

Buffalo Mountain Town Forest

Community survey results

Total responses 287

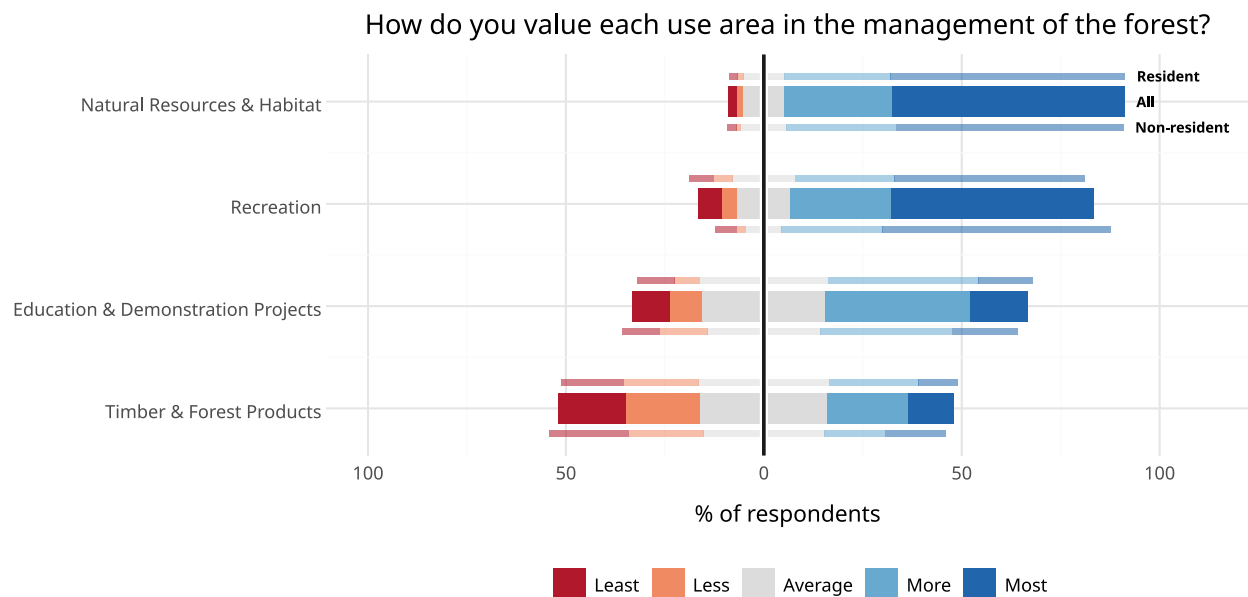
Responses from Hardwick residents 197 (69%)

Overview

The following charts show aggregated responses from our survey, which was conducted between June and August, 2026. The left side of the charts show more negative sentiment, the middle is more neutral, and the right is more positive. The large bar for each item represents all of the survey respondents, while the small bars above and below it represent Hardwick residents and non-residents, respectively. Generally, there were few differences between resident and non-resident preferences.

