

BERG LAKE CORRIDOR

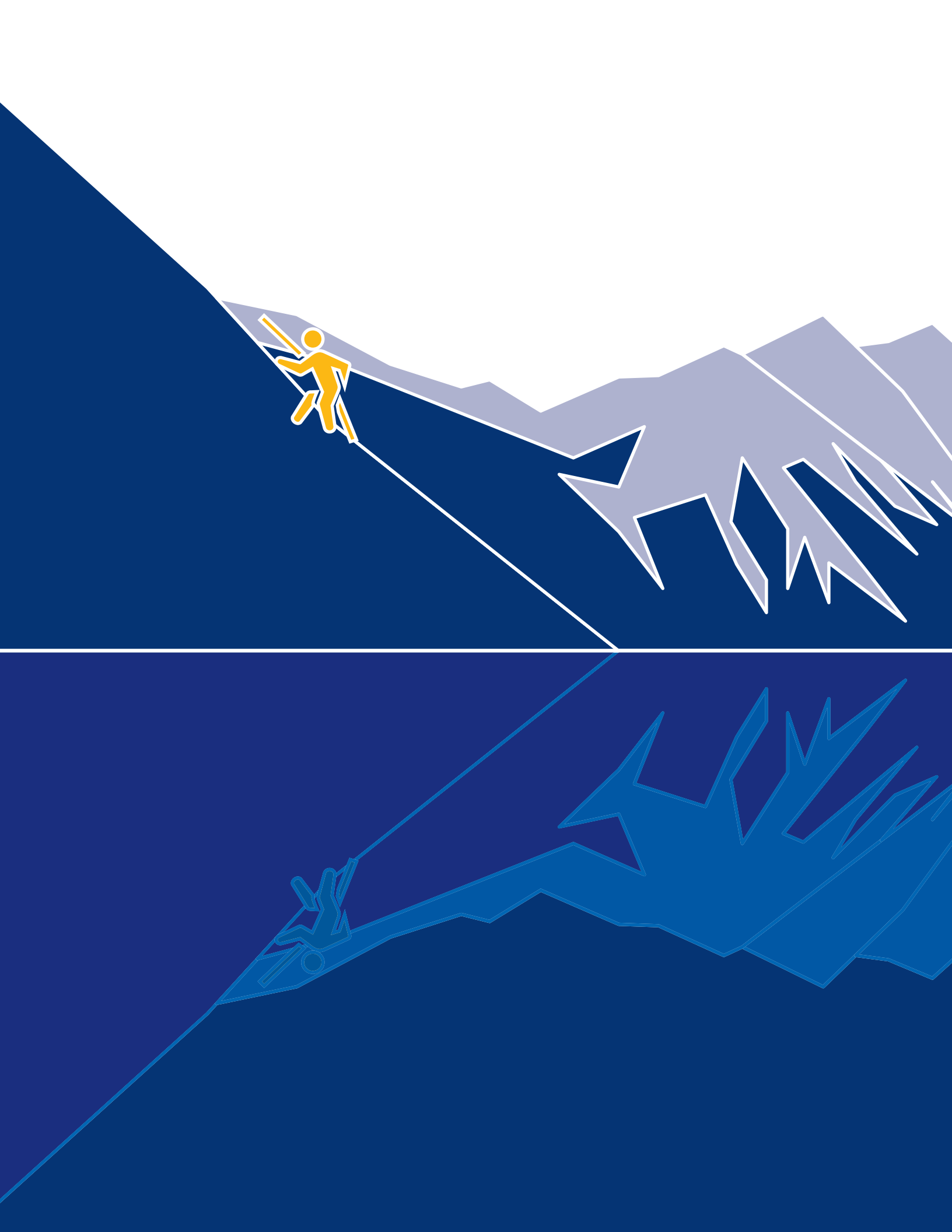
VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT PLAN

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

MARCH 2025

BRITISH COLUMBIA | BC Parks

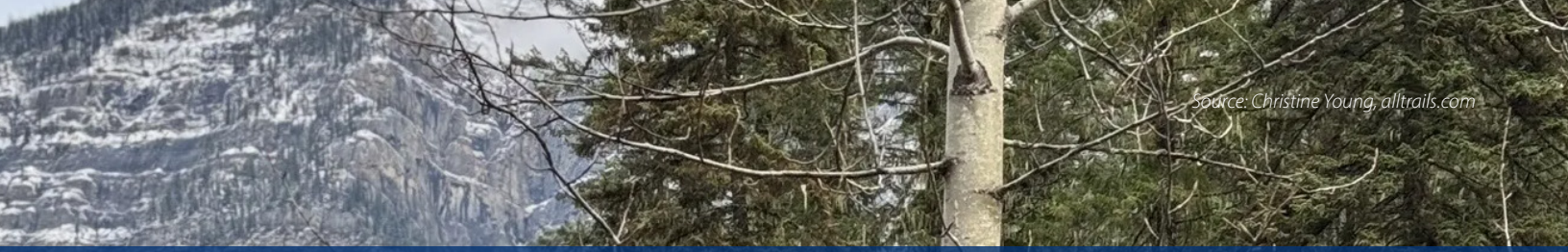
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ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS STATEMENT

The following What We Hear Report summarizes the findings from a public survey. The opinions, ideas, and statements are those expressed my members of public and are represented in participants own words or summaries of participant feedback. It is important to note that some of the comments are perceptions of the public rather than representations of BC Parks management decisions, staff directions, and or official policy.



Source: Christine Young, alltrails.com

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Source: Luke Miller, alltrails.com

The Berg Lake Corridor (BLC), located within Mount Robson Provincial Park, is a world-renowned destination offering a unique blend of pristine natural beauty, intact ecosystems, backcountry recreation, and cultural significance. Guided by the 2000–2025 Berg Lake Corridor Management Plan, the area has historically balanced visitor enjoyment with conservation priorities. However, increasing visitation, evolving recreation patterns, and climate-related challenges necessitate an updated Visitor Use Management Plan to ensure long-term sustainability.

A public survey, conducted in the summer of 2024 garnered 357 responses, providing valuable insights into visitor experiences and concerns. Approximately 87% of respondents had hiked the Berg Lake Trail (BLC), with 80% participating in overnight backcountry camping. Visitors praised the area's natural beauty and high-quality amenities, including well-maintained trails and camping facilities. However, the survey highlighted significant challenges, particularly regarding the reservation system, which was cited as perceptions of a major issue by 47% of respondents. Technical glitches, inequitable access, and unused reservations were common frustrations. Proposals for mixed allocation models, such as lotteries and walk-in permits, were frequently suggested.

Environmental stewardship remains a top priority for visitors, with 85% of backcountry overnight visitors valuing the corridor's adventure opportunities and solitude. Concerns about crowding, litter, and trail maintenance were noted but considered manageable with targeted interventions, such as expanded ranger presence and enhanced amenities, including additional shelters and improved pit toilets.

The updated management plan will address these insights, balancing the demand for expanded access with the need to protect the corridor's ecological integrity. Stakeholder engagement will play a central role in shaping a vision that meets the needs of diverse user groups while preserving the area's wilderness character. As the BLC prepares for a full reopening in 2025, this plan aims to maintain the corridor as a premier backcountry destination, ensuring sustainable recreation and conservation for future generations.



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Source: Trinity Dubuc-Fraser, alltrails.com

1 INTRODUCTION



Mount Robson was established in 1913 and is the second oldest park in the BC Parks system. When the initial management plan for Mount Robson Park was developed in 1992 (updated in 2011), one recommendation was to have a second plan focused solely on recreation management within the Berg Lake Corridor (BLC) due to the intensive recreation the area receives. While not a visitor-use management plan, The Berg Lake Corridor (BLC) Management Plan (2000 – 2025) has been very effective in managing visitation and helping to retain desired conditions and the visitor experience throughout the corridor. However, the plan requires an update and refresh to review and reaffirm much of the previous direction and to provide direction to address new activities, increasing day-use demands, increasing commercial demands, and the implications of climate change and high-water events such as those that damaged large segment of the original Berg Lake Trail routing in 2021. Given the notoriety of the corridor, engagement is a key aspect of the visitor use management planning process. During the Summer of 2024, BC Parks launched a public survey to determine what gaps and additional information is needed in updating this important plan.

The purpose of the engagement was to better understand users of the BLC, gather opinions on current and pressing issues and recreation impacts in the BLC, and receive feedback on proposed management actions to address concerns and support BC Parks in renewing the management plan for this important area. The engagement process was designed and implemented in accordance with the International Association of Public Participation's (IAP2) best practices and core values (Figure 1).

Feedback received through the open public survey are summarized below and will be used to guide edits, changes, and future editions of the Berg Lake Corridor Visitor Use Management Plan. When finalized, the plan will identify the actions that BC Parks and partners may take to ensure recreation is sustainable, well-managed, and provides a high-quality visitor experience in the BLC.

iap2 international association for public participation

CORE VALUES

IAP2 Federation's Core Values for Public Participation professionals define the expectations and aspirations of the public participation process. Processes based on the Core Values have been shown to be the most successful and respected.

1 Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.

2 Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.

3 Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognizing and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision-makers.

4 Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.

5 Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.

6 Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

7 Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision.

www.iap2.org

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Figure 1 IAP2 Core Values

1.1 ABOUT THE BERG LAKE CORRIDOR

The Berg Lake Corridor (BLC), situated within Mount Robson Provincial Park, is a premier destination for outdoor recreation, renowned for its breathtaking scenery and iconic Berg Lake Trail (BLT). Spanning from the trailhead at Kinney Lake to the alpine splendour of Berg Lake, the corridor offers diverse experiences ranging from accessible day hikes to challenging backcountry overnight experiences. It forms part of the UNESCO-designated Canadian Rocky Mountains Parks World Heritage Site, emphasizing its ecological and cultural significance.

Originally guided by the 2000–2025 Berg Lake Corridor Management Plan, the area has faced increasing recreational demands, with visitation reaching approximately 30,000 overnight users annually before the 2021 flood event. The flood caused significant damage, catalyzing reconstruction efforts and a timely revaluation of visitor use management.

The updated plan aims to balance conservation with rising visitor numbers, addressing challenges such as climate impacts, day-use pressures, and evolving recreation patterns. Phase one of stakeholder engagement will play a central role in shaping a sustainable vision for this significant destination as it prepares to reopen the fully reconstructed trail in 2025.



Source: Josh Deans, alltrails.com

Source: Internal Photos, alltrails.com

2 ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS



In total, 1040 visits to the project webpage were recorded. Of those visits, 490 visits were made to the survey page, and of those, 357 responses were gathered in the fielding window of July 24, 2024, through to September 11, 2024. The survey was promoted through a variety of mechanisms, including the following:

- Posters were put up at the BLC day use/visitor centre and business cards with a QR Code to the survey were handed out to campers/hikers exploring the BLC.
- BC Parks staff attended the Robson Marathon and hosted an information booth, providing visitors information on the public survey and ongoing VUM work.
- Organized user groups and stakeholders were asked to promote the survey to their members and networks.
- BC Parks promoted the survey through its website and communication channels, including social media.

The responses to the questions are presented below in the order they were asked in the survey. It is important to note that not all questions were answered by all respondents, this is partially due to logic based survey design in which participants were shown relevant questions based on if they had visiting the BLC and if they had ever camped overnight in the backcountry within the BLC. Additionally, some open ended questions were voluntary and did not receive responses from all participants. The percentages in the findings represent the number of respondents to the individual questions. Additionally, subsegment analyses were completed to compare the responses from respondents who said they 1) camp in the backcountry areas of the BLC, 2) day-hike in the BLC, and 3) climbing as their primary reason for visiting the BLC. Where there are sizeable and material differences between the segments, those differences are presented alongside the overall findings.[1]



Source: Internal Photos, alltrails.com

1 *Sample sizes for the different segments are noted in Figure 5. There may be some overlap between the categories*

2.1 ONLINE SURVEY FINDINGS

1. Have you ever hiked in the Berg Lake Corridor? (Berg Lake Trail, Mount Robson, Mumm Basin, Snowbird Pass, Whitehorn Mountain)

To begin the survey, respondents were asked if they had ever hiked in the Berg Lake Corridor. The majority of respondents (87%) had, in fact, hiked in the BLC. Those who had hiked in the area were then shown a series of specific questions regarding their past visit(s).

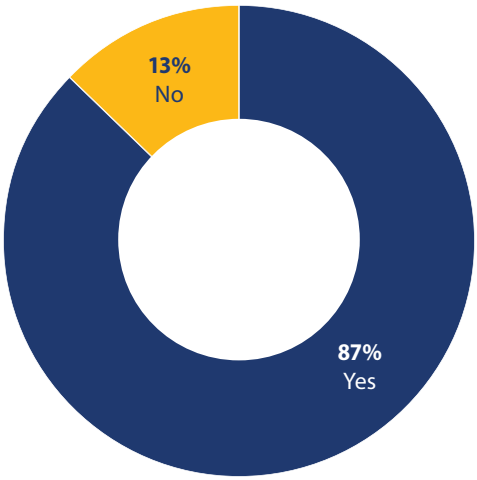


Figure 2 Have you ever hiked in the Berg Lake Corridor? (Berg Lake Trail, Mount Robson, Mumm Basin, Snowbird Pass, Whitehorn Mountain)

2. When you visited the Berg Lake Corridor, did you camp overnight on the trail?

Given that the major focus of the BLC is an entry-level backcountry camping experience, it is not surprising that the majority of respondents (80%) camped overnight on the Berg Lake Trail.

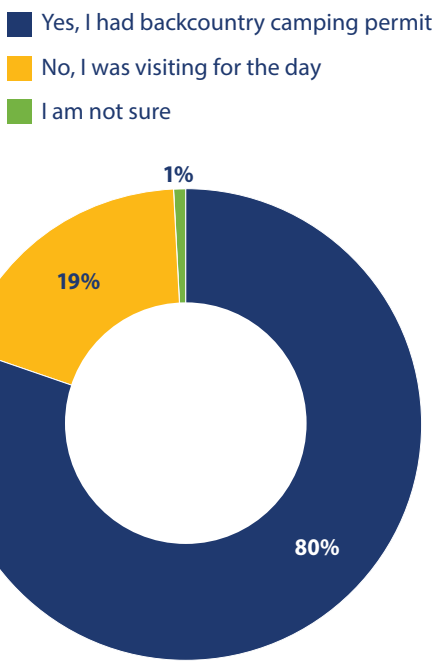


Figure 3 When you visited the Berg Lake Corridor, did you camp overnight on the trail?

3. When was the last time you visited the Berg Lake Corridor?

Respondents visited the BLC over the course of more than 10 years. However, the majority of respondents (37%) visited prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and prior to the 2021 significant flood event, in which there was significant damage along the Berg Lake Trail. The second largest group of respondents were more recent, with 33% of respondents visiting this past year/ season between 2023/2024. A very small number of respondents indicated they visited during the COVID-19 pandemic and while the Berg Lake Trail was closed during 2022.

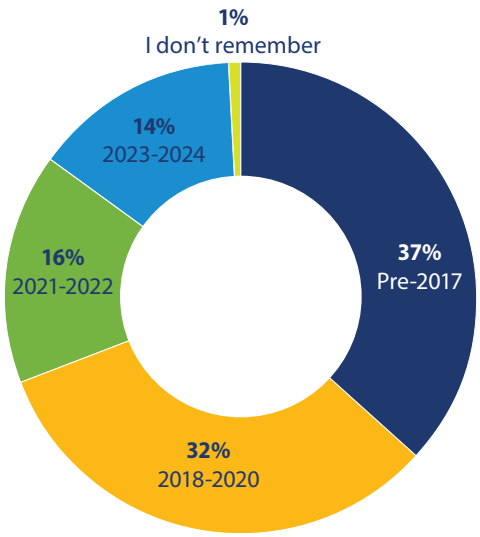


Figure 4 When was the last time you visited the Berg Lake Corridor?

4. What was the primary purpose of your last visit to the Berg Lake Corridor? (check all that apply)

Respondents are overwhelmingly visiting the BLC for day-use hiking and backcountry overnight experiences. However, as part of their visits, they may also be visiting for the opportunity to see wildlife, hike with their dog, and do other outdoor recreation activities, such as climbing.

It is worth noting that those who indicated they were visiting as "climbers" also indicated they visited the BLC for backcountry camping, hiking, and trail running – suggesting that visitors have multiple recreational identities and that the BLC can and does serve many different visitor segments.

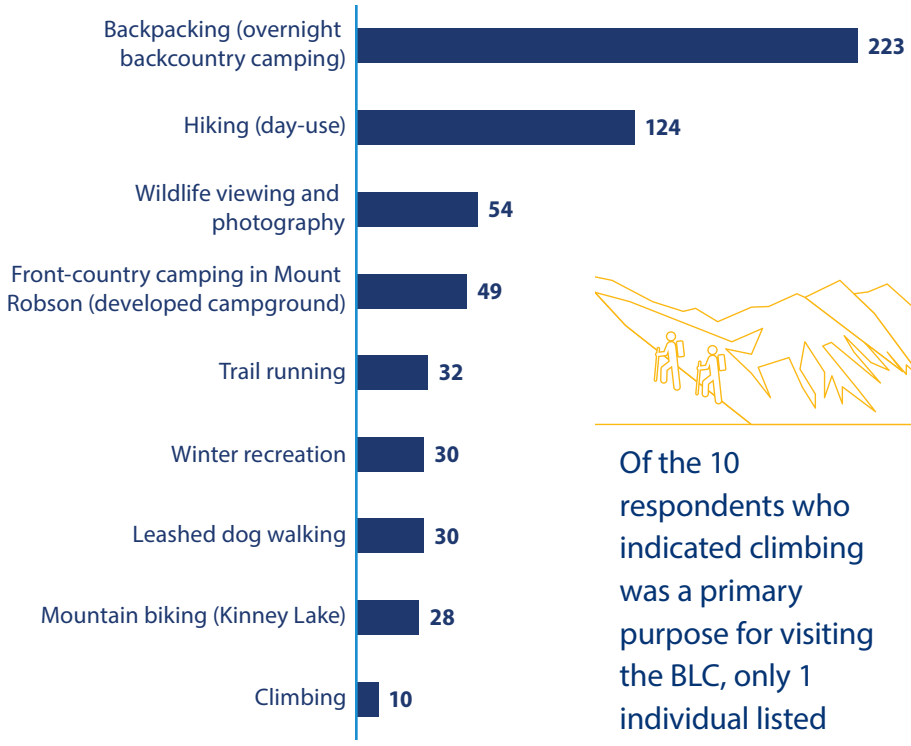


Figure 5 What was the primary purpose of your last visit to the Berg Lake Corridor? (check all that apply)

Of the 10 respondents who indicated climbing was a primary purpose for visiting the BLC, only 1 individual listed climbing as the only purpose for visiting.

