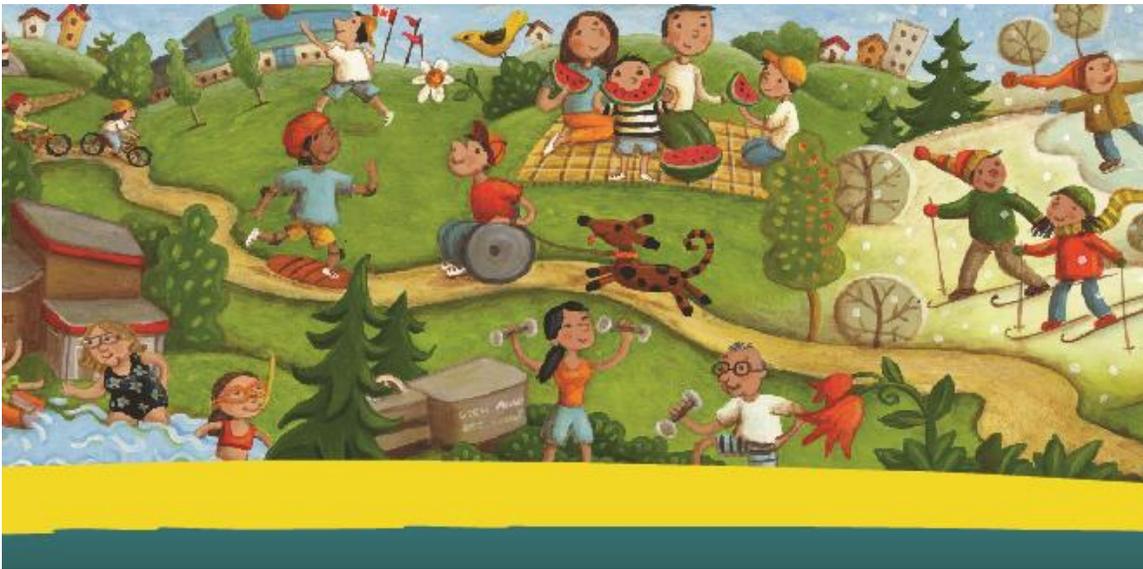




2021 April SCOOP Mixed Topic Survey: Recreation in Strathcona County



Research Results

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Communications

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I. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In April 2021, Strathcona County conducted an online survey as part of its Strathcona County Online Opinion Panel (SCOOP) initiative. This project, entitled *the Mixed Topic Survey*, consisted of different survey areas whereby only a limited number of questions were asked within one or more topic areas and was exclusive to residents who signed up to be part of SCOOP. The April 2021 mixed topic survey consisted of a variety of recreation-related questions about summer recreation events, Pitch-In annual spring cleanup, winter recreation activities and summer activities at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre, all of which are covered in this report.

Obtaining primary data from residents directly will provide Strathcona County departments with information and enable County officials to make decisions that accurately reflect the perspectives and attitudes of residents. This report will provide a comprehensive review of all steps undertaken in the development and implementation of the survey, as well as a detailed summary of the results. The results from this study were prepared by Phil Kreisel, Ph.D. (Communications); SPSS was used for the data analysis.

A review of the methodology associated in the development and implementation of this survey can be found in the next section of this report.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. The Questionnaire

The questions used in this study were new, using questions that were submitted by department representatives from Recreation Parks and Culture. The survey was then created, reviewed and modified where necessary by members of Survey Central for wording, question ordering and general understanding. This included a final check of the content by FOIP¹ prior to the release of the survey to the public.

B. Sampling Design and Data Collection Procedure

The sample frame used in this study consisted of 455 people who did one or more parts of the April 2021 survey. All participants were drawn from people who had previously signed up to be part of SCOOP, Strathcona County's online opinion panel. Overall, 75.4% of the participants lived in the urban area, 22.6% came from rural parts of Strathcona County, and the remaining 2.0% worked in Strathcona County but did not live there.

Although poll-based data is derived from people who decide to participate, were not randomly selected and have access to the online poll, the margin of error for a comparable probability-based random sample of the same size is $\pm 4.6\%$, 19 times out of 20.²

During the fielding of the survey, respondents had the option to skip a section if they felt that the topic had no relevance to them.

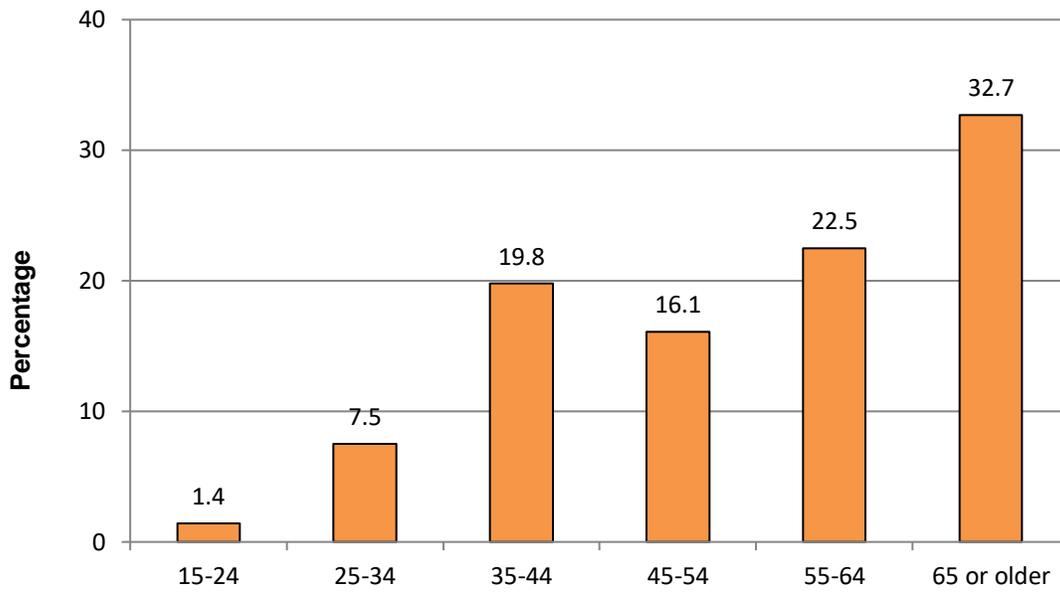
As seen in Figure 1, most of the respondents who participated in the survey are over the age of 44, with 27.3% of the participants between the

¹ FOIP stands for Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy and was reviewed by selected members from Strathcona County's Legislation and Legal Department (LLS).

² The $\pm 4.6\%$ is the *margin of error* associated with this study and refers to the potential percentage spread that exists within answers to questions. This means that an answer could be up to 4.6% higher or lower than what is reported. Please note, however, that the data was gathered through an online survey and no controls were undertaken to make this a random sample.

age of 25 and 44. Only a very small percentage of participants were under 25. Overall, 60.3% of participants were female while 39.7% were male.

