

# FISH CREEK

## RECREATION AREA PLANNING COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS



Prepared by:

**MRV ARCHITECTS, PC**

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Cover Photo of Montana Creek Road trail.



## SECTION 1:

## BACKGROUND

The Fish Creek Recreation Area on Douglas Island is a popular recreation area and contains valuable fish and wildlife habitat. The City and Borough of Juneau, Southeast Alaska Watershed Coalition, and Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game and MRV Architects have teamed up to improve recreation opportunities and restore stream and natural habitat.

Recently a survey was conducted to help us learn how the community uses the area and to share our ideas for improvements. This survey asked a series of ranking and open-ended questions to gain an understanding of current creek values, uses and needs for the community. The survey ended Monday August 2nd, 2021 at 5 PM and **385 responses were collected.**

The results have been tabulated and converted into a summary contained within this document. The following are the major parts cover by the survey to which the results are reflected:

- Part 1: User Information
- Part 1.2 Family Use
- Part 2: Knowledge of the Fish Creek Recreation Area
- Part 3: Vision for the Creek

Narrative comments have been categorized and added at the end of the report.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA  
WATERSHED COALITION



CONNECT - INFORM - PARTICIPATE



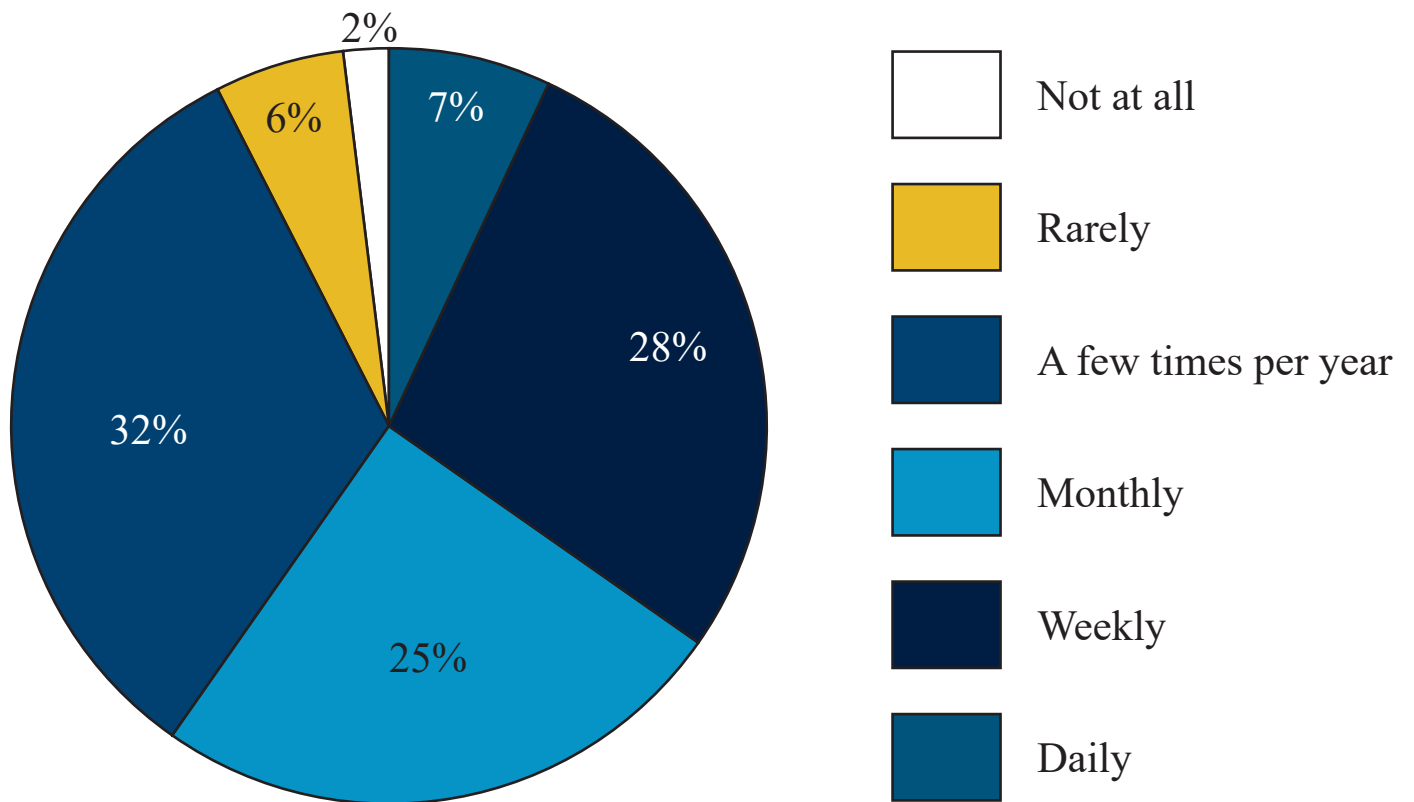
Community Planning & Survey Administrators



Fish Creek Recreation Area Land Ownership Map

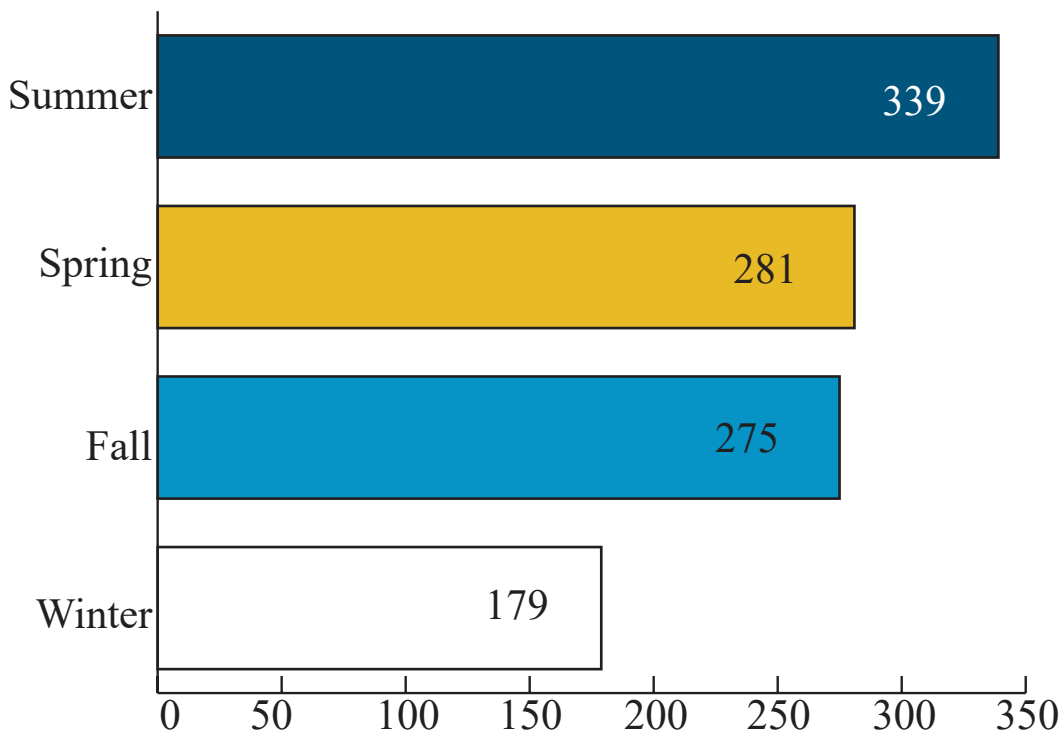
Question 1: How frequently do you use the Fish Creek Recreation Area?

Responses: 382



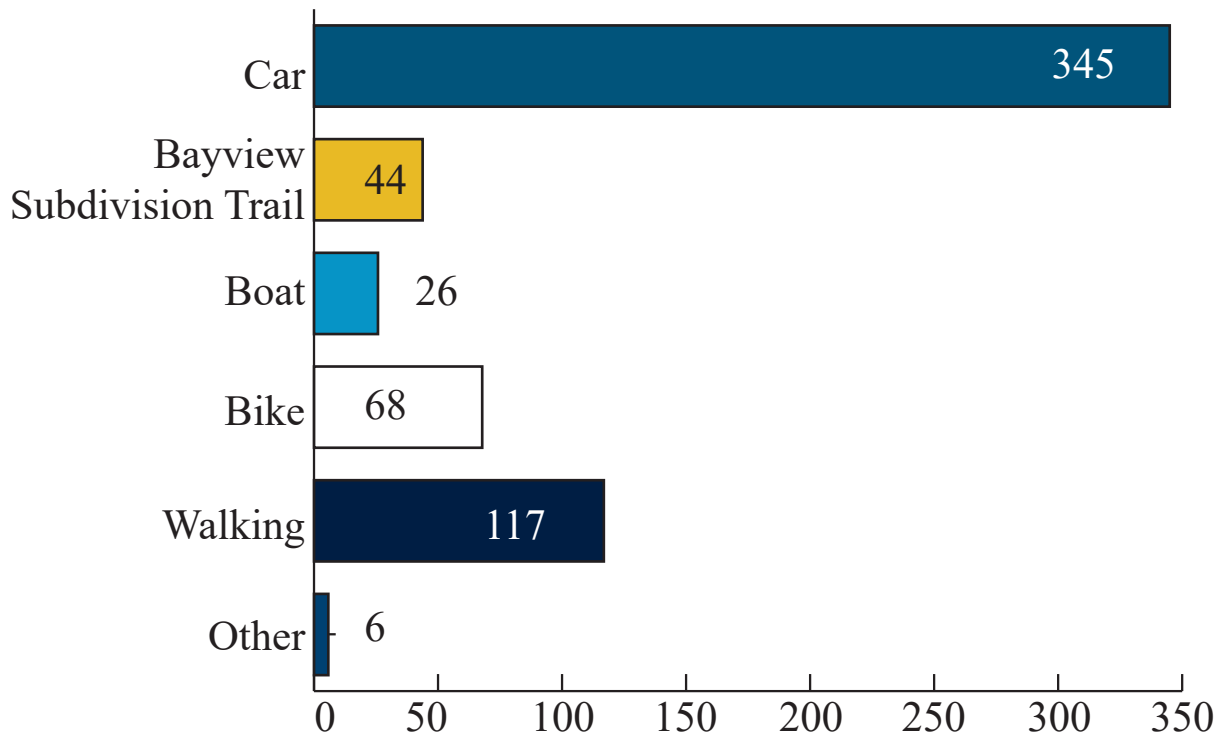
Question 2: During which seasons do you mostly use the area? (Check all that apply)

Responses: 378



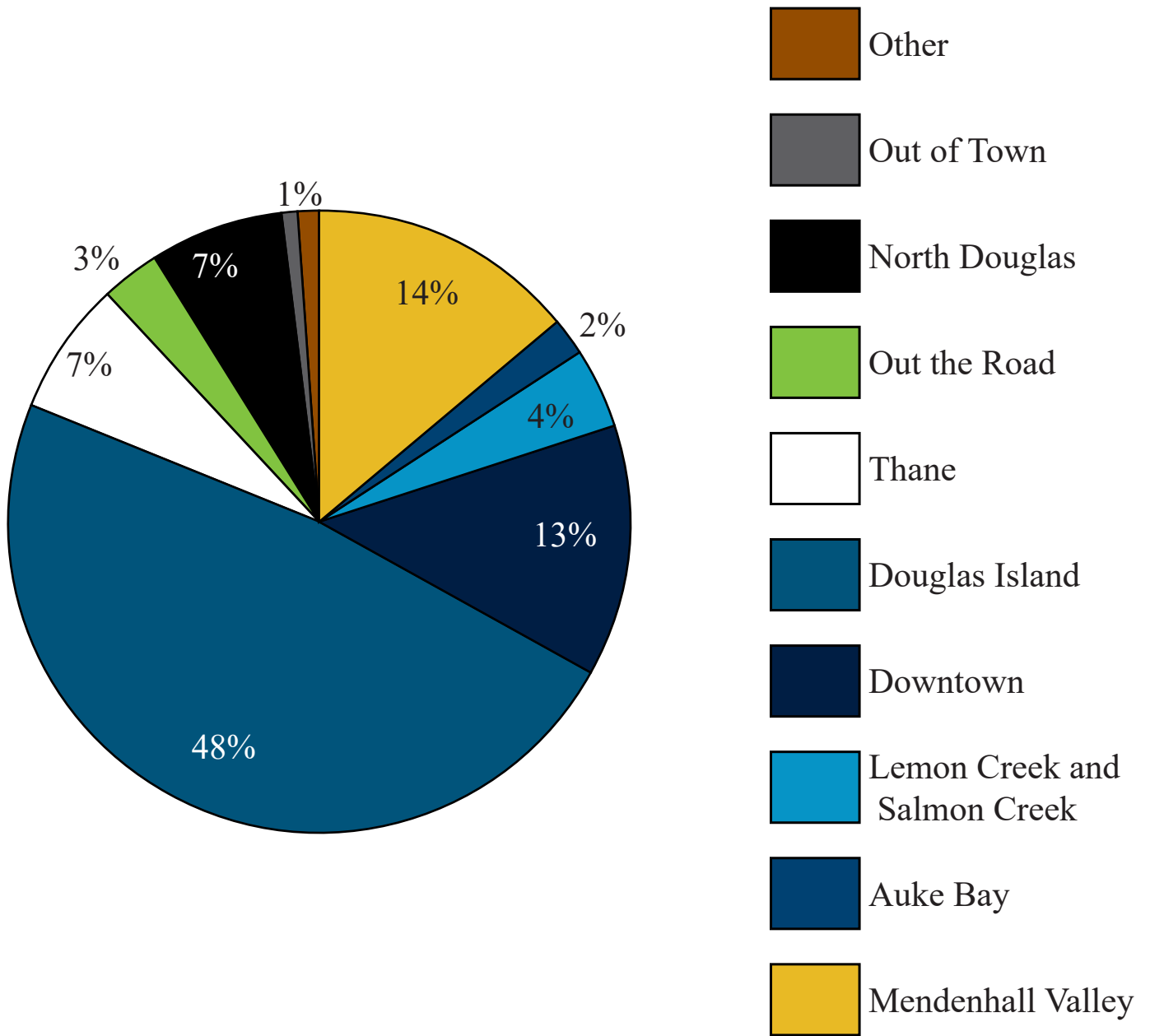
Question 3: How do you access Fish Creek Recreation Area? (check all that apply)

Responses: 382



Question 4: What area of town do you live in?

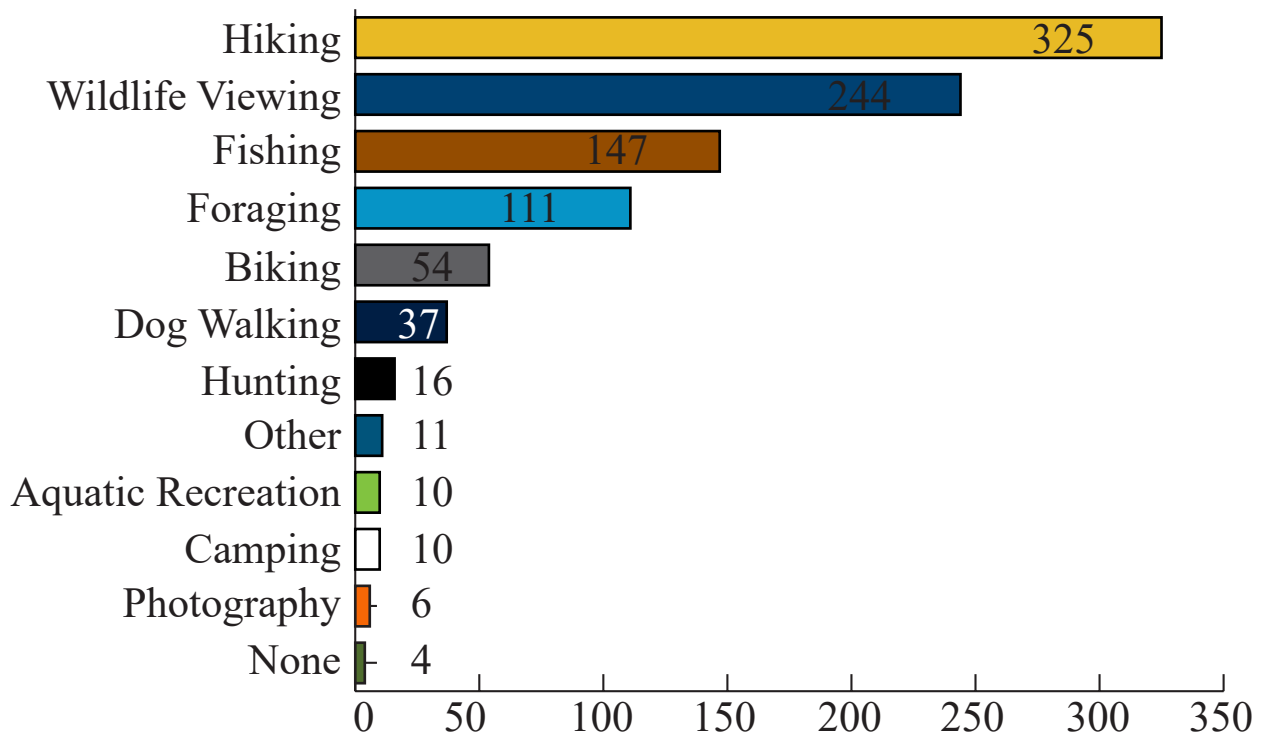
Responses: 385





Question 6: In the last twelve months in the Fish Creek Recreation area, which recreational activities did you frequently engage in? (check the top three that apply to you)

