



2022 Community Assessment on the Impacts of Increased Tourism in Sitka

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We thank the Sitka Public Library for allowing access to archives that provided essential background on the history of and research on Sitka.

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Importantly, we would like to thank the community of Sitka for welcoming us and being willing to give their time and insight to this effort. Gunalchéesh!



A majority of survey respondents reported that increased tourism during summer 2022 impacted their experiences in and around Sitka.

Executive Summary

Considering individual and community well-being, tourism can have both positive and negative impacts – for instance, there is potential to generate economic revenue but the community might incur strains to the built and natural environment. In Sitka, AK, as the community prepared for its busiest visitor season ever—an estimated half-a-million visitors during summer 2022—the impacts of increased tourism were unclear. By conducting a survey of all adult residents and interviews of select community leaders, this community assessment aimed to investigate the perceived impacts of increased tourism on individual and community well-being in Sitka.

A total of 439 eligible survey responses were received, yielding a 6.5% response rate among Sitka’s adult population; 11 interviews were conducted. 63% of almost all respondents (N=436) felt that this uptick in tourism made Sitka a less desirable place to live. The key areas of impact to individual and community well-being in order from greatest to least impact were housing availability and costs, access to cultural and recreational sites, and access to local businesses, including grocery stores and restaurants. Respondents perceived that health care services and youth summer programs have not been as impacted by increased tourism. Much of the stated impacts were described as having potentially consequential impacts on Sitkans, and survey respondents and interviewees both highlighted critical issues and potential solutions related to traffic, transportation, infrastructure, availability of jobs, pollution and the environment, and housing that need to be addressed.

This assessment is intended to provide a snapshot of community perspectives that the Sitka Sound Science Center, community leaders, local government, and other policymakers might use to kickstart discussions on how to best mitigate the negative impacts and maximize the benefits of tourism as it continues in the future.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Tourism, as defined by the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), is “a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes” (UNWTO, n.d.). Tourism can bring about both positive and negative impacts in a community (Yu et al., 2011); it has the potential to provide economic, employment, recreational, and entertainment opportunities (Rosentraub and Joo, 2009), and it can also strain infrastructure (e.g., housing) and the environment, including natural resources (Mikulić et al., 2021; Sunlu, 2003).

An economic driver in Sitka, Alaska, is the tourism industry (Sitka Economic Development Association, n.d.). As Sitka’s history demonstrates, tourism has had a notable presence in the community (see Appendix I), while different individuals, organizations, and sectors have grappled with this dynamic (see Appendix II). In Sitka, visitors travel to the community as independent travelers and through cruise ships, which have both increased in magnitude over recent years (Alaska Public Media, 2019). During summer 2022, Sitka expected its busiest tourism season ever—an estimated half-a-million visitors (Boots, 2022). The community has publicly dealt with the logistics of hosting this many visitors, planning around issues from transportation and traffic to wastewater systems (City and Borough of Sitka, Alaska, 2022). However, questions remain as to how residents perceive increased tourism to be affecting their lives and the community overall.

This project sought to understand resident perspectives on increased tourism and their well-being, given that the ability for individuals and communities to thrive is rooted in literature around “well-being” (Plough, 2020), broadly described as “a positive outcome that is meaningful for people and for many sectors of society, because it tells us that people perceive that their lives are going well” (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). Well-being considers good living conditions like housing and employment, as well as a sense of prosperity and satisfaction with life. We focused our community assessment on various aspects that contribute to individual and collective well-being in Sitka, and sought to address the following research questions:

- What are the community’s perspectives on the impacts of tourism in Sitka?
- How does the community perceive tourism to be affecting aspects of their well-being?
- What are the community’s perspectives around the benefits and consequences of increased tourism on their individual lives and the community, overall?

Drawing from Santa Monica’s Well-being Index (The City of Santa Monica Wellbeing Project, 2015), our assessment was organized around five domains: community, opportunity, place and planet, health, and learning. Within each domain, we focused on key measure areas elevated by community leaders in Sitka as likely to be impacted by tourism (see Table 1).

Domain	Community	Opportunity	Place & Planet	Health	Learning
Description (drawn directly)	Strength of community and connection	Diverse populations can live and thrive in the community	Built and natural environmental support and promote well-being	The community is healthy	Opportunities to enrich knowledge and skill sets
Measure areas	Benefits and consequences of tourism, including what tourists bring to the community	Short- and long-term employment and staffing Housing costs and availability	Access to local businesses and healthy and nutritious foods Impacts on recreational and cultural sites	Access to health care services	Access to youth summer programs

Table 1. Well-Being Domains and Corresponding Measurement Areas

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Chapter Two

Methods

To gain adequate context and inform the study approach, we held informal discussions with community leaders in Sitka from various sectors in May and June 2022. The study was approved by RAND's Human Subjects Protection Committee (see Appendix III and IV for protocols).

Survey of Community Members

We conducted an online, community-wide survey of Sitkan adults who were either year-round or seasonal residents. We aimed to reach at least 5% of this population. To advertise the survey and reach a breadth of respondents, we conducted outreach through in-person (e.g., flyering), media (e.g., KCAW interview), and online channels (e.g., Facebook's Sitka Chatters announcements). The survey was fielded from August 10-31, 2022.

The first section of the survey inquired about general impacts of increased tourism. Subsequent sections asked respondents to report impacts on the previously described measurement areas related to the well-being domains and to describe any new opportunities for or barriers to each area. We also asked respondents to report optional demographic information. Questions were a mix of multiple choice, five-point Likert scales, and open-ended text boxes.

A total of 439 eligible survey responses were received, yielding a 6.5% response rate among Sitka's adult population. We analyzed the survey data in Microsoft Excel. One team member reviewed the survey responses and removed any personally identifiable information that may have been entered into open-ended boxes. The qualitative responses were then recoded to support thematic analyses.

All survey questions, besides the screening questions, were optional; the reporting of survey data includes the number of respondents who answered each question, often denoted by "N".

Interviews of Community Leaders

We also conducted hour-long in-person and online interviews (i.e., Zoom) of select community leaders in Sitka to assess general and sector-specific impacts of tourism as well as gather ideas for potential strategies to address such impacts. A sample of potential interviewees was compiled based on discussions with community leadership in Sitka, the Sitka Sound Science Center, and personal experiences. Recruitment included email outreach followed by electronic and phone reminders. A total of 25 individuals were invited to participate in the interviews of which 11 interviews were conducted from August to October 2022 with 12 individuals.

The first section of the interview inquired about general perspectives on the impacts of increased tourism. Subsequent sections asked respondents to report sector-specific impacts and impacts on the measurement areas related to the well-being domains, with probes to explore potential strategies or solutions for addressing them. We also asked interviewees to share their perspectives on future priorities for the community and whether increased tourism this summer affected their interest in residing in Sitka moving forward. Given the nature of this interview as semi-structured, all questions were not covered in each interview. The appropriate sample size is included with the respective findings.

Notes from the interview discussions were rapidly analyzed to identify major themes under the five well-being domains. Interviews and notetaking were carried out by all team members; one team member led the analysis and conferred with others to reduce subjectivity.

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Chapter Three

Results

Sample Characteristics

Survey respondents were comparable to the greater population of Sitka with regard to race and ethnicity, but respondents were generally older, more educated, and more likely to be homeowners (see Table 2 for full breakdown; U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). The vast majority (95%) of respondents (N=437) resided in Sitka year-round and a majority (63%) resided in Sitka for 20 years or more (N=437).

Characteristics	Sample (Survey)*		Census (Sitka, AK)
Race/ethnicity	N= 368	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 78% White 11% American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous (excluding individuals who identify as multiracial) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 64% White 12% American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous
Gender	N= 389	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 69% female 29% male 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 49% female 51% male
Age	N= 439	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 – 29 years: 9% 30 – 39 years: 13% 40 – 49 years: 16% 50 – 59 years: 16% 60+ years: 49% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 18 – 29 years: 19% 30 – 39 years: 19% 40 – 49 years: 15% 50 – 59 years: 16% 60+ years: 30%
Education	N= 432	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68% have a bachelor’s degree or higher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 34% have a bachelor’s degree or higher
Home ownership	N= 438	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 74% own a home 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61% own a home

Table 2. Survey Sample Demographics vs. Sitka Population Demographics (*N values exclude blank responses and prefer not to answer)

Given the nature of the interviews of community leaders, such demographic information was not requested. At the aggregate level, interviewees represented multiple sectors including businesses, within and outside of the tourism industry, community-serving organizations, and the commercial fishing industry. Most discussed having a long-standing history of residing and working in Sitka.

The Well-Being Domain of Community

The first well-being domain—community—includes the measurement areas of desirability of living in Sitka and general impacts, and the benefits and consequences, of tourism. Overall, we found that nearly 87% of survey respondents (N=434) had been affected—whether positively or negatively—by increased tourism in summer 2022.

Desirability

Survey Findings

63% of respondents (N=436) reported that increased tourism makes Sitka a somewhat or far less desirable place to live. This proportion is particularly higher among those who indicated they worked in the commercial fishing industry (N=51), among whom 82% reported increased tourism made Sitka somewhat or far less desirable. This proportion is lower among those who identified as American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous (N=42), among whom 45% reported increased tourism made Sitka somewhat or far less desirable.

Interview Findings

More than half of interview discussions (n=6) addressed whether interest or willingness to reside in Sitka was affected by increased tourism. Two interviewees responded with personal reflections, one offering that their deep history in the community would cause them to remain in Sitka and the other citing that the only issue affecting their life and experience was related to transportation. Three interviewees responded with perspectives on others’ decisions and behaviors: one cited hearing others mentioning that “Sitka no longer feels

like [their] town,” one described concern around Sitka changing too dramatically, and another questioned whether newer generations of multigenerational families will be priced out of the community due to the rising living costs. Relatedly, one interviewee shared that their decision on where to reside was not based on tourism but the costs of living and retiring in Sitka.

General Impacts

Survey Findings

356 respondents described the ways in which tourism had been impactful to their lives. Respondents frequently discussed impacts on traffic, transportation, and infrastructure (n=245), the economy (n=208), the environment and pollution, particularly air pollution from busses (n=89), pedestrian congestion (n=85), pedestrian safety, namely jay walking (n=55), and telecommunications, including cell and internet connection during busy cruise ship days (n=32).

14% of these survey respondents discussed impacts on the sense of community in Sitka. For example, one person shared, the “town is more lively and festive which has been enjoyable, especially loving the additional food options and busking that has sprung up.” On the other hand, one respondent shared that increased tourism “diminishes Sitka’s charm.”

Interview Findings

All interview discussions (n=11) addressed general perspectives on increased tourism. One interviewee believed Sitka was handling increased tourism well, while two others believed Sitka had overcommitted itself. Another interviewee noted that multiple community-wide changes had occurred at once, including the expansion of the Southeast Regional Healthcare Consortium (SEARHC) and a construction project, which might also impact different well-being domains.

Notably, an interviewee emphasized that the discussions at the forefront of local discourse preceded this recent increase in tourism and another interviewee encouraged recognition that there are many camps of thought around whether tourism is necessary and/or beneficial and how it should be addressed. One interviewee, for instance, mentioned a need for Sitka to be more precise on what entails an organization being considered as part of the tourism industry. Two interviewees also discussed a need for a better understanding of which “types” of tourists Sitka should target moving forward: independent travelers or cruise ship visitors. Unsurprisingly, almost half (n=5) of interviewees spoke to the need for ongoing community discourse and education, joint reflection, and shared learning on this topic. One interviewee shared,

“We see ourselves turning into a shell like Skagway where money is not staying in the community to help the community.”

Many interviewees also raised a number of questions on the below topics:

- Use of economic surplus from tourism in the community, by the community (n=3)
- Electrification of transportation (n=2)
- Indigenous representation on decision-making bodies (n=1)
- Regenerative tourism (n=1)
- Ongoing supply and demand around tourism and related resources (n=1)
- Traditional land ownership (n=1)

Benefits and Consequences

Survey Findings

427 survey respondents reported perspectives on the benefits of tourism in Sitka (see Table 3 for an overview of themes reported). A majority mentioned economic benefits (n=301) and a little more than one-fourth, city tax revenue (n=125). One respondent wrote, “Increased tourism gives more opportunity for residents to earn money, whether primary or secondary. This helps with the continuing increase in cost of living.” Another shared, “Tourism helps to provide this type of economic opportunity and provides for increases tax revenue to help fund local infrastructure and services that I benefit from.”

However, 9% of these respondents (n=40) reported equity concerns related to the economic benefits of tourism. For example, one respondent reported, “For those not in the tourism industry, benefits are slim. Added sales tax for the city may trickle down to benefit all, but it will probably be minimally helpful.” Another individual wrote,

“I believe there are economic benefits for our community due to increased tourism, but it’s still unclear if that means all residents will feel some financial relief, such as decreased utility rates over time, or if only the residents who work in tourism will feel the financial rewards of increased tourism.”

Additionally, a small portion (n=38) of respondents discussed benefits of hospitality and sharing Sitka with others. For example, one respondent described their vision, “I love that people connect with nature when they are in Sitka, and I hope that the connections they make here permeate throughout their lives. That said, I would love to see tourism become more regenerative and less extractive.”

422 survey respondents reported perspectives on tourism’s consequences (see Table 3). Individuals most commonly discussed traffic, congestion, and transportation issues (n=152) and strains on infrastructure (e.g., roads, telecommunications; n=144). Respondents also wrote about pollution, trash, and impacts to the environment (n=112) and consequences to the sense of community (i.e., Sitka’s charm or small-town atmosphere; n=84). Approximately one-fifth of respondents (n=82) discussed impacts to the economy and a shift to a seasonal economy, with close to half of these respondents (n=33) worrying about businesses shifting to those not owned by or catered to locals. Almost one-fifth of respondents (n=74) further discussed a rise in housing costs and a reduction in housing availability. Notably, a small portion of respondents (n=17) shared that the level of visitors was reaching a “tipping point” and that there should be a “cap” or a “balance.” 24 respondents wrote that such levels of tourists were even diminishing visitors’ experiences.

Benefits (N=427)	n	%	Consequences (N=422)	n	%
Economic (i.e., business profits, jobs)	301	70%	Traffic, congestion, transportation, parking	152	36%
Tax revenue	125	29%	Infrastructure (e.g., roads, utilities, telecommunications)	144	34%
No benefits	40	9%	Pollution, trash, and the environment	112	27%
Hospitality (i.e., sharing Sitka with others)	38	9%	Sense of community (i.e., town character)	84	20%
Infrastructure (i.e., public works projects, beautification projects)	26	6%	Economy (e.g., seasonal work, non-local businesses)	82	19%
Vibrancy (i.e., livens the town)	7	2%	Housing costs and availability	74	18%
Education (i.e., educates tourists on Tlingit culture, the environment)	6	1%	Higher costs for goods and services	28	7%
			Stress and frustration	28	7%
			Health (i.e., spread of disease, access to care)	25	6%

	Diminished visitor experience	24	6%
	Fishing (e.g., fish stocks)	22	5%
	Safety (i.e., road and pedestrian)	18	4%
	No consequences	11	3%

Table 3. Benefits and Consequences Identified by Survey Respondents

Interview Findings

Although not probed, interviewees discussed benefits and consequences stemming from increased tourism this summer. These benefits and consequences echoed those discussed by survey respondents, emphasizing the tension between economic revenue and other plusses with concerns around loss of agency, resources, and culture (see Table 4).

Benefits	n	Consequences	n
Economic revenue	3	Tension between balancing new opportunities with the community	2
Enables certain public resources (e.g., public library) and many businesses to exist year-round	2	High climate and community footprint of the visitor industry, particularly cruise ships	3
Use of existing infrastructure (e.g., cross-trail)	1	Lack of economic stability with the cruise ship industry	1
Elevate cultural knowledge and education	1	Overpromotion and overuse of resources and infrastructure (e.g., waterfront, cellular network, restrooms, highway), and potential implications	4
Highlight information about and experiences in Alaska	1	More involvement of the cruise ship industry in Sitkans' lives	1
		Loss of the community as it currently is for local residents	1

Table 4. Benefits and Consequences Identified by Interviewees

The Well-Being Domain of Opportunity

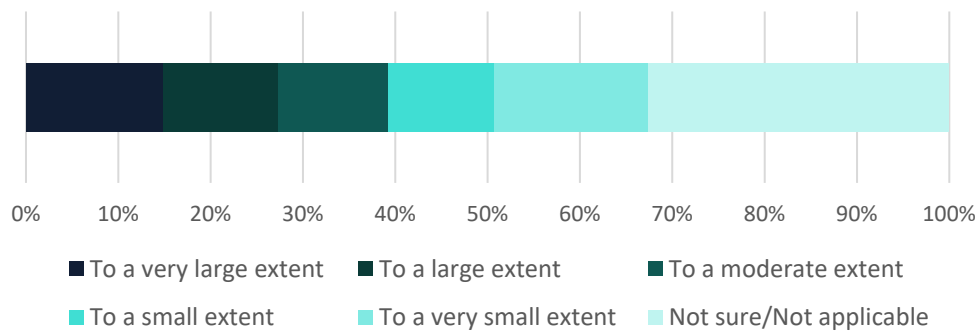
The next well-being domain—opportunity—is related to the following measurement areas: employment and staffing and housing costs and availability.

Employment & Staffing

Survey Findings

We asked respondents to report to what extent increased tourism this summer had affected their current job(s); 436 responded. 39% indicated their current jobs were affected to a moderate, large, or very large extent (see Figure 1). A higher proportion (55%) of those who identified as American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous, Hispanic, Latino/a, or Latin American, Asian or Asian American, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, or multiracial (together; N=69) indicated being impacted to a moderate, large, or very large extent, as did those who worked in for-profit businesses (77%; N=49) and those who worked for community-based organizations (61%; N=74).

Figure 1. To what extent has increased tourism this summer affected your current job(s)? N=436



When asked to describe the ways in which increased tourism had impacted employment, 217 respondents provided additional detail. Most commonly, respondents (n=53) discussed opportunities for work in a tourism-related industry. For example, one respondent shared, “We own a small business and the influx in tourists has shown dramatically by the number of sales. We’ve also been able to bring on another employee and offer more hours to each of them than before.”

Respondents reported employment barriers, including physical access to their job given road closures, traffic, and congestion (n=37) and labor shortages (n=26). Some respondents (n=38) discussed housing costs and availability as barriers to hiring in Sitka, as well as housing itself affected by a rise in seasonal employment. A few individuals noted concerns with a shift to seasonal employment (n=15) with low-wage jobs (n=9).

Seven individuals who worked in health care or emergency response noted the rise in use of these services by tourists. For example, one respondent shared, “working in health care, increased tourism has led to more tourists admitted to the hospital leading to longer wait times and taking beds in a very small hospital with limited resources.”

Five respondents who worked in commercial fishing noted impacts by the charter/tourism fishing industry on fish stocks and the lack of a boat haul-out. For example, one respondent noted, “Increased guided sport fishing is hurting commercial fleets due to poor regulation and management of guided sport industry.”

Interview Findings

Almost all discussions with interviewees (n=10) addressed how increased tourism affected their employment and sectors, overall. A few interviewees expressed positive sentiments: two shared that their organizations are “thriving,” and another demonstrated excitement for future “growth opportunities.” One interviewee also highlighted that cruise line agencies have invested in select local businesses, while another described new opportunities to collaborate with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska and better embed cultural tourism opportunities in cruise line offerings. One interviewee specifically noted that their organization was not affected by local street closures.

However, some interviewees expressed concerns related to the impacts of increased tourism. Three interviewees discussed labor-related issues, citing the difficulty of attracting staff given other industries (e.g., fishing lodges) offering more competitive hourly wages, even if those were not complemented by benefits (n=2), the “Great Resignation” (n=1), and staffing costs dramatically increasing (n=1). Notably, one of these interviewees emphasized that “high volume, low value” service positions attracting local high school students or recent graduates would provide “less meaningful opportunities” for development and growth. Another of these interviewees frankly shared, “everyone in our organization is flat-out exhausted.”

Two interviewees discussed needing to scale back the number of customers who could be served and another, finding it difficult to deal with cruise line “visitor dispersion” across the community. Interviewees also discussed the use of local resources: one interviewee mentioned the difficulties of communication due to cellular network overuse and two mentioned the loss of the local haul-out dock for boats given the creation of the cruise dock.

Finally, two interviewees offered considerations for the future. One emphasized that organizations within the tourism industry must consider how to develop products and experiences that do not overutilize depleting resources within Sitka. Another suggested developing a community-wide plan for understanding and prioritizing the impacts of long-term sustainable industries on the local environment and economy.

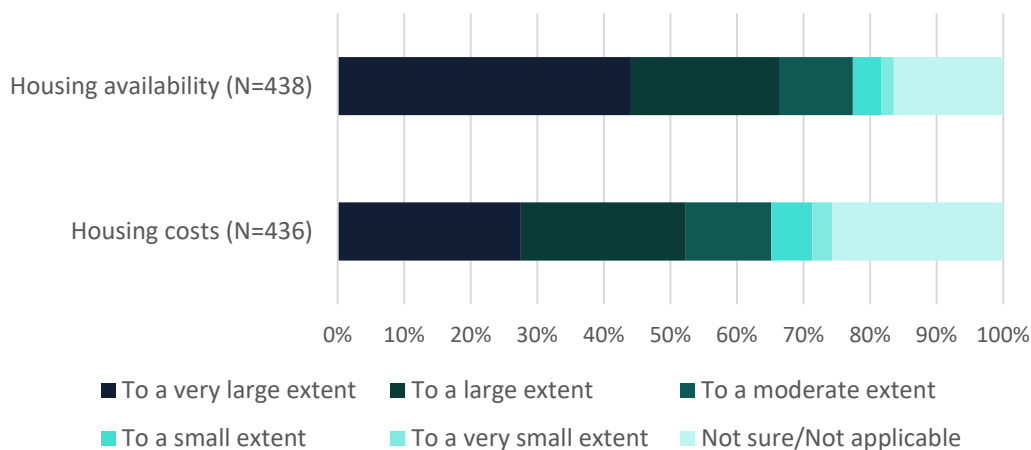
Housing Costs & Availability

Survey Findings

When asked about impacts of increased tourism on housing costs, 65% of those who responded to this question reported being impacted to a moderate, large, or very large extent (see Figure 2).

More individuals reported a higher level of impact on housing availability compared to housing costs. When asked about impacts of increased tourism on housing availability, 78% of those who responded to this question reported being impacted to a moderate, large, or very large extent – 44% alone reported to a very large extent.

Figure 2. To what extent has increased tourism this summer affected...?



215 respondents described new opportunities or barriers to housing due to tourism. Most commonly, respondents referenced the impact of short-term rentals, like Airbnb and Vrbo, on housing costs and availability (n=76). One-fourth of respondents (n=54) shared personal struggles and barriers to finding housing, and 20 respondents, challenges in finding housing for employees. 32 respondents discussed impacts of seasonal or short-term employment on year-round housing availability.

On the other hand, a very small portion of respondents (n=10) described economic opportunities of renting out their homes. For example, one respondent shared, “More opportunities for existing Sitka residents to make extra money renting rooms in their homes during this time of high inflation. Helps offset the high costs of fuel, groceries, utilities, and mortgages, while providing much needed housing for temporary workers.”

Some respondents (n=37) shared that issues with housing costs and availability in Sitka were caused by other issues, and that tourism may aggravate the existing issue or does not contribute to it at all. For example, one shared,

“Sitka had very limited housing prior to this summer. The recent increase in tourism has not caused the housing shortage. Growth in independent travelers and individuals purchasing second homes over the past 10 has reduced housing supply in Sitka. More land needs to be made available for private development.”

Some individuals spoke about the need for development or land (n=29), with six individuals discussing the need for greater density. For example, one shared, “High density housing is a popular option for other communities experiencing housing crisis. Tourism in Sitka doesn't contribute to our lack of physical land to build on or the fact that many of us are priced out of homeownership.”

Other suggested solutions were:

- Use of land for trailer or RV parks, or encouragement of trailer courts as tiny-home neighborhoods through zoning and tax incentives
- Use of a revolving loan fund to subsidize projects that result in new, affordable housing
- BIHA, USFS, CBS, and Mental Health Trust coordination to open new areas for development (e.g., land exchanges)
- Use of university housing for seasonal housing during the summer to help with the demand

Interview Findings

Almost all interview discussions (n=10) addressed how increased tourism had affected housing costs and availability, and interviewees overwhelmingly offered concerns related to both. More than half of interviewees (n=6) discussed high housing costs, including it making affordable living nearly impossible, pricing families out of the market, and fostering a culture of Sitka being a place to visit versus reside permanently. Interviewees (n=6) also discussed short-term rentals being a concern. Some interviewees (n=4) emphasized a driving factor of limited housing availability being geographic constraints. Related to concerns expressed with labor shortages, interviewees (n=4) highlighted the need for employers to provide staff with housing due to a shortage of availability this summer. One of these interviewees further emphasized the expenses incurred by such employers, which, in turn, increased the cost of services for consumers. Two interviewees described how the lack of housing availability has been compounded by the tourism season expanding beyond summer months, limiting housing opportunities for teachers, among others. Unrelated to the impacts of increased tourism, two interviewees attributed the lack of housing availability to SEARHC.

One interviewee discussed a need for Sitka to better understand vacancy rates within the local housing supply. Another reminded that housing needs are growing in Sitka, but as an interviewee emphasized, those Sitkans most impacted, or housing insecure, are often left out of such discussions.

Interviewees also offered a number of suggestions for how housing costs and availability might be addressed in the future:

- Consider alternative living spaces (e.g., boats) and design options (e.g., higher density housing) (n=2)
- Consider new funding sources (e.g., Build Back Better grants, public financing) (n=2)
- Improve zoning and permitting policies, including around short-term rentals (n=1)
- Develop new areas like the 150 acres owned by the Sitka Tribe of Alaska near the Indian River (n=1)

- Require major employers to consider how to build staff housing, potentially incentivizing such behavior through tax deductions (n=1)

Given the nature of housing-related issues, it is unsurprising that interviewees offered a breadth of individuals and organizations responsible for addressing them. This included community members who might advocate to local leadership, philanthropic and community-serving organizations, and different levels of government.

The Well-Being Domain of Place & Planet

Local Businesses

Survey Findings

We asked respondents to report if they had noticed a change in their ability to access local businesses given increased tourism. Of 437 respondents to this question, 81% reported yes (see Figure 3). Of those who answered the open-ended question (N=292), a majority (n=179) shared that accessing businesses was impacted by crowds, congestion, and wait times. 52 respondents discussed street closures, primarily as a barrier to accessing businesses, however, some respondents shared positive opportunities of the closures. Respondents also wrote about issues related to labor shortages (n=26), higher prices (n=16), and shortage of goods or food (n=15). On the other hand, respondents shared that tourism had helped local businesses (n=10) or created new businesses, including new food options (n=16). One respondent shared, “Quality, service, and availability are all negatively impacted by the drastic increase in tourists. An opportunity is that there are more food trucks/carts/stands so this positively impacts small scale entrepreneurs.”

Figure 3. Have you noticed a change in your ability to **access local businesses**, including restaurants, given increased tourism this summer? N=437

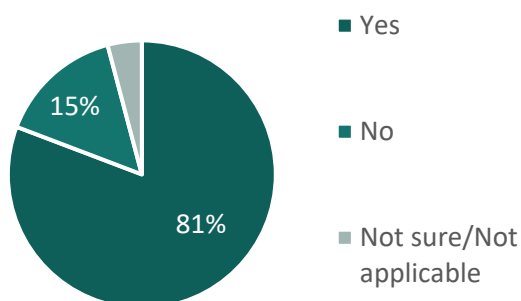
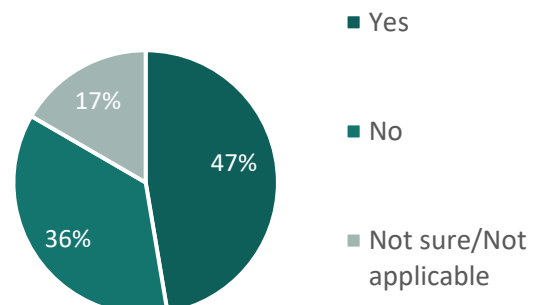


Figure 4. Have you noticed a change in the **availability of healthy and fresh foods** given increased tourism this summer? N=433



Interview Findings

Many interview discussions (n=8) addressed how increased tourism affected access to local businesses. Half of these interviewees (n=4) discussed transportation issues to different sites, while two others mentioned specific access issues for the elderly population who might need to drive and with drive-through businesses located on Lincoln Street. One interviewee noted, however, that the Lincoln Street closure was desirable to some primarily tourist-serving organizations located downtown.

