

The Wood River Trails Coalition presents...

The 2021 Trail Survey Project

A Discussion of Results

Hosted by The Community Library in Ketchum, ID



PRESENTATION OUTLINE



- Project Overview
- Quantitative/Trail Counters
- Comparing counts: 2012 vs. 2021
- Qualitative/Survey
- Future happenings
- Questions and Answer Session



IDENTIFYING A NEED



How many individuals are using Wood River Valley Trails?



And who are they?

2021 TRAIL SURVEY PROJECT VISION AND GOALS



Vision: Conduct a comprehensive trail surveying effort on designated National Forest trail systems in the WRV - the results of which will build capacity for current and future trail management/programming.

GOAL # 1



- ❑ **Collect reliable, accurate counts of trail usership at specified locations, which can serve as a baseline for future trail surveying efforts.**

GOAL # 2



- ❑ Administer trail use surveys to the public throughout the 2021 summer season, providing project team with relevant demographic, patterns of use, and trail preference information; collect at least 1000 responses.

GOAL # 3



- ❓ Create standard survey methodology that is easily replicable and matches resource capacities for summer 2022 and beyond.

PROJECT STRUCTURE



Tools

- 6 TRAFx infrared trail counting devices, on rotation
- Formstack survey application, administered in-person and online
- Parking lot counts, ground-truthing



Timeline

- May 29th, 2021-September 8th, 2021

Key Supporters



Zach Poff, Recreation/Winter Sports Program Manager



Lindsay Mollineaux, Executive Director

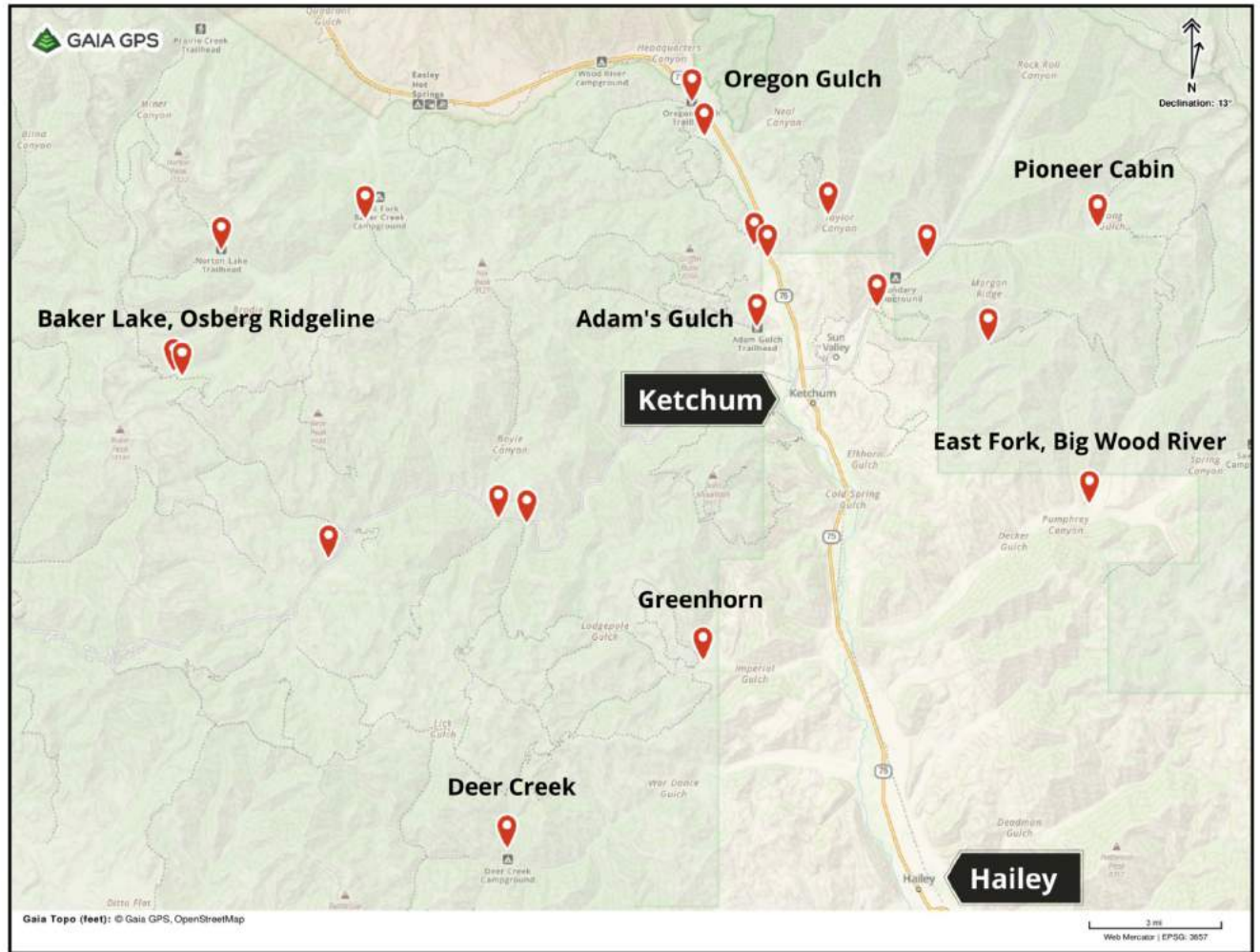


Dani Southard, Manger – Northern Rockies



Katherine Rixon, Owner/Broker

PROJECT SCOPE

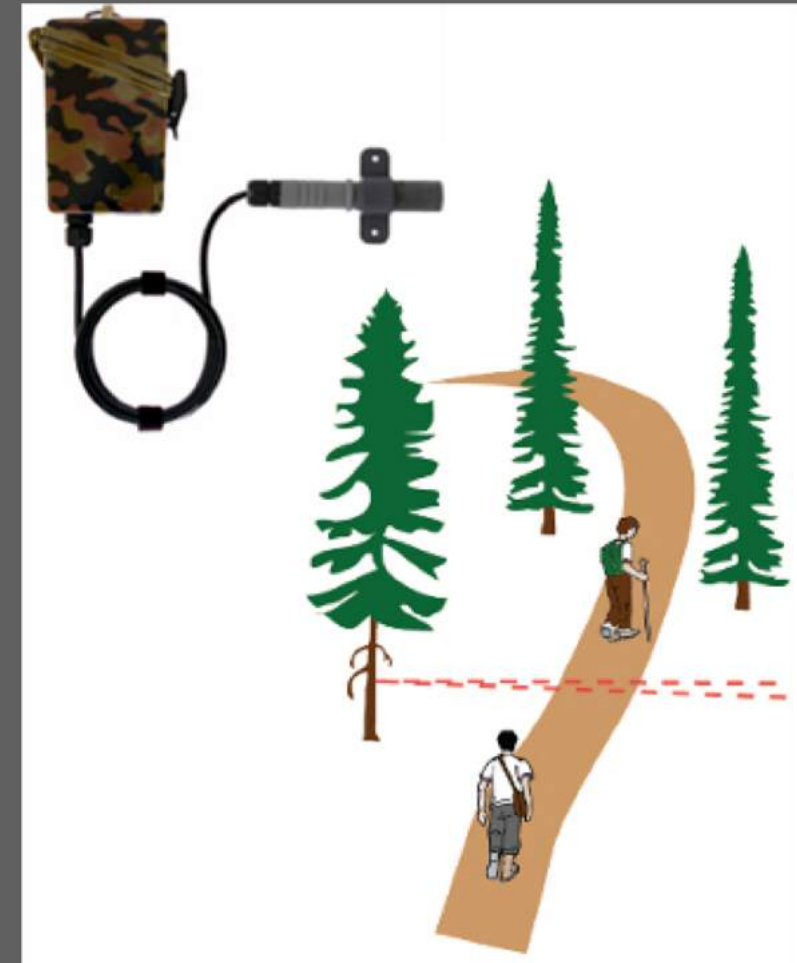


QUANTITATIVE: TRAIL COUNTERS

TRAFX INFRARED TRAIL COUNTERS



- Same tool used for 2012 Trail Survey (BCRD/SVED), similar resource assessment strategies used by Wood River Wolf Project, Sun Valley Company
- **Assumptions/Limitations**
 - Average Daily Total ≠ Other totals
 - Counter days at each location varied
 - Standard/peak summer season= 100 days (on average, 99 days from Memorial Day to Labor Day)
 - Trail “passes” vs. actual number of users – both are useful data points
 - “Out and Back” calculation; Less is More!

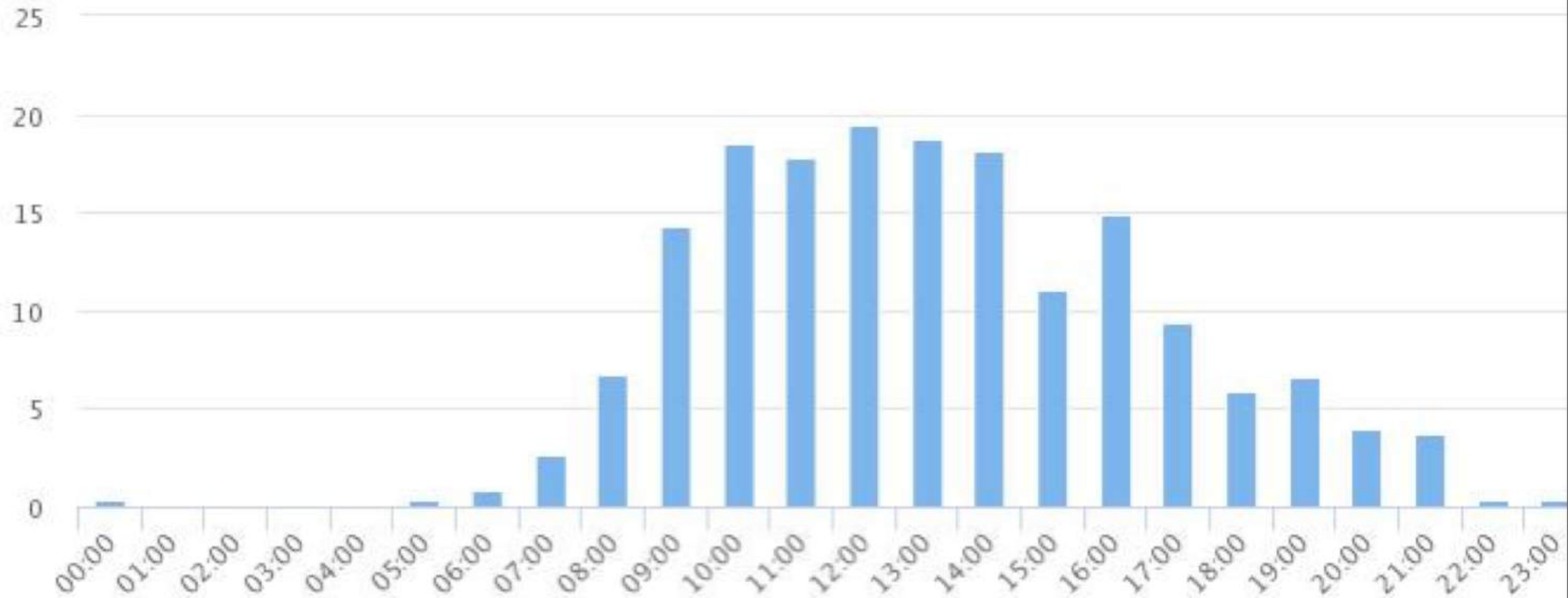


BAKER CREEK DRAINAGE

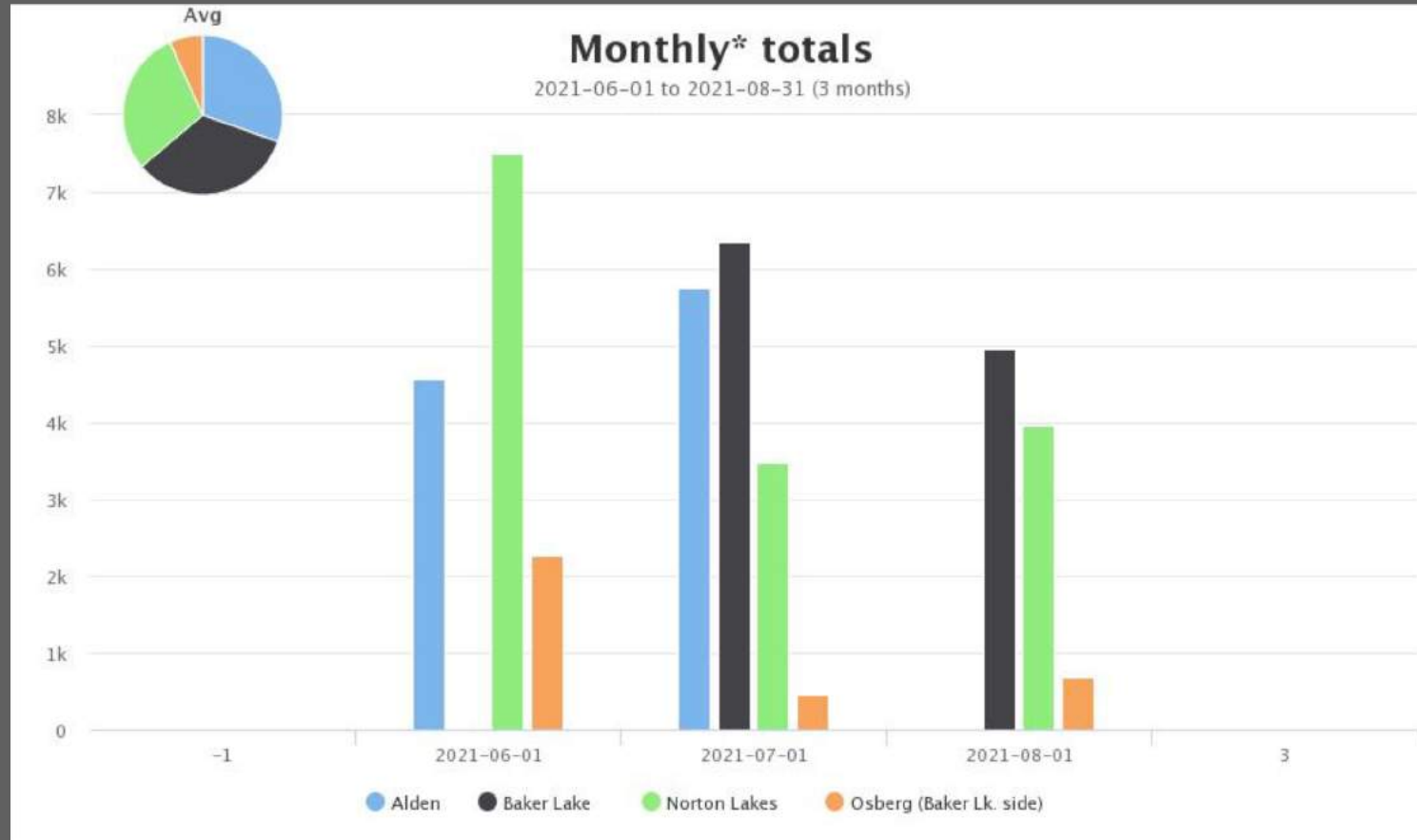


Hours of the day

2021-06-11 to 2021-07-12
Hourly averages



BAKER CREEK DRAINAGE CONT'D

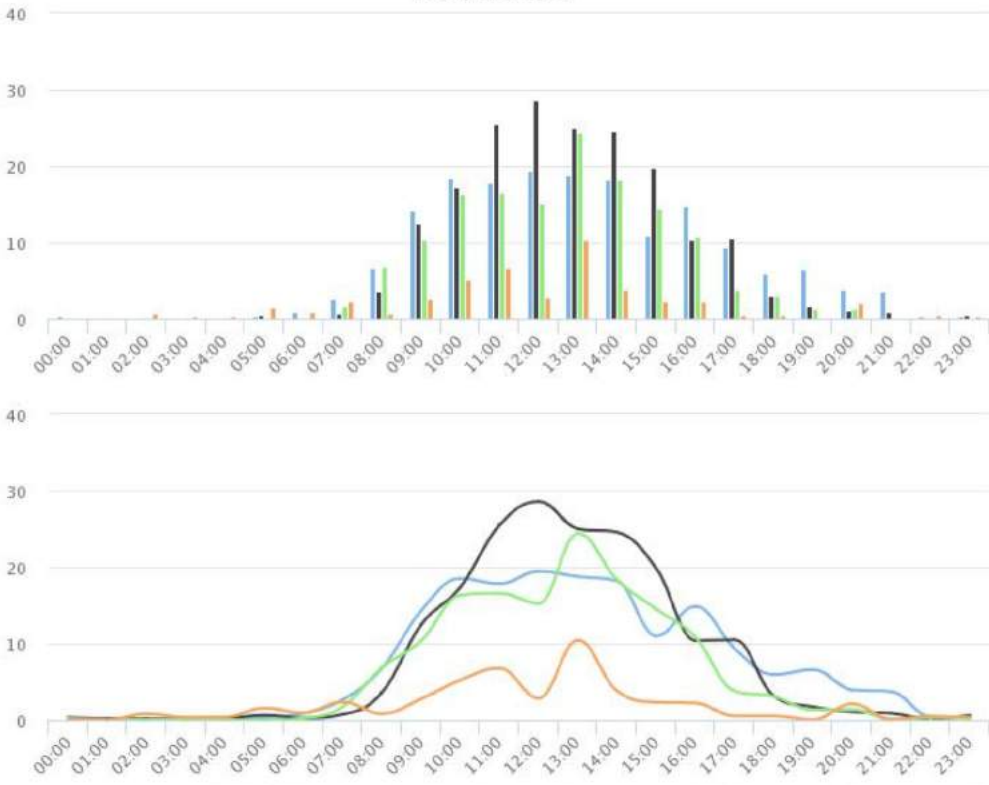


BAKER CREEK DRAINAGE CONT'D



Hours of the day

2021-06-11 to 2021-08-14
Hourly averages



What is Certain:

- Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are the most popular user days, midday is most popular time.
- Baker Lk. Trail is distinctively appealing to users (Osberg TH is only 50 yds. away, but dramatically lower counts).
- Alden is receiving heavy impacts from users – not fully understood, though.

Total Trail Impact Estimates - Memorial Day to Labor Day

Baker Lake: **18,700** passes,
9350 users

Osberg Ridgeline: **3054** passes,
2,749 users*

Norton Lakes: **13,700** passes,
6850 users

Alden: **17,200** passes,
13,760 users*

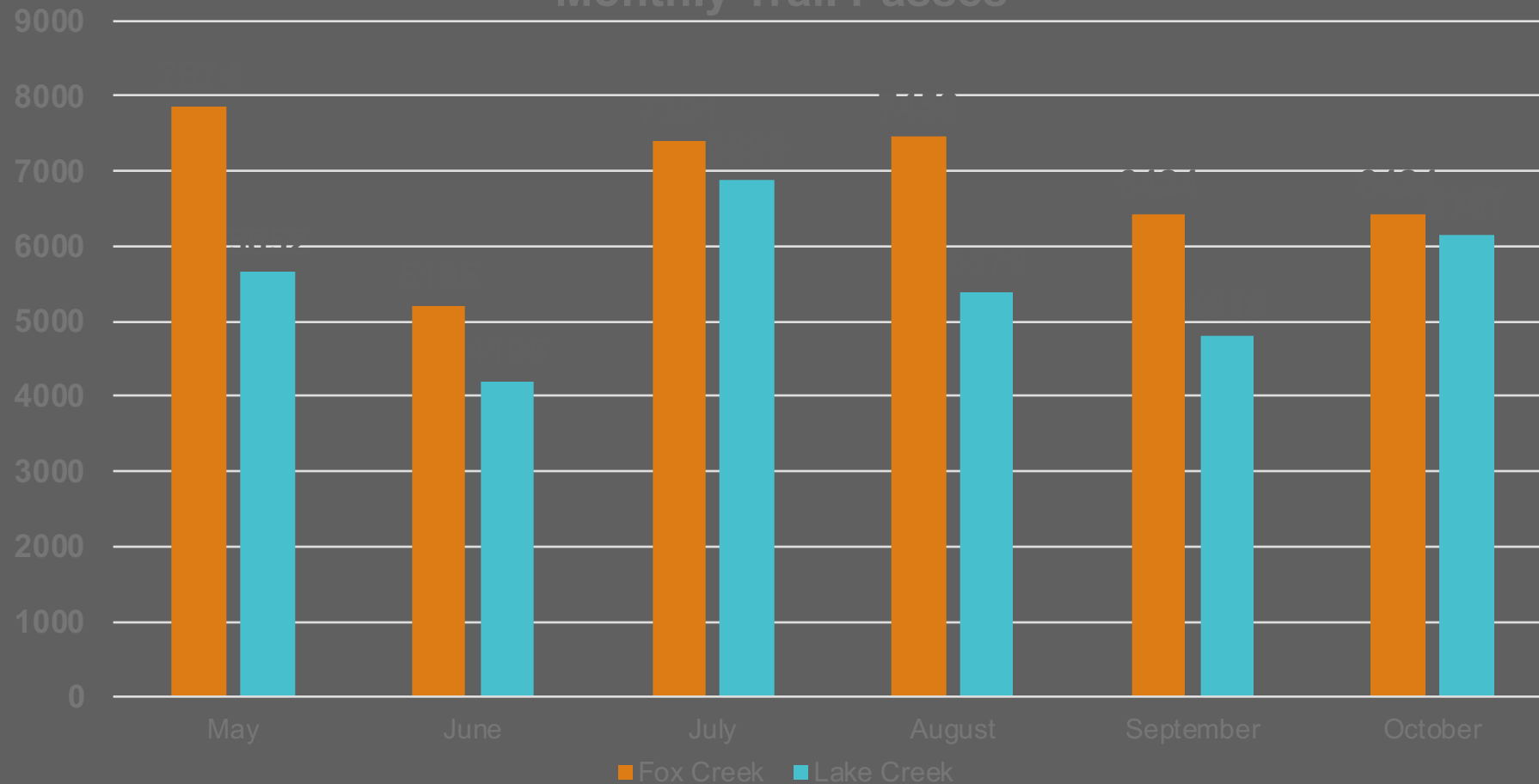
Site Name	Average	Median	STDV	Min	Max
Alden	7.9	6.3	7.2	0.1	19.5
Baker Lake	7.8	1.4	9.8	0.1	28.6
Norton Lakes	7.7	3.8	7.6	0.1	24.4
Osberg (Baker Lk. side)	2.0	0.9	2.4	0.0	10.5

