



National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey 2012: Individual Refuge Results for Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge

By Alia M. Dietsch, Natalie R. Sexton, Lynne Koontz, and Shannon J. Conk

I always enjoy when I have the opportunity to hunt and enjoy the outdoors at Eufaula NWR. The scenery is great, the staff is courteous and knowledgeable, and we usually have a good hunt with a variety of birds. It's a blessing to have it so close by.

— *Survey comment from a visitor to Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge*



Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge. Photo credit: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Contents

- Acknowledgments iv
- Introduction 1
- Organization of Results 2
- Methods 3
 - Selecting Participating Refuges 3
 - Developing the Survey Instrument 3
 - Contacting Visitors 3
 - Interpreting the Results 5
- Refuge Description 5
- Sampling at This Refuge 8
- Selected Survey Results 9
 - Visitor and Trip Characteristics 9
 - Visitor Spending in Local Communities 17
 - Visitor Opinions about This Refuge 18
 - Visitor Opinions about National Wildlife Refuge System Topics 23
- Conclusion 28
- References Cited 29
- Appendix A: Survey Frequencies for This Refuge A-1
- Appendix B: Visitor Comments for This Refuge B-1

Figures

1.	Map of this refuge	7
2.	How visitors first learned or heard about this refuge	10
3.	Resources used by visitors to find their way to this refuge during this visit	10
4.	Number of visitors travelling to this refuge by place of residence.....	12
5.	Modes of transportation used by visitors to this refuge during this visit.....	13
6.	Activities in which visitors participated during the past 12 months at this refuge.....	14
7.	The primary activity in which visitors participated during this visit to this refuge	15
8.	Visitor Center activities in which visitors participated at this refuge.....	15
9.	Overall satisfaction with this refuge during this visit	18
10.	Importance-satisfaction ratings of services and facilities provided at this refuge.	20
11.	Importance-satisfaction ratings of recreational opportunities provided at this refuge.	21
12.	Importance-satisfaction ratings of transportation-related features at this refuge.	22
13.	Visitors' likelihood of using alternative transportation options at refuges in the future.....	24
14.	Visitors' personal involvement with climate change related to fish, wildlife and their habitats.	26
15.	Visitors' beliefs about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats	27

Tables

1.	Refuges participating in the 2012 national wildlife refuge visitor survey.....	4
2.	Sampling and response rate summary for this refuge.....	8
3.	Influence of this refuge on visitors' decisions to take their trips.....	11
4.	Type and size of groups visiting this refuge	13
5.	Total visitor expenditures in local communities and at this refuge expressed in dollars per person per day	17

Acknowledgments

This study was commissioned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Visitor Services and Communications Headquarters Office and the Department of Transportation Federal Lands Highways Program, both of Arlington, Virginia. The study design and survey instrument were developed collaboratively with representatives from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and researchers from the Policy Analysis and Science Assistance Branch (PASA) of the U.S. Geological Survey. For their support and input to the study, we would like to thank Kevin Kilcullen, Chief of Visitor Services; Steve Suder, National Transportation Coordinator; Regional Office Visitor Services Chiefs and Transportation Coordinators; and the staff and any volunteers at Eufaula NWR who assisted with the implementation of this survey effort. The success of this effort is largely a result of their dedication to the refuge and its resources, as well as to the people who come to explore these unique lands. We would also like to especially acknowledge Holly Miller of PASA for her various and critical contributions throughout the entire survey effort, and Andrew Don Carlos of Colorado State University for his expertise in sampling design and overall contributions during the 2010–2011 phase of this project. Furthermore, we must thank the following PASA team members for their dedicated work in a variety of capacities throughout the 2012 survey effort: Halle Musfeldt, Jessie Paulson, Addy Rastall, Dani Sack, Adam Solomon, and Margaret Swann.

National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Survey 2012: Individual Refuge Results for Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge

By Alia M. Dietsch, Natalie R. Sexton, Lynne Koontz, and Shannon J. Conk

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 specifically dedicated to the conservation of fish, wildlife, and their habitats. There are 560 national wildlife refuges (refuges) and 38 wetland management districts nationwide, including possessions and territories in the Pacific and Caribbean, encompassing more than 150 million acres (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2013). As stated in the National Wildlife Refuge Improvement Act of 1997, 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 the diversity and interconnectedness of fish, wildlife, and plants, and their habitats” and the goal “to provide and enhance opportunities to participate in compatible wildlife-dependent recreation” (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2006, p. 2). The Refuge System attracts nearly 45 million visitors annually, including 34.8 million people who observe and photograph wildlife, 9.6 million who hunt and fish, and nearly 675,000 teachers and students who use refuges as “outdoor classrooms” (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2012). Understanding visitor perceptions of refuges and characterizing their experiences on 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 refuges. The purpose of the survey was to better understand visitor experiences and trip characteristics, to gauge visitors’ levels of satisfaction with existing recreational opportunities, and to garner feedback to inform the design of programs and facilities. The survey results will inform performance, planning, budget, and communications goals. Results will also inform Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs), visitor services, and transportation planning processes.

Organization of Results

These results are specific to visitors who were contacted at Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) (this refuge) during the specified sampling periods and are part of USGS Data Series 754. All refuges participating in the 2012 survey 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 survey effort.
- **Methods:** The procedures for the national survey 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 Refuge System topics
- **Conclusion**
- **References Cited**
- **Survey Frequencies (Appendix A):** The survey instrument with frequency results for this refuge.
- **Visitor Comments (Appendix B):** The verbatim responses to open-ended survey questions for this refuge.

Methods

Selecting Participating Refuges

The national visitor survey was conducted from January–December 2012 on 25 refuges across the Refuge System (table 1). Each refuge was selected for participation by the Refuge Transportation Program National Coordinator in conjunction with regional office Visitor Services Chiefs. Selection was based on the need to inform transportation planning processes at the national level and to address refuge planning and transportation needs at the individual refuge level.

Developing the Survey Instrument

Researchers at the USGS 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 (one 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 at which to sample, 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 the 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 3–5 hour (hr) time bands, stratified across AM and PM as well as weekend and weekdays. In coordination with refuge staff, any necessary customizations were made to the standardized schedule to accommodate the identified sampling locations and to address specific spatial and temporal patterns of visitation.

Twenty visitors (18 years of age or older) per sampling shift were systematically selected, for a total of 320 willing participants per refuge (or 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. Refuges participating in the 2012 national wildlife refuge visitor survey.

Pacific Region (R1)
Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge (WA)
Southwest Region (R2)
Balcones Canyonlands National Wildlife Refuge (TX)
Hagerman National Wildlife Refuge (TX)
Kofa National Wildlife Refuge (AZ)
Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge (TX)
Tishomingo National Wildlife Refuge (OK)
Great Lakes-Big Rivers Region (R3)
La Crosse District, Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge (WI)
Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MN)
Southeast Region (R4)
Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge (FL)
Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge (AL)
Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge (AR)
Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge (LA)
National Key Deer Refuge (FL)
Savannah National Wildlife Refuge (GA/SC)
Northeast Region (R5)
Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge (MA)
Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (VA)
Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (VA)
Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge (NJ)
Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge (ME)
Mountain-Prairie Region (R6)
Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge (UT)
Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge (MT)
Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge (CO)
National Bison Range (MT)
California and Nevada Region (R8)
Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge (CA)
San Luis National Wildlife Refuge (CA)

Refuge staff and/or volunteers (survey recruiters) contacted visitors onsite following a protocol provided by the USGS that was designed to obtain a representative 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 contacting only one person per group. Visitors were informed of the survey effort, given a token incentive (for example, a small magnet or 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 were also instructed to record any refusals and then proceed with the sampling protocol.

All visitors that agreed onsite to fill out a survey received the same sequence of correspondence regardless of their preference for survey mode. This approach allowed for an assessment of visitors' likelihood of completing the survey by their preferred survey mode (see Sexton and others, 2011). Researchers at the USGS sent the following materials to all visitors agreeing to participate who had not yet completed a survey at the time of each mailing (Dillman, 2007):

- A postcard mailed within 10 days of the initial onsite contact thanking visitors for agreeing to participate in the survey and inviting them to complete the survey online.
- A packet mailed 9 days later consisting of a cover letter, survey, and postage paid envelope for returning a completed paper survey.
- A reminder postcard mailed 7 days later.
- A second packet mailed 14 days later consisting of another cover letter, survey, and postage paid envelope for returning a completed paper survey.

Each mailing included instructions for completing the survey online, so visitors had an opportunity to complete an online survey with each mailing. 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 packet to determine any differences between respondents and nonrespondents at the aggregate level. Online survey data were exported and paper survey data were entered into Microsoft Excel using a standardized survey codebook and data entry procedure. All survey data were analyzed using *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences* (SPSS, v.20) software¹.

Interpreting the Results

The extent to which these results accurately represent the total population of visitors to this refuge is dependent on the number of visitors who completed the survey (sample size) and the ability of the variation

¹ Any use of trade, firm, or product names is for descriptive purposes only and does not imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

resulting from that sample to reflect the beliefs and interests of different visitor user groups (Scheaffer and others, 1996). 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 unique to each refuge. Spatially, the geographical layout and public-use infrastructure varies widely across refuges. Some refuges can be accessed only 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 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, which may result in certain survey measures such as visitors' self-reported "primary activity during their visit" reflecting a seasonality bias. Results contained within this report may not apply to visitors during all times of the year or to visitors who did not visit the survey locations.

In this report, visitors who responded to the survey are referred to simply as "visitors." However, when interpreting the results for Eufaula NWR, any potential spatial and temporal sampling limitation specific to this refuge needs 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 (mi) 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). 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) is too low ($n < 30$), a warning is included in the text. Finally, the term "this visit" is used to reference the visit during which people were contacted to participate in the survey.

Refuge Description for Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge

Eufaula NWR is located in western Georgia and eastern Alabama along the banks of the Walter F. George Lake (also known as Lake Eufaula). The lake is actually part of the Chattahoochee River. Of the refuge's 11,184 acres, 71% lies within Alabama and the remaining 29% within Georgia. The refuge borders Lakepoint State Park near the city of Eufaula, Alabama. The refuge was created in 1964 in partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers, which managed the lock and dam system for the Walter F. George Lake. The primary mission in establishing this refuge was to create habitat for wintering waterfowl, other migratory birds and resident species, and endangered or threatened species. Additionally, the refuge was to provide wildlife-oriented recreation opportunities for the public.

Habitat on the refuge is varied and includes 4,000 acres of open water, 3,000 acres of wetlands, 2,000 acres of woodlands, 1,000 acres of croplands, and 1,000 acres of grasslands. Many bird species, including wading birds, waterfowl, and songbirds, use the refuge as a migratory destination or stop over during different times of the year. The refuge is also home to many reptiles, amphibians, insects, fish, and mammals, such as deer, rabbits, otters, and beaver. Several endangered or threatened species such as the bald eagle, wood stork, American alligator, and peregrine falcon also reside on the refuge. Each year, just over 380,000 visitors spend time at Eufaula NWR (2011 Refuge Annual Performance Plan measures; Rob Miller,

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2012, written commun.). Popular visitor activities include fishing, hunting, non-motorized boating, birdwatching, wildlife observation, photography, an auto-tour route, hiking, and the use of two observation towers and a Visitor Center for environmental education and interpretation. Figure 1 displays a map of the refuge. For more information, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/eufaula>.

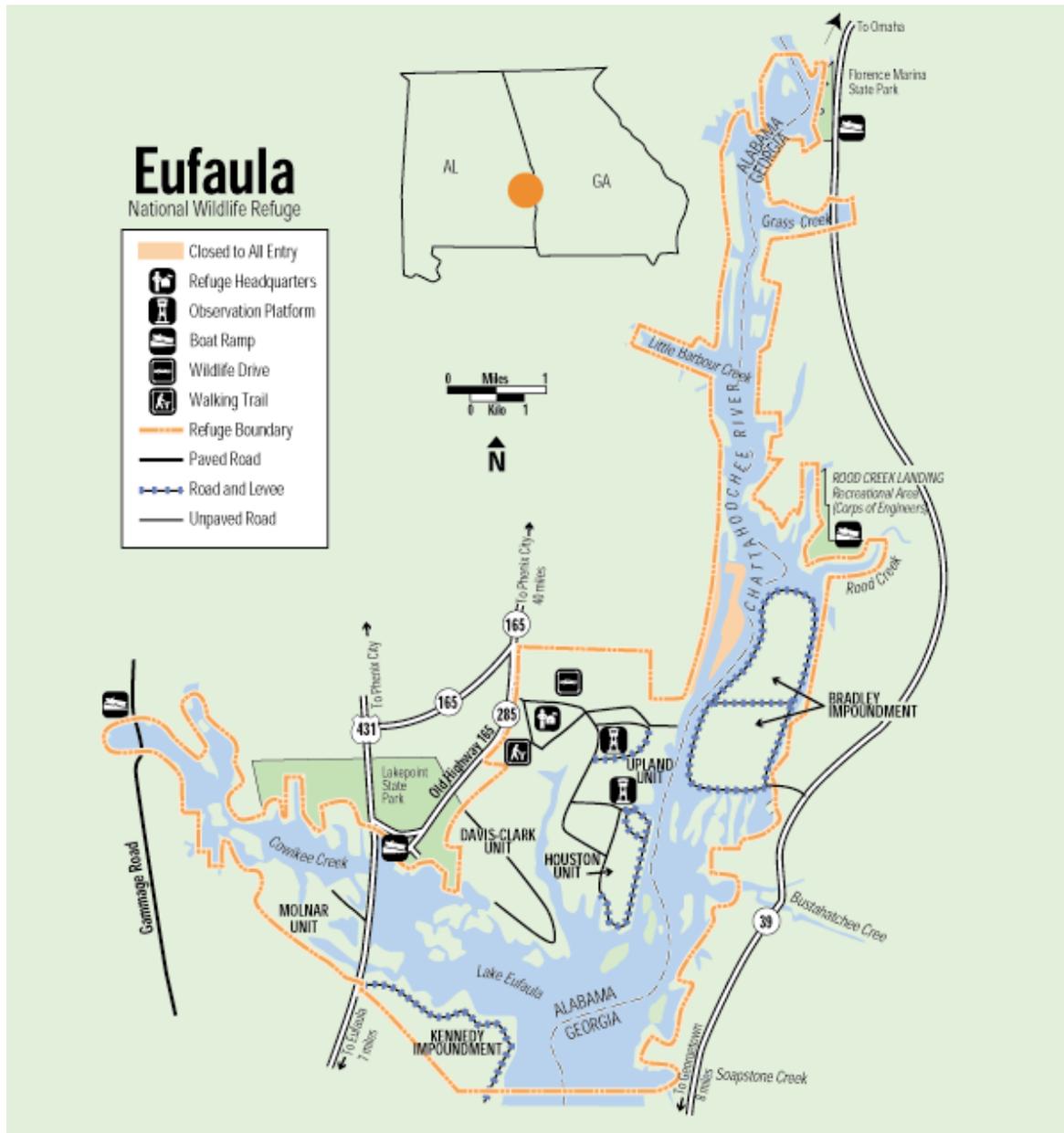


Figure 1. Map of Eufaula NWR, courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Sampling at Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge

A total of 264 visitors agreed to participate in the survey during the two sampling periods at the identified locations at Eufaula NWR (table 2). In all, 142 visitors completed the survey for a 57% response rate, and $\pm 6.6\%$ margin of error at the 95% confidence level.²

Table 2. Sampling and response rate summary for Eufaula NWR.

