



Release Date: Monday, June 5, 2017

Contact: MaryEllen Snyder, National Park Service: 724-329-8131

**Tourism to National Parks in Western Pennsylvania
Create \$88 Million in Economic Benefits**
Report shows visitor spending supports 1,058 jobs in local economy

Shanksville, PA – A new National Park Service (NPS) report shows that 1,061,400 visitors to the five Western Pennsylvania National Park Service sites in 2016 spent \$64 million dollars in communities near the park. That spending supported 1,058 jobs in the local area and had a cumulative benefit to the local economy of \$88 million. The five parks are Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site, Flight 93 National Memorial, Fort Necessity National Battlefield, Friendship Hill National Historic Site, and Johnstown Flood National Memorial.

“The Western Pennsylvania National Park Service sites welcome visitors from across the country and around the world,” said Superintendent Stephen M. Clark. “We are delighted to share the story of these five special places and the experiences they provide.

National park tourism is a significant driver in the national economy, returning more than \$10 for every \$1 invested in the National Park Service, and it’s a big factor in our local economy as well. “We appreciate the partnership and support of our neighbors and are glad to be able to give back by helping to sustain local communities.”

The peer-reviewed visitor spending analysis was conducted by economists Catherine Cullinane Thomas of the U.S. Geological Survey and Lynne Koontz of the National Park Service. The report shows \$18.4 billion of direct spending by 331 million park visitors in communities within 60 miles of a national park. This spending supported 318,000 jobs nationally; 271,544 of those jobs are found in these gateway communities. The cumulative benefit to the U.S. economy was \$34.9 billion.

According to the 2016 report, most park visitor spending was for lodging (31.2 percent) followed by food and beverages (27.2 percent), gas and oil (11.7 percent), admissions and fees (10.2 percent), souvenirs and other expenses (9.7 percent), local transportation (7.4 percent), and camping fees (2.5%).

Report authors this year produced an interactive tool. Users can explore current year visitor spending, jobs, labor income, value added, and output effects by sector for national, state, and local economies. Users can also view year-by-year trend data. The interactive tool and report are available at the NPS Social Science Program webpage: go.nps.gov/vse.

The report includes information for visitor spending at individual parks and by state. To learn more about national parks in Pennsylvania and how the National Park Service works with communities across the commonwealth to help preserve local history, conserve the environment, and provide outdoor recreation, go to www.nps.gov/Pennsylvania.

About the National Parks of Western Pennsylvania: visit park websites, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube pages. The five parks are Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site, Flight 93 National Memorial, Fort Necessity National Battlefield, Friendship Hill National Historic Site, and Johnstown Flood National Memorial.

About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 417 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Visit us at www.nps.gov, on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalparkservice, Twitter www.twitter.com/natlparkservice, and YouTube www.youtube.com/nationalparkservice.

-NPS-