5. How often do you visit the Berg Lake Corridor?

Typically, visitors do not visit annually; rather, they visit once or perhaps a few times over the course of a lifetime. However, a small number of visitors do visit annually, even more than once per year – this represents 19% (50 respondents) of respondents. Of these frequent visitors, the average was 3-5 times per year, with the exception of a few locals who indicated they visit the BLC upwards of 15 times per year.

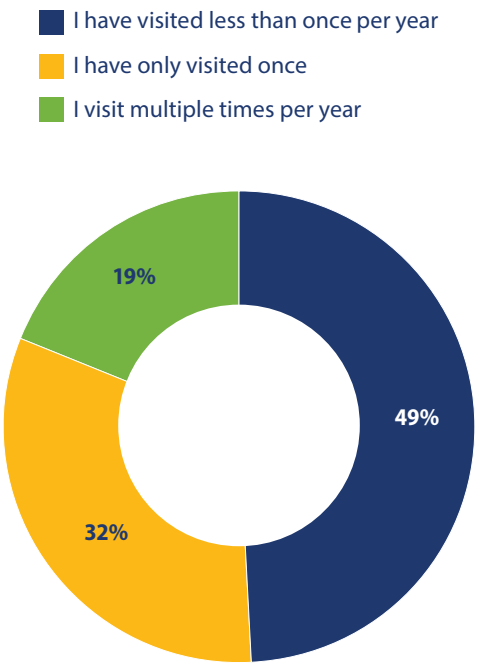


Figure 6 How often do you visit the Berg Lake Corridor?

6. When do you typically visit the Berg Lake Corridor? check all that apply

Respondents indicated that summer is the most popular time of year to visit the BLC. However, there is significant interest in visiting in the spring and fall – typically known as shoulder season. Additionally, 14% of respondents also visit whenever they can obtain a permit/reservation (note that permits are only required May-September), this could indicate a shift in timing by days, weeks, or a few months but would still fall within the seasonal permit window. These visitors may or may not have a seasonal preference but are highly motivated to visit the BLC and are willing to shift their preferred visitation season in order to obtain a reservation/permit for the opportunity.

There were no reported differences in visitation timing based on the type of visitor.

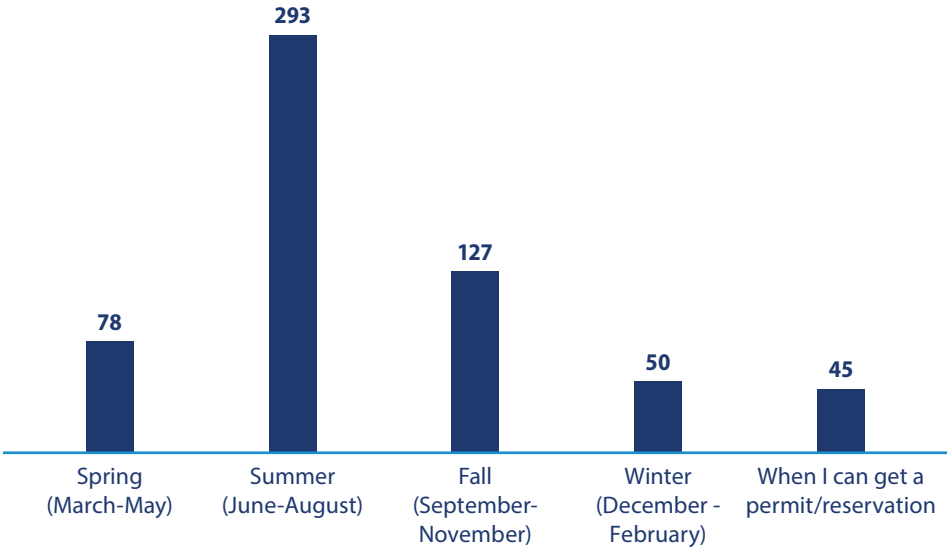


Figure 7 When do you typically visit the Berg Lake Corridor? check all that apply

7. If you were to do an overnight backcountry hiking trip in the corridor, what kind of experience are you looking for? (type of facilities, number of people, number of campsites, etc.).

A small number of respondents (42), who have not previously or have not recently participated in a backcountry hiking trip in the BLC provided some insight into what amenities and experiences they would be seeking if they were to participate in a backcountry overnight trip. Responses indicate the following key elements (reported in order of frequency):

1. Frequent and well-maintained toilet facilities (pit toilets)
2. Reservable and designated tent-pads (in designated camping areas with others)
3. Bear caches/lockers/bear hangs
4. Covered shelters for cooking (separate cooking area)
5. Water sources at campsites

8. If you were to do a day hike (or other day-use activity) in the corridor, what kind of experience are you looking for? (type of facilities, number of people, etc.).

Day-hiking is becoming a more and more popular pastime and is increasing along the BLC. Many respondents indicated that even if they typically visit the BLC for backcountry experiences, they might be interested in day-hiking. However, of those who visited for overnight backcountry camping, only 35 respondents provided feedback on this question. However, there were some key themes that highlighted the unique needs of day-use visitors. Responses indicate the following key elements (reported in order of frequency):

1. Frequent and well-maintained toilet facilities (pit toilets)
2. Trail amenities such as benches, viewpoints, signage, information, and varying degrees of difficulty
    i. Natural features, bridges, well-built and well-maintained trails
3. Managed access that ensures the trail is not overcrowded
4. Allowing dogs on the trail



Source: Heather Robinson, alltrails.com

9. Did you feel that you had the information you needed to properly plan and prepare for your visit to the Berg Lake Corridor?

The majority of respondents felt that they had the information they needed to properly plan and prepare for their visit to the BLC. 98% of respondents indicated they had all the information they needed. This highlights the variety of information sources. It is worth noting that all of the respondents to this part of the survey had visited the BLC previously and therefore were able to obtain at least the information required to visit – there may be potential visitors who are unable to access information needed to plan their trip and as such have not visited the BLC.

No differences were reported based on the type of visitor.

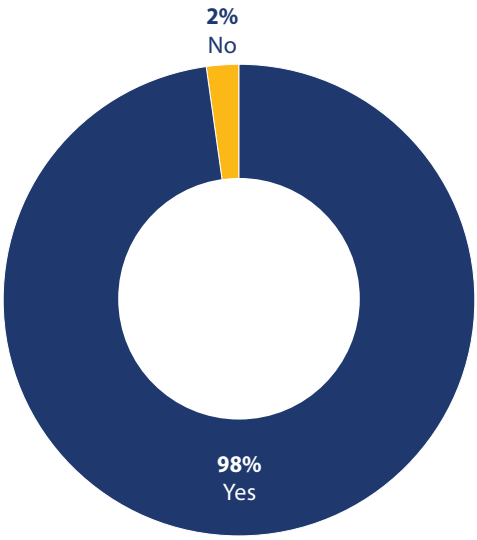
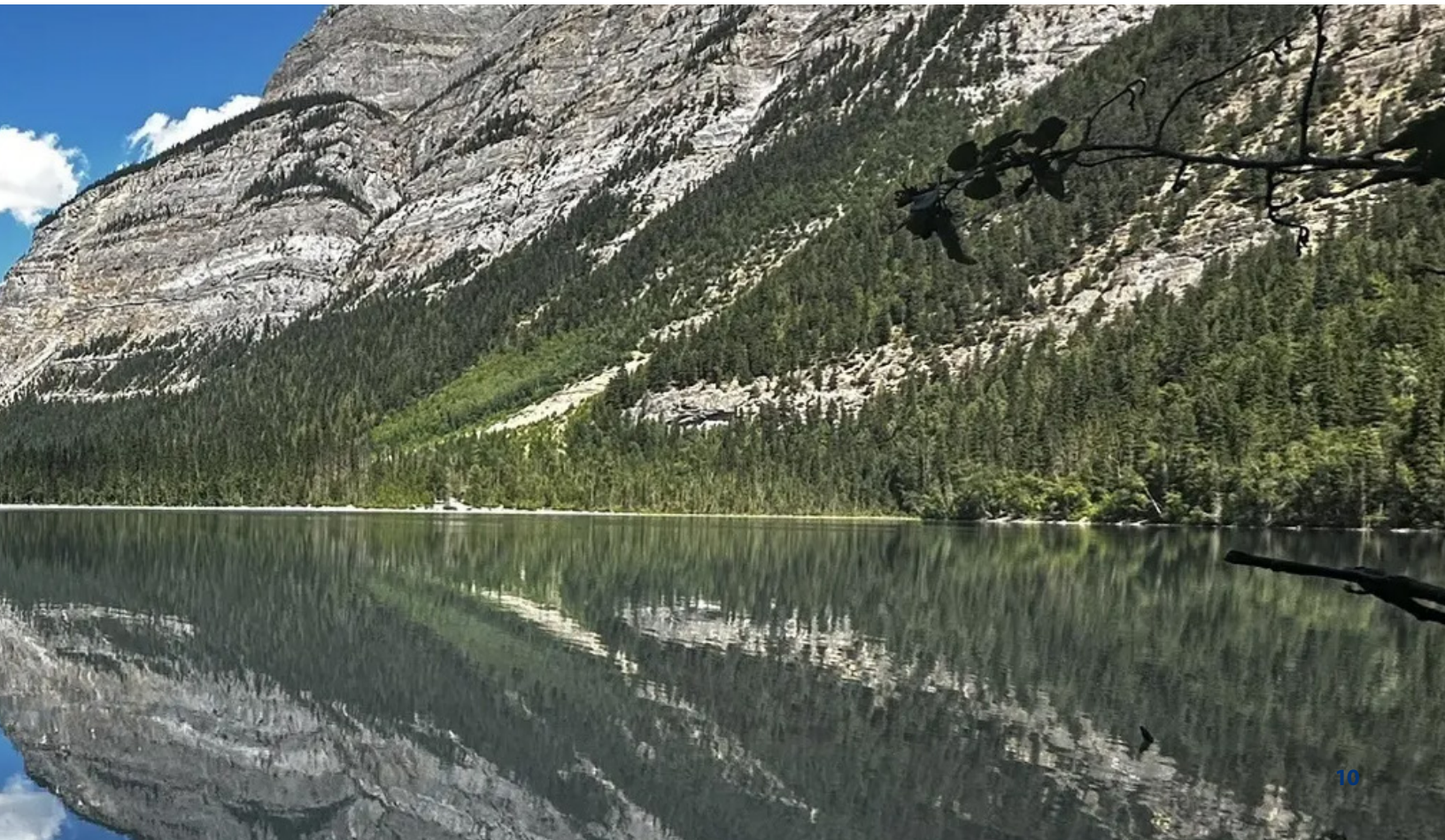