One interviewee mentioned the overcrowding of local businesses, while a few (n=3) alluded to increased tourism causing local residents to avoid downtown businesses, especially on busy cruise ship days and during the daytime. Two interviewees mentioned that local residents might miss out on restaurant offerings if they sell

out or are only available seasonally. One interviewee highlighted that there are long lines due to businesses being short-staffed, and another than the “joy” attained from helping customers is being lost given the situation. An interviewee warned that local business offerings might change to better cater to tourists in the future, although another emphasized that tourists might no longer enjoy Sitka if it feels “inauthentic.”

One interviewee acknowledged that closing Lincoln Street was an effective solution to handling tourist congestion, and others offered additional suggestions to address the impacts experienced this summer. One interviewee suggested an immediate next step would to be conduct a cost-benefit analysis to determine how to proceed. Another interviewee suggested addressing the local business labor shortage by having self-checkout systems for customers to use that individual business owners could implement. An interviewee also recommended having “local hours” to promote more engagement among local residents. Finally, one interviewee proposed expanding local business and housing offerings by converting the Katlian Street Clan Houses to mixed-use properties if they will not be renovated.

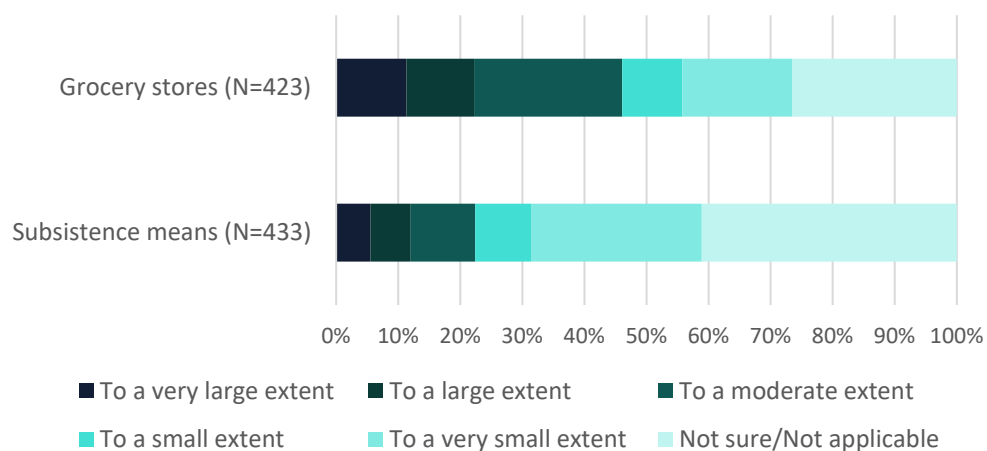
Grocery Stores and Subsistence Mechanisms for Food Access

Survey Findings

When asked if they had noticed a change in the availability of healthy and fresh foods given increased tourism, 433 responded, of whom 47% reported yes (see Figure 4 above). When asked about impacts to purchasing food from grocery stores, 423 responded and 46% indicated to a moderate, large, or very large extent. Of those who responded to the open-ended question on general food availability (N=151), a majority (n=117) wrote about limited availability of food. Although 15 respondents were unsure of the cause of reduced food availability and 17 pointed to other issues, like supply chain issues, some respondents indicated that this was caused by large purchases by the charter fishing or lodge industry (n=24), cruises (n=15), tourists in general (n=12), restaurants (n=7), and the commercial fishing industry (n=5). Of those who responded to the open-ended question on accessing grocery stores specifically (N=159), 71 noted limited availability of food, while 20 noted that there had been no change in availability. Of those who had commented on a change in access, 24 were unsure of the cause and 42 pointed to other issues, like supply chain issues and inflation.

We also asked respondents to report impacts on their ability to gather healthy and fresh foods through subsistence mechanisms, like fishing. 433 responded, of whom 22% reported to a moderate, large, or very large extent (see Figure 5).

Figure 5. To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted your ability to purchase/gather healthy and fresh foods from...?



Of those who responded to the open-ended question (N=120), 36 wrote about impacts of the charter fishing industry, including forcing smaller boats to fish further from town, and impacts of a general increase in crowding (n=15) and competition (n=5) for resources. 30 respondents wrote that they did not experience any impacts to subsistence activities.

Interview Findings

All interview discussions (n=11) discussed the availability of healthy and fresh foods in Sitka. Interviews generally had mixed perspectives on how, if at all, food access was impacted by increased tourism; two interviewees, in fact, did not see any connection.

Almost half of interviewees (n=5) discussed local resources (e.g., fish) being depleted by charter fishing and tourists, potentially affecting subsistence lifestyles in the future, with an additional interviewee emphasizing that a lack of regulation might have similar impacts. However, another interviewee believes the fish supply has not been affected, and another describing it being an issue preceding the increase in tourism. One interviewee also expressed concern with the health of the marine environment if “cruise ships discharge raw sewage.”

Similar to the mixed perspectives expressed regarding fishing, one interviewee believed that increased tourism affected the availability of foods in the grocery stores, whereas another interviewee attributed food availability and pricing to be, at least in part, related to inflation and supply chain issues. One interviewee noted that availability was likely unrelated to cruise ship purchasing or use. Finally, an interviewee also highlighted that the current restaurant offerings might not meet tourist needs.

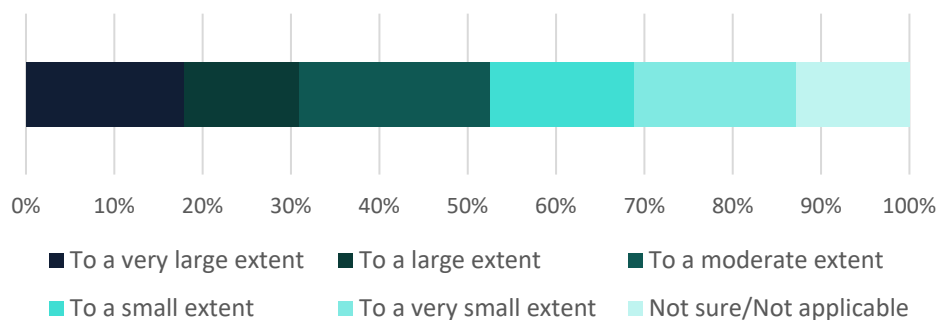
Interviewees did not offer many suggestions to address actual or potential food access concerns. Three interviewees mentioned the potential use of regulations around fishing, with one citing prior examples of doing so. Another interviewee suggested that grocery stores, similar to the suggestion made for local businesses, host “local hours.”

Recreational and Cultural Sites

Survey Findings

When asked about impacts of increased tourism on the availability or potential to use recreational sites in and around town (e.g., hiking trails), 430 responded and about half (53%) reported being impacted to a moderate, large, or very large extent (see Figure 6).

Figure 6. To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted the availability or potential to use recreational sites in and around town (e.g., hiking trails)? N=430



Of those who described new opportunities for or barriers to accessing recreational sites (N=202), a majority (n=140) noted experiencing congestion on trails, roads, and/or waterways, particularly on days with large numbers of tourists. In particular, over a third of respondents (n=77) reported experiencing overcrowding on hiking trails and downtown. 40 respondents wrote about experiencing vehicle congestion, notably due to electronic bikes, cars, or boats. Specifically, respondents described electronic bikes as especially dangerous on hiking trails with other pedestrians sharing the same trail or street. For example, one respondent shared,

“We are seeing an increased use of the hiking trails by electric bike riders off the ships. This really needs to stop. The trails are for non-motorized vehicles and that means electric bikes are not appropriate or approved. The eBikes are driven fast, kick up the trail material, spook people and dogs, and come upon walkers quickly.”

Some respondents (n=23) noted that they did not experience any barriers or changes in accessing recreational sites. A few respondents also reported positive impacts from the increase in tourism due to economic or other such benefits with one commenting, “I enjoy seeing our recreational sites being used!”

We asked participants if recreational sites should be set aside for local use. Of 431 respondents, almost half (46%) reported no, about a quarter (27%) responded yes, and a quarter (27%) reported not sure/not applicable. One respondent shared,

“This would take some community input. Goddard hot springs and Tom Young cabin would be good choices, because they are owned by the city. They also get very crowded. Water taxis have been bending the rules with regard to Goddard especially... It feels like this town is being ruined, and would be nice to have somewhere free from tourism.”

Respondents were asked to list which recreational sites they were referring to in their response to setting aside sites for local use. 86 respondents referred to numerous areas in Sitka including Goddard Hot Springs, Harbor Mountain Road, Beaver Lake, Mosquito Cove, Indian River, the Cross Trails, Baranof Warm Springs, Herring Cove, Kruzof ATV trails, and Magic Island. A few noted that they believed visitors should be allowed access to these areas but regulated with firm rules and limitations on capacity in place.

When asked if recreational sites should be set aside for visitors’ use, 422 responded and about half reported “no” (48%), one-fourth responded “yes” (24%), and one-fourth responded “not sure/not applicable” (28%). Respondents were asked to list which recreational sites they were referring to in their response. 69 respondents referred to numerous sites including Sitka National Historic Park (i.e., Totem Park), Seawalk, Raptor Center, Fortress of the Bears, Whale Park, Castle Hill, Sitka Sound Science Center, Alaska Native Brotherhood Founders Hall, and the area by the cruise ship dock. Residents’ suggested solutions for accessing recreational sites included:

- “...the kind of use should be established/ monitored. Maybe a permitting process with limited numbers and firm rules on access; as in places with no UTV’s or eBike access.”
- “I strongly feel that local bays with shellfish for subsistence harvest should not be accessed by charter clients. There is no reason for clients to need a clam digging experience when local residents need this food for their freezers.”

- “Use tourist dollars to improve access: ramps, toilets, curb cuts.”
- “I do believe that [somehow] there should be more local control over the number of individuals allowed access to an area, whether it’s a rec area, Sitka itself, fishing grounds, whale/otter watching, cultural sites, etc.”
- “It would be wise to nudge visitors to places like totem park to keep them concentrated if possible.”

When further asked if they had noticed changes to cultural sites in and around Sitka as a result of increased tourism this summer, 426 respondents’ perceptions were divided with over a third (38%) reporting no, about a quarter (28%) reporting yes, and a third (34%) reporting not sure/not applicable.

Of those describing new opportunities for or barriers to accessing cultural sites (N=121), about half (n=57) mentioned congestion and overcrowding of certain cultural sites. In particular, 30 respondents wrote about Sitka National Historic Park as being overcrowded. For example, one wrote, “Crowding, especially on busy days. People standing around, preventing movement and access. Parking issues. Tour guides who are not well informed or prepared to 'usher' visitors through the sites.”

A few (n=8) cited concerns with environmental impacts including trash and vandalism and limited access for those with disabilities. On the other hand, 17 reported new opportunities such as the upkeep and extended opening of cultural sites, improved signage and maintenance, and the enjoyment of sharing the beauty and historic value of Sitka with tourists.

Residents were asked to share any suggestions to preserve the history and traditional use of different cultural sites that might be frequented by tourists in Sitka. Suggestions included:

- Restrict e-bikes to roads, and regulate visitor capacity in certain areas including cultural sites through ticketing or a lottery system
- Educate visitors of Sitka’s multi-perspective history through improved signage in both English and Tlingit and historically accurate storyboards with efforts led by local Alaskan native interpreters
- Support and renovate St. Michael’s Cathedral with tourism dollars
- Create a committee composed of local tribes to address the issue
- Preserve frequented historical sites including Sitka National Historic Park (i.e., Totem Park), Castle Hill, and Russian Bishop’s House

Interview Findings

Almost all interview discussions (n=10) addressed the impacts of increased tourism on recreational and cultural sites in Sitka. Similar to the perspectives generated around the use of local businesses, interviewees (n=3) highlighted that local residents avoid using such sites both, during the tourism season, generally, and specifically on heavy cruise ship days. Two interviewees discussed the experience of witnessing many tourists using such sites as being “discouraging” or unpleasant. An interviewee felt that the local trails have not been overutilized by tourists, but the use of e-bikes is a concern. Specific sites mentioned as being overused by tourists includes Sitka National Historic Park (n=4), Goddard Hot Springs (n=2), and Harbor Mountain (n=1). Two interviewees were unsure of any impact stemming from increased tourism.

Interviewees had a variety of suggestions that included protecting local residents’ use of recreational and cultural sites through the use of “local days” (n=1), rethinking where and when across Sitka tourists are taken through tours (n=2), increasing funding for infrastructure (n=1) and charging fees for sites like the Goddard Hot Springs (n=1), and supporting the tourist experience by investing in the downtown area by “[putting] in cobblestones, [putting] in landscaping” (n=1). One interviewee recommended that public lands could be given back to the Sitka Tribe of Alaska, who could help “ensure it is used in a culturally appropriate” manner in the future.

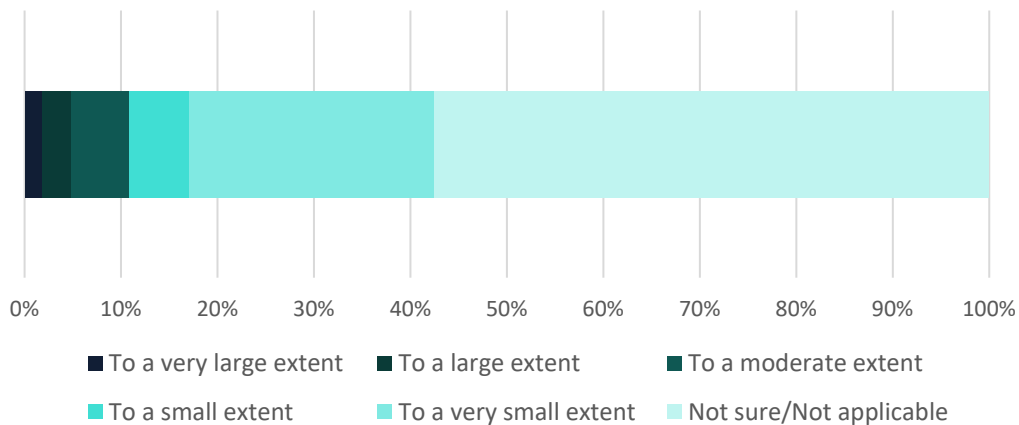
The Well-Being Domain of Health

Health Care Services

Survey Findings

When asked about impacts of increased tourism on ability to access health services for acute or new and emergent issues, only 11% of 433 respondents reported being impacted to a moderate, large, or very large extent (see Figure 7).

Figure 7. To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted your ability to access health services for acute or new and emergent issues (e.g., Urgent Care for an injury)? N=433



Of those who described new opportunities for or barriers to accessing health services (N=106), some (n=36) reported having difficulty in accessing high quality service (i.e., patients unable to schedule appointments in a timely manner and experiencing longer wait times, hospital overloaded with patients and being understaffed). For example, one respondent shared,

"I was made to wait in the Emergency Department for a CT scan because several cruise ship passengers arrived after me, but because they were scheduled to depart at 10:00 pm, they were prioritized. I ended up needing emergency surgery, so delaying the scan also delayed the surgery by a couple hours."

Another respondent wrote, "My [relative] works in [health care] and their ER has been slammed. Impacting care for the local patients. This hospital cannot handle 2 to 3 times the population that happened many times this summer."

21 respondents specifically mention tourism as the reason for impacts on their access to health care services while 11 reported that tourism was not the cause, but rather other sources of limitations were impacting their access. On the other hand, 27 reported having experienced no impacts on their access to health services.

Interview Findings

Most interview discussions (n=8) also inquired about whether and how increased tourism affected access to and the availability of health care services. Interviewees were mixed in their responses, often citing anecdotal

evidence: five interviewees mentioned emergency response and medical services, with two believing that these services are stretched thin by the influx of cruise visitors and another raising a question of whether the Coast Guard has been impacted given their role in providing aid to cruise ship passengers. One interviewee also hypothesized that there might be instances in which medivac services are unavailable for a local resident in the case of a visitor having an acute emergency. Other issues related to health care access and availability include changes within SEARHC’s structure and difficulty obtaining appointments or longer wait times for filling prescriptions. Two interviewees were unsure of whether there was an impact stemming from increased tourism in this domain.

One interviewee mentioned that given their role as the sole health system in Sitka, SEARHC would be the relevant leadership to foster efforts to address any concerns related to health care access and availability.

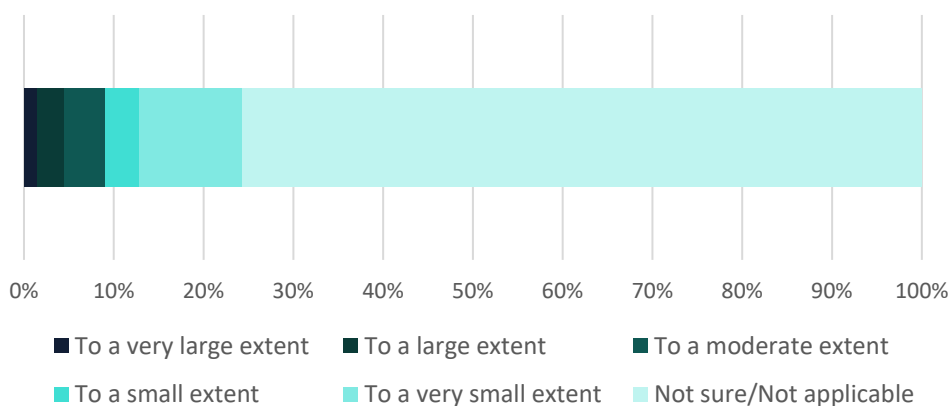
The Well-Being Domain of Learning

Youth Summer Programs

Survey Findings

When asked about access to or the availability of youth summer programs (N=420), only 9% reported being impact to a moderate, large, or very large extent (see Figure 8).

Figure 8. To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted access to or the availability of youth summer programs? N=420



Of the 59 residents who described new opportunities for or barriers to youth summer programs, almost half (n=26) said they did not encounter any new opportunities or barriers. 10 individuals encountered difficulties in summer youth programming due to crowds, traffic, or lack of availability to reserve spaces for youth.

On the other hand, seven individuals perceived that the increase in tourism brought more opportunities for youth to engage in summer activities, jobs, and programs. For example, one respondent wrote, “There are more opportunities for programs because of tourism overall – tourism businesses support youth sports big time! Through sponsorships, in-kind donations etc. Healthy economy means more support for our youth.”

Interview Findings

Most interview discussions (n=7) inquired about whether and how increased tourism affected youth summer programs. Similar to survey respondents, almost all (n=5) discussed there being no direct impact or being unsure. One interviewee discussed anecdotally hearing that “parents were unable to find childcare or activities

for children, affecting their ability to work.” One interviewee also highlighted the opportunity for the community and cruise line agencies to collaborate on providing activities for local youth like sports clinics or taking advantage of the soon-to-be-built zipline course.

Future Priorities

Almost all interview discussions (n=10) inquired about what Sitka should prioritize moving forward given the increased tourism faced during summer 2022. Interviewees raised a number of distinct topics for further consideration and discussion; the below Table 4 offers a summary organized by well-being domain (topics under health and learning were not suggested).

Importantly, one interviewee emphasized that Sitka must consider the following overarching question in looking forward: “What kind of city does Sitka want to be?”

Domain	n	Issues for Consideration and Discussion
Community	1	Use of the tourism “head” tax in the community
	1	Support from the visitor industry for Sitka to support itself
	1	Whether local vendors should be residents
Opportunity	1	Affordable housing and the overall cost of living
	1	Cellular connectivity
	1	Job opportunities, particularly in “mariculture and fishing”
	1	Reward systems to incentive positive behavior change (e.g., using non-carbon fuel boats)
Place and Planet	8	Infrastructure, including existing capacity, current use, and future needs
	2	Sustainability and resilience in the face of climate change
	2	Transportation, including ride-sharing opportunities and congestion

Table 2. Priorities for Sitka to Address in the Future



Chapter Four

Discussion

A majority of survey respondents reported that increased tourism during summer 2022 impacted their experiences in and around Sitka. In fact, 63% of almost all respondents felt that this uptick in tourism made Sitka a less desirable place to live. Some interviewees, even given their being entrenched in the community, expressed concern over future desirability of living in Sitka.

Much of the stated impacts of increased tourism, especially within the areas of housing availability and costs, access to cultural and recreational sites, and access to local businesses, were described as having potentially consequential impacts on Sitkans. For instance, community members shared their personal struggles in securing housing, and at times, securing housing for employees, which could be addressed through solutions offered like building higher-density housing facilities or rezoning land for housing developments. With regard to addressing the impacts of increased tourism, survey respondents and interviewees highlighted critical issues related to traffic, transportation, infrastructure, availability of jobs, pollution and the environment, and housing. We heard from community members that there are concerns around increased pollution due to the introduction of new busses for tourists arriving at the cruise dock, which could be addressed through solutions like electrifying the busses or other green initiatives, potentially supported through federal and/or state initiatives.

Together, the findings of this community assessment beg the question of: *what will it take to maintain the cultural, social, political, and economic fabric of this rural community in light of tourism, particularly if it continues to increase in future seasons?*

In considering how to approach this question, we offer a few insights around equity, collaboration, and introspective and shared learning that stem from these data.

Equity

The use of revenue generated through increased tourism was frequently raised by community members. Survey respondents and interviewees seemingly have many questions about if and how such revenue will be equitably allocated to support the community and organizations or groups with the greatest needs. To the extent possible, full transparency around the total revenue, including the tourism head tax, and its allocations may be helpful; community members may have additional ideas for distribution of such funds, as well, to ensure its equitable allocation.

Collaboration

Housing availability remains one of the most debated topics in Sitka; with regard to increased tourism, the main concerns among survey respondents centered around short-term rentals. However, as interviewees indicated, the broader topic of costs and availability requires multiple sectors, especially major employers like SEARHC and the commercial fishing industry, to co-create a feasible, affordable, and environmentally conscious solution that addresses, but also looks beyond short-term rentals (which has since been limited by the City Assembly based on successful regulations passed by a ski town in Colorado). This speaks to the important role of cross-sector collaboration is jointly identifying and implementing strategies that may address the impacts of increased tourism, including, but not limited to, housing availability.

Introspective Learning

While the perceived impacts to accessing local businesses and recreational and cultural sites is clear among survey respondents, interviewees were more mixed in their perspectives on whether positive or negative impacts stemmed from increased tourism. Both data collection activities showed a similarly mixed perspective on access to healthy and nutritious foods through grocery stores and subsistence mechanisms. Additional qualitative investigation of these areas with specific community groups who might be underrepresented in this assessment might be helpful.

Shared Learning

There also exists a ripe opportunity for Sitka to learn from the experiences of other coastal communities who have undergone similar increases in tourism. One stand-out program in several Southeast communities is a voluntary Tourism Best Management Practices (TBMP) program. Pioneered by Juneau in 1997, the idea spread to Skagway and Ketchikan by 2021 (City and Borough of Juneau, 2022; Ketchikan Visitors Bureau, 2022; Skagway TBMP, 2021). As of summer 2022, TBMPs were also considered for adoption in Wrangell and Whittier (City of Whittier, 2022; Wrangell Convention and Visitors Bureau, 2021). A TBMP is a cooperative effort between local government, cruise lines, tour operators, and transportation providers to provide guidelines on how to best serve both visitors and the community. Recommendations range from timing of tour departures and wildlife viewing practices to places where left turns are not acceptable, among many others. New additions in Juneau in 2022 include “reducing speeds in certain marine areas, keeping buses out of a certain streets or neighborhoods, and avoiding certain areas frequented by locals” (City & Borough of Juneau, 2022). This collaboration between residents and the tourism industry has enhanced community relations and fostered the spirit of collective action and community well-being that is present in Sitka.

Sitka has a strong history of listening to and acting on community concerns. As Sitka considers what it wants to look like in the future it is good to remember that there are opportunities to develop effective community-serving solutions that are equitable, collaborative, and reflective of introspective and shared learning.

Limitations

One key limitation of our study is the time period in which the survey was fielded, and the interviews were conducted. Facing the busiest tourism season yet, community members and leaders working in organizations affected by the tourism industry might not have been available to participate and so our findings might be biased by the self-selection of our final sample. Although we attempted to mitigate this concern by conducting interviews virtually into October 2022, we recognize this limitation was likely to exist given the timing of our temporary residence in Sitka. Relatedly, this limitation likely caused the underrepresentation of interviewees from the business sector.

Another key limitation is that there might be recall bias affecting what survey respondents and interviewees are attributing to increased tourism versus other exogenous drivers of different impacts. This was accounted for by the repeated use of the phrase “due to increased tourism” across the survey and interview language.

In addition, the convenient sampling constrained our survey sample to those who were interested in or aware of the survey and also those who had access to technology. The survey was only offered online through SelectSurvey and did not have any paper options. Therefore, we are likely to exclude participants who did not have access to or had difficulty accessing a computer or mobile device that would allow them to take the survey.

The other limitation of note is that the survey questions offering a five-point Likert scale rating to measure the extent to which increased tourism this summer affected a particular measurement area did not offer an explicit “to no extent” response option. (It was expected this response would be captured through “not sure/not applicable.”) As such, some respondents reported skipping the question or selecting “not sure/not applicable,” and providing their reasoning in the open-ended text boxes.

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Chapter Five

Conclusion

This community assessment offers insight into how local residents perceive increased tourism to be impacting their individual and community well-being. Perceptions around individual well-being may be highly dependent on the context and factors that drive a particular individual's experience. For instance, for an individual working downtown and needing to drive and park there, some of the changes that have occurred might detrimentally affect individual well-being; for others, this might not be the case. In considering the community, overall, there is limited evidence to say that perceptions of community well-being have been significantly altered by increased tourism, but there are findings from this assessment that demonstrate certain aspects, like access to recreational and cultural sites and local businesses, are perceived to be affected in a potentially consequential manner.

No one entity was offered as being solely responsible for addressing the complex issue of increased tourism, speaking to the need for individuals across local government, community-serving organizations, the fishing and business sectors, and more to find mechanisms through which they can better understand diverse perspectives and experiences related to this topic and co-create solutions.

As an immediate next step, it is recommended that Sitka consider these findings and priorities and determine feasibility of potential solutions. It is also recommended that maintenance and infrastructure costs be calculated to understand the feasibility of maintaining public restrooms, street closures, and public transportation in future tourism seasons. With the greatest emphasis, it is recommended that a participatory approach be undertaken to eventually co-create community changes in advance of the next tourism season.

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Appendices

Appendix I. A Brief History of Sitka and Tourism

Sitka is a community located on Baranof Island in the Southeast region of Alaska. The community has a rich history, the Tlingit Indians trace their roots in the Sitka Sound region to around 10,000 years ago and solely inhabited the area until the Russians arrived in 1799. It was the capital of Russian America until 1867 when ownership of what is now Alaska was transferred to the United States (U.S.) (City & Borough of Sitka, n.d.). Sitka was, in fact, referred to as the “Paris of the Pacific” by some around this time. The City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) was chartered in 1970. Informal governmental cooperation with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska was initiated in the early 1970s and formalized as quarterly government to government meetings in a 1998 Memorandum of Understanding (Sitka Tribe of Alaska, 1998). Sitka’s Tlingit cultural roots and Russian influences remain evident in its architecture, arts, and traditions today.

Geographically, the CBS covers 4,811 square miles. Most of this area is within the 17-million-acre Tongass National Forest (USFS, 2022), of which approximately 1 million acres is designated as the Sitka Community Use Area (SCUA) and is managed to maximize Sitkans’ use of renewable resources (Sitka Conservation Society, 2022). Federal ownership of the lands surrounding Sitka constrains use of those lands, and so they are not available for housing or industry development.

From 1959 until 1994, these forest resources included large-scale industrial logging which supported the Sitka based Alaska Pulp Mill. With the passage of the 1990 Tongass Timber Reform Act (TTRA), management of the forest was redirected toward non-extractive uses. TTRA brought the Southeast region’s public land management thematically into agreement with the 1980 Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA). By 1993, the Alaska Pulp Company shuttered, and Sitka lost one of its largest employers (Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, 2014).

The economic shock of losing the pulp mill was somewhat absorbed by the long established commercial fishing industry based in Sitka, but the community began looking increasingly at tourism as an option for economic growth and sustainable employment. A research team found that, “...according to local government meeting minutes, the tourism planning process began in 2005, when Sitka residents sought a response to the proposed construction of a cruise dock” (Jordan et al., 2016).

During the early 2000s, residents twice voted against hosting a cruise docking facility in their downtown and to instead encourage ships to lighter offshore, bringing cruise-based visitors ashore by vessel. As cruise tourism grew in popularity and the capacity of cruise ships increased, Sitka saw an uneven growth in tourism: communities across Southeast Alaska competed for inclusion on cruise ship schedules, and Sitka’s lightering policy made the town a less-attractive destination for some of the larger cruise ships. Prior to 2022, Sitka’s largest cruise season (May-September) on record was in 2008, with approximately 285,000 cruise visitors (City & Borough of Sitka, 2022). By 2016, visitor numbers had declined to around 120,000 (Sitka Economic Development Association, n.d.).

International restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic halted large-ship cruise tourism to Southeast Alaska, and Sitka, for a period of two years, 2020-2021. During this period, a privately-owned cruise ship facility, the Sitka Sound Cruise Terminal, with berths for “two 1,000 foot neo-Panamax-class cruise ships, with a total capacity of 8,000 guests” was built (PRNewswire, 2022).

Appendix II. Literature Overview

This literature overview is a compilation of past published reports and materials specific to the community of Sitka and focuses on socioeconomic well-being. The overview is split into two sections.

Section One focuses on locally generated documentation addressing Sitka's socioeconomic factors. The primary sources for this literature were the Alaska Statewide Library Electronic Doorway (SLED) which includes the materials from the State of Alaska Archives, the Alaska Public Library Network, the Sealaska Heritage Institute and Alaska Native Heritage Center as well as the expansive University of Alaska Consortium Library. Within this section living documents with multiple issuances such as updated community plans and annual economic reports are indicated via commas, ex: (2012, 2016, 2020), with the exception of the most recent versions which are listed separately and feature their host website. The section also consists of a sampling of local news articles to provide temporal context for the snap-shot-in-time qualitative research.

Future researchers expanding on Sitka's socioeconomic themes would be well served by seeking unpublished public materials via direct inquiry to the McKinley Group (formerly the McDowell Group) for supplemental unpublished but publicly available economic assessments of the Sitka economy, the United States Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station for socioeconomic research in the Tongass National Forest, the Alaska Department of Labor for workforce and economic sector information, the Alaska Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development's Division of Community and Regional Affairs for State assisted inquiries into Sitka's community development and overall time specific statuses, and Alaska's oldest public policy research organization, the University of Alaska Anchorage's Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER).

Section Two is the result of a literature review using Google Scholar with the search terms including "Sitka", "Community", and "Well Being". After duplicates were removed, articles were examined for relevance and the thirty-nine remaining citations comprise this section.

A brief summary of the literature in the two sections shows Sitka to be a thoughtful and resilient community. Surrounded by the Tongass National Forest, Sitka is by all descriptions a beautiful location. Incorporated in 1970, the City and Borough of Sitka (CBS) shows a historic tendency towards relying on community participation in local governmental decision-making as demonstrated through a strong history of public forums and community workshops and a long-standing practice of consultation and government to government relations with the Sitka Tribe of Alaska.

Section One

AEIDC. (1979). *Sitka Community College: A Study of the Area Served Including Transportation, Economy, Population Characteristics, and Education*.

Agnew: Beck Consulting. (2005). *Affordable Housing in Sitka. A Report to the Sitka Long Range Planning & Economic Development Commission*.

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=2dcc4e3e-31d9-4c75-bb54-42269b7c633a&isPdf=true>

Examination of Sitka's affordable housing. Notes "long term lack of affordable housing gradually tears the fabric of what makes a community whole, diverse, and economically sound." Suggests "aggressive program to increase supply".

Alaska Travel Industry Association. (2016). *Alaska Visitor Statistics Program 7, Summer 2016*. McDowell Group.

<https://www.alaskatia.org/wp-content/uploads/Full-AVSP-VII-Report.pdf>

Statewide report. Features Sitka bed tax increase, increase in total visitors, average length of stay, cruise visitors, market percentages, most popular day excursions, and overall satisfaction. Estimates visitors spend \$353 per visit to Sitka.

- Alexander, J. M. (2009). *Exploring spiritual landscape in Sitka Alaska to enhance cross-cultural understanding. PhD thesis examining Sitka's spiritual landscapes, cross cultural relations, and cultural attitudes towards the environment.*
- Bichler, B. F. (2019, October 23). Designing Tourism Governance: The Role of Local Residents. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management.*
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212571X18303238?casa_token=YMnSk5AV6VMAAA%3AAqmnp7nvZTn2-kwF12g8UkIM7EcPlz9jkHrqkxG_6wyy_jNnNuYbcFCYfxJGtAlm0H7F-ZWgCj3pJ
Discusses how "local residents' participation is an essential aspect of effective tourism governance."
- Chrislip, D. D. (2002). *Transforming civic culture: Sitka, Alaska 1999-2001.* Jossey-Bass.
Discusses collaborative leadership in Sitka.
- City and Borough of Sitka. (1998). *1999 Comprehensive Plan.*
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- City and Borough of Sitka. (2007). *2007 Sitka Visitor Industry Plan Version 2.0.*
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=3b60373f-b6d5-4217-9d66-301cb6d9b9f8&isPdf=true>
Report on the progress of the tourism planning process commissioned in 2005 and being prepared by the Long Range Planning and Economic Development Commission including draft implementation strategies.
- City and Borough of Sitka. (1994). *An Economic Diversification Strategy: A Plan for Expanding the Economy of Sitka, Alaska Following the Closure of the Alaska Pulp Corporation Mill.*
- City and Borough of Sitka. (2007). *City and Borough of Sitka Comprehensive Plan Update.*
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- City and Borough of Sitka. (2006). *Coastal Management Plan, Final Plan Amendment, December 2006.*
<https://www.cityofsitka.com/media/Planning%20and%20Community%20Development/SitkaCMPAmend.pdf>
Plan for managing coastal resources: their use, development, protection, and conservation. Document includes analysis of Sitka population, economics, coastal use, and activities.
- City and Borough of Sitka. (2008). *Community Profile.*
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=39a47758-8d48-4dd2-8ddd-9d25e61d3e4b&isPdf=true>
State of Alaska Department of Commerce's summary of Sitka through socioeconomic, economic, and historic lenses.
- City and Borough of Sitka. (1996) *Sitka: Gateway Community Planning Assistance; Design Workshop Recommendations; range of alternatives.*
Report on conclusions and recommendation reached at community visioning workshop. Available at Sitka Public Library.
- City and Borough of Sitka. (1966). *Greater Sitka Borough Comprehensive Development Plan.*
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=37c49baa-591d-40da-89ef-ba1f24b31141&isPdf=true>
- City and Borough of Sitka. (2004). *Indian River Corridor and Watershed Master Plan.*
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=7936d88f-f177-4e01-9ca1-93d19279fec3&isPdf=true>
"The Indian River Corridor and Watershed Master Plan as a tool for encouraging and managing responsible development within the Indian River watershed. The Master Plan document is a guide and resource for project planning, development and watershed management that protects watershed assets that were identified as important to the Sitka community."

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<https://evogov.s3.amazonaws.com/182/media/189774.pdf>
- City and Borough of Sitka. (1995). *Sitka Cruise Ship Facility: Preliminary Report*. Available at Sitka Public Library.
- City and Borough of Sitka. (2004). *Sitka Economic Profile 2004*. McDowell Group.
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=057a40a6-0498-40ab-9df7-6fbfb6a3bee0&isPdf=true>
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www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=5e4a4e50-f91b-4b43-84b1-39b26c6eea77&isPdf=true
Survey results and census comparison, market analysis and national trends, and action plan.
- City and Borough of Sitka. (2022). *Sitka's Short-Term Tourism Plan*.
https://www.cityofsitka.com/media/Planning%20and%20Community%20Development/Plans/Tourism/Sitka%27s%20Short%20Term%20Tourism%20Plan_Final.pdf
CBS planning document in response to the announcement by the private cruise ship docking facility predicting an anticipated 480,000 visitors for 2022 summer visitor season.
- City and Borough of Sitka & Alaska Long Range Planning and Economic Development Commission. (2007). *Sitka Visitor Industry Plan*.
Sitka Visitor Industry Plan for the 2008 visitor season which anticipated a record breaking 285,000 visitors.
- City of Sitka & State of Alaska Division of Economic Enterprise. (1975, 1978). *Sitka: An Alaskan Community Profile*.
State of Alaska Department of Commerce's summary of Sitka through socioeconomic, economic, and historic lenses.
- Community Indicators Consortium (2017). *Sitka Community Indicators: A Profile of Community Well-Being*.
<https://communityindicators.net/indicator-projects/sitka-community-indicators-a-profile-of-community-well-being/>
A discussion of arts, culture, economy, education, environment, health & wellbeing, housing, and public safety in Sitka Alaska.
- Comprehensive Development Plan for the City and Borough Collection*. (1958- 2018). Sitka Public Library
- Frankenstein, Ellen (2022). *14 Miles: a documentary film series*. Artchange, Inc. <https://artchangeinc.org/14miles>
A "series of micro documentaries about place and identities" in Sitka Alaska.
- Frankenstein, Ellen (2022). *Cruise Boom: A Community on the Cusp of Change*. Artchange, Inc.
<https://artchangeinc.org/cruiseboom>
Documentary focusing on Sitka, Alaska before and during a tourism boom attempting to answer, "What happens on an island community when a private cruise ship dock opens a new door to cruises hips hungry for a place to park?"
- Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce. (1987). *An Economic Profile: Sitka Alaska*.
- Greater Sitka Chamber of Commerce. (1982). *Sitka: A Community Profile*.
State of Alaska Department of Commerce's summary of Sitka through socioeconomic, economic, and historic lenses.
- Headwaters Economics (2007). *A SocioEconomic Profile, Sika Borough, Alaska*.
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=1e3842c5-7b73-4ea5-b74c-e593aa46dd8b&isPdf=true>
- Holthaus, G. H. (2010). *Up for discussion: What makes a Sustainable Community*. Gary Holthaus.
PhD thesis summarizing humanities activities designed as ongoing conversations about community and sustainability created in partnership with the Island Institute.
- Hope, Andrew. (1896-1968). *Andrew P. Hope & Ellen Hope Hays Papers*. Sealaska Heritage Institute.

Personal papers of the Hope family papers covering their time throughout southeast and including Sitka Alaska.

Island Institute. (1999, 2002). *Sitka Community Indicators: A Profile of Community Well-Being*. The Island Institute.

“The uncertainties and controversies brought about by the 1993 closure of the Alaska Pulp Corporation mill prompted the Institute to bring Sitkans together to compile reliable information in the form of community indicators. The reports track social, economic, and ecological trends in Sitka, was widely distributed and used in the community, and hailed as a model for communities elsewhere in Alaska and around the country.”

Island Institute. (1994, 1998). *The Island Institute's Community Forum on the Future of Tourism in Sitka, Alaska*. The Island Institute.

Report on the outcomes of Island Institute sponsored community forums examining the future of tourism in Sitka.

KCAW. (1998). Deep Water Dock Forum. broadcast, Sitka, Alaska.

Public radio broadcast of a community forum discussing the development of a deep water dock facility

Lutenecker, B. (2019, March 25). *Since the Workshop: Sitka, AK tackles housing affordability*. Smart Growth America. <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/since-the-workshop-sitka-ak-tackles-housing-affordability/>
A side project attached to Sitka zoning code review, this workshop addressed the limited supply of affordable housing and discussed “how the city could remove barriers in their existing zoning code, create incentives for affordable housing, and fill other regulatory gaps.” This document reviews progress on action items identified in the workshop.

Mehta, A. (2022). *Booms and Busts: An Economic History of Cruise Tourism in Sitka, 1993-2022*. Atman Mehta Master's thesis exploring thirty years of cruise tourism in Sitka. Extensively uses Sitka Daily Sentinel accounts for event reconstruction.

National Park Service. (1998) *Sitka National Historical Park, General Management Plan, November 1998*. National Historical Park General Management Plan (nps.gov)

Management plan for “Totem Park” which acts as a popular cultural excursion for cruise tourism.

Seetanah, B. (2011, January). Assessing the dynamic economic impact of tourism for island economies. *Annals of Tourism Research*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160738310001106?via%3Dihub>.
Looking at 19 island communities, “the study explores the potential contribution of tourism to economic growth and development within the conventional augmented Solow growth model.”

Sitka Convention and Visitors Bureau & City and City & Borough of Sitka. (1988, 1995). *Sitka Tourism Market Study and Development Strategy*.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2004, 2006, 2019, 2020). *Community Profile: Sitka, Alaska, City & Borough*. McDowell Group.

State of Alaska Department of Commerce's summary of Sitka through socioeconomic, economic, and historic lenses.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2007). *SEDA Strategic Plan 2008-2012*.

<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/dcra/admin/Download/GetFile/?documentUID=1cdeafda-c888-4c16-8e68-004816ce6805&isPdf=true>

SEDA board strategy for 2008-2012 outlining seven 7 priorities with associated goals and action plan.

Sitka Tribe of Alaska. (1998, July 11). *Memorandum of Understanding Sitka tribe of Alaska & City and Borough of Sitka*. Retrieved September 25, 2022, from <https://www.sitkatribes.org/uploads/cms/19980711-City-of-Sitka-MOU.pdf>

Formalization of collaboration and government to government communications between the City and Borough of Sitka and the Sitka Tribe of Alaska.

State of Alaska, Department of Commerce and Economic Development. (1984, 1989). *Sitka: An Alaska Community Profile*.

State of Alaska Department of Commerce's summary of Sitka through socioeconomic, economic, and historic lenses.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2021) *Sitka Business Climate and COVID-19 Impacts Survey 2021*. Rain Coast Data. *Retrospective on COVID related the economic impacts including a year with no cruise ships*.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2015). *Sitka Economic Development Association Strategic Plan 2016*. Rain Coast Data. <https://www.raincoastdata.com/project/sitka-economic-development-association-strategic-plan-2016/>
SEDA board strategy setting priorities of supporting renewable energy, development of affordable housing, increasing marine service industry and promoting economic enterprises.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2018, 2019, 2020). *Sitka Economic Profile*. McDowell Group.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2000). *Sitka Economic Profile – A White Paper Report*. McDowell Group.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2021, 2022). *Sitka Economic Trends*. McKinley Research Group.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2000, 2004, 2008, 2009). *The State of Sitka's Economy*. McDowell Group.

Sitka Economic Development Association. (2010). *State of the Sitka Economy, 2008*. McDowell Group PowerPoint Presentation. https://www.slideserve.com/mike_john/state-of-the-sitka-economy

Southeast Conference. (2015, 2020). *Analysis of Southeast Alaska's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats*. www.seconference.org/publications/

Regional SWOT analysis. Top strength: Beauty and recreational opportunities. Top weakness: Decline of the ferry system. Top opportunity: Strengthening ferry transportation. Top Threat: Loss of ferry service.

Southeast Conference. (2021). *Sitka Business Climate and COVID-19 Impacts Survey 2021*. <https://www.seconference.org/publication/sitka-business-climate-and-covid-19-impacts-survey-2021/>

Southeast Conference. (2016). *Southeast Alaska 2020 Economic Plan*. <https://www.seconference.org/publication/southeast-alaska-2020-economic-plan/>

Southeast Conference. (2021). *Southeast Alaska 2025 Economic Plan*. <https://www.seconference.org/publication/southeast-alaska-2025-economic-plan/>

Southeast Conference. (2015, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022). *Southeast Alaska Business Climate Survey*. www.seconference.org/publications/

Southeast Conference. (2017). *Southeast Conference's Economic Planning for the Region (Senate Commerce Committee January 26, 2017.)* Rain Coast Data. <https://www.seconference.org/publication/southeast-conferences-economic-planning-for-the-region/>

Southeast Conference. (2014). *The Arts Economy of Southeast Alaska*. <https://www.seconference.org/publication/the-arts-economy-of-southeast-alaska/ce.org>

Swagel, W. (n.d.). *Sitka's New Dock is Old Sitka Dock: Private Infrastructure for Public Good*. The Free Library. <https://www.thefreelibrary.com/Sitka%27s+new+dock+is+old+Sitka+Dock%3A+private+infrastructure+for+public...-a0350574767>
News article noting the decade of decline of cruise ship visitors to Sitka, voters twice rejecting a publicly owned docking facility downtown, and prior to the building of the privately owned docking facility at the site of the Old Sitka Dock.

Thanh. (2019, March 26). *State of the Sitka Economy, 2009 Update*. McDowell Group PowerPoint Presentation. <https://www.slideserve.com/thanh/state-of-the-economy-2009-powerpoint-ppt-presentation>

- Vogt, C., Jordan, E., Grewe, N., & Kruger, L. (2015, December 18). *Collaborative Tourism Planning and Subjective Well-being in a Small Island Destination*. *Journal of Destination Marketing & Management*.
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S2212571X15000682>
Description of Sitka's actions involving collaborative planning to develop a community centered tourism plan and its rejection by local government.
- Woolsey, R. (2022, March 7). *Could Sitka's 'Cruise Boom' be a bust? A new documentary explores the impact of rapid growth in cruise tourism*. KCAW. <https://www.kcaw.org/2022/03/03/could-sitkas-cruise-boom-be-a-bust-a-new-documentary-explores-the-impact-of-rapid-growth-in-cruise-tourism/>
Interview with filmmakers Ellen Frankenstein and Atman Mehta about their film project looking at cruise tourism in Sitka.
- Woolsey, R. (2019, May 4). *Despite Low Business Confidence, Sitka's Economy Trends Up*. KCAW.
<https://www.kcaw.org/2019/05/02/despite-low-business-confidence-sitkas-economy-trends-up/>
Discussion of Sitka's economy highlighting 25 years of relative stability.

Section Two

- Alexander, J. M. (2009, November 23). *Exploring Spiritual Landscape in Sitka Alaska to Enhance Cross-Cultural Understanding*. ResearchSpace Home. <https://researchspace.auckland.ac.nz/handle/2292/5566>
"This thesis examines spiritual landscapes, illustrating their richness in understanding cross-cultural relations and revealing deeper cultural attitudes toward the environment. It also shows that spiritual landscapes hold visible and invisible remnants of the past, providing insights for intercultural relations today. The research is timely, building on the momentum of international and national efforts to better understand and preserve indigenous cultures and settler heritages."
- Amsden, B. L., Stedman, R. C., & Kruger, L. E. (2010). The Creation and Maintenance of Sense of Place in a Tourism-Dependent Community. *Leisure Sciences*, 33(1), 32–51.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01490400.2011.533105>
"This paper examines the theoretical intersection of place attachment and community through a study of the place attachment of residents who live, work, and play in a tourism-dependent community."
- Barkley, J. R., & Kruger, L. E. (2012). Place Meanings as Lived Experience. *Place-Based Conservation*, 89–98.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-5802-5_7
"Describes a theoretical perspective of divisive political ideology compounded by an exclusive reliance on scientific knowledge. It suggests that the expression of stakeholders' place-related emotion through stories of lived experience can play an important role in natural resource planning."
- Behnken, L. (1970, January 1). *SSF: Communities, Fishing Is Life*. AquaDocs.
<https://aquadocs.org/handle/1834/36210>
Article highlighting that "without fishing, Alaska's coastal residents would have no way to sustain their families and their communities."
- Bunten, Alexis Celeste. (2010). More Like Ourselves: Indigenous Capitalism Through Tourism. *American Indian Quarterly*, 34(3), 285. <https://doi.org/10.5250/amerindiquar.34.3.285>
Focuses on Alaska and New Zealand indigenous-owned cultural tourism businesses. "Indigenous capitalism as a distinct strategy to achieve ethical, culturally appropriate, and successful Indigenous participation within the global economy."
- Cavanaugh, N., & Cheney, K. S. (2002). Community Collaboration—A Weaving. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*, 8(1), 13–20. <https://doi.org/10.1097/00124784-200201000-00004>
"This article describes the collaborative efforts of the Sitka Turning Point Towards Health partnership in Sitka, Alaska. Key steps to its success include defining our terms, finding consensus, maintaining an attitude of respect, engaging people—building relationships, creating work groups, sharing leadership, committing to collaborative leadership, building in sustainability, and telling our story. We have chosen to

interlace a weaving metaphor to reflect our Alaskan Native American culture and the vision of our partnership.”

Colt, S., Fay, G., & Dugan, D. (1970, January 1). *The Regional Economy of Southeast Alaska*. ScholarWorks@UA Home. <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/12231>

This report provides a broad overview of the regional economy of Southeast Alaska, including trends over time for individual communities and boroughs.

Creating Harbors of Well-Being in Alaska’s Frontier Communities: The “Community Wellness Advocate Training Program”. (2001). American Public Health Association.

https://aphanew.confex.com/apha/129am/techprogram/paper_22925.htm

“The CWA Training Program is a model of a distance-delivered, relevant, and academically sound preparation program for people, isolated from higher education, who wish to work as community health promoters. The year-long training program collaborates with the University of Alaska Southeast-Sitka to deliver three college courses. Upon program completion, CWA students earn twelve college credits, which may be applied towards a degree at the University.”

Crone, L. K. (2005). Southeast Alaska economics: A resource-abundant region competing in a global marketplace. *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 72(1-3), 215–233. Southeast Alaska Economics.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2004.09.019>

“Comparisons are undertaken to evaluate the economic changes taking place in southeast Alaska, to analyze the sources of these changes, and to determine if and why they differ from the changes taking place at larger scales and those occurring in a similar rural and resource-abundant region. Divergent views regarding the current role of the Tongass in the regional economy are summarized and assessed by using contemporary evidence.”

Dugan, D., Fay, G., & Colt, S. (2007, March 20). *Nature-based Tourism in Southeast Alaska: Results from 2005 and 2006 Field Study*. https://iseralaska.org/static/legacy_publication_links/SEnbt_final.pdf

“This report explores the economic importance of nature-based tourism in Southeast Alaska based on field research conducted during 2005 and 2006. We define nature-based tourism as those tourism activities for which the natural environment is a significant input.”

Gurosy, D., et al. (2018, September 17). Residents’ Impact Perceptions of and Attitudes Towards Tourism Development: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management*.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19368623.2018.1516589>

“Applying a meta-analysis approach, this study examines the applicability of SET on explaining residents’ impact perceptions of and attitudes toward tourism development. Findings confirm the applicability of SET in tourism impact studies when assessing the impacts of perceived benefits (positive impacts) on support. Findings reveal that perceived benefits produce substantial effects on support while perceived costs (negative impacts) have trivial effects, which suggest that measures and indicators used to assess residents’ perceptions of perceived costs (negative impacts) may have validity problems. Moreover, a closer examination of the mean effects of five exogenous determinants of impact perceptions reveals that none of those variables have significant effects on the perceptions of negative impacts further suggesting possible problems with the operationalization of negative impact perceptions. Findings clearly suggest that a closer examination of the measurement items used to assess the negative impact perceptions of tourism impacts is needed.”

Edwards, W., & Natarajan, T. (2011, April 27). *Rural Society and barriers to well-being*. DIVA. <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A412578&dswid=356>

“Service availability, access, and delivery are universal problems every society faces. Invariably, some members of any society are unable to access all of the services they need. This article identifies crucial factors that create service access barriers by using a modified Social Fabric Matrix (SFM) methodology. The

components of the matrix go to the core of the question of well-being and are ideally suited to clarifying access rigidities.

- Farnum, J., Hall, T., & Kruger, L. E. (2005). Sense of place in Natural Resource Recreation and Tourism: An Evaluation and assessment of research findings. <https://doi.org/10.2737/pnw-gtr-660>
"This integrative review of research provides relevant, current information on the role of sense of place in natural resource based recreation and tourism. Special focus is given to the foundations of place attachment, how place attachment may differ among user types, and the relation of place attachment to other psychological phenomena such as attitudes. The role of theory in place attachment also is addressed, and gaps in theoretical and empirical work are identified. This review provides specific recommendations for managers and others wanting to better understand the dynamics of sense of place."
- Fix, Peter J., Kruger, L. & McCollum, D. (2008). *Understanding Alaska Public Lands Visitors Collaboration: The Alaska Residents Statistics Program*. Conference Paper.
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/272792287_Understanding_Alaska_Public_Lands_Visitors_Through_Collaboration_The_Alaska_Residents_Statistics_Program
"The Alaska Residents Statistics Program (ARSP) is a collaborative effort among federal land management agencies to gather information on travel patterns, subsistence and recreation activities, and how public land relates to quality of life. To gather this information, the ARSP study group designed and administered the Alaska Residents Outdoor Activity and Travel Survey to over 2,000 Alaska residents in 2006-2007. Results showing how management decisions might impact subsistence and recreation on public lands will be useful for regional level planning."
- Hillmer-Pegram, K. (2019). Integrating Indigenous Values with Capitalism Through Tourism: Alaskan Experiences and Outstanding Issues. *Sustainable Tourism and Indigenous Peoples*, 128–144.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315112053-8>
"This book provides a comprehensive, detailed and insight rich review of both the positive (capacity building, cultural conservation and economic opportunities) and negative (commodification, cultural change and possible loss of ownership and control) aspects of tourism development in indigenous communities"
- Himes-Cornell, A., & Kasperski, S. (2016). Using Socioeconomic and Fisheries Involvement Indices to Understand Alaska Fishing Community Well-being. *Coastal Management*, 44(1), 36–70.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08920753.2016.1116671>
"Over recent years, fisheries managers have been going through a paradigm shift to prioritize ecosystem-based management. With this comes an increasing need to better understand the impacts of fisheries management decisions on the social well-being and sustainability of fishing communities. This article summarizes research aimed at using secondary data to develop socioeconomic and fisheries involvement indices to measure objective fishing community wellbeing in Alaska. Data from more than 300 communities in Alaska were used to create a database of socioeconomic and fisheries involvement indices of objective well-being and adaptability for Alaska communities dependent on marine resources."
- Himes-Cornell, A., Maguire, C., Kasperski, S., Hoelting, K., & Pollnac, R. (2016). Understanding Vulnerability in Alaska Fishing Communities: A Validation Methodology for Rapid Assessment of Indices Related to Well-being. *Ocean & Coastal Management*, 124, 53–65. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ocecoaman.2016.02.004>
Describes a rapid assessment method for vulnerability indices tested for construct and external validity in fishing communities in Alaska."
- Izenberg, M., Brown, R., Siebert, C., Heinz, R., Rahmattalabi, A., & Vayanos, P. (2022). A Community-partnered Approach to Social Network Data Collection for a Large and Partial Network. *Field Methods*.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822x221074769>
"In the small town of Sitka, Alaska, frequent and often catastrophic landslides threaten residents. One challenge associated with disaster preparedness is access to timely and reliable risk information. As with

many small but diverse towns, who or what is a trustworthy source of information is often contested. To help improve landslide communication in Sitka, we used a community-partnered approach to social network analysis to identify (1) potential key actors for landslide risk communication and (2) structural holes that may inhibit efficient and equitable communication. This short take describes how we built trust and developed adaptive data collection methods to build an approach that was acceptable and actionable for Sitka, Alaska. This approach could be useful to other researchers for conducting social network analysis to improve risk communication, particularly in rural and remote contexts.”

Izenberg, M., Clark-Ginsberg, A., Clancy, N., Busch, L., Schmidt, J., & Dixon, L. (2022). Efforts to End a Stalemate in Landslide Insurance Availability Through Inclusive Policymaking: A Case Study in Sitka, Alaska. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4104356>

“Stalemates frequently obstruct disaster risk management related initiatives, including related to risk financing. They can arise from misaligned stakeholder objectives and a cognitive effort to avoid decision-making under uncertainty. Participatory action research techniques can be useful for overcoming stalemates, but have not been examined in the context of disaster risk management. To fill this gap, we explored how participatory techniques could overcome one disaster risk financing related stalemate: the case of landslide insurance in a highly landslide-prone location, Sitka, Alaska.”

Jordan, E. J. (2014). Planning as a Coping Response to Proposed Tourism Development. *Journal of Travel Research*, 54(3), 316–328. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287513517425>

“This case study explores the psychological concepts of stress and coping as experienced by residents of a host community. Stress can negatively affect communities and individuals in myriad ways, leading to community dysfunction, negative health outcomes, and psychological consequences. Successful coping actions can moderate the effects of stress on individuals and communities. Over the span of two years, the community of Sitka, Alaska, undertook two tourism planning processes in response to the proposed development of a cruise pier. Thematic analysis of 29 interviews of Sitka residents and tourism planning participants revealed that the tourism planning process was a form of community coping with the stress of proposed tourism development.”

Jordan, E., Vogt, C., Kruger, L., & Grewe, N. (2002). *Coping with tourism: The Case of Sitka, Alaska*. Amherst. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19407963.2013.789354>

“In this research, coping behaviors of community residents in response to the proposed development of a cruise dock in the community of Sitka, AK were explored.”

Jordan, E., Vogt, C., Kruger, L., & Grewe, N. (2016). *The Role of Governance in Tourism Planning*. ScholarWorks@UMass Amherst. <https://scholarworks.umass.edu/ttra/2012/Oral/21/>

“This research tests Beaumont and Dredge’s tourism application of governance structure theory using recent tourism planning efforts in the community of Sitka, Alaska. In less than two years, the community of Sitka undertook two separate tourism-planning processes in response to a major tourism event (need for cruise dock to accommodate large cruise ships). The first plan followed a participant-led governance structure, the second plan a council-led governance structure. The participant-led governance structure produced a plan through a collaborative process that empowered citizen participants and sought to limit growth, while the council-led structure produced a more pro-growth plan and downplayed citizen concern for maintaining quality of life. Through this research, tourism governance structures are critically analyzed with a clearer understanding of advantages and disadvantages of planning processes under differing governance structures.”

Knapp, G. (1970, January 1). *Ecology, Economics, Politics, and the Alaska Forest Industry*. ScholarWorks@UA Home. <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/12043>

Ecology, economics, and politics together define and constrain opportunities for the Alaska forest products industry. Ecology limits potential timber harvest paths and non-timber benefits over time. One kind of

ecological limit is the tradeoff between potential harvest levels over time. Another kind of ecological limit is the tradeoff between timber harvests and non-timber forest benefits such as fish and wildlife and scenery.

Kreiss-Tomkins, D. (2014). *Use of Tlingit art and Identity by Non-Tlingit people in Sitka, Alaska* (dissertation). <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1556139953?pq-origsite=gscholar&fromopenview=true>, Fairbanks, Alaska.

"Tlingit culture, as with many Indigenous cultures that exist under colonial rule, is often described as being in danger of disappearing. Despite this, the appropriation of and subsequent use of cultural practices by non-Tlingit people, and especially white people, is a continuation of the process of colonization when it is enacted in a manner that is not critical of current and historical racism, capitalist pressures and colonial violence."

Kruger, L. E. (2004, November 10). *Community and Landscape Change in Southeast Alaska*. *Landscape and Urban Planning*. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204604001252>

"Since the early 1970s, social science research has addressed issues concerning the nature and distribution of values and uses associated with natural resources. In part, this research has tried to improve our understanding of interconnections between resource management and social and cultural change on the Tongass National Forest in southeast Alaska. In 1997, scientists at the Pacific Northwest Research Station (PNW) initiated a number of social science studies in response to information gaps identified while developing the Tongass Land Management Plan. Results presented here summarize findings from studies of traditional ecological knowledge, subsistence use of natural resources, tourism trends and the effects of tourism on communities, and social acceptability of alternative timber harvest practices. Management implications are discussed along with suggestions for further study."

Lowe, M. E., Wilson, M., Robyn, M., & Sanders, K. (2012, June 1). *Alaska Coastal Community Youth and the Future*. ScholarWorks@UA Home. <https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/3923>

"The proposed project was conducted between 2008-2011 to study the perceptions of youth in Alaska's coastal communities on their lives today, their goals or aspirations about the future, and to examine community in- and out-migration from their perspective. Specifically, the research situated the position of youth aged 16-24 in the current "economic uncertainty" of coastal Alaska in how they might respond or be responding to changes in their communities' economies. Research questions included: 1) How are Alaska's coastal community youth responding to economic change in their communities? 2) What are their aspirations for future opportunities for work, education, or training? 3) What are the ways schools and the State of Alaska can respond to youth culture and current economic opportunities to foster healthy coastal communities of the future?"

Mazza, R. (2004). *Economic Growth and Change in Southeast Alaska*. <https://doi.org/10.2737/pnw-gtr-611>

"This report focuses on economic trends since the 1970s in rural southeast Alaska. These trends are compared with those in the Nation and in nonmetropolitan areas of the country to determine the extent to which the economy in rural southeast Alaska is affected by regional activity and by larger market forces. Many of the economic changes occurring in rural southeast Alaska, such as the decline in the manufacturing sector, are reflections of broad-scale changes in the greater U.S. economy. Other changes, such as the increase in nonwage income as a percentage of total income, have been greater in rural southeast Alaska than at the larger scales of comparison."

Mazza, R., & Kruger, L. E. (2005). *Social Conditions and Trends in Southeast Alaska*. *US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station*. <https://doi.org/10.2737/pnw-gtr-653>

"Demographic trends suggest that despite having many unique geographic, climatic, and physical characteristics, southeast Alaska exhibits many social conditions and trends similar to those statewide, as well as in the greater United States and nonmetropolitan United States. Much variation exists at the community level, however, when measuring change in population and income in southeast Alaska. In the last decade, tourism has been one of the fastest growing components of Alaska's economy and an

important source of export-based income. Natural resource management and use in Alaska will affect and will be affected by trends in tourism growth and activities."

McLeod, M. T., & Croes, R. R. (2018). In *Tourism Management in Warm-Water island Destinations*. Chapter 8. CAB International.

"This chapter examines the literature pertaining to the relationship between tourism development and residents' well-being, with a focus on small island destinations. The chapter addresses topics that contribute to well-being, such as the relationship between higher incomes and resident happiness, and the role of tourism development in enhancing social comparison as a force in defining resident happiness. Also presented is a case study focusing on tourism development in relation to residents' well-being in Aruba. The gaps in the literature are highlighted and future research stemming from the insights gained from the literature review as well as directions for policymakers are discussed."

Ross, P. J., Bluestone, H., & Hines, F. K. (1979). *Indexes and Rankings for Indicators of Social Well-being for U.S. Counties: Statistical Supplement for Rural Development Research Report no. 10*. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Economics, Statistics, and Cooperatives Service.

Safford, T. G., Henly, M., Ulrich-Schad, J. D., & Perkins, K. (2014). *Charting a Future Course for Development: Natural Resources, Conservation, and Community Character in Coastal Alaska*. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*. <https://journals.brandonu.ca/jrcd/article/view/904>

"Using survey data from 1,541 residents of Southeast Alaska, we examine individual views regarding the role of fishing, forestry, and tourism in this region's economic future. We also assess beliefs about the importance of conserving natural resources and the preservation of the area's cultural character within new development efforts. Findings show that social factors such as age, education, political party affiliation, and individuals' economic well-being, along with place of residence explain diverging views. Given the changing demographics and the shifting interconnections between different communities within rural regions, these results illustrate the importance of designing investigations that capture broad regional trends while also highlighting the key place-specific factors that shape beliefs about natural resource-related industries and the priorities for future rural development activities."

Sampson, R. (n.d.). *Sitka solution - community transportation*. <https://ctaa.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/spring-38-41.pdf>

Addresses community transportation in Sitka.

Sikka, M., Thornton, T. F., & Worl, R. (2013). Sustainable Biomass Energy and Indigenous Cultural Models of Well-being in an Alaska Forest Ecosystem. *Ecology and Society*, 18(3). <https://doi.org/10.5751/es-05763-180338>

"With the cost of fuel and transport skyrocketing, energy costs are crippling local economies, leading to increasing outmigration and concern for their very existence in the future. What can be done to address this energy crisis, and promote energy security, sustainability, and resilience in rural forest communities? We examine the potential of developing a sustainable biomass-energy industry in Southeast Alaska, home to nearly 16,000 Alaska Natives in a dozen rural and two urban communities within the United States' largest national forest: The Tongass. Although the potential for biomass energy has long been touted, realization of the opportunity has been catalyzed only recently as part of a model of sustainable development being enacted by the region's largest Native corporation, Sealaska, and its subsidiary, Haa Aani ("Our Land") L.L.C. In this paper we examine the unique nature of Alaska Native corporations and their potential as engines of sustainable development, particularly through Sealaska's emerging cultural model of sustainability in relation to social-ecological well-being. We assess the economic, ecological, and atmospheric emissions parameters of a wood-biomass energy industry at various scales according to the "triple bottom line" of sustainability. Finally, we address what additional policy and support measures may be necessary to nurture the successful transition to biomass energy at a sustainable scale to support rural indigenous communities, a more resilient, renewable energy system, and a lower carbon footprint."

Spooner, E., Karnauskas, M., Harvey, C. J., Kelble, C., Rosellon-Druker, J., Kasperski, S., Lucey, S. M., Andrews, K. S., Gittings, S. R., Moss, J. H., Gove, J. M., Samhour, J. F., Allee, R. J., Bograd, S. J., Monaco, M. E., Clay, P. M., Rogers, L. A., Marshak, A., Wongbusarakum, S., Lynch, P. D. (2021). Using Integrated Ecosystem Assessments to Build Resilient Ecosystems, Communities, and Economies. *Coastal Management*, 49(1), 26–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08920753.2021.1846152>

“NOAA adopted the Integrated Ecosystem Assessment (IEA) approach to conduct the collaborative science necessary for ecosystem-based management. IEAs have been employed for over a decade to develop science, tools, and collaborations that address complex ecosystem challenges and make progress toward NOAA’s vision. This paper demonstrates, through case studies, how scientists, stakeholders, and managers build trust and meaningful relationships from the IEA approach. These case studies further demonstrate how the IEA approach can be adapted to various geographic and management scales to build trust with partners and provide the ecosystem science, including social science, required to build resilient coastal ecosystems, communities, and economies.”

Stedman, R., Amsden, B. L., & Kruger, L. (2006). Sense of Place and Community: Points of intersection with Implications for Leisure Research. *Leisure/Loisir*, 30(2), 393–404. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14927713.2006.9651360>

“...paper explores the points of contrast and intersection between two theories that have been used to understand the relationships between people and locales: sense of place and community theory. We distill crucial elements from each approach: for sense of place we include setting characteristics, behaviors, symbolic meanings, and evaluations such as attachment and identity. We use the interactional approach to represent community theory, and thus include ecology, society, and action components. We create and introduce a matrix that intersects these elements and find that much common ground exists: there is significant potential for cross fertilization between the approaches. The utility of the approach is illustrated using public participation as an example topic of interest to resource and recreation managers.”

Szymkowiak, M., & Kasperski, S. (2020). Sustaining an Alaska Coastal Community: Integrating Place Based Well-being Indicators and Fisheries Participation. *Coastal Management*, 49(1), 107–131. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08920753.2021.1846165>

“The incorporation of human dimensions into ecosystem-based fisheries management has largely focused on metrics of economic welfare. Yet researchers have demonstrated the variety of well-being that is derived from fisheries as well as the need for localized and collaborative scientific efforts that result in appropriately contextualized metrics. This article presents the results of a project intended to address these needs and inform the North Pacific fisheries management process with a set of indicators that are related to multiple dimensions of human well-being and links to fisheries participation. The article showcases a mechanism of applying a well-being framework and participatory methods to develop locally relevant quantitative indicators for one of the most highly engaged fishing communities in Alaska - Sitka. These indicators can be used to track how fishery shocks may reverberate through social systems and affect fishing communities. Furthermore, the discussion of the multifaceted well-being indicators presents information on local values and complex dynamics between community well-being and fisheries that are difficult to conceptualize and integrate into management decisions. Ultimately, this work can facilitate a more comprehensive incorporation of human dimensions into ecosystem-based frameworks in fisheries management, contextualizing that expansion within locally relevant narratives that engage stakeholders in resource management.”

United States Federal Highway Administration. (2017, May 23). *Tribal Transportation Case Study: Sitka Tribe of Alaska Works with Local Government to Improve Roadways for Transit Use*. <https://rosap.ntl.bts.gov/view/dot/62918>

Case study of Sitka Tribe of Alaska’s role in creating public transit, “the RIDE”.

