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# Visitors' Travel Behavior and Perceptions of the Upper Valley Region

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This visitor survey for the Upper Valley Region was conducted using the survey platform-Prolific with a valid sample size of 535 respondents from New York City (NY), Boston (MA), Springfield (MA), Hartford (CT), Montreal (Quebec), and other cities from NY, MA, CT, and Canada. These cities/states were identified as the target markets by the local leadership.

This survey aims to learn more from visitors to the region about their trip characteristics and their perceptions of the importance and performance of sustainability indicators, destination competitiveness, relationships between humans and the environment, and travel preferences and behaviors post-COVID-19.

Results show the Appalachian Trails-NH/VT were the most popular attraction in the area. Approximately one-third (29.2%) of respondents reported having used the trail during their most recent trips to the region. Of the 25 towns, Hartford was visited by 28.6% of the people, Hanover by 27.9%, and Pendleton by 23.4%, making them the top three most visited towns.

Nearly 13% of respondents reported group spending of \$501 to \$600/per trip, the largest among all spending segments. Respondents were more likely to stay overnight during and after COVID-19 (2020, 2021, and 2022) than before COVID-19 (2019). The average number of overnight stays was 3.64. Most respondents stayed with friends or relatives (36.4%), in hotels/motel/inns (34.8%), and in Airbnbs (21.8%).

In terms of respondents' perceptions of sustainability indicators, 91.1% of respondents either moderately agreed (30.6%) or strongly agreed (60.5%) that "Environmental Quality" (item 3) was an important indicator ( $M = 4.50$ ), closely followed by "Protection of the natural environment" (item 1) (90.9%) ( $M = 4.51$ ), and "management of waste" (item 6) (76.4%) ( $M = 4.11$ ). All three indicators relate to the environmental domain of sustainability. As measured by mean ( $M$ ) responses on a 5-point Likert scale, visitors felt the environmental indicators were most important with an average mean score of 4.08 for the eight items along with the cultural indicators ( $M = 3.92$ ). In contrast, they felt less strongly about the institutional ( $M = 3.67$ ) and the socio-economic indicators ( $M = 3.70$ ).

An Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) reveals that five environmental indicators (items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6), four cultural indicators (items 17, 18, 19, and 20), and one institutional indicator (item 31) are in the 'keep up the good work' quadrant. In comparison, two socio-economic indicators (items 11 and 16), one cultural indicator (item 24), and one institutional indicator (item 30) are placed in the 'concentrate here' quadrant, implying that higher priorities for improvement should be placed on these socio-economic, cultural, and institutional indicators.

## **1. Introduction**

Gateway communities in the United States suffer from a similar lack of research-based performance indicators to measure and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and to clearly identify where additional resources are needed to enhance the tourism and recreation economy. To this end, a multi-state, integrated project team that involves research and extension faculty from West Virginia University, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Vermont, and the University of New Hampshire was formed with support from the Northeast Regional Center for Rural Development to develop an integrated process for measuring and evaluating sustainable tourism performance indicators and competitiveness in rural destinations in the northeast United States. By understanding the factors that make destinations resilient the project will produce policy recommendations and general guidelines for improving destination and gateway community sustainability and well-being. This project was funded through a USDA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative grant and adopts a mixed-method approach that involves primary and secondary data collection for three targeted rural case study destinations in northwestern Pennsylvania, the Upper Valley Region (UVR) on the Vermont/New Hampshire border, and the Monongahela National Forest region of West Virginia. This report only focuses on findings on visitor profiles, visitor spending, and visitors' perceptions of tourism sustainability indicators in the UVR between VT and NH.

## **2. Methods**

### **2.1. Questionnaire**

A questionnaire was designed based on findings from the literature (e.g., Asmelash & Kumar, 2019; Powell et al., 2017; Vogt, 2021) and with input from the research team and invited external reviewers including tourism leadership in the targeted destinations. This questionnaire

consisted of eight sections: 1) background information, 2) trip characteristics, 3) perceptions of tourism sustainability indicators: importance, 4) perceptions of tourism sustainability indicators: performance, 5) perceptions of relative competitiveness for UVR, 6) post-Covid-19 travel preferences and behaviors, 7) perceptions of the relationship between humans and the environment, and 8) socio-demographics (Appendix A). The questionnaire was built into Qualtrics and reviewed and approved by the West Virginia University Institutional Review Board. The questionnaire was pilot tested on the Prolific online survey platform in December 2022 and was finalized based on comments and feedback from 44 participants.

## **2.2. Data collection and data analysis**

The questionnaire was built in Qualtrics and integrated into Prolific which was used as the online survey platform for this study. The target states for the UVR include New York (NY), Connecticut (CT), Massachusetts (MA), and Canada with a total of 3,833 eligible participants. Surveys were distributed to each origin state/country on various dates, ranging from January 25, 2023, for Connecticut (CT) to February 6, 2023, for New York (NY), with surveys ending between February 12, 2023 (CT) and March 2, 2023 (NY). A total of 746 participants responded. Of these responses, 211 blank or incomplete responses were removed, resulting in 535 valid responses for further analysis.

As mentioned, this report is largely descriptive without the use of any advanced statistical methods. Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) was used for plotting indicator items into each of the four quadrants: keep up the good work, concentrate here, low priority, and possible overkill. The two commonly used methods of placing crosshairs are scale-centered, where the scale middle (i.e., 3 on a five-point Likert scale) is used and data-centered, where the item mean scores are used. This report used the data-centered approach.

### 3. Results

#### 3.1. Demographics

Of the 535 valid respondents, over half were males (55.0%) while females accounted for 42.9%. In addition, a small percentage of respondents identified themselves as non-binary (1.7%) while 0.4% preferred not to say (Figure 1).

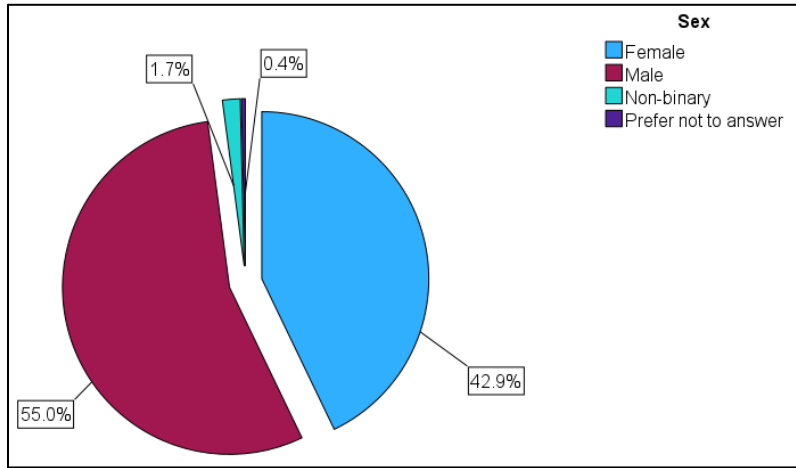


Figure 1. Respondents by sex

Most respondents were young, with over three-quarters (83.0%) ranging between 18 and 44 years of age: 23.0% for age range 18-24, 34.9% for age 25-34, and 22.1% for age 35-44 (Figure 2). Respondents

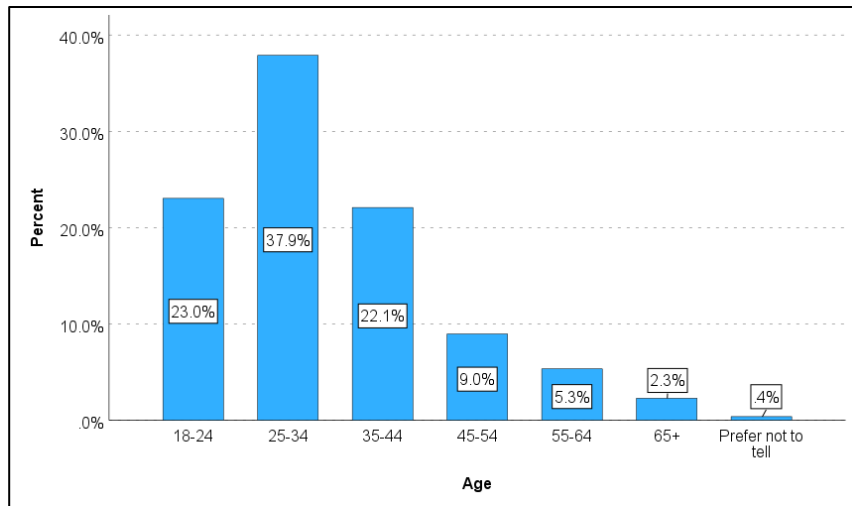


Figure 2. Respondents by age

between 45 and 64 years of age accounted for 14.3% while a small percentage of respondents were 65 years old and over (2.3%). In addition, 0.4% of respondents preferred not to tell.

Figures 3 and 4 present respondents by education and income, respectively. Most respondents were well-educated and affluent. Specifically, 90.7% had some level of college education; 20.4% had attended some college, 46.6% held an undergraduate or post-secondary degree, and nearly one-quarter (23.7%) had a graduate degree. Also, 8.8% had a high school degree or equivalent while a very small percentage of respondents (0.6%) had less than a high school degree.

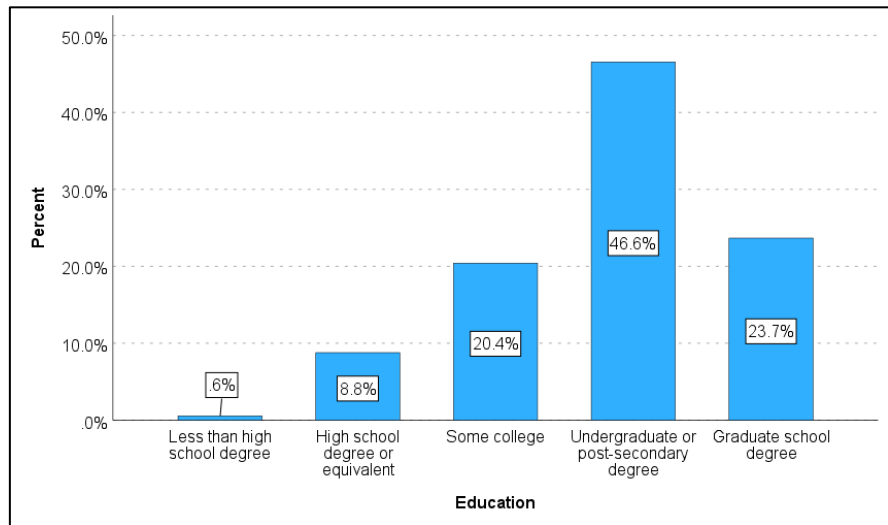


Figure 3. Respondents by education

In terms of pre-tax income, over half of respondents (48.1%) reported a household income of less than \$80,000 (14.5%, 16.6%, 10.9%, and 6.1% had an income between \$60,001 and \$80,000; between \$80,000; between \$40,001 and \$60,000; between \$20,001 and \$40,000, and less than \$20,000,

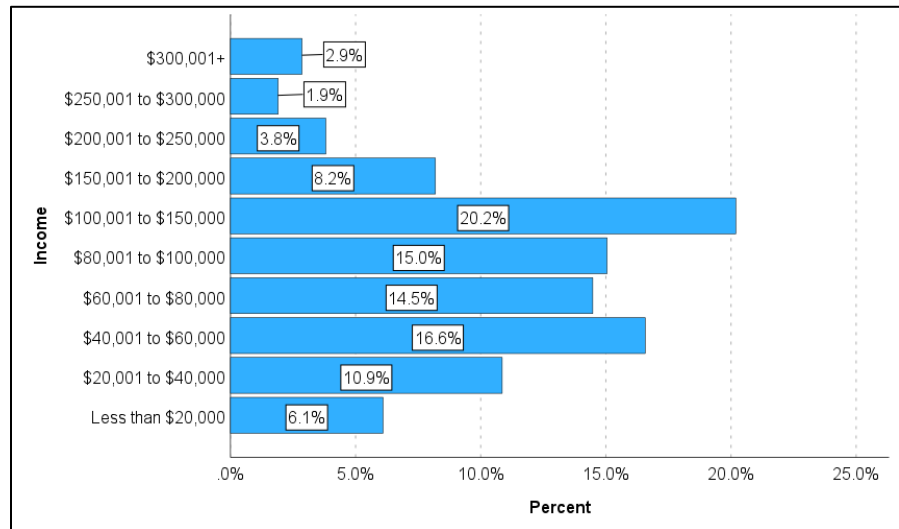


Figure 4. Respondents by income

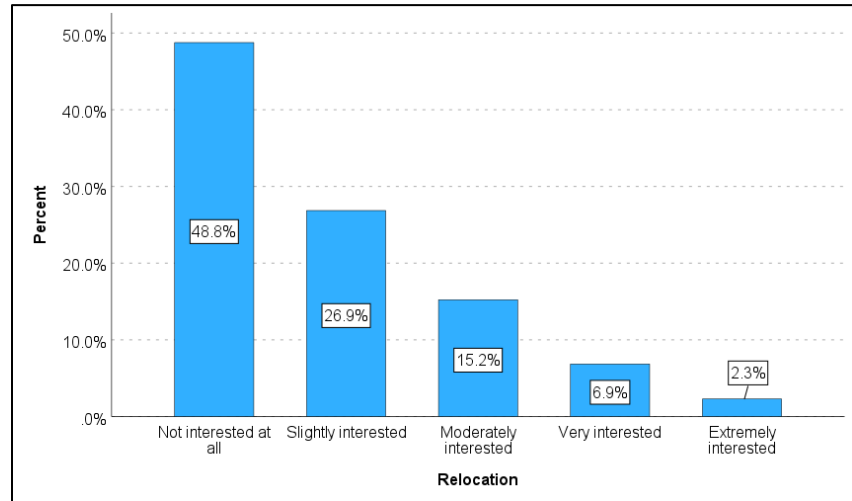
respectively). The remaining 51.9% reported an income of \$80,001 or above (15.0%, 20.2%, and



8.2% reported a household income between \$80,001 and \$100,000, between \$100,001 and \$150,000, and between \$150,001 and \$200,000, respectively).

Survey participants were also asked to indicate the extent to which they were interested in relocating their family or business to the region (Figure 5). As the figure shows, close to half

(48.8%) of respondents reported not being interested at all in relocating to the area, while 9.1% were extremely or very interested in relocating. In addition, 15.2% and 26.9% of



respondents were either moderately or slightly interested in relocation. Further analysis (such as where they are from and the distance they traveled to reach the area) could reveal characteristics of these visitors that are helpful for targeted recruitment efforts.

Figure 5. Levels of interests in relocation to the area

### 3.2. Trip Characteristics

#### *Most recent trip to the area*

Participants were asked to indicate the year in which they traveled most recently to the area (2019 to present). Figure 6 shows that

nearly one-third (32.0%) of respondents visited the area in 2019 (pre-COVID-19), which is higher than the 19.4% in 2020 (during COVID-19), 19.3% in 2021 (transition year toward post-COVID-

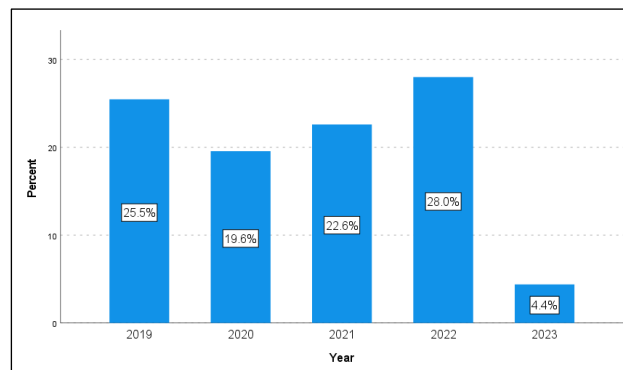


Figure 6. Most recent year travelled to the area.

19), and 27.3% in 2022 (post-COVID-19). A small percentage (2.1%) of respondents visited the area most recently in 2023 (as of March 1, 2023, the closing date for the survey).

### *Origin of Respondents by City*

Figure 7 presents the origin of respondents by city. Of the five targeted cities, respondents from the City of New York accounted 40.0%, the largest portion of the sample, followed by Boston, MA (16.6%) and Hartford, CT (4.3%). It should be noted that a large percentage of respondents reported from none of the five cities, indicating a wider region from which visitors travel than the

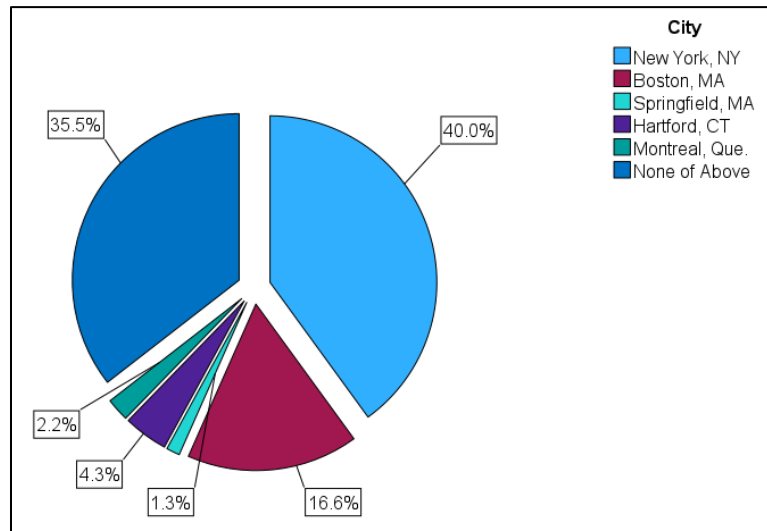


Figure 7. Origin of respondents by city

leaders who listed these five cities as major sources had expected. It should be noted that the percentage for each city should not be used as a proxy for market segments for the area because the survey participants were intentionally limited to the targeted areas.

