

(Neb.)-National Parks In Nebraska Bring In Tourism Revenue

By: Chris Fankhauser Posted at: 03/04/2014 08:15 AM

(Omaha)-A new National Park Service (NPS) report shows that 304,046 visitors to national parks in Nebraska spent \$13.2 million and supported 200 jobs in the state in 2012.

NPS Midwest Regional Director Michael T. Reynolds said the national parks of Nebraska attract visitors from across the country and around the world and provide premiere historical, cultural, natural, and recreational experiences. He stated that this new report shows that national park tourism is a significant driver in the national economy - returning \$10 for every \$1 invested - and funding generated by national parks has a swift and direct positive impact on local economies in Nebraska as well.

The national parks in Nebraska are: Agate Fossil Beds National Monument, Harrison; Homestead National Monument of America, Beatrice; Niobrara National Scenic River, Valentine; Scotts Bluff National Monument, Gering.

The peer-reviewed visitor spending analysis was conducted by U.S. Geological Survey economists Catherine Cullinane Thomas and Christopher Huber and Lynne Koontz for the National Park Service. The report shows \$14.7 billion of direct spending by 283 million park visitors in communities within 60 miles of a national park. This spending supported 243,000 jobs nationally, with 201,000 jobs found in these gateway communities, and had a cumulative benefit to the U.S. economy of \$26.75 billion.

According to the report, most visitor spending supports jobs in restaurants, grocery and convenience stores (39 percent), hotels, motels and B&Bs (27 percent), and other amusement and recreation (20 percent). To download the report visit <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/economics.cfm>.

The report includes information for visitor spending by park and by state.

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

(Information courtesy National Park Service)