

2. Results of the Survey of Pleasant Bay Communities

**Survey of Residents in
Pleasant Bay Communities**

*The Survey Center
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Pleasant Bay Resource Management Plan Residents' Survey

Pleasant Bay is a cherished resource for residents of Orleans, Chatham, Harwich, and Brewster. The four towns are working together to develop a resource management plan to sustain the important resources of Pleasant Bay for use by residents and visitors, and for future generations. The survey summarized in this report is among the public outreach activities sponsored by the four towns to provide residents with an opportunity to participate directly in shaping the resource management plan. The primary objectives of the survey are:

- to understand how residents use certain areas of Pleasant Bay;
- to determine residents' views on the importance of various Bay activities;
- to assess residents' views on the importance of selected issues related to the Bay; and
- to determine residents' support for possible policies or actions to manage the Bay's resources.

In July, 1996, more than 12,300 questionnaires were mailed out to residents of the four towns. Questionnaires were distributed to a cross-section of year-round and seasonal residents in the four communities. Over 1,000 useable questionnaires were returned, providing a statistically significant number of responses.

The responses to the survey provide a profile of public uses and perceptions relating to Pleasant Bay. The survey findings confirm many commonly held perceptions about the Bay and highlight other issues not previously a part of public discussion about the Bay. The findings are intended to provide a basis for further public discussion on issues and management strategies. This information complements technical data collected on the Bay's natural resources and human uses. Along with technical data, the survey results will be used to identify the specific issues the Pleasant Bay resource management plan will address.

The survey was designed and implemented by the Pleasant Bay Resource Management Plan Committee sponsored by the four towns. The Survey Center, Inc., an independent marketing research consulting firm located in New Seabury, Massachusetts, tabulated the results and prepared an analysis of the findings. This report is intended to provide interested citizens with key highlights and detailed findings from the survey. Questions or comments should be directed to Carole Ridley, coordinator for the Pleasant Bay Resource Management Plan, at (508)430-2563.

Pleasant Bay Resource Management Plan Residents' Survey Highlights

How Do Residents Use Pleasant Bay?

The survey results confirm that residents use Pleasant Bay for a wide variety of recreational activities and limited commercial activities. The uses of the Bay that were reported most frequently by respondents are beach walking, swimming, and beach access. Power boating and sailing are the next most common uses, followed by shellfishing and fishing. Wind surfing and jet skiing are the least common activities reported, perhaps indicating that people who use the Bay for such activities are more likely to be visitors.

Only six percent of respondents said they use the Bay for commercial purposes, and among them roughly half said they use the Bay for shellfishing.

For detailed findings, please refer to pages 6, 12, & 13 of this report.

What Areas of Pleasant Bay Do Residents Use Most?

Overall, Big Pleasant Bay is used by nearly two-thirds of respondents, while Little Pleasant Bay and Nauset Beach to Chatham are each used by more than half of respondents. Among those respondents who use town landings either for boating or shore access, nearly one out of five use either River Road in Orleans or Ryders Cove in Chatham.

The survey responses indicate that town landings are used heavily, and for more than boat launching and mooring. More than one-half of respondents said they use town landings for shore access, while slightly less than one-half said they use town landings for boat launching or mooring. Those who reported using town landings for boat launching and mooring tend to favor Ryders Cove in Chatham, River Road in Orleans, and Round Cove in Harwich, while those who use town landings for beach access tend to use all landings fairly evenly.

For detailed findings, please refer to pages 7-11 of this report.

How Do Residents Feel About Various Activities in the Bay?

The recreational activities that residents seem to value most require beach access. The top five activities rated "very important" by respondents are scenic viewing, walking along the shore, bird watching/nature viewing, and beach activities. Sailing, fishing, shellfishing, and canoeing/kayaking constitute the next tier of important activities. Waterskiing, wind surfing, and waterfowling were among the lowest five importance ratings, respectively. The least valued activity in the Bay is jet skiing.

Some activities appear to be important to residents even if they don't participate in those activities, while other activities appear to be important to those who participate in them. For example, thirty-four percent of respondents say they use the Bay for shellfishing, yet sixty-four percent think shellfishing is an important activity. Respondents followed a similar pattern for fishing and sailing. On the other hand, roughly the same percentage of respondents indicating that power boating is an important activity say they use the Bay for that purpose. Also, responses were evenly split as to whether power boating is an important activity or an unimportant activity.

