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# COMMUNITY OF SOOKE, BC HUMAN- BEAR CONFLICT MANAGEMENT PLAN

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Prepared For  
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## **List of Acronyms and Abbreviations**

BC	British Columbia
CRD	Capital Regional District
CBSM	Community-Based Social Marketing
EDRF	Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund
HBCMP	Human-Bear Conflict Management Plan
PBHA	Preliminary Bear Hazard Assessment
RRU	Royal Roads University
SBWG	Sooke Bear Working Group
WWS	Wild Wise Sooke

## Executive Summary

In recent years the population of Sooke, British Columbia has grown rapidly, putting pressures on surrounding ecosystems. With an increase in development and an influx of people, there have been increasing occurrences of human-bear conflicts. Bears are attracted to the area due to salmon-bearing rivers, plentiful fruit, and anthropogenic attractants. Once bears become habituated or food conditioned, conflicts may arise. A habituated bear is defined as a bear that has become comfortable around humans and is no longer startled by their presence. A food conditioned bear is one that has learnt on their own that humans and anthropogenic areas are associated with food. Local non-profit organizations such as Wild Wise Sooke have attempted to mitigate this issue; however, it is a very complex problem that requires planning and management.

Wild Wise Sooke requested that Environmental Science undergraduate students from Royal Roads University develop a Human-Bear Conflict Management Plan (HBCMP). This HBCMP is the second phase of the Preliminary Bear Hazard Assessment that was conducted in 2017. The scope of the HBCMP is limited to black bears who inhabit areas surrounding the community of Sooke, BC. The plan includes a collection of information gathered from interviews with local professionals, survey responses from local residents, and literature reviews of existing documents such as Whistler's HBCMP. The goal of Sooke's HBCMP is to identify the community's level of commitment to prevent human-bear conflicts, to evaluate current issues, and to develop methods of action. Mitigation strategies to address these problems were determined; these actions were prioritized and a timeline with cost estimates for each of the recommended actions were developed.

Three main strategies were identified to help reduce human-bear conflicts in Sooke. The three strategies include: strengthening of bylaws and enforcement, waste management, and education. These actions have been divided between top priorities and future actions.

The top priorities include:

1. Implementing a waste pick-up bylaw;
2. Modifying the animal regulation and impounding bylaw;

3. Increasing bylaw enforcement;
4. Developing a waste management plan;
5. Providing bear-resistant bins for residents in high-risk areas; and
6. Supporting community education and outreach programs.

The future actions include:

1. Implementing a livestock bylaw;
2. Implementing a waste storage bylaw for non-residential premises;
3. Urban development planning;
4. Creating a waste drop-off area; and
5. Preparing annual community progress reports.

Sooke's HBCMP is to be used as a tool to help identify the necessary programs and mitigation procedures to meet the community's goals of minimizing wildlife conflicts.



## **1.0 Introduction**

Sooke, BC is located west of Victoria on Vancouver Island. The area consists of prime black bear habitat due to adjacent valleys, salmon-bearing rivers, and plentiful fruit trees. In recent years, urbanisation has increased pressure on their habitat, impacting black bear populations inhabiting nearby areas. As a result, the number of human-bear conflicts in Sooke has increased. Every year, hundreds of phone calls are made to local conservation officers (COs) regarding bear encounters within the community.

The purpose of the HBCMP is to provide recommendations to help resolve the issues outlined in the Preliminary Bear Hazard Assessment (PBHA), and to serve as a reference for Wild Wise Sooke (WWS). WWS is a non-profit organization founded in 2015 by Debbie Read. The purpose of WWS is to offer free public education and outreach programs to help reduce wildlife conflicts in Sooke.

### **1.1 Background Information**

Sooke is a district municipality of the Capital Regional District (CRD), and is home to 13,000 people. Sooke has a warm Mediterranean climate and has numerous tourist destinations including the Sooke Potholes and East Sooke Park. These attractions bring in many visitors each year. Due to the climate, plentiful vegetation, and salmon bearing streams, Sooke is a perfect black bear habitat. However, in recent years urban development has encroached on bear habitat. Conservation officers receive over 400 calls a year reporting wildlife conflicts within the community. These conflicts typically arise when bears have become habituated or food dependant. If dependency occurs, troubles may arise leading to the bear's euthanizations; an unsustainable solution. Another technique used to mitigate habituated or food dependant bears is to relocate them. However due to the island's high black bear population density, relocated bears may encroach on other bear's habitat leading to competition over the territory. Non-profit organizations such as WWS can help reduce wildlife conflicts in Sooke through education programs. The Phase I Sooke PBHA identified the most common bear attractant to be improper handling and storing of garbage, but may also include poultry, and fruit trees. By implementing a HBCMP, along with support from the District of Sooke, the Sooke Transition Town Society, the Sooke Bear Working Group (SBWG) and WWS, wildlife conflicts can be reduced.

## 1.2 Research Question

What are practical solutions to minimize human-bear conflicts in Sooke, and how can positive long-term change be created within the community? Some of the issues that have been addressed include the control of bear attractants through the use of bylaws, waste management practices, and education.

## 1.3 Project Scope

Royal Roads University (RRU) Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science undergraduate students were retained by WWS, as represented by Debbie Read, to develop a HBCMP between January 1<sup>st</sup> and August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The scope of the HBCMP is limited to black bears in the community of Sooke.

The project involved the following activities:

1. Interviews with professionals;
2. Surveying of Sooke residents;
3. Review of existing documents; and
4. The development of a HBCMP.

## 1.4 Project Goals

This HBCMP followed the goals outlined in the Bear Smart Community Program (Davis, Wellwood, & Ciarniello, 2002, pp. 39):

1. *Provide a general summary of the Human-Bear conflict issues in the community based on the Phase I: Problem Analysis;*
2. *Identify the community's level of commitment to the program;*
3. *Identify the level of tolerance of the community towards maintaining or restoring natural bear habitats (e.g., travel corridors and feeding areas) adjacent to the community;*
4. *Clearly establish goalposts for the success of the program;*
5. *Identify the agencies, groups, or individuals responsible for addressing problems;*
6. *Determine what is necessary to address each problem successfully;*
7. *Set priorities for specific actions to be taken;*
8. *Develop a timetable for addressing each problem; and*

9. *Conduct a cost estimate of proposed management actions and provide a budget breakdown for each of the criteria in the program.*

## **2.0 Methodology**

### **2.1 Interviews**

WWS provided a list of professionals to be interviewed. These suggestions were based on their participation in other successful HBCMP documents and whether their input would be valuable. The professionals interviewed included both local and provincial government representatives, individuals who have regulatory authority within the area of Sooke, and others who have previously developed such reports. The interview questions were designed in a way that allowed for discussion providing each interviewer's perspective. Notes and recordings were collected during the interviews to recall specific details.

### **2.2 Surveys**

RRU faculty members and Debbie Read assisted in the development of survey questions for Sooke residents. Questions were developed to provide both quantitative results, and to give residents a platform where they can express their views and opinions on human-bear conflicts. The survey questions were organized into true or false, short answer, multiple choice, and ranking. Sooke's Earth Day event was used as an opportunity to distribute the survey in person. An online version was also created to obtain feedback from individuals unable to attend the event. The online survey was developed using LimeSurvey. This survey was distributed on WWS's Facebook page, Sooke Reddit, on both the Sooke Mirror Facebook page and in their paper, and on posters displayed in coffee shops and at the grocery store.

### 2.3 Review of Documents

Multiple resources were reviewed and used as a guide to help develop Sooke's HBCMP. These documents were recommended by either WWS or by an interviewee. The following is a list of documents that were referenced:

1. Sooke's PBHA;
2. The HBCMP for the Resort Municipality of Whistler;
3. "Bear Smart" Community Program: Background Report;
4. Bear Smart in British Columbia: An Interim Analysis of Effectiveness; and
5. The Bow Valley Bear Hazard Assessment.

## **3.0 Results**

### **3.1 Interviews**

Mike Badry, BC's Wildlife Conflict Manager, provided us with insight on human-bear conflicts throughout the province. Mike oversaw the development of Whistler's HBCMP, and through this project, he realised that in order to make a successful plan, the community must be invested in implementing long-term changes. Every community is different; therefore, the plan must take into consideration the culture of the community in order to create long-term change. Mike mentioned that the formation of a working group is necessary in order to communicate and resolve issues effectively within the community. A working group generally consists of a number of professionals with local knowledge of the area, including ecological, historical, governmental and any other field deemed necessary. There should be a member from each level of government, an enforcement personnel, an individual in charge of communication, and any other help as deemed necessary. A working group is necessary to ensure that the HBCMP is a fluid document that is continually maintained and changed to meet the ever growing and changing demands of a community. Support within the working group is needed from various levels of government.

Sooke's Mayor, Her Worship Maja Tait helped our team understand how Sooke's municipal government operates and the extent to which they are able to help with human-bear conflicts. With a HBCMP in place, the council may be able to put a motion forward to fund the plan which could be used to help launch the recommendations outlined in this report. Currently, residents believe that if they call a CO reporting a wildlife conflict, then the chances of a bear being euthanized is considerable. This however, is not the case in most scenarios, and can be mitigated through the reduction of bear attractants by means of education. There have been considerable improvements in the minimization of human-bear conflicts in recent years due to organizations such as WWS. The Mayor voiced her preference of education over fines; therefore, supporting educational programs will be a main focus used to increase overall community awareness.

Laura Hooper, Head of Parks and Environmental Services for the District of Sooke, mentioned that she is a member of Sooke's working group. Laura's background in biology helped us further understand how the landscape of Sooke has changed due to urban development,

and how this has impacted local ecosystems. Another issue she mentioned was the lack of a municipal waste management system. Laura was interested in the development of a waste management plan for Sooke. Our team has suggested that a waste management plan be developed as Phase III of this project.

Peter Pauwels, one of Victoria's four COs, helped us understand the perspectives of local COs. He mentioned to us that there is a limited number of COs on Vancouver Island, and that human-bear conflicts make up more than the designated 15% of their workload. Peter believes that further education and attractant management can help reduce the reliance on COs, while reducing the need for tickets and penalties through proper communication.

Crystal McMillan, Executive Director of Bear Smart BC Consulting, is experienced in the development of HBCMP's. Crystal mentioned that it is important to have the municipality's support when determining who is responsible for investing in such projects. She also mentioned that the project must be specific to the community of Sooke. This becomes essential when developing recommendations that are feasible and that have been proven to be successful by other communities. Crystal also suggested reviewing Bear Smart's Community Background report, and ensuring that the community is engaged through continuous outreach programs.

## 3.2 Surveys

The online survey was available between April 17<sup>th</sup> and June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2018. All in-person survey responses were manually entered into the online database, totaling 115 responses from Sooke residents. The questions were designed to:

1. Acquire information regarding resident's bear awareness;
2. Evaluate bear presence within the community;
3. Gain an understanding of the community's satisfaction with the current waste management process;
4. Identify tolerance and/or the commitment to a HBCMP; and
5. Provide residents with an opportunity to make comments and suggestions.

### 3.2.1 Resident awareness

Determining bear awareness can be used to identify areas that require immediate attention. Questions such as "Are you aware of any human-bear conflicts within the community

of Sooke?” allowed us to understand whether residents were aware of the issue. 68% of survey responses indicated that those individuals were aware, with the remaining 30% not being aware. The latter group is cause for concern, as Sooke is in an area of prime bear habitat, resulting in a reasonably high number of human-bear encounters annually when compared to other areas on Vancouver Island.

Additional questions included: “Rank the top three things you would do in the case of a bear sighting at your house, or place of work”. A list of seven options were included to choose from. The number one initial reaction selected was to do nothing; followed by cleanup or removal of attractants, and then to call a CO.

The initial response of doing nothing was very promising as one should never confront a bear; their size and strength can make them very dangerous if the bear feels threatened. However, doing nothing would mean that the attractant is still present (unless cleanup was to follow) and may result in additional human-bear encounters. The second most popular response was to clean up or remove the attractants. Removal of attractants is key to help prevent future bear encounters; however, we recommend that the second step should be to contact a professional who will identify and assess the reason for the encounter. Local organizations such as COs and WWS are first on the list of people that we recommend calling. COs should be contacted for urgent instances (e.g., habituated or aggressive bears), and WWS should be contacted for non-urgent instances. WWS is well educated in attractant management and could help divert many of the unnecessary phone calls made to COs. These survey responses allowed us to identify areas for improvement to help mitigate bear encounters.

Garbage was the major attractant identified in the PBHA, and is designated to be a high priority item. The next question, “How and where do you store your garbage?” involved identifying whether bears gaining access to garbage was due to the storage location, or to other factors. This question allowed residents to expand on their issues and provide suggestions. The majority of these responses noted that garbage was kept in the garage, or a bear-proof shed or bin. Ten responders admitted to storing their garbage outside, and these individuals mentioned that the lids were secured with either a rope or bungee, or not secured at all. The information collected here helped us in all three of our major areas of focus: improvement and

implementation of bylaws, education programs for residents, and the suggestion of developing a municipal waste management plan.

### *3.2.2 Bear presence*

The next set of questions identified whether changes have been made within the community since the development of the PBHA. The first question asked, “When was the last time you saw a bear in Sooke?” The highest selection was from 61% of individuals who have seen a bear within the last year, followed by 19% of individuals who said within the last week, 9% said in the last five years, 8% said they have never seen a bear, and the remaining 3%, said they haven't seen a bear in over five years. These responses emphasized that there is still a presence of bears within the community.

Sooke residents were then asked: “Have you had issues with bears on your property or place of work?” 63% of people said they have not had any issues with bears, whereas 37% said that they have had issues. This question allowed for comments, with 48% of responders leaving a comment. The majority of the comments indicated that the issue with bears was from residents that were new to the area at the time of incidence, and were not aware of the appropriate attractant storage. Its comforting to see that these issues for the most part were self-acknowledged and remedied. Responses from this question provided us with evidence of bear activity within the community, and allowed us to verify that attractant control is still an issue in Sooke. The comments left in this section have demonstrated a need for some sort of education program for new residents.

All direct survey responses and comments are provided in the Appendix.

### *3.2.3 A Re-evaluation of the problem*

The next question was, “Do you have any of the following bear attractants at your house?” This question allowed us to re-examine the previously identified issues in the PBHA, and provided an area of focus. The most abundant attractants are fruit and berry trees at 49%, followed by barbecues at 46%, 40% have vegetable gardens, 39% have compost, 25% have bird feeders, 22% have outdoor pets, 12% have chicken coops, 6% have outdoor freezers, 5% admitted to having unsecured outdoor garbage, and 4% have livestock. Note that the total adds up to >100%, as many respondents were able to identify more than one attractant. The most



common bear attractants include: garbage, unsecured livestock and fruit. Table 2 of the Appendix displays the number of calls associated with each attractant in the months of June, September and October during the years 2014-2016.

The next question was, “Do you have any of the following bear attractants at your place of work?” Compost was the most abundant attractant, with 9% of individuals having one at work, followed by 8% with vegetable gardens, 7% with fruit trees or berries, 4% having unsecured outside garbage, 3% with barbeques, 3% with poultry, 2% with livestock, 2% with outdoor pets, 2% with bird feeders, and 2% with outdoor freezers.

The results demonstrated that compost and fruit trees are still amongst the top three attractants; however, more garbage was found to be unsecured at work, when compared to the homes of Sooke residents. This is interesting, as it suggests that people are more likely to leave garbage unsecured at their place of work. Neglect may be due to a lack of facilities, lack of awareness or responsibility. This information is useful because it indicates that more awareness and education could be provided at work, thus reducing issues of unsecured business waste.

All direct survey responses and comments are provided in the Appendix.

#### *3.2.4 Waste management*

The next area of analysis regarded waste management in Sooke. Two main questions were asked to gather information on the subject. The first was, “How frequently is your waste picked up or taken to the dump?” Responses were highest for the weekly selection, with 46% of people, closely followed by the “other” selection, in which individuals specified that their waste is picked up every two weeks. Monthly pick-up was the third most common selection (10% of responses). Only 3% of residents said that they never have their waste picked up. This question was used to identify the most common frequencies for waste pick-up and helped us to ascertain that waste is stored for too long on properties (thus luring in bears), and to identify what frequency of collection might be easily adopted by Sooke as part of any future Municipal Waste Management Plan.

A similar question was asked regarding compost pick-up. The results indicated that 45% of residents have never had compost pick-up; 25% selected “other” and commented that they either don't compost, have it picked biweekly, or compost on their property. 23% of residents

have their compost picked up weekly and the remaining 4% have their compost picked up monthly.

The final question involved waste management, and was used to identify the overall satisfaction that residents felt with their current waste collection system. The question asked was “How satisfied are you with the current waste management system in Sooke?” We determined that 42% are somewhat satisfied, 27% are very satisfied, 19% are somewhat unsatisfied and 9% are very unsatisfied. There was the option for residents to provide a comment for this section. A variety of responses included: “We don’t use it”, “Residents should have waste pick-up for free due to the high property taxes”, and “We are asked to put on curb by 7 am, but pick up often isn’t until late afternoon”. There were a few other more specific complaints regarding the various local disposal companies. A very satisfied rate of less than 30% indicated that the remaining 70% of residents may be willing to transition from their current disposal system to another; therefore, Sooke should consider developing a community waste management plan.

All direct survey responses and comments are provided in the Appendix.

### *3.2.5 Tolerance and commitment to the plan*

The next question asked residents to identify the level of commitment and acceptance they would have towards the implementation of a HBCMP. To determine their level of commitment to the plan, we first felt it was appropriate to understand how they felt about black bears. We asked residents to “Please rank the top three things that come to mind when you think about bears”. There were five selections available for residents to choose including: Pest, Neighbour, Dangerous, Important for the environment, and a Symbol for the community. 49% of residents consider bears as a neighbour, 25% indicated that bears are important for the environment, 15% believed that bears are a symbol of the community, 10% said that bears are dangerous, and 2% consider bears a pest.

These responses indicate that the residents of Sooke (assuming the survey is representative of the community as a whole) are interested in the local bears and believe that a management plan needs to be in place.

Residents were also asked to identify the level of responsibility of homeowners, the community, municipality, province, business owners, and garbage collectors regarding wildlife

issues in Sooke. 77% of residents believe that homeowners in Sooke should be very responsible, 19% believe homeowners should be somewhat responsible, 2% think that homeowners are minimally responsible and 1% see no responsibility on the part of homeowners.

For the community's responsibility regarding wildlife issues, 76% see the community to be very responsible, 18% somewhat responsible, 3% minimally responsible, and 2% to be not responsible. As for the municipality, 58% of residents felt the municipality should be very responsible, 30% see them being somewhat responsible, 5% minimally responsible, and 3% not responsible.

Business owners were regarded as being almost as responsible as the municipality regarding wildlife issues, with 52% of residents regarding them as being very responsible, 34% being somewhat responsible, 9% minimally responsible, and 3% not responsible. The level of responsibility continues to decrease with regard to the provincial government, with only 43% regarding them as being very responsible, 35% to be somewhat responsible, 16% to be minimally responsible, and 4% to be not responsible. The last group in the list was the private garbage collectors, who were identified as being very responsible by 37% of residents, somewhat responsible by 30%, minimally responsible by 20%, and not responsible by 10% of residents.

Residents believe that the responsibility for wildlife issues is shared amongst all members of the community, municipal government, businesses and the provincial government. Those who are situated geographically within Sooke should be regarded as being more responsible; however, residents believe that everyone needs to take some form of responsibility.

All direct survey responses and comments are provided in the Appendix.

### *3.2.6 Comments and suggestions*

Sooke residents were asked if they had any suggestions for resolving human-bear conflict issues. Most mentioned ideas such as on-going education and outreach programs, electric fencing and incentives for the securing of livestock, Twitter alerts identifying bears in the area, videos, and other social media reminders. Residents also suggested that garbage collection should be improved, as in most cases garbage cans are left out all day before being picked up. The minimizing of attractants, improving enforcement and fines, having a Bear Aware program, and having the municipality provide bear-proof bins for residents, were other suggestions provided.

The encroachment of development on or near bear habitat was also a concern expressed by some residents.

Lastly, Sooke residents were asked if they had any final comments regarding the human-bear conflicts in Sooke. Most residents appreciate bears in the area and believe education is the key to mitigate current issues. The community wants to see continuous outreach programs and awareness meetings targeting all age groups, which could be provided by WWS. Residents also want council to enforce bylaws regarding garbage containers. There were also suggestions that COs could reach out and address fears regarding bear euthanization. Also, some residents did not like the phrase “human-bear conflict”; they believe it makes the situation sound worse than it is. Some had suggested using terms like “human-bear interactions” instead.

All direct survey responses and comments are provided in the Appendix.

### 3.3 Identification of Conflict Issues Based on the Phase 1 PBHA

Sooke is adjacent to natural bear habitat, resulting in residential areas being potential travel corridors. The most reported human-bear conflict was due to food conditioning from human garbage, compost, residential fruit trees and livestock, particularly in the months of June, September and October.

Areas that were highlighted as having a high bear encounter risk included: Sunriver, T’Sou-ke Nation Reserve, Eustace road, Helgesen road north, and Ecole Poirier School. These areas were identified as being high-risk as they were in close proximity to dense forests, green spaces, high numbers of salmonberries, plants seen as being attractable to bears, or due to implications of improper management of garbage and/or compost bins.

Farms without electric fences were also considered at high risk due to the presence of potential sources in the form of livestock and chickens. Fruit trees and gardens without electric fences were also mentioned as being a potential risk for human-bear conflicts.

## 4.0 Discussion

### 4.1 Top Priorities

Top priorities are defined as actions that need to be implemented as soon as possible, or ones that are necessary to be performed before later successional steps.

#### 4.1.1 *Implement waste pick-up bylaw*

To prevent bears from accessing anthropogenic food sources, garbage should be stored in a bear-proof location at all times. Residents should not place their garbage on the street for pick-up before a specified time (e.g. 5:00 am) on the morning of the scheduled pick-up. These recommendations should be reinforced by the implementation of a bylaw and enforcement (Davis, et al., 2002).

Residents in Sooke have expressed concern about such a bylaw, as some residences do not have a location in which to store bins securely. Some residents also expressed concern about being unable to comply with such a bylaw due to work schedules. To address these issues, an incentive program could be implemented to provide bear-proofing products (e.g. bins or totes) to those who require them.

