

What We Heard

Public Perspectives on Recreational Access to Mosaic's Forests

SEPTEMBER 2025



Photo: Jens Kieft

Message from the CEO

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I want to thank the thousands of people who shared their perspectives on recreational access through our recent survey.

This report outlines what we heard from you. Your input provides a helpful foundation for working with communities, governments, and First Nations on solutions that balance reliable, fair access with the safety and environmental stewardship we all value.

It's clear people care deeply about outdoor access and are looking for more opportunities to recreate. For many, Mosaic's forests are the closest places to get outdoors, and sometimes the only place to partake in specific recreational activities. The high survey response rate and thoughtful feedback underscore the importance of getting things right.

As a first step, we will improve communications around access, which was a common concern raised. We are also in the process of hiring an external consultant who will help design a better access framework that addresses current challenges and unlocks untapped opportunities. Please visit [MosaicForests.com](https://www.mosaicforests.com) for related updates.

Thank you again for your time and constructive input.

Duncan Davies
President & CEO, Mosaic Forest Management

Part I: Quantitative Results

WHO WE HEARD FROM

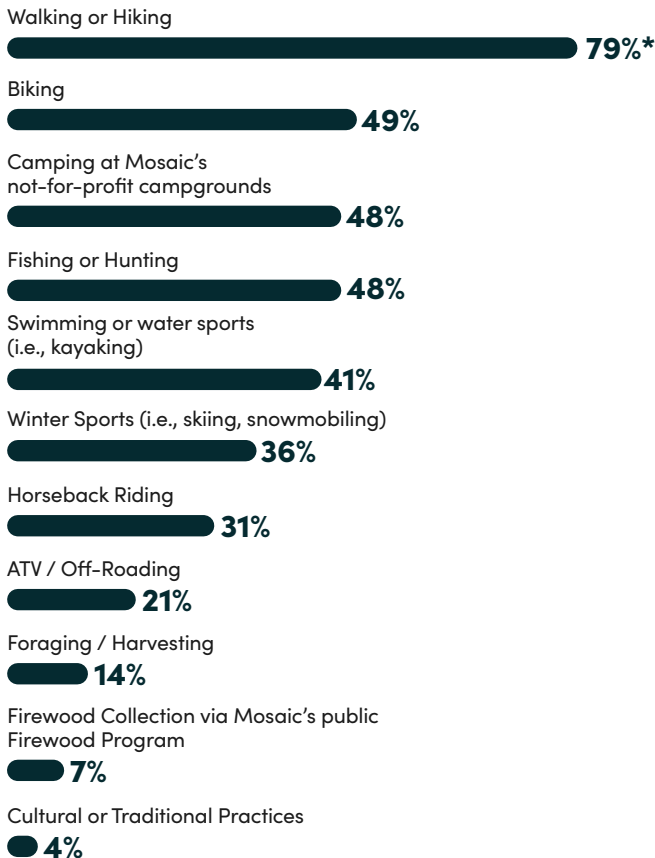
Mosaic’s survey drew 7,600+ participants in 23 days, indicating high public interest.

Most respondents live on Vancouver Island or the Sunshine Coast, with particularly strong representation from the South and Mid-Island regions. A large majority have long-standing ties to the area—over two-thirds have lived here for more than 20 years.

Survey results showed that many people use these forests, with walking or hiking being the most popular activity, followed by biking, camping and fishing or hunting. In a separate section, written comments mentioned a wide variety of other uses including paragliding, birdwatching and mountain climbing.

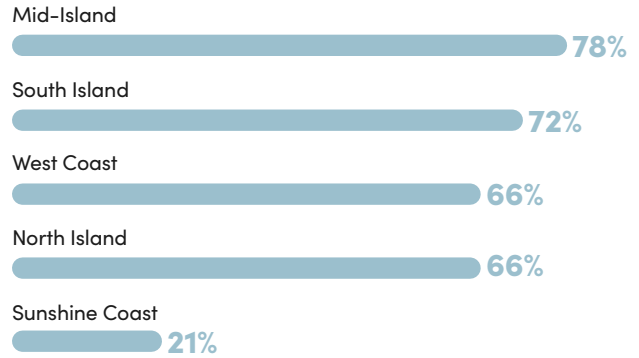
MOST COMMON RECREATION ACTIVITIES

(Respondents could select all that apply)



*All percentages in the report are rounded to the nearest whole number.

WHERE RESPONDENTS RECREATE



TOP VALUES

For their top value related to recreational access, 79% selected outdoor recreation for personal and community well-being.

Many respondents described Mosaic’s forests as central to their daily lives or connected to their personal history. Respondents’ feedback noted it was difficult to limit their choices to three values, underscoring how multi-layered this connection is.

TOP VALUES FOR RECREATIONAL ACCESS

(Respondents could select up to three values)





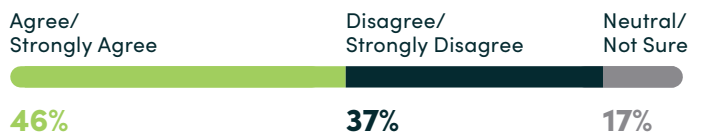
PERSPECTIVES ON MANAGED ACCESS

More respondents agree with the need for access restrictions than disagree.

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement:

“At times, access to Mosaic’s private forest lands may need to be restricted to protect people, nature, or forest resources.”

A combined 46% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. 37% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



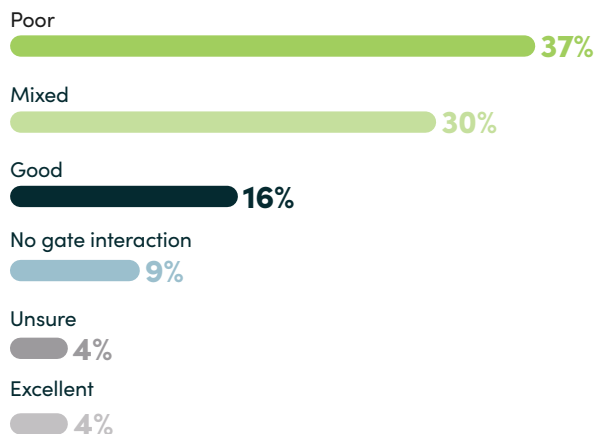
EXPERIENCE WITH GATES

37% of respondents rated their experience with Mosaic gates as poor.

Some of the operational challenges highlighted by respondents include:

- **Restricted hours** that did not fit all schedules
- **Unexpected closures** where gates were locked despite posted times
- **Confusing or difficult access models**

GATE EXPERIENCE



CONCERNS RELATED TO ACCESS

Limited access/locked gates top the list.

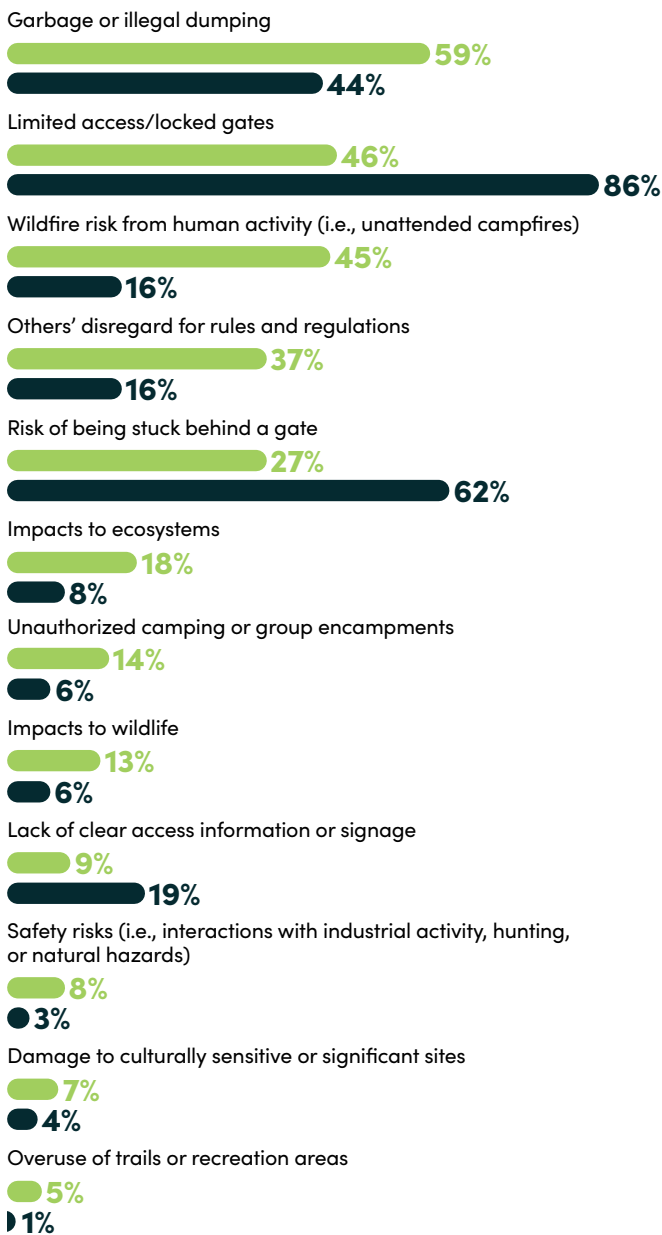
*Across all respondents, the top concerns related to recreational access were:

- **Gates & access** – 64%
- **Garbage & illegal dumping** – 54%
- **Risk of being stuck behind a gate** – 43%
- **Wildfire risk** – 32%

*Respondents could select up to three values

TOP CONCERNS

(Filtered by respondents who had indicated agreement with access restrictions and those who did not)



● Agrees with access restrictions ● Does not agree with access restrictions

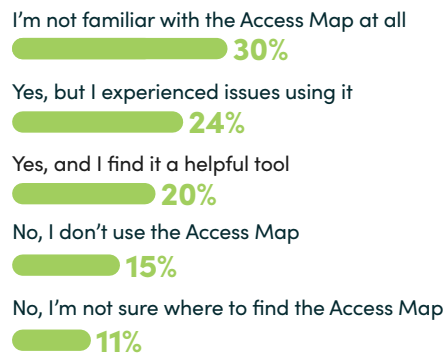
SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR ACCESS

58% of respondents rely on word-of-mouth for updates.

Respondents were asked where they currently get information on recreational access opportunities for Mosaic's land base. After word-of-mouth, other key sources include the Mosaic website (45%) and recreational apps/websites (32%).



Respondents were also asked if they've ever used Mosaic's access map on MosaicForests.com, and whether they found it to be a helpful tool or not. The majority are not familiar with the online access map at all, and those who have used it report it being difficult to navigate or incorrect.



Part II: Key Themes

Building on points introduced earlier, several common themes surfaced across the findings and qualitative feedback.

ACCESS LIMITATIONS: RESTRICTED HOURS AND LIMITED ENTRY POINTS

Many respondents noted the gate system lacks flexibility for different types of users. Two issues stood out:

- **Restricted Hours** – Dawn-to-dusk or weekend-only access don't work for all schedules. Some also raised safety concerns about being locked in after hours.
- **Limited Entry Points** – Especially on south Vancouver Island. Limited access points lead to crowding, longer travel times, and reduced enjoyment.

*"The hours don't work for people who don't have a 9–5 job. It's not fair that only certain schedules are considered."**

COMMUNICATION AND INCONSISTENT INFORMATION

Beyond access itself, many respondents expressed frustration with unclear or conflicting information. Some said they planned visits based on posted hours, only to find gates unexpectedly closed. Others pointed to a lack of timely updates and conflicting details across websites, signage, and from staff.

Awareness of Mosaic's digital access map was limited, and even among those who used it, satisfaction was mixed. Respondents emphasized that **reliable, consistent information is essential** for the system to work.

"The information is confusing and changes all the time. You never really know if you'll be able to get in."

"There's a lack of clear signage... it's hard to figure out who to call to unlock the gate and there are heavy fees when needed to get out"

"I drove an hour and a half to a spot only to find it gated on a Saturday during times it was supposed to be open according to your online map."



BALANCED AND FLEXIBLE ACCESS

Across the spectrum of views, respondents noted the system could be **more adaptable**. Many noted it does not reflect different activities, varying levels of impact and risk, or seasonal conditions.

Instead of a fully open or fully closed approach, respondents suggested more flexible options, including extended hours, additional open days, or conditional access based on fire risk or safety conditions as ways to balance protection with public use.

"Let hikers and cyclists through even if ATVs are banned."

"It should depend on the zone – not all roads are dangerous."

*Comments in italics are verbatim from the survey.

RESPONSIBLE USE AND LAND PROTECTION

Based on respondents' feedback, there was agreement on the need to minimize environmental impacts on these lands. Concerns were raised about issues like garbage, vandalism, trail damage, and the risk of wildfire from public use.

Where respondents differed was in their view of how best to manage these risks. Some view gates and controls as necessary to prevent damage and promote responsible use. Others note that problems exist, but questioned whether gates were the right solution, expressing concern that broad restrictions penalize everyone, including those who act responsibly.

"People who respect the land should still be allowed in – it's the careless ones that ruin it for everyone."

"It's private land. People need to follow the rules or stay out."

FAIRNESS AND FORMAL ACCESS AGREEMENTS

Mosaic's access agreements drew mixed views. Some felt they **promote accountability** and enable safe, structured access through waivers and training. Others described the model **as too limited or exclusive**, offering privileges not available to the wider public.

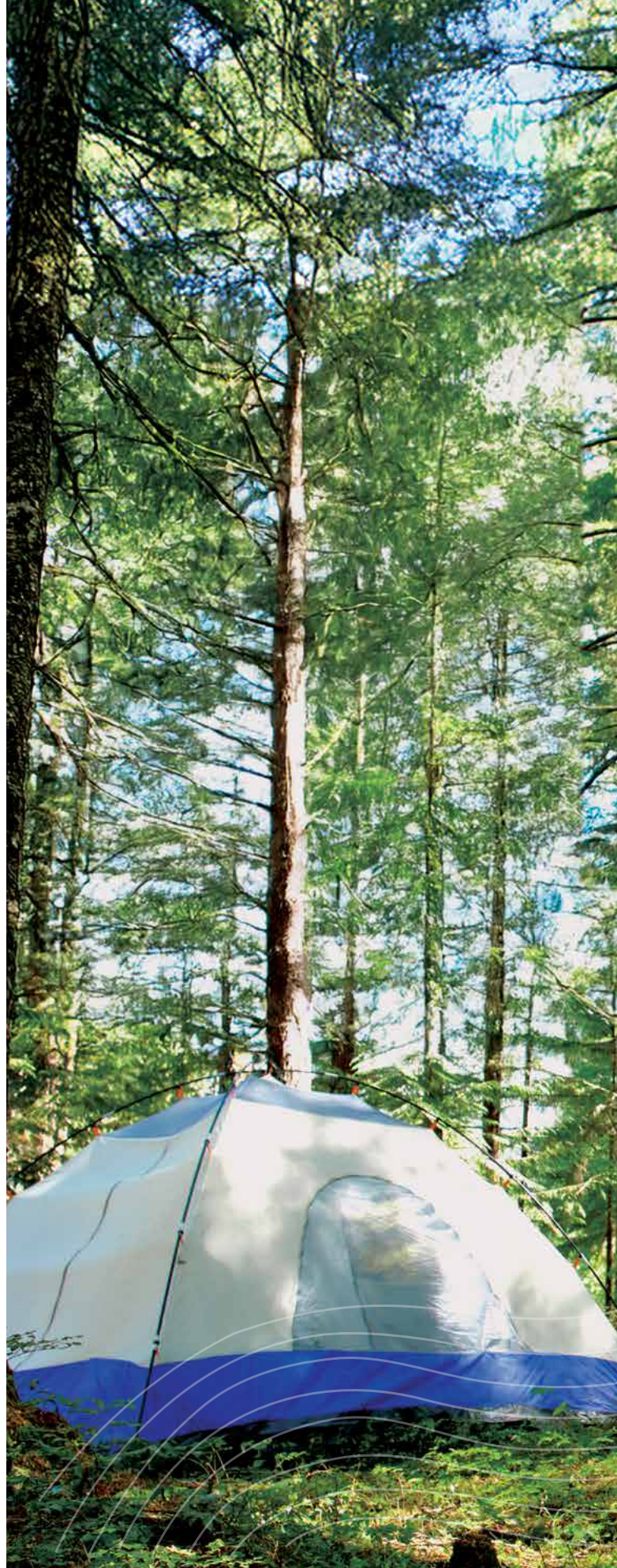
There were calls for adjustments, including expanding agreements or creating broader pass programs while still maintaining accountability. At the other end was concern that access should be unrestricted, making agreements unnecessary.

"I support the idea of permits, but the system needs to be easier to use."

"It's challenging and expensive to get keys for access. Only certain people seem to have them."

"Qualified access – agreements with groups and individuals – drastically improves the expected behaviours and adherence to laws and rules."

"As a club member, it is frustrating to pay money, meet requirements, and be accountable, while the general public can come and go... access needs to be fair, and all users should be accountable."





73% report a good to excellent campground experience.

Awareness of Mosaic's campgrounds was limited, but most visitors reported **positive experiences**, citing well-kept sites and affordable access. Suggestions such as expanding locations, extending seasons, and streamlining bookings pointed to opportunities to enhance what is generally a well-regarded community offering. Campground hosts were noted as a key factor shaping experiences - some praised them as friendly and helpful, while others felt greater consistency in professionalism and rule enforcement would improve visits.

Part III: What's Next

In our last public communication in June, we committed to prioritizing and addressing areas of focus. One priority is improving communication so information is consistent, accurate and easier to find. We have already started to better utilize our website and social platforms to communicate key access updates, particularly during the summer 2025 wildfire season.

Mosaic is also in the process of engaging an **external consultant** to help us design an improved access framework. This work will consider both user experience alongside the need to balance recreation with safety, operational requirements, and environmental protection. In our consultant Request for Proposals, Mosaic indicated the goal is to launch an updated access program in spring 2026, with ongoing development continuing throughout next year.

We will continue to provide updates on **MosaicForests.com** so communities can remain informed and engaged. The next update will come in late fall 2025, when we introduce our consultant and share their initial recommendations.

Mosaic will also keep listening. As the project rolls out further this year and into next, we will engage accordingly with recreation user groups and community members. We will also continue discussions with First Nations and government partners to explore perspectives and opportunities.

Thank you again to the thousands of people who shared their views, experiences, and ideas. We're grateful for your feedback.

Opportunities for Exploration

Survey participants offered a range of ideas that may help inform future approaches to recreational access.

- **Fire Safety and Prevention**
Education, seasonal restrictions and stronger fire safety rules were among the most common ideas for reducing wildfire risk.
- **Extended and Predictable Hours**
Calls for longer or more consistent gate hours, with fewer unexpected closures.
- **Fee or Pass/Permit Systems**
Ideas ranged from seasonal passes to modest access fees as a way to support management and fairness.
- **Enforcement and Accountability**
Suggestions included fines, patrols or refined ranger-style models to encourage responsible use.
- **Facilities and Infrastructure**
Proposals for garbage facilities and small infrastructure improvements to reduce misuse.
- **Activity-Specific Access Rules**
Suggestions for updated rules to distinguish between low-impact and higher-impact activities, including hiking, cycling, motorized recreation, hunting and fishing.
- **Agreements with User Groups**
Calls to expand structured agreements with clubs or associations to manage access for specific activities.
- **Partnerships and Volunteers**
Interest in volunteer programs or partnerships with community groups to support stewardship and access.
- **Communication and Transparency**
Calls for more reliable, consistent information about closures, operations, and rules, with clearer signage at gates and better use of digital tools where applicable.
- **Managing Risk and Responsibility**
Suggestions to explore partnerships and find ways to reduce or share risks as a means of supporting more reliable recreational opportunities.
- **Campgrounds and Community Access**
Suggestions for expanded availability, smoother booking and greater consistency in how campgrounds are managed by hosts.