Maroon Bells Scenic Area:

Transportation Management Strategies Update

February 11, 2020

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TRANSPORTATION INNOVATION FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD

Background

- Since 2017, a stakeholder group has been meeting to discuss and address transportation challenges along Maroon Creek Road
  - Implemented riders survey in September 2018 and issued report
  - Completed Shuttle Staging Study Report in 2019
- To visit the Maroon Bells from June through October, visitors must take a RFTA shuttle from Aspen Highlands
- Shuttles operate from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM during the season, but start as early as 7:00 AM on peak days (in September and October)

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Challenges

- Maroon Bells visitation is increasing in September and October
  - Both in total numbers and in intensity of visitors per day
- Early morning visitation (as early as 5:00 AM) is increasing and creating traffic problems
  - "Sunrise crowd" arrives before RFTA shuttles operate to see the sunrise over Maroon Lake
  - Parking lots at MBSA fill up as early as 5:30 AM, creating congestion along Maroon Creek Road

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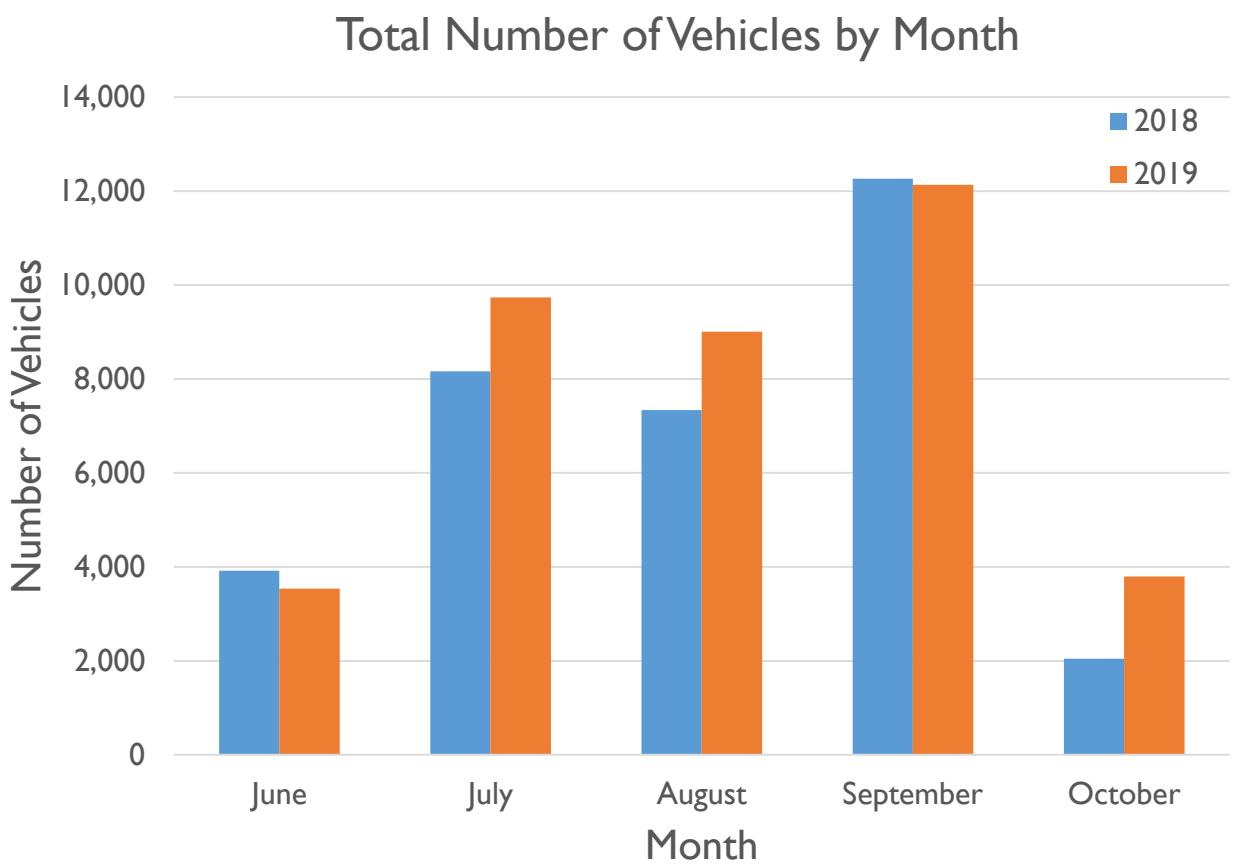
Visitation Trends



Source: Volpe Center analysis of Aspen Highlands garage data provided by Aspen Skiing Company

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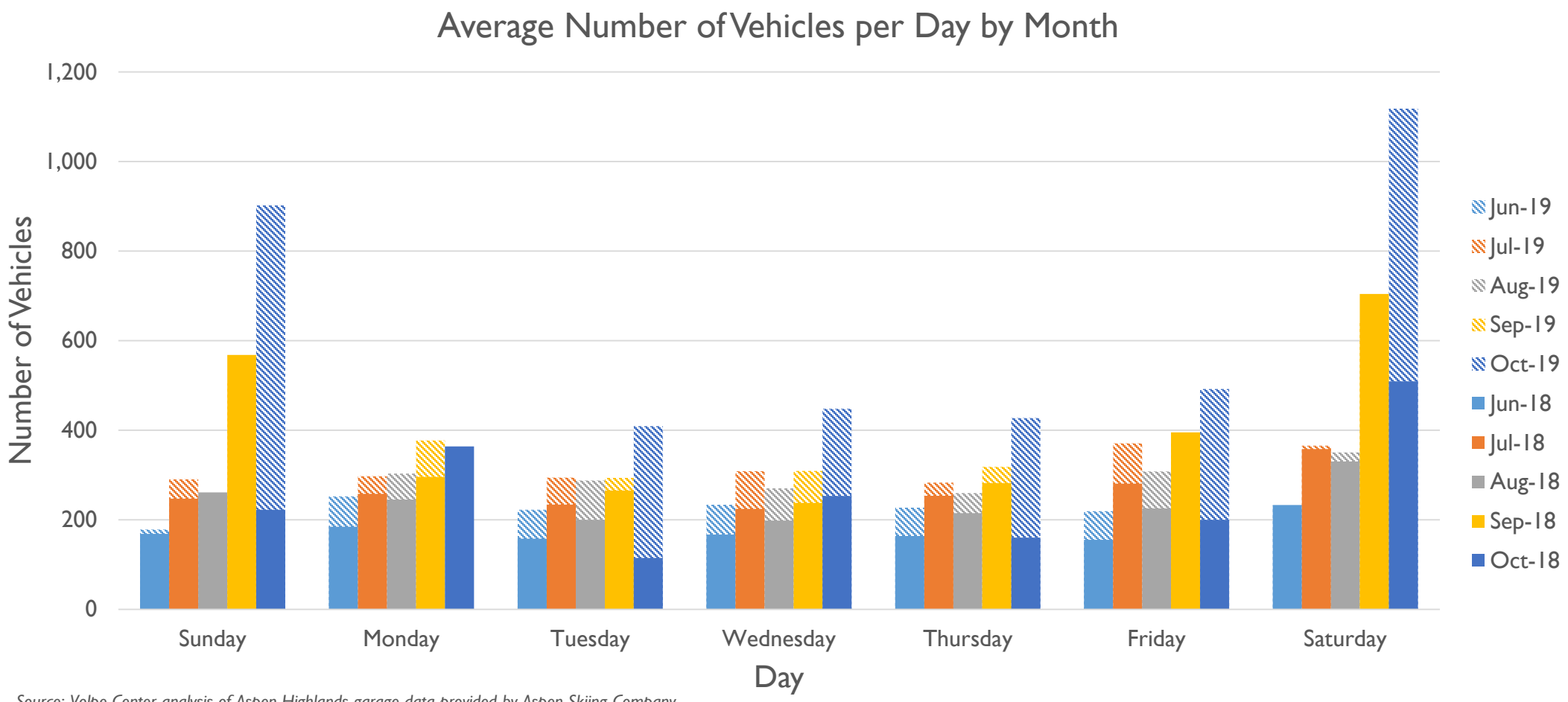
Visitation Trends



Source: Volpe Center analysis of Aspen Highlands garage data provided by Aspen Skiing Company

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Peak Garage Usage Days: 2018 vs. 2019

Date	Total Number of Cars
Saturday, September 22, 2018	1056
Saturday, September 29, 2018	953
Sunday, September 23, 2018	759
Sunday, September 30, 2018	747
Saturday, September 15, 2018	687

Date	Total Number of Cars
Saturday, September 28, 2019	1113
Saturday, October 5, 2019	1112
Sunday, October 6, 2019	898
Sunday, September 29, 2019	813
Saturday, September 1, 2019	665

Source: Volpe Center analysis of Aspen Highlands garage data provided by Aspen Skiing Company

Potential Management Strategies

- Starting shuttles at 5:30 AM on peak days to serve "sunrise crowd"
- Running shuttles later in the season, until October 11 or 12 (Columbus Day weekend)
- Implementing a reservation system pilot for the peak visitation period of September and October, to be piloted fall 2020

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Reservation System Capacity Scenarios

Capacity Scenario	# of Riders	# of Rdrs/Hr	# of Cars/Day	Max # in Garage*	# of Buses/Hr	# of 2018 & 2019 Fall Days Exceeded
Weekend A	2,205	210	650	300	6	10 wknd days (45%)
Weekend B	2,585	245	785	360	7	6 wknd days (26%)
Weekend C	3,000	280	930	425	8	4 wknd days (17%)
Weekday A	940	105	240	104	3	35 weekdays (69%)
Weekday B	1,250	140	350	151	4	17 weekdays (33%)
Weekday C	1,500	175	440	189	5	6 weekdays (12%)

** **Note:** The upper limit/capacity of the parking garage is 425 (holding 50 for cars parked overnight)*

- Pros & cons / trade-offs
  - The higher the capacity, the more riders can be accommodated, but the more expensive the service becomes

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Questions?

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