During interviews with stakeholders and the surveying of residents, we have determined that some have experienced a lack of consistency from their service provider regarding the time of day that their waste is picked up. In some cases, this has led to unsecured garbage being left out for longer periods, increasing the likelihood of bears being attracted. The survey results suggested that the community believes waste pick-up providers hold some responsibility for reducing human-bear conflict in Sooke. Additionally, one individual indicated in the survey that,

“We are asked to put [trash] on curb by 7 am, but pick-up often isn't until late afternoon”

This is one comment among many that highlights this issue. Given this information, the municipality consider a bylaw that enforces waste pick-up service providers to adhere to a specified pick-up time frame (e.g. in the morning).

Since human-bear conflicts are a chronic problem in Sooke, this bylaw should be considered a complementary measure. More permanent measures outlined in *Section 4.1.4* will

need to be implemented to achieve long-term success in reducing human-bear conflicts within the community.

#### *4.1.2 Modify animal regulation and impounding bylaw*

In Sooke, feeding of wildlife is regulated by the Animal Regulation and Impounding Bylaw No. 392. The section of the bylaw pertaining to feeding wildlife is outlined in Sections 51.1 and 51.2, quoted below (District of Sooke, 2009):

*“51.1 Except for bird feeders, no person shall provide any wildlife with food either directly or by leaving or placing in, on or about land or premises any food, food waste, or other material that is or is likely to be attractive to wildlife for the purpose of feeding those animals, other than a Conservation Officer acting in the performance of his or her duties, or a person acting under the direction of or with the permission of a Conservation Officer. (added by Bylaw No. 617 May 25, 2015)*

*51.2 For certainty, the prohibition in section 51.1 does not apply in relation to hunting and trapping activities carried out in accordance with the Wildlife Act and its regulations. (added by Bylaw No. 617 May 25, 2015)”*

The current bylaw regulates attractants that have been left out for the purpose of feeding animals, implying intentional feeding. This bylaw should be modified so that unintentional feeding of wildlife by means of leaving out unsecured attractants can also be clearly regulated. The modified bylaw should clearly state that no person shall dispose of, leave out, provide, or place any refuse that is an animal attractant in or around any land or establishment in such a manner that it is accessible to wildlife. This should include, but not be limited to, household garbage, compost, fruit, livestock feed, refrigerators/freezers, barbeques, bees, beehives, and grease traps. The Resort Municipality of Whistler and the Municipality of Squamish are examples of communities with detailed wildlife attractant bylaws that could be used as models for making modifications to Sooke’s feeding wildlife bylaw.

#### *4.1.3 Increase bylaw enforcement*

Improving and implementing more bylaws to reduce human-bear conflict in the community will only be effective if bylaw enforcement in Sooke is available to do so. It was reported by Sooke Mayor Maja Tait, and Peter Pauwels, a CO with the BC Ministry of

Environment, that bylaw enforcement in Sooke could be improved. At the time of the consultation, there was only one bylaw enforcement officer employed by the municipality. The municipality reported that they were in the process of considering the addition of a second municipal bylaw officer. This is strongly recommended to be done immediately to ensure that wildlife and the advised waste pick-up bylaws can be adequately enforced.

Currently, bylaw officers work business hours (8:30 am - 4:00 pm). It should be noted that in order to enforce bylaws concerning waste handling practices, officer hours may need to be expanded to enforce bylaws concerning unsecured garbage in the evening or early morning prior to waste pick-up. Once the public becomes well-informed of new waste management and or feeding wildlife bylaws, a zero-tolerance approach should be taken (Paquet, 2009).

Money generated by bylaw enforcement could be incorporated into a municipal fund created to address human-bear conflicts and towards paying for a second bylaw enforcement officer. This fund could be used towards education programs or for the purchase of bear-proof bins for high risk areas. As an alternative to administering fines, those who violate bylaws could be required to complete community service work related to reducing human-bear conflict in the municipality. This could include cleaning up garbage in problem areas (Davis, et al., 2002). Such a punishment would serve the additional purpose of informing or expanding the awareness of the individual regarding local human-bear issues.

#### *4.1.4 Development of a waste management plan*

A Waste Management Plan that takes human-bear interactions into account needs to be developed, implemented and maintained for the municipality of Sooke. A modern Waste Management Plan is important for any municipality, but it becomes even more important in an area surrounded by a high population of bears and other wildlife.

This system needs a cradle-to-grave approach and has to be bear-proof from start to finish in order to be effective. Residential storage, business storage, transfer stations and the end disposal all have to take bears into account. Bylaws will need to be implemented to ensure that the private sector involved in municipal solid waste collection, transfer, disposal, recycling, compost and other activities are bear-proof.

Enforcement should be applied, using both positive and negative reinforcement, and should focus on new members of the community. It should also include incentives to reward compliance and disincentives for non-compliance (e.g. tax breaks for buying bear-proof bins or fines for leaving garbage out overnight). Disincentives should be a last resort and only used with bylaw enforcement's discretion; their use should be after education has been attempted and warnings have been issued. Four options for a bear-friendly Waste Management Plan have been identified below (Davis, et al., 2002):

1. Curbside Collection:

To make this system bear-proof, garbage should only be left out during specified time periods identified in the waste pick-up bylaw, minimizing the opportunity for bears to access garbage. Pick-up times will need to be well defined, reliable and communicated. Residents will need to be home to put their garbage out at the appropriate times. They will need a safe storage space for garbage until their pick-up times, meaning that people without a garage may need a shed, some sort of bear-proof structure, or a bear-proof container to store garbage. This could create large costs or difficulties for some individuals. The municipality could give tax breaks to individuals buying bear-proof bins or purchase them for residents who live in the most high-risk areas (Davis, et al., 2002).

2. Residential Dumpsters:

Large bear-proof dumpsters for 20-35 homes is another option. This system saves money by not requiring the purchase of a bear-proof bin for each resident. It also allows residents to put out their garbage whenever it is convenient, and provides universal access to garbage drop off. The use of a residential-based dumpster system simplifies the route for collectors greatly and in turn increases the efficiency of collection. The Teton Series: Model T400 4-yard bin (<https://bearguardian.com/bear-proof-products/bear-proof-dumpsters/teton-series-model-t400/>) is sold by Bear Guardian for \$2,790.58 USD; this bin would be a good fit for this option (Bear Guardian, 2018).

However, the issue with this plan is identifying a location for the dumpster. Dumpsters would need to be placed somewhere that is still accessible for residents, yet far enough away to negate the unsightly nature and odour issues. Bins must be emptied regularly to combat odours and



designed to be aesthetically appealing or be placed somewhere that they are not seen (Davis, et al., 2002). Other concerns to be addressed include pick-up and associated costs.

Currently, garbage pick-up in Sooke is private and some individuals choose to take their own waste to the dump. The municipality contracting out community pick-up and passing on the bill to residents through their taxes could lead to backlash. Consultation and education would need to occur in the early stages of this plan before it is implemented, to mitigate some of these possible issues. The capital cost for dumpsters is another hurdle the municipality would need to overcome, as the bins themselves would cost on average \$200 for each resident.

### 3. Large Community Dumpsters:

This system uses several large bear-proof compactors for the whole municipality. The advantage over residential dumpsters is that you can be more selective in where they are placed (i.e. they won't need to be as close to residential homes). Additionally, there will be less of them, so construction, land purchasing and equipment costs would be reduced. The Teton Series: Model T800 8-yard bin (<https://bearguardian.com/bear-proof-products/bear-proof-dumpsters/teton-series-model-t800/>) is sold by Bear Guardian for \$4316.91 USD; this bin would be a good fit for this option (Bear Guardian, 2018).

An issue with these types of dumpsters, is that they are only bear-proof if the lids are kept closed (Davis, et al., 2002). Therefore, the issue of overfilling and proper use needs to be communicated with all users. Installing electric fences around the dumpsters could be a secondary form of defence to be considered. The acquisition of land is another hurdle to be overcome; the Mayor of Sooke indicated that residents would prefer land to remain as green spaces instead of becoming a community dumpster area. A final issue to consider is that, depending on age and ability, not everyone may be capable of dropping their waste off regularly to a community dumpster site.

### 4. Disposal Directly at the Landfill:

This plan involves residents directly taking their garbage to the landfill; this is not practical for all residents. Wildlife conflicts may arise if residents improperly use the landfill; therefore, staff would need to be hired to continuously monitor the landfill. It's also not practical for all

residents to make frequent trips to the dump and could lead to unmotivated individuals dumping their waste, or illegally filling commercial bins.

The Waste Management Plan also needs to be bear friendly for condos and commercial buildings. Bear-proof bins will be needed for large condos, businesses, schools and downtown streets, with the priority going to high-risk areas. The Teton Series: Model T800 8-yard bin sold by Bear Guardian for \$4316.91 USD is a unit that would work for schools, and the Teton Series: Model T400 4-yard bin sold by Bear Guardian for \$2790.58 USD, would work for businesses and condos (Bear Guardian, 2018).

Ultimately, the waste management plan may need to incorporate a combination of options depending on the severity of bear conflicts, and available land. The plan would need to be tailor-made for the community of Sooke and would need further consultation with the community, wildlife experts, and local waste management companies. An issue with any of these plans is that there is already private garbage pick-up for Sooke. This plan will require companies to make operational changes and may require them to buy new equipment in order to deal with the new bins and more frequent pick-up times. A municipally-run Waste Management Plan removes the freedom residents currently have to select their own pick-up company. However, the surveys have indicated that although most residents feel the current pick-up system is adequate, there is still room for improvement.

A new Waste Management Plan has the ability to fix the current waste management system's inefficiency of multiple companies going down the same street multiple times per day. There are also issues with garbage being dumped into fields and ditches or stuffed into bus-stop garbage cans, presumably by residents who do not want to pay for garbage pick-up. Mandatory participation in a municipal waste collection system should eliminate dumping. A new Waste Management Plan has the ability to improve efficiency, lower costs, and can be more user friendly.

#### *4.1.5 Bear-proof bins in high-risk areas*

Individual bear-resistant bins can be one of the most user-friendly and effective ways to stop bears from accessing garbage; however, a major barrier is the high cost associated. A pilot project may be needed to provide the community with the information required to assess the

benefits of the bins and the most cost-effective way to supply them to the community. The pilot project would include 30 volunteer residences along Eustace Road, Helgesen road and Sunriver Estates. These areas have been chosen because they have been identified as being at a high risk of attracting and contributing to the habituation and food conditioning of bears. (Gouett et al., 2017)

WWS is currently working with Alpine to supply bear-resistant Totes for around \$300 with a total cost of an estimated \$9000 for 30 totes (D. Read. Personal communication, July 10, 2018). The 64-gallon bear EVR II Universal/Nestable Bear Tight Cart (<https://www.toter.com/consumers/product/bear-tough-cart>) has also been quoted for \$141.00 USD plus freight by Toter Inc. which may be more affordable than the Alpine tote. (H. Morris. Personal communication, July 17, 2018).

Costs for bear-proof bins should be divided evenly between participating homeowners and the municipality. These can be used for the pilot project to test the totes effectiveness and to help reduce bear interactions in these high-problem areas. A year after the introduction of the pilot project, a review needs to be undertaken, incorporating interviews with residents to determine effectiveness, usability, and durability of the totes. Once this is completed, a strategy can be implemented to decide if and where more bins should be introduced.

#### *4.1.6 Developing community education and outreach programs*

As the population of Sooke increases, so does the risk for wildlife conflicts. Improperly stored garbage and other food sources are some of the most common bear attractants. However, attractants can be mitigated by providing residents with educational solutions. Education and outreach programs will be designed to reduce bear attractants within the community, while providing information on bear behaviour. These programs will be key components in the effort to reduce human-bear conflicts, and in turn limit pressures on COs.

Educational programs need to be available both online, and in person through outreach programs to ensure maximum coverage of Sooke. Information must be concise and easy to interpret, allowing community members a clear understanding that conflicts can be avoided through the removal of attractants. Wild Safe BC supports our results, and also identifies the most common bear attractant as garbage (Wild Safe BC, n.d.).

Education programs should be designed to reach all demographics of the community including homeowners, visitors, students, and business owners. Programs and reminders should be made available around the town, particularly from January to April, prior to bear season. Some of the objectives for the program should include information on bear ecology, behaviour, and potential attractants. More specific topics include;

1. Identifying ways to prevent bears from accessing non-natural food sources, through the removal of attractants;
2. Developing guidelines for human activities within bear-inhabited areas;
3. Providing actions to be taken if a bear encounter occurs; and
4. Encouraging tolerance of “healthy bear” sightings near the community. Note that tolerance should not be given for specific bears who have become habituated and pose a threat to human safety (Davis, et al., 2002).

Ultimately, the goal of the educational program is to increase public awareness, understanding, and to develop a tolerance of bears; this is best achieved by clearly demonstrating the actions that people should take to help reduce human-bear conflicts (Davis, et al., 2002). Consultation with local and regional governments can help aid in the support and implementation of an educational program; in addition, social media can be utilized to help spread awareness and information.

Internet resources such as WWS’s Facebook page are continuously updated to help spread awareness and information on bear sightings within Sooke. The municipal government’s website should also be updated with informative and interactive information relating to human-bear conflicts. Local newspapers and radio stations could offer information related to human-bear topics including the recommended actions following a bear sighting. The increased media attention could be used to peak public interest. Media often portrays human-bear interactions in a negative light, especially in regard to how COs handle situations. This should be discouraged, and media outlets should be encouraged to report stories in an educational manner to help the public avoid future human-bear conflicts.

### Program Implementation Strategies - Program Development

Survey results regarding tolerance and commitment to the HBCMP indicated a positive response from the community. It is clear that the community wants to live in harmony with surrounding bear populations. By identifying the community's current stance on human-bear issues, and where it wants to be in the future, creative solutions can be developed to attain such goals. Addressing the current and future goals of the community through the development of an education plan will require an individual to be hired for a permanent role. A Bear Education Program Coordinator for the community may be necessary to bridge this gap.

The coordinator must be able to convey information based on scientific research and expert opinion, in a concise and easily understood manner. The coordinator should not have a personal agenda or bias which could potentially undermine the integrity of the program. Ideally, the coordinator lives within the community, and is respected by other community members. The coordinator must have good interpersonal skills, and inspire residents to help change behaviours in the long term. Some of the objectives a coordinator should consider include:

1. Familiarizing themselves with education programs created by WWS, and by other communities;
2. Recruiting volunteers;
3. Consulting and supporting with the working group to gain expert opinion to improve the development and delivery of the program;
4. Seeking access to grant funding;
5. Developing working relationships with local businesses (e.g., restaurants and local waste disposal companies); and
6. Developing ways to implement the plan within the community by providing support and strategies to help reduce human-bear conflicts (Davis, et al., 2002).

### Program Implementation Strategies - Program Delivery

To ensure the success of the program, as previously mentioned, information should be accessible to all demographics within the community. Delivery of the program should be highlighted between January and April of every year, and continue for the duration of the bear season. The objectives for successful delivery of the program should include:

1. Educating residents on bear attractants and bear behaviour;
2. Demonstrating to residents how to remove non-natural food from the access of bears;
3. Offering support and solutions for residents;
4. Encouraging the use of bear-proof bins and electric fences; and
5. Increasing the overall community awareness.

Actions that should be conducted for successful delivery of the program include:

1. Education and outreach events for the general public and schools;
2. Door-to-door education campaigns for those unable to attend events;
3. A window sticker campaign to raise awareness, and funding;
4. Research into preserving bear habitats and natural corridors;
5. Consultation with local COs;
6. Development of a voluntary fruit tree management campaign; and
7. Providing regular updates on bear related topics to residents, businesses, and media (Davis, et al., 2002).

### Homeowners

Education programs should be designed for both long-time residents who are comfortable around bears, and for newcomers who need help adjusting to the area. Homeowners should receive reminders on how to store their garbage properly, and how to best manage other attractants. Education for homeowners should include:

1. Strategies for waste management, livestock management, chicken coops, and management of other attractants;
2. Information regarding the specifics to the waste pick-up bylaw (e.g. when garbage should be curbside);
3. Keeping garbage organized and secured until collection;
4. Installation of appropriate electric fencing to protect chicken coops and livestock;
5. The placing of other attractants such as bird feeders in locations where bears cannot access them; and
6. Ensuring cleanliness of barbeque grills and smokers (Davis, et al., 2002).

Survey results suggest that new homeowners would like more education to prevent bears from being attracted to their property. The municipality should consider creating a brochure to be handed out by realtors to new residents. Other communities such as Canmore, offer new homeowners “A Homeowner's Guide to Environmental Stewardship” which is distributed by realtors and is available electronically on the following website: [http://biosphereinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Chinook\\_HomeBuyers.pdf](http://biosphereinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Chinook_HomeBuyers.pdf). Existing homeowners could be educated by door-to-door delivery of similar pamphlets. Priority of distribution should be to areas that are considered high risk.

Based on the survey results, residents of Sooke are hesitant to call COs as they fear the bear will be euthanized. Local residents should be invited to community events where they can be reassured that COs are there to protect them and that euthanization will only occur when deemed absolutely necessary.

### Visitors

Signs should be made visible along main roads, trails, and other popular outdoor recreation areas. Educational posters can be designed and placed in high-traffic areas such as coffee shops, and restaurants. Sooke could also consider creating a “Bear Activity” rating system, similar to a fire index sign. This sign could be publicly displayed indicating low, medium, or high bear activity (Davis, et al., 2002). Information brochures should be made available near the entrance to trails, at campgrounds, bus stops, and taxi ranks. Signs and brochures could outline tips people can follow to prevent wildlife conflicts, and information on what to do if they encounter a bear.

Signage on trails could include information on how to prevent, and respond safely to a bear encounter by informing individuals to:

1. Not feed wildlife;
2. Identify yourself in a calm tone;
3. Back away slowly from the bear in the opposite direction; and
4. Keep an eye on the bear to see how it reacts (Get Bear Smart Society, n.d.).

These signs should also remind people that the bears will not generally be aggressive; however, they are wild animal and there is potential for the bear to defend itself if threatened.

Visitors and residents should also be on the lookout for indications of a bear in the area, including trampled grass, grazed fruit trees, berries, and scat.

### Students

Education that is free and publicly available is necessary to help promote a more sustainable community, while helping to preserve bear habitat. The education programs must inspire students at a young age and encourage them to help their community. Schools could help their students become more engaged and aware through guest lectures, and the incorporation of activities (e.g. prevention of littering, and artwork), and after-school activities such as Junior Ranger Programs (<https://wildsafebc.com/jrp/>). If the students are engaged, they will be more likely to share this information with their family, friends and most importantly their parents. This can be a vital line of communication to adults in Sooke, as many parents work and spend most of their time outside of the community.

Students should be educated on the following:

1. Bear ecology, and bear behaviour;
2. Bear attractants;
3. Proper waste disposal methods and the importance of waste management;
4. What to do if they see a bear;
5. Why the habituation and food conditioning of bears should be avoided; finally
6. How students can help their home and community (Davis, et al., 2002).

To help ensure the safety of school grounds, schools should also consider storing waste receptacles in enclosed areas, securing any garden areas, installing bear-proof bins on school grounds, and consider fencing the perimeter of the school property.

### Businesses

Local businesses, in particular restaurants, could improve their current waste management practices and provide their customers with the necessary facilities to dispose of their products properly. In an attempt to reduce attractants, restaurants should consider the following:

1. Not to overload bins with food waste;
2. To clean and organize food waste;



3. To seal and lock both garbage and compost bins properly; and
4. To keep waste stored in a bear proof bin until scheduled pick-up.

Annual reminders on the importance of proper waste management and associated bylaws could be provided to businesses in the form of an email or letter. The Sooke Chamber of Commerce could be employed as a direct line of communication to spread educational information to local business owners.

## 4.2 Future Actions

Future actions are defined as those which are important but should be addressed after the top priorities have been considered. They may require more time to develop and implement but should be considered.

### 4.2.1 Livestock bylaw

Currently, the only bylaw pertaining to keeping livestock in Sooke is included in the Animal Regulation and Impounding Bylaw No. 392 “Control of Animals Generally”. The section of the bylaw pertaining to keeping livestock is outlined in Sections 43, quoted below (Bylaw No. 392, Animal Regulation and Impounding Bylaw, 2009):

*“43. No person shall permit any livestock to be running at large in the District unless under the immediate care and control of a competent person.”*

Sooke currently allows residents to have livestock on their property without a permit or licence and does not have any bylaws outlining specific requirements for the management of livestock. It was reported by WWS, BC Conservation, and identified in the PBHA that livestock such as chickens, pigs, and sheep are major bear attractants in Sooke. Many properties have livestock, and the handling of this livestock is becoming an issue as the community becomes more urbanized. Several survey responses showed that people found electric fences to be an effective way to protect their livestock from bears. The following is a resident’s comment from the survey regarding this topic:

“[The bear] ate my chickens. Totally my fault and I have since set up an electric fence and no more bears!”

Sooke should implement a bylaw that requires anyone with livestock on their property to have a permit. Permits will be issued to individuals who can prove that they have sufficiently prepared an enclosure for their livestock with electric fences. It is recommended that electric fencing be required for all areas and exceptions only being made after consultation with a permit issuing authority. The bylaw should also specify that hens, coops and pens be kept in such a manner that they are inaccessible to wildlife. This bylaw could accompany Section 51.1 of the Sooke Animal Regulation and Impounding Bylaw. Such a bylaw could be modeled after Sections 9i and 9j of the Squamish Wildlife Attractant Bylaw No. 2053 as quoted (District of Squamish, 2009):

*“(i) keep hens in such a manner so as not to attract wildlife;*

*(j) keep hens, coops, and pens in such a manner so that they are reasonably inaccessible to wildlife. Coops and Pens must be enclosed by electric fencing and situated according to the Zoning Bylaw.”*

#### *4.2.2 Waste storage bylaw for non-residential premises*

A bylaw for waste storage should be implemented for non-residential premises include: buildings, structures, and premises used by businesses, non-profit-organizations, or for professional, institution, industrial, commercial, retail, restaurant or worship purposes (Town of Banff, 2017). The bylaw should require each non-residential premise to have or share a bear-proof bin or enclosure. Since Sooke does not have a municipal waste service currently, owners of the non-residential premises would need to request that such a bin be provided in contracts with their waste service provider. This bylaw should also outline requirements for waste management on site. Such a bylaw could be modeled after Section 5 of the Town of Banff Non-Residential Waste Bylaw No. 377 (Town of Banff, 2017) which includes requirements similar to the following:

The owner of non-residential premises shall:

1. Maintain their waste disposal bin and area in a safe, serviceable, and sanitary condition;
2. Ensure that the waste removal schedule is of appropriate frequency such that waste does not overflow or accumulate beside the bins;

3. Clean-up and remove litter or debris from their property that may have resulted from the emptying or filling process;
4. Clean and repair the bin or enclosure when requested by the bylaw officer; and
5. The bins should only contain properly prepared and properly placed non-residential waste.

