

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO
**PARKS AND
RECREATION**

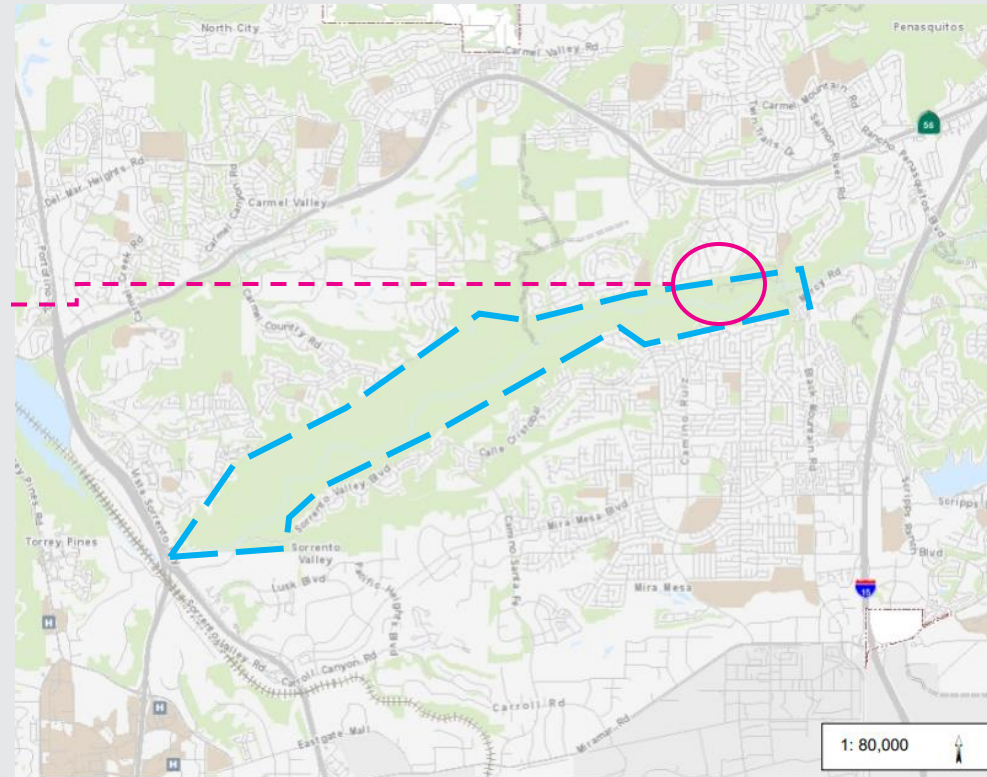
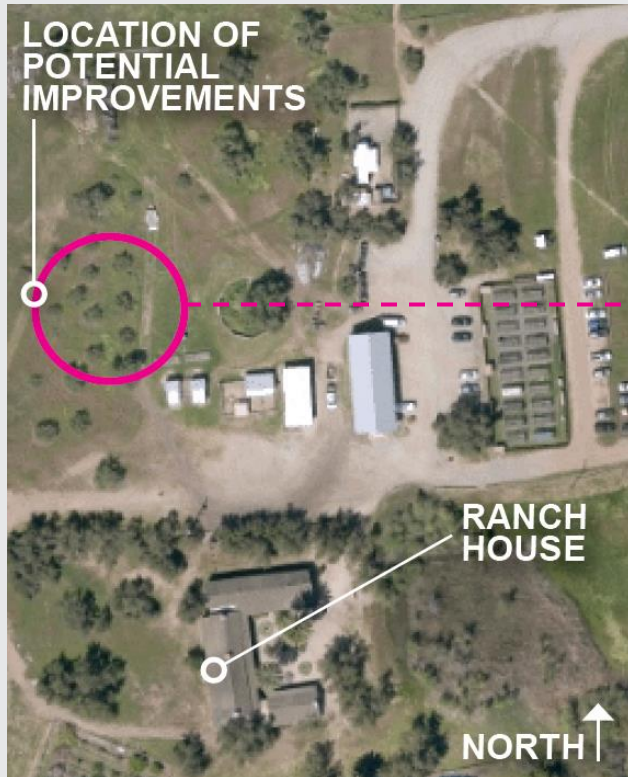
LOS PEÑASQUITOS OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

Summary of Los Peñasquitos Outdoor Classroom Public Meeting | May 24, 2022

BACKGROUND

Currently, the County is advancing a planned project to add improvements to the existing outdoor classroom space at the Los Peñasquitos Ranch House.

The full scope and design of the classroom space improvements will depend on the results of geotechnical studies that are currently underway and will be informed by community preferences shared with the County by residents and stakeholders. All proposed improvements will be compliant with CEQA requirements.



VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

EVENT SUMMARY

On May 24, 2022, DPR held its first virtual public meeting from 5:30pm – 6:30pm via Zoom to update the community on the Los Peñasquitos Outdoor Classroom project and ask for community input in the public survey, in addition to answering question from meeting participants.

The following topics were discussed:

1. The context of the project and the existing outdoor classroom.
2. Possibilities for the outdoor classroom improvements.
3. Plans to potentially rebuild a nearby bridge during construction of the outdoor classroom.

PROMOTION

To notify the community about the event, 19,707 flyers were hand delivered to every door in adjacent zip codes of the proposed outdoor classroom project. The event was promoted via DPR social media channels and on the DPR Events website prior to the event. DPR also reached out to the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve Citizen's Advisory Committee (LPCPCAC) to notify members of the upcoming event.

The existing outdoor classroom

EVENT STATISTICS

- 9 DPR staff members attended the meeting
- 5 public members attended the meeting
- The video generated by the event was posted to sdparcs.org on the public meeting page. As of June 15th, the video has been viewed 17 times.



Topic	Stakeholder Question or Comment	Answer(s)
Timeline	What is the timeline of the project?	DPR is currently focusing on design options for the outdoor classroom and the next public meeting that will be hosted in the coming months. At that meeting staff will present survey results and a concept design based on community preferences. After a design is finalized, construction drawings will be produced, followed by our typical construction process to build the space.
Scope and Operations	What will the classroom be used for and who will manage it?	The classroom will primarily be used for school groups/field trips, but DPR is open to other groups utilizing it. Please let us know if your group would be interested and what type of group it is – we can then incorporate any needs you might have into the design. Park Operations staff will manage it. We currently have thousands of school children visit the park for field trips.
Operations	Will staff be available for the area?	Yes, our Park Operations staff will manage and staff the outdoor classroom depending on the needs of the group.
User Groups	Sierra Club / hiking meet ups – would they have access to it?	Yes, we are currently reaching out to special user groups so we can incorporate any design needs they might have. Please let us know if your group would be interested in using the space and the types of activities you might use it for. It would be a great spot for County Park events like our Hawktoberfest.
Scope	Is there a possibility of including nature play?	We love the idea of including nature play elements – please let us know if that is something you would like to see.
Scope	Is there space for a kid's community garden?	There is currently a community garden on site here and it has a waitlist for plots. This is a great idea and we'll explore the possibilities. We appreciate your feedback.

QUESTIONS DURING VIRTUAL PUBLIC MEETING

NEW OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT THE LOS PEÑASQUITOS CANYON PRESERVE



ONLINE SURVEY

APPROACH

To gain a better understanding of community preferences and desires for the new park, DPR developed and circulated an online survey. The survey consisted of 11 multiple answer and open response questions.

PROMOTION

The survey was mentioned in the flyer, promoted during the Zoom virtual public meeting, and linked on the project webpage.

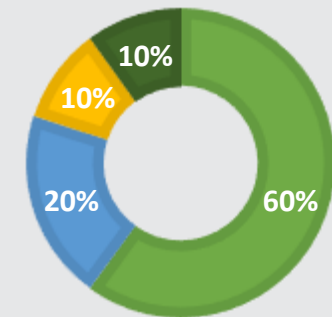
Survey Links were also shared with the following organizations:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos	Palomar College	Park Village Elementary School
Rancho Peñasquitos Planning Group	Montessori Learning Center	Mesa Verde Middle School
Mira Mesa Community Planning Group	Ericson Elementary School PTA	Adobe Bluffs Elementary School
The Indie Sol Collective	Wangenheim Middle School	Deer Canyon Elementary School
San Diego Archaeological Society	Good Shepherd Catholic School	Sundance Elementary School
San Diego City College	Mira Mesa High School	Black Mountain Middle School
Mt. Carmel High School	Carmel Mountain Pre-School	Discovery Isle Preschool
Los Peñasquitos Elementary School	Rolling Hills Elementary School	

SURVEY STATISTICS

- The survey was open from May 24 – June 10, 2022
- The survey allowed for one response per IP address.
- 10 individuals completed the survey.
- Of those who completed the survey, most were residents of Rancho Peñasquitos or Mira Mesa. The remainder were from neighboring communities. (Based on Zip Codes, see below.)

■ Rancho Peñasquitos - 92129
 ■ Mira Mesa - 92126
■ Escondido - 92029
 ■ Scripps Ranch - 92131



RESULTS

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The community is interested in seeing an outdoor classroom space that is available for a variety of uses.

A primary preference shared by all survey respondents was a desire for shade to be added to the site to ensure safety from the elements during the summer months.

Most survey participants gravitated toward more natural concept images that featured wooden elements, as well as the concept image that featured a shade structure.

In the open comment section of the survey DPR received important feedback regarding opportunities for active learning. Several comments focused on adding elements of nature play and active participation to encourage diverse learning styles.

These findings will guide the development of a concept plan to be reviewed by the community in late summer 2022.