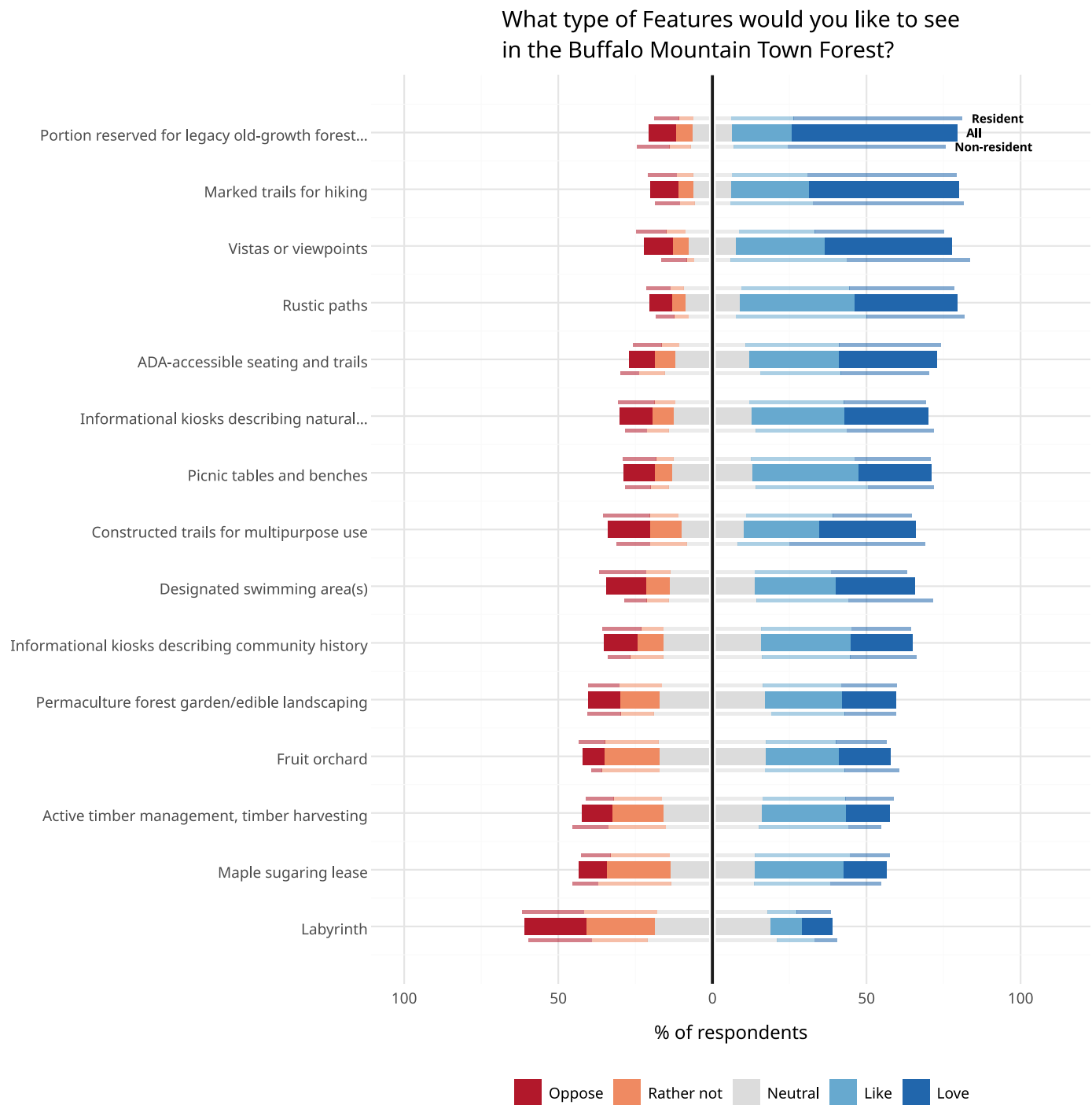
Goals

Respondents showed a preference for prioritizing conservation and recreation, with less emphasis placed on education and especially harvesting forest products.

