

# ARKANSAS TOURISM IMPACT REPORT





# TELLING THE STORY OF THE NATURAL STATE

The 2025 Economic Impact Study underscores what we see across Arkansas every day: tourism and outdoor recreation continue to drive meaningful economic growth, strengthen communities, and elevate our state on the national stage. This year's findings highlight strong performance and the momentum created through strategic investments and partnerships statewide. From state parks and trails to heritage tourism, cultural programming, and outdoor recreation infrastructure, Arkansas continues to expand experiences that improve quality of life for residents while attracting visitors from around the country and the world.

In 2025, this momentum became clear in many ways. We hosted the first Natural State Day at the Capitol, bringing partners, communities, and industry leaders together to highlight the importance of tourism and outdoor recreation to our economy and identity. Arkansas State Parks continues to invest in enhanced visitor experiences through trail improvements, upgraded campgrounds and innovating new visitor amenities at some of our most iconic destinations. We also introduced new outdoor recreation opportunities that further strengthen Arkansas' position as a leader in outdoor experiences.

These efforts reflect a broader vision. Under Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders' Natural State Initiative, Arkansas continues to prioritize outdoor recreation, tourism, and quality of place investments that support long term economic growth and reinforce our reputation as The Natural State.

As national travel trends evolve, Arkansas remains



uniquely positioned for continued success because of our authenticity, natural beauty, and the collaborative work taking place across communities, agencies, and industries. We are thinking boldly about the future—expanding trail systems, enhancing outdoor recreation access, strengthening heritage tourism, and creating new experiences that encourage visitors to stay longer and explore more deeply.

This momentum is creating real benefits for Arkansas communities, businesses, and families. Thank you for your continued partnership and support as we work together to build a stronger tourism economy and ensure Arkansas remains a place people are proud to visit, explore, and call home.

Sincerely,

Shea Lewis  
Secretary, Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage  
and Tourism





In 2025, Arkansas Tourism continued building momentum toward our vision of becoming a premier, year round travel and outdoor recreation destination. Even as early year economic headwinds presented challenges nationwide, Arkansas' tourism sector demonstrated resilience and strength, ultimately exceeding year-over-year monthly 2% tax collections records from September through December. This late year surge signaled renewed consumer confidence and reinforced the powerful appeal of The Natural State.

Looking toward the future, one of our foremost priorities is extending visitor stays and driving more overnight trips—key strategies that will help us reach our long term goal of growing statewide 2% Tourism Tax collections to \$50 million by 2033. As travelers seek authentic experiences and value driven adventures, Arkansas is well positioned to deliver both.

In 2025, we placed a renewed emphasis on statewide collaboration and equitable support for every corner of our state. Through the Regional Tourist Association Grant Program and the Small Festival Advertising Grant, we ensured that every county had opportunities for promotional visibility. We also revamped our multi million dollar cooperative

marketing program, helping our partners' advertising dollars stretch further while creating opportunities for unified, statewide messaging. These investments maintain a strong, diverse pipeline of Arkansas stories—something made possible through the commitment of our local partners.

As investment and development continue to rise statewide, we are matching that energy with strategic marketing that reaches the right traveler at the right time. Our public relations efforts added millions of dollars in advertising value and generated significant national attention, culminating in Arkansas being named one of Condé Nast Traveler's top places in North America to visit in 2026—a recognition announced at the end of 2025 that reflects our growing presence on the national stage.

The year ahead brings even greater opportunity. By strengthening partnerships, elevating our promotional efforts, and boldly sharing The Natural State's story, we will build on this momentum and expand Arkansas' reputation as a destination where travelers can stay longer, explore deeper, and experience more.

We appreciate your partnership and your commitment to Arkansas tourism division.

Warm regards,

Dalaney Thomas  
Director, Arkansas Tourism  
Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism

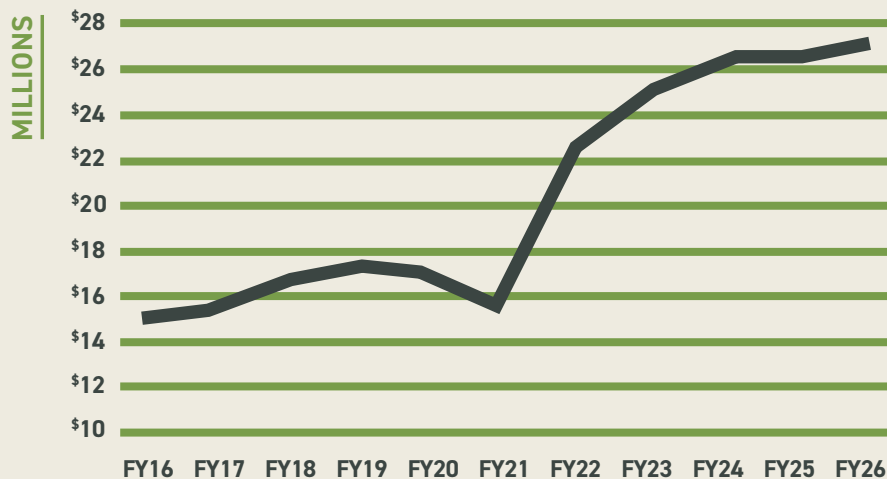


## FISCAL YEAR 2026 2% TAX COLLECTIONS

 **\$26.9M**

Following modest declines early in calendar year 2025, 2% tax collections strengthened throughout the remainder of the year, resulting in a record setting fiscal year 2026 (\$26,851,526).

### 10-YEAR SNAPSHOT



*Source: Arkansas Department of Finance and Administration  
and Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism*

The 2% tax revenue provides funding for the Arkansas Tourism marketing budget. When a traveler visits the state, they pay 2% tax on lodging, attractions and some adventure rentals. The 2% tax revenue is then used to advertise to potential visitors both in and out of state.

*Fiscal Years represent 2% tax collections from May - April each year.*



## 2025 TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT



**\$17.4B** TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT  
NO CHANGE FROM 2024

**\$10.2B** VISITOR SPENDING + **\$4.4B** INDIRECT SALES + **\$2.8B** INDUCED PURCHASES

*Sources: D.K. Shifflet, Tourism Economics, Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism*





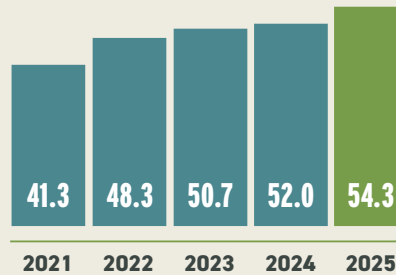
## 2025 ARKANSAS VISITOR INSIGHTS



# 54.3M VISITORS

4.4% INCREASE OVER 2024

### VISITOR HISTORY MILLIONS



### LEISURE VISITORS



## 39.6M

5.6% INCREASE OVER 2024

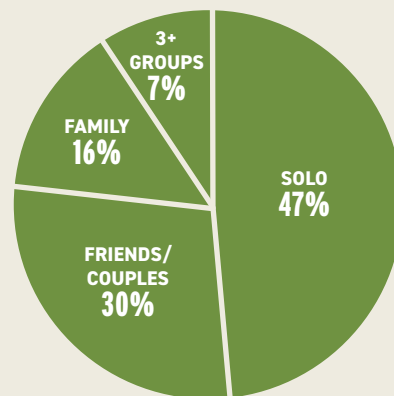
### OVERNIGHT VISITORS



## 16.2M

1.3% INCREASE OVER 2024

### OVERNIGHT TRAVEL PARTY



### AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY

## 2.6 NIGHTS

Sources: D.K. Shifflet, Tourism Economics, Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism



# 2025 ARKANSAS VISITOR INSIGHTS

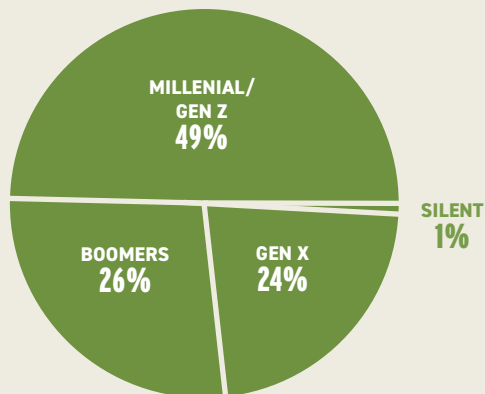
## VISITOR MARKETS

**55% FROM ARKANSAS**

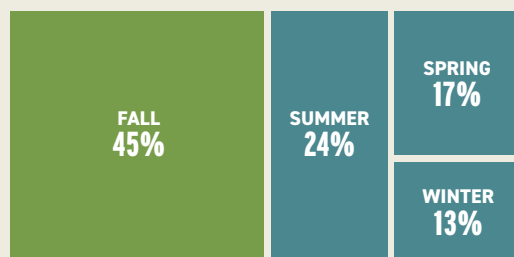
## AVERAGE VISITOR AGE

**47 YEARS OLD**

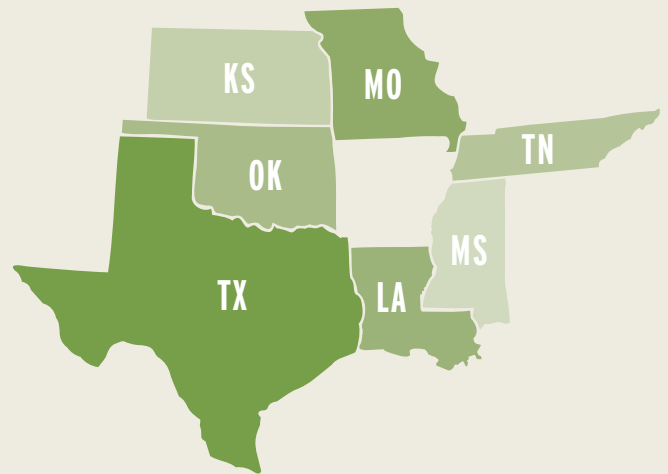
## GENERATIONAL MIX



## SEASONALITY



## TOP OUT OF STATE VISITOR MARKETS INCLUDE

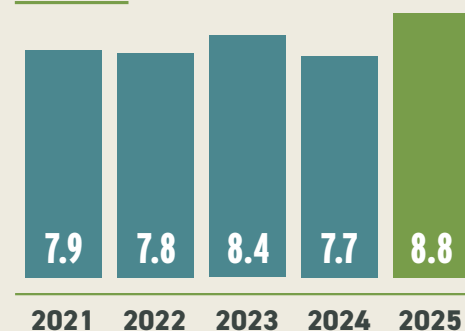


## AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD INCOME

**\$106,074**

## STATE PARKS VISITS

**MILLIONS**



Sources: D.K. Shifflet, Tourism Economics, Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism



# 2025 TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT

## TOTAL VISITOR SPENDING



# \$10.2B

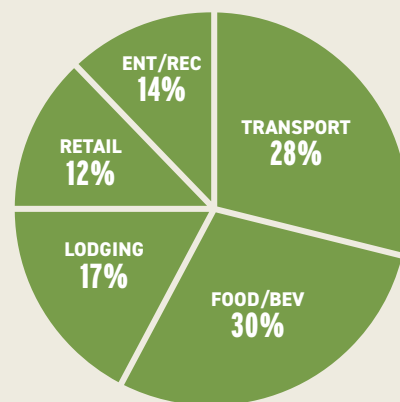
0.9% DECREASE FROM 2024

## VISITOR SPENDING TRENDS BILLIONS



Visitors spent \$27.9 million every day in Arkansas in 2025.

## SPENDING DETAILS



Leisure day trips continued to fuel U.S. travel activity in 2025, helping sustain overall demand despite slight declines in paid hotel room nights.

# 2025 TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT

## THE TOURISM INDUSTRY SUPPORTED



**71,860 JOBS**

**0.3%**

INCREASE OVER 2024



**\$2.3B INCOME**

4.5% INCREASE OVER 2024

If all employees stood side-by-side the line would span 17 miles or 11% of the length of the Buffalo National River

This income is the equivalent of

**\$1,877**

for every occupied household in Arkansas.

## VISITOR SPENDING GENERATED

**\$529M STATE TAXES**

0.3% DECREASE FROM 2024

**\$204M LOCAL TAXES**

NO CHANGE FROM 2024

**\$919**

amount every Arkansas household would have to be charged to replace the visitor-generated taxes received by state and local governments in 2025



# ARKANSAS TOURISM:

## STATEWIDE IMPACT & KEY WINS

Arkansas Tourism delivered measurable results that strengthened local economies, expanded statewide visibility, and supported communities in every region of the state. Through coordinated marketing, direct community investment, and a growing outdoor recreation sector, tourism continues to be a reliable contributor to Arkansas' economic health and quality of life.



# MARKETING IMPACT:

## NATIONAL REACH, LOCAL RESULTS

Arkansas Tourism's marketing efforts reached national audiences and generated strong interest in Arkansas destinations. By combining advertising, digital engagement, and earned media coverage, the program helped communities attract visitors they could not reach on their own. These efforts support local businesses, generate tax revenue, and reinforce tourism as a key economic driver for the state.

### KEY MARKETING METRICS

**1.2B** AD IMPRESSIONS

**\$21.3M** MEDIA INVESTMENT

**5.2M** WEB SESSIONS

**99.2K** PUBLICATIONS DELIVERED

**806** SOCIAL POSTS

### PUBLIC RELATIONS REACH

**122** EARNED MEDIA PLACEMENTS

**1.9B** MONTHLY UNIQUE VISITORS REACHED

**\$46.5M** ADVERTISING VALUE EQUIVALENCY



# COMMUNITY IMPACT:

## SUPPORTING LOCAL CAPACITY ACROSS ALL 75 COUNTIES

Tourism support extended directly into communities through content development, journalist familiarization tours, grants, and co-op partnerships. These initiatives help local destinations improve their marketing, expand their reach, and build the capacity needed to compete for visitors. By investing in all 75 counties, Arkansas Tourism ensures that communities of every size benefit from tourism growth and have access to tools that strengthen their local economies.

### GRANT PROGRAMS

**\$2M+** PROMOTIONAL GRANTS  
MADE AVAILABLE TO THE  
12 REGIONAL TOURIST  
ASSOCIATIONS

**\$96K** SMALL FESTIVAL  
ADVERTISING GRANTS  
AWARDED TO  
19 COMMUNITIES WITH A  
POPULATION UNDER 10,500

### STATE CO-OPERATIVE PROGRAM

**90+** PARTNER  
PARTICIPANTS

**500+** PARTNER ADS GENERATING  
28.8M IMPRESSIONS

### ON-THE-GROUND SUPPORT

**42+** CONTENT SHOOTS

**40+** FAMILIARIZATION TRIP  
PARTICIPANTS ACROSS  
SIX COUNTIES

**21** INFLUENCER TRIPS

**8** TRADE/MEDIA SHOWS  
SUPPORTING  
10 DESTINATIONS  
STATEWIDE



## COMMUNITY VOICES

**“We reached larger out-of-state markets like Atlanta... it may not have been possible without the co-op program.”**

– Pine Bluff Advertising and Promotion

**“The impact [of the co-op program] cannot be overstated... previously unattainable goals have been accomplished.”**

– Mena Advertising and Promotion

**“The co-op partnership amplified our reach for the Bentonville Half Marathon. We had our highest registration for the marathon ever!”**

