

Arch Cape Forest – Draft Public Access Plan

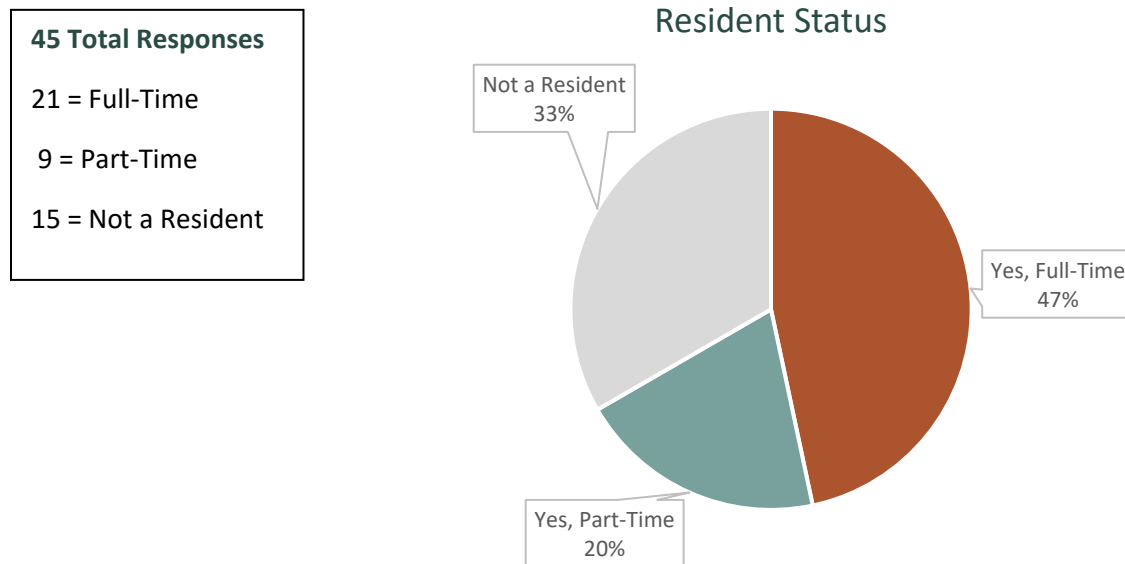
Received Public Comments | June 16 - July 5, 2023

Concurrent with the public release of the *Arch Cape Forest – Draft Public Access Plan*, an electronic survey was distributed by the Arch Cape Water District to their email list to facilitate getting comments and feedback on the document. A total of 45 responses to the survey were prepared; of these, 16 only included responses to the first two questions about Arch Cape residency and whether the respondent was an Arch Cape Water District rate payer without any responses to questions about the draft plan. The remaining 29 survey respondents answered at least one question about the draft plan. In addition, one letter and one email with comments was submitted, the contents of which are included at the end of this document.

The following is a summary of the comments submitted during the June 16 through July 5, 2023 public comment period. For questions requiring specific pre-populated responses (such as “yes-no” or multiple-choice questions), the responses are summarized in charts. Open-ended responses to survey questions are provided verbatim (other than minor, non-substantive edits to capitalization, spelling, and punctuation).

Survey Results

Question 1: Are you an Arch Cape Resident? (Landowner or Long-Term Renter)



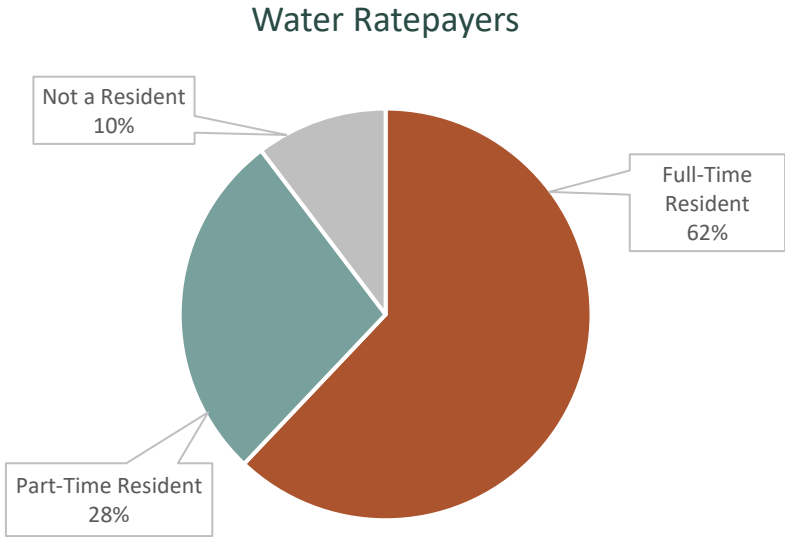
Question 2: Are you an Arch Cape Water District Ratepayer?

