

REGIONAL DISTRICT OF BULKLEY-NECHAKO

PARKS AND TRAILS MASTER PLAN

FOR ELECTORAL AREA G (Houston/Granisle Rural)



2026

The development of this plan was guided by input from the following groups and individuals:

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Thank you to those residents and members of the public who shared their thoughts and ideas through the engagement process.

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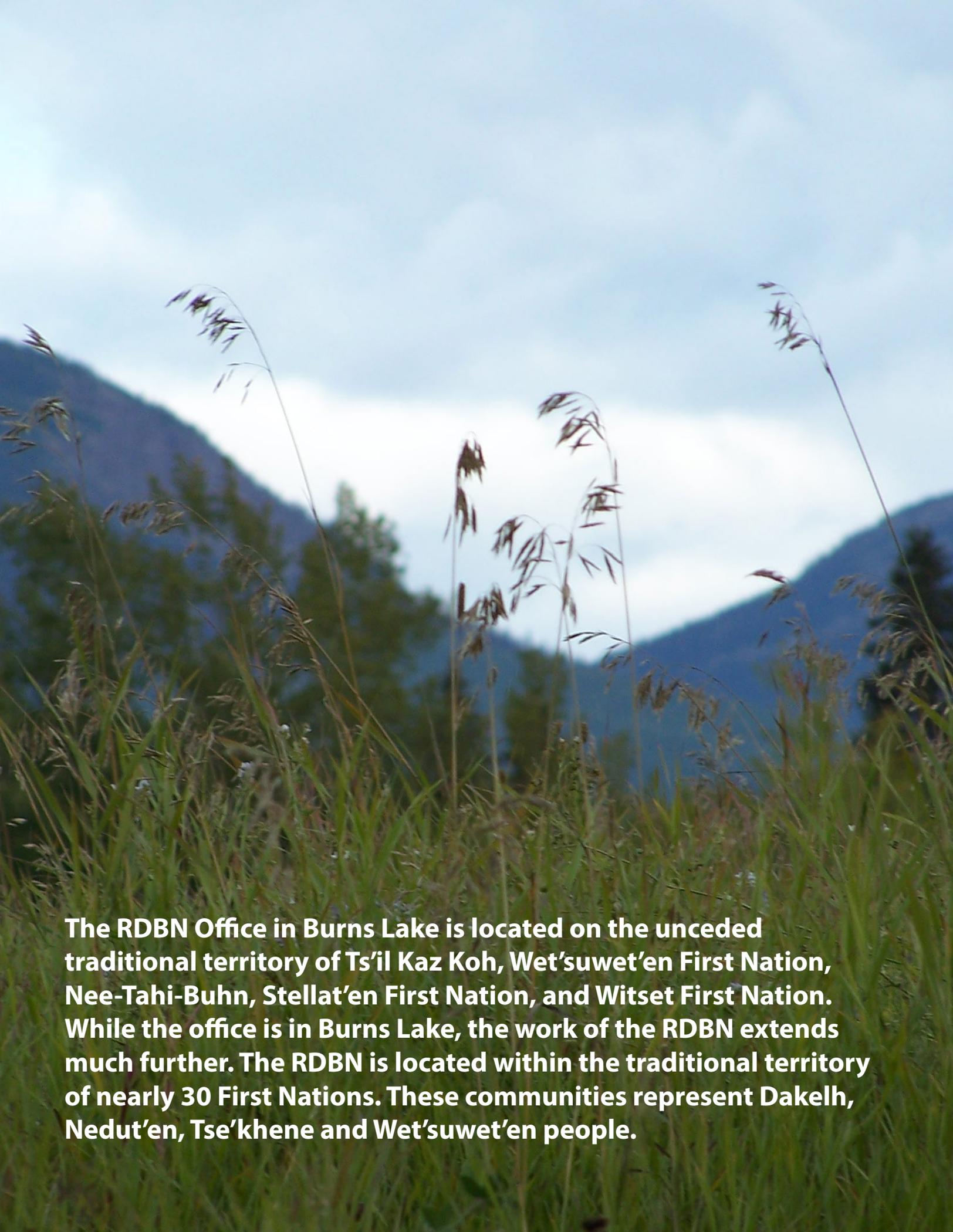
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An executive summary will be provided for the Final Report



The RDBN Office in Burns Lake is located on the unceded traditional territory of Ts'il Kaz Koh, Wet'suwet'en First Nation, Nee-Tahi-Buhn, Stelat'en First Nation, and Witsset First Nation. While the office is in Burns Lake, the work of the RDBN extends much further. The RDBN is located within the traditional territory of nearly 30 First Nations. These communities represent Dakelh, Nedut'en, Tse'khene and Wet'suwet'en people.

1 INTRODUCTION



1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) lies within the north-central region of British Columbia between Prince George and Prince Rupert. The region's landscape is characterized by lakes, mountains, and expansive forests with diverse recreation opportunities such as hiking, biking, fishing, climbing, skiing, hunting, paddling, camping, ATVing, and snowmobiling. Outdoor parks and trails within the region are essential to enhancing the well-being of residents and visitors alike, as well as bolstering the local economy through tourism. Residents in the region live in and around communities along the Highway 16 corridor, though smaller settlements are found throughout the region. The region's primary economic opportunities include agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting.

The RDBN is home to 14 First Nations alongside others with identified Aboriginal rights or title whose Nations have stewarded the lands since time immemorial and continue to have significant cultural values and interests.

The RDBN's *Parks and Outdoor Recreation Study* (2020) identified the need for a regional parks and trails service to meet the growing demand for outdoor recreation in the region's rural areas and address gaps in the recreation services provided by volunteer clubs, municipalities, Recreation Sites & Trails BC, and BC Parks. In response to the 2020 study, the RDBN initiated the creation of four Parks and Trails Service Areas, including the District of Houston, Village of Granisle, and Electoral Area G. The RDBN also established four Recreation Contribution Service Areas that provide financial assistance to organizations offering recreational activities for residents and visitors. To facilitate the implementation of these services, the Regional District is developing Parks and Trails Master Plans for each service area. This plan is the first for Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural).

1.1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Electoral Area G Parks and Trails Master Plan builds on the progress made by municipalities, community groups, and other parks and trail managers in providing outdoor recreation experiences in Electoral Area G. The plan sets out a community-driven Vision and Goals to guide the management of parks and trails in the region over the next 10 years, along with specific recommendations to enhance them in a coordinated, collaborative, and cost-effective way.

1.1.2 PLANNING AREA

The RDBN is within the unceded traditional territories of the Dakelh, Nedut'en, Tse'khene, and Witsuwit'en speaking peoples. There are 14 First Nations with communities in the RDBN, and many others with traditional territory. The First Nations with reserve communities in Electoral Area G include the Lake Babine Nation.

This plan focuses on Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural), the rural area surrounding the municipalities of the District of Houston and the Village of Granisle. There are several unincorporated communities, including Perow, Buck Flats, Kuldo, Smithers Landing, Topley, and Topley Landing. Lake Babine Nation has three communities within Electoral Area G including Fort Babine, Old Fort and Tachet.

The 2021 Census reported a population of 836 in Electoral Area G, just over 3,000 in the District of Houston, and 330 in the Village of Granisle. It is generally believed that the population of the rural areas is relatively stable at around 1,000 residents. An additional 1,000 people reside in the First Nations communities. The population of Electoral Area G accounts for approximately 2.2% of the total population of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako.

The average age for Electoral Area G is 46.6 years which is slightly higher than the RDBN (41.1) and BC (43.1). In general, there is a smaller percentage of children and youth under the age of 19, in comparison to RDBN and BC. There is a higher percentage of adults aged 50 and over than both RDBN and BC.



Figure 1: Electoral Area G Boundary.

1.2 THE PLANNING PROCESS

Phase 1 – Review of Relevant Background Materials: The first phase included background research, reviewing relevant regional strategies and bylaws, and mapping the existing inventory of parks and trails in the region.

Phase 2 - Community Engagement Round 1: In the second phase, site visits, discussions with RDBN staff, and community engagement occurred. This involved outreach to local First Nations, interviewing interest-holders, a public in-person pop-up event, and a public online survey. These sessions aimed to introduce the community to the project, understand their values and priorities, and identify challenges and opportunities regarding parks and trails in the region. Findings from engagement activities were summarized in a Draft Engagement Summary.

Phase 3 - Draft Parks and Trails Master Plan: This phase involved developing the draft Parks and Trails Master Plan, including information gathered in the first two phases of the project and a draft vision, goals, and recommendations.

Future Phases

Phase 4 - Community Engagement Round 2: The fourth phase featured a second round of community engagement to report the plan’s findings back to the community and collect feedback on the draft vision, goals, and recommendations. Round two of engagement included another online survey and a virtual open house. Engagement findings from both rounds of engagement were summarized in a final engagement summary.

Phase 5 - Final Parks and Trails Plan: The fifth phase included incorporating feedback from the final round of engagement into the draft plan to develop the final Parks and Trails Plan. The final plan was presented to the Regional District’s Board of Directors.



Figure 2: Project timeline

1.2.1 RELATED PLANS AND POLICIES

The Electoral Area G Parks and Trails Master Plan is informed by the following RDBN strategic documents.

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

The RDBN's Strategic Plan outlines the vision, mission, and priorities of the Regional District as it plans for future community growth between 2022 and 2026. The Plan outlines four strategic focus areas: relationships with First Nations, advocacy with the Province, housing supply, and community and economic sustainability.

Implications for the Parks and Trails Master Plan: Park and trail planning and development present opportunities to implement the Plan's recommendations for collaborating with First Nations on areas of mutual interest. They also serve as opportunities to act on the recommendation to provide services to First Nations communities. Additionally, outdoor recreation-based tourism could help advance the goal of economic diversification in Electoral Area G.

Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Parks & Outdoor Recreation Study – 2020

This study was part of the groundwork that led to the development of the Parks and Trails Service. It reviewed community demand for outdoor recreation across the Regional District and surveyed outdoor recreation clubs that operate in the region. It also gives an overview of regional district park services across British Columbia and their service-delivery strategies. The study presents potential strategies for the RDBN to provide park and recreation services to residents in rural regions of the Regional District.

Implications for the Parks and Trails Master Plan: This study established the vision for delivering outdoor recreation in the region, where volunteer-based clubs continue to play a vital role in providing recreation experiences, backed by support and collaboration from the Regional District.

Bulkley-Nechako Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee - Accessibility Plan – 2024

The Accessibility Plan identifies barriers that people living with accessibility concerns experience in the RDBN. The plan includes recommendations to promote a more accessible built environment, including in parks, trails, and outdoor public spaces.

Implications for the Parks and Trails Master Plan: The Accessibility Plan recommends the design or upgrading of recreation infrastructure to adhere to standards set out in the BC Parks Universal Design Guide Front-Country Parks.

RDBN Value of Tourism Report – 2017

The report identifies the value of tourism for communities across the RDBN in accordance with Tourism BC's Value of Tourism Model. The report summarizes the benefits of tourism in the RDBN and includes an estimate of tourism spending in the region. The report also contains a review of local planning documents related to tourism.

Implications for the Parks and Trails Master Plan: The Report contains no specific recommendations relevant for the Parks and Trails Master Plan, but its findings demonstrate that infrastructure is in place to allow the RDBN to benefit from tourism, which is often driven by outdoor recreation in the region.

Parks And Trails Service Establishment Bylaw No. 1928, 2020

A bylaw to establish a parks and trails service for Electoral Area G.

Implications for this Plan: This bylaw authorizes the RDBN to establish, operate, and promote regional parks and trails, thereby supporting the implementation of recommendations in this Plan related to creating new parks and trails.

1.2.2 ROLE OF THE REGIONAL DISTRICT

The role of the Regional District Parks and Trails Service is to establish, manage, and promote parks and trails, and by extension, support healthy and active living, foster community bonds through recreation, and enable individuals to enjoy the natural environment. It is the intention of the RDBN to complement and coordinate with the overall network of parks and trails in the region but not duplicate the services of other agencies in fulfilling its mandate. The general role of the park and trails system is to provide opportunities for the public to access and enjoy scenic and historically significant destinations for a range of year-round outdoor recreational activities such as hiking, biking, walking, boating, paddling, fishing, wildlife viewing, picnicking, and swimming.

The RDBN intends to take a phased approach to the development of parks and trails, focusing first on providing access to day-use recreation areas, improving access to lakes and shorelines, and supporting the efforts of other government and non-governmental organizations in providing recreation services.

1.2.3 REGIONAL DISTRICT SERVICES

In addition to the Parks and Trails Service and Recreation Contribution Service, the RDBN also does the following:

- **Grants in Aid:** The RDBN provides grants to community organizations through an application process which is reviewed by the RDBN Board. Grants may be used for cultural, charitable, sporting, recreational, service activities and special events for the purpose of benefiting the community.
- **Canada Community-Building Fund:** The federal government provides predictable, long-term funding for local governments to invest in infrastructure and capacity-building projects. The fund is administered through UBCM to the RDBN, which then makes decisions on its use locally. Local non-profit organizations can apply for support on a variety of community projects, including outdoor recreation capital projects. This would primarily fall under the Community Works Fund.

- **Transfers to Partner Municipalities for Recreation Services:** The RDBN can collect property taxes from rural residents by establishing a service area to contribute to the costs that municipalities incur for providing recreation services.
- **Grant Writing Support:** The RDBN has an economic development team with proposal writers on staff that can assist non-profit organizations with the grant writing process.¹

¹ *Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Parks & Outdoor Recreation Study – June 2020*

2 CURRENT PARKS & TRAIL SYSTEM



2.1 THE PARKS AND TRAILS SYSTEM

Parks and trails play a crucial role in the region and are greatly appreciated by the community for providing recreational opportunities that enhance health and wellness. They serve as avenues for experiencing nature, engaging in outdoor activities, and safeguarding open spaces for the benefit of future generations.

Electoral Area G has an abundance of highly valued parks, trails, and natural areas that support a wide variety of four-season outdoor recreation. Highlights include the many lakes and rivers offering places for relaxation, fishing, and hunting and the extensive trail networks for hiking, mountain biking, and riding off-road vehicles. Visitors flock to the area for the fishing opportunities, backcountry lodges, and wilderness experiences, while residents enjoy the benefits of the independent lifestyle and easy access to cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and hiking. It's also a close drive to three extensive backcountry snowmobile areas.

The many opportunities are provided by BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, the District of Houston, the Village of Granisle, and the considerable efforts of volunteer-based outdoor recreation organizations such as the Houston Hikers, Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club, Houston Snowmobile Club, and Houston Mountain Biking Association. The RDBN's aim is to identify ways to complement and expand opportunities within the existing network of parks, trails, and outdoor recreation already provided by others.

2.1.1 REGIONAL PLANNING

The RDBN Parks and Trails Service is administered by the Regional District's Planning Department. In each of the four service areas, planning staff are responsible for overseeing the development of the Parks and Trails Service, coordinating with government and community recreation organizations, offering recreation services in the regional district, and administering planning processes and capital projects.

Each Parks and Trails Service Area has unique challenges and opportunities, as well as distinct outdoor recreation needs. A key challenge for the RDBN has been the question of how to balance resources and staff time between each service area. In 2025, 20% of staff time was dedicated to the Village of Granisle and Houston/Electoral Area G. As the parks and trails service in each area grows, additional staff resources may be needed to address inequities.

Due to the geographic shape of Electoral Area G, some locations that are valued and highly used by Electoral Area G residents may actually be in Electoral Areas A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) or B (Burns Lake Rural). While this plan focuses only on the parks and trails service for Electoral Area G, there are opportunities for coordination between these three electoral areas.

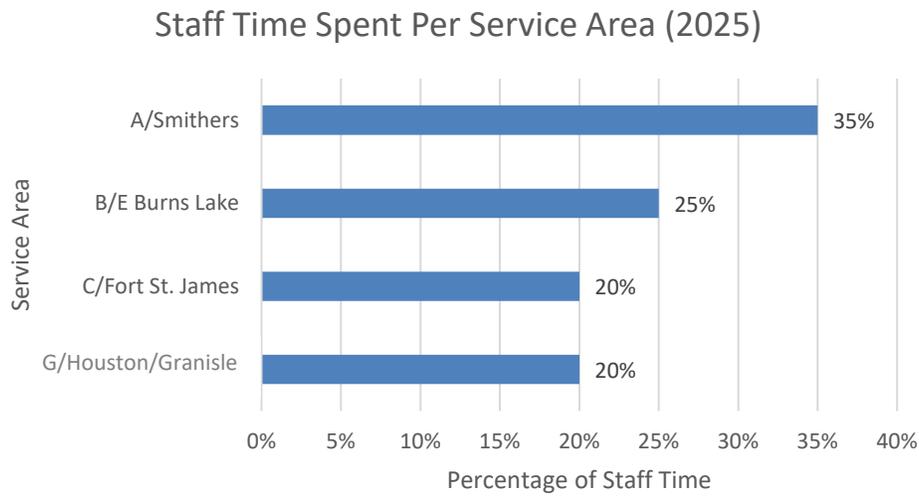


Figure 3: Staff time spent per parks and trails service area

2.1.2 PARKLAND ACQUISITION

The RDBN has the authority to establish and operate parks and recreation services as set out in *Part 10 of the Local Government Act*. The *Act* allows the RDBN to acquire land for parks and trails and pass regulatory bylaws with respect to managing those parks. With the RDBN's establishment of a parks function by bylaw, the following funding streams are the main sources of revenue:

- **Property Taxes:** Property taxes are the most common revenue stream for supporting a parks and recreation function.
- **Canada Community Building Fund and other Senior Government Grants:** The RDBN has access to various government grant programs to fund parks and recreation infrastructure. Typically, these programs do not provide funding for maintenance or operational costs.²

Although not currently in use or commonly available, the following additional tools can be used to generate revenues for parks and recreation services, should opportunities arise:

- **Parkland or Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland at Time of Subdivision:** The *Act* gives the RDBN authority to require parkland dedication or cash in lieu of parkland dedication equivalent to the market value of 5% of the land at the time of subdivision.

² Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako Parks & Outdoor Recreation Study – June 2020

- **Development Cost Charges (DCCs):** Through a Development Cost Charges (DCC) Bylaw the RDBN may charge developers a fee at the time of development. DCCs for parks can be used for land acquisition and for specific improvements, such as trails and picnic areas.
- **Ecological gifts, bequests, life-estates, land donations:** The RDBN has the authority to accept ecological gifts of land. It can be a considerable tax benefit to a donor to have a land donation recognized as having “ecological significance” by Revenue Canada.

In each service area, there will be a separate **Parkland Reserve Fund**. The revenues collected within each service area will be used to cover the expenses for the capital, operational, and administrative aspects of the parks and trails service, specifically in that area.

2.1.3 OTHER OUTDOOR RECREATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

Various levels of government, contractors, and recreation organizations play a significant role in parks and recreation in the planning area, including:

- District of Houston – The District of Houston owns and manages municipal parks, trails, and sidewalks within the District boundaries, supporting community organizations and public users of parks and trails. The District also manages some parks and trails outside the District boundary.
- Village of Granisle – The Village of Granisle owns and maintains several small municipal parks and sidewalks. The Village also oversees a larger neighbourhood park and marina on Babine Lake which provides access to recreational boating and fishing opportunities.
- Recreation Sites and Trails BC (and their contractors) and partner recreation organizations, such as the Houston Snowmobile Club, which are responsible for the operation and maintenance of trails and recreation sites on Crown and community forest lands.
- BC Parks – BC Parks holds tenure and manages provincial parks. Some are undeveloped designated park lands, while others have been improved with amenities like campsites, trails, and boat launches.
- First Nations – Indigenous Peoples exercise and have full enjoyment of their inherent rights, including the rights of First Nations to own, use, develop and control lands and resources within their territories in BC First Nations are also responsible for on-reserve parks and trails.

2.2 PARKS AND TRAILS INVENTORY

This section provides an inventory of parks and trails within the study area. Currently, there are no RDBN-managed parks or trails in Electoral Area G. This inventory, therefore, focuses on sites managed by the District of Houston, Village of Granisle, RSTBC, and BC Parks. This comprehensive inventory enables the RDBN to bridge existing gaps in the parks and trails system and to explore opportunities to expand service offerings.

2.2.1 RDBN PARKS AND TRAILS IN AREA G

While there are no parks and trails owned and managed by RDBN within Electoral Area G, the Regional District collaborates with other recreation service providers to support the delivery of parks and trails in the area. The Houston, Topley, Granisle OCP (2011) identified the China Nose Trail, Houston Palisades Trail, Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club trail network and the Houston Snowmobile Club trails for their high-value recreation opportunities.

The RDBN primarily supports these facilities through its recreation contribution grant funding program, which provides multi-year funding to outdoor recreation organizations such as the Houston Hikers and the Houston Mountain Bike Association. The Houston Mountain Bike Association recently developed the Houston Mountain Bike Trails, which continue to grow in popularity.

2.2.2 MUNICIPALITIES

The District of Houston and Village of Granisle each provide municipal parks, walking trails, and outdoor recreation opportunities, described in the following sections.

District of Houston

The District of Houston manages eleven parks and several local trails. The following are parks managed by the District of Houston, which includes two park areas outside the District boundaries on Crown lands, through partnership with RSTBC. There is also the Houston Community Forest, which offers trails and a day-use area within the working forest. A summary of the parks and trails is provided in Table 1 below (District of Houston, 2025).

