

Outdoor Recreation (Population Level)

RBA: Part I, Quality of Life (Population) Result, Outdoor Recreation Summary

Quality of Life Result:

All residents and visitors of the state shall have access to and the ability to utilize natural settings and related outdoor recreational experiences.

Why Is This Result Important:

Recreation is an essential element of daily life. Recreation itself is a natural expression of human interests and needs seeking satisfaction during leisure time. Since personality needs manifest in many different ways, the opportunity to recreate out of doors must be necessarily broad, varied, flexible and inclusive. The ability to utilize public areas designed for outdoor recreation promotes healthy lifestyles.

Indicators 1a, b, and c (Access) --See Data Development Agenda

Indicator 2 (Utilization): Percentage of State Residents Having An Outdoor Recreational Experience In The Past Year: 93.8% (households).

Indicator 3a (Enjoyment): Percent Rating Their Outdoor Recreation Experience As Good or Better
--See Data Development Agenda

Indicator 3b (Enjoyment): Percent Rating Condition of Facilities as Good or Better:
--Local Facilities:

	Percent Assessing Condition As Good or Better	
	Local	State Parks
Citizens Survey	80.7%	82.4%
Avid Users Survey	75.3%	75.9%

Key Funding Information	*
Total Current Funding	16,245,000
Funding Distribution	
Total Federal Funds	
Total State Funds	14,745,000
Capital Projects Subtotal	1,500,000
Other Funding	
Percent of Total Funding Contracted to Third Parties	

***not comprehensive, does not include municipal grants or municipal and commercial contributions**

Story Behind The Baselines:

Unlike many states, Connecticut is host to very few federally- owned recreational areas. The State system includes state parks, forests, wildlife management areas, natural area preserves, public boat launches and undesignated open space lands that offer a wide assortment of facilities including trails, beaches, camping, and picnic areas, as well as a variety of other activities such as fishing, hunting and various winter sports. Municipal areas include local parks and preserves, multi-use areas, swimming facilities, golf courses, athletic fields and courts. In addition, many municipal school facilities include areas for outdoor play. Privately held but publicly accessible recreational resources include land trusts, a variety of institutionally held facilities, pay to play facilities and commercially available attractions such as golf courses and driving ranges. Despite Connecticut's relatively small size, it is home to resources of all types, owned, operated and managed by a vast collection of institutions.

While there is clearly substantial demand for and use of outdoor recreational resources, data on access, utilization, and enjoyment of those resources is limited. The baseline information presented here is primarily from a one-time data collection effort conducted as part of the development of a five year plan. More detailed and more frequent data are needed. There currently is very little information available on resources devoted to outdoor recreation at the local level, although those resources are undoubtedly much greater than those devoted at the state level.

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	<p>Action Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct annual surveys of Connecticut residents to determine the percentage of residents engaged in outdoor recreational activities and in the converse, determine whether those not responding to the survey engage in outdoor recreation activities;• Address the barriers to outdoor recreation identified by state residents;• Address the needs identified by municipal officials for improving outdoor recreation opportunities at the municipal level;• Improve public awareness of outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities throughout all demographic groups in the State; and• Create a "Google type" internet-based map with interactive search capability for public access and use in providing information and locations of recreational resources in Connecticut <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fully implement DEP's All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) policy with the requisite legislative actions necessary to address the unmet needs of the off-road vehicle users in Connecticut;• Increase funding for maintenance, information, development, acquisition of outdoor recreation facilities statewide;• Expand partnership with CT Historic Preservation Office to promote increased public access to historic sites and museums and enhance public programs relating to Connecticut's history; and,• Increase staffing to provide additional natural resource interpretive education programs; and <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Budget for and conduct routine surveys to better assess the quality and enjoyment of persons engaging in outdoor recreational activities in Connecticut particularly in areas where UCONN's CPR Citizen Demand Survey was not representative of the populous of Connecticut.
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Outdoor Recreation (Population Level)

Part I Outdoor Recreation -- (Population) Result

Quality of Life Result:

- All residents and visitors of the state shall have access to and the ability to utilize natural settings and related outdoor recreational experiences.

Why Is This Result Important?

- Recreation is an essential element of daily life. Recreation itself is a natural expression of human interests and needs seeking satisfaction during leisure time. Since personality needs manifest in many different ways, the opportunity to recreate out of doors must be necessarily broad, varied, flexible and inclusive. The ability to utilize public areas designed for outdoor recreation promotes healthy lifestyles.

Access

- a) % of residents that live within 1 mile of an outdoor recreational place—see data development agenda
- b) % of residents within 1 mile of 200 acre outdoor experience—see data development agenda
- c) % of publicly accessible outdoor recreation areas serviced by mass transit?—see data development agenda

Story behind the Baseline:

Measure 1a) Access: Percentage of residents within 1 mile of a publicly accessible outdoor recreational place

Connecticut's inventory of outdoor recreation facilities includes state, municipal, and privately held resources. Unlike many states, Connecticut is host to very few federally- owned recreational areas. The State system includes state parks, forests, wildlife management areas, natural area preserves, public boat launches and undesignated open space lands that offer a wide assortment of facilities including trails, beaches, camping, and picnic areas, as well as a variety of other activities such as fishing, hunting and various winter sports. In addition, some State assets are historic in nature and serve as tourist destinations, while others function as nature conservation areas, serving to protect and preserve habitats while offering opportunities for passive enjoyment. Municipal areas include local parks and preserves, multi-use areas, swimming facilities, golf courses, athletic fields and courts. In addition, many municipal school facilities include areas for outdoor play. Privately held but publicly accessible recreational resources include land trusts, a variety of institutionally held facilities, pay to play facilities and commercially available attractions such as golf courses and driving ranges. Despite Connecticut's relatively small size, it is home to resources of all types, owned, operated and managed by a vast collection of institutions.

In 2005 DEP contracted with the University of Connecticut's Center for Population Research (CPR) to count and assemble a database of recreational facilities in Connecticut. The unit of analysis employed is the discrete identifiable recreational place (DIRP). DIRPs are discrete in that each one is separate and distinct from all others and can be definitively located. Consequently in the state there are a finite and measurable number of DIRP's. Of Connecticut's 169 towns, 103 (61%) provided reliable feedback on the list of and attributes of their DIRPs. DEP validated the information on all DEP owned facilities. For 56 (33%) of the 66 towns, information was gathered by phone or through the mail. The final 10 towns (6%), varying in size and population from very small to among the state's largest, did not provide sufficient data in those ten cases. CPR imputed the number of components for the 10 municipalities by inserting the difference between the measured number of components and the average number of each component of the three most similar Connecticut towns by population and density.

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On this town-by-town basis, 4,291 DIRPs were inventoried with their components. DIRPs included not only state and municipal parks but also federal holdings, trails, school athletic facilities, playgrounds, boat launch sites, golf courses, land trust holdings, wildlife viewing areas, and commercial recreation sites. Easements obtained from private landowners for public recreational access were not counted. The most common recreational facility found in the state are playgrounds, with 3.1 playgrounds per 10,000 Connecticut residents. Baseball fields, trails, picnic areas, and fishing areas are provided at a rate of 2.0 or more per 10,000 residents or one per every 5,000 residents, while at least one basketball court, multi-use area, soccer field, and tennis court are available per 10,000 residents. Table 1 displays in descending order the relative availability of various recreational facilities to Connecticut's populous.

Facilities Statewide	Counts of DIRPs per 10,000 Population	Facilities Statewide	Counts of DIRPs per 10,000 Population	Facilities Statewide	Counts of DIRPs per 10,000 Population
1) Playgrounds	3.1	8) Soccer Fields	1.5	15) Golf Courses	0.4
2) Baseball/Softball Fields	2.9	9) Tennis Courts	1.1	16) Public Gardens	0.3
3) Hiking Trails	2.6	10) Public Boat Launches	0.8	17) Historic Sites	0.3
4) Picnic Areas	2.0	11) Winter Sports Areas	0.7	18) Hunting Areas	0.3
5) Public Fishing Areas	2.0	12) Public Beaches	0.5	19) Camp Sites	0.3
6) Basketball Courts	1.9	13) Football Fields	0.5	20) Volleyball Courts	0.2
7) Multi Use Trails	1.8	14) Swimming Areas	0.4		

Table 1

Data is not readily available to calculate the percentage of Connecticut's populous living within one mile of a publicly accessible DIRP. However, given the broad distribution of state, private and municipal DIRPs, particularly public schools with playgrounds, it is probable that the vast majority of the state's populous resides within one mile of a publicly accessible, outdoor recreation facility.

Measure 1b) Access: Percentage of residents within 1 mile of a 200 acre or greater publicly accessible outdoor recreational area

State and local governments, non-profit organizations, and commercial entities serve differing roles in meeting the recreational needs of the citizens of Connecticut. It is clear that the job of providing for different types of outdoor recreational activities falls differentially to municipalities, the state and the "other" open space land providers. As seen in Table 2, DEP provides Connecticut residents with the majority of recreational lands and, as such, is principally concerned with long-term acquisition of open space. This coincides with the state providing the greatest opportunity for hunting, fishing, camping, and trails. All of these activities are dependent on a significant land base. All state forests and state parks as well as other state properties under DEP's control are included as state-owned in Table 2. Municipal properties include recreational areas, schools, playgrounds, and municipally managed preserves. All institutionally-owned but publicly accessible recreational sites as well as commercial sites open to the public are grouped together under "Other". Municipal jurisdictions clearly provide the majority of resources devoted to sports fields, courts, public gardens, playgrounds, and swimming pools. Golf courses, for instance, are supplied most often by commercial entities. Multiple ownership groups supply some resources. Included in this shared resource contribution category are beaches (fresh and salt water swimming), boating access, camping, fishing, historic sites, trails, and winter sports.

DEP owns or substantially controls roughly 152 parcels of land in Connecticut that equal or exceed 200 acres of land or water in aerial extent. These areas are distributed among approximately 109

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municipalities throughout the state. Data on municipal and privately owned parcels of land larger than the 200 acre threshold is not available although there are many large tracts of land known to DEP that are privately held (e.g., Yale Forest at 15,000 acres, and Connecticut Light and Power lands at 12,000 acres) which exceed the 200 acre threshold and may be open for public use. Therefore, it is not possible to determine the percentage of Connecticut's population that lives within one mile of a publicly accessible recreational area of 200 acres or more with more information on those parcels that are not under DEP's control and geospatial information on the population of Connecticut.

Types of DIRPs	% of State Ownership	% of Municipal Ownership	% of Other Ownership
Baseball/Softball Fields	0.6%	90.5%	8.8%
Basketball Courts	0.5%	90.5%	9.0%
Beaches	10.2%	55.1%	34.7%
Boat Launch Areas	30.2%	36.8%	33.0%
Camp Sites	33.0%	25.0%	42.0%
Fishing Areas	26.3%	41.9%	31.8%
Football Fields	0.6%	87.7%	11.7%
Gardens	6.4%	69.7%	23.9%
Golf Courses	0%	24.0%	76.0%
Historic Facilities	24.2%	58.6%	17.2%
Hunting Areas	70.5%	2.3%	27.3%
Multi Use Areas	5.3%	83.3%	11.4%
Picnic Areas	12.4%	67.7%	19.9%
Playgrounds	0.4%	88.4%	11.3%
Soccer Fields	1.0%	90.3%	8.7%
Swimming Pools	1.5%	68.6%	29.9%
Tennis Courts	1.0%	91.4%	7.6%
Trails	18.2%	49.9%	31.9%
Volleyball Courts	0.0%	67.6%	32.4%
Winter Sports Areas	29.4%	52.1%	18.5%
Acreage	54%	26%	20%

Table 2

Story behind the Baseline –

Measure 1c) Access: Percentage of publicly accessible outdoor recreation areas serviced by mass transit

DEP believes there is no single source of data or information regarding outdoor recreation areas in Connecticut that are serviced by mass transportation. The percentage of publicly accessible outdoor recreation areas serviced by mass transportation systems can not be determined without that data.

Story Behind the Indicator-

Measure 2) Utilization: Percentage of State Residents Having an Outdoor Recreational Experience During the Past Year

Connecticut's residents enjoy a wide assortment of outdoor recreational activities. They visit state parks and forests, local parks and facilities, privately held properties, and commercial enterprises. During the course of the year, Connecticut's populous takes part in land-based, water-based, and winter activities. The level of participation indicates that the demand for outdoor recreation in Connecticut is high and is increasing. Data from the Citizen Demand Survey, conducted by the University of Connecticut's Center for Population Research, and the National Survey of Recreation and the Environment (NSRE), supplemented by data from the surveys of town officials and avid users that was gathered for the development of Connecticut's 2005-2010 SCORP were used to get a picture of the current participation rates of Connecticut residents and the degree to which their demand for outdoor recreational opportunities were being met. The facilities citizens visit were analyzed as to the demand for those facilities, the degree to which demand is being met, the most frequently cited obstacles to the enjoyment of those facilities, and the opinion of both citizens and officials as to the condition of those facilities, regardless of the management, maintenance, and ownership of the facilities.

The Citizen Demand Survey results show that almost all households surveyed (93.8%) participate in land-based outdoor recreational activities, 85.3% of households participate in water-based activities, 54.2% participate in winter activities and that a high percentage of Connecticut residents participate in a broad range of outdoor activities. The top ten activities in descending order of individual participation rates are: walking/running/hiking, beach activities, visiting historic sites or museums, swimming in freshwater or saltwater, swimming in pools, biking, bird and wildlife watching, sledding, camping, and canoeing/kayaking/tubing. The frequency with which residents engage in these activities varies widely. For example, a walker or runner likely practices that activity more frequently than a visitor to historic sites and museums makes such trips. To capture the variation in the frequency with which the various activities are engaged in, and thus to get a more accurate picture of recreational demand, a measure called the use frequency index (UFI) was developed. Loosely defined, the UFI is a product of the percentage of residents practicing an activity times a measure of the frequency of participation and is used in Table 3 to compare the intensity of participation across the 30 activities listed.

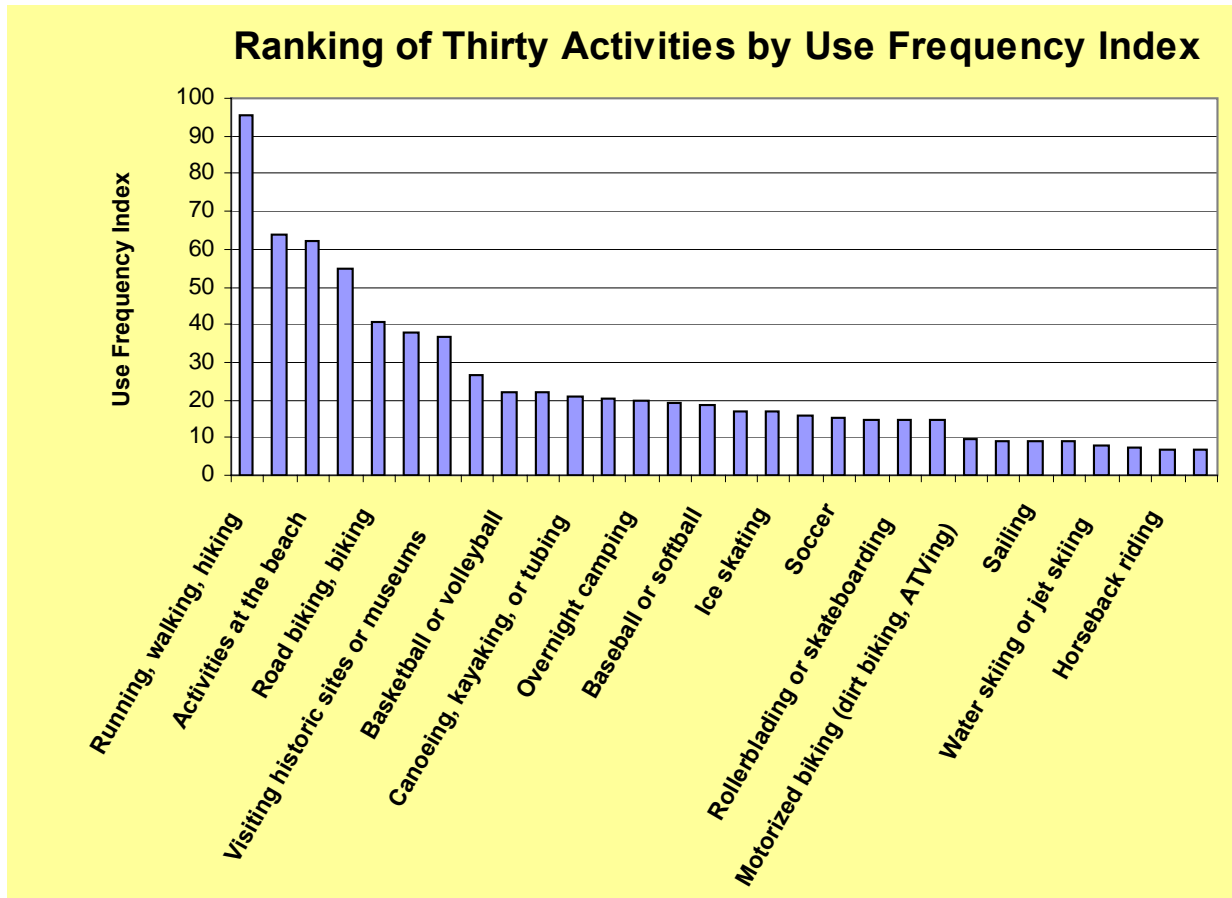


Table 3

According to the Citizen Demand Survey, 68% of Connecticut residents visited state parks within the previous year, and 77.1% visited local parks. Of the state park visitors, 88.3% also indicated they use local parks, while 80.2% of local park users also visited state parks. Residents were also surveyed to identify the factors which keep them from using state and local parks or which prevent them from using these facilities more often than they do. Of the various factors listed, ten reasons were cited by 10% or more of respondents. The two most common reasons given for preventing more frequent use of recreational facilities were not knowing what is being offered (36.3%) and not knowing the location of facilities (27.3%).

Reasons that Prevent the Respondent Household Population
from Using Outdoor Recreational Facilities and Activities More Often

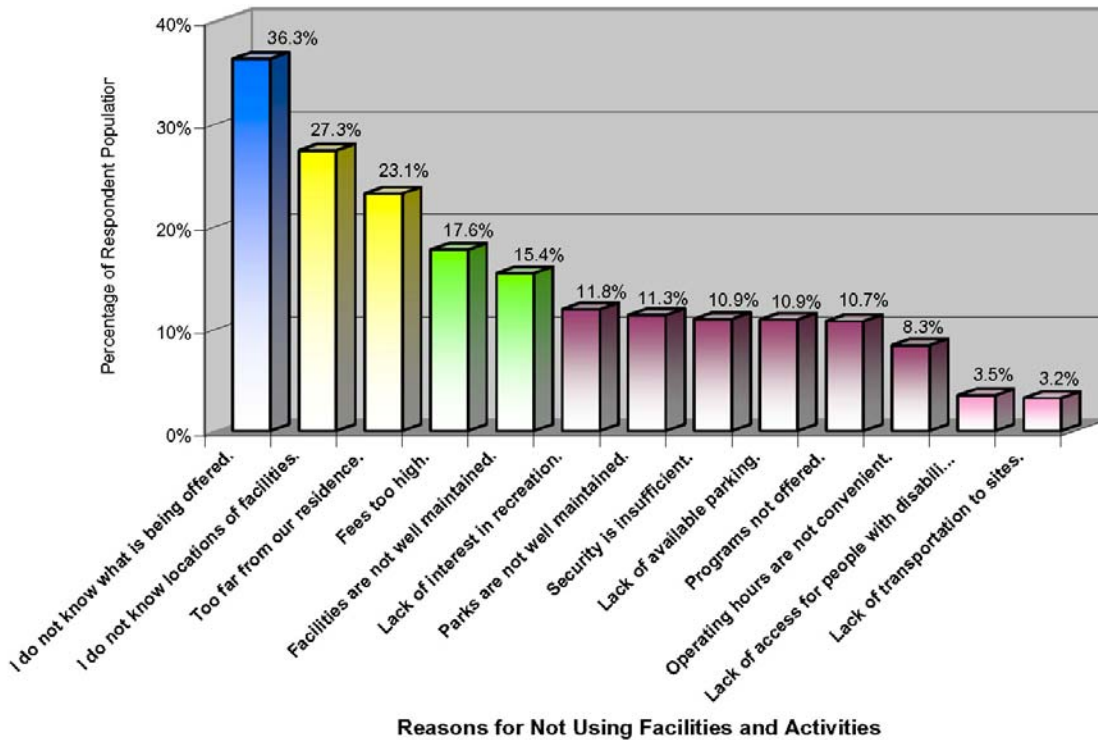


Table 4 highlights the most commonly cited reasons the survey respondents don't utilize recreational facilities more frequently. It is also important to note that the UCONN CPR survey had a 23% response rate, therefore these numbers are likely to be much higher and probably include many more reasons when one considers that 75% of survey recipients choose not to respond to the survey. That result probably indicates the presence of an information gap and the need for a more rigorous evaluation of public opinion on recreational resources in Connecticut.

Utilizing the data generated in 2005, the number of households engaging in some form of outdoor activity is high. However, without a more comprehensive data collection effort it is not feasible to determine the percentage of State residents who have had an outdoor recreational experience during the past year. The percentage probably exceeds 90%.

Story behind the Baseline: –

Measure 3) Enjoyment: Percent of Recreators Rating Their Experience Good or Better

DEP's Bureau of Outdoor Recreation knows of no direct metric or system of measurement to determine the degree of enjoyment or the relative quality of a person's experience while engaging in outdoor recreational activities in Connecticut. In the three surveys conducted by the UCONN's CPR for the 2005-2010 SCORP update (i.e., the Citizen Demand Survey, the Survey of Avid Users, and the Survey of Town Officials), citizens and officials in the state were asked to comment on the condition of outdoor recreational facilities both municipal and state and to identify their unmet recreational needs in Connecticut. For this assessment of a users quality of experience or level of enjoyment while engaging in outdoor activities their ratings of the condition of the facilities and use needs shall serve as a surrogate for recreational users quality of experience.

Figure 1 shows the results of both the Citizen Demand Survey and the Survey

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of Avid Users. In all four cases, the vast majority of Connecticut's residents who are avid outdoor recreationalists rated the condition of recreational facilities, whether in state parks and forests or in the local community, as "good" or "excellent".

Facility Conditions

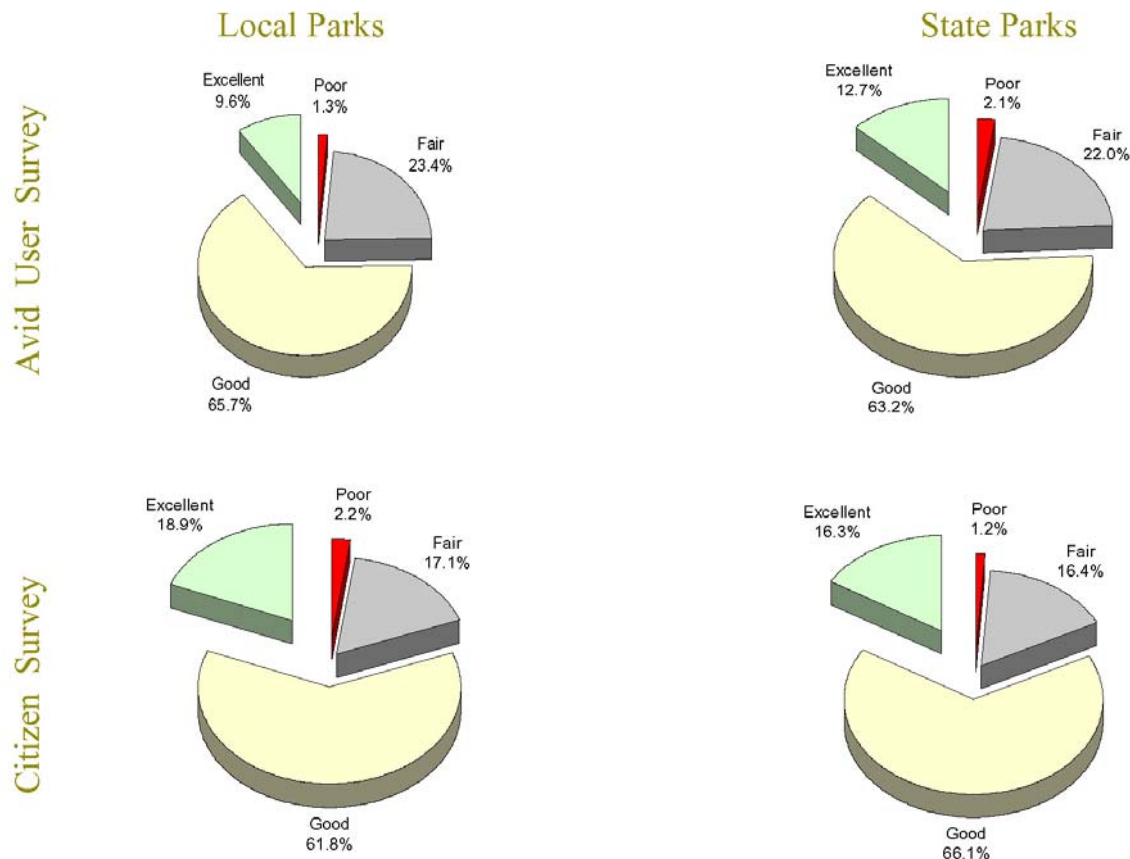


Figure 1

However, the national norm for citizen-rated conditions as reported by Leisure Vision, Inc. is higher than the ratings offered by avid users in Connecticut regarding Connecticut's recreational facilities. Nationally, the average citizen ranking of good or excellent is closer to 85%. In Connecticut, avid users ranked local parks at about 75% good or excellent and state parks at about 76%. The general population as represented by the Citizen Demand Survey reported a better opinion of the condition of the supply than did avid users. Citizens ranked local parks at slightly over 80% good or excellent and state parks at 82.4%. Although few respondents considered the condition to be poor, in every case, whether among avid users or the general population, between 17% and 20% see the recreational supply as in only fair or poor condition. It is fair to surmise that they would probably call for an improvement in condition of recreational throughout this state. While avid users are more critical of facility conditions than is the general population, town officials report even greater dissatisfaction with the condition of municipal facilities. One might assume that avid users, given their level and intensity of use, would be more familiar with park conditions than the average citizen might be, and therefore perhaps more able to accurately evaluate this parameter. Town officials should be even more intimately familiar with their recreational facilities given that they maintain and repair them, therefore one might speculate that their opinions as to conditions are in many ways more accurate.

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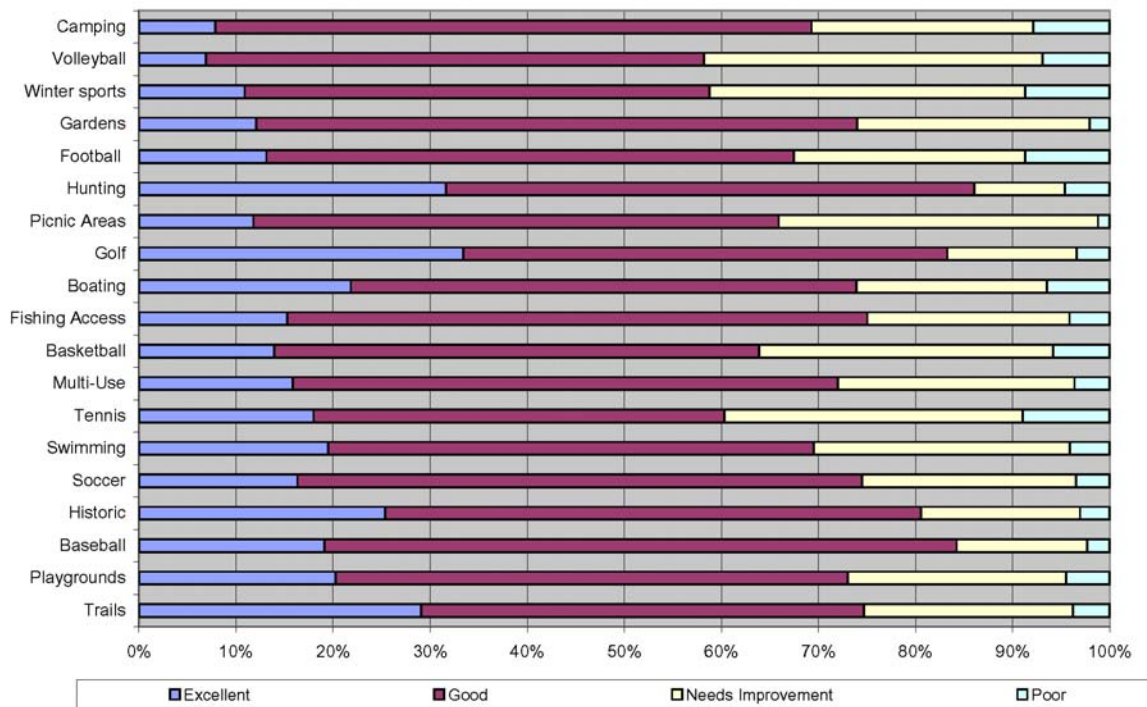


Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the rating of town officials on the overall condition of a range of municipal recreational assets. Town officials tend to rank trails, golf, hunting, and historic sites as particularly high in the excellent column. When combining those in excellent and good condition, the types of sites in the best condition according to town officials shifts slightly to include hunting, baseball and softball fields, golf, and historic sites. Those in the worst condition are courts for volleyball, tennis, and basketball, as well as areas for winter sports. In treating all nineteen component types equally and averaging the percentage of town officials that rate that average site as excellent or good, only 71.8% of town officials rated a typical resource as in excellent or good condition.

The rates at which Connecticut residents participate in outdoor recreational activities correlate well with their expressed need for various types of recreational facilities and areas and is probably an accurate reflection of their satisfaction with recreational facilities in Connecticut. As an element of the Citizen Demand Survey, residents were asked what types of facilities members of their households had a need for. The percentages of expressed need were then multiplied by the number of households in Connecticut to estimate the total number of households statewide with a need for a specific type of facility. Table 5 depicts the needs data extrapolated to all Connecticut households showing that over 800,000 households (62%) have a need for picnic areas, shelters, and playgrounds.

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Number of Respondent Households that Have a Need for Various Parks and Recreational Facilities

by number of households based on 1,346,073 households in the State of Connecticut

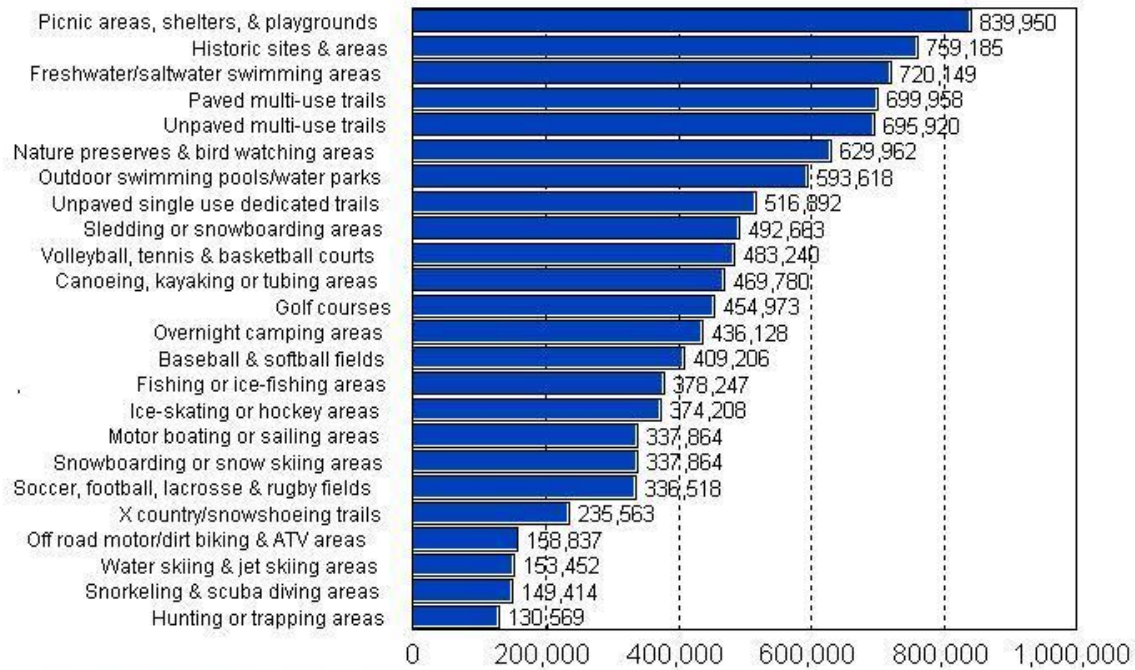


Table 5

For each activity, residents were asked to what degree their need for that facility is currently being met. The percentage of respondents indicating that their needs were being met at a level of 50% or less was multiplied by the total number of households in the state to determine the number of households with unmet needs for each type of facility. Based on this methodology, the largest unmet need as identified by survey respondents is for paved multi-use trails, with 413,000 households articulating a desire for that type of facility but finding their need to be 50% or more unmet.