29 Ratepayers
 64% of Total Responses

18 = Full-Time

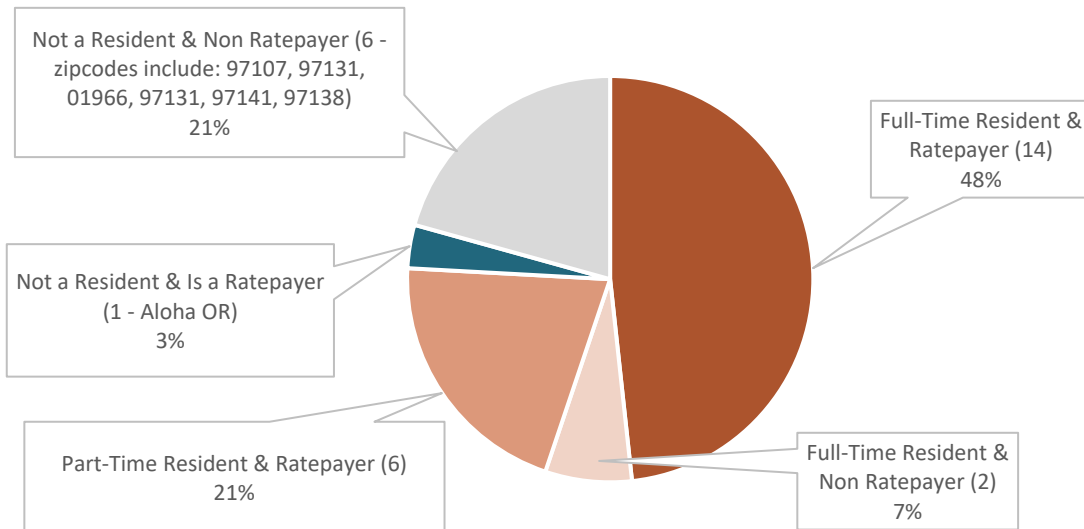
8 = Part-Time

3 = Not a Resident

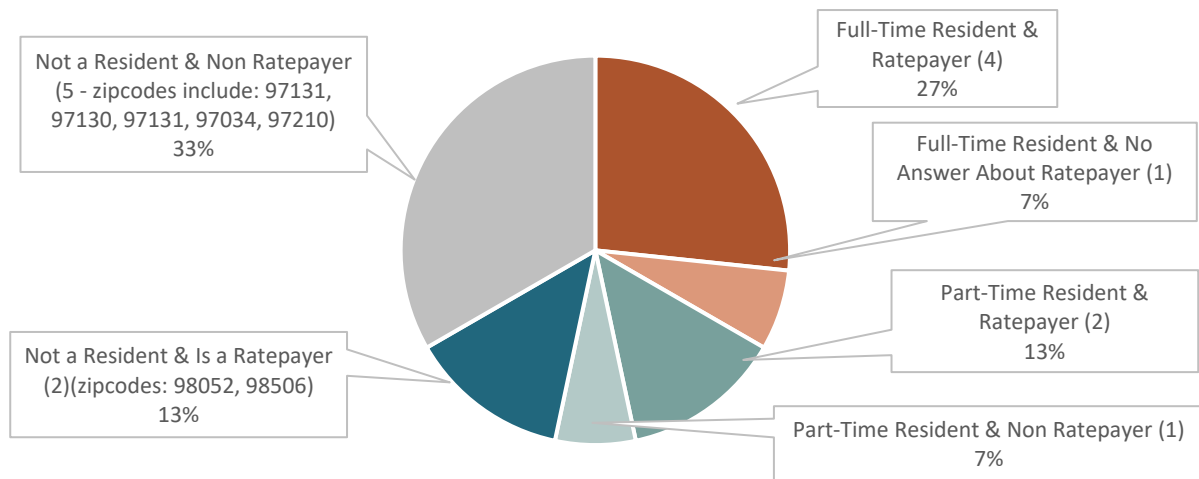


The following additional analyses illustrate which of the 45 total surveys included responses to the plan-related questions and which did not, and whether those respondents were residents and/or ratepayers:

**Respondents Who Answered Plan-Related Questions
 (29 total)**



Respondents Who Did Not Answer Plan-Related Questions (16 total)



Note that because these 16 survey responses did not include any responses about the draft plan, they are not included in the summaries for each following plan-related question. As such, the following responses to plan-related questions include the 29 surveys that responded to at least one plan-related question.

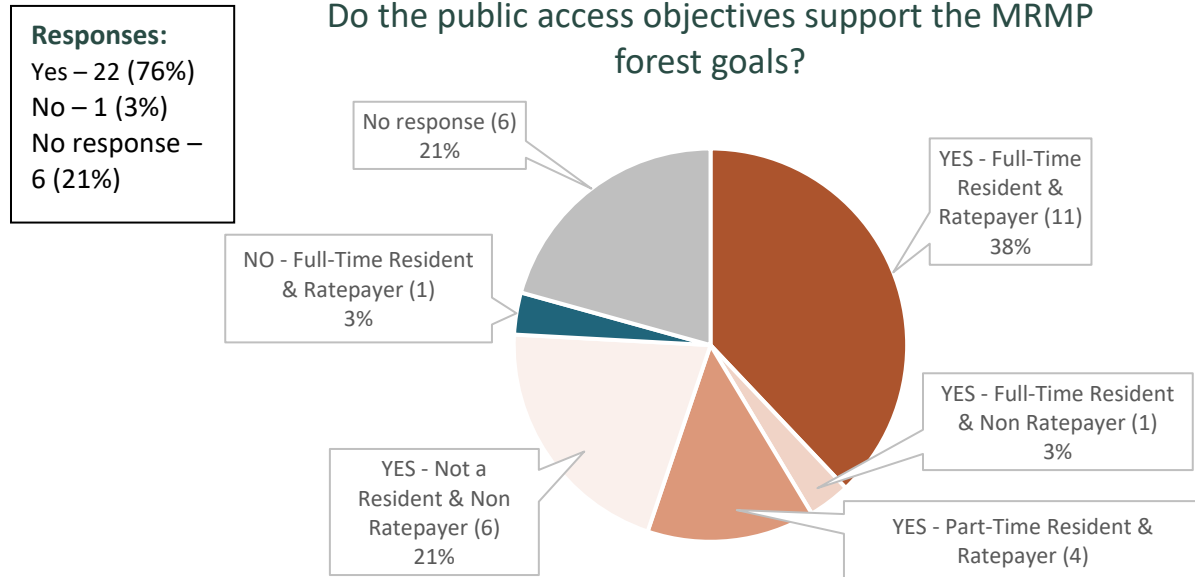
Question 3: Are the communities' key issues and concerns reflected in this section? If not, what is missing?

