



# OUTDOOR RECREATION AND NEW MEXICO'S ECONOMY



2020





## NEW MEXICO'S OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY DIRECTLY SUPPORTS \$1.2 BILLION IN INCOME AND 33,500 JOBS.

For perspective, there are more people working in outdoor recreation in the state than in farming and manufacturing, and slightly less than the number working in mining, including oil and gas development.

**Outdoor recreation contributes \$2.3 billion, or 2.5%, to state GDP.**

The outdoor recreation economy is growing faster than the overall state economy: **between 2012 and 2017, GDP from outdoor recreation grew by 11% while overall state GDP grew by 4%.**

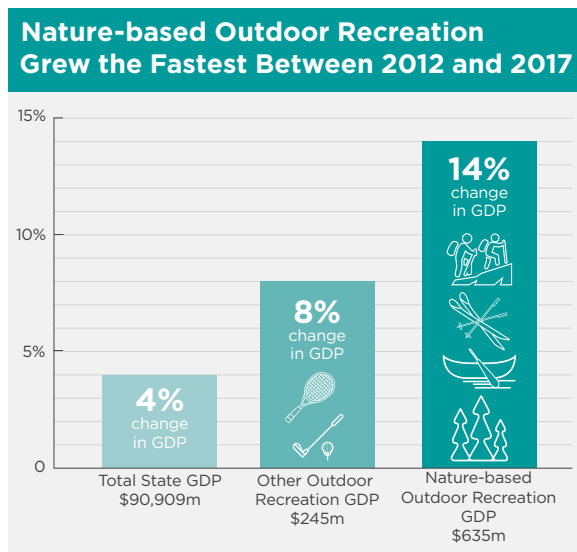


# OUTDOOR RECREATION IS OUR WAY OF LIFE AND AN ECONOMIC POWERHOUSE FOR NEW MEXICO.

Creating 33,500 jobs that provide \$1.2 billion in income across many sectors, outdoor recreation diversifies our economy, improves our quality of life, and strengthens our community wellbeing. For many New Mexico communities, access to year-round outdoor recreation in our shared public lands and water is an essential component of long-term economic development and community identity. As more residents and visitors are active in New Mexico's great outdoors, stewardship of recreation assets requires investment of time, energy, and money for healthier communities, economies, and people.

**The majority of outdoor recreation's contribution to state GDP occurs in nature-based environments** (such as hiking, skiing, fishing, and hunting), contributing \$678 million to state GDP. By comparison, other forms of recreation (such as golf, tennis, or soccer) that take place in urban and developed settings contribute \$261 million to state GDP.

**Nature-based recreation's contribution to GDP grew by 14% between 2012 and 2017. Other recreation grew by 8%.**



## THESE ACTIVITIES MAKE UP THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY

The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis defines outdoor recreation as all recreational activities undertaken for pleasure that occur outdoors. This includes many activities.



### Nature-Based Outdoor Recreation

- Bicycling
- Boating/Fishing
- Climbing/Hiking/Tent Camping
- Equestrian
- Hunting/Shooting/Trapping
- Motorcycling/ATVing
- Recreational Flying
- RVing
- Snow Activities



### Other Outdoor Recreation

- Amusement Parks
- Festivals/Sporting Events/Concerts
- Field Sports (soccer)
- Game Areas (golf & tennis)
- Guided Tours
- Productive Activities (gardening)



IT'S TIME FOR OUR STATE TO EMPOWER OUR YOUTH TO BE AMBASSADORS FOR THEIR COMMUNITIES IN THE OUTDOORS. THEIR PRESENCE WILL REFLECT THE UNIQUE CULTURE AND HISTORY OF OUR STATE AND ENSURE FUTURE LAND POLICY ACKNOWLEDGES THE TEACHINGS OF OUR ANCESTORS. IT WILL ALSO ENSURE WE HAVE THE WORKFORCE NEEDED TO MANAGE AN "OUTDOOR ECONOMY" POISED TO BOOM."

-DUSTIN MARTIN, WINGS OF AMERICA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## DID YOU KNOW?

The country's newest national park is White Sands, which was designated on December 20, 2019. It is New Mexico's second national park.

