

# Oregon's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

## Balance & Engagement: Sustaining the Benefits for all Oregonians



**2025–2029**



This document is part of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) process. Authority to conduct the SCORP process is granted to the Director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 390.180.

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Above: A hiker at Ecola State Park looking out over the ocean with a pair of binoculars.

Cover photo, left: Kayaker's on a ranger tour in Willamette Mission State Park (Dan Little). Cover photo, right: Mt. Hood from the south side with an image of the Pacific Crest Trail sign in the foreground.

# Foreword

## A Message from the Director, Oregon Parks & Recreation Department

The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) is pleased to publish the 2025-2029 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) Balance and engagement: sustaining the benefits for all Oregonians. From the title through the final pages, this plan presents two challenges that are daunting, clear, and sometimes contradictory.

All people—regardless of their personal characteristics, geography, or social circumstances—benefit equally from participation in outdoor recreation. Beyond health benefits explored in Chapter 5, and economics explained in Chapter 6, the research and public surveys agree: people share a desire to physically connect with natural spaces through outdoor recreation. This drive is universal. Where participation varies among people with disabilities, or demographically, or by gender identity, or any of the other myriad ways people experience life, the differences are typically because of barriers, not because of lack of interest. The location, design, policies, and social environment of outdoor recreation opportunities can encourage or discourage engagement, and this report explores issues managers can use to identify and remove obstacles.

Is it contradictory to push policymakers and managers to encourage broader participation, and in the same breath warn of the threats to natural resources from high levels of use? In Chapter 3, we explore ideas for combating degradation of the lands and waters that enable us to enjoy the benefits of recreation. All forms of outdoor recreation consume the resource, and as managers sift through options to sustain service—whether that’s spreading people out in time or space—we can expect to see increasing use of tools that ration use, or development of new facilities or accesses. Whatever the solutions are, we must bake in a barrier-free perspective and refine existing management to serve everyone equally well. Protecting the environment and increasing access for all people go hand-in-hand.

SCORP is Oregon’s five-year plan for outdoor recreation. It guides the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program and other OPRD-administered grant programs including the Local Government, County Opportunity, Recreational Trails, and All-Terrain Vehicle. We will support action on key statewide and local planning recommendations through partnerships and OPRD grant programs, and remind policymakers at the local, state, and federal levels that outdoor recreation is no mere luxury. As we sustain it with our time and money and decisions, the benefits people—**all** people—experience far outstrip the costs.

Sincerely,



**Lisa Sumption, Director**

State Liaison Officer, LWCF



Photo: Lisa Sumption, Director, on a rock ledge in front of Crater Lake.



# Acknowledgments

The following individuals developed and prepared this plan.

## OPRD Project Staff

<b>Dr. Caleb Dickson</b>	Research Analyst, SCORP Project Manager
<b>Brady Callahan</b>	Geospatial Lead
<b>Nohemi Enciso</b>	LWCF Grant Program Coordinator

## OPRD Management

<b>Lisa Sumption</b>	Director
<b>Chris Havel</b>	Deputy Director of Governmental Relations & Policy
<b>Daniel Killam</b>	Deputy Director of Administration
<b>Michele Scalise</b>	Grants and Community Programs Manager
<b>Cailin O'Brien-Feeney</b>	Director, Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation

## Other OPRD Contributors

Nicole Fox  
Alexis Grambo  
Melissa Gutierrez  
Helena Kesch  
Stefanie Knowlton  
Chris Parkins  
Lee Ricci  
Bridget Tinsley  
Alexander Vencill  
Beth Wilson

## Oregon State University Project Staff

Dr. Randall Rosenberger  
Lydia Gorrell  
Daniel Powers  
Dakota Nelson  
Center for the Outdoor Recreation Economy Staff

## Consultants

<b>Robert Alan Ping</b>	Crosscurrent Collective
<b>Kristin Dahl</b>	Crosscurrent Collective
<b>Ken Cousins</b>	Earth Economics
<b>Erin Mackey</b>	Earth Economics
<b>Dr. Wayde Morse</b>	Auburn University



A woman sitting in a wheelchair next to two people holding kayak paddles, preparing for a kayak trip at Milo McIver State Park.



## SCORP Advisory Committee

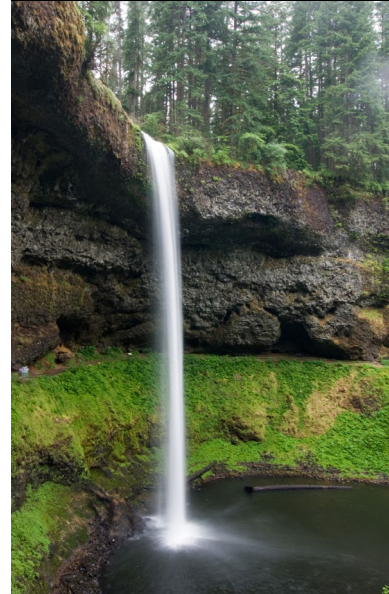
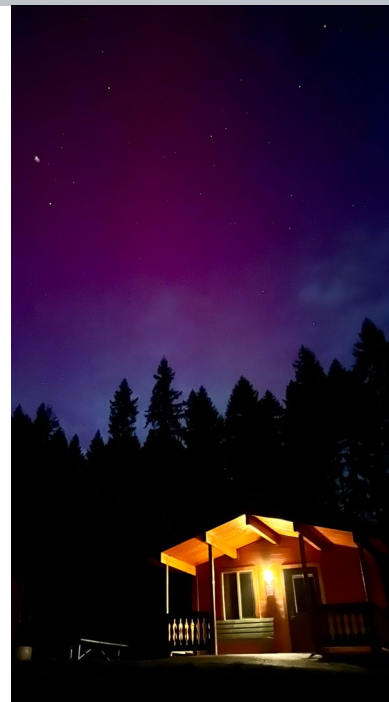
*Listed in Alphabetical Order*

### Member

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Dave Ballinger  
Scott Bricker  
Mark Buckley  
Jon Burpee  
Tracy Calizon  
Brian Carroll  
Haley Cox  
Laura Fredrickson  
Roger Fuhrman  
Nick Green  
Wesley Heredia  
Ross Hoover  
Liam Hughes  
Steve Lambert  
Nicole Lewis  
Fraser MacDonald  
Jenna Marmon  
Kim McCarrell  
Shelly Miller  
Georgena Moran  
Josh Mullhollem  
Steph Noll  
Darryl Ramsey  
Jahmaal Rebb  
Melissa Rinehart  
Jackie Rochefort  
Ryan Singleton  
Alan Thompson  
Kelly Chase Veach  
Stacey Whaley  
Michael Yun

### Organization

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Oregon Recreation Trails Advisory Council / Sunset Empire  
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Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
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Oregon Equestrian Trails / Deschutes Trails Coalition  
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City of Corvallis Parks & Recreation  
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Photos, from top: A cabin at L.L. Stub Stewart State Park on a starry evening (Mel Gutierrez). South Falls at Silver Falls State Park (R. J. Sanchez). A young girl whale watching at the Oregon Coast. (Mel Gutierrez)

## SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee

*Listed in Alphabetical Order*

### Member

Tracy Calizon  
Haley Cox  
Wesley Heredia  
Ross Hoover  
Nicole Lewis  
Georgena Moran  
Darryl Ramsey  
Melissa Rinehart  
Kelly Chase Veach  
Michael Yun

### Organization

U.S. Forest Service  
Oregon Parks and Recreation  
Vamanos Outside  
City of Tualatin Parks & Recreation  
METRO Parks & Nature  
Access for All, LLC  
Outdoor Afro  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
U.S. Forest Service  
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## SCORP Balancing Conservation and Recreation Subcommittee

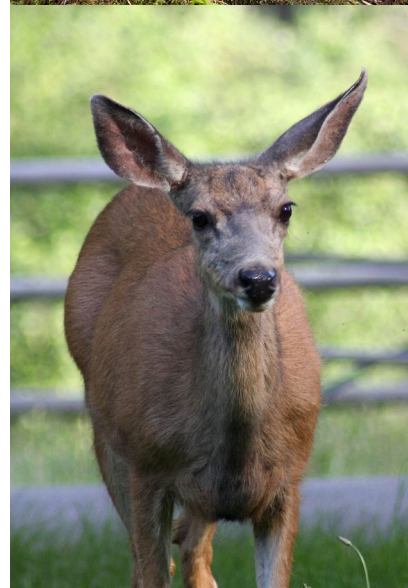
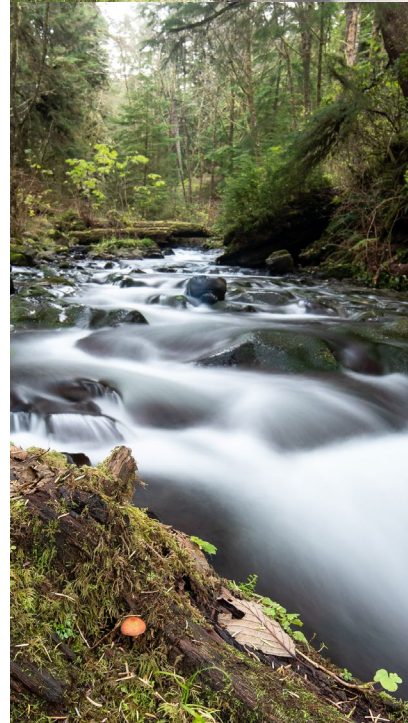
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Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife  
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Willamalane Park & Recreation District  
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
City of Eugene Parks & Open Space  
Oregon State Marine Board  
Oregon Trails Coalition  
Outdoor Afro  
Oregon Department of Forestry  
U.S. Forest Service



Photos, from top: A trail sign in the Columbia River Gorge for the Starvation Ridge Trail. River flowing through Oswald West State Park. Deer at Prineville Reservoir State Park.



# Executive Summary

The 2025–2029 Oregon Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), titled *Balance and Engagement: sustaining the Benefits for all Oregonians*, constitutes Oregon’s basic five-year plan for outdoor recreation. The plan guides the use of Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) monies that come into the state, guides other Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)-administered grant programs, and offers recommendations to guide federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector, in making policy and planning decisions.

The plan addresses three important priorities facing outdoor recreation providers in the coming years, including:

1. The importance and benefits of recreation to Oregonians and the local economy.
2. Balancing conservation with outdoor recreation.
3. Engaging with underserved communities in outdoor recreation efforts.

Besides satisfying grant program requirements, the primary intent of this plan is to provide up-to-date, high-quality information to assist recreation providers with park system planning in Oregon. As a result, a substantial investment was made to conduct a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their outdoor recreation participation in Oregon, as well as their opinions about parks and recreation management. The survey results are provided for the general statewide population; urban, suburban, and rural populations; and for demographic groups at the statewide level. A total of 4,055 randomly selected Oregonians completed a survey questionnaire. A summary of statewide and demographic group survey results is included in this plan. A SCORP planning support document titled *2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey*, contains the full report.

As seen in Chapter 2, survey results show that overall, 95% of Oregonians participated in at least one outdoor recreation activity in Oregon during the past year. Close-to-home activities dominated the total user occasions for Oregon residents because these activities can occur daily with limited travel

time. Besides walking on trails or sidewalks, top outdoor activities included nature immersion, nature observation, and attending outdoor events. Traveling to hike and for nature immersion, sightseeing/driving for pleasure, and activities at the beach were some of the most popular events outside communities. For demographic groups, high-income individuals had the highest proportion of their population participating in some outdoor recreation activity, and low-income (annual household income <\$25,000) had the lowest. Survey results include specific recommendations on how Oregon’s recreation providers can better serve the outdoor recreation needs of the general population and target demographic groups.

Chapters 3 and 4, *Balancing Conservation and Recreation* and *Engaging with Underserved Communities*, address specific concerns regarding crowding and environmental stress in recreation areas and identifying and engaging with underserved communities in outdoor recreation. For concerns with crowding and balancing conservation with recreation, residents identified their personal response to crowding, their preferred management action, and their priority of natural resource impact. Public recreation providers were also surveyed on these issues. For issues of equitable inclusion of diverse communities, participation for specific demographic groups was compared alongside relevant constraints for a few groups of interest (low-income Oregon residents, residents in a household with a disability, and racially/ethnically diverse residents). Management recommendations are included in each chapter.

Separate research projects titled *Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians from Their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon* and *Total Net Economic Value from Residents’ Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon* (Chapters 5 and 6) investigated the general economic benefits of outdoor recreation to participants, as well as specific impacts on health spending. The total annual Cost of Illness savings from Oregonians’ participation in 76 outdoor recreation activities is conservatively calculated to be \$2.965 billion, while the total economic value received by Oregonians associated with their outdoor recreation in the state

is estimated at \$57.1 billion. The report clearly demonstrates that parks and recreation providers have a role in increasing the public health and well-being of Oregonians and possess significant economic weight.

Beyond the benefits enjoyed directly by participants, outdoor recreation brings billions of dollars to Oregon's economy each year. Chapter 8, *Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon*, estimates the economic contribution of the outdoor recreation economy based on 2022 participation levels. The study finds that outdoor recreation spending totaled \$16 billion at businesses throughout the state, which supported 192,000 full and part-time jobs as it rippled through Oregon's economy, including sectors not directly tied to outdoor recreation. These results further illustrate the importance of providing sustainable access to outdoor recreation to maintain a high quality of life for Oregon residents.

In lieu of a 2023 recreation inventory, OPRD opted to engage the geospatial data community in developing a data standard for recreation facilities. The standard provides a solid foundation for recreation inventory and spatial analysis with the intent to increase the amount of recreation facility data and ensure the data is consistent and accessible in future research. The lack of standardization and centralization is a barrier to organizations needing this critical planning information for equitable recreation

planning and resource management, as well as other associated uses such as health tracking and emergency response. Developing and adopting a statewide data standard is the first step in improving the quantity and accessibility of recreation facility information for Oregon.

In addition to materials in this plan, a series of support documents are available online or by request. Those documents include:

- 2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey Report, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a1>
- 2023 Oregon Park and Recreation Provider Survey Report, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a2>
- 2023 Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians from Their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a3>
- 2023 Total Net Economic Value from Residents' Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a4>
- Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: 2022 Update, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a5>
- Oregon Administrative Rules for Distribution of LWCF Funding, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a6>
- 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP Wetlands Priority Component, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a7>
- Summary of 2024 SCORP Public Open House Meetings, <https://bit.ly/scorp24a8>

A child playing baseball at Silver Fall State Park while her family watches. (R.J. Sanchez)





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A ranger gardening at Champoege State Park.





# ► CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

### Plan Introduction

The purpose of this planning effort is to provide guidance for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) program and information and recommendations to guide federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector, in making policy and planning decisions. It also provides guidance for other Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD)-administered grant programs including the Local Grant, County Opportunity Grant, Recreational Trails, and All-Terrain Vehicle programs. Besides satisfying grant program requirements, the primary intent of this plan is to provide up-to-date, high-quality information to assist recreation providers with park system planning in Oregon. In addition, it provides recommendations for Oregon State Park System operations, administration, planning, development, and recreation programs.

This document constitutes Oregon's basic five-year policy plan for outdoor recreation. It establishes the framework for statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation planning and the implementation process. In conjunction with that purpose, it is intended to be consistent with the objectives of the LWCF Act of 1965, which, as its title implies, is to conserve and make available for public enjoyment as much of the nation's high-quality land and water resources as may be available and necessary to meet the nation's outdoor recreation needs.

### The Land & Water Conservation Fund

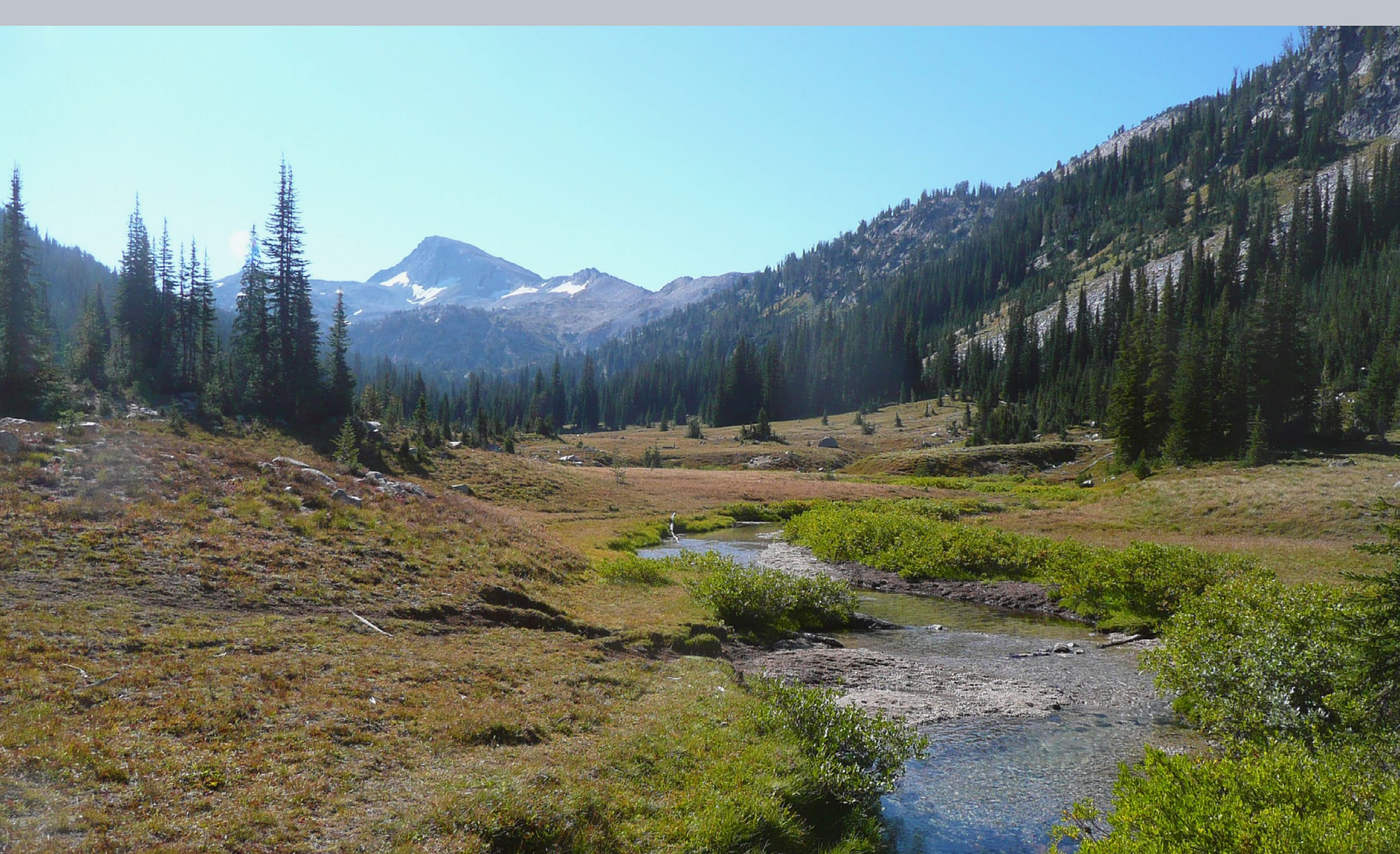
The Land and Water Conservation Fund was established by Congress in 1964 to create parks and open spaces, protect wilderness, wetlands, and refuges, preserve wildlife habitat, and enhance recreational opportunities. The LWCF has two components:

- A **federal program** that funds the purchase of land and water areas for conservation and recreation purposes within the four federal land management agencies; and
- A **stateside matching grants program** that provides funds to states for planning, developing, and acquiring land and water areas for state and local parks and recreation areas.

### The Federal LWCF Program

Funds appropriated for the federal program are available to federal agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, and the Bureau of Land Management to purchase land and water areas for conservation and recreation purposes. These funds are used for public acquisition of special lands and places for conservation and recreation purposes; public acquisition of special lands and places for conservation and recreation purposes; public acquisition of private holdings within National Parks, National Forests, National Fish and Wildlife Refuges, public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and wilderness areas; public acquisition areas key to fish and wildlife protection; and public acquisition as authorized by law.

Federal LWCF program funds are distributed following an annual process of prioritizing regional land acquisition needs for each eligible agency. After considering various factors such as cost, probability of development, and local support, they develop prioritized “wish lists” that are forwarded to their



A creek running through the high country in the Wallowas in Eastern Oregon.

Washington, D.C., land acquisition headquarters. The headquarters staff identifies its priorities and sends them to the Land Acquisition Working Group, comprised of the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; the Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Land Management; and the Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Nature, Resources, and the Environment. The working group sends the prioritized agency lists to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) at the completion of the congressional session. OMB critiques and returns the list, and following a final appeal process by the agencies, the fiscal year's land acquisition funding amount is presented as part of the President's budget.

### **The Stateside LWCF Grant Program**

Those funds appropriated for the stateside matching grants program can be used to acquire land for parks and recreation purposes; build or redevelop recreation and park facilities; provide riding and hiking trails; enhance recreation access; and conserve open space, forests, estuaries, wildlife, and natural resource areas through recreation projects. In most years, all states

receive individual allocations of stateside LWCF grant funds based on a national formula, with state population being the most influential factor.

The LWCF Act requires that all property acquired or developed with LWCF funds be dedicated in perpetuity exclusively to public outdoor recreation use. The law further states that no property can be converted to a different use without the approval of the Secretary of the Interior. When an organization wants to convert land to another use, consultation with Oregon Parks and Recreation Department is required prior to requesting approval from the National Park Service. Property converted from recreational use must be replaced with land of at least current fair market value and equivalent recreational utility. Proposals to resolve conversions from recreation use will be consistent with the evaluation of new grant proposals. Proposals will be evaluated based on their consistency with the evaluation of new grant proposals. Proposals will be evaluated based on their consistency with SCORP priorities and/or consistency with project priorities identified through a local public planning process.



## Qualifying For LWCF Funding

To qualify for stateside LWCF funding, each state must prepare a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) every five years. In Oregon, the plan functions not only to guide the LWCF program but also provides guidance for other OPRD-administered grant programs, including the Local Grant, County Opportunity Grant, Recreational Trails, and All-Terrain Vehicle Programs. Finally, the plan provides guidance to federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector, in delivering quality outdoor recreational opportunities to Oregonians and out-of-state visitors.

## Legal Authority

To be eligible for assistance under the Federal Land and Conservation Fund Act of 1964 (Public Law 88-578; 78 Stat. 897), the Governor of the state of Oregon has designated the Director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department as the official who has authority to represent and act for the State as the State Liaison Officer (SLO) in dealing with the Director of the National Park Service for purposes of the LWCF program. The SLO has the authority and responsibility to accept and administer funds paid for approved projects.

Authority to conduct the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan process is granted to the Director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 390.180. Authority to recommend and promote standards for recreation facilities, personnel, activities, and programs is granted to the Director of the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department under Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 390.140. This document and related appendices were prepared to be in compliance with Chapter 630 of the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund Grants Manual. Federal acceptance of the State's comprehensive outdoor recreation planning process is a prerequisite for Oregon's establishing and maintaining eligibility to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund program.

The Oregon Administrative Rules, Chapter 736, Division 8, Distribution of LWCF Funding Assistance to Units of Local Government for Public

Outdoor Recreation, establishes the State Liaison Office when distributing federal Land and Water Conservation Fund monies to the state agencies and eligible local governments, and the process for establishing the priority order in which projects shall be funded. See the support document entitled *Oregon Administrative Rules for Distribution of LWCF Funding* available online at: <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Documents/SCORP-OARS-Distribution-LWCF-Funds.pdf>.

## The Planning Process

The last Comprehensive Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan for Oregon was completed by OPRD and accepted by the National Park Service (NPS) in April 2019. With the completion of the 2025–2029 plan, the state maintains eligibility to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund up through December 2029.

OPRD began the current SCORP planning process in January 2022. An initial planning task was to identify the most important issues in Oregon related to outdoor recreation. Critical issues identified and addressed in this plan include balancing conservation with recreation, engaging with underserved populations in outdoor recreation, and the importance of outdoor recreation in Oregon's economy and culture. With these priorities in mind, along with the intent to provide information to assist recreation providers with park system planning in Oregon, the plan has been titled *Balance and Engagement: Sustaining the Benefits for all Oregonians*.

To produce this SCORP, OPRD contracted with Oregon State University's Center for the Outdoor Recreation Economy (CORE) to assist in project administration and to coordinate research. Specifically, CORE provided coordination and communications support with OPRD and college faculty and staff in the identification, planning, and execution of research and related data collection, information gathering, and surveying associated with the SCORP planning project.

The following sections briefly describe the major components of the planning effort.



## SCORP Advisory Committee

Early in the planning effort, OPRD established a SCORP Advisory Committee (see Acknowledgments) to assist the department with the planning process. Members of the group represented various organizations, including local, state, and federal recreation providers, recreational user groups, and universities. During the planning effort, committee members were asked to assist OPRD with the following SCORP-related tasks:

- reviewing the basic planning framework;
- determining the basic planning outline;
- identifying significant statewide outdoor recreation issues and strategic actions;
- reviewing survey instruments, research findings, and reports;
- determining Open Project Selection Process criteria for evaluating grant proposals for the LWCF grant program; and
- reviewing the planning documents.

The initial full Advisory Committee meeting was held on August 10, 2022. Objectives of this meeting included:

- identifying the types of information to include in the SCORP plan;
- reviewing top statewide issues;
- reviewing updates to the statewide participation survey instruments and methods;
- reviewing provider needs assessment methods; and
- reviewing GIS data standardization.

A final full committee meeting was held on January 18, 2024. Meeting objectives included:

- reviewing and providing feedback on survey findings;
- reviewing report on engaging with underserved communities;
- reviewing report on balancing conservation and recreation;
- reviewing progress on GIS data standards;
- reviewing proposed statewide strategic actions; and
- reviewing LWCF grant evaluation criteria.

Several subcommittee meetings were held over the course of the planning effort. One subcommittee meeting was held on March 8, 2023, to guide the Balancing Conservation and Recreation chapter. Two subcommittee meetings were held on March 9, 2023, and May 8, 2023, to assist with the chapter on Engaging with Underserved Communities.

## Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey

OPRD conducted a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their 2022 outdoor recreation participation in Oregon, as well as their opinions about park and recreation management. This report provides the results of the statewide survey.

The sample design was developed to derive statewide information as well as information specific to the following demographic characteristics:

- Race/ethnicity: Respondents self-identifying as Hispanic/Latino/a (of any race), and non-Hispanic/Latino/a residents identifying as Asian, Black/African American, Mixed race, or White/European American.
- Low income: Respondents who reported an annual household income <\$25,000.
- Disabled individuals: Respondents reporting having a disability or living in a household with someone with a disability.
- Age: Respondents 60 years or older.
- Community type: Respondents describing their community as urban, suburban, or rural.

The survey was distributed to a random statewide sample of Oregon residents with addresses on file with the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and a panel sample of Oregon residents designed to oversample ethnic and racial minorities. The study design and questionnaires were developed with the assistance of Dr. Wayde Morse, Auburn University (AU), under a technical assistance agreement and were reviewed by Caleb Dickson, Chris Havel, and Cailin O'Brien-Feeney of OPRD. Dr. Randall Rosenberger and Lydia Gorrell completed data collection and analysis. Survey results may be used by federal, state, and local parks and recreation managers/agencies and private-sector recreation providers to understand





Young children at a campsite in Milo McIver State Park.

current recreation and future demands for recreation opportunities and programs.

Summaries of key demographic group results are included in issues chapters in the plan. A SCORP planning support document entitled *2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey* contains the full report, including statewide and demographic group results. Demographic group results are also supplemented by reports on balancing conservation and recreation and engaging with underserved communities in outdoor recreation (see Chapters 3 and 4).

## **Oregon Outdoor Recreation Metrics: Health, Physical Activity, and Value**

Public land systems in Oregon, such as state parks and forests, national forests and grasslands, and county and municipal parks, provide public access for outdoor recreation activities. As people engage in outdoor recreation activities, they accrue many benefits. Measuring these benefits are indicators of public support for public land systems by demonstrating the real benefits flowing to people, communities, and the state through healthy lifestyles, lower health care costs, and overall quality of life.

This research project was conducted by Dr. Randy Rosenberger of Oregon State University's College of Forestry for the 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP. Two final reports from this research effort are included in the plan. The reports estimate the health benefits



obtained by Oregonians and the total net economic value for recreation participation in Oregon from their participation in 76 outdoor recreation activities in 2022.

Summaries of these two reports are included as chapters in the plan. A SCORP planning support document titled “Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians from Their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon” contains the full report, including statewide and county-level results. Another SCORP planning support document titled “Total Net Economic Value from Residents’ Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon” contains the full report, including statewide and county-level results.

## GIS Recreation Data Standard

Spatial information is a critical component of outdoor recreation planning. The lack of standardization and centralization provides a barrier to organizations needing this information for equitable recreation planning and resource management as well as other associated uses such as health tracking and emergency response. The goal of this part of the 2025–2029 SCORP is to help increase the amount of available recreation facility data, ensure the data is consistent, and improve its accessibility. To provide a solid foundation for recreation inventory and spatial analysis, OPRD engaged the geospatial data community in developing a data standard for recreation facilities.

OPRD established a Recreation Data Workgroup (RDW) in the Spring of 2022 and invited multiple state and local government agencies to participate. The RDW reviewed existing recreation data schemas from Oregon state agencies, local governments, federal agencies, park and recreation districts, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The results were compiled in a way that identified the common attributes between them and maximized the likelihood that the new standard could be widely used.

A draft Oregon Recreation Data Standard (RDS) was created in 2023 and made its way through the Framework Standard process as defined by the

Oregon Geographic Information Council’s (OGIC) Framework Program. The RDS was reviewed and adopted by OGIC at its April 2024 meeting and is now published at <https://ogic-geo.hub.arcgis.com/pages/standards> under the “Land Use/Land Cover” category.

## Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon

Quantifying the economic impacts of outdoor recreation in Oregon can guide policymakers across the state as they consider ways to support their communities and provide access to recreation for local residents and visitors. To this end, the Oregon SCORP includes an economic impact assessment of outdoor recreation in Oregon based on 2022 participation levels. The study estimates total spending on outdoor recreation in Oregon, direct and secondary impacts of outdoor recreation (e.g., employment, value added, tax revenue), and visitor volume. Results of the analysis are available for each county across the state.

Earth Economics conducted this study, which is an update of a report titled *Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon*, which was published in 2021 and analyzed the economic impact of outdoor recreation in Oregon in 2019.

## Recreational Needs Assessment

Two methods were used to identify funding needs for additional recreational facilities in Oregon. The first method was a component of the Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey. Oregonians were asked their opinions about priorities for the future. Respondents were asked to rate several items for investment by park and forest agencies using a 4-point Likert scale (1=Lowest priority need to 5=Highest priority need). The second method involved a survey of Oregon public recreation providers to identify recreational needs. Two separate survey instruments were used for the study, one completed by recreation providers with most of their managed parklands located within an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), unincorporated community boundary, or a tribal community, and the other by recreation providers with most of their parklands outside of such boundaries. The total number of completed questionnaires for



providers within UGBs was 115 (total response rate: 38%), while the total number of questionnaires for dispersed-setting providers was 63 (total response rate: 63%). Respondents were asked to rate the importance of funding need for various recreation projects in their jurisdictions in the coming five years. State and county-level priorities identified from this analysis are included in this report.

## Key Planning Actions

This chapter describes the strategic actions identified during the planning process to better serve the needs of Oregonians as related to the top statewide planning issues. The strategic actions fall under the following categories:

1. Address the top outdoor recreation priorities of Oregon residents.
2. Address the top constraints to outdoor recreation for Oregon residents.
3. Increase engagement with low-income Oregon residents.
4. Increase engagement with Oregon households with disabilities.
5. Increase engagement with diverse racial/ethnic communities in Oregon.
6. Take actions to balance conservation and recreation at outdoor areas in Oregon.

The SCORP Advisory Committee reviewed and contributed to the strategic actions at its January 18, 2024, meeting.

## Public Open Houses

In 2024, OPRD hosted virtual open houses on February 15, 29, and March 2 to discuss the draft SCORP with the public. The meetings were announced in a press release across the state and promoted through OPRD and CORE social media channels. Each open house included an overview of the draft plan and an opportunity for attendees to offer brief comments. The goal of the open house sessions was to gather public comments to ensure that the report was clear and relevant to users across the state. Attendees were also given information to participate in the full plan's public review process. A support document to the plan summarizes the open house comments received from the public.

## LWCF Open Project Selection Criteria

To allocate LWCF funds objectively, a set of Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) criteria was developed for evaluating statewide LWCF grant proposals. Eighty-five of the 125 possible points are tied directly to findings from this SCORP planning effort.

## Oregon Wetlands Priority Component

The Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986 (P.L. 99-645) requires each SCORP to include a component that identifies wetlands as a priority concern within the state. A support document to the plan describes the values and functions of wetlands, current wetland conservation in Oregon, wetland mapping in Oregon, and listing of priority wetland types and locations for restoration and acquisition. In Oregon, wetland protection typically occurs with private or public funding under the direction of the Oregon Department of State Lands. To maximize flexibility when selecting a replacement property, LWCF sponsors may purchase wetlands prioritized for habitat or water quality needs when resolving conversions.

## SCORP Planning Website

Early in the planning process, OSU Center for the Outdoor Recreation Economy (CORE) staff developed a SCORP planning website for people across the state to access current information about the 2025–2029 SCORP planning process. The website address is <https://outdooreconomy.oregonstate.edu/scorp2024>

## ► CHAPTER 2

# Oregon Resident Survey

This chapter summarizes the results of the 2023 Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey. A full survey report, including statewide and demographic results, can be found on the OPRD SCORP planning website at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a1>.

## Background

In preparation for the 2025–2029 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) contracted with Oregon State University (OSU) to conduct a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their participation in outdoor recreation in Oregon in 2022 and their attitudes and priorities regarding outdoor recreation management.

The survey was distributed to a random statewide sample of Oregon residents with addresses on file with the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and a panel sample of Oregon residents participating in Qualtrics survey research designed to oversample ethnic and racial minorities. The study design and questionnaires were developed with the assistance of Dr. Wayne Morse, Auburn University (AU), under a technical assistance agreement and were reviewed by Dr. Caleb Dickson, Chris Havel, and Cailin O'Brien-Feeney of OPRD. Dr. Randall Rosenberger and Lydia Gorrell completed data collection and analysis.

These results may be useful to federal, state, and local parks and recreation agencies and employees, as well as individuals working in private-sector recreation, to understand Oregonians' current behaviors, attitudes, and priorities for future recreation provisions.

## Data Presentation

Numbers are rounded in this report to one decimal place where percentages are reported and to two where means are reported. As such, some percentages may not add up to 100%. Averages reported in this report are means, and the terms are used interchangeably. Missing values are present in

many variables here, particularly for demographic questions, so all percentages reported here are “valid percentages.”

The results of this survey are provided for the general statewide population and for the following demographic groups of interest that had a large enough number of respondents for statistical inference:

- Race/ethnicity: Respondents self-identifying as Hispanic/Latino/a (of any race), and non-Hispanic/Latino/a residents identifying as Asian, Black/African American, Mixed race, or White/European American.
- Low income: Respondents who reported an annual household income <\$25,000.
- Households with disabilities: Respondents reporting having a disability or living in a household with someone with a disability.
- Age: Respondents 60 years or older.
- Community type: Respondents describing their community as urban, suburban, or rural.

## Survey Methodology

Two samples were used: (1) a statewide random sample of 22,000 Oregon residents with addresses on file at the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and (2) a panel sample of Oregon residents who were recruited and compensated by Qualtrics, a private company contracted to do this work. The panel sample was intended to overrecruit ethnic and racial minorities to ensure enough responses to allow for adequate statistical inference regarding these groups.

The statewide random sample included individuals who had their addresses on file with the DMV both as license holders and as state-ID holders to ensure individuals without cars or licenses were not excluded. Random sample recipients received an initial mailed invitation and two mailed reminders in English and Spanish. Participants also had the option to request and receive either an English or Spanish

paper version of the survey (only 144 respondents completed the survey on paper).

The random mailed sample was 99.9% deliverable and received 2,479 responses (11.3% response rate). Response rates of ~10% are typical of large-scale, general population surveys that are lengthy and do not provide financial or token incentives to participants.

The panel study used an existing database of individuals residing in Oregon who were previously recruited to participate in online research in exchange for financial compensation. Qualtrics was contracted to obtain a sample of 1,554 individuals, oversampling for individuals of minority racial and ethnic backgrounds to improve the statistical reliability of their responses as subgroups. To ensure expediency, however, the sample obtained by Qualtrics eventually fell to “natural fallout,” with any interested individual completing the survey regardless of demographic background. The same survey was distributed to these recipients online only, and the final sample size was 1,576.

The survey was also distributed in two versions. Version 1 contained questions regarding Motivations to Recreate, Natural Resource Impacts, Crowding, and Support for Management Actions; Version 2 asked respondents about Recreation Constraints and Overcoming Constraints. Both survey versions were distributed to random statewide and panel samples, and each version was randomly assigned to recipients.

The total number of responses was 4,055. The random statewide sample and the panel sample reached different demographic groups more effectively (the mailed survey highlighted more individuals over age 60, while the Qualtrics panel reached more individuals with a disability or living with someone who does, more Black/African American respondents, more low-income respondents, and more rural respondents). Versions 1 and 2 had relatively similar demographic breakdowns, each employing the same random sampling methods.

## Maximizing Data Accuracy

As with most survey research, the goal of this study was to use a sample (limited respondents) to infer information about a larger population (in this case, all Oregon residents). This form of research is vulnerable to a few sources of error, as only a portion of the population received the survey, and only a portion of those recipients opted to complete it. Often, survey administrators prioritize reduction of sampling error by increasing sample sizes. However, as sampling error can vary across analyses, both sample size and response variability for each question can affect it.

Readers should keep this potential for error in mind; however, significant effort and attention have been paid in the survey administration process to minimize sources of error and correct factors that may lead to bias.

## Weighting Data and Sample Demographics

Data from the combined samples were weighted according to the following factors: age category, gender (male/female only), community type (urban/rural only), and ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino/a and non-Hispanic/Latino/a). The samples were also weighted separately by version, according to the same set of demographic categories. This was only performed when analyzing data from module questions that were only asked on one version. For all other questions, the samples are always weighted together.

## Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation

This survey investigated participation in 76 different outdoor recreation activities identified from previous SCORP activity lists and by the SCORP advisory committee of parks and recreation managers across Oregon. These activities were grouped into eleven categories, identified as three activities *In Your Community* and *eight Outside Your Community*.



The three categories *In Your Community* were:

- Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities
- Outdoor leisure and sporting activities
- Nature study activities

The categories “*Outside Your Community*” are shown below:

- Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities
- Outdoor leisure and sporting activities
- Nature study activities
- Motorized activities
- Vehicle-based camping activities
- Hunting and fishing activities
- Non-motorized, water-based and beach activities
- Non-motorized, snow activities

For all activities reported *In Your Community*, respondents reported the number of occasions per year and the average number of minutes per occasion. For activities *Outside Your Community*, respondents reported the number of days per year in which they participated in that activity.

## Statewide Resident User Occasions and Participation

The total number of user occasions—individual occurrences of outdoor recreation—and percent of population engaging in an activity were estimated at the state scale. In total, 94.6% of Oregonians reported participating in at least one outdoor recreation activity on at least one occasion in Oregon during 2022, inside or outside their community.

**Figure 2.1 Top Ten Activities for Oregon Residents In Their Community, 2022**

User Occasions		% Population Participating		Frequency per Household	
Activity	Total (millions)	Activity	Percent	Activity	Times/Year
Walking on streets or sidewalks	358	Walking on streets or sidewalks	79.1%	Walking on streets or sidewalks	210.01
Walking on paved paths or natural trails	149	Walking on paved paths or natural trails	71.8%	Walking on paved paths or natural trails	87.58
Nature immersion	59	Nature immersion	52.6%	Nature immersion	34.69
Nature observation	55	Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	40.6%	Nature observation	32.29
Taking children or grandchildren to a playground	48	Visiting historical sites or history-themed parks	40.5%	Taking children or grandchildren to a playground	28.19
Going to dog parks or off-leash areas	45	Picnicking	40.4%	Going to dog parks or off-leash areas	26.67
Pedaling bicycles on streets or sidewalks	43	Nature observation	37.4%	Pedaling bicycles on streets or sidewalks	25.06
Jogging or running on streets or sidewalks	29	Taking children or grandchildren to a playground	34.2%	Jogging or running on streets or sidewalks	16.91
Pedaling bicycles on paved paths or natural trails (including mountain biking)	23	Visiting nature centers	34.2%	Pedaling bicycles on paved paths or natural trails (including mountain biking)	13.44
Outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	22	Pedaling bicycles on streets or sidewalks	30.9%	Outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	12.75

The top activities inside a respondent's community based on total user occasions, percent of the population participating, and mean activity frequency per year are shown in Figure 2.1, while the top activities outside a respondent's community are shown in Figure 2.2.

In general, activities within a respondent's community reported more user occasions than those outside of a respondent's community. This is not surprising, and aligns with previous SCORP findings, as these activities can occur regularly and with limited travel time and cost. Statewide rates of participation in all activities can be seen in Table 2.1.

**Figure 2.2. Top Ten Activities for Oregon Residents Outside Their Community, 2022**

User Occasions		% Population Participating		Frequency per Household	
Activity	Total (millions)	Activity	Percent	Activity	Times/Year
Traveling to walk/hike on non-local paved paths or natural trails	34	Traveling to walk/hike on non-local paved paths or natural trails	53.2%	Traveling to walk/hike on non-local paved paths or natural trails	20.25
Traveling for nature immersion	20	Beach activities—Ocean	45.2%	Traveling for nature immersion	11.46
Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	18	Traveling for nature immersion	36.9%	Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	10.44
Beach activities—Ocean	16	Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	32.9%	Beach activities—Ocean	9.37
Beach activities—Lakes, reservoirs, rivers	14	Beach activities—Lakes, reservoirs, rivers	30.6%	Beach activities—Lakes, reservoirs, rivers	8.47
Traveling for nature observation	14	Traveling to historic sites or history-themed parks	29.7%	Traveling for nature observation	8.04
Traveling to off-leash areas/hike with your dog	12	Traveling for nature observation	29%	Traveling to off-leash areas/hike with your dog	7.09
Car camping with a tent	10	Traveling to attend outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	28.5%	Car camping with a tent	6.09
RV/motorhome/trailer camping	10	Traveling to picnic	26.4%	RV/motorhome/trailer camping	5.84
Traveling with children or grandchildren to nature settings	9	Exploring tidepools	25.1%	Traveling with children or grandchildren to nature settings	5.40



A man and a woman ready to fish at Fort Stevens.



RV Camping at Memaloose State Park.

**Table 2.1. Percent of Population Participating in Activities, 2022**

<b>Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities <i>In Your Community</i></b>	<b>% Statewide Population</b>
Walking on streets or sidewalks	79.1
Walking on paved paths or natural trails	71.8
Jogging or running on streets or sidewalks	23.5
Jogging or running on paved paths or natural trails	19.8
Riding non-powered scooters/skateboards on streets or sidewalks	8.1
Pedaling bicycles on streets or sidewalks	30.9
Pedaling bicycles on paved paths or natural trails (including mountain biking)	20.9
Riding E-bikes on streets or sidewalks	7.6
Riding E-bikes on paved paths or natural trails	5.0
Riding e-scooters/e-skateboards/monowheel/other on streets or sidewalks	6.3
Riding e-scooters/e-skateboards/monowheel/other on paved paths or natural trails	4.1
Flying drones in local parks or open spaces	6.7
<b>Outdoor leisure and sporting activities <i>In Your Community</i></b>	
Picnicking	40.4
Taking children or grandchildren to a playground	34.2
Nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise)	52.6
Going to dog parks or off-leash areas	26.5
Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	40.6
Golfing	11.8
Tennis (played outdoors)	7.2
Pickleball (played outdoors)	6.3
Outdoor court games other than tennis/pickleball (e.g., basketball, badminton, futsal, beach volleyball)	11.2
Field sports (e.g., soccer, softball, baseball, football, ultimate frisbee, disc-golf, lacrosse)	16.5
Visiting historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers)	40.5
<b>Nature study activities <i>In Your Community</i></b>	
Nature observation (e.g., birds, other wildlife, forests, wildflowers)	37.4
Visiting nature centers (e.g., zoo, botanical garden, arboretum)	34.2
Taking children or grandchildren to nature settings to explore and/or learn about nature	19.6
Outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	20.8
Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	40.6

Table 2.1. Percent of Population Participating in Activities, 2022 (Cont.)

<b>Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	<b>% Statewide Population</b>
Traveling to walk/hike on non-local paved paths or natural trails	53.2
Long-distance hiking (backpacking)	17.8
Traveling to jog or run on non-local paved paths or natural trails	10.4
Traveling to pedal bicycles on non-local paved paths or natural trails	13.6
Traveling to ride e-bikes on non-local paved paths or natural trails	4.7
Traveling to ride e-scooters/e-skateboards/monowheel/other on non-local paved paths or natural trails	3.3
Horseback riding	6.2
<b>Outdoor leisure and sporting activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	
Traveling to picnic	26.4
Traveling to off-leash areas/hike with your dog	18.0
Traveling to golf	8.1
Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	32.9
Traveling to attend outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	28.5
Traveling to historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers)	29.7
Traveling for nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise)	36.9
Traveling for tennis or pickleball	3.2
Traveling for other outdoor sports (e.g., basketball, soccer, baseball, disc-golf, badminton, beach volleyball)	11.5
Visiting historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers)	40.5
<b>Nature study activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	
Traveling to go bird watching	11.6
Whale watching	16.0
Exploring tidepools	25.1
Traveling for nature observation (e.g., other wildlife, forests, wildflowers)	29.0
Traveling with children or grandchildren to nature settings to explore and/or learn about nature	16.7
Traveling to nature centers (e.g., zoo, botanical garden, arboretum)	22.8
Traveling to do outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	12.1
Traveling for collecting/foraging (e.g., rocks, plants, mushrooms, or berries)	16.5



**Table 2.1. Percent of Population Participating in Activities, 2022 (Cont.)**

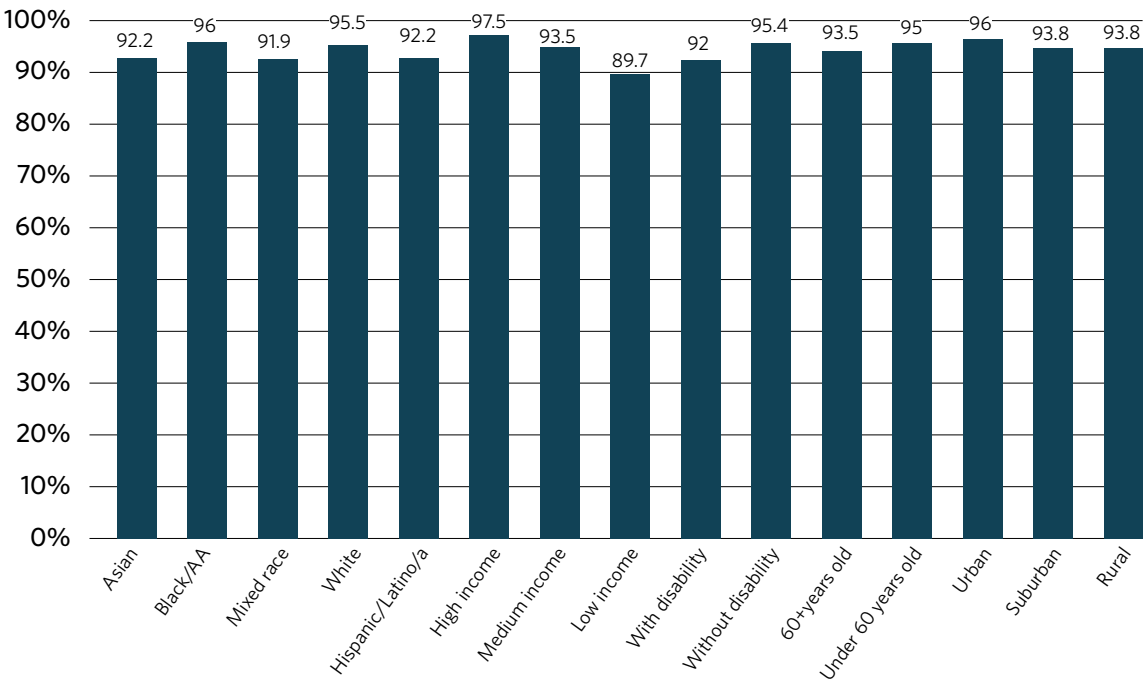
<b>Motorized activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	<b>% Statewide Population</b>
Class I—All-terrain vehicle riding (3 & 4 wheel ATVs, straddle seat and handle-bars)	6.4
Class II—Off-road 4-wheel driving (jeeps, pick-ups, dune buggies, SUVs)	6.5
Class III—Off-road motorcycling	3.1
Class IV—Riding UTVs or side-by-side ATVs (non-straddle seat, driver and passenger sit side-by-side in the vehicle, steering wheel for steering control)	4.1
Snowmobiling	2.6
Using personal watercraft, such as jet ski	3.8
Power-boating (cruising or water skiing)	7.2
<b>Vehicle-based camping activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	
RV/motorhome/trailer camping	15.7
Car camping with a tent	24.4
Yurts or camper cabins	8.8
Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	32.9
<b>Hunting &amp; fishing activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	
Hunting—Big game	6.9
Hunting—Small game	5.0
Fishing—Ocean/saltwater	8.7
Fishing—Freshwater	16.3
Crabbing	8.4
Shellfishing/clamming	5.7
<b>Non-motorized, water-based &amp; beach activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	
White-water canoeing, kayaking, or rafting	9.8
Flat water canoeing, sea kayaking, rowing, stand-up paddling, tubing, floating	15.2
Wind-surfing/kiteboarding/sailing	2.6
Beach activities—Ocean	45.2
Beach activities—Lakes, reservoirs, rivers	30.6
<b>Non-motorized, snow activities <i>Outside Your Community</i></b>	
Downhill (alpine) skiing or snowboarding	10.7
Cross-country/Nordic skiing/skijoring	5.5
Sledding, tubing, or general snow play	10.9
Snowshoeing	7.0

# Differences in Resident Participation by Demographic Group

The most common activities for all demographic groups included Walking on local streets, Walking on local trails, Nature immersion, and Picnicking. The most common activities outside the community were Traveling to walk/hike, Beach activities at the ocean, Traveling for nature immersion, and Sightseeing/driving for pleasure. Notably, for activities both in and outside the community, there is wide variation in the proportions of groups who participated in these activities despite being ranked similarly.

Variation was also observed in the percentage of each demographic group of interest participating in at least one outdoor recreation activity in Oregon in 2022 (see Figure 2.3). The highest rate of participation was reported for high-income<sup>1</sup> individuals, and the lowest rate of participation was that of low-income individuals.

**Figure 2.3. Total Percent of Demographic Group Population Participating in One or More Outdoor Activities 2022**



Similarly, the participation rates for individual activities by demographic group were evaluated by comparing those with greater, less, or similar participation rates to that of the statewide population. The demographic groups with the highest activity participation rates, at least 10% over the statewide rate (in over 40 activities), were high-income individuals, individuals under 60, and urban individuals. Groups with the highest number of activities at least 10% below the statewide participation rate (in over 40 activities) were individuals over age 60, low-income individuals, individuals with a disability or in a household with someone with a disability, and Black/ African American individuals. The full results are shown in Table 2.2.

<sup>1</sup> The term “high-income” is used in this SCORP to describe individuals with an income over \$75,000/year and is not intended as a designation of an objectively high income in Oregon. Intent of this classification is the comparison of participation among this group and the low-income (<\$25,000/year) and middle-income (\$25,000-75,000/year) groups, consistent with the income groupings from previous Oregon SCORP reports. High rates of participation for the high-income group in some measurements, including mean annual participation times, are likely driven by a consistent increase in outdoor recreation participation associated with income. Even within the high-income variable, this was observed, with individuals making >\$100,000 a year having a higher mean annual participation rate than those making \$75,000-100,000.

**Table 2.2 Comparing Activity Participation**

Target Demographic Group	# of Activities With Participation Rate 10% More Than Statewide Rate	# of Activities With Participation Rate 10% Less Than Statewide Rate	# of Activities With <10% Difference from Statewide Participation Rate
Asian	13	41	22
Black/African American	19	45	12
Mixed race	17	27	32
White	0	19	57
Hispanic/Latino/a	40	7	29
High income	50	3	23
Middle income	1	32	43
Low income	9	54	13
Under 60 years	44	0	32
60+ years old	2	63	11
Household without disability	17	0	59
Household with disability	2	48	26
Urban	42	4	30
Suburban	0	38	38
Rural	14	41	21

**Table 2.3 Comparison of Mean Participation Times, 2022\***

Demographic Group	Mean Annual Participation Times*
State population	336.48
Asian	221.16 ▼
Black/African American	217.14 ▼
Mixed race	369.29
White	344.89
Hispanic/Latino/a	328.01
High income	365.74 ▲
Middle income	317.36
Low income	309.01
Under 60 years old	364.34 ▲
60+ years old	271.73 ▼
Household without disability	342.47
Household with disability	319.63
Urban	405.97 ▲
Suburban	309.48 ▼
Rural	272.43 ▼

\*Shading based on independent samples t-tests comparing groups of interest to rest of the population. Significantly more participation times are shaded green and show an up arrow, while significantly fewer participation times are shaded orange and show a down arrow, and those with no difference are left white.

Mean participation times in all 76 activities in 2022 for the Oregon population and for specific demographic groups were also compared. The statewide average for participation was 336 times a year in any activity. Among demographic groups, the highest participation times were for individuals who identified as urban, high income, and/or under 60 years of age, while demographic groups with the lowest annual mean participation times were Black/African American individuals, Asian individuals, individuals over 60, and rural individuals. The full results of this measure can be seen in Table 2.3; cells shaded orange have significantly lower participation times than the rest of the population, while cells shaded green are significantly higher.

In full, these data suggest that Black/African American, Asian, low-income, and rural individuals, as well as individuals in a household with a disability or over 60 years old, may be underserved in outdoor recreation participation compared to the rest of the population.



# Opinions and Preferences of Oregon Residents Regarding Outdoor Recreation

## Recreation Group Characteristics & Size

Respondents were asked with whom they usually recreated, with the option to select all responses that applied to them. Over half of respondents reported recreating with just family, while approximately one-third of respondents each reported going alone, going with just friends, going with friends or family at the same time, or going with one or more dogs.

Respondents also reported their typical recreation group size. Most respondents (76%) reported a group size between 2–5 people, while only 1% reported a group size of 11 or more.

## Local Recreation Attitudes and Proximity

Statewide data suggested that, on average, it was “important” to most residents to have “a local park, trail, open space, or recreation center within a comfortable walking distance of [their] home (e.g., a 10-minute walk or less).” A few groups (low-income individuals, individuals with a disability or in a household with a disability, individuals 60 years old or older, and rural individuals) reported means slightly below “important,” while Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, and urban individuals reported means slightly higher than “important.” The full breakdown of these responses can be found in Table 2.4.

In addition, respondents reported proximity to a “local park, trail, open space, or recreation center within a comfortable walking distance of [their] home.” The highest number of respondents reported “multiple parks/recreation facilities” near them, and most reported at least one park/recreation facility near them (see Table 2.5). Only rural individuals reported “no park/recreation facility” more commonly than other groups.

Table 2.4 Importance of a Nearby Walking Area

Demographic Group	Mean
Statewide	3.03
Asian	3.00
Black/African American	3.12
Mixed Race	3.00
White	3.03
Hispanic/Latino/a	3.13
Low Income	2.78
Household with Disability	2.86
60+ Years Old	2.92
Urban	3.22
Suburban	3.03
Rural	2.71

\*Means and percentages for 4-point Likert Scale (1=“Not at all important” to 4=“Very important”)

Table 2.5 Statewide Response Breakdown, Proximity to Local Recreation Areas

Number of Parks/Facilities	Percent
No parks/recreation facilities	17.3
A single park/recreation facility	39.1
Multiple parks/recreation facilities	43.6

# Type of Outdoor Recreation Area Used, Transportation

When reporting the types of recreation areas visited in the past 12 months, most respondents used local/city parks (83%) and state parks, forests, or game lands (71%), and almost half of respondents used county parks (48%) or national parks, forests, and recreation areas (49%).

Respondents were able to choose one method of transportation that they most used to travel to outdoor recreation. The highest number reported that they walked (38%) or drove themselves (40%), while the lowest common method of transportation was using a taxi or rideshare (<1%, see Table 2.6).

Finally, respondents were asked to determine how long of a drive they would consider to still be inside their community. Slightly over half of respondents indicated their community was contained within a 20-minute drive, although almost 30% indicated a 20–30-minute drive would still be considered inside a respondent’s community.

# Camping Priorities

Over 75% of respondents stated they camped in the last 12 months or had an interest in camping despite not camping in the last 12 months, and these individuals were asked to identify needs for specific types of camping sites available outside their communities (see Table 2.7). The highest priority camping site identified was a drive-in tent site, while both types of cabins with amenities also ranked highly. The lowest priority camping site type was RV sites.

# Priorities for Future Investment Inside and Outside Communities

Respondents were asked to rate priorities for future investment both inside and outside their communities. The top priorities for both inside- and outside-community offerings included clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, and more parks and recreation areas. Respondents also prioritized directional signs and trail details for in-community offerings, and nature and wildlife viewing areas for recreation provisions outside their community. Full responses are shown in Table 2.8.

Amongst different demographic groups, priorities were relatively similar to the statewide priorities. A few groups (Black/African American, Household with disability, Hispanic/Latino/a) highlighted the importance of accessible areas for individuals with disabilities over other priorities, both inside and outside of their communities.

Table 2.6 Methods of Transportation to Recreation Areas

Method of Transport	Statewide Rate
Walk	37.9
Bicycle	4.6
Car—drive myself	39.5
Car—driven by friend/family	14.8
Bus or other public transit	1.5
Taxi/rideshare (i.e., Uber, Lyft)	0.1
Other	1.6

Table 2.7 Level of Priority Need for Camping Type

Camping Type	Statewide Mean
RV sites	2.69
Cabins or yurts with heat and lights	3.37
Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen	3.30
Drive-in tent site	3.62
Hike-in tent site	3.02
Hiker-biker sites	2.73
Remote backpacking sites	2.90
Drive-in group sites	3.19

\*Means for 5-point Likert Scale (1=“Lowest priority need” to 5=“Highest priority need”)

**Table 2.8 Priorities for Investment Inside & Outside Communities**

<b>Recreation Priority</b>	<b>Statewide Mean: <i>INSIDE</i> Community</b>	<b>Recreation Priority</b>	<b>Statewide Mean: <i>OUTSIDE</i> Community</b>
Clean and well-maintained facilities	4.16	Clean and well-maintained facilities	4.09
Restrooms	4.06	Restrooms	4.07
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	3.99	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	3.88
Parks and recreation areas	3.78	Nature and wildlife viewing areas	3.67
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	3.71	Parks and recreation areas	3.66
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	3.64	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	3.66
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	3.59	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	3.55
Natural/dirt or other soft surface walking trails	3.53	Information on parks and recreation opportunities	3.53
Lighting and/or security cameras in key places	3.45	Natural/dirt or other soft surface walking trails	3.49
Information on parks and recreation opportunities	3.43	Lighting and/or security cameras in key places	3.48
Children's playgrounds and family-friendly areas	3.40	Children's playgrounds and family-friendly areas	3.29
Public pools and/or waterparks	3.36	Picnic areas and shelters for small groups	3.21
Picnic areas and shelters for small groups	3.29	Public pools and/or waterparks	3.20
Beautification projects (e.g., fountains, ponds, landscaping, waterfalls)	3.25	Beautification projects (e.g., fountains, ponds, landscaping, waterfalls)	3.18
Paved or hard surface walking paths	3.11	Paved or hard surface walking paths	3.09
Dog parks and off-leash areas	3.07	Designated paddling routes for canoes, kayaks, rafts, and drift boats with public access sites to waterways	3.06
Off-street bicycle paved paths or natural trails	3.03	Off-street bicycle paved paths or natural trails	3.01
Designated paddling routes for canoes, kayaks, rafts, and drift boats with public access sites to waterways	3.02	Dog parks and off-leash areas	3.01
Picnic areas and shelters for large groups	2.99	Officers/law enforcement in uniform	3.00
Multi-use sports fields	2.97	Picnic areas and shelters for large groups	2.99
Officers/law enforcement in uniform	2.93	Multi-use sports fields	2.84
Free Wi-Fi	2.67	Free Wi-Fi	2.66
Separate areas for older adults to be with others their age	2.63	Off-highway vehicle trails/areas	2.65
Off-highway vehicle trails/areas	2.55	Separate areas for older adults to be with others their age	2.65

\*Means for 5-point Likert Scale (1="Lowest priority need" to 5="Highest priority need")



# Sources of Outdoor Recreation Information

The most highly rated sources of outdoor recreation information were friends, relatives, and word of mouth; websites; visitor or welcome centers; and maps or brochures. Few people reported using social media, with low scores for Instagram, Pinterest, Twitter, and Snapchat.

All demographic groups reported friends, relatives, and word of mouth as their most important source of outdoor recreation information, and in general, had similar top three information sources, with a few groups (Rural, 60+ years of age, Black/African American, and White respondents) ranking maps or brochures over websites and/or visitor or welcome centers.

# Community Recreation Program Needs

When asked about priorities for community recreation programs, respondents highly rated farmers’ markets, community gardens, outdoor sports, and outdoor concerts and movies. The three lowest-ranked activities were related to fitness: functional strength training, fitness classes, and outdoor exercise equipment (see Table 2.9).

Demographic groups’ priorities did not differ greatly from the statewide mean. Some groups highlighted the importance of educational activities over the programs mentioned previously (Black/African American, Mixed race, Hispanic/Latino/a, urban, low-income, and rural residents), and residents aged 60 and over identified seniors’ activity centers as a priority.

# Impacts of COVID-19 on Recreation

The survey asked respondents to answer a few questions regarding their participation in outdoor recreation during the COVID-19 pandemic. In general, respondents reported that outdoor recreation benefited their mental and physical health during the pandemic, while half of respondents indicated disagreement with statements about increasing or changing outdoor recreation activities during COVID-19. Demographic comparisons highlighted higher scores in all categories for Asian, Black/African American, and Hispanic/Latino/a respondents compared to the statewide mean and lower scores in all categories for low-income residents, rural residents, residents in a household with a disability, and residents older than 60.

Respondents were also asked to provide up to three activities that they began to do during the COVID-19 pandemic. The top ten activities reported included Walking/hiking, Non-motorized water sports (kayaking & paddleboarding, mainly), Biking (including mountain biking and e-biking), Non-team sports (disc golf, golf, pickleball, tennis), Camping (including RVs), Running/jogging, Non-motorized snow sports (skiing, snowshoeing), Nature observation (especially birdwatching), Fishing, and Swimming.

Table 2.9 Community Program Need

Recreation Program Investment <i>In Your Community</i>	Statewide Mean
Farmers’ markets	3.91
Community gardens	3.55
Outdoor sports (youth and adult)	3.41
Outdoor concerts and movies	3.41
Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)	3.36
Seniors’ activity centers	3.34
Quiet zones for reading, meditating, or games (e.g., chess, cards)	3.13
Arts and crafts (e.g., ceramics, painting)	3.02
Functional strength training (training the body for activities performed in daily life)	2.99
Fitness classes (e.g., yoga, Tai Chi, Zumba, aerobics, Pilates, water exercise, cross-fit, adult dancing, organized walks)	2.90
Outdoor exercise equipment (e.g., elliptical trainer, stationary bike, rower)	2.45

\*Means for 5-point Likert Scale (1=“Lowest priority” to 5=“Highest priority”)

## Free Response: Recommendations for Individuals with Disabilities, and “Any Other Comments about Outdoor Recreation in Oregon”

Individuals who identified as having a disability or living in a household with someone with a disability were asked to share whether there was a way that accommodations could be made to support their recreation. In general, most comments related to mobility accessibility, particularly focusing on improving trails and providing places to rest. Full responses can be seen in Table 2.10.

Finally, at the end of the survey, a few respondents had suggestions for improvements or frustrations with their current or past experiences that they reported in a final comment box. The top ten concerns and/or suggestions, in order of frequency reported, are shown in Table 2.11.

## Module Questions

The following questions refer to two series of modules, each included in only one version of the survey, so only half of the respondents replied to each question. Questions regarding motivations, crowding, and priorities for management were included in Version 1, and questions regarding constraints and overcoming constraints were included in Version 2. Responses were weighted individually by version according to the same demographic factors by which the entire combined sample was weighted.

Further reading on these modules can be found in Chapter 3, “Balancing Conservation & Recreation,” and Chapter 4, “Engaging with Underserved Communities.”

## Motivations to Recreate Outdoors

Respondents were asked to rate the importance of some possible motivations to recreate. Top motivations for respondents included “To view the scenic beauty,” “To improve my mental health,” “To be close to nature,” and “To relax and recharge.” The lowest rated motivations were “For the thrill of it all,” “To gain self-confidence,” and “To be challenged.” In general, respondents ranked most motivations highly.