How Well Parks and Recreational Facilities in Connecticut Meet the Needs of Respondent Households

by percentage of respondents that have a need for facilities

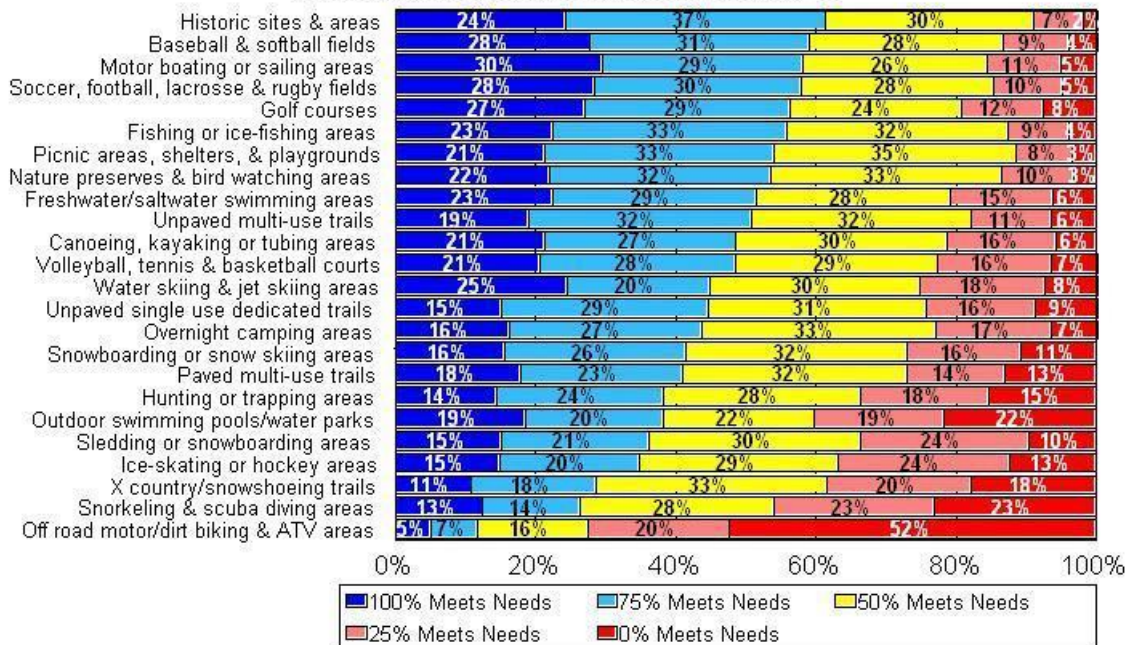


Table 6

The activity with the greatest percentage of unmet needs is off-road motorized biking and all terrain vehicle use. Fully 52% of those expressing a need for this type of facility said their need is completely unmet, with another 20% finding their need to be only 25% met. Outdoor swimming pools have the largest totally unmet need of any activity, equivalent to 130,000 households having their need for this type of facility completely unmet. Twenty-two percent of households having a need for outdoor swimming pools felt their need was completely unmet. This equates to a larger volume of totally unmet need than for motorized biking and ATV use because of the much larger number of households having a need for swimming pools than for dirt bike/ATV trails. Although survey respondents also indicated that they had significant levels of unmet needs for all other types of facilities, it is clear that picnic areas, playgrounds and shelters, all types of swimming facilities, and trails of all types are the greatest unmet facility needs of the people of Connecticut. When asked to list the three types of facilities most important to develop in local parks, the top five responses were paved multi-use trails, picnic areas/ shelters/ playgrounds, unpaved multi-use trails, swimming pools, and freshwater/saltwater swimming areas. The same question for state parks yielded the top five choices of picnic areas/shelters/playgrounds, unpaved multi-use trails, paved multi-use trails, freshwater/saltwater swimming areas, and nature preserves/bird watching areas.

Town officials were also asked to rate the sufficiency of their town's facilities for the types identified as most desired by the citizens. In the view of the ninety-five responding town officials, the supply of the most needed facilities identified in the Citizen Demand Survey is not sufficient. Fewer than 50% of town officials deem swimming facilities to be sufficient. Only 46% feel that they offer sufficient trails, with 45% saying their towns have sufficient picnic areas, and 40% having sufficient playgrounds. The town officials acknowledge the same needs as the citizens; however, they perceive a greater need for athletic facilities including baseball, multi-use, soccer, and football fields, as well as basketball and volleyball courts. They also see an immediate need for more winter sports facilities. The town officials were also asked how well they feel their facilities and programs

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meet the needs of various age groups. In general, the needs of children and families were felt to be adequately met, while those of adults (19-54) and older adults (55+) were felt to be less well met. Younger children (0-5) and teenagers were seen by town officials as having their needs poorly met. The demand for both state and local parks is high, and there is a considerable degree of overlap among the users of these parks.

From the responses to the UCONN's CPR Citizen Demand Survey it is apparent many households in Connecticut participate in outdoor recreational activities, their rating of the condition of the state's recreational facilities is well below the national average. In addition, there are many unmet needs for outdoor recreational facilities. Note, however there is no known direct measure available to directly determine the level of enjoyment experienced by persons engaging in outdoor recreational activities in Connecticut and the Citizen Demand Survey under-represented single person households, certain racial and ethnic groups and significantly under-represented lower income households in Connecticut.

Action Steps For Success

- Establish and improve mass transit service to all publicly accessible outdoor recreation facilities in Connecticut.
- Address the barriers to outdoor recreation identified by state residents;
- Address the needs identified by municipal officials for improving outdoor recreation opportunities at the municipal level;
- Improve public awareness of outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities throughout all demographic groups in the State; and
- Create a "Google type" internet-based map with interactive search capability for public access and use in providing information and locations of recreational resources in Connecticut.
- Fully implement DEP's All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) policy with the requisite legislative actions necessary to address the unmet needs of the off-road vehicle users in Connecticut;
- Increase funding for maintenance, information, development, acquisition of outdoor recreation facilities statewide;
- Expand partnership with CT Historic Preservation Office to promote increased public access to historic sites and museums and enhance public programs relating to Connecticut's history; and,
- Increase staffing to provide additional natural resource interpretive education programs

Partners

Federal

U.S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration
National Parks and Recreation Association

State

Legislature/General Assembly
Office of Policy and Management/Connecticut's Conservation and Development
Policies Plan
Commission on Culture and Tourism/Historic Preservation and Museum Division
Department of Public Health
Department of Transportation
Department of Agriculture
Connecticut Forest and Park Association
Utility Companies (Electric, Sewer and Water)
Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association
Audubon Society
Sierra Club
Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC)
The Nature Conservancy
Friends of Connecticut State Parks

Municipal

169 Municipalities: Parks and Recreation and Public Works Departments
Municipal and Regional Land Trusts

For-profit Recreation Providers

(e.g., beaches, swimming pools, playgrounds and courts, historic sites, golf courses, batting cages, ski areas, marinas, commercial campgrounds, miniature golf courses, outdoor shooting ranges, paintball courses, amusement parks, race tracks, party-fishing boats, riding stables, paddlesport guides)

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Appendix A: Data Development Agenda

Measure 1a) Access: Percentage of residents within 1 mile of an outdoor recreational place

- Complete DIRP data collection efforts for the municipalities not completed as part of DEP's 2005 SCORP development process;
- Verify the accuracy of the DIRP data collected by UCONN's CPR with regard to all state and municipal facilities;
- Expand data collection efforts to include all private and commercial providers of publicly accessible outdoor recreational facilities;
- Complete DEP's Protected Open Space Mapping Project (POSM) to catalog all protected open space in Connecticut and the completion of geodatabase of protected, publicly accessible open space lands in Connecticut;
- Establish a protocol for municipalities and other organizations to update the POSM database when protected, publicly accessible open space is acquired, and is officially recorded as such on the municipal land records;
- Digitize spatial and geographic information for all DIRP's identified in Connecticut;
- Integrate DIRP digitized geographic data with geographically digitized population data for Connecticut; and,
- Assess the percentage of Connecticut's populous to DIRP's within a 1 mile range

Measure 1b) Access: Percentage of residents within 1 mile of a 200 acre outdoor recreational experience

- Complete the Actions and Data Needs recommendations under Measure 1a;
- Integrate the digitized geographic data of DIRP's of 200 acres or more with geographically digitized population data for Connecticut; and,
- Assess the percentage of Connecticut's populous to DIRP's of 200 acres or more within a 1 mile range

Measure 1c) Access: Percentage of publicly accessible outdoor recreation areas serviced by mass transit

- Complete the Action and Data Needs recommendations under Measures 1a and 1b;
- Survey the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) and municipal mass transportation providers inclusive of public schools and senior citizen service agencies on the availability and scheduling of those systems that service DIRP's in Connecticut; and,

Measure 2) Utilization: Percentage of State Residents Having an Outdoor Recreational Experience During the Past Year

- Conduct annual surveys of Connecticut residents to determine the percentage of residents engaged in outdoor recreational activities and in the converse, determine whether those not responding to the survey engage in outdoor recreation activities;

Measure 3) Enjoyment: Percent of Recreators Rating Their Experience Good or Better

- Budget for and conduct routine surveys to better assess the quality and enjoyment of persons engaging in outdoor recreational activities in Connecticut particularly in areas where UCONN's CPR Citizen Demand Survey was not representative of the populous of Connecticut.

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Usage:

- Percent of youth having an outdoor recreational experience within the last year

Satisfaction:

- Percent of Outdoor Recreators that rate their outdoor experiences as good or better

Outdoor Recreation (Population Level)

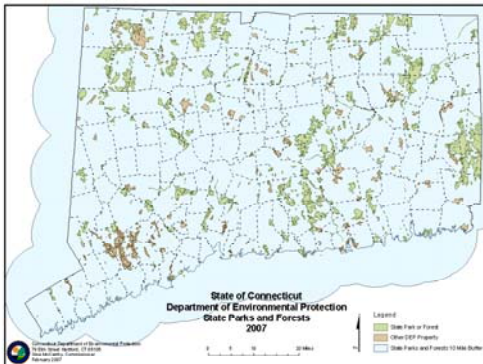
Outdoor Recreation—Department of Environmental Protection Parks System Connecticut Appropriations Committee RBA Template Part II, Program/Agency/System Accountability Summary

Program Purpose:

To provide a broad spectrum of natural resource based outdoor recreational experiences for all segments of Connecticut's citizenry, and to maximize public access to DEP's outdoor recreational facilities and the opportunities offered

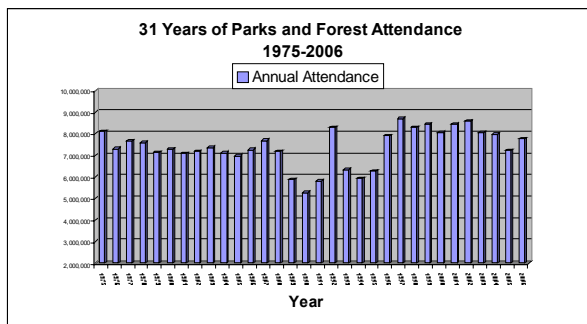
Program: **State Parks System**

Performance Measure 1 (Access): Percentage of Residents Living Within 10 Miles of a State Park or Forest Recreation Area: 100%



Performance Measure 2a (Utilization): Percent CT Residents Using State Parks Within The Last 12 Months: 69.7%.