# NEW MEXICO'S OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY CONTRIBUTES TO MANY PARTS OF THE ECONOMY.

## OUTDOOR RECREATION JOBS IN NEW MEXICO CONSIST OF A VARIETY OF PROFESSIONS.

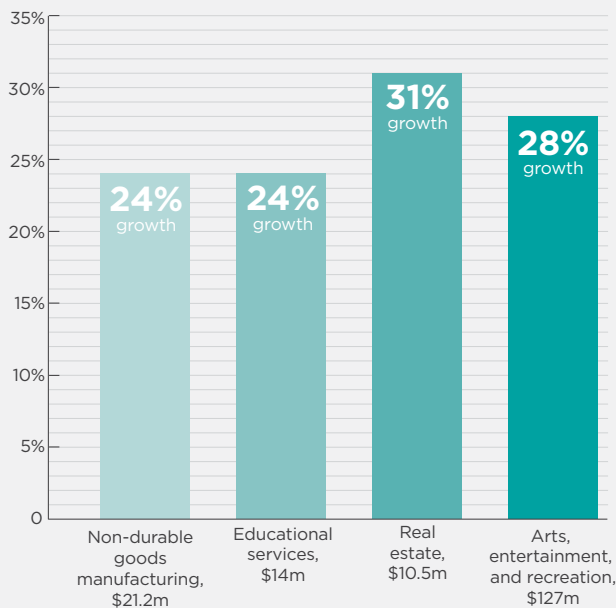
### For example, in 2017:

- **443** were employed in professional and business services;
- **702** in construction;
- **385** in manufacturing; and
- **563** in transportation and warehousing.

## Retail trade, accommodations, and food services create the most jobs related to outdoor recreation: about 26,000 total.

Outdoor recreation-related employment in the educational services (e.g., schools and universities) and arts, entertainment, and recreation sectors grew 28% and 21%, respectively, between 2012 and 2017.

### Sectors showing the fastest growth in income related to outdoor recreation, 2012-2017



### QUALITY OF LIFE:

More than 65% of New Mexico residents participate in outdoor recreation



NEW MEXICO'S PUBLIC LANDS AND STATE

PARKS ARE PART OF WHAT MAKES OUR

STATE THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT. BUT NOT

EVERYONE GETS TO EXPERIENCE THE BEAUTY,

HISTORY, AND CULTURE THAT'S TIED TO OUR

LANDS AND WATERS. THE NEW MEXICO

OUTDOOR EQUITY FUND IS THE BEGINNING

OF A LONG EFFORT TO ENSURE THAT ALL

OF OUR YOUTH GET THE OPPORTUNITY TO

EXPLORE AND APPRECIATE OUR STATE'S

UNFORGETTABLE LANDSCAPES."

-ANGELICA RUBIO,  
NEW MEXICO STATE REPRESENTATIVE

### DID YOU KNOW?

In New Mexico:

- There are 35.5 million acres of state and federal public land.
- More than half the state is publicly managed land.
- About 90% of visits to state parks are to lakes, rivers, and reservoirs.





## RESIDENTS OF NEW MEXICO SPEND \$4.8 BILLION ON OUTDOOR RECREATION IN THE STATE EACH YEAR.

**Above:** Hunting and fishing support nearly 8,000 jobs and more than \$51 million in state and local taxes.  
**Below:** More than 200,000 people spent more than 3 million days hunting, fishing, and trapping in New Mexico in 2013, spending more than \$613 million. These figures are even bigger today, as the number of hunting and fishing licenses sold increased by 26% between 2013 and 2018.







## IN A RECENT POLL

- 84% of New Mexicans believe the outdoor recreation economy is important for the future of New Mexico and the western U.S.
- 76% of New Mexicans consider themselves an outdoor recreation enthusiast.
- 70% of New Mexicans believe that ensuring opportunities for outdoor recreation is important.

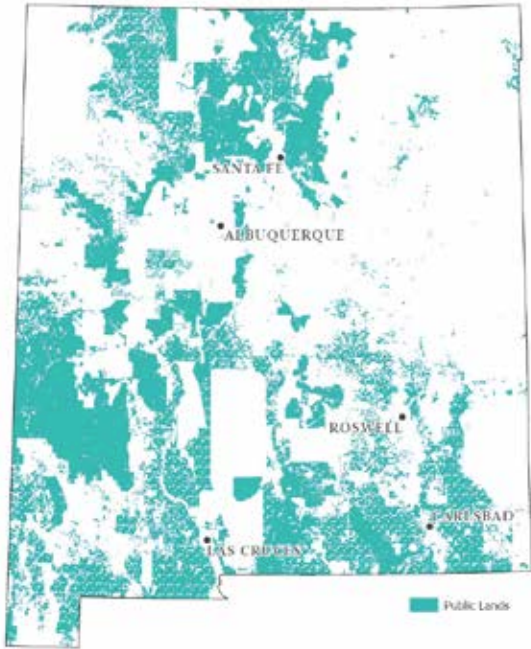
Source: Colorado College. 2018. Conservation in the West Poll. <https://www.coloradocollege.edu/other/stateoftherockies/conservationinthewest>. Margin of error is +/-4.9%.





# WHERE AND HOW WE RECREATE IN NEW MEXICO BENEFITS OUR COMMUNITIES

## PUBLIC LANDS IN NEW MEXICO



- In 2018 there were **2.1 million visitors to 14 National Park Service lands in New Mexico** (two national parks, nine national monuments, three historic parks and one preserve). The visitors to these areas spent almost \$123 million, which in turn created 1,752 local jobs.
- From 2012 to 2018, visitation to National Park Service lands in New Mexico **increased by 35% and recreation visits increased by 38%**.
- New Mexico has **35 state parks which had more than 5 million visitors in FY18**. Nearly 75% of New Mexicans live within 40 miles of a state park.

## VISITATION AND JOBS BY PUBLIC LAND TYPE

PUBLIC LAND AGENCY	LAND AREA (ACRES)	VISITS IN 2018
Bureau of Land Management	13,485,894	3.3 million
U.S. Forest Service	9,213,637	4.8 million
National Park Service	385,127	2.1 million
State Parks	98,118	5.0 million

## NEW MEXICO RESIDENTS AND VISITORS RECREATE AND SPEND MONEY IN MANY WAYS

In 2013, **anglers** spent \$267.7 million in 2.5 million angling days.



In 2013, **hunters** spent \$342.4 million in more than 746,000 hunter days.



During the winter of 2018-2019, **alpine skiers** spent \$142.3 million during more than 1 million skier days. Two-thirds of this spending was by visitors to the state.



### DID YOU KNOW?

Tourism employment has been one of the best performing sectors in the New Mexico economy. Since 2011 there was 10.1% growth in direct tourism employment (or 6,511 additional jobs). Direct, indirect, and induced employment totaled 93,617, or 8.3% of all jobs in New Mexico.

## MANY NEW MEXICO COMMUNITIES ARE INVESTING IN OUTDOOR RECREATION:

Trail networks in **Gallup**, New Mexico, and associated events have brought \$17 million in new spending to the area. Running and biking events bring an estimated \$45,000 per event to the community.

In 2019, New Mexico demonstrated its leadership in improving access to outdoor recreation to all its residents with the establishment of the **Outdoor Equity Fund**, a grant program designed to help underserved youth get outside.

New Mexico is a national leader in using outdoor recreation to improve public health through its **Prescription Trails program**, which targets physically inactive people in nine regions in New Mexico.

New Mexico legislators officially recognized **the state's bikepacking trail network** for its contribution to rural economic development.

Since 2014, the city of **Farmington** has invested \$12 million into outdoor recreation infrastructure, including a motorized trail system and a public beach at the municipal lake.

# OUTDOOR RECREATION BENEFITS NEW MEXICO'S ECONOMY IN MANY WAYS



## QUALITY OF LIFE

The outdoors is an essential part of the New Mexico way of life—attracting, sustaining and retaining families, communities, and businesses. Our heritage, culture, and tradition are closely tied to the outdoors and access to public lands.



## CREATING AND RETAINING JOBS

New Mexico employers have a strong competitive advantage over other states. Businesses use access to outdoor recreation to attract talent and retain valuable employees.



## BUSINESS/ECONOMY

Many New Mexico businesses manufacture products for outdoor recreation and provide services for tourists and locals alike, creating jobs, income, and state and local taxes.



## COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Outdoor recreation supports healthy communities. Studies show that access to the outdoors supports reduced crime rates, improves educational outcomes, and improves physical and mental health.

For more information about how the outdoor recreation economy impacts our state, how the state of New Mexico promotes the outdoor recreation economy, or to find out what you can do to support our outdoor recreation landscape, contact the Outdoor Recreation Division.



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Cover: Upper left photo from Willow Creek Campground area in the Gila National Forest, by Jay Hemphill. Upper right photo from Diablo Canyon outside Santa Fe, by Michael Clark. Lower left photo is from Taos Ski Valley's legendary steeps. Lower right photo is the fire lookout tower on the top of Hillsboro Peak in the Aldo Leopoldo Wilderness, by Jay Hemphill.

Photos courtesy of New Mexico's Outdoor Recreation Division partners: Michael Clark, Jay Hemphill, Taos Fly Shop, Bow and Arrow Brewing Co., Wings of America, Taos Ski Valley, the Department of Fish and Game, and the New Mexico Tourism Department.

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For complete references, see <https://headwaterseconomics.org/outdoor-recreation/new-mexico-outdoor-recreation>