Night Access To Parks - Expand Programming Opportunities

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**INTRODUCTION**

Access to Parks at Night?
- Good policy?
- Is it necessary?
- What are the risks if we keep the parks open?
- Will people use the parks?

Survey size: 14 with 10+ years in outdoor adventure experience
25 with under 3 years experience

**PROBLEM**

Schools, local hiking clubs, and private citizens often face difficulty with access to area parks at night. This is due to day-time park operations and the misconceptions about night-time outdoor adventures. This research project investigates the basis for restrictive park policies and potential, actionable solutions.

**CONCERNS**

- A SENSE OF SOLITUDE 60%
- VIEWING NOCTURNAL ANIMALS 40%

**CONCERNS about participating in night time outdoor adventures**

- ACCESS NOT ALLOWED 50% 16%
- SAFETY 21% 48%
- VIOLATION OF PARK RULES 14% 16%
- LACK OF SKILLS 7% 44%
- FEAR OF ANIMALS AND UNKNOWNS 0% 40%
- NO ISSUES OR CONCERNS 7% 20%

**REASONS why you would participate in night time outdoor adventure**

- DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE 64%
- NIGHT SKY 72%
- SOUNDS 64%
- ABLE TO FIT IN ACTIVITIES 32%
- A SENSE OF SOLITUDE 60%
- VIEWING NOCTURNAL ANIMALS 40%

- Outstanding reasons to venture into the wilds...

**SKILLS / ITEMS that people need to safely participate in night time outdoor adventure?**

- HEADLAMP WITH EXTRA BATTERIES 42% 64%
- FIRST AID KIT 29% 92%
- NAVIGATION AND MAP READING 14% 76%

A paradigm shift in outdoor safety! Those “skilled” deem these unnecessary!

**ACTIVITIES that you would participate in night time outdoor adventures**

- BACKPACKING 64% 40%
- CAMPING 64% 76%
- HIKING 57% 68%
- FLATWATER PADDLING 57% 36%
- NATURE VIEWING 43% 44%
- ROCK CLIMBING 21% 48%
- MOUNTAIN BIKING 0% 44%

What we do when we do OUTDOOR ADVENTURE!

**AN EDUCATOR’S PERSPECTIVE**

*Primary Educational Justification to Provide Access:*

There are three vision impaired conditions that may occur in outdoor wilderness experiences. Navigation under these conditions are very difficult unless skills are obtained. They are:

- Fog
- Blizzard Conditions
- Night time

Night time is the only condition that we can simulate “impaired” vision. Night time allows the educator the ability to provide training to those in need of these skills.

* See handout for additional justifications

**-THREE VIEWS- Night Time Outdoor Adventures in Parks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OPEN-ENDED ACCESS</th>
<th>GUIDED ACCESS</th>
<th>PERMITTED ACCESS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Less regulations</td>
<td>- Increase staff if additional funding is available</td>
<td>- Potential revenue increase due to permit fees</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Less manpower</td>
<td>- Teachable moments</td>
<td>- Increase usage at non-prime times</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Less strain on budget?</td>
<td>- Control of access</td>
<td>- Controlled access</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Liability insurance</td>
<td>- Revenue generation</td>
<td>- Traffic / Pandemic</td>
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<td>- Training</td>
<td>- Increased programming</td>
<td>- Mitigate overcrowding</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>Cons</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Adverse weather unless staff patrol at night</td>
<td>- Increase of staff hours</td>
<td>- Potential litigation if there are problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Increase potential for issues</td>
<td>- Additional/budget funding needed</td>
<td>- Determining qualifying criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Injuries</td>
<td>- Staff skills may need additional training</td>
<td>- Liability Insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Trail damage</td>
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<td>- Certifications</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Animal / people contacts</td>
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<td>- Training</td>
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<td>- Negativity</td>
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**MISCONCEPTIONS**

- Cost too much for additional staffing and training of personnel for Parks.
- Parks are unsafe for public to use at night.
- Additional training needs.

- Solution: Work with area schools to provide volunteer guides and programs through a permitted process.
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Why provide access at night?

- Three Common Misconceptions
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Outstanding reasons to venture into the wilds...

Leave your worries behind. Hire a guide!

**-ADVENTURE!-**

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