

# **Leave No Trace Communication Audit of Curt Gowdy State Park**

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# LNT Principles

- 1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
- 2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
- 3. Dispose of Waste Properly
- 4. Leave What You Find
- 5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
- 6. Respect Wildlife
- 7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors



# Research Questions

- Does Curt Gowdy educate its visitors about Leave No Trace?
- How does the content vary across types of communication?
- Are there explanations that describe why it is important to follow Leave No Trace guidelines?

# Written Codebook

## **Code 6. Respect Wildlife**

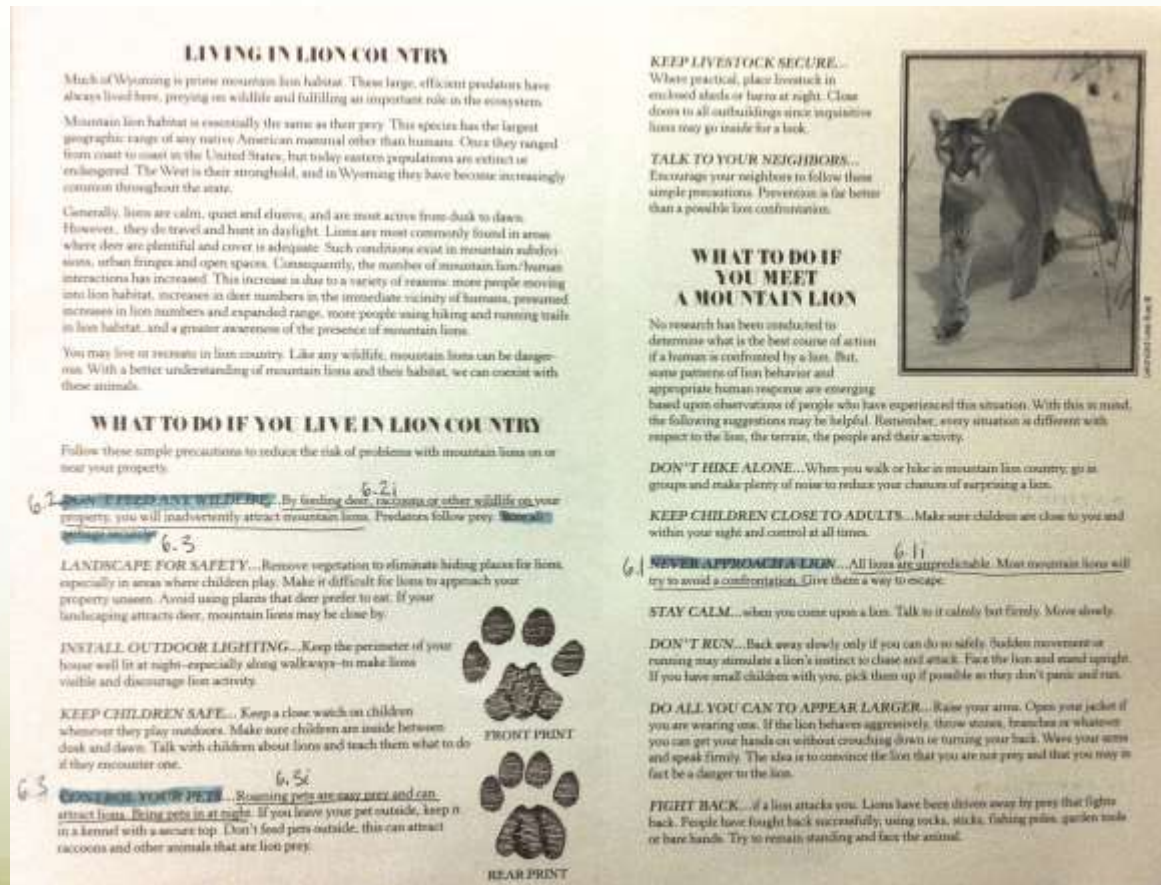
Code 6.1 **Do not approach wildlife.** This code relates to any guidelines about respecting the wildlife's personal space. It can include any information about not touching wildlife, a specific number of yards to keep between a person and an animal, times when wildlife are the most sensitive (ex: mating, winter, rearing young), and keeping pets away from wildlife.

### **i. Explanation:**

- a. Approaching wildlife is dangerous, because the animals need their personal space and may feel threatened if it is encroached.
- b. Animals are extra aggressive when mates or young are present, as they are trying to protect themselves and/or their babies. Even if a person gets too close accidentally, the mother could become aggressive.
- c. During winter, animals depend on saving calories to stay alive. If you startle a moose and it runs away, it wastes precious energy.

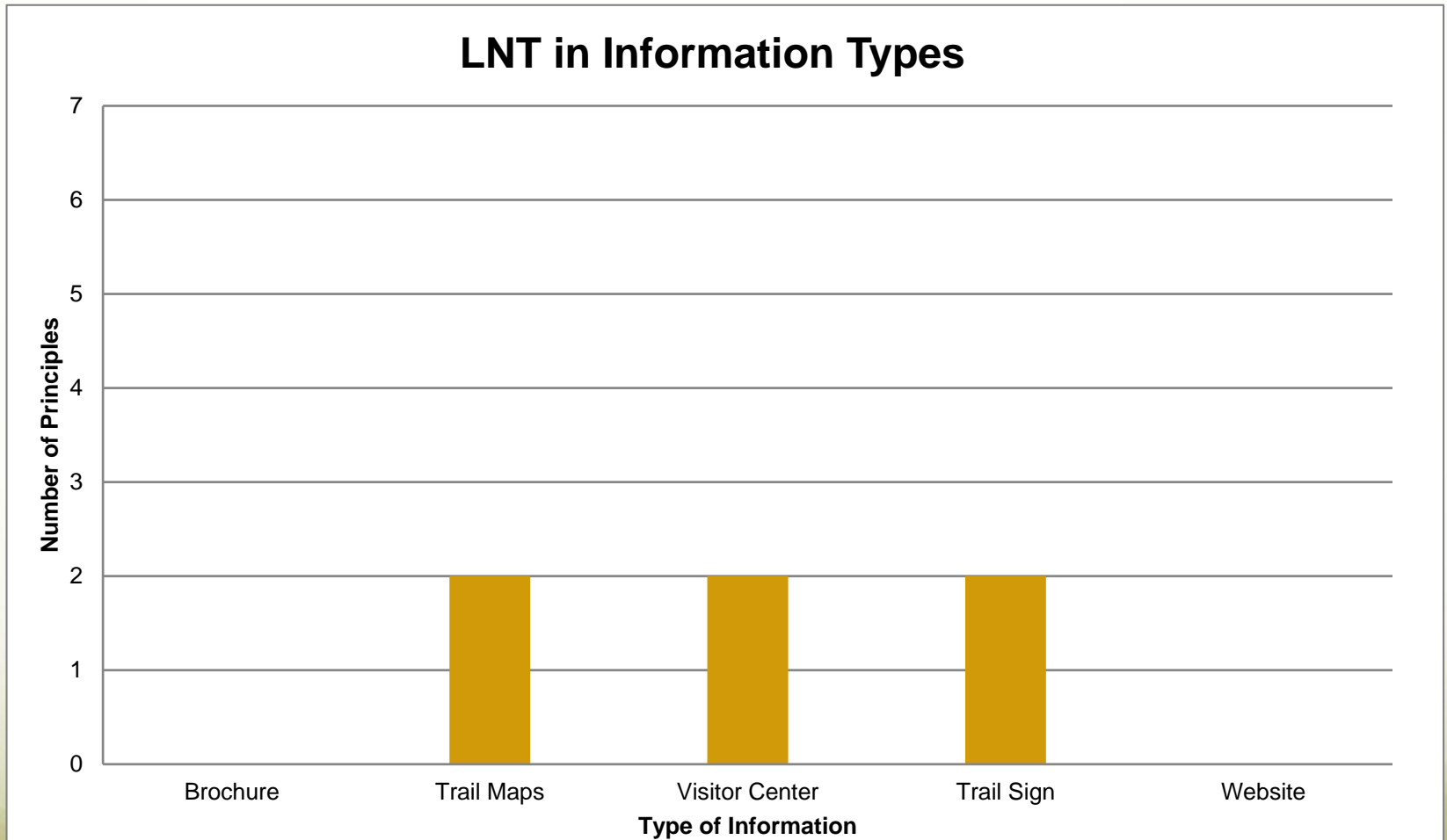
# Research Project

- Data Collection Locations:
  - Brochures
  - Trail Maps
  - Visitor Center
  - Trailhead Signs
  - Website

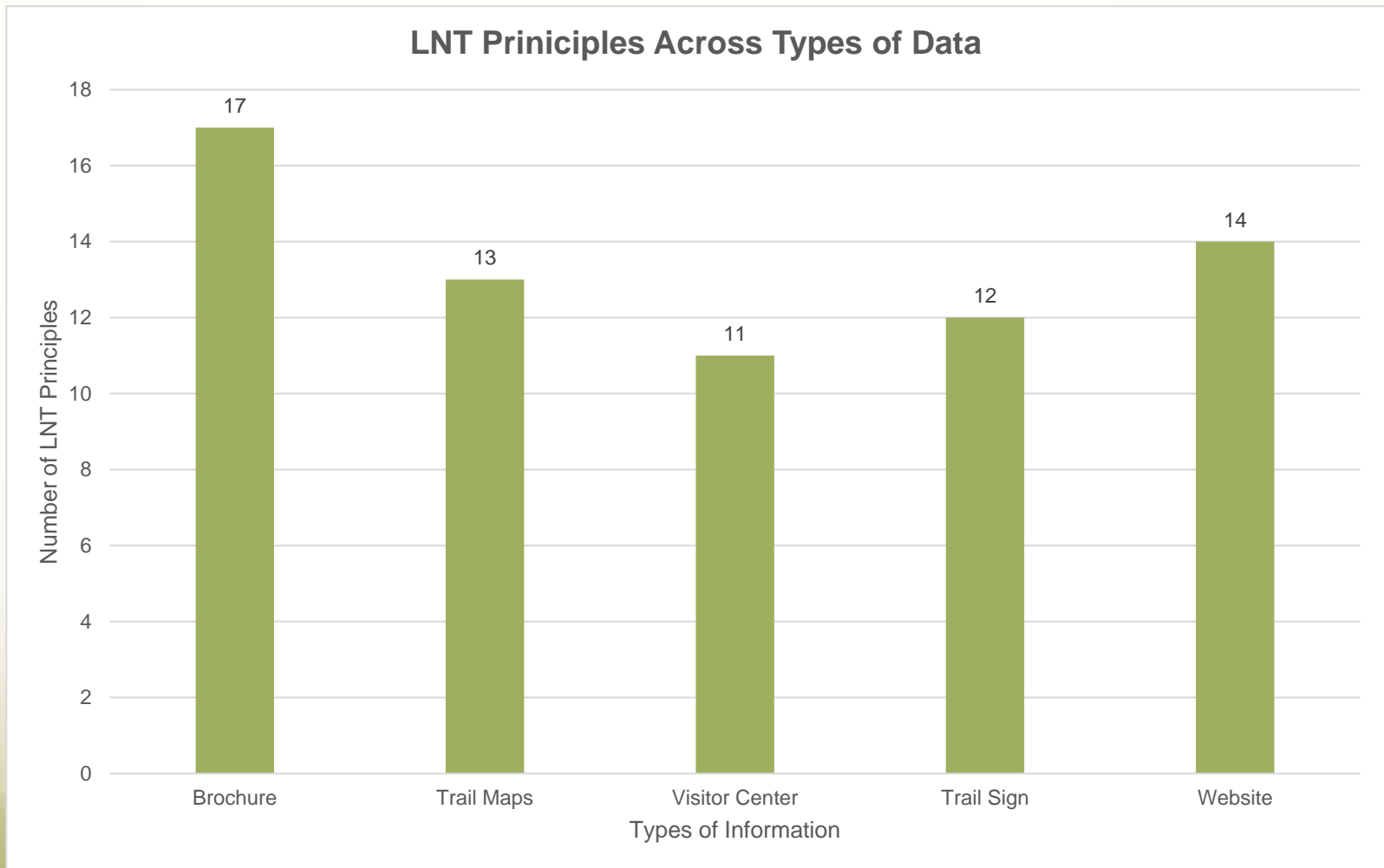




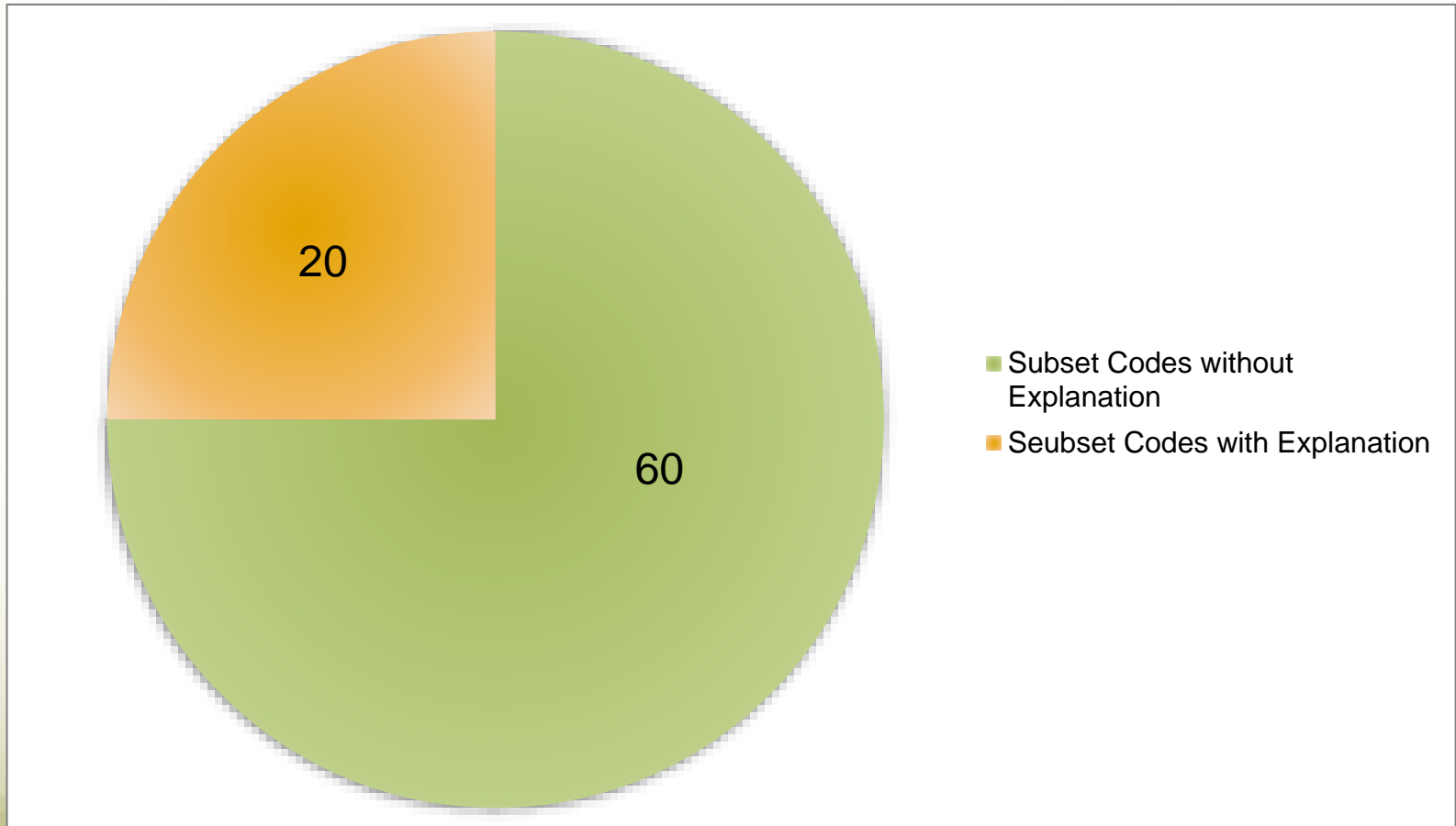
# Findings



# Findings



# Findings



# Limitations

- Definition of explanation
- Overlapping information
- Complexity of LNT
- Bias



# Importance

- Increase in visitation
- Previous study results
- It seems that Curt Gowdy could benefit from an implementation of the Leave No Trace principles in their visitor communication plan.

# LNT Booklet

## DISPOSE OF WASTE PROPERLY

Pack it in, pack it out.



- **Inspect your campsite and rest areas for trash or spilled foods. Pack out all trash, leftover food and litter.**
  - Even organic waste (ex: apple cores, orange peels) can take months or years to decompose fully.
  - Do not burn food or trash, it may not burn completely, other visitors wont want to see it, and animals might eat it.
- **To wash yourself or your dishes, carry water 200 feet away from streams or lakes and use small amounts of biodegradable soap.**
  - This ensures that food particles will not be scattered around your camp for other visitors to see.



**Backpackers tip!**  
Deposit all human waste into a cathole dug 6-8 inches deep. Be sure to carry out all toilet paper and hygiene products. Nobody wants to see used toilet paper on the trail.



Try to leave the area better than you found it. A good habit to start with is picking up 5 pieces of trash before leaving a campsite or hiking trail.

## LEAVE WHAT YOU FIND



Leaving things as you found them allows others the opportunity to enjoy the natural state.

- **Leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them.**
  - As Dave Collins said, "It may look pretty nifty on your shelf at home, but it really belongs in the environment from where it came. That's where it derives its power."
  - If you pick a flower, you are removing its reproductive organs, and bee's will not be able to spread its pollination. An old, fallen antler or bone provides nutrients back into the soil, and to small rodents and insects.
- **Avoid introducing or transporting non-native species.**
  - Think about aquatic species, and rinse off boats, gaiters, and water equipment when traveling between bodies of water. You may inadvertently introduce a deadly virus or bacteria that could hurt native species. For example, whirling disease in Cutthroat Trout in Yellowstone National Park.
- **Do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches.**
  - Other visitors go out into the wild be in the wild, not see signs of other people being destructive.



**STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!**

Prevent the transport of invasive species.  
Clean all recreational equipment.  
[www.ProtectOurWaters.net](http://www.ProtectOurWaters.net)

Questions?

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