

Cienega Corridor Visitor Survey Results

SUMMARY REPORT

August 18, 2020



Prepared for:

Pima County Regional Flood Control District
Pima County Office of Sustainability & Conservation
Pima County Natural Resources, Parks, and Recreation

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Introduction

The Cienega Creek Natural Preserve (Preserve) is a 4,000+ acre preserve established for the preservation and protection of the natural and scenic resources of the property. The Preserve extends 12 miles in length from Colossal Cave Road on the northwest to the former corners of the Empirita Ranch on the southeast. A section of Cienega Creek within the Preserve has been designated as an Outstanding Water of Arizona due, in part, to its excellent quality of water.

Pima County Regional Flood Control District, Pima County Office of Sustainability and Conservation, and Pima County Natural Resources, Parks, and Recreation are in the process of developing a new Management Plan for the Cienega Corridor, which includes the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve and Colossal Cave Mountain Park (excluding the lease area which includes the cave attraction and Posta Quemada Ranch area). A visitor use survey was developed to inform the process and to gauge differences in visitor use and/or attitudes in the 27 years since the previous survey was conducted to inform the 1994 management plan. The survey is primarily focused on the Preserve, but a limited amount of information was collected for other locations in the Cienega Corridor as well.

The 2020 survey was built in the Google Forms platform, with questions that mirrored the 1993 survey as well as new questions that the management team was interested in getting visitor feedback on. The 1993 survey was developed and conducted during April and May of 1993 by the Pima County Department of Transportation, Pima County Regional Flood Control District, and McGann & Associates. It was distributed by mail to 128 individuals who had previously obtained a permit for access into the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, and there were 64 total respondents. The 2020 survey was distributed digitally through direct outreach via emails and social media platforms; in addition, a Quick Response (QR) barcode linked to the survey was posted at the Gabe Zimmerman Trailhead. Direct outreach to user groups such as the Arizona Trail Association, Sonoran Desert Mountain Bicyclists, Tucson Audubon Society, and others was a successful way to reach Preserve users. Nearly 500 (497) people responded to the survey during the one-month survey period (June 18 – July 20, 2020).

The data summaries presented in this report include comparison with 1993 data when possible. Survey questions are included in Appendix A and raw data from the survey has been submitted under separate cover.

Key Findings

- The majority of the respondents were from Pima County, have visited the Preserve on multiple occasions, and travel 50 miles or less to visit the Preserve.
- Although 62% of respondents were aware of permit requirements, only 43% obtained one on their last visit.
- Views regarding the current permit system are largely positive or neutral, which is an improvement since the 1993 survey.
- The majority of respondents encountered 10 or less people on their last visit; uncrowded conditions are one of the main drivers of visitation.
- The Gabe Zimmerman Trailhead is the most popular access point.
- The Arizona Trail is the most popular destination, followed by the Cienega Creek itself and Davidson Canyon.
- The most popular activities are hiking/backpacking, birdwatching, and photography. There has been a notable increase in mountain biking since the 1993 survey.
- Most respondents reported no observations of prohibited activities.

Response Summary

SECTION ONE: Residency and Visitation

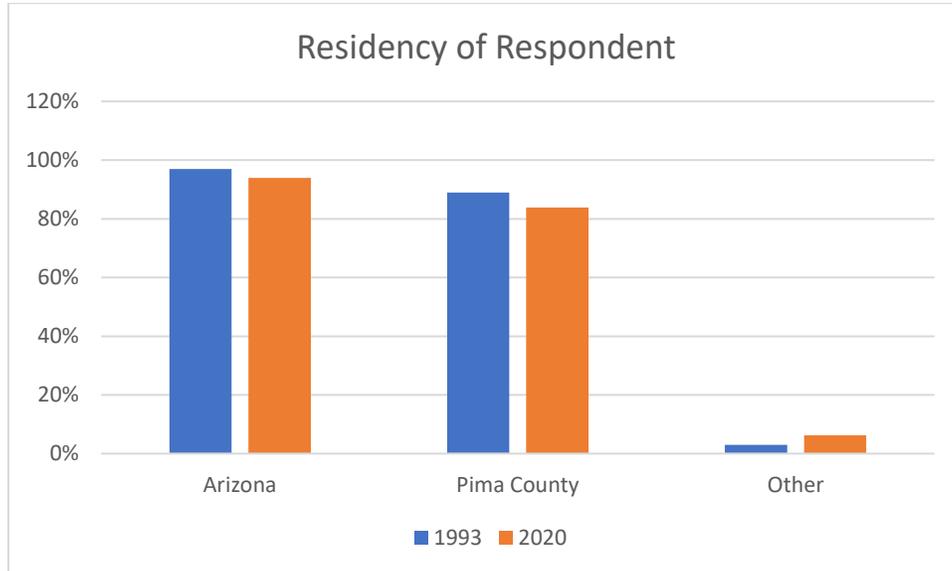


Figure 1. Residency of respondents is roughly the same as it was in 1993, with the vast majority of visitors from Pima County, Arizona.

Q2: Since its establishment in 1988, I have visited Cienega Creek Natural Preserve:

497 responses

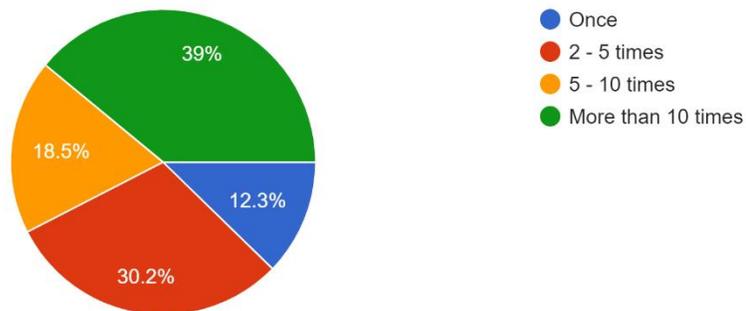


Figure 2. This data is not comparable to 1993, as 27 additional years have passed. The majority of visitors who responded to the study have been to the Preserve on multiple occasions.

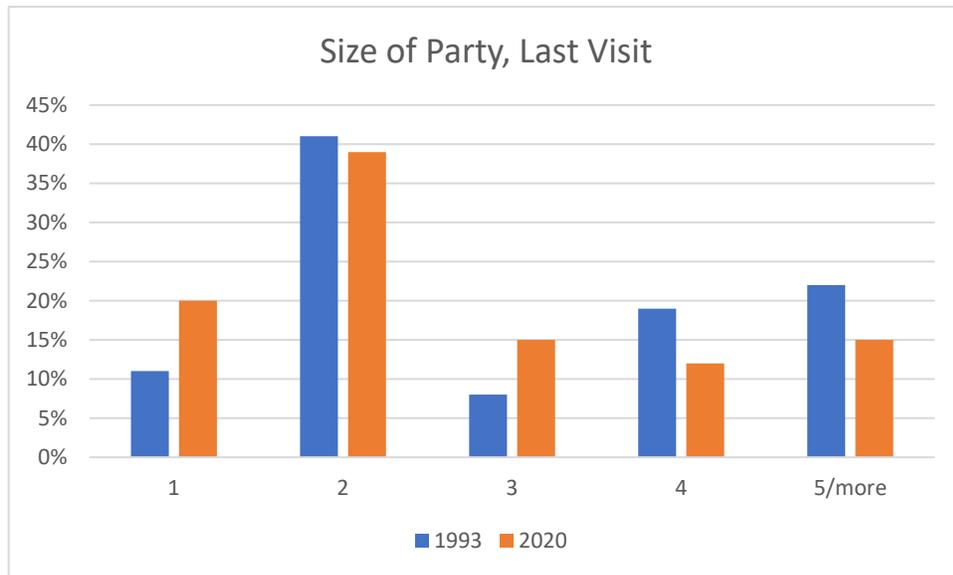


Figure 3. The majority of current visitation is groups of 3 or less; in 1993 there were more larger groups.

Q4: On past visits to Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, my party included other individuals who:
(please check all that apply)

497 responses

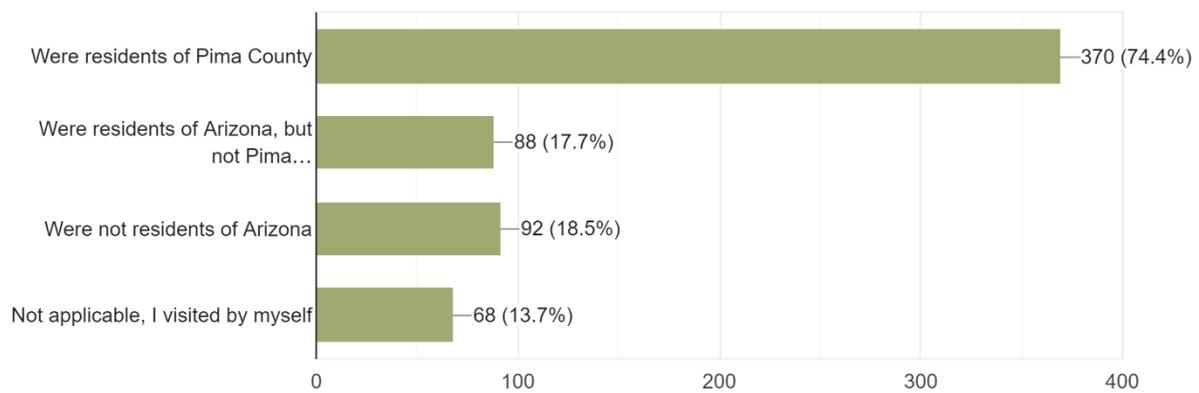


Figure 4. 2020 data only - not directly comparable to 1993 survey question.

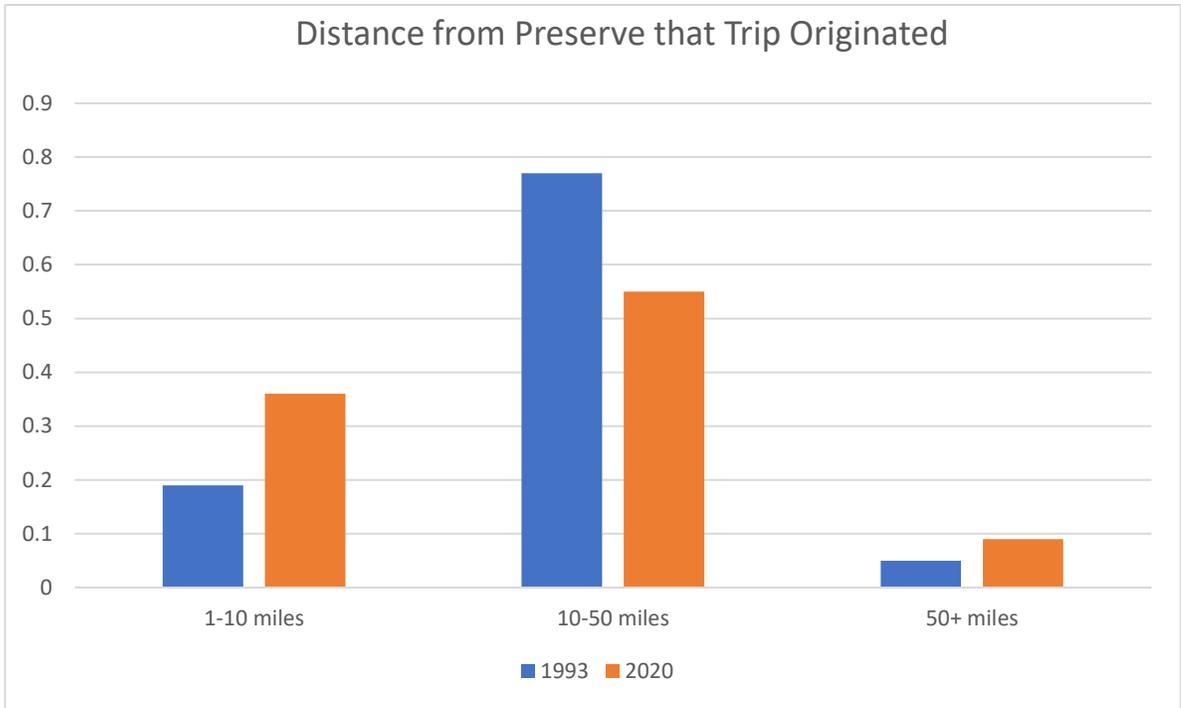


Figure 5. Most trips originate from the Tucson area, but since 1993 there has been an increase in the trips originating both closer and further.

Q6: On your most recent trip, how far did you travel to reach the Preserve?

497 responses

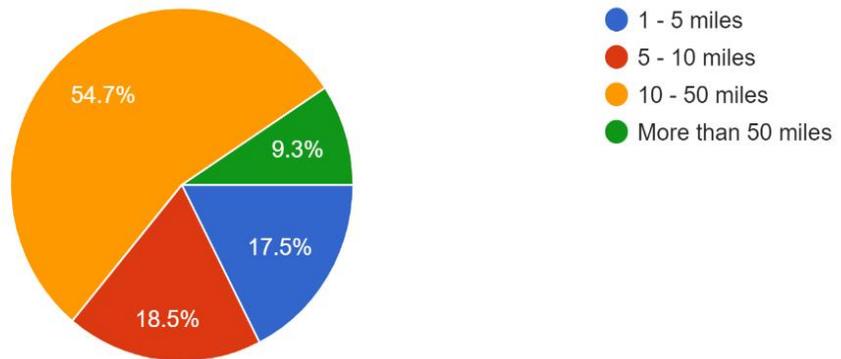


Figure 6. In 2020 the survey broke the 1-10 mile category up, and it was further revealed that of that total (36%) roughly half of the visitors were travelling from only 1 - 5 miles away.

Q8: Considering all past visits, I have visited Cienega Creek Natural Preserve during the following seasons: (check all that apply)

497 responses

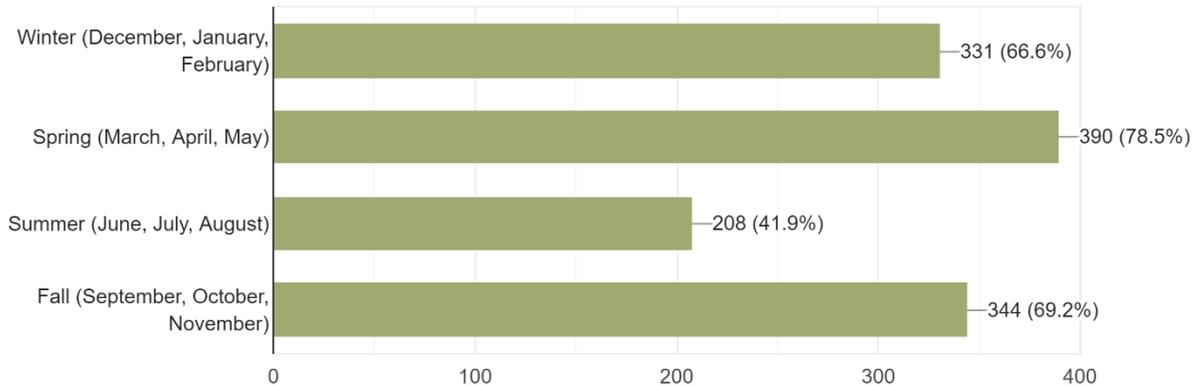


Figure 7. Respondents visit the Preserve throughout the year, with higher visitation in the spring and fall months. This is a similar pattern from the 1993 data, which was collected by month but averaged as follows: winter 36%; spring 48%; summer 28%; and fall 44%. The overall magnitude of visitation seems to be increasing; larger percentages in the 2020 data are likely explained by a larger number of respondents that visit the Preserve throughout the year.

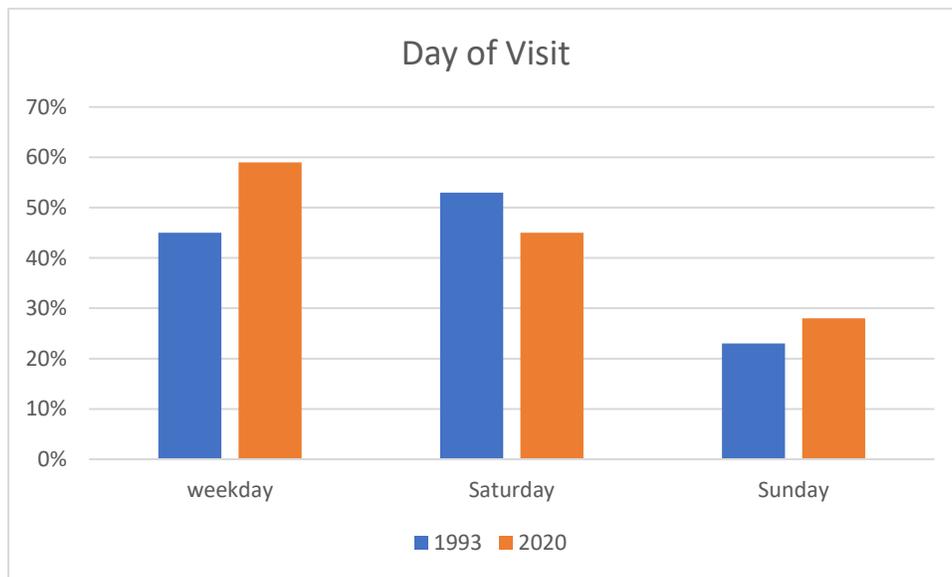


Figure 8. Weekday visitation was more common in the 2020 survey; this may be due in part to the changes in respondents' schedules due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

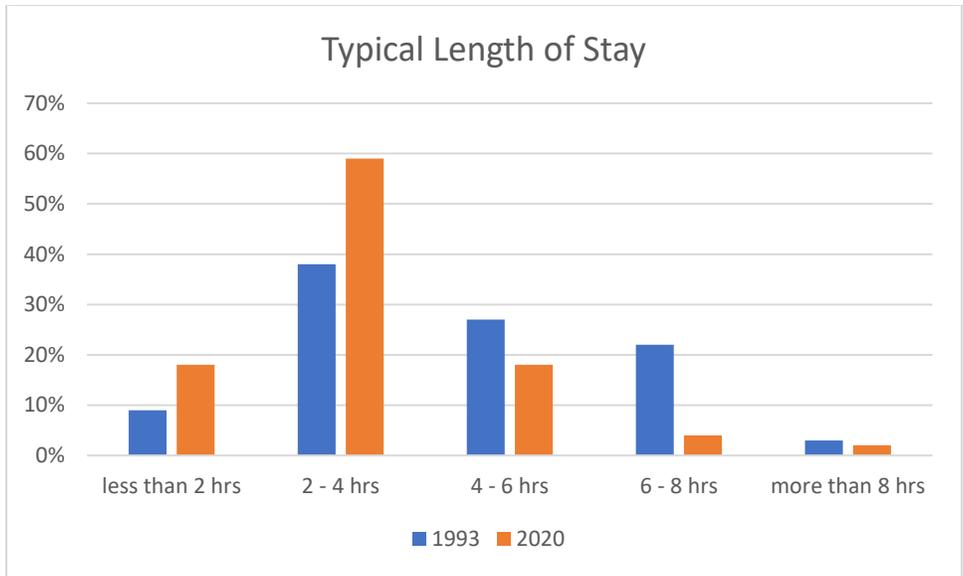


Figure 9. The typical length of stay has decreased since 1993, with most visitors staying between 2 - 4 hours. Since 1993, the Arizona Trail was developed and the Gabe Zimmerman Memorial was added to the Trailhead.

SECTION TWO: Permitting

Q11: Were you aware that a free permit, obtainable online, is required to visit the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve?

497 responses



Figure 10. More than a third of the respondents were not aware that a free permit is required. This question was not a part of the 1993 survey.

Q12: On your last visit to the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, did you obtain a permit ahead of time?

497 responses



Figure 11. Less than half of the respondents obtained a free permit prior to their last visit. This question was not a part of the 1993 survey.

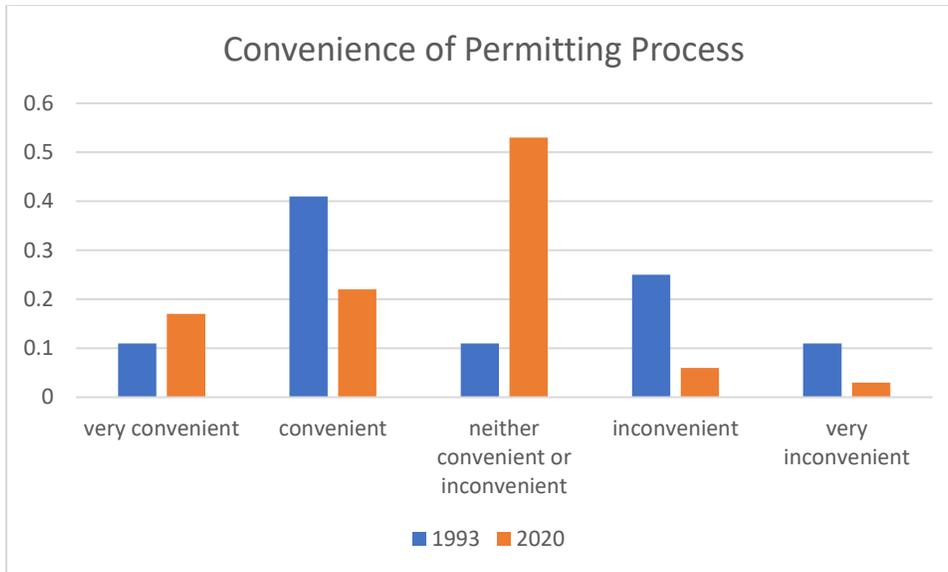


Figure 12. The vast majority of the respondents have a positive or neutral view of the permitting process (92%). This is a significant increase since 1993, when 63% of respondents held those views. At that time, visitors had to make a phone call to get a permit, and either pick it up in person or wait for it to arrive in the mail. The newer system is much more streamlined and does not require as much advance planning. Additional narrative responses are available in the raw data.

Q15: How many other visitors did you encounter on your last visit to the Preserve?

496 responses

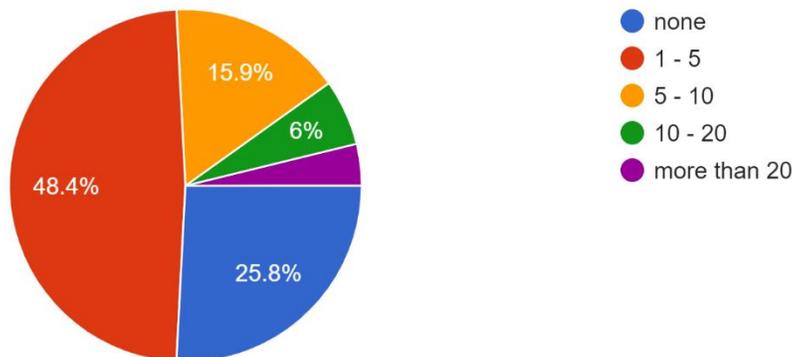


Figure 13. The majority of respondents encountered relatively small numbers of other visitors while at their last visit to the Preserve. This question was not included in the 1993 survey. Additional narrative responses are available in the raw data.

Q16: On your last visit, what was your opinion about the number of visitors you encountered?

497 responses

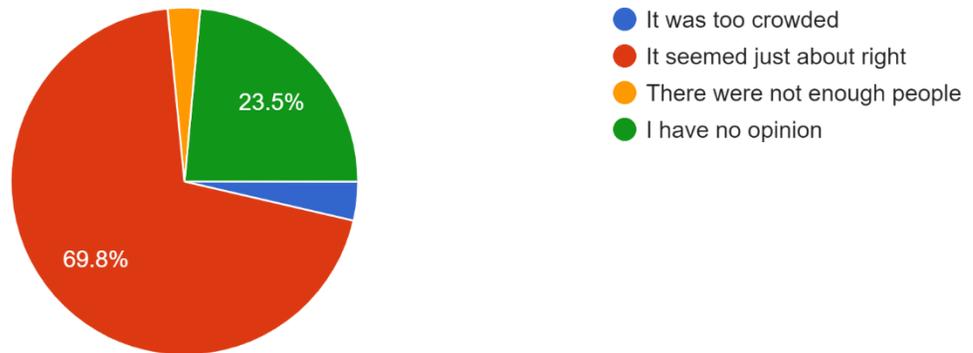


Figure 14. The majority of respondents felt positively or had no opinion about the level of visitation they encountered. This question was not included in the 1993 survey.

Q18: In addition to the current access permit, a Right of Entry permit is required for formal research and commercial or organized group events...e you familiar with these other special permits?

497 responses

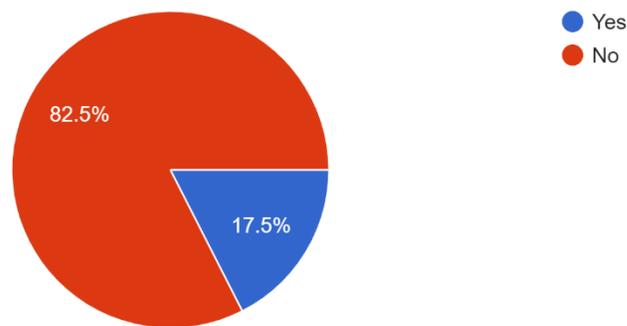


Figure 15. The majority of respondents were not aware of additional permitting requirements for other activities. Additional narrative responses are available in the raw data. This question was not included in the 1993 survey.

SECTION THREE: Access and Visitor Activities

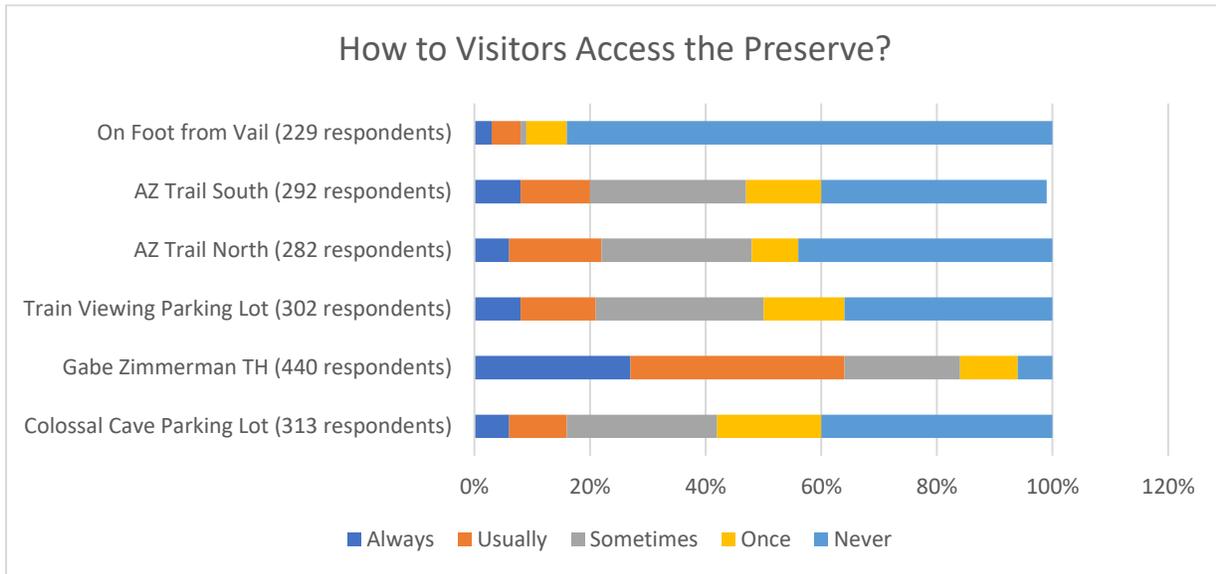


Figure 16. Visitor Access Points. This question was not included in the 1993 survey.

Table 1. Other access points reported in survey. This question was not included in the 1993 survey.

1925 Bridge just west of Dam
Adjoining residential neighborhood
Agua Verde Creek from La Posta Quemada TH.
Along RR tracks
along the creek to Davidson Canyon
AZT2020
Bike
By mountain bike from other parts of the Arizona Trail, and while living in Vail.
Cut in from the side
Cut in from the side
Cut in from the side
During my last project, I also accessed it from the historic Pantano town site, and from a two-track road coming in from the north approximately midway between Pantano and Davidson Canyon Wash. About 20 years ago I accessed it from the mouth of Mescal Wash as part of an archaeological project associated with the Marsh Road overpass.
East end
Eastern access from east Marsh Station Road
Empirita Ranch

Empirita Ranch
Empirita Ranch
Empirita Ranch
From Davidson Canyon in the 1980's when conducting monitoring for Pima County when I worked at PAG. Also, from Marsh Station Road bear the old train water tower.
I accessed from the west side I believe. My group was birding in hopes of seeing yellow-billed cuckoos and gray hawks
I chose other because I've only visited by Marsh Station once ga th hearing cattle and once at G. Z. Trailhead.
I lived off of Agua Verde and Marsh Station Roads for 33 years.
I lived on segal lane just before the train bridge from 1984 to 1990
I park by the crosswalk at AZ trail and head south
I ran the colossal/vail 50 mile run.
Loma Alta trail head
Marsh Station road and Cienega creek and Davidson canyon at I-10
Mountain biking the AZT
Off of Marsh Station upstream, near Empirita, or bushwack in.
On bicycle from Vail or Gabe Zimmerman
Once from the east side of the preserve, north of I-10.
Other roads provide access
Passed thru in vehicle on Marsh Station Rd.
Pistol Hill
Sometimes I park at the small turnout at the northeast end of the road bridge, next to the AZ trail crossing. More often I park in the larger turnout that's around the bend to the east, next to the site of the old cantina. This is generally a quiet place to park. Before the pandemic, I parked at the Zimmerman Trailhead on about half of my visits, and the "Cantina Turnout" on the other half.
Taking the easter I-10 Marsh Station Road exit (#291?) and coming back west there is a ranch road that goes down to the creek
The field work that I conduct within the preserve requires entry/exit from both the Gabe Zimmerman trailhead and the access gate near the Pantano Townsite.
two different points along the road east of the creek
We do monitoring and I take friends to the Pantano cultural site upstream by the Jungle.
We hiked in one direction from the far East side to the Gabe trailhead.
We missed the exit on the freeway and used the Google map to backtrack and find the east way onto Marsh Station Rd and crossed the brush and railroad tracks down to the creek!
We tried accessing it through a neighborhood

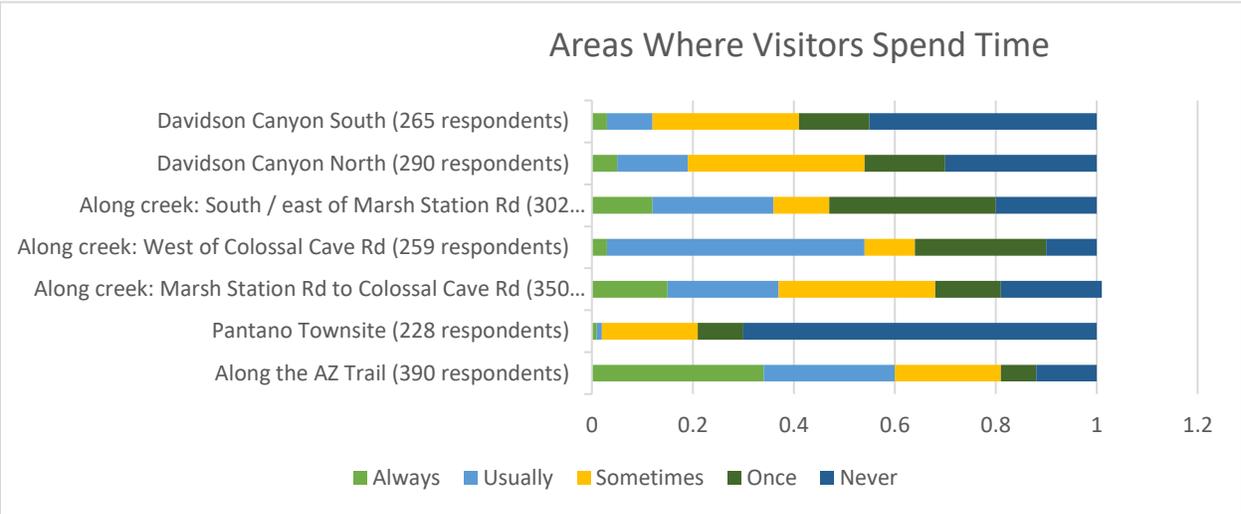


Figure 17. Areas where visitors spend time. This question was not included in the 1993 survey.

Table 2. Other areas of visitation. This question was not included in the 1993 survey.

Agua Verde Wash
Area around the railroad "High Bridge".
Empirita area
I believe I stayed on the Arizona trail I was only on site for the day and camped north of the park for the night And left at first light. sunrise to sunset AZT2020
I hike, photograph, and explore all over that area.
I like seeing the train rails
I usually walk up stream from three bridges about 2 miles and downstream about a mile.
I'm somewhat directionally challenged in the outdoors, so I think my answer above is correct. We went the typical route for birding there, which first crosses an open area before descending to the sandy river bed. Just a short ways up (or down) the river bed, there's a side "tributary" that heads off to the right, if that helps to figure out where I've been.
Just stayed at the railroad bridge.
Old Spanish Trail and Pistol Hill roadways.
On our way back from Willcox Playa
Sorry, I don't keep track of directions. I've walked along the creek in both directions from Marsh Station Road.
Stay at the train viewing location only
Train watching and hiking the Arizona Trail
Train watching from Train viewing parking lot
Unsure of which portion of the preserve we visited. our approach was from the west
up stream from the Gabe Zimmerman Trailhead access
We couldn't park where we tried to access it from

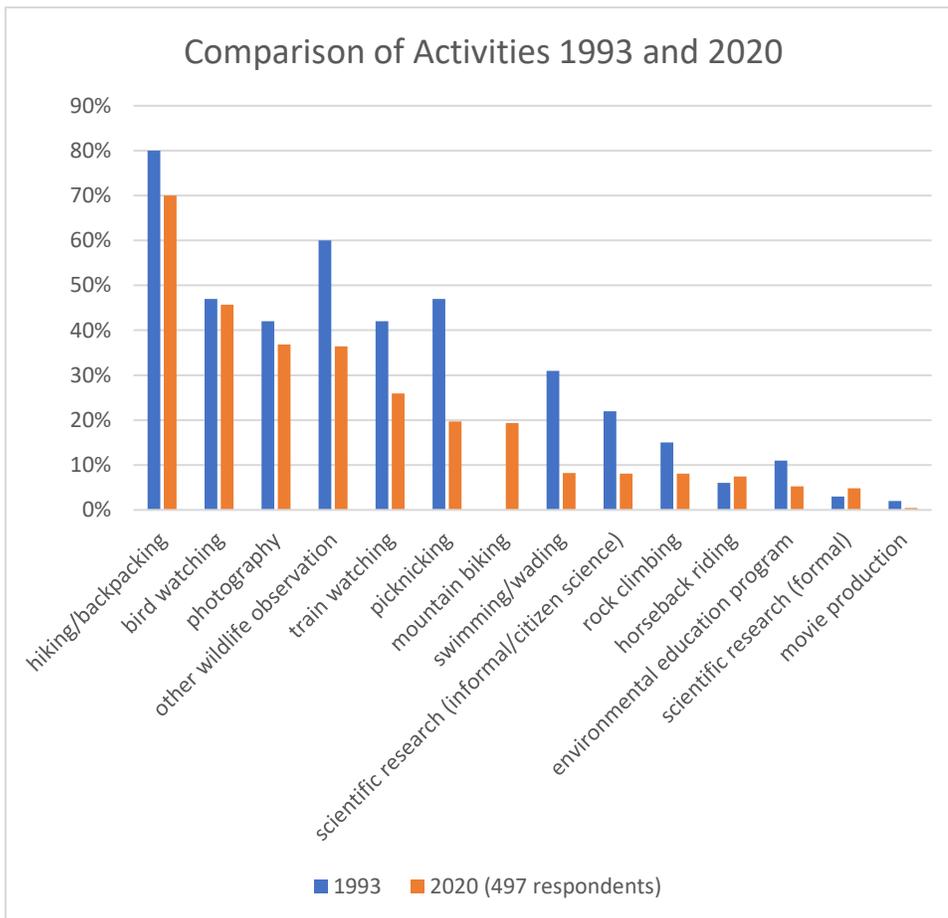


Figure 18. Comparison of activities 1993 and 2020; only activities included in both surveys are presented. Data are ordered by most popular activities in 2020. Notable increase: mountain biking. Notable decreases: other wildlife observation, train watching, picnicking, swimming/wading. Although it does not show up in the 1993 data, mountain biking was permitted on existing roads on the Preserve at the time of that survey; the construction and promotion of the Arizona Trail has made the area a very popular destination for mountain bikers since that time.

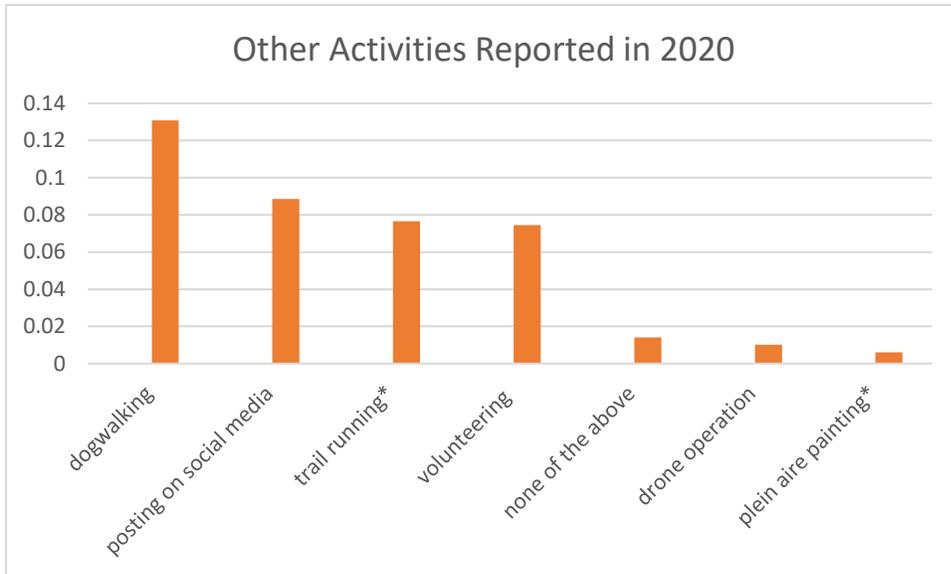


Figure 19. Activities not included in the 1993 survey. Activities with asterisks were identified by respondents. Others included: geocaching, metal detecting, botanical observations, bike packing, road cycling, technical ropes training, meditation, and rappelling off the bridge (20 years ago).

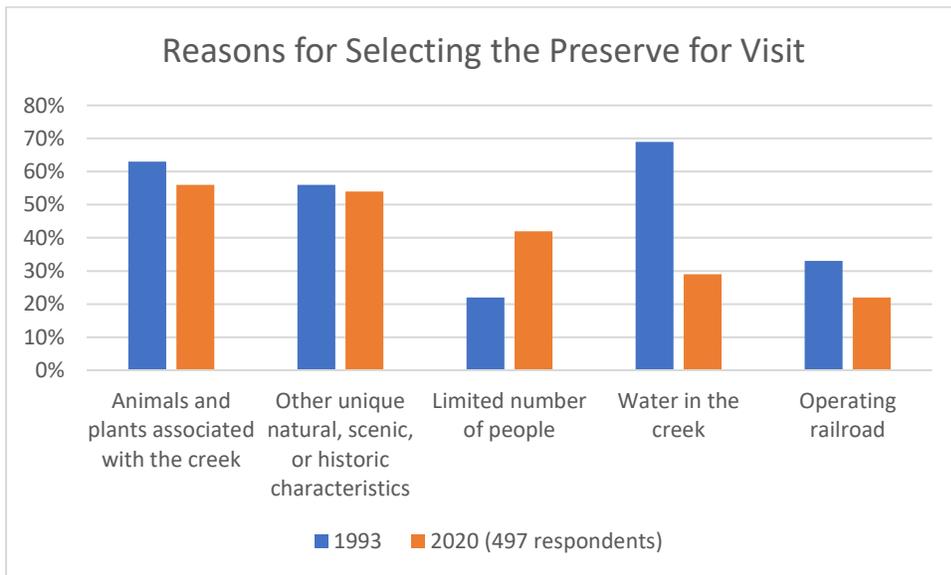


Figure 20. Visitors selected the Preserve for a variety of reasons, ordered by most common in 2020. Notable changes since 1993: a significant decrease in the percentage of respondents attracted to the water in the creek, and an increase in the percentage of respondents attracted by the limited number of people they would encounter. Other responses included: Arizona Trail (41); proximity to home (9); event (9); shade (5); research (3); easy access (1); dog-friendly (1); mountain bike friendly (1); well-maintained trail (1); wanted to see the Gabe Zimmerman Trailhead (1); presence of rare/endangered species (1); sheep crossing (1); and have been visiting since 1968 (1).

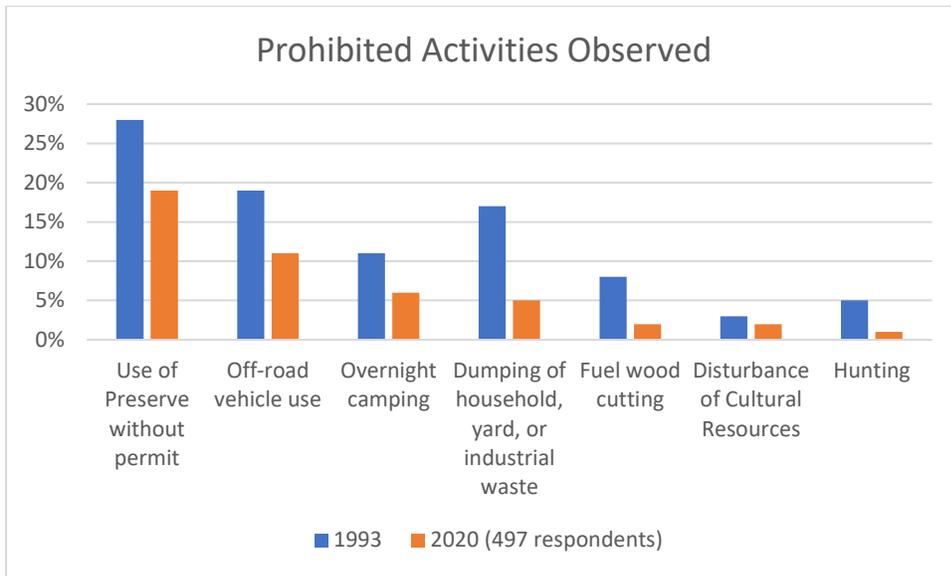


Figure 21. Prohibited activities observed, ordered by most common in 2020. It is notable that for all categories that were part of both surveys, the current observed percentages are lower than 1993 observations.

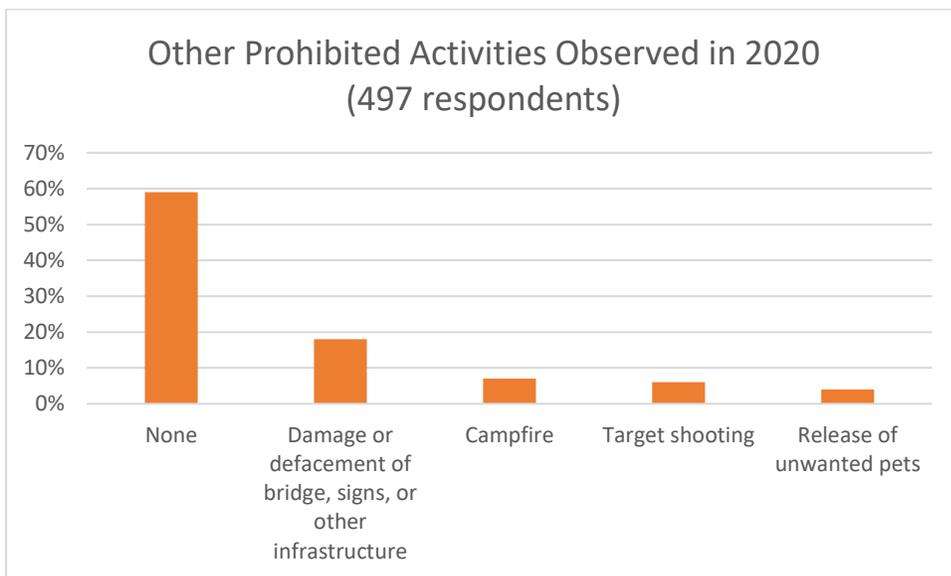


Figure 22. Additional prohibited activities that were added to the 2020 survey. Most notably, the majority of respondents did not observe any prohibited activities. Other prohibited activities that respondents reported included: litter/trash (6); cattle (5); dogs off-leash (4); railroad ROW entry (1); and paintball (1).

SECTION FOUR: Other Areas Within the Cienega Creek Corridor

Q27: Have you visited any of the other areas within the Cienega Creek Corridor (check all that apply)?

494 responses

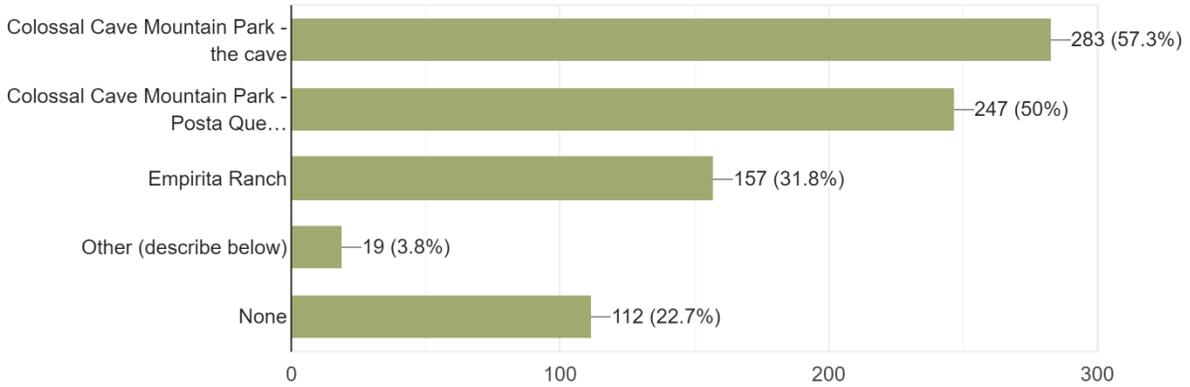


Figure 23. This question was not included in the 1993 survey. Other areas identified by respondents included: Agua Verde Wash, Davidson Canyon, the Arizona Trail, and Colossal Cave Campground.

SECTION FIVE: Other Comments Received

Of the nearly 500 respondents, 120 left optional comments at the end of the survey. The majority of the comments were positive, with many reflecting appreciation for the Preserve and an expectation that Pima County continue to protect the area. All comments are included in the table below.

we need more riparian areas, more protection for unique places like Cienega Creek
A fresh water resource and restroom would be appreciated.
A self-permitting station might be good. Cell service was sporadic.
Appreciate the trail, access and natural space
Arizona is beautiful people need to get out and explore.
As a volunteer for the Arizona Trail Association (and the 13 years while I was an employee of Pima County NRPR) of I have spent hundreds of hours working and recreating along the Arizona Trail and at Empirita Ranch. As the population expands there will be more pressure on these areas, and management that permits additional recreation while protecting cultural and biological resources is critical. People will go there to recreate, and a management plan that doesn't recognize and control how and where they recreate will result in serious negative impacts on those resources.
Awesome place - thanks for taking care of it
Balance visitor numbers with easy access to a great resource
Beautiful area -please keep it protected!!
Cienega Creek is a real treasure for the Tucson area. It needs to be protected from groundwater pumping upstream and overuse.
Cienega Creek is SUCH a valuable resource. Protecting the surface water from upstream threats is more critical than worrying about a few users who over-impact the area right around the Gabe-Z trailhead. I agree that people should follow the rules, but if the mines dry it up, then people will stop coming anyway.
Cienega Creek Natural Preserve is a pristine and peaceful natural habitat. Wonderful to see the creek running. I entrust Pima County to protect and preserve this area against destructive mining operations. It will destroy this sacred, beautiful environmental treasure.
Cienega is a wonderful asset to Pima County and I strongly suggest that current policies remain in place. It would be nice if Posta Quemada Ranch was restored to accommodate more activities and events, however I understand the cost/return constraints involved.
continue to preserve this area, especially by prohibiting the Rosemont Mine
Do whatever possible to preserve and maintain positive impact on this region please
during last visit, I did not get confirmation that my permit was received or approved (during COVID)
Efforts to keep it clean and graffiti free would be good!
For me, Cienega Creek is a unique and precious area because of the water resource and the wildlife it supports. I am willing to give time and money to help in its preservation. I will contact Mr. Scalero directly.
Get rid of the permits.
Good place for butterflies.

Gorgeous place--can't wait to return.
Grateful for the preservation and conservation of this important area. Maintaining such a pristine and ecologically valuable place is paramount during a warming and drying climate.
Having a separate parking lot with dirt footing is a big plus for parking horse trailers and unloading horses. Thank you
hope it stays open for mountain biking toward Empirita Ranch
I absolutely love this area and treat it with the utmost respect as it is a little gem as do all of the mountain bikers I have ever ridden with there. We keep it clean, we love it deeply and respect each hiker we encounter.
I have done phenology in the creek. PLEASE don't develop!!
I just love watching the trains.
I like it that you are doing the surgery
I like that the area is limited, but it is not enforced with staff, so there are always people there that don't have a permit.
I like the current setup
I plan to visit Cienega NP regularly beginning in 2021 after coronavirus has eased.
I really love this location
I recently visited Empirita Ranch for the first time. The access feels like hunting is the primary access concern, but at the sign in box it seemed like the last few visitors were all hikers, birders and bikers - we drove more than hiked on our visit but hope to return and explore the area more - I hope that recreational use of the Empirita Ranch is given serious consideration!
I spoke with the area manager last year, but the break in of cattle seems to be a continual problem. Given the fragility and value of the remaining riparian species and surface flows with the conservation area, I find this pretty unacceptable. There are few resources like the spring flows and the aquatic species they support left in the region at large. Cattle have trampled and over browsed much of the vegetation, caused large amounts of stream bed degradation, bank erosion, and silting in several areas. This has major impacts on the water quality, forage, and watershed health.
I think a trail system throughout the area would be awesome. But after answering all these questions it seems like that will never happen
I think it is great to have a wildlife preserve with limited human access.
I was astounded at the very tall shade trees - definitely hard to find in Arizona and something I miss from the midwest. I'd like to go back on a hot day, but the walk from the Gabe trailhead lot to the creek is in full sun and would undo any cooling that the creek foliage would provide
I wish I could obtain a permit in a shorter timeframe - There have been times when I realize I can hike on a Saturday, but it is too late on Friday.
I wish you would set up same day permits if there are slots open for a particular day.
I would be very upset if we couldn't continue to visit the area.
I would recommend a revision to the right of way road path around colossal cave area to allow more traffic and visitors.
If you have a permit system, then you need enforcement. If you have enforcement, then you need budget, fines, and all that goes with that.

If you need any help with developing the management plan, I would be happy to volunteer
I'm happy to get a permit the next time I visit the area. I'm wondering about long distance hikers on the Arizona Trail who are briefly passing through the Cienega Corridor and if they need a permit.
I'm intrigued by the survey. I appreciate the need to find balance in preserving the fragile ecosystems and enabling use for human recreation and enjoyment. Wish you the best!
I'm very glad Pima County is protecting and preserving these beautiful places.
Improve campgrounds, roads and make camping reservation on line.
In the past park rangers were helpful, currently deputies are supportive
increased visitor activity seems to have decreased illegal traffic and camping
It is a beautiful location.
It is very important to protect the water in the creek from the mining industry.
It was a nice location to visit.
It would be awesome if the survey wasn't so long or at least I had a heads up that it was going to be 31 question
it would be nice if there were additional parking areas besides gabe zimmerman and colossal cave road. It is quite a hike from there to the interior of the preserve. i would also like to explore the extreme eastern end, but there is not a lot of info about it.
It would be nice to have a pedestrian bridge just west of and parallel to the road bridge. This would allow more productive use of the trestle parking lot by AZ Trail hikers and easier/safer viewing of the creek below by short-time visitors, those folks who've just pulled off the road to take a quick look. Spray paint graffitiers have been particularly active this year in one of the RR culverts west of the trestle.
It's a beautiful and biologically important place! Thank you for keeping it a wonderful preserve
It's a beautiful and biologically important place! Thank you for keeping it a wonderful preserve
It's a beautiful and biologically important place! Thank you for keeping it a wonderful preserve
It's a great place to mountain bike and hike dogs.
It's a special place worth protecting.
it's really lovely the way it is. can you really improve it?
I've only seen a small section of the Creek--I would love to explore further but didn't have this information
Keep the cows out! Such damage. and lots of transients, makes it feel unsafe; like I should be carrying.
Less permits less restrictions are what's needed to get people outside.
Love this area!!
maintain equestrian use -appreciation of desert's beauty without motorized vehicles. peace and tranquillity!
Make this area a priority for protection and monitoring
Marsh Station Road is crowded with Cyclists, plus the visitors to the Trail Head. People do not observe the No standing or walking on bridge

Missed this year due to virus. I'll be back in April if things clear up.
My experiences at Cienega Creek are generally very positive but I think more monitoring is needed to educate people of the rules (weekends especially). Blocking 4 wheel access to the riparian stretch above the dam coming from the Colossal Cave Bridge entrance would also help preserve the sensitive habitat there (and probably decrease illegal poaching in this area if it occurs).
Need access for horses between Gabe Zimmermann and Marsh Station Road
No, but I will certainly obtain a permit before visiting in the future.
No, other than I love and greatly appreciate my access to the Creek and hope I have continued and easy access as I have in the past. Thank you very much. Michael Breskin
Once again, please do not allow pets of any kind in this small fragile ecosystem. Humans do not clean up after their pets. Even if they do the impacts of scents left behind are harmful enough to wildlife.
permit process is a major pain if it still involves faxing, etc.
Permit process was straightforward & I appreciate the quick response. Also thank you for allowing geocaching, it was the basis for my vacation to the beautiful area.
Please connect the preserve to the Loop.
please continue to preserve and protect this critical area. Thank you!
Please continue to preserve this area from encroaching development!
Please do your best to keep it pristine Thank you
Please don't allow more people in!
Please don't develop more trails or bike access it ruins the natural values
Please fix the road from entrance to camp to ranch
Please keep out motorized bikes, drones and limit the use of high speed mountain bikes. all can be safe it speed is considered.
Please keep this open to the public
Please make same day permit if there are open slots
Please protect the waters, habitat and wildlife in as wild a state as possible.
Please save Cienega Creek...keep the water flowing...and keep it all natural and pristine. it is a beautiful, special place and I take many out of state visitors there to show them the wildlife, to enjoy the water, and savor the riparian environment!
Preservation of La Cienega is crucial for the flora and fauna of our region; at the same time public access (limited and controlled) will enable us to enjoy and protect this treasure. We protect that which we love. There needs to be a concentrated effort to increase awareness about permitting, online, at trailheads, etc. I have lives here for 8 years, enjoying the preserve and surrounding areas multiple times per week, and I have served multiple local environmental organizations in that time as well - this survey is the first I have hears regarding the need for a permit. I am sorry I have not obtained one in the past.
Protect flowing water and cottonwood trees there.
Really appreciate the good work Pima County does in managing this and other areas. Thanks!
Reduce gov't interference and restrictions
Signs say Zimmerman trailhead closed at dusk but great spot for stargazing.
Take all measures possible to maintain or increase surface water flow.

Thank you
Thank you for supporting our trail, feed back is most necessary to keep the ball rolling.
Thank you for wanting to protect and make this area better
Thank you!
Thanks for preserving this magically beautiful natural area!
The Arizona Trail rising out of the creek was poorly marked. I walked along the creek bed for some distance before realizing I had missed the trail leading away from the Creek.
The AZT is poorly marked once down in the creek bed, coming from the Gabe Zimmerman Trailhead. It took 3 tries and several GPS apps to finally find where to exit the creek basin!! I think it would be helpful to avoid unintentional damage to the creek area if the trail had better marking.
The overhead cage to cross under the railroad is very appreciated and a good way to keep hikers safe from falling RR debris.
There's already too many people and less and less open space. If more and more people keep moving in, competition for nice recreationable spaces will make the few remaining undeveloped places less enjoyable. Do everything you can to limit development.
These pristine areas are worth protecting.
This area is spectacular. Especially the Posta Quemada area of Colossal Cave Park, and the Davidson Canyon area closest to the Gabe Zimmerman trailhead
this is a treasure, thank you for your good work. I would consider volunteering for maintenance projects.
This is a truly amazing resource in SE Arizona. My fifth year in the state and I remain very impressed with wildlife viewing opportunity. Experiencing the train going over is way cool as way.
This is a very important area for environmental, historical, and recreational reasons. Management of it is critical to allow it to be used while preserving it for future generations to enjoy. I appreciate the opportunity for feedback and involvement. As an equestrian user I access this area frequently and with responsibly.
this is an important natural area
This place is special because it isn't crowded. It would be nice to keep it that way. Thanks.
This preserve is a real gem. Please continue to protect it while keeping it open to AZT users. Also, this survey makes it sound like you always need a permit to visit, while other resources make it sound like you don't need a permit as long as you stay on the AZT. The language around this should be made more consistent.
This whole preserve is a treasure to the area.
We found mushrooms in a damp side-channel of the creek, which was very exciting.
We fully support the permit system, and keeping this area as wild, and natural as possible. We recognize the immense value of Cottonwood galleries to the wildlife of Arizona, both resident and migrant, their rarity across the landscape; we support all mgmt aimed to conserve to the greatest extent possible this diminishing resource.
We love the Arizona Trail
where do I get the permit you mentioned?
Will you be sharing analysis of the permit numbers?

Working to build strong connections to the nearby residents, and, more broadly, to Pima County residents would be a good long-term strategy. It is my observation that those connections have weakened in recent years. We need to build community connections that encourage residents to understand the special places that are right in their 'back yards' and encourage a preservation, caring and care taking ethic.

Worried that the Preserve will be polluted by the Rosemount Mine. Would like a dedicated map of the hiking and cultural attractions in the preserve. This would expand and add to the hiking experience.

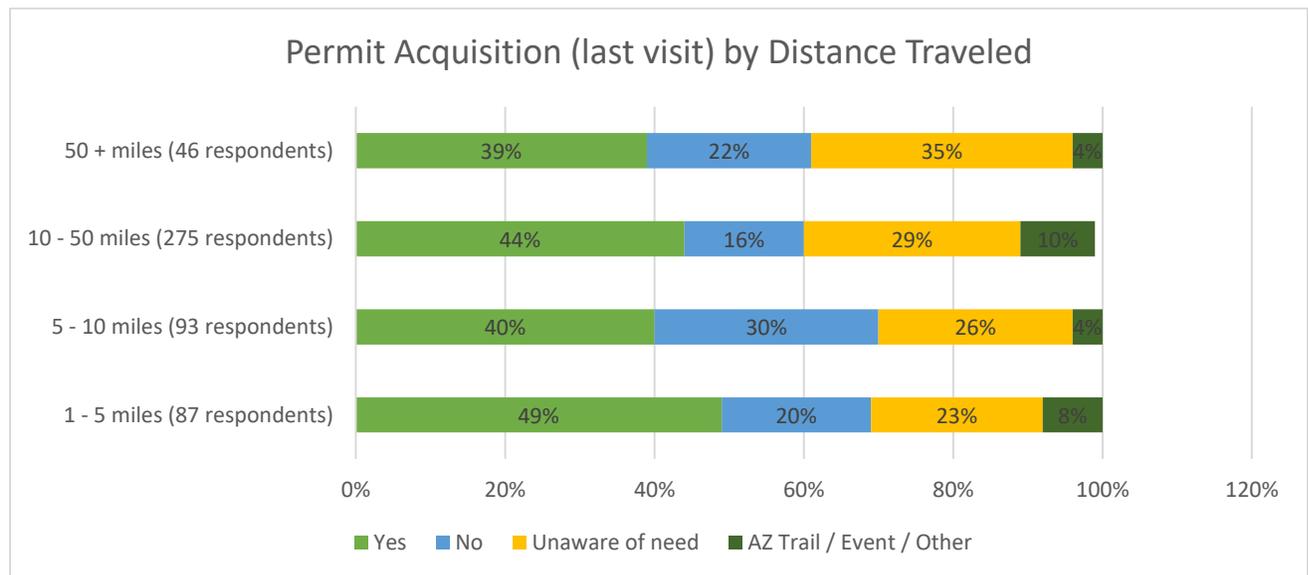
Would really hate to see developers ruin this area by building houses in the desert.

Questions for Further Analysis

The project team had a couple of specific questions that required a more detailed analysis of the data.

How did the distance travelled relate to whether the respondent obtained a permit for their last visit?

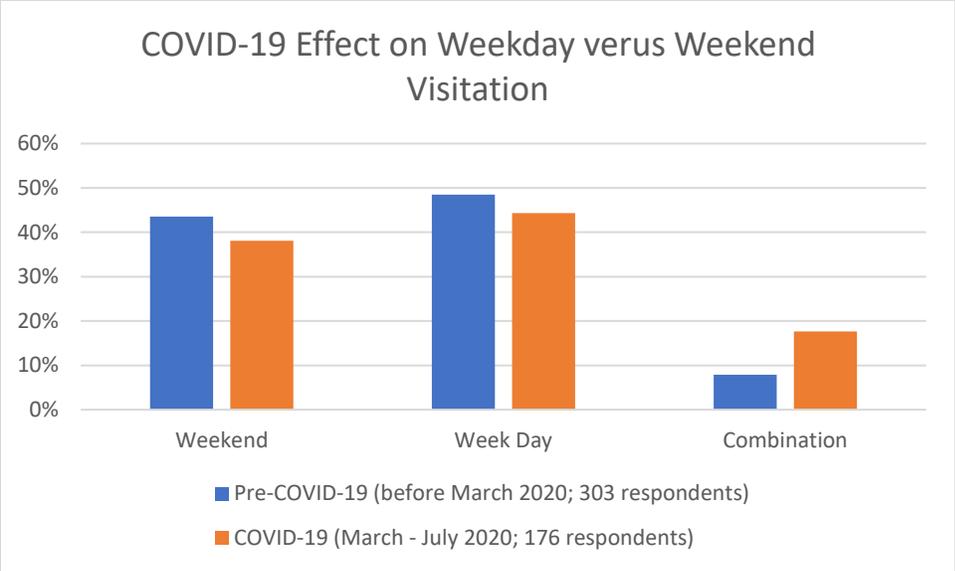
The response data revealed only minor differences in the patterns of permit acquisition by distance travelled, with visitors from 5 – 10 miles the least likely to get a permit.



Are there any discernible effects of COVID-19 on visitation patterns?

Approximately 35% of the survey respondents reported that their last visit to the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve was between March and July of this year, during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff was curious about whether that corresponded with an increase in weekday visits. Of the 479 responses where a determination was possible, 303 respondents' last visit was prior to the pandemic, and 176 respondents' last visit was during the pandemic. The percentage of last visits on weekend, weekday, or some combination thereof was calculated based on the total of prior or during the pandemic, as appropriate.

Surprisingly, the percentage of both weekday and weekend visits was lower during the pandemic, with the percentage of combination visits higher during the pandemic. However, the question regarding weekday/weekend visitation was not specific to the respondent's last visit; it was phrased to include the day/s "most typically" visited. This lack of specificity may invalidate this analysis.



Appendix A: Survey Questions

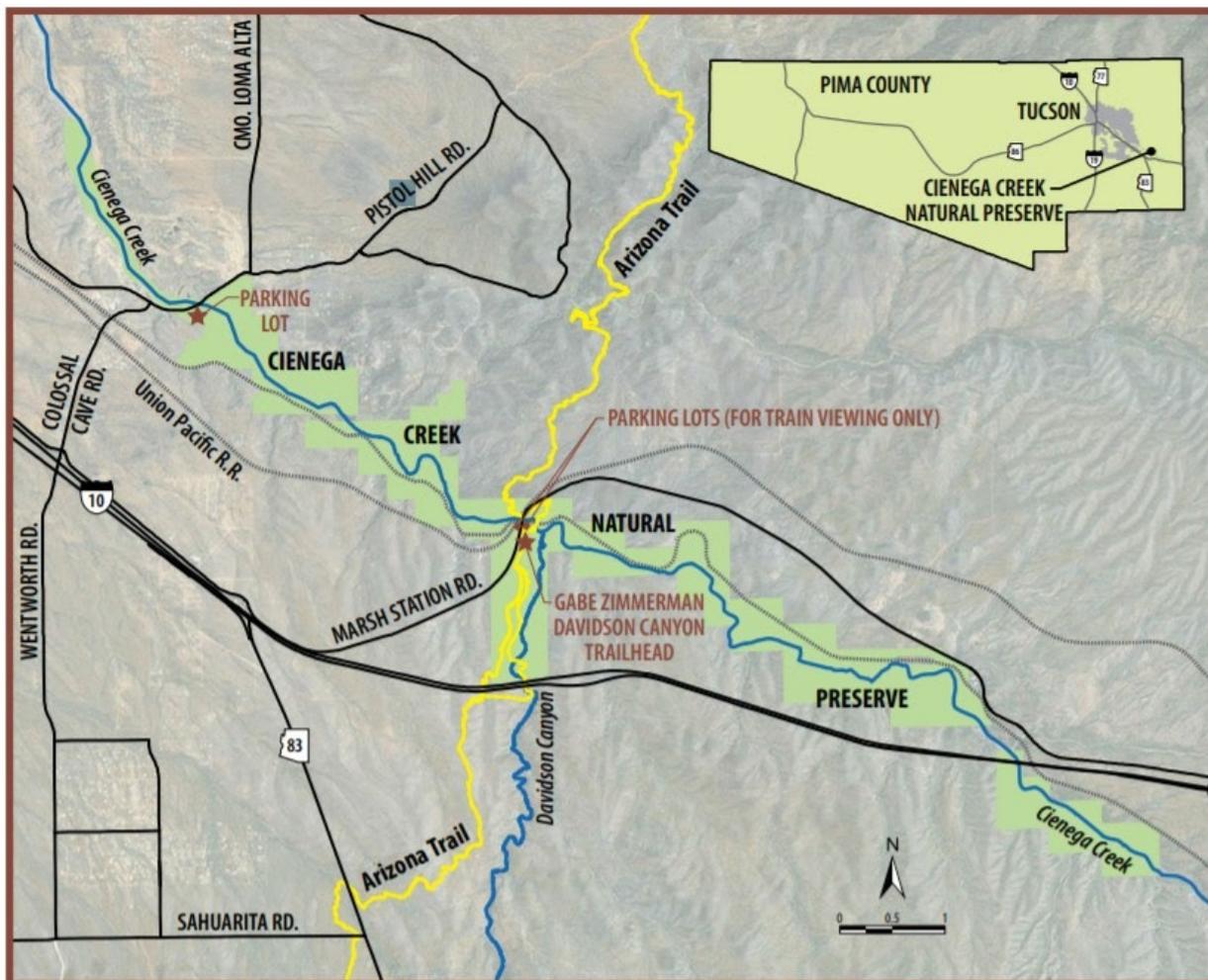
Cienega Corridor Visitor Survey

The Cienega Creek Natural Preserve is a 4,000+ acre preserve established for the preservation and protection of the natural and scenic resources of the property. The preserve extends 12 miles in length from Colossal Cave Road on the northwest to the former corners of the Empirita Ranch on the southeast. A section of the creek within the preserve has been designated as an Outstanding Water of Arizona due, in part, to its excellent quality of water.

Pima County Regional Flood Control District, Pima County Office of Sustainability and Conservation, and Pima County Natural Resources, Parks, and Recreation are in the process of developing a new Management Plan for Cienega Creek Natural Preserve and Colossal Cave Mountain Park (excluding the lease area which includes the cave attraction and Posta Quemada Ranch area). We are interested in getting feedback from visitors to inform the process.

* Required

Map of the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve



1. Q1: I am a resident of: (please check all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

Pima County

Arizona

Other: _____

2. Q2: Since its establishment in 1988, I have visited Cienega Creek Natural Preserve: *

Mark only one oval.

