



## Destination Stewardship, Responsible Travel, & Sustainable Tourism

---

A GLOBAL TRENDS REPORT

## Stewardship, Responsibility, and Sustainability in their simplest terms... means **BALANCE**.



### DESTINATION STEWARDSHIP

brings together community allies to find a **balance** between residents' quality of life and visitors' experience.



### RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

encourages visitors to **balance** enjoyment of local heritage and nature with respect for community assets.



### SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

emphasizes industry operations that balance economic returns with social responsibility and environmental conservation

As travelers become savvier, these concepts are increasingly important.

SUSTAINABILITY  
IS IMPORTANT  
TO TRAVELERS

90%

of travelers look for sustainable options when traveling.



Travelers prefer to support **SUSTAINABLE** businesses with their wallet.

60%

of travelers are willing to pay more for travel providers that demonstrate a commitment to environmental responsibility

**BUT...**

49%

of travelers think there are not enough sustainable choices available in the market

**IN REALITY...**

74%

of accommodations implement sustainable practices, but 69% do not communicate their efforts effectively

THIS IS A MISSED OPPORTUNITY BECAUSE...

31%

of travelers said they would be encouraged to make more sustainable travel choices if travel platforms used a clear label to identify when something is sustainable



COMMUNICATION  
SPOTLIGHT  
Breckenridge, CO

Breckenridge, Colorado's 'B like Breckenridge' campaign takes a holistic approach to sustainability, targeting visitors, locals and businesses, and encouraging respectful interactions with nature, wildlife and each other when visiting the mountain destination. The campaign encourages use of language such as 'everyone is invited', 'resource wise businesses', and 'embrace the spirit of Breckenridge'.

# 2

## Places Need It



Outdoor recreation is a significant part of the visitor experience.



**OUTDOOR RECREATION  
TOURISM IS A RAPIDLY  
EXPANDING INDUSTRY**

**56%**

of travelers seek more  
rural, off-the-beaten-track  
experiences to immerse  
themselves in the outdoors



**BUT THERE ARE CONCERNS  
THAT REQUIRE COLLABORATIVE,  
COMPREHENSIVE, AND  
COORDINATED PLANNING**



- **SEASONALITY** and visitor distribution
- **STRAINED** public infrastructure
- **CLIMATE** related impacts
- **INCLUSION** and representation
- **ECONOMIC** inequality

“

We are at an inflection point. Outdoor asset-based economic development presents a great opportunity for communities and there is money on the table to help activate and advance projects. But, if we are not planning for the effects of a shifting climate, or taking these opportunities to welcome underrepresented communities, then we are missing the mark, and the long-term return on investments will be diminished. Investments in outdoor assets and stewardship, in all aspects of the industry, must be part of the discussion.

”

**Amy Allison**, Director Made x Mtns, Former Director  
of Office of Outdoor Recreation for North Carolina

**Investing in stewardship can have numerous benefits for places and people.**

Through collaboration and planning, you can inspire your visitors to act responsibly  
during their visit and generate more value for your community

**ENHANCES COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT & INCLUSIVITY BY**

Creating economic  
multipliers by  
encouraging travelers'  
and businesses' to  
spend locally

Integrating  
the community's  
values and including  
local culture in  
experiences

Celebrating  
heritage and intangible  
culture by sharing arts,  
music, food and historic  
experiences

73% of travelers want to have authentic experiences  
that are representative of the local culture when they travel

**CONSERVES NATURAL &  
ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES BY:**

Educating visitors  
and local communities  
on conservation,  
preservation and  
responsible visitation

Providing a mechanism  
to use tourism profits to  
conserve natural assets

Encouraging  
destinations to create  
stewardship plans and  
businesses to implement  
sustainability initiatives

Over \$10 billion of tourism revenue is spent  
annually on protecting natural sites and wildlife



# 3

## It's Good For Business



### Tourism and outdoor recreation is big business in the US

In 2019 there were 2.3 billion domestic travelers, spending  
**\$972 BILLION**  
and 79.2 million international tourists, worth \$155 billion

In 2021, the outdoor recreation economy generated \$862 billion, or roughly 2% of national GDP.

**THIS IS A LARGER SHARE OF NATIONAL GDP THAN OIL AND GAS EXTRACTION, MINING OR AGRICULTURE.**

**\$111.6 BILLION**  
or 13% of the entire outdoor recreation economy, is from tourism-related activities (arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services)

### JOBS, JOBS, JOBS

**10.5 MILLION**

people were employed in tourism in the US in 2021, or 7% of all US jobs



**EVERY \$1 MILLION OF SALES**

in travel goods & services



**DIRECTLY GENERATES**

**8 JOBS**

compared to only 5 for other industries

**5.2 MILLION**

people are directly or indirectly employed in outdoor recreation in the US



**FOR EVERY JOB CREATED**  
in the outdoor recreation industry



**3-4 JOBS**

are created throughout the entire economy

### SUSTAINABILITY is good for the bottom line

Sustainability is all about quality management and assurance for the long-term, something that all businesses need to thrive

Sustainability gives businesses a competitive edge and leads to happier customers

77% of organizations say their sustainability approaches increased customer loyalty

Sustainable businesses outperform others across all industries

88% of sustainable-minded businesses outperform their broad market equivalents

The sustainable tourism market is outpacing the traditional tourism market

Globally the sustainable tourism market is expected to grow at 23% per year over the next 10 years, far exceeding the overall tourism market

STEWARDSHIP | RESPONSIBILITY | SUSTAINABILITY

BALANCE

MATTERS TO VISITORS | POSITIVELY IMPACTS PEOPLE AND PLACE | IMPROVES ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE