



Michigan's Tourism Economy, Outdoor Recreation Industry Threatened by Climate Change

Climate Action and Natural Resource Safeguards Urgently Needed

LANSING, MI (November 4) – Sportsmen, tourism officials and natural resource experts are sounding the alarm on the threat of climate change to Michigan's tourism economy and wildlife. At a roundtable discussion held at Michigan State University Wednesday, community leaders discussed the threats that change poses to fish and wildlife, and the healthy natural systems that sustain Michigan's outdoor recreation and tourism industries.

Each year, Michigan generates \$5 billion in economic activity and 72,812 jobs from hunting, fishing, and wildlife related recreation. Nationally, outdoor recreation accounts for 8% all consumer spending, which drives an overall annual contribution of \$730 billion to the economy and supports 6.5 million jobs.

“Outdoor recreation is a cornerstone of Michigan's economy,” said **Danielle Korpalski, the National Wildlife Federation's regional outreach coordinator**. “To ensure the survival of countless businesses and communities throughout the state, Congress must pass legislation that not only reduces global warming pollution but also protects wildlife and natural resources from the current and forecasted impacts of climate change.”

According to government data, climate change poses serious threats to the natural systems that provide Michigan with safe drinking water, clean air, flood protection, food, timber, recreational opportunities, scenic beauty, jobs, and numerous other services. To keep these natural resources thriving for future generations, Korpalski said the Senate will need to dedicate a significant portion of total allowances from a climate bill toward job-creating conservation initiatives that safeguard wildlife and protect, restore and enhance forests, grasslands, rivers, oceans, coastal areas and the Great Lakes.

“Our wildlife and natural resource managers have not been given the tools to meet the challenges of climate change,” said **Melinda Koslow, NWF's regional campaign manager for wildlife adaptation**. “Legislation currently being considered in the Senate would prioritize climate-smart conservation solutions and provide the much needed funding and support for states to meet the scale and scope of the threats facing wildlife and natural resources today.”

Scientific studies have shown that natural systems are already being stressed by climate-related impacts, such as extreme weather events, prolonged and pest seasons, drought and erosion. These changes affect the Great Lakes, streams and forests and the treasured species that those habitats support — including moose, perch and brook trout.

Recently, numerous groups from Michigan signed a letter urging Sen. Carl Levin and Sen. Debbie Stabenow to “work with your colleagues to ensure that the Senate passes comprehensive climate and

energy legislation this year. In order to safeguard fish, wildlife and their habitats, we urge that legislation must include both reductions of greenhouse gas emissions and dedication of allowance value for natural resources adaptation programs.”

A similar letter to the Senate was signed by 20 prominent sportsmen and conservation groups.

The National Wildlife Federation is America's largest conservation organization inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

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