### *Places Visited*

Table 1 shows places that respondents visited during their most recent trip to the area. Appalachian Trails-NH/VT was the most popular attraction in the area. Approximately one-third (29.2%) of respondents reported having visited the park during their most recent trip. The second and third most popular places were Hiking - Gile Mountain, trails of Upper Valley Trails Alliance/ Hanover Conservancy lands - VT/NH (14.6%) and King Arthur Baking Cafe/Store - Norwich V (14.0%). The least visited places/events included Opera North at Blow Me Down

Farm in Cornish (outdoor venue for Opera North performances under a big top tent) - Cornish NH (2.4%), Quechee Balloon Festival - Quechee VT (2.6%), and Storrs Hill Skiway - ski jumping/lessons - Lebanon NH (3.6%).

**Table 1. Places visited.**

<b>Places visited</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Percent of cases</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
21. Appalachian Trail - NH/VT	156	14.9	29.2
9. Hiking - Gile Mountain, trails of Upper Valley Trails Alliance/ Hanover Conservancy lands - VT/NH	78	7.4	14.6
4. King Arthur Baking Cafe/Store - Norwich VT	75	7.1	14.0
1. Whaleback Mountain Ski Area - Enfield NH	68	6.5	12.7
5. The Hopkins Center - theater at Dartmouth College - Hanover NH	55	5.2	10.3
8. Boating on Connecticut River (kayaking/rowing) VT/NH	49	4.7	9.2
14. Vermont Institute of Natural Science - Quechee VT	48	4.6	9.0
2. Lebanon Opera House (live shows/performances) - Lebanon NH	46	4.4	8.6
13. Billings Farm & Museum - Woodstock VT	46	4.4	8.6
7. Montshire Museum of Science - Norwich VT	44	4.2	8.2
18. Storr's Pond Recreation Area - hiking, swimming, summer camps - Hanover NH	38	3.6	7.1
19. Cardigan Mountain - hiking - Orange NH	33	3.1	6.2
10. Boston Lot conservation land - mountain biking trails - Lebanon NH	28	2.7	5.2
20. Grafton Pond - kayaking - Grafton NH	28	2.7	5.2
12. Simon Pearce Glassblowing/Store/Restaurant - Quechee VT	25	2.4	4.7
17. Mascoma Lake - boating, swimming - Enfield VT	23	2.2	4.3
15. Northern Stage Theater - White River Junction VT	22	2.1	4.1
6. AVA Gallery - art galleries/studios/classes - Lebanon NH	20	1.9	3.7
16. First Friday in White River Junction - VT	20	1.9	3.7
22. Storrs Hill Skiway - ski jumping/lessons - Lebanon NH	19	1.8	3.6
11. Quechee Balloon Festival - Quechee VT	14	1.3	2.6

3.Opera North at Blow Me Down Farm in Cornish (outdoor venue for Opera North performances under a big top tent) - Cornish NH	13	1.2	2.4
Others (please specify)	102	9.7	19.1
Total	141	100.0	240.9

*Note:* This is a multiple-response question where the percent of responses (second column of numbers) is the percent of each response out of all responses with a total of 100, while the percent of *cases* refers to the percent of respondents who visited a given place (maximum for each response is 100).

Respondents were also asked to click on the UVR map to roughly show places they visited during their most recent trip to the area (with a maximum of 10 clicks allowed per respondent). Figure 8 shows the two most popular subregions based on the frequency of clicks. Subregion 1 (around Hartford) was the most visited, followed by Subregion 2 (Hanover and Norwich). The top three most visited towns are Hartford (28.6%), Hanover (27.9%), and Pendleton (23.4%) (Table 2), while Grantham (2.6%), Piermont (2.2%), and West Fairlee (2.2%) are the three least visited towns.

**Table 2. Towns visited (from NY, MA, CT, and Canada combined)**

Towns visited	Responses		Percent of cases
	N	(%)	(%)
Hartford	153	12.6	28.6
Hanover	149	12.2	27.9
Norwich	125	10.3	23.4
Lebanon	109	9.0	20.4
Enfield	79	6.5	14.8
Springfield	49	4.0	9.2
Lyme	44	3.6	8.2
Grafton	42	3.5	7.9
Pomfret	42	3.5	7.9
Canaan	38	3.1	7.1
Orange	35	2.9	6.5
Windsor	32	2.6	6.0
Other	31	2.5	5.8
Strafford	30	2.5	5.6
Orford	29	2.4	5.4
Plainfield	29	2.4	5.4

Thetford	28	2.3	5.2
Hartland	27	2.2	5.0
Cornish	26	2.1	4.9
Fairlee	25	2.1	4.7
Sharon	24	2.0	4.5
Royalton	18	1.5	3.4
Vershire	15	1.2	2.8
Grantham	14	1.2	2.6
Piermont	12	1.0	2.2
West Fairlee	12	1.0	2.2
Total	1217	100.0	227.5

See Table 1 above for explanation of percent of responses vs. cases.

Figures 8, 9, 10, and 11 show heatmaps of the places most frequently visited by visitors from New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Canada, respectively. Tables 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the frequency of visits for each of the 25 towns in the UVR by visitors from NY, MA, CT, and Canada, respectively. As shown, Hartford, Norwich, Lebanon, and Hanover were the four towns most visited by visitors from New York (Figure 8, Table 3) and Massachusetts (Figure 9, Table 4). Three of them - Norwich, Hartford, and Hanover - have been most frequently visited by respondents from Connecticut (Figure 10, Table 5). Contrary to the heatmaps showing visits largely concentrated in these four towns, the heatmap based on clicks from Canadian visitors is more diverse, with seven towns, including the four, being the most visited. The other three most visited towns are West Fairlee, Lyme, and Enfield (Figure 11, Table 6).

**Table 3. Towns visited (NY)**

<b>Towns visited</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Percent of cases</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Hartford	45	13.0	30.0
Hanover	43	12.4	28.7
Norwich	37	10.7	24.7
Lebanon	35	10.1	23.3
Enfield	26	7.5	17.3
Grafton	16	4.6	10.7
Other	14	4.0	9.3
Hartland	12	3.5	8.0
Lyme	11	3.2	7.3
Springfield	11	3.2	7.3
Plainfield	10	2.9	6.7
Cornish	10	2.9	6.7
Canaan	9	2.6	6.0
Pomfret	9	2.6	6.0
Thetford	8	2.3	5.3
Strafford	7	2.0	4.7
Sharon	7	2.0	4.7
Orange	6	1.7	4.0
Windsor	6	1.7	4.0
Fairlee	6	1.7	4.0
Orford	4	1.2	2.7
Grantham	4	1.2	2.7
Piermont	3	0.9	2.0
Royalton	3	0.9	2.0
West Fairlee	2	0.6	1.3
Vershire	2	0.6	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>346</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>230.7</b>

**Table 4. Towns visited (MA)**

<b>Towns visited</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Percent of cases</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Hanover	42	14.0	35.0
Hartford	42	14.0	35.0
Lebanon	34	11.3	28.3
Norwich	25	8.3	20.8
Grafton	19	6.3	15.8
Springfield	16	5.3	13.3
Enfield	16	5.3	13.3
Orange	14	4.7	11.7
Lyme	10	3.3	8.3
Sharon	8	2.7	6.7
Orford	7	2.3	5.8
Windsor	7	2.3	5.8
Pomfret	7	2.3	5.8
Strafford	6	2.0	5.0
Canaan	5	1.7	4.2
Plainfield	5	1.7	4.2
Hartland	5	1.7	4.2
Royalton	5	1.7	4.2
Other	5	1.7	4.2
Grantham	4	1.3	3.3
Cornish	4	1.3	3.3
Thetford	4	1.3	3.3
Fairlee	4	1.3	3.3
West Fairlee	3	1.0	2.5
Piermont	2	0.7	1.7
Vershire	2	0.7	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>250.8</b>

**Table 5. Towns visited (CT)**

<b>Towns visited</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Percent of cases</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Norwich	19	14.6	40.4
Hartford	16	12.3	34.0
Hanover	13	10.0	27.7
Windsor	8	6.2	17.0
Enfield	7	5.4	14.9
Lebanon	7	5.4	14.9
Strafford	6	4.6	12.8
Pomfret	6	4.6	12.8
Lyme	5	3.8	10.6
Canaan	5	3.8	10.6
Springfield	5	3.8	10.6
Orford	4	3.1	8.5
Plainfield	4	3.1	8.5
Thetford	4	3.1	8.5
Cornish	3	2.3	6.4
Hartland	3	2.3	6.4
Vershire	3	2.3	6.4
Piermont	2	1.5	4.3
Orange	2	1.5	4.3
Fairlee	2	1.5	4.3
Royalton	2	1.5	4.3
Other	2	1.5	4.3
Grafton	1	0.8	2.1
West Fairlee	1	0.8	2.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>276.6</b>



**Table 6. Towns visited (Canada)**

<b>Towns visited</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Percent of cases</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Hartford	18	9.5	29.0
Hanover	17	8.9	27.4
Norwich	17	8.9	27.4
Springfield	11	5.8	17.7
Lebanon	11	5.8	17.7
Enfield	10	5.3	16.1
Lyme	9	4.7	14.5
Fairlee	9	4.7	14.5
Strafford	8	4.2	12.9
Pomfret	8	4.2	12.9
Canaan	7	3.7	11.3
Orange	7	3.7	11.3
Thetford	7	3.7	11.3
Orford	6	3.2	9.7
Windsor	6	3.2	9.7
Royalton	6	3.2	9.7
Vershire	5	2.6	8.1
Grantham	4	2.1	6.5
Plainfield	4	2.1	6.5
Hartland	4	2.1	6.5
West Fairlee	4	2.1	6.5
Sharon	4	2.1	6.5
Cornish	3	1.6	4.8
Other	3	1.6	4.8
Piermont	1	0.5	1.6
Grafton	1	0.5	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>306.5</b>

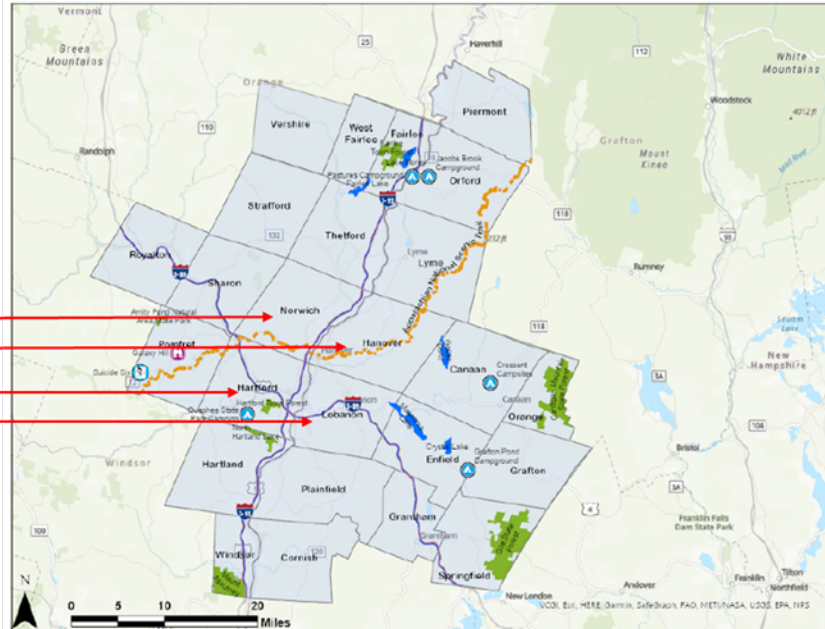
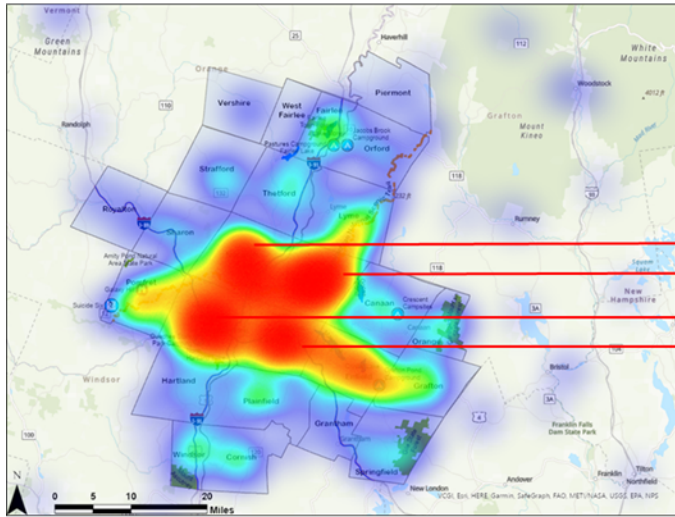


Figure 8. Heatmap showing most visited towns based on visitors' clicks from New York state

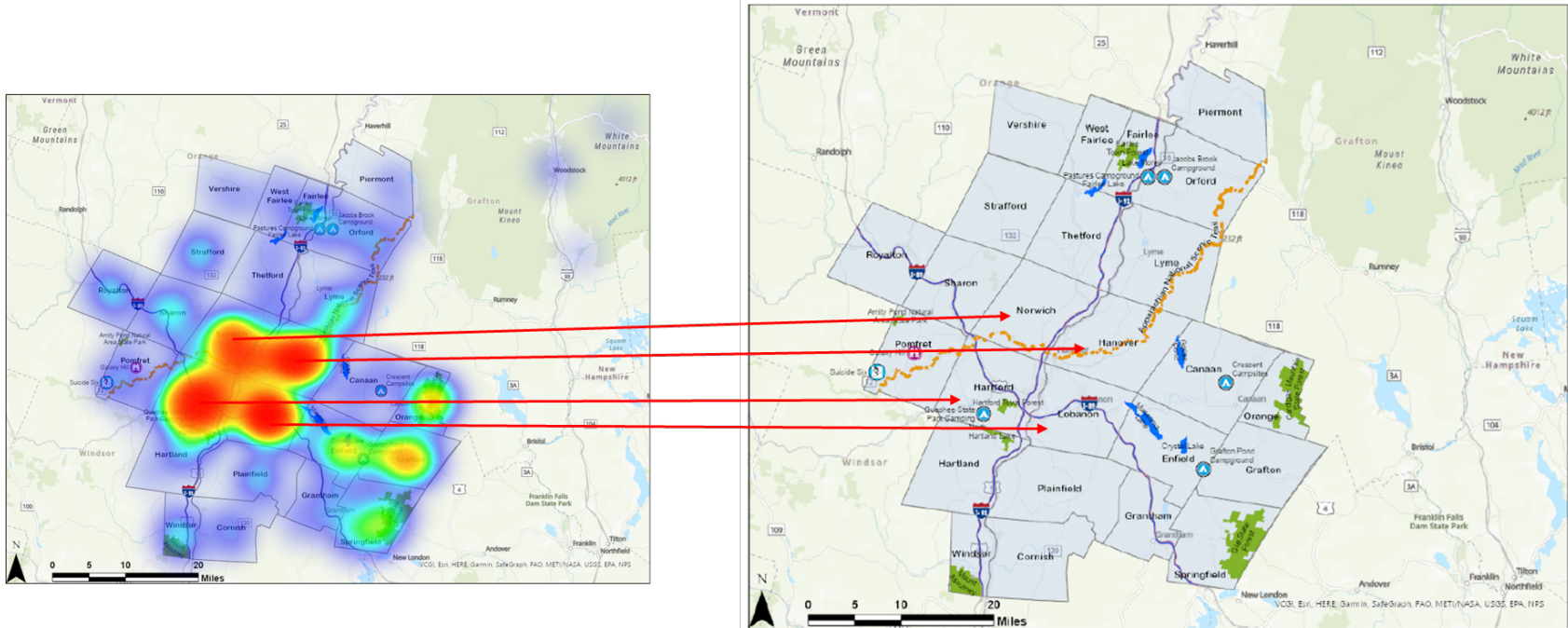


Figure 9. Heatmap showing most visited towns based on clicks from visitors from Massachusetts

