

Sustainability Survey Analysis

2025

ROOST



Project background and methodology

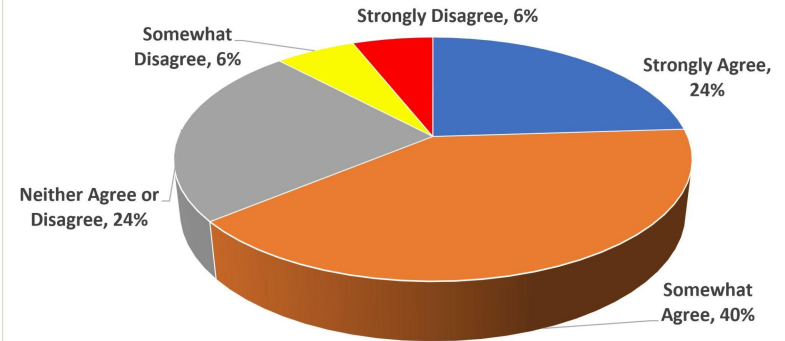
- The Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) has focused on the sustainability of its tourism assets across Essex and Hamilton counties and the villages of Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake Region in New York state. The agency has, for more than 20 years, commissioned a study to determine visitor information at the county levels and to gauge key regional marketing program statistics.
- ROOST contracted with PlaceMaking, a regional community and economic development firm, to complete this research. ROOST sent a jointly developed survey tool to a sample of its 2025 leisure visitors to the region. Visitors completed an online survey (via email) with responses compiled from visitors who spent most of their time in this portion of the Adirondack region.
- For the fourth consecutive year, ROOST administered an additional brief survey to ascertain opinions and perceptions about sustainability relative to their travel decisions. The survey asked these 2025 visitors to indicate the level of importance of sustainability concerns to their travel decisions. Those who responded that it was a “strong concern” or “somewhat of a concern” completed an additional set of questions.
- Over 1,000 (1,042) more “sustainability minded” respondents answered these questions which is an increase over the 989 responses received from 2024 visitors. The results of this accompanying survey are outlined below.

Importance of sustainability in planning a trip

Perceived Importance of Sustainability to Travel Decision

- ROOST asked these survey respondents how important sustainability factors are when they plan a trip. Nearly one out of four visitors (24%) “strongly agree” that sustainability is an important consideration, with 40% noting that they “agree” that it is important.

Figure 1. Importance of Sustainability to Travel Choice

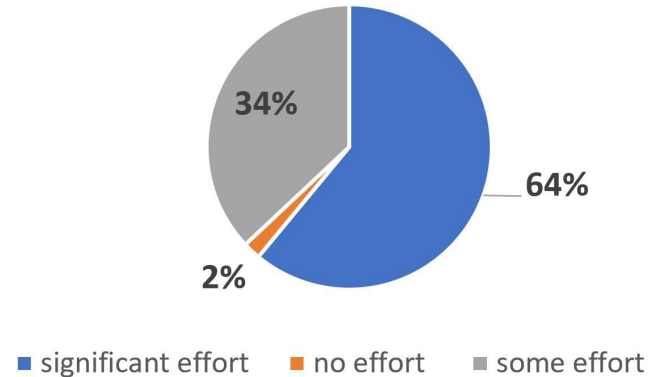


Perceived sustainability of the Adirondacks as a destination (Environmental)

- The survey asked respondents about perceived levels of efforts made by the region in these sub-categories: social, economic, and environmental sustainability.
- Perceived efforts regarding **environmental** sustainability increased slightly among 2025 respondents compared to the prior two years (increase from 62% to 64% noting “significant” efforts).

Perceived Efforts For Sustainability (Environmental)

Figure 2. Perceived Efforts Made for Environmental Sustainability

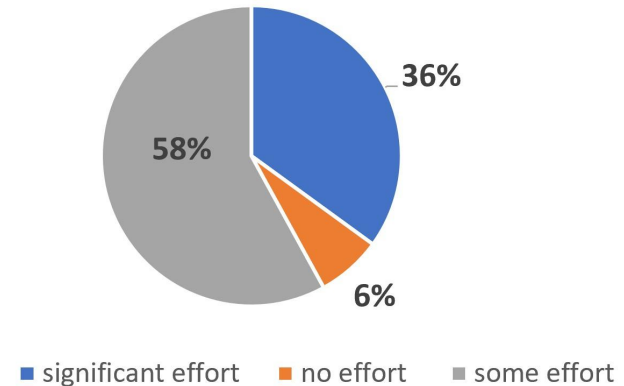


Perceived sustainability of the Adirondacks as a destination (Economic)

- The survey asked respondents about perceived levels of efforts made by the region in these sub-categories: social, economic, and environmental sustainability.
- Respondents' perceptions of **economic** sustainability efforts remained consistent for the past two years.

