



Sonoma Sustainable Tourism

Advancing Sustainability in the North Bay

The Sonoma Sustainable Tourism Observatory

Director: Pamela Lanier



Background and Focus

- ▶ Accepted into INSTO in April of 2017
- ▶ 2018 was the first year of operation
- ▶ October of 2017 saw devastating fires sweep through our region, slowing the Observatory's progress but giving us a opportunity to track the effects of natural disasters on well-known travel destination –Northern California's wine country

Our focus:

- ▶ Recovery from the fires & efforts made to keep it from occurring again
- ▶ Sonoma County's efforts to become the first 100% sustainable wine region in the US
- ▶ How stakeholders and residents view tourism in the area – the positives and negatives

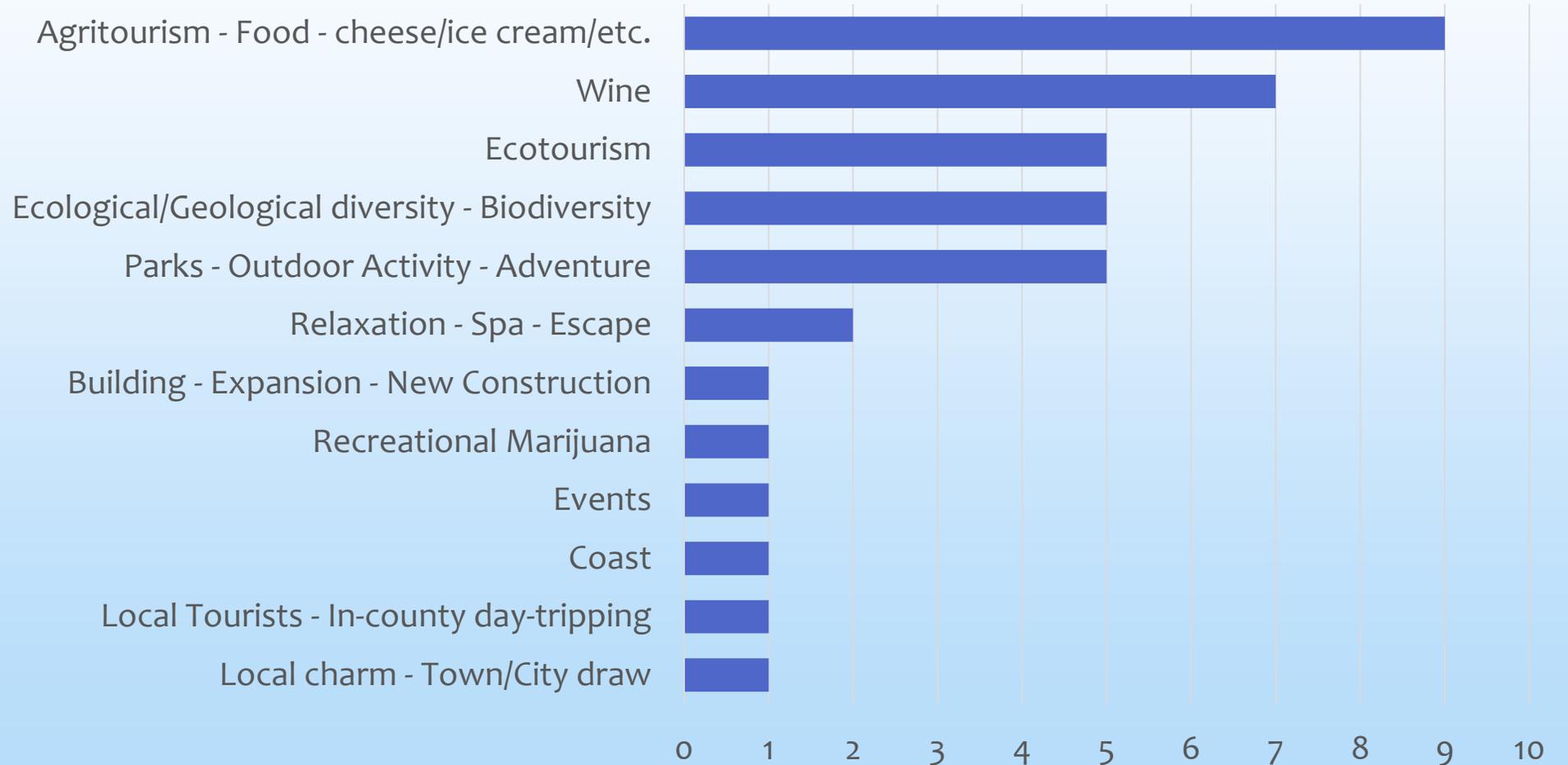
Sustainable Enterprise Conference – June 22nd

- ▶ With a special emphasis on the One Planet Living sustainability framework, Sustainable Enterprise was a perfect opportunity for the Sonoma Observatory to touch base with stakeholders.
- ▶ With a section in the main lobby and an opening introduction about the Sonoma Sustainable Tourism Observatory, we were able to explain what we're doing and why, in person, face-to-face.
- ▶ Our important proprietary survey was conducted



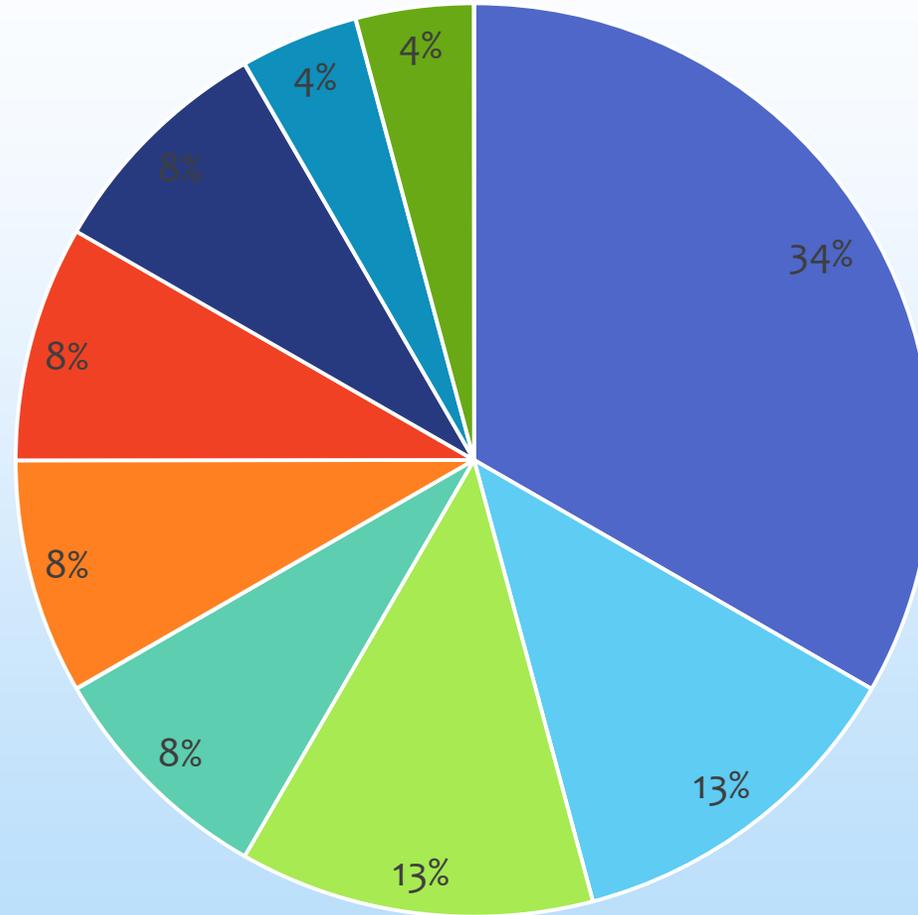
Stakeholder Satisfaction:

Where are the biggest opportunities for tourism?



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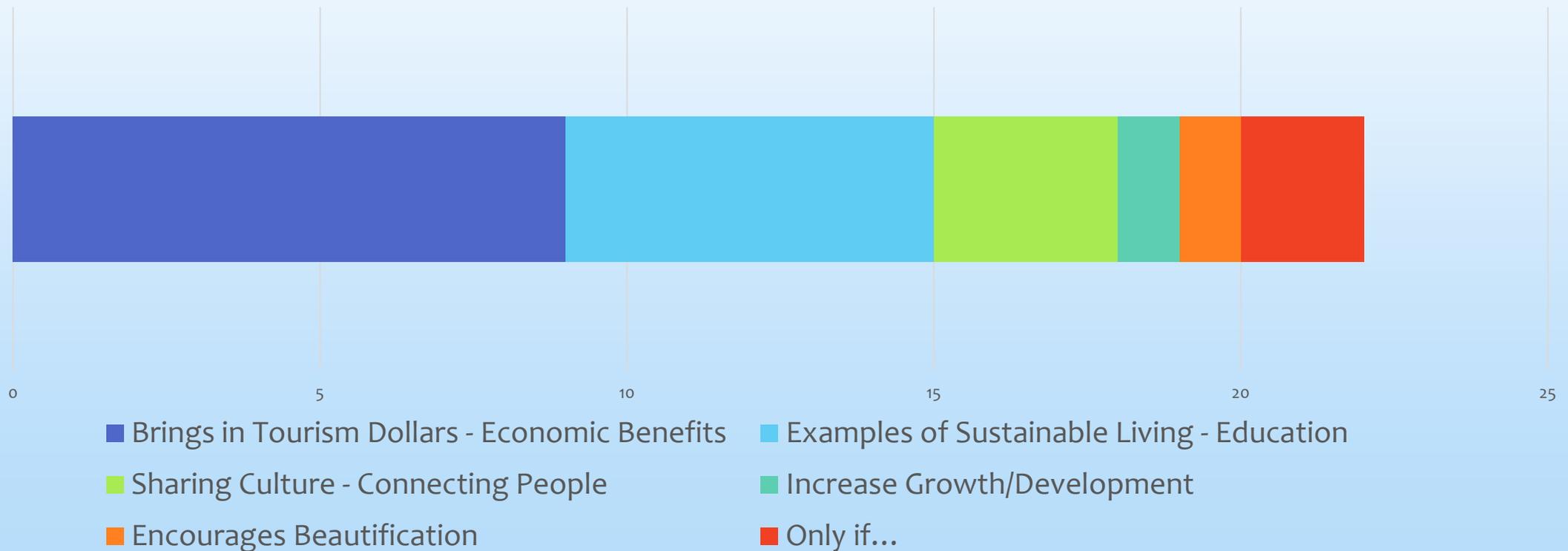
Road/
transportation
changes



- Public Transit - Train Improvements
- Ridesharing
- Bike and Walking integration
- Electric Vehicle & ZipCar incentives
- Clearer Roadsigns
- Connecting Sonoma County with San Francisco
- Better maintained roads
- App or Guide for tourism, including public transit
- Deincentivize driving - parking

Stakeholder Satisfaction:

How is tourism a force for good in Sonoma County?



Stakeholder Satisfaction: Biggest threats from tourism?

The three biggest concerns were:

- road congestion and vehicle pollution,
- the rising cost of living, and
- the ecological harm and waste produced by visitors

Traffic - Cars & vehicle pollution - Drunk driving	22%
Cost of Living - Equal Opportunity Employment	19%
Ecological Impacts - Waste – Carelessness	19%
Wine Industry - Monocropping	11%
Overcrowding - Driving Locals Out	11%
Droughts - Natural Disasters	7%
Increase of Urban Landscape - Habitat Loss	7%
Greenwashing - Sustainability issues	4%

Other North Bay institutions collecting data

The Farallon Institute

- ▶ Located in Petaluma, CA, the Farallon Institute is a research agency focused on marine life and ecosystems
- ▶ They monitor ocean health through:
 - ▶ *Extensive krill, herring, and seabird studies and surveys*
 - ▶ *North Pacific biogeography: with funding from NASA, they are studying the North Pacific Current and its effect on plankton communities*
 - ▶ *State of the Ocean talks*
 - ▶ *Peer-reviewed papers put forward to share findings*





Other North Bay institutions collecting data

The Sonoma Ecology Center

Located in Eldridge, CA, the Sonoma Ecology Center is dedicated research and restoration in Sonoma County

- ▶ Habitat rehabilitation - projects that restore, protect, and improve our natural heritage
- ▶ Research - historical ecology, water quality parameters, erosion data, etc., for watershed health monitoring, climate adaptation planning, sediment analysis, and steelhead data analysis
- ▶ Education to support sustainable practices and create future leadership for Sonoma Valley
- ▶ Preservation to protect our natural heritage and public lands
- ▶ Data & Mapping (GIS) Services using technology to manage and share environmental information for greater efficacy and impact



Rehabilitation from the October 2017 Fires

Since the firestorm a year ago, action has been taken to keep fires of that magnitude from occurring again in the area, and various research efforts on the effects of the fires are ongoing, including:

- ▶ *Pepperwood Preserve & Dwight Center for Conservation Science* – aims to improve models of wildfire for Sonoma, Mendocino, and Napa Counties — models that can help us understand vulnerabilities in the urban-wildland interface and better inform both natural resource management and wildfire response strategies moving forward.
- ▶ *Department of Energy's Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory* - understand potential impact of fires on the nutrient, solute, and metal delivery to surface and groundwater systems
- ▶ *The Cooperative Institute for Mesoscale Meteorological Studies, NOAA/NWS/NCEP Storm Prediction Center, and the University of Idaho's Department of Geography* – Produced a Case Study examining the why and how of both the North Bay fires of October and the Southern California fires of December 2017

Toward the future 2019 and beyond

Pamela Lanier; Founder

Pamelalanier@yahoo.com

www.sonomasustainabletourism.org

