



Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance

VOBA is a state-wide nonprofit organization dedicated to strengthening, expanding, attracting, and retaining outdoor recreation businesses. Activities focus on areas of financing, workforce, infrastructure, and branding.

VOBA educates Vermonters about outdoor recreation, educates businesses about collaboration and business development, and advances diversity, equity and inclusion in work spaces and outdoor places.

VOBA engages on legislative policy that affects businesses, employees, and customers and that invests in Vermont's natural and recreation assets and outdoor communities. VOBA works closely with the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC).

VOBA's membership includes 135 outdoor businesses that produce and sell outdoor products and services, including retailers, manufacturers, resorts and outdoor facilities, tour operators, trail builders, outdoor creatives, media and marketing agencies, event organizers, lodging, and more.

www.vermontoutdoorbusinessalliance.org



Outdoor Businesses at the State House during Tourism Day 2023



Vermont's Outdoor Recreation: Economic Driver in 2022

According to the [US Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis \(BEA\)](#):

- The national outdoor economy surpassed \$1 trillion, growing 2.5 times faster than the national economy
- Outdoor recreation made up 4.6% of Vermont's economy ranking the state 2nd behind Hawaii in contributions to state gross domestic product (GDP)
- Outdoor recreation accounted for close to \$400 million in retail sales in 2022, up from \$310 million in 2021, and manufacturing reported \$106 million
- Accommodations and food services significantly increased to \$666 million in 2022 from \$383 million in 2021
- Outdoor workforce expanded to 15,000 workers in 2022 (4.8%) at a rate of 12.4% and the highest percentage growth nationwide
- *Areas of improvement:* Vermont ranks as one of the lowest states in the country for wages (49th) and compensation (46th)





2023 Flood Impact and Climate Resiliency

The July 10 and December 18 floods, prolonged summer rain, and fluctuating winter conditions have caused significant physical and economic injury impacts, affecting outdoor businesses and the recreation assets they depend on.

VOBA's August survey (50 responses) identified [flood relief needs](#):

- Over \$6M in physical and economic injury losses in nearly every county
- 72% reported lost revenue due to inaccessible roads, closed recreation and slowed tourism, 44% reported losses due to canceled reservations / services
- 49% reported lost revenue from physical damage and 47% planned to pursue financial assistance from the Business Emergency Gap Assistance Program, Main Street Flood Recovery Fund, SBA Loans
- 77% planned to seek out economic injury grants

VOBA's December survey (55 responses) identified [climate mitigation needs](#):

- 68% prioritize funding to recoup physical losses, 53% for economic injury
- Investments in structural renovations / equipment / innovation / services
- Significant unmet needs due to insufficient financial assistance options



Jen Roberts, Onion River Outdoors
Lamoille Valley Rail Trail



VOBA 2024 Policy Pillars

Advance Climate Resiliency Solutions for Businesses

Flood recovery funding for physical and economic injury losses

Marketing initiatives that promote Vermont businesses and destinations



Enable Climate-Readiness, Sustainability & Equity through Business Development

Business innovation funding and technical assistance

Workforce professional development and training for outdoor careers

Elimination of forever chemicals in outdoor products



Strengthen Recreation, Conservation & Community Infrastructure

Economic impact study on recreation assets and businesses

Trail and recreation stewardship and capacity

Alternative transportation incentives and planning

Conservation planning integrating sustainable recreation



H.673 - An Act relating to Vermont's Outdoor Recreation Economy

Directs the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative in consultation with Vermont Trails and Greenways Council and VOBA to conduct an outdoor recreation economic impact study, evaluating:

- Overall statewide economic impact of outdoor recreation (74%);
- County-level economic impact of outdoor recreation;
- Return on investment in outdoor recreation in Vermont (66%);
- Top three opportunities for growth in the sector (*MFTV*); and,
- Recommendations for future investments to maintain and grow Vermont's outdoor recreation economy (*MFTV*).



Why now and why this study?

- Allows us to look ten years down the road and determine our future integrated recreation ecosystem
- Clarifies the economic promise of action (and cost of inaction): what we stand to gain from lifting up those climate-affected in the past + prepare for the climate-ready opportunities of the future
- Provides understanding of specific geographic impact and highly diversified business opportunities

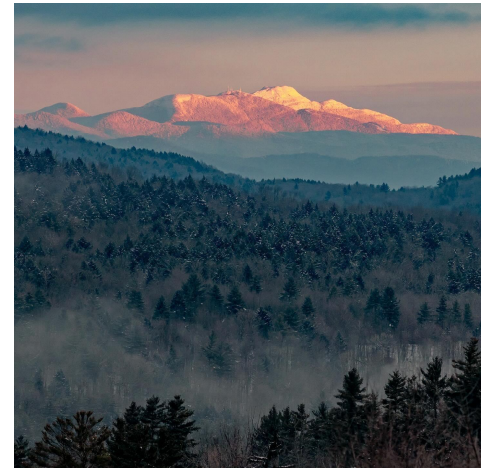
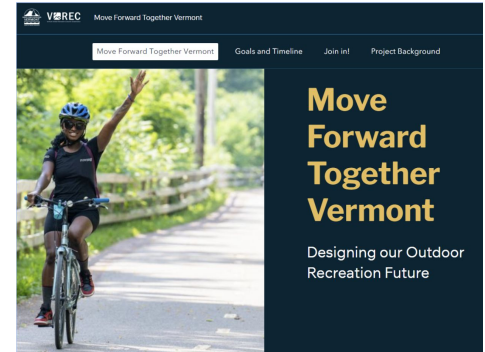


H.673 - An Act relating to Vermont's Outdoor Recreation Economy

An economic impact study is a timely and essential tool, ensuring we have the data to make strategic climate resiliency investments in the outdoor sector today to ensure a prosperous economy tomorrow.

VOBA is a partner in VOREC's Move Forward Together Vermont planning process and will determine recommendations for growth that prepare climate - ready businesses, communities, and landscapes by:

- Financing entrepreneurs based in rural downtowns and villages interlinked with recreation infrastructure;
- Innovating through technology and sustainable manufacturing to reduce carbon emissions and support production in the state;
- Expanding outdoor services, events and facilities serving visitors to be adaptable in the face of climate disruption; and,
- Building out career pathways to ensure a climate-ready workforce that attracts and retains Vermonters.





Vermont Outdoor
Business Alliance

MEMBERS

4FRNT Skis
4 Points Vermont
45 North
Alpine Luddites
Apex Trailworks
Bicycle Express
Bill Supple, LLC
Birdie Blue
Bivo
Black Diamond
Bolton Valley Resort
Burke Mountain Resort
Burlington International Airport
Burton Snowboards
Cabot Creamery Co-operative
Catamount Trail Association
Class 4 Designs
Confluence Behavioral Health
Connecticut River Conservancy
Craftsbury Outdoor Center
Darn Tough Vermont®
Discovery Bicycle Tours
Doug Stewart
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First Stop Board Barn
Fourbital Factory
FUSE
Gordini
Green Mountain Club
Height of Land Publications
High Fives Foundation
Hitchhiker Bike Shop
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Kaden Apparel
Kelly Brush Foundation
Kenrick Fischer Artistries, LLC
Killington/Pico Resorts
Kingdom Games
Kingdom Trail Association
Kit Lender

Lake Morey Resort
Lamoille Valley Bike Tours
Local Motion
Lyndon Institute
Madbush Falls/Riders Outpost
Maidstone Public Relations
Mad River Valley Chamber
Marmot
Mavic North America
M.E.T. Consulting Inc
Method Outdoor Collective
MomTrends Media
Moonrocks Marketing
Mountain Road Outfitters
Northern Forest Canoe Trail
Onion River Outdoors
Orvis
Outdoor Gear Exchange
Overeas Apparel
Pale Morning Media
Petra Cliffs Climbing Center and Mountaineering School
Pinnacle Outdoor Group
Place Creative Company
Porcupine Bikes
PowderJet Snowboards
Press Forward PR
Red Clover Bikes
REI Co-op
Renoun Skis
Ridgeline Outdoor Collective
Sam's Outdoor Outfitters
SB Signs
Ski The East
Ski Vermont
Skida Headwear & Accessories
Skirack/Patagonia Burlington
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Vermont Recreation and Parks Association
Vermont Ski and Snowboard Museum
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WhiteRoom Skis
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