

## Marion Open Space and Recreation Survey Results

The Marion Open Space and Recreation Survey results were obtained from a sample of the registered voters. Surveys were sent to every fifth voter: the sample size was 503 voters. The response rate was 66%, or 328 returned surveys. The response provides a statistically valid prediction of the attitudes of the larger sample, i.e., all of the registered voters in Marion.

Surveys were initially sorted by those who attended town meeting and voted in the town elections, those who did not attend town meetings but voted in town elections, and those who neither attended town meetings nor voted in town elections. The results of the three groups showed some minor differences, but these differences were not significant.

### Recreation

1. Which activities do you and your family members enjoy? Check as many as are appropriate.

	In	Just other	
	Marion	Both	towns
a. golf	67	62	19
b. tennis	99	36	3
c. baseball	52	12	5
d. soccer	22	21	16
e. basketball	49	17	6
f. sunbathing	132	54	7
g. swimming	168	77	8
h. swimming instruction	43	6	14
i. sailing instruction	49	4	3
j. sailboat racing	50	10	1
k. recreational sailing	102	28	8
l. sail boarding	15	8	3
m. canoeing/kayaking	29	17	19
n. boating from trailer	29	11	8
o. boating from mooring	101	8	6
p. boating from dock	58	10	9
q. jet skiing	8	2	3
r. skating on bogs	81	29	8
s. skating on ice rink	104	14	5
t. x-country skiing	57	28	17
u. walking	191	752	
v. jogging	82	20	0
w. biking	126	64	3
x. roller blading	64	15	1
y. trail biking	26	11	6
z. clamming	90	8	5
aa. quahogging	104	8	2
ab. oystering	51	5	1
ac. scalloping	50	5	1
ad. lobstering	30	3	4
ae. musseling	20	5	2
af. crabbing	16	6	5

ag. fishing	69	49	9
ah. hunting	16	12	11
ai. walking in woods	121	52	16
aj. birding	67	21	4
ak. play at schoolyard	91	19	1
al. picnicking	61	44	14
am. enjoying the view	151	93	6

2. Of the activities listed above, which ones do your family do the most? You can list up to five, using the letters used in Question 1. Please list in order of use.

5 points were awarded for #1 choice, 3 points for #2 choice, and 1 point for #3 choice.

a. golf	287
b. tennis	206
c. baseball	64
d. soccer	72
e. basketball	53
f. sunbathing	167
g. swimming	447
h. swimming instruction	21
i. sailing instruction	13
j. sailboat racing	54
k. recreational sailing	240
l. sail boarding	12
m. canoeing/kayaking	27
n. boating from trailer	29
o. boating from mooring	140
p. boating from dock	75
q. jet skiing	6
r. skating on bogs	14
s. skating on ice rink	41
t. x-country skiing	36
u. walking	662
v. jogging	135

w. biking	281
x. roller blading	56
y. trail biking	30
z. clamming	83
aa. quahogging	83
ab. oystering	6
ac. scalloping	9
ad. lobstering	4
ae. musseling	2
af. crabbing	4
ag. fishing	103
ah. hunting	16
ai. walking in woods	181
aj. birding	71
ak. play at schoolyard	92
al. picnicking	44
am. enjoying the view	256

x. wildlife habitat	132 M	0 L	S
y. endangered species habitat	119 M	0 L	S
z. quiet seashore	114 M	0 L	S

4. Of the facilities listed above, which five are in greatest need of improvement or expansion?

5. Of the facilities listed above, which five least need improvement? Please list the lowest need first.

3. Which of the following recreational facilities do we need more of? Which less? Check **M** for more, **L** for less, or **S** for satisfactory.

a. golf courses	31 M	6 L	S
b. tennis courts	85 M	4 L	S
c. baseball fields	27 M	4 L	S
d. soccer fields	67 M	4 L	S
e. basketball courts	77 M	4 L	S
f. wildlife habitat	148 M	1 L	S
g. swimming beaches	91 M	0 L	S
h. swimming instruction	31 M	3 L	S
i. sail board launching areas	28 M	12 L	S
j. canoe access	49 M	3 L	S
k. boat ramps	46 M	8 L	S
l. boat moorings	63 M	40 L	S
m. ice rink	53 M	5 L	S
n. sidewalks	143 M	3 L	S
o. bike paths	225 M	0 L	S
p. shellfishing areas	66 M	3 L	S
q. shellfishing area access	76 M	4 L	S
r. permanently protected open space with public access	179 M	4 L	S
s. playgrounds	44 M	2 L	S
t. picnicking areas	98 M	4 L	S
u. bird habitat	113 M	1 L	S
v. playgrounds at schoolyard	21 M	2 L	S
w. viewing areas	96 M	4 L	S

Answers for Question 4 and question 5 were added together with answers for Question #4 awarded 5 points for #1 choice, 4 points for #2 choice, 3 points for #3 choice, etc. Answers to Question #5 were awarded -5 points for #1 choice, -4 points for #2 choice, -3 points for #3 choice, etc.

a. golf courses	-437
b. tennis courts	-70
c. baseball fields	-112
d. soccer fields	+8
e. basketball courts	+40
f. wildlife habitat	+328
g. swimming beaches	+91
h. swimming instruction	+16
i. sail board launching areas	-161
j. canoe access	-90
k. boat ramps	-14
l. boat moorings	-77
m. ice rink	-109
n. sidewalks	+241
o. bike paths	+440
p. shellfishing areas	+52
q. shellfishing area access	+10
r. permanently protected open space with public access	+301
s. playgrounds	-100
t. picnicking areas	+21
u. bird habitat	+41
v. playgrounds at schoolyard	+104
w. viewing areas	+26
x. wildlife habitat	+34
y. endangered species habitat	+90
z. quiet seashore	+178

6. Of the existing recreational programs and facilities in Marion, which of the following need upgrading? Answers were awarded +1 for Yes, -1 for a No then added together.

a. Washburn Park Athletic Fields	+77
b. Sippican School Athletic Fields	-36
c. Point Road Basketball Courts	+74
d. Sippican School Basketball Courts	+11
e. Wings Cove Boat Ramp	-8
f. Old Landing Boat Ramp	-19
g. Point Road Playground	+91
h. Sippican School Playground	-137
i. Skating Area in Washburn Park	+45
j. Swimming Instruction	-48
k. Tennis Courts behind Town Hall	+5
l. Tennis Courts behind Sippican School	+13
m. Tennis Courts at Point Road Playground	+33
n. Baseball Field behind Town Hall	-66
o. Baseball Field behind Sippican School	-77
p. Baseball Fields at Washburn Park	-18
q. Boat Moorings	-18
r. Washburn Park Skating Pond	+45
s. Beach at River Road	+14
t. Beach at Oakdale Avenue	+2
u. Beach at Island Wharf	-15
v. Silvershell Beach	-3
w. Planting Island Causeway Beach	+39
x. Sail Board Launch Area on Planting Island Causeway	-55
y. Sail Board Launch Area at Silvershell Beach	-52
z. Holmes Woods	+8
aa. Basketball Court at Silvershell	+86
ab. Sailing Instruction	-18
ac. Band Shell	-14

7. Please indicate, using the letters above, which of the above facilities are in greatest need of expansion or repair. 5 points were awarded for #1 choice, 3 points for #2 choice, and 1 point for #3 choice.

a. Washburn Park Athletic Fields	38
b. Sippican School Athletic Fields	7
c. Point Road Basketball Courts	38
d. Sippican School Basketball Courts	56
e. Wings Cove Boat Ramp	57
f. Old Landing Boat Ramp	95
g. Point Road Playground	185
h. Sippican School Playground	24
i. Skating Area in Washburn Park	52
j. Swimming Instruction	21
k. Tennis Courts behind Town Hall	133
l. Tennis Courts behind Sippican School	94
m. Tennis Courts at Point Road Playground	56
n. Baseball Field behind Town Hall	13
o. Baseball Field behind Sippican School	13
p. Baseball Fields at Washburn Park	71
q. Boat Moorings	85
r. Washburn Park Skating Pond	46
s. Beach at River Road	39
t. Beach at Oakdale Avenue	13
u. Beach at Island Wharf	48
v. Silvershell Beach	174
w. Planting Island Causeway Beach	204
x. Sail Board Launch Area on Planting Island Causeway	7
y. Sail Board Launch Area at Silvershell Beach	30
z. Holmes Woods	72
aa. Basketball Court at Silvershell	192
ab. Sailing Instruction	28
ac. Band Shell	41

each of the following statements by circling the number that most closely represents how you feel about it, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means you *strongly agree* and 5 means you *strongly disagree*.

8. The following services and facilities should be located in Marion: (Average of the responses is given in bold.)

	<b>Strongly Agree</b>				<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Bicycle Paths			<b>1.7</b>		
b. Horse-riding Trails			<b>3.1</b>		
c. Nature & Hiking Trails			<b>1.9</b>		
d. Roller Skating Rink			<b>3.7</b>		
e. Teenage Center			<b>2.5</b>		
f. Swimming Pool			<b>2.7</b>		

Please indicate your level of agreement with

9. Which of the facilities listed should be given the highest priority? 5 points were awarded for #1 choice, 3 points for #2 choice, and 1 point for #3 choice.

a. Bicycle Paths	743
b. Horse-riding Trails	97
c. Nature & Hiking Trails	586
d. Roller Skating Rink	78
e. Teenage Center	428
f. Swimming Pool	371

10. For which of the facilities listed would you pay a user fee? 5 points were awarded for #1 choice, 3 points for #2 choice, and 1 point for #3 choice.

a. Bicycle Paths	163
b. Horse-riding Trails	51
c. Nature & Hiking Trails	169
d. Roller Skating Rink	226
e. Teenage Center	218
f. Swimming Pool	724

11. What would you be willing to pay?

(The answers to this question were not in a quantifiable form.)

12. Which of the facilities would you be most willing to support through your local taxes? 5 points were awarded for #1 choice, 3 points for #2 choice, and 1 point for #3 choice.

a. Bicycle Paths	608
b. Horse-riding Trails	58
c. Nature & Hiking Trails	483
d. Roller Skating Rink	52
e. Teenage Center	320
f. Swimming Pool	270

**Environmental Issues**

13. A big problem facing the future of Marion's marine resources and harbor management is: (Average of responses is given in bold.)

**Strongly Agree**                      **Strongly Disagree**  
1 2 3 4 5

a. Pollution from boats	<b>2.0</b>
b. Pollution from runoff	<b>2.1</b>
c. Pollution from septic systems	<b>2.2</b>
d. Pollution from the town sewage plant	<b>2.5</b>
e. Overfishing of shellfish beds	<b>2.6</b>
f. Too many moorings	<b>2.4</b>
g. Too many mooring areas	<b>2.9</b>
h. Pollution from lawn care products	<b>2.7</b>
i. Too many docks	<b>3.4</b>
j. Lack of access	<b>3.0</b>
k. Pollution from geese.	<b>2.7</b>

14. Of the possible problems facing the future of Marion's marine resources and harbor management, from the list above, please list the letters of what you believe to be the three biggest problems in order of importance, with #1 being the most important.

a. Pollution from boats	671
b. Pollution from runoff	332
c. Pollution from septic systems	449
d. Pollution from the town sewage plant	179
e. Overfishing of shellfish beds	102
f. Too many moorings	183
g. Too many mooring areas	31
h. Pollution from lawn care products	121
i. Too many docks and piers	26
j. Lack of access to shores	87
k. Pollution from geese	137

15. How would you improve any of the above?

(See Appendix F.)

**Strongly**                      **Strongly**

	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>
	1 2 3 4	5
16. Marion should set aside funds to identify and preserve environmentally sensitive areas (e.g., wetlands, woodlands, marine habitats and natural open spaces)		<b>1.9</b>
Conservation Commission regulations should be strengthened to include the following:		
17. Expanded protection for wetlands		<b>2.3</b>
18. Restriction of house density for future building in the floodplain zone.		<b>1.8</b>
19. Prohibition of future building in the high wave energy areas (velocity zone).		<b>2.0</b>

20. Prohibition of future building in the floodplain zone. **2.1**

### Planning

21. The Town should allow future residential development in some areas of Marion to take place on smaller lots if, in exchange, developers would be required to preserve large amounts of open land. **2.4**

22. Open space should be required in all future developments. **1.7**

Marion currently allows "cluster zoning" by special permit. This allows the same number of houses in a given area as regular zoning, but placed closer together leaving permanent open land.

23. Marion should provide incentives to promote cluster zoning development. **2.6**

24. Some towns require developers of new subdivisions to provide an alternative cluster plan with the conventional plan to offer the Planning Board a choice. Marion should adopt this approach. **2.3**

25. New commercial buildings should be set back from the road by a planted buffer. **1.8**

That buffer should be:

- a. a line of flowers **3.0**
- b. a line of low shrubs **2.3**
- c. a visual screen of trees and shrubs **1.9**
- d. greater than: 10 feet wide, 20 feet, 30 feet, 40 feet, 50 feet. **Average of responses - 23 feet**

26. In your opinion, has Marion's rate of

growth been:

- 1. much too slow
- 2. somewhat too slow
- 3. about right 3.4**
- 4. somewhat too fast
- 5. much too fast

27. Thinking about the Town's land use regulations (zoning ordinances, site plan reviews, etc.). would you say that:

- 1. They are too restrictive in telling a person what they can and cannot do with their land;
- 2. They strike a good balance between the need for regulation and property owner's rights 2.0**
- 3. They are too lenient and do not provide enough protection for the public.
- 4. I have no opinion.

28. In the spaces below, please list the three most important issues facing Marion. Please be as specific as possible.

(See Appendix F.)

**Finances**

**Strongly Agree**

**Strongly Disagree**

1 2 3 4 5

29. Land should be taxed at a lower rate if it has perpetual open space protection on the deed. **2.0**

30. I would pay more for town water if the extra cost was used to protect the town wells through land purchases. **2.8**

Right now, about 8% of Marion is in permanent open space protection. For comparison, Nantucket has set a goal of setting aside 33% of the town for open space protection.

31. What should be Marion's goal? (Results were averaged.) **24%**

*The following answers were not tabulated.*

- 32. How much would you be willing to pay each year to achieve that goal?
- 33. How much would you be willing to pay each year for tree planting along town roads?

**Characteristics of Respondent**

(Please circle most appropriate answer.)

- 1. Present location in Marion:
  - a. Marion Vill.
  - b. N. Marion
  - c. East Marion
  - d. Route 6 Area
  - e. Converse Rd. & West
- 2. Are you registered to vote in Marion? Yes  
No
- 3. In the last five years, how many Annual Town Meetings have you attended?
- 4. In the last five years, how many times have you voted in the town elections?
- 5. How many children do you have under the age of 18?
- 6. Your age:
  - a. 18 - 34
  - b. 35 - 49
  - c. 50 - 64
  - d. 65 - 74
  - e. 75 - 84
  - f. 86+
- 7. Number of years in Marion
- 8. How many miles do you travel to work each day?

**1995 Marion Open Space and Recreation Survey Essay Responses**

Only two questions in the Open Space and Recreation Survey required an essay-type response. Essay responses were numerous, and generally fell into one of several sub-categories for each question. Numbers listed after each response indicate the number of times that, or a similar, response was given. Only responses that were repeated three or more times are listed below.

These answers are not to be considered representative of the population as no attempt at quantification has been performed. However, the responses do provide an overview of some of the sentiments held by Marion residents and can be considered as valid as public comments given at hearings.

**Q#15. How would you improve any of the following: pollution from boats, road runoff, septic systems, sewage plant, lawn care products, and geese; over fishing of shellfish beds; too many moorings, mooring areas, and docks and piers; lack of access to shores.**

*Sewer & Sewer Treatment Plant/Discharge - 52*

1. update sewer plant - 16
2. extend town sewer to most sensitive areas (environmental restrictions cited) - 16
3. town-wide sewer & mandatory connections - 14
4. monitor/stop sewage discharge in Aucoot Cove - 3

miscellaneous comments relating to sewer & sewer treatment plant/discharge - 5

*Moorings - 48*

1. fewer moorings (reduce total number of moorings) - 19
2. reduce number of out of town moorings - 8
3. restrict harbor or other access to year-round residents - 7
4. no new moorings - 7
5. remove moorings - 3

miscellaneous comments relating to moorings - 4

*Regulation, Inspection, Enforcement - 44*

1. increase inspections and monitoring - 14
2. enforce regulations - 11
3. stronger new laws for harbor - 7
4. strict laws and no variances - 6

miscellaneous comments relating to regulation, inspection, & enforcement - 6

*Boats/Boat Waste - 32*

1. check boat holding tanks/pumpout - 9
2. higher fees for illegal dumping or boat waste - 7
3. require all boats moored here to have tight tanks - 6
4. higher fees for boaters, especially non-taxpayers - 6

miscellaneous comments relating to boats/boat waste - 4

*Chemicals/Fertilizers - 21*

1. ban toxic lawn products (Tabor fields, Allen's Point, golf course, & Chemlawn cited) - 17
2. ban or reduce salt usage - 4

*Septic Systems - 16*

- 1.1. need town plan for upgrading septic systems at sale or over time (betterment bill, waterfront and Aucoot cited) - 12
2. require annual septic pumpouts - 3

miscellaneous comments relating to septic systems - 1

*Animal Wastes - 16*

1. hunt the geese - 11

miscellaneous comments relating to animal wastes - 5

*PR/Research - 14*

1. educate public - 8
2. have BOS, BOH, & Conservation Commission start a good campaign blitz on the issues - 3
3. request proposals from committees/experts/environmental firms to see ideas "out there" - 3

*Storm water - 8*

1. Storm water remediation (Old Knoll into Aucoot cited) - 5
2. more Sprague's Coves - 3

*Planning/Development - 6*

1. restrict development ("in wetlands" cited) - 6

*Miscellaneous - 3*

1. improve DPW town engineering performance - 2
2. better management of oil and waste spills - 1

**Q#28. Please list the three most important issues facing Marion.**

*Moorings/Boats/Harbor/Marine Water Quality/Shores - 157*

1. protect and clean up marine environment - 33
2. marine water quality an important issue - 27
3. polluted harbor and bay - 18
4. overcrowded mooring situation - 15
5. shore access a problem - 13
6. harbor control/management needs help - 12
7. boating and mooring access for residents/taxpayers only - 11
8. polluted runoff in harbor a problem - 5
9. future problems with Silvershell beach - 5
10. future problems with shell fishing areas - 4
11. boat pollution a problem - 3
12. problems with docks and boat ramps - 3

13. harbor access and trailer parking needed - 3

miscellaneous comments relating to moorings - boats - harbor - marine water quality - shores - 5

*Development/Growth Management/Controls (Residential) - 150*

1. restrict/control development/limit building permits - 60
2. we have overpopulation and overdevelopment - 38
3. need creative, long-range plan for future development - 21
4. too much residential development - 8
5. growth rate too fast for water, sewer, schools - 7
6. coastal development a problem - 5
7. too much development in East Marion/Point Rd. - 5

miscellaneous comments relating to development - growth management - residential land use controls - 6

*Sewer/Septic - 97*

1. improve/modernize sewer treatment plant - 28
2. bad septic systems/fix them cheaper/pollution from - 21
3. sewer town wide needed - 19
4. update sewer due to growth - 15
5. expand sewer to identified areas of town - 14

miscellaneous comments relating to development - growth management - residential land use controls - 6

*Zoning/Planning - 79*

1. zoning/rezone - 21
2. land use regulations stupid, inconsistent, subject to egos and personalities, not assertive enough in establishing new zoning Marion needs - 17
3. remaining land/woods too open to developers, land between Converse Road, Zora Farm and Indian Cone cited, Rte. 6 corridor cited, between Rte. 6 and 195 cited - 10
4. large lot sizes needed - 8
5. rezone and stop large scale development - 7
6. ANR rules a problem (outside influences), grandfathering a problem - 4
7. (anti-cluster) get rid of cluster zoning - 3

*Open Space - 69*

1. acquire / protect open space - 59
2. set aside land for wildlife - 6

*Drinking Water - 67*

1. protect drinking water - 33
2. drinking water is bad/clean drinking water needed - 23
3. affordable drinking water -5
4. improve water supply for future - 5

*Recreation/Bike Paths/After School/Day care - 67*

1. lack of recreation facilities for kids/teens cited - “not all kids are in sports,” need community center - 33
2. sidewalks/bike paths needed - 22
3. clean and restore existing parks (Washburn Park mentioned) and beaches - 3

*Environment/General and Wetlands - 42*

1. pollution a problem - 33
2. environmental issues important, protect land/sea environment (environmental degradation) - 25
3. preserve wetlands and protect them - 13

*Infrastructure/Town Services - 41*

1. poor road surfaces (County Rd. cited) - 11
2. overpopulation, growth rate too fast for water, sewer, schools - 7
3. disposal of solid waste (brush, etc) a problem / “the dump” / “garbage” - 5
4. public transportation for those who need it - 3

*Taxes/Financial/Tax Base - 37*

1. reduce/hold line on taxes - 21
2. encourage light industry to generate tax revenues - 3
3. expand tax base/tax Tabor Academy (expansion of Tabor with tax free status cited) - 5

*Town Government/Criticism - 33*

1. snobbery at work in town government - 5
2. better government management needed - 5
3. uninformed/incompetent decision makers, need competency testing - 3

*Schools/Education/School Buildings - 29*

1. preserve education quality/improve education quality/prevent overcrowding - 24
2. update Sippican school building - 4

*Regulation/Enforcement - 27*

1. leash laws needed - 8
2. the land use regulations unfairly administered, depends on who you are - 5
3. guard against over-regulation by conservation - 4
4. littering a problem - 3

*Water in General - 25*

1. water pollution (quality), protection (non-specific) and issue - 17
2. clean water (non-specific) an issue - 7

*Town Character - 23*

1. preserve existing character of town - 21

*Village - 22*

1. help for (commercial) downtown, we're losing it - 11
2. commercial growth a problem - 4

*Rt.. 6 / Commerce - 16*

1. limit new businesses/ keep commercialism down - 6
2. Rt.. 6 commercialization, "strip development along Rt.. 6," "eyesores," "trashing of Rt.. 6" a problem - 4
3. no commerce is a problem - 3

*Elderly / Affordable Housing - 16*

1. lack of elderly and affordable housing a problem - 16

*Town-Owned Buildings - 6*

1. maintenance of town-owned buildings and properties a problem - 2
2. abandon/fix Music Hall - 2