



Buffalo National River
402 N. Walnut
Harrison, AR 72601

870-365-2700 phone
www.nps.gov/buff

For Immediate Release

Contact: Casey Johannsen, 870-449-4311

Tourism to Buffalo National River Creates \$71.1 Million in Economic Benefits

Harrison, Arkansas – A new National Park Service (NPS) report shows that 1.5 million visitors to Buffalo National River in 2017 spent \$62.6 million in communities near the park. That spending supported 911 jobs in the local area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$71.1 million.

"Buffalo National River is pleased to welcome a diverse group of visitors from across the state and around the country," said Acting Superintendent Laura Miller. "In addition to the recreational opportunities available at Buffalo National River we are happy to share the park's natural and cultural resources with our visitors. It is our hope that local communities continue to benefit economically from the tourism that is generated by the park."

The peer-reviewed visitor spending analysis was conducted by economists Catherine Cullinane Thomas of the U.S. Geological Survey and Lynne Koontz of the National Park Service. The report shows \$18.2 billion of direct spending by more than 330 million park visitors in communities within 60 miles of a national park. This spending supported 306,000 jobs nationally; 255,900 of those jobs are found in these gateway communities. The cumulative benefit to the U.S. economy was \$35.8 billion.

The lodging sector received the highest direct contributions with \$5.5 billion in economic output to local gateway economies and 49,000 jobs. The restaurants sector received the next greatest direct contributions with \$3.7 billion in economic output to local gateway economies and 60,500 jobs.

According to the 2017 report, most park visitor spending was for lodging/camping (32.9 percent) followed by food and beverages (27.5 percent), gas and oil (12.1 percent), souvenirs and other expenses (10.1 percent), admissions and fees (10.0 percent), and local transportation (7.5 percent).

Report authors also produce an interactive tool that enables users to explore visitor spending, jobs, labor income, value added, and output effects by sector for national, state, and local economies. Users can also view year-by-year trend data. The interactive tool and report are available at the NPS Social Science Program webpage:

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm>

To learn more about national parks in Arkansas and how the National Park Service works with Arkansas communities to help preserve local history, conserve the environment, and provide outdoor recreation, go to www.nps.gov/arkansas.

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About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 408 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities.