

INTRODUCTION:

The FIU Nature Preserve (NP) has been a part of the University for over thirty years. Since The Office of University Sustainability (OUS) began managing it in 2011, it has greatly evolved. A ½ mile recycled-tire jogging path was installed, programming was increased, and educational signs were added.

To better manage the NP and understand the influx of new visitors, this study was completed; something that had never been done before at this facility.

METHODS:

OUS staff spent 80 hours surveying and counting more than 1,400 visitors during the 2015 spring semester. Visits per year were estimated using field counts. The demographics were obtained through surveys administered on-site combined with information from 2014 calendar year events.

RESULTS:

30,586 Estimated visits for the 2015 calendar year

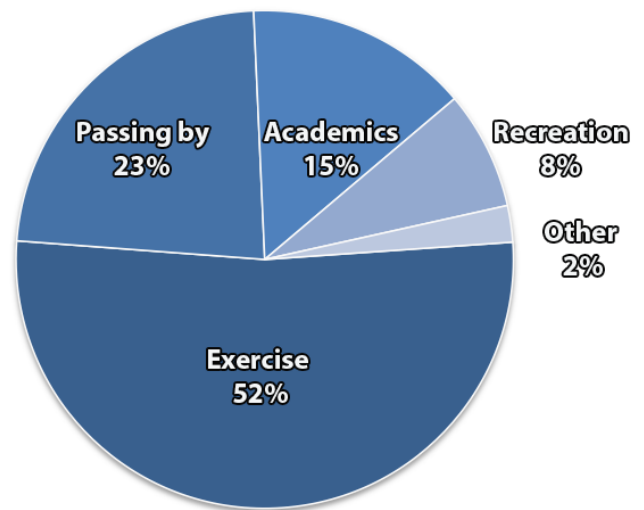
DISCUSSION:

The University has allocated many resources to the NP over the last few years, creating a safe and attractive way to experience nature. This has been its best and biggest advertisement; 64% of visitors found out about the NP by walking or driving by.

With exercise accounting for just over half of the visitation, the NP is a demonstration of how natural areas can be incorporated with the built environment. Pure conservation and academics are not the only means to educate the public about the natural world.

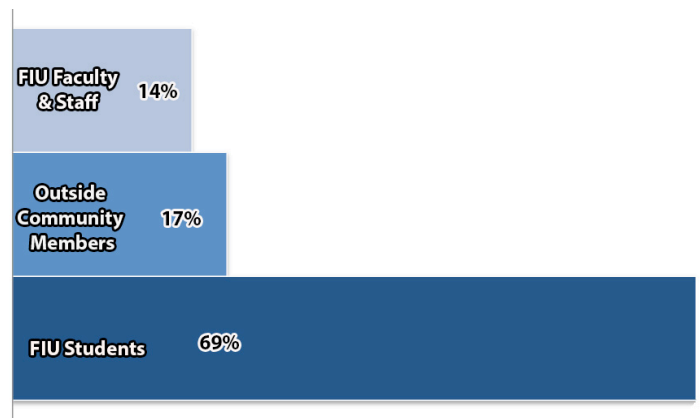
Moving forward, the NP will continue to be a multi-purpose facility; striving to educate the public about Florida's natural areas and promoting healthy lifestyles.

REASON FOR VISIT



64% of visitors found out about the Nature Preserve by walking or driving by

VISITOR AFFILIATION



THANK YOU:

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