

OVERVIEW

The 2025 North Slope Recreation Area (NSRA) Visitor Survey was a multi-mode effort to capture visitor perceptions of outdoor recreation across the region. The survey effort documented visitor's perceptions, desires, and interests during the 2025 summer season.

The survey covered the following topics:

- Types of activities participated in at NSRA
- Desired amenities for outdoor recreation
- Preferences for prioritization at NSRA
- Opinions on managing costs from outdoor recreation
- Personal values placed on goals for NSRA
- Recreation characteristics and demographics

In total, 937 respondents participated in some form of the survey between May 21st to September 17th, 2025. Of those respondents, the vast majority used the online link (88%) as it had a broader reach than the postcards. Approximately 12% of respondents participated via the postcard with most using the QR code scan (10% of the total 12%) and 2% using the URL link.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The following section details the results of the survey from the summer season of 2025.

- The 2025 North Slope Recreation Area Visitor Survey demonstrates that NSRA is a highly valued recreational resource that must balance multiple priorities: safeguarding water supply and ecosystem health, while providing meaningful outdoor experiences for residents and visitors alike.
- Survey participants overwhelmingly support a dual mission of protection and recreation. They place high importance on objectives such as protecting wildlife, water quality, and scenic resources, while also recognizing the need for accessible, quality recreation opportunities. At the same time, visitors expressed clear expectations for the management of growth: investments in core amenities, proactive management of crowding and ecological impacts, and user-based cost recovery mechanisms.
- The findings suggest a pathway forward: strengthen infrastructure around high-demand activities like hiking and fishing, improve visitor services through targeted amenities, and establish sustainable funding streams that do not burden utilities customers. Equally important, managers should adopt monitoring tools and adaptive strategies to respond to shifting recreation pressures while keeping ecosystem protection at the forefront.
- In conclusion, NSRA is well-positioned to continue serving as a unique space where water protection and recreation coexist. Implementing these recommendations will help ensure that the area remains resilient, inclusive, and enjoyable for future generations—while safeguarding the vital resources upon which the City of Colorado Springs depends.