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**U.S. Department of the Interior**

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## Mount Rainier National Park News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Mount Rainier Tourism Creates \$57.7M in Local Economic Benefit - Part of \$15.7B impact overall that supports 277,000 jobs nationwide**

ASHFORD, WA – A new National Park Service (NPS) report shows that nearly 1.3 million recreation visitors to Mount Rainier National Park during 2014 spent \$45.5M in communities surrounding the park and a net impact to the economy of approximately \$57.7M. This spending supported approximately 595 jobs in the local area, not including the 100-105 permanent and 175-185 seasonal staff working directly for the park and another 450-500 commercial concessions service employees working in or near the park. Due to warmer and drier than normal weather in the first quarter of 2015, visitation to the park is already 50% higher than the same period in 2014.

“Mount Rainier National Park is a touchstone for residents and visitors in the Pacific Northwest, and connects people to the land, as it has for centuries. The park is also home to a trove of natural and cultural resources that tell an important part of the history of the National Park Service,” said park Deputy Superintendent Tracy Swartout. “The mountain attracts visitors from across the U.S. and around the world. While their destination may be the national park, they also enjoy connecting with our local communities, such as Greenwater, Enumclaw, Packwood and Ashford- as well as other public lands and destinations along the Chinook and Cayuse Scenic Byways. These local communities are also where many of our dedicated park employees, and their families, live.”

National park tourism is a significant driver in the national economy, returning \$10 for every \$1 invested in the National Park Service. The information for Mount Rainier National Park is part of a peer-reviewed visitor spending analysis was conducted by U.S. Geological Survey economists Catherine Cullinane Thomas and Christopher Huber and National Park Service economist Lynne Koontz. The report shows \$15.7 billion of direct spending by 292.8 million park visitors in communities within 60 miles of a national park. This spending supported 277,000 jobs nationally; 235,600 of those jobs are found in these gateway communities. The cumulative benefit to the U.S. economy was \$29.7 billion. According to the 2014 report, most park visitor spending across the NPS was for lodging (31%) followed by food and beverages (20%), gas and oil (12%), admissions and fees (10%) and souvenirs and other expenses (10%).

To download the report visit <http://www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/economics.cfm>

The report includes information for visitor spending at individual parks and by state.

To learn more about national parks in state name and how the National Park Service works with Washington communities to help preserve local history, conserve the environment, and provide outdoor recreation, go to [www.nps.gov/WASHINGTON](http://www.nps.gov/WASHINGTON).

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