South Australian Parks Visitation Survey 2017

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Environmental Science Branch
Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

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Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources
GPO Box 1047, Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone National (08) 8463 6946
International +61 8 8463 6946

Fax National (08) 8463 6999
International +61 8 8463 6999

Website www.environment.sa.gov.au

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Glen Scholz Principal Advisor Environmental Science Branch DEWNR, reviewed the results of the survey conducted by Mc Gregor Tan Research and produced a summary of the results for this report.
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1 Purpose

The purpose of this survey is to gather information from South Australian residents to inform the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) about their current use of, and attitudes towards South Australian National Parks, Conservation Parks and Recreational Parks. This survey was initiated in 2011–12 and is conducted annually in May–June to report on that financial year.

2 Objectives

The objectives of the research were to measure South Australians’:
- current perceptions about their health
- their overall level of satisfaction with their life
- the number of times they have visited National Parks, Conservation and Recreational Parks over the last twelve months
- which parks they have visited
- the value they place on parks, and
- their familiarity with, and attitudes towards marine parks
- activities and experiences undertaken within parks over the previous 12 months.
- limitations to parks visitation

3 Method

A survey of 1143 South Australian residents was conducted between 9 June and 11 July 2017 and refers to the financial year period 2016–17.

The surveys were conducted by a combination of online and telephone (land line and mobile) surveys. This combined approach ensured that the surveys were completed by a representative sample of South Australian residents of different ages and at different life stages, and minimised weighting of the data.

The South Australian Parks Survey question regarding the percentage of visitors to parks was presented differently from 2014 to previous year’s surveys. All surveys identify a different range of parks depending on the postcode of the interviewee. The 2012–14 survey identified 10 parks which included iconic parks in SA as well as some parks local to the NRM region and a query about other parks visited. The 2014–15 surveys identified 10 parks which are within the NRM region and a query about other parks visited. This is likely to have reduced past errors in the survey caused by survey recipients either forgetting or not knowing the area was a prescribed park rather than council reserve. As a result the figures may be slightly higher compared with previous years but they are likely to be more accurate. The results have been treated the same as previous years’ data but the aforementioned information should be taken into consideration when comparing results.

For the 2017 survey the following parks in the Adelaide and Mount Lofty Ranges NRM region were added to the list of specifically named parks: Para Wirra, Anstey Hill, Black Hill, O’Halloran Hill and Cobbler Creek. This was due to the requirement for increasing the accuracy of parks visitation data in response to the Connecting Residents with Nature initiative, which is investing 8.9 million dollars into seven metropolitan parks (Morialta and Onkaparinga River Parks were previously specifically identified).

To improve accuracy in parks identification the 2017 survey also identified Port Gawler, in conjunction with the International Bird Sanctuary, and Marino in conjunction with Hallett Cove as the walk between the two parks is the major visitation activity.
3.1 Processing

Data was weighted by age group and gender by benchmarks derived from the 2016 Census figures. The survey was administered using an ONLINE survey.

While telephone has traditionally been the method of choice for conducting quantitative research, households with fixed telephone lines have been steadily decreasing over time. Many more people tend to use mobile phones now and no longer rely on a fixed line. In many cases the telephone landline is only used for the household internet connection. Almost all households have an internet connection while the number of landlines is decreasing.

This combined approach ensured that the surveys were completed by a representative sample of South Australian residents of different ages and at different life stages.

The tables and graphs therefore show the weighted respondents numbers by gender, age and other variables. It should be noted that the weighting process can result in minor rounding variations.

Please note that, because of rounding, answers in single response questions will not always sum precisely to 100%. In addition, as the base for percentages is the number of respondents answering a particular question (rather than the number of responses) multiple response questions sum to more than 100%.

It should be noted in this report that all data based on sample surveys are subject to a sampling tolerance. Further details on statistically-valid significant differences are identified in the data analysis reports noted in the reference list of this document.
4 Results

1. In 2016–17 what proportion of South Australians visited parks, and how does this compare to previous years?

This far exceeds the People and Parks Visitor Strategy Target 1 – ‘By 2020 50% of South Australians will visit parks annually’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59.6%</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>56.2%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Is this proportion of visitation similar across all NRM regions?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL 2017</th>
<th>Adelaide &amp; Mt Lofty Ranges</th>
<th>South Australian Murray-Darling Basin</th>
<th>Kangaroo Island</th>
<th>South East</th>
<th>Eyre Peninsula</th>
<th>Northern &amp; Yorke</th>
<th>Alinytjara Wilurara</th>
<th>South Australian Arid Lands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>74%</strong></td>
<td>73% +</td>
<td>79% +</td>
<td>80% +</td>
<td>73% +</td>
<td>82% -</td>
<td>64% +</td>
<td>100% +</td>
<td>72% +</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Approximately half of all respondents (55%, 2017 up from 52% in 2016) visited a National, Conservation or Recreation Park in the Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges NRM Region.

