

# Sustainable Recreation

## What's the Problem?

Many people engage in outdoor recreation in many forms such as camping and hiking, but these activities can have negative impacts on the surrounding environment, such as a decrease in biodiversity and productivity of local flora. These problems also include soil degradation and loss of vegetation which disrupt the ecosystems. We want the public to still engage with the outdoors, but we have to protect those ecosystems.



## Our Parks are Important!

America's national parks received 327.5 million visitors in 2019.

In 2019, the American national parks received 1,429,969,885 recreation visitor hours.

In 2020, the national parks contributed 28.6 billion to the nation's economy.

Over 234,000 jobs were supported by the national parks in 2020.

## Why Should I Care?

- Keep communities active
- Mental health benefits of nature
- Support economies of our communities

## Potential Solutions

- Educational sources for visitors
- Enforcement of regulations
- Cleaning up after using the land
- Rotate active campsites
- Staying in designated areas
- Mitigating feedback loops in nature, such as with **erosion**

## What Can I Do?

- Follow the **Leave No Trace Principles from Int.org**
- Vote for local restrictions
- Monitor your own activities
- Volunteer to help your local park management

## Systems Approach Keeping Solutions...

**EQUITABLE:** preventing litter and policies from negatively affecting properties bordering the park and not making park access exclusive.

**VIALE:** making the most of the land on the park and creating creative methods to help fund it.

**BEARABLE:** making sure that conservationists are being heard.

When erosion begins, it builds on itself creating a positive feedback loop. Once raw soil is exposed, it is more likely to be eroded. This creates a loss of vegetation which is also caused by trampling from hikers and camping. The loss of vegetation takes aspects out of food webs and decreases biodiversity.

1. Plan and Prepare Ahead
2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
3. Dispose of waste properly
4. Leave what you find
5. Minimize campfire impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be considerate of other visitors



To learn more about the importance of responsible recreation and what you can do, visit <https://Int.org/>