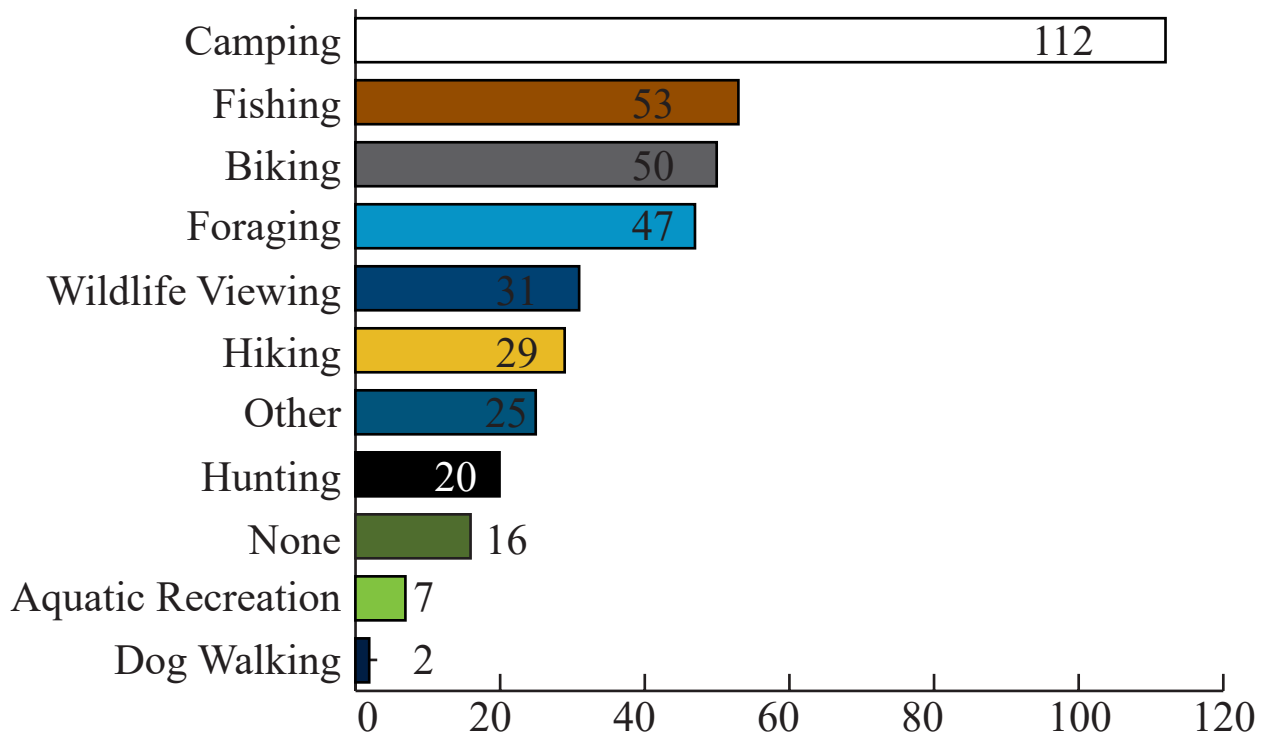
Responses: 384





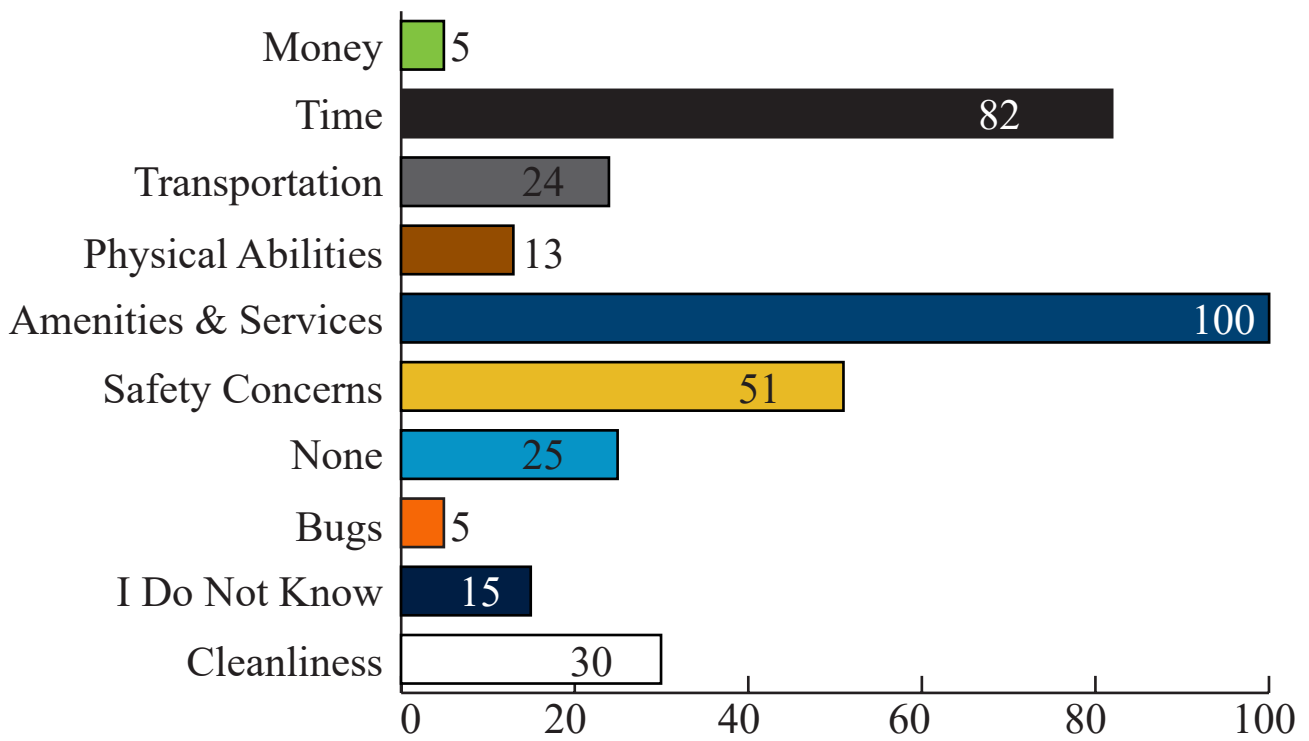
Question 7: What recreational activities do you or any others in your household NOT PARTICIPATE IN THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO in this area? (check all that apply)

Responses: 240



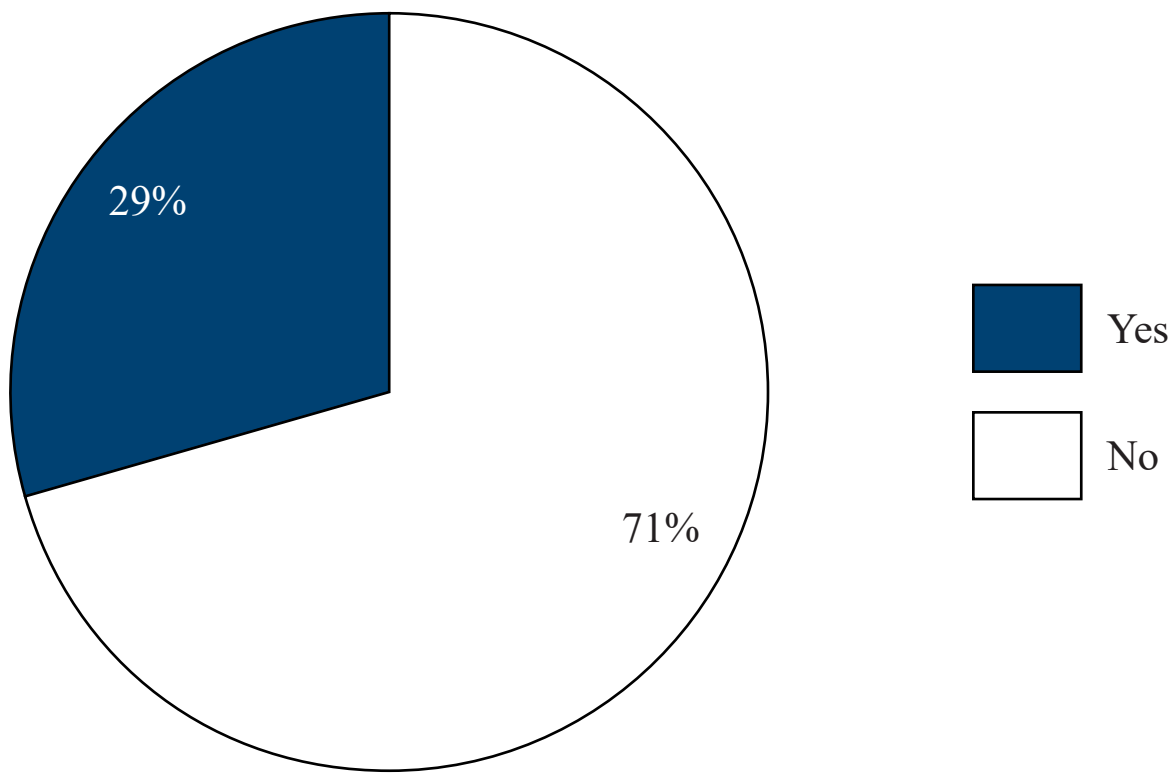
Question 8: What barriers are keeping you or any other in your household from participating in these activities in this area? (check all that apply)

Responses: 247



Question 10: Is anyone in your household below the age of 18?

