

Public Lands and the Continental Divide Trail Study



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The Fiscal and Economic Research Center

Provides research services for area business, not-for-profits, organizations, and government entities, including:

- Ecological and biological analysis
- Economic analysis
- Entrepreneurship
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis
- Government and public policy analysis
- Land-use planning
- Market research, marketing strategy and planning
- Simulation analysis
- Statistical analysis



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Introduction

The mission of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition is to complete, promote, and protect the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. The CDTC does this by building a strong and diverse trail community, providing up-to-date information to the public, and encouraging conservation and stewardship of the trail, its corridor, and surrounding landscapes. 2022 marks the tenth anniversary of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition.

The Continental Divide Trail Coalition's vision is to see that the 3,100-mile Continental Divide National Scenic Trail remains a renowned and revered natural resource for people to connect with friends and family, draw inspiration, and create outstanding personal experiences.

The primary goal of this study was to understand who uses the CDT, how they use it, their preferences, and the economic impact of the CDT in the region. Additional data were also collected regarding the protection of public lands and the use of the Continental Divide Trail in Colorado.

Study Design

In this study, we used a combination of quantitative and qualitative techniques to gain insights into the Continental Divide Trail. The methodology used in this study is as follows.

First, an online survey was designed with inputs from the CDT team. The sample for the survey were registered members of the CDTC and members of various alliances, clubs, and organizations working with the CDT team. The online survey was disseminated through the mailing lists of these organizations. Survey responses were analyzed using statistical and visualization tools to gain insights into various characteristics and preferences of hikers.

Next, based on the hiker's responses on spending on the CDT an IMPLAN analysis was conducted to obtain a quantitative assessment of the economic impact of CDT.

Third, we conducted focus groups with several organizations in the CDT, to get an in-depth perspective on CDT and its impacts. This report is based on the findings from these three quantitative and qualitative analysis.

Types of Visitors

Section Hiker – Traveling parts of trail in a season or year (40.3%)



Day Hiker – Travel on the trail for a day (23%)



Ancillary Hiker – Travel on the CDT to get to other places (16%)



Future Hiker – Plan to be on CDT in the future (11.6%)



Thru-Hiker – Travel the entire trail during the season or year (7.2%)



Other (1.9%)



Most Frequent Type of Visit to the CDT in Colorado in the Last 2 Years

40%

traveled parts of the trail
in a season or year

16%

have used the CDT as a
transition to get to other
destinations

23%

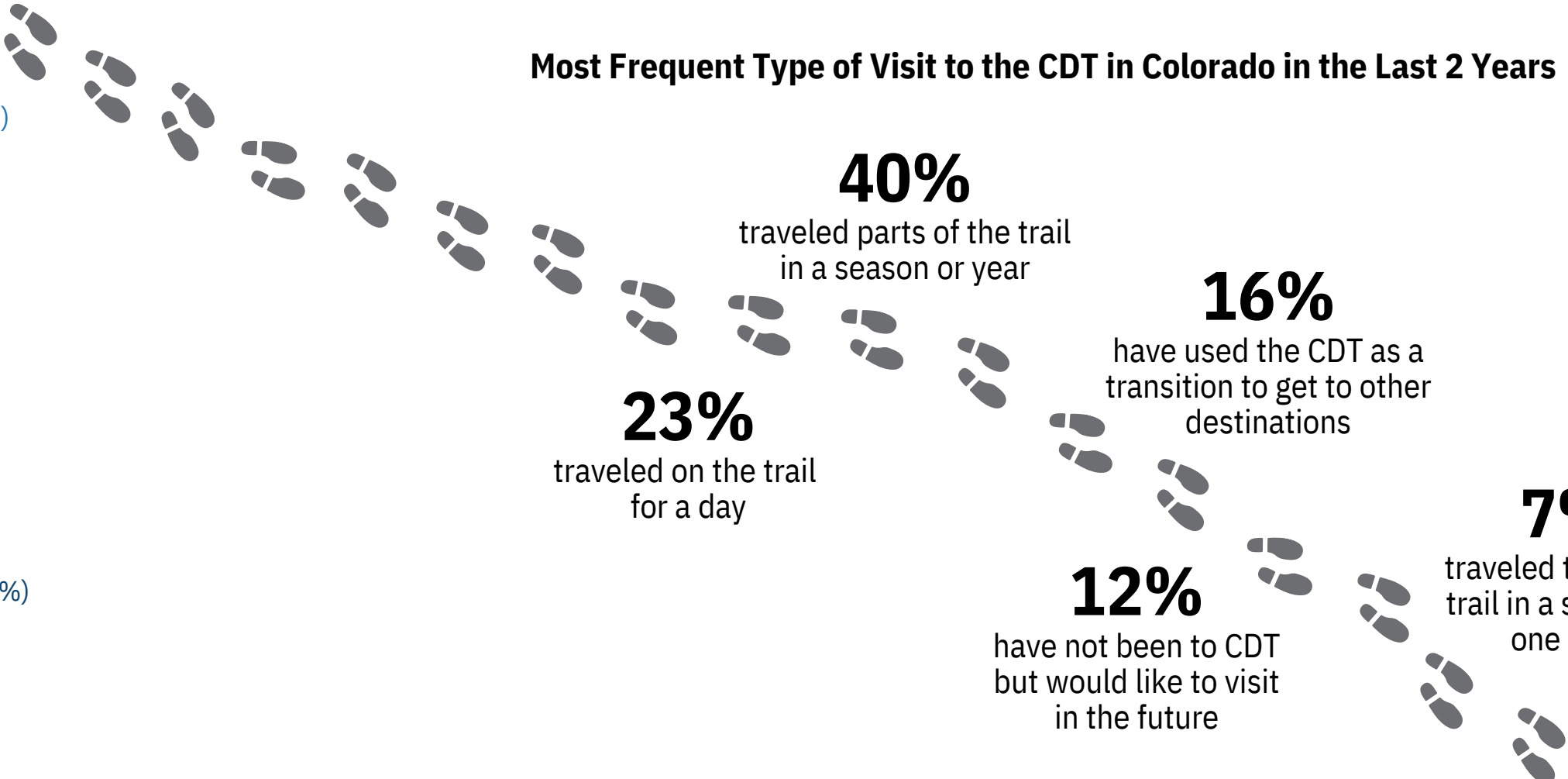
traveled on the trail
for a day

12%

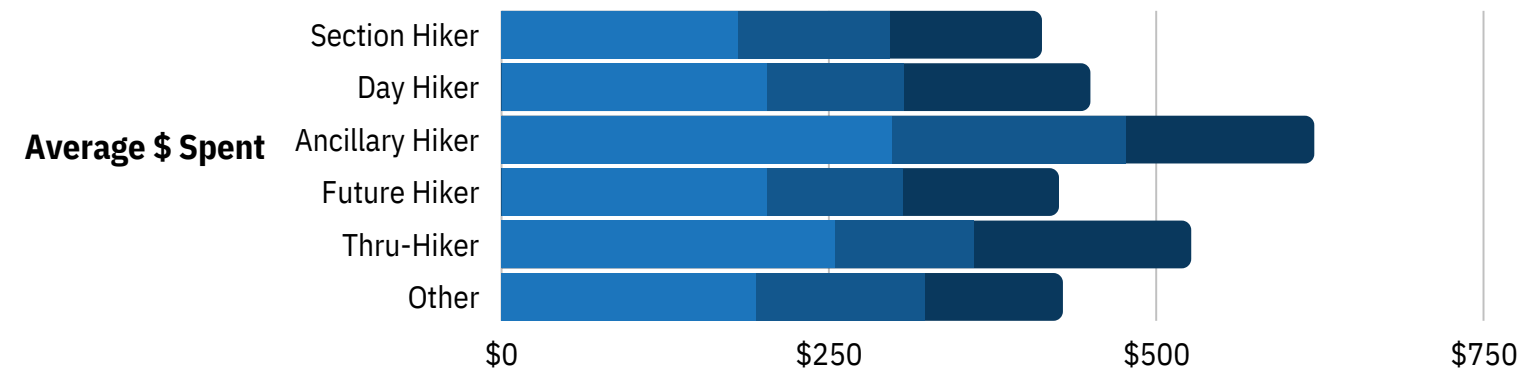
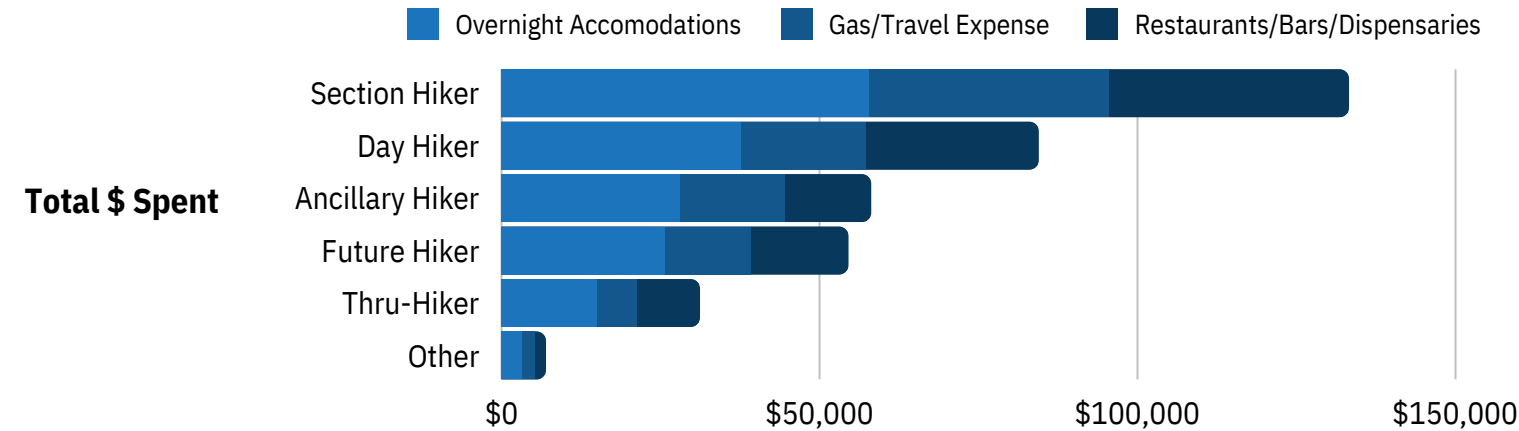
have not been to CDT
but would like to visit
in the future