**Table 2.10 Recommendations on Improvements to Recreation Accessibility**

ADA trails (or trails that are paved, wider, free of tripping hazards, and/or have handrails)
Places to sit and rest
More communication or information about trail amenities/accessibility (including level of accessibility, distance, gradient, and/or new hazards/barriers)
Transportation or parking improvements (more handicap spaces, more spaces closer to restrooms, shuttle services or better public transportation)
Accessible restrooms (for wheelchairs/mobility issues including proximity to restrooms or campsites)
Wheelchair/adaptive equipment rentals or free loans from recreation providers
Group activities, or volunteers/guides to assist individuals with disabilities
Accessible campsites (for wheelchairs/mobility issues)

\*Recommendations are presented in order of the frequency that they were reported by respondents with a disability or in a household with a disability. Responses to this question were not weighted.

**Table 2.11 Other Comments for Improvement of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon**

Improve accessibility of recreation areas
Improve transportation, road, and/or trail infrastructure
Create more campsites/improve campsite reservation system
Provide new “other” recreation infrastructure (i.e., pools, courts, gardens, play areas, etc.)
Prioritize nature and/or “greenness” in management strategies for recreation areas
Manage to provide increased safety/reduced crime
Manage to reduce crowding
Improve sanitation/cleanliness of parks and facilities
Concerns over unhoused or homeless individuals
Improve communication about recreation areas and activities

\*Recommendations are presented in order of the frequency that they were reported by respondents. Responses to this question were not weighted.

Overall, motivations were ranked similarly for each demographic group, but Hispanic/Latino/a and urban individuals ranked many motivations higher than others outside of those groups, and suburban individuals and those 60 years or older ranked many motivations lower than the rest of the population. Notably, low-income individuals scored many top motivations lower than the rest of the population and many low-ranking motivations higher than the rest of the population.

### Constraints & Overcoming Constraints to Outdoor Recreation

A series of questions regarding constraints asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a number of statements on general, social, and natural setting constraints to outdoor recreation, as well as how respondents typically overcame constraints. The top constraints of each type for the statewide population are shown in Table 2.12.

Respondents ranked difficulties with a reservation system, limited or unsecure parking, and crowding as the top general constraints to recreation. The lowest-ranked general constraints included difficulties with transportation, lack of time due to family commitments, off-leash dogs, lack of appropriate gear or equipment, and lack of accessible features.

The top-ranking social constraint was the presence of homeless or unsheltered persons at the site. Other more highly ranked constraints included lack of personal security, no one to go with, and lack of group or club activities to join. The lowest-ranked social constraints included not feeling welcome or comfortable, not being interested in outdoor recreation, and language barriers in recreation materials (signs, websites, staff).

The three highest-ranked natural setting constraints were the sanitation issue of encountering human waste, excessive heat, and damage to a natural area caused by a wildfire. Concerns about cold or snow,

rain or flooding, and concern about being hurt by wildlife were ranked lowest.

Finally, the most popular methods of overcoming constraints included finding recreation areas where one felt comfortable, checking conditions before going on a trip, and trying to learn new skills. Many also reported that they had been successful in getting around constraints to recreation in the past.

The constraints module highlights that general constraints may be more impactful compared to most social constraints and natural setting constraints, and some groups—usually White respondents and occasionally suburban respondents—experience

Table 2.12 Top Constraints to Outdoor Recreation\*

GENERAL Constraints	Mean Rating
It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)	3.38
There is limited or unsecure parking	3.27
There are too many people/it is crowded	3.20
Requiring a permit restricts my participation	3.07
SOCIAL Constraints	Mean Rating
The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site	3.18
I have no one to go with/lack of support	2.32
Lack of personal security (from others)	2.30
There is a lack of group or club activities I could join	2.29
NATURAL Constraints	Mean Rating
The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation	2.82
I am concerned about excessive heat	2.74
A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting	2.73
Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less	2.59

\*Means for 5-point Likert Scale (1=“Strongly disagree” to 5=“Strongly agree”)

relatively lower levels of constraints. Higher levels of constraints were reported most consistently for low-income individuals and individuals in a household with a disability. Barriers were also reported less consistently for Hispanic/Latino/a individuals, rural individuals, and individuals 60 and over. Notably, urban respondents reported the highest level of natural setting constraints while also reporting higher agreement with most strategies for overcoming barriers.



## Crowding & Responding to Crowding

Respondents were asked to report if and/or how frequently they felt there were too many people while recreating outdoors in their community and outside of their community, as well as to rate their agreement with a few statements regarding crowding. Generally, the population indicated they encountered crowding more frequently outside their community than inside it, and that many of them selected new areas or planned their visits to avoid crowds.

Differences in perceptions and agreement about crowding while recreating were expressed for different demographic groups. Low-income individuals and individuals over 60 indicated lower levels of perceived crowding than the rest of the population both inside and outside their community, and White individuals identified lower levels of perceived crowding only inside their communities. Meanwhile, Hispanic/Latino/a and urban individuals found higher levels of perceived crowding only inside their communities and showed higher levels of agreement on statements about crowding, suggesting that this population may be most affected by this phenomenon.

## Support for Management Actions: Crowding, Natural Resource Impacts & Electronic Transportation

After responding to questions regarding crowding impacts, respondents reported the most popular crowding management actions included promoting low-impact recreation/“Leave No Trace” programs, making walking/biking between parks safer, and securing new areas for outdoor recreation. The least popular actions were requiring a reservation, encouraging/allowing more guided opportunities with for-profit guides, and charging or increasing the fee for use.

Respondents also indicated the level of priority that they felt recreation managers should put on different natural resource impacts, with the highest levels of priority placed on trash, fire risk, and water pollution and the lowest levels of priority on soil erosion/compaction, new trail damage, and light pollution.

Finally, respondents rated their support for management actions regarding electronic transportation and recreation equipment (i.e., e-bikes, e-scooters, drones). In general, agreement was well above neutral for most management actions, with the highest level of agreement around developing guidelines as to where electronic transportation equipment is allowed. Only two statements fell below a neutral rating, which indicated that fewer respondents had experienced conflict between users of e-transportation and/or drones.

Although the subjects of these management actions differ greatly, some patterns emerge among demographic groups when identifying appropriate interventions. Low-income individuals, in general, tend to prioritize these actions lower than the rest of the population, and urban respondents tend to rate their support for actions significantly higher. Individuals 60 and older also differ from the rest of the population, although the direction of their support (for or against) can be variable.

## Final Notes: Constraints and Access to Outdoor Recreation

Analysis of the module questions indicated the heightened importance of constraints in affecting differences in demographic groups’ participation in outdoor recreation. However, many demographic groups overlapped in how they ranked barriers to participation, indicating that the resolution of the top constraints for all groups (see Table 2.12) would support residents from many backgrounds and mitigate many obstacles to recreation for the general population.

Targeted remediation of these constraints is explored further for a few groups (low-income residents, residents in a household with a disability, and racially and ethnically diverse residents) in the Engaging with Underserved Communities chapter of this report. For further analysis of specific barriers for groups not discussed in depth in Chapter 4, please see the full report on the resident survey.

## ► CHAPTER 3

# Balancing Conservation & Recreation



Hikers on a bridge at Guy Talbot State Park admiring a waterfall.

### Introduction

Visits to the Oregon outdoors have reached new heights in recent years. Oregon State Parks experienced its two highest levels of visitation in 2021 and 2022, with 2021 setting the record. The rise in visitation is not unique to state parks in Oregon; Crater Lake National Park and John Day Fossil Beds National Monument have seen visitation increases over the last 10 years and set annual records within that time frame (National Park Service, 2023). Increases in visitation have been accompanied by reports of busier and busier parks and campgrounds across the state, resulting in negative visitor experiences (Elliot & Urness, 2022; Urness, 2022a). The concern that parks are becoming overcrowded, especially in the peak summer months, has been

echoed by members of the SCORP Advisory Committee working at local, state, and federal agencies.

In general, the growth in outdoor recreation is a positive development due to the associated public health and economic benefits. However, there is a risk of the “tragedy of the commons” in locations that have become busy to the extent that environmental and/or social carrying capacities are exceeded (Manning et al., 2011). Hardin (1968) defined the commons as resources that are owned by the public (such as parklands) and suggested that individuals acting according to their own self-interest will over-exploit these resources because they receive the full benefits of their use while bearing only a portion of the costs. The environmental costs associated with recreational use of parks are natural



resource impacts such as erosion, spread of weeds, disturbance/displacement of wildlife, damage to natural vegetation, soil compaction, and, in extreme cases, wildfire. High levels of recreational use can also harm visitor experience through crowding, traffic congestion, user conflict, and diminished natural beauty of outdoor locations. There is growing concern that damage to natural resources and overcrowding of outdoor areas could lead to a decline in outdoor recreation participation. To avoid this situation, outdoor recreation providers must seek a balance between conservation of outdoor areas and recreation by visitors. Ideally, this balance would maximize visitor experience while minimizing environmental degradation in the long term and, as a result, ensure that future generations are able to enjoy the full benefits of outdoor recreation.

The recommended approach to avoid the “tragedy of the commons” is to institute mutually agreed-upon limits on the use of public resources (Hardin, 1968). The National Park Service has implemented several approaches to manage overcrowding that align with this recommendation, including permits for backcountry access, timed entry systems, and day-use reservations (Reynolds, 2021; Bradybaugh, 2022). Timed entry and day-use reservations have resulted in positive feedback and fewer complaints from visitors regarding their experiences in National Parks. The park service has also attempted to manage congestion in ways that do not limit visitor access, such as providing shuttles throughout parks, building multi-use paths that enable walking or biking around parks and changing traffic configurations during peak visitation (Reynolds, 2021; Bradybaugh, 2022). Recreation providers across Oregon are considering these types of management actions to deal with the increase in visitors, too. For example, seasonal permit and timed entry systems are being or have been used to manage crowding at popular locations in Central Oregon, the Columbia River Gorge, and the Oregon Coast (U.S. Forest Service, 2023a; U.S. Forest Service, 2023b; Urness, 2022b). Despite showing promise as effective methods for managing crowds and natural resource impacts, these techniques may discourage some visitors to the point that they choose to do something else during their leisure time. This outcome is problematic, given the benefits of having people engage in outdoor recreation.

Another approach to overcrowding has been targeted communication and marketing strategies that encourage visitors to explore historically less popular locations or to visit popular locations at different times of the year. However, SCORP Advisory Committee members stated that this approach has downsides. There will likely be higher maintenance requirements due to the expanded seasonal services if popular locations serve more visitors in the offseason. At historically less popular locations, there may be a lack of services and carrying capacity, and an increase in visitation is likely to increase natural resource damage.

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey and the Oregon Park and Recreation Provider Survey have been updated for the 2025–2029 SCORP with questions that specifically address crowding and the impact of recreation use on natural resources. The resident survey in the 2019–23 SCORP included questions about priorities for future investment and management actions that would help residents participate in outdoor recreation, but these questions did not explicitly address the issues of crowding and natural resource degradation. The 2019–23 survey did, however, ask residents to rate how management efforts to reduce overcrowding in parks would affect their participation in outdoor recreation. The question used a 3-point Likert scale (1=no effect, 2=lead to a small increase, and 3=lead to a large increase), and the average rating was 2.08 for the statewide sample, with 75.6% of respondents selecting 2 or 3. In addition, the provider survey from the 2019–23 SCORP did not ask about crowding or natural resource impacts.

For the 2025–2029 SCORP, residents were asked to rate the priority they believe land managers should place on preventing different types of natural resource impacts, how frequently they feel there are too many people in outdoor areas they visit, how they respond to crowding in Oregon outdoor recreation sites, and their support for different management actions that can address natural resource impacts and perceived crowding. Additionally, the survey of Oregon outdoor recreation providers was changed for the 2025–2029 SCORP to include questions on this topic. Providers were asked to rate the level of priority that their organization places on natural resource impacts caused by recreation use, and the



questions related to management actions included items related to crowding and natural resource protection. Responses to the resident and provider surveys are analyzed to better understand the following:

- how residents perceive and respond to crowding in Oregon
- which natural resource impacts are most important to residents and outdoor recreation providers
- which management actions are supported by residents and the level of challenge those actions pose to providers

The objective of this chapter is to identify how Oregon residents feel about balancing conservation and recreation and how land managers can approach the issue to support the long-term well-being of outdoor recreation in Oregon. This chapter primarily deals with the resource and social consequences of crowding and does not address the effects of high visitation on infrastructure repair and improvement.

The next section of this chapter presents the resident and provider survey results for questions related to crowding, natural resource impacts, and management actions. The “Discussion” section includes interpretation of the survey results and examines the suitability of management approaches based on survey results and field experiences. The chapter concludes with a summary of recommendations for recreation providers.

## **Resident and Provider Survey Results: Crowding and Natural Resource Impacts**

### **Overview of Surveys**

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey for the 2025–2029 SCORP was conducted between November 2022 and January 2023. Residents of Oregon were contacted either as part of a random sample from the Oregon DMV or via a panel study conducted through Qualtrics intended to oversample for demographic minorities. These respondents were asked to complete a series of questions regarding recreation participation and preferences. To reduce the burden on recipients in answering every question of interest, survey participants were randomly

assigned either Version 1 or 2 of the survey, each of which contained module questions that were different from the other version. Version 1 contained most of the questions of interest in this chapter. Before analysis, all Version 1 respondents from both samples were combined and weighted to align with Oregon demographic proportions by age, gender (M/F only), community type (urban or rural), and ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino/a or not) to ensure a more representative picture of Oregonians’ preferences. The total number of responses was 4,057, with 2,066 responses for Version 1 and 1,991 for Version 2. Full details on the resident survey can be found in the 2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey Report, available at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a1>.

In addition to a resident survey, land managers and public recreation providers in Oregon were surveyed between December 2022 and January 2023 regarding their needs, challenges, and priorities for recreation management in their jurisdiction. These providers received different surveys depending on whether their organization was contained within an urban growth boundary (“within UGB”) or outside of one (“dispersed”). Regardless of the setting, providers were asked the same questions regarding management priorities and natural resource impacts. Furthermore, these questions were built similarly to questions asked in the resident survey to allow for comparison of priorities of both residents and providers and to support an alignment of goals for both groups. The total number of completed questionnaires for providers within UGBs was 115, while the total number of responses for dispersed-setting providers was 63. Full details on the provider survey can be found in the 2023 Oregon Park and Recreation Provider Survey Report, available at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a2>.

### **Crowding**

General perceptions of crowding were gauged by asking residents to indicate if and/or how frequently they felt there were too many people in outdoor recreation locations in their community and outside their community. The survey defined “In your community” locations as those that are relatively close to home, where respondents could visit daily or weekly, and “Outside your community” locations as those where travel is involved and it would be





Hikers at a high mountain lake in the Eagle Cap Wilderness in the Wallowas.

difficult to visit daily. Respondents rated perceived crowding using a 5-point Likert scale (1=very rarely, 3=sometimes, 5=very frequently). The average response was 2.8 out of 5 for crowding at locations within their community, and 24.8% of respondents selected 4 or 5, indicating that crowding was frequent at these locations. For outside their community locations, the average response was 3.15 out of 5 and 38.9% of respondents experienced frequent crowding. These results show that perceived crowding is higher in areas that are more dispersed and remote (e.g. national and state forests) compared to locations closer to towns and cities (e.g. local parks). These survey responses provide a baseline for future SCORPs to monitor general crowding perceptions in Oregon.

Residents were also asked if they agree or disagree with seven statements about their response to the number of other visitors at recreation locations inside and outside their community. The level of agreement for each statement was indicated using a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 5=strongly agree). The top responses to the

number of other visitors based on average score were the following:

- I like to have some people around as it makes me feel safer
- I go to different areas and use crowded sites less often
- I go to crowded areas at different times of the day or week, or off-season to avoid crowds
- Crowding reduced my overall satisfaction with outdoor recreation this year

Each of these responses had an average score greater than 3 out of 5. According to these results, residents are most likely to change behavior due to negative associations with larger crowds by bringing others for safety, changing the time of visit, or changing location. Furthermore, the negative association with crowding is illustrated by the result that “I enjoy crowds and the social atmosphere” received the lowest average rating.

In addition, the survey inquired about potential constraints to outdoor recreation participation. Respondents indicated the extent to which each constraint limited their participation using a 5-point

Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 5=strongly agree). The two constraints that pertain to crowding were “There are too many people/it is too crowded” and “There is limited or unsecure parking.” Both constraints had relatively high average scores on the Likert scale and, as a result, ranked as the second and third most prominent constraints for the statewide sample. “There is limited or unsecure parking” had an average score of 3.27 out of 5, which was the second highest among all constraints. “There are too many people/it is too crowded” had an average score of 3.20 out of 5, which was the third highest among all constraints.

## Natural Resource Impacts

Resident survey respondents were asked to rate the level of priority they believe land managers should place on preventing 11 natural resource impacts that are linked to recreation use. Similarly, provider survey respondents were asked to rate the level of priority their organization placed on the same 11 natural resource impacts. In both surveys, priority was rated on a Likert scale from “Lowest priority” to “Highest priority.”

Based on average Likert scores, the top natural resource impact priorities for Oregon residents were the following:

- Trash
- Fire risk (causing fires)
- Water pollution
- Wildlife disturbance
- Spread of invasive weeds

Based on average Likert scores, the top natural resource impact priorities for within-UGB Oregon providers were the following:

- Trash
- Spread of invasive weeds
- Fire risk (causing fires)
- Water pollution
- Vegetation damage (e.g., trampling in campsites, visitor/viewing areas, tree vandalism)

Based on average Likert scores, the top natural resource impact priorities for dispersed Oregon providers were the following:

- Fire risk (causing fires)
- Trash
- Spread of invasive weeds
- Soil erosion/compaction (e.g., on trails, campsites, water access areas, visitor centers)
- Vegetation damage (e.g., trampling in campsites, visitor/viewing areas, tree vandalism)

The survey responses show that priorities for natural resource impact are well-aligned between residents and providers in Oregon. Trash, fire risk, and the spread of invasive weeds were top priorities for each group. Overall, 4 of the residents’ top 5 priorities also ranked in the top 5 for at least one of the provider groups.

The resident survey also asked about nine potential natural setting constraints to outdoor recreation participation. Respondents indicated if they agreed that each constraint limited their participation using a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 5=strongly agree). This type of question directly addresses whether natural setting conditions, particularly those conditions impacted by recreation use, limit participation. The following natural setting constraints were most prominent for Oregon residents:

- The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation
- I am concerned about excessive heat
- A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting
- Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less
- I am concerned about the potential of fire danger while out recreating

Apart from excessive heat, the top constraints are related to situations that can be caused by recreation use, illustrating how recreation use can degrade natural settings to the extent that it limits participation for some individuals.



## Management Actions

The resident survey asked respondents to rate their level of support for 17 management strategies that can reduce natural resource impacts and perceived crowding. Respondents scored each strategy using a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly oppose, 3=neutral, 5=strongly support). Table 3.1 shows the average Likert score for each management action and the ranking from most to least supported based on these averages. The following items were the most supported management actions:

- Promote low-impact recreation/“Leave No Trace”
- Make walking/biking between different parks safer

- Secure new areas for outdoor recreation
- Expansion of recreation opportunities in existing areas (e.g., new campgrounds, trails, facilities in current parks)
- Reduce illegal activities through increased enforcement (e.g., unsanctioned camping, drug/alcohol use)

Residents strongly supported the promotion of low-impact recreation and “Leave No Trace” messaging. This result implies that residents would like to see better education for visitors about how their behaviors affect natural resource impacts. It is worth noting that “Leave No Trace” is a specific organization that develops educational programs to inform visitors about practices intended to reduce

**Table 3.1 Resident Support for Management Actions**

Rank	Management Action	Resident Mean*
1	Promote low-impact recreation/Leave No Trace	4.06 🌟
2	Secure new areas for outdoor recreation	3.92
3	Make walking/biking between different parks safer	3.90
4	Expansion of recreation opportunities in existing areas (e.g., new campgrounds, trails, facilities in current parks)	3.83
5	Reduce illegal activities through increased enforcement (e.g., unsanctioned camping, drug/alcohol use)	3.81
6	Provide online information on crowding (e.g., real-time parking information, ‘best times’ to visit)	3.78 🌟
7	Increase enforcement of existing rules (e.g., motorized vehicles, campfires, shooting)	3.61
8	Add parking lots in dispersed areas	3.24
9	Encourage/allow more guided recreation opportunities by management agency park interpreters	3.22
10	Zoning to restrict what recreation activities can be done where (e.g., single-use trails/areas)	3.20 ↔
11	Marketing/communicating about ‘hidden gems’ or less busy areas	3.12 🌟
12	Seasonal site and facility closure	3.00 ↔
13	Limit the number of visitors (e.g., group size limits, establish timed-entry permits)	2.91 🚶
14	Establish 1-way directional trails to reduce contact with other visitors	2.89 ↔
15	Require a reservation (instead of first-come, first served)	2.88 🚶
16	Encourage/allow more guided recreation opportunities by for-profit guides	2.86
17	Charge a fee or increase the fee	2.51 🚶

\*1=Strongly oppose, 3=Neutral, 5=Strongly support. Items highlighted in orange and noted with 🚶 are actions that manage visitor levels; items highlighted in green and noted with 🌟 are actions that provide information on crowding and natural resource impacts; items highlighted in gray and noted with ↔ are actions that adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts.



natural resource damage caused by outdoor recreation (Leave No Trace, 2024). Residents also supported actions that led to increased opportunities and access to outdoor recreation.

Oregon outdoor recreation providers were also asked about management actions to understand the level of challenge associated with implementing these actions. In particular, provider survey respondents were asked to identify the level of challenge associated with 23 maintenance/management issues using a 4-point Likert scale (1=“Not a challenge,” 4=“Major challenge”), with the option to mark “N/A.” Many of these management actions were analogous to those in the resident survey. Tables 3.2 and 3.3 show the

average Likert score for each management action and the ranking from most challenging to least challenging based on these averages. Table 3.2 shows results for within-UGB providers, and Table 3.3 shows results for dispersed providers. The most challenging management actions for within-UGB providers were the following:

- Reducing illegal activities (e.g., unsanctioned camping, drug/alcohol use)
- Creating new park and recreation facilities
- Maintaining existing local parks and facilities
- Addressing ADA and other accessibility issues
- Providing safe walking and biking routes to parks and trails

**Table 3.2 Management Issues, Within-UGB Providers**

Rank	Management Action	Within UGB Mean*
1	Reduce illegal activities (e.g., unsanctioned camping, drug/alcohol use)	3.20
2	Creating new park and recreation facilities	3.11
3	Maintaining existing local parks and facilities	2.95
4	Addressing ADA and other accessibility issues	2.88
5	Providing safe walking and biking routes to parks and trails	2.86
6	Enforcing existing rules	2.78
7	Expanding parking capacity	2.66
8	Ensuring public safety in parks and recreation areas	2.62
9	Locating enough acreage of suitable sites for new parks and recreation facilities	2.59
10	Providing public transportation to parks and trails	2.24
11	Charging a fee or increasing existing fees	2.18 †
12	Responding to complaints from citizens about park conditions	2.15
13	Provide online information on crowding (e.g., real-time parking information, ‘best times’ to visit)	2.09 *
14	Marketing/communicating about ‘hidden gems’ or less busy areas	2.06 *
15	Managing electronic transportation use (e.g., e-bikes, e-scooters, e-skateboards, monowheels) in park and recreation areas	2.05
16	Providing guided recreation opportunities	2.00
17	Managing unauthorized off-highway vehicle use	1.98
18	Zoning to restrict what recreation activities can be done	1.97 ↔
19	Promoting low-impact recreation/Leave No Trace	1.92 *
20	Implementing seasonal site and facility closure	1.73 ↔
21	Managing drone use in park and recreation areas	1.64
22	Limiting the number of visitors (e.g., group size limits, establish timed-entry permits)	1.61 †
23	Establishing 1-way directional trails to reduce contact with other visitors	1.49 ↔

\*1=Not a challenge, 4=Major challenge. Items highlighted in orange and noted with † are actions that manage visitor levels; items highlighted in green and noted with \* are actions that provide information on crowding and natural resource impacts; items highlighted in gray and noted with ↔ are actions that adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts.

The following management actions ranked as the most challenging for dispersed providers:

- Maintaining existing parks and facilities
- Reducing illegal activities (e.g., unsanctioned camping, drug/alcohol use)
- Addressing ADA and other accessibility issues
- Enforcing existing rules
- Creating new park and recreation facilities

The results illustrate that providers face large challenges when increasing opportunities and access to outdoor recreation through resident-supported

actions like creating new park and recreation facilities and providing safe walking and biking routes to parks and trails. This outcome is not surprising since these tasks tend to be expensive and require longer-term planning within communities and across jurisdictions. As such, it is worthwhile to focus on survey responses related to a subset of management actions that can be implemented in the short run without large investments. A number of these techniques were discussed in the introduction of this report, and the survey questions were specifically crafted to include them. To better summarize the survey results, these management actions are grouped under three

**Table 3.3 Dispersed Providers**

Rank	Management Action	Within UGB Mean*
1	Maintaining existing local parks and facilities	3.18
2	Reduce illegal activities (e.g., unsanctioned camping, drug/alcohol use)	3.17
3	Addressing ADA and other accessibility issues	3.15
4	Enforcing existing rules	3.04
5	Creating new park and recreation facilities	2.96
6	Provide online information on crowding (e.g., real-time parking information, 'best times' to visit)	2.75 🌟
7	Expanding parking capacity	2.71
8	Ensuring public safety in parks and recreation areas	2.69
9	Managing electronic transportation use (e.g., e-bikes, e-scooters, e-skateboards, monowheels) in park and recreation areas	2.62
10	Providing safe walking and biking routes to parks and trails	2.54
11	Managing unauthorized off-highway vehicle use	2.52
12	Providing public transportation to parks and trails	2.39
13	Managing drone use in park and recreation areas	2.34
14	Limiting the number of visitors (e.g., group size limits, establish timed-entry permits)	2.29 🚶
15	Charging a fee or increasing existing fees	2.28 🚶
16	Zoning to restrict what recreation activities can be done	2.26 ↔
17	Promoting low-impact recreation/Leave No Trace	2.20 🌟
18	Providing guided recreation opportunities	2.12
19	Marketing/communicating about 'hidden gems' or less busy areas	2.10 🌟
20	Locating enough acreage of suitable sites for new parks and recreation facilities	2.09
21	Responding to complaints from citizens about park conditions	1.98
22	Establishing 1-way directional trails to reduce contact with other visitors	1.93 ↔
23	Implementing seasonal site and facility closure	1.71 ↔

\*1=Not a challenge, 4=Major challenge. Items highlighted in orange and noted with 🚶 are actions that manage visitor levels; items highlighted in green and noted with 🌟 are actions that provide information on crowding and natural resource impacts; items highlighted in gray and noted with ↔ are actions that adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts.

broader strategies aimed at reducing natural resource and crowding impacts.

The first group of actions is related to managing visitor numbers. The following survey items relate to this approach:

- Limit the number of visitors (e.g., group size limits, established timed-entry permits)
- Require a reservation (instead of first-come, first-served)
- Charge a fee or increase the fee

These management actions are highlighted in orange in the tables above to illustrate where they rank in resident and provider responses. Residents showed relatively low support for this group of actions. Out of 17 management actions, “Limit the number of visitors” ranked as the 13th most supported, “Require a reservation” ranked 15th, and “Charge a fee or increase the fee” ranked last. Providers rated actions from this category as moderate to low challenges.

The next management strategy is to provide more information to visitors about crowding and natural resource impacts. This strategy was addressed in the surveys by three management actions:

- Promote low-impact recreation/“Leave No Trace”
- Provide online information on crowding (e.g., real-time parking information, ‘best times’ to visit)
- Marketing/communicating about ‘hidden gems’ or less busy areas

These management actions are highlighted in green in the tables above. Residents expressed strong support for this category. Out of 17 management actions, “Promote low-impact recreation/‘Leave No Trace’” ranked as the most supported, “Provide online information on crowding” ranked as the 6th most supported, and “Marketing/communicating about ‘hidden gems’ or less busy areas” ranked 11th. For the most part, these management actions pose low to moderate challenges to providers. It is clear that “Promote low-impact recreation/‘Leave No Trace’” is a method that has high support for residents and is a low challenge to providers. Out of 23 management actions, this action ranked as the 19th most challenging for within-UGB providers and the 17th most challenging for dispersed providers.

The third strategy for managing outdoor recreation use is to adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts. It is important to point out that these techniques could ideally be implemented without large physical investments, though they can require higher expenditures for enforcement. This strategy was represented in the surveys by the following items:

- Zoning to restrict what recreation activities can be done where (e.g., single-use trails/areas)
- Seasonal site and facility closure
- Establish 1-way directional trails to reduce contact with other visitors

These management actions are highlighted in gray in the tables above. Residents responded with low to medium levels of support for options in this category. Out of 17 management actions, “Zoning to restrict what recreation activities can be done where” ranked as the 10th most supported, “Seasonal site and facility closure” ranked as the 12th most supported, and “Establish 1-way directional trails to reduce contact with other visitors” ranked 14th. Both groups of providers rated these management tactics as being low challenges. For instance, “Establish 1-way directional trails to reduce contact with other visitors” was the lowest challenge for within-UGB providers, and “Implementing seasonal site and facility closure” was the lowest challenge for dispersed providers.

## Discussion

The survey results provide important insights into how Oregon residents feel about crowding and natural resource impacts. With the rising number of visits to outdoor areas in Oregon, it is vital to monitor whether crowding and natural resource degradation are negatively impacting the amount and quality of outdoor recreation, thereby reducing the potential benefits enjoyed by Oregon residents.

Perceived crowding is higher in areas that are more dispersed and remote (e.g. national and state forests) compared to locations closer to towns and cities (e.g. local parks). The survey responses show that about 25% of residents feel that crowding is frequent at locations within their community, and almost 40% feel that crowding is frequent in locations outside





A bike and a tent at a campground at Clyde Holliday State Recreation Site.

their community. This result does not necessarily mean that residents encounter more people at locations outside their community compared to locations within their community. Rather, it illustrates the role of expectations in perceived crowding. It is likely that population density is lower in remote natural areas compared to local parks, but visitors expect to see fewer people when they go to these distant locations while they are unsurprised by crowds at close-to-home locations.

The survey results support the assumption that perceived crowding has a negative impact on visitor experience. Oregon residents rated crowding-related constraints as some of the most prominent barriers to outdoor recreation participation. Furthermore, the most common responses to crowding are bringing others for safety, changing the time of visit, or changing location. These behaviors indicate that residents generally try to avoid crowds. However, it seems counterintuitive that a response to crowding is to bring others because this would increase crowding

if enough people responded this way. This result may represent that although recreationists do not like large crowds, they also have safety concerns when presented with complete isolation, especially in remote outdoor areas.

Turning to natural resource impacts, the survey results illustrate that providers are striving to address issues that matter to residents. Trash, fire risk, and the spread of invasive weeds are top natural resource priorities for residents, within-UGB providers, and dispersed providers. There is still concern, however, that natural settings are being degraded by high usage to an extent that outdoor recreation participation is being limited for some individuals. This outcome is demonstrated by the fact that most of the top natural setting constraints for residents are related to situations that can be caused by recreation use.

Taken together, the resident survey responses provide evidence that problems associated with high visitation are present in Oregon. It is expected that the



frequency and risk of experiencing negative impacts associated with crowding or natural resource damage are increasing along with rates of outdoor recreation participation. As a result, outdoor recreation providers must have feasible management options that protect natural resources and visitor experiences to support outdoor recreation participation and its associated benefits. The resident and provider surveys, the SCORP Advisory Subcommittee on Balancing Conservation and Recreation, and experiences from the outdoor recreation professionals provide valuable insights into which management options can be effective at addressing the issues at hand.

Oregon residents tend to show very strong support for management methods that address higher recreation usage by expanding opportunities, such as adding new parks or adding new facilities at existing parks. These methods are likely effective at alleviating the effects of high visitation on infrastructure repair and visitor experience at existing parks. However, there are also large capital, time, and labor requirements associated with expansion. It is no surprise that these methods rank as some of the most challenging for providers. As such, this report provides an in-depth look at management methods that can be implemented relatively quickly without large investment. These three categories of management methods (as mentioned in the previous section) are managing visitation levels, providing information on crowding and natural resource impacts, and adapting current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts.

## Managing Visitation Levels

The objective of managing visitation levels is to reduce crowding and the associated negative impacts by distributing visitors more evenly at a park across time. Examples of techniques that fall under this method are the following:

- Charging fees or increasing fees
- Limiting the number of visitors for a given time (e.g. creating timed entry systems)
- Requiring reservations (e.g. at day-use areas)
- Requiring permits (e.g. backcountry access)

Based on economic theory, increasing fees can lead to decreased usage of an outdoor recreation area,

thereby reducing crowding and natural resource impacts. However, this option is the least supported management technique by Oregon residents. Another potential negative consequence of higher fees is increased inequity for low-income residents to visit and enjoy the outdoors, which would be a concern for public agencies that strive to promote equity and inclusivity for outdoor recreation access. For these reasons, this technique is not included as a recommendation to address crowding. However, there may be cases where small fee changes could raise revenue to fund additional programs or approaches to managing crowds or natural resources while keeping access affordable and relatively equitable.

Timed-entry systems, reservation requirements, and permit requirements are direct approaches to controlling the number of visitors in an area at a given time. Oregon residents indicate low support for these techniques in the survey. Nonetheless, providers indicate these systems have been implemented successfully and are not very challenging to administer. Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has been involved in two of these projects, which resulted in reports of positive visitor experiences and reduced congestion despite initial pushback from the public. The National Park Service has also reported positive visitor feedback, fewer complaints, and less traffic and parking lot congestion from programs that spread out visitation throughout the day (Reynolds, 2021; Bradybaugh, 2022).

Interestingly, these systems can be designed to spread out visitation across time without reducing it. The National Park Service has reported instances where a ticketed entry system has been able to adequately serve and support the same daily visitation (with decreased staff numbers, too) (Reynolds, 2021). These experiences illustrate that the initial negative reaction can be replaced by enjoyment and support of the programs. The low support in the resident survey may reflect that survey respondents are not yet able to connect these management actions to potentially improved experiences; rather, the responses result from a concern that access to outdoor areas would be limited. SCORP Advisory Committee members have observed this outcome from the user perspective and report that users who have experienced these systems express support for their expansion to new areas. From the recreation

provider standpoint, Advisory Committee members have used these management methods to improve visitor tracking and site management, allowing for more efficient maintenance planning.

It is recommended that outdoor recreation providers consider implementing timed-entry systems, reservation requirements, and permit requirements to manage crowding based on the positive experiences with their implementation and the relatively low challenge they pose to providers. Still, there are several issues to account for when applying these techniques. First, there will likely be an initial negative reaction, and providers must work with the public, partners, and local communities to develop strategies to disseminate information effectively. It is important to reduce confusion among user groups and the public as it can be the main source of negative sentiment (especially if nearby outdoor areas have separate permit/reservation/timed-entry systems). Second, there may need to be additional changes to accommodate increased visitors at other locations, either inside the park or at nearby parks. Traffic data analysis, if feasible, is important for understanding traffic volumes and flows and can be useful when planning these programs (Bradybaugh, 2022). Lastly, these methods seem to be equitable and inclusive if they enable the delivery of the same services to the same number of people. However, some people may not be able to access online systems, have access to information, or be able to adapt their schedules to meet these changes. As such, these programs should be monitored to ensure goals are being met, and the public and stakeholders should have options for engagement before there is long-term implementation.

## **Providing Information on Crowding and Natural Resource Impacts**

This method aims to reduce crowding and natural resource damage by providing visitors with new and more detailed information about these topics. It assumes visitors will use the information to recreate responsibly and explore less busy locations or times. Examples of techniques that fall under this method are as follows:

- Promoting outdoor practices and principles to minimize visitor impacts on natural resources
- Marketing/communication about “hidden gems” or less-busy areas
- Providing online information on crowding (e.g. real-time, “best times” to visit)

Promoting outdoor practices and principles to minimize visitor impacts is an established technique that outdoor recreation providers should continue to embrace. According to surveys, this is the most supported action by residents and is a low challenge to providers. The education programs should mainly focus on the top natural resource priorities identified by residents: reducing trash and minimizing fire risk.

Marketing and communication about “hidden gems” or less busy areas is another technique that may be effective. Residents show support for this technique, and it does not pose a major challenge to providers. However, the SCORP Advisory Subcommittee on Balancing Recreation and Conservation identified several considerations for providers interested in encouraging visitors to explore different areas. First, if there is an influx of new visitors to a location, there may also be an increase in maintenance needs at the location. Second, many factors determine whether or not a location is popular, and it will be difficult to determine which less busy locations have the potential to attract new visitors. Third, some less busy locations do not have the facilities and amenities to support increased visitation. Thus, it is important to identify locations that can support more visitors based on facilities and amenities that appeal to Oregonians. According to the resident survey, restrooms, nature and wildlife viewing areas, trails, opportunities for people with disabilities, and lighting/security cameras in key places rank as the highest priorities.

The third technique in this management method is to provide online information on crowding to show the busyness of a park or specific locations within a park (e.g. trails, parking lots). Providers should consider this method because it has high support in the resident survey. However, it may be a challenge for some providers, especially in dispersed areas where internet connectivity is not strong.

Overall, it is recommended that outdoor recreation providers provide information on crowding and natural resource impacts in some way. Providers are encouraged to organize with relevant tourism entities with marketing and messaging capacity and cross-jurisdictional relationships. Additionally, this management technique's efficacy relies on a dependable web presence. The resident survey results show that websites are the second most important information source for park visitors and rank as the top medium that can be managed by outdoor recreation providers ("Friends/relatives/word of mouth" ranks number 1 overall). Lastly, it may take a long time to see the impact of this management technique because it is an indirect approach to address crowding impacts and relies on voluntary changes in visitor behavior. Therefore, it should be monitored for effectiveness over time and be combined with other techniques when overcrowding is a pressing concern.

## **Adapting Current Infrastructure to Address Crowding and Natural Resource Impacts**

Adapting current infrastructure can address crowding issues by distributing visitors more evenly throughout the park across space, thereby reducing user conflicts and natural resource exposure. Examples of techniques that fall under this method are as follows:

- Zoning to restrict what recreation activities can be done where (e.g. single-use trails/areas)
- Closing sites and facilities seasonally
- Establishing 1-way directional trails to reduce contact with other visitors
- Changing traffic configurations

Residents show low to medium levels of support for management options in this category, while providers rate these techniques as being low challenges. Despite the lack of obvious support from residents, this management approach may be effective because it directly addresses crowding by spreading visitors out. This approach may also prevent vulnerable natural resources from being exposed to the recreation uses that are most impactful. In particular, zoning to

restrict what activities can be done in different parts of a park could potentially reduce natural resource impacts in areas susceptible to damage by a particular set of activities while also reducing user conflict. SCORP Advisory Committee members advise that this technique will likely receive public backlash from user groups that lose access to a park area but is usually acceptable to users when applied to new park areas or amenities. Establishing one-way directional trails could also reduce user conflict and lower perceived crowding by reducing encounters with other visitors, with the added benefit that it does not reduce the number of user groups with access to the trails. This technique can also help mitigate natural resource degradation that results from certain types of uses (e.g. downhill mountain biking, motorized trail use), as reported by Advisory Committee members. In addition, seasonal closures are a useful way to protect habitats during vulnerable times and to allow wildlife to thrive when recreation demand is low.

However, outdoor recreation providers may incur additional costs associated with the enforcement of these options, especially if they strain current staffing levels. The resident survey may present a similar issue as suggested in the section on managing visitor levels: respondents are not able to link these management actions to potentially improved experiences until implementation. With that said these techniques should only be instituted with public engagement and pilot projects to test effectiveness before committing to long-term application.

## **Recommendations**

Many places in the Oregon outdoors have seen record visitation in recent years. The growth in outdoor recreation should continue to be encouraged due to the resulting health and economic benefits. However, higher usage of outdoor areas can also lead to a "tragedy of the commons" in which crowding and natural resource degradation diminish visitor experiences to the extent that they decrease outdoor recreation participation. The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses provide evidence that the problems associated with high visitation are present in Oregon. To improve





A family tent-camping at Willamette Mission State Park.

this situation, outdoor recreation providers must seek a balance between conservation and recreation that maximizes visitor experience while minimizing environmental degradation so that current and future generations are able to enjoy the full benefits of outdoor recreation.

Combining insights from land manager experiences, the Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey, the Oregon Park and Recreation Provider Survey, and the SCORP Advisory Committee, this report offers management recommendations to outdoor recreation providers to help protect natural resources and visitor experiences. The first two recommendations are indirect approaches to address issues created by crowding. The techniques that fall under these methods are highly supported by Oregon residents but may take several years to have an impact because they rely on voluntary changes in visitor behavior. Meanwhile, the third and fourth recommendations are direct approaches to address crowding. In other words, these techniques change how visitors enter and move about parklands.

**Promote outdoor practices and principles to minimize visitor impacts.** Residents strongly support this technique and it is a low challenge to providers. The education programs should mainly focus on the top natural resource priorities identified by residents: reducing trash and minimizing fire risk.

**Utilize web presence to provide information about crowding and encourage visitors to explore less busy locations.** These techniques are supported by residents and, for the most part, pose low challenges to providers. In addition, websites are one of the most important information sources for visitors. It is imperative to identify locations with facilities and amenities to support more visitors when recommending locations. The facilities and amenities that are most important to Oregon residents are restrooms, nature and wildlife viewing areas, trails, opportunities for people with disabilities, and lighting/security cameras in key places.

**Implement timed-entry systems, reservation requirements, and permit requirements to manage crowding.** These systems have been implemented successfully and pose a relatively low challenge to providers. Field reports indicate that programs that spread out visitation throughout the



day result in positive visitor experiences and reduced congestion, despite Oregon residents indicating low support in the survey. When these techniques are implemented, there will likely be initial adverse reactions, and providers must work with the public, partners, and local communities to develop strategies to effectively disseminate information. It is essential to reduce confusion from the public as it can be the primary source of negative sentiment.

**Adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts.** Despite the lack of obvious support from residents, this management technique may be effective at spreading visitors across space and reducing natural resource exposure to impactful recreation uses. Establishing one-way directional trails could potentially reduce natural resource impacts, user conflict, and perceived crowding without reducing the number of user groups with access to the trails. Seasonal closures can also be employed to protect habitats during vulnerable times and to allow wildlife to thrive when recreation demand is low.

It is important for outdoor recreation providers to consider all stakeholders impacted by implementing these recommended actions. Providers should engage with local communities, user groups, tourism entities, and nearby park and transportation authorities to develop collaborative solutions to managing crowds and protecting resources. The management methods should be tested with pilot programs, monitored for effectiveness, and assessed with public and stakeholder feedback before there is long-term application.

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## ► CHAPTER 4

# Engaging with Underserved Communities

### Introduction

Across the United States, a wealth of evidence shows limitations for participation in outdoor recreation for underserved communities, including (but not limited to) Black, Hispanic/Latino/a, Indigenous and Native American, Asian and Pacific Islander persons, and other people of color; people with disabilities; and individuals experiencing poverty. For example, research has found the proportion of visitors at National Parks from minority racial/ethnic communities to be disproportionately lower than the proportion of minority racial/ethnic citizens in the general U.S. population (Taylor et al., 2011). While there have been slight increases in racial/ethnic diversity in outdoor recreation in recent years, the participant base is still less diverse than the U.S. population (Outdoor Industry Association, 2022).

Similar trends have been observed in Oregon, particularly for racially/ethnically diverse residents. The 2019–23 SCORP found that outdoor recreation participation was generally lower for Hispanic/Latino/a, Asian, and low-income residents of Oregon. This report also found that people with disabilities faced higher barriers to outdoor recreation; over 50% of non-participants in outdoor recreation either had a disability or lived with a person with a disability—a rate twice as high as participants—and a much higher proportion stated that disability hampers their ability to recreate outdoors. Similar findings in the Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey for the 2025–2029 SCORP identified that Black, Asian, and Hispanic/Latino/a residents participated less often than White residents; low-income residents participated less often than residents with higher levels of income; and residents who live with a disability or have a household member with a disability participated less often than all other residents.

These observed differences are concerning because they demonstrate that outdoor recreationists do not represent the overall state population. In addition to its many avenues of enjoyment, outdoor recreation has many health benefits, including improving mental health through lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression (Jimenez et al. 2021; Pearson & Craig, 2014), and fostering physical activity, which can reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, dementia, diabetes, and several cancers. (Physical health benefits are demonstrated in the 2025–2029 SCORP chapter titled, “Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians from their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon,” showing how energy expenditure from physical activity related to outdoor recreation participation may lead to \$2.965 billion in cost of illness savings for these chronic illnesses.) Reduction in participation in outdoor activities by underserved residents may result in reduced access to these benefits.

Various explanations for lower participation in outdoor recreation amongst underserved communities have been proposed. A chief barrier to participation is the lack of close-to-home natural environments in communities that are more ethnically diverse and/or have lower socioeconomic status (Klompmaaker et al., 2023). The cost of participation (e.g. transportation, food, lodging, gear, entrance fees) can also be a major obstacle (Mott, 2016; Rott, 2016; Taylor et al., 2011), and lack of participation may result in a lack of knowledge about outdoor recreation, a self-reinforcing cycle in which members of underrepresented communities do not know which activities may appeal to them and which skills are required for these activities (Machado, 2017; Mott, 2016; Taylor et al., 2011). Finally, a variety of social constraints limit participation in underserved communities (Baker, 2017; Berger, 2016; Jag, 2022; Machado, 2017; Nelson, 2015; Rott, 2016; Samayoa,

2020; Tariq, 2018; Vestal, 2016). Individuals from these groups express being uncomfortable in places where there are few others from their communities, leading to many accounts of feeling excluded and unwelcome in outdoor settings. Outdoor diversity advocates highlight the difficulty in seeing oneself in an outdoor community when a person does not physically see others like them in that community, a perception which has been historically reinforced by a failure to show diverse participants in outdoor advertising. Additionally, members of underrepresented communities may feel less safe in outdoor areas because of both first-hand experiences of discrimination and the history of racially motivated exclusion and violence in remote locations across the United States (*The Atlantic* 2018; Pires, 2018).

Previous SCORP reports have sought to highlight the need to provide recreational opportunities for diverse communities. In the 2019–23 Oregon SCORP report, in particular, survey responses were examined for Asian, Hispanic/Latino/a, and low-income Oregon residents to better understand specific outdoor recreation preferences and constraints to participation. For each of these groups, the report highlighted outdoor recreation participation, types of outdoor recreation areas used, camping likelihood and priority needs, priorities for the future, agency management actions, local park visitor characteristics, community recreation program needs, and outdoor recreation information sources. These responses were used to develop recommendations aimed at providing these communities with more accessible and meaningful outdoor recreational opportunities.

Following the work of the 2019–23 SCORP, the objective of this chapter is to advance the understanding of constraints that limit outdoor recreation participation of underrepresented communities in Oregon. The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey was updated for the 2025–29 SCORP to include questions specifically addressing motivations to recreate, constraints that limit outdoor recreation, and ways that residents overcome constraints. It is recommended that recreation providers use this information to consider ways to lower the most prominent constraints for all Oregonians; there are many common constraints

across the population, and mitigating these constraints can serve individuals of all backgrounds.

To supplement these efforts to address access issues in outdoor recreation, this chapter mainly focuses on constraints that may contribute to lower participation levels for low-income residents, households with disabilities, and racial/ethnic minority communities. This analysis aims to provide tangible recommendations that help recreation providers identify and/or design services that meet the needs of the entire population while simultaneously promoting participation amongst underrepresented communities to minimize gaps in participation between demographic groups, to support all Oregonians in their pursuit of outdoor recreation and its benefits.

The next section of this chapter provides background information on the Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey data, and the sections following present survey response summaries and recommendations for increasing outdoor recreation participation for low-income residents, households with disabilities, and racial/ethnic minority communities. The chapter concludes with a synopsis of the main findings and recommendations.

## **Oregon Resident Survey**

The survey was distributed to Oregon residents in two samples, a random statewide sample of Oregon residents with addresses on file with the Oregon DMV, and a panel study conducted by Qualtrics and intended to oversample for individuals from demographic minorities. Additionally, two versions of the survey were distributed to both samples to reduce the survey burden on residents by dividing some of the questions between the samples. The version that each recipient received was randomly assigned.

Respondents reported their race as Asian, Black/African American, Native American/Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, White, Mixed race, or Other, and their ethnicity as Hispanic/Latino/a or not Hispanic/Latino/a. Respondents could identify as many races or ethnicities as was true for them. Similar to calculations of racial and ethnic background in the U.S. census, all individuals who identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino/a were considered Hispanic/Latino/a regardless of the race they identified,



and all other individuals were identified as non-Hispanic/Latino/a. Of the non-Hispanic/Latino/a residents, racial identifiers were applied to those who identified one race that described themselves (Asian alone, Black/African American alone, White/European American alone), and all individuals who identified as Mixed Race or identified more than one racial identifier were considered Mixed Race. In the weighted sample, 3.2% of the sample identified as Asian, 1.6% as Black/African American, 13.9% as Hispanic/Latino/a, 4.5% as Mixed Race, and 73.9% as White. Both Version 1 and Version 2 of the survey had similar proportions of each racial group other than Black/African American respondents, who were more prevalent in Version 2. The racial/ethnic breakdown for the largest racial/ethnic groups in the full sample as well as the Version 1 and 2 samples can be found in Table 4.1. Because of the low number of respondents in a few racial groups, and because of the relative similarity of the proportion of some groups to the Oregon population, the sample was only weighted by ethnicity (Hispanic/Latino/a or not Hispanic/Latino/a).

It is important to mention that outdoor recreation participation statistics were not available for some racial/ethnic groups due to insufficient data. In addition to the groups listed above, this survey offered respondents the opportunity to identify as “American Indian or Alaska Native,” “Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander,” and/or “Other.” Furthermore, in Version 1, the Black/African American sample was also too small for adequate statistical inference, which is noted in one of the tables of this chapter. While some respondents were from these communities, there were not enough responses to present data that were adequately representative of these groups in this report. It is recommended that outdoor recreation providers and future SCORP plans seek to better understand communities that are not included in this report by convening focus groups or expanding targeted survey efforts.

Respondents indicated whether or not they had a disability or lived in a household with someone with a disability. Those who indicated they had a disability were asked to identify the kind of disability, including Hearing, Sight, Walking, Learning, and Other disabilities. The highest number of respondents indicated a Walking disability (47%) or Other disability (38%, see Table 2). Total numbers and proportions of individuals with disabilities or living in a household with someone with a disability in the full sample and in the split Version 1 and 2 samples are also reported in Table 1.

Finally, respondents provided information on their income; this information was grouped into three categories: High income (\$75,000/year or more), middle income (\$25,000–\$50,000/year), and low income (\$25,000/year or less)<sup>2</sup>. Total numbers and proportions of respondents in these categories in the full sample and the split Version 1 and 2 samples are reported in Table 1. The low-income population accounts for 16.1% of the Oregon population and 17.1% of the SCORP resident survey sample. Middle income households represent 36.1% of the Oregon population and 35.2% of the SCORP resident survey sample, and high-income households make up 47.9% of Oregon’s population and 47.7% of the survey sample have high incomes.

## Survey Questions

Respondents were surveyed regarding their attitudes, behaviors, and preferences around outdoor recreation and its management. Several questions included in this report reflect participation in outdoor recreation for each of the demographic groups of interest, as well as their priorities for the future, inside and outside their communities, and their specific community’s recreation needs for recreation programs; each of these questions were asked to every respondent of this survey. All respondents who indicated an interest in camping (78% of respondents) also reported their priorities for camping infrastructure. Finally, individuals who

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2 The term “high-income” is used in this SCORP to describe individuals with an income over \$75,000/year and is not intended as a designation of an objectively high income in Oregon. Intent of this classification is the comparison of participation among this group and the low-income (<\$25,000/year) and middle-income (\$25,000–50,000/year) groups, consistent with the income groupings from previous Oregon SCORP reports. High rates of participation for the high-income group in some measurements, including mean annual participation times, are likely driven by a consistent increase in outdoor recreation participation associated with income. Even within the high-income variable, this was observed, with individuals making >\$100,000 a year having a higher mean annual participation rate than those making \$75,000–100,000.

**Table 4.1 Demographic breakdown of sample by race/ethnicity, income, and disability, total sample and split samples by version, weighted\***

Demographic group	% of total sample	# in total sample	% of Version 1 sample	# in Version 1 sample	% in Version 2 sample	# in Version 2 sample
<b>RACE</b>						
Asian	3.2	98	3.4	52	3.2	48
Black/African American	1.6	50	1.1	17	2.1	31
Mixed race	4.6	141	4.3	66	4.8	73
White	73.8	2266	75.3	1161	72.3	1096
Hispanic/Latino/a	13.9	426	13.2	203	14.7	1293
<b>DISABILITY</b>						
Individual with disability or in a household with a disability	24.9	761	25.6	394	24.0	363
<b>INCOME LEVEL</b>						
High income	47.7	1419	47.3	706	47.6	721
Middle income	35.2	1046	35.6	549	33.1	502
Low income	17.1	508	15.4	238	16.4	248

\*Because individual Version 1 and Version 2 samples are weighted separately, numbers of individuals in each category may add up to a different number than is reported for the number of that demographic group in the total sample, which was weighted as a single unit.

**Table 4.2 Types of Disabilities Identified for Respondents with Disabilities or in a Household with Someone with a Disability, Weighted\***

Type of disability	Percent of sample with disability or in a household with a disability
Hearing	21.8
Sight	12.4
Walking	46.5
Learning	19.4
Other	37.7

\*Types of disabilities were not mutually exclusive—respondents could pick as many as was true for them and/or their household—so the percentages should not add up to 100%.

responded to Version 1 of the survey reported their motivations for recreating outdoors, and those who responded to Version 2 of the survey shared the general, social, and natural setting constraints they encountered when recreating outdoors, as well as their typical approaches to overcoming these constraints.

In the following sections, the top responses shown for each participant group are based on average (mean) scores of the weighted sample. Full details on the resident survey questions for all demographic groups can be found in the 2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey Report, available at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a1>.

## Survey Responses: Low-Income Respondents

### Participation

The activities in which the largest proportions of low-income Oregonians participated in their community in 2022 included the following:

1. Walking on local streets
2. Walking on local trails
3. Nature immersion
4. Picnicking
5. Nature observation

The activities in which the largest proportions of low-income Oregonians participated outside their community in 2022 included the following:

1. Traveling to walk/hike
2. Beach activities—Ocean
3. Traveling for nature immersion
4. Beach activities—Lakes, reservoirs, rivers
5. Sightseeing/driving for pleasure

Associations between income and outdoor recreation were identified using three measures of participation. First, 90% of Oregon's low-income population participated in at least one outdoor recreation activity in Oregon during 2022, a lower participation rate than that of both high-income residents (97.5%) and middle-income residents (93.5%). Second, all residents were surveyed regarding participation in 76 activities. The low-income population reported 54 activities where the participation rate was less than that of Oregon's general population by a margin of 10% or more<sup>3</sup>. Finally, the annual mean of participation times for all 76 activities was 309 times for the low-income population, compared to 317 times for Oregon middle-income population and 366 times for the Oregon high-income population. The annual participation times for the high-income population was found to be statistically higher than the participation times of all other Oregon residents as well.

Taken together, these results suggest that, by several metrics, the Oregon low-income population is underserved in comparison to the overall Oregon population in terms of outdoor recreation participation.

### Motivations

The top 5 motivations to participate in outdoor recreation for low-income residents in 2022 were the following:

1. To experience calm, peace
2. To relax and recharge
3. To improve my mental health
4. To view the scenic beauty
5. To get away from the usual demands of life

These top motivations were very similar between low-income residents in Oregon and the general population.

### Constraints

Oregon low-income residents indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on general constraints that potentially limited their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. Requiring a permit restricts my participation
2. There is limited or unsecure parking
3. There are too many people/it is too crowded
4. Transportation to recreation settings is difficult
5. It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)

The most prominent general constraints for low-income residents tended to be similar to those of the general population. However, "Transportation to recreation settings is difficult" ranked higher for low-income residents. Regardless of ranking, the general constraints with the largest absolute difference between the low-income population and Oregon general population were "Transportation to recreation settings is difficult" and "I do not have the gear, equipment, or appropriate clothing." Both

<sup>3</sup> In this case, the 10% margin is measured in relative terms, not absolute terms. For instance, the statewide participation rate for "Walking on streets or sidewalks" is 79.1% and 10% of this rate is 7.91%. The low-income population's participation rate is 70.5% for this activity which is less than the statewide rate by a margin greater than 7.91% in absolute terms and 10% in relative terms





Silver Falls State Park group hike with a ranger.

constraints were scored statistically higher by low-income residents than by all other residents.

Oregon low-income residents indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on social constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. The presence of unsheltered/ homeless persons on-site
2. I have no one to go with/lack of support
3. My personal health is a limiting factor for me
4. There is a lack of group or club activities I could join
5. The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform

Three of the top 5 social constraints for low-income residents also ranked as top 5 social constraints for the general population: “The presence of unsheltered/ homeless persons on-site,” “I have no one to go with/lack of support,” and “There is a lack of group or club activities I could join.” Meanwhile, low-income residents ranked “My personal health is a limiting factor for me” and “The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform” higher than the general population. It is

also worth noting that all the social constraints except “The presence of unsheltered/ homeless persons on-site” had statistically higher ratings for low-income residents than those of all other respondents.

Oregon low-income residents indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on natural setting constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation
2. I am concerned about excessive heat
3. Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less
4. A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting
5. I am concerned about cold or snow

The top natural constraints for low-income residents were comparable to those of the general population. However, “I am concerned about cold or snow” ranked higher for low-income residents and the average rating for this constraint (2.61 out of 5) was statistically significantly higher than the average rating of all other respondents.

Finally, Oregon low-income residents indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on overcoming constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable
2. I actively try to learn new skills
3. I try to budget money for recreation
4. I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip
5. In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation

When it comes to overcoming constraints, low-income residents take similar approaches as the Oregon general population. The top 5 statements on overcoming constraints were the same for both groups.

## Camping Priority Needs

For low-income Oregonians the following types of camping were rated as having the highest need outside their community:

1. Drive-in tent site
2. Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen
3. Cabins or yurts with heat and lights
4. Drive-in group sites

## Priorities for Future Investment

The top “in your community” priorities for future investment according to Oregon’s low-income population are as follows:

1. Clean and well-maintained facilities
2. Restrooms
3. Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
4. Nature and wildlife viewing areas
5. Parks and recreation areas

The top “outside your community” priorities for future investment according to Oregon’s low-income population are as follows:

1. Restrooms
2. Clean and well-maintained facilities
3. Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
4. Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
5. Nature and wildlife viewing areas

## Community Recreation Program Need

Low-income residents rate the following programs as highest priority for city and municipal agencies in their community to prioritize for future investments:

1. Farmers’ markets
2. Community gardens
3. Outdoor concerts and movies
4. Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)

## Recommendations: Low Income Residents

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal that low-income Oregon residents are underserved in terms of outdoor recreation participation, consistent with findings in the 2019-23 Oregon SCORP. Compared to Oregonians with middle and high incomes, the proportion of low-income Oregonians that participate in outdoor recreation is lower. Low-income Oregon residents also participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year and have a lower participation rate than that of the Oregon population in the majority of specific activities.

Since this issue has persisted over several years, the Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey was updated for the 2025–2029 SCORP to specifically address motivations to recreate and constraints that limit outdoor recreation to better understand participation differences for this demographic group. The survey data shows that the top motivations for low-income residents are very similar to those of the Oregon general population. As such, it is expected that low-income residents’ lower rates



of participation in outdoor recreation are caused by constraints to recreation, rather than by unique preferences for different leisure activities. It follows, then, that lowering barriers to outdoor recreation may be the most effective way to enable increased participation for low-income residents.

In order to determine which of these barriers most limited Oregon's low-income population, consideration was given both to the most prominent constraints—those that ranked the highest based on average survey responses—and those most unique to this population. Unique constraints were those with average responses that differed considerably from the general population, and were considered distinctly important, as the most prominent constraints for Oregon's low-income residents showed considerable overlap with the general population. Using this approach, the following constraints are considered the most important for low-income residents:

- Requiring a permit restricts my participation
- The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high
- Transportation to recreation settings is difficult
- I do not have the gear, equipment, or appropriate clothing
- I have no one to go with/lack of support
- My personal health is a limiting factor for me
- The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform

In general, recreation providers are encouraged to prioritize these constraints when considering ways to improve opportunities for low-income residents. The recommendations presented here fulfill this goal by providing tangible suggestions that directly address most of these barriers, helping recreation providers design and locate services that meet the needs of the low-income population and facilitate economically equitable enjoyment of outdoor recreation. In addition to survey data, these recommendations are informed by the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee, and the ongoing outdoor inclusion discourse.

The first set of recommendations to increase outdoor recreation participation among the low-income population come directly from opinions expressed in the survey.

**Camping needs.** Oregon's outdoor recreation providers should prioritize the addition of drive-in tent sites, cabins, yurts, and drive-in group sites. Tent sites are typically less expensive compared to other site types, and providing more tent camping opportunities may therefore lower the overall cost of trips to natural areas. Alternatively, while cabins and yurts may cost more than other sites per night, less camping gear is required to stay in these sites, an important feature for low-income residents who indicated having gear and equipment as a prominent constraint.

**Priorities for future investment.** The top “within your community” priorities for future investment according to Oregon's low-income population were clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, nature and wildlife viewing areas, and parks and recreation areas. The top “outside your community” priorities for future investment were restrooms, clean and well-maintained facilities, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, and nature and wildlife viewing areas. The future development of free-of-charge recreation opportunities throughout Oregon recreation areas directly lowers the expense barrier of outdoor recreation trips. Investment in community parks and recreation areas can also lower the cost of trips and address transportation issues by allowing individuals to choose close-to-home recreation over traveling to dispersed natural areas. In addition, improving accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities may address the key constraint of being limited by personal health. OPRD will provide funding priority for these low-income population needs in OPRD-administered grant programs where applicable. Other public and private recreation providers also are encouraged to consider these needs in program design and jurisdictional planning efforts.

**Community recreation programs.** Farmer's markets, community gardens, outdoor concerts and movies, and educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours) are the highest need community recreation programs according to the low-income population. Municipal recreation providers should consider these findings in program planning efforts.





A group fishing from the river bank along the Banks Vernonia Trail.

The next set of recommendations comes from outdoor inclusion literature and discussions with the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee. Most address the lack of economic resources that is a defining issue for low-income households. Many of the largest barriers to outdoor recreation for low-income residents can be directly tied to finances: the cost of trips to visit natural areas; transportation to recreation settings; and lack of gear, equipment, or appropriate clothing. Recreation providers in Oregon have a responsibility to increase economic accessibility to outdoor recreation opportunities for its low-income residents, to ensure access to community and health benefits. Some of the following recommendations can be used to address key issues for low-income residents in the short term, while others are targeted towards longer-term planning efforts.

**Transportation.** Members of the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory

Subcommittee stressed that, in their experience, transportation to parks is often very difficult for underserved communities. The survey data also shows that low-income residents are more likely to rely on public transit (5.1%) than the general population (1.5%) when traveling to outdoor areas. As a result, it is recommended that recreation providers seek out transportation assistance for low-income residents. For example, providers could approach ride-share companies, city transit authorities, charter bus companies, local schools, and/or community-based organizations to explore low-cost transport options to help low-income families (*The Atlantic*, 2018; Mott, 2016).

**Low-cost equipment rentals.** Recreation providers can also support outdoor recreation participation among low-income residents by offering low-cost equipment rentals. This action would directly address the lack of necessary gear and equipment for certain outdoor activities that was identified as a unique



barrier for low-income residents. There may be opportunities for recreation providers to partner with outdoor retailers in this endeavor, especially those retailers who have a mission to help underserved communities.

**Improved affordability information.** Another aspect of improving economic accessibility is providing information about affordable recreation options so that low-income residents can learn about new or unknown recreation opportunities and effectively make decisions within their budgets. A few considerations are encouraged in pursuit of this goal. First, it is important for recreation providers to provide clear information about which locations and activities do not have any associated fees. Second, providers should highlight popular activities that are generally low-cost for participants (e.g., walking on trails, picnicking, nature observation), while also trying to pique interest in low-cost activities that may be new to some low-income residents (e.g., bird watching, geocaching, foraging) by providing accessible guidance for beginners (e.g., printable guides, free tours, relevant community groups). Third, providers should bring awareness to close-to-home activities that may be perceived to only be available in remote settings (e.g., camping, fishing, hunting). Fourth, activity information should include gear requirements (or lack thereof) for each activity, helping residents determine its true cost. Lastly, providers should offer information about public transportation options to outdoor areas. All this information should be available on websites, at visitor centers, and on maps and brochures, and information sources that were ranked as the most important by low-income residents in the survey.

**Improved accessibility.** To address the personal health barrier for low-income residents, recreation providers should advance accessibility and universal design principles when designing park amenities and features. Universal design is “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (The Center for Universal Design, 2006). This type of design can be applied to trails, picnic areas, and restrooms (amongst other locations within parks) to ensure that areas are accessible to people with mobility limitations. The

Oregon Governor’s Task Force on the Outdoors has recommended this action as part of a strategy to advance efforts on equity, diversity, and inclusion in Oregon (Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, 2020).

**Community engagement.** A final recommendation is for recreation providers to increase community engagement in recreation planning to improve outdoor opportunities for low-income residents. Recreation providers can do this by collaborating with community partners such as schools, non-profit organizations, churches, youth organizations, and/or other community groups that serve low-income residents. This action will empower low-income residents and center their needs in the development, monitoring, and evaluation of outdoor recreation programs and opportunities. Our understanding of many of these barriers, including permit requirements and the presence of law enforcement, would benefit from the inclusion of low-income communities and supportive organizations in the discourse. Both the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee and the Oregon Governor’s Task Force on the Outdoors have advocated for this recommendation, to make sure that underserved communities are not left behind in the pursuit of equitable recreation access (Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, 2020).

