Economic Study Shows Hunting and Fishing Pays Big Dividends to Park County

Park County, Wyo., July 27 – The Wyoming Wildlife Federation (WWF) today released an economic study by the University of Wyoming (UW) for Park County, Wyoming, which shows $23.4 million was generated in 2015 as a result of hunters and anglers participating in their outdoor activities on public and private lands in the county.

“This study shows that expenditures by hunters and anglers amount to important revenue which supports the Park County economy," says Tex Taylor, economist with UW’s Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, author of the report.

The report’s conclusions were presented today to the Park County advisory committee assembled to craft a recommendation for Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) that fall within the county. This county-by-county effort is part of the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative (WPLI), which is anticipated to culminate in congressional legislation for 45 WSAs in Wyoming. The report and infographic are available via WWF’s website (click [here](http://www.wyomingwildlife.org/)).

This study has the support of the Wyoming Sportsmen’s Alliance, which represents more than 30,000 hunters and anglers. “As sportmen we clearly place a high value on our public lands, but important to the Park County process for evaluating the importance of WSAs and land uses, we needed to show how our use of these lands actually pays dividends to the county,” says Chamois Andersen, executive director of the Wyoming Wildlife Federation. “Bottom line, sportsmen using public lands in Park County significantly contribute to the county’s economy.”

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department provided the hunting and fishing license data used in Taylor’s economic analysis. This analysis showed hunters spent $12.7 million in Park County in 2015. This total was based on hunter day estimates from Game and Fish’s 2015 Annual Harvest Reports, compiled by hunt area. Data were compiled from hunting licenses for big game and trophy species. Taylor also calculated 62,000 hunting days were spent in Park County in 2015.

Anglers spent $10.7 million in expenditures in Park County in 2015, which was based on the 20,000 fishing licenses sold in the county. Taylor also showed a total of 123,000 angling days were spent in Park County in 2015.

This report is one of a series of reports on the economic impacts of hunting and fishing for each of
eight participating counties under the WPLI. The Wyoming Geographic Information Science Center (WyGISC) at UW provided the GIS analysis. Hunting days were estimated for each hunting unit. Because some units cross county lines, this meant GIS was needed to determine the percentage of hunter days for each of the two counties where the hunting unit occurs. In addition, in order to estimate the expenditures for hunting and fishing, per unit estimates for Wyoming were calculated based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s (USFWS) 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation report. These expenditures were then adjusted for inflation to 2015 dollars.

In the USFWS survey, it is estimated that 443,000 resident and nonresident hunters and anglers spent 4.8 million. Within the report it is also estimated that this recreation activity generates more than $683 million of spending within the Wyoming economy.

“Spending by hunters and anglers flows to a number of different sectors within the Park County economy,” Taylor says. “While some of the $23.4 million may have been spent outside Park County, those dollars that are spent locally do generate secondary benefits in various other support sectors within the local economy,” he adds.

For information on the Wyoming Public Lands Initiative and the Park County advisory committee process and others, please log on to http://wyomingwildlife.org/public-lands/wpli/.

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