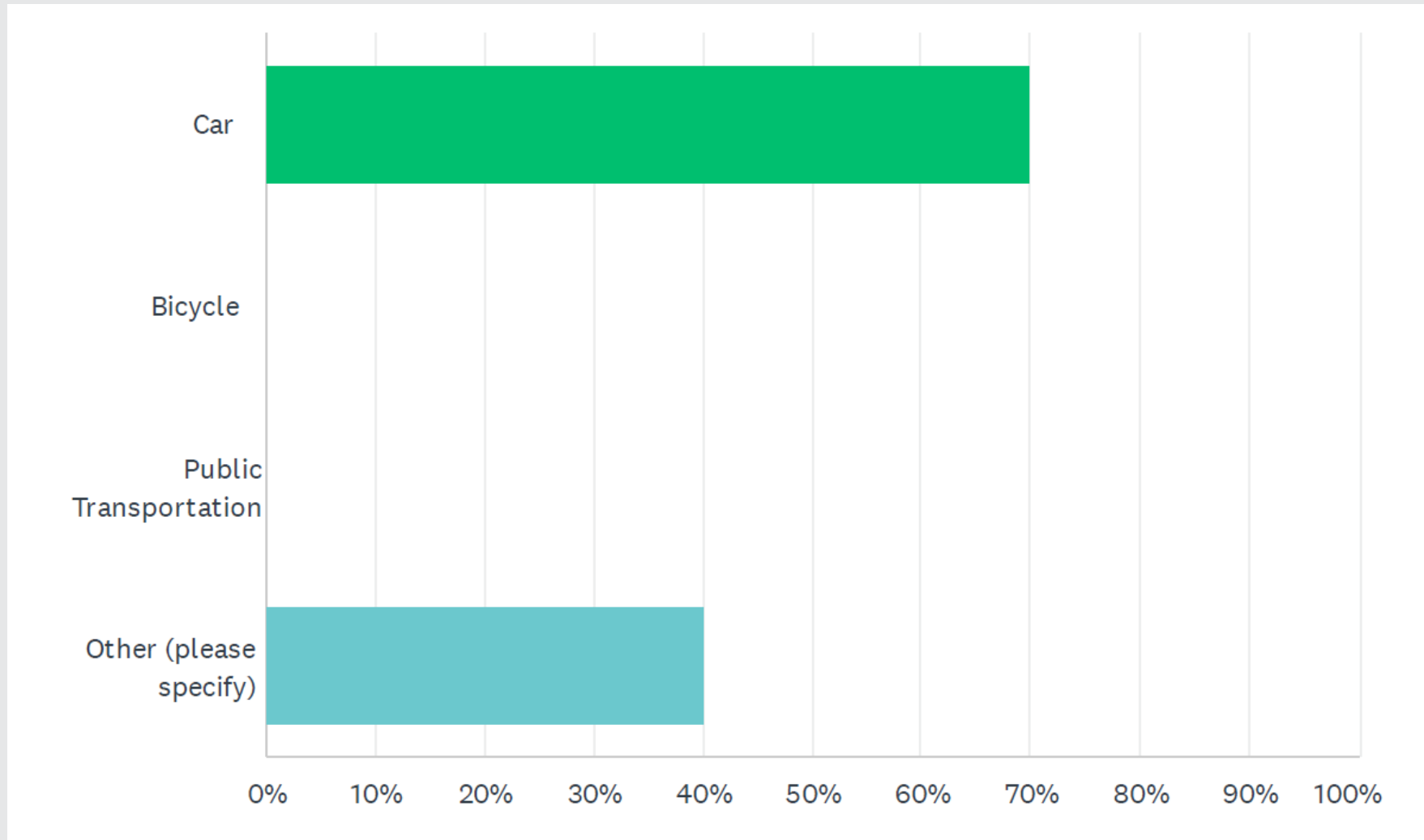


*Most Popular
Concept Images*



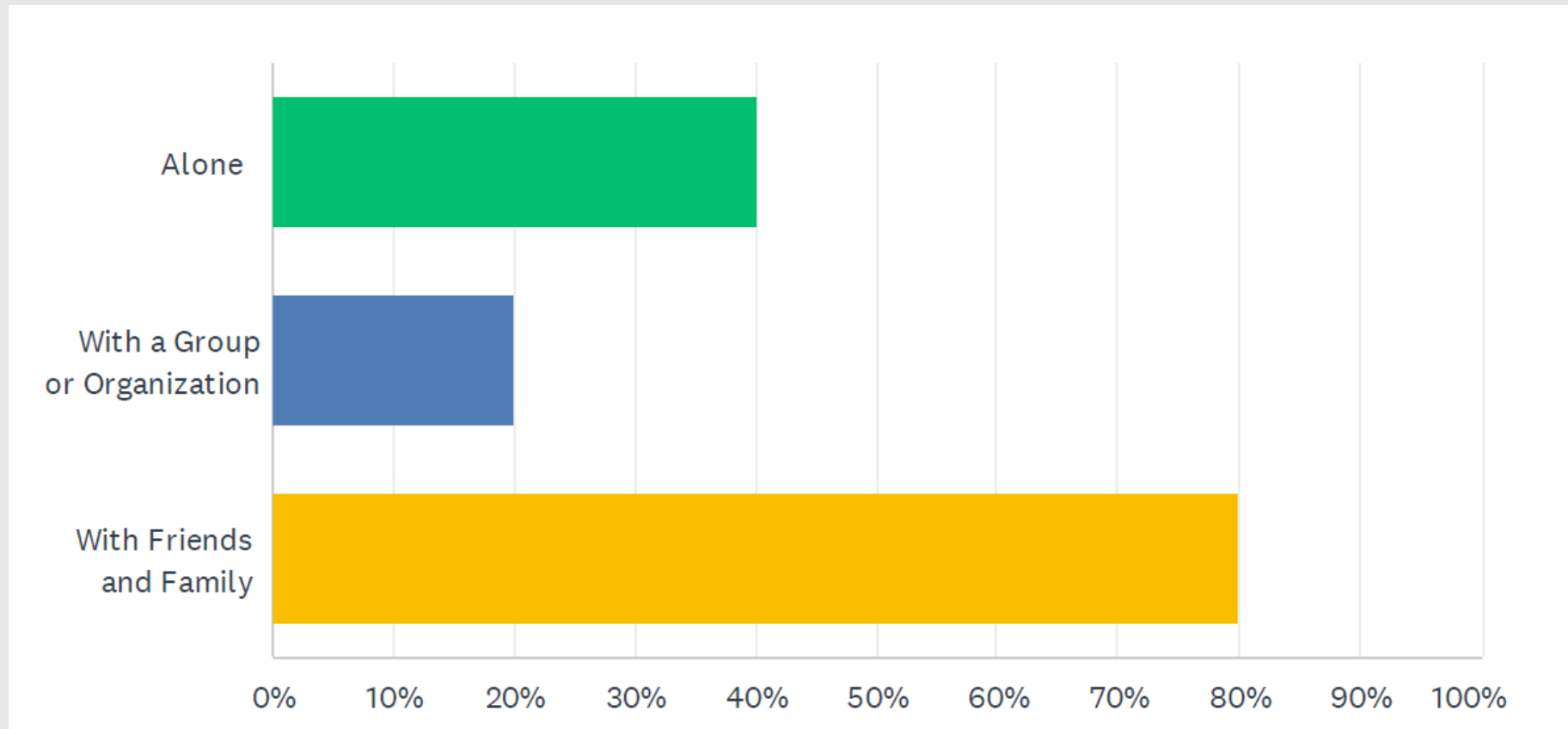
HOW DO YOU TYPICALLY GET TO THE PRESERVE?