This was an open-ended question; the following were the responses provided:

- Yes, it is very comprehensive
- Yes, I think this is mainly accurate. However, as a water manager for 20 years, I believe this bullet point pertaining to the correlation between recreation and water quality is driven by something other than a focus on water quality. A far greater threat to water quality exists from industrial timber harvesting practices. As a water manager, this was always more of a concern to me than of people recreating in the forest.
- Yes
- I believe key issues are well reflected.
- Yes
- This section does a nice job covering key issues and concerns. Pg 49 Sediment - Edit this sentence: Sediment and in-stream nutrients are primary drivers of drinking water quality issues and water treatment costs. Pg 53 Plant Communities, Vegetation, and Wildlife Issues: Add bullet "Cougar, bear, bobcat, and coyote help keep elk and deer populations healthy as they eat weaker animals (sick, older, less strong)." Pg 54 Related Public Access Issues: Add a bullet about people with diverse abilities. How can we support local people that cannot hike/bike well uphill accessing the forest (e.g. occasional tours, e-bikes, electric wheelchairs, a bench at a low overlook, ADA accessible trail). Add bullet about the need for children to access nature. Ideally within 1/2 mile (?), walkable from homes. AC has no city parks. Pg 57 Hunting: Add concern that hunting of cougar leads to less healthy elk herds and cascading effects on other wildlife.

- I feel that this is a fair and thoughtfully prepared plan that addresses the concern of the community.
- I do feel they are properly reflected.
- Page 20 regarding Nuveen " maintaining a regular presence mentioning security ". I understand the concept of having security but I don't think it is conducive to the overall vision of this forest management. There was an issue in the past of "security " taking advantage of the access to the forest via gate entry. We have emphasized reducing traffic and footprint to the forest and Nuveen does not fit with the model. Window stickers are extra advertisement to the forest and we need to know the definition of "constant presence ". Loyal hunters of the forest have never driven into the forest and I would expect all other parties to follow suit. Exception for ACWD to drive in to service the bio field and sprinkler field which is a necessary routine. No to Nuveen. The constant vehicle traffic had a major impact on the wildlife most notable in the first week of November the slaughter of hundreds of Salamanders and Newts migrating across gravel roads; And pushing Deer and Elk herds out of their natural habitat. Thank you
- Yes
- Watershed should also be considered sensitive
- Yes
- Yes
- I marked that I'm an Arch Cape resident because the Post Office says so. My physical residence is in Cove Beach. If you consider being a ratepayer in the Arch Cape Water District a requirement to weigh in, I don't qualify. Otherwise, I'm a long-time contributor to NCLC, and I secured Clatsop County General Fund support of \$250,000 to help buy the property. And many Federal dollars helped buy the property. Who "owns" it? Protecting it by establishing sidebars and consequences is essential.
- Yes, I don't see anything missing
- Yes
- My concern is lumping research and education together as one issue that has impact on damaged plants, erosion, etc. Research and Education should be listed as separate issues. Education can be a tour of a small group of individuals or as large as school busses filled with children to go on an "educational hike". Research is conducted by professionals in their specific field with one of the goals being restoration and preservation and sponsored by their city, state, government or university, and does not involve huge groups of people.
- That the management of the Forest Watershed be managed by forestry professionals not the manager of the water system and his staff. This should be funded separately from the budget for the water system infrastructure and maintenance.
- Yes
- Yes
- Yes

Question 4: Do you feel the public access objectives for the Arch Cape Forest support the overarching forest goals as outlined in the Multi-Resource Management Plan? If no: Which objectives are inconsistent with the overarching goals for the Arch Cape Forest and why?



Two respondents who answered “yes” provided comments as follows:

- Good job on this revised / updated public access plan. This was not an easy document to produce and I’m grateful for all the hard work that went into the process – outreach, listening, synthesizing, etc. This is a special place, with a diverse user group, and I believe the net result is a fair and balanced access plan for all stakeholders. Thank you.
- I’m glad to see that this process is finally close to completion. It’s been a long, long road. Thank you to the RTCA program and especially to Julie Fonseca de Borges and Anne Dove for their guidance in bringing the community to this level of success. The Arch Cape community could never have achieved this level of professionalism without their work. Special thanks top to the North Coat Land Conservancy for their partnership in the process.