7%

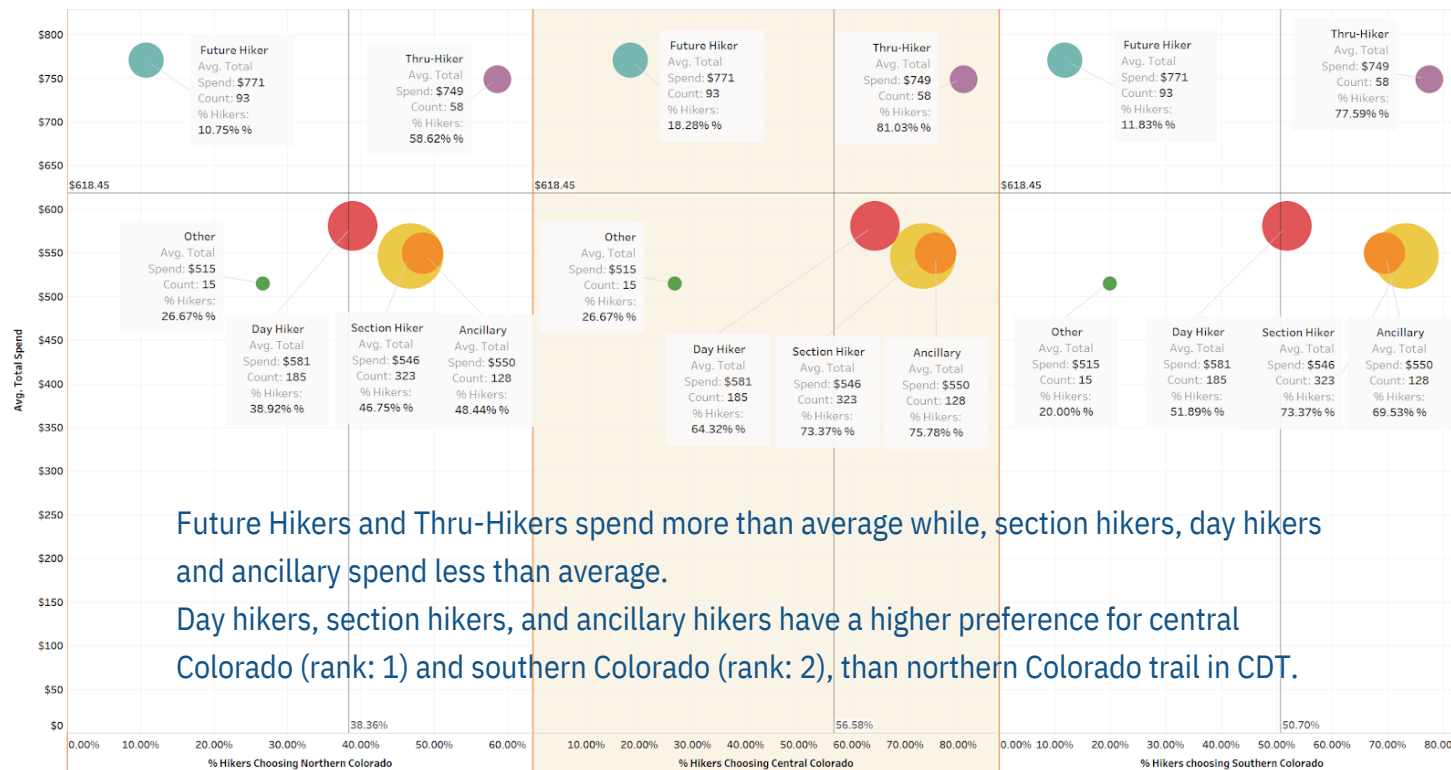
traveled the entire
trail in a season or
one year



Types of Visitors vs. \$ Spent



Average Total Spend by Hikers Choosing Different Regions of CDT



IMPLAN Analysis

For this study, the FERC utilized IMPLAN to give a quantitative assessment of the economic impacts of the Federal Funds for research for Colorado as a whole. IMPLAN is an input-output method of measuring the economic impact of grant making. IMPLAN estimates are grouped into three categories that affect the local economy.

Direct Effect: The direct effect refers to the production change associated with a change in demand for the good itself. In other words, the direct effect is the initial impact to the economy, which is exogenous to the model. This could be wages for faculty members and student salaries and/or traveling expenses incurred by the researchers when carrying out research tasks or attending conferences.

Indirect Effect: The indirect effect refers to the secondary impact caused by changing input needs of directly affected industries (e.g., additional input purchases to produce additional output). It concerns inter-industry transactions, as companies that received a grant create a demand for locally sourced materials that are needed to produce said companies’ products or services. An example for this criterion would be the expenses that the traveling agencies incur when booking flights for conferences attended by the researchers.










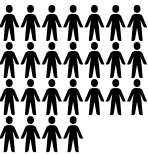


Induced Effect: The induced effect is caused by the changes in the household spending due to the additional employment generated by direct and indirect effects. The induced effect measures the effects of the changes in household income, as individuals working in the training facilities and the industry’s suppliers spend money at places such as restaurants, grocery stores and shops.

State Tax Revenue

\$9,643,220





















Federal Tax Revenue

\$5,160,750

| | Employment | Labor Income | Output |
|-----------------|---|---|--|
| Direct Effect |  755 |  \$23,302,160 |  \$60,266,490 |
| Indirect Effect |  183 |  \$11,256,610 |  \$36,500,060 |
| Induced Effect |  312 |  \$4,406,304 |  \$51,680,270 |
| Total Effect |  1250 |  \$50,836,670 |  \$148,446,820 |

Note: Impact for every 100,000 visitors

IMPLAN Analysis - Industry Insights and Impact

| Industry | Employment | Labor Income | Output |
|--|---|---|---|
| <div>Retail Trade</div> <div></div> | <div></div> <div>196</div> | <div></div> <div>\$4,631,790</div> | <div></div> <div>\$8,738,420</div> |
| <div>Hotels</div> <div></div> | <div></div> <div>178</div> | <div></div> <div>\$6,785,460</div> | <div></div> <div>\$21,169,020</div> |
| <div>Restaurants</div> <div></div> | <div></div> <div>177</div> | <div></div> <div>\$3,754,560</div> | <div></div> <div>\$15,044,670</div> |
| <div>Gas Stations</div> <div></div> | <div></div> <div>162</div> | <div></div> <div>\$6,211,140</div> | <div></div> <div>\$11,892,910</div> |
| <div>Outdoor Entertainment</div> <div></div> | <div></div> <div>78</div> | <div></div> <div>\$1,846,480</div> | <div></div> <div>\$4,987,220</div> |

Protecting Public Lands

The overwhelming majority want public lands protected.



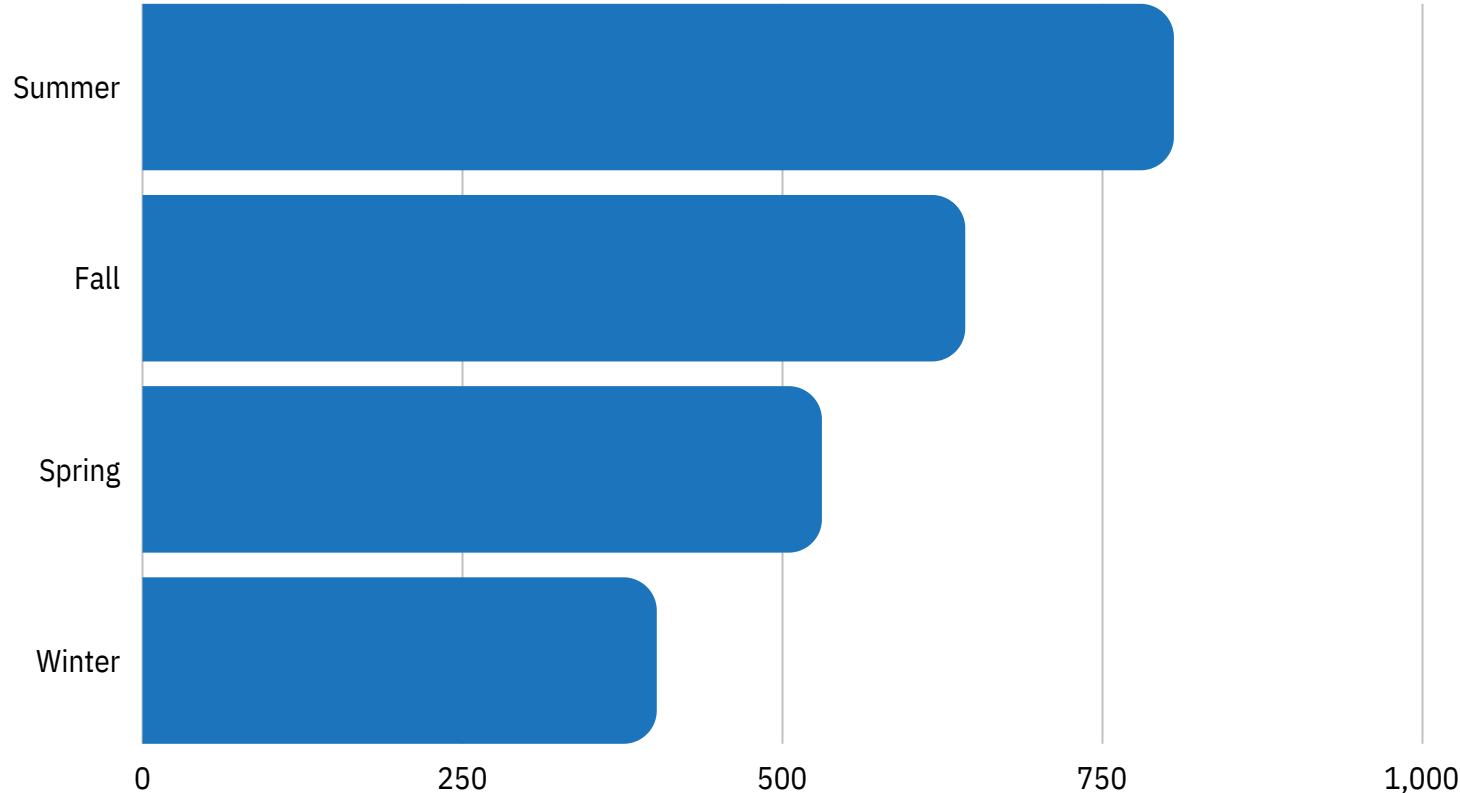
Question 1: How important is protecting public lands in Colorado and the CDT through legislation?
Question 2: How important is protecting landscapes with historical significance?
Question 3: How important is protecting public lands in Colorado and the CDT from the development activities (example: oil and gas development)?

Main Purpose for Your Visit to Colorado



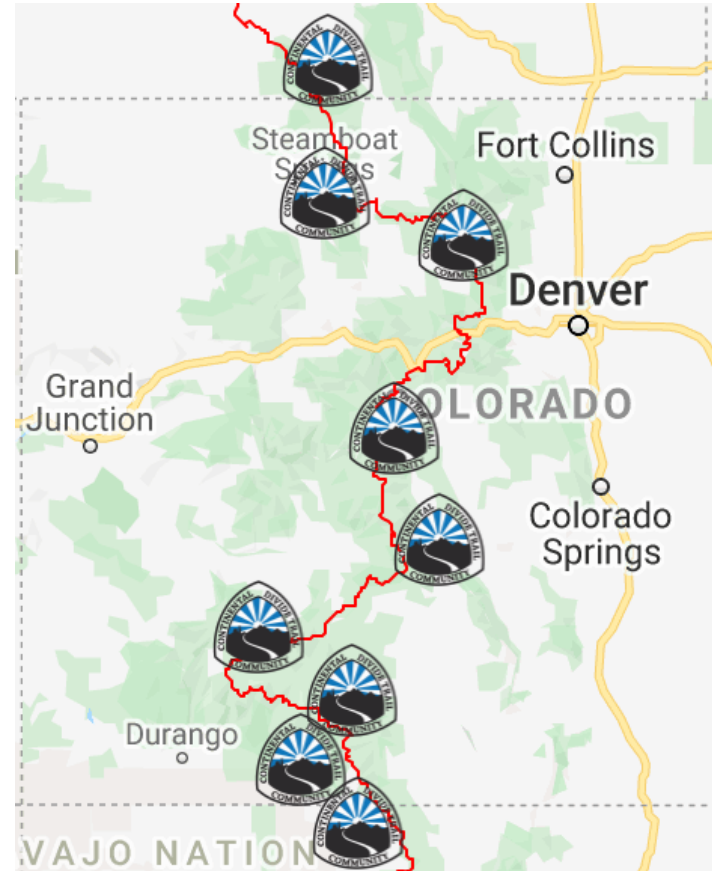
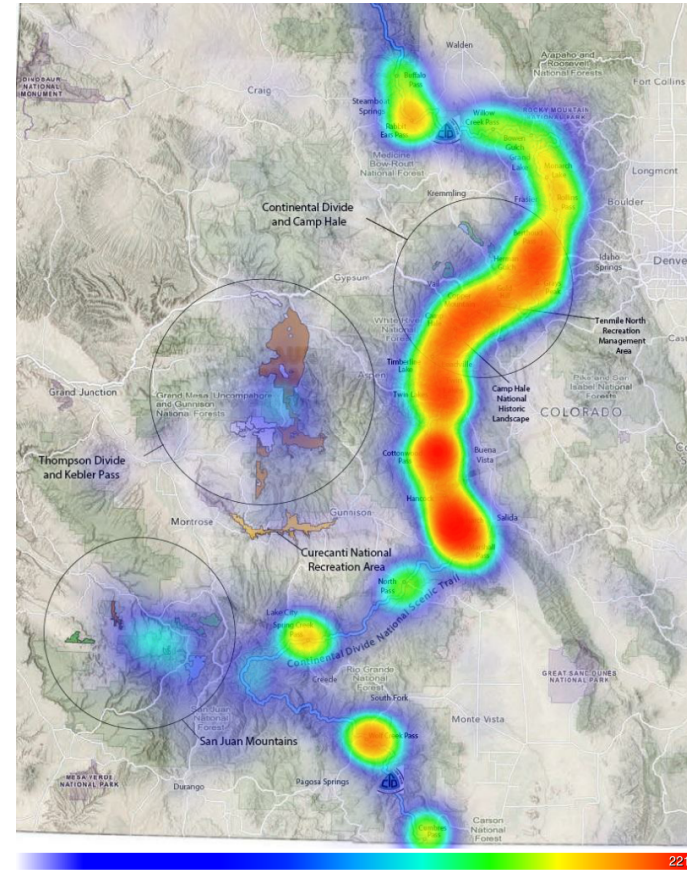
- More than half the respondents specifically came to Colorado to Experience the Continental Divide
- Majority of the respondents visited Colorado to enjoy nature, scenery, mountains, and leisure
- Friends and Family along with Recreation activity were also rated high

