



# UAA OUTDOOR RECREATION PROGRAM FEE SURVEY

## OVERVIEW

During the fall 2014 USUAA General Elections, students recommended the creation of an Outdoor Recreation Programming Board at UAA, funded by a new mandatory ten dollar (\$10) flat fee per semester for students enrolled in three (3) or more non-distance credits during fall or springs semesters at the UAA Anchorage campus (Constitutional Referendum 15-03: Outdoor Recreation Programming Fee).

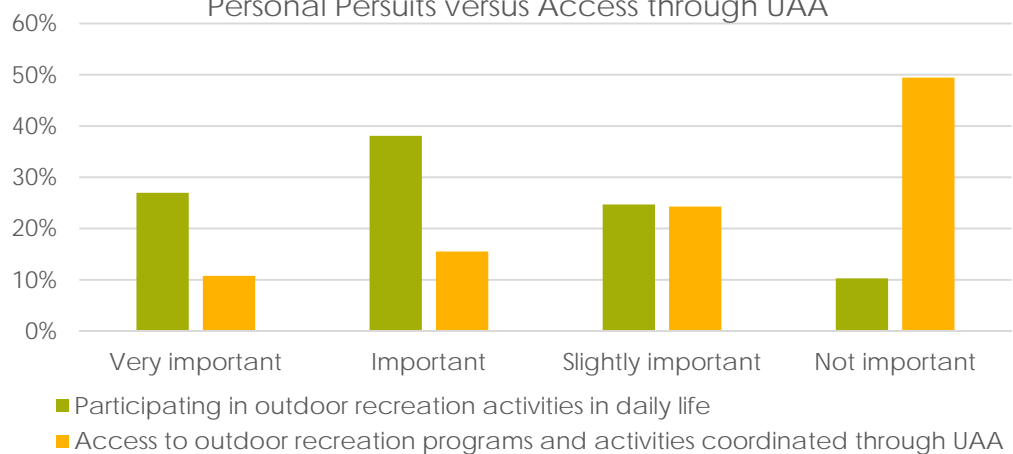
As an example, in fall 2015, a student enrolled in 12 credits will pay \$532 towards mandatory student fees. If this new \$10 outdoor recreation fee is implemented, a student enrolled in 12 credits will pay \$542 towards mandatory student fees.

Survey respondents describe their **level of support to the new Outdoor Recreation Program and fee** as described above as:

- **47.34%** **Against**
- **33.46%** **In Favor**
- **19.20%** **Indifferent**

While majority of respondents indicated that **participating in outdoor recreation activities in their daily life is important or very important**, the majority of respondents said that it is **not important or slightly important to have access to outdoor recreation programs and activities coordinated through UAA**. This is a mean comparison of 2.82 importance to daily life participation versus 1.88 importance to access to through UAA.

Personal Pursuits versus Access through UAA



The majority of respondents **participate in some form of outdoor recreation activity in Alaska once per week or more**.

- 35% More than once per week
- 27% Once a week
- 17% Once a month
- 12% Once every few months
- 5% Once a year
- 4% Never

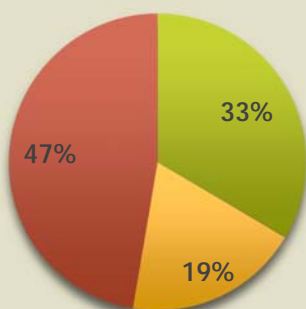
## PURPOSE

The UAA Outdoor Recreation Program Fee Survey was administered to gather additional student input on the proposed new UAA Anchorage Campus Outdoor Recreation Program and mandatory \$10 fee.

While this program fee passed the USUAA General Elections, it has not yet been approved by university administration and is under consideration for potential spring 2016 implementation.

The purpose of the Outdoor Recreation Program would be to provide professional quality and intentional programming, including access to outdoor recreation trips (ranging from no to reduced cost), outdoor recreation equipment rentals, adventure information, speakers, workshops, clinics, and more.

## Level of Suport



- In Favor
- Indifferent
- Against

## OUTDOOR RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Respondents indicate an overall greater likelihood of pursuing outdoor recreation opportunities independently as opposed to participating if provided or coordinated by UAA. Opportunities with greater likelihood of participation if provided by UAA included trainings, courses, and seminars, as well as dog mushing, gear rentals, and swimming pool movie nights. Sea Kayaking, Canoeing, or Paddle boarding experienced high likelihood both independently and with UAA.