For those who responded “no”, the following open-ended responses are included below:

- Cultural indigenous use is not specified

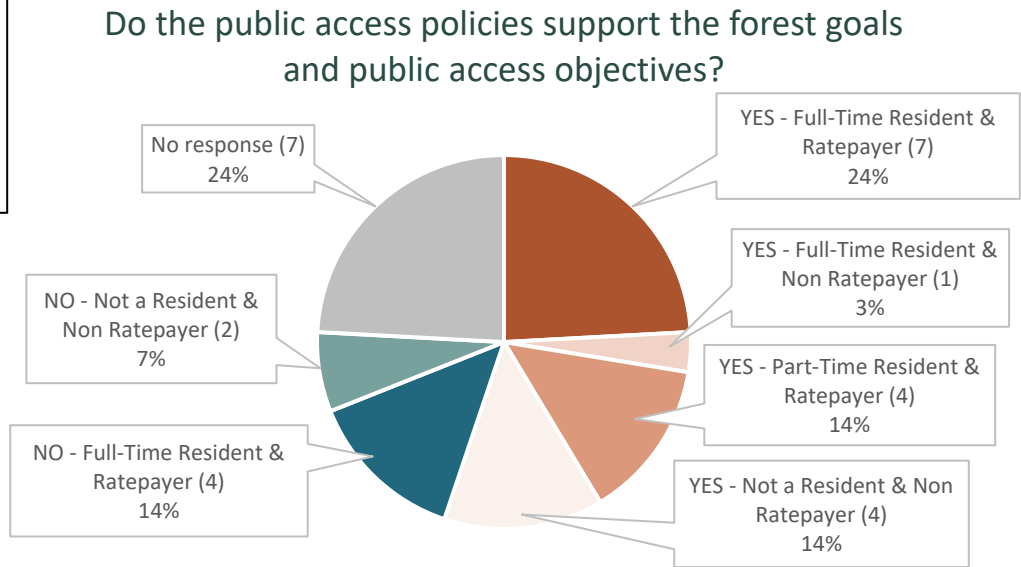
Question 5: What, if any, objectives are missing and should be added?

This was an open-ended question; the following were the responses provided:

- The details of monitoring impacts matter greatly. Consequences and adaptive management are essential to maintaining forest health and achieving the goals of this plan. A group to do that monitoring in a way that is both welcoming and effective is the dynamic tension to balance and harmonize.
- This section is well done. Thank you! Pg 64: This does not seem feasible or needed "Exclude public access within 25 ft. of any stream with the exception of access along maintained roads." There are too many streams and off road use is very limited. There is not a problem with this now. Maybe limit access to Shark and Asbury Creek main stems, if anything. This one is all we need: "Where roads cross creeks, assess conditions to identify need for barriers to keep the public out of the creek corridors; where intervention is needed, maintain vegetation buffers between road edges and creeks where there are road drainage crossings to deter the public from leaving the roads to access the creeks; where vegetation buffers are not practical or conflict with other management goals, consider physical barriers such as fencing or railing." Pg 65: "Provide information about policies, rules, safety, etc. at the Hug Point Road entrance to the Arch Cape Forest" this info should not be on the highway/at the gate, but up a ways where the current kiosk is in order to not draw more people.
- Stress that all of the Forest be open to public recreation as long as people stay on hard scape roads.
- E-bikes should not be allowed. They endanger hikers, riders, and wildlife and detract greatly from the enjoyment of hiking the forest.
- Work with adjoining land managers to create a trail system that meets the objectives.

Question 6: Do you feel the public access policies for the Arch Cape Forest support the overarching forest goals and the public access objectives? If No: Which policies are inconsistent with the overarching forest goals and public access objectives and why?

Responses :
 Yes – 16 (55%)
 No – 6 (21%)
 No response – 7 (24%)



Four respondents who answered “yes” provided comments as follows:

- But what about maintaining the roads for fire safety? Maybe I just missed it. This was a long and complicated document! Congratulations and thanks for all your hard work in developing it.
- I would like to see the hunting regulation state that only deer and elk may be hunted and retain mention of no trapping. The present policy prohibits predator hunting so this restriction will not be a policy change impacting hunters. The definition of a predator is not intuitive to non-hunters (for example rabbits and birds). A policy more easily understood by hunters and non-hunters is to state that only deer and elk may be hunted. Should we have a problem with any animal we can alter the hunting policy when required.
- I think these are very good overall. I'm disappointed that it took so long to get here and that "NIMBYS" wasted so much time delaying the process. I do think a greater focus could have been made on inclusion during this process, but I know firsthand that this is not the Arch Cape community's strength, nor are they trying to get there.
- Good job on this revised / updated public access plan. This was not an easy document to produce and I'm grateful for all the hard work that went into the process – outreach, listening, synthesizing, etc. This is a special place, with a diverse user group, and I believe the net result is a fair and balanced access plan for all stakeholders. Thank you.

For those who responded “no”, the following open-ended responses are included below:

- Predator hunting should be allowed on the Rainforest Reserve. It was bought with public money.

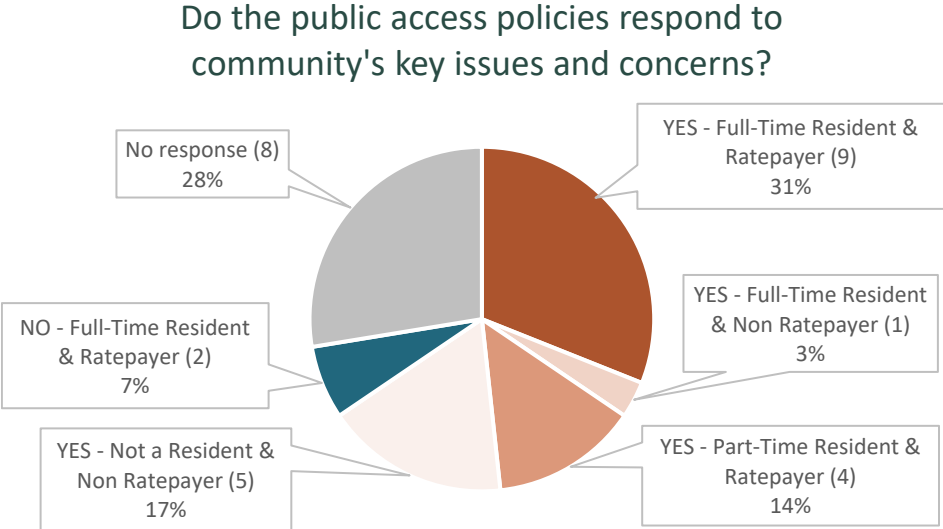
- We are in a new era of environmental concern. Hunting should NOT be allowed due to increased fire risk. Allowing hunting is a legacy policy that is not applicable anymore due to our thin maritime strip with housing located too close to the mountains. If this feedback is ignored, then limit only to deer and elk. Scientific research should be allowed in sensitive areas via permission. Limit foraging to berry picking with a one-gallon limit per person. Bicycle and e-bikes roads should be monitored first year, then excluded the following year if new trails are discovered. Why? We know that humans take advantages of their privileges, especially if they notice there is no monitoring. The public access policy as is, is too liberal.
- Ebikes encourage our watershed to be utilized by more people, easily, in a sensitive watershed area. The forum in April summary lists MANY more concerns than benefits. Certainly, in an emergency situation, if an Ebike is necessary, then that is the exception, but otherwise, the community and myself see ebikes as a majority of no ebikes. It's strange to me that it slipped in there as a recreational use, when after more than one survey, including the April meeting shows clearly that we do not as a community majority, want them. I do not see " an additional recreation opportunity" for fishing as a benefit. It is a concern just as drawing more people than absolutely necessary into our WATERSHED is a concern. The concerns outweigh the benefits on fishing as well on the April meeting survey, and again how did this become a yes for use?
- If hunting is going to be allowed, District must ban ammunition like lead and other metals that are harmful to water quality.
- See previous comment on e-bikes [E-bikes should not be allowed. They endanger hikers, riders, and wildlife and detract greatly from the enjoyment of hiking the forest.]
- Predator hunting should be allowed on the Rainforest Reserve. It was bought with public money.

One respondent answered neither "yes" or "no", but provided the following open-ended responses are included below (note this response was tallied as a "no" for the purposes of quantifying responses):

- Yes to all, with the exception of limited hunting to deer and elk only.

Question 7: Do you feel the public access policies for the Arch Cape Forest are responsive to the key issues and concerns raised from the community? If No: Which policies are inconsistent with the key issues and concerns shared by the community and why?

Responses:
 Yes – 19 (67%)
 No – 2 (7%)
 No response – 7 (28%)



Three respondents who answered “yes” provided comments as follows:

- The Arch Cape Forest land should remain open to hiking unless temporary closure due to fire or logging activities is required. The land has been open since prior to the 1960s when I began hiking in the hills behind Arch Cape. The low number of hikers have never caused a negative impact to our drinking water. The only problem with water production has been due to logging near streams. Restricting access to the drinking water source area is not required and would remove access to nearly all the land.
- I wish the community was more inclusive. This is not a place I feel good about celebrating.
- Good job on this revised / updated public access plan. This was not an easy document to produce and I’m grateful for all the hard work that went into the process – outreach, listening, synthesizing, etc. This is a special place, with a diverse user group, and I believe the net result is a fair and balanced access plan for all stakeholders. Thank you. [Note: this respondent provided the same response for the previous question]

For those who responded “no”, the following open-ended responses are included below:

- The public access policy as is, is too liberal. Examples are hunting, foraging, e-bikes and bikes are allowed. People take advantage of their privileges. I have seen people on the Arch Cape beach who are fishing for commercial purposes. I know of a basketry organization coming from Portland that stripped the sweetgrass from an area in Tillamook. I am aware of a person who makes his living giving multiple classes every summer via a Portland organization on how to forage seaweed and other edibles from tidal pools. Having said that, I do not want Arch Cape/Falcon Cove residents restricted from walking through the Arch Cape Forest. I want all the land open for hiking including the source water area for Arch Cape/Falcon Cove residents.

- For the reasons I stated in the last question. Ebikes encourage our watershed to be utilized by more people, easily, in a sensitive watershed area. The forum in April summary lists MANY more concerns than benefits. Certainly in an emergency situation, if an ebike is necessary, then that is the exception, but otherwise, the community and myself see ebikes as a majority of no ebikes. It's strange to me that it slipped in there as a recreational use, when after more than one survey, including the April meeting shows clearly that we do not as a community majority, want them. I do not see "an additional recreation opportunity" for fishing as a benefit. It is a concern just as drawing more people than absolutely necessary into our WATERSHED is a concern. The concerns outweigh the benefits on fishing as well on the April meeting survey, and again how did this become a yes for use?]

One respondent answered neither "yes" or "no", but provided the following open-ended responses are included below (note this response was included in the tally as a "no response" to "yes or no"):

- I'm hesitant about collecting of plants and possibility of commercial mushroom hunting, poaching etc.

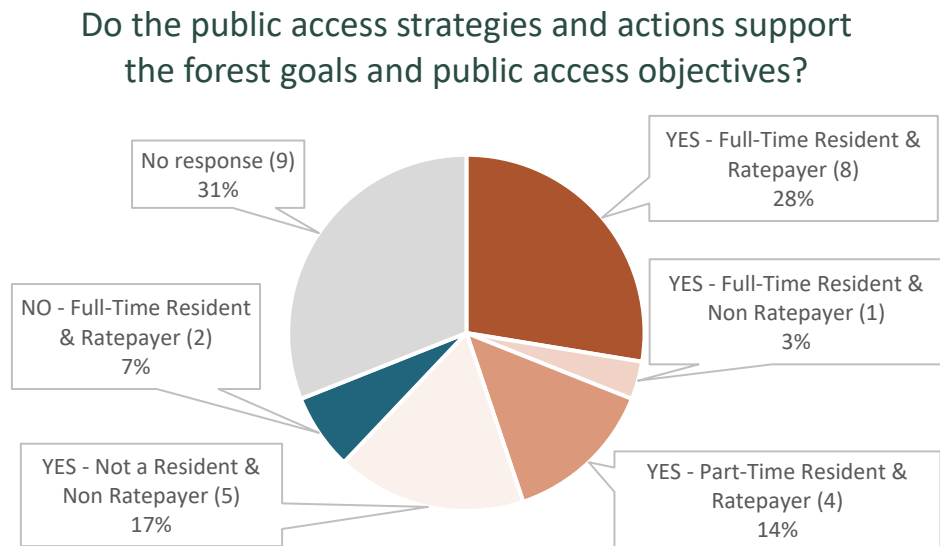
Question 8: What, if any, public access policies are missing and should be added?

This was an open-ended question; the following were the responses provided:

- Unrestricted hunting on the Rainforest Reserve
- Winter recreation is not addressed.
- Do not lump education and research together in a public access policy. They should be separate. Allow education in small groups only, not a bus full of children or adults. Allow scientific research backed by a university or governmental organization, limit number of people. Allow public access to all lands by Arch Cape/Falcon Cove residents who want to hike through the forest, including the water source area.
- I've had jobs regulating human behavior. Developing policies, educating the public, then monitoring, but finally, consequences that promote the best and deal with the worst make the difference in achieving stated policy goals. Good luck!
- As long as there is periodic review of the effects of the public access, negative consequences should be minimized
- Since the District is concerned with the ecological health of the property, the District should not allow predator hunting. Predators are needed to keep the forest balanced.
- I think that hunting should be limited to elk and deer only. No smoking should be allowed due to fire risk. No recreational fires.
- No predator hunting
- You've done a very good job of making a comprehensive plan.

Question 9: Do you feel the public access strategies and actions for the Arch Cape Forest support the overarching forest goals and the public access objectives? If No: Which strategies and actions are inconsistent with the overarching forest goals and public access objectives and why?

Responses:
 Yes – 18 (62%)
 No – 2 (7%)
 No response – 9 (31%)



For those who responded “no”, the following open-ended responses are included below:

- I think the public access policies are too liberal and are based upon old legacy activities that are no longer applicable due to our current environmental situation of limited resources, our restricting location, overcrowding, climate change, fire risk, erosion, over development, reduction of our lands to monocultures which is susceptible to disease, and stripping of our lands by foraging.
- Is this the same question as above? I am not sure what this means, but generally speaking, I have never felt that our watershed protection should be driven by a recreational use theme. It is best suited for no disturbance beyond the absolutely necessary tasks to keep our watershed pristine, and undisturbed.

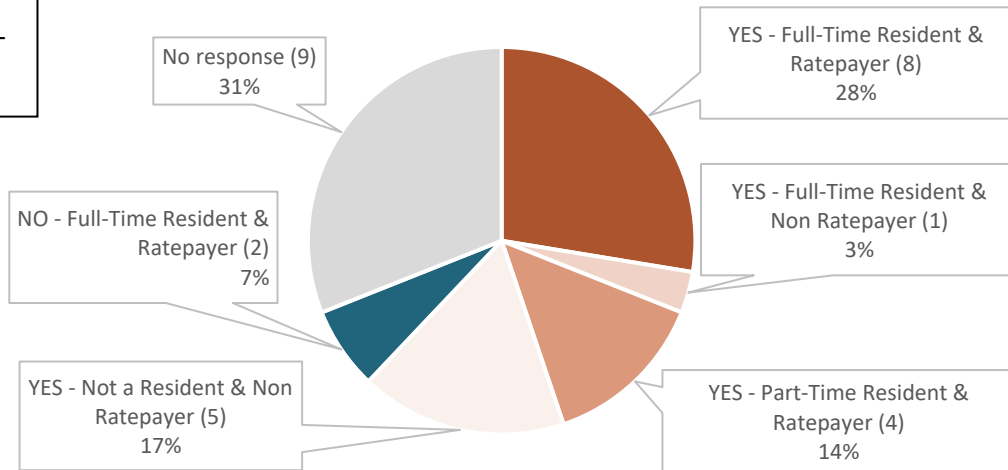
One respondent answered neither “yes” or “no”, but provided the following open-ended responses are included below (note this response was included in the tally as a “no response” to “yes or no”):

- Is this access require permit? Permits would help generate revenue to sustain the forest and limit people

Question 10: Do you feel the public access strategies and actions for the Arch Cape Forest are responsive to the key issues and concerns raised from the community? If No: Which strategies and actions are inconsistent with the goals and public access objectives and why?

Responses :
 Yes – 18 (62%)
 No – 2 (7%)
 No response – 9 (31%)

Are the public access strategies and action responsive to the community's key issues and concerns?



One respondent who answered “yes” provided comments as follows:

- Who "belongs" in the space? As a Cove Beach resident, do I belong? Who decides? How are the limits to access defined and enforced?

For those who responded “no”, the following open-ended responses are included below:

- My understanding is that many want public access to be closed. Many want public access open. Instead of making a black or white decision, it makes better sense to keep public access open, but with restrictions. Do not follow public access legacy policies. Keep public access open for low impact activities such as hiking and forest bathing (shinrin-yoku), restrict foraging to one gallon of berries for personal use, no mushroom foraging (too destructive), no foraging for ferns or moss, no dogs off leash, no dogs on leash, no dogs at all, no hunting except for a one-week period. Allow scientific research. Allow education in small groups, not to exceed 10 people. No advertising except by special invitation.
- Not totally. In part, yes.

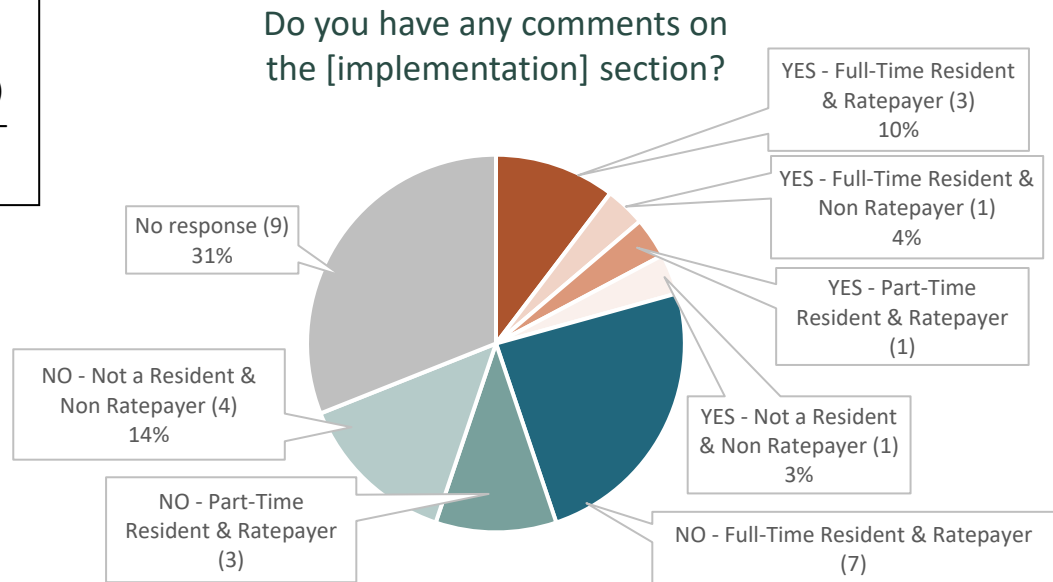
Question 11: What, if any, strategies and actions are missing and should be added?

This was an open-ended question; the following were the responses provided:

- Hunting should not be allowed except for special permits where it has been determined by professionals that there is an over population of deer and elk. Then the open season should be restricted to 1 week or whatever the professional determines. This should be limited to deer and elk only. It would be nice to be able to go to a local forest in the fall where I do not have to fear being shot by a stray bullet. 2) Please add berry picking to be the only foraging activity allowed with a one-gallon limit. 3) Please add for keeping all land open for hiking including the water sources area to Arch Cape/Falcon Cove residents. 4) Please allow scientific research in sensitive areas by permission only.
- Permits required with fee
- Dealing with monitoring and responding with kindness and effectiveness.
- I have heard that some want to close the drinking watershed to public access. I am absolutely against this idea. We do not have a problem with access now. If there are real issues in the future, changes could be considered. But for now, the rules laid out in this document are excellent.
- Again, hunting for deer and elk only
- plastic bag dispensers for dog feces should be provided at trail heads as well as trash barrels for their disposal. Otherwise, some dog owners will not pick up after their dogs while some will toss filled bags into the brush.
- Inclusion was missing all along, by no fault of the staff or consultants of the ACDWSD. The majority of this project was funded by federal money. It is deplorable that this community attempted to extinguish the opportunity for others outside of Arch Cape to experience this magnificent landscape.
- Due to the high demand for hiking and biking, it may be a good idea to partner with organizations such as Trail Keepers of Oregon to develop and maintain trails that meet the plans other objectives.

