



Connecticut Department of

**ENERGY &
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PROTECTION**

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

**DEEP and CCEA Release Study Highlighting the Economic Impact of CT
State Parks and Forests**

More than \$1 Billion Spent by Residents and Visitors in 2010

Connecticut's state parks and forests offer numerous outdoor recreation activities that are part of what makes Connecticut a special place to live – and a new study concludes they are also good for the economy.

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) today released an extensive analysis conducted by UConn's Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis (CCEA) showing that outdoor activities on state lands have an economic impact of more than \$1 billion a year. The \$1 billion represents the amount spent by state residents and visitors on a variety of outdoor activities including camping, boating, fishing and hunting.

The study also concluded that:

- For every dollar the state spends on the state park system, it receives an estimated \$38 in economic activity.
- Nearly 9,000 private sector jobs statewide result from the support of outdoor recreation pursuits.

"It is no secret that Connecticut has some of the most beautiful state parks and forests in the country that provide countless outdoor recreational activities to our residents and visitors," said DEEP Commissioner Daniel C. Esty. "This study now demonstrates that our parks and forests also make a significant contribution to our state's economy. With the support of Governor Malloy, the General Assembly, and all of our partners, DEEP works hard to maintain and improve our parks and forests for the enjoyment of all – and we now see from even a 'bottom line' perspective that it is time and money well spent."

The study ([*The Economic Impact of State Parks, Forests and Natural Resources under the Management of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection*](#)) is an economic impact analysis CCEA developed of the state's recreational activities including visits to state

parks and forests, hunting, fishing, boating, and other sporting activities. Of the \$1 billion spent on recreation, visitors to parks and forests spent \$544 million in 2010 on general tourism activities in Connecticut such as lodging, meals, groceries, and other activities and goods during their stay.

In addition, sports persons holding licenses and permits issued by DEEP spent the following amounts:

- Fishing accounted for \$264 million in expenditures
- Hunting accounted for \$100 million in expenditures
- Recreational boating accounted for nearly \$37 million in expenditures
- \$26.2 million came from skiing and attending educational and other venues

The study also shows that the nearly 9,000 private sector jobs credited to the state parks system and associated recreational activities result in \$343 million in personal income, estimated to grow to \$595 million in current dollars in 2020. Of that \$343 million, \$253 million is considered disposable income, increasing to \$471 million by 2020.

“The mission of CCEA is to provide exactly this kind of analysis, one that illuminates policy and budget choices,” said Fred Carstensen, Director, Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis. “In this specific case, the analysis is conservative, as it does not include all related activities, such as horseback riding, undertaken in state parks and forests, involving relative minor total expenditures, nor was all related travel Connecticut park and forest recreationalists undertook because the study limited travel distances to that of the closest available venue.”

Along with the tangible benefits DEEP-managed outdoor recreation opportunities create in the state, the CCEA report also found that DEEP’s 250,000 acres of open space increases property values for those whose land borders or overlooks the state green spaces. In addition to the benefit to property owners, the increased property values generated an estimated \$3.1 to \$5.4 million to municipalities.

“This study puts real data behind something we’ve known for many years – the State Parks are both a bargain and a job creator for Connecticut,” said Eric Hammerling, Executive Director, Connecticut Forest and Parks Association. “The resources that are invested in maintaining the Park System (and we’d like to see more) are returned many times over through enormous recreational, wildlife, educational, and economic benefits.”

Background on CCEA

The Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis, established in 1992, serves the people of Connecticut by improving their understanding of the state's economy -- past, present, and future. The Center focuses on providing timely information and reliable analyses about Connecticut's economy. The Center takes a long-term, strategic view of economic forces, and is objective and transparent in its execution and delivery.