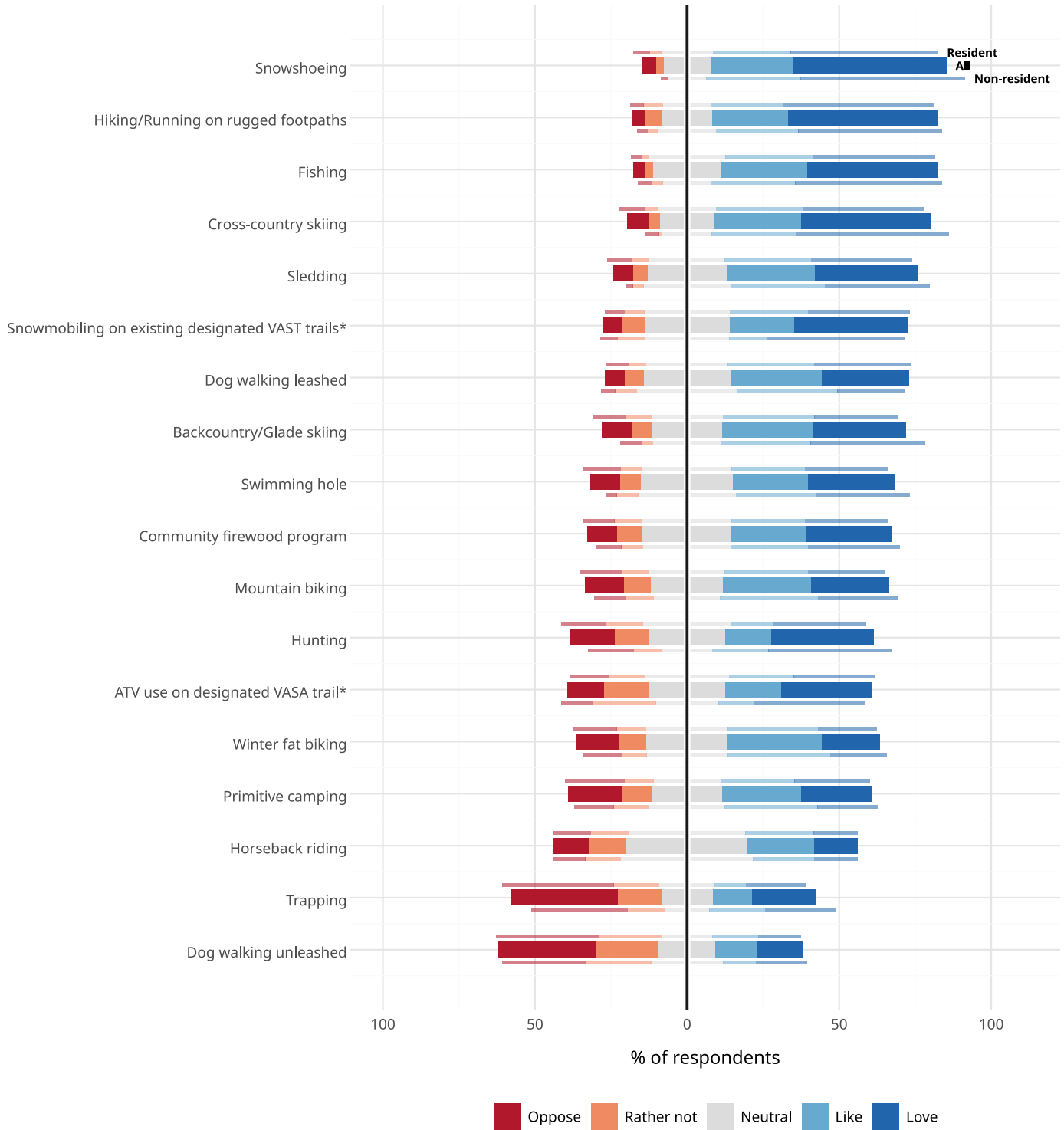


Favorability Ratings

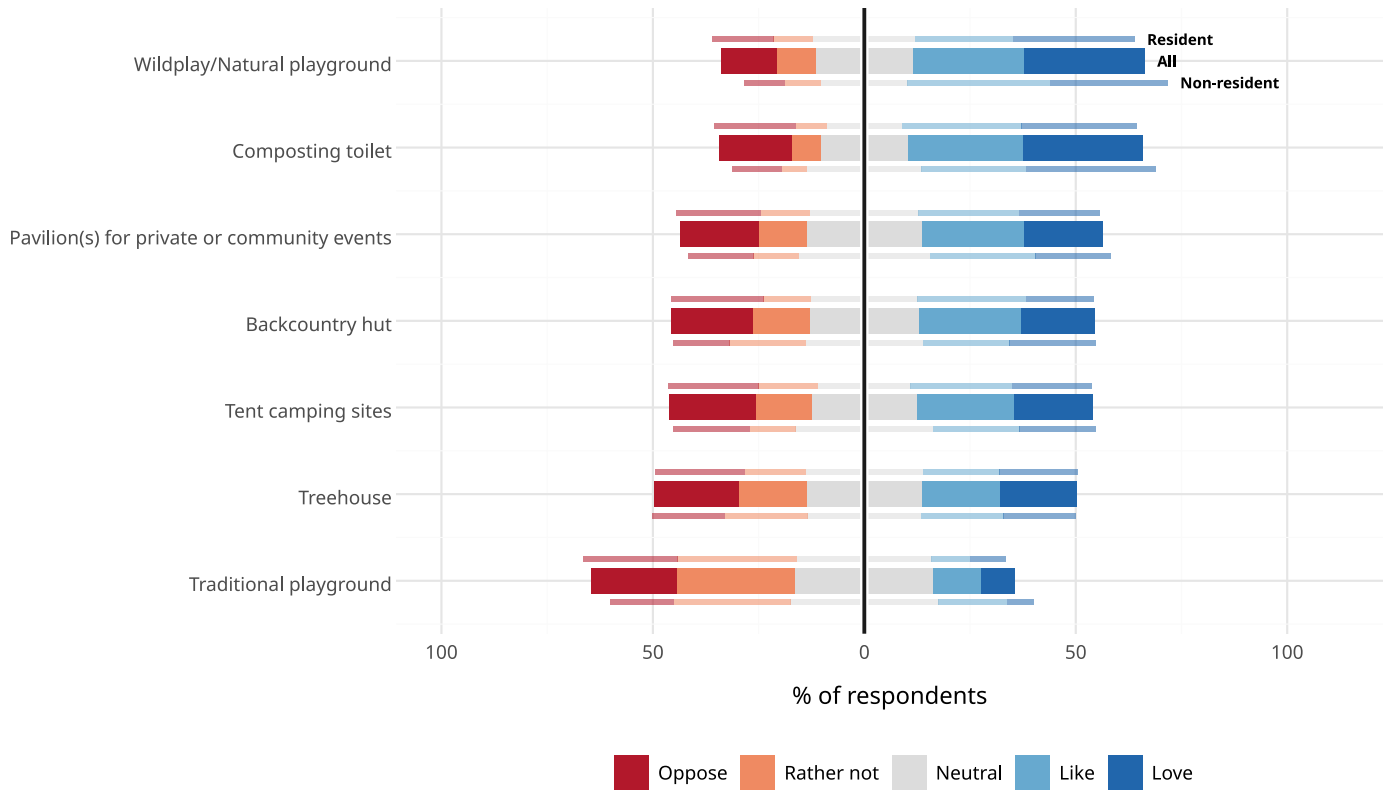
Respondents tended to favor natural resources and low-impact activities, like hiking and snowshoeing. More impactful development and infrastructure was less popular. Trapping and unleashed dog-walking were the most contentious ideas.



