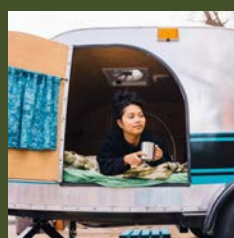
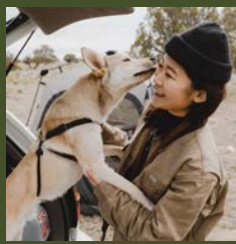


Low-impact camping on private lands

Opportunities and challenges

California Jobs First

September 2025



Introductions



The outdoor recreation industry, and demand for new places to get outside, is growing in the United States

- In 2023, **168 million participants**, more than half the **U.S. population**, participated in outdoor recreation
- Outdoor recreation generated **\$1.1 trillion in economic activity** in 2022. That's **2.2% of GDP** and nearly **5 million jobs** (BEA)



The volume of campers is affecting the experience and impacting the environment

- 46% of campers indicated they camped less in 2022 due to overcrowding
- 44% changed the way they camped because of the influx of new campers
- 45% say the large number of newcomers impacted the quality of their camping experience



Outside

We Need More Campsites

A shortage of places to camp is hurting the environment and limiting diversity in outdoors. But there are some innovative solutions on the table.

Low impact camping creates new places to get outside and generates revenue that protects open lands.




What is low-impact camping?



Kenney's Ranch

Kenney hosts four sites on 850 acres of grain, cattle, and untouched open space on California's Central Coast.



A photograph of a grassy hillside under a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a small, rustic tent with a brown roof and white walls is set up on a grassy slope. The tent is illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. The background consists of rolling hills covered in dry, golden-brown grass, stretching towards the horizon.

“I’m looking at the future of agriculture in California.
To keep the rangeland rangeland, to keep it from
getting gobbled up, to try to be a good steward of
the land, camping’s an easy way to do it.”

\$186,000 and 1000 bookings

Shasta View Camping

“Hipcamp is one of the greatest things that I’ve run into in this lifetime with regards to combining a community sense with a profitable return. Win Win for everyone. I’m ecstatic to be sharing my beautiful land, as campers love being there, and to find a way to supplement my income... I couldn’t be happier.”



The problem

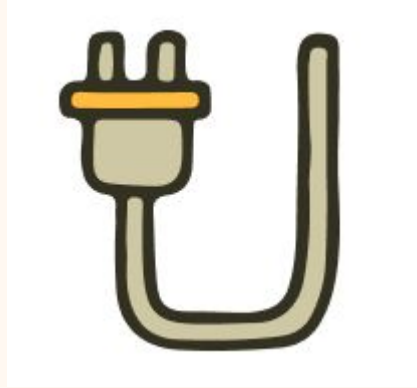
**Campground regulations are
out of step with new ways of
camping... and community
goals**

The problem continued...



Grey space in current code

Low-impact camping often falls between commercial campgrounds, b&bs, and short term rentals.



Expensive requirements

Commercial campground regulations are development-heavy and very expensive.



State one-size fits all rules

CA requires heavy infrastructure for campgrounds

The solution - “low impact camping” and AB 518



New state definition of “low impact camping”

Zoning and land use	Ag, rural, rural residential, recreational zoning and incidental use
Types of camping	Tent, RV, van, alternative structures
Density	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- 1 site per acre density limit- Max of 9 sites total
Permits	Administrative and low-cost
Taxes	Pay transient occupancy taxes
Bathrooms	Compost toilets, porta potties, septic. Flexibility.
Fire Safety	Must follow all local fire restrictions with dedicated fire pits and safety equipment



Why are counties interested in this?

LOCAL BENEFIT

\$58M

ANNUAL BOOKINGS

55,000

ANNUAL CAMPSITE
SALES

\$10M

165k

ANNUAL VISITORS

3,000

LANDOWNER HOSTS

- Economic development
- Sustainable tourism
- Landowner benefit
- Conservation

How does this interact with state policies?

1.10. Collaborate with private landowners, and federal, state, regional, and local governments to explore opportunities to expand recreation access on private lands

1.10.1 Through partnerships with private landowners, explore the use of partnership, joint-use, lease, and other access agreements to develop and allow recreation on private lands, including working lands. Identify and share agreement best practices.

1.10.2 Partner with local governments, including county planning departments, to implement simple, clear, and accessible permitting pathways to allow for low-impact camping on private property, particularly agricultural properties and properties that abut public lands.

Partnerships and community support



Questions?

