



2019 Enhanced Visitation Evaluation

**Measurement of Visitors Traveling Through Reservations,
Participating in Recreational Visits and/or Attending Programs or Events
at Cleveland Metroparks Facilities**

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In 1993, Cleveland Metroparks began a systematic effort to estimate attendance at its reservations, golf courses, and Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. There are currently over 130 mechanical counters installed throughout the reservations. The meters assist in: 1) documenting the number of visits to reservations, 2) informing planning decisions related to signage and entrances, and 3) identifying general shifts in reservation usage as they occur.

Three types of visitation are measured for Cleveland Metroparks. These categories range from general to specific and are listed below:

- (1) **Visitor Occasions** represent the number of people *entering* Cleveland Metroparks reservations by vehicle, foot, or bicycle for any reason. Visitor Occasions include all of those who travel through the parks as well as those who visit the parks for recreational purposes.

Why do we track Visitor Occasions? While every person that travels through Cleveland Metroparks on a yearly basis may not stop for a “recreation” visit, we patrol, pave, repair, plow and otherwise maintain 100 miles of connecting parkways for public use. For this reason it is important that we understand how many visits occur on our properties on a yearly basis. In addition, it is beneficial from a sponsorship standpoint to know how many potential impressions could occur on our properties.

- (2) **Recreation Visits** Counts only include people who *park their vehicles, or arrive by foot/bicycle/in-line skate, etc.* to use the parks.
- (3) **Commuter/Scenic Driving Visits** represents the number of vehicles and visitors unaccounted for by Recreation Visits. They are estimated by taking the difference between Visitor Occasions and Recreation Visits.

Visitation Statistics by Category for 2019

Visitor Occasions (1)	49,308,743
Recreation Visits (2)	18,487,828
Commuter/Scenic Driving (3)	30,820,915

VISITOR OCCASIONS

Visitor Occasions are an estimate of the number of people entering Cleveland Metroparks, through major vehicular entrances, for any reason. These figures include both recreational and commuter traffic.

Method for Estimating Visitor Occasions

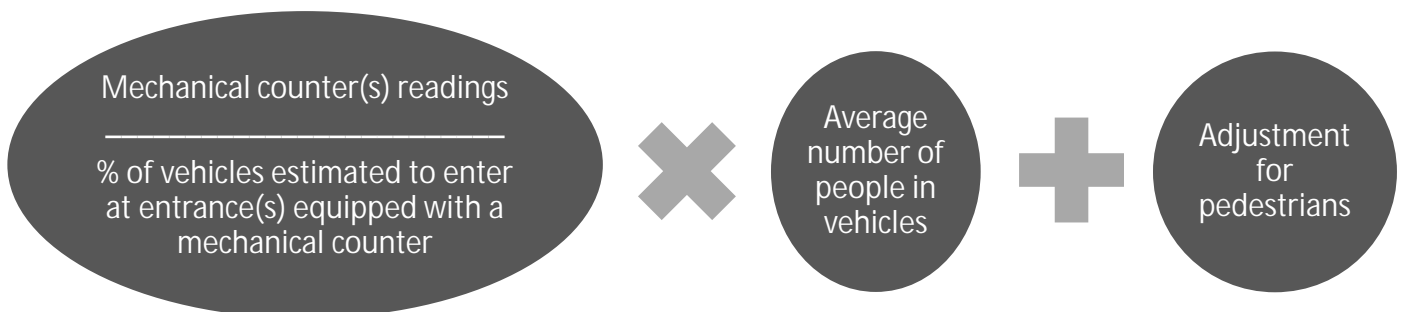
Typically, before installing a mechanical counter, attendance counter technicians count all traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, entering the reservations at major intersections for a full calendar year. The primary function of the counts are to determine the proportion of vehicles entering at each intersection and to compute a weight-based multiplier on the average number of passengers in these vehicles. Once a reservation has been counted for a full year by visual observation, mechanical counters can be installed and used with confidence.

Calibration of counters consist of...

- **estimating the percentage of motorized vehicles that enter through each roadway entrance for an entire reservation.** Attendance counters record the number of vehicles entering the reservation at all major entrances for one year. Vehicles already in the reservation are not counted. Once the proportion of vehicles entering the reservation through each entrance is known, a mechanical counter can be installed at entrances with the largest traffic flows to estimate use for the entire reservation.
- **estimating the average number of people in vehicles.** At the same time vehicles are being counted, visual observations are made of how many people are in each vehicle. A multiplier is calculated for each reservation. This figure is multiplied by the mechanical counter reading to estimate the total number of people entering the reservation each month.
- **estimating the percentage of people entering the reservation on foot, bicycle, in-line skates, etc.** Results from the In-Park User Survey conducted in 2010-2011 assisted in the creation of updated pedestrian adjustments. Pedestrian adjustments for reservations acquired after 2011 were created based off of other survey data collected (e.g., Lakefront Strategy Research) as well as visual observations.

Once visual counts are completed at a reservation, attendance estimations are made based on readings from the mechanical counters. At the end of each month, mechanical counter readings are recorded. These readings reflect the number of vehicles entering the reservation at a specific entrance. The reading is divided by the percentage of cars estimated to enter the reservation at that entrance and is then multiplied by the average number of people per vehicle. The total is the monthly attendance at that reservation.

Therefore, for each reservation, monthly attendance =



Since usage varies by season, percentages of cars entering each reservation entrance are calculated bi-monthly. Thus, January/February may have a different multiplier than March/April. The ability to estimate attendance using percentages for bi-monthly periods improves the accuracy of the estimates. Essentially, this is a control for seasonal and accompanying weather variations. Visual counts also control for differences between weekday and weekend usage. The last adjustment made is adding golf attendance for Seneca, Shawnee Hills, Sleepy Hollow and Manakiki to their respective reservations (Bedford, Brecksville and North Chagrin), as routes to these courses do not require entrance into the reservations.

Ongoing visual counts/observations are necessary to ensure the most up to date information is being used in the calculation of estimates. In 2019, visual observations occurred at the following reservations; Acacia, Big Creek, Brookside, Euclid Creek, Garfield Park, Ohio & Erie Canal, Lakefront, North Chagrin, Washington and West Creek. Observations were done to update various multipliers and weights (e.g., parking lot/entrance weights, persons per car multipliers).

Installation and maintenance of mechanical traffic counters in all reservations is an ongoing project. Estimates become more accurate as more mechanical traffic counters are installed and as additional visual counts are replicated. Approximately three percent of traffic counters will malfunction or be damaged each year. Having counters at several entrances in each reservation allows estimates to be made even if one unit malfunctions.

Results

During 2019, 49,308,743 individual visits were made to Cleveland Metroparks and Cleveland Metroparks Zoo. This represents an increase of 4% from 2018 (47,227,416).

RECREATION VISITS

People enter Cleveland Metroparks reservations for a variety of reasons. However, a basic distinction can be made between those who are commuting through the reservations to a destination outside the parks, and those seeking recreation, education or conservation opportunities within the reservation. Distinguishing between the two groups is difficult, since mechanical traffic counters cannot measure motivations, and treating commuters and recreationists as mutually exclusive groups is a questionable assumption.

In 1993 a systematic counting approach was implemented. Recreation visits were defined as those who park in a parking lot, or walk or bicycle into a reservation.

Method

Single Entrance Reservations

In estimating recreation visits, reservations with a single vehicular entrance are assumed to be used strictly for recreational purposes. The number entering in vehicles, plus an upward correction for pedestrians, produces the recreational visits. For these locations, recreational visit figures will be identical to visitor occasions. That is, 100% of those entering reservations with one entrance are assumed to be recreational visits.

Multiple Entrance Reservations

To estimate recreation visits for reservations with two or more entrances requires estimating the percentage of vehicles parking in each lot over a period of one year in bi-monthly periods. Once these percentages are known, a mechanical counter is installed in selected parking lots. Counts from these lots are then used to estimate the total number of recreation vehicles. For instance, if a year of observational counts indicates that 10 percent of all vehicles are parked at one parking area in a reservation, then a mechanical counter can be installed there. The monthly total for that parking lot is then divided by 0.10 to estimate total recreation vehicles for the entire reservation. The reservation specific multiplier is then applied to the total number of vehicles counted to estimate the number of people that came for a recreational visit.

Reservations vary greatly in the volume of pedestrians that walk, jog or bike in to each park. Location of the particular reservation as well as the number of access points makes this vary widely across the system. More detail on the pedestrian adjustment can be found on page 3.

Results

The recreation visitation total for 2019 was 18,487,828 visits. This represents an increase of 4% from 2018 (17,715,121).

Table 1. Visitor Occasions and Recreation Visits by Reservation

Reservation	2016	2017	2018	2019
Acacia				
Visitor Occasions	112,071	119,227	172,679 ^d	183,041 ^a
Recreation Visits	112,071	119,227	172,679 ^d	183,041 ^a
Bedford				
Visitor Occasions	798,151	760,728	693,512	766,529
Hawthorn Parkway ²	244,332	212,545	266,216	257,718
Recreation Visits	757,883	777,268	713,387 ^a	803,375
Big Creek				
Visitor Occasions	8,861,827	8,949,246	8,780,470	8,158,769
Recreation Visits	767,351	713,137	683,152	652,560 ^a
Bradley Woods				
Visitor Occasions	96,520	100,318	93,495	89,437
Recreation Visits	96,520	100,318	93,495	89,437
Brecksville				
Visitor Occasions ¹	1,331,088	1,222,751	1,276,900	1,475,662
Valley Parkway ²	3,159,594	3,059,440	3,241,987	3,956,211
Recreation Visits	1,428,082	1,545,419 ^a	1,508,748	1,519,074
Brookside				
Visitor Occasions	262,423	219,514	224,578	258,530 ^a
Recreation Visits	262,423	219,514	224,578	258,530 ^a
Euclid Creek				
Visitor Occasions	1,569,626	1,728,141	1,469,689	1,551,339
Recreation Visits	582,537	575,542	577,469	579,105 ^a
Garfield Park				
Visitor Occasions	2,223,875	2,129,787	1,971,412	1,995,089
Recreation Visits	413,622	387,665	348,050	381,485 ^{f a}
Hinckley				
Visitor Occasions	771,809	772,908	782,510 ^a	784,668
Recreation Visits	771,809	772,908	782,510 ^a	784,668
Huntington				
Visitor Occasions	993,064	992,350	914,381	928,447
Recreation Visits	755,486 ^c	818,288	777,609 ^a	828,949
Lakefront Reservation (Edgewater Park)				
Visitor Occasions	1,256,881	1,512,705	1,650,848	1,728,039 ^o
Recreation Visits	1,256,881	1,512,705	1,650,848	1,728,039 ^o
Lakefront Reservation (Whiskey Island/Wendy Park)				
Visitor Occasions	329,970	328,195	314,273	343,051
Recreation Visits	329,970	328,195	314,273	343,051
Lakefront Reservation (E. 55, E. 72, Nature Preserve)				
Visitor Occasions	855,721	868,461	839,179	970,093
Recreation Visits	855,721	868,461	839,179	970,093

Reservation	2016	2017	2018	2019
Lakefront Euclid Creek (Villa Angela/Wildwood/Euclid Beach)				
Visitor Occasions	454,635	463,470	477,135	483,916 ^a
Recreation Visits	454,635	463,470	477,135	483,916 ^a
Mill Stream Run				
Visitor Occasions	11,001,879	10,954,611	11,074,629	10,843,429 ^a
Recreation Visits	2,097,852	2,079,489 ^a	1,800,350 ^a	1,998,361
North Chagrin				
Visitor Occasions ¹	1,629,597	1,540,061	1,459,659	1,561,553
Recreation Visits	1,251,150	1,202,643	1,107,587	1,044,268 ^a
Ohio & Erie Canal				
Visitor Occasions	416,102	373,587	348,023	330,716 ^a
Recreation Visits	416,102	373,587 ^a	348,023	330,716 ^a
Rocky River				
Visitor Occasions	6,833,834	6,915,995	6,342,443	7,191,900
Recreation Visits	3,074,678	3,402,474	3,041,232	3,105,649
South Chagrin				
Visitor Occasions	602,915	652,729	602,527	1,143,855 ^v
Hawthorn Parkway ²	2,179,237	2,718,027	2,576,707	2,510,903
Recreation Visits	640,060	634,354	600,653	607,663
Washington				
Visitor Occasions ¹	141,423	165,176	150,967	155,798
Recreation Visits ¹	141,423	165,176	150,967	155,798
Merwin's Wharf Visitor Count	110,000	180,000	180,000	195,000
Water Taxi Riders	30,563	47,040	47,381	51,953
West Creek				
Visitor Occasions	134,792	176,798	156,902	158,129 ^a
Recreation Visits	134,792	176,798	156,902	158,129 ^a
Zoo and RainForest				
Total Ticketed/Non-Ticketed Attendance	1,023,608	1,042,564	1,118,914	1,234,968
Grand Total				
Total Visitor Occasions	47,425,537 ^d	48,206,374	47,227,416	49,308,743 ^v
Total Recreation Visits	17,765,219 ^d	18,506,242	17,715,121	18,487,828

¹ Includes golf course visits, estimated separately

² A separate Visitor Occasion estimate is provided for reservations with stretches of parkway outside the main body of the reservation, to estimate the number of visitors traversing the stretches of parkway

^a Updated weights for parking lots/entrances and/or persons per car multipliers

^b Not full year counts

^c Began counting visitors to the Wolf Picnic area which had previously not been accounted for

^d Additional meter placed to catch traffic from 2nd driveway entrance

^f Began counting visitors to the Mill Creek Falls Overlook area which had previously not been accounted for

^v Observations throughout 2018-2019 indicate a different entrance distribution, including park visitors entering through numerous other locations, thus, revealing a number of entrances that were previously unaccounted for

^o Added full year Battery Park Pedestrian Tunnel counts which had previously not been accounted for - EcoCounter

Table 2. Golf Visitation

Golf Division	2016	2017	2018	2019
Big Met				
Golfers @ 9 holes	63,373	58,189	56,049	58,890
Clubhouse Events	5,175	4,600	2,982	2,398
Non-golfers (incl. skiing, APT visitors, etc.)	3,700	3,550	1,740	5,365
Starts*	45,789	42,337	40,510	43,452
Total for Big Met (including 9-hole rounds)	72,248	66,339	60,771	66,653
Total for Big Met (including starts)	54,664	50,487	45,232	51,215
Little Met				
Golfers @ 9 holes	21,512	21,274	19,345	20,764
Non-golfers	161	2,400	1,070	1,080
Starts*	21,512	21,274	19,345	20,764
Total for Little Met (including 9-hole rounds)	21,673	23,674	20,415	21,844
Total for Little Met (including starts)	21,673	23,674	20,415	21,844
Manakiki				
Golfers @ 9 holes	48,940	44,332	44,773	46,710
Clubhouse Events	14,235	15,870	16,866	16,429
Instructional Classes	574	194	142	203
Practice Tee	471	464	431	437
Non-golfers	901	284	325	687
Starts*	32,033	28,602	28,749	30,129
Total for Manakiki (including 9-hole rounds)	65,121	61,144	62,537	64,466
Total for Manakiki (including starts)	48,214	45,414	46,513	47,885
Mastick Woods				
Golfers @ 9 holes	17,198	16,151	14,261	15,739
Instructional Classes	410	270	289	151
Non-golfers	620	665	576	680
Footgolf Total	2,653	1,991	1,217	1,140
Starts*	17,198	16,151	14,261	15,739
Total for Mastick (including 9-hole rounds)	18,228	17,086	16,343	17,710
Total for Mastick (including starts)	18,228	17,086	16,343	17,710
Seneca				
Golfers @ 9 holes	41,690	42,290	46,597	53,207
Clubhouse Events	152	480	621	554
Practice Tee	1,671	1,505	1,660	1,462
Instructional Classes	969	856	645	784
Non-golfers	243	310	770	777
Starts*	33,960	34,231	37,434	43,378
Total for Seneca (including 9-hole rounds)	44,725	45,441	50,293	56,784

Total for Seneca (including starts)	36,995	37,382	41,130	46,995
Golf Division	2016	2017	2018	2019
Shawnee Hills				
Golfers @ 9 holes	52,723	50,492	48,290	47,344
Driving Range Tokens	26,627	27,453	25,873	26,515
Clubhouse Events	180	--	--	1
Instructional Classes	407	171	358	326
Non-golfers	1,150	975	945	832
Footgolf Total	1,262	923	488	759
Starts*	39,959	39,093	37,392	29,632
Total for Shawnee (including 9-hole rounds)	81,087	79,091	75,954	75,777
Total for Shawnee (including starts)	68,323	67,692	65,056	58,065
Sleepy Hollow				
Golfers @ 9 holes	51,612	49,641	44,796	46,358
Driving Range Tokens	35,632	36,451	32,580	37,792
Clubhouse Events	1,846 ^a	2,413	2,756	1,568
Instructional Classes	354	169	246	228
Non-golfers	360	409	200	423
Starts*	32,354	31,034	28,378	30,022
Total for Sleepy (including 9-hole rounds)	89,804	89,083	80,578	89,369
Total for Sleepy (including starts)	70,546	70,476	64,160	70,033
Washington				
Golfers @ 9 holes	10,674	10,734	10,130	11,368
Driving Range Tokens	42,260	48,813	42,763	47,414
Clubhouse Events	10	--	--	--
Instructional Classes	1,304	1,029	1,045	1,055
Non-golfers	755	475	564	620
First Tee	1,352	15,850 ^c	15,250	17,605
Practice Tee (Putt & Chip + Short Game Combo)	1,034	1,009	965	1,025
Starts*	10,542	10,734	10,130	11,368
Total for Washington (including 9-hole rounds)	57,389	77,910	70,716	79,087
Total for Washington (including starts)	57,257	77,910	70,716	79,087
Total for Golf				
Golfers @ 9 holes	307,722	293,103	284,241	300,380
Golfers @ Starts	233,347	223,456	216,199	224,484
Footgolf Total	3,915	2,914	1,705	1,899
Grand total for Golf (using starts)	375,900	390,121	369,565	392,834

*Pre-2016 Starts include Courtesy Coupons which are not in 9-hole rounds (clarifies why starts are higher than 9-hole rounds)

^a Prior to 1/4/2016 the Sleepy Hollow facility was leased to Theo's, more accurate recording of visitor data is now in place

^c Updated and improved accuracy of the counting of First Tee program participants

Table 3. Chalet Visitation

The Chalet	2016	2017	2018	2019*
Public Admissions	27,118	23,682	22,359	25,010
Private Rentals	18,552	17,737	17,524	16,835
Total for Chalet	45,670	41,419	39,883	41,845

*2019 began with seasonably cold weather resulting in a good start to the year. Thanksgiving was a week later in 2019, causing tobogganing to open a week later than normal. Toboggan season opening day (11/29/19) was a record attendance. Private rentals were much busier than years prior, and December had 2 days of closure due to rain and high winds.

Table 4. Outdoor Experience

Outdoor Experiences	2016	2017	2018	2019
Brecksville Nature Center				
Walk-in	27,672	29,868	26,547	29,782
Program/Building Use/Roving	32,909	29,860	24,854	31,850
Total	60,581	59,728	51,401	61,632
CanalWay Center				
Walk-in	23,600	22,985	23,143	20,810
Program/Building Use/Roving	50,962	56,690	39,318	37,637
Total	74,562	79,675	62,461	58,447
Nature Preschool	N/A	N/A	703	1,782
Outdoor Recreation	4,776	5,768	6,752	8,438
NatureTracks Mobile	33,825	30,958	31,546	22,917
North Chagrin Nature Center, Nature Education Building & Look About Lodge (combined)				
Walk-in	89,317	98,691	94,363	98,213
Program/Building Use/Roving	37,626	38,274	35,760	40,165
Total	126,943	136,965	130,123	138,378
Rocky River Nature Center				
Walk-in	142,256	179,272	146,176	147,568
Program/Building Use/Roving	46,463	50,619	40,642	46,667
Total	188,719	229,891	186,818	194,235
Youth Outdoors	9,536	11,042	9,180	9,935
Watershed Stewardship Center				
Walk-in	30,143	30,807	31,507	32,214
Program/Building Use/Roving	33,556	30,274	31,612	32,909
Total	63,699	61,081	63,119	65,123
Eco Explorers (previously included in Nature Tracks)	13,341	17,130	18,537	13,961
Total - Walk-in	312,988	361,623	321,736	328,587
Total - Program/Building Use/Roving	262,994	270,615	238,904	246,263
Total	575,982	632,238	560,640	574,850