

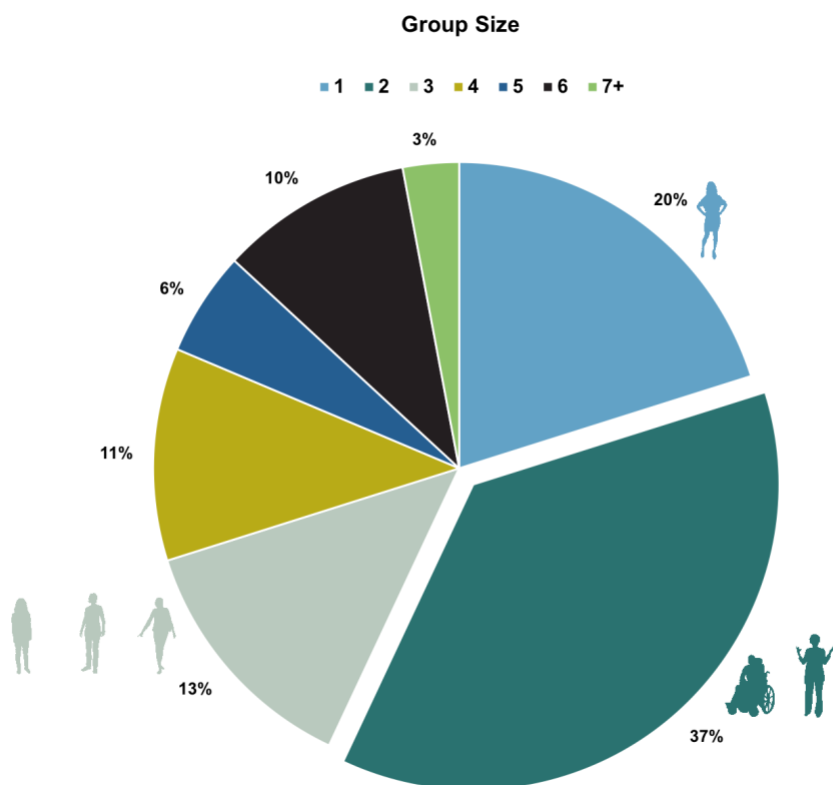
## Mount Agamenticus Visitor Use Survey Results 2019

The Mount Agamenticus Visitor Use Survey is a tool that allows us to collect and analyze data on who is visiting Mount A, the popular activities on the mountain, and offers us a chance to receive direct visitor feedback. This data is gathered annually to allow for the analysis of changing trends. This year we continued to track where our visitors are from, how they heard about us, how often they visit, what activities they do on the mountain, how they feel about trail condition, and if they feel there is adequate signage out on the trails. We also asked visitors what their main draw to the region was, and whether or not they also visited any other local area businesses or landmarks. Information from surveys is kept anonymous, and all survey questions are optional.

### Number of People in Each Group

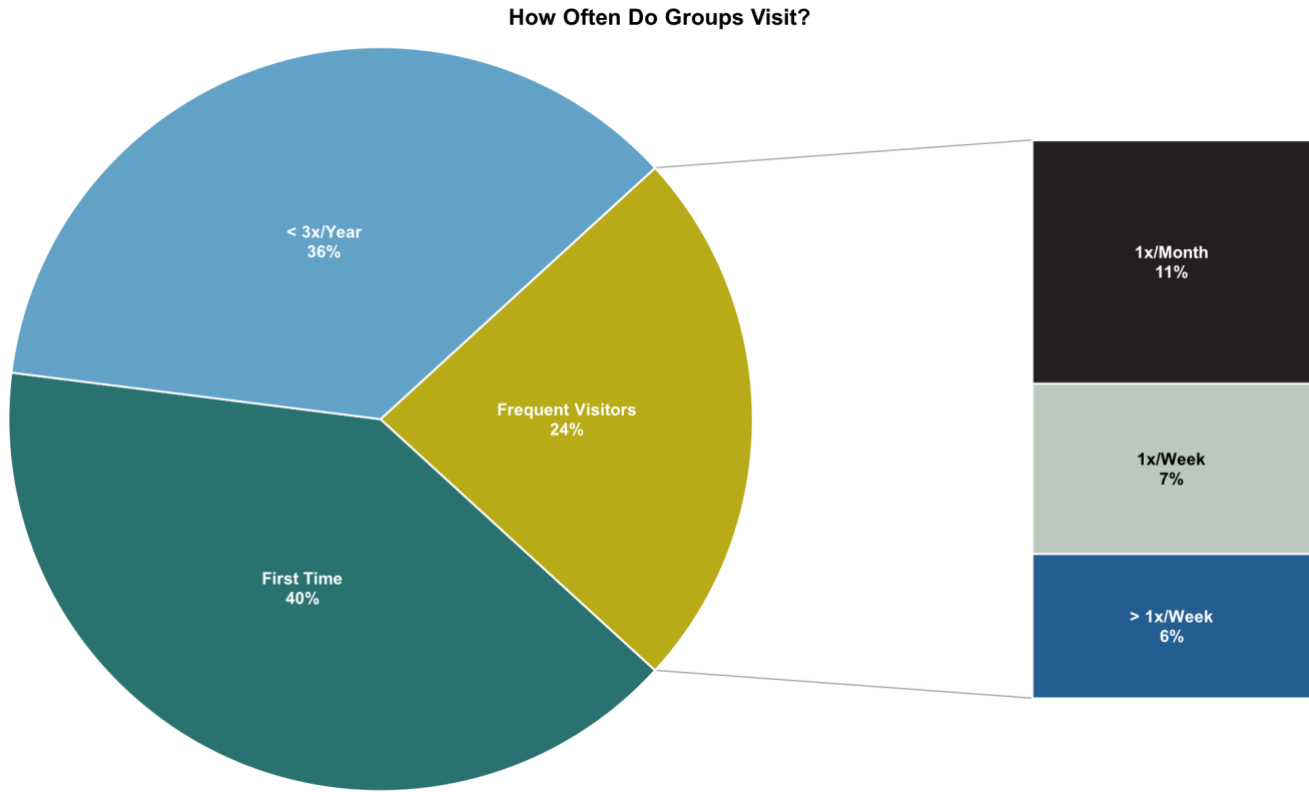
Surveys took place in mid-July through the end of August. From three surveys per day for seven days at two locations (Base and Summit), we spoke with 1,432 visitors in 472 total surveys! We found that the results were mostly consistent with what we've found in the past, though we did conduct fewer total surveys than in previous years. This year, we had fewer staff members conducting surveys at the summit, and we also did not survey visitors at Cedar trail. These changes could account for lower total numbers. In 2018, we conducted 546 total surveys with 1,447 visitors and in 2017 we conducted 646 surveys speaking to 1,679 visitors.