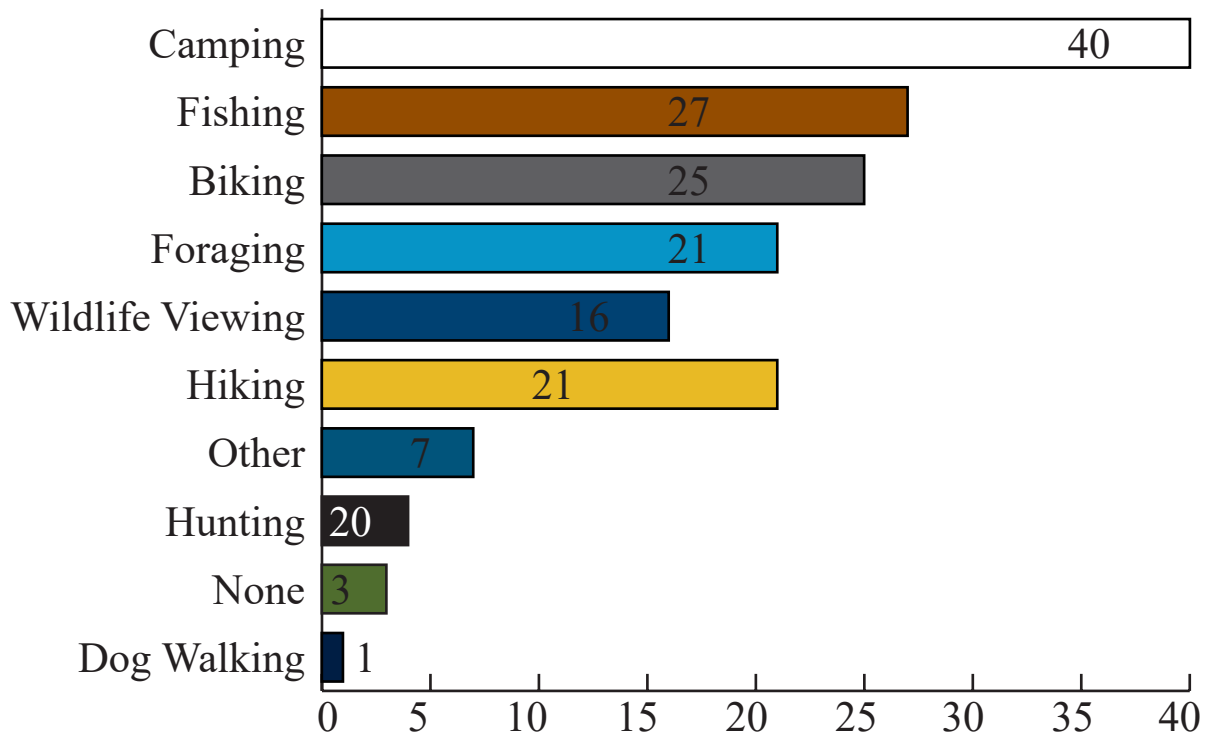
Responses: 383





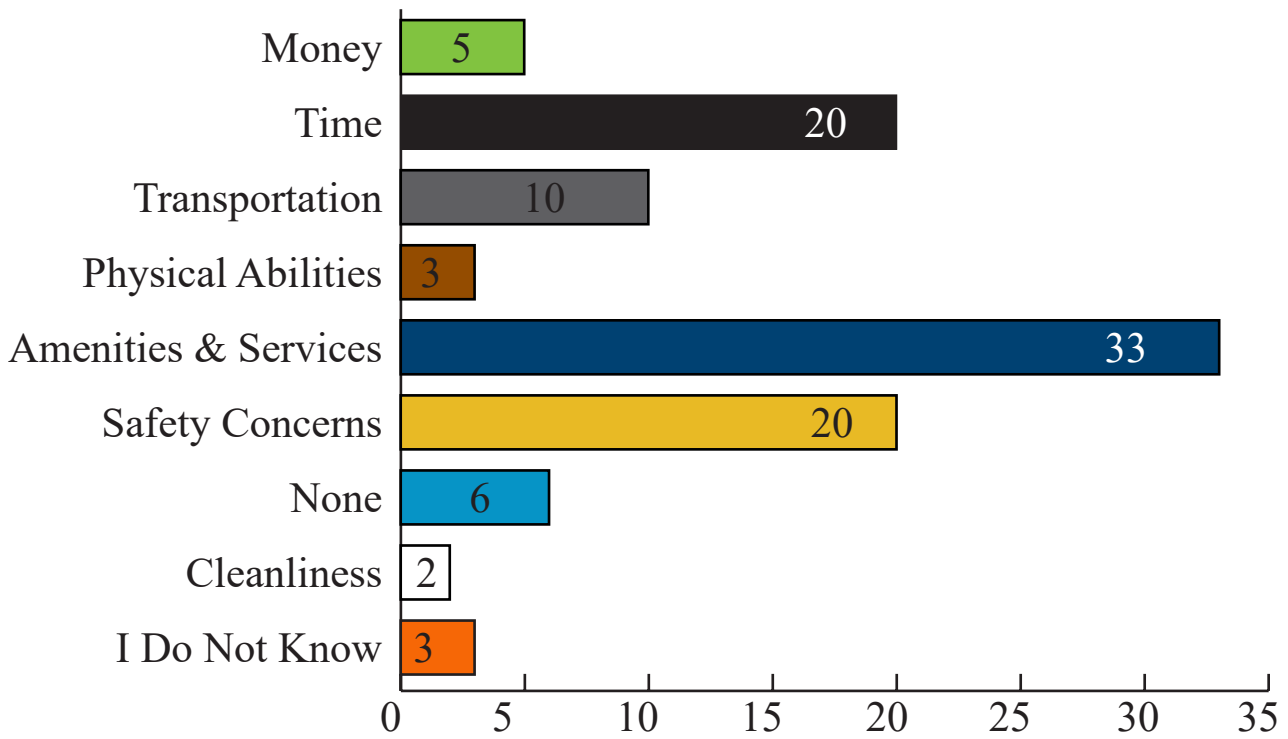
Question 11: What activities do children in your household NOT PARTICIPATE IN THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO in this area? (check all that apply)

Responses: 75



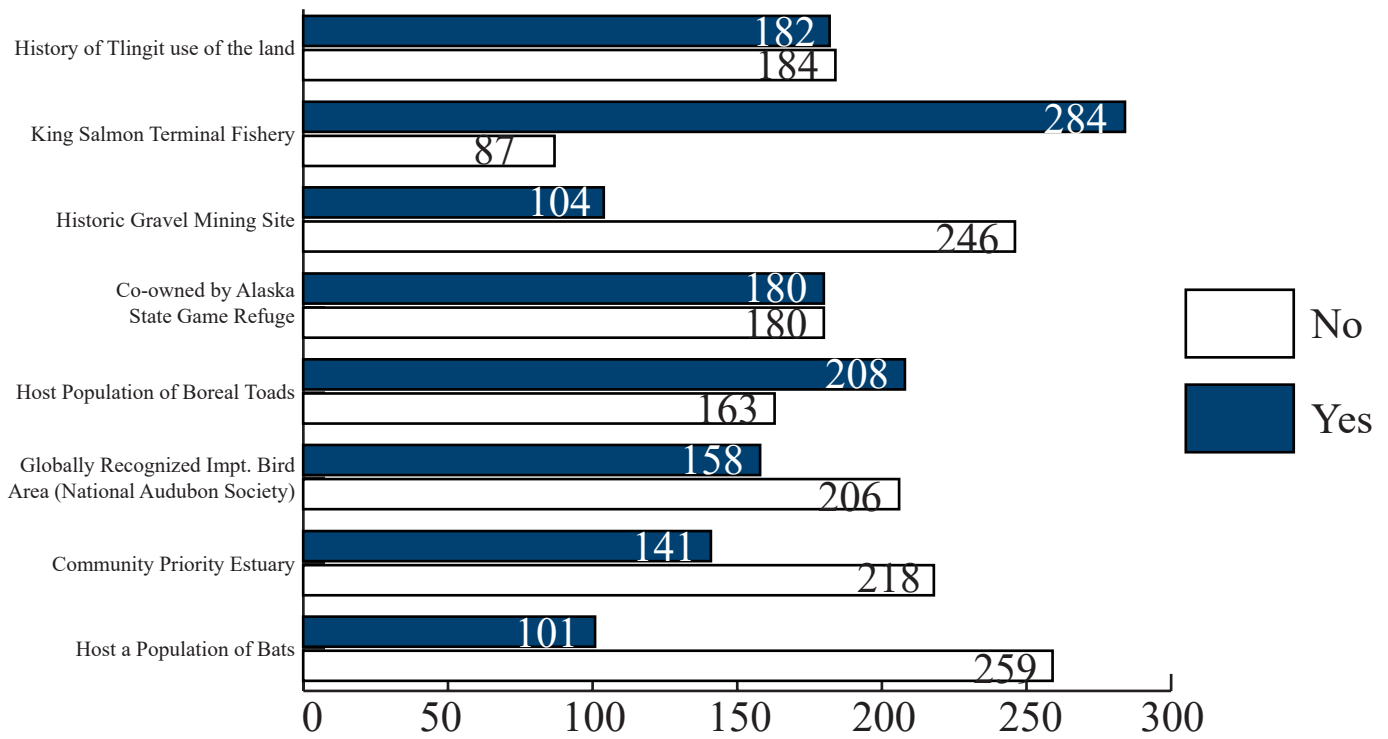
Question 12: What barriers are keeping children in your household from participating in these activities in this area? (check all that apply)

Responses: 73



Question 14: Did you know that Fish Creek Recreation Area is particularly unique because of the following characteristics? MARK ONLY ONE OVAL PER ROW \*\*Using a phone? Turn it sideways to see all options.\*\*

