

Epic Trails in the Glacier Peak Wilderness

Washington TRAILS

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What New Study Reveals About Youth and the Outdoors

The Outdoor Foundation released its 2014 Outdoor Recreation Participation Topline Report in May. The report is the only detailed study of its kind tracking American participation trends in outdoor recreation and focuses on youth, young adults and the future of the outdoors. The data came from 19,240 online interviews carried out with a nationwide sample and uncovered some encouraging trends. Major takeaways include these positives:

- ↑ A record **142.6 million** Americans participated in at least one outdoor activity in 2013—that's 49.2% of the population. Collectively, people went on 12.1 billion outdoor outings.
- ↑ Outdoor participation among youth and young adults showed promise, with an annual average of 99 outdoor outings per person. In comparison, that is more than the 77 annual outings participants ages 25 and up took in 2013.
- ↑ Young participants were slightly more diverse in 2013 than they were in 2012. This was in part due to increased Hispanic participation, which grew from 8% in 2012 to 10% in 2013.
- ↑ Young females are now participating in outdoor activities at the same rate as young males. That wasn't the case from 2008 to 2012.
- ↑ The most popular activities among young people, in terms of overall participation, continued to be running, biking, fishing, camping and hiking. Adults reported similar favorite pursuits.
- ↑ Trail running saw a significant increase in popularity, up 13% from 2012. Participation in climbing increased 6% and backpacking increased 4% during the same period.

While the individual takeaways of the study are encouraging, the overall trend is even more positive: there is a growing demand for on-trail activities and an increasingly active young generation.

The Next Step: Channeling that outdoor enthusiasm into a passion for stewardship.

PARK UPDATES:

Enchanted Valley Chalet Moving?

OLYMPIC NATIONAL PARK – With the Enchanted Valley Chalet still teetering on the bank of the East Fork Quinault River, park officials have announced a plan to temporarily move the building approximately 50 to 100 feet away from the river. The move is an interim solution to save the chalet, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and to protect the water quality of the East Fork Quinault River—an important habitat for a variety of salmon and the endangered bull trout.

The park accepted public comments on its proposal in June. WTA supports the park's efforts to protect the river by temporarily moving the chalet. In its letter to Olympic National Park, WTA advocated that costs incurred by relocating the chalet should not deplete the budgets of other park functions, such as trail maintenance and recreation. WTA also asked that impacts on hiker access to the Enchanted Valley be kept to a minimum during the busy summer hiking season.

A decision on the temporary move is expected in the coming weeks. To learn more about the chalet, visit wta.org/chalet.



Photo by Ben Jensen

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