Approximately 37% of groups surveyed were visiting in pairs. Single visitors made up 20% of those surveyed, and groups of three made up around 13%. Eleven percent of visitors surveyed were in groups of four; 10% in groups of six; and 6% in groups of five people. Of the 14 groups that were larger than 7, three of those surveyed included more than 11 people.



## Visit Frequency

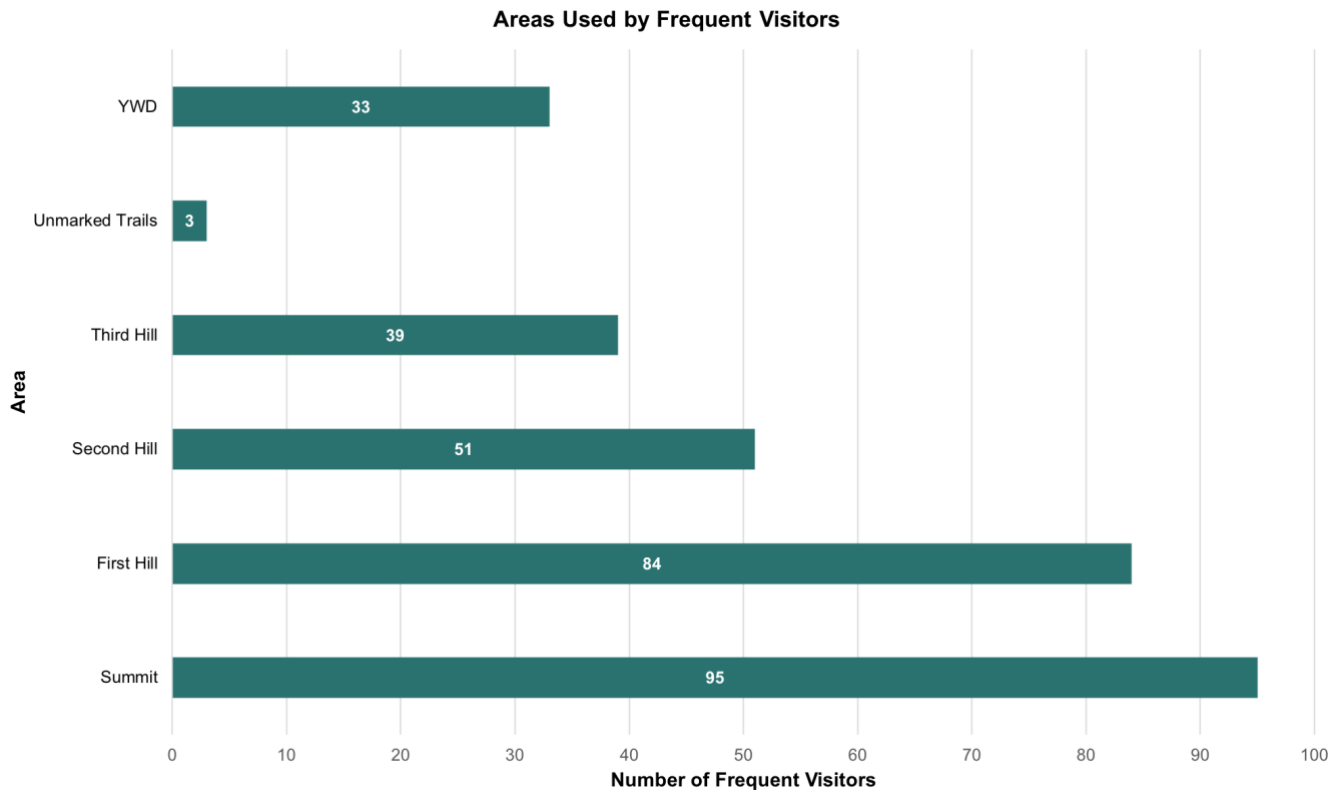
As in previous years, the majority of visitors surveyed (40.2%) were visiting Mount A for the first time, though almost as many were infrequent visitors (36.2%), coming less than three times a year. This number is up only slightly from last year (35.6%) *Frequent visitors*, those coming at least once per month, made up nearly 24% (23.6% exactly) of visitors surveyed, which is about the same as last year (23.9%).



