



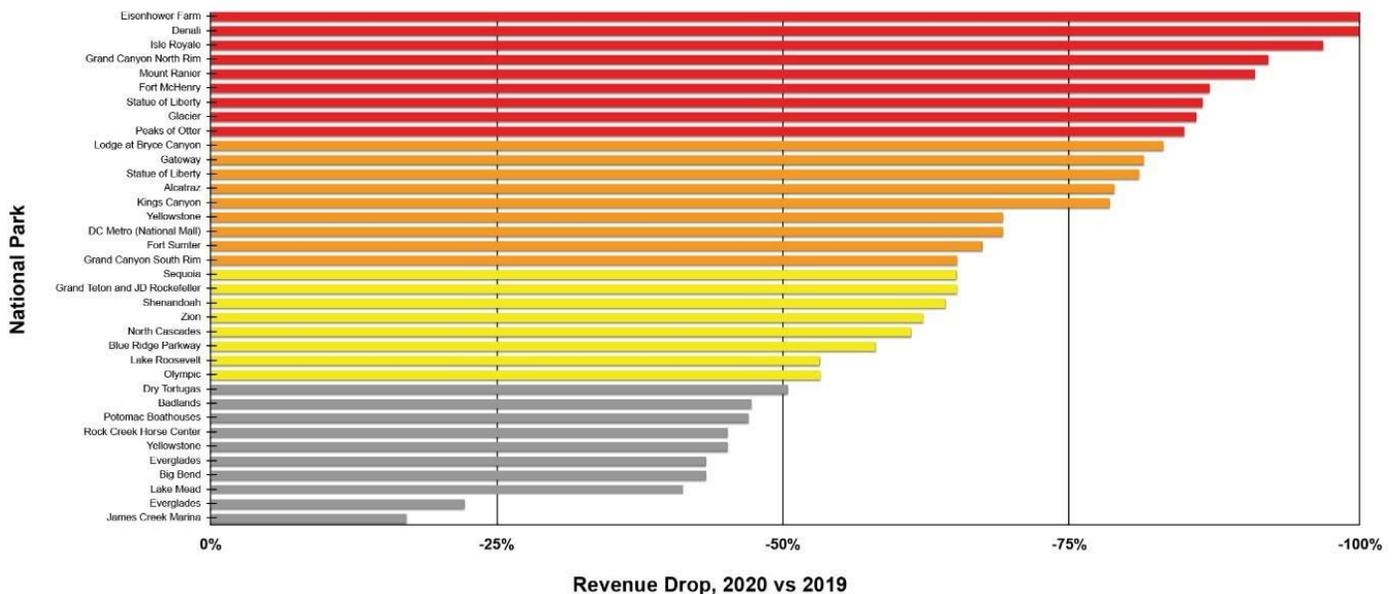
Global health crisis continues to impact National Park System visitor services

Washington, D.C. (August 26, 2020) – Closures and requisite safety measures to protect public health amid the COVID-19 pandemic have taken a considerable toll on visitor services provided throughout the National Park System and have resulted in severe economic losses for the concessioner partners of the National Park Service (NPS) and concession employees.

Concessioners in national parks provide park visitors with food and beverages, transportation, lodging, guide and outfitter services, as well as retail outlets that offer groceries, outdoor equipment, Native American art and more.

A survey of nearly 40 concession operations was recently released by the National Park Hospitality Association. It showed a significant decline in revenues for January through July 2020 from the prior year. The declines averaged nearly 70% and ranged from 17% all the way to 100% for some operations. The overall decline is now projected to be more than \$1.1 billion nationally for 2020. The latest survey confirms an earlier survey conducted in April, when concessioners predicted declines in visitor spending of at least 46% if most park units were opened in June and 58% if park unit reopening was delayed until July.

Concessioner Revenue Drop in National Parks 2019 to 2020 (Jan. 1-July 31)



In addition to the significant impact on employees – normally 25,000 people are employed by park concessioners during the peak season – the reduction in visitor spending will reduce concessioner fees paid to the agency by

nearly \$100 million this year. These payments are based upon a percentage of this spending under agreements between NPS and its partners.

Gateway communities across the nation will also suffer from this decline because most concessioner sales are subject to state and local sales and tourism taxes.

Key park re-openings continue, but some visitor services remain limited throughout the National Park System to comply with federal, state and local health guidelines. Food service in parks has seen major changes, with little indoor dining available. Travel patterns have also changed, with drastic declines in visitors arriving via airlines and greatly diminished group visits, both domestic and international. Seasonality is a major factor in park visitor services, further complicating the economic health of many NPHA members who will see limited income over the 2020-2021 winter season.

NPHA plans a follow-up survey in the fall.

About the National Park Hospitality Association:

The National Park Hospitality Association (NPHA) – is the national trade association of the businesses that provide lodging, food services, gifts and souvenirs, equipment rentals, transportation, and other visitor services in the National Park System. Concessioners have played an important role in creating lasting national park memories for more than 125 years. Concessioners operate in more than 100 national park units with combined sales exceeding \$1.6 billion annually and \$150+ million in franchise and related fees paid to the National Park Service each year. The in-park concessioner workforce of some 25,000 persons assists visitors an estimated 100 million times annually. Information on national park concessioners is at www.parkpartners.org.

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