Table 1- Summary of parks and trails managed by the District of Houston

Park/Trail/Rec Site Name	Type	Amenities
Avalon Park	Park	playground
By-Mac Park*	Park	9 unserviced campsites; a shelter; boat launch; picnic areas; outhouses
Four Seasons Park	Park	4 ball diamonds; rodeo grounds; riding area
Hagman Park	Park	playground
Irrigation Lake*	Rec Site	picnic area; fire pits; beach; change rooms; outhouses
Jamie Baxter Park	Park	skateboard park; ball diamond; BMX track; playground; outhouses; picnic area

Nadina Park	Park	swings; picnic area
Northside Park	Park	ball diamond; outhouses; playground; picnic area; walking trails
Northwood Picnic Site	Rec Site	picnic areas; outhouse
Ruiter Heights Park	Park	playground
Steelhead Park	Park	walking trails; playground; dog run; picnic areas; fountains; flower gardens
Duck Pond Walking Trails	Trail	platforms; benches; garbage cans; dock
Circle Pathway		7 km of trails that connect to the pathways along Buck Creek and the Bulkley River.
Bulkley River/Buck Creek Junction	Trail	Short trail along Buck Creek from the Visitor's Centre.
Buck Creek Drive	Trail	Trail along the dike of Buck Creek

**Note: These two parks are located outside municipal boundaries, within Electoral Area G, but are operated by the municipality.*

Village of Granisle

The Village of Granisle manages a Visitor's Centre with adjacent park, a lakefront park, and marina. The Village has developed a Granisle Downtown Revitalization Plan (2023) that focuses on leveraging outdoor recreation assets like the lakefront and enhancing camping and trail opportunities to boost tourism. A summary of the parks and trails is provided in Table 2 below.

Table 2 - Summary of parks and trails managed by the Village of Granisle

Park/Trail/Rec Site Name	Type	Amenities
Granisle Memorial Park	Park	Seating, picnic tables, accessible pathway, horticultural planting beds, and band shell; adjacent to the Granisle Travel Information Centre
New Beach	Park	Beach access, day-use, outhouses, and camping
Whiskey Jack Trail/Eagle Way Trail	Trail	Perimeter trails around the Village
Lakeshore trail/Beach Trail	Trail	Lakeside trail connecting the marina to Lions Beach

Granisle Lions Club

The Granisle Lions Club maintains Granisle Lions Beach Park, located just outside of the Village and Red Bluff Provincial Park. The park provides 21 RV camping sites, a playground, beach access, and a dock. Social media posts note the sites are operated on a first-come, first-served basis, and visitors occupy the waterfront sites throughout the summer.

2.2.3 RECREATION SITES AND TRAILS BC

Recreation Sites and Trails BC manages 19 recreation sites and 529 km of trails in Area G. Given the electoral area boundaries, there are also nearby recreation sites and trails within Electoral Areas A (Smithers/Telkwa Rural) to the west and B (Burns Lake Rural) to the east, frequently used by Area G residents. This highlights the need for the RDBN to coordinate between electoral areas.

The sites include camping opportunities, primarily user maintained. Several local outdoor recreation organizations operate and maintain recreation sites and trails on crown lands. The District of Houston’s website links to the Houston Hikers Society, Houston Mountain Bike Association, and Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club, each of which has a network of trails.

Highlights are described in Tables 3 and 4 below and a map are provided in Appendix B.

Table 3 – Summary of recreation site type

Recreation Site Type	Amount of Feature
Recreational Trail	529 km
Recreation Sites	19 Sites

Table 4 RSTBC Sites in the Service Area

Recreation Site Name
Aspen
Chapman Lake
Dungate Meadows Cabin
Doris Lake
Helen Lake
Lamprey Creek
Lamprey Lake
Morin Lake
Mt. Harry Davis
Old Fort
Owen Flats
Owen Hill
Owen Lake
Paul Lake
Peacock Falls
Silverthorne Lake
Starvation Lake
Sunset Lake
Tanglechain Lake
Telkwa Mountain
Telkwa Mtn. Cabin

Mt. Harry Davis Mountain Bike Trails

The Houston Mountain Bike Association (<https://www.ridehoustonbc.com/>) has developed a cohesive network of trails and is focused on building, maintaining, and promoting mountain biking in the Houston area.

Morice Mountain

The Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club maintains and manages a significant outdoor recreation hub offering trails, camping, and access to Silverthorne Lake. The club originally focused on cross-country skiing but has expanded into multi-sport and multi-season non-motorized activities including water sports, paddling, trail biking, hiking, running, camping, groomed xc skiing, ungroomed exploring, alpine cabin accommodation, snowshoeing and fat biking.

Houston Hikers Society Trails

The Houston Hikers are a well-established outdoor recreation organization dedicated to promoting Houston and the surrounding area as hiking destinations for tourists and locals. The Houston Hikers maintain many kilometers of trails and have developed their capacity for trail building and maintenance with the goal of getting the existing trails up to a higher standard. They have been instrumental in consolidating and documenting trail information, hosting a website with search options by activity and difficulty, as well as maps of some hikes that are georeferenced and useable on a smartphone with the Avenza app.

The RDBN has provided funding through the recreation contribution grant program, allowing the group to hire contractors to perform additional maintenance beyond the capacity of the volunteer base.

Recreation Sites with Camping

There are some recreation sites that are maintained to a higher standard than the baseline user-maintained recreation sites and offer camping. One example is Helen Lake, just northwest of town, which has recently been upgraded with an accessible gravel trail and dock, along with a handful of campsites. There are many other recreation sites that are user-maintained throughout Electoral Area G.

Other RSTBC Trails

There are also many trails documented by RSTBC, including those maintained by the outdoor recreation organizations described above. However, maintenance is not necessarily consistent or to a specific standard and RTSBC has limited resources to keep trail data updated.

2.2.4 BC PARKS

BC Parks manages 148,676 ha of parkland in Electoral Area G, however much of the parkland is remote and is not easily accessible, either located significant distances down forest service roads or boat access only. Some locations are easier to reach from communities outside Electoral Area G (Smithers, Burns Lake) and are therefore not considered recreation assets of Area G.

The Morice Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) and associated government-to-government discussions with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en has resulted in the creation of seven new parks and protected areas in recent years. Most do not have amenities or facilities but do allow backcountry camping.

Table 5 - BC Parks and Conservation Area summary

BC Park or Conservation Area Name	Park Area (ha)	Frontic. Camping	Boat Launch	Formal Trails	Day Use Area with Amenities	Backcountry Camping	Other Recreation
ATNA RIVER PARK	21031					x	Access from Houston; adjacent to Morice Lake Park
MORICE LAKE PARK	52498	x	x			x	Access from Houston; adjacent to Atna River and Neneikekh/Nanika-Kidprice Parks; backcountry cabin
NENEIKEKH/NANIKA-KIDPRICE PARK	17015					x	Access from Houston via Lampray Lake Recreation Site; four-lake canoe route; adjacent to Morice Lake Park
RED BLUFF PARK	156	x	x	x	x		Popular camping, fishing, boating area near Granisle
TOTAL Parkland with Amenities	90,700						
NADINA MOUNTAIN PARK				x			Trail doesn't receive regular maintenance; potential rock climbing on the granite spire
OLD MAN LAKE PARK			x				Unmaintained skid-trails offer access to viewpoints
TOPLEY PARK							Management plan does not support recreation
BURNIE-SHEA PARK						x	Helicopter or floatplane access only
MORICE RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE						x	Only low-impact recreation is allowed; no facilities
BABINE RIVER CORRIDOR PARK			x				Access from Smithers
TORKELSEN LAKE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE							Access from Smithers
RAINBOW ALLEY PARK							Boat access only, closest to Smithers
LONG ISLAND CONSERVANCY							Boat access only, Babine Lake
WILKINSON-WRIGHT BAY CONSERVANCY							Boat access only, Babine Lake
PORT ARTHUR CONSERVANCY							Boat access only, Babine Lake
SANCTUARY BAY CONSERVANCY							Boat access only, Babine Lake
BEAR ISLAND CONSERVANCY		x					Boat access on Babine Lake with camping road access
NORTH SPIT CONSERVANCY							Boat access only, Babine Lake
BABINE LAKE MARINE PARK - SMITHERS LANDING SITE							Boat access only, Babine Lake

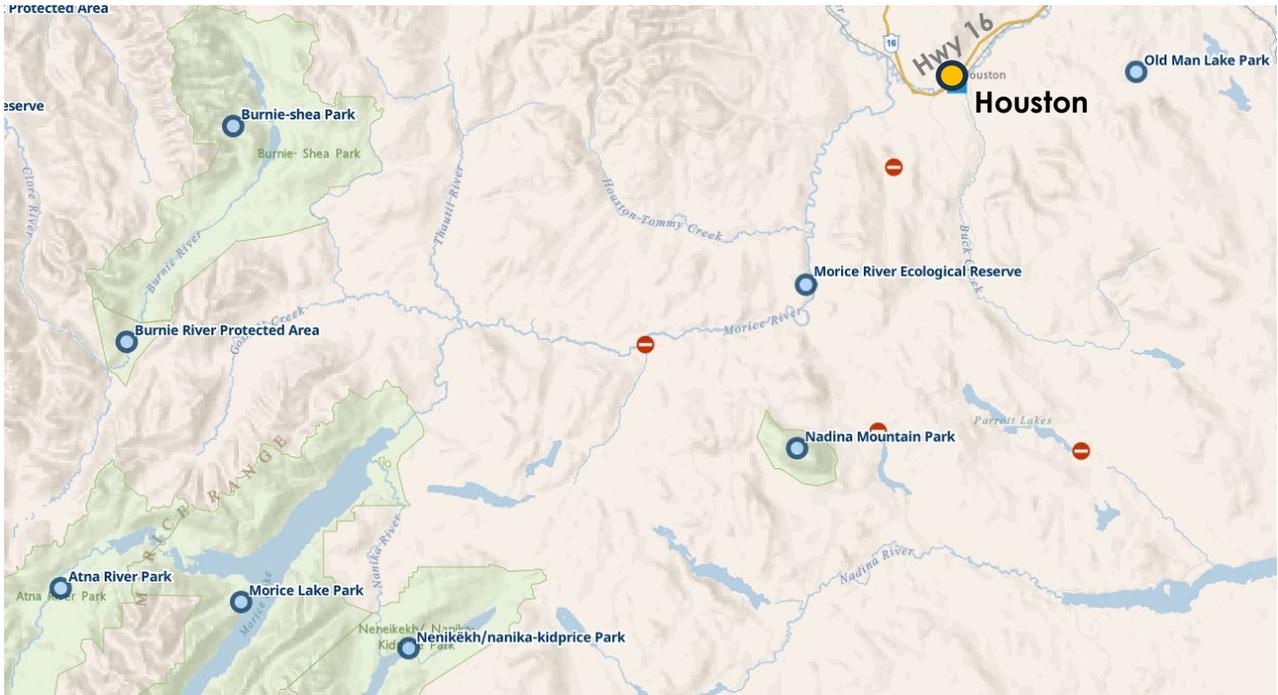


Figure 4 - BC Parks and Conservation Areas South of Houston

Morice Lake Park (Wet-zuhn-buhn)

Morice Lake Park boasts highly valuable ecosystems and wildlife habitat and offers canoeing, camping, and fishing opportunities. Located 84 km from Houston, the park is user-maintained, pack-in-pack-out with 18 frontcountry campsites equipped with picnic tables, fire rings, and pit toilets, suitable for tents and small trailers. Backcountry camping is available along Morice Lake, though no facilities are provided. The site features portage trails between Morice Lake and Atna Lake. A gravel boat launch is located at the north end of the Morice Lake campsite. There is no formal day-use area.

Nadina Mountain Park

Nadina Mountain Park, located 42 km southwest of Houston, provides access to Nadina Mountain via a single strenuous hiking trail. Wilderness camping is permitted; however, no facilities are available. An alternative route begins at Nadina Mountain Lodge on Owen Lake, offering a longer and more challenging ascent that passes Klate Lake and Base Lake before climbing steeply to the summit. This route has not been cleared for several years, making travel difficult. The park's primary conservation role is to protect an isolated granitic mountain and its associated natural values, including mountain goats, grizzly bears, lichen communities, and distinctive granitic spires.

During engagement, the connection between the Nadina Mountain Wilderness Lodge and Nadina Mountain was highlighted as a possible future trail improvement opportunity.

Nenikëkh /Nanika-Kidprice Park

Located within the traditional territory of Wet'suwet'en First Nation, Nenikëkh translates to canoe swerving against the current to make its way upstream. The park is located between the Sibola mountain range and the Morice Range and is a popular destination for multi-day canoeing, fishing, and marine-accessible camping containing a chain of four lakes and three portage trails. The western boundary of the park joins with Morice Lake Park including Nanika Falls and the lower Nanika River.

Old Man Lake Park

Old Man Lake Park includes Old Man Lake, Beaver Lake and a portion of McBreirie Lake and is located approximately 20km east of Houston with access via a forest service road. BC Parks highlights canoeing, hiking, and wildlife viewing, but also notes that the removal of the dam infrastructure outside the park boundary has resulted in lower water levels in the lake and a shift in the location for launching canoes. There aren't any developed trails, but there are some old skid trails that bring people to viewpoints of Beaver Lake and China Nose mountain. The lakes are valued for their ecologically rich wetlands and marsh fringe ecosystems that support migrating birds, as well as rare grassland habitats.

During engagement, BC Parks noted that collaboration between BC Parks, RSTBC, and the RDBN could help secure and improve access to the park and a non-motorized boat launch area. Since the dam has been removed the canoe launch site is 100 m further upstream from where the access road meets the waterway.

Red Bluff Park

Located just south of the Village of Granisle, between Granisle and Topley Landing, this park is located on the shore of Babine Lake and offers a variety of outdoor activities, including camping, swimming, fishing, boating, and a short 3 km trail. The front country campground features 27 reservable campsites along with additional non-reservable, vehicle-accessible sites. Visitors can also take advantage of a convenient boat launch and a day-use area for relaxing by the water. The park is packed with visitors in the warmer months.

Other Conservancies

There are many conservation areas along Babine Lake that lack facilities and are accessible by boat only.



Figure 4: BC Parks and Conservation Areas Along Babine Lake

2.3 OUTDOOR RECREATION SERVICES

The following section summarizes community recreation facilities and services provided by outdoor recreation service providers. The intention of this section is to provide a snapshot of the outdoor recreation services available in Electoral Area G and identify gaps and potential opportunities for the RDBN to address unmet needs in the planning area.

During the initial round of community engagement, participants emphasized the significance of having a wide range of outdoor recreational options, including activities like fishing, hiking, camping, swimming, cross-country skiing, ATV/snowmobiling, and mountain biking. Numerous outdoor recreation organizations actively contribute to the planning area's outdoor recreation. Additionally, land managers such as RSTBC, the District of Houston, the Village of Granisle and BC Parks, are vital contributors to ensuring access to outdoor recreation opportunities within the planning area.

Table 6 summarizes recreation facilities and services delivered by government entities, land managers, and outdoor recreation organizations. There were no significant gaps in the *variety* of services identified, but the engagement results indicated the challenges are related to quality, accessibility, and capacity of what is available.

Table 6: Community Recreation Facilities and Services Provided by Outdoor Recreation Service Providers

Outdoor Recreation Service Providers	Campgrounds	Walking/ Hiking / Biking Trails	Skiing / Snowshoeing Trails	ATV / Snowmobiling Trails	Beach Access/ Beaches	Boat Launches/dock	Outdoor event space/ Fair Grounds
RDBN							
District of Houston	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
Houston Community Forest		✓		✓			
Lions Club (Granisle)	✓				✓	✓	
Village of Granisle	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
BC Parks	✓	✓			✓	✓	
Recreation, Sites, and Trails BC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Community Recreation Organizations		✓	✓	✓			✓

2.3.1 COMPARISON WITH OTHER PARKS AND TRAILS SERVICE AREAS

Gaining insights into the provision of parkland and outdoor recreation amenities in each of the RDBN's parks and trails service areas will empower the RDBN to make informed decisions regarding the specific types of services and amenities required in each respective area. Table 7 is an inventory of the number of regional, provincial, and municipal parks by service area. Additionally, the table includes the number of recreational sites in each service area, recognizing their significance as integral components of the recreational landscape in RDBN.

Compared to the other Parks and Trails Service Areas in the RDBN, Electoral Area G has the highest number of provincial parks and the second-highest number of municipal parks; however, it is important to note that the provincial parks and recreation sites in the planning area are predominantly rustic sites with limited amenities and, in many cases, are remote and difficult to access. There is also concern that access to some recreation sites could be lost as forest service roads are decommissioned. Although outside the RDBN's jurisdiction, the RDBN continues to advocate to the Province for continued maintenance on important access roads.

Table 7 - Electoral Area Parks Opportunities Compared to other RDBN Service Areas

Service Areas in RDBN	RDBN Parks	Provincial Parks	Municipal Parks	Recreation Sites
Village of Burns Lake, Electoral Area B, and Electoral Area E	2	10	13	35
Town of Smithers and Electoral Area A	2	3	21	21
District of Fort St. James and Electoral Area C	0	9	7	26
District of Houston, Village of Granisle, and Electoral Area G	0	11	19	21

2.4 PARKLAND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Parkland Needs Assessment involves an exploration of the gaps and opportunities within the parks and trails system that have been identified during the planning process. A benchmarking exercise was also conducted comparing the provision of parkland to comparable communities in BC.

There is no definitive way to determine whether a region has an adequate supply of parkland; it depends on the values, desires, and needs of the communities. However, several common metrics can be employed to gauge the adequacy of parkland, such as comparing with other regions, assessing the amount of parkland available per capita, and evaluating the proximity of parks to residents. The following section analyzes parkland averages to understand the inventory and distribution needs of the RDBN.

2.4.1 PARKLAND PER CAPITA ANALYSIS

Parkland area and population estimates were used to determine the amount of parkland in Electoral Area G per 1,000 residents. Since the establishment of the Parks and Trails Service in 2020, the RDBN has acquired approximately 43.5 hectares of parkland, resulting in an overall average of 1.2 hectares of parkland per 1,000 residents in the RDBN. The RDBN has a below-average supply of parkland compared to similar regional districts. However, as the RDBN’s Parks and Trails Service is newly established, this is anticipated to change over the next 10 years.

To meet the average of 2.8 hectares/ 1,000 residents, an additional 62.16 hectares are required throughout the RDBN. **Proportionally, Electoral Area G would need 3-4 hectares to meet this target.**

Table 8 - Parkland Supply Compared to Similar Regional Districts

Regional District	Population (2021)	Total Area of Regional Parks (ha)	Parkland (Ha) Per 1,000
Bulkley-Nechako	37,737	43.5	1.2
Thompson-Nicola	143,680	67	0.5
Peace River	61,532	72	1.2
Central Kootenay	62,509	86	1.4
East Kootenay	65,896	254	3.9
Fraser Fort-George	96,979	330	3.4
Central Okanagan	222,162	2,020	9.1
Average			2.8

3 COMMUNITY PROFILE



3 COMMUNITY PROFILE

3.1 COMMUNITY PROFILE

Developing a community profile for RDBN’s Electoral Area G is an important step towards understanding the community’s present and future needs for parks and recreation. As of 2021, the planning area had a total population of 836, accounting for approximately 2.2% of the population of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako. Based on 2021 Statistics Canada Census data, Electoral Area G experienced a 7.4% population decrease between 2016 and 2021. However, the Regional District believes that the census may have undercounted the population, suggesting that the actual decline might not be as significant, and the population has remained relatively stable throughout the planning area since 2011.

The primary population centers within the planning area are the District of Houston and the Village of Granisle. The area is home to several unincorporated communities in addition to these population centres, including Fort Babine, Kuldo, Tachet, Perow, Buck Flats, Old Fort, Smithers Landing, Topley, and Topley Landing. Since 2016, the population increased by 2.0% in the District of Houston and grew by 11.2% in the Village of Granisle. However, like in the rural areas, it is acknowledged by these communities that these estimates may be inaccurate, and it is believed that their populations have likely remained relatively unchanged since the 2011 census. An additional 1,000 people reside in the First Nations communities.

Table 9 – Current and Projected Population

	2021 Census Population	Population Density (per km ²)	Percent of Total Population
RDBN	37,737	0.5	100%
Electoral Area G	836	0.1	2.2%
District of Houston	3,052	41.9	8.1%
Village of Granisle	337	8.5	0.9%

Age distribution, household incomes, and industrial activities are pivotal demographic factors shaping the recommendations in this Master Plan. The Statistics Canada Census Reports (2021) unveil key characteristics about the planning areas:

Average Age

- Electoral Area G has an average age of 46.6, which is slightly higher than the RDBN (41.1) and British Columbia (43.1).

Household Incomes

- In 2020, the median annual household income in Electoral Area G was \$81,000, which is slightly lower than British Columbia and RDBN (both at \$85,000).

Key Industries

- According to the 2021 Census, the largest employment sectors are agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, followed by manufacturing and construction. The area is also rich in mineral resources.

These demographic trends underscore the necessity for the parks and trails system to adapt to accommodate an aging population, but also to attract and retain families. A robust parks and trails system is an important quality of life factor for existing and new businesses, as the local economy faces challenges from declines in mining and milling industries. Given the diverse range of household incomes in Electoral Area G, it is crucial to plan for low-cost recreation opportunities in the parks and trails system.

