

Benefits of the Voluntary Public Access-Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP): 2021

for:



By:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2010, prior to the implementation of the federal Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP), some states administered public access programs of various forms which, using incentives, encouraged landowners to allow public recreational access to their land. These programs provided direct support in the form of monetary incentives as well non-monetary incentives such as habitat enhancement and liability protection. All of these programs supported local economies dependent upon wildlife recreation and helped foster wildlife conservation. However, the level of resources available at the time, such as labor, time, and finances, limited the scope and longevity of many of these programs as well as the creation of new public access programs.

The overarching objective of the VPA-HIP program, then and now, is to provide financial support to states to boost existing access programs and to implement new programs that increase public access – primarily hunting - to private lands. The purpose of this research effort was to assess and quantify the economic returns and contributions associated with VPA-HIP investments made in 2021. Of the 26 states and one tribal nation that participated in VPA-HIP in 2021, 12 states were invited to participate in this assessment based on available resources and their ability to provide necessary data. The results presented here only reflect these 12 states.

Table E1 shows the collective results across all twelve states. An estimated \$47.1 million of additional trip and equipment-related spending was generated by the increased recreational days that occurred as a result of the investments made for lands enrolled in the VPA-HIP program in 2021. A total of \$5.79 million in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021, meaning \$8.13 were generated for every \$1 invested. Similar returns would be expected from the investments made by all twenty-six states plus the tribal nation that participated in VPA-HIP in 2021.

These dollars circulated through the economy, resulting in \$47.1 million dollars in total economic activity, or multiplier effect. In essence, if the VPA-HIP investments were not made, the local economies benefiting by VPA-HIP would have been \$83.6 million smaller in 2021. As part of the multiplier effect, these local economies received \$25.8 million in additional income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with the 725 full and part-time jobs supported by the VPA-HIP investments.

TABLE E1. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021 AMONG TARGETED STATES

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$15.04 million
Equipment spending	\$32.03 million
Total spending (<i>Direct economic activity</i>)	\$47.08 million
Total VPA-HIP investments in the 12 examined states	\$5.79 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested	\$8.13: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$83.60 million
Income	\$25.85 million
Employment	725

This is the third report in a series of studies evaluating the benefits of the VPA-HIP. Findings from each of those efforts indicate that the program consistently generates positive returns on investments and meaningful economic contributions to statewide economies.

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INTRODUCTION

Programs such as the Voluntary Public Access-Habitat Improvement Program (VPA-HIP) increase public access to private lands for the purpose of wildlife-dependent recreation, including hunting, fishing, and non-consumptive activities. Increased access, particularly in states where a high proportion of land is privately held, increases opportunities for wildlife-associated recreation. This activity, in turn, boosts local economies and fosters conservation spending.

Beginning in 2008, as part of the Farm Bill, the VPA-HIP provides an opportunity for states to initiate or augment existing access programs through leveraged Federal grant dollars. Most recently, twenty-six states and one tribal nation were selected to receive the \$50 million of grant funds available in 2020. The purpose of this research effort was to assess and quantify the return on investment and economic contributions associated with VPA-HIP investments in 2021. Based on available resources and their ability to provide necessary data, twelve of the states receiving awards were selected to participate.

APPROACH

The estimated economic benefits associated with VPA-HIP investments are based on increases in sporting and recreational activities that would otherwise not have existed. The net increase is defined as the recreational and economic activity over and above the baseline levels that existed prior to the new VPA-HIP investments. This assessment focused on hunting.

The objectives of this research effort were accomplished by collaboratively gathering core measures along with supporting information from each state, focusing on 2021. The core VPA-HIP measures include, but are not limited to, private acres enrolled, public use and utilization of enrolled acres, and recreational user spending. Recognizing that each state and their program are unique to local situations and needs, every effort was made to tailor state data collection efforts to fit both the needs of the analysis as well as the resources available.

These measures were gathered with the intent to quantify the change in public access to private lands within the VPA-HIP enrolled states and to estimate the economic contributions to local economies from recreational activity and spending that occurred as a result of VPA-HIP investments.

Measuring the change in access to and usage of private acres

For this update, efforts were focused on the privately held acres opened to public access in 2021 using VPA-HIP funds. The main sources for these data were the semiannual progress reports completed by the grantee and submitted to the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Major topics within those reports include summarized results to date and the total number of acres opened as a result of the VPA-HIP grant.

A hierarchical approach was used for each state to estimate use of VPA-HIP lands. If available, the utilization measures drew from state-level research such as harvest surveys. In the absence of state-level usage estimates, total utilization was estimated using a “national” average utilization rate (based on estimated individual people) developed as part of the original 2011 VPA-HIP evaluation effort that looked at a geographically diverse set of states where usage estimates were available (Southwick 2012). Usage patterns by hunters are not expected to have changed measurably in the intervening 10 years.

Estimating spending and economic contributions associated with each state's VPA-HIP enrolled lands

Although the enrolled acres were often open to other recreational activities, this effort focused on hunters' expenditures given that each state indicated the primary activity on enrolled lands was hunting. As a result, the return on investment and economic contribution estimates are conservative.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (FHWAR) were used to develop state-specific spending profiles. The 2016 USFWS survey was conducted in two parts. The first part, using techniques employed in previous USFWS national surveys, was conducted by the US Census Bureau and generated national and regional spending data that are considered highly reliable. The relationships observed within the 2011 FHWAR (e.g. distribution of total spending across the variety of items) were used to derive state-specific profiles. The 2016 data were then adjusted to reflect 2021 conditions using inflation and license sales trends.

Expenditures made by recreational users such as hunters generate additional economic benefits throughout the economy beyond the initial spending. These additional economic contributions are estimated with regional input-output economic models that describe how spending in a specific industry impacts other industries. For the purposes of this study, separate state-level models were created to estimate how hunters' spending benefits the whole state. Three economic estimates were calculated based on hunters' spending associated with their use of enrolled acres for each participating state:

Output—this measure reports the sum of hunters' spending (direct impacts), the resulting spending as businesses buy additional supplies and input (indirect effects), and the spending that results from employees in these businesses then spending their paychecks (induced contributions) resulting from hunting taking place on the newly enrolled VPA-HIP lands. This measure explains the total economic activity generated by a retail sale, or how much the overall economy would shrink if people did not spend the dollars being tracked.

Income— this measure reports total payroll, including salaries and wages as well as other benefits (insurance, retirement benefits) paid to employees and business proprietors as a result of the recreational spending associated with the VPA-HIP enrolled acres.

Employment—this measure reports the total jobs in all sectors of the economy as a result of the VPA-HIP stimulated spending. These are not just the employees directly serving recreationists or manufacturing their goods, they also include the truck driver who delivers food to restaurants serving hunters, for example.

RESULTS

This is the third report in a series of studies evaluating the benefits of VPA-HIP. To the extent possible, the approach was held consistent across these study years, yet slight differences in data availability and collection certainly occurred. As a result, the authors encourage readers to use caution when comparing results to previous reports. The same could be said about drawing inferences between the states in this effort and previous reports. While the return on investments or economic contributions were calculated using the same approach for all states, unique conditions exist within each state that ultimately impact the magnitude of the results. Quantifying those unique conditions (e.g. how the competitive rates for landowner payments for access differs across the country) was beyond the scope of this study.

Results for each state plus the nation are presented in separate sections within this report, allowing each to be copied and shared based on the reader's specific state or region of interest. A comprehensive table of results is provided in the Appendix.

ARKANSAS

A total of 3,800 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 600 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 10,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on state-level data from the Waterfowl Rice Incentive Conservation Enhancement program collected during the 2021-2022 duck season (Table 1).

TABLE 1. ARKANSAS VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

	Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award
Enrolled acres*	3,797
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	600
Total additional hunting days	10,199
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$654,474

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$977,700 of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 2). A total of \$654,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$0.49 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 2. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$352,900
Equipment spending	\$624,700
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$977,700
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$1.49: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$1.68 million
Income	\$497,500
Employment	15

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$1.68 million. Recreational activities generated \$497,000 of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 15 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



COLORADO

A total of 234,000 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 12,700 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 84,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on state-level data from the Walk-in Access lands program collected during the prior two hunting season and documented in Colorado’s report to NRCS (Table 3).

TABLE 3. COLORADO VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award	
Enrolled acres*	234,212
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	12,714
Total additional hunting days	84,548
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$730,854

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program’s support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$12.52 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 4). A total of \$731,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$16.14 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 4. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$5.28 million
Equipment spending	\$7.25 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$12.52 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$17.14: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$22.23 million
Income	\$8.06 million
Employment	225

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$22.23 million. Recreational activities generated \$8.06 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 225 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



GEORGIA

A total of 21,600 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 433 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 3,500 days in the field. These estimates are based on both primary and secondary data, such as site-specific property sign-in data, Georgia’s species-specific harvest studies, and the USFWS National Survey (Table 5).

TABLE 5. GEORGIA VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award	
Acres available in 2021*	21,624
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	433
Total additional hunting days	3,672
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$389,672

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program’s support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$400,000 of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 6). A total of \$390,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$0.03 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 6. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$214,437
Equipment spending	\$186,784
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$401,221
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$1.03: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$748,506
Income	\$247,943
Employment	5

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$748,000. Recreational activities generated \$247,900 of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 5 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



IDAHO

A total of 222,000 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 11,000 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 52,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level data collected during the 2012 study about the benefits of the 2011 VPA-HIP, which included a multi-state survey of hunters utilizing enrolled acres (Table 7).

TABLE 7. IDAHO VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award	
Enrolled acres*	222,314
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	11,116
Total additional hunting days	52,044
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$300,000

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$9.47 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 8). A total of \$300,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$30.59 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 8. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$5.80 million
Equipment spending	\$3.67 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$9.47 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$31.59: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$16.36 million
Income	\$4.72 million
Employment	155

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$16.36 million. Recreational activities generated \$4.72 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 155 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



ILLINOIS

A total of 25,600 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 1,500 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 5,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level Illinois Recreational Access Program permit data collected between the Fall of 2017-Spring of 2018 (Table 9).

TABLE 9. ILLINOIS VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award	
Enrolled acres*	25,646
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	1,539
Total additional hunting days	5,164
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$252,186

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$630,000 of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 10). A total of \$252,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$1.49 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 10. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$200,138
Equipment spending	\$427,671
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$627,809
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$2.49: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$1,051,839
Income	\$293,197
Employment	7

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$1.05 million. Recreational activities generated \$293,000 of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with seven full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



KANSAS

A total of 21,600 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 1,100 residents and non-residents used those acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 5,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level data collected during the 2012 study about the benefits of the 2011 VPA-HIP, which included a multi-state survey of hunters utilizing enrolled acres (Table 11).

TABLE 11. KANSAS VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award	
Enrolled acres*	21,636
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	1,082
Total additional hunting days	5,065
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$191,045

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only amortized VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$280,000 of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 12). A total of \$191,045 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on enrolled acres. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$0.47 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 12. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$170,942
Equipment spending	\$110,426
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$281,369
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$1.47: \$1.00
Total state-level economic contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$468,000
Income	\$142,000
Employment	4

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$468,000. Recreational activities generated \$142,000 of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with four full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



MINNESOTA

A total of 29,000 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 9,500 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 44,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on state-level research specific to utilization of Walk-in Access lands collected during the 2013-2014 hunting season (Table 13).

TABLE 13. MINNESOTA VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

	Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award
Enrolled acres*	29,136
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	9,556
Total additional hunting days	44,744
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$524,448

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$6.65 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 14). A total of \$524,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on enrolled acres. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$11.69 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 14. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$1.92 million
Equipment spending	\$4.74 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$6.65 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$12.69: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$12.38 million
Income	\$4.01 million
Employment	100

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$12.38 million. Recreational activities generated \$4.01 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 100 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.

NEBRASKA

A total of 233,800 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 11,700 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 54,700 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level data collected during the 2012 study about the benefits of the 2011 VPA-HIP, which included a multi-state survey of hunters utilizing enrolled acres (Table 15).

TABLE 15. NEBRASKA VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

	Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award
Enrolled acres*	233,817
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	11,691
Total additional hunting days	54,737
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$813,600

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$16.70 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 16). A total of \$814,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$19.76 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 16. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$3.68 million
Equipment spending	\$13.03 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$16.70 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$20.76: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$27.83 million
Income	\$8.25 million
Employment	212

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$27.83 million. Recreational activities generated \$8.25 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 212 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



OKLAHOMA

A total of 94,000 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 8,300 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 38,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level data collected during the 2012 study about the benefits of the 2011 VPA-HIP, which included a multi-state survey of hunters utilizing enrolled acres (Table 17).

TABLE 17. OKLAHOMA VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

	Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award
Enrolled acres*	94,066
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	8,279
Total additional hunting days	38,762
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$857,038

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$3.37 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 18). A total of \$857,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$2.94 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 18. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$0.76 million
Equipment spending	\$2.61 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$3.37 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$3.94: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$5.71 million
Income	\$1.60 million
Employment	50

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$5.71 million. Recreational activities generated \$1.60 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 50 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



SOUTH DAKOTA

A total of 165,000 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 8,000 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 38,700 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level data collected during the 2012 study about the benefits of the 2011 VPA-HIP, which included a multi-state survey of hunters utilizing enrolled acres (Table 19).

TABLE 19. SOUTH DAKOTA VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

	Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award
Enrolled acres*	165,436
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	8,271
Total additional hunting days	38,727
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$684,718

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$8.29 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 20). A total of \$685,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$11.11 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 20. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$4.46 million
Equipment spending	\$3.84 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$8.29 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$12.11: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$12.95 million
Income	\$3.57 million
Employment	119

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$12.95 million. Recreational activities generated \$3.57 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 119 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



TEXAS

A total of 22,890 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 6,900 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 32,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level data collected during the 2012 study about the benefits of the 2011 VPA-HIP, which included a multi-state survey of hunters utilizing enrolled acres (Table 21).

TABLE 21. TEXAS VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

	Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award
Enrolled acres*	22,890
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	6,867
Total additional hunting days	32,151
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$286,971

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$3.38 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 22). A total of \$287,000 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$10.78 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 22. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$1.56 million
Equipment spending	\$1.82 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$3.38 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$11.78: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$6.45 million
Income	\$2.06 million
Employment	55

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$6.45 million. Recreational activities generated \$2.06 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 55 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



WASHINGTON

A total 90,000 acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 10,800 residents and non-residents used those acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 50,000 days in the field. These estimates are based on historical state-level data collected during the 2012 study about the benefits of the 2011 VPA-HIP, which included a multi-state survey of hunters utilizing enrolled acres (Table 23).

TABLE 23. WASHINGTON VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021

Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award	
Enrolled acres*	90,000
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	1,800
Total additional hunting days	8,428
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$108,120

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$1.53 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 24). A total of \$108,120 in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$13.18 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 24. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Economic benefits	
Trip spending	\$686,157
Equipment spending	\$846,677
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$1.53 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$14.18: \$1.00
Total state-level economic contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$2.73 million
Income	\$0.85 million
Employment	20

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$2.73 million. Recreational activities generated \$0.85 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 20 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



A COLLECTIVE PICTURE

Collectively, across all twelve states selected to participate, an estimated 1.16 million acres, supported through the VPA-HIP in 2021, were enrolled for public access during the 2021 hunting seasons. Roughly 73,900 residents and non-residents used these acres and, collectively, these hunters spent more than 323,500 days in the field (Table 25).

TABLE 25. COLLECTIVE VPA-HIP STATISTICS FOR 2021 AND TARGETED STATES

Enrollment and usage of acres supported by the 2020 VPA-HIP award	
Enrolled acres*	1.16 million
Utilization**	
Total hunters using enrolled acres	73,900
Total additional hunting days	323,500
VPA-HIP investments in 2021***	\$5.79 million

*This effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

**Universal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

***Only VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

An estimated \$47.08 million of in-state trip and equipment-related spending was associated with the total additional days of hunting created by VPA-HIP (Table 26). A total of \$5.79 million in VPA-HIP funds were invested on these enrolled acres in 2021. When spending for these additional recreational days is compared to the VPA-HIP investment, every dollar invested was matched and generated an additional \$7.13 of direct economic activity.

TABLE 26. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA-HIP INVESTMENTS IN 2021

Hunter spending	
Trip spending	\$15.04 million
Equipment spending	\$32.03 million
Total spending (Direct economic activity)*	\$47.08 million
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested**	\$8.13: \$1.00
Total State-level Economic Contribution with multiplier effect	
Output	\$83.60 million
Income	\$25.85 million
Employment	725

* Spending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

**ROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

The total economic activity associated with the additional hunting on these enrolled VPA-HIP lands in 2021 was estimated to be \$83.60 million. Recreational activities generated \$25.85 million of income (salaries, wages, and business earnings) associated with 725 full and part-time jobs in businesses across the state whose products and services were purchased by hunters.



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TABLE A 1. ENROLLMENT, SPENDING, AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA INVESTMENTS IN 2021 (BY STATE)

	Collectively	Arkansas	Colorado	Georgia	Idaho	Illinois	Kansas
Enrolled acres^a	1.16 M	3,797	234,212	21,624	222,314	25,646	21,636
Utilization^b							
Total hunters using enrolled acres	73,900	600	12,714	433	11,116	1,539	1,082
Total additional hunting days	323,500	10,199	84,548	3,672	52,044	5,164	5,065
VPA-HIP investments in 2021^c	\$5.79 M	\$654,474	\$730,854	\$389,672	\$300,000	\$252,186	\$191,045
Economic activity							
Hunter spending							
Trip spending	\$15.04 M	\$352,900	\$5.28 M	\$214,437	\$5.80 M	\$200,138	\$170,942
Equipment spending	\$32.03 M	\$624,700	\$7.25 M	\$186,784	\$3.67 M	\$427,671	\$110,426
Total spending (<i>Direct economic activity</i>) ^d	\$47.08 M	\$977,700	\$12.52 M	\$401,221	\$9.47 M	\$627,809	\$281,369
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested^e	\$8.13: \$1.00	\$1.49: \$1.00	\$17.14: \$1.00	\$1.03: \$1.00	\$31.59: \$1.00	\$2.49: \$1.00	\$1.47: \$1.00
Total economic contribution							
Output	\$83.60 M	\$1.68 M	\$22.23 M	\$748,506	\$16.36 M	\$1,051,839	\$468,000
Income	\$25.85 M	\$497,500	\$8.06 M	\$247,943	\$4.72 M	\$293,197	\$142,000
Employment	725	15	225	5	155	7	4

^aThis effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

^bUniversal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

^cOnly VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

^dSpending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

^eROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.

TABLE A1 (CONT.). ENROLLMENT, SPENDING, AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY ATTRIBUTABLE TO VPA INVESTMENTS IN 2021 (BY STATE)

	Minnesota	Nebraska	Oklahoma	South Dakota	Texas	Washington
Enrolled acres^a	29,136	233,817	94,066	165,436	22,890	90,000
Utilization^b						
Total hunters using enrolled acres	9,556	11,691	8,279	8,271	6,867	1,800
Total additional hunting days	44,744	54,737	38,762	38,727	32,151	8,428
VPA-HIP investments in 2021^c	\$524,448	\$813,600	\$857,038	\$684,718	\$286,971	\$108,120
Economic activity						
Hunter spending						
Trip spending	\$1.92 M	\$3.68 M	\$0.76 M	\$4.46 M	\$1.56 M	\$686,157
Equipment spending	\$4.74 M	\$13.03 M	\$2.61 M	\$3.84 M	\$1.82 M	\$846,677
Total spending (<i>Direct economic activity</i>) ^d	\$6.65 M	\$16.70 M	\$3.37 M	\$8.29 M	\$3.38 M	\$1.53 M
Return on Investment (ROI) per dollar invested^e	\$12.69: \$1.00	\$20.76: \$1.00	\$3.94: \$1.00	\$12.11: \$1.00	\$11.78: \$1.00	\$14.18: \$1.00
Total economic contribution						
Output	\$12.38 M	\$27.83 M	\$5.71 M	\$12.95 M	\$6.45 M	\$2.73 M
Income	\$4.01 M	\$8.25 M	\$1.60 M	\$3.57 M	\$2.06 M	\$0.85 M
Employment	100	212	50	119	55	20

^aThis effort focuses solely on VPA-HIP and the acres associated with that program's support. It does not reflect all efforts and successes within other state-level programs that increase access to private lands for public outdoor recreation.

^bUniversal utilization metrics for all potential users do not exist. The return on investment and economic contributions focus primarily on hunter activity. As such, these evaluation metrics are likely to be conservative.

^cOnly VPA-HIP grant funds are reported. State and private matching funds are not included.

^dSpending by hunters is derived from the 2011 and 2016 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated recreation.

^eROI is calculated as total spending associated with additional days divided by VPA-HIP investments.