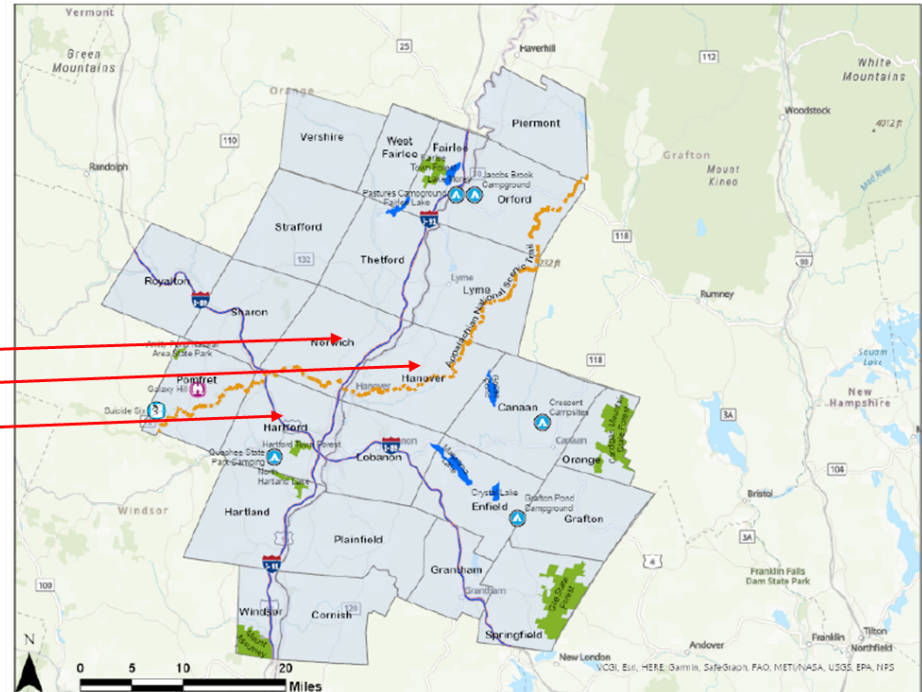
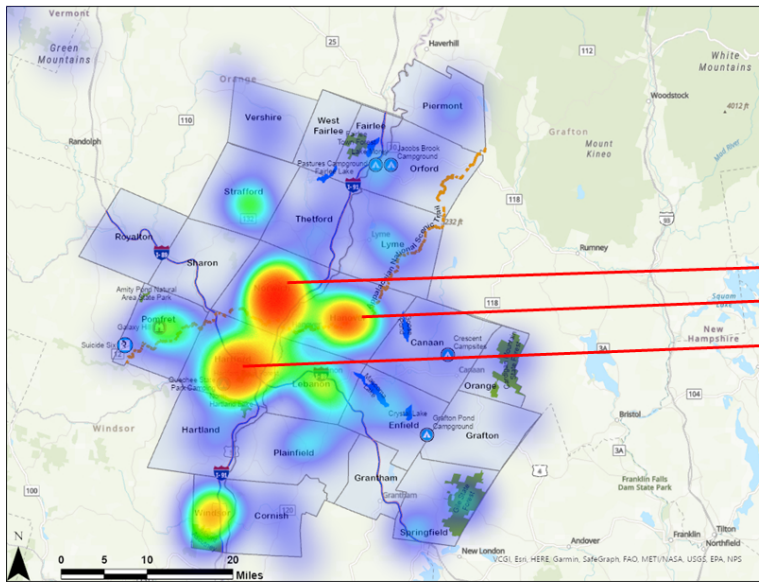


Figure 10. Heatmap showing most visited towns based on clicks from visitors from Connecticut

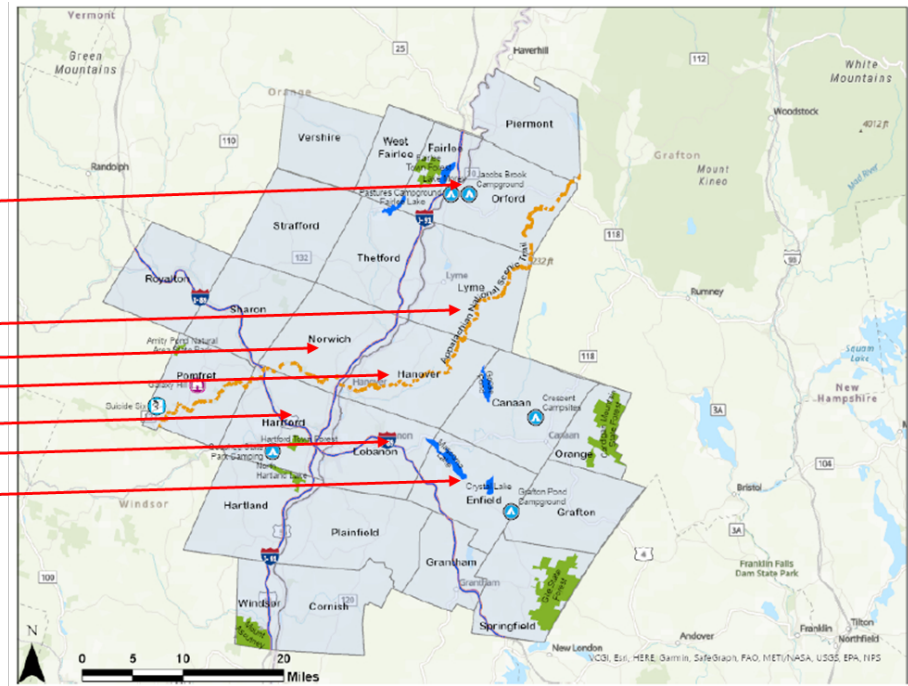
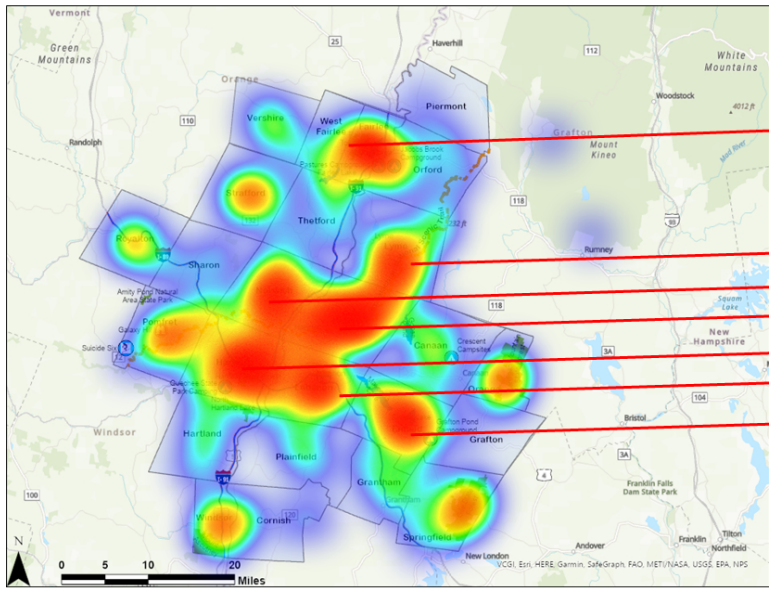


Figure 11. Heatmap showing most visited towns based on clicks from visitors from Canada

## Travel Purposes

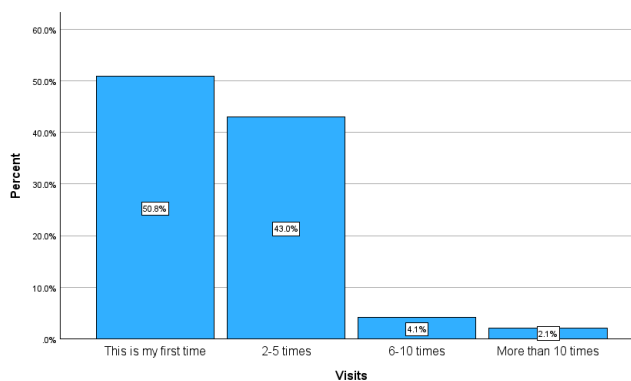
In terms of travel purposes (respondents were allowed to choose multiple purposes), most respondents (85.6%) traveled to the region for leisure/holiday/vacation, followed by visiting friends and/or relatives (35.3%) (Table 7). A small number of respondents (3.2%) reported having visited the area for other reasons (e.g., traveling through on a road trip; driving through the state, taking the scenic route; kind of a mix between leisure and business; just exploring; etc.). Only a small percentage of respondents visited the region for business (2.2%).

**Table 7. Travel purposes**

Reasons for visiting the area	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	(%)	(%)
Leisure	458	67.8	85.6
VFR	189	28.0	35.3
Business	12	1.8	2.2
Other	17	2.5	3.2
Total	676	100.0	120.2

## Frequency of Visits

Respondents were asked to report how many times they have visited the UVR in the past four years or so (2019- present). Responses are displayed in Figure 12. Interestingly, about half of respondents reported visiting the area for the first time, followed by 43% of them who have visited between two and five times. A small number of respondents reported a frequency of visits of 6-10 times (4.1%), or more than 10 times (2.1%), respectively. The average number of visits in the previous 12 months was 1.12 times.



**Figure 12. Frequency of visits in the past 4 years**

## Group Size

Most respondents reported visiting the region in groups of two (44.5%) or 3-5 persons (38.3%), respectively, while 9.2% reported visiting alone. A small percentage of respondents traveled in groups of 6-10 persons (5.8%) or more than 10 people (2.2%) (Figure 13).

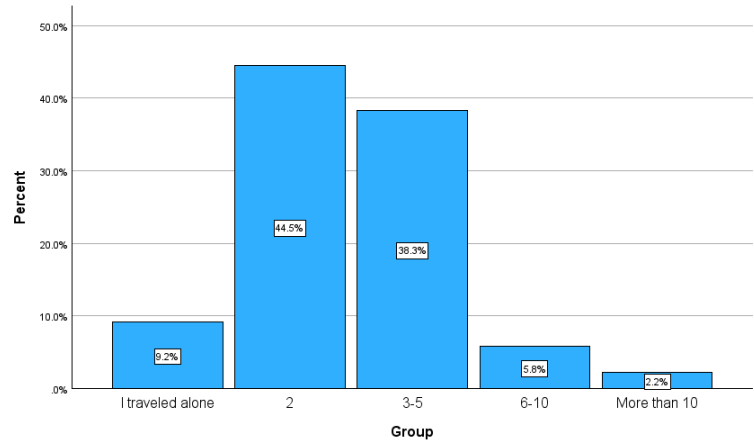


Figure 13. Group size

## Activities Participated In

Table 8 presents activities that respondents have participated in during their most recent trip to the region. Not surprisingly, hiking was the most frequently reported activity, with the most responses (62.1%), followed by sightseeing (55.9%). These two activities were also reported as the primary activity by 28.3% and 14.6% of respondents (Table 9). Other popular activities included shopping (51%), food and drinking experiences (48.8%), and viewing wildlife (31.6%). In contrast, activities such as geocaching (1.7%), hunting (1.9%), snowmobiling/ATV/UTV riding (2.8%), XC skiing (3.4%), and Rock Climbing/Bouldering (3.4%) were the least commonly reported.

**Table 8. Activities participated in**

<b>Activities participated in</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Percent of cases</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Hiking	332	13.3	62.1
Sightseeing	299	12.0	55.9
Shopping	273	11.0	51.0
Food & drink experiences	261	10.5	48.8
Viewing wildlife	169	6.8	31.6
Farms/farmer's markets	150	6.0	28.0
Picnicking	142	5.7	26.5
Swimming	127	5.1	23.7
Canoeing/Kayaking	86	3.5	16.1
Fishing	75	3.0	14.0
Backpacking	74	3.0	13.8
Fairs & events	70	2.8	13.1
Nightlife	65	2.6	12.1
Performing arts	61	2.4	11.4
Leaf peeping	48	1.9	9.0
Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding	43	1.7	8.0
Mountain Biking	42	1.7	7.9
Factory tours	31	1.2	5.8
Rail-trail/Road Biking	27	1.1	5.0
Whitewater Rafting	23	0.9	4.3
XC Skiing	18	0.7	3.4
Rock Climbing/Bouldering	18	0.7	3.4
Snowmobiling/ATV/UTV riding	15	0.6	2.8
Hunting	10	0.4	1.9
Geocaching	9	0.4	1.7
Other	22	0.9	4.1
Total	2,490	100	465.4



**Table 9. Primary activity**

	<b>Primary activity*</b> <b>(%)</b>
Hiking	28.3
Sightseeing	14.6
Food & drink experiences	6.4
Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding	6.1
Shopping	4.7
Performing arts	3.6
Canoeing/Kayaking	3.4
Swimming	2.6
Viewing wildlife	2.6
Fairs & events	2.3
Picnicking	2.2
Fishing	2.0
XC Skiing	2.0
Mountain Biking	1.9
Nightlife	1.6
Leaf peeping	1.6
Backpacking	1.2
Farms/farmer's markets	1.2
Hunting	1.2
Rail-trail/Road Biking	0.9
Whitewater Rafting	0.9
Rock Climbing/Bouldering	0.9
Factory tours	0.9
Snowmobiling/ATV/UTV riding	0.9
Geocaching Click all that apply	0.8
Other (please specify)	4.8

## Spending

Figure 14 presents the distribution of group spending per trip as reported by respondents. As shown, 12.7% of respondents reported group spending of \$501-\$600 per trip, the largest percentage among all spending segments.

This is closely followed by the spending ranges of \$201 to \$300 (12.5%) and \$1001 to \$2000. Nearly equal numbers of respondents

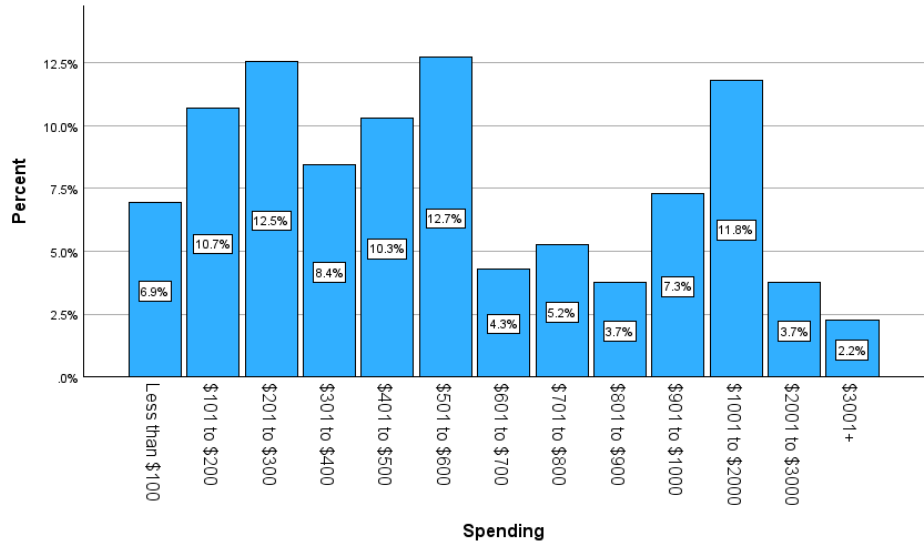


Figure 14. Group spending/per trip

reported spending ranges of \$101 to \$200 (10.7%) and \$401 to \$500 (10.3%). A small percentage of respondents reported a group spending of more than \$3,001 (2.2%).

Figure 15 presents group spending/per trip by year. The percentage of respondents is similar across years in the range of \$1,001 to \$2,000, with the percentage of respondents in 2022 being slightly higher than in other years (Figure 15).

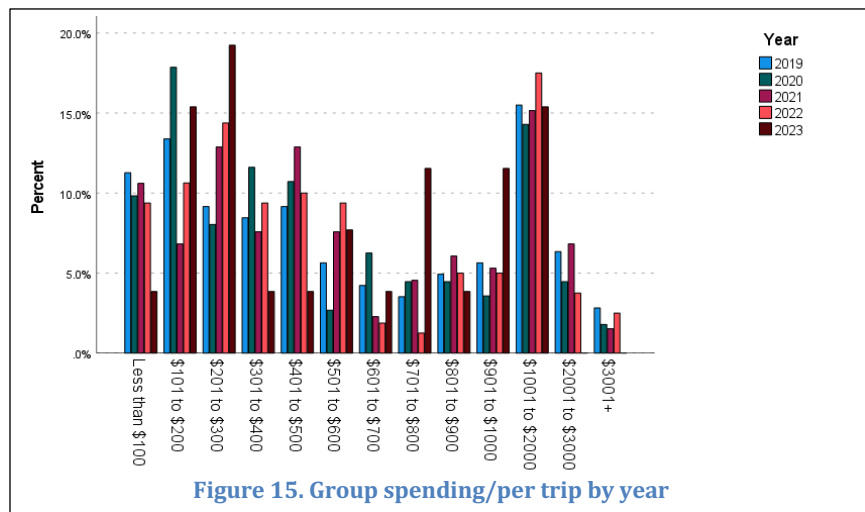


Figure 15. Group spending/per trip by year

### Overnight Stays

The spending pattern shown in Figures 14 and 15 generally corresponds with most respondents being overnight visitors (72.1% vs. 27.9% being day trippers) as shown in Figure 16. Interestingly, respondents were more likely to stay overnight during 2020, 2021, and 2022 than either pre-COVID-19 (2019) or post-COVID-19 2023 (Figure 17). The average number of overnight stays was 3.64.

