The Economic Value of Quiet Recreation on BLM Lands

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) oversees 246 million acres of public land across 11 western states and Alaska. In 2014, there were more than 60 million visits to these lands, nearly two-thirds of which were by people enjoying quiet (nonmotorized) recreational activities, like camping, hunting, hiking, and fishing. These visitors spent some $1.8 billion in communities within 50 miles of recreation areas, supported nearly 25,000 jobs, and generated $2.8 billion for the overall U.S. economy. In the state of Colorado, more than 8.4 million acres of public land are managed by the BLM for multiple uses.

Royal Gorge

Eastern Colorado’s Royal Gorge BLM field office oversees some 658,000 acres of public land. In 2015, there were more than 1,230,000 visits to these landscapes for nonmotorized recreation, $54.3 million in spending to the local economy.

- $67.6 million in total economic output—the value of goods and services produced, the broadest measure of economic activity.
- $54.3 million in total direct spending on quiet recreation visits within 50 miles of recreation sites.
- $40.1 million generated in personal income to people specifically tied to quiet recreation on BLM lands, including wages, salaries, and benefits.
- 693 jobs supported locally as a result of quiet recreation visits to BLM land.

Source: ECONorthwest
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