



MONTANA **FWP**

2018 ANNUAL VISITATION REPORT



2018

Montana State Parks

Montana State Parks hosted 2.56 million visits in 2018. Statewide visitation was up 1% from 2017. The Northwest Region (Kalispell) had the highest overall visitation with over 717,000 visits, and Giant Springs State Park in Great Falls had the highest visitation of all state parks with over 397,000 visits.

2018 Annual Visitation Report

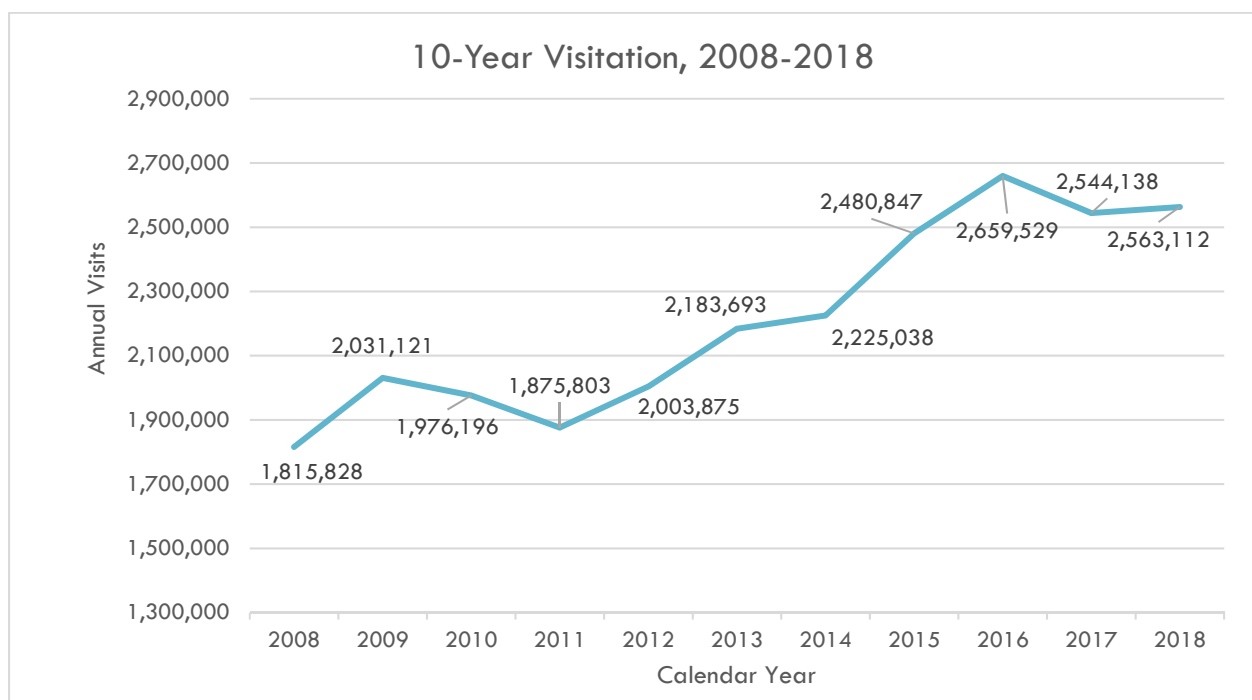
JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2018

The following is a summary of the Montana State Parks 2018 annual visitation, as well as comparisons with 2017 data and visitation trends.

Total statewide visitation was 2,563,112 visits in 2018, up 1% from 2017.

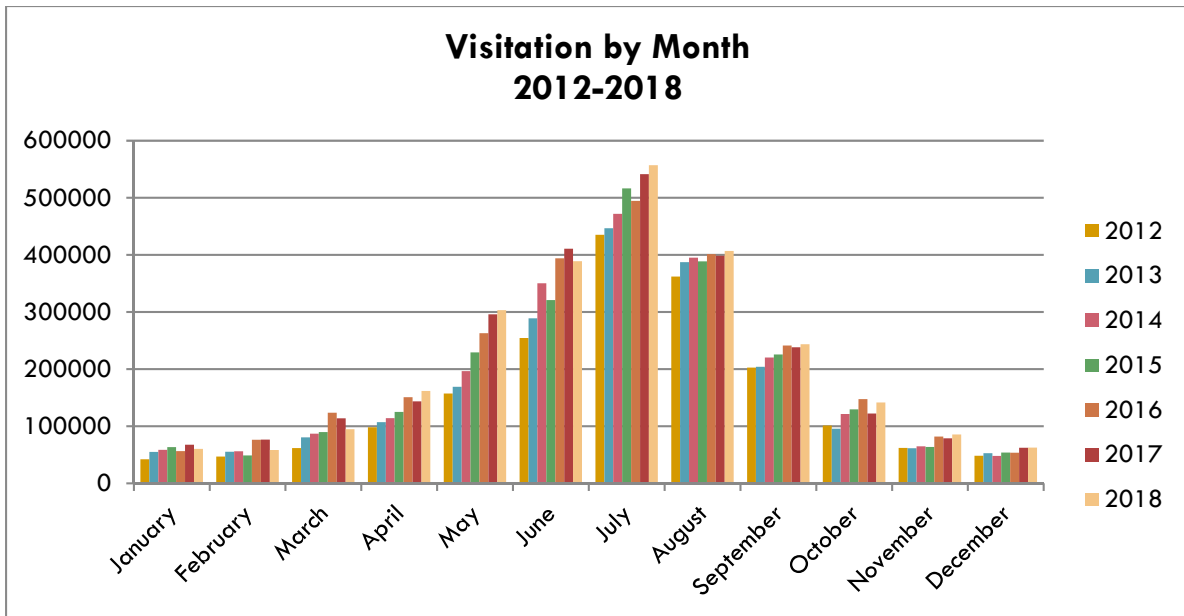
STATE PARK VISITATION TRENDS

In 2018, Montana State Parks visitation was up 1% from the previous year.



The top five parks for **annual** visitation in 2018 were:

1. Giant Springs – 397,013 visits
2. Flathead Lake – 322,987 visits
3. Cooney – 172,665 visits
4. Thompson Chain-of-Lakes/Logan – 158,145 visits
5. Lake Elmo – 138,196 visits



Annual Visitation by Region, 2018			
Region	2018 Total Visits	2017 Total Visits	% Change 2017-2018
Northwest (Kalispell)	717,959	696,372	3%
West Central (Missoula)	313,194	256,287	22%*
Southwest (Bozeman)	412,640	430,356	-4%
North Central (Great Falls)	691,984	698,355	-1%
Eastern (Billings)	427,335	462,768	-8%