The majority of respondents drive to the Preserve; most responses in the “Other” category reflect individuals that can walk to the Preserve.



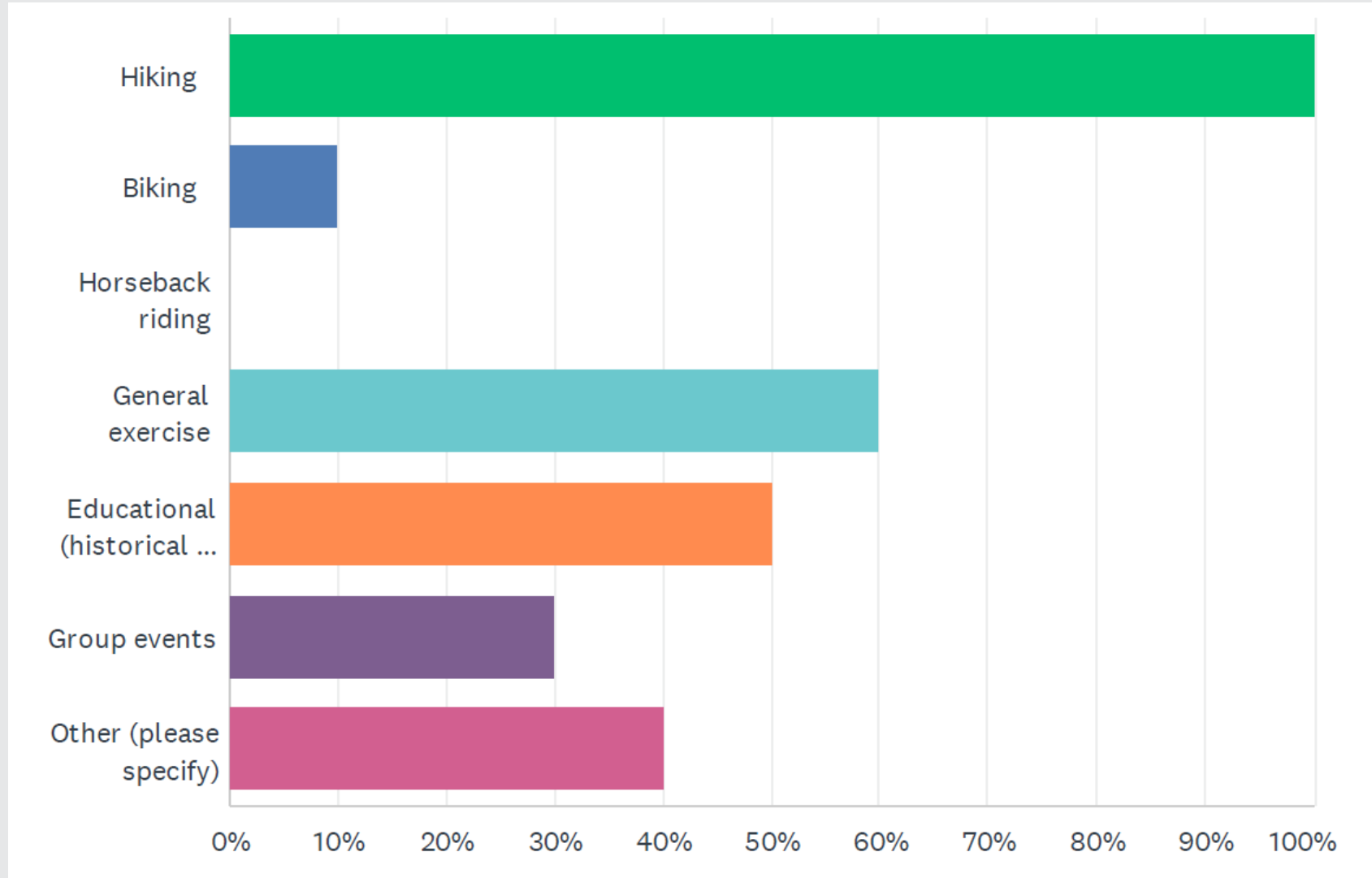
DO YOU VISIT THE PRESERVE ALONE, WITH A GROUP OR ORGANIZATION, OR WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY?

Most respondents visit the Preserve with friends and family.



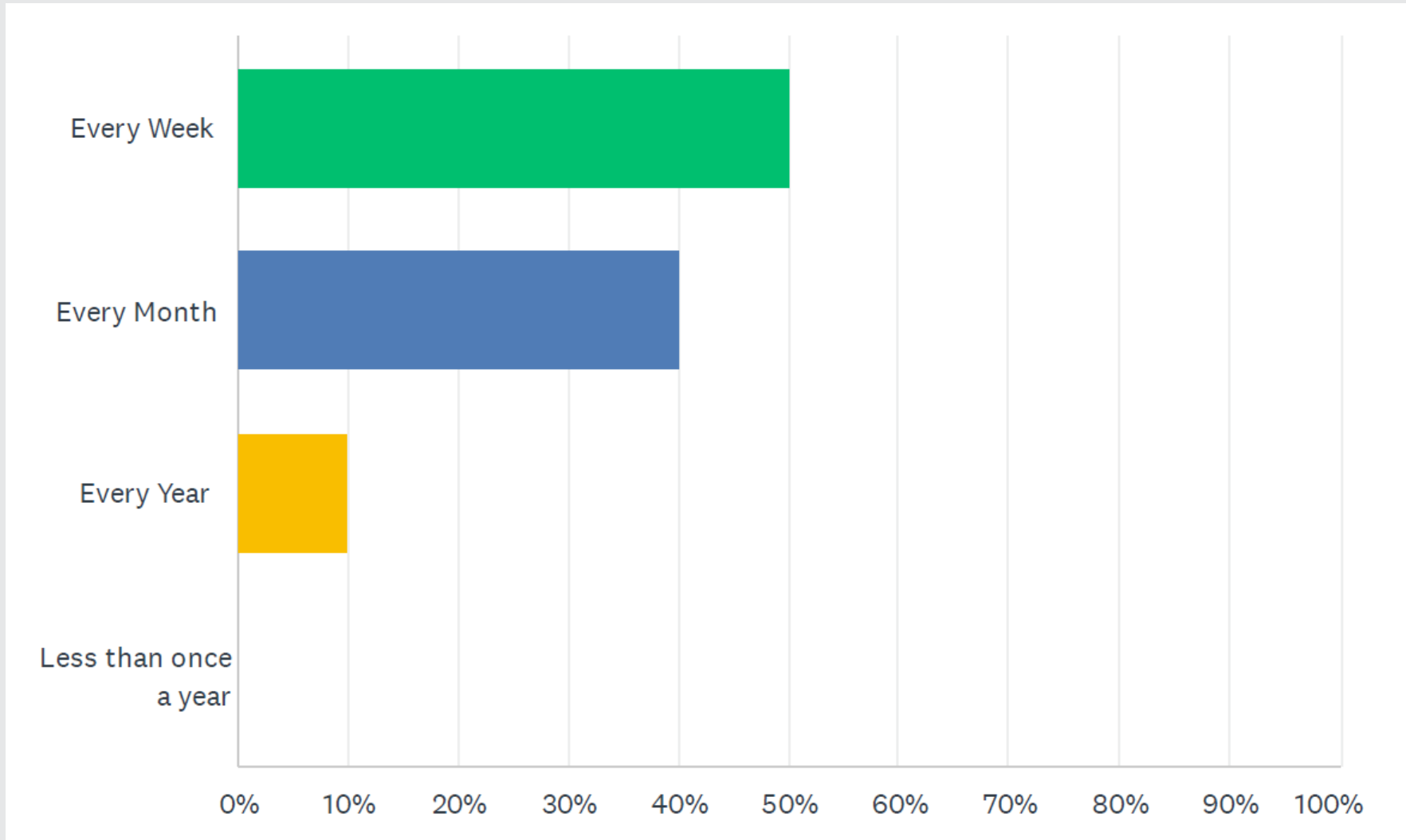
WHAT TYPES OF ACTIVITIES DO YOU ENGAGE IN AT THE PRESERVE?

The majority of respondents visit the Preserve to hike, but users also partake in a variety of activities.



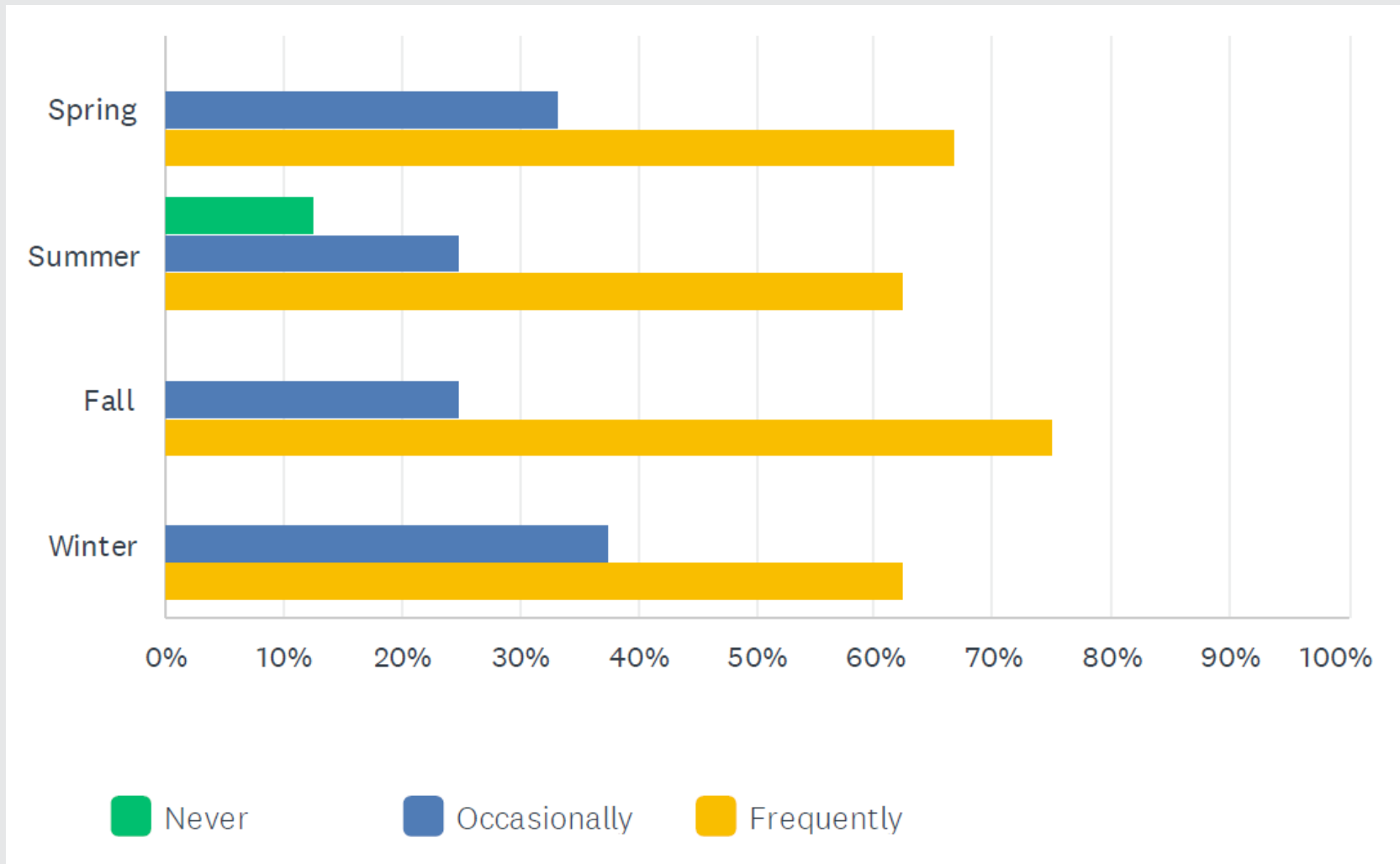
HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT THE RANCH HOUSE AT THE PRESERVE?

Most respondents visit the Ranch House every week, followed closely by users that visit every month.



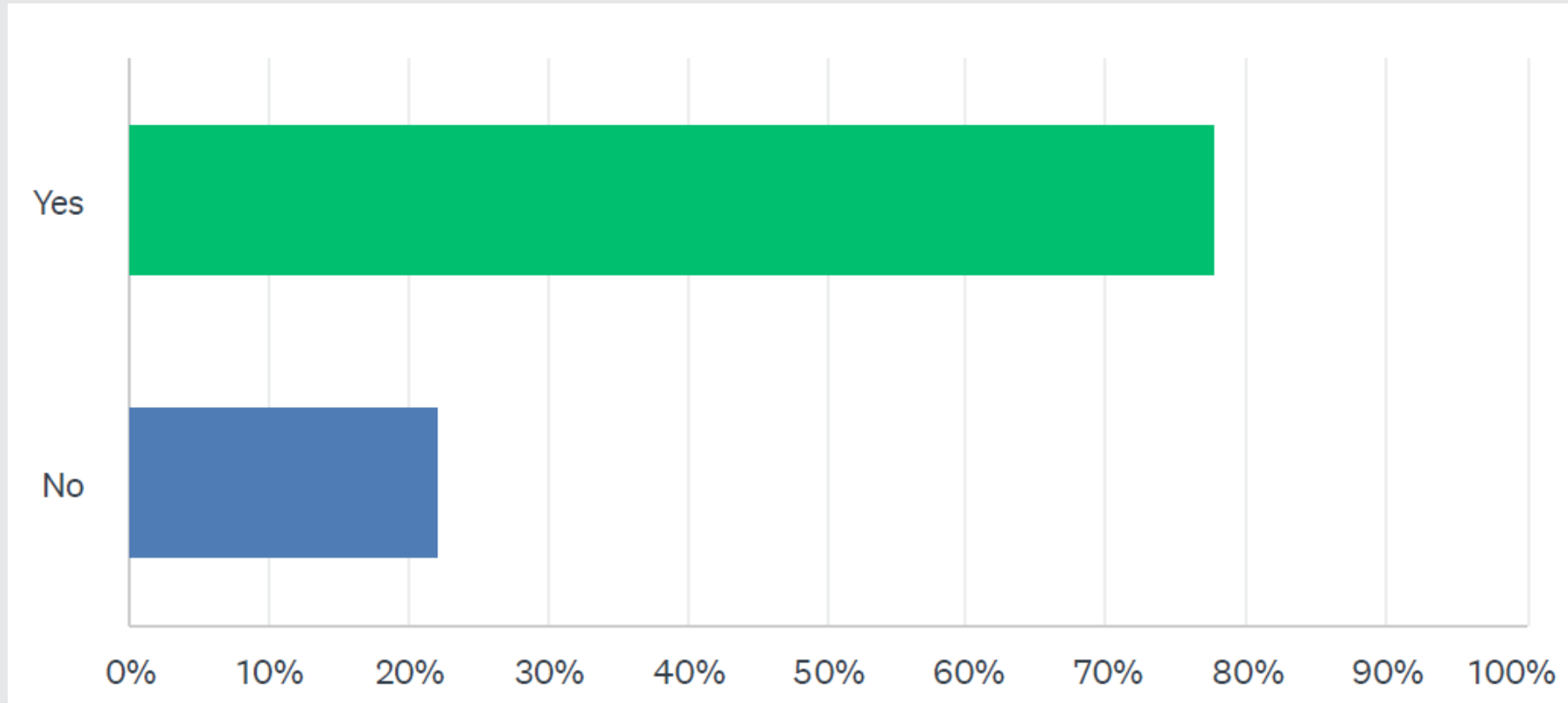
HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU VISIT THE RANCH HOUSE IN EACH SEASON?

There were a variety of responses suggesting that the Ranch House is visited frequently throughout the year, but several respondents noted that they do not visit the Ranch House during Summer.



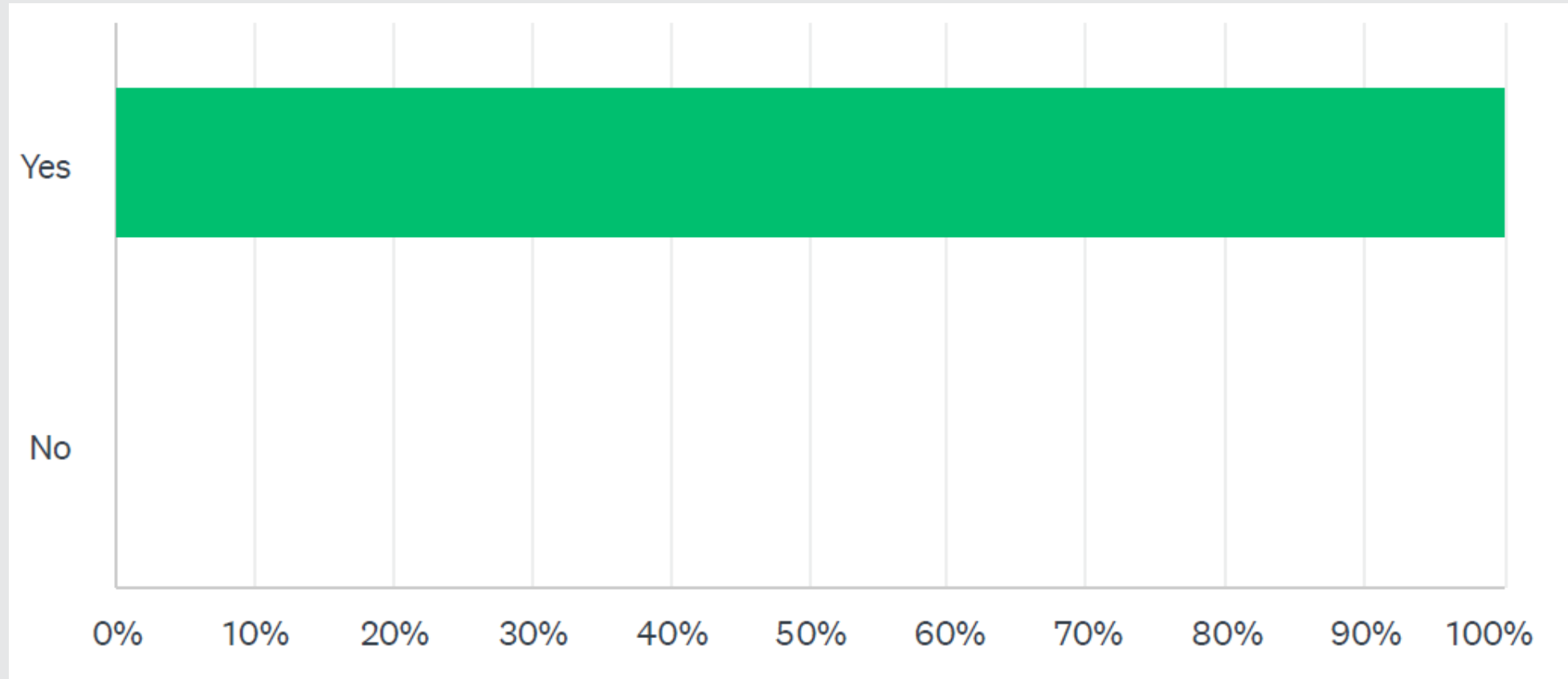
WOULD YOU USE A NEW OUTDOOR CLASSROOM AT THE RANCH HOUSE?

Most respondents confirmed that they would use a new outdoor classroom at the Ranch House.



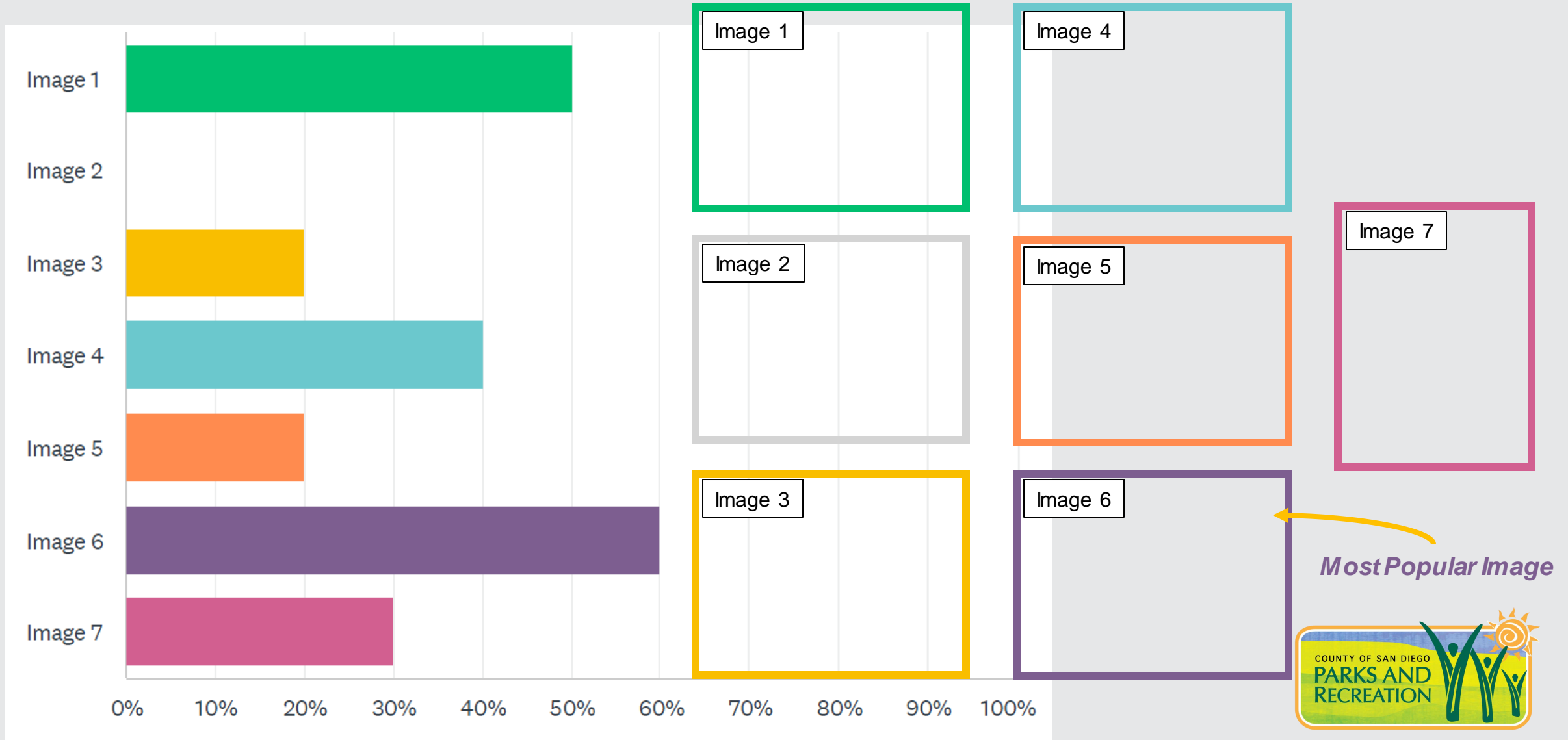
THERE IS CURRENTLY ONLY PARTIAL SHADE ONSITE. WOULD HAVING SHADE AT THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM INCREASE YOUR LIKELIHOOD OF USING IT?

Respondents overwhelmingly agreed that having shade onsite would benefit the space.



WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES MOST CLOSELY MATCHES YOUR VISION OF WHAT THE OUTDOOR CLASSROOM COULD LOOK LIKE?

Respondents tended toward images that showed wooden, natural features as well as the image showing a shade structure.



IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU'D LIKE TO SHARE ABOUT THIS PROJECT OR YOUR VISION FOR THE SPACE?

Several recurring themes appeared in the open-response comment question. The most prevalent of these include:

- Shade, particularly natural shade (trees) if possible.
- Opportunities for play and active learning, including nature play.
- Tables for tangible learning opportunities.
- Natural aesthetic and features that complement the surrounding environment.

Some of the less common responses that we will additionally consider for this project or future improvements include:

- A community garden for kids.
- Operations/Programming suggestions, including different types of talks that could be given at the space.
- Planters that can hold temporary shade sails.
- Having a flexible space for use as a farmers'/artisans' market.

Additionally, one respondent mentioned the concern of snakes being able to enter the space. We will consider the risks associated with the classroom as it moves through design and will determine appropriate mitigation strategies, including informational or interpretive signage about local flora and fauna.

