In this EcoWest presentation, we discuss the winter tourism economy and how climate change will affect U.S. industries that depend on snow.
A handful of states lead the pack in skiing, snowboarding, and snowmobiling visits, but 38 states have at least some winter sports industry, according to this study by University of New Hampshire researchers. Colorado accounted for one fifth of ski and snowboarding visits, while 1 in 8 took place in California.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters
URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp
Notes:
Narrative: This graphic, based on data from a different source, shows that nearly 20 million people skied or snowboarded last season. Recently, the participation rate has been dropping.

URL: http://www.snowsports.org/Media/SnowSportsFactSheet
Notes: These figures represent participants who are 6+ years old and participated in a sport at least once during the given season.
Narrative: The regional breakdown of skier/snowboarder visits shows that the West, which includes the Pacific and Rockies regions, accounts for about 55% of total visits.


URL: http://www.snowsports.org/Media/SnowSportsFactSheet

Notes: The NSAA defines a skier/snowboarder visit as one person visiting a ski area for all or any part of a day or night one time. This includes full-day, half-day, night, complimentary, adult, child, season and any other ticket type that gives one the use of an area’s facility.
Narrative: Focusing on snowmobiling, the greatest number of visits occur in the upper Midwest states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan. In the West, registration rates are highest in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
This map illustrates the number of jobs in the winter tourism industry. Colorado has the most, with nearly 38,000, but every Western state has more than 1,000 jobs in the state connecting to winter sports.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
Nationwide, winter sports trips generated nearly 212,000 jobs, labor income of $7 billion, and total economic value of $12.2 billion in the 2009/2010 season. In this study, skiing and snowboarding trips were treated as one category.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
Narrative: The University of New Hampshire study looked not only at direct spending on winter sports trips, such as hotel rooms, lift tickets, and groceries, but also on the indirect and induced effects that this spending had on the economy. An example of indirect spending is a food wholesaler stocking the kitchen of a resort restaurant. Induced impacts are felt in the broader economy as people employed in the ski and snowmobile industries spend money on things such as food, clothing, and health care.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
Narrative: This graphic summarizes the economic value added by winter tourism in the United States. The boxes are sized by the economic value in each sector and colored according to employment. Resort operations account for nearly $3 billion and the largest share.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
This graphic illustrates how much is spent locally per day on a variety of expenses. Snowmobilers don’t need to pay money for lift tickets, but that recreation expense accounts for the bulk of local spending on skiing and snowboarding trips. Snowmobile trips do involve a lot more spending on gasoline.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters
URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp
Notes:
The study also examined how low-snow years affected the 38 states’ winter tourism economies. Such low-snow years will become more common if climate change continues unabated. Some states appear to be more resilient than others. Colorado, which has by far the most ski visits, suffered less of a decline than average, as did California and Utah. But some Western states, such as Washington, Oregon, and New Hampshire, saw skier visits decline even more than the national average.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters
URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp
Notes:
Here's the same data in a map. Comparing lower to higher snowfall years, states such as New Mexico, Oregon, and Wisconsin suffered declines of more than 30 percent in the number of skier visits.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
Narrative: In Colorado, there were 8 percent fewer visits in low-snow years, resulting in the loss of nearly 1,900 jobs and $154 million in revenue for ski resorts.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
Narrative: In Montana, ski resorts lost $16 million in a low-snow year.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters

URL: http://www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/climate-impacts-winter-tourism.asp

Notes:
In New Mexico, the declines were especially steep, with skier visits plummeting by 30 percent.

Source: Burakowski and Magnusson, “Climate Impacts on the Winter Tourism Economy,” paper released by Natural Resources Defense Council and Protect Our Winters
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