



# **Modernizing Park and Campground Regulations for the Yukon**

## **What We Heard**

Results of engagement conducted from April to December 2022

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# Introduction

This document summarizes the results of engagement conducted in 2022 on proposed regulations under the *Parks and Land Certainty Act*. These regulations will address operational concerns and help preserve and enhance many of the environmental, economic, social and health benefits of territorial parks that Yukoners enjoy.

The proposed regulations encompass 10 thematic areas:

- Noise
- Domestic animals
- Liquor
- Smoking including cannabis
- On-road and off-road vehicles
- Aircraft use including drones
- Park zoning
- Activities requiring permits
- Other general park regulations
- Campground and recreation site regulations

These proposed regulations were developed based on previous engagement. From April to September 2018, we engaged First Nations, Yukon communities, park users and stakeholders at more than 20 events as part of the Talking Yukon Parks engagement to help us begin the process of developing the Yukon Parks Strategy. In Fall 2019, we re-engaged Yukoners on the Draft Yukon Parks Strategy. During the Talking Yukon Parks engagement, people told us they want better management of issues that affect park ecosystems and their enjoyment of parks. During public review of the Yukon Parks Strategy Yukoners expressed strong support for updating regulations.

The Government of Yukon released the Yukon Parks Strategy (2020-2030) in September 2020. The Strategy sets the direction for the Yukon's system of territorial parks. Modernizing regulations under the *Parks and Land Certainty Act* (PLCA) was identified as one of the 10 priorities in the Strategy to effectively manage the Yukon's system of territorial parks. Regulations made with public input will help us develop fair, transparent and appropriate rules to govern activities in territorial parks and campgrounds.

## How we engaged

Engagement with the public and stakeholders was held from April 29, 2022 to July 4, 2022. Engagement with First Nations, Inuvialuit and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups was held from April 29, 2022 to December 5, 2022.

We published a discussion document in April 2022 entitled *Modernizing Park and Campground Regulations for Yukon*, which described the proposed regulations as well as some context and considerations.

We contacted 26 First Nations, Inuvialuit, transboundary Indigenous governments and groups, by mail, and email and 149 stakeholders by email to provide the discussion document and request input. Stakeholders we contacted included renewable resources councils, First Nation councils, ENGOs, commercial bodies and recreation organizations operating in territorial parks, industry associations, and research centres. We received input through emails, phone calls, meetings, and written submissions.

An online public survey was conducted by the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. For each of the 10 themes, the survey presented the proposed regulations and asked respondents whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal or were unsure. Respondents also had the option to provide additional written comments. Four individuals chose to email us directly or phone us.

## Summary of input from First Nations, Inuvialuit and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups

We gathered input on the proposed park and campground regulations from our Indigenous partners through mail, email and phone or online conversations. We received input from 11 First Nations, Inuvialuit and transboundary Indigenous governments and groups. We heard that all were supportive of modernizing regulations under the PLCA. Five stated that they want to continue to be involved in the development of the regulations to ensure that the final regulations: do not infringe upon their treaty or Aboriginal rights, adequately acknowledge and respect their treaty and Aboriginal rights within territorial parks and address their concerns related to park use.

## Summary of feedback from stakeholders

We gathered feedback on the proposed park and campground regulations from stakeholders through email. We received feedback from four stakeholders: two ENGOs, one tourism operator, and one renewable resource council. All were supportive of modernizing regulations under the PLCA. Specific feedback included:

- One stated that zoning regulations should allow new types of zones to be created in future, establish a zone specific to wetlands, and be flexible enough that they can be applied on a park-by-park basis based upon the specific sensitivities of each and maximize the options available in addressing emerging conservation concerns.
- One stated that zoning is a critical tool for protecting ecological integrity and a quality visitor experience should be backstopped with regulations.
- One stated that it is important to reduce noise in parks, not just to improve the visitor experience, but also to reduce stress and disturbance to wildlife.
- One stated that it is important to expand to toolbox for managing motorized and non-motorized activities.
- One stated that they want to ensure that horseback travel and tours can still continue in parks, while leaving as small a footprint as possible.

# Summary of public survey results

We gathered public feedback on the proposed park and campground regulations through an online survey posted on EngageYukon.ca.

- 1,443 people responded to the survey.
- The survey results indicate that the majority of respondents agree with all of the regulation proposals. Support ranged from 63 per cent to 79 per cent for each of the 10 areas of proposed regulations (see Figure 1 below).
- In reviewing the written comments that accompanied the survey responses, it became clear that some of the “disagree” responses that we received were not against the proposed regulations but instead wanted different regulations or more restrictive regulations.

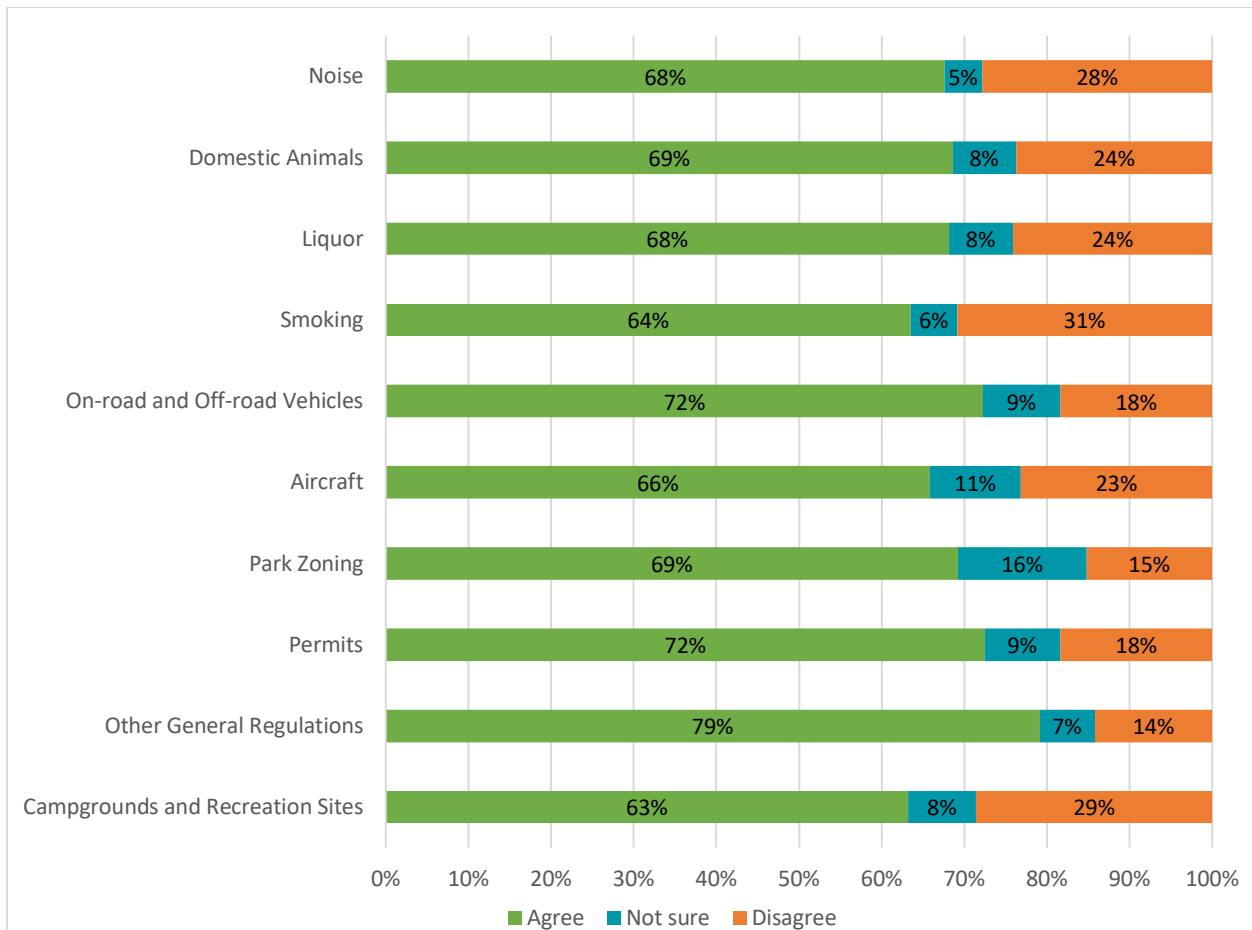


Figure 1 Survey responses to proposed regulations.

# Detailed public survey results

## Noise

The majority of survey respondents agreed (68%; 929 of 1,320) with the proposal.

- Proposed regulations would:
- During the hours of 11 pm to 7 am prohibit:
    - making noise that is likely to disturb the peace and quiet of an occupant of another campsite in a campground; and
    - operating a generator (medical exceptions by special permit).
  - Prohibit at all times:
    - making excessive noise that is likely to interfere with another person’s enjoyment of a park; and
    - the use of fireworks.
  - Prohibit operating a generator in a designated quiet area at all times.
  - Prohibit accommodation units such as RVs, campers and trailers within a designated tenting-only area.

