

## CHAPTER SEVEN

# THREE TYPES OF OUTDOOR RECREATION OCCASIONS: VACATIONS, TRIPS, AND OUTINGS<sup>1</sup>

The extent to which participation in particular outdoor recreation activities occurs on special occasions varies by activity according to the locations of facilities necessary for participation. While it is not possible to distribute participation for any activity among the three types of occasions considered here (and a fourth type representing casual participation for brief periods in facilities close at hand), it is clear, for example, that all camping and much fishing, hunting, swimming, and boating occur on vacations, trips, and outings. Different units of measurement are introduced for the purpose of analyzing participation on these occasions.

### RECREATION RELATED EXPENDITURES

During 1960, leisure time related spending is estimated as in the neighborhood of \$40 billion or 12 percent of all personal consumption expenditures. All outdoor recreation related spending is estimated at roughly half the leisure time total,<sup>2/</sup> with half of the outdoor total—\$10 million or 3 percent of consumption expenditures—by persons 12 years or over while away from their home communities on vacations and outdoor recreation trips and outings.

The four national recreation surveys secured information on the activity of persons 12 years and over while away from home on three types of outdoor recreation occasions in terms of their expenditures, round trip distance traveled and time away from home. These measures of activity are available by type of occasion and season of the year, June 1960–May 1961, on an overall total basis in table 17, and on a per capita, as well as selected person-occasion and person-day average basis, by the following socioeconomic characteristics: age–sex, family income, major region, and place of residence (tables 1.07, 1.08, 1.10, and 5.38–5.46).

Vacations include the most recent away–from–home occasion persons 12 years and over consider a vacation: this type includes occasions showing substantial variation in each of the three activity measures—namely time, money, and distance. Information for all but the most recent vacations, of persons with more than one within any particular season of the year, is included with data on trips providing the major purpose of the occasions has to do with participation in outdoor recreation. On trips persons

are away from home at least overnight. This occasion type shows much less variation in time and money spent as well as distance traveled: the average person was away from home 2 1/2 days, traveled 225 miles, and spent nearly \$5 per day on the average trip. Outings, by definition, include outdoor recreation occasions on which persons were away from home the major part of the day—8 hours on the average with little variation—but not overnight. In the per capita and total time away from home estimates, each person–outing is included as 1 day.

The national recreation surveys also secured information on expenditures during the previous year for selected personal articles and family possessions important for participation in related major types of outdoor recreation. Table 18 presents the percent of persons residing in households in which such expenditures were made, as well as estimates of the total annual expenditures.

The nearly \$2 billion total for the selected articles is thought to represent an important share of all expenditures for equipment associated with outdoor recreation. On the other hand, to the extent that these purchases occurred on vacations, trips, and outings there is duplication between total expenditures shown for selected articles and for recreation occasions.

As was noted above, 3 percent of all personal consumption expenditures are by persons 12 years and over, away from home on vacations, trips, and outings. The nearly 2 billion days spent on these occasions represent about the same proportion—4 percent—of the total time available to these persons. Recreation travel, on the other hand, represents more than 20 percent of all domestic intercity passenger–miles by all modes of transportation. It should be noted that the global comparison in the latter case is complicated by the inclusion of oversea recreation travel in National Recreation Survey data: this overstatement may not be properly balanced by the inclusion of travel by persons under 12 years in the domestic total.

Vacations are by far the most important recreation occasion type when activity is measured by expenditures and distance, as may be seen from the table above. In terms of time, however, outings emerge as an important occasion type which accounts for nearly as many days away from home as vacations. Moreover, definitions require the major purpose of outings to be outdoor recreation oriented while such a condition is assumed, but not imposed, for vacations.

Most activity occurs in the summer which accounts for 45 percent of the dollar and slightly more than half of the time expenditures. The fall is the next

<sup>1/</sup>This chapter and chapter 8 were prepared by Betty C. Churchill.

<sup>2/</sup>"Outdoor Recreation for America," a report to the President and to the Congress by the Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission, January 1962, p. 78-79.

Table 17. Estimates of expenditures, distance traveled and time away from home by type of occasion and season

National Recreation Survey

	All	Occasion type			Season of the year			
		Vacations	Trips	Outings	Summer	Fall	Winter	Spring
Expenditures (million dollars)...	9,782	6,832	1,265	1,685	4,344	2,374	1,467	1,597
Distance (billion passenger-miles)	168	101	25	42	82	41	21	23
Time away from home (million days) .....	1,907	836	261	810	980	457	209	261
Percent Distributions								
Expenditures .....	100	69	13	17	45	24	15	16
Distance .....	100	60	15	25	49	24	12	14
Time .....	100	44	14	42	51	24	11	14

Table 18. Percent of persons 12 years and over in households having expenditures for recreation articles and annual expenditures

National Recreation Survey\*

Article	Percent of persons	Annual expenditure (million dollars)
Inboard motorboat .....	0.2	121
Other boat .....	1.5	410
Outboard motor .....	1.8	339
Boat trailer .....	1.0	94
Rod and reel .....	7.2	120
Shotgun or rifle .....	2.7	126
Tent large enough to stand in .....	.5	16
Golf set .....	1.0	65
Vacation trailer .....	.2	106
Vacation cottage .....	.2	313
Total above articles .....	....	1,710

\*Average annual expenditure estimates are based on four surveys which were conducted during September and December 1960, and March and June 1961. In each survey information was secured on expenditures for selected articles during the year previous to the date of the survey.

most popular season representing about one-fourth the annual total by all three measures. As would be expected, the winter represents the low point of the year with respect to activity in outdoor recreation occasions. By these measures, however, spring activity exceeds the winter only slightly.

Table 5.36 presents total expenditures by season of the year, type of occasion, and category of expense. For all types of occasions combined, transportation accounts for the largest (about one-third) and the food the second largest (more than one-quarter) proportion of all expenditures. These categories are also the largest within each occasion type with food expenditures on trips and outings slightly exceeding those for transportation. Expenditures on cabins, hotel rooms, and other lodgings are not incurred on outings, but are next in importance on vacations and trips on which they respectively account for 23 and 19 percent of the total. Recreation other

than outdoor types consumes about 5 percent, and miscellaneous expenditures about 10 percent, of the totals. The distribution of expenditures by these categories of expense is reasonably constant across the seasons of the year.

Direct expenditures for outdoor recreation amount to 8 percent of the annual total for all types of occasions combined. This category includes fees paid for access to parks, bathing beaches, golf courses, and other public or private recreation areas, as well as guide fees, hunting and fishing licenses (if purchased while away from home on the occasions), and the like. Despite the fact that much outdoor recreation is available without payment of fees and that fees when imposed for use of public facilities are usually nominal, some insight may be gained through special consideration of this item of expense.

The importance of the outing is again emphasized by the fact that more than half of all outdoor recreation expenditures are incurred on occasions of this type. By way of contrast it again should be noted that outings account for only 17 percent of total all occasion expenditures. Only one-third of the direct expenditures on outdoor recreation are incurred on vacations—as opposed to nearly 70 percent of all expenses. Trips, on the other hand, account for about the same proportions of all expenses (13 percent) and outdoor recreation expenses (15 percent).

Outdoor recreation expenditures as a proportion of total expense also show suggestive patterns within types of occasions and seasons of the year: 8 percent for all occasions combined; 4 percent for vacations in each season of the year; 9 percent on all trips (nearly 20 percent during the winter); and 25 percent on all outings (more than 30 percent in both fall and winter). Contrasts of this kind were entirely absent or much less pronounced for all other categories of expense considered above.

In preparing the distribution of expenditures by category of expense within occasion types and seasons of the year, adjustment was made for expenditures reported in the form of "package fees." For vacations roughly 15 percent of all expenditures are in this form. These package fees may cover anything from all expense tours around the world to small proportions of vacationers' total expense representing various combinations of selected categories and brief parts of the total vacation periods. The complete

expenditure record of each person with a vacation package fee was examined: the entire package fee was distributed to the missing, or unreasonably light, categories according to the known distribution for other persons in the same age-sex income class. Package fees were much less important in the case of trips (3 percent of the total) and outings (1 1/2 percent). For these occasions, package fee expenditures were distributed among the categories according to the distribution of all persons without package fees.

It should also be noted that by no means do all persons incur expenses in any or all categories on all occasions. Detailed information on this point is presented only for the summer (table 1.10) but this season is quite representative of the other three in this respect. The proportion of occasions on which persons incurred expense of 50 cents or more show marked differences by occasion type, category of expense, and socioeconomic characteristics.

Nearly everyone taking a vacation incurred expense of some kind—usually at least for transportation. Expenses for lodging, however, occurred among only slightly more than half of the vacationists: this proportion rises for those in the 45 to 64 age class, in large cities, or with family incomes above \$6,000 per year. Persons with family incomes below \$3,000 per year incur lodging expense with the lowest frequency, probably reflecting a tendency for these persons to spend vacations with friends or relatives. This observation also holds true for women more than 65 years old and for persons living in rural areas on farms. More than three-fourths of all persons on vacations incur expenses for food, two-fifths for outdoor recreation fees as well as for miscellaneous expenditures, and one-quarter for other recreation. The pattern of variation across socioeconomic characteristics of the above categories is generally the same as that observed for lodging expenditures.