## About Our Frequent Visitors

**Seasons** Of the 101 total frequent visitors to Mount A, 83.3% also visit in the fall; 44.1% in the winter, and 76.5% in the spring. Spring and fall visitation are up from last year (from 68.4% spring and 73.5% fall), but down slightly for winter (from 45.6%).

**Areas** Frequent visitors were asked which areas of the Mount Agamenticus region they typically use. Of the 99 people that answered this question, 95 people (96%) utilize the summit park, 84 people (84.8%) hike First Hill trails, 51 (51.5%) go to Second Hill, and 39 (39.4%) of these visitors venture out to Third hill. Three percent of this year's frequent visitors surveyed use unmarked trails in the area, and 33.3% access neighboring York Water District Trails. There is a decrease in use of Second and Third Hill trails amount frequent visitors compared to last year (from 62.1% and 40.9% respectively). Unmarked trail use is also down from last year by 3.8% and use of York Water District trails has increased by 12.1%.

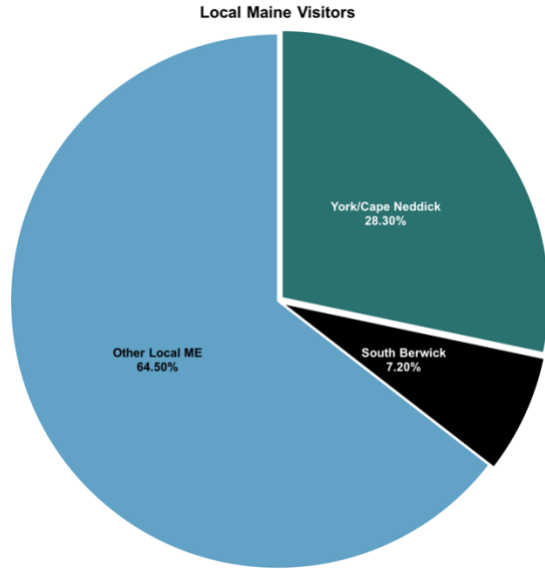
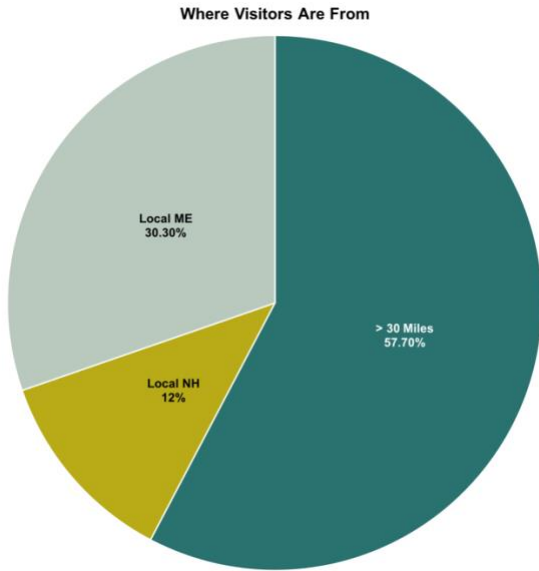


***Favorite Trails*** Only 69 of our frequent visitors told us their favorite trails, this year, but of those visitors, 34.8% (24 people) named **Ring Trail**. Blueberry Bluff and the Big A Trail were tied at 17.4% (12 people), followed by Vulture’s View at 13%, then Porcupine at 8.7% and Goosefoot at 7.2%

