

The 2014 Mat-Su Community Survey

Attitudes toward salmon, land use, and the environment

The Neighbors' Point of View

Since 2006, the Mat-Su Borough and the University of Alaska Justice Center have conducted a survey to gauge Mat-Su residents' feelings of satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, with borough services, taxation, facilities, and life in the valley. In 2014, a new series of questions was added to gauge attitudes about salmon, land use and the impact of the environment on our health.

Survey Says? Salmon Are King

The survey proves out that salmon are highly valued by the community. 82% of respondents agreed that salmon are important to the Mat-Su economy and 72% feel that salmon are essential to the Mat-Su way of life. The results also showed that residents believe salmon are facing long-term problems and need healthy streams and rivers to maintain numbers. And, they strongly support the protection of healthy salmon habitat "even in difficult economic times."

My Land!

Of those surveyed, 67% are concerned about how changing land use effects the Mat-Su. Pair this with the 65% who think the borough needs to do a better job of managing growth and development and you have people troubled by a growing Mat-Su. A good indicator of priorities is to look where locals are willing to spend tax money. While 39% of respondents think they don't get their money's worth for taxes paid, there is support for spending funds to preserve open space.

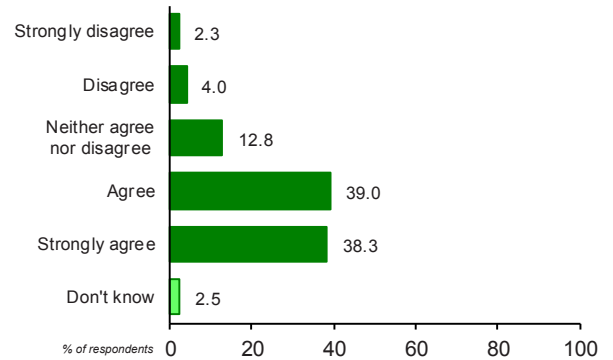
Walking The Talk

Three-quarters of respondents use Borough recreational facilities, with trails being the most popular. 80% of those surveyed said that their personal health is a product, in part, of a healthy environment. Walking, hiking and other physical activity helps prevent obesity and related illnesses and promotes a positive outlook. Access to public outdoor spaces can decrease medical costs and boost productivity.

Read the complete report at justice.uaa.alaska.edu.

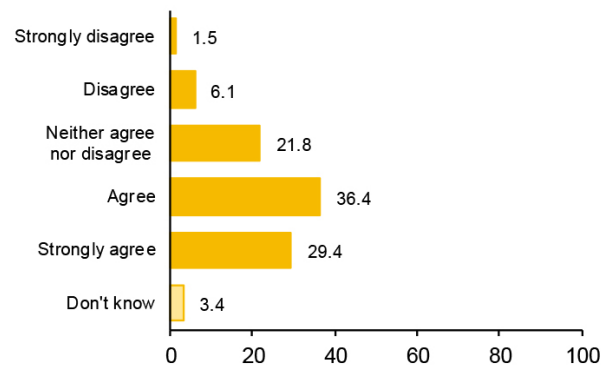
Survey results are given in tables & bar graphs.
Respondents were also asked for their comments.

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:
Even in difficult economic times, we should still find money to protect and manage salmon and their habitat.



"My family and I hunt wild meats and catch our own fish every year. I am very concerned about the loss of farm land, fishing and recreational sites, and conservation of water ways in the Mat-Su."

Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:
In the future, the Mat-Su Borough must do a better job of managing growth and development.



"Alaska must develop its natural resources to continue growing. A long-range view should be taken when considering any project. Sacrificing air or water quality or renewable resources for short-term financial gain is a path we cannot follow."

