

Packers Falls Park

Questionnaire Findings*

Data collected June 16 – July 9, 2023; 79 responses

Question	Response
1. Durham resident?	83% were residents
2. # of people in group?	81% had 1 to 2 people per group; 19% had 3 to 4 people per group
3. Ages of people in group?	Over 65 years old (41%), between 45-64 (43%), between 35 and 44 (22%), and under 18 years old (32%).**
4. Why have you chosen to visit Packers Falls Park?	Top 4 vote-getters were: river views (70%), natural environment (68%), water access (67%) and proximity to home (66%).
5. What activities do you do?	Walking (70%), swimming (54%), birdwatching (30%), pet-walking (23%), picnicking (20%) and fishing (16%). **
6. How often do you visit?	10% of people visit one to three times a week, 13% visit one to three times a month, and 55% visit several times a year.
7. When do you visit?	Most popular is weekday afternoons (66%) followed by weekend afternoons (59%). Weekend mornings and afternoons were tied at 44%. **
8. How many hours do you spend each visit?	48% spend less than 1 hour, and 45% spend 1-2 hours, per visit.
9. Which seasons do you visit?	Summer is most popular (92%), followed by fall (72%), spring (91%), and winter (38%). **
10. What improvements are needed?	Remove debris was top vote-getter (40%) followed by no improvements needed (37%). Other suggestions were trail signage (32%) and more educational signage (22%). **
11. Have you always found a parking space at Packers Falls Park?	47% yes, 33% no, and 19% NA.
12. How do you access Packers Falls Park?	Car/motorcycle (74%), bicycle (31%), and on foot (40%). **
13. How did you find out about Packers Falls Park?	Word-of-mouth (74%), town website (26%) and kiosk (17%).
14. What other town properties do you visit?	Top vote-getters were Wagon Hill (82%), followed by Wiswall Dam (79%), Jackson's Landing (75%), Doe Farm (70%) and Oyster River Forest (62%). **

What we learned: This *Friday Updates* on-line questionnaire revealed that most respondents are from Durham, have 1 to 2 people in their group, and one-third are under age 18. People come for the river views, natural environment, water access and its proximity to home. Although most people come to walk, over half of them come to swim. Most visits last 2 hours or less, and a quarter of visitors come several times a month. People prefer to visit in the afternoons on both weekend and weekdays, especially in the summer, fall and spring. Parking is not always available, and the presence of boulders to prevent roadside parking can result in unsafe pedestrian navigation (see comments). Although most people access the property via car/motorcycle/bike, nearly half of the time they access it on foot. They've discovered the property via word of mouth or the town website. The major suggestions for improvement include "remove debris", "trail signage" and "more educational signage", although one-third of respondents felt no improvements were needed. Other Durham properties that

respondents visit are (in descending order of popularity) Wagon Hill, Wiswall Dam, Jackson's Landing, Doe Farm and Oyster River Forest.

Recommendations:

1. Explore if water quality could be tested, given the popularity of this swimming spot.
2. Evaluate reducing number of trails; this will reduce poison ivy exposure and trail erosion.
3. Revise signage to inform users about allowed and prohibited uses, to be consistent with other town properties, including "please keep dogs on leash".
4. Evaluate parking and parking needs.

*Questionnaire available via *Friday Updates* and QR code on-site. Raw analysis data resides in the Durham Town Hall files

**Respondents could choose more than one response.