

National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey 2010/2011: Individual Refuge Results for William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

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We have enjoyed going to the Finley Refuge for approximately twenty years. Walking on the trails each season is renewing for us. Driving on the roads when the trails are closed is just as enjoyable. We go slow and stop many times to observe. There have been many times it takes us three hours to go a mile on a trail because of all the things we stop to observe and wonder at. We have checked off many birds on our bird list at Finley. We enjoy seeing the elk herd right in front of us, hearing a bull elk bugle in the mist in October, watching harriers and other hawks glide over the hilltops, and we are amazed at the thousands of geese taking flight and then sitting quietly and listening to the meadow larks singing. All of this makes Finley a special place to my wife and me.—Survey comment from visitor to William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge.



William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge. Photo credit: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Introduction

The National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System), established in 1903 and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), is the leading network of protected lands and waters in the world dedicated to the conservation of fish, wildlife and their habitats. There are 556 national wildlife refuges (NWRs) and 38 wetland management districts nationwide, including possessions and territories in the Pacific and Caribbean, encompassing more than 150 million acres. The mission of the Refuge System is to “administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and, where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.” Part of achieving this mission is the goal “to foster understanding and instill appreciation of fish, wildlife, and plants, and their conservation, by providing the public with safe, high-quality, and compatible wildlife-dependent public use” (Clark, 2001). The Refuge System attracts more than 45 million visitors annually, including 25 million people per year to observe and photograph wildlife, over 9 million to hunt and fish, and more than 10 million to participate in educational and interpretation programs (Uniack, 1999; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2007). Understanding visitors and characterizing their experiences on national wildlife refuges are critical elements of managing these lands and meeting the goals of the Refuge System.

The Service contracted with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to conduct a national survey of visitors regarding their experiences on national wildlife refuges. The survey was conducted to better understand visitor needs and experiences and to design programs and facilities that respond to those needs. The survey results will inform Service performance planning, budget, and communications goals. Results will also inform Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCPs), Visitor Services, and Transportation Planning processes.

Organization of Results

These results are for William L. Finley NWR (this refuge) and are part of USGS Data Series 643 (Sexton and others, 2011). All refuges participating in the 2010/2011 surveying effort will receive individual refuge results specific to the visitors to that refuge. Each set of results is organized by the following categories:

- **Introduction:** An overview of the Refuge System and the goals of the national surveying effort.
- **Methods:** The procedures for the national surveying effort, including selecting refuges, developing the survey instrument, contacting visitors, and guidance for interpreting the results.
- **Refuge Description:** A brief description of the refuge location, acreage, purpose, recreational activities, and visitation statistics, including a map (where available) and refuge website link.
- **Sampling at This Refuge:** The sampling periods, locations, and response rate for this refuge.
- **Selected Survey Results:** Key findings for this refuge, including:
 - Visitor and Trip Characteristics
 - Visitor Spending in the Local Communities
 - Visitors Opinions about This Refuge
 - Visitor Opinions about National Wildlife Refuge System Topics
- **Conclusion**
- **References**
- **Survey Frequencies (Appendix A):** The survey instrument with the frequency results for this refuge.
- **Visitor Comments (Appendix B):** The verbatim responses to the open-ended survey questions for this refuge.

Methods

Selecting Participating Refuges

The national visitor survey was conducted from July 2010 – November 2011 on 53 refuges across the Refuge System (table 1). Based on the Refuge System’s 2008 Refuge Annual Performance Plan (RAPP; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2011, written comm.), 192 refuges with a minimum visitation of 25,000 were considered. This criterion was the median visitation across the Refuge System and the minimum visitation necessary to ensure that the surveying would be logistically feasible onsite. Visitors were sampled on 35 randomly selected refuges and 18 other refuges that were selected by Service Regional Offices to respond to priority refuge planning processes.

Developing the Survey Instrument

USGS researchers developed the survey in consultation with the Service Headquarters Office, managers, planners, and visitor services professionals. The survey was peer-reviewed by academic and government researchers and was further pre-tested with eight Refuge System Friends Group representatives from each region to ensure readability and overall clarity. The survey and associated methodology were approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB control #: 1018-0145; expiration date: 6/30/2013).

Contacting Visitors

Refuge staff identified two separate 15-day sampling periods and one or more locations that best reflected the diversity of use and specific visitation patterns of each participating refuge. Sampling periods and locations were identified by refuge staff and submitted to USGS via an internal website that included a customized mapping tool. A standardized sampling schedule was created for all refuges that included eight randomly selected sampling shifts during each of the two sampling periods. Sampling shifts were three- to five-hour randomly selected time bands that were stratified across AM and PM, as well as weekend and weekdays. Any necessary customizations were made, in coordination with refuge staff, to the standardized schedule to accommodate the identified sampling locations and to address specific spatial and temporal patterns of visitation.

Twenty visitors (18 years or older) per sampling shift were systematically selected, for a total of 320 willing participants per refuge—160 per sampling period—to ensure an adequate sample of completed surveys. When necessary, shifts were moved, added, or extended to alleviate logistical limitations (for example, weather or low visitation at a particular site) in an effort to reach target numbers.

Table 1. Participating refuges in the 2010/2011 national wildlife refuge visitor survey.

| | |
|---|--|
| Pacific Region (R1) | |
| Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge (HI) | William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge (OR) |
| Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge (ID) | McNary National Wildlife Refuge (WA) |
| Cape Meares National Wildlife Refuge (OR) | Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge (WA) |
| Malheur National Wildlife Refuge (OR) | |
| Southwest Region (R2) | |
| Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NM) | Aransas National Wildlife Refuge (TX) |
| Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge (NM) | San Bernard/ Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge (TX) |
| Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge (OK) | |
| Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region (R3) | |
| DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge (IA) | McGregor District, Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge – (IA/WI) |
| Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge (IA) | |
| Muscatatuck National Wildlife Refuge (IN) | Big Muddy National Fish and Wildlife Refuge (MO) |
| Rice Lake National Wildlife Refuge (MN) | Horicon National Wildlife Refuge (WI) |
| Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge (MN) | Necedah National Wildlife Refuge (WI) |
| Southeast Region (R4) | |
| Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge (AL) | Banks Lake National Wildlife Refuge (GA) |
| Big Lake National Wildlife Refuge (AR) | Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge (MS) |
| Pond Creek National Wildlife Refuge (AR) | Cabo Rojo National Wildlife Refuge (Puerto Rico) |
| Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (FL) | Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge (NC) |
| St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge (FL) | Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge (SC) |
| Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge (FL) | Reelfoot National Wildlife Refuge (TN) |
| Northeast Region (R5) | |
| Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge (CT) | Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge (ME) |
| Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge (DE) | Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (NJ) |
| Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge (MA) | Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge (NY) |
| Parker River National Wildlife Refuge (MA) | Wertheim National Wildlife Refuge (NY) |
| Patuxent Research Refuge (MD) | Occoquan Bay/ Elizabeth Hartwell Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge (VA) |
| Mountain-Prairie Region (R6) | |
| Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge (CO) | Sand Lake National Wildlife Refuge (SD) |
| Quivira National Wildlife Refuge (KS) | National Elk Refuge (WY) |
| Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge (MT) | |
| Alaska Region (R7) | |
| Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge (AK) | Kenai National Wildlife Refuge (AK) |
| California and Nevada Region (R8) | |
| Lower Klamath/Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge (CA) | Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NV) |
| Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge (CA) | |

Refuge staff and/or volunteers (survey recruiters) contacted visitors on-site following a protocol provided by USGS to ensure a diverse sample. Instructions included contacting visitors across the entire sampling shift (for example, every n^{th} visitor for dense visitation, as often as possible for sparse visitation), and only one person per group. Visitors were informed of the survey effort, given a token incentive (for example, a small magnet, temporary tattoo), and asked to participate. Willing participants provided their name, mailing address, and preference for language (English or Spanish) and survey mode (mail or online). Survey recruiters also were instructed to record any refusals and then proceed with the sampling protocol.

Visitors were mailed a postcard within 10 days of the initial on-site contact thanking them for agreeing to participate in the survey and inviting them to complete the survey online. Those visitors choosing not to complete the survey online were sent a paper copy a week later. Two additional contacts were made by mail during the next seven weeks following a modified Tailored Design Method (Dillman, 2007): 1) a reminder postcard one week after the first survey, and 2) a second paper survey two weeks after the reminder postcard. Each mailing included instructions for completing the survey online and a postage paid envelope for returning the paper version of the survey. Those visitors indicating a preference for Spanish were sent Spanish versions of all correspondence (including the survey). Finally, a short survey of six questions was sent to nonrespondents four weeks after the second survey mailing to determine any differences between respondents and nonrespondents at the national level. Online survey data were exported and paper survey data were entered using a standardized survey codebook and data entry procedure. All survey data were analyzed by using SPSS v.18 statistical analysis software.

Interpreting the Results

The extent to which these results accurately represent the total population of visitors to this refuge is dependent on 1) an adequate sample size of those visitors and 2) the representativeness of that sample. The adequacy of the sample size for this refuge is quantified as the margin of error. The composition of the sample is dependent on the ability of the standardized sampling protocol for this study to account for the spatial and temporal patterns of visitor use specific to each refuge. Spatially, the geographical layout and public use infrastructure varies widely across refuges. Some refuges only can be accessed through a single entrance, while others have multiple unmonitored access points across large expanses of land and water. As a result, the degree to which sampling locations effectively captured spatial patterns of visitor use will likely vary from refuge to refuge. Temporally, the two 15-day sampling periods may not have effectively captured all of the predominant visitor uses/activities on some refuges during the course of a year. Therefore, certain survey measures such as visitors' self-reported "primary activity during their visit" may reflect a seasonality bias.

Herein, the sample of visitors who responded to the survey are referred to simply as "visitors." However, when interpreting the results for William L. Finley NWR, any potential spatial and temporal sampling limitations specific to this refuge need to be considered when generalizing the results to the total population of visitors. For example, a refuge that sampled during a special event (for example, birding festival) held during the spring may have contacted a higher percentage of visitors who traveled greater than 50 miles to get to the refuge than the actual number of these people who would have visited throughout the calendar year (that is, oversampling of nonlocals). In contrast, another refuge may not have enough nonlocal visitors in the sample to adequately represent the beliefs and opinions of that group type. If the sample for a specific group type (for example, nonlocals, hunters, those visitors who paid a fee) is too low ($n < 30$), a warning is included. Additionally, the term "*this* visit" is used to reference the visit on which people were contacted to participate in the survey, which may or may not have been their most recent refuge visit.

Refuge Description for William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

William L. Finley NWR is situated along the foothills of the Coast Range at the western edge of the fertile Willamette Valley of northwestern Oregon. The refuge encompasses a diverse assortment of habitats including riparian forest, upland forest, upland prairie, wet prairie, wetlands and farm fields. Located 10 miles from Corvallis in the Willamette Valley, this 5,666-acre refuge protects many of the valley's historic habitats, including the largest remaining tract of native Willamette Valley wet prairie. Fields of wildlife food crops are interspersed with Oregon white oak savannah, meandering creeks with bottomland Oregon ash forest, old growth big-leaf maple, and native prairie.

William L. Finley NWR was created in 1964 to provide vital wintering habitat for dusky Canada geese and other migratory waterfowl; protect threatened and endangered species; and to provide for environmental education, research, and wildlife dependent recreation. Unlike other Canada geese, duskies have limited summer and winter ranges. They nest on Alaska's Copper River Delta, and winter almost exclusively in the Willamette Valley. The Fiechter House, completed in 1857, is thought to be the oldest house in Benton County and adds a touch of history to the refuge. The refuge was named for William L. Finley, an early conservationist who persuaded President Theodore Roosevelt to set aside the first national wildlife refuge west of the Mississippi River.

With close to 120,000 visitors annually (based on 2008 RAPP database; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2011, written comm.), William L. Finley NWR offers a wide range of activities including big game hunting, fishing, hiking, bicycling, auto tour routes, wildlife observation, photography, visiting historical sites such as the Fiechter House, environmental education and interpretation. Figure 1 below displays a map of the refuge. For more information, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/willamettevalley/finley/index.html>.

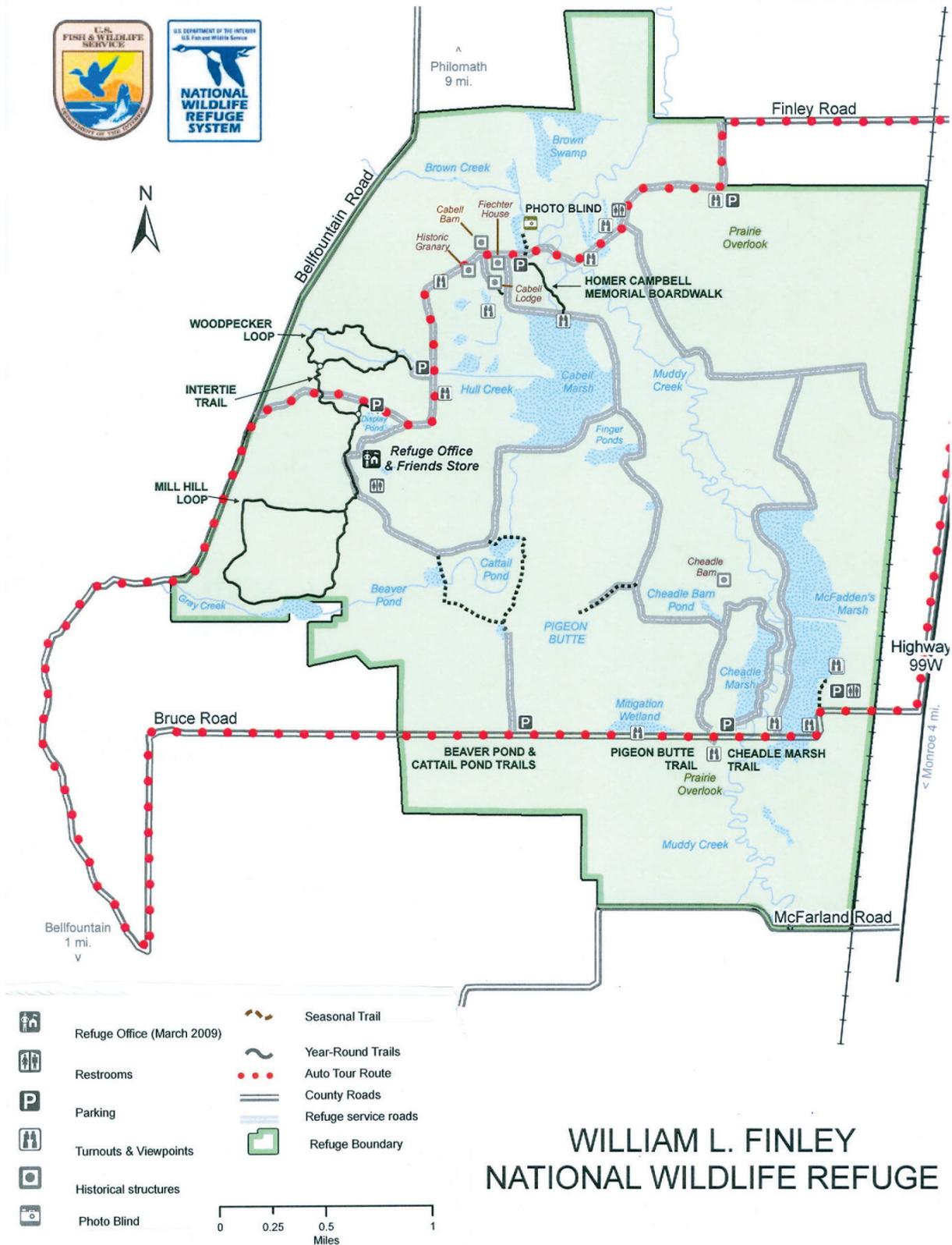


Figure 1. Map of William L. Finley NWR, courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Sampling at William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

A total of 334 visitors agreed to participate in the survey during the two sampling periods at the identified locations at William L. Finley NWR (table 2). In all, 258 visitors completed the survey for a 79% response rate and $\pm 5\%$ margin of error at the 95% confidence level.¹

Table 2. Sampling and response rate summary for William L. Finley NWR.

| Sampling period | Dates | Locations | Total contacts | Undeliverable addresses | Completed surveys | Response rate |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|---|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| 1 | 10/23/2010 to 11/6/2010 | Hunt Kiosk on Finley Refuge Road McFaddens Marsh | 201 | 4 | 160 | 79% |
| 2 | 3/5/2011 to 3/19/2011 | Prairie Overlook McFaddens Marsh Refuge Office Wild Goose Nature Store | 133 | 2 | 98 | 75% |
| Total | | | 334 | 6 | 258 | 79% |

Selected Survey Results

Visitor and Trip Characteristics

A solid understanding of refuge visitors and details about their trips to refuges can inform communication outreach efforts, inform visitor services and transportation planning, forecast use, and gauge demand for services and facilities.

Familiarity with the Refuge System

While we did not ask visitors to identify the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, visitors to William L. Finley NWR reported that before participating in the survey, they were aware of the role of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in managing national wildlife refuges (90%) and that the Refuge System has the mission of conserving, managing, and restoring fish, wildlife, plants and their habitat (94%). Positive responses to these questions concerning the management and mission of the Refuge System do not indicate the degree to which these visitors understand the day-to-day management practices of individual refuges, only that visitors feel they have a basic knowledge of who

¹ The margin of error (or confidence interval) is the error associated with the results related to the sample and population size. A margin of error of $\pm 5\%$, for example, means if 55% of the sample answered a survey question in a certain way, then 50–60% of the entire population would have answered that way. The margin of error is calculated with an 80/20 response distribution, assuming that for any given dichotomous choice question, approximately 80% of respondents selected one choice and 20% selected the other (Salant and Dillman, 1994).

manages refuges and why. Compared to other public lands, many visitors feel that refuges provide a unique recreation experience (94%; see Appendix B for visitor comments on “What Makes National Wildlife Refuges Unique?”); however, reasons for why visitors find refuges unique are varied and may not directly correspond to their understanding of the mission of the Refuge System. Most visitors to William L. Finley NWR had been to at least one other National Wildlife Refuge in the past year (86%), with an average of 7 visits to other refuges during the past 12 months.

Visiting This Refuge

Some surveyed visitors (19%) had only been to William L. Finley NWR once in the past 12 months, while most had been multiple times (81%). These repeat visitors went to the refuge an average of 13 times during that same 12-month period. Visitors used the refuge during only one season (26%), during multiple seasons (28%), and year-round (47%).

Most visitors first learned about the refuge from friends/relatives (41%), signs on the highway (37%), or people in the local community (25%; fig. 2). Key information sources used by visitors to find their way to this refuge include previous knowledge (64%) and signs on highways (54%; fig. 3).

Most visitors (87%) lived in the local area (within 50 miles of the refuge), whereas 13% were nonlocal visitors. For most local visitors, William L. Finley NWR was the primary purpose or sole destination of their trip (83%; table 3). For most nonlocal visitors, the refuge was also the primary purpose or sole destination of their trip (36%). Local visitors reported that they traveled an average of 21 miles to get to the refuge, while nonlocal visitors traveled an average of 103 miles. Figure 4 shows the residence of visitors travelling to the refuge. About 96% of visitors travelling to William L. Finley NWR were from Oregon.