FIGURE 1
Age of Respondents



III. SURVEY RESULTS

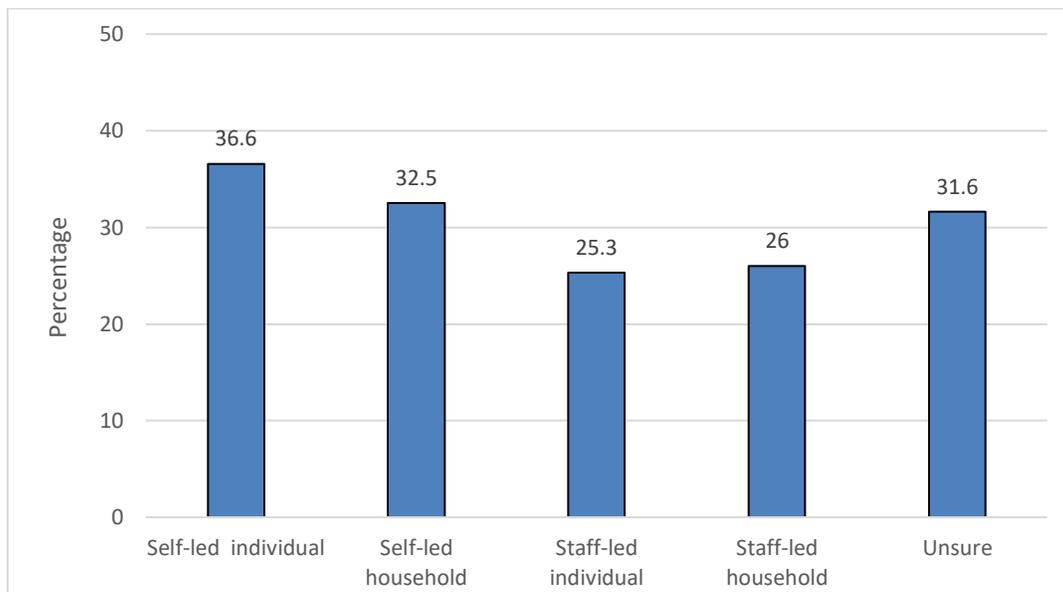
A. Summer Recreation Events

Respondents were asked if they would like to answer a series of questions about summer recreation events in Strathcona County. Overall, 96.5% of the participants opted to answer questions from this topic.

Initially, respondents were asked if they were interested in participating in virtual activities such as arts, crafts, games and nature activities. Overall, 18.9% said they would, 55.2% said no, while the remaining 25.9% were unsure.

All respondents were then asked about the interest with either self-led³ or staff-led⁴ in-person activities. A summary of these options is presented in Figure 2 below.