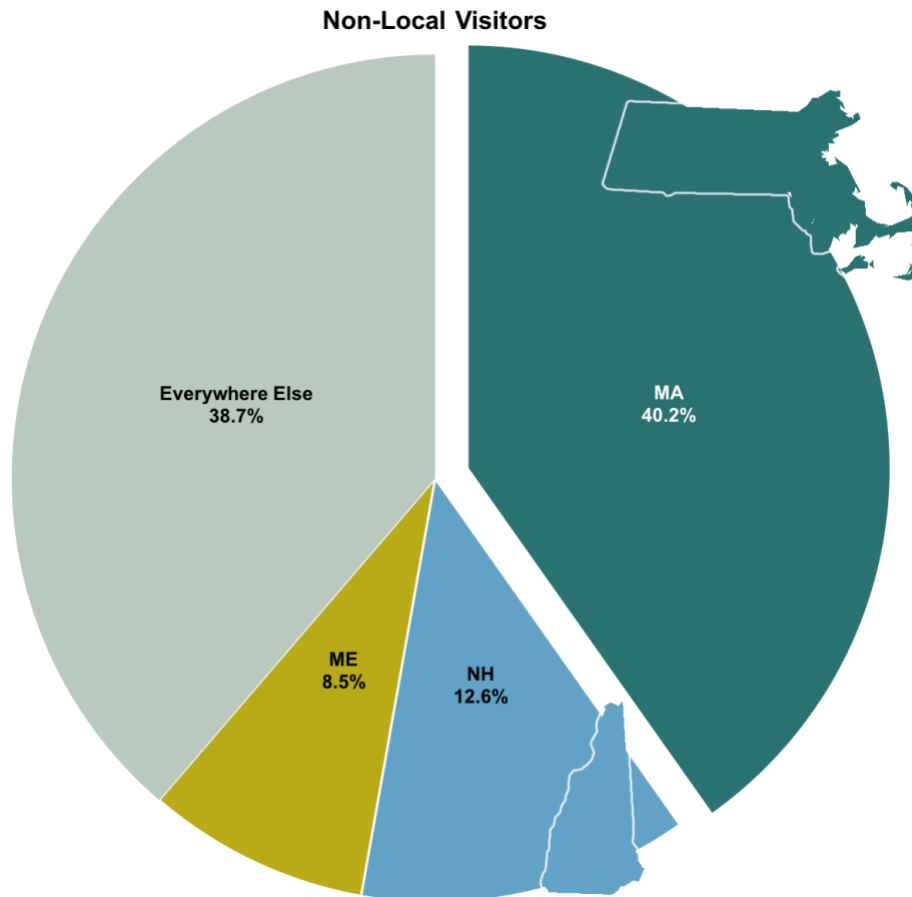
### **Where Visitors are From**

This year, as in previous years, the majority of our visitors have come from out of town (57.7%, an increase of 2.4% over last year). There is also still a significantly higher percentage of local visitors who live in Maine (30.3%) than local New Hampshire visitors (12%). Of 472 total surveys, 180 visitors said they lived locally. Local visitors are considered those who live within 30 miles of Mount A.

The majority of local New Hampshire visitors continue to come from Portsmouth (10.6%, up from last year’s 8.9%) and Dover (6.7%, down from 7.2% last year and in 2017). As for local Maine visitors, a great majority come from York or Cape Neddick (28.3%, up from last year’s 24.7%). South Berwick residents make up 7.2% (down by about 3% from last year), Wells 7.2% (up from 6.4%), and Kennebunk and Kennebunkport make up 6.7% of local Maine visitors.

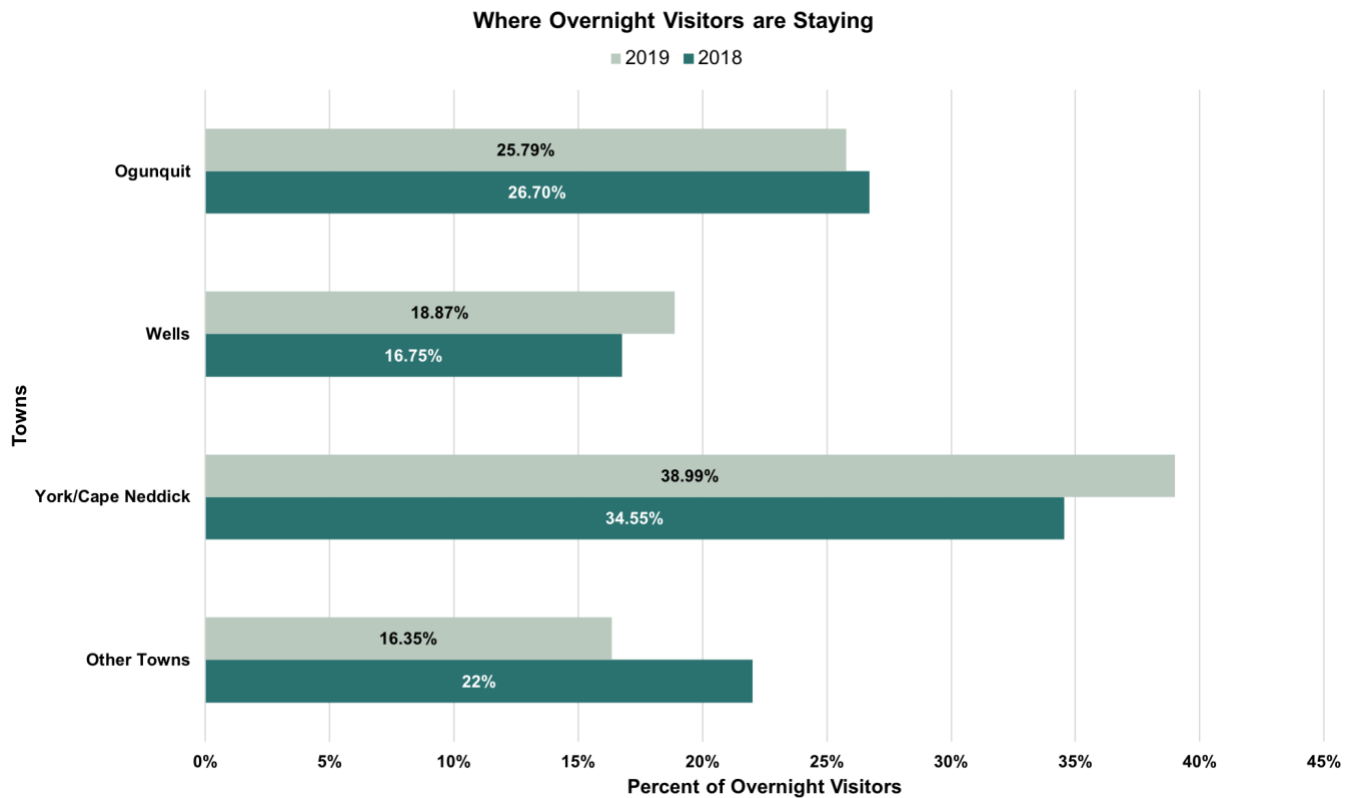


Finally, of the 246 out-of-town visitors (those coming from more than 30 miles away), the majority are still from Massachusetts (40.2%, up from last year's 36.8%). New Hampshire has the second highest at 16.2% (down by 3.6% from last year). Another 8.5% of our visitors are from in-state, but more than thirty miles away. International visitors, including those from Canada, made up 4.9% of our visitors, this year.