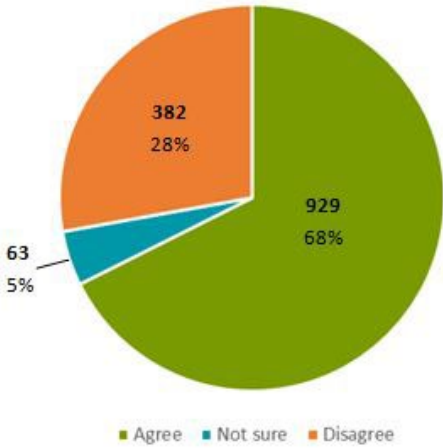


Figure 2 Survey responses to proposed regulations on noise.

### Additional written comments:

- 120 comments indicated a desire for more restrictions on the use of generators throughout the day, including suggestions that: generator use should end earlier and start later than the quiet hours, generators should not be allowed to run all day, and they should only be allowed to be used during specified short time-windows.
- 90 comments reiterated agreement with the establishment of quiet hours. 54 comments suggested longer quiet hours while 14 suggested shorter hours, and 21 mentioned support for the proposed hours.
- 29 comments suggested we clearly define ‘excessive noise’ and 28 suggested the same for ‘likely to disturb the peace and quiet of another’
- 27 comments specifically indicated support for the establishment of quiet camping zones.
- 14 comments specifically supported the establishment of tenting-only camping sites, while 12 were opposed.
- 12 comments specifically supported the prohibition on the use of fireworks in parks, while 9 were opposed.

## Domestic Animals

The majority of survey respondents agreed (69%; 929 of 1,354) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Require domestic animals to be:
  - physically restrained (e.g., on a leash or in a crate) at all times in campgrounds and recreation sites;
  - physically restrained in any areas where a posted sign requires it; and
  - under control (e.g., able to be quickly recalled and obey other commands) at all times in territorial parks.
- Enable certain domestic animals to be prohibited from certain territorial parks or areas of territorial parks (e.g., llamas may be prohibited from sheep habitat) or the whole parks system.

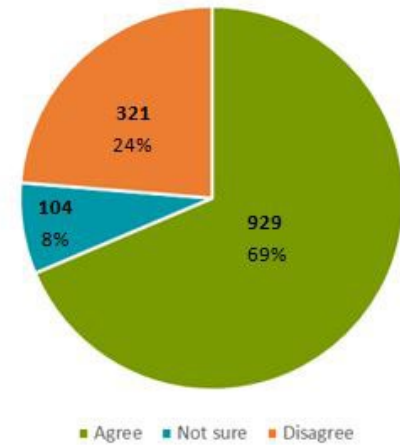


Figure 3. Survey responses to proposed regulations on domestic animals

Additional written comments:

- 137 comments suggested adding regulations related to excessive barking of dogs, cleaning up of pet waste, and prohibition on unattended pets (especially dogs).
- 112 comments reiterated support for the requirement for domestic animals to be physically restrained at all times in campgrounds and recreation sites. 68 comments opposed the requirement.
- Five comments opposed the requirement for domestic animals to be physically restrained (e.g. on a leash) in other areas of territorial parks where a posted sign requires it.
- No comments were opposed to the need for domestic animals to be under control at all times within a park.
- No comments were opposed to Yukon Parks having the ability to prohibit certain species of domestic animals from specific areas of parks, certain parks or all territorial parks.



## Liquor

The majority of survey respondents agreed (68%; 913 of 1,340) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Allow the consumption of liquor anywhere on a registered territorial campsite; not just inside an accommodation unit (RV, tent, trailer).
- Clarify the authority to temporarily ban liquor consumption in certain campgrounds. This is an effective practice to proactively manage known party times, such as at Yukon River Campground during the Dawson City Music Festival.
- Provide authority for Park Officers to seize, report and dispose of liquor from minors within parks and from adults in areas where it has been prohibited.

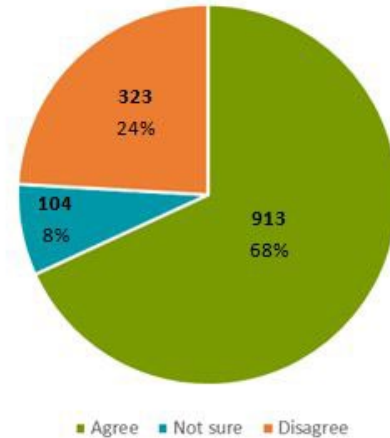


Figure 4. Survey responses to proposed regulations on liquor

Additional written comments:

- 112 comments were not in support of Yukon Parks having the power to temporarily ban alcohol in campgrounds.
- 75 comments reiterated agreement with allowing the consumption of liquor anywhere on a registered campsite, not just inside an accommodation unit.
- 15 comments wanted liquor to be permitted to be consumed in public areas of campgrounds and recreation sites.
- 27 comments supported, and 21 opposed, providing the authority to park officers to seize, report and dispose of liquor from minors within parks and from adults in areas of parks where consumption has been prohibited.

## Smoking including cannabis

The majority of survey respondents agree (64%; 849 of 1336) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Prohibit smoking in public areas such as playgrounds, picnic shelters, beaches, and boat launches. This would apply to all smoking (e.g., tobacco, cannabis, vaping, etc.).
- Continue to allow smoking, including cannabis, on a registered territorial campsite.

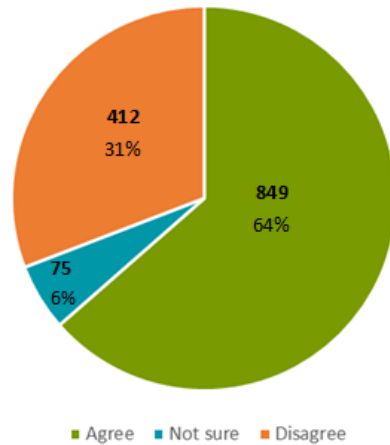


Figure 5. Survey responses to proposed regulations on smoking including cannabis

Additional written comments:

- 45 comments indicated agreement that smoking bans should be in places where children congregate (i.e. playgrounds) and covered areas (i.e. cook shacks), but disagreed with bans in open-air areas where people congregate (such as docks and boat launches).
- 41 comments suggested that designated smoking areas should be established and that smoking should be prohibited in all other areas including camping sites.

## On-road and off-road vehicles

The majority of survey respondents agree (72%; 960 of 1,328) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Clarify the legal authority to install directional signage in territorial parks such as speed limits, stop signs and trail designations.
- Provide the authority to designate trails for different types of uses such as ORV, snowmobiles, bicycles, horses, dogsleds, etc. and to restrict some of these uses on some trails.
- Provide specific authority to address dangerous driving, such as speeding and recklessness, as well as removal of abandoned vehicles from a territorial park and penalize the owner for abandonment.

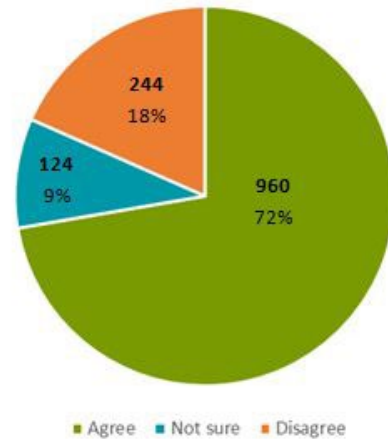


Figure 6. Survey responses to proposed regulations on on-road and off-road vehicles

Additional written comments:

- 15 comments reiterated agreement with the clarification of the authority for Yukon Parks to install directional signage in territorial parks.
- 16 comments specifically supported the proposal to provide the authority to designate trails for different types of uses and restrict some types of uses, while 20 comments were opposed.
- Seven comments were in support of Yukon Parks having the authority to address dangerous driving, as well as the removal of abandoned vehicles, while six were opposed.
- 26 comments indicated a desire for regulations that prohibit people, including minors, from doing laps of campgrounds roads with on-road and off-road vehicles.

## Aircraft use including drones

The majority of survey respondents agree (66%; 842 of 1,280) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Prohibit the use of drones and the landing of aircraft in any territorial park unless authorized by permit.

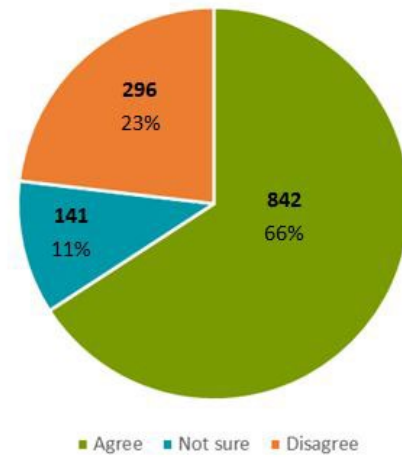


Figure 7. Survey responses to proposed regulations on aircraft use including drones

Additional written comments:

- 105 comments specifically indicated support to better manage drones as it relates to personal privacy and disturbance to wildlife.
- 62 comments suggested prohibiting drones from specific areas to promote privacy (such as over campgrounds) or in areas with sensitive wildlife species instead of requiring permits to use a drone. 23 comments indicated a desire for an outright ban on drones within territorial parks. 20 comments reiterated support for the proposal for authorizing drone use by permit.
- Seven comments did not support the requirement for a permit to land aircraft in a park.