Sampling period	Dates	Locations	Total contacts	Undeliverable addresses	Completed surveys	Response rate
1	3/17/2012 to 3/31/2012	Lake Point Boat Ramp				
		Houston Bottoms Ramp				
		Kennedy Unit				
		Gammage Road Ramp				
		SP1 Totals				
2	11/10/2012 to 11/24/2012	Lake Point Boat Ramp				
		Main Unit				
		Bradley Unit				
		Kennedy Unit				
		SP2 Totals				
Combined Totals			264	8	142	57%

² A margin of error of $\pm 5\%$ at a 95% confidence level, for example, means that, if a reported percentage is 55%, then 95 out of 100 times, that sample estimate would fall between 50% and 60% if the same question was asked in the same way. The margin of error is calculated with an 80/20 response distribution, assuming that for a given dichotomous choice question, approximately 80% of respondents would select one choice and 20% would select the other choice (Salant and Dillman, 1994).

Selected Survey Results

Visitor and Trip Characteristics

A solid understanding of visitor characteristics and details about their trips to refuges can inform communication and outreach efforts, inform managers about desired types of visitor services and modes of transportation used on refuges, and help forecast use and gauge demand for services and facilities.

Familiarity with the Refuge System

Most visitors to Eufaula NWR reported that before participating in the survey, they were aware of the role of the Service in managing refuges (91%) and that the Refuge System has the mission of conserving, managing, and restoring fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats (92%). It is important to note that we did not ask visitors to identify the mission of the Refuge System or the Service, and positive responses to these questions concerning the management and mission of the Refuge System do not necessarily indicate that these visitors fully understand the day-to-day management practices of individual refuges, only that visitors feel they have a basic knowledge of who manages refuges and why.

Many visitors (80%) feel that refuges, compared to other public lands, provide a unique recreation experience (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.

A quarter of visitors to Eufaula NWR had been to at least one *other* national wildlife refuge in the past year (25%), with an average of 3 visits to *other* refuges during the past 12 months.

Visiting This Refuge

Some surveyed visitors (24%) had only been to Eufaula NWR once in the past 12 months, while many had been multiple times (76%). These repeat visitors went to the refuge an average of 16 times during that same 12-month period. Visitors used the refuge during only one season (45%), during multiple seasons (27%), and year-round (28%).

Most visitors first learned about the refuge from friends/relatives (79%), while others learned from signs on the highway (14%) or people in the local community (13%; fig. 2). Visitors primarily relied on their own previous knowledge as an information source used to find their way to this refuge (82%; fig. 3).

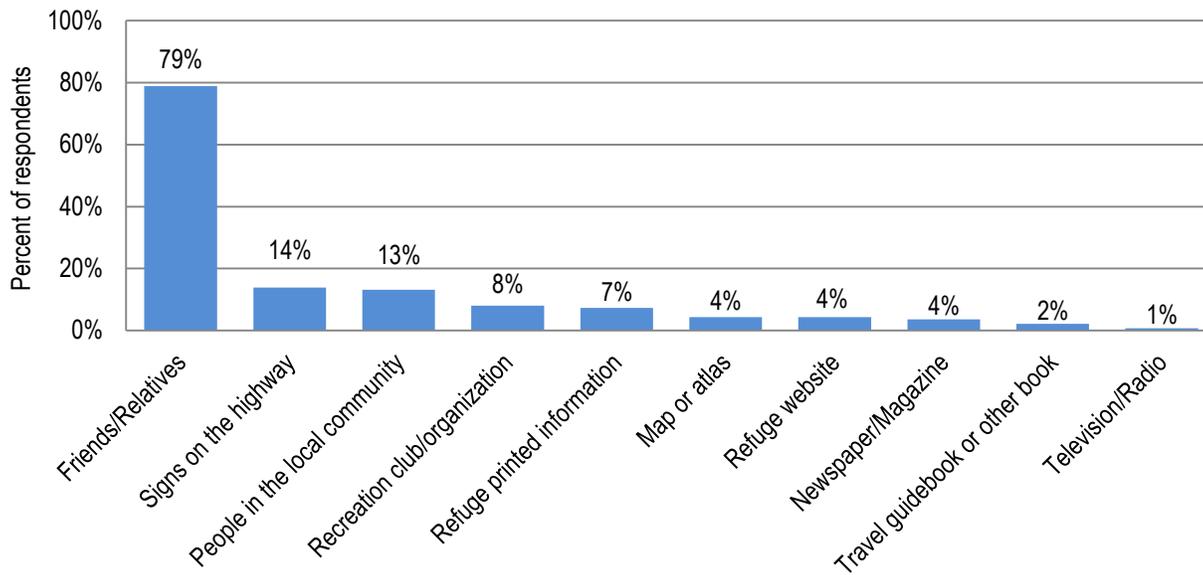


Figure 2. How visitors first learned or heard about Eufaula NWR (n = 137).

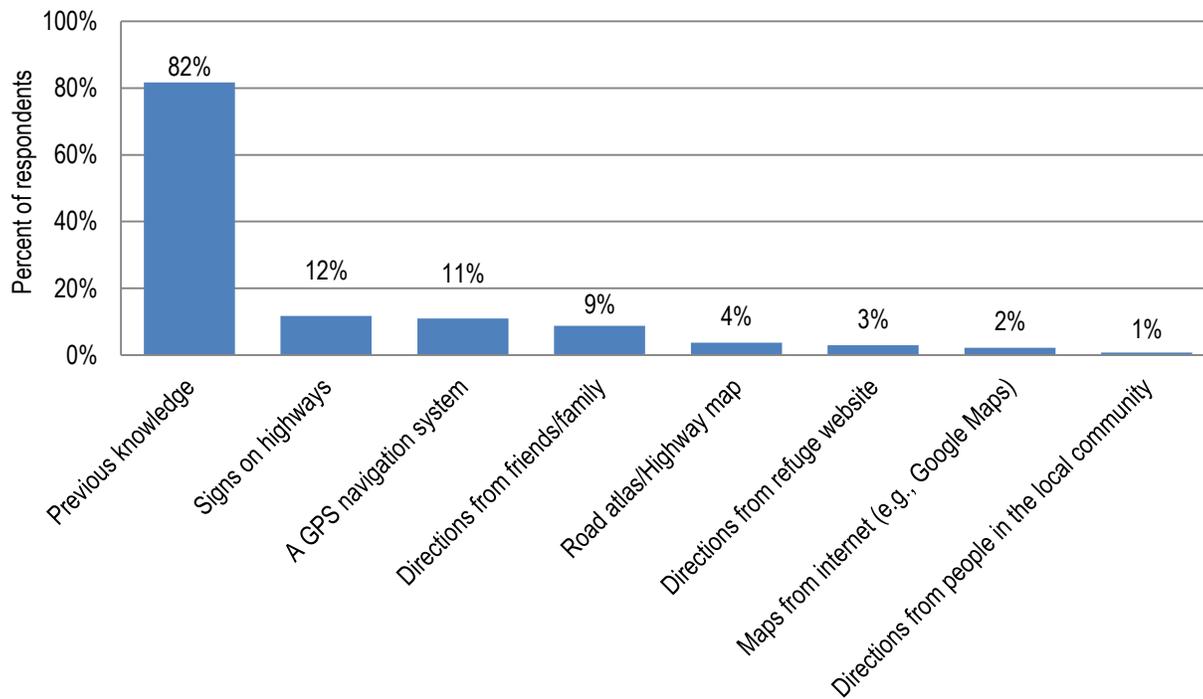


Figure 3. Resources used by visitors to find their way to Eufaula NWR during this visit (n = 137).

Some visitors (45%) lived in the local area (within 50 mi of the refuge), whereas 55% were nonlocal visitors. For most local visitors, Eufaula NWR was the primary purpose or sole destination of their trips (87%; table 3). For most nonlocal visitors, the refuge was also the primary purpose or sole destination of their trips (95%).

Local visitors reported that they traveled an average of 29 mi to get to the refuge, while nonlocal visitors traveled an average of 150 mi. The average distance traveled for all visitors to this refuge was 97 mi, while the median was 64 mi. Figure 4 shows the residences of visitors traveling to this refuge. About 58% of visitors traveling to Eufaula NWR were from Alabama and another 32% were from Georgia.

Table 3. Influence of Eufaula NWR on visitors' decisions to take their trips.

Visitors	Visiting this refuge was...		
	the primary reason for trip	one of many equally important reasons for trip	an incidental stop
Nonlocal	95%	3%	3%
Local	87%	8%	5%
All visitors	91%	5%	4%

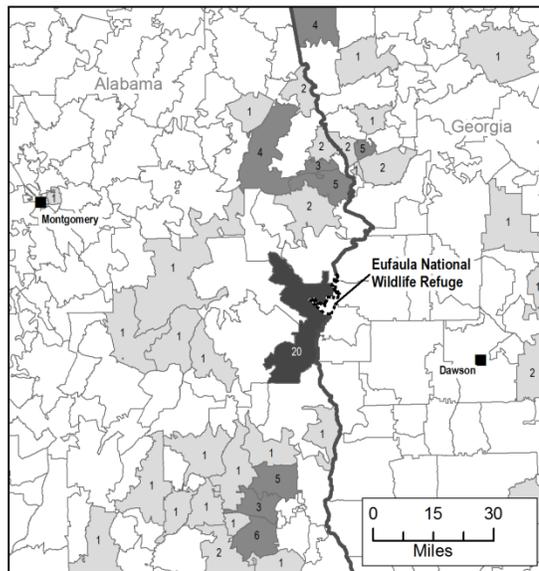
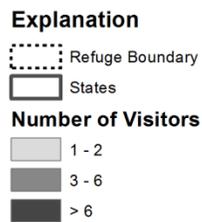
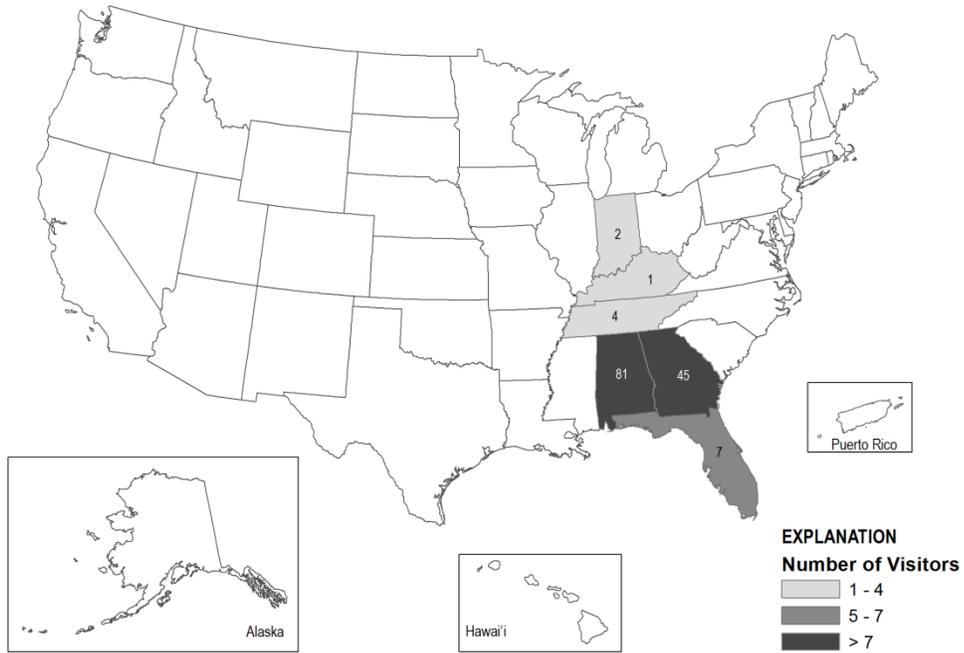


Figure 4. Number of visitors travelling to Eufaula NWR by place of residence. The top map shows visitors residence by state and the bottom map shows residence by zip codes near the refuge (n = 140).

Surveyed visitors reported that they spent an average of 7 hr at the refuge during one day there, while the most frequently reported length of a day visit (the modal response) was 8 hr (67%). Most visitors indicated they were part of a group on their visit to this refuge (78%). Of those people who indicated they traveled with a group, visitors primarily traveled with family/friends (table 4).

Table 4. Type and size of groups visiting Eufaula NWR (for those who indicated they were part of a group, n = 109).

Group type	Percent (of those traveling in a group)	Average group size		
		Number of adults	Number of children	Total group size
Family/Friends	86%	3	1	4
Commercial tour group	1%	2	0	2
Organized club/School group	13%	66	0	66
Other group type	0%	0	0	0

The key modes of transportation used by visitors to travel around the refuge were private vehicles with trailers (57%) and private vehicles (41%; fig. 5).

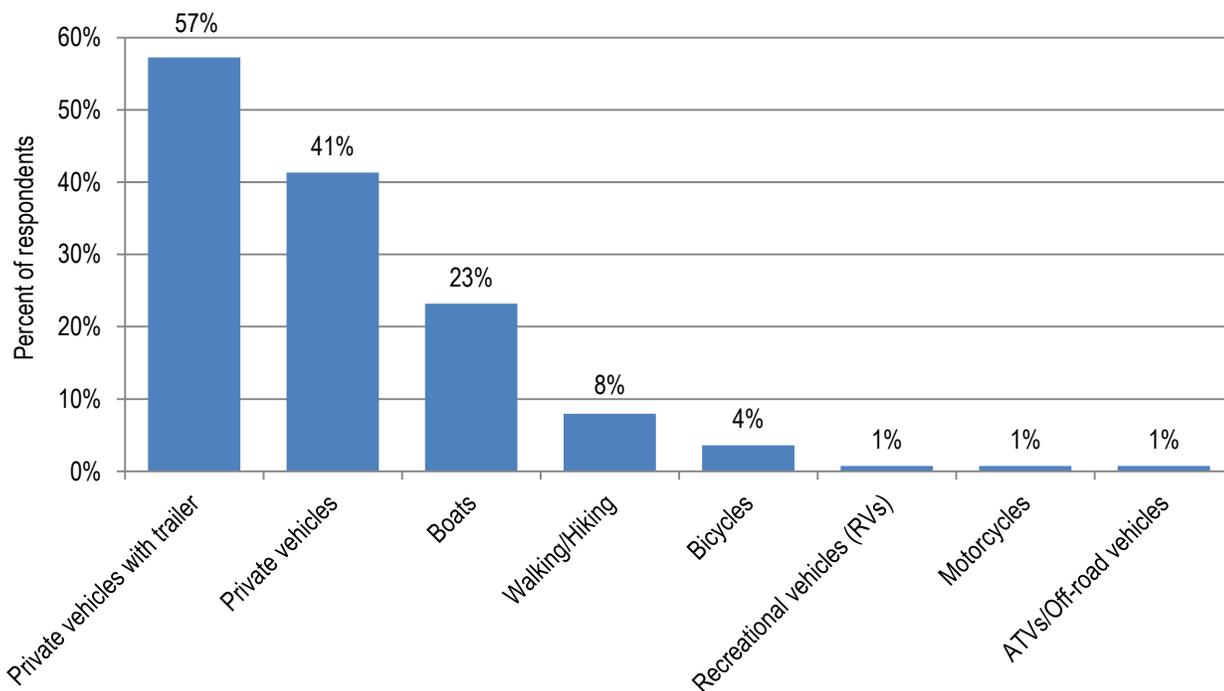


Figure 5. Modes of transportation used by visitors to Eufaula NWR during this visit (n = 138).

Surveyed visitors participated in a variety of refuge activities during the 12 months prior to completing the survey (fig. 6); the top three activities in which people reported participating were freshwater fishing (69%), motorized boating (35%), and migratory bird/waterfowl hunting (24%). The primary reasons for visitors' most recent visits included fishing (59%) and hunting (33%; fig. 7). Some visitors also used the Visitor Center during their trips (36%), mostly to pick up/purchase a license, permit, or pass (45%), stop to use the facilities (45%), and ask information of staff or volunteers (33%; fig. 8).

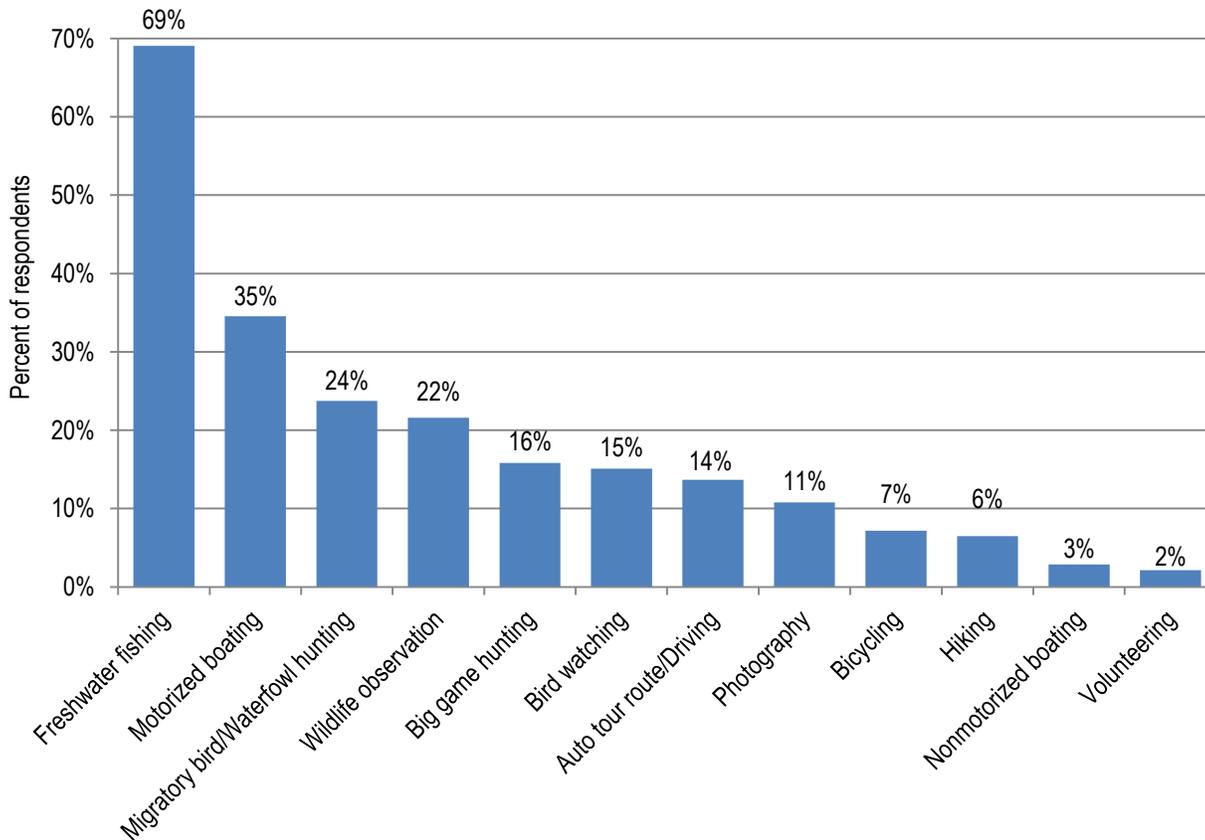


Figure 6. Activities in which visitors participated during the past 12 months at Eufaula NWR (n = 139). See Appendix B for a listing of “other” activities.

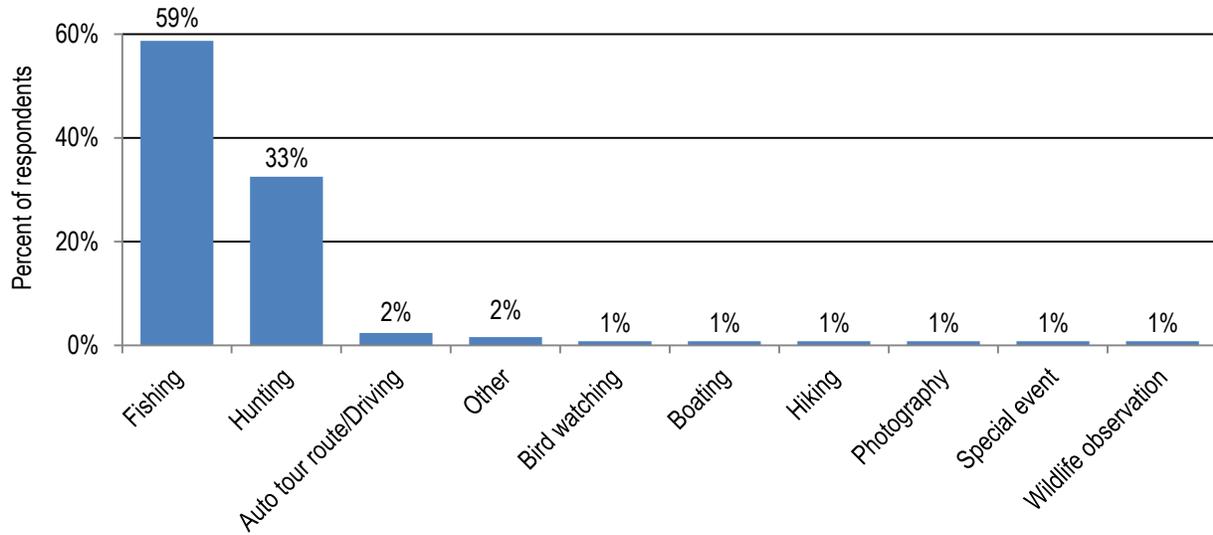


Figure 7. The **primary** activity in which visitors participated during this visit to Eufaula NWR (n = 126). See Appendix B for a listing of “other” activities.

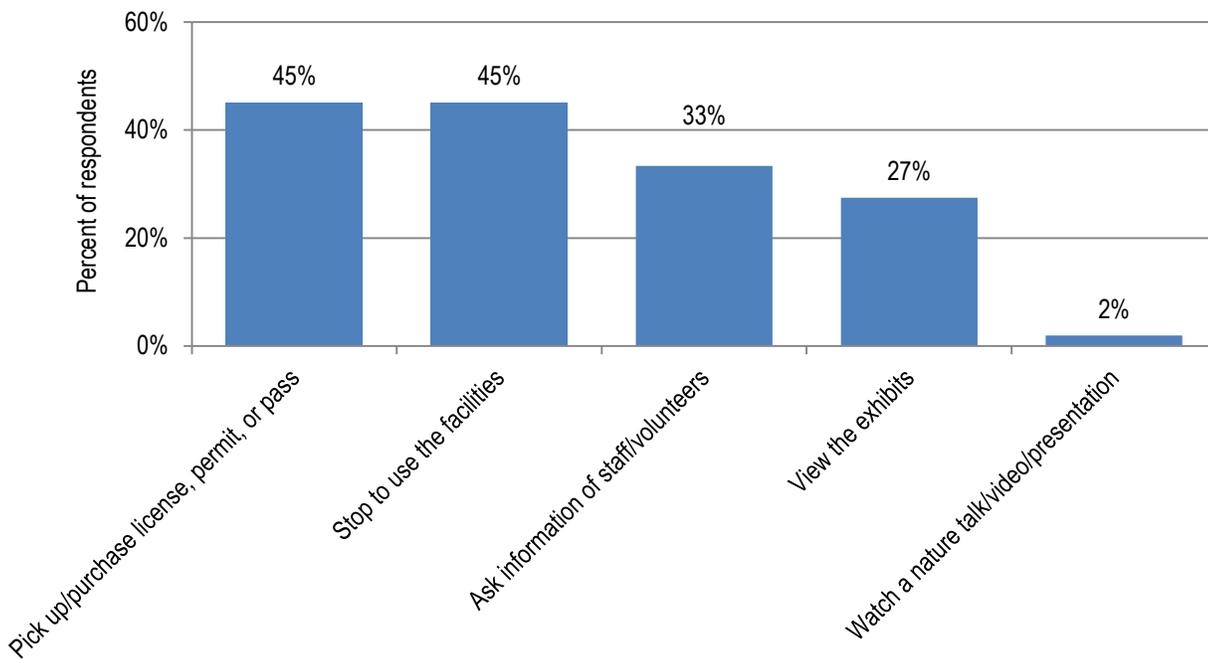


Figure 8. Visitor Center activities in which visitors participated at Eufaula NWR (n = 51).

Visitor Characteristics

All visitors who participated in the survey at Eufaula NWR indicated that they were citizens or permanent residents of the United States. These visitors were primarily male (94% of visitors), with an average age of 50 years, while 6% of visitors were female (with an average age of 49 years). Visitors, on average, reported they had 14 years of formal education (equivalent to two years of college or technical school). The median level of income was \$75,000-\$99,999. See Appendix A for more demographic information.

In comparison to these results, the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2007) found that participants in wildlife watching and hunting on public lands were 55% male and 45% female with an average age of 46 years, an average level of education of 14 years (equivalent to an associate degree or two years of college), and a median income of \$50,000–74,999 (Anna Harris, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2011, written commun.). Compared to the U.S. population, participants in wildlife-related recreation are more likely to be male, and tend to be older with higher education and income levels (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Census Bureau, 2007).