*Assuming 20% "out and back" rate

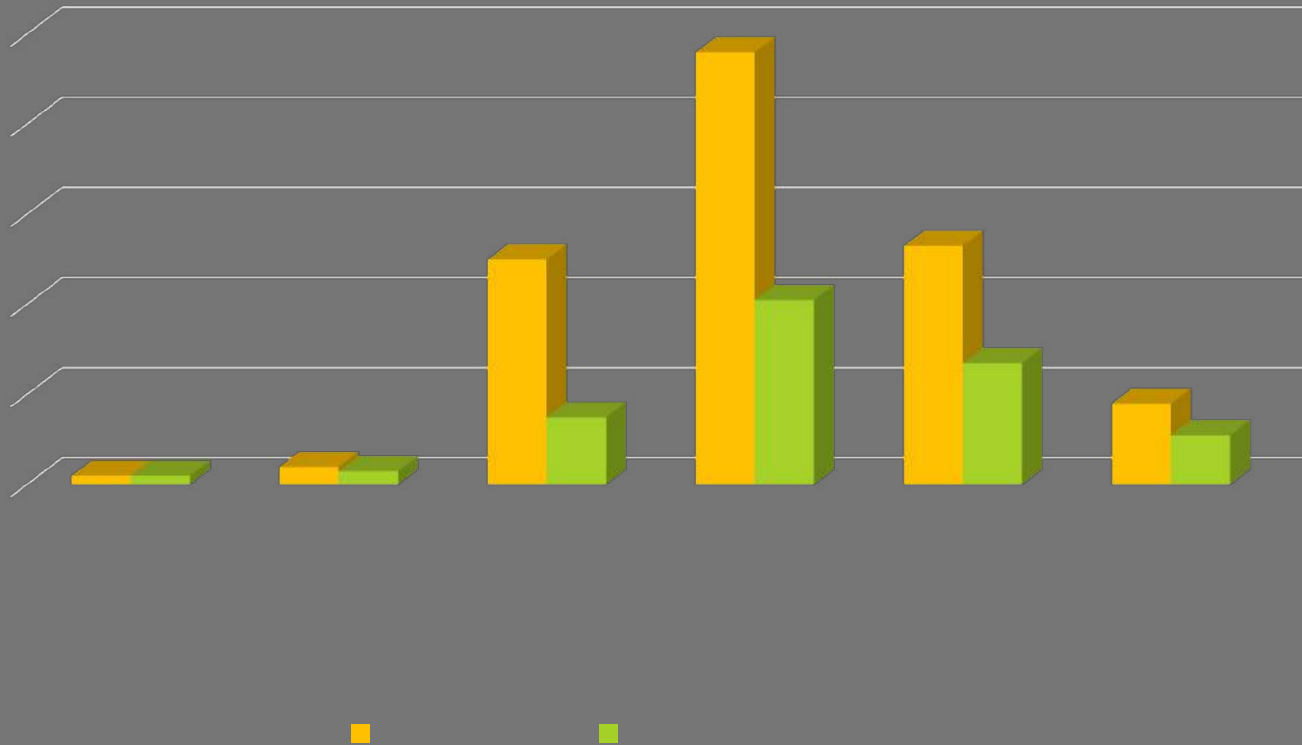
FOX CREEK, LAKE CREEK



Monthly Trail Passes



FOX CREEK, LAKE CREEK CONT'D

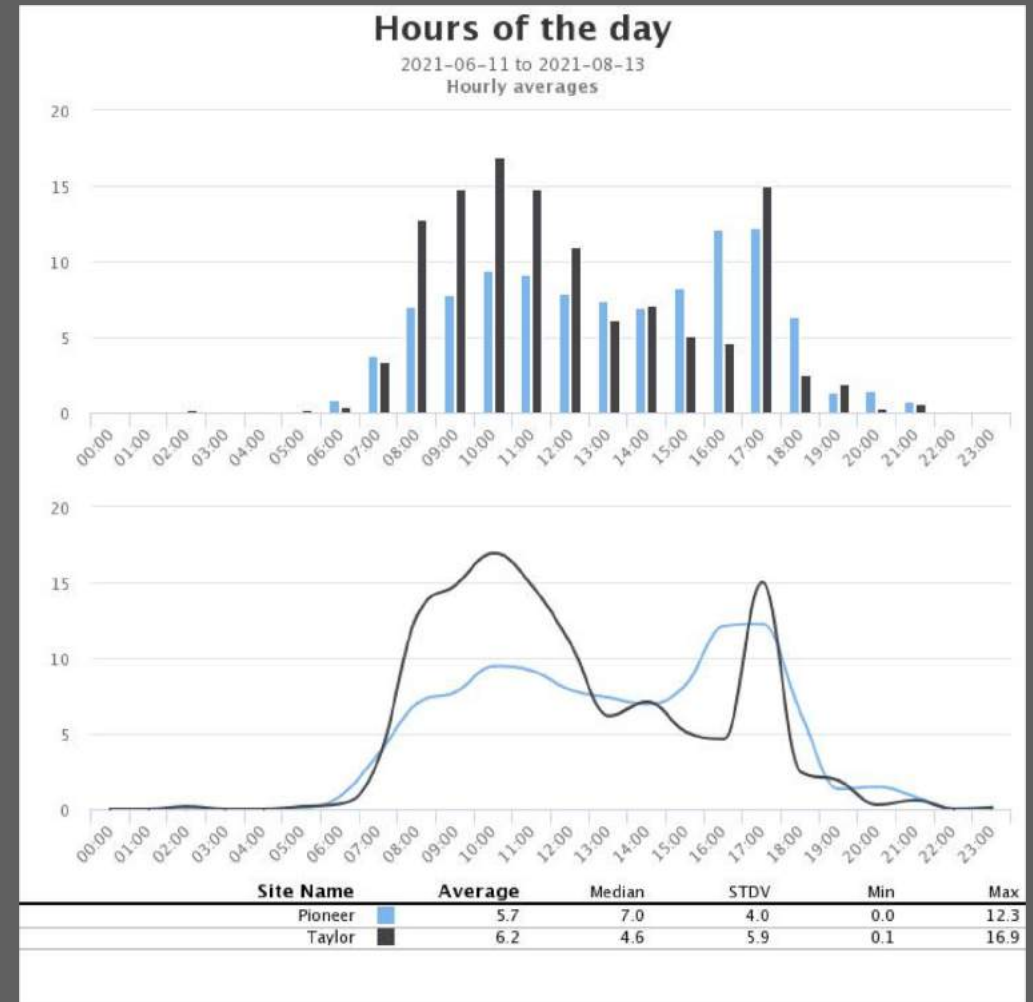
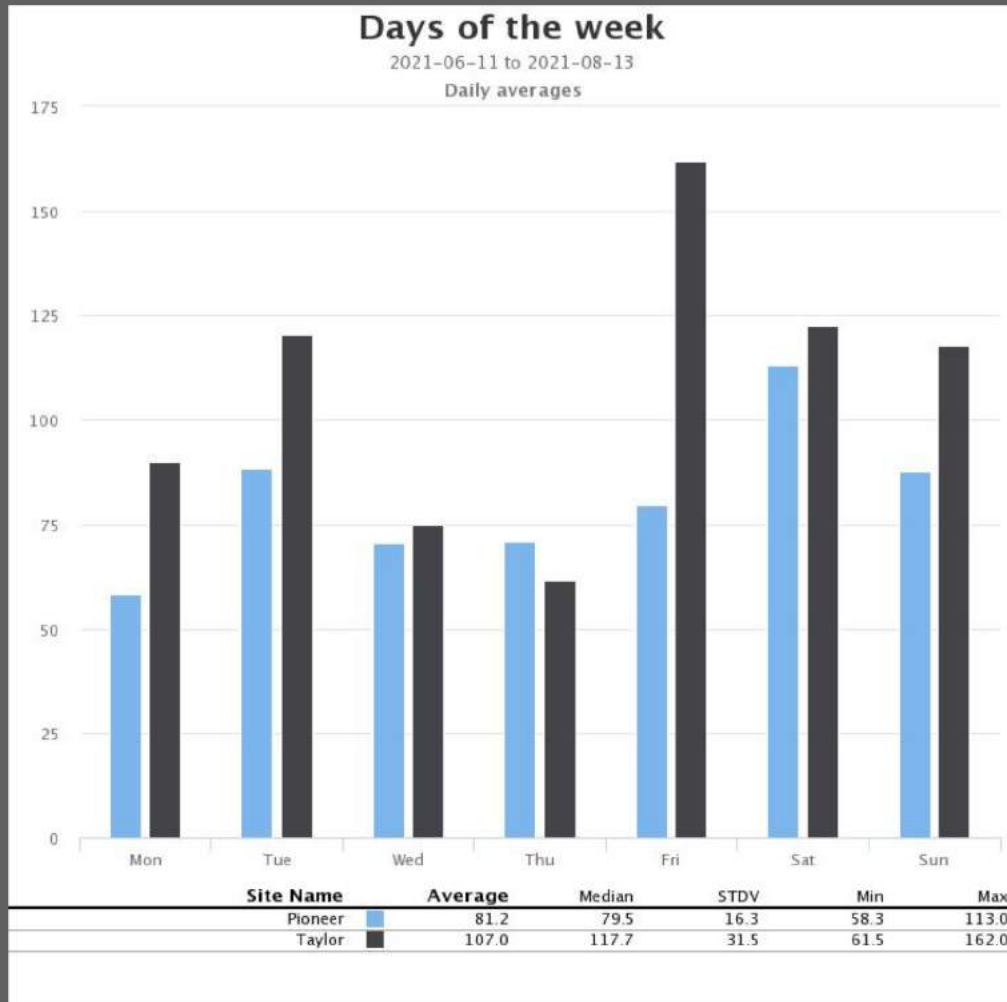