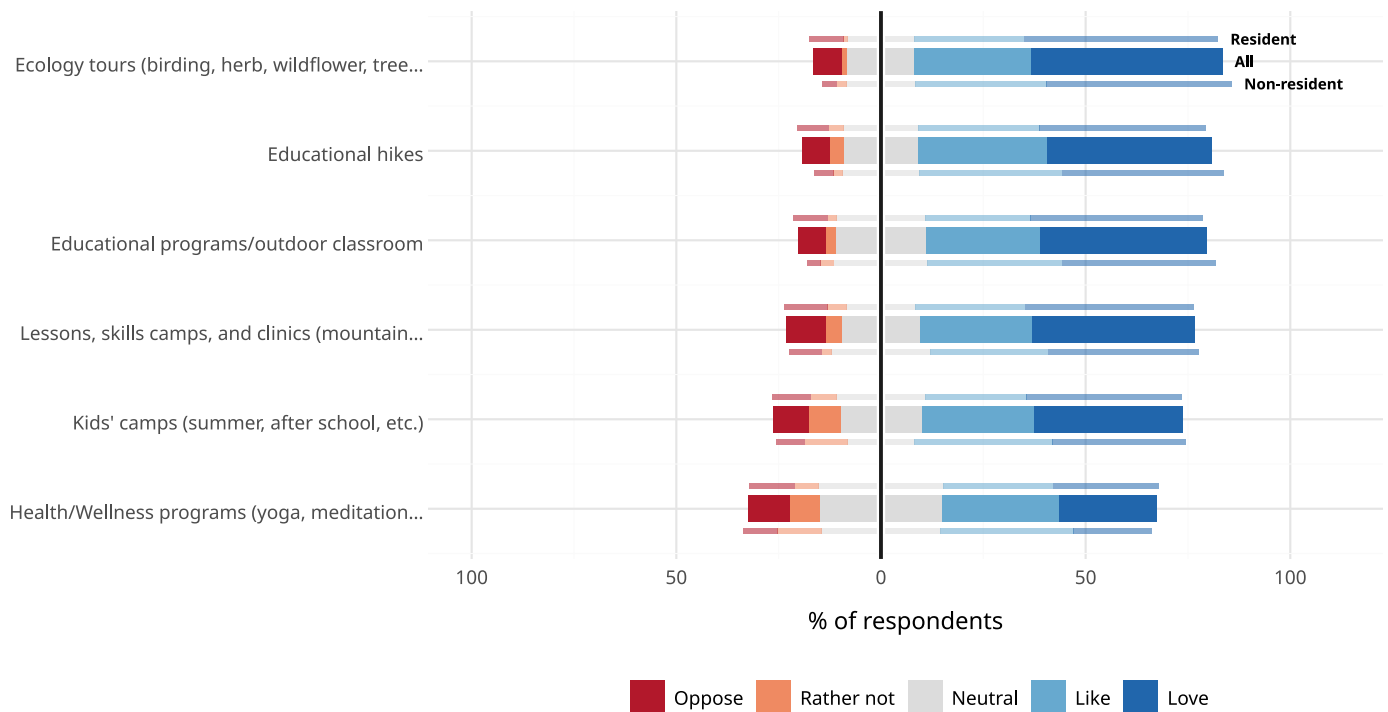
What type of Activities would you like to see in the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest?

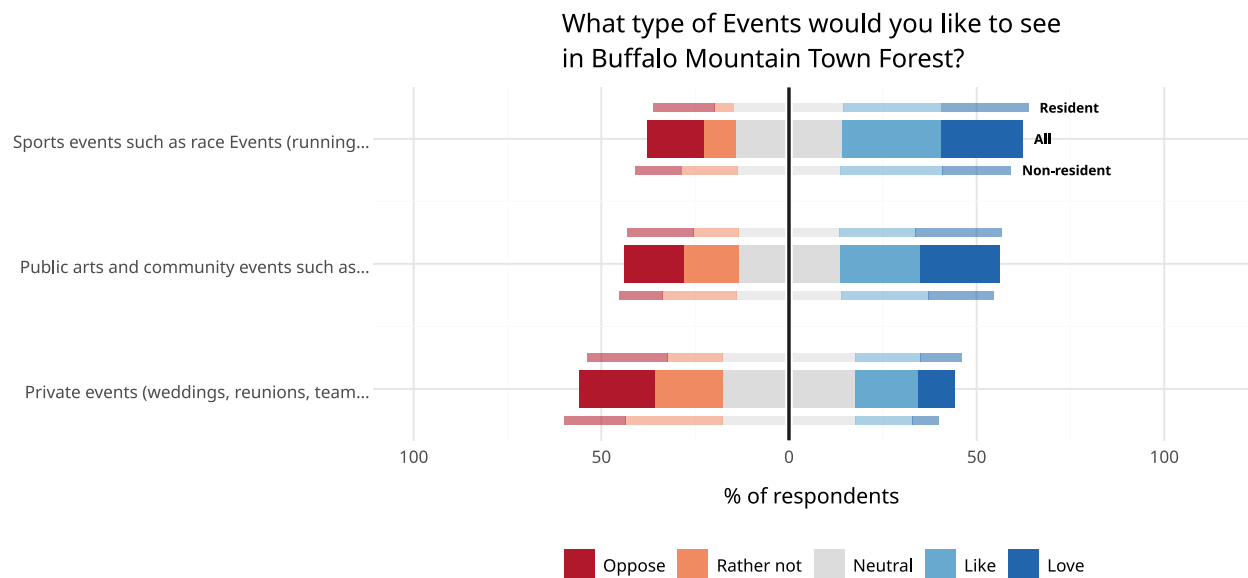


What type of Buildings and Facilities would you like to see in the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest, if any?



