



## Swimming Hole / Lowell Johnson Park FAQs

### Is the Swimming Hole a Pierce County park?

No, this is a common misunderstanding. Anderson Island Park and Recreation District manages the Lowell Johnson Park, AKA the “Ol’ Swimming Hole.” This park is funded exclusively by Anderson Island property owners through a levy on island property taxes. AIPRD is a municipal corporation who reports to the state and is not affiliated with the county or state park systems.

### What is the capacity of the park?

Acquired by the parks in the 1970’s for the purpose of giving island families access to 275 feet of lakefront to enjoy on hot summer days, the total island population at creation was 300 people. This park has limited parking (25 parking spots), and though we haven’t formally placed a capacity limit on the park, we estimate the maximum daily capacity to be 120 people.

### Do you have attendance stats?

In 2021, we engaged a security company to put a gate guard at the entrance on weekends in the summer. In addition to reminding folks of the rules and managing the parking capacity, they collected data for us. In 2021, 2/3 of visitors to the park on the weekends did not live on or own property on the island, and roughly 1/3 of the monitored days exceeded our 120-person max capacity suggestion. In 2022, our guard was present on some weekdays as well as weekends, but the stats were consistent across both – 60% of visitors did not live on the island and 60% of monitored days exceeded capacity.

### Can you restrict the park to only island residents?

While there is precedent for levy-driven local entities like ours restricting access to recreation resources, we are still seeking advice of legal counsel to determine if this is a route we can legally pursue. In our 2020 community survey with 274 respondents, 70% said they were very or somewhat interested in restricting the park. If we get a green light to pursue this, we will be revisiting the idea with the community as part of our path forward.

### Why can’t you just enforce the park rules?

While technically breaking rules at our park could result in a ticket, enforcing those rules is an ongoing challenge. After a lot of work last year, we finally had Pierce County Sheriffs acknowledge that they would be the enforcement entity that serves AIPRD. However, they must witness infractions to write citations and PCS works on a “response” mode, not a “patrol” model - that means they will not and do not patrol in search of issues...they respond to calls and resolve issues. Because of the ferry access, they can’t respond in a timely fashion to requests for help, and our situations are almost always non-emergency or non-priority and would not get an immediate response anyway. When we pay for an off-duty officer to patrol the island/park, they cannot write citations because they are not on duty. Thus far, we’ve had no luck engaging the Sheriff’s office to help us with viable support for issues.

### How much does it cost to run the Swimming Hole right now?

With a 2022 budget just under \$160,000 to run 11 parks, including the Swimming Hole, AIPRD doesn’t have large budgets to cover the costs of staff. 60% goes to maintenance, 20-30% on improvements, and the rest for operating costs. Currently, all the work that is done to care for our parks comes from 5 volunteer Commissioners, our park maintenance contractor, and willing volunteers for special projects. The Swimming Hole uses the most maintenance budget out of any single park, totaling roughly 20% of each year’s annual maintenance budget (2021-22%, 2020-19%, 2019-21%) – about \$18-21k a year. This DOES NOT include the gate guard contract. For the last 2 summers, we have invested in 36 6-hour shifts of a gate guard at a cost of ~\$10k each year, though 2022 is likely to be less because the guard resigned at the end of July.

### If you charged non-residents fees, could that cover the cost of staff?

Some of it, yes. However, AIPRD currently does not have any employees, so the cost of time and resources to set up an HR and employment capability would be substantial, including procedures, management, and administration.

Additionally, collecting cash at the Swimming Hole creates petty cash and money handling issues that would have to be vigilantly and carefully addressed. It may be possible that we cannot have 1 person on duty in that case due to liability/financial control issues.

### Why did you restrict parking at the Swimming Hole?

In 2020, we reached an all-time high of incidents and complaints about overcrowding and rule infractions at the park. After surveying the community and discussing the mitigation steps available to us, we determined that most options would take years to put into effect. One option that could be done with less resource investment was to implement a parking limit that correlated to a more ideal visitor capacity, allowing on-island visitors to bike, walk or drop in freely. AIPRD advertised this limitation widely, hoping it would deter some from coming to the island mid-day to find the Swimming Hole parking closed. Unfortunately, in reality, the result has been overflow parking along Guthrie rather than visitors being deterred.

### Can you expand the park to accommodate more visitors & parking?

The Park is 5.39 acres, with 2/3 left as undeveloped forest, 275 feet of water frontage on Lake Florence. There isn’t any more room for waterfront expansion to accommodate more visitors using the park. Expanding the size of the parking lot by eliminating wooded sections is not currently being considered, since it’s overpopulation of the park itself that is the issue. Additionally, part of our mission is to preserve greenspace which is especially important on a lake that is seeing increased population density.

<b>2021 Lowell Johnson Park Use Summary</b>	<b>Average % by category</b>		<b>Park Attendees</b>	<b>By hi temp</b>	<b>Avg # of Park Attendees</b>	<b># of Days</b>	
			<b>Live Here*</b>	31%	<b>Under 75</b>	74	8
			<b>Visitor</b>	69%	<b>75+</b>	141	15

	SAT May 29	SUN May 30	MON May 31	SAT June 26	SUN June 27	FRI July 2	SAT July 3	SAT July 10	SUN July 11	FRI July 16	SAT July 17	SUN July 18	SUN July 25	SAT July 31	SUN August 1	SAT August 7	SUN August 8	SUN August 15	FRI August 20	SAT August 21	SUN August 22	SAT August 28	SUN August 29	
HOURS OF DATA COLLECTION	10am-5pm	10am-5pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-6pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	11am-7pm	
HIGH TEMP FOR DAY	72	73	77	102	104	79	79	78	81	67	76	80	84	75	79	72	73	87	64	68	67	77	79	
<b>PEOPLE (TOTAL)</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>227</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>113</b>	
-- Local*	26	38	35	56	43	39	48	40	39	9	6	55	26	43	60	38	63	64	7	34	16	39	19	
-- Visitors	29	56	33	171	54	55	120	111	86	65	147	89	84	82	120	30	75	117	28	49	29	108	94	
<b>CARS (TOTAL)</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>39</b>	
-- Local*	11	12	12	18	32	17	16	11	12	3	3	20	10	12	16	9	16	18	2	10	5	12	9	
-- Visitors	12	15	11	34	23	19	47	32	31	19	41	32	28	25	31	11	24	34	8	14	9	31	30	
<b>BIKES*** (TOTAL)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>		<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>WALK-INS** (TOTAL)</b>				<b>56</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>37</b>	
<b>OTHER DETAILS</b>																								
CARS ALREADY IN LOT				8	11			5	1	0	1		3	7	3	0	1	4	0	2	0	4	0	
CARS IN LOT AT END								18	14	5	13			8	7	0	3	18	0	0	2	3	10	
LOT FILLED BY/DURING		by 15:43						2-3pm & 3:08-4:20pm	3:16-4pm		1:20-2:30		1:05-1:15 & 2:10-3:50	1:43-2:01 & 4:50-5:10							2:05-2:25 & 3:20-4:32	12:40-1:46, 2:17-2:35 & 3:18-4:15		
CARS PARKED ON STREET								5	0	6	0	0	15 (8 at once)	9	0	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	12 (8 at once)	12 (6 at once)
CARS TURNED AWAY/OUSTED****								1	2	1	3	3	2	0	2	0	4	5	0	0	1	3	1	
SHERRIF DRIVE-THRU								1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
ISLAND PATROLDRIVE-THRU									1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	

<b>2022 Lowell Johnson Park Use Summary</b>	<b>Average % by category</b>			<b>All Park Attendees</b>	<b>Weekends / Holidays Only</b>	<b>Weekdays Only</b>	<b>By hi temp</b>	<b>Avg # of Park Attendees</b>	<b># of Days</b>	
				<b>Live Here*</b>	39%	40%	38%	<b>Under 75</b>	83	6
				<b>Visitor</b>	61%	60%	62%	<b>75+</b>	144	12

	MON May 30	WED June 1	TUES June 21	SAT June 25	SUN June 26	MON June 27	SAT July 2	SUN July 4	SAT July 9	SUN July 10	TUES July 12	FRI July 15	SAT July 16	TUES July 19	SAT July 23	SUN July 24	WED July 27	SAT July 30
HOURS OF DATA COLLECTION	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm	11am-5pm
HIGH TEMP FOR DAY	62	70	77	87	91	89	67	62	78	76	84	79	72	83	74	84	91	97
<b>PEOPLE (TOTAL)</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>205</b>
-- Local*	7	0	41	72	54	43	45	17	78	45	93	35	65	46	74	36	40	83
-- Visitors	14	0	4	78	138	133	50	32	68	74	52	102	93	96	102	99	91	122
<b>CARS (TOTAL)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>65</b>
-- Local*	4	0	10	22	26	13	14	6	24	17	31	14	17	16	18	14	17	21
-- Visitors	3	0	1	25	36	37	11	11	17	19	17	26	28	27	28	30	28	44
<b>BIKES*** (TOTAL)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>WALK-INS** (TOTAL)</b>				<b>56</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>36</b>	
<b>OTHER DETAILS</b>																		
CARS ALREADY IN LOT	0	0	0	6	7	6	0	2	2	3	3	4	1	2	4	4	2	4
CARS IN LOT AT END	0	0	4	17	20	19	6	0	17	13	18	15	8	15	22	24	15	23
CARS ON STREET AT END				5	7	11			1		2					35		2
LOT FILLED BY/DURING				12:40	11:25	12:50			2:50		3:20	2:30	1:40		4:00	4:00	1:00	1:40
CARS ON STREET AFTER LOT CLOSED				3	7	7			17							35		1

**Notes**

- \* LOCAL is determined by question "Do you live on the island?" - vacation homes included
- \*\* WALK-IN totals are rolled into PEOPLE numbers by category and summarized here
- \*\*\* BIKES totals are rolled into PEOPLE numbers by category, includes motorcycles, scooters, etc
- \*\*\*\* In general, for rules infractions, harassment, etc