Total Trail Impact Estimates - Memorial Day to Labor Day

Fox Creek: **21,810 passes,**
10,905 users

Lake Creek: **17,189 passes,**
10,743 users*

TAYLOR CANYON, PIONEER CABIN



TAYLOR CANYON, PIONEER CABIN CONT'D



Total Trail Impact Estimates - Memorial Day to Labor Day

Taylor Canyon: **10,500 passes, 9,450 users***

Pioneer Cabin: **8,100 passes, 4,050+ users**



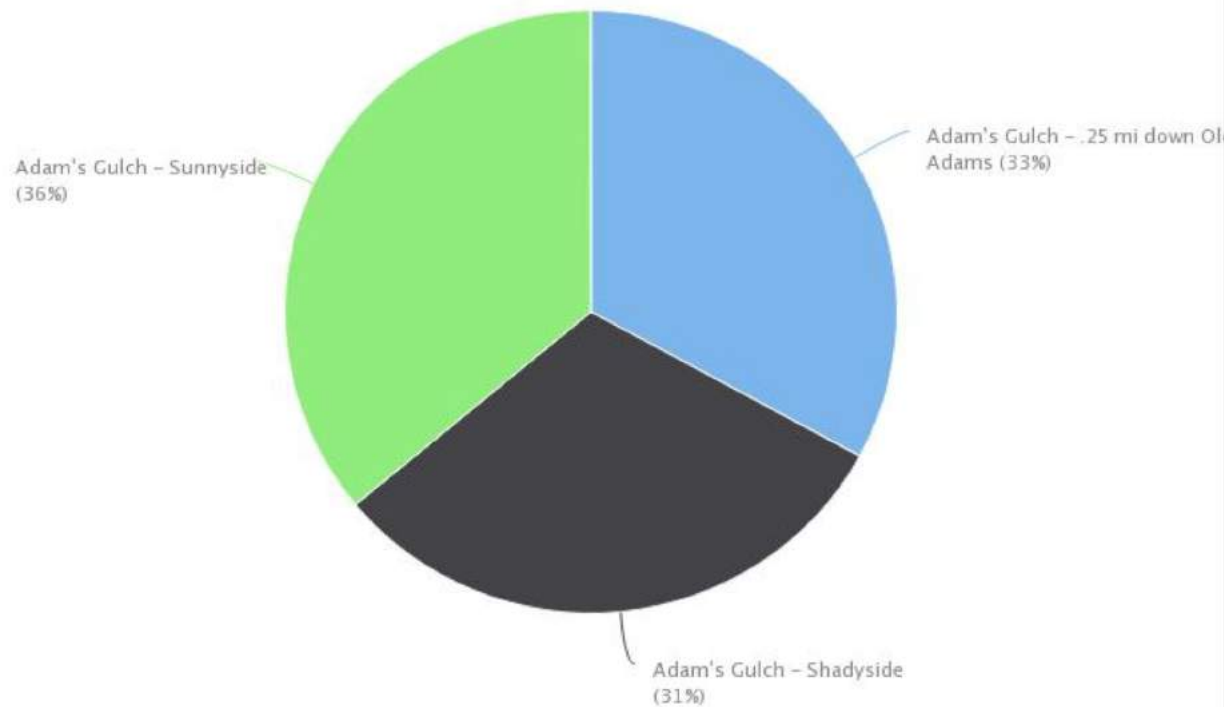
*Assuming 20% "out and back" rate

ADAM'S GULCH



Compare Sites

2021-06-18 to 2021-10-10

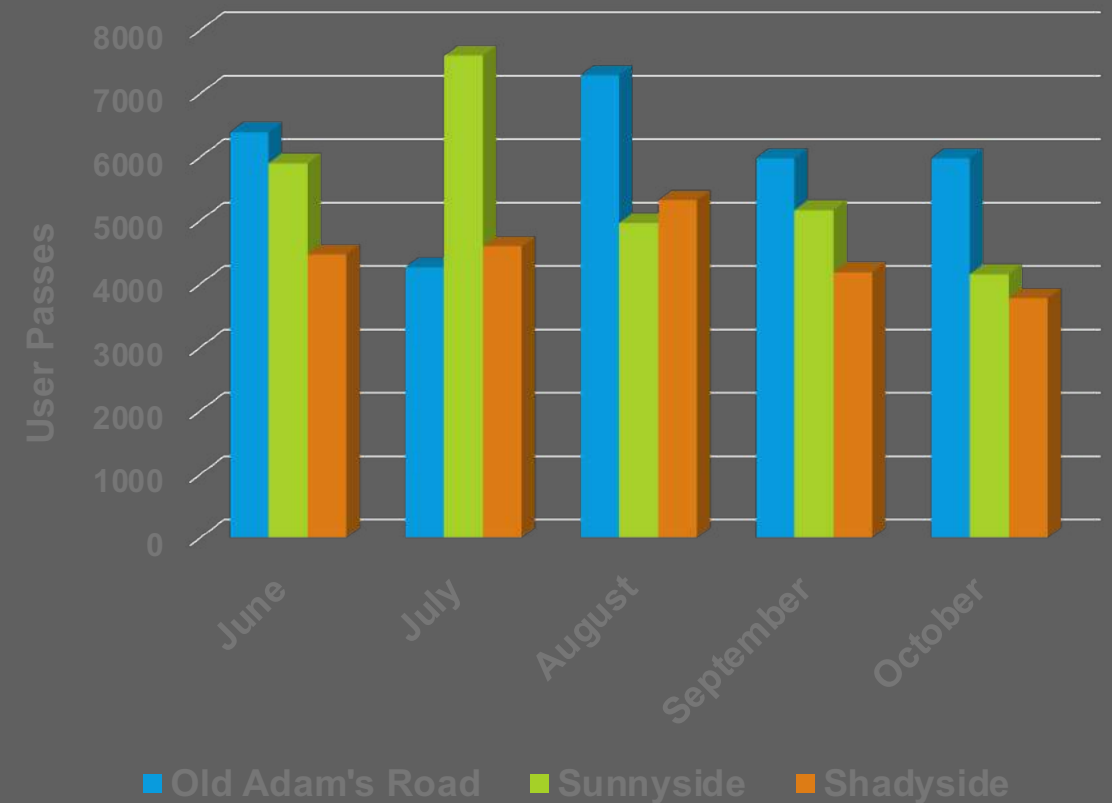


Site Name

Daily Average

Adam's Gulch - .25 mi down Old Adams	155.7 (33.0%)
Adam's Gulch - Shadyside	146.4 (31.0%)
Adam's Gulch - Sunnyside	170.3 (36.0%)

Monthly Trail User Impact, Adam's Gulch



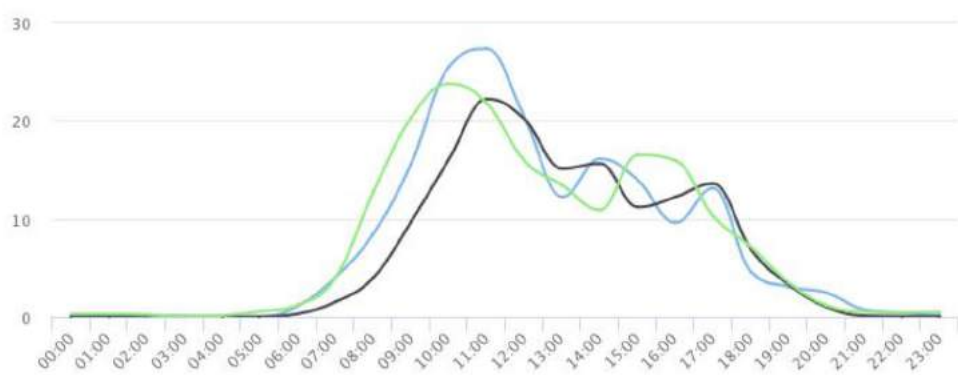
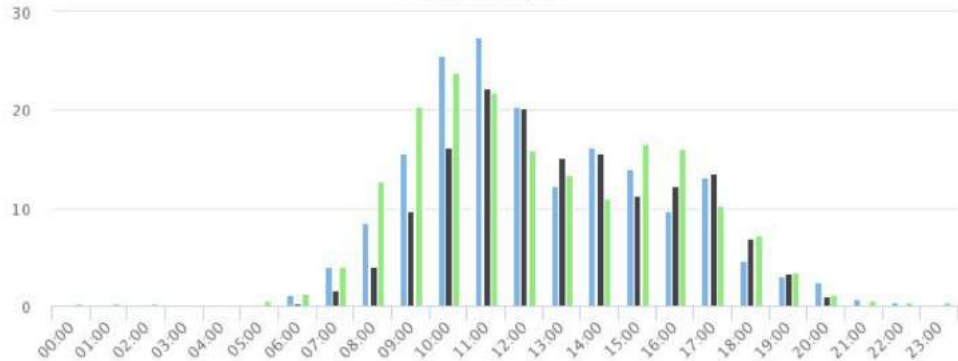
Old Adam's Road Sunnyside Shadyside

ADAM'S GULCH CONT'D



Hours of the day

2021-06-18 to 2021-10-15
Hourly averages



Site Name	Average	Median	STDV	Min	Max
Adam's Gulch - .25 mi down Old Adams	9.0	6.6	8.5	0.1	27.3
Adam's Gulch - Shadyside	6.4	2.4	7.3	0.0	22.2
Adam's Gulch - Sunnyside	7.6	3.8	7.9	0.1	23.8

**Total Trail Impact Estimates -
Memorial Day to Labor Day**

Old Adam's Road: **15,569** passes, **11,677** users*

Sunnyside: **16,738** passes, **15,901** users**

Shadyside: **14,610** passes, **14,245** users***

*Assuming 50% "out and back" rate

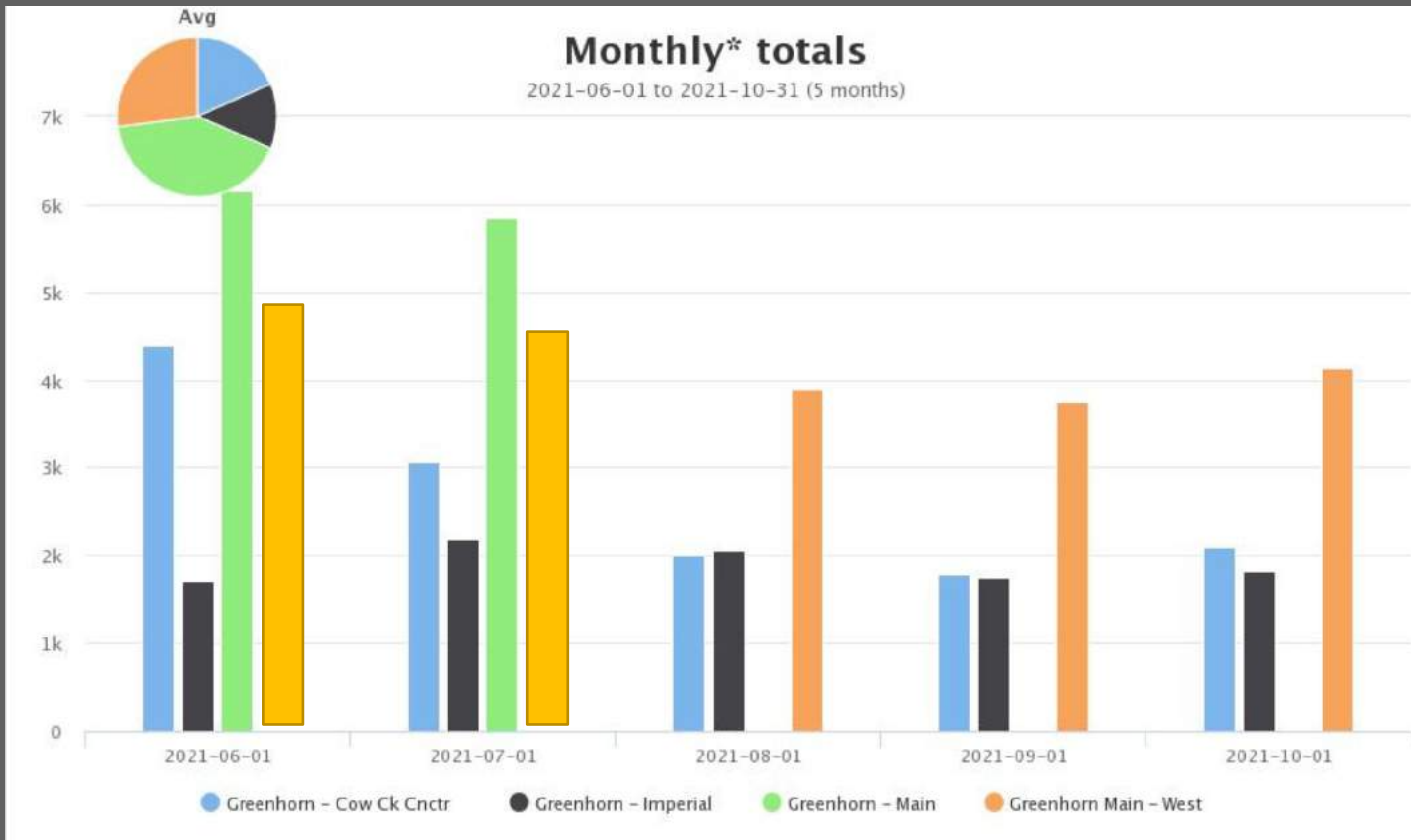
**Assuming 10% "out and back" rate

***Assuming 5% "out and back" rate

GREENHORN – A TEST OF THE “OUT&BACK”



