

# Sustainability Survey Analysis

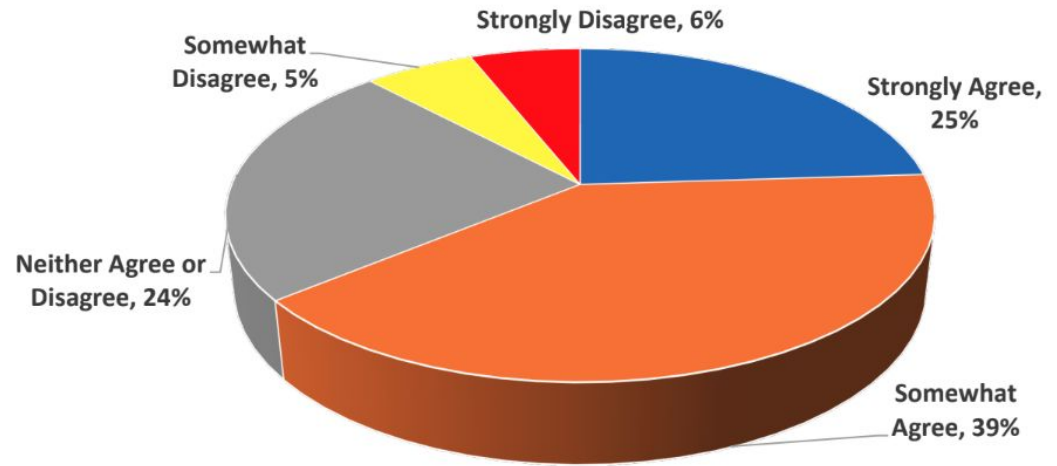


# Project background and methodology

- The Regional Office of Sustainable Tourism (ROOST) has long worked toward the sustainability of its tourism assets in Essex and Hamilton counties and the Saranac Lake and Tupper Lake Regions in New York state. In 2024, ROOST employed a survey to a sampling of those who inquired about travel to the region during the year and indicated that sustainability was at least somewhat important when planning a trip. The purpose of this survey was to ascertain visitor and potential visitor opinions and perceptions about sustainability relative to travel decisions.
- Nearly 1,000 “more sustainability minded” respondents responded to the survey. This is down from the nearly 1,500 who replied to this question from 2023 travel, however the complete respondent pool had declined somewhat as well.
- Just over half (54%) of these respondents report residing in New York state, compared to 67% from the full survey. Twelve percent (12%) of these respondents reported Canadian residence.

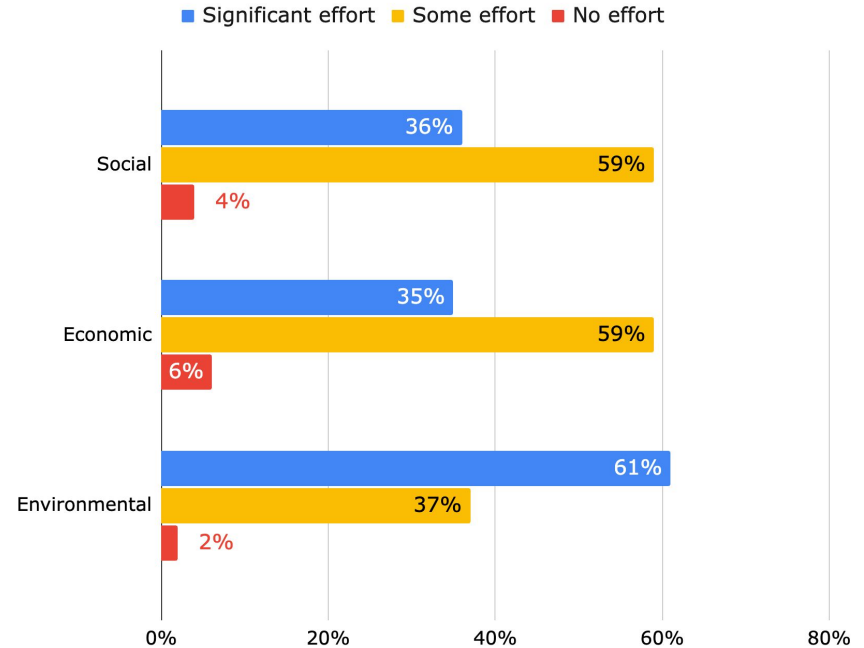
# Importance of sustainability in planning a trip

- Survey respondents were asked how important sustainability factors are when they plan a trip. More than one out of four visitors “strongly agree” that sustainability is an important consideration.
- Cumulatively, a strong majority (64%) positively support the importance of sustainability considerations in planning travel. This percentage has increased slightly over the last several years.



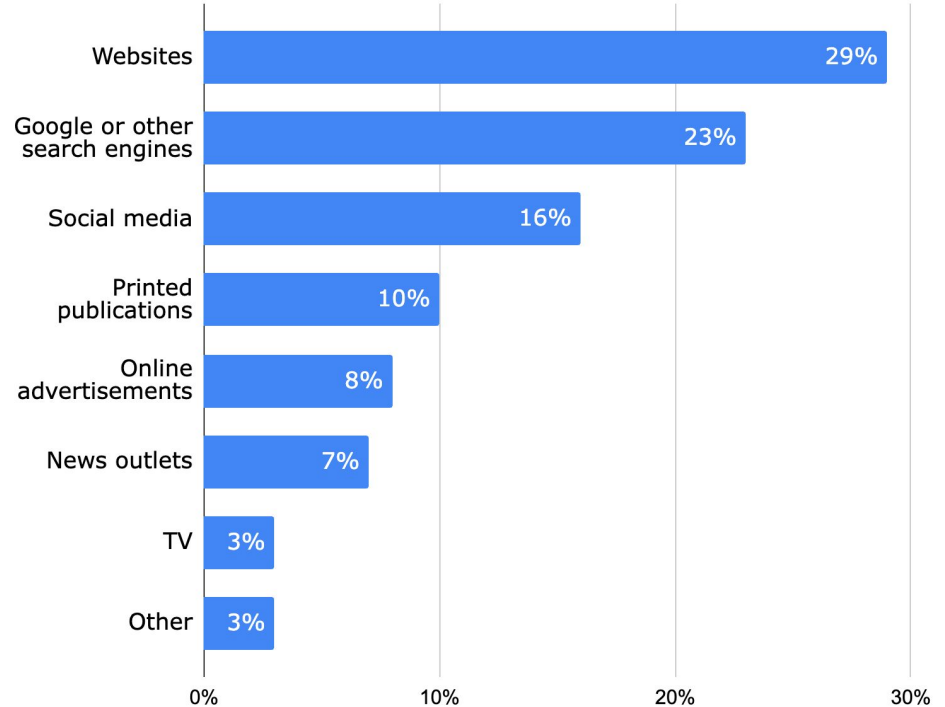
# Perceived sustainability of the Adirondacks as a destination

- The survey asked respondents the level of effort that they perceived in the region as a travel destination in three different categories: socially, economically, and environmentally.
- The environmental aspect of sustainability shows strongest perception, and remained consistent with 2023 data.



# Travel information

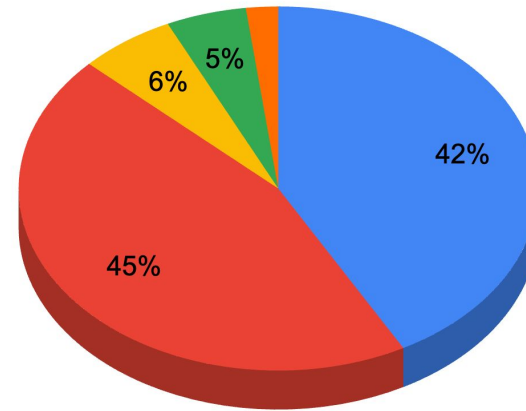
- The survey asked visitors and potential visitors where they typically find their information about the sustainability of a destination, permitting as many responses as applicable.
- The results have been consistent across the three years of data collection.



# Influence of sustainability practices

- The survey asked how often a company's sustainability practices influenced the respondent's decision to purchase from them.
- More than ninety percent (93%) of respondents indicate that sustainability at least "sometimes" affects purchase decisions. This is the same proportion as replied positively to this question in 2023.

● Often  
● Sometimes  
● Always  
● Rarely  
● Never





# Impacts on traveling decisions by possible sustainability factors/actions

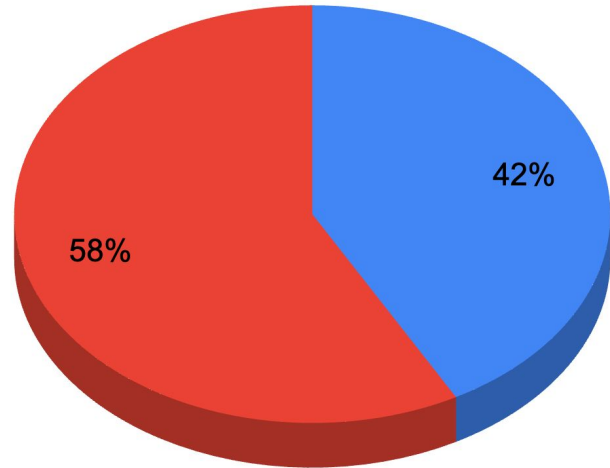
- The survey asked respondents to check from a list of sustainability practices that they “looked for” when planning a vacation destination. Respondents were allowed to select as many that applied.
- Two of these are new to the “top 5” most selected interests in comparison to data from the prior year. They include a reduction of single use plastics (from #6 to #3) and businesses that give back to the community through work with local charities (from #8 to #5).

Sustainable Practice	% Respondents
Restaurants in the region buy from local suppliers	93%
Businesses sell local artisan products and services	68%
An effort to reduce single use plastics	58%
Businesses in the region support the local economy	56%
Businesses in the region give back to the community through work with local charities	54%
Restaurants focusing on reducing food waste	51%
Plans to manage hiking traffic and limit impacts on trails	51%
Choosing road trips over airlines and cruises	51%
Public transportation to popular attractions	47%
Filtered refill stations for reusable water bottles-	47%
Businesses using renewable sources of energy	45%
Businesses donate to local nonprofits	35%
Lodging and restaurants partnering with local compost producers	34%
Bicycles rentals available as a means of transportation	33%
Use of environmentally safe snow removal practices (e.g. avoiding the use of products with high salt concentrations)	32%
The ability to donate money to support environmental efforts in the region	30%
Availability of electric vehicle charging stations	13%
Zoning restrictions to prohibit short term rentals	10%
None	5%
Other	2%

# Ease of finding information on sustainability

- Respondents were asked if it is “easy” or “difficult” to find information about the sustainability of a travel destination. A slight majority of respondents (58%) stated that it is “difficult” to find information, with the balance (42%) finding it “easy”.
- Those responding that this information is difficult to find increased by 2% from the prior year, back to the level expressed by 2022 respondents.

● Easy  
● Difficult





# Conclusion

- While sustainability has been a focus within ROOST for many years, this is the third year that a survey was conducted to gauge information specific to visitor perceptions regarding sustainability. The data provides interesting indications of priorities.
- Green hotels, resorts, and experiences capture the growing interest in wellness tourism, which is a strengthening niche across the industry. The Adirondack region is extremely well poised to utilize sustainable practices as a marketing tool for individual and group markets.
- Travel experts emphasize that sustainability is a growing concern expressed by an increasing proportion of visitors. This baseline data is useful in moving forward with a better understanding of visitor preferences and to monitor and concentrate on specific areas of interest in future years.