## Day Trips and Overnight Visitors

We asked visitors if they were visiting for a day or if they were here overnight or on an extended stay. Of the 425 groups who answered this question, 58% were visiting just for the day and 42% stayed overnight. There was a 3.6% increase of overnight visitors from last year. Those visitors here for more than a day were also asked what town they were staying in. Of the 159 groups who answered, the majority of visitors (over 83%) were staying in York or Cape Neddick (62 people, 38.99%), Ogunquit (41 people, 25.79%), or Wells (30 people, 18.87%). Compared to last year, there was an increase in the percentage of overnight visitors staying in both York/Cape Neddick and Wells.

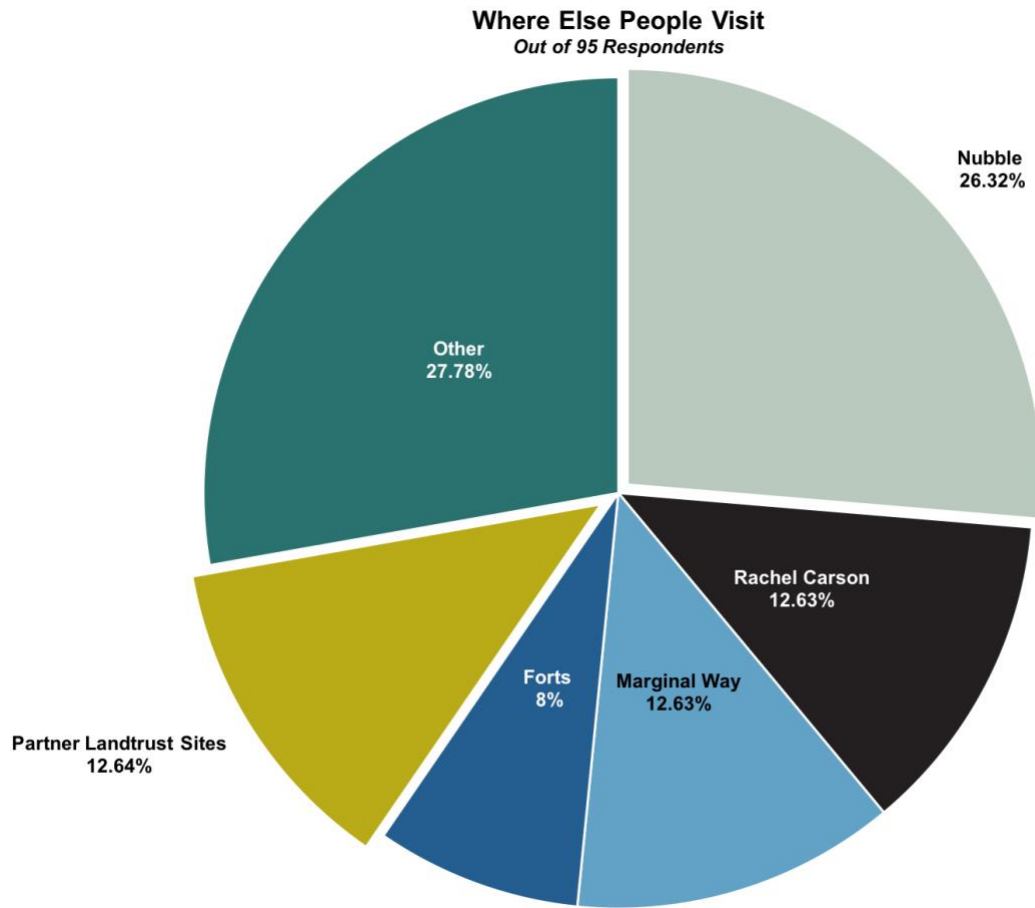


## Where Else People are Visiting

This was our second year asking all visitors, both day-trippers and those staying overnight, what other kinds of places they were visiting while in the area. Of the 333 groups that answered, the majority (69.4%) were also visiting beaches, 59.5% were visiting local area dining establishments, and around 38% of visitors were shopping. Approximately 28% of visitors were going to other landmarks (close to last year's 29.5%), and about 25% were visiting other hiking trails (an increase from last year's 23.2%).

Ninety-five groups provided specifics when answering this question. Of those answers, the most popular places were Nubble Lighthouse (26.32%, an increase of last year's 21.84%), Rachel Carson (12.63%) and the Marginal Way in Ogunquit (also 12.63%, a decrease of 5.76%

from last year). Eight percent of those who answered visited nearby forts (including Foster and McClary) and just over twelve percent of visitors hiked Great Works Regional Land Trust (including Orris Falls and Bauneg Beg) and York Land Trust (including Highland Farms Preserve and Hilton-Winn Preserve) sites. Other answers ran the gamut from mentions of certain cities like Freeport and Portland as well as local area eateries like Flo’s Hotdogs in York and Congdon’s Donuts in Wells. Other nearby places of repeat interest included the Center for Wildlife, Vaughn Woods, and the Ogunquit Playhouse.