Figure 8 Did you feel that you had the information you needed to properly plan and prepare for your visit to the Berg Lake Corridor?



10. Which of the following sources of information did you use when planning your visit to The Berg Lake Corridor? choose all that apply.

The majority of visitors access information on the BLC through the BC Parks website; however, a significant number of respondents also live in the area and, therefore, have local knowledge. Other information sources also include family and friends, social media, third-party apps, and other websites. Additionally, 30 respondents indicated that they access information through other sources such as hiking guidebooks, print materials, and previous experiences through school and summer camp.

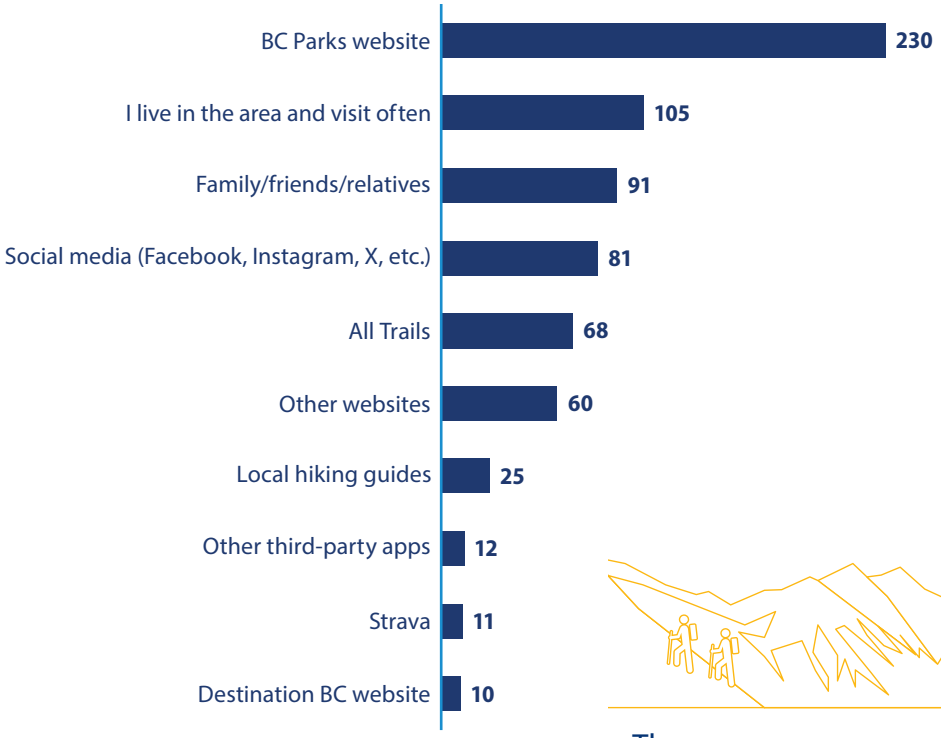


Figure 9 Did you feel that you had the information you needed to properly plan and prepare for your visit to the Berg Lake Corridor?

There were no significant differences in how backcountry overnight visitors accessed information compared to day-use visitors. However, backcountry visitors used information from the BC Parks website 1.5% more than day-use visitors and use social media and third party apps slightly less (2-.5%).



Source: Hannah Fabian, alltrails.com

11. Typically, what mode of transportation do you use to travel to the Berg Lake Corridor?

The majority of respondents (97%) use their personal vehicle to travel to the BLC. A small percentage of respondents indicated they had used a rental vehicle, but this was less than 2%. Additionally, 6 respondents indicated they live in the area and are able to walk, bike, or carpool to the BLC. *Important to note that no respondents indicated they arrived by commercial bus (tour bus).*

No differences were reported across visitor types.

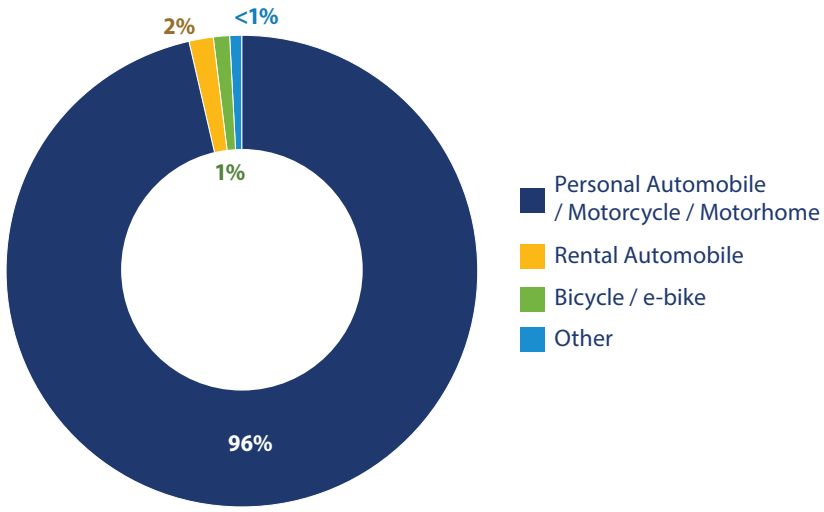


Figure 10 Typically, what mode of transportation do you use to travel to the Berg Lake Corridor?

12. During your last visit to the Berg Lake Corridor, please indicate how crowded the area felt at the time of your visit.

Most visitors do not feel crowded when visiting the BLC. 65% of respondents indicated they did not feel crowded at all or only slightly crowded. Less than 10% of total respondents suggested that crowding was a significant issue during their visit to the BLC. **There were no differences between backcountry overnight visitors, day hikers, or any visitor segments in perceived crowding. However, in the open-ended questions through the survey, respondents indicated fears of increased visitation and the perceived sense that crowding may become an issue in the future.**

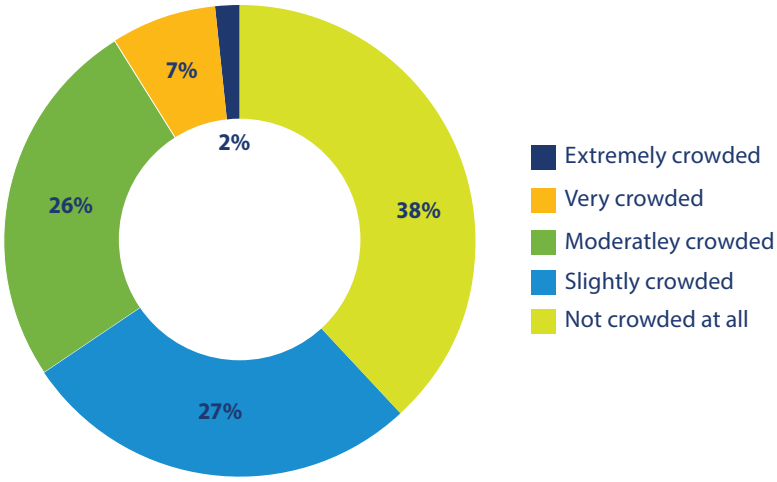


Figure 11 During your last visit to the Berg Lake Corridor, please indicate how crowded the area felt at the time of your visit.

13. How important are the following reasons for visiting the Berg Lake Corridor?

The primary motivations for visiting the BLC were enjoying nature and observing the scenic beauty of the area.

Additionally, visitors are highly motivated to visit the BLC for relaxation, quiet time and reflection, solitude, and a strong focus on health and well-being. It is worth noting that respondents did not indicate that visiting a world-renowned destination was a high priority.



There were very few differences between backcountry overnight visitors, day hikers, or any visitor segments in their motivations for visiting the BLC. The biggest difference was for backcountry overnight visitors who felt that experiencing a sense of excitement and adventure was incredibly important. The difference was quite substantial, with 85% of backcountry visitors ranking adventure and excitement as more important than having fun, health and well-being and enjoying solitude.

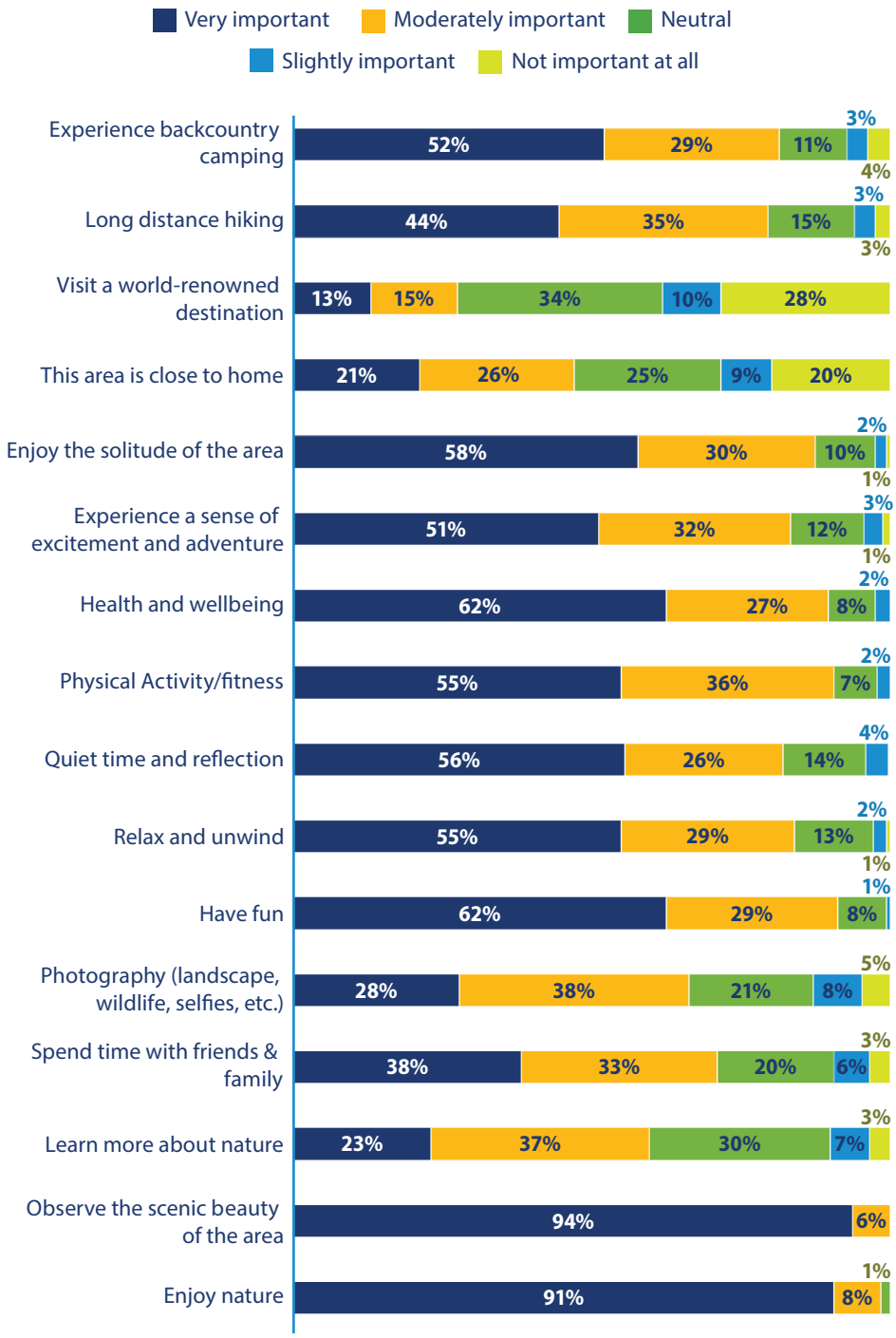


Figure 12 How important are the following reasons for visiting the Berg Lake Corridor?



14. Although BC Parks is not proposing to add new campgrounds on the Berg Lake Trail, how supportive would you be of new trails/ campsites (tent pads, yurts, etc.) being developed in other areas of the Berg Lake Corridor?

Respondents indicated strong support for developing new trails and campsites within the BLC. It is worth noting that the majority of those in favour of expanding recreation infrastructure and amenities are those who have camped overnight in the background along the BLC.

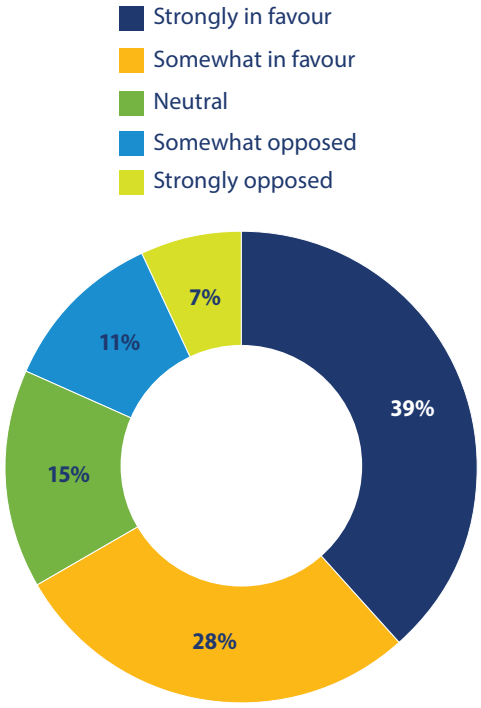


Figure 13 Although BC Parks is not proposing to add new campgrounds on the Berg Lake Trail, how supportive would you be of new trails/campsites (tent pads, yurts, etc.) being developed in other areas of the Berg Lake Corridor?



Backcountry camping visitors (backcountry camping permit holders) represent 84% of the respondents who support increases in recreational development along the BLC.

15. What was the highlight of your most recent trip to the Berg Lake Corridor?

Experiences on the Berg Lake Trail and along the Berg Lake Corridor are very positive and extremely memorable for respondents. Almost all of the participants of the survey provided some feedback, with more than 285 comments; the following represents the main themes (reported in order of frequency):

1. **Natural beauty of the area**

   i. Waterfalls, lakes, mountain views, wildlife

   The ecological features are overwhelming the highlight of the significant area. Visitors are overwhelmingly impressed by the natural beauty and site. The natural trail design is a key element of this, as well as the area not being overly crowded. Of the memorable natural features, Snowbird Pass was noted as the most memorable and most significant area along the BLC.

2. **Overall quality of the experience.**

   i. Amenities such as tent pads, pit toilets, viewpoints

   Respondents noted the maintenance of the trail, available amenities, and the ongoing investment in rebuilding the trail following the 2021 flood.

3. **Family friendly trail experiences**

   The BLC corridor provides an opportunity to make lasting memories with family and loved ones. Respondents reminisced on spending time with children along the trail, positive family memories, and looking forward to sharing the trail with family members in the future.

4. **Introductory trail for backcountry experiences**

   Respondents appreciate the introduction level this trail provides and feel this is a highlight for those who are new to backcountry travel.

Other sentiments include the ability to bring a dog on the trail, winter recreation opportunities, an updated and expanded parking lot, and the variety of outdoor recreation such as paddle boarding and climbing.



Source: Josh Deans, alltrails.com

16. What did you find most challenging during your most recent visit/hike to the Berg Lake Corridor?

While there is tremendous passion and appreciation for the BLC and the incredible trail system, respondents were forthcoming with feedback on challenges. Two hundred sixty-five respondents provided responses to this question and indicated a number of recurring challenges and experiences across visitor types. the following represents the main themes (reported in order of frequency):

1. **Reservation System**

   More than 50 comments were directly focused on the challenges visitors have experienced with the reservation system. Respondents suggested that the current system does not take into account local interests and needs of British Columbia residents, nor does it provide flexibility for last minute travel. Additionally, participants feel that the current system appears to be contributing to vacant or ghost bookings, where visitors indicated that even when the system does not have available permits and campsites, there are many empty or vacant spots along the trail. Overall, the demand for access to the trail is high and supply (number of campsites/available permits) is low. It is important to note that while respondents are frustrated with their lack of access to desired sites or dates, there is also a recurring theme/sentiment in all open-ended questions that increasing visitor numbers should also be approached with caution as the potential for crowding is a common fear.

2. **Challenging trail**

   Respondents provided feedback on how challenging the trail, terrain, and overall experience was. This was not a complaint but rather perhaps feedback to suggest that the BLC is more than an introductory trail and requires preparation and physical fitness to be successful.

3. **Check in and pre-hike education**

   While not a significant issue for most respondents, 11 people provided feedback on the required video that visitors must watch and the overall check-in procedure. The most common critiques of this system were the timing – only available when the visitor center is open, which limits visitors from starting on the trail before 8:00am, and the frequency for which visitors must participate in this procedure. Repeat or frequent visitors were interested in having a certificate or the ability to not repeat the procedure yearly or, in some cases, multiple times per year.

4. **Trail amenities and features**

   A small number of respondents indicated some features, such as the availability of toilets, cleanliness and maintenance of toilets, and the location of pit toilets, were a challenge for them. Additionally, a few respondents noted litter and human waste along the trail as an issue. Finally, 2 respondents indicated the need for more covered shelters and specific designated cooking shelters – separate from camping areas (for bear safety).

17. Did you use the reservation system on your most recent visit to the Berg Lake Corridor?

The majority of respondents are accessing the BLC through the online reservation system.

**Given that 255 respondents indicated they camped overnight along the Berg Lake Trail, it is likely that some additional respondents used the reservation system or that someone in their party was able to navigate it successfully.*

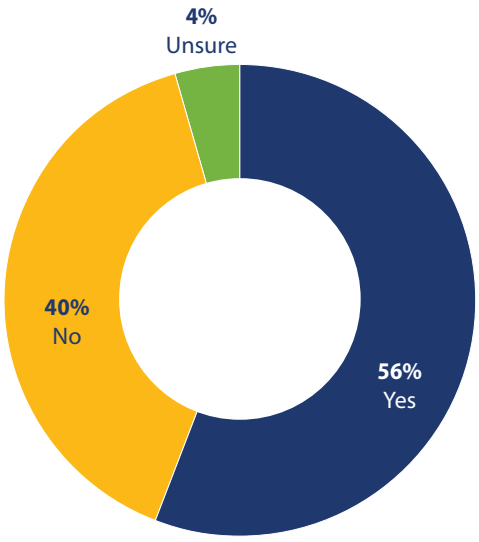


Figure 14 Did you use the reservation system on your most recent visit to the Berg Lake Corridor?



30% of respondents who suggested they had a backcountry camping permit on their most recent visit to the BLC responded no to the use of the reservation system.

18. When thinking about your use of the reservation system on your most recent visit, the reservation system: (select all that apply)

While the majority of respondents felt that the cost of a reservation (backcountry permit) was appropriate, many indicated that they were unable to make a reservation for their desired dates (more respondents were unable to get to book their desired dates compared to those who were able). It is worth noting that many respondents felt the reservation system was both easy to use and easy to understand. Therefore, suggesting the lack of access is not a direct result of the system not working; rather, there appears to be more demand than supply.

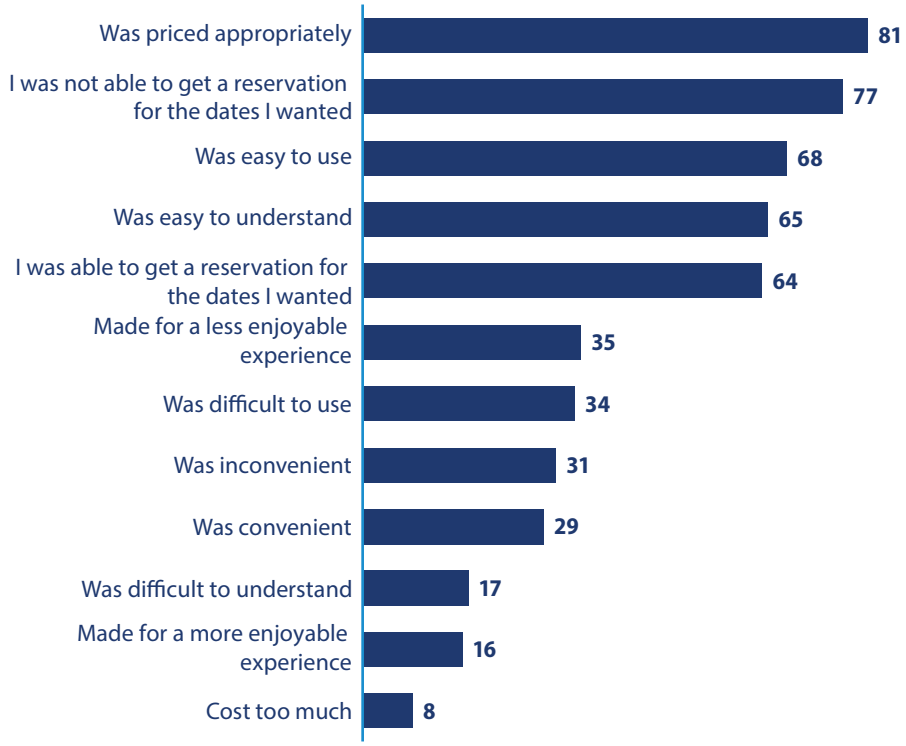


Figure 15 When thinking about your use of the reservation system on your most recent visit, the reservation system: (select all that apply)

19. How important are the following values to you?

Natural environments and wildlife habitat are the most important values for visitors to the BLC. Following these values are recreation-related values, with recreation experiences and amenities being the next more important aspects of the BLC. The overall visitor experience is also very important to respondents as 80% indicated that recreation amenities and recreation experiences are very high and high importance. Respondents appear to not be as concerned with parking concerns and overall safety.



There were very few differences between backcountry overnight visitors, day hikers, or any visitor segments in their values within the BLC. The only differences were slight (1%) increases in the importance of natural environments and wildlife habitat – this suggests that visitors who camp overnight along the BLC are very slightly more aware of and value the importance of visiting the BLC for immersive nature-based recreation experiences.

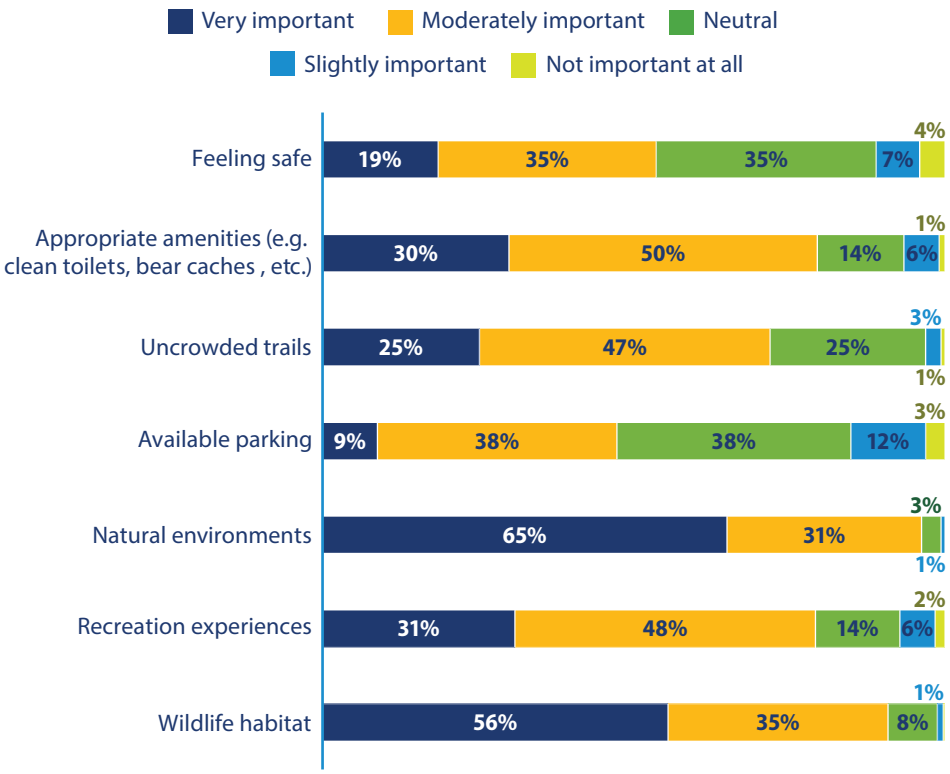


Figure 16 How important are the following values to you?



20. From your experience, how much of a problem are the following management issues in the Berg Lake Corridor?

Respondents indicated that there are few perceived management issues within the BLC. However, the reservation system is considered the most significant issue for all visitors, with 47% of respondents indicating the reservation system was a huge or big problem. Other issues that were perceived by at least 10% of visitors include the number of campsites (14%), litter (10%), dogs on the trail (17% indicated off-leash dogs was a significant issue and 12% indicated dogs in general were an issue), and helicopter flights (15%). It is worth noting that less than one-quarter of respondents believe these issues are significant issues; in fact, other than the reservation system, all of the listed potential management issues were considered to not be a problem at all or a small problem by more than 50% of all respondents. Suggesting that current management practices are largely working, with small adjustments needed and future planning is required to ensure this remains positive.

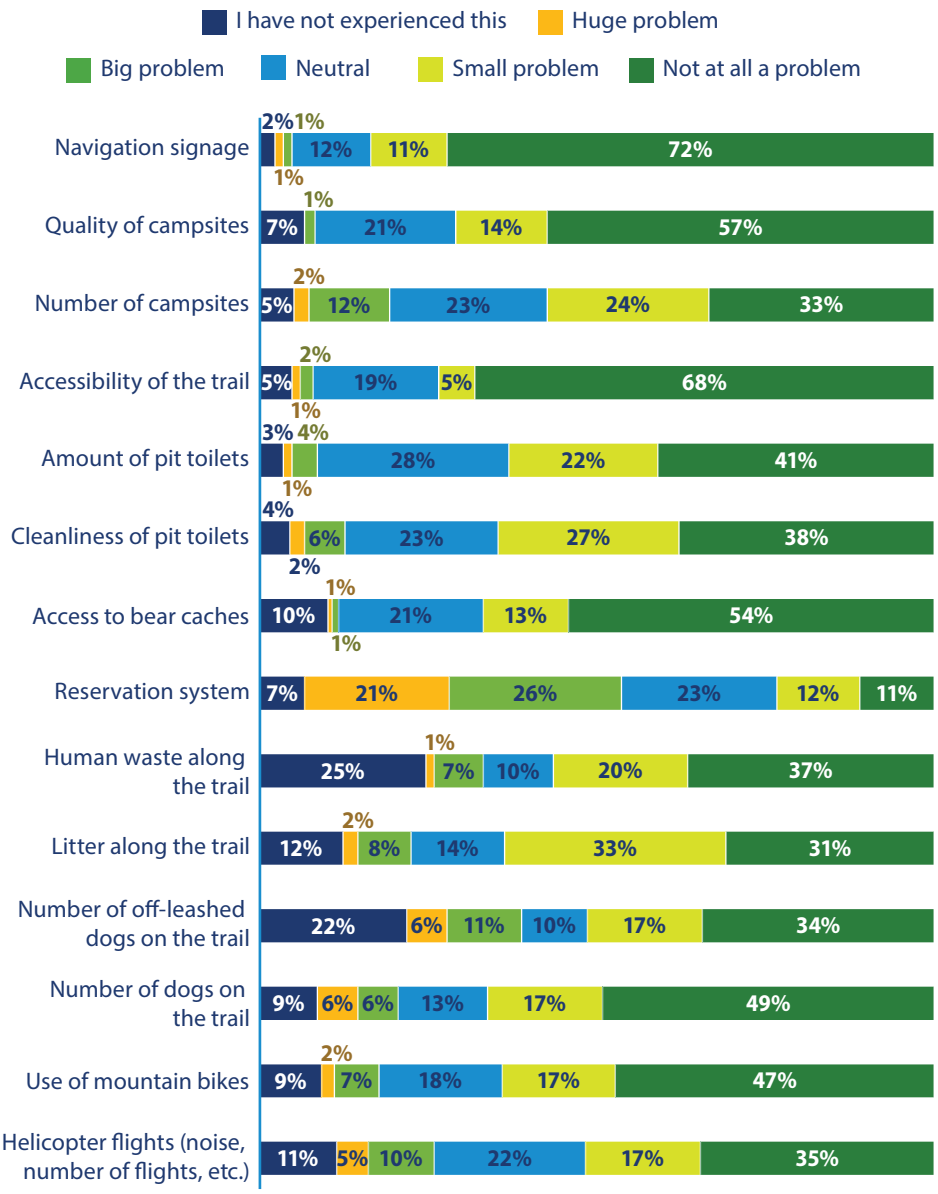


Figure 17 From your experience, how much of a problem are the following management issues in the Berg Lake Corridor?

There were, however, some significant differences between those who spent time camping in the backcountry (overnight visitors within the BLC) and those who visited for the day (day-hikers). The most apparent difference appears to be the perception of toilets, both in their availability and their cleanliness. The cleanliness of pit toilets is a more significant issue for backcountry overnight visitors, whereas the number of pit toilets along the trail is more of an issue for day-use visitors. Interestingly, while reservations are not required for day-use hiking, the reservation system is still perceived as the most significant issue for both types of users.

The following figures (Figure 18 and Figure 19) highlight those differences.



Those who visit the BLC as Climbers suggested that the most significant issues are dogs on the trail (both leashed and off-leash) and the reservation system. 50% of respondents indicated these were big/huge problems.

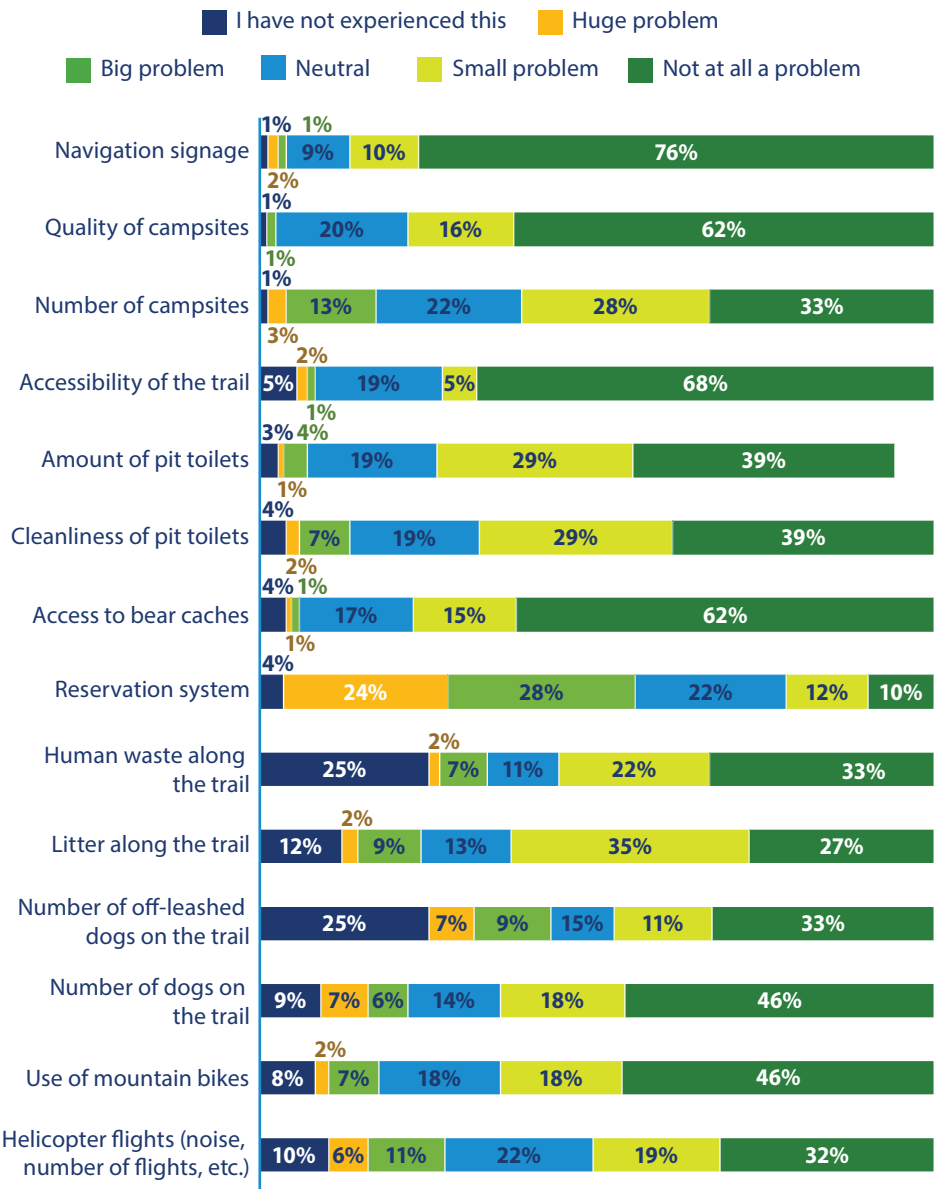


Figure 18 Backcountry Overnight Visitors Perception of Management Issues



Helicopter flights were perceived as a more significant issue by those who camp overnight within the BLC compared to day-use visitors.

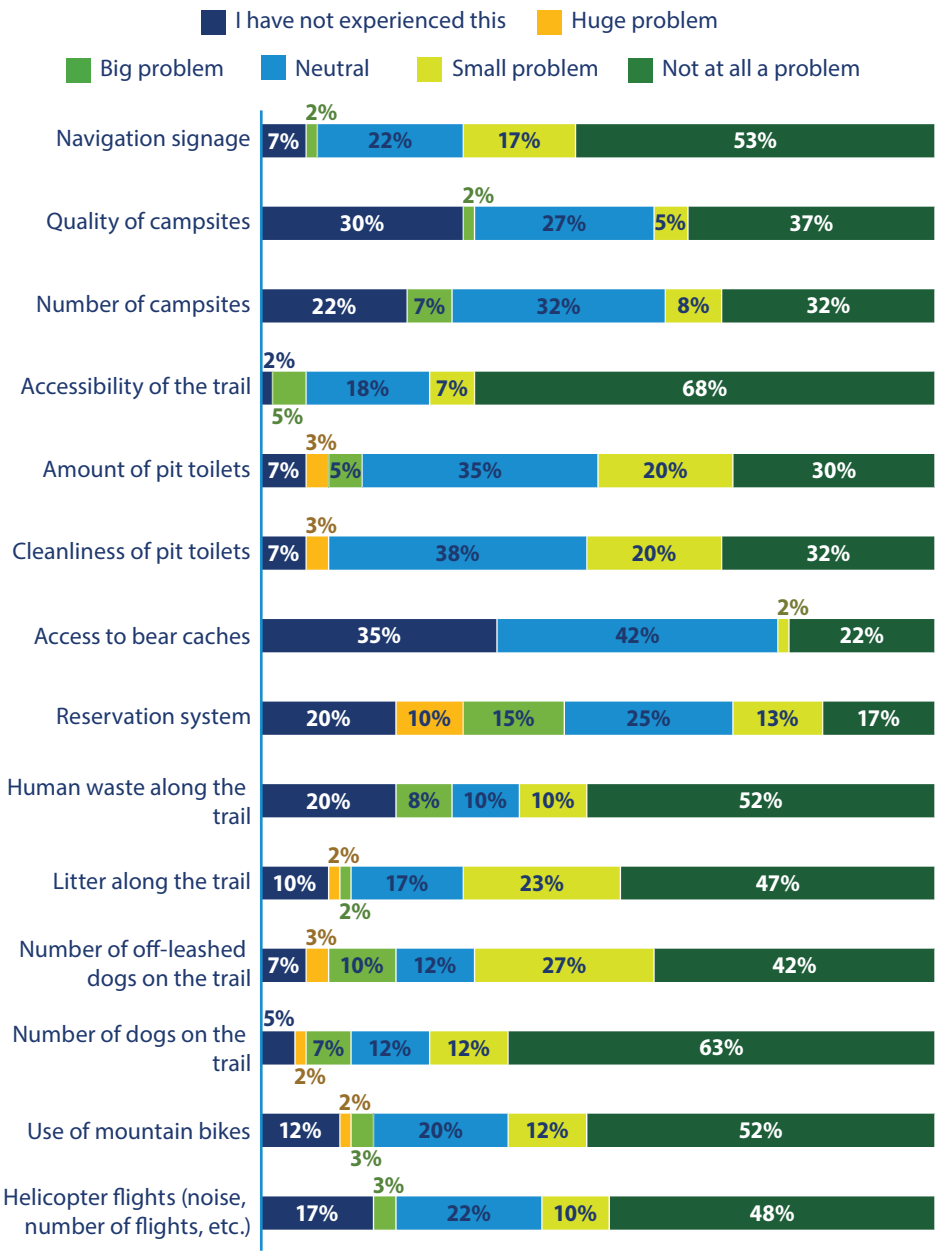


Figure 19 Day Use Visitors Perception of Management Issues

21. What is your level of awareness of low-impact recreation principles such as Leave No Trace?



Figure 20 What is your level of awareness of low-impact recreation principles such as Leave No Trace?