3. Of those people who visit parks how often did they visit? (2016 results in red)

- 1 to 3 visits: 41%  \(\downarrow\) from 46%
- 4 to 11 visits: 44%  \(\uparrow\) from 42%
- 12 or more visits: 15%  \(\uparrow\) from 12%

4. What Parks values most directly reflect those of the community? (2016 results in red)

- Parks provide community spaces for recreation, enjoyment and health: 49%  \(\downarrow\) from 49%
- Parks provide protection for native plants and animals or cultural heritage: 49%  \(\uparrow\) from 47%
- Parks are not important to me: 1%  \(\downarrow\) from 2%
5. What were the top ten most popular Parks in SA? (2016 results in red)

- Cleland 24% 🔷 from 23% (incl. Waterfall Gully to Mount Lofty Trail)
- Belair 21% 🔷 from 23%
- Morialta 17% 🔷 from 18%
- Granite Island 14% 🔷 from 15%
- Brownhill Creek 11% 🔷 from 9%
- Marino to Hallett Cove 9% 🔷 from 6%
- Onkaparinga River 7% 🔷 from 8%
- Deep Creek 7% ↔ from 7%
- Anstey Hill 7% 🔷 from 1%
- Torrens Island 5% ↔ from 5% (incl. Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary)
- Murray 5% 🔷 from 3%

6. There has been a huge increase in the visitation rate of Belair, Cleland and Morialta between 2014 and 2016–17, why is that?

The increase in visitation might be attributed to recent initiatives that have occurred* i.e. Nature Play programs, open days, and mountain biking.

There appears to be a large community response to free organised events in these three parks.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitation %</th>
<th>Belair</th>
<th>Cleland</th>
<th>Morialta</th>
<th>Granite Island</th>
<th>Deep Creek</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In consultation with the park rangers associated with these parks this is a reflection of what they felt has occurred, but they have limited data to confirm this. Their view is that the increase in visitation is attributed to recent initiatives that have occurred relating to these parks i.e. Nature Play programs (ie ride with a ranger) and open day free events and mountain biking. Morialta has been celebrating its 100 yrs (2015) with promotions and events. Belair has had four big events over 2015–16. Cubby town, went for 2 days with approximately 800 and 900 cars attending, Belair open day had an estimated 1500 cars attend. There appears to be a large community response to the free access days.

Overall the rangers feel the car visitation numbers are going down but there is an increase in numbers of people and bike rider visitors and an increase in visitation at other entrances to the parks.
7. What has been the community’s attitude** to Marine Parks from 2012 to 2017?

The survey asked how familiar were you with what a marine park was and then asked of those who were familiar or very familiar “Would you say your attitude towards marine parks in South Australia is positive, negative or neutral?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ attitude</th>
<th>2012 Pre-parks establishment</th>
<th>2013 Question not surveyed</th>
<th>2014 Pre-parks establishment</th>
<th>2015 Post-parks establishment</th>
<th>2016 Post-parks establishment</th>
<th>2017 Post-parks establishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** The results from the Marine Parks Survey 2017 question “Are you in favour of Marine Parks to protect marine plants and animals? Yes - 91%, No – 3% and don’t know 6%**

8. How does the community’s familiarity with Marine Parks relate to their attitude to Marine Parks?

61% of the community who are not familiar with what a marine park have a neutral or unsure position on marine parks compared to 33% of those who are familiar with what a marine park is.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All respondents</th>
<th>Very familiar or Somewhat familiar</th>
<th>Not familiar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9. **What activities and experiences did South Australians participate in when visiting parks in the last 12 months?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities and experiences</th>
<th>S.A. parks visitors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing nature and scenery</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialising with friends</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with family</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about nature</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picnicking/BBQ</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time by myself</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking the dog</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camping</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four-wheel driving</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering in nature</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cycling/Mountain biking</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5 References

Adelaide University, 2012 (unpublished). SASP Household Survey Results 2012. DEWNR

Adelaide University, 2014 (unpublished). Results from the Health Monitor Survey 2013. DEWNR

Adelaide University, 2014 (unpublished). Results from the Health Monitor Survey 2014. DEWNR


