

Peyton

HTMNC, Stars in the Parks Project

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National Park Benefits

Many people have called national parks a waste of taxpayer money, a pointless space for nomadic people and wanderers, or even a waste of all the precious resources national parks have. What some people fail to consider though is how important national parks really are. National parks are one of the most beneficial programs of the government. Growing up in California, I had access to national, state, and local parks. These parks have helped contribute to my enjoyable childhood and future. They provide many great services for our country and our people. Spending money on national parks is responsible and beneficial in part to its many health, mental, and societal benefits.

National parks provide many health benefits. National parks have been proven to help with inflammation and improving your memory. A Business Insider article stated, "In one study, University of Michigan students were given a brief memory test, then divided into two groups. One group took a walk around an arboretum, and the other took a walk down a city street. When the participants returned and did the test again, those who had walked among trees did almost 20% percent better than they had first time," (2018). An improvement in memory is very important for a happy and healthy life. Another one of national parks great benefits is how it lessens inflammation. In the same Business Insider article they stated, "In one study, students

who spent time in the forest had lower levels of inflammation than those who spent time in the city.” Growing up with an autoimmune disease I could definitely see improvement from being in the outdoors. Parks played an important role in sustaining my happiness and health.

National parks have helped many people mentally. People who have gone to national parks have shown a decrease in stress and depression. “One study found that students sent into the forest for two nights had lower levels of cortisol — a hormone often used as a marker for stress — than those who spent that time in a city,” (2018). This quote taken from Business Insider shows how national parks can contribute towards a calmer lifestyle. Many people have struggled with stress and anxiety and these parks might help you overcome that. National parks also help fight depression. “One study found that walks in the forest were associated with decreased levels of anxiety and bad moods, and another found that outdoor walks could be ‘useful clinically as a supplement to existing treatments’ for major depressive disorder.” Many people such as Chris McCandless, protagonist of the novel *Into The Wild*, depend on national parks. Although Chris’ foolhardy adventure proved fatal, national parks had an immense impact on him and shaped his life to be more enjoyable.

Another one of the many great services that national parks provide are the societal and economic benefits. National parks have been proven to bring in revenue and an economic boost to different governments. In an article in the National Parks Association for the state of New South Wales it stated, “National Parks provide a major boost to Australia’s economy, with nature based tourism bringing \$23 billion into the country every year.” These economic benefits help

countries thrive all over the world. Another one of the great benefits national parks have are the natural resources they provide. The National Parks Association for New South Wales states, “Intact natural areas also provide a variety of resources and processes vital for human life and the economy,” (2019). These natural resources are worth trillions of dollars. “By one analysis these ‘ecosystem services’ are worth US \$33 trillion a year.” With our country's resources growing scarce national parks are crucial for the development of our country.

National parks play an important role in our society. These national parks provide valuable services for our country and bring out the best in all of us. Many people depend on national parks to sustain their health and happiness. These parks have played an important role in my life and many other people's life. If we do not protect these lands their demise is inevitable. We have to preserve these lands not just for the animals or the plants, but for us and our country.

Citations

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[Health benefits of being outside: improve memory ... - Business Insider](#)