

March 22  
2023

# Outdoor Recreation & the Vermont Visitor Economy

Tourism Day, 2023

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# The Landscape

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## What makes Vermont a world-class outdoor recreation destination

- 8,000+ miles of public access trails
  - Growing trail-serviced hut system
  - 7000+ miles of river and over 800 lakes & ponds
  - More than 40 alpine & cross-country ski areas
  - Over 6 million acres of land for hunting
  - 150 miles of accessible rail trails
  - Dozens of outdoor recreation-oriented communities
  - Access to natural, often conserved landscapes
  - A vibrant and highly diversified outdoor recreation business sector
- ... All within a 5-hour drive of 60+ million people





# The Impacts

## Outdoor Recreation drives health, environmental, and economic benefits

- Supports healthy & resilient communities
- Fosters ecological awareness & conservation
- Fuels sustainable economic development:
  - Hundreds of outdoor businesses
  - Attraction and retention of new residents
  - Supporting infrastructure and amenities
  - **A driving force for so many of the 13+ million annual visitor trips**



Source: Headwaters Economics



# The Ecosystem

Public sector, nonprofit, and for-profit enterprises working together

- The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources
- Public land managers
- Trail stewardship organizations
- Towns & Municipalities
- The outdoor recreation business community
- Organizations focused on equitable access
- The Vermont Agency of Commerce and Community Development
- Regional Development Corporations
- The Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative
- The Legislature!







Grow OR-  
related  
businesses



Increase  
participation in OR  
activities among all  
demographics



Strengthen the  
quality and extent  
of OR resources



Increase OR  
stewardship and  
environmental  
quality



Promote and  
enjoy the health  
and wellness  
benefits of OR

# Our Work

Five pillars to collectively advance outdoor recreation in Vermont

# The Need

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## How legislators can help ensure the vitality of outdoor recreation in Vermont

- Long-term, sustainable funding for new community-centered recreation assets
- Sustainable investment in the stewardship of existing outdoor recreation infrastructure
- Continued capital investment in State Parks
- Support pursuing ways to better protect and acknowledge private landowners who host trails
- Boosted investment in marketing the outdoors and Vermont as a place to work and live
- Workforce and economic development programs that stimulate career pathways and innovation
- Support for equitable access to the outdoors







THANK YOU!

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