#### *4.2.3 Development planning – bylaws and considerations*

As the population of Sooke increases, feeding opportunities in the form of attractants become introduced for bears to discover and potentially exploit (Davis, et al., 2002). Several of the stakeholders interviewed felt that new developments in the area, along with new residents who are unfamiliar with living in bear-dense areas, are a major cause of increasing human-bear conflicts in Sooke. Peter Pauwels, a CO with the BC Ministry of the Environment, reported that in several cases where bears had been attracted to a new development, residents noted that they did not have an adequate space within their residence to store their garbage. This led to the residents leaving unsecured garbage outdoors. In most cases, this was a problem for residents in condos and townhouses.

To reduce human-bear conflicts in Sooke all planning and decision-making documents need to be consistent with the HBCMP. This means that planning documents need to include consideration of how areas frequented by bears may need to be kept separate from areas used by humans. Under circumstances where this is not possible, mitigation measures for reducing the potential for human-bear conflict should be included in the development plan as a requirement for obtaining a building permit from the municipality. Mitigation measures could include targeted education programs and the incorporation of waste management measures and features into the development design (Paquet, 2009).

To enforce this concept, development and building permits should be subject to the proposed waste management bylaw requiring a waste management plan to be included in the development plans (Paquet, 2009). Waste management plans for developments would need to consider mitigation measures for reducing bear attractants. This bylaw would apply to all types of developments including those for townhouses, condos, apartment buildings, commercial areas, and recreational areas. An example of a design feature that considers waste management planning, would be the provision of space in each building or complex for residents to store their garbage securely.

In Sooke, 5% of land developed must be reserved for parkland. As a result, in cases where parkland is not incorporated into a development, money is obtained by the municipality from the developer to be spent on parkland elsewhere (L. Hooper, Personal Communication, May 1, 2018). These funds could be used to place parks in the most bear-dense areas and expand protected habitat. For example, parks could be purchased in areas surrounding waterways, which are typically very good bear habitat. The BC Riparian Areas Protection Act already regulates development surrounding water courses so addition of parkland, can be used to increase the overall size of the protected area. Focusing on protecting land surrounding waterways will help to reduce issues caused by habitat fragmentation. This occurs when smaller patches of unconnected parkland do not contribute to bear habitat. Larger areas of land, connected with waterways, are more useful to bears as they provide areas for them to live, forage, and fish without human interaction. Protected areas should also be designed to act as travel corridors to allow for seasonal movements and dispersal of wildlife (Davis, et al., 2002).

Measures need to be implemented to discourage bears from entering human-use green spaces such as municipal parks, playgrounds, and public walkways. Such measures include locating public green spaces away from known bear travel corridors, installing fencing, increasing visibility, and using bear-proof bins. Most, if not all garbage bins in Sooke parks are currently bear-proof; however, they are also needed in green spaces which are not owned by the municipality, such as baseball diamonds and golf courses. Inspection and maintenance schedules are also needed for waste receptacles in all public areas to ensure that they are emptied on a regular basis and remain in functional condition (Davis, et al., 2002). These schedules should be included as part of the recommended Waste Management Plan as a requirement for development permits to be accepted by the municipality.

#### *4.2.4 Waste Drop-off areas*

A Waste Management Plan will be time consuming to design and implement. In the meantime, areas to place extra waste for community members who do not pay for pick-up are needed. Survey results indicate that many members of the community do not get curbside waste pick-up. As a result, trash is not being collected properly. Bus stop trash cans have had to be removed due to people stuffing them with their personal garbage. There are also people who dump their garbage into fields because it is the cheapest and easiest way to deal with their waste.

Therefore, a waste drop-off area should be implemented. This drop-off area also would be useful to gain feedback on how the community feels about community waste drop-off areas and provides the community with a chance to try out a drop-off system before it becomes part of the fully implemented Waste Management Plan.

This waste drops off area is not meant to replace the current waste management pickup in Sooke; only to complement it and ease the potential transition to the proposed Waste Management Plan. To prevent the waste drop-off area from being abused, it should only be open for two days a month, should be locked up when not in use, and only available to Sooke residents.

It is important for residents to be educated about waste drop-off areas. Closing the gate and dumpster lid is important to keep bears away from the garbage. Signs should also be placed in areas as a reminder to residents to close the gate and the dumpster lid closed. Drop off dumpsters need to be bear-proof and have an electric fence for two layers of protection from bears. The Bearicuda 8-yard front loading “Crested Buttle” Resistant Dumpster (<http://www.bearicuda.com/enclosures/bear-resistant-dumpsters.php>) for \$3995.00 USD is a good design (Bearicuda, 2018). The dumpster would need regular pick-up to ensure it does not overfill and to reduce odors. Pick-up for this dumpster, land for placement, and regular cleaning would incur additional costs that will need to be considered.

#### *4.2.5 Progress reporting for the education plan*

##### Program Implementation Strategies - Annual Progress Report

Education programs are an important part of HBCMPs but for education programs to be successful, progress reports need to be completed to determine the success of the education program and provide recommendations for the following year. A progress report for the education program should be completed annually. The report should include the level of success of the program, budgets, methods, involvement, gaps in the program, and recommendations for improvements. As a method to prevent similar situations from occurring, an investigation should be performed into what brought the bear into the area, and provide information on how to improve current practices to prevent recurrence. This information should then be made available to residents. This report could be completed by the Bear Education Program Coordinator.

### Community-Based Social Marketing

Sooke could also consider reviewing community-based social marketing (CBSM) strategies. CBSM can be used as a tool to promote sustainable behaviour throughout the community. Some CBSM strategies could include:

1. Prompts which could serve as daily reminders (e.g., posters around town, vehicle window stickers);
2. Community norms adopted to induce behavioural changes regarding better management of attractants;
3. Communication tools utilizing engaging messages and infographics, available online and within the community; and
4. Methods for identifying the barriers to behavioural changes and ways to overcome them (Natural Resources Canada, 2013).

Effective social marketing could also include:

1. Reminders on how to properly store attractants (i.e. in the garage, or freezing compost until pick-up day);
2. Discussion of opportunities for waste disposal companies to indicate approximate times they will be visiting each neighbourhood to prevent garbage from being left out;
3. Addressing the myths and rumors regarding the work of COs;
4. Developing community norms such as planting vegetation that does not attract bears. A list of acceptable plants species should be created;
5. Neighbours could help each other remove fallen fruit or sharing fresh fruit; and
6. Reminding the community what times of year the bears will be most active.

A CBSM program can be used to address each of these issues as well as any other issues that may arise (Natural Resources Canada, 2013). Sooke could also consider contacting the Greater Victoria Green Team, who focus on environmental stewardship by encouraging the community to care for nature. They could help by recruiting volunteers to aid in the enhancement, protection, and preservation of parks and wildlife habitat throughout Sooke. This could be accomplished by providing education and supplying tools or equipment. Local businesses and governments should continue to support widespread public education programs

targeting all community members. Best practice safety information should also be provided consistently, and be publicly accessible. A cost breakdown of the proposed activities can be found in *Section 5.2* (Honeyman, 2007, and Paquet, M. M., 2009).

## **5.0 Moving Forward**

### **5.1 Improvements for Public Education and Awareness**

Organizations such as WWS are in a good position to expand their existing programs with help and support from governments and stakeholders. Continuous education programs that cover all demographics are essential for the reduction of human-bear conflicts. Residents, employees, students, and visitors need to understand that Sooke is bear country and that they must live in unison with local bear populations.

### **5.2 Implementing, Maintaining, and Supporting the Plan**

The importance of Bear Working Groups was repeatedly emphasized by local professionals. The “Bear Smart” Program also highlights Bear Stewardship Committees as the most effective way to implement a HBCMP.

A Bear Stewardship committee should be used in Sooke to facilitate the involvement of the public and stakeholders using the plan. WWS has already formed and organized the Sooke Bear Working Group (SBWG). This group’s mandate is to reduce human-bear conflicts. Its members meet on a regular basis to discuss human-bear conflict reduction strategies. The group is currently made up of members of Wild Wise Sooke, B.C. conservation officers, municipal staff, police, and members of other community organizations. Since WWS has already established a working group, much of the footwork has already been completed; however, the importance of regular meetings and the continuation of the group’s efforts is vital in the success to this HBCMP. In addition, the plan will only be successful if decisions regarding future process, and development consult the HBCMP prior to implementation. This requires the community of Sooke fully taking ownership and integrating the plan into its daily decisions. Ownership requires that the community value the lives of bears and that they have the desire to maintain the health of bear populations over the long term (Davis, et al., 2002). Since it was identified through the survey that bears are seen as a positive symbol of the community as well as important environmentally, this should not be an issue for Sooke.

The municipality of Sooke should support the SBWG in a number of ways, including allowing staff to meet with SBWG, provide a meeting space for the SBWG, and listening and giving weight to the SBWG’s proposed solutions and suggestions.



Once a HBCMP is implemented, its success is highly dependent on how often the SBWG meets and reviews the progress of the plan. Progress and success will be assessed by the number of bear euthanizations and bear-related calls to COs per year in the Sooke area. These numbers will be compared to previous years and a reduction will be considered a success. The SBWG will need to develop annual reports that evaluate the program that has been implemented, the progress of programs that are in development, and whether the current year was deemed successful. The report should also include any changes that need to be made, and the direction for the coming year.

The foreseen cost, timeline, responsibility, and priority of action of each of the activities associated with implementing the HBCMP are included in the following table.

Table 1: Priority of action, timeline, cost and assigned responsibility for each recommended activity

<b>Activity and Section</b>	<b>Priority of Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Community outreach (5.1.6)	High	Immediately	\$250-500 per event	Municipal Government
Educational talks in schools (5.1.6)	High	Immediately	\$50 per school visit	Municipal Government / Provincial Government
Develop a Waste Management Plan (5.1.4)	High	Immediately	\$50,000  Price could be reduced with help from student group from RRU	Municipality. Support from SBWG and RRU
Bylaw - waste pick-up (residents) (5.1.1)	High	Within first year	\$160-\$600 dollars to hire lawyer to write bylaw*	Municipal Government
Bylaw - waste pick-up (collectors) (5.1.1)	High	Within first year	\$160-\$600 dollars to hire lawyer to write bylaw*	Municipal Government
Community brochures (5.1.6)	High	Within first year	\$1000	Municipal Government/ Community Members

<b>Activity and Section</b>	<b>Priority of Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Brochures for newcomers (5.1.6)	High	Within first year	\$1000	Municipal Government
Development planning (5.2.3)	Medium	Ongoing	Minimal financial cost. Will take up land that could be used by people	Municipal Government
Bylaw- development planning (5.2.3)	Medium	Within first year	\$160-\$600 dollars to hire lawyer to write bylaw*	Municipal Government
Bear-proof bins program in high-risk areas (5.1.5)	Medium	Within first year	\$45,000 for municipality to purchase bear proof bins  \$150.00 for residents to purchase bear proof bins (through incentive program)	Municipality/ Homeowner
Designated Bear Education Program Coordinator (5.1.6)	Medium	Within two years	\$50,000/year	Provincial Government
Increasing bylaw enforcement (employment of bylaw officer) (5.1.3)	Medium	Within two years	Approximately \$55,000/year (District of Sooke, 2018)  Increasing enforcement can help offset this cost	Municipal Government
Bylaw - non-residential waste Storage (5.2.2)	Medium	Within five years	\$160-\$600 dollars to hire lawyer to write bylaw*	Municipal Government

<b>Activity and Section</b>	<b>Priority of Action</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Bylaw - animal regulation and impounding (5.1.2)	Medium	Within five years	\$160-\$600 dollars for lawyer to write bylaw*	Municipal Government
Development of voluntary fruit tree management campaign (5.2.5)	Low	Within first year	Dependent on number of residents and how many shrubs are on the property	Municipal Government
Research into community-based social marketing (5.2.5)	Low	Within two years	\$10,000  This could be tasked to the Bear Educated Program Coordinator to reduce cost	Municipal Government
Bylaw – livestock (5.2.1)	Low	Within five years	\$160-\$600 dollars to hire lawyer to write bylaw*	Municipal Government
Waste drop-off area (5.2.4)	Low	Within five years	\$3995.00 USD for bin plus shipping  Land to place drop-off area will be an additional cost  Trash pick-up and maintenance will be an ongoing cost	Municipality Government

\* Cost is estimated by assuming 1-2 hours of work to write a bylaw given the drafting instructions provided in the plan. A project like this may be eligible for funding from the Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund (EDRF), which pays lawyers at \$80/hour. EDRF lawyers require a top-up from the client above that rate, but also require that the total fee be no more than \$160/hour. The full cost of a municipal law firm would be in the range of \$200-300/hour (Mathew Nefstead. Personal communication, July 25, 2018).

### 5.3 Benefits of the Plan

There are a number of benefits to be derived from the implementation of an effective HBCMP including:

1. Increasing awareness and safety of residents and visitors;
2. Helping protect both bears and humans;
3. Helping the community to use its resources more efficiently;
4. Helping mitigate human-bear conflicts in the most cost-effective way;
5. Helping alleviate the cost burden of human-bear conflict from other groups such as conservation officers, police, and bylaw officers;
6. Reducing damage to property caused by bears; and
7. Increasing tourism (Paquet, M. M., 2009).

### 5.4 Barriers to the Plan

The major barrier to the HBCMP is cost. Bear-proof bins of any size are expensive. However, the ability to find suppliers who offer competitive rates, while introducing bear-proof bins into high-risk areas, and purchasing in bulk are the best ways to reduce this cost. Dividing costs between homeowners and the municipality can make the bins reasonably-priced for both groups.

Changing human behavior is another barrier for the plan to be successful. Empowerment followed by warning and lastly by fines is the best way to encourage change in behavior. Empowering the public, by providing them with solutions, can help them make lasting changes. Letting the public know what to do and why it's important, is the first step in creating change. If education does not work, bylaws can then be used as enforcement to ensure people make the appropriate changes. If people do not change, fines may be needed to force compliance, but should only be used as a last resort under the discretion of the bylaw officer or CO.

A barrier for bylaws is that they can take time to be developed, and approved by council. Therefore, time should be allotted for the implementation of bylaws, and the most important or effective bylaws should be introduced first. Other barriers that face the HBCMP are inconvenience, political will, and disinterest. This will need to be considered when implementing

the HBCMP and all those involved should be consulted during the development and implementation of the plan (Paquet, M., 2009).

## **6.0 Conclusion**

Human-bear conflicts are a growing issue in Sooke as a result of increased anthropogenic attractants. Issues are exacerbated by the loss of bear habitat and introduction of attractants such as fruit trees and berries, improper disposal and storage of waste, and lack of overall knowledge regarding how to live with bears. Public education and outreach programs can help mitigate these issues through the increase of public awareness.

The community of Sooke has indicated that they are aware of the current human-bear conflict issues and believe that bears are neighbours who are an important part of their environment. Residents also indicated that the community, the municipality, the provincial government, waste management companies and local businesses are all responsible for the protection of bears and the minimization of attractants. Through numerous comments and personal interactions, it was determined that community members generally feel that education and outreach programs are necessary and important for new residents.

Human-bear conflicts can be addressed using three primary overarching strategies:

1. Waste Management;
2. Strengthening bylaws and their enforcement; and
3. Increased public education and awareness.

In order to improve waste management practices, a waste management plan for Sooke needs to be developed. This will not only help to make Sooke more bear-friendly but will also make waste management more efficient both financially and environmentally. A pilot project providing bear-resistant totes for residents in high-risk areas has been suggested. Bear-resistant totes will help with waste storage and inconsistency of pick-up times. These should be funded jointly by the municipality and residents.

A waste management plan will have a higher rate of success if it is complemented with bylaws and education plans. Six main areas were identified as requiring either the implementation or improvement of a bylaw:

1. Implementation of a waste pick-up bylaw which limits residents to a period of time in which they are allowed to have their garbage on the street;
2. Waste collectors should be given a time frame for when they can pick up garbage;
3. Improvement of the *Animal Regulation and Impounding Bylaw* to better regulate the involuntary feeding of wildlife;
4. Mitigation of the attraction of bears to livestock and poultry, via implementation of a permit-based bylaw;
5. Requesting that all non-residential garbage receptacles within the community are bear-proof; and
6. A waste management bylaw that requires a waste management plan to be included as part of development plans.

Controlling the availability of garbage and other attractants can reduce the tendency of bears to enter the community in search of food; thus, reducing the potential for food dependency and ultimately habituation. This can be done through continuous education and outreach programs, encompassing both residents and business owners. Education programs should be designed to reach all demographics including: homeowners, visitors, students, and business owners. Programs and reminders should be made available around the town every year prior to bear season. This can be done through signs, brochures, public speeches, online news updates, and door-to-door meetings. Education and public outreach can help reduce reliance on COs, resulting in better overall compliance in the community. Education and public outreach will also create jobs such as a Bear Education Program Coordinator, field staff, and/or program staff. By identifying innovative ways to change people's behaviour, wildlife conflicts can be avoided or mitigated in Sooke.

## 7.0 References

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## 8.0 Appendix

Table 2: Reports made to the Conservation Officer Services in June, September and October 2014-2016 (Gouett et al., 2017). The cells highlighted in pink show the attractants that received the highest amount of reports.

	June			September			October		
Attractant	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Garbage	10	5	2	3	25	10	9	11	6
Compost	0	1	0	0	9	0	0	1	3
Livestock	5	8	0	5	6	3	0	4	0
Not applicable	9	13	3	9	44	27	11	19	15
Residential – Fruit Trees/Berries	0	1	0	4	18	7	2	2	1
Pets	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Barbeque	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Beehive	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Residential – Vegetable Garden	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
Campground Food	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Livestock Feed	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Other	2	2	0	1	2	2	0	1	2
Bird Feeders	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Commercial / Vineyards/Orchard	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Freezer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>29</b>

**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Number of records in this query:	115
Total records in survey:	115
Percentage of total:	100.00%

**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Street: Which street or neighbourhood in Sooke do you live in? If not listed, please select "other" and indicate your neighbourhood in the space provided.

Answer	Count	Percentage
Amethyst Way (27)	1	0.87%
Belvista Place (A8)	0	0.00%
Blythwood Road (20)	0	0.00%
Caldwell Road (13)	1	0.87%
Church Road (A5)	6	5.22%
Corvis Road (21)	0	0.00%
Eustace Road (12)	1	0.87%
Felderhof Road (16)	0	0.00%
Francis Road (A7)	0	0.00%
French Road South (14)	1	0.87%
French Road North (23)	1	0.87%
Grant Road (A9)	8	6.96%
Harbourview Road (24)	1	0.87%
Henlyn Drive (15)	2	1.74%
Maple Avenue North (A6)	2	1.74%
Mowich Drive (22)	0	0.00%
Pyrite Drive (A4)	0	0.00%
Parkland Road (19)	0	0.00%
Rhodonite Drive (17)	1	0.87%
T'Sou-ke First Nation Reserve (A2)	1	0.87%
Sunriver Estates Community (A1)	12	10.43%
Throup Road and Charters Road (10)	3	2.61%
Townsend Road (11)	1	0.87%
Wadams Way (18)	0	0.00%
Whiffin Spit Community (A3)	19	16.52%
Woodlands Road (25)	1	0.87%
Other (26)	50	43.48%
Comments	55	47.83%
No answer	3	2.61%

**Other; Responses**

Murray Rd

Helgesen Road

Sooke River Road

Arranwood Drive

East Sooke

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Otter Point

Erinan Estates (approx. 3km west of Sooke town center)

The Pointe on Demamiel Drive

Westcoast Rd

Sooke River Rd

Otter point

TsElla Beach

Kaltasin Road

Norton Road

Beacher bay

Briarwood Place off Whiffin Spit

Otter point Rd

Arranwood Dr

West Coast Rd

Sooke Rd

Otter Ridge

Shirley, BC

Tugwell road, Otter Point

Otter point

Galena

Throup & Church

East Sooke. Llanilar Road.

Robinson Road in Otter Point

Saseenos

We live Kemp Lake Rd in Otter Point not Sooke but the bears don't care

Seagirt Rd East Sooke

Sooke River Road

Mountain Heights Drive

West coast road

Maple Park Terrace

Brooks Road

Melrick Place

Charval Pl

West Coast Rd

Broom hill Mtn - Valleyview Place

I live on Charters near the corner of Golledge.

Phillips Rd. Many bears in this area. We have a bear walk by pretty well daily.

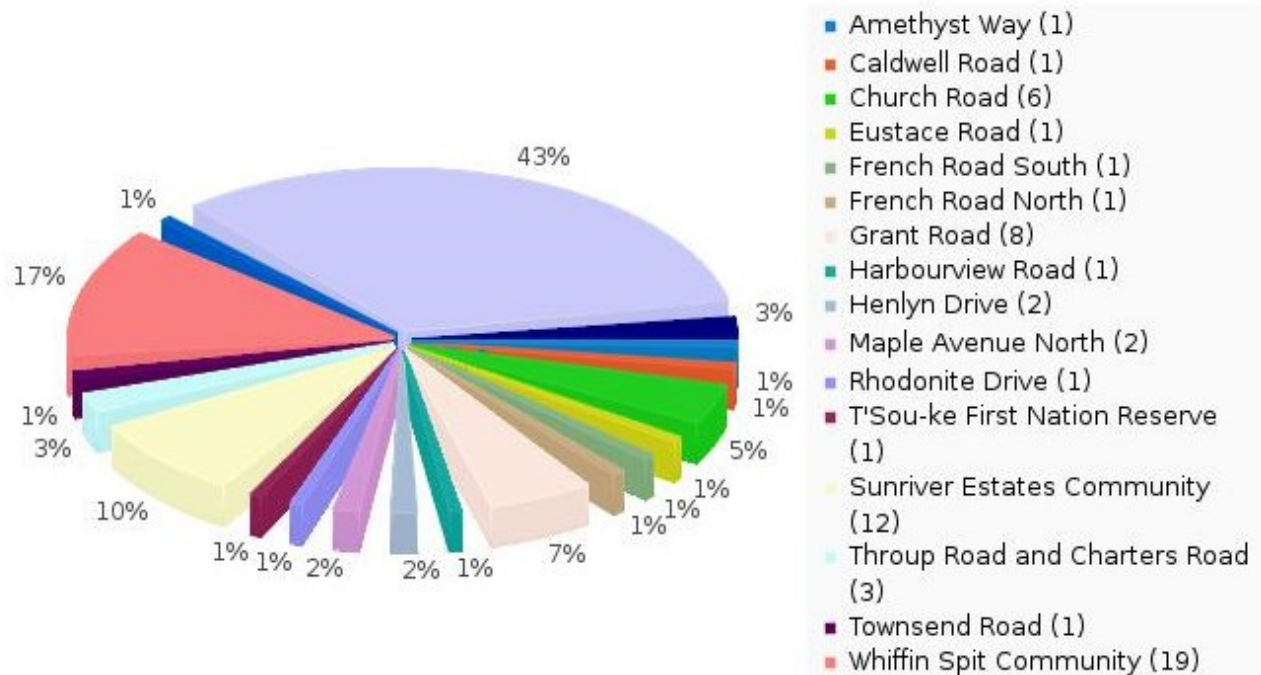
Sooke River Rd

End of Phillips Rd

Broomhill

## Survey Results for: Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Sassenos  
Stone Creek Place  
Burr Rd  
Maple Avenue south  
Siasong Rd Saseenos  
Kennedy St N  
Kirby Road/Dixon Road area, off Sooke River Road  
Otter point Rd/helgesen Rd  
Phillips Rd  
Sooke River Rd



## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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#### Question Awareness: Are you aware of any human-bear conflicts within the community of Sooke? (If yes, please explain)

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Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (A1)	78	67.83%
No (A2)	34	29.57%
Comments	64	55.65%
No answer	3	2.61%

#### Other; Responses

Bears eating garbage.

Go through yard to ocean

I have encountered a bear while walking on Broom Hill with my dog; bear scat in the yard; bear tore out our backyard in-ground food-digester

Bears often down at the river. They mostly just move on if you make a noise!!

If they have young we give them a large space.

Stupid Signs pointing out that Bears are around -- which freaks some people out and they call the Conservation People and a Bear is dead -- drop the signs.

The main conflict seems to be bears getting into garbage. A bear has been known to try and rip the roof & siding off a metal garden shed to access the garbage can inside.

Apple trees everywhere unpicked...garbage left out all night for pickup next day...there was a mama bear shot in our area because of that.

We see them occasionally but the bears usually run away.

Not so far this year

Conflicts happen from time-to-time as in any other BC community.

I've heard of human bear interaction. I am not comfortable calling it conflict

Bears eating garbage, space issues, roads

On Sooke social there are pictures and postings of bears. I have also had a bear in my Back yard last year.

New Residents

Sooke River Rd

Scare people. Garbage

Bear highway

Yes, shoot too many bears

Garbage storage issues, unpicked fruit trees

Lack of knowledge, poor management

Bear visit

Last year

Garbage bears prowl the town

Wild Wise Sooke is very good about posting recent sightings of bears. I check Wild Wise Sooke every morning before walking the dog.

Bears were shot last year due to irresponsible garbage people actions.

Some incidents of bears in area poaching chickens.

Because people leave garbage out!

Bears come for garbage

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Bears in garbage, bears roaming the streets etc.

Getting into garbage

At Whiffin Spit, mostly due to bear attractants; in Shirley, handled peaceably; aware that last summer's encounters in Sooke often resulted in the bears being euthanized, not relocated.

my house and several neighbours; Regular bear sightings, bears smashing shed doors/panels to steal garbage and bears raiding/breaking secured compost bins. They used to pass through our yard regularly

I don't consider bear sightings or bears getting into garbage conflicts.

People leaving garbage/attractants out causing bears to enter the community.

Not sure it's a conflict but I know bears have entered yards looking for improperly stored attractants

People leaving garbage in areas that are accessible to bears.

Within the last 5 years a neighbour had a bear trying (unsuccessfully, but messily) to break into their compost rolling bin. 10 years ago I had a bear damage a pear tree helping itself to fruit.

Bears getting into garbage

Bears getting into fruit trees and garbage

Seen them in neighbour's garbage. Hear about in paper, online through social media and other media. Hearing stuff from Wild Wise Sooke.

All the time! People not putting their trash and compost in a garage or secured place.

Bears get into garbage and compost all the time as some residents are not bear smart and put the garbage out the night before pick up.

People leaving garbage and other food sources on their property, so that bears come onto their property.

There are many bears in Sooke. Which I love. People need to learn to keep garbage locked up. Also we need more fruit trees and berries where we want the bears. (In the mountains/forest/by the river)

The only "conflicts" between humans and bears occur when humans are irresponsible and leave their garbage and recycling etc. outside and not locked up

My friend's chicken coop got broken into. Many human-bear interactions, less "conflicts"

Most conflicts seem to arise from people not storing garbage/kitchen scraps safely. I've noticed a significant increase in conflict reports since the requirement for separating kitchen scraps from garbage was implemented.

Nothing specific, but lots of calls to police when they are sighted. Lots of debate about Whether this should be called in.

Facebook reports of sighting

There is no conflict its simple the only problem Sooke has is the irresponsible humans who do not contain there garbage. No survey can fix Carelessness

I was walking our dogs a few months ago around 1930hrs and saw a black bear by the pond in our area. Luckily the dogs didn't see it. I turned around and quickly walked home. People leave garbage out which attracts bears. 100% human caused

See them every year knocking over cans people put out the night before. Usually in late fall Or early spring

Like a fight?

We get bears here ALL the time. One kept breaking into our shed but we had nothing in it but tools. Lots of bears looking for idiots who leave there garbage out No conflicts, just visits.

Bears often are attracted to garbage cans (especially put out the night before garbage day) And livestock not contained by electric fencing.

Some people refuse to secure their garbage and attract the poor bears.

Garbage bears when people leave their garbage out or unpicked produce.

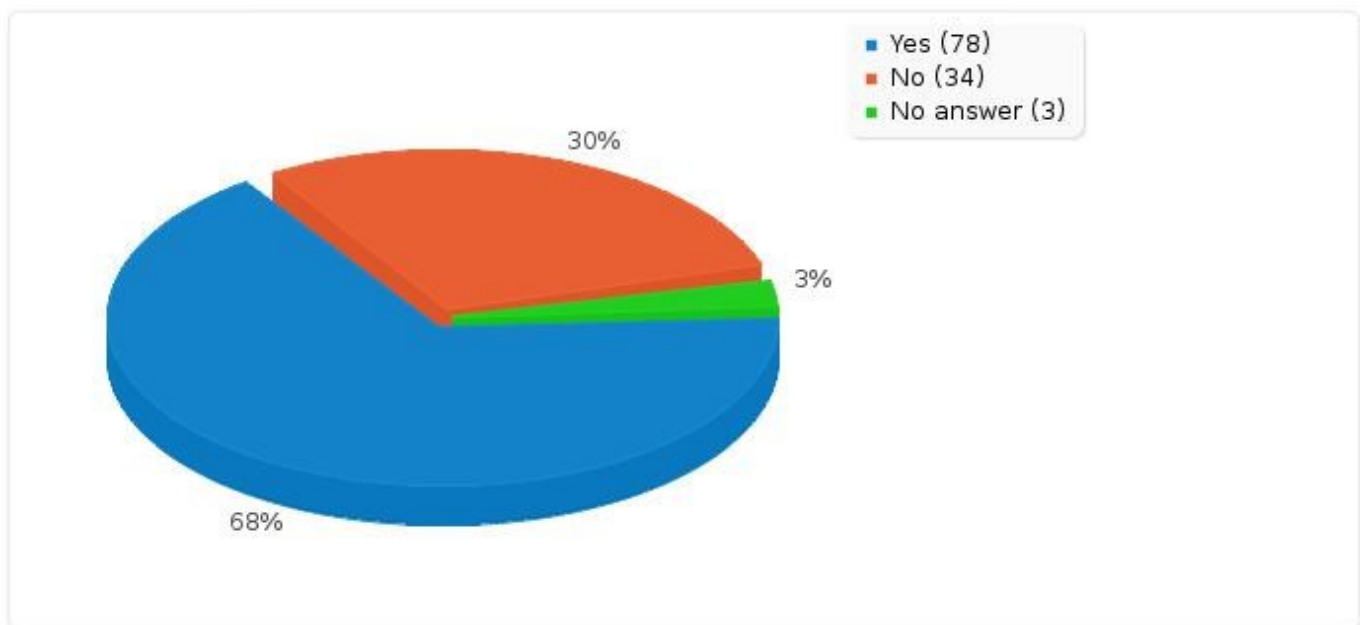


**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

People leave their garbage out which attracts the bears who then become habituated which often results in them being euthanized. Every year we have at least one bear that saunters around our street during the day not scared of anyone or anything. Last year it was a Mom and cubs who all ended up being killed. Bears getting into garbage and dragging it away.

Regular sightings, incidents with garbage/compost, etc. Pets and livestock killed.

Who isn't?



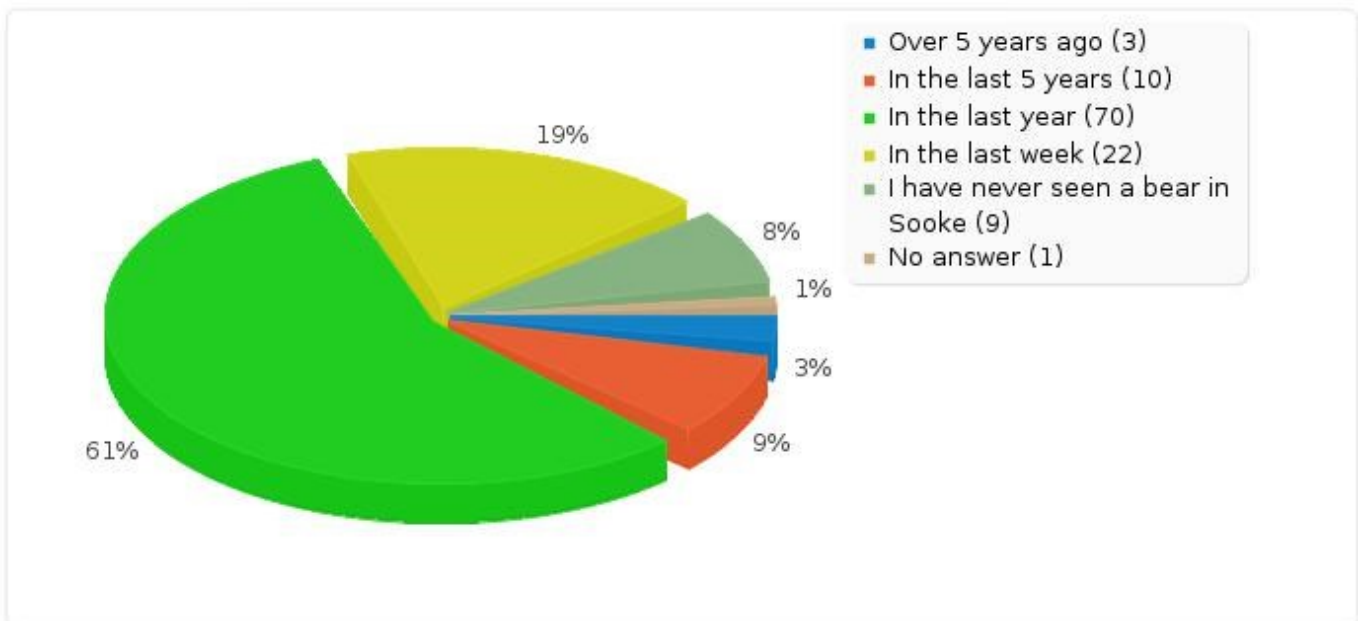
**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question saw bears: When was the last time you saw a bear in Sooke?

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Over 5 years ago (A1)	3	2.61%
In the last 5 years (A4)	10	8.70%
In the last year (A2)	70	60.87%
In the last week (A3)	22	19.13%
I have never seen a bear in Sooke (A5)	9	7.83%
No answer	1	0.87%

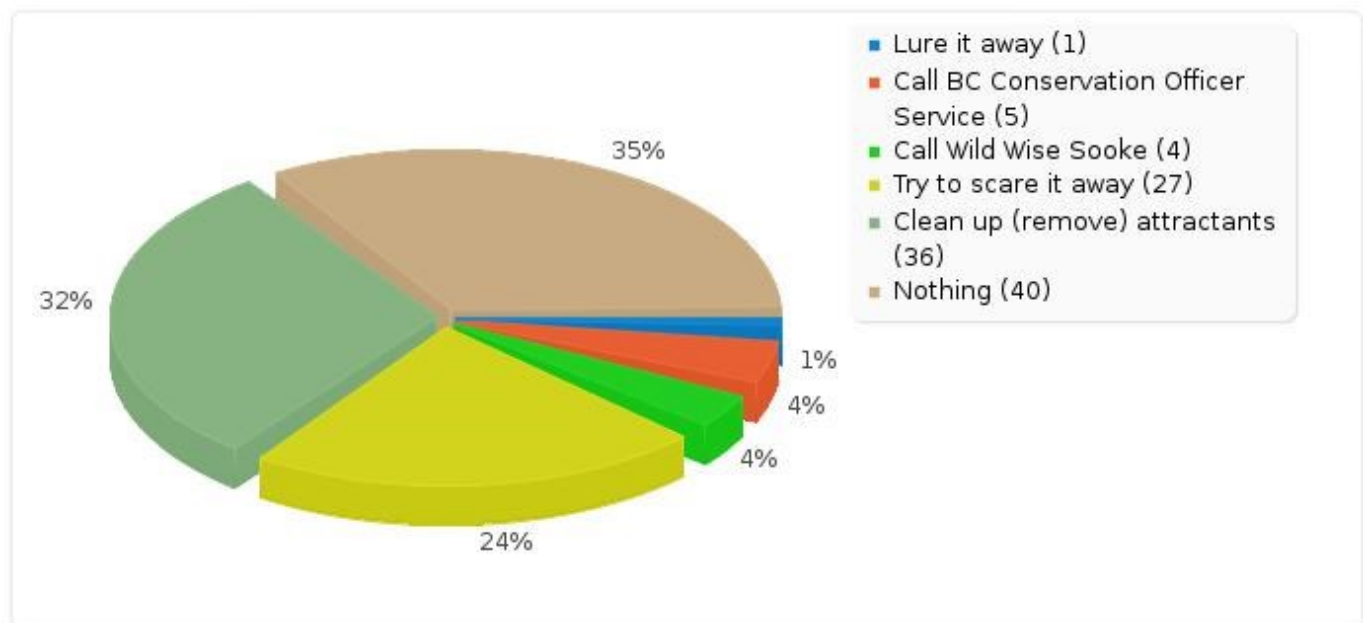


## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question: What would you do? [1]: In order, what are the top three things you would do in the event of a bear sighting on your property or at your place of work?[Ranking 1]

Answer	Count	Percentage
Lure it away (A1)	1	0.88%
Call BC Conservation Officer Service (A2)	5	4.42%
Call 911 (A3)	0	0.00%
Call Wild Wise Sooke (A4)	4	3.54%
Try to scare it away (A5)	27	23.89%
Clean up (remove) attractants (A6)	36	31.86%
Nothing (A7)	40	35.40%

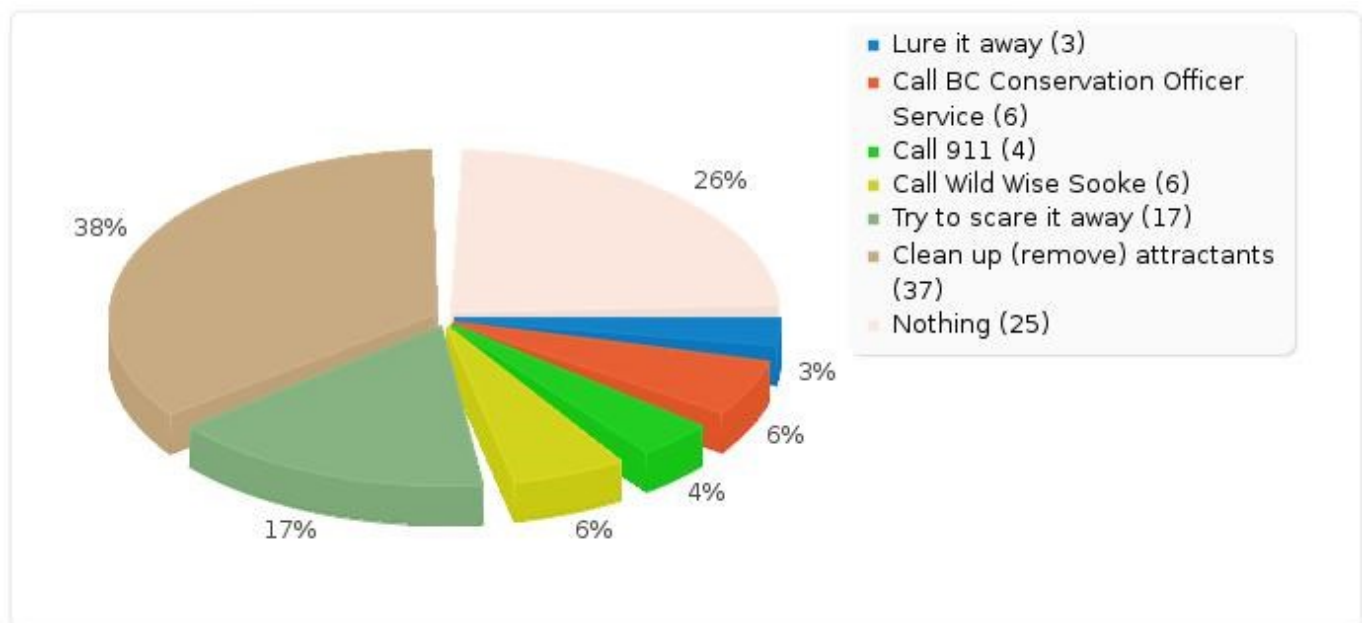


## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question what would you do? [2]: In order, what are the top three things you would do in the event of a bear sighting on your property or at your place of work?[Ranking 2]

Answer	Count	Percentage
Lure it away (A1)	3	3.06%
Call BC Conservation Officer Service (A2)	6	6.12%
Call 911 (A3)	4	4.08%
Call Wild Wise Sooke (A4)	6	6.12%
Try to scare it away (A5)	17	17.35%
Clean up (remove) attractants (A6)	37	37.76%
Nothing (A7)	25	25.51%

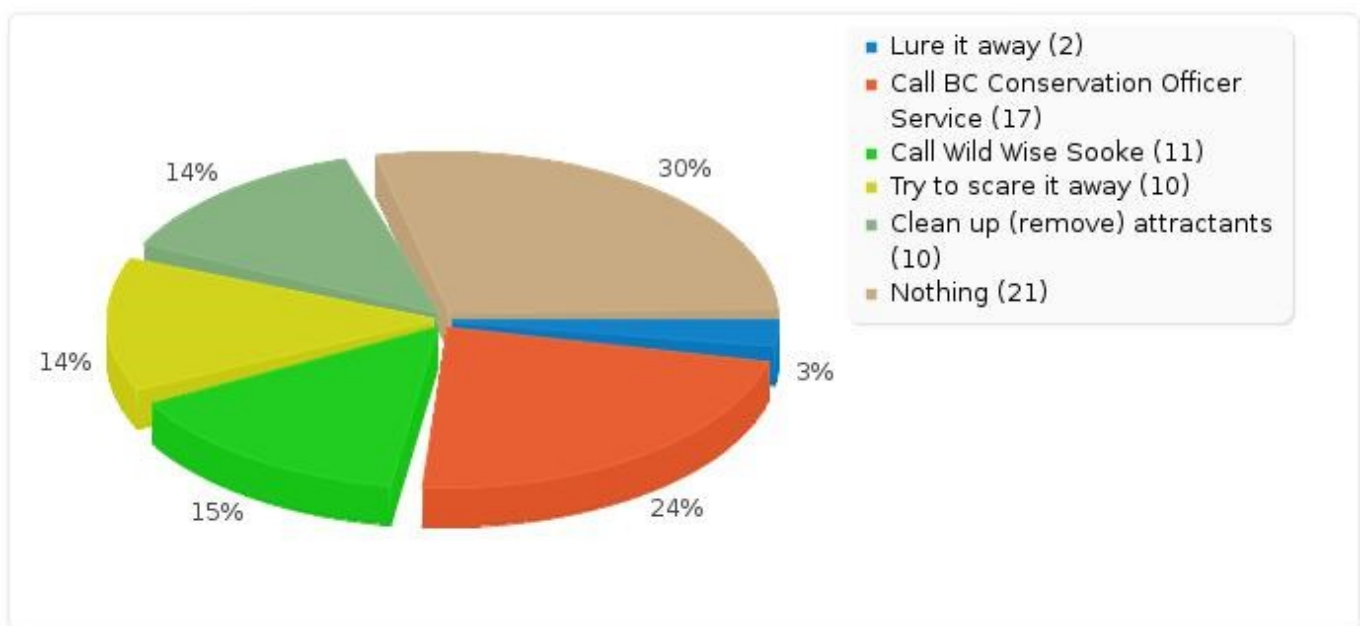


## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question what would you do? [3]: In order, what are the top three things you would do in the event of a bear sighting on your property or at your place of work?[Ranking 3]

Answer	Count	Percentage
Lure it away (A1)	2	2.82%
Call BC Conservation Officer Service (A2)	17	23.94%
Call 911 (A3)	0	0.00%
Call Wild Wise Sooke (A4)	11	15.49%
Try to scare it away (A5)	10	14.08%
Clean up (remove) attractants (A6)	10	14.08%
Nothing (A7)	21	29.58%



## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question what would you do? [4]: In order, what are the top three things you would do in the event of a bear sighting on your property or at your place of work?[Ranking 4]

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Lure it away (A1)	0	0.00%
Call BC Conservation Officer Service (A2)	0	0.00%
Call 911 (A3)	0	0.00%
Call Wild Wise Sooke (A4)	0	0.00%
Try to scare it away (A5)	0	0.00%
Clean up (remove) attractants (A6)	0	0.00%
Nothing (A7)	0	0.00%

**Survey Results for:**

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question what would you do? [5]: In order, what are the top three things you would do in the event of a bear sighting on your property or at your place of work?[Ranking 5]

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Lure it away (A1)	0	0.00%
Call BC Conservation Officer Service (A2)	0	0.00%
Call 911 (A3)	0	0.00%
Call Wild Wise Sooke (A4)	0	0.00%
Try to scare it away (A5)	0	0.00%
Clean up (remove) attractants (A6)	0	0.00%
Nothing (A7)	0	0.00%

## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question what would you do? [6]: In order, what are the top three things you would do in the event of a bear sighting on your property or at your place of work?[Ranking 6]

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Lure it away (A1)	0	0.00%
Call BC Conservation Officer Service (A2)	0	0.00%
Call 911 (A3)	0	0.00%
Call Wild Wise Sooke (A4)	0	0.00%
Try to scare it away (A5)	0	0.00%
Clean up (remove) attractants (A6)	0	0.00%
Nothing (A7)	0	0.00%



## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question what would you do? [7]: In order, what are the top three things you would do in the event of a bear sighting on your property or at your place of work?[Ranking 7]

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Lure it away (A1)	0	0.00%
Call BC Conservation Officer Service (A2)	0	0.00%
Call 911 (A3)	0	0.00%
Call Wild Wise Sooke (A4)	0	0.00%
Try to scare it away (A5)	0	0.00%
Clean up (remove) attractants (A6)	0	0.00%
Nothing (A7)	0	0.00%

## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Property: Have you had issues with bears on your property or place of work?  
(If yes, please explain)

Answer	Count	Percentage
Yes (A1)	43	37.39%
No (A2)	72	62.61%
Comments	55	47.83%
No answer	0	0.00%

### Other; Responses

See above: one tore out our backyard in-ground food-digester (and we have stopped using it as a result)

They poop in my yard and use the pool

I have a bear proof garbage shed but the day of garbage pickup I put the garbage and kitchen scraps in their bins outside of the shed for Alpine to pick up and sometimes the bears will get to it before they do

I do not put anything food wise in my garbage until an hour before I put my garbage can out to the curb for pick up.

Mama bear shot she was injured and left behind two cubs

They have been in our yard and neighbors yards for years and have never once been a problem. They roam in and roam away

No real 'issues' but a bear, on two occasions, did pass through our property. Since the end of November, 2017, no signs of a bear around.

Bears come on my property but I do not consider it an issue

The bear tore open our storage shed to get to bird seed.

They walk through

No, they walk through

Garbage

Kill goat

Bears in neighbor garbage

Love Them

Neighbor have had issues

Neighbor's yard

Chicken farm. Constant attacks from end of august until the salmon enter the creeks near mid-October

I have never had issues with bears since moving to our property. They have always moved along and never shown aggression in the 9 years that we have been here.

I once had a local problem bear break into my freezer on the back porch, but I scared it away.

Bears came for garbage. Realized garbage needed to be locked up better. Bear broke my fence.

A few years back one was shot & killed 2 doors down from me

Mostly they just wander through, but we had one try to get into our garbage can storing bird seed, and one try to get into our chicken coop. It was interrupted by us in both cases and we scared it away from did our best to secure the attractant. After our apple trees

We have had five bear sightings on our property in the past year; I did not witness any of

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Them. I did hear two of the visits when garbage containers were ransacked and two others when the Golden Lab chased the bear/s off.

Regular bear sightings, bears smashing shed doors/panels to steal garbage and bears raiding/breaking secured compost bins.

We keep attractants under control

Ate my chickens. Totally my fault and I have since set up electric fence and no more bear!

Thanks to my neighbors garbage cans stored outside & full.

Was a bear on our front porch this December.

Bear has its path thru my property to neighbours for apples - has been coming for over 30 years without hurting anyone, great to watch

A bear came over the neighbour's fence to try to get our garbage. It was unsuccessful but slight damage to fence.

We've since removed the attractant.

After the pear tree incident we harvest the fruit just before it ripens.

We are next to a green belt that bears travel through. We have no issue with the bears

I had a bear break my fence panel.

They sometimes wander through, but I keep the typical attractants cleaned up or secured and my children and small pets indoors or supervised during spring and fall

When we first moved to Sooke we left our compost outside and a bear tried to get into it.

I've seen a bear on my road a couple of times, and one went through the neighbour's yard, but I didn't consider it a problem.

No issues. We are used to the bears. We have a big dog and a fence so they mostly stay away. I've run into bears on walks. Both the bear and I just go our own way. Never had a problem.

They come and eat fruit off our trees in the fall but they don't bother us or our pets if we respect them and give them space.

They really don't seem to be an issue for us. They show up regularly. The dogs bark and they leave.

A couple years ago they climbed my apple tree and broke some branches. We have put a fence around the trees now.

They have been there at night. Ate apples off trees. Also sniffing outside garage where garbage is kept.

Bears often come on our property for the fruit. We have 7 fruit trees. I don't really think it's An 'issue' though.

We cohabit with them

I don't consider them problems, more expected while trying to co-exist. Sure they've knocked down my chicken coop fence or left big piles of poop, hardly anything to get worked up over. I've never heard of them going after a kid and quite frankly they really just keep to themselves.

Getting into garbage in spring and fall. Lock it up for a couple weeks and they move on.

See above, bear in shed

We have small acreage, bear comes onto property at night on occasion - looks for the garbage can.

Prior to having an electric fence, a bear got into our yard one night and had chicken dinner. The next day, I put up an electric fence. Never a problem since.

Yes I have neighbours who leave garbage out overnight and every year bears come.

They also seem to just pass through a lot. Like my street is along the path they walk.

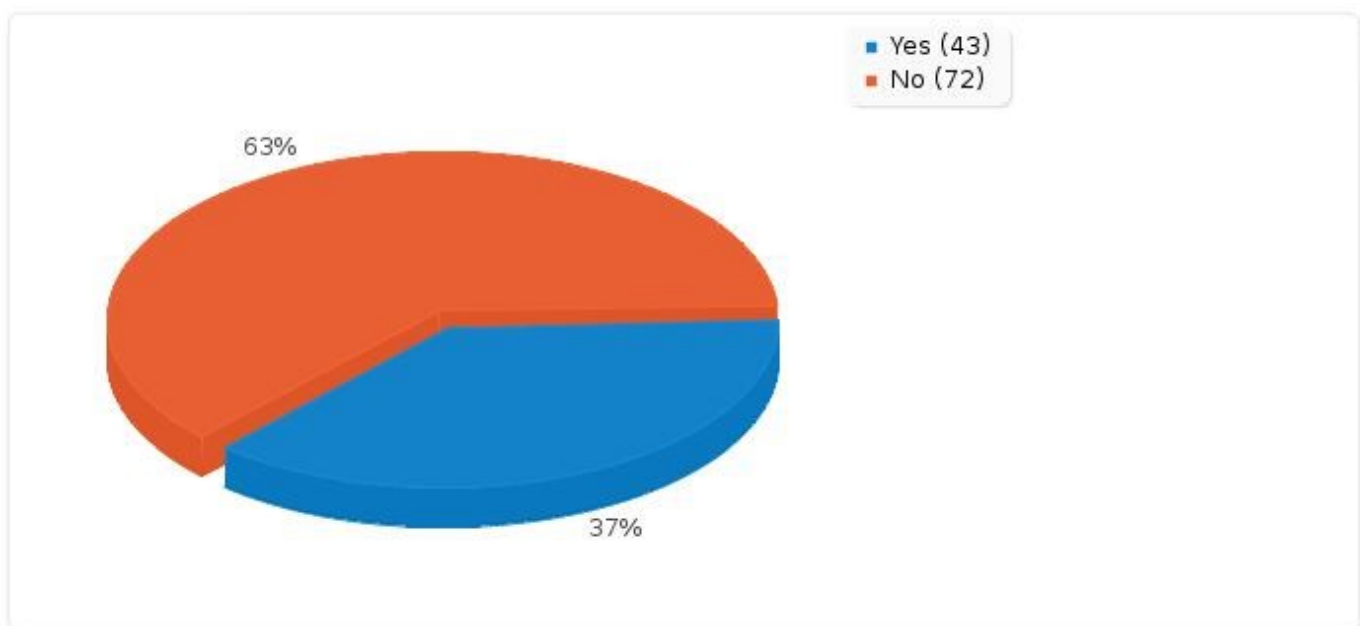
Bears have gotten into our garbage several times. They have climbed our fence into our back yard.

They have dragged other people's garbage through our property.

Last year a bear tore into a large enclosure on our property and killed two pet rabbits.

The above question lists removing attractants as an option for what to do when you see a bear on your property - That is obviously something that should be done BEFORE you're Facing a bear. Anyway yes we've had bear conflicts with our fruit trees for years.

**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey



**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

**Question attractants Property: Do you have any of the following bear attractants on your Property?**

Answer	Count	Percentage
Compost (SQ001)	45	39.13%
Unsecured garbage left outside (SQ002)	6	5.22%
Livestock (SQ003)	5	4.35%
Poultry (SQ004)	14	12.17%
Fruit trees or berries (SQ005)	56	48.70%
Vegetable gardens (SQ006)	46	40.00%
Outdoor pets (SQ007)	26	22.61%
Barbeques (SQ008)	53	46.09%
Bird feeders (SQ009)	29	25.22%
Outdoor freezers (SQ010)	7	6.09%
Other	5	4.35%

**Other; Responses**

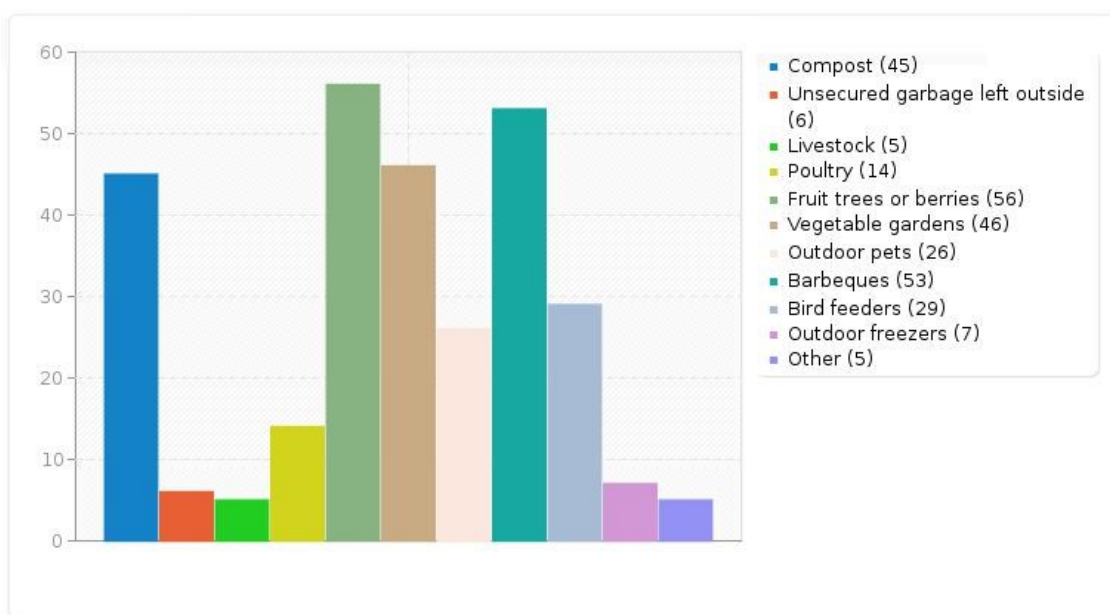
Used to have bird feeders but not anymore.

Locked heavy wooden garbage shed

Nothing left out

None

None



**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Work: Do you have any of the following bear attractants at your place of work? (If you do not work in Sooke, please leave this section blank)

Answer	Count	Percentage
Compost (SQ001)	10	8.70%
Unsecured garbage left outside (SQ002)	5	4.35%
Livestock (SQ003)	2	1.74%
Poultry (SQ004)	4	3.48%
Fruit trees or berries (SQ005)	8	6.96%
Vegetable gardens (SQ006)	9	7.83%
Outdoor pets (SQ007)	2	1.74%
Barbeques (SQ008)	4	3.48%
Beehives (SQ009)	2	1.74%
Bird feeders (SQ010)	2	1.74%
Outdoor freezers (SQ011)	2	1.74%
Other	6	5.22%

**Other; Responses**

N/A

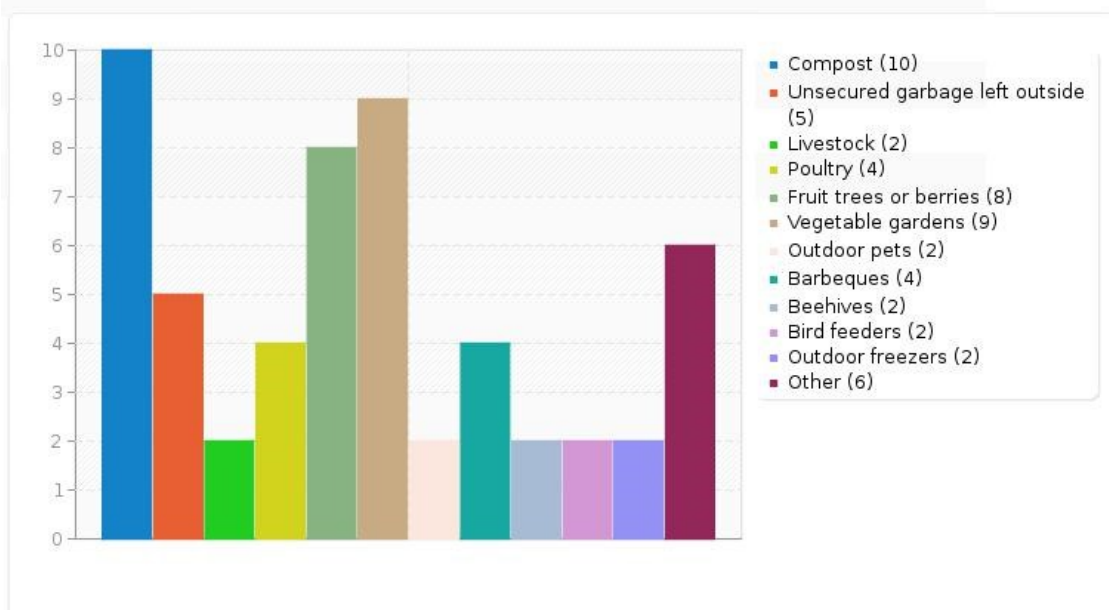
Retired no workplace

Don't work

N/A

Nothing left out

No



## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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#### Question Protection: How do you protect your property from bears? Please explain.

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Answer	101	87.83%
No answer	14	12.17%

#### Responses

Keep trash inside.

Nothing

We don't, except for no longer using the aforementioned food-digester

Fence. No garbage outside.

I have installed many fences and gates and a bear proof garbage shed.

I don't -- I'm not getting in the way of a bear cruising through the hood!

Although I have a fence around my garden, it would not stop a determined bear from Getting into my yard.

No protection needed

Garbage is closed and lock, Fence, Gate

Garbage/kitchen scraps & BBQ stored in garage

BY keeping it fairly clean of attractants

Harvest berries/fruits

Owning a dog

No outside garbage

Keep property clean and tidy.

Garbage/compost containers, which are in the garage, go out to curb on morning of pick-up. I have my garbage secured but I don't "protect" my property. They walk through on their way to places

Secure attractants, Fence

We don't.

Do not leave garbage bins out. Put the garbage out only a few hours before pickup and Bring in ASAP after pick up.no longer have bird feeders. Clean BBQ within an hour of using Each time.

Fencing

Nothing

Nothing

Fence

Garbage Inside

Locked Garbage Bin

Fence

Enclosed compost- very secure- wood box with latch

Gated Fences

High Fence. Garbage and compost secured

Fence and Gates

Does not

Fences and pick up fruit

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Does not

Garbage stored in garage, composter in back corner of yard w. no problems to date.

Dog, attractants in fence in fence

Have no attractants

Keep garbage in the receptacle. However they do not have locking lids. BBQ is cleaned shut and covered. Property is fenced (I know they can climb but it's at least not the easy path.

Secured garbage

Secure garbage in a shed

Keep garbage away

Keep garbage in garage. Put out in morning, careful with compost, dog poop

Fence, keep property clean

Store garbage inside

Outer perimeter field fencing + electric

Inner perimeters 4ft fencing + electric

Coops are surrounded with fencing and electric as well

3 Great Pyrenees dogs and 2 small rodent dogs

100% of property infrared night vision camera coverage

I have a fully fenced yard - hoping that 6' fences will deter most bears.

In my garbage can is used kitty litter, tissues from bathroom garbage, dirt from vacuum bag, dryer lint. I keep my food scraps in a sealed plastic can in garage & freeze meat food scraps until day I take in my car to Alpine in Langford. I recycle all 'soft' cleaned plastics & clean all food off aluminum foil wrappers. The end of April I take down my suet feeders for the birds.

We give them clear path and move them along if we find them napping in our yard.

First, my compost is anaerobic, kept inside and then buried underground. Second, any food waste that is not compostable gets frozen until garbage day. Third, I keep a block of wood on top of the freezer.

Fruit trees, veg gardens and livestock fenced electric. No unsupervised pets left out

Garbage is stored in fenced back yard securely. Compost bin, bird feeders, and barbecue located in secured fenced back yard. I have never had a bear in my fenced back yard. Keep barbecue clean.

No garbage or recycling outside until pickup day.

Pets inside before dark.

Lock garbage in locked shed. Clean fruit trees

No attractants & deer fence (optimism, eh?!)

Don't leave garbage out, pick fruit off the trees ASAP

Keep attractants secured. Our dog generally warns us when a bear is about, even in the middle of the night. It appears interested in anything on our property we will scare it away. We have had no issues with our compost or veggie garden attracting bears.

We have a lock box for garbage, no food waste in compost and always covered with brown matter and we pick the fruit early

The Golden Lab runs the bears off the property. Otherwise, fellow tenants are usually fairly careful to keep attractants minimized.

We keep the fruit picked and garbage in the garage Meat scraps are frozen and burned with the yard waste in season

Bird feeders put away. Garbage secured. Electric fence.

Store garbage bags inside house. Pick fruit regularly. Keep Clean BBQ.

No need to protect my property, bears are welcome to wander through anytime they want



## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Clean up attractant.

I allow the bears to do their own thing, they aren't hurting anyone

By picking up fallen fruit, securing garbage, basically minimizing attractants

Compost and garbage are kept in the garage until the morning of pickup; fruit trees are harvested early.

Keep all bear attractants inside

Garbage is stored inside, we do not compost, and our pet's foods are inside

No garbage, bury compost

Only put table scraps in compost; no cooked food; no seafood or chicken.

All smelly garbage is in freezer until we take it to the depot on Marilyn Road.

All smelly compost in freezer until taken to Marilyn Road.

Barbecue cleaned and put away in garage

Freezers secured in garage.

Pantry (in garage) is double doored from outside-

We will pick our fruit as soon as possible and not leave any on the ground.

Bird feeder - hmmm

I keep our compost, garbage and recycling locked in a shed. I don't have fruit trees... my neighbors do not! (Grr)

A fenced yard with a dog.

Keep attractants secured, or cleaned up (harvest fruit right away and keep my poultry pen clean)

We built a bear proof garbage/compost container outside. Nothing is getting in this thing!

We also pick up any fruit dropped and when it is ripe.

Fenced area around home

We keep our garbage and compost locked in the garage, and try to ensure we pick the fruit from our trees as early as we can.

We have a large dog and a fence. We never leave garbage out. We even have chickens and have never had a problem with bears even though they walk by daily.

We live on a large acreage. Bears are welcome on our property, they often wade through our creek throughout the summer and eat the apples from our trees in the fall. If we don't bother them, then they don't bother us, so we really don't mind them being here.

All attractants are secured within a fenced off area that includes our two large dogs. They may wander by and sniff out those items but they are barked off by the dogs so they don't bother with our stuff.

Fencing and minimizing attractants

Backyard is fenced to deter bears from entering where vegetable gardens are. Garbage is kept in enclosed garage until morning of pick up.

Our dog chases them away if they come right over our fence.

I don't worry about bears. We have a fenced in yard and keep our yard and area clean

We are responsible and contain our waste

Keep garbage bin behind gate and have compost bin in our garage.

There is nothing to protect. They walk through. This survey assumes people need to protect themselves

2 big dogs

Lock garbage in metal shed. Although once they tore open the door

Our dogs usually scare it off, but normally we just leave them alone.

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

#### Bear horn and fences

Our property is fenced - only to keep the dogs in. 4' high wire mesh between wood posts. Deer come over, bear over, or through, as the case may be. All bear attractants are kept within our electric fence.

Store garbage and food scrapes in garage until the morning of pick up. I'm also aware that I live in Sooke...we share this town with a lot of wildlife. Be cautious and safe but let them be.

#### High fence

Fully fenced backyard. No meat products in compost. German Shepherd Dog.

No garbage left out. No unpicked produce, BBQ cleaned after use.

My backyard is fenced and my garbage is in a locked and secured shed. I don't have anything in my yard that would attract bears.

It's fenced. The food we grow we pick when ready. Our garbage is kept in the garage until garbage day.

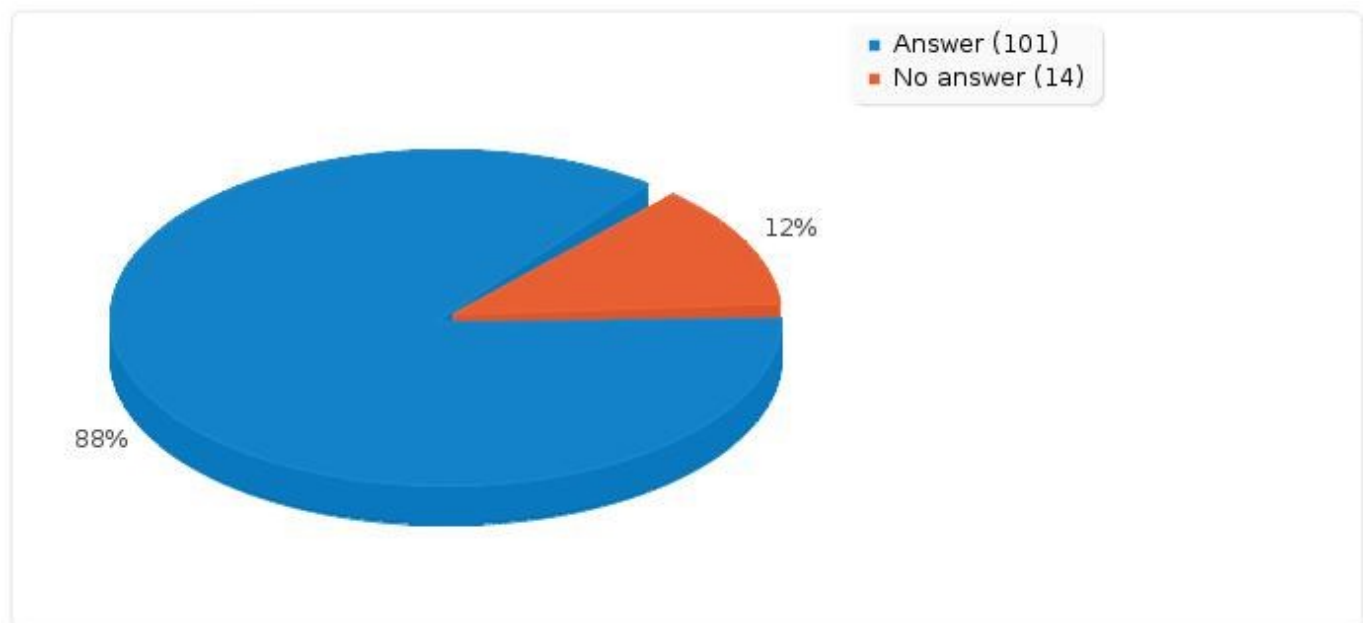
Don't have to. They don't bother anyone.

Don't really, they live here too

Leave nothing out for them to get into

Generally try to keep attractants to a minimum, though impossible to stop berries (salmonberry/blackberry) all over property. Keep garbage in garage

Try to pick the fruit as soon as we can, but obviously bears eat unripen fruit which means we either invest a tonne of money on an electric fence system or we maintain the status quo where we try to get the fruit as early as possible. This mostly works.



## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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#### Question store: How and where do you store your garbage and/or compost?

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Answer	94	81.74%
No answer	21	18.26%

#### Responses

In the garage.

Garbage stays in the garage until pick up

In the garage

Garbage is in wheelie bin inside of shed and the compost is made up of pallets with a Lockdown lid

Garage

I have a bear proof garbage area - it's a small shed within a wired frame - top and sides are all wire. This works until garbage day when I have to put my bins on the curb.

Outside the back door in a fenced yard with a 100 pound Pure Bred German Shepherd.

My garbage remains indoors until the morning of garbage pick-up. My compost is in two large black plastic composters at the back of my yard. Garbage in garage

Garage

In garbage can by house

In the garage. Come out the night/afternoon before pick up.

Very little garbage generated in house. Recycle everything we can and it remains in the closed a garage until recycle day. Recycle containers go out the morning of pick up and go back inside immediately after pick up. No bins left out for days like a lot of houses in separate bins inside the garage.

Garage

Garage.

In the garage.

Closed black compost container which has vegetable & garden debris only.

Nothing

In box

Unsecured but no garbage anymore due to compost/recycling, burn paper in wood stove to start fire. Being careful about consumption

Back deck but chained up

Garage + backyard + we don't have a meat digester, so we store any food waste in the freezer 'til time to take it to A&P Disposal for shipment to Hartland Large garbage container near house

Garage

No compost and garbage is in can at side of house

Bins, securely latched during bear season

Garbage is in a locked can on the deck. No food garbage goes into the can since we have food scraps recycling. In the summer, the food scraps are frozen until garbage day and garbage is put out in the morning of the day. Cleaned soft plastic in lidded metal bin outside. Used kitty litter in Garbage wheelie bin outside my garage, no food or food contaminated items are in that garbage bin. Meat

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Scraps in compostable bag in freezer until drop off day, Veggie scraps in compostable bags in larger compostable bag in lidded plastic pail with snap lock closure inside my garage.

All stored inside

Inside

See above.

Garbage garage. Compost outside no meat or bones

Garbage is in a wooden bin in my fenced back yard. A bear would never locate it. Compost is also in wooden bin in fenced area.

Garbage In the garage.

In a locked tin shed

Garbage - In garbage cans, in the garage.

Compost - in freezer until pick-up day.

Locked container in the carport

Garbage is secured in a shed, compost is in a compost bin made of pallets in the yard.

In a construction lock box

My garbage is in locked, lidded containers. On occasion, fellow tenants do not secure or contain their garbage sufficiently, and the end result is inevitable.

Cannot compost anymore because bear destroyed CRD bin, ripped up cone composter.

Bear smashed custom heavy duty wooden garbage shed - unsure of what to do now

Compost is not associated with the house and we try to keep it unattractive

Garbage in a closed container both it and cleaned recycling in a closed garage in bin

Use cans but fill them the morning of garbage day pickup. Use compost in veggie garden for soil top-up.

In a secure container below the deck

Inside.

Inside house

In an enclosed area with bear proof lids

In a secure, locked garage.

Indoors until pickup

Garbage is kept inside the garage

Stored inside the cans in our garage until the morning of pick up

In locked building, bury compost

Back yard in a large secured compost bin

See above

A locked shed.

Locked garbage bin, and a green cone food digester for all smelly compost. Only grass clippings go in the black composted.

Outside in a bear proof container and we only put our garbage/compost out in the AM of Pick up day.

Locked shed

In our locked garage.

Indoors

Garbage in the garage. Food scraps go to chickens. We lock the chicken up every night. Compost has only yard waste such as lawn clippings and leaves.

Garbage and recycling are kept locked inside a sturdy shed.

## Survey Results for: Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Garbage is stored in the garage until pick up day. Composting is done inside the fence line.

In the Green House

Indoor and we compost in a rotating composter, adding appropriate ingredients so there is No smell.

Enclosed garage

In garage.

Garbage is in a locked shed. Compost can be tipped over if they really try hard - but it's Only happened once.

Compost bin and dumpster

Beside our house in secure area

Locked metal bin

Garbage bin behind gate with no food in it and compost bin is in garage.

Garage

Compost is open in the back yard but mainly grass and chicken poop.

Garbage is not accessible for bears and is put out morning of garbage day See above. Don't compost because rats and bears

Garbage is in garage. All edible compost goes to chickens.

Garage

Garbage outside by driveway, large blue bin, tied down top.

Garbage cans are kept in the shed until the morning of garbage day. Compost is within Electric fencing.

Garage.

Garage

The garbage and compost are in the backyard which is fenced. Meat byproducts are kept Inside in the freezer until pickup day.

In the garage in cans.

In a garbage can in a locked wooden shed.

In the garage. We previously tried to store it in an outside locked shed no they ripped the Doors off.

Compost locked

Non compost foods frozen till garbage day

In a covered bin

In the garage/house

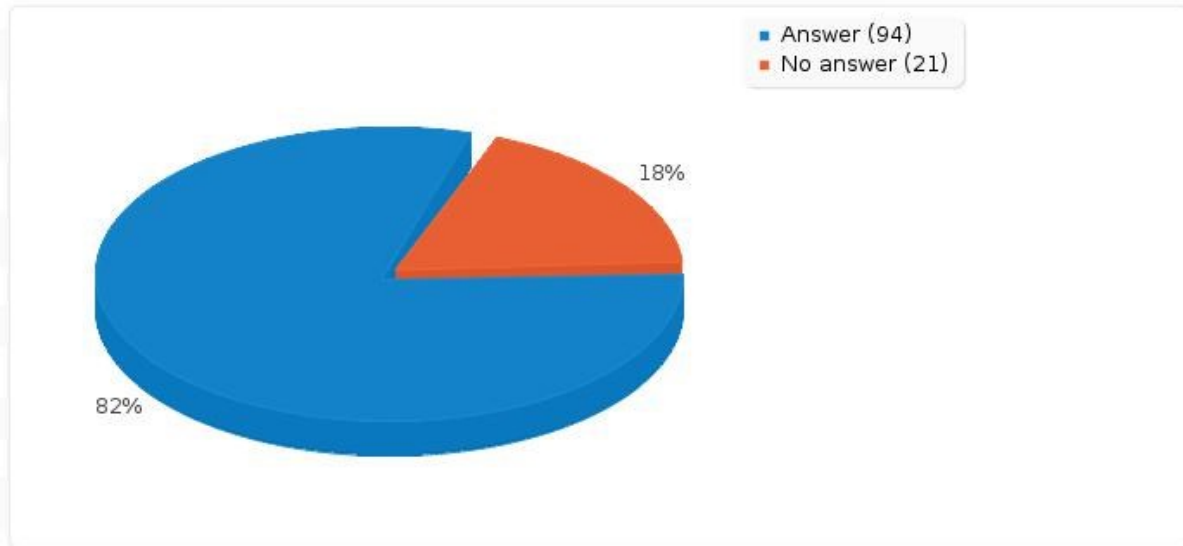
Garbage is inside a garage. Compost is outside, covered with brown matter to reduce odours.

Garbage in garage

Secured can, outside

In a home built metal storage locker made from an old 500 gallon propane tank and in a metal shipping container.

**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey



## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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### Question Pickup: How frequently is your waste picked up or taken to the dump?

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Answer	Count	Percentage
Daily (A1)	0	0.00%
Weekly (A2)	53	46.09%
Monthly (A3)	12	10.43%
Never (A4)	4	3.48%
Other	42	36.52%
No answer	4	3.48%

#### Other; Responses

Biweekly

Twice monthly pickup

2 -weekly bi-

weekly Every

2 weeks Bi

weekly

biweekly Bi-

weekly

3 weeks

Bi-Weekly

Biweekly

Biweekly

Biweekly

Biweekly

2 times a week

Bi-Weekly

delivered

Bi- monthly

Every few months

bi-weekly

Every two weeks

When I have 3 bags to take in. No food waste

Bi-weekly

Bi-weekly

As needed, every few months.

Every 2 weeks

**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

When the can is full 4 to 6 weeks

Every 2 weeks

When full can

Every 2 weeks

Incinerate

Every two months but in freezer in interim

Bi weekly

Biweekly

Every two weeks

Every two weeks

Every two weeks

Every other week.

Every 2 weeks

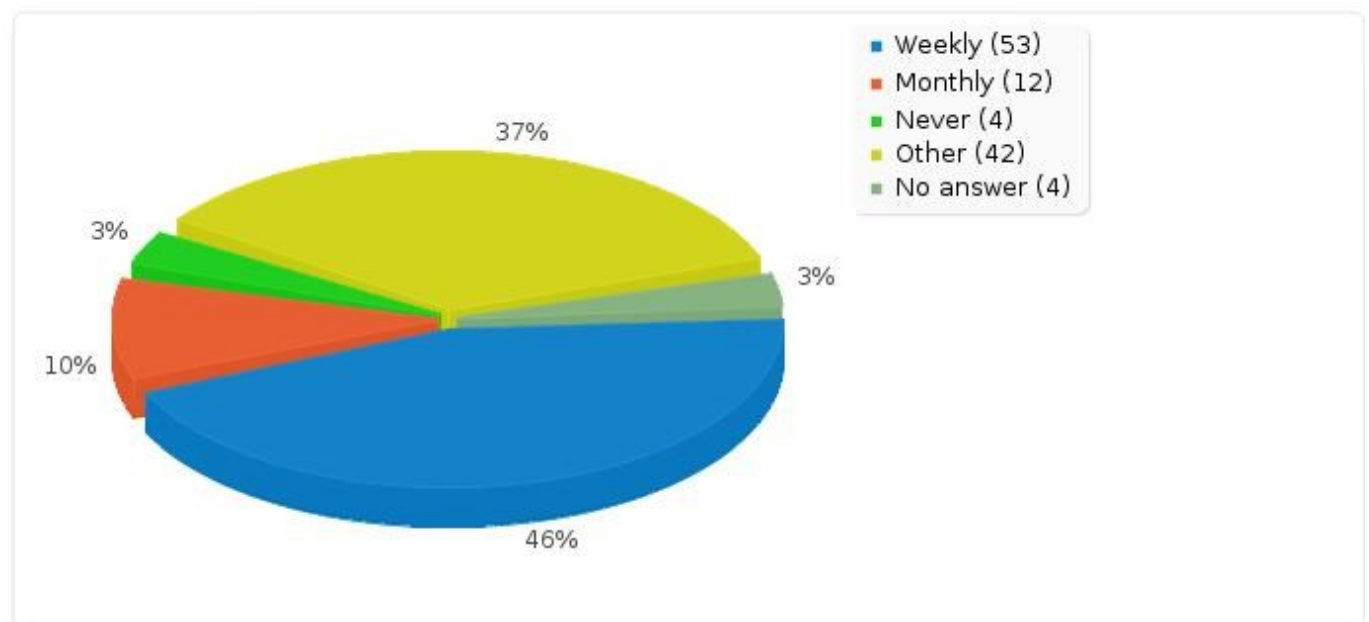
Every 2nd week

Biweekly

Biweekly

We take our garbage in to a dump about once a month ourselves; it is never outside.

Maybe quarterly





## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

### Question Compost: How frequently is your compost picked up?

Answer	Count	Percentage
Daily (A1)	0	0.00%
Weekly (A2)	27	23.48%
Monthly (A3)	5	4.35%
Never (A4)	52	45.22%
Other	29	25.22%
No answer	2	1.74%

#### Other; Responses

Biweekly

Done himself

Never -- I use it in my garden

Every 2 weeks

Biweekly

Bi-weekly

Does self

Done Self

Does himself

Bi-Weekly

Bi-Weekly

Bi-monthly

Every two weeks

Use in garden

Biweekly

Bi-weekly

I don't compost

We use it

Rarely

Composed on our property

Every two weeks

We don't compost

Bury

See previous question

Bi weekly

Every other week.

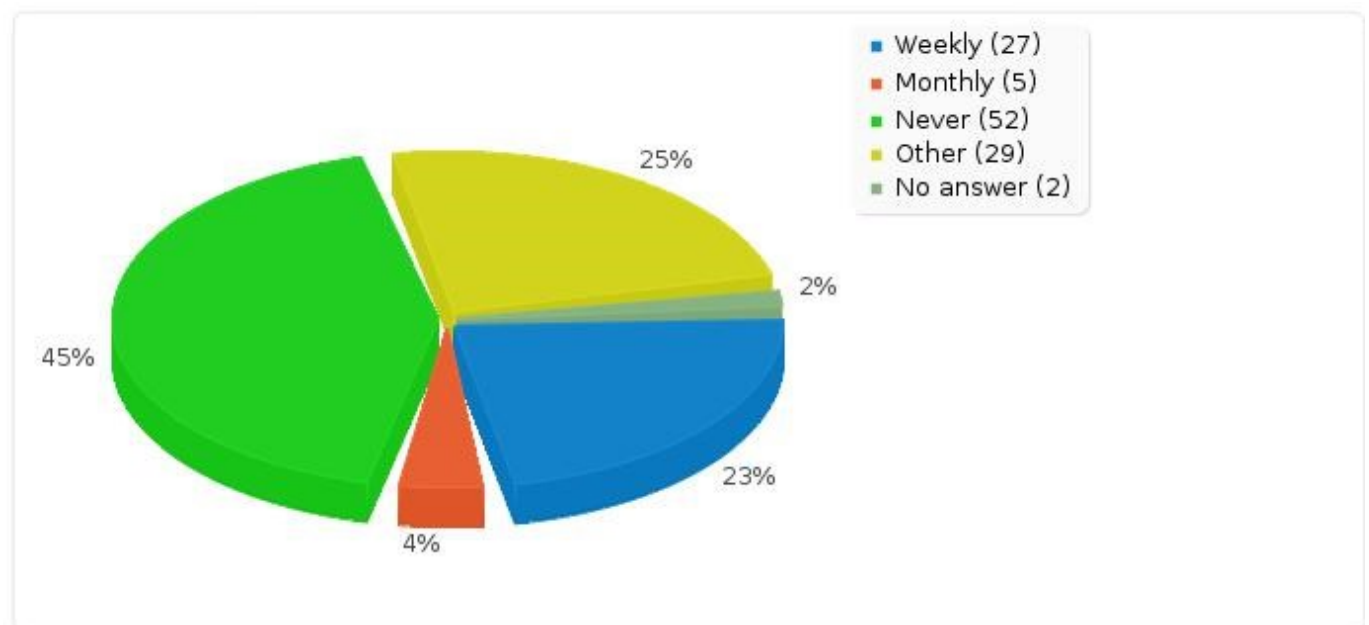
**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

I don't have compost

Biweekly

Biweekly

It is dumped into a deep hole in the ground



## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Happy about garage: Are you satisfied with the current waste management system in Sooke? Please explain.

Answer	Count	Percentage
Very satisfied (A1)	31	26.96%
Somewhat satisfied (A2)	48	41.74%
Somewhat unsatisfied (A3)	22	19.13%
Very unsatisfied (A4)	10	8.70%
Comments	37	32.17%
No answer	4	3.48%

#### Other; Responses

N/A

I resent that we do not have the option of using the food-digester because of the bears, especially having paid nearly \$200 for it.

Sooke needs more garbage bins in public spaces and parks and walkable areas.  
Need a place to take landscaping items.

There is no waste management - I hired Alpine to come and take my garbage/compost.

Don't use it

Sooke Disposal is the best. Always courteous...

Don't use them. Any waste we have is taken in for disposal as needed. I see several times per year the garbage of my neighbours is not picked up. They just don't show up not available

Could be weekly

Does not use garbage pick up

Need more beach clean-ups desperately need option for disposing of large volumes of Styrofoam

We need a compost centre, yard-waste depot and recycling centre w. affiliated businesses  
That could salvage material and rework it.  
People don't do it well on their own

Experience not good

People need to stop putting out their garbage the night before.

People in Sooke have garbage all over their properties.  
With the high taxes we pay waste removal should be covered

Lack of garbage cans in parks or beach access. More so for dog poo bags

I see garbage put out the night before pickup. I see garbage out on holidays because Garbage Company does not let clients know there is no pickup. Garbage people have poor attitude.

We are asked to put on curb by 7 am, but pick up often isn't until late afternoon.

There's always room for improvement

I don't deal with Sooke's waste management, but based on the number of interactions with bears and garbage, I think there are improvements to be made. No green waste pick up/drop off Composted bins are WAY too large (hard to clean/fill up too much, too bulky/stinky to store in the house)

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Should not have answered as we only get the bi weekly recycling pick up

Too many rats around since food scraps not allowed in garbage bags. Service Should be included in property taxes.

Should have house hold garbage pick-up included in our property taxes

Not a good question and difficult to determine relevance without context. We do not have pick-up of garbage or compost. We do some of our own composting. We take plastics, garbage and compost to Marilyn road (two places). We do have pick up of recyclables. If you mean should waste be handled differently to address bears then yes council should pass a bylaw so garbage is put out early in the morning. Sooke should provide subsidized bear-proof garbage containers. There should be stiff fines for not following these procedures.

I don't use Sooke disposal, i would but tried for 3 weeks with no returned message. We use Alpine.

I have questioned if they are sorting out compost from garbage as they use the same small truck for pick-up of both materials. They say they sort it back at the dumping station...seems unrealistic to me.

It seems expensive for the level of service we receive. Sometimes garbage and compost sits outside for hours before pick up. Would love to see yard waste included in what gets picked up.

Need more trucks, so the garbage/compost is picked up in the morning. There are sometimes it does not get picked up till late afternoon.

No access to yard waste pick up. Requirement for separating kitchen scraps from garbage but no clear benefits.

We use Alpine because Sooke Disposal wasn't reliable.

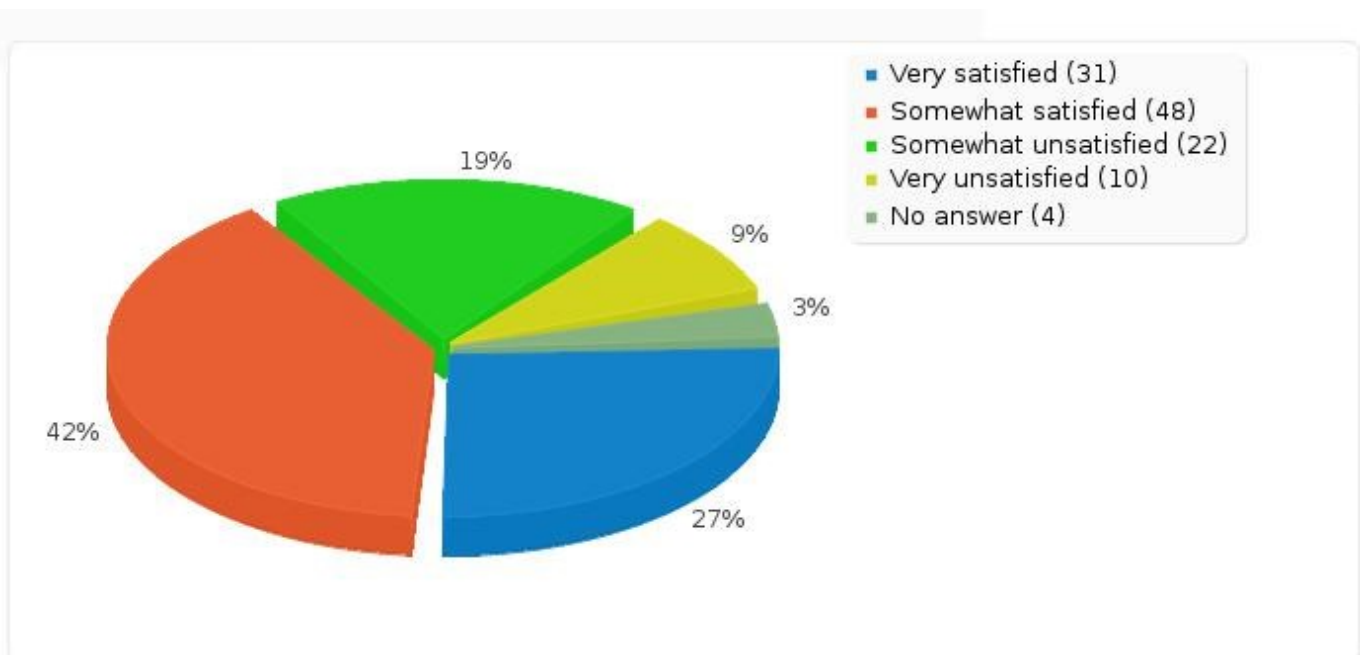
Municipal waste and compost pickup would be nice.

People should be fined for putting garbage out the night before

Sooke disposal drives dangerously and dropping off at the "dump" in Sooke is expensive and proving is inconsistent.

In my opinion a bylaw staying garbage must be kept locked inside a bear proof enclosed Area until day of pick up would be helpful.

Should be CRD

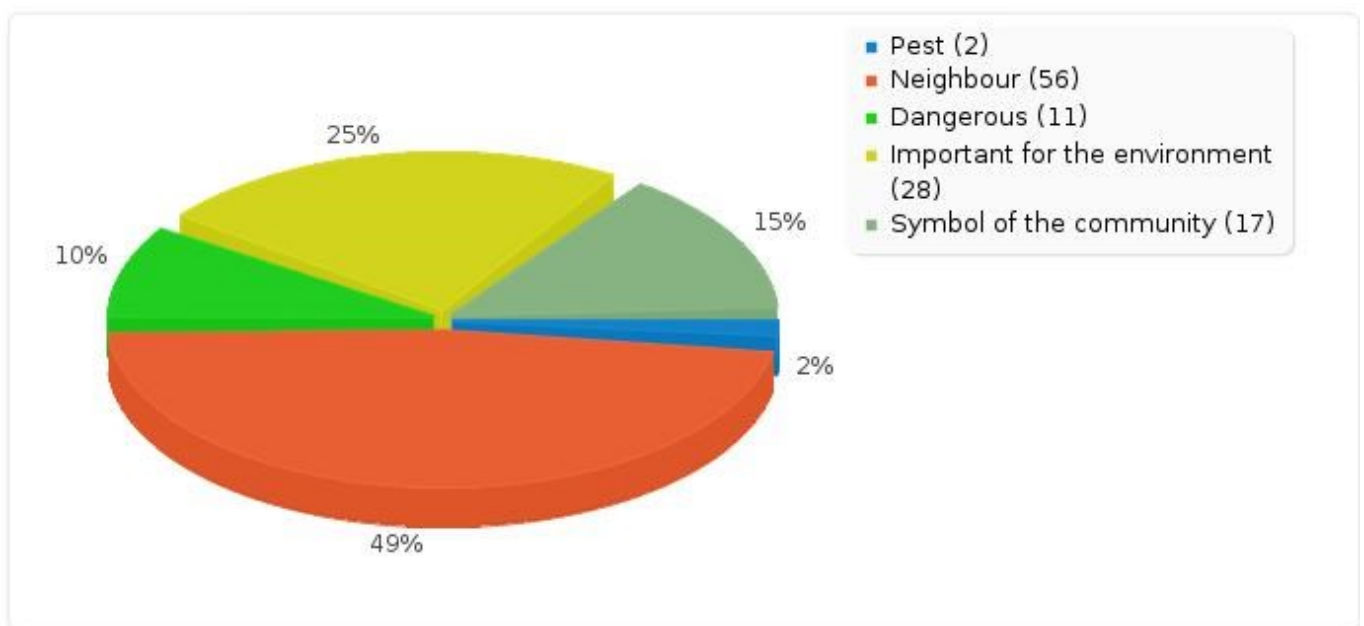


## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question think of bears [1]: Please rank the top three characteristics that come to mind when you think about bears. [Ranking 1]

Answer	Count	Percentage
Pest (A1)	2	1.75%
Neighbour (A2)	56	49.12%
Dangerous (A3)	11	9.65%
Important for the environment (A5)	28	24.56%
Symbol of the community (A6)	17	14.91%

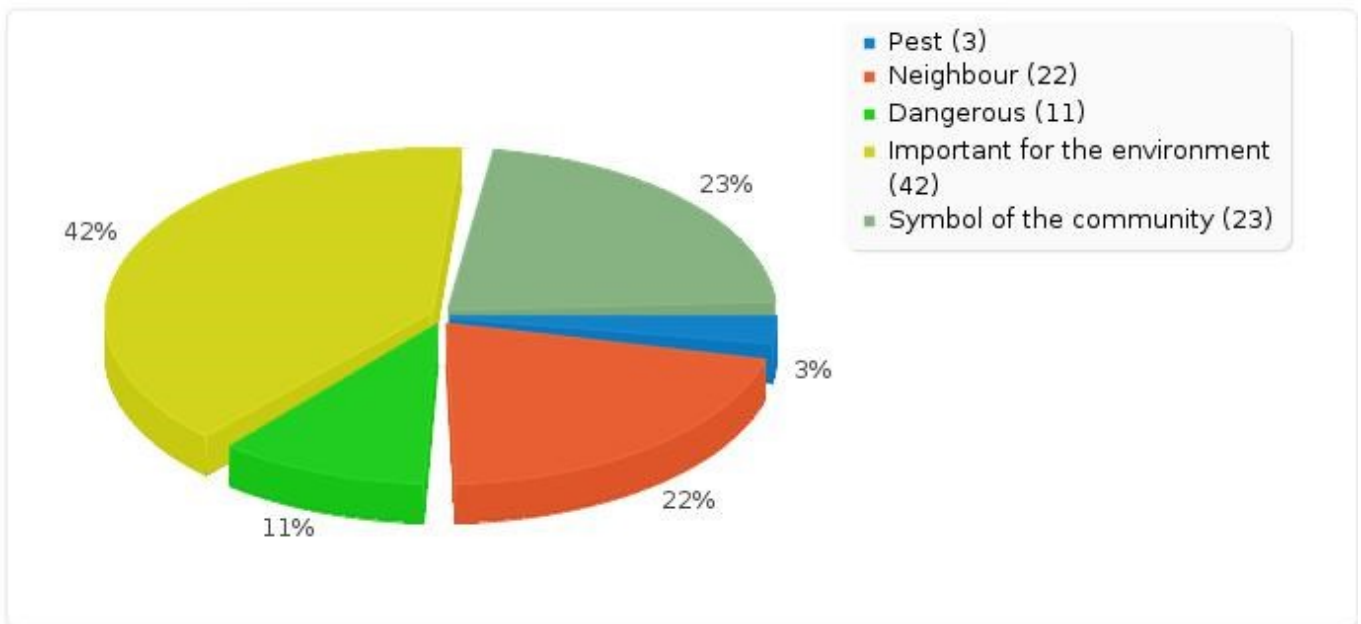


## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question think of bears [2]: Please rank the top three characteristics that come to mind when you think about bears. [Ranking 2]

Answer	Count	Percentage
Pest (A1)	3	2.97%
Neighbour (A2)	22	21.78%
Dangerous (A3)	11	10.89%
Important for the environment (A5)	42	41.58%
Symbol of the community (A6)	23	22.77%

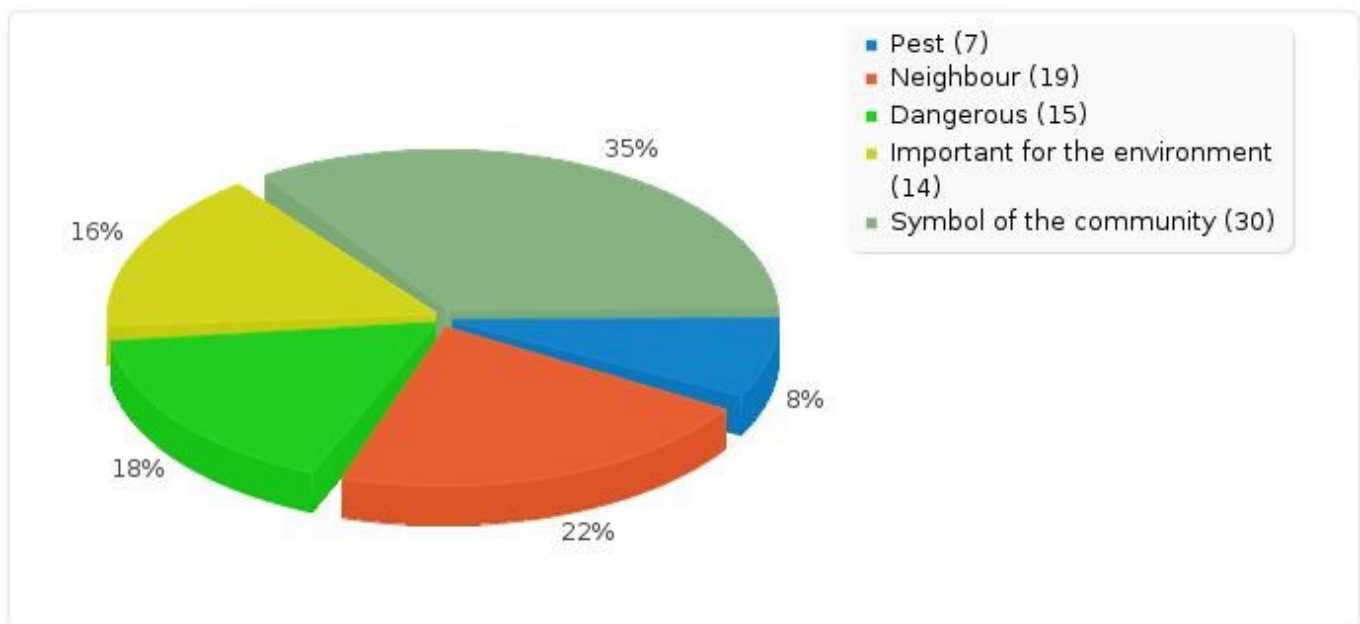


## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question think of bears [3]: Please rank the top three characteristics that come to mind when you think about bears. [Ranking 3]

Answer	Count	Percentage
Pest (A1)	7	8.24%
Neighbour (A2)	19	22.35%
Dangerous (A3)	15	17.65%
Important for the environment (A5)	14	16.47%
Symbol of the community (A6)	30	35.29%



## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question think of bears [4]: Please rank the top three characteristics that come to mind when you think about bears. [Ranking 4]

---

Answer	Count	Percentage
Pest (A1)	0	0.00%
Neighbour (A2)	0	0.00%
Dangerous (A3)	0	0.00%
Important for the environment (A5)	0	0.00%
Symbol of the community (A6)	0	0.00%



## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question think of bears [5]: Please rank the top three characteristics that come to mind when you think about bears. [Ranking 5]

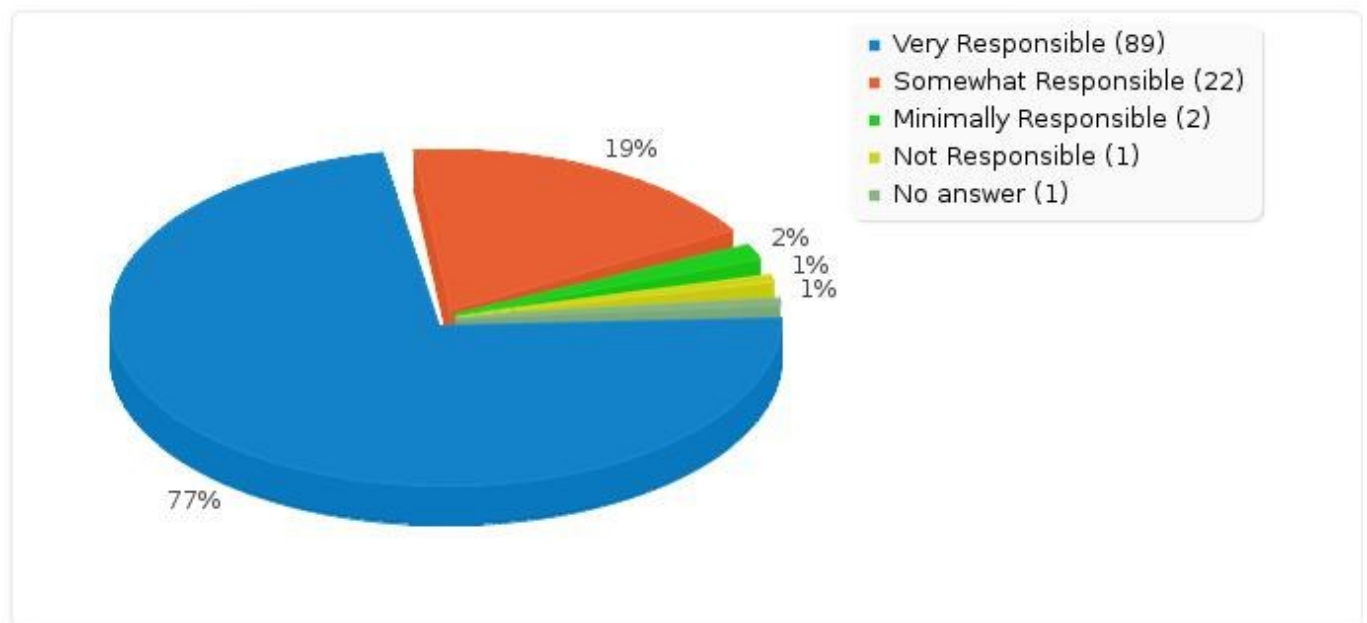
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Answer	Count	Percentage
Pest (A1)	0	0.00%
Neighbour (A2)	0	0.00%
Dangerous (A3)	0	0.00%
Important for the environment (A5)	0	0.00%
Symbol of the community (A6)	0	0.00%

**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Responsible (SQ001): Please identify who you think should be responsible for Wildlife issues in Sooke.  
[Homeowners]

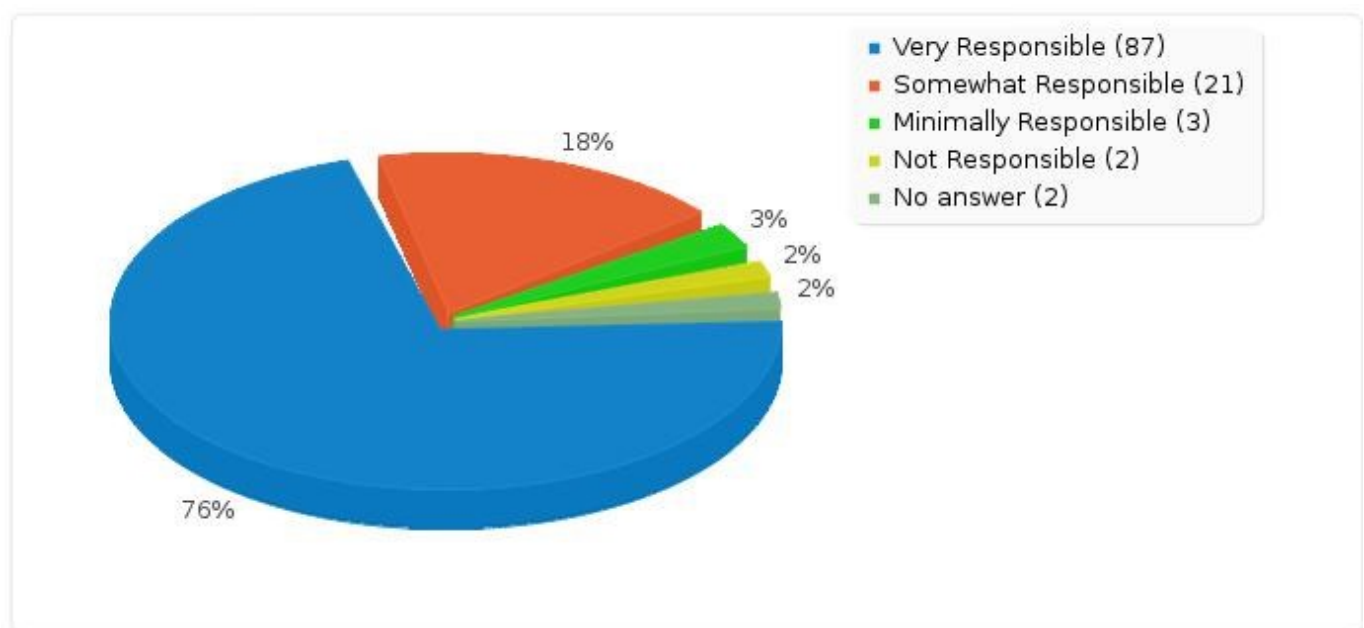
Answer	Count	Percentage
Very Responsible (A1)	89	77.39%
Somewhat Responsible (A2)	22	19.13%
Minimally Responsible (A3)	2	1.74%
Not Responsible (A4)	1	0.87%
No answer	1	0.87%



**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Responsible (SQ002): Please identify who you think should be responsible for Wildlife issues in Sooke.  
[Community]

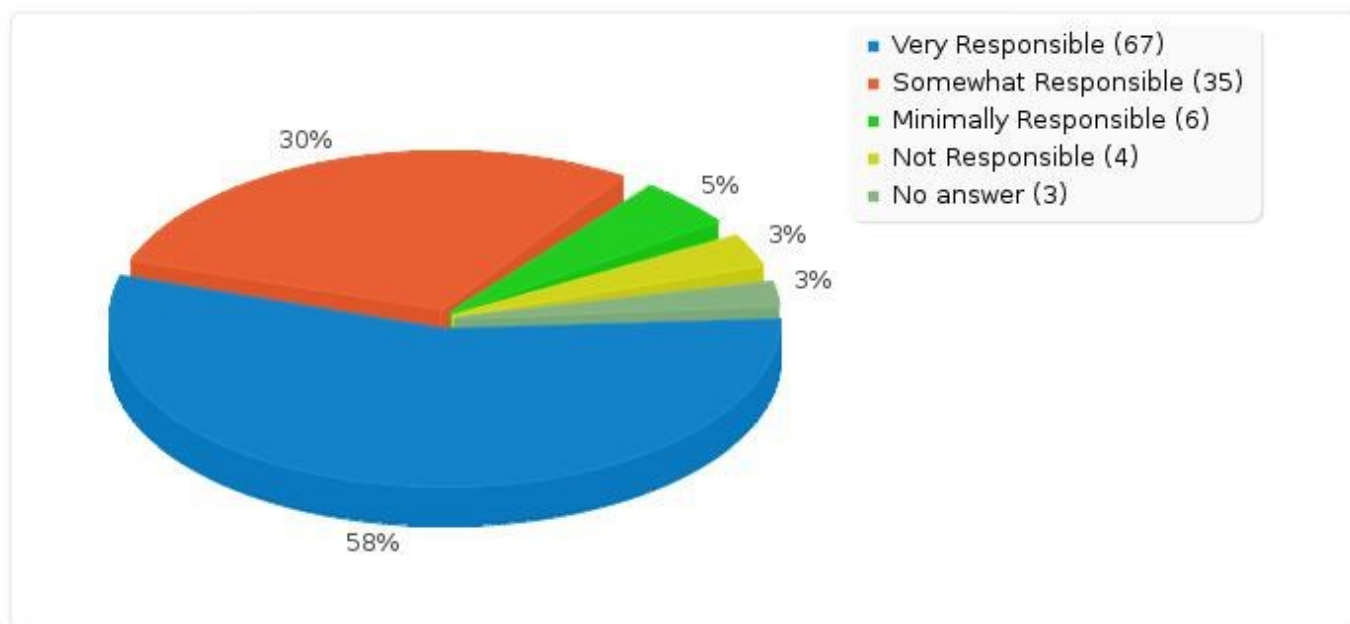
Answer	Count	Percentage
Very Responsible (A1)	87	75.65%
Somewhat Responsible (A2)	21	18.26%
Minimally Responsible (A3)	3	2.61%
Not Responsible (A4)	2	1.74%
No answer	2	1.74%



**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Responsible (SQ003): Please identify who you think should be responsible for Wildlife issues in Sooke.  
[Municipality]

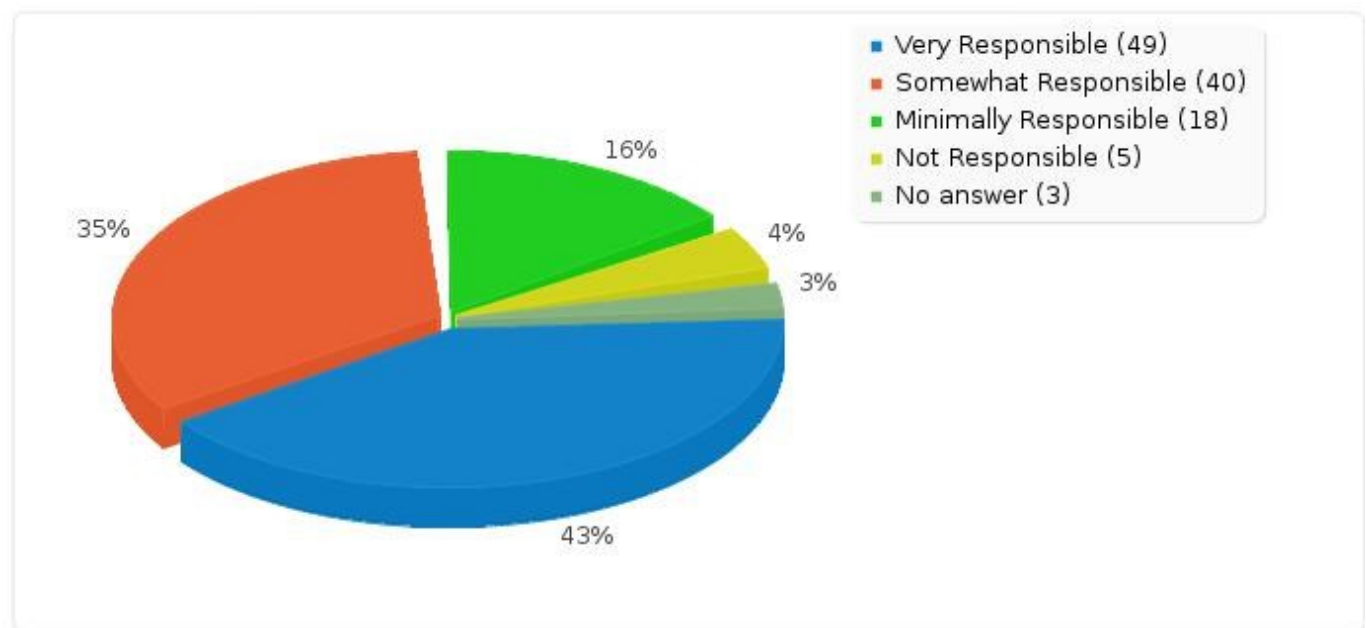
Answer	Count	Percentage
Very Responsible (A1)	67	58.26%
Somewhat Responsible (A2)	35	30.43%
Minimally Responsible (A3)	6	5.22%
Not Responsible (A4)	4	3.48%
No answer	3	2.61%



**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Responsible (SQ004): Please identify who you think should be responsible for Wildlife issues in Sooke.  
[Province]

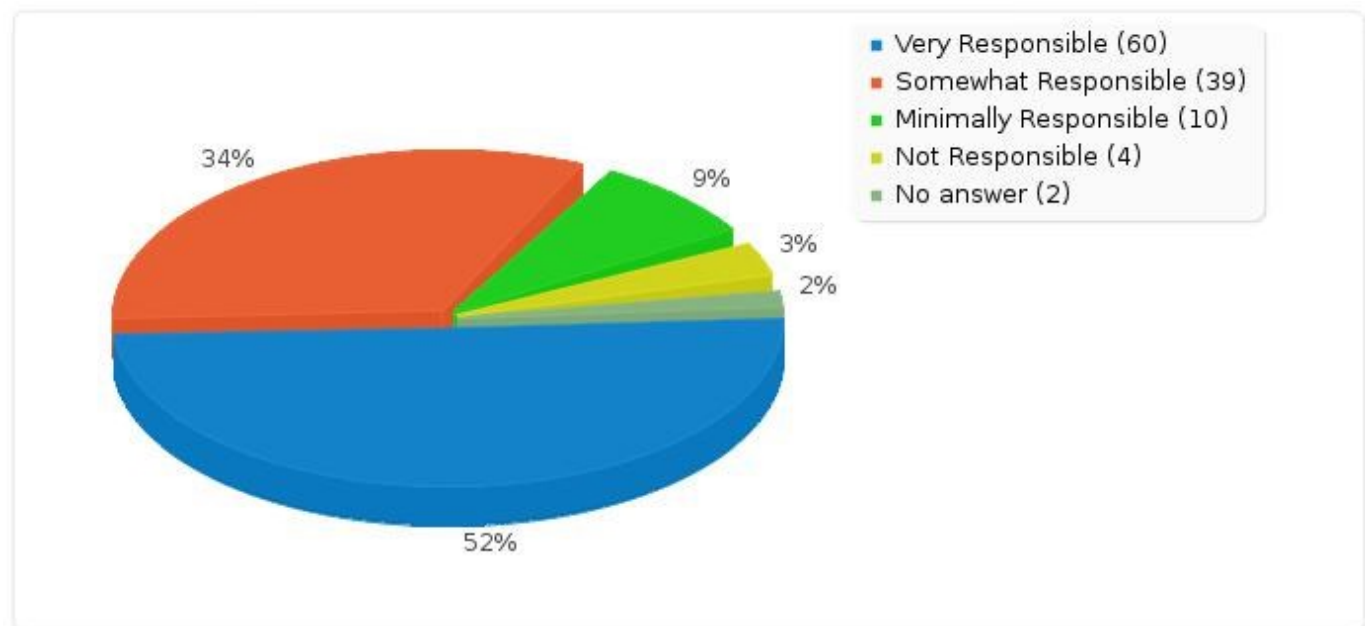
Answer	Count	Percentage
Very Responsible (A1)	49	42.61%
Somewhat Responsible (A2)	40	34.78%
Minimally Responsible (A3)	18	15.65%
Not Responsible (A4)	5	4.35%
No answer	3	2.61%



**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Responsible (SQ005): Please identify who you think should be responsible for Wildlife issues in Sooke.  
[Business Owners]

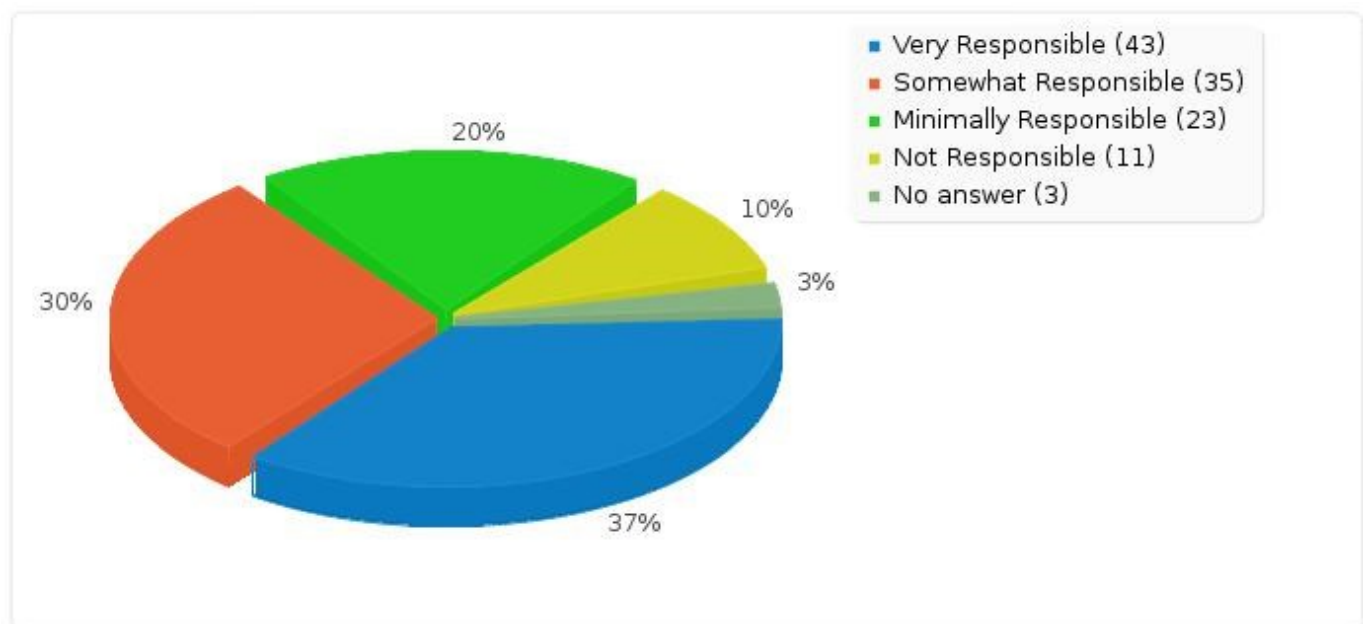
Answer	Count	Percentage
Very Responsible (A1)	60	52.17%
Somewhat Responsible (A2)	39	33.91%
Minimally Responsible (A3)	10	8.70%
Not Responsible (A4)	4	3.48%
No answer	2	1.74%



**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Question Responsible (SQ006): Please identify who you think should be responsible for Wildlife issues in Sooke.  
[Garbage Collectors]

Answer	Count	Percentage
Very Responsible (A1)	43	37.39%
Somewhat Responsible (A2)	35	30.43%
Minimally Responsible (A3)	23	20.00%
Not Responsible (A4)	11	9.57%
No answer	3	2.61%



## Survey Results for:

Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question Suggestions: Please provide any suggestions you may have for resolving human-bear conflicts that arise.

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Answer	Count	Percentage
Answer	92	80.00%
No answer	23	20.00%

### Responses

Better education on what to do when you have an experience with a bear.

Public Education, Fencing

Twitter alerts

Education. Especially for youngsters

We live in a trailer park and to my knowledge we're the only ones that have built a purpose built wheelie bin storage shed.

Garbage should be picked up earlier in the day if possible. Sometimes are cans are out there until the evening.

With all the municipal taxes I pay, I do not receive water, sewer, street lights, sidewalks, bus stop, etc. so you'd think they could provide me with a bear proof garbage bin. Stop Bear Wise Sooke Fear Mongering!

Conservation officers that live here in Sooke should be more responsible for educating Sooke.

Encourage members of the community to be proactive, live in harmony

Selling at a discount bear spray etc.

Don't panic because you see a bear. They are just being a bear. Most bear/people issues are human generated by people being unaware of how important it is not to leave garbage/recycle bins out. Most bears in Sooke are born in their territory and know of nowhere else.

On-going 'education-reminders' using various media (tv/radio/social commercials) on what to do/what not to do, etc. etc.

Side note: Could also include reminders for cougars and wolves.

Education

EDUCATION! We as a community are responsible for ensuring bears are not habituated. Doing whatever we can to educate ourselves and our neighbours to protect the bears and prevent human conflict.

Get neighbour to stop feeding all animals.

Awareness, Keep Attractants away

Education at events and flyers

Education

Education

Education

Education

Education and kindness to all animals. Firmness

Concentrate on securing our waste/compost

No need to have conflicts if we keep garbage cleaned up

Keep Garbage away from where bears can smell

Garbage bear proof bins



## Survey Results for: Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

### Education, Enforcement

Give bears more space

Day of pick-up bylaw for putting trash at curbside for collection. Matched with warnings and, as a last resort, fines.

Every residence should get bear proof garbage/compost. Weekly pickup, more education, more fines

More frequent garbage pickup

### Education

Education always. Start with children at school and home

Less development, investigation to bear habitat, avoid encroaching

Stands at grocery stores, museums

Use common sense

Municipal garbage pick up

Put garbage out in morning. Bears need to be caught if too many

Home however need to take responsible

Enforcement in suburban Sooke, in the areas where problems arise.

Fines for putting out UNSECURED garbage on a Sunday night

Give citations to those who put out garbage the night before garbage pick-up.

Fines for anyone still putting food scraps in the garbage.

People need to take the time a research behaviours of the bears in the Sooke and Vancouver Island area. The deer cause more property damage and human injury then the bears ever do.

My methods of managing attractants have resulted in complete success, haven't had a Bear problem in 4 years now.

Bear aware program

Secure garbage and fine people that don't take care of their garbage! It is better than it used to be but still is bad in some areas. The bears will move on if there is no garbage to eat. Bears were here first! Sun River is the bear's territory due to salmon in the river and Demaniel creek.

Warnings and fines for people who put out garbage or recycling before pickup day.

Pass a bylaw that people cannot put garbage out before 8 AM on garbage day. Educate people about stopping to take pics of them and that this is the first step to it becoming a nuisance bear. It loses its natural fear of humans and from there it's a downhill slide.

Extreme fines for those people who leave out garbage and attractants unsecured in their yard. Fines for leaving garbage cans and recycling on the curb for longer than necessary (morning of and removed same day). Incentives for properly protecting livestock, poultry, and food crops (electric fences, enclosed and secured coops and runs). Municipalities should provide bear proof bins for garbage cans and in public parks and town. Fine people for not securing garbage

The concern is the bears' comfort in being around humans, which is why attractants need to be minimized. But it's impossible to completely deter interaction. My leashed dogs wear bear bells on their harnesses and I carry a whistle in my pocket. Any interaction is to be avoided if at all possible and, if not, intimidation tactics must be taken (such as attempting to look larger than I am) if the bear does not immediately leave the area. I'm not looking forward to my first encounter, but I am learning to be more observant so that it will hopefully not occur in any threatening manner for either of us.

Providing budget friendly garbage storage sheds (ie: steel bear "proof" boxes)

Finding solutions for composting easily and safely.

Education about co existing with bears followed by strictly enforced by laws around garbage storage and pick up. Other areas send the bylaw officers out and ticket offender the bears were here first

## Survey Results for: Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Violators (leaving garbage out etc.) issued tickets.

Have garbage pickup service included in property taxes would definitely help many of these issues. Not all issues of course but those who refuse or can't pay for private garbage service would help (like my neighbor incident with mama bears & 2 cubs). Would reduce no of garbage bears & hopefully save some bear lives. Relax

Teach people/give reminders about how to clean up the areas and bring in items that can attract bears.

If you don't want to see bears move - simple solution

I think people should clean up their yards. If there is nothing there for the bear he'll move on.

Bears live here too. People should give them a wide berth and learn to share the area.

Children should be taught bear awareness.

I was raised in the East Kootenays and was taught bear awareness at a very young age.

We were also taught to respect these beautiful creatures.

Fines for people/businesses that do not secure garbage.

Garbage should be kept inside ... fines for people who continually refuse to clean up bear attractions

People just need to give their heads a shake and not attract bears.

Educate people who feed wildlife to stop it

Already said them above.

It's been said many times, lock up the attractants... pick the fruit/veggies. Don't call Conservation they kill the bears!

Education of people

Community members must have a vested interest in the well-being of the bears

People need to be informed; there should be a by-law in place that you can't put your garbage out until the AM of pickup. People/businesses should be fined for not having garbage secured. We have a people problem, not a bear problem.

I would love for people to be directed to call Wild Wise or a similar organization before contacting police. Improvements to waste management in Sooke could potentially help as well.

Planting fruit trees and berry bushes in places we want the bears to stay.

(Forest/mountains/streams). This is huge. We've taken so much of the natural food sources.

It's time we give back.

The only issues are human error. Some people are too stupid lazy and ignorant to secure their garbage and their same people who complain about bears on their property.

If you wish to live in an area that bears live...then you must learn to live with the bears.

Forcing them to adapt to us is a backwards notion of passing on responsibility. If I wish to have chickens on property that bears have been living on....then I need to put in Safeguards for the wellbeing of the chickens. In our case, we put up a strong fence and we have two working dogs that keep the bears deterred from coming too close to the chicken coop.

People need to be more responsible for not making their properties attractive to bears.

Keep garbage and compost locked up.

We should plant more berries and fruit trees in unpopulated areas (Sooke Hills) so they can be well fed on good food instead of garbage. PROTECT salmon stocks - very important. Leave fallen trees (grub).

Strong fines for those that leave attractants out. Include wildlife corridors in community planning to ensure wild animals have a safe place to go despite development.

Live and let live. Don't leave garbage around, but also let the bears do bear things.

People need to be careful and stop being so fearful. We are taking over their land and need to remember that. I hike in the hills and have come across a few. I give them there space and never have had an issue ....knock on wood.... Educate

## Survey Results for: Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Keep garbage and compost in garage and don't place it out the night before pickup.  
Educate people to understand there is no problem if attractants are not left out

It's all about the garbage and fruit left on trees. Do not put your garbage out the night before

Provide bear proof garbage cans

People need to not feed them and learn to keep their garbage in

Secure attractants as always - ensure development leaves wildlife corridors. Possibly more 'bear aware' signage in active neighborhoods. Advertise regularly during bear season in local papers/local online news sites.

Regular reminders, especially to those new to the area, regarding appropriate waste disposal. Hand out pamphlets or stickers for community members to put on garbage cans to inform neighbours of inappropriate behaviour. Coupons for electric fencing supplies. Be a responsible homeowner, business owner, and/or are member of community.

Give bears the right of way. Respect them. Protect them from becoming dependant on human garbage.

Not sure what the answer is, people don't know how to live with wildlife. There is a lot of educational materials but people choose not to follow them.

People need to stop being ignorant, realize they are the problem, and secure their garbage.

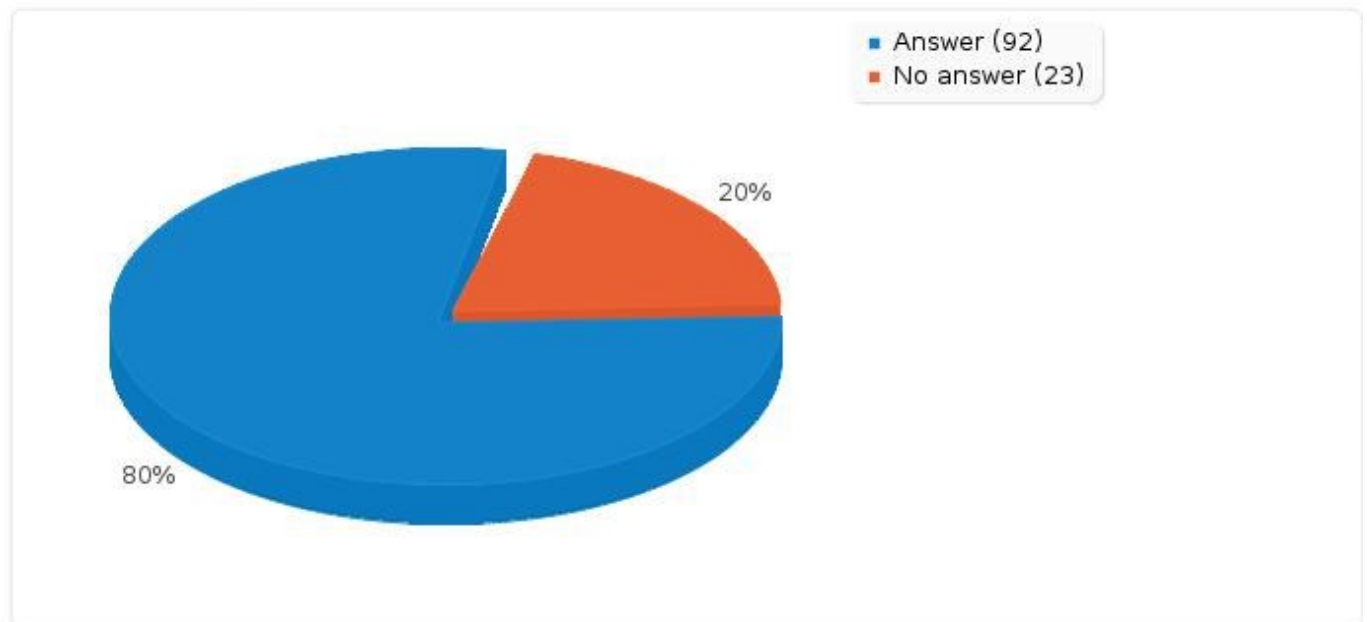
Keep attractants to a minimum.

By laws regarding garbage storage.

I believe that people with unsecured garbage should be heavily fined.

Was not aware that there were any conflicts.

Doing the best everyone can to remove attractants. Not everyone can have an electric fence around all the attractants at their farms though, and I think that needs to be understood.



## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

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Question Final Thoughts: Please provide any final thoughts or comments you may have regarding bears or human-bear conflict in Sooke.

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Answer	Count	Percentage
Answer	63	54.78%
No answer	52	45.22%

#### Responses

Bears are a necessary part of the local community and in general are the trash cleaners of the forest.

Education (conservation)

It's natural—I'm sure we bother them more than they bother us!

With a bear proof bin to every household in Sooke, we might be able to deter the bears from becoming garbage bears and reduce any human/bear conflicts as well as save a few bears from being killed. Thank you for doing this survey - I hope it gets a lot of attention! Clean up after yourself and leave the Bears alone.

I think the biggest thing that can be done to resolve most of the human/bear conflicts is to have people learn to put foods that attract bears out in the garbage on the morning of garbage pickups.

Bear proof garbage cans should be provided for people and mandatory or fined if not used.

Keep it up. Community events, target all age groups.

More awareness meetings for residents

Education for the people on bear management and the municipality should be involved to fine people who leave attractants out. People problem making a bear problem Education

It may become necessary to have counsel legislate rules for garbage containers etc. Etc. Etc. The community of Canmore in Alberta prohibits bird feeders and all residents must have bear proof garbage bins. It was a slow process to get everyone on board but to be privileged to share the land with the bears must be seen as a privilege and not a right and we must do what is necessary to live at peace with them. I think a way to monitor the resident bear population is important as well. Overpopulation leads to competition for food supply and drives the bears to look for a more readily available food source. Awareness

They were here first (live with them)

Nothing

Try and not euthanize bear

Nothing

None

Be proactive. Get something done

None

Thank you for this survey. Wild Wise Sooke is doing a great job locally and we encourage full municipal support for its work in educating the public and working with bylaw officers on homes with persistent garbage-storage and bear-habituation issues. Wild wise Sooke, More education

Good project

Want to understand depth

## Survey Results for: Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

More education, guide, mentoring

Glad for support

Educate humans

Leave lots bigger, less paving

No

Once a bear loses a fear of human settlement it is too late.

Bears in communities should be actively chased away by trained specialists and monitored.

Hopefully 2018 will not be the year a terrible incident happens

I do not like the term "bear conflict" if makes it gives the idea that we are in constant danger if there is a bear sighted anywhere in this town. They are here to live just like us. Conflict makes it sound like they are out there picking fights and causing pre meditated destruction. I think that the word interaction describes the various interactions that happen in Sooke.

People need to manage attractants. Wash your recycling. Bury your compost and freeze Your other food waste, or burn it.

Must learn to coexist

Clean up your garbage people! Bears were here first and we should not be killing them!

Bears are our neighbours. We are living on their land. We must live respectfully and responsibly and not put them in danger by our actions.

It's a pity that when bear sightings are reported, the bear usually ends up dead. This discourages most people from reporting.

If I saw one, I would just stay clear & let it go on its way.

Perhaps go to the schools and start talking to the kids, they are our first line of the education part of this whole topic.

It's very sad so many bears have to be killed because people are ignorant, lazy or just plain dumb

This is their home, too.

Please help, we do not want to see bears destroyed but we need a solution for garbage/compost storage that does not include keeping it in the house. Bears are too strong/clever for any attempts we have made to fix the problem. And it is very expensive to keep fixing property damage.

I am saddened and angered by the loss of my neighbourhood bear I believe it was one of the bears shot because we have had so many new neighbours whose homes were built in the bear path. I and my family on River Road have lived for 60 years with bears as regular neighbours passing through There has not been a threatening incident the family has always been careful not to have attractants on our property

Love seeing the bears in the wild at a distance. Such beauty. Won't call authorities as the bear will be killed not relocated. Wish everyone would do their part to minimize garbage/wildlife issues.

I find it disgusting that people build there houses in areas were bears traditionally live and we call them a problem.

Don't call conservation unless the bear is aggressive. Just get out of the way and let the bear be a bear.

They were here first be patient with them and remove things that draws them to you

People are ignorant and think that bears just stay in the forested areas. People need to be informed about how close a bear can get to someone without being seen

I think you should be asking people if they know which time of day is best to put out their garbage, if they know what kind of container would be best, and try to get a sense of what people actually know about bears and why they become a problem. Ask them if they would be willing to put out their garbage at a different time, if they would be willing to purchase a new container if required and other questions like that.

Most of the time a bear passing through should be a reminder to clean up your space. This would also be a good time to remind your neighbours to do the same.

Only once it has begun habituating and starts becoming a threat to people and pets does

## Survey Results for:

### Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

Conservation need to get involved. They are overworked as it is.

The dump is a dump and needs to be better managed. The first time I went there I was so nervous to drive into it in fear of getting a flat tire. It is a complete mess.

The recycling station should be open longer and provide better services.

In each of my interactions with bears (Sooke, West Coast Trail, Fairy Lake), the bear did not seem afraid of me but didn't want to have anything to do with me either.

People need to take responsibility for their part in this relationship. If a bear is taken out because you felt entitled to put out "bear snacks" and the bear ate them, then the onus is on you....not the bear. The onus is on you....not the district. The onus is on you...not the government. The onus is on you....not the garbage man.

I personally love the fact that I live in this town and have the opportunity to see the various wildlife up close. It's a great shame that any animal is having to be destroyed because of irresponsible people.

How long until the bears realize 99% of us don't have guns and can't actually hurt them. How long until they realize all the food is actually inside our houses and not in garbage bins.

Conservation officers need to be willing to attempt relocation rather than resorting to destruction when not necessary.

Humans are the problem

We're encroaching on their home by removing the trees and expanding the housing market in the area. People need to understand that there will always be wildlife around and we need to coexist somehow without destroying the bears. its awesome seeing them and we can co-exist

I feel lucky I have deer, bear, raccoons visit my property. I am not aware of any conflicts in our neighborhood.

Thanks for asking!

The wildlife is one of the reasons I moved to Sooke 20 years ago. I have had lots of bear encounters in the past, all positive.

It is sad to see beautiful animals killed because of human ignorance and their refusal to do things that are necessary to keep the bears away from unhealthy attractants. A lot of people lack education on being near aware.

We share the space with these beautiful animals. I have young children so I worry about there safety playing outside in our yard at times. Everyone needs to do there part to ensure the safety of our community and the bears.

I am very disturbed to hear bears are being killed when they are garbage bears. The humans should be punished severely for negligence.

**Survey Results for:**  
Sooke Human-Bear Conflict Survey

