Newsletter

Park Institute of America

Check out the latest edition of the National Parks Conservation Association's *Science News*. See how science is helping NPCA advocate for conservation of national parks and protected areas, and read how the Park Institute is supporting their efforts.

FEATURED PARK

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

Humboldt Redwoods State Park
California

FACT 1: Spanning 53,000 acres, about a third of which is occupied by ancient redwoods, Humboldt Redwoods protects the **world's largest** contiguous old-growth redwood forest. Decimated by logging in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, old-growth redwoods exist today because of the determined efforts of conservation organizations, such as the Save the Redwoods League, that fought for their protection.

FACT 2: Coast redwoods, which can grow more than **350 feet tall**, may live for more than **2,500 years** and serve as a keystone species for the unique temperate rainforest ecosystems of northern California and Oregon. These trees also sustain many unique organisms, including the banana slug, North America's **largest slug species**.

Nominate *your* favorite local, state, or national park here so our subscribers can learn about it.
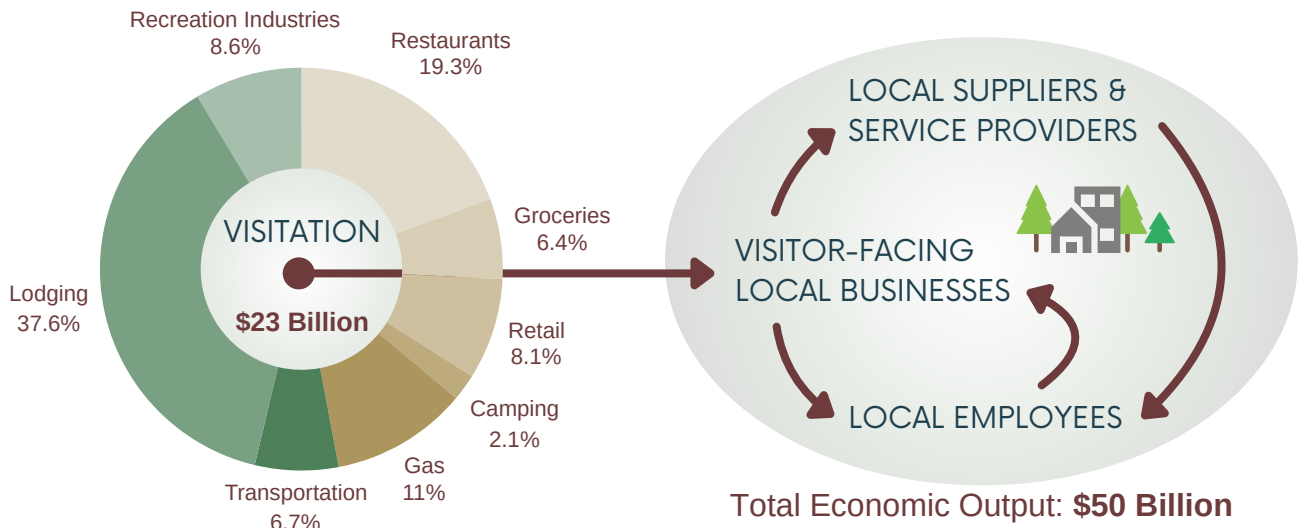
PARK PERKS

While park are known to provide significant economic benefits to adjacent communities, the full scope of those benefits is often unclear. This week's research, published by the National Park Service in August 2023, attempts to quantify the economic contribution of the US National Park System. Utilizing park visitation data and models predicting spending, the authors estimated the direct and indirect economic benefits associated with national parks. Categorizing benefits according to a series of sectors, they summed up the data on a national scale, producing an analysis of overall economic impacts.

Economic Engine of the National Park System
2022 visitation spend in National Park Service gateway communities by sector

Recreation Industries 8.6%
Restaurants 19.3%
Groceries 6.4%
Retail 8.1%
Camping 2.1%
Gas 11%
Transportation 6.7%
Lodging 37.6%

VISITATION
$23 Billion

LOCAL SUPPLIERS & SERVICE PROVIDERS
VISITOR-FACING LOCAL BUSINESSES
LOCAL EMPLOYEES

Total Economic Output: **$50 Billion**

The analysis strongly suggests that the National Park System is a major economic asset to local communities. Visitors spent about *$23.9 billion* in "gateway" regions adjacent to national parks, ultimately amounting to **$50 billion** in national economic output through indirect effects, such as business expansion and increased employment. With $9 billion in direct contributions, the lodging sector was the largest individual beneficiary of park visitation. This research provides further evidence of the crucial role many national parks play in sustaining local economies. Its findings also bolster the argument for conservation area establishment and long-term preservation.

PLAY GROUND

Which birds love springing forward to Daylight Savings Time?

cuckoos, they get all wound up about it