

Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research

**2024 BBER Economic Seminar
Montana Tourism Outlook**

Presentation Outline

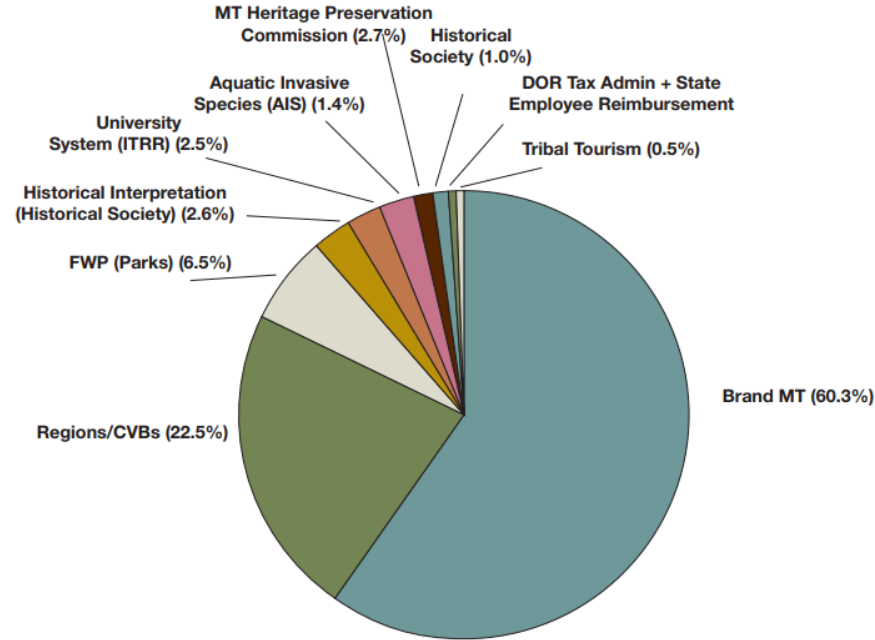
- Welcome
- Who we are
- ITRR Research
- Tourism 2023
- Sustainable Tourism
- 2024 Tourism Outlook



Who we are

- ITRR was established in 1987 to conduct objective research in tourism and recreation. ITRR is housed in the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation at The University of Montana-Missoula.
- ITRR receives 2.5% of the 4% of Lodging Facility Use Tax. Research needs are solicited annually from tourism businesses, government agencies, non-profits, and other interested parties, then prioritized and approved by the Tourism Advisory Council. The Dean of the W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation has final approval of selected projects.
- Additional grants and contracts are obtained through written proposals to public and nonprofit agencies involved in tourism and recreation. In 2020, ITRR was awarded a \$40 million 5- yr. contract with two other research firms.

DISTRIBUTION OF 4% LODGING FACILITY USE TAX*



Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research



Dr. Melissa Weddell
Director & Research Faculty
melissa.weddell@umontana.edu



Carter Bermingham
Social Scientist and Research Associate
carter.bermingham@umontana.edu



Dr. Elena Bigart
Social Scientist and Research Associate
elena.bigart@umontana.edu



Glenna Brown
Program Assistant and Qualitative Specialist
glenna.hartman@umontana.edu



Kara Grau
Assistant Director of Economic Analysis
kara.grau@umontana.edu



Matthew Pettigrew
Data Engineer and Research Associate
matthew.pettigrew@umontana.edu



Megan Schultz
Project Manager and Research Associate
megan.schultz@umontana.edu



Rachel Shouse
Communication Specialist
rachel.shouse@umontana.edu



Ava Worbets
Graduate Student
ava.worbets@umconnect.umt.edu



ITRR Research Priorities and Cycle

- Quarterly Nonresident Travel & Recreation Analysis
- Quarterly Resident Survey
- Economic Impacts and Future Outlooks
- Tourism and Recreation Monitoring
- Emerging Issues
- Survey Kits
- Data Visualization
- Public Repository of Research



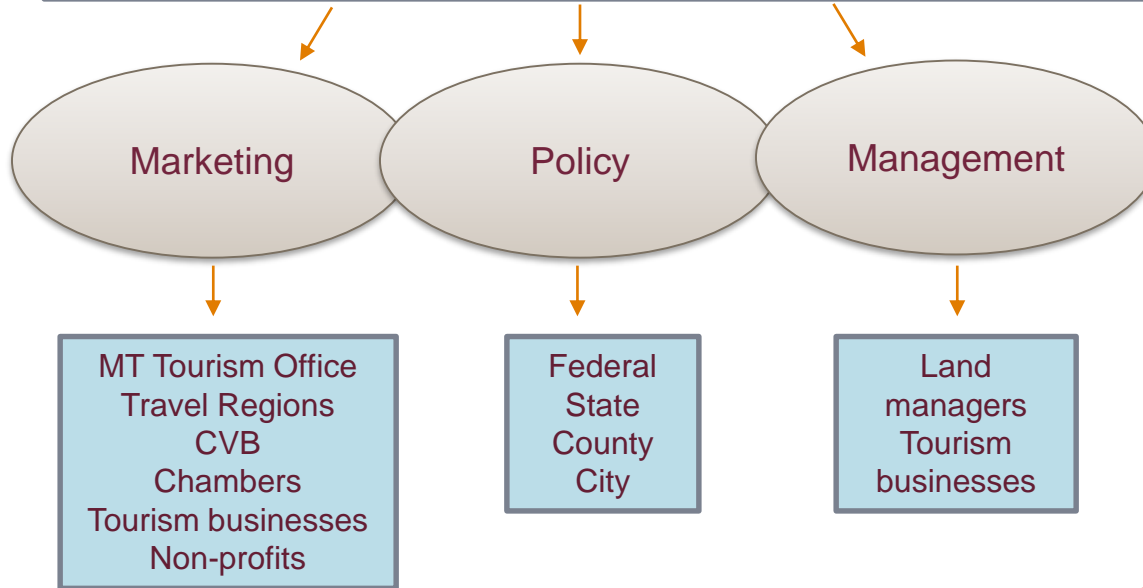
37 Years of Providing Travel, Tourism, and Recreation Research

Tourism Advisory Council (TAC)



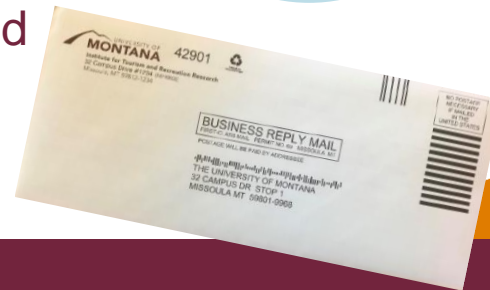
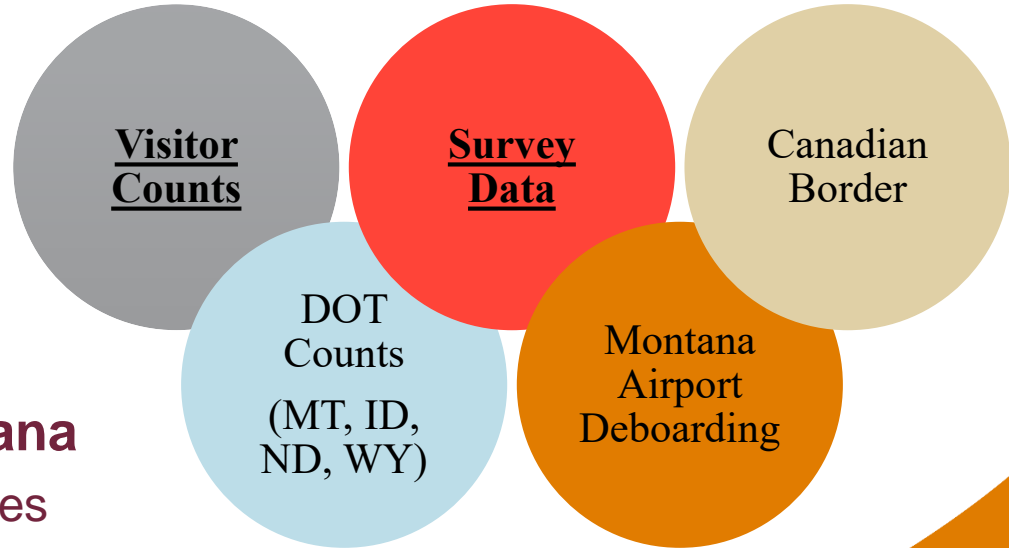
- The Governor-appointed Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) oversees the distribution of the Lodging Facility Use Tax ("bed tax") to Montana's tourism regions and convention and visitor bureaus, advises the Department of Commerce relative to tourism promotion, and fulfills other functions as defined by MCA 2-15-1816.
- Each year, ITRR proposes a research agenda, including project proposals and a budget outline, to the TAC Research Committee.
- Projects are discussed based on how beneficial they will be to the tourism and recreation industry statewide. More niche, or local projects, may be approved if the findings would be beneficial or applicable to others.
- TAC votes on bed tax-funded projects annually

Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research (ITRR):
Collect, analyze, and interpret tourism and
recreation data for planning and decision-making

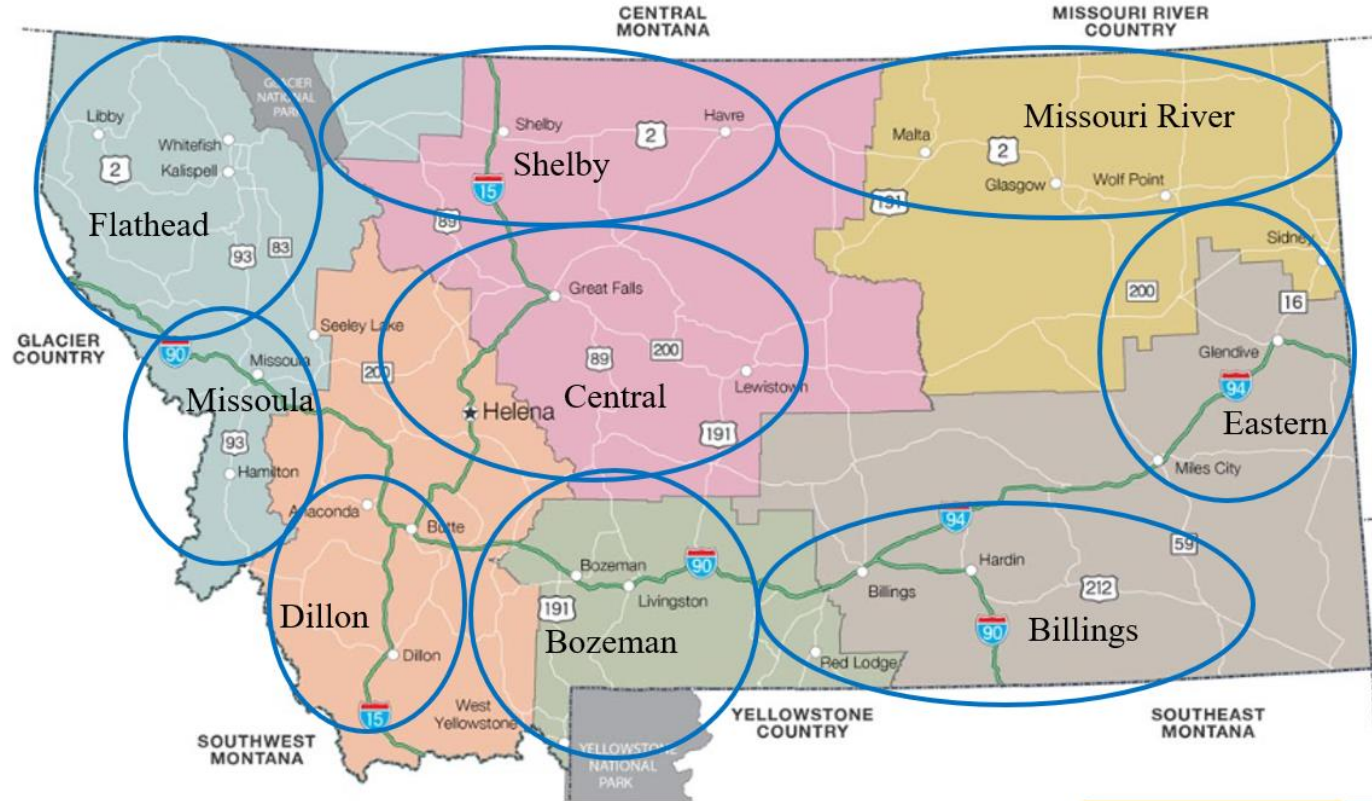


Quarterly Nonresident Research

- **On-going since July 2009**
- **Each Intercept:**
 - Up-front survey on iPad
 - Mailback survey
- **Understanding the Total Population of Visitors to Montana**
 - 11 Surveyors covering 9 Territories
 - Over 65 Communities Represented
 - Each working 29 hours per week*



Data Collection Territories



ITRR Data Dashboards (Publicly Available)



Nonresident Survey Full Data Summary

Dive in to complete customizable access to summary percentages from our complete nonresident survey.



Nonresident Survey Mailback Crosstabs

Examine how trip characteristics like Activities or Sites Visited on trip vary across cross-sections of nonresident visitors.



Visitor Trends Nonresident Visitation

Learn how many nonresidents visit Montana by examining visitation trends.



Resident Survey National Park Visitation Q1, 2023

Our most recent resident report from Q1, 2023 highlights Montana residents' visitation to Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks.

<https://www.umt.edu/tourism-recreation-research/>

Montana Travel Industry

Year	Nonresident Visitors
2023	~12,643,000
2022	12,409,000
2021	12,840,000
2020	11,202,000
2019	12,585,000
2018	12,343,000