For detailed findings, please refer to page 14 of this report.

What Issues are Residents Concerned About?

The five issues given the greatest importance by respondents are water quality in the Bay, diversity of animal and plant life, boating safety and navigation, shellfish or fin fish stocks, and noise level. The importance of these issues is echoed in respondents' written comments. The top three issues mentioned are jet skis, resource preservation, and power boats.

The five issues to which respondents gave the least importance are waterfront development, commercial uses of town landings, boat fueling facilities, docks and piers, and aquaculture. With the exception of waterfront development, the relatively lower level of importance given these issues may be because they tend to affect only those directly involved with a specific activity.

For more detailed findings, please refer to page 15 of this report.

What Possible Management Options Do Residents Support?

Regulating use of jet skis, purchase of land for conservation, and requiring boats to use pump-out facilities are among the actions receiving the most support from respondents. These results are consistent with respondents' concerns about water quality, noise level on the Bay, and public access. Other actions receiving strong support are increase storm drainage remediation, expand town shellfish seeding programs, increase regulatory enforcement for boating, and further restrict land development.

Most of the management options tested received more support than opposition. Only four issues received more opposition than support: raising the price of a shellfishing license, allowing more water-view restaurants, reducing the number of moorings, and increasing the number of moorings.

For more detailed findings, please refer to page 16 of this report.

Who responded to the survey?

Over 1,000 residents responded to the survey. Four out of five respondents are year round residents, and just over half live on or near the waterfront. Forty-two percent of respondents are from Orleans, twenty-six percent from Chatham, twenty percent from Harwich, and ten percent from Brewster.

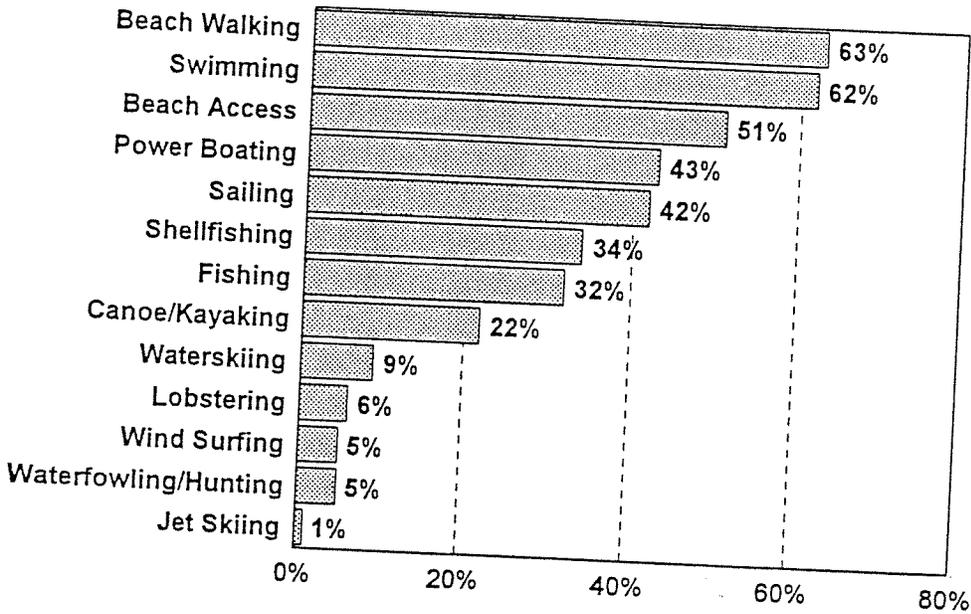
For more detailed findings, please refer to pages 17 and 18 of this report.

Detailed Findings

Q.1. Please check all boxes indicating your use of Pleasant Bay.

Among survey respondents, beach activities, specifically beach walking, swimming, and beach access, are the most common uses of Pleasant Bay. Power boating and sail boating are the next most common uses of the Bay. Wind surfing, waterfowling/hunting, and jet skiing are the least common Bay activities among respondents.

Activity at Pleasant Bay



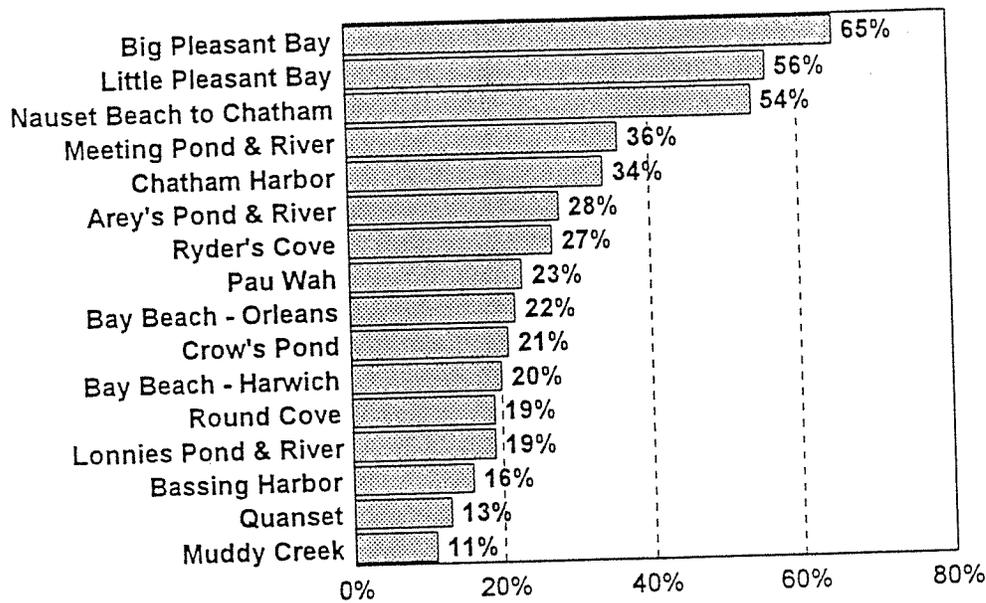
Shellfishing includes: clamming, quahauging, scalloping, and musseling
Fishing includes: floundering and bass/blue fishing

Detailed Findings

Q.1. Please check all boxes indicating your use of Pleasant Bay.

Three areas on Pleasant Bay are used with greater frequency than the others. Big Pleasant Bay is used by nearly two-thirds of respondents, while Little Pleasant Bay and Nauset Beach to Chatham are each used by more than half of respondents. The areas least used by respondents are Quanset and Muddy Creek.

Areas Used on Pleasant Bay

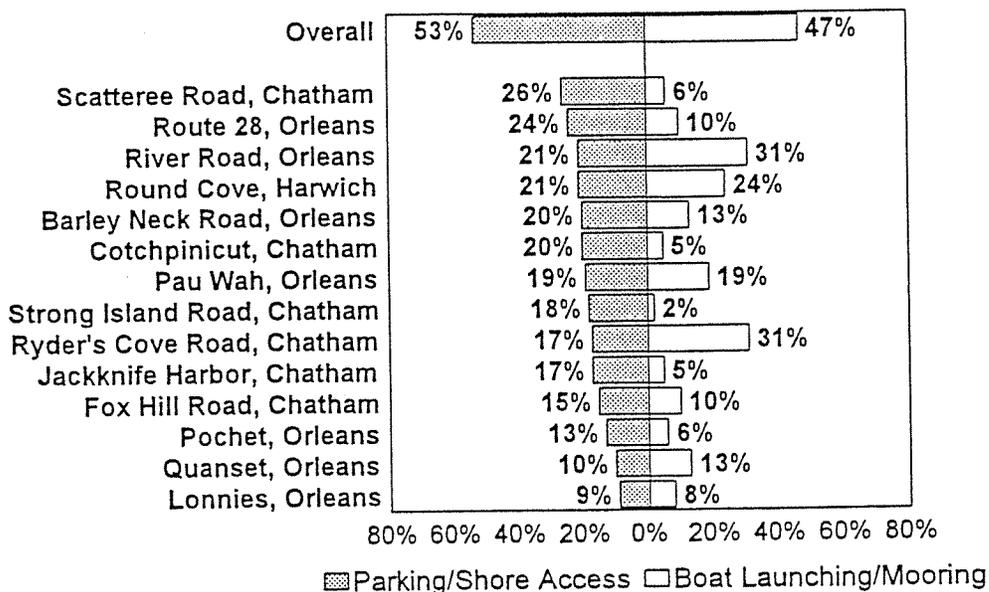


Detailed Findings

Q.1. Please check all boxes indicating your use of Pleasant Bay.

More than half of respondents indicate they use town landings for parking/shore access, while just under half indicate using town landings for boat launching/mooring. Respondents who use town landings for parking/shore access more evenly distribute their use among the fourteen landings. Respondents who use town landings for boat launching/mooring tend to use some landings more frequently than others.

Comparative Use of Town Landings

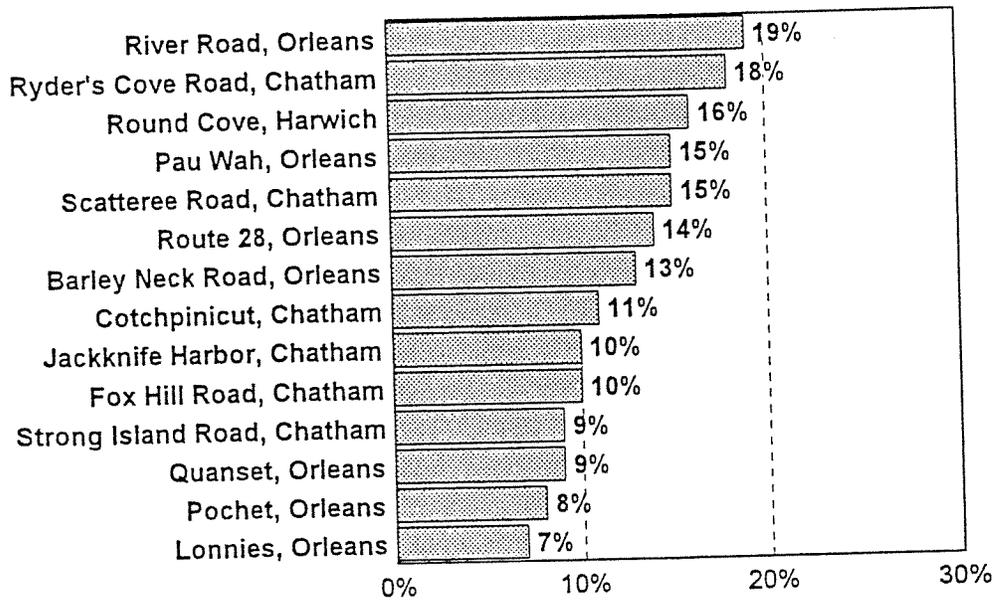


Detailed Findings

Q.1. Please check all boxes indicating your use of Pleasant Bay.

Among those using town landings, nearly one out five use either River Road in Orleans or Ryders Cove Road in Chatham. Pochet and Lonnies, both in Orleans, are the town landings used the least by respondents.

Town Landings Used

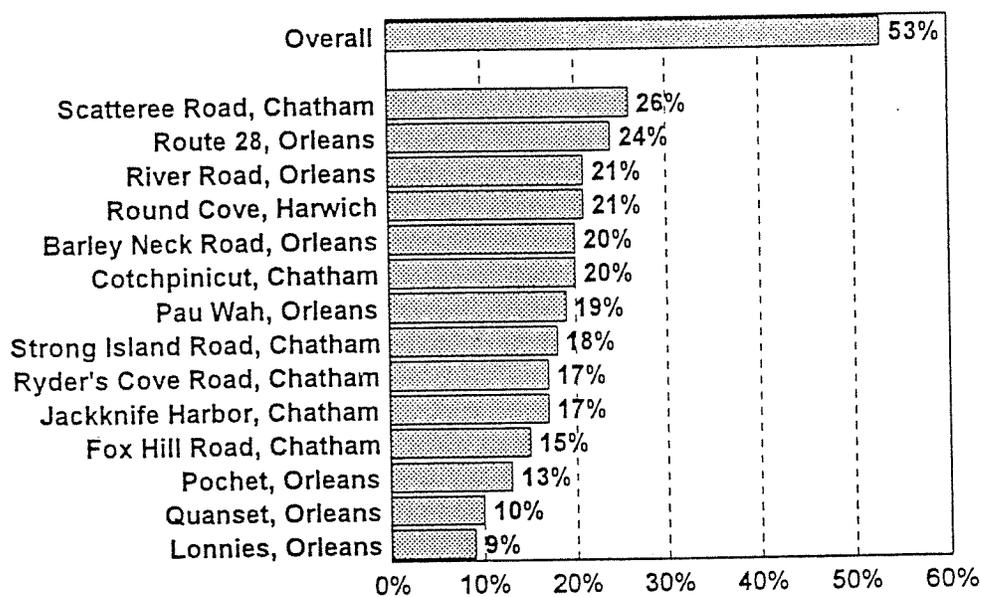


Detailed Findings

Q.1. Please check all boxes indicating your use of Pleasant Bay.

Approximately one quarter of respondents using town landings for parking/shore access use Scatterree Road in Chatham or Route 28 in Orleans. In general, use for parking/shore access tends to be fairly evenly distributed among all town landings. In fact, of the fourteen landings, only two landings are used by ten percent of respondents or less for parking/shore access.

Use of Town Landings for Parking/Shore Access

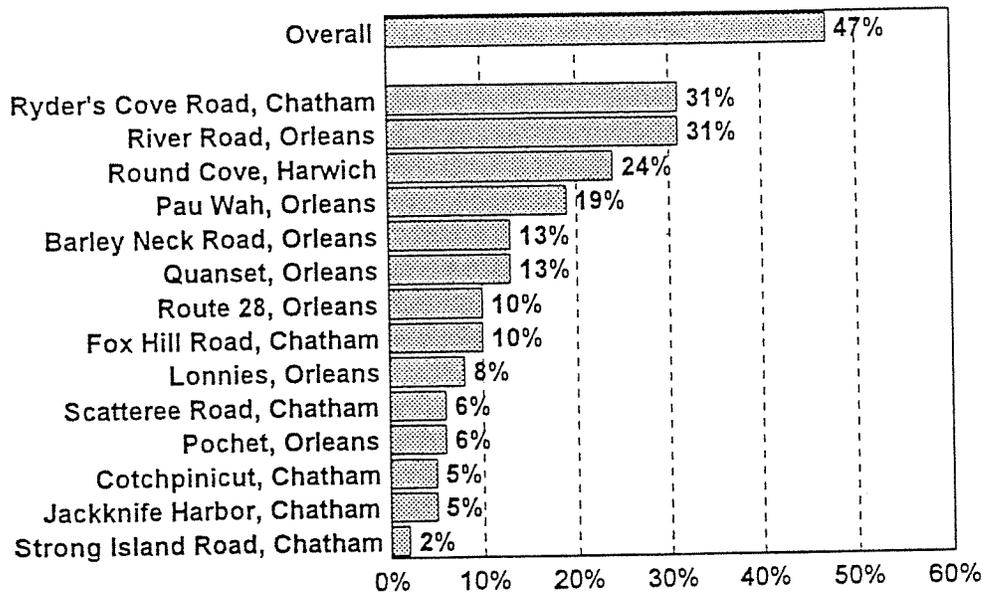


Detailed Findings

Q.1. Please check all boxes indicating your use of Pleasant Bay.

Among those respondents using town landings for boat launching/mooring, nearly one-third use Ryders Cove Road in Chatham and another third use River Road in Orleans. Approximately one-quarter use Round Cove in Harwich. Of the fourteen landings tested, eight are used by ten percent of respondents or less for boat launching/mooring.

Use of Town Landings For Boat Launch/Moorings

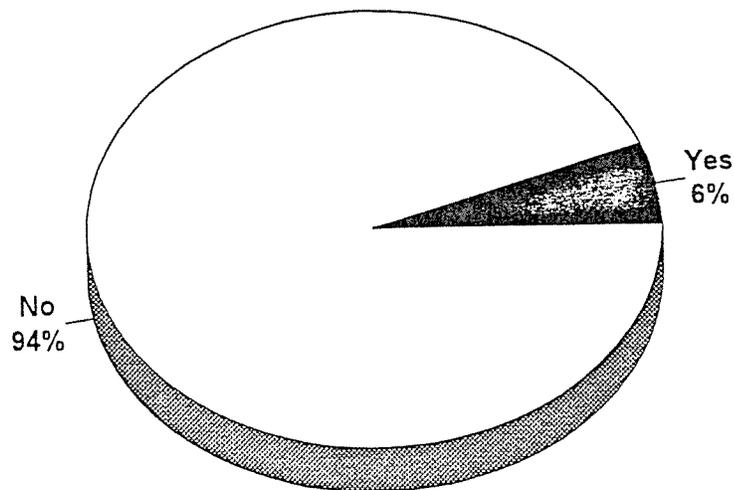


Detailed Findings

Q.2. Do you use the Bay for any commercial Activities?

Six percent of respondents use the Bay for commercial activities.

Use of Bay for Commercial Activities

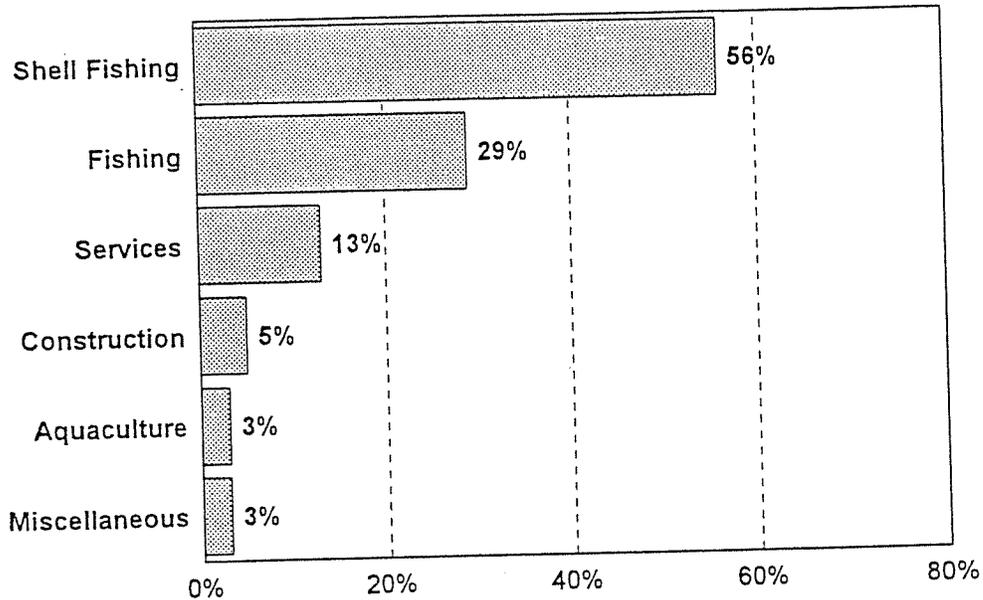


Detailed Findings

Q.2. Please specify your commercial activity on the Bay.
Please note that responses have been categorized into appropriate classifications.

Among those that use the Bay for commercial activities, shell fishing and fishing are the predominant activities.

Commercial Activities on Pleasant Bay

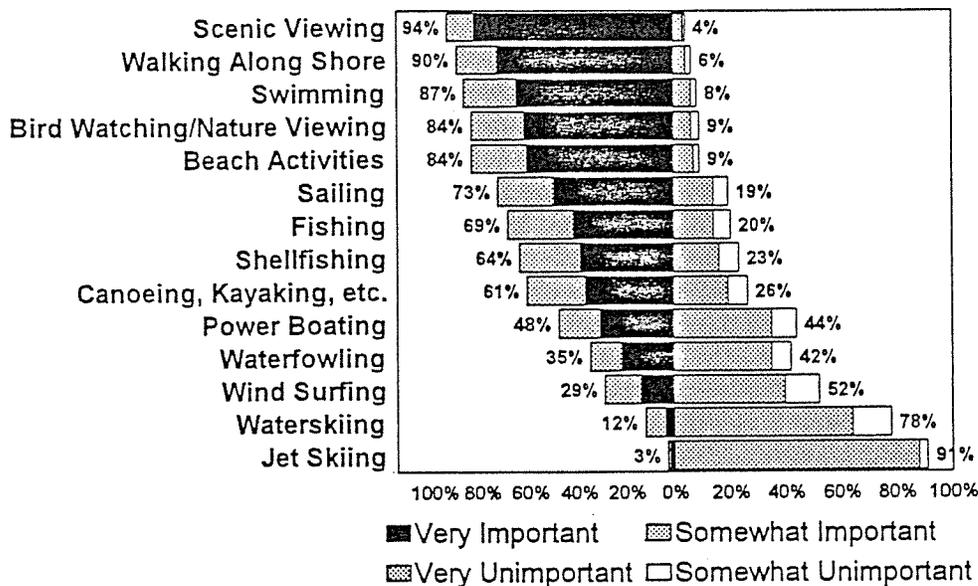


Detailed Findings

Q.3. Please circle the number that best describes the importance to you of each of the following Bay activities.

Respondents indicate that scenic viewing is the most important Bay activity. Walking along the shore, swimming, bird watching/nature viewing, and beach activities round out respondents' five most important Bay activities. The five least important Bay activities are jet skiing, waterskiing, wind surfing, waterfowling, and power boating. It should be noted that power boating receives approximately the same number of very important ratings as very unimportant ratings.

Importance of Bay Activities

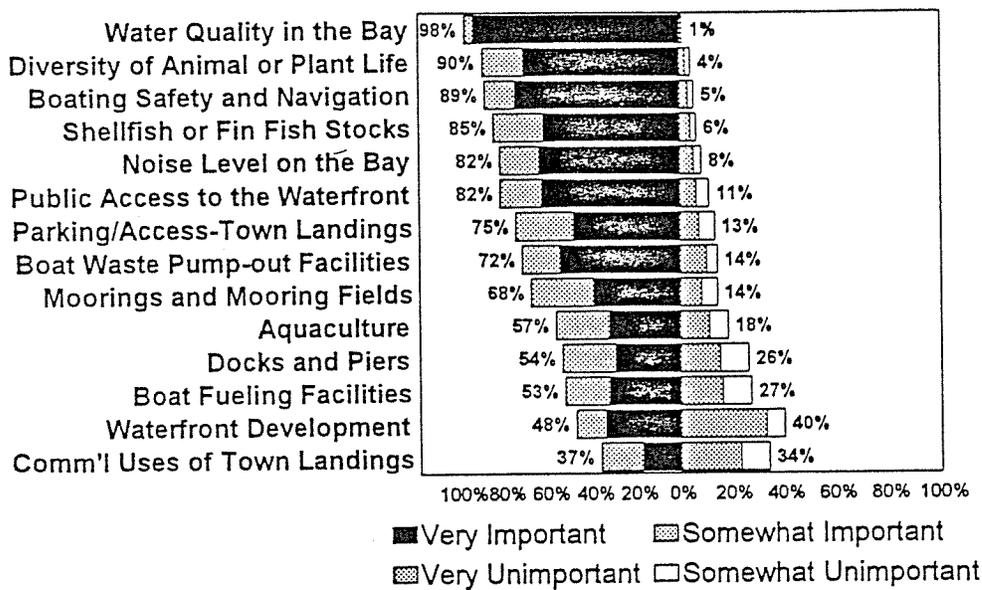


Detailed Findings

Q.4. Please circle the number that best describes the importance to you of each of the following Bay issues.

Nearly all respondents indicate that water quality in the Bay is an important issue of concern. Approximately nine out of ten respondents indicate that diversity of animal or plant life boating and safety & navigation are important issues of concern. Of the fourteen issues tested, all are rated important more than one-third of respondents. Four issues are rated unimportant by more than one quarter of respondents; docks and piers, boat fueling facilities, waterfront development, and commercial uses of town landings.

Important Issues of Concern

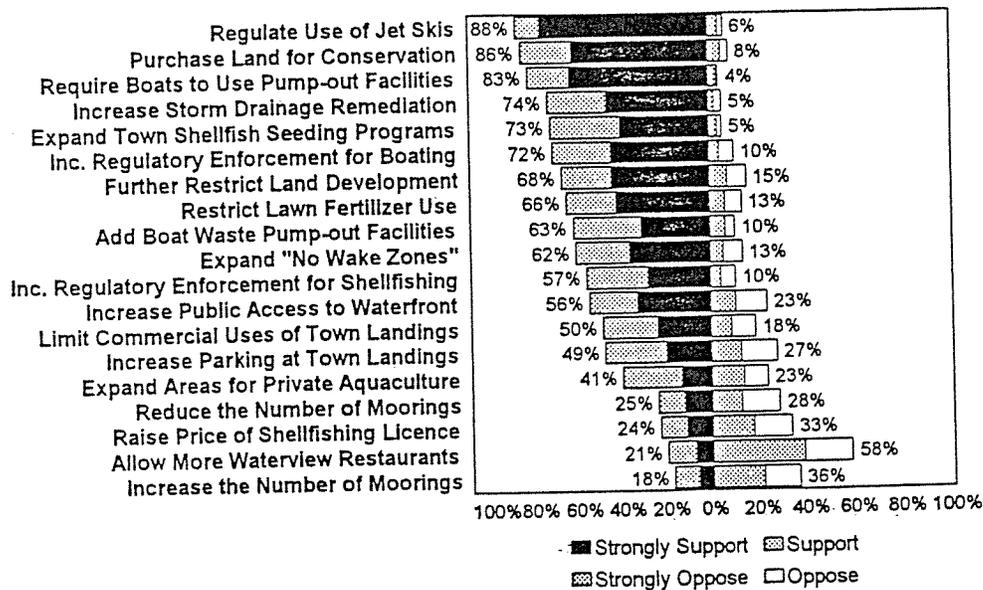


Detailed Findings

Q.5. Please circle the number that best describes your support or opposition to each of the following possible actions to management the resources of Pleasant Bay.

