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## FEATURED PARK



Photos and facts of your favorite parks, one issue at a time

### George Washington and Jefferson National Forest Virginia, West Virginia, and Kentucky

**FACT 1:** The George Washington National Forest and the Jefferson National Forest were combined in 1995, becoming the largest single administrative block of federal land in the eastern US, larger than the combined areas of Connecticut and Rhode Island.

**FACT 2:** In 1933, the very first Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) encampment, Camp Roosevelt, was built within this National Forest a mere **three weeks** after legislation establishing the CCC was enacted.



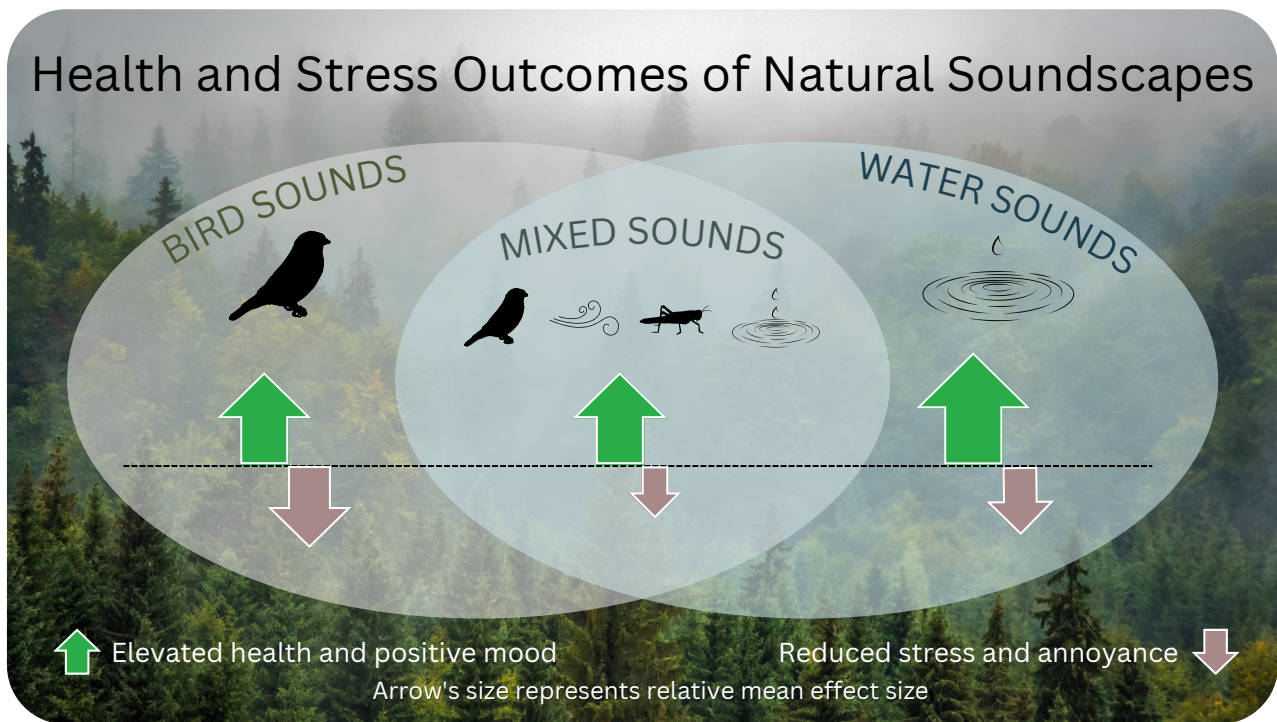
Nominate *your* favorite local, state, or national park [here](#) so our subscribers can learn about it.

# PARK PERKS



Visualizing key research to show why parks matter

In a 2021 [article](#) published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, university and government researchers conducted a meta-analysis of 18 studies examining the psychological and health effects of natural sounds, as well as natural soundscape distribution across 68 US National Parks. The analysis showed increased exposure to natural sounds led to a 184% average improvement in metrics associated with health and positive emotions, especially mood and cognitive performance. Signs of stress and annoyance, including pain, blood pressure, and heart rate, were found to decrease (28% on average) with greater exposure to natural soundscapes. The authors suggest psychological benefits may arise from natural sounds that portray safety and order, allowing for a more relaxed state, while the absence of natural sound may lead to heightened tension and agitation.



Birdsong was found to be most beneficial for stress and annoyance reduction, while water sounds had the largest impact on health and positive emotion. The study suggests that natural soundscapes are key ecosystem benefits that can have a surprisingly *important* impact on mental and physical health.

What did copper say to get gold's attention?

**PLAY  GROUND**

Ay! You!



If you can't make it to a park this 4th and wish you could, check out the [More Than Just Parks hi-def video series](#) - closest thing to being there.