Performance Measure 2b (Utilization): Number Using State Parks Annually: est. 7.5 million



Key Budget Information	State Parks Division*
Total Current Program Year Funding	\$16,320,000
Funding as Percent Of All Funding for Program Result	100%
Program Funding As Percent Of Total Agency Budget	8.6%
Funding Distribution	
Total Federal Funds	\$0
Total State Funds	\$16,320,000
Capital Projects	\$2,175,000
Subtotal	
Other Funding (Fees)	\$3,000,000
Percent of Total Current Funding Spent on Direct Service	\$14,145,000
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties	\$1,500,000

*** see budget detail for budget information on ENCON police**

Story Behind The Baselines

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) operates and maintains 105 State Parks and Natural Preserves, 32 State Forests and Recreation areas, approximately 95 Wildlife Management Areas, 120 state maintained boat launches, and hundreds of miles of hiking trails, greenways and multi-use trails. All off Connecticut's residents with the exception of several small areas in the lower sections of Fairfield County are within a 5 mile radius or an approximate 10 minute drive of a DEP open space property.

Connecticut's State Park and Forest Recreation areas currently host approximately 7 million to 7.5 million visitors annually. Note that counting visitors to DEP's facilities is an inexact science based upon a combined assessment of paid admissions at museums (3 facilities), tickets sold at facilities with parking charges (11 facilities that charge both on weekdays and weekends, and 13 facilities that charge on weekends only) and an estimate of vehicles

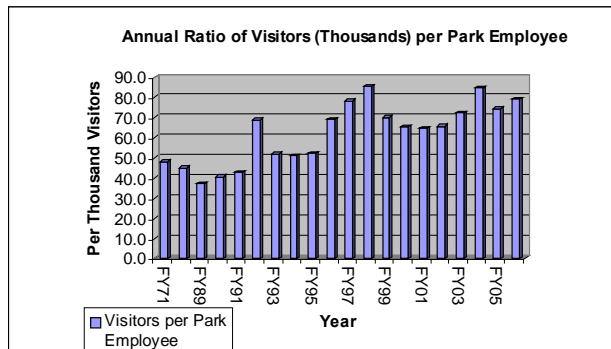
Outdoor Recreation (Population Level)

Performance Measure 3 (Enjoyment): Percent survey respondents indicating they were satisfied or very satisfied with their state park experience: 76%

Performance Measure 4a: Percentage of Parks Actively Managed

	Total	Staffed	Percent Staffed
Parks With Year Round Car Entry	26	19	73%
Memorial Day To Labor Day	105	39	37%
Labor Day to Memorial Day	79	0	
State Forests	32	4	13%

Performance Measure 4b: Ratio of Visitors To Park Employees



parked at "No charge" facilities (79 State Parks, 29 State Forest Recreation Areas and 96 Wildlife Management Areas). At facilities that assess parking charges as well as those where there is no charge for parking, State Park staff estimate the number of cars that frequent state recreation areas on a daily basis. The estimate is then multiplied by four (assumption of four people per vehicle) and that product is used to calculate a total number of visitors to DEP's recreational areas on an annual basis. It is probable the actual number of individuals visiting State Park and Forest Recreation areas is higher than the more recent estimates suggest. Visitorship to outdoor recreation areas is largely weather-dependant. A recreation season in which the weekend weather is sunny and dry, attendance escalates (e.g., 2002, 2003, 2004). When the converse is true, attendance suffers (e.g., 2005). This correlation holds true in all venues, both public and private, where there are outdoor attractions

The 105 State Parks are divided into Parks that are open and operate year-round, those that open and operate seasonally and those that are managed year round as walk-in or natural area parks with minimal or no amenities provided. Twenty-six (26) State Parks are open for car entry on a year-round basis, nineteen (19) of these facilities serve as duty stations or State Park management unit headquarters and therefore State Park Division staff are typically present during normal working hours on a year-round basis. During the summer recreational season, Memorial Day to Labor Day, thirty-nine (39) State Parks are staffed and operated during normal Park operating business hours (8:00AM to sunset).

Turning The Curves: What do you propose to do over the next two years and why?

- Explore barriers to visiting State Parks among communities that don't utilize or under utilize the State Park system and address those issues;
- Continue to promote DEP's "No Child Left Inside" initiative and DEP's "Great Park Pursuit" to encourage greater utilization of

Outdoor Recreation (Population Level)

	<p>DEP's lands;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide customer service training to all State Park Division staff;• Provide additional naturalist and interpretative programs to educate and help visitors to become better stewards of the parks and forests;• Provide Park Welcome Centers with information and materials that orients visitors to the Park or Forest and encourages exploration and participation in programs that will help maximize the enjoyment derived from their visit
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Part II Outdoor Recreation -- Program Template State Parks System

Program Goal/Purpose:

- **To provide a broad spectrum of natural resource based outdoor recreational experiences for all segments of Connecticut's citizenry, and to maximize public access to DEP's outdoor recreational facilities and the opportunities offered**

Summary of Agency/System

- **The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) State Parks Division administers the planning, development, operations, programs and maintenance of the lands and facilities under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner including Connecticut's State Parks, State Forests, Wildlife Management Areas, Natural area Preserves as well as undesignated lands for year-round outdoor recreational use; these lands are managed to provide as broad an array of recreation opportunities as is feasible inclusive of campgrounds and group camping areas; swimming areas; salt water beaches; hiking and multiple-use trails; historic and cultural sites; state boat launch access areas; picnic shelters and interpretative programs on historic sites and natural resources; as well as providing for the protection for unique natural resources through their preservation as a state preserve. The State Parks Division also issues special use licenses and short and long term leases that promotes the public's use of DEP managed lands.**

Contribution to Population Result

- **The State Park System is an essential component of Connecticut's inventory of outdoor recreation facilities. DEP maintains roughly one-half of open space lands in Connecticut. Since DEP as Connecticut's principal advocate of outdoor activities such as of hunting, fishing, camping, and hiking as an agency it must give priority to the acquisition of large tracts of open space is a critical requisite for these activities. As such, DEP remains very active in acquiring and preserving open space land for public enjoyment, recreation and environmental protection. Note, the constant loss of privately held open space land to new residential and commercial development will continue to bring more and new pressures to publicly-held open space land. These pressures will escalate in the future.**

Key Funding Information

Key Budget Information	State Parks Division	ENCON Police¹
Total Current Program Year Funding	\$16,320,000	\$600,000
Funding as Percent Of All Funding for Program Result	100%	10%
Program Funding As Percent Of Total Agency Budget	8.6%	0.2%
Funding Distribution		
Total Federal Funds	\$0	\$0
Total State Funds	\$16,320,000	\$600,000
Capital Projects Subtotal	\$2,175,000	(N/A)
Other Funding (Fees)	\$3,000,000	(N/A)

¹ ENCON Police logged 20,252 hours patrolling Connecticut's State Parks and Recreation areas in 2006.

Percent of Total Current Funding Spent on Direct Service	\$14,145,000	\$600,000
Percent of Total Current Funding Contracted to Third Parties²	\$1,500,000	(N/A)

Access

- a) % of residents that live within 10 miles of a State Park

Story Behind the Baseline:

Measure 1) Access: Percentage of Residents that Live within 10 Miles of a State Park

Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) operates and maintains 105 State Parks and Natural Preserves, 32 State Forests and Recreation areas, approximately 95 Wildlife Management Areas, 120 state maintained boat launches, and hundreds of miles of hiking trails, greenways and multi-use trails. DEP owns in fee or substantially controls approximately 251,000 acres of open space lands representing about 8% of Connecticut's total land mass. Section 23-8(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes established an open space acquisition goal for the state of 320,576 acres or 10% of the state's land area.

Figure 1 is a statewide map of DEP's 251,000 acres of land holdings inclusive of lands protected through acquisition development rights and protective easements.

² Statutory responsibility for all major capital projects belongs to Department of Public Works: \$1,500,000 in Fy06

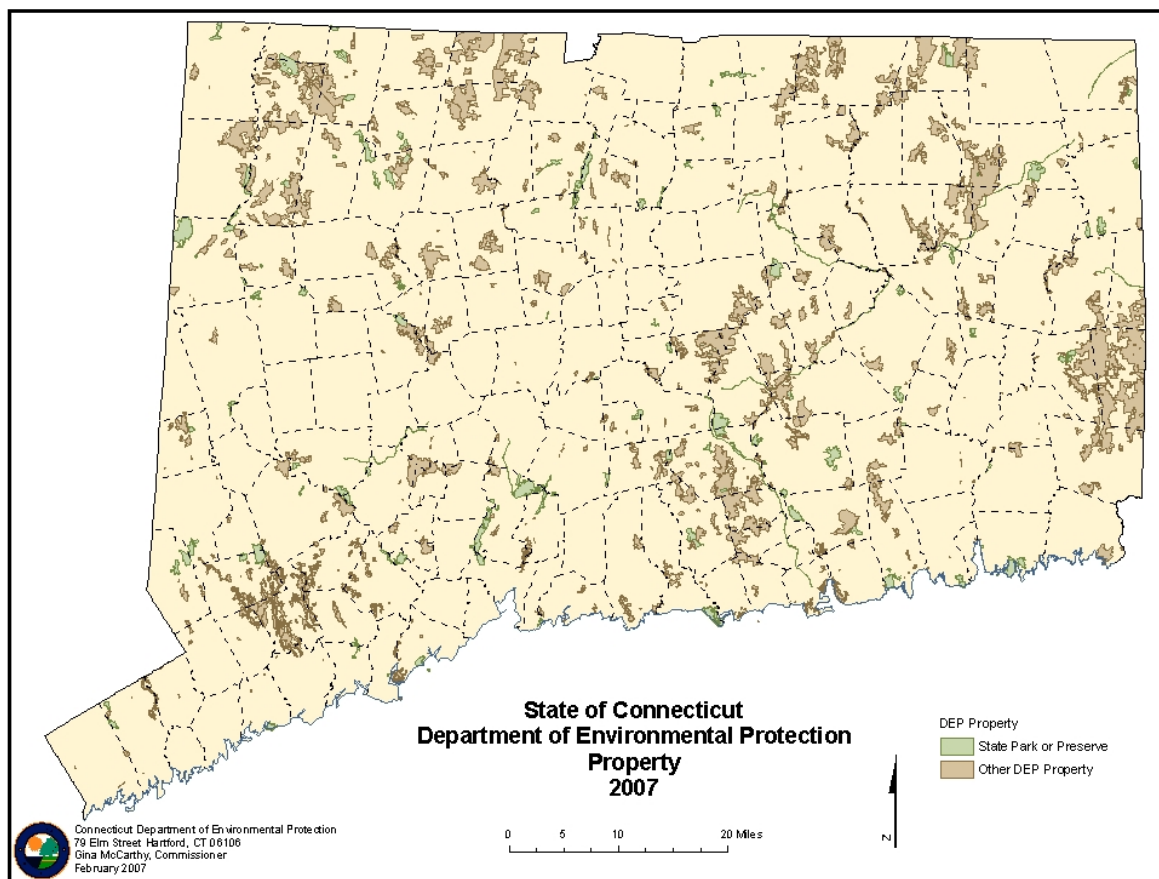


Figure 1

Figure 2 shows the area (shaded) of the state that is within a 10 mile radius of a State Park or State Forest Recreation Area. Based upon the shading, one can conclude that 100% of Connecticut's populous lives within 10 miles of a State Park or State Forest Recreation area.

