

# How to make the economic case for your work using existing tools and resources

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The logo for The Trust for Public Land, featuring a green square background with the text "THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND" in white, stacked vertically.

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# Outline

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- Introductions
- Overview of economic benefits
- Existing tools and resources
- Messaging in response to common misconceptions
- Questions

# The Trust for Public Land: How we work

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## FUND

Help enact measures for public funding

## PLAN

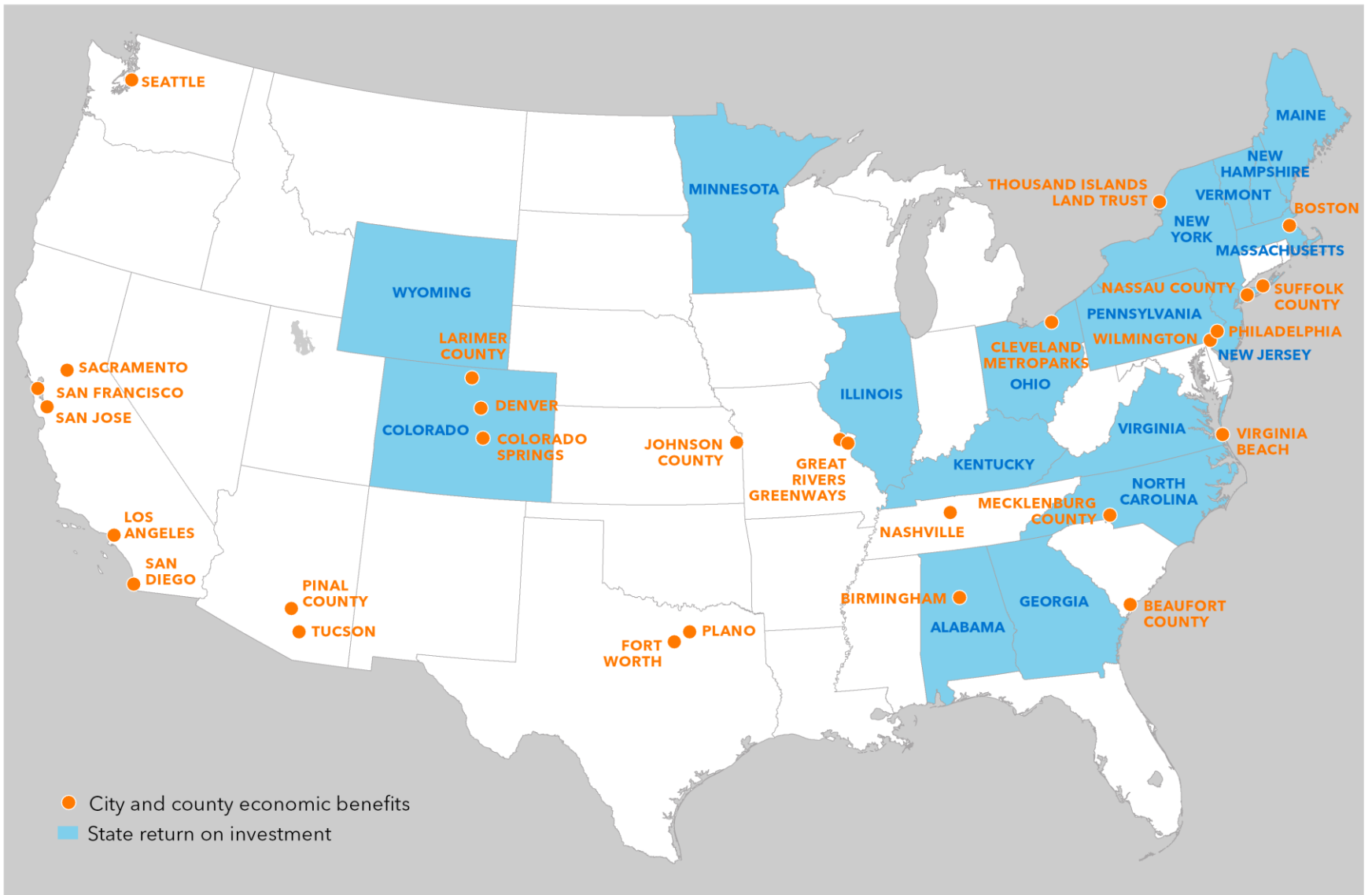
Identify the most important land for conservation

## PROTECT

Acquire and protect land

## CREATE

Create innovative parks



# Economic benefits studies in cities, counties, and states (2008-2018)

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# Conservation Economics

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- Examining ***measurable*** economic benefits of conserved lands.
- Translating ***perceived*** values into dollars and cents
- Conserved lands can:
  - Propel economic development
  - Enable recreation
  - Increase public health
  - Reduce stormwater and air pollution
  - Provide natural goods and services
  - Support agriculture, fishing, and forestry
  - Bolster tourism
  - Enhance property value

# Thinking about economic benefits

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Photo: Darcy Kiefel

- Who is your audience?
- What are you trying to get them to do?
- Different messages resonate with different target audiences.
- Key themes

# Economic Development



Photo: Don J. Usner

- Conserved lands make the area an attractive place to live and work.
  - Attracts businesses
  - Attracts skilled workers
- Available information on the quality of life in the community
  - Awards won
  - Business leader quotes
  - Business surveys
- Esri Business Analyst
  - Businesses, sales, employees
  - Fee based

# Recreational Use



Photo: Darcy Kiefel

- Value gained by residents from outdoor activities.
  - Oregon State University - Recreation Use Values Database
  - <http://recvaluation.forestry.oregonstate.edu/database>
- Combine with user data for economic evaluation
  - Trail counts
  - Surveys



# Improved Health

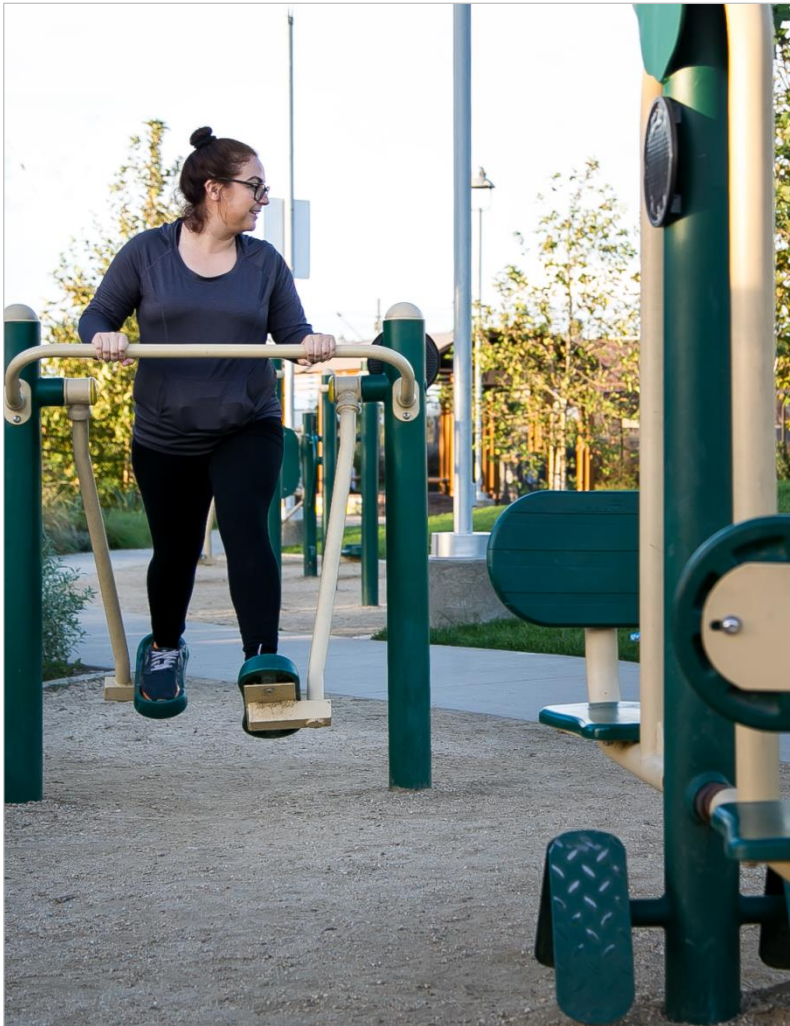


Photo: Annie Bang

- When people have access to trails and parks they exercise more.
- Adults who exercise regularly save \$1,180-\$2,360/year
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention obesity data
  - <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html>
- County Health Rankings & Roadmap
  - <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/>

# Natural Goods and Services

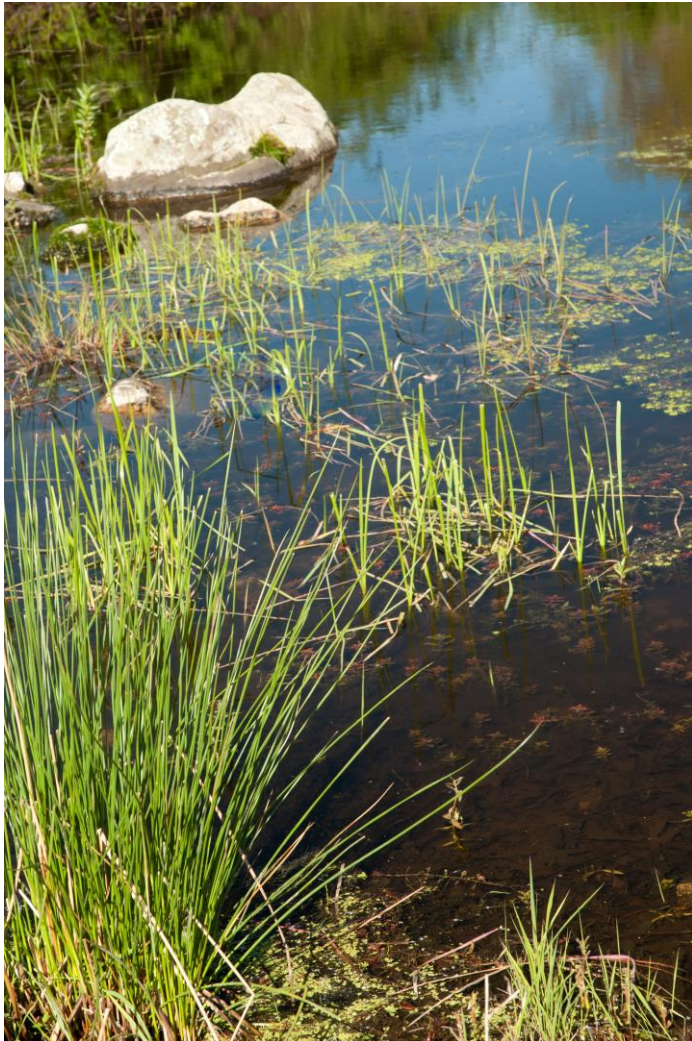


Photo: Paul Mozell,

- Reduced stormwater runoff
  - Conserved lands can reduce the costs of stormwater management by capturing precipitation and/or slowing its runoff.
- Air pollution removal
  - Vegetation improves air quality by removing air pollutants, including:
    - Carbon monoxide
    - Nitrogen dioxide
    - Ozone
    - Particulate matter
    - Sulfur dioxide
- <http://www.itreetools.org/>

# Natural Goods and Services

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- Mapping and valuing ecosystem services
  - Carbon
  - Coastal vulnerability
  - Crop pollination
  - Fisheries
  - Habitat quality
  - Managed timber production
  - Recreation
  - Sediment retention
  - Water purification
- Free
- <http://www.naturalcapitalproject.org/invest/>

# Resiliency

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- Extreme events
- SHELDUS™ is a county-level hazard loss data set for the U.S. for 18 different natural hazard events types such as thunderstorms, hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and tornados.
- Fee based
- <http://hvri.geog.sc.edu/SHELDUS/>

# Natural Goods and Services

The Return on Investment in Parks  
and Open Space in Massachusetts



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CONSERVING LAND FOR PEOPLE

- Over a dozen state-level analyses by The Trust for Public Land.
- Every **\$1 invested in state land conservation programs returns \$4 to \$11** in natural goods and services.
- Every **\$1 invested by Massachusetts in parks and open spaces returns \$4** in natural goods and services.
- <http://cloud.tpl.org/pubs/benefits-ma-roi-report.pdf>

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# Industries Supported by Conservation



Photo: Dietrich Gehring

- Agriculture, forestry, and commercial fishing
  - USDA Census of Agriculture
    - <https://www.agcensus.usda.gov/>
  - Bureau of Economic Analysis – BEARFACTS
    - <http://www.bea.gov/regional/bearfacts/>
  - Census – County Business Patterns
    - <http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cbp.html>

# Industries Supported by Conservation

How U.S. Forest Service Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program Acquisitions Impact Communities in Six Case Studies



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LAND FOR PEOPLE

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[https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/files\\_upload/ForestService\\_LWCF\\_Final\\_07.22.2014\\_1\\_0.pdf](https://www.tpl.org/sites/default/files/files_upload/ForestService_LWCF_Final_07.22.2014_1_0.pdf)

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# Tourism



Photo: Ian MacLellan

- Conserved lands attract non-residents to the area.
- These visitors spend money in local communities.
- Sources
  - MA Office of Travel and Tourism
  - Visitors bureaus
  - Research universities