Once

2 - 5 times

5 - 10 times

More than 10 times

3. Q3: The number of persons in my party when I last visited Cienega Creek Natural Preserve was: *

Mark only one oval.

1

2

3

4

5 or more

4. Q4: On past visits to Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, my party included other individuals who: (please check all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

- Were residents of Pima County
- Were residents of Arizona, but not Pima County
- Were not residents of Arizona
- Not applicable, I visited by myself

5. Q5: Please specify where the other individuals were from if not Arizona.

6. Q6: On your most recent trip, how far did you travel to reach the Preserve? *

Mark only one oval.

- 1 - 5 miles
- 5 - 10 miles
- 10 - 50 miles
- More than 50 miles

7. Q7: When was your last visit? (month and year if possible) *

8. Q8: Considering all past visits, I have visited Cienega Creek Natural Preserve during the following seasons: (check all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

- Winter (December, January, February)
- Spring (March, April, May)
- Summer (June, July, August)
- Fall (September, October, November)

9. Q9: I visited (or most typically visit) the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve on a: *

Check all that apply.

- Weekday
 Saturday
 Sunday

10. Q10: When I visit the Preserve, the typical length of my stay is: *

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 2 hours
 2 - 4 hours
 4 - 6 hours
 6 - 8 hours
 More than 8 hours

**Permit
System**

The Cienega Creek Natural Preserve is managed with the objective of accommodating public use to the degree that such use will not result in degradation to the natural qualities of this special resource. Access is limited. Access permits are required and available at no fee.

11. Q11: Were you aware that a free permit, obtainable online, is required to visit the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
 No
 Other: _____

12. Q12: On your last visit to the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, did you obtain a permit ahead of time? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No
- I did not know I needed one
- Other: _____

13. Q13: The current process for acquisition of a permit for access into the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve is: *

Mark only one oval.

- Very convenient
- Convenient
- Neither convenient or inconvenient
- Inconvenient
- Very inconvenient
- No opinion

14. Q14: Please tell us about why you chose your answer for the above question.

15. Q15: How many other visitors did you encounter on your last visit to the Preserve?

Mark only one oval.

- none
- 1 - 5
- 5 - 10
- 10 - 20
- more than 20

16. Q16: On your last visit, what was your opinion about the number of visitors you encountered? *

Mark only one oval.

- It was too crowded
- It seemed just about right
- There were not enough people
- I have no opinion

17. Q17: Feel free to add more detail about your response to the previous question here

18. Q18: In addition to the current access permit, a Right of Entry permit is required for formal research and commercial or organized group events. If ground-disturbing activities are involved, there may be an additional need for a Floodplain Use Permit (FUP). Are you familiar with these other special permits? *

Mark only one oval.

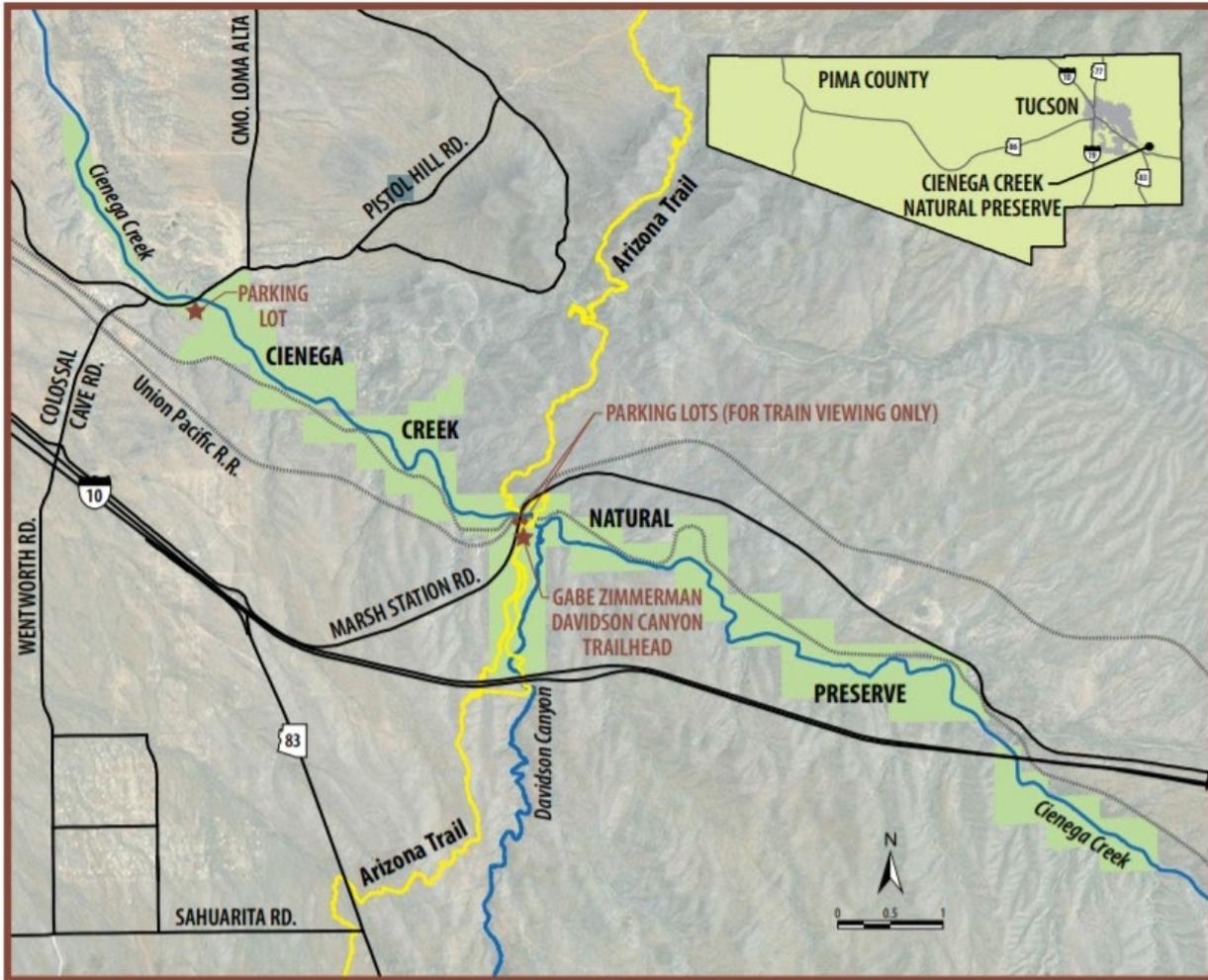
Yes

No

19. Q19: If you were not aware of these other types of permits, does knowing about them affect your opinion about the existing access permit? Do you have any other comments?

Visitor Activities

Map of the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve



20. Q20: I have accessed the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve from the following access points (refer to map above, and select an answer for each access point):

Mark only one oval per row.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Once	Never
Parking Lot at Colossal Cave Road	<input type="radio"/>				
Gabe Zimmerman Davidson Canyon Trailhead at Marsh Station Road	<input type="radio"/>				
Train viewing parking lot at Marsh Station Road	<input type="radio"/>				
Arizona Trail from the north	<input type="radio"/>				
Arizona Trail from the south	<input type="radio"/>				
On foot from Vail	<input type="radio"/>				
Other (please describe below)	<input type="radio"/>				

21. Q21: If you chose "other" in the above question, please describe.

22. Q22: While at the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, I spend time in the following locations (select an answer for each location):

Mark only one oval per row.

	Always	Usually	Sometimes	Once	Never
Along the Arizona Trail	<input type="radio"/>				
Pantano Townsite	<input type="radio"/>				
Along Cienega Creek - between Marsh Station Road and Colossal Cave Road	<input type="radio"/>				
Along Cienega Creek - west of Colossal Cave Road	<input type="radio"/>				
Along Cienega Creek - south/east of Marsh Station Road	<input type="radio"/>				
Davidson Canyon - north of I-10	<input type="radio"/>				
Davidson Canyon - south of I-10	<input type="radio"/>				
Other (please describe below)	<input type="radio"/>				

23. Q23: If you chose "other" in the question above, please describe.

24. Q24: While within the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, I or members of my party engaged in the following activities (please check all that apply): *

Check all that apply.

- hiking / backpacking
- picnicking
- horseback riding
- train watching
- bird watching
- other wildlife observation
- swimming / wading
- rock climbing
- mountain biking
- photography
- movie production
- scientific research (formal)
- scientific research (informal) / citizen science
- environmental education program
- posting on social media
- dog walking
- none of the above
- volunteering
- drone operation

Other: _____

25. Q25: The reason I selected the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve for the above activity / activities was: (Please check all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

- Animals and plants associated with the creek
- Water in the creek
- Other unique natural, scenic, or historic characteristics
- Operating railroad
- The limited number of people

Other: _____

Prohibited Activities

26. Q26: While within the Cienega Creek Natural Preserve, I observed / observed evidence of the following prohibited activities: (Please check all that apply) *

Check all that apply.

- use of Preserve without a permit
- off-road vehicle use
- fuel wood cutting
- hunting
- overnight camping
- disturbance of cultural resources
- dumping of household, yard, or industrial waste
- collection of plants, animals, and/or other natural resources such as rocks
- release of unwanted pets
- damage or defacement of the bridge, signs, or other infrastructure
- campfire
- target shooting
- None of the above

Other: _____

Other Pima County Lands in the Cienega Creek Corridor

27. Q27: Have you visited any of the other areas within the Cienega Creek Corridor (check all that apply)?

Check all that apply.

- Colossal Cave Mountain Park - the cave
- Colossal Cave Mountain Park - Posta Quemada Canyon
- Empirita Ranch
- Other (describe below)
- None

28. Q28: If you answered "other" above, please describe.

29. Q29: What activities did you engage in?

30. Q30: What are the views you most enjoy at Colossal Cave Mountain Park or the Cienega Natural Preserve? And where do you enjoy them from?

31. Q31: Do you have any additional feedback or comments?

32. Q32: If you would like to receive updates on the planning process, please provide your email here, or send a separate request to David.Scalero@pima.gov.

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