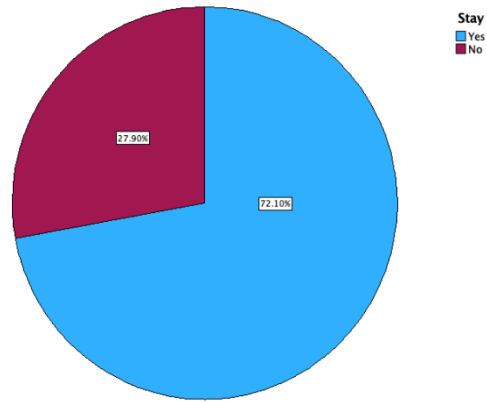


Figure 16. Overnight visitors vs. day trippers

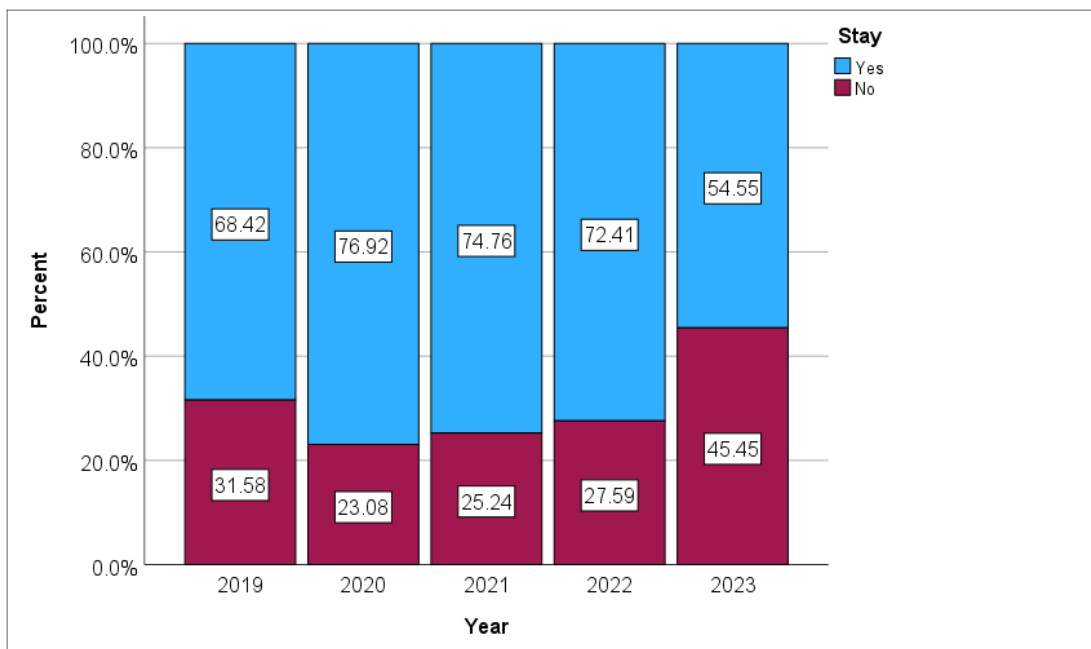


Figure 17. Overnight visitors vs. day trippers by year

Table 10 presents responses on where respondents stayed during their most recent trip to the Upper Valley area (as with their responses on travel purposes, respondents were also allowed to choose multiple lodging types). As shown, most visitors stayed with friends/relatives (36.4%) and in hotels/motels/inns (34.8%). Also, 21.8% of respondents stayed in Airbnb properties and 13.0% camped or stayed in tents. A small number of respondents stayed in homestays (0.5%), timeshares (0.5%), or second homes (0.2%).

**Table 10. Respondents by lodging types**

<b>Lodging</b>	<b>Responses</b>		<b>Percent of cases</b>
	<b>N</b>	<b>(%)</b>	<b>(%)</b>
Friends and/or relatives	140	30.4	36.4
Hotel/motel/inn	134	29.1	34.8
Airbnb	84	18.2	21.8
Camping/tent	50	10.8	13.0
Bed & Breakfast	20	4.3	5.2
Rented house/apartment/VRBO	13	2.8	3.4
Youth hostel	6	1.3	1.6
Other	5	1.1	1.3
RV	4	0.9	1.0
Homestays	2	0.4	0.5
Timeshare	2	0.4	0.5
Second home	1	0.2	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>461</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>119.7</b>

Respondents were also asked to indicate which town (s) they stayed in (Table 11). Hanover (21.1%), Harford (17.4%), Lebanon (16.7%), and Norwich (11.5%) were the top four towns with the most overnight visitors, followed by Enfield (9.4%) and Grafton (6.3%). A smaller percentage of respondents reported having stayed in Thetford or Vershire, each accounting for 0.8% of total responses.

**Table 11. Towns stayed in**

Towns stayed in	Responses		
	N	Percent (%)	Percent of cases (%)
Hanover	81	16.4	21.1
Hartford	67	13.5	17.4
Lebanon	64	12.9	16.7
Norwich	44	8.9	11.5
Enfield	36	7.3	9.4
Grafton	24	4.8	6.3
Lyme	22	4.4	5.7
Springfield	16	3.2	4.2
Other	16	3.2	4.2
Canaan	15	3.0	3.9
Strafford	15	3.0	3.9
Orange	14	2.8	3.6
Windsor	14	2.8	3.6
Plainfield	9	1.8	2.3
Pomfret	9	1.8	2.3
Hartland	7	1.4	1.8
Fairlee	7	1.4	1.8
Cornish	5	1.0	1.3
Sharon	5	1.0	1.3
Grantham	4	0.8	1.0
Orford	4	0.8	1.0
Royalton	4	0.8	1.0
West Fairlee	4	0.8	1.0
Piermont	3	0.6	0.8
Thetford	3	0.6	0.8
Vershire	3	0.6	0.8
Total	495	100.0	128.9

### 3.3. Perceptions of Sustainability Indicators

Sustainability indicators related to various aspects of tourism and recreation are used increasingly to assess longer-term prospects for tourism development in different communities. These are usually rated on a 5-point (Likert) scale ranging from strong agreement that an indicator is important or performing well to neutral and strong disagreement. In addition to rating the importance of difference indicators in a destination, visitors are then also asked how the destination is performing on the indicator. When a given indicator is rated as important and at the same time the community is rated as performing well on that indicator, no further action is

needed. On the other hand, if the community is rated as underperforming, that particular indicator points to an important area for potential improvement. Here we consider four broad categories (also referred to as dimensions) of indicators, including those related to the environment, socioeconomic conditions, cultural factors, and institution-related items. Within these four broad categories, more specific and measurable sub-indicators are examined. This section reports results from the visitor survey in UVR.

### *Descriptive Analysis*

Table 12 presents respondents' assessment of current levels or the state of the 32 sustainable tourism indicators. More than 9 in 10 (91.1%) of respondents either moderately agreed (30.6%) or strongly agreed (60.5%) that "Environmental Quality" (item 3) is an important indicator ( $M = 4.50$ ), followed by "Protection of the natural environment" (item 1) (90.9%) ( $M = 4.51$ ), and "management of waste" (item 6) (76.4%) ( $M = 4.11$ ). Here  $M$  refers to the mean or average score, and all three of these indicators relate to the environmental domain of sustainability. In contrast, "opportunities for visitors to reflect on religious or other spiritual values" (item 22) was rated the lowest with 43.9% of respondents moderately agreeing (28.1%) or strongly agreeing (15.8%) that it is an important indicator ( $M = 3.16$ ), followed by "Evidence of links and engagement with other bodies" (item 25) (47.5%) ( $M = 3.35$ ), and "Existence of a regional collaboration and marketing organization" (item 26) (48%) ( $M = 3.37$ ).

Overall, visitors were more positive on the environmental indicators with an average mean score of 4.08 for the eight items and cultural indicators ( $M = 3.92$ ), while being less positive on the institutional ( $M = 3.67$ ) and the socio-economic indicators ( $M = 3.70$ ).

**Table 12. Visitors' assessment of the *importance* of the tourism sustainability indicators**

Items	Strongly disagree (SD) (%)	Mildly disagree (MD) (%)	Neutral (N) (%)	Mildly agree (MA) (%)	Strongly agree (SA) (%)	MA+ SA	Mean
1. Protection of the natural environment	0.9	0.8	7.4	28.2	62.7	90.9	4.51
3. Environmental quality	0.4	1.1	7.4	30.6	60.5	91.1	4.50
18. Celebration and protection of intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, food and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness	1.3	3.6	15.1	34.8	45.1	79.9	4.19
6. Management of waste	1.4	5.5	16.8	33.6	42.8	76.4	4.11
17. A policy and system to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage and cultural landscapes	1	6	20.2	29.8	43.2	73	4.08
20. Guidelines for visitor behavior at sensitive sites and cultural events being made available to visitors	2.1	4.9	17.9	34.6	40.5	75.1	4.06
19. Accurate interpretative material that informs visitors of the significance of the cultural and natural aspects of the sites they visit	1.3	5.9	16.4	39.4	36.9	76.3	4.05
5. Control of negative impacts through long-term planning	1.6	5.3	21.5	32.9	38.7	71.6	4.02
14. Contribution to community and sustainability initiatives in a responsible manner from enterprises, visitors, and the public	1.5	3.5	22.4	38	34.7	72.7	4.01
21. Optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts in cultural sites	2.1	5.6	19.1	36.9	36.3	73.2	4
24. Safeguarding cultural identity of local community	2.9	5.7	19.4	36.8	35.2	72	3.96
11. Improvement of the well-being of rural communities from tourism development	0.8	6.6	20.2	41.4	31	72.4	3.95
7. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	2.5	8.2	18.4	34.2	36.7	70.9	3.94
30. A system to monitor and respond to socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and impacts arising from tourism	2.9	5.6	21.9	36.9	32.6	69.5	3.91
2. Rural authenticity	1.9	6.7	23.1	37.4	30.9	68.3	3.89
16. A system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards that addresses the needs of both visitors and residents	2.3	7.2	24.2	33.8	32.5	66.3	3.87
31. Public participation in sustainable destination planning and management	2.5	5.6	22.5	41.4	27.9	69.3	3.87
4. Reduction of energy consumption and improvement of efficiency in its use	2.7	6.9	23.6	37.5	29.3	66.8	3.84
8. Management of overcrowding	3.1	7.6	23.4	35	30.9	65.9	3.83
23. Cultural/heritages sites accessible to physically disabled tourists	4.3	6.4	23.7	33.6	32	65.6	3.83
29. A risk reduction, crisis management and emergency response plan	3.1	8.6	21.6	35.1	31.6	66.7	3.83
32. The destination management strategy/plan clearly visible and available online	2.9	8.9	24.1	35.3	28.7	64	3.78
9. Economic opportunities from tourism development	1.4	7.9	28.8	37.5	24.5	62	3.76
27. Local leaders' support for tourism development	4.5	11.1	24.1	37.7	22.7	60.4	3.63
28. Quality of public-private partnership in tourism	5	10.5	27.8	34.2	22.5	56.7	3.59
13. More investment in tourism development	4.4	12.4	28.6	34.9	19.7	54.6	3.53
12. Marketing and promotion of tourism assets to visitors	3.8	12.5	29.2	36.2	18.3	54.5	3.53
10. High-paying jobs from tourism development	4.9	10	33.2	33.4	18.5	51.9	3.5
15. Career opportunities and training in tourism	5.1	11.4	33.4	32	18.1	50.1	3.47
26. Existence of a regional collaboration and marketing organization	6.3	15	30.7	31.3	16.7	48	3.37
25. Evidence of links and engagement with other bodies	7.2	13.9	31.4	31.2	16.3	47.5	3.35
22. Opportunities for visitors to reflect on religious or other spiritual values	12.5	18.3	25.3	28.1	15.8	43.9	3.16

Note. Items 1-8: environmental; items 9-16: socio-economical; items 17-24: cultural; items 25-32: institutional

Table 13 presents visitors' perceptions of the performance of the 32 sustainability indicators.

Three environmental indicators - item 1 'protection of the natural environment', item 2 'rural

**Table 13. Visitors’ perceptions of the *performance* of the tourism sustainability indicators**

Items	Strongly disagree (SD) (%)	Mildly disagree (MD) (%)	Neutral (N) (%)	Mildly agree (MA) (%)	Strongly agree (SA) (%)	MA+ SA	Mean
1. Protection of the natural environment	1.2	1.4	9.7	37.2	50.6	87.8	4.35
3. Environmental quality	0.4	1.6	11.8	37.5	48.8	86.3	4.33
2. Rural authenticity	0.6	3.4	18.4	39.1	38.5	77.6	4.11
6. Management of waste	1.1	6.2	21.6	37.2	33.9	71.1	3.97
5. Control of negative impacts through long-term planning	1.2	6.2	27.1	37.4	28.1	65.5	3.85
32. The destination management strategy/plan clearly visible and available online	1.5	6.4	24.5	41.1	26.5	67.6	3.85
8. Management of overcrowding	1.9	6.9	25.4	37.4	28.5	65.9	3.84
18. Celebration and protection of intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, food and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness	1.7	6.4	24.5	41.6	25.8	67.4	3.83
29. A risk reduction, crisis management and emergency response plan	1.8	6.8	26.3	37.9	27.1	65	3.82
14. Contribution to community and sustainability initiatives in a responsible manner from enterprises, visitors, and the public	1.1	6.9	26.8	40.4	24.8	65.2	3.81
19. Accurate interpretative material that informs visitors of the significance of the cultural and natural aspects of the sites they visit	2.4	6.4	24.4	42.5	24.4	66.9	3.8
21. Optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts in cultural sites	0.9	7.8	25.3	42.5	23.5	66	3.8
20. Guidelines for visitor behavior at sensitive sites and cultural events being made available to visitors	1.5	8.3	24.5	40.2	25.5	65.7	3.8
17. A policy and system to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage and cultural landscapes	1.4	5.8	28.1	41.5	23.2	64.7	3.79
31. Public participation in sustainable destination planning and management	1.5	5.8	28.7	40.1	23.9	64	3.79
4. Reduction of energy consumption and improvement of efficiency in its use	0.9	7	30.8	36.2	25.2	61.4	3.78
24. Safeguarding cultural identity of local community	2.2	6	26.6	43	22.2	65.2	3.77
7. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	1.7	8.2	29.9	32.7	27.4	60.1	3.76
16. A system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards that addresses the needs of both visitors and residents	1.7	6.7	29.3	38.3	24	62.3	3.76
27. Local leaders' support for tourism development	3	5.5	29.1	39.7	22.6	62.3	3.73
9. Economic opportunities from tourism development	1.4	6.1	29.4	45.2	17.9	63.1	3.72
11. Improvement of the well-being of rural communities from tourism development	1.9	8.3	27.5	41.7	20.6	62.3	3.71
12. Marketing and promotion of tourism assets to visitors	1.9	7.2	30.1	39.6	21.2	60.8	3.71
30. A system to monitor and respond to socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and impacts arising from tourism	2.1	6.2	30.6	40.5	20.5	61	3.71
28. Quality of public-private partnership in tourism	3.1	8.5	27	40.1	21.3	61.4	3.68
23. Cultural/heritages sites accessible to physically disabled tourists	3.6	9.6	28	36.4	22.4	58.8	3.64
13. More investment in tourism development	1.6	10.4	31.3	39.1	17.6	56.7	3.61
26. Existence of a regional collaboration and marketing organization	3.9	8.6	31.1	37.2	19.3	56.5	3.59
15. Career opportunities and training in tourism	2.3	11.9	33.4	32.9	19.4	52.3	3.55
25. Evidence of links and engagement with other bodies	4.1	11.3	31.1	34.7	18.8	53.5	3.53
10. High-paying jobs from tourism development	2.6	12.5	40.1	27.9	16.9	44.8	3.44
22. Opportunities for visitors to reflect on religious or other spiritual values	9.2	11.4	31.2	28.5	19.8	48.3	3.38

Note. Items 1-8: environmental; items 9-16: socio-economical; items 17-24: cultural; items 25-32: institutional

authenticity’, and item 3 ‘environmental quality’- were perceived to perform well, with mean scores of 4.35, 4.11, and 4.33, respectively. Similar to respondents’ assessment of the socio-



economic and institutional indicators being less important than the other two dimensions of sustainability, visitors noted that the indicators in these two categories or dimensions performed worse than those in the environmental and cultural dimensions.

Several items were perceived to perform poorly, including item 10 ‘high-paying jobs from tourism development’ ( $M = 3.44$ ), item 15 ‘career opportunities and training in tourism’ ( $M = 3.55$ ), item 22 ‘opportunities for visitors to reflect on religious or other spiritual values’ ( $M = 3.38$ ), and item 25 ‘evidence of links and engagement with other bodies’ ( $M = 3.53$ ).

### Gap Analysis

From Tables 12 and 12 a so-called gap analysis can be performed between the importance and performance for each of the 32 indicators (Table 14). Among the eight pairs of environmental indicators, six consistently show performance significantly lower than their importance rating. Additionally, six pairs of socioeconomic and two institutional indicators are significantly different with performance being lower than importance. On the cultural dimension, significant differences exist between performance and importance for seven pairs of indicators, with performance consistently rated as lower below importance.

