



# The Mountain Pact

## Outdoor Industry Valued at Two Percent of Overall U.S. Economy

On February 14, 2018 the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) released a prototype report detailing the contribution of the outdoor recreation industry to the overall United States Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This report has been nearly two years in the making since the passage of the [Outdoor REC \(Recreation Jobs and Economic Impact\) Act](#) in 2016 and in 2017 The Mountain Pact led a [large](#)



[effort](#) to ensure that this report was completed in a timely manner so that these official numbers could be used to further support mountain communities. BEA [found](#) that the outdoor recreation industry accounted for an incredible 2 percent of the GDP in 2016 and is growing faster than the overall United States economy at a rate of 3.8 compared to 2.8 percent.

### Bureau of Economic Analysis Statistics and What This Means for Mountain Communities

The 2016 passage of the Outdoor REC Act was a huge step in the right direction for getting the contribution of the outdoor recreation industry officially recognized. Government recognition of the breadth of this industry could hold [more credence](#) for decision makers than the industry affiliated Outdoor Industry Association (OIA) reports.

The BEA prototype report valued the outdoor recreation economy at \$ 373.7 billion which is 2 percent of the overall economy. This figure is [comparable](#) to other industries like construction (4.3 percent); legal services (1.3 percent); agriculture, including farming, forestry, and fishing (1 percent); and, most significantly, mining, oil, and gas extraction (1.4 percent). This 2 percent contribution is impressive and particularly timely as the Trump Administration and Secretary of the Interior Zinke are moving to expand and streamline oil and gas development on public lands rather than support infrastructure for the faster growing outdoor recreation industry. With these official numbers showing the extent to which the outdoor industry contributes to the GDP, [perhaps](#) a focus on balanced management of public lands to support the continued growth of this industry can prevail. National public

lands are key for the outdoor recreation industry that supports our mountain communities and official recognition of the outdoor industry's importance can help give our mountain communities a greater voice when advocating for public lands protections.

### **What Next?**

For many of you who have been following this, the discrepancy between the [2017 OIA report](#) valuing the outdoor recreation industry at \$887 billion and this BEA study is significant.

However, two [main differences](#) exist in how BEA measured the industry. BEA did not account for revenue generated from apparel or equipment manufactured overseas, nor did it account for travel expenses for trips less than 50 miles from home. This second omission is significant as two-thirds of outdoor recreation trips occur within 50 miles from home.

Thank you to all of you who have been involved with The Mountain Pact's efforts to help get this report completed; it is almost there! In regards to how BEA measures the contribution of outdoor recreation, they will be accepting comments and will be updating the statistics with a final release scheduled for the fall of 2018.

If you are interested in submitting comment you can do so [here](#) by April 27, 2018, and if you would like more information on this process please contact us at [info@themountainpact.org](mailto:info@themountainpact.org).

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