## Park zoning

The majority of survey respondents agree (69%; 866 of 1,251) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Define the four types of park zones so they are consistent with existing approved territorial park management plans and policy:
  - Multiple use recreation** - an area that provides for a variety of readily-accessible outdoor recreation opportunities that may involve special facilities.
  - Natural** - an area that conserves a representative regional landscape and provides for a variety of outdoor recreational and educational activities in a largely undisturbed natural environment.
  - Wildland** - an area that preserves an undisturbed natural landscape, and offers backcountry experiences in a pristine environment.
  - Special feature** - an area that preserves and protects significant natural, cultural, or historic resources, features or processes, and where appropriate, interprets these features to the public.
- Define the allowable activities and development types within each type of zone, as well as which zones can be applied within each type of territorial park consistent with existing approved park management plans and policy.

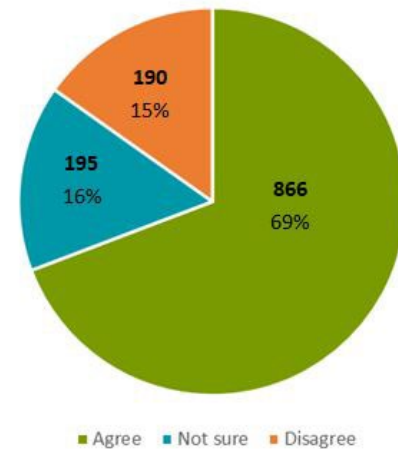


Figure 8. Survey responses to proposed regulations on park zoning

Additional written comments:

- One comment indicated a desire for a zone that recognizes cultural landscapes.

## Activities requiring permits

The majority of survey respondents agree (73%; 920 of 1,269) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Specify that the activities requiring a park permit include such things as special events, commercial activities, scientific research and collection, and landing an aircraft.
- Specify the activities not requiring a permit such as recreational day use, backcountry travel, and use of park facilities other than a campsite.
- Specify that a park permit holder must be at least 16 years old.

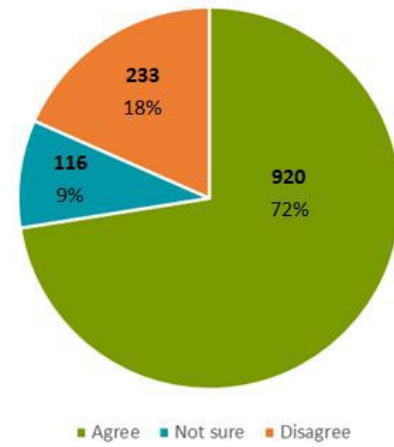


Figure 9. Survey responses to proposed regulations on activities requiring permits

Additional written comments:

- Four comments reiterated agreement with the proposed age requirement for permit holders, while 13 comments suggested it should be older and one suggested there should be no age restriction.

## Other general park regulations

The majority of survey respondents agree (73%; 920 of 1,269) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations would:

- Prohibit:
  - Actions that can contaminate water, such as depositing waste within 30 metres of a water source.
  - Feeding wildlife or not securely storing food or other wildlife attractants.
  - Disposing garbage anywhere other than in a provided garbage receptacle.
- Prohibit, unless authorized by a territorial park permit:
  - Having a fire larger than the standard campground fire ring (0.6m wide by 0.5m high).
  - Camping outside designated camping sites.
  - Release of non-native species.
  - Storing or caching equipment or supplies.
  - Having explosives, including fireworks.
  - Actions that result in the removal, destruction, damage, disturbance or exploitation of natural or heritage resources in a park.
- Temporarily restrict or prohibit fires in a territorial park for safety reasons.

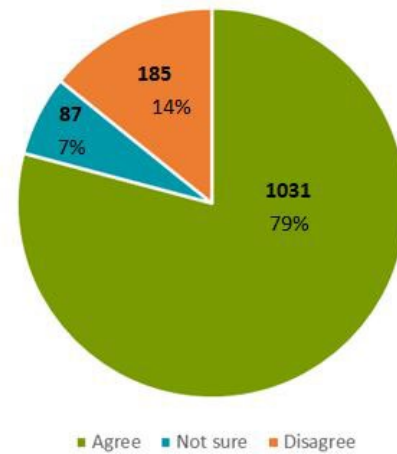


Figure 10. Survey responses to proposed regulations on other general park regulations

Additional written comments:

- 16 comments reiterated support for regulations to prohibit water contamination, the feeding of wildlife, not securely storing wildlife attractants, improper disposal of garbage, and release of non-native species into parks.
- 20 comments were opposed to needing a permit for backcountry camping outside a campground.
- 20 comments were opposed to a prohibition on camping outside of designated camping sites within campgrounds.
- Five comments wanted to ensure the prohibition on explosives did not apply to ammunition used in hunting or bear bangers.
- 10 comments were opposed to a prohibition on fireworks.
- Two comments were opposed to a prohibition on oversized fires.
- No comments were opposed to enabling the temporary restriction or prohibition of fires.

## Campground and recreation site regulations

The majority of survey respondents agree (63%; 855 of 1,352) with the proposal.

Proposed regulations include:

- Only registered campers are allowed in a campground from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.
- Day-use recreation sites may only be used from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m.
- Firewood provided by Yukon Parks may not be stored in any vehicle.
- No more than four cubic feet (0.113 cubic metres) of firewood provided by Yukon Parks may be stockpiled at a campsite. This is an average stack of firewood, about 2 feet wide by 1.5 feet high.
- While firearms are allowed, loaded firearms are not.
- Cutting or damaging trees is prohibited.

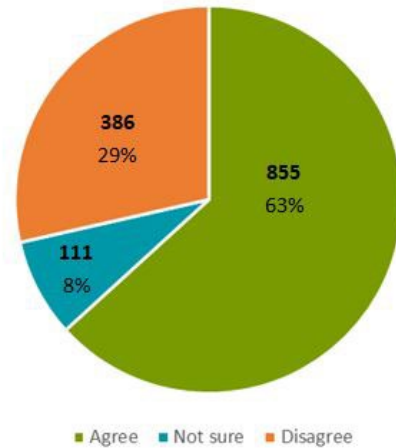


Figure 11. Survey responses to proposed regulations on campgrounds and recreation sites

Additional written comments:

- 47 comments indicated that visitors other than registered campers should be allowed in the campground at any time.
- 31 comments indicated a desire to be able to use day-use recreation areas earlier in the morning and later in the evening than the proposed 7 am to 11 pm.
- 24 comments reiterated support for the storing of firewood in vehicles.
- 34 comments indicated a desire for a larger stockpile of firewood allowed than that proposed.
- 15 comments reiterated support for a prohibition on loaded firearms.
- 11 comments reiterated support for a prohibition on cutting or damaging trees.

## Other Indications from Written Comments

- We received 243 comments related to enforcement despite not asking questions specific to enforcement of the regulations. People indicated that they were concerned about how the new regulations would be enforced knowing that there are not park officers/rangers in all parks every day. These individuals showed support for more resources being provided for enforcement and campground host programs.
- Based upon the written comments, we heard that some of the proposals were not clear and that we need to provide this clarity when the regulations are developed.



## Other things the public would like to see in regulation

People made many thoughtful suggestions about potential regulations that would improve their park experiences, protect the environment, and provide fair access to park facilities and improvements. These were made through written comments with the survey, via email, or in conversation. Suggested additions to the regulations include:

- Stronger regulations to prohibit people from saving camping sites for themselves or their friends – mentioned by nine.
- Establishment of RV-only camping sites where use of tents only is prohibited – mentioned by eight.
- Prohibit loud music in campgrounds – mentioned by seven.
- Prohibit the idling of vehicles in campgrounds – mentioned by four.
- Limit motor size or prohibit motorized watercraft on small lakes – mentioned by four.
- Manage use of e-bikes on trails – mentioned by three.
- Allow overflow camping that people can use for one night if the main campground is full. Particularly for use by travelers and tenters to keep tired drivers off the roads and tenters safe – mentioned by two.
- Manage use of accessible camping sites – mentioned by one.
- Prohibit day-use in camping sites if the people are not camping – mentioned by one.
- Limit the number of dogs per camping site – mentioned by one.
- Define what a mobility aid is and what types of mobility aids can be used on trails – mentioned by one.

Thank you to those who took the time to participate in our engagement process.