



CONFLUENCE  
OF STATES

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# 2024 OUTDOOR REPORT

**JULY 2023 - JUNE 2024**

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October 2024  
[www.confluenceofstates.com](http://www.confluenceofstates.com)



# 2024 OUTDOOR REPORT

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# Our Vision



We, a growing **Confluence of States** with a shared passion for the outdoors and a commitment to cultivating a strong outdoor recreation economy, believe that outdoor recreation is **core to the very character and quality of life we should all enjoy.**

While each of our states is unique, our shared commitment to facilitating everyone's love of place through inclusion and diverse outdoor experiences has the **power to unify communities, to bridge societal divides, and to improve the mental and physical health of all people.**

This **Outdoor Report** provides an overview of the collective work our member states have **accomplished for FY 2024.**

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRS



**Katherine Andrews** (Arkansas)  
Chair



**Carolann Ouellette** (Maine)  
Co-Chair

As the 2024 Co-Chairs, it has been an immense privilege to oversee and contribute to the remarkable progress highlighted in our Outdoor Report. This year, we've **achieved a significant milestone** in elevating the outdoor recreation sector's relevance and impact, a feat made possible through the unwavering support of our industry partners and the dedicated leaders driving the outdoor economy forward in each of our states.

Together, we have celebrated, promoted, and expanded the outdoor recreation economy, underscoring its vital contributions to physical health, job creation, and the stewardship of our natural resources. We've also embraced new opportunities by introducing a fifth pillar this year—**opportunity and experience**—which further enriches our mission and broadens our reach. Our commitment to reducing barriers to the outdoors is reflected in our efforts to engage new voices and support a wide array of outdoor participants,

This year has been particularly exciting as **we welcomed four new states**—Massachusetts, Minnesota, North Dakota, and Pennsylvania—into the Confluence of States, strengthening our collective capacity. Additionally, we proudly participated in the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable's National Outdoor Recreation Executive Forum in Washington, D.C., where we shared insights and collaborated on future strategies.

With 24 offices of outdoor recreation now established and a campaign underway to reach 25 offices by 2025, **our presence is felt nationwide**. As we continue to expand our network, we invite you to read about our accomplishments, be inspired, and connect with us. Your ideas and solutions are crucial to our shared journey, and we are grateful to have you alongside us as we look toward an even brighter future.

Katherine Andrews and Carolann Ouellette

**Chair and Co-Chair**

# MEMBER STATES



2018

## First States Join

Colorado  
Montana  
North Carolina  
Oregon  
Utah  
Vermont  
Washington  
Wyoming

2019

## Second States Join

Maine  
Michigan  
Nevada  
New Mexico  
Virginia

2022

## Third States Join

Arkansas  
Maryland  
New Hampshire

2024

## Fourth States Join

Massachusetts  
Pennsylvania  
  
Minnesota  
North Dakota

# State Directors

## Arkansas



**Katherine Andrews**

**Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Colorado



**Conor Hall**

**Director  
Outdoor Recreation  
Industry Office**

## Maine



**Jeff McCabe**

**Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Maryland



**Sandi Olek**

**Executive Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Massachusetts



**Paul Jahnige**

**Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Michigan



**Brad Garmon**

**Director  
Outdoor Recreation  
Industry Office**

## Minnesota



**Randolph Briley**

**Deputy Director  
Outdoor Recreation  
Industry  
Partnership**

## Montana



**Vacant**

**Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Nevada



**Denise Beronio**

**Administrator  
Division of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## New Hampshire



**Janel Lawton**

**Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation Industry  
Development**

# State Directors

## New Mexico



**Karina Armijo**

**Director  
Outdoor Recreation  
Division**

## North Carolina



**Amy Allison**

**Director  
Outdoor Recreation  
Economy Office**

## North Dakota



**Cole Garman**

**Outreach and  
Engagement Chief  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Oregon



**Vacant**

**Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Pennsylvania



**Nathan Reigner**

**Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Utah



**Jason Curry**

**Director  
Division of Outdoor  
Recreation**

## Vermont



**Jackie Dagger**

**Program Manager  
Outdoor Recreation  
Economic  
Collaborative**

## Virginia



**Stock Watson**

**Director of Outdoor  
Experiences  
Secretariat of  
Natural Resources**

## Washington



**Jon Snyder**

**Senior Policy  
Analyst  
Outdoor Recreation  
and Economic  
Development**

## Wyoming



**Patrick Harrington**

**Manager  
Outdoor Recreation  
Office**

# Prospective Member States

Arizona



Neil Large

Administrator  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation

Connecticut



Mason Trumble

Deputy  
Commissioner  
Connecticut  
Department of  
Energy and  
Environmental  
Protection

Tennessee



Brian Clifford

Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation

Wisconsin



Cassie Mordini

Director  
Office of Outdoor  
Recreation

## PROSPECTIVE MEMBERSHIP

The Confluence offers prospective state memberships for leaders in the process of developing their offices of outdoor recreation. Prospective members are matched a sponsor state and serve as a resource for meeting the Confluence Accords.

For more information, contact our [Confluence of States Manager](#).

[Confluence Accords](#)

[Guidebook on Developing Offices of Outdoor Recreation](#)

[Newsletter + Resources](#)





# THE IMPACT OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

**\$1.1  
TRILLION**

The Bureau of Economic Analysis calculates the economic output of outdoor recreation to be \$1.1 trillion, surpassing industries such as mining, utilities, farming and ranching, and chemical products manufacturing.

**5  
MILLION  
JOBS**

Outdoor recreation generates millions of quality jobs and careers in the United States across a wide variety of industries.

**175.8  
MILLION  
AMERICANS**

The number of Americans ages 6 and over that participated in at least one outdoor activity.

Data sources\* are from [Outdoor Recreation Roundtable](#) and [Outdoor Industry Association](#)

\*Economic and job numbers rely on Bureau of Economic Analysis [Outdoor Recreation Satellite Account](#), which is updated every November.

# FY2024 CONFLUENCE HIGHLIGHTS

## Growing Confluence of States

The Confluence of States welcomed Massachusetts and Pennsylvania at the 2024 Outdoor Recreation Roundtable's (ORR) **National Outdoor Recreation Executive Forum**, the outdoor recreation industry's first-ever, cross-segment CEO-level event in Washington, D.C.



Massachusetts and Pennsylvania join the Confluence

## Fifth Pillar Added to Accords

The Confluence of States announced the addition of a fifth pillar, **Opportunity & Experience**, to its foundational principles. This new pillar is designed to foster a more inclusive, accessible, and enriching outdoor experience for all communities.



Confluence and SOBAN members convene in North Carolina

## Convening with SOBAN

The Confluence of States and the State Outdoor Business Alliance Network (SOBAN) convened at the **2023 Outdoor Economy Conference** in North Carolina to discuss strategies for working together to advance the outdoor recreation economy.

## Investing in Outdoor Funding

States like New Mexico and Wyoming passed outdoor recreation funds through legislation to create **access to more sustained funding for outdoor recreation**. These funds are designated to improve infrastructure, create more accessible trails, parks, and recreational facilities, and support programs that encourage diverse communities to engage with the outdoors.



Photo of Utah's Outdoor Recreation Day on the Hill advocating for funding and policies supporting outdoor recreation

# The Five Pillars

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The outdoors is the wellspring of adventure, camaraderie, and solace, inspiring us to both explore new places and set down roots. The Confluence of States is committed to fostering conservation and stewardship values, ensuring environmental quality, and restoring sustainable access to the outdoors for current and future generations.

**Each state adopts and commits our states to the following common principles:**

## Conservation & Stewardship

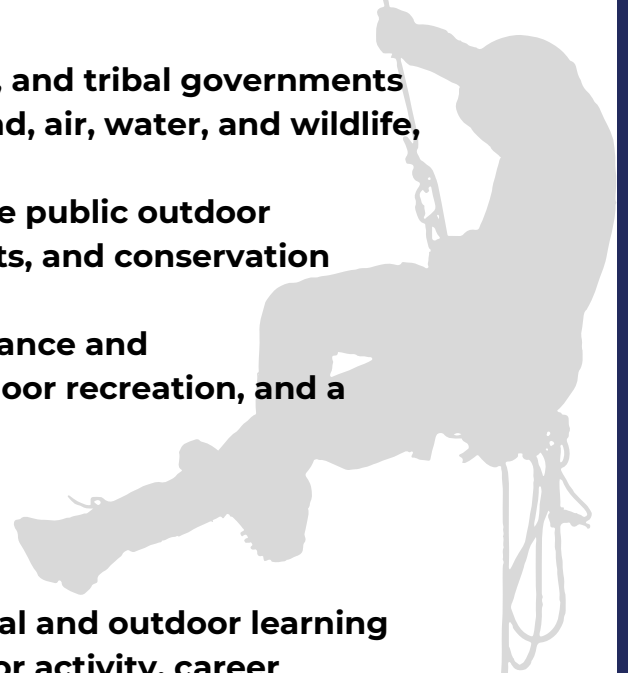
- **Work with the public, private, nonprofit sectors, and tribal governments to promote conservation and stewardship of land, air, water, and wildlife, and for responsible public access to them.**
- **Facilitate public-private partnerships to enhance public outdoor recreational access, infrastructure improvements, and conservation efforts.**
- **Educate and empower the public on the importance and interrelatedness of a healthy environment, outdoor recreation, and a vibrant economy.**

## Education & Workforce Training

- **Engage with educators to support environmental and outdoor learning opportunities for all in early and life-long outdoor activity, career development, and advocacy for outdoor recreation.**
- **Promote workforce training programs for technical training, skill mastery, and business opportunities across the spectrum of outdoor industry careers, with an emphasis on empowering underrepresented and rural communities for careers and leadership roles in the outdoor sector and supporting opportunities for early and life-long outdoor learning.**

## Economic Development

- **Collaborate with all stakeholders including underrepresented and rural communities to establish and improve sustainable outdoor recreation economies, infrastructure, and funding.**
- **Engage federal, tribal, state, and local governments, as well as local and regional economic development organizations to attract, retain, and expand business and market the outdoor recreation economy.**
- **Address barriers hindering business success in the outdoor recreation economy, particularly in underrepresented and rural communities and among entrepreneurs.**



# The Five Pillars

## Public Health & Wellness

- Address social determinants of health by increasing outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities.
- Partner with health & wellness stakeholders to determine shared values and common goals, build relationships, and generate innovative partnerships to fulfill shared visions.
- Work with health and wellness stakeholders to quantify the impact of outdoor recreation access and related social determinants on individual and community wellbeing.



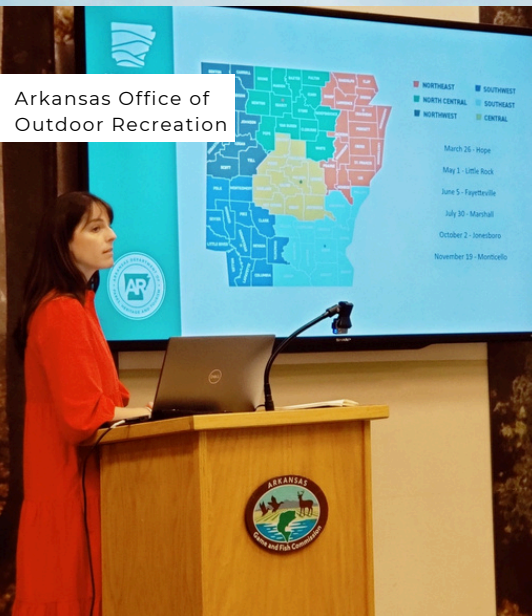
## Opportunity & Experience

- Promote safety and inclusion for all in all outdoor activities.
- Promote recreation opportunities close to places where people live, work and play.
- Reduce barriers to experiencing nature and participation in outdoor activities.



# Conservation & Stewardship

## ADVOCATING FOR CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP OF LAND



### ARKANSAS

Arkansas forests and wetlands received nearly **\$5 million** through **Inflation Reduction Act** protecting and restoring natural habitats for people and wildlife alike by aiming to reduce flood and drought risks and improve access to public recreational areas.

### COLORADO

Governor Polis and the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission announced trail-funding allocations for the 2024 Non-Motorized Trail and Land and Water Conservation Grants. There were **29 Outdoor Recreational Grants** funded this year totaling **\$7,918,274**.



### MAINE

Governor Janet Mills signed into law bipartisan legislation that will place a **\$30 million bond** on the 2024 November ballot to repair and enhance trails across the state. The measure would make available grants to help Maine nonprofits, municipalities, and qualified entities within State Government to improve non-motorized, motorized, and multi-use trails.



### MARYLAND

Governor Wes Moore announced that the latest update of the Maryland Protected Lands Dashboard reports that Maryland has already met the 30% mark with more than **1.85 million acres of land conserved** as of February 2024.

## MASSACHUSETTS

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced over **\$365,000 to restore 234 acres of wildlife habitat** across Massachusetts.

## MICHIGAN

Governor Gretchen Whitmer announced **15 communities will share \$1,977,300 in Recreation Passport grants** for projects, including the addition of a skate park in Mecosta County, new playground equipment in Roscommon County, a new campground and boat launch in Ontonagon County, and park improvements in Barry and Tuscola counties.

## NEVADA

The Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources announced that approximately **\$3 million** in grant funding is now available through the Conserve Nevada Program for projects that support conservation and outdoor recreation in Nevada.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

New Hampshire's Department of Natural and Cultural Resources announced **\$1 million in funding to improve the statewide trail system** following damage caused by historic rain and flooding events in 2023.

## NEW MEXICO

The first round of Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant awardees for 2023 totaled **\$2,360,289 for 20 projects** by organizations bringing in an additional **\$1,953,453** in matching funding.

## NORTH CAROLINA

Governor Roy Cooper signed Executive Order 305, an order that sets goals for the state to preserve **one million acres of land**, restore an additional million acres, and plant one million urban trees by 2040.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Governor Josh Shapiro and Department of Conservation and Natural Resources announced a **\$52.5 million investment for more than 225 recreation and conservation projects** across Pennsylvania that will create new recreational opportunities, conserve natural resources, and help revitalize local communities.

## UTAH

Utah hosted the **inaugural Mountain West Trails Conference** in Vernal, Utah. The conferenced united trail advocates, volunteers, land managers, industry professionals, users, and community leaders from Mountain West states to shape the future of trails in the region, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange that will drive the trail experience forward.

## VERMONT

The Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) convened focus groups of outdoor recreation stakeholders to share input on the inventory of current and possible conserved lands as part of the **Vermont Conservation Strategy Initiative**, a result of the Community Resilience and Biodiversity protection Act which aims to conserve 30% of Vermont’s landscape by 2030 and 50% by 2050.

## VIRGINIA

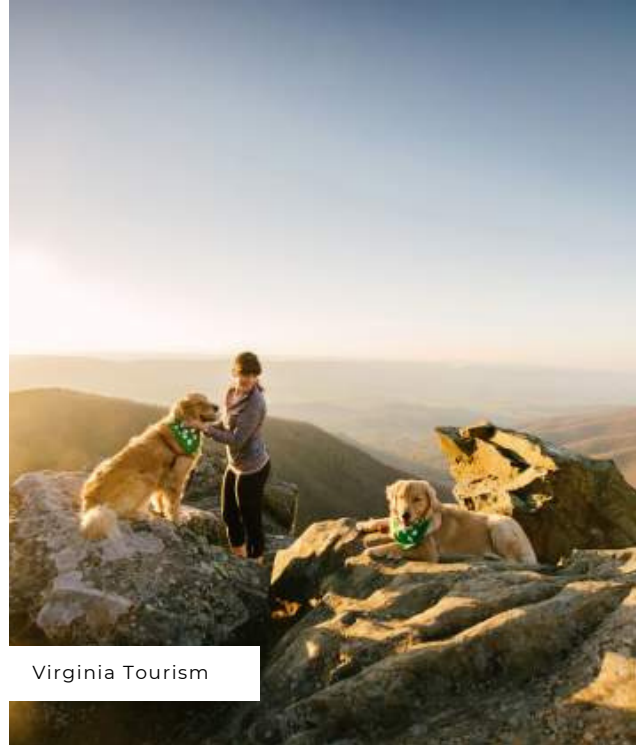
Governor Glenn Youngkin announced **\$14.7 million in Virginia Land Conservation Foundation**. The funds will go toward 29 projects across Virginia, including land acquisitions for new public outdoor recreation areas and conservation easements to protect active forests and farmland.

## WASHINGTON

Washington secured a **\$15.3 million federal grant** for the purchase of nearly **10,000 acres of forestland** around the headwaters of the Yakima River.

## WYOMING

The Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation announced recipients of the Wyoming Outdoor Recreation ARPA Grant program accounting for an added **\$509,836 in allocated funding**. To date, the grant program has awarded \$2,612,359 for outdoor recreation projects across the state.



Virginia Tourism



Washington Tourism

Source: Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation



# Education & Workforce Training

CONNECTING OUTDOOR RECREATION  
TO ALL PARTS OF THE STATE



Source: Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation



Source: Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation



Source: Maryland Department of Natural Resources

## ARKANSAS

The University of Arkansas's Greenhouse Outdoor Recreation Program received a **\$1.2 million grant to expand statewide** and support founders from the Ozark Mountains to the Arkansas Delta in creating innovative products and services within the outdoor recreation industry.

## COLORADO

In partnership with the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office, The Wright presented the 2024 Challenge Partners, who will be working closely with student teams over the coming months to **solve real issues in the outdoors**. The Wright set out to celebrate outdoor-inspired entrepreneurs across Colorado.

## MAINE

The University of New England added an undergraduate major in outdoor business and innovation. The new **Bachelor of Science in Outdoor Business and Innovation** degree program aims to get students career-ready through a focus on sustainable community development, environmental policy, entrepreneurship and small business management.

## MARYLAND

Governor Wes Moore signed an executive order establishing the **Maryland Outdoor Learning Partnership**—a new group of state agencies, educators, and nonprofits tasked with ensuring Maryland students have meaningful access to outdoor education about the environment, climate, and the natural world.



## MASSACHUSETTS

The Healey-Driscoll Administration **joined the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable** to promote the growth of the outdoor recreation economy and outdoor-related activities. As a member of the coalition, the office will convene regularly to identify challenges and solutions through innovative research and collaboratively sharing information on best practices within the field.

## MICHIGAN

Founded Outdoors partnered with the Michigan Outdoor Recreation Industry Office and Pure Michigan Business Connect in a year-long program to **educate and connect entrepreneurs** with the state's product design and scaled manufacturing opportunities.

## NEVADA

The Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation was chosen for the **Nature Everywhere initiative**, a national program aimed at expanding equitable access to nature for children throughout the state.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

The University of New Hampshire, NEMO Equipment, and New Hampshire Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry Development collaborated to fund of the **first New Hampshire Outdoor Recreation Policy Fellow**.

## NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division sponsored the **Next Gen Youth Panel**, hosted by Nature Niños at Outdoor New Mexico Outdoor Economics Conference.

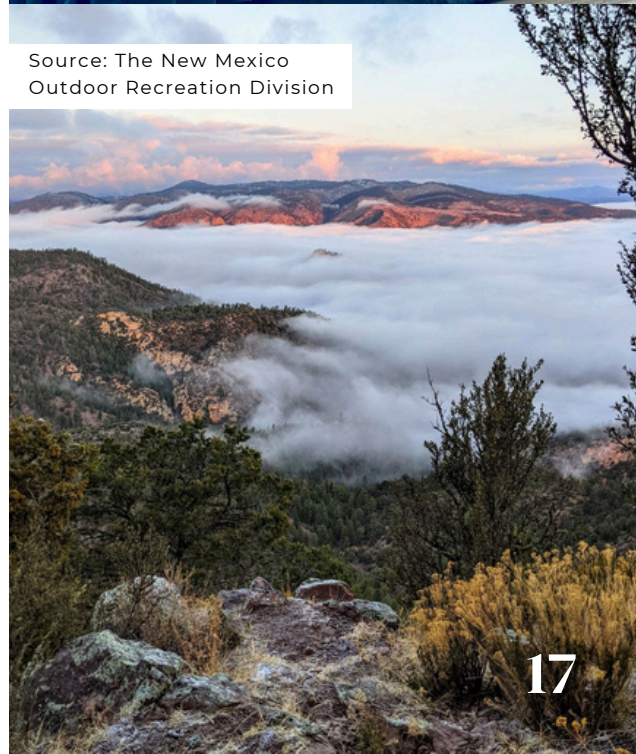
Massachusetts Office of Outdoor Recreation



Source: Michigan Economic Development Corporation



Source: The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division



## NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina hosted the Confluence of States at the **Outdoor Economy Conference** bringing together stakeholders in the outdoor business sector, federal and state agencies, environmental leaders, entrepreneurs, and the higher education community to have conversations on the outdoor economy.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Governor Josh Shapiro's 2024-25 budget included a **\$5 million investment in the Outdoor Corps** to improve and expand this critical conservation workforce program.

## UTAH

The Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation granted over **\$357,000 to fund youth outdoor recreation programs** around the state.

## VERMONT

The Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance (VOBA) with funding from the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) hosted a **series of workforce trainings** that included bicycle mechanics for retail service and trail building for professional development in trail construction and maintenance.

## VIRGINIA

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Federal Highway Administration have awarded grants to **nine trail projects through the Recreational Trails Program**.

## WASHINGTON

During the 2023 legislative session, lawmakers increased funding to **\$7 million for the No Child Left Inside Program**, helping fund more than 100 additional grant proposals than in its previous cycle. The program funds grants for organizations to ensure underserved youth can get into the outdoors.

## WYOMING

The University of Wyoming's WORTH Initiative and the Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation hosted the **Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Summit** for the second year in a row in Downtown Casper, Wyoming.



Source: Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative

# Economic Development

## SUPPORTING THE OUTDOOR RECREATION ECONOMY



Source: Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office

### ARKANSAS

Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders received a report from the **Natural State Initiative Advisory Council** detailing the group's recommendations to increase access to outdoor recreation and grow Arkansas' outdoor economy.

### COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis and the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office announced the **final 15 recipients of the Colorado State Outdoor Recreation grant (COSORG)**. Since October 2022, these grants have helped fund regional projects across the state that are advancing Colorado's outdoor recreation industry and strengthening local economies.



Source: Maryland Department of Natural Resources

### MAINE

Maine Outdoor Brands collaborated with the Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation to **elevate exposure for Maine-based outdoor products, services, and retail brands** at the Summer Outdoor Retailer.

### MARYLAND

The Maryland Office of Outdoor Recreation announced the **inaugural 2024 Outdoor Recreation Summit** to hold conversations on the importance of outdoor recreation for Maryland's environment, workforce, quality of life and economy.



### MASSACHUSETTS

The Massachusetts Office of Outdoor Recreation **joined the Confluence of States** to cultivate local outdoor recreation economies.

Source: Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation



Source: Michigan Economic Development Corporation

## MICHIGAN

InvestUP received \$3 million to establish the **Michigan Outdoor Innovation Fund**, the first fund of its kind in the Upper Peninsula. The Fund will invest in startups innovating new technology in outdoor recreation, strengthening the long-term future of Michigan’s outdoor and tourism industry.

## NEVADA

In partnership with the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation, the University of Nevada, Reno developed two programs to address the **increasing demand for skilled professionals in outdoor recreation**.



Source: New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

The New Hampshire Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry Development developed the **New Hampshire Outdoor Industry Inventory** to define and quantify the outdoor recreation industry in the state.

## NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division announced the fourth round of fiscal year **2024 Outdoor Recreation Trails+ Grant** recipients awarding \$1,944,944 in funding to 13 projects throughout the state to expand outdoor access and grow the New Mexico outdoor recreation economy.

## NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina hosted the **Outdoor Economy Conference** bringing together stakeholders in the outdoor business sector, federal and state agencies, environmental leaders, entrepreneurs, and the higher education community to have conversations on the outdoor economy.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Governor Josh Shapiro, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and Department of Agriculture visited ski and snowboard manufacturer Gilson Snow, Inc. in Snyder County to launch the **Pennsylvania Outdoor Business Alliance**.



Source: Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation

## UTAH

The Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation announced funding for **130 projects in Utah meant to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities** throughout the state. More than \$15 million will fund infrastructure and \$3 million in grants will go to Off-Highway Vehicle projects

## VERMONT

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation (FPR) and the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) announced **51 new recipients of the VOREC Community Grant Program**. These projects mark an investment of over \$6 million into outdoor recreation economy project planning, project implementation, outdoor equity and the recovery of flood impacted recreation resources.

## VIRGINIA

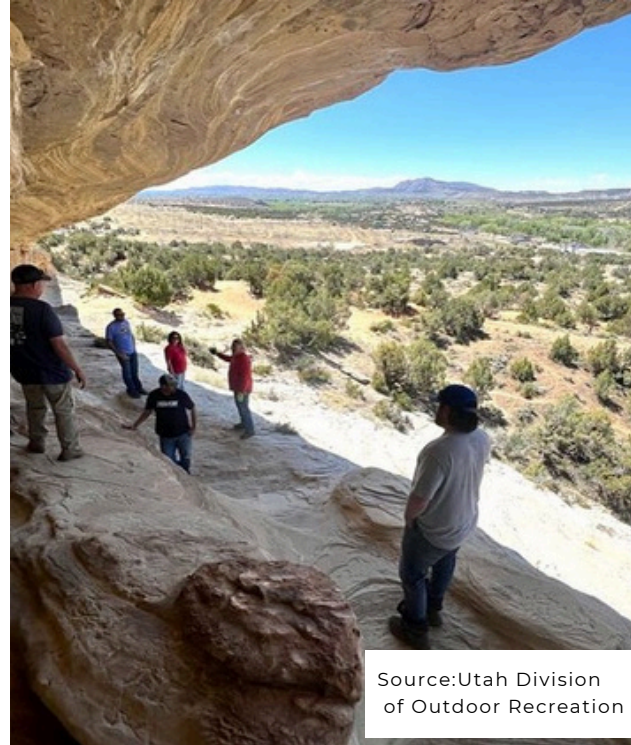
Governor Glenn Youngkin announced that **10 Virginia communities will launch new tourism programs** to boost their outdoor recreation economies.

## WASHINGTON

The Washington State Recreation & Conservation Office announced the award of **\$190 million in grants for communities** across the state. The money will be used to add a spray park, renovate trails, build campsites, and buy land.

## WYOMING

The Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation launched the **Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Grant Program** funding projects that focus on the response to COVID-19 impacts, new outdoor recreation infrastructure, and economic impact in local communities.



Source: Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation

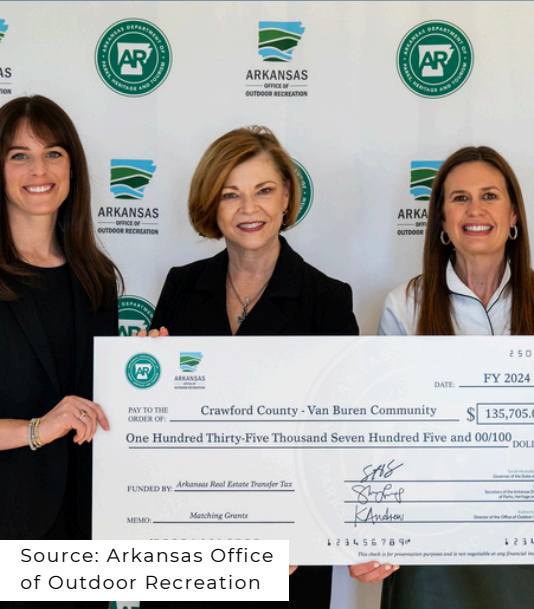
Source: Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative



Source: Jon Snyder

# Public Health & Wellness

## IMPROVING ACCESS TO OUTDOOR RECREATION



Source: Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation



Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office



Massachusetts Office of Outdoor Recreation

### ARKANSAS

Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation awarded **\$4.34 million** awarded to projects in 29 counties across the state. The grants fall into two categories: Facilities for Underdeveloped Neighborhoods (FUN) Park grants and matching grants.

### COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis and the Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office announced the **inaugural Outside Festival** at Denver's Civic Center Park. This flagship event celebrated Colorado's unparalleled outdoor recreation lifestyle and industry, while advancing our state's commitment to increasing access to the outdoors.

### MAINE

The Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation and Maine Outdoor Brands partnered to host the **second annual Outdoor Economy Summit** in Rockport, Maine.

### MARYLAND

The Maryland Office of Outdoor Recreation hosted a full day of family-friendly programs at Tuckahoe State Park. The event included a **ribbon-cutting for the new Lore of the Land: Sensory Trail**, built specifically for people with disabilities and sensory impairments to collectively immerse users in a multi-sensory journey.

### MASSACHUSETTS

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced **\$12 million in funding to support 65 trail improvement projects** across Massachusetts.

## MICHIGAN

The Michigan Outdoor Recreation Industry Office hosted several **conversations at Midwest House, SXSW 2024** - How the Outdoor Industry Becomes the Midwest's Secret Weapon and From Waste to Wear.

## NEVADA

The Nevada Division of State Parks announced the launch of a new app that will make it easier than ever for visitors to **connect with nature and access information about parks and trails** from their mobile devices.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

The National Park Service approved New Hampshire's **2024-2028 outdoor recreation management plan**, a strategic tool for the \$2.7 billion industry that employs 28,000 workers.

## NEW MEXICO

New Mexico passed the **Land of Enchantment Legacy Fund** that will provide a dedicated and steadfast stream of resources to programs focused on conservation and recreation in all 33 counties and tribal communities.

## NORTH CAROLINA

The N.C. Division of Parks and Recreation awarded **\$3,025,636 in grants for 13 land acquisition projects** through the Complete the Trails Program Fund. These grants will leverage more than \$13 million in matching funds to help local nonprofit partners acquire land for state trails projects in nine North Carolina counties.

## PENNSYLVANIA

The Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation was welcomed into **Confluence of States** at the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable's 2024 National Outdoor Recreation Executive Forum.



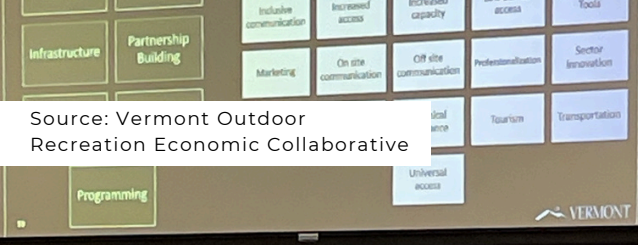
Source: Travel Nevada



Source: North Carolina Outdoor Economy Conference



Source: Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation



Source: Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative



## UTAH

The Utah Department of Transportation announced the inaugural round of funding for the Utah Trail Network. **\$95 million in funding will build and plan 19 new paved trails or complete existing trail gaps** across the state. The vision of the Utah Trail Network is to create a regional paved trail network to connect Utahns of all ages and abilities to their destinations and communities.

## VERMONT

The Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) awarded over **\$600K to the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council** to develop a statewide trail accessibility hub, a collaborative initiative aimed at providing the resources and information needed to make Vermont’s land and water based trails more accessible to a wider number of individuals, including those with differences in physical mobility.



Source: Washington Tourism

## VIRGINIA

Governor Glenn Youngkin proclaimed **June 2024 as Great Outdoors Month** in Virginia celebrating the quality of life in Virginia.

Source: Confluence of States

## WASHINGTON

Washington held the **Washington State Tourism Conference and Responsible Outdoor Travel Summit**. The Summit convened thought leaders in tourism, outdoor recreation, and conservation for sessions and discussions on common issues and potential solutions and partnerships.



## WYOMING

The Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation facilitated **seven community outdoor recreation collaboratives** throughout the state to gather community-based solutions to outdoor recreation challenges and development.



# Opportunity & Experience

ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALL



Source: Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation

## ARKANSAS

Katherine Andrews, Director of the Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation, testified at the House Subcommittee on Federal Lands legislative hearing on the “**Expanding Public Lands Outdoor Recreation Experiences (EXPLORE) Act.**”

## COLORADO

Governor Jared Polis and Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW) announced an additional **\$200,000 in annual awards for groups providing outdoor recreation and conservation opportunities** for youth through the Outdoor Equity Grant Program.



Source: Colorado Outdoor Recreation Industry Office

## MAINE

Maine started developing a **10-Year Outdoor Recreation Economy Roadmap** that will identify trends, challenges, and opportunities for sustainable growth and diversification of the rapidly growing outdoor industry.

## MARYLAND

The Board of Public Works approved Maryland Department of Natural Resources items including more than **\$14.8 million in grants to local governments and land trusts** to preserve and protect land, and provide recreation opportunities for Marylanders.

## MASSACHUSETTS

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced **\$167,000 in grants to support equitable access to outdoor recreation events** through the Massachusetts Office of Outdoor Recreation. 21 organizations and municipalities were awarded Inclusive and Accessible Event grants to improve ease of access to outdoor recreational activities for low-income residents, communities of color, and people living with disabilities.



Source: Maine Office of Outdoor Recreation



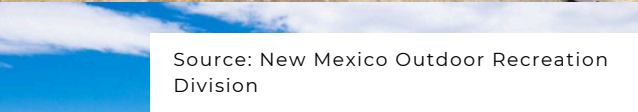
Source: Michigan Economic Development Corporation

## MICHIGAN

The state of Michigan is leading the charge in electric boats and marine electrification in the US with the ‘**Fresh Coast Maritime Challenge**’, a first-of-its-kind program for sustainable transportation on inland waterways. It encompasses everything from recreational boating to commercial activity on the Great Lakes to marina innovation and infrastructure.

## NEVADA

Nevada is planning to open **Adventure Centers promoting outdoor recreation** with \$3.7 million federal grant. The centers will promote all the state has to offer and be a one-stop shops for both visitors and locals alike.



Source: New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

The 2nd annual **GRANITEER** was held for the outdoor recreation community. It is a first-of-its kind outdoor lifestyle festival that shares the experience-based way of life in New Hampshire.

## NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico Outdoor Recreation Division announced funding of **\$975,142 in new Outdoor Equity Fund awards** to 33 organizations.



Source: Pennsylvania Office of Outdoor Recreation

## NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina General Assembly’s 2023-2025 budget invested **\$54.9 million to advance trail and greenway infrastructure** in North Carolina.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Lieutenant Governor Davis presented a proclamation to the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources announcing July 20 as **Outdoors for All Day**, highlighting the Commonwealth's wealth of public outdoor spaces that make Pennsylvania a place for a Great American Getaway for all Pennsylvanians.

## UTAH

The Utah Division of Outdoor Recreation released their inaugural **Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan** giving communities funds, data and a blueprint to expand their trails and access.

## VERMONT

The Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation and the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) launched the groundbreaking initiative “**Move Forward Together Vermont.**” This ambitious statewide planning process has been set in motion to address a critical need – aligning Vermont outdoor recreation partners around one vision and set of priority actions to strengthen Vermont’s outdoor recreation spaces and communities.

## VIRGINIA

·Governor Glenn Youngkin officially dedicated Virginia’s newest State Park, **Culpeper Battlefields State Park**. The park opens with 263 acres, centered around the crest of Fleetwood Hill at Brandy Station Battlefield, the site where the largest cavalry battle fought on the North American continent took place.

## WASHINGTON

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources launched the development process for the **Outdoor Access and Responsible Recreation Strategic Plan** to create a useable, actionable vision to guide the development and management of outdoor access and recreation activities on DNR-managed public lands.

## WYOMING

Governor Mark Gordon signed the Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Administration bill into law, unlocking brand new **Wyoming Outdoor Recreation and Tourism Trust Fund** to provide \$6 million every two years for outdoor recreation infrastructure, planning, and access.



# A LOOK AHEAD...

**As nearly half of the country now boasts state offices dedicated to outdoor recreation**, the Confluence of States stands as a pivotal network, fostering collaboration and innovation across state lines. Each office has become vital in promoting outdoor activities, preserving natural landscapes, and boosting local economies through tourism and recreation-driven businesses.

This year, we have seen new pathways and structures developed as we welcomed four new state offices. We're excited to see how states continue to **develop new models to support their outdoor recreation economies and communities.**

The Confluence of States is not just fostering a network; it is **cultivating a movement that recognizes the intrinsic value of nature in our lives and the importance of responsible stewardship.** As we look to next year, the Confluence of States will continue to shape a future where outdoor recreation is accessible, sustainable, and celebrated across the country.



# Office Creation

Offices of Outdoor Recreation are created through a number of measures - legislation, budget line item, executive order, press releases, or gubernatorial action. Offices are created by the support of stakeholders, business leaders, government and non-profit partnerships.

|                                | Creation                        | Agency   | Funding                          |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| <b>Arkansas</b><br>(2021)      | <u>Executive Order</u>          | Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism            | General Funds                    |
| <b>Arizona</b><br>(2024)       | <u>Press Release</u>            | State Parks and Trails                               | General Funds                    |
| <b>Colorado</b><br>(2015)      | <u>Legislation</u>              | Office of Economic and International Trade           | General Funds                    |
| <b>Connecticut</b><br>(2024)   | <u>Press Release</u>            | Department of Energy and Environmental Protection    | General Funds                    |
| <b>Maine</b><br>(2018)         | <u>Legislation</u>              | Department of Economic & Community Development       | Tourism Marketing Promotion Fund |
| <b>Maryland</b><br>(2021)      | <u>Budget Line Item</u>         | Department of Natural Resources                      | General Funds                    |
| <b>Massachusetts</b><br>(2022) | <u>Press Release</u>            | Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs | Executive Budget                 |
| <b>Michigan</b><br>(2019)      | <u>Governor's Press Release</u> | Department of Natural Resources                      | Executive Budget                 |

|                                 | Creation   | Agency   | Funding                                 |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Minnesota</b><br>(2023)      | <a href="#">Governor's Press Release</a>         | Explore Minnesota                                | General Funds                           |
| <b>Montana</b><br>(2017)        | <a href="#">Gubernatorial Action</a>             | Department of Commerce                           | Big Sky Economic Development Trust Fund |
| <b>Nevada</b><br>(2019)         | <a href="#">Legislation</a>                      | Department of Conservation and Natural Resources | General Funds                           |
| <b>New Hampshire</b><br>(2019)  | <a href="#">Legislation</a>                      | Division of Economic Development                 | General Funds                           |
| <b>New Mexico</b><br>(2019)     | <a href="#">Legislation</a>                      | Economic Development Department                  | General Funds                           |
| <b>North Carolina</b><br>(2017) | Budget Line Item                                 | Economic Development Partnership                 | General Funds                           |
| <b>North Dakota</b><br>(2024)   | <a href="#">Executive Order</a>                  | Parks and Recreation Department                  | General Funds                           |
| <b>Oregon</b><br>(2017)         | <a href="#">Legislation</a>                      | Oregon Parks and Recreation Department           | Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  |
| <b>Pennsylvania</b><br>(2023)   | Budget Line Item & <a href="#">Press Release</a> | Department of Conservation and Natural Resources | General Funds                           |

|                             | Creation                    | Agency  | Funding                              |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Tennessee</b><br>(2024)  | <u>Gubernatorial Action</u> | Department of Environment & Conservation  | General Funds                        |
| <b>Utah</b><br>(2013)       | <u>Legislation</u>          | Department of Natural Resources   | General Funds and Transient Room Tax |
| <b>Vermont</b><br>(2017)    | <u>Executive Order</u>      | Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation and the Agency of Commerce and Community Development | Grant Funding and General Funds      |
| <b>Virginia</b><br>(2019)   | <u>Executive Order</u>      | Secretariat of Commerce and Trade   | Executive Budget                     |
| <b>Washington</b><br>(2015) | <u>Legislation</u>          | Office of the Governor  | General Funds                        |
| <b>Wisconsin</b><br>(2019)  | <u>Budget Line Item</u>     | Department of Tourism   | General Funds                        |
| <b>Wyoming</b><br>(2015)    | <u>Gubernatorial Action</u> | Wyoming State Parks & Cultural Resources  | General Funds                        |

Want to learn more about creating an office of outdoor recreation?

[Connect with us here.](#)

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