



To the Institute's many student partners, research fellows, and academic collaborators:

Welcome to this academic year and good luck.

Together, we are making the future conservation workforce larger, stronger, and more diverse. Thank you for your work.

FEATURED PARK



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

Indiana Dunes National Park

Indiana

FACT 1: Despite bearing the name of its iconic sand formations, Indiana Dunes hosts impressively diverse vegetation. The park's variety of marshes, prairies, and oak savannahs create a thriving home for over 1,100 species of plants. Although it is one of the nation's smallest national parks, Indiana Dunes is the ***fourth most biologically diverse***.



FACT 2: Indiana Dunes played a key role in establishing *ecology* as a modern science. Inspired by the park's incredible plant diversity and everchanging sand landscape, University of Chicago botanist Henry Cowles wrote his 1899 PhD thesis not just about the park's individual plant species, but also how these species interact with *each other and their physical surroundings*.

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

PARK PERKS

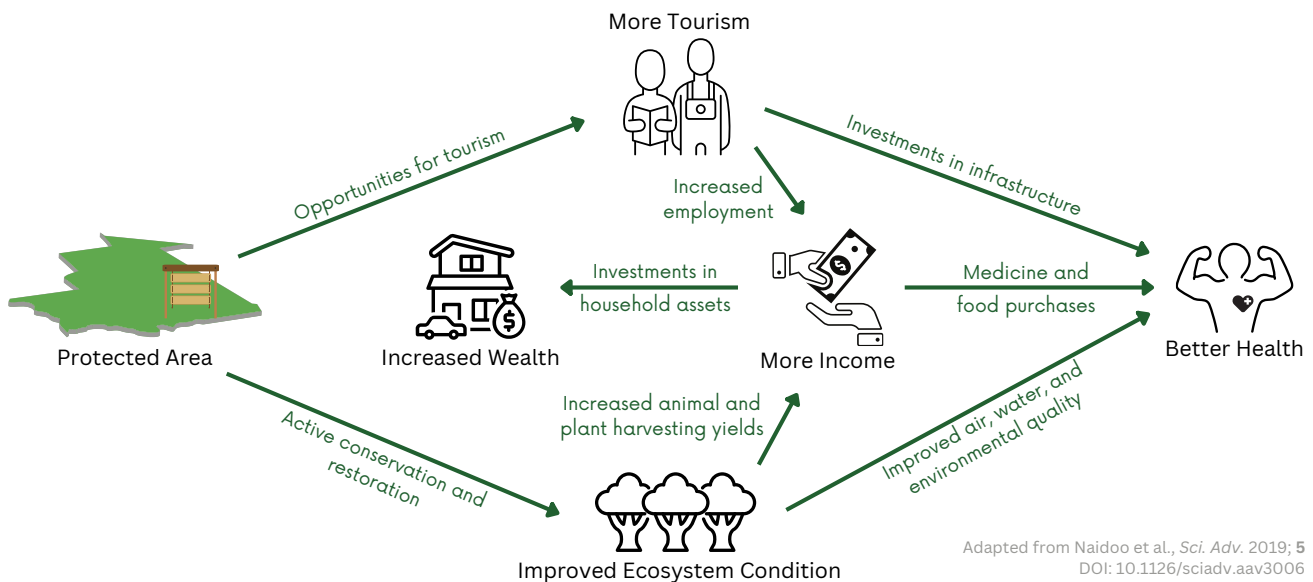


Visualizing key research to show why parks matter

Since many of world's most biodiverse places, and thus great candidates for conservation protection, are located in the developing world, the question of whether conservation activities in these countries would *help* or *hamper* efforts to reduce poverty and improve health has been hotly debated. In a 2019 [article](#) published in the journal *Science Advances*, an international team of researchers addressed this question by using a USAID health dataset to create matched groups of similar households in 34 countries whose only significant difference was proximity to protected areas (PAs) - within 10km vs. beyond 10km. The team simulated how relocating the more distant households closer to the PAs would impact their health and wealth metrics.

Protected Area Impacts in the Developing World

Possible pathways to health and wealth



The simulation predicted that household well-being in developing countries is **positively impacted** by PAs through two key mechanisms: *tourism growth* and *improvements to ecosystem quality*. The authors acknowledge that while societal factors like governance and equity were not included in the analysis due to a lack of data, the findings suggest that conservation protections in the developing world likely **support** parallel goals of poverty reduction, food security, and improved health.

What kind of bar serves escargot?

PLAY  GROUND

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