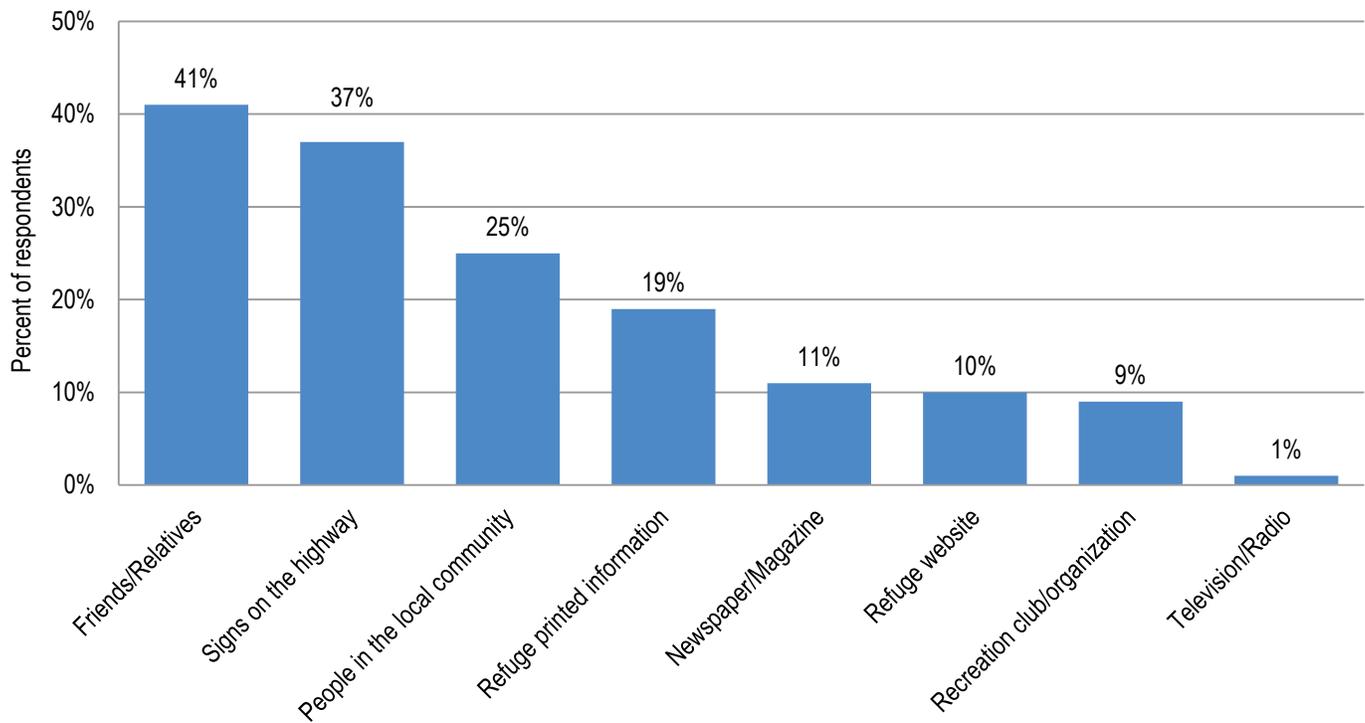


Figure 2. How visitors first learned or heard about William L. Finley NWR (n = 246).

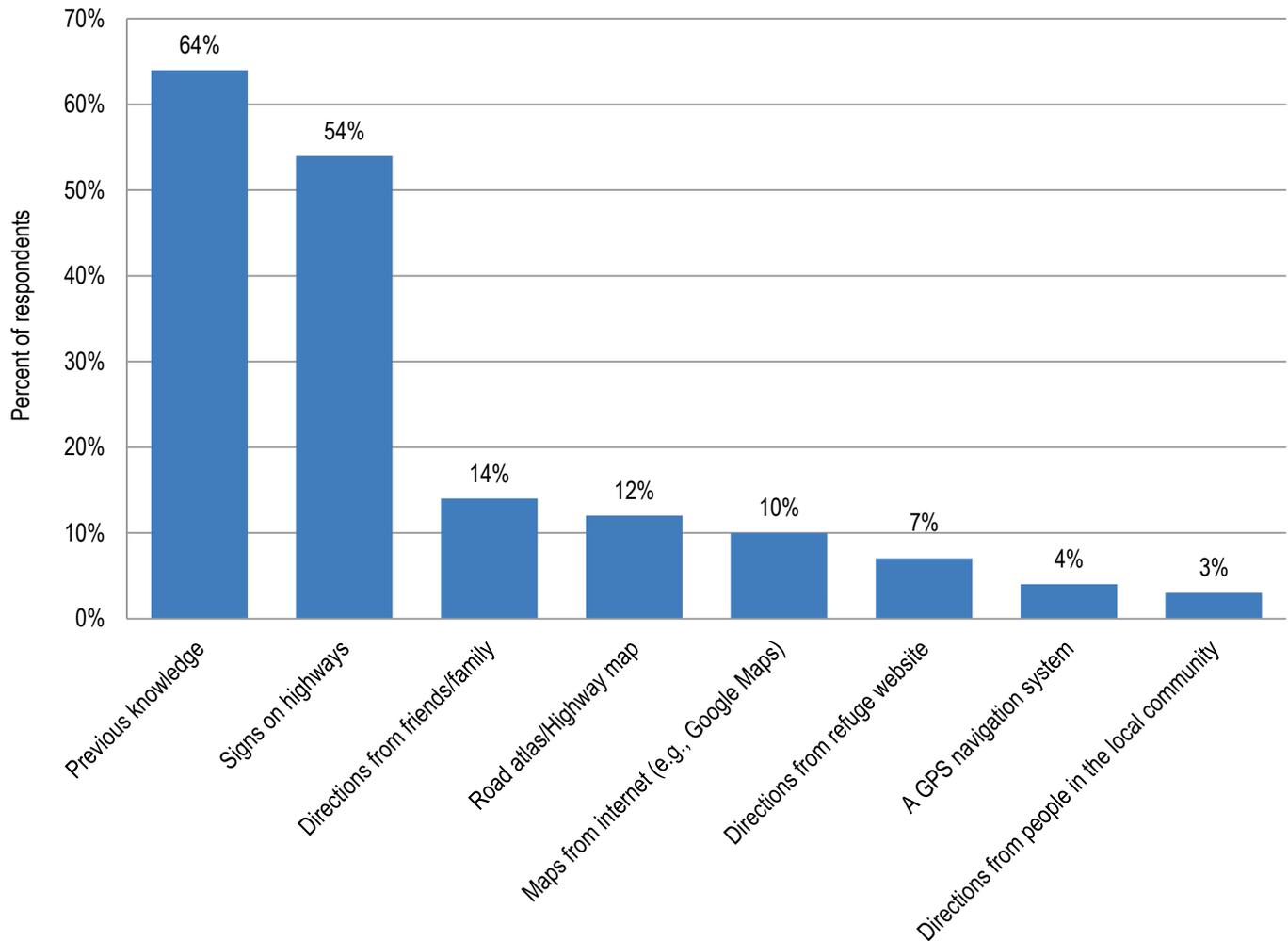


Figure 3. Resources used by visitors to find their way to William L. Finley NWR during *this* visit (n = 253).

Table 3. Influence of William L. Finley NWR on visitors' decision to take *this* trip.

| Visitors | Visiting this refuge was... | | |
|----------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|
| | the primary reason for trip | one of many equally important reasons for trip | an incidental stop |
| Nonlocal | 37% | 33% | 30% |
| Local | 84% | 8% | 8% |
| Total | 77% | 12% | 11% |

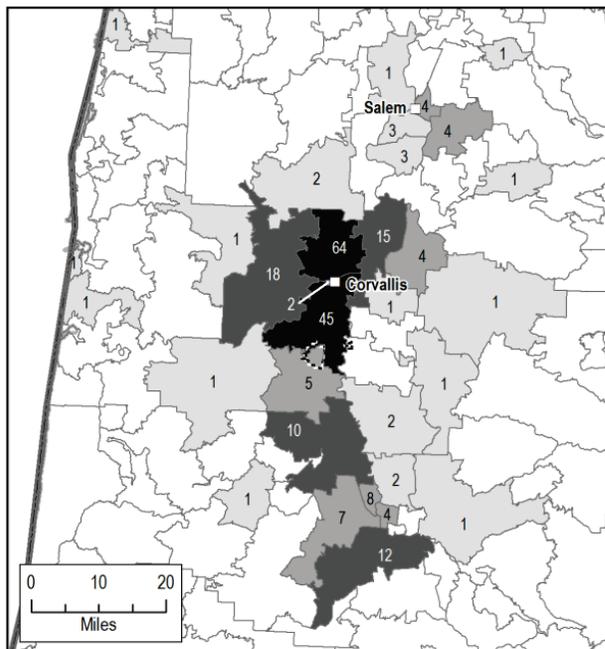
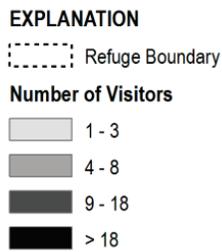
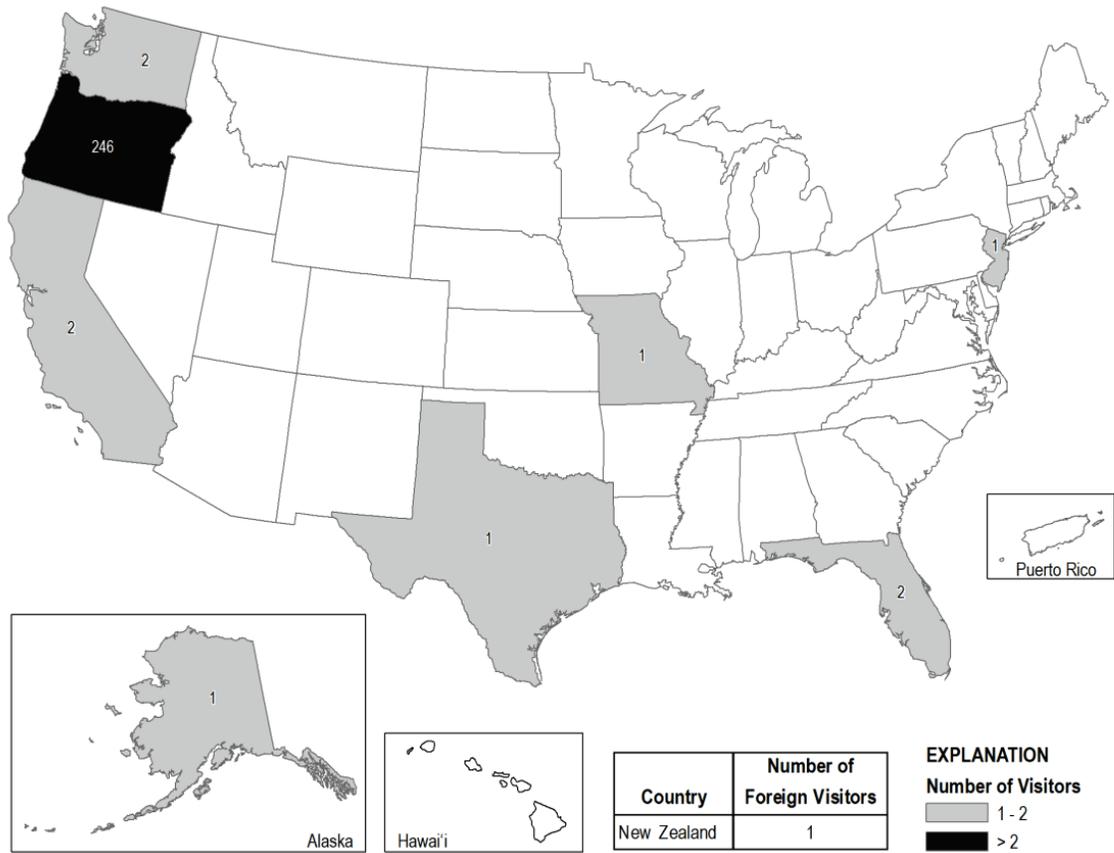


Figure 4. Number of visitors travelling to William L. Finley NWR by residence. Top map shows residence by state and bottom map shows residence by zip codes near the refuge (n = 257).

Surveyed visitors reported that they spent an average of 3 hours at William L. Finley NWR during one day there (a day visit is assumed to be 8 hours). However, the most frequently reported length of visit during one day was actually 2 hours (29%). The key modes of transportation used by visitors to travel around the refuge were private vehicle (98%) and walking/hiking (41%; fig. 5). Most visitors indicated they were part of a group on their visit to this refuge (60%), travelling primarily with family and friends (table 4).

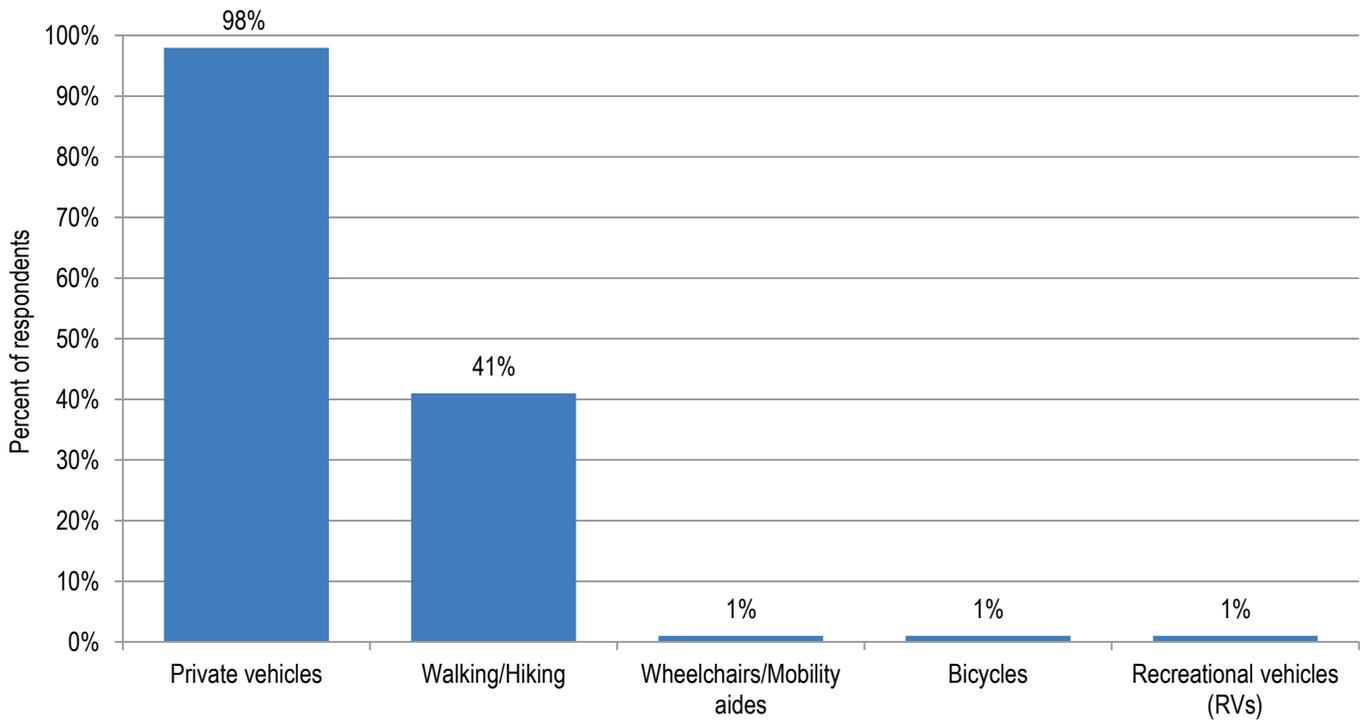


Figure 5. Modes of transportation used by visitors to William L. Finley NWR during *this* visit (n = 256).

Table 4. Type and size of groups visiting William L. Finley NWR (for those who indicated they were part of a group, n = 152).

| Group type | Percent (of those traveling in a group) | Average group size | | |
|-----------------------------|---|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
| | | Number of adults | Number of children | Total group size |
| Family/Friends | 92% | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Commercial tour group | 0% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Organized club/School group | 5% | 10 | 13 | 23 |
| Other group type | 3% | 24 | 10 | 34 |

Surveyed visitors participated in a variety of refuge activities during the past 12 months (fig. 6); the top three activities reported were bird watching (88%), wildlife observation (86%), and hiking (67%). The primary reasons for their most recent visit included bird watching (36%), wildlife observation (22%), and hiking (16%; fig. 7). The visitor center (at W.L. Finley, there is no visitor center but rather a contact station/administrative office) was used by 66% of visitors, mostly to visit the gift shop/bookstore (80%), stop to use the facilities (for example, get water, use restroom; 67%), and ask information of staff/volunteers (60%; fig. 8).

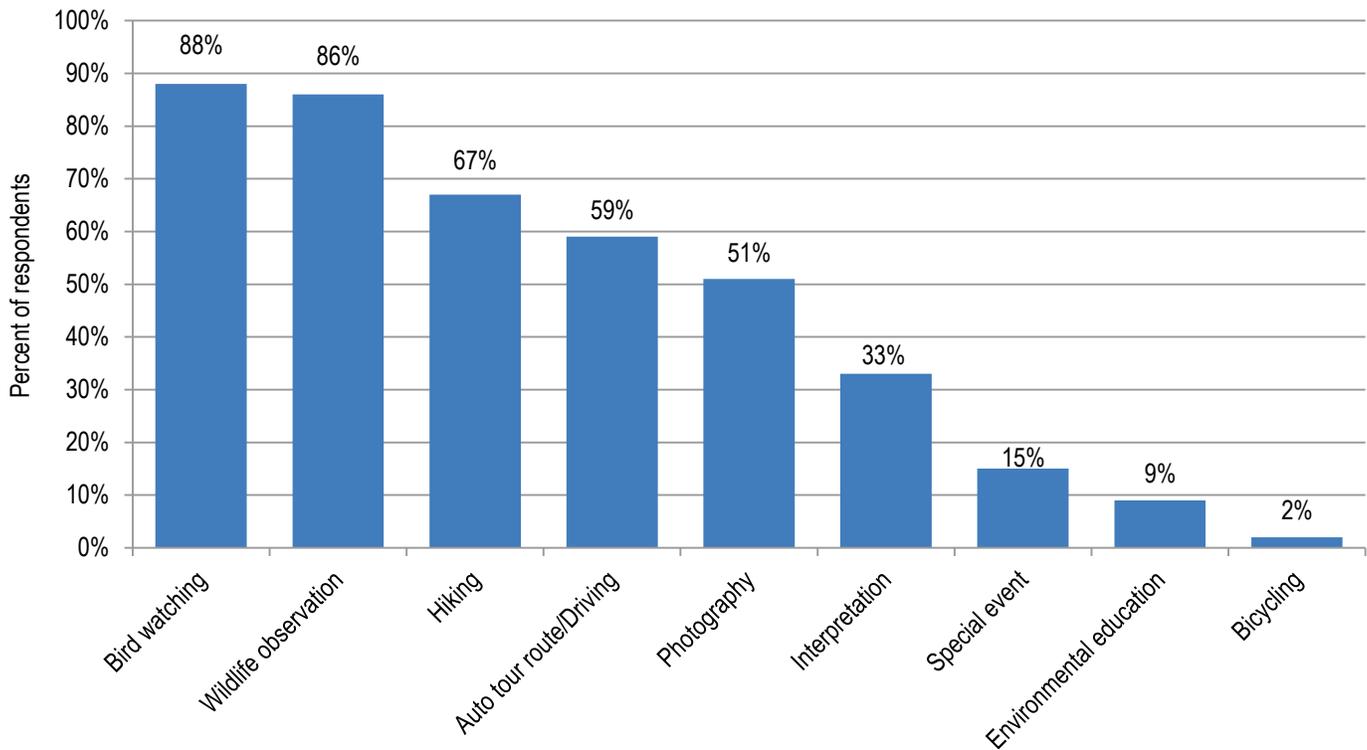


Figure 6. Activities in which visitors participated during the past 12 months at William L. Finley NWR (n = 253). See Appendix B for a listing of “other” activities.