**Table 14. Paired-sample t-tests for mean differences between performance and importance**

Item	Mean		Mean difference	p
	Performance	Importance		
1. Protection of the natural environment	4.35	4.51	-0.16	<.001***
2. Rural authenticity	4.11	3.89	0.22	<.001***
3. Environmental quality	4.33	4.50	-0.17	<.001***
4. Reduction of energy consumption and improvement of efficiency in its use	3.78	3.84	-0.06	.205
5. Control of negative impacts through long-term planning	3.85	4.02	-0.17	.011*
6. Management of waste	3.97	4.11	-0.14	.001***
7. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	3.76	3.94	-0.18	<.001***
8. Management of overcrowding	3.84	3.83	0.01	1.000
9. Economic opportunities from tourism development	3.72	3.76	-0.04	.249
10. High-paying jobs from tourism development	3.44	3.50	-0.06	.049*
11. Improvement of the well-being of rural communities from tourism development	3.71	3.95	-0.24	<.001***
12. Marketing and promotion of tourism assets to visitors	3.71	3.53	0.18	.005**
13. More investment in tourism development	3.61	3.53	0.08	.461
14. Contribution to community and sustainability initiatives in a responsible manner from enterprises, visitors, and the public	3.81	4.01	-0.2	<.001***
15. Career opportunities and training in tourism	3.55	3.47	0.08	.636
16. A system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards that addresses the needs of both visitors and residents	3.76	3.87	-0.11	.004**

17. A policy and system to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage and cultural landscapes	3.79	4.08	-0.29	<.001***
18. Celebration and protection of intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, food and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness	3.83	4.19	-0.36	<.001***
19. Accurate interpretative material that informs visitors of the significance of the cultural and natural aspects of the sites they visit	3.80	4.05	-0.25	<.001***
20. Guidelines for visitor behavior at sensitive sites and cultural events being made available to visitors	3.80	4.06	-0.26	<.001***
21. Optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts in cultural sites	3.80	4.00	-0.2	<.001***
22. Opportunities for visitors to reflect on religious or other spiritual values	3.38	3.16	0.22	.286
23. Cultural/heritages sites accessible to physically disabled tourists	3.64	3.83	-0.19	<.001***
24. Safeguarding cultural identify of local community	3.77	3.96	-0.19	<.001***
25. Evidence of links and engagement with other bodies	3.53	3.35	0.18	.484
26. Existence of a regional collaboration and marketing organization	3.59	3.37	0.22	.04*
27. Local leaders' support for tourism development	3.73	3.63	0.1	.371
28. Quality of public-private partnership in tourism	3.68	3.59	0.09	.966
29. A risk reduction, crisis management and emergency response plan	3.82	3.83	-0.01	.071
30. A system to monitor and respond to socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and impacts arising from tourism	3.71	3.91	-0.2	<.001***
31. Public participation in sustainable destination planning and management	3.79	3.87	-0.08	.108
32. The destination management strategy/plan clearly visible and available online	3.85	3.78	0.07	.495
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.78</b>	<b>3.84</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>N/A</b>

\* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

### *Importance-Performance Analysis*

Figure 18 displays the distribution of the 32 indicators in the I-P grid, which essentially plots the rankings of importance vs. performance of each indicator. Five environmental indicators (items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6), four cultural indicators (items 17, 18, 19, and 20), and one institutional indicator (item 31) are located in the ‘keep up the good work’ quadrant, while two socio-economic indicators (items 11 and 16), one cultural indicator (item 24), and one institutional indicator (item 30) are located in the ‘concentrate here’ quadrant, implying that higher priority could be placed on these socio-economic, cultural, and institutional indicators to make the destination more attractive to visitors.

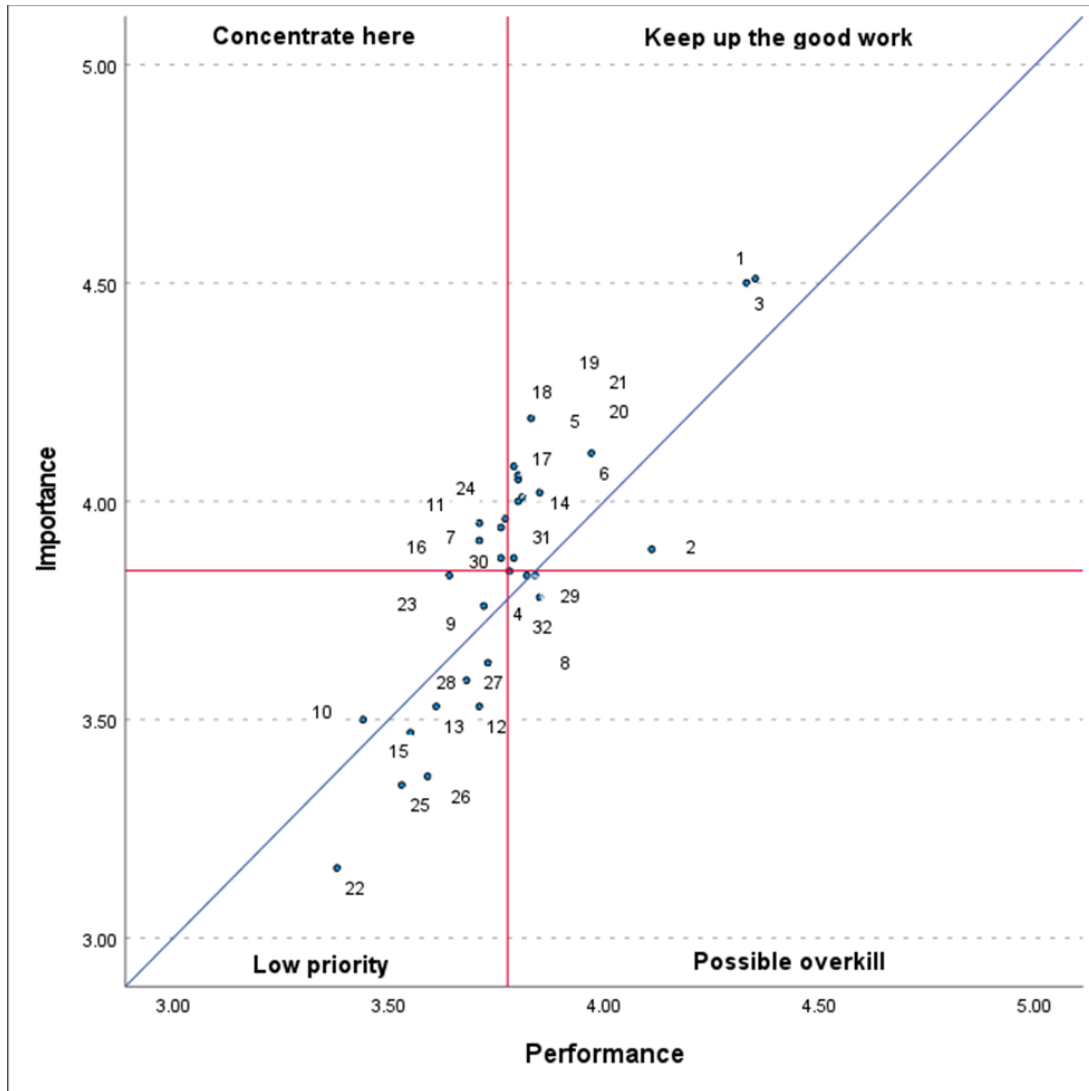


Figure 18. Importance-performance analysis of sustainability indicators

### 3.4. Perceptions of Relative Competitiveness

#### *Similar Rural Areas Visited*

Participants were asked to report if they have visited any other rural destination(s) similar to UVR in the past 4 years or so (2019-present). Nearly half of the respondents (46.2%) reported having visited at least one rural area similar to the study area (Table 15). Similar areas visited include national parks, national forests, state parks, state forests, heritage areas/recreations, trails, resorts, and more.

**Table 15. Similar destinations compared to the Upper Valley Region.**

	Similar destinations
National parks	WY: Yellowstone NP CA: Yosemite NP ME: Acadia NP WA: Olympic Peninsula (Olympic NP)
National forests	GA: Chattahoochee NF
State parks	NY: Bear Mountain SP, Niagara Falls SP
Heritage areas/recreation areas	WV: Dolly Sods NY: The Adirondack Mountains, Catskill Mountains MI: Upper Peninsula of Michigan PA: The Pocono Mountains MA: Mount Greylock State Reservation, Pioneer Valley NJ: Pinelands National Reserve
Trails	Appalachian Trail MD: Annapolis Rocks
Resorts	NY: Lake Placid NJ: Cape May, Wildwood WV: Canaan MA: Wachusett Mountain Ski Area VA: Primland Resort IN: Woodland Hills Campground
Others	CA: Mendocino County CO: Panonia NY: Western NY, Lake George, Hudson Highlands, Ithaca, Lake Luzerne, Blue hole, Port Jervis, Roxbury, upstate NY, Saratoga, Woodstock, Millbrook NH: Gorham, Guilford, North Conway, Jackson, Wolfeboro ME: Northern Maine, Northeast Maine, Southern Maine, Midcoast Maine, Bethel, Brunswick, North Berwick, Kennebunkport SC: Summerville, South Carolina CT: West Suffield, Eastern Connecticut, UConn Forest  MA: Arlington, North Adams, The Berkshires, Stockbridge, Lenox, North Central MA, Concord, Williamstown NJ: Allentown, Ridgewood VT: Stowe, Northern Vermont MT: Livingston, ID: Island Park DE: Georgetown VA: Charleston PA: Bucks County, Liberty MO: Jefferson WA: White Salmon IN: Marshall County VT: Westminster WV: Green Bank TX: Travaasa Austin

Table 16 presents similar areas reported at least twice by respondents. Of these areas, the Catskills was cited 14 times, accounting for 14.4% of the most frequently reported destinations

similar to the area, followed by the Poconos (12.4%), Upstate NY (12.4%), and Berkshires (10.3%).

**Table 16. Most frequently reported destinations similar to the Upper Valley area.**

Similar places	Counts	Percentage (%)
Catskills	14	14.4%
Poconos	12	12.4%
Upstate NY	12	12.4%
Berkshires	10	10.3%
Finger Lakes	8	8.2%
White Mountains	7	7.2%
Vermont (Woodstock, Stowe, Sudbury, Ludlow, Mount Tabor, Stratford, Sugarbush)	7	7.2%
Adirondack Mountains	6	6.2%
Northern Maine	5	5.2%
Cape Cod	5	5.2%
Acadia National Park	4	4.1%
Bar Harbour	4	4.1%
Albany, NY	3	3.1%
Total	97	100.0

### *Most Negative Aspects Affecting Visitors' Experience*

To further understand visitors' overall experience in the destination, respondents were asked to indicate the most negative aspect as well as the most positive aspect of their most recent visit to the region. Results are presented in Tables 17 and 18. A total of 285 valid responses were provided on what has most negatively affected their overall experience. These responses are grouped into 14 categories (Table 17). The most negative aspect is related to accessibility, accounting for 12.3% of all responses (e.g., It takes a while to get out there and the roads are difficult due to bad lighting conditions in Vermont; long drive; getting there by flight was pretty negative since the flight had been canceled and delayed which caused us to waste a day just getting to NH; Longer drive from NY than other ski resort towns). The second most negative aspect is crowding (11.2%) (e.g., overcrowding; it was overcrowded; so many tourists; crowded

areas), followed by weather (10.9%) (e.g., it was very cold; the weather wasn't great on the most recent trip, but very enjoyable overall; bad weather when I went) and prices (9.1%) (e.g., the prices were through the roof; some food stuff was very expensive over there; some common items were very expensive; the visiting population has really gone down leading to the closure of so many eateries. Food is expensive). Other negative aspects include lack of attractions (8.8%) (e.g., not many things to do; empty, hard to find many things to do; the nightlife wasn't very lively, not much LGBTQ visibility where we were; It was during peak COVID so not many indoor activities), lack of amenities (8.8%) (I appreciated the rural nature of the area, but it was sometimes hard to find quality restaurants. We ate at the camper a lot as a result. Personally, I found the variety of known grocery stores to be lacking; It is kind of rural so there is not a lot to see), and local attitudes (7.4%) (Racism; people don't respect the environment; run into rude residents; local residents can be unfriendly to LGBTQ).

**Table 17. Most negative aspects of visitors' most recent visit to the region. \***

No.	Category	Selected negative comments	Counts**	%
1	Accessibility	Since I live in New York, probably the drive/accessibility by train, bus, etc. It takes a while to get out there and the roads are difficult due to bad lighting conditions in Vermont; long drive; getting there by flight was pretty negative since the flight had been canceled and delayed which caused us to waste a day just getting to NH; Longer drive from NY than other ski resort towns.	35	12.3
2	Crowding	Overcrowding; it was overcrowded; so many tourists; crowded areas.	32	11.2
3	Weather	It was very cold; the weather wasn't great on the most recent trip, but very enjoyable overall; bad weather when I went.	31	10.9
4	Prices	The prices were through the roof; some food stuff was very expensive over there; some common items were very expensive; The visiting population has really gone down leading to the closure of so many eateries. Food is expensive.	26	9.1
5	Lack of attractions	Not many things to do; empty, hard to find many things to do; the nightlife wasn't very lively, not much LGBTQ visibility where we were; It was during peak COVID so not many indoor activities.	25	8.8
6	Lack of amenities	I appreciated the rural nature of the area, but it was sometimes hard to find quality restaurants. We ate at the camper a lot as a result. Personally, I found the variety of	25	8.8

		known grocery stores to be lacking; It is kind of rural so there is not a lot to see.		
7	Local attitudes	Racism; people don't respect the environment; run into rude residents; local residents can be unfriendly to LGBTQ.	21	7.4
8	Traffic	Traffic, hyper-commercialized dining; too busy, feel lost and unsafe at times; lots of traffic.	16	5.6
9	Lack of information	Felt like sometimes you couldn't find anyone who has answers to your questions; signage and maps could've been better; sometimes signage wasn't great or was worn out.	16	5.6
10	Transportation/facilities	Lack of transportation; lack of public or easy-to-access transportation to get around town; SOME OF THE PLACES NEEDED RENOVATION.	15	5.3
11	Poor quality	My most negative aspect was my visit to the hotel as the room beds were not clean; the quality of hotels; the lake's water quality was questionable in areas	14	4.9
12	Business hours	Not many places were open; I went fairly early in the Covid period. While places were open many people were skittish and careful, and some places were closed; we had to check out of our motel at 6 AM.	13	4.6
13	Management	Homeless; unleashed dogs on the hiking trail, most were ok, some were a nuisance; seeing so much build-up of apartment buildings in the Lebanon NH area; too much environmental impact by humans, waste.	10	3.5
14	Other	NOT LONG ENOUGH OF A STAY; I missed the city life; Hartford had a lot of insurance company office buildings.	6	2.1
<b>Total</b>			<b>285</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Some respondents provided more than one negative aspect; \*\*the category “others” includes all responses on a single negative aspect with fewer than 3 counts.

*Most Positive Aspects Affecting Visitors’ Experience*

Table 18 presents a total of 641 positive things that the survey participants experienced during their most recent visit to the area. These responses are outlined into 14 categories. The most positive experience is related to natural beauty/scenery, accounting for 43.7% of all responses (e.g., the most positive aspect is I was able to be in tune with nature and peace; it is a beautiful and fun place; the area was beautiful and a really incredible experience to see; nature; incredible natural beauty, welcoming towns). The second most positive aspect is friendly people (10.1%) (e.g., I loved the cleanliness of the area and the locals were all very friendly and helpful when I had questions; people were welcoming; everyone was nice there and very helpful and my friends were there), which is closely followed by outdoor activities (5.9%) (e.g., getting time hiking; when we went there fishing; the most positive aspect was going snowboarding in the

region). Other positive experiences are associated with rural characteristics (7.2%) (I loved the surrounding areas, the small towns, and the places we visited, overall, it was a very positive family trip; rural quiet peace of the area); tranquility (5.6%) (Quiet and foliage. Restaurants. Peaceful; the way the towns looked compared to my life back at home. Everything was very peaceful, the air smelled fresh and everyone I asked for directions was very nice); good food (4.7%) (I really enjoyed White River Junction and the food/shopping there - much more interesting than I had expected); spending time with friends and family (3.4%) (getting to meet my partner's family; Seeing our friends and having a great time with them in the city doing tons of sightseeing and nightlife activities), and attractions (3.3%) (visiting a sugar shack and the beauty of nature were both welcome and enjoyable; I loved the beauty of Quechee Gorge. I had read about it beforehand and thought I might be disappointed when visiting it, but it was absolutely gorgeous and worth the trip. My family also enjoyed our visit to the King Arthur Flour headquarters and we also enjoyed some of the smaller local shops and restaurants. Overall, a beautiful area and we definitely would like to go back).

