



2023 Season Highlights

The Parks Season Highlights provide annual statistics on park visitation and general information about NWT Parks. This season saw a significant recovery in tourism activity. However, the threat of wildfires impacting much of the territory’s highway travel led to campsite reservation cancellations. Despite this, total reservations and visitor numbers continue to rebound from the effects of the 2020 pandemic.



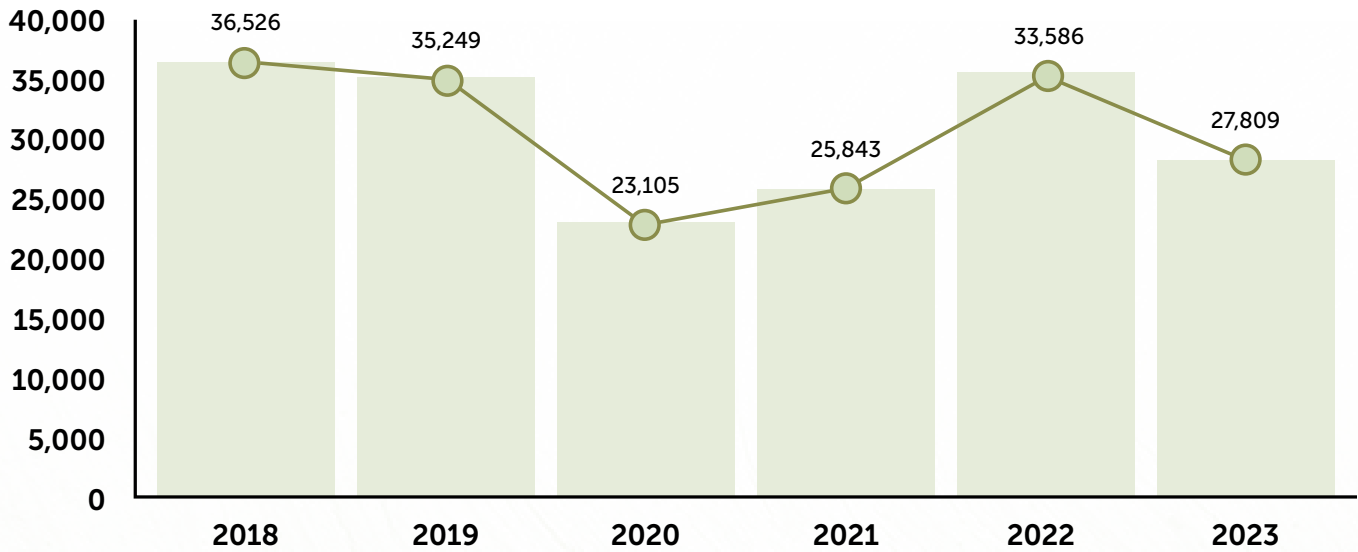
Key Indicators and Notes

Park closures due to wildfires obscured some NWT parks visitation trends for the 2023 season. Despite these natural disasters and the media coverage deterring travel to the Territory, some parks reported

a steady increase in visitation compared to the 2022 season, particularly those with unobstructed highway travel routes.



TOTAL OVERNIGHT VISITORS



NWT Parks Overnight Visitors

Overnight visitation across the NWT was, on average, 17% lower in the 2023 season compared with 2022. The number of overnight visitors represents the total count of individuals based on the party size of all reservations made throughout the season.

A surge in overnight stays to the Beaufort Delta Region helped offset an even larger decline in total overnight visitors. While most parks on NWT highways were affected by the 2023 wildfires, the Beaufort Delta's access route remained unaffected. As a result, visitation in the Beaufort Delta increased by 18% compared to the previous season. Meanwhile, the North Slave region recorded its lowest number of overnight visitors since 2018.

The Research and Planning Unit within the Tourism and Parks Division compiles and reports key statistics from NWT Parks. The definition of overnight visitors was updated in February 2024 to exclude the number of days in the reservation, providing a more accurate explanation of the data.

