



RESEARCH, PLANNING & EVALUATION

ROSSLAND MOUNTAIN BIKE VISITOR STUDY 2011 RESULTS

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Research, Planning & Evaluation
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Acknowledgements

The 2011 Rossland Mountain Bike Visitor Study was a comprehensive survey of mountain bike travellers to Rossland between July 1 and September 5, 2011.

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Executive Summary

The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of mountain bikers who visited Rossland, in terms of traveller and trip characteristics.

Travellers were interviewed while mountain biking on trails in Rossland (Centennial, Red Mountain, Malde Creek, Seven Summits trail/Nancy Greene and Mining School) or at a local bike shop. Interviews collected information from travellers during their trip and a follow-up questionnaire collected information from travellers after their trip. The purpose of the follow-up questionnaire was to gather information about trip motivation, planning, experiences and activities, and to understand travellers' perceptions of the Rossland area and British Columbia upon trip completion.

- Between July 1 and September 5, 2011, 574 people were approached at various mountain bike trails or at a local bike shop in Rossland. Of those, 533 agreed to complete the interview. However, 7 of these individuals had previously completed the survey and were not invited to participate a second time, 310 were excluded as they were from the local Rossland/Trail area and had completed a shorter version of the survey, and an additional 7 business travellers were excluded, resulting in 209 useable non-resident leisure traveller surveys.
- Eighty-nine percent of intercepted mountain bike travellers agreed to complete a follow-up survey (mailback or online) and 60% of these completed their survey by November 13, 2011, resulting in 105 useable follow-up surveys for analysis.
- Overall, almost three-fifths (57%) of Rossland mountain bike travellers were from British Columbia and another fifth (21%) were from the rest of Canada. The majority (74%) of Canadian mountain bike travellers from provinces other than British Columbia were from Alberta.
- United States (US) mountain bike travellers represented almost a sixth (16%) of mountain bike travellers to Rossland. Over two-fifths (42%) were from Washington; the remainder were from ten additional states.
- The remainder (7%) of the mountain bike travellers were from other countries, including New Zealand (27%), the United Kingdom (27%) and Australia (20%).
- Almost a third (32%) of travellers were 25-34 years of age, followed by over a quarter (28%) who were 35-44 years of age, and another quarter (26%) who were 45-54 years of age.
- Almost half (49%) of the mountain bike travellers had a university degree; a fifth (18%) had multiple degrees, including a Masters or PhD. Another fifth (19%) had completed a college or technical diploma.
- While one-fifth (18%) stated explicitly that they preferred not to answer the question on annual household income, almost half (48%) of respondents had household incomes of at least \$100,000 annually, including over a quarter (27%) with stated household incomes over \$150,000.

- Almost three-fifths (58%) of respondents indicated that they were members of a mountain biking or a trails society/club.
- Four-fifths (80%) of travellers indicated that the primary purpose of their trip was leisure.
- The vast majority (96%) of respondents used cars, trucks, or motorcycles as their primary mode of transportation.
- Over a third (35%) of all overnight travellers reported using a campground or RV park as their primary accommodation; another third (33%) were staying with friends or relatives. Hotel/motel (9%) and rental house/condo (9%) were mentioned by almost a fifth of respondents.
- Almost a fifth (17%) of mountain bike travellers indicated they were touring with no specific destination. Travellers with a primary destination were more likely to select a destination within British Columbia (81%), including almost two-thirds (65%) who intended to visit the Rossland/Trail area. Another tenth planned to visit Nelson (5%), Castlegar (3%) or Christina Lake (3%).
- The median number of days away from home was 6, with 5 days spent in British Columbia and 3 days in the Rossland/Trail area.
- Among all mountain bike travellers, international travellers reported the longest overall trip duration, averaging 56 days away from home, followed by travellers from other Canadian provinces (33 days), the US (13 days), Alberta (10 days) and British Columbia (7 days). International travellers reported the longest trip duration in British Columbia (50 days), followed by other Canadians (24 days), Albertans (9 days), US travellers (7 days) and British Columbians (6 days). Other Canadians spent the most time in Rossland (9 days), followed by international travellers (8 days), Albertans (5 days), US travellers (4 days) and British Columbians (3 days).
- Mountain bike travellers were most likely to be travelling with their spouse (wife 36%; husband 17%) or partner (21%), followed by the company of their children (son 21%; daughter 15%) and friends (33%).
- The average travel party size was 2.8 people. Over one-fifth (21%) of respondents were travelling with children. Travel party sizes for those travelling with children were substantially larger (4.6 travellers per travel party with children vs. 2.3 travellers per travel party without children).
- Over three-fifths (61%) of mountain bike travellers spent 3 or more weeks planning their trip, with over a quarter (29%) of travellers starting their trip planning 3-8 weeks in advance.
- Almost half (46%) of respondents indicated that, independent of cost or budget, their first consideration in trip planning was the notion of a mountain bike trip, followed at a later stage by a search for a suitable destination.

- Past experience (72%), advice from friends and relatives (54%), mountain biking related websites (39%), mountain bike related media (28%) and the Tourism Rossland website (22%) were the top information sources used by mountain bike travellers before their trip.
- The two information sources that travellers found most useful before their trip were experience from previous visits to Rossland (44%) and advice from friends and relatives (40%).
- Previous visits to Rossland (44%) and advice from friends/relatives (43%) were the information sources used most often during the trip by these travellers. Also reportedly useful, but less frequently used, were information sources such as visitor guides and brochures (25%) and visitor centres (14%).
- Travellers were asked about the leisure activities they participated in during their overall trip, besides mountain biking. The top three activities mentioned were visiting a municipal, provincial or national park, or a natural area outside a park (41%), hiking (35%) and shopping for local arts and crafts (31%).
- Respondents were also asked about activities they participated in while in the Rossland/Trail area besides mountain biking. The most frequently selected activity for travellers was visiting a municipal, provincial or national park, or natural area outside a park (31%), shopping for local arts and crafts (31%), hiking (28%), attending or participating in a sporting event (does not include golf) (28%) and cycling (other than mountain biking) (27%).
- Four-fifths (80%) of mountain bike travellers intended to ride their bikes for three or fewer days in the Rossland area during the trip in which they were interviewed.
- On average, travellers spent an average of almost 4½ hours per day on their mountain bikes (median = 5 hours).
- Based on responses from the follow-up survey, the Seven Summits trail was the most popular trail, as over three-fifths (61%) of respondents reported riding on it during their visit. Other popular trails included Techno Grind (43%), Milky Way (39%), Larry's (38%), Full Monte (35%), Redtop (34%), Miners (29%) and Whiskey (20%).
- The vast majority (90%) of mountain bikers were riding their own personal bikes at the time they were interviewed.
- Between July 1 and September 5, 2011, three-quarter (73%) of respondents visited Rossland only once; the rest (27%) visited Rossland an average of two times.
- Almost a fifth (19%) of mountain bike travellers reported that at least one member of their travel party would not be mountain biking on the trip.
- Similar to travel party size, the average rider party size also increased when children were present (3.6 riders per rider party with children vs. 2.5 riders per rider party without children).

- A fifth (21%) of all mountain bike traveller riding parties included at least one local resident.
- Travellers were asked about the importance of mountain biking in their decision to visit Rossland, over seven-eighths (90%) of respondents stated that mountain biking was either the single most important factor (66%; rating of 10 on a 10-point scale) or a very important factor (24%; rating of 7-9 on a 10-point scale).
- When asked how they first learned about Rossland as a place to mountain bike, over half (51%) of respondents credited their family and friends, another third (33%) through personal experience and almost a quarter (24%) learned about Rossland's mountain biking offerings through the mountain bike community (e.g. magazines, websites, videos, etc.).
- In order to identify areas where Rossland is currently meeting and/or exceeding consumer expectations, mountain bike travellers were asked about their satisfaction and perceived importance for various factors, including mountain bike trails/riding aspects, community offerings and other aspects. On every aspect, Rossland met travellers' expectations.
- When asked about the satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with their mountain bike experience in Rossland, all travellers indicated they were satisfied (90%, very satisfied; 10%, somewhat satisfied).
- Three-quarters (75%) of mountain bike travellers indicated they were likely to return to the Rossland/Trail area to mountain bike in the next 12 months (61%, very likely to return; 14%, somewhat likely to return).
- The vast majority (98%) of mountain bike travellers were very likely to recommend Rossland as a place to mountain bike to their friends and family, while the remainder (2%) mentioned they were somewhat likely to recommend.
- Additional mountain biking related features and services respondents reported wanting to see included longer/additional trails (18% of the total responses; 30% of the total respondents), additional services and amenities (12% of responses; 20% of respondents), increased/improved transportation (8% of responses; 13% of responses), better maps/use of map technology (8% of responses; 13% of respondents) and better signage (8% of responses; 13% of respondents).
- Over half (52%) of the travellers reported mountain biking at locations other than Rossland on their trip. The most frequently mentioned locations included Nelson, New Denver, Revelstoke, Whistler, Squamish, Idaho, Pemberton, Kamloops, Vernon, Kelowna and Castlegar.

- A variety of characteristics were identified as unique to Rossland, including the diversity and type of trails that were available to mountain bikers (24% of the total responses; 59% of the total respondents), ease of trail access (9% responses; 21% of respondents), friendly locals (7% of responses; 18% of respondents), authenticity of the small town setting (7% of responses; 16% of respondents), scenery (7% of responses; 16% of respondents), quiet/uncrowded (6% of responses; 15% of respondents), the Seven Summits trail (6% of responses; 14% of respondents) and the organization and quality of the trails (6% of responses; 14% of respondents).
- Positive images/characteristics of Rossland included the quality of the biking experience (17% of the total responses; 44% of the total respondents), its scenic beauty (16% of responses; 41% of respondents), friendly nature (13% of responses; 35% of respondents), the town (8% of responses; 21% of respondents), the uncrowded/relaxed atmosphere (8% of responses; 21% of respondents) and lots to do (7% of responses; 18% of respondents).
- Negative images or characteristics of Rossland included distance and accessibility (17% of the total responses; 24% of the total respondents), limited amenities (15% of responses; 22% of respondents), limited operating hours/lack of night life, food, facilities and options (11% of responses; 16% of respondents), cost (8% of responses; 12% of respondents), trail enhancement (7% of responses; 10% of respondents) and limited camping/options for inexpensive accommodation (7% of responses; 10% of respondents).
- Respondents were asked which mountain bike vacation destination inside and outside British Columbia they would most likely consider for the future. Inside British Columbia, almost a fifth (20%) of respondents indicated that they would consider Whistler, another sixth (15%) considered visiting Nelson, whereas a tenth indicated they would consider visiting Squamish (11%) or Fernie (11%). Outside British Columbia, one-third (33%) mentioned Moab, Utah, an eighth indicated an alternate destination in the US (14%) or Canmore, Alberta (12%), and a tenth (9%) indicated they would consider visiting Fruita, Colorado.
- Travellers were also asked about their satisfaction with their trip in British Columbia. The majority of travellers stated they were satisfied with their trip (86%, very satisfied; 6%, somewhat satisfied).
- Travellers were asked about their likelihood of taking another trip in British Columbia. The majority of travellers indicated that they were likely to do so (86%, very likely; 6%, likely; 5%, somewhat likely).
- A majority of respondents indicated they were likely to mountain bike while on another trip in British Columbia (86%, very likely; 8%, likely; 4%, somewhat likely).
- Travellers were asked whether their main motivation of another trip to British Columbia will be driven by mountain biking. Three-quarters (76%) of respondents indicated that they were very likely to be driven by mountain biking on another trip in British Columbia.

- Overall, mountain bike travellers reported an average spending of \$148.57 per party per day and \$62.82 per person per day during their trip.
- Respondents were asked about the type of mountain biking they normally participate in. Over seven-eighths (88%) of travellers participate in cross-country/all mountain, followed by a smaller proportion who participate in freeriding (20%) and downhill biking (17%), and a handful of respondents who participate in bike skills/dirt jumping (4%).
- Travellers were asked level of experience level: a third (33%) indicated they were at the intermediate level (that they have been mountain biking for a little while, still learning lots; blue trails), almost half (48%) were at the advanced level (been mountain biking for quite awhile; black trails), and over an eighth (14%) indicated they would classify themselves as expert riders (ride the most advanced trails; double black).
- Three-quarters (75%) of mountain bike travellers reported taking at least one overnight trip for the purpose of mountain biking in the previous 12 months. The median number of overnight mountain biking trips taken by respondents during this period was three.
- Travellers were asked about the number and types of bikes they currently owned. Almost two-fifths (38%) owned 4 or more bikes, another third (29%) owned 3 bikes and a quarter (23%) owned 2 bikes. Over three-quarters (78%) of mountain bike travellers owned full suspension mountain bikes, next in popularity were road bikes (65%) and hardtail mountain bikes (42%).