



Report

Community Survey

Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

Client Contact: Terry Harper
ACNielsen Contact: Sonia Huf
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Statement of Professional Commitment

ACNielsen certifies that the information contained in this report has been compiled in accordance with sound market research methodologies developed by, or for, ACNielsen. ACNielsen believes that this report represents a fair, accurate and comprehensive analysis of the information collected, with all sampled information subject to normal statistical variance.

ACNielsen Research Pty. Ltd. ABN 96 001 923 093
545 Queen Street, Brisbane 4000
Phone: (07) 3360 2111 Fax: (07) 3832 1883
<http://www.acnielsen.com.au>

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Executive Insights

Study Context

In June/July 2003, a random telephone survey was conducted with approximately 2,000 residents aged 15 years and over, living throughout Queensland, to measure people's attitudes and behaviours regarding national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland.

The study replicated the approach taken in the 1999 benchmark survey, where 3,000 residents were surveyed.

The Changing Role of QPWS

The role of QPWS has expanded since the benchmark study, with the integration of State forests into its area of responsibility. This should be taken into account when interpreting findings, as questionnaire wording reflects that used in 1999 (for comparability), and as such, excludes State forests. For example it was explained to respondents that national parks or similar types of conservation areas exclude botanical gardens, council parks or State forests.

Conclusions

Visitation of National Parks and Similar Areas

- Eight in ten Queensland residents report having visited national parks or similar areas in Queensland at some time (excluding botanical gardens, council parks or State forests), similar to the level found in 1999.
 - The majority of residents are also more recent users of park areas in Queensland, with six in ten having visited within the past three years and four in ten having visited in the past year. These visitation levels are similar but lower (by around four to five percentage points) to 1999.
 - While not directly comparable, Australian Bureau of Statistics figures suggest that visitation levels have stabilised (for the 12 months prior to 1998 and 2001) after showing some decline in the previous decade.
 - Two in ten residents overall visit park areas at least once every few months (slightly lower than in 1999). This level of frequent visitation is higher for some groups including those in South East and Northern Queensland, males, aged 18-44, and employed.
 - The main reasons for not visiting park areas more often are once again, work commitments, a preference for doing other things with people's leisure time, and a perceived difficulty in getting to these areas. This continues to match the broad findings found by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and other studies such as the South East Queensland Outdoor Recreation Demand Study undertaken on behalf of QORF.
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Executive Insights, Continued

Overall Satisfaction

- Visitors to park areas express strong satisfaction with their visit experience. Of those who have been to these areas in the past three years, nine in ten are satisfied with the overall experience on their last trip (62% very satisfied, 29% somewhat satisfied), consistent with 1999.
-

Perceived Advantages and Disadvantages

- Residents associate a large number of benefits with having parks areas in Queensland, particularly in terms of protecting the environment and enabling appreciation by the public. In line with 1999 findings, the main benefits are seen to be:
 - Protecting native animals, wildlife and plants
 - Protecting the bush/wilderness areas/ keeping it unspoiled
 - Protecting the environment in general
 - Helping people to get away and enjoy the bush
 - People can use these areas for recreation
 - People can see and appreciate these areas.
 - Half of residents see no negative aspects associated with having national park areas in Queensland, with areas of some concern (each mentioned by less than one in ten residents) more likely to be associated with the way in which these areas are managed:
 - Park areas are not being looked after well enough
 - Park areas are not policed well enough
 - Park areas are a source of weeds, pests or feral animals
 - Park areas encourage bushfires.
 - Perceptions are similar to 1999, although slightly more now suggest that these areas encourage bushfires, that there are too many restrictions, or that they are too commercialised or not accessible (each up from 0% to 3%).
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Suggested Improvements

- The main suggestions to help national parks and similar areas better meet residents' needs are related to providing more information, access and facilities. Specifically, suggestions (by at least 5%) include:
 - Provide more information to the public
 - Improve/provide more walking tracks
 - Improve/provide more camping facilities
 - Provide easier/more car access
 - Improve/provide more toilet facilities
 - Consistent with 1999, close to four in ten residents say that either no changes are required for park areas to better meet their needs or they are unable to think of any improvements.
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Executive Insights, Continued

Number of National Parks and Similar Areas

- There is widespread support for the allocation of conservation areas in Queensland; almost half of residents say there is the *right amount* while a further four in ten say there are *not enough*. This reflects opinions identified in 1999.
 - Greater support for increasing the number of parks is found among:
 - Residents of South East and Central regions
 - Those aged 18-34 years
 - Males
 - Those who have visited areas before or who visit regularly
 - Residents who have completed Year 12 or a higher qualification.
-

Perceived Role of National Parks and Similar Areas

- The community believes park areas provide a wide range of positive benefits for Queensland. The most favourably perceived include:
 - Protecting and preserving Queensland's natural heritage (rating of 4.6 out of 5, using a 1 to 5 rating scale where 1 is very negative and 5 is very positive)
 - Providing outdoor tourism and recreation opportunities (4.6 out of 5)
 - Enhancing the overall quality of life in Queensland (4.4 out of 5).
 - While still very sound with ratings of around 4 out of a possible 5, relatively lower agreement emerges for statements relating to the contribution of park areas to Queensland's economic position:
 - Queensland's economy in general (4.0 out of 5)
 - Job and employment opportunities in Queensland (3.9 out of 5).
 - These ratings are consistent with those measured in 1999.
-

Management of National Parks and Similar areas

- The main organisation thought to be responsible for managing Queensland's national park areas is QPWS/National Parks and Wildlife, noted by four in ten residents, consistent with the level found four years ago.
 - Two in ten believe it is the Queensland State Government and one in ten nominate local councils.
 - As in 1999, just over half of residents feel park areas in Queensland are managed either very well (17%) or well (36%).
 - While less than one in ten feel parks are being poorly managed, there may be room to improve perceptions as 30% of residents consider that management of park areas in Queensland is 'average'.
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Executive Insights, Continued

Implications for Park Management

The following comments are those of the consultant, ACNielsen, based on the findings from the research project and may not necessarily reflect the opinions of QPWS. QPWS may have access to other information or operate within parameters unknown to the consultant.

Key Learnings – Positioning of Natural Areas

Almost half of Queensland residents have come into contact with Queensland's national parks and similar conservation areas in the past year and for almost all, experiences were favourable. Importantly, levels of satisfaction are strong regardless of frequency of visitation to park areas.

These findings are set in the context of (over time) downward trends in park area use and general involvement in cultural and physical activities. For example, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reports visitation to national parks, state parks and world heritage areas at 62% for (the 12 months prior to) 1992, 56% for 1998 and 57% for 2001 (similar results nation-wide) and a steady decline in involvement in sport and physical activity (59% in 1998-99 and 55% 1999-00 Australia-wide).

This highlights the challenge that natural areas face in attracting visitation and continued patronage against competing options and lifestyle changes. Other findings also suggest that public demand is increasing for more natural settings, the management of commercial/ visitation impact, and for ease of access.

Importantly, there is continued strong support for park areas in Queensland, with this noticeably stronger amongst regular park users who would like to see even more natural areas.

Key Learnings - Promotion of Initiatives

QPWS should continue to actively promote its initiatives, partnerships, and community involvement wherever possible. It is only through over time exposure that people can build (or re-build) perceptions of the organisation and wider management issues.

As a limited effort is possible for targeted public communication, the aim of QPWS should be to improve the *quality* of awareness/knowledge rather than the *quantity* per se. In other words, the aim should be to obtain small but quality increases rather than seek big increases but dilute the message or impression.

Continued on next page

Executive Insights, Continued

Key Learnings - Promotion of Initiatives, cont'd

Examples of positive promotion could include:

- Continued and active use of media releases and media placement
 - Appropriate signage of natural areas to attribute improvements and initiatives back to the organisation. In other words, ensuring that signage is in place, is accurate, and acknowledges/promotes partnerships. This is a low cost and passive way to raise awareness of the expansion of QPWS' responsibilities to State forest areas, the aim of enhancing visitation growth, involvement in the upgrading of areas and new projects, employment of additional rangers etc.
 - Involving the community and/or community groups in management or decision processes.
 - Considering options for school-based programs which align QPWS services/ knowledge to curriculum requirements/ learning outcomes.
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Key Learnings – Best Practice

It should be noted that what is considered 'world's best practice' in customer satisfaction is the achievement of 80% or higher satisfaction. QPWS has met and indeed exceeded these levels, so rather than seeking to increase satisfaction, the challenge for QPWS is to maintain levels (or minimise decline) over time.

Key Learnings – Setting of KPIs

As part of tracking its service delivery, QPWS may wish to set performance targets for key indicators of its charter and/or agree on new indicators to better match services to desired outcomes. Some aspects for consideration include:

- Existing satisfaction levels and the features which are likely to have greater influence or act as obstructions to changing perceptions
 - Varying targets between different/diverse QPWS services
 - Acknowledging that some targets may be difficult to improve, e.g. where scores are already relatively high.
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Key Learnings - Further Exploration

- To ensure this research provides management with practical outcomes, it is recommended that a workshop is undertaken focusing on the key issues, likely implications and possible initiatives.
 - As noted in 1999, an area which would benefit from further investigation is perceptions of park area management. While many residents view management favourably, three in ten rate it as average. A qualitative approach would help to explore reasons behind these opinions and in testing responses to concepts/strategies.
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Business Needs Assessment

Background

Environmental Protection Agency is seeking to understand the needs and values of the Queensland community to help enhance the relationship between the community and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS). QPWS, part of the Agency, is responsible for managing wildlife and the protected area estate in Queensland on behalf of the State Government.

Many studies have focused on specific segments rather than the wider community (inclusive of both national park users and non-users). This study has canvassed the behaviours and opinions of the Queensland community to aid in monitoring the performance of QPWS over time and to build upon knowledge gained from a benchmark survey in 1999.

Objectives

Information obtained from this project is intended to:

- Help understand the community's perceptions of national parks and similar areas, the QPWS and its services
- Assist in more accurately directing education and resources to the community
- Assist in more accurately directing management resources to address specific concerns in the community
- Ensure national parks and similar areas provide maximum value for the community
- Determine best options for management of national parks and similar areas
- Provide data for evaluating and tracking QPWS performance
- Ensure robust results for planning and decision making purposes.

Specifically, the survey will provide information on:

- Level of use of national parks and similar areas
 - Knowledge and understanding of national parks and similar areas
 - Reasons why people do or don't visit national parks
 - Attitudes towards national parks and similar areas
 - Profile of users of national parks and similar areas.
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Research Design

Methodology

The research was conducted using random telephone interviewing, targeting the person in the household aged 15 years and over, due to have their birthday next. A total of 2,009 residents were interviewed between 25 June and 3 July 2003.

The following design aspects were incorporated:

- Telephone numbers were generated using random digit dialling to maximise coverage of household types (i.e. not excluding silent numbers).
- To maximise the probability of capturing non-answering telephone numbers, the survey design allowed for up to 6 call-backs.
- Age and gender distribution by location was monitored throughout the survey fieldwork, although no quotas were enforced.
- Public holidays were avoided in scheduling the survey fieldwork.
- Respondents were the person in the household due to have their birthday next.

The survey design replicated the benchmark research, conducted between 4 and 25 October 1999.

Weighting

Data from the survey has been weighted to reflect known population characteristics (age, gender and location). That is, results are weighted to represent the geographic population from which they were drawn, using the latest population estimates based on ABS Estimated Resident Populations (ERPs) which provide population estimates by sex, age and SLA.

Household size was also used in the weighting process to cater for the differing probabilities of respondent selection dependent on residing in larger vs. smaller households.

- At the total level, results based on a sample of 2009 are associated with a maximum margin of error $\pm 2.2\%$ at the 95% level of confidence.
 - For the subset of residents who have ever visited a national park, results based on a sample of 1,572 are associated with a maximum margin of $\pm 2.5\%$ at the 95% level of confidence.
 - For the subset of park users in the past year, results based on a sample of 831 are associated with a maximum margin of error $\pm 3.4\%$ at the 95% level of confidence.
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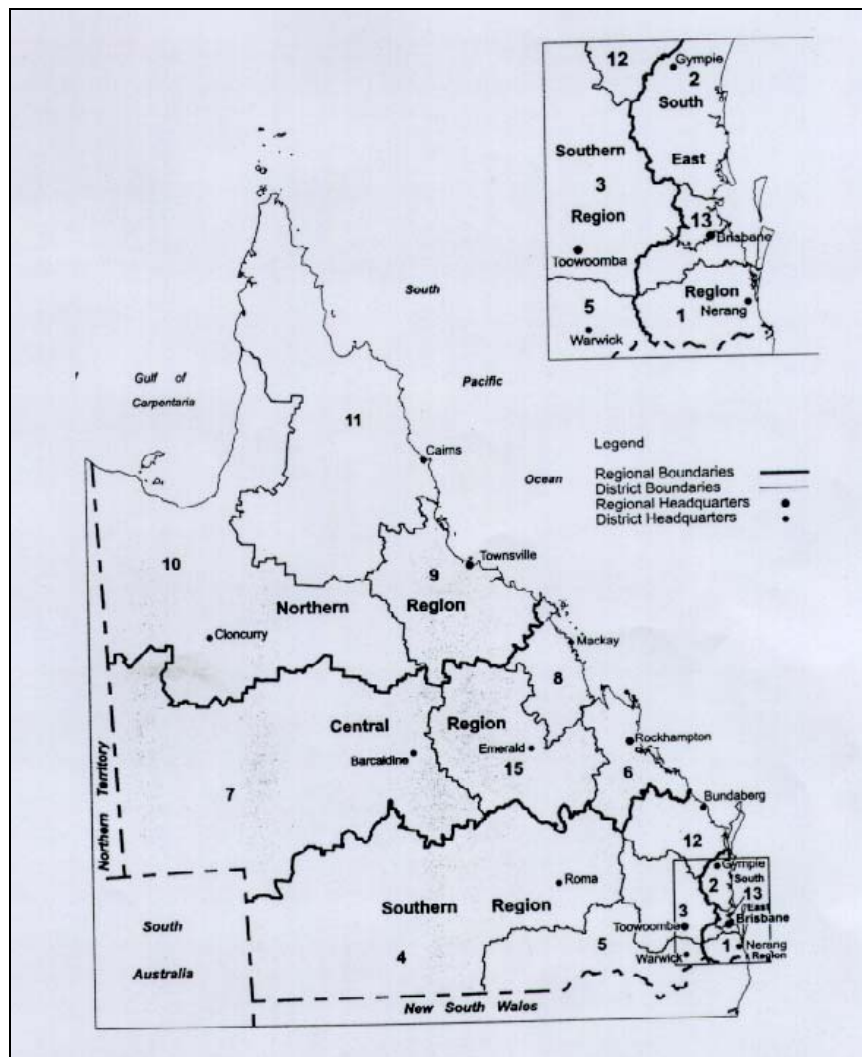
Research Design, Continued

Regional information

To provide QPWS with regional information about Queensland residents' perceptions and opinions, the geographic area of Queensland was divided into four regions.

These included South East, Southern, Central and Northern and are based primarily on Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Divisions. The map below shows the boundaries of these regions.

Metropolitan and other Queensland identifiers were also included in the survey design.



Research Design, Continued

Significant differences

In the text of this report, references have been made to statistically significant differences. This has been included to provide an indication of significance, and is based on tests between proportions and means of independent samples (assuming a 95% level of confidence).

Note: Due to the large sample sizes in many of the categories tested, relatively small differences of 2-3% test as statistically significant. This is an indication of the robustness of the data.

Comparisons with ABS data

To provide a comparison to other research, references have been made in this report to ABS data where applicable. This data is sourced from the publication titled *Environmental Issues, People's Views and Practices (4602.0)*. It should be noted that the ABS survey differed from the QPWS survey in the following ways:

- Survey method: Information was obtained by personal interviews with responsible adult (aged 18+ years) members of selected households whose birthday was closest to the date of the interview.
 - Survey timeframe: Questions on parks relate to the year ending March 2001 and March 1998.
 - Sample size: The questions were asked of 18,500 private dwellings throughout Australia and approximately 2,500-2,600 private dwellings in Queensland.
 - Question wording: Questions referred to use of World Heritage Areas, National Parks and State parks. People could therefore answer about their use of parks regardless of location (e.g. in any part of Australia, overseas) and inclusive of State parks/forests.
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Detailed Findings

The detailed findings are contained in the following sections:

Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements

Section 3: Perceived Role of National Parks and Similar Areas

Section 4: Management of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland

**Research Note:
The Changing
Role of QPWS**

The role of QPWS has expanded since the benchmark study, with the integration of forest resources into its area of responsibility. As noted in the 2001-2002 Queensland State Budget

Sustainable forest management and equitable access to safe and sustainable recreation opportunities in State forests, now forms part of the QPWS charter.

This should be taken into account when interpreting findings, as questionnaire wording reflects that used in 1999 (for comparability), and as such, excludes State forests. For example it was explained to respondents that national parks or similar types of conservation areas exclude botanical gardens, council parks or State forests.

Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland

Previous Visitation

Close to eight in ten have visited national parks

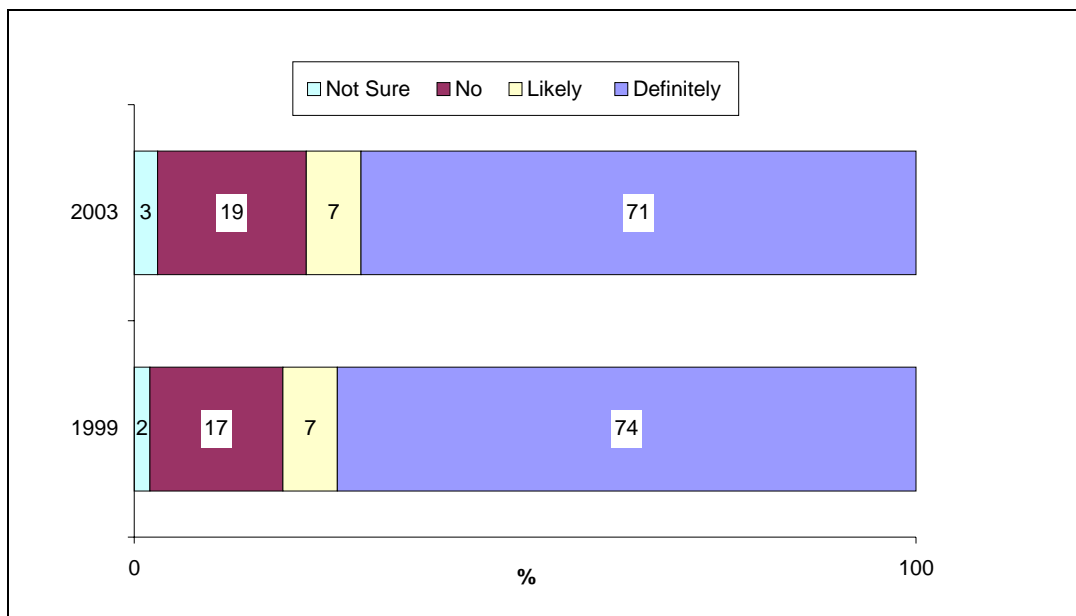
Consistent with previous findings, eight in ten Queensland residents believe they have visited a national park or similar area in Queensland (78% in 2003, 81% in 1999).

Most say they have *definitely* been to these types of areas in Queensland (71%), although some are a little uncertain and say it is likely they have been (7%). Close to two in ten (19%) say they have never visited national parks or similar areas in Queensland before.

People who are more likely to say they have *definitely* visited park areas in Queensland include:

- Those in Northern region (77%)
- Residents aged 25+ (73%)
- Males (77%)
- Those who are working (76%)
- Those who have completed further studies including an apprenticeship, certificate, diploma, degree or higher (75%).

Very little change in park visitation since 1999



Q1 Have you *ever* personally visited a national park or similar type of conservation area in Queensland? Please note that this does not include botanical gardens, council parks or State forests

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

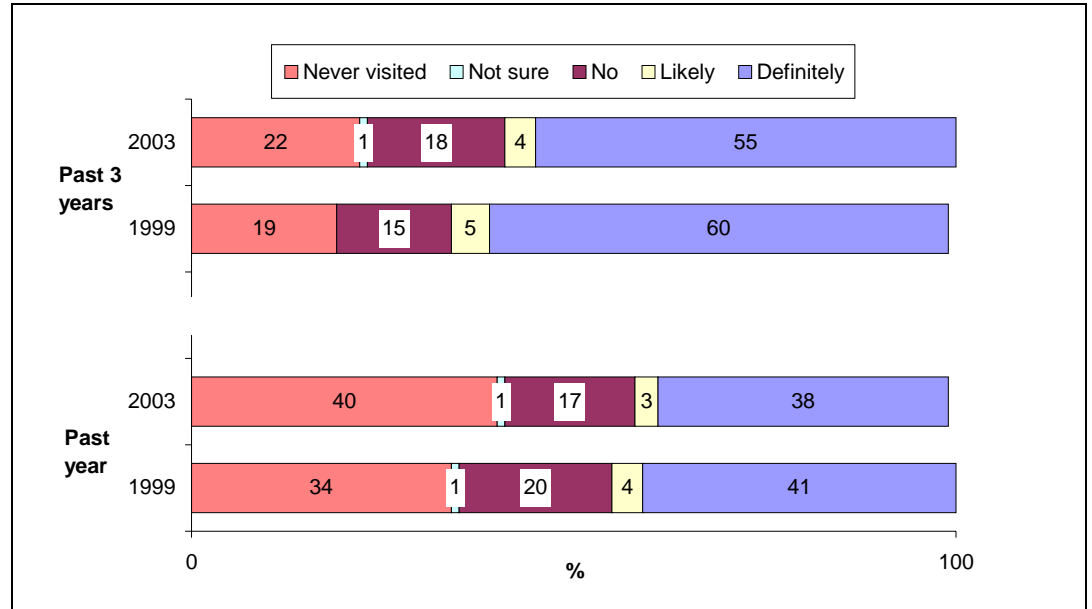
Four in ten have visited parks in the past year

Six in ten residents recall having visited national parks and similar areas in Queensland within the past three years (60% in 2003, a statistically significant drop from 65% in 1999). This equates to 1.8 million people of the 2.95 million aged 15+ living in Queensland.

Four in ten (41%) residents also state they have visited in the recent past (down from 45% in 1999): 38% say they have definitely been to these areas in Queensland in the past year, while a further 3% feel it is likely they have been in the past year. This equates to 1.22 million residents.

As a comparison, Australian Bureau of Statistics figures state that 57% of Queensland residents aged 18+ visited a World Heritage Area, National or State park in the 12 months prior to March 2001 (56% for the 12 months prior to March 1998, 62% for the 12 months prior to March 1992). (*Source: Catalogue 4602.0*) Figures are not directly comparable due to differences in research design (refer p13 for details).

Small decline in park usage in recent years



Q2a Would that have been in the past 3 years? Again this does not include visits to botanical gardens, council parks or State forests.

Q2b And what about in the past year?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Residents more likely to say they have *definitely* visited national park areas within the past year include:

- Those in Northern region (46%)
 - Those aged 18-54 years (43%)
 - Males (43%)
 - People working full or part time (44%)
 - People who have completed further studies including an apprenticeship, certificate, diploma, degree or higher (48%).
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Question wording was designed to prompt people to differentiate between types of areas visited (if possible) due to QPWS having management jurisdiction of specific areas. It is known from general knowledge and past research that people are sometimes unsure of the exact name/definition of areas they have visited.

Majority visited parks on a private trip

Of residents who have been to a national park or similar area in Queensland in the past three years (equating to around 1.8 million residents), almost all went of their own accord rather than through a commercial tour operator:

- 95% say their last visit was privately organised/of their own accord (96% in 1999)
 - 4% say their trip was organised using a commercial tour operator. Consistent with 1999 results, this is more likely for those 15-17 years (18%) and 65 years or older (11%).
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Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

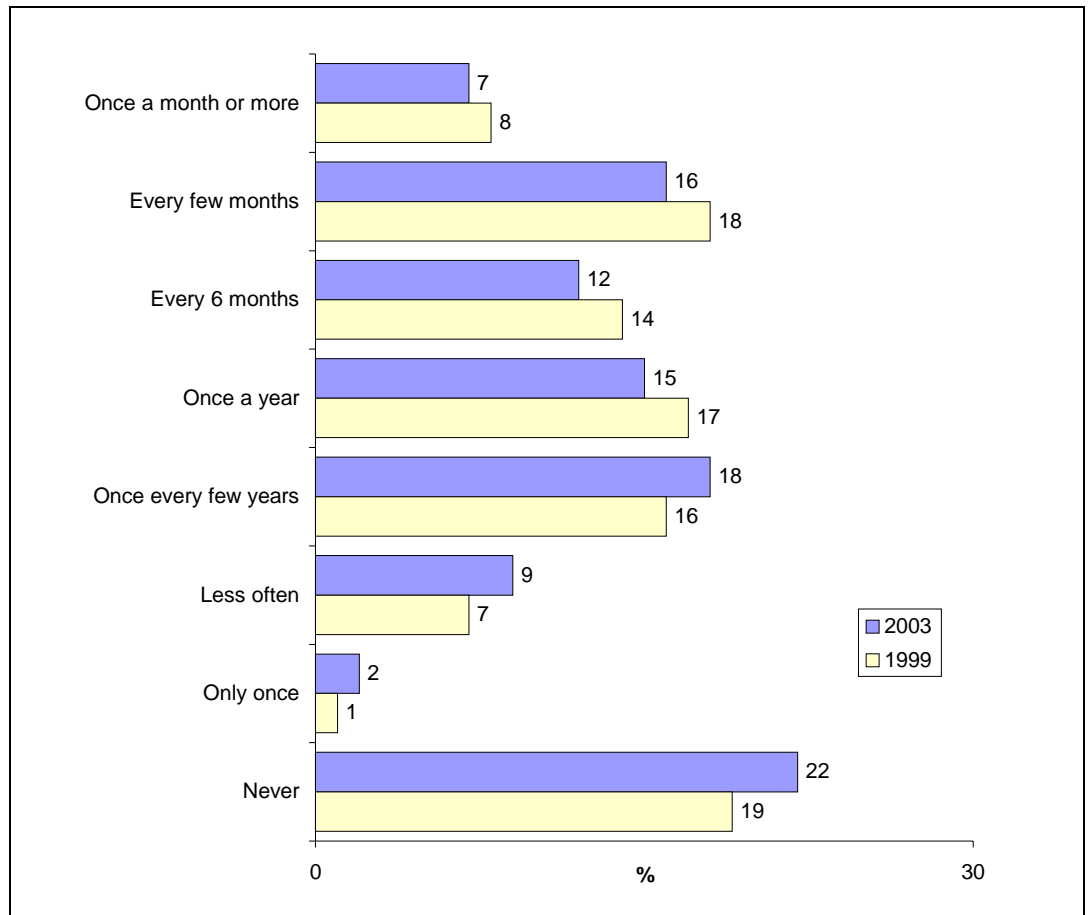
Frequency of Visitation

Half visit national parks at least once a year

Half (50%) of all Queensland residents aged 15 years and over say they visit a national park or similar conservation area in Queensland at least once a year, down from 56% in 1999 (a statistically significant difference).

- Just over two in ten (22%) report visiting park areas regularly, at least once every few months (down from 26% in 1999).
- Overall, 28% visit less often than once a year (24% in 1999).

Decline in frequency of visiting national parks and similar areas in Queensland



Q5 In general, how frequently do you visit national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Continued on next page

Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Around two thirds of those who have ever visited national parks visit at least once a year

<i>Frequency of visit</i>	<i>All residents¹ n=2,009</i>	<i>Those visited area before² n=1,572</i>
Once a month or more often	7%	9%
Once every few months	16%	20%
Once every 6 months	12%	15%
Once a year	15%	20%
Once every few years	18%	23%
Less often	9%	11%
Only visited once before	2%	2%

Q5 In general, how frequently do you visit national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland?

¹ Base: All Queensland residents 15+ years.

² Base: Queensland residents aged 15+ years who have visited park areas in Queensland before (78% of all residents aged 15+ years).

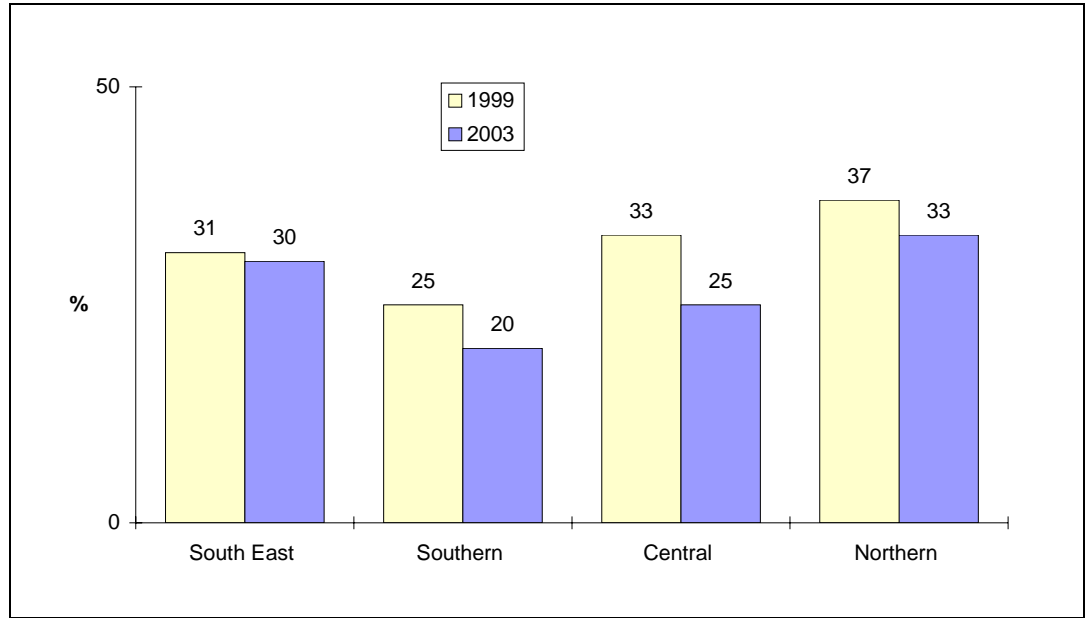
As found in 1999, frequency of visitation is linked to people's location, age, employment status and education levels. Those significantly more likely to visit park areas in Queensland at least once every few months (29% of those who have visited park areas in Queensland before) are:

- Residents of the South East (30%) and Northern (33%) regions of Queensland, compared to those in Southern (20%) and Central (25%) regions
- Those aged 18 to 44 years (average of 34%), more so than younger or older residents
- Males (33%) compared to females (24%)
- Workers (30%) and students (35%), more so than retirees/pensioners (22%) or those not in paid employment (25%)
- Those with an apprenticeship, certificate or diploma (31%) or degree or higher (33%) over those with a lower level of education.

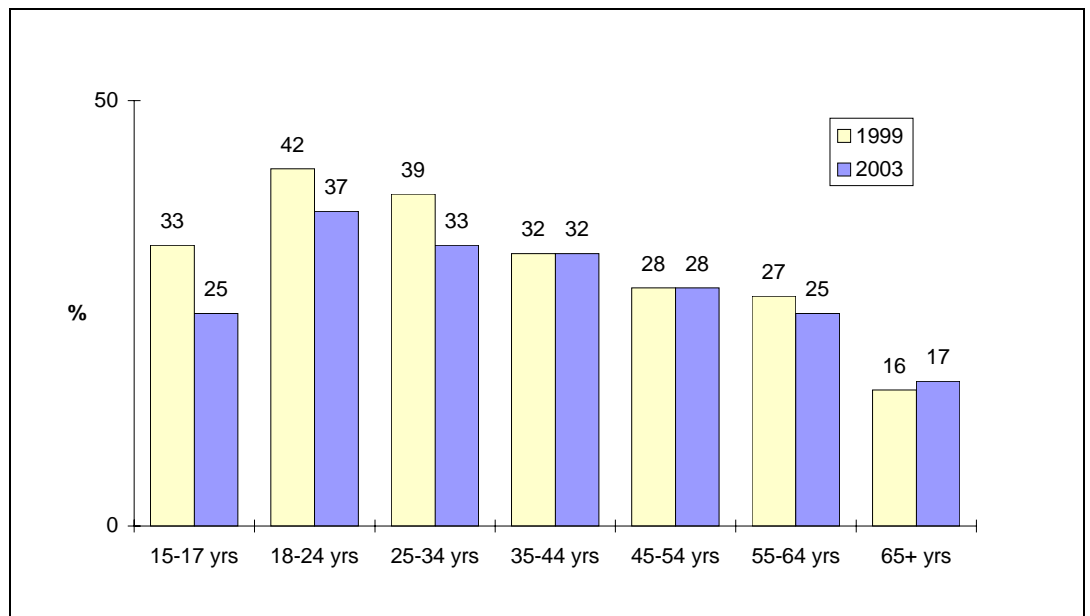
The charts overleaf show how frequent visitation (at least every few months) has changed over time for different regions and age groups.

Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Frequent visitation is stable in the South East, but has dropped in other regions



Frequent visitation has dropped for those aged under 35



Q5 In general, how frequently do you visit national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland?

Base: Queensland residents aged 15+ years who have visited park areas in Queensland before (n=1572 in 2003, n=2403 in 1999)

Percentages refer to the proportion of residents who say they visit parks once every few months or more.

Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Reasons for Infrequent Visitation

Main reason for not visiting national parks is work commitments

All residents, regardless of their use of park areas, were asked for the reasons why they don't visit national parks and similar areas more often.

The major justification given for not visiting national parks and similar conservation areas more often is a busy lifestyle, and in particular, **work commitments**. Four in ten (40%) residents say this is one of the reasons they do not visit more frequently and 35% say this is the main reason. This was also the primary reason cited in 1999 – 39% main reason, 44% total reasons. Work commitments are more likely to be mentioned by residents in Central (45%) and Northern (46%) regions, by those aged 25-54 (52%) and working full or part time (54%).

Other key aspects hindering visits to park areas include:

- A **preference for other recreational activities** (15% say this is the main reason, mentioned by 25% in total). This is more likely to be mentioned by Brisbane residents (29%), those aged 15-17 (31%) or 55-64 (31%), and by students (34%).
- The **distance** involved (13% say this is the main reason, mentioned by 17% in total). Distance is more likely to be an issue for those in Northern region (25%), aged under 25 (25%), and less likely to be mentioned by those who are currently employed (13%).

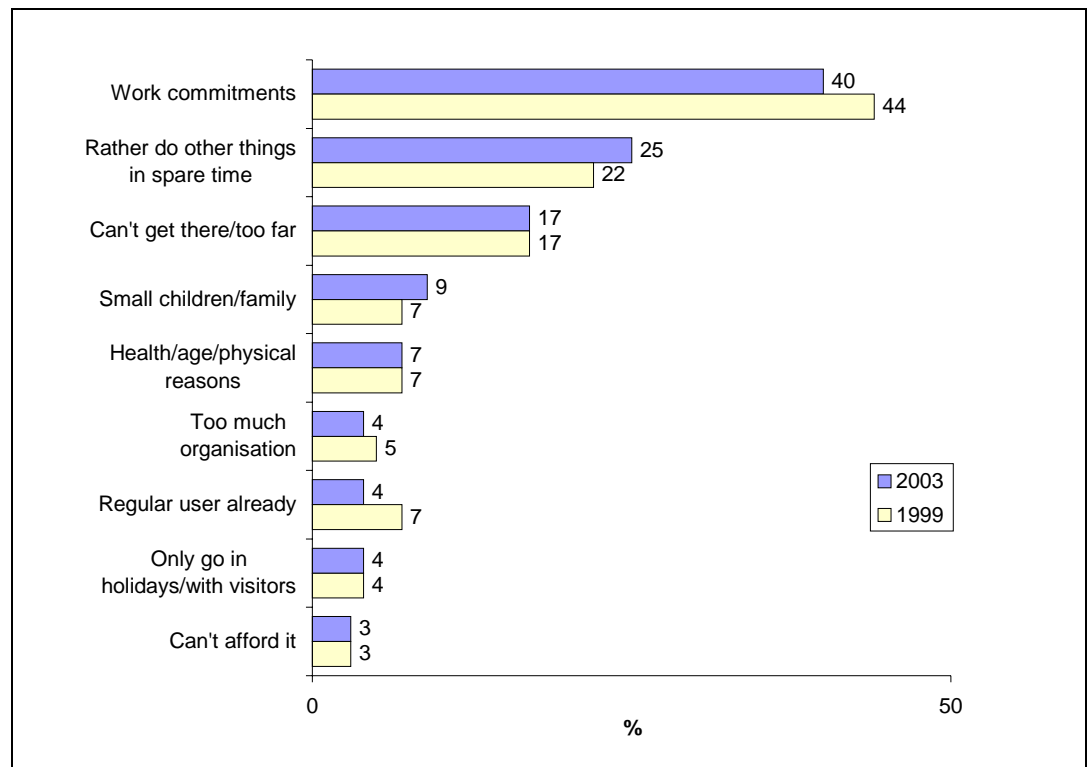
Other factors impeding park visitation, each mentioned by less than one in ten residents, include having small children/young family (9%) and health/ age/ physical reasons (7%).

Interestingly, 4% of residents classify themselves as very regular users (7% in 1999). This group mostly comprises those who currently visit park areas in Queensland at least once every few months, and is also more likely to include Central region residents (8%) and those with a degree or higher qualification (6%).

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Section 1: Use of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Reasons for not visiting national parks and similar areas consistent over time



Q6a What is the *main* reason you don't visit national parks and similar conservation areas more often or at all?

Q6b Any other reasons?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Figures represent total mentions to Q6a and Q6b. Includes mentions by 3% or more in 2003.

As a comparison, Australian Bureau of Statistics figures show the main reasons Queensland residents aged 18+ had not visited park areas in the past year were:

	March 2001	March 1998
No time	36%	37%
Age/health/unable	17%	15%
Not interested	12%	9%
Access/distance	11%	10%
Cost	8%	7%
No reason	12%	16%

Park areas included World Heritage Areas, and National or State parks. (Source: Catalogue 4602.0) Figures are not directly comparable due to differences in research design (refer page 13 for details).

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements

Overall Satisfaction with Last Visit

Nine in ten are satisfied with the park experience

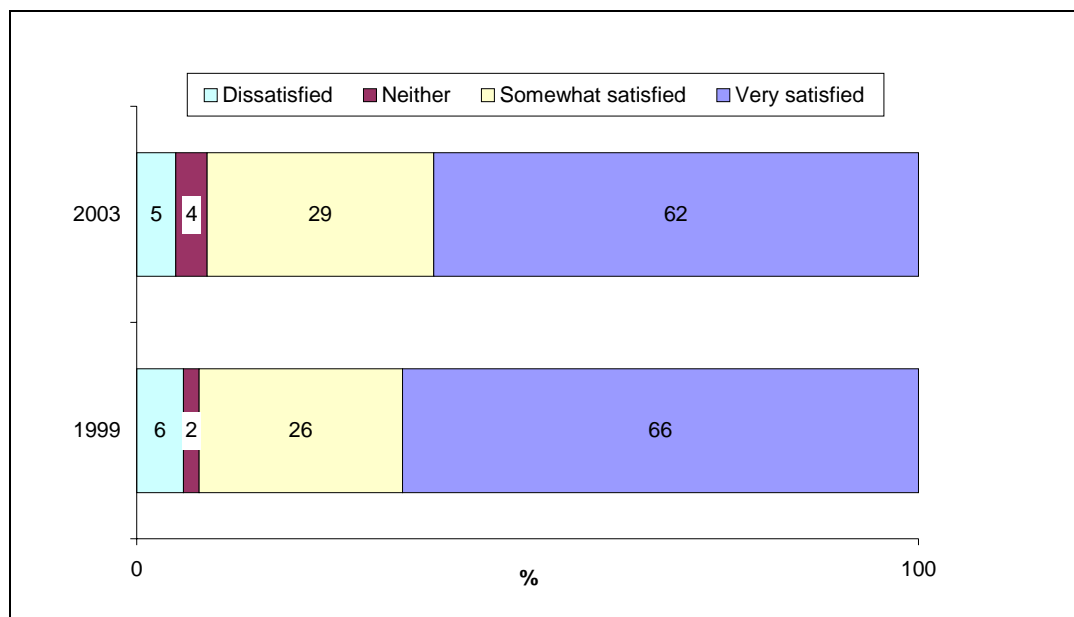
Residents who have visited a national park or similar area in the past three years (60% of all Queensland residents in 2003) were asked how satisfied they were with the overall experience the last time they visited a national park.

Consistent with past results, nine in ten residents (91% in 2003, 92% in 1999) are satisfied with the overall experience on their last trip (62% very satisfied, 29% somewhat satisfied). Just 5% are dissatisfied (6% in 1999).

These responses equate to an average rating or *satisfaction score* of **4.47 out of 5** (using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is very dissatisfied and 5 is very satisfied) in 2003 (4.50 in 1999).

As in 1999, satisfaction is high across all types of park users, with little variation in reported satisfaction levels evident.

Overall satisfaction with last visit remains very favourable



Q4 Thinking about your overall experience, how satisfied were you with your last visit to a national park or similar conservation area in Queensland?

Base: Queensland residents aged 15+ years who have visited park areas in Queensland in the past 3 years (n=1209 in 2003, n=1898 in 1999)

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements, Continued

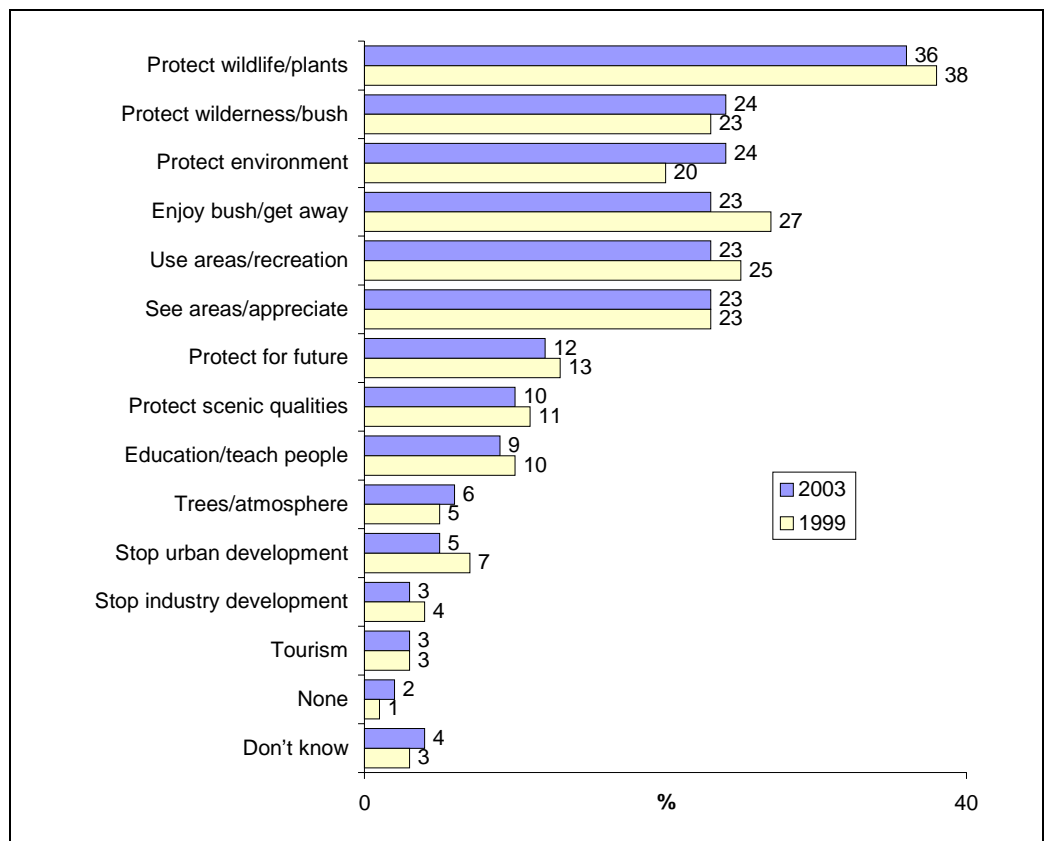
Main Benefits

To better understand the opinions and perceptions of the community, residents were probed for their views of benefits, disadvantages and possible improvements. Responses were unprompted and multiple responses were allowed.

Main benefits of national parks are seen to be protection of wildlife, bush and the environment

One third (36%) of residents feel the main benefit of national parks and similar areas is protection of native animals and plants. Other benefits, mentioned by around one quarter of residents, include: protection of wilderness (24%), protection of the environment (24%), enjoyment of the bush (23%), using areas for recreation (23%) and being able to see and appreciate the areas (23%). Responses are in line with 1999 findings.

Residents are aware of a wide range of benefits



Q8 What do you feel are the main benefits in having national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland? Anything else?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)
Includes mentions by 3% or more in 2003.

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Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements, Continued

Perceived benefits differ between user types

The perceived benefits of national parks and similar areas differ somewhat between user groups.

While South East and Southern regions are generally in line with the state average, differences emerge for Central and Northern regions:

- Central residents are more likely to mention protection of native animals and plants (40%), but less likely to mention factors relating to use of the parks, such as seeing/appreciating areas (17%), good to get away and enjoy (17%) and using areas for recreation (18%).
- Northern residents are more likely to refer to protection of native wildlife (40%) and the environment in general (31%), as well as using areas for recreation (27%).

Some broad patterns are also evident for different age groups.

- Those aged 15-17 are less likely to be able to think of any benefits of national parks (19% say don't know, compared to 4% overall).
- Those aged 18-54 are more likely to mention benefits related to protecting the environment, animals and plants.
- 55-64 year-olds are more likely to mention seeing and appreciating the areas.
- Residents aged 65+ focus on getting away and enjoying the bush and protecting beautiful/scenic areas.

Those who use park areas in Queensland at least once every few months are significantly more likely to state the benefits as:

- Good for getting away/enjoying the bush (30% vs. 21% less frequent/non users)
- So people can see these areas/appreciate these areas (27% vs. 22%)
- Protect beautiful areas/scenic qualities (15% vs. 9%).

Less frequent/non-users are just as likely, however, to say the main benefits are to protect native animals/wildlife/plants (36% frequent and infrequent users) and to protect the bush/wilderness (24% both groups).

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements, Continued

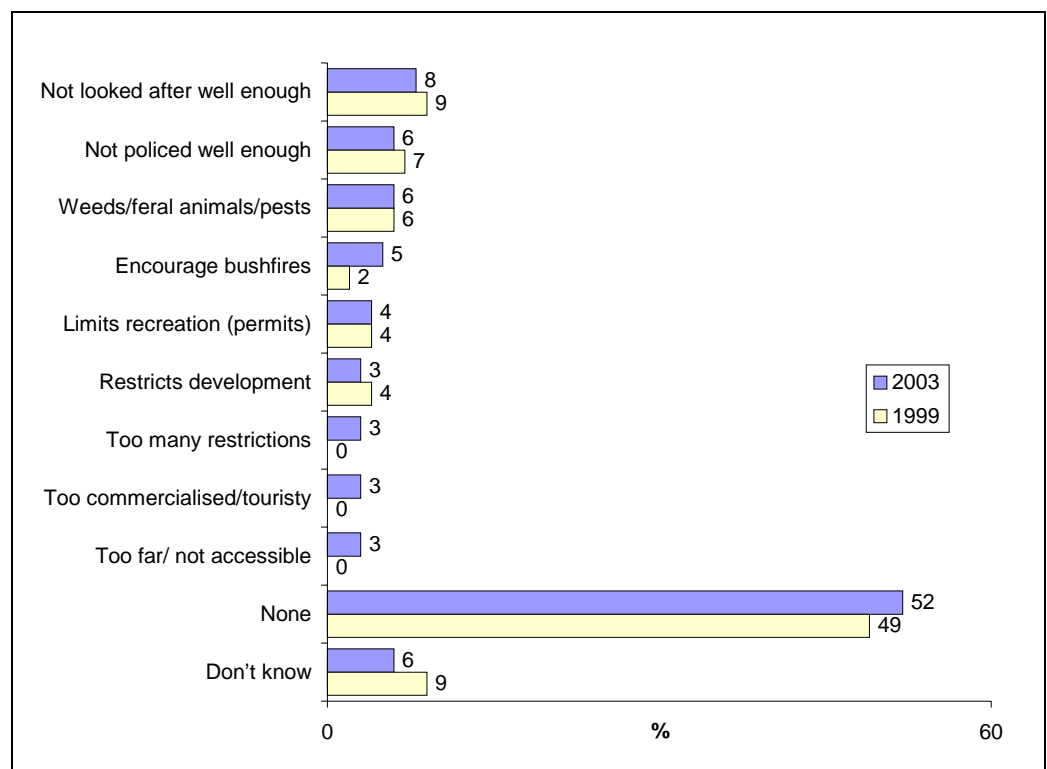
Negative Aspects

Half can think of no negative aspects

Around half of residents see no negative aspects associated with having national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland (52% in 2003, 49% in 1999). Negative aspects mentioned tend to centre on the way in which park areas are managed:

- 8% say areas are not being looked after well enough/poor management (9% in 1999)
- 6% feel these areas are not policed well enough and that there are issues with vandalism and damage (7% in 1999)
- 6% feel park areas are a source of weeds, pests or feral animals (6% in 1999)
- 5% feel these areas encourage bushfires (2% in 1999).

Residents have some concerns over management of national park areas



Q9 And what do you think are negative aspects associated with national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland? Anything else?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)
Includes mentions by 3% or more in 2003.

Continued on next page

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements, Continued

Perceived negative aspects differ between regions

Regional residents are significantly more likely than their Brisbane counterparts to say that conservation areas are not looked after well enough, particularly those in Southern and Northern regions (both 12%, vs. 7% in South East and 9% in Central).

This point is also made to a greater extent by those who visit park areas frequently (13% at least once every few months, 10% once or twice a year, 6% less often/non-users) and those with an apprenticeship/certificate/diploma or higher education (11% vs. 7% with Senior education or below).

Those from regional Queensland however, are significantly more likely to believe that park areas are a source of weeds, pests and feral animals, particularly if living in Southern (15%) or Central (13%) Queensland. Residents in Northern region are much more likely to think park areas restrict recreation use due to the need for permits (12%).

Frequent visitors are more likely to feel that areas are not policed well enough (10% at least once every few months, 7% once or twice a year, 4% less often/non-users).

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements, Continued

Suggestions for Improving National Parks and Similar Areas

Broad range of suggestions offered

When asked for improvements to national parks or similar conservation areas, a broad range of suggestions is offered.

Two in ten (19%) residents are looking for **more information** about national parks and similar areas in Queensland, with the main suggestions including:

- Provide more/better information to the public (13%)
- Provide more/better information on where parks are/camping information (6%)

Overall, 16% mention issues related to **access**, with the main suggestions including:

- Provide better/more walking tracks (8%)
- Provide easier/more car access (2WD/cars, not 4WD) (7%).

Issues related to **park facilities** are mentioned by 13%, suggestions include:

- Providing more camping facilities/improve camping facilities (eg hot water, showers etc) (8%)
- Provide more toilets/improve toilets (7%)

A further 36% of residents suggest a wide range of **other issues**, including management and maintenance issues. All mentions are, however, noted by five percent or fewer – for example:

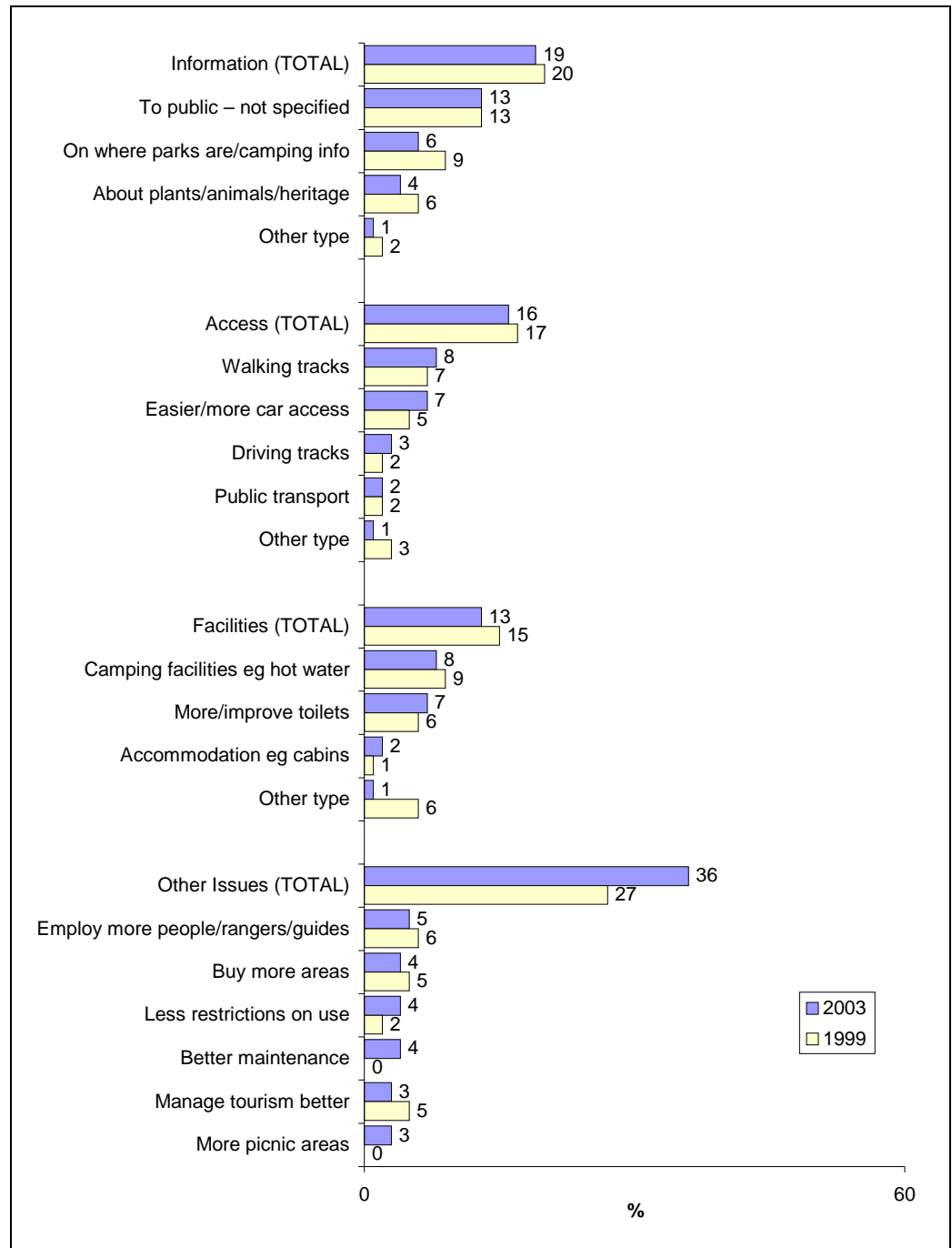
- Employing more people/rangers/guides (5%)
- Buying more natural areas and adding to those already protected (4%)
- Having less restrictions of use (e.g. permits, dogs, horses, bikes) (4%)
- Better upkeep and maintenance (4%)

Consistent with 1999 findings, two in ten (20%) say nothing is required for park areas to better meet their needs. A further two in ten (17%) are unsure and unable to give a response.

Continued on next page

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements, Continued

Suggested improvements to national park areas are similar over time



Q13 In what ways could national parks or similar conservation areas better meet your needs and interests, or those of the community generally?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)
 Issues under 'Other issues' include mentions by 3% or more in 2003.

Continued on next page

Section 2: Overall Satisfaction, Perceptions and Improvements, Continued

Suggested improvements differ between users and non-users

Suggestions related to information are slightly more likely to be made by those who have never visited national parks (22%) than those who have (18%).

However, users of park areas are more likely to feel both access and facilities could be improved than those who have never visited national parks:

- Issues relating to access (17% of users vs. 10% non-users)
- Issues relating to facilities (15% vs. 5%)

Further, users are also much more likely to make other suggestions: 39% of users vs. 24% non-users.

These variations were also evident in 1999.

Specific issues

For those who have visited park areas, the specific issues of greater priority for better meeting their needs include:

- Providing better or more walking tracks (10% vs. 3% who have not visited these areas before)
- Providing more toilets/improving toilets (8% vs. 3% of non-users)
- Providing more camping facilities/improve camping facilities (hot water, showers etc.) (9% vs. 2% of non-users)
- Buy more areas/natural areas, add to those already protected (5% vs. 2% of non-users)
- Employ more people, rangers, guides (6% vs. 3% of non-users)
- None/nothing needed (21% vs. 17% of non-users).

People who are very regular users (that is, who visit park areas at least once every few months) comment more often on aspects surrounding park area management. They are more likely to refer to buying more/adding to natural areas, having less restrictions, upkeep/maintenance, more picnic areas/playgrounds, and better funding for management (by around three percentage points).

Non-users are far more likely to respond “don’t know” to this question (32% compared to 13% of those who have visited park areas).

Little variation is evident between metropolitan and regional areas, although Brisbane residents are more likely to offer suggestions related to information (22% vs. 17% regional) and facilities (15% Brisbane vs. 12% regional).

Section 3: Perceived Role of National Parks and Similar Areas

Number of Park Areas in Queensland

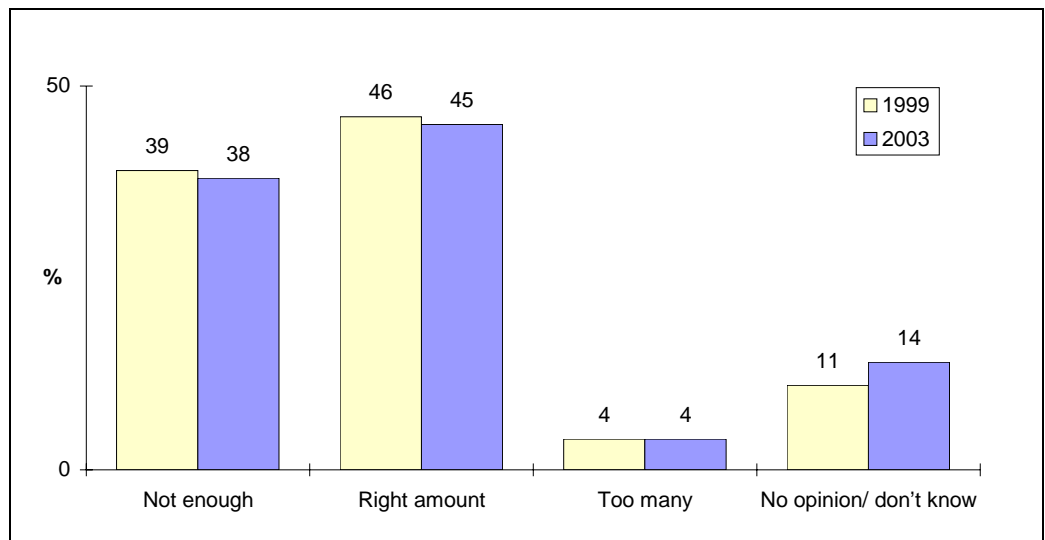
Almost half feel there is the right amount of parks in Queensland

Queensland residents were asked whether they feel there are about the right amount, too many, or too few national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland.

As noted in 1999, almost half (45%) of residents feel there is currently the right amount of national parks and conservation areas. A further 38% say there are not enough of these areas in Queensland.

A minority of 4% feel there are too many conservation areas in Queensland.

Opinions regarding appropriate number of parks have not changed over time



Q7 Do you think Queensland has...?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Greater support for increasing the number of national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland (38% overall) is found among:

- Residents of the South East (41%) and Central (39%) regions
- 18-34 years olds (44%)
- Males (41%)
- People who have visited park areas before (40%), and more specifically, those who visit at least once every few months (48%)
- Residents who have completed year 12 or a higher qualification (41%).

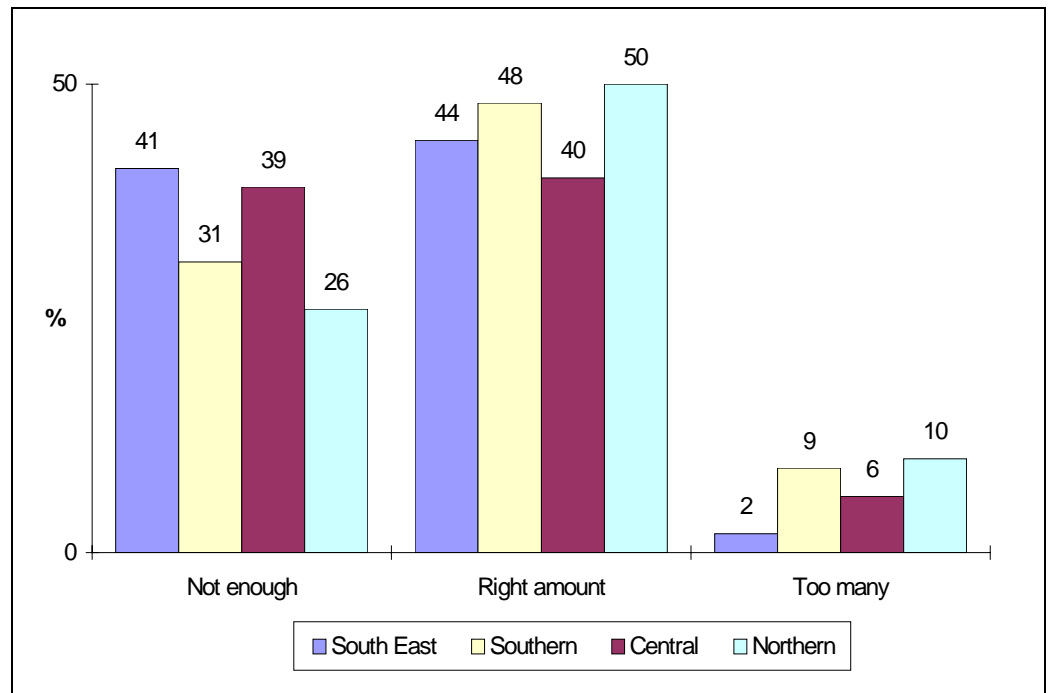
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Section 3: Perceived Role of National Parks and Similar Areas, Continued

There is greater evidence of resistance to increasing the coverage of park areas (4% overall) among:

- Residents in regional Queensland (6%) than in Brisbane (1%)
- Those aged 45 years and over (6%)
- Males (6%) rather than females (2%)
- Those who completed year 10 or below (6%).

Southern and Northern Queensland residents are more likely to feel there is the right amount of parks



Q7 Do you think Queensland has...?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Section 3: Perceived Role of National Parks and Similar Areas, Continued

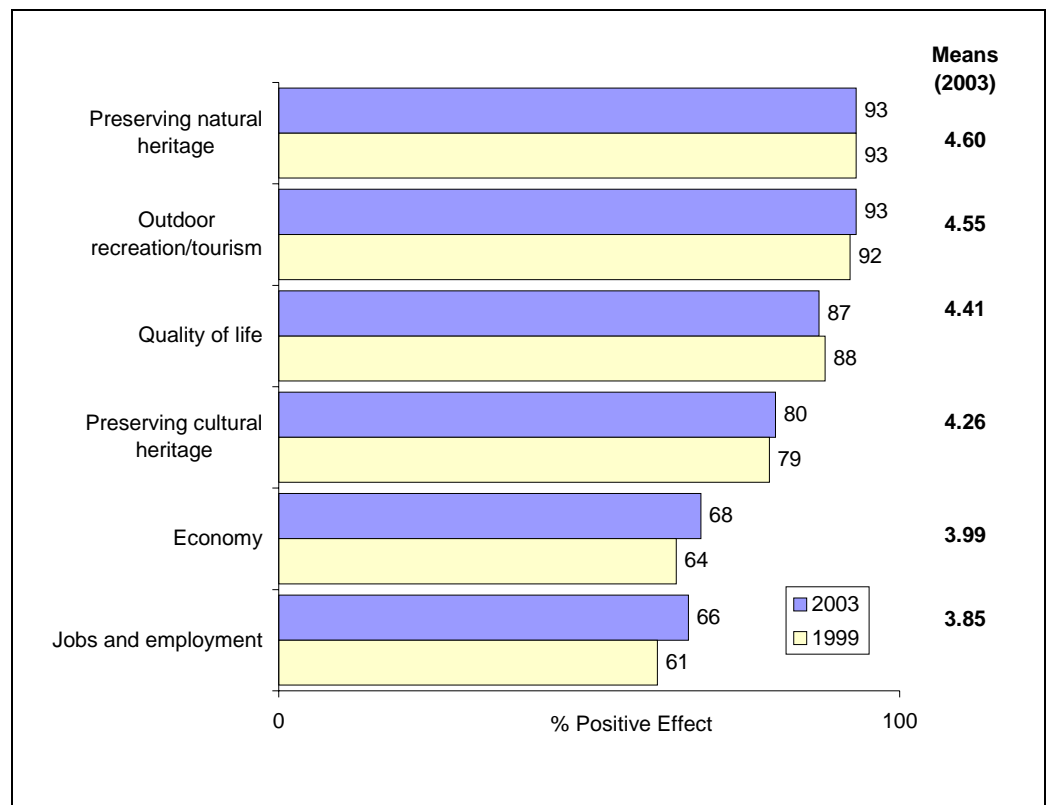
Contribution of National Parks to Queensland

To better understand the community's perception of the contribution of national parks and conservation areas, each respondent was asked the effect these areas have on six specific attributes.

Statements were rotated to reduce any bias arising from the order in which statements were presented to respondents. Answers used a 1 to 5 scale: 1 very negative, 2 somewhat negative, 3 no effect/both, 4 somewhat positive, 5 very positive.

The chart below shows the proportion of people who feel park areas have a positive effect on each issue.

Perceived contributions consistent over time



Q10 I would like you to tell me what effect you think national parks or similar conservation areas in Queensland have on each of the following issues?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Mean ratings are based on a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is very negative and 5 is very positive.

Continued on next page

Section 3: Perceived Role of National Parks and Similar Areas, Continued

Parks rated most favourably in terms of preserving natural heritage and outdoor tourism and recreation opportunities

Residents have a generally positive view of the role of national parks and similar areas in Queensland, with each attribute associated with a rating of higher than 3.5 out of a possible 5. Ratings are very similar to those measured in 1999.

The two *highest* rating attributes are protecting and preserving Queensland's natural heritage (4.60, 4.62 in 1999) and providing outdoor tourism and recreation opportunities (4.55, 4.58 in 1999). Also rated very highly is the contribution to overall quality of life in Queensland (4.41, 4.42 in 1999).

The *lowest* rated attributes relate to park areas' economic contribution: to Queensland's economy in general is rated at 3.99 (3.90 in 1999), and job and employment opportunities in Queensland is rated at 3.85 (3.74 in 1999). Note: these are still seen as more positive than negative (i.e. ratings of higher than 3.5 out of 5).

Resident groups rating attributes *most* and *least* positively are summarised in the table overleaf.

Continued on next page

Section 3: Perceived Role of National Parks and Similar Areas, Continued

Greater perceived contribution of national parks is noted by residents of Brisbane, with a degree or higher qualification, who have visited park areas before

	<i>Rating (out of 5)</i>	<i>Highest ratings</i>	<i>Lowest ratings</i>
<i>Natural heritage</i>	4.60	Brisbane (4.67) 25-34 yrs (4.72) Females (4.63) Visited areas before (4.63) Degree or higher (4.75)	Regional Queensland (4.55) 45-54 yrs (4.52) Males (4.57) Never visited (4.52) Year 10 or below (4.51)
<i>Recreation/tourism</i>	4.55	Brisbane (4.64) 25-34 yrs (4.65) Visited areas before (4.58) Degree or higher (4.68)	Northern Queensland (4.37) 18-24 yrs (4.46) Never visited (4.43) Year 10 or below (4.48)
<i>Quality of life</i>	4.41	Brisbane (4.48) 25-34 yrs (4.48) Females (4.45) Visited areas before (4.45) Degree or higher (4.53)	Regional Queensland (4.36) 15-17 yrs (4.31) Males (4.38) Never visited (4.29) Year 12 or below (4.37)
<i>Cultural heritage</i>	4.26	South East (4.29), Central (4.28) 18-24 yrs (4.41) Females (4.33) Year 12 (4.30)	Southern (4.17), Northern (4.14) 45-64 yrs (4.14) Males (4.19) Apprenticeship/cert/dip (4.17)
<i>Economy in general</i>	3.99	Brisbane (4.08) 25-44 yrs (4.06) Visited areas before (4.04) Worker (4.01), retiree (4.04) Degree or higher (4.18)	Central Queensland (3.88) 15-17 yrs (3.83) Never visited (3.82) Unemployed (3.86) Year 10 or below (3.84)
<i>Jobs/employment</i>	3.85	Brisbane (3.89) 25-34 yrs (3.96) Visit areas before (3.90) Student (3.92), unemployed (3.92) Degree or higher (3.93)	Regional Queensland (3.81) 65+ yrs (3.68) Never visited (3.66) Retiree (3.74) Year 10 or below (3.80)

Q10 I would like you to tell me what effect you think national parks or similar conservation areas in Queensland have on each of the following issues?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Mean ratings are based on a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is very negative and 5 is very positive.

Section 4: Management of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland

Knowledge of Organisation Managing Park Areas

Four in ten say QPWS or NPW responsible for management

People were asked which they thought was the main organisation responsible for managing national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland.

Overall, four in ten (42%) accurately nominate Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service/National Parks and Wildlife as responsible, with 37% mentioning one of these as the *main* organisation responsible. This is consistent with the 1999 results: 38% nominated QPWS/NPW as main organisation responsible, 44% overall.

Those more likely to nominate QPWS/NPW include:

- Residents aged 25-64 (47%)
- Males (49%)
- Those who have visited areas before (47%)
- People working full or part time (47%)
- Those with a degree or higher qualification (54%).

Two in ten (21%) feel the State Government (no specific department) is responsible for managing national parks, with one in ten (11%) citing councils, shires and local governments.

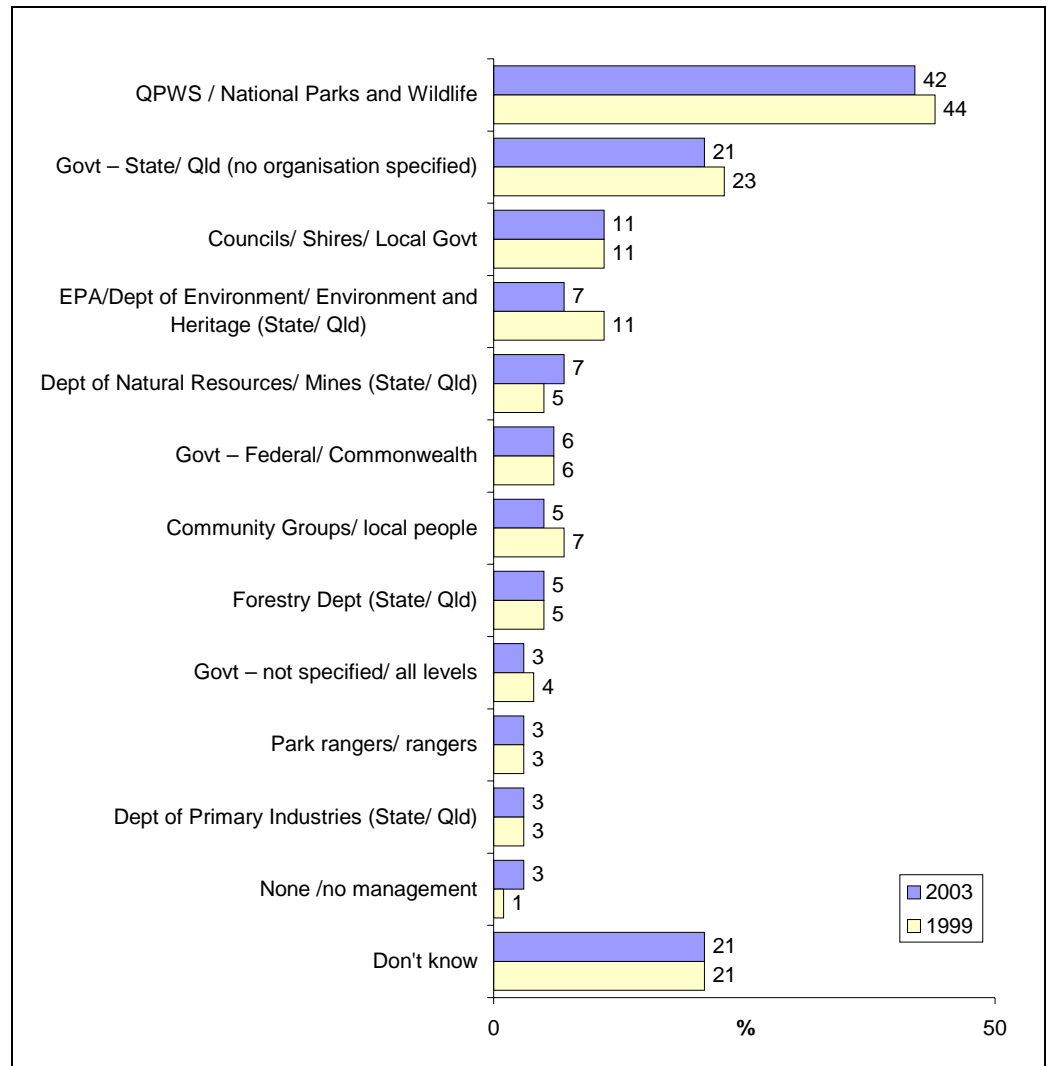
Two in ten (21%) Queensland residents are unsure which organisation is responsible for managing these types of areas (the same proportion as in 1999).

The chart overleaf shows the proportion of people who mention each organisation as responsible.

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Section 4: Management of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Knowledge of who manages national parks is consistent over time



Q11a Which organisation is mainly responsible for managing national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland?

Q11b Any others?

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Figures represent total mentions to Q11a and Q11b. Includes mentions by 3% or more in 2003.

Section 4: Management of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Adequacy of Management of Park Areas

Over half feel parks are managed well

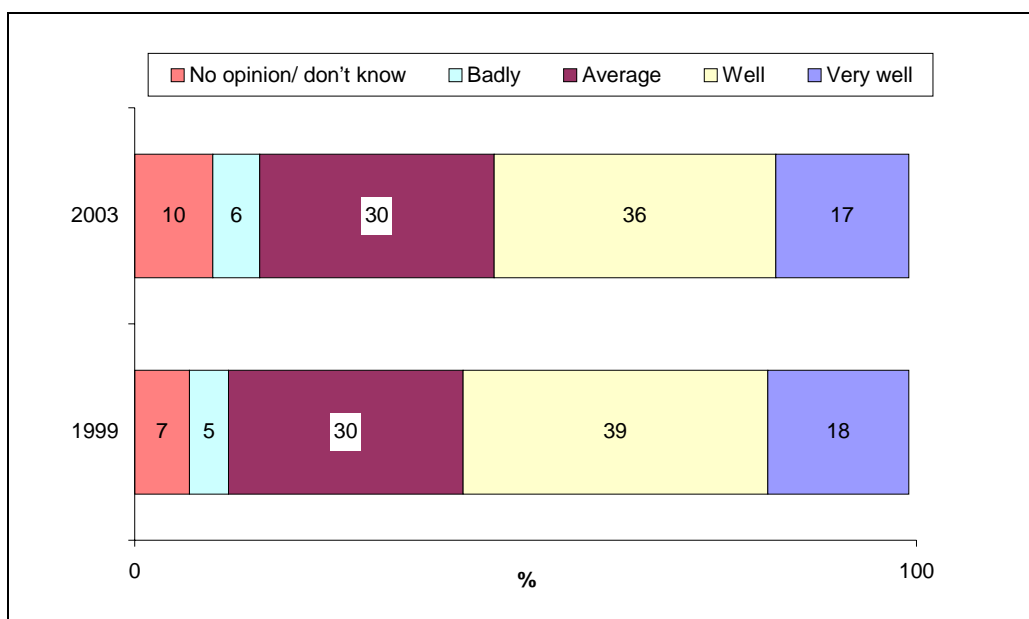
Queensland residents were asked about the adequacy of the management of national parks and similar conservation areas.

Over half (54%) of residents feel park areas in Queensland are managed either very well or well – down from 57% in 1999. Just 6% feel they are being badly managed (5% in 1999).

As in 1999, three in ten (30%) feel management of park areas is just ‘average’.

These responses equate to an average rating or *performance score* of **3.70 out of 5** (using a 1 to 5 scale where 1 is very badly managed and 5 is very well managed) in 2003 (3.75 in 1999).

Satisfaction with park management remains relatively consistent



Q12 How well do you think Queensland's national parks and similar conservation areas are currently being managed? Again remembering we are not talking about botanic gardens, council parks or State forests.

Base: All Queensland residents aged 15+ (n=2009 in 2003, n=3003 in 1999)

Section 4: Management of National Parks and Similar Areas in Queensland, Continued

Brisbane residents and females appear more satisfied with park management

Those residents associating park management with Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service/National Parks and Wildlife (42% of residents overall) rate management similarly to the rating across all residents: 54% feel management is good, mean rating 3.66 out of 5.

Consistent with 1999, additional differences in satisfaction levels emerge for the following groups:

- Brisbane residents rate management significantly higher than regional Queensland residents (3.77 vs. 3.64 respectively).
- Females rate management significantly higher than males (3.75 females vs. 3.65 males).

All residents, regardless of demographic characteristic, rate park area management as better than average with no ratings below 3.5 emerging.

Appendix I: Questionnaire

SQ1 SYSTEM TO RECORD LOCATION FROM SAMPLE

SQ2 Firstly to ensure we are speaking with a good cross section of the community, what was your age on your last birthday? **RECORD AGE**

ASK SQ3 IF REFUSED AT SQ2

SQ3 In that case could you tell me which age bracket you would fit into? Are you in your teens, twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, sixties or older than this?

RECORD FOR ALL

SQ4 RECORD SEX

Q1 Have you ever personally visited a national park or similar type of conservation area in Queensland? Please note that this does not include botanical gardens, council parks or State forests.

- 1 Yes, definitely
- 2 Yes - likely
- 3 No **GO TO Q6a**
- 9 Not sure **GO TO Q6a**

Q2a Would that have been in the past 3 years? Again this does not include visits to botanical gardens, council parks or State forests.

- 1 Yes, definitely
- 2 Yes - likely
- 3 No **GO TO Q5**
- 9 Not sure **GO TO Q5**

Q2b And what about in the past year?

- 4 Yes, definitely
- 5 Yes - likely
- 6 No
- 9 Not sure

Q3 Was your last visit to a national park or similar conservation area in Queensland organised through a commercial tour operator, or was it privately organised?

- 1 Commercial tour operator
- 2 Privately organised/went of own accord
- 9 Not sure

Q4 Thinking about your overall experience, how satisfied were you with your last visit to a national park or similar conservation area in Queensland? Were you...?

READ OUT (ROTATE SCALE)

- 5 Very satisfied
- 4 Somewhat satisfied
- 3 Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- 2 Somewhat dissatisfied
- 1 Very dissatisfied
- 7 NO OPINION/ DON'T CARE
- 9 DON'T KNOW

Appendix I: Questionnaire, Continued

ASK Q5 IF CODES 1 OR 2 AT Q1. OTHERS GO TO Q6a

Q5 In general, how frequently do you visit national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland?

READ OUT. SINGLE RESPONSE

- 1 Once a month or more often
- 2 Once every few months
- 3 Once every 6 months
- 4 About once a year
- 5 Once every few years
- 6 Less often
- 7 Only visited once before
- 9 DON'T KNOW

ASK ALL

Q6a What is the main reason you don't visit national parks and similar conservation areas more often or at all?

Q6b Any other reasons?

DO NOT READ. MULTIPLE RESPONSE. IF "TOO BUSY" PROBE FOR REASON

- 01 Too busy - work commitments
- 02 Too busy- would rather do other things in spare time
- 03 Can't get there/ too far to go/ distance
- 04 Health/ age/ unable to physically
- 05 Only go in holidays/ only go when family or visitors come
- 06 Just hasn't happened/ too much to organise to get there
- 07 Can't afford it/ cost
- 08 Small children/baby/family
- 09 Single person/ no one to go with
- 10 Very regular user already
- 97 No reason/ never thought of going
- 98 Other (SPECIFY)
- 99 Not sure

Q7 Do you think Queensland has ...?

READ OUT AND ROTATE

- 1 Not enough national parks and conservation areas
- 2 About the right amount of national parks or conservation areas
- 3 Too many national parks or conservation areas
- 7 NO OPINION/ DON'T CARE
- 9 DON'T KNOW

Appendix I: Questionnaire, Continued

Q8 What do you feel are the main benefits in having national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland?
Anything else?

DO NOT READ. MULTIPLE RESPONSE

- 01 Protect the bush/ wilderness areas/ keep unspoilt
- 02 Protect native animals/ plants/ wildlife
- 03 Protect environment – not specified
- 04 Good to get away/ enjoy bush
- 05 So people can see these areas/ appreciate these areas
- 06 So people can use these areas/ recreation
- 07 Protect for our children/ future generations
- 08 Education/ teach children/ educate people
- 09 Stop development – houses/urban
- 10 Stop development – mining/ logging/ farming
- 11 Important for tourism
- 12 Trees provide oxygen/ help atmosphere
- 13 Protect beautiful areas/ scenic qualities
- 97 None/ no benefits
- 98 Other (SPECIFY)
- 99 Not sure/don't know

Q9 And what do you think are negative aspects associated with national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland? Anything else?

DO NOT READ. MULTIPLE RESPONSE

- 01 Areas not looked after well enough/ poor management
- 02 Areas not policed well enough/ vandalism/ damage
- 03 Limits recreation use – horses, horse riding
- 04 Limits recreation use – dogs/ can't take dog/s
- 05 Limits recreation use – bike riding/motorbikes
- 06 Limits recreation use – need for permits/have to get permits to do things
- 07 Restricts development
- 08 Loss of jobs
- 09 Source of weeds, feral animals, pests
- 10 Encourages bushfires
- 11 Only for greenies/hippies/weirdoes
- 97 None/ no negatives
- 98 Other (SPECIFY)
- 99 Not sure/ don't know

Q10 I would like you to tell me what effect you think national parks or similar conservation areas in Queensland have on each of the following issues.

Would you say these areas have a positive, negative or no effect on ...? And on...?

READ OUT STATEMENTS. ROTATE. PROBE FOR SOMEWHAT OR VERY

- a Jobs and employment opportunities in Queensland
- b Queensland's economy in general
- c Outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities
- d Protecting and preserving Queensland's natural heritage
- e Protecting and preserving Queensland's cultural heritage
- f Overall quality of life in Queensland

Appendix I: Questionnaire, Continued

Q11a Which organisation is mainly responsible for managing national parks and similar conservation areas in Queensland?

Q11b Any others?

DO NOT READ. SINGLE RESPONSE

IF SAY “government”, ASK “Can you be more specific?”

IF CODES 04, 07, 09, 10, ASK “Is that State or Federal?” If Federal code in Other

- 01 Government – Federal/Commonwealth
- 02 Government – State / Queensland
- 03 Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service/National Parks & Wildlife
- 04 Department of Natural Resources/Natural Resources and Mines (State/ Queensland)
- 05 Community Groups/ local people
- 06 Councils/ Shires/ Local Governments
- 07 Forestry Department (State/ Queensland)
- 08 Park Rangers/ Rangers
- 09 Environmental Protection Agency/ Dept. of Environment/ Dept. of Environment and Heritage (State/ Queensland)
- 10 DPI/ Department of Primary Industries (State/ Queensland)
- 11 Government – not specified/ all levels
- 98 Other (SPECIFY)
- 97 NONE/ NO OTHER
- 99 DON'T KNOW

Q12 How well do you think Queensland's national parks and similar conservation areas are currently being managed? Again remembering we are not talking about botanic gardens, council parks or State forests. **READ OUT AND ROTATE. IF DON'T KNOW PROMPT “Just on your impressions, what do you think?”**

- 1 Very well
- 2 Well
- 3 Average
- 4 Badly
- 5 Very badly
- 7 NO OPINION/ DON'T CARE
- 9 DON'T KNOW

Appendix I: Questionnaire, Continued

Q13 In what ways could national parks or similar conservation areas better meet your needs and interests, or those of the community generally?

DO NOT READ. MULTIPLE RESPONSE

Information

- 01 Provide more/ better information to public – not specified
- 02 Provide more/better information on where parks are/camping information
- 03 Provide more/better information on- parks about plants/animals/cultural heritage etc
- 04 Other type of information (SPECIFY)

Access

- 05 Provide easier/more car access (2WD/cars not 4WD)
- 06 Provide better/more walking tracks
- 07 Provide better/more driving tracks
- 08 Provide public transport
- 09 Other type of access (SPECIFY)

Facilities

- 10 Provide more toilets/improve toilets
- 11 Provide more camping facilities/improve camping facilities (hot water/showers/etc)
- 12 Provide accommodation (cabins/units/motels/etc)
- 13 Other type of facilities (SPECIFY)

Other issues

- 14 Buy more areas/ natural areas/ add to those already protected
- 15 Have less restrictions of use/ permits/ dogs, horses, bikes, etc.
- 16 Employ more people/ rangers/ guides
- 17 Consult with public about their needs/ what to do
- 18 Manage tourism better/reduce impact of tourism
- 98 Other issues (SPECIFY)
- 97 NONE/ NOTHING NEEDED
- 99 DON'T KNOW

D1 Which of the following best describes your current situation?

- 01 Employed full time
- 02 Employed part time
- 03 Self employed
- 04 Not currently employed
- 05 Unpaid helper
- 06 Student
- 07 Home duties
- 08 Retired or aged pension
- 09 Other pension
- 98 OTHER (SPECIFY)
- 97 REFUSED

D2 How many people are there in your household aged 15 years or over, including yourself?

D3 What is the highest level of education you have completed?

D4 What is the postcode of your home address?