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 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 to local communities of visitor activities on refuges. Visitor expenditure information also can be used to analyze the economic impact of proposed refuge management alternatives.

Visitors that live within the local 50-mi area of a refuge typically have different spending patterns than those that travel from longer distances. During the two sampling periods, 45% of surveyed visitors to Eufaula NWR indicated that they live within the local 50-mi area while nonlocal visitors (55%) stayed in the local area, on average, for 4 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. During the two sampling periods, nonlocal visitors spent an average of \$95 per person per day and local visitors spent an average of \$57 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 factors include the amount of time spent at the refuge, influence of the refuge on the visitors' 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.

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

Visitors	n ¹	Median	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Nonlocal	70	\$70	\$95	\$81	\$0	\$415
Local	49	\$33	\$57	\$64	\$0	\$278

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 number 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 in the local community, 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 in which people participated), and may not be representative of the total population of visitors to this refuge.

Visitor Opinions about this Refuge

Refuges provide visitors with a variety of services, facilities, and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities. Understanding visitors' perceptions of refuge offerings is a key component of the Refuge System's mission. In particular, a baseline understanding of visitor experiences provides a framework from which the Refuge System can monitor trends in visitor experiences overtime, which is increasingly useful in the face of changing demographics and wildlife-related interests. Some studies on wildlife-related recreation trends have indicated declines in participation over the latter part of the 20th century in traditional activities such as hunting (for example, U.S. Department of the Interior and others, 2007), while others highlight a need to connect the next generation of people to nature and wildlife (for example, Charles and Louv, 2009). These types of factors highlight a need to better understand visitors' opinions of their refuge experiences and to monitor trends in these opinions over time.

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

- 88% of visitors were satisfied with the recreational activities and opportunities,
- 86% of visitors were satisfied with the information and education about the refuge and its resources,
- 82% of visitors were satisfied with the services provided by employees or volunteers, and
- 84% of visitors were satisfied with the refuge's job of conserving fish, wildlife and their habitats.

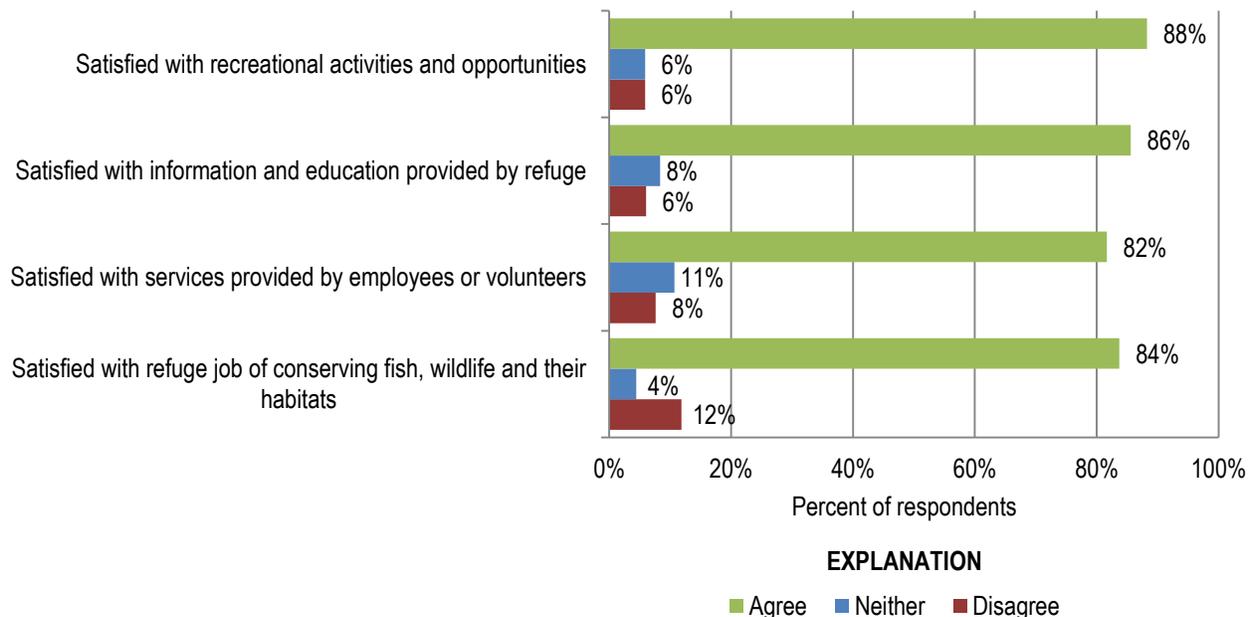


Figure 9. Overall satisfaction with Eufaula NWR during this visit (n ≥ 131).

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 examines the importance of an attribute to visitors in relation to their satisfaction with that attribute (Martilla and James, 1977). Drawn from marketing research, this tool has been applied to outdoor recreation and visitation settings (for example, Tarrant and Smith, 2002). Results for the attributes of interest are segmented into one of four quadrants (modified slightly for this 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 different visitor groups regarding their expectations and levels of importance (Vaske and others, 1996; Bruyere and others, 2002; Wade and Eagles, 2003); 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. This consideration is especially important when reviewing any attribute that falls 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 or 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 their satisfaction with) the attribute may be much higher than the overall importance (and satisfaction) would be for the sample of visitors summarized in this report.

Figures 10–12 depict surveyed visitors' importance-satisfaction ratings for refuge services and facilities, recreational opportunities, and transportation-related features at Eufaula NWR. Results are summarized as follows:

- All refuge *services and facilities* fell in the "Keep Up the Good Work" quadrant (fig. 10).
- All refuge *recreational opportunities* fell in the "Keep Up the Good Work" quadrant (fig. 11).
- All *transportation-related features* fell in the "Keep Up the Good Work" quadrant (fig. 12).

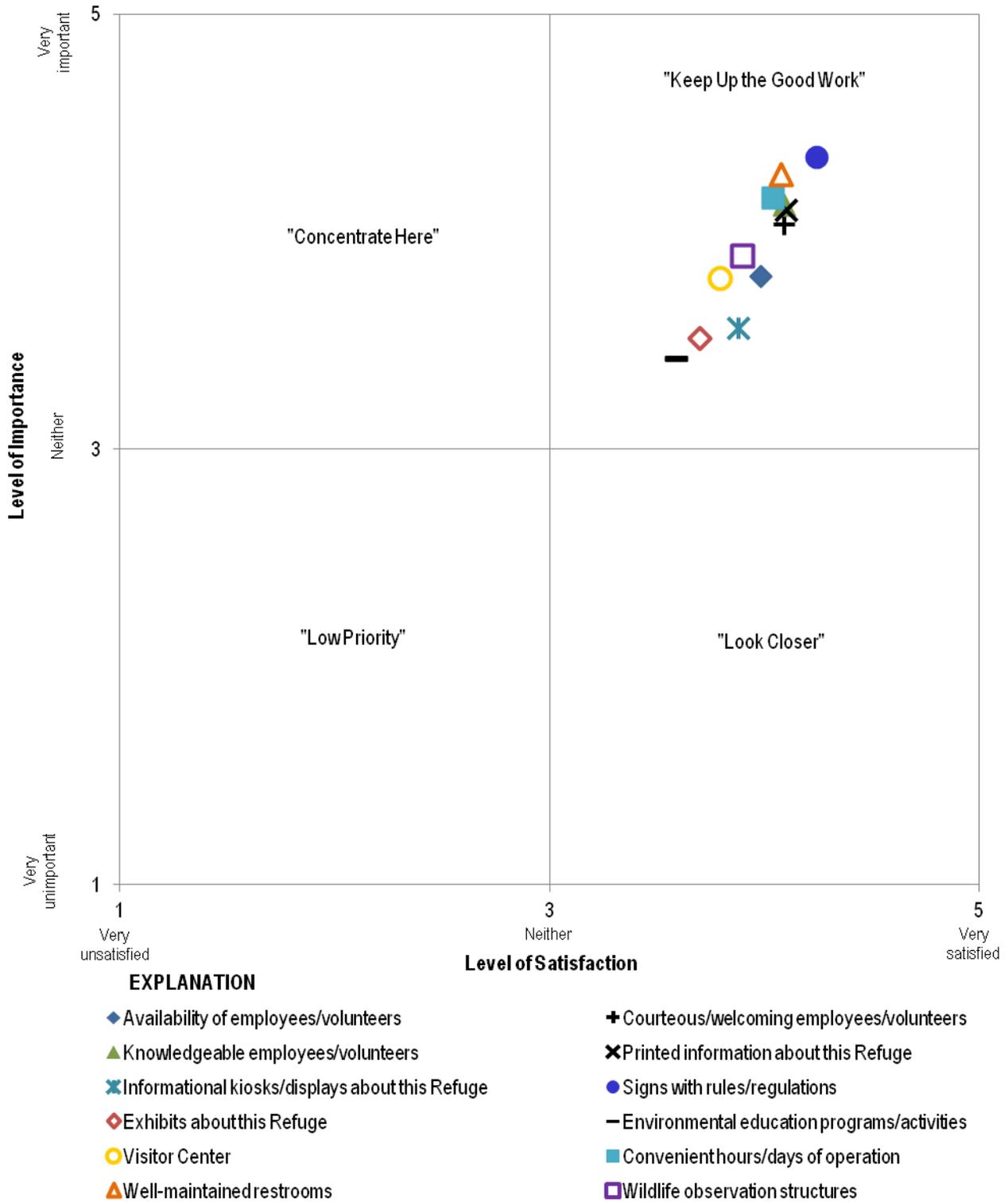
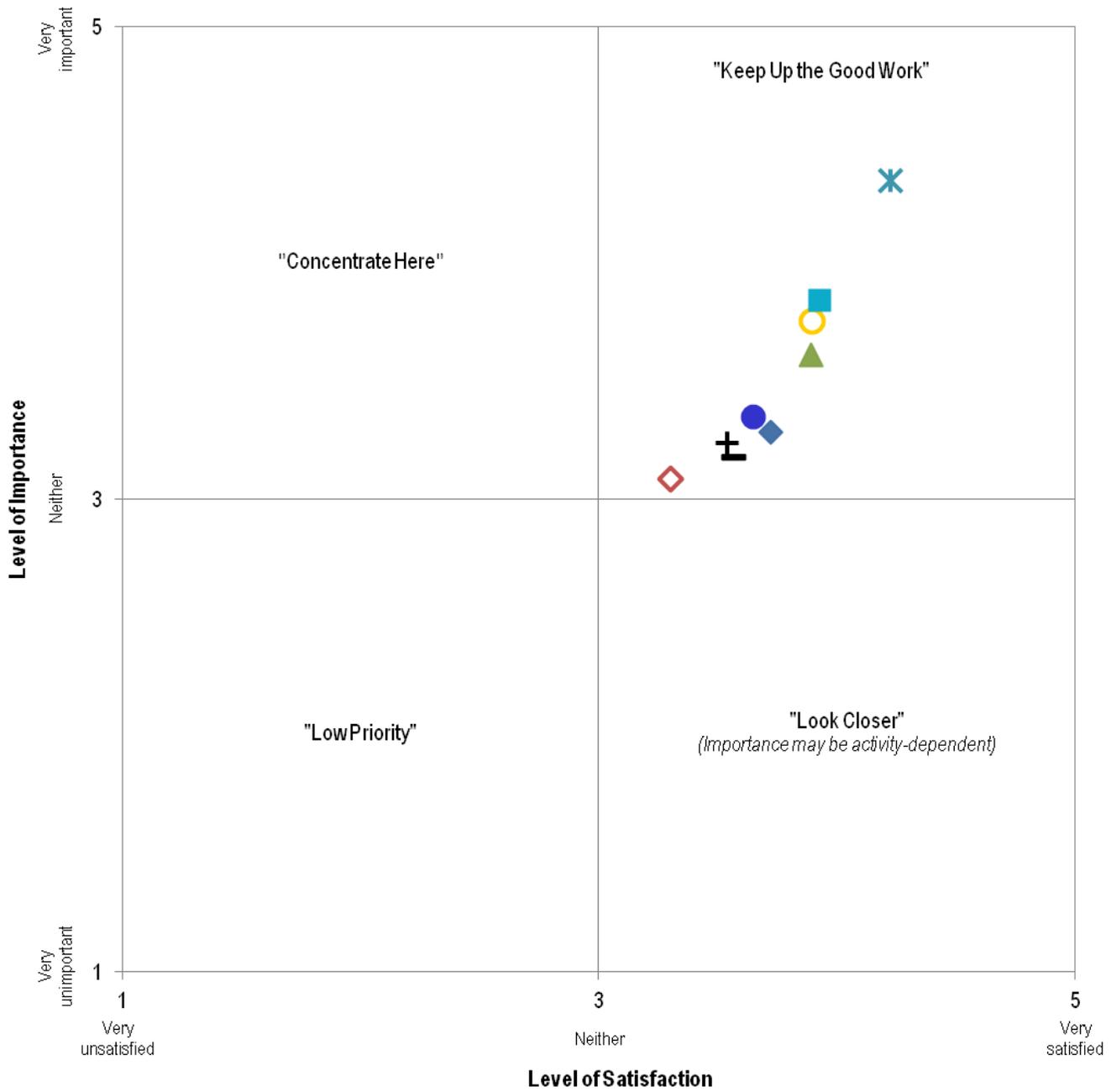


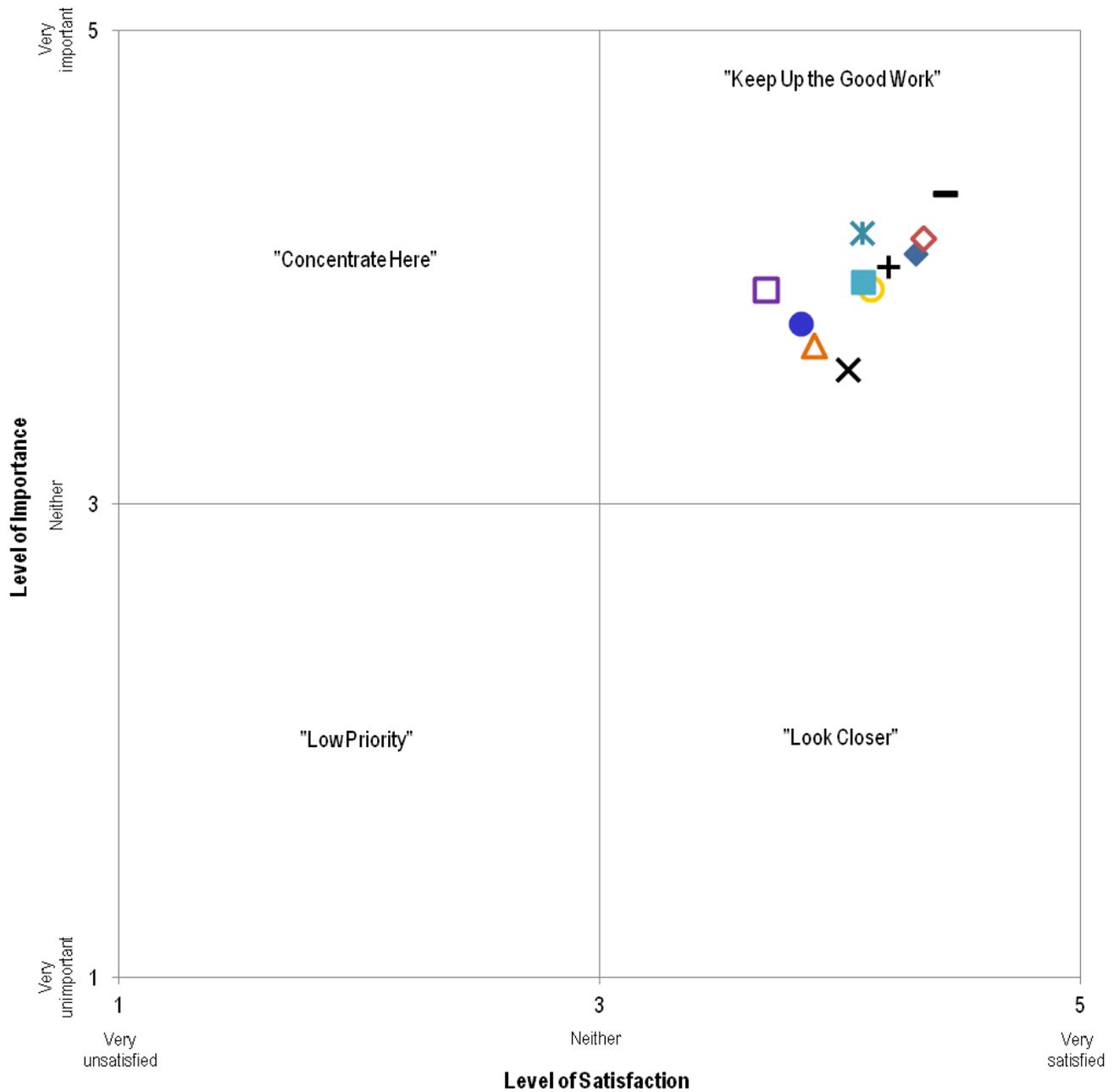
Figure 10. Importance-satisfaction ratings of services and facilities provided at Eufaula NWR.



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 Eufaula NWR.



EXPLANATION

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

Figure 12. Importance-satisfaction ratings of transportation-related features at Eufaula 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 of these questions will be evaluated in aggregate form (data from all participating refuges together) to better address national-level goals. Basic results for Eufaula NWR are reported here.

Alternative Transportation and the Refuge System

Visitors use various types of transportation to access and enjoy refuges. While many visitors arrive at the refuge in private vehicles, 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 and others, 2001), and recent efforts are beginning to characterize the use of transit and non-motorized transportation modes for visitor access to refuges (Volpe Center, 2010). However, less is known about how visitors perceive 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 refuges in the future.

Of the six alternative transportation options listed on the survey, a majority of Eufaula NWR visitors were likely to use a boat that goes to different points on refuge waterways in the future (fig. 13). A majority of visitors indicated they were *not* likely to use a bus/tram that takes passengers to different points on the refuge, an offsite parking lot that provides trail access onto the refuge, a bus/tram that runs during a special event, a bus/tram that provides a guided tour of the refuge, or a bike share program.

When asked specifically about using alternative transportation at Eufaula NWR, some visitors thought alternative transportation would enhance their experience (18%) while a little over half of visitors thought it would not (51%). An additional 31% of surveyed visitors indicated they were unsure whether alternative transportation would enhance their experiences.

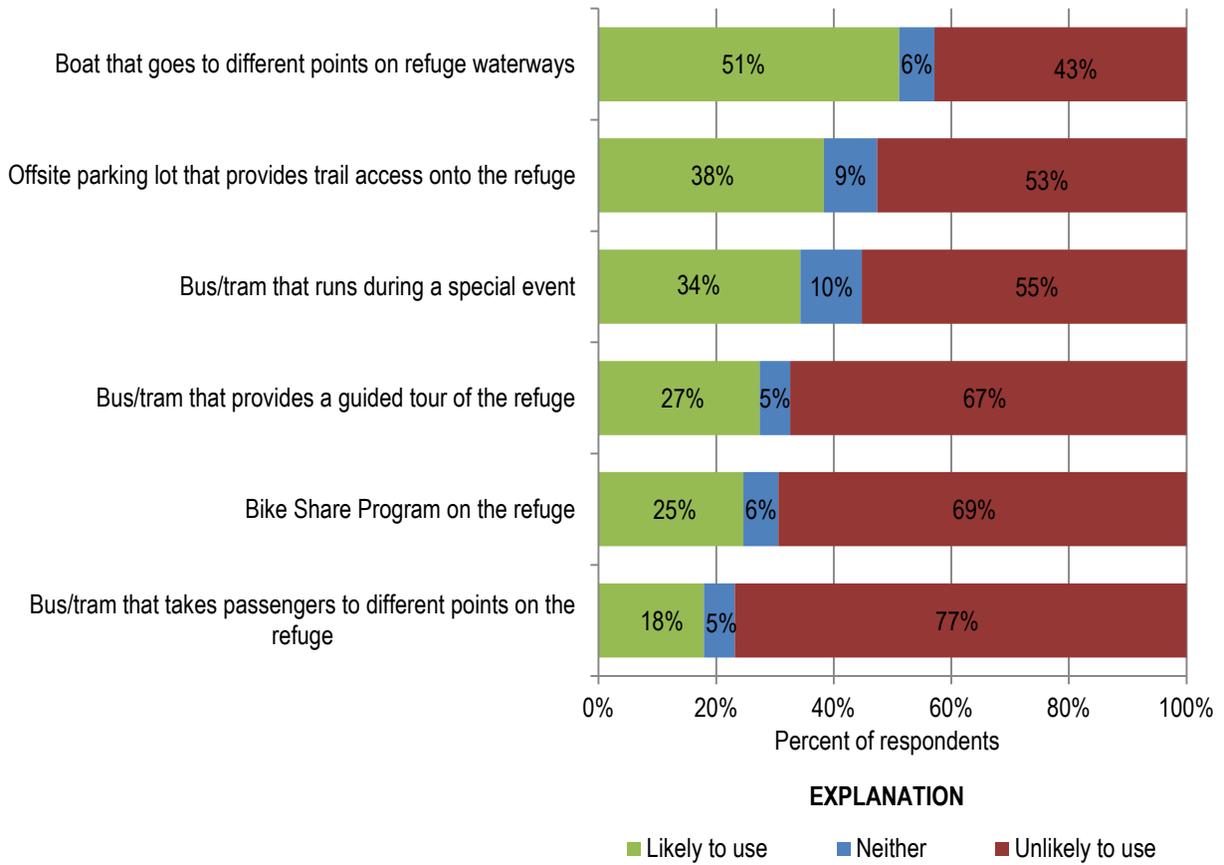


Figure 13. Visitors' likelihood of using alternative transportation options at refuges in the future (n ≥ 133).

Climate Change and the National Wildlife Refuge System

Climate change represents a growing concern for refuge management. The Service's climate-change strategy, titled "Rising to the Urgent Challenge," establishes a basic context for the agency to work within a larger conservation community to 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 the topic of climate change. Previous research suggests that human thought about climate change is influenced by individuals' levels of concern, levels of involvement, preferences for policies, and associated behaviors (Maibach and others, 2009). The results presented below provide baseline information on these factors in relation to the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife, and their habitats.

These results are most useful when coupled with responses to belief statements, 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 does not alter the overall message, but rather places the issue in a context in which different audience groupings can relate (Nisbet, 2009). 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 or supporting economic growth through new jobs/technology). Framing information in ways that resonate with visitors' beliefs may result in more engaged audiences who support strategies aimed at alleviating climate-change pressures. Data will be analyzed further at the national level to inform the development of a comprehensive climate change communication and engagement strategy.

The majority of visitors to Eufaula NWR agreed with the following statements related to their own *personal involvement* with the topic of climate change as it relates to fish, wildlife, and habitats (fig. 14):

- I am personally concerned about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and habitats; and
- I stay well-informed about the effects of climate change.

The majority of visitors also agreed with the following *belief statements* regarding climate change effects on fish, wildlife and their habitats (fig. 15):

- It is important to consider the economic costs and benefits to local communities when addressing climate change effects;
- There is too much scientific uncertainty to adequately understand climate change effects;
- Future generations will benefit if we address climate change effects; and
- We can improve our quality of life if we address the effects of climate change.

Results regarding such beliefs are important to consider when communicating with visitors about this topic, since almost half of visitors (43%) indicated their experiences would be enhanced if Eufaula NWR provided information about how visitors can help to address climate change impacts on fish, wildlife, and their habitats (fig. 14).

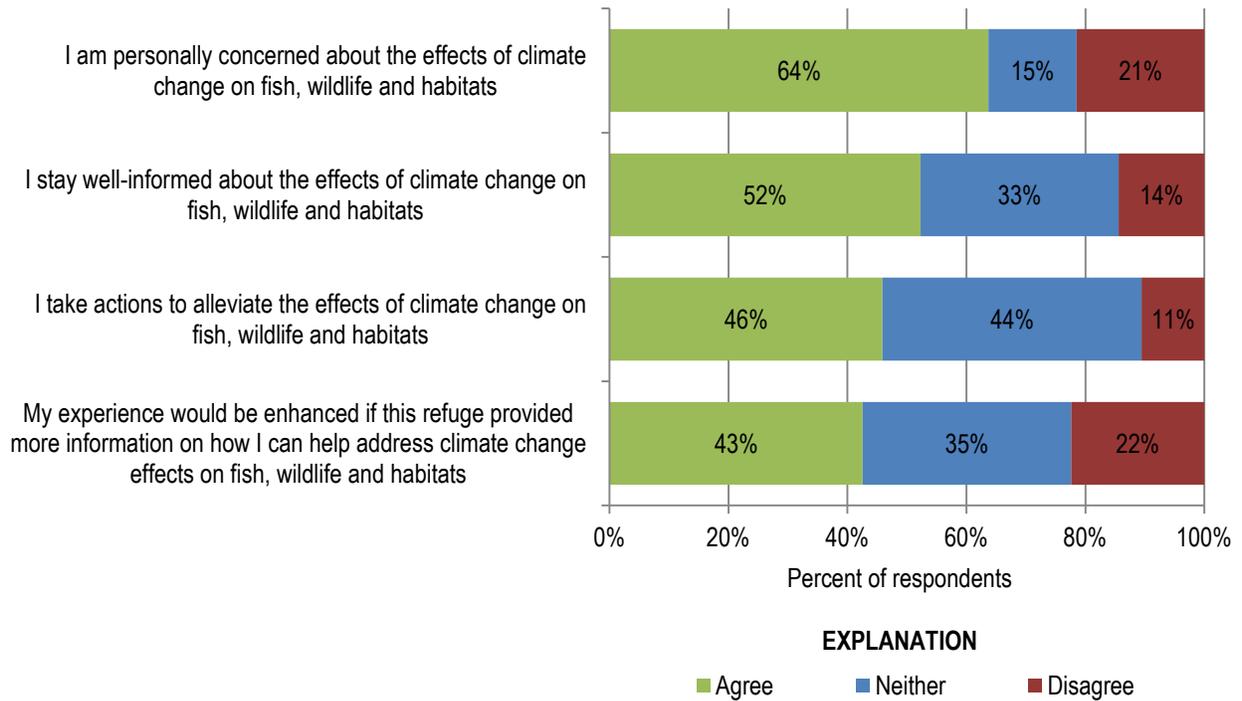


Figure 14. Visitors’ personal involvement with climate change related to fish, wildlife and their habitats (n ≥ 132).