## Survey Responses: Households with Disabilities

### Participation

The activities in which the largest proportions of Oregonian households with disabilities participated in their community in 2022 included the following:

1. Walking on local streets
2. Walking on local trails
3. Nature immersion
4. Picnicking
5. Nature observation

The activities in which the largest proportions of Oregonian households with disabilities participated outside their community in 2022 included the following:

1. Traveling to walk/hike
2. Beach activities—Ocean
3. Traveling for nature immersion
4. Sightseeing/driving for pleasure
5. Traveling to picnic

Overall, the survey identified a decrease in participation in outdoor recreation by households with disabilities compared to households without disabilities using three metrics. First, 92% of households with disabilities in Oregon participated in at least one outdoor recreation activity in Oregon during 2022, a lower rate than for households without disabilities (95%). Second, when evaluating the rate of participation in specific outdoor recreation activities, households with disabilities reported 48 out of 76 activities where their participation rate was less than that of the Oregon general population by a margin of 10% or more<sup>4</sup>. Finally, the annual mean of participation times for all 76 activities was 320 times for Oregon households with disabilities, compared to 342 times for Oregon households without disabilities.

These results suggest that households with disabilities are underserved in comparison to the overall Oregon population, in terms of outdoor recreation participation.

## Motivations

The top 5 motivations to participate in outdoor recreation for households with disabilities in 2022 were as follows:

1. To view the scenic beauty
2. To improve my mental health
3. To be close to nature
4. To relax and recharge
5. To experience calm, peace

The top motivations were very similar between households with disabilities in Oregon and the general population.

## Constraints

Oregon households with disabilities indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on general constraints that potentially limited their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)
2. There is limited or unsecure parking
3. The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high
4. There are too many people/it is too crowded
5. Requiring a permit restricts my participation

The most prominent general constraints for households with disabilities tended to be similar to those of the general population. However, “The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high” ranked higher for households with disabilities, and the average rating (3.2 out of 5) was statistically significantly higher than that of other respondents. Regardless of ranking, the general constraints with the largest absolute difference between households with disabilities and the Oregon general population were “I visit less because there is a lack of accessible features” and “There is a lack of information about which locations have accessible features (for those with disabilities).” Both constraints were scored statistically higher by households with disabilities than by all other residents.

Oregon households with disabilities indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on social constraints that potentially limited their participation in outdoor recreation:

The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site

1. My personal health is a limiting factor for me
2. I have no one to go with/lack of support
3. There is a lack of group or club activities I could join
4. Lack of personal security (from others)

Four of the top 5 social constraints for households with disabilities also ranked in the top 5 social constraints for the general population: “The presence

<sup>4</sup> In this case, the 10% margin is measured in relative terms, not absolute terms. For instance, the statewide participation rate for “Walking on paved paths or natural trails” is 71.8% and 10% of this rate is 7.18%. The participation rate for households with disabilities is 63.7% for this activity, which is less than the statewide rate by a margin greater than 7.18% in absolute terms and 10% in relative terms.



of unsheltered/ homeless persons on-site,” “I have no one to go with/lack of support,” “There is a lack of group or club activities I could join,” and “Lack of personal security (from others).” Meanwhile, households with disabilities ranked “My personal health is a limiting factor for me” higher than the general population; this social constraint also had the largest absolute difference between households with disabilities and the Oregon general population. It is also of note that all social constraints except “The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site” had statistically higher ratings for households with disabilities than those of all other respondents. Finally, “I have no one to go with/lack of support” was scored statistically higher by this group and had the second largest absolute difference from the Oregon general population.

Oregon households with disabilities indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on natural setting constraints that potentially limited their participation in outdoor recreation:

The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation

1. I am concerned about excessive heat
2. Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less
3. A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting
4. I am concerned about the potential of fire danger while out recreating

The top natural constraints for households with disabilities were the same as those of the general population.

Oregon households with disabilities indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on overcoming constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable
2. I get the latest information on natural hazards/ conditions before I go on a trip
3. In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation
4. I try to budget money for recreation
5. I actively try to learn new skills

When it comes to overcoming constraints, households with disabilities take similar approaches as the Oregon general population; both groups shared these top 5 statements on overcoming constraints.

## Camping Priority Needs

For Oregonian households with disabilities the following types of camping were rated as having the highest need outside their community:

1. Drive-in tent site
2. Cabins or yurts with heat and lights
3. Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen
4. Drive-in group sites

## Priorities for Future Investment

The top “in your community” priorities for future investment according to Oregon’s households with disabilities are as follows:

1. Clean and well-maintained facilities
2. Restrooms
3. Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
4. Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
5. Parks and recreation areas

The top “outside your community” priorities for future investment according to Oregon’s households with disabilities are as follows:

1. Clean and well-maintained facilities
2. Restrooms
3. Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
4. Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
5. Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

## Community Recreation Program Need

Households with disabilities rate the following programs as highest priority for city and municipal agencies in their community to prioritize for future investments:

1. Farmers' markets
2. Community gardens
3. Seniors' activity centers
4. Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)

## Recommendations: Households with Disabilities

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal that Oregon households with disabilities are underserved in terms of outdoor recreation participation. Compared to households without disabilities, the proportion of households with disabilities that participate in outdoor recreation is lower in Oregon, and these households also participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year, in general. Furthermore, the rate of participation is lower for the majority of specific activities.

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey was updated for the 2025–2029 SCORP to specifically address motivations to recreate and constraints that limit outdoor recreation in order to better understand participation differences across demographic groups. Because the survey data shows that the top motivations for households with disabilities are very similar to those of the Oregon general population, it is expected that the lower participation for households with disabilities is caused more by constraints to recreation than by unique preferences towards different leisure activities. It follows, then, that lowering barriers to outdoor recreation may be the most effective way to enable increased participation for households with disabilities.

The survey showed considerable overlap in the most prominent constraints for households with disabilities with the Oregon general population, so these recommendations attempt to address prominent

(highest ranking) constraints as well as those unique to households with disabilities. Unique constraints are those with average responses that differ considerably from the general population, regardless of ranking. Using this approach, the following constraints are considered the most important for households with disabilities:

- It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)
- The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high
- There is a lack of information about which locations have accessible features (for those with disabilities)
- My personal health is a limiting factor for me
- Transportation to recreation settings is difficult
- I visit less because there is a lack of accessible features
- I have no one to go with/lack of support
- Lack of personal security (from others)
- There is a lack of group or club activities I could join

The goal of this section is to provide tangible recommendations within the purview of recreation providers that directly address most of these constraints and help providers design and identify services that meet the needs of persons with disabilities, so that all Oregonians can enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation. In general, recreation providers should prioritize these constraints when considering ways to address disparities in recreation access for households with disabilities. Furthermore, it is important to note that types of disabilities (e.g., sensory, mobility) can differ greatly, and recreation providers need to consider the multifaceted nature of accessibility and the different accommodations that are required in different contexts. The recommendations in this section are informed by survey responses, the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee, and the outdoor inclusion discourse. The first set of recommendations to increase outdoor recreation participation amongst households with disabilities come directly from opinions expressed in the survey.

**Camping sites.** Regarding the camping needs of households with disabilities, Oregon's outdoor recreation providers should prioritize the addition of





Top: A large group after a successful day on the water at Milo McIver State Park. Left: A man sitting in a wheelchair listens to a guide give a pre-trip talk to their group. Right: A man sitting in a wheelchair prepares to get into a kayak.

drive-in tent sites, cabins, yurts, and drive-in group sites to better serve households with disabilities. Each of these site types should be designed according to accessibility standards for outdoor areas, which will not only increase the inventory of accessible campsites, but address constraints related to the lack of accessible features and difficulty finding sites. Tent sites tend to be less expensive compared to other site types, and having more of these sites available would facilitate a lower overall cost of camping

trips. Additionally, while cabins and yurts may cost more than other sites per night, they can substitute for more costly hotel vacations. These sites can also provide a greater feeling of safety compared to other site types, and their amenities (e.g., electricity, heat) may help support those with certain health conditions.

**Priorities for future investment.** The top “within your community” priorities for future investment according to households with disabilities in Oregon



are clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, and parks and recreation areas. Top “outside your community” priorities for future investment according to households with disabilities in Oregon are clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, and directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead.

Future development of free-of-charge recreation opportunities throughout Oregon’s recreation areas can directly lower the expense barrier of trips. Investment in close-to-home parks and recreation areas can also lower trip cost and address transportation issues by facilitating more close-to-home recreation opportunities. In addition, increasing accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities would improve park conditions for and support visitation by those who require accessible features and/or have personal health issues. Directional signs and trail details at trailheads would also enable households with disabilities to better assess trail suitability and ease their decision making during outdoor trips. OPRD will provide funding priority for the needs of households with disabilities in OPRD-administered grant programs where applicable. Public and private recreation providers should also consider these needs in program development, facility design, and jurisdictional planning efforts.

**Community recreation programs.** Households with disabilities expressed the highest need for farmer’s markets, community gardens, seniors’ activity centers, and educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours). Municipal recreation providers should determine the specific needs of individuals and households with disabilities within these programs in their planning efforts.

The next set of recommendations come from the outdoor inclusion literature and from discussions with the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee. Many focus on the lack of accessibility in outdoor areas, a crucial outdoor

recreation issue for households with disabilities. It is important for recreation providers to employ a multidimensional approach to accessibility to increase the inventory of accessible park features and amenities for households with disabilities. Some of these recommendations highlight key issues that can be addressed in the short term, while others are more targeted towards longer-term planning efforts.

**Universal design.** Universal design is “the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design” (The Center for Universal Design, 2006). This type of design can be applied to many features, including trails, picnic areas, and restrooms, to ensure accessibility to people with mobility limitations. The Oregon Governor’s Task Force on the Outdoors has recommended this action as part of a strategy to advance efforts on equity, diversity, and inclusion in Oregon (Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, 2020). To this end, OPRD developed and published an ADA Transition Plan and Accessibility Design Standards for all Future Projects. The ADA Transition Plan outlines how the agency will alleviate physical obstacles to accessibility in state park facilities (e.g., parking, restrooms, picnic areas, viewpoints) over a 25-year period (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 2021). The Accessibility Design Standards serve, “to promote a consistent approach to incorporate improved accessibility, beyond the foundational standards when feasible, in the development of all future projects” (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 2023). Municipal recreation providers are also encouraged to pursue universal design in new and ongoing development efforts.

Free response questions at the end of the resident survey asked respondents who reported a disability in their household what could be done to improve their access to recreation. A majority of responses indicated a desire for improved design to support mobility—ADA trails, including more solid or level trail surfaces, places to sit and rest, more handicap parking spaces, and more accessible restrooms and campsites. When considering universal design principles, the high priority placed on these issues by survey respondents should also be considered.





A family enjoying a fire pit at a yurt campsite at Beverly Beach State Park.

**Improved accessibility information.** Oregon outdoor recreation providers should publish detailed information on the accessibility of all features in outdoor areas. The SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee has advocated for details about parklands to be available online and at the parks (e.g., visitor centers, maps/brochures) to help determine how accessible an area is based on an individual or household's needs. The usefulness of these outdoor recreation information sources to households with disabilities is corroborated by the survey data. Free responses from respondents in a household with a disability also indicated a high level of priority of communicating about trail accessibility, distance, and gradient, along with any changes to the trails and/or new barriers, hazards, or construction; providing all of these details about trails will allow every user to assess whether a trail is suitable. The SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee has also suggested that providers connect with recreators with disabilities and

supportive groups and use their recommendations and guidelines to provide relevant information for people with disabilities, such as those provided by Access Recreation (Access Recreation, 2013).

**Transportation.** Households with disabilities expressed that transportation to parks can be a major barrier to outdoor recreation participation. The prevalence of this barrier was echoed by the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee. Although the difference is small, the survey data shows that households with disabilities are more likely to rely on public transit or family/friends (20%) to travel to outdoor areas than the general population is (16%), and several free responses from respondents with a disability in their household indicated a desire for shuttle services and/or better public transportation. As a result, it is recommended that recreation providers seek out transportation assistance that is accessible to households with disabilities. For example, providers could approach ride-share companies, city transit



authorities, charter bus companies, local schools, and community-based organizations to explore low-cost transport options to help households with disabilities (*The Atlantic*, 2018; Mott, 2016). In addition, provider websites should include information about existing public transportation options to outdoor areas.

**Community programs.** Additional barriers for households with disabilities are presented by lack of community in outdoor areas. Many free responses from individuals with a disability in their household indicated a desire for more group activities or for access to volunteers who could help them when recreating. Recreation providers should consider offering programs such as outdoor education and training, guided hikes, nature walks, or other activities to promote accessible outdoor recreation specifically for households with disabilities. For example, providers could highlight the accessible features of a park with guided opportunities, especially when these features are new or upgraded. These programs may also benefit from partnerships with local advocacy groups.

**Increase community engagement.** Recreation providers should collaborate with community partners such as disability advocacy and support groups, schools, non-profit organizations, churches, youth organizations, and other community groups that specifically serve households with disabilities. This will enable recreation providers to better understand the needs of households with disabilities when developing, monitoring, and evaluating outdoor recreation programs and opportunities. Providers' efforts to minimize recreation barriers, including personal safety limitations, inaccessible communication, or lack of community, would benefit from the involvement of individuals with disabilities and supporting organizations in the decision-making process. Both the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee and the Oregon Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors have advocated for this recommendation to make sure that underserved communities are equitably supported in their pursuit of outdoor recreation (Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, 2020).

## Survey Responses: Race/Ethnicity

### Participation

Table 4.3 shows the activities in which the largest proportions of Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, Mixed Race, and White Oregonians participated in within their communities in 2022. There were considerable similarities between groups. For instance, "Walking on local streets," "Walking on local trails," and "Nature Immersion" were the most common activities for each group.

Table 4.4 shows the activities in which the largest proportions of Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, Mixed Race, and White Oregonians participated in outside their communities in 2022. Once again, there was overlap in the most common activities across groups. "Traveling to walk/hike," "Traveling for nature immersion," and "Beach activities—Ocean" were popular activities for each group.

Table 4.5 shows the proportion from each racial/ethnic group that participated in at least one outdoor recreation activity in Oregon during 2022. Overall, 92% of the Asian population, 96% of the Black/African American population, 92% of the Hispanic/Latino/a population, 92% of the Mixed Race population, and 96% of the White population participated in at least one activity. Table 4.5 also shows the group-specific mean total participation times in a year summed across all 76 activities included in the survey, representing the average number of times a person participated in outdoor recreation in 2022. For reference, the statewide mean participation was 336 times in 2022. This measure shows wide variation in participation across the groups. Three groups participated less than the statewide population on average: the Asian population (221 times), the Black/African American population (217 times), and the Hispanic/Latino/a population (328 times). The annual participation times for the Asian and Black/African American populations were each found to be statistically lower than the participation times of all other

5 In this case, the 10% margin is measured in relative terms, not absolute terms. For instance, the statewide participation rate for "Going to dog parks or off-leash areas" is 26.5% and 10% of this rate is 2.65%. The Asian population's participation rate is 18.4% for this activity, which is less than the statewide rate by a margin greater than 2.65% in absolute terms and 10% in relative terms.



**Table 4.3 Top Activities by Participation Rate “In Your Community”**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
Walking on local streets	Walking on local streets	Walking on local streets	Walking on local streets	Walking on local streets
Walking on local trails	Walking on local trails	Walking on local trails	Walking on local trails	Walking on local trails
Nature immersion	Nature immersion	Nature immersion	Nature immersion	Nature immersion
Picnicking	Picnicking	Picnicking	Picnicking	Attending local outdoor events
Visiting nature centers	Jogging on local streets	Attending local outdoor events	Visiting historic sites	Visiting historic sites

**Table 4.4 Top Activities by Participation Rate “Outside Your Community”**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
Traveling to walk/hike	Beach activities—Ocean	Traveling to walk/hike	Traveling to walk/hike	Traveling to walk/hike
Traveling for nature immersion	Traveling to walk/hike	Beach activities—Ocean	Beach activities—Ocean	Beach activities—Ocean
Beach activities—Ocean	Sightseeing/driving for pleasure	Traveling for nature immersion	Traveling for nature immersion	Traveling for nature immersion
Traveling to picnic	Traveling for nature immersion	Traveling to historic sites	Sightseeing/ driving for pleasure	Sightseeing/ driving for pleasure
Sightseeing/driving for pleasure	White-water canoeing	Traveling to attend outdoor events	Traveling to picnic	Beach activities—Lakes, reservoirs, rivers

**Table 4.5 Total Participation Statistics**

	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
Outdoor recreation participation, %	92.2%	96%	92.2%	91.9%	95.5%
Mean annual participation times	221	217	328	369	345
# of Activities with participation rate 10% less than statewide participation rate	41	45	7	27	19
# of Activities with participation rate 10% more than statewide participation rate	13	19	40	17	0

**Table 4.6 Top Motivations to Participate in Outdoor Recreation\***

Asian	Hispanic/Latino/a	Mixed Race	White
To improve my mental health	To improve my mental health	To improve my mental health	To view the scenic beauty
To view the scenic beauty	To relax and recharge	To be close to nature	To improve my mental health
To improve my physical health	To do something with my family and/or friends	To view the scenic beauty	To be close to nature
To be close to nature	To get away from the usual demands of life	To relax and recharge	To relax and recharge
To relax and recharge	To view the scenic beauty	To escape noise and crowds	To experience calm, peace

\*Note: The table does not include Black/African American population responses because there was an insufficient number of responses for statistical inference.

Oregon residents as well. Meanwhile, the Mixed Race population (369 times) and White population (345 times) participated more than the statewide population on average.

When comparing the percent of the overall population and the percent of each racial/ethnic group participating in each of the 76 activities, the Asian population reported 41 activities where the participation rate was less than that of the Oregon general population by a margin of 10% or more, and the Black/African American population reported 45 activities where this was the case<sup>5</sup>. Table 4.5 shows this data for each racial/ethnic population. Other groups reported participation rates for the majority of activities that were either above or close to the statewide rates. In fact, the Hispanic/Latino/a population reported 40 activities with participation rates above those of the Oregon general population by a margin of 10% or more.

These results suggest that outdoor recreation participation varies across racial/ethnic communities. Mixed Race and White populations in Oregon reported outdoor recreation participation levels similar to that of the Oregon general population. When examining both the total number of activities participated in and the total participation across the year, Asian and Black/African American populations were underserved in comparison to the overall Oregon population in terms of outdoor recreation participation. There is also evidence that the Hispanic/Latino/a population may be underserved in terms of total outdoor recreation times per year, despite the fact that residents from this group participated in more activities than other Oregonians.

## Motivations

Table 4.6 shows the top 5 motivations to participate in outdoor recreation for residents from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. “To improve my mental health,” “To view the scenic beauty,” and “To relax and recharge” were top motivations for every group; “To be close to nature” was a top motivation for 3 of the 4 groups. However, some motivations were more prominent for particular groups. “To improve my physical health” was a vital motivation for the Asian population to participate in outdoor recreation, and for the Mixed Race population, “To escape noise and crowds” was an important aspect of outdoor recreation. The Hispanic/Latino/a population highlighted 2 motivations over others: “To do something with my family and/or friends” and “To get away from the usual demands of life.”

## Constraints

The Oregon general population indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on general constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)
2. There is limited or unsecure parking
3. There are too many people/it is too crowded
4. Requiring a permit restricts my participation
5. Use/entrance fees are too high

The above list represents the responses of Oregonians from all racial/ethnic groups together. Table 4.7 shows the top 5 general constraints for Oregonians from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.





A group hiking at L.L. Stub Stewart State Park.

**Table 4.7 Most Prominent General Constraints to Participate in Outdoor Recreation**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
There is limited or unsecure parking	The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high	There is limited or unsecure parking	There is limited or unsecure parking	It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)
It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)	There are too many people/it is too crowded	I do not have enough time due to work	It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)	There is limited or unsecure parking
There is a lack of information about which locations have accessible features (for those with disabilities)	I choose to do other things during my free time	It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)	Use/entrance fees are too high	There are too many people/it is too crowded
There are not enough nearby places to go (travel distance)	Use/entrance fees are too high	The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high	The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high	Requiring a permit restricts my participation
There are too many people/it is too crowded	There are not enough facilities (picnic tables, shelters, playground equipment, group)	There are too many people/it is too crowded	There are too many people/it is too crowded	There is a lack of information about opportunities and places to go



Several general constraints ranked high for all groups. “There are too many people/it is too crowded” was a top constraint for all groups, and “It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system” and “There is limited or unsecure parking” were top constraints for four of the five groups.

Several noteworthy differences emerged when comparing responses of racial/ethnic groups to those of the general population, with some standing out more important for multiple groups. “The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high” was a larger constraint for Black/African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a populations than the general population, and Hispanic/Latino/a respondents scored this constraint statistically higher than all others on average. Hispanic/Latino/a respondents ranked “I do not have enough time due to work” higher than the general population as well, and this constraint had the largest absolute difference between the Hispanic/Latino/a population and the Oregon general population.

A few groups highlighted specific constraints that were unique compared to the general population. “There is a lack of information about which locations have accessible features” and “There are not enough nearby places to go” ranked as larger constraints for the Asian population; the average ratings by Asian respondents for these two constraints also had the largest absolute differences compared to the general population’s ratings and were statistically significantly higher than the average ratings of the rest of the respondents.

Black/African American respondents ranked “I choose to do other things during my free time” and “There are not enough facilities” higher than the general population. Also, the general constraints with the largest differences between the Mixed Race population and the general population were “Use/entrance fees are too high” and “I do not have the gear, equipment, or appropriate clothing.” Both of these constraints were scored statistically higher by the Mixed Race population as well.

**Table 4.8 Most Prominent Social Constraints to Participate in Outdoor Recreation**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site	Discrimination of any kind	The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site	The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site	The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site
Lack of personal security (from others)	I don’t see people like me in their advertising or working there	The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/ law enforcement in uniform	There is a lack of group or club activities I could join	I have no one to go with/lack of support
There is a lack of traffic safety at recreation areas	There is a lack of group or club activities I could join	There is a lack of cultural events	Lack of personal security (from others)	Lack of personal security (from others)
There is a lack of cultural events	There is a lack of cultural events	There is a lack of group or club activities I could join	There is a lack of cultural events	There is a lack of group or club activities I could join
The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/ law enforcement in uniform	The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site	Not having the appropriate skills or experience to feel comfortable.	Discrimination of any kind	My personal health is a limiting factor for me

Oregon residents across all demographics indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on social constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site
2. I have no one to go with/lack of support
3. Lack of personal security (from others)
4. There is a lack of group or club activities could join
5. There is a lack of cultural events

Table 4.8 shows the top 5 social constraints for Oregonians from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Three social constraints were common across groups. “The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site” was a high-ranking social constraint for each racial/ethnic group; “There is a lack of group or club activities I could join” and “There is a lack of cultural events” were top social constraints for four of the groups.

More heterogeneity in responses across racial/ethnic groups was observed compared to responses on other constraint categories. A few responses stood out for multiple groups: “Discrimination of any kind” was a top social constraint for both Black/African American and Mixed Race populations, and respondents from both of these groups (along with Asian respondents) scored this constraint statistically higher than all other respondents on average. The rating on this social constraint also had some of the largest differences between both Black/African American and Mixed Race populations when compared to the Oregon general population. In addition, the Asian and Hispanic/Latino/a populations each ranked “The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform” higher than the general population.

“There is a lack of traffic safety at recreation areas” ranked higher for Asian respondents and the average score for this group was statistically significantly higher than that of all others. Black/African American residents ranked “I don’t see people like me in their advertising or working there”

**Table 4.9 Most Prominent Natural Setting Constraints to Participate in Outdoor Recreation**

Asian	Black/African American	Hispanic/Latino/a	Mixed Race	White
The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation	The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation	The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation	The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation	The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation
Low water levels (e.g., dry docks, stream and bank damage, no access) meant I visited less	I am afraid of getting hurt by wildlife	A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting	I am concerned about excessive heat	I am concerned about excessive heat
I am concerned about excessive heat	I am concerned about excessive heat	I am concerned about excessive heat	A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting	A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting
A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting	I am concerned about the potential of fire danger while out recreating	I am concerned about the potential of fire danger while out recreating	Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less	Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less
I am concerned about cold or snow	Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less	I am concerned about cold or snow	Discrimination of any kind	My personal health is a limiting factor for me

higher than the general population and the average score for this respondent group was statistically higher than all others. (This constraint is not ranked as a top 5 social constraint for Asian, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a residents, but it was scored statistically higher by each group when compared to all others.) The White population also ranked “My personal health is a limiting factor for me” as a more prominent constraint than the general population.

For Hispanic/Latino/a populations, “Not having the appropriate skills or experience to feel comfortable” was uniquely prominent, and the average score on this constraint was statistically higher than that of all other respondents. Lastly, “There are language barriers for me (signs, website, staff)” was not ranked as a top 5 social constraint for Hispanic/Latino/a residents, but it was scored statistically higher by these residents and had the second largest difference compared to the Oregon general population.

When considering natural setting constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation, the Oregon general population indicated the highest agreement with the following statements:

1. The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation
2. I am concerned about excessive heat
3. A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting
4. Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less
5. I am concerned about the potential of fire danger while out recreating

The highest ranked natural constraints for residents from different racial/ethnic backgrounds are shown in Table 4.9.

Across different groups of respondents, three constraints were commonly ranked highly: “The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation,” “I am concerned about excessive heat,” and “A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting.”

**Table 4.10 Most Prominent Ways to Overcome Constraints to Participating in Outdoor Recreation**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable	I actively try to learn new skills	I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable	I actively try to learn new skills	I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable
I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	I already recreate as much as I want	I actively try to learn new skills	I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip
I actively try to learn new skills	In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation	I try to budget money for recreation	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation
I make time for recreation, trading off time spent on other leisure activities	I found others with my same interests	In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation	In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation	I actively try to learn new skills
I already recreate as much as I want	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	I try to budget money for recreation	I try to budget money for recreation



**Table 4.11 Camping Types with Highest Priority Need**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
Cabins or yurts with heat and lights	Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen	Drive-in tent site	Drive-in tent site	Drive-in tent site
Drive-in tent site	Drive-in group sites	Drive-in group sites	Cabins or yurts with heat and lights	Cabins or yurts with heat and lights
Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen	Cabins or yurts with heat and lights	Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen	Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen	Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom, and kitchen
Drive-in group sites	Drive-in tent site	Cabins or yurts with heat and lights	Drive-in group sites	Drive-in group sites
I already recreate as much as I want	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	I try to budget money for recreation	I try to budget money for recreation

“I am concerned about cold or snow” was also ranked higher by both the Asian and Hispanic/Latino/a populations than by the general population.

A few differences emerged for individual racial/ethnic groups as well. For the Asian population, “Low water levels meant I visited less” was ranked higher than it was by the general population and scored statistically higher. Hispanic/Latino/a respondent scores were also statistically significantly higher than all other respondents for this constraint. Black/African American respondents were the only group to rank “I am afraid of getting hurt by wildlife” as a prominent natural setting constraint, and they also scored this constraint statistically higher than all others.

Oregon residents indicated the highest agreement for the following statements on overcoming constraints that potentially limit their participation in outdoor recreation:

1. I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable
2. I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip
3. I actively try to learn new skills
4. In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation
5. I try to budget money for recreation

Table 4.10 shows the top 5 ways to overcome constraints to participating in outdoor recreation for residents from different racial/ethnic backgrounds.

When it comes to overcoming constraints, residents from each racial/ethnic group take similar approaches. “I have found recreation areas where I feel comfortable,” “I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip,” “I actively try to learn new skills,” and “In the past, I have been successful getting around the constraints to my outdoor recreation” are ranked highly for each group.

Some differences in rankings are worth mentioning: Asian and Black/African American residents both ranked “I already recreate as much as I want” higher than the general population. The Asian population also ranked “I make time for recreation, trading off time spent on other leisure activities” higher than the general population. Additionally, the Black/African American population is the only group that identified “I found others with my same interests” as one of the most agreed upon statements regarding overcoming constraints.

## Camping Priority Needs

Table 4.11 shows which camping types were rated as highest need for residents from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. Although the order differs, each group identified the same four campsite types as having the highest need.

**Table 4.12 Top “In Your Community” Investment Priorities**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Clean and well-maintained facilities	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Restrooms	Restrooms	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Parks and recreation areas	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Parks and recreation areas
Parks and recreation areas	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Nature and wildlife viewing areas	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

### Priorities for Future Investment

The top “in your community” priorities for future investment according to Oregonians from different racial/ethnic populations are shown in Table 4.12.

The top “outside your community” priorities for future investment according to Oregonians from different racial/ethnic populations are shown in Table 4.13.

### Community Recreation Program Need

Table 4.14 shows the highest priority programs for city and municipal agencies according to each racial/ethnic population.

### Recommendations: Different Race/Ethnicity Populations in Oregon

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal clear differences in outdoor recreation participation across Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, Mixed Race, and White populations in Oregon. Mixed Race and White populations report outdoor recreation participation levels similar to that of the Oregon general population, while Asian and Black/African American residents participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year than the general population. In terms of specific outdoor recreation activities, the Asian and Black/African American populations each have a lower participation rate than the Oregon population for the majority of activities. There is also evidence that the Hispanic/Latino/a population may be underserved in terms of total outdoor recreation times per year, despite the fact that this group participates in more specific activities than other Oregonians. As stated previously, low response numbers limited inferential power of data for some

**Table 4.13 Top “Outside Your Community” Investment Priorities**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms	Restrooms	Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Lighting and/or security cameras in key places	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Parks and recreation areas
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Nature and wildlife viewing areas	Parks and recreation areas	Nature and wildlife viewing areas

**Table 4.14 Top “In Your Community” Program Needs**

<b>Asian</b>	<b>Black/African American</b>	<b>Hispanic/Latino/a</b>	<b>Mixed Race</b>	<b>White</b>
Farmers’ markets	Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)	Farmers’ markets	Farmers’ markets	Farmers’ markets
Community gardens	Farmers’ markets	Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)	Community gardens	Community gardens
Outdoor sports (youth and adult)	Community gardens	Community gardens	Outdoor concerts and movies	Outdoor sports (youth and adult)
Quiet zones for reading, meditating, or games (e.g., chess, cards)	Functional strength training (training the body for activities performed in daily life)	Outdoor sports (youth and adult)	Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)	Outdoor concerts and movies
I already recreate as much as I want	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	I get the latest information on natural hazards/conditions before I go on a trip	I try to budget money for recreation	I try to budget money for recreation



racial/ethnic groups, including individuals identifying as “American Indian or Alaska Native” and “Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.” Although the specific needs and priorities of all racial and ethnic groups are not included in this report, recreation providers are encouraged to reflect on the diversity in their own communities and identify ways to best support all residents.

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey was updated for the 2025–2029 SCORP with questions that specifically address motivations to recreate and constraints that limit outdoor recreation in order to better understand participation differences across demographic groups. The survey data shows that, despite small differences noted above, the top motivations are similar for residents from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. It stands to reason, then, that participation differences across groups are caused more by constraints to recreation rather than differing leisure preferences, and that lowering these barriers to outdoor recreation may be the most effective way to empower underserved communities.

In 2022, 73.5% of Oregon residents identified themselves as White alone, not Hispanic or Latino/a (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). This is evident in the survey; White residents are strongly represented by the responses for the general population, and their participation levels largely define the benchmark levels of outdoor recreation participation in Oregon. Because of this, it is recommended that outdoor recreation providers address the top general population constraints in order to support more participation for this population, and all residents—the survey showed considerable overlap in the most prominent constraints for residents from Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, Mixed Race, and White populations. With that in mind, the following recommendations in this section will attempt to address the constraints that are both prominent and unique to minority racial/ethnic populations, because these groups showed distinct differences in some constraints, and because research indicates these groups are the most likely to be underserved.

To identify constraints that were particularly salient for minority groups, constraints that were both prominent and unique compared to the general

population response were highlighted. Prominent constraints were the highest ranking based on average survey responses, while unique constraints had average responses that differed considerably from the general population. Using this approach, the following constraints are considered the most important for minority racial/ethnic communities, while being within the purview of recreation providers:

- There is a lack of cultural events
- I don’t see people like me in their advertising or working there
- The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high
- The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform
- I do not have the gear, equipment, or appropriate clothing
- Discrimination of any kind
- There is a lack of information about which locations have accessible features (for those with disabilities)
- There are not enough nearby places to go (travel distance)
- There is a lack of traffic safety at recreation areas
- I visit less because there is a lack of accessible features
- Not having the appropriate skills or experience to feel comfortable.
- There are language barriers for me (signs, website, staff)

In general, recreation providers should prioritize addressing these constraints when considering ways to improve opportunities for Asian, Black/African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a populations. The goal of this section is to provide tangible recommendations that directly address most of these constraints and to help recreation providers design and identify services that meet these communities’ needs, enhancing enjoyment of the benefits of outdoor recreation in Oregon. It is important to note that although these recommendations are crafted to be relevant to multiple underserved groups, recreation providers must take into account the specific communities they



A family enjoying the day at Nehalem Bay.

serve, as each community will have unique needs, priorities, and resources. The recommendations in this section are informed by survey responses, the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee, and the outdoor inclusion discourse.