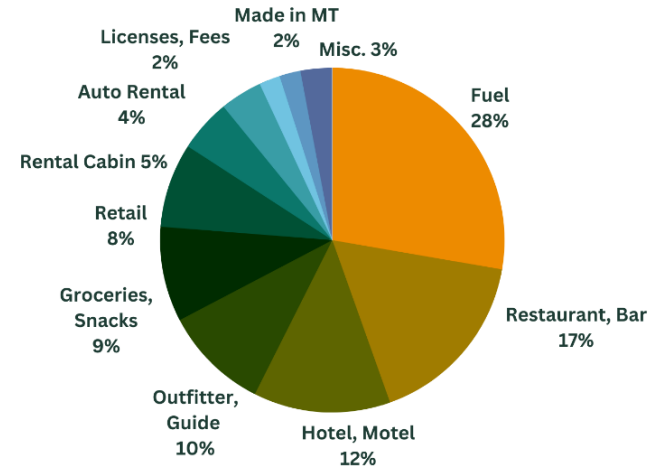


2022 Estimates

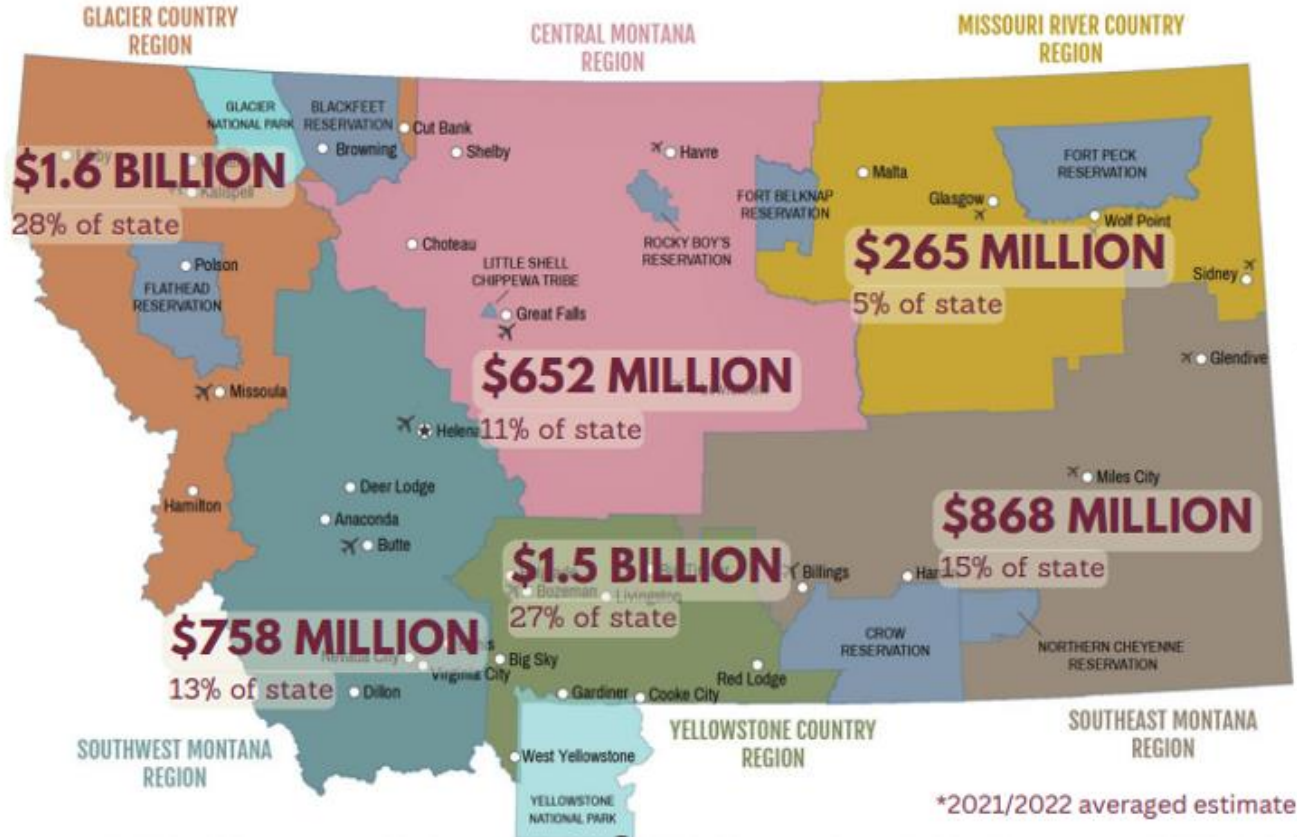


12.5 million travelers

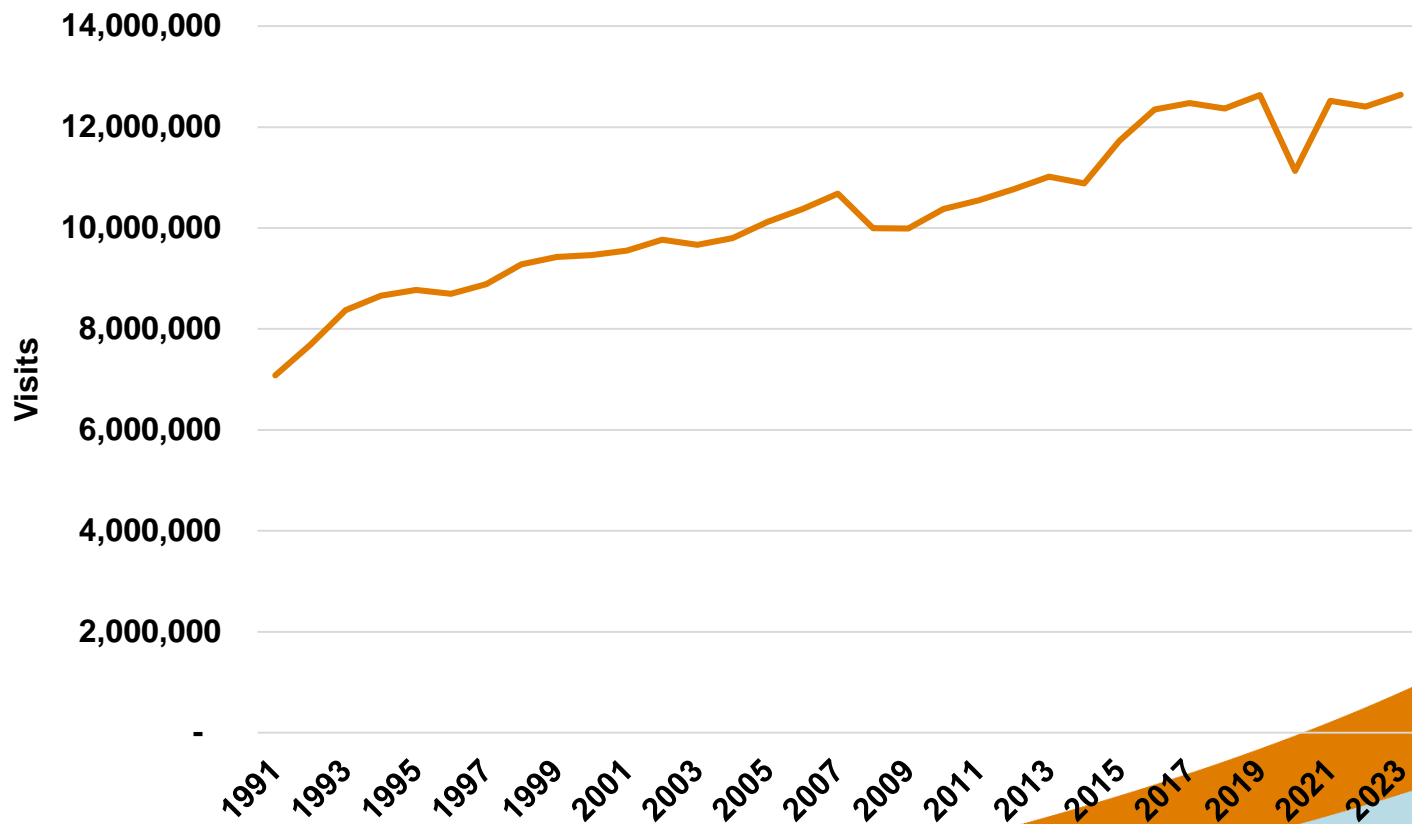
Nonresident travel spending in Montana - \$5.82 billion



