

THE CHESAPEAKE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA WOULD BOOST THE REGION'S ECONOMY

National Parks

America's national parks are a significant draw for tourism across the United States, attracting millions of visitors from around the country and many international visitors. In 2020, there were 237 million recreation visits across the entire National Park System, which includes 423 individual units located around the country. This tourism activity contributed \$28.6 billion to the U.S. economy and supported 234,000 jobs. In gateway communities located within 60 miles of a park, visitors spent \$14.5 billion dollars in 2020.

Visitation varies from park to park, and in 2020, 25% of total recreation visits in national parks occurred in the top six most visited parks. However, even smaller national park units contribute to local economies, increasing tourism and providing related economic benefits. For example, Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine in Baltimore, Maryland, had 163,000 visitors in 2020, with an estimated \$13.8 million in economic output for the local economy.

Beyond Tourism

It's proven that national parks – especially those centered on outdoor recreation – contribute to local economies in a variety of ways beyond tourism. For example, access to parks enhances the quality of life for residents, which helps to attract new residents and retain existing residents. Relating to this effect, national parks also support local businesses and can motivate talent recruitment and retainment. Other related economic benefits include expanding the tax base, lowering health care costs and increasing property values.

Residents' favorite outdoor pastimes have an impact. For example, according to the Bureau of Economic Analysis, in Maryland recreational boating (including motor boating, kayaking and canoeing, sailing and fishing) In Maryland, boating is a significant sector of Maryland's outdoor recreation economy and contributes more than \$500 million in economic value added each year. In Virginia, that figure is more than \$600 million.

Chesapeake Impact

The Chesapeake Bay is home to two major North Atlantic ports—Baltimore and Hampton Roads. The Bay serves as the lifeblood of the local economy and is a source for recreation for the more than 18 million people who live here and our many visitors.

In Maryland, outdoor industries generate \$14 billion in consumer spending and 109,000 jobs, and Virginia reports nearly \$22 billion in consumer spending and 197,000 jobs.

Altogether, the outdoor recreation economy contributes more than \$63 billion in value added to the watershed's economy each year (New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia and the District of Columbia).



Economy

U.S. outdoor recreation economy = 1.8 percent

(\$374.3 billion) of current-dollar gross domestic product (GDP) for the nation in 2020
Value added to the economy from outdoor recreation amounts to more than \$63 billion

- Bureau of Economic Analysis

54% of Americans

ages six and over participated in *at least one* outdoor activity in 2021

The outdoor recreation participant base grew 2.2% in 2021 to

over 164 million participants

- Outdoor Foundation