### Main Draw to the Area

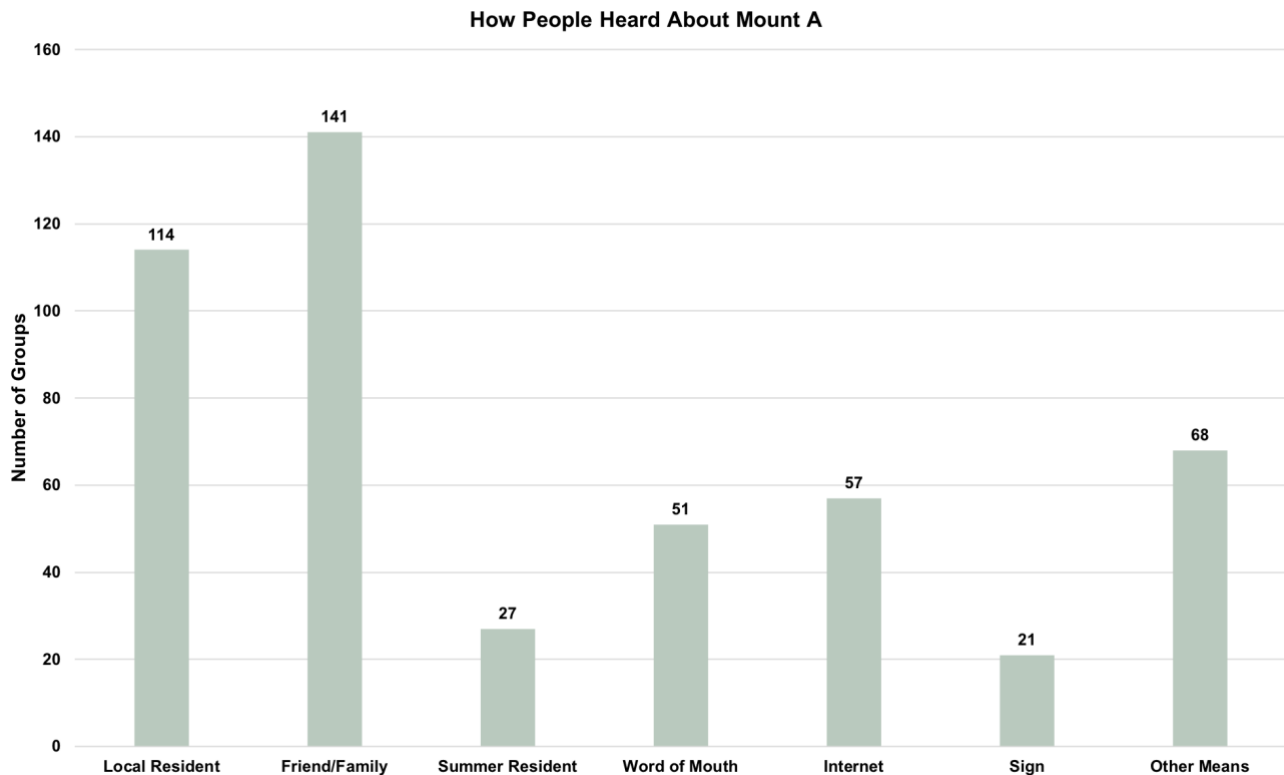
When asked what their main draw to the area was, 213 groups (about 53%) out of the 398 that answered said Mount A. Out of those groups, 175 were day-trippers and of those, 127 were also local residents, coming from less than 30 miles away. Of those visitors, 26.7% were from York or Cape Neddick, with the next largest group coming from Portsmouth, NH making up 12.5% of local day-trippers who said that Mount A was their main draw to the area.

Around 22% of visitors said that their main draw to the area was the beach, the ocean, or the coastline, and 10.8% of visitors said that their main draw was vacation, or they consider themselves summer residents. Another 13.82% of visitors were in the area with or visiting family

or friends. About 5% of our visitors were in the area because of nostalgia or tradition; they have always vacationed here, or they grew up here and enjoy coming back in the summer.

