



PRESS RELEASE

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Parks Prohibiting Jetskis see Significant Increase in Visitation, Parks that Continue to Allow the Machines see a Decrease

Visitation Data Shows that Jetski Bans May Be Good for Local Economies

San Francisco, CA—As the 2002 boating season comes to an end, Bluewater Network recently completed a review of the National Park Service's (NPS) recreation visitor counts for the past two seasons. This review found that parks that prohibited personal watercraft (PWC) on April 22, 2002 experienced an average six percent increase in visitation, as compared to last year. By contrast, those parks that continue to permit the machines' operation saw a more than nine percent drop in visitation during the same time period. PWC, better known by the trade name jetski, cause significant damage to air and water quality, visitor enjoyment, public health and safety, endangered species, natural soundscapes, and wildlife.

“The Park Service visitor data clearly shows that prohibiting jetskis from park waters may be a huge boon to local economies,” said Sean Smith, Bluewater Network's public lands director and former park ranger. “Moreover, jetski bans have the added bonus of improving visitor enjoyment, public safety, air and water quality, and natural soundscapes.”

These new statistics contradict the contention that prohibiting harmful PWC operation hurts local economies by causing a decrease in park visitation. In fact, NPS data clearly shows that more protective policies may be helpful to local economies by bringing new visitors to the region. For example, at Fire Island National Seashore in New York, the seashore experienced 20 percent more visitors than last year. At Big Thicket National Preserve in Texas, visitation was up more by more than 200,000 people. Even at the three National Recreation Areas (NRA) which are now closed to PWC (Gateway (NY), Delaware Water Gap (DE/PA), Whiskeytown, CA), park visitation was up by nearly seven percent. In total, parks that banned PWC welcomed an additional 1.45 million people during the first nine months of 2002.

By contrast, the NPS data shows that continued PWC use may actually hurt local economies by driving away visitors. At Lake Mead and Glen Canyon, two parks which see significant PWC use, visitation dropped by more than 10 percent. Overall, at the eight parks that continue to allow PWC, visitation dropped by 1.37 million.

Recreational visitation can have substantial impacts upon local economies. For example, according to federal land management agencies visitors to a typical seashore spend roughly \$100 per visit. At Assateague Island National Seashore which saw an increase of 209,000 visitors over last year, new visitation may have added as much as \$20.9 million to the economies of the seashore's surrounding gateway communities.

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<i>Parks that allow jetskis</i>	<i>2001 Visitation (Jan/Sept)</i>	<i>2002 Visitation (Jan/Sept)</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>%</i>
	14,504,855	13,136,971	-1,367,884	-9.4%

- Amistad NRA (TX)
- Bighorn Canyon NRA (MT)
- Chickasaw NRA (OK)
- Curecanti NRA (CO)
- Glen Canyon NRA (UT/AZ)
- Lake Mead NRA (NV/AZ)
- Lake Meredith NRA (TX)
- Lake Roosevelt NRA (WA)

<i>Parks that ban jetskis</i>	<i>2001 Visitation (Jan/Sept)</i>	<i>2002 Visitation (Jan/Sept)</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>%</i>
	24,036,184	25,490,924	1,454,740	6%

- Assateague Island NS (MD)
- Big Thicket NPres (TX)
- Cape Cod NS (MA)
- Cape Lookout NS (NC)
- Cumberland Island NS (GA)
- Delaware Water Gap NRA (DE/PA)
- Fire Island NS (NY)
- Gateway NRA (NY)
- Gulf Island NS (MS/FL)
- Indiana Dunes NL (IN)
- Padre Island NS (TX)
- Pictured Rocks NL (MI)
- Whiskeytown NRA (CA)

Key:
 NRA - National Recreation Area
 NL - National Lakeshore
 NS - National Seashore
 NPA - National Preservation Area

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