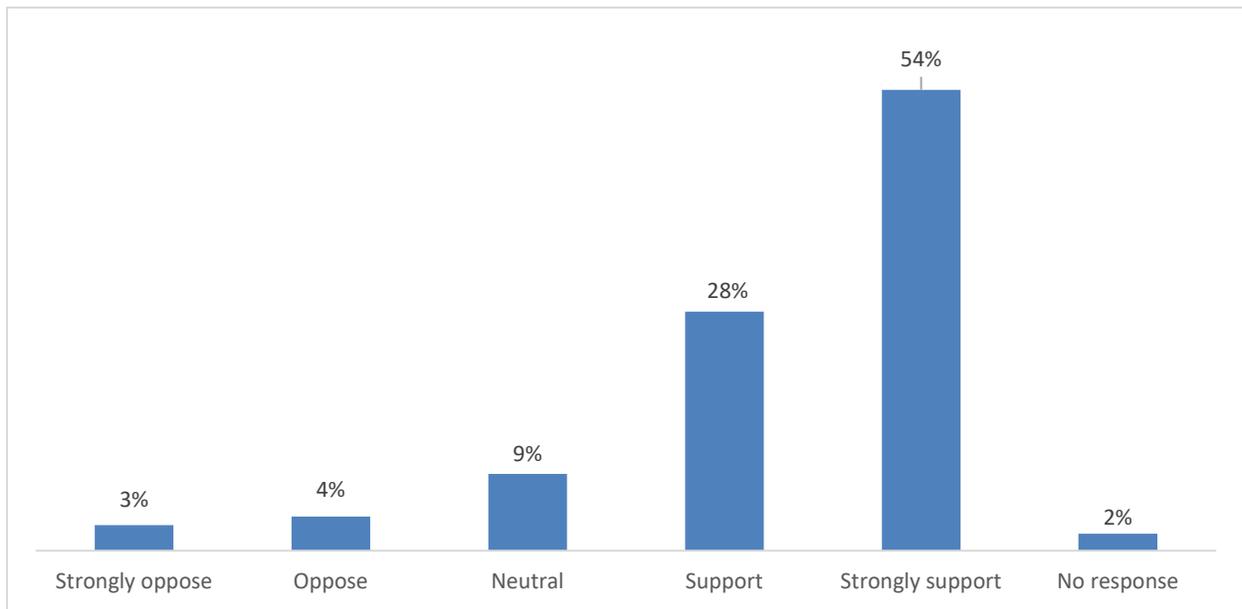


Figure 28: Breakdown of responses to requesting dogs to be on-leash in sensitive areas to protect cultural heritage sites in East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 18: IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK, HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH:**

Q18a. Experiences: The majority of respondents to this survey (90%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with their experience in the park.

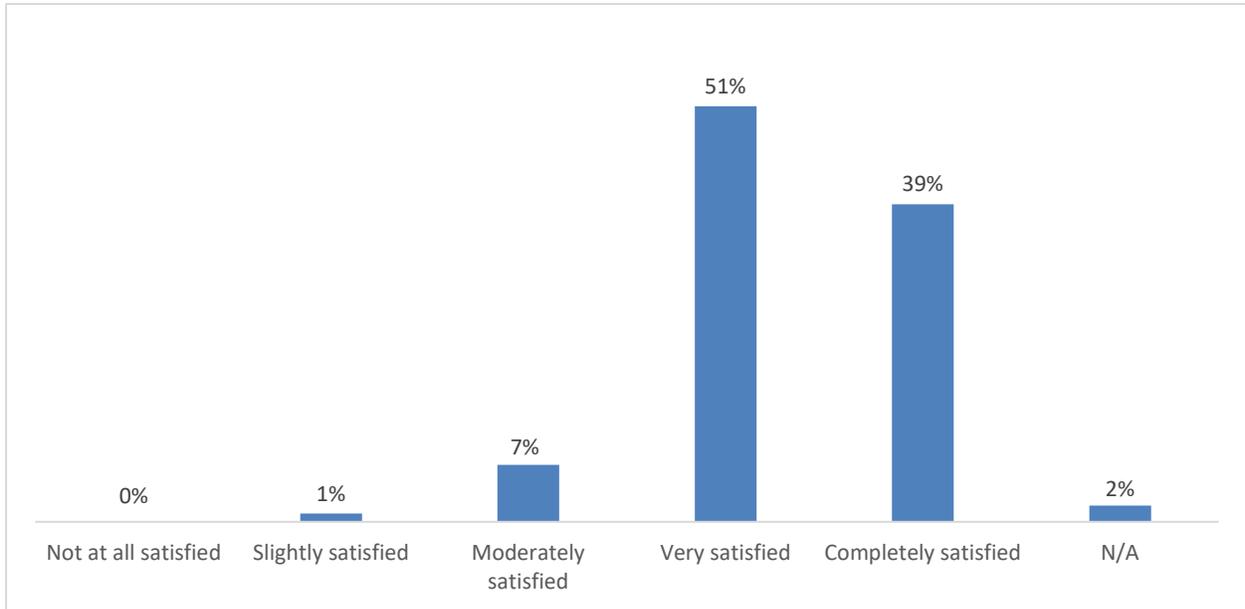


Figure 29: Breakdown of responses to park experience satisfaction level.

Q18b. Natural environment and species protection: The majority of respondents to this survey (60%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with natural environment and species protection in the park, while 35% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied.

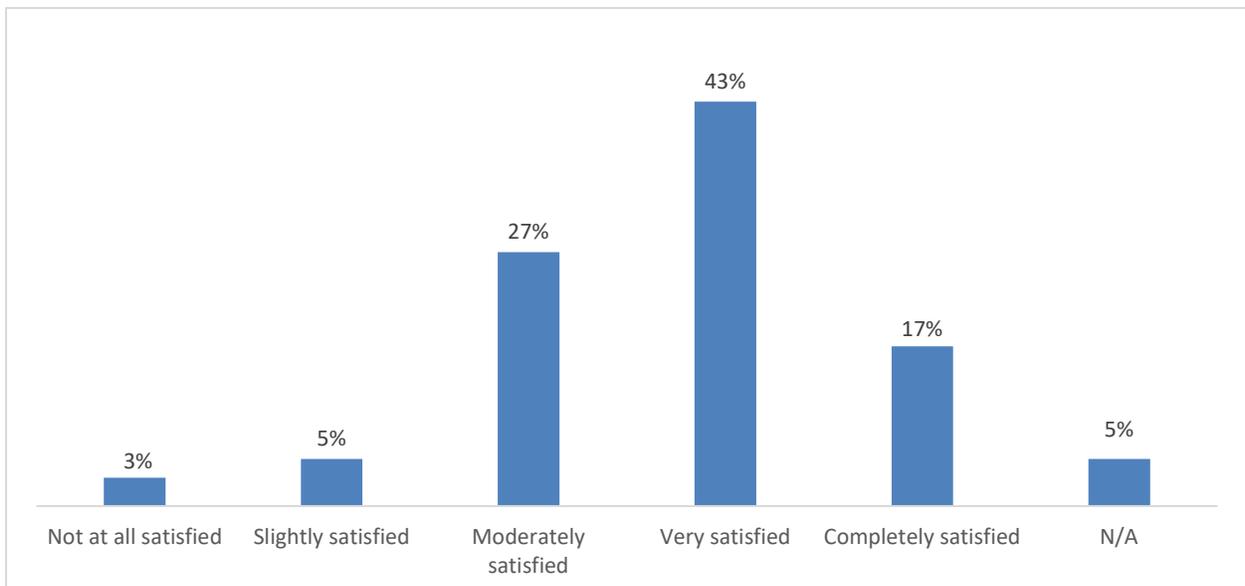


Figure 30: Satisfaction level with natural environment and species protection.