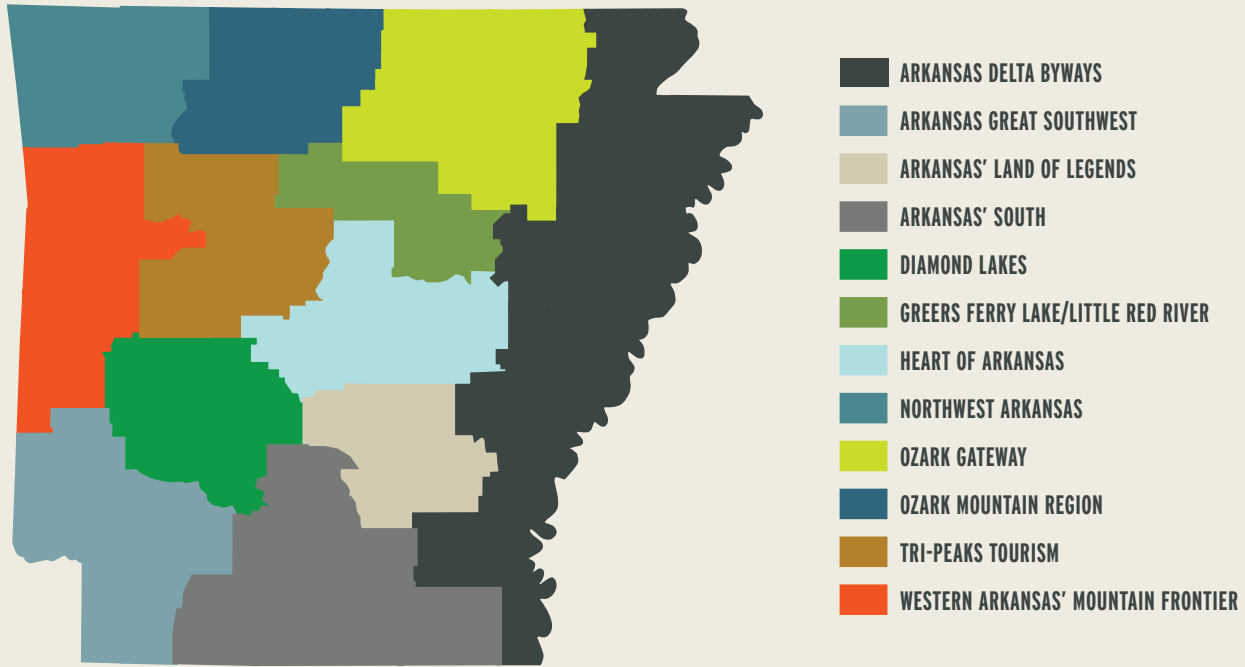
– Visit Bentonville







# 2025 REGIONAL ASSOCIATION AREA IMPACT



| REGION                              | VISITOR SPENDING<br>(MILLIONS) | STATE<br>TAXES<br>(MILLIONS) | LOCAL<br>TAXES<br>(MILLIONS) | EMPLOYMENT    | LABOR INCOME<br>(MILLIONS) |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| ARKANSAS DELTA BYWAYS               | \$1,198.6                      | \$78.0                       | \$27.1                       | 8,991         | \$258.8                    |
| ARKANSAS' GREAT SOUTHWEST           | \$294.7                        | \$16.4                       | \$6.7                        | 1,863         | \$60.8                     |
| ARKANSAS' LAND OF LEGENDS           | \$181.4                        | \$10.8                       | \$4.2                        | 1,334         | \$41.1                     |
| ARKANSAS' SOUTH                     | \$327.8                        | \$19.6                       | \$7.5                        | 2,103         | \$59.1                     |
| DIAMOND LAKES                       | \$1,164.8                      | \$71.6                       | \$29.9                       | 8,877         | \$242.5                    |
| GREERS FERRY LAKE/LITTLE RED RIVER  | \$339.0                        | \$21.9                       | \$9.6                        | 2,383         | \$67.9                     |
| HEART OF ARKANSAS                   | \$2,662.6                      | \$123.2                      | \$57.1                       | 15,737        | \$597.4                    |
| NORTHWEST ARKANSAS                  | \$2,412.2                      | \$160.0                      | \$63.1                       | 19,739        | \$599.6                    |
| OZARK GATEWAY                       | \$290.0                        | \$18.6                       | \$7.5                        | 2,048         | \$60.1                     |
| OZARK MOUNTAIN REGION               | \$415.5                        | \$26.5                       | \$10.0                       | 3,234         | \$97.4                     |
| TRI-PEAKS TOURISM                   | \$290.5                        | \$15.9                       | \$6.3                        | 1,904         | \$57.2                     |
| WESTERN ARKANSAS' MOUNTAIN FRONTIER | \$641.5                        | \$30.5                       | \$11.5                       | 3,763         | \$125.4                    |
| <b>ARKANSAS TOTAL</b>               | <b>\$10,202.2</b>              | <b>\$591.9</b>               | <b>\$239.7</b>               | <b>71,860</b> | <b>\$2,263.7</b>           |

Source: Tourism Economics      Totals may not sum due to rounding. | Totals may not sum due to Logan County split between two regions.



# 2025 COUNTY IMPACT

| COUNTY       | VISITOR<br>SPENDING<br>(Millions) | STATE<br>TAXES<br>(Millions) | LOCAL<br>TAXES<br>(Millions) | EMPLOYMENT | LABOR INCOME<br>(MILLIONS) |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------|----------------------------|
| ARKANSAS     | \$62.8                            | \$4.0                        | \$1.6                        | 362        | \$11.6                     |
| ASHLEY       | \$36.6                            | \$2.2                        | \$0.9                        | 261        | \$7.6                      |
| BAXTER       | \$217.8                           | \$13.6                       | \$4.8                        | 1561       | \$49.8                     |
| BENTON       | \$1,230.8                         | \$87.3                       | \$38.5                       | 9681       | \$283.0                    |
| BOONE        | \$85.9                            | \$5.6                        | \$2.0                        | 735        | \$19.7                     |
| BRADLEY      | \$15.9                            | \$1.1                        | \$0.5                        | 83         | \$2.9                      |
| CALHOUN      | \$5.4                             | \$0.4                        | \$0.2                        | 14         | \$0.6                      |
| CARROLL      | \$349.4                           | \$23.2                       | \$7.2                        | 3324       | \$84.5                     |
| CHICOT       | \$18.9                            | \$1.2                        | \$0.5                        | 148        | \$4.9                      |
| CLARK        | \$95.9                            | \$6.3                        | \$1.9                        | 666        | \$20.5                     |
| CLAY         | \$12.1                            | \$0.8                        | \$0.4                        | 72         | \$2.2                      |
| CLEBURNE     | \$128.1                           | \$8.4                        | \$4.4                        | 918        | \$27.0                     |
| CLEVELAND    | \$3.5                             | \$0.2                        | \$0.1                        | 19         | \$0.6                      |
| COLUMBIA     | \$53.5                            | \$3.4                        | \$1.3                        | 397        | \$11.1                     |
| CONWAY       | \$42.2                            | \$2.8                        | \$1.2                        | 300        | \$8.9                      |
| CRAIGHEAD    | \$321.6                           | \$20.8                       | \$6.2                        | 2409       | \$68.1                     |
| CRAWFORD     | \$105.1                           | \$7.0                        | \$2.3                        | 711        | \$21.1                     |
| CRITTENDEN   | \$314.3                           | \$20.8                       | \$6.9                        | 2422       | \$68.7                     |
| CROSS        | \$15.8                            | \$1.1                        | \$0.4                        | 118        | \$3.6                      |
| DALLAS       | \$19.1                            | \$1.3                        | \$0.6                        | 111        | \$3.5                      |
| DESHA        | \$23.6                            | \$1.6                        | \$0.6                        | 206        | \$5.1                      |
| DREW         | \$47.4                            | \$3.1                        | \$1.1                        | 394        | \$11.4                     |
| FAULKNER     | \$243.9                           | \$16.0                       | \$4.8                        | 1809       | \$55.9                     |
| FRANKLIN     | \$35.2                            | \$2.3                        | \$0.9                        | 241        | \$7.5                      |
| FULTON       | \$25.3                            | \$1.7                        | \$0.7                        | 194        | \$5.8                      |
| GARLAND      | \$918.8                           | \$55.6                       | \$23.4                       | 7190       | \$192.7                    |
| GRANT        | \$11.9                            | \$0.8                        | \$0.3                        | 65         | \$1.7                      |
| GREENE       | \$45.4                            | \$3.0                        | \$1.3                        | 364        | \$10.5                     |
| HEMPSTEAD    | \$58.2                            | \$3.9                        | \$1.8                        | 459        | \$13.9                     |
| HOT SPRING   | \$44.9                            | \$2.9                        | \$1.2                        | 264        | \$7.7                      |
| HOWARD       | \$15.4                            | \$1.0                        | \$0.4                        | 58         | \$2.2                      |
| INDEPENDENCE | \$78.8                            | \$5.0                        | \$1.8                        | 632        | \$18.0                     |
| IZARD        | \$19.8                            | \$1.3                        | \$0.6                        | 112        | \$3.4                      |
| JACKSON      | \$25.7                            | \$1.7                        | \$0.6                        | 159        | \$4.7                      |

| COUNTY                | VISITOR<br>SPENDING<br>(Millions) | STATE<br>TAXES<br>(Millions) | LOCAL<br>TAXES<br>(Millions) | EMPLOYMENT    | LABOR INCOME<br>(MILLIONS) |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|
| JEFFERSON             | \$159.7                           | \$9.4                        | \$3.7                        | 1223          | \$37.8                     |
| JOHNSON               | \$38.5                            | \$2.5                        | \$0.9                        | 307           | \$9.5                      |
| LAFAYETTE             | \$12.7                            | \$0.8                        | \$0.5                        | 66            | \$2.0                      |
| LAWRENCE              | \$23.8                            | \$1.6                        | \$0.6                        | 157           | \$4.5                      |
| LEE                   | \$4.1                             | \$0.3                        | \$0.1                        | 29            | \$0.7                      |
| LINCOLN               | \$6.3                             | \$0.4                        | \$0.2                        | 28            | \$1.0                      |
| LITTLE RIVER          | \$17.3                            | \$1.2                        | \$0.6                        | 108           | \$3.1                      |
| LOGAN                 | \$16.5                            | \$1.2                        | \$0.6                        | 117           | \$3.7                      |
| LONOKE                | \$98.4                            | \$6.2                        | \$1.9                        | 600           | \$19.4                     |
| MADISON               | \$17.4                            | \$1.1                        | \$0.6                        | 81            | \$2.8                      |
| MARION                | \$45.4                            | \$3.0                        | \$1.3                        | 381           | \$11.8                     |
| MILLER                | \$146.7                           | \$7.2                        | \$2.5                        | 919           | \$30.8                     |
| MISSISSIPPI           | \$160.1                           | \$10.3                       | \$3.8                        | 1375          | \$38.6                     |
| MONROE                | \$26.9                            | \$1.8                        | \$0.7                        | 192           | \$5.8                      |
| MONTGOMERY            | \$64.2                            | \$4.1                        | \$2.3                        | 403           | \$11.5                     |
| NEVADA                | \$24.2                            | \$1.1                        | \$0.5                        | 120           | \$5.1                      |
| NEWTON                | \$48.3                            | \$3.1                        | \$1.4                        | 432           | \$12.2                     |
| OUACHITA              | \$56.5                            | \$3.8                        | \$1.3                        | 419           | \$12.3                     |
| PERRY                 | \$9.2                             | \$0.6                        | \$0.4                        | 42            | \$1.4                      |
| PHILLIPS              | \$26.1                            | \$1.8                        | \$0.8                        | 209           | \$5.7                      |
| PIKE                  | \$40.9                            | \$2.7                        | \$1.1                        | 354           | \$10.0                     |
| POINSETT              | \$17.6                            | \$1.2                        | \$0.4                        | 81            | \$2.4                      |
| POLK                  | \$48.3                            | \$3.2                        | \$1.2                        | 345           | \$9.6                      |
| POPE                  | \$168.4                           | \$7.9                        | \$2.6                        | 1054          | \$31.2                     |
| PRAIRIE               | \$13.2                            | \$0.9                        | \$0.4                        | 87            | \$2.4                      |
| PULASKI               | \$2,155.9                         | \$90.2                       | \$46.6                       | 12046         | \$485.6                    |
| RANDOLPH              | \$22.7                            | \$1.5                        | \$0.7                        | 123           | \$3.6                      |
| SAINT FRANCIS         | \$101.9                           | \$6.3                        | \$2.3                        | 611           | \$19.5                     |
| SALINE                | \$151.1                           | \$9.8                        | \$3.4                        | 1194          | \$34.0                     |
| SCOTT                 | \$10.3                            | \$0.6                        | \$0.3                        | 78            | \$2.2                      |
| SEARCY                | \$18.1                            | \$1.2                        | \$0.5                        | 125           | \$4.0                      |
| SEBASTIAN             | \$426.0                           | \$16.2                       | \$6.2                        | 2271          | \$81.4                     |
| SEVIER                | \$20.3                            | \$1.3                        | \$0.5                        | 133           | \$3.7                      |
| SHARP                 | \$37.4                            | \$2.4                        | \$1.2                        | 228           | \$6.9                      |
| STONE                 | \$56.6                            | \$3.4                        | \$1.4                        | 443           | \$13.2                     |
| UNION                 | \$140.8                           | \$7.5                        | \$2.6                        | 818           | \$21.1                     |
| VAN BUREN             | \$61.0                            | \$4.1                        | \$2.1                        | 428           | \$12.1                     |
| WASHINGTON            | \$814.7                           | \$48.4                       | \$16.7                       | 6653          | \$229.3                    |
| WHITE                 | \$144.4                           | \$9.1                        | \$2.9                        | 1010          | \$28.0                     |
| WOODRUFF              | \$5.5                             | \$0.4                        | \$0.2                        | 27            | \$0.9                      |
| YELL                  | \$15.7                            | \$1.0                        | \$0.5                        | 84            | \$2.6                      |
| <b>ARKANSAS TOTAL</b> | <b>\$10,202.2</b>                 | <b>\$591.9</b>               | <b>\$239.7</b>               | <b>71,860</b> | <b>\$2,263.7</b>           |

Source: Tourism Economics

Totals may not sum due to rounding.



# 2024 OUTDOOR ECONOMY IMPACT

PROVIDED BY THE ARKANSAS OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

Outdoor recreation continues to be one of Arkansas' most reliable and fastest-growing economic contributors. With billions in annual impact and growth rates that exceed national averages, the state's natural assets play a central role in supporting rural communities, attracting visitors, and strengthening the overall tourism economy.

OUTDOOR RECREATION  
CONTRIBUTED **\$5B** TO THE  
STATE  
ECONOMY  
IN 2024



**9.2% GROWTH**  
IN OUTDOOR TRAVEL & TOURISM

**22.6% GROWTH**  
IN HUNTING, SHOOTING & TRAPPING

**6th**  
BEST  
NATIONALLY

Sources: Office of Outdoor Recreation, ARData and Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA)







# THE NATURAL STATE



Scan to view the  
interactive economic  
impact report. Or visit  
[Arkansas.com/Industry](https://arkansas.com/industry).