Seasons To Visit Public Lands in Colorado

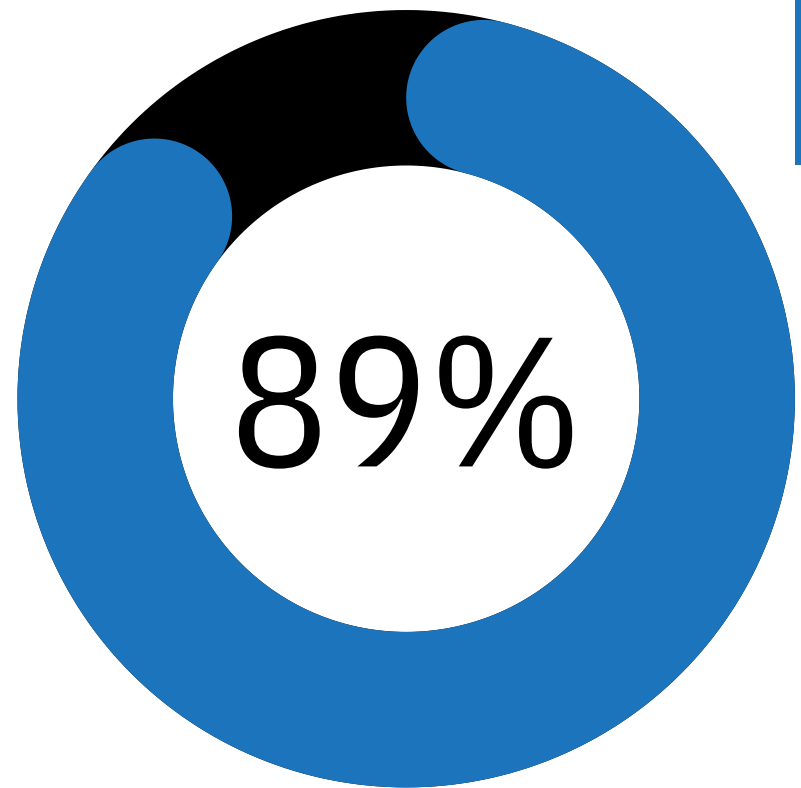


Majority of the visitors prefer to visit the public lands in Colorado during summer or fall.