3.2 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

3.2.1 PURPOSE

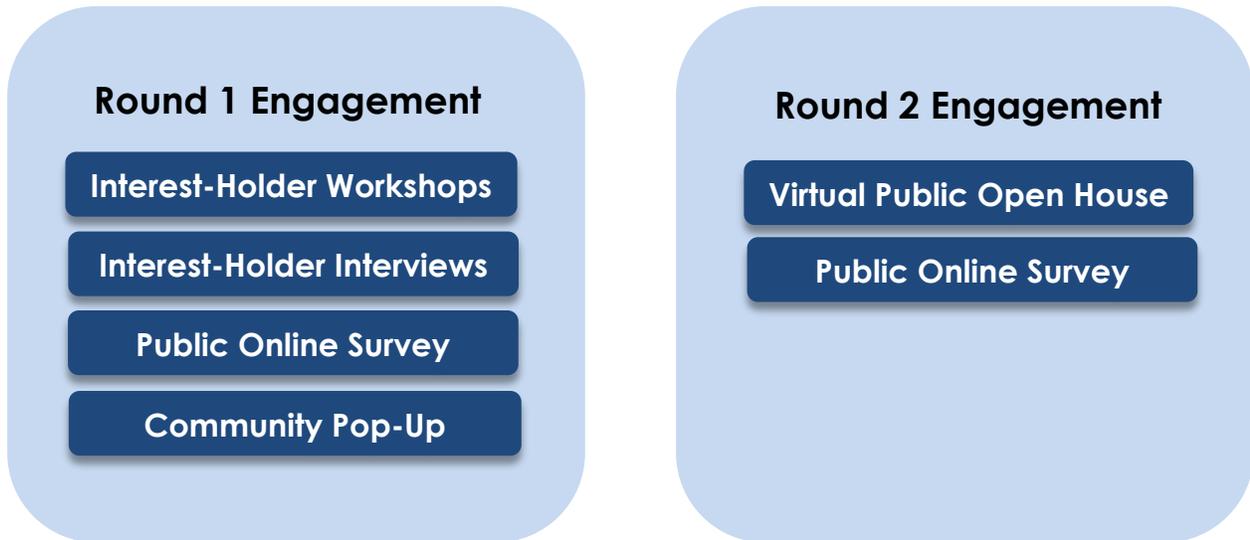
The volunteer community in the planning area, including an extensive network of community organizations and sport/interest groups, is actively engaged in the provision of recreation opportunities in Electoral Area G. Therefore, understanding the community's vision and goals for local parks and recreation is critical to the success of the Parks and Trails Master Plan. Through community engagement, significant challenges and opportunities were identified, providing key input that guided the recommendations included in this Master Plan.

The first round of community engagement, held in summer 2025, asked stakeholders and potential partners and the public to provide information about how they use parks and outdoor recreation facilities and programs within Electoral Area G. The feedback from the first round of engagement informed the vision and goals for the Draft Parks and Trails Master Plan and helped to identify potential opportunities for the future parks and trails system.

The second round of engagement, held in early 2026, asked for community feedback on draft recommendations to confirm the developed vision and goals.

3.2.2 WHAT WE DID

The following summarizes the engagement activities by phase. A detailed description of the engagement activities and findings is included in **Appendix A**.



3.2.3 PARTICIPATION

Participation included:

- 54 survey participants
- 7 participants in the interest-holder workshops
- Approximately 20 in-person engagements at the Houston Farmer’s Market

3.2.4 FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT

The RDBN invited sixteen First Nations that have indicated they have consultation interests within Electoral Area G to participate in individual rights-holder meetings. The invitation was also extended to participate in the public pop-ups and online surveys. There have been no requests for meetings to date.

The RDBN is committed to fostering robust relationships with local First Nations and acknowledges the significance of considering their interests and values. This includes the protection of culturally significant areas within the parks system. As further input is offered in the future, it will be integrated into the decision-making process.

3.2.5 WHAT WE HEARD

Several key themes emerged during engagement, including:

Key Challenges

- Volunteer capacity challenges;
- Lack of funding streams for operational work;
- Potential loss of road access, specifically Palisades, Morice Lake Park, Old Man Lake, and Nadina Mountain access are a concern;
- Concerns about the level of maintenance and quality of trails and amenities, and
- Better information and signage is needed for trails.

Opportunities

- Trail from Granisle to Topley Landing;
- Formalizing boat launches and lake access at Barrett and Klinger Lake;
- Trails and access along Old Man, Swans, and Elwin Lakes, in partnership with RSTBC;
- Access and trails along the Morice River and Morice Lake;
- Improved access to Nadina Mountain along the Owen Connector;
- Improved partnerships and collaboration between community organizations and with the RDBN, and
- Improved relationships and partnerships with First Nations.

Priorities

- Camping and lake-related activities are the most popular activities.
- Creating and managing new trail networks was ranked as the highest priority, followed by creating connections between communities and key destinations.
- Trail signage and improved park amenities were also cited as important.

4 BENEFITS & TRENDS



4.1 BENEFITS OF PARKS AND TRAILS

The following section presents research showing that parks and trails improve health and wellbeing, advance reconciliation, strengthen local ecosystems and the environment, and provide economic growth and tourism.

Health and wellbeing

Spending time in nature and participating in outdoor recreation reduces stress and promotes social connections. In 2023, the Outdoor Recreation Council of BC (ORCBC) conducted a survey on outdoor recreation participation, highlighting the significance of outdoor recreation for creating positive social connections and preserving mental well-being during the winter. In the RDBN, the Houston Hikers, Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club, Houston Snowmobile Club and Houston Mountain Bike Association are examples of organizations that spend considerable time and energy to provide recreation opportunities, fostering a sense of community through their commitment to outdoor recreation.



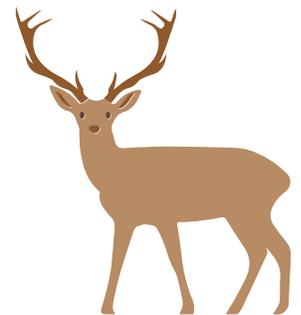
Reconciliation

The RDBN is located within the traditional territory of nearly 30 First Nations. These communities represent Dakelh, Nedut'en, Tse'khene, and Wet'suwet'en people. Addressing the impact of colonization on parks and trails is essential to building respectful relationships with First Nations to support governance on their traditional territories. One example is to support language revitalization programs by creating initiatives with local First Nations to introduce First Nations place naming for parks and trails. Listening and sharing, with consent, the stories of parks and trails in traditional territory through educational signage and materials connects the larger comm. Practicing meaningful engagement and prioritizing First Nations' values and needs in park and trail development are crucial steps towards Reconciliation.



Environmental Benefits

According to the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA), parks and trails serve a vital role in conserving natural resources, providing wildlife habitat, safeguarding air and water quality, offsetting carbon emissions, and preserving open spaces for future generations. Engaging in stewardship and participating in volunteer activities within parks allow the public to actively contribute to preserving these spaces for the future while also increasing awareness of environmental issues at both local and global levels.



In the RDBN, parks can play a significant role in safeguarding essential ecosystems and natural features, such as rivers, lakes, spawning areas, and marshes. Their diverse and protected ecosystems serve as valuable habitat for a range of wildlife, including bears, moose, beavers, osprey, and many more.

Tourism

The RDBN’s natural attractions are becoming increasingly popular with tourists seeking outdoor activities in rural areas. As interest grows, parks and trails in the area may become significant tourist destinations. Additionally, visitors are likely to stop in local communities to stock up on supplies before embarking on outdoor adventures, potentially boosting economic activity.



Economic Benefits

Parks and trails encourage people to get outside and move, contributing to long-term reductions in healthcare costs associated with the health burden of physical inactivity and associated chronic diseases. Research suggests that even a 10% increase in physical activity rates among Canadians could lead to a substantial \$280 billion reduction in direct healthcare costs⁵.



Parks and trails serve as attractive destinations for both visitors and residents. The infrastructure of these parks and trails provides opportunities for generating revenue through various means, including venue rentals, events, educational programs, and interpretive activities. A 2020 study reveals that outdoor recreation in British Columbia contributes over 15 billion dollars in economic value to the residents of the province each year⁶.

⁵ BC Provincial Health Services Authority, 2019

⁶ Patrick Lloyd-Smith, The Economic Benefits of Recreation in Canada, accessed November 17, 2023, https://plloydsmith.github.io/files/LloydSmith_RecCJE.pdf.

4.2 TRENDS OF PARKS AND TRAILS

The following section examines key trends shaping parks and trails in Area G, including climate change, communication and wayfinding, recreation, accessibility, park use, and volunteer capacity.

Climate Change

Northern British Columbia is experiencing effects of climate change that contribute to wildfire risk, extreme weather events, and other changes that impact residents' health and community infrastructure. To adapt existing parks and plan for new parks, prioritizing strategies to address climate change in operational practices, maintenance considerations, and park acquisition is critical. The RDBN needs to understand how emergency access and wildfires might impact parks and trails infrastructure, incorporate FireSmart practices for buildings and key access points, and ensure forests and ecosystems are managed for human safety and ecosystem health.



Wayfinding

Interpretive signage and guided tours within parks can help educate park visitors to learn about the area they are exploring, providing a more profound and meaningful experience beyond just being present in the space. In discussions with stakeholders, the suggestion emerged that parks could benefit from an increased presence of interpretive panels, which offer valuable information to visitors.



Industry

Access to many important outdoor recreation locations is via forest service roads currently maintained by those in the mining and forest industry. Outdoor recreation investment will need to be focused in areas where continued maintenance of access roads will continue in the long-term.

Recreation

Activities such as hiking, walking, snowshoeing, kayaking, canoeing, swimming, and fishing continue to increase in popularity in the RDBN. Trends in recreation activity highlight the importance of planning and managing for diverse use and potential conflicts associated with shared use of parks.

The Bulkley-Nechako area provides outstanding opportunities to view undisturbed wildlife in remote locations, a growing attraction across Northern BC. Wildlife viewing offers a flexible, equipment-light activity suitable for all ages. However, educating park visitors is crucial to ensuring public safety during wildlife viewing and to minimizing human-wildlife conflicts effectively.



Accessibility

With an aging population in the RDBN Area 'G', a growing number of individuals will face mobility challenges at a time when the significance of staying active and getting outdoors increases. In parks, providing a range of options that are safe and enjoyable for seniors and those with limited mobility are critical to increase the accessibility of parks and trails. These amenities can be used by people of all age groups, including parents with strollers and children.



The issue of accessibility extends beyond the younger and older demographics. According to the Canadian Survey on Disability Reports, in 2017, 22% of the Canadian population aged 15 and older had one or more disabilities, ranging from mild to severe (Canada, 2020). These disabilities pose challenges in accessing parks and trails to the most vulnerable members of the community. Trails that are safe and easily accessible play a crucial role in encouraging and empowering children and youth to engage in physical activity.

Year-Round Park Use

The RDBN experiences winter weather conditions for approximately six months each year. Encouraging and embracing outdoor recreation during this period is essential to keep people active and engaged with parks throughout the entire year. By providing opportunities for these winter activities, parks can cater to a broader range of visitors and ensure that the enjoyment of outdoor spaces extends beyond the warmer months. The Houston Snowmobile Club is one example of a group in the RDBN that works hard to maintain the safety of trails for snowmobiling in the winter.



Volunteerism

The ORCBC study (2023) emphasized that volunteer retention can be challenging, with factors such as burnout and aging demographics contributing to this issue. Outdoor recreation clubs expressed that the burden of work falls on the same few volunteers consistently. The combination of an ageing volunteer base and a relatively small population presents difficulties in meeting a high level of trail maintenance. Providing support to build community capacity and volunteerism is crucial to sustaining a network of volunteers with shared priorities.



5 VISION & GOALS



5.1 VISION

The RDBN's Parks and Trails Service for Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) will:

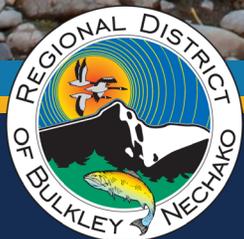
- **Build on Community Strengths.** The RDBN seeks to build upon the strengths of the recreation services provided by others, including First Nations, and recreation organizations. These partnerships will create a cohesive and sustainable system that enhances the overall recreational experience for all.
- **Create Safe Connections.** The parks and trails system will support connections between residents and key recreation and community destinations, focusing on accessible and multi-use linkages.
- **Provide Diverse and Accessible Recreation Opportunities.** The parks and trails system will offer diverse and accessible recreation options for all ages and abilities that will lead to increased participation in outdoor activities, increased health and well-being for residents, and enhanced tourism capacity. This will be achieved by maintaining and improving existing infrastructure and creating new or expanded parks, trails, and amenities to address gaps.
- **Celebrate the Region's Natural Beauty and Unique Features.** The parks and trails system will facilitate access to unique natural features and important community destinations and will contribute to a sense of place that attracts residents and visitors to the region.
- **Support a Diversified Economy.** The parks and trails system in Electoral Area G will support a vibrant economy and expansion of tourism by developing high-quality outdoor recreation amenities that enhance quality of life and attract residents and visitors to the region.

5.2 GOALS

Five goals emerged to support the RDBN in achieving the vision for parks and trail. Each goal is supported by specific recommendations to be accomplished over the next 10 years. These recommendations are outlined in the next section.

- **Goal 1:** Define the RDBN approach to the delivery of the Parks and Trails Service in Electoral Area G.
- **Goal 2:** Strengthen partnerships and build community capacity.
- **Goal 3:** Improve access to outdoor recreation opportunities.
- **Goal 4:** Enhance the user experience at parks and trails.
- **Goal 5:** Enhance outdoor recreation and cultural tourism opportunities.

6 RECOMMENDATIONS



The following section outlines key recommendations specific to each goal for Electoral Area G.

GOAL 1: DEFINE THE APPROACH TO THE DELIVERY OF THE PARKS AND TRAILS SERVICE IN ELECTORAL AREA G

This goal focuses on establishing a comprehensive approach to the delivery of parks and trails services in Electoral Area G. By providing clear frameworks and consistent evaluations, this goal ensures the safety, proper maintenance, and strategic allocation of resources for the parks and trails within the electoral area.

Recommendation 1.1

Continue to engage with other levels of government and community organizations to identify and prioritize opportunities for the RDBN to provide parks and trails through partnerships or through direct acquisition and management.

This could take the form of a parks and trails “working group”. An example of this model is the Shuswap Trails Alliance, which brings together interest-holders across all sectors to one table for regular meetings to discuss, collaborate, coordinate, and share resources and knowledge. By bringing interest-holders together, the RDBN will help build community capacity and volunteerism and can also help identify ways to remove administrative burdens and increase collaboration toward shared priorities.

The members could be invited from First Nations, District of Houston, Village of Granisle, BC Parks, RSTBC, local outdoor recreation organizations, local stewardship organizations, local outdoor recreation businesses, youth representatives, etc.

Recommendation 1.2

Establish a service level for parks and trails, in line with the standards for other service areas. For future parks and trails, develop management plans and update the plans every five years. Include considerations for level of maintenance, developing/upgrading infrastructure, universal accessibility and protection for environmentally sensitive areas, and invasive species management. Where the RDBN takes on ownership or management of parks and trails, conduct inspections as described in the RDBN Parks and Trails Inspection and Maintenance Policy. This will ensure parks and trails are safe and well-maintained, and that appropriate resources and budget are allocated to maintenance.

Recommendation 1.3

Continue to work with First Nations communities, other levels of government, and community groups to maintain and expand land use agreements for recreation and conservation. Within this, continue to advocate for continued maintenance of forest service roads (FSRs) that link to important outdoor recreation locations.

Recommendation 1.4

Consider adding staff to support the implementation of parks and trails projects in Electoral Area G and across the RDBN's four parks and trails service areas, ensuring equitable distribution of staff time between the service areas.

GOAL 2: STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS AND BUILD COMMUNITY CAPACITY

This goal emphasizes the importance of building robust partnerships and enhancing community capacity in the realm of parks and trails services. By fostering collaboration, providing financial support, and expanding land use agreements, this goal aims to build a stronger community foundation and ensure effective management and development of parks and trails services.

Recommendation 2.1

Continue to build relationships with First Nations and prioritize protection and enhancement of cultural and ecological values.

Recommendation 2.2

Continue to implement the Recreation Contribution Grant Program that provides allocation of multi-year funding to recreation organizations providing recreation services. Continue to monitor the program's success and adjust funding and reporting criteria as needed.

Recommendation 2.3

Facilitate collaboration between outdoor recreation groups who are actively engaged in maintaining parks and trail features within Electoral Area G and promote the RDBN's ability to support through grant writing and coordination between different levels of government. Continue to increase awareness of the RDBN's capacity to support outdoor recreation organizations.

GOAL 3: IMPROVE ACCESS TO OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

This goal focuses on expanding access to a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, including lakeshores, rivers, trails, and viewpoints. The recommendations below primarily arose during the first round of engagement.

Recommendation 3.1

Work with the Village of Granisle to explore the development of a multi-use trail between Granisle and Topley Landing. This potential connection could provide active transportation options for residents and visitors travelling between various destinations along Babine Lake. The proposed trail will cross multiple jurisdictional boundaries and the RDBN may have an important role in facilitating coordination.

A feasibility study for a 10 kilometer trail between Granisle and Topley Landing was completed in 2021. The Village of Granisle, the RDBN, and residents have expressed interest in the potential implementation

of this trail. Further action would require coordination with BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails BC, the Ministry of Transportation and Transit, and private landowners.

Consultation with Lake Babine Nation and residents of Tachet is needed. Topics for discussion may include the protection of sensitive ecological areas along the Fulton River and Babine Lake; the protection of important cultural and archaeological sites; opportunities to connect to Tachet; and opportunities to include First Nations recognition and art in signage and interpretive elements.

Recommendation 3.2

Collaborate with Recreation Sites and Trails BC, BC Parks, and Houston Hikers to support the development of a three-lake canoe route integrated with Old Man Lake Park. The proposed route will connect Old Man, Swans, and Elwin Lakes by designated portages.

Recommendation 3.3

Collaborate with BC Parks and RSTBC to establish a trail connection from Nadina Mountain Park to the Owen Lake recreation site. Consult with Felix George No. 7 IR located adjacent to the recreation site north of Owen Lake before initiating this work. This would improve access to the Nadina Mountain climbing area and hiking opportunity.

Recommendation 3.4

Continue advocating with the Province of BC to stop decommissioning and ensure continued maintenance of important access roads for outdoor recreation and tourism. Prioritize investment in parks and trails along access roads most likely to receive continued maintenance.

GOAL 4: ENHANCE THE USER EXPERIENCE AT PARKS AND TRAILS

This goal aims to improve overall user experience within parks and trails. By prioritizing accessibility, information availability, cultural inclusion, and amenity expansion, this goal aims to create an enriched and user-friendly environment within parks and trails, enhancing community enjoyment and engagement.

Recommendation 4.1

Follow accessibility standards, such as the [Universal Design Guide](#) by BC Parks, when establishing or upgrading trails.

Recommendation 4.2

Collaborate with the Houston Mountain Bike Association to establish a campground near the Mt. Harry Davis mountain biking trails.

Recommendation 4.3

Support the Houston Hikers in the enhancement and promotion of the Houston Palisades Trail as a day-hiking destination. This could include trail upgrades, signage and wayfinding upgrades, improved support amenities such as benches or picnic tables, and interpretive elements.

Recommendation 4.4

Support the Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club and Houston Hikers in the maintenance and improvement of the abundant trails and amenities around Silverthorne Lake and the Morice Wilderness Area (RSTBC) to further enhance this area as a recreation hub.

Recommendation 4.5

Work with Recreation Sites and Trails British Columbia (RSTBC) to identify priority sites for increased maintenance, management, or financial support from the RDBN. Priority sites will include locations that improve public access to lakes and shorelines, offer unique viewpoints or natural features, and have a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

GOAL 5: ENHANCE OUTDOOR RECREATION AND CULTURAL TOURISM OPPORTUNITIES

This goal focuses on enhancing the area's tourism capacity through collaboration and strategic improvements.

Recommendation 5.1

Update the RDBN's website to provide more information about outdoor recreation destinations, parks, trails, and campgrounds, including information about accessible features, safety, wayfinding, and amenities. Work with local organizations that have already done considerable work in this area, such as the Houston Hikers.

Recommendation 5.2

Develop a wayfinding and signage plan that is consistent with standards for other service areas and other service providers (BC Parks, RSTBC, District of Houston, Village of Granisle). Ensure any Regional District trails are identified with wayfinding and informational signage indicating the name of the trail as well as safety, wildlife, and accessibility information. Consider incorporating local artists and First Nations culture into signage and promotional materials.

Recommendation 5.3

Work with First Nations communities to develop a naming policy for trails and to incorporate Indigenous stories and histories into interpretive signage in trails where appropriate.

Recommendation 5.4

Explore opportunities to develop a trail on Crown lands in Electoral Area G along the route of the historic Dominion Telegraph Line. The Dominion Telegraph Line operated from 1900 to 1936 and connected Quesnel to Dawson City and the section within the RDBN is also referred to as the Yukon Telegraph Line. In 2025, the RDBN Planning Department mapped portions of the line located on Crown lands and identified its route through the five electoral areas traversed by the line, including Electoral Area G.

Within the RDBN, the Electoral Area G line segment includes some of the longest continuous stretches on Crown land. Developing a trail could be a significant local and tourist asset and would support the 2016 Statement of Significance that recognizes the line as a Provincial Historic Place, Site, and Trail.

7 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



APPENDIX A

WHAT WE HEARD REPORT

Regional District of Bulkley Nechako

Parks and Trails Master Plan – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)

Engagement Summary

LEFS
+
ASSOCIATES

Electoral Area G
(Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks
and Trails Master Plan
Engagement Summary

February 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN) is developing a Parks and Trails Master Plan for Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural). This plan will create a strategy and plan of action for parks and trails that reflects the unique character, culture, and geography of the region.

Community input is key to the success of this initiative. To make sure that the Plan reflects a community vision and a wide range of perspectives, consultation included outreach to the public and key rights and interest-holders including outdoor clubs, community groups, and Indigenous communities. Consultation with BC Parks, Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC), local governments, and organizations was also completed to coordinate efforts and build on existing infrastructure and service offerings.

The engagement series took place in two rounds which provided participants an opportunity to shape the vision and priorities for parks and trails in the area, then provide feedback on the draft Master Plan before the final revision.

Round 1 engagement included stakeholder meetings, stakeholder interviews, a public online survey, and a public pop-up event. Round 2 engagement included a public online survey, and a virtual public open house. The details of these activities are described below, and the results are summarized in this report.

1.2 FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT

The RDBN invited sixteen First Nations that have identified as having consultation ideas within the RDBN's Electoral Area G to participate in individual rights holder meetings, as well as extending the invitation to participate in the public pop-ups and online surveys. There have been no requests for meetings to date.

