

Contact:
Daffny Pitchford
(703) 490-4979 ext.12

Occoquan National Wildlife Refuge Boosts Local Economy Refuge Visits Stimulate Area Sales, Jobs, Taxes

Occoquan National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia generated \$241,000 for Fairfax County, Fairfax City, Falls Church City, Prince William County, Manassas and Manassas Park in Fiscal Year 2011, according to a new economic analysis. The benefit – which includes retail sales, taxes and job income – came from visitor spending tied to recreation activities on the refuge.

The refuge returned more than \$584,000 in total economic effects, which is the total recreational expenditures plus net economic value. Economic value is the difference between the total value received from participating in a recreational activity and the total amount paid to participate in the activity.

The figures come from a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service study, called *Banking on Nature*, which used 92 of the more than 550 national wildlife refuges for its economic sampling.

Wildlife refuges pumped \$2.4 billion into the economy and supported more than 35,000 private-sector jobs in Fiscal Year 2011. Refuges contributed an average \$4.87 in total economic output for every \$1 appropriated and produced nearly \$793 million in job income for local communities. The refuges are part of the National Wildlife Refuge System, managed by the Service.

“Our National Wildlife Refuge System is the world’s greatest network of lands dedicated to wildlife conservation but is also an important contributor to our economy, attracting more than 46 million visitors from around the world who support local restaurants, hotels, and other businesses,” said Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell. “Every dollar we invest in our Refuge System and other public lands generates huge dividends for our country.”

Some recreation activities on Occoquan Refuge are wildlife viewing and hunting.

Researchers examined visitor spending in four areas – food, lodging, transportation and other expenses (such as guide fees, land-use fees and equipment rental). Local economies were defined as those within 50 miles of each of the 92 refuges studied.

Learn more about the study [here: http://1.usa.gov/185tp06](http://1.usa.gov/185tp06)

Learn more about visitor opportunities at Occoquan Refuge [here: http://www.fws.gov/refuge/occoquan_bay/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/occoquan_bay/)

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The National Wildlife Refuge System protects wildlife and wildlife habitat on more than 150 million acres of land and water from the Caribbean to the Pacific, Maine to Alaska. Refuges also improve human health, provide outdoor recreation and support local economies. Visit our [homepage](http://www.fws.gov/refuges) at www.fws.gov/refuges. Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our [Facebook page](#), follow our [tweets](#), watch our [YouTube Channel](#), and download photos from our [Flickr page](#).

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