Heat Map of Passes Most Visited in Colorado



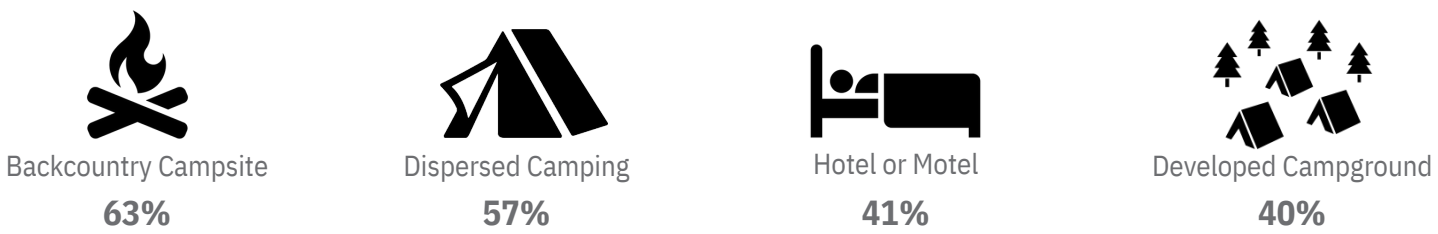
Staying Overnight



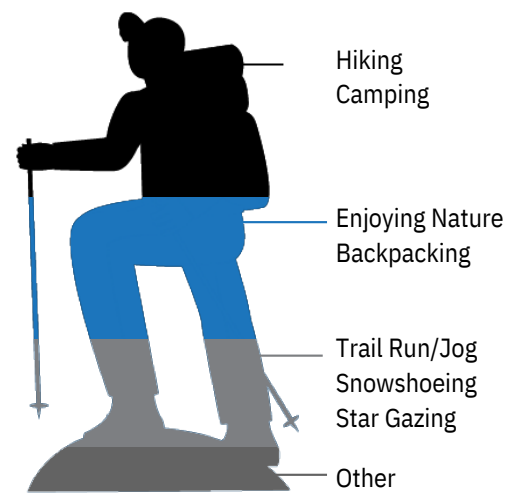
89% of visitors prefer to stay overnight when they visit



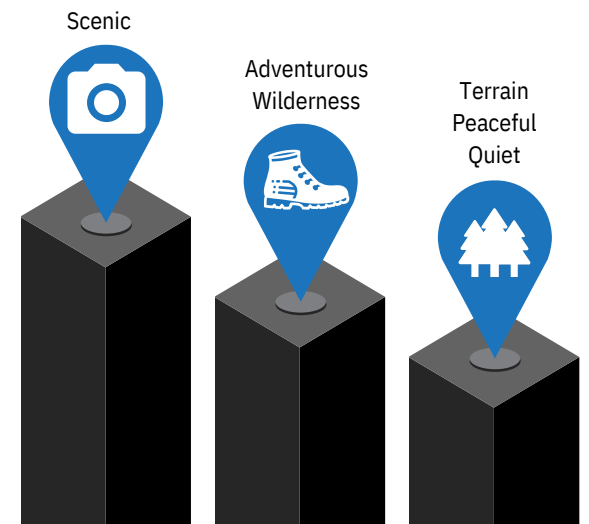
Preferred Accommodations for Your Visit to Public Lands in Colorado



Top Activities

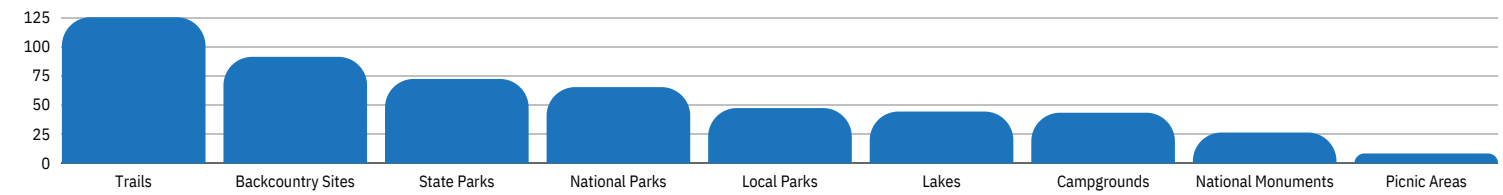


Top Most Appealing CDT Characteristics



COVID-19 Impact

What areas are you using more?



What areas are you using less?