*Milltown State Park opened in 2018

Shoulder Season

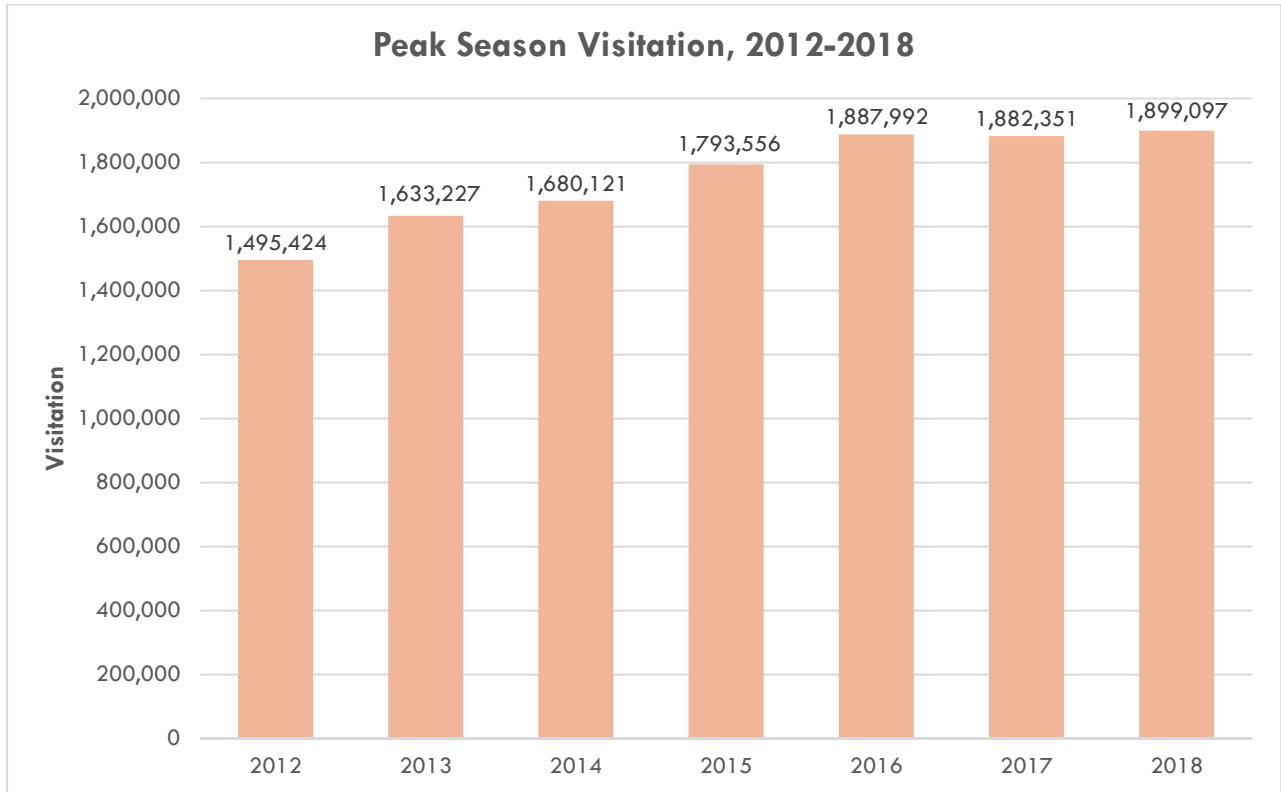
The 2018 shoulder season (February through April and October through November) saw a 1% increase from the 2017 season. There was a slight decrease in the spring due to flooding across the State, but an increase in the fall due to mild weather.

Shoulder Season Visitation				
Shoulder Season*	2018	2017	2016	2015
February – April	314,396	333,530	429,066	350,295
October - November	226,846	200,620	217,047	229,118
Total Shoulder Season	541,242	534,150	646,113	579,413

*Does not include January or December

Peak Season Visitation

Peak season for Montana State Parks is from May to September. The 2018 peak season saw a total of **1,899,097 visits**.



The top five parks for **peak season** visitation in 2018 were:

1. Flathead Lake – 274,228 visits (+6% from 2017)
2. Giant Springs – 234,494 visits (+4% from 2017)
3. Cooney – 129,671 visits (-11% from 2017)
4. Thompson Chain-of-Lakes/Logan – 121,937 visits (+20% from 2017)
5. Lake Elmo – 106,846 visits (-16% from 2017)

