



CALIFORNIA

From California's beautiful coastal beaches to its dramatic deserts and awe-inspiring redwood forests, conserved landscapes are central to the state's identity. Californians of all political stripes have shown strong support for public lands—from neighborhood parks to national parks—and for land and water protection.¹ California is a national model for conservation efforts that create prosperous local economies and healthy communities.²

Our Health

- **A huge amount of scientific research now links access to close-to-home parks and green space with improved physical and mental health.**³ One large-scale study showed that living within 0.6 miles of green space is linked to lower rates of 15 major diseases, including heart disease (15% lower), diabetes (20% lower), and depression (25% lower).⁴ Cardiovascular disease affects nearly 5% of Californians;⁵ diabetes affects nearly 10%;⁶ and depression affects nearly 17% of seniors.⁷ Currently, cardiovascular disease costs the U.S. economy \$330 billion per year, diabetes costs \$327 billion, and depression costs \$210 billion. Spending time in nature can also reduce symptoms of attention-deficit disorder, which affects over 7% of California children, and post-traumatic stress disorder, which affects many veterans and at-risk youth.⁸

Our Farms, Ranches, and Fisheries

- **California's farmers and ranchers are leaders in private land conservation.** Federal conservation funding helps protect land, water, soil, and pollinator resources that are crucial to farmers, ranchers, and the state's \$55 billion agricultural economy.⁹ USDA conservation programs help pay for practices to increase yields, enhance production, and reduce impacts to nature. California farmers leveraged over \$491 million from USDA conservation programs between 1995 and 2017.¹⁰
- **Conservation keeps farms and ranches in production.** California is the top food producer in the country, producing over 400 agricultural commodities, one-third of all vegetables and two-thirds of all fruits and nuts.¹¹ But, California lost over three million acres of agricultural land between 1997 and 2012—11% of the state's remaining farmland.¹² Private landowners have conserved at least two million acres through conservation easements in California. Some of these easements help ensure that important farm and ranch lands stay in production.¹³
- **California's seafood industry generates \$23 billion in sales annually**—more than 10% of the nation's total, and it supports nearly 125,000 jobs.¹⁴ In addition, nearly 1.7 million people participate in recreational fishing in California each year—generating over \$2.2 billion in spending. California's conserved watersheds, rivers and lakes, and marine areas also bolster the state's fishing economy.



TNC's Dangermond Preserve, California

1. Wildermuth, "Poll Shows Surprising GOP Tilt toward Environmental Issues in California - SFChronicle.Com."; 2. California League of Conservation Voters, "CLCV Poll Finds Overwhelming, Bi-Partisan Support to Renew Land & Water Conservation Fund."; 3. Kuo, "How Might Contact with Nature Promote Human Health?"; Twohig-Bennett and Jones, "The Health Benefits of the Great Outdoors."; 4. Maas et al., "Morbidity Is Related to a Green Living Environment."; 5. Kaiser Family Foundation, "Percent of Adults with Cardiovascular Disease."; 6. CDC, "U.S. Diabetes Surveillance System."; 7. United Health Foundation, "America's Health Rankings."; 8. CDC, "State-Based Prevalence Data of Parent Reported ADHD Diagnosis by a Health Care Provider"; Anwar, "Nature Is Proving to Be Awesome Medicine for PTSD."; 9. USDA ERS, "USDA ERS - State Fact Sheets."; 10. Environmental Working Group (EWG), "EWG's Farm Subsidy Database."; 11. California Department of Agriculture, "California Agricultural Production Statistics."; 12. USDA, "USDA - NASS, Census of Agriculture - Publications - 2012."; 13. Ducks Unlimited and The Trust for Public Land, "National Conservation Easement Database | NCED: State Profiles."; 14. NOAA Fisheries, "Fisheries Economics of the United States Report, 2016 | NOAA Fisheries."



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Our Forests and Coasts

- **Cleaner air and water.** Conservation, particularly forest and wetland conservation, helps provide abundant cleaner water and clean air. Sixty percent of California's water comes from the forests and watersheds of the Sierra Nevada. Protected watersheds can provide as much as a 10-fold savings in treating drinking water,¹⁵ and nationwide, forests provide \$6.8 billion dollars in air pollution removal each year.¹⁶ Studies have calculated that for every \$1 invested in conservation \$4 to \$11 is returned in natural goods and services like clean water.¹⁷
- **Coastal tourism and recreation generate over \$17 billion annually.**¹⁸ California's coastline powers its economy, attracts workers, supports vibrant communities, and draws visitors from around the world. California is a national and international leader in protecting coastal resources and providing access to the coastline.

Our Cities

- **Cooler, greener, healthier cities.** Nearly all U.S. cities are seeing hotter summer days than 50 years ago. Protecting parks and planting trees reduces the "urban heat island" effect and cools cities. By investing \$6.4 million annually in street tree planting in dense neighborhoods in central Los Angeles, Santa Monica, and Long Beach, more than 400,000 people could see summertime temperatures reduced by almost three degrees.¹⁹ In addition to the cooling and air quality benefits, trees provide habitat for wildlife, reduce stormwater runoff, and sequester carbon from the atmosphere, which helps to mitigate climate change. There is also a growing body of research showing that exposure to trees and other vegetation has a positive effect on mental health, especially for children.²⁰

Our Parks and Recreation

- **Outdoor recreation in California directly supports 691,000 jobs**—more than the wine industry and the film and television industry combined. Outdoor recreation generates \$92 billion in consumer spending in California, \$30.4 billion in wages and salaries, and \$6.2 billion in state and local tax revenue.²¹
- **California's local parks and recreation agencies support nearly 120,000 jobs.**²² Nearly 80 million people visit California's state parks each year,²³ while the state's national parks host 40.5 million people per year, generate nearly \$1.9 billion in economic activity, and support over 25,500 jobs.²⁴

Our Natural Heritage

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) investment of \$2.4 billion in California's parks and open spaces has been the difference in ensuring that California stays California—from preserving Muir Woods and the Golden Gate National Recreation Area to Joshua Tree National Park and the Pacific Crest Trail.²⁵ The LWCF's State Assistance Program has supported nearly 1,600 local projects, including community parks across the state.²⁶

California's dramatic redwood forests contain the world's tallest and largest trees. These forests represent unique, ancient ecological communities, and they store more carbon than any other forest ecosystem.²⁷ With the help of LWCF, Californians have been able to protect some of the state's most iconic redwood forests—forests that provide unmatched natural services, inspire tremendous awe, and attract tourists from around the world.²⁸

15. The Trust for Public Land, "The Economic Benefits and Fiscal Impact of Parks and Open Space in Nassau and Suffolk Counties, New York."; 16. Nowak et al., "Tree and Forest Effects on Air Quality and Human Health in the United States."; 17. The Trust for Public Land, "The Economic Benefits of Great Outdoors Colorado and the Conservation Trust Fund: Fact Sheet"; The Trust for Public Land, "Vermont's Return on Investment in Land Conservation"; The Trust for Public Land, "Return on the Investment From the Land & Water Conservation Fund."; 18. Eastern Research Group for NOAA Office of Coastal Management, "The National Significance of California's Ocean Economy."; 19. McDonald et al., "Planting Healthy Air."; 20. Hutchinson, "How Trees Calm Us Down"; ADD Hero, "Nature Therapy for Children with ADHD"; Chawla, "Benefits of Nature Contact for Children."; 21. Outdoor Industry Association, "Outdoor Industry Association Economic Report--California."; 22. National Recreation and Park Association, "The Economic Impact of Local Parks | Research | National Recreation and Park Association."; 23. BBC Research & Consulting for California State Parks, "California Outdoor Recreation Economic Study: State Park System Contributions and Benefits."; 24. National Park Service, "Visitor Spending Effects - Economic Contributions of National Park Visitor Spending - Social Science (U.S. National Park Service)--Economic Contributions to State Economies."; 25. LWCF Coalition, "Save LWCF: California Spotlight."; 26. National Recreation and Park Association, "Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program: State Fact Sheets."; 27. Save the Redwoods League, "Why Protect Redwoods?"; 28. LWCF Coalition, "Save LWCF: California Spotlight."