**Camping sites.** Oregon's outdoor recreation providers should prioritize the addition of drive-in tent sites, cabins, yurts, and drive-in group sites to serve the camping needs of Asian, Black/African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a residents. Tent sites tend to be less expensive compared to other site types, and having more available would help lower the cost of trips to outdoor areas. Cabins and yurts often cost more than other sites per night but can be an affordable substitute for more costly hotel rentals. These sites can also provide a greater sense of safety and often require less camping gear and experience than other site types.

**Priorities for future investment.** The top “within your community” priorities for future investment, according to Oregon's Asian, Black/African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a populations, were clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, parks and recreation areas, directional signs and details about trails at the trailhead, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, and nature and wildlife viewing areas. Top “outside your community” priorities for future investment were clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, nature and wildlife viewing areas, parks and recreation areas, accessibility

and opportunities for people with disabilities, directional signs and details about trails at the trailhead, and lighting and/or security cameras in key places. Each of these was identified as a top 5 priority for at least one of these groups.

The future development of free-of-charge recreation opportunities throughout state recreation areas helps to lower the barrier that trips cost too much, and investment in close-to-home parks and recreation areas can further lower the cost of trips and address the lack of recreation sites within communities. Adding more directional signs and trail specifics in multiple languages at trailheads will provide information to help visitors determine which trails are suitable for their experience and comfort levels. Improving accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities will address key constraints related to the lack of accessible features. Lastly, increasing lighting and/or security cameras in key places can address concerns about traffic safety at recreation areas. OPRD will provide funding priority for these needs in OPRD-administered grant programs where applicable, and recreation providers should consider these needs in jurisdictional planning efforts.

**Community recreation programs.** Asian, Black/African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a populations indicated the highest need for the following community recreation programs: Farmers' markets, community gardens, outdoor sports (youth and adult), outdoor concerts and movies, educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours), functional strength training (training

the body for activities performed in daily life), and quiet zones for reading, meditating, or games (e.g., chess, cards). Municipal recreation providers should examine ways to include these priorities in program planning efforts, which may help remove obstacles to participation. For example, outdoor concerts and movies can be opportunities to increase the number of cultural events at local parks, while educational activities can provide skills to help residents feel more confident in outdoor settings.

The next set of recommendations comes from the outdoor inclusion literature and from discussions with the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee. Some of these recommendations can address key issues for minority racial/ethnic communities in the short term, while others are targeted toward longer-term planning efforts.

**Advancing inclusion.** It is essential for outdoor recreation providers to promote a sense of belonging and safety for all communities. Feeling excluded in outdoor areas is common for underrepresented communities, and the survey data highlighted this, as “Discrimination of any kind” was a prominent constraint for Black/African American and Mixed Race residents and “I don’t see people like me in their advertising or working there” was scored prominently for Asian, Black/African American, and Mixed Race residents. Acknowledgment of the historical roots of this exclusion and displacement is recommended by both the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee and Vestal (2016). For example, recreation providers can hire historians to research and clarify the backstories of outdoor spaces and incorporate a more thorough history of diverse communities’ relationships to recreation areas in interpretative materials, art installations, and memorials (*The Atlantic*, 2018; Mott, 2016). Additionally, recreation staff can be trained to respond to instances of bias and inequity in the outdoors; organizations can partner with supportive organizations to host events serving and celebrating diverse communities, including those that offer educational opportunities for all residents; and agencies can identify ways to take appropriate action when any residents report harmful encounters with others while using recreation areas.

**Advance organizational diversity.** Outdoor recreation providers should continue promoting internal and external organizational diversity to encourage a sense of belonging in the outdoors. From an internal standpoint, a diverse workforce would improve organizational access to varied and thorough perspectives on recreation issues and help ensure more communities are represented within an organization. For this reason, the Oregon Governor’s Task Force on the Outdoors has specifically recommended setting targets for inclusion and diversity on organization committees (Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, 2020). These steps can help ensure equitable inclusion and help underrepresented communities feel a greater sense of belonging in outdoor recreation areas and planning. From an external standpoint, recreation providers should include diverse recreators in all marketing campaigns, websites, and informational materials (*The Atlantic*, 2018; Vestal, 2016). Individuals may feel more welcome when they see people like themselves being celebrated in these outdoor recreation settings.

**Host cultural events.** A lack of cultural events was a notable social constraint for Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, and Mixed Race residents in this survey. Recreation providers should consider opportunities for parks to serve as venues for cultural events and festivals that are important to residents in both close-to-home and dispersed settings (*The Atlantic*, 2018). For example, parks could host educational events during Black/African American or AAPI History Month (Mott, 2016), fairs or festivals during important holidays (e.g., Chinese New Year, Diwali, Juneteenth), or group gatherings for organizations that bring together diverse recreators. The SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee has advocated for this approach while suggesting a possible lack of awareness about the events that parks currently host. As such, it is recommended that recreation providers enhance their marketing for new and existing events and ensure they are accessible to the intended audiences, including multiple language publications, disseminating information through outside organizations and their media, or sharing event announcements on culturally diverse online platforms (Mott, 2016). According to the survey, the top information sources (websites, visitor centers,



and maps/brochures) were similar between minority racial/ethnic groups and the general population, but a number of sources—including smartphone applications (e.g. Strava), community organizations like school or church, video sharing platforms, and social media platforms—tended to be more important for Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, and Mixed Race residents. Providers should consider using these communication channels when trying to reach diverse audiences.

**Information on accessibility.** To better serve the needs of racial/ethnic minority households with disabilities, Oregon outdoor recreation providers should provide more detailed information on the accessibility of all features in outdoor areas. The SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee has stressed that details about parklands be available online and at parks and trailheads to help people with disabilities from all underserved communities determine the accessibility of an area based on their individual needs. This issue is covered in more depth in the section on households with disabilities.

**Transportation.** Although transportation is not listed as a key constraint for racial/ethnic minority residents in the survey, the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee has experienced that transportation to parks can be a major barrier to outdoor recreation participation for underserved communities. The survey data also shows that Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, and Mixed Race residents are more likely to rely on friends and family to travel to outdoor areas than the general population, and Black/African American and Mixed Race residents are more likely to rely on public transit. It is recommended that recreation providers seek out accessible transportation assistance for residents from diverse communities. For example, providers could approach ride-share companies, city transit authorities, charter bus companies, local schools, and community-based organizations to explore low-cost transport options (*The Atlantic*, 2018; Mott, 2016). This action would help to address prominent constraints like “There are not enough nearby places to go (travel distance)” and “The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high.” Additionally, provider websites should have

information about public transportation options and their routes to outdoor areas.

**Outdoor education.** Recreation providers should also consider programs such as outdoor education and training, guided hikes, nature walks, or other activities that promote outdoor recreation for households from diverse racial/ethnic communities. These types of programs can help build experience and skills that enable individuals to feel more comfortable in outdoor areas. Furthermore, recreation providers could partner with supportive community groups to host these programs as events, since attendees may feel more comfortable in the presence of familiar individuals or organizations.

**Low-cost equipment rentals.** Offering low-cost equipment rentals would directly address barriers related to gear and equipment requirements for certain outdoor activities. There may be opportunities for recreation providers to partner with outdoor retailers in this endeavor, especially retailers with a mission to help underserved communities.

**Community engagement.** A final recommendation is for recreation providers to increase community engagement with underserved racial/ethnic communities in the recreation planning process. Recreation providers should collaborate with community partners such as diversity advocacy groups, schools, non-profit organizations, churches, youth organizations, and other community groups that serve diverse racial/ethnic communities. This action will enable recreation providers to better understand these residents’ needs when developing, monitoring, and evaluating outdoor recreation programs. For example, efforts towards lowering barriers related to discrimination, safety concerns, language differences, and the presence of law enforcement would benefit from a more thoroughly informed understanding of how these issues specifically impact minority racial/ethnic communities. Both the SCORP Engagement, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Subcommittee and the Oregon Governor’s Task Force on the Outdoors have advocated for this, to ensure that all communities and heritages are celebrated in the outdoors (Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation, 2020).

## Conclusion

One of the purposes of recent Oregon SCORP reports has been to provide deeper information regarding equity in outdoor recreation in the state. The 2025–2029 SCORP report builds on previous work by evaluating specific differences in recreation behaviors, priorities, motivations, and constraints for underserved populations, including low-income residents, residents in a household with a disability, and residents from Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, and Mixed Race backgrounds.

The previous sections have highlighted that key differences in recreation behaviors for these groups are likely explained by differences in constraints to recreation rather than different motivations or activity preferences. With that in mind, the recommended management actions to mitigate impacts on these groups focused on these constraints. Unique constraints were identified for each group alongside many similarities. Each group highlighted the importance of accessibility in outdoor recreation areas for individuals with disabilities. Many advocated for increases in free programming, improved communication and information availability about parks, trails, and available activities, and better access to transportation to recreation areas. Low-cost equipment rentals were identified as useful for many who identified financial barriers to recreation, and a few groups highlighted the value of events and activities specifically supporting and celebrating their communities. It follows, then, that increased sensitivity to any of these issues may support access for a variety of underserved communities and that many of these efforts can be easily overlapped and naturally collaborative.

Each section in this chapter ended with a recommendation for further engagement with each of these communities to help develop programming that is affordable, accessible, safe, and relevant to the interests of more people. These areas for growth are an opportunity for collaboration with underserved communities. It is clear from survey responses that Oregon residents deeply value their public lands, and ensuring that access is maintained for all residents is a key responsibility of land managers and recreation providers in the state. The best understanding of how to improve access will come from the intentional inclusion of those groups who have reported that

they are currently underserved in outdoor recreation. This includes those groups discussed here as well as those not identified in this survey that may also be at risk of lowered access to recreation activities: individuals in dense urban areas without parks, individuals living in rural areas far from public lands (Note: Priorities for urban, suburban, and rural users are reported in the Resident Survey Report: <https://bit.ly/scorp24a1>, LGBTQ+ users, families who care for children or other family members, and individuals from minority racial/ethnic groups that were not included in this report.)

While disparities in access continue to be relevant (Outdoor Industry Association, 2022), there is an opportunity for outdoor recreation to be a powerful equalizer and source of lasting health benefits for all communities. Oregon's public lands and recreation areas are some of its greatest assets, and continued management of these lands for health benefits and sustainable enjoyment for its residents will be essential over the next few years. This chapter and others in the 2025–2029 SCORP provide valuable information for ensuring that these recreation areas and benefits continue to be accessible and support goals set by OPRD and the Oregon Governor's Task Force on the Outdoors to maintain equity in outdoor recreation while providing continued guidance and resources for land managers throughout the state.

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## ► CHAPTER 5

# Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians From Their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon

## Introduction

Physical activity affects the overall health of people and may reduce risk factors for numerous causes of mortality (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018). In response to the growing health crisis, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services published its Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans. The guidelines were based on a comprehensive report from the Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee, which was made up of exercise science and public health experts. The guidelines included recommendations for aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities. The Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee found that 500 to 1,000 MET-minutes<sup>6</sup> per week (roughly equivalent to 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activities) were required to receive substantial health benefits<sup>7</sup> (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018). Physical activities (aerobic, anaerobic, and flexibility movements) include recreating outdoors or indoors, doing work on the job or at home, commuting by walking or bicycling, and even exercising at the gym or at home. However, any level of physical activity beyond sedentarism generates some health benefits, including low-intensity activities such as relaxing or picnicking in natural settings.

Physical activity may decrease the risk of many chronic illnesses such as heart disease, stroke, depression, dementia, diabetes, and several cancers (e.g., breast, colon, endometrial, esophageal, kidney, stomach, lung) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018). In 2014, these chronic conditions made up five of the top ten leading causes of death (Maizlish, 2016). Daily physical activity provides multiple benefits to people beyond reducing risks of chronic illnesses, such as increased memory function and improved quality of sleep.

However, one-fifth (20%) of all adult Oregonians were not physically active outside of work in 2021, and less than 25% of adult Oregonians met the CDC's recommended physical activity levels in 2019 (Oregon Health Authority, 2023a). This state of physical inactivity and associated chronic illnesses is a public health concern, as

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6 MET stands for metabolic equivalent task, where one MET is the typical energy expenditure of an individual at rest (1 kcal/kg/h). Activities are assigned MET values based upon how much energy they require to perform. METs are constants for activities and therefore are usually expressed as either MET-minutes or MET-hours. A MET-minute is a unit that describes the energy expenditure of a specific activity per minute. For example, walking at 3.0 mph requires 3.3 METs of energy expenditure and running at 6.0 mph is a 10 MET activity. Walking at 3.0 mph for 10 minutes would be expressed as 33 MET-minutes, whereas running at 6.0 mph for 10 minutes is 100 MET-minutes.

7 There are a variety of ways someone could meet the minimum guideline of 500 MET-minutes. For example, if someone walked their dog (MET value of 3) every day for 25 minutes they would accumulate 525 MET-minutes every week (Ainsworth, et al., 2011). It is important to note that while the 500 MET-minutes per week result in “substantial” health benefits, any amount of physical activity is beneficial and the largest health improvements are received by those who are moving away from being sedentary to any physical activity.





Hikers at Saddle Mountain State Natural Area.

well as an economic burden. In the U.S., 11.1% of aggregate healthcare expenditures can be attributed to insufficient physical activity and sedentarism (Carlson et al., 2015). Substantial cost of illness savings (or conversely, health benefits) could be realized through increased physical activity. Oregonians spent over \$31 billion on health care in 2021 (Oregon Health Authority, 2023b).

## Promoting Physical Activity Through Outdoor Recreation Participation

The largest predictor of a community's health is not the accessibility or quality of clinical care but rather the social, economic, and physical conditions in which people live. These are considered “upstream” factors, and they shape our environments (White and Blakesley, 2016). The lived environment influences

people's physical activity participation, and parks and recreation providers can play a key role (Pitas et al., 2017). Various interventions for promoting physical activity were evaluated to determine what approaches were effective at increasing rates of physical activity (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2018). They categorized the interventions into four levels: individual, community, environment and policy, and communication/ information technologies. The evidence supporting the efficacy of environment and policy interventions were found to be strong to moderate. Specifically, there was substantial evidence suggesting point-of-decision prompts, like signs encouraging people to take the stairs instead of the elevator, to be effective, and moderate evidence suggesting that the built environment, including community designs and active transportation infrastructures that support physical activity and access to indoor and outdoor facilities/environments



were effective interventions (2018 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee, 2018). Public transportation and trail-related bills focused on policy and environmental changes to promote physical activity are likely to be enacted (Eyler et al., 2016).

It is important to note that most epidemiological studies that link environmental factors with participation in physical activities have been generally conducted in urban environments. These studies look at land use mix, road design/street connectivity, urban planning policies (provision of parks, trails, or open spaces), neighborhood characteristics, and/or transportation infrastructure (sidewalks, bike lanes, trails). Environments that are more supportive of physical activity are generally found to have a positive influence on outdoor recreation participation.

A review of 11 cross-sectional studies shows that adults in neighborhoods that are more activity-supportive reported a median of 50.4 more minutes per week of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity and averaged about 13.7 minutes more of recreational walking compared to less supportive neighborhoods (2018 Physical Activity Guidelines Advisory Committee, 2018). Characteristics positively correlated with supportive environments include perceptions of safety; proximity of destinations; street connectivity; walkability indices; neighborhood aesthetics; low traffic volumes; and access to indoor and outdoor recreation facilities or outlets, including parks, trails, and green spaces.

Brown, Rhodes, and Dade (2018) used a participatory mapping method to relate park types and locations with physical activities and perceived social, psychological, and environmental benefits. Their results confirm that physical activity benefits most often occur in parks close-to-home, while social and environmental benefits are derived from more distant parks. Correlation analysis of their data suggests that larger parks provide greater opportunities to be physically active. When controlling for park size, their analysis shows natural parks, linear parks (i.e., trails), and large urban parks have the largest mean physical activity scores.

## Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians from Their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon

This research project was conducted by Dr. Randall Rosenberger from Oregon State University's College of Forestry and was funded by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) for the 2025–2029 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The research project estimates the health benefits obtained by Oregonians from their participation in 76 outdoor recreation activities in 2022.

The full research report, including a more detailed description of study methods and county-level estimates, is on the OPRD SCORP planning website at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a3>.

## Methods

### Oregon SCORP Data

In preparation for the 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP, a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their 2022 outdoor recreation participation in Oregon was conducted, as well as their opinions about park and recreation management (Gorrell, Rosenberger, and Morse, 2023). The sample design was developed to derive information at various scales, including statewide, urban, suburban, and rural, for the general population and for specific demographic groups.

Surveying Oregonians consisted of two samples: (1) a statewide random sample of 22,000 Oregon adult residents with addresses on file with the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), including valid driver's licenses and state-ID cards, and (2) a panel sample of Oregon residents. The random mailed sample was 99.9% deliverable and received a total number of 2,480 responses (11.3% response rate). The panel sample was conducted through Qualtrics, using an existing database of individuals residing in Oregon who were previously recruited to participate in online research in exchange for financial compensation. Qualtrics was contracted to obtain a sample of 1,554 individuals, oversampling for individuals of minority racial and ethnic backgrounds



to improve the statistical reliability of their responses as a subgroup—the final sample size was 1,577. The total number of responses was 4,057.

Based on previous SCORP outdoor recreation activity lists and recommendations by the SCORP advisory committee comprised of parks and recreation managers across Oregon, 76 recreation activities were identified as important recreation activity types. These activities were grouped into 11 categories, including three defined as “in your community”: (1) Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities, (2) Outdoor leisure and sporting activities, (3) Nature study activities, and eight activities “outside your community”: (4) Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities, (5) Outdoor leisure and sporting activities, (6) Nature study activities, (7) Motorized activities, (8) Vehicle-based camping activities, (9) Hunting and fishing activities, (10) Non-motorized, water-based and beach activities, and (11) Non-motorized, snow activities.

## **The Outdoor Recreation Health Impacts Estimator**

The Outdoor Recreation Health Impacts Estimator (OR Estimator) tool was developed by modifying the Transportation Options Health Impact Estimator (TO Estimator) tool to include a suite of outdoor recreation activities in Oregon (Dunn, 2018). Just as the TO Estimator is a modification of the underlying Integrated Transport and Health Impact Model (ITHIM), including input and output user pages and prompts that increase the accessibility of ITHIM to practitioners, the OR Estimator provides guided and simple input needs to increase accessibility for recreation and community planners. The OR Estimator links an environmental intervention to behavioral changes that result in changes in physical activity exposures, which in turn lead to improved health outcomes. In other words, a new trail (environment) leads to increased walking (behavior), thus increasing physical activity (exposure), which results in a decrease in chronic diseases (health outcome). When the decrease in chronic diseases is monetized as a Cost of Illness savings, then the health outcome of the intervention may be quantified as an economic measure of health benefits due to the intervention. Although this is the conceptual flow of

the tool’s application, the tool itself only models the relationship between behavior change, exposure level, and health outcomes.

ITHIM was designed to estimate the health outcomes from transportation projects that affect the level of active transportation projects that affect the level of active transportation through walking (a moderately-intense physical activity; MET-value=3.0) and bicycling (a vigorously-intense physical activity; MET-value=6.0). Changes in the amount of physical activity for the median participant are modeled on how their relative risks of eight different diseases are affected by the amount of physical activity changes. The relative risk changes are converted into monetary estimates as Cost of Illness savings. The underlying functions that relate physical activity to relative risks and relative risks to Cost of Illness savings are based on cumulative knowledge from health science studies that estimated these relationships. The TO Estimator adapts the model to fit Oregon’s population and health distributions, and the OR Estimator expands on active transportation modes (walking and biking) to include 76 different outdoor recreation activity types. The version of the OR Estimator used here was also updated to the 2020 population demographics of Oregon.

## **Cost of Illness Savings Estimation**

Health benefits, or Cost of Illness savings, estimates for Oregonians participating in outdoor recreation were estimated using the Outdoor Recreation Health Impact Estimator tool, as described above. Aggregate health benefits estimates are derived from the OR Estimator Tool by inputting county, activity type, and median outdoor recreation activity weekly minutes. These county estimates, which are based on county demographics but regional activity participation, are then aggregated to the state level. Two additional adjustments are made to Cost of Illness estimates to account for changes in population and inflation over time. First, the model was updated with 2020 U.S. Census data. Second, COI estimates are adjusted for inflation to 2023 USD using a CPI deflator tool.

## Results

Table 5.1 lists the 76 outdoor recreation activities included in the analysis. The top three activities based on total adult participants and proportion of the adult population participating in them include Walking on streets/sidewalks (2.8 million, 79%), Walking on paved paths or natural trails (2.5 million, 72%), and Traveling to walk/hike on non-local paved paths or natural trails (1.9 million, 53%). The bottom three activities on total adult participation and proportion of the adult population participating in them include Class III—Off-road motorcycling (0.1 million, 3%); Snowmobiling (0.09 million, 3%); and Windsurfing/kiteboarding/sailing (0.09 million, 3%).

Total annual user occasions are the primary Oregon SCORP survey outcomes correlating with activity engagement. The top three activities with the largest annual user occasions include Walking on streets or sidewalks (358 million), Walking on paved paths or natural trails (183 million), within your community (149 million) and outside your community (34 million), and Nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise) (79 million), within your community (59 million) and outside your community (20 million). The bottom three activities with the smallest annual user occasions include Snowshoeing (1.1 million), Windsurfing/kiteboarding/sailing (0.9 million), and Snowmobiling (0.8 million).

## Health Benefits—Cost of Illness Savings Estimates

The ITHIM tool estimates Cost of Illness (COI) savings for eight primary illnesses (breast cancer, colon cancer, stroke, ischemic heart disease, depression, dementia, diabetes, and hypertensive heart disease); given sustained physical activity has many other health benefits, these COI savings are underestimated. The COI savings include only morbidity costs of these illnesses and do not include avoided deaths (mortality) due to physical activity.

The total annual Cost of Illness savings estimated to Oregon from Oregonians' participation in 76 outdoor recreation activities is \$2.965 billion (Table 5.1). As noted in the introduction, Oregonians are estimated to spend \$31.1 billion on health care each year.



A woman, child, and dog at L.L. Stub Stewart State Park.

Physical activity rates that inform COI savings are primarily a function of frequency (user occasions per year), duration (time per user occasion), and intensity (MET-value). The three outdoor recreation activities with the largest COI savings per year include Walking on streets or sidewalks (\$615 million); Walking on paved paths or natural trails (\$554 million), within your community (\$408 million) and outside your community (\$146 million); and Jogging or running on streets or sidewalks (\$149 million). The bottom three activities with lowest annual COI savings include Flying drones in local parks or open spaces (\$0.3 million); Windsurfing/ kiteboarding/sailing (\$0.7 million); and Whale watching (\$0.9 million).

Total annual COI savings may then be divided by the estimated number of participants to derive a COI

savings per participant (not per person) for each outdoor recreation activity (Table 5.1). The top three activities with the largest COI savings per participant include RV/motorhome/ trailer camping (\$229); Walking on streets or sidewalks (\$221); and Jogging or running on streets or sidewalks (\$181). The three

activities with the lowest COI savings per participant include Picnicking (\$1); Flying drones in local parks or open spaces (\$1); and Whale watching (\$2). COI savings per participant are affected by the MET-value, duration, and frequency of activity.

**Table 5.1 Cost of Illness Savings (2023 USD) from 2023 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation in Oregon**

Activity	Total Participants (million)	% Population Participating	User Occasions, Total Annual (million)	MET Value	Average Daily Minutes	COI Savings, Total Annual (\$million)	COI Savings, Annual / Participant	COI Savings, Per User Occasion
<b>Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities In Your Community</b>								
Walking on streets or sidewalks	2.779	79.1%	357.559	3.5	17.6	\$614.955	\$221.26	\$1.72
Walking on paved paths or natural trails	2.523	71.8%	149.120	5.3	8.4	\$408.038	\$161.74	\$2.74
Jogging or running on streets or sidewalks	0.826	23.5%	28.792	7.0	7.0	\$149.488	\$181.04	\$5.19
Jogging or running on paved paths or natural trails	0.696	19.8%	19.868	7.0	5.1	\$89.726	\$128.97	\$4.52
Riding non-powered scooters/skateboards on streets or sidewalks	0.285	8.1%	8.839	5.0	4.3	\$20.503	\$72.04	\$2.32
Pedaling bicycles on streets or sidewalks	1.086	30.9%	42.666	3.5	6.8	\$84.706	\$78.02	\$1.99
Pedaling bicycles on paved paths or natural trails (including mountain biking)	0.734	20.9%	22.888	5.8	3.9	\$55.500	\$75.58	\$2.42
Riding E-bikes on streets or sidewalks	0.267	7.6%	5.853	2.8	3.8	\$4.076	\$15.26	\$0.70
Riding E-bikes on paved paths or natural trails	0.176	5.0%	3.339	2.8	2.8	\$1.272	\$7.24	\$0.38
Riding e-scooters/e-skateboards/ monowheel/other on streets or sidewalks	0.221	6.3%	3.000	2.8	3.1	\$2.579	\$11.65	\$0.86
Riding e-scooters/e-skateboards/ monowheel/other on paved paths or natural trails	0.144	4.1%	1.881	2.8	2.1	\$0.600	\$4.16	\$0.32
Flying drones in local parks or open spaces	0.235	6.7%	2.862	1.8	1.7	\$0.348	\$1.48	\$0.12



**Table 5.1 Cost of Illness Savings (2023 USD) from 2023 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation in Oregon (cont.)**

Activity	Total Participants (million)	% Population Participating	User Occasions, Total Annual (million)	MET Value	Average Daily Minutes	COI Savings, Total Annual (\$million)	COI Savings, Annual / Participant	COI Savings, Per User Occasion
<b>Outdoor leisure and sporting activities In Your Community</b>								
Picnicking	1.420	40.4%	15.633	1.8	1.4	\$1.728	\$1.22	\$0.11
Taking children or grandchildren to a playground	1.202	34.2%	48.004	3.0	4.5	\$44.585	\$37.10	\$0.93
Nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise)	1.848	52.6%	59.057	1.5	5.8	\$21.603	\$11.69	\$0.37
Going to dog parks or off-leash areas	0.931	26.5%	45.415	3.0	10.8	\$108.163	\$116.16	\$2.38
Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	1.426	40.6%	10.443	3.0	1.6	\$3.288	\$2.31	\$0.31
Golfing	0.415	11.8%	6.449	4.8	8.0	\$58.306	\$140.63	\$9.04
Tennis (played outdoors)	0.253	7.2%	3.231	7.3	2.7	\$16.329	\$64.55	\$5.05
Pickleball (played outdoors)	0.221	6.3%	4.513	4.5	2.8	\$6.454	\$29.15	\$1.43
Outdoor court games other than tennis/ pickleball (e.g., basketball, badminton, futsal, beach volleyball)	0.394	11.2%	5.322	6.0	1.7	\$5.147	\$13.08	\$0.97
Field sports (e.g., soccer, softball, baseball, football, ultimate frisbee, disc-golf, lacrosse)	0.580	16.5%	17.131	6.0	5.3	\$66.398	\$114.53	\$3.88
Visiting historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers)	1.423	40.5%	11.307	3.0	1.4	\$2.874	\$2.02	\$0.25

**Table 5.1 Cost of Illness Savings (2023 USD) from 2023 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation in Oregon (cont.)**

Activity	Total Participants (million)	% Population Participating	User Occasions, Total Annual (million)	MET Value	Average Daily Minutes	COI Savings, Total Annual (\$million)	COI Savings, Annual / Participant	COI Savings, Per User Occasion
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**Nature study activities In Your Community**

Nature observation (e.g., birds, other wildlife, forests, wildflowers)	1.314	37.4%	54.982	2.5	6.7	\$60.830	\$46.29	\$1.11
Visiting nature centers (e.g., zoo, botanical garden, arboretum)	1.202	34.2%	9.186	3.0	1.4	\$2.427	\$2.02	\$0.26
Taking children or grandchildren to nature settings to explore and/or learn about nature	0.689	19.6%	14.906	3.0	3.3	\$8.824	\$12.81	\$0.59
Outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	0.731	20.8%	21.705	2.5	4.9	\$20.928	\$28.64	\$0.96

**Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities Outside Your Community**

Traveling to walk/hike on non-local paved paths or natural trails	1.869	53.2%	34.477	5.3	4.5	\$145.930	\$78.07	\$4.23
Long-distance hiking (backpacking)	0.625	17.8%	6.171	7.0	4.5	\$69.482	\$111.10	\$11.26
Traveling to jog or run on non-local paved paths or natural trails	0.365	10.4%	5.959	7.0	4.9	\$46.022	\$125.94	\$7.72
Traveling to pedal bicycles on non-local paved paths or natural trails	0.478	13.6%	5.091	5.8	4.3	\$39.170	\$81.97	\$7.69
Traveling to ride e-bikes on non-local paved paths or natural trails	0.165	4.7%	1.503	2.8	2.8	\$1.195	\$7.24	\$0.80
Traveling to ride e-scooters/e-skateboards/monowheel/other on non-local paved paths or natural trails	0.116	3.3%	1.197	2.8	2.1	\$0.483	\$4.16	\$0.40
Horseback riding	0.218	6.2%	2.973	5.5	3.6	\$14.103	\$64.74	\$4.74

**Table 5.1 Cost of Illness Savings (2023 USD) from 2023 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation in Oregon (cont.)**

Activity	Total Participants (million)	% Population Participating	User Occasions, Total Annual (million)	MET Value	Average Daily Minutes	COI Savings, Total Annual (\$million)	COI Savings, Annual / Participant	COI Savings, Per User Occasion
<b>Outdoor leisure and sporting activities Outside Your Community</b>								
Traveling to picnic	0.928	26.4%	8.102	1.8	3.2	\$3.802	\$4.10	\$0.47
Traveling to off-leash areas/hike with your dog	0.632	18.0%	12.066	3.0	7.7	\$48.466	\$76.63	\$4.02
Traveling to golf	0.285	8.1%	2.657	4.8	4.9	\$22.034	\$77.42	\$8.29
Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	1.156	32.9%	17.769	2.0	5.8	\$18.775	\$16.24	\$1.06
Traveling to attend outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	1.001	28.5%	5.622	3.0	3.3	\$12.831	\$12.81	\$2.28
Traveling to historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers)	1.044	29.7%	7.126	3.0	3.0	\$12.479	\$11.96	\$1.75
Traveling for nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise)	1.297	36.9%	19.514	1.5	6.9	\$19.440	\$14.99	\$1.00
Traveling for tennis or pickleball	0.112	3.2%	0.977	6.0	2.9	\$6.717	\$59.74	\$6.87
Traveling for other outdoor sports (e.g., basketball, soccer, baseball, disc-golf, badminton, beach volleyball)	0.404	11.5%	8.675	6.0	3.5	\$28.687	\$71.00	\$3.31



**Table 5.1 Cost of Illness Savings (2023 USD) from 2023 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation in Oregon (cont.)**

Activity	Total Participants (million)	% Population Participating	User Occasions, Total Annual (million)	MET Value	Average Daily Minutes	COI Savings, Total Annual (\$million)	COI Savings, Annual / Participant	COI Savings, Per User Occasion
<b>Nature study activities Outside Your Community</b>								
Traveling to go bird watching	0.408	11.6%	6.096	2.5	3.1	\$2.925	\$7.18	\$0.48
Whale watching	0.562	16.0%	2.232	1.5	2.3	\$0.937	\$1.67	\$0.42
Exploring tidepools	0.882	25.1%	5.141	2.5	2.5	\$3.873	\$4.39	\$0.75
Traveling for nature observation (e.g., other wildlife, forests, wildflowers)	1.019	29.0%	13.692	1.5	3.5	\$3.860	\$3.79	\$0.28
Traveling with children or grandchildren to nature settings to explore and/or learn about nature	0.587	16.7%	9.195	3.0	4.1	\$16.844	\$28.71	\$1.83
Traveling to nature centers (e.g., zoo, botanical garden, arboretum)	0.801	22.8%	5.428	1.8	2.5	\$1.737	\$2.17	\$0.32
Traveling to do outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	0.425	12.1%	5.971	1.8	4.1	\$2.939	\$6.91	\$0.49
Traveling for collecting/foraging (e.g., rocks, plants, mushrooms, or berries)	0.580	16.5%	8.139	3.8	3.2	\$15.791	\$27.24	\$1.94



A person kayak fishing in Milo McIver State Park.

