

## Connection to Nature

### Americans love our open spaces.

- Three out of every four Americans feel an "emotional or spiritual uplift" from spending time in natural areas<sup>1</sup>.
- 85 percent of Americans say it is important to be able to access them.<sup>2</sup>

### Access to nature is good for our health.

- Living near green space can [add up to 2.5 years](#) to an American's life.<sup>3</sup>
- Access to nature can limit the impact of [life stress on children](#).<sup>4</sup>
- Views of greenery can enhance the recovery of patients.<sup>5</sup>

### However, open space is being lost to other land uses at an alarming rate.

- Each day in America, an estimated 2,000 acres (3.3 square miles) of open space is developed, mostly near the urbanized areas where most Americans live, and mostly due to an increased number of people living in those areas.<sup>6</sup>
- The Census Bureau projects the U.S. population will add 75 million people by the Year 2060, with roughly 90 percent of that growth resulting from immigration.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pulse Opinion Research Survey, May 15-27, 2020. *From Sea To Sprawling Sea*, Appendix G, pp. G-1, G-2.

<https://sprawlusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NatlSprawl.pdf#%5B%7B%22num%22%3A80%2C%22gen%22%3A0%7D%2C%7B%22name%22%3A%22FitR%22%7D%2C-75%2C178%2C686%2C768%5D>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Kyeezu Kim, et. al. Inequalities in urban greenness and epigenetic aging: Different associations by race and neighborhood socioeconomic status. *Science Advances*. June 28, 2023.

<https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/sciadv.adf8140>. See also: "Living near green spaces could add 2.5 years to your life, new research finds," by Allyson Chiu, *The Washington Post*, June 28, 2023.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-solutions/2023/06/28/aging-green-spaces-nature-health/>

<sup>4</sup> Wells, N. M., & Evans, G. W. (2003). Nearby nature: A buffer of life stress among rural children. *Environment and Behavior*, 35(3), 311–330. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916503035003001>

<sup>5</sup> Ulrich, R. 1983. Aesthetic and affective response to natural environment. Chapter 3 in I. Altman, & J. F. Wohlwill (Eds.), *Human Behavior and Environment: Volume 6* (pp. 85-126). New York: Plenum Press; Ulrich, R. 1984. Views through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science*, 224, 420- 421.

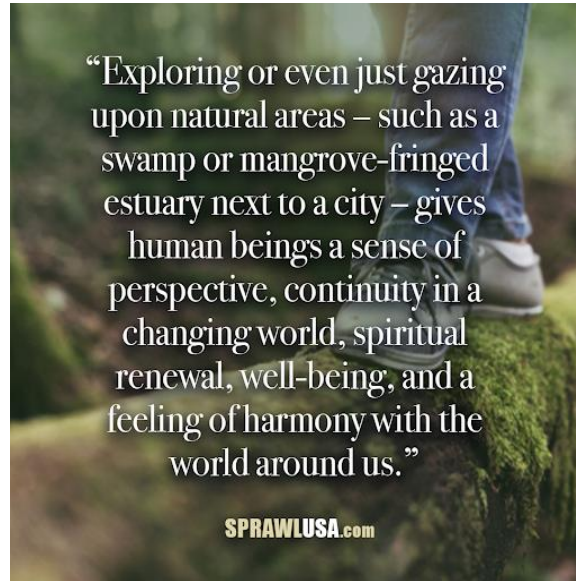
<sup>6</sup> Leon Kolankiewicz with Roy Beck and Eric Ruark, *From Sea To Sprawling Sea*, 2022, p 137.

<https://sprawlusa.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/NatlSprawl.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Sandra Johnson, *A Changing Nation: Population Projections Under Alternative Immigration Scenarios*, Current Population Reports, U.S. Census, 2020. <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2020/demo/p25-1146.pdf>

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As our population grows, parks and beaches simply cannot keep pace with the demand, and access to America's open spaces - whether majestic or modest, where people can find solitude, enjoy peace-of-mind, and observe nature in action - will become increasingly [restricted](#).



“It is not good for man to be kept perforce at all times in the presence of his species. A world from which solitude is extirpated, is a very poor ideal...” - John Stuart Mill, "[Of the Stationary State](#)," from his *Principles of Political Economy*