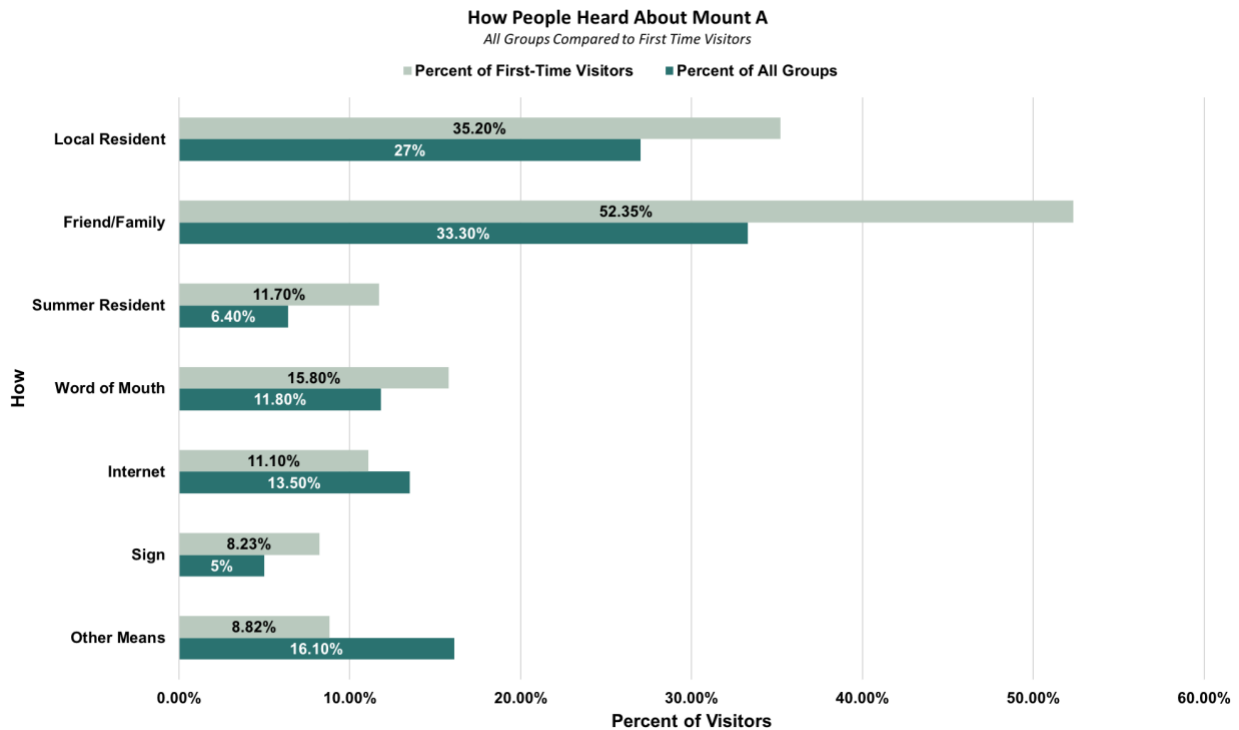
### How People Hear About Mount A

The majority of visitors (33.3% from 424 total answers) heard about Mount A from a friend or family member; 26.9% (up from 22.8% last year) either heard about Mount A from a local resident or are local residents themselves. Many of those who answered had been local residents at one time or have been coming to the area for years. Summer residents make up another 6.4%. Twelve percent of our visitors heard about Mount A through word of mouth, and 13.4% of visitors heard about us through the Internet. Eighteen out of 57 of these visitors utilized Google, and a handful of visitors (fewer than ten) told us they made use of apps like AllTrails and TrailForks. Another ten percent of visitors heard about us through some other means, but a number of those answers could also be considered “word of mouth,” as some visitors said that they heard about us through local tour guides, hotel concierge or at other community events. Only five percent of visitors heard about Mount A through signs, and less than 2% of visitors this year heard of us via maps, information centers, print media, or television, the majority of those coming to Mount A for the first time this year.



For the 170 first-time visitors who answered this question, the majority (52.35%) heard about Mount A through friends or family members; just over 35% were local visitors or heard of

us through a local visitor; 15.88% heard about Mount A through word of mouth; and just over 11% of these first-time visitors to Mount A are summer residents or heard of us through a summer resident.



### Trail Condition Ratings

Based on 302 answers, our average trail condition rating this year is a 4.84 out of 5, which is up slightly from last year’s rating of 4.74. Ninety-eight percent of people who answered rated the trails a 4 or above and 72.2% rated a 5, which is up from last year (58.9%). Only 2% of people who answered rated the trails a 3 or a 2. There were no ratings of 1. Another 115 survey respondents could not give a condition rating either because they were first time hikers who hadn’t yet been out on the trails or because they were groups visiting the summit park and not planning to hike.

### Amount of Trail Signage Ratings

The majority of the 287 people who answered this question said that the amount of signage was just right (93%, up 1% from last year) and 5.6% of people said there weren’t enough signs, mostly on Second and Third hills or at intersections. Four people (1.4% of those who answered) said there were too many signs, which is the same percentage as last year.