For each outdoor recreation opportunity, the chart below shows the mean comparison between the likelihood of participation independently versus the likelihood of participation if provided or coordinated by UAA. The mean is based on a 1 to 4 point scale with 1 indicating "not at all likely" and 4 indicating "very likely."

<i>Outdoor Recreation Opportunity</i>	<i>Participate Independently</i>	<i>Participate with UAA</i>
<i>Alyeska Resort trips</i>	2.40	1.84
<i>Chena Hot Springs trip</i>	2.36	1.88
<i>Climbing trips (i.e. rock, ice, indoor sport, etc.)</i>	2.19	1.86
<i>Cycling trips (i.e. road, mountain, fat tire, etc.)</i>	2.39	1.78
<i>Disk Golf</i>	1.98	1.59
<b><i>Dog Mushing</i></b>	1.45	1.61
<b><i>Emergency medical courses</i></b>	2.21	2.23
<b><i>Environmental education seminars</i></b>	1.81	1.92
<i>Fishing trips</i>	2.71	1.83
<i>Geocaching</i>	1.77	1.65
<i>Hiking and backpacking trips</i>	3.02	2.04
<b><i>Outdoor gear rentals</i></b>	2.01	2.13
<b><i>Outdoor leadership courses</i></b>	1.61	1.78
<b><i>Outdoor recreation activity seminars and classes</i></b>	1.75	1.92
<i>Overnight camping trips</i>	3.01	1.83
<i>Sea Kayaking, Canoeing, or Paddle boarding</i>	2.63	2.14
<b><i>Search and Rescue techniques</i></b>	1.96	2.06
<i>Ski trips (i.e. cross country, backcountry, alpine, etc.)</i>	2.19	1.77
<i>Survival techniques</i>	2.14	2.09
<b><i>Swimming pool movie nights</i></b>	1.74	1.86
<i>Whitewater rafting or kayaking</i>	2.37	2.08
<i>Wildlife viewing trips</i>	2.44	1.97

**\*Bold** = Opportunities that indicate an increased likelihood of participation if provided or coordinated by UAA.

**\*Blue** = Top 5 opportunities with greatest likelihood of participation.

Respondents indicated the greatest likelihood to participate in the following outdoor recreation opportunities **independently**:

1. Hiking and backpacking trips
2. Overnight camping trips
3. Fishing trips
4. Sea Kayaking, Canoeing, or Paddle boarding
5. Wildlife viewing

Respondents indicated the greatest likelihood to participate in the following outdoor recreation opportunities if **provided or coordinated by UAA**:

1. Emergency medical courses
2. Sea Kayaking, Canoeing, or Paddle boarding
3. Outdoor gear rentals
4. Survival techniques
5. Whitewater rafting or kayaking



The following opportunities show an **increased likelihood of participation if provided or coordinate by UAA**:

1. Outdoor leadership courses
2. Outdoor recreation activity seminars and classes
3. Dog Mushing
4. Outdoor gear rentals
5. Swimming pool movie nights
6. Environmental education seminars
7. Search and Rescue techniques
8. Emergency medical courses

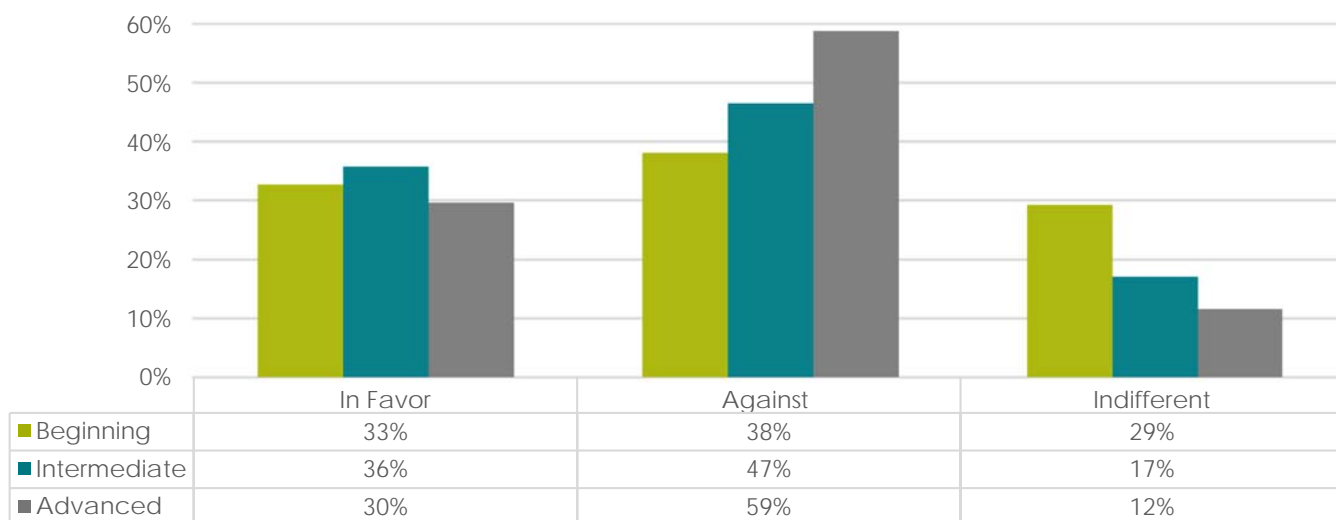
## LEVEL OF OUTDOOR RECREATION EXPERIENCE

**Over half** of respondents describe their personal level of outdoor recreation **experience as intermediate**.

- 25% Beginning
- 53% Intermediate
- 22% Advanced

Respondents with advanced experience were most against the proposed program and fee, while respondents with intermediate experience were most in favor. Respondents with beginning experience were most indifferent.

Level of Support by Outdoor Recreation Experience



## FEE COMMENTARY

**560 comments** were provided in response to the invitation to, "Please provide any additional comments you may have regarding the **mandatory \$10 outdoor recreation fee per semester** for students enrolled in three (3) or more credits during fall or springs semesters at UAA."

**Common themes from the comments include:**

- Outdoor recreation is important and there is value in having the opportunity available
- Sentiment that students are forced to pay mandatory fees for programs that they don't even use
- The fee should be optional or voluntary – Only students who participate through UAA should pay
- Confusion between the Athletics/Recreation Sports fee and the Outdoor Recreation Program Fee
- Perception that the Outdoor Recreation Program would not be accessible by students with disabilities
- Surprise that UAA does not already do more to encourage outdoor recreation in Alaska
- Belief that the program is a good idea, but the fee would only benefit a small number of students

**Two-thirds of the comments given expressed opposition to the fee.** Approximately 50% of comments expressed full opposition, while another 16% of comments expressed opposition but also suggested that students who wish to use the outdoor recreation program have the opportunity to pay to participate. Comments in opposition to this fee include:

- ❖ "I am a strong supporter of outdoor activities; however, I am strongly opposed to being forced to pay another mandatory fee for a non-mandatory option. Perhaps UAA should stop trying to force students to pay for another student's entertainment."
- ❖ "Mandatory fees are getting out of control. Working more than full time and going to school does not allow the time for all this extra activity that different fees are now collecting for. UAA is made up of many non-traditional students and these fees seem to support the activities that are more geared to a traditional student's schedule and availability. I understand everyone has to contribute but it would be nice to see some of the activities geared to non-traditional students' availability."
- ❖ "I don't use any of the other mandatory fee programs and I'd rather not pay for another I won't use."
- ❖ "I don't want the program. I go to school to study and I work to pay my expenses and outdoor adventures. I usually do not go with university friends and during the school year I don't really have time after my school and work commitments. I would prefer making the program optional for students who wish to join. I'm sure it will be well worth it for those who are in a good position to take advantage of the opportunities. However, there are many of us who aren't in a good position and another fee is annoying."
- ❖ "Students are required to pay a lot of fees the way it is, why keep adding more? It's Alaska--how hard is it really to get outside and recreate? There are a lot of non-traditional students at UAA who I think would be completely uninterested in these types of organized activities which seem geared towards freshman/traditional-students."
- ❖ "I'm tired of paying fees for services that I don't utilize. As a full-time working professional, I don't have time to participate in extra activities and I'm sick of subsidizing services for traditional students. If they want to participate in outdoor recreational activities, let them pay per use."
- ❖ "As a non-traditional student, and a Mat-Su Valley resident, it is infuriating to even be charged for the current campus fees that I do not use because I live in the valley. I think it would be great if UAA had an outdoor recreation club and they could provide their own funding but I will not use this service. As stated in the beginning of this survey about \$500 is charged in mandatory fees to a student taking 12 credits. That is almost the cost of a 3 credit class! \$500 could cover my books for a semester. All these fees are unnecessary and could be better spent elsewhere by the student. Very few of us have financial aid covering these fees."

10% of comments expressed **skepticism to the program's access, quality, and success.** While in general support of the program, these students expressed **concern in the promotion and awareness of opportunities, variety and frequency of programs, duplication of resources, and additional costs to participate.** Comments of skepticism include:

- ❖ "\$10 seems to be a fair price for outdoor activities but they must be communicated well. Dissemination of information is lacking at UAA. i.e. Bookstore events, presentations, and events posted on the day they are occurring, after students are already in school for the day."
- ❖ "I hope that there will be a lot of widespread advertising on the classes, seminars, etc. Hopefully they will mostly be offered at no cost."
- ❖ "It's great to encourage students to get outdoors, but I think you would be serving a very limited number of students by making all students pay for it. There are many, many groups around town that already provide this type of service. (REI, Eagle River Nature Center, Campbell Creek Science Center, etc...) By increasing student fees, you are making it more difficult for people to pay for their education, which is the main focus of attending college."
- ❖ "I don't mind the mandatory fee or its amount so long as activities are provided at no cost/minimal cost. I would be willing to pay no more than \$30 for any given activity/seminar. Also, I would like to see a schedule of activities and associated costs before the beginning of the semester. If it is a mandatory fee then I expect the program can provide the student body with a variety of activities, services, no cost/minimal cost rentals, and be visible on campus through flyers and email. The northern light student newspaper should print a schedule of activities in each paper."

Less than 20% of comments were in **support** of the outdoor recreation fee. Comments in support of the outdoor recreation fee include:

- ❖ "I am in full support of the outdoor rec fee. I believe it would help create a stronger student life culture while also giving students an opportunity to get active in one of the most beautiful places in the world. Offering seminars, rentals and trips adds value to the university. I believe it is something that students would take advantage of and may also be a deciding factor when students choose which school they want to enroll with."
- ❖ "I think having these trips would be a great way to make friends. It is hard to do so at UAA. Also, I tried going ice skating at UAA, and they did not have any ice skates to rent because they got stolen. I wish there was more equipment to rent."
- ❖ "I think this is a program that will be used by quite a lot of younger students (hopefully), though I don't really see myself using this service. I think that group outdoor activities will be very beneficial to new students, from both in state and outside of Alaska. I can't say I'm 100% happy about another mandatory fee for something I don't believe I'll use, but I understand the importance of group activities in a safe environment."
- ❖ "If the offered trips are reasonably priced, I think this is certainly well worth the fee. When I lived on campus and the recreation office offered them, trips like these had a huge impact on my UAA experience for the better. It's part of the reason why I stayed in Alaska after graduation. Trips like these helped me to fall in love with Alaska."
- ❖ "As a UAA student and someone who enjoys the outdoors I highly support this recreation fee. Gives a chance for the students to be active and meet new people :)"
- ❖ "This exposes kids to experiences they may not otherwise have, so I'm willing to support it. How to do these things safely must be emphasized."

## METHODOLOGY

Findings are based on the UAA Outdoor Recreation Program Fee Survey completed by **1075** University of Alaska Anchorage students between June 19 and July 6, 2015. This survey was administered electronically through Campus Labs Baseline by the Office of Student Affairs to the 10,009 students who were charged the UAA Concert Board Fee in Spring 2015, which is the same criteria as proposed for this fee. Students who are enrolled in 3 or more credits on the Anchorage campus would pay this fee. Students who completed the survey were entered into a drawing to win one of two \$50 REI gift cards.

Respondents were:

- Mostly women (60% women, 40% men).
- Representative of diverse age groups (16% 18-20 years old, 38% 21 to 25 years old, 32% 26 to 39 years old, 14% 40 years and older).
- Representative of different class years (12% freshman, 14% sophomore, 18% juniors, 40% seniors, 8% graduates, 8% Non-Degree Seeking).
- Racially diverse (66% Caucasian, 12% Alaska Native or American Indian, 9% Asian, 7% Not Specified, 4% Black or African American, 2% Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander).
- Mostly full-time students (61% full time students).
- Living off campus (93% live off campus).

*\*Please note, the percentages included in this report are rounded for clarity purposes.*

## QUESTIONS

Please direct any questions concerning this report to:

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