Monthly Trail User Impact



Total Trail Impact Estimates - Memorial Day to Labor Day

Greenhorn Main-West (past Imperial) :
12,700 passes, 11,430 users*

Imperial: **6,202 passes, 5,582 users****

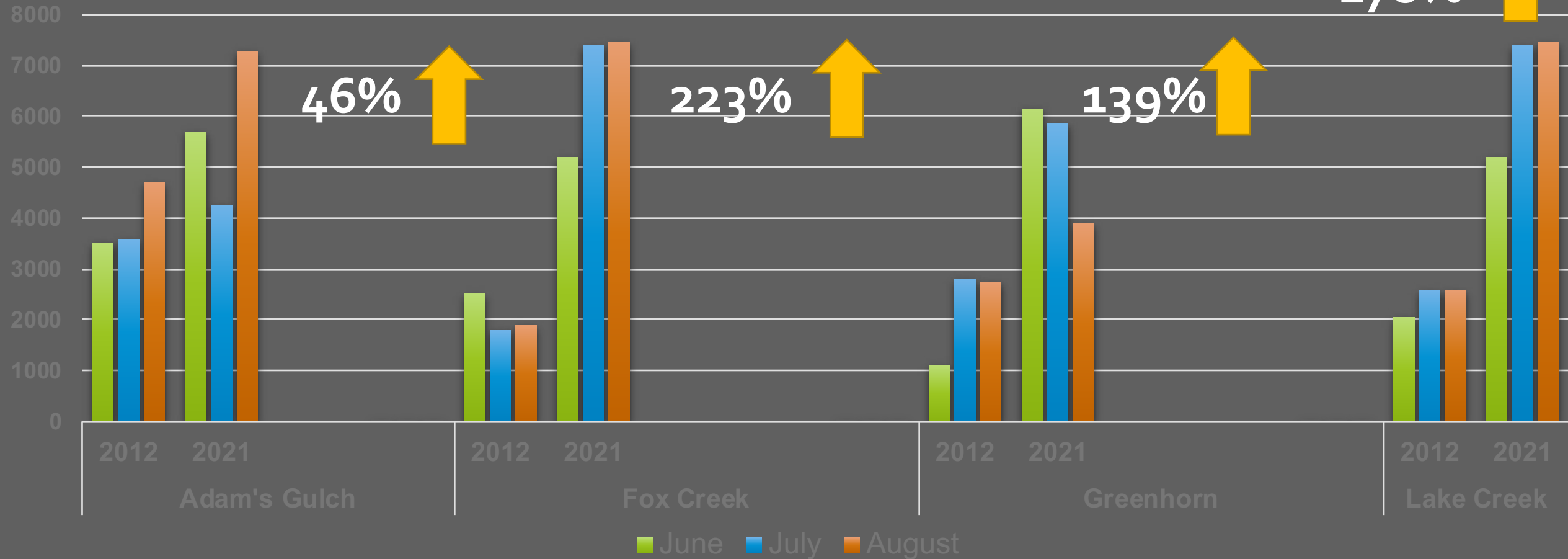
Cow Creek Connector: **7,484 passes, 6,736 users***

*Assuming 20% “out and back” rate
**Assuming 10% “out and back” rate

2021 SEASON TOTALS, VS. 2012 STUDY



Total Trail Impact: 2012 vs. 2021



TOTAL USER DAYS, MEMORIAL-LABOR DAY



133,428 Trail User Days

vs. most recently available (2018) skier days at Sun Valley:
380,000

Some things to keep in mind:

- Not all trails
- Not the full non-winter use season
- Counters were not at every trail every day (remember ADT!)

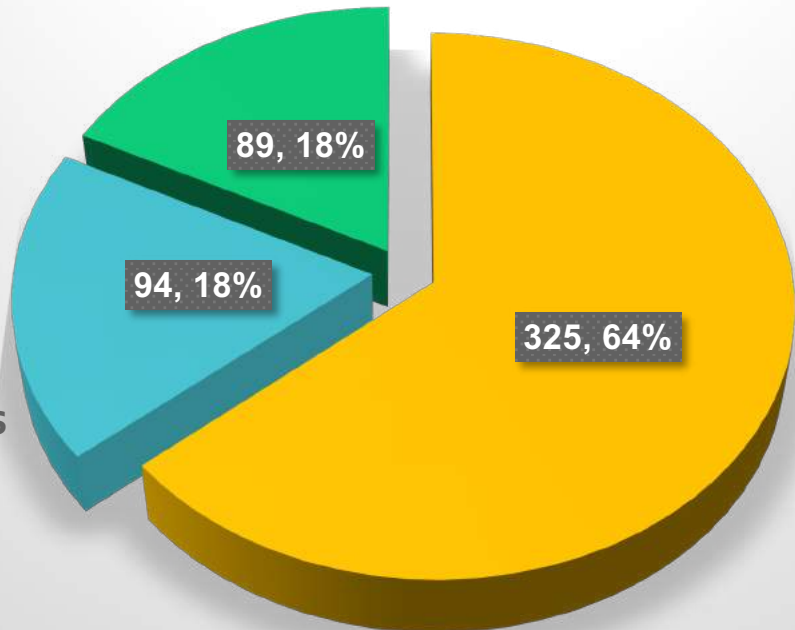
QUALITATIVE: FORMSTACK SURVEY

RESIDENCY



Residency Type

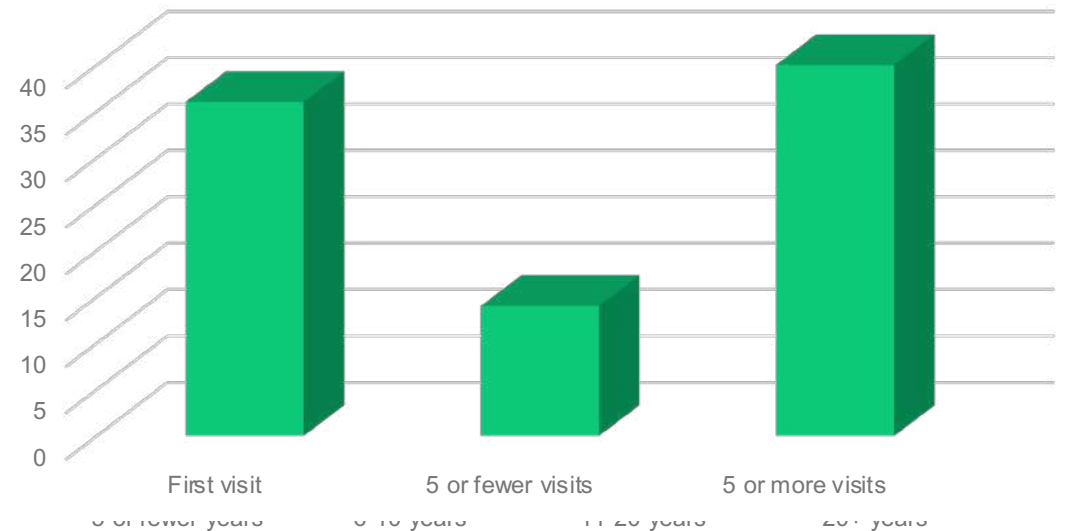
- Full-time
- Part-time
- Visitor/Tourist



Avg: 17 years

Avg: 18 years

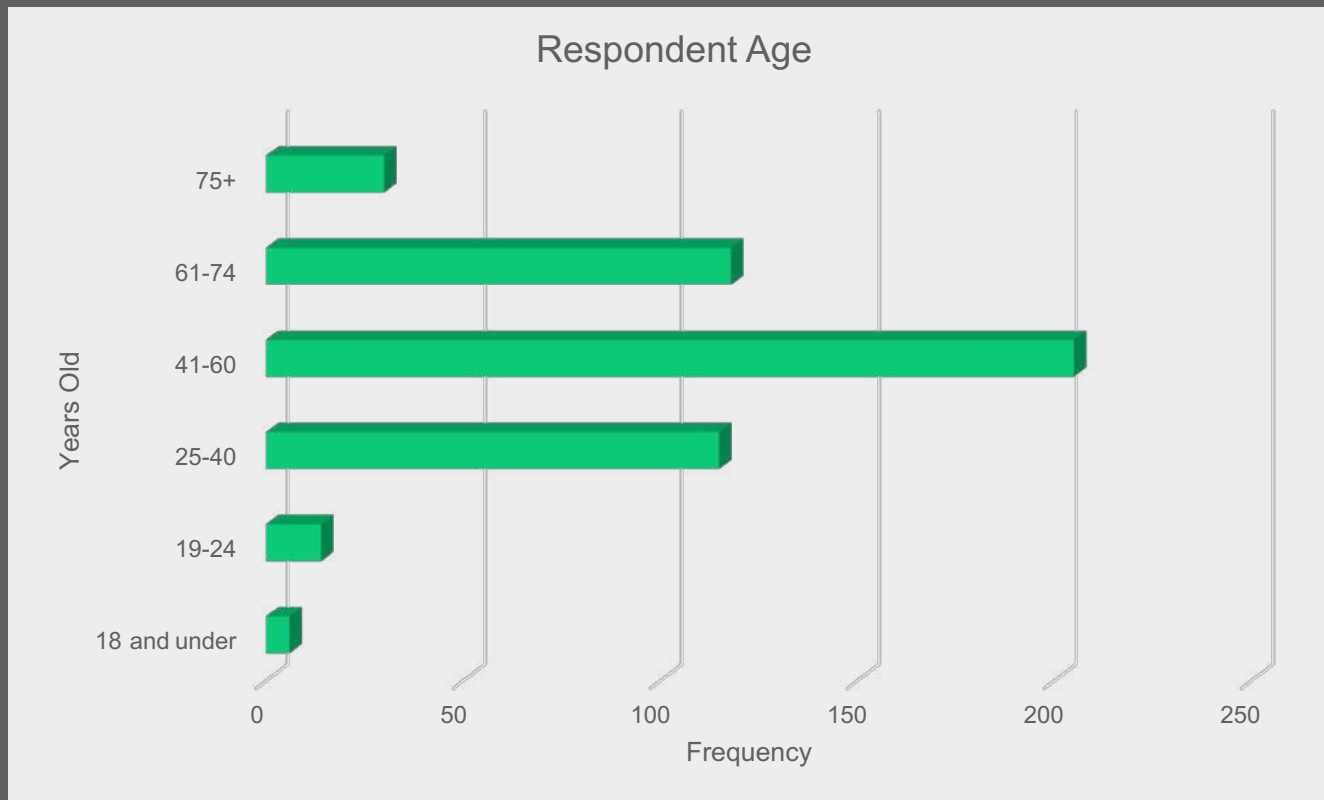
Visit Frequency



AGE, GENDER, RACE



Average respondent age: 51 years old



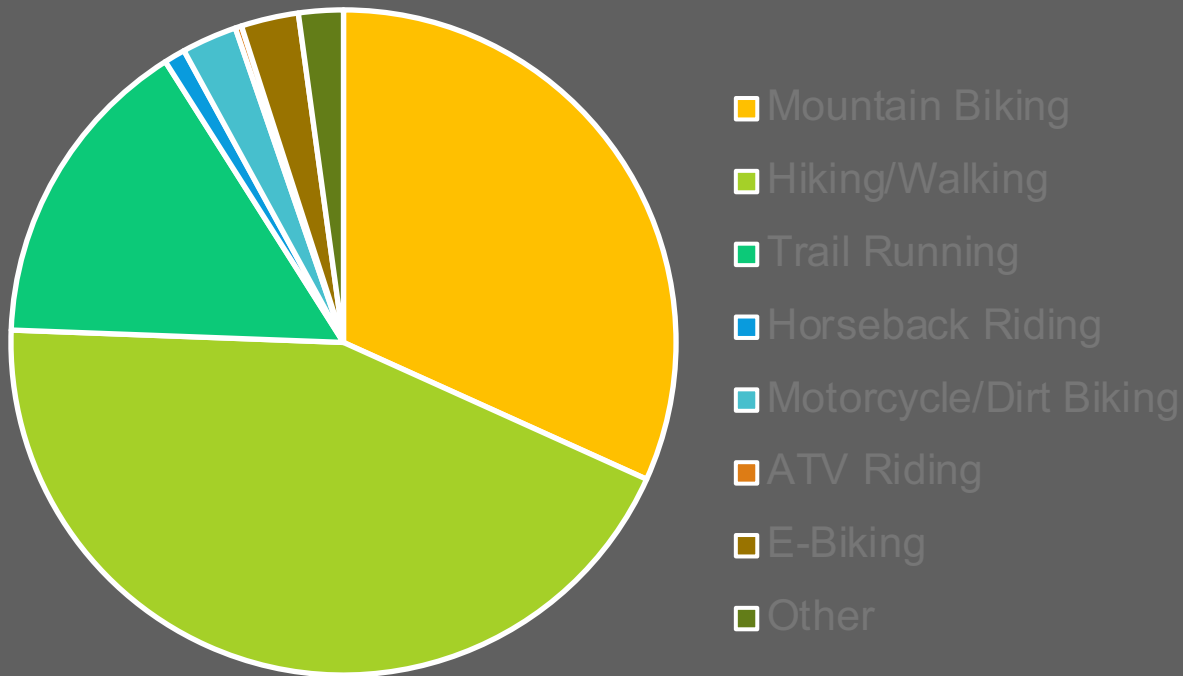
Respondent Gender: **53.3% female, 46.7% male**
(no transgender/non-binary responses received)

