Recreation & Managed Use

Identifying The Issue

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Facility Capacities

Parking Infrastructure

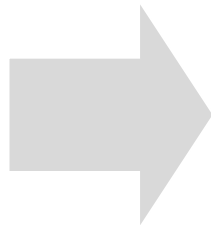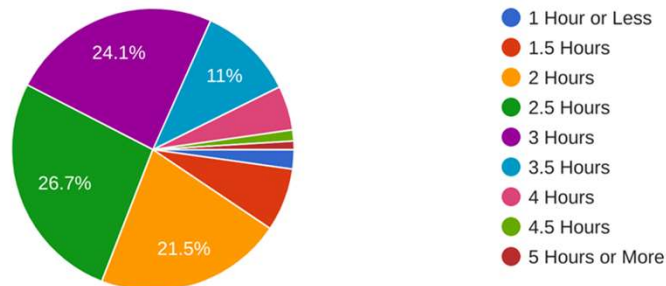
User Experience

Overuse Impacts

Data collection and identifying limited capacities

- Parking Study
- Trail Counters
- Environmental Study
- Visitor Survey
- Local Public Opinion

- Number of parkings spaces available?
- Average time visitors stay?
- How many people can the resource handle at once?
- What is the seasonal demand?
- What changes would visitors and locals like to

How long did you spend hiking, round trip?
3,471 responses

- 1 Hour or Less
- 1.5 Hours
- 2 Hours
- 2.5 Hours
- 3 Hours
- 3.5 Hours
- 4 Hours
- 4.5 Hours
- 5 Hours or More

Quantifying capacities

- **Parking Spaces**
- **Maximum visitors at one time**
- **Daily amount of visitors**
  - Agency or community requirement
- **Shuttle bus capacity**

Hanging Lake Example

Daily Capacity: 615

Parking Capacity: ~100 Vehicles

Maroon Bells Example

Shuttle Capacity: 1 Bus /15 Min.

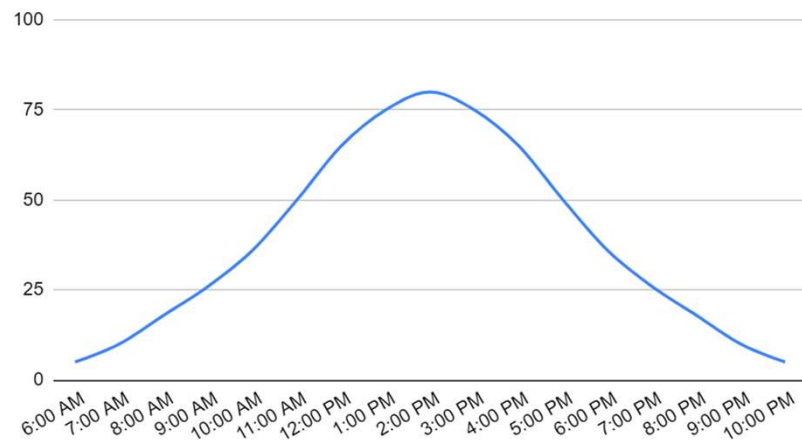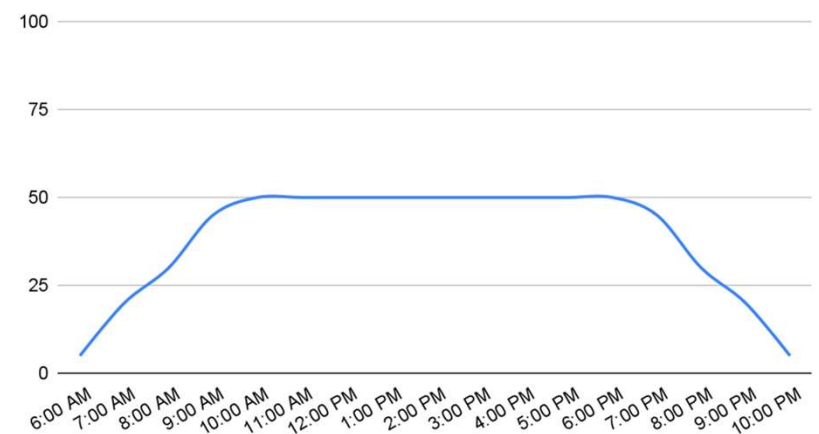# The Solution

Reduce the peak number of visitors with reservations

Natural Daily Visitor Use

Managed Daily Visitor Use

Both charts show the same number visitors, dispersed differently.

The Solution - Hanging Lake

Self Drive Schedule & Capacity

- Plan based on the maximum use of 615.
- The schedule will have 12 groups of 51 hikers spread out throughout the day. (first group is 54), for a total of 615.
- Tables below show the number of cars in the parking lot based on an average of 2.85 (**2020 average**) hikers per car, and the number of hikers in the area.

Assuming 4 Hour Visit						Assuming 3 Hour Visit				
Group	Time	#Hikers	Cars in Lot	Hikers in Area		Group	Time	#Hikers	Cars in Lot	Hikers in Area
1	6:30 AM	54	19	54		1	6:30 AM	54	19	54
2	7:30 AM	51	37	105		2	7:30 AM	51	37	105
3	8:30 AM	51	55	156		3	8:30 AM	51	55	156
4	9:30 AM	51	73	207		4	9:30 AM	51	54	153
5	10:30 AM	51	72	204		5	10:30 AM	51	54	153
6	11:30 AM	51	72	204		6	11:30 AM	51	54	153
7	12:30 PM	51	72	204		7	12:30 PM	51	54	153
8	1:30 PM	51	72	204		8	1:30 PM	51	54	153
9	2:30 PM	51	72	204		9	2:30 PM	51	54	153
10	3:30 PM	51	72	204		10	3:30 PM	51	54	153
11	4:30 PM	51	72	204		11	4:30 PM	51	54	153
12	5:30 PM	51	72	204		12	5:30 PM	51	54	153
	6:30 PM		54	153			6:30 PM		36	102
	7:30 PM		36	102			7:30 PM		18	51
	8:30 PM		18	51			8:30 PM		0	0
	9:30 PM		0	0			9:30 PM		0	0

Reservation System Benefits

Allow visitors to plan and guarantee their visit

- **Visitors are already getting turned away due to parking or overcrowding issues**
  - Gently disappoint them ahead of time
  - Instead of frustratingly the day they try to visit
- **Without a reservation system, visitors may drive hours just to get turned away**

Enhanced communication with visitors

- **More Informed Visitor**
  - Discourage visitors not up to the challenge
  - Share trail conditions
  - Increased safety due to the visitor being prepared
    - Keep EMS services available in the community
- **Easily Communicate Issues**
  - Road closures and travel delays
  - Schedule changes

Hanging Lake Example

2018 (no reservations)
38 EMS visits

**2019 (first year with reservations)**
3 EMS visits

Additional resource funding from reservation fees

- **Closed loop funding for the resource**
- **On-site staffing**
  - Visitor education
  - Enhanced safety
- **Off-site Staffing**
 - Help desk
  - Seasonal or year round

Data collection

- **Visitor data from initial reservation**
  - Group sizes
  - Where visitors are coming from
- **Post-trip visitor survey**
  - Visitor demographics
  - Visitor impressions
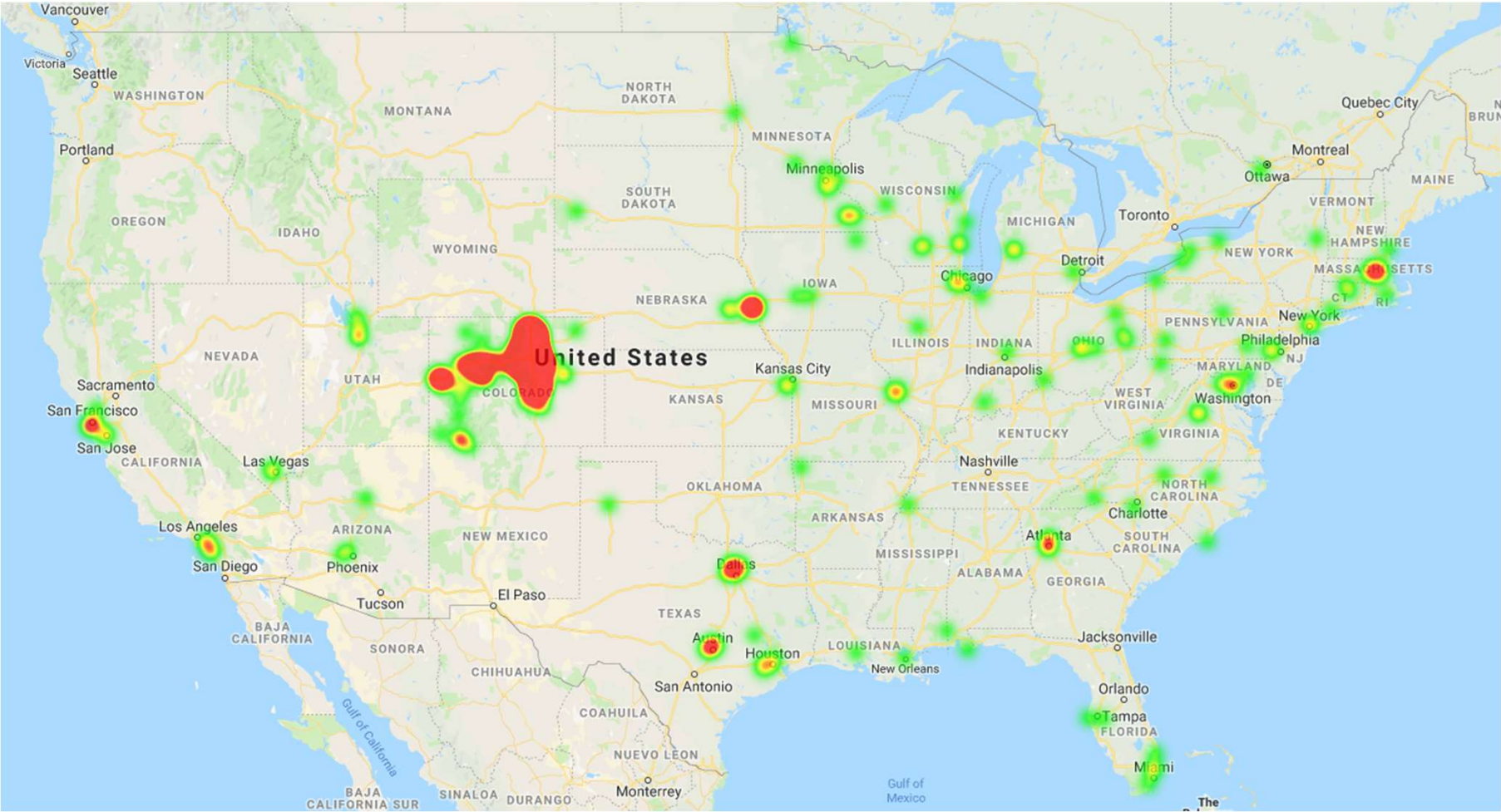 - Length of visit
  - Information specific to the local community

How many children 12 and younger were in your party?
3,471 responses

85.1%

0
1
2
3
4
5
6
7

△ 1/2 ▽
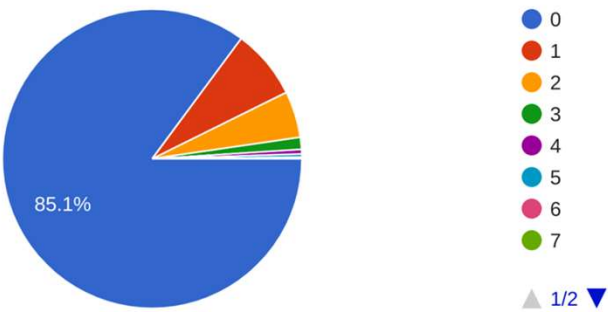
How many people were in your party?
3,471 responses

12.6%   14%

9.9%

52.7%

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8

△ 1/2 ▽
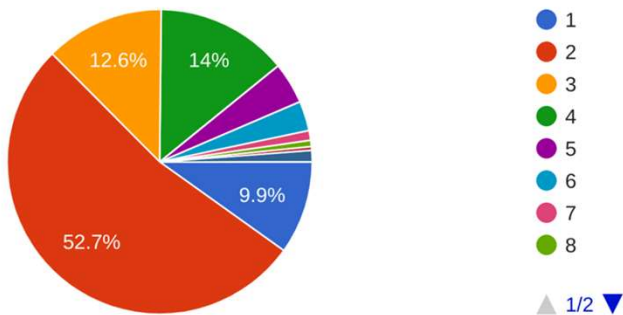
Zip Code Analysis

Zip Code Analysis

Hanging Lake

States

Cities

State	%		City	%
Colorado	59.0%		Denver	12.7%
Texas	5.3%		Colorado Springs	3.6%
California	4.0%		Aurora	3.2%
Florida	3.2%		Littleton	2.3%
Illinois	2.3%		Lakewood	2.0%
Minnesota	1.6%		Arvada	1.7%
Utah	1.5%		Highlands Ranch	1.6%
New York	1.4%		Boulder	1.6%
Missouri	1.4%		Fort Collins	1.5%
Pennsylvania	1.3%		Parker	1.4%
Michigan	1.2%uh		Westminster	1.3%
Wisconsin	1.1%		Centennial	1.2%
Ohio	1.1%		Castle Rock	1.2%
			Glenwood Springs	1.1%
			Grand Junction	1.1%
			Englewood	1.1%
			Thornton	1.1%

Maroon Bells

States

Cities

State	%		City	%
Colorado	38.4%		Denver	8.1%
Texas	10.7%		Aspen	3.0%
California	7.2%		Colorado Springs	2.7%
Florida	5.3%		Boulder	2.0%
Illinois	3.5%		Houston	1.9%
New York	3.3%		Aurora	1.4%
Missouri	1.7%		Austin	1.3%
Georgia	1.7%		Littleton	1.2%
New Jersey	1.6%		Dallas	1.1%
Arizona	1.6%		New York	1.1%
Ohio	1.6%		Carbondale	1.1%
Pennsylvania	1.6%		Lakewood	1.0%
			Basalt	1.0%
			Chicago	1.0%
			Fort Collins	1.0%

Reservation System Challenges
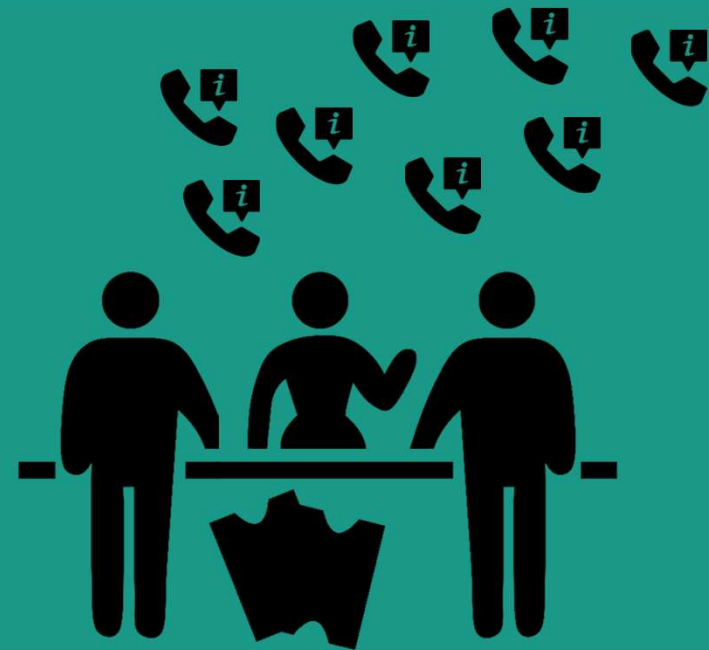
Communicating new reservation requirements

- Public relations campaign
- Contact various outdoor websites to update information
- Inform local hotels and concierges

Less people will be able to visit

- **High call and email volume from visitors who were turned away**
  - Remind those who aren't able to visit why the reservation system was put in place
    - To protect the resource
    - Allows for a guaranteed future visit, and a better experience
    - Suggest reserving during the shoulder seasons
- **Less visitors may visit the local community**
  - Suggest alternate nearby attractions, to keep the visitors in town
- **Frustrated locals who may not be able to visit without prior planning**
  - Hopefully most will understand a reservation system will protect their local resource

Staffing

- **Hiring and training seasonal employees**
  - Call center employees
  - On-site employees
- **Repetitive job**
  - Answering same questions over and over

As a positive, creates new seasonal and year round jobs in the community

Handling walk-in and standby visitors

- **Many visitors no-show for various reasons**
  - About 10% for Maroon Bells shuttle reservations
- **Day of or standby reservations may be possible**
  - Hard to do with parking reservations if there is a long arrival window
  - Requires additional staff and resources
- **Ideally the reservation system will become established and not need a standby option**
  - Slightly oversell by the no-show percentage
    - Requires a season worth of data to understand visitor trends
  - Most efficient for both visitors and those managing the system
  - Visitors KNOW the only way to visit is to have a reservation
    - Visitors won't risk wasting their time trying to get on standby

Key Items to Consider

ONE central reservation website

- **Chamber, city, or towns website**
  - Great for the city or town to promote other attractions
  - May be confusing for visitors if there is too much other information
    - Other booking options for hotels, activities, etc.
  - Harder to give access to third parties to edit the information
- **Stand alone website.**
  - Very easy for visitors to find the information they need
  - Editing access can be easily transferred or given to third parties as contracts change

Year round reservation consistency

- **Consistency is important for messaging and visitor education**
  - You ALWAYS need a reservation to visit
- **Even if the off-seasons are slow, requiring a reservation can be beneficial for messaging**
  - Use different rules if needed
    - Timed entry vs any time allowed
    - Possibly cheaper price point