

FEBRUARY 27, 2025

MEMORANDUM

To: Paul Murphy  
From: Tom Crikelair  
Subject: 2024 Island Explorer Passenger Survey  
CC: John Kelly, Stephanie Clement

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This memo presents the results of an onboard passenger survey distributed on Island Explorer buses in August of 2024. The analysis includes comparisons with surveys from past years.

The survey form and a transcription of passenger comments are attached as appendices.

The report is structured as follows:

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# 2024 Island Explorer Passenger Survey

## 1. Methodology and Response

The onboard survey was carried out on Tuesday and Wednesday, August 6 and 7, 2024. Surveys were distributed between 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Island Explorer bus routes that originate at the Bar Harbor Village Green and at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. The Schoodic route, the Tremont route, and the Bicycle Express were not included in the 2024 survey effort. Groups were handed a survey form by a team member as they boarded buses at the two transit hub locations.

Passengers were asked to complete one survey per group. Those who agreed to participate were given a blank form and a pencil. They were asked to place their completed form in a box at the front of the bus as they disembarked. Nearly all groups that were offered a survey agreed to take one. In 2024, 500 surveys were distributed, and 456 completed surveys were returned, for a response rate of 91.2%.

It is important to recognize that the survey examines Island Explorer usage during the daytime only. The distribution of trip purposes and the distribution of riders by route would have been different if the survey had included evening hours. Surveys were not distributed in the evening in part because it would have been difficult for passengers to fill out survey forms on buses in the dark.

Because the survey was carried out during the busiest part of the summer, the percentage of usage by visitors (as opposed to year-round and seasonal residents) may have been somewhat higher than at other times during the season.

FIGURE 1 2024 SURVEY AND RIDERSHIP DISTRIBUTION

<i>Route</i>	<i>Survey Respondents</i>	<i>Survey Distribution</i>	<i>Ridership Distribution</i>
Bar Harbor Road	116	19%	16%
Eden Street	88	14%	22%
Sand Beach	118	19%	10%
Loop Road	102	17%	29%
Jordan Pond	80	13%	10%
Northeast Harbor	29	5%	3%
Southwest Harbor	33	5%	3%
Schoodic	0	0%	2%
Trenton	14	2%	3%
Blackwoods	28	5%	2%
Tremont	3	0.5%	0.3%
Total	611	100%	100%

Figure 1 shows bus routes utilized by groups participating in the 2024 survey. The total is greater than 456 because some groups used more than one route for their trip. This table also shows the distribution of 2024 summer-season ridership by route.

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The survey sample included a lower percentage of Eden Street route riders when compared with the actual distribution of ridership by route. This resulted in part from the fact that survey distribution was limited to daytime hours.

Surveys were distributed at the Bar Harbor Village Green and at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center. This means that survey distribution focused on groups that traveled to, from, or through these two transit hubs. Results would have been different if surveys had been offered to all Island Explorer passengers.

### 2. Group Size and Age of Survey Respondents

Participants were asked to identify the number of individuals in their party. In 2024, the 456 participating groups included a total of 1,342 individuals. The average group size was 2.9.

FIGURE 2 AVERAGE GROUP SIZE

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Surveys	484	490	532	477	464	451	462	227	464	466	456
Average Group	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.7	3.1	2.2	2.9	2.8	2.9

Figure 3 shows the distribution of survey groups by group size. Groups of five or more individuals made up 15% of survey respondents during the 2024 summer survey. Groups of five or more made up 14% of survey respondents during the 2023 summer survey and 14% of survey respondents during the 2022 summer survey.

FIGURE 3 SIZE OF PARTICIPATING GROUPS

<i>Group sizes</i>	<i>Summer 2022 Count</i>	<i>Summer 2022 Percent</i>	<i>Summer 2023 Count</i>	<i>Summer 2023 Percent</i>	<i>Summer 2024 Count</i>	<i>Summer 2024 Percent</i>
One	78	17%	99	21%	73	16%
Two	218	45%	167	36%	206	45%
Three	39	8%	49	11%	37	8%
Four	73	16%	87	19%	69	15%
Five	24	5%	28	6%	37	8%
Six	12	3%	14	3%	14	3%
Seven	9	2%	7	2%	5	1%
Eight or more	17	4%	12	3%	15	3%
	464	100%	463	100%	456	100%

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In the summer of 2024, 20% of group members were retired adults, 57% were non-retired adults, and 23% were children below the age of 18. In the summer of 2023, 18% of group members were retired adults, 58% were non-retired adults, and 24% were children below the age of 18.

### AGE DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPATING GROUPS

	<i>Summer 2018</i>	<i>Fall 2019</i>	<i>Summer 2022</i>	<i>Summer 2023</i>	<i>Summer 2024</i>
Retired Adults	16%	51%	15%	18%	20%
Other Adults	58%	45%	61%	58%	57%
Children	27%	4%	23%	24%	23%

In August of 2024, 32% of participating groups included at least one child. In August of 2023, 34% of participating groups included at least one child.

### 3. Passenger Comments and Suggestions

Bus riders continue to be very pleased with free Island Explorer bus service. A visitor from Ohio on the Loop Road bus said, “Great service, friendly staff.” A visitor from New York on the Bar Harbor Road bus said, “This is a wonderful service and should serve as a model for communities everywhere.”

A visitor from New Hampshire on the Northeast Harbor bus said, “The Island Explorer was extremely convenient. We parked our car and did not use it during our stay. The schedule was easy to follow and the drivers were very helpful.” A visitor from Massachusetts on the Eden Street bus said, “I’m a big fan! This bus has made our trip a lot easier.”

A visitor from New Brunswick said, “This service was extremely helpful and one of the main reasons we came with our RV to Bar Harbor.” A seasonal worker from Jamaica said, “The bus drivers are awesome and courteous.”

Survey respondents had special praise for Island Explorer Ambassadors. A visitor from Delaware on the Jordan Pond bus said, “It was very helpful having Island Explorer workers at the stops to answer navigation questions.” A visitor from Wisconsin said, “Great service. Ambassadors are helpful and knowledgeable.”

A visitor from Pennsylvania on the Jordan Pond bus said, “Love it! Great, especially for doing point-to-point hikes versus out-and-back.” A group from Massachusetts on the Sand Beach bus said, “We appreciate that we can hike all over without having to back track to parking.”

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THANK YOU, L.L.BEAN!

As they have in past years, passengers expressed gratitude to L.L.Bean for the company's contribution to the bus system. A visitor from Florida on the Bar Harbor Road bus said: "We are grateful that L.L.Bean provides this service. We support the companies that help our National Parks." A visitor from Connecticut on the Blackwoods bus said: "Awesome and perfectly in support of their image. L.L.Bean is always one of my first stops driving up to Acadia (my 52<sup>nd</sup> consecutive year!)."

A visitor from Massachusetts on the Sand Beach bus said: "This service is invaluable and will surely encourage me to purchase L.L.Bean over any other outdoor outfitter." A visitor from Tennessee on the Loop Road bus said: "Money well spent. Excellent amenity."

A Loop Road passenger from New York said: "Excellent. We visited Freeport and purchased at L.L.Bean. Hope this sponsorship continues. Thanks for adding to an enjoyable vacation in Maine!" Several survey participants echoed a visitor from New Jersey on the Eden Street bus who said: "We will be stopping by Freeport on our way home."

## SUGGESTIONS

Survey respondents used the comment section to make a variety of suggestions for improving Island Explorer service. The most frequent request came from passengers on the Sand Beach bus who asked for a dedicated bus lane at the Ocean Drive fee station. A passenger from Pennsylvania said: "Long wait at entrance station." A California visitor said: "Let buses through the Ranger station without waiting in this very long line!"

A passenger from Connecticut suggested: "Dedicated bus travel lane at the Park fee station to avoid buses stuck in traffic and encourage riders." Another Sand Beach passenger asked: "Can a bus lane be worked out with NPS for quicker entry into the park?" A passenger from Michigan on the Loop Road bus cited a "45-minute wait to get into Sandy Beach."

Another request made by multiple riders was for a direct bus route between the Bar Harbor Village Green and Jordan Pond House. A visitor from Florida said: "Village Green to Jordan Pond—direct without bus change." A visitor from Massachusetts suggested: "More frequent and direct service. Less stops to get to Jordan Pond." A bus rider from Florida said: "I wish there was better service between the Village Green and Jordan Pond since Jordan Pond is the worst parking. I am not willing to take two buses, traveling by way of the Visitor Center."

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Passengers also asked for:

- Earlier morning departures (“earlier than 9:00 am”) from the Visitor Center.
- More frequent service to Southwest Harbor and Northeast Harbor.
- Later service to Tremont, Manset, and Northeast Harbor.
- More frequent Blackwoods service.
- A bus stop closer to the Bubble Rock trailhead.
- Later evening trips from the Village Green to the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.
- Later evening inbound trips from the Oceanarium.
- A parking lot redesign that separates buses from auto congestion at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center.
- Better organization of people waiting to board buses at the Visitor Center.
- More explicit information on the web site about bus stop locations.
- A bus route to Cadillac Mountain.
- A bus stop at the South Ridge trailhead.
- Better display of direction of travel for bus symbols on the MyStop app.
- A way to travel from KOA to ANP without transferring at the Village Green.
- More coordinated transfer times at the High School.
- Earlier and later service to areas outside of Bar Harbor.

### 4. Residency and Overnight Lodging

In the 2024 survey, 12% of participating groups said that they are year-round or summer residents of Mount Desert Island. This includes 4% who said they are year-round residents and 8% who said that they are summer residents. The distribution of local residents, summer residents, and non-resident visitors for the ten most recent Island Explorer surveys is presented in Figure 4.

FIGURE 4 LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2023
Year-round	9%	8%	9%	6%	7%	5%	3%	5%	3%	4%
Summer residents	13%	12%	12%	11%	10%	9%	11%	10%	12%	8%
Visitors	78%	81%	79%	83%	84%	87%	86%	85%	85%	88%

Participants were asked to identify their hometown and state. The results are presented in Figure 5. Twenty-two percent of groups participating in the 2024 survey live year-round in New England, while 25% live in Mid-Atlantic States.

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FIGURE 5 YEAR-ROUND RESIDENCE BY REGION

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Mid Atlantic	25%	27%	27%	31%	25%	27%	21%	32%	23%	25%
Maine	17%	11%	15%	12%	13%	15%	6%	8%	6%	6%
Other New England	16%	18%	15%	16%	15%	15%	3%	9%	12%	16%
Midwest	9%	8%	12%	11%	10%	12%	21%	15%	18%	17%
Southeast	11%	12%	12%	12%	17%	12%	21%	15%	17%	16%
West	7%	7%	5%	6%	6%	5%	13%	6%	8%	8%
Canada	5%	6%	6%	5%	6%	6%	1%	5%	6%	5%
Other international	10%	11%	8%	8%	6%	8%	14%	9%	9%	9%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Combined New England	33%	29%	30%	28%	27%	30%	9%	17%	17%	22%
Eastern Europe	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	3%	0%	2%	2%	2%

Survey participants were asked: “What town will you stay in tonight?” In 2024, 69% of bus riders said they planned to stay overnight in Bar Harbor, while 14% were spending the night in other Mount Desert Island towns, 4% were staying in Trenton, and 1% was staying in the Schoodic area. The percentage staying in “other Hancock County towns” was 5%, while 4% stayed elsewhere in Maine. Town-by-town results for the most recent ten surveys are presented in Figure 6.

FIGURE 6 LOCATION OF OVERNIGHT LODGING

Town	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Bar Harbor	70%	75%	75%	72%	64%	65%	54%	65%	68%	69%
Mount Desert	7%	7%	11%	8%	10%	8%	3%	5%	2%	7%
Southwest Harbor	5%	7%	4%	6%	7%	6%	0.4%	6%	6%	6%
Other Hancock County	8%	3%	4%	8%	4%	6%	2%	4%	5%	5%
Other Maine	4%	3%	2%	2%	4%	4%	1%	7%	4%	4%
Tremont	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	0.4%	1%	4%	2%
Trenton	2%	3%	2%	1%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Schoodic area	1%	1%	0.2%	0.4%	1%	0%	0.4%	2%	2%	1%
Nova Scotia	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Local Islands	1%	1%	0.8%	0.4%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Cruise ship						4%	36%	0%	0%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Local MDI towns	89%	94%	94%	90%	91%	86%	62%	82%	85%	88%

Figure 7 shows distribution of overnight lodging by type of accommodation from 2012 through 2024. In 2024, 22% of Island Explorer groups stayed in campgrounds, while 32% stayed in motels, inns, or B&B’s. The percentage staying in short-term rentals was 21%.

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During most years, summer-season surveys have been carried out on days when no cruise ships were scheduled. Cruise ship passengers accounted for 35% of survey groups in the fall of 2019, and 4% of survey groups in August of 2018. A single cruise ship was in Bar Harbor on the first day of the 2018 survey.

**FIGURE 7 TYPE OF OVERNIGHT LODGING**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Campground	22%	20%	23%	23%	32%	27%	14%	24%	24%	22%
Motel, Inn, B&B	38%	43%	41%	39%	31%	40%	32%	35%	33%	32%
Year-round residence	13%	10%	11%	8%	9%	10%	6%	6%	5%	6%
Summer residence	14%	8%	12%	11%	10%	9%	8%	10%	11%	8%
Short-term rental	9%	14%	9%	16%	12%	7%	5%	17%	17%	21%
Sailboat or Yacht	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	0%	2%	2%	4%
Cruise Ship	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	35%	0%	0%	0%
Other	1%	2%	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Surveys included the question: “Is your overnight lodging within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor Village Green?” In August 2024, 32% of participating groups said that their lodging was located within easy walking distance of the Bar Harbor transit hub. During recent years, this number has varied from a low of 26% in 2017 to highs of 39% in 2014 and 37% in 2012.

## 5. Trip Purpose

Survey respondents were asked to identify the primary purpose of their bus trip. The most popular categories in August of 2024 were “hiking” and “sightseeing,” with 40% and 27% of total responses respectively. “Work” was cited by 7%. Recreational purposes (hiking, biking, swimming, and boating) were chosen by a combined 45% of survey groups. Percentages for “biking” since 2019 are lower than previous years because surveys were not distributed on the Bicycle Express in 2019 through 2024.

**FIGURE 8 TRIP PURPOSE**

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Work	13%	10%	10%	10%	8%	7%	9%	10%	8%	7%
Hiking	30%	31%	32%	40%	29%	34%	25%	42%	39%	40%
Biking	11%	18%	11%	10%	10%	7%	1%	3%	2%	3%
Swimming	6%	4%	5%	3%	4%	6%	0%	3%	3%	1%
Boating	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Shopping	4%	6%	7%	4%	6%	6%	5%	7%	5%	7%
Dining	3%	4%	5%	4%	6%	6%	4%	4%	6%	7%
Sightseeing	27%	20%	25%	24%	29%	32%	51%	26%	31%	27%
Other	5%	5%	5%	4%	6%	2%	4%	4%	4%	6%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%



## 6. Visitor Travel Modes

In 2024, 55% of visitor groups said they traveled to the region in an automobile without an attached trailer, 17% of visitors arrived in a recreational vehicle or in a car towing a trailer, and 23% arrived in the region on an airplane. Three percent arrived via sailboat or motorboat. Auto travel in 2024 was consistent with past summers. Airplane travel in the three most recent years has been higher than amounts reported during the previous seven years.

FIGURE 9 VISITOR TRAVEL MODES

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Car	58%	64%	59%	61%	59%	53%	27%	59%	52%	55%
RV or trailer	16%	10%	16%	17%	21%	20%	14%	14%	16%	17%
Airplane	17%	16%	17%	18%	11%	17%	16%	24%	28%	23%
Sailboat or yacht	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%	3%	0%	2%	2%	3%
Intercity bus	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Tour bus	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%
Cruise Ship	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	37%	0%	0%	0%
Other	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%	0%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

## 7. Park Entry Permits

In the August 2024 survey, 80% of all Island Explorer groups said they purchased an Acadia National Park entry permit. This is a 1% increase from 2023 and a 9% drop from 2022.

FIGURE 10 DID YOU PURCHASE A PARK ENTRY PERMIT?

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
YES	66%	67%	70%	70%	70%	74%	80%	80%	84%	77%	89%	79%	80%
NO	34%	33%	30%	30%	30%	26%	20%	20%	16%	23%	11%	21%	20%

Figure 11 shows the percentage of entry permit purchases for various user groups. In 2024, 85% of non-resident visitor groups purchased an entry pass. While only 41% of summer residents had passes, if individuals traveling for work are excluded, 64% of summer residents purchased passes.

In 2024, 89% of groups who said they would visit Acadia National Park on their bus ride had a permit. Fifty-nine percent of bus riders who were not traveling to the park had a permit.

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FIGURE 11 PERCENT OF USER GROUPS WITH PARK ENTRY PERMITS

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Year-round residents	33%	41%	59%	65%	50%	81%	89%	75%	*note	*note
Summer residents	52%	49%	40%	46%	51%	54%	38%	30%	31%	41%
Visitors	78%	75%	80%	86%	85%	87%	81%	89%	86%	85%
Cruise ship passengers							79%			
Groups visiting ANP on this trip	82%	80%	80%	90%	91%	91%	89%	94%	90%	89%
Groups not visiting ANP on this trip	40%	32%	32%	50%	54%	64%	44%	53%	53%	59%

\*Sample sizes in 2023 and 2024 were too small to yield meaningful results.

Figure 12 shows permit ownership by type of lodging. It shows that people staying in summer residences are the least likely to have a permit. As noted above, many of the respondents staying in “summer residences” were seasonal workers.

FIGURE 12 PERCENT WITH PARK PERMITS BY LODGING TYPE

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Campgrounds	83%	83%	84%	88%	92%	91%	74%	89%	89%	86%
Hotels	80%	71%	77%	85%	81%	88%	74%	84%	82%	83%
Inn or B&B	83%	78%	84%	90%	89%	73%	100%	96%	91%	86%
Weekly or Airbnb	83%	79%	90%	93%	91%	70%	55%	100%	93%	95%
Summer residence	52%	39%	44%	44%	50%	62%	41%	30%	29%	47%
Year-round residence	41%	46%	64%	77%	56%	93%	100%	77%	*note	*note
Sailboat or yacht	39%	65%	50%	57%	50%	53%		71%	*note	*note

\*Sample sizes in 2023 and 2024 were too small to yield meaningful results.

Figure 13 shows where bus riders purchased their Park entry permits. Figure 14 shows a breakdown of permit types for Island Explorer bus riders.

FIGURE 13 WHERE DID YOU PURCHASE YOUR PARK ENTRY PERMIT?

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Village Green	37%	39%	34%	33%	30%	33%	44%	0%	0%	0%
Loop Road	11%	8%	9%	7%	5%	5%	3%	6%	5%	6%
Visitor Center	29%	34%	30%	34%	26%	27%	18%	26%	28%	22%
ANP Campground	4%	5%	7%	6%	6%	4%	1%	4%	3%	2%
Online						9%	3%	45%	39%	46%
Other	19%	15%	20%	20%	33%	22%	31%	20%	24%	24%

FIGURE 14 TYPES OF ENTRY PERMITS

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
One-week	46%	51%	42%	55%	50%	57%	30%	55%	51%	46%
Full Season	14%	10%	14%	13%	15%	7%	3%	20%	18%	20%*
Senior Pass	23%	22%	30%	27%	27%	25%	48%	19%	23%	24%
Other	17%	17%	14%	5%	8%	11%	19%	6%	9%	10%

\*In 2024, 7% Acadia Annual Pass and 13% Interagency Annual Pass.

## 8. Transfer Activity

Twenty-seven percent of survey groups said they used more than one bus route to complete their trip. Fifteen percent of all groups transferred to or from the Sand Beach route, 15% transferred to or from the Bar Harbor Road route, and 14% transferred to or from the Loop Road route.

The most common transfer pair involved Routes 3 and 4 (Sand Beach and Loop Road), with 27 transfers. The second most common pair was Route 1 and 5 (Bar Harbor Road and Jordan Pond), with 20 transfers. This was followed by Routes 1 and 3 (Bar Harbor Road and Sand Beach) with 18 transfers, Routes 1 and 4 (Bar Harbor Road and Loop Road) with 17, and routes 4 and 5 with 16.

### MOST COMMON TRANSFER PAIRS

Route Pair	Count	Transfer Locations
Routes 3 & 4	27	Sand Beach or Sieur de Monts
Routes 1 & 5	20	Hulls Cove Visitor Center
Routes 1 & 3	18	Village Green
Routes 1 & 4	17	Hulls Cove Visitor Center
Routes 4 & 5	16	Jordan Pond House

### TRANSFER COUNTS

ROUTES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	10	11	Total
1			15	5	6	1	2		1		30
2	5		5				1		1		12
3	3	1		12	2		1	1	1		21
4	12		15		4						31
5	14	1	5	12		1			1		34
6	2	2	1	1							6
7	1	1	2	2	1				1		8
9	1		3								4
10	1				1	1	1				4
11							3				3
Total	39	5	46	32	14	3	8	1	5	0	153

## 9. Parking Locations

Participants were asked where they parked their cars or recreational vehicles. In August of 2024, 49% were parked at their hotel or campground, 6% were parked at a private residence, and 1% said that someone else was using their vehicle. Sixteen percent said they did not have a car or RV available locally. A combined total of 72% of Island Explorer riders reached an Island Explorer bus stop without using a private vehicle.

The Hulls Cove Visitor Center parking lot was used by 21% of Island Explorer groups participating in the August 2024 survey. People who said they parked their cars on the street or in public parking spaces in Bar Harbor accounted for 2% of groups surveyed in 2024.

FIGURE 15 WHERE IS YOUR CAR NOW?

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
Lodging	50%	54%	54%	53%	48%	57%	32%	52%	49%	49%
Residence	9%	14%	14%	12%	13%	6%	5%	6%	7%	6%
Someone is using it	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
No car	18%	13%	16%	13%	17%	17%	51%	16%	19%	16%
Hulls Cove Visitor Center	6%	5%	5%	13%	13%	13%	8%	18%	21%	21%
Other ANP	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Bar Harbor street or lot	7%	9%	6%	3%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Other towns	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%
Other	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

For groups who parked their cars at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center, 54% said they had local overnight accommodations (MDI towns or Trenton), 37% were staying elsewhere in Hancock County, 7% had lodging in other Maine towns, and 1% were going out of state.

## 10. Number of Years Utilizing the Island Explorer

Groups were asked how many years they have used the Island Explorer. In August of 2024, 75% were first-year users. Twelve percent of Island Explorer groups said they have used the system for five or more years.

FIGURE 16 HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU USED THE ISLAND EXPLORER?

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2017	2018	Fall 2019	2022	2023	2024
1st year	66%	68%	67%	66%	71%	74%	82%	80%	79%	75%
Two years	6%	8%	7%	11%	7%	7%	6%	5%	8%	8%
3 or 4 years	11%	8%	9%	8%	7%	7%	4%	3%	4%	5%
5 or more	17%	15%	17%	15%	15%	12%	8%	12%	10%	12%

Excluding year-round and summer residents, 81% of visiting groups said that 2024 was their first year using the shuttle service.

## 11. Service Evaluation

Passengers were asked to evaluate the quality of service provided by the Island Explorer. They were asked to rate the cleanliness of buses and the friendliness and helpfulness of drivers. They were asked whether seats were readily available, whether buses ran on time, if bus schedules were easy to find, and if schedules were easy to understand. Riders were also asked to comment on the frequency of service and whether the right destinations are served. The results of the service evaluation for 2024 are presented in Figure 17.

FIGURE 17: EVALUATION OF SERVICE QUALITY FOR 2024

	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Poor</i>
Buses are clean	92%	7%	0%	0%
Drivers are friendly and helpful	90%	9%	1%	0%
It is easy to find a seat	77%	17%	5%	1%
Buses are on time	79%	16%	4%	0%
Bus schedules are easy to find	80%	14%	6%	1%
Bus schedules are easy to understand	74%	18%	7%	1%
The frequency of service is convenient	67%	24%	8%	1%
The right destinations are served	76%	20%	3%	0%

Seat availability on the Loop Road route improved significantly from 2023 to 2024. In 2023, 26% of Loop Road groups rated “easy to find a seat” as “fair” and 15% as “poor.” In 2024, 3% of Loop Road groups said seat availability was “fair” and 3% said “poor.”

## 12. Crowded Buses

The 2024 survey included two questions about bus capacity and crowding. Passengers were asked:

- Have you been on a bus where you had to stand because seats were filled?
- Have you had to wait for another bus because the bus you wanted was full?

In 2024, 27% of survey groups said they had to stand “once or twice,” 11% said they had to stand “several times,” and 62% said they had not been required to stand. In 2023, 32% said “once or twice,” 9% said “several times,” and 59% said they had not been required to stand.

In 2024, 18% of survey groups said they had been turned away by a full bus “once or twice,” while 3% said this had happened “several times.” In 2023, 22% of survey groups said they had been turned away by a full bus “once or twice,” while 2% said this had happened “several times.” In 2022, 11% said they had been turned away by a full bus “once or twice,” and 2% said “several times.”

### 13. What Helped You Decide?

FIGURE 18: WHAT HELPED YOU DECIDE TO TRY THE ISLAND EXPLORER?

	Count	Percent of groups	Comments
NPS web site	70	17%	The NPS web site was selected by 33% of Southwest Harbor groups, 25% of Loop Road groups, and 21% of Blackwoods groups.
Hotel or campground web site	76	18%	Lodging web site was selected by 36% of Eden Street groups, 28% of Bar Harbor Road groups, 24% of Southwest Harbor groups, and 22% of Trenton groups.
IEX web site	69	17%	The Island Explorer web site was chosen by 44% of Trenton groups, 40% of Northeast Harbor, and 26% of Blackwoods groups.
IEX staff at transit hubs	69	17%	IEX support staff influenced 28% of Loop Road, 20% of Northeast Harbor, and 16% of Jordan Pond groups.
NPS Rangers	54	13%	Park Rangers helped 24% of Loop Road groups and 20% of Jordan Pond groups in their decision to use the service.
Lodging staff	67	16%	Lodging staff helped 33% of Eden Street groups and 22% of Trenton groups.
Advice from friends	84	20%	39% of Southwest Harbor groups, 29% of Sand Beach groups, and 25% of Northeast Harbor groups cited advice from friends.
IEX tabloid	76	18%	Eighteen percent of Island Explorer groups utilized the printed bus schedule to help make their decision.
Seeing others ride	43	10%	Ten percent of survey groups said they decided to use the shuttles after seeing others ride.
Seeing buses everywhere	86	21%	Twenty-one percent cited “seeing buses everywhere.”
We tried driving but couldn’t park	53	13%	Eighteen percent of Loop Road and Bar Harbor Road groups said they decided to ride after experiencing parking problems

## 2024 Island Explorer Passenger Survey

The 2024 survey asked participants to select from a list of eleven factors that helped them decide to try the Island Explorer. While the survey did not ask for the “most important” factors, most respondents limited themselves to choosing either one item or a small handful of items from the available list.

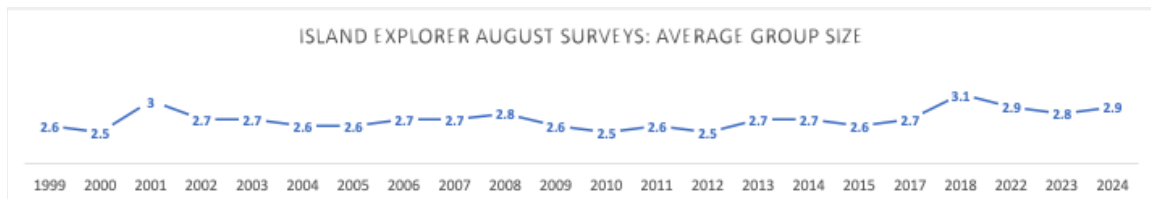
Most of the items were selected by between 15% and 20% of survey respondents. The most popular was “Seeing buses everywhere,” selected by 21% of survey groups. This was followed by “Advice from friends,” with 20%. Web sites (NPS, lodging establishment, Island Explorer ) were selected by 17-18% of survey groups.

### 14. Multiyear Trends

In the years since the service was first introduced in 1999, Island Explorer passengers have participated in twenty-two surveys. This section presents multiyear responses to selected survey questions. It addresses summer surveys only. The 2021 fall survey is addressed separately in the closing section of this report.

#### GROUP SIZE

Over the course of 24 years, average group size for Island Explorer survey participants has varied from a low of 2.5 to a high of 3.1.

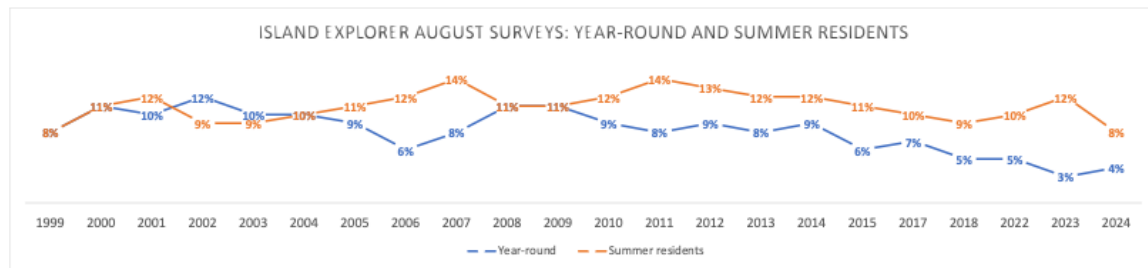


## 2024 Island Explorer Passenger Survey

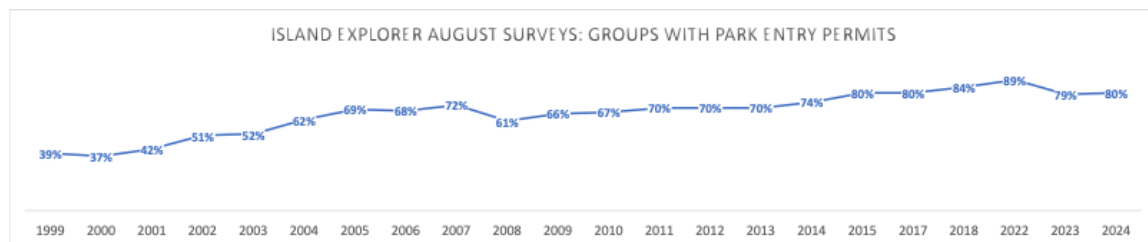
### YEAR-ROUND AND SUMMER RESIDENTS

Between 2000 and 2004, between 8% and 12% of Island Explorer survey groups were year-round residents. From 2005 to 2022, year-round residents accounted for between 5% and 7% of survey groups. In 2023, 3% of survey groups said they were year-round residents. In 2024, 4% of survey groups said they were year-round residents.

Between 8% and 14% of surveys have been completed by summer residents, including seasonal workers. The combined total of year-round and summer residents has varied between 12% and 22%.

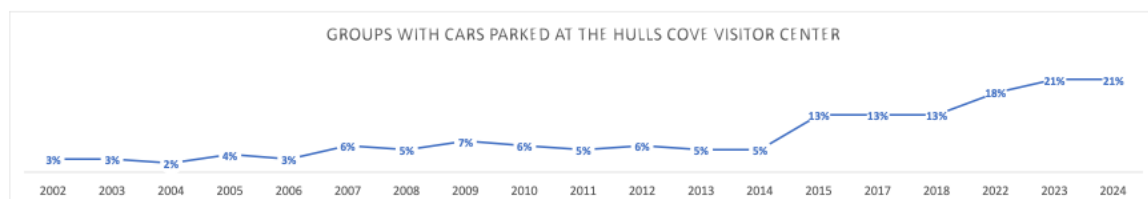


### PARK ENTRY PERMITS



The percentage of groups with park entry permits has increased steadily over the years. Despite this long-term increase, the percentage of all groups with entry permits decreased 9 percentage points between 2022 and 2024, from 89% in 2022 to 80% in 2024.

### PARKING AT THE HULLS COVE VISITOR CENTER

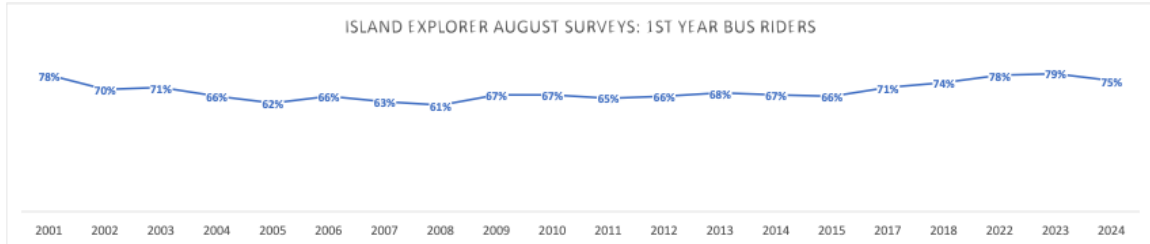


The percentage of survey groups who parked their cars at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center has increased significantly in recent years.



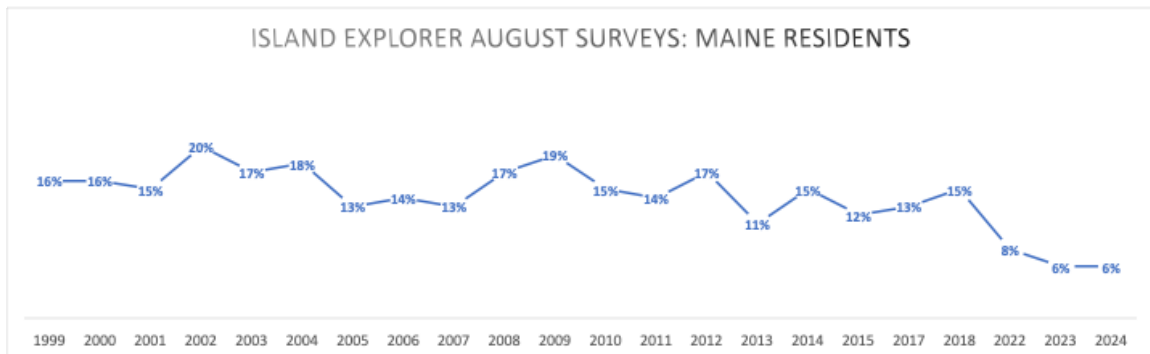
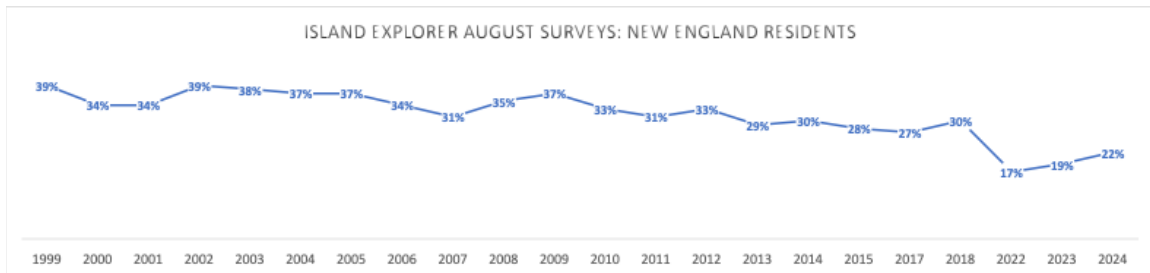
## 2024 Island Explorer Passenger Survey

### FIRST-YEAR BUS RIDERS



In the most recent eight years, the percentage of first-time users has increased from two-thirds to 75%. If year-round and seasonal residents are excluded, 81% of survey groups in 2024 were first-year users.

### NEW ENGLAND AND MAINE RESIDENTS



There has been a multi-year decline in the percentage of survey groups who live in of New England states. In the past three years, there has also been a substantial drop in the percentage who live in Maine.

## 2024 Island Explorer Passenger Survey

### TRIP PURPOSE: WORK AND HIKING



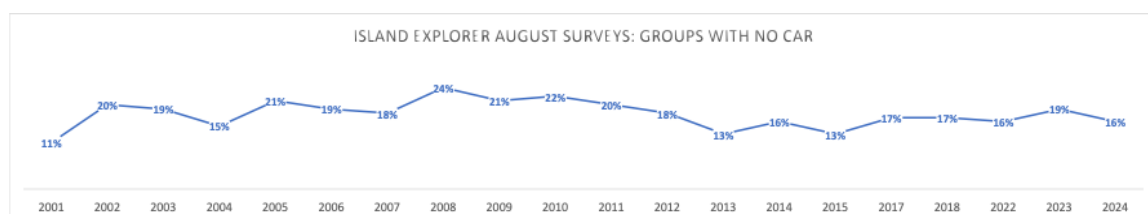
In recent years, the percentage of work trips has varied between 7% and 13%. The percentage of groups who identified “hiking” as the “primary purpose” of their bus ride has increased from 12% in 1999 to 40% in 2024.

### SHORT-TERM RENTALS



There has been an upward trend in the percentage of groups who stay overnight in short-term rentals, with the highest percentage occurring in 2024.

### GROUPS WITHOUT CARS



The percentage of groups without an available car has varied from 11% in 2001 to 24% in 2008. In the 2024 survey, 16% of all groups said they had no car; 96% of respondents traveling to or from work had no car. If work travel is excluded, 11% of survey groups said they had no car.

## 15. Comparison of Fall and Summer Survey Results

The Island Explorer typically surveys passengers during the first week of August. In 2021 the survey was carried out in October. This section summarizes some of the key differences between fall and summer survey responses.

- The 2021 fall survey shows that large numbers of cruise ship passengers have taken advantage of Island Explorer buses in the fall. Cruise ship passengers accounted for 35% of October 2019 survey responses.
- Groups in the fall are smaller, with more retirees and fewer children.
- Year-round residents make up a smaller percentage of bus riders in the fall.
- Fall riders live farther away, with fewer Maine residents and fewer groups from other New England states.
- Visitors with overnight lodging in October are less likely to be staying at campgrounds or on sailboats.
- Fall bus riders are more likely to choose “sightseeing” as their trip purpose.
- Hiking remains a popular fall trip purpose, while few fall riders use the bus to go biking, swimming, or boating.
- Fall bus riders are more likely to have National Park senior citizen passes (48% in October 2019 versus 25% in August 2018 and 19% in August 2022).
- The fall has a higher percentage of bus riders who have no local car (51% in the fall of 2019 versus 17% in August 2018 and 16% in August 2022). People without cars include cruise ship passengers, tour bus travelers, and seasonal workers.
- Ninety-one percent of cruise ship groups said they were first-time Island Explorer users.

# Island Explorer Passenger Survey 2024

PLEASE FILL OUT ONLY ONE SURVEY PER FAMILY OR GROUP

1. DATE \_\_\_\_\_

2. TIME \_\_\_\_\_

How many are in your party?

Retired adults \_\_\_\_\_

Other adults \_\_\_\_\_

Children (under 18) \_\_\_\_\_

6. WHAT ROUTE ARE YOU ON NOW? (Please check only one)

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Eden Street      | <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Sand Beach       | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Loop Road | <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Bar Harbor Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (6) Northeast Harbor | <input type="checkbox"/> (7) Southwest Harbor | <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Schoodic  | <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Jordan Pond     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Blackwoods      | <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Tremont         |  | <input type="checkbox"/> (9) Trenton         |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle Express     |

7. WILL THIS RIDE INVOLVE MORE THAN ONE ROUTE? ☐ YES ☐ No

8. If yes, please check the other routes used for this ride.

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Eden Street      | <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Sand Beach       | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Loop Road | <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Bar Harbor Road |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (6) Northeast Harbor | <input type="checkbox"/> (7) Southwest Harbor | <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Schoodic  | <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Jordan Pond     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (10) Blackwoods      | <input type="checkbox"/> (11) Tremont         |  | <input type="checkbox"/> (9) Trenton         |
|   |   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycle Express     |

9. What is the PRIMARY purpose of this bus trip? (Please check only one) To or from:

- |  |                                       |                                     |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> (1) Work        | <input type="checkbox"/> (2) Hiking   | <input type="checkbox"/> (3) Biking | <input type="checkbox"/> (4) Swimming    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (5) Boating     | <input type="checkbox"/> (6) Shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> (7) Dining | <input type="checkbox"/> (8) Sightseeing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (9) Other _____ |                                       |                                     |  |

10. Are you a year-round MDI or Schoodic resident? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Are you a summer resident of MDI or Schoodic? ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. What town will you stay in tonight? \_\_\_\_\_

13. Are you staying at
- |                             |       |                          |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| (1) Campground              | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (2) Hotel or Motel          | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (3) Inn or Bed & Breakfast  | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (4) Weekly rental or AirBnB | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (5) Summer residence        | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (6) Year-round residence    | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (7) Sailboat or motorboat   | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (8) Other                   | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

14. Can you easily walk from your lodging to the Bar Harbor Village Green? ☐ Yes ☐ No

15. What is your home town and state? \_\_\_\_\_

16. If you are not an MDI or Schoodic resident, how did you travel to the region?

- |                                  |       |                          |                         |       |                          |
|----------------------------------|-------|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| (1) Car or truck without trailer | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | (6) Commercial airplane | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (2) Car or truck with trailer    | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | (7) Private airplane    | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (3) Recreational vehicle         | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | (8) Tour bus            | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (4) Sailboat or motorboat        | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | (9) Intercity bus       | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (5) Cruise Ship                  | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | (10) Other              | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> |

17. On this bus ride will you visit Acadia National Park? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18. Have you purchased a National Park entry permit for your group? ☐ Yes ☐ No

19. If yes, where did you purchase your permit? ☐ (1) Online ☐ (2) Loop Road Fee Station

☐ (3) Hulls Cove Visitor Center ☐ (4) ANP Campground ☐ (5) Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. What type of entry permit do you have? ☐ (1) One-week ☐ (2) Acadia Annual Pass

☐ (3) Interagency Annual Pass ☐ (4) Senior Pass ☐ (5) Other \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for completing both sides!

## Island Explorer Passenger Survey 2024

21. If you have a car or RV available locally, where is this vehicle parked now?

- ☐ (1) No local car or RV   ☐ (2) Hotel, campground, B&B   ☐ (3) Someone else is using it  
☐ (4) Private residence   ☐ (5) Other (where?) \_\_\_\_\_

22. How many years have you used the Island Explorer?

- ☐ This year only   ☐ 2 years   ☐ 3 - 4 years   ☐ 5 or more years

23. How many days have you used the Island Explorer this season?

- ☐ This is our first day   ☐ 2 or 3 days   ☐ 4 or 5 days   ☐ more than 5 days

24. Have you been on a bus where you had to stand because seats were filled?

- ☐ No   ☐ Once or twice   ☐ Several times

25. Have you had to wait for another bus because the bus you wanted was full?

- ☐ No   ☐ Once or twice   ☐ Several times

HOW ARE WE DOING?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
26. Buses are clean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27. Drivers are friendly and helpful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28. It is easy to find a seat	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
29. Buses are on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30. Bus schedules are easy to find	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
31. Bus schedules are easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32. The frequency of service is convenient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33. The right destinations are served	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

34. What helped you decide to try the Island Explorer? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ NPS web site   ☐ Hotel or campground web site   ☐ Island Explorer web site  
☐ Help from Island Explorer staff at the Village Green, Visitor Center, or Jordan Pond House  
☐ Advice from Park rangers   ☐ Advice from lodging staff   ☐ Advice from friends  
☐ Island Explorer printed schedule   ☐ Watching others use the service  
☐ Seeing the buses everywhere   ☐ We tried driving first, but couldn't park

35. Do you have any comments about the Island Explorer, or suggestions for improving the service? Comments and suggestions will be posted at [www.exploreacadia.com](http://www.exploreacadia.com)

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36. L.L.Bean has pledged over \$4 million to Friends of Acadia for the Island Explorer to help protect Acadia National Park. Do you have any comments about L.L.Bean's contribution?

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Thank you for completing both sides!

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

Do you have any comments or suggestions for improving the Island Explorer?

L.L.Bean has pledged over \$4 million to Friends of Acadia for the Island Explorer to help protect Acadia National Park. Do you have any comments about L.L.Bean's contribution?

<i>Rt.</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>L.L.Bean</i>
1	Hawaii	The team standing at the bus stop at the Village Green were wonderful.	L.L.Bean blessing us with lives of love, beauty, and adventure.
1	NJ	Thank you!	
1	NJ		Thank you!
1		Just thanks.	Just thanks. Keeping doing same.
1	MA	Great service.	
1	MI	This is wonderful--thank you!	We appreciate it.
1	AR	Very friendly and helpful!	Good for them.
1	NY	You are just exceptional.	Great going.
1	NM	It's a wonderful service. We wouldn't have been able to see so much if it wasn't for this service. Would definitely RV here again because of Island Explorer. Appreciate how you cut down on traffic and air pollution too!	Appreciate them for giving back to the community.
1	VA	This is an amazing service. We would not be able to easily explore Acadia Park, restaurants, and shopping without it.	Amazing service for community and visitors.
1	China	Great services enable us to go anywhere at ANP. Nice drivers and passengers.	L.L.Bean is a great store. L.L.Bean products are wonderful. I bought many items there.
1	New Brunswick	This service was extremely helpful and one of the main reasons we came with our RV to Bar Harbor.	Makes me more likely to support their company.
1		Thank you!	Very civic minded!
1	ME: Bar Harbor	The bus staff and the IE ambassadors are amazing.	What an awesome gift.
1	NY	This is a wonderful service and should serve as a model for communities everywhere.	Thank you!
1	NY	It's very convenient, just very busy.	Thanks. Much appreciated.
1	England	No. 1 Bar Harbor return from the Oceanarium should run later.	Nice.
1	TN		There's a good reason L.L.Bean has an excellent reputation in Maine!
1	MA	Excellent drivers. Very clean buses.	Thanks!
1	NY		Thanks, L.L.Bean.
1	CA		Excellent news!
1			Thank you.
1	NC	Worked well for travel around the Park and community. Friendly ambassadors.	

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

1	GA	Some confusion over where the routes are serving--specifically Route 1/2.	Thanks for providing the bus shuttles!
1	PA	Ran smoothly both directions. Happy to have service available.	Glad that L.L.Bean is actively working to assist the park--my L.L.Bean dollars at work!
1		Great service.	Very impressed at L.L.Bean's commitment to National Parks and the outdoors.
1	VA	Our family had a great experience with the Island Explorer. This system helped get us from place to place easily and safely. We happily use it every time we come. It has become part of our trip each year!	Grateful for that gift. Makes all the difference as a seasonal visitor. Traffic would be a mess without the bus.
1	MA		Thank you, L.L.Bean!
1	NY		Great.
1	OH	The web site doesn't have addresses for stops. I wish it did.	
1	PA	Priority.	Thank you!
1	Quebec	Tres bonne idee! Et bon pour nous et bon pour les commerces du village.	
1		Amazing surprise upon arrival.	
1	PA	It does have a learning curve and feels daunting at first. I have had major inconveniences that were stressful because of my own mistakes, but staff are outstanding. I need to do my research first to ensure a good experience. I'm gaining skills and knowledge each year.	What a great cause! I am grateful for the contribution and the commitment it shows.
1	VA	Better advice online about busy seasons and better truths about traveling ease. Better parking spaces and parking lots. Better directions to and from campsites online.	
1	FL	We very much appreciate the convenience. We have a small RV and parking is not readily accessible.	We are grateful that L.L.Bean provides this service. Their contribution is an incentive to buy from them. We support the companies that help our National Parks.
1	FL	More buses are needed. Have a lane for buses to bypass the entrance gate on the Loop Road. Have a stop at the South Ridge trailhead on Route 3.	Fantastic!!
1	New Brunswick		Nice service!! Helpful staff.
1	IN	It's excellent!	Kudos to L.L.Bean--from Indiana.
2	Jamaica	The service is really good.	Hopefully they keep doing that.
2	MI	This is a great service to get tourists to town and helps relive parking stress.	That is a great donation to help visitors see all Acadia has to offer.
2	OH	Love the free bus service. Thank you!	Thank you, L.L.Bean! We love the Cincinnati, OH store also.
2	MA	I'm a big fan! This bus has made our trip a lot easier.	

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

2	FL	Make it easier to understand the schedule.	Just a wonderful thing they've done.
2	Jamaica	Inside the bus is a little warm at times.	They are doing an awesome job. Thank you.
2	Jamaica	The bus drivers are awesome and courteous.	
2	Jamaica	Great job.	
2	KS	Fantastic. Thank you.	I am so thankful. Thank you, L.L.Bean.
2	FL	I wish there was better service between the Village Green and Jordan Pond since Jordan Pond is the worst parking. I am not willing to take two buses, traveling by way of the Visitor Center. No benches, etc.	Wonderful. Thanks.
2	OH		I think it is a fantastic service and will be stopping to shop at L.L.Bean.
2	MA	More AC on hot days.	Awesome!
2	NY		Thank you, L.L.Bean!
2	Quebec		Great!
2	TX	Great service!! Not much to fix!	We didn't know that. We will do more now to support L.L.Bean!
2	MI	All works well.	
2	NY	It's great!	Valuable.
2	Ontario	Wonderful service, friendly drivers. Love the idea of reducing Acadia Park car traffic.	
2	Switzerland	Thank you for your service, it's excellent.	
2	ME: Bar Harbor	The "Where's My Bus" section of the site seems convenient, but is not since it does not remove a stop once it has been passed, nor reset every round. I see a stop on there, the bus 70 ft away, but thinking it will stop there, it actually passes me on the other side of the road because it left earlier than the schedule stated, and was coming back rather than away. The tracker does not take direction into account.	Love it. I hear many people calling it "the Bean Bus" because of that.
2	OH		Great!
2	FL		Thank you.
2	CA		Thank you.
2	CT		Thanks.
2	NY		We love L.L.Bean.
2	OH		That is amazing. Thanks.
2	CT		We shop L.L.Bean and hope they continue their contributions!
2	CT	More buses that go to the park from the Village Green.	Cool. Thankful.
2	MN	Very helpful and convenient.	Thank you.
2	PA	Offer refreshments for guests.	Thanks, L.L.Bean!
2	PA	Great service.	
2	MN	Great way to get around. Thank you!	Awesome.



## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

2	VT	I am grateful for your fabulous service.	Thank you!!!
2	MA	Good system.	
2	Mexico		Thanks.
2	NJ	Thank you for what you do!	We applaud them! We try to give back as well. We will be stopping by Freeport on our way home.
2	WI	Cold.	Great work, thank you.
2	Albania	Best drivers ever. Very friendly.	
2	MN	Very convenient.	How generous!
2	NH	We were so happy this service could bring us to town!	Thank you, L.L.Bean!
2	PA		Thank you.
3	WI	Earlier than 9 a.m. departure times would be helpful. (From Visitor Center.)	Thank you!
3	FL	Run more often to Southwest Harbor.	Thanks!
3	IN		That is very cash money of them.
3	MN	Great Ambassadors with sooooo much knowledge.	That's awesome.
3	MN	The bus drivers are very friendly. Bar Harbor buses need air conditioning.	
3	FL		Thank you.
3	NY		That is very generous of L.L.Bean. So nice to hear they are supporting our National Park Service.
3	ME: East Boothbay		Man, L.L.Bean has been the real O.G. since the beginning. My initials have never felt more important.
3	MD	Excellent service.	We love L.L.Bean. Please keep up the good work. We will stop in Freeport at the store this week.
3	Israel	It would be nice if the Village Green would have a route to the Loop Road. Also, we've had to wait a half an hour for a bus. That was too long.	Thank you, L.L.Bean!
3	MA	This is a great convenience, a great idea. We appreciate that we can hike all over without having to back track to parking. The Sand Beach driver is the best! He drives great, has answers, and engages the passengers' kids. Love the bus.	Needs to continue the service.
3	MD	More people should use this service. It's a major reason we visit the area and the NPS here.	We applaud them and thank them tremendously for their dedication and contributions. It's helping our parks and our environment. We wish other National Parks had such a wonderful contributor.
3	RI	Should serve beer (KIDDING!)	

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

3	MA	Everything is FANTASTIC! I wish Cape Cod would do this! If you wanted to go above and beyond, the buses would run until 11pm, but that is not absolutely necessary. We are a group of 6 teens and 2 moms. The bus has been a savior--everyone can get around town--back and forth to hotel for free! We used the bus to ride back from a day of biking carriage roads. It saved us a huge uphill ride!	This service is invaluable and will surely encourage me to purchase L.L.Bean over any other outdoor outfitter.
3	MI	A more frequent bus schedule and bus-only lanes would solve the issues of crowding and efficiency.	Their generous donation should be used to construct bus lanes.
3	WI	Earlier and later service to areas outside of Bar Harbor.	Nice to have a corporation actually do something for public benefit.
3	KS	I had a hard time finding directions from the website for specifically where to go to pick up the bus.	
3	NC	First day using but takes worry of parking small RV out of the equation.	Only \$4 million?
3	NJ		Thank you!
3	NJ	Everything is good.	
3	PA		
3	PA		This is great!
3	PA	The lady who drove the number 3 bus was such a delight. She gets 5 stars.	
3	TX	Fantastic service and great friendly drivers.	Great organization.
3	NC		Corporate / private investment is critical for public progress toward carbon neutrality. Way to go!
3	CT	Dedicated bus travel lane at the Park fee station to avoid buses stuck in traffic and encourage riders.	Keep up the good work.
3	CA	Has made the trip delightful and easy.	Very grateful to them. I'm wearing their sweatshirt today. It's good to buy from them now knowing they support this.
3	NC	App's great. (MyStop)	Wonderful contribution.
3	MD		Very helpful.
3	NY		Thank you.
3	OK	A way to get from bus route 9 (KOA) to the Park (Acadia) without having to transfer at the Village Green. Absolutely love Island Explorer!	So happy they are supporting public access to the outdoors!
3	NH	We love riding the Island Explorer every year while we are here!	Thank you!
3	NC		This is amazing!
3	VT	Wonderful service.	Thank you.
3	NY	Up-to-date schedules more easily available.	
3	TX	Great.	Love L.L.Bean.

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

3	OH	The driver and lady I spoke to on the phone helped get us to where we needed to be. So nice and friendly.	Awesome!
3	CT	Can a bus lane be worked out with NPS for quicker entry into the park?	Than you, L.L.Bean! It's a great service.
3	PA	Long wait at entrance station.	Thank you.
3	VT	Excellent service and drivers--very good experience.	Thank you!
3	NC		Generous and appreciated.
3	IL	Thank you--great service.	
3	PA	Great service!	Thank you!
3	NY	Buses are awesome!	Thank you, L.L.Bean!
3	OH		Well done, and many thanks.
3	NH		Thank you!
3	ME: Wells		Terrific.
3	DC	Great service, keep it up!	
3	NJ	The website is hard to use.	
3	CA	Let buses through the Ranger station without waiting in this very long line!	I think it's great that corporations support National Parks and nearby communities. I'm surprised their competitors are not on a list of supporters. L.L.Bean could feature their support in ads... "Proud sponsors of..."
3	Quebec	Excellent service.	
3	CO		Good company.
3	MA		Fantastic!
3	SC		EV buses.
3	ME: Gardiner	We are 100% satisfied having this service available to us.	We are very thankful for their contributions.
3	VA	Advertise the service schedule and service better.	Thank you for your interest in preserving a national treasure.
3	NY	It's a great service.	We approve! The fewer cars in National Parks, the better!
4	NY	Last year, I found it confusing ... went the wrong direction, had to change buses...	Yay! Thank you, L.L.Bean! Acadia!! I tried to use the bus app, but it is the same app I use for buses at home and wasn't sure how to switch to this location.
4	NY	2X a year survey? Once a month?	Excellent. We visited Freeport and purchased at L.L.Bean. Hope this sponsorship continues. Thanks for adding to an enjoyed vacation in Maine!
4	IA	Pleasant experience. Definitely a great asset to the National Park system--the shuttles.	Make it all shuttles--no cars! Thank you, L.L.Bean.
4	MO		Thanks, L.L.Bean.
4	VA		Love L.L.Bean! Great job!
4	PA	Thanks for the service!	Thank you!
4	DC		Thanks, L.L.Bean.

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

4	OH	Need a route to Cadillac Mountain. Line jumping always. Drivers didn't announce stop location. Not everyone likes dogs! More parking needed. Need later times from Village Green to visitors park.	This service is great, never have experienced free service in our travels.
4	NY	Use digital display to announce stops.	It inclines me to support L.L.Bean when I shop.
4	NY	Needs to be more organized for loading. The loading zone start and end needs to be marked on the ground. At the fee station, buses should have a priority lane.	Great!
4	TX	I love buses. Thank you.	Yay. Thanks for your corporate sponsorship.
4	MA		Glad to see they are contributing to NPS. They should stay out of politics.
4	MI	45 minute wait to get into Sandy Beach.	
4		Sign on bus should display "UNAVAILABLE" if driver is taking a break. Smooth ride. Not smelly like diesel.	Very generous and appreciated gesture by L.L.Bean.
4	DE		Awesome and amazing!
4	MO		Fantastic. Love L.L.Bean.
4	VA		Many thanks to L.L.Bean.
4	NY	A little commentary by drivers would be great!	BRAVO!
4	TN	The parking lot at the Visitor Center is congested. Buses need right of way.	Money well spent. Excellent amenity.
4	CT		Thank you!
4	VA	The staff were friendly and helpful!	It's wonderful!
4	DE		Good for L.L.Bean. I will buy their products now!
4	OH	Thank God we found the service. We almost left Bar Harbor due to a lack of parking options. Now we also know how to get to Acadia.	L.L.Bean is one of our favorite retailers. Knowing they help with this type of service will make us buy more.
4	MN	Seems good.	Thank you, L.L.Bean.
4	CA		Long live the Bean.
4	NH	Great option versus driving and parking. We weren't aware of Island Explorer until we checked into our hotel--maybe an increase in advertising when you purchase your park ticket.	We frequent the store in Freeport. Great company and sponsorship.
4	Ontario	The bus service is wonderful. It is crazy to try and drive into Bar Harbor. These buses are the best. We didn't realize that we could take our bikes on the bus. Perhaps this information could be more visible.	I am very impressed with L.L.Bean. Less cars on these roads is helping the environment. Are these buses natural gas or electric?? This would also be good.
4	NY	Hard to get map.	Great job!
4	NY		Fabulous!
4	PA	Please add a stop close to the Bubble trail.	Thanks!

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

4	VA	More frequency, please.	
4	PA		Love L.L.Bean.
4	TX	Great service.	Thank you!
4	VA		Yeah!
4	CT	Thank you for dog friendly!!!	Yay! Wonderful.
4	OH	Great service, friendly staff.	
4	FL	The village of Bar Harbor was impossible with a car (traffic, no parking). It would be nice if the buses ran to and from Village Green / Visitor Center later in the evening than already scheduled (10:30 / 11:00 p)	
4	VA		We love L.L.Bean.
4	FL	One later bus run to Manset please.	That's great!
5	New Gloucester, ME		Love L.L.Bean.
5	VA		I love L.L.Bean more for supporting Friends of Acadia.
5	NC	Love it! Very grateful for the buses.	They're a successful corporation--they should give back! Glad to hear they are.
5	CA		Everyone should support the NPS system.
5	DE	We have loved this service. We didn't know about it until we arrived. Very convenient, especially on busy days. It was also very helpful having Island Explorer workers at the stops to answer navigation questions.	Thank you, L.L.Bean!
5	WA	Our driver was friendly and entertaining. Please provide a bus lane at the park entrance to expedite shuttles.	Love that L.L.Bean is supporting the shuttles.
5	NJ	The yellow "request to stop" doesn't seem to work.	It is a fantastic program and needed.
5	NC		Very generous of L.L.Bean.
5	IL	The woman at the Hulls Cove Visitor Center stop for Jordan Pond was exceptionally nice and helpful.	Thank you, L.L.Bean!
5	NY		Excellent!
5	PA	Love it! Great, especially for doing point-to-point hikes versus out-and-back.	Great ambassadors for the park.
5	NJ		That's a wonderful thing to do.
5	MA	More frequent and direct service. Less stops to get to Jordan Pond. Etc.	Love.
5	NY	What a great idea. I love it. Stress free. I was here during covid. No buses. I missed them.	It makes me want to buy your products. You are providing a great service.
5	SD	Great.	Are they paying any corporate taxes?
5	MA	Drivers have been EXCELLENT! Very friendly, and very informative.	Awesome! I wish more major corporations donated to NPS.
5	MA		Well worth it. Using the bus to cut down on car traffic and ease parking is great.

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

5	MD	Great experience!	Thank you, L.L.Bean!
5	NJ		Thank you!
5	WI	Great service. Ambassadors are helpful and knowledgeable.	
5	NC		Thanks so much.
5	Quebec	Have buses come more frequently to Blackwoods campground. One bus an hour is not enough. Otherwise, great work, great staff.	
5	PA		LLB is my husband's favorite brand--head to toe!
6	CT		It's pretty cool.
6	VA	Keep up the great work!	
6	OH		Very nice.
6			It's excellent. We just say thank you so much.
6	ME: Blue Hill	Run buses to NE Harbor and SW Harbor every 30 or 45 minutes instead of every hour.	Thank you, L.L.Bean!
6	FL	Village Green to Jordan Pond--direct without bus change.	Excellent.
6	CA		Great. Appreciated.
6	NH	The Island Explorer was extremely convenient. We parked our car and did not use it during our stay. The schedule was easy to follow and the drivers were very helpful.	We love L.L.Bean and we have been customers for years.
6	CT	Excellent service.	
6	NC	We love everything about Island Explorer!	We're very pleased to see a large company giving back to the local community in such a positive and useful way.
6	ME: Woolwich		Thank you, L.L.Bean!!
6	MD	Excellent in all respects.	Grateful.
6	MA	An incredibly valuable service to enjoy the park without a car.	Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We love L.L.Bean--for supporting the Island Explorer and sponsoring Mount Abrams!
7	NY	We used a car to get around, but when our car broke down--we had to rely on Island Explorer.	We heard about it and went to the flagship store in Maine to support L.L. in return! Love the commitment!
7	ME: Camden	Love the service. I always make a donation--wish everyone did. Appreciate drivers willingness to stop along route when it's safe.	Thank you, L.L.Bean. (We helped you earn that money--I've been shopping there since the original store.)
7	ME: Bar Harbor	I want to make a video for the world to see how convenient the buses are. On the video I'm working on, I will go into detail what stops should be added to certain routes and how often. These stops will greatly cut down on vehicles on the roadways around the island.	L.L.Bean is awesome, they are a leader of Maine companies. I wish others cared as much about the environment as L.L.Bean does. My YouTube channel is AEW Maine Treasure Adventures.
7	MA	Wish Route 7 ran more often.	

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

7	NC	Great service. Great drivers. We are thrilled to have this service and enjoy the comfort and friendliness of the drivers, service, drop off areas--convenience.	Excellent! Thank you, L.L.Bean.
7	CT	I find Island Explorer an amazing service. Buses are clean, drivers very friendly, and the Island coverage is pretty good. On top of that, one can flag a bus on any part of the route (as long as it's safe to stop) and all buses are electric, and rides are free of charge. A great way of getting around the island!	This is one of the best causes to contribute money to. The service is excellent, it makes moving around the island very convenient, while saving the environment. It's free of charge on top of that! Thank you, L.L.Bean!
7	ME: Southwest Harbor	To have more coordinated transfer times at the high school.	L.L.Bean's logo could be smaller. Some times people think it's operated by LLB. Smaller logos would help avoid that confusion.
7	NJ	Great service.	Amazing.
7		Later stops @ Tremont and Northeast Harbor.	Love the buses. Love L.L.Bean.
7	TX	I really appreciate your great service! Thank you.	
7	CT	Our driver is the best driver we've ever had. He's awesome and did his best to pick someone up even after he'd left the stop. He deserves a raise. Also he's so funny and super nice.	Nice job! Keep doing it. Amazing. Jesus loves you! John 3:16 Love.
9	ME: Trenton	Start the season sooner like March or April and go till November.	
9	NH		Thank you!
9	NJ	Love the service! Our truck is too big for public street parking and this service is very helpful and relaxing.	Thank you, L.L.Bean!!
9	MD	Excellent service and way to visit the park. We were very impressed and convinced that the bus is better than renting a car locally.	
9	SC	You got it right.	Thank you.
9	MI	Large gap between 12 and 3 for [the Tremont] route. Otherwise service was excellent!	Thank you, L.L.Bean, We will keep this in mind when purchasing outdoor equipment in the future.
9	NJ	This is a wonderful service. We will visit again since it was so easy.	Thank you, L.L.Bean.
10	VT		Happy to have such an amazing resource!
10	FL	More frequent service to Southwest Harbor. Service to Cadillac summit. Better schedule watching at Village Green so buses don't leave just before the one I'm on gets in a minute or two late.	Fantastic!!!!

## Island Explorer 2024 Onboard Survey – Passenger Comments

10	ME: Bar Harbor	Since I live in Bar Harbor without a car, the Island Explorer provides the only means I have to get around MDI readily (during the season o, of course!)-I greatly value Island Explorer!	Every year I say the same thing. L.L.Bean's contribution is appreciated, but the ever-increasing posting of the L.L.Bean name on and inside the buses, on bus stop signs, on the schedules with a long advertising blurb, etc. gives the appearance that L.L.Bean has purchased advertising. Very obnoxious. Get the L.L.Bean name OFF Island Explorer!
10	NJ		Thank you!
10	CT	It all seems to work good. My first trip alone to Acadia, park in Bar Harbor, bus to Sieur de Monts, hike trails, get back to town. Solved my problem!	Awesome and perfectly in support of their image. L.L.Bean is always one of my first stops driving up to Acadia (my 52nd consecutive year!).
10		Awesome service, wish more would use it!	This is fantastic of them, will shop more with them because of this!
10	NY	How wonderful that you offer this!	You go!! L.L.Bean!
10	MA	This is a great service. We have used it for many years. We have no complaints. The drivers are always pleasant, knowledgeable, and drive well. When family joins us, everyone appreciates. The Village Green group is great as well.	We hope they continue. We appreciate this service. It serves many purposes. We say thank you.
10	ME Bar Harbor	Great service.	Thanks.
10	ME Mt Desert	More year-round services elsewhere on the island, please!	
10	MA	Was hard to find Loop Road. We lost WIFI in that area. Could it be more clear on website / Google maps?	I am pleased with the contribution. L.L.Bean is a fine and reputable company.
10	DE		Thank you, L.L.Bean.
10	MA	More routes from Village Green.	Thank you! Best park experience ever!
10	MI	Served our needs well during a family trip to Acadia. We have a class C motorhome, so use of the Island Explorer was integral to our visit.	Fully support the contribution!
10	NY	Have had great experiences so far--really appreciate the flexibility, communication, and responsiveness of staff. It has saved us a lot of time. Would be nice if there were shorter transfers between Route 10 [Blackwoods] and the Loop Road in terms of bus times, otherwise no complaints.	It's great that they support this service.
10	PA	More frequent Blackwoods service.	Thank you!!!
10	Quebec		Thank you, L.L.Bean!
10	England	Great service. We only wish they were more frequent. We believe more people will be persuaded to use the bus if they are every 10 minutes. It would be great to see the park with less cars!	Thank you!



