

**Lakeshore Nature Preserve**  
**Picnic Point Visitor Survey Results: July 2010**  
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**Survey purpose**

Lakeshore Nature Preserve staff seek information to support and inform management decisions. This data collection effort is intended to provide a “snap-shot” of visitor perspectives and preferences. Due to time and resource constraints, a non-probability sampling strategy is used.

**Research goal**

Collect data on visitor-use activities, as well as, visitor preferences for regulations and services at Picnic Point.

**Research objectives**

1. Collect visitation data, using observers, on visitors’ mode of travel, age cohort, and group size and dog visitation rates.
2. Collect visitor opinions, using a self-administered paper survey, on the following topics:
  - a. Profile of visitor use.
  - b. Opinions regarding regulation of activities or behaviors (“support/oppose scale”).
  - c. Opinions regarding provision of maintenance and other visitor services (“important/not important scale”).
  - d. Overall opinion of management of Picnic Point.

**Summary of key findings**

- Most support **dogs** on-leash but oppose dogs off-leash.
- Most support **bikes** being allowed on the main path but oppose fast moving bikes.
- Most support **joggers**, regardless of group size.
- Most support **alcohol** at fire circles. Many are neutral on the issue.
- Most are not concerned about other visitors impeding their way by **blocking the path**.
- Top three **important services**: shoreline access; plant restoration; and rut-free main path. Bottom three **not important services**: clean ash out of fire circles; keep side paths rut free; and provide free wood.

## **Data collection process**

Data was collected during a 10-day period (July 13-23, 2010). Survey collection was conducted in approximately 1.5 hour sessions on four weekdays (M, T, W, and F) and one weekend day (Sat.). A total of 12 hours of data collection were conducted during eight survey sessions. Data was collected from 7AM through 7PM.

Surveys were primarily distributed by undergraduate student interns who approached visitors and politely invited them to complete a paper survey. Most survey participants took 4-8 minutes to complete the survey.

Two data collection techniques were used:

- 1) An observer counted all visitors as they entered the Picnic Point split -rail gateway off University Bay Drive.
- 2) Paper surveys were offered to visitors as they entered the Picnic Point split -rail gateway off University Bay Drive. The paper survey participants' mode of travel and approximate age cohort were noted on the survey by the survey observer.

One collection session (1.5 hours) was conducted at the tip of Picnic Point where it was felt runners and bikers might be more receptive to stopping to complete a survey.

Initially, paper surveys were offered randomly to every third or fourth visitor. It was soon apparent that runners and bikers were not being proportionally represented among survey participants. These visitors were often less willing to interrupt their activity to complete a paper survey.

For the final six hours of the survey, a sign board was erected on the path with a message that specifically encouraged runner and biker participation. Survey distributors were encouraged to recruit as many runners and bikers as possible during this period.

## **Survey replication**

This survey will be repeated in mid-April and early October to gather data which may show seasonal variability.

**Observer results (Data collected by survey observer)**

Total individuals observed: 492

Mode for all visitors entering Picnic Point

(Note for this calculation groups of 3+ people are counted as “1” visitor)

Walker:	37%
Jogger:	37%
Biker:	24%
Other:	2%

Mode of paper survey participants

Walker:	43%
Jogger:	30%
Biker:	27%
Other:	0%

Age range of paper survey participants

Little tykes (0-5 years):	0
School age (6- 18 years):	0
College age (19-30 years):	49
Older than 30 years:	48
Not identified:	3

Age range of for all visitors entering Picnic Point

(Note for this calculation all visitors are counted. This included several large groups from youth athletics program)

Little tykes (0-5 years):	15
School age (6- 18 years):	73
College age (19-30 years):	224
Older than 30 years:	180
Total for 12 hours of observation:	492

Dogs on leash: 17

Dogs off leash: 0

(Note: Dogs only counted upon entering at the split -rail gateway. More dogs were observed exiting then had entered at this location, which suggests that dog walkers are accessing Picnic Point from other locations. )

## Survey Results- (Data provided by paper survey participants)

### Q1) Residency

Dane County (n=64)

Not Dane County (n=29)

### Q2) Current university relationship

Student (n=25)

Faculty/staff (n=14)

Alum or retired student /faculty/staff (n=26)

Not affiliated (n=35)

### Q3) Rate of visitation in past two months

More than three times week (n=15)

Average twice week (n=13)

Average once week (n=19)

Few times (n=52)

### Q4) Usual travel mode when visiting Picnic Point

Walker (n=40)

Biker (n=15)

Jogger (n=42)

Other (n=3)

### Q5) Primary reason for visit

Recreation/exercise (n=90)

Study/research/observation (n=2)

Social/spiritual (n=8)