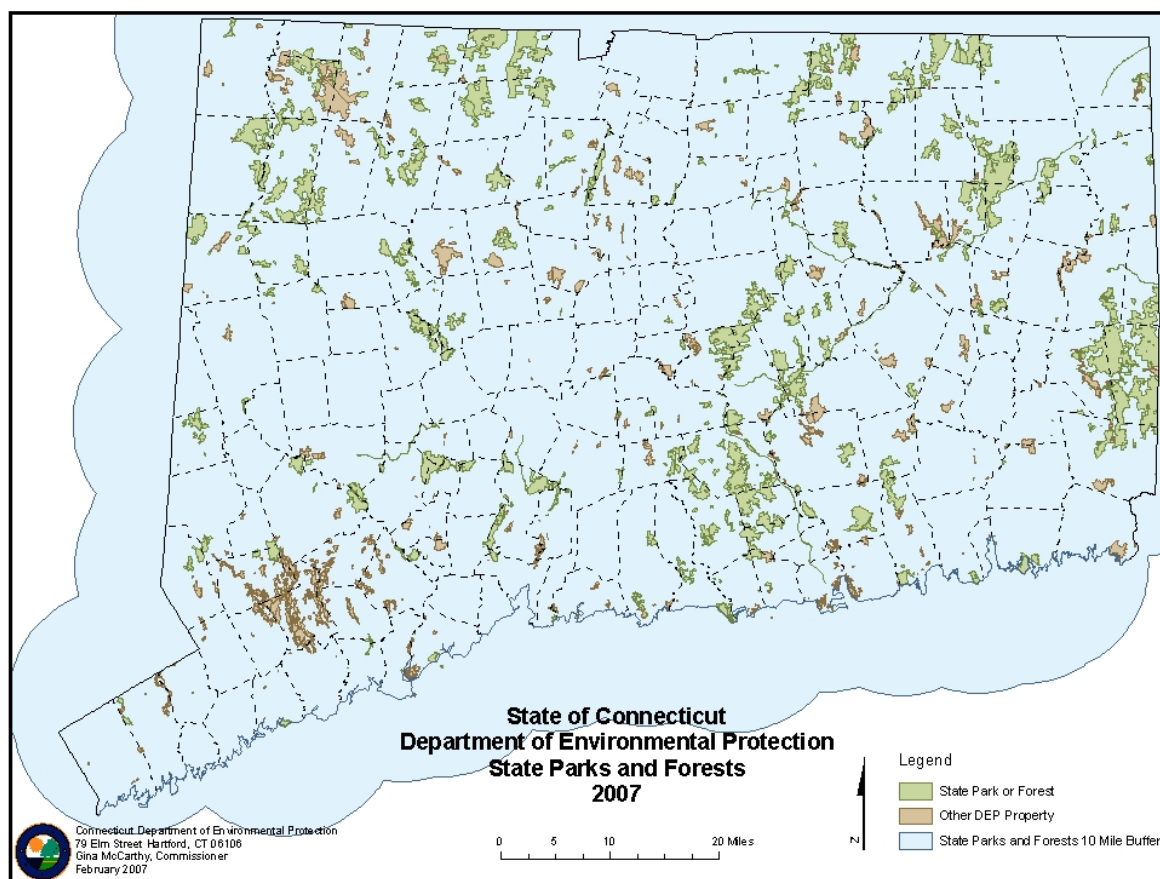


Figure 2

Figure 3 shows the area of the state that is within a 5 mile radius of a State Park, State Forest Recreation or Wildlife Management Area. Based upon the shaded areas, all of Connecticut's residents with the exception of several small areas in the lower sections of Fairfield County are within a 5 mile radius or an approximate 10 minute drive of a DEP open space property.

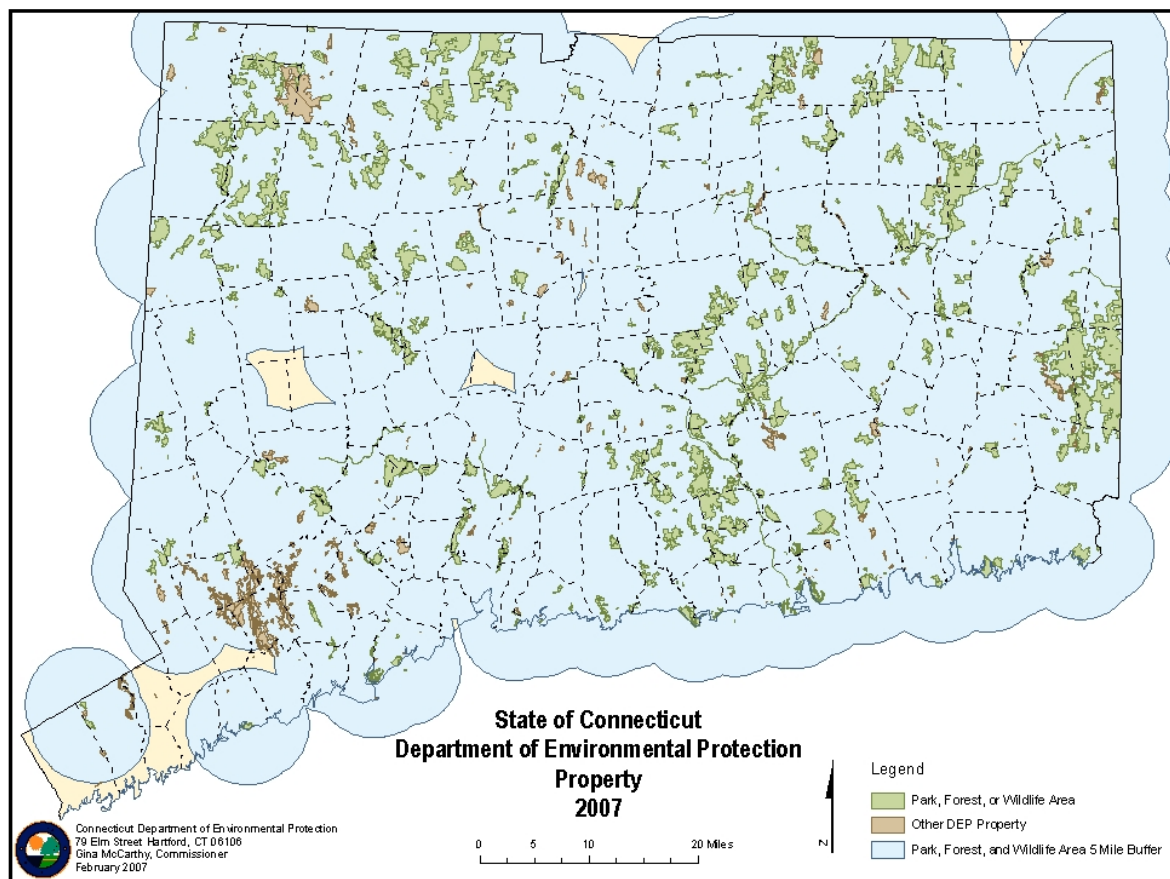


Figure 3

Utilization

- a) % of residents using a park at least once during the last year
- b) Number of visitors per year

Story Behind the Baseline

Measure 2a) Utilization: Percentage of Residents using a State Park at least once during the last year

Responses to the Citizen Demand Survey conducted by UCONN's Center of Population Research in 2005 found that State Parks and forests were visited by over two-thirds of Connecticut's households that responded to the survey. (Note that the survey under-represented minority and low income households in Connecticut.) Figure 1 shows the percentage of the state's households that do or do not visit state parks as projected from the survey results.

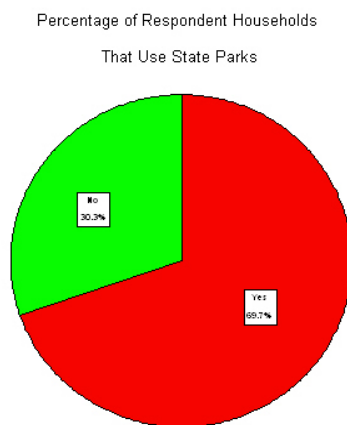


Figure 1

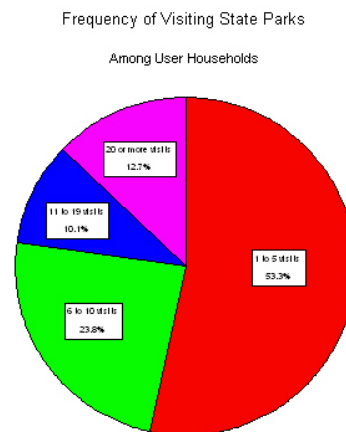


Figure 2

Within this sample, UCONN's CPR reported that 69.7% of households that used state parks accounted for 68% of individuals that responded to CPR's survey. Given that the percentage of household use and individual use are virtually identical, it appears as though there is no difference in demand for state park by household size.

In Figure 2, the demand for state parks was further broken down by CPR by looking at the number of times per year these households visit the parks.

Among those households that visited state parks, about half (53.3%) visited those parks between once and five times per year. Nearly one quarter of households surveyed went to state parks between 6 and 10 times a year or approaching once a month. The remaining quarter visited state parks at least once a month, with 12.7% visiting more than 20 times per year. Again generalizing to the entire population based upon this survey, over 115,000 households representing 300,000 people (slightly less than 10% of the state

population) visited state parks at frequencies of over 20 times per year. It can be concluded that the demand for the State Parks in Connecticut is very high.

Many people report frequent use of both state and local parks. Of those who used state parks, 88.3% also indicated that they used local parks. Of those who used local parks, 80.2% also indicated using state parks. This overlap points to two findings. State and local recreational facilities form a complementary recreational system, each supplying resources that citizens utilize in order to fulfill their entire suite of outdoor recreation needs. Secondly, the demands of Connecticut's populous are varied. Although some people may only practice one or two activities, many engage in multiple recreational activities and visit different facilities to participate in a broader array of activities.

Story behind the Baseline-

Measure 2b) Utilization: Number of Visitors Per Year

As shown in Figure 3 Connecticut's State Park and Forest Recreation areas currently host approximately 7 million to 7.5 million visitors annually. Note that counting visitors to DEP's facilities is an inexact science based upon a combined assessment of paid admissions at museums (3 facilities), tickets sold at facilities with parking charges (11 facilities that charge both on weekdays and weekends, and 13 facilities that charge on weekends only) and an estimate of vehicles parked at "No charge" facilities (79 State Parks, 29 State Forest Recreation Areas and 96 Wildlife Management Areas). At facilities that assess parking charges as well as those where there is no charge for parking, State Park staff estimate the number of cars that frequent state recreation areas on a daily basis. The estimate is then multiplied by four (assumption of four people per vehicle) and that product is used to calculate a total number of visitors to DEP's recreational areas on an annual basis. It is probable the actual number of individuals visiting State Park and Forest Recreation areas is higher than the more recent estimates charted in Figure 3.

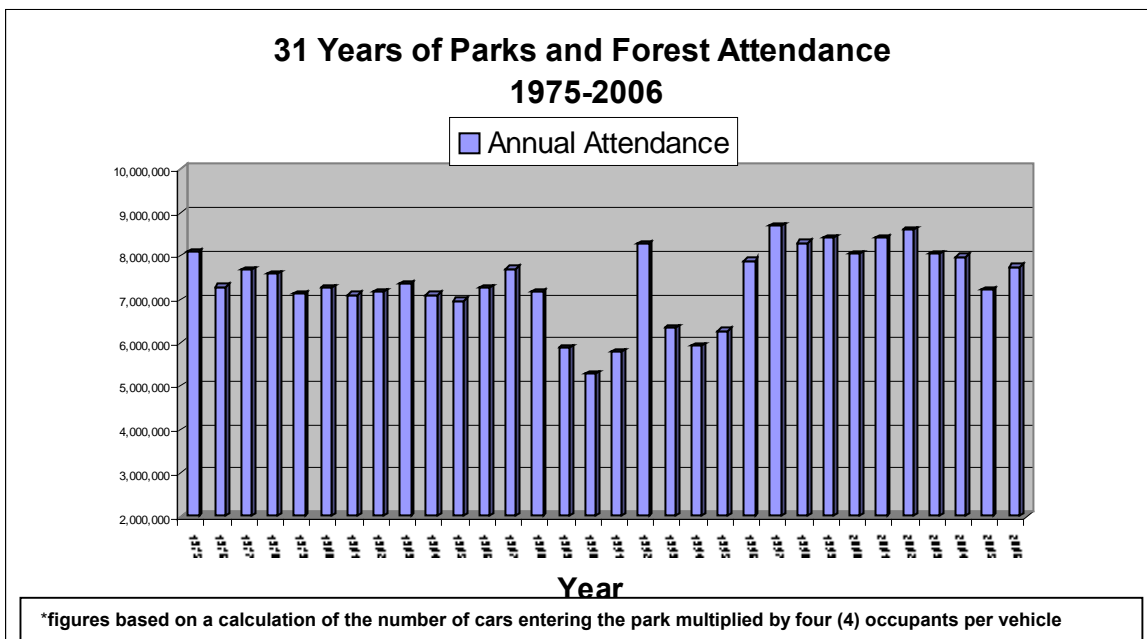


Figure 3

Estimates of resident versus non-resident visitors can be extrapolated from the twenty-four (24) State Park facilities that charge for parking. In so far as State Parks has established differential parking fees for residents and non-residents therefore parking receipts data can be polled for out-of-state visitors. Table 1 outlines the number of parking passes sold to in-state and out-of-state day users as well as the season parking passes sold. Table 2 provides statistics of both in-state and out-of-state camping reservations at the State Park campgrounds. Note the percentages of reservations align fairly well with parking receipts for in and out-of-state visitors. Using those figures, approximately 20% to 30% of our state park visitors are from out-of-state or roughly 1.4 million to 2.0 million annually.

In-State vs. Non-Resident Use of Ct State Parks

2003-2006

Year	R/NR	# Sold	Percent	Revenue \$	Percent
2003					
Tickets	R	182,721	79%	\$1,332,891	70%
	NR	49,429	21%	\$582,816	30%
Passes	R	10,450	98%	\$418,000	97%
	NR	199	2%	\$11,940	3%
2004					
Tickets	R	181,321	80%	\$1,336,644	71%
	NR	46,112	20%	\$539,077	29%
Passes	R	11,928	98%	\$477,120	96%
	NR	289	2%	\$17,340	4%
2005					
Tickets	R	201,119	77%	\$1,493,883	68%
	NR	59,085	23%	\$707,473	32%
Passes	R	12,684	98%	\$507,360	96%
	NR	322	2%	\$19,320	4%
2006					
Tickets	R	183,541	78%	\$1,343,504	69%
	NR	51,242	22%	\$603,821	31%
Passes	R	12,807	98%	\$512,280	96%
	NR	316	2%	\$18,960	4%

Table 1

CT vs. Non-Resident Camping Figures by Year
(derived from reservation numbers)**2003-2006**

Year	CT Residents	Percent	Non-Residents	Percent	Total
2003	15,832	71%	6,333	29%	22,165
2004	18,265	72%	6,970	28%	25,235
2005	18,915	73%	6,894	27%	25,809
2006	18,070	71%	7,226	29%	25,296

Table 2

Visitorship to outdoor recreation areas is largely weather-dependant. A recreation season in which the weekend weather is sunny and dry, attendance escalates (e.g., 2002, 2003, 2004). When the converse is true, attendance suffers (e.g., 2005). This correlation holds true in all venues, both public and private, where there are outdoor attractions.

It is also interesting to note that in times of national crisis, people turn to the out-of-doors as a place to find solace. Immediately following the 9-11-01 attacks on the United States, National, State and Local Park Directors universally reported much higher-than-normal attendance at the parks and recreation areas. This phenomenon speaks to the importance of the parks and forests in helping to ground and heal persons affected by these events and the state's responsibility to provide and protect the places where the public can fulfill their need to recreate out-of-doors when a national tragedy curtains travel on a global scale.

Indicator 3. Enjoyment

- a) % of visitors (or complaints per 100 visitors) filing a complaint with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) after visiting a park
- b) Percent of customers visiting a State Park that were moderately/very satisfied with their experience

Story Behind the Baseline: -

Measure 3a) Enjoyment: Percent of Visitors (or Complaints per 100 Visitors) Filing a Complaint with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) after visiting a park

With approximately 7 million to 7.5 million visitors each year, the State Parks Division strives to make every visitor experience a safe and enjoyable one. Toward that end, the Division developed a “Customer Survey Card” which is made available to State Park and Forest Users to provide comment on their experience, the programs and facilities they encounter. The card may be dropped off at any park office or mailed directly to the State Parks Division Director. The Division's contact information is also made available to park visitors to express their opinion. In total, the State Parks Division receives approximately 200 to 500 comment cards and letters from visitors critiquing their visits to State Park facilities annually. Approximately 5% of those critiques or roughly 25 per year are severely critical of the conditions found at a facility or identify specific complaints regarding their visit. Most complaints relate to restrooms, trash, the behavior of other patrons or water quality. It is highly probable that not all comments are captured. Visitors may express displeasure verbally to a staff person or, may leave and not return without commenting at all.

The State Parks Division takes all comments seriously and attempts to implement immediate action to correct problems or deficiencies as identified by visitors or field staff alike. To the extent possible, visitor complaints are corrected as soon as they are received. Repairs that require significant funding may take longer. Despite the “tired” appearance of some of the park facilities, park users appreciate the responsiveness of the staff in receiving their concerns and addressing them. This customer service ethic has helped promote user satisfaction and a loyal visitorship to DEP’s recreation areas.

Story Behind the Baseline -

Measure 3b) Enjoyment: Percent of Customers Visiting a State Park that were Moderately/Very Satisfied with their Experience

In an effort to capture a better body of information from visitors, the Connecticut Commission on Culture and Tourism engages a marketing research firm to perform Visitor Intercept Surveys. A limited number of these surveys are performed throughout the recreation season from April through October at State Parks. Approximately, eight (8) days of surveys per year, two each season (spring, summer and fall) are conducted at a variety of inland and shoreline State Parks. From the 1,280 interviews conducted at State Parks since 2002, 1% of visitors surveyed were “very dissatisfied” and 10% were “somewhat

dissatisfied”. Conversely 76% were "satisfied" while 13% were "very satisfied" with their visit to that State Park facility. Some of the concerns were out of the parks control such as, water quality of Long Island Sound and others were legitimate complaints about restroom cleanliness or, not enough staffing at beaches.

Another source of information relating to visitor satisfaction can be found in a study performed in 2003 by Clough Harbor Assoc., which evaluated the State Park infrastructure and staffing. A “Visitor Perspective” was done as part of the study. Clough Harbor staff that had never visited a Connecticut State Park or Forest conducted this piece of the study. Their task was to visit the park and provide their honest first impression views of the park experience. Anecdotal information from that study indicated the following: restroom buildings were old and in poor condition, some buildings did not meet current building codes for people with disabilities, some recreation areas were not welcoming (lacked signage and visitor centers) and moving about the park was not intuitive.

Indicator 4. Management

- a) % of parks actively managed
- b) Number of Visitors Per Staff Person

Story Behind the Baseline-

Measure 4a) Management: Percent of Parks Actively Managed

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) actively manages every area under its control to varying degrees inclusive of all 105 State Parks and Natural Preserves, the 32 State Forest Recreation Areas, the 95 Wildlife Management Areas, 120 boat launches, and hundreds of miles of hiking trails, greenways and multi-use trails. The basic management and maintenance activities performed by State Park staff include trash pickup, road and parking lot maintenance, signage and gate maintenance, where available, bathroom/outhouse cleanup, repair and maintenance.

By design, the most frequently used and popular areas receive more maintenance attention than others. For instance, the 105 State Parks are divided into Parks that are open and operate year-round, those that open and operate seasonally and those that are managed year round as walk-in or natural area parks with minimal or no amenities provided. Twenty-six (26) State Parks are open for car entry on a year-round basis, nineteen (19) of these facilities serve as duty stations or State Park management unit headquarters and therefore State Park Division staff are typically present during normal working hours on a year-round basis. During the summer recreational season, Memorial Day to Labor Day, thirty-nine (39) State Parks are staffed and operated during normal Park operating business hours (8:00AM to sunset.) In the thirty-nine (39) Parks, the State Parks Division operates fifteen (15) campgrounds offering over 1400 campsites and nineteen (19) designated swimming areas.

During the period from Labor Day to Memorial Day the seventy-nine (79) Parks not accessible by car are open for walk-in or ski-in recreational use.

Presently, all thirty-two (32) State Forests are open to recreational pursuits on a year round basis and are operated similarly to walk-in State Parks. The State Parks Division maintains four (4) management unit offices in Connecticut's State Forests and State Park staff are usually present in those areas during normal work hours. Figure 4 shows the State Park Management Units with their unit names as currently established statewide.

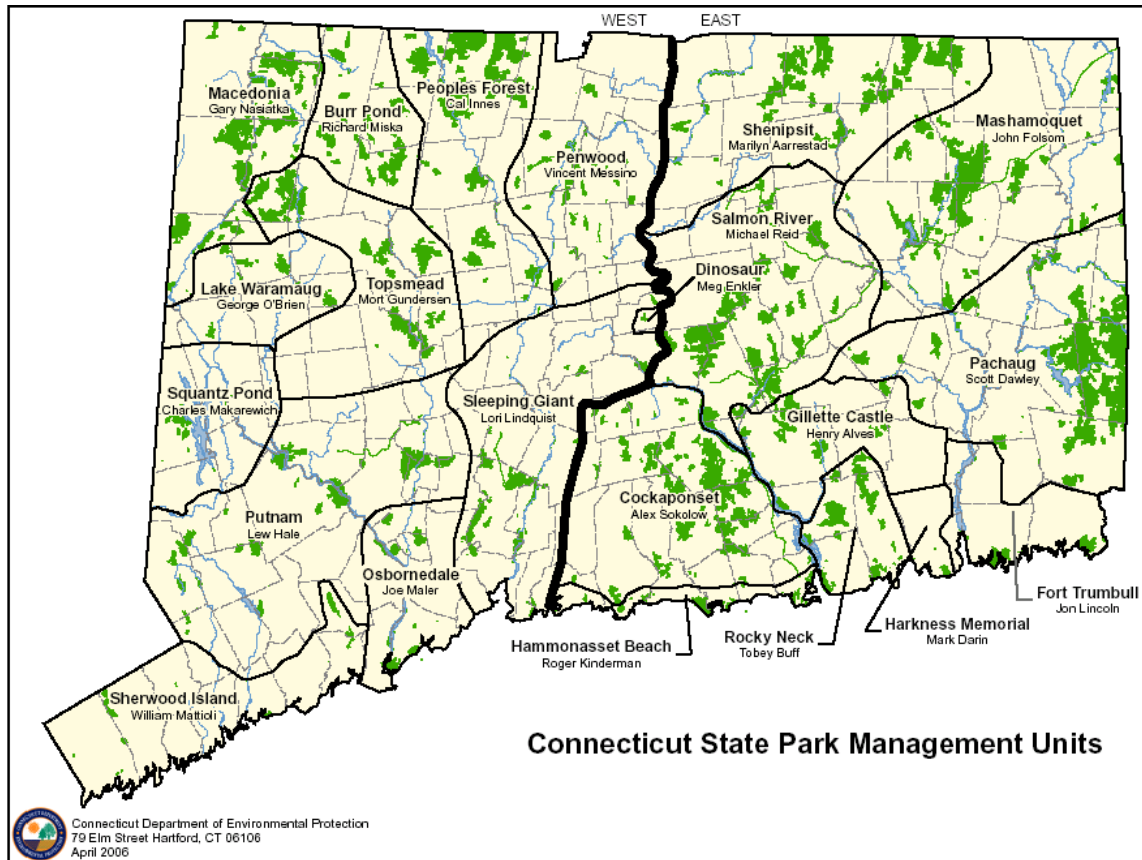


Figure 4

The last major change in DEP's management and operation of its outdoor recreational facilities occurred in 2003. To address the loss of 33% (48 out of 145 full time employees) from the State Parks work force as well as similar staff losses in DEP's Field Support Services and Law Enforcement Divisions the agency developed and adopted an Operations Reduction Plan. To concentrate staff and funding on DEP's primary and most popular recreation areas while maximizing revenue generation the following measures were implemented:

- the recreational season was shortened to core summer months at selected recreational areas economizing on maintenance and support activities;
- twelve (12) State Park facilities were converted to a year-round "walk-in" Parks, with an additional ten (10) Parks designated to become "walk-in" facilities in the off-season. (gates remain closed, parking provided exterior to gate, and limited facility maintenance);

- Fee collections were eliminated at Boat Launch ramps where the practice was shown not to be cost effective;
- Bus visitation pass allocations were reduced to all recreation facilities thereby reducing seasonal staff time devoted to management of bus groups and the impact those groups have;
- Seasonal Environmental Conservation Police Officer (SCO) coverage was reduced in some areas and those SCO's were replaced with Park Aide positions to oversee the activities of the public and report emergencies;
- the number of Park Supervisors were reduced following the ERIP. Management areas were combined thereby increasing the facilities, acreage and maintenance responsibilities;
- the frequency of mowing/brushing in lesser-used areas and at state-owned dam sites was reduced, and;
- Total seasonal staffing was reduced from approximately 500 to 400;
- lifeguards at swimming beaches with low attendance (8 facilities) were eliminated;
- Summer interpretive programs were reduced or eliminated in favor of hiring seasonal maintenance staff to help offset the loss of permanent maintainers;

While all Parks and Recreation Areas (over 350 discreet places) are managed and are available for walk-in recreational use, approximately 30 are managed to allow year round vehicle access with amenities to support large scale public use.

Story Behind the Baseline-

Measure 4b) Management: Number of Visitors Per Staff Person

The ratio of visitors (in 1,000s) to State Park Division employees has ranged between 82,000 to 1 in 2004 to 62,000 to 1 in 2001. Since visitation rates are weather dependent wide-scale variations in this ratio should be expected. This ratio has doubled what it had been in the late 1980s when attendance to the Parks was down and full-time staffing for the State Parks was above 150.

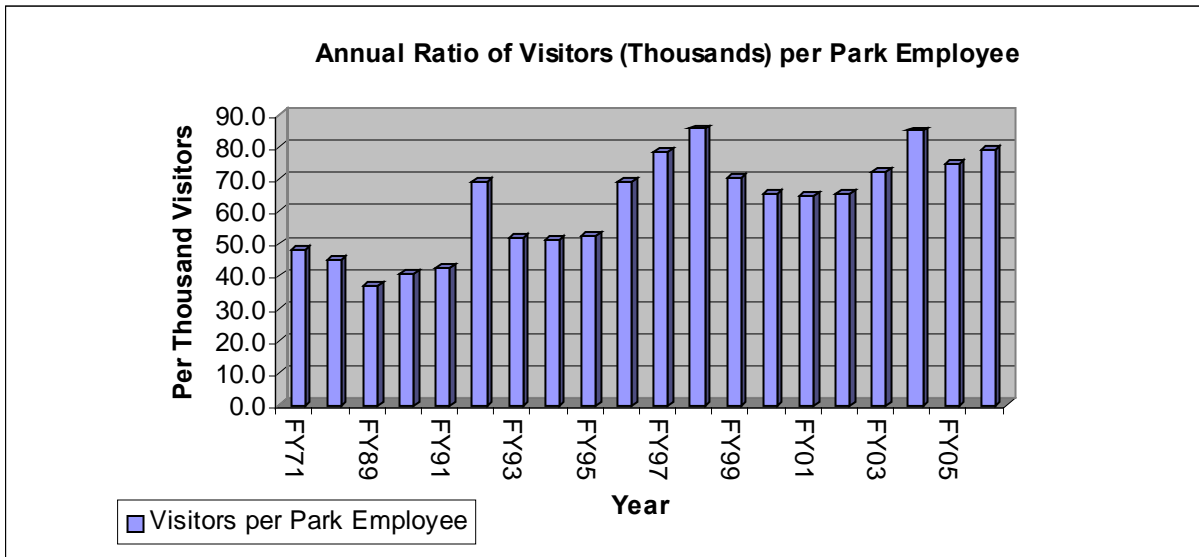


Figure 5

What do You Propose To Do To Improve (in the next 3-5 years)?

- **Continue to acquire open space properties for public access, recreation and natural resource protection in accordance with Connecticut's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and DEP's statutory goal for open space preservation.**
- **Explore barriers to visiting State Parks among communities that don't utilize or under utilize the State Park system and address those issues;**
- **Continue to promote DEP's "No Child Left Inside" initiative and DEP's "Great Park Pursuit" to encourage greater utilization of DEP's lands;**
- **Continue to offer outdoor recreation education and certification courses (e.g., hunting, boating, fishing, naturalist training) to promote greater participation in outdoor recreation activities;**
- **Create and publish a map for broad scale distribution that provides location data on all of DEP's properties and highlight the types of activities that are supported in Connecticut's State Park and Recreation areas; and,**
- **Encourage mass transit service to Connecticut's the State Park and Forest Recreational areas;**
- **Add more full-time and seasonal staffing to better manage the State Park and Forest Recreation Areas, continue to focus resources on Connecticut's most popular recreation areas;**
- **Demolish structures and derelict amenities in Park and Recreation Areas that are designated to remain year round walk-in recreational facilities;**

- **Update the 2010 State Park Capital Improvement Plan to reflect new and emerging infrastructure needs in the State Park and Forest Recreation system;**
- **Update facilities in the State Park campgrounds and add two new family campgrounds in central and southwestern Connecticut;**
- **Add camping cabins to existing campgrounds;**
- **Establish a new swimming area at Gardner Lake in Salem;**
- **Establish a recreation area devoted to All Terrain Vehicle use;**
- **Continue to focus on new revenue streams to improve the operations at the Parks;**
- **Increase reliance on seasonal staffing to bolster peak recreation season programs (interpretive, lifeguard, SCO's) to attract more visitors to safe and clean parks, forests and campgrounds;**
- **Partner with Friends Organizations to support programming efforts;**
- **Partner with other State Agencies to augment programs such as historic preservation, marketing and education; and**
- **Replace old, inefficient equipment so that the State Parks maintenance staff may work more efficiently.**
- **Address mechanisms to overcome inflation and wage increases that continue to erode existing State Park and Forest management resources.**
- **Continue to act on complaints immediately - where feasible;**
- **Provide customer service training to all State Park Division staff;**
- **Provide additional naturalist and interpretative programs to educate and help visitors to become better stewards of the parks and forests;**
- **Provide Park Welcome Centers with information and materials that orients visitors to the Park or Forest and encourages exploration and participation in programs that will help maximize the enjoyment derived from their visit; and**
- **Continue to renovate and upgrade State Park and Forest facilities in accordance with the 2010 Capital Improvement Plan to provide basic customer needs (restrooms, changing rooms parking areas, informational kiosks.)**

●

Partners

Federal

U.S. Department of the Interior/National Park Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Transportation/Federal Highway Administration
National Parks and Recreation Association

State

Legislature/General Assembly
Office of Policy and Management/Connecticut's Conservation and Development Policies Plan
Commission on Culture and Tourism/Historic Preservation and Museum Division
Department of Public Health
Department of Transportation
Department of Agriculture
Connecticut's Regional Planning Agencies
Department of Economic and Community Development
Connecticut's Social Service Agencies
Connecticut Forest and Park Association
Utility Companies (Electric, Sewer and Water)
Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association
Audubon Society
Sierra Club
Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC)
The Nature Conservancy
Friends of Connecticut State Parks
The Connecticut Horse Council
Housatonic Valley Association
Avid Outdoor Recreationalists

Municipal

169 Municipalities/Parks and Recreation

For-profit Recreation Providers

e.g., beach clubs, swimming pool providers, playgrounds and courts, historic sites, golf courses, batting cages, ski areas, marinas, commercial campgrounds, miniature golf courses, outdoor shooting ranges, paintball courses, amusement parks, race tracks, party-fishing boats, riding stables, paddlesport guides

Avid Users

The Boys and Girls Clubs of Connecticut
The YMCA and YWCA
Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of America
Other Youth and Adult Organizations that promote Outdoor Recreation

Users

DEP: State Parks System

All Connecticut residents and Non-residents

Appendix A: Data Development Agenda

Measure 1) Access: Percentage of Residents that live within 10 miles of a State Park

- **Complete DEP's Protected Open Space Mapping Project (POSM) to more accurately catalog and map open space under DEP's control;**
- **Validate DEP's geographic mapping of its open space lands against the data gathered from the POSM project; and,**

Measure 2a) Utilization: Percentage of Residents using a State Park at least once during the last year

- **Build upon and expand UCONN's CPR Citizen Demand Survey to more precisely survey minority and low-income households in Connecticut to determine their use patterns of State Parks and more accurately evaluate State Park use by Connecticut's citizenry;**
- **courses (e.g., hunting, boating, fishing, naturalist training) to promote greater participation in outdoor recreation activities;**
- **Install counters at DEP Rail Trails to capture use of linear recreation facilities and, at museum parking lots to capture information on passive outdoor use of park grounds;**
- **Implement "easy pass" system at shoreline parks to collect better data on customer use patterns;**
- **Acquire car counters to be used to count visits to "No charge" facilities with high volume use; and,**
- **Perform actual counts of visitors at specific parks (both high and low volume) to determine accuracy of counts made by field personnel using the visitor extrapolation methodology using vehicle estimates and counts.**

Measure 3a) Enjoyment: Percent of Visitors (or Complaints per 100 Visitors) Filing a Complaint with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) after visiting a park

- **Develop an internet-based electronic comment card for improved communication between state recreation users and the division;**
- **Develop and adopt a universal methodology and formal tracking system to log complaints when a complaint is lodged by the visiting public;**

Measure 3b) Enjoyment: Percent of Customers Visiting a State Park that were Moderately/Very Satisfied with their Experience

- **Complete the Actions and Data Needs outlined under 3a;**
- **Survey visitors to determine satisfaction with visit;**
- **Engage a consultant to help identify what the "Satisfaction Drivers" are.**
Learn what visitors value-big picture versus site specific. Distinguish that which can be controlled (clean beaches) from that which cannot (weather).
Include visitors, staff and other stakeholders in study.