**Table 18. Most positive aspects of visitors' most recent visits to the area. \***

No.	Category	Sample positive comments	Counts**	Percent (%)
1	Natural beauty/scenery	The most positive aspect is I was able to be in tune with nature and peace; it is a beautiful and fun place; the area was beautiful and a really incredible experience to see; nature; incredible natural beauty, welcoming towns.	280	43.7
2	Friendly people	I loved the cleanliness of the area and the locals were all very friendly and helpful when I had questions; people were welcoming; everyone was nice there and very helpful and my friends were there.	65	10.1
3	Outdoor activities	Getting time hiking; when we went there fishing; the most positive aspect was going snowboarding in the region.	64	10.0
4	Rural characteristics	Lebanon is an idyllic destination for a vacation and with so many beautiful unexplored and untouched beaches, rich history, a number of museums, natural landscapes, and active nightlife; I loved the	46	7.2



		surrounding areas, the small towns, and the places we visited, overall, it was a very positive family trip; rural quiet peace of the area.		
5	Tranquility	Quiet and foliage. Restaurants. Peaceful; the way the towns looked compared to my life back at home. everything was very peaceful, the air smelled fresh and everyone I asked for directions was very nice.	36	5.6
6	Good food	The food; the restaurants we visited were incredible; I really enjoyed White River Junction and the food/shopping there - much more interesting than I had expected.	30	4.7
7	With friends/family	Family visit; getting to meet my partner's family; Seeing our friends and having a great time with them in the city doing tons of sightseeing and nightlife activities.	22	3.4
8	Attractions	Probably the sights; visiting a sugar shack and the beauty of nature were both welcome and enjoyable; I loved the beauty of Quechee Gorge. I had read about it beforehand and thought I might be disappointed when visiting it, but it was absolutely gorgeous and worth the trip. My family also enjoyed our visit to the King Arthur Flour headquarters and we also enjoyed some of the smaller local shops and restaurants. Overall, a beautiful area and we definitely would like to go back.	21	3.3
9	Clean	It was very clean and safer than I expected; I like the cleanliness and order, the city is well organized and the areas of interest are well maintained; the tap water tasted better than any water I have had, bottled or tap.	21	3.3
10	Fresh air	I love the fresh air and scenery; getting to experience the clean air and fresh resources; beautiful surroundings, warm welcoming people, fresh air.	15	2.3
11	Accessibility	It was easy to get around and find things; it is a beautiful area and is easily accessible from home in northeastern Massachusetts; easy access to trails.	11	1.7
12	Wildlife	Seeing the wildlife; the scenery was stunning. I enjoyed the wildlife and seeing nature untouched; to appreciate a different, local type of wildlife and to be able to enjoy the outdoors.	9	1.4
13	Weather	On my visit I had some temperate weather and beautiful hikes; it was generally peaceful and the weather was nice.	9	1.4
14	Others	everything, as I said... I love Vermont; seeing different cultures of America; it was spacious.	12	1.9
<b>Total</b>			<b>641</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Some respondents provided more than one positive aspect; \*\*the category “others” includes responses on a single positive aspect with fewer than 3 counts.

### *Things to be Done to Increase Destination Competitiveness*

Visitors were further asked to indicate what specifically could this region do to be more competitive as a tourist destination. A summary of their responses is presented in Table 19. Their responses are outlined into 15 categories. Most respondents (29.0%) indicated that more advertising is needed (e.g., Advertising, I had not heard of this place until my parents decided to take us; advertise the ski resort during the winter and the hiking trails for spring till fall; having more ads online and offers; make it more well known perhaps? more promotion of tourism), followed by more attractions (18.1%) (e.g., Possibly more skiing resorts; holiday events, and community events to spread not only in the area but for tourists; more festivals; more attractions; expand the focus and resources on ecotourism). In addition, 25 responses with fewer than three counts for each type of response are grouped as “others”, accounting for 4.8% of total responses.

**Table 19. Responses on what to be Done to Increase Destination Competitiveness. \***

No.	Category	Sample responses	Counts**	Percent (%)
1	Advertise	Advertising, I had not heard of this place until my parents decided to take us; advertise the ski resort during the winter and the hiking trails for spring till fall; Having more ads online and offers; make it more well known perhaps? more promotion of tourism.	150	<b>29.0</b>
2	More attractions	Possibly more skiing resorts; holiday events, and community events to spread not only in the area but for tourists; more festivals; more attractions; expand the focus and resources on ecotourism.	94	<b>18.1</b>
3	Stay authentic	Ensure to retain the rural nature of the Upper Valley towns and doing more conservation work to protect the environment and educate residents and tourists of climate change; I think being able to maintain its current identity and continued effective management of crowds will be very important for the region to be competitive as a tourism destination; learn better ways to incorporate the local places of business. Instead of overpriced souvenir shops.	49	<b>9.5</b>
4	Lower prices	Travel guides are available online, public transport, and affordable lodging. Catering more to people that normally wouldn't be able to afford to visit somewhere so far away; definitely offer cheaper hotels and attractions; become more affordable.	37	<b>7.1</b>
5	More amenities	More beaches; a little more urban would be nice, since it was very quiet; Add more restaurants, urban	36	<b>6.9</b>

		activities, and nightlife; provide more amenities at vantage points.		
6	Improve transportation	Invest in additional affordable transportation options; more ways to commute; better-paved roads.	36	<b>6.9</b>
7	Better accommodations	Improving their safety measures and their hotels/motels; they definitely need to invest more; need better hotel options or some nice bread and breakfasts; they could have cheaper accommodations.	26	<b>5.0</b>
8	Protect environment	To have a sanctuary of wildlife, off limits from tourists, which would only be allowed outside the restricted area, so they could still witness wildlife from a safe distance for both; Focus on green initiatives, parks, etc., promote sustainable tourism, and offer multiple choices of foods; I think continuing to move in the direction with a larger focus on the environment is very positive. Conservation, waste management, ecology, biodiversity are things to focus on.	20	<b>3.9</b>
9	Crowd control	It's hard to say. Sometimes I feel like it's a bit crowded, but I don't know what to do about that; place more emphasis on its unique cultural milieu in addition to its unique environs; nothing, really, except maybe protecting wildlife from tourists a bit more.	11	<b>2.1</b>
10	Hospitality	Friendlier people; be more welcoming, care more about the environment. Care about representing all races, sexual orientations, genders, and cultures; it could be more inviting.	8	<b>1.5</b>
11	Dining options/food	Open more restaurants; more dining options; increase food options.	8	<b>1.5</b>
12	Guides	Tours; have more trail guides; offer more guided tours that lets us explore the region more.	7	<b>1.4</b>
13	More development/infrastructure	A little more urban would be nice, since it was very quiet; Push for better train route development and higher speed trains so in 20 years the infrastructure could be in place for easier access to the NY/NJ/East PA market; If this area had more development, it would be more attractive	6	<b>1.2</b>
14	Signs	Have clear signs for trail entrances along the road; Keep the politics invisible, no Biden signs, no trump signs. Politics hurts tourism; better signage.	5	<b>1.0</b>
15	Others	More street lights, it was a very dark drive for part of the way and it deterred me; good point, technology endeavors; build the area to be bigger & better; customer expectations, tourist satisfaction and value, tourist motivation and motives, destination branding.	25	<b>4.8</b>
<b>Total</b>			<b>518</b>	<b>100.0</b>

### *Perceptions of Competitiveness*

Participants were further asked to indicate how competitive the Upper Valley region is as compared to similar rural area(s) they have visited in the past 4 years or so (2019-present). Most participants regarded the study area as equally competitive compared to similar areas visited

(Table 20). For instance, over 60% rated the area as 'about the same' on resource conservation (60.5%) and security and safety (64.2%). Additionally, 60.9% of participants considered the area to be 'about the same' in terms of overall competitiveness. These are important findings that could be emphasized for marketing UVR. For example, abundant outdoor recreational opportunities and rural tranquility/authenticity are among the strong selling points for the region. On the other hand, the perceived weaknesses of lacking infrastructure, and shopping and entertainment or nightlife could be considered as key development opportunities.

**Table 20. Perceptions of Competitiveness.**

Items	MW (%)	SW (%)	AS (%)	SB (%)	MB (%)	SB + MB	Mean
13. Outdoor recreation opportunities	0.4	6.6	45.7	35.8	11.5	47.3	3.51
3. Rural tranquility and authenticity	1.2	8.6	47.7	33.3	9.1	42.4	3.40
1. Natural Attraction	0.4	9.9	53.1	25.1	11.5	36.6	3.37
4. Hospitality and friendliness of local residents	1.2	8.2	56.4	27.6	6.6	34.2	3.30
9. Resource conservation	0	7.4	60.5	27.2	4.9	32.1	3.3
11. local food/eatery	1.6	16.5	44.9	27.2	9.9	37.1	3.27
18. Overall competitiveness	0.8	7.8	60.9	24.7	5.8	30.5	3.27
7. Security and safety	1.2	7.4	64.2	18.5	8.6	27.1	3.26
17. Lodging	1.2	9.9	58.4	24.3	6.2	30.5	3.24
10. Festivals and events	1.6	15.6	48.6	26.3	7.8	34.1	3.23
6. Accessibility	0.8	13.6	54.7	23.5	7.4	30.9	3.23
15. Level of crowding	2.5	19.8	40.7	28.4	8.6	37.0	3.21
5. Diversity and uniqueness of local products	1.2	16	52.3	22.2	8.2	30.4	3.20
2. Heritage and cultural assets	0.4	14.8	55.6	23	6.2	29.2	3.20
8. Infrastructure	1.6	13.6	54.3	24.7	5.8	30.5	3.19
16. Shopping	2.5	12.3	55.1	24.3	5.8	30.1	3.19
12. Prices	4.5	20.2	39.9	28.8	6.6	35.4	3.13
14. Entertainment and nightlife	2.1	24.3	45.3	22.2	6.2	28.4	3.06

Note, MW = much worse, SW = somewhat worse, AS = about the same, SB = somewhat better, MB = much better

### 3.5. Post-COVID-19 Travel Preferences and Behaviors

Respondents were also asked to indicate how much they disagreed or agreed with 16 statements measuring their perceptions of travel preferences and behaviors post-COVID-19

(Table 21). Most respondents either mildly agreed or strongly agreed that they care more about hygiene and safety in future trips (79.6%). This was followed by their intention to 'give more attention to reviews about the cleanliness of accommodations' (72.9%), 'Search for less crowded places' (71.5%), be 'more cautious about traveling' (67.0%), and 'spend more time searching for information about the destination' (63.2%).

**Table 21. Perceptions of travel preferences and behaviors post COVID-19.**

Items	SD (%)	MD (%)	N (%)	MA (%)	SA (%)	MA+SA (%)	Mean
7. Care more about hygiene and safety in future trips	3.8	4.2	12.4	44.6	35	79.6	4.03
13. Give more attention to the reviews about the accommodation cleanness	3.2	5.3	18.5	43	29.9	72.9	3.91
2. Search for less crowded places	7	9.1	12.4	42.5	29	71.5	3.77
1. More cautious about travelling	8.2	12	12.8	41.1	25.9	67.0	3.65
9. Spend more time searching for information about the destination	4	6.3	26.5	39.2	24	63.2	3.73
8. More interested in nature-based tourism	4.2	8	25.1	37.3	25.3	62.6	3.72
16. Use mobile payment options more	7.2	8.4	22.7	35.8	25.9	61.7	3.65
14. Look for booking a flight ticket with more flexibility	4.2	6.9	29.3	36.6	23	59.6	3.67
10. Travel less compared to the period before the pandemic	8	16	16.8	34.5	24.8	59.3	3.52
4. Travel to places closer to home	7.2	16	20.4	40	16.4	56.4	3.42
5. Prefer to travel with family members or relatives	7.4	9.9	27.2	33.3	22.1	55.4	3.53
3. Prefer rural areas over urban areas	7.2	11.2	26.9	29.9	24.8	54.7	3.54
12. Prefer to travel domestically	6.5	14.1	27.4	31.8	20.2	52	3.45
15. More likely to share travel experience and write reviews on social media platforms	10.9	16.6	31.2	29.3	12	41.3	3.15
6. Prefer to stay in short-term rentals over other lodging types	8.4	18.5	32.6	28.4	12.2	40.6	3.18
11. Prefer to stay at a small hotel rather than a big one	8.8	18.3	35	23.4	14.5	37.9	3.17

SD = Strongly Disagree, MD = Mildly Disagree, N = Neutral, MA = Mildly Agree, SA = Strongly Agree

### 3.6. Perceptions of the Relationship between Humans and the Environment

Table 22 presents visitors' perceptions of the relationship between humans and the environment measured by the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) (Dunlap et al., 2000).

Participants’ responses were most positive for Item 5, 'Humans are severely abusing the environment' (85.2%), Item 9, 'Despite our special abilities, humans are still subject to the laws of nature' (82.7%), and Item 7, 'Plants and animals have as much right as humans to exist' (81.5%). It should be noted that nearly 60% of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed with Item 6, ‘The earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them’ with a mean value of 2.54 out of 5, the lowest among all the 15 items (note: as with other even-numbered items, this item was also reverse re-coded).

**Table 17. Perceptions of the relationship between humans and the environment.**

Items	SD (%)	MD (%)	N (%)	MA (%)	SA (%)	MA+SA(%)	Mean
5. Humans are severely abusing the environment	1.5	3.8	9.5	37	48.2	85.2	4.26
9. Despite our special abilities humans are still subject to the laws of nature	0.8	2.1	14.5	33	49.7	82.7	4.29
7. Plants and animals have as much right as humans to exist	1.3	4.2	13	26.5	55	81.5	4.30
15. If things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe	2.7	5.9	14.3	32.4	44.8	77.2	4.11
3. When humans interfere with nature it often produces disastrous consequences	2.9	5.7	14.7	41.5	35.2	76.7	4.01
10. The so-called “ecological crisis” facing humankind has been greatly exaggerated	5.5	10.3	14.7	24.6	45	69.6	3.93
13. The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset	1.7	9.5	19.8	36.4	32.6	69.0	3.89
11. The earth is like a spaceship with very limited room and resources	7	13.3	17.7	37.3	24.6	61.9	3.59
12. Humans were meant to rule over the rest of nature	6.9	14.3	18.7	24.4	35.8	60.2	3.68
1. We are approaching the limit of the number of people the earth can support	11.6	15.8	14.3	35.4	22.9	58.3	3.42
8. The balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations	7.2	20.8	19.2	28.2	24.6	52.8	3.42
2. Humans have the right to modify the natural environment to suit their needs	6.5	21.5	21.3	32.6	18.1	50.7	3.34
14. Humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it	7.6	19.8	26.3	24.2	22.1	46.3	3.33
4. Human ingenuity will ensure that we do NOT make the earth unlivable	7.8	22.7	31.4	23.2	14.9	38.1	3.15
6. The earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them	19.6	39.6	17.5	13.5	9.7	23.2	2.54

Note: Agreement with the eight odd-numbered items and disagreement with the seven even-numbered items, which were reverse worded, indicate pro-NEP responses. The seven-numbered items were re-coded in the same direction as the eight-numbered items so that higher percentages/means indicate more support for the environment.

## 4. Discussion and Conclusions

While the development of recreational economies in gateway communities near public lands has been a longstanding practice in the US, it is only recently that the possibility has emerged as

a national priority for rural community development. To capitalize on this momentum, rural communities need to work collaboratively in a regional approach to create a shared vision for promoting and developing recreational economies in their destinations. This regional approach to rural development can be better implemented with an understanding of how recreational economies are perceived from the perspective of visitors, particularly those from the major tourism markets of the region.

This study identified 32 sustainability indicators with inputs from the research team and by drawing upon findings from the literature. These 32 indicators were selected to reflect the four dimensions of sustainability - environmental, socio-economic, cultural, and institutional - with eight items for each. A gap analysis between importance and performance for all 32 indicators revealed that performance scores are significantly lower than importance scores, indicating a need and opportunity for improving sustainability indicators for the Upper Valley region. It is worth noting that tourism attributes are often rated high in importance but low in performance in the tourism literature (Deng et al., 2017).

A further Importance-Performance Analysis (IPA) indicates that five environmental indicators (items 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6), four cultural indicators (items 17, 18, 19, and 20), and one institutional indicator (item 31) are located in the 'keep up the good work' quadrant, while two socio-economic indicators (items 11 and 16), one cultural indicator (item 24), and one institutional indicator (item 30) are located in the 'concentrate here' quadrant, implying that higher priorities should be paid to these socio-economic, cultural, and institutional indicators, when developing management plans and strategies.

Findings from the IPA show that visitors cared more about environmental sustainability than the other three sustainability dimensions, particularly socio-economic sustainability. This finding

is consistent with the literature. For example, previous studies also reported that tourists scored significantly higher on environmental attributes than on social and economic attributes (Deng & Bender, 2007; Gezici, 2006). This suggests that visitors were more likely to value what they could experience in a tourist destination (e.g., rural authenticity and natural environment) than what local communities could benefit from tourism development (e.g., economic benefits for gateway communities).

In summary, survey results in this report provide useful information on visitors' profiles, their perceptions of destination competitiveness, and their perceived importance and performance of sustainability indicators. This research-based information is critical for developing sustainable recreational economies in gateway communities surrounding national forests, thus facilitating the linkage between recreation for community wellbeing and forest resource management, a primary goal for the USDA.

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**Appendix A: Survey questionnaire – see next page.**



**January 23, 2023**

**Dear Participant:**

Thank you for assisting us in our research project about visitors' perceptions of rural tourism in the Upper Connecticut River Valley area of central New Hampshire and Vermont, known as Upper Valley. **This survey only targets those who have visited the Upper Valley region at least once in the past 4 years or so (2019-present).** This project is being conducted by Dr. Doug Arbogast, an associate professor with WVU Extension Service and Dr. Jinyang Deng, a professor with WVU Recreation, Parks and Tourism Resources Program. Your participation in this project is greatly appreciated and will take approximately 15 minutes to complete the survey.

The study is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The objectives of the grant are focused on better understanding resiliency of rural destinations and indicators of sustainable tourism related to COVID-19. Sections 3, 4 and 6 in the survey are focused on sustainable tourism indicators and post COVID-19 travel preferences and behaviors. Section 7 will provide the theoretical framework for a doctoral dissertation. The results of this survey will also be used to improve policy makers' understanding of visitors' attitudes and opinions toward tourism in the region and help them determine future tourism development opportunities in order to create more resilient and sustainable destinations. The information obtained from this survey will also provide recreation/tourism leaders the opportunity to learn about and respond to public opinions. Sections 2 and 5 are designed to specifically provide insight to support local decision makers.

Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you can quit at any time. However, you can help us very much by taking a few minutes to respond. You do not have to answer all of the questions, but any information you provide will contribute to the project's success. **All information collected will be kept strictly confidential.** Information you provide is anonymous and only summaries will be reported in which an individual's answers will not be identified.

This survey was reviewed and approved by WVU Institutional Review Board (IRB) and a **WVU IRB acknowledgement is on file.** If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Doug Arbogast by phone (304-293-8686) and/or by email (douglas.arbogast@mail.wvu.edu). Your contribution to this study is greatly appreciated and will be a great benefit to this region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jinyang Deng'.

Dr. Jinyang Deng  
West Virginia University  
Professor  
Recreation, Parks and Tourism Resources

A handwritten signature in brown ink, appearing to read 'Doug W. Arbogast'.

Doug Arbogast  
West Virginia University  
Extension Specialist  
Rural Tourism Development

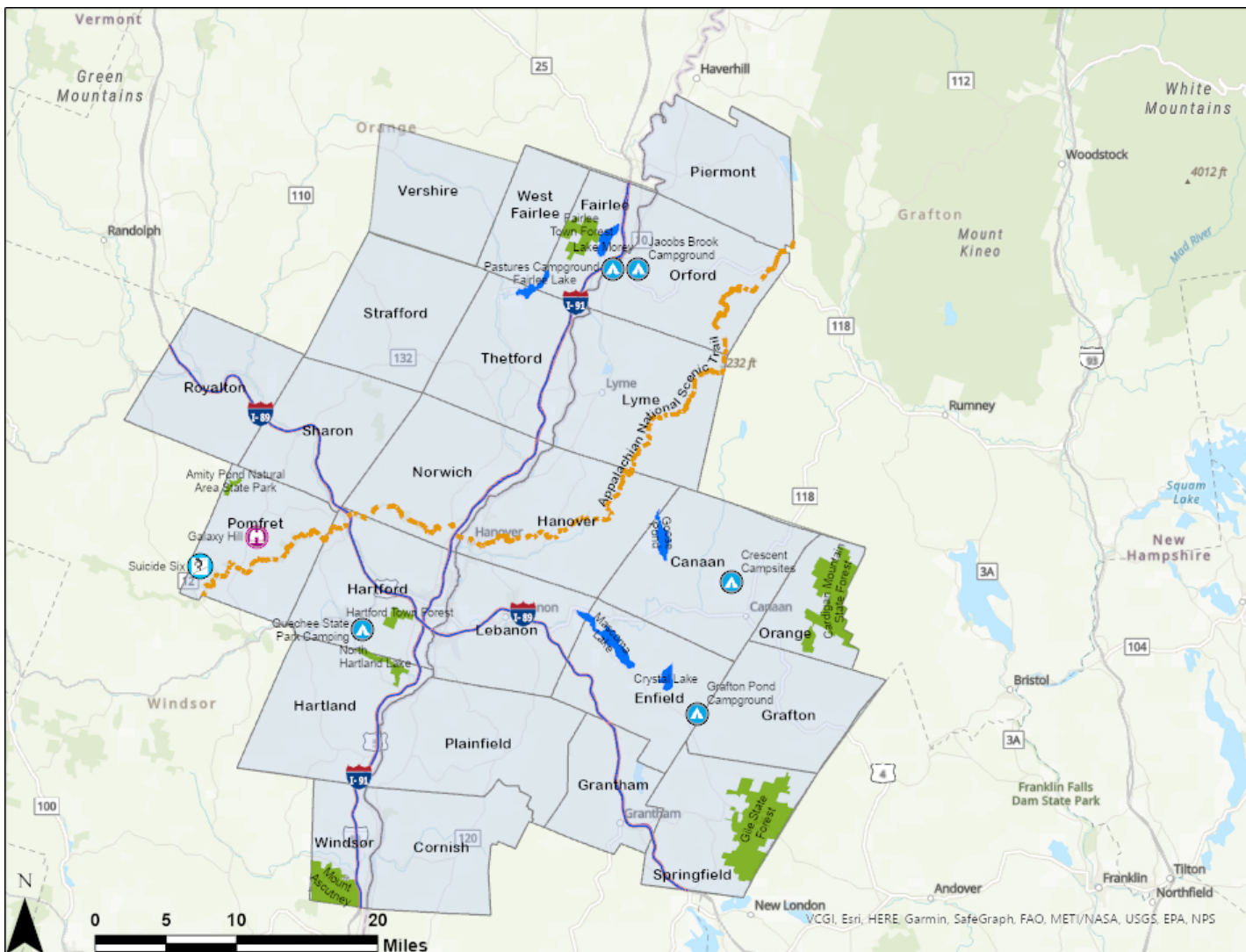
## Section 1: Consent and Eligibility

1. If you qualify for this survey, you will be offered \$5 for completing this survey. If you agree to participate in this survey, please check "Yes" below:

- Yes  
 No

### Block 9

2. Below is a map (which is not interactive) that shows the Upper Connecticut River Valley Area of central New Hampshire and Vermont, known as Upper Valley (shaded region), which includes **25 towns**. This study only targets those who have visited any places in this area in the past **4 years or so (2019-present)**. If you wish to zoom in or out on the map, please [click here](#). **(note, please do not close the google maps window after you viewed the map, to return to the survey, simply click the left arrow on your Browser bar)**. If your answer in the next question is "Yes", you are qualified for this survey. Otherwise, the survey will end.



### Screener Validation

3. Have you visited the Upper Valley area (the area marked in the map) in the **past 4 years or so (2019-present)**?

- Yes
- No

### Screener questions

4. Congratulations! You are qualified for this survey. Please check the year in which you made **for your most recent trip** to the area.

- 2019  
 2020  
 2021  
 2022  
 2023

5. What city do you currently reside in?

- New York, NY  
 Boston, MA  
 Springfield, MA  
 Hartford, CT  
 Montreal, Que.  
 None of Above

6. Please choose from the following list of places you have visited in the area **in the past 12 months** (Click to choose **all** that apply).

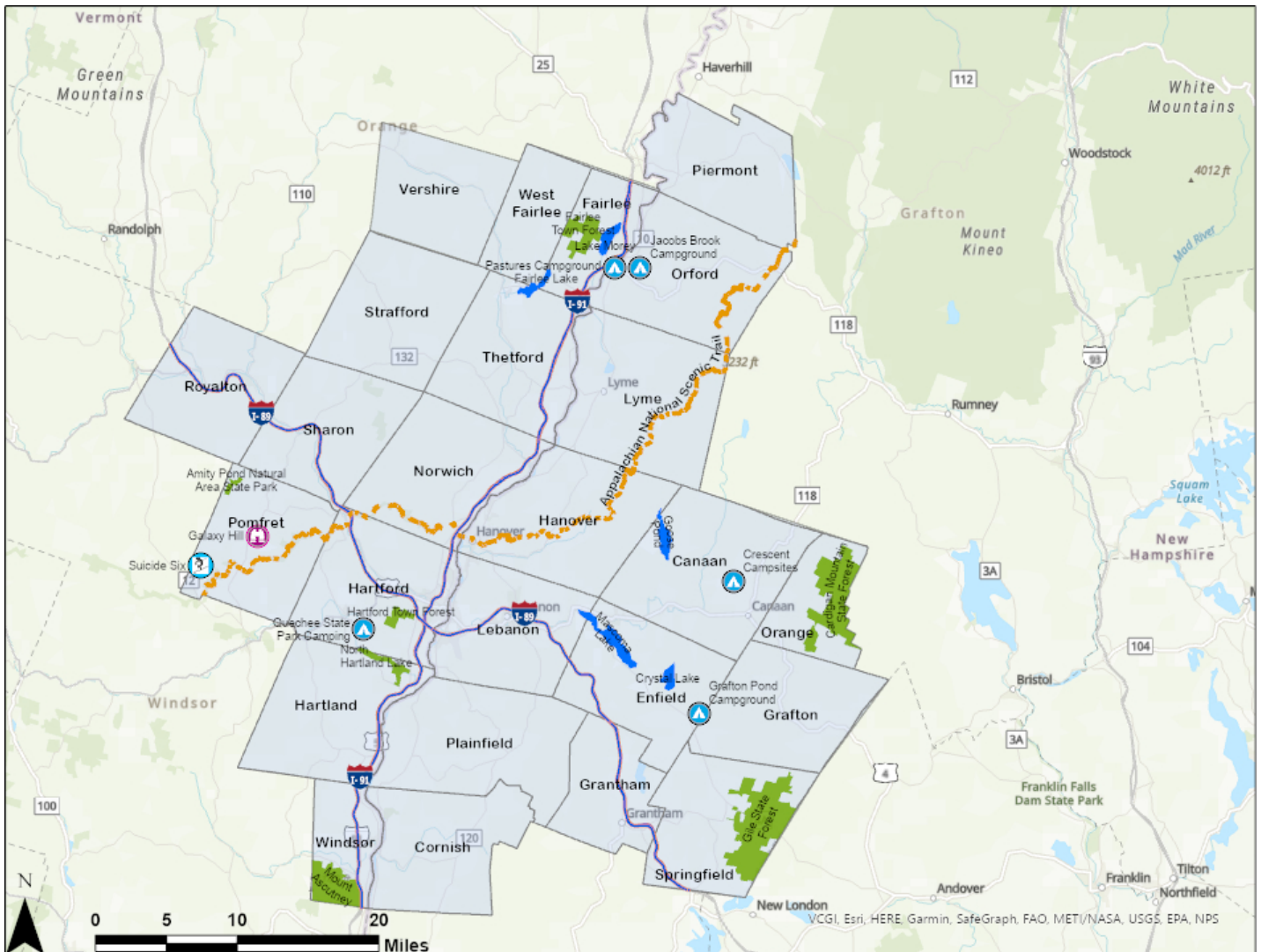
- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Whaleback Mountain Ski Area - Enfield NH   | <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Billings Farm & Museum - Woodstock VT                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. Lebanon Opera House (live shows/performances) - Lebanon NH   | <input type="checkbox"/> 14. Vermont Institute of Natural Science - Quechee VT                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. Opera North at Blow Me Down Farm in Cornish (outdoor venue for Opera North performances under a big top tent) - Cornish NH | <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Northern Stage Theater - White River Junction VT                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. King Arthur Baking Cafe/Store - Norwich V  | <input type="checkbox"/> 16. First Friday in White River Junction - VT                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. The Hopkins Center - theater at Dartmouth College - Hanover NH   | <input type="checkbox"/> 17. Mascoma Lake - boating, swimming - Enfield VT                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. AVA Gallery - art galleries/studios/classes - Lebanon NH   | <input type="checkbox"/> 18. Storr's Pond Recreation Area - hiking, swimming, summer camps - Hanover NH |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Montshire Museum of Science - Norwich VT   | <input type="checkbox"/> 19. Cardigan Mountain - hiking - Orange NH                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Boating on Connecticut River (kayaking/rowing) VT/NH   | <input type="checkbox"/> 20. Grafton Pond - kayaking - Grafton NH                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Hiking - Gile Mountain, trails of Upper Valley Trails Alliance/ Hanover Conservancy lands - VT/NH                          | <input type="checkbox"/> 21. Appalachian Trail - NH/VT  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Boston Lot conservation land - mountain biking trails - Lebanon NH  | <input type="checkbox"/> 22. Storrs Hill Skiway - ski jumping/lessons - Lebanon NH                      |

11. Quechee Balloon Festival - Quechee VT

Others (please specify)

12. Simon Pearce Glassblowing/Store/Restaurant - Quechee VT

7. Following the previous question, please click on the map (**shaded area**) to roughly show places you have visited during your most recent trip to the area (Maximum 10 clicks. To delete a point, put the cursor on the point, then left click. To move the point, put the cursor on the point, left click, hold and drag. if you use a mobile device, simply finger touch the map area, touch again to delete. To move the point, touch, hold and drag).



## Prolific ID

8. What is your Prolific ID?

Please note that this response should auto-fill with the correct ID

## Section 2: Trip Characteristics

### Section 2: Trip Characteristics

1. Please check where appropriate to indicate your reason(s) for visiting the Upper Valley area during your most recent visit.

- Leisure/holiday/vacation
- Visiting friends and/or relatives
- Business
- Others (please specify)

2. Including your most recent visit, how many times have you visited the Upper Valley area **in the past 4 years or so (2019-present)?**

- This is my first time
- 2-5 times
- 6-10 times
- More than 10 times

3. Including your most recent visit, how many times have you visited the Upper Valley area in the previous 12 months? (Numbers only).

4. Including yourself, how many people were traveling with you during your most recent trip to the area?

- I traveled alone
- 2
- 3-5
- 6-10
- More than 10

5. What activities have you participated in during your most recent trip to the Upper Valley area?

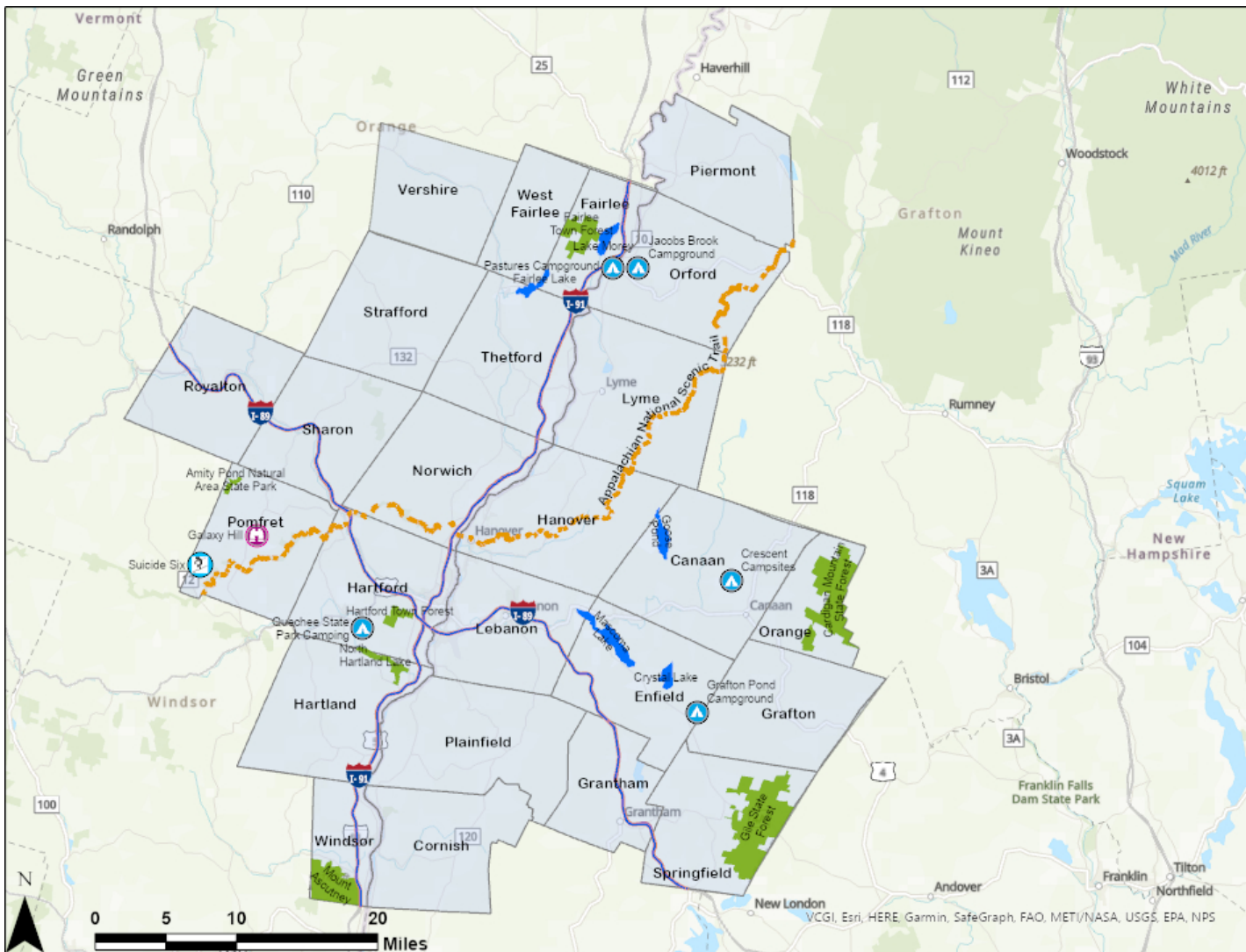
	Select <b>all</b> activities you participated in during your most recent trip to the area	Select the <b>one</b> activity that was the primary activity you participated during your most recent trip to the area.
	Click all that apply	Choose only ONE
Hiking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mountain Biking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rail-trail/Road Biking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fishing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Canoeing/Kayaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whitewater Rafting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Downhill Skiing/Snowboarding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
XC Skiing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rock Climbing/Bouldering	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swimming	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Picnicking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Backpacking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Shopping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	Select <b>all</b> activities you participated in during your most recent trip to the area	Select the <b>one</b> activity that was the primary activity you participated during your most recent trip to the area.
	Click all that apply	Choose only ONE
Farms/farmer's markets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sightseeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Performing arts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairs & events	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Viewing wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Food & drink experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nightlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hunting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Factory tours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Snowmobiling/ATV/UTV riding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leaf peeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Geocaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="text"/>		

6. During your most recent trip to the Upper Valley area, how much have you or your group spent in the area? (If you traveled as a group, enter the estimated spending for the whole group. If you traveled alone, enter the spending for yourself).