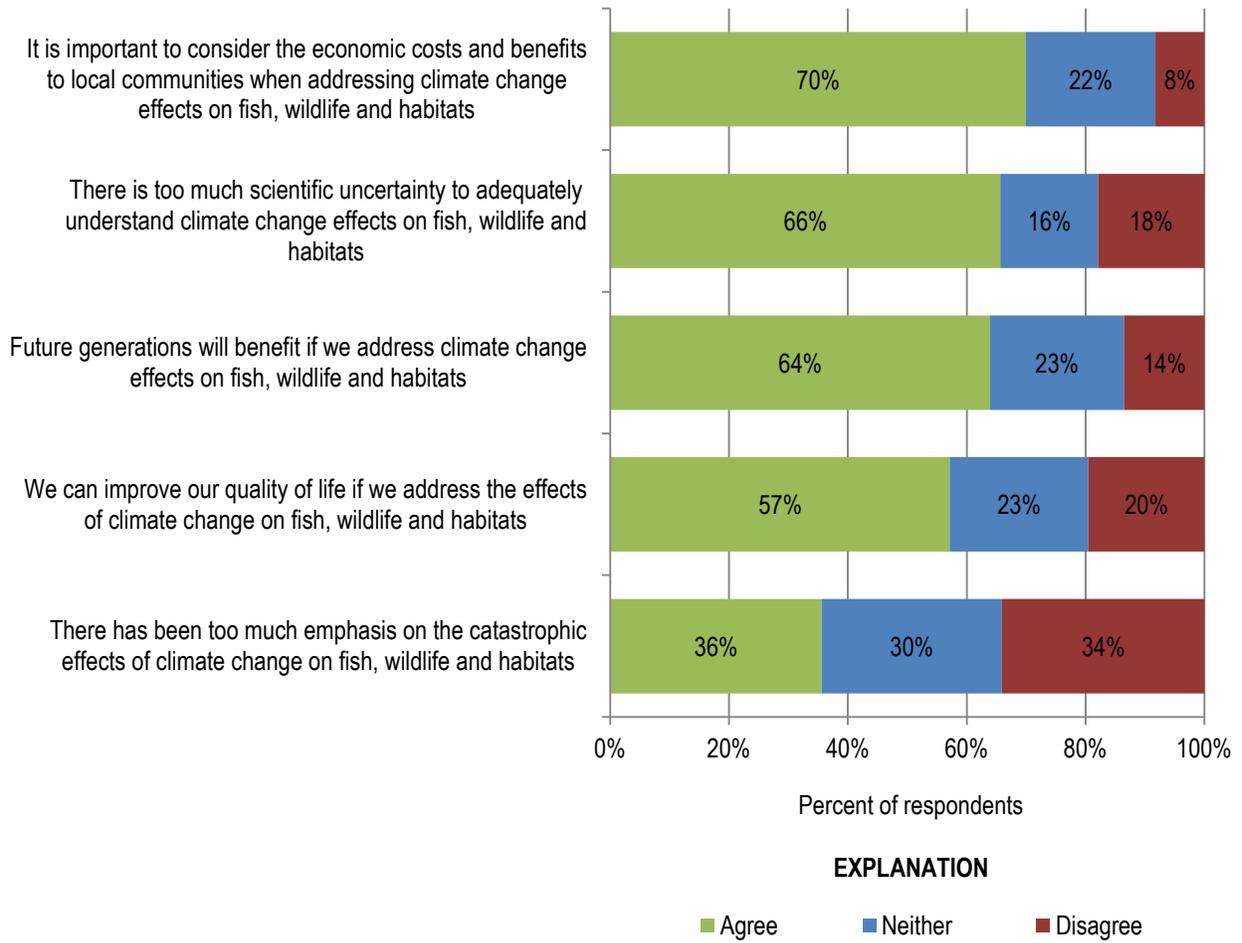


Figure 15. Visitors' beliefs about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats (n ≥ 133).

Conclusion

These individual refuge results provide a summary of trip characteristics and experiences of a sample of visitors to Eufaula NWR during 2012 and are intended to inform decision-making efforts related to visitor services and transportation at the refuge. Additionally, the results from this survey can be used to inform planning efforts, such as a refuge's Comprehensive Conservation Plan. With an understanding of visitors' trip and activity characteristics and visitor-satisfaction ratings with existing offerings, refuge managers are able to make informed decisions about possible modifications (whether reducing or enhancing) to visitor facilities, services, or recreational opportunities. This information can help managers 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 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 and its resources, 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/754/>. For additional information about this project, contact the USGS researchers at national_visitor_survey@usgs.gov or 970.226.9205.

References Cited

- Bruyere, B.L., Rodriguez, D.A., and Vaske, J.J., 2002, Enhancing importance-performance analysis through segmentation: *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, v. 12, no. 1, p. 81–95.
- Carver, E., and Caudill, J., 2007, Banking on nature 2006—The economic benefits to local communities of National Wildlife Refuge visitation: Washington, D.C., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Economics, 372 p., accessed September 30, 2011, at http://www.fws.gov/refuges/about/msWord/BankingonNature_2006_11-23.doc.
- Charles, C., and Louv, R., 2009, Children’s nature deficit—What we know and don’t know: Santa Fe, N.M., Children & Nature Network, 28 p., accessed November 15, 2012, at <http://www.childrenandnature.org/downloads/CNNEvidenceoftheDeficit.pdf>.
- Dillman, D.A., 2007, Mail and internet surveys—The tailored design method (2d ed.): Hoboken, N.J., John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 523 p.
- Krechmer, D., Grimm, L., Hodge, D., Mendes, D., and Goetzke, F., 2001, Federal lands alternative transportation systems study—Volume 3—Summary of national ATS needs: Cambridge Systematics, Inc., and BRW Group, Inc., prepared for Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration in association with National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 80 p., accessed March 23, 2010, at http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/3039_study.pdf.
- Maibach, E., Roser-Renouf, C., and Leiserowitz, A., 2009, Global warming’s six Americas 2009—An audience segmentation analysis: New Haven, Conn., Yale University, 144 p.
- Martilla, J.A., and James, J.C., 1977, Importance-performance analysis: *Journal of Marketing*, v. 41, p. 77–79.
- Nisbet, M.C., 2009, Communicating climate change—Why frames matter for public engagement: *Environment*, v. 51, p. 12–23.
- Salant, P., and Dillman, D.A., 1994, How to conduct your own study: New York, John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 256 p.
- Scheaffer, R.L., Mendenhall, W., III, and Ott, R.L., 1996, Elementary survey sampling (5th ed): Belmont, Calif., Duxbury Press, 324 p.
- Sexton, N.R., Miller, H.M., and Dietsch, A.D., 2011, Appropriate uses and considerations for online surveying in human dimensions research: *Human Dimensions of Wildlife*, v. 16, no. 3, p. 154–163.
- Tarrant, M.A., and Smith, E.K., 2002, The use of a modified importance-performance framework to examine visitor satisfaction with attributes of outdoor recreation settings: *Managing Leisure*, v. 7, no. 2, p. 69–82.

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Census Bureau, 2007, 2006 National survey of fishing, hunting, and wildlife-associated recreation: Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Department of Commerce, 168 p.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2006, National Wildlife Refuge System Mission and Goals and Refuge Purposes (601 FW 1), 7 p., accessed May 31, 2011 at <http://www.fws.gov/policy/601fw1.pdf>.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2007, Final strategic plan for the National Wildlife Refuge System FY 2006–2010: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C., 53 p.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2010, Rising to the urgent challenge—Strategic plan for responding to accelerating climate change: Washington, D.C., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Refuges, 32 p., accessed April 2, 2011 at <http://www.fws.gov/home/climatechange/pdf/CCStrategicPlan.pdf>.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2012, FWS Budget Proposal: Washington, D.C., U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 48 p.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2013, National Wildlife Refuge System: Overview: Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of the Interior, 1 p., accessed April 2013 at <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/about/pdfs/OverviewFactSheetApril2013.pdf>.
- Vaske, J.J., Beaman, J., Stanley R., and Grenier, M., 1996, Importance-performance and segmentation—Where do we go from here?, in Fesenmaier, D.R., O’Leary, J.T., and Uysal, M., eds., Recent advances in tourism marketing research: New York, The Haworth Press, Inc., p. 225–240.
- Volpe Center, 2010, Transit and trail connections—Assessment of visitor access to national wildlife refuges: The U.S. Department of Transportation Volpe National Transportation Systems Center and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 47 p., accessed October 1, 2011, at http://www.fta.dot.gov/documents/Transit_Trails_Layout_Final_123010.pdf.
- Wade, D.J., and Eagles, P.F.J., 2003, The use of importance-performance analysis and market segmentation for tourism management in parks and protected areas—An application to Tanzania’s National Parks: *Journal of Ecotourism*, v. 2, no. 3, p. 196–212.

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.

Even 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 for any question that uses the phrase “this Refuge.” Please reference the cover letter included with this survey if you are unsure of which refuge you visited.

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"/> 16% Big game hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> 6% Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Environmental education (for example, classrooms or labs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Upland/Small game hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> 7% Bicycling | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Interpretation (for example, exhibits, kiosks, videos) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 24% Migratory bird/Waterfowl hunting | <input type="checkbox"/> 14% Auto tour route/Driving | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Refuge special event (<i>please specify</i>)
<u>See Appendix B</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 22% Wildlife observation | <input type="checkbox"/> 35% Motorized boating | <input type="checkbox"/> 4% Other (<i>please specify</i>)
<u>See Appendix B</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15% Bird watching | <input type="checkbox"/> 3% Nonmotorized boating (including canoes/kayaks) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12% Freshwater fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> 2% Volunteering | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% Saltwater fishing | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11% 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? (** indicates this is not offered at this Refuge*)

- 64% No
- 36% Yes → If yes, what did you do there? (Please mark **all that apply.**)
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> * Visit the gift shop or bookstore | <input type="checkbox"/> 45% Pick up/purchase a license, permit, or pass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 27% View the exhibits | <input type="checkbox"/> 45% Stop to use the facilities (for example, get water, use restroom) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 33% Ask information of staff/volunteers | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2% Watch a nature talk/video/presentation | <input type="checkbox"/> 8% 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	All visitors	
<input type="checkbox"/> 95%	<input type="checkbox"/> 87%	<input type="checkbox"/> 90%	It was the primary purpose or sole destination of my trip.
<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 8%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	It was one of many equally important reasons or destinations for my trip.
<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%	<input type="checkbox"/> 4%	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 **hours/minutes and miles** (one-way) did you travel from your home to this Refuge?

Nonlocal	<u> 2 </u> Hours	<u> 51 </u> Minutes	<i>and</i>	<u> 150 </u> Miles
Local	<u> 0 </u> Hours	<u> 42 </u> Minutes	<i>and</i>	<u> 29 </u> Miles
All visitors	<u> 1 </u> Hours	<u> 54 </u> Minutes	<i>and</i>	<u> 97 </u> Miles

6. What type of group were you with on your visit to this Refuge?

22% None, I visited this Refuge alone

(of those visiting with a group)

86% Family and/or friends

11% Organized club or school group (for example, Boy/Girl Scouts, hiking club, bird watching group)

1% Commerical tour group

2% Other (*please specify*) See Appendix B

7. Including yourself, how many people were in your group? (*Please answer each category.*)

 9 number 18 years and over

 0 number 17 years and under

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

79% Family and/or friends

4% Refuge website

14% Signs on highway

0% Other website (*please specify*) See Appendix B

8% Recreation club or organization

1% Television or radio

13% People in the local community

4% Newspaper or magazine

7% Refuge printed information (brochure, map)

2% Travel guidebook or other book

4% Map or atlas

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

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

72% Spring
(March-May)

40% Summer
(June-August)

62% Fall
(September-November)

49% Winter
(December-February)

10. How many times have you visited...

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

...other National Wildlife Refuges in the last 12 months? 1 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"/> 41% | Private vehicle without a trailer | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Refuge shuttle bus or tram | <input type="checkbox"/> 4% | Bicycle |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 57% | Private vehicle with a trailer
(for boat, camper or other) | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Motorcycle | <input type="checkbox"/> 8% | Walk/Hike |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Commercial tour bus | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | ATV or off-road vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Other (<i>please specify below</i>) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Recreational vehicle (RV) | <input type="checkbox"/> 23% | Boat | <u>See Appendix B</u> | |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> 0% | Wheelchair or other mobility aid | | |

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

- | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 82% | Previous knowledge/I have been to this Refuge before | <input type="checkbox"/> 2% | Maps from the Internet (for example, MapQuest or Google Maps) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12% | Signs on highways | <input type="checkbox"/> 3% | Directions from Refuge website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11% | A GPS navigation system | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Directions from people in community near this Refuge |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4% | A road atlas or highway map | <input type="checkbox"/> 9% | Directions from friends or family |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> 1% | Other (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u> |

2. 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"/> 65%	<input type="checkbox"/> 12%	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%	<input type="checkbox"/> 12%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%
...a bike that was offered through a Bike Share Program for use while on the Refuge?	<input type="checkbox"/> 59%	<input type="checkbox"/> 10%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 19%	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%
...a bus or tram that provides a guided tour of the Refuge with information about the Refuge and its resources?	<input type="checkbox"/> 56%	<input type="checkbox"/> 12%	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%	<input type="checkbox"/> 23%	<input type="checkbox"/> 4%
...a boat that goes to different points on Refuge waterways?	<input type="checkbox"/> 35%	<input type="checkbox"/> 8%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 32%	<input type="checkbox"/> 20%
...a bus or tram that runs during a special event (such as an evening tour of wildlife or weekend festival)?	<input type="checkbox"/> 49%	<input type="checkbox"/> 7%	<input type="checkbox"/> 10%	<input type="checkbox"/> 28%	<input type="checkbox"/> 7%
...an offsite parking lot that provides trail access for walking/hiking onto the Refuge?	<input type="checkbox"/> 44%	<input type="checkbox"/> 9%	<input type="checkbox"/> 9%	<input type="checkbox"/> 27%	<input type="checkbox"/> 11%
...some other alternative transportation option? (<i>please specify</i>) <u>See Appendix B</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 0%	<input type="checkbox"/> 9%	<input type="checkbox"/> 18%	<input type="checkbox"/> 73%

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

- 18% Yes 51% No 31% Not Sure

4. 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	
5%	7%	9%	38%	42%	Surface conditions of roads	6%	6%	3%	20%	65%	NA
4%	8%	9%	41%	38%	Surface conditions of parking areas	6%	6%	7%	23%	58%	NA
*	*	*	*	*	Condition of bridges <i>(no bridges at this facility)</i>	*	*	*	*	*	100%
11%	2%	29%	33%	25%	Condition of trails and boardwalks	4%	0%	26%	28%	42%	NA
5%	5%	13%	26%	51%	Number of places for parking	7%	7%	9%	23%	54%	NA
5%	3%	28%	38%	26%	Number of places to pull over along Refuge roads	6%	6%	22%	29%	37%	NA
6%	3%	14%	29%	49%	Safety of driving conditions on Refuge roads	4%	4%	7%	23%	62%	NA
5%	2%	7%	31%	55%	Safety of Refuge road entrances/exits	5%	2%	4%	23%	66%	NA
6%	7%	17%	33%	38%	Signs on highways directing you to the Refuge	5%	3%	16%	23%	52%	NA
7%	5%	13%	37%	38%	Signs directing you around the Refuge roads	4%	5%	13%	31%	46%	NA
10%	4%	30%	22%	34%	Signs directing you on trails	4%	5%	27%	24%	40%	NA
7%	2%	30%	16%	45%	Access for people with physical disabilities or who have difficulty walking	9%	3%	33%	19%	36%	NA

5. 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)?