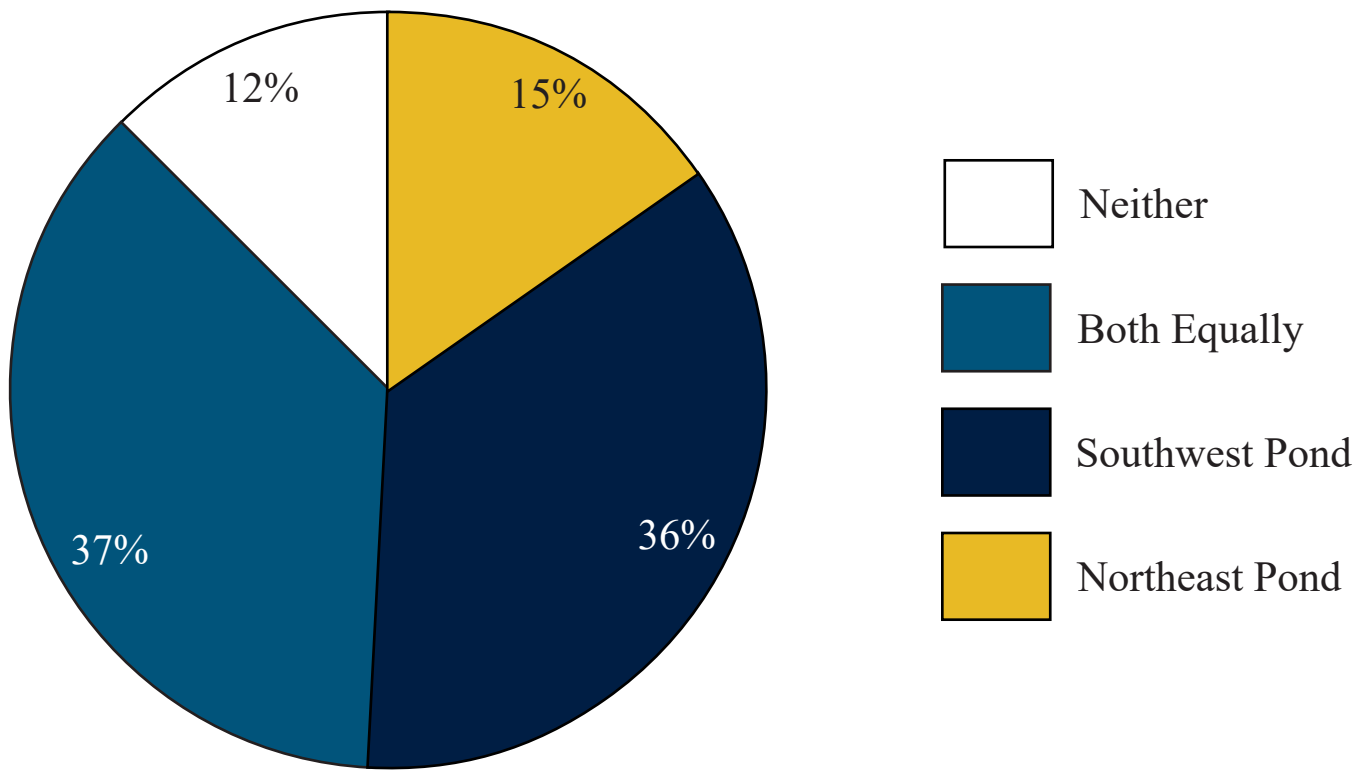
Responses: Undetermined





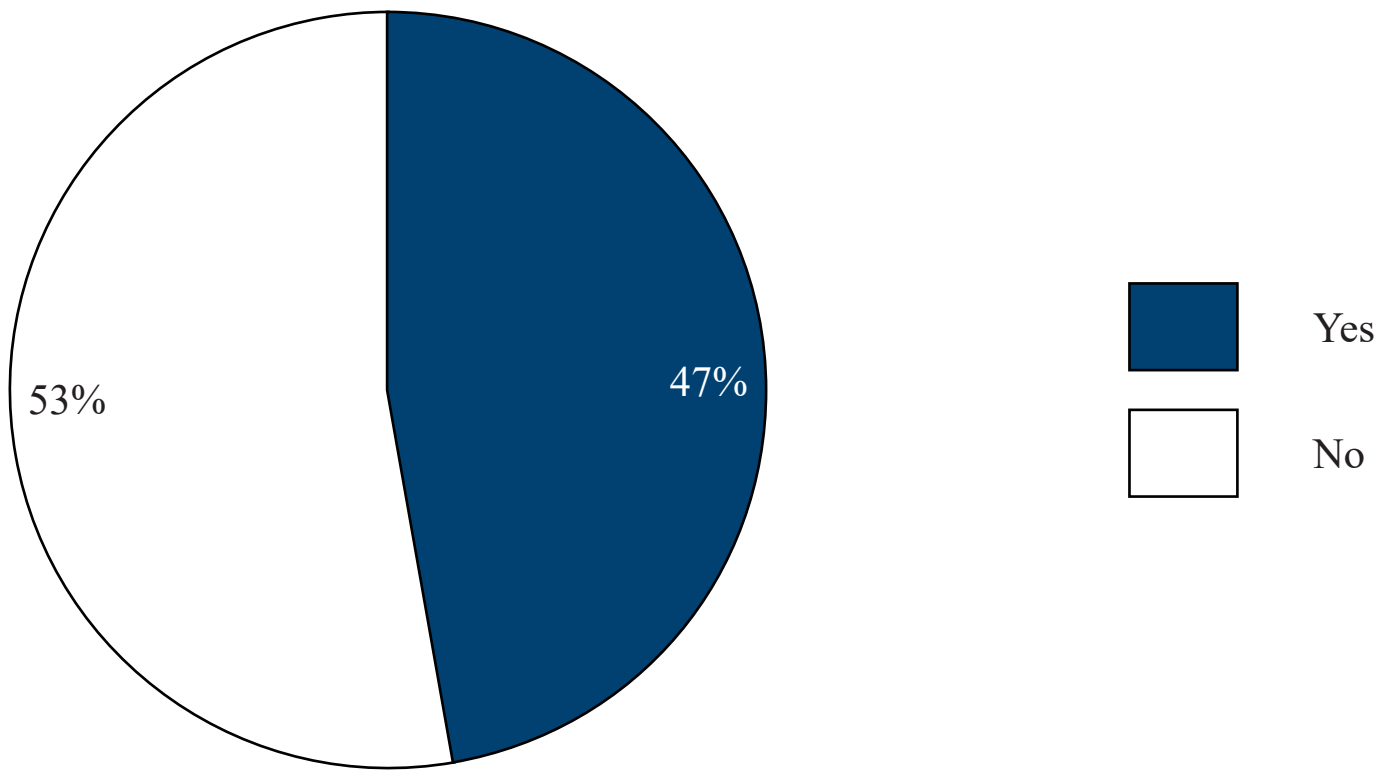
Question 15: What pond in the Fish Creek Recreation Area do you tend to engage with the most?

Responses: 382



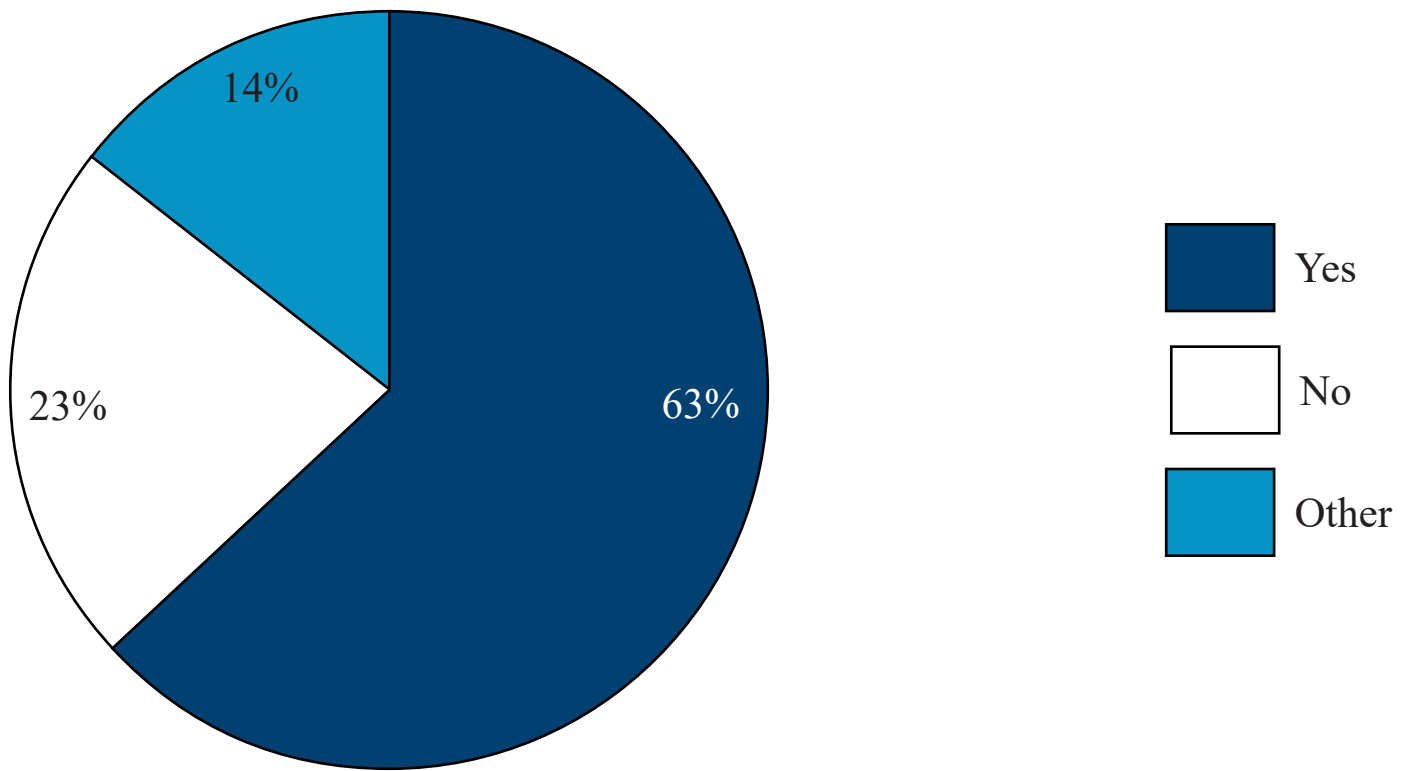
Question 16: Did you know that the two ponds in the recreation area are man made features from the 1960s and 70s?

Responses: 383



Question 17: Are you happy with the level of recreational and educational opportunities currently available for Fish Creek Recreation Area?

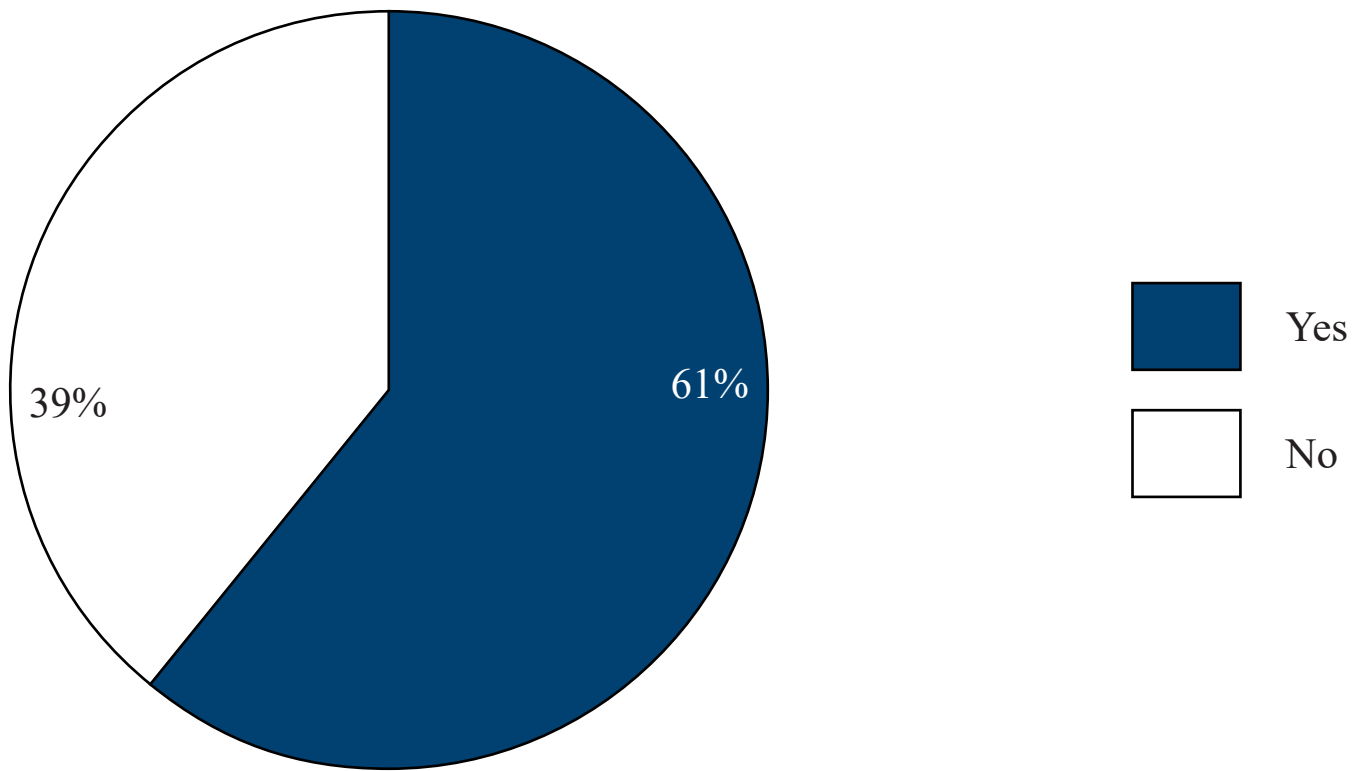
Responses: 377





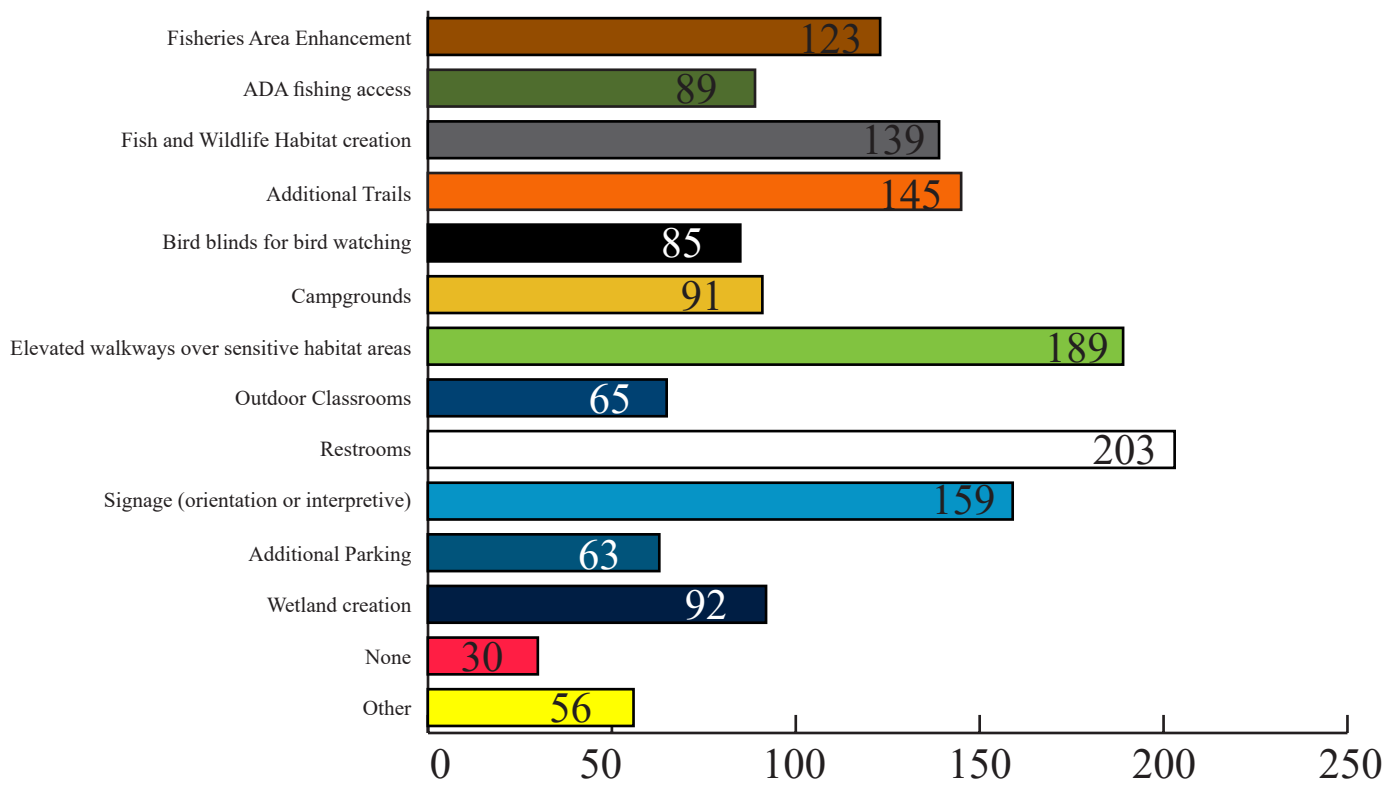
Question 18: Do you want more recreational and educational amenities in Fish Creek Recreation Area?

Responses: 373



Question 19: In the next 10 years, what types of specific investments in new habitat improvements, recreation amenities, education amenities or support infrastructure do you think should be made for Fish Creek Recreation Area? (check top three choices that apply)

Responses: 380



## SECTION 3:

## NARRATIVE COMMENTS

Below are all of the narrative comments received in the survey, organized and categorized by topic. Some of the comments may appear more than once if they pertain to multiple topics.

### Human Amenities Comments:

Access; toilets

Benches more family oriented

Benches. Bathrooms. Water?

Better facilities

Better trails. Bike paths.

Bike parking, more benches, better maintained trails

Bike trails

Build a playground

Community guided hikes

Develop it for ATV use

Foraging guides would be cool!

Hiking / walking/info guide as to what is available there

I would use this area a lot more for hiking and wildlife viewing if it had more and improved trails. I rarely come here because the main trail is through the camping area. It can be very unpleasant walking through that when people are camping. Walking off trail (other than the beach) can be very wet and mucky.

Improve trails for biking

Install disc golf baskets

More facilities near the water and mouth of Fish Creek

Offer more picnic tables in other areas of Fish Creek Rec Area; install some play equipment

running water

Trails could be expanded and improved.



## Restroom Comments:

A more stable restroom area. Sheltered area to seek refuge from bad weather

Benches. Bathrooms. Water?

Better access with closer outhouse to prevent polluting the area

Camping areas, small boat launch, public restroom, shelter area

Get a port a potty and have it serviced regularly.

It would benefit greatly from having a restroom or outhouse available to use. For safety reasons, we generally don't go when fish are running as we prefer to leave the area to the bears so they can fish undisturbed. We have multiple generations in our household and the picnic area close to the parking lot with wide even path provides stable ground for our elders and limited mobility family member the ability to sit and enjoy the area while other members of the family to enjoy the hiking and other activities the area offers.

Monitor camping and fishing more regularly, more port-a-potties, more bear proof trash cans, maybe a fish slime table. I just took my dog for a walk and there were dozens of people and fish guts and trash were everywhere.

More established camping area, with better toilets/washroom. If a couple cabins are possible, that would be lovely.

Outhouse, bike path, more picnic tables, maybe a structure for big picnics that is covered

Over crowded and messy, no bathroom amenities makes one wonder about human waste left behind, especially around the entrance island zone.

Provide restroom facilities, fix the potholes on the road and parking area, possibly pave the pathway leading to and around the picnic areas for ADA accessibility.

Restrooms

Restrooms, improved trail system, developed campsites, covered table areas

There needs to be bathroom facilities. There is heavy use during salmon snagging season and we avoid it because we do not feel safe.

Toilets

Trails that are better maintained and safer for wheelchair users. Better toilets. Move the rocks a couple of inches so a wheelchair can get to the trails more easily.

**Shelter or Picnic Comments:**

A more stable restroom area. Sheltered area to seek refuge from bad weather

Basic fishing services staging; bear-proof trash-cans; grills; tables

Benches more family oriented

Benches. Bathrooms. Water?

Bike parking, more benches, better maintained trails

build a small amphitheater for outdoor classroom, build covered picnic table, add play equipment

Build covered picnic areas or shelters

Camping areas, small boat launch, public restroom, shelter area

Camping sites/grills or fire pits would be awesome!

Covered picnic area

Covered picnicking areas and camping grounds.

Create more picnic and wildlife viewing spaces

Create multiple areas with picnic tables

Grade the road, picnic area and shelter

It would be nice to have a bit more amenities, like more garbage cans, picnic tables further out on the trail, etc.

It would benefit greatly from having a restroom or outhouse available to use. For safety reasons, we generally don't go when fish are running as we prefer to leave the area to the bears so they can fish undisturbed. We have multiple generations in our household and the picnic area close to the parking lot with wide even path provides stable ground for our elders and limited mobility family member the ability to sit and enjoy the area while other members of the family to enjoy the hiking and other activities the area offers.

More facilities near mouth of Fish Creek near the ocean. Facilities = campsites (maybe around corner in direction of Douglas boat landing) with picnic/BBQ fire rings near mouth of Fish Creek with views of Mendenhall Glacier and Chilkats

Offer more picnic tables in other areas of Fish Creek Rec Area; install some play equipment

Outhouse, bike path, more picnic tables, maybe a structure for big picnics that is covered

Picnic tables by the pond. more things to keep people around the pond

Provide restroom facilities, fix the potholes on the road and parking area, possibly pave the pathway leading to and around the picnic areas for ADA accessibility.

Restrooms, improved trail system, developed campsites, covered table areas

Shelters like Auke Rec is possible

wheelchair access/ sitting/rest areas

Yes! Have Trail Mix build a gravel trail all the way around the island at the end of the peninsula by Entrance Point, connecting it to the decent trail at the isthmus. And then put some benches or picnic tables along the outer edge, so we can sit and look at the view and our shoes don't get mucky.

Yes, build Lena beach style shelters! N Douglas rev areas have so few of these amenities.

Cabin or Camping Comments:

Add a dock and a cabin

Camping areas, small boat launch, public restroom, shelter area

camping infrastructure would be fun to see if not trashy

Camping sites/grills or fire pits would be awesome!

Campsites. Fishing information signs.

Covered picnicking areas and camping grounds.

I would use this area a lot more for hiking and wildlife viewing if it had more and improved trails. I rarely come here because the main trail is through the camping area. It can be very unpleasant walking through that when people are camping. Walking off trail (other than the beach) can be very wet and mucky.

I'd camp out there, but I don't know if there is designated places and access to bathrooms is a concern.

I'm not sure if camping facilities are available in the Fish Creek location, there may be now.

It would be a great spot for an actual campground that is maintained and kept clean

More established camping area, with better toilets/washroom. If a couple cabins are possible, that would be lovely.

More facilities near mouth of Fish Creek near the ocean. Facilities = campsites (maybe around corner in direction of Douglas boat landing) with picnic/BBQ fire rings near mouth of Fish Creek with views of Mendenhall Glacier and Chilkats

more obvious spots for camping

Not sure what land ownership boundaries are but a few raised gravel tent sites could be cool.

Public use cabin on the island

Restrooms, improved trail system, developed campsites, covered table areas

"Snagging season pretty much sucks. Sketchy people camping, trash everywhere, massive treble hooks flying through the air... only time of year that I steer clear of the area. Also, any "campers" at the "camp site" usually trash the place. No camping allowed would be best option. "

"The park has become a doggy toilet, dogs running freely off leash, pooping everywhere and being cleaned up. Dogs harassing fishing activities and camping. Dogs should be banned here because pet owners do not comply with leash laws and pet waste clean up. "

Yes, please have a paid designated camp area, educate public on litter impacts (bears)



## Dock or Fishing Comments:

Add a dock and a cabin

Basic fishing services staging; bear-proof trash-cans; grills; tables

Camping areas, small boat launch, public restroom, shelter area

Campsites. Fishing information signs.

Concern about the flinging of big lead fishing weights at the snagging pond.

Encourage fishermen to pick up trash, not leave fishing line, food, trash etc., prohibit building camp fires randomly around the pond. Prohibit camping. Check parking lot for abandoned vehicles, and check for vehicles staying too long with folks sleeping/living out of their cars.

Irresponsible anglers leaving a dirty site

"It would be so nice to put in a small seasonal floating deck so that people in wheelchairs could fish the pond with the three pipes on it. There is already an ADA-type road from the highway to the fishing area, but amenities for folks who use wheelchairs could be improved.

It would also be wonderful to put in a year round outhouse like the one at Eagle beach or Windfall Lake cabin (solar powered!). It's gross to think about how many people defecate in the woods because the port a potty is stinky or being used. A nicer one would be so good for this area.

It would be amazing to put a fish cleaning table out for people to use. This should be Ada accessible. I'm thinking a metal one, like at the Douglas Boat Ramp, with a bearproof container for fish waste only. Currently fish entrails are EVERYWHERE in late summer because people clean their fish everywhere around that pond. There is also SO much trash from fishermen.

It would be great if the muni bus would go all the way to the N Dgls Boat Ramp, and maybe include a stop at Fish Creek. Summer tourists would love it and it would be a nice way for everyone to get to experience Fish Creek at very low cost. "

Monitor camping and fishing more regularly, more port-a-potties, more bear proof trash cans, maybe a fish slime table. I just took my dog for a walk and there were dozens of people and fish guts and trash were everywhere.

"Snagging season pretty much sucks. Sketchy people camping, trash everywhere, massive treble hooks flying through the air... only time of year that I steer clear of the area. Also, any "campers" at the "camp site" usually trash the place. No camping allowed would be best option. "

"The park has become a doggy toilet, dogs running freely off leash, pooping everywhere and being cleaned up. Dogs harassing fishing activities and camping. Dogs should be banned here because pet owners do not comply with leash laws and pet waste clean up. "

There needs to be bathroom facilities. There is heavy use during salmon snagging season and we avoid it because we do not feel safe.

When people are snagging and leaving their trash behind

## Cleanliness Comments:

Areas for cleaning and disposing fish guts

Ban people leaving trash and remnants of fishing and hunting.

Better access with closer outhouse to prevent polluting the area

camping infrastructure would be fun to see if not trashy

Cleanliness

Cutback some slash

Encourage fishermen to pick up trash, not leave fishing line, food, trash etc., prohibit building camp fires randomly around the pond. Prohibit camping. Check parking lot for abandoned vehicles, and check for vehicles staying too long with folks sleeping/living out of their cars.

Irresponsible anglers leaving a dirty site

It would be nice to have a bit more amenities, like more garbage cans, picnic tables further out on the trail, etc.

"It would be so nice to put in a small seasonal floating deck so that people in wheelchairs could fish the pond with the three pipes on it. There is already an ADA-type road from the highway to the fishing area, but amenities for folks who use wheelchairs could be improved.

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Monitor camping and fishing more regularly, more port-a-potties, more bear proof trash cans, maybe a fish slime table. I just took my dog for a walk and there were dozens of people and fish guts and trash were everywhere.

More frequent trash service

More trash cans that are frequently emptied. Assurance that my car won't get broken into overnight.

Over crowded and messy, no bathroom amenities makes one wonder about human waste left behind, especially around the entrance island zone.

People safety concerns. Trashy people. Need conduct rules and enforcement.

Regulate the area or provide more services so less human trash and waste is left during fishing season.

"Snagging season pretty much sucks. Sketchy people camping, trash everywhere, massive treble hooks flying through the air... only time of year that I steer clear of the area. Also, any "campers" at the "camp site" usually trash the place. No camping allowed would be best option. "

"The park has become a doggy toilet, dogs running freely off leash, pooping everywhere and being cleaned up. Dogs harassing fishing activities and camping. Dogs should be banned here because pet owners do not comply with leash laws and pet waste clean up. "

The parking lot can be horribly pot holed at times. As far as safety concerns go, both the squatters who spend extended time with lived in vehicles parked in the parking lot and the riff raff that migrate over during fish runs that leave trash and smoldering fires along the pond side pose safety concerns that I often wish were not there.

There needs to be bathroom facilities. There is heavy use during salmon snagging season and we avoid it because we do not feel safe.

When people are snagging and leaving their trash behind

## Safety Concerns Comments:

"Snagging season pretty much sucks. Sketchy people camping, trash everywhere, massive treble hooks flying through the air... only time of year that I steer clear of the area. Also, any "campers" at the "camp site" usually trash the place. No camping allowed would be best option. "

Concern about the flinging of big lead fishing weights at the snagging pond.

Getting better but still feels sketch at parking area.

I avoid the area during duck hunting season; the gunfire torments my dog and makes me uncomfortable as well.

It would benefit greatly from having a restroom or outhouse available to use. For safety reasons, we generally don't go when fish are running as we prefer to leave the area to the bears so they can fish undisturbed. We have multiple generations in our household and the picnic area close to the parking lot with wide even path provides stable ground for our elders and limited mobility family member the ability to sit and enjoy the area while other members of the family to enjoy the hiking and other activities the area offers.

I've seen people shooting guns presumably at ducks while I'm hiking with my children. I don't feel like those things can work together safely. Keep out one or the other

I've seen people shooting guns presumably at ducks while I'm hiking with my kids. That feels dangerous. Ban one or the other from the area.

Keep squatters away

More so in the Spring time, I notice vehicles that are parked in the lot that are clearly abandoned or are being lived out of. I do not always feel safe if I am the only other person there.

More trash cans that are frequently emptied. Assurance that my car won't get broken into overnight.

Over crowded and messy, no bathroom amenities makes one wonder about human waste left behind, especially around the entrance island zone.

People safety concerns. Trashy people. Need conduct rules and enforcement.

Re gravel East Pond Trail. Remove the too many deadfalls off the trail.

The parking lot can be horribly pot holed at times. As far as safety concerns go, both the squatters who spend extended time with lived in vehicles parked in the parking lot and the riff raff that migrate over during fish runs that leave trash and smoldering fires along the pond side pose safety concerns that I often wish were not there.

There needs to be bathroom facilities. There is heavy use during salmon snagging season and we avoid it because we do not feel safe.

We don't feel safe around unleashed pets

## Parking, Access & Circulation Comments:

"It would be so nice to put in a small seasonal floating deck so that people in wheelchairs could fish the pond with the three pipes on it. There is already an ADA-type road from the highway to the fishing area, but amenities for folks who use wheelchairs could be improved.

It would also be wonderful to put in a year round outhouse like the one at Eagle beach or Windfall Lake cabin (solar powered!). It's gross to think about how many people defecate in the woods because the port a potty is stinky or being used. A nicer one would be so good for this area.

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It would be great if the muni bus would go all the way to the N Dgls Boat Ramp, and maybe include a stop at Fish Creek. Summer tourists would love it and it would be a nice way for everyone to get to experience Fish Creek at very low cost. "

better parking and access to the "pond."

Better trails. Bike paths.

Bike parking, more benches, better maintained trails

Bike racks and electric vehicle charging

Bike trails

Build a second bridge to Douglas

build the second crossing

Community guided hikes

Create a more welcoming and inviting area that is also accessible to all users

Drive too far

Grade the road, picnic area and shelter

i am unsure sometimes where private property extends to the shore line...

I would use this area a lot more for hiking and wildlife viewing if it had more and improved trails. I rarely come here because the main trail is through the camping area. It can be very unpleasant walking through that when people are camping. Walking off trail (other than the beach) can be very wet and mucky.

I'd prefer there to be more separation of user groups (it feels like I'm always in people's way out there)

Improve the roads



Improve trails for biking

Improve trails for biking

Improve trails for biking

improved parking in the fish creek parking lot

Improving the trails for bikes. It is hard to not run people over when on the main trail. Especially the one going out to the point

It would benefit greatly from having a restroom or outhouse available to use. For safety reasons, we generally don't go when fish are running as we prefer to leave the area to the bears so they can fish undisturbed. We have multiple generations in our household and the picnic area close to the parking lot with wide even path provides stable ground for our elders and limited mobility family member the ability to sit and enjoy the area while other members of the family to enjoy the hiking and other activities the area offers.

More biking trails!

More bus service out No Douglas

More so in the Spring time, I notice vehicles that are parked in the lot that are clearly abandoned or are being lived out of. I do not always feel safe if I am the only other person there.

Not many trails real good for biking

Outhouse, bike path, more picnic tables, maybe a structure for big picnics that is covered

Provide restroom facilities, fix the potholes on the road and parking area, possibly pave the pathway leading to and around the picnic areas for ADA accessibility.

public bus?

See my answer above about a possible side trail that walks people around the fish gut area of the south side of the lake.

That's a long bike ride from the Mendenhall Valley - I'm not sure if there is a wide, designated bike lane on the North Douglas highway; if not, that would be my biggest concern.

The parking lot can be horribly pot holed at times. As far as safety concerns go, both the squatters who spend extended time with lived in vehicles parked in the parking lot and the riff raff that migrate over during fish runs that leave trash and smoldering fires along the pond side pose safety concerns that I often wish were not there.

Trails that are better maintained and safer for wheelchair users. Better toilets. Move the rocks a couple of inches so a wheelchair can get to the trails more easily.

wheelchair access/ sitting/rest areas

## Environmental Comments:

The parking lot can be horribly pot holed at times. As far as safety concerns go, both the squatters who spend extended time with lived in vehicles parked in the parking lot and the riff raff that migrate over during fish runs that leave trash and smoldering fires along the pond side pose safety concerns that I often wish were not there.

Create more picnic and wildlife viewing spaces

Cutback some slash

I would ban dogs or at least dogs off leash-too much pressure on local wildlife particularly migrating birds.

More facilities near mouth of Fish Creek near the ocean. Facilities = campsites (maybe around corner in direction of Douglas boat landing) with picnic/BBQ fire rings near mouth of Fish Creek with views of Mendenhall Glacier and Chilkats

nope - noseums are so bad there the place is crap

Over crowded and messy, no bathroom amenities makes one wonder about human waste left behind, especially around the entrance island zone.

Re gravel East Pond Trail. Remove the too many deadfalls off the trail.

Yes! Have Trail Mix build a gravel trail all the way around the island at the end of the peninsula by Entrance Point, connecting it to the decent trail at the isthmus. And then put some benches or picnic tables along the outer edge, so we can sit and look at the view and our shoes don't get mucky.

**Trail Comments:**

Better trails. Bike paths.

Bike parking, more benches, better maintained trails

Bike racks and electric vehicle charging

Bike trails

Improve trails for biking

Improve trails for biking

Improve trails for biking

Improving the trails for bikes. It is hard to not run people over when on the main trail. Especially the one going out to the point maybe make the trails wider?

More biking trails!

Not many trails real good for biking

Outhouse, bike path, more picnic tables, maybe a structure for big picnics that is covered

Provide restroom facilities, fix the potholes on the road and parking area, possibly pave the pathway leading to and around the picnic areas for ADA accessibility.

Re gravel East Pond Trail. Remove the too many deadfalls off the trail.

Restrooms, improved trail system, developed campsites, covered table areas

See my answer above about a possible side trail that walks people around the fish gut area of the south side of the lake.

Trails could be expanded and improved.

Trails that are better maintained and safer for wheelchair users. Better toilets. Move the rocks a couple of inches so a wheelchair can get to the trails more easily.

Work with other entities (if any) to improve trail in from Fish Creek (Eaglecrest) road

Yes! Have Trail Mix build a gravel trail all the way around the island at the end of the peninsula by Entrance Point, connecting it to the decent trail at the isthmus. And then put some benches or picnic tables along the outer edge, so we can sit and look at the view and our shoes don't get mucky.

Education Comments:

build a small amphitheater for outdoor classroom, build covered picnic table, add play equipment

Campsites. Fishing information signs.

Community guided hikes

Foraging guides would be cool!

Hiking / walking/info guide as to what is available there

i am unsure sometimes where private property extends to the shore line...

I'm not sure if camping facilities are available in the Fish Creek location, there may be now.

I've seen people shooting guns presumably at ducks while I'm hiking with my kids. That feels dangerous. Ban one or the other from the area.

Not sure what land ownership boundaries are but a few raised gravel tent sites could be cool.

Post rules more clearly or have a website

spotlight the area

Yes, please have a paid designated camp area, educate public on litter impacts (bears)

Miscellaneous Comments:

Benches. Bathrooms. Water?

Deal with the homeless issue.

Deal with the homeless issue.

Develop it for ATV use

Encourage fishermen to pick up trash, not leave fishing line, food, trash etc., prohibit building camp fires randomly around the pond. Prohibit camping. Check parking lot for abandoned vehicles, and check for vehicles staying too long with folks sleeping/living out of their cars.

enforcement

I would ban dogs or at least dogs off leash-too much pressure on local wildlife particularly migrating birds.

I've seen people shooting guns presumably at ducks while I'm hiking with my children. I don't feel like those things can work together safely. Keep out one or the other

I've seen people shooting guns presumably at ducks while I'm hiking with my kids. That feels dangerous. Ban one or the other from the area.

Keep it local -- no tourists, please.

Keep squatters away

People safety concerns. Trashy people. Need conduct rules and enforcement.

Possibly broaden the non-duck hunting areas, or somehow focus the hunting to the seaward side of Entrance Point tombolo / spit. The estuarine area of the mouth of Fish Creek needs to be more for non-consumptive, non-dangerous use.

Prohibit it.

Regulate the area or provide more services so less human trash and waste is left during fishing season.

running water

"Snagging season pretty much sucks. Sketchy people camping, trash everywhere, massive treble hooks flying through the air...only time of year that I steer clear of the area.

Also, any "campers" at the "camp site" usually trash the place. No camping allowed would be best option. "

"The park has become a doggy toilet, dogs running freely off leash, pooping everywhere and being cleaned up. Dogs harassing fishing activities and camping. Dogs should be banned here because pet owners do not comply with leash laws and pet waste clean up. "



The parking lot can be horribly pot holed at times. As far as safety concerns go, both the squatters who spend extended time with lived in vehicles parked in the parking lot and the riff raff that migrate over during fish runs that leave trash and smoldering fires along the pond side pose safety concerns that I often wish were not there.

We don't feel safe around unleashed pets