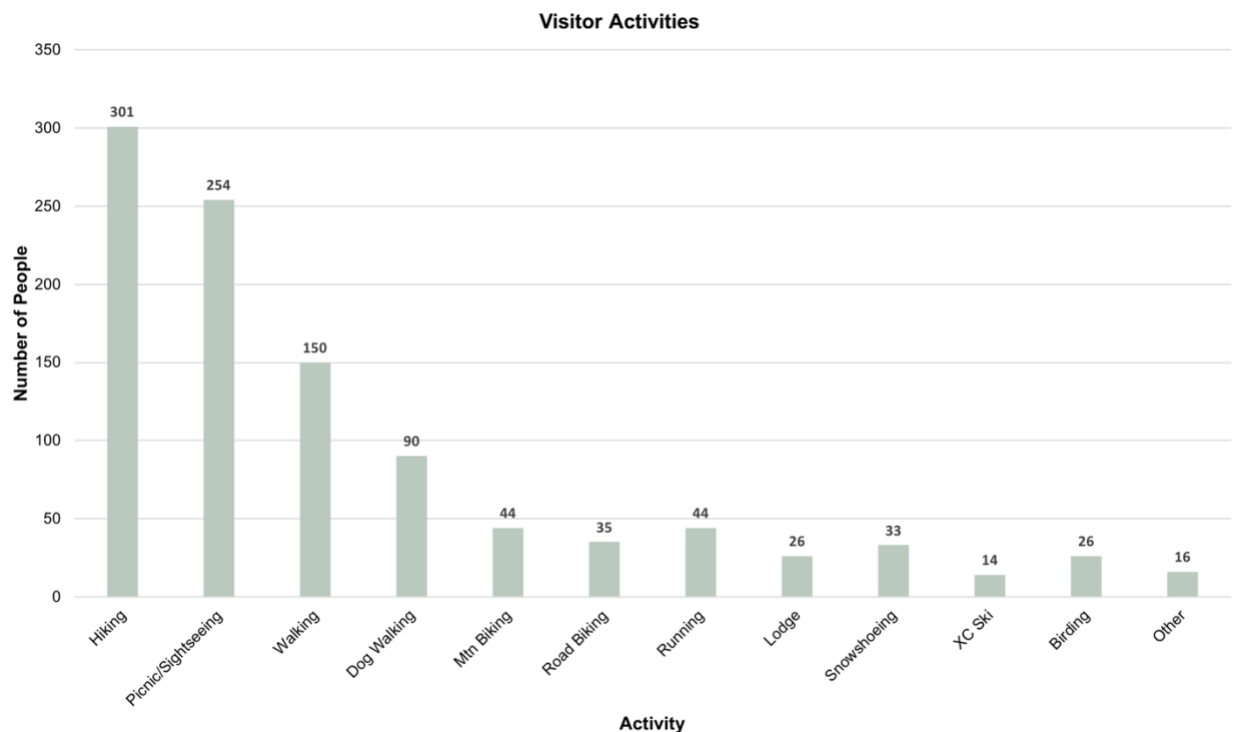


## What Activities Visitors Do at Mount A

Of the 333 visitors who answered this question, the vast majority come to the mountain to hike (90.4%, up from 62.3% last year) and/or picnic and sightsee (76.3%). Another 20.7% (up from 17.5% last year) come for dog walking, 45% for walking either the trails or summit access road, 13.2% for mountain biking, another 13.2% for trail running. Just over 7% of this year's visitors were here for the Learning Lodge or guided programs, which is an increase of 2.8% over last year. Another 9.9% visit Mount A in the winter for snowshoeing (up from 5.1% last year) or cross-country skiing (4.2%), and 7.8% come for birding opportunities (up from 4.2% last year). Other activities (4.8%) mentioned by our visitors include photography, sketching, yoga and meditation.

## What Visitors Enjoy Most

When asked what they enjoy most about their visit to the mountain, none of the surveyors were surprised when many people said the view. The majority of visitors answered the same in previous years. Of the 371 people who answered this question (78% of all those surveyed, down 6% from last year), 55.26% told us that they most enjoyed the 360-degree view from the summit, or how they could see distant mountains and the ocean from the same spot. Another 20.49% of respondents said that they most enjoyed being outdoors or in nature. Exercise and quiet came in next at 12.67% and 11.05% of respondents, respectively. Just under 6% of visitors (about the same as last year) enjoyed our educational and outreach efforts, including the Learning Lodge, Story Walk, Tree ID, and other displays and kiosks; 4.85% enjoyed the varied animal and plant life at Mount A; and 5.39% enjoyed Mount A's accessibility, which included the Big A Universal Access trail and new viewing platform, as well as ease of access for families. Another 5.39% enjoyed the trails most, many because of the variety of terrain and skill level. A number of our local visitors said that they liked how close Mount A is to home, and that it's a nice alternative to visiting busy beaches in the summer. Others said that they enjoyed talking to staff, and many visitors continue to enjoy how dog friendly the area is.



## Visitor Comments and Suggestions

At the end of our time surveying each group, we ask them for any comments, questions, or suggestions. Each year, we receive a wide variety of answers.

This year, 151 groups of the 472 surveyed answered this question. A number of visitors asked whether or not we would be constructing any new trails, and some expressed a desire for bike-only trails. As in previous years, many suggestions and comments were made regarding the port-a-potties, and the desire for better facilities. However, this year there were fewer complaints about port-a-potty conditions than in previous years. Both crowded parking and safety on the road have also become increasing concerns expressed among our visitors, and many visitors wanted to see more road signage and promotion outside of York.

As in years past, we did receive more positive comments than negative ones. Once again, many visitors told us that they enjoy how typically clean and well maintained the summit and trails are, and that they appreciate all the work we've done. A number of return visitors said how impressed they were with the amount of positive change that's happened on the mountain in just a few years, and that they can see the improvements every year.

### Visitor Comments



## **Conclusion**

Mount Agamenticus is frequented not only by many vacationers, but by large amount of frequent local visitors that love coming as often as they can in all seasons. While many visitors make a full day out of their trip to the mountain, many also take the opportunity to experience other local attractions. For many seasonal visitors, Mount A is included on their list of “must see” places in the area. Most people had positive things to say about the mountain and how we manage it, though there are some aspects that we continue to improve. We will continue to work to make the mountain as user-friendly, safe and accessible as possible, while protecting the natural resources and supporting sustainable recreation.