



Director of Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness Resources



Chris Hartman is the Director of Recreation, Wilderness and Heritage. He started his federal career with the Corps of Engineers as a District Landscape Architect and Recreation Planner in Walla Walla, Washington. His Forest Service experience began in 1990 and includes assignments on the Siuslaw Nation Forest, the Intermountain Region on the Facilities Design Team, Regional Landscape Architect and several international assignments. He has had details in the National Winter Sports program and as Acting Director of Recreation in the Eastern Region. He spent four years as the developed sites and business information program manager in the Washington Office. He moved back to the Intermountain Region in 2014 as the Director of Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness.

The Intermountain Region Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness Resources Program

The Intermountain Region of the Forest Service encompasses nearly 34-million acres of National Forest System land. The Intermountain Regional Office in Ogden, Utah provides administrative oversight and support to 12 national forests and one national grassland in Utah, Nevada, western Wyoming, eastern California, and southern and central Idaho. More than 20 million people visit each year to hike, camp, drive, ski, hunt, and fish while enjoying the beauty of the national forests and grasslands.

Outdoor recreation is by far the single greatest use of the Forests in the Intermountain Region, dwarfing every other use. The number of recreation visits to the Intermountain Region rose from about 2.5 million in 1930s to about 20.3 million today. That's a growth rate of over 800 percent. Not surprisingly, it is also the single greatest employer, and it provides the single greatest stimulus for local economies. Here are some highlights:

- 21 Ski Areas
- 28 Scenic Byways
- 13.7K MI non-motorized Trails
- 11.5 K MI Motorized Trails



The Intermountain Region Recreation, Heritage and Wilderness Resources (continued)

Visitors

According to one recent national survey, more than half of American voters have visited a National Forest or Grassland in the past year, and nearly 90% of avid visitors (those who have gone three or more times in the last year) plan to visit again next year.

We get a lot of repeat visitors. In the Intermountain Region, a full 16% of our total visits are from people who enjoy their public lands more than 50 times a year. Even if they don't directly visit, travelers on scenic byways and similar routes near National Forest lands enjoyed the beautiful scenery 300 million times. In the same survey, 7 out of 10 Americans agree that protecting our national history and beauty through public lands like National Forests is one of the things we do best.

Economic Growth

Recreation is big business. In a recent report, the Outdoor Industry Association found the "outdoor economy" generates \$38 billion in direct yearly spending in the four states that make up the Intermountain Region.

Outdoor economy spending for all public lands directly supports nearly 397,000 jobs in local communities in Utah, Nevada, Idaho and Wyoming; from outdoor gear manufacturers and retailers to outfitters and guides. Visitors to our public lands are not only enjoying the bounty of our natural resources, but also promoting jobs and growth. One dollar invested in Forest Service recreation programs becomes a \$33 contribution to GDP.

Supporting Resilient Communities

Forest Service recreation programs in the region support over 120,000 jobs, the vast majority of which are in gateway communities. Outdoor recreation is the single greatest employer in the National Forest System, and provides the single greatest stimulus for local economies. Ski areas on National Forest lands throughout the country contribute \$5 billion to the GDP and represent around 78,000 full and part-time jobs.

Gateway communities such as Cedar City, UT and Ketchum, ID provide access to public lands and services to the many millions of Americans who visit them each year. These cities' distinguishing feature is proximity to public lands; the vitality of their social and economic structure often depend on the management decisions being made on and for these public lands.

Outdoor recreation opportunities and amenities are consistently ranked as one of the top reasons people move to rural towns, and is a leading force in many small town revivals, especially in the West.

Improving Quality of Life

Forest Service lands provide the opportunity to de-stress: about 30% of visitors say they spent time just relaxing. Recreation contributes to the overall health of those who visit. Over 90 million visitors of all ages and abilities (over 55%) come to engage in a physically active pursuit, spending about 7 hours being active.

With more and more of America living in urban environments, the importance of our public lands as natural refuges has never been greater.