# Tourism

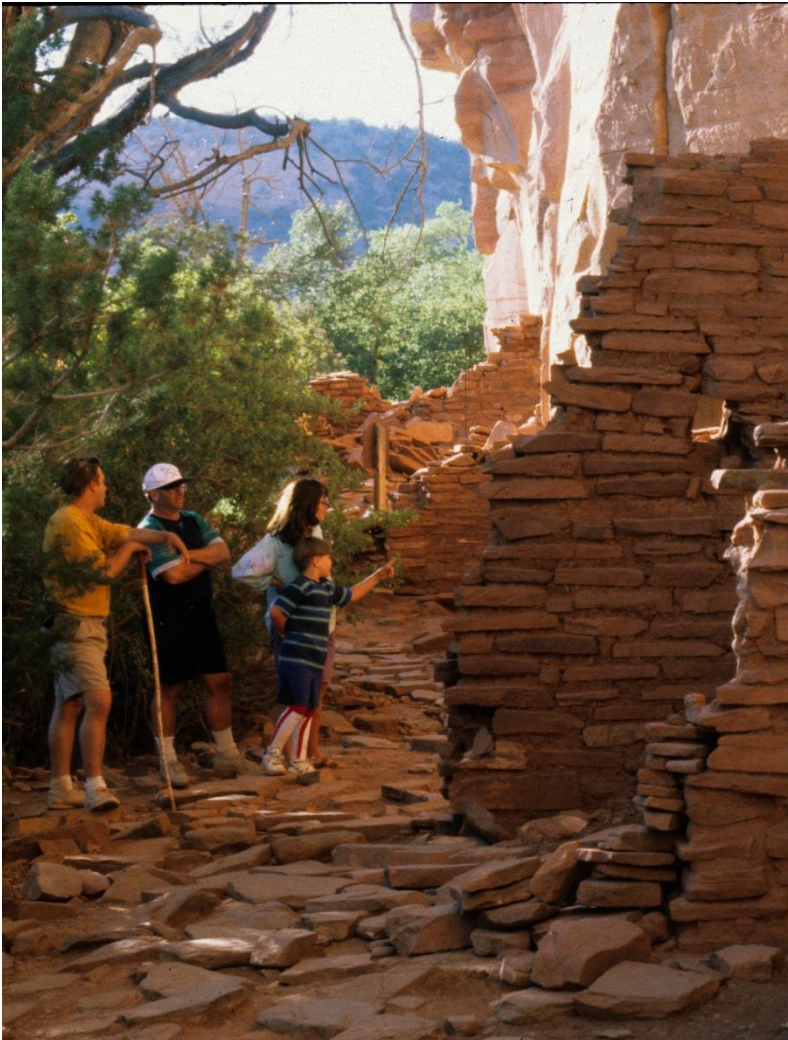
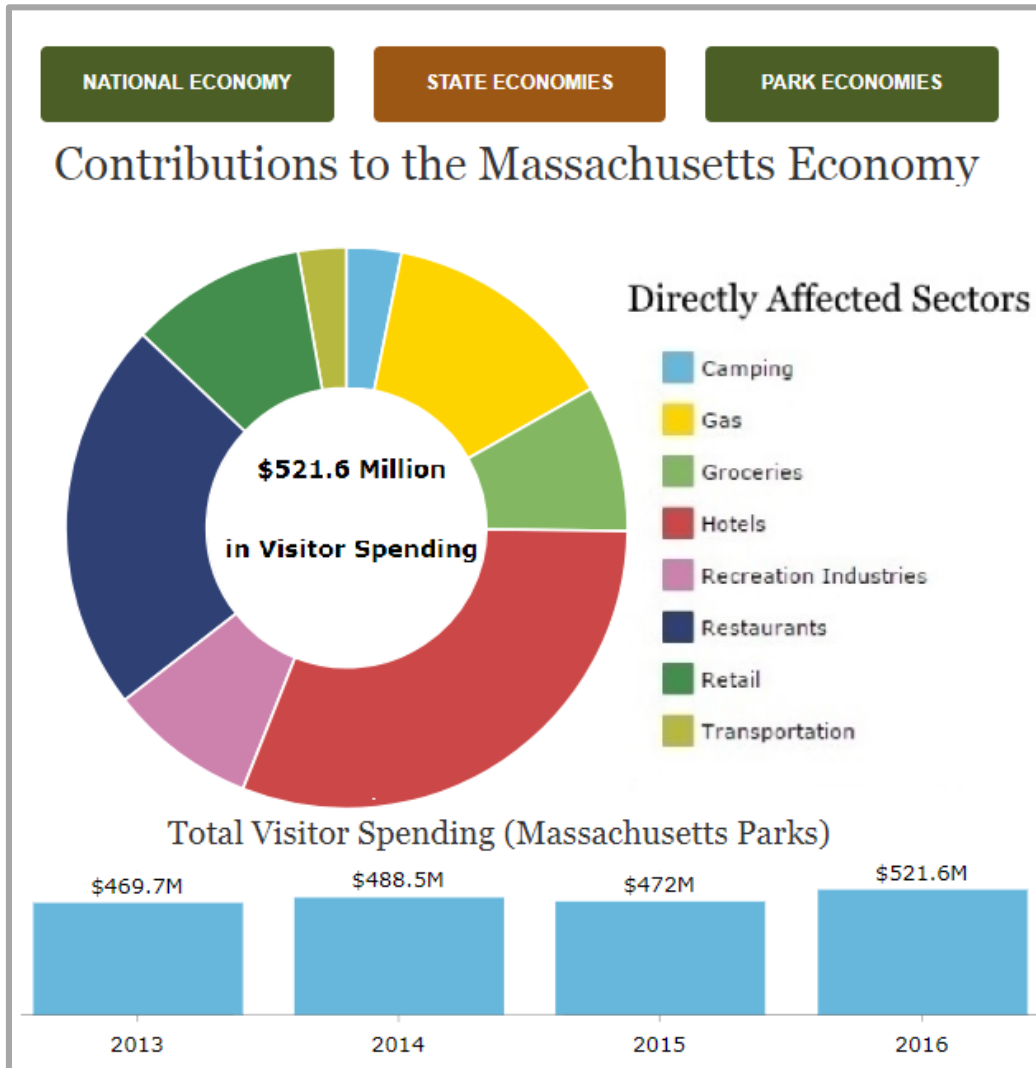


Photo: Dominic Oldershaw

- Massachusetts Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
  - Over 20 million tourists
  - \$19.5 billion in direct spending annually
  - Outdoor recreation amenities are a top 5 reason for visiting MA

# Tourism



- National Park Service
- Visitor spending and jobs
  - National
  - State
  - Park
- <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/socialscience/vse.htm>

Source: National Park Service



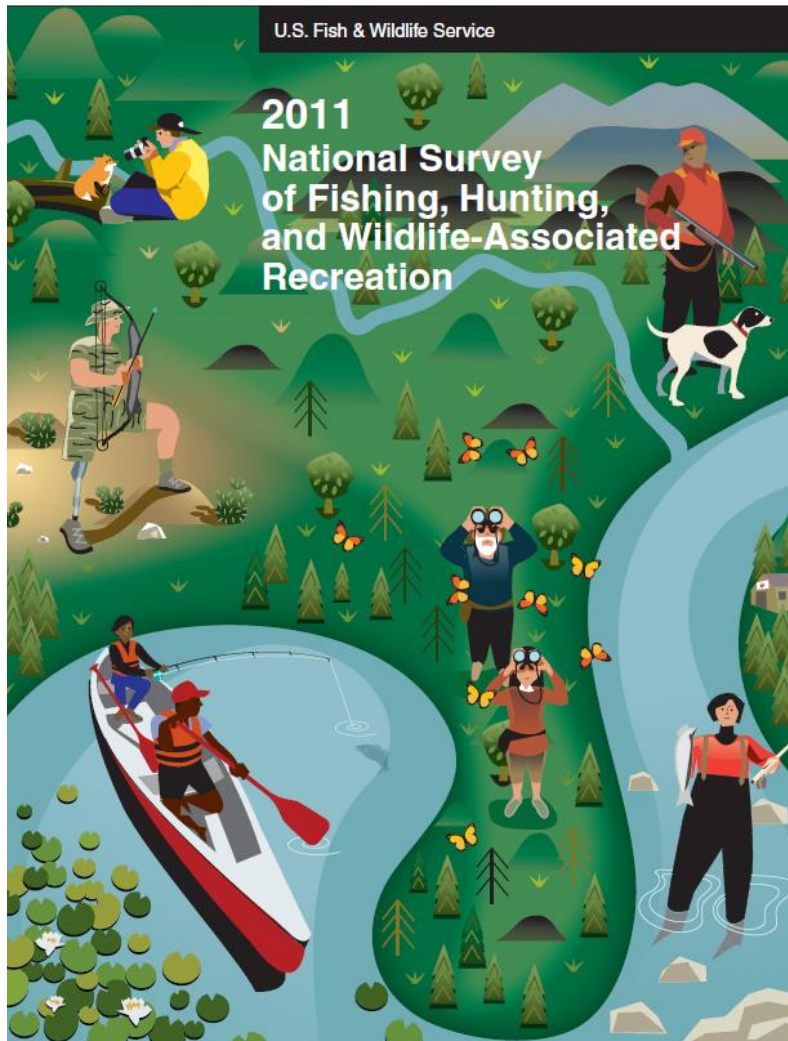
# Tourism



Source: Outdoor Industry Association

- Outdoor Industry Association
- Overview of MA outdoor recreation economy
- <https://outdoorindustry.org/state/massachusetts/>
- Bureau of Economic Analysis
- <https://www.bea.gov/newsreleases/industry/orsa/orsanewsrelease.htm>

