

\*\*\*\*\*



*IRIS*  
*Internet Research*  
*Information*  
*Series*



\*\*\*\*\*

**Good Times Outdoors**  
**They Are A Changin<sup>1</sup>**

**A Research Brief in the IRIS Series<sup>2</sup>**

**July, 2012**

---

<sup>1</sup> Athens Research Group, Southern Research Station, USDA Forest Service, Athens, GA (H. Ken Cordell, Project Leader).

<sup>2</sup> The Internet Research Information Series (**IRIS**) is an internet accessible science report series covering outdoor recreation statistics (**RECSTATS**), the National Kids Survey (**NKSSTATS**), natural lands research (**NATLAND**), and other human-dimension and demographics research (**DEMOSTATS**) related to natural resources. This research is a collaborative effort between the USDA Forest Service's Southern Research Station and its Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Athens, Georgia; the University of Georgia in Athens; and the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee.

<http://warnell.forestry.uga.edu/nrrt/nsre/IrisReports.html>

# Good Times Outdoors They Are A Changin

## IRIS Research Brief

### Key Findings from the 2010 RPA Outdoor Recreation Demand Assessment

Outdoor recreation plays a large role in American lifestyles. The magnitude of this role is no more in evidence than when one examines recent outdoor recreation activity trends. Recent trends have been reported as part of the current RPA Assessment of Forest and Rangelands (Cordell, 2012). An overview of these trends is presented below. For other reports the Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, has published for the national 2010 Resource Planning Act (RPA) Assessment, visit the following site link (<http://www.fs.fed.us/research/rpa/assessment.php>).

- (1) Outdoor recreation choices by people today are noticeably different from those made by and available to previous generations of Americans.*
- (2) There is an overall increase in outdoor recreation activity participation, even though some traditional activities have been in decline.*
- (3) There is growth in one group of nature-based activities in particular, that of “viewing and photographing nature.”*



Group viewing natural scenery overlooking Pololu Valley along the north coast of the island of Hawaii, 2010 (Photograph by Ken Cordell).

- (4) Different segments of society choose different mixes of outdoor activities.*
- (5) There is evidence that America's youth spend time outdoors, and, among some young people, this time is substantial.*
- (6) Public lands remain highly important for the recreation opportunities they offer.*
- (7) Trends in visitation vary by Federal land management agency and between Federal and State jurisdictions.*
- (8) A national study of motivations showed there are various reasons why people seek different forms of outdoor recreation.*

A full copy of the outdoor recreation demand report can be found at [http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/gtr/gtr\\_srs150.pdf](http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/gtr/gtr_srs150.pdf). An IRIS report will be created to cover more detail of each of the 8 key findings listed above over the next 8 weeks.