Q18c. Outdoor recreation opportunities: The majority of respondents to this survey (84%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with outdoor recreation opportunities in the park.

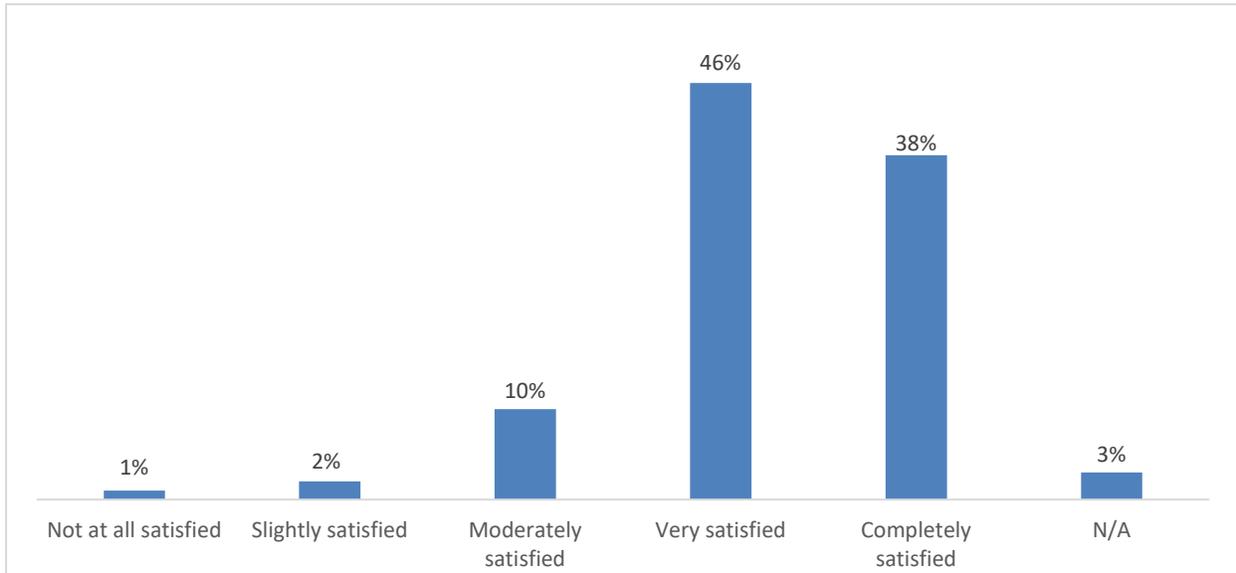


Figure 31: Satisfaction level with outdoor recreation opportunities.

Q18d. Trails: The majority of respondents to this survey (83%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the trails in the park.

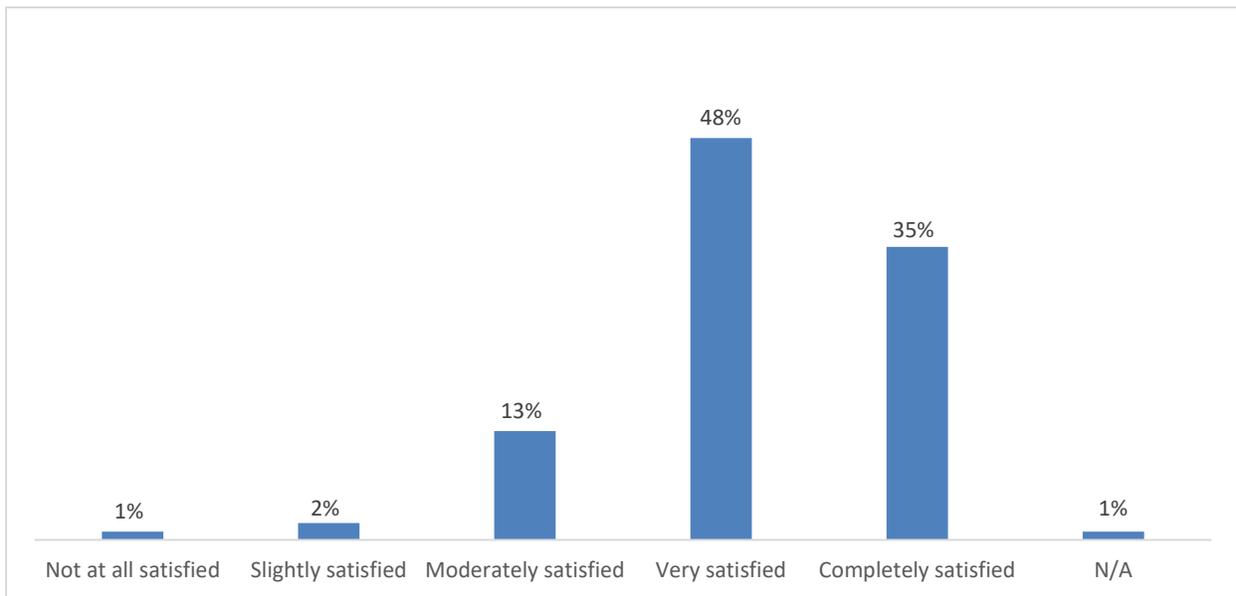


Figure 32: Satisfaction level with park trails.

Q18e. Picnic tables: Of the survey respondents, 40% were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the picnic tables in the park, while 28% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied, and 32% had no opinion.

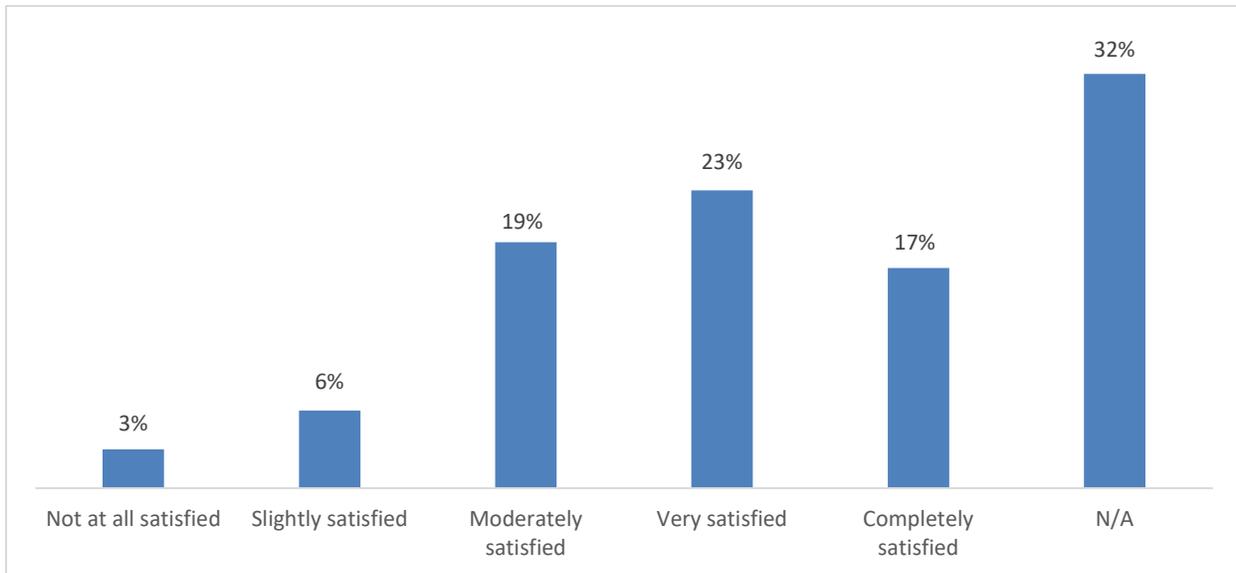


Figure 33: Satisfaction level with park picnic tables.

