MT SCORP

Resident Travel for Outdoor Recreation in Montana

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this analysis was to understand the resident travel patterns of Montanans who participate in outdoor recreation. This was a secondary data analysis from data collected by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) from their most recent resident travel study conducted in 2011-2012 for one year.

Nights spent away from home

- Glacier Region had the largest percentage of overnight resident travelers.
- Gallatin, Flathead and Beaverhead counties had the greatest percentage of overnight resident travelers.

Spending and economic impact by residents traveling 50 miles or more from home in MT

- Total spending on outdoor recreation trips by Montana residents was $206 million.
- Residents contributed $42 million to state and local tax revenue because of travel for outdoor recreation.
- Travel for the main purpose of outdoor recreation supported over 1900 jobs in Montana.
- Employee compensation directly supported by outdoor recreation trips was $47 million.

Activity participation by purpose of trip

- 27% of all resident travel in Montana was for outdoor recreation.
- 24% was to visit friends and family.
- 10% of resident travel was for business and pleasure trips combined.

Historical comparison of resident trip recreation activities: 1989-2012

- Trends over time suggest day hiking and nature photography are increasing in participation.
- Another positive upward trend is participation in hunting and fishing activities.
- Motorized boating is on a downward trend.
- Caution should be used when evaluating these trends, see report for explanation.

Nights spent away from home by activity type

- Overall, a majority of overnight visits happened in the Glacier, Southwest and Yellowstone Regions.
- There were a few exceptions, hunting, angling, off-rad ATV and rock hounding had high participating in the Central Region.
- Notable counties for outdoor recreation across many of the activities were Gallatin, Beaverhead, Lewis and Clark, Flathead, Park, Yellowstone and Missoula.

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Introduction

Montana State Parks, a division of MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks is in the process of updating the Montana Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for 2013-2017. The goal of the SCORP is to identify outdoor recreation trends, needs, and issues that will help direct Montana's use of the Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars allocated to the state.

This report is based on existing data collected by the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR) on resident travel in Montana. The most recent resident travel study report can be found on the ITRR website at the following address: http://www.itrr.umt.edu/research12/ResidentTravel2011-12RR2012-8.pdf .

For 12 months between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012, data was collected throughout Montana in an effort to assess the travel behavior of residents traveling in-state on vacation or leisure. Data collection included both an on-site survey and a follow-up survey (mail-back or web-based), and provided information to estimate resident spending while traveling in-state; estimate frequency of traveling in-state for leisure, business or other purposes (day or overnight trips); estimate the length of in-state pleasure trips; and assess leisure travel patterns within Montana. Only trips of 50 miles or more away from home qualified for the resident travel study.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of this report was to assess travel behavior of Montana residents traveling in-state for the primary reason of outdoor recreation to determine outdoor recreation activity participation, where outdoor recreationists spend nights, and spending behavior during their outdoor recreation trip.

Methods

For data collection methods, please access the above referenced report. For this report, we extracted additional information from the existing resident travel study dataset. All residents who indicated outdoor recreation as the main purpose of their trip were selected from the larger data set. Twenty-seven percent of all respondents (adults 18 and over) said outdoor recreation was their main purpose of their trip 50 miles or more away from home but still recreating in Montana. For the purposes of this report a sample size of 841 residents traveling for outdoor recreation were used.

Results

Results show that 27 percent of all Montanan's took an outdoor recreation trip in the year. Of those trips, 23 percent were day trips and 77 percent were overnight outdoor recreation trips. These trips equate to 4,187,362 person trips or 1,368,419 group trips for outdoor recreation. The average group size was 3.06. Those who took an overnight trip had an average time away from home of 2.39 nights.

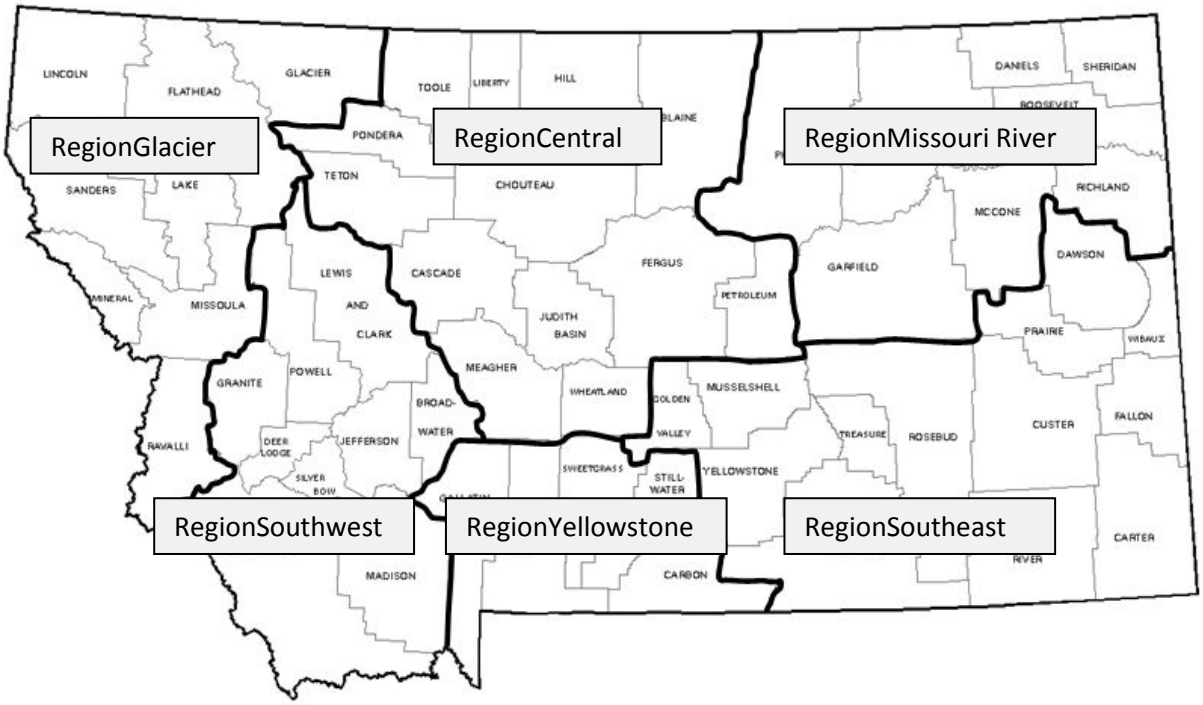

Figure 1: Map of Tourism Regions

Nights Spent Away From Home

Analysis was conducted to determine which tourism region had the most overnight visits because of outdoor recreation. Respondents could have listed up to eight nights away on recreation visits. The region with the most nights spent was Glacier (419) followed by Southwest (351) and Yellowstone (355).

Table 1: Total nights spent up to 8 nights by tourism region

	Total nights
Glacier Region	419
Southwest Region	351
Central Region	188
Yellowstone Region	355
Missouri River Region	102
Southeast region	90

Respondents were asked about where they spent nights away on their recreation trips. Respondents could list the nearest town for up to eight nights away from home. Converting the town to county provided easier analysis. Table 5 provides the frequency of the number of nights for each county. The counties with the most number of nights were Gallatin (140), Flathead (125) and Beaverhead (105).

Table 2: Total nights spent up to 8 days by county

	Total nights		Total nights
Beaverhead	105	**Meagher**	64
Big Horn	21	**Mineral**	23
Broadwater	22	**Missoula**	79
Carbon	46	**Musselshell**	3
Cascade	34	**Park**	99
Choteau	10	**Petroleum**	4
Custer	7	**Phillips**	28
Dawson	3	**Pondera**	4
Deer Lodge	43	**Powder River**	8
Fallon	1	**Powell**	19
Fergus	17	**Prairie**	2
Flathead	125	**Ravalli**	22
Gallatin	140	**Rosebud**	15
Garfield	35	**Sanders**	11
Glacier	30	**Silver Bow**	12
Granite	26	**Stillwater**	40
Hill	9	**Sweet Grass**	13
Jefferson	10	**Teton**	24
Judith Basin	11	**Toole**	2
Lake	47	**Valley**	30
Lewis & Clark	74	**Wheatland**	2
Liberty	7	**Yellowstone**	32
Lincoln	19	**YNP**	17
McCone	4	**GNP**	51
Madison	38		

Spending and Economic Impact

Spending patterns of Montana residents taking outdoor recreation trips of >50 miles from home show that gasoline is the highest expenditure by both day and overnight trips. Not surprising, accommodations was the second highest cost for overnight trips. Groceries were the next highest expenditure followed by restaurant and bar (Table 3) for both overnight and day trippers. Total spending on outdoor recreation trips was slightly over $206 million.

Table 3: Median expenditure by Montana residents traveling for outdoor recreation

	Overnight Trip	Day Trip
	Total $	**Total $**
Gas	$52,748,572	$28,296,037
Accommodations	$26,733,809	$0
Grocery	$24,062,418	$12,907,858
Restaurant/bar	$22,074,620	$11,841,539
Retail	$11,403,532	$6,117,223
Service	$6,551,167	$3,514,257
TOTAL	$143,574,118	$62,676,914
TOTAL	$206,251,031	

The economic impact of spending by outdoor recreationists who traveled greater than 50 miles from home is shown in Table 4. These numbers were generated by using the IMPLAN economic input-output model software program. Direct impacts result from the traveler purchases of goods and services. Indirect impacts result from purchases made by travel-related businesses. Induced impacts result from purchases by those employed in the travel-related occupations.

Residents who travel for outdoor recreation directly support 1,900 jobs. This is 22 percent of all jobs supported by resident travel. The combined support of jobs in Montana by residents traveling for outdoor recreation is 2,700. Direct employee compensation due to outdoor recreation travel is nearly $47 million with a combined contribution of $68 million. Outdoor recreation related trips provide $42 million to the state and local tax revenue.

Table 4: Montana residents traveling for outdoor recreation economic impact (spending >50 miles away from home)

$206 million in resident spending contributes:	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Combined
Industry Output*	$168,713,989	$36,845,684	$46,150,380	$251,710,053
Employment (# of jobs)**	1,925	324	458	2,706
Employee Compensation	$46,643,011	$9,486,979	$12,412,298	$68,542,288
Proprietor Income	$8,357,631	$2,088,062	$2,455,031	$12,900,724
Other Property Type Income	$55,000,642	$11,575,041	$14,867,329	$81,443,012
State & Local Taxes	-	-	-	$42,198,868

*Industry Output is the value of goods & services produced by an industry which MT residents purchased away from home but still in Montana
**employment is full and part-time average annual jobs.

Activity Participation by Purpose of Trip

The main purpose of this report was to provide information about outdoor recreation participation of Montana residents while on in-state pleasure trips. While most of this report is based on those residents who indicated outdoor recreation as their main trip purpose, we thought it would be valuable to share the other top reasons for pleasure trips and what those residents did on the trip. As shown in Table 5 many residents were involved in outdoor recreation activities even if that was not their main purpose.

Outdoor recreation as the main purpose is represented by 841 individuals or 27 percent of Montana's population. Seventy-seven percent spent at least one night away from home on their outdoor recreation trip.

Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) as the main purpose is represented by 729 individuals or 24 percent of Montana's population. Eighty-six percent spent at least one night away from home on their VFR trip.

Combining business and pleasure as the main purpose is represented by 313 individuals or 10 percent of Montana's population. Eighty percent spent at least one night away from home on their business/pleasure trip.

As shown in Table 5, residents who travel for outdoor recreation were more likely to engage in the outdoor activities at a higher rate (or percent) than both the VFR group and the mixed business and pleasure group. This is not a surprising finding. However, it is important to note that many residents still participated in outdoor recreation even though it was not their main purpose. This suggests that the previously stated economic impact of outdoor recreation and travel is understated for the state. In other words, the dollars, jobs, and taxes generated due to travel and outdoor recreation stated in Table 4 is conservative.

Montanan's who travel at least 50 miles for the purpose of outdoor recreation, are most likely to day hike (43%) or fish (42%) followed by scenic driving (37%), wildlife watching (36%), and camping (28%).

Table 5: Activity participation by purpose of trip

Activities (full year)	Main Purpose of trip		
	Outdoor Recreation (27%)	**VFR (24%)**	**Business & Pleasure (10%)**
Scenic driving	37% (312)	40% (172)	48% (151)
Watching wildlife	36% (304)	23% (168)	30% (95)
Day hiking	43% (361)	24% (172)	25% (79)
Nature photography	22% (184)	13% (91)	16% (49)
Car/RV camping	28% (239)	8% (58)	8% (26)
Hunting	19% (159)	6% (41)	7% (21)
Off-road ATV or 4WD	10% (86)	4% (32)	6% (20)
Backpacking	13% (108)	3% (22)	5% (14)
Birding	6% (50)	5% (34)	5% (14)

Table 5 Continued:			
Activities (full year)	**Main purpose of trip**		
Golfing	3% (23)	4% (32)	6% (20)
Horseback riding	3% (28)	3% (23)	4% (13)
Rock hounding	4% (34)	3% (19)	3% (8)
Mountain biking	4% (35)	1% (7)	1% (4)
Road biking	2% (19)	1% (9)	1% (3)
Rock climbing	2% (19)	<1% (1)	<1% (2)
Fishing	42% (354)	11% (82)	16% (50)
"Beach" activities	13% (106)	9% (66)	7% (23)
Motorized boating	13% (109)	5% (36)	7% (22)
Non-motorized boating	13% (106)	6% (41)	3% (10)
Downhill skiing or snowboarding	11% (92)	3% (20)	5% (16)
Ice fishing	7% (58)	2% (17)	6% (17)
Snowmobiling	5% (39)	2% (15)	5% (17)
XC skiing	4% (37)	3% (17)	2% (6)
Snowshoeing	3% (23)	1% (10)	2% (7)

Recreation Activities on Four Different Resident Trips in Montana

It is always intriguing to look back in time to see if there are changes in trends related to activity participation. ITRR has conducted four Montana resident travel studies since 1989. These studies were completed from October 1989-September 1990; July 1998-June 1999; calendar year 2005; July 2011-June 2012. Table 6 displays the frequencies of participation for each of the four studies.