Number of Overnight Visitors

27,809

Total Overnight Occupancy

14,717

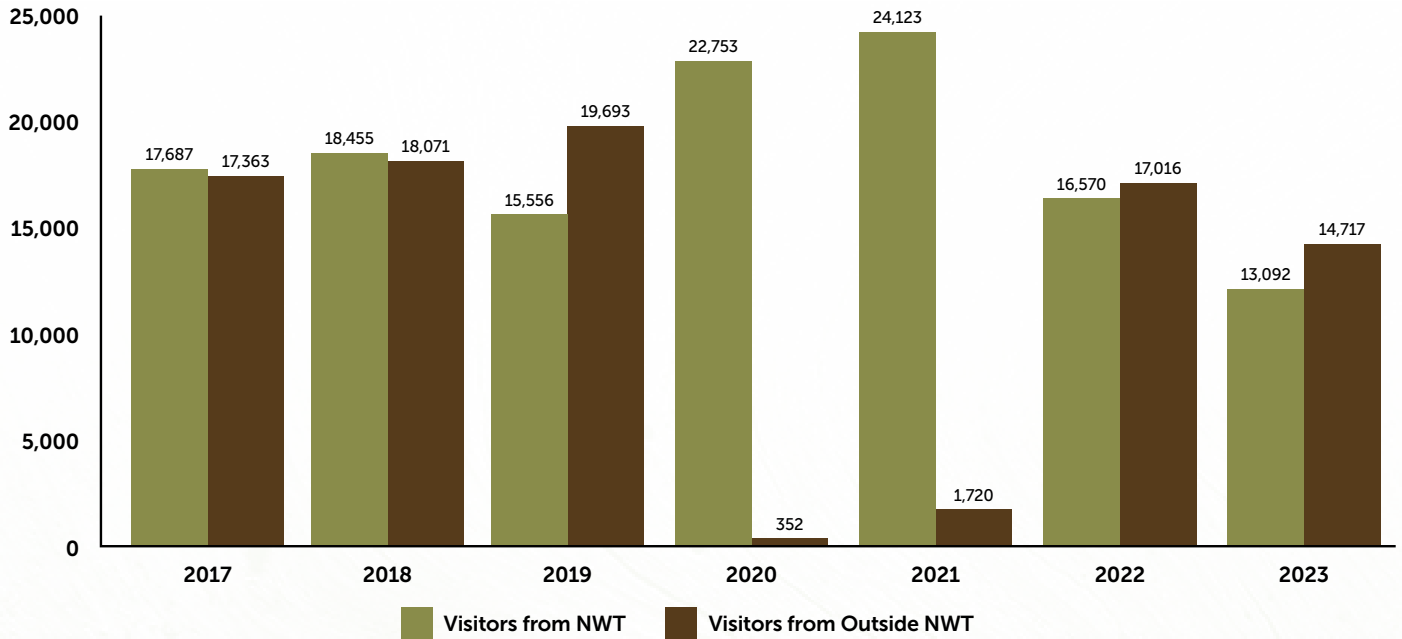
Occupancy from Non-Resident Visitors



NWT PARKS - ESTIMATED OVERNIGHT VISITORS BY REGION							2023 vs 2022
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	YOY %
Beaufort Delta Region	5,615	6,292	842	1,100	4,371	5,167	18%
Dehcho Region	2,156	1,931	1,371	1,417	2,108	1,720	-18%
North Slave Region	16,623	15,430	14,968	16,568	15,792	11,431	-28%
South Slave Region	12,133	11,596	5,924	6,758	11,315	9,491	-16%
Total Overnight Visitors	36,527	35,249	23,105	25,843	33,586	27,809	-17%

NWT Parks Visitor Origin

NUMBER OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS



There is a growing trend of tourists from outside the NWT visiting Parks. Visitor origin information presented a demonstrated rise in US visitors (4% in 2022 to 27% in 2023) and international visitors (2% in 2022 to 13% in 2023) compared to the 2022 season. In the 2023 season, visitors from outside the NWT accounted for more than half (53%) of all NWT park visitors. The last time a similarly high percentage of non-resident visitors was recorded was in 2019, at 56%. This indicates that national and international tourists are returning to NWT parks, despite the 2023 wildfires.

14,717

Overnight stays from Non-resident Visitors

Stays from visitors outside the NWT accounted for 53% of the total visitation.

13,092

Overnight Stays from NWT Residents

NWT residents were 47% of total overnight visitors.



For the 2023 season, overall more than 50% of overnight visitors to the parks were from outside of the NWT as follows:

38%

FROM OTHER AREAS OF CANADA

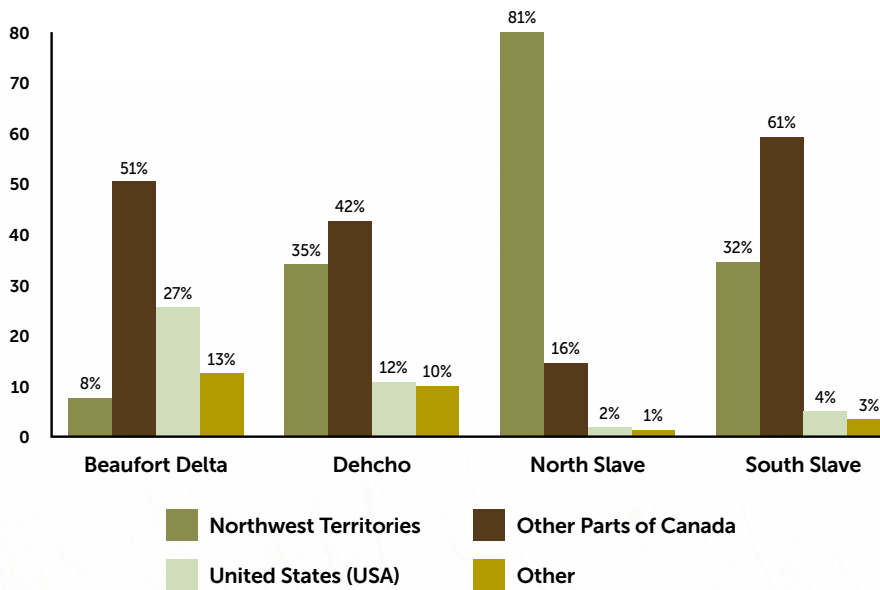
14%

INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLERS

International percentage includes overnight visitors with undisclosed origins.



2023 SEASON VISITOR ORIGIN (% OF REGIONAL TOTAL)



Assessing trends in visitor origins for the 2023 season is challenging due to the temporary closures of several parks during the wildfires. However, the Dehcho region saw a dramatic 50% increase in both US visitors and visitors from other parts of Canada in 2023. International travelers were distributed relatively equally to the 2022 season, except in the Beaufort Delta, which saw an increase in international visitors from 2% in 2022 to 13% in 2023. This indicates that tourism to the Beaufort Delta is reaching a wider international audience.



4/17 Parks**

Saw visitor all-time highs

8/17 Parks

Reached normal visitation figures, recovering from the previous two years.

*Regional numbers may not add to 100% due to rounding.

**Based on visitation figures, in the "Number of Overnight Visitors by NWT Park" table on the following page.



Reservation Cancellations Due to Wildfires

During the 2023 season, evacuations necessitated the closure of some parks. Reservation cancellation data from August 15 to the end of season shows that over 3,700 reservations were cancelled due to park closures. Without this disruption, NWT Parks would have seen nearly 31,600 overnight visitors. Additionally, cancellations due to wildfire news outside the park closure dates suggest that, if not for the historic wildfire season, park visitations in 2023 would have continued to increase from the previous season.

Number of Overnight Visitors by NWT Park

Beaufort Delta’s Nataiinlaih and Jàk Parks experienced record visitor numbers, resulting in an impressive 18% increase in total visitation for the region. Fort Providence Park also saw a remarkable 20% increase in visitors, thanks to its growing popularity as an early-season fishing destination. These successes highlight the appeal and resilience of these parks, even during a challenging travel season.

NWT PARK	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2022 season vs. 2023 season
Beaufort Delta	5,614	6,292	842	1,100	4,371	5167	18%
Gwich'in Territorial Park	288	603	271	262	50**	107	114%
Happy Valley Territorial Park	3,442	3,548	19	0*	1,130	1596	41%
Jàk Territorial Park	1,258	1,258	534	805	2,243	2391	7%
Nataiinlaih Park	626	883	18	33	995	1073	8%
Dehcho	2,156	1,931	1,371	1,417	2,108	1720	-18%
Blackstone Territorial Park	784	656	275*	269	622	457	-27%
Fort Simpson Territorial Park	472	459	315	191*	672	600	-11%
Sambaa Deh Territorial Park	900	816	781	957	814	663	-19%
North Slave	16,623	15,430	14,968	16,568	15,792	11431	-28%
Fred Henne Territorial Park	11,323	10,548	8,370	10,183	9,049	6614	-27%
Prelude Lake Territorial Park	3,043	2,872	3,657	3,668	3,974	2881	-28%
Reid Lake Territorial Park	2,257	2,011	2,940	2,717	2,769	1936	-30%
South Slave	12,133	11,596	5,924	6,758	11,315	9491	-16%
60 th Parallel	342	250	0*	0*	196	110	-44%
Fort Providence Territorial Park	2,016	1,860	594	584	2,303	2757	20%
Hay River Territorial Park	3,777	4,052	2,340	2,401	2,231	1981	-11%
Lady Evelyn Falls Territorial Park	1,624	1,281	1,270	1,256	1,944	1410	-27%
Little Buffalo River Crossing Territorial Park	726	928	213	167	1,027	907	-12%
Queen Elizabeth Territorial Park	1,115	1,106	825	1,292	1,413	827	-41%
Twin Falls Gorge – Louise Falls Campground	2,504	2,102	682	1,058	2,201	1488	-32%
Grand Total	36,526	35,249	23,105	25,843	33,586	27,809	-17%

The average length of stay in the NWT parks was 2.67 days – an increase in the average length of stay during the 2022 season. This figure is affected by the closure of some parks due to wildfires and floods, and resultant park closures.