Q18f. Parking: Slightly more than half of survey respondents (53%) stated that they were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with parking in the park, while 44% were very satisfied to completely satisfied with the parking.

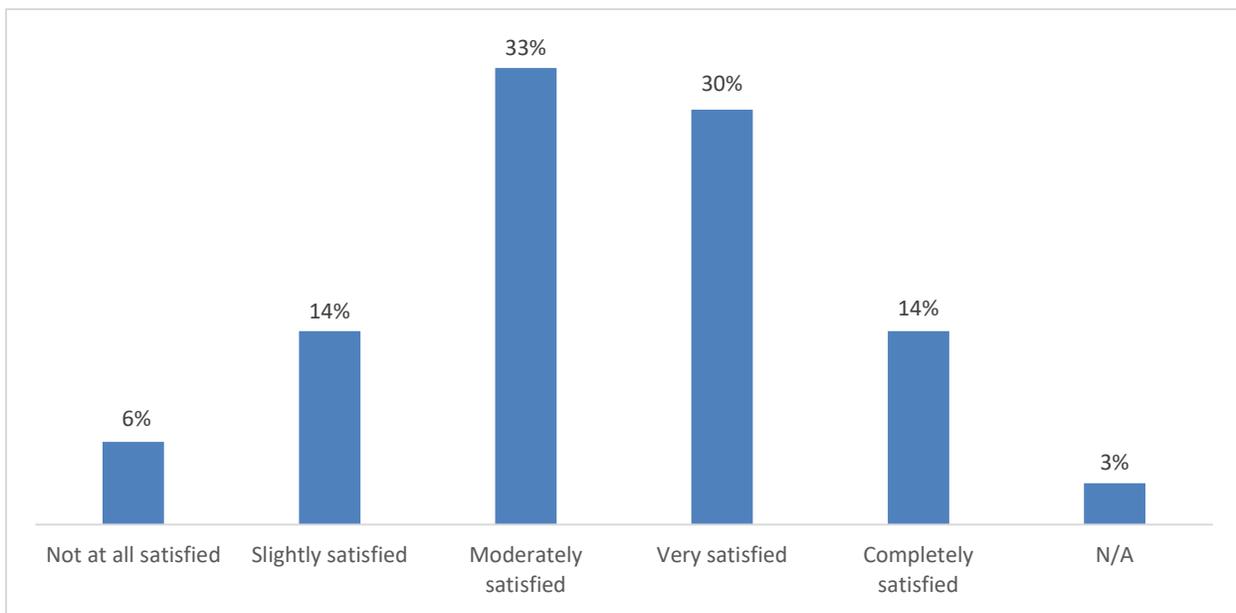


Figure 34: Satisfaction level with parking in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q18g. Group shelter: Survey respondents were split between being very satisfied to completely satisfied with the group shelter (50%), not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied (25%), and having no opinion on the group shelter (25%).

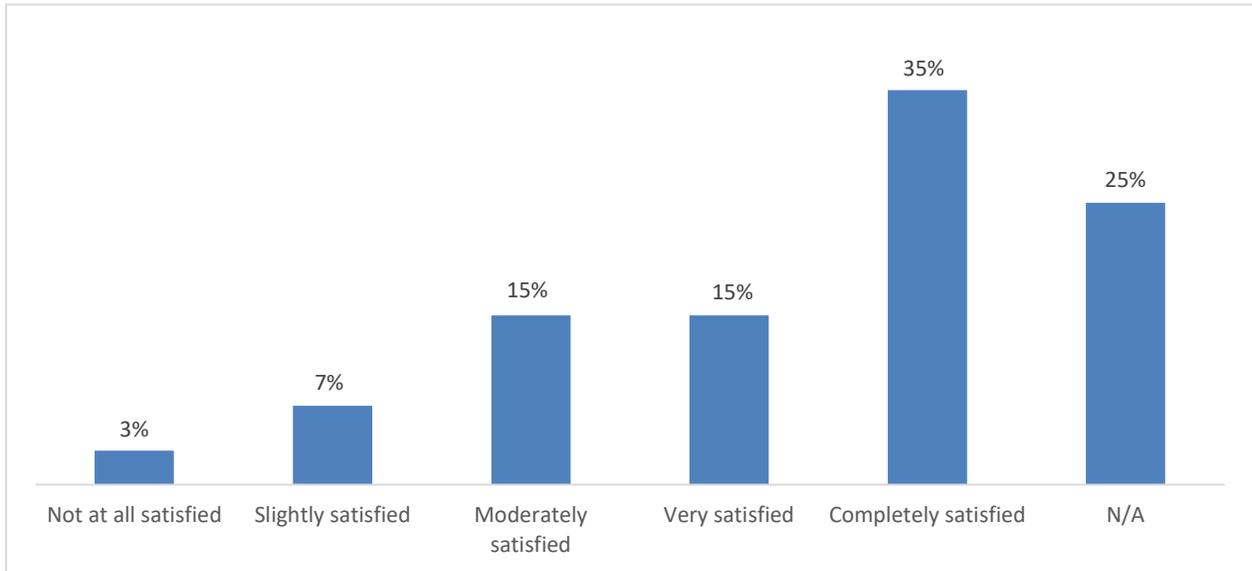


Figure 35: Satisfaction level with the group shelter.

Q18h. Overall cleanliness: The majority of respondents to this survey (80%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the overall cleanliness of the park.

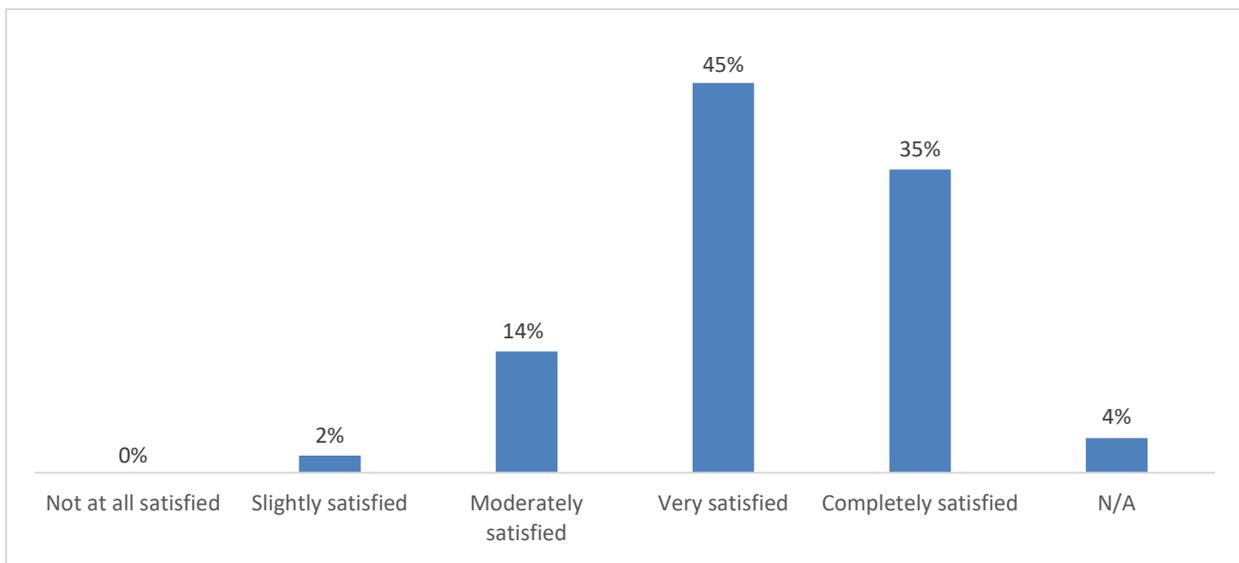


Figure 36: Satisfaction level with overall cleanliness in East Sooke Regional Park.

Q18i. Education/nature programs: The greatest percentage of survey respondents (48%) had no opinion on the education/nature programs in the park, while 28% were very satisfied to completely satisfied, and 24% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with education/nature programs.

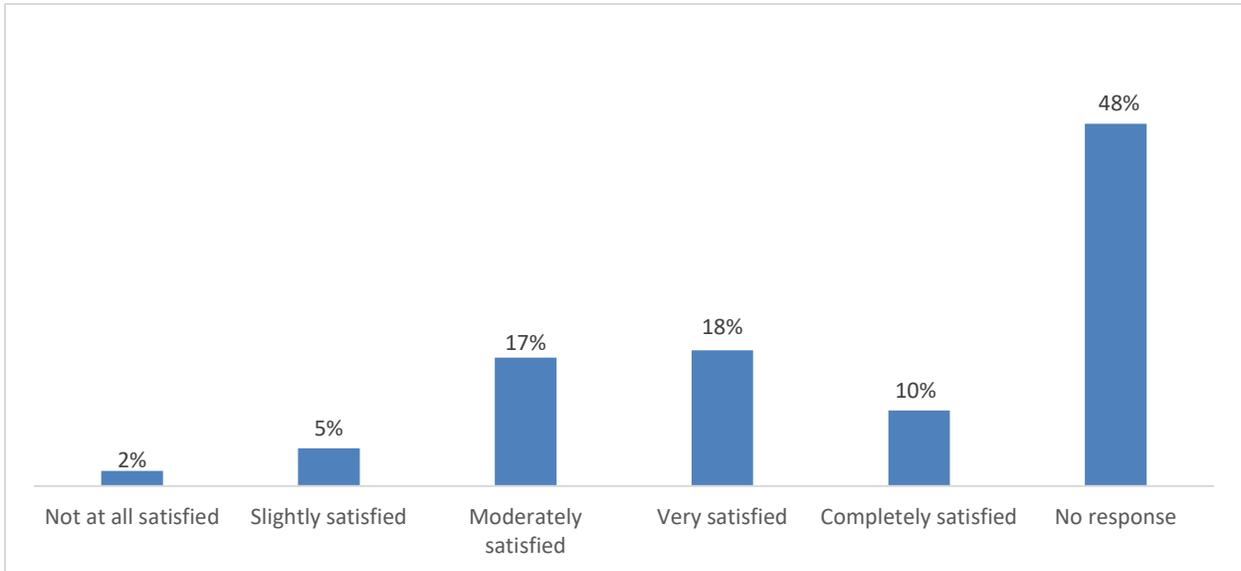


Figure 37: Satisfaction level with park education and nature programs.

Q18j. Welcome/orientation signs: Slightly more than half of respondents (58%) were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the park welcome/orientation signs, while 32% were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with the welcome/orientation signs and 10% had no opinion.

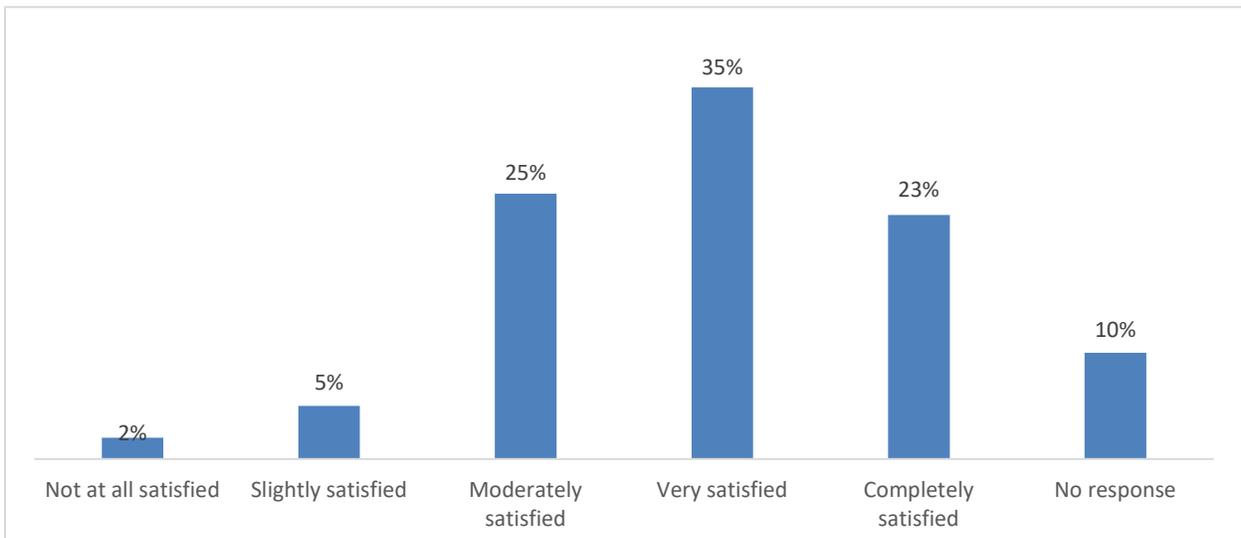


Figure 38: Satisfaction level with park welcome and orientation signs.

Q18k. CRD park maps: The majority of respondents to this survey (63%) indicated that they were very satisfied or completely satisfied with the CRD park maps, while 28% indicated that they were not at all satisfied to moderately satisfied with the CRD park maps.

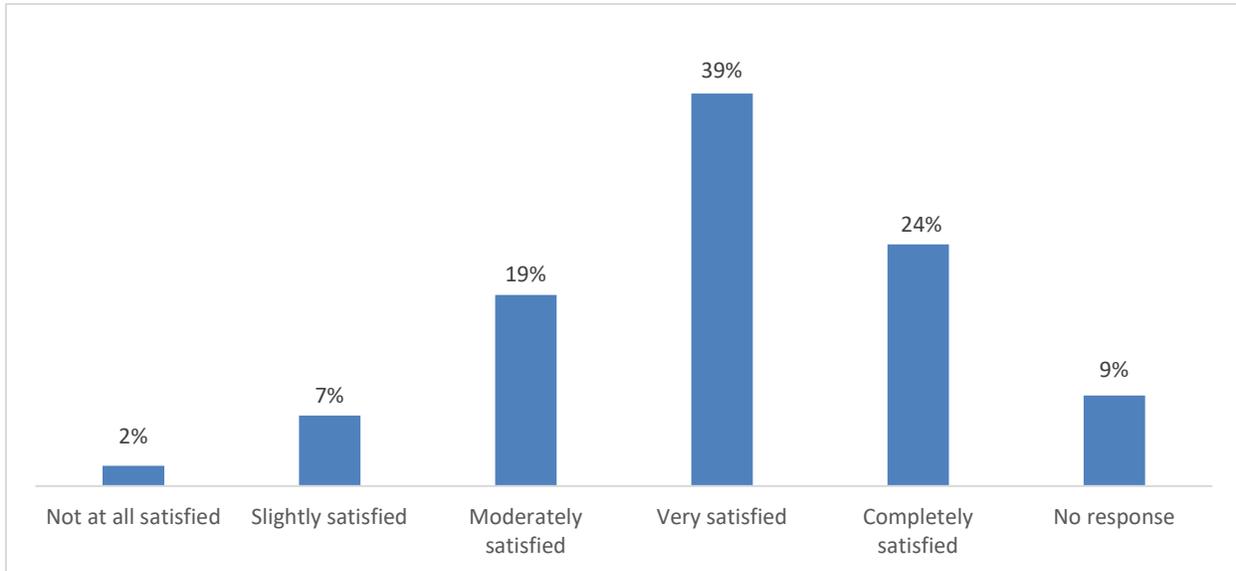


Figure 39: Satisfaction level with CRD park maps.

**QUESTION 19: HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A COUGAR, BEAR AND/OR WOLF IN EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?**

The majority of survey respondents (79%) indicated that they had never seen a cougar, bear and/or wolf in the park.

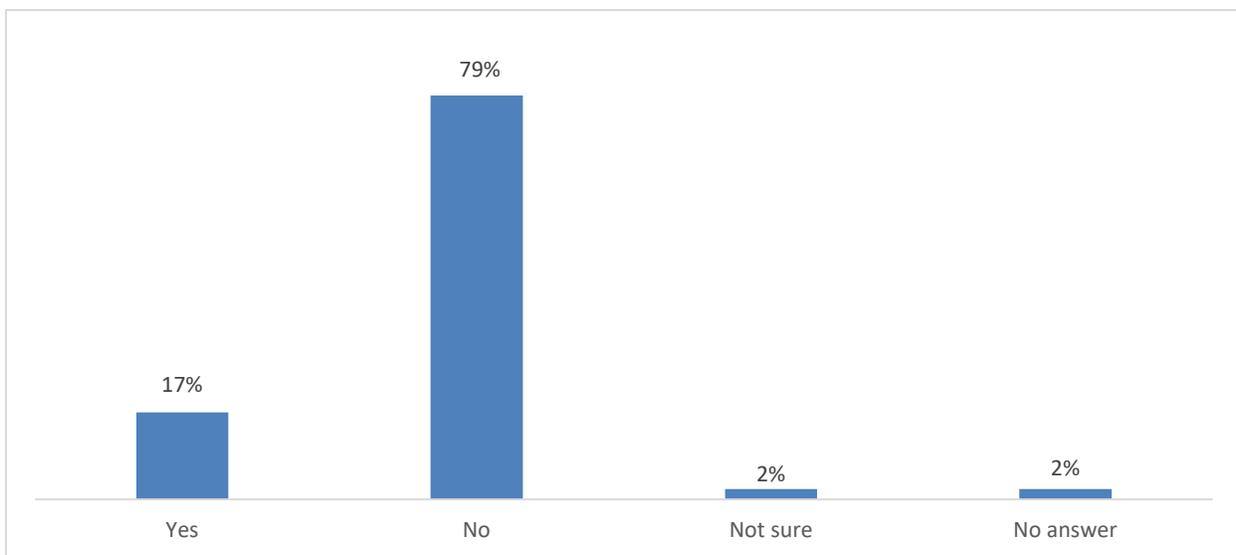


Figure 40: Respondents' sighting of cougars, bears and/or wolves in East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 20: WHAT DID YOU SEE?

Of the survey respondents who had seen a large carnivore in the park, the majority (15%) had seen a bear, while 5% had seen a cougar, and only 1% had seen a wolf.

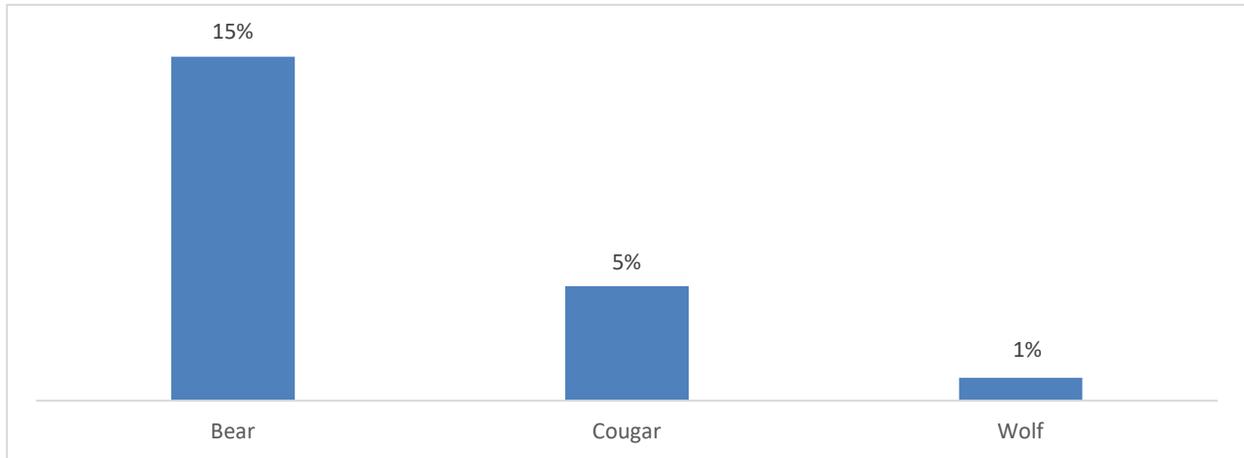


Figure 41: Respondents' sighting of cougars, bears and/or wolves in East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 21: WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO PREPARE FOR POSSIBLY ENCOUNTERING COUGARS, BEARS AND/OR WOLVES?

Slightly more than half of survey respondents (51%) stated that they read information signs about large carnivores in the park, while 53% stated that they travel in groups.

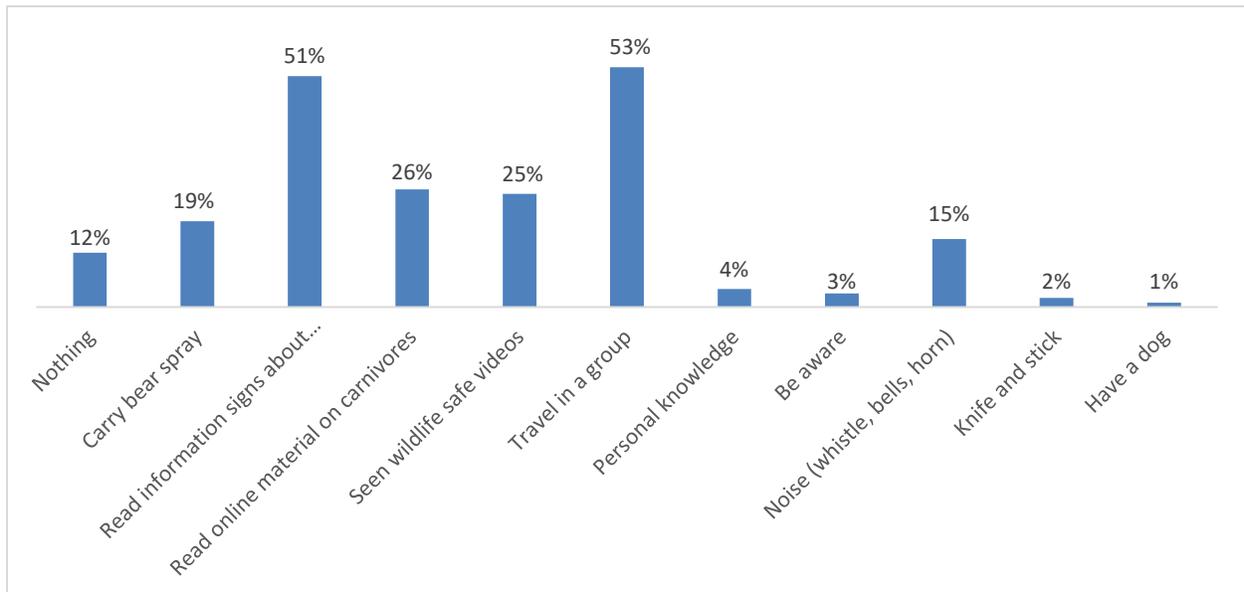


Figure 42: Breakdown of respondents' preparedness for encountering carnivores in East Sooke Regional Park.

### QUESTION 22: IN WHICH AGE CATEGORY DO YOU FALL?

Respondents to the survey were distributed similarly between the age categories 25-65+. There was low input to the survey from youth and younger adults.

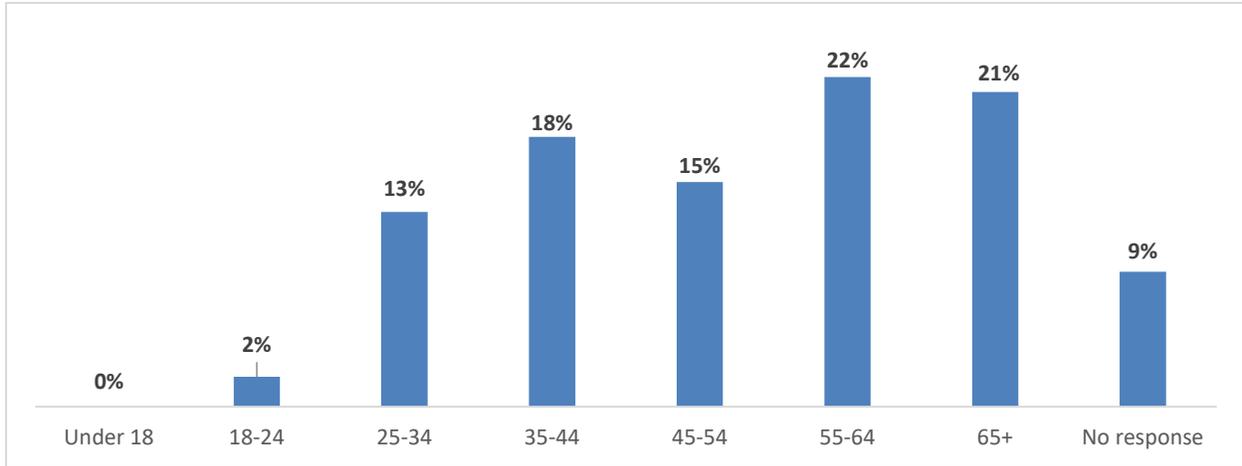


Figure 43: Breakdown of respondents' age categories.

### QUESTION 23: WHICH MODE OF TRANSPORTATION DO YOU USUALLY USE TO ARRIVE TO EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of survey respondents (94%) arrive to the park by motor vehicle.

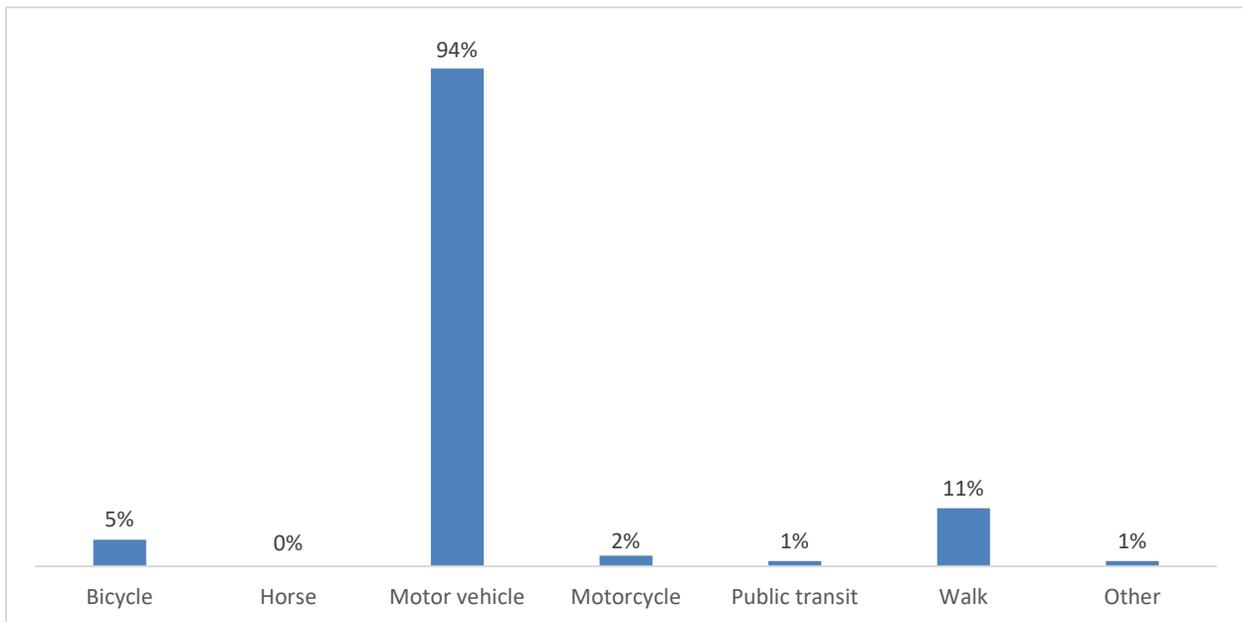


Figure 44: Respondents' mode of transportation to East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 24: WHICH PARKING LOT DO YOU USE THE MOST WHEN VISITING EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?**

The majority of survey respondents most frequently use the parking lot at Aylard Farm (69%) when visiting the park.

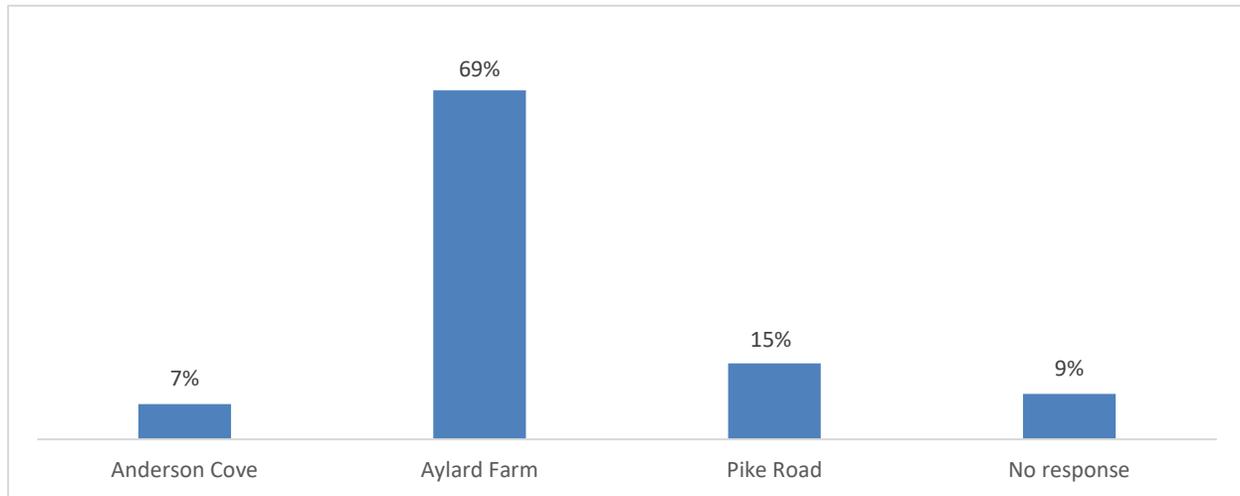


Figure 45: Respondents’ use of parking lots when visiting East Sooke Regional Park.

**QUESTION 25: WHERE DO YOU LIVE?**

Survey respondents come to the park from throughout the capital region, but the highest percentage come from the Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, Metchosin, and Sooke (40% combined), with Saanich and Victoria coming in second (31% combined).

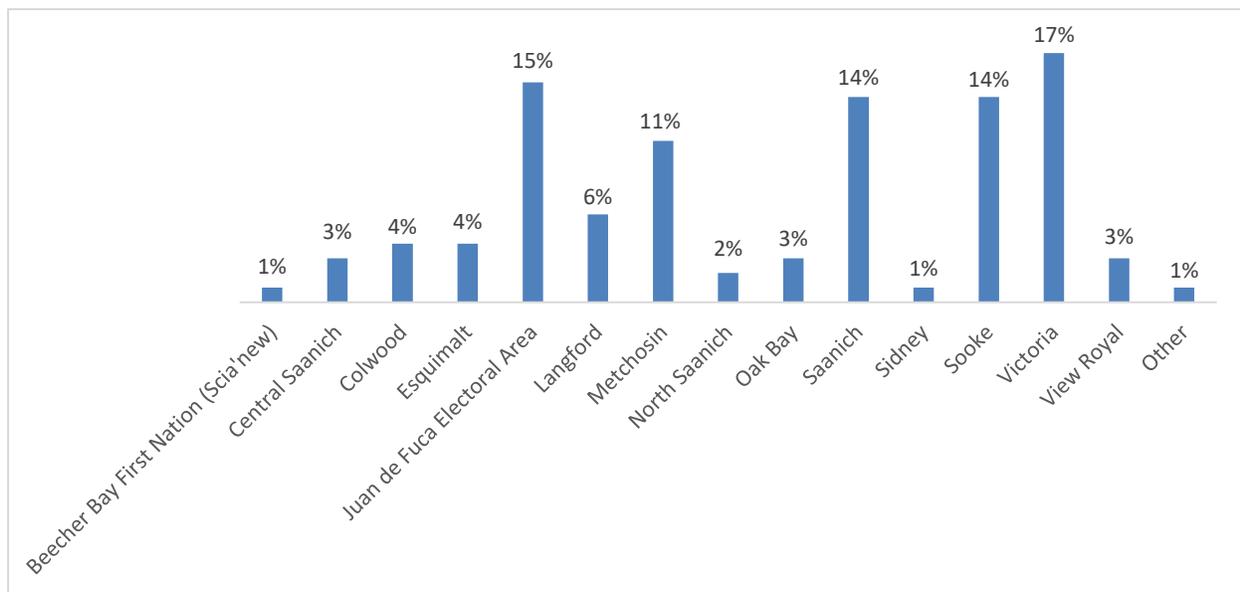


Figure 46: Breakdown of where park visitors live.

### QUESTION 26: WITH WHOM DO YOU USUALLY VISIT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

The majority of park visitors come to the park with family or friends (82%).

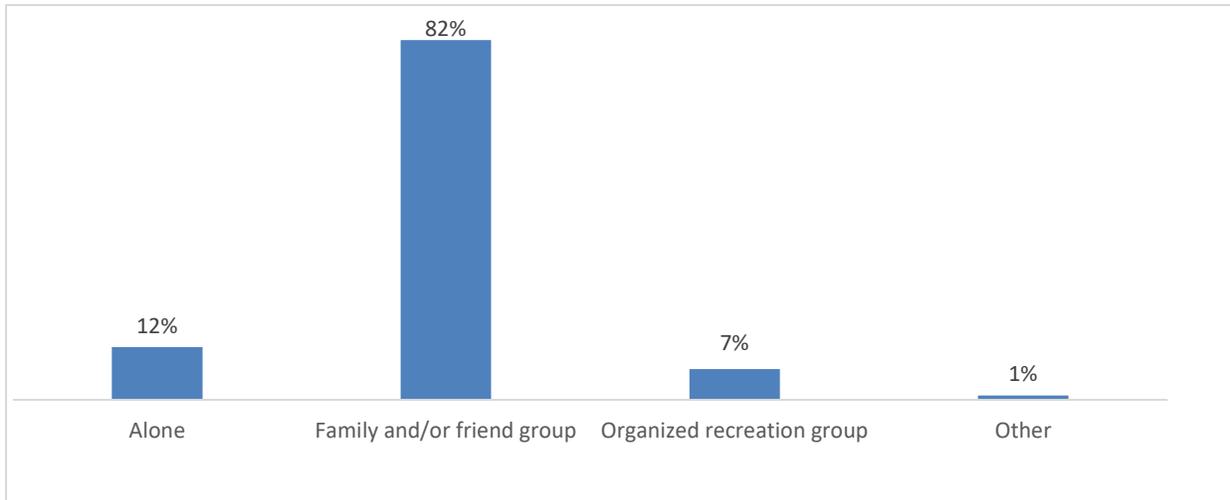


Figure 47: Breakdown of who visitors come to East Sooke Regional Park with.

### QUESTION 27: WHAT IS THE MAIN SOURCE OF INFORMATION YOU USE TO FIND OUT ABOUT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

Survey respondents use a variety of information sources to find out about the park, but the most common sources are the CRD website (51%), family and friends (36%), and word of mouth (33%).

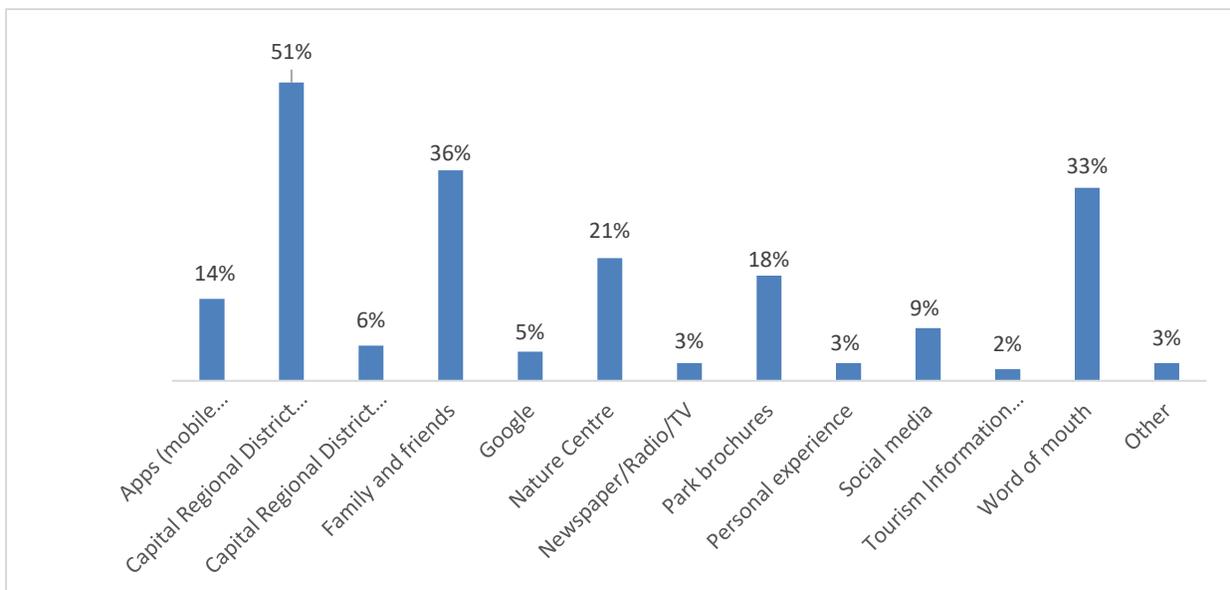


Figure 48: Breakdown of main sources of information to find out about East Sooke Regional Park.

## QUESTION 28: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER COMMENTS ABOUT EAST SOOKE REGIONAL PARK?

A total of 494 qualitative comments were provided by respondents to the open-ended question asking if there were any other comments about East Sooke Regional Park. Each comment entailed multiple themes.

The most mentioned themes were:

- **Experiences**: keep the park natural; don't change anything about the park; keep the park wild and pristine; keep the park as it is and do not commercialize or over-develop it; protect the petroglyphs at Beechey Head; honour First Nations culture in the park; do not let increasing numbers of people ruin the park; protect this beautiful park at all costs.
- **Outdoor recreation**: ban dogs or require them to be leashed in the park; continue to maintain dogs under control in the park; do not allow mountain biking or camping in the park—there are better places for those activities; consider allowing some mountain biking and backcountry camping in the park; keep the trail system rugged and challenging, in line with the wilderness designation; manage the trails by Aylard Farm to improve accessibility and higher visitor use; rebuild unsafe sections of the Coast Trail.
- **Natural environment**: protect the park's sensitive ecosystems; remove invasive species; provide more interpretation and education about the park's natural environment; educate new people about how to respectfully visit the park; protect seasonal migratory birds that stop-over in the park; ensure that the park is a place where flora and fauna can thrive; maintain landscape connectivity and intactness; protect habitat for large carnivores.
- **Facilities**: require dog owners to pick up dog feces and deposit them in garbage cans; install more restrooms to cut down on human feces in the park; improve the parking situation at Aylard Farm; improve the road into Aylard Farm; maintain park facilities and keep washrooms clean and garbage cans emptied; install better signs and maps on the trails; bring back printed brochures to prevent roaming charges (USA) when navigating by phone in the park; post signs about cougar or bear sightings; do not put gravel on park trails.
- **Accessibility**: consider a shuttle between the Aylard Farm and Pike Road entrances so people can hike the Coast Trail end-to-end; work with BC Transit to get bus access to the park; keep Aylard Farm accessible to everyone; consider some improvements to parking at secondary entrances to the park; work with park neighbors on parking and access issues; do not expect all areas of the park to be accessible to everyone—only Aylard Farm and the Pike Road Trail.

# Appendix E – Online Survey Methodology

## Methods

A survey with 28 questions focused on visitor use patterns, respondents' opinions, and management directions related to East Sooke Regional Park was available on the CRD website from August 17 to September 18, 2020. The questionnaire was designed to take 15-25 minutes to complete.

Some survey questions had multiple statements to be answered. Close-ended questions were measured through a five-point rating scale ranging from strongly support/completely satisfied to strongly oppose/not-at-all satisfied or by offering pre-determined categories. Close-ended questions were used to reduce the response burden for participants. Open-ended questions were also included to allow respondents to offer additional comments and clarify their responses, if they wished. Questions about participants' demographic characteristics (i.e., age, residency) were also added to the questionnaire.

## Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 (IBM 2017) was used to analyze descriptive statistics, which are reported as percentages for all quantitative questions of the survey. To analyze the qualitative comments provided by participants in a replicable and systematic manner, content analysis was performed. Specifically, all qualitative data were categorized using codes, which enabled the ability to identify code themes and response patterns. Both dimensions of a content analysis, quantitative (focused on counting and measuring) and qualitative (focused on interpreting and understanding), were used to offer insights on respondents' opinions about the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan.

## Rationale

It is important to acknowledge that the aim of the survey was to offer an easy to access venue for the public to voice their opinions about what should be considered when drafting the East Sooke Regional Park Management Plan. The information obtained through this participation tool is not intended to be representative of the whole population of the island or the capital region. Hence, the data reported in this document will not be generalized to the broader population.

The survey was used to ensure that insights, concerns and experiences of participants interested in the East Sooke Regional Park management plan dialogue are documented and considered. The information retrieved through this participatory tool complement the insights provided by the other engagement approaches reported in this document. The data in this report should therefore be interpreted in conjunction with the overall engagement process outcomes.

## Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act & Privacy Impact Assessment

All responses in the survey were voluntary, thus participants had the freedom to skip any question they did not wish to answer. All information was collected in compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (see <https://www.crd.bc.ca/freedom-of-information>). A Privacy Impact Assessment (CRD PIA #20-018) was developed for this project to ensure research involving humans was conducted in compliance with ethics and local legislation.