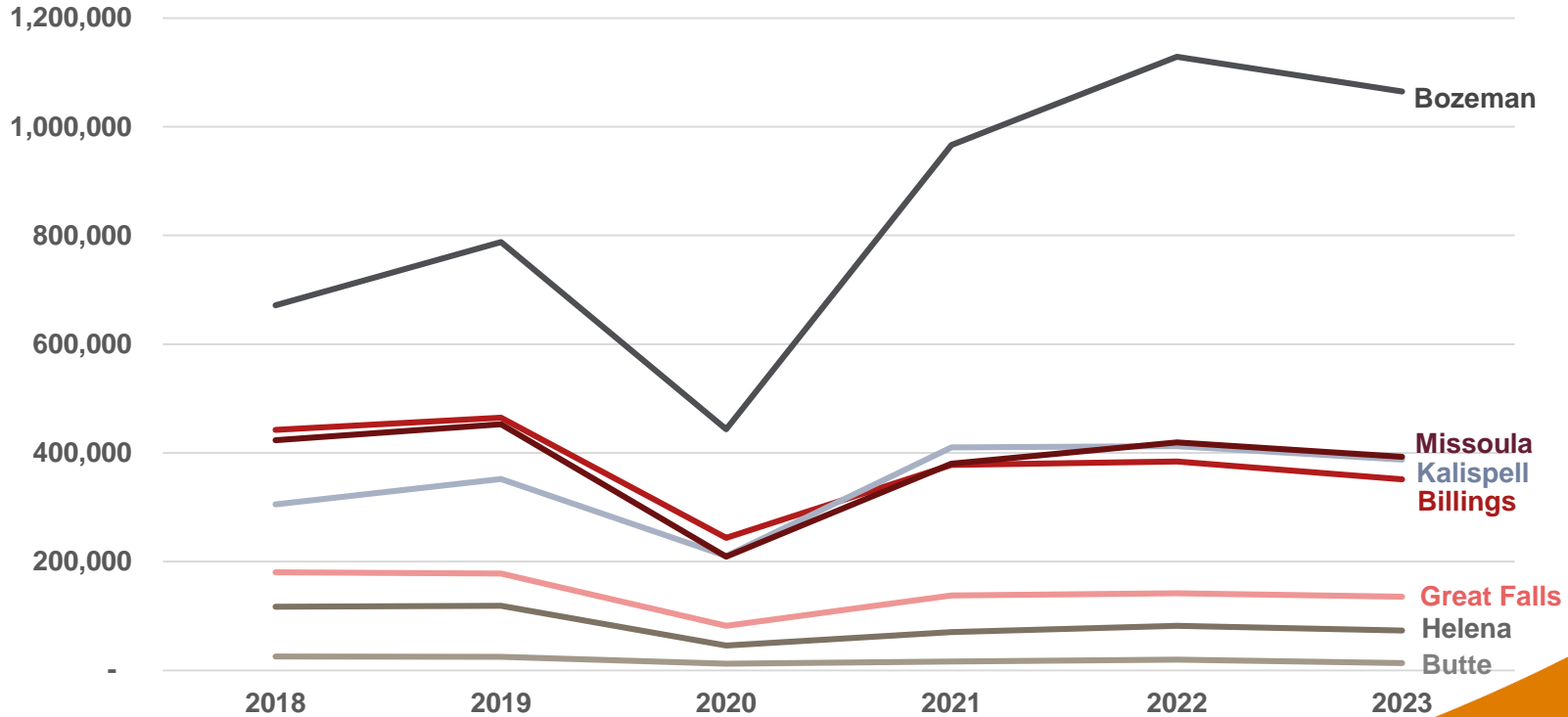
2022 Montana Travel Industry



Montana Visitation (1991-2023)



Airport Deboardings – 2018-2023

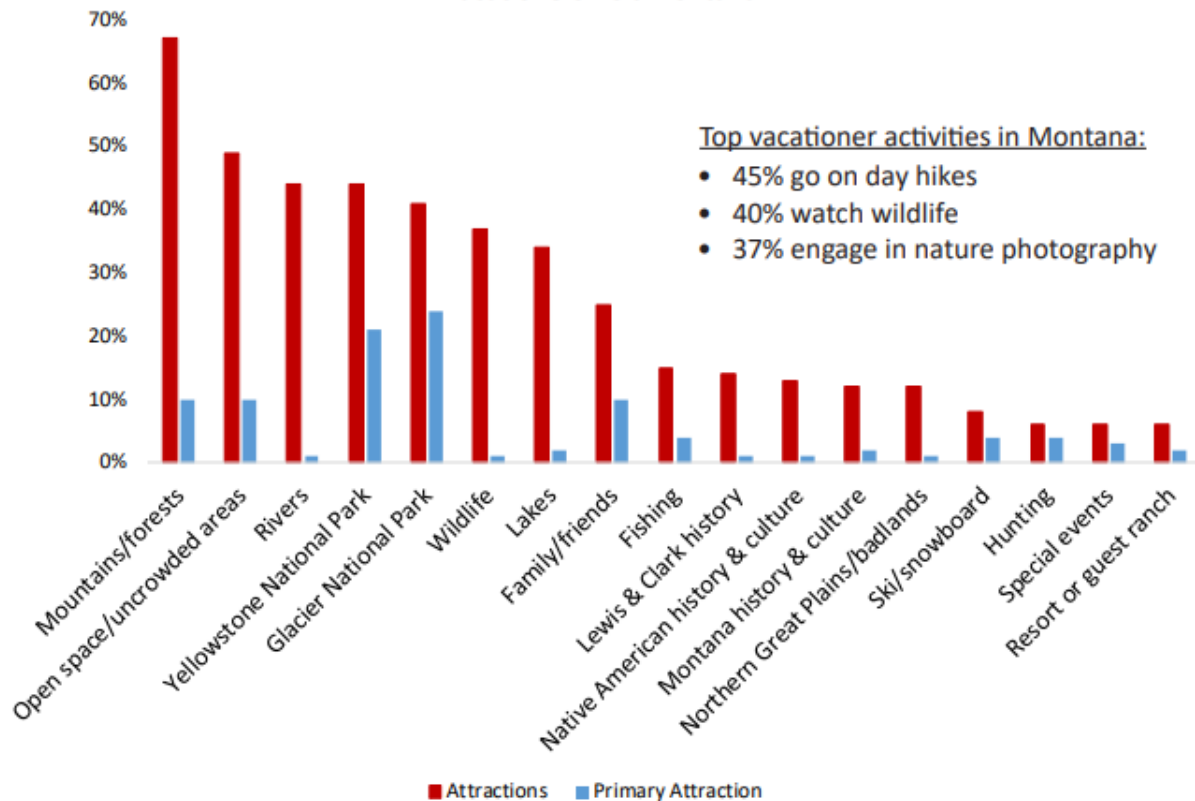


Outdoor Recreation Economy

- **2022 economic impact of outdoor recreation nationwide is \$1.1 trillion, with employment for 5 million jobs**
- **Montana's outdoor recreation economy grew nearly 14% from 2021-22 (*Bureau of Economic Analysis 2023*)**
- **Montana had the third-highest state level value added, behind Hawaii & Vermont**
- **4.3% of State GDP**
- **Montana is ranked 10th in the nation in federal land ownership, with about 30% or 27 million acres, followed by state agencies that manage a little over 5 million acres**

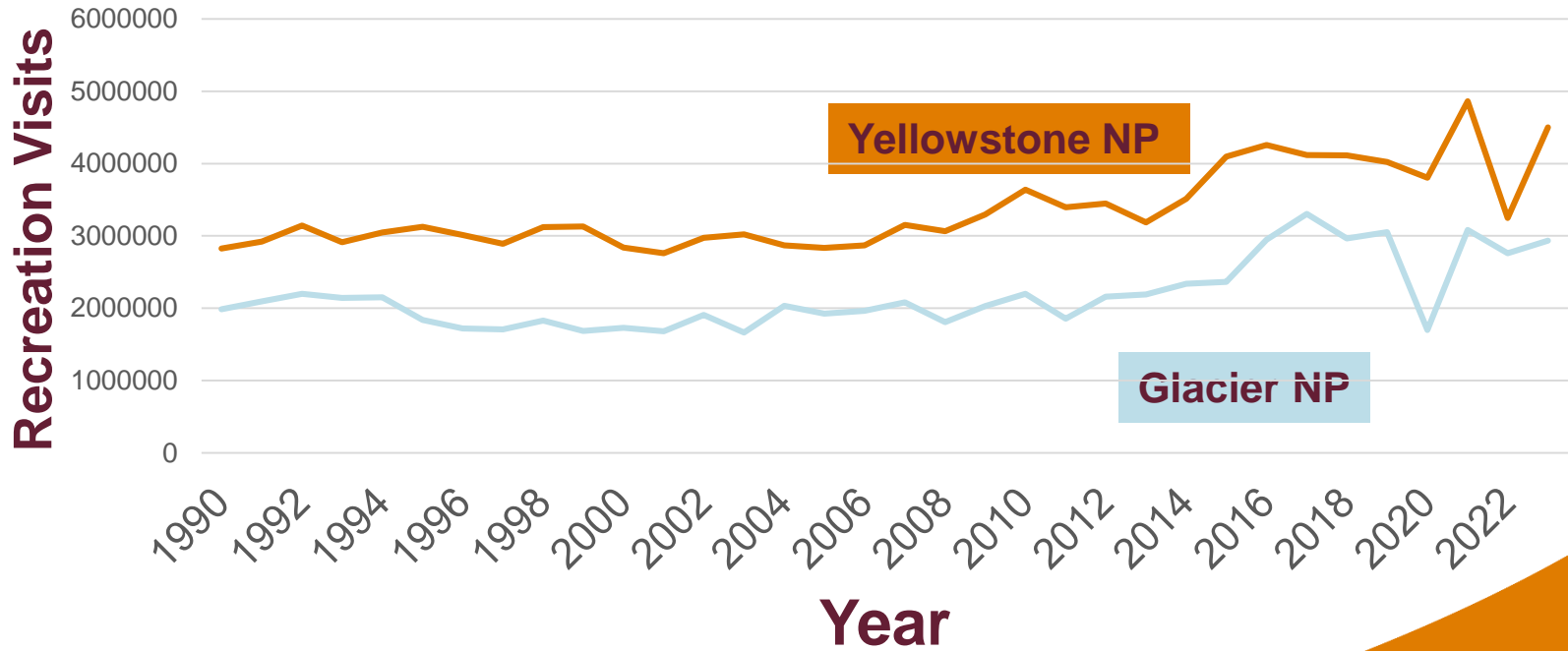
Vacationers Come to Montana for the Great Outdoors

Natural resources are the top eight out of nine reasons vacationers visit Montana.



National Park Visits 1990-2023

Annual Nonresident Visits to MT National Parks: 1990-2023



Montana State Parks



- 55 state parks
- 332 Fishing Access Sites (FASs)
- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

Year	Park Visitation
2022	3,036,121
2021	3,381,507
2020	3,427,555
2019	2,646,886
2018	2,572,890
2017	2,544,138

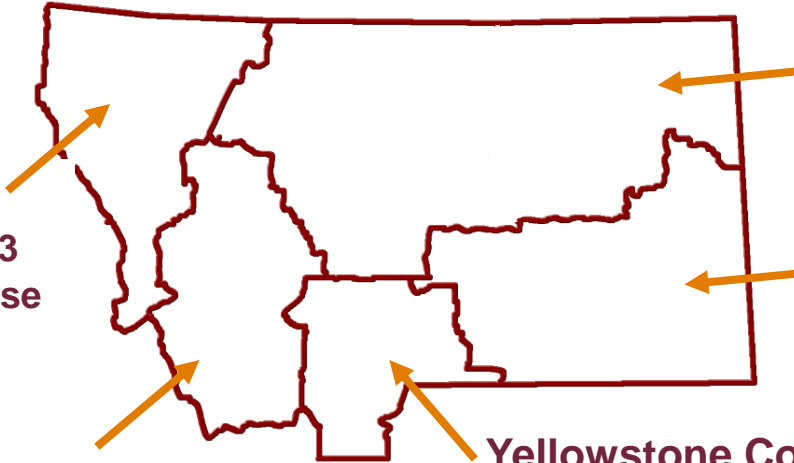
Montana Tourism Business Survey Results

- **2023 Business Report**
 - 42% increased visitor volume
 - 27% remained the same
- **2024 Business Outlook**
 - 87% expect customer volume to increase/stay the same
- **Opportunities**
 - Modify/Diversify Offerings
 - Target Local Markets
 - Niche Business Initiatives
- **Challenges**
 - Economic Downturn
 - Political Instability
 - Natural Disasters (fire, flood, drought)

Tourism Business Owners

2023 Volume Increase; Expected in 2024

Glacier Country
30% increased in 2023
33% expect an increase in 2024



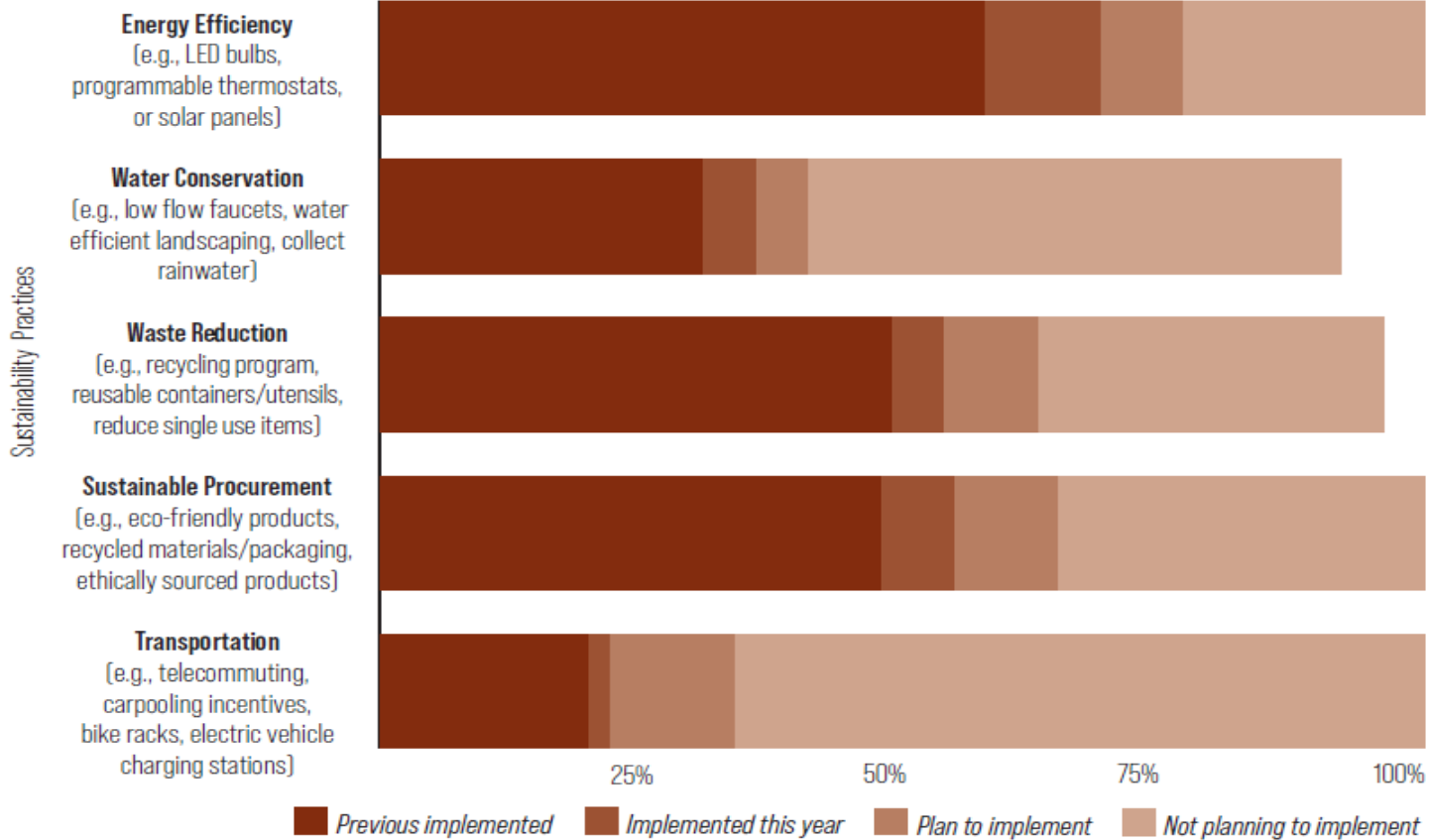
Southwest Montana
44% increased in 2023
50% expect an increase in 2024