**Table 5.1 Cost of Illness Savings (2023 USD) from 2023 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation in Oregon (cont.)**

Activity	Total Participants (million)	% Population Participating	User Occasions, Total Annual (million)	MET Value	Average Daily Minutes	COI Savings, Total Annual (\$million)	COI Savings, Annual / Participant	COI Savings, Per User Occasion
<b>Motorized activities Outside Your Community</b>								
Class I—All-terrain vehicle riding (3- & 4-wheel ATVs, straddle seat and handlebars)	0.225	6.4%	2.702	4.0	4.2	\$12.386	\$55.08	\$4.58
Class II—Off-road 4-wheel driving (jeeps, pick-ups, dune buggies, SUVs)	0.228	6.5%	3.179	4.0	4.9	\$14.695	\$64.34	\$4.62
Class III—Off-road motorcycling	0.109	3.1%	1.176	4.0	6.7	\$9.332	\$85.68	\$7.94
Class IV—Riding UTVs or side-by-side ATVs (non-straddle seat, driver and passenger sit side-by-side in the vehicle, steering wheel for steering control)	0.144	4.1%	1.852	4.0	4.7	\$9.033	\$62.70	\$4.88
Snowmobiling	0.091	2.6%	0.751	3.5	5.2	\$5.614	\$61.46	\$7.47
Using personal watercraft, such as jet ski	0.134	3.8%	1.342	7.0	4.2	\$13.743	\$102.93	\$10.24
Powerboating (cruising or water skiing)	0.253	7.2%	2.969	2.5	4.7	\$6.738	\$26.63	\$2.27
<b>Vehicle-based camping activities Outside Your Community</b>								
RV/motorhome/trailer camping	0.552	15.7%	9.951	2.5	25.4	\$126.144	\$228.67	\$12.68
Car camping with a tent	0.857	24.4%	10.365	2.5	15.1	\$120.945	\$141.07	\$11.67
Yurts or camper cabins	0.309	8.8%	1.770	2.5	6.4	\$13.902	\$44.96	\$7.85
<b>Hunting and fishing activities Outside Your Community</b>								
Hunting—Big game	0.242	6.9%	2.337	6.0	6.0	\$31.438	\$129.67	\$13.45
Hunting—Small game	0.176	5.0%	1.379	5.0	6.0	\$18.973	\$108.00	\$13.76
Fishing—Ocean/saltwater	0.306	8.7%	3.172	3.5	4.5	\$13.071	\$42.76	\$4.12
Fishing—Freshwater	0.573	16.3%	7.596	3.5	4.5	\$24.490	\$42.76	\$3.22
Crabbing	0.295	8.4%	1.639	4.5	3.0	\$10.948	\$37.09	\$6.68
Shellfishing/clamming	0.200	5.7%	1.523	4.5	2.7	\$5.452	\$27.22	\$3.58

**Table 5.1 Cost of Illness Savings (2023 USD) from 2023 Outdoor Recreation Activity Participation in Oregon (cont.)**

Activity	Total Participants (million)	% Population Participating	User Occasions, Total Annual (million)	MET Value	Average Daily Minutes	COI Savings, Total Annual (\$million)	COI Savings, Annual / Participant	COI Savings, Per User Occasion
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**Non-motorized, water-based and beach activities Outside Your Community**

White-water canoeing, kayaking, or rafting	0.344	9.8%	2.432	5.0	2.9	\$13.373	\$38.84	\$5.50
Flat water canoeing, sea kayaking, rowing, stand-up paddling, tubing, floating	0.534	15.2%	4.496	3.5	3.1	\$8.261	\$15.47	\$1.84
Windsurfing/ kiteboarding/sailing	0.091	2.6%	0.892	5.0	1.7	\$0.704	\$7.70	\$0.79
Beach activities— Ocean	1.588	45.2%	15.946	3.0	3.3	\$20.350	\$12.81	\$1.28
Beach activities— Lakes, reservoirs, rivers	1.075	30.6%	14.420	3.0	3.8	\$17.229	\$16.02	\$1.19

**Non-motorized, snow activities Outside Your Community**

Downhill (alpine) skiing or snowboarding	0.376	10.7%	3.047	4.3	4.4	\$23.666	\$62.95	\$7.77
Cross-country/Nordic skiing/skijoring	0.193	5.5%	1.884	6.8	3.1	\$13.751	\$71.15	\$7.30
Sledding, tubing, or general snow play	0.383	10.9%	2.353	7.0	2.5	\$22.961	\$59.95	\$9.76
Snowshoeing	0.246	7.0%	1.117	5.3	2.6	\$9.244	\$37.58	\$8.27

<b>TOTAL OREGON</b>	<b>Annual User Occasions (millions)</b>	<b>1,270.013</b>	<b>Annual COI Savings (\$ million)</b>	<b>\$2,964.640</b>	<b>COI Savings per User Occasion (\$)</b>	<b>\$2.33</b>
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A group of kids peeking out of a tent at Tumalo State Park.



A man and a woman with their bikes at L.L. Stub Stewart State Park.



COI savings per user occasion are also derived by dividing total annual COI savings by the total number of user occasions (Table 5.1). The top three activities with the largest COI savings per user occasion include Hunting small game (\$14); Hunting big game (\$13); and RV/motorhome/ trailer camping (\$13). The bottom three activities with the lowest COI savings per user occasion include Picnicking (\$0.11), Flying drones in local parks or open spaces (\$0.12), and Visiting historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers) (\$0.25). COI savings per user occasion are affected by the MET-value, frequency, and duration of activity.

## Trends in Health Benefits

Direct comparisons between the 2019–2023 SCORP data and these estimates for the 2025–2029 SCORP are difficult, given changes in data collection methodology, types of outdoor recreation activities included, and survey design and implementation. However, a general assessment of trends in health benefits derived by Oregonians from their outdoor recreation participation is possible with some assumptions and adjustments. First, the comparison only includes similar activities in Table 5.1 with those in the prior SCORP estimation of health benefits. Second, the 2019–2023 SCORP estimates are adjusted for population growth that occurred in Oregon between the 2017 and 2020 demographics. Third, the 2019–2023 SCORP estimates are adjusted for inflation to 2023 USD. These adjustments result in an estimate of \$1.9 billion<sup>8</sup> in health benefits from the 2019–2023 SCORP analysis with \$2.1 billion in the 2025–2029 SCORP analysis. Essentially, this is a 10% increase in health benefits beyond the effects of population growth and inflation. This increase is the result of increased participation rates (i.e., more people engaging in activities), increased frequency of participation (i.e., same people engaging more often), and/or increased duration of participation (i.e., people engage for a longer period of time on each occasion).

## Conclusions

Adult Oregonians engaged in 76 outdoor recreation activities for a total of 1.27 billion user occasions over the past year. They also realized \$2.965 billion in COI savings associated with eight chronic illnesses affected by their physical activity levels in outdoor recreation. Close-to-home non-motorized linear/ trail-based activities (i.e., activities on trails, paths, roads, streets, and sidewalks) account for the largest proportion of health benefits. Outdoor recreation activities, including walking/jogging/bicycling and other non-motorized and E-motorized activities on streets/sidewalks/trails/paths, account for 55% of total annual user occasions and 58% of total COI savings associated with Oregonians participating in 76 outdoor recreation activities of low- to vigorous-intensity. These cost savings accrue to health insurers, providers, and participants.

Community development/design and transportation planning significantly affect the health of people attempting to engage in daily physical activity to meet recommended levels for a healthy lifestyle (Cohen et al., 2016; Larson, Jennings, and Cloutier, 2016). The management of parks and recreation is often not recognized for the health impacts they (at least indirectly) promote through providing environments and facilities that enable people to engage in physical activity through outdoor recreation. Estimating the health benefits obtained through outdoor recreation-related physical activity demonstrates that parks and recreation providers have a role in increasing Oregonians' public health and well-being (Rosenberger, Bergerson, and Kline, 2009). Collaboration between health, transportation, and parks and recreation providers, among others, can significantly influence community health and may be a cost-effective health prevention strategy for Oregon.

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8 The estimated benefits from 2019–2023 SCORP were \$1.42 billion (2018 USD), but only \$1.38 billion (2018 USD) were included in the adjusted calculation for comparison purposes. The difference is due to differences in measured activities between the two surveys.

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## ► CHAPTER 6

# Total Net Economic Value from Residents' Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon

### Introduction

Outdoor recreation participation is a source of many benefits for individuals, communities, and society. It has been the subject of numerous assessments on participation, trends, and impacts conducted at various scales (Cordell, 2012; Gorrell, Rosenberger, and Morse, 2023; Outdoor Foundation, 2022; Rosenberger, 2016a, 2023; Rosenberger and Dunn, 2018; Rosenberger, et al., 2017). Total net economic value or benefits (i.e., total economic value net of the costs) is a measure of the contribution to societal welfare for cost-benefit analyses. Nonmarket valuation techniques, such as travel cost and contingent valuation methods, are economic tools used to estimate the economic value associated with goods not traditionally traded in formal markets, such as outdoor recreation and ecosystem services (Champ, et al., 2017). These tools have been in wide use since the 1950s and applied to various nonmarket goods and services, including outdoor recreation (Rosenberger, 2016a, b).

Economic impacts (or contributions) assessment is another common tool used to measure economic outcomes associated with outdoor recreation (Mojica et al., 2021; Outdoor Industry Association, 2017, 2018; White, et al., 2016; White, 2018). Economic impact measures are often referred to as economic benefits or values; however, this is not conceptually correct and conflates economic terms and meanings. Economic impact (or contribution) assessments measure how spending by recreationists (often defined as non-resident or non-local visitors/tourists) affects economies within a given geography (e.g., community, region, state, or nation). Economic impacts or outcomes are typically associated with

changes in sales, tax revenues, income, and jobs due to spending on outdoor recreation activity. For an estimate of the economic impacts related to outdoor recreation participation in Oregon, see the accompanying chapter for the Oregon SCORP project.

By contrast, economic value for outdoor recreation is a monetary measure of the benefits received by an individual or group who participates in outdoor recreation. At the individual level, the net economic value of a recreation activity is measured as the maximum amount the individual is willing to pay to participate in the activity minus the costs incurred in participating. In economic terms, this monetary measure is also known as consumer surplus. Consumer surplus is the economic value of a recreation activity above what must be paid by the recreationist to enjoy it.

However, participation costs are not equivalent to consumer spending amounts used in economic impact analyses. Recreation costs used in travel cost models typically only include out-of-pocket costs (e.g., gasoline, entrance fees, and equipment rentals) and opportunity costs of time while traveling for the purpose of or engaging in an activity on site. Recreation spending in economic impact analyses, by contrast, includes spending on lodging, food, souvenirs, and other expenses, as well as gasoline, entrance fees, and equipment rentals, but not opportunity costs of time. Economic impact analyses may also restrict the region within which spending occurs, whereas costs of participating in outdoor recreation may occur anywhere. Another contrast between economic value and economic impact may be shown through the role of costs in each model.



An increase in the costs of participating in outdoor recreation (e.g., an increase in gasoline prices or entrance fees) would result in smaller net benefits and larger economic impacts, *ceteris paribus*.

## **Total Net Economic Value from Residents' Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon**

This research project was conducted by Dr. Randall Rosenberger from Oregon State University's College of Forestry. It was funded by the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) for the 2025–2029 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The research project estimates the total net economic value for recreation participation in Oregon to Oregonians from their participation in 76 outdoor recreation activities in 2022.

The full research report, including a more detailed description of study methods and county-level estimates, is on the OPRD SCORP planning website at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a4>.

## **Methods**

Consumer surplus is generally estimated in primary research by inferring it from revealed preference data (i.e., generate the demand function and then calculate consumer surplus) or directly estimated using stated preference data (i.e., people state their maximum net willingness to pay within constructed market conditions via surveys). However, when resources are unavailable (e.g., funds and time), consumer surplus may be inferred from existing information from prior studies conducted elsewhere. This approach is called benefit transfer, and it applies benefit estimates obtained through primary research for one location to other unstudied locations of interest (Rosenberger and Loomis, 2017). For decades, benefit transfer has been used to estimate economic values for nonmarket goods and services (Johnston and Rosenberger, 2010; Johnston, et al., 2015; Rosenberger, et al., 2017).

Benefit transfer methods include two primary types: value transfer and function transfer. Value transfer is the use of a single estimate of value or a weighted average of multiple estimates of value obtained from previously published studies. Value transfer can be an

attractive method for estimating recreation economic benefits when time, funding, and expertise are insufficient to conduct an original study. Moreover, new estimates of economic value based on original or primary research are not needed if the resulting value estimates do not statistically differ from estimates derived from benefit transfer methods. However, original or primary research may provide additional information necessary to evaluating or assessing management implications at a site, e.g., how values relate to changes in resource or site quality, proposed management options, or other attributes held constant in the benefit transfer estimation process.

Function transfer is the use of a statistical model to derive recreation economic values. The model is estimated from participant or survey data available from one or more previously published studies and is adjusted for characteristics of the site or collection of sites being considered. Function transfers can also rely on data summarizing value estimates reported in a body of literature (such as the Recreation Use Values Database (2016)) using a technique known as meta-analysis. Function transfer using meta-analysis can be a more statistically rigorous and robust method for conducting benefit transfer but is dependent on the availability of information about the characteristics of a specific site or collection of sites being considered. Conceptual backgrounds and issues/advantages of these benefit transfer methods may be found in Johnston and Rosenberger (2010), Johnston et al. (2015), Rosenberger et al. (2017), and Rosenberger and Loomis (2017). This latter method, meta-regression benefit function transfer, is used in this project to predict net economic values for recreation participation in Oregon.

## **Data**

### **Oregon SCORP Data**

In preparation for the 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP, a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their 2022 outdoor recreation participation in Oregon was conducted, as well as their opinions about park and recreation management (Gorrell, Rosenberger, and Morse, 2023). The sample design was developed to derive information at various scales, including statewide, urban, suburban, and rural, for the general population and specific demographic groups.



Bikers enjoying a trail at Champoege State Park.

Surveying Oregonians consisted of two samples: (1) a statewide random sample of 22,000 Oregon adult residents with addresses on file with the Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), including valid driver's licenses and state-ID cards, and (2) a panel sample of Oregon residents. The random mailed sample was 99.9% deliverable and received 2,480 responses (11.3% response rate). The panel sample was conducted through Qualtrics, using an existing database of individuals residing in Oregon who were previously recruited to participate in online research in exchange for financial compensation. Qualtrics was contracted to obtain a sample of 1,554 individuals, oversampling for individuals of minority racial and ethnic backgrounds to improve the statistical reliability of their responses as a subgroup—the final sample size was 1,577. The total number of responses was 4,057.

Based on previous SCORP outdoor recreation activity lists and recommendations by the SCORP Advisory Committee, which is comprised of parks and recreation managers across Oregon, 76 recreation

activities were identified as important recreation activity types. These activities were grouped into 11 categories, including three defined as “in your community”: Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities, Outdoor leisure and sporting activities, Nature study activities, and eight “outside your community”: Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities, Outdoor leisure and sporting activities, Nature study activities, Motorized activities, Vehicle-based camping activities, Hunting and fishing activities, Non-motorized, water-based and beach activities, and Non-motorized, snow activities.

Total user occasions for all outdoor recreation activities were estimated using population-weighted sample data adjusted by household members participating in each activity over a one-year period. User occasions are the number of times individuals, in aggregate, participated in outdoor recreation activities in 2022 and are equivalent measures of activity days as used in the Recreation Use Values Database.



## Recreation Use Values Database (RUVD)

The RUVD (Recreation Use Values Database, 2016) summarizes recreation economic value estimates from more than 50 years of published economic research (1958-2015), characterizing the value of outdoor recreation in the US and Canada (Rosenberger, 2016b). The RUVD includes all documented estimates of recreation economic values, whether published in journal articles, technical reports, book chapters, working papers, conference proceedings, or graduate theses. Included studies encompass a variety of methods, regional and activity foci, sample sizes, and site characteristics. The RUVD contains 3,194 use value estimates derived from 422 published studies.

## Results

### User Occasions—Activity Days

Table 6.1 lists the SCORP Activities grouped by category and the 2022 total user occasions derived from the Oregon SCORP statewide survey (Gorrell, Rosenberger, and Morse, 2023). Estimates range from a high of 358 million user occasions for Walking on streets or sidewalks to 0.7 million user occasions for Snowmobiling. User occasion estimates are based, in part, on the question of how many times or days the respondent participated in the outdoor recreation activity during the past 12 months. User occasions are equivalent to activity days, as used in the RUVD, where an activity day is defined as one person recreating for some portion of a day.

### Economic Value per Activity Day

Data for estimating recreation economic values for SCORP outdoor recreation activities were drawn from the RUVD. The current version of the RUVD contains 3,194 individual recreation economic value estimates from 422 individual studies and numerous outdoor recreation activities. The RUVD activities were clustered or segregated to match the SCORP activities, resulting in 30 RUVD outdoor recreation activities. The data were reduced by (1) eliminating 180 estimates for Canada and (2) removing 106

outlier estimates (i.e., unreasonably small or large, which significantly affects average values) as less than \$5 or greater than \$550 per person per activity day, resulting in 2,908 estimates from 395 studies.

### Meta-Regression Analysis (MRA)

Dummy variables (binary 0, 1 coding) identify the RUVD activity, where the mean is its representation in the underlying data and consistent with Table A1's number of studies per recreation activity (<https://bit.ly/scorp24a4>). To capture variations in value estimates, dummy variables are created for each USFS region. The variable of interest is the Pacific Northwest Region. Each underlying primary study is based on a random sample of participants for the activity/location being evaluated. These samples may include only residents, only non-residents, or a mix of both residents and non-residents. A variable capturing non-resident samples was included to account for their effect on the overall estimates and makeup about 7% of the data. Substitute price is a key variable in recreation demand analyses and reflects a switching point in which recreationists would choose to go to a different location if the price of the destination was too high. Substitute price exerts a downward pressure on willingness to pay. Primary studies that directly incorporated substitute prices are about 27% of the data. Trend is a variable defined as the year the primary data for each study was collected minus 1955 (the earliest year data was collected). This variable captures changes in methods and values over time.

It is common for a single primary study to contain multiple value estimates, which is reflected in the numbers of estimates (n=2,908) and studies (n=395). The distribution of study numbers across the 30 RUVD activity sets reflects the relative volume of scientific studies and does not reflect the relative popularity or importance of each activity set. Wildlife-related activities, such as fishing and hunting, have historically been the focus of much recreation benefit research. Conversely, downhill skiing and backpacking have received less attention in the research literature. And SCORP activities, such as outdoor sporting activities (i.e., tennis, soccer, golf, etc.), have not been the target of nonmarket valuation



research, lacking estimates of the value per person per activity day.

There is a wide range of recreation value estimates across most activities (Rosenberger, 2016b). The range of value estimates reflects variation across individual study sites (e.g., site quality, attributes, and recreation facilities) and study participants and differences in study methods. Accounting for this variation is one reason why an MRA benefit transfer function is especially attractive for developing economic estimates of recreation values.

An MRA statistical model is fit to the value estimates for RUVD activities and associated data contained in the RUVD. The regression measures the effect or relationship of select independent variables from the RUVD to the Value per activity day data characterizing the standardized consumer surplus per person per activity day as defined in Equation (1). The  $\beta$ 's measure the statistical relationship between the variation in the independent variable to the variation in the value estimates, also known as partial effects (<https://bit.ly/scorp24a4>).

Theoretically, when a variable is correlated with the variation in recreation benefit values, its partial effect will measure the magnitude and direction of this relationship. Combining these variables in a multivariate model provides a transparent and consistent way to estimate average values based on a policy site's specific characteristics. Given the large sample size, the overall model performance has a grand mean—that is, the mean of the sample means—with  $\pm 2.5\%$  margin of error. Thus, the MRA model provides more robust estimates than an average value transfer (Rosenberger, 2015). It has also been shown that there are information gains from including broader recreation valuation data to predict value estimates for activities and regions (Moeltner and Rosenberger, 2008, 2014).



A person riding an ATV at Jessie M. Honeyman Memorial State Park.

## Meta-Regression Analysis Predicted Values

The MRA RUVD value per person activity day estimates for all RUVD recreation activities (Table 6.1) are predicted by weighting the measured partial effect of variables relevant for the target activity. Given the MRA model was constructed to enable the prediction of value estimates for recreation participation in Oregon by Oregonians, the predictions will reflect relevant adjustments to the model.

Table 6.1 reports the MRA RUVD predicted Value per Activity Day in the 4th column. The predicted values per activity day range from \$156.97 for Whitewater kayaking/ canoeing/ rafting and \$147.87 for Fishing—saltwater to \$21.83 for Walking and \$28.06 for Backpacking. These estimates reflect the average consumer surplus values per person per activity day. The MRA RUVD predicted values are constant measures (i.e., each activity day is worth the same amount regardless of differences in time, location, and site attributes).

Table 6.1 User Occasions, Activity Days, and Total Net Economic Value

SCORP Activity	RUVD Activity	Total Annual Activity Days	Value / Activity Day (2023 USD)	Total Net Economic Value (2023 USD)
<b>Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities In Your Community</b>				
Walking on streets or sidewalks	Walking	357,558,563	\$21.83	\$7,804,896,510
Walking on paved paths or natural trails	Walking	149,119,536	\$21.83	\$3,255,026,355
Jogging or running on streets or sidewalks	Jogging / running	28,791,816	\$67.69	\$1,948,961,000
Jogging or running on paved paths or natural trails	Jogging / running	19,867,529	\$67.69	\$1,344,862,692
Riding non-powered scooters/skateboards on streets or sidewalks	Leisure biking	8,839,308	\$67.19	\$593,901,018
Pedaling bicycles on streets or sidewalks	Leisure biking	42,666,036	\$67.19	\$2,866,672,617
Pedaling bicycles on paved paths or natural trails (including mountain biking)	Mountain biking	22,888,395	\$115.68	\$2,647,691,141
Riding E-bikes on streets or sidewalks	Leisure biking	5,852,546	\$67.19	\$393,224,563
Riding E-bikes on paved paths or natural trails	Leisure biking	3,339,153	\$67.19	\$224,353,124
Riding e-scooters/e-skateboards/monowheel/other on streets or sidewalks	Leisure biking	2,999,512	\$67.19	\$201,533,110
Riding e-scooters/e-skateboards/monowheel/other on paved paths or natural trails	Leisure biking	1,881,058	\$67.19	\$126,385,715
Flying drones in local parks or open spaces	Walking	2,862,500	\$21.83	\$62,483,516
<b>Outdoor leisure and sporting activities In Your Community</b>				
Picnicking	Picnicking	15,633,323	\$48.61	\$759,864,115
Taking children or grandchildren to a playground	Walking	48,003,644	\$21.83	\$1,047,838,067
Nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise)	Wildlife viewing—other	59,056,930	\$67.36	\$3,978,126,928
Going to dog parks or off-leash areas	Walking	45,415,364	\$21.83	\$991,340,308
Attending outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	Visiting nature centers / arboretums / historic sites / aquariums	10,442,813	\$46.55	\$486,062,847
Golfing	Walking	6,448,525	\$21.83	\$140,760,355
Tennis (played outdoors)	Jogging / running	3,231,070	\$67.69	\$218,715,951
Pickleball (played outdoors)	Jogging / running	4,512,733	\$67.69	\$305,473,632
Outdoor court games other than tennis/pickleball (e.g., basketball, badminton, futsal, beach volleyball)	Jogging / running	5,322,104	\$67.69	\$360,261,164
Field sports (e.g., soccer, softball, baseball, football, ultimate frisbee, disc-golf, lacrosse)	Jogging / running	17,130,797	\$67.69	\$1,159,609,218
Visiting historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers)	Visiting nature centers / arboretums / historic sites / aquariums	11,307,341	\$46.55	\$526,302,478

Table 6.1 User Occasions, Activity Days, and Total Net Economic Value, cont.

SCORP Activity	RUVD Activity	Total Annual Activity Days	Value / Activity Day (2023 USD)	Total Net Economic Value (2023 USD)
<b>Nature study activities In Your Community</b>				
Nature observation (e.g., birds, other wildlife, forests, wildflowers)	Wildlife viewing—other	54,981,854	\$67.36	\$3,703,626,212
Visiting nature centers (e.g., zoo, botanical garden, arboretum)	Visiting nature centers / arboretums / historic sites / aquariums	9,185,765	\$46.55	\$427,553,293
Taking children or grandchildren to nature settings to explore and/or learn about nature	Walking	14,905,603	\$21.83	\$325,364,013
Outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	Photography	21,705,217	\$42.56	\$923,875,455
<b>Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities Outside Your Community</b>				
Traveling to walk/hike on non-local paved paths or natural trails	Hiking	34,476,955	\$106.98	\$3,688,306,121
Long-distance hiking (backpacking)	Backpacking	6,171,499	\$28.06	\$173,149,258
Traveling to jog or run on non-local paved paths or natural trails	Jogging / running	5,958,798	\$67.69	\$403,359,931
Traveling to pedal bicycles on non-local paved paths or natural trails	Mountain biking	5,090,776	\$115.68	\$588,892,428
Traveling to ride e-bikes on non-local paved paths or natural trails	Leisure biking	1,503,242	\$67.19	\$101,000,774
Traveling to ride e-scooters/e-skateboards/monowheel/other on non-local paved paths or natural trails	Leisure biking	1,197,138	\$67.19	\$80,434,065
Horseback riding	General other recreation	2,972,501	\$87.54	\$260,215,688
<b>Outdoor leisure and sporting activities Outside Your Community</b>				
Traveling to picnic	Picnicking	8,102,129	\$48.61	\$393,807,323
Traveling to off-leash areas/hike with your dog	Walking	12,066,291	\$21.83	\$263,386,651
Traveling to golf	Walking	2,656,513	\$21.83	\$57,987,170
Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	Sightseeing	17,768,532	\$68.32	\$1,213,998,570
Traveling to attend outdoor concerts, fairs, or festivals	Visiting nature centers / arboretums / historic sites / aquariums	5,622,256	\$46.55	\$261,689,045
Traveling to historic sites or history-themed parks (e.g., history-oriented museums, outdoor displays, visitor centers)	Visiting nature centers / arboretums / historic sites / aquariums	7,126,207	\$46.55	\$331,690,749
Traveling for nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise)	Wildlife viewing - other	19,513,666	\$67.36	\$1,314,457,765
Traveling for tennis or pickleball	Jogging / running	977,415	\$67.69	\$66,162,680
Traveling for other outdoor sports (e.g., basketball, soccer, baseball, disc-golf, badminton, beach volleyball)	Jogging / running	8,674,715	\$67.69	\$587,204,406



Table 6.1 User Occasions, Activity Days, and Total Net Economic Value, cont.

SCORP Activity	RUVD Activity	Total Annual Activity Days	Value / Activity Day (2023 USD)	Total Net Economic Value (2023 USD)
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**Nature study activities Outside Your Community**

Traveling to go bird watching	Bird watching	6,095,719	\$69.22	\$421,947,636
Whale watching	Whale watching	2,232,085	\$112.29	\$250,633,933
Exploring tidepools	Wildlife viewing—other	5,141,320	\$67.36	\$346,323,853
Traveling for nature observation (e.g., other wildlife, forests, wildflowers)	Wildlife viewing—other	13,692,018	\$67.36	\$922,306,417
Traveling with children or grandchildren to nature settings to explore and/or learn about nature	Walking	9,194,819	\$21.83	\$200,707,291
Traveling to nature centers (e.g., zoo, botanical garden, arboretum)	Visiting nature centers / arboretums / historic sites / aquariums	5,428,387	\$46.55	\$252,665,373
Traveling to do outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	Photography	5,971,313	\$42.56	\$254,166,983
Traveling for collecting/foraging (e.g., rocks, plants, mushrooms, or berries)	Gathering forest products (non-timber but includes firewood)	8,139,052	\$100.46	\$817,687,683

**Motorized activities Outside Your Community**

Class I—All-terrain vehicle riding (3- & 4-wheel ATVs, straddle seat and handle-bars)	Off-road vehicle driving	2,702,468	\$61.72	\$166,806,926
Class II—Off-road 4-wheel driving (jeeps, pick-ups, dune buggies, SUVs)	Off-road vehicle driving	3,178,994	\$61.72	\$196,219,980
Class III—Off-road motorcycling	Off-road vehicle driving	1,176,029	\$61.72	\$72,589,123
Class IV—Riding UTVs or side-by-side ATVs (non-straddle seat, driver and passenger sit side-by-side in the vehicle, steering wheel for steering control)	Off-road vehicle driving	1,852,443	\$61.72	\$114,340,048
Snowmobiling	Snowmobiling	751,374	\$40.58	\$30,487,423
Using personal water craft, such as jet ski	Motorboating / jet skiing / water skiing	1,342,496	\$44.88	\$60,253,238
Power-boating (cruising or water skiing)	Motorboating / jet skiing / water skiing	2,968,688	\$44.88	\$133,239,178

**Vehicle-based camping activities Outside Your Community**

RV/motorhome/trailer camping	Developed camping	9,950,524	\$33.10	\$329,343,862
Car camping with a tent	Developed camping	10,365,145	\$33.10	\$343,067,047
Yurts or camper cabins	Developed camping	1,770,171	\$33.10	\$58,589,372
Sightseeing/driving or motorcycling for pleasure	Sightseeing	17,768,532	\$68.32	\$1,213,998,570

Table 6.1 User Occasions, Activity Days, and Total Net Economic Value, cont.

SCORP Activity	RUVD Activity	Total Annual Activity Days	Value / Activity Day (2023 USD)	Total Net Economic Value (2023 USD)
<b>Hunting and fishing activities Outside Your Community</b>				
Hunting—Big game	Hunting—big game	2,337,429	\$97.55	\$228,009,099
Hunting—Small game	Hunting—small game / waterfowl	1,379,174	\$90.22	\$124,426,279
Fishing—Ocean/saltwater	Fishing—saltwater	3,171,700	\$147.87	\$468,984,793
Fishing—Freshwater	Fishing—freshwater	7,596,365	\$87.23	\$662,630,719
Crabbing	Shellfishing	1,638,790	\$64.17	\$105,153,571
Shellfishing/clamming	Shellfishing	1,523,188	\$64.17	\$97,735,926
Traveling to do outdoor photography, painting, or drawing	Photography	5,971,313	\$42.56	\$254,166,983
Traveling for collecting/foraging (e.g., rocks, plants, mushrooms, or berries)	Gathering forest products (non-timber but includes firewood)	8,139,052	\$100.46	\$817,687,683
<b>Non-motorized, water-based and beach activities Outside Your Community</b>				
White-water canoeing, kayaking, or rafting	Whitewater canoeing / kayaking / rafting / windsurfing	2,432,003	\$156.97	\$381,758,765
Flat water canoeing, sea kayaking, rowing, stand-up paddling, tubing, floating	Flatwater kayaking / canoeing / rafting	4,495,845	\$58.54	\$263,191,454
Wind-surfing/ kiteboarding/sailing	Whitewater canoeing / kayaking / rafting / windsurfing	892,083	\$156.97	\$140,032,929
Beach activities—Ocean	Beach—ocean / snorkeling / scuba diving	15,945,512	\$109.31	\$1,743,065,508
Beach activities—Lakes, reservoirs, rivers	Beach—lake / reservoir / river	14,419,698	\$46.42	\$669,294,502
<b>Non-motorized, snow activities Outside Your Community</b>				
Downhill (alpine) skiing or snowboarding	Downhill skiing / snowboarding	3,047,371	\$100.87	\$307,398,682
Cross-country/Nordic skiing/skijoring	Cross-country skiing	1,883,863	\$68.89	\$129,784,677
Sledding, tubing, or general snow play	Cross-country skiing	2,352,527	\$68.89	\$162,072,272
Snowshoeing	Cross-country skiing	1,117,239	\$68.89	\$76,969,771
<b>TOTAL OREGON</b>		<b>1,270,013,500</b>	<b>\$57,142,392,334</b>	

These estimates of value per person per activity day should not be interpreted as being indicative of which activities are best to promote through management. For example, even though the value for Mountain biking is much larger on a per person per activity day basis than Walking, there are many more people who engage in walking activities than mountain biking activities. The total net economic value for a recreation activity is the value per activity day times the number of activity days.

## Total Net Economic Values

Table 6.1 identifies the RUVD activity that is paired with each SCORP activity. SCORP includes 76 activity types, whereas only 30 activity types were identified in the RUVD. In most cases, there is one-to-one correspondence; for example, hunting and fishing correspond directly to each other in both activity sets. In other cases, some assumptions were made in order to match the RUVD activity predicted values with SCORP activities. The primary assumptions used include:

- *Walking*, and *Jogging / running* are not differentiated by activity attributes;
- *Long-distance biking (backpacking)*=*Backpacking* (i.e., all are overnight trips);
- *Horseback riding* is proxied by *General other recreation*;
- *Bicycling on unpaved trails*=*Mountain biking*, otherwise bicycling is not differentiated by activity attributes;
- Class I-IV motorized riding=*Off-road vehicle driving*;
- *Personal watercraft* and *Power boating*=*Motorboating / jetskiing / waterskiing*;
- *Cross-country skiing* value estimate is used for all *Non-motorized snow activities except Downhill skiing*;
- All *Outdoor sports and court games activities* use the predicted activity value for *Walking*;
- All electronic-assisted activities such as bicycling, are proxied by *Walking*, and
- All *Vehicle-based camping activities* use the *Developed camping* activity day value.

