

Saving Summer

How Climate Change is Reshaping the Season We Love

Summer is woven into the American experience. It's hiking shaded trails and pitching tents under the stars. It's playing parachute games at summer camp. It's afternoons spent swimming in lakes and grilling poolside. It's early mornings casting a fishing line into cool water. These rituals connect us to nature, to each other, and to our public lands.

96%

of national parks
have harmful air
pollution levels

5 million

acres burned
nationwide in 2025

84%

world's coral reef area
impacted by latest
global bleaching

467,000

Americans treated
for Lyme disease
each year

Summer is changing

Across the United States, climate change is reshaping the season in visible and deeply personal ways. Rising temperatures, worsening drought, stronger storms, wildfire smoke, and warming rivers are changing when, where, and how we spend time outdoors. The places we typically go to cool off, unplug, and make memories are increasingly being disrupted by extreme weather and environmental change.

The impacts we are witnessing are interconnected. Heat intensifies drought, drought fuels wildfires, and wildfires worsen air quality. Warmer temperatures are heating up lakes, rivers, and oceans – affecting aquatic and marine species. Together, they are reshaping summer as we know it.

This report explores how climate change is affecting some of our most cherished summer activities and what those changes tell us about the urgent need to protect the places, traditions, and ecosystems that make our summer – no matter how we like to spend it – possible.

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