Caution should be taken when looking at the table as different methods and different questions were used in the data collection. First of all trip distance differed between studies. 2011-'12 was 50 miles or more away from home; 2005 was 50 miles or more away from home; 1998-'99 was any length of trip; 1989-'90 was > 10 miles from home. In addition methodologies can slightly change responses and data. The 2011-12 study was an intercept and an on-line follow-up methodology for an entire year. The 2005 study and the 1998-'99 study were both a phone survey conducted every two weeks for the full year. Finally, the 1989-'90 study was a weekly phone interview with a follow-up mail-back survey for a full year.

While these methodologies and distances were difference, there is still some legitimacy in comparing trends over these years. What is perhaps the most interesting analysis is that the participant level for each activity is quite similar with little change especially in the past two studies.

Table 6: Resident state trips with activity participation

Outdoor Land-Based Recreation Activities	2011-'12* (participation in past month)	2005* (participation by week was reported)	1998-'99* (participation by most recent trip)	1989-'90* (participation by week was reported)
Scenic driving	46%	-	-	-
Watching wildlife	31%	28%	-	10%
Day hiking	30%	24%	28%	12%
Nature photography	19%	14%	24%	6%
Car/RV camping	14%	9%	-	-
Hunting	9%	8%	5%	5%
Backpacking	6%	7%	-	-
Off-road ATV or 4WD	6%	6%	7%	9%
Backpacking	6%	7%	7%	-
Birding	5%	5%	-	-
Golfing	4%	7%	7%	-
Horseback riding	3%	5%	4%	-
Rock hounding	3%	-	-	-
Mountain biking	2%	4%	-	-
Road biking	2%	2%	-	-
Rock climbing	1%	-	-	-
Cultural or Art Activities	**2011-'12**	**2005**	**1998-'99**	**1989-'90**
Visit historic sites, museums, etc.	21%	13%	-	-
City/urban sightseeing	18%	16%	-	-
Attend cultural events or festivals	9%	10%	-	-
Visit art museums or galleries	9%	10%	-	-
Attend performing arts event	5%	7%	-	-
Water-Based Activities	**2011-'12**	**2005**	**1998-'99**	**1989-'90**
Fishing	21%	17%	16%	18%
"Beach" activities	9%	9%	-	-
Motorized boating	8%	12%	16%	-
Non-motorized boating (rafting, floating, canoeing)	7%			-
Winter Activities	**2011-'12**	**2005**	**1998-'99**	**1989-'90**
Downhill skiing or snowboarding	6%	5%	2%	-
Ice fishing	4%	3%	1%	-
Snowmobiling	4%	4%	2%	-
Cross country skiing	3%	3%	1%	-
Snowshoeing	2%	2%	-	-

***Trip distance differed between studies. 2011-'12 was 50 miles or more away from home; 2005 was 50 miles or more away from home; 1998-'99 was any length of trip; 1989-'90 was > 10 miles from home.**

Nights Spent Away From Home by Activity Type

In the subsequent pages of this report the specific outdoor recreation activities were analyzed by where residents spent their nights. The following maps display the percent of nights spent in each region by residents who did that particular activity. Each outdoor recreation activity was isolated to understand patterns in overnight visits by county and tourism region.

Backpacking

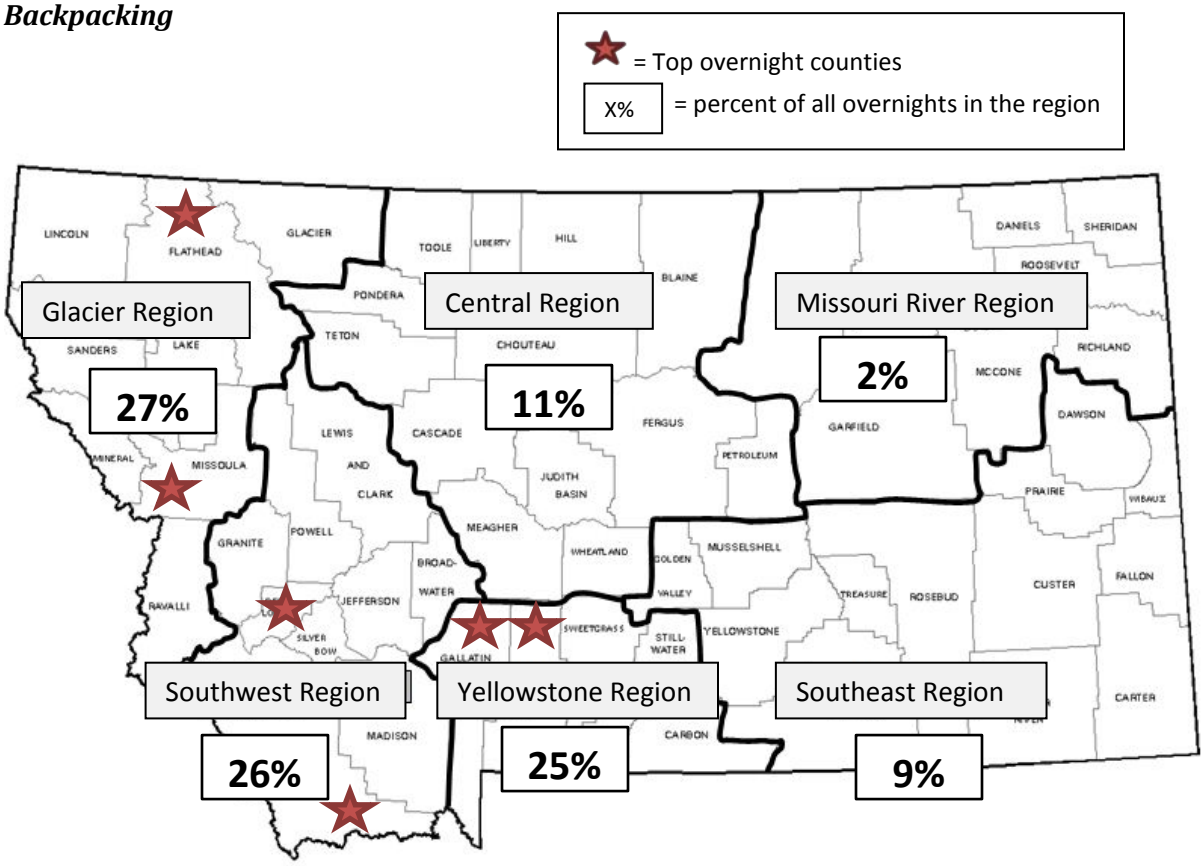

Figure 2: Percentage of backpackers by tourism region and county

Backpackers spent at least one night away from home. Thirty percent were female and 70 percent were male. The average age was 40 years old. On average, backpackers spent two nights away from home. The majority of backpackers spent their time in the Glacier, Southwest and Yellowstone regions. Below are the SIX most popular counties for backpacking:

- Gallatin County (10%)
- Park County (10%)
- Beaverhead County (9%)
- Flathead County (9%)
- Deer lodge County (7%)
- Missoula County (7%)

Birding

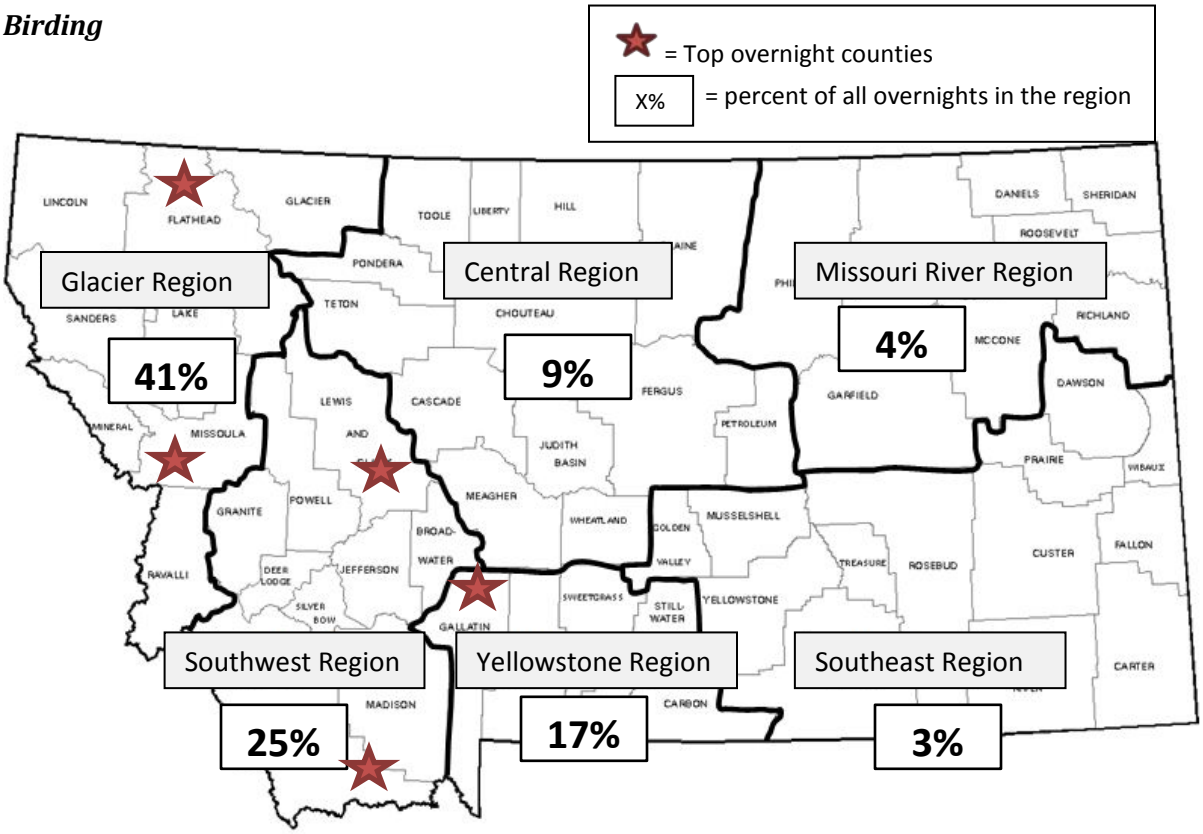

Figure 3: Percentage of birding by tourism region and county

Of those who indicated they went birding, 116 (81% of total birders) spent at least one night away from home. Birders were split close to even by gender with 48 percent female and 52 percent male. The average age of birders was 53 years. Birders spent on average two nights away from home. Birders spent a majority of their time in the Glacier Region (41%) of Montana followed by the Southwest Region (25%). A majority of birders spent their time in counties in the western part of the state. Below is a list of the most popular counties:

- Flathead County (20%)
- Missoula County (15%)
- Gallatin County (8%)
- Beaverhead County (8%)
- Lewis and Clark County (7%)

Car and RV Camping

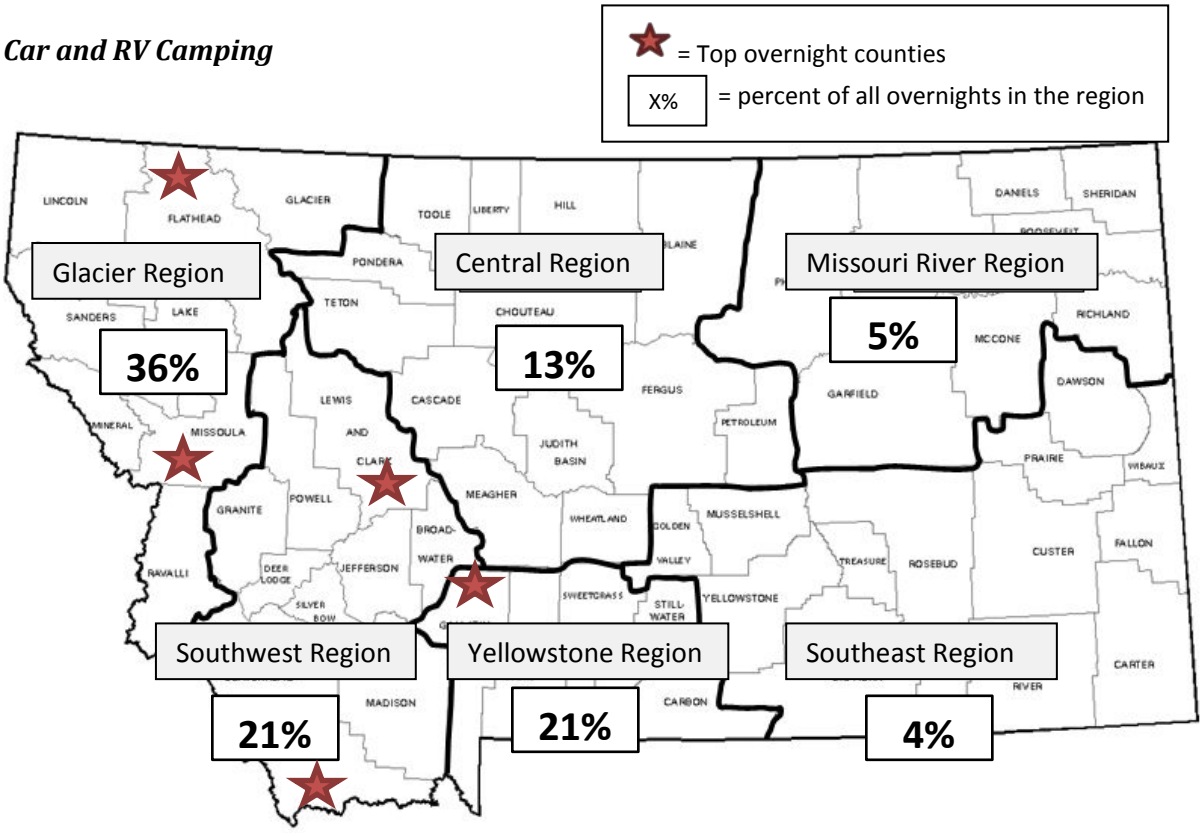

Figure 4: Percentage of car and RV camping by tourism region and county

Over four hundred respondents indicated they spent at least one night away car and RV camping and spent an average of two nights away from home (n=426). Close to 60 percent of the respondents were male and the average age 50 years old. Those who car camp or RV camp spent a majority of the nights in the Glacier Region (36%) followed by the Southwest Region (21%). The counties with the most number of nights spent is listed below:

- Gallatin County (9%)
- Missoula County (9%)
- Flathead County (8%)
- Beaverhead County (6%)
- Lewis and Clark County (6%)

Day Hiking

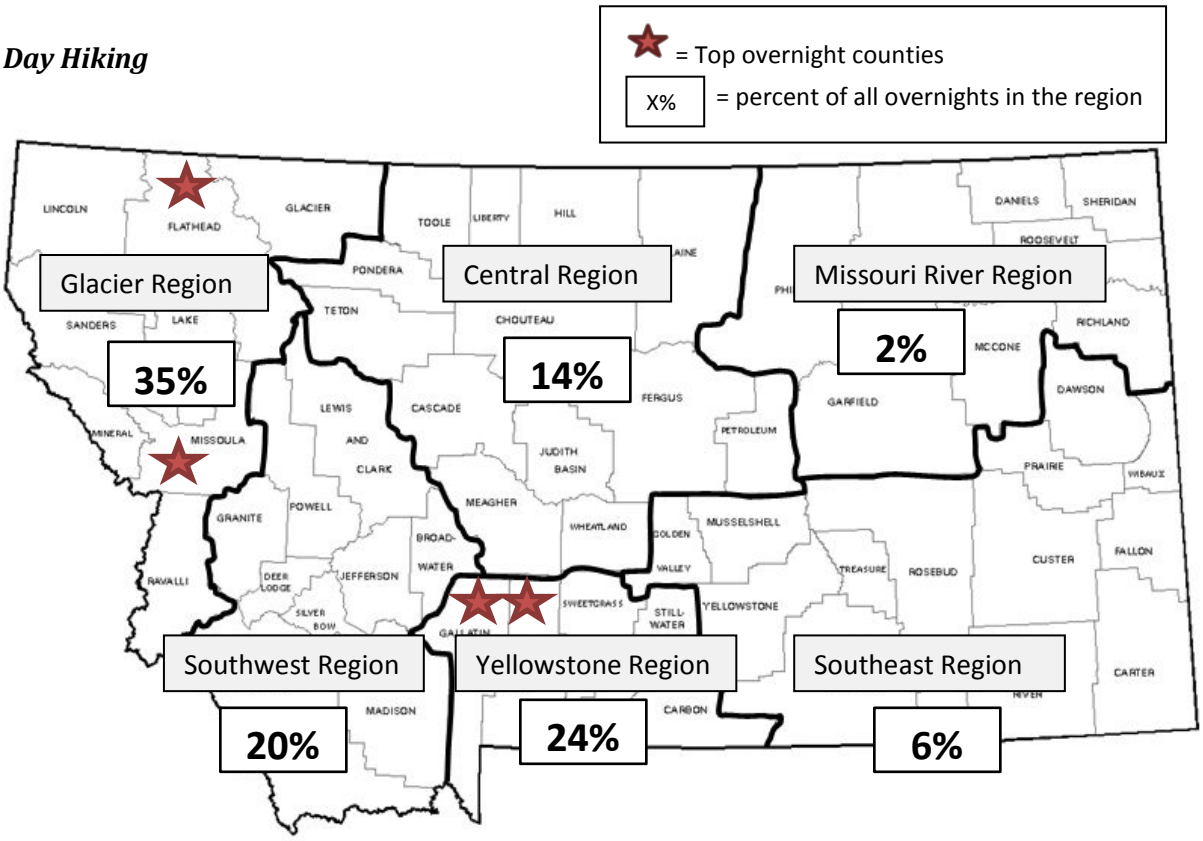

Figure 5: Percentage of hiking by tourism region and county

Of the respondents who indicated they went hiking, over 700 (78% of total hikers) spent at least one night away from home (n=730) and 46 percent identified themselves as female and 54 percent were male. The average age of the respondents was 46 years of age. On average, day hikers spent less than two nights away from home (mean=1.93). Day hikers spent a majority of their nights in the Glacier Region (35%). This was followed by the Yellowstone (24%) and Southwest (20%) Regions. The four most popular counties for day hikers to spend nights are listed below:

- Gallatin County (11%)
- Flathead County (11%)
- Missoula County (9%)
- Park County (7%)

Golfing

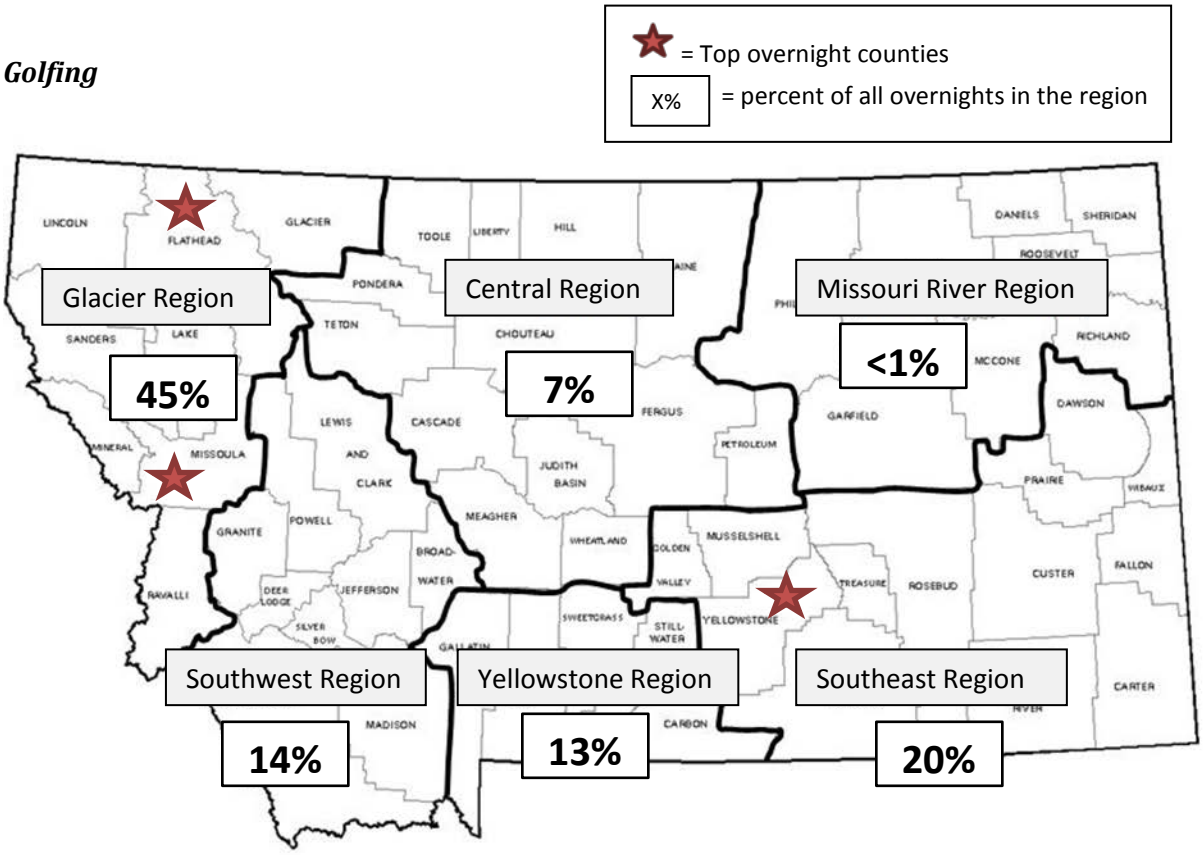

Figure 6: Percentage of golfing by tourism region and county

Of the golfers, 113 (84% of total golfers) spent at least one night away from home. A majority of golfers who responded indicated they were male (75%) and averaged 49 years of age. On average, golfers spent less than one night away from home (m=1.93). A majority of golfers spent nights in the Glacier Region (45%) and the Southeast Region (20%). The top county for nights spent was Flathead (22%). Below is a list of the top three counties:

- Flathead County (22%)
- Yellowstone County (16%)
- Missoula County (11%)

Horseback Riding

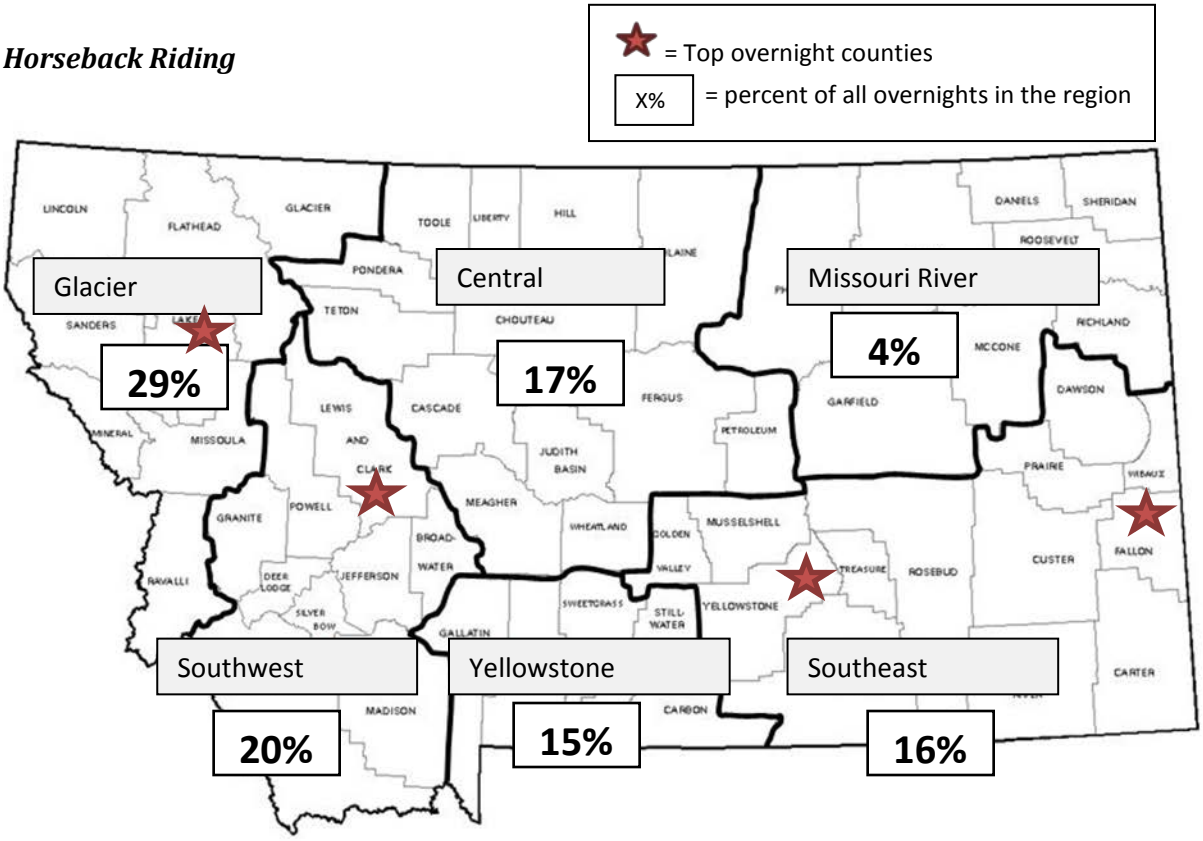

Figure 7: Percentage of horseback riding by tourism region and county

For those who indicated they horseback ride 79 (75% of total horseback riders) spent at least one night away from home and just over half were female (51%). The average age of horseback riders was 43 years. On average, horseback riders spent 2 nights away from home. Close to 30 percent of horseback riders spent evenings in the Glacier Region followed by the Southwest Region (20%). The most popular counties for horseback riders to spend nights are listed below:

- Lake County (9%)
- Lewis and Clark County (9%)
- Fallon County (6%)
- Yellowstone County (6%)

Hunting

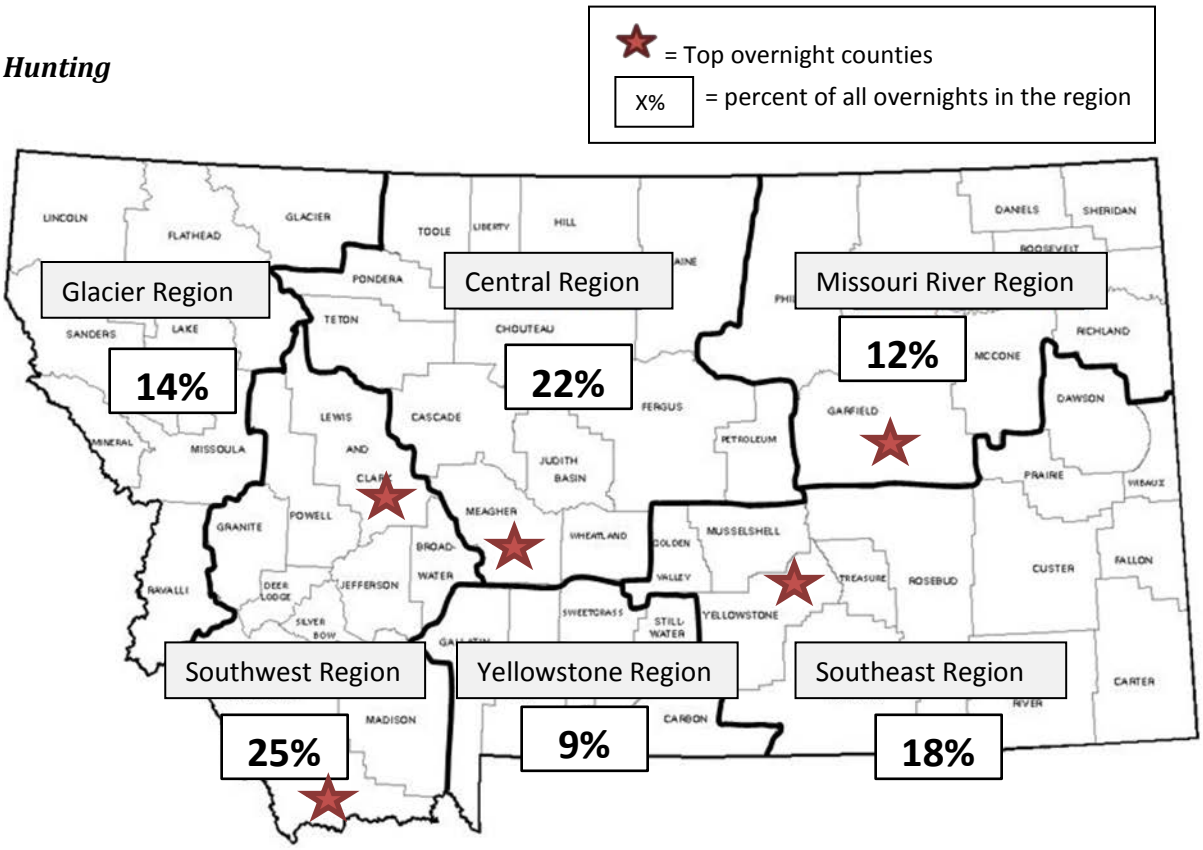

Figure 8: Percentage of hunting by tourism region and county

Of those who hunted over 200 (79% of total hunters) spent at least one night away from home (n=218). Eighty percent indicated they were male and hunters had an average age of 48 years. Hunters spent just over two nights away from home on their trips (mean=2.16). Hunters spent a majority of their nights in the Southwest (25%) and Central (22%) Regions. The top five counties for hunters to spend nights are listed below:

- Beaverhead County (9%)
- Meagher County (9%)
- Yellowstone County (8%)
- Lewis and Clark County (5%)
- Garfield County (4%)

Mountain Biking

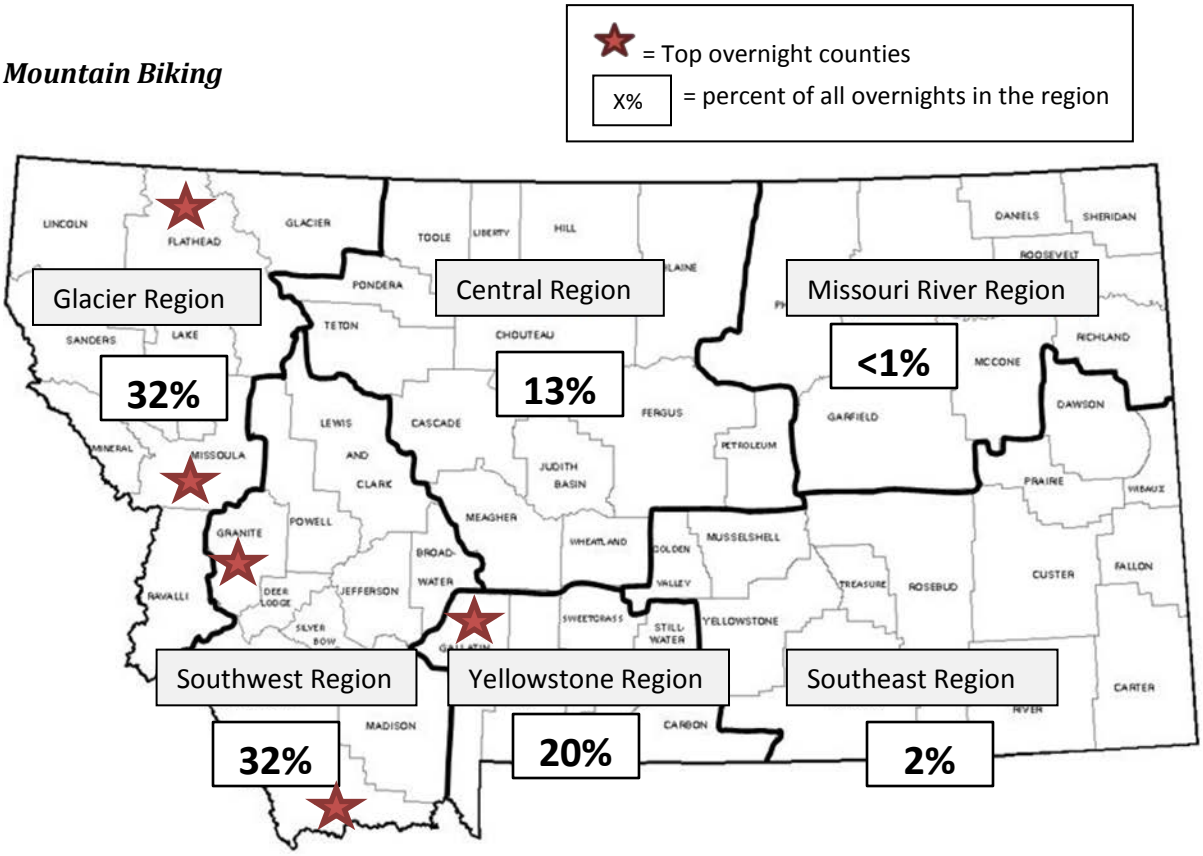

Figure 9: Percentage of mountain biking by tourism region and county

Of mountain bikers, 53 (76% of total mountain bikers) spent at least one night away from home and 63 percent indicated they were male. On average, mountain bikers spent just over two nights away from home and had an average age of 42 years. Over 60 percent of mountain bikers spent nights in the Southwest and Glacier Regions. The counties with the most nights spent for mountain bikers are listed below:

- Missoula County (14%)
- Gallatin County (13%)
- Granite County (13%)
- Flathead County (8%)
- Beaverhead County (8%)

Nature Photography

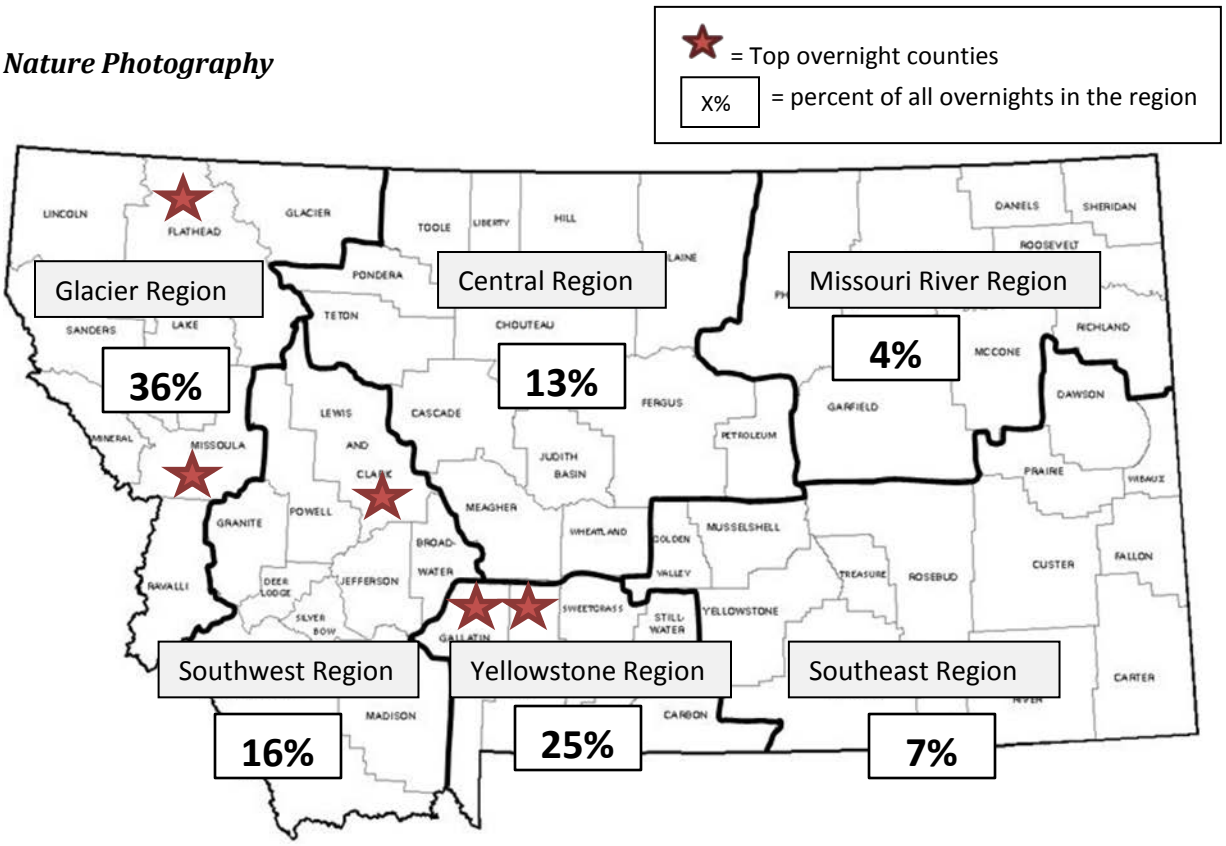

Figure 10: Percentage of nature photography by tourism region and county

Of the nature photographers, 438 (74% of all nature photographers) spent at least one night away from home. Nature photographers were split relatively evenly by gender with males making up 53 percent of the respondents. Nature photographers spent less than two nights away from home (mean=1.86) and averaged 48 years of age. Thirty six percent of nature photographers spent their nights in the Glacier Region, followed by the Yellowstone Region (25%). The county where nature photographers spent the most number of nights are listed below:

- Gallatin County (14%)
- Flathead County (13%)
- Missoula County (8%)
- Park County (7%)
- Lewis and Clark County (5%)

Off-road ATV or 4WD

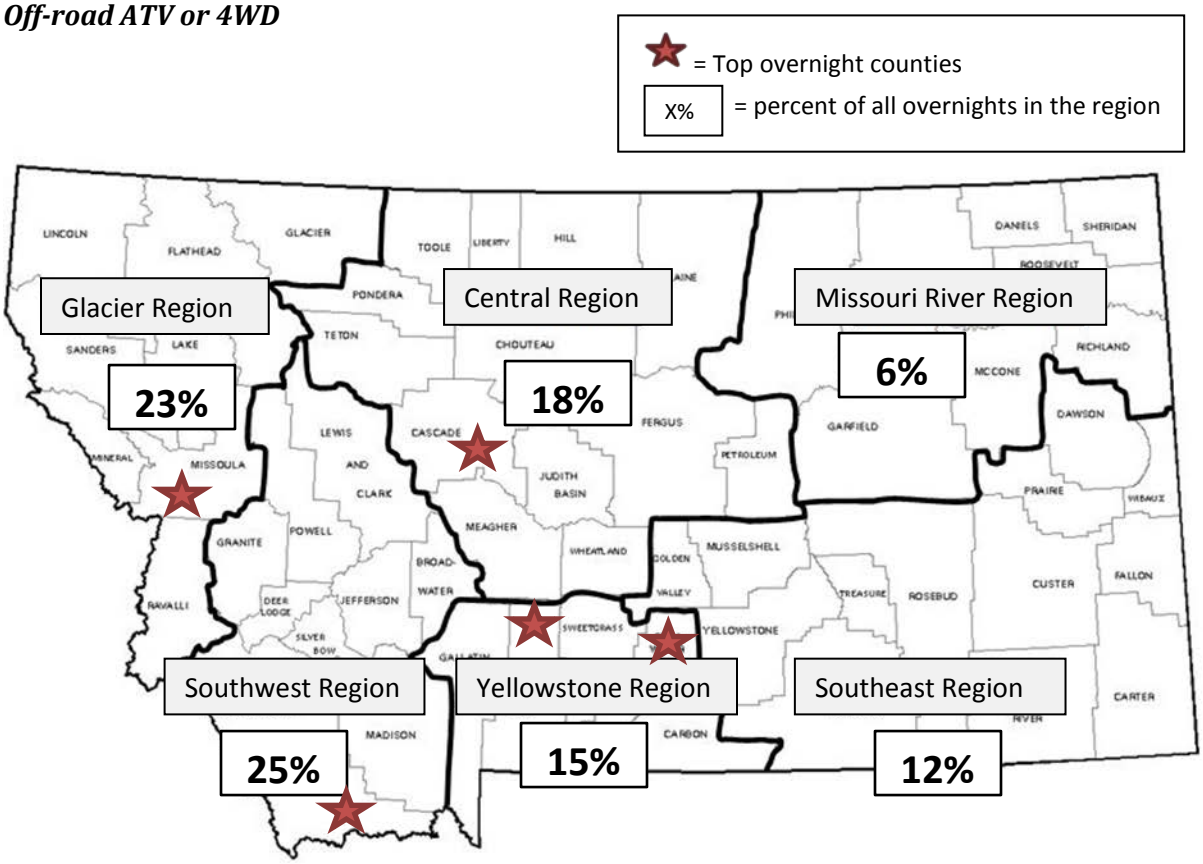

Figure 11: Percentage of off-road ATV and 4WD by tourism region and county

Over 157 off-road ATV and 4WD users spent at least one night away from home (n=199; 79% of total). Of the off-road ATV and 4WD users, about 70% were male. They spent just over two nights away from home (mean=2.22) and had an average age of 44 years. The Glacier (23%) and Southwest (25%) Regions had the most overnight visits from off-road ATV users. The counties with the most nights are listed below:

- Beaverhead County (14%)
- Stillwater County (7%)
- Missoula County (6%)
- Cascade County (6%)
- Park County (6%)

Road Biking

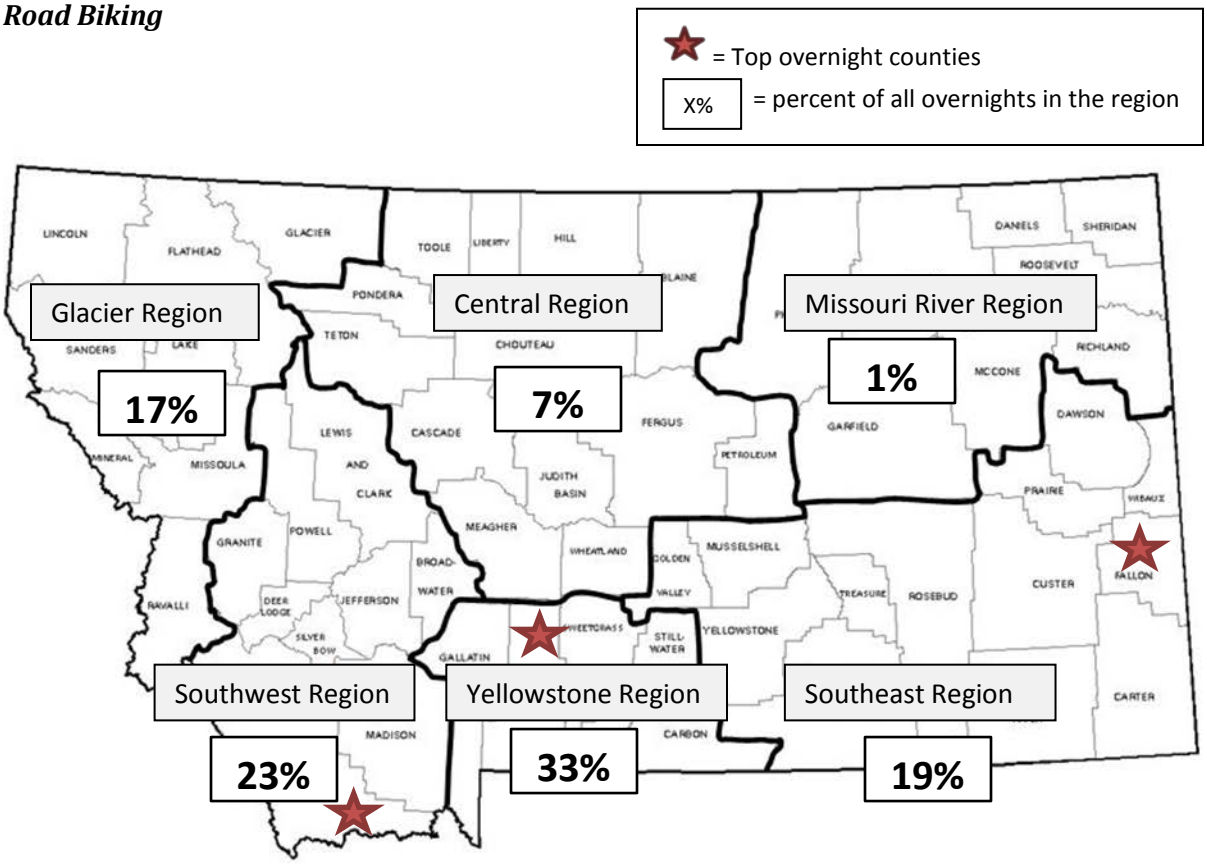

Figure 12: Percentage of road biking by tourism region and county

Forty-five road bikers spent at least one night away from home (77% of total bikers). The average age of road bikers in this sample was 50 years. Fifty- five percent identified themselves as male. Road bikers spent less than two nights away from home (mean=1.81). Of those who road biked, 33 percent of nights away from home were spent in the Yellowstone Region followed by the Southwest Region (23%). The three counties with the most overnight visits are listed below:

- Park County (16%)
- Beaverhead County (16%)
- Fallon County (12%)

Rock Climbing

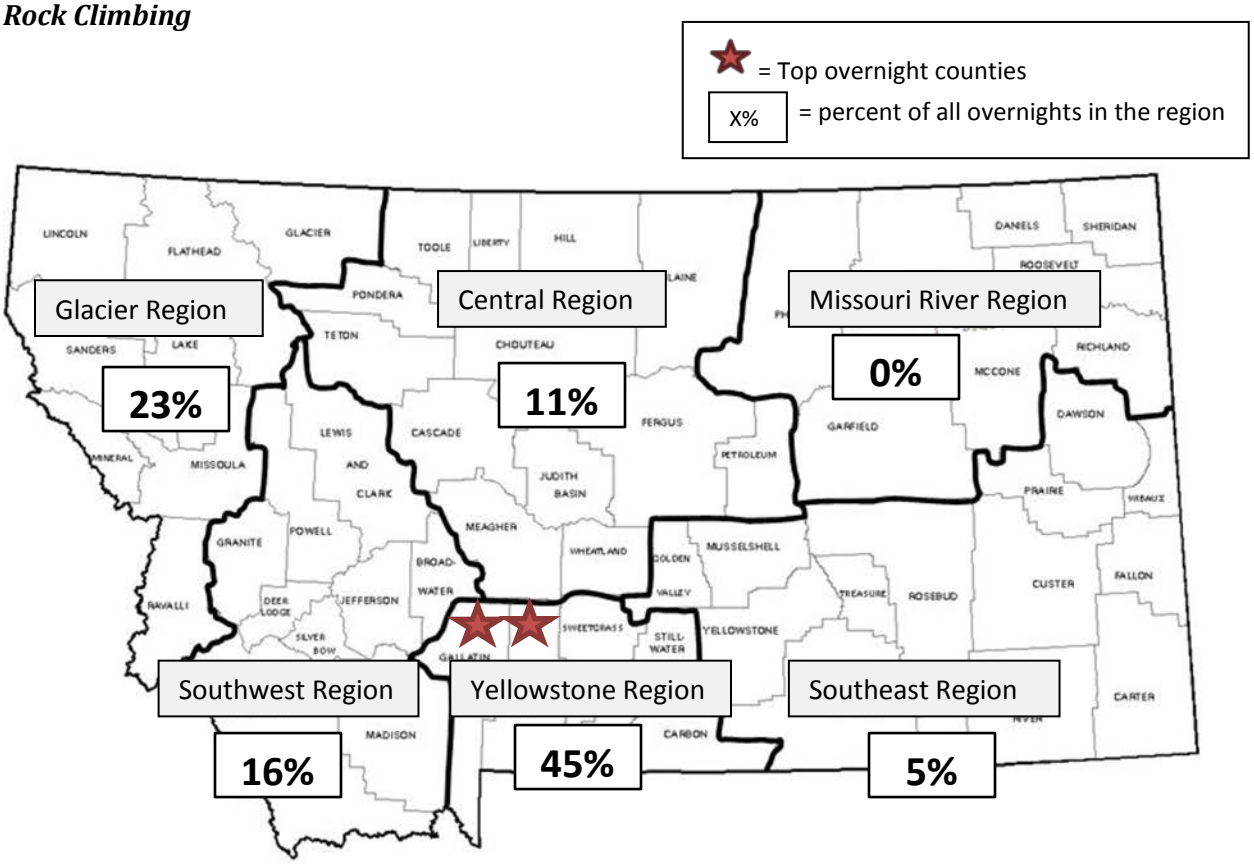

Figure 13: Percentage of rock climbing by tourism region and county

Twenty-two (78% of total) rock climbers indicated they spent more than one night away from home. A majority of them were males (70%) and had an average age of 43 years. They spent on average two nights away from home. A majority of rock climbers spent nights in the Yellowstone Region (45%). Both Gallatin (16%) and Park (15%) counties had the most overnight visits. Do to the low sample of rock climbers, other counties are not reported here.

Rock Hounding

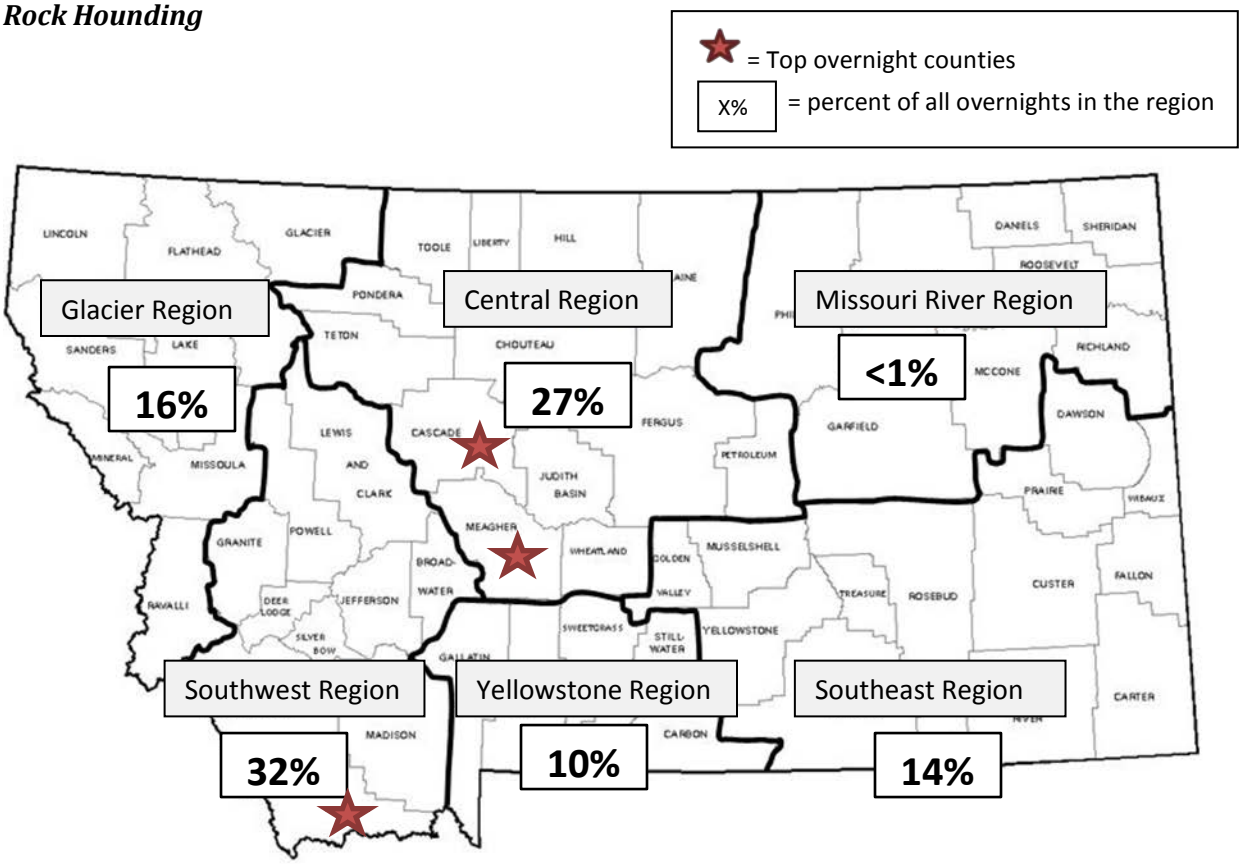

Figure 14: Percentage of rock hounding by tourism region and county

Seventy-five rock hounders spent at least one night away from home (69% of total rockhounders). The average age of rock hounders was 50 years. Over half identified themselves as female (52%) and spent less than two nights away from home (mean=1.83). A majority of rock hounders spent nights in the Southwest (32%) and Central Regions (27%). The three most popular counties to spend nights in are listed below:

- Beaverhead County (12%)
- Meagher County (9%)
- Cascade County (8%)

Scenic Driving

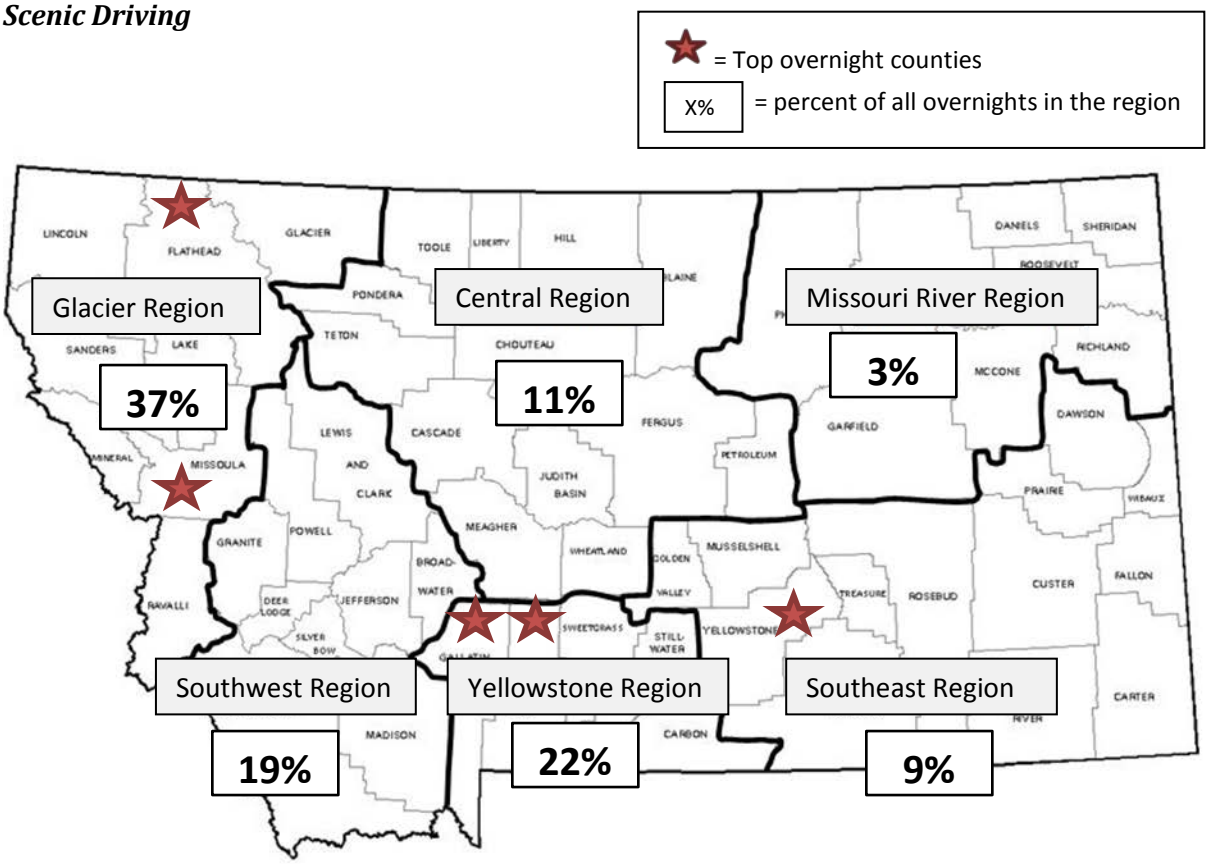

Figure 15: Percentage of scenic driving by tourism region and county

Of the scenic drivers, over 1000 (73% of total) indicated they spent at least one night away from home (n=1051). Forty eight percent were female and 52% identified themselves as male. Scenic drivers spent 1.66 nights away from home and had an average age of 49 years. For scenic drivers, a majority of nights spent away from home were in the Glacier Region (37%). Other popular regions for nights spent were the Southwest (19%) and Yellowstone Region (22%). The counties with the most number of nights spent are listed below:

- Flathead County (14%)
- Gallatin County (12%)
- Missoula County (10%)
- Park County (6%)
- Yellowstone County (6%)

Wildlife Watching

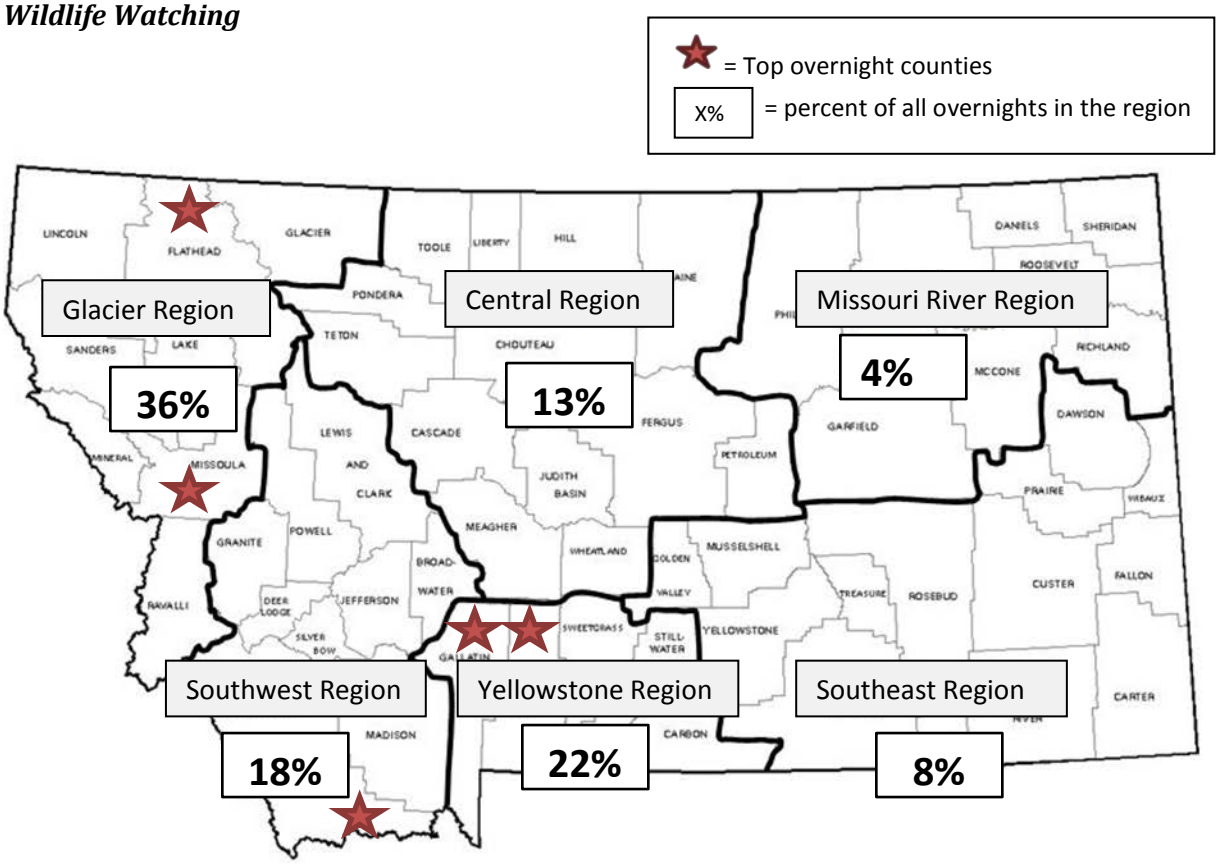

Figure 16: Percentage of wildlife watching by tourism region and county

Of the wildlife watchers, 741 (75% of total wildlife watchers) indicated they spent at least one night away on their trip. Over 50 percent identified themselves as male (54%) and had an average age of 49 years. Wildlife watchers spent 1.87 nights away from home on their trip. Wildlife watchers spent the most number of nights in the Glacier (36%) and Yellowstone (22%) Regions. The top counties for nights spent are listed below:

- Flathead County (14%)
- Gallatin County (12%
- Missoula County (8%)
- Park County (6%)
- Beaverhead County (5%)

Beach Activities

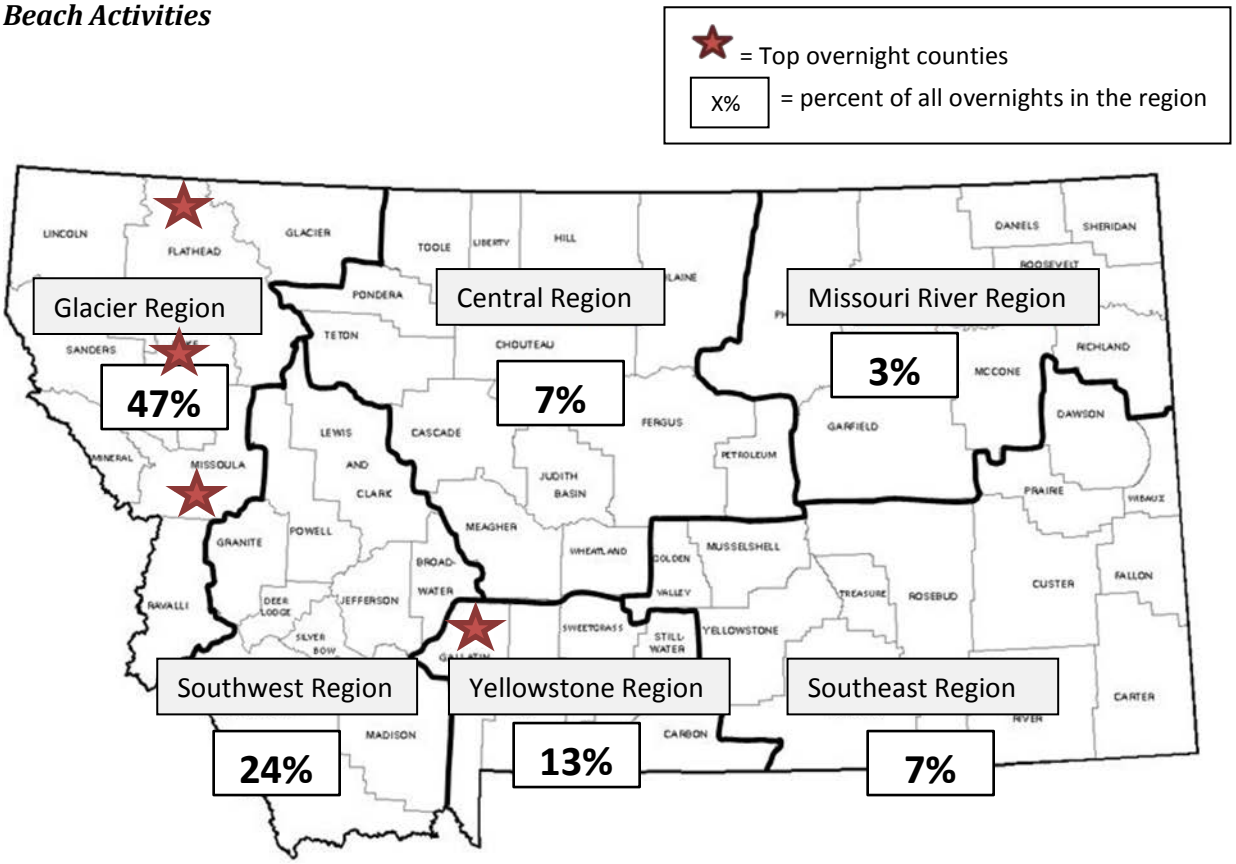

Figure 17: Percentage of beach activities by tourism region and county

Of the beach goers, 235 (83% of total) spent at least one night away from home and the average age for beach users was 45 years. Over 50 percent were male and 47 percent were female. On average those in beach activities spent over two nights away from home (mean=2.11). Of respondents who participated in beach activities, close to 50 percent spent at least one night in the Glacier Region (47%). The counties with the greatest percentage of overnight visits are listed below:

- Flathead County (15%)
- Missoula County (12%)
- Gallatin County (9%)
- Lake County (8%)

Fishing

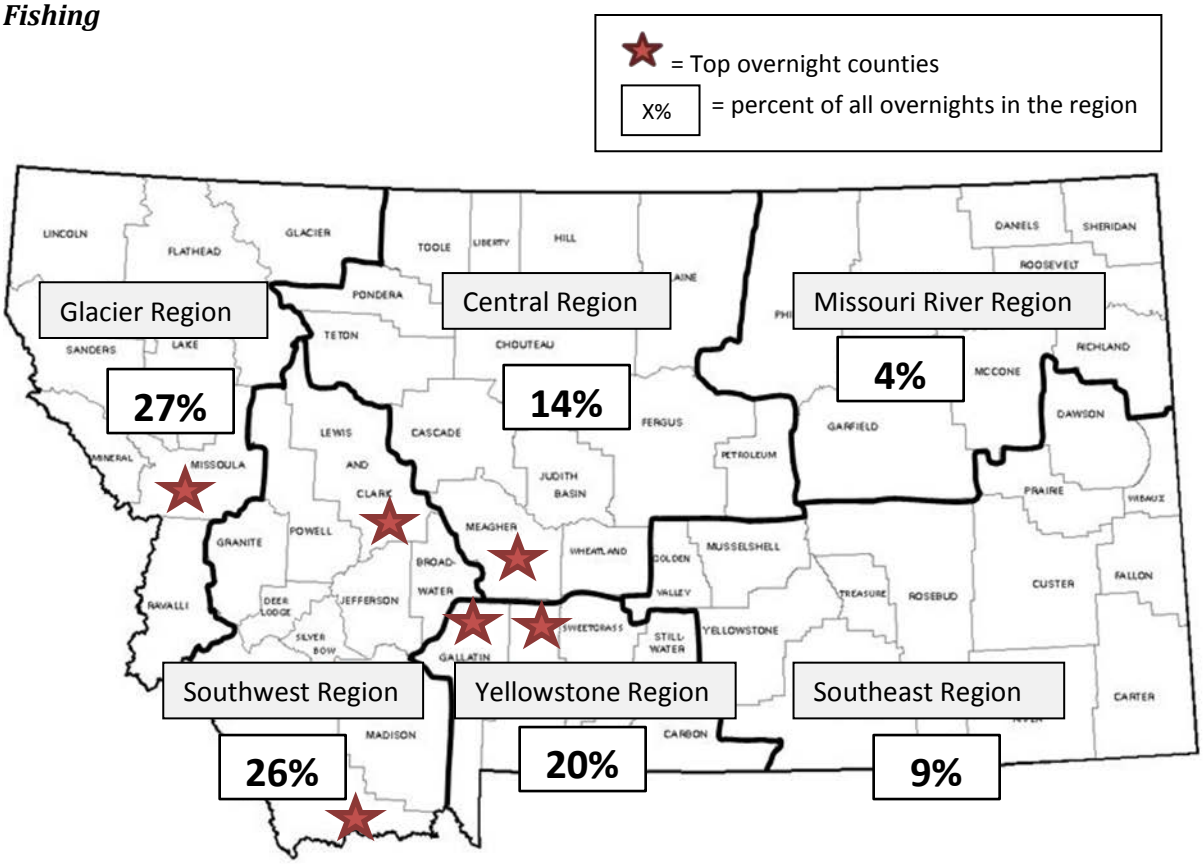

Figure 18: Percentage of fishing by tourism region and county

Over 500 anglers indicated they spent at least one night away from home (n=516; 79% of total anglers). The average age of anglers was 48 years and 67 percent were male. On average, anglers spent two nights away from home. The Glacier (27%) and Southwest (26%) Regions had the highest percentage of overnight visits. The counties with the greatest percentage of overnight visits arelisted below:

- Gallatin County (10%)
- Beaverhead County (7%)
- Missoula County (6%)
- Lewis and Clark County (5%)
- Park County (5%)

Motorized Boating

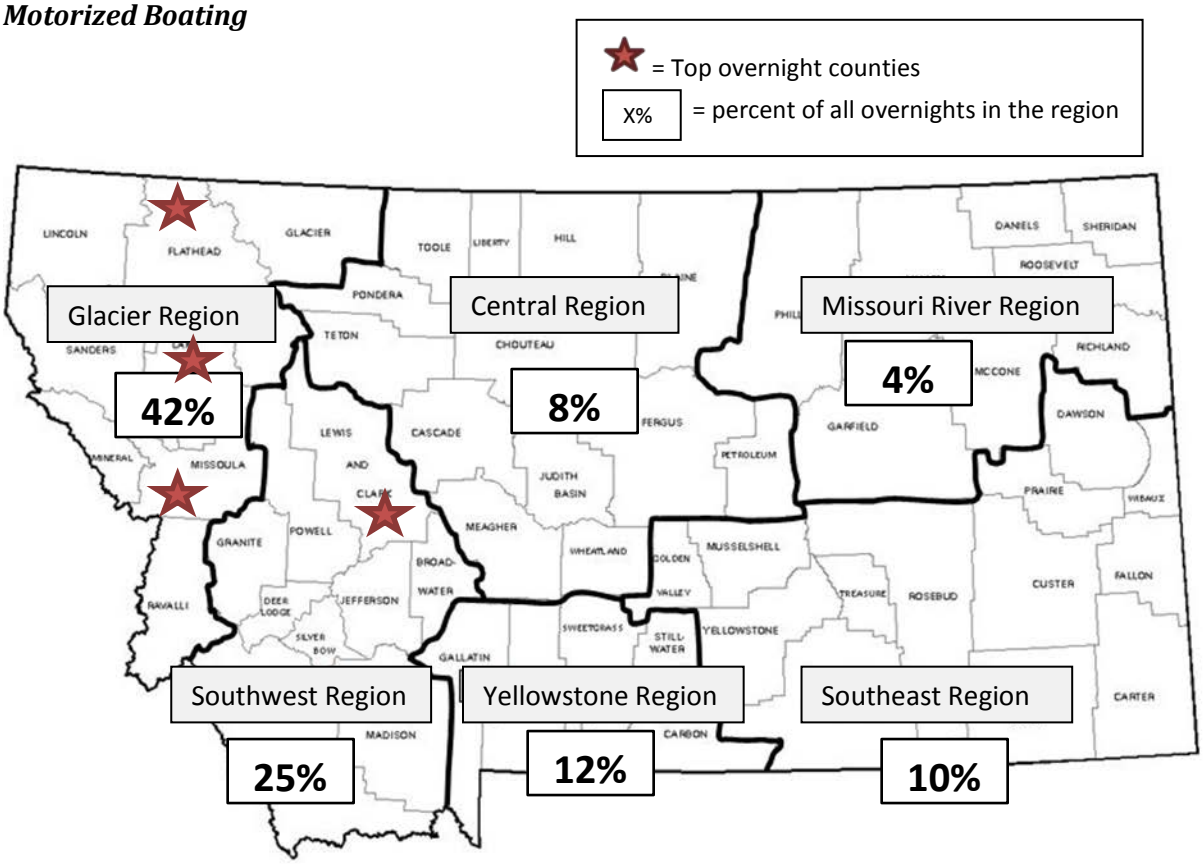

Figure 19: Percentage of motorized boating by tourism region and county

Of the motorized boaters close to 200 spent at least one night away from home (n=191; 80% of total). The average age of motorized boaters was 47 years. Forty-four percent indicated they were female and 56 percent male. Motorized boaters spent just over two nights away from home (mean=2.18). For motorized boaters, a majority of overnight visits occurred in the Glacier Region (42%) followed by the Southwest Region (25%). The counties with the most overnight visits are listed below:

- Flathead County (14%
- Missoula County (13%)
- Lewis and Clark County (10%)

Non-motorized Boating (rafting, floating, kayaking, canoeing)

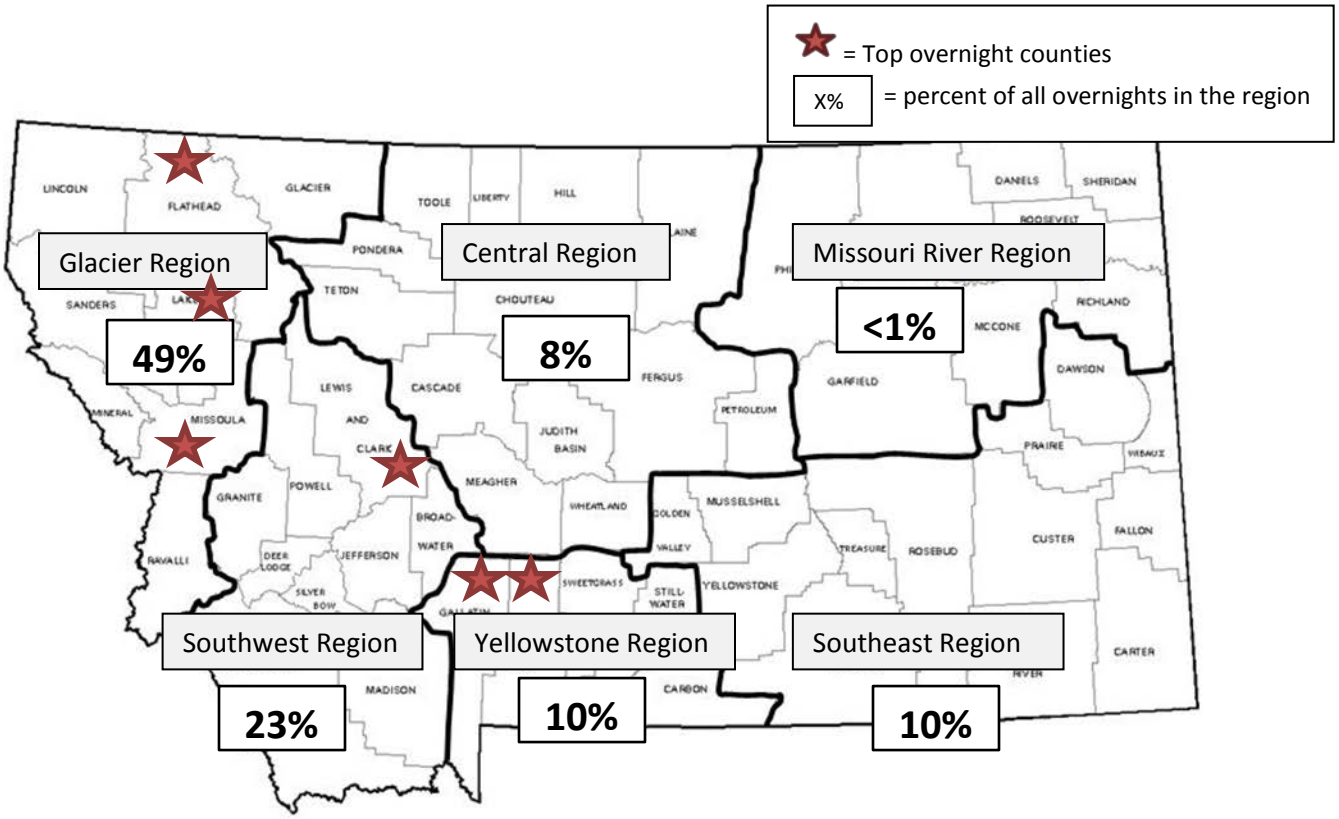

Figure 20: Percentage of non-motorized boating by tourism region and county

Nearly 200 non-motorized boaters spent at least one night away from home (n=192; 82% of total) . On average, non-motorized boaters spent two nights away from home and had an average age of 46 years. Close to 60 percent were male and 42 percent were female. For the non-motorized boaters, close to 50 percent of the overnight visits occurred in the Glacier Region. The counties with the greatest number of overnight visits are listed below:

- Missoula County (14%)
- Flathead County (14%)
- Lake County (8%)
- Lewis and Clark County (5%)
- Park County (5%)
- Gallatin County (4%)

Cross Country Skiing

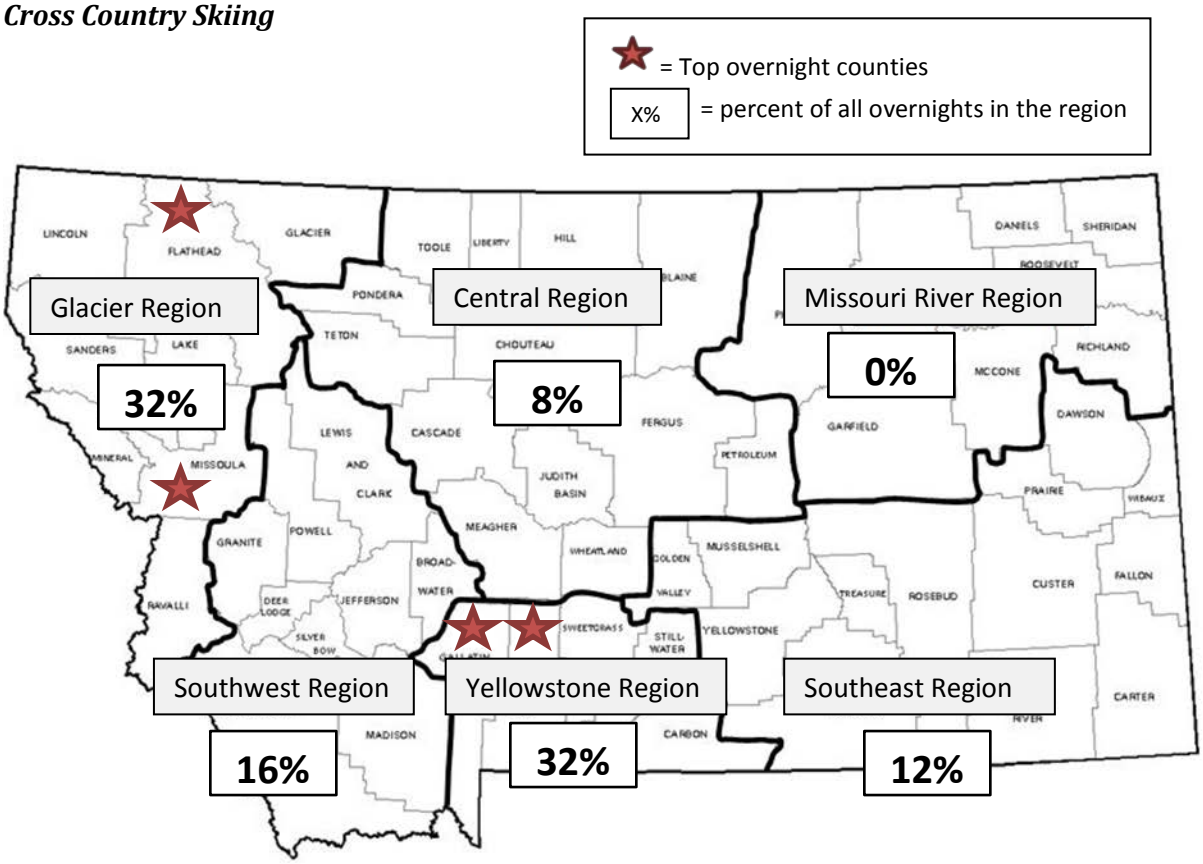

Figure 21: Percentage of cross country skiing by tourism region and county

Of the cross country skiers, 60 (73% of total XC skiers) spent at least one night away from home. Cross country skiers had an average age of 52 years. The sample was split evenly by gender and respondents indicated they spent 1.83 nights away from home. Cross country skiers spent the greatest number of nights in both the Glacier (32%) and Yellowstone (32%) Regions. The counties with the most overnight visits are listed below:

- Gallatin County (19%)
- Missoula County (12%)
- Park County (11%)
- Flathead County (11%)

Downhill Skiing

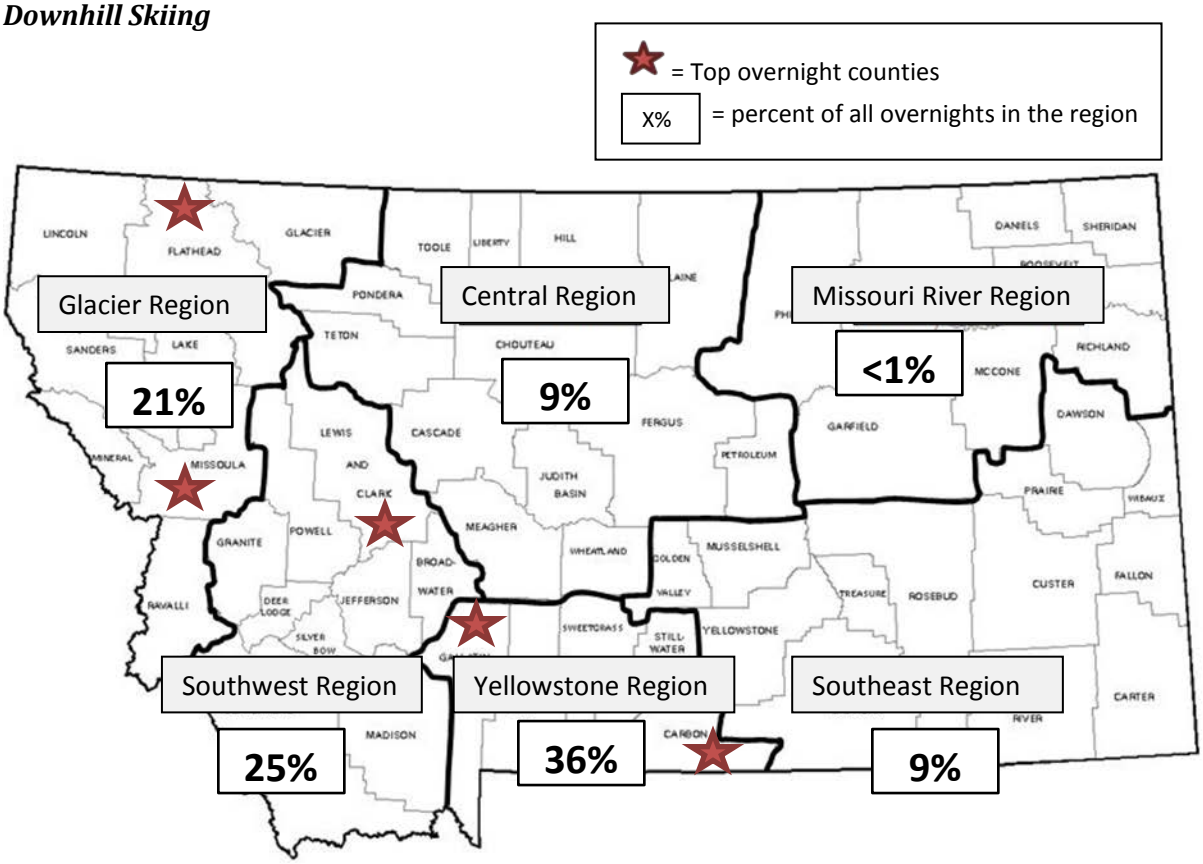

Figure 22: Percentage of downhill skiing by tourism region and county

Of the downhill skiers and snowboarders, 132 (71% of total) spent at least one night away from home. The average age of downhill skiers for this sample was 43 years. Fifty-eight percent identified themselves as male and spent less than two nights away on trips (mean=1.50). The Yellowstone Region (36%) had the most overnight visits for downhill skiers. The counties with the greatest number of overnight visits are listed below:

- Gallatin County (27%)
- Flathead County (9%)
- Missoula County (7%)
- Carbon County (7%)
- Lewis and Clark County (7%)

Ice Fishing

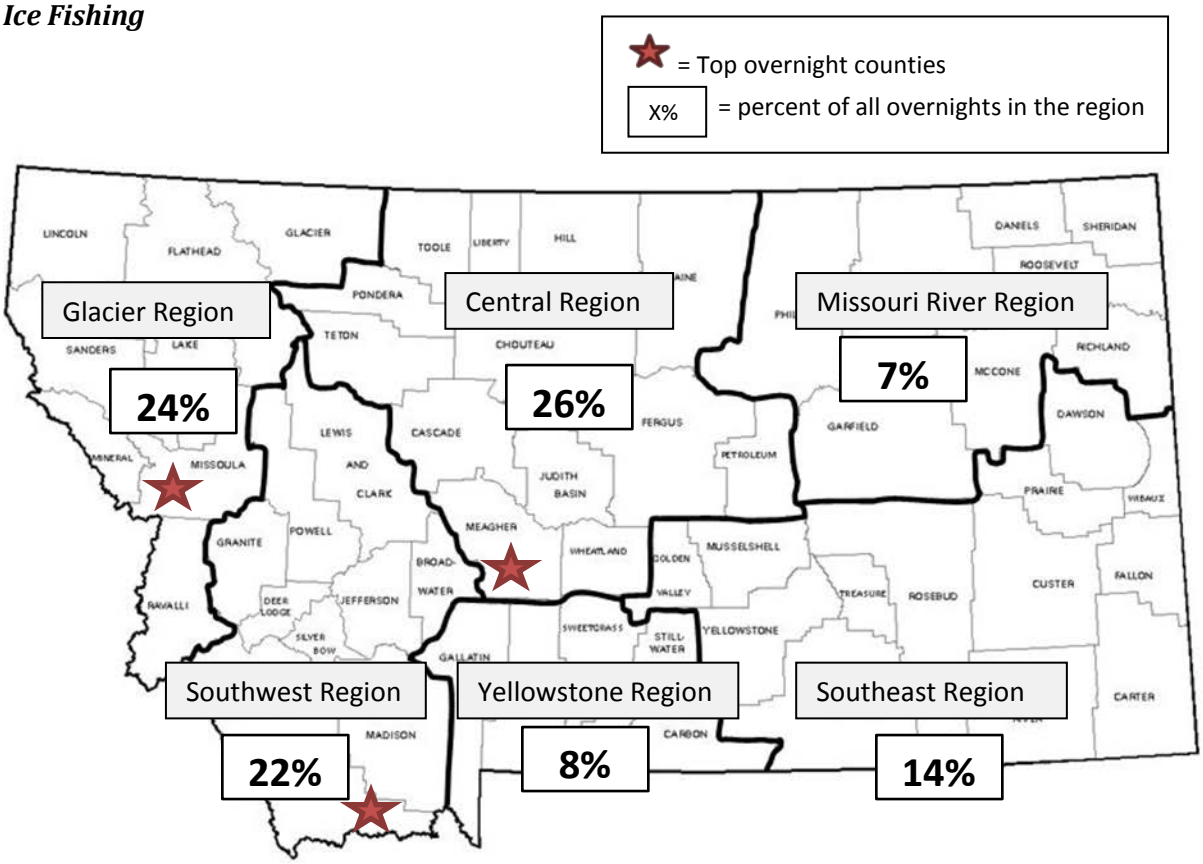

Figure 23: Percentage of ice fishing by tourism region and county

Of those who ice fish, 95 (70% of total) spent at least one night away from home and 77 percent identified themselves as male. The average age of ice fishing participation is 48 years and they spent less than two nights away from home (mean=1.88). The Central Region (26%) had the most overnight visits for ice fishing followed by Glacier (24%) and Southwest (22%) Regions. The counties with the greatest percentage of ice fishing overnight visits are listed below:

- Meagher County (13%)
- Beaverhead County (10%)
- Missoula County (8%)

Snowmobiling

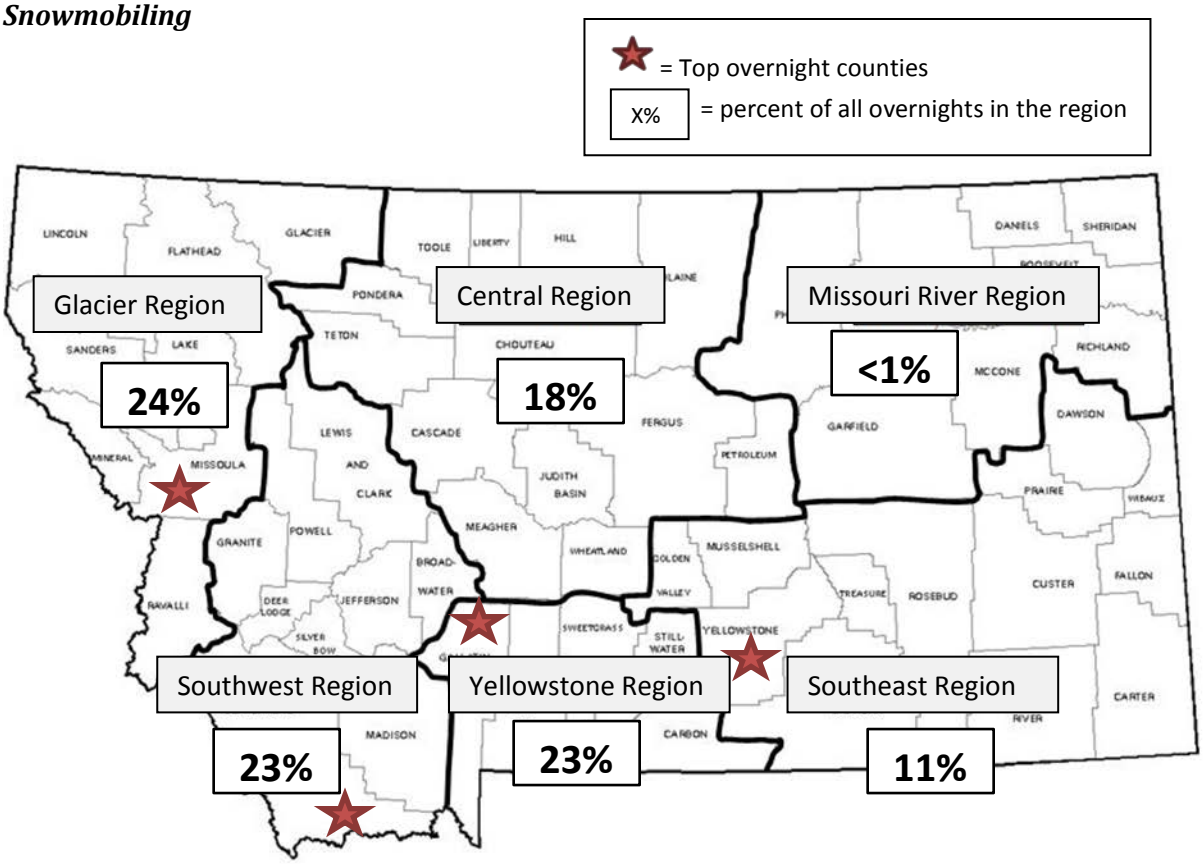

Figure 24: Percentage of snowmobiling by tourism region and county

Of the snowmobilers, 88 (73% of total) spent at least one night away from home. The average age for snowmobilers is 44 years and 70 percent identified themselves as male. On average, snowmobilers spent less than two nights away from home (mean=1.68). Of those who participated in snowmobiling, most spent nights in the Glacier (24%), Southwest (23%) and Yellowstone (23%) Regions. The counties with the greatest percentage of overnight visits are listed below:

- Beaverhead County (14%)
- Gallatin County (13%)
- Yellowstone County (9%)
- Missoula County (9%)

Snowshoeing

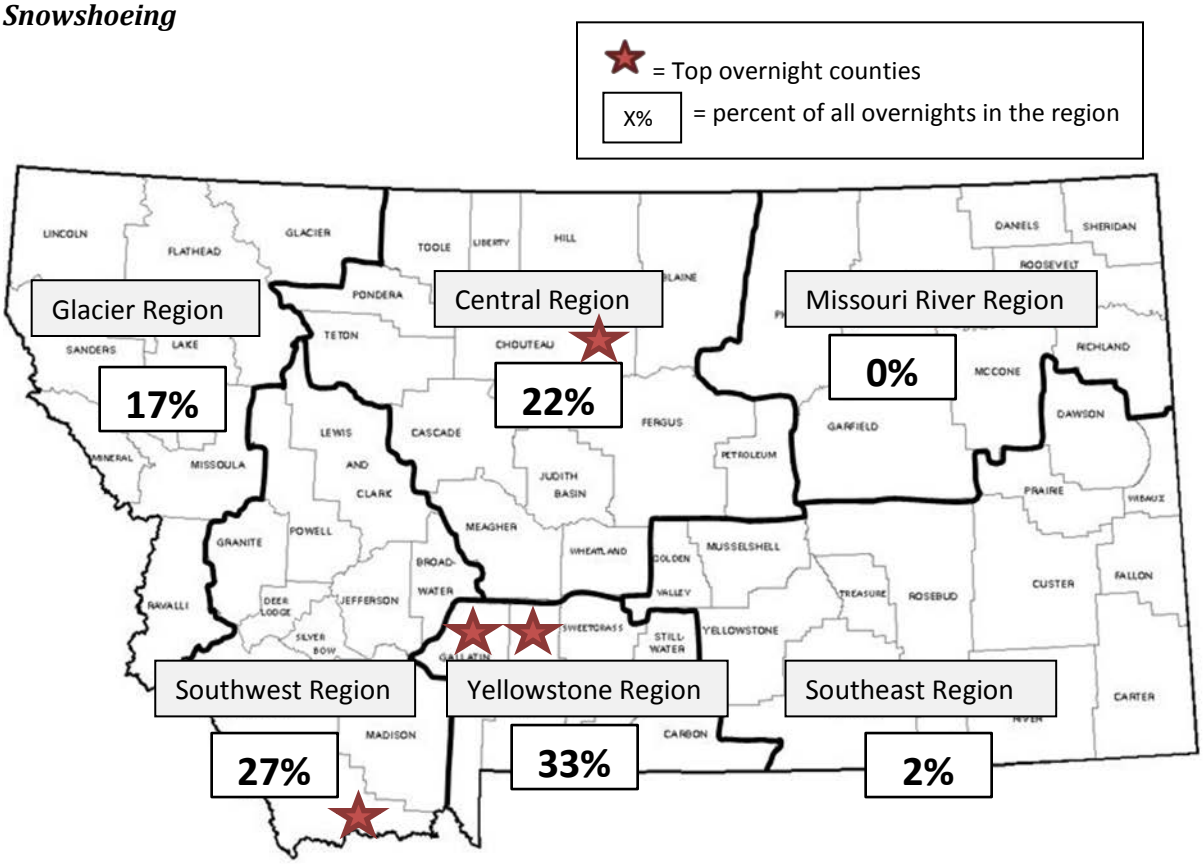

Figure 25: Percentage of snowshoeing by tourism region and county

Only a small percentage of the sample were snowshoers (n=40) and of those, 65 percent spent at least one night away from home. The average age for snowshoe participants was 50 years and 60 percent indicated they were male. On average, they spent less than two nights away from home (mean=1.68). One third of the respondents spent nights in the Yellowstone Region. The counties with the greatest percentage of overnights visits are listed below:

- Park County (18%)
- Gallatin County (14%)
- Beaverhead County (12%)
- Choteau County (12%)

Conclusions and Discussion

Travel in and around the state of Montana by residents has a significant economic impact. Resident travel contributes over $200 million to the local economy and is responsible for close to 2000 jobs.

Of the Montana residents, 27% traveled for outdoor recreation, 24% traveled for friends and family and 10% combined business and leisure trips together. This suggests that Montanans are devoting a significant amount of the travel to recreation and leisure related purposes. Residents are active in outdoor recreation and are spending nights away in the state to enjoy their favorite recreation activities.

The regional and county comparisons had a few interesting results. Overall, the Glacier, Southwest, and Yellowstone Regions were the most popular for a majority of the outdoor recreation activities. Some notable differences from this trend were in the Central and Southeast Regions. The Southeast Region was popular for overnight golfers, hunters, and road bikers. The Central Region attracted those interested in hunting, off-road ATV riding, rock hounding, ice fishing, and snowshoeing. The most popular counties for most recreation activities (for those who drove > 50 miles and spent a night) were Gallatin, Beaverhead, Lewis and Clark, Flathead, Park, Yellowstone and Missoula counties. There were a few counties and activities that did not fit this trend entirely. Fallon County was a popular overnight destination for horseback riders and road bikers. For hunters, Garfield and Meagher County were both notable overnight destinations. For anglers and rock hounders, Meagher County had a number of overnight visits. Rock hounders along with off-road ATV users both spent overnight visits in Cascade County. Lake County was a popular destination for motorized and non-motorized users. Carbon County had notable overnight visits from downhill skiers and snowboarders. Lastly, Choteau County had a high percentage of overnight visits from those who snowshoe.

Using previous studies conducted by ITRR, several recreation trends can be determined. These results should be interpreted with caution since the questions were asked on previous surveys in different formats and not intended for trend comparisons. Comparisons suggest day hiking and nature photography are gaining popularity among Montanans. The increase in these activities is consistent with national averages that project (under certain scenarios) that they will continue to increase over the next 50 years (Bowker et al., 2012). Other notable trends are with hunting and fishing, which is increasing among residents. This should be examined with caution since national averages indicate an overall downward trend for these activities (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2006).

Overall, these findings suggest that outdoor recreation is a popular reason for residents of Montana to travel around the state. Residents have a significant impact on the economy and continue to support jobs, and state/ local taxes with their recreation habits. Overall, the Glacier Region was the most popular for outdoor recreation visits, followed by the Yellowstone and Southwest Regions. The Central and Southeast Regions have several activities that make it a notable destination. The only region that was not as popular for outdoor recreation overnights was the Missouri River Region.

References

Bowker, J.M., Askew, A. E., Cordell, H. K., Betz, C. J., Arnoch, & Seymour, L. (2012). Outdoor recreation participation in the United States: Projections to 2060. Forest Service Technical Report, http://www.srs.fs.fed.us/pubs/gtr/gtr_srs160.pdf.

U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation.