

Do Cleveland Metroparks golfers participate in other activities?

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In a recent telephone survey, Tax District residents were asked what variety of activities they participate in when visiting Cleveland Metroparks. These data allow a test of a commonly held belief of Cleveland Metroparks managers that if Cleveland Metroparks did not offer golf, the golfer segment of the tax district would largely not accrue value from the Park District.

The survey asked residents to check activities in which they participate. This is a basic measure does not measure *intensity* of use, so activities that are rarely participated are given the same value as activities that park users frequently take part in. Likewise many respondents report what activities any member of their household participate in. From the list of 35 activities or experiences, 19 activities that Cleveland Metroparks actively manages for were selected for analysis. Participation in golf was cross-tabulated (compared) with their participation in each of the other activities.

Table 1, presents results of how many respondents to the survey 1) participated in *neither* golf or the other activity, 2) what percent participated *only* in golf, and 3) only participated in the *other* activity. Finally, in the second to last column, 4) percentages are listed for those who do *both* golf and each of the other activities.

The data in Table 1 provide moderate evidence that golfers are a discreet user group. For each of the other 18 activities, participation in another activity *and* golf ranged from 0.5 to 12 percent. Activities with more than five percent covariance were pleasure driving, biking on paved surfaces, picnicking and walking/hiking. Three of these four activities are very popular, almost generic activities.

Because the measure of participation in recreation was a simple yes/no measure, further statistical tests were conducted that cluster activities based on patterns of responses given to all 19 activities. Three types of cluster analysis and exploratory factor analysis were used to identify robust clusters of activities. Four moderately robust clusters of activities appeared across all analysis types. These were:

- Nature appreciation—the tightest of the clusters includes visiting nature centers, observing nature and birds, pleasure driving, photography and special events.
- Exercise—the next most robust cluster includes biking on paved surfaces, jogging/running, walking/hiking, inline skating, and dog walking.
- *Children/Family centered activities*—this cluster of activities includes playground, picnicking, swimming and sledding/tobogganing.
- Fishing/boating—this cluster includes two activities: fishing, and boating. Fishing Derby in one analysis was associated with this cluster, but not in the other three.

Three activities groups did *not* associate with other activities in any of the four exploratory analyses. These activities are: *Mountain biking (dirt trails), Horseback riding, and Golfing.*

While respondents reported participating in other activities along with each of these three activities, the patterns of activities were too idiosyncratic for the statistical methods to identify a pattern.

Table 1. Overlap of golfing with other activities.

	ither tivity 1044	Only plays golf	Only does other activity	Does golf and other	Total
The other activity is act	tivity 1044	golf			TOLdI
·	1044	-	i activiiv	activity	n-
Fishing Derby		107	-	5	n= 1246
		187	10		1240
Hawaalaad, widina	84%	15%	1%	0.4%	1246
Horseback riding	1030	186	24	6	1246
	83%	15%	2%	0.5%	
Inline skating	1029	179	25	13	1246
	83%	14%	2%	1%	
Mountain bike (dirt trails)	1006	173	48	19	1246
	81%	14%	4%	2%	
Swimming	969	163	85	29	1246
	78%	13%	7%	2%	
Boating	990	170	64	22	1246
	79%	14%	5%	2%	
Nature center programs	904	155	150	37	1246
	73%	12%	12%	3%	
Playground	918	152	136	40	1246
7,6	74%	12%	11%	3%	
Photography	920	150	134	42	1246
3 1 7	74%	12%	11%	3%	
Visit nature center	852	132	202	60	1246
visit iluture center	68%	11%	16%	5%	12.10
Cladding/Tabagganing					1246
Sledding/Tobogganing	919	136	135	56	1246
Nature and hird watching	74%	11% 129	11% 235	4% 63	1246
Nature and bird watching	819				1240
	66%	10%	19%	5%	4246
Jog or run	882	127	172	65	1246
	71%	10%	14%	5%	
Walking the dog	816	131	238	61	1246
	65%	11%	19%	5%	
Fishing	923	134	131	58	1246
	74%	11%	11%	5%	
Pleasure driving	762	100	292	92	1246
	61%	8%	23%	7%	
Biking paved surfaces	797	104	257	88	1246
	64%	8%	21%	7%	
Picnicking	629	90	425	102	1246
- U	50%	7%	34%	8%	
Walking/hiking	365	47	689	145	1246
5, 5	29%	4%	55%	12%	

Discussion

Even with dichotomous (participates, does not participate) data, a moderate strength argument can be made that for golfers (and maybe horseback riders and mountain bikers) that these recreationists participate in few other activities offered by Cleveland Metroparks. The implications is that if this activity was not offered, these residents of the tax district might not visit (and obtain value) from Cleveland Metroparks. How to interpret these findings, and their broader implications, is a bit of a challenge.

- The data used in this analysis does *not* include measures of intensity of use or level of interest in the activity. Likewise, despite the activity participation question asking "What do you do...?" many respondents probably answered for their entire family or household. (For instance some golfers indicated they use playgrounds—a reflection of children being present in the household). Most of the biases in the question format would skew results toward disconfirming the original question that drove the analysis. That is, with more precise measures of activity participation levels or intensity, the results should more strongly confirm the original notion that participants in some activities tend to only participate in their one activity.
- Every recreationist identifies, often strongly, with some activities they participate in (but not others in which they occasionally participate). Two of the four activities that overlap with golfing are fairly generic activities. For instance, it is not unusual for someone to state that they are a golfer, but it is rare to hear someone describe themselves as a picnicker or a pleasure driver, two of the activities with more than five percent overlap with golfing. Likewise, the activity walking/hiking includes (avid) hikers and a broad group that occasionally goes for a walk.
- Of all the possible management strategies, to what extent does Cleveland Metroparks want to use a provision-of-activities strategy as a primary means of providing for the wants of all Tax District residents?

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