



MONTANA **FWP**

2019 ANNUAL VISITATION REPORT



Montana State Parks hosted over 2.6 million visits in 2019. Statewide visitation was up 3% from 2018. The Northwest Region (Kalispell) had the highest overall visitation with over 768,356 visits, and Giant Springs State Park in Great Falls had the highest visitation of all state parks with over 384,023 visits.

2019 Annual Visitation Report

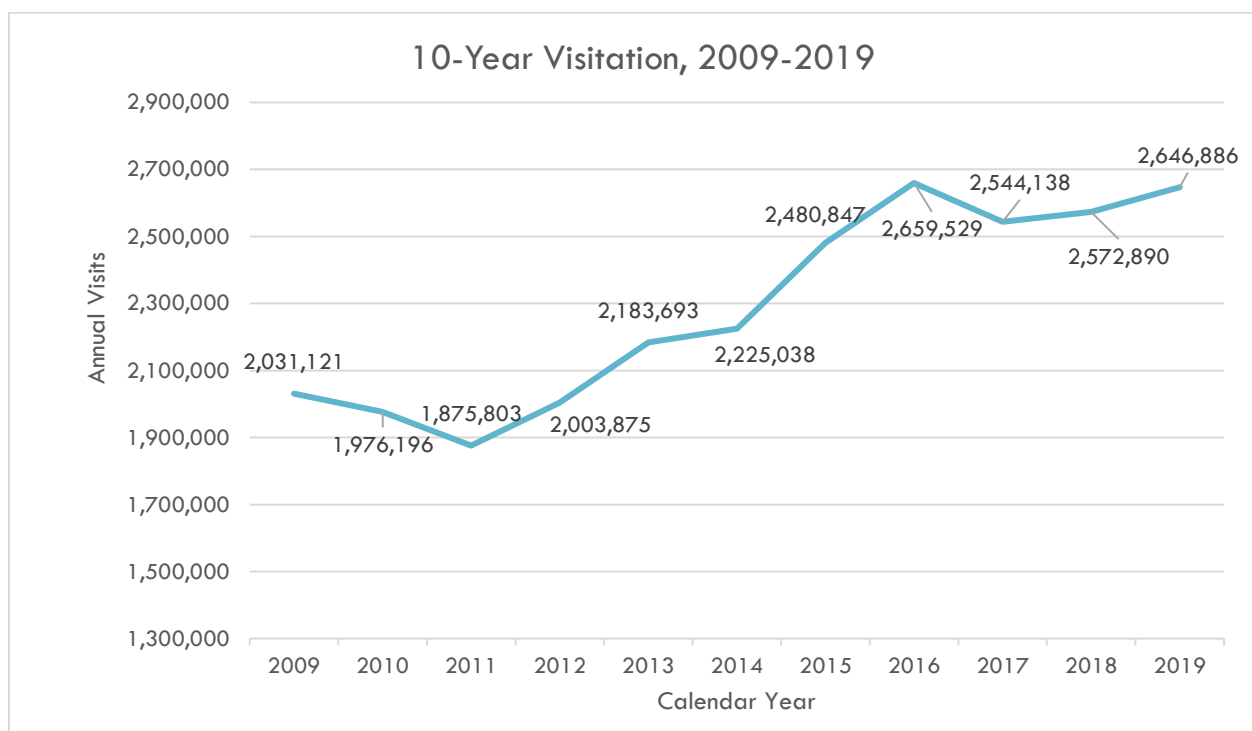
JANUARY TO DECEMBER 2019

The following is a summary of the Montana State Parks 2019 annual visitation, as well as comparisons with 2018 data and visitation trends.

Total statewide visitation was 2,646,886 visits in 2019, up 3% from 2018.

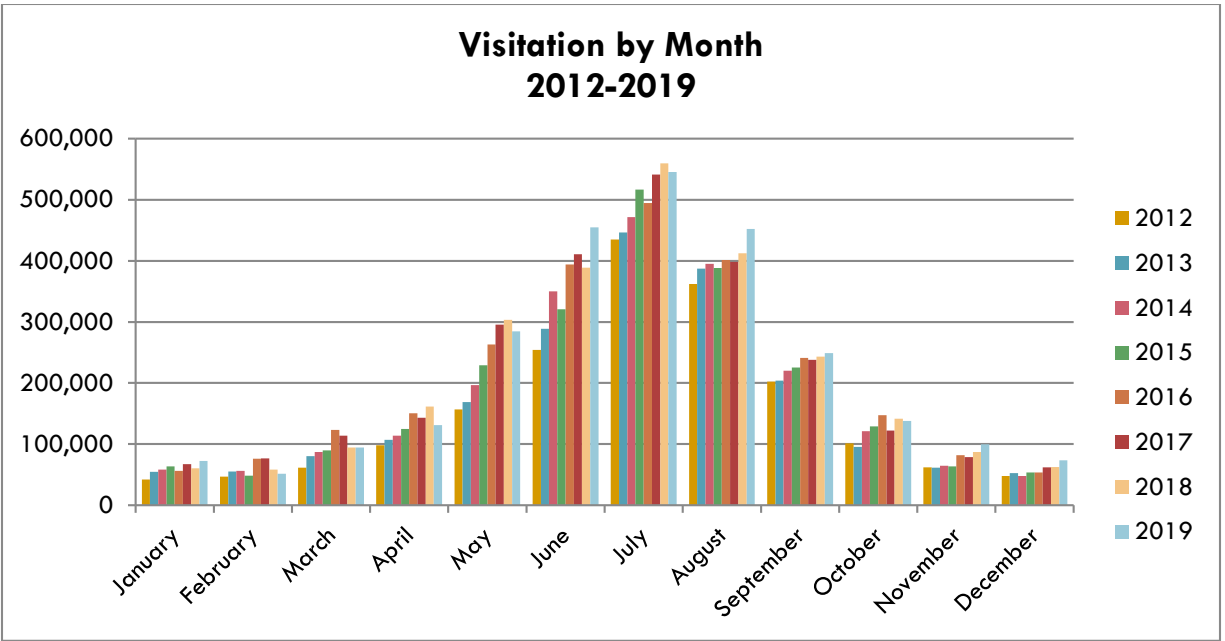
STATE PARK VISITATION TRENDS

In 2019, Montana State Parks visitation was up 3% from the previous year.



The top five parks for **annual** visitation in 2019 were:

1. Giant Springs – 384,023 visits
2. Flathead Lake – 353,269 visits
3. Cooney – 173,439 visits
4. Lake Elmo – 172,118 visits
5. Thompson Chain-of-Lakes/Logan – 153,732 visits



Annual Visitation by Region, 2019			
Region	2019 Total Visits	2018 Total Visits	% Change 2018-2019
Region 1 (Kalispell)	768,365	717,959	7%
Region 2 (Missoula)	347,158	313,194	11%
Region 3 (Bozeman)*	244,919	412,640	-41%
Region 4 (Great Falls)	653,939	691,984	-5%
Region 5 (Billings)*	425,943	389,302	9%
Region 7 (Miles City)	216,768	219,955	-1%

* Regional boundaries were modified. Cooney State Park was moved back to Region 5 from Region 3.

Shoulder Season

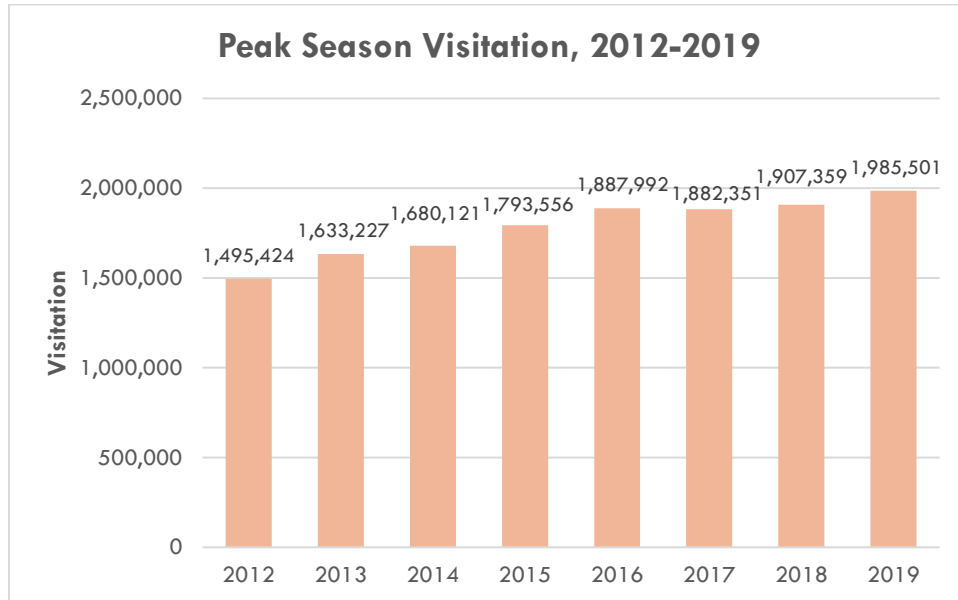
The 2019 shoulder season (February through April and October through November) saw a decrease of 5% from the 2018 season. There was a slight decrease in the spring due to flooding across the State, but an increase in the fall due to mild weather.

	Shoulder Season Visitation				
Shoulder Season*	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
February – April	277,313	314,396	333,530	429,066	350,295
October - November	237,818	226,846	200,620	217,047	229,118
Total Shoulder Season	515,131	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 2019 peak season saw a total of **1,985,501 visits**.



The top five parks for **peak season** visitation in 2019 were:

1. Flathead Lake – 294,717 visits (+2% from 2018)
2. Giant Springs – 216,950 visits (-7% from 2018)
3. Lake Elmo – 145,278 visits (36% from 2018)
4. Cooney – 132,911 visits (2% from 2018)
5. Thompson Chain-of-Lakes/Logan – 118,233 visits (-3% from 2018)

2019 Peak Season Visitation Estimates by Total Visits

May - September: **1,985,501** Visits

Park	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2018-2019 % Change
Flathead Lake	294,717	274,228	258,743	251,002	225,357	226,472	212,380	200,118	2%
<i>Wayfarers</i>	159,079	135,104	135,433	123,985	103,942	108,610	99,942	90,643	18%
<i>Big Arm</i>	42,613	43,253	36,483	34,688	31,933	30,229	28,769	30,189	-1%
<i>Finley Point</i>	27,721	23,224	23,110	27,088	24,786	19,976	18,736	18,722	19%
<i>Wild Horse Island</i>	23,410	21,654	22,788	19,946	18,501	19,108	18,838	16,519	8%
<i>West Shore</i>	22,283	29,376	23,870	25,114	28,208	25,995	28,175	24,321	-24%
<i>Yellow Bay</i>	19,611	21,617	17,059	20,181	17,988	22,554	17,921	19,723	-9%
Giant Springs	216,950	234,494	224,607	230,438	239,344	179,894	174,452	156,685	-7%
Cooney	132,911	129,671	145,436	133,148	138,836	122,102	125,107	98,836	2%
TCL/Logan	118,233	121,937	101,857	107,282	93,760	73,765	70,592	-	-3
<i>Thompson Chain of Lakes</i>	93,968	100,908	81,803	82,348	71,528	53,567	55,124	-	-7%
<i>Logan</i>	24,265	21,029	20,054	24,934	22,232	20,198	15,468	15,578	15%
Lake Elmo	145,278	106,846	127,585	122,266	117,051	108,992	119,704	169,540	36%
Whitefish/Les Mason	90,195	94,142	96,836	92,699	95,142	58,799	62,154	62,350	-4%
<i>Whitefish Lake</i>	57,889	60,719	66,115	64,004	64,431	46,874	50,166	51,747	-5%
<i>Les Mason</i>	32,306	33,423	30,721	28,698	30,711	11,925	11,988	10,603	-3%
Spring Meadow Lake	81,179	83,988	82,635	80,807	123,841	104,362	124,868	88,091	-3%
Lewis & Clark Caverns	79,331	73,378	72,359	73,954	69,330	61,046	64,228	59,861	8%
Lone Pine	69,354	62,330	59,076	68,119	52,886	58,806	47,174	40,457	11%
Placid Lake	61,104	47,824	47,828	53,863	40,875	52,495	33,208	43,660	28%
Makoshika	60,456	54,527	58,558	66,923	50,860	53,987	33,760	42,265	11%
Tongue River Reservoir	58,629	62,598	55,402	57,871	44,868	57,057	65,296	47,464	-6%
Frenchtown Pond	55,831	37,323	37,724	45,749	36,040	45,173	25,878	25,669	50%
Salmon Lake	47,857	36,717	46,346	49,152	52,021	57,230	53,220	44,607	30%
Missouri Headwaters	38,562	33,038	32,048	28,804	24,250	23,145	23,359	19,914	17%
Pictograph Cave	37,764	37,467	39,330	33,263	44,486	43,367	39,700	28,633	1%
Bannack	35,300	37,457	36,622	51,396	35,665	27,498	13,475	27,362	-6%
Black Sandy	33,426	46,989	55,937	52,897	17,614	47,349	48,236	50,910	-29%
Hell Creek	28,951	16,332	22,838	20,828	25,093	25,162	28,025	25,063	77%
Ackley Lake	26,430	34,853	34,205	32,848	24,058	23,065	27,531	19,442	-24%
Milltown*	24,475	33,868	-	-	-	-	-	-	-37%
Travelers' Rest	23,403	23,070	21,145	23,712	20,034	19,181	17,214	15,854	1%
Beavertail Hill	20,805	19,667	18,018	20,427	17,702	21,056	17,807	15,228	6%
Council Grove	20,044	14,041	18,812	20,320	18,564	17,905	19,546	18,635	43%
Lake Mary Ronan	17,952	17,485	20,188	19,670	8,424	22,778	22,817	22,870	3%
Sluice Boxes	16,911	18,838	18,175	16,098	15,550	13,015	13,470	12,134	-10%
Thompson Falls	14,548	14,557	16,543	12,869	11,523	10,733	11,609	10,515	0%
Lost Creek	13,718	11,699	11,026	10,672	13,842	9,868	9,512	9,487	17%
Anaconda Smoke Stack	13,163	12,101	10,433	11,622	8,404	7,545	7,119	7,220	9%
First Peoples Buffalo Jump	12,957	18,214	19,761	20,108	11,923	13,606	11,209	10,782	-29%
Medicine Rocks	12,925	14,767	8,639	11,600	11,909	7,457	19,108	7,663	-12%
Painted Rocks	11,070	11,285	9,717	9,227	8,183	11,183	11,538	11,862	-2%
Chief Plenty Coups	10,818	12,939	12,331	8,778	13,077	23,576	18,654	27,932	-16%
Prairie Dog Town	10,206	8,739	12,187	12,186	12,592	8,296	15,114	8,061	17%
Madison Buffalo Jump	8,945	9,505	8,208	8,626	6,516	8,405	7,375	2,158	-6%
Brush Lake	8,151	9,033	7,716	6,724	8,843	6,843	5,255	8,478	-10%
Tower Rock	7,594	3,950	6,828	4,126	6,441	7,881	5,902	7,057	92%
Smith River	5,728	5,463	4,844	3,902	3,739	4,924	4,061	4,128	5%
Rosebud Battlefield	5,291	2,656	3,123	3,102	2,798	2,466	2,525	3,616	59%
Clarks Lookout	5,077	4,760	6,061	4,437	5,069	3,624	4,710	5,091	7%
Fish Creek	3,776	3,776	3,276	3,276	2,050	3,283	3,283	3,283	0%
Fort Owen	3,103	2,656	1,737	1,751	1,721	2,194	2,258	3,236	17%
Pirogue Island	2,383	2,696	2,873	3,299	3,336	3,038	2,956	9,094	-12%

*park opened during the 2018 season.

2019 Annual Visitation by Region

January - December: **2,646,886 Visits**

Region	Park	2019 Total Visits	2018 Total Visits	% Change
Region 1 (Kalispell)		768,365	717,959	7%
	Flathead Lake	353,269	322,987	9%
	Wayfarers	196,434	164,261	20%
	Big Arm	50,579	51,452	-2%
	Finley Point	29,106	24,390	19%
	West Shore	29,127	33,859	-14%
	Wild Horse Island	23,804	22,003	8%
	Yellow Bay	24,219	27,022	-10%
	Lake Mary Ronan	23,086	23,161	0%
	Lone Pine	114,132	94,212	21%
	TCL/Logan	153,732	158,145	-3%
	Thompson Chain of Lakes	123,682	130,006	-5%
	Logan	30,050	28,139	7%
	Thompson Falls	15,675	15,229	3%
Whitefish Lake/Les Mason	108,471	104,225	4%	
Whitefish Lake	72,573	67,596	7%	
Les Mason	35,898	36,629	-2%	
Region 2 (Missoula)		347,158	313,194	11%
Frenchtown Pond	70,338	62,178	13%	
Placid Lake	67,695	51,668	31%	
Salmon Lake	50,754	39,449	29%	
Travelers' Rest	39,851	38,939	2%	
Milltown	36,387	38,091	-18%	
Council Grove	35,868	41,818	-14%	
Beavertail Hill	22,201	20,866	6%	
Painted Rocks	12,987	12,980	0%	
Fish Creek	6,281	5,979	5%	
Fort Owen	4,796	4,033	19%	
Region 3 (Bozeman)		234,713	230,718	2%
Lewis & Clark Caverns	86,077	80,294	7%	
Missouri Headwaters	51,898	45,110	15%	
Bannack	43,804	54,019	-19%	
Anaconda Smoke Stack	16,309	14,506	12%	
Madison Buffalo Jump	15,649	16,266	-4%	
Lost Creek	15,346	13,129	17%	
Clark's Lookout	5,630	7,394	-24%	
Region 4 (Great Falls)		653,939	691,984	-5%
Giant Springs	384,023	397,013	-3%	
Spring Meadow Lake	134,992	132,496	2%	
Black Sandy	43,241	59,638	-27%	
Ackley Lake	32,522	42,157	-23%	
Sluice Boxes	22,085	24,169	-9%	
First Peoples Buffalo Jump	16,202	23,168	-30%	
Tower Rock	14,777	7,320	102%	
Smith River	6,097	6,023	1%	
Region 5 (Billings)		425,943	389,302	9%
Cooney	173,439	172,665	0%	
Lake Elmo	172,118	138,196	25%	
Pictograph Cave	54,273	52,667	3%	
Chief Plenty Coups	15,907	16,517	-4%	
Prairie Dog Town	10,206	9,257	10%	
Region 7 (Miles City)		216,768	219,955	-1%
Makoshika	79,799	85,990	-7%	
Tongue River Reservoir	64,504	72,693	-11%	
Hell Creek	36,189	23,088	57%	
Medicine Rocks	16,819	19,323	-13%	
Brush Lake	8,556	9,754	-12%	
Rosebud Battlefield	6,563	3,807	47%	
Pirogue Island	4,338	5,300	-18%	

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