- 94.2% of respondents identified as "White/Caucasian"
- 1.1% identify as "Asian"
- Less than 1% answered "Hispanic/Latino", "Biracial"
- 3% answered with "Other"
- *This was a write-in response

HOW WRV TRAILS ARE USED



Trail User Groups



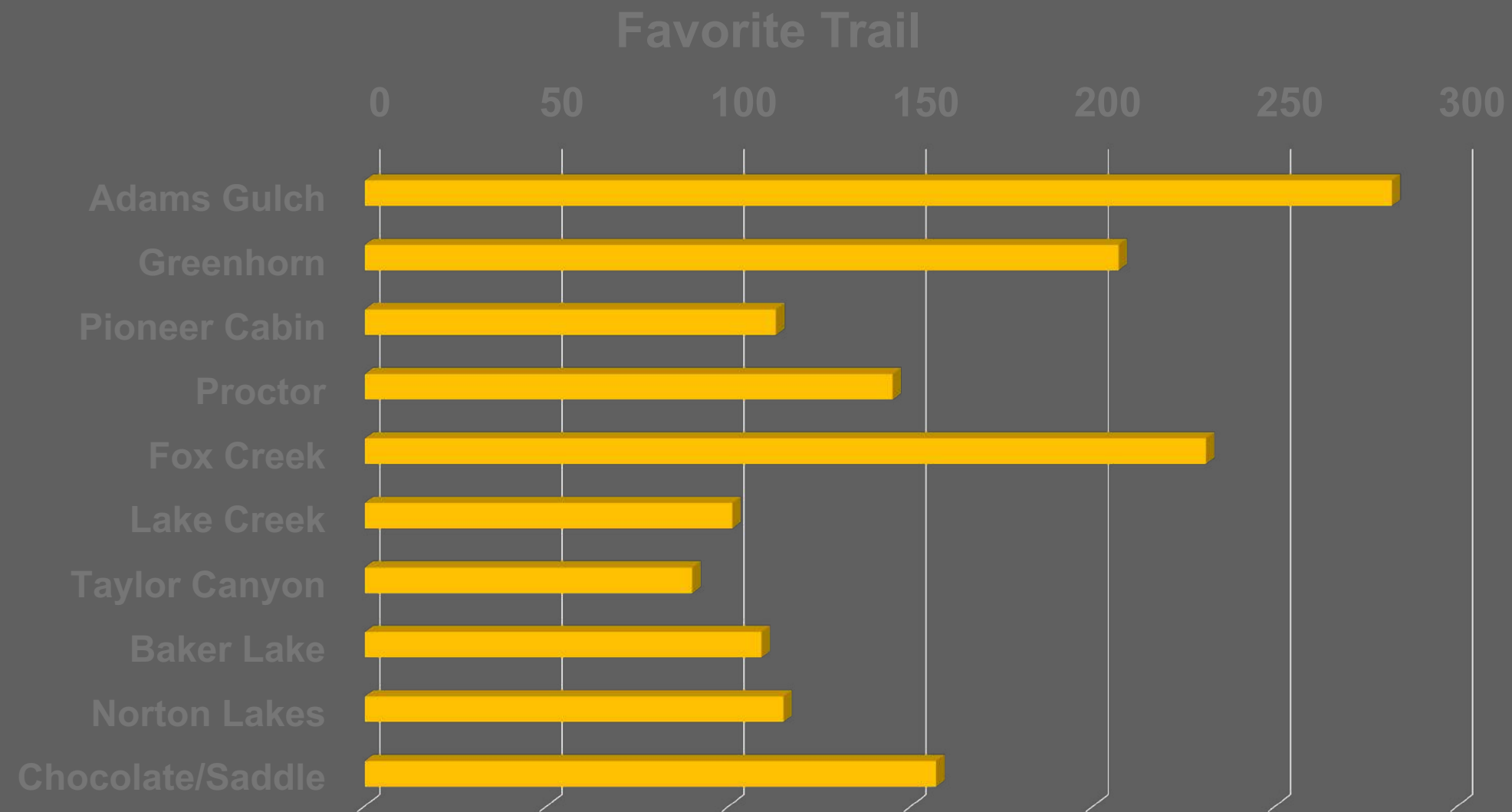
Popular "Other" uses of WRV Trails:

- Dog-walking
- Fishing Access
- Wildflower viewing

Splitting Time

- Majority of trail runners also hike/walk.
- 76% of Mtn. Bikers also Hike/Walk.
- Only ~6% of those who said they engage in mtn. biking also e-bike; same for moto/dirt biking – but majority of these motorized users DO engage in mountain biking.

Respondents' Top 10 Favorite Trails

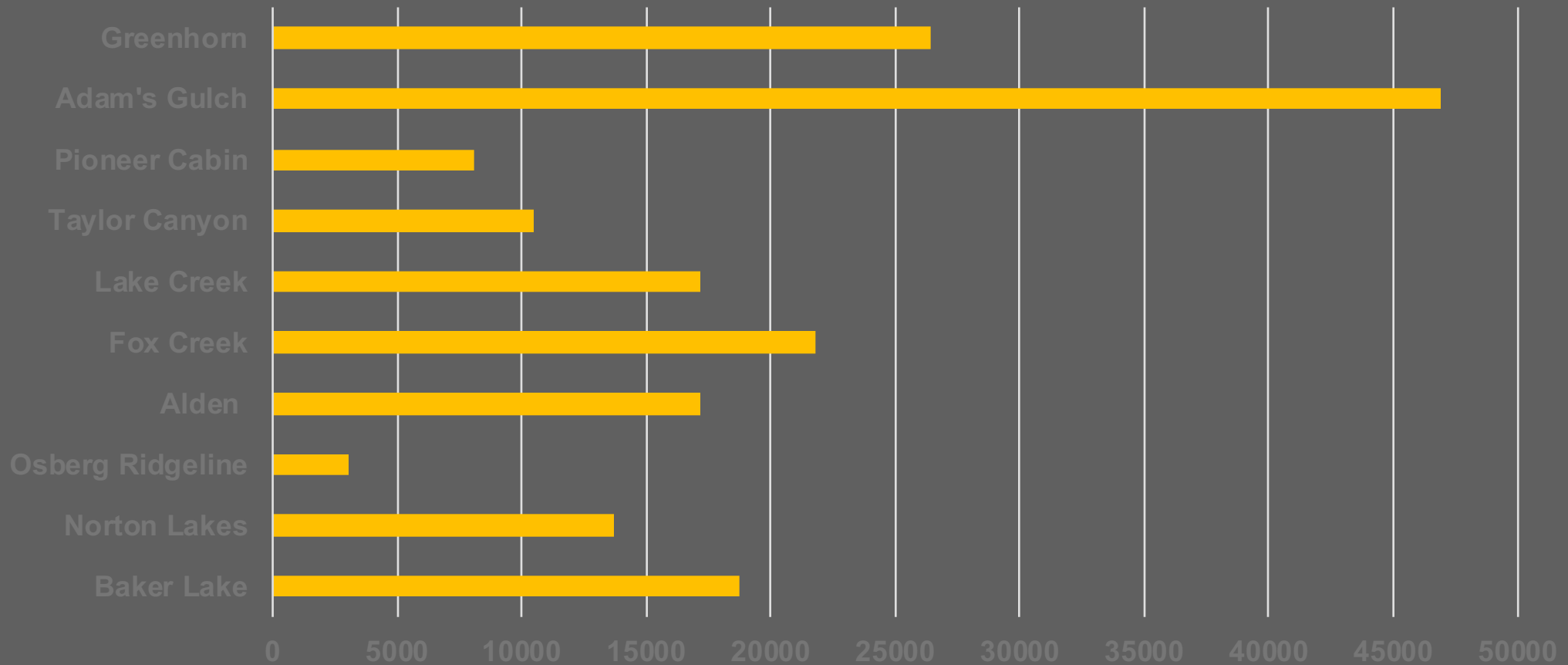


Popular "Other" responses: Baldy trails, Wood River Trail, Prairie/Miner Loop

FAVORITE TRAIL VS. TOTAL TRAIL IMPACT



Total Trail Passes, Memorial Day to Labor Day



FAVORITE TRAIL VS. RESIDENCY

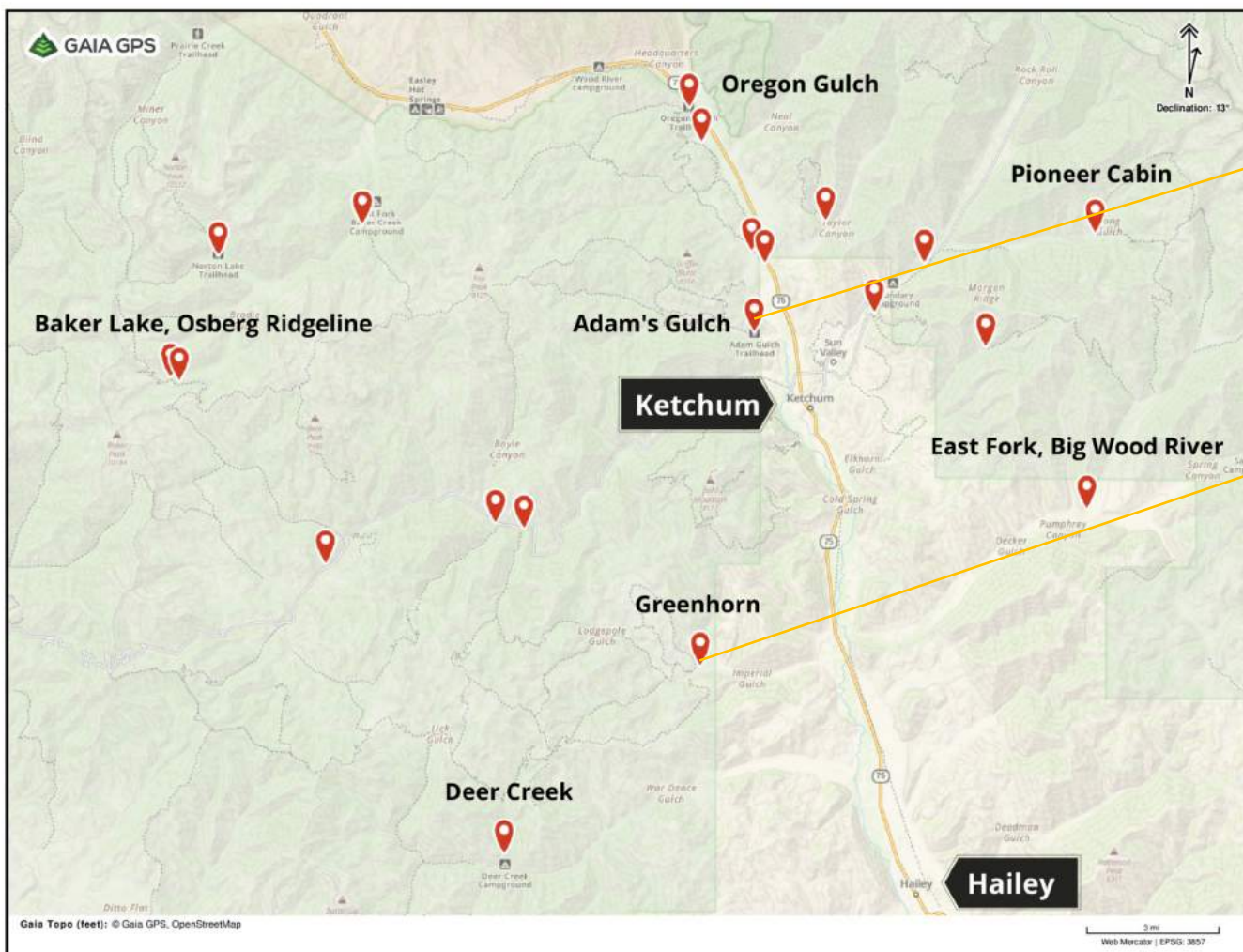


Adam's Gulch – Everyone loves it

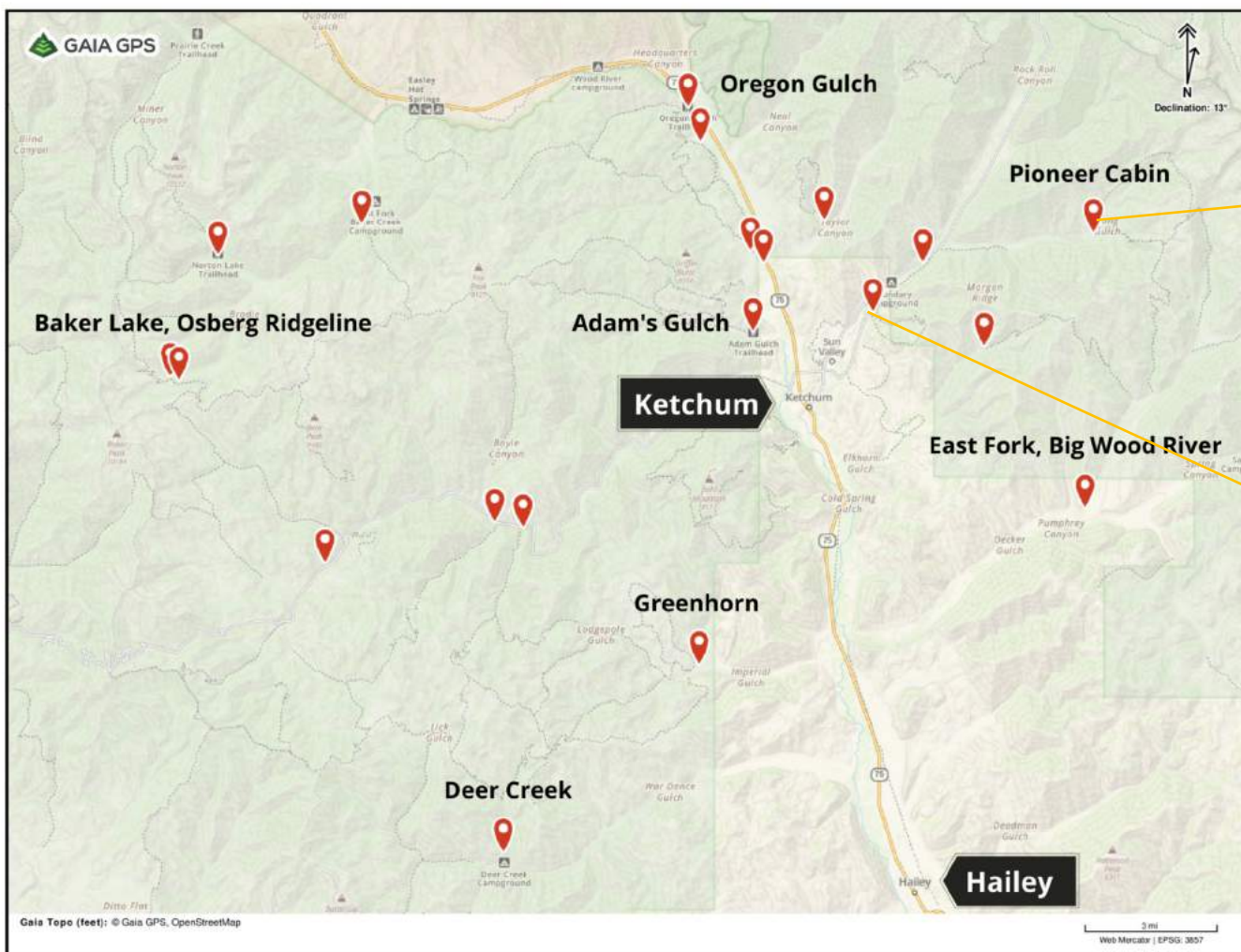
- ~50% Full-timers
- ~70% Part-timers
- 60% of all visitors

Greenhorn – Locals' Locale

- 50+% Full-timers



FAVORITE TRAIL VS. RESIDENCY



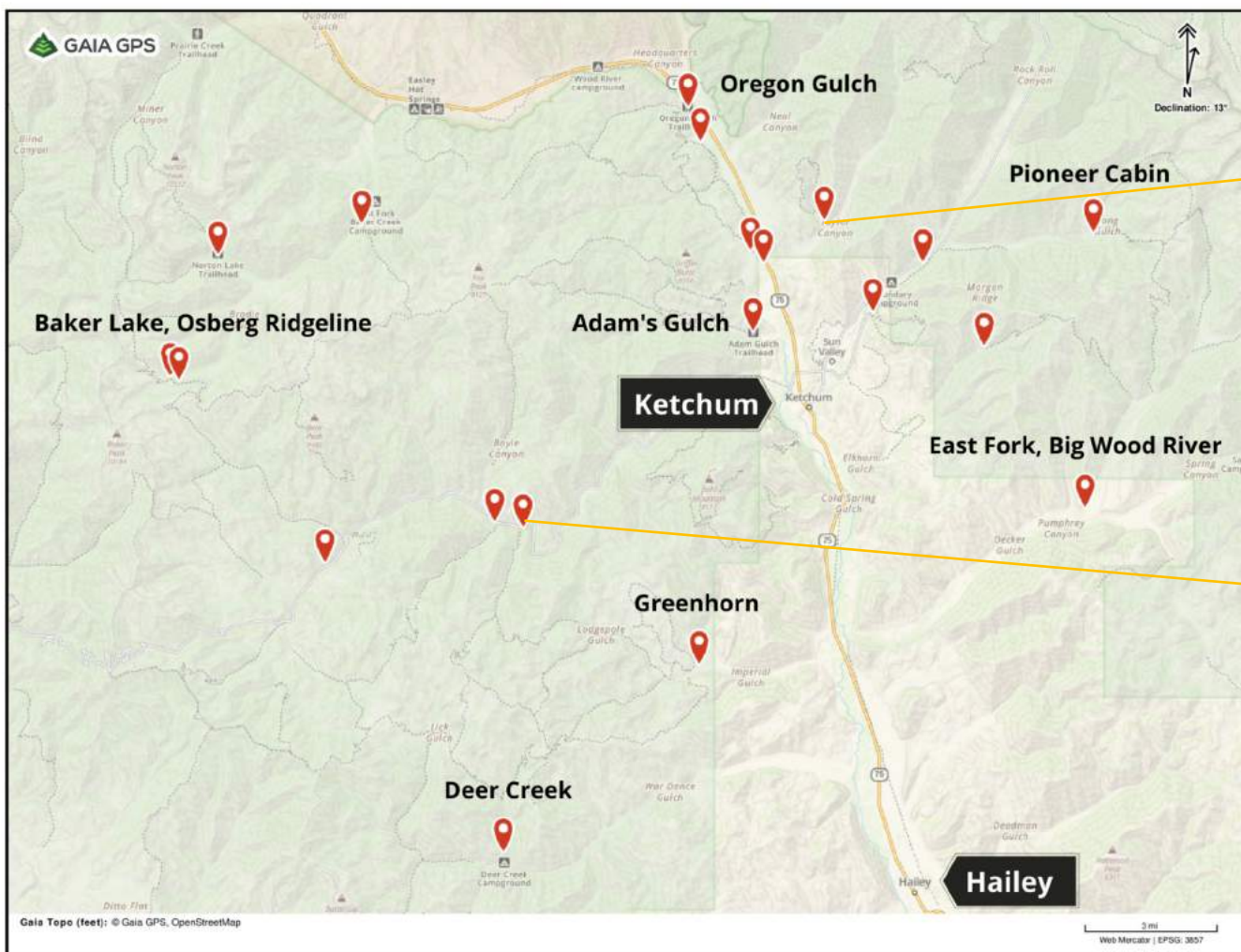
Pioneer Cabin – Surprisingly, not a top spot for visitors/tourist

- 24% Visitors/Tourists
- 60% Full-timers
 - Remember those oddly low counter numbers...

Proctor – Most preferred by part-timers

- 40% Part-time, highest percentage amongst residency types

FAVORITE TRAIL VS. RESIDENCY



Taylor Canyon – The ultimate “Locals Only” spot

- 70+% Full-timers
- 3% Visitor/Tourists

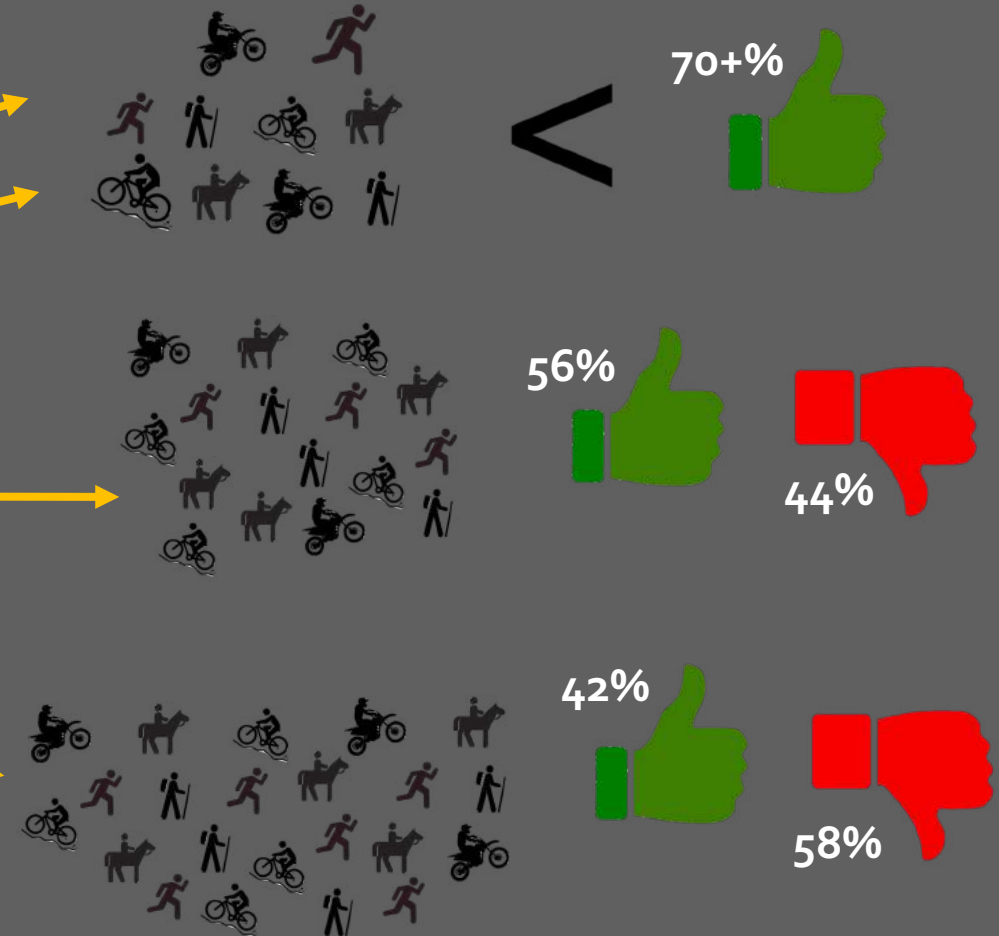
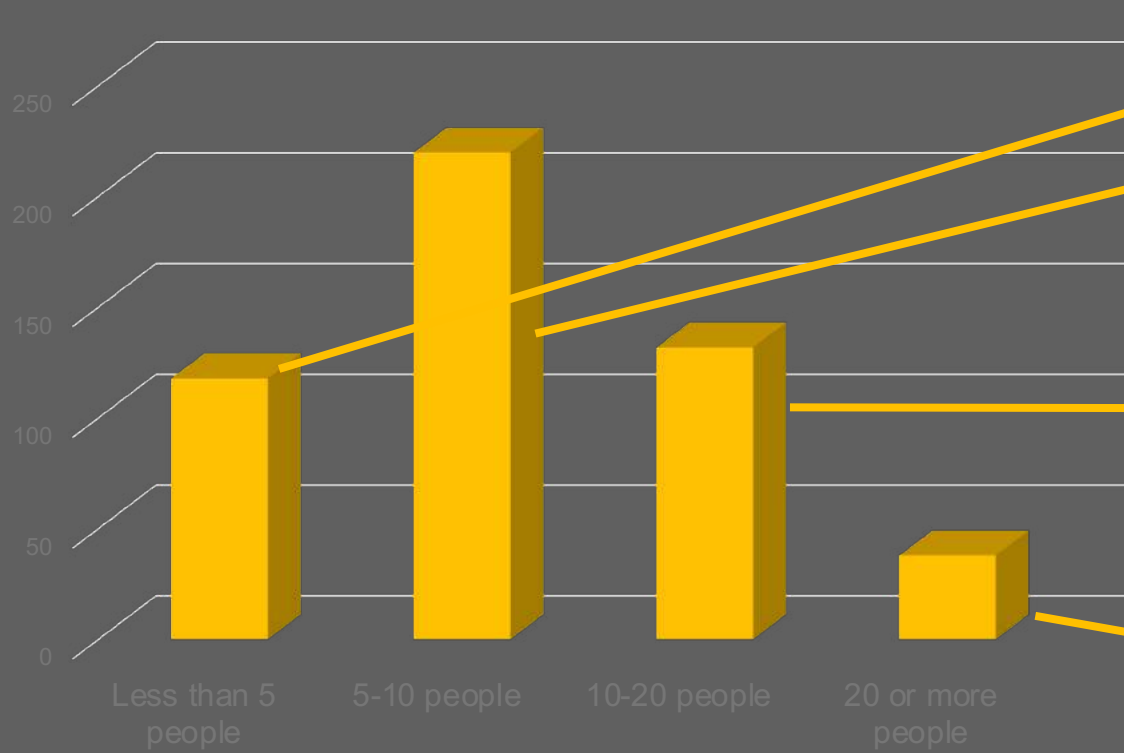
Warfield – You might be thinking of a different spot...?

