



## Economic Effects of National Forest Recreation in Alaska

### Topic

Recreation visitors to the national forests in Alaska are estimated to spend about \$483 million each year in the local economy. Local jobs related to recreation in Alaska’s national forests are estimated at almost 4900 direct jobs and over 6400 total jobs. All factors show increasing trends.

The U.S. Forest Service surveys recreation visitors through the National Visitor Use Monitoring survey (NVUM). The Alaska Region has supplemented the national NVUM survey to collect better and more detailed information about backcountry recreation, access to remote places in Alaska, and trip details such as length of stay. The supplemental survey also was implemented because of the unique ways that people access the Tongass and Chugach National Forests.

### Current Situation

Dr. Eric White and Dr. Dan Stynes wrote a 2010 report entitled “Characterization of Resident and Non-resident Visitors to Alaska National Forests”. White and Stynes developed coefficients for spending, income, and jobs per 10,000 visits to the forests. When multiplied by estimated visits, the following numbers are derived for visitor spending, income, and jobs related to visits to the national forests in Alaska, matched to the basic NVUM survey information for the years 2010-2014. The White and Stynes coefficients provide a calculated visitation estimate of 3,465,000 annual visits to the Region 10 due to previously undocumented travel to the forest via boat and plane.

	# of Annual NF Recreation Visits	Total Annual Spending Related to NF Visits	Direct Personal Income Related to NF Visits	Direct Jobs Related to NF Visits	Total Jobs Related to NF Visits
Chugach NF	591,000	\$100,714,500	\$25,883,800	981	1,297
Tongass NF	2,874,000	\$382,199,600	\$109,604,500	3,947	5,056
Region Total	3,465,000	\$482,914,100	\$135,488,400	4,928	6,353
% Increase during 2010-2014 period	72%	37%	37%	37%	76%

Source: 2010-2014 NVUM and White/Styne 2010 Report: Characterization of Resident and Non-resident Visitors to Alaska National Forests

In the reporting period the coefficients were developed, more than 1.1 million of 2.5 million visitors reported using a boat or plane to access the national forest. This is quite different from how national forests are accessed in other states and is one reason recreation sampling in Alaska can be so difficult. The Alaska supplemental NVUM survey attempts to accurately count these visitors.

Nationwide, recreation visitor spending amounted to nearly \$11 billion in 2012, and as visitor spending ripples through the U.S. economy, the monetary value of all the goods and services adds a little more than \$13 billion to the gross domestic product, and sustains about 190,000 full- and part-time jobs.

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