45% Yes

55% No → How much time did you spend **in the local area** on this trip?

Nonlocals If you spent one day or more in the local area, enter the number of days: 5 day(s)

only If you spent less than one day in the local area, enter the number of hours: 6 hour(s)

2. How much time did you spend **at this Refuge** during your most recent visit?

If you spent one day or more at this Refuge, enter the number of days: 3 day(s)

If you spent less than one day at this Refuge, enter the number of hours: 6 hour(s)

3. 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	Amount Spent in Local Communities & at this Refuge <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

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

2 number of people sharing expenses

5. 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%	14%	16%	5%	17%	5%	19%	1%	1%	2%	9%

6. 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**.)

100% Did not pay a fee (skip to Section 4)

Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge does not charge an entrance fee. This question does not apply.

7. 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.

Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge does not charge an entrance fee. This question does not apply.

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.	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 51%	<input type="checkbox"/> 37%	NA
Overall, I am satisfied with the information and education provided by this Refuge about its resources.	<input type="checkbox"/> 1%	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%	<input type="checkbox"/> 8%	<input type="checkbox"/> 55%	<input type="checkbox"/> 30%	NA
Overall, I am satisfied with the services provided by employees or volunteers at this Refuge.	<input type="checkbox"/> 5%	<input type="checkbox"/> 3%	<input type="checkbox"/> 11%	<input type="checkbox"/> 40%	<input type="checkbox"/> 42%	NA
This Refuge does a good job of conserving fish, wildlife and their habitats.	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 6%	<input type="checkbox"/> 4%	<input type="checkbox"/> 30%	<input type="checkbox"/> 53%	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
6%	6%	24%	32%	33%	Availability of employees or volunteers	5%	4%	21%	27%	43%	NA
6%	2%	20%	27%	45%	Courteous and welcoming employees or volunteers	6%	2%	21%	19%	52%	NA
5%	2%	15%	30%	47%	Knowledgeable employees or volunteers	5%	3%	18%	28%	47%	NA
3%	4%	10%	46%	37%	Printed information about this Refuge and its resources (for example, maps and brochures)	5%	3%	17%	29%	47%	NA
10%	3%	30%	34%	22%	Informational kiosks/displays about this Refuge and its resources	3%	2%	33%	29%	33%	NA
4%	1%	6%	35%	54%	Signs with rules/regulations for this Refuge	2%	5%	7%	38%	48%	NA
7%	5%	38%	31%	19%	Exhibits about this Refuge and its resources	3%	6%	37%	27%	27%	NA
6%	9%	41%	26%	18%	Environmental education programs or activities	4%	4%	44%	23%	24%	NA
4%	2%	35%	28%	31%	Visitor Center	5%	3%	35%	24%	34%	NA
5%	2%	14%	31%	48%	Convenient hours and days of operation	7%	3%	14%	30%	45%	NA
7%	2%	11%	20%	61%	Well-maintained restrooms	3%	11%	12%	21%	52%	NA
8%	2%	26%	23%	42%	Wildlife observation structures (decks, blinds)	3%	8%	26%	22%	41%	NA
11%	5%	44%	25%	15%	Bird-watching opportunities	3%	3%	43%	20%	31%	NA
7%	4%	26%	31%	31%	Opportunities to observe wildlife other than birds	3%	6%	31%	21%	40%	NA
9%	3%	30%	33%	25%	Opportunities to photograph wildlife and scenery	3%	4%	29%	28%	35%	NA
14%	3%	16%	18%	49%	Hunting opportunities	3%	8%	23%	24%	42%	NA
7%	2%	12%	10%	70%	Fishing opportunities	6%	6%	10%	17%	62%	NA
12%	1%	44%	26%	17%	Trail hiking opportunities	3%	1%	52%	15%	29%	NA
13%	5%	54%	14%	13%	Water trail opportunities for canoeing or kayaking	4%	7%	60%	12%	17%	NA
14%	3%	48%	21%	14%	Bicycling opportunities	3%	3%	50%	20%	23%	NA
10%	3%	56%	18%	14%	Volunteer opportunities	2%	2%	56%	18%	21%	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?

91% Yes

9% No

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

92% Yes

8% No

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

80% Yes

20% No

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

See Appendix B

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.	9%	13%	15%	39%	24%
We can improve our quality of life if we address the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats.	10%	10%	23%	36%	21%
There is too much scientific uncertainty to adequately understand how climate change will impact fish, wildlife and their habitats.	7%	10%	16%	46%	20%
I stay well-informed about the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats.	4%	11%	33%	42%	11%
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.	4%	5%	22%	47%	23%
I take actions to alleviate the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats.	3%	8%	44%	34%	12%
There has been too much emphasis on the catastrophic effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats.	10%	24%	30%	21%	14%
Future generations will benefit if we address the effects of climate change on fish, wildlife and their habitats.	8%	5%	23%	38%	26%
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.	10%	13%	35%	31%	12%

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?

100% Yes 0% No → *If not, what is your home country?* See Figure 2 in Report

2. Are you? 94% Male 6% Female

3. In what year were you born? 1961 (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%						35%						53%						13%

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.**)

4% American Indian or Alaska Native 4% Black or African American 96% White
 0% Asian 0% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

7. How many members are in your household? 3 persons

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

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

<input type="checkbox"/> 4% Less than \$10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 10% \$35,000 - \$49,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 26% \$100,000 - \$149,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 3% \$10,000 - \$24,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 21% \$50,000 - \$74,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 4% \$150,000 - \$199,999
<input type="checkbox"/> 10% \$25,000 - \$34,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 20% \$75,000 - \$99,999	<input type="checkbox"/> 3% \$200,000 or more

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

31 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.

Comments?

See Appendix B for Comments

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT STATEMENT: The Paperwork Reduction Act requires us to tell you why we are collecting this information, how we will use it, and whether or not you have to respond. The information that we collect in this survey will help us understand visitor satisfaction with and use of National Wildlife Refuges and to make sound management and policy decisions. Your response is voluntary. An agency may not conduct or sponsor and you are not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB Control Number. We estimate it will take an average of 25 minutes to complete this survey. You may send comments concerning the burden estimate or any aspect of the survey to the Information Collection Clearance Officer, Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, MS 222-ARLSQ, Arlington, VA 22203. OMB CONTROL #1018-0145 EXPIRATION DATE 6/30/2013

Appendix B: Visitor Comments to Open-Ended Survey Questions for Eufala 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
Camping	3
Church picnics	1
Family reunion	1
Firing range	1

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
Bird blind repair	1
Firing range	1

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

Other Visitor Center Activity	Frequency
Eat at Lakepoint restaurant	3
To buy fish bait	1

Question 6: “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
Tournament	1
West GA Bass Team	1

Question 8: "How did you first learn or hear about this Refuge?"

Other Ways Heard about This Refuge	Frequency
At my job - store sporting goods buyer.	1
Church picnics	1
Fishing	1
Friends with rangers on the refuge and served on board with past Director.	1

Survey Section 2

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

Other Ways Found This Refuge	Frequency
Refuge officers	1

Question 3: "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
Air boat	1
ATV trails	1
ATV/OHV	5
Electric golf carts	1
Golf cart rental	2
Need my boat	1
Personal vehicle	3

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 = 19)

Alabama State Police need to stop harassing visitors of frivolous traffic issues such as not always using a signal to change lanes. Visitors are targeted because they are visitors.

Boat ramp accessibility and condition to be taken into consideration.

Great people work here.

I would like to see the amount of available drivable trails/roads be expanded. Many "no motorized vehicle" signs are blocking many service roads that I wish were available to drive on. I don't think the additional roads would be much of a drain on available manpower and resources.

Improvement of boat trailer parking/ more ramps/ picnic area and signs along 431 & 165 to Lakepoint and overall help for people boating. While I was there someone had a handicapped chair and I had to help them getting in the boat.

It is very difficult for wheelchair access.

Just wish we could use our electric golf carts on the main roads only, not in the woods. They're quiet and won't tear the roads up like an ATV.

The boat ramp being closed on the Houston unit has made it very dangerous and very inconvenient for hunters to access the refuge by boat. In years past, this boat ramp had been open.

The boat ramps on the refuge are in poor condition.

The Eufaula National Wildlife refuge is a great place. My family and I have enjoyed visiting many times. Thank you for your efforts in bringing us that enjoyment!

The parking for the Visitor Center is extremely small and has almost no lighting.

There are at least 2 areas that have good roads that are open to walking but are blocked for vehicles. My wife and I enjoy fishing and I enjoy wildlife photography. We are not able to enjoy these areas like younger people without disabilities. I was injured in an accident and have bad knees and we are both getting up in age. It is very unfair for people like us to be locked out of these areas while others can have access. The areas that should be opened for our enjoyment are: the Kennedy Unit on US 431 and the Kennedy Unit on CR 39 on the GA side. Please consider opening these so those of us that have difficulty walking can enjoy them too. Thank you; (signed)

There is a big paddle boat sitting in the boat ramp parking lot that has been there for two years.

There needs to be more hiking/golf cart routes to take.

This is a tremendous refuge as are all of the refuges in Alabama.

This is concerning the campsite; the road has been patched poorly.

Why can't you drive down some roads to collect deer down firebreaks?

Would not want to lose private vehicle access to any refuge.

Survey Section 4

Question 3: "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 = 47)

Bathrooms should be cleaner.

Bush hog fields better and plant some.

Enforcing parking at the boat ramp. One individual was taking up 6 boat trailer parking spots and no one was going around enforcing the rules and writing people, like him, tickets.

Great resort. You need to leave the water alone and stop killing grass.

Hydrilla and natural grass should not be killed from the lake. The bass population has dropped too low as I have seen in 35 years.

I am a deer hunter. I come to Eufaula because it is bow hunting only. Over the past few years, there have been fewer and fewer food plots planted in areas that aren't closed past the first month. A side benefit of hunting here is the number of wild hogs. Every hunter I speak to, enjoys having the opportunity to also harvest a hog. Come Nov 15 of each year, a majority of the deer and hogs stay in the no hunting areas where the corn is planted. If this continues, a majority of the hunters I speak with that have been coming for more than 10 years will stop coming after Nov 15 each year. This year, they even took down the deer and or hog hanging stations making it much harder for a single hunter to clean and quarter his or her harvest. I could go on but you should get the message that we hunters are frustrated that so much of our adventure is shrinking each and every year.

I appreciate the knowledge of the people that are employed at this refuge. They care if I have a good trip or not.

I have found the facilities to be very clean and been very satisfied with the services which I have utilized when visiting this refuge. Just wish I had a better fishing season!

I have not visited this refuge enough to thoroughly explore all of the various opportunities. I did enjoy both of my visits and plan to visit again.

I know a lot of people have been complaining about the lack of bush hogging, and/or agriculture plantings for wildlife, but me and my friends have been very satisfied. Our opportunities at mature bucks has greatly improved. Less people are willing to work to hunt and are lazy, so the deer are less pressured in a lot of areas.

I paid to use the boat launch facilities at Lakepoint. Launching was fine but when we finished fishing, people were fishing from the docks and refused to move so we could reload the boat. There was no refuge employees around to help. It would be great if some "no fishing from dock" signs were posted and someone to check on it. I paid to use the docks. They didn't and they were only there to cause problems. The younger kids tried to throw their fishing lines in our boat.

I think all volunteers and employees in the camping area should be together and some of the campsites are so bad.

I think that a little bit more could be or should be done to make the deer hunting better. The fields need plowing badly. It makes access to the woods hard to get in and out.

I visited the Bradley unit with my son for a youth waterfowl hunt. We drew blind #13. We did see several species of birds, however, only about 15 feet in front of the blind the water level was above my waders, and I am 6'1". My son killed his first duck and Drake Ringneck, but we were unable to recover it. I think hunters should be aware that a retriever dog may be necessary to hunt from this blind.