Source: Allie Pugh, alltrails.com

22. Is there any additional information you can share about the Berg Lake Corridor that you feel would assist the visitor use management planning process?

More than 200 respondents provided comments on this final open-ended question. The sentiment explored in this includes a substantial amount of gratitude for park staff, parks and trails in general. There were also clear messages of wanting to keep this special place as natural as possible and ensuring the area does not become degraded, overcrowded, and hardened. Additionally, this question allowed respondents to reiterate the recurring theme of their frustration with the BC Parks Reservation system and provided space for feedback and ideas for how to improve the system. Respondents identified a number of key issues and ideas:

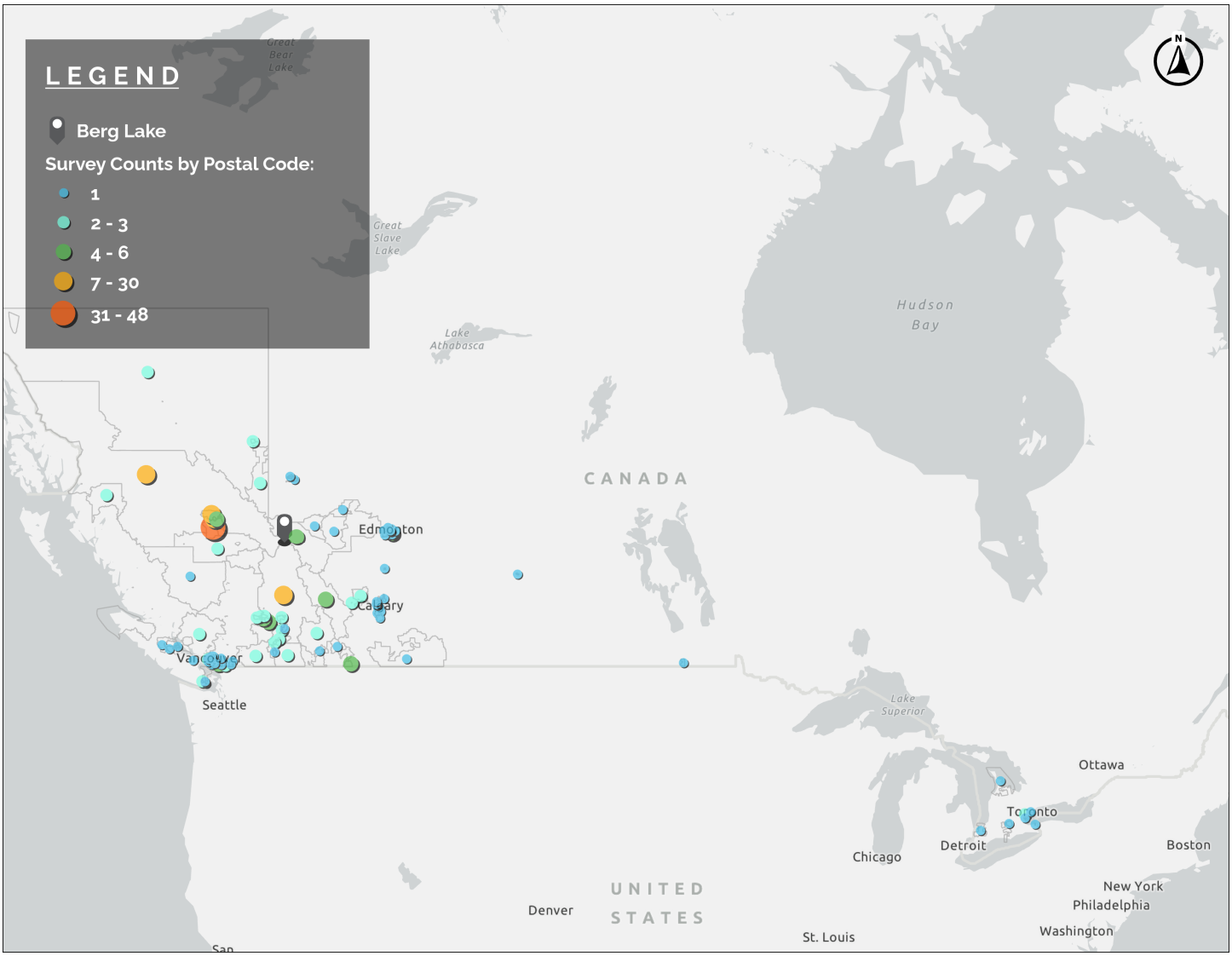
- **Technical Issues:** Respondents indicated they face glitches and confusing interfaces during bookings, hindering their ability to secure reservations efficiently.
- **Inequitable Access:** Local residents feel disadvantaged compared to commercial operators and international visitors (the perception from respondents indicated they feel that it is easier for commercial operators and international visitors to obtain permits, this is a perception not a BC Parks policy), advocating for prioritization policies for BC residents.
- **Underutilized Campsites:** Respondents cited their personal experience or perception of frequent no-shows and unused reservations, highlighting the need for better cancellation incentives and real-time updates on availability.
- **Demand for Mixed Allocation:** Many recommend incorporating lotteries, walk-in permits, and first-come, first-served options to improve fairness and flexibility.
- **Environmental Balance:** Respondents clearly value the healthy, intact ecosystems within the BLC but request expanded amenities, Leave No Trace education, and limits on overcrowding.

There were also a few other key ideas that had not been shared in other questions.

1. Increase staffing and staff presence, especially rangers along the trail.
2. More covered areas and rest areas with some shelter as respondents frequently noted the high amounts of precipitation and rapidly changing weather patterns.
3. Potentially for bivy campsites geared towards climbers.

Demographics: About the Respondents

The majority of respondents are from British Columbia, with Albertans being the second largest provincial group represented, with very few respondents indicating they live elsewhere in the country. Approximately 20% of residents live nearby, in Prince George and surrounding communities.



The following table describes the profile of the survey respondents.

Role and Interest in the BLC	
I am an overnight Backcountry camper/hiker	79%
I am a day hiker	13.5%
I am an overnight backcountry camper/hiker with a commercial guide	2%
I am a concerned citizen, but I do not recreate in the BLC	3%
I am a tourism operator	1%
I am representing a formal recreation organization / club	2%
I am a local business owner	1%
I represent an Environmental / Wildlife Organization	Less than 1%
I am an elected official (local, regional, provincial)	Less than 1%

Gender	
Male	39%
Female	58%
Non-binary	1%
Prefer not to answer	2%

Age Category	
18-24	1%
25-34	12%
35-44	26%
45-54	30%
55-64	17%
65 -74	11.5%
75 and older	2%

Primary Language Spoken at Home	
English	98%
French	1%
German	1%



Source: Internal Photos, alltrails.com

Source: Christine Young, alltrails.com

3 CONCLUSIONS





Source: Cera Merkel, alltrails.com

The public survey findings for the BLC Visitor Use Management Plan reveal a high appreciation for the area's natural beauty and backcountry opportunities, alongside significant challenges that require attention. Approximately 87% of respondents have previously hiked in the BLC, with 80% having camped overnight. While 98% of visitors felt adequately informed to plan their trips, key concerns remain including the reservation system, potential environmental impacts of recreation, and crowding (future possibility).

The reservation system was identified as a "big" or "huge" issue by 47% of respondents, with complaints about technical glitches, ghost bookings, and limited availability. Many suggested alternative models, such as lotteries, walk-in permits, or mixed allocation systems, to enhance fairness and efficiency. Additionally, 14% reported concerns about insufficient campsite availability, while 10% noted litter as an ongoing challenge.

Respondents emphasized maintaining the corridor's pristine wilderness, with 85% of backcountry visitors valuing excitement and adventure alongside solitude and nature immersion. Seasonal preferences lean heavily toward summer, though 14% prioritize availability over timing. Proposals for expanded ranger presence, improved trail amenities, and additional covered shelters reflect visitors' desire for better infrastructure while preserving the corridor's unique wilderness character.

As visitation levels are expected to return to pre-flood levels by 2025, these insights will guide updates to the Visitor Use Management Plan, balancing conservation goals with evolving user needs.



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