Perceived Efforts For Sustainability (Economic)

Figure 3. Perceived Efforts for Economic Sustainability

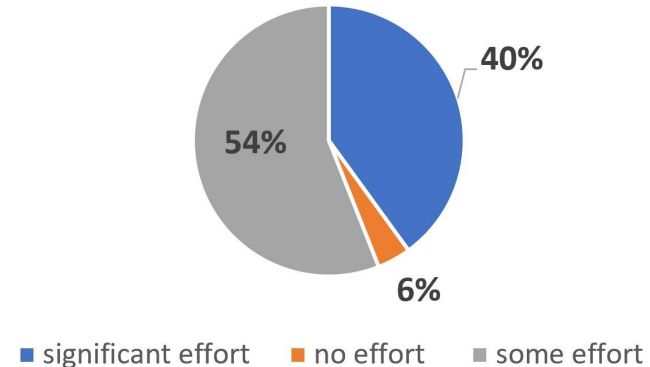


Perceived sustainability of the Adirondacks as a destination (Social)

- The survey asked respondents about perceived levels of efforts made by the region in these sub-categories: social, economic, and environmental sustainability.
- Perceived efforts toward **social** sustainability demonstrated change from the prior two years, with an increase in those noting “significant” efforts in this area (from 35% to 40%).

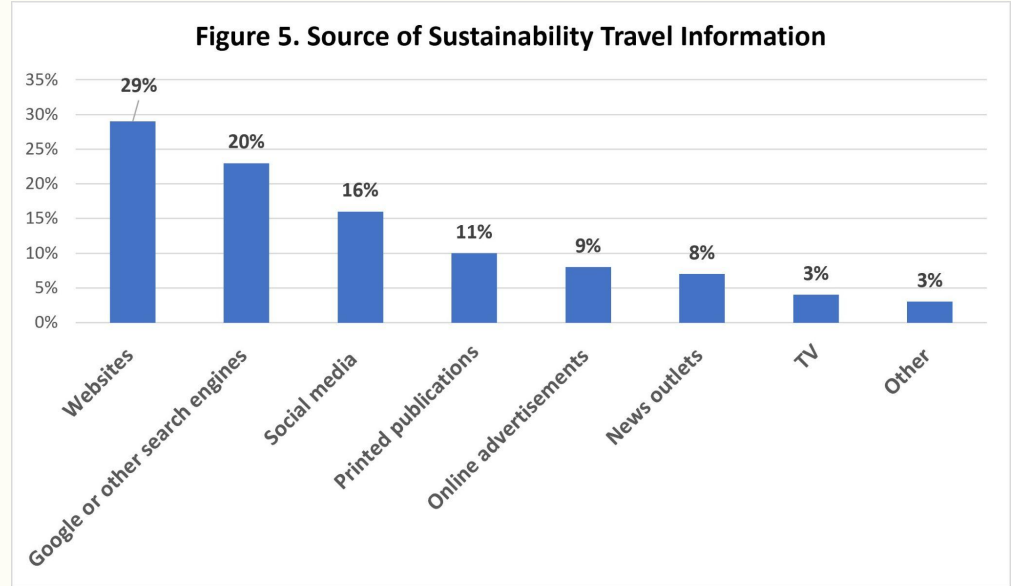
Perceived Efforts For Sustainability (Social)

Figure 4. Perceived Efforts for Social Sustainability of Adirondacks



Travel information

- The survey asked visitors and potential visitors where they typically find their information about the sustainability of a destination, permitting multiple responses. Figure 5 depicts the distribution of responses by source.



Websites Used for Travel Information

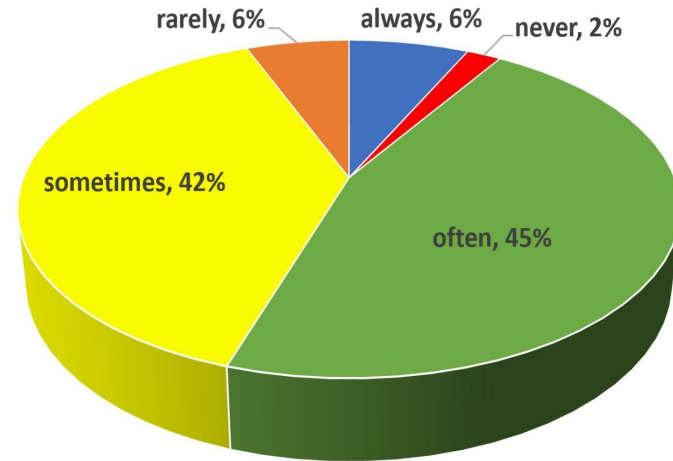
- The survey asked respondents what types of websites they most used to gather travel information.
- The table here depicts the responses by percentage

Choice	% of Respondents
Destination websites (e.g., LakePlacid.com, AdirondacksUSA.com)	33%
Travel websites	21%
Local government websites	11%
Online booking sites (Expedia, Airbnb)	11%
Travel blogs	9%
Sustainable travel websites	7%
Business websites	6%
Other	1%

Influence of sustainability practices

- The survey asked respondents how often a company's sustainability practices influenced their purchasing decisions. Figure 6 depicts these responses.
- More than ninety percent (93%) of respondents indicate that sustainability at least "sometimes" affects purchase decisions. The proportion of those responding that this is "often" a consideration increased from 42% to 45% of responses and "sometimes" dropped from 45% to 42%. Otherwise, these responses remained consistent from the prior two years.

Figure 6. How Often Does a Company's Sustainability Practices Influence Your Purchases?



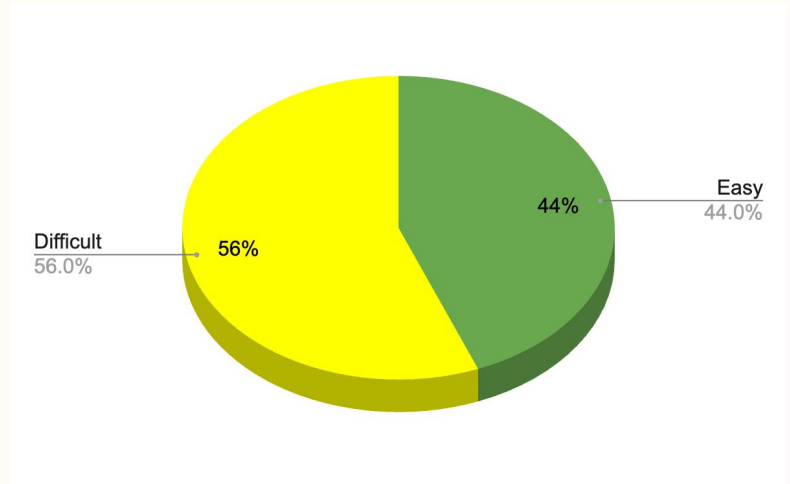
Impacts on Traveling Decisions by Sustainability Practices

- The survey asked respondents to select from a list of provided sustainability practices they “looked for” when planning a vacation destination. Respondents selected as many factors as applicable.
- The list presents results from the most common to least common selections of the top responses (which were selected by nearly half or more respondents to this question). The number of responses received for each category are provided in parentheses.

Choice	% of Respondents
Restaurants in the region buy from local suppliers	76.3%
Businesses in the region support the local economy	75.3%
Businesses sell local artisan products and services	70.6%
Funds generated by tourism are used for the improvement of the local community	66.8%
Businesses in the area founded by residents (new)	59.9%
An effort to reduce single use plastics	57.5%
Businesses in the region give back to the community through work with charities	55.6%
Plans to manage hiking traffic and limit impacts on trails	53.0%
Restaurants focusing on reducing food waste	51.3%
Choosing road trips over airlines and cruises	51.3%
Public transportation to popular attractions	48.1%
Businesses using renewable sources of energy	47.3%
Filtered refill stations for reusable water bottles	46.7%
Businesses donate to local nonprofits	44.3%
Lodging and restaurants partnering with local compost producers	37.7%
Use of environmentally safe snow removal practices	34.5%
Bicycles rentals available as a means of transportation	31.2%
The ability to donate money to support environmental efforts in the region	30.7%
Availability of electric vehicle charging stations	13.1%
Zoning restrictions to prohibit short term rentals	12.0%
The option to pay extra to offset carbon emissions	7.9%
Access to electric scooters	7.7%
Other	3.1%

Ease of finding information on sustainability

- The survey asked respondents about the ease of finding information about the sustainability of a travel destination. A slight majority of respondents (56%) stated that it is “difficult” to find information, with the balance (44%) finding it “easy”.
- The proportion noting it is “easily found” increased slightly over that expressed in the prior year.



Conclusion

- Sustainability has been a cornerstone of ROOST for many years. This data collection and analysis mark the fourth year that a survey gauged visitor perceptions regarding sustainability. It is important to note that this data is not a random representation of visitors, but reflects responses by those who indicated that they were at least “somewhat” concerned about sustainability matters when traveling.
- High-ranking interests such as supporting small and local businesses in travel and noting recycling and responsible use of food waste position local connections and experiences. Green hotels, resorts, and experiences capture the growing interest in wellness tourism, which is a strengthening niche across the industry. The Adirondack region is well positioned to utilize sustainable practices as a marketing tool for individual and group markets.
- There are strong opportunities among sustainability minded visitors to leave the communities they visit in better condition than prior to their visit. Maximizing these impacts and potential will be worth considering in the future. Overall, this data provides valuable insights into visitor preferences regarding sustainability and specific areas of agency interests.