



March 26, 2020

The Honorable Greg Abbott
Governor of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Governor Abbott,

On behalf of the outdoor recreation industry, we commend you for your leadership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As you look to take further actions to safeguard community health and safety during this unprecedented crisis, the outdoor industry stands ready to be a resource and we ask that you keep outdoor recreation in mind.

The physical and mental health benefits of outdoor recreation are well known. Studies have shown that healthy, active outdoor recreation helps combat anxiety, depression, obesity and more. As people grapple with the effects of COVID-19, outdoor recreation can be invaluable to maintaining physical and mental health. Hiking, biking, paddling, hunting, boating, running, fishing, camping, SCUBA diving, ATVing, RVing, horseback riding and more are all activities that can be engaged in while adhering to CDC guidelines for social distancing. Now, more than ever, it is critical for communities to have access to opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Access is an important component for our communities when participating in outdoor recreation. Regardless of what outdoor activity they enjoy, the public needs access. In addition to the benefits recreation brings to mental and physical wellbeing, it's also important to note the role recreation can play in revitalizing state and local economies in the wake of the economic crisis our nation faces. As you look to take further action to navigate your state through the pandemic, we encourage you to consider the health and economic benefits access to recreation provides.

Additionally, we encourage you to consider outdoor recreation repair, manufacturing and service providers as "essential" if you choose to move forward with any additional orders for employers. Outdoor recreation companies provide vital services for all Americans and often are a critical partner to law enforcement and public health agencies. For example – many marinas offer slips to law enforcement to ensure quick response for water safety; dealerships offer critical repair services for outdoor recreation products; and campgrounds might offer space for housing for traveling nurses and those in RVs. Gear manufacturers provide headlamps and gloves to workers and are adapting their facilities to the changing needs of our nation.

We understand the measures needed to protect health and safety and stand ready to work with the state to fully open public access to the outdoors once practical. We hope to work with you and your team in the months to come to bolster the health of your citizens and the outdoor economy that will ensure revitalized communities and economies for years to come.

The outdoor recreation industry applauds your leadership during this pandemic and stands ready to assist your efforts to lead residents through this difficult time.

Sincerely,

America Outdoors
American Sportfishing Association
Archery Trade Association
Association of Marina Industries
CHM Government Services
Diving Equipment and Marketing Association
International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association
Marine Retailers Association of the Americas
National Association of RV Parks and Campgrounds
National Forest Recreation Association
National Marine Manufacturers Association
National Park Hospitality Association
Outdoor Industry Association
RV Dealers Association
RV Industry Association
Snowsports Industries America
Specialty Equipment Market Association