- 7.5% Visitor/Tourists
- 2% Full-timers
- 1% Part-timers
- Our trail users love post-ride beverages

CROWDING PERCEPTION

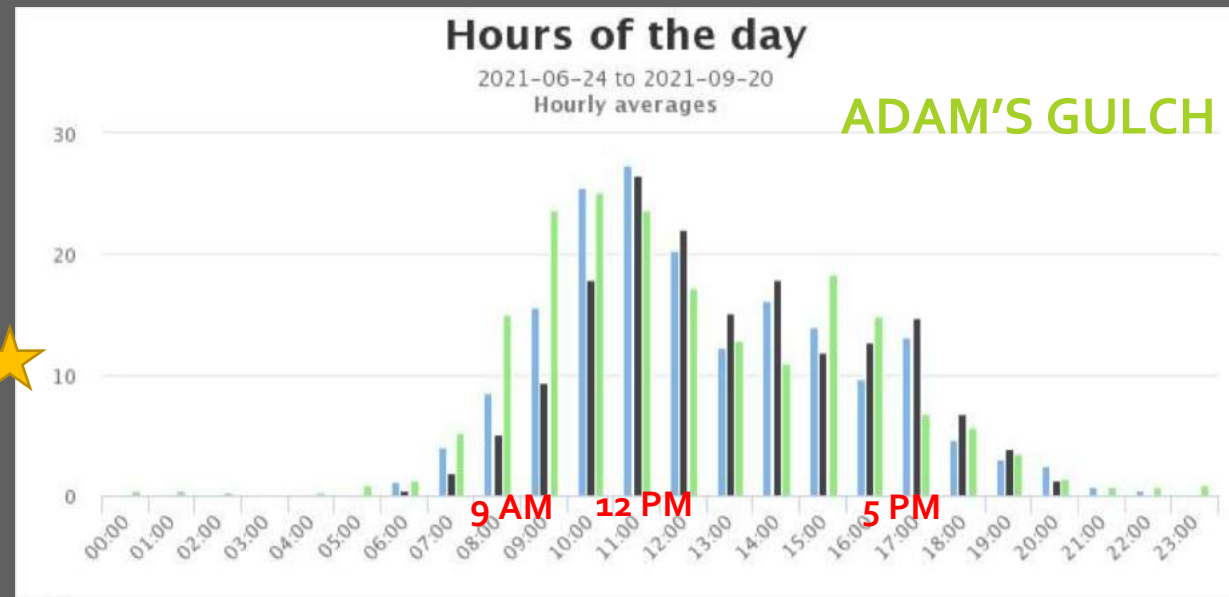


Encounters with Other Trail Users



Trails our respondents most frequently perceived as being crowded:

- Adam's Gulch
- Greenhorn
- Taylor Canyon
- Fox Creek
- Chocolate/Saddle



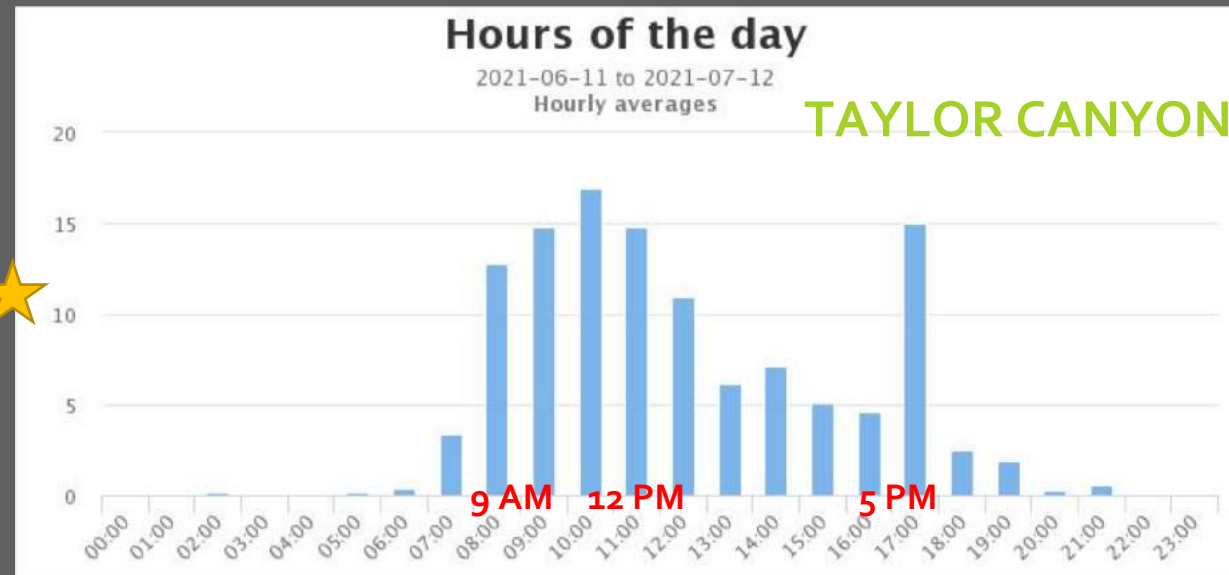
BLAINE COUNTY
FEATURED

At Chocolate Gulch, visitor surge prompts questions about parking for public access

Sep 3, 2021

For many, the Chocolate Gulch trailhead forking out from Wood River Estates Subdivision north of Ketchum offers hard-to-beat access and miles ...

[Read more](#)



WHAT DO OUR TRAIL USERS VALUE?



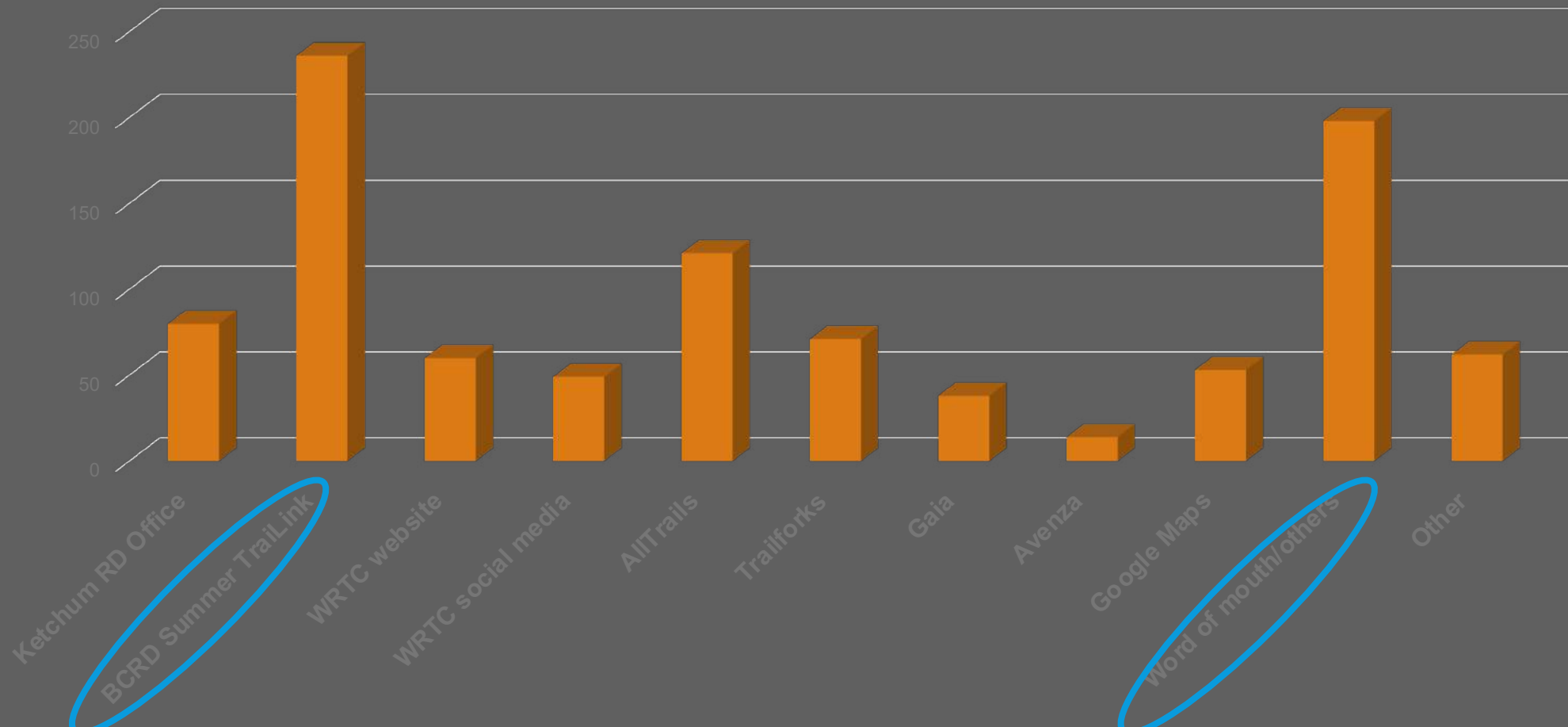
Top 5 Trail Characteristics that our users value/consider:

1. Opportunity for solitude
2. Variety of terrain types (sage foothills, wooded areas, water features)
3. Sufficient challenge/complexity of trail features
4. Time of year/season
5. Ability to “loop/lap” a trail

TRAIL INFO SOURCE



“Where do you get your information about WRV trails?”



FUTURE HAPPENINGS



- Survey will be happening again in 2022!
- Refining our approach and assembling a long-term strategy.

<https://woodrivertrailscoalition.org/donate>

QUESTIONS?

erodrigue@woodrivertrailscoalition.org

THANK YOU!

See you next summer...

<https://woodrivertrailscoalition.org>

