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Kent County Parks Generated \$33 Million in Economic Activity *Local park and recreation spending in Kent County supported 317 jobs*

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (Sept. 11, 2019) – The Kent County Parks (KCP) issued a new report demonstrating the economic impact of its large regional park system. In 2018, approximately 1.4 million visitors visited at least one of the County’s 42 parks, greenspaces, or regional trails.

The Economic Impact Study: Kent County Parks, developed in partnership with Seidman Research Office at Grand Valley State University (GVSU), shows that County parks generated more than \$33 million in economic activity. Of this amount, \$14.7 million was spurred by non-local visitors.

“Parks, greenspaces and trails are vital to a thriving community,” said Dan DeLooff, KCP Superintendent. “This report illustrates how our park system improves the quality of life in our communities, creates jobs and spurs economic activity that ripples throughout our economy.”

The report also indicated the economic activity of KCP visitors supported the creation of 317 jobs in 2018.

“The parks in Kent County play an important role in stimulating business and contributing to the West Michigan economy,” said Christian Glupker, clinical affiliate of economics in GVSU’s Seidman College of Business and lead investigator for the study. “It is eye-opening to understand the millions of dollars in economic activity generated by visitors who come to Kent County to enjoy its parks and trails.”

The study was compiled through a multi-methodology approach, incorporating data from the 2018 Kent County Parks Needs Assessment Survey, a recent comparable study, data gathered by County staff, and new field research.

To access *The Economic Impact Study: Kent County Parks* report, visit <https://www.accesskent.com/Publications/pdfs/2019/GVSU-Study-Parks-Sept-2019.pdf>. To learn more about KCP, visit <https://www.kentcountyparks.org/>.

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