I was very disappointed to see that there was nothing being planted for the wildlife on the refuge anymore. The lack of food for the wildlife has really hurt the deer population.

I wish there were more opportunities to waterfowl hunt.

I would like more information on upcoming events.

I would like the boat ramp to stay open all year.

It is always picked up and nice, clean maintenance. Nice job.

Maps of duck hunting blinds in the duck hunting area posted outside the check-in station for pre-hunt scouting would be nice--one page printed copies would be even better.

Need a place to clean deer and a place to dispose of the remains. This is very important.

Need to pickup the money from boat ramp fee more often. Sometimes it is full and it may fall out onto the ground.

No dove hunting preparation.

Please do not restrict access to only certain hours.

Poor lighting at the check in and out building.

Restroom at the refuge should be a little nicer.

See comment attachment at the end of the survey.

Signs for all incoming roads/increase boat ramps/restrooms were in great condition.

The ability of the staff to enforce the hunting rules was poor.

The boat ramp does not provide for handicap loading. It does provide for handicap parking.

The cabins need a little maintenance.

The drawing needs to issue a point system. If you are not drawn at least you will receive a point for possible draw next year (improve chances).

The observation decks are pretty much useless. The locations are wrong. The best areas to observe birds is nowhere near the observation structures. It is disappointing to visit the two observation structures. Several spots that I visit daily have a lot of bird watching activity. Observation structures would be great if they were built in these areas.

The older cabins are in need of repairs at Lakepoint State Park in Alabama.

The water level is up and down too often.

The way the people were allowed to set up their campsite was terrible. There were 3 to 4 carpools of people selling firewood.

They need to open it up to wild hog hunting after deer season.

This is a very nice place to visit and my wife and I enjoy it very much. The only problem I have is the disrespectful people that leave their trash and fishing line on the ground. They should be fined and made to spend a couple weekends cleaning up the area.

This was my first visit, so I did not get to do a lot but went fishing with my son and his friends.

Try to make fishing better. Everyone in the community and parks will prosper from that.

Very nice.

Why did they spray the grass and kill all the big bass?

Would like more waterfowl hunting opportunities.

Would like to see more information about dove hunts/youth hunts. Not sure where to find except on Facebook. Dates should be posted on more sites!

You have beautiful facilities that my daughter and I really enjoyed. She is ready to come back and we'll be back soon!

You need strict restrictions on litter. Those who are caught littering should be fined heavily. We have picked litter up from people who brought trash from home and brought it to our trash can. Have more trash receptacles open and post more signs warning about litter.

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 = 87)

A lot of dedication and good resources dedicated and used to conserve wildlife.

A lot of public lands do not allow hunting. Although this resource is dwindling each year...even here; having a place to bow hunt large game like deer and hogs, makes me support U.S. Fish and Wildlife services and the national refuge programs.

Abundant wildlife.

Allow unlimited access and freedom to experience "wild" life.

Availability of onsite personnel to answer questions.

Beautiful place and good fishing.

Because of hunting being allowed.

Because they have so much wildlife, they are for the people who wish to use them. They do a lot of work preparation for the wildlife.

Clean.

Commitment to wildlife preservation.

Conservation of our wildlife and our environment for our enjoyment makes it unique. We always feel welcomed and safe. The public needs to be educated to conserve our future. Thank you!

Each NWR seems to focus on a certain unique experience; Eufaula is known for its waterfowl.

Fishing is great when there is plenty of water. Gators are neat to look at; they are all different sizes. I mainly fish here.

For the preservation of wildlife for future generations to enjoy. For the preservation of environmental areas that are unique to create jobs for the economy.

For younger kids and people to see wildlife up close and in the wild makes it unique.

Getting a chance to see the wildlife and its habitat was amazing. My daughter is 9 years old and it was very neat for her to see animals that we do not get to see except on TV. Thank you for that opportunity and the memories!

Good duck hunting.

Good places to hunt and fish.

Great duck habitat for hunting.

I am a waterfowl hunter and I liked the way that the blinds were set up in their ponds.

I have always loved coming down to Eufaula for hunting and camping. I just wish they would do a little more for the wildlife like planting some of the open areas instead of just letting them grow up.

I like the friendly people and how they manage it. I would definitely come back.

I think it is important for our kids to see. Some think that this is the only time they have.

If is one of the few, rare opportunities that we have left to enjoy if we don't get rid of that money squandering crowd in D.C. We will not have this very long. Thanks. (Name Signed).

In some areas, they may be the only opportunity for some people to hunt or experience the outdoors.

It combines the opportunities for fishing, camping, hunting and boating.

It gives you information about the area you're in and information if you have questions about anything.

It has more water than most others.

It has multiple family settings, fishing, wildlife observations, and golfing.

It has the perfect combination of nature and comfort.

It is a good place to have bass tournaments.

It is a great place for kids to see wildlife in its natural setting and also see wildlife you cannot see anywhere else.

It is an open to experience wildlife.

It is clean and well taken care of. It has a well lit parking lot. I was very satisfied with my camping experience.

It is close to home and convenient.

It is managed better and safer.

It provides a public place for family and friends to enjoy the outdoors.

It's able to offer access to all.

Lack of party animals.

Learning experience for youth and old fashion traditional fun for families.

More closer to nature, cleaner, kind of get that pure feeling.

Most are quiet and out of the way.

Offers opportunities that some may not have otherwise.

Only thing left of mother nature where you can enjoy the outdoors with your friends and family.

Opportunities to hike, fish, hunt, trails and nature; it is a place to go to get away and enjoy yourself. Thanks.

Scenery, wildlife, fishing opportunity.

The amount of wildlife is awesome.

The area is left in a relatively untouched condition.

The bird houses and fish habitat makes it unique.

The different ways people manage them and their knowledge for information makes it unique.

The Eufaula NWR is faithful to the mission of conserving, and restoring the wildlife and habitat, much to the dismay of someone looking for a trip to the zoo. The beauty and pleasure of the NWR is the subtle changes you can see day to day.

The Eufaula Refuge is very well maintained and the staff are very helpful and friendly. After duck hunting in the refuge for the past 14 years, the hunts are very well managed.

The fishing is good and the alligators are plentiful.

The old creek, town park, walking and fishing; you do a good job.

The opportunity to have hunting sites available nearby.

The property is well managed and provides some of the best duck hunting in the state of Georgia, if not the best. I feel fortunate to be able to hunt there on selected quota hunts. I wish this type of refuge could be expanded to large lakes of Georgia.

The refuge is huge, as is the lake, and has a lot of variety, which I believe is very important in attracting many different types of individuals with many diverse activities in mind. Great job. Keep doing what you all are doing.

The refuge is well-maintained and easy to access.

The service of the wildlife refuge.

The wetlands for the ducks.

Their preservation of wildlife. You cannot do waterfowl hunting anywhere else around here like you can do at the Eufaula NWR. It is wonderful and managed properly!

There are more ducks there than anywhere else.

There is a lot of room to launch your boat.

There is lots of wildlife and scenery.

These areas provide good, knowledgeable people, quality clean facilities, and at a fairly reasonable price. The cabins may be a little pricey for 1 person not sharing expenses with anyone else.

They are naturally wild.

They are staffed and maintained by people who love the outdoors/ wildlife and who are educated and knowledgeable in their field.

They bring awareness to wildlife conservation.

This park, due to alligators, is more fishing. That means less boat traffic due to skiers and other water craft. More secluded and back to nature. Takes you back in time before everything changed.

This place used to be beautiful and treasured. My thoughts are this has been horribly managed. The damage sustained will scar the landscape as well as animals for years. This is a perfect example of how bad management can destroy a generation's experience and therefore completely stop funding for all future endeavors.

This refuge has created a unique Mississippi flyway experience in southeast Alabama. Great experience.

This refuge provides not only the ability for my family and I to view wildlife, but it also presents us the opportunity to hunt deer, waterfowl, and small game in an uncrowded, well managed area.

To be able to get close to wildlife and enjoy God's creation makes it unique.

To me this refuge was like a small town (and country) in its own right.

To see birds, deer, alligators, and fish is very interesting and enjoyable.

Very nice lake!

Very well preserves local, original habitat.

Visible wildlife.

Waterfowl hunting draw hunts. Opportunities to participate in preserving waterfowl habitat.

Waterfowl hunts.

We had an opportunity to see several species of ducks, however I think it could be improved upon greatly by creating more vegetation for the ducks.

Well it gives somewhere different to hunt and fish, and I like that the hunting is bow hunting only.

Well managed.

Well managed and maintained.

Well managed duck hunting habitat and a good balance of hunting pressure/opportunities.

Wildlife indigenous to the area.

Yes, just would like to see more fields for wildlife.

Additional Comments (n = 26)

About 25 years ago I visited this refuge often. It seems to have been "let go". The decks were in bad shape. One part of the refuge had been totally closed. I moved back to the area and the refuge was one of the first places I wanted to visit again. I was disappointed.

Again, I would like to see at least the Kennedy Unit open so my wife and I could have access by vehicle so we can enjoy that area the same as people that don't have a problem with walking. It is not fair to us that having walking disabilities shuts us out, especially when there is a good road already there. Please don't treat us unfairly and please let me know what your response is to this.

Alabama State police should stop harassing visitors for frivolous traffic issues such as changing lanes without using signal. Locals are not harassed for these kinds of traffic violations.

I also like the fact that the divers at the boat ramp were removed. This makes it easier for loading and unloading.

I always enjoy when I have the opportunity to hunt and enjoy the outdoors and Eufaula NWR. The scenery is great, the staff is courteous and knowledgeable, and we usually have a good hunt with a variety of birds. It's a blessing to have it so close by.

I am an avid outdoorsmen. I love to fish and hunt and I mostly hunt on the refuge. One of the things I see that would benefit me and hunters alike is to maintain the hardwoods that are left there. Continue the growth of the long leaf pines. The fields are too overgrown, they need some attention badly. It wouldn't be a bad idea to take volunteers on some weekends to plow and plant. I would most definitely volunteer with that. Here is an idea too: If buying the seeds for the fields would be an issue then charge maybe 10 dollars to 15 dollars for the permits that would help out a lot, because there are a lot of bow hunters that probably would think the same way too. Please consider this proposal.

I have been very satisfied with Eufaula NWR over the last 14 years of being able to duck hunt. My neighbor invited me on my first duck hunt to Eufaula and since then I have introduced my three daughters, wife, and countless friends to their first duck hunts at Eufaula.

I have concerns about the water elevation on Lake Eufaula and its effects on the Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge.

I hunt and fish regularly. I don't take trips to do this and most is local. I really enjoyed the duck hunt at Eufaula.

I mainly fish. Leave the water alone and don't kill the grass.

I photograph birds and without the refuge it would be much more difficult.

I think Eufaula NWR is one of the most beautiful places we have in Alabama. Please do a little more for the wildlife such as planting crops.

Me and my buddy love to deer hunt and hike at the refuge. It's always been good there, until this year. I know that the economy is tight and people are cutting back, but this year at the refuge was awful for us. No one there has bush-hogged any or done any disking or planting for the deer, turkeys, hogs, or birds to eat. Most years they do a good job, but not this year. There is no food plots at all this year for the deer. We've talked to other hunters and they say the same thing, that it sucks. We've really enjoyed it there in the past though. Maybe you all can do better next year. I won't be going back this year. Thanks. (signed)

My friends and I have enjoyed this property for twenty years. I am accustomed to trips where I saw 30 deer in a field every day. The woods were a beautiful and healthy mix of hardwoods and pines where all sorts of animals prospered. Now all manner of animals well being has been sacrificed for the harvest of all trees and replaced with pines. Obviously so you can cut pines and generate income. All of the fields were under agriculture programs and provided sustenance for wildlife. This is no longer the case. I have always supported any program associated with conservation and land availability for public use. However I now believe this is corruption and complete mismanagement. This year's trip was very depressing and my family is debating whether to ever come back again. This will not only stop my usage but my children as well. I am sincere in all that I have written. This property holds many dear memories I would love for future generations to have the same experiences. (signed)

Need to conserve the land better. Plant fields, cleans roads, fix holes in road, and bush hog better.

Need to fix light over boat ramp at Lakepoint.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to participate in this survey. I do wish the game and fish department in Georgia would take as good as care for our lakes and habitat as the folks in Alabama do. (Name Signed)

Thank you for everything you all do!

The bow hunters should be afforded the same opportunities as waterfowl lovers and/or hunters. It is pretty clear that hunters are tolerated here but we could go away and no one would care. Emphasis and money is clearly being spent on waterfowl programs. Spend a little of it on enhancing hunting opportunities after 15 Nov when most of your gates and roadways are closed. Bring back the cleaning station so a lone hunter can hang and clean their harvest. Bring back the bucket so we can take our carcass to the drop point requested by management and away from the check station. Try making the hunters feel wanted and welcomed. Not better than the bird watchers...equal to. Not better than the hikers...equal to.

The lake levels need to come up and more grass to make the fish more healthy. The grass has went away and the health of the fish has too.

The water was too low on the trip we took in March (3-15-12 through 3-17-12).

We are not your normal visitors. We use Eufaula NWR on a daily basis. We make multiple trips through the refuge every day with our 4 dogs. Our dogs look forward to the daily drives to birdwatch, gator watch, and just enjoy the peace and tranquility. Photography has become very important to us again because of the daily visits. We are looking forward to the return of the migratory birds in December, January, and February.

We will continue utilizing this refuge. We always enjoy ourselves even when we don't catch fish, which happens quite frequently. We really enjoy fishing Eufaula.

Would like to see more fields planted for wildlife.