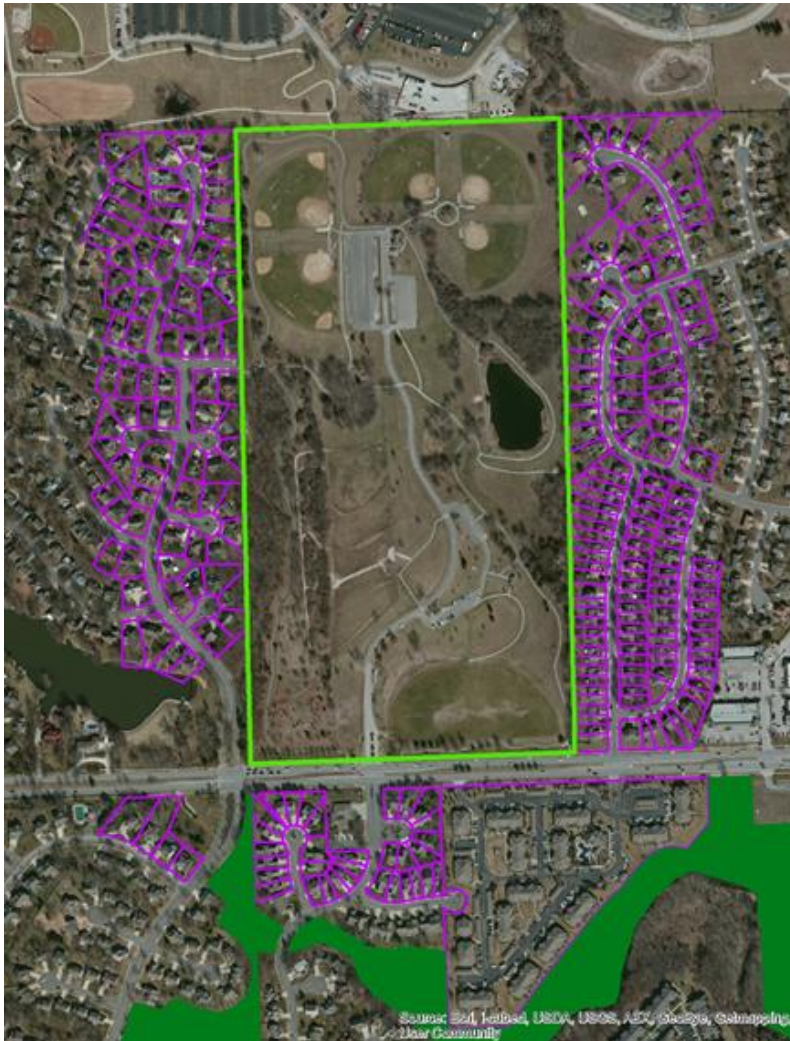
# Tourism



## U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

- Survey of hunting, fishing, and wildlife watching
  - <http://census.gov/library/publications.html>
- *Banking on Nature* - National Wildlife Refuge Visitation
  - <https://www.fws.gov/refuges/about/refugereports/>

# Enhanced Property Value



- Market values of properties near conserved lands are frequently higher than properties located elsewhere.
- An increase in property values generally means increased property tax revenues.
- Sources to cite:
  - Dr. Virginia McConnell
  - Dr. Margaret Walls
  - Dr. John Crompton
  - National Association of Realtors
  - CEOs for Cities
  - Urban Land Institute
  - Local developers
  - Ads for new development

# Enhanced Property Value: Sources

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- Dr. Virginia McConnell and Dr. Margaret Walls, Resources for the Future
  - <http://www.rff.org/files/sharepoint/WorkImages/Download/RFF-REPORT-Open%20Spaces.pdf>
- Dr. John Crompton, Texas A&M University
  - <http://rpts.tamu.edu/the-proximate-principle-impact-of-parks-on-property-value/>
- National Association of Realtors
  - Brad Broberg, “Everybody Loves a Park: Green Space Is a Premium When Building, Buying, or Selling,” *National Association of Realtors, On Common Ground* (2009): 20–25. <http://www.slideshare.net/REALTORS/smart-growth-on-common-ground-winter09>
- CEOs for Cities
  - <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/assets/Uploads/2009WalkingTheWalkCEOsforCities.pdf>
- Urban Land Institute
  - <http://uli.org/report/active-transportation-real-estate-next-frontier/>

# Cost of Community Services



Photo: Rich Reid

- American Farmland Trust – Cost of Community Services
- Nationally
  - Residential: \$1.16 in services for every \$1
  - Working and open lands: \$0.37 in services for every \$1
- Other communities
  - [http://www.farmlandinfo.org/sites/default/files/COCOS\\_08-2010\\_1.pdf](http://www.farmlandinfo.org/sites/default/files/COCOS_08-2010_1.pdf)

# Common Arguments Against

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1. Takes land off the tax rolls
2. Parks only provide economic benefits in cities
3. Other infrastructure investments create more jobs
4. We have other priorities
5. Is a luxury we cannot afford



# Takes land off the tax rolls



Photo: Allen Brisson-Smith

- Cost of community services
- Enhanced property value
- Tourism
- Agriculture, forestry, and commercial fishing
- <http://legislature.maine.gov/uploads/originals/land-trust-highlights-final.pdf>
- <http://wflmaine.org/assets/mdacf-handout-2017.pdf>

# Parks only provide economic benefits in cities

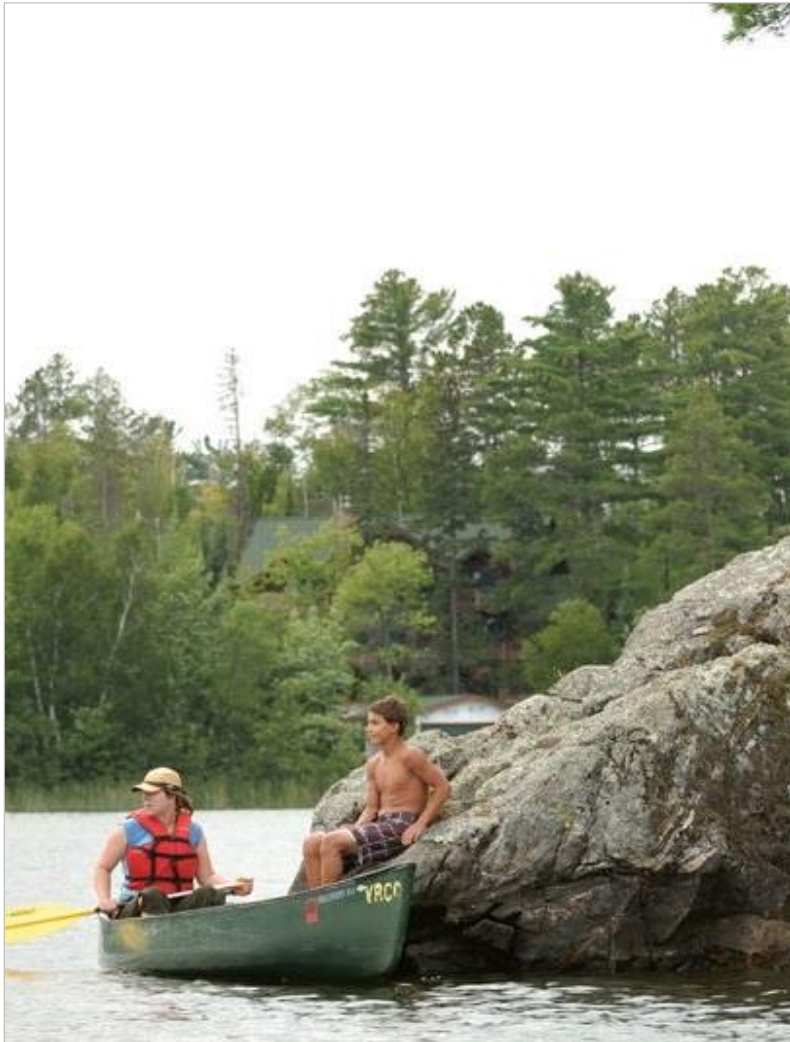


Photo: Darcy Kiefel

- Economic development
- Supports local business
  - Tourism
  - Outdoor recreation
  - Agriculture, fishing, forestry, wildlife-related

# Other infrastructure investments create more jobs



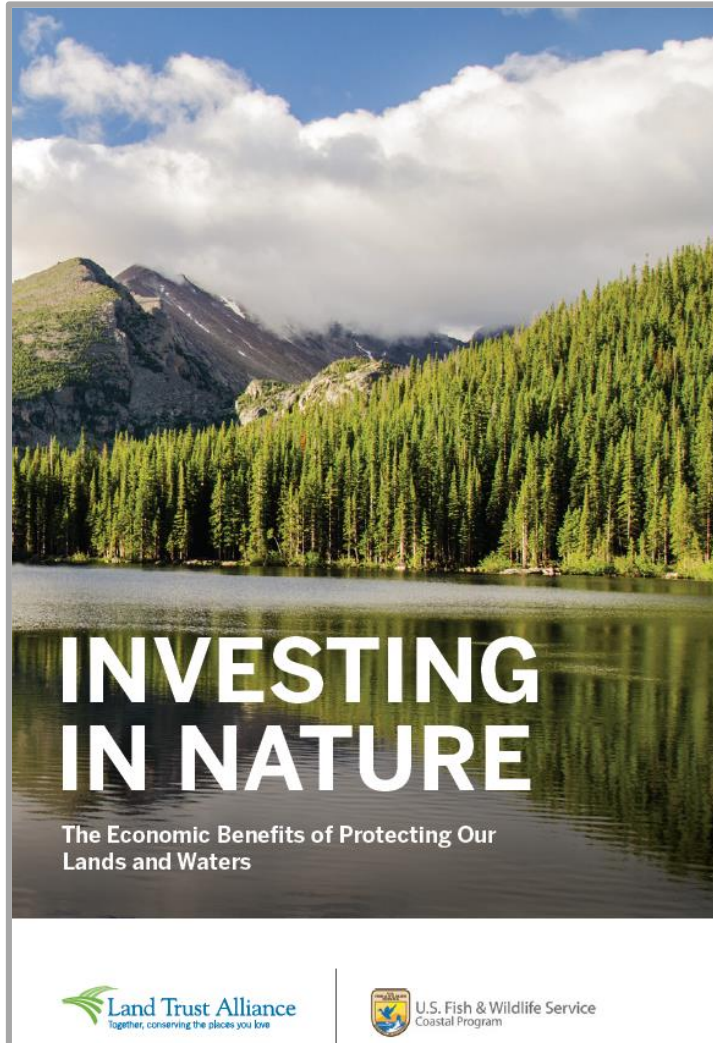
- IMPLAN
- Economic development
- [www.nrpa.org/ParkEconReport](http://www.nrpa.org/ParkEconReport)
- Tourism
- Agriculture, forestry, and commercial fishing

## The Economic Impact of Local Parks

An Examination of the Economic Impacts of Operations and Capital Spending on the United States Economy



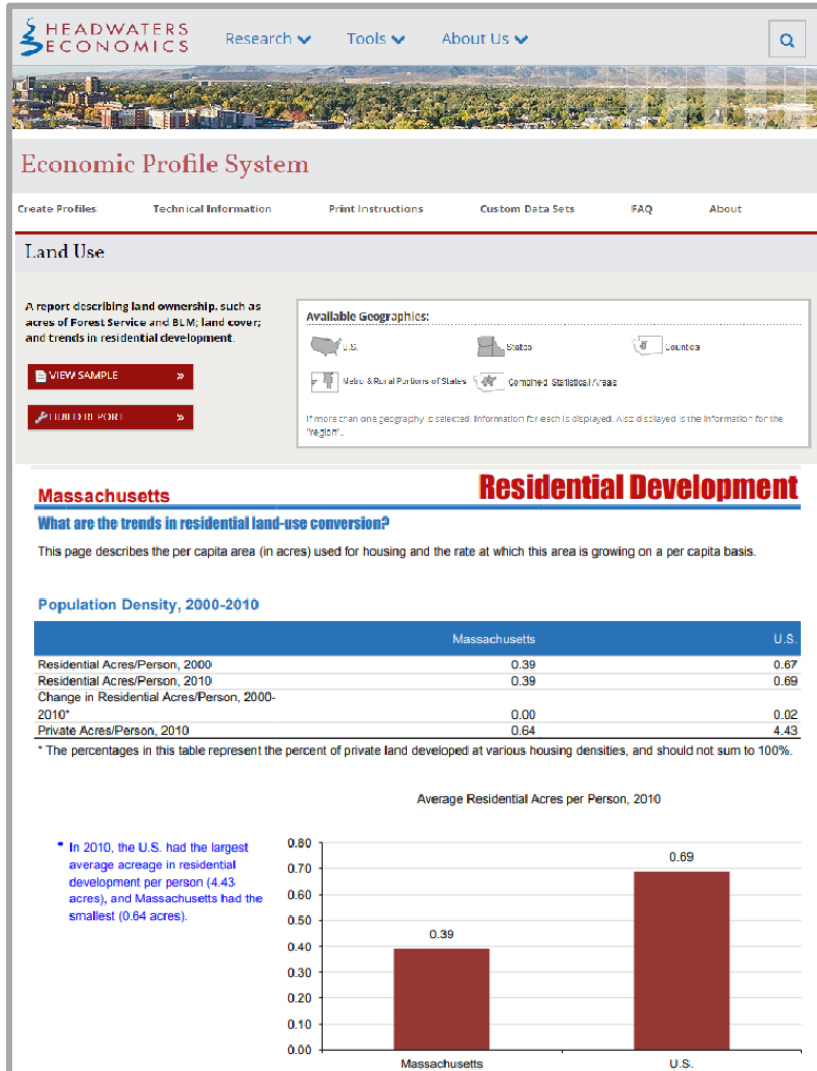
# We have other priorities



- Economic development
- Conservation can be part of other priorities
  - Working landscapes
  - Transportation
  - Flood protection
  - Water quality
- Available at <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/to pics/economic-benefits>



# Is a luxury we cannot afford



- Economic development
- Recreation
- Health
- Clean air and clean water
- Agriculture, forestry, and commercial fishing
- Tourism
- Enhanced property values
- Cost of community services
- <https://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/economic-profile-system/>

# Additional Information

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## **The Trust for Public Land**

[www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)

## **Reports Available:**

[www.tpl.org/conservation-economics](http://www.tpl.org/conservation-economics)

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