The RDBN is committed to fostering robust relationships with local First Nations and acknowledges the significance of considering their interests and values. This includes the protection of culturally significant areas within the parks system. As further input is offered in the future, it will be integrated into the decision-making process.

2 ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

2.1 PURPOSE OF ENGAGEMENT

The purpose of Round 1 engagement was to provide an opportunity for interest holders, rights holders, potential partners, and the public to discuss how current parks, trails, and recreation areas are meeting community needs; the challenges and opportunities of providing and operating parks and trails in the RDBN; and strategies for improved partnership and coordination.

2.2 OUTREACH AND PARTICIPATION

Public consultation activities included virtual interest-holder workshops, a public online survey, and a community pop-up event. Further details about each activity are provided below, and a summary of the results are included in this report.

A combination of phone calls, email invitations, and social media posts was used to encourage participation in the first round of engagement. The RDBN website provided a headquarters for all updates, information on how to participate, and a link to the online survey.

Engagement by the Numbers

- **54** participants in one online survey
- **5** participants in the community workshops
- In-person pop-up event at the Houston Farmer's Market

2.3 ENGAGEMENT TOOLS

2.3.1 INTEREST-HOLDER WORKSHOPS AND INTERVIEWS

Four virtual workshops were held with a diverse set of interest-holders, including local and provincial government representatives, community organizations, land managers, and youth and education groups. Interviews with individual knowledge holders were also conducted. Participants included representatives from:

- Elected officials from the RDBN Electoral Area 'G', Village of Granisle, and District of Houston
- District of Houston Leisure Services Staff
- Houston Hikers
- Houston Mountain Bike Association
- Recreation Sites and Trails BC (RSTBC) Staff
- BC Parks Staff

During these meetings and interviews, the project was introduced, and representatives were asked about their organization’s role in parks and trails. They were also asked for their feedback on any challenges or potential opportunities within parks and trails.

2.3.2 COMMUNITY POP-UP

One in-person pop-up event was held at the Houston Farmer’s Market on August 22, 2025 from 12:00-4:00 pm. Facilitators from the Regional District and LEES+Associates were present to gather feedback, guide conversation, and answer questions.

The pop-up was focused on introducing the project to the community and providing information about parks and trails planning in the area. Display boards prompted participants to share their vision for parks and trails, identify key locations they would like to see prioritized, and share what features and amenities were most important. The pop-up also encouraged participation in the online survey.

The following questions were asked on the display boards:

- What areas should be prioritized for future parks and trails?
- What features and amenities would you like to see in Regional District parks?
- What features and amenities would you like to see in Regional District trails?
- Over the next 10 years, what are the most important priorities for parks and trails?
- What is your vision for the future of parks and trails in Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle rural)?

2.3.3 PUBLIC ONLINE SURVEY

Input from the public was gathered through an online survey hosted on SurveyMonkey. A total of 54 responses were collected from August 15 – September 30, 2025. The results were collected through the online platform Survey Monkey and are summarized in Section 4.0 of this report.

3 ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

3.1 COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS AND INTERVIEWS

Elected Officials

- It was noted that a meeting was held with the Ministry of Forests at UBCM discussing a commitment to a 10km trail area between the Granisle and Topley Landing previously explored in a 2021 feasibility study by the Village of Granisle. This is a top priority for the municipality.
- It was noted that future forestry campsites and access roads will be important to trails and recreational access planning, as forestry companies may not continue to maintain some roads.
- Changes to permitting requirements mean that a larger number of permits will likely be required to establish new projects, particularly along lake shores and rivers. Strategically focusing on maintaining existing assets rather than establishing new infrastructure may reduce the number of permits required.
- Fishing along the Morice River and lake access were identified as priorities, alongside the closing of gaps in hiking trails along lake and river frontages.
- Unmaintained and unsanctioned boat launches along waterfronts present a hazard. Barrett and Klinger Lakes were identified as sites in need of improved amenities, as well as parking.
- It was shared that stronger partnerships with local First Nations are needed to support access to public recreation sites and to provide clear communication to the public, particularly as Provincial reconciliation processes may change future access to Crown land. Examples of potential actions included collaborating on culturally respectful signage that acknowledges First Nations sites and encourages responsible use.

Houston Leisure Services

- Volunteer capacity within a small population was identified as a challenge.
- Accessibility, safety, trail connectivity, and signage were identified as priorities.

Houston Hikers

- Trail maintenance and limited funding streams for operational work were identified as a challenge.
- Interest was expressed in establishing a cabin in the subalpine of Morice Mountain to support trail stewardship activities.

- Interest was expressed in establishing trails and access along Old Man, Swans and Elwin Lakes in partnership with RSTBC.

Key Locations

Morice River	Old Man Lake
Barrett Lake	Swans Lake
Klinger Lake	Elwin Lake
Owen Lake	Irrigation Lake (Dist. of Houston)
Helen Lake	By-mac Campground (Dist. of Houston)
Silverthorn Lake	Northwood Park (Dist. of Houston)

3.2 PUBLIC POP-UP

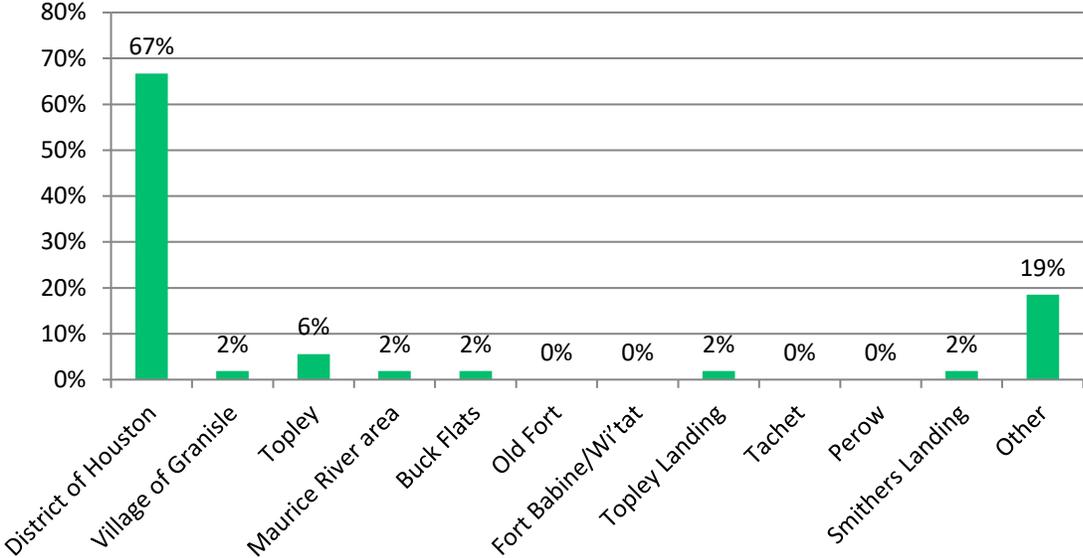
- Some participants identified the Nadina Mountain area as a potential place of interest. There is a wilderness lodge in that area, as well as the Nadina Mountain Provincial Park and Owen Lake Recreation Site.
- Concerns over maintaining road access after industry decommissioning was discussed, with specific reference to Palisades, Morice Lake Park and Nadina Mountain access along the Owen Connector.
- BC Rec Sites located close to town were described as popular and favored by locals due to their ease of access. These included Silverthorne Lake, Helen Lake, and Sunset Lake recreation sites.
- Bike trails were a popular topic, with interest expressed in safety, community connections, and having more trails developed in the area in general. Mountain biking was the main topic of these conversations, however an opportunity for introducing gravel bike trails was also identified.

3.3 PUBLIC ONLINE SURVEY

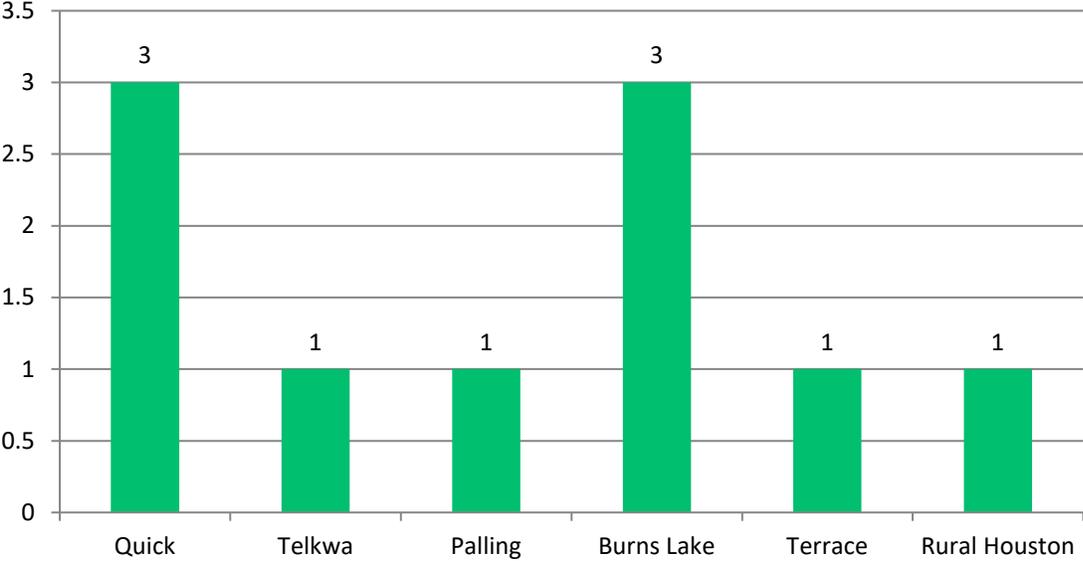
Who Responded

- The survey was completed by a total of 54 respondents.
- The majority of respondents identified as women (80%).
- The largest age group of respondents were between 35 and 49 years of age (43%).
- Less than half of respondents noted having children under the age of 18 living at home (38%).
- The majority of respondents were from the District of Houston (67%).

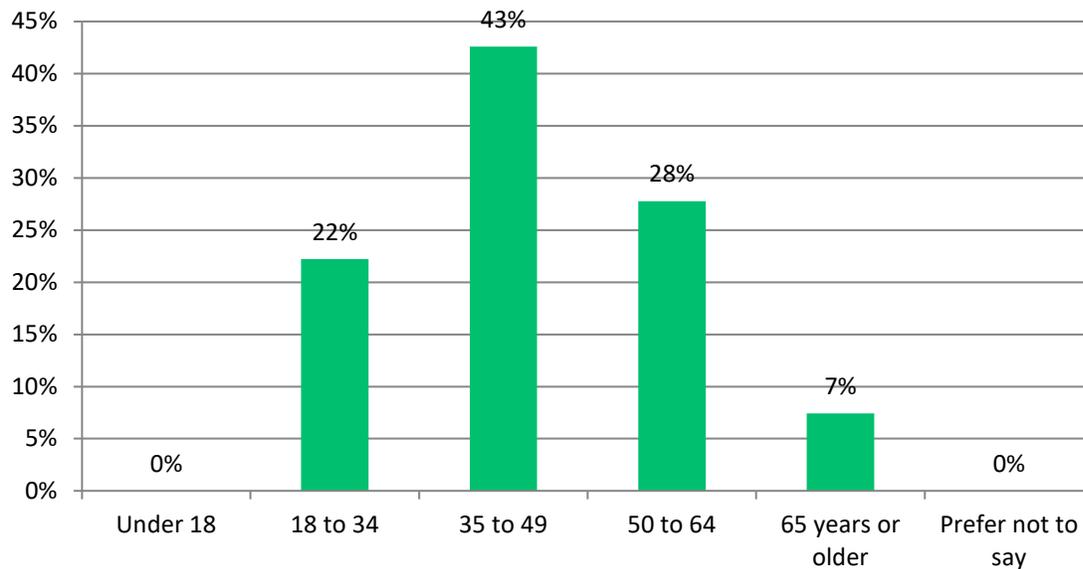
Where do you live?



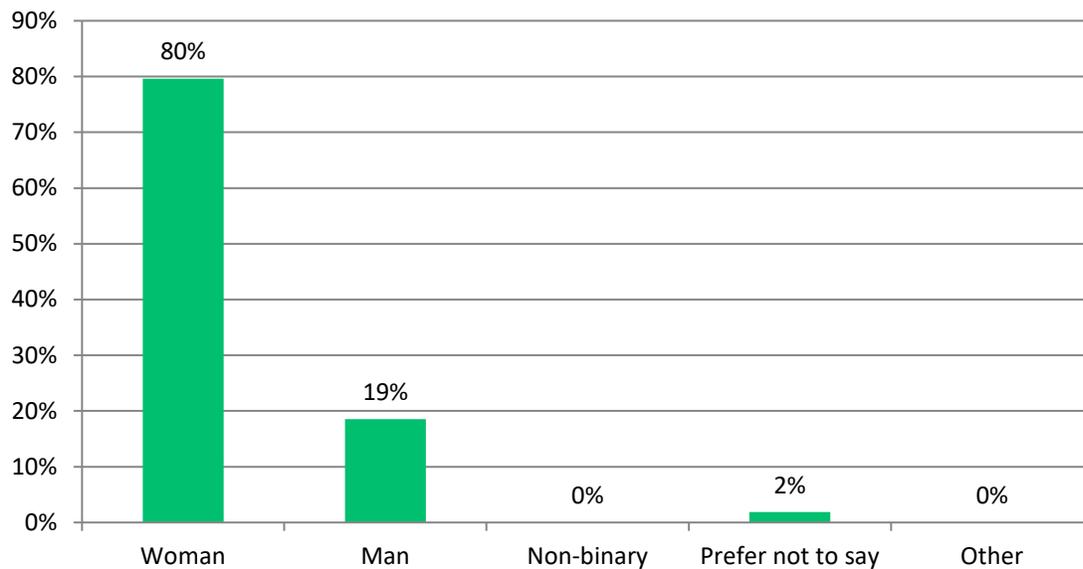
Other Areas of Residence



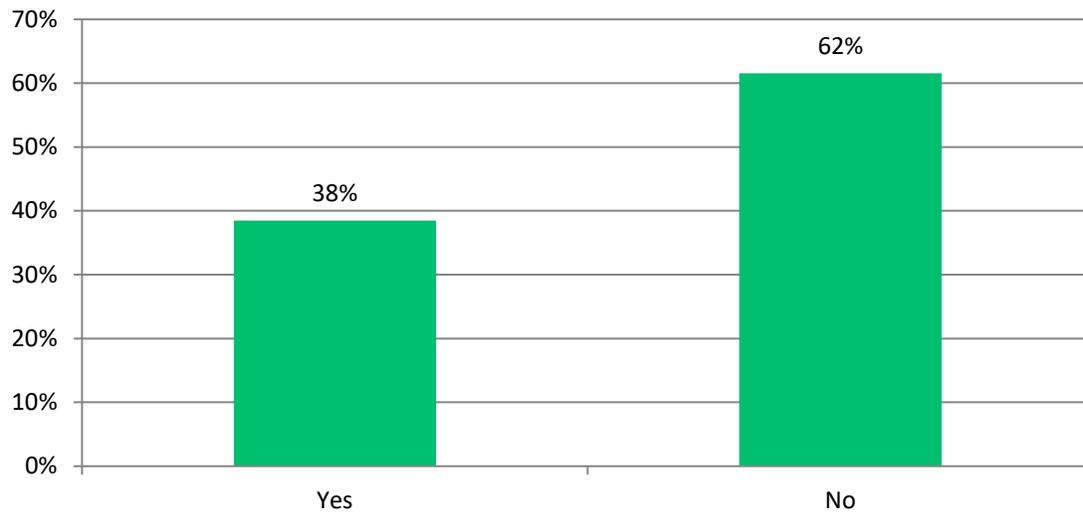
What age category are you?



What gender do you identify with?



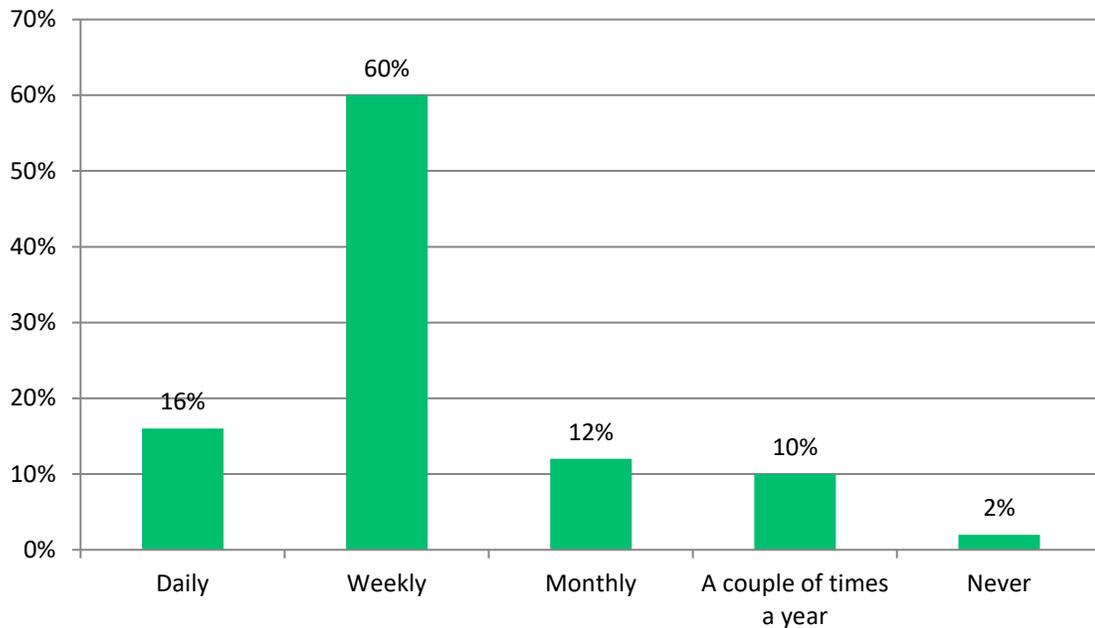
Do you have children under the age of 18 living at home?



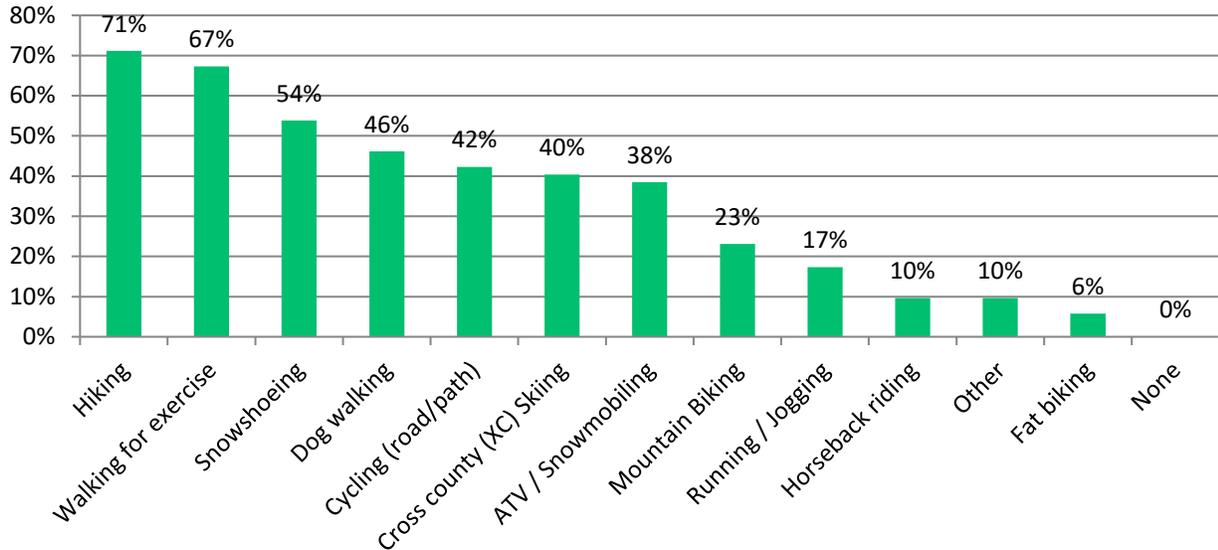
Trail Use Habits

- Roughly three-quarters of respondents noted using trails at least on a weekly basis (76%).
- The most popular trail activities among respondents were hiking (71%), walking for exercise (67%), and snowshoeing (54%).
- Though not as popular as summer activities, a significant portion of respondents reported participating in winter trail activities.
- The most popular trail activity among the children of respondents was hiking (65%), though ATV/snowmobiling (45%), cross-country skiing (45%), dog walking (40%), and mountain biking (40%) were also common responses.

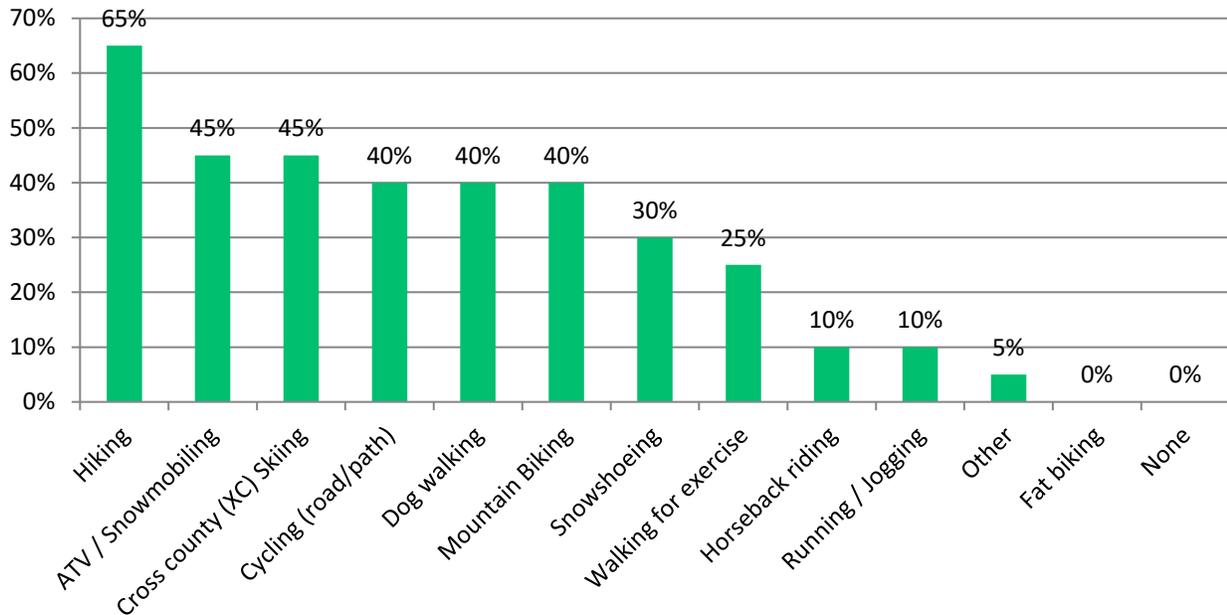
How often do you use trails?



What types of trail activities do you do most often?



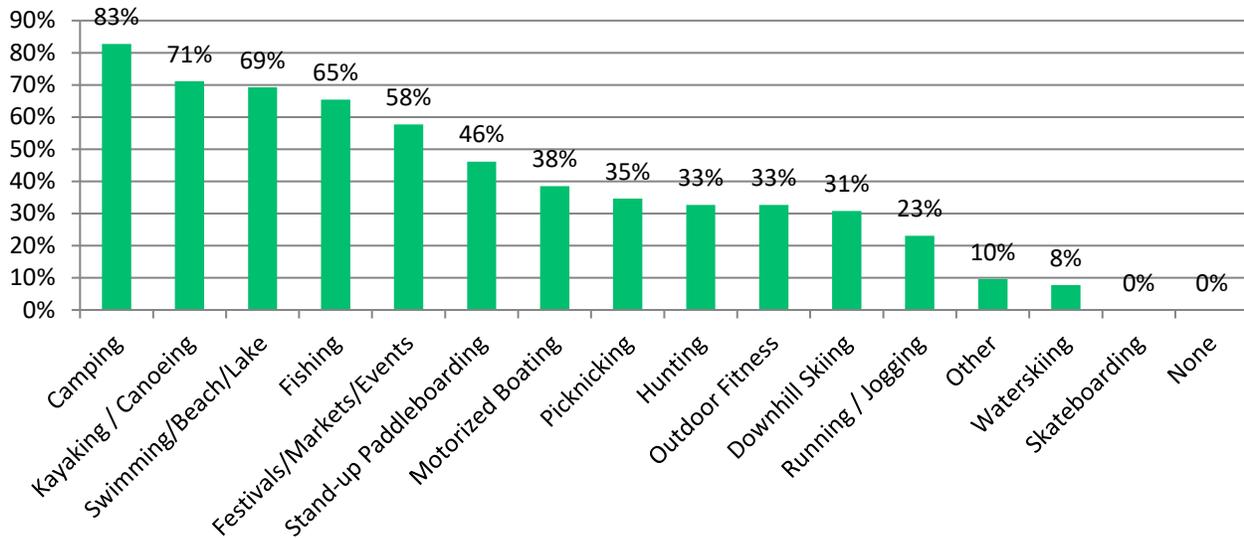
What types of trail activities do your children do most often? (Select all that apply).



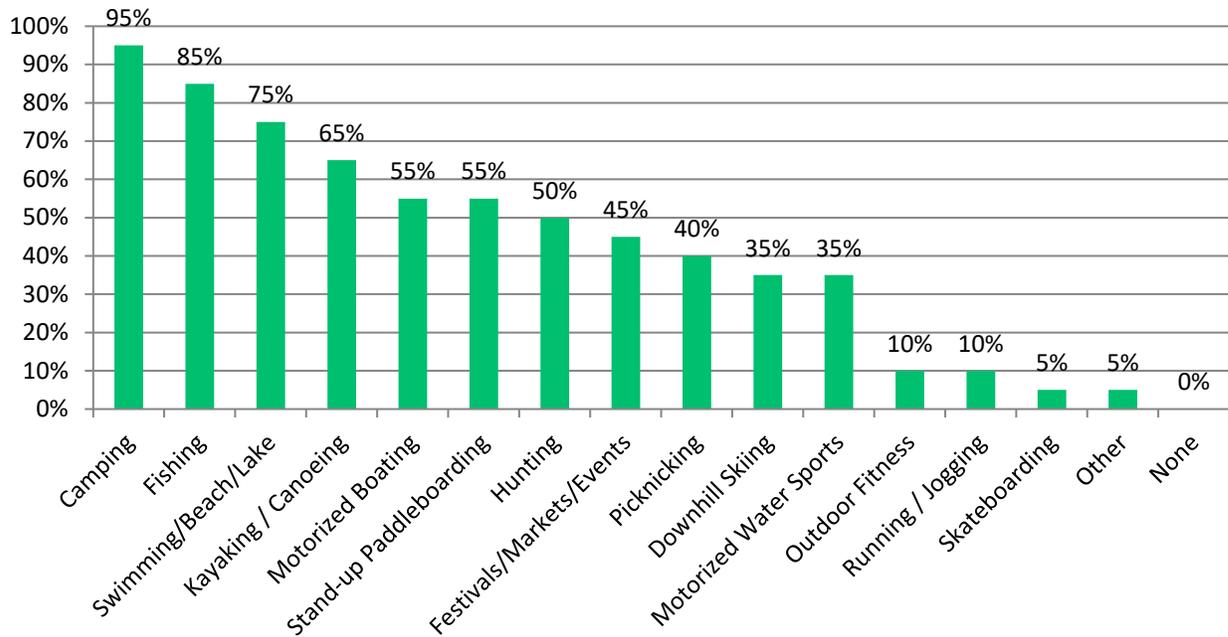
Outdoor Recreation Habits

- Camping was the most popular outdoor recreation activity among respondents (83%).
- Many respondents participated in water-based activities such as canoeing/kayaking (71%), swimming/going to the lake (69%), fishing (65%), stand-up paddleboarding (46%), and motorized boating (38%).
- The most popular outdoor recreation activities among the children of respondents were camping (95%), fishing (85%), and swimming/going to the lake (75%).

What types outdoor activities do you enjoy?
 Think of all seasons and times of the year.
 (Select all that apply).



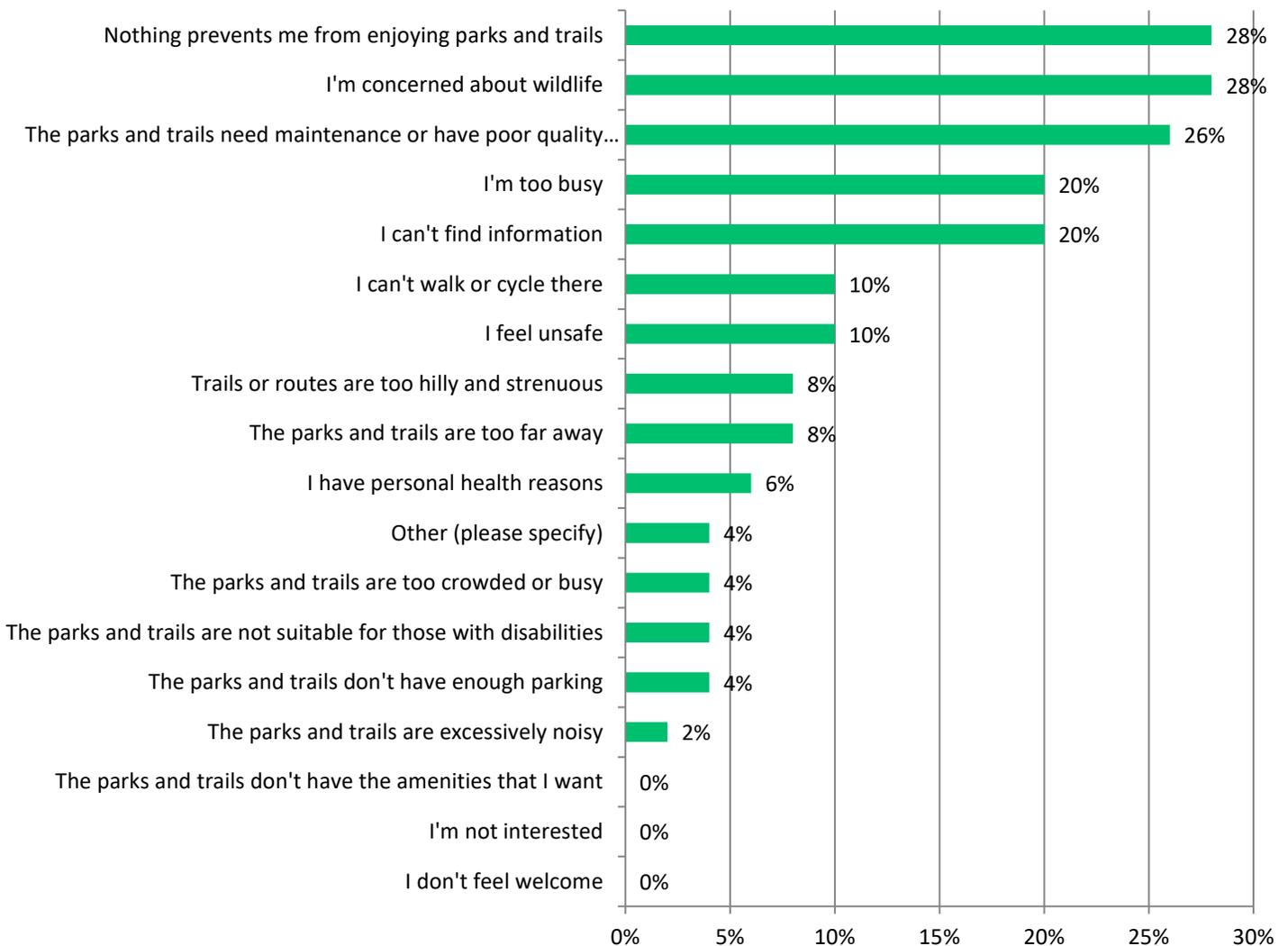
What types outdoor activities do your children enjoy? Think of all seasons and times of the year. (Select all that apply).



Barriers to Accessing Outdoor Recreation

- The primary barriers to using parks and trails more often were wildlife concerns (28%), poor park and trail maintenance (26%), a lack of information (20%), and being too busy (20%).
- Roughly one-quarter of respondents said they don't face any barriers in accessing parks and trails (28%).

What, if anything, keeps you from visiting parks or getting out on trails more often? (Select your top 3 reasons).



Key Destinations

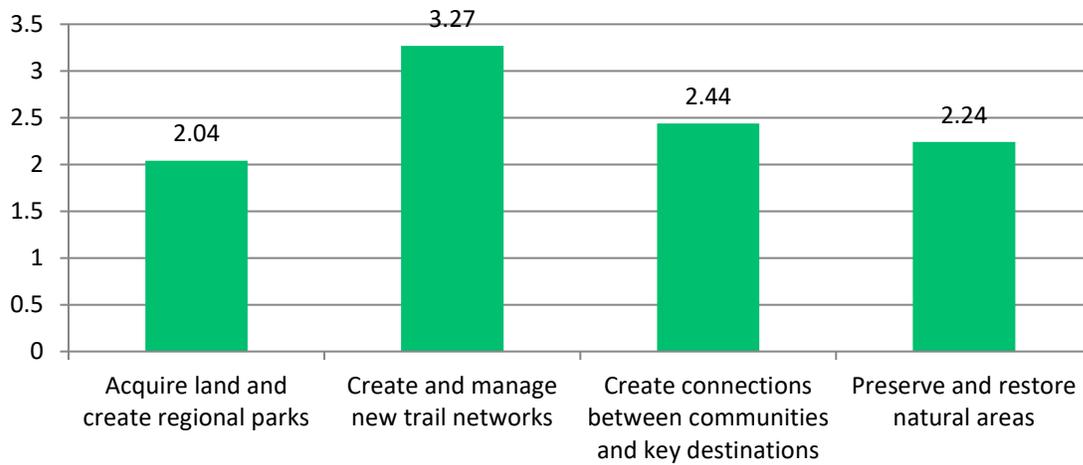
Destinations raised by engagement participants included:

- Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Club (n=10)
- China Nose Mountain (n=7) (Note: This is not in Electoral Area G)
- Babine Lake Hiking Trails (n=6)
- Equity Ice Falls (n=4)
- Barret Hat Hiking Area (n=3)
- Owen Lake (n=3)
- Duck Pond (n=2) (District of Houston)
- Telkwa Range (n=2)
- Sunset Lake (n=1)
- Buck Creek Falls (n=1)
- Perow Falls (n=1)

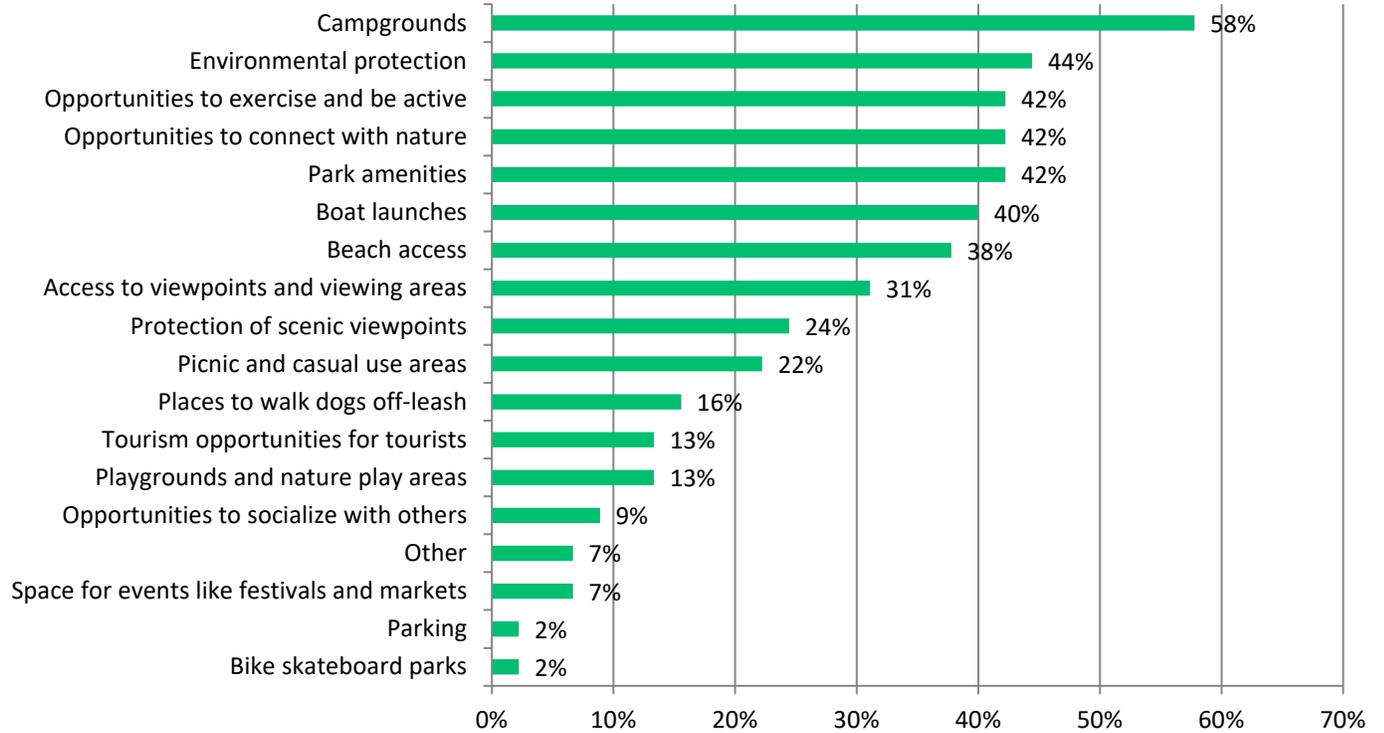
Park and Trails Priorities

- Respondents indicated that the **creation and management of new trails networks** should be prioritized over the next 10 years (Score of 3.27/4). 51% of respondents selected this as their top priority.
- The **creation of connections between communities and key destinations** was of importance to respondents (Score of 2.44/4).
- Respondents indicated that **campgrounds** (58%), **environmental protection** (44%), **opportunities to be active** (42%) and **connect with nature** (42%), and park **amenities** (42%) are their main priority for parks in Electoral Area G.
- Respondents indicated that **hiking and walking** (82%), trail **signage** (49%), **improved trail connections to community amenities** (36%), **hard-surface multi-use pathways** (33%), and **ATV/snowmobile routes** (31%) are their main priorities for trails and active transportation in Electoral Area G.
- More respondents were supportive of tax increases to fund parks and trails improvements than those opposed (47% supportive compared to 29% opposed). A quarter of respondents (24%) were neutral regarding increased taxation.
- When asked what else we need to know, many respondents commented on the need for improved connectivity (n=9). Improved maintenance (n=6) and the need for more information, wayfinding, and signage (n=4) were also commonly mentioned.

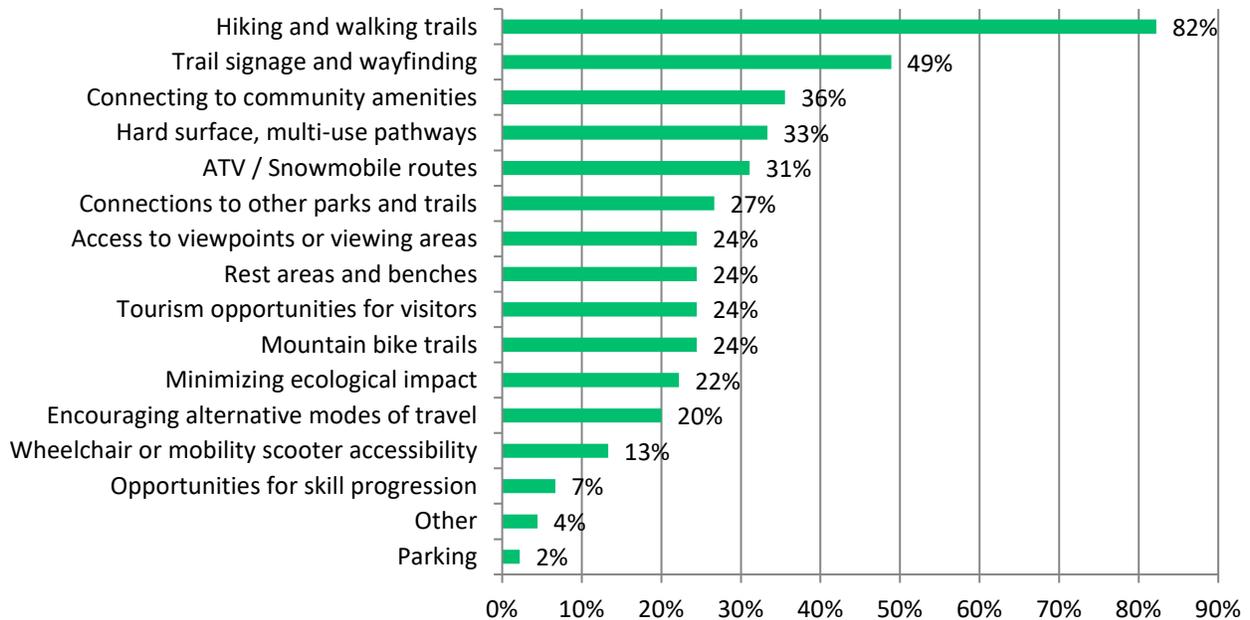
What should the RDBN prioritize in parks and trails over the next 10 years? (Rank options in order of priority).



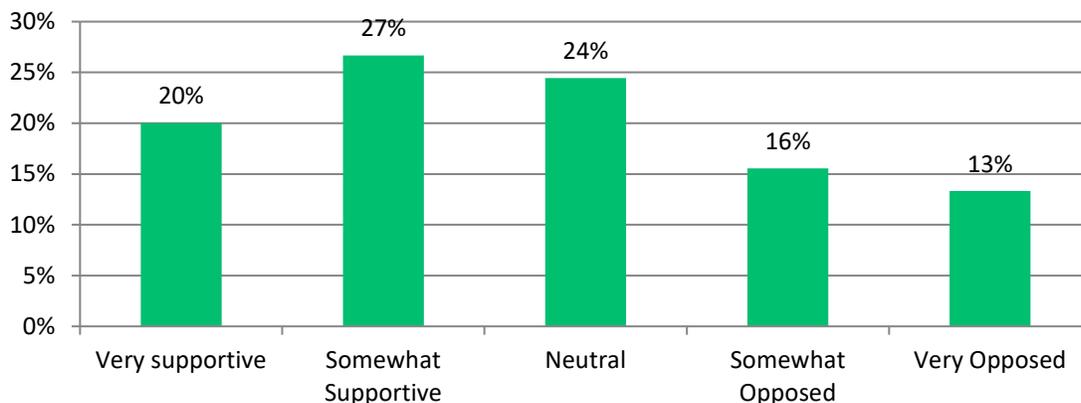
What are your main priorities for parks in Electoral Area G-Houston/Granisle Rural? (Select your top 5)



What are your main priorities for trails and active transportation in Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)? (Select your top 5).



How supportive are you of a tax increase to fund the acquisition of new parks and trails, or the development of new infrastructure in parks and trails?



4 SUMMARY OF KEY THEMES

Overall, we heard about the following key challenges, opportunities and priorities through the engagement process:

Key Challenges

- Volunteer capacity challenges;
- Lack of funding streams for operational work;
- Potential loss of road access, specifically Palisades, Morice Lake Park and Nadina Mountain access are a concern;
- Concerns about the level of maintenance and quality of trails and amenities, and
- Better information and signage is needed for trails.

Opportunities

- Trail from Granisle to Topley Landing;
- Formalizing boat launches and lake access at Barrett and Klinger Lake;
- Trails and access along Old Man, Swan, and Allen Lakes, in partnership with RSTBC;
- Access and trails along the Morice River and Morice Lake;
- Subalpine cabin on Morice Mountain;
- Nadina Mountain access along the Owen Connector;
- Improved partnerships and collaboration between community organizations and with the RDBN, and
- Improved relationships and partnerships with First Nations.

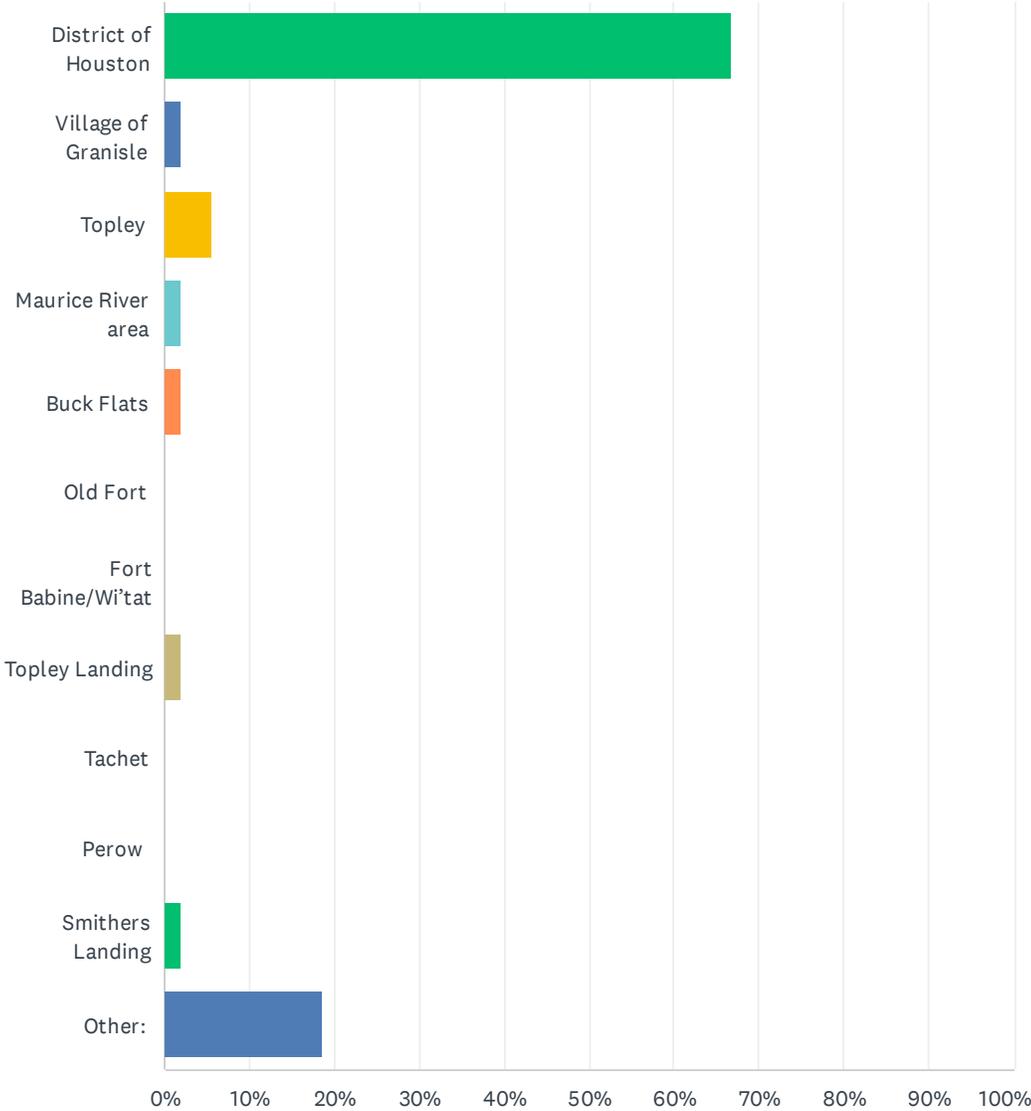
Priorities

- Camping and lake-related activities are the most popular activities.
- Creating and managing new trail networks was ranked as the highest priority, followed by creating connections between communities and key destinations.
- Trail signage and improved park amenities were also cited as important.

APPENDIX A: FULL ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Q1 Where do you live?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



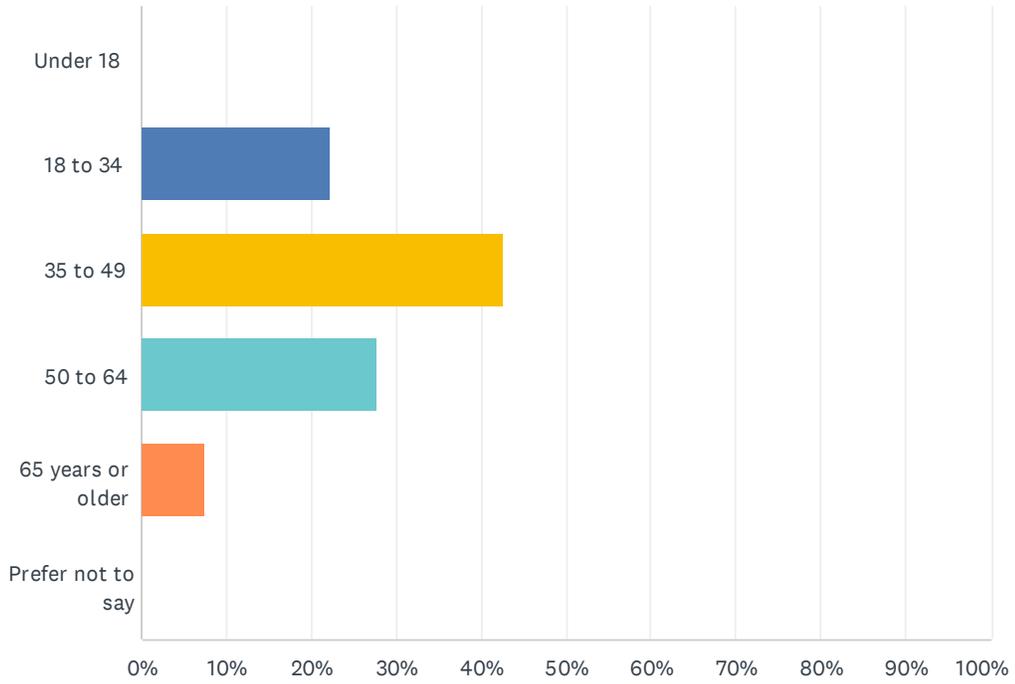
RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
District of Houston	66.67%	36
Village of Granisle	1.85%	1
Topley	5.56%	3
Maurice River area	1.85%	1
Buck Flats	1.85%	1
Old Fort	0.00%	0
Fort Babine/Wi'tat	0.00%	0
Topley Landing	1.85%	1
Tachet	0.00%	0
Perow	0.00%	0
Smithers Landing	1.85%	1
Other:	18.52%	10
TOTAL		54

#	OTHER:	DATE
1	Quick	9/26/2025 9:41 PM
2	Telkwa	9/25/2025 8:18 AM
3	Palling bc	9/23/2025 6:50 PM
4	Quick	9/23/2025 6:47 AM
5	Burns Lake	9/22/2025 8:44 AM
6	RDBN near Burns Lake	9/20/2025 7:26 AM
7	Burns Lake	9/19/2025 10:12 PM
8	Terrace	9/19/2025 4:43 PM
9	Rural Houston	8/28/2025 6:54 PM
10	Quick	8/26/2025 11:02 AM

Q2 What age category are you?

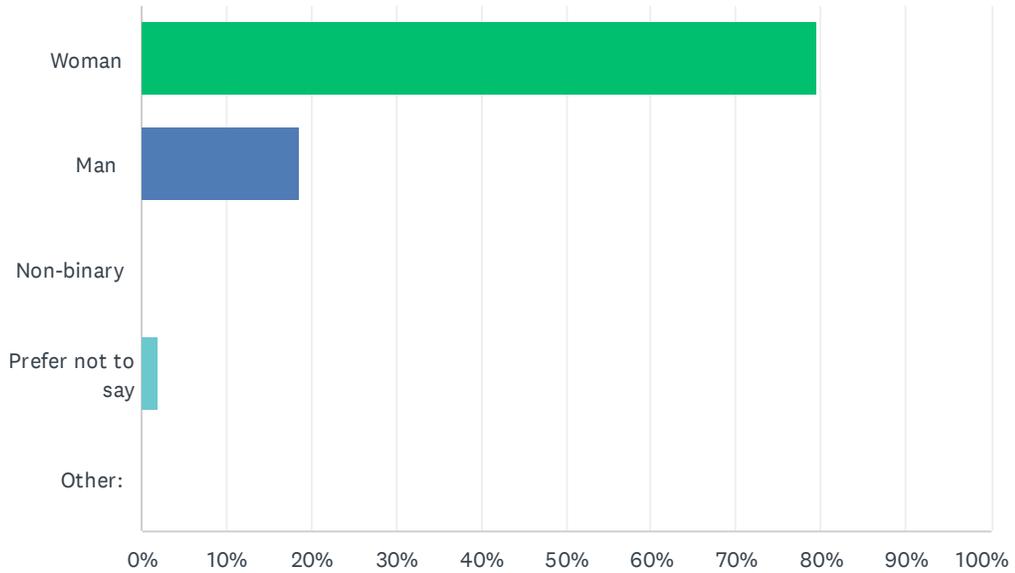
Answered: 54 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Under 18	0.00% 0
18 to 34	22.22% 12
35 to 49	42.59% 23
50 to 64	27.78% 15
65 years or older	7.41% 4
Prefer not to say	0.00% 0
TOTAL	54

Q3 What gender do you identify with?

Answered: 54 Skipped: 0

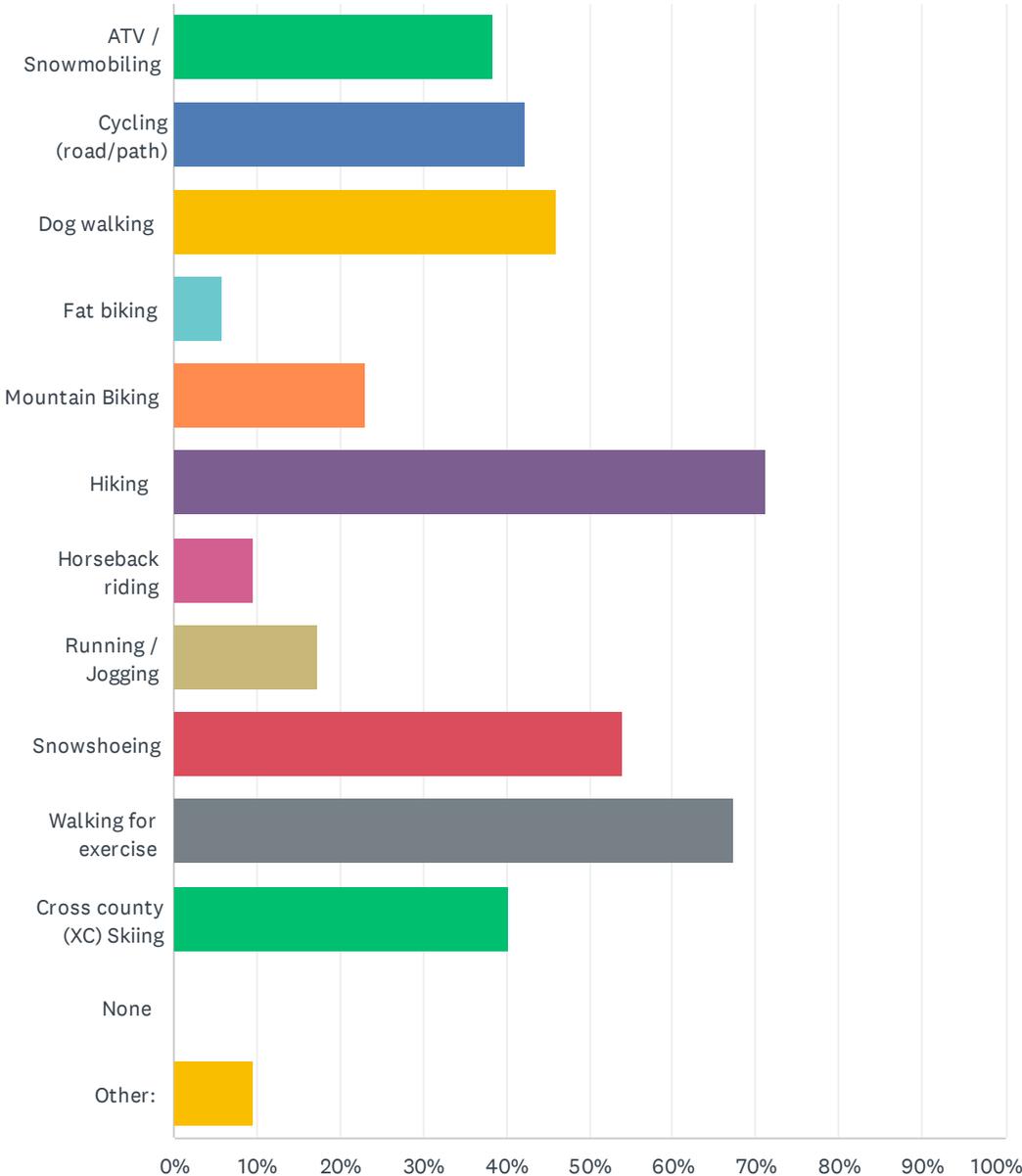


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Woman	79.63%	43
Man	18.52%	10
Non-binary	0.00%	0
Prefer not to say	1.85%	1
Other:	0.00%	0
TOTAL		54

#	OTHER:	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q4 What types of trail activities do you do most often?

Answered: 52 Skipped: 2



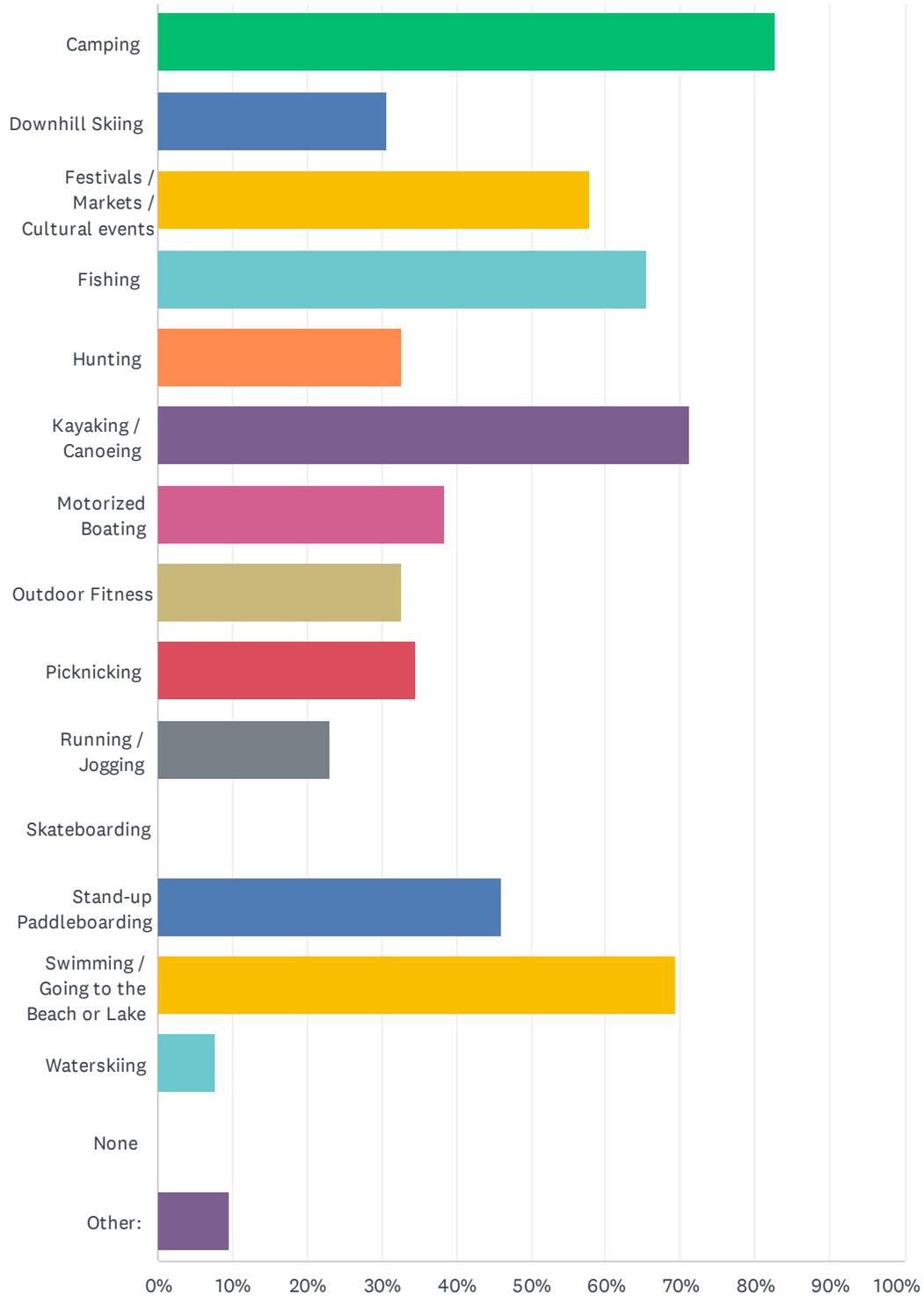
RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
ATV / Snowmobiling	38.46%	20
Cycling (road/path)	42.31%	22
Dog walking	46.15%	24
Fat biking	5.77%	3
Mountain Biking	23.08%	12
Hiking	71.15%	37
Horseback riding	9.62%	5
Running / Jogging	17.31%	9
Snowshoeing	53.85%	28
Walking for exercise	67.31%	35
Cross county (XC) Skiing	40.38%	21
None	0.00%	0
Other:	9.62%	5
Total Respondents: 52		

#	OTHER:	DATE
1	Trail grooming, falling danger trees cutting new trail	9/23/2025 6:52 PM
2	Camping, boating, fishing	9/22/2025 8:46 AM
3	Swim, paddle board	9/20/2025 7:28 AM
4	dirt biking	9/17/2025 8:30 AM
5	Portage	8/20/2025 9:01 AM

Q5 What types outdoor activities do you enjoy? Think of all seasons and times of the year. (Select all that apply).

Answered: 52 Skipped: 2



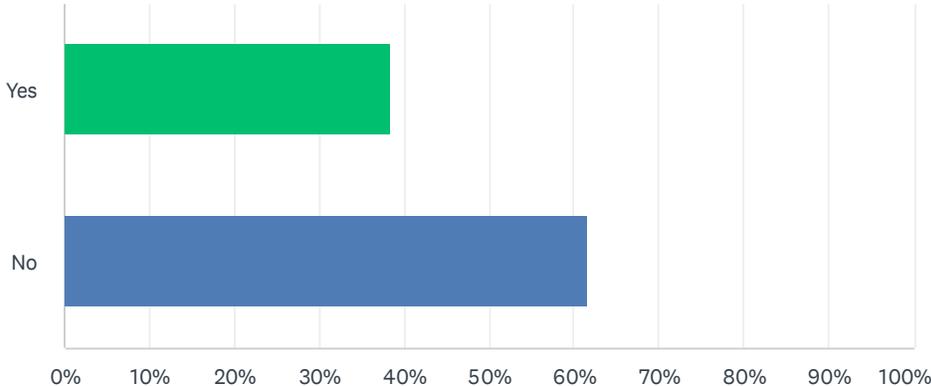
RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Camping	82.69%	43
Downhill Skiing	30.77%	16
Festivals / Markets / Cultural events	57.69%	30
Fishing	65.38%	34
Hunting	32.69%	17
Kayaking / Canoeing	71.15%	37
Motorized Boating	38.46%	20
Outdoor Fitness	32.69%	17
Picknicking	34.62%	18
Running / Jogging	23.08%	12
Skateboarding	0.00%	0
Stand-up Paddleboarding	46.15%	24
Swimming / Going to the Beach or Lake	69.23%	36
Waterskiing	7.69%	4
None	0.00%	0
Other:	9.62%	5
Total Respondents: 52		

#	OTHER:	DATE
1	Harvesting plant food and traditional medicines	9/20/2025 7:28 AM
2	Hiking	9/19/2025 4:29 PM
3	Forest Bathing	9/4/2025 12:26 PM
4	Walking	8/28/2025 6:56 PM
5	Hiking, xcountry skiing (why aren't they on this list?)	8/20/2025 9:01 AM

Q6 Do you have children under the age of 18 living at home?

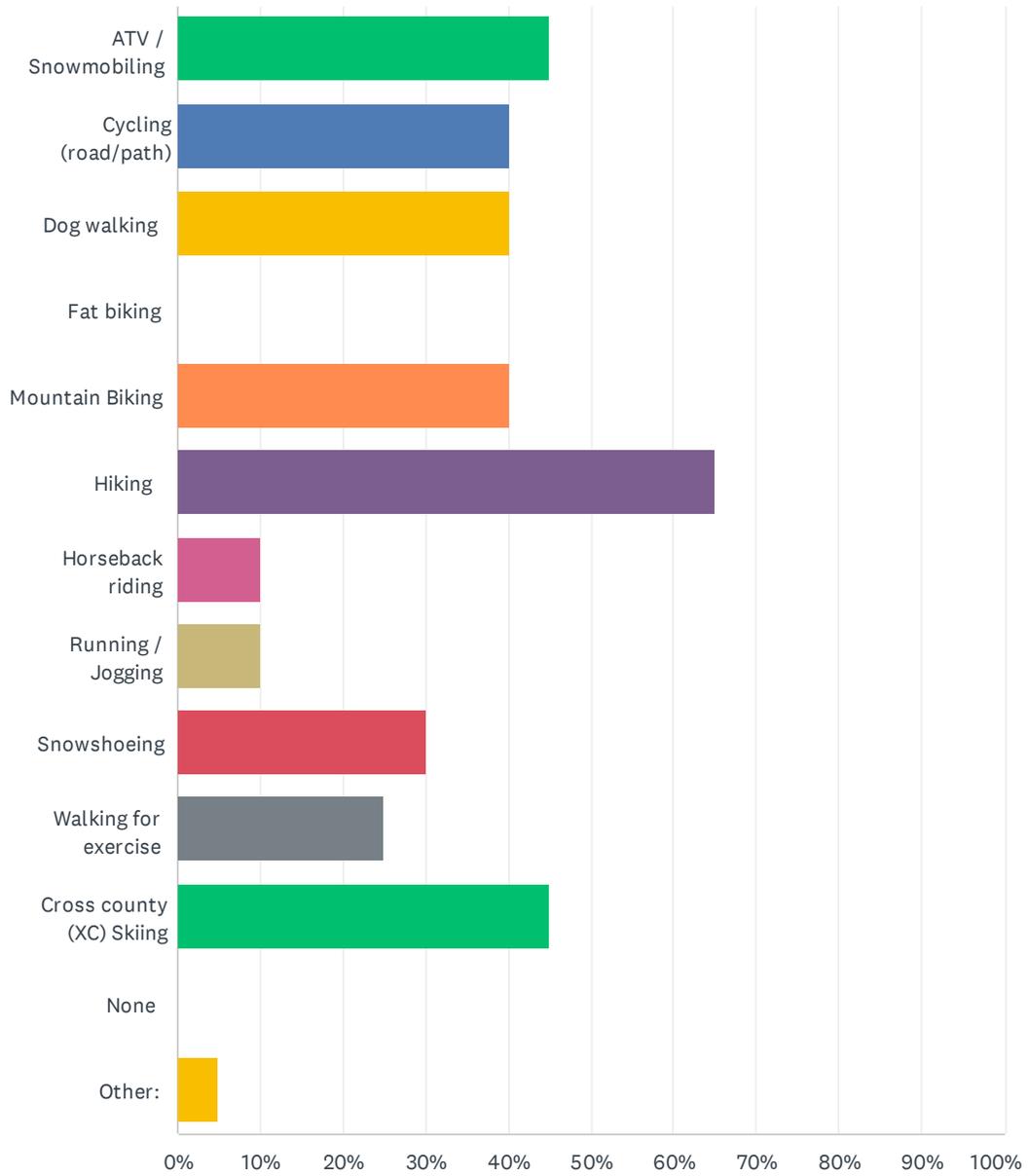
Answered: 52 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	38.46%	20
No	61.54%	32
TOTAL		52

Q7 What types of trail activities do your children do most often? (Select all that apply).

Answered: 20 Skipped: 34



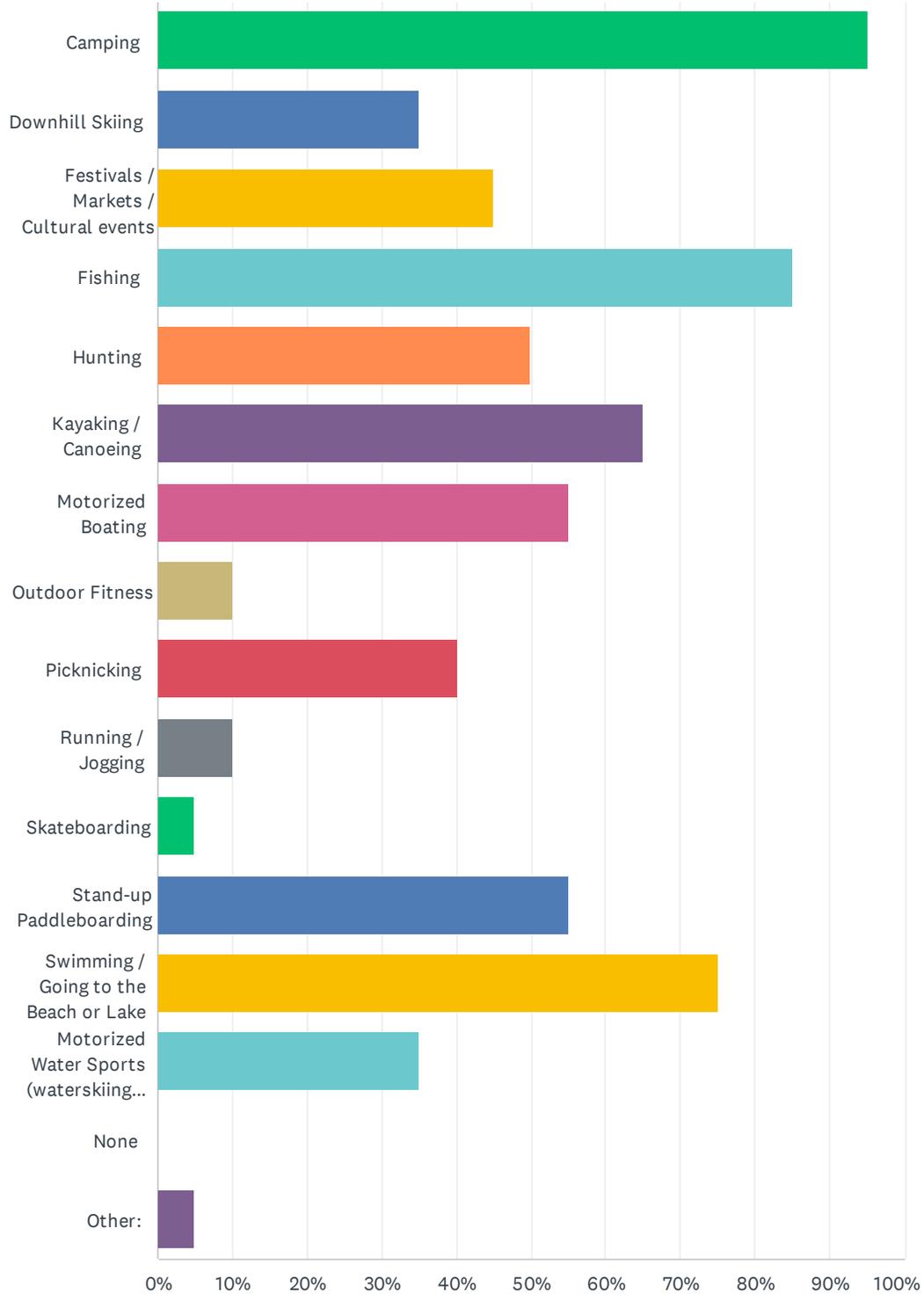
RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
ATV / Snowmobiling	45.00% 9
Cycling (road/path)	40.00% 8
Dog walking	40.00% 8
Fat biking	0.00% 0
Mountain Biking	40.00% 8
Hiking	65.00% 13
Horseback riding	10.00% 2
Running / Jogging	10.00% 2
Snowshoeing	30.00% 6
Walking for exercise	25.00% 5
Cross county (XC) Skiing	45.00% 9
None	0.00% 0
Other:	5.00% 1
Total Respondents: 20	

#	OTHER:	DATE
1	Scooter	9/19/2025 4:30 PM

Q8 What types outdoor activities do your children enjoy? Think of all seasons and times of the year. (Select all that apply).

Answered: 20 Skipped: 34



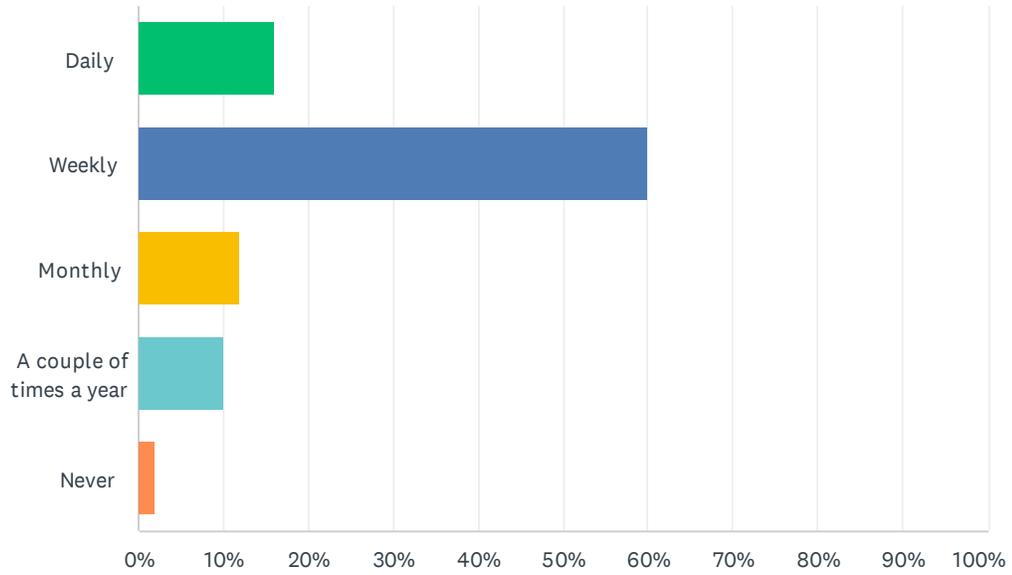
RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Camping	95.00%	19
Downhill Skiing	35.00%	7
Festivals / Markets / Cultural events	45.00%	9
Fishing	85.00%	17
Hunting	50.00%	10
Kayaking / Canoeing	65.00%	13
Motorized Boating	55.00%	11
Outdoor Fitness	10.00%	2
Picnicking	40.00%	8
Running / Jogging	10.00%	2
Skateboarding	5.00%	1
Stand-up Paddleboarding	55.00%	11
Swimming / Going to the Beach or Lake	75.00%	15
Motorized Water Sports (waterskiing, wakeboarding, tubing, etc.)	35.00%	7
None	0.00%	0
Other:	5.00%	1
Total Respondents: 20		

#	OTHER:	DATE
1	hiking, x-country skiing	8/20/2025 9:02 AM

Q9 How often do you use trails?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 4

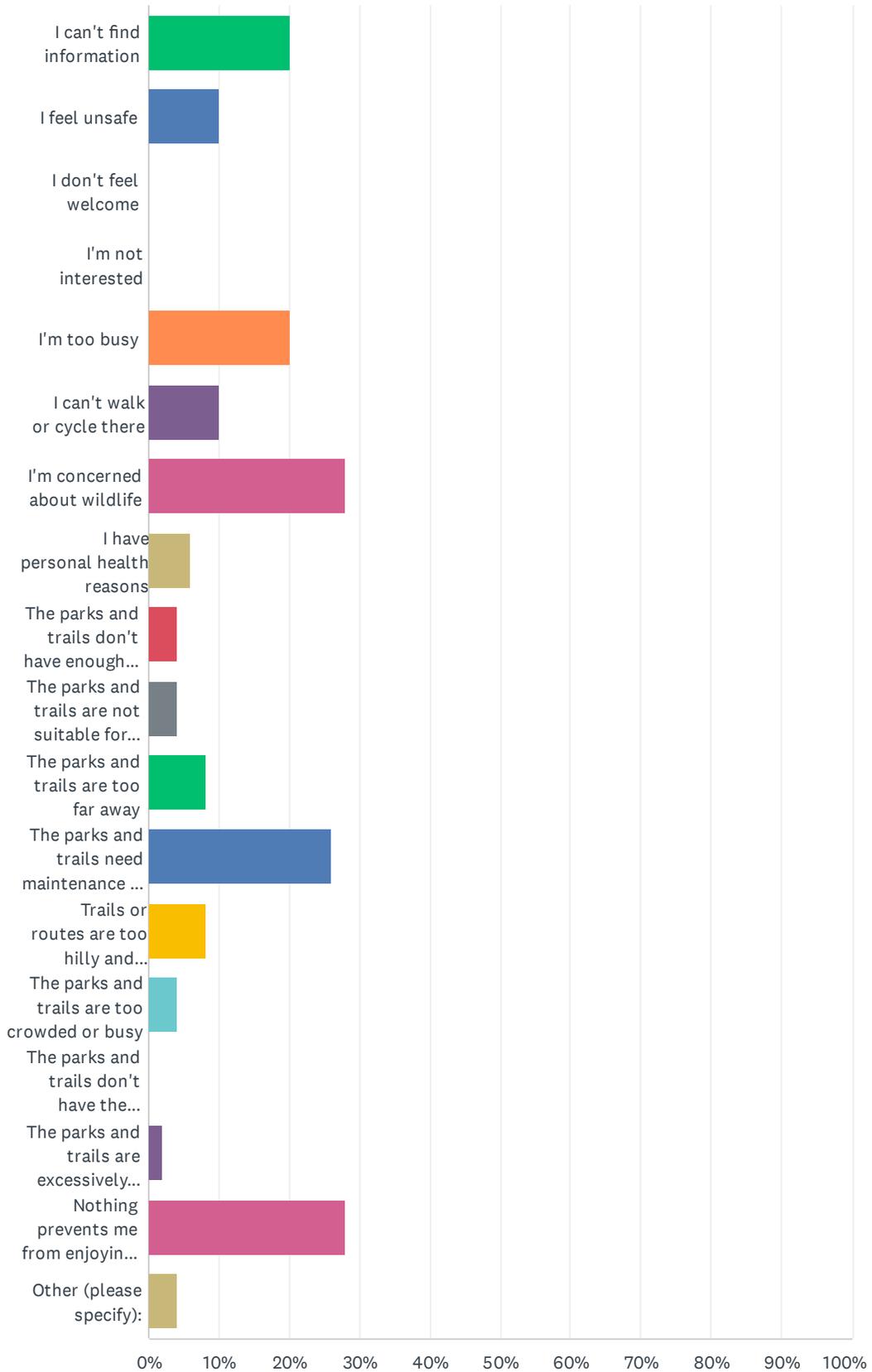


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Daily	16.00%	8
Weekly	60.00%	30
Monthly	12.00%	6
A couple of times a year	10.00%	5
Never	2.00%	1
TOTAL		50

Q10 What, if anything, keeps you from visiting parks or getting out on trails more often? (Select your top 3 reasons).

Answered: 50 Skipped: 4

RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey



RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I can't find information	20.00% 10
I feel unsafe	10.00% 5
I don't feel welcome	0.00% 0
I'm not interested	0.00% 0
I'm too busy	20.00% 10
I can't walk or cycle there	10.00% 5
I'm concerned about wildlife	28.00% 14
I have personal health reasons	6.00% 3
The parks and trails don't have enough parking	4.00% 2
The parks and trails are not suitable for those with disabilities	4.00% 2
The parks and trails are too far away	8.00% 4
The parks and trails need maintenance or have poor quality amenities	26.00% 13
Trails or routes are too hilly and strenuous	8.00% 4
The parks and trails are too crowded or busy	4.00% 2
The parks and trails don't have the amenities that I want	0.00% 0
The parks and trails are excessively noisy	2.00% 1
Nothing prevents me from enjoying parks and trails	28.00% 14
Other (please specify):	4.00% 2
Total Respondents: 50	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY):	DATE
1	The roads going to and from are not maintained (potholes, grown in, ect)	8/25/2025 9:05 AM
2	Access road conditions, brush, washouts, ruts	8/25/2025 6:34 AM

Q11 What places do you consider key destinations in Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)?

Answered: 32 Skipped: 22

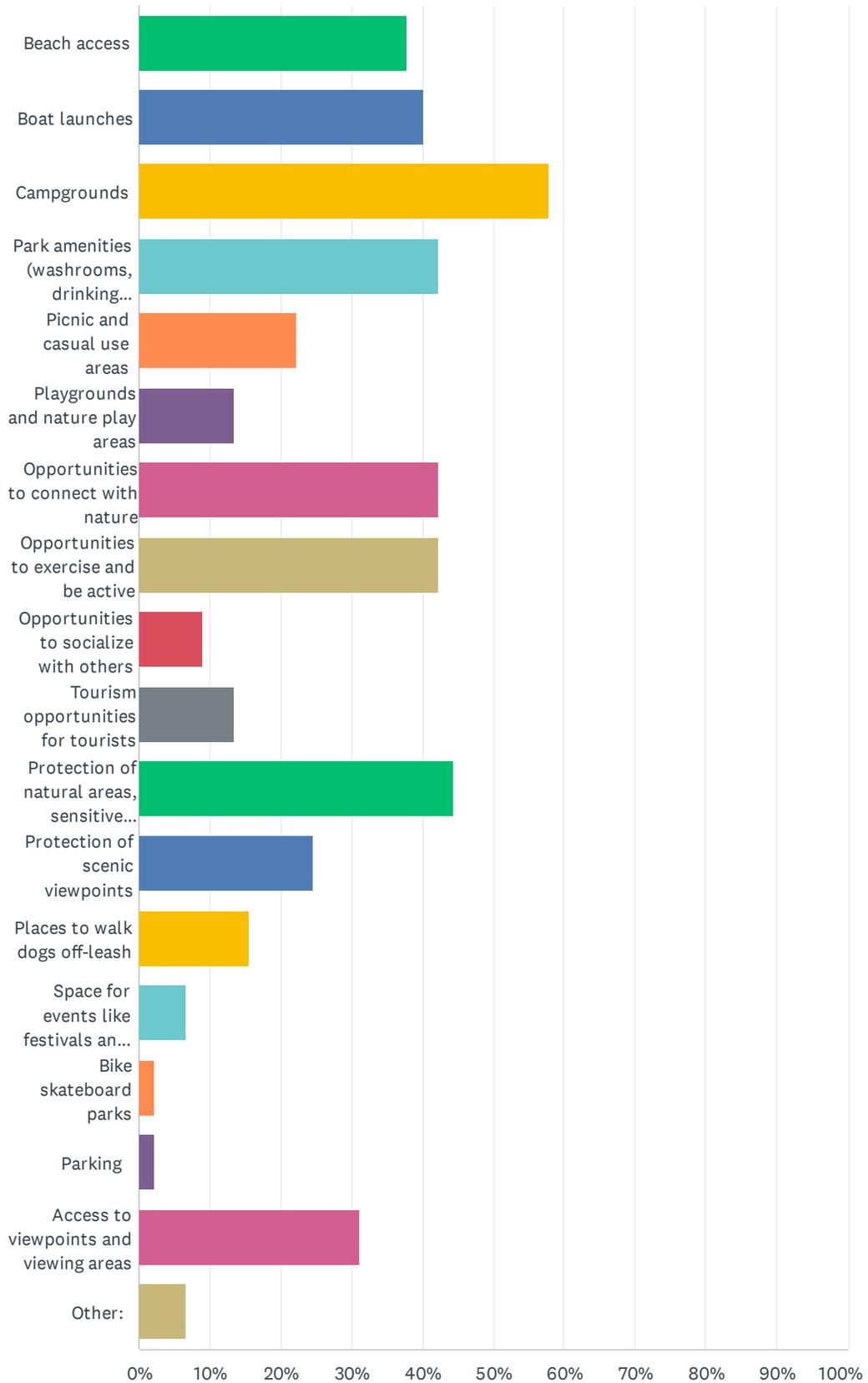
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Duck pond	9/28/2025 8:49 AM
2	We love the Equity Ice Falls for snowshoeing and hike at barret hat a few times a year in all seasons. We've been wanting to try more areas around Houston but I have a bad ankle and cannot do super steep terrain	9/26/2025 9:45 PM
3	Babine lake Hiking trails- Houston xcountry ski trails Houston walking trails- houston	9/26/2025 6:17 PM
4	China Knows mountain, Babine Lake, sunset lake, Morice mountain, telkwa Range, Owen lake	9/26/2025 2:02 PM
5	Mmns. Barrett hat. Owen lake	9/25/2025 7:46 PM
6	Road between Michelle for to Granisle	9/25/2025 8:20 AM
7	Cross country skiing	9/24/2025 7:10 PM
8	Silverthorne lake, equity ice falls	9/23/2025 9:43 PM
9	Morice Lake Campground, Aspen Campground	9/23/2025 7:06 PM
10	Babine lake Morice Mt Houston bike trails Granisle trails, trail from marina to Tachet and many more	9/23/2025 6:57 PM
11	Silverthorne lake trails	9/22/2025 9:10 AM
12	Red Bluff Provincial Park	9/22/2025 8:50 AM
13	Silverthorne lake	9/21/2025 9:41 PM
14	Morice mountain Nordic trails Silverthorne loop around the lake and old pines for biking/hiking Mount Harry Davis - mountain biking	9/21/2025 6:21 AM
15	China Knows, Owen Hat, Nadina Mountains	9/20/2025 9:35 PM
16	I visit the area for Lion's Beach, docking boat, and the hike by the fisheries	9/20/2025 7:31 AM
17	Telkwa Range, Dungen Meadows, Ailport(snowmobiling) Babine Lake-Red Bluff(camping/fishing), Morice and Bulkley rivers for fishing as well as many other lakes in the area	9/19/2025 10:17 PM
18	Irrigation lake, Steelhead Park, and the leisure facility	9/19/2025 9:38 PM
19	Silverthorne lake, China nose,	9/19/2025 7:47 PM
20	Babine Lake	9/19/2025 4:45 PM
21	China Knows. Buck Creek Falls. Perow Falls. Red Bluff Provincial Park. Morice Mountain Nordic Ski Trails, Houston Mountain Bike Association	9/19/2025 3:57 PM
22	Duck pond, Silverthorne lake, Upper Bulkley River, any lake that has fish and/or good for paddling	9/4/2025 12:28 PM
23	Red Bluff, Palisades, Aspen, Morice River, Mt. Harry Davis, Silverthorne Lake	8/26/2025 11:06 AM
24	By Mac	8/25/2025 3:04 PM
25	Babine and Houston	8/25/2025 9:48 AM
26	Lakes and Mountains.	8/25/2025 9:42 AM
27	Everywhere	8/25/2025 9:05 AM

