

# Quiet Recreation on BLM-Managed Lands in Northwest California: Economic Contribution 2015

Prepared for The Pew Charitable Trusts | July 2017



This page left intentionally blank

---

## CONTACT

Kristin Lee, Austin Rempel, and Joel Ainsworth prepared this report with the assistance of a number of other ECONorthwest staff.

ECONorthwest is solely responsible for its content. ECONorthwest gratefully acknowledges the valuable input provided by BLM and USFS personnel.

ECONorthwest specializes in economics, planning, and finance. Established in 1974, ECONorthwest has four decades of experience helping clients make sound decisions based on rigorous economic, planning and financial analysis.

For more information about ECONorthwest, visit our website at [www.econw.com](http://www.econw.com).

For more information about this report:

Kristin Lee  
lee@econw.com  
The Washburne Building  
72 W Broadway Suite 206  
Eugene, OR 97401  
541-687-0051 ext. 5431

## DISCLAIMER

ECONorthwest was commissioned by The Pew Charitable Trusts to complete this report.

Throughout the report we have identified our sources of information and assumptions used in the analysis. Within practical limits, ECONW has made every effort to check the reasonableness of the data and assumptions and to test the sensitivity of the results of our analysis to changes in key assumptions.

We gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the many individuals who provided us with information and insight. But we emphasize that we, alone, are responsible for the report's contents. We have prepared this report based on our own knowledge and training and on information derived from government agencies, private statistical services, the reports of others, interviews of individuals, or other sources believed to be reliable. ECONorthwest has not verified the accuracy of such information, however, and makes no representation regarding its accuracy or completeness. Any statements nonfactual in nature constitute the authors' current opinions, which may change as more information becomes available.

The analytical method used in this report was peer reviewed by other professional economists for accuracy and appropriateness. Responsibility for the research and findings lies solely with ECONorthwest.

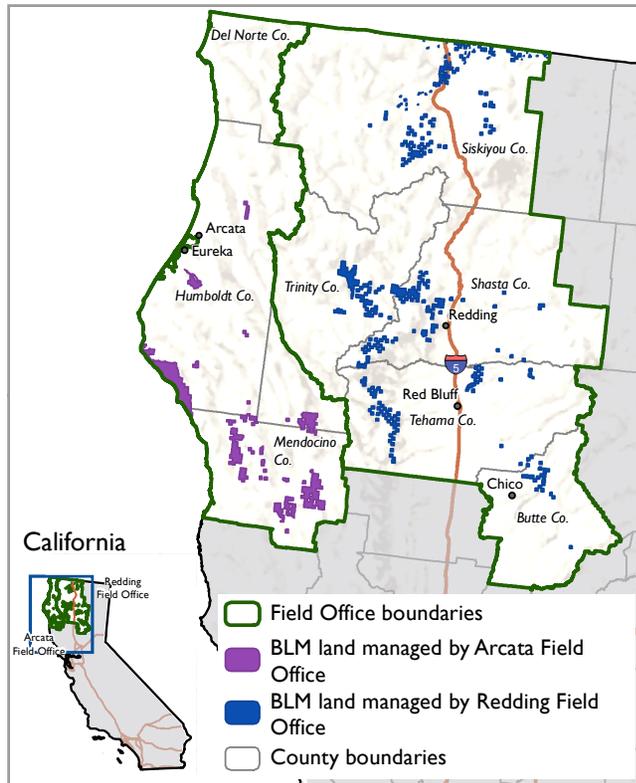
This page left intentionally blank

## INTRODUCTION

Public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in California provide a wealth of recreational opportunities. This report focuses on “quiet” recreational uses on northwest California lands managed by BLM’s Redding and Arcata Field Offices (RAFOs). These uses range from hiking, camping, and hunting, to swimming and mountain biking.

The RAFOs manage approximately 400,000 acres of BLM land located over eight northwest California counties. This region contains diverse landscapes, from the ocean to the mountains, offering a variety of recreational opportunities at both developed sites and remote areas.

**Figure 1. Lands Managed by the Redding and Arcata Field Offices (California)**



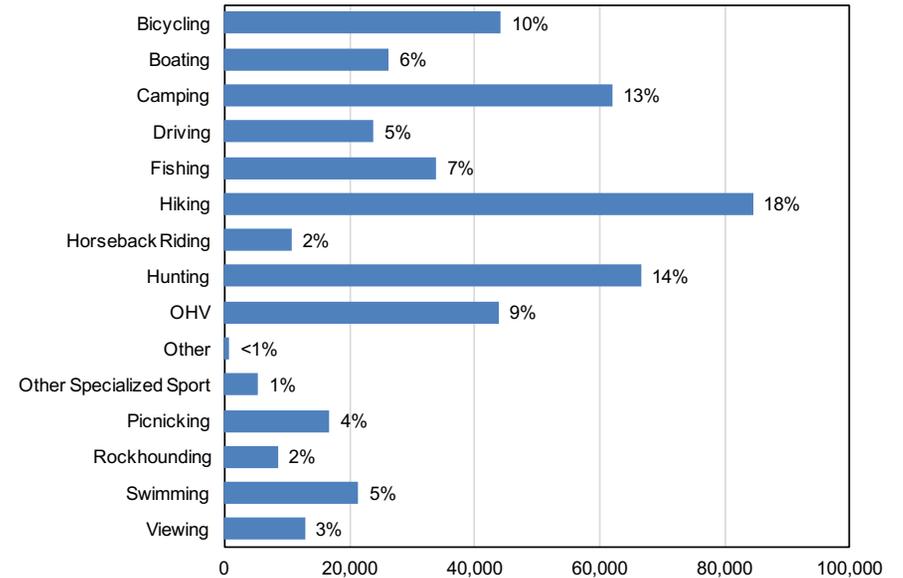
Source: ECONorthwest

## RECREATION IN NORTHWEST CALIFORNIA

According to visitation data from BLM, there were nearly 1.3 million visits to BLM lands managed by the RAFOs in northwest California in 2015.<sup>1</sup> A “visit” is a trip of any length—an hour, a day, a week—by an individual to BLM land for recreational purposes. These visits accounted for approximately 16 percent of the nearly 8 million visits to all BLM lands throughout the state of California in 2015.

As Figure 2 shows, recreational visitors engaged in a wide range of activities during their time in the area managed by the RAFOs. The BLM reports activity participation in units of “visitor days”—defined as aggregated 12-hour periods of time. There were nearly 462,000 visitor days on lands managed by the RAFOs in 2015, with Hiking (18%), Hunting (14%), Camping (13%), and Bicycling (10%) at the top of the list.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 2. Recreation on Lands Managed by BLM’s Redding and Arcata Field Offices, by Percentage of Visitor Days (2015)**



Source: ECONorthwest based on data from the Recreation Management Information System (BLM, 2015).  
 Note: Almost 40 recreation categories were condensed into the categories displayed in this figure.  
 Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

1. The visitation data exclude the 161,000 visits to Headwaters Forest Reserve and King Range National Conservation Areas, which are managed under separate resource management plans.

2. The source for all visitation data in this report is data provided by the BLM from the BLM Recreation Management Information System.

## QUIET RECREATION VISITS

“Quiet recreation” is recreation that does not involve significant motorized activity (such as motor-boating, snowmobiling, motorcycling, other off-highway-vehicle use, etc.)—aside from any transportation to and from the recreation sites. In this analysis, we estimate the number of “quiet recreation visits,” which are trips (of any length) to BLM lands managed by the RAFOs in northwest California for the primary purpose of engaging in quiet recreation activities.

Our analysis utilizes data on visits and activities from the BLM and data on characteristics of visits to other public lands from the National Visitor Use Monitoring Program, which is an extensive survey effort of the U.S. Forest Service.<sup>3</sup> We outlined the analytical approach in a 2016 report of quiet recreation on BLM lands across the western U.S.<sup>4</sup> The more localized focus in this analysis afforded us the opportunity to undertake a more detailed review of data within the field office, communicate with BLM personnel about the area, and review other studies of the region.<sup>5</sup> As a result, we incorporated region-specific or site-specific assumptions instead of more general data when available.<sup>6</sup>

We estimate that there were 1,049,000 quiet recreation visits on BLM land in the RAFOs region in 2015, which represents 81 percent of all recreational visits to BLM-managed lands in the region.

**Figure 3. Recreation Visits to BLM Land Managed by the Redding and Arcata Field Offices in NW California (2015)**

Type of Recreation Visit	Number of Visits
All Recreation	1,289,000
Quiet Recreation	1,049,000

Values rounded to the nearest thousand.  
Source: ECONorthwest based on data from BLM.

## QUIET RECREATION SPENDING

When people visit BLM lands to engage in recreation, they also contribute to local economies through their local purchases. Visitors make expenditures on food, fuel, and other goods and services. A share of those expenditures occurs in communities within 50 miles of the recreation site. These expenditures support local incomes, jobs, and other economic activity.

We apply data on the spending amounts associated with individual recreation visits to calculate the total expenditures from quiet recreation visits on lands managed by the BLM.<sup>7</sup> As Figure 4 shows, we estimate that quiet recreation visitors on BLM land managed by the RAFOs spent a total of \$41.2 million locally in conjunction with their visits in 2015, with nearly \$29 million of that amount spent by visitors from outside the area.

**Figure 4. Visit-Related Expenditures, Quiet Recreation in the Redding and Arcata Field Offices Region (2015)**

Category of Visitor	Expenditures
Local	\$10,864,000
Non-Local	\$28,833,000
Non-Primary	\$1,533,000
Total	\$41,230,000

Values rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals may not sum due to rounding.  
Source: ECONorthwest, based on BLM and NVUM data.  
Note: “Non-Primary” Visitors are visitors for whom recreation was not the primary purpose of their visit.

3. Bureau of Land Management. 2015. Recreation Management Information System (RMIS) Data; and USDA Forest Service. 2015. *National Visitor Use Monitoring Version 2.1 - Round 2 (2005 – 2009) Data*.

4. For a description of the analytical approach used for calculating quiet recreation visitation, spending, and economic contribution, See ECONorthwest. 2016. *Quiet Recreation on BLM-Managed Lands: Economic Contribution 2014*. March.

5. See, for example, U.S. Bureau of Land Management. 2016. *Northwest California Integrated Resource Management Plan: Analysis of the Management Situation*. Northern California District, Arcata and Redding Field Offices. November.

6. For example, we reviewed site-level data to identify concentrated locations of non-quiet activities. Based on site data and communication with BLM personnel we utilized site-specific estimates of cross-participation between quiet and non-quiet activities rather than national averages in such locations.

7. See ECONorthwest (2016) for a description of the analytical method. For spending data, See E.M. White and D.J. Stynes. 2010. *Updated Spending Profiles for National Forest Recreation Visitors by Activity*. Joint Venture Agreement between the USDA Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station and Oregon State University. #10-JV-11261955-018. November.

## ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

We use statewide and regional economic models to estimate the ripple effects of the dollars spent in local communities in conjunction with quiet recreation visits to BLM lands.<sup>8</sup> Figure 5 shows the economic contribution of spending associated with quiet recreation visits on BLM lands managed by the RAFOs in northwest California in 2015.

Direct effects stem from the activities of visitors making purchases within 50 miles of BLM recreation areas. Indirect effects are the result of activity by suppliers to the directly and indirectly affected businesses. Induced effects are the result of purchases of goods and services by employees and proprietors in directly and indirectly affected businesses. Total economic effects are reported as the sum of direct, indirect, and induced effects.

Our analysis focuses on the economic activity associated with quiet recreation on BLM lands, so we include the spending from all categories of visitors. To understand the relative contribution among the different groups of visitors, we break out the results separately for three different groups of visitors: local, non-local, and non-primary purpose (those for whom recreation was not the primary purpose of their visit).

Visitors' expenditures of \$41.2 million in the region supported approximately \$26.9 million in personal income (employee compensation), \$19.3 million in value-added (contribution to GDP), approximately 570 jobs (both full-time and part-time, full-year equivalents), and economic output (value of goods and services produced) of over \$50.2 million.

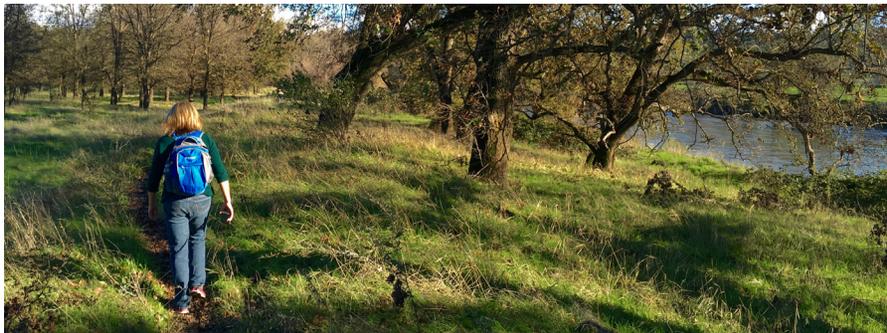


Photo Credit: Steve Evans

Figure 5. Economic Contribution by Visitor Category (2015)

Type of Effect	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total
<b>Local</b>				
Output	\$5,114,000	\$2,532,000	\$2,546,000	\$10,192,000
Compensation	\$2,643,000	\$1,285,000	\$1,456,000	\$5,385,000
Value-Added	\$2,440,000	\$795,000	\$816,000	\$4,051,000
Jobs	78	16	19	112
<b>Non-Local</b>				
Output	\$19,619,000	\$9,794,000	\$9,234,000	\$38,647,000
Compensation	\$10,450,000	\$5,067,000	\$5,283,000	\$20,801,000
Value-Added	\$8,521,000	\$3,195,000	\$2,961,000	\$14,677,000
Jobs	307	65	68	441
<b>Non-Primary</b>				
Output	\$685,000	\$329,000	\$370,000	\$1,384,000
Compensation	\$369,000	\$167,000	\$211,000	\$747,000
Value-Added	\$370,000	\$101,000	\$118,000	\$590,000
Jobs	12	2	3	17
<b>Total</b>				
Output	\$25,419,000	\$12,655,000	\$12,150,000	\$50,223,000
Compensation	\$13,462,000	\$6,519,000	\$6,951,000	\$26,932,000
Value-Added	\$11,331,000	\$4,091,000	\$3,895,000	\$19,317,000
Jobs	397	83	90	570

Dollar values rounded to the nearest thousand. Totals may not sum due to rounding.  
Source: ECONorthwest.



Photo Credit: Cycle Siskiyou

8. This analysis utilized input-output modeling with IMPLAN software and 2015 IMPLAN data. See ECONorthwest (2016) for a description of the analytical method.