

Great Rock Bight Preserve 2024

Overall Summary

For the 2024 season, Great Rock Bight Preserve had a total of 3,691 visitors. In 2023, a total of 6,298 visitors were recorded at the property. Notably, the difference in the number of days the trailhead was attended in 2024, 50 days, compared to the number of days it was attended in 2023, 84 days, was significant. Because of this difference, the daily averages recorded by the summer rangers at the trailhead at Great Rock Bight Preserve in 2023 and 2024 offer more comparable data than the totals.

The number of days the beach was attended at Great Rock Bight Preserve also decreased compared to last season. In 2024, the beach was attended for 11 days. In 2023, the beach was attended for 45 days. Although the number of days the beach was attended was not significantly different, it greatly impacted the data collected for comparison between this season and the last.

The trailhead, which has a maximum of 18 spaces (and one universal access space), was most often filled on Sundays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Visitors expressed gratitude about the addition of a universal access parking space closest to the trailhead.

Data Summary

In spite of the significant difference in the days the parking lot was attended, the daily averages for this season show comparable results with those of last season (Figure 1A and 1B). The average number of vehicles per day, number of visitors, and maximum number of vehicles in the lot were very similar to last season. The time the parking lot was full slightly increased from a daily average of 11.6 minutes in 2023 to an average of 16.1 minutes in 2024 (Figure 1A).

Figure 1A: Parking Data Daily Averages

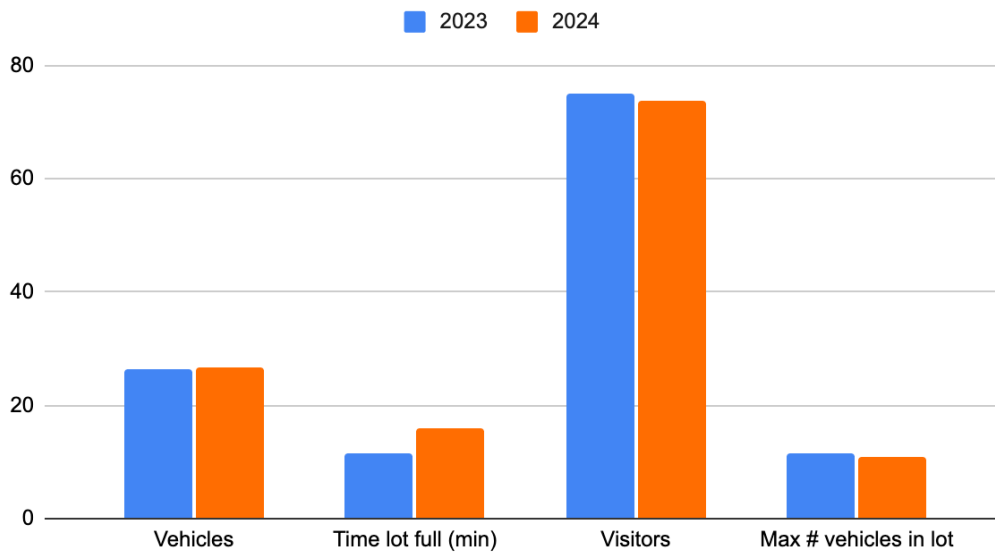
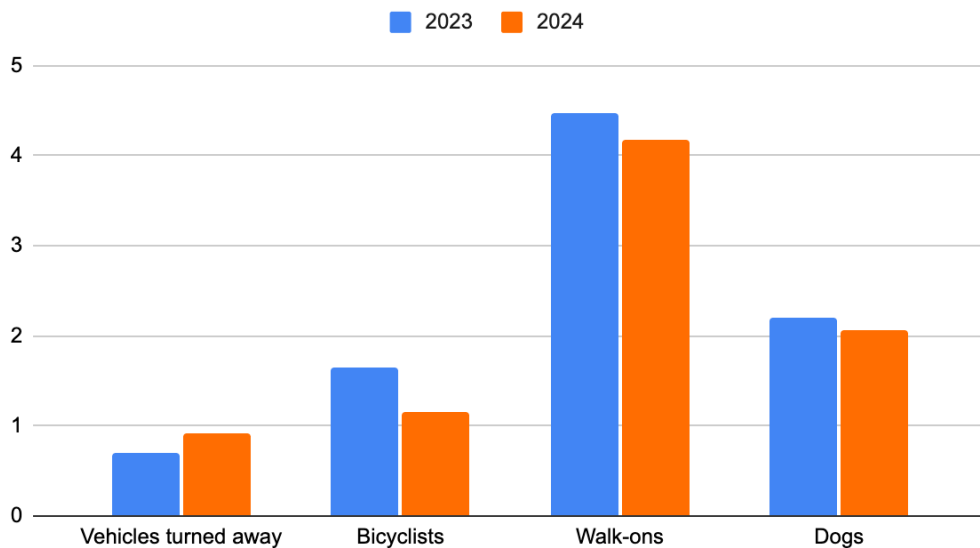


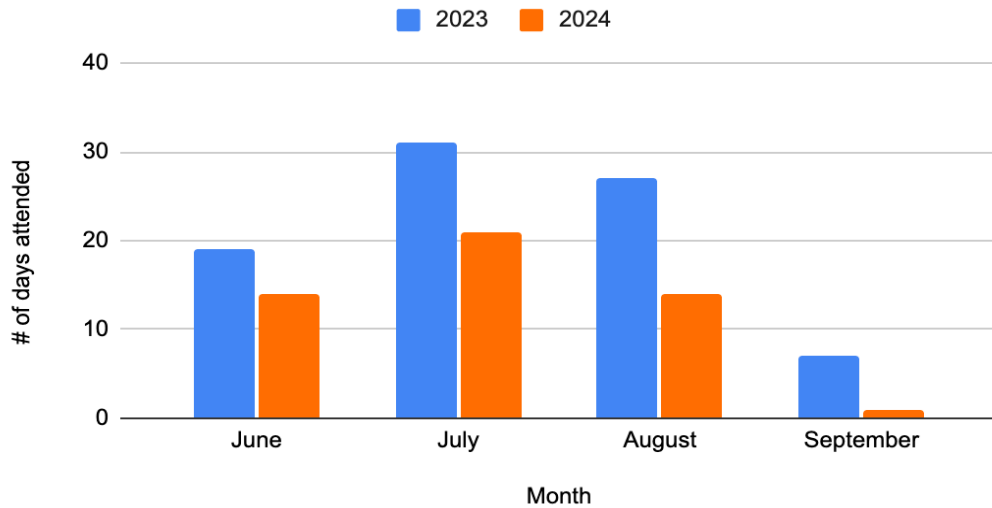
Figure 1B: Parking Data Daily Averages



As a result of the greater amount of time the trailhead was full, the average number of vehicles turned away also slightly increased from an average of 0.7 vehicles turned away each day in 2023 to 0.9 in 2024 (Figure 1B). The daily average number of visitors arriving by bicycle (bicyclists), walk-ons, and dogs coming to Great Rock Bight all slightly decreased.

The most significant difference between 2023 and 2024 was in the total number of days the trailhead was attended. In 2024 the trailhead was attended for 14 days in June, 21 days in July, 14 days in August, and 1 day in September. In 2023, the trailhead was attended for 19 days in June, 31 days in July, 27 days in August, and 7 days in September.

Figure 2: Number of Days Lot Attended 2023 vs. 2024



In 2024, there were fewer total visitors, people fishing, dogs turned away, and violations of property boundaries. Of the 4 data measures collected by rangers, the incidence of property boundary violation were the most similar across the years — 55 incidents of property boundary violation this season compared to 77 incidents of property boundary violation last season.