Visitor Characteristics

Nearly all (99%) surveyed visitors to William L. Finley NWR indicated that they were citizens or permanent residents of the United States. Only those visitors 18 years or older were sampled. Visitors were a mix of 45% male with an average age of 57 years and 55% female with an average age of 55 years. Visitors, on average, reported they had 16 years of formal education (college or technical school). The median level of income was \$50,000–\$74,999. See Appendix A for more demographic information. In comparison, the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation found that participants in wildlife watching and hunting on public land were 55% male and 45% female with an average age of 46 years, an average level of education of 14 years (associate degree or two years of college), and a median income of \$50,000–\$74,999 (Harris, 2011, personal communication). Compared to the U.S. population, these 2006 survey participants are more likely to be male, older, and have higher education and income levels (U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Department of Commerce, 2007).

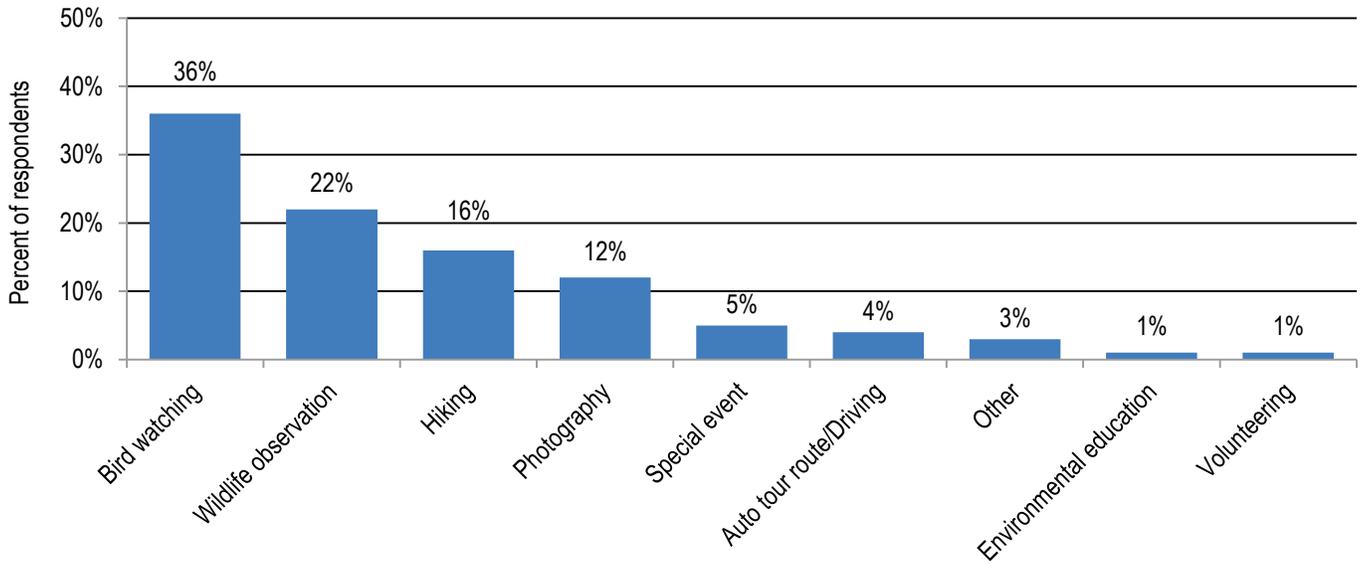


Figure 7. The primary activity in which visitors participated during *this* visit to William L. Finley NWR (n = 244). See Appendix B for a listing of “other” activities.

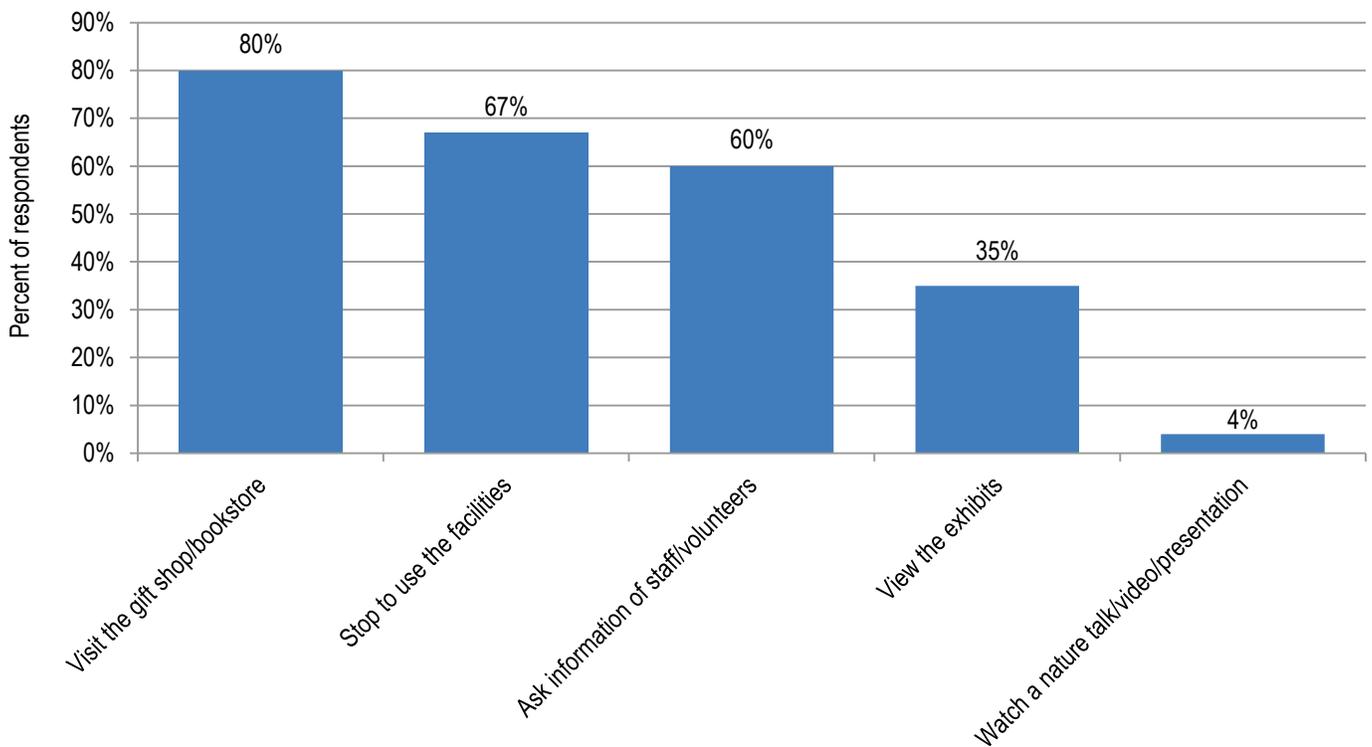


Figure 8. Use of the visitor center at William L. Finley NWR (for those visitors who indicated they used the visitor center, n = 166).

Visitor Spending in Local Communities

Tourists usually buy a wide range of goods and services while visiting an area. Major expenditure categories include lodging, food, supplies, and gasoline. Spending associated with refuge visitation can generate considerable economic benefits for the local communities near a refuge. For example, more than 34.8 million visits were made to national wildlife refuges in fiscal year 2006; these visits generated \$1.7 billion in sales, almost 27,000 jobs, and \$542.8 million in employment income in regional economies (Carver and Caudill, 2007). Information on the amount and types of visitor expenditures can illustrate the economic importance of refuge visitor activities to local communities. Visitor expenditure information also can be used to analyze the economic impact of proposed refuge management alternatives.

A region (and its economy) is typically defined as all counties within 50 miles of a travel destination (Stynes, 2008). Visitors that live within the local 50-mile area of a refuge typically have different spending patterns than those that travel from longer distances. During the two sampling periods, 87% of surveyed visitors to William L. Finley NWR indicated that they live within the local area. Nonlocal visitors (13%) stayed in the local area, on average, for 2 days. Table 5 shows summary statistics for local and nonlocal visitor expenditures in the local communities and at the refuge, with expenditures reported on a per person per day basis. ***It is important to note that summary statistics based on a small sample size (n < 30) may not provide a reliable representation of that population.*** During the two sampling periods, nonlocal visitors spent an average of \$33 per person per day and local visitors spent an average of \$19 per person per day in the local area. Several factors should be considered when estimating the economic importance of refuge visitor spending in the local communities. These include the amount of time spent at the refuge, influence of refuge on decision to take this trip, and the representativeness of primary activities of the sample of surveyed visitors compared to the general population. Controlling for these factors is beyond the scope of the summary statistics presented in this report. Detailed refuge-level visitor spending profiles which do consider these factors will be developed during the next phase of analysis.

Table 5. Total visitor expenditures in local communities and at William L. Finley NWR expressed in dollars per person per day.

| Visitors | n ¹ | Median | Mean | Standard deviation | Minimum | Maximum |
|----------|----------------|--------|------|--------------------|---------|---------|
| Nonlocal | 27 | \$25 | \$33 | \$28 | \$0 | \$100 |
| Local | 178 | \$10 | \$19 | \$23 | \$0 | \$125 |

¹n = number of visitors who answered both locality *and* expenditure questions.

Note: For each respondent, reported expenditures were divided by the number of persons in their group that shared expenses in order to determine the spending per person per trip. This was then divided by the number of days spent in the local area to determine the spending per person per day for each respondent. For respondents who reported spending less than one full day, trip length was set equal to one day. These visitor spending estimates are appropriate for the sampling periods selected by refuge staff (see table 2 for sampling period dates and figure 7 for the primary visitor activities). They may not be representative of the total population of visitors to this refuge.

Visitor Opinions about This Refuge

National wildlife refuges provide visitors with a variety of services, facilities, and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities. Understanding visitors' perceptions of their refuge experience is a key component of the Refuge System mission as it pertains to providing high-quality wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities. Having a baseline understanding of visitor experience can inform management decisions to better balance visitors' expectations with the Refuge System mission. Recent studies in outdoor recreation have included an emphasis on declining participation in traditional activities such as hunting and an increasing need to connect the next generation to nature and wildlife. These factors highlight the importance of current refuge visitors as a key constituency in wildlife conservation. A better understanding is increasingly needed to better manage the visitor experience and to address the challenges of the future.

Surveyed visitors' overall satisfaction with the services, facilities, and recreational opportunities provided at William L. Finley NWR were as follows (fig. 9):

- 94% were satisfied with the recreational activities and opportunities,
- 91% were satisfied with the information and education about the refuge and its resources,
- 91% were satisfied with the services provided by employees or volunteers, and
- 94% were satisfied with the refuge's job of conserving fish, wildlife and their habitats.

Although 5% of visitors (n = 13) indicated they paid a fee to enter William L. Finley NWR, the refuge does not have an entrance fee. It is not known why a small number of visitors thought they paid a fee to enter the refuge.

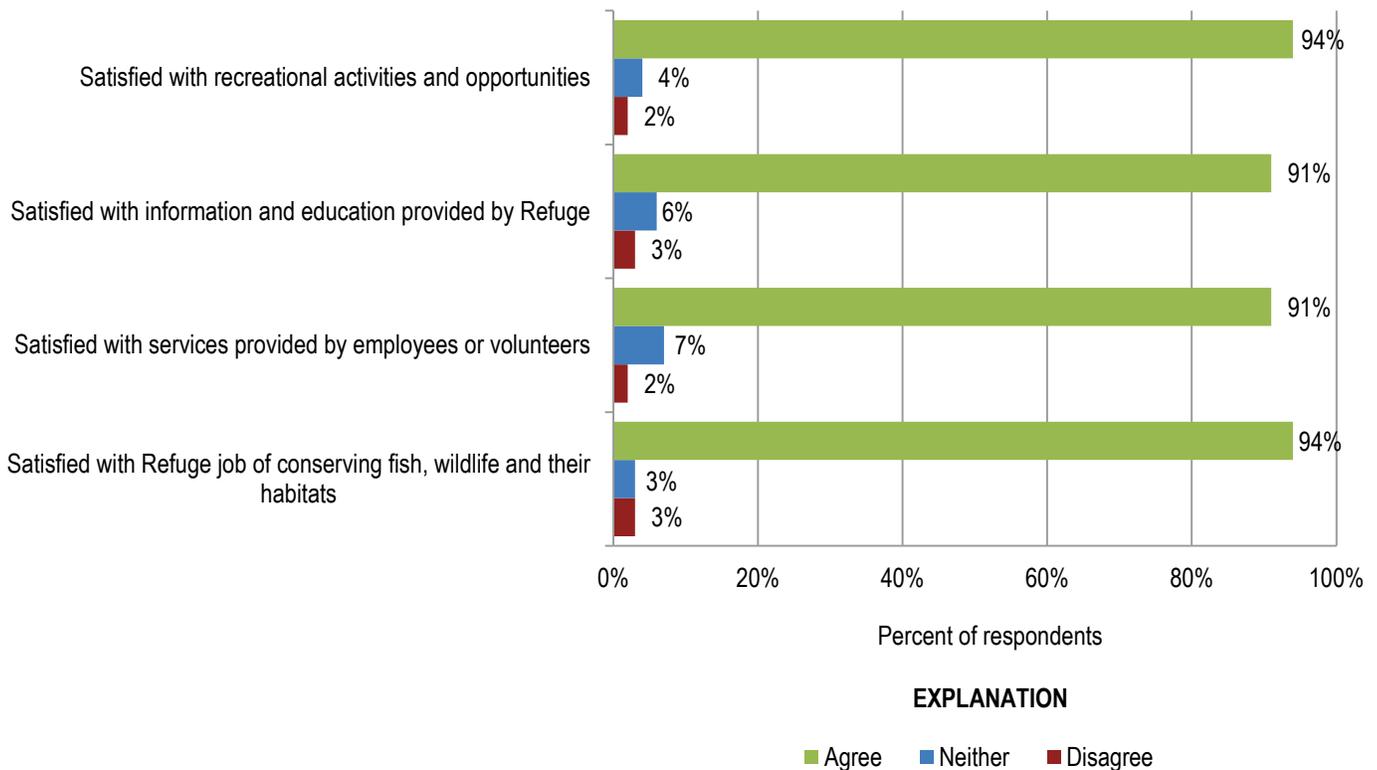


Figure 9. Overall satisfaction with William L. Finley NWR during this visit (n ≥ 240).

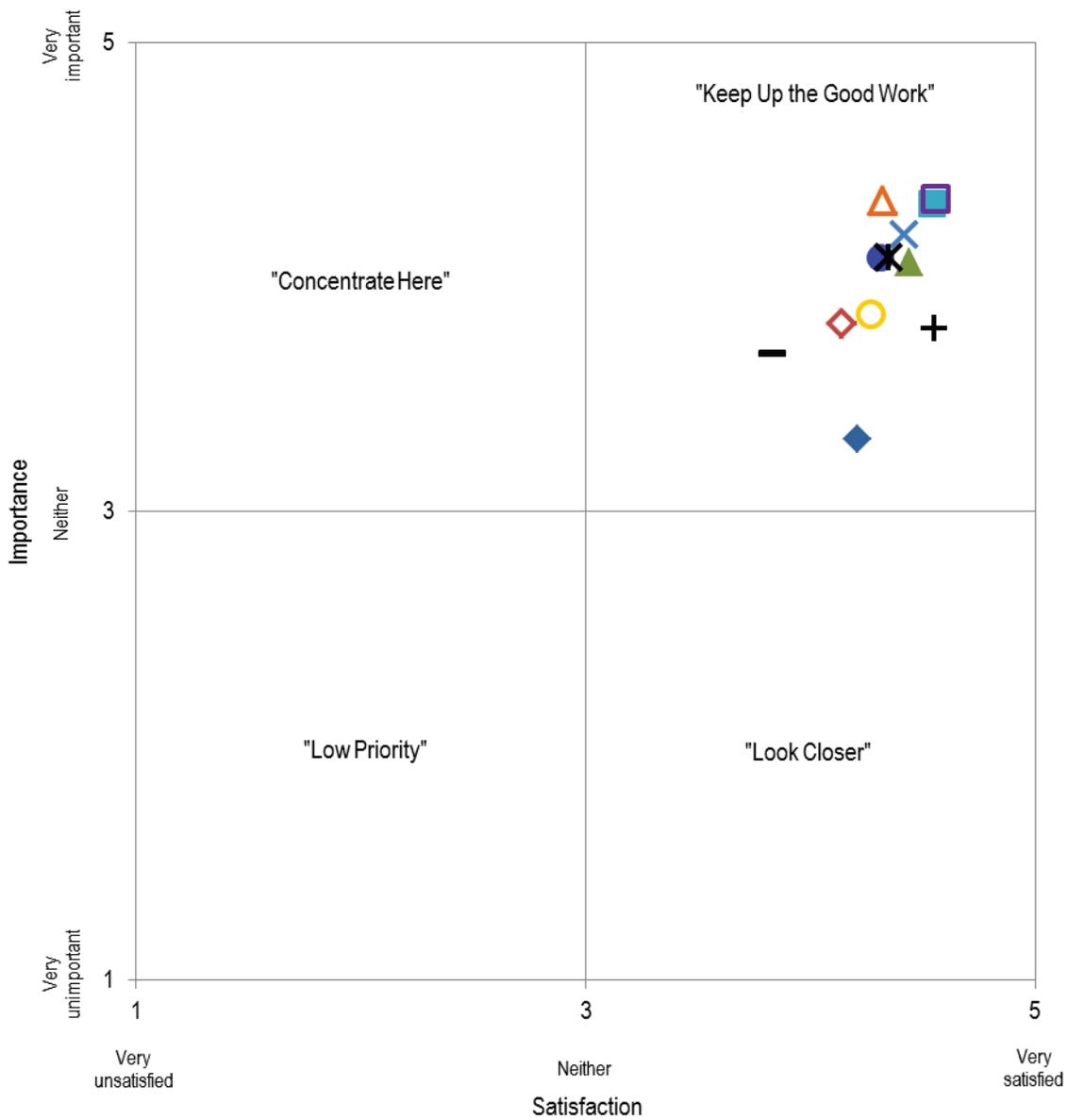
Importance/Satisfaction Ratings

Comparing the importance and satisfaction ratings for visitor services provided by refuges can help to identify how well the services are meeting visitor expectations. The importance-performance framework presented in this section is a tool that includes the importance of an attribute to visitors in relation to their satisfaction with that attribute. Drawn from marketing research, this tool has been applied to outdoor recreation and visitation settings (Martilla and James, 1977; Tarrant and Smith, 2002). Results for the attributes of interest are segmented into one of four quadrants (modified for this national study):

- Keep Up the Good Work = high importance/high satisfaction;
- Concentrate Here = high importance/low satisfaction;
- Low Priority = low importance/low satisfaction; and
- Look Closer = low importance/high satisfaction.

Graphically plotting visitors' importance and satisfaction ratings for different services, facilities, and recreational opportunities provides a simple and intuitive visualization of these survey measures. However, this tool is not without its drawbacks. One is the potential for variation among visitors regarding their expectations and levels of importance (Vaske et al., 1996; Bruyere et al., 2002; Wade and Eagles, 2003), and certain services or recreational opportunities may be more or less important for different segments of the visitor population. For example, hunters may place more importance on hunting opportunities and amenities such as blinds, while school group leaders may place more importance on educational/informational displays than would other visitors. This potential for highly varied importance ratings needs to be considered when viewing the average results of this analysis of visitors to William L. Finley NWR. This consideration is especially important when reviewing the attributes that fall into the "Look Closer" quadrant. In some cases, these attributes may represent specialized recreational activities in which a small subset of visitors participate (for example, hunting, kayaking) or facilities and services that only some visitors experience (for example, exhibits about the refuge). For these visitors, the average importance of (and potentially the satisfaction with) the attribute may be much higher than it would be for the overall population of visitors.