FIGURE 2
Interest in self-led or staff-led in-person activities

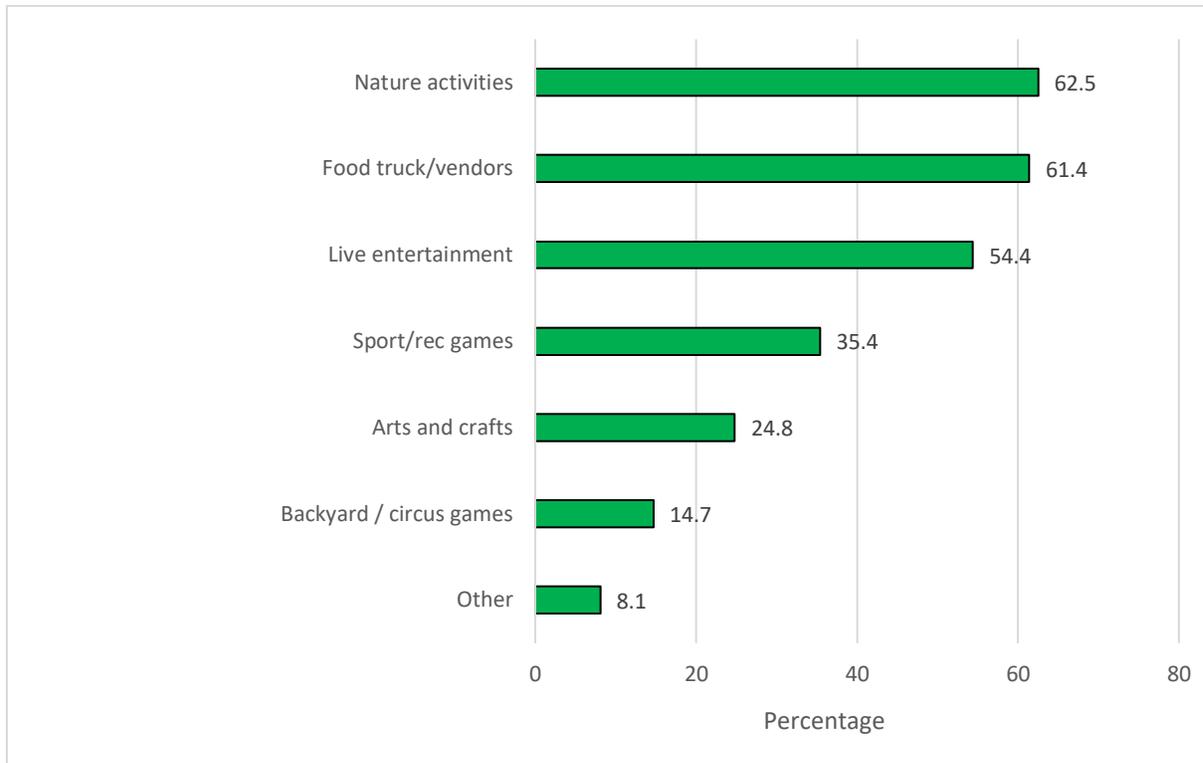


³ **Self-led** means participating in an activity when it fits your schedule, at your own pace, and without live staff guidance. A set of instructions or pre-recorded video would be provided for you to follow.

⁴ **Staff-led** means Strathcona County will have staff available to provide direction. This could be at an activity station, event, or online and able to answer questions or provide direction in real time.

These people were then asked to indicate the activities they would be interested in participating during an in-person event this year. The overall results are shown in Figure 3. Many of the top activities are focused on options that were not readily available from one's home.

FIGURE 3
Activities that were of interest to people at an in-person event



The other reasons option gave respondents an outlet to elaborate on other in-person activities that they might be interested in pursuing within a structured setting. A variety of activities were suggested, including cycling tours, escape rooms, treasure/scavenger hunts, canoeing and beer/wine tasting events.

B. Pitch-In Campaign

Overall, 91.2% of respondents were asked to indicate how safe they felt in participating in the annual community clean-up event. It can be seen in Figure 4 that close to three quarters of respondents either felt safe or very safe in participating in the 2021 pitch-in campaign. No differences were found with gender, but it can be seen in Figure 5 that younger people felt

safer participating in the campaign compared to older people, though the differences were not substantial.

FIGURE 4
Perceptions of safety in participating in the 2021 Pitch-In event

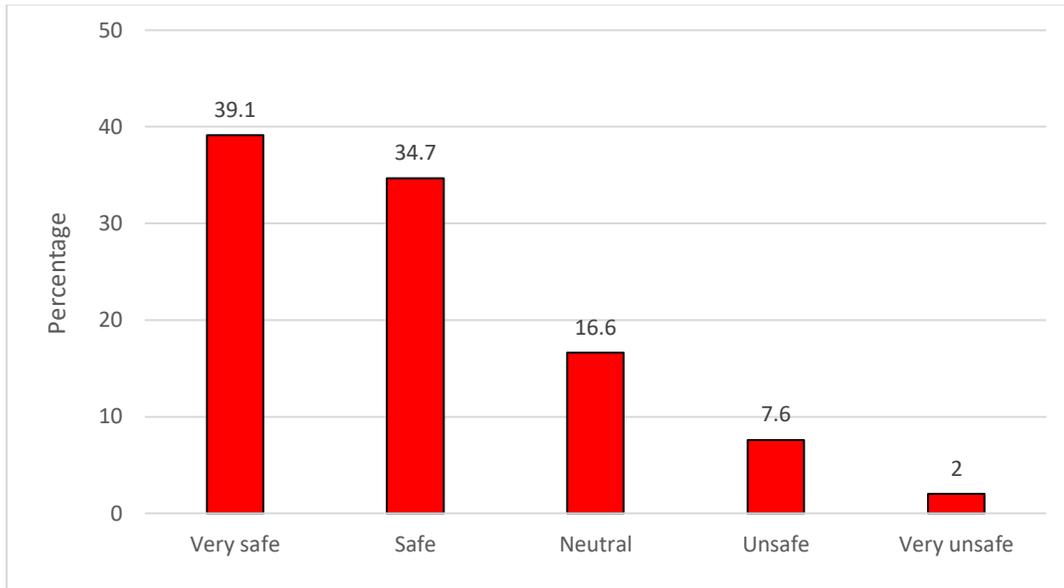
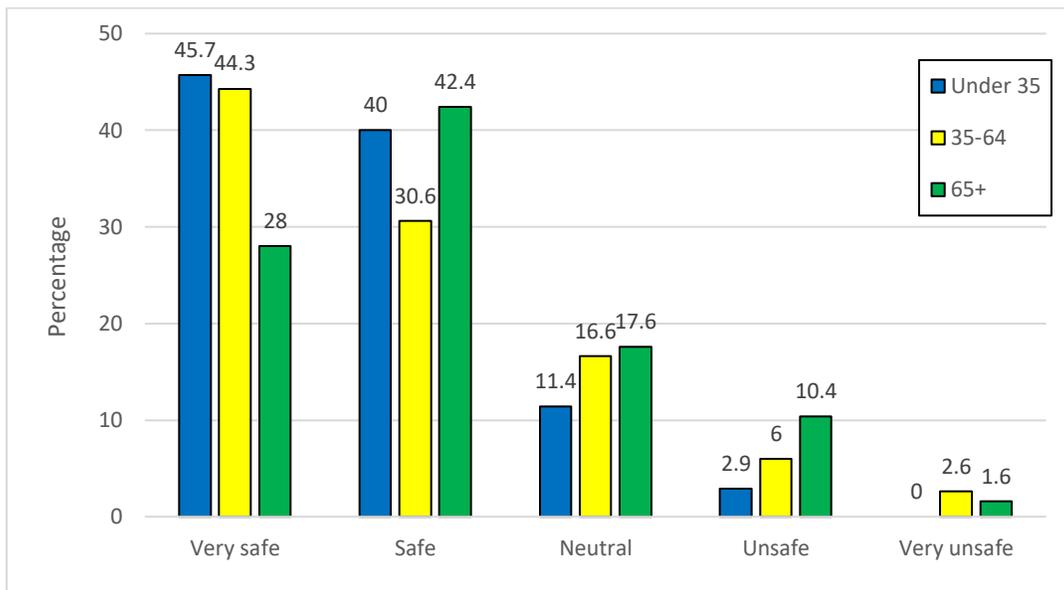


FIGURE 5
Perceptions of safety in participating in the 2021 Pitch-In event (Age Group Comparisons)



C. Winter Recreation Activities

Overall, 92.5% of respondents agreed to answer questions about winter recreation activities. Initially, people were asked to rank their favorite winter recreation activities. It can be seen in Table 1 that the top three winter activities were walking, skating and looking at/creating outdoor light displays. Being at an outdoor fire pit or outdoor patio, as well as cross-country skiing, tobogganing and snow-shoeing were secondary activities. Please note that many items in the “other” category were “blank, don’t know or not applicable” as people had to put in something to advance to the next question.

TABLE 1
Ranking winter outdoor activities

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
Walking	45.8%	17.6%	11.6%	12.1%	6.8%	3.5%	2.0%	0.5%	---
Skating	16.6%	14.9%	12.2%	10.8%	13.0%	11.9%	7.5%	11.6%	1.7%
Light displays	14.2%	20.2%	16.8%	19.2%	9.7%	5.8%	4.5%	8.1%	1.6%
X-country skiing	7.9%	6.2%	7.3%	4.8%	10.5%	15.3%	22.9%	21.8%	3.4%
Tobogganing	7.1%	10.8%	10.5%	11.1%	15.1%	16.5%	14.5%	13.4%	1.1%
Fire Pits	6.7%	15.4%	17.5%	19.7%	14.3%	12.1%	9.2%	4.6%	0.5%
Outdoor Patio	3.0%	9.5%	19.6%	12.3%	15.3%	14.4%	11.2%	13.4%	1.4%
Snow-shoeing	2.6%	10.0%	7.4%	9.4%	12.0%	15.1%	22.3%	18.9%	2.3%
Other*	4.4%	3.6%	2.9%	1.8%	2.5%	2.5%	1.5%	2.9%	77.8%

Respondents were also asked to indicate which outdoor amenities were most important to them during the winter months.

- 50.6% - Washroom access
- 42.2% - Ample parking
- 41.6% - Proximity from your house
- 37.2% - A place to warm up
- 34.0% - Something to engage with (such as the light display at Broadmoor Lake Park, Christmas tree in front of Festival Place, interactive public art, etc.)
- 23.8% - Evening access (including lighting)

- 18.4% - Sheltered structures (such as heated skate shacks in winter or covered roof)
- 15.6% - Sufficient seating/rest spots
- 13.2% - Enough garbage cans and recycling depots
- 11.7% - Accessibility (e.g. wheelchair ramps, cleared trails, etc.)
- 6.7% - Gathering places for groups (post-COVID)
- 2.7% - Other

Washroom access was the most important consideration, followed by *ample parking* (to where they were going), the *proximity of the activity relative to their home* and having access to a *place to warm up*.

The *other* category included having places to skate and having winter activity areas (such as trails) that were well maintained and reliable.

Respondents were then asked two questions specific to skating. Of those who skated,⁵ 61.4% preferred a skating pathway, while the remainder were equally split between a snowbank rink or an outdoor boarded rink (19.3% each option). The skating activity that was preferred was casual skating (78.8%), while the others preferred playing hockey (12.8%) or working on hockey skills, such as passing or shooting (8.4%).

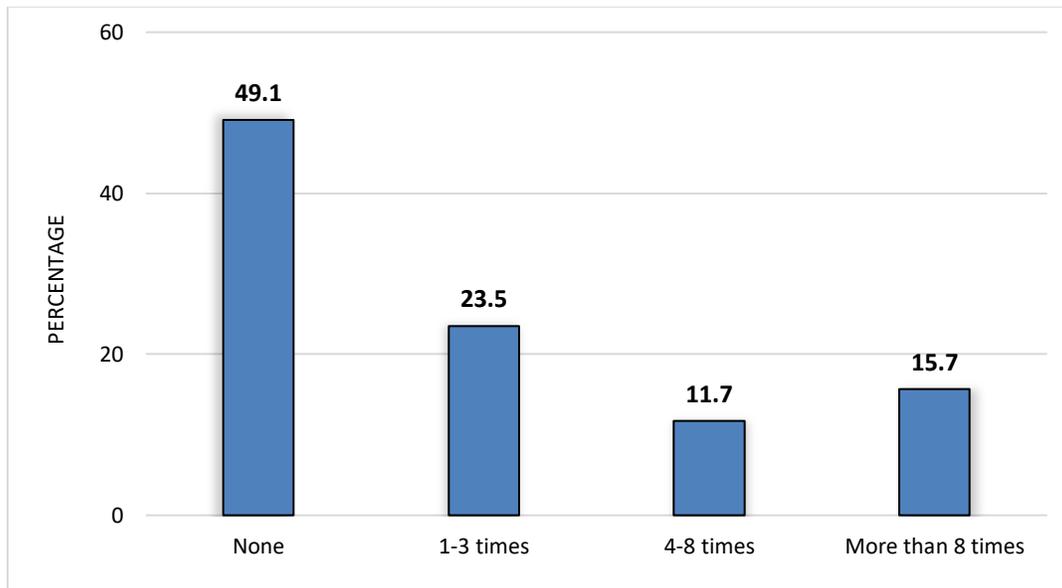
Several questions were then asked about groomed trails. Overall, 57.4% were aware that groomed trails were added to the Broadmoor Public Golf Course this past winter for the community to enjoy cross-country skiing, skate-skiing, snowshoeing and walking. These people were then asked how often they made use of Broadmoor this past winter to enjoy either cross-country skiing, skate skiing, snowshoeing or walking. The results, shown in Figure 6, indicate that just over half of those who were aware of these groomed trails made use of them to some extent last winter.

When asked to state in their own words how the groomed trails were, there were a few who thought that the County should groom all 18 holes, and there were some people who thought there should be lights for evening

⁵ It was found that 32.5% of respondents did not skate.

use. However, most of the comments were the results were overwhelmingly positive.

FIGURE 6
Use of Broadmoor groomed trails



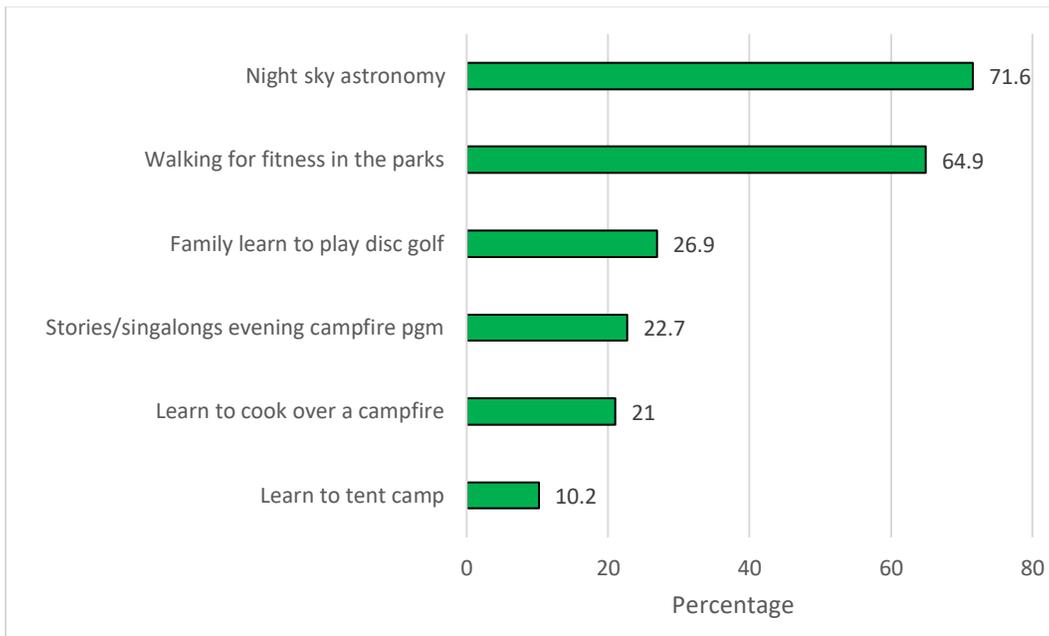
People were also asked to indicate their awareness of other outdoor recreation opportunities. It can be seen that a strong majority were aware of Broadmoor Lake's holiday light display, but only small percentages were aware of the other initiatives.

- 67.7% - Broadmoor Lake Park's holiday light display
- 16.3% - New skating pathway at Ardrossan Athletic Park Track near Ardrossan Junior/Senior High School
- 15.4% - Crokicurl at Emerald Hills
- 14.8% - Pre-registered guided interpretive snowshoeing sessions including snowshoe rentals
- 9.3% - New skating pathways at Josephburg (Moyer Recreation Centre)
- 28.1% - were not aware of any of these recreation opportunities

D. Summer activities at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre

Overall, 81.7% of respondents agreed to answer questions about summer activities at the Strathcona Wilderness Centre. These people were initially asked to indicate the activities they might be interested in participating either this spring or summer in-person this year. The overall results are shown in Figure 7. Night sky astronomy and walking for fitness in the parks were the most popular options. It should also be noted that a small percentage (7.6%) were not interested in any of these.

FIGURE 7
Summer activities that were of interest to people at the Wilderness Centre



Respondents were also asked to indicate the preferred time that they would like to send their children for organized classes. Overall:

- 6.9% favored morning classes (10 am- Noon)
- 10.3% favored afternoon classes (1 – 3 pm)
- 22.1% were good with either time
- 60.7% did not like either option