These assumptions may lead to under- or over-estimation for some activities. For example, the Walking activity day value was used for outdoor sports activities because it was the lowest estimate provided by the MRA model, and not because Walking activity best reflects the magnitude of value derived from participating in outdoor sports. Given it is expected that this value is a lower bound to the actual value for outdoor sports participation, this assumption leads to conservative total economic value estimates. A primary study that estimates the value for these activities would confirm whether using the Walking value as a proxy is conservative or not.

Total net economic value (= \$ value per activity day \* # activity days) is reported in the last column of Table 6.1 for each activity type, and for the sub-total by activity category. These are all measures of the value of access, or with versus without access to a site or activity. The total net economic value for recreation participation in Oregon by Oregonians is

**Table 6.2 Top Ten SCORP Activities by Total Net Economic Value**

SCORP Activity	Total Net Economic Value
Walking on local streets / sidewalks in your community	\$7.8 billion
Walking / hiking on paved paths or natural trails	\$6.9 billion combined
Nature observation (e.g., birds, other wildlife, forests, wildflowers)	\$5.3 billion combined
Nature immersion (e.g., relaxing, hanging out, escaping heat or noise)	\$5.3 billion combined
Pedaling bicycles on paved paths or natural trails (including mountain biking)	\$3.2 billion combined
Pedaling bicycles on streets or sidewalks in your community	\$2.9 billion
Jogging / running on streets or sidewalks in your community	\$1.9 billion
Jogging / running on paved paths or natural trails	\$1.7 billion combined
Beach activities—ocean outside your community	\$1.7 billion
Sightseeing / driving or motorcycling for pleasure outside your community	\$1.2 billion



**Table 6.3 SCORP Activity Categories by Total Net Economic Value**

SCORP Activity	Total Net Economic Value
Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities in your community	\$21.5 billion
Outdoor leisure and sporting activities in your community	\$10.0 billion
Nature study activities in your community	\$5.4 billion
Non-motorized and electric trail or related activities outside your community	\$5.3 billion
Outdoor leisure and sporting activities outside your community	\$4.5 billion
Nature study activities outside your community	\$3.5 billion
Non-motorized, water-based and beach activities outside your community	\$3.2 billion
Hunting and fishing activities outside your community	\$1.7 billion
Motorized activities outside your community	\$0.8 billion
Vehicle-based camping activities outside your community	\$0.7 billion
Non-motorized, snow activities outside your community	\$0.7 billion

estimated to be **\$57.1 billion (2023 USD)** annually based on 2022 use levels. Table 6.2 reports the ten SCORP activities with the largest total net economic values, and Table 6.3 reports the total economic value by SCORP recreation category, both in descending order. These are all measures of the value of access, or with versus without access to a site or activity.

## Conclusions

The total net economic value associated with outdoor recreation participation in Oregon by Oregonians is estimated to be \$57.1 billion (2023 USD) annually, based on 2022 use levels. This total economic value was derived by combining information from the Oregon SCORP 2023 statewide outdoor recreation participation survey that estimated total annual user occasions for 76 outdoor recreation activity types.

A meta-regression analysis model was estimated on 2,908 estimates of outdoor recreation use values in the US and across 30 activity types. Controlling for activity type and region, among other attributes, the estimated meta-regression model was used to predict values per person per activity day for 30 activity types. These activity types were then paired with the 76 SCORP activity types, some with one-to-one correspondence and others as a proxy for value. The total net economic value was calculated for all 76 SCORP activity types and apportioned to the county level.

Total net economic values may be used to compare the relative worth of different assets, such as

outdoor recreation resources and facilities based on resident participation. They also may be used in the benefit-cost analysis that compares net benefits from outdoor recreation with investments in expanding outdoor recreation resources and opportunity sets. This is because nonmarket values are those that are not addressed or represented in typical market transactions and can include things such as the value someone has for the opportunity to view nature or the loss of well-being from residents who must endure more traffic from users of recreation opportunities. This project focused on the computation of recreation economic values by developing “direct use values” representing the benefits to individual recreationists directly engaged in outdoor recreation activities. These values represent “access” to a particular site or activity relative to that location or activity not being available or accessible to recreationists. Thus, these economic values measure the total net benefits of recreation, not marginal changes in site or activity access and quality.

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## ► CHAPTER 7

# Recreation Data Standard for Geospatial Information

### Introduction

Spatial information is a critical component of outdoor recreation planning. The lack of standardization and centralization of geospatial data creates barriers for organizations needing this information for equitable recreation planning, resource management, and other associated uses such as health tracking and emergency response. Standardized recreation resource information may allow for future integration of public participation data with facilities to support dynamic spatial and temporal analyses. Such models would enable Oregon to create robust disaster strategies for potential future emergencies. With this in mind, the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) chose to forgo a recreation inventory in 2023. Instead, it engaged the geospatial data community in developing a data standard for recreation facilities that provides a solid foundation for recreation inventory and spatial analysis.

This section of the 2025–2029 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) aims to help increase the amount of recreation facility data, ensure the data is consistent, and improve data accessibility. The following sections describe the impetus for creating a recreation data standard, Oregon’s general approach to developing geospatial data standards, the development process of the Oregon recreation data standard, and details about migrating existing geospatial data to the new standard.

### Background

The Oregon SCORP has included a recreation facility inventory twice in its planning process prior to the 2019–23 plan. Those inventory results were aggregated to the county or regional level for reporting and analysis. While county-level comparisons may have met some informational needs, the lack of spatial detail made local-level

analysis impossible. For the 2019–2023 SCORP, OPRD developed a statewide Geographic Information System (GIS) dataset of all parks (public and non-federal) and used that data for the recreation facility inventory. OPRD called this the Oregon Parkland Dataset (Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, 2019). Tying inventory data to individual parks and combining this with US Census data allowed for accessibility and level of service analysis at the city and finer level scales.

The lack of an existing recreation data standard made the development of the Parkland Dataset challenging. Many recreation providers in Oregon already build spatial data for their own business needs, but these data are typically stored in unique ways that do not allow for easy integration and data sharing. For the Parkland Dataset, OPRD utilized a commercial data standard, which was relatively quick to implement. However, the commercial standard was overly detailed and did not fully match the recreation opportunities in Oregon, especially those on federal lands. Therefore, migrating data into the commercial standard was less direct than was hoped, and given the difficulty of aggregation, the Parkland inventory excluded federal land. Additionally, using the commercial standard did not provide an opportunity to engage the Oregon GIS community and foster partnerships for future recreation inventories.

The 2020 wildfires in Oregon and the global COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the need for consistent and accessible recreation facility information for user communities and recreation managers when millions of acres and their associated recreation sites were closed. GIS staff from multiple state and federal agencies worked to develop temporary solutions to provide common recreation status information to the public. Unfortunately, as most solutions were for areas affected by natural and public health emergencies, these went out of date or stopped working once the emergency passed.





An person riding a horse at Milo McIver State Park.

## GIS Standards Development Process

Oregon has had a volunteer geospatial data governance structure for several decades, predominantly led by State agencies with some federal and local government participation. While somewhat effective, this structure was not formally recognized or granted specific authority. In 2017, the Oregon Geographic Information Council (OGIC) was established in statute (ORS 276A.503) as a governor-appointed council to serve as the statewide governing body for sharing and managing geospatial framework data. OGIC is the lead entity responsible for overseeing the strategic development and governance of geospatial framework data, including developing, implementing, and reviewing geospatial policies, practices, and standards (Oregon Geographic Information Council, 2024).

The Oregon Framework Program administers the standard development process with OGIC oversight. The program relies on volunteers across the state to create, steward, and compile geospatial data and coordinate on developing data standards. This process encourages engagement across all levels of government and reduces data storage and duplication (Oregon GEOHub, 2024). The steps for developing

a standard through the Framework Program are provided in the “Oregon Geospatial Standards Development Guidelines v 1.1” (Oregon Geospatial Enterprise Office, 2012). The steps of the workflow require the standard to be:

1. Developed collaboratively by a workgroup.
2. Publicly presented to the GIS community at an open forum.
3. Shared with OGIC’s advisory committees for review and comment.
4. Shared with the broader GIS community for review and comment.
5. Formally peer reviewed by one of the Framework Advisory groups.
6. Publicly presented to the GIS community at a second open forum.
7. Presented to OGIC for consideration and endorsement.

The development process includes feedback loops and decision points to enable the advancement of the standard through each step.

It is recognized that standards become living documents after endorsement and implementation and need to be reviewed and potentially updated periodically. The Framework Program includes a pathway for addressing major and minor standard

amendments. Minor amendments are intended to be handled by the thematic Framework Team the standard falls within; these include a public comment period. Major amendments are also addressed by the relevant Framework Team, but these include a longer public comment period, approval at an open forum, and final review and endorsement by OGIC.

## Oregon Recreation Data Standard Development

OPRD established a Recreation Data Workgroup (RDW) in the Spring of 2022 and invited multiple state and local government agencies to participate. The federal government has its own data standard process overseen by the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) and is not bound by Oregon's data standards. Therefore, input was solicited from staff at several federal agencies multiple times, but they were not included directly as members of the RDW.

An early task for the RDW was to determine the scope for the new data standard. Trails were very quickly identified to be in need of their own data standard and set aside for a separate effort<sup>9</sup>. A clear separation between facilities and activities was also made, with the latter being set aside for potential future discussion. A spatial and conceptual hierarchy was developed to help allocate recreational features into one of three groups:

1. **Recreation areas.** Typically based on land ownership or management, these are represented by a polygon area bounding lower-level recreation features. The feature is usually a polygon but could be represented as a point on small scales; examples include parks, historic or cultural areas, forests, monuments or scenic areas, natural areas, and wildlife areas.

2. **Recreation sites.** Typically, these are groupings of discrete facilities combined as a singular location, denoting accessibility to a recreational activity. The feature is usually represented as a point but could be represented as a polygon. These features include campgrounds, trailheads, boating sites, picnic sites, fish hatcheries, and OHV sites.
3. **Recreation facilities.** Typically, these are the most discrete features that support recreation activities either directly or indirectly. Each feature is a point, such as a single campsite, boat ramp, shelter, diamond field, playground, or pool.

The RDW reviewed existing recreation data schemas from Oregon state agencies, local governments, federal agencies, park and recreation districts, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The results were compiled in a way that identified common attributes and maximized the likelihood that the new standard could be widely used and integrated with national datasets (e.g., the USGS Protected Area Database, PAD US). The commercial standard and results used in the previous SCORP were also re-examined to determine the most reported recreation facilities and to ensure their inclusion. Finally, additional attributes were added to facilitate data maintenance and aggregation.

A draft Oregon Recreation Data Standard (RDS) was created in 2023 and made its way through the Framework Standard process. The community and advisory committee reviews provided useful modifications, but no substantive changes or issues were identified. The RDS was reviewed and adopted by OGIC at its April 2024 meeting and is now published at <https://ogic-geo.hub.arcgis.com/pages/standards> under the "Land Use/Land Cover" category.

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<sup>9</sup> The process for creating a data standard for trails started in late 2023 and is intended to be completed by the end of 2024. Like the RDS, the goal is to utilize the Framework Data Standard process to obtain input and support from the broader community. OPRD expects to also act as a data steward for the statewide trail data and serve as a conduit for sharing with the USGS National Digital Trails project.



## Migration to the Oregon Recreation Data Standard

Updating the Oregon Parkland dataset to meet the new Recreation Data Standard was integral to increasing the amount and consistency of recreation facility data for this SCORP. The original Parkland data aggregated facility data to a park level, while the RDS includes three separate spatial datasets that include facilities as independent features.

While updating the Parkland data to the RDS, one challenge was that discrete location data was not available for each site or facility extracted from the park-level inventory. Because the facility information had been tied to parks, the only location available was the polygon representing the whole Parkland feature. Limited options are available for dealing with this issue without significant analysis or extensive data review and editing. OPRD GIS staff determined that the best approach would be to utilize the centroid of the park polygon for all site and facility information. Other methods considered included random or arbitrary placement within the park polygon and utilizing a computed offset from the centroid. The concern with the alternatives was that a false sense of accuracy might be attributed to the data before the spatial locations could be improved.

While the number of recreation facilities counted did not increase when migrating to the new data standard, the number of spatial features included is significantly larger. The original Parkland data included 6,333 polygon features, which essentially were directly migrated into the Recreation Area feature class of the RDS. However, an additional 6,943 Recreation Sites and 25,884 Recreation Facilities were mapped by extracting site and facility information from the Parkland data attribute table. This resulted in a net increase of 32,827 recreation features being mapped throughout Oregon.

Moving data from one schema to another typically involves the creation of a crosswalk table that maps the changes. In this case, a crosswalk was manually created by examining the attributes and deciding on the best fit. The difference between the commercial data standard used by the Parkland data and the RDS required that some feature types be aggregated while others needed to be split. Aggregation is typically less of an issue, but splitting or moving a single feature

type into a choice of two new types results in some errors as the correct classification is unknown without further input. Types that required splitting were noted and will be given priority for future review.

## Statewide Recreation Data Strategy

Developing and adopting a statewide data standard is the first step in improving the quantity and accessibility of recreation facility information for Oregon. By soliciting input from multiple recreation providers and utilizing the Framework Data Standard process the RDS has already received approval from many key recreation stakeholders. However, wide adoption will take time, and barriers such as differing business needs may be difficult to overcome, so continued promotion is recommended.

OPRD intends to continue to act in the capacity of data steward for statewide recreation facility data. This role will require the development of a stewardship plan to ensure long term stability and availability of the data. Existing datasets will be assembled and integrated with the updated Parkland data and shared publicly by OPRD and through Oregon's Open Data Portal.

## References

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## ► CHAPTER 8

# Economic Impact of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon

This chapter of the 2025–2029 Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) is an executive summary of a report titled “Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: 2022 Update” prepared by Earth Economics. The full report is available at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a5>.

### Executive Summary

Oregon offers thousands of outdoor recreational opportunities for hiking, camping, biking, picnicking, hunting, and more. The outdoor recreation industry brings billions of dollars to the state’s economy. In 2019, in recognition of this, Travel Oregon, the Oregon Office of Outdoor Recreation (OREC), and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) commissioned a study by Earth Economics to assess the economic contribution of the outdoor recreation economy (see Mojica et al., 2021). Earth Economics has provided a 2022 update in partnership with the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (reported in 2023 USD).

The present study found that in 2022, outdoor recreation spending in Oregon totaled \$16 billion at businesses throughout the state, rippling through Oregon’s economy as income and wages were re-spent, driving economic effects in sectors not directly tied to outdoor recreation. Total consumer spending on outdoor recreation in 2022 supported 192,000 full and part-time jobs in Oregon, associated with \$8.2 billion in wages and other compensation.

These results intend to bring greater awareness of the enormous economic value produced by those who enjoy recreating in Oregon’s outdoor spaces. Well-informed policies can help maintain a high quality of life for residents while providing sustainable access to locals and visitors alike. Detailed results are available for each county, while activity-specific estimates are provided at the state level. One of the goals of this project was to establish a reliable, scalable framework

### ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION AT-A-GLANCE

Economic contribution analyses—also known as input-output analyses—model the effects of initial spending as it ripples through regional economies. Complex, data-driven models of interindustry spending at both state and local levels allow outdoor recreation spending to be traced to subsequent spending and employment in connected industries. For example, weekend visitors to the Oregon Coast spend money at hotels, boutique retailers, and restaurants. Those hotels, restaurants, retailers, and their employees then purchase goods and services to support their businesses and families.

to monitor outdoor recreation participation and associated spending. This framework can be shared across agencies to standardize data collection, address data gaps, and support comparison across jurisdictional and agency boundaries.

### Benchmarks

This analysis is consistent with findings from other research conducted on Oregon’s outdoor recreation economy. In 2017, the Outdoor Industry Association estimated that \$16.4 billion was spent on outdoor recreation trips and gear purchases in Oregon, an estimate slightly higher than the one presented here. The U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) estimated that spending on outdoor recreation in Oregon in 2022 contributed \$7.5 billion to Oregon’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and supported 73,000 jobs. However, the BEA does not consider local recreation in its analysis.

## Benefits not Included in This Study

While this report estimates the significant economic contribution of outdoor recreation in Oregon, it does not present the full benefits that outdoor recreation and natural spaces provide, such as consumer surplus or health and environmental benefits. In Chapter 6 of this document, “Total Net Economic Value from Residents’ Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon,” the consumer surplus for Oregon recreationists was estimated at \$57.1 billion annually, based on 2022 participation levels. Consumer surplus (willingness-to-pay that exceeds spending) is a measure of nonmarket social benefits.

Parks and natural spaces promote physical and mental health, with lower medical and insurance costs for those living active outdoor lifestyles. Chapter 5 of this SCORP, “Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians from Their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon,” conservatively estimated that the physical activity associated with outdoor recreation led to \$2.965 billion in annual Cost of Illness savings.

Furthermore, the environmental benefits provided by parks and green spaces include clean, drinkable water (reducing filtration costs), carbon sequestration (reducing future climate impacts), scenic beauty (increasing home values), and habitat for plants and animals (strengthening food webs). While not measured here, these benefits can be monetized to show the value of stewarding outdoor spaces for a more resilient future.

## Participation and Economic Contributions Explained

In this study, outdoor recreationists were divided into two groups: local (those traveling fewer than 50 miles) and visitors (those traveling 50 or more miles, including out-of-state tourists). This distinction is important for several reasons: visitors inject “new” money into local economies, with different spending patterns than locals. For instance, out-of-state tourists are more likely to stay at hotels than locals, while both may be just as likely to visit a local eatery. In 2022, Oregonians and out-of-state visitors participated in 209 million days of recreation, and their overall spending (including trip-related and equipment

**Table 8.1 Outdoor Recreation Trip-Related Spending, By County (2023 USD)**

County	Trip-Related Spending (\$000s)
Baker	\$124,938
Benton	\$84,076
Clackamas	\$244,881
Clatsop	\$823,255
Columbia	\$45,631
Coos	\$1,276,746
Crook	\$63,954
Curry	\$533,591
Deschutes	\$421,800
Douglas	\$524,278
Gilliam	\$3,493
Grant	\$28,622
Harney	\$284,659
Hood River	\$62,488
Jackson	\$345,481
Jefferson	\$130,523
Josephine	\$216,532
Klamath	\$202,051
Lake	\$30,296
Lane	\$1,203,505
Lincoln	\$2,278,172
Linn	\$153,119
Malheur	\$114,266
Marion	\$295,290
Morrow	\$15,984
Multnomah	\$355,165
Polk	\$79,594
Sherman	\$9,537
Tillamook	\$731,420
Umatilla	\$83,953
Union	\$61,827
Wallowa	\$23,185
Wasco	\$70,412
Washington	\$276,161
Wheeler	\$17,165
Yamhill	\$88,421
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,304,471</b>

**Table 8.2 Equipment-related Spending by Industry (2023 USD)**

Industry	Equipment Expenditures (000s)
Retail—Motor vehicle and parts dealers	\$951,178
Retail—Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	\$11,282
Retail—Clothing and clothing accessories stores	\$111,346
Retail—Sporting goods, hobby, musical instrument and book stores	\$2,144,013
Personal and household goods repair and maintenance	\$1,041,314
Other personal services	\$117,350
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4,376,481</b>

spending) was estimated to be \$15.7 billion. Most of that was spent on recreation trips in 2022, totaling \$11.3 billion (Table 8.1). The remaining \$4.4 billion was spent on equipment (Table 8.2).

The scale of outdoor recreation’s economic contribution provides meaningful insight to those tasked with decisions that may affect the access to—and quality of—outdoor recreation opportunities in the state. Key economic indicators include total spending, job creation, wages, and tax revenues. Other useful measures of economic health include total economic output (all spending linked to outdoor recreation, including secondary spending) and the contribution of outdoor recreation to the state’s GDP.

**Figure 8.1 Economic Contributions by Type**

## **JOBS**

Outdoor recreation spending supports both full and part-time employment in counties throughout Oregon. Employees of hotels, gas stations, guide services, and specialty retailers all directly benefit from recreation spending, but those expenditures also indirectly support industries that provide supporting goods and services, such as wholesalers, maintenance work, government services, and real estate.

## **LABOR INCOME**

Input-Output models also estimate worker compensation (salary plus benefits). As employees pay for necessities such as food and housing, other industries and their workers are also supported. A similar effect occurs as businesses purchase the goods and services they need to operate.

## **TAX REVENUE**

Oregon does not have a statewide sales tax, but outdoor recreation spending generates local and state revenues through income and property taxes paid by recreation supported businesses and their employees. Additional tax revenues may be generated by short-term lodgers, car rentals, purchases of fuel or alcohol, and use of airports.

## **ECONOMIC OUTPUT**

Initial spending on outdoor recreation generates additional spending within the state. The total economic activity of industries directly and indirectly supported by outdoor recreation expenditures is understood as the total economic output of outdoor recreation.

## **VALUE-ADDED**

Value-added (often referred to as GDP) is a subset of total economic output. It is calculated by removing the value of intermediate inputs (e.g. raw materials, semi-finished goods, business-to-business services) from the total economic output. It is intended to better reflect the value that final goods and services added to an economy.



**Table 8.3 Trip- and Equipment-related Economic Contribution of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon (2023 USD)**

County	Jobs	Wages (\$000s)	Output (\$000s)	GDP (\$000s)
Direct Effect	155,200	\$5,958,000	\$13,807,524	\$8,571,000
Indirect Effect	10,700	\$757,000	\$2,296,460	\$1,185,800
Induced Effect	25,900	\$1,453,100	\$4,489,805	\$2,660,816
<b>Total Effect</b>	<b>191,800</b>	<b>\$8,168,131</b>	<b>\$20,593,789</b>	<b>\$12,417,606</b>

The total economic impacts resulting from consumer spending are known as *economic contributions* (see Figure 8.1), which are organized as *direct*, *indirect*, and *induced* impacts. Direct effects are the immediate effects of initial expenditures (e.g. spending at hotels, campsites, restaurants, retailers). Subsequent spending by those businesses and their employees are classified as secondary economic impacts, which are further divided into *indirect* and *induced* effects. Indirect effects are driven by business-to-business transactions (e.g., restaurants purchasing ingredients or charters purchasing recreational gear). Induced effects occur when employees spend their earnings (e.g., rent, food, healthcare). Secondary effects ripple throughout the state economy until that capital is either reserved as savings or is used to buy goods and services from outside the state. The longer money circulates within a local economy, the larger the total economic impacts—often called the *multiplier effect*.

## Total Contributions

Outdoor recreation spending was analyzed for its effects on Oregon’s county economies. Statewide trip and equipment-related results are presented in Table 8.3. This table shows job creation, wages, total spending, and contribution to GDP associated with outdoor recreation. Table 8.4 shows these indicators for trip-related contributions by county.

A park employee greets visitors at Silver Falls State Park on State Parks Day in June.

## Future Considerations

These estimates provide a strong baseline for Oregon’s outdoor recreation economy, benchmarking future studies. It is critical that agencies consistently collect visitation data to support ongoing monitoring and assessment of the importance of the outdoor recreation economy to the state and its local communities. Due to the dispersed nature of outdoor recreation, this can be challenging, especially for amenities without controlled access. This report recognizes these limitations and uses the best available data to estimate visitation. As new opportunities to monitor use emerge (e.g., mobile device data, social media), they may be able to provide additional insight for policymakers and investors.



**Table 8.4 Trip-related Economic Contribution of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon, County-level Results**

<b>County</b>	<b>Jobs</b>	<b>Wages (\$000s)</b>	<b>Output (\$000s)</b>	<b>GDP (\$000s)</b>	<b>State and Local Tax (\$000s)</b>
Baker	1,398	\$42,201	\$119,582	\$66,041	\$9,632
Benton	948	\$37,682	\$98,936	\$60,039	\$8,501
Clackamas	2,531	\$112,188	\$263,041	\$165,687	\$20,543
Clatsop	9,096	\$401,042	\$1,008,466	\$625,933	\$82,103
Columbia	516	\$17,731	\$46,083	\$27,129	\$4,056
Coos	12,566	\$533,772	\$1,342,689	\$830,749	\$116,676
Crook	764	\$26,089	\$71,222	\$42,403	\$7,199
Curry	6,093	\$184,652	\$538,214	\$304,113	\$51,331
Deschutes	4,840	\$200,918	\$477,745	\$303,799	\$46,266
Douglas	6,234	\$217,332	\$599,776	\$347,395	\$54,011
Gilliam	40	\$1,319	\$3,431	\$1,864	\$210
Grant	348	\$8,325	\$26,557	\$13,297	\$2,173
Harney	2,996	\$112,106	\$292,380	\$173,893	\$28,225
Hood River	598	\$25,633	\$62,719	\$38,775	\$5,182
Jackson	3,811	\$153,596	\$379,985	\$232,557	\$35,503
Jefferson	1,562	\$56,469	\$141,812	\$85,084	\$12,560
Josephine	2,213	\$110,153	\$249,367	\$158,722	\$23,621
Klamath	2,391	\$83,899	\$216,629	\$130,495	\$22,053
Lake	351	\$10,207	\$29,480	\$16,493	\$3,089
Lane	13,722	\$560,949	\$1,436,219	\$871,330	\$130,211
Lincoln	26,428	\$1,018,569	\$2,684,013	\$1,621,086	\$218,307
Linn	1,740	\$65,449	\$168,555	\$100,646	\$14,588
Malheur	1,246	\$38,357	\$106,295	\$60,720	\$10,868
Marion	3,324	\$138,130	\$344,306	\$211,188	\$29,574
Morrow	177	\$5,995	\$15,992	\$9,162	\$1,156
Multnomah	3,910	\$171,378	\$390,227	\$253,951	\$36,511
Polk	896	\$31,366	\$82,777	\$48,183	\$6,076
Sherman	94	\$4,539	\$10,322	\$6,477	\$929
Tillamook	8,535	\$318,685	\$870,137	\$517,578	\$75,506
Umatilla	997	\$33,654	\$84,435	\$50,398	\$7,933
Union	761	\$24,232	\$68,529	\$38,088	\$6,364
Wallowa	240	\$8,224	\$21,918	\$12,483	\$1,839
Wasco	740	\$27,654	\$73,539	\$43,573	\$6,948
Washington	3,084	\$134,452	\$316,362	\$200,901	\$26,140
Wheeler	228	\$5,942	\$18,885	\$9,312	\$1,303
Yamhill	1,056	\$39,458	\$100,910	\$61,138	\$9,285
<b>Total</b>	<b>126,473</b>	<b>\$4,962,346</b>	<b>\$12,761,535</b>	<b>\$7,740,681</b>	<b>\$1,116,473</b>

## ► CHAPTER 9

# Recreational Needs Assessment

## 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP Needs Assessment

The 2025–2029 SCORP effort included two distinct methods to identify recreational needs in Oregon. The first method involved a survey of Oregon outdoor recreation providers. Between December 5, 2022, and January 11, 2023, data were gathered from two internet surveys of recreation providers either within Urban Growth Boundaries (UGBs) or in dispersed settings. Respondents from within UGB providers were from city governments, county parks departments, special park and recreation districts, municipal park departments, port districts, and Native American Tribes. Respondents from dispersed-setting providers represented county parks departments, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, federal agencies, and other state agencies. The total number of completed questionnaires for providers within UGBs was 115 (total response rate: 38%), while the total number of questionnaires for dispersed-setting providers was 63 (total response rate: 63%).

Recreation providers were asked to rate the funding importance of outdoor recreation amenities within their jurisdiction, using a 4-point Likert scale (1=“Not needed” to 4=“Most needed,” or N/A). To identify the level of need, respondents were asked to consider types of high-priority projects that their organization had identified for development in the coming 5-year period. State and county-level priorities identified from this analysis are included below. Full details on the provider survey can be found in the “2023 Oregon Park and Recreation Provider Survey Report” available at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a2>.

The second method for identifying recreational needs was a statewide survey of Oregon residents regarding their participation in outdoor recreation in Oregon in 2022 and their attitudes and priorities regarding outdoor recreation management. The total number of responses was 4,057 for this survey. Respondents were asked to rate priorities for future investment both inside and outside their communities. Specific items were rated using a 5-point Likert scale (1=Lowest priority need to 5=Highest priority need). The top priorities for the general population and for key demographic groups are included below. Full details on the resident survey can be found in the “2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey Report” available at <https://bit.ly/scorp24a1>.

## Outdoor Recreation Provider Need

The following are recreational needs at the statewide and county levels identified in the statewide survey of Oregon public recreation providers.

### Statewide Need

Table 9.1 Oregon Outdoor Recreation Provider Survey

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Community trail system	Restrooms
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas
Law enforcement officers	Connecting trails into larger trail systems



## County-level Need

Table 9.2 Baker County Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Off-highway vehicle trails/areas	Law enforcement officers
Community vegetable garden areas (community gardens)	Interpretive displays
Motorized boat launches and support facilities	Day-use hiking trails

Table 9.3 Benton County Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Law enforcement officers
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas
Restrooms	Interpretive displays

Table 9.4 Clackamas County Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas
Acquisition of trail corridors and rights of way	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

Table 9.5 Clatsop County Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Law enforcement officers
Restrooms	Restrooms

Table 9.6 Columbia County Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Law enforcement officers
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Law enforcement officers	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas

**Table 9.7 Coos County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Law enforcement officers
Law enforcement officers	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

**Table 9.8 Crook County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Law enforcement officers	Connecting trails into larger trail systems

**Table 9.9 Curry County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Arts and crafts (e.g., ceramics, painting)	Law enforcement officers
RV dump stations	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas

**Table 9.10 Deschutes County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Trails connected to public lands	Interpretive displays
Mountain biking (single track) trails/areas	Day-use hiking trails

**Table 9.11 Douglas County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Wi-Fi	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Restrooms	Long-distance bicycle routes

**Table 9.12 Gilliam County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
WIFI	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Restrooms	Day-use hiking trails
Interpretive displays	Law enforcement officers

**Table 9.13 Grant County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Beautification projects (e.g., fountains, ponds, landscaping, waterfalls)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Law enforcement officers	Tent campgrounds and facilities (car camping)

**Table 9.14 Harney County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Nature study/wildlife watching sites	Law enforcement officers
Beautification projects (e.g., fountains, ponds, landscaping, waterfalls)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Urban bike paths (separate from street traffic)	Connecting trails into larger trail systems

**Table 9.15 Hood River County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Dog off-leash areas/dog parks	Law enforcement officers
Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Picnic areas and shelters for large visitor groups	Interpretive displays

**Table 9.16 Jackson County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Restrooms
Law enforcement officers	Day-use hiking trails

**Table 9.17 Jefferson County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Law enforcement officers	Restrooms

**Table 9.18 Josephine County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Urban bike paths (separate from street traffic)	Law enforcement officers
Law enforcement officers	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Connecting trails into larger trail systems



**Table 9.19 Klamath County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Day-use hiking trails

**Table 9.20 Lake County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Golf courses	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Picnic areas and shelters for small groups
Skateboard parks	Picnic areas and shelters for large groups

**Table 9.21 Lane County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Restrooms	Restrooms
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Trails connecting adjacent communities	Law enforcement officers

**Table 9.22 Lincoln County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Restrooms
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Nature study/wildlife watching sites

**Table 9.23 Linn County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Mountain biking (single track) trails/areas
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Community trail system	Interpretive displays

**Table 9.24 Malheur County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Connecting trails into larger trail systems

**Table 9.25 Marion County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Law enforcement officers
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Community trail system	Restrooms

**Table 9.26 Morrow County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Marinas	Law enforcement officers
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Restrooms	Connecting trails into larger trail systems

**Table 9.27 Multnomah County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Trails connecting adjacent communities	Law enforcement officers
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas
Directional signage and details about trails and locations	Interpretive displays

**Table 9.28 Polk County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Community trail system	Law enforcement officers
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Mountain biking (single track) trails/areas
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Interpretive displays

**Table 9.29 Sherman County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Sports fields	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Restrooms	Day-use hiking trails
WIFI	Law enforcement officers

**Table 9.30 Tillamook County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Trails connecting adjacent communities	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Law enforcement officers	Law enforcement officers
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas

**Table 9.31 Umatilla County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Law enforcement officers
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Law enforcement officers	Connecting trails into larger trail systems

**Table 9.32 Union County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Day-use hiking trails
Community trail system	Law enforcement officers
Trails connected to public lands	Interpretive displays

**Table 9.33 Wallowa County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
RV/trailer campