"THE ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF THE JULESBURG DRAGSTRIP"

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

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PROJECT INTRODUCTION



The Julesburg Dragstrip is a historic racing venue and the oldest track in the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA). Beyond racing, the track brings racers, spectators, and families to Julesburg, many traveling considerable distances to attend events .Understanding the importance of the dragstrip requires looking beyond attendance numbers.

How much do visitors value the opportunity to race and attend events in Julesburg?

How does the dragstrip influence travel to the area and spending in the local community?

This project examines visitor characteristics, travel patterns, experiences, and responses to travel costs to better understand the dragstrip's **recreational value and importance to the surrounding community**.

WHAT I DID

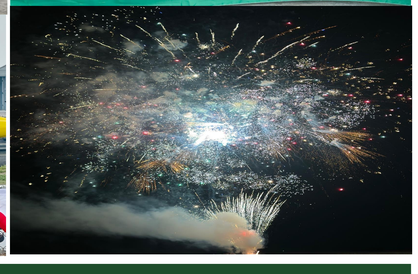
- Designed and administered a survey for Julesburg Dragstrip visitors, both in person and online via Qualtrics (July 3–5)
- Collected data on visitor origin, trip purpose, visitation frequency, travel patterns and expenditures, visitors experience, and demographics.
- Assessed how facility improvements and changes in travel costs may influence future visitation.
- Used a Travel Cost Model to estimate visitation demand and calculate consumer surplus, or how much the dragstrip is worth to visitors beyond what they pay.

FIELDWORK AT THE DRAGSTRIP









SURVEY SNAPSHOTS

79
Total respondents

July 3–5, 2026
Independence Day Weekend

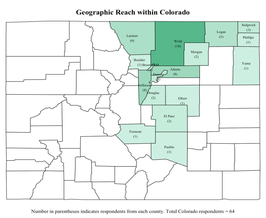
AVERAGE AGE: 51 years

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE: 3 people

GENDER : 55% Male | 45% Female

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME: $118,403

VISITOR PROFILE, EXPERIENCE & FUTURE VISITATION



81% Visitors from Colorado

96% RETURNING VISITORS

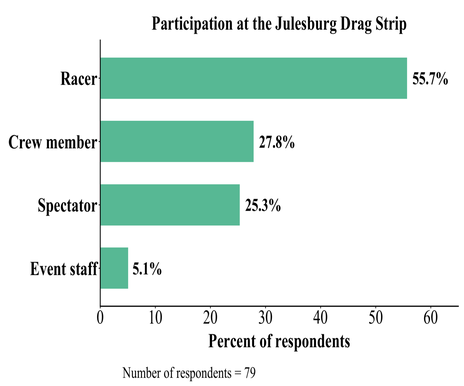
83% OVERNIGHT VISITORS

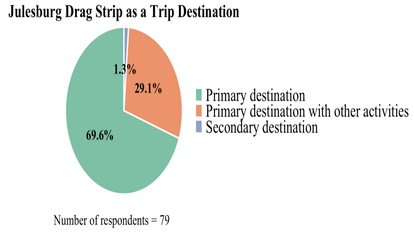
224 MILES AVG.TRAVEL DISTANCE

13.6 AVG. VISITS PER RACING SEASON

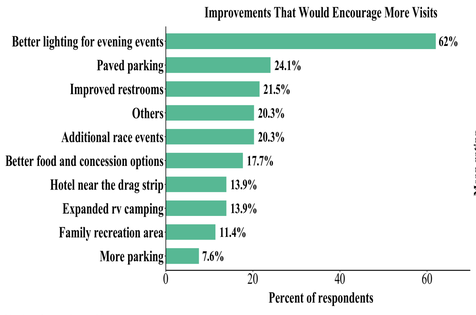
3.0 hours AVG.TRAVEL TIME

6 States: CO, NE, WY, AK, AZ, and CA



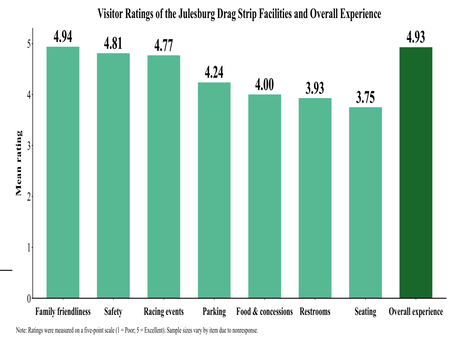


73.2%
Average trip share attributed to the dragstrip *among multipurpose visitors (N = 24)*



Number of respondents = 79

Note: Respondents could select more than one improvement; percentages may sum to more than 100%.



Note: Ratings were measured on a five-point scale (1 = Poor; 5 = Excellent). Sample sizes vary by item due to nonresponse.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS: WHAT VISITORS SAID

FAMILY & COMMUNITY
"The dragstrip has such an amazing community, and everyone is family."

HISTORY & HERITAGE
"This dragstrip is historic. My dad raced here as a kid, and my son started racing here as well."

LOCAL ECONOMIC CONNECTIONS
"Without the racetrack, we would have no reason to come to Sedgwick County."

RECREATIONAL VALUE: TRAVEL COST MODEL

HOW TRIP COST WAS CALCULATED

- **Trip cost per person** = Travel expenses per person + Opportunity cost of travel time
- **Travel expenses included:** Mileage (distance × IRS mileage rate)+ Lodging+ Food+ Admission+ Shopping
- **Opportunity cost of travel time:** Travel time valued at one-third of the respondent's estimated hourly wage rate.

OUR FINDINGS

Factor	Relationship with number of visits
💲 **Trip cost per person**	↓ **Fewer visits ★★**
🏁 **Racer**	↑ **More visits ★★**
👨‍👩‍👧 **Household size**	↑ **More visits †**
Age	No significant relationship
♂ Gender	No significant relationship
Household income	No significant relationship

ESTIMATED CONSUMER SURPLUS ≈ $1,144 per person per trip

In simple terms, this represents the estimated value visitors receive from having access to the Julesburg dragstrip beyond what they spend to make the trip.

COST INCREASE SENSITIVITY (25% INCREASE IN OVERALL TRIP COSTS)

52%	25%	24%
• Would attend just as often	• Not sure	• Would attend less often

WHAT I LEARNED

I LEARNED WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PART OF THE COMMUNITY.



Special thanks to all the survey participants who shared their time and insights, as well as the Julesburg Dragstrip management team.

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