- Less than \$100
- \$101 to \$200
- \$201 to \$300
- \$301 to \$400
- \$401 to \$500
- \$501 to \$600
- \$601 to \$700
- \$701 to \$800
- \$801 to \$900
- \$901 to \$1000
- \$1001 to \$2000
- \$2001 to \$3000
- \$3001+



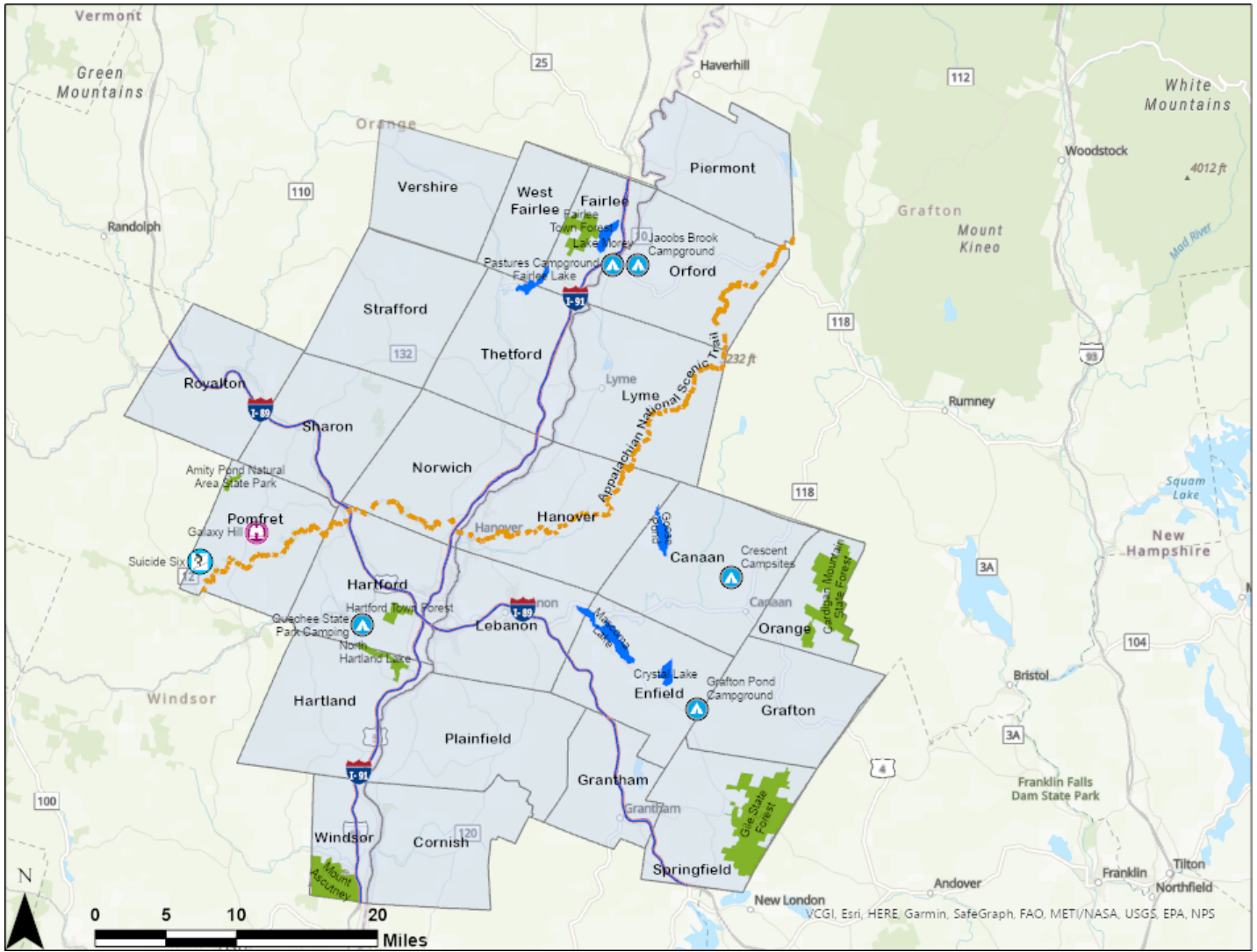
7. Have you stayed overnight in the Upper Valley area (anywhere in the region defined above including the towns in the area) during your most recent trip?

- Yes
- No

8. During your most recent trip to the Upper Valley area, how many nights have you stayed in the area? (number only)

9. Please indicate your main type(s) of accommodation in the Upper Valley area during your most recent trip.

- Friends and/or relatives
- Youth hostel
- RV
- Homestays
- Hotel/motel/inn
- Second home
- Camping/tent
- Timeshare
- Airbnb
- Bed & Breakfast
- Rented house/apartment/VRBO
- Other (please specify)



10. What town/area have you stayed overnight in during your most recent visit to the area? Please check all that apply.

- |                                      |                                   |   |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lebanon     | <input type="checkbox"/> Orford   | <input type="checkbox"/> Thetford               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hanover     | <input type="checkbox"/> Piermont | <input type="checkbox"/> Sharon                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Enfield     | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange   | <input type="checkbox"/> Fairlee                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canaan      | <input type="checkbox"/> Grafton  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pomfret                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grantham    | <input type="checkbox"/> Hartford | <input type="checkbox"/> Vershire               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plainfield  | <input type="checkbox"/> Windsor  | <input type="checkbox"/> West Fairlee           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lyme        | <input type="checkbox"/> Norwich  | <input type="checkbox"/> Stafford               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cornish     | <input type="checkbox"/> Hartland | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/>             | <input type="checkbox"/>          | <input type="checkbox"/>                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Springfield | <input type="checkbox"/> Royalton |   |

### Section 3: Perceptions of Tourism Sustainability Indicators

#### Section 3: Perceptions of Tourism Sustainability Indicators: Importance

1. Listed below are phrases about your perceptions of the aspects of tourism sustainability **in rural destinations as a whole**. Please using the following scale to indicate how important (**1 = least important, 5 = most important**) each indicator is to measure tourism sustainability.

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
1. Protection of the natural environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Rural authenticity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Environmental quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Reduction of energy consumption and improvement of efficiency in its use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Control of negative impacts through long-term planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Management of waste	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
8. Management of overcrowding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Economic opportunities from tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. High-paying jobs from tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Improvement of the well-being of rural communities from tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Marketing and promotion of tourism assets to visitors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. More investment in tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Contribution to community and sustainability initiatives in a responsible manner from enterprises, visitors, and the public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
15. Career opportunities and training in tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. A system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards that addresses the needs of both visitors and residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. A policy and system to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage and cultural landscapes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Celebration and protection of intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, food and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
19. Accurate interpretative material that informs visitors of the significance of the cultural and natural aspects of the sites they visit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Guidelines for visitor behavior at sensitive sites and cultural events being made available to visitors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts in cultural sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
22. Opportunities for visitors to reflect on religious or other spiritual values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Cultural/heritages sites accessible to physically disabled tourists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Safeguarding cultural identify of local community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Evidence of links and engagement with other bodies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Existence of a regional collaboration and marketing organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Local leaders' support for tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Quality of public-private partnership in tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	N/A
29. A risk reduction, crisis management and emergency response plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. A system to monitor and respond to socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and impacts arising from tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Public participation in sustainable destination planning and management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. The destination management strategy/plan clearly visible and available online	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Section 4: Perceptions of Tourism Sustainability Indicators: Performance

1. Listed below are phrases about your perceptions of the aspects of tourism sustainability **specifically related to the Upper Valley area**. Please using the following scale to indicate how satisfied (**1 = very dissatisfied, 5 = very satisfied**) with the performance of each indicator in the area.

	1	2	3	4	5	Unsure
1. Protection of the natural environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Rural authenticity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Environmental quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1	2	3	4	5	Unsure
4. Reduction of energy consumption and improvement of efficiency in its use	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Control of negative impacts through long-term planning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Management of waste	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	Unsure
8. Management of overcrowding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Economic opportunities from tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. High-paying jobs from tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Improvement of the well-being of rural communities from tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Marketing and promotion of tourism assets to visitors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. More investment in tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Contribution to community and sustainability initiatives in a responsible manner from enterprises, visitors, and the public	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	Unsure
15. Career opportunities and training in tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. A system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards that addresses the needs of both visitors and residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. A policy and system to evaluate, rehabilitate, and conserve cultural assets, including built heritage and cultural landscapes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Celebration and protection of intangible cultural heritage, including local traditions, arts, music, language, food and other aspects of local identity and distinctiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. Accurate interpretative material that informs visitors of the significance of the cultural and natural aspects of the sites they visit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Guidelines for visitor behavior at sensitive sites and cultural events being made available to visitors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Optimize visitor flow and minimize adverse impacts in cultural sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	Unsure
22. Opportunities for visitors to reflect on religious or other spiritual values	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Cultural/heritages sites accessible to physically disabled tourists	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Safeguarding cultural identify of local community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Evidence of links and engagement with other bodies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Existence of a regional collaboration and marketing organization	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Local leaders' support for tourism development	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Quality of public-private partnership in tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	1	2	3	4	5	Unsure

	1	2	3	4	5	Unsure
29. A risk reduction, crisis management and emergency response plan	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. A system to monitor and respond to socio-economic, cultural and environmental issues and impacts arising from tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Public participation in sustainable destination planning and management	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. The destination management strategy/plan clearly visible and available online	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Section 5: Perceptions of Relative Competitiveness

### Section 5: Perceptions of Relative Competitiveness for Upper Valley Area

1. Have you visited any other rural destination(s) similar to the Upper Valley Area in the past **4 years or so?** (2019-present)

- Yes
- No

2. Please list up to three rural destinations you are comparing to the Upper Valley area (Text only) (please list the name of the destination and state).

1

2

3



3. Listed below are phrases about your perceptions of how competitive the Upper Valley area is as compared to a similar rural area(s) you have visited in the **past 4 years or so (2019-present)**.

	Much Worse	Somewhat Worse	About the Same	Somewhat Better	Much Better
1. Natural attraction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Heritage and cultural assets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Rural tranquility and authenticity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Hospitability and friendliness of local residents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Diversity and uniqueness of local products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Much Worse	Somewhat Worse	About the Same	Somewhat Better	Much Better
7. Security and safety	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. Infrastructure	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Resource conservation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Festivals and events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. local food/eatery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Prices	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Much Worse	Somewhat Worse	About the Same	Somewhat Better	Much Better
13. Outdoor recreation opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Entertainment and night life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Level of crowding	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Shopping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Lodging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Much Worse	Somewhat Worse	About the Same	Somewhat Better	Much Better
18. Overall competitiveness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. What was the most negative aspect of your most recent visit to this area, if any?

5. What was the most positive aspect of your most recent visit to this area, if any?

6. What specifically could this region do to be more competitive as a tourism destination?

## Section 6: Post COVID-19 Travel Preferences and Behaviors

### Section 6: Post COVID-19 Travel Preferences and Behaviors

1. List below are phrases on your **post**-COVID-19 travel preferences and attitudes *as compared to* **pre**-COVID-19. Please use the

following scale to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each item (**1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree**).

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
1. More cautious about travelling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Search for less crowded places	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. Prefer rural areas over urban areas	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Travel to places closer to home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Prefer to travel with family members or relatives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. Prefer to stay in short-term rentals over other lodging types	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
7. Care more about hygiene and safety in future trips	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. More interested in nature-based tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Spend more time searching for information about the destination	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. Travel less compared to the period before the pandemic	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11. Prefer to stay at a small hotel rather than a big one	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Prefer to travel domestically	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
13. Give more attention to the reviews about the accommodation cleanliness	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Look for booking a flight ticket with more flexibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. More likely to share travel experience and write reviews on social media platforms	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
16. Use mobile payment options more	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Section 7: Perceptions of the Relationship between Humans and the Environment

### Section 7: Perceptions of the Relationship between Humans and the Environment

1. Please rate the extent to which you disagree or agree with each statement below.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
1. We are approaching the limit of the number of people the earth can support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. Humans have the right to modify the natural environment to suit their needs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. When humans interfere with nature it often produces disastrous consequences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. Human ingenuity will ensure that we do NOT make the earth unlivable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. Humans are severely abusing the environment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
6. The earth has plenty of natural resources if we just learn how to develop them	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Plants and animals have as much right as humans to exist	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
8. The balance of nature is strong enough to cope with the impacts of modern industrial nations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. Despite our special abilities humans are still subject to the laws of nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. The so-called "ecological crisis" facing humankind has been greatly exaggerated	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
11. The earth is like a spaceship with very limited room and resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Humans were meant to rule over the rest of nature	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. The balance of nature is very delicate and easily upset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Humans will eventually learn enough about how nature works to be able to control it	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. If things continue on their present course, we will soon experience a major ecological catastrophe	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Section 8: Socio-demographics

### Section 8: Socio-demographics

1. What is your sex?

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

## 2. What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to tell

## 3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Less than high school degree
- High school degree or equivalent
- Some college
- Undergraduate or post-secondary degree
- Graduate school degree

## 4. What was your approximate household income from all sources, before taxes, in **2022**?

- Less than \$20,000
- \$20,001 to \$40,000
- \$40,001 to \$60,000
- \$60,001 to \$80,000
- \$80,001 to \$100,000
- \$100,001 to \$150,000
- \$150,001 to \$200,000
- \$200,001 to \$250,000
- \$250,001 to \$300,000
- \$300,001+

5. What is your zip code?

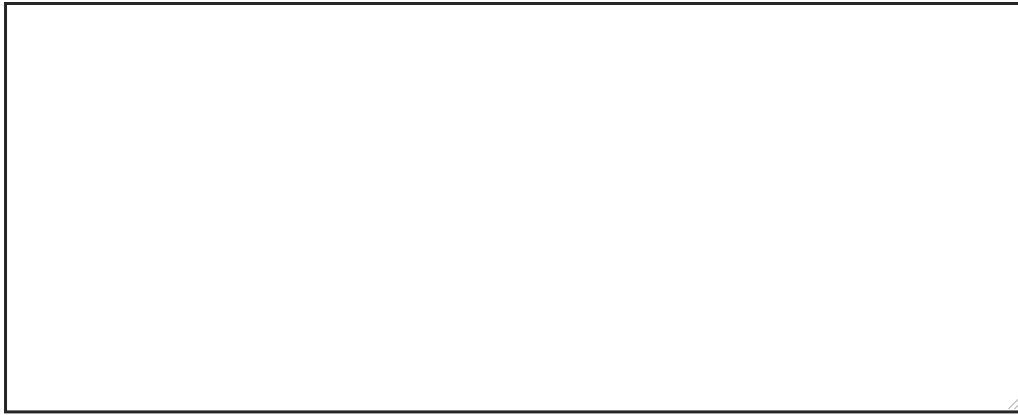
6. Please circle a number in the following scale to indicate the extent to which you are interested in relocating your family or business to the Upper Valley region?

- Not interested at all
- Slightly interested
- Moderately interested
- Very interested
- Extremely interested

7. If you are interested in relocating to the Upper Valley region, what are the reasons

8. What are the barriers to relocating?

9. Do you have any other comments on COVID-19 and tourism in the area?



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