2018 Peak Season Visitation Estimates by Total Visits

May - September: 1,899,097 visits

Park	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2017-2018 % Change
Flathead Lake	274,228	258,743	251,002	225,357	226,472	212,380	200,118	6%
<i>Wayfarers</i>	135,104	135,433	123,985	103,942	108,610	99,942	90,643	0%
<i>Big Arm</i>	43,253	36,483	34,688	31,933	30,229	28,769	30,189	19%
<i>West Shore</i>	29,376	23,870	25,114	28,208	25,995	28,175	24,321	23%
<i>Finley Point</i>	23,224	23,110	27,088	24,786	19,976	18,736	18,722	0%
<i>Wild Horse Island</i>	21,654	22,788	19,946	18,501	19,108	18,838	16,519	-5%
<i>Yellow Bay</i>	21,617	17,059	20,181	17,988	22,554	17,921	19,723	27%
Giant Springs	234,494	224,607	230,438	239,344	179,894	174,452	156,685	4%
Cooney	129,671	145,436	133,148	138,836	122,102	125,107	98,836	-11%
TCL/Logan	121,937	101,857	107,282	93,760	73,765	70,592	-	20%
<i>Thompson Chain of Lakes</i>	100,908	81,803	82,348	71,528	53,567	55,124	-	23%
<i>Logan</i>	21,029	20,054	24,934	22,232	20,198	15,468	15,578	5%
Lake Elmo	106,846	127,585	122,266	117,051	108,992	119,704	169,540	-16%
Whitefish/Les Mason	94,142	96,836	92,699	95,142	58,799	62,154	62,350	-3%
<i>Whitefish Lake</i>	60,719	66,115	64,004	64,431	46,874	50,166	51,747	-8%
<i>Les Mason</i>	33,423	30,721	28,698	30,711	11,925	11,988	10,603	9%
Spring Meadow Lake	83,988	82,635	80,807	123,841	104,362	124,868	88,091	2%
Lewis & Clark Caverns	73,378	72,359	73,954	69,330	61,046	64,228	59,861	1%
Tongue River Reservoir	62,598	55,402	57,871	44,868	57,057	65,296	47,464	13%
Lone Pine	62,330	59,076	68,119	52,886	58,806	47,174	40,457	6%
Makoshika	54,527	58,558	66,923	50,860	53,987	33,760	42,265	-7%
Placid Lake	47,824	47,828	53,863	40,875	52,495	33,208	43,660	0%
Black Sandy	46,989	55,937	52,897	17,614	47,349	48,236	50,910	-16%
Salmon Lake	36,717	46,346	49,152	52,021	57,230	53,220	44,607	-21%
Pictograph Cave	37,467	39,330	33,263	44,486	43,367	39,700	28,633	-5%
Frenchtown Pond	37,323	37,724	45,749	36,040	45,173	25,878	25,669	-1%
Bannack	37,457	36,622	51,396	35,665	27,498	13,475	27,362	2%
Ackley Lake	34,853	34,205	32,848	24,058	23,065	27,531	19,442	2%
Milltown*	33,868	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Missouri Headwaters	33,038	32,048	28,804	24,250	23,145	23,359	19,914	3%
Travelers' Rest	23,070	21,145	23,712	20,034	19,181	17,214	15,854	9%
Beavertail Hill	19,667	18,018	20,427	17,702	21,056	17,807	15,228	9%
Sluice Boxes	18,838	18,175	16,098	15,550	13,015	13,470	12,134	4%
First Peoples Buffalo Jump	18,214	19,761	20,108	11,923	13,606	11,209	10,782	-8%
Lake Mary Ronan	17,485	20,188	19,670	8,424	22,778	22,817	22,870	-13%
Hell Creek	16,332	22,838	20,828	25,093	25,162	28,025	25,063	-28%
Medicine Rocks	14,767	8,639	11,600	11,909	7,457	19,108	7,663	71%
Thompson Falls	14,557	16,543	12,869	11,523	10,733	11,609	10,515	-12%
Chief Plenty Coups	12,939	12,331	8,778	13,077	23,576	18,654	27,932	5%
Anaconda Smoke Stack	12,101	10,433	11,622	8,404	7,545	7,119	7,220	16%
Lost Creek	11,699	11,026	10,672	13,842	9,868	9,512	9,487	6%
Painted Rocks	11,285	9,717	9,227	8,183	11,183	11,538	11,862	16%
Council Grove	11,234	18,812	20,320	18,564	17,905	19,546	18,635	-40%
Madison Buffalo Jump	9,505	8,208	8,626	6,516	8,405	7,375	2,158	16%
Brush Lake	9,033	7,716	6,724	8,843	6,843	5,255	8,478	17%
Prairie Dog Town	8,739	12,187	12,186	12,592	8,296	15,114	8,061	-48%
Smith River	5,463	4,844	3,902	3,739	4,924	4,061	4,128	13%
Clarks Lookout	4,760	6,061	4,437	5,069	3,624	4,710	5,091	-21%
Tower Rock	3,950	6,828	4,126	6,441	7,881	5,902	7,057	-42%
Fish Creek	3,776	3,276	3,276	2,050	3,283	3,283	3,283	15%
Pirogue Island	2,696	2,873	3,299	3,336	3,038	2,956	9,094	-6%
Fort Owen	2,656	1,737	1,751	1,721	2,194	2,258	3,236	53%
Rosebud Battlefield	2,656	3,123	3,102	2,798	2,466	2,525	3,616	-15%

*park opened during the 2018 season.

2018 Annual Visitation by Region

January - December: Visits

Region	Park	2018 Total Visits	2017 Total Visits	% Change
Northwest Region (Kalispell)		717,959	696,372	3%
	Flathead Lake	322,987	308,576	2%
	Wayfarers	164,261	163,085	-6%
	Big Arm	51,452	43,522	22%
	West Shore	33,859	32,798	3%
	Yellow Bay	27,022	22,045	23%
	Finley Point	24,390	23,863	2%
	Wild Horse Island	22,003	23,263	-5%
	Lake Mary Ronan	23,161	27,919	-17%
	Lone Pine	94,212	94,121	0%
	TCL/Logan	158,145	133,702	18%
	Thompson Chain of Lakes	130,006	106,933	22%
	Logan	28,139	26,769	5%
	Thompson Falls	15,229	17,233	-12%
Whitefish Lake/Les Mason	104,225	114,821	-9%	
Whitefish Lake	67,596	82,538	-18%	
Les Mason	36,629	32,283	13%	
West Central Region (Missoula)		313,194	256,287	22%
Beavertail Hill	20,866	19,148	9%	
Council Grove	39,011	33,431	17%	
Fish Creek	5,979	5,481	9%	
Fort Owen	4,033	2,549	58%	
Frenchtown Pond	62,178	51,297	21%	
Milltown	38,091	0	0%	
Painted Rocks	12,980	10,560	23%	
Placid Lake	51,668	50,413	2%	
Salmon Lake	39,449	48,248	-18%	
Travelers' Rest	38,939	35,160	11%	
Southwest Region (Bozeman)		412,640	430,356	-4%
Anaconda Smoke Stack	14,506	12,652	15%	
Bannack	54,019	48,918	10%	
Clark's Lookout	7,394	9,611	-23%	
Cooney	172,665	190,279	-9%	
Lewis & Clark Caverns	80,294	81,518	-2%	
Lost Creek	13,129	12,522	5%	
Madison Buffalo Jump	16,266	14,705	11%	
Missouri Headwaters	45,110	42,365	6%	
Prairie Dog Town	9,257	17,786	-48%	
North Central Region (Great Falls)		691,984	698,355	-1%
Giant Springs	397,013	401,062	-1%	
Spring Meadow Lake	132,496	131,733	1%	
Black Sandy	59,638	62,895	-5%	
Ackley Lake	42,157	41,470	2%	
Sluice Boxes	24,169	22,592	7%	
First Peoples Buffalo Jump	23,168	23,956	-3%	
Tower Rock	7,320	9,150	-20%	
Smith River	6,023	5,497	10%	
Southeast Region (Billings)		427,335	462,768	-8%
Lake Elmo	138,196	170,770	-19%	
Makoshika	85,990	94,308	-9%	
Tongue River Reservoir	72,693	66,864	9%	
Pictograph Cave	52,667	51,985	1%	
Hell Creek	23,088	30,093	-23%	
Medicine Rocks	19,323	13,893	39%	
Chief Plenty Coups	16,517	16,057	3%	
Brush Lake	9,754	8,799	11%	
Pirogue Island	5,300	5,848	-9%	
Rosebud Battlefield	3,807	4,151	-8%	

Visitation is not reported for Elkhorn, Granite, Beaverhead Rock, Marias River, North Shore or Yellowstone River.