Williams, G. D. (n.d.). *Place-based Ecosystem Management: Adapting Integrated Ecosystem Assessment Processes for Developing Scientifically and Socially Relevant Indicator Portfolios*. Taylor & Francis. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/08920753.2021.1846154?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

“Developing a comprehensive portfolio of theoretically sound indicators is fundamental to effective place-based management of coastal ecosystems at a wide range of scales. We reviewed indicator development case studies from seven different social-ecological systems over the first 10 years of the NOAA integrated ecosystem assessment (IEA) program, with the goals of identifying effective strategies and highlighting general principles that would inform future efforts. The IEA framework provided a versatile approach to developing indicators across a diverse range of differently scaled systems and partnerships, guided by organizing principles of screening transparency, iterative review, and an adaptive balance between quantitative evaluation methods and qualitative stakeholder guidance. Information exchange across the broad community of EBM practitioners facilitated progress between systems, chronologically tracking a path that reflected improvements in indicator development methods (especially for social indicators) and a growing focus on multisector EBM in smaller coastal communities. Most projects adopted innovative visual imagery to engage partners and stakeholders, which built trust and communication while enhancing the spectrum of indicators. Using guidance from the lessons above, future indicator development efforts will be better prepared to confront the recurring, transdisciplinary challenges of managing integrated social-ecological systems.”

Appendix III. Survey Protocol

Given the large increase in tourism in Sitka this summer, we are conducting a community assessment on the local impacts of tourism.

This assessment is being conducted by a team of student researchers from the Pardee RAND Graduate School to assist the Sitka Sound Science Center and the broader community in understanding how tourism is impacting individuals in and the community of Sitka. **All individuals residing in Sitka, like yourself, have been invited to participate in a brief and anonymous survey that should not take more than 10 minutes to complete. The survey will be open until Friday, August 26.**

Please note that respondents must be at least 18 years old and should reside in Sitka permanently or for temporary employment. The survey asks about your perspectives on the impacts of tourism across a range of different areas and poses demographic questions. Findings from this survey may help policymakers better address community members' needs and interests as it relates to tourism in the future.

If you agree, your participation will last for the period of time during which you are completing this survey. Your participation is voluntary, and there are no anticipated risks of participation. You can refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and remain in the study. You may also choose to stop answering the survey at any point without risk of penalization. Survey data will not be shared outside of the Pardee RAND team and will only be reported on in a deidentified and aggregate manner.

If you have any questions, please let our research team know by emailing sitkacommunityassessment@collaboration.rand.org.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant or need to report a research-related injury or concern, you can contact RAND's Human Subjects Protection Committee toll-free at (866) 697-5620 or by emailing hspcinfo@rand.org. When you contact the Committee, please reference Study #2022-N0298.

By clicking "Yes" below, you are indicating that you have reviewed this consent form and agree to participate. [Yes/No]

-

Thank you for agreeing to participate. Over the next few pages of this survey, you will be asked to answer multiple questions. Please keep in mind that there is no right or wrong answer, and you may skip any question that you would not like to answer.

Select the range that best corresponds with your age.

- 0-17
 - If selected: Thank you for participating in this survey. Additional responses are not required at this time given that the community assessment is intended for adult respondents (over the age of 18) only.
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-59
- 60+

Are you a permanent resident in Sitka or participating in temporary employment in Sitka this summer? (Y/N)

- If no: Thank you for participating in this survey. Additional responses are not required at this time given that the community assessment is focused on gaining perspectives from community residents.
- If yes: (Continue to next page)

-

We are interested in gaining your perspectives on the impacts of tourism across a range of different areas of your life and community. There is no right or wrong answer.

To maintain anonymity, please refrain from sharing personally identifiable information in the open-ended text boxes.

Has increased tourism this summer in Sitka (positively or negatively) affected you? (Y/N)

- If no, skip to next question.
- If yes: Describe how increased tourism has impacted you; we are interested in both positive and negative impacts that you might be experiencing: [Open-ended text box]

Does increased tourism make Sitka a more or less desirable place to live?

- Far more desirable
- Somewhat more desirable
- Neither more nor less desirable
- Somewhat less desirable
- Far less desirable
- Not sure/Not applicable

What do you believe are the benefits of increased tourism in Sitka? [Open-ended text box]

What do you believe are the consequences of increased tourism in Sitka? [Open-ended text box]

To what extent has increased tourism this summer affected your current job(s)?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to employment: [Open-ended text box]

-

We are interested in gaining your perspectives on the impacts of tourism across a range of different areas of your life and community. There is no right or wrong answer.

To maintain anonymity, please refrain from sharing personally identifiable information in the open-ended text boxes.

To what extent has increased tourism this summer affected housing costs in Sitka?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent

- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

To what extent has increased tourism this summer affected housing availability in Sitka?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Has the change in housing availability and/or costs due to increased tourism affected the following groups in your life? (Check all that apply)

- Me
- My immediate family
- My extended family
- My neighbors
- My friends
- My coworkers
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to housing: [Open-ended text box]

Have you noticed a change in availability of health care services (physical and/or mental health) given increased tourism this summer? (Y/N/Not sure/Not applicable)

To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted your ability to access health services for acute or new and emergent issues (e.g., Urgent Care for an injury)?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to accessing these health services: [Open-ended text box]

To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted your ability to access health services for chronic health conditions (e.g., ongoing treatment for a chronic health condition like heart disease)?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to accessing these health services:
[Open-ended text box]

-

We are interested in gaining your perspectives on the impacts of tourism across a range of different areas of your life and community. There is no right or wrong answer.

To maintain anonymity, please refrain from sharing personally identifiable information in the open-ended text boxes.

Have you noticed a change in your ability to access local businesses, including restaurants, given increased tourism this summer? (Y/N/Not sure/Not applicable)

- If no or “Not sure/Not applicable”, skip to next question.
- If yes: please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to accessing local businesses:
[Open-ended text box]

Have you noticed a change in the availability of healthy and fresh foods given increased tourism this summer? (Y/N/Not sure/Not applicable)

- If no or “Not Sure/Not Applicable”, skip to next question.
- If yes: please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to food availability: [Open-ended text box]

To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted your ability to purchase healthy and fresh foods from grocery stores in Sitka?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to purchasing food: [Open-ended text box]

To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted your ability to gather healthy and fresh foods through subsistence mechanisms (e.g., fishing)?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to gathering food: [Open-ended text box]

-

We are interested in gaining your perspectives on the impacts of tourism across a range of different areas of your life and community. There is no right or wrong answer.

To maintain anonymity, please refrain from sharing personally identifiable information in the open-ended text boxes.

To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted the availability or potential to use recreational sites in and around town (e.g., hiking trails)?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to accessing recreational sites: [Open-ended text box]

Are there recreational sites that you believe should be set aside for local use? (Y/N/Not sure/Not applicable)

- If yes: please list which recreational sites you are referring to: [Open-ended text box]

Are there recreational sites that you believe should be targeted for tourists' use? (Y/N/Not sure/Not applicable)

- If yes: please list which recreational sites you are referring to: [Open-ended text box]

Have you noticed changes to cultural sites in and around Sitka as a result of increased tourism this summer? (Y/N/Not sure/Not applicable)

Please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to accessing cultural sites: [Open-ended text box]

Please share any suggestions to preserve the history and traditional use of different cultural sites that might be frequented by tourists in Sitka: [Open-ended text box]

-

We are interested in gaining your perspectives on the impacts of tourism across a range of different areas of your life and community. There is no right or wrong answer.

To maintain anonymity, please refrain from sharing personally identifiable information in the open-ended text boxes.

To what extent has increased tourism this summer impacted access to or the availability of youth summer programs?

- To a very large extent
- To a large extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- To a very small extent
- Not sure/Not applicable

Optional; please describe, including any new opportunities for or barriers to accessing youth summer programs: [Open-ended text box]

-

The following questions inquire about your demographic information. As a reminder, you can skip any question or select “prefer not to answer.”

- Select your gender identity.
 - Gender non-conforming person
 - Man
 - Non-binary person
 - Woman
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer
- Select your race/ethnicity.
 - American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous
 - Asian or Asian American
 - Black or African American
 - Hispanic, Latino/a, or Latin American
 - Middle Eastern
 - Multiracial or multi-ethnic
 - Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer
- Select your highest level of educational attainment.
 - GED or high school diploma
 - Associate degree
 - Professional trade license
 - Bachelor’s degree
 - Master’s degree
 - Terminal degree (e.g., MD, PhD, ED)
 - Prefer not to answer
- Select your sector(s) of employment. (Check all that apply)
 - Academia
 - Commercial fishing
 - Tourism industry
 - Restaurant or for-profit businesses
 - Community-based, nonprofit, or not-for-profit organization
 - Federal, state, or local government
 - Other
 - Prefer not to answer
- Do you reside in Sitka year-round? (Y/N/Prefer not to answer)
- For how many years have you resided in Sitka?
 - 0-4
 - 5-9
 - 10-14
 - 15-19
 - 20+
 - Prefer not to answer
- What is your housing status?

- Homeowner
- Renter
- Other
- Prefer not to answer

-
Thank you for completing this survey! The results of our survey will be shared with the Sitka Sound Science Center and other decision-makers as the community looks toward next year's tourism season. If you have any questions, please email us at sitkacommunityassessment@collaboration.rand.org.

Appendix IV. Interview Protocol

Introduction

My name is [INSERT] and I am a researcher and doctoral candidate at the Pardee RAND Graduate School. Thank you for taking the time to meet.

Consent

This research study is being conducted by a team of student researchers from the Pardee RAND Graduate School to assist the Sitka Sound Science Center and the broader community in understanding how tourism is impacting individuals in and the community of Sitka. Relatedly, all individuals residing in Sitka, including yourself, have been invited to participate in a brief and anonymous survey. If you have not already been able to complete that survey, we encourage you to do so.

We are now interviewing select community leaders, like you, to explore in better depth the impacts of increased tourism on individuals in and the community of Sitka as well as potential solutions to address any negative impacts in the future.

If you agree to participate, your participation will last for the period of time during which you are in this discussion, which will be at most one hour. Your participation is voluntary, and there are almost no anticipated risks of participation. You can refuse to answer any questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. You may also choose to stop participating in the interview at any point without risk of penalization.

A member of our team is here to take notes on our discussion. Interview data will not be shared outside of the Pardee RAND team and will be kept anonymous. Deidentified and aggregate information from the interviewers will be summarized in reports and presentations, which may include quotations that are not attributed to any specific individual.

Do you have any questions?

Also, please note that if you have questions about your rights as a research participant or need to report a research-related injury or concern, you can contact RAND's Human Subjects Protection Committee toll-free at (866) 697-5620 or by emailing hspcinfo@rand.org. When you contact the Committee, please reference Study #2022-N0298.

With that, do you agree to participate in this discussion? (If no, thank participant for their time and end discussion.)

(If yes:) Thank you. We would like to record this discussion for our internal purposes only. The recordings will be referenced as we review the notes and develop our deliverables, and destroyed at the completion of this study. With that, do you agree to being audio recorded?

- (If no, confirm notetaker can continue taking notes during discussion and begin.)
- (If yes, interviewer to begin recording.)

Background

- To start, please tell us about your relationship to Sitka and [insert sector], including your professional role.
- How do you believe the increase in tourism this summer has affected individuals in Sitka? The community overall?

Sector-specific

- How has the increase in tourism this summer affected [insert sector]? Your primary place of employment?
 - Probe, if not covered: Can you provide specific examples of how the increase in tourism this summer has affected your work and primary place of employment?
 - Probe, if not covered: Positive impacts, negative impacts, job stability, availability of raises or bonuses

Well-being

- We are particularly interested in learning about your perspectives on the impacts of the increase in tourism on specific areas that affect individual and community well-being. Well-being is a positive outcome that is meaningful for people and for many sectors of society, because it tells us that people perceive that their lives are going well.
 - Probe: What impacts do you think have occurred related to housing availability and affordability?
 - Probe: What suggestions do you have for addressing [restate impact, as relevant] in future tourism seasons?
 - Probe, as relevant: Who should be involved in implementing [restate suggestion]?
 - Probe: What impacts do you think have occurred in terms of accessing and the availability of health care services? Health care services refer both to physical and mental health related services.
 - Probe: What suggestions do you have for addressing [restate impact, as relevant] in future tourism seasons?
 - Probe, as relevant: Who should be involved in implementing [restate suggestion]?
 - Probe: What impacts do you think have occurred in terms of the availability of healthy and fresh foods, both in grocery stores and through subsistence means like fishing?
 - Probe: What suggestions do you have for addressing [restate impact, as relevant] in future tourism seasons?
 - Probe, as relevant: Who should be involved in implementing [restate suggestion]?
 - Probe: What impacts do you think have occurred in terms of local residents accessing and the availability of recreational and cultural sites?
 - Probe: What suggestions do you have for addressing [restate impact, as relevant] in future tourism seasons?
 - Probe, as relevant: Who should be involved in implementing [restate suggestion]?
 - Probe: What impacts do you think have occurred in terms of local residents accessing local businesses?
 - Probe, if not covered: Shopping changes or differences in shopping
 - Probe: What suggestions do you have for addressing [restate impact, as relevant] in future tourism seasons?
 - Probe, as relevant: Who should be involved in implementing [restate suggestion]?
 - Probe: What impacts do you think have occurred in terms of families' access to youth summer programs?
 - Probe: What suggestions do you have for addressing [restate impact, as relevant] in future tourism seasons?
 - Probe, as relevant: Who should be involved in implementing [restate suggestion]?

Conclusion

- What do you believe Sitka's top priorities should be for supporting community members if tourism continues to increase in future years?
 - Probe: Areas of opportunity that might arise; ongoing or new concerns
 - Probe, if not covered: Who should be involved in these types of planning discussions in the future?
- What do you believe Sitka's top priorities should be for supporting community members if tourism remains constant, without increasing, in future years?
 - Probe: Areas of opportunity that might arise; ongoing or new concerns
 - Probe, if not covered: Who should be involved in these types of planning discussions in the future?
- To what extent is tourism personally affecting your interest or willingness to continue residing in Sitka in the future?
- Is there anything else we have not discussed today that is pertinent to our community assessment?

Thank you! We will now stop the recording. [Turn off recorder and wrap up]

The image features a detailed wood grain pattern with concentric, wavy lines in shades of brown, tan, and dark blue. A white rectangular box is centered over the pattern, containing the word "References" in a bold, teal-colored font. The right side of the image is partially obscured by a solid purple background.

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**This project was conducted as part of the Pardee RAND Graduate School's
Community-Partnered Policy and Action summer externships.**

Questions can be directed to the project leaders:

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