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Relocation to Montana: Current Residents Who Were Influenced by Previous Vacations or Seasonal Tourism Jobs to Move to the State

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Research Note 2015-2

Relocation to Montana: Current Residents Who Were Influenced by Previous Vacations or Seasonal Tourism Jobs to Move to the State

Montana residents were intercepted during 4th quarter, 2012, and asked several questions regarding experiences that may have influenced them to relocate to Montana. Furthermore, those respondents who had relocated to the state were asked about business ownership in the state. ITRR surveyors collected the data state-wide, and responses were recorded on iPads. A total of 2,434 surveys were collected during the seven week period. Data was weighted based on respondent county of residence to be representative of Montana’s population (weighted sample size = 2,410). Results of this survey are highlighted below, along with the total number of Montana residents (ages 18+) represented by the survey sample.

Montana population, 18 and older, in 2014¹: 797,370

How many years have you lived in Montana?

Length of MT Residency	% of Sample (n = 2,410)	Number of Responses	MT Population Represented
1-5 years	11%	267	88,510
6-10 years	8%	195	64,590
11-20 years	11%	259	85,320
21 or more	24%	568	188,180
All my life	47%	1,119	370,780

Respondents who had not lived in Montana their whole life were asked the following questions:

- 1) Does this statement describe you?: It has been said that many people come to Montana on vacation and enjoy it here so much that they decide to relocate to Montana (immediately or later in life).
- 2) Does this statement describe you?: It has been said that many people come to Montana for seasonal tourism jobs and enjoy it so much that they decide to relocate to Montana (immediately or later in life).

¹ United States Census Bureau 2014 estimate, accessed 3/11/2015 at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/30000.html>

Respondents who answered yes to one or both of the questions above were asked a third question:

3) Did you, or do you currently, own a business in Montana?

Of those respondents who have moved here (n = 1,289), 25 percent (n=317) say they came after visiting, and nine percent (n=112) came after a seasonal tourism job. Of those who were previous visitors and/or seasonal workers, 12 percent (n=156) own(ed) a business. The following table represents this information as applied to the entire Montana population, 18 and older.

Residents who relocated to MT:	% of Full Sample (n = 2,410)	Number of Responses	MT Population Represented
Vacationed, then moved to MT	13.2%	317	105,250
Seasonal tourism job, then moved to MT	4.6%	112	36,680
After moving to MT, own(ed) business	6.5%	156	51,830

The types of businesses currently or previously owned in Montana by those who relocated to the state after vacationing or working seasonally are listed in the table below. Multiple responses for any of the business types listed are noted in parentheses:

Accounting	Gift shop	Rental co/restaurant/catering
Aero space	Golf cart sales	Rental houses
Alternative health care	Greenhouse	Restaurant (5)
Architecture	Home care	Restaurant. Hunting. Realestate
Arts crafts gifts	Home cleaning	Restaurant/bar
Auto parts	Homeland security	Retail (5)
Bakery	Horse shoes	Rocks
Bar (2 responses)	Hotel (2)	Salon
Bar, Hotel	Insurance	Sells fire equipment
Bar/restaurant	Internet	Sells oil painting and frames
Bed n breakfast	Internet svc	Service (2)
Book store	Iron works	Service station, Auto repair
Catering	Landscape design	Silversmith
Coffee, bookstore	Law (2)	Snow removal
Commercial art	Law firm	Software
Concrete	Lease hunting/ranching	Specialized bicycle parts
Construction (19)	Lingerie	Sports memorabilia

Construction and modular home manufacturing	Lodging	Surveying
Consulting (5)	Manage boxers	Tech
Contractor (2)	Manufacturing/cabinetry	Title
Contractor. Real estate	Marketing	Tourist
Crafts, salon	Masonry (2)	Tours, restaurant service
Dog washer	Motel (3)	Toy store
Electrical contracting	Natural food store	Traveling concession
Electrical install	Network marketing	Tree service and dog training
Engineering firm	Passion parties...	Truck repair
Excavation orchard maintenance	Pet grooming (2)	Trucking
Farming/ag (2)	Phone	Tupperware
Fiberglass repair	Photography (3)	Vacation rentals
Fine art	Plumbing	Veg farmer sales
Fishing outfitter	Pottery center	Video store
Flyfishing, fishing rods	Private investigator	Washiteria
Foreclosure defense	Ranching (11)	Water drilling
Geological	Real estate	Yard

Previous research has indicated, over and over again, that the features that attract people to Montana for vacation² are many of the same qualities that residents of the state appreciate as part of our home environment. These assets that both residents and visitors, alike, appreciate about Montana include, but are certainly not limited to, open and uncrowded spaces, wildlife, public lands, and abundant recreation opportunities. The research presented here helps us to understand and quantify the number of Montanans who were influenced to relocate to Montana, likely for many of these same reasons. Furthermore, as illustrated by these survey results, these Montanans who relocated to the state as a result of having an opportunity to vacation or work seasonally here have a positive, state-wide impact in terms of business creation and business diversity.

² Nonresident Travel Data, <http://www.tourismresearchmt.org/>