Q6 and Q7 are “fill in the blank” open-ended questions

#	Favorite activity at Picnic Point (Q6)	Something <u>others</u> do that interferes with your experience (Q7)
1	bonfire	party glass containers
2	jog	ride bike, have dog
3	hike	dogs (esp. unleashed)
4	look at the wildflowers	N/A
5	running	smoking
6	atmosphere, close to work	smoking
7	walk, jog, observe	loose dogs, fast bikes
8	walk, sightsee	N/A
9	The ambiance	fast bikes
10	viewing nature while walking	fast bikes, pet droppings
11	take pictures	N/A
12	run, look at water and animals	N/A
13	look at the view	drink alcohol
14	swim with dog	N/A
15	walk	fast bikes
16	scenery	N/A
17	scenery	N/A
18	walking	N/A
19	scenery, run	N/A
20	run	N/A
21	nature	do as you please
22	looking for rocks, burial mounds, butterflies	N/A
23	walk dog, talk with girlfriend	N/A
24	hike	bikes
25	run/walk, scenery	fast bikes
26	walk, bird watch	dogs off leash, smokers
27	walking	too much loud partying
28	enjoying views	mike riding
29	campfires	people walking side by side creating lane difficulty
30	walk	N/A
31	walk the dog, nature hike with kids	sometimes slightly crowded
32	stretch	N/A
33	cool, good walking	biking
34	favorite bench to sit on	N/A
35	(no response)	N/A
36	walk w/friends	noise
37	get away, listen to birds	smoke from fires
38	seeing animals	speak very loudly
39	scenery	being sexually inappropriate or loud
40	bike, swim	N/A

41	environment, trees, quiet, water view	N/A
42	(no response)	N/A
43	run the trail	N/A
44	meditate	ride bikes
45	watching the bay	N/A
46	walk, scenery	N/A
47	scenery	smoking, being noisy
48	see sunset, wildlife	n/a
49	walking trails, sitting by water	Loud conversation, party
50	swim	n/a
51	relax on beach	Too busy, not enough beach space (at Narrows)
52	walk through woods	litter
53	enjoy nature	take surveys
54	Watch trees!	n/a
55	dog walk	n/a
56	breathe oxygen	smoke
57	jog/bike	n/a
58	ride in the road	n/a
59	view of downtown	Noisy hijinks
60	picnic/ campfire	heavy drinking
61	run out to point, stretch w/ view, run back	n/a
62	run on trails	bike on trails
63	running/ scenery	Leave trash around
64	The lake	n/a
65	walk	party
66	greeting goose family!	n/a
67	views and walk	aggressive bikers
68	side trails	Walk 4-wide
69	Bike	litter
70	use trail, talk to whoever I'm with	Smoke
71	lake view	n/a
72	running along trails	n/a
73	run/ listen/ be in nature	chop down trees, set it on fire
74	jogging, looking at lake, trees	n/a
75	run or swim (w/ UW PE open water class)	Slow walk? Usually not a problem
76	run	n/a
77	scenery/ exercise	loiter
78	run, look out at Mendota	n/a
79	walk dogs	bikers on lakeshore trail
80	run, bird watch	Only if someone rides really fast on their bike
81	look at the sites!	n/a
82	run/biking	n/a
83	exercise	drink
84	running	Play music on a stereo
85	bird watch	n/a
86	jog, dip feet in water	Walk in big groups, taking up entire path

87	wildlife viewing	n/a
88	Sit quietly and look about	Unleashed dogs get my goat. Loudness.
89	jogging	n/a
90	run	n/a
91	look at lake	not ride on one side
92	enjoy the water view	taking large groups there
93	sit for picnics/ look at water	n/a
94	look at scenery	n/a
95	running on trails	being loud
96	run/bike	smoking
97	run/walk trails/ sit on rocks	litter
98	stop at the end to watch the sunset	n/a
99	no car noise	n/a
100	run/ swim/ train for endurance events	Walk w/o letting others pass, being loud, steal while I'm in lake training

Q8. “Tell us how you feel about the following situations that you might observe on Picnic Point. Indicate which of the following options most closely describes your viewpoint.

- Support** (This is a good thing --I like it -- I feel safe.)  
**Neutral** (I’m not really affected by this behavior.)  
**Oppose** (This concerns me -- I don’t like this--I feel unsafe.)  
**No opinion** (I just don’t know enough about this to say.)

Summary of Q8 results:

- Most support **dogs** on-leash (n=66) but oppose dogs off-leash (n=41)
- Most support **bikes** being allowed (n=72) but oppose fast bikes (n=52)
- **Joggers** are generally supported: in team groups (n=62), alone/pair (n=80) or in groups of 3 or more (n=64)
- **Alcohol** at fire circles is supported (n=34) yet a majority is either neutral (n=38) or opposed (n=20) Note: alcohol at fire circles is not allowed without a permit.

Q9 Visitors blocking the path

- Visitors **blocking the path** for others is not a big deal for most (n=56).

Q10 “Tell us how important these services are for your visit. Indicate which of the following options most closely describes your viewpoint.”

- **Important** (This enhances my experience.)
- **Neutral** (This is nice, but it’s not a priority.)
- **Not important** (This is something you don’t need to do or do infrequently.)
- **No opinion** (I just don’t know enough about this to say.)

Summary of Q10 results:

Most important services

Access to shoreline (n=75), plant restoration (n=70), rut-free main path (n= 69), maintain hand-pump (n=63), invasives removal (n=62)

Somewhat important services

Trail signs (n=57), clear branches main path (n=55), trail maps/regulations (n=55), clean restrooms (n=55), provide interpretive signs (n=50)

Not important and neutral

Clean ash out of fire circles (n=66), keep side paths rut free (n=62), provide free wood (n=50)

Q11Rate university management of Picnic Point

Excellent (n=54) Good (n=40) Fair (n=1) Poor (n=0)