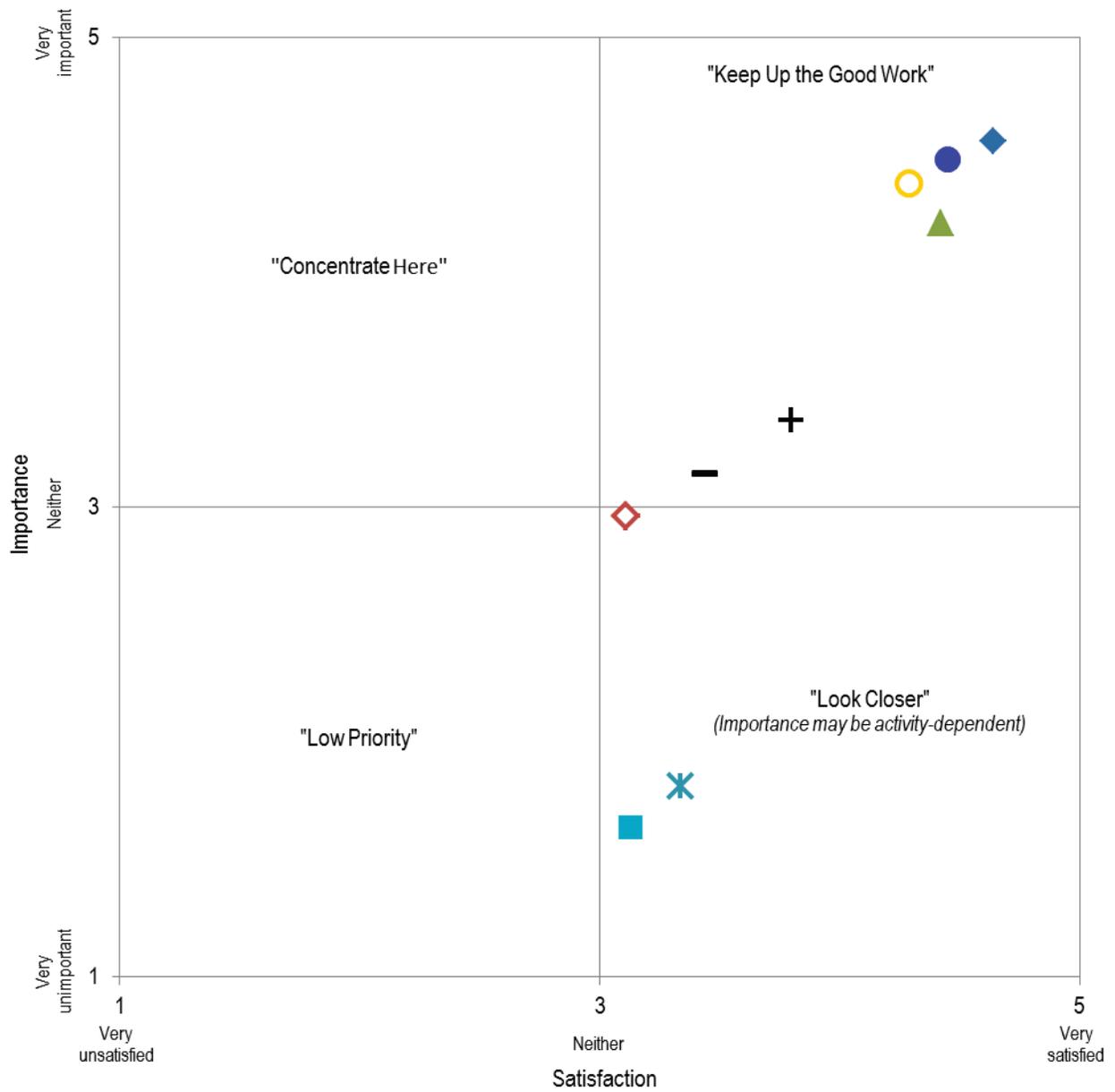
Figures 10-12 depict surveyed visitors' importance-satisfaction results for refuge services and facilities, recreational opportunities, and transportation-related features at William L. Finley NWR, respectively. All refuge services and facilities fell in the "Keep Up the Good Work" quadrant (fig. 10). Nearly all refuge recreational opportunities fell in the "Keep Up the Good Work" quadrant except hunting, fishing, and canoe/kayak opportunities, which fell into the "Look Closer" quadrant (fig. 11). The average importance of hunting, fishing, and canoe/kayak opportunities in the "Look Closer" quadrant may be higher among visitors who have participated in these activities during the past 12 months; however, there were not enough individuals in the sample to evaluate the responses of such participants. All transportation-related features fell in the "Keep Up the Good Work" quadrant (fig. 12).



EXPLANATION

- ◆ Availability of employees/volunteers
- ▲ Knowledgeable employees/volunteers
- Signs with rules/regulations
- ◇ Exhibits about this Refuge
- Visitor Center
- △ Well-maintained restrooms
- ✚ Courteous/welcoming employees/volunteers
- ✕ Printed information about this Refuge
- ✖ Informational kiosks/displays about this Refuge
- Environmental education programs/activities
- Convenient hours/days of operation
- ▣ Wildlife observation structures

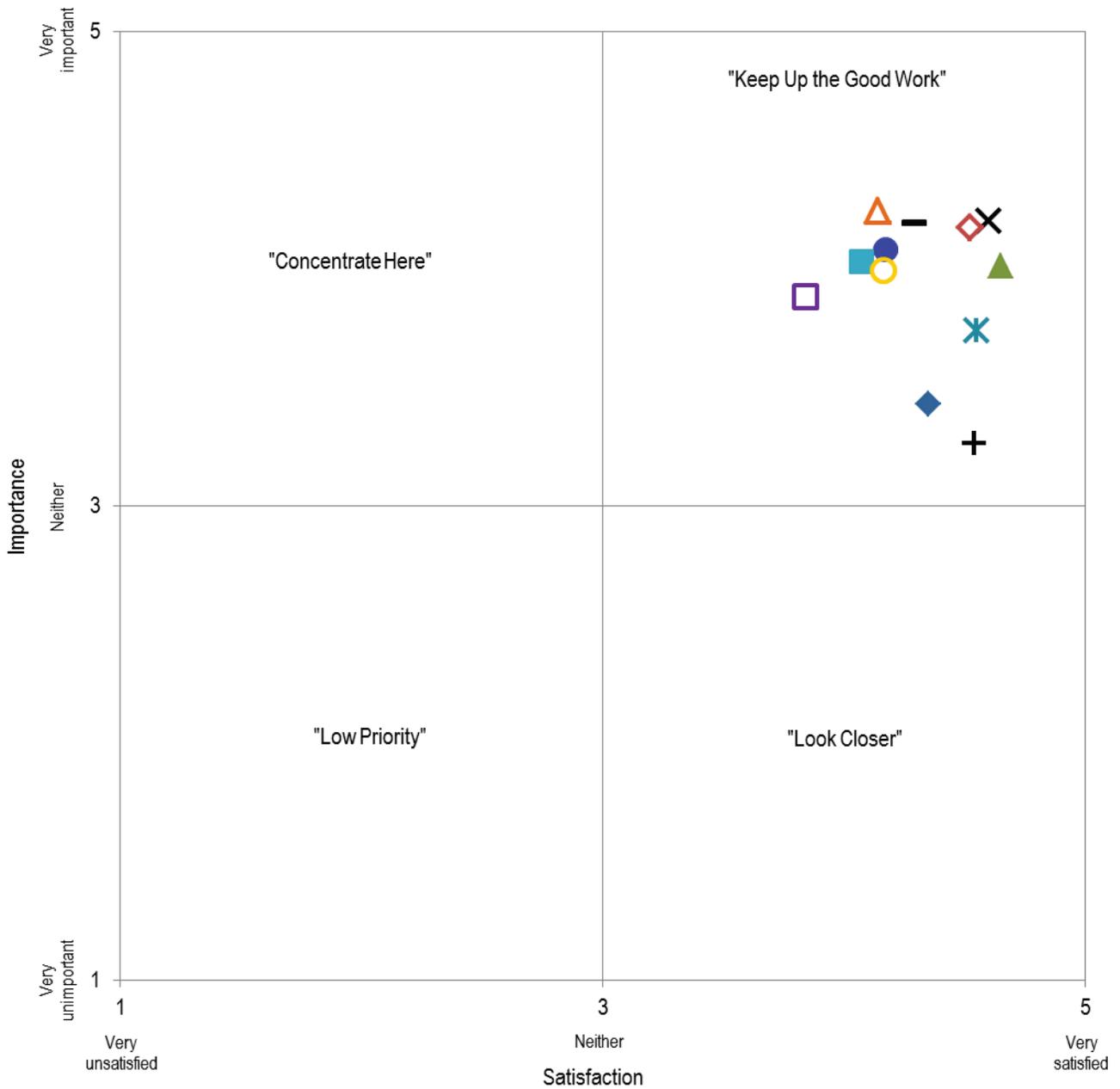
Figure 10. Importance-satisfaction ratings of services and facilities provided at William L. Finley NWR.



EXPLANATION

- ◆ Bird watching opportunities
- Wildlife viewing opportunities
- ▲ Photography opportunities
- Hunting opportunities
- ✕ Fishing opportunities
- Hiking opportunities
- ◇ Kayak/Canoe opportunities
- Bicycling opportunities
- ✚ Volunteer opportunities

Figure 11. Importance-satisfaction ratings of recreational opportunities provided at William L. Finley NWR.



EXPLANATION

- ◆ Condition of roads
- ⊕ Condition of parking areas
- ▲ Condition of bridges
- ✕ Condition of trails/boardwalks
- ⊗ Number of parking places
- Number of pullovers
- ◇ Safety of driving conditions
- Safety of Refuge entrances
- Directional signs on Refuge
- ▲ Directional signs on trails
- Directional signs on highways
- Disabled access

Figure 12. Importance-satisfaction ratings of transportation-related features at William L. Finley NWR.

Visitor Opinions about National Wildlife Refuge System Topics

One goal of this national visitor survey was to identify visitor trends across the Refuge System to more effectively manage refuges and provide visitor services. Two important issues to the Refuge System are transportation on refuges and communicating with visitors about climate change. The results to these questions will be most meaningful when they are evaluated in aggregate (data from all participating refuges together). However, basic results for William L. Finley NWR are reported here.

Alternative Transportation and the National Wildlife Refuge System

Visitors use a variety of transportation means to access and enjoy national wildlife refuges. While many visitors arrive at the refuge in a private vehicle, alternatives such as buses, trams, watercraft, and bicycles are increasingly becoming a part of the visitor experience. Previous research has identified a growing need for transportation alternatives within the Refuge System (Krechmer et al., 2001); however, less is known about how visitors perceive and use these new transportation options. An understanding of visitors' likelihood of using certain alternative transportation options can help in future planning efforts. Visitors were asked their likelihood of using alternative transportation options at national wildlife refuges in the future.

Of the six Refuge System-wide alternative transportation options listed on the survey, the majority of William L. Finley NWR visitors who were surveyed were likely to use the following options at national wildlife refuges in the future (fig. 13):

- an offsite parking lot that provides trail access;
- a boat that goes to different points on Refuge waterways; and
- a bus/tram that runs during a special event.

The majority of visitors were *not* likely to use a bus/tram that takes passengers to different points on the Refuge or a bus/tram that provides a guided tour at national wildlife refuges in the future (fig. 13).

When asked about using alternative transportation at William L. Finley NWR specifically, 44% of visitors indicated they were unsure whether it would enhance their experience; however, some visitors thought alternative transportation would enhance their experience (20%) and others thought it would not (36%).

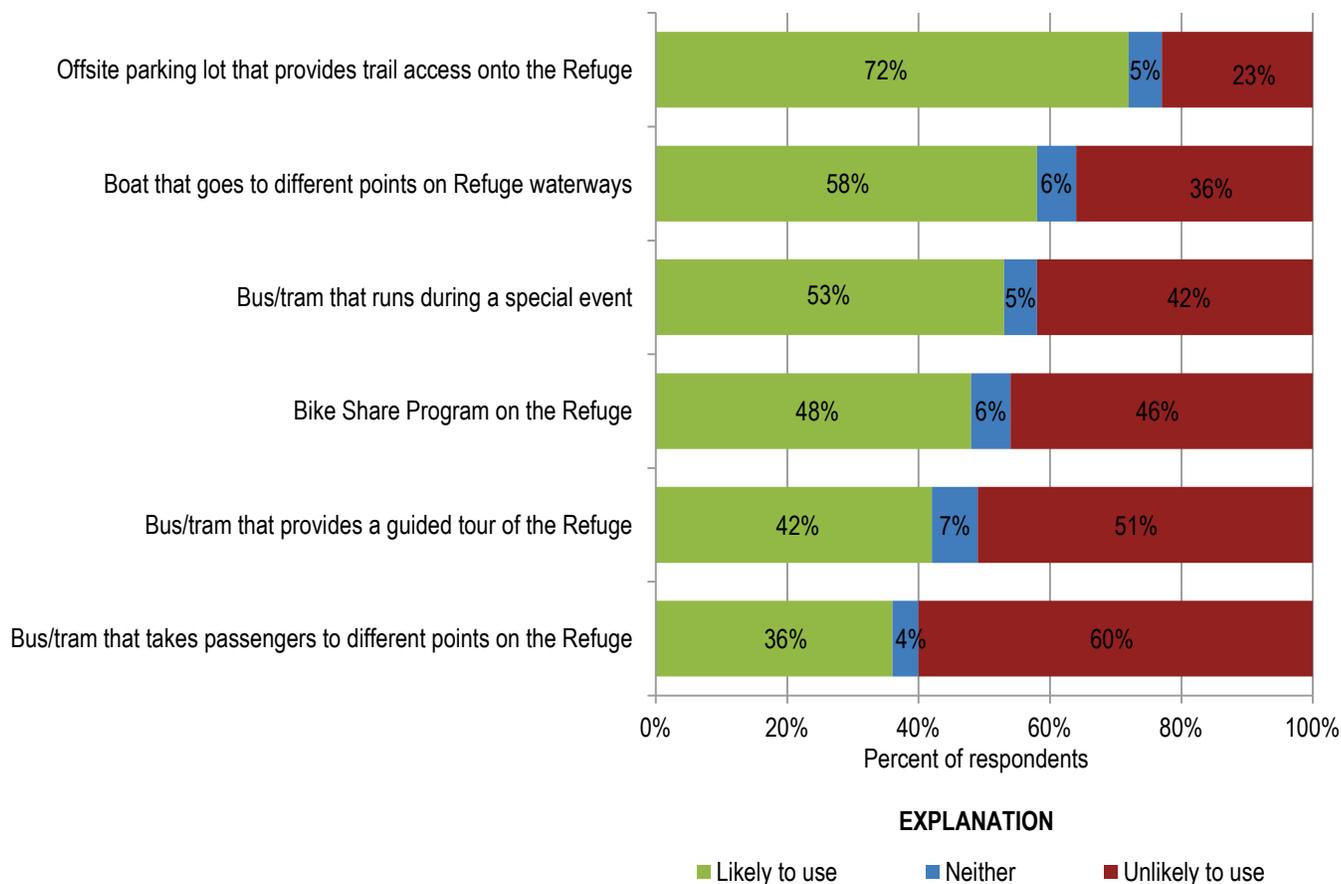


Figure 13. Visitors' likelihood of using alternative transportation options at national wildlife refuges in the future (n ≥ 250).

Climate Change and the National Wildlife Refuge System

Climate change represents a growing concern for the management of national wildlife refuges. The Service's climate change strategy, titled "Rising to the Urgent Challenge," establishes a basic framework for the agency to work within a larger conservation community to help ensure wildlife, plant, and habitat sustainability (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2010). To support the guiding principles of the strategy, refuges will be exploring options for more effective engagement with visitors on this topic. The national visitor survey collected information about visitors' level of personal involvement in climate change related to fish, wildlife and their habitats and visitors' beliefs regarding this topic. Items draw from the "Six Americas" framework for understanding public sentiment toward climate change (Leiserowitz, Maibach, and Roser-Renouf, 2008) and from literature on climate change message frames (for example, Nisbet, 2009). Such information provides a baseline for understanding visitor perceptions of climate change in the context of fish and wildlife conservation that can further inform related communication and outreach strategies.

Factors that influence how individuals think about climate change include their basic beliefs, levels of involvement, policy preferences, and behaviors related to this topic. Results presented below provide baseline information on visitors' levels of involvement with the topic of climate change related to fish,

wildlife and their habitats. The majority of surveyed visitors to William L. Finley NWR agreed with the following statements (fig. 14):

- “I am personally concerned about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and habitats;”
- “I take actions to alleviate the effects of climate change;”
- “I stay well-informed about the effects of climate change;” and
- “My experience would be enhanced if the Refuge provides information about how I can help address climate change effects.”

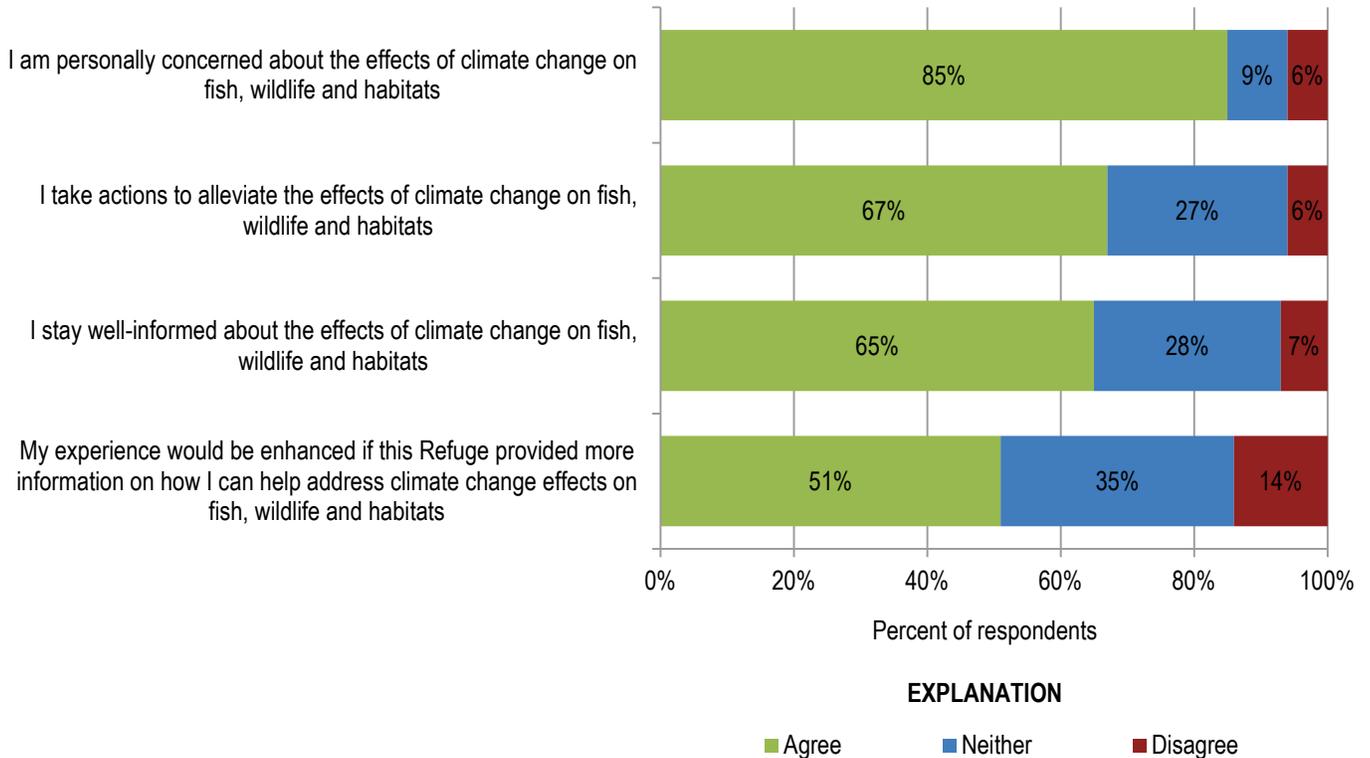


Figure 14. Visitors’ personal involvement with climate change related to fish, wildlife and their habitats (n ≥ 243).

These results are most useful when coupled with responses to belief statements about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats, because such beliefs may be used to develop message frames (or ways to communicate) about climate change with a broad coalition of visitors. Framing science-based findings will not alter the overall message, but rather place the issue in a context in which different audience groupings can relate. The need to mitigate impacts of climate change on Refuges could be framed as a quality-of-life issue (for example, preserving the ability to enjoy fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitat) or an economic issue (for example, maintaining tourist revenues, supporting economic growth through new jobs/technology).

For William L. Finley NWR, the majority of visitors believed the following regarding climate change related to fish, wildlife and their habitats (fig. 15):

- “Future generations will benefit if we address climate change effects;”
- “We can improve our quality of life if we address the effects of climate change;” and
- “It is important to consider the economic costs and benefits to local communities when addressing climate change effects.”

The majority of visitors did *not* believe:

- “There has been too much emphasis on the catastrophic effects of climate change;” and
- “There is too much scientific uncertainty to adequately understand climate change effects.”

Such information suggests that certain beliefs resonate with a greater number of visitors than other beliefs do. This information is important to note because some visitors (51%) indicated that their experience would be enhanced if William L. Finley NWR provided information about how they could help address the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife, and their habitats (fig. 14), and framing the information in a way that resonates most with visitors may result in a more engaged public who support strategies aimed at alleviating climate change pressures. Data will be analyzed further at the aggregate, or national level, to inform the development of a comprehensive communication strategy about climate change.

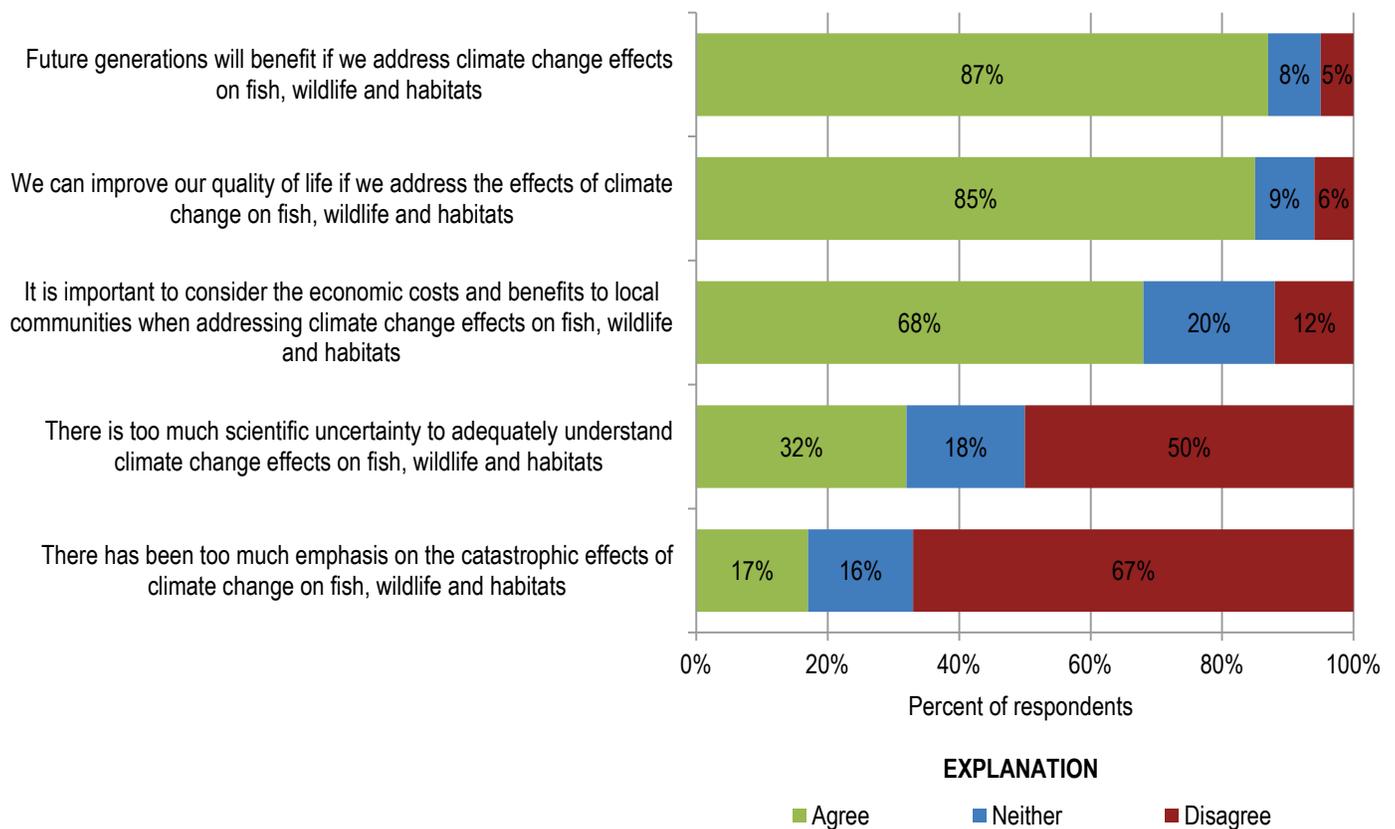


Figure 15. Visitors’ beliefs about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats (n ≥ 244).

Conclusion

These individual refuge results provide a summary of trip characteristics and experiences of a sample of visitors to William L. Finley NWR during 2010–2011. These data can be used to inform decision-making efforts related to the refuge, such as Comprehensive Conservation Plan implementation, visitor services management, and transportation planning and management. For example, when modifying (either minimizing or enhancing) visitor facilities, services, or recreational opportunities, a solid understanding of visitors' trip and activity characteristics, their satisfaction with existing offerings, and opinions regarding refuge fees is helpful. This information can help to gauge demand for refuge opportunities and inform both implementation and communication strategies. Similarly, an awareness of visitors' satisfaction ratings with refuge offerings can help determine if any potential areas of concern need to be investigated further. As another example of the utility of these results, community relations may be improved or bolstered through an understanding of the value of the refuge to visitors, whether that value is attributed to an appreciation of the refuge's uniqueness, enjoyment of its recreational opportunities, or spending contributions of nonlocal visitors to the local economy. Such data about visitors and their experiences, in conjunction with an understanding of biophysical data on the refuge, can ensure that management decisions are consistent with the Refuge System mission while fostering a continued public interest in these special places.

Individual refuge results are available for downloading at <http://pubs.usgs.gov/ds/643/> as part of USGS Data Series 643 (Sexton and others, 2011). For additional information about this project, contact the USGS researchers at national_visitor_survey@usgs.gov or 970.226.9205.

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National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey



PLEASE READ THIS FIRST:

Thank you for visiting a National Wildlife Refuge and for agreeing to participate in this study! We hope that you had an enjoyable experience. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey would like to learn more about National Wildlife Refuge visitors in order to improve the management of the area and enhance visitor opportunities.

If you have recently visited more than one National Wildlife Refuge or made more than one visit to the same Refuge, please respond regarding only the Refuge and the visit when you were asked to participate in this survey. Any question that uses the phrase “this Refuge” refers to the Refuge and visit when you were contacted.

SECTION 1. Your visit to this Refuge

1. Including your most recent visit, which activities have you participated in during the past 12 months at this Refuge?
(Please mark **all that apply.**)

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Big game hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> 67% Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> 9% Environmental education (for example, classrooms or labs, tours) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Upland/Small-game hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> 2% Bicycling | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Migratory bird/Waterfowl hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> 59% Auto tour route/Driving | <input type="checkbox"/> 15% Special event (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 86% Wildlife observation | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Motorized boating | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 88% Bird watching | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Nonmotorized boating (including canoes/kayaks) | <input type="checkbox"/> 12% Other (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Freshwater fishing | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Saltwater fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> 33% Interpretation (for example, exhibits, kiosks, videos) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% Other (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 51% Photography | | |

2. Which of the activities above was the ***primary*** purpose of your visit to this Refuge?
(Please write **only one activity** on the line.) See report for categorized results; see Appendix B for miscellaneous responses

3. Did you go to a Visitor Center at this Refuge?

- 34% No
- 66% Yes → If yes, what did you do there? (Please mark **all that apply.**)
- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 80% Visit the gift shop or bookstore | <input type="checkbox"/> 4% Watch a nature talk/video/presentation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35% View the exhibits | <input type="checkbox"/> 67% Stopped to use the facilities (for example, get water, use restroom) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 60% Ask information of staff/volunteers | <input type="checkbox"/> 10% Other (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u> |

4. Which of the following best describes your visit to this Refuge? (*Please mark **only one.***)

| Nonlocal | Local | Total | |
|----------|-------|-------|---|
| 36% | 83% | 76% | It was the primary purpose or sole destination of my trip. |
| 33% | 8% | 12% | It was one of many equally important reasons or destinations for my trip. |
| 30% | 8% | 12% | It was just an incidental or spur-of-the-moment stop on a trip taken for other purposes or to other destinations. |

5. Approximately how many **miles** did you travel to get to this Refuge?

Nonlocal 103 number of miles

Local 21 number of miles

6. How much time did you spend at this Refuge on your visit?

See Report for Results

7. Were you part of a group on your visit to this Refuge?

40% No (*skip to question #9*)

60% Yes → What **type of group** were you with on your visit? (*Please mark **only one.***)

92% Family and/or friends

5% Organized club or school group

0% Commercial tour group

3% Other (*please specify*) See Appendix B

8. How many people were in your group, including yourself? (*Please answer each category.*)

 3 number 18 years and over

 1 number 17 years and under

9. How did you **first learn or hear about** this Refuge? (*Please mark **all that apply.***)

41% Friends or relatives

10% Refuge website

37% Signs on highway

1% Other website (*please specify*) See Appendix B

9% Recreation club or organization

1% Television or radio

25% People in the local community

11% Newspaper or magazine

19% Refuge printed information (brochure, map)

13% Other (*please specify*) See Appendix B

10. During which seasons have you visited this Refuge in the last 12 months? (*Please mark **all that apply.***)

83% Spring
(March-May)

60% Summer
(June-August)

77% Fall
(September-November)

63% Winter
(December-February)

11. How many times have you visited...

...this Refuge (including this visit) in the last 12 months? 11 number of visits

...other National Wildlife Refuges in the last 12 months? 6 number of visits

SECTION 2. Transportation and access at this Refuge

1. What **forms of transportation** did you use on your visit to this Refuge? (*Please mark **all that apply.***)

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 98% | Private vehicle without a trailer | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Refuge shuttle bus or tram | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Bicycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Private vehicle with a trailer (for boat, camper or other) | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Motorcycle | <input type="checkbox"/> 41% | Walk/Hike |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Commercial tour bus | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | ATV or off-road vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Other (<i>please specify below</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Recreational vehicle (RV) | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Boat | <u>See Appendix B</u> | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Wheelchair or other mobility aid | | |

2. Which of the following did you use to find your way to this Refuge? (*Please mark **all that apply.***)

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 54% | Signs on highways | <input type="checkbox"/> 7% | Directions from Refuge website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4% | A GPS navigation system | <input type="checkbox"/> 3% | Directions from people in community near this Refuge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12% | A road atlas or highway map | <input type="checkbox"/> 14% | Directions from friends or family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10% | Maps from the Internet (for example, MapQuest or Google Maps) | <input type="checkbox"/> 64% | Previous knowledge/I have been to this Refuge before |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> 3% | Other (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u> |

3. Below are different alternative transportation options that could be offered at some National Wildlife Refuges in the future. Considering the different Refuges you may have visited, please tell us **how likely you would be to use each transportation option.** (*Please circle one number for each statement.*)

| How likely would you be to use... | Very Unlikely | Somewhat Unlikely | Neither | Somewhat Likely | Very Likely |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ...a bus or tram that takes passengers to different points on the Refuge (such as the Visitor Center)? | <input type="checkbox"/> 42% | <input type="checkbox"/> 17% | <input type="checkbox"/> 4% | <input type="checkbox"/> 23% | <input type="checkbox"/> 13% |
| ...a bike that was offered through a Bike Share Program for use while on the Refuge? | <input type="checkbox"/> 34% | <input type="checkbox"/> 11% | <input type="checkbox"/> 7% | <input type="checkbox"/> 28% | <input type="checkbox"/> 19% |
| ...a bus or tram that provides a guided tour of the Refuge with information about the Refuge and its resources? | <input type="checkbox"/> 36% | <input type="checkbox"/> 15% | <input type="checkbox"/> 7% | <input type="checkbox"/> 26% | <input type="checkbox"/> 16% |
| ...a boat that goes to different points on Refuge waterways? | <input type="checkbox"/> 28% | <input type="checkbox"/> 8% | <input type="checkbox"/> 5% | <input type="checkbox"/> 34% | <input type="checkbox"/> 24% |
| ...a bus or tram that runs during a special event (such as an evening tour of wildlife or weekend festival)? | <input type="checkbox"/> 31% | <input type="checkbox"/> 11% | <input type="checkbox"/> 5% | <input type="checkbox"/> 31% | <input type="checkbox"/> 21% |
| ...an offsite parking lot that provides trail access for walking/hiking onto the Refuge? | <input type="checkbox"/> 17% | <input type="checkbox"/> 6% | <input type="checkbox"/> 4% | <input type="checkbox"/> 33% | <input type="checkbox"/> 40% |
| ...some other alternative transportation option? (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> 8% | <input type="checkbox"/> 4% | <input type="checkbox"/> 8% | <input type="checkbox"/> 38% | <input type="checkbox"/> 42% |

4. If alternative transportation were offered at *this* Refuge, would it enhance your experience?

- 20% Yes 36% No 44% Not Sure

5. For each of the following transportation-related features, first, **rate how important** each feature is to you when visiting this Refuge; then **rate how satisfied** you are with the way this Refuge is managing each feature. *If this Refuge does not offer a specific transportation-related feature, please rate how important it is to you and then circle NA "Not Applicable" under the Satisfaction column.*

| Importance | | | | | | Satisfaction | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------|----------------|---|---------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Circle one for each item. | | | | | | Circle one for each item. | | | | | |
| Very Unimportant | Somewhat Unimportant | Neither | Somewhat Important | Very Important | | Very Unsatisfied | Somewhat Unsatisfied | Neither | Somewhat Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Not Applicable |
| 6% | 23% | 10% | 46% | 16% | Surface conditions of roads | 4% | 4% | 4% | 28% | 60% | NA |
| 8% | 22% | 12% | 49% | 8% | Surface conditions of parking areas | 4% | 1% | 6% | 17% | 73% | NA |
| 5% | 9% | 9% | 34% | 43% | Condition of bridges | 3% | 0% | 4% | 11% | 80% | NA |
| 3% | 5% | 5% | 41% | 45% | Condition of trails and boardwalks | 3% | 1% | 3% | 22% | 72% | NA |
| 2% | 12% | 14% | 52% | 19% | Number of places for parking | 2% | 2% | 5% | 19% | 71% | NA |
| 4% | 6% | 7% | 46% | 37% | Number of places to pull over along Refuge roads | 2% | 8% | 10% | 33% | 48% | NA |
| 4% | 4% | 8% | 39% | 45% | Safety of driving conditions on Refuge roads | 4% | 1% | 5% | 20% | 70% | NA |
| 4% | 4% | 7% | 40% | 46% | Safety of Refuge road entrances/exits | 2% | 6% | 6% | 31% | 55% | NA |
| 6% | 6% | 9% | 43% | 37% | Signs on highways directing you to the Refuge | 4% | 9% | 9% | 25% | 53% | NA |
| 3% | 7% | 12% | 39% | 39% | Signs directing you around the Refuge roads | 3% | 8% | 11% | 36% | 42% | NA |
| 4% | 3% | 7% | 38% | 48% | Signs directing you on trails | 2% | 6% | 9% | 41% | 42% | NA |
| 4% | 5% | 23% | 33% | 35% | Access for people with physical disabilities or who have difficulty walking | 3% | 6% | 27% | 33% | 32% | NA |

6. If you have any comments about transportation-related items at this Refuge, please write them on the lines below.

See Appendix B

SECTION 3. Your expenses related to your Refuge visit

1. Do you live in the local area (within approximately 50 miles of this Refuge)?

87% Yes

13% No → How much time did you spend **in local communities** on this trip?

 1 number of hours OR 4 number of days

2. Please record the amount that **you and other members of your group** with whom you shared expenses (for example, other family members, traveling companions) spent in the local 50-mile area during **your most recent visit** to this Refuge. *(Please enter the amount spent to the nearest dollar in each category below. Enter 0 (zero) if you did not spend any money in a particular category.)*

| Categories | <u>Amount Spent in Local Communities & at this Refuge</u> <i>(within 50 miles of this Refuge)</i> |
|--|--|
| Motel, bed & breakfast, cabin, etc. | |
| Camping | |
| Restaurants & bars | |
| Groceries | |
| Gasoline and oil | |
| Local transportation (bus, shuttle, rental car, etc.) | |
| Refuge entrance fee | |
| Recreation guide fees (hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, etc.) | |
| Equipment rental (canoe, bicycle, kayak, etc.) | |
| Sporting good purchases | |
| Souvenirs/clothing and other retail | |
| Other <i>(please specify)</i> _____ | |

See Report for Results

3. Including yourself, how many people in your group shared these trip expenses?

 2 number of people sharing expenses

4. As you know, some of the costs of travel such as gasoline, hotels, and airline tickets often increase. If your total trip costs were to increase, what is the maximum extra amount you would pay and still visit this Refuge? *(Please circle the highest dollar amount.)*

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|------|------|------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| \$0 | \$10 | \$20 | \$35 | \$50 | \$75 | \$100 | \$125 | \$150 | \$200 | \$250 |
| 11% | 34% | 28% | 8% | 11% | 3% | 3% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 1% |

5. If you or a member of your group paid a fee or used a pass to enter this Refuge, how appropriate was the fee? *(Please mark **only one**.)*

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|----|---------|-----|-------------|----|----------|----|--------------|-----|---|
| 15% | Far too low | 0% | Too low | 85% | About right | 0% | Too high | 0% | Far too high | 95% | Did not pay a fee <i>(skip to Section 4)</i> |
|-----|-------------|----|---------|-----|-------------|----|----------|----|--------------|-----|---|

6. Please indicate whether you disagree or agree with the following statement. *(Please mark **only one**.)*

The value of the recreation opportunities and services I experienced at this Refuge was at least equal to the fee I paid.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|----------|----|---------------------------|-----|-------|-----|----------------|
| 0% | Strongly disagree | 0% | Disagree | 0% | Neither agree or disagree | 25% | Agree | 75% | Strongly agree |
|----|-------------------|----|----------|----|---------------------------|-----|-------|-----|----------------|

SECTION 4. Your experience at this Refuge

1. Considering your visit to this Refuge, please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement. *(Please circle one number for each statement.)*

| | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither | Agree | Strongly Agree | Not Applicable |
|---|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|----------------|
| Overall, I am satisfied with the recreational activities and opportunities provided by this Refuge. | 1% | 2% | 4% | 36% | 57% | NA |
| Overall, I am satisfied with the information and education provided by this Refuge about its resources. | 0% | 2% | 6% | 45% | 46% | NA |
| Overall, I am satisfied with the services provided by employees or volunteers at this Refuge. | 1% | 1% | 7% | 35% | 57% | NA |
| This Refuge does a good job of conserving fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 2% | 1% | 4% | 32% | 62% | NA |

2. For each of the following services, facilities, and activities, first, **rate how important** each item is to you when visiting this Refuge; then, **rate how satisfied** you are with the way this Refuge is managing each item.
If this Refuge does not offer a specific service, facility, or activity, please rate how important it is to you and then circle NA “Not Applicable” under the Satisfaction column.

| Importance | | | | | Refuge Services, Facilities, and Activities | Satisfaction | | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------|----------------|---|---------------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Circle one for each item. | | | | | | Circle one for each item. | | | | | |
| Very Unimportant | Somewhat Unimportant | Neither | Somewhat Important | Very Important | | Very Unsatisfied | Somewhat Unsatisfied | Neither | Somewhat Satisfied | Very Satisfied | Not Applicable |
| 8% | 19% | 20% | 41% | 12% | Availability of employees or volunteers | 1% | 4% | 18% | 26% | 51% | NA |
| 7% | 11% | 12% | 39% | 31% | Courteous and welcoming employees or volunteers | 0% | 2% | 11% | 16% | 71% | NA |
| 4% | 7% | 9% | 38% | 42% | Knowledgeable employees or volunteers | 0% | 3% | 10% | 23% | 63% | NA |
| 3% | 3% | 7% | 47% | 40% | Printed information about this Refuge and its resources (for example, maps and brochures) | 2% | 1% | 7% | 31% | 58% | NA |
| 2% | 5% | 7% | 54% | 32% | Informational kiosks/displays about this Refuge and its resources | 1% | 3% | 7% | 39% | 50% | NA |
| 3% | 7% | 10% | 40% | 41% | Signs with rules/regulations for this Refuge | 1% | 2% | 12% | 35% | 50% | NA |
| 3% | 8% | 16% | 53% | 20% | Exhibits about this Refuge and its resources | 0% | 4% | 17% | 40% | 39% | NA |
| 6% | 7% | 27% | 37% | 24% | Environmental education programs or activities | 1% | 5% | 37% | 26% | 31% | NA |
| 3% | 6% | 18% | 50% | 23% | Visitor Center | 1% | 3% | 17% | 23% | 55% | NA |
| 3% | 3% | 7% | 37% | 51% | Convenient hours and days of operation | 1% | 2% | 6% | 24% | 67% | NA |
| 2% | 3% | 5% | 39% | 50% | Well-maintained restrooms | 0% | 9% | 9% | 23% | 59% | NA |
| 2% | 2% | 4% | 44% | 48% | Wildlife observation structures (decks, blinds) | 0% | 2% | 5% | 29% | 65% | NA |
| 3% | 0% | 4% | 24% | 69% | Bird-watching opportunities | 0% | 2% | 3% | 22% | 73% | NA |
| 2% | 2% | 4% | 40% | 52% | Opportunities to observe wildlife other than birds | 1% | 4% | 9% | 38% | 48% | NA |
| 3% | 6% | 9% | 32% | 50% | Opportunities to photograph wildlife and scenery | 1% | 2% | 11% | 27% | 59% | NA |
| 72% | 6% | 15% | 3% | 5% | Hunting opportunities | 10% | 5% | 64% | 3% | 18% | NA |
| 60% | 12% | 18% | 7% | 3% | Fishing opportunities | 4% | 3% | 69% | 5% | 20% | NA |
| 2% | 2% | 5% | 26% | 64% | Trail hiking opportunities | 0% | 2% | 7% | 34% | 57% | NA |
| 20% | 11% | 32% | 28% | 9% | Water trail opportunities for canoeing or kayaking | 6% | 10% | 64% | 8% | 13% | NA |
| 17% | 13% | 22% | 36% | 12% | Bicycling opportunities | 4% | 6% | 51% | 19% | 19% | NA |
| 10% | 8% | 31% | 35% | 15% | Volunteer opportunities | 0% | 0% | 51% | 19% | 30% | NA |

3. If you have any comments about the services, facilities, and activities at this Refuge, please write them on the lines below.

See Appendix B

SECTION 5. Your opinions regarding National Wildlife Refuges and the resources they conserve

1. Before you were contacted to participate in this survey, were you aware that National Wildlife Refuges...

...are managed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

90% Yes

10% No

...have the primary mission of conserving, managing, and restoring fish, wildlife, plants and their habitat?

94% Yes

6% No

2. Compared to other public lands you have visited, do you think Refuges provide a unique recreation experience?

94% Yes

6% No

3. If you answered "Yes" to Question 2, please briefly describe what makes Refuges unique. _____

See Appendix B

4. There has been a lot of talk about climate change recently. We would like to know what you think about climate change as it relates to fish, wildlife and their habitats. To what extent do you disagree or agree with each statement below? (Please circle one number for each statement.)

| Statements about climate change | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neither | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|----------|---------|-------|----------------|
| I am personally concerned about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 2% | 4% | 9% | 35% | 51% |
| We can improve our quality of life if we address the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 2% | 3% | 10% | 35% | 50% |
| There is too much scientific uncertainty to adequately understand how climate change will impact fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 27% | 23% | 18% | 25% | 7% |
| I stay well-informed about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 0% | 6% | 28% | 47% | 18% |
| It is important to consider the economic costs and benefits to local communities when addressing the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 2% | 9% | 20% | 54% | 14% |
| I take actions to alleviate the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 2% | 4% | 27% | 48% | 19% |
| There has been too much emphasis on the catastrophic effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 45% | 22% | 16% | 11% | 5% |
| Future generations will benefit if we address the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 2% | 2% | 9% | 32% | 55% |
| My experience at this Refuge would be enhanced if this Refuge provided more information about how I can help address the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats. | 6% | 8% | 35% | 38% | 13% |

SECTION 6. A Little about You

**** Please tell us a little bit about yourself. Your answers to these questions will help further characterize visitors to National Wildlife Refuges. Answers are not linked to any individual taking this survey. ****

1. Are you a citizen or permanent resident of the United States?

99% Yes 1% No → If not, what is your home country? See Figure 4 in Report

2. Are you? 45% Male 55% Female

3. In what year were you born? 1955 (YYYY)

4. What is your highest year of formal schooling? *(Please circle one number.)*

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--------------|---|---|---|---|--------------------------------|---|---|---------------|----|----|----|-------------------------------|----|----|----|-----------------------------------|----|----|-----|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20+ |
| (elementary) | | | | | (junior high or middle school) | | | (high school) | | | | (college or technical school) | | | | (graduate or professional school) | | | |
| | | | | | 0% | | | 8% | | | | 48% | | | | 43% | | | |

5. What ethnicity do you consider yourself? 2% Hispanic or Latino 98% Not Hispanic or Latino

6. From what racial origin(s) do you consider yourself? *(Please mark **all that apply.**)*

- 5% American Indian or Alaska Native 1% Black or African American 100% White
 0% Asian 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

7. How many members of your household contribute to paying the household expenses? 2 persons

8. Including these members, what was your approximate household income from all sources (before taxes) last year?

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3% Less than \$10,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16% \$35,000 - \$49,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 19% \$100,000 - \$149,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9% \$10,000 - \$24,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 23% \$50,000 - \$74,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3% \$150,000 - \$199,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12% \$25,000 - \$34,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 16% \$75,000 - \$99,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% \$200,000 or more |

9. How many outdoor recreation trips did you take in the last 12 months (for activities such as hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, etc.)?

28 number of trips

Thank you for completing the survey.

There is space on the next page for any additional comments you may have regarding your visit to this Refuge.

See Appendix B for Comments

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Appendix B: Visitor Comments to Open-Ended Survey Questions for William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge

Survey Section 1

Question 1: "Including your most recent visit, which activities have you participated in during the past 12 months at this Refuge?"

| Special Event | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Audubon Society sponsored native plant planting | 1 |
| Barns & Bluegrass | 1 |
| Big Sit | 1 |
| Finley Refuge Day | 1 |
| Habitat restoration | 1 |
| Native plant reclamation | 1 |
| Native Plant walk | 1 |
| Native wildflower planting | 1 |
| Refuge open house | 18 |
| Plant identification | 1 |
| Planting | 3 |
| Planting shrubs for fender blue butterfly habitat | 1 |
| Restoration Planting | 1 |
| School trip | 1 |
| Special Event Assistance | 1 |
| Training for interpretation of Refuge habitat and wildlife. | 1 |
| Tree Planting | 1 |
| Volunteered to help plant wildflowers. | 1 |
| Volunteering to staff a table/booth for the survey and the recent open house. | 1 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Wildflower planting event in spring | 1 |
| Total | 39 |

| Other Activity | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Aired out my dog at parking lot | 1 |
| Butterfly habitat restoration | 1 |
| Eating lunch and relaxing | 1 |
| Field Trip | 1 |
| Fine art; plein air painting. | 1 |
| Gift shop | 1 |
| Graduate research | 1 |
| Habitat planting for Fender's blue butterfly | 1 |
| Habitat restoration as part of community groups | 1 |
| Helping with minimal maintenance on the wildlife photo blinds | 1 |
| Landscape painting | 1 |
| Motorcycle Tour Route/Riding | 1 |
| Nature study of plants, flowers, lichens | 1 |
| Painting/sketching | 1 |
| Picnic | 1 |
| Planting for prairie restoration | 1 |
| Quiet Napping | 1 |
| Seeing the exterior of the historical buildings there. | 1 |
| Solitude to combat heart problems. | 1 |
| Staffing the refuge store | 1 |

| | |
|--|----|
| Store volunteer | 1 |
| To see example of an ash swale ecosystem. | 1 |
| Tour of the area | 1 |
| Tour of the historical house | 1 |
| Visit during lunch break | 1 |
| Visiting | 1 |
| Volunteer at Refuge Store | 1 |
| Volunteer planting for butterfly habitat | 1 |
| Volunteering - bird walks for local Audubon Society, wildlife plantings. | 1 |
| Wheelchair accessible boardwalk | 1 |
| Writing, Studying Plants, and Drawing | 1 |
| Total | 31 |

| 2 nd Other Activity | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Inspiration walks with the purpose of making a memory painting. | 1 |
| Plant observation | 1 |
| Total | 2 |

Question 2: “Which of the activities above was the primary purpose of your visit to this Refuge?”
Primary activities are categorized in the main report; the table below lists the “other” miscellaneous primary activities listed by survey respondents.

| Other Miscellaneous Primary Activities | Frequency |
|--|-----------|
| Ash Swale | 1 |
| Exploring | 1 |
| Field Trip | 1 |
| Graduate research | 1 |
| Habitat planting for Fender's blue butterfly | 1 |
| Landscape painting | 1 |
| Visiting | 1 |
| Working at the refuge store | 1 |
| Total | 8 |

Question 3: “Did you go to a Visitor Center at this Refuge?”; If Yes, “What did you do there?”

| Other Visitor Center Activity | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Asked to plant a White Oak sapling on property. | 1 |
| Ate our lunch while watching birds. | 1 |
| Check out the bird log. | 1 |
| Class. | 1 |
| Due to time constraints, just walked around part of the exterior walkway. | 1 |
| Find out if they take images. | 1 |
| Native Plant Walk | 1 |
| Photograph | 1 |
| Picnicking | 1 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Took wildlife photos from the Visitor's Center. | 1 |
| Volunteer planting. | 1 |
| Volunteered for a project. | 1 |
| Watched birds at birdfeeders. | 3 |
| Worked at cash register for sales at gift shop | 1 |
| Total | 16 |

Question 7: "Were you part of a group on your visit to this Refuge?; If Yes, "What type of group were you with on your visit?"

| Other Group Type | Frequency |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| Audubon birding class | 1 |
| Audubon tree planting | 1 |
| Class field trip | 1 |
| Volunteer gathering | 1 |
| Volunteer planting group | 1 |
| Total | 5 |

Question 9: "How did you first learn or hear about this Refuge?"

| Other Website | Frequency |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| Corvallis Audubon | 1 |
| Geocache website | 1 |
| Oregon Birding Online | 1 |
| Total | 3 |

| Other Ways Heard about This Refuge | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| 101 Things to Do | 1 |
| AAA | 1 |
| Area hiking trails book. | 1 |
| Audubon Society | 3 |
| Birding guidebook | 1 |
| Birding literature/ Reference books | 1 |
| Book on hikes around Corvallis | 1 |
| Corvallis Hiking Guide | 1 |
| Corvallis Trails (guide book to local trails) | 1 |
| Field trip while attending OSU in 1980s. | 1 |
| Former FWS Employee | 1 |
| General wildlife and refuge awareness | 1 |
| Highway maps and state gazette | 1 |
| Hiking guide for Corvallis and vicinity | 1 |
| Hiking guidebook by William Sullivan (Central Cascades edition) | 1 |
| Interviewed manager at the time the refuge was established. | 1 |
| Map while looking for a home to buy. | 1 |
| Oregon map | 1 |
| Road map | 1 |
| Salmon Watch | 1 |
| Saw it on a map | 1 |
| School | 2 |
| State map | 2 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| The Nature Conservancy in Oregon | 1 |
| Visited with an OSU Class | 1 |
| Wildlife viewing book | 1 |
| Zoology Dept. at local university | 1 |
| Total | 31 |

Survey Section 2

Question 1: "What forms of transportation did you use on your visit to this Refuge?"

| Other Forms of Transportation | Frequency |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Patrol car | 1 |
| School bus | 1 |
| School van | 1 |
| Total | 3 |

Question 2: "Which of the following did you use to find your way to this Refuge?"

| Other Ways Found This Refuge | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| "Birding Oregon" book | 1 |
| Book | 1 |
| Book Corvallis Trails | 1 |
| Followed class instructor. | 1 |
| Hiking guidebook | 1 |
| Map provided during the open house. | 1 |
| Resident | 1 |
| Walking guide for Corvallis and surrounding countryside | 1 |
| Total | 8 |

Question 5: “Below are different alternative transportation options that could be offered at some National Wildlife Refuges in the future...please tell us how likely you would be to use each transportation option.”

| Other Transportation Option Likely to Use | Frequency |
|---|-----------|
| Any kind of shuttle. | 1 |
| ATV | 1 |
| Bike | 6 |
| Bike path along train tracks from Corvallis to the refuge. | 1 |
| Bike tour group to get there. | 1 |
| Canoes or paddle boats, guided walking tours. | 1 |
| City bus, etc. | 1 |
| Horse pulled wagon for special event, such as highlighting history of area. | 1 |
| Horseback trail rides to some areas with limited accessibility. | 1 |
| It might depend on the transportation alternative being offered...I usually drive my own car. | 1 |
| Kayak or canoe that I can use independently. | 1 |
| Motorless canoe, kayak, or rowboat rentals. | 1 |
| My car | 1 |
| Pony or burro wagon with soft tires and interpreter. | 1 |
| Private auto | 1 |
| Rails to trails please!!! (e.g., Corvallis to Finley NWR) | 1 |
| Shuttle bus to the refuge from nearby town. | 1 |
| Small plane | 1 |
| Tour bus | 1 |
| Walking | 1 |
| We like the quiet, without buses and noisy visitors. | 1 |
| Wooden walkways thru the refuge. | 1 |
| Total | 27 |

Question 6: "If you have any comments about transportation-related items at this Refuge, please write them on the lines below."

Comments on Transportation-related Items at This Refuge (n = 53)

Bicycles are not allowed on trails at our nearby refuge. The use of a mountain bike would be a big plus for me since I have osteoarthritis.

Bike trails would be nice to have access to.

Expect a dusty, dirty car after a visit. Often cars stir up lots of dust and that's what happens.

Fuller access for bicycle touring would enhance the refuge experience and more people would use and value the refuge.

I answered importance with the viewpoint that the refuges are primarily for wildlife. Safety of visitors, and signage describing allowed seasonal access was of greatest importance to me. Making travel and parking pleasant is secondary.

I appreciate the new boardwalk trails.

I believe Refuge staff should consult with a few wheelchair users re: start of boardwalks. I had one comment from a wheelchair user that it could be a little smoother at the edges.

I come for the hiking primarily. I like to make a very large loop around Cabell Marsh, stop at Pigeon Butte, go around the small ponds, and take the Mill Hill and Woodpecker trails. To complete the loop, I have to walk along the refuge roads between a few of the trailheads. I would like to see more connecting trails especially between the Woodpecker Loop and Cabell Marsh trailhead to avoid the walk along that road.

I enjoyed each trip.

I enjoyed the rustic quality of the road and the speed of driving they enforce.

I LOVE the boardwalk for people in wheelchairs. It is fantastic. It is the ONLY place I know of in Oregon where I can take my friend in a wheelchair (who was an avid hiker before her injury) and actually get off the road to do a long hike - not just a few feet & then turn around and go back to the car. I also LOVE that the roads are unpaved. Please do not pave them. Unpaved roads in the refuge create much less eco-damage for the wildlife. They also pre-select people who are actually interested in wildlife. Willamette Park was partly ruined when the paved path was put in, and the paved parking lots for the soccer fields. Pavement draws a completely different crowd. If it is paved, you get more beer guzzling, litter-making creeps. When it stays unpaved, I am uniformly drawn to the positive, up-energy of most visitors.

I suggest extending a paved approach for the west entrance to the refuge so there can be some more safety when entering the fast paced highway. There is poison oak on some trails and most of the time it is moved back from the trails, so just keep up with it.

I would love to be able to rent a bicycle. If you were to do this, then the importance of road conditions would be important for bicycle trails.

In the refuges that have wintering waterfowl, I would like to see more pulloff areas closer to where the waterfowl rest.

It would have been nice to have one walking area/trail where dogs on a leash were allowed.

Less motorized access, more trails. Too much emphasis on motorized vehicles. It's a refuge, not a mall. At least keep the roads as unimproved as possible.

Many of the roads that serve as trails are heavily graveled for farm equipment use, making them very unpleasant and difficult to walk on. The addition of real trails alongside these roads with a surface more suitable for hiking would greatly improve the recreational experience at this refuge.

Need safer access (pullout) from Hwy 99.

Not sure if there was a sign on I-5 about the refuge as we came via the Lebanon area. Also, did not see a sign when trying to get onto 99W. It's possible we missed it.

Overall, it is kept up well in all seasons.

Perhaps have more trails available for those individuals with walking disabilities, and more boardwalks would enhance water viewing. This was a family favorite, especially for our two sons, ages 3 and 5.

Please do not use pesticides.

Please do not over-improve wildlife refuges. Keep them wild.

Please keep the roads gravel or people drive too fast and miss the scenery and harm the wildlife with their cars and trucks.

Public transport to the refuge from Corvallis would be great. Our daughter's preschool teacher told us that they would love to go on a field trip to the refuge, but since there is no city bus going there, they cannot afford it.

Re: Finley NWR - some roads are also public roads and many vehicles travel way too fast. This can be a hazard where there are limited pullouts.

Roads could be a little wider.

Signs directing folks into the refuge need to be more frequent before the turn from the highway onto the refuge road. By the time travelers see the sign, they pass the refuge and have to turn around.

Signs from Salem off I-5 would be nice.

Some of the roads were narrow.

Some of the year-round trails are quite muddy and next to impossible to hike on. Also, we would like to see more trails.

The entrance sign on Bellfountain Road is good, but the one on Hwy 99W could be better/bigger/more noticeable.

The exit from the highway is just a one way highway and people do not slow down for you to exit. A turn lane from both north/south would help the exit.

The gravel on most of the roads are too big and too much for bicycles. Dusting/sealing the roads would be best.

The main entrance off Hwy-99W is somewhat dangerous. The south end entrance is covered by foliage and is also somewhat dangerous. The third entrance is O.K.

The main road is in need of maintenance. It is a gravel road, which is nice because it allows for rain to run into the system naturally without the tar and other garbage in asphalt. However, due to the rainy climate in this area, the road should be graded twice a year to reduce the recurrence of large and dangerous potholes. Trails should be clearly marked at all intersections with arrows and the corresponding trail names. The exit from Hwy 99 is very dangerous. The highway is two lanes, one each in opposing directions, and has a posted 55 mph speed limit. The only sign indicating the turn into the refuge is about 500ft from the turn off. This isn't enough time to safely slow down and make a safe turn from the highway. The sign is very small and easily overlooked, causing confusion and a hazard to all drivers. I have not seen any handicap accessible trails at this refuge. This should be altered in a least one area of the refuge so that all visitors may reap the benefits of this beautiful area.

The refuge has one road that gets used as a short cut. Many of these short cutters drive too fast. Gravel and dirt roads are in good condition and appropriate. Paved roads are not necessary unless roads are otherwise often in horrible condition.

The refuge needs to have better signs on Bruce Road, showing drivers where to turn to return to the main refuge (after driving through some residential areas).

The roads and trails were in good shape. It was a little wet to take advantage of benches, etc.

The signs directing to driving trails were very clear. The trails for walking were difficult for me to travel due to the uneven gravel paths.

There are a lot of pot holes on the refuge roads.

There are too many ruts in the road. They cause a lot of pain to people with spine disabilities. There is not enough access for people in wheelchairs

There is really no need for the expense of any kind of mass transit in Finley. The only exception would be a huge single lot even where current parking would be inadequate. We totally enjoy the rustic peace and beauty of the park without any "mass transit". We'd hate to see this change.

There needs to be signs/directions to the location of the Visitor Center out by the roads that lead in. It is quite a ways into the refuge and we kind of stumbled across it.

There's only one short walk that is suitable for people with mobility issues, all other trails are for hikers.

They need to have signs for the refuge on Hwy-99 at Bruce Road entrance.

Tour trams on busy use weekends or special occasions that have more access would be much appreciated. To completely close down large areas of access during winter months for wildlife is unacceptable. Very limited organized transportation to closed areas, such as guided trams or boats, would be a much better usage with little impact.

Trails are great; boardwalk and viewing hut to observe birds is fantastic. Great area to hike and see birds at same time.

We love Finley!

We really like Finley NWR the way it is or we wouldn't be going there so often. We have seen other places we loved ruined with too many people, so it seems there should be some places that require an effort to find. Please don't ruin it with more publicity. We already have to drive so far to find this peacefulness.

You could have better signage at access points. You could also use more pull-offs for car viewings. How about a sign on I-5? There already have been many excellent improvements since I moved to the area 10 years ago. Keep up the good work! You could also use more restrooms at different places on the refuge.

You could use additional bike trails.

You could use more hiking trails.

Survey Section 4

Question 6: "If you have any comments about services, facilities, and activities at this Refuge, please write them on the lines below."

Comments on Services, Facilities, and Activities at This Refuge (n = 69)

"Off Limits Season" signs were adequate. I would recommend "Year Round Access" signs for the few locations that allow year-round access. Simply NOT having "Off Limits Season" signs at those locations isn't clear enough for a visitor.

A larger entrance sign on the highway would be nice. Larger board with map of refuge near entrances and lot more small bird blinds also would be nice. Thank you for all you're doing.

Bathrooms are in poor condition. I enjoy the solitude and opportunity to observe nature.

During the last 10 years we have noticed a gradual decline in quantity and diversity of wildlife in the refuge. We considered that it connects with the permitting of hunting and economic using of territory of the refuge.

Everyone's helpful!

Excellent management, facilities, and upkeep.

Hunters paid for most of the refuges in this country, but we are not allowed to hunt in any of the three refuges in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. The reason given is to protect the Dusky Canada Goose. Come on - compromise must be possible!!

Hunting and fishing should be a low priority for refuges. A refuge is a place to protect animals, not kill them.

I don't think hunting and fishing are recreational uses that should be allowed on the refuge. I also disagree with allowing cattle to graze at the refuge...the point is to allow nature and its inhabitants a break from cattle grazing and taking of the land... observation is one thing... usage like hunting, fishing, and cattle are another.

I enjoy coming to the refuge and seeing the different wildlife, especially the migratory animals.

I enjoy the refuge very much.

I enjoyed the planting job. I would have really liked a short discussion about the species we were planting and the life cycles of the Fender Blue. It would have been nice to learn more about the nature of our activities.

I have been to Finley a few times for hiking and walking around the lake. I have enjoyed the viewing structures for the lake. I don't know if boats are allowed, as I never see any. I guess for wildlife's sake, I am not interested in getting in their space. I love to hike and am always looking for a new trail, but again, not to impose on their life. I am not a hunter. Are there fish there? Or do the birds need what is there? My last visit included the gift shop. I bought a book I am glad to have. It is a small refuge relative to others, I am guessing. I really don't know about too many other refuges.

I love the hiking trails, but I wish more were open year-round if that could be done without damage to wildlife.

I love this place and I appreciate all that is done to preserve it and its wildlife.

I love this refuge as a place to hike and be with nature. Paving roads, interfering with the natural environment, adding structures, motorized boats or vehicles would significantly detract from the experience. The non-slip bridges are much appreciated as are the signs that say "Let the geese do the honking." The Homer Campbell path with a spectacular view from the deck at the end of the train is marvelous, especially for people in wheelchairs.

I see that the ponds and sloughs south of McFarland Road remain undeveloped. I suggest you consider this area to be reopened to duck and goose hunters during the winter time.

I think bird hunting is incompatible with providing a refuge for birds.

I will return in the spring, if not sooner. The weather was bad and we didn't see many birds or animals. We were unable to walk any of the trails. I had my mother with me who is in her 80's.

I would like to have hunting discontinued.

I would like to see a regulated area established for waterfowl/upland game hunting during regular waterfowl/upland game season. I would also like the ability to walk my dog during spring or summer, and more access for bicycles during the spring/summer. This could be done and still not disrupt breeding and conservation.

I'm against allowing hunting on refuges.

It is friendly, clean, and has good trails.

It would be nice to have drinks available at the headquarters. We would love to canoe, but do not know if we can.

It's a great place to see all the birds and seasons, and animals: cougar, bobcats, elk, weasels, and coyotes. Believe it or not, a bright white U.F.O. hovered 100 feet over me for 4 minutes at 6:00am on October 4, 2008.

It's all good.

It's very nice, we really enjoyed it! It's great for all seasons. More information about the old buildings would be nice. I would like to see them open.

Keep expanding the refuge.

Maps should be provided throughout the park, but I couldn't find any.

More loop trails please.

More restrooms or porta potties.

More road access.

Nothing was really open on this winter day. Just wanted to photo some birds.

Our recent visit was the first time we stopped at the new visitor center. It was nice, but small.

Photo blind opportunities are very sparse and mediocre at best. Access needs to be increased on an organized basis for restricted/closed areas during the winter. An auction or draw for an Elk hunting tag and permit on a very limited number would raise more money for this refuge than all other fundraising activities combined. Naturalists are not the only people that have a right to determine land usage on public properties.

Please do not "improve" Finley. Please maintain it and protect the wildlife.

Please do not start charging a fee. I would gladly continue to have minimal services to avoid a fee. I do not want hunters to be able to come onto the nature preserve. I believe this is currently illegal as it is a wildlife sanctuary. I would be interested in an off-road bicycle/multi-use path.

Please keep it simple; there are too many tourist traps.

Some better maps near the entrance would be helpful, as would additional trails to hike on.

Some of the trail maps were vague or somewhat confusing, otherwise the visit was very enjoyable and satisfying.

Someone needs to stop the killing off elk and leaving them laying there. There have been three elk killed on the refuge in about one month. Please do something about this, if you can.

The facilities and visitor center could have more exhibits and educational programs working with the local elementary schools and high schools. Overall it should be better advertised to the local community.

The highway signs need to be bigger. The highway also needs to be open more.

The location and trail to the wildlife photography blind could be improved by relocating it and developing a low-maintenance boardwalk to the blind.

The lower bathroom down by Hwy 99W is pretty grungy, but the new ones up at headquarters are nice.

The new visitor center is very nice.

The new visitor's center is a great addition. The boardwalk trail is outstanding. There are times when it would be fun to know what was happening or will happen. The last 5-10 years have been a big improvement in the visiting opportunities to really see wildlife.

The overall experience was gratifying. I understand the expense, but would like to see staff available more often.

The people have always been very friendly and the restrooms have always been clean.

The receptionist is unfriendly. Nobody else was available to talk to.

The refuge just keeps getting better every year. Employees and volunteers are great. Lots of new plans and improvements are always going on or are in the works. Staff asks for input about new plans, which is nice. It makes me look forward to each new visit to see what's been done. I'm very lucky to live only 12 miles from the refuge.

The services, facilities, and activities at this refuge are excellent and they get better every time I go out. They are working hard to make it user friendly for any activity you choose.

The staff is doing a great job with education, outreach, and developing an educational curriculum.

The trail maps were very easy to interpret.

There are no decent bathroom facilities on the Bruce Road side. Some maps and signs leave a person in doubt as to where a trail goes when you are standing at an intersection.

There are portable bathrooms at certain turnouts in the refuge. Although these are useful and easily maintained by an outside source, the potential for these to be knocked over is relatively high and disgusting. There are no garbage receptacles at these stations, which causes trash to be either left at the refuge or placed in the "porta-potties." As annoying and lazy as this seems, it is a fact, and, unfortunately, this laziness should be stopped to eliminate improper disposal of garbage and unsanitary, bio-hazardous items such as soiled diapers, dog feces, and personal feminine hygiene items. Face it, who wants to drive around with a poopy diaper, bag of dog poop, or bloody maxi pad in the back of their minivan? Honestly - I don't.

Too much agricultural activity at the refuge and an emphasis on single-species management. Use of unknown agricultural chemicals without

any warning or information about toxicity to visitors or wildlife. Hunting should NOT be allowed at wildlife REFUGES!!!

Uniformed personnel and volunteers are always welcoming and helpful.

Use less gravel on the roads to make it easier for cyclists.

We did not go into the Visitor Center or use the restrooms on this visit.

We enjoyed our visit and found the volunteers very helpful.

We enjoyed watching the Canada geese come in. We also enjoyed talking with the staff in the gift shop.

We want more Wildlife Refuges in Oregon.

We wished the gift store had been open. The ranger on duty did let us in to look, but couldn't sell anything. Cute store! She did give us some free literature and posters! Very nice woman!

Website information was very important - Very satisfied.

Wonderful boardwalks, nice trails, nice to have two entrances. Good viewpoint structures.

Wonderful volunteers and staff.

You are doing a great job. The farmers, however, were firing their guns to frighten the geese. I think they didn't want the geese in their fields.

You could provide info on the history of this refuge and the US Refuge System as a whole. I think more people could appreciate the refuge system and learn about their local ecosystems if they had a little more public visibility. I understand that activities cost money and man power.

Survey Section 5

Question 3: "If you answered "Yes" to Question 2, please briefly describe what makes Refuges unique."

Comments on What Makes Refuges Unique? (n = 195)

1) They provide large areas of habitat for biodiversity in an often patchy, disturbed surrounding. 2) They provide resting, sheltering, and rearing areas for birds and other wildlife. 3) They provide research, educational, and artistic opportunities that tie us to the land and bring us meaning. 4) They provide landscapes that are important to native plants and insects. 5) They are areas of our natural heritage dedicated specifically to conserving wildlife and flora.

A chance to quietly enjoy nature without boats zooming by loudly, or guns going off. A chance to enjoy the Willamette as it should be... or was before we took it over for farming.

A more natural experience to observe the birds and wildlife. An observational experience rather than "entertainment-centered."

A place to observe wildlife in nature and to hike/walk in an area that allows observation of birds and other wildlife.

A safe and very accessible way to view wildlife and birds as opposed to BLM lands, which are more out of the way and inaccessible. Also,

easier for those with physical handicaps to view wildlife in a variety of habitats.

Ability to get close to see the wildlife and photograph.

Ability to observe wildlife and interpretative centers.

Able to photograph wildlife not seen near people.

Absence of "tourism," concessions; The vistas and boardwalks and trails allow the nature lover to "creep up on wildlife" and see them as they go through their life cycles during all four seasons. Beautiful photography opportunities in the blinds, especially.

Access to wildlife viewing, less crowding.

Accessibility.

Area to see protected wildlife.

Because that is just what it is: a "wildlife refuge." No stores, no buses, no loud music. Quiet, peaceful, and serene!

Because they put the wildlife and habitat first.

Being a senior, I enjoy just driving there to watch the geese, ducks, elk, and sometimes even a deer without ever having to get out of the car.

Being located near urban areas and virtually all the land being private, Finley offers a rest area for migratory birds, cover for other wildlife like deer, elk, coyotes, bobcats, and other smaller wildlife. It allows the public to view wildlife in natural settings. To a nature photographer, it provides opportunities to view and photograph wildlife that would otherwise be very difficult to see. It is an oasis in a sea of private lands and a chance for wildlife to survive as their habitat is otherwise destroyed in the world outside the refuge.

Bird and wildlife watching experiences.

Bird watching is exceptional. The history of the area is also interesting.

Care is taken to create and maintain a natural habitat where birds will come full-time or while migrating. The trails, with viewpoints, are designed and located for viewing without disturbing the birds.

Close by, plenty of access, plenty of trails, many ecosystems, and great freedom to explore or just pause life for a moment.

Close observation of waterfowl.

Close proximity to both waterfowl and other wildlife.

Concentration and diversity of wildlife and birds in an accessible, but unobtrusively managed setting.

Conservation is paramount.

Dedication to the primary rule: "where wildlife comes first." In Oregon especially, the history of refuges is inspiring, given the rescue of coastal seabird rookeries at the turn of the century, the protection of the Klamath marshes, provision for winter survival of the Dusky Canada goose, and harboring of huge flocks of migrant birds during fall and spring along the Oregon coast.

Deer hunting in the valley is neat. I killed a really nice buck a few years back out at the refuge.

Diversity of wildlife, habitat.

Easy access, readily available information, ADA accessibility, and auto-tour routes make it easier when toting birding paraphernalia (binoculars, scopes, field guides, etc.). Also, there is usually easy access to FWS employees during a visit. Visiting wildlife refuges is my favorite activity.

Education and outreach are the necessity; dedication of staff and the management of the area for conservation.

Efforts for managing wildlife.

Every refuge offers its own ecosystem, even refuges 15 miles apart offer different wildlife experiences. This particular refuge has a wonderful array of different bird habitats, all visible from the same area.

Excellent bird watching opportunities.

Finley has a resident Roosevelt Elk herd that can sometimes be seen and has a wonderful assortment of birds coming through in great volumes! We love the Homer Campbell Boardwalk and the Woodpecker and Mill Hill Trails. We have even seen white pelicans on the pond off of Homer.

Finley is a great place to clear the mind and get in touch with the natural part of life.

Great birding and other wildlife habitat, interesting native flora, trails, peace and quiet.

Great places for wildlife viewing.

Great way to see birdlife, if it is open.

Habitat has been managed for birds & wildlife, offering many opportunities for viewing. Refuges are vital to the survival of many species, particularly those in the cross-hairs of hunters.

High numbers of waterfowl.

I am able to look at wildlife in a more natural setting.

I believe that properly managed lands give a better example of what an ecosystem should naturally look like.

I do see a wider range of wildlife on the refuges than in other parks. Also, the focus being first on conservation and recreation with other purposes being second is unique to the refuges.

I enjoy bird watching. I would really like canoe or kayak trail experience.

I particularly like places where even dogs are not allowed in order to protect the birds and wildlife.

I perceive our national wildlife refuges as the 'crown jewels' on our nation's natural environment; the essential elements in preserving quality of life for all living things.

If you don't already know, shame on you.

Information on bird and other species is usually available; staff is generally knowledgeable about bird and wildlife related topics.

It allows an area for wildlife to thrive and be witnessed by visitors without any disturbance to the area.

It is a clean, modern location. They are well maintained and a great use of tax payer dollars.

It is a large expansive NWR with a large variety of varying terrain. I liked the variability within the refuge.

It is nice to see wild land being cared for so we can enjoy the entire biodiversity it offers.

It provides opportunities to observe wildlife that is not readily available elsewhere.

It was a place to take my children so they could see there are places that have been saved for the birds. My kids are 3 and 4 years old and my sister works for the US Fish and Wildlife Service and she explained its benefits to them!

It's a safe place for wildlife viewing. Light traffic allows for you to stop right when you see something.

It's one of our few places with beautiful scenery. It also offers me an opportunity to get up close and personal with the wildlife in this area.

It's peaceful and not very commercial, but I have not been to very many and don't have a good basis for comparison.

It's truly Oregon.

Its unique location.

Just knowing that an area has been reserved for critters is comforting. We humans have a tendency to take over everything, so having these refuges is wonderful.

Largest congregation of Canada geese I've ever seen.

Less Park like and less traffic.

Letting people see animals in their natural habitat, not on display like in a zoo.

Lots of water brings in waterfowl. Open fields and riparian areas provide for raptors and geese.

Migratory wildlife.

More opportunities to see wildlife because of the quiet and natural area.

Most other visitors I encounter at the refuge are there for the same purposes as me: to view wildlife without causing too much disturbance. I like that everyone has that same mind set, and it makes visiting the refuge a great stress release.

Most public lands are managed for a broader range of uses, while the refuges have a primary goal of being a refuge for wildlife and an educational opportunity for visitors.

National Wildlife Refuges offer "regular" people the chance to visit "the wild" just outside their hometowns. There are kiosks, maps, brochures, educated professionals, and avid volunteers to help everyday people witness and be a part of the true beauty of an ever decreasing resource. Wildlife refuges are an extremely important part of an undying connection that people have with their wild side, or maybe even their ancestry. The chance to see a herd of elk or deer crossing the road, or the possibility of watching a great blue heron hunt in the reeds while turtles bask in the sunlight on a submerged log, is an essential need for our nation and one that is very few and far between.

Natural habitat is rare. It's rewarding, refreshing, healing, comforting, and educational to experience the natural environment.

Natural habitat.

Natural, unspoiled.

No commercialization of nature, as in some of the National Parks; the ability to enjoy wildlife in their habitat and with the least amount of disturbance. Protection of native plants/ecosystems.

Observing and preserving wildlife, hiking, birding, and photography.

Only in a very special niche. They offer an experience that falls in between a wilderness experience and that of a public park. Many local city parks and wildlife areas offer better interaction and viewing of local wildlife.

Opportunities to experience wetlands and their wildlife.

Opportunity to see and experience an intact habitat. It gives guests a chance to learn from the wildlife refuge's conservation practices as well as a chance to volunteer. It is a wonderful place to bring friends and family.

Opportunity to see wildlife, especially migratory waterfowl, in a somewhat natural setting.

Preservation and protection aspect. Opportunities for photography.

Preserving wildlife and the peacefulness of the areas for all to enjoy.

Primary purpose is for conserving animals and their habitats rather than serving people.

Protected areas offer a unique opportunity to view wildlife.

Provide the opportunity to observe wildlife in their natural environment and learn about the area's natural resources.

Provides opportunities to view wildlife at an unhurried pace with the ability to pull off the road frequently.

Proximity to my hometown; quiet; good boardwalks and trails for walking; observation of Canada geese.

Reasonable price and fresh air.

Refuges are more peaceful to visit, and provide better habitat for wildlife, due to restricting human activities such as power boating and ATV/off-road vehicles.

Refuges are unique in placing primary importance on wildlife populations and providing public accessibility. It balances management considerations unlike the USFS and the BLM policies for public land management.

Refuges offer sites and opportunities to view wildlife and ecosystems. There is usually a knowledgeable staff person or volunteer on hand to answer questions and direct you to locations within the refuge that may be of special interest. All without the commercialism of many other parks.

Refuges provide essential habitat for species of plants, mammals and birds that have seen decline. Refuges provide a chance for these species to bounce back and for people to see these rare species firsthand. Refuges also provide important education to a society that is somewhat detached from the environment. Through refuge activities and visits, the public can have personal experiences with wildlife that will be important for the future of refuges and the wildlife that inhabit the refuges.

Refuges provide habitat for birds and other wildlife. They provide wild places so that we can enjoy nature and its beauty. I receive a spiritual

renewal in the places without disturbance. In recent years the NWR have gotten much friendlier towards those who want to view wildlife and nature. The improvements have allowed for the public to support the NWR by making it more welcoming and not treating the public as an invasive species. Thank you all who manage to fund these places and make me feel like I belong. (signatures)

Refuges provide the opportunity to conserve unique habitats and to manage wildlife and plant populations for their conservation. They also serve to educate the public on conservation and provide recreation to the public. I consider wildlife refuges a step above the management of the Forest Service and BLM lands for conservation.

Safe and convenient place to see wildlife and to provide "refuge" for that wildlife.

Since the main purpose of a refuge is to conserve and maintain animal populations, refuges provide an environment where animals come first. People work with them to preserve and observe them. I feel like other public lands put people first.

Small areas that allow for intimate interaction with the environment.

So close to home. Lots of ducks, geese, and other birds. Wildlife viewing opportunities close to home. Sanctuary for peace and quiet. Relatively unknown to most.

Solitude. Remoteness.

The "wildness" of it and the quiet. I'd like to come back when there is more wildlife activity. Winter/early Spring is not the best time.

The ability to manage lands by conserving, managing, and restoring fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitat for the general public to learn and see the work accomplished.

The ability to see so much wildlife in a short amount of time.

The boardwalks and photo opportunities.

The emphasis on bird and wildlife preservation, and their accessibility to the public.

The extraordinary congregation of species (especially birds) that one can find at certain refuges makes every trip worthwhile.

The fact that the priority is on wildlife habitat preservation and not hunting, fishing, or other extractive human uses.

The focus is on animal habitat.

The focus is on wildlife and wildlife habitats.

The focus on preserving prime wildlife habitat.

The focus on wildlife conservation and restoration of habitat, and unique wild places. Also the cultural history of the properties.

The fresh air. The lack of pavement. The beautiful signs along the hiking trails, describing the flora and fauna. The wonderful, kind, cheerful volunteers. The beautiful trails. The haunting vistas. The sense of peace, of timelessness, of beauty, of connection to nature, of endless history, of life in balance. The blessing of at least one undamaged, unspoiled, unpolluted, non-commercialized, not overcrowded, quiet (no noise pollution) place I can visit easily from my home. The lack of physical structures - one place I can go and not see a single house or shed or barn while on many trails. The unparalleled vistas. The blessing that my tax dollars are actually used for something useful.

The habitat for animals and plants that is undisturbed by people.

The human brain needs the connection on a regular basis. You can clearly see the difference between country and the few urban birds that flock at the refuge. Urban birds are in smaller groups, far more skittish, and have the grey patches of inbreeding.

The lack of dogs, horses, motorboats, and bicycles in the refuge make it unique, a place to really commune with the deep peace of the natural world. I enjoy other trails in this area and am grateful for the variety of hiking choices. This refuge, however, is a special place to share with wildlife and birds. There are plenty of other options for a more boisterous experience, but few options where we can "Let the geese do the honking."

The National Parks like Crater Lake and other public lands keep the visitors at a restricted distance from viewing the wildlife. The refuge allows the visitor a closer look at the wildlife and it isn't like going to the zoo. They are in their natural home.

The number of elk and birds.

The Oak and Savannah habitat.

The opportunities to visit nature, away from the hustle of our techno world, are most rejuvenating. I love to see the flora and fauna in their natural environment. I think we should protect more of our valuable lands.

The opportunity to observe wildlife in a natural setting.

The opportunity to observe without disturbing the wildlife in a beautiful natural setting.

The opportunity to photograph wildlife in natural settings.

The opportunity to see migrating birds is amazing.

The opportunity to see wildlife in a safe environment. I imagine the exception would be in a hunting environment.

The peacefulness, the birds, the trails; we love this place just the way it is.

The people we meet on the trail are conservation minded. I may be wrong, but I don't have to worry about hunters shooting me when I am painting.

The presence of animals and birds, managed trails, and strict rules make it unique. It is also close to home.

The relatively large concentration of wildlife that is readily observable there!

The scenery is different and feels less tampered with.

The stronger focus on native wildlife than BLM, NPS, FS, etc. (not cows, minerals, oil, gas, off-road vehicles, feral horses, etc.).

The unimpaired nature of areas and ability to see undisturbed wildlife makes it unique.

The United States has incredible National Parks! Keep up the good work.

The upgrading and care of the fields for feeding the migrations.

The wildlife focus.

The wildlife. Our granddaughter loves seeing all the birds and elk.

Their emphasis on providing good habitat for wildlife and opportunities for viewing wildlife.

Their focus on preserving and maintaining the appropriate habitats.

Their minimal development and design for wildlife refuge, not human enjoyment.

There are a variety of birds and environments.

There are ample hiking trails, excellent possibilities for wildlife viewing, and good opportunities for education for people of all ages, including children.

There is a lower volume of visitors; it is not commercial.

There are places to sit or walk for long enough periods of time to see wildlife moving around you, and you can see several types of birds and wildlife.

There are portions set aside for viewing and places to sit and quietly work with the ability to observe wildlife.

There are wonderful trails, and they are well kept except for pesticides in the parking lot.

There is more wildlife available to observe. It is often full of unique or unusual species, and the habitats are protected.

These are often more remote and less crowded than other parks such as national parks or state parks.

They actively manage for native plants and animal species.

They are an important landscape feature that provides opportunities to observe wildlife in their natural, historic conditions. They are a valuable resource to both humans and wildlife.

They are better protected and there is more information about wildlife.

They are convenient to populated communities so people and especially children can experience what this Refuge has to offer.

They are generally the best places for bird watching--the main purpose of our visit.

They are large size and are good winter habitats for various geese, ducks, and many other water fowl. A variety of habitat allows for viewing of valley to mountain species here.

They are less commercial than other outdoor venues. I enjoyed the simplicity of the visitor's center and the volunteerism.

They are less crowded, more peaceful, and quieter than National Parks. Wildlife always comes first. There is a better chance to commune with nature, slow down, and get out of the rat race for the day.

They are low key, have an emphasis on wildlife instead of recreation, and are not crowded.

They are managed for the wildlife, not necessarily for the public. The habitats are not modified very much, but left as natural as possible.

They are managed more intensively (water structures to control clams.) It seems less visited, providing a more remote experience.

They are more readily accessible to visit with less cost than parks or other recreational areas.

They are not as exposed as the USFS or the NPS lands and have more of a down home feeling--a very comfortable feeling.

They are not designed to be "multiple use," which often means "multiple abuse," but are dedicated to the wildlife.

They are often located in areas of primary importance for 'stopovers' of migratory animals/birds, which means they offer superb learning and viewing opportunities. This one is a very small, but incredibly well-located byway and is seeking to preserve some very important, rapidly disappearing wildflower/animal communities. Involvement with the local college and non-profit groups provide a unique place to bring young people and myself to learn about our very specific habitat.

They are preserving land that otherwise would not be preserved. They are beautiful.

They are protected, quite natural, and usually offer a great chance to see wildlife and interesting ecosystems and natural spaces.

They are public and not private, in a natural setting, have recreational opportunities, educational opportunities, volunteering opportunities, are not commercialized, and there is conservation of natural resources and no commercial development.

They are so peaceful and quiet.

They are usually in places that other agencies don't manage: wetlands, estuaries, and seasonally flooded farmlands. This is unique because they contain different habitats and very often are great places to see migratory or wetland associated birds.

They are very peaceful, which allows for good observation of wildlife.

They are wintering grounds for dusky Canada geese.

They aren't commercialized.

They aren't geared to tourists; wildlife comes first. The opportunity is there to observe nature for people that respect nature.

They focus entirely on wildlife and what it needs to survive. They provide viewing areas and photo opportunities.

They have convenient days and hours of operation. The size of the refuge is unique and there is a variety of wildlife. They maintain the roads and hiking trails. It is a safe environment in which to observe wildlife (no panhandlers, homeless people, or threatening people.) So far they are not crowded, but that may change during the summer. They are also very clean; there is no trash.

They have wildlife-centric objectives for a managed ecosystem. It contrasts with multiple-use mandate of the National Forest and the restricted conservation mandate of National Parks. A better balance between wildlife objective and recreation use is found in the Refuge. National Parks are too crowded to meet somewhat conflicting objectives for ecosystem conservation and recreational experiences.

They offer many opportunities such as boardwalks, blinds, hiking trails, and ponds to see and photograph birds and wildlife.

They often provide the opportunity to experience a concentrated and varied bird population. They are not crowded like National Parks.

They provide excellent opportunities to observe birds and wildlife in their natural habitat with minimal disruption from visitors. They also provide a unique educational experience for the visitors and give them a greater appreciation and understanding of the environment.

They provide good human access to areas dense in wildlife, which is alone worthwhile. When combined with educational material, they allow firsthand appreciation of wildlife, plants, and conservation efforts.

They seem more wild than park-like.

They serve and protect the wilderness.

This is one of the few places nearby that one can observe wildlife undisturbed. I find the observation decks to be excellent additions to the refuge. Thank you.

This refuge has beautiful open land that feeds the soul. Its mission is very important to my husband and me, including conservation of land and wildlife. I don't agree with use for hunting; that is not what a refuge should be for.

To know the public can use it, but it's off limits for mating and raising young birds and animals.

Totally reserved and maintained in a natural state with minimal intrusion of buildings and motors.

Type of habitat and management.

Unusual combination of hunter access and birding opportunities. That combination has worked well to satisfy multiple uses. Would like to see more emphasis on natural vegetation management as opposed to growing forage for wildlife.

Waterfowl. "No pets allowed" is great. A lot of solitude.

We are always amazed by all the birds and elk we can see from a short distance in the refuge. Hiking on the trails with all the boardwalks, ponds and oak tree savannah is a wonderful way to teach our children how beautiful and exciting nature is. They love watching birds and newts, and they can already name several birds.

We love the boardwalk and many trails available.

Well maintained and managed wild lands for waterfowl and elk. Really does not need much change in the park.

Well, yes and no. NPS manages for wildlife and conservation, and in general, there is often better access to wildlife and natural areas. USFWS seems more focused on hunting than NPS, and I'm not into hunting at USFWS lands. They are also often smaller, and without wilderness designation. I appreciate them greatly, but they are not really unique. All are important though.

Wildlife can find sanctuary here and therefore tend to congregate in these areas.

Wildlife viewing opportunities, photography, and good helpers.

Wildlife viewing.

Wildlife, wildlife, wildlife!

Yes, but it seems to be limited at this location.

You can reasonably expect an opportunity to actually observe wildlife.

You can see animals and birds in their natural habitat.

You get to see wildlife in its natural habitat.

You never know what you will see. We enjoy seeing the wildlife in their natural environment. We have seen elk, deer, eagles, hawks, and other birds. We get such an awesome experience from it.

Additional Comments (n = 53)

*Expand the refuge with cooperative agreements *Connect Finley NWR to Corvallis with hiking/biking trail (e.g. rails to trails). (can't hurt to ask)

After wildlife protection and habitat goals are accomplished, the most significant role of Refuge managers is public education, including recruiting, training, and inspiring volunteers, and managing mission-specific volunteer work programs. There are refuges that have outstanding outreach programs. These refuges should be recognized, their staff rewarded, and their mission expanded to include training sessions for their fellow professionals in other areas who don't have the mission message yet.

As a photographer, I frequently use Finley NWR as one of my major areas for photographing birds in particular. Over the course of a year, they have a large variety of birdlife that migrates through the Refuge... I am aware that they are in the process of developing more photography opportunities for young people through organized educational and recreational programs. As an "old guy," I am delighted to see this happen.

As stated before, some type of hunting should be allowed. There are options that will protect the Dusky Canada goose while still allowing hunting opportunities. The system has taken the easy way out!! Some areas of the refuges are not used that much by the Dusky geese. There are options!

Disappointing to be too early in the season. I do understand the reasons for not having captive birds and appreciate them being free. But when I visited a caged raptor facility, I found it very educational to learn about the birds and their place in this life.

Enjoyed all the activities provided during this Open House. Particularly enjoyed learning about the Fichter family history in the area.

Finley could use more signs and enforcement for loose dogs. We have seen many dogs running unleashed on trails and even splashing in the duck ponds. Talking to these people ourselves has little effect. I guess they think it's a dog park.

Finley NWR has very friendly staff, a good nature store, and places to hike and see birds and other animals. A fun place to visit. Saw bald eagles, the closest I've been to them.

First class refuge.

First visit to this refuge! Absolutely loved the auto tour, the varied topography and habitats, the historical buildings, etc.! Look forward to making another trip to this and other refuges soon! Is there an audio tour tape available for the refuge, giving information on the various habitats/wildlife/historical sites in the refuge? Did not get a chance to check this out, but think that would be great!

Geocaching takes you everywhere.

Hiking signs and trails could be improved.

Hunting should NOT be allowed at ANY refuge. If it is allowed at this refuge, there should be at least one weekend day that is for NON-HUNTING use only so that birders, hikers, and other visitors there for non-consumptive use can enjoy the refuge without fearing for their safety.

I am concerned that in general the refuges don't have a higher priority with regards to funding our water rights historically. They are only going to become more critical as time goes on. If we educate citizens about refuges, maybe protection and expansion will have more political robustness. I also wonder what is being done about outreach, education, and cooperation with adjacent landowners.

I don't go here often because I can't take my dogs or horse.

I enjoy the refuge as a place to view wildlife. I do not need it to help me cure the world of all evil or to remind me that I am NOT Hispanic or a minority race. I just like to go there simply to be outdoors and enjoy viewing nature with my family. I do not visit so I can be managed by government employees.

I enjoyed the Refuge. I'll come back in the spring when the birds are more active.

I have been painting at Finley for 14 years, but have completed only a few paintings. I keep seeing paintings in my mind from what I have seen; I will paint more in the future.

I like the availability of the gift shop.

I love that this is available to our community... it surprises me how many people I know who have been born and raised in this area who have never been. Our connection to nature is lacking in our current generation...children and adults need to get outside and explore... Thank goodness we have Finley to do that in. Thank you to everyone for their continued hard work and support.

I love visiting the Refuge, as it allows quiet enjoyment of landscapes and animals, especially birds.

I never see any litter there. Wonderful!

I play guitar at the refuge and have had elk, deer, and bald eagles come very close. A cougar even came close and meowed for 20 minutes almost like he was singing along.

I really enjoyed the drive through, but it was just not the right time. I will return hopefully in the next month to see some elk. I always have my camera so having a place like this means a lot to me.

I saw 2 juvenile bobcats and their mother behind the equipment sheds! Very cool... it made my week!

I thought the staff and volunteers did a good job and were accessible. I also noticed that the facilities are well maintained.

I would love to see more Native Plant Walks. Also, herb walks. Also, how to sustainably harvest wild plants (although I know we cannot do this on the wildlife refuge, it'd still be a good place for a leader to demonstrate to a group appropriate methods and for the group to share locations or private properties where this could be done).

If there was a charge to Finley NWR, \$5 seems reasonable.

It is a beautiful refuge, with diverse habitats for birding. The earth is stunning at this refuge, visually, auditory, and even tactually in places.

Keep up the good work! We still have not visited the gift shop, but next time we will.

Keep up the good work.

More roads and viewing areas.

Most of the time we see no staff or volunteers. I would like to see both out and about talking with people on the trails, in the parking lot, etc. I would enjoy more child friendly events throughout the year (grade school age). I would enjoy more behind the scenes opportunities and more features in the local paper about upcoming events. It feels as though it is a great opportunity and privilege to live next to the refuge my whole life.

My wife and I visit this refuge often, especially during fall and winter when we have more time. The migrating birds are one of our favorites. It is always a very peaceful place to visit. Please keep up the great job.

One of our favorites. We will visit 3-4 times a year, trying to visit at each season.

Our visit was on a weekday, very quiet lots of birds. We are from Alaska but were visiting family in Junction City for 12 days. We also geocached near the refuge.

Please do something about the pesticides in the parking lot at Finley Wildlife Refuge. Many people cannot come during the month they spray. People are allergic to harsh chemicals.

Preserving tracts of land in moderate or undeveloped states for wildlife to exist is much more important than climate change. Habitat availability is most important.

Thank you for providing this survey. I very much enjoy the chance to visit the National Wildlife Refuge in my area and in other areas around the nation. Please don't let this important resource be lost or even downgraded. The "regular" people need these wild places.

Thank you for the "island refuge" that William L. Finley NWR represents!

Thank you!

Thanks for making the refuge available! The ideas of transportation improvements to this particular refuge are unnecessary, in my opinion. I think it will only lead to more people, and more noise, and the less 'commercialized' the refuge, the better.

Thanks for the very nice, low key experiences we have had over the past 8 years. The Finley Refuge is a convenient place to spend "quality" time with my family.

The new visitor's center was a wonderful improvement.

There is not much mentioned of hunting in these questions. Refuge, to me, means freedom from the pressure of hunting.

This is a great place any time of the year. We especially love the old buildings and barns, as they are great places to watch the wildlife, especially the owls.

Very enjoyable, keep up the good work!

We have enjoyed going to the Finley Refuge for approximately twenty years. Walking on the trails each season is renewing for us. Driving on the roads when the trails are closed is just as enjoyable. We go slow and stop many times to observe. There have been many times it takes us 3 hours to go a mile on a trail because of all the things we stop to observe and wonder at. We have checked many birds on our bird list at Finley. We enjoy seeing the elk herd right in front of us, hearing a bull elk bugle in the mist in October, watching harriers and other hawks glide over the hilltops, and we are amazed at the thousands of geese taking flight and then sitting quietly and listening to the meadow larks singing. All of this makes Finley a special place to my wife and me.

We have noticed more people visiting it in recent years.

We love to visit the refuge. The only thing that might make it nicer is to have a destination to get a snack and drink!

We travel extensively in Canada and the Arctic and make every opportunity to enjoy nature in all its variations. The Finley refuge is just another of the many we visit and enjoy. It is a good place to visit.

We would like to have year-round access to upland areas like Pigeon Butte that would not have a negative impact on waterfowl.

Wildlife Refuges are very important for wildlife protection and habitat protection. Other uses need to be managed to minimize or eliminate their impacts. No livestock grazing unless it enhances the habitat (if that ever happens, I'm not sure). Wildlife needs places like refuges where they don't have to compete with humans and our demands.