



## **ESTIMATION OF TOURISTS' WILLINGNESS TO PAY ENTRANCE FEES FOR A FOREST BATHING SITE IN THE PHILIPPINES**

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**ABSTRACT** – Forest bathing is in its infancy in the Philippines. Because of this, the valuation of the health benefits derived from forest bathing in the country has not been studied. This paper aims to value the health benefits derived from a forest bathing facility in Camp John Hay, Baguio through the payment of entrance fees. A survey of 60 people was conducted and results were processed using the Contingent Valuation method. The survey revealed that respondents' mean willingness to pay (WTP) value is USD 15\*\* (Php 770) and the median is USD 10 (Php 500). Respondents with medical conditions gave significantly higher WTP values compared to healthy individuals. Livelihood and revenues are lost because of the restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is proposed that the John Hay Management Corporation together with the Department of Tourism re-package forest bathing as an activity, which will enhance the citizenry's well-being and propose this to the pandemic task force. The proposed entrance fee is the mean amount inclusive of safety measures prioritizing a registration system and crowd control measures.

\*\* Exchange rate is USD 1 = PHP 50

**Keywords:** Contingent Valuation Method, ecosystem services, forest benefits, health, nature therapy, COVID-19

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