Figure 3: Number of Days Beach Attended 2023 vs. 2024

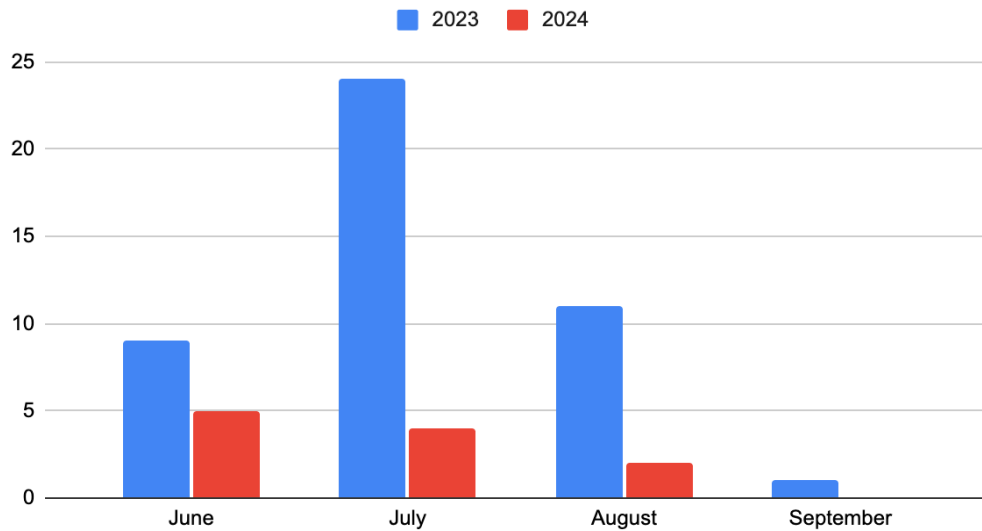


Figure 4A: Total Beach Visitors

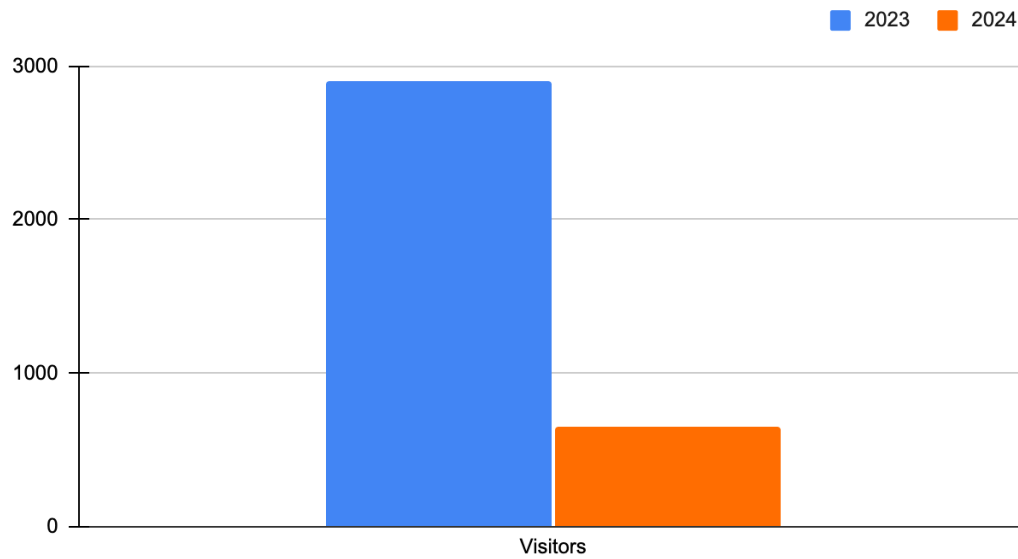
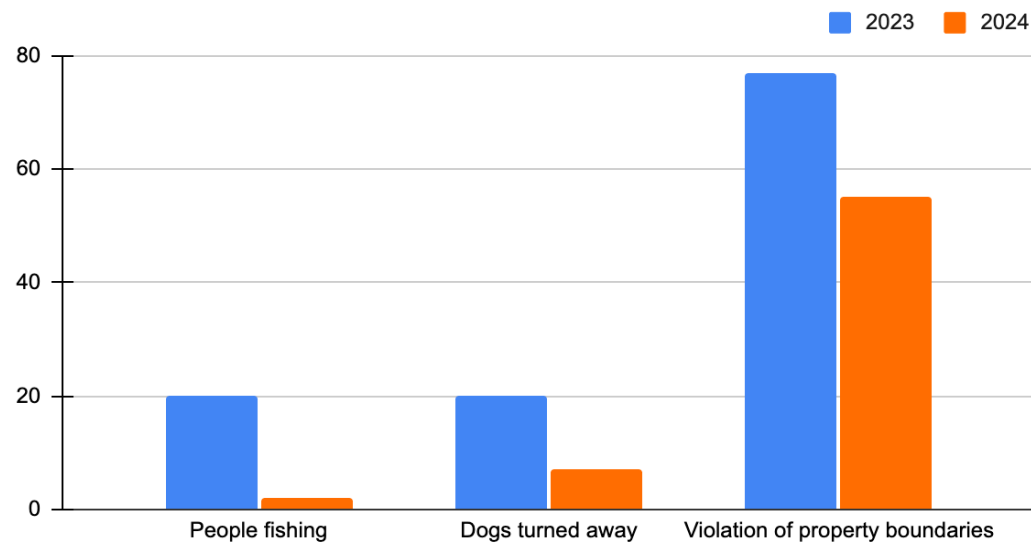


Figure 4B: Beach Data Totals



Beach daily averages in June (Figures 5A and 5B) show the same average number of visitors per day (43 visitors) in 2024 and 2023. The similar number of days the beach at Great Rock Bight Preserve was attended in June 2024 (5 days) compared to June 2023 (9 days) indicates a similar trend in public use of the property during the month of June. Interestingly, there were higher counts of people fishing, dogs being turned away, and a much higher incidence of beach visitors violating property boundaries in June 2024 than in June 2023.

Figure 5A: June Daily Average Visitors

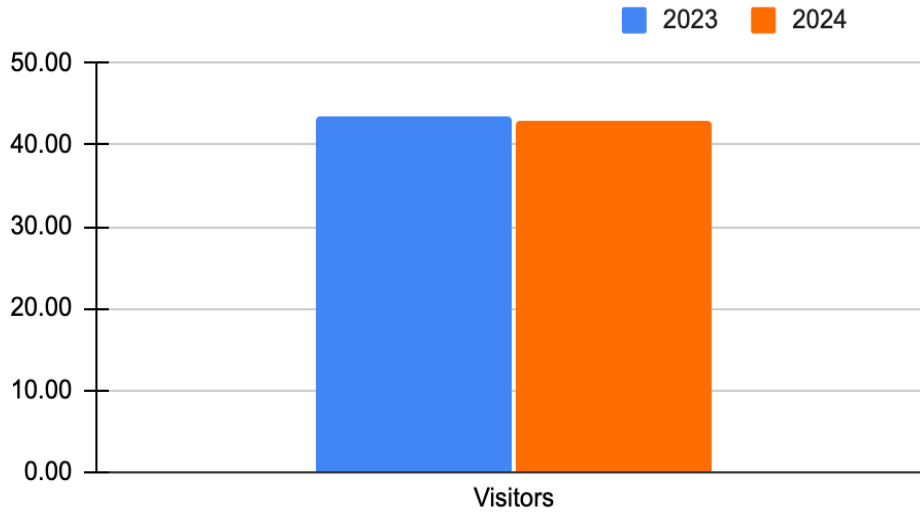
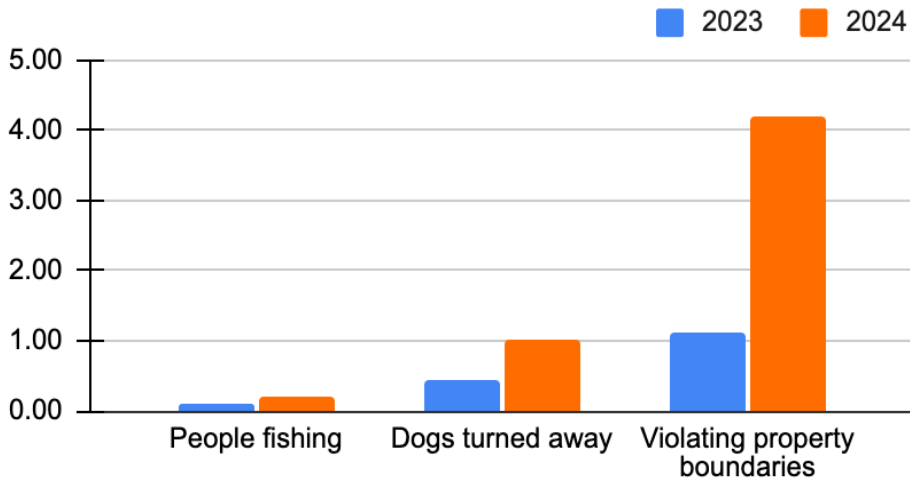
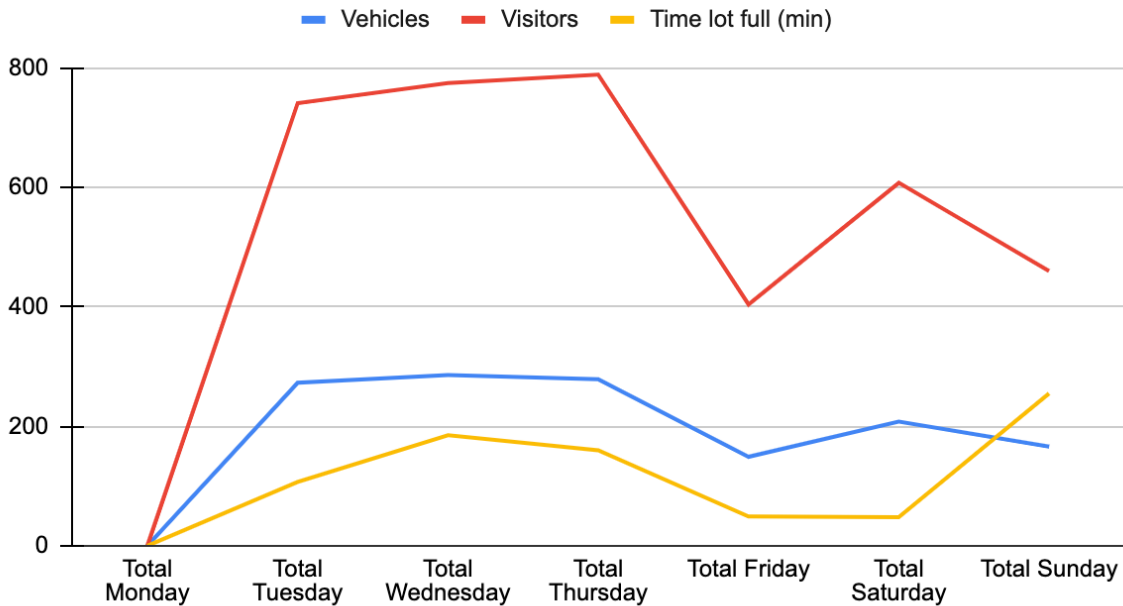


Figure 5B: June Daily Averages



While not significantly different, the most popular days of the week were Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays with the most number of visitors, vehicles, and minutes the parking lot is full (Figure 6). Additionally, Tuesdays saw a high number of visitors.

Figure 6: Days of the Week Totals



Actions to be Taken in Coming Season

1. Summer rangers in the trailhead should be prioritized on the weekends, particularly on Sundays which had the greatest amount of time with the trailhead full. Further attending days should include Wednesdays and Thursdays when the most weekday property usage is seen.
2. People violating property boundaries continues to be a challenge. In 2024, there were 55 records of violated property boundaries compared to 77 in 2023. This difference is not significant (t-test, $p=0.37$). When sufficient staffing allows, beach attending should be prioritized, signage should be maintained, and communication with the public about property rules and boundaries should be proactively addressed.
3. A pre-season trash cleanup should be completed to ease summer trash collection.
4. Due to the high-traffic nature of this property, at least one ranger should be in the trailhead on weekends during the peak summer season to ensure the maximum capacity of the trailhead is not surpassed.

Anecdotes

The signage at the overlook and on the beach displaying the dog policy and property boundaries at Great Rock Bight Preserve was helpful for summer rangers to reference when communicating property rules to visitors. Given an increase in the number of visitors violating property boundaries during June, a ranger should be stationed on the beach as staff permits.

Like last season, visitors often complimented the newly replaced stairs at Great Rock Bight Preserve. The Land Bank crew diligently maintained the trails and stairs throughout the season.

After several storms this season, trash washed up on the beach. Additionally, summer rangers noted an increase in the amount of trash left by visitors — typically leaving trash near or on the wooden summer supplies boxes by the beach and in the trailhead. Summer rangers should collect what is left behind and inform the summer ranger manager about any volume of trash that may need to be picked up immediately.

Unlike last season, more dogs were brought to the beach while rangers were present. Since Great Rock Bight Preserve previously had a dog policy of no dogs on the beach from 10 - 6, this encouraged owners to bring their dogs outside of attending times. While many dog owners still bring their dogs to walk the trails, it is unclear if the dog policy is being adhered to on the beach if there is not a summer ranger attending the beach.

Appendix

Table 1: Parking Lot Usage for June 13th - September 1st

Summer 2024:	Daily Average:	Total:
Vehicles	26.5	1327
Bicyclists	1.2	58
Walk-ons	4.2	209
Visitors	73.8	3691
Max # of vehicles in lot	11.0	550
Vehicles turned away	0.9	46
Time lot full (min)	16.1	804
Dogs	2.1	103

Table 2: Monthly Parking Lot Data with Daily Average (Avg), Totals, and Averages by Day of the Week

Monthly Data		Daily AVG	Total	AVG Tuesday	AVG Wednesday	AVG Thursday	AVG Friday	AVG Saturday	AVG Sunday
June	Vehicles	21.00	252	17.00	20.00	17.00	22.00	25.00	30.50
	Bicyclists	1.17	14	0.00	1.00	2.00	0.00	0.00	2.00
	Walk-ons	2.33	28	1.00	1.50	3.33	0.00	1.00	5.00
	Visitors	60.50	726	50.00	58.00	48.67	43.00	86.00	85.00
	Max # of vehicles in lot	8.92	107	8.00	9.50	5.33	9.00	8.00	15.50
	Vehicles turned away	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Time lot full (min)	0.42	5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.50
	Dogs	2.00	24	2.00	3.50	2.33	0.00	0.00	3.00

		Daily AVG	Total	AVG Tuesday	AVG Wednesday	AVG Thursday	AVG Friday	AVG Saturday	AVG Sunday
July	Vehicles	28.19	592.00	29.20	28.80	29.00	23.50	23.60	28.67
	Bicyclists	1.29	27.00	1.20	0.80	2.00	1.00	0.80	2.33
	Walk-ons	4.43	95.00	4.40	5.20	6.75	3.50	3.40	2.33
	Visitors	79.52	1670.00	80.40	78.80	86.00	57.50	67.00	82.67
	Max # of vehicles in lot	11.62	244.00	12.20	11.60	10.50	9.50	10.40	13.67
	Vehicles turned away	2.31	30.00	0.00	1.60	3.75	0.00	0.00	2.33
	Time lot full (min)	28.76	604.00	13.80	25.00	40.00	0.00	0.00	83.33
	Dogs	3.54	41.00	1.00	1.60	1.75	1.00	2.80	2.33
		Daily AVG	Total	AVG Tuesday	AVG Wednesday	AVG Thursday	AVG Friday	AVG Saturday	AVG Sunday
August	Vehicles	30.93	464	31.00	30.00	39.00	26.67	32.50	
	Bicyclists	1.25	15	1.00	1.33	1.50	0.00	2.50	
	Walk-ons	5.73	86	5.67	3.75	7.50	7.67	5.00	
	Visitors	83.53	1253	79.67	75.50	106.50	82.00	93.50	
	Max # of vehicles in lot	12.75	192	13.00	10.50	13.00	13.33	15.00	
	Vehicles turned away	1.14	16	0.67	2.33	0.00	1.00	2.00	
	Time lot full (min)	13.93	195	12.67	20.00	0.00	16.33	24.00	
	Dogs	2.44	35	2.00	2.75	3.00	1.33	3.00	

		Daily AVG	Total	AVG Tuesday	AVG Wednesday	AVG Thursday	AVG Friday	AVG Saturday	AVG Sunday
September	Vehicles	19.00	19						19.00
	Bicyclists	2.00	2						2.00
	Walk-ons	3.00	0						
	Visitors	92.17	42						42.00
	Max # of vehicles in lot	14.00	7						7.00
	Vehicles turned away	3.00	0						
	Time lot full (min)	45.00	0						
	Dogs	3.17	3						3.00

Table 3: Monthly Beach Data with Daily Average (Avg), Totals, and Averages by Day of the Week (when available)

Monthly Data		Daily AVG	Total	AVG Tuesday	AVG Wednesday	AVG Thursday	AVG Friday
June	Visitors	43.00	215.00	46.500	48.000	22.00	
	# of visitors fishing	0.20	1	0.00	1.00	0.00	
	Dogs turned away	1.00	5	1.50	1.00	0.00	
	Violations of property boundaries	4.20	21	5.00	8.00	2.00	
		Daily AVG	Total	AVG Tuesday	AVG Wednesday	AVG Thursday	AVG Friday
July	Visitors	86.67	260	77.00	31.00	106.00	
	# of visitors fishing	0.33	1	0.00	0.00	1.00	
	Dogs turned away	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	
	Violations of property boundaries	6.67	20	6.00	3.00	8.00	
		Daily AVG	Total	AVG Tuesday	AVG Wednesday	AVG Thursday	AVG Friday
August	Visitors	58.33	175		31.00	96.00	48.00
	# of visitors fishing	0.00	0		0.00	0.00	0.00
	Dogs turned away	0.67	2		0.00	2.00	0.00
	Violations of property boundaries	4.67	14		3.00	3.00	8.00

Table 4: Beach Usage for June 13th - August 9th

Summer 2024:	Average:	Total:
Visitors	65.0	650.0
People fishing	0.2	2.0
Dogs turned away	0.7	7.0
Violations of property boundaries	5.5	55.0