



Patuxent Wildlife Research Center

USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center - Field Station at Virginia Tech

Vital Statistics

- Located in the Department of Forestry, College of Natural Resources, Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, Virginia; established in 1989
- Provides research and technical assistance to National Parks and other protected areas nationwide
- Research focus on recreation resources management in parks and wilderness, recreation ecology (visitor impacts to protected environments), carrying capacity, and ecotourism management

Benefits to Virginia

- Research and technical assistance to Virginia parks
- Collaboration on trail and campsite management practices
- Guidance and support of graduate students at Virginia Tech

Partnership with Virginia Tech

- Serving as Adjunct Faculty
- Conducting collaborative research studies with faculty and graduate students
- Graduate teaching and guest lectures in undergraduate courses
- Mentoring graduate students through technical, financial, and teaching support

Examples of Current Research Projects

- Adaptive management research to evaluate alternative camping impact management strategies at Shenandoah National Park
- Design and testing of protocols for monitoring visitor use and resource impacts at Cape Cod National Seashore
- Trail and campsite monitoring protocol development at Acadia National Park
- Research to support application of the Visitor Experience and Resource Protection framework at Zion National Park
- Development and application of trail impact monitoring protocols at Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
- Understanding the role of desired future condition statements in carrying capacity decision making
- Evaluating the effectiveness of camping management actions at high-use destination areas along the Appalachian Trail
- Investigation of visitor use, impact patterns and trail conditions at Denali National Park
- Understanding and managing visitor impacts resulting from ecotourism visitation in Belize, Costa Rica, and Chile
- Review and classification of methods for monitoring visitor impacts to wildlife
- Development and application of campsite impact monitoring protocols at Isle Royale National Park

Technical Assistance

- Visitor impact monitoring
- Visitor impact management
- Carrying capacity decision making
- International ecotourism management consulting