Three possible management actions clearly receive more support than the rest of the actions tested; regulate use of jet skis, require boats to use pump-out facilities, and purchase land for conservation. In general, respondents tend to support the majority of possible management actions. In fact, only four issues receive more opposition than support; raise price of shellfishing license, allow more water-view restaurants, reduce the number of moorings, and increase the number of moorings.

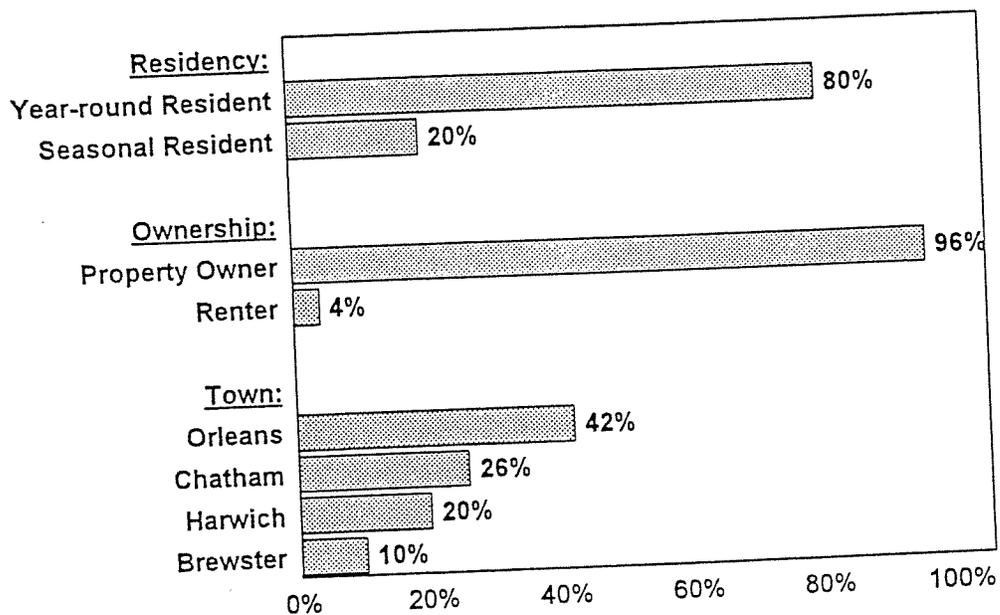
Support of Possible Management Actions



Detailed Findings

Q.6. Please check the choices which best describe your residency on Cape Cod.

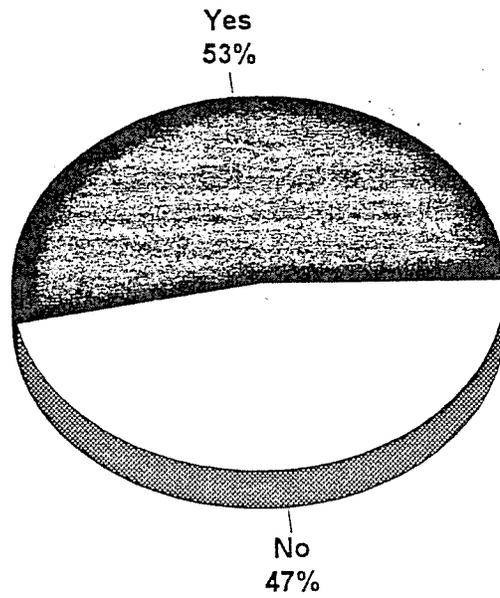
Residency of Respondents



Detailed Findings

Q.7. Do you live on or near the waterfront of the Bay?

Proximity to Waterfront



Detailed Findings

Q.8. Please use the following space to describe any conflicts involving uses of the Bay you have experienced, or to provide any other comments.
Please note that responses have been categorized into appropriate classifications.

Of those comments/conflicts identified, three were most prevalent. These are jet ski issues, issues regarding preservation of the environment, and power boat issues.

Categorization of Other Comments/Conflicts