Yellowstone Country
54% increased in 2023
41% expect an increase in 2024

Central & Missouri River regions
37% increased in 2023
42% expect an increase in 2024

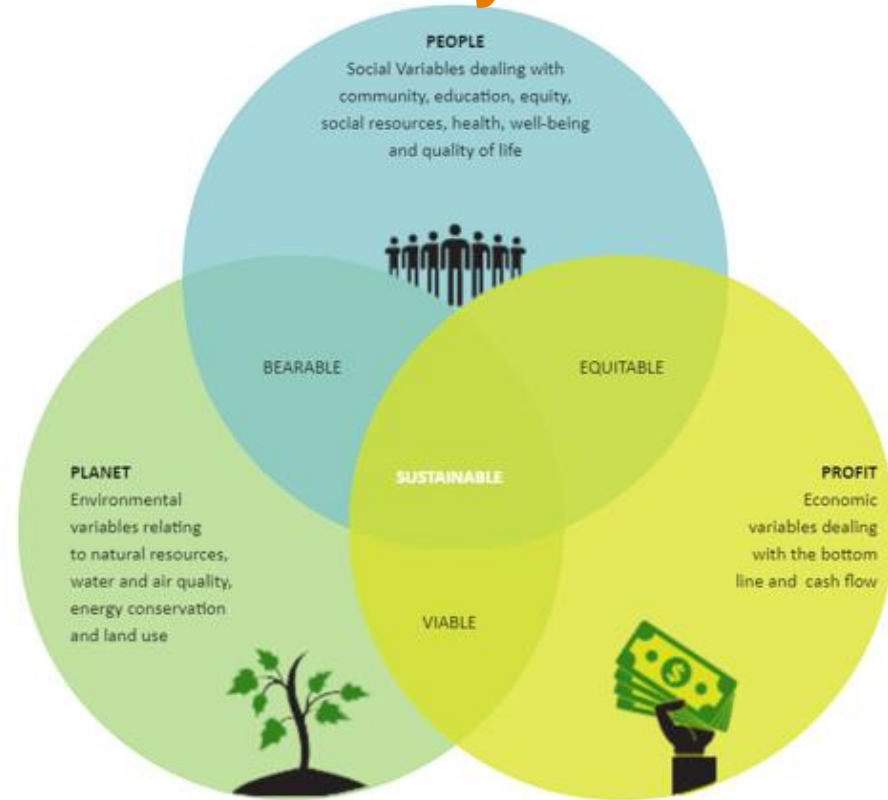
Southeast Montana
48% increased in 2023
60% expect an increase in 2024

Sustainability Practices of Montana Tourism Businesses



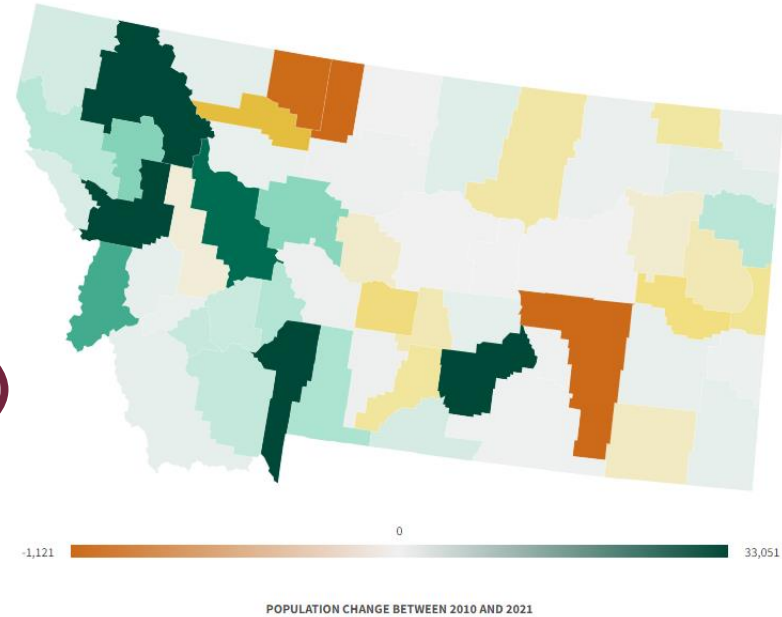
Destination Stewardship & Sustainability

- Conservation and Preservation
- Education and Awareness
- Infrastructure Development
- Community Involvement
- Policy and Regulation
- Monitoring and Adaptation



Montana Changes over Time

- **New Residents**
 - Need for Infrastructure
 - Competition for Outdoor Recreation Assets
- **High Inflation (Gasoline/Air Travel/Food)**
- **Natural Disasters (Fire, Flood, Heat)**
- **Low Unemployment**
- **National Park Crowding/Ticketing**
- **Planning for Amenity Towns (STR Regulations/Housing)**
- **Global Competition**



2024 Tourism Trends & Outlook

- **Steady Visitation for Past 5 Years**
 - ~12 million visitors annually
- **Sustainable Visitor Numbers**
- **87% of Tourism Business Owners stated they anticipate visitor/customer volume to increase or stay the same**
- **Glacier NP: Vehicle Reservation System Modifications**
- **Environmental & Economic Concerns**
- **Trends**
 - **Authentic Travel Experiences**
 - **Cultural Exploration**
 - **Active Trips**
 - **Shoulder Season (long weekends)**
 - **TV/Social Media Influenced Travel**
 - **Music/Concert/Festival Tourism**
 - **Regional Tourism**

Questions?

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itrr@umontana.edu