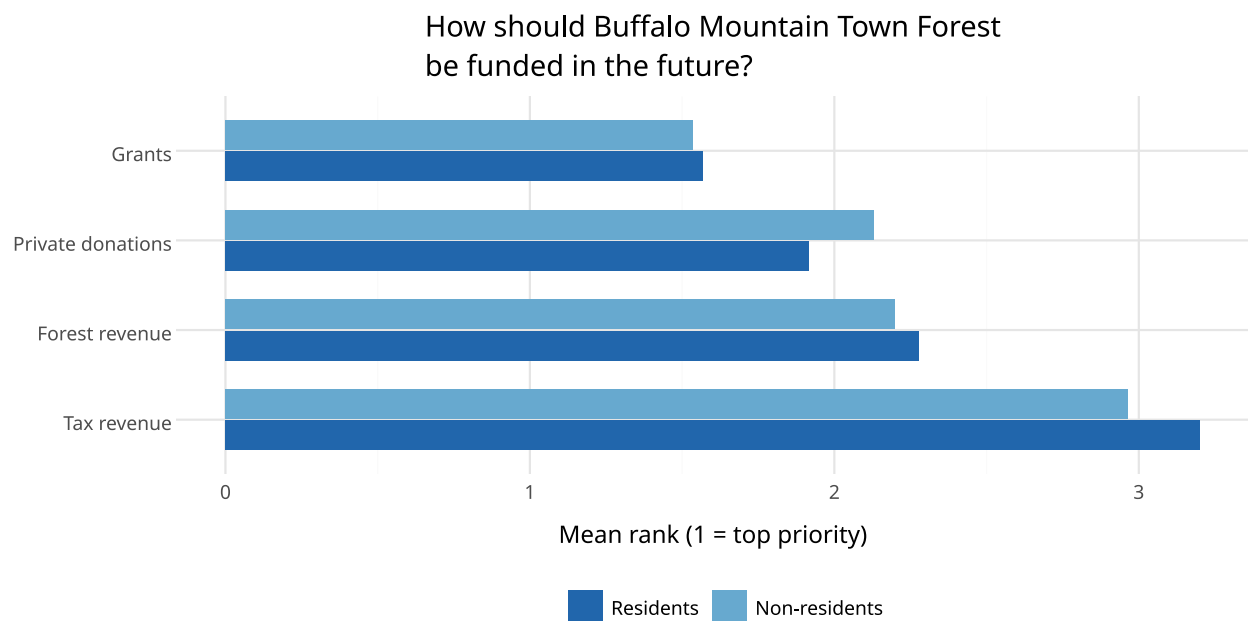
What type of Programs do you envision in the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest?





Funding

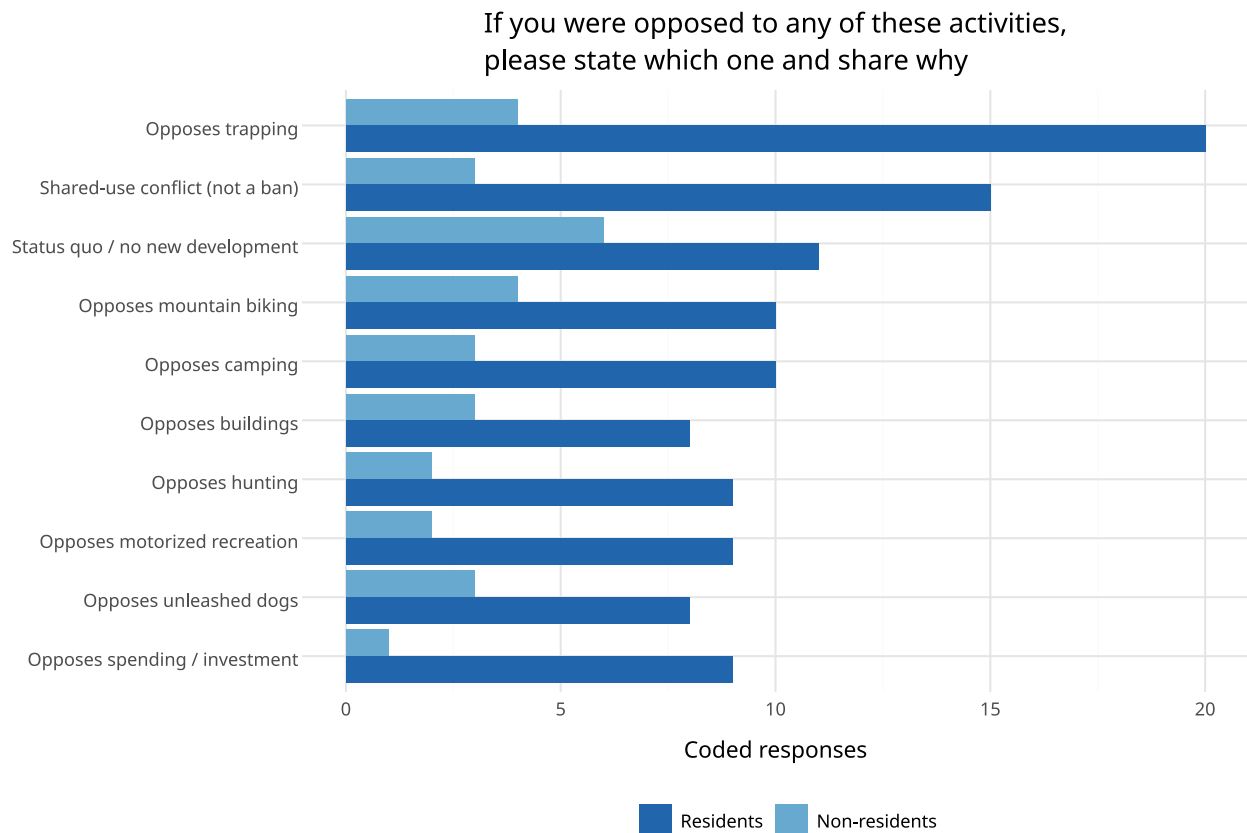
Respondents favored grants and private donations to fund the forest. Spending tax money was the least preferable option.



We also asked about willingness to pay fees to use the forest. Overall, most people were against this. Only 20% of respondents indicated they were willing to pay an access fee. Non-residents were more open to the idea, with 27% of non-residents responding favorably to the idea, while only 17% of Hardwick residents were.

Comment analysis

The survey prompted for additional input and suggestions. These answers were given as free-form text, which we've categorized here into recurrent themes and suggestions. As in the preference ratings above, trapping was commonly identified as a point of concern. In addition, many people took the chance to explain that they weren't necessarily against hunting (or trapping) per se, but were concerned about how it could exist safely alongside other activities, like hiking and biking.



“Are there other uses, programs, or events you would like to see in the Buffalo Mountain Town Forest?”

nature walks (8)
 hosted events (art, music, food trucks, etc.) (6)
 expanded motorized trails (5)
 shooting range (4)
 backcountry ski trails (4)
 connected trail network (4)
 nature study areas (w/ game cameras, blinds, etc) (3)
 non-timber forest products (3)
 disc golf (3)
 green burial (3)
 vistas (2)
 parking lot (2)
 orchard (2)
 adaptive trails (2)

composting toilet (2)
 fun run up the mountain (1)
 picnic spot (1)
 water fountain for human and dogs (1)
 volleyball court (1)
 affordable housing (1)
 tracking club (1)
 thea alvin stonework (1)
 stargazing spot (1)
 skeet shooting (1)
 archery range (1)
 sensory park (1)
 rc cars (1)
 pollinator garden (1)

pavilion (1)
 forest bathing (1)
 buffalo mountain t-shirts/swag (1)
 paintball (1)
 community firewood program (1)
 nude tanning (1)
 newsletter (1)
 adult swing set (1)
 mtb pump track (1)
 fenced dog park (1)
 horse trails (1)
 haunted forest (1)
 zip line course (1)

Demographics

We asked respondents to give their approximate age. If we compare resident respondent ages to the Census, we see that younger adults are relatively under-represented in our responses.