Question 12: Do you have any comments on this section [implementation]? *If Yes: Please provide comments in the space below.*

Responses:
 Yes – 6 (21%)
 No – 14 (48%)
 No response – 9 (31%)



For those who responded “yes”, the following open-ended responses are included below:

- Looks great. I agree about the monitoring and collection of data to establish a baseline and future changes, and the use of volunteers.
- You seem to have anticipated what needs to happen. Did you ever consider how maintaining the financial health of the Forest may impact future policies.
- I would like to ensure the residents have access via Shingle Mill Rd. It would be nice to be able to walk into the forest without driving to one of the primary gates.
- It is critical that we continue to have both a project manager and forester under contract to implement the Forest and Access Plans well. District staff and volunteers are not enough. They can help raise funds and manage needed projects. We also have to have positive relationships with our neighboring landowners and partners. It is critical that this be a priority going forward.
- The limited parking available may serve to reduce the impact of hikers.

One respondent answered neither “yes” or “no”, but provided the following open-ended responses are included below (note this response was included in the tally as a “no response” to “yes or no”):

- I feel this is a well thought out plan and depending on the community's overall water and sewer department needs and budget, and staff availability, and potential grants, that running the sanitary plant and water system and getting it back in working order (it took a hit for the last few years) takes a priority over some of the idealistic aspects to the public access plan.

Please use the space below to share any additional comments about *the Draft Public Access Management Plan for the Arch Cape Forest.*

This was an open-ended question; the following were the responses provided:

- Please continue keeping all the land open for hiking by Arch Cape/Falcon Cove residents including sensitive areas and the water source area.
- Thanks so much. Well done!
- My comment is not about the Plan so much as the format of this survey. WAY to complicated. Every response is dependent on combining several, sometimes conflicting concepts so to give simple answers is not simple. I started a couple times and then my text disappeared... frustrating.
- I think it is well drafted and I'm appreciative of all the efforts of everyone to complete it. I'm a new homeowner in Arch Cape and am excited by the protection of our water source, but also appreciate seeing the positive discussion regarding public access. I would like to keep it our little secret though!
- Good work Arch Cape! I feel that the process for developing this public access plan included the Arch Cape community. There were plenty of opportunities to be engaged and this plan reflects what the community wants.
- Thanks to the NPS staff, partners and community members who worked on this excellent plan! I look forward to it being completed this fall and implementation to begin. I plan to hike, bike, and forage in the Forest with my family for many years to come. Thanks to the former ACDWSD Board members, committee members, partners, funders and donors who made it possible to buy our community forest.
- I believe hunting for grouse, quail and brush rabbits should be allowed.
- A section on the geology of the AC Forest would be appropriate. Understanding the geologic controls of landsliding and stream erosion is important for planning and informing the public.
- Very comprehensive. I had hoped to see a component of removing the thick timber cover and re-establishing the historic habit on Onion Peak and Angora, and also to develop a carefully controlled trail to the top of Onion that allows access in a controlled way and prevents damage.

Comments Submitted via Individual Letter & Email Message

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW)

“Dear Arch Cape Water and Sanitary Districts Board of Directors and North Coast Land Conservancy:

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the public access planning process, review the draft public access plan and provide comments. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) agency mission is to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations. In 2018, ODFW completed a strategic plan where one of the five identified focal issues was public access. Additionally, public access is critical to ODFW's ability to effectively manage wildlife at optimum levels.

Allowing hunting access on the Arch Cape Community Forest serves several important purposes: it retains recreational access that has been historically allowed, allows for management of wildlife populations at optimum levels, and provides avenues for landowners to elect for enhanced enforcement by the Oregon State Police Fish and Wildlife Division (OSP) through ODFW's Access and Habitat Program. Hunting is a useful tool to keep elk populations at levels that help maintain forest health and keep conflicts with people in residential areas at a minimum. This is not only true for ungulates, but for bear and cougar as well. Continuing public recreational hunting access will also allow an opportunity for cooperating landowners to join the North Coast Travel Management Area which will provide the added OSP presence and enforcement referenced above. Thank you for following ODFW's recommendation to allow hunting access in accordance with ODFW big game regulations.

Restricting predator hunting on the Rainforest Reserve presents some key issues to ODFW's wildlife management mandates. Local wildlife biologists are seeing bear and cougar complaints become more prevalent including just to the south in Manzanita and north in Seaside. These complaints often stem from public safety issues when these species are around dwellings. Taking away opportunities for people to pursue predators in the very controlled and regulated manner that currently exists, takes away tools for ODFW to help solve future public safety issues. Without the ability to send hunters to properties adjacent to where complaints are occurring, the problem is likely to increase resulting in increased public safety issues and often requires extreme reactive action by ODFW. Additionally, since the home ranges of both bears and cougars are bigger than these subject properties, restricting take is unlikely to result in significant changes to local populations. Please consider allowing public hunting access in accordance with ODFW big game regulations.

Sincerely,
Paul Atwood
District Wildlife Biologist
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
4907 Third Street
Tillamook, OR 97141”

Comments from a Member of the Public via Email

"Good job on this revised/ updated public access plan. This was not an easy document to produce and I'm grateful for all the hard work that went into the process - outreach, listening, synthesizing, etc. This is a special place, with a diverse user group, and I believe the net result is a fair and balanced access plan for all stakeholders. Thank you.

Also, small typo on page 5 - see screenshot below [page 5, list of Advisory Team members] . Pretty sure the drafter meant Kevin Brownlee, not Kevin Brown (which could be especially confusing given Mr. Brown is the District Manager for Nuveen)."