On trips more than 10 percent of all persons incur no expenses of any kind with this proportion rising to 30 percent for boys 12-17 years. Many of the latter occasions probably involve organizational activities on weekends spent by young boys close to home. On trips, as well as on vacations, transportation is the most usual type of expense. Lodging expenses appear in 22 percent of the cases—less than half the vacation rate. Expenditures for food are incurred much more often (46 percent) but, again, smaller proportions of persons buy food on trips than on vacations. Only about 20 percent of outdoor recreation trips involve direct expenditures for outdoor recreation, with the 25 to 44 years age group higher than any other subgroup of the population shown.

On outings only 60 percent of all persons incur expense away from home, and only one-third of all persons spend as much as 50 cents for transportation or for food. Outdoor recreation expenses occur on one-fifth of the outings—the same proportion as on trips. Expenditures for other recreation and miscellaneous items falls off very sharply in the case of outings.

On all three types of occasions persons 65 years and over incur outdoor recreation expense infrequently as do persons with family incomes below

\$3,000. However, it should be remembered that many older persons have low retirement incomes.

## SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS AND RECREATION OCCASIONS

Activity on outdoor recreation occasions differs among subgroups of the population 12 years and over classified by all the characteristics considered here. The largest variations are nearly always found within the income distribution, followed in order by the age-sex, place of residence, and major geographical region distributions. Among the three activity measures, expenditures show the most, and distance traveled the least, variation across socioeconomic characteristics.

The effect of income on the time-money-distance activity measures used for these occasions is to a large extent discussed in the next chapter which includes consideration of the effect of income on additional activity measures as well as on the exposure of individuals to selected family-owned recreation equipment.

### ALL OCCASIONS

For each person 12 years and over, nearly 15 days and \$75 were spent away from home during the year from June 1960-May 1961 on vacations, trips, and outings which involved travel of nearly 1,300 miles per person (tables 5.41, 5.42, and 5.43). All these measures increase with increases in family income. The activity of those in the highest family income class (\$15,000 or more) exceeds that of the lowest (less than \$1,500) by factors of 24 for expenditures, 9 for distance, and 4 for time. By all these measures, both the highest and the lowest income groups engage in roughly one-third of their activity during the summer with the remaining two-thirds spread quite evenly throughout the other seasons. Those in the intermediate family income groups, on the other hand, tend to allot about half of their activities to the summer and to be relatively inactive during the winter.

Per capita expenditures, distance traveled, and time away from home for males slightly exceeds the activity of females during the year as a whole and in each season except the summer for which differences by sex of roughly the same magnitude are reversed in order. Per capita expenditures by males gradually increases with age through the 45-64 year group and declines sharply for those 65 years or more. High summer and fall expenditures by persons in the 18-24 year age bracket interrupt what is otherwise the same progression and sharp decline for females. The school age groups—those 12-17 years and to some extent those 18-24 years—tend to concentrate larger shares of their annual expenditures in the summer vacation period, while the expenditures of older persons, though high in the summer, are spread somewhat more evenly throughout the year. Changes across the age-sex distribution in per capita distance traveled are similar to those found for expenditures, but relatively smaller, in all age groups except for even sharper declines in travel for those 65 years or more. Per capita days away from home, on the other

hand are highest for the youngest age group for both sexes so that this measure declines with age across the entire range.

The place of residence distributions shown in the tables may be thought of as an ordering from high to low urbanization. Per capita money-traveltime on outdoor recreation occasions are highest among those most thoroughly urbanized and lowest for the rural farm group for the year as a whole and in the summer in all cases. Most exceptions to the annual and summer patterns occur in the winter. Except for the tendency for per capita rates to be higher among those living in the proximity of large cities but in rural areas than among those in urban places outside of standard metropolitan areas, the arrangement is nearly always by degree of urbanization. The range of difference is much greater with respect to expenditures than for distance traveled and time away from home, particularly in the summer months, with relatively low variation in the winter. Rates for persons residing on farms are higher than average during the off-season winter months for time away from home and below average for the other two measures.

Within the major regions of the United States, annual per capita expenditures are highest in the Northeast (\$100), followed by the West (\$80), North Central region (\$65), and the South (\$55). The regional pattern of expenditures is repeated in all seasons of the year except the winter which finds the South in first place and the North Central in last. On the basis of per capita expenditures, the sharpest regional differences in weather during the winter appear to be between the Northeast and the South: the effect is such that persons living in the Northeast spend only 10 percent, while persons in the South spend more than 20 percent of their annual totals during the winter months. Per capita distance traveled and days away from home follow different regional patterns: the West about ties with the Northeast on both in the spring but is found in first place in all other seasons of the year, with the North Central or South the last. On all measures, however, the range of difference across the regions is much less than that found by other factors.

On the per capita basis discussed above, the patterns described for all occasions combined in general are also quite closely followed within occasion type and distribution of the population by income, place of residence, and major region. In the case of the age-sex distribution, however, males are found to be much more active than females on both trips and outings in all seasons of the year. With vacations accounting for the bulk of activity in both groups, and females the more active during summer and fall occasions of this type, the all occasion totals reveal only the moderate differences which have been noted.

### VACATION CHARACTERISTICS

During the year from June 1960 through May 1961, persons 12 years and over took nearly 80 million vacations on which they spent \$6.8 billion, traveled more than 100 billion passenger-miles and remained away from home more than 800 million person-days. The number of vacations per person in the population (table 5.38) may be interpreted as the proportion of persons with a vacation within any one season of the

year, but may not be so interpreted, of course, within the year as a whole since multiple vacation persons are included more than once in the annual total. From the total, however, it becomes clear that only for those with family incomes of \$15,000 or more can it be said with certainty that multiple vacations do occur. It is likely, of course, that at least some multiple vacations occur within all of the classes shown with the proportion increasing, perhaps quite sharply, across the income distribution.

During the summer months, the most likely candidates for vacations are persons from 12 to 17 years and persons with family incomes of \$8,000 or more. For this younger school age group more than two-thirds of all vacations are taken during the summer months, while for the higher family income group, particularly those with incomes of \$15,000 or more per year, the number of occasions is spread more evenly throughout the year. The rate of vacation taking of those with family incomes of \$15,000 or more is nearly twice that of the all class average for the year as a whole—in the summer 40 percent higher while in other seasons of the year the rate for those in the highest income class doubles or triples.

It is of interest that the rate of vacation taking for persons living on farms is higher than average during the winter and considerably below average for all other seasons of the year. Also of interest is the fact that in the South during the winter the vacation rate remains high.

As has been noted, the summer months constitute the most popular period for vacations away from home. For this season, tables 1.07 and 1.08 show the percent of persons with vacations by age, cross-classified by family income, number of persons in household, race, state of health, physical impairments, and region. As has also been noted there is considerable intercorrelation between age and family income. This places particular interest on examination of the percent of persons with vacations within groups of the population cross-classified by these characteristics. It appears that the income distribution has a smaller effect at the younger ages than at the older ages. It is also apparent that the age effect is much more pronounced at the lower income levels than at the higher income levels. It is also suggested that for the summer months the proportion of persons taking vacations away from home tends to level off for incomes of \$8,000 a year or more.

Within major regions of the United States, the South has the lowest rate of vacation taking. However, when the cross-classification by major region and family income is examined, it appears that the rate for the South is not significantly lower than the all region average within any income class—suggesting that the lower rate for the South is attributable entirely to differentials in income between the regions.

There appears to be no significant difference between the rate of taking summer vacations between persons who consider their health excellent as opposed to good. However, those reporting fair or poor health were much less apt to take a vacation. Similarly, those reporting limiting impairments vacation at a somewhat lower than average rate within all age groups and for the population as a whole; however, in this case the effect is much less pronounced.

On an overall basis persons in one-or-two person households have lower than average rates as do those in households with seven or more. For small households this appears to be an age effect to some extent since it is reduced for the one-person, and eliminated for the two-person households within age classes. However, in the very large households—those with seven or more—the effect appears quite real within all age classes.

The average person on vacation travels more than 1,200 miles, is away from home slightly more than 10 days, and spends an average of slightly more than \$8 per day or \$80 in all (tables 5.44 and 5.45). Distance traveled by persons on vacation rises somewhat with age from roughly 800 miles in the 12 to 17 year age bracket to about 1,500 miles for those 45 years or more. Distance traveled also rises with income and with the degree of urbanization. There is a slight tendency for greater distances to be traveled on winter and spring vacations than on those which are taken in the summer and fall.

### TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

During the year from June 1960 through May 1961 persons 12 years and over went on 111 million recreation trips, on which they were away from home 260 million person-days, spent \$1.25 billion and traveled 25 billion passenger-miles. As was the case with vacations, the summer is the most popular period for outdoor recreation trips, nearly half being taken during this season of the year. About half of the time away from home also occurs during the summer; however, only roughly 45 percent of the total expenditures and passenger-miles are accounted for by this season.

For the year as a whole fishing is by far the most important reason for which trips are undertaken as may be seen in table 5.37. However, during the fall and winter hunting season, hunting becomes more important than fishing in this respect although the former is in fourth place with respect to the year as a whole. Camping appears as an important primary reason for undertaking an outdoor recreation trip in all seasons of the year and particularly in the spring. Swimming is also important but primarily in the summer. Although during the winter nearly 10 percent of all trips are undertaken to engage in winter sports, even during this season many more trips are primarily for fishing.

On the average trip a person travels 225 miles, is away from home roughly 2 1/2 days, and spends just under \$5 a day or \$11.50 for the trip. The duration of trips shows very little variation across seasons of the year or across the socioeconomic characteristic (table 5.46). There is a tendency within all classes for trips undertaken in the fall to cover greater distances and to be somewhat more expensive than trips during other seasons of the year. Winter trips, on the other hand, cover somewhat shorter distances and are slightly less expensive, though the contrast here is less persistent and less pronounced.

The percent of persons with one or more trips is shown by season of the year and socioeconomic characteristics in table 5.39. It appears that in all seasons of the year men and boys of all ages are more

apt to go on recreation trips than are the women and girls. However, the women and girls who do go on trips travel as far, are away from home about the same length of time, and spend approximately the same amount as their male counterparts. The percent of persons with one or more trips during the summer rises across the family income distribution from 6 percent of those with less than \$1,500 a year to 27 percent of those with \$8,000 a year and levels off thereafter. In the fall the same pattern is apparent. However, in the winter and spring, although these seasons remain less popular, comparatively much higher percentages of those with family incomes of \$15,000 or more undertake at least one trip.

Percent of persons with one or more trips is high in the Western region of the United States and low in the Northeastern States in all seasons of the year. No uniform progression can be observed for this percentage by the place of residence distribution. On the average person-trip, those with incomes of \$3,000 or less travel about half of the distance of those with \$10,000 or more while the picture for the middle income group is somewhat mixed (table 5.46). The per-person-per-day expenditures rise even more sharply across the income group from less than \$2 for those with incomes below \$1,500 per year to \$8 for those with incomes of \$15,000, or more. The progression of per-person-per-day expenditures is quite uniform across the income distribution except for the \$3,000 to \$8,000 family income size classes for which there is some leveling off.

### OUTING CHARACTERISTICS

During the year June 1960–May 1961, persons 12 years and over went on 810 million outdoor recreation outings on which they spent \$1.7 billion and traveled 42 billion passenger-miles. Persons are not away from home overnight on outings but are away from home for the major part of the day, outings averaging approximately 8 hours each. Hence it becomes legitimate to consider each outing a day away from home in pursuit of outdoor recreation. When so considered, the importance of outings approaches that of vacations, and exceeds the importance of outdoor recreation trips. As has been noted above, persons are much less apt to incur away-from-home expenses on outings than they are on vacations and trips. The distance traveled on a typical outing is considerably shorter than that of the other two occasions types, and the total expenses often average less than 50 cents per occasion. All that is needed in the way of food and refreshment is often carried from home.

As may be seen from table 5.40, nearly three-fifths of all persons went on at least one outing during the summer with nearly two-fifths so engaged at least one time during the fall. This percentage drops to one-fifth for the winter but rises to one-third for the spring.

During all seasons of the year the proportion of persons with one or more outings is high for the youngest age class and considerably lower for the oldest age class with systematic declines across the age distribution.

During the summer and spring, there are no significant differences between the sexes with regard to percent of persons with one or more outings: however, during the fall and winter—probably because of the importance of hunting as the major purpose of outings during these seasons (table 5.37)—there is a greater tendency for men and boys to engage in outings. For the year as a whole, picnicking appears as the most important reason for going on an outing. However, picnicking appears as the most important single major purpose in no particular season of the year. Swimming becomes the most important major purpose of summer outings, accounting for one-third. Attending outdoor sports events is the most important during the fall

football season. Hunting is firmly in first place during the winter and fishing during the spring.

The percent of persons with summer outings rises from 30 percent for those with family incomes \$1,500 or less to about 60 percent for those with \$3,000 to \$4,500 and levels off for those with higher incomes. The same pattern is repeated in the fall and the spring: however, a much sharper rise across the income distribution can be observed for the winter. Among the regions, higher proportions of all persons in the West go on at least one outing. However, the South makes a better showing with respect to outings than with respect to either vacations or trips.