

Recreation Experience Baseline Study Report

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

Phase 3: HWY 89, Vermilion Cliffs, and Paria Canyon & Plateau



Final Report

The Natural Resource Center at Colorado Mesa University

2017

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Acknowledgements

The Natural Resource Center at Colorado Mesa University would like to acknowledge the help and support from several entities and individuals that made this research possible. First, thanks is due to the Bureau of Land Management staff of Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, most especially our contact Allysia Angus, landscape architect / land use planner, without whom none of this would have been possible. We would also like to acknowledge Lora Gale, Outdoor Recreation Planner. We would like to thank the National Landscape Conservation System and the Monument for providing funding for this third phase of the project. We are grateful to several individuals at the university who provided support for the project including the staff at the Office of Sponsored Programs and Academic Research, Jessica Herrick, chair of the Social and Behavioral Science Department. As the principal investigator on the project, I would like to acknowledge my debt to my colleague, Maureen McCarney who collaborated on the discourse aspects of the project and student assistants, Lyndsey Karp and Jacob Carmin. Finally, I am grateful to my family for their encouragement and support as I immersed myself in this place and its people for the past few years.

Disclaimer: The views and conclusions contained in this document are those of the author (Dr. Tim Casey, CMU) and should not be interpreted as representing the opinions or policies of the U.S. Government. Mention of trade names or commercial products does not constitute their endorsement by the U.S. Government.

Executive Summary

In the fall of 2012, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) entered into a five-year assistance agreement with the Natural Resource Center (NRC) at Colorado Mesa University (CMU) in Grand Junction, Colorado to conduct a recreational experience baseline study of the Monument. A recreational baseline study is designed to develop an understanding of the recreational use and demands of a particular location at a particular time to establish a baseline for future planning or projects. This baseline will also serve as a starting point for conversations between the BLM and their partners in the surrounding communities and beyond regarding recreation on GSENM. The study was planned to be conducted in five phases across the approximately 1.9-million-acre monument, beginning in 2013 with the areas accessed by Hole in the Rock Road. The second phase of the study focused on the Grand Staircase study area located on the western third of GSENM and is accessed primarily by Johnson Canyon, Cottonwood and Skutumpah Roads as well as Highway 89 on the southern edge. This third phase focused on the southern portions of GSENM and all of Vermilion Cliffs National Monument (VCNM). Additionally, there are some landscapes in this study that are managed by the BLM - Kanab Field Office. Unique features include the internationally iconic landscape known as “The Wave”, the Paria River canyon, White Pockets, the Paria Townsite and Movie Set, The Toadstools, paleontologically significant sites especially around Big Water, and the Vermilion Cliffs themselves

A mixed methodology focus group, using audience polling in addition to engaging participants in open dialogue, was determined to be the appropriate approach to establish the recreation experience baseline. In this case, a focus group is a structured conversation with a limited number of participants (less than 25) regarding recreation in GSENM, VCNM and surrounding areas. The small nature of the setting and open-ended nature of the questions allows for a good deal of interaction between the participants and the facilitator, and between the participants themselves. This methodology allows participants to express the subtleties and nuances of what really matters to them about recreating in the area. This mixed methodology approach provides a data set that captures both a complete set of responses from each participant using audience polling technology as well as documents a rich set of notes from the group dialogue that gives context and depth to the polling data. Dr. Tim Casey, a Professor of Political Science at CMU and director of the NRC, was named as the principal investigator to conduct the focus groups and prepare the analytical reports.

A total of 14 focus groups were conducted between March and September 2015 for this third phase of the study. Nine of those focus groups were conducted in person in the towns of Kanab and Big Water, UT, as well as, Page and Marble Canyon, AZ, in three separate visits during March, May and September. The remaining five focus groups were conducted digitally via the internet and conference call (these will be referred to throughout this document as “digital focus groups”). There were a total of 89 participants in the 14 focus groups. The participants were allowed to remain anonymous, although their responses were tracked and collated by the use of audience polling technology. Some basic demographic information was collected at the beginning of each session. Participants were asked to provide home zip codes in order to identify how representative this study was of the overall population. The majority of participants came from

zip codes in Utah (53%). Most of those came from Kanab (41.5% of all participants). The next largest group of participants came from Page, AZ (only 9% of total participants). Other participants represented a total of ten other states and a Canadian province. There were participants from 26 unique zip codes. Participants were also asked to select one affiliation (role) they have in relation to the landscape. Those selections included: visitor, local resident, community leader, outfitter/guide, business owner, other. The majority of the participants selected affiliations associated with the local area: local resident (35.6%), business owner (7.8%), and community leader (6.7%). Visitors represented 31.1% of the total and outfitters/guides made up 7.8%. 7.8% of respondents did not select an affiliation, and 3.3% chose “other”.

The design of the focus group for data collection entailed a series of discussion questions designed to engage participants in open dialogue about their preferences, interests and expectations regarding recreation so responses could be captured in their own words, followed by a list of choices that represented a spectrum of possible answers to the discussion questions. They could respond to this list of possible responses by selecting them via anonymous audience polling using hand held remote response devices (clickers). The focus group script covered all the major elements needed in planning for recreation on public lands: preferences for outcomes and experiences, interests and expectations, setting characteristics, activities, and the services needed to support the recreation experience.

After analysis of the responses from 89 participants in 14 focus groups over seven months of data collection in 2015, the following observations and suggestions began to emerge regarding the southern area of GSENM and the VCNM. Although in a baseline study, the principal focus is on observations of the setting and context, inevitably some participants expressed their ideas concerning the area as suggestions for future action. These were not solicited in the study, but are recorded as part of the response given.

Observations:

- The entire study area¹, which includes the southern part of GSENM, all of VCNM and the Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area, is characterized by the vast majority of participants as an area of amazing scenic beauty. This is the most common quality identified as a reason this is a special place. Activities such as photography and scenic driving are popular pursuits that rely on this value of the landscape. Visual resources clearly support the outstanding recreational experiences in the study area.
- Numerous participants throughout the focus group study indicated that one of the most important qualities of this landscape is its uniqueness. Many comments suggest that this place is like no other they have encountered. There are several qualities they point to which contribute to this uniqueness including: geologic features found nowhere else in the world; an abundance of paleontological resources many of which are unique to only this area; and the opportunity to see endangered wildlife species such as the California condor described as a once in a lifetime

¹ Throughout the rest of the report the use of the term “study area” will mean the southern portion of GSENM accessed by Highway 89, the Paria Wilderness Area and the entire VCNM. This will be used as short-hand to avoid awkward and cumbersome phrasing.

experience. These unique resources contribute to obtaining the outcomes associated with the natural history and science interest and expectation selected by many participants.

- With 1.9 million acres in GSENM and nearly 300,000 acres in VCNM, a significant contributing factor to the overall experience of the study area is the enormous scale of the vast open spaces in the landscape. This large-scale setting allows for more dispersed recreation that supports the values of solitude and privacy, and remoteness as well as the outcomes associated with tranquil escape which was one of the most popular interest and expectations selected by participants.
- Most participants also commented on and selected values associated with the wild, natural and rugged characteristics of the landscape. These values allow for the attainment of recreational outcomes associated with the interest and expectation of natural landscapes which is the most preferred selection among all participants as well as the interest and expectation of self-reliant adventures which has particular appeal to about half of the participants who identified as local residents. These values even impacted the ideas of several participants regarding their preferences on the types of roads in the area as they suggested that a less developed road would fit the characteristic of the landscape much better.
- One of the participants remarked that for him, the people around the area are the reason it is a special place. While that was a comment from just one participant, the sentiment was widely shared through a variety of other comments that surfaced in the discussions. A variety of groups of people were identified as contributing to the value of the landscape in the study area. Some talked about the importance of indigenous populations in the past (archeological sites) as well as those who still live in the area and maintain that ancient connection to the landscape such as the Navajo community. Others identified the people in surrounding communities as an integral part of the specialness of the landscape. Not only have many of their ancestors worked the landscape to settle in the region, but current residents also add to the character of the area through their knowledge of the landscape, their hospitality to visitors and their own recreation on these public lands with their family and friends. These communities, particularly Kanab and Page provide valuable support services which make it possible for visitors to have a successful recreational experience in the study area. Another group of people identified as important to the landscape are the tourists. In addition to helping the local economies with the purchase of services from gasoline and guide services to hotels and restaurants; these tourists also provide the locals an opportunity to share this amazing landscape with others. Several participants commented on the satisfaction they derive from seeing others enjoying “their backyard.” Combined, these groups create the opportunity to achieve the recreational outcomes associated with the interest and expectation categories of cultural and heritage history as well as sharing the landscape with youth, family and friends.
- The mode of transportation to encounter the landscape is always a consideration when managing public lands for recreation or other values. While the most popular selection for activity was hiking/walking/running which would indicate that much of this landscape is approached on foot; a number of comments from participants also highlighted the value of ATVs and other vehicles to encounter this landscape. Often these modes of transportation are used in combination so a participant might use a vehicle for initial access then continue deeper into the landscape on foot. Several participants also expressed the value of riding a horse in the area, or seeing someone else

riding. Some suggested that this mode of transportation fits the classic image of the “old” west and seems a fitting reminder of the long and ongoing relationship people have with this landscape. There was concern expressed by “quiet users” about the noise and resource damage that can come with ATV and 4x4 traffic, however, most participants supported the idea that the landscape is so large that it can (and should) accommodate all of these modes of transportation in the study area.

- Several participants expressed concern for the safety of visitors to the landscape. Some were concerned about the inexperience or unpreparedness of tourists who come to see the area, particularly those from other countries who might only have a connection to the landscape based off a picture of The Wave on the internet. Some fear that those who lack a connection to the place or are unfamiliar with the rules and regulations are also likely to do damage to the resources in the area either intentionally or unintentionally. There were also a number of concerns voiced about the strain on search and rescue as well as local health care resources as more and more people come to recreate in the area. Because of the scale and ruggedness of the landscape, it is easy to become lost or stranded and if an emergency arises and it might be difficult to call for or receive help in such a situation.
- Finally, there were many comments and suggestions regarding the permit process for access to Coyote Buttes and The Wave. Several participants were concerned that the number of permits and the random nature of assigning those opportunities have significantly impacted their ability to experience the area. Some are not interested in The Wave, but other parts of the permit area that they are unable to secure access for due to the demand for access to The Wave. Arguments were made for keeping the lottery drawing in Kanab as well as moving it to Big Water or Page. Often these were framed in terms of fairness or the need to share the economic opportunities associated with lottery participants staying in the area. Others were critical of the focus on The Wave as an iconic destination. Promoting The Wave as THE most unique destination in the area, acts as a distraction from the many other truly unique features of the area. It also sets up most visitors for disappointment since there are far more people desiring permits on any given day than the 20 available.

Suggestions:

There were several suggestions offered to address concerns expressed by participants. These suggestions appeared in a variety of comments from various focus groups throughout the study. This report does not necessarily endorse the suggestions; however, because this study is intended to develop a baseline for recreational interests and expectations in the study area, they are certainly worth consideration and further conversation between all relevant stakeholders including the GSENM and VCNM staff. They are summarized here.

- There should be a number of efforts made to educate the public about the unique resources in the study area as well as how one can recreate without diminishing those resources (e.g. maps, signs, visitor information, websites). There were also several suggestions regarding the need for safety education for visitors to the area because of the challenges of surviving in the challenging landscape. Visitors can often get lost, drive vehicles into areas that are not suited for the vehicle they are

driving, and fail to adequately prepare for backcountry experiences with adequate water and other supplies.

- The natural landscapes and tranquil escapes opportunities are the overwhelming preferred qualities to be maintained in study area.
- When discussing the various managing agencies and government authorities with a say in the use, regulation and protection of the landscape, many participants expressed frustration at the silo like approach each government entity and government agency takes toward the lands under their control. Visitors often move across many management boundaries, counties and even state lines while recreating in the region. They called for regional planning cooperation between federal, state and local governments as well as between the various federal land agencies and offices.. Such cooperative efforts would support the regionally based recreation interests and expectations of all who go to the landscape. At a minimum, participants have asked for consistent signage and road numbering across the various jurisdictions.
- While discussing the permit process for access to The Wave/Coyote Buttes area, a few participants called for a separation of the two areas in the permitting process because most people in the lottery go straight to The Wave, and those who want to go to Coyote Buttes have to compete for those few spots when they have no intention of going to The Wave itself. This move would allow more people to experience both sites without increasing the number of visitors at either individually.
- Finally, because this Highway 89 area draws more tourism than many other parts of the region, some participants suggested there is unmet opportunity to provide visitors with shuttle services to various destinations. This would not only add to the economic opportunities for local residents, but might enhance the safety of visitors who could otherwise get lost or cause damage to the landscape due to their lack of knowledge about or connection to this place.

Full Report

Introduction

In 1996, President Bill Clinton standing on the rim of the Grand Canyon created the largest national monument in the country, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument (GSENM) by setting aside 1.9 million acres of federal land in southern Utah through the Antiquities Act. This vast, wild and rugged landscape was bounded on the north by Highway 12, on the south by Highway 89, on the west by Bryce Canyon National Park and on the east by Capitol Reef National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. The scale of the GSENM allows for scientific inquiry at a landscape level, endless opportunities for recreation centered on discovery, solitude and awe at the natural wonders that abound throughout the monument, and preservation of the past from geologic and paleontological origins through ages of human encounters from the indigenous populations to pioneers to the contemporary communities of Kanab, Boulder, Escalante, Bryce Valley and others that surround the monument. It is truly a unique and spectacular landscape.

In 2000, President Clinton declared almost 300,000 acres just south of the Utah-Arizona border Vermilion Cliffs National Monument (VCNM). This remote landscape contains evidence of almost 12,000 years of continuous human habitation as well as providing undisturbed habitat for rare flora and fauna such as the endangered California condor which was successfully reintroduced into the remote area. Although VCNM does not experience nearly the visitor population that nearby Grand Canyon National Park or Glen Canyon National Recreation Area do; it remains an important remote, back county recreation destination for those seeking the serenity, solitude and beauty of a largely undisturbed part of the Colorado Plateau.

Today, GSENM and VCNM remain central parts of a living landscape connecting a communities, native peoples, local residents and an increasing number of visitors from far and wide to a unique and dynamic place that seems at once timeless and familiar, yet ever new and full of surprise and discovery. This report is an attempt to understand the many senses of place that people have with these dynamic landscapes known as Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument and Vermilion Cliffs National Monument. It is a report on the data collected through a series of focus groups (conversations) in 2015 about the area and people's connection to it.

In the fall of 2012, GSENM entered into a five-year assistance agreement with the Natural Resource Center (NRC) at Colorado Mesa University (CMU) in Grand Junction, Colorado to conduct a recreational experience baseline study of the Monument. A recreational baseline study is designed to develop an understanding of the recreational use and demands of a particular location at a particular time to establish a baseline for future planning or projects. This baseline will also serve as a starting point for conversations between the BLM and their partners in the surrounding communities and beyond regarding recreation in Grand Staircase Escalante National Monument. The study was planned to be conducted in five phases across the almost two-million-acre monument, beginning in 2013 with the areas accessed by Hole in the Rock Road. Phase 2 of the study began in 2014 focused on the Grand Staircase region, and Phase 3 focused on the landscapes within the Highway 89 corridor and on the Paria Plateau in 2015. Finally, the areas accessed by Highway 12

and the Burr Trail were studied in 2016. The fifth year of the study will be dedicated to compiling a Monument-wide recreation experience baseline by combining and analyzing each of the earlier phases.

Although the principle focus of the study is on lands within GSENM, it is neither possible nor desirable to exclude the surrounding federal and state public lands from the dialogues. Lands adjacent to GSENM that are managed by federal or state agencies include Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Bryce Canyon and Capitol Reef National Parks, Dixie National Forest, Vermillion Cliffs National Monument, Kodachrome Basin and Escalante Petrified Forest State Parks, Utah State and Institutional Trust Lands, and lands managed by the BLM Kanab and Arizona Strip Field Offices.

A mixed methodology focus group, using audience polling in addition to engaging participants in open dialogue, was used to establish the recreation experience baseline. In this case, a focus group is a structured conversation with a limited number of participants (less than 25) regarding recreation in the Hole in the Rock area or other such iconic locations. The nature of the small-group setting and open-ended nature of the questions allows for interaction between the participants and the facilitator, and between the participants themselves. This methodology allows participants to express the subtleties and nuances of what really matters to them about recreating in the area. This mixed methodology approach provides a data set that captures both a complete set of responses from each participant using audience polling technology as well as documents a rich set of notes from the group dialogue that gives context and depth to the polling data. Dr. Tim Casey, a Professor of Political Science at CMU and director of the NRC, was named as the principal investigator to conduct the focus groups and prepare the analytical reports.

When the five-year study is complete, each phase will collectively contribute to a rich understanding of the public's recreational preferences, their connections to GSENM and surrounding public lands, as well as the impact of recreational use of those lands on gateway communities.

Methodology

The mixed methodology focus group, using audience polling in addition to engaging participants in open dialogue, was determined to be the appropriate approach to establish the recreation experience baseline. This methodology captures both a complete set of responses from each participant using audience polling technology as well as documents a rich set of notes from the group dialog that gives context and depth to the polling data. Either approach used alone would leave an incomplete picture of the broad and deep relationships people have with this landscape.

The design of the focus group for data collection entailed a series of discussion questions intended to engage participants in open dialogue about their preferences, interests, and expectations so responses could be captured in their own words, followed by a list of choices that represented a spectrum of possible responses to the discussion questions that could be responded to via anonymous audience polling. The audience polling was captured by each participant using a handheld clicker linked to Turning Technologies software. The open dialogue comments were documented with audio recording equipment as well as by CMU researchers taking notes.

The focus group script covered all the major elements needed in planning for recreation on public lands: preferences for outcomes and experiences, interests and expectations, setting characteristics, activities, and the services needed to support the recreation experience. It included 20 questions, eight were open-ended, nine had prepared responses for audience polling, and three allowed for both polling and open-ended responses. All questions with prepared responses included an “other” option so participants weren’t constrained by the prepared responses. Of the open-ended questions, one included a mapping exercise where participants noted special places on a map of the study area, and another included a series of black and white images that focused dialogue on perceptions of crowding and levels of development. The number of questions included in the script was tailored to allow for a 90-minute focus group. See Appendix 1 for a copy of the focus group handout.

A total of 14 focus groups were conducted between March and September 2015 for this second phase of the study. Nine of those focus groups were conducted in person in the towns of Kanab and Big Water, Utah, and Page and Marble Canyon, AZ. They took place in three separate visits in March, May and September. The remaining five focus groups were conducted digitally via the internet and conference call (these will be referred to throughout this document as “digital focus groups”). The digital focus groups were facilitated through Adobe Connect software and utilized the same discussion prompts and polls that were used during the in-person focus groups.

There were a total of 89 participants in the 14 focus groups for this phase of the research. The participants were allowed to remain anonymous, although their responses were tracked and collated by the use of audience polling technology. Some basic demographic information was collected at the beginning of each session. Participants were asked to provide home zip codes in order to identify how representative this study was of the overall population. The table in Figure 1 indicates the dates, locations, and number of participants for each focus group.

Figure 1 – Table of Focus Groups, Dates and Locations

Focus Group #	Date	Location/Name	Number of Participants
1	3/6/15	Kanab #1	18
2	3/6/15	Kanab #2-Outfitters and guides	18
3	3/7/15	Marble Canyon #1	1
4	3/7/15	Page #1	5
6 ²	5/15/15	Big Water #1	3
7	5/15/15	Kanab #4	4
8	5/16/15	Kanab #5	8

² The numbering of focus groups appears out of sequence because several (4) focus groups in this study had no participants (focus group numbers were retained, but were not recorded in participant counts).

9	10/16/15	Kanab #7	11
10	7/30/15	Digital Focus Group #1	4
11	8/4/15	Digital Focus Group #2	2
12	8/4/15	Digital Focus Group #3	5
13	8/6/15	Digital Focus Group #4	4
14	8/6/15	Digital Focus Group #5	6

Outreach to populate the focus groups included:

- Invitations shared with area board and committees (i.e. Monument Advisory Committee, etc.),
- Direct outreach to partners and key stakeholders (Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners, Glen Canyon Natural History Association, GSENM outfitters and guides, etc.),
- Press releases in local newspapers,
- Flyers posted at visitor centers, local post offices, and in local businesses,
- Postcards distributed in visitor centers,
- Information packets with business cards in trailhead register boxes,
- Group email notices,
- Inclusion in Amazing Earthfest and Big Water Dinosaur Festival programming
- Word of mouth, and
- Direct e-mail or phone contact with any who expressed interest in participating.

The methodology of audience polling allows each participant the opportunity to weigh in on every area of the research. This is important to avoid a wide variety of social setting dynamics that arise in traditional focus group settings, such as only hearing from extroverted participants who dominate a conversation. The polling also minimizes the undue influence of peer settings in small communities. If an individual is worried about the repercussions of their responses mentioned aloud in a focus group within their community, they are not likely to respond, or not as accurately. However, if they can anonymously record their preferences, they may feel more liberated to express their true opinion. The audience polling using electronic recording devices preserves participants' anonymity while being able to link all of their answers together for the purposes of analysis. In traditional focus groups, one might be able to link comments and preferences back to a particular focus group, but unless the group was small and homogenous, it would be difficult to determine preferences for groups, or how those preferences might interact with other preferences (i.e. if a person is seeking solitude, do they choose particular activities or settings to achieve that outcome?). Traditionally, a survey was needed to link these variables; however, a survey often misses the nuance of the dialogue. The advantage of using audience polling and open-ended questions in a focus group setting is that participants are allowed to clarify what they mean when they select certain responses.

It is important to note the limitations of using this data. Because the sampling of participants was not random, it would be difficult to suggest this analysis is generalizable to the preferences of the entire

population that might be interested in the area, and no attempt to do so is done here. However, effort was made to hear from a broad sample of groups who have a connection to the landscape including both locals and visitors that were willing to spend 90 minutes participating in the conversation. Participants did self-select to join the study, but given the diversity of participants and the depth of data gathered, this study is certainly defensible as a solid baseline for recreational experiences in the southern area of GSENM accessed from Highway 89, the Paria Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness, and VCNM.

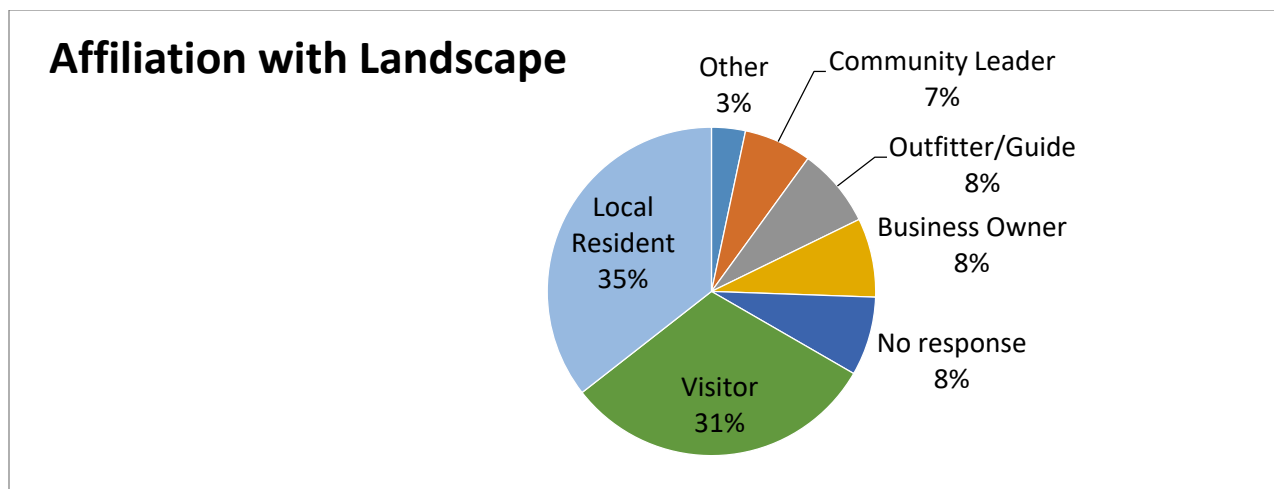
Demographics

Participation in the study was anonymous and voluntary and no personal information was gathered or retained from the participants other than the two demographic questions of zip code and affiliation. Although participants were allowed to remain anonymous, their responses were tracked and collated by the use of audience polling technology. Participants were asked to provide home zip codes in order to identify how representative this study was of the overall population. There were 89 participants in this phase of the study. The majority of participants came from zip codes in Utah (53%). Most of those came from Kanab (41.5% of all participants). The next largest group of participants came from Page, AZ (only 9% of total participants). Other participants represented a total of ten other states and a Canadian province. There were participants from 26 unique zip codes.

Demographic distinctions are important to understand how visitor expectations and experiences on public lands compare to local resident expectations and experiences on landscapes they have a very strong sense of attachment to through years, often generations, of interaction. Understanding these similarities and differences is absolutely essential for agencies to effectively manage public lands in partnership with local communities, while balancing local demands with visitor expectations constitutive of a broader national mandate to manage those lands.

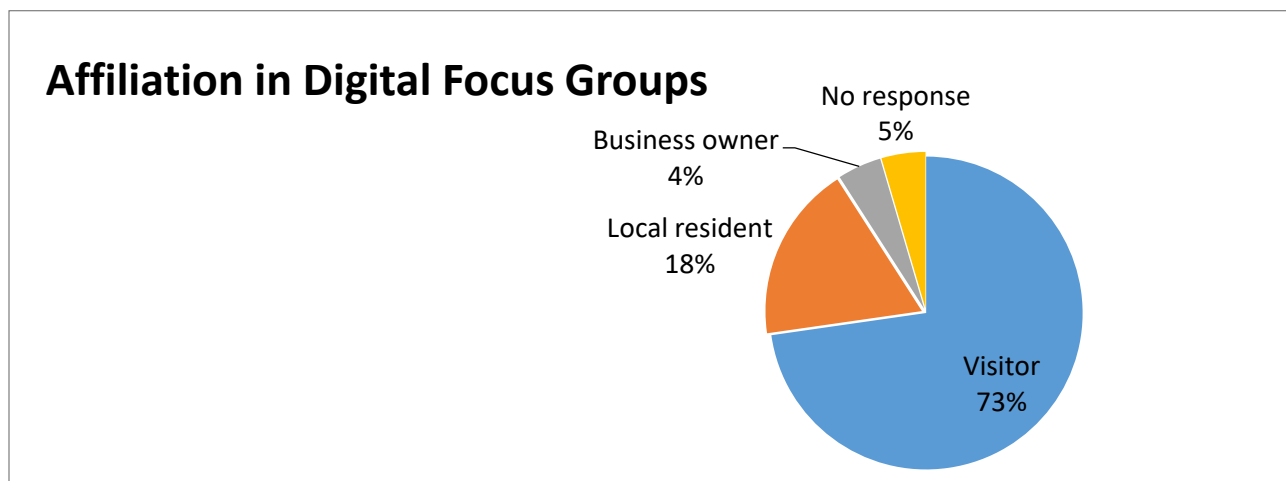
Participants were also asked to select one affiliation (role) they played in relation to the landscape. Those selections included: visitor, local resident, community leader, outfitter/guide, business owner, or other. Often individuals had more than one affiliation (for example a business owner might also be a local resident, or an outfitter might also be a visitor), but they were asked to choose their primary affiliation and respond to all questions "wearing that hat." The majority of the participants selected affiliations associated with the local area: local resident (35.6%), business owner (7.8%), and community leader (6.7%). Visitors represented 31.1% of the total and outfitters/guides made up 7.8%. 7.8% of respondents did not select an affiliation, and 3.3% chose "other". Those that selected "other" as a category often indicated that they were part time residents or former federal employees who had settled in the area but might have a different perspective than any of the affiliations offered. Figure 2 shows the composition of the focus group participants in terms of their affiliation with the Phase 3 study area.

Figure 2 –Affiliation of All Participants in Study



In order to better capture the recreational experience of non-residents we continued to offer digital focus groups for this phase as well. Figure 3 shows how different the make-up of the digital focus groups is from traditional focus groups in terms of who they can reach.

Figure 3 – Affiliation in Digital Focus Groups



Data Analysis

The data analysis that follows combines the polling data from each question with the spoken comments from the meetings as those particular questions were discussed. The result is a comprehensive and nuanced collection of participant preferences that will serve as a recreational experience baseline for future planning in the study area. For recreation planning, land managers need to know the desirable outcomes people are seeking when recreating on public lands. They also need to know the activities that people engage in, as well as the landscape setting characteristics that support those interests and expectations. Finally, they need to understand the essential services provided by the agency or surrounding communities that support recreation on the public lands. The data analysis section is divided into these essential elements needed for

planning and management of the landscape. This recreational experience baseline data will not only be useful for planning, but it will serve as a background for conversations that BLM can have with its local public and private partners and service providers.

Desirable and Undesirable Experiences and Outcomes:

What are the qualities of the study area that make it special?

Initially, focus group participants were asked to share the qualities of the study area that make it special. A wide variety of responses were given during the open-ended dialogue prior to the prepared list of responses being shared for polling. To allow for analysis, the dialogue responses were grouped with the choices selected through the polling. Comments were coded in terms of what response or responses they related to in the polling selections. There were several comments in each section that didn't neatly fit into the choices offered in the preset audience polling. These responses were coded and grouped according to their concern. Only a representative sample of all the comments is located in this report, but the total comments as well as the audio recordings for all focus groups were given to the BLM as part of the administrative record of the research. The responses are discussed in the order of their popularity as measured by the percentage of participants in the entire study (all focus groups) that selected them. Figure 4 (below) shows the overall distribution of responses by all participants.

Figure 4 – Special Qualities of the Phase 3 Study Area



- **Scenic quality**

It should not be surprising given the incredible vistas and visual features that abound in the study area that the most popular special quality of the area is scenic beauty (74.4%). Several participants commented on how this landscape is particularly special in the way the scenery inspires them. The following comments expressed during the focus groups identify the importance of scenery (often combined with other qualities) in the overall recreational experience in the study area.

"It's the combination of raw beauty, wilderness and solitude."

"The scenery is incredible; it is not overrun with visitors. There are lots of areas and things you can still see."

"The changing light is so beautiful on the landscape."

Other comments highlighted the variety of colors, the drama of the cliffs and the "sublime beauty".

- **Wild, unspoiled and natural/Remote and rugged/Sense of solitude and privacy**

The relatively isolated location also contributes to the strong preference for the values of wild, unspoiled, and natural (56.7%) and remote and rugged (43.3%) as well as the opportunity for solitude and privacy (44.4%). This combination of characteristics was expressed in several of the comments offered by the participants.

"The area is pristine, remote, primitive, natural aesthetics and a good habitat for wildlife."

"I love the vastness, the unspoiled nature. It has a spiritual quality to connect with the soul."

"Remoteness, solitude, geology, best hiking and camping opportunities in the world, ability to experience the natural world."

"It is remote and easy to find uncrowded areas."

"So many sermon opportunities; all about creation."

- **A local place to play with family and friends**

A common theme for why this is a special place is how much the local populations utilize this landscape for recreational opportunities because it is in their backyard (42.2%); it is a great place to share with family and friends (33.3%); and it is a place where they like to engage in recreational activities they enjoy (30%). They articulated this local sense of place in many comments offered.

"It is a quick place to get out to for solitude."

"I grew up here and that's where we went on weekends, but I have family now and I want to take them."

"It is a landscape you enjoy seeing and visiting with others."

"The people who live here make it a special place."

"The number of recreation opportunities. With a family, we can go hiking or hunting."

"For me, we have people from all over the world and they get to see this. Paria and Bryce are people's favorites. I get to talk to them about what's amazing."

A number of comments identified several specific recreational opportunities that are enjoyed in the area including hiking and camping.

- **Sense of Freedom**

A number of participants emphasized a sense of freedom (37.8%) in the study area, much of this sense of freedom relates to the lack of regulations and restrictions as indicated by the following comments.

"To be able to go when we want to go without obstruction."

"It has fewer regulations and bureaucracy—more free-ranging opportunities—recreational diversity."

- **Sense of discovery and learning opportunities/Natural and cultural resources**

Many participants also identified the study area as a place of learning as evidenced by their emphasis on the opportunity the landscape provides for a sense of discovery and learning opportunities (30%), as well as the physical (31.1%), biological (21.1%), historic (27.8%) and cultural (26.7%) resources found in it. Some of the many comments made by the participants give a better understanding of the value of these learning opportunities on the landscape, and the value of the cultural, physical and historic resources.

"So many dinosaurs, such a record of the past."

"The condors are simply amazing and this is a perfect landscape for them to fly free."

"History—there are places where pioneers took axle grease and wrote their names. We are fortunate that the guides who have been here their whole lives. It is a place and they know the history."

"It offers a geologic perspective that is unique in this country, if not in the world."

"Not just the raw landscape. It's got 10,000 years of human interaction; small places—human residence."

"I still know where we go collecting herbs, and where offerings are made. A real special place where a mountain lion foot goes by and we know what to say to a mountain lion footprint or an eagle or a red tailed hawk. We know what to say to that."

"It's a landscape full of a lot of history and petroglyphs and pioneer markings."

One of the participants cautioned against the danger of categorizing indigenous populations, particularly the Navajo, as part of archeological/cultural history of the place because they still live there and are still practicing the same cultural ties their ancestors did in the area. The concern is that heritage values often ignore those indigenous peoples still living on the landscape, while the designation of archeological resource relegates their connection to the land to some distant past era. Part of the learning and discovery of the place could be the traditional indigenous knowledge of the landscape as the following comments suggests.

"Historic records are not usually about Native Americans. Archeology treats us as though we are all dead, but we are still here. This whole region and the tribal use of this ranch and this ranch or this soldier was here and Navajo and Paiutes and Shoshone. Why did they travel so far to this region? Heritage focus is usually about Mormon missionaries as though no one else was ever around, as if there were no Indians around - no one else was here. How can I, as full-blooded native person, know the history? And that is not in the writings for the general public or in the policies. There are religious sites. There are herbs that are gathered that are part of everyday life - used every day."

"Up and down these canyons there are a lot of places where people go to make offerings. The mountain right here behind us is Tobacco Mountain where all the tobacco comes from, but you only see the peace pipe or John Wayne. Not that the people are using it right now. I want to see my history in here - when you write your report."

- **Natural quietness/Dark night skies/ Lack of development and improvements**

An important theme that emerged for many participants is the relative lack of development and improvements on the landscape (25.6%) contributes to a setting that is conducive to a tranquil escape from the hustle and bustle of modern life including a sense of natural quietness (35.6%) as well as the opportunity to experience dark night skies (33.3%) identified as a special value by one out of every three participants across the study area. The following comments help us to understand how these qualities work together.

"It has large day and night skies – empty-of-light night skies."

"I like it because it's quiet and not developed, in the way that the national parks are developed. There are places to get to on foot and with a good four wheel drive, spectacular scenery."

"I like the quiet, the sound of birds, and the lack of light at night so I can see so many stars."

"It allows for a perspective of (peacefulness ;) that clarity, lack of stuff, assists in healing."

“Peace, relief and relaxation.”

- **The scale, uniqueness and dynamic of the landscape**

Another important theme to emerge out of participants comments on the specialness of the place (but not captured in the list of options all could select) was the uniqueness and scale of the landscape as well as the dynamic nature of the landscape. The scale, dynamics and uniqueness of the landscape seem to be characteristics that rely on the size and relative isolation of the monuments. A selection of those comments will illustrate the point.

“I grew up in a different part of the country. This landscape is so open; there are so many chances for exploration; this is the place where I learned that.”

“The access is challenging the further you go into the area, which is also a positive.”

“Sheer expanse of area, connectivity of places, no one place, sheer size of landscape, increasingly rare in our world.

“Different than anywhere I’ve ever seen, unspoiled. It’s like art to me—the rock formations.”

“It’s so unique. You can see things there that you wouldn’t see anywhere else.”

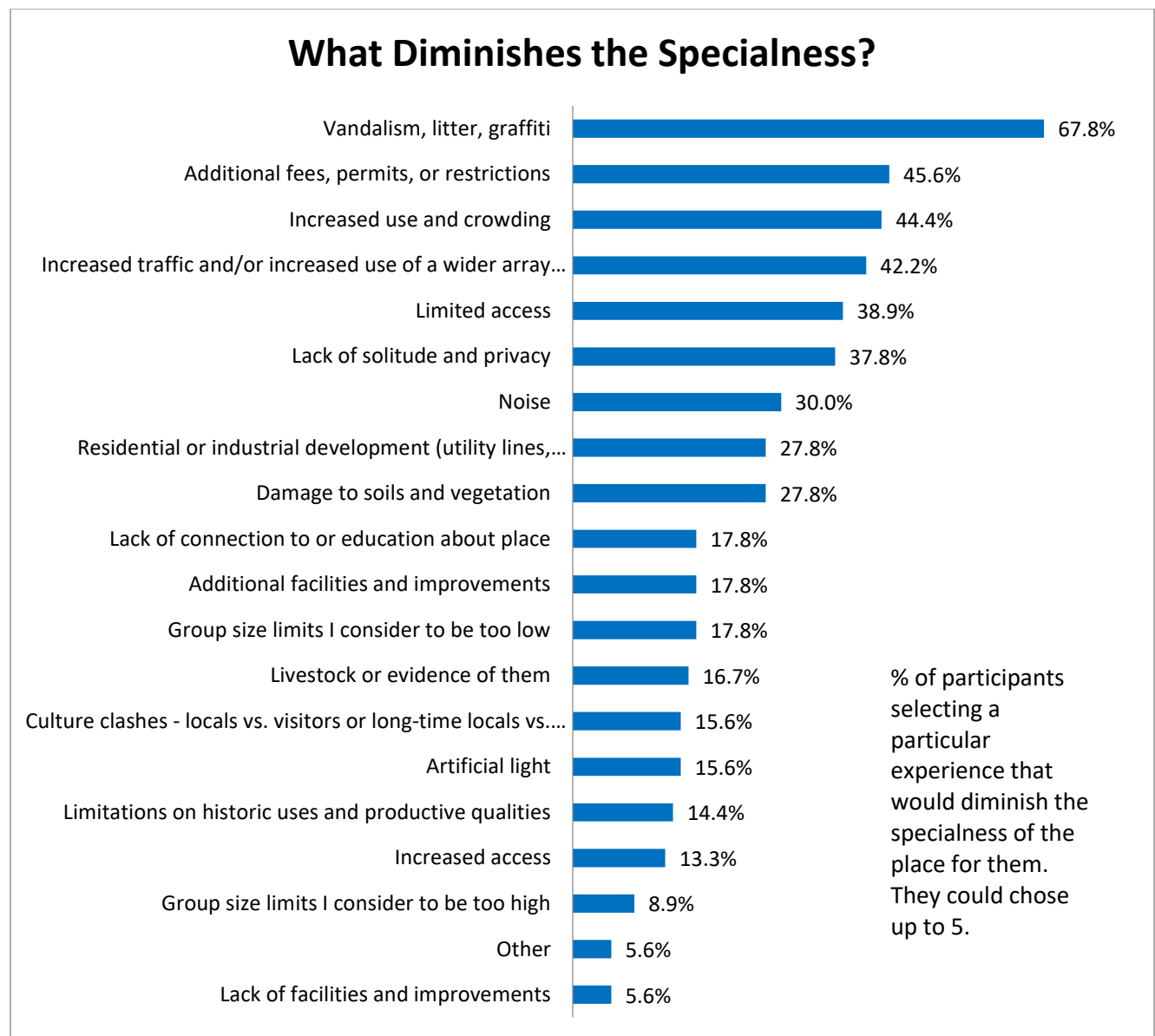
“Geographically it is an incredible array of opportunities - it’s the center of the Colorado Plateau.”

“The openness of the area, the ease of finding remote and isolated areas to see, camp, adventure. As one gets renowned and crowded, I can always find another area.”

What could or does diminish the specialness of the place?

While it is important to understand why people think a place special, it is equally important to understand what might diminish that specialness and affect their connection to place. After discussing why the Phase 3 study area is special, participants were asked to identify, “What could or does diminish the specialness of the place?” After the open-ended dialogue about the threats to specialness, the participants were given prepared list of qualities from which to choose using the audience polling clickers. Figure 5 shows the percentage of responses selected by all participants. Details about the most commonly selected responses are then discussed in more depth.

Figure 5: Qualities that Diminish Specialness



- **Human Impacts**

The primary experiences that seem to diminish the specialness of the study area for many participants in the focus groups have to do with human impacts to the landscape. A strong majority of participants across the study identified the presence of vandalism, litter, graffiti and/or human waste (67.8%) as a significant issue to be addressed. Additionally, damage to soils and vegetation (27.8%) and other negative outcomes are human-caused impacts that are particularly salient as negative outcomes for recreation in the area. The following comments offer more detail on how these elements impact recreational visitation to the area.

"Use has strongly increased and made conditions worse—graffiti—along the way. People are not watching where they are stepping. They are disrespectful of nature."

"As something gets more well-known and a bunch of people come out there and there's some bad eggs who write their names right over the existing rock art."

"Boulder in the canyon and a guy writes his treatise on his father."

"You feel like you are the only people in the world there, and then you see trash."

"Fragile features are being destroyed."

"Unnatural alterations (man-made alterations, excessive human use)."

- **Crowding**

In addition to all the human impacts, the sheer increase in number of humans visiting the area has led to concerns about increased use and crowding (44.4%). This increased use is accompanied by concerns for increased traffic and/or a wider use and array of vehicles (42.2%) and other crowding issues. The following comments give some more dimension to the concerns raised about crowding.

"Where there has been increased use, it's for the worse (mainly due to crowding, excessive use, more apparent human impacts)."

"Increased visitation has diminished my experience, but I appreciate that many others are getting an opportunity."

"Somewhat worse change because too many people in concentrated areas and not being managed as well as it could."

"Crowds. I like being able to go out there and be by myself."

"Crowding. Go for a hike. Saw a group of 235 people. Got to the top and had a hard time finding a place to eat lunch."

"Too many people don't get the solitude; everywhere you went, evidence of others."

"I was warned not to go into Coyote Gulch because it was very crowded."

"Increase in social trails and sandstone fins are gone because of dispersed use."

"ATVs going cross country - starting new trails, destroying vegetation."

"We have a population in this area and they want to get pleasure out of the land just driving or ripping through the land in their Humvees and rock climbers and they are now doing it on Navajo."

"Off-road motorized activity and damage; overcrowding; damage from cattle grazing, especially in riparian areas."

- **Administrative Controls**

While many participants acknowledge the need for some regulations of recreational activity on public lands in GSENM and VCNM, concerns were raised by nearly half of the participants about the possibility of additional fees, regulations and restrictions (45.6%) in the area. These concerns were also associated with limitations on access (38.9%), especially motorized access. There was also a great deal of concern expressed over the permitting process to get into The Wave. The following comments give a sense of what restrictions or fees are most troubling to the participants.

"Additional fees- I was gonna go out and camp overnight and I had to have a permit and then I could drive a car but only on certain roads. I feel like as a local I should have a little more freedom. We chose to live here. We pay taxes. These others, we want them to come here, but they don't have the same respect for the land here."

"Laws and regulations reducing access is bad."

"Want to go out and camp and permits and a ranger come by and says you need a permit."

"Implementing too many controls. I realize that as use and crowds increase, controls are necessary, particularly in areas like The Wave. As that happens, we'll be looking to other places for recreation."

"I have tried to get a Permit for The Wave for many months...but never "win" the lottery."

"Permits - can't get permits to Coyote Buttes. I'm from Arizona and I know people who have been trying for ten years to get a permit. "

"Lack of accessibility for people who are physically challenged."

"That's why I left California; you couldn't go anywhere or do anything because they were closed down (no access)."

"Limited access - means that people get funneled into special places."

"Restricting the number of people who can go to The Wave"

"Having the lottery in Kanab and not here (Big Water), but the lottery in Kanab hurts business in Page. Having the lottery here puts people closer to The Wave."

"Wouldn't want it to get harder for people to visit, if they want to put forth the effort."

"The Wave is an issue and 100 people show up here (Kanab) and they can't get in."

- **Lack of preparation or connection to place from tourists**

Because The Wave and other features of the study area have become internationally popular, tourists come from all over to gain access. Although fewer participants selected the diminishing quality of lack of connection or education about the place (17.8%) and culture clash (15.6%), there were numerous discussions at many of the focus groups about the problems posed by tourists unfamiliar with the area. Participants expressed concern that these new tourists are not prepared to encounter the landscape and create safety and vandalism issues as a result. Several comments were directed to this particular problem.

"Population is the problem. I have learned in my position that the management of people is important and if you don't manage the people moving through then it impacts the people who live here and impacts emergency management and costs a lot of money. Our population that are flocking to this beautiful place, the population that is coming out now, are not schooled about being in the outdoors. They are not prepared. They are not trained, and they have to be rescued."

"Less prepared visitors and the regulations that has to come with that."

"Larger pool of people who are not experienced hikers."

"Increase in our search and rescue teams who are all volunteers. They are our resource and there are budget cuts all the time and people management comes in all the time. We have a regional meeting where we bring Inter-Agency regional meeting—Grand Canyon, Page, Fredonia, San Juan County—we can't do it alone. There are common issues that we are all struggling with. Bought a Ham radio that we are putting in these places and then the people who are coming out are not schooled and a few years ago we started the Friends of the Cliffs (friends group for VCNM) and we talked about posting people out at The Wave to make sure people are ready and can make it out there and back."

"People are 'desperate' to see some of these places and will risk their lives. And some have died."

"Photography and publicity of certain places that makes people feel that's a place they need to be. Not done by the BLM. And that creates demand and that compromises the landscape."

"We ran into a lot of foreign tourists who were very lost...and had to help them orient themselves to get back to their car."

"I work search-and-rescue and find people a half mile from their car and they have no idea where they are."

- **Infrastructure development**

Given the remote, rugged and natural values that so many participants placed on the landscape, they are not interested in residential or industrial development (27.8%) or additional facilities and improvements (17.8%) in the study area.

- **Noise/Lack of solitude and privacy/Artificial light**

Given the value placed on naturalness and remoteness discussed prior, one would expect that participants might express concerns about anything that would disrupt their expectations of tranquility and natural settings such as the presence of noise (30%), or a lack of solitude and privacy (37.8%), and even the presence of artificial light at night (15.6%) which impacts the dark night skies discussed in the previous section of this report.

"Loss of remoteness and solitude with increased visitation, but I have high regard for people's right to visit and their experience and expanded perspective from going there. Mixed bag."

"Down in the Paria Canyon and the sound is just trapped. Get down in the canyon a few miles and you can still hear them."

"Don't like to hear mechanical noise out there, prefer wind birds natural sounds."

"Noise level. State didn't do any favors when they put rumble strips on the highway and the trucks and at night you can hear the rumble strips for miles. I have a campground - so hear it at night."

"As much as I'm pro-capitalism - opposed to the noise of planes and two engine boats."

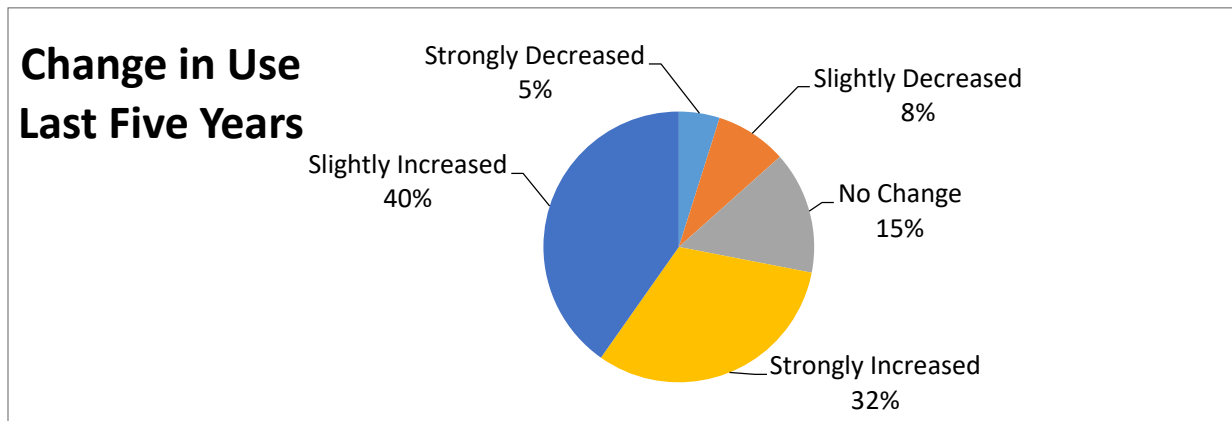
How has the use of the area changed in the last five years? Has it been for the better or worse?

The next question revolved around the nature of change the participants had noticed and their perception of whether those changes in use were for the better or worse. These questions are related, and when discussing their answers, participants were encouraged to speak both of how much change they had noticed, as well as whether it had made things better or worse, and why. All participants were asked to record their selections on a series of two Likert scales using the audience polling clickers. The first scale recorded how much change in use they noticed in the area over the last five years from strongly decreased to strongly increase with a neutral value of no change in the middle of a 5-point scale. The second scale

recorded whether they felt that the change they had indicated had made things much better to much worse with a neutral no change in the middle of a 5-point scale.

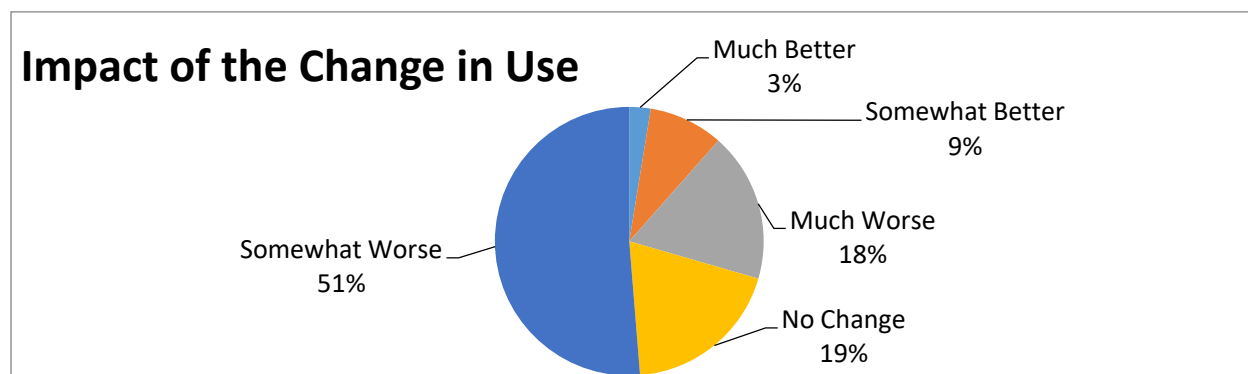
Figure 6 shows the response to the question on the nature of change in use over the last five years.

Figure 6: Nature of Change in Use



It is clear from Figure 6 that use in the study area has increased in the last five years according to the participants in this phase of the study. Almost three out of every four participants indicated use had increased either slightly or strongly (roughly evenly split between the two). Only 13% of the participants indicated use had decreased in any way from their perspective. A similar number (15%) indicated they had not seen any change either way. In their clarifying comments several participants indicated that there was a difference in the change between the front country/prominent locations and the backcountry locations. Each of these indicated that while use might be increasing in the front country, they have noticed little change or even a slight decrease in backcountry use.

Figure 7: Value of Change in Use over the Last Five Years



When considering how the change impacted the landscape and their connection to it; few identified the change in use as making the conditions better. Over half of all participants noted that change had made conditions somewhat worse. 18% of participants indicated that the change made conditions in the area much worse. This is twice the number of participants that indicated that the increased use had actually

made conditions somewhat better. Figure 7 depicts the perceived value of the change in use in the last five years.

The following comments illustrate some of the ways conditions were perceived to be better or worse as a result of the general trend of increased use in the area over the last five years. It appears that determining whether conditions have worsened or not could depend on an individual's affiliation with (and expectations of) the landscape, and the management response to the increased use.

"As government in this region we are always trying to build economic development and we are always trying to increase visitors and we are out there promoting our region –trying to make ourselves smell nice. But on the other hand, are we really ready for that increase? For example, signs and the placement of signs are very important to agencies and businesses and nonprofits. We have to both promote and get ready. What I've seen is that in this office, we were not ready for the kind of people that are coming."

"The other challenge to our region is the multi-jurisdictional area. Everybody has their own little niche, their own policy, but we need to be on the same page. We have to do that. County Commissioners and Supervisors - we talk about having no state line and we have to work together."

"Being in the campground business, more than 90% of our visitors are international. They love this place and we have to decide what we are going to do with this land mass that we are given. The Wave, with limited permits, some discussion of raising it to 20. Sacrificial lamb kinds of places. Mushroom Valley - people never used to go there. Gravel parking lot and now people there. Wonderful area. People are coming, internationally, so the government's gotta decide. More roads and overlooks and signage and we could have 1000 people a day—problems are no maps, no water, no information..."

"The Wave and maybe some highly popular areas are worse and archeology sites and people are picking up pot shards and stuff and driving ATVS in."

"Increased use is okay if people who behave, practice leave no trace principles, treat others with respect. I'm dismayed at some of the behaviors."

What are your interests and expectations when going out into the study area?

Research has indicated that people visit public lands to achieve a variety of beneficial outcomes and experiences for themselves, their communities, and the environment, while at the same time trying to avoid adverse outcomes and experiences. The list of such outcomes and experiences is extensive, but further research has discovered that people tend to bundle these experiences and expectations into a limited number of profiles of interests and expectations.³ Participants were given a list of 12 profiles of interests

³ For a good discussion of the experiences and outcomes that people seek when recreating in public lands see the work of Driver, B.L. and D.H. Bruns. 1999. Concepts and Uses of the Benefits Approach to Leisure. P. 349-369 in Leisure Studies: Prospects for the Twenty-First Century E.L. Jackson and T.L. Burton et al. (eds.). Venture Publishing, State College, PA. Venture. To see the research that narrows the list of experiences and outcomes into profiles of interests and expectations see Parry, B., Gollob, J. and Frans, J. 2014. Benefits of public land usage: an analysis of outdoor recreationists. In Managing Leisure 19(4). That study narrowed the profiles down to eight (8). Those eight (8) are used

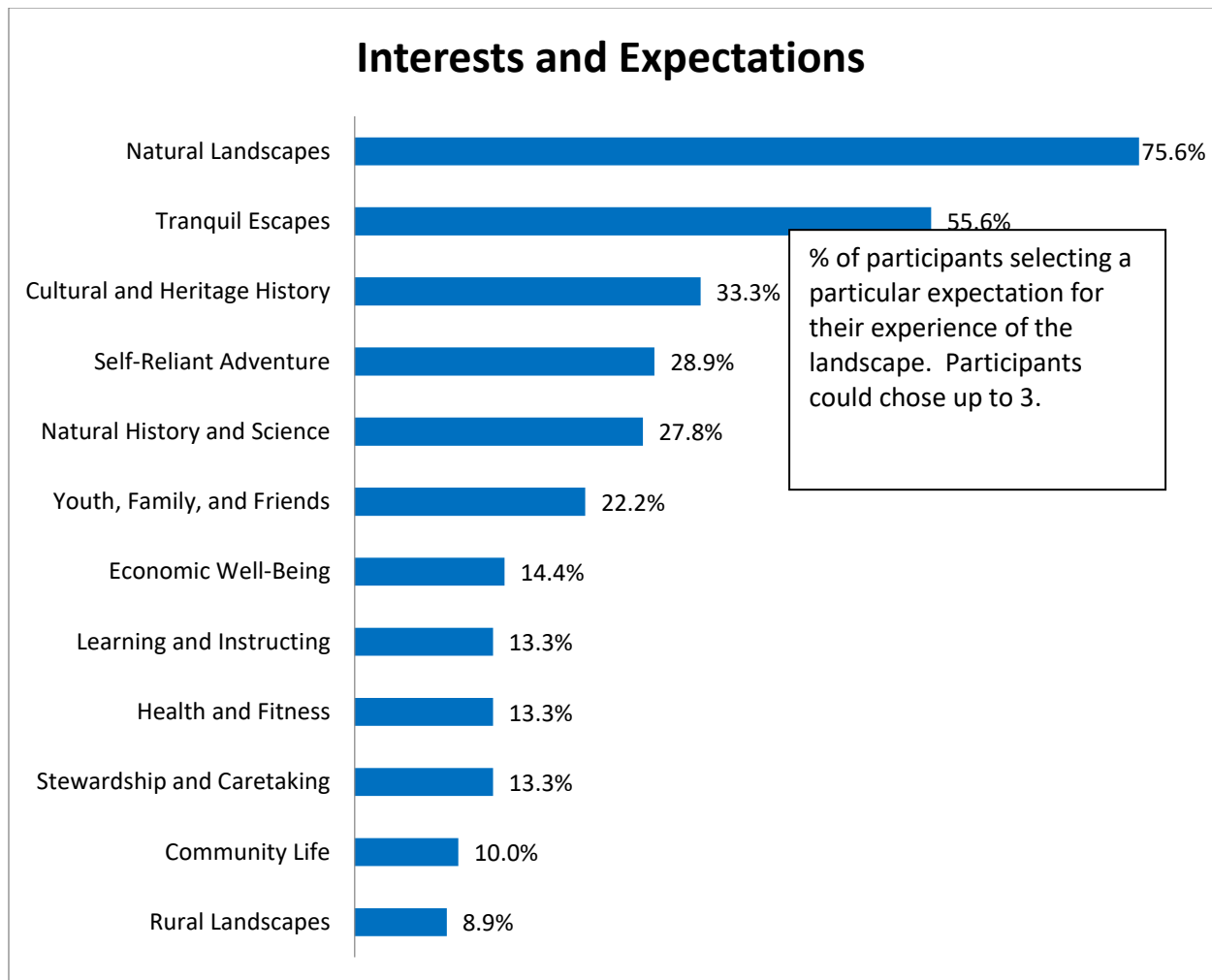
and expectations they might have when visiting the HWY 89 area, and VCNM. Each profile included a descriptive sentence of what someone choosing that profile might say. The profiles and descriptions included the following:

1. **Natural Landscapes** - I like to surround myself with the beauty of open space and the wildness of mountains, forests, rangeland, water and wildlife.
2. **Rural Landscapes** - I want to connect with the visual landscapes, sense of place and pace of rural areas where people make their living from the land.
3. **Cultural & Heritage History** - I am interested in how historic and prehistoric peoples lived in the area, and in exploring the connections I have with those peoples.
4. **Natural History & Science** - I am interested in knowing about natural processes in this area and the study of the scientific value of the landscape for enhancing our understanding of the world around us.
5. **Health & Fitness** - I like being able to regularly access public lands recreation areas that help me get and stay fit or improve my mental well-being.
6. **Self-Reliant Adventure** - I prefer outdoor adventure on my own that challenges my outdoor skills, improves my abilities, and maybe even involves some risk.
7. **Tranquil Escapes** - I look forward to the quiet serenity of getting away from it all for some mental and physical relaxation, reflection, and renewal.
8. **Youth, Family & Friends** - I am enriched by socializing with others: young people, my family and/or friends and enjoying companionship in the outdoors together.
9. **Community Life** - I like seeing what the discovery and enjoyment of nearby open space recreation does for my community and our visiting guests
10. **Economic Well-being** - I want to see public lands recreation areas contributing in a significant way to our economic livelihood.
11. **Learning & instructing** - I feel comfortable having others equip and enable me to do recreation and tourism outings—or being part of helping others learn how to do that.
12. **Stewardship & Caretaking** - I like giving back to the outdoors from what I've received by helping care for special sites and facilities so others can also enjoy them.

Participants were allowed to select up to three profiles. Figure 8 shows the percentage of total selections by all participants for particular interest and expectation profile options. Figure 9 shows the analysis by affiliation preference to see if additional insight could be gained on the motivation for visiting this area and how that might differ depending on who is visiting.

in this study along with an additional four (4) that were added to more comprehensively capture people's expected experiences and outcomes for recreating in these landscapes.

Figure 8: Interest and Expectation Profiles



The most popular sets of interests and expectations for the study area are the natural landscapes (75.6%) and tranquil escapes (55.6%). This seems to support the strong interest in the wild, natural, rugged and remote characteristics of much of this landscape where one can find the desired experiences of solitude and renewal of mind and spirit in nature. There is also a real interest in the learning and discovery characteristics of the cultural and heritage history (33.3%) of the study area, as well as in self-reliant adventures (28.9%).

Figure 9: Interest and Expectations by Affiliation

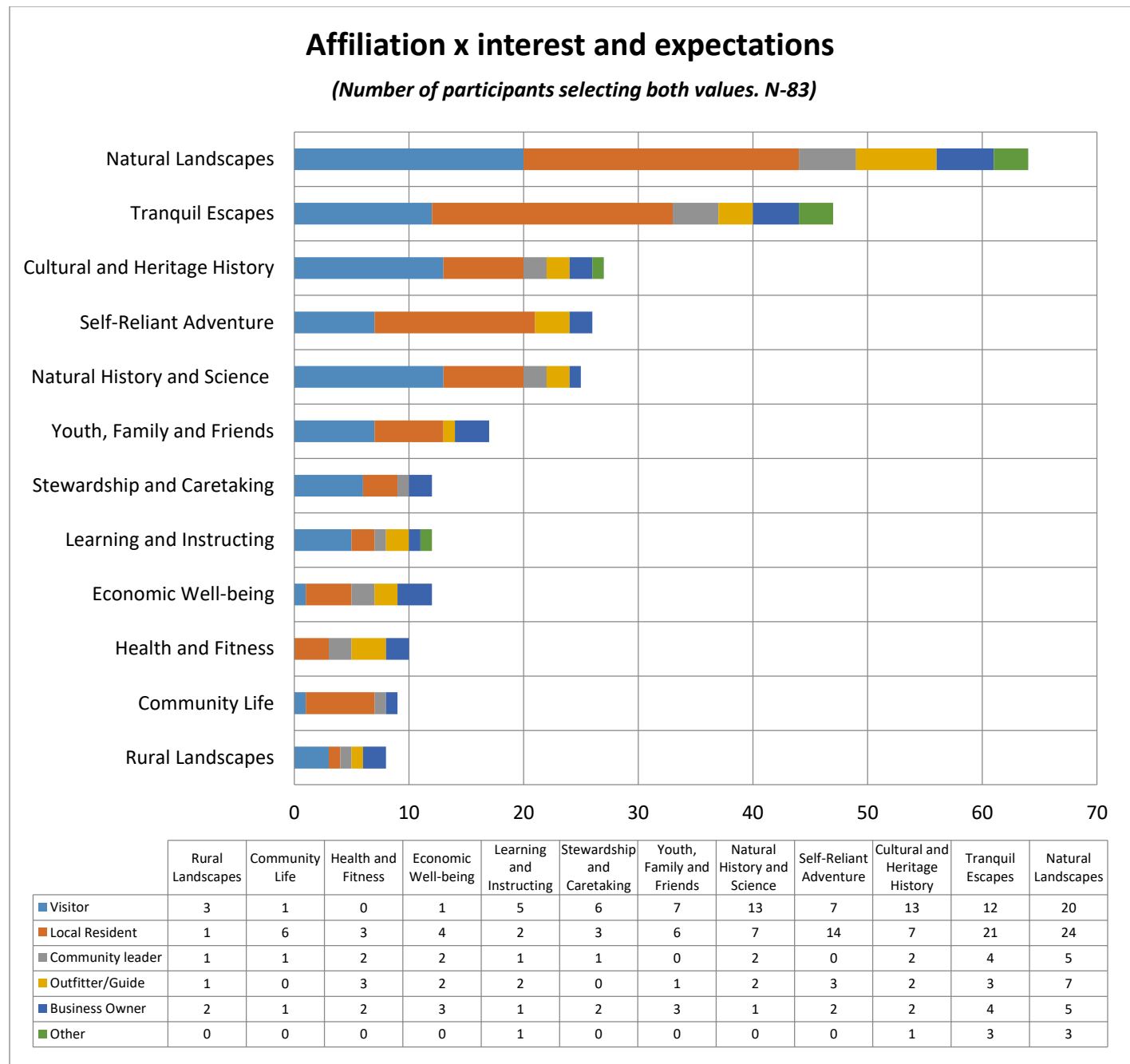


Figure 9 displays preferences for particular interest and expectations of the landscape by affiliation. Read left to right the colors in sequence in the bar chart correspond to the attributes with color next to them from top to bottom in the table. The bar chart identifies the percentage of each option that was selected by a participant with a particular affiliation. For clarity, the table below the bar chart shows the number of

participants in each affiliation that selected each of the interest and expectation options. It should be noted again, that they could chose up to three options.

Some values such as natural landscapes, tranquil escapes, cultural and heritage history, and learning and instructing appear in every affiliation. Other values such as self-reliant adventures and stewardship and caretaking have relevance for some affiliations such as visitors and local residents, but less so for outfitters/guides and community leaders. The value with perhaps the greatest divergence between affiliations was youth, family and friends. This value of sharing the area with others is more important to the visitors and even local residents, but not identified as a top value by those who may be interested more in the economics of the setting such as outfitters and guides, community leaders, and “others”.

The following sample of comments illustrates some of the diversity of opinions about the interests and expectations (value profiles) of the landscape.

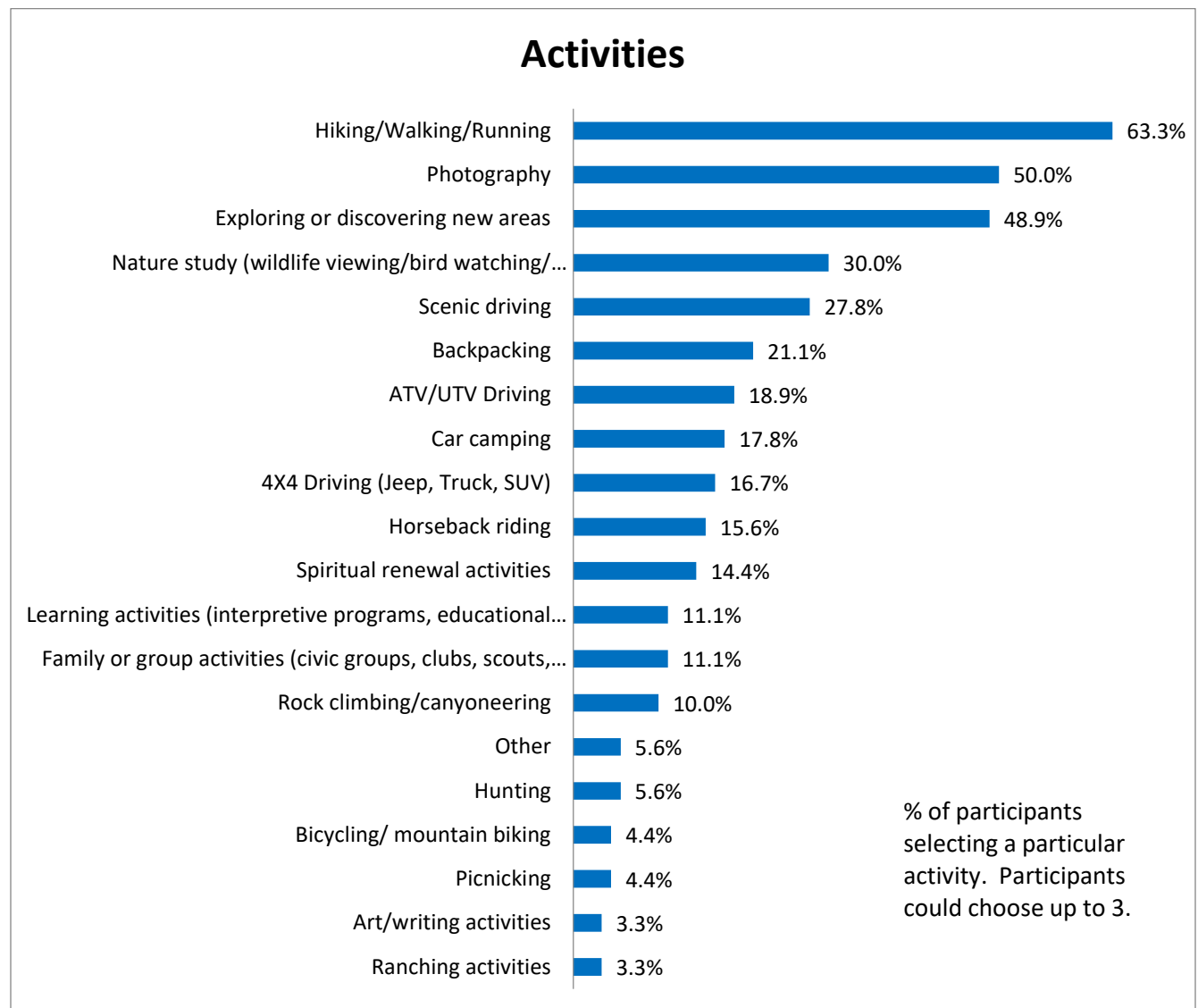
“This area meets my desire to visit world class natural areas.”

“One of the things that I’ve seen that’s amazing - friendships are nurtured - way stronger than if you were to meet at the gym. I have seen lifelong friendships formed between people who had never known each other before.”

Activities

Traditional recreation studies on public lands typically begin by determining which activities people engage in, then determining how and whether those activities could be supported by the land base. More contemporary recreation studies focus instead on the interests, expectations and benefits the public receives from recreating on public lands and the settings necessary to provide them, recognizing that a variety of activities can provide similar benefits and meet expectations if the settings needed remain intact. Also, discussing preferred activities has a tendency to allow people to form “tribes” and allow stereotypes to cloud interactions. For these reasons, activities were not discussed until midway through each focus group during this study. After discussing the specialness of the place, threats to it, and participants’ interests and expectations, they were asked to select up to three activities they engaged in most often from a prepared list. Participants could select more than one activity and had the option of selecting “other” then were asked to clarify it. Figure 10 shows the number of participants that selected any given activity.

Figure 10: Activities Engaged in Most Often



When asked to choose the activities they engage in most often, a significant majority of participants selected hiking/walking/running (63.3%) as their top activity. A number of activities selected highlighted the observation, study and learning objectives outlined in the GSENM Management Plan. Examples include chronicling their visit with photography (50%), and nature study (30%) as well as more formal learning opportunities (11.1%) and the less formal self-guided discovery and exploration of the area (48.9%). Vehicle use plays a role for many participants in the area through activities such as scenic driving (27.8%), use of 4x4 vehicles (16.7%), and ATV/UTV riding (18.9%) as well as car camping (17.8%).

The results of this question indicate that there is significant preference for non-motorized recreation though recreational activities on this landscape are certainly not limited to only those pursuits, and that recreational

plans in the area will need to address the diversity of activities that occur. The following comments from the meetings provide a more nuanced understanding of this recreational activity mosaic.

"I am a site steward and go check archeological sites."

"Collecting herbs - traveling out there and we'll do a prayer that starts at home and then we'll drive out there and finish the song and we travel and make an offering. "

"I like to hike, but I don't want to hike along the highway. Spectacular scenery everywhere you go."

"Hard to isolate a few activities, I'm an omnivore. I usually drive to do something else. I explore but do it hiking, etc. These overlap. That's what makes it a landscape - there are so many activities. There are so many opportunities."

"Exploring and discovering new areas but also exploring and re-discovering--or discovering different aspects of--already-known areas."

Most Special Places Mapping

In order to contextualize comments from the focus groups about the study area, participants were asked to identify special places by writing place names on sticky notes and attaching them to the general location of the place on a large map. They were also asked *"Why is this area particularly special?"* They could either record those responses on the sticky notes or verbalize them in the discussion afterwards. Figure 11 lists the most commonly articulated places and the discussion that follows captures some of the conversations about the places identified. The table includes the top 27 locations named by frequency, but there were a total of 149 places identified, of which there were 88 unique locations named. The table contains all places that were mentioned at least two times by different participants which correlates to 29.5% of the total number of unique special places identified, and 58.4% of all special places identified. It is clear from this sample that the area is a diverse complex of special places, few of which are special to everyone, but many of which are particularly important to some people. All sites identified, along with their locations and comments on why they are special, were recorded and mapped and included in the data provided to GSENM and VCNM as a result of this study.

Figure 11: Identified Special Places

<u>Location Name</u>	<u>Number of selections</u>	<u>% of total special places named</u>	<u>Management</u>
Buckskin Gulch	8	5.4%	BLM (KFO)
White Pocket	7	4.7%	BLM (VCNM)
Paria River	6	4.0%	BLM (GSENM/KFO/VCNM)
Flag Point	5	3.4%	BLM (GSENM)
West Clark Bench	5	3.4%	BLM (GSENM)
Paria Plateau	4	2.7%	BLM (GSENM/KFO/VCNM)
The Maze Petroglyphs	4	2.7%	BLM (VCNM)
The Wave	4	2.7%	BLM(VCNM)
The Toadstools	4	2.7%	BLM (GSENM)
Buckskin and Wire Pass Washes	3	2.0%	BLM (KFO)
Condor Release Area	3	2.0%	BLM (VCNM)
Coyote Buttes	3	2.0%	BLM (VCNM)
The Dive	3	2.0%	SITLA
Vermilion Cliffs	3	2.0%	BLM (GSENM/KFO/VCNM)
Wahweep Hoodoos	3	2.0%	BLM (GSENM)
House Rock Valley Road	2	1.3%	BLM (GSENM/KFO/VCNM)
Cottonwood Cove	2	1.3%	BLM (VCNM)
Kitchen Corral Wash	2	1.3%	BLM (GSENM)
Lee's Ferry	2	1.3%	NPS (GLCA)
Nautilus	2	1.3%	BLM (GSENM)
Paria Overlook	2	1.3%	BLM (GSENM)
Paria Town Site	2	1.3%	BLM (GSENM)
Powell's Monument	2	1.3%	Unknown
Smokey Hollow Road	2	1.3%	BLM (GSENM)
The Cockscomb	2	1.3%	BLM (GSENM/KFO/VCNM)
Wahweep Creek	2	1.3%	SITLA/NPS (GLCA)

The comments that surfaced as to why these places are special varied from unique qualities of the place to personal connections to the place. Some of the special places identified were highlighted because of concerns for resource damage that is taking place at the location. Many of the comments referred to the scenic qualities of the place, while others identified important features of the landscape such as historic characteristics, geologic formations, and the uniqueness of the ecosystems. Access to these special places is an important part of their specialness for many participants. Some access is easy where as some is challenging, and both were valued. Some participants expressed the need to understand better the impact of diverse demands on these special places in order to maintain their special characteristics.

A sample of the comments provides greater understanding of why places were identified, such as:

"Buckskin Gulch is best slot canyon. It is the center of the earth."

"Cows need to be kept out of Buckskin Gulch. Within wilderness - especially narrows."

"Motorized access to Flag Point is very important."

"Kitchen Corral Point - keep the existing roads open on the Monument for all to use."

"Lower House Rock Valley Road is a nice place to explore, see pioneer names, and watch condors."

"Nipple Springs is a year round water source which brings in animals and wildlife. "

"Old Spanish Trail is a National Historic Trail that needs to be identified as a recreational experience."

"Rim camping in Vermilion Cliffs National Monument – Bruce Babbitt named this as an outstanding recreation opportunity."

Settings

Is it the place or the activity or both that is most important to you?

There is a good deal of debate among academics and practitioners of recreational management on public lands as to whether the place is most important and people simply chose activities to enjoy the places where they want to be; or whether the activities they engage in are most important and they simply look for ideal places to engage in their chosen activities. The answer to this debate is likely to have a direct impact on the way the area is managed in order to provide desired setting characteristics. To better understand how this debate plays out in the study area, participants were asked whether the place is most important to them, or the activity, or a combination of the two.

This dichotomy turns out to be more of a constructed debate among academics and land managers than in the preferences of the participants involved in this study. Most of the participants (76.7%) said that both place and activity were important to them. The second most popular selection was that the place itself is inherently special (10%) and activity was only selected by 4.4% of all participants. Specific comments offered by the participants offer some clarification into the thinking behind their selections:

"Any place in the Monument is scenic - if it's got archeology or historic ranch house – bonus. Activity is extra."

"There is a lot of history and a lot of stories that get told. Of course we're horse riding and so they are living the history. It is part of the Old West and connection to the actual place. "

"The place lends itself to the activity, but the place IS inherently special. And it's my backyard, so to speak."

"It's the feature of the place and the walking along in it - finding bird's nest or petroglyph. It is the activity but in a particular place. I like observing unique features, the details of the place."

"Uniqueness allows for activities you can't find in any other place."

"Even if I could never see this place again, I still want to know that it is there and protected and managed properly for future generations. It is just good to know it's there. I value the connection I have spiritually to this landscape. "

"I have to say the geography of the country out there is unique in the world, and I am fortunate enough to have that as my backyard. I have to say both."

"Primarily the place: it is its uniqueness that draws me there; my activities are dependent on/determined by the nature of the place."

"The place allows for my favorite activity and my favorite activity (hiking) is enhanced by place."

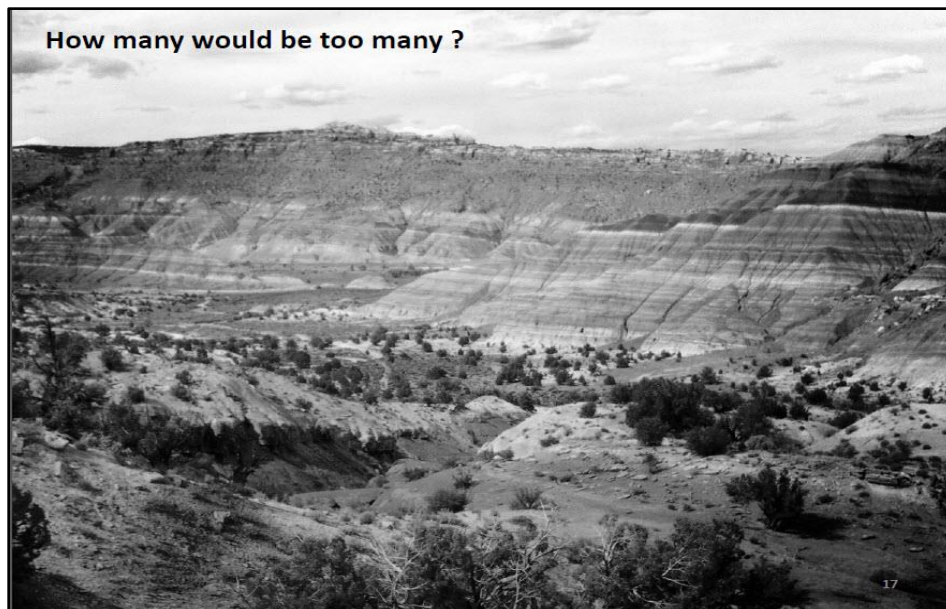
Crowding Analysis Using Series of Black and White Landscape Images

One of the principle considerations for land managers and recreation planners is the setting characteristics for the landscape that should be tied to particular interests and expectations of the public. Unfortunately, the settings matrix used to determine the appropriate setting (primitive to urban) along at least 16 different setting characteristics (see Appendix 2) can be overwhelming to members of the public, so it is difficult to determine what really matters most.

In order to get at what matters most to the participants in terms of setting characteristics related to the issue of crowding, a series of black and white images without any sign of other visitors were offered. The same discussion prompt, *"If you came across other people while visiting the scene in this photo, how many people would be too many people before it would change the character of the place for you?"* was included with each image. Since many public landscapes have prescriptions that limit the number of people in some way, the prompt was good to begin discussion; but more important than the number assigned, was the rationale participants used to make their determinations. Open-ended discussion was encouraged before participants were asked to record a number with the clickers.

The three images in the series and the comments they generated follow below.

Figure 12 – Image of Representative Large Scale Landscape



The first image was a black and white image of a large scale landscape without people in the scene so that participants would be able to use their imagination to locate people in the scene in order to comment on how many would be too many. The scale of this landscape generated a number of comments regarding the larger number of people that could be absorbed without changing the character of the area, what those people were doing, and how close they were to the observer. While participants generally noted their preference for values of solitude and the wildness of the landscape; asking about crowding in such a large scale landscape helped to clarify how the scale of the landscape, as well as the proximity, visibility, group size and activities of other people affect those values of solitude and wildness in the landscape. The following comments are examples of the conversations that arose surrounding this particular landscape image.

"Depends on whether I was guiding out there with family. If I have a guest or a client might want to see more. Perceptions of clients - they have to come far from a big airport and it's hard to get there, so they want to see no one."

"Distance. Fewer people closer and more people far away."

"Wouldn't mind seeing, but I wouldn't want to hear their loud music or ATVs with non-mufflers."

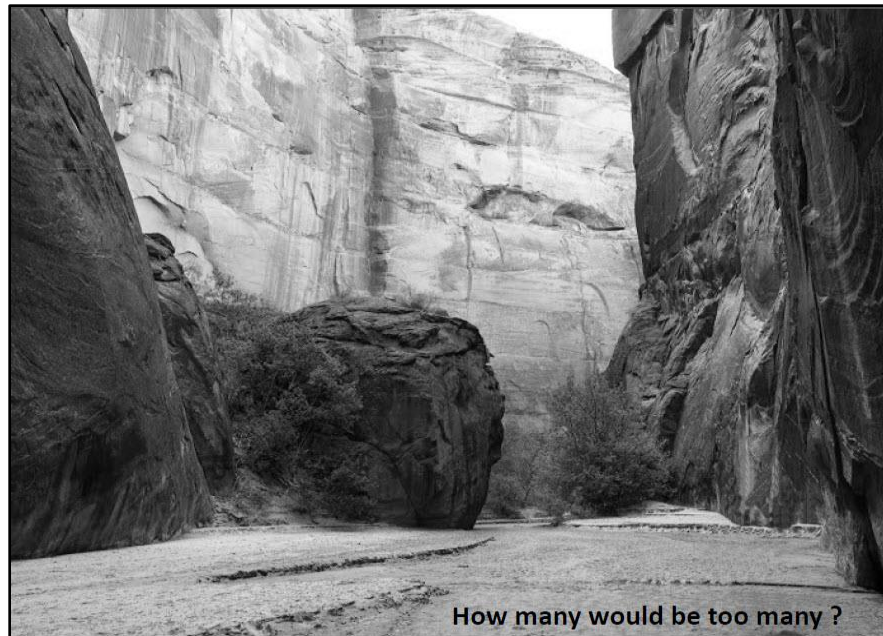
"Where it is? Paria Movie Set and the west entrance to The Box? So, one of the more heavily accessed - if everybody is going to stay there - it's okay."

"Day, week, month, year? Looking at impact - how many visitors in a year, on a daily basis, some limits."

"For me, I automatically went for vehicles. It's hard for me to separate that out. Entered a number. If you had 100 people out there walking around, you wouldn't even see them, but you'd assume there are vehicles there somewhere."

“Open landscape. That landscape is fairly large. And it could be according to what other people are doing. If they are just hiking like you are - but if they are zipping around on vehicles, not so much.”

Figure 13 – Image of Representative Close Scale Landscape



This second image is a much more restricted area in terms of space. Many participants recognized this space as part of the Paria Canyon, and thus adjusted their responses to that space in particular. However, several participants simply looked at the limited distance that groups are visible in a space such as this canyon, and focused more on the concentrating effect of the canyon walls on noise, group sizes, and proximity of activities. Several of the comments highlight the value of sharing this unique landscape with other visitors, especially if they are learning and discovering. Often participants would compare the confined scale of this image with the earlier wide open landscape image to articulate how their expectations changed with the different scale of the landscape. The following sample of comments underscores these changed expectations.

“Yes, my expectations change in this space because there is a limited area for setting up camp. You're lucky to fit five people and you need to.”

“Places more publicly known are more crowded, but I've spent days in the interior of the Monument and not seen anyone.”

“All at once? Throughout the day? If I'm out there for 8 hours and I see ten all day.”

“Love to see a family coming out of it - mom dad and a couple kids.”

“In this canyon, because it's confined, a far smaller number for me - because of the noise.”

“Size and odds; closeness of the environment to the people you’re funneling down in to a smaller area. Fewer people because enclosed space. Move the number down.”

“I want to see people enjoying this. Enjoying that social interaction. If I’ve seen it, looking at it through a visitor’s eyes—a German or a Japanese.”

“ATVs up the creek—silence shattered, the sound echoes in the canyon. I don’t mind horse poop; it’s organic.”

“If I see a group of young people, I feel pretty strongly that we should help them get outside and in contact with nature.”

“If we don’t work to take care of other’s mess, we will loose access. I feel compeled to clean up to preserve access.”

Figure 14 – Image of Representative Well-known Landscape



The final image is of the iconic destination - The Wave” which is within the Paria Canyon Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area in the Coyote Buttes permit area. The Wave is an internationally known destination controlled by a limited permit system allowing 20 visitors per day. Half of the 20 can be secured on-line and the others are available the day before at the GSENM Kanab Visitor Center via a live lottery each morning. The demand for permits far exceeds the permits issued. During heavy visitation times, hundreds of people vie for the 10 permits available each day. As such, comments about this image reacted to the actual landscape features as well as the limitations imposed on visitation to the landscape by the permit system. Often in earlier phases of this study, an iconic location would solicit expectations of increased crowding due

to the popularity of the destination; however, many participants changed their expectations based on their knowledge of the permit limitations or the existence of this image within a Wilderness Area. Because of the harshness of the landscape, a number of comments also focused on safety issues for visitors. The following comments offer a description of the participant's reaction to this image.

"The popularity of The Wave is a quirk of marketing and popular culture. I don't even try the lottery because it's not the wilderness. That's not the wilderness if I know 20 people are going to be there."

"People like Paul and I who want to hike in North Coyote Buttes and NOT The Wave can't get in. We need to be able to get permits for just North Coyote Buttes."

"Once the word gets out and demand goes up beyond what the resource can accommodate and handle, they will need to restrict."

"One spot is most popular, but there are so many wonderful places around that area. They all cluster at The Wave."

"One of the big problems with this area - they get heat stroke - water, need to be sipping it the whole time and not wait until they are ready to pass out."

"Rich, smart, and tight timetable—many with no wilderness knowledge or experience—they want to get to THAT and then be on their way."

"Wave is small. I support 20 person limits because it's small."

"If it had a trail - maybe have higher numbers in the marked trails."

With all of these images, several participants expressed concern about actually assigning a number to the question of how many would be too many. They were concerned partly because of all of the variables that might affect that number during different times and conditions, but they were also concerned about what the BLM would do with such numbers. Their fear was that once a number was placed on the resource; there would be more restrictions and limitations of access to manage for those particular numbers of visitors. With areas such as The Wave, those management restrictions are already in place and some participants expressed concern that those restrictions would be enhanced and additional restrictions might be placed on other parts of the Monuments and surrounding landscape.

Landscape Imagery Analysis

In general, there was reluctance amongst participants to assign a number answering the question, *"How many would be too many?"* to each image, but after extensive discussion several participants did so with the polling clickers. Fewer participants answered these questions related to crowding than any other question in the focus group. While other questions generally had 95% or higher participation with clicker responses, these images had response rates that ranged 28% to 37%. This seemed to match the reluctance to respond with a particular number either because it was too contingent on numerous other factors described above, or fear that a specific number could be used to justify restrictions on the number of people who could visit a

particular site. In general, they were tolerant of higher numbers in the large scale landscape setting. Likewise, they were least likely to offer a number for human encounters in the intimate canyon setting image because of the smaller scale of the place and the desire to be uncrowded. Although there were exceptions to these general trends; taken together, the comments and numbers of acceptable people in the images indicate that some of the key determining factors that impact perceptions of crowding include the scale of the landscape, the activities and proximity of other people, impacts to quiet and visual values of the area, the accessibility and level of development, and the familiarity with the site. The more accessible a setting, the larger the scale of the landscape, and the more known and iconic a setting, the more one expects to see others.

Analysis of Road Development Preferences Using Black and White Images

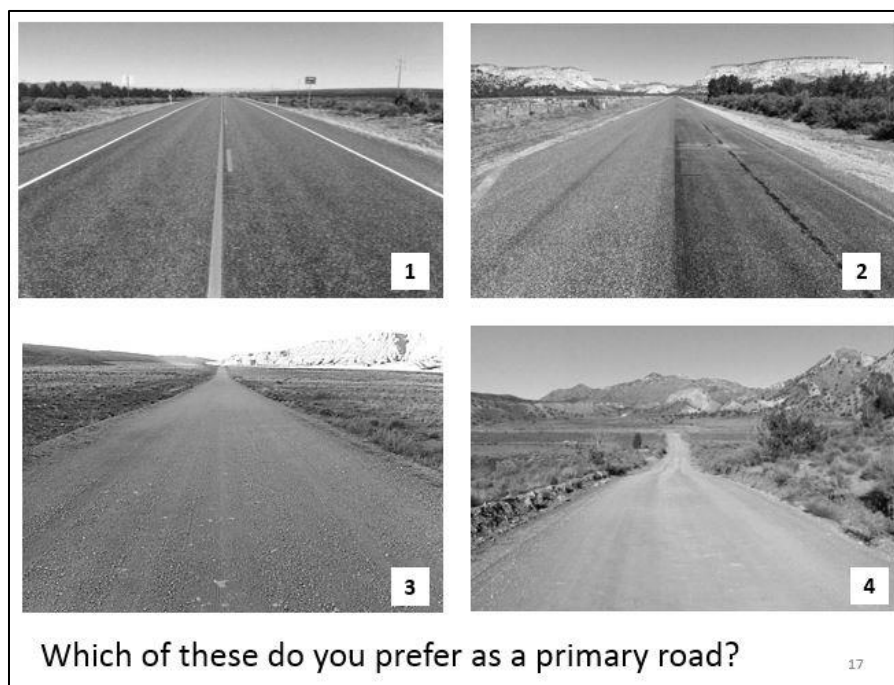
Participants were asked to compare images depicting various levels of road development in the study area to determine their preferences for travelling within the landscape. There were two sets of images. The first set asked participants about primary roads in the area (these were defined as roads such as Cottonwood Road, House Rock Valley Road, etc.), not highways. The second set asked participants about secondary roads (defined as those roads spurring off the primary roads accessing specific recreational destinations such as Five Mile Mountain or Buckskin Mountain Road, etc.).

Primary Roads

The four images provided for the primary road question are shown in Figure 15. The explanations associated with each photo included:

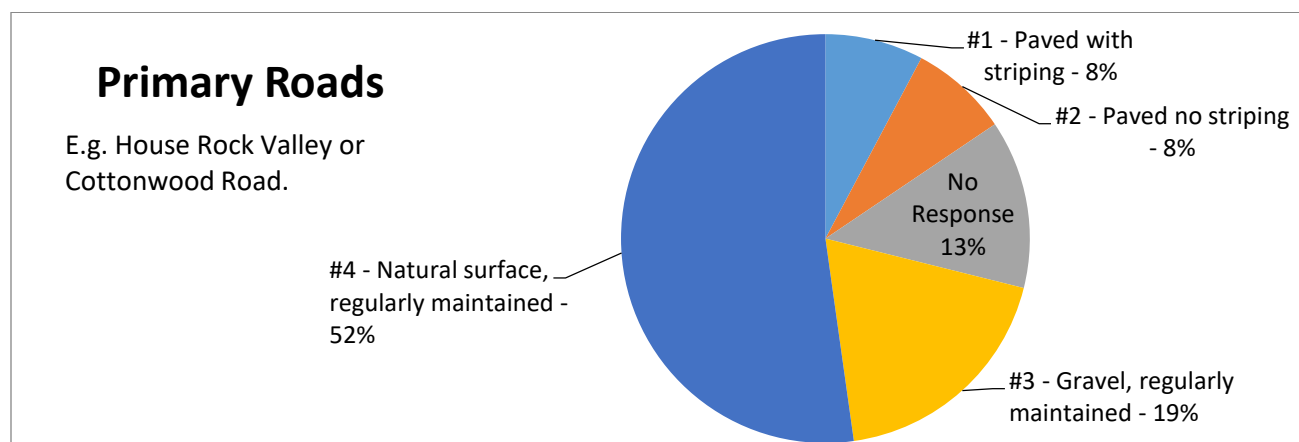
- Photo 1 – An asphalt paved road with painted striping
- Photo 2 – An asphalt paved road with no striping
- Photo 3 – A crowned and ditched gravel road – regularly maintained
- Photo 4 – A natural surface road - regularly maintained

Figure 15: Primary Road Development Preference Images



Participants were allowed to select only one option when asked, “Which road would you prefer as a primary road when traveling through or going to recreate in the study area?” Figure 16 shows the percentage each choice was selected. The data revealed a preference for non-paved options (#3 and #4) from the majority of the participants.

Figure 16: Primary Road Development Preferences



The most popular selection among the 77 participants that responded to this question was the natural surface, regularly maintained road (52%). The other surface preferred by several participants was the Gravel, regularly maintained road. Nearly three of every four participants indicated a preference for non-paved roads. Only 16% of the participants that answered this question selected any type of pavement for the primary roads (excluding HWY 89 and 89A) in the study area. 13% of the participants chose not to

respond to this question, which is a higher percentage than most of the questions in the focus group. While it is important to remember that these percentages are not generalizable to the larger population, they illustrate trends among those willing to commit the time and effort to participate in one of the focus groups, and thus show an active interest in GSENM and VCNM management actions related to development of roads and travel corridors.

This set of questions illustrates the value of a mixed methodology in which participants not only select an option, but are able to offer comments about why they made their selection. The additional comments are useful information for managers and local officials responsible for determining the level of development of the roads in the study area. Comments offered in clarification of their choices support leaving roads less developed, although an important minority of participants expressed support for the development of access to various points on the Monuments for visitors who might not otherwise be able to access them.

The comments can be grouped along several themes. First, there were numerous comments about how the destination impacts the condition of the route. Preferences for a particular road surface may change if a participant is just traveling through the area, or seeking to get to a remote part of the landscape to recreate. Other themes include concerns about how the road surface would impact issues of crowding, how the road surface is impacted by weather and other safety considerations and how the road surface should match the landscape characteristics. The following comments illustrate these distinctions.

Theme #1 - Destination

"If I'm just moving through - then faster; if I'm there to be there - to be part of the landscape - more profound connection. "

"Can it take you to the place, or like from Kanab to Cannonville?"

"Depends on how long I've been on # 4. If it's been a long time on four, I'm looking for a one."

"Once I get to a point in the landscape and I'm not in a hurry - that's why I walk - if I was walking, I wouldn't look for a road at all."

Theme #2 - Crowding

Some participants commented on the trade-off between developed roads and the solitude experience that might be adversely affected by larger numbers of visitors. Participants noted this while acknowledging the need to accommodate the increasing number of visitors who are likely to come in the future. This accommodation of future increased use includes protection of the landscape from damage and the safety of the visitors themselves.

"Depends on the use the area is receiving.

The more use, the more developed the road to be safe for travelers. Don't want to make road improvements to increase visitation, but if demand is there, we need to consider improvements to deal with those visitors."

"I prefer the road to be rough; washboard is a pain, it keeps a lot of people off."

"If you improve the roads, there would be more people and that might diminish the experience. Too much traffic would be bad."

"A dirt road, not too much traffic, but it's a good dirt road, so it would probably limit the number of people who would try it."

Theme #3 – Road Conditions

"If clay road is wet, it can be a problem; it can also be a problem of access for people in rental cars."

"For visitors, it is hard to travel and get a vehicle rental that allows access."

"Cottonwood or Skutumpah should be at least # 3 or more engineered to handle the weather conditions."

"3 rather than 4 because of the erosion that can be pretty hard on your vehicle."

Theme #4 - Setting

Road conditions also have an impact on the recreational experience people have in the landscape. Several comments indicated that the roads should match the natural, remote and rugged character of the area and contribute to achieving the much desired solitude experience (as documented elsewhere throughout this report).

"The primary road should be good enough to get in but not so good that it becomes a raceway. "

"Road 3 or 4 slows you down so you can appreciate it (the landscape)."

"It is good that the road is a bit difficult and makes you take your time to appreciate the experience."

"All roads 1-3 have an appearance of human impacts that conflict with the naturalness/remoteness of the area."

"In this area, traveling dirt roads is necessary to experience those remote areas."

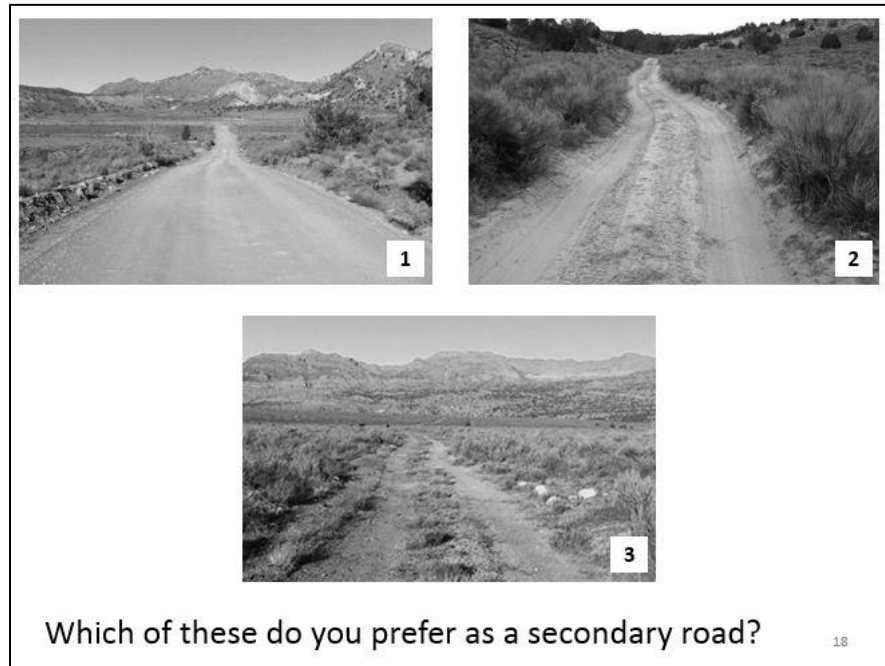
"For me, on the road I choose, I can pull over anywhere and not worry about traffic. Looking for an interesting hike, I could gawk and no one would be behind me."

Secondary Roads

After discussing the relative merits of several primary road options, participants were asked to compare a second set of three images depicting various levels of road development for secondary roads. The three images provided for the secondary road question are shown in Figure 17 and included:

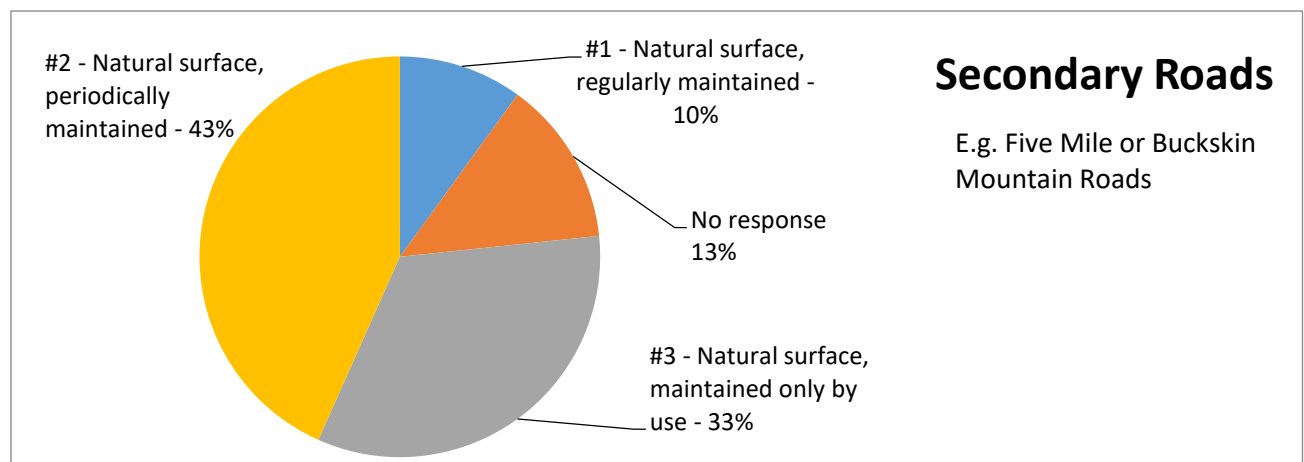
- Photo 1 – A natural surface road – regularly maintained
- Photo 2 – A natural surface road - periodically maintained (every few years)
- Photo 3 – A natural surface two-track road - maintained only by use

Figure 17: Secondary Road Development Preference Images



Participants were allowed to select only one option when asked, “Which road do you prefer as a secondary road when traveling through or going to recreate in the study area?” Figure 18 shows the number of participants who selected each choice.

Figure 18: Secondary Road Development Preferences



The selections made by the participants do not reveal a clear pattern as they were fairly evenly split between Road 2 - natural surface, periodically maintained at 43% and Road 3 - natural surface, maintained

only by use at 34%. Even Road 1 – natural surface, regularly maintained had several participants selecting it at 10%. With such an evenly matched set of preferences it is important to try to understand why participants made the selections they did through the comments. Comments offered in clarification of their choices offer a variety of issues that impacted their decision making which, again, might usefully be organized along a few of themes.

Theme #1 – Character of the Experience

Similar to the responses for primary roads, participants identified a number of recreational experience characteristics such as ruggedness, wildness, scenic qualities and solitude that would be impacted by the type of secondary roads in the monuments, and generally preferred less developed roads in order to maintain those qualities. For example:

“Prefer #3 because when I get off the primary roads I don’t mind doing some work to get there. I admire the scenic quality of that road. ”

“The road is part of the experience, prepares you for what you're going to encounter there.”

“Road 3 is preferred. It heightens a sense of remoteness/naturalness/isolation and has less visual impact than either Road 1 or 2.”

Theme #2- Type of Vehicle

Another major theme of the comments on secondary roads had to do with the type of vehicles required to travel on various roads, and the kind of vehicle travel that the road might suggest.

“Does kind of limit the kind of vehicle. They say - won’t take my rental car down there.”

“Got ATVs because the roads get worse and worse and then you’ve got a new demographic.”

“I had a little trouble. Sand needs four wheel drive. #3 not a road at all”

“Road 3 might encourage off road travel because the road is not well enough defined.”

“Inducing me to use a SUV feels environmentally conflicted.”

“I don't mind walking a few kilometers but don't like being 'locked out' by poor roads that favor SUVs only.”

“If it is open, I'd travel it.”

While these comments offer more insight into the rationale for the split choice on this question of secondary road preferences, the results are far from conclusive other than the need for a diversity of options when traveling to or through this landscape.

Management Boundaries

There are many different administrative units (BLM, NPS, state land, etc.) in the study area and it is often times easy to cross from one jurisdiction to another without being aware. In order to better understand the challenges and opportunities this presents participants were asked if they were aware when crossing boundaries in the area. If they responded yes, they were also asked to explain whether or not crossing a boundary influenced their behavior, expectations or perceptions. Sample responses are provided by theme:

Theme #1 – Management Approaches and Regulations

The following is a sample of some of the comments that were made related to different management approaches and regulations.

“There is a perception of more flexibility and freedom of movement and activities within the BLM, state, and USFS land. More restrictions on NPS land, particularly with the dog.”

“Aware of boundaries and does impact my perceptions. Park service land more uptight and monitored, and Forest Service and BLM somewhat managed and fewer restrictions; wilder.”

“Zion vs. GSENM – one is more regulated and visible, the other is getting BLM land uses so I may not be quite as careful in GSENM as in Zion. No dogs in Zion, etc., more invasive weeds on GSENM, it seems like field office BLM lands.”

“When I go into the park service I feel like the people are better at enforcing regulations; state land is a free-for-all. If I am driving on the monument and I see a lot of trash I think that’s state land.”

“Mental definitions of how strict each of these agencies is and expectations of enforcement.”

“I am keenly aware of the impacts to the land due to its management.”

“The land doesn't know who is managing it!”

Theme #2– Coordination of Travel in Region

Others were concerned that the lack of on the ground signage and adequate maps identifying boundaries might lead to confusion and a diminished recreational experience. They also expressed concern that different management agencies number routes differently which also contributes to confusion. For example:

“Most confusing thing is all the roads have different numbers.”

“The public knows they are driving on a road, but they don’t know whose road in a multi-jurisdictional area and it is necessary to work together. All these agencies do their own plan but what we need is a regional plan - need a region wide plan. Those agencies are islands, but we are a county.”

“Boundaries all use different numbers and nothing is coordinated.”

"Collaboration with a capital C."

"A lot of times I'm not aware because it isn't really signed out there."

Theme #3– Private Property

Most participants were concerned that private lands are sometimes not clearly marked. Many expressed a desire to respect private land while others see private land as a barrier to access, as the following comments indicate.

"Inspired by public lands because it means I can go there; private lands mean that I can't go there and I don't want to see private lands."

"In a lot of cases you get a county road going across private property but there is no indication if it is private property or not."

"Yes, I am aware of the boundaries, and yes, it does affect my perception because I want to be respectful of private lands."

"Private land, if I know, I try to avoid it if private land is blocking you from accessing public lands."

Theme #4– Condition of the Landscape Differs

Finally, several comments were directed toward the condition of the landscape that is often a result of management practices, or activities allowed on some lands and not others. The conditions and choices are also affected by weather and types of vegetation. The following comments give a sample of some of the concerns raised regarding this issues.

"Heavily grazed areas are not as attractive--fewer animals and plants because of over-grazing."

"If you get out much you can be blindfolded and take it off and tell whether it's BLM or Forest Service."

"More likely to drive fast through national parks; BLM more scenic than Forest Service and I slow down."

"Where more destructive management is allowed (grazing, ATV use) it shows!"

"Forest Service - higher land with more trees; higher land - more ATVs."

"In the summer, I might pick Forest Service because it's cooler."

"BLM has a lot of negative attention in the media, which is unfair. BLM is now becoming an outdoor recreation agency more than grazing, but not sure the agency has made the adjustment."

Wilderness Study Area Boundaries

Another boundary related question addresses crossing into Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) in the region. Participants were asked if they were aware when they crossed WSA boundaries and if it influenced their expectations, perceptions or actions. The responses to this open-ended question surfaced a wide variety of perspectives on the topic of wilderness, and the management actions associated with WSAs in the area. The following samples of comments identify the key themes to emerge from this conversation.

Theme #1–Awareness of Boundaries

Many participants commented on how difficult it was to determine where the boundaries are, or even to be aware of them at all.

“Not aware; not all the places I choose to cross have signs.”

“I seldom see any signage of any kind.”

“Problem with tourists, sometimes with the language. They seem to be unaware of the boundaries and the rules regarding WSAs. “

“A lot of times you are not able to identify without map. Management doesn't look different often in WSA. WSAs are more degraded, and that is unfortunate, until some determination is made.”

“Wilderness Areas are generally well signed/defined and are easy to tell when you enter into them. WSAs not so much. I generally know when I'm in one but I couldn't always define that boundary.”

Theme #2– Management Expectations in WSAs

Where people are aware of the boundaries or the existence of WSAs, they have an expectation that they are managed for wilderness characteristics.

“Wilderness is a natural area; livestock grazing in Wilderness is disappointing.”

“I am aware and it does changes my perceptions and expectations, meaning in that I expect to have a heightened sense of naturalness/isolation and expect to see no evidence of active management. “

“Helpful to be knowledgeable about the rules that are different and where they are.”

Theme #3– Restrictions on Recreation

For many, the existence of WSA boundaries was interpreted as restricting or enabling certain types of recreational activity. In the words of the participants:

“Wilderness Study Area good. They are gonna be quiet - certain use restricted.”

“Wilderness protects against cross country ATV travel. Can avoid it in Wilderness.”

“If I answer, is that going to change the rules about accessibility and restricting access?”

“Big proponent of wilderness area. Some areas not trampled. We have a lot of land available to us - some set aside for its own self.”

“Value lack of motorized recreation and value wilderness for that attribute.”

“Wilderness and wilderness study—most restrictive: WSA - because of politics and litigation.”

Theme #4 – Land Ethic

Lastly, several participants spoke of the land ethic that treats all areas as if they are wilderness. Thus, the WSA boundary does not matter to them even if they are aware of it.

“I treat them both with the same respect. We need to insure that the next generation has the same opportunity to see this land as we do.”

“I always think of Stegner's idea that is important to know that wilderness (including WSA) exists, even if you only even know about them, but never visit.”

“I act the same respectful, low impact way no matter where I go.”

When choosing to recreate in the area, where do you spend the most time?

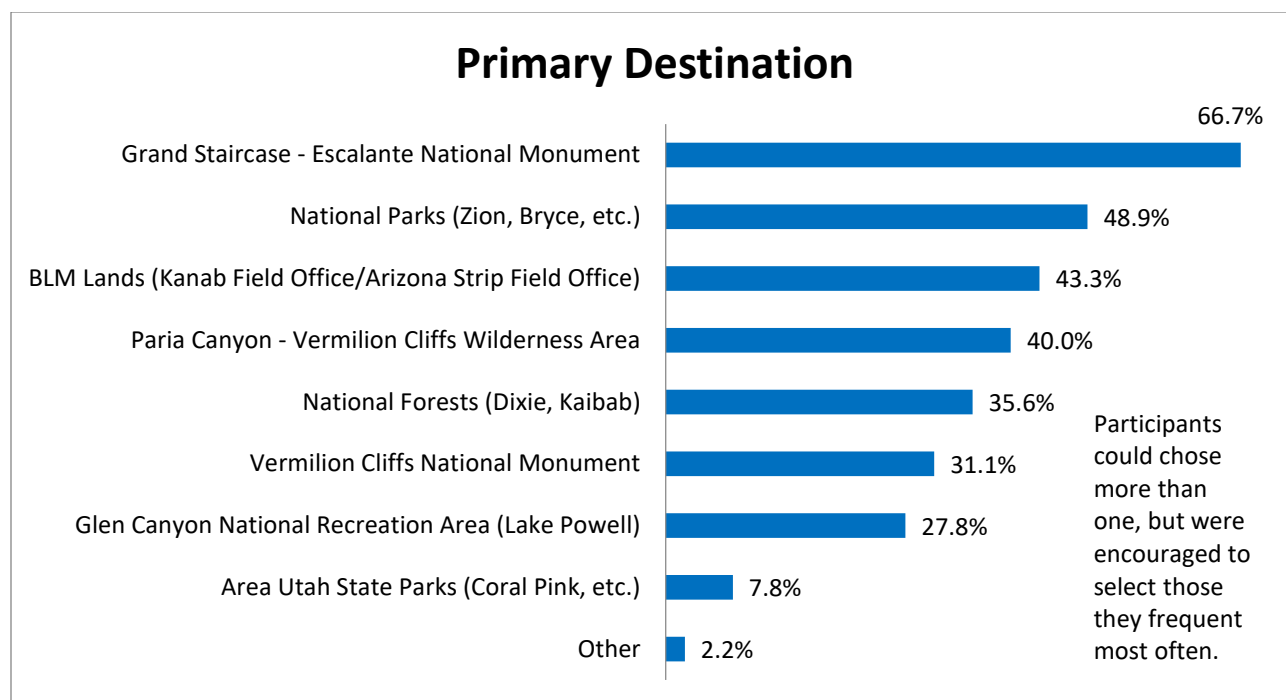
One of the remarkable aspects of the area studied in this phase is the context of the larger landscape the monuments are in. Beyond the world-class public lands and recreational opportunities in the study area additional regional destinations include Zion National Park to the west; Capitol Reef National Park and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area to the east and northeast; Bryce Canyon National Park and Dixie National Forest to the north and northwest; Grand Canyon National Park and Kaibab National Forest to the south, and several nearby Utah State Parks including Coral Pink Sand Dunes, Kodachrome Basin, and Escalante Petrified Forest.

With so many recreational opportunities and amazing landscapes in close proximity to the study area, it is important to understand how these different destinations relate to each other in providing recreation opportunities for local as well as visiting recreationists. To better understand where people spend the most time when recreating in the area, participants were provided a list of regional destinations, including “other”. They were allowed to select several options with the clicker and they could also explain their choices through comments. Figure 19 shows the selections made, most participants selected more than one destination. GSENM was the most common destination (66.7%). The national parks were also popular destinations in the area (48.9%). Non-designated BLM lands in the area were the third most commonly selected destination (43.3%). VCNM was clearly less of a destination among participants (31.1%) compared to the other destinations and still nearly one of every three participants identified it as a destination.

The selection of VCNM as a destination was used as a demographic indicator to study the preferences of those participants in comparison to the participants that did not select VCNM as a primary destination. The results of these comparisons are found in Appendix 3 of this report. In many cases there are similar

preferences, but there are also several instances of significant distinctions that might be instructive to managers of VCNM and others interested in the particular characteristic preferences for that Monument.

Figure 19: Primary Destination(s)



Participants indicated that there were a variety of factors that would influence their decision on what destination they chose to recreate at, including seasons, who they are with, crowding, regulations, and accessibility.

Services

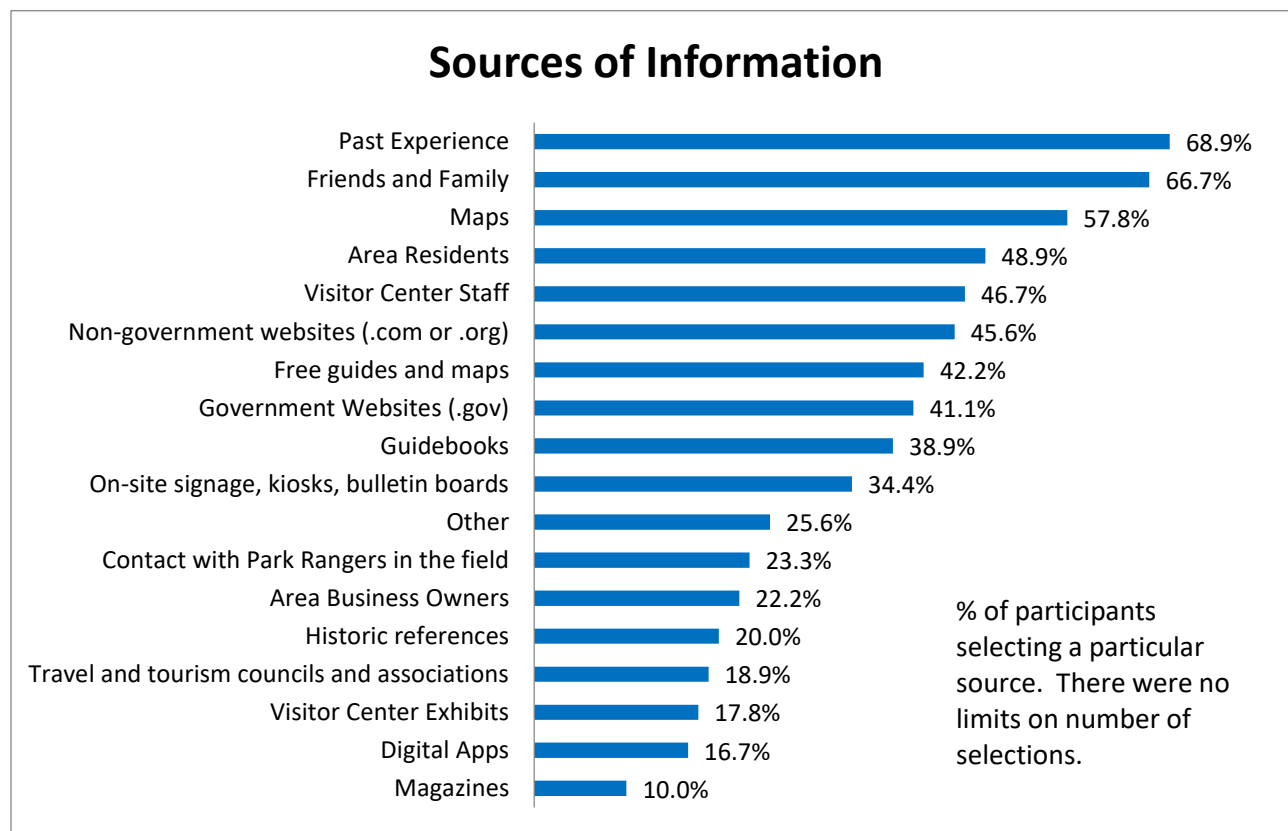
When individuals recreate on public lands they are concerned about the outcomes and experiences that they desire, the activities they want to participate in, and the setting characteristics that make all of those possible, but they are also reliant on the provision of services that make their experiences possible. These services typically range from information to fuel, food to gear, and accommodations to communications. While BLM does not provide many of the services needed by recreationists using the area, the agency does need to understand what services are necessary for visitors and local residents to be successful when recreating in the study area and on adjacent public lands. The data about services allows BLM staff to engage in dialogue with business owners, community leaders, and residents to develop partnerships that enhance the livelihood and well-being of the local communities and supports visitor needs. The conversations that arise from these "practical partnerships" between the BLM and the service providers are one of the best values of this study. Done well, these will strengthen the ties of local residents, community leaders, and business owners to the landscapes surrounding their gateway communities.

Participants were asked several questions to prompt discussion about the kinds of services that are needed to be successful when they recreate in the study area and where those services are located. Their responses and a selection of clarifying comments follow.

Information Sources for the Study Area

The first set of services almost every recreationist relies on to be successful is quality information. The participants were asked, "*Which sources of information do you depend upon to plan your recreation in the study area?*" and were allowed to choose more than one response from the prepared list. Figure 20 contains the percentage of participants that chose particular responses.

Figure 20: Sources of information about study area



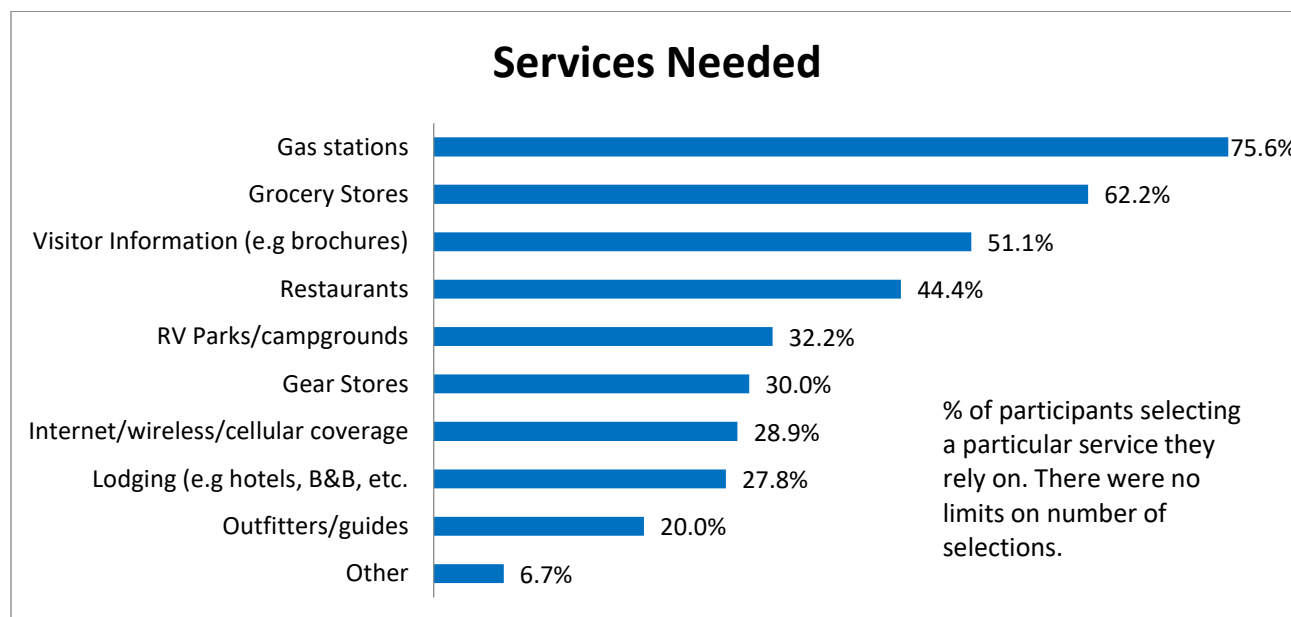
As one might expect, past experiences (68.9%), and maps (57.8%) remain very important sources of information about the area for over half of the participants. These sources of information seem to be complimented by personal interaction with family and friends (66.7%), area residents (48.9%) and visitor center staff (46.7%). It is worth noting the important role that the information provided by BLM plays in the preparation and successful recreation experience in the study area. Not only did nearly half the participants identify the visitor center staff as sources of information, they also indicated that on-site kiosks (34.4%), government websites (41.1%), and even occasional contacts with rangers in the field (23.3%) all contributed to having a successful recreational experience. Digital information seems to be playing a growing role as a source of information. A significant number of participants indicated the usefulness of websites (45.6%)

using non-government websites and 41.1% using government websites) in their preparation. Several also identified digital apps (16.7%), which is quite a bit more than in previous phases of the study.

Other services needed for successful recreation experiences

In order to measure the other services that participants depended on, they were asked “*What services do you depend on to have a successful recreational experience?*” and to select as many responses from the prepared list as were applicable. These services range from gas to groceries and gear to accommodations. It is important to note that BLM is not planning on offering most or any of these services, but BLM planning efforts require that the agency understand the interactions between recreational users of public lands and the surrounding communities. “Practical partnerships” between BLM and service providers can result from this understanding and provide support for the provision of quality recreational experiences on public lands. Figure 21 shows the percentage of total participants selecting each of the services.

Figure 21: Services Needed



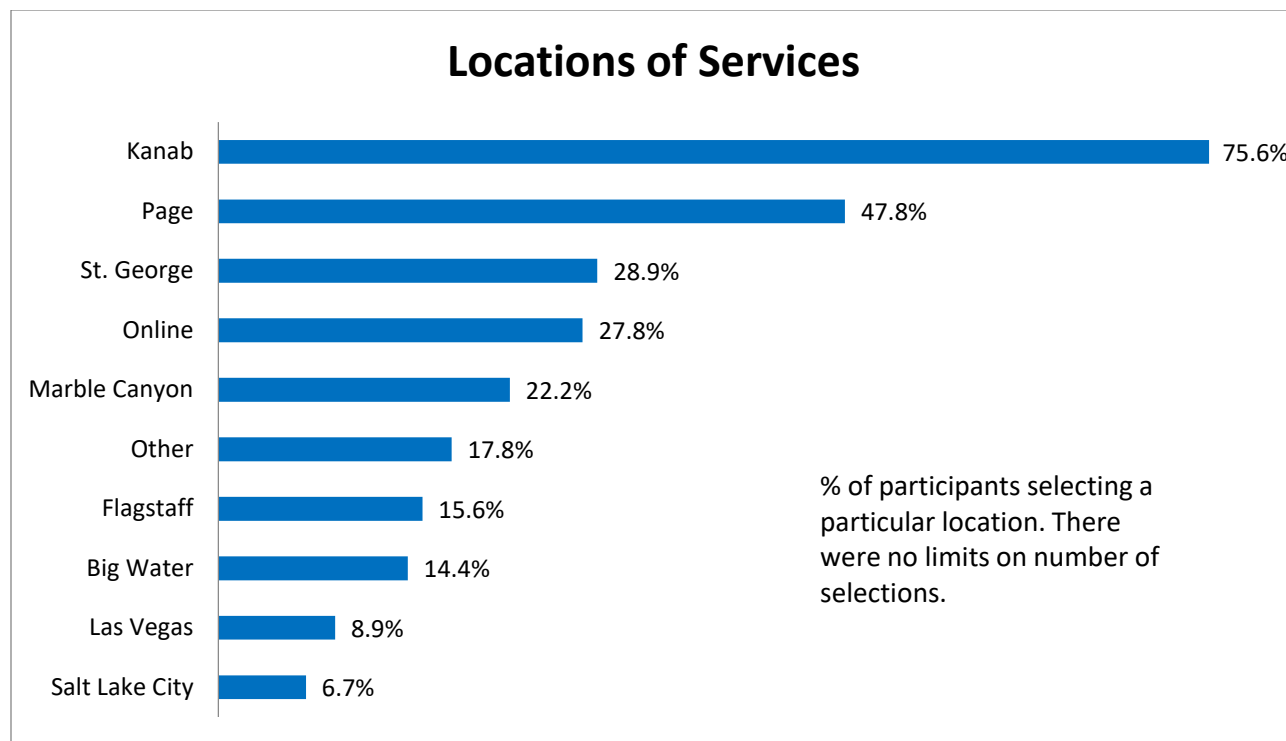
As one might expect, gas stations were the most common selection (75.6%) followed by grocery stores (62.2%), visitor information (51.1%) and restaurants (44.4%). Wireless/cellular coverage (28.9%) drew mixed reaction in the comments as a split between those who felt safer with cell coverage, and those who didn't need or want it because of a desire for self-reliance or a “wilderness” setting. Accommodations were split between RV parks / campgrounds at 32.2% and lodging (hotels, B&Bs, etc.) at 27.8%. 30% of participants selected gear stores, and 20% selected outfitters and guides. Additional comments by participants suggest they also rely on services not listed such as GPS devices and google earth/google maps applications.

Where those services are located

The real power of a discussion of services that participants depend on is to combine it with the location of those services so we can better understand that dimension of the relationship between the gateway communities and the public lands surrounding them. Once again participants were encouraged to offer comments as well as consider a list of several of the communities from which they might obtain services.

They were allowed to choose as many locations as they thought essential. Figure 22 shows the number of total selections for any particular location to obtain services.

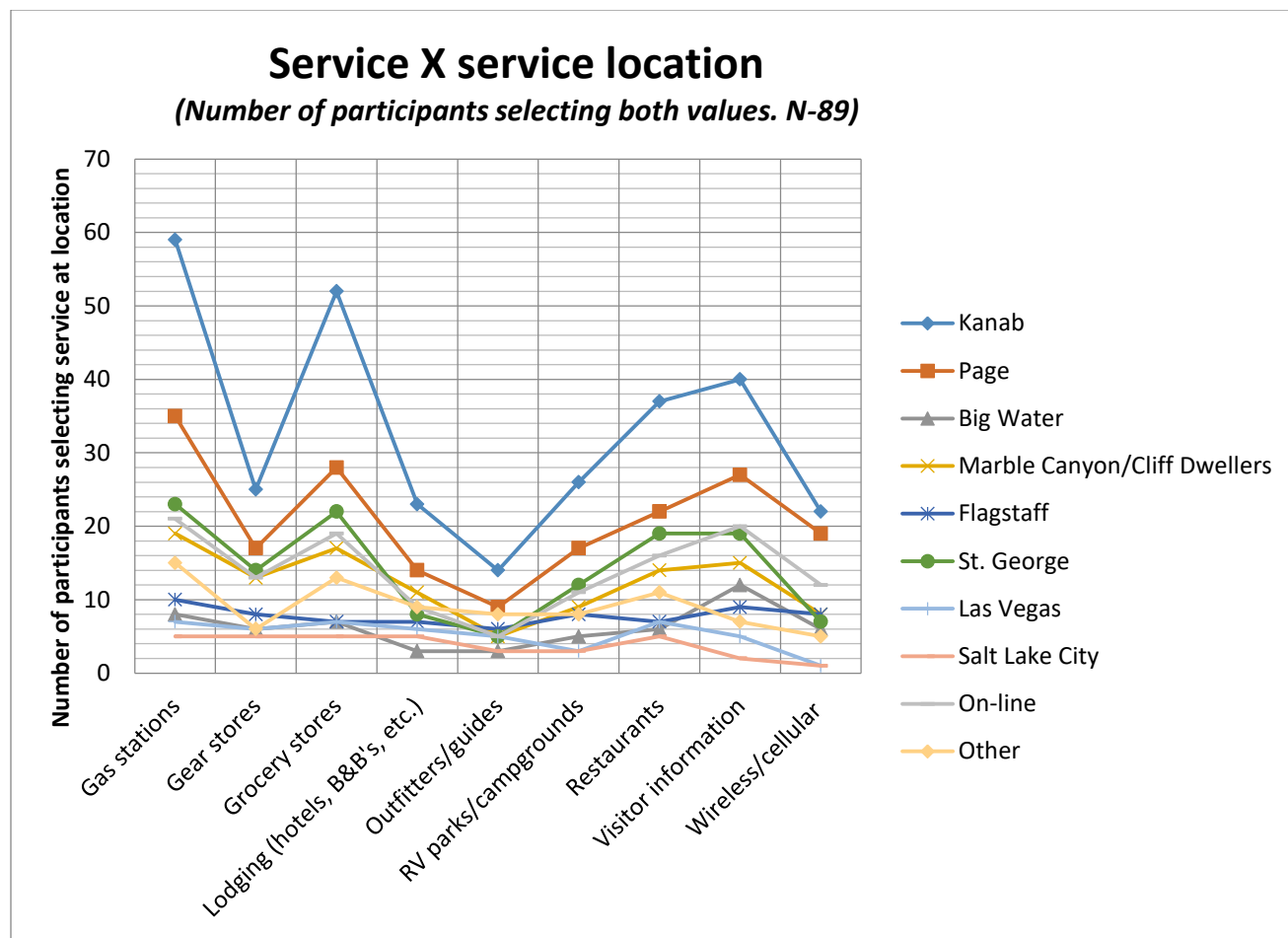
Figure 22– Location of Services



When asked about where the services are located that participants depend on for recreational support in the study area it is apparent the significant role played by the gateway communities of Kanab (75.6%) and Page, Arizona (47.8%). For some services, participants moved beyond the immediate gateway communities to find services in St. George, UT (28.9%), on-line shopping (27.8%) and even Flagstaff, AZ (15.6%). A number of participants selected Marble Canyon, AZ (22.2%), which acts as a gateway service provider for the southern side of the study area, particularly for participants noting VCNM as a primary destination. Some participants selected other (17.8%). When asked to clarify, they indicated that they obtained services from Escalante, Boulder, and Jacob’s Lake. Several of the comments indicated the improved quality of services in towns such as Escalante, but there was also concern expressed that some surrounding communities (i.e. Escalante and Kanab) don’t appreciate the boost public lands gives to the local economy through the use of these services.

From these responses it appears that recreation in the study area provides an important contribution to the local tourist economy in the gateway communities proximate to the Monuments and a spill-over economic effect on other communities in the region. In order to understand more precisely what types of services are utilized in each community, individual services were correlated with the communities selected by each participant and are displayed below in Figure 23 below.

Figure 23 – Services and locations of those services



Missing Services

When asked what services were missing that hinder the participant's ability to have a successful recreational experience in the study area, responses ranged from more social opportunities to shuttle services, emergency services, and expanded times services are available.

"It would be handy to be able to rent a 4WD vehicle locally at Las Vegas rates ...dreaming, I know."

"You have family in town and you go out for a hike and you want to go out for pizza and beer and there's nothing around."

"Consistent cell phone or internet service."

"More up to date highway information, especially in bad weather."

"Broadband. It's a big challenge—we have accidents and people have to drive out."

"Community education—not necessarily for people who live here. Time zone changes between Page, Arizona and Wave lottery (on Utah time)."

"Do we have a hospital, do we have guides, do we have shuttle services?"

"I would enjoy more live music, more diverse dining experiences. It's slowly improving."

Most Recent Visit -Expectations and Surprises

The final discussion in the focus groups centered on the participants' memories of their most recent visit to the study area. They were asked to comment on whether that last visit met their expectations and whether they were surprised by anything. Of course, the most important element of this discussion was their response to the follow up question, "Why?"

Based on their responses, the area is generally meeting or exceeding expectations as evidenced by these comments which are typical of many expressed about the area and its ability to surprise and delight.

"Pay-off at the end of the trail; the more you go, the more you find."

"When I first came to the area - petroglyphs and dinosaur footprints were rare, they're not rare."

"It always surprises me how remote and rugged it can be just 5 minutes from town."

"My last recreation outing in the study area was wonderful. Actually, all my experiences have been wonderful; even Coyote Gulch in July."

"Wire Pass, Buckskin, the Paria - even from the pictures. I was not prepared for how magnificent it is. There is still room to be humbled, even if you have seen it several times."

"I loved every minute in the Monument."

"It far exceeded my expectation. Each time I visit I am amazed at the diversity of scenery and wildlife."

"I'm never disappointed with the Monument. Leave it alone."

Conclusions:

After analysis of the responses from 89 participants in 14 focus groups over seven (7) months of data collection in 2015, the following conclusions began to emerge regarding the study area. These conclusions are separated into observations and recommendations. Although in a baseline study, the principal focus would be on observations of the setting and context, inevitably as participants expressed their ideas concerning the area of study, some of those ideas came as recommendations for future action. These were not solicited, but are recorded as part of the response given.

Observations

- The entire study area, which includes the southern part of GSENM, all of VCNM and the Paria Canyon-Vermillion Cliffs Wilderness Area, is characterized by the vast majority of participants as an

area of amazing scenic beauty. This is the most common quality identified as a reason this is a special place. Activities such as photography, and scenic driving are popular pursuits that rely on this value of the landscape. Visual resources clearly support the outstanding recreational experiences in the study area.

- Numerous participants throughout the focus group study indicated that one of the most important qualities of this landscape is its uniqueness. Many comments suggest that this place is like no other they have encountered. There are several qualities they point to which contribute to this uniqueness including: geologic features found nowhere else in the world; an abundance of paleontological resources, many of which are unique to only this area; and the opportunity to see endangered wildlife species such as the California condor described as a once in a lifetime experience. These unique resources contribute to obtaining the outcomes associated with the natural history and science interest and expectation selected by many participants.
- With 1.9 million acres in GSENM and nearly 300,000 acres in VCNM, a significant contributing factor to the overall experience of the study area is the enormous scale of the vast open spaces in the landscape. This large-scale setting allows for more dispersed recreation that supports the values of solitude and privacy, and remoteness as well as the outcomes associated with tranquil escape which was one of the most popular interest and expectations selected by participants.
- Most participants also commented on and selected values associated with the wild, natural and rugged characteristics of the landscape. These values allow for the attainment of recreational outcomes associated with the interest and expectation of natural landscapes which is the most preferred selection among all participants as well as the interest and expectation of self-reliant adventures which has particular appeal to about half of the participants who identified as local residents. These values even impacted the ideas of several participants regarding their preferences on the types of roads in the area as they suggested that a less developed road would fit the characteristic of the landscape much better.
- One of the participants remarked that for him, the people around the area are the reason it is a special place. While that was a comment from just one participant, the sentiment was widely shared through a variety of other comments that surfaced in the discussions. A variety of groups of people were identified as contributing to the value of the landscape in the study area. Some talked about the importance of indigenous populations in the past (archeological sites) as well as those who still live in the area and maintain that ancient connection to the landscape such as the Navajo community. Others identified the people in surrounding communities as an integral part of the specialness of the landscape. Not only have many of their ancestors worked the landscape to settle in the region, but current residents also add to the character of the area through their knowledge of the landscape, their hospitality to visitors and their own recreation on these public lands with their family and friends. These communities, particularly Kanab and Page provide valuable support services which make it possible for visitors to have a successful recreational experience in the study area. Another group of people identified as important to the landscape are the tourists. In addition to helping the local economies with the purchase of services from gasoline and guide services to hotels and restaurants; these tourists also provide the locals an opportunity to share this amazing landscape with others. Several participants commented on the satisfaction they derive from seeing

others enjoying “their backyard.” Combined, these groups create the opportunity to achieve the recreational outcomes associated with the interest and expectation categories of cultural and heritage history as well as sharing the landscape with youth, family and friends.

- The mode of transportation to encounter the landscape is always a consideration when managing public lands for recreation or other values. While the most popular selection for activity was hiking/walking/running which would indicate that much of this landscape is approached on foot; a number of comments from participants also highlighted the value of ATVs and other vehicles to encounter this landscape. Often these modes of transportation are used in combination so a participant might use a vehicle for initial access then continue deeper into the landscape on foot. Several participants also expressed the value of riding a horse in the area, or seeing someone else riding. Some suggested that this mode of transportation fits the classic image of the “old” west and seems a fitting reminder of the long and ongoing relationship people have with this landscape. There was concern expressed by “quiet users” about the noise and resource damage that can come with ATV and 4x4 traffic, however, most participants supported the idea that the landscape is so large that it can (and should) accommodate all of these modes of transportation in the study area.
- Several participants expressed concern for the safety of visitors to the landscape. Some were concerned about the inexperience or unpreparedness of tourists who come to see the area, particularly those from other countries who might only have a connection to the landscape based off a picture of The Wave on the internet. Some fear that those who lack a connection to the place or are unfamiliar with the rules and regulations are also likely to do damage to the resources in the area either intentionally or unintentionally. There were also a number of concerns voiced about the strain on search and rescue as well as local health care resources as more and more people come to recreate in the area. Because of the scale and ruggedness of the landscape, it is easy to become lost or stranded if an emergency arises and it might be difficult to call for or receive help in such a situation.
- One of the major management tools to maintain characteristics of the landscape is the ability to assign a number to the total visitor count in an area, and the group size in an area. The fact that every focus group responded to a numeric question in the photo section by suggesting “it depends on...” might cause one to rethink some of those prescriptions.
- Finally, there were many comments and suggestions regarding the permit process for access to Coyote Buttes and The Wave. Several participants were concerned that the number of permits and the random nature of assigning those opportunities have significantly impacted their ability to experience the area. Some are not even interested in The Wave, but the other parts of the permit area that they feel crowded out of because everyone wants to see The Wave. Arguments were made for keeping the lottery drawing in Kanab as well as moving it to Big Water or Page. Often these were framed in terms of fairness or the need to share the economic opportunities associated with lottery participants staying in the area. Others were critical of the focus on The Wave as an iconic destination. Promoting The Wave as THE most unique destination in the area, acts as a distraction from the many other truly unique features of the area. It also sets up most tourists for disappointment since there are far more tourists and local residents wanting to recreate in the area on any given day than the 20 permits offered to access The Wave and Coyote Buttes area.

Suggestions

There were several suggestions offered to address concerns expressed by participants. These suggestions appeared in a variety of comments from various focus groups throughout the study. This report does not necessarily endorse the suggestions; however, because this study is intended to develop a baseline for recreational interests and expectations in the study area, they are certainly worth consideration and further conversation between all relevant stakeholders including the GSENM and VCNM staff. They are summarized here.

- There should be a number of efforts made to educate the public about the unique resources in study area as well as how one can recreate without diminishing those resources (e.g. maps, signs, visitor information, websites). There were also several suggestions regarding the need for safety education for visitors to the area because of the challenges of surviving in the challenging landscape. Visitors can often get lost, drive vehicles into areas that are not suited for the vehicle they are driving, and fail to adequately prepare for back-country experiences with adequate water and other supplies.
- The natural landscapes and tranquil escapes opportunities are the overwhelming preferred qualities to be maintained in study area.
- When discussing the various managing agencies and government authorities with a say in the use, regulation and protection of the landscape, many participants expressed frustration at the silo like approach each government entity and government agency takes toward the lands under their control. Visitors often move across many management boundaries, counties and even state lines while recreating in the region. They called for a regional planning cooperation between federal, state and local governments as well as between the various federal land agencies such as GSENM, VCNM, GCNRA, and the BLM Kanab Field Office. Such cooperative efforts would support the regionally based recreation interests and expectations of all who go to the landscape. At a minimum, participants have asked for consistent signage and road numbering across the various jurisdictions.
- While discussing the permit process into The Wave/Coyote Buttes area, a few participants called for a separation of the two areas in the permitting process because most people in the lottery go straight to The Wave, and those who want to go to Coyote Buttes have to compete for those few spots when they have no intention of going to The Wave itself. This move would allow more people to experience both sites without increasing the number of visitors at either individually.
- Finally, because this area draws more tourism than many other parts of the region, there is unmet opportunity to provide visitors with shuttle services to various destinations. This would not only add to the economic opportunities for local residents, but might enhance the safety of visitors who could otherwise get lost or cause damage to the landscape due to their lack of knowledge about or connection to this place.

Future research in this five-year study will include two additional phases. In 2016 Phase 4 will concentrate on the northern region of the Monument accessed by Highway 12 and Burr Trail Road. The last year of the study will take a comparative look at all four areas of the Monument covered in earlier phases. A final

report released in 2018 will identify a recreational baseline of desired outcomes across the entire Grand Staircase Escalante and Vermillion Cliffs National Monuments, with emphasis on unique qualities of one or more regions.

Appendix 1: Meeting Handout Phase 3 – HWY 89, Vermilion Cliffs, Paria Canyon & Plateau

Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument

Vermillion Cliffs National Monument

Kanab Field Office

Recreation Experience Baseline Study

Phase 3

HWY 89

Vermilion Cliffs

Paria Canyon & Plateau



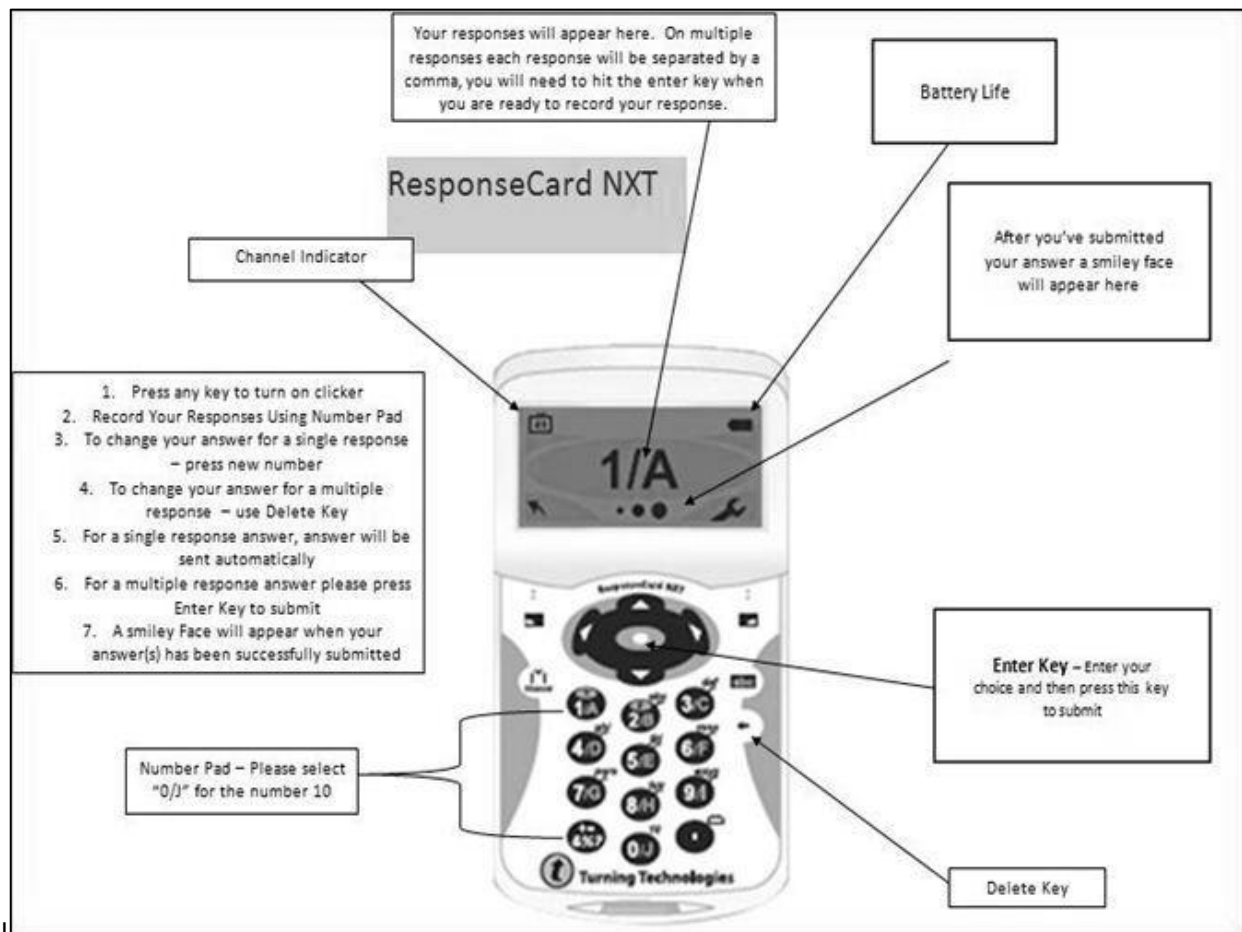
Tim Casey, PhD

Natural Resource Center - Colorado Mesa University

2015

Participants:

- ✓ Listen, contribute, and stay focused on the subject at hand
- ✓ Feel free to keep or change your opinions in response to what you hear
- ✓ Respect others' right to share their thoughts; do not interrupt
- ✓ The moderator will stop anyone who attempts to block another's views
- ✓ Feel free to get up, obtain refreshments, or visit the restroom
- ✓ Do not engage in separate, private discussions
- ✓ Remember, participation is voluntary on all questions



To ensure that we all can use the clickers to help record your preferences throughout the focus group, let's try them now.

1. Would you start by entering your home zip-code when the slide is available and the polling bar in the corner of the slide is green.

To submit your response, select the enter key in the center of the arrows. You should see a smiley face at the bottom of your screen, if your response has been received.

2. Which of the following choices best describes your primary association with the study area?

1	Visitor
2	Local Resident
3	Community Leader (elected / non-elected)
4	Outfitter/Guide
5	Business owner
6	Other

3. What are the qualities of the study area that make it special for you? (Open Ended)

3. What are the qualities of the study area that makes it a special place for you? (Choose up to five.)

SP-1	1	It's my back yard
	2	It's where I spend quality time with friends and family
	3	Historic qualities - how previous generations used the area
	4	Productive qualities - grazing and hunting
	5	Biological resources - plants, animals, etc.
	6	Physical resources - geology, paleontology, etc.
	7	Cultural resources -archeology, etc.
	8	Scenic quality
	9	Spiritual and/or religious qualities
	0	Sense of freedom
SP-2	1	Wild, unspoiled, and natural
	2	Remote and rugged
	3	Sense of solitude and privacy
	4	Natural quietness
	5	Dark night skies
	6	Sense of discovery/learning opportunities
	7	Dogs and/or horses are allowed
	8	Lack of development or improvements
	9	It's where I engage in recreational activities I enjoy
	0	Other

4. What could or does diminish the specialness for you? (Open-ended)

4. What could or does diminish the specialness for you? (Choose up to five.)

DIM-1	1	Additional fees, permits, or restrictions
	2	Increased use and crowding
	3	Increased traffic and/or increase use of a wider array of vehicles
	4	Group size limits I consider to be too high
	5	Group size limits I consider to be too low
	6	Limitations on historic uses and productive qualities
	7	Additional facilities and improvements
	8	Lack of facilities and improvements
	9	Increased access
	0	Limited access
DIM-2	1	Vandalism, litter, graffiti, and/or human waste
	2	Damage to soils and vegetation
	3	Lack of solitude and privacy
	4	Noise
	5	Artificial light
	6	Livestock or evidence of them
	7	Culture clashes – locals vs. visitors or long time locals vs. move-ins
	8	Lack of connection to or education about place
	9	Residential or industrial development (utility lines, pipelines, etc.)
	0	Other

5. At the places you enjoy visiting has use increased or decreased in the last five (5) years?

1. Strongly Decreased	2. Slightly Decreased	3. No Change	4. Slightly Increased	5. Strongly Increased
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6. If use at that these places has changed in the last five (5) years, has it been for the better or worse?

1. Much worse	2. Somewhat worse	3. No change	4. Somewhat better	5. Much better
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Why?

7. Are there particular places that are most important to you?

Why are these areas particularly special?

(Please write your clicker number, the names of these places, and why they are special on the sticky notes provided and place them on the general location of the area large map.)

8. When you go to your areas of interest, which of these phrases best captures your interests and expectations for going there? (Choose up to 3.)

CS-1	1	Natural Landscapes	I like to surround myself with the beauty of open space and the wildness of mountains, forests, rangeland, water and wildlife
	2	Rural Landscapes	I want to connect with the visual landscapes, sense of place and pace of rural areas where people make their living from the land
	3	Cultural & Heritage History	I am interested in how historic and prehistoric peoples lived in the area, and in exploring the connections I have with those peoples
	4	Natural History & Science	I am interested in knowing about natural processes in this area and the study of the scientific value of the landscape for enhancing our understanding of the world around us.
	5	Health & Fitness	I like being able to regularly access public lands recreation areas that help me get and stay fit or improve my mental well-being
	6	Self-Reliant Adventure	I prefer outdoor adventure on my own that challenges my outdoor skills, improves my abilities, and maybe even involves some risk
CS-2	1	Tranquil Escapes	I look forward to the quiet serenity of getting away from it all for some mental and physical relaxation, reflection, and renewal
	2	Youth, Family & Friends	I am enriched by socializing with others: young people, my family and/or friends and enjoying companionship in the outdoors together
	3	Community Life	I like seeing what the discovery and enjoyment of nearby open space recreation does for my community and our visiting guests

	4	Economic Well-being	I want to see public lands recreation areas contributing in a significant way to our economic livelihood
	5	Learning & instructing	I feel comfortable having others equip and enable me to do recreation and tourism outings—or being part of helping others learn how to do that
	6	Stewardship & Caretaking	I like giving back to the outdoors from what I've received by helping care for special sites and facilities so others can also enjoy them

9. When visiting those areas, what activities do you engage in most often? (Choose up to 3.)

Act-1	1	Scenic Driving
	2	Exploring or discovering new areas
	3	Hiking/Walking/Running
	4	Backpacking
	5	Car Camping
	6	Picnicking
	7	Rock Climbing/Canyoneering
	8	Nature Study (wildlife viewing/ bird watching/geology/plants)
	9	4x4 Driving (Jeep, truck, SUV)
	0	ATV/UTV riding
Act-2	1	Bicycling/ Mountain Biking
	2	Horseback Riding
	3	Family or Group Activities (civic groups, clubs, scouts, church, historic reenactments, etc.)
	4	Ranching activities
	5	Hunting
	6	Photography
	7	Learning activities (interpretive programs, educational outings, etc.)
	8	Art/Writing activities
	9	Spiritual renewal activities
	0	Other

10. Do you recreate in these areas primarily because:

1	The PLACES are inherently special to me
2	These areas allow me to engage in a favored ACTIVITY
3	Both PLACE and ACTIVITY are important to me

11. Photos & Preference: The next set of slides show images from the area of study. The images depict settings and travel routes in this region and we will use those to discuss your preferences.

12a. When traveling in the area of study are you aware when you travel across administrative boundaries (BLM, NPS, USFS, private land, state land, etc.)?

If so, how does that influence what you do, your expectations, or your perceptions?

12b. When traveling in the area of study are you aware when you go into and out of Wilderness Areas or Wilderness Study Areas?

If so, how does that influence what you do, your expectations, or your perceptions?

13. When choosing where to recreate in this region, where do you spend the most time? (Choose up to 3.)

Dest-1	1	Grand Staircase- Escalante National Monument
	2	Vermilion Cliffs National Monument
	3	Paria Canyon-Vermilion Cliffs Wilderness Area
	4	BLM lands (Kanab Field Office/Arizona Strip Field Office)
	5	Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (Lake Powell)
	6	National Forests (Dixie, Kaibab)
	7	National Parks (Zion, Bryce, Grand Canyon, etc.)
	8	Area Utah State Parks (Coral Pink, etc.)
	9	Other

14. Which sources of information do you depend upon to plan your recreation in the region? (Choose all that apply.)

S-1	1	Friends and family
	2	Past experience
	3	Area business owners
	4	Area residents
	5	Visitor Center staff
	6	Contact with park rangers in the field
	7	Visitor Center exhibits
	8	On-Site signage, kiosks, bulletin boards
	9	Travel and tourism councils and associations
S-2	1	Magazines
	2	Free guides and maps
	3	Guidebooks
	4	Government websites - .gov
	5	Non-government websites - .com or .org

	6	Digital apps
	7	Historic references
	8	Maps (topographic, National Geographic, etc.)
	9	Other

15. What services do you depend on to have a successful recreational experience? (Choose all that apply.)

Services-1	1	Gas stations
	2	Gear stores
	3	Grocery stores
	4	Lodging (e.g. hotels, B&B's, etc.)
	5	Outfitters/guides
	6	RV parks/campgrounds
	7	Restaurants
	8	Visitor information (e.g. brochures)
	9	Internet/wireless/cellular coverage
	0	Other

16. Where are those services located? (Choose all that apply.)

Se	vi	1	Kanab
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	2	Page
	3	Big Water
	4	Marble Canyon/Cliff Dwellers
	5	Flagstaff
	6	St. George
	7	Las Vegas
	8	Salt Lake City
	9	Online
	0	Other


17. Are there services that are missing that prevent you from having a successful experience?

18. Did your last recreational outing in the study area meet your expectations? Why or why not?

19. What was the most surprising thing about your visit compared to what you expected?

Appendix 2 – BLM Recreational Setting Characteristic Matrix

Figure 24 – Land Use Planning ROS matrix

Every Recreation Setting Can be Described:		<div> <div>By the Variation Within... ▶</div> <div>...its Component Attributes ▼</div> </div>					
		<div>Setting Classes</div> 					
		Primitive	Back Country	Middle Country	Front Country	Rural Country	Urban
BIO- PHYSICAL:	a. Remoteness:						
	b. Naturalness:						
	c. Facilities:						
SOCIAL:	d. Group Size:						
	e. Contacts:						
	f. Evidence of Use:						
OPERA- TIONAL:	g. Visitor Services:						
	h. Management Controls:						
	i. Travel Mode:						

Appendix 3 – Key Responses from Participants Selecting VCNM as a Primary Destination

Figure 25 – Interest and Expectation Values Selected by VCNM Destination Participants

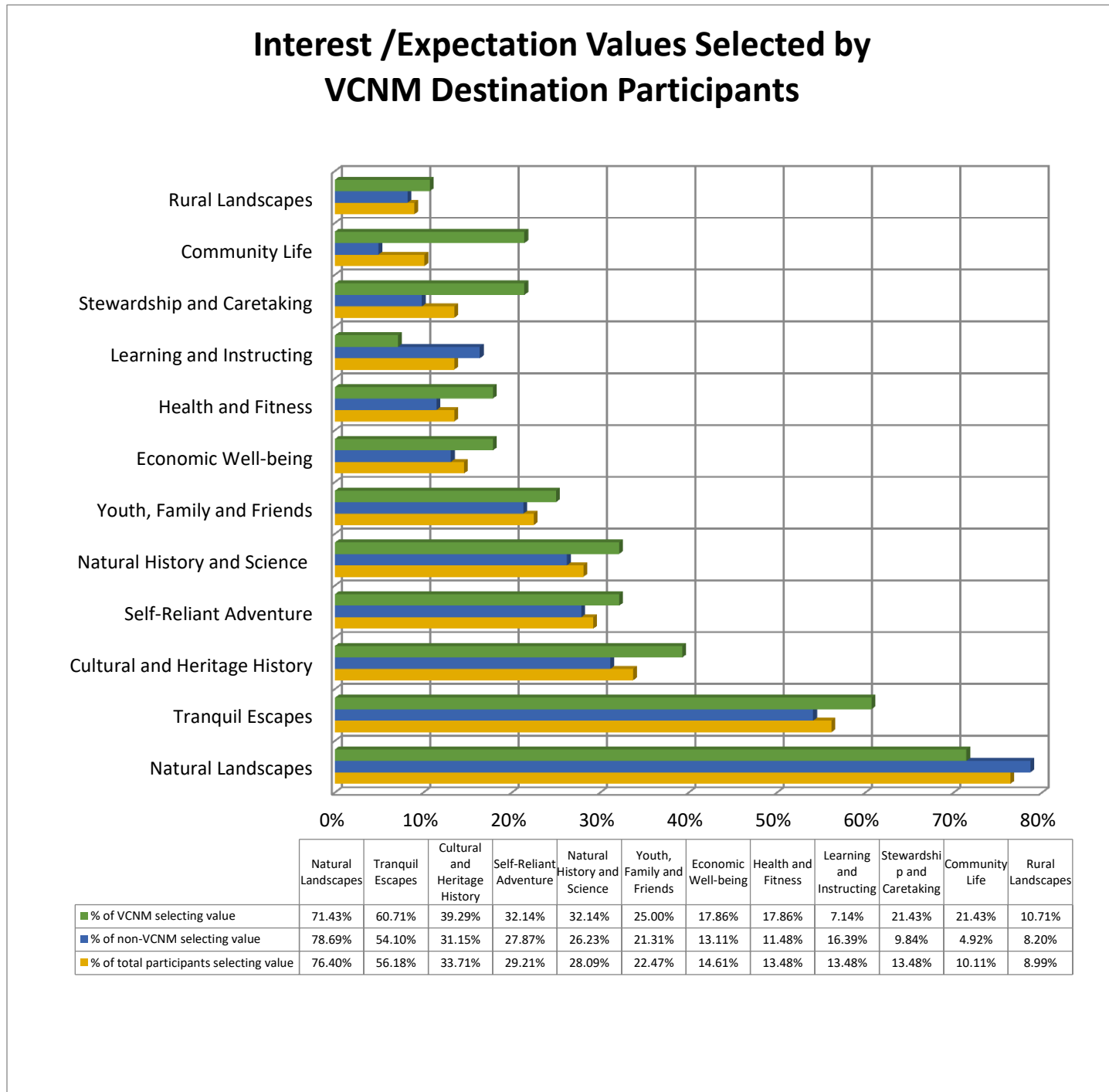


Figure 26 – Special Qualities Selected by VCNM Destination Participants

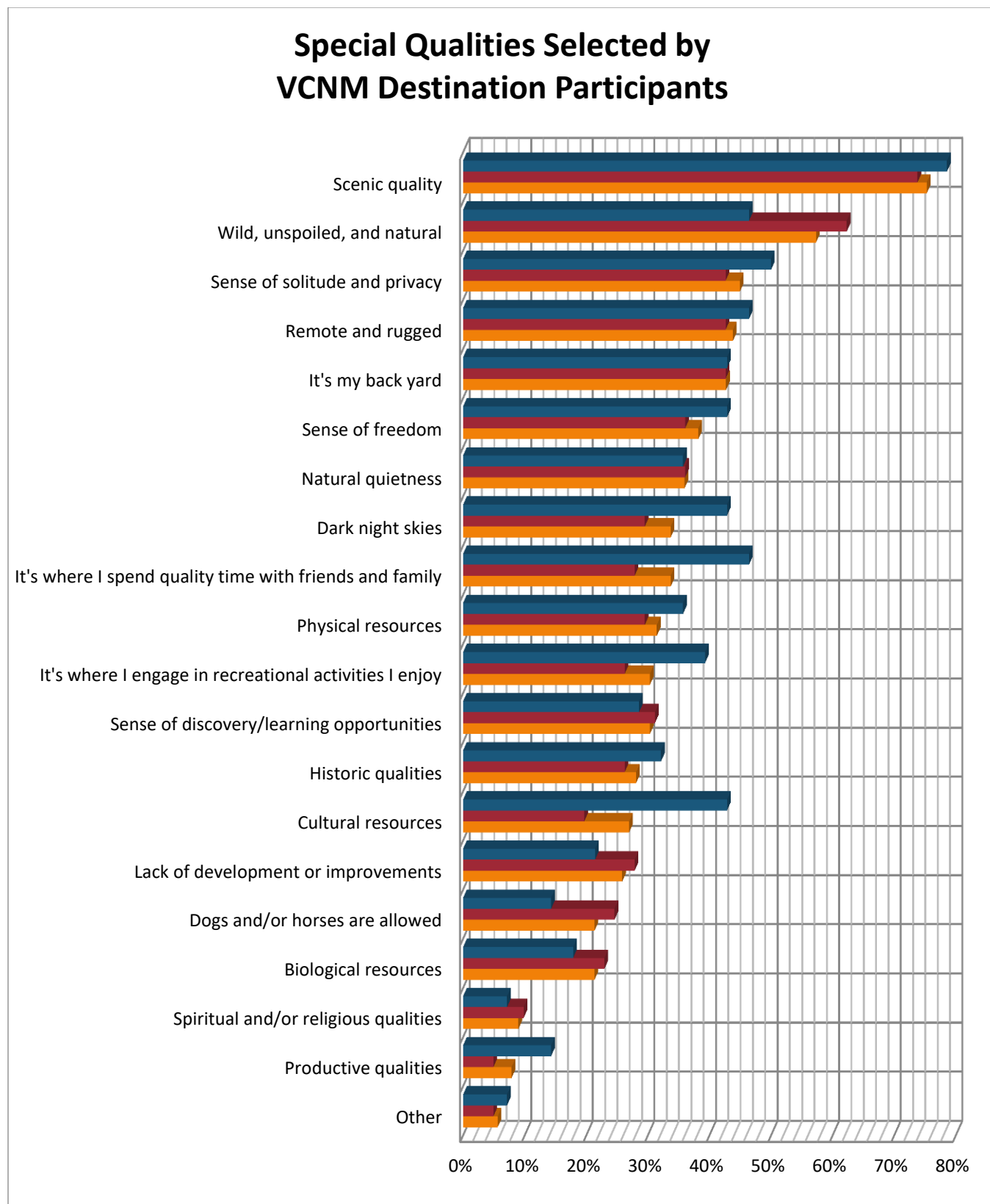


Figure 27 – Diminishing Qualities Selected by VCNM Destination Participants

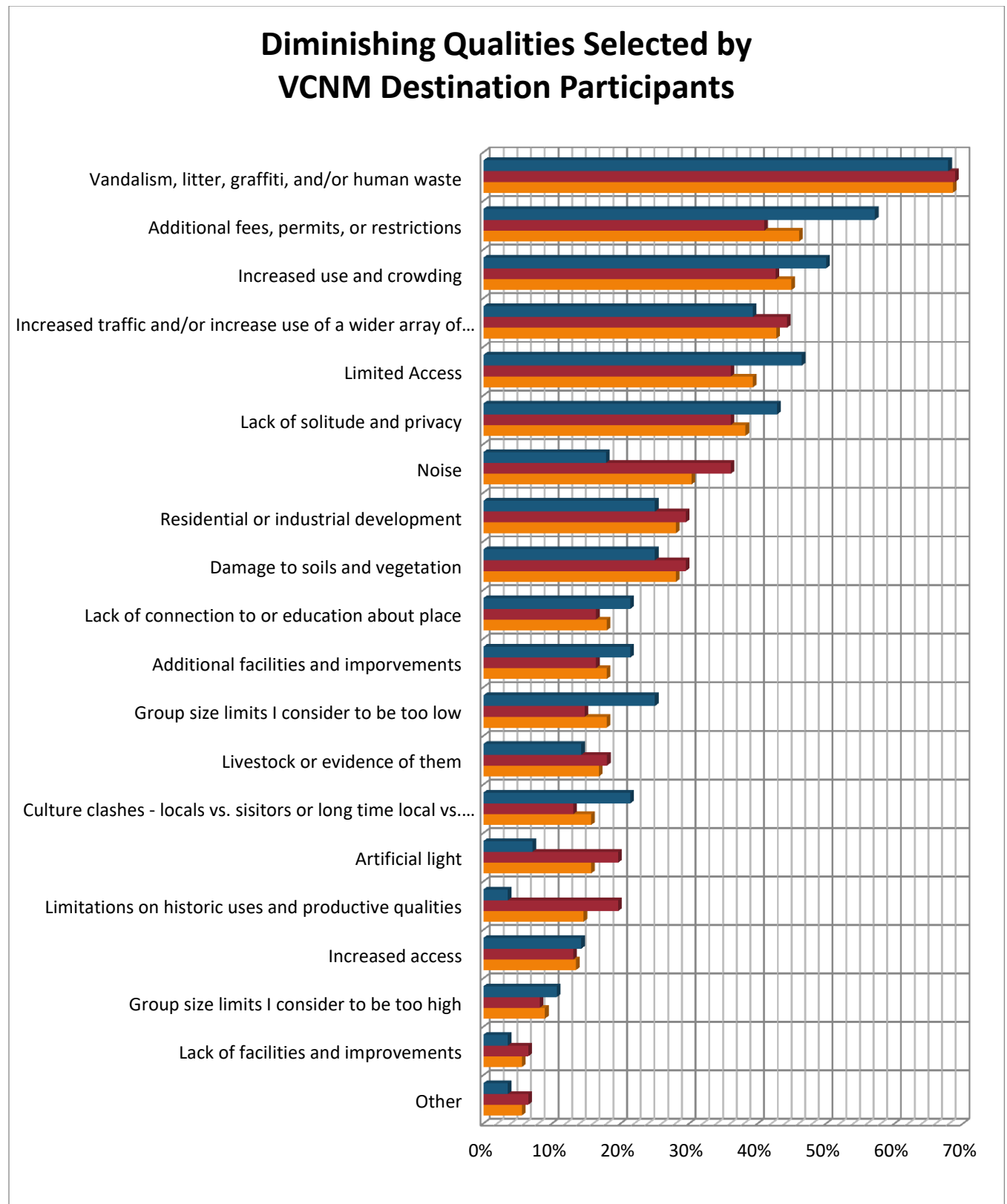


Figure 28 – Activities Selected by VCNM Destination Participants