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28	Mount Harry Davis	8/25/2025 8:50 AM
29	China Knows, Barrett Hat, mtn bike trails at Mt Harry Davis, equity falls, buck falls	8/25/2025 7:39 AM
30	China Knows, Barrett Hat, District of Houston trails	8/25/2025 6:34 AM
31	Babine lake	8/22/2025 12:58 PM
32	China Knows, Story Lookout, Peacock Falls, Morice Lake, Nadina Mtn, Morice Mtn, Owen Lake, Morice River, general backroad exploring, Equity Area, Silverthorne Lake/ski trails	8/20/2025 9:04 AM

**Q12 What are your main priorities for parks in Electoral Area G-
Houston/Granisle Rural? (Select your top 5)**

Answered: 45 Skipped: 9



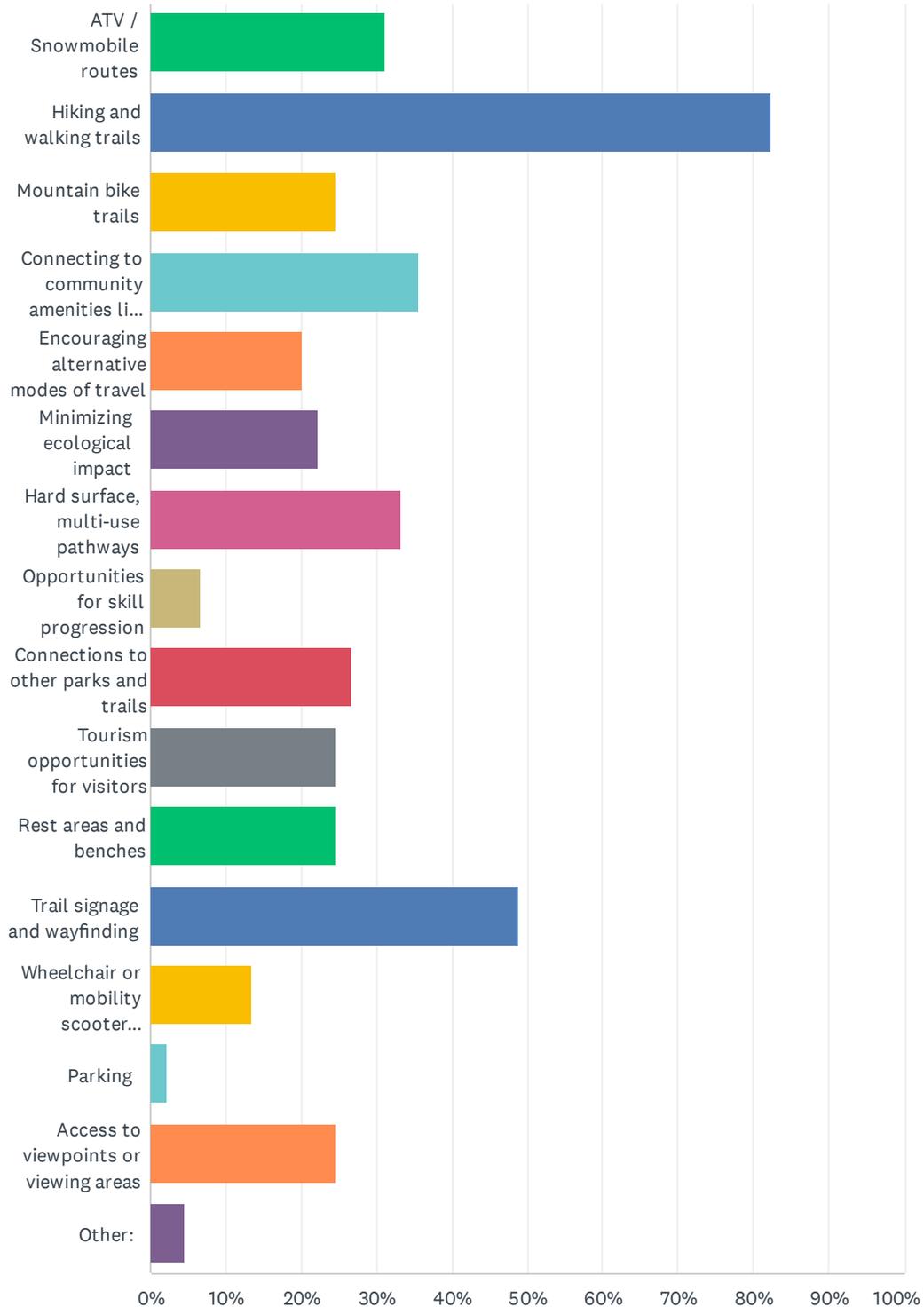
RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Beach access	37.78%	17
Boat launches	40.00%	18
Campgrounds	57.78%	26
Park amenities (washrooms, drinking fountains, benches, etc.)	42.22%	19
Picnic and casual use areas	22.22%	10
Playgrounds and nature play areas	13.33%	6
Opportunities to connect with nature	42.22%	19
Opportunities to exercise and be active	42.22%	19
Opportunities to socialize with others	8.89%	4
Tourism opportunities for tourists	13.33%	6
Protection of natural areas, sensitive ecosystems, and wildlife	44.44%	20
Protection of scenic viewpoints	24.44%	11
Places to walk dogs off-leash	15.56%	7
Space for events like festivals and markets	6.67%	3
Bike skateboard parks	2.22%	1
Parking	2.22%	1
Access to viewpoints and viewing areas	31.11%	14
Other:	6.67%	3
Total Respondents: 45		

#	OTHER:	DATE
1	Atv marked trails	9/25/2025 8:26 AM
2	Assessibility	9/25/2025 6:34 AM
3	Access to learn about local native culture	9/20/2025 7:38 AM

Q13 What are your main priorities for trails and active transportation in Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural)? (Select your top 5).

Answered: 45 Skipped: 9



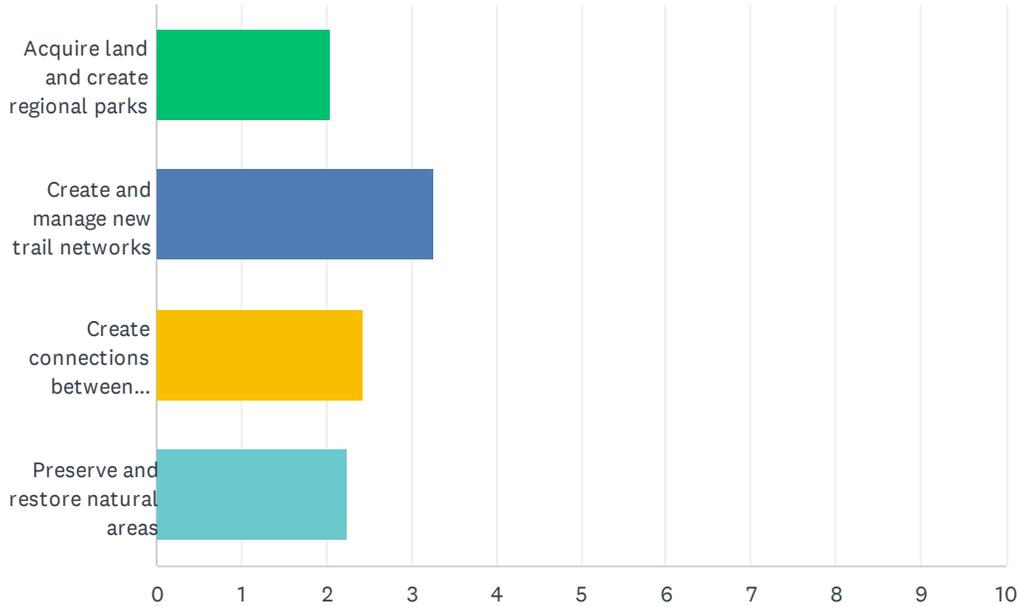
RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
ATV / Snowmobile routes	31.11%	14
Hiking and walking trails	82.22%	37
Mountain bike trails	24.44%	11
Connecting to community amenities like schools, parks, and neighbourhoods	35.56%	16
Encouraging alternative modes of travel	20.00%	9
Minimizing ecological impact	22.22%	10
Hard surface, multi-use pathways	33.33%	15
Opportunities for skill progression	6.67%	3
Connections to other parks and trails	26.67%	12
Tourism opportunities for visitors	24.44%	11
Rest areas and benches	24.44%	11
Trail signage and wayfinding	48.89%	22
Wheelchair or mobility scooter accessibility	13.33%	6
Parking	2.22%	1
Access to viewpoints or viewing areas	24.44%	11
Other:	4.44%	2
Total Respondents: 45		

#	OTHER:	DATE
1	Horseback riding	9/23/2025 6:53 AM
2	cycle path not on highway	8/25/2025 6:44 AM

Q14 What should the RDBN prioritize in parks and trails over the next 10 years? (Rank options in order of priority).

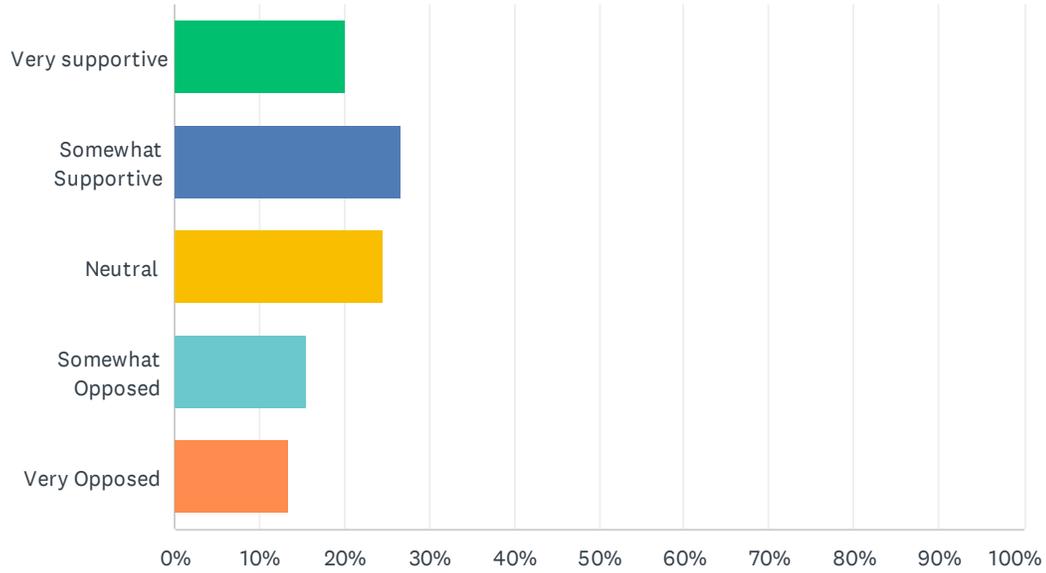
Answered: 45 Skipped: 9



	1	2	3	4	TOTAL	SCORE
Acquire land and create regional parks	13.33% 6	15.56% 7	33.33% 15	37.78% 17	45	2.04
Create and manage new trail networks	51.11% 23	26.67% 12	20.00% 9	2.22% 1	45	3.27
Create connections between communities and key destinations	17.78% 8	37.78% 17	15.56% 7	28.89% 13	45	2.44
Preserve and restore natural areas	17.78% 8	20.00% 9	31.11% 14	31.11% 14	45	2.24

Q15 How supportive are you of a tax increase to fund the acquisition of new parks and trails, or the development of new infrastructure in parks and trails?

Answered: 45 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very supportive	20.00%	9
Somewhat Supportive	26.67%	12
Neutral	24.44%	11
Somewhat Opposed	15.56%	7
Very Opposed	13.33%	6
TOTAL		45

Q16 What else do we need to know about parks and trails in Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) of the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako?

Answered: 25 Skipped: 29

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Houston has some great trails that are user and group maintained; however, granisle and topley are badly lacking any organized trails or outdoor experiences (especially if you don't have access to boating/fishing)	9/26/2025 6:22 PM
2	We have lots of tails and parks time to look after them and keep them useable	9/26/2025 2:08 PM
3	More wheelchair accessible docks and boat launches.	9/25/2025 7:48 PM
4	One should be able to drive quads to connecting places.from telkwa to Houston to Tolpley to Granisle. Review trails for atv/snowmobile New Brunswick to nova scotia, or the trail in town on Vancouver island or New Brunswick. Make town trails at accessible to town for food n gas.set speed zones and roads in the towns.all paid with membership. Connect telkwa trails at microwave to other towns	9/25/2025 8:26 AM
5	It's pretty	9/24/2025 7:12 PM
6	Keep them accessible to all skill levels and remove barriers for those requiring mobility aids in some trails. Be inclusive in the design models	9/23/2025 9:46 PM
7	The roads to the destinations around our area need more up keep. Most trails or campsites I go to require 4WD vehicle. For example the last 7 km into morice lake provincial park takes 35 minutes due to the road	9/23/2025 7:09 PM
8	Instead of creating new trails and parks funds should be made available to maintain existing infrastructure.	9/22/2025 9:00 AM
9	Houston residents have no money help save our town	9/21/2025 9:42 PM
10	The Houston Hikers site for hiking trail directions is the best in the region. Without their directions, it would be very difficult to find many of the hikes in the area	9/20/2025 9:37 PM
11	I live near Burns but would definitely travel to the area more if there were some epic trails for mountain biking and hiking. Especially some longer ones like if there was a 10k+ trail with epic viewpoints of the lake. Please work with local First Nations. Would love to see place names, history, traditional knowledge on trail.	9/20/2025 7:38 AM
12	Would be amazing to connect all of the communities from PG to Rupert with a network of ATV/Snowmobile trails similar to what exists in the Provinces to the east of BC. I believe we have way more scenic and less private land to contend with than many of the other provinces. We are missing out on huge amounts of tourism dollars here. Look up the stats from the BC Snowmobile Federation. The Burns Lake Snowmobile Club is working on developing a trail network with BC trails and recreation. Along with the network of trails access into the communities to provide riders with the local amenities like food, fuel, and accommodations would be necessary to make these trails the most successful they can be	9/19/2025 10:29 PM
13	All the local lake campgrounds need more sites, better boat launches. Sunset Lake and Morice lake need more lakeside sites. The roads to our local lakes out the Morice River road need graded monthly for people to travel out there to enjoy them. The roads are way too rough.	9/19/2025 7:54 PM
14	That a connected, established trail system would encourage local communities to be outdoors as well as prove a valuable tourism attraction.	9/19/2025 3:59 PM
15	It would be great to see connecting trails from the Houston Cross Country Ski Trails to Bymac (via the fire break that was recently created) for ATVs, horseback riding, or snowshoeing in the winter.	9/19/2025 3:57 PM

RDBN – Electoral Area G (Houston/Granisle Rural) Parks and Trails Master Plan Community Survey

16	Bike/walking paths to allow biking to work and other amenities safely and not having to bike on the highway would be amazing.	9/4/2025 12:31 PM
17	Maintenance of old areas are key as well as new improvements. Very excited for more trails and camping areas. Beach's at lakes need to be bigger and better maintained. Improvement at irrigation lake are so great. But now the beach can't accommodate the traffic	8/28/2025 7:04 PM
18	Can be hard to find current info on some of the hikes, lakes to paddle on, etc.	8/26/2025 6:20 PM
19	Trails are not well marked, additional signage needed on FSRs getting to more remote trails, MM Nordic Ski trails need better signage , more variety of trails along the Morice River and access points to swim in the river	8/26/2025 11:13 AM
20	We need to build on tourism so these projects are very important	8/25/2025 9:51 AM
21	We also need more docks at lakes as there is rarely nice beach areas.	8/25/2025 9:47 AM
22	Houston is missing out on a provincially management campground close to town	8/25/2025 8:53 AM
23	We have many trails but not enough parking or adequate funding to maintain them. Many volunteers do a lot of maintenance but it's difficult to keep up with. Better signs on trails would encourage more people to get out	8/25/2025 7:42 AM
24	Some popular trails (China Knows, Pallisades, others) are becoming difficult to access due to deteriorating access roads	8/25/2025 6:44 AM
25	1)We've lost a few rec sites over the years (Parrott Lake, Lamprey Creek, McBride Cabin), so there should be some collaboration with RSTBC to create more camping areas to offset what's been lost. 2) Regular steady funding to groups to maintain trails will help elevate the types of offerings available.	8/20/2025 9:09 AM

APPENDIX B

MAPS

RDBN Parks & Trails Master Plan Electoral Area G

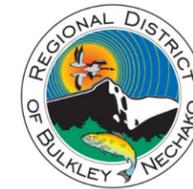
Parks and Recreation Sites Inventory

Draft v1
November 10, 2025

Client:

Consultant:

Scale: 1:1,000,000
(on 11x17 Inch Sheet)

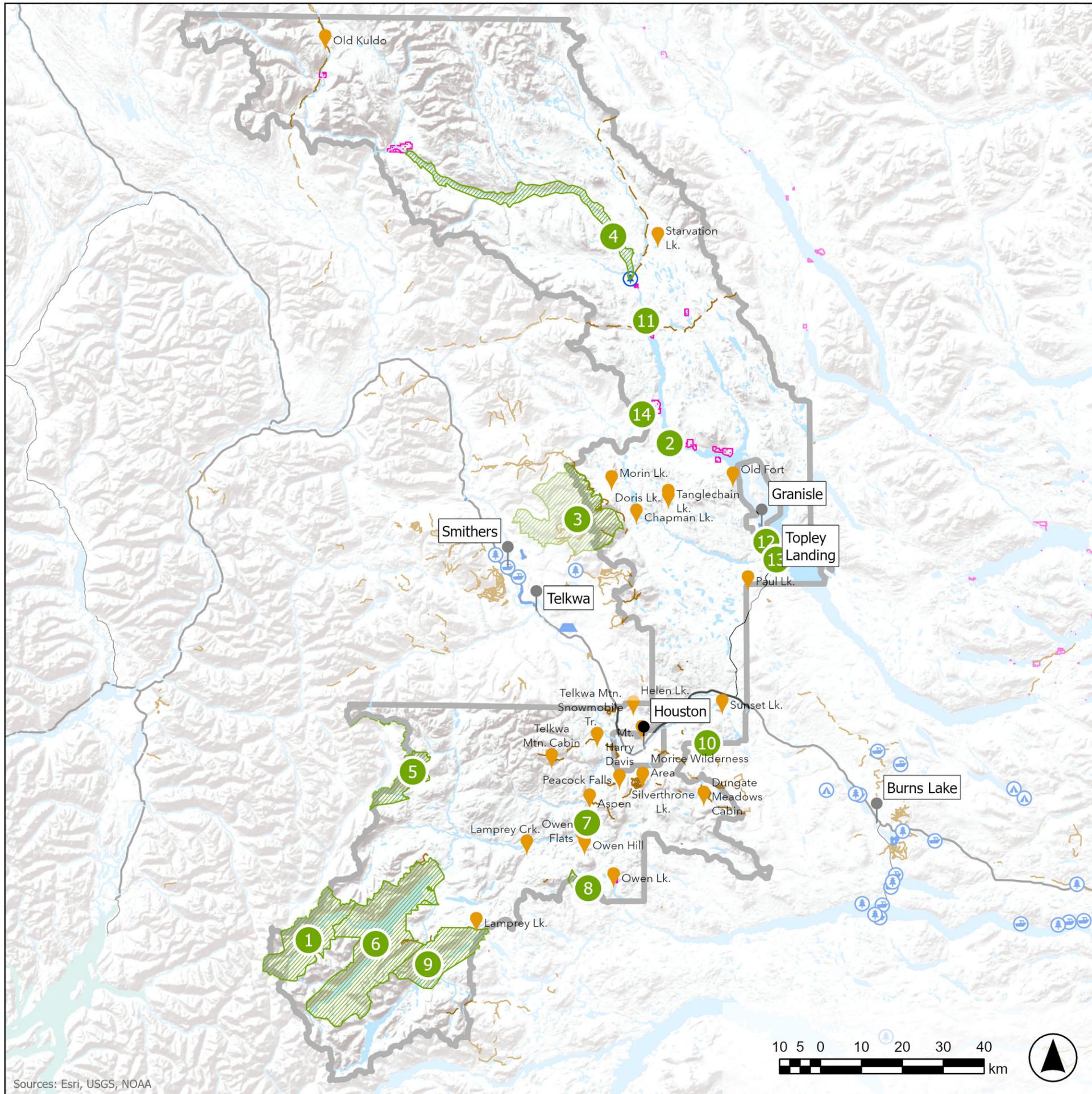


LEFS
ASSOCIATES

Legend

- | | |
|--|---------------------|
| RDBN Electoral Area G | RDBN Day Use Site |
| Municipality | RDBN Dock |
| Reserves | RDBN Regional Trail |
| Recreation Sites - Electoral Area G | BC Provincial Trail |
| BC Provincial Parks - Electoral Area G | Minor Road |
| RDBN Boat Launch | Major Road |
| RDBN Campsite | Lakes |
| | Rivers & Streams |

- 1 ATNA RIVER PARK
- 2 BABINE LAKE MARINE PARK - SMITHERS LANDING SITE
- 3 BABINE MOUNTAINS PARK
- 4 BABINE RIVER CORRIDOR PARK
- 5 BURNIE-SHEA PARK
- 6 MORICE LAKE PARK
- 7 MORICE RIVER ECOLOGICAL RESERVE
- 8 NADINA MOUNTAIN PARK
- 9 NENEIKEKH/NANIKA-KIDPRICE PARK
- 10 OLD MAN LAKE PARK
- 11 RAINBOW ALLEY PARK
- 12 RED BLUFF PARK
- 13 TOPLEY PARK
- 14 TORKELSEN LAKE ECOLOGICAL RESERVE



Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA