



Figure 9. Management preference responses.

## 6. Visitor attitudes towards management options

Attitudes toward eighteen options for managing future increases in track use-levels were surveyed, with visitors indicating the degree to which they agreed or disagreed. These options included increasing the capacity of accommodation, dispersing use pressures, imposing use-limits, and providing pre-walk information (refer Appendix 1, Question 8). The complete list of responses, as summarised in Figure 9, indicates a variety of visitor attitudes.

The only management approach attracting consistently high support was that associated with using pre-walk information to influence visitor choices about making track visits. Over 70% of visitors agreed with these approaches while less than 10% disagreed. More direct control methods such as reducing facilities and services in order to discourage use, allowing more camping freedom, making peak times cost more for visits, or making the track one-way only were highly out of favour. Development options such as building more huts, providing more bunks in huts, or allowing more guided trip opportunities were also unpopular. For many of the other options, the proportions of visitors either for or against were similar. For example, the options related to booking systems for huts and campsites were opposed by around 40% the visitors, and supported by around a 40%. This split response has important implications for management as booking systems are being considered for many of the Great Walks, and the high proportion of opposition suggests there may be considerable visitor concern.

Overall these results indicate a pattern of preferences by visitors for different management options. Indirect information-based approaches are clearly most favoured; developing facilities, alternatives opportunities, and applying allocation systems are options which tend to split visitors evenly for or against; and more direct actions to control and channel use are clearly least favoured.

## 6.1 EFFECTS OF AGE, GENDER, NATIONALITY, AND CROWDING PERCEPTION

### 6.1.1 Background to analyses

Additional analyses were required to assess whether these management items varied significantly among the visitors according to age group, gender, nationality and crowding perception. Table 5 and Figure 10 show the attitudes to management scales created for these analyses (refer Section 4.1.1).

TABLE 5. ATTITUDES TO MANAGEMENT SUMMARY SCALES (REFER APPENDIX 2).

SCALE	DESCRIPTION
Rationing/use-limits	Booking systems for huts/campsites, limited track permits
Information management	Encourage use elsewhere, promote low-impact behaviour
Increase accommodation	More hut/camp capacity, guided options, alternative tracks
Manipulate use conditions	Pricing, facility reduction, promote small groups

(extra individual items — manage as a one-way track)

### 6.1.2 Significant findings

Differences in these management scales according to age-group (over and under 40 years), gender (male/female), nationality (New Zealand and overseas), and crowding perceptions (uncrowded/crowded) were analysed (refer Section 4.1 for method). The significant effects and interactions associated with the analysis using these independent variables are summarised in Table 6. These results indicate significant differences in attitudes towards management options do occur between New Zealand and overseas visitors, and between younger and older visitors.

TABLE 6. SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS ON ATTITUDE TO MANAGEMENT SCALES.

SOURCE OF SIGNIFICANT EFFECT	SIGNIFICANT MANAGEMENT SCALES	MEAN VALUES (ADJUSTED*)	
		New Zealand	Overseas
Nationality effect $F(4,373) = 7.83, p = .000$	Manipulate use conditions $F(1,376) = 23.59, p = .000$	3.50	3.05
	Information management $F(1,376) = 13.05, p = .018$	2.14	1.92
Age-group effect $F(4,376) = 3.39, p = .010$	Information management $F(1,376) = 10.44, p = .001$	Under 40 1.99	Over 40 1.91
	Manipulate use conditions $F(1,376) = 5.31, p = .022$	3.16	3.21

\* Mean values for the summary scales are divided by the number of constituent items to allow interpretation using the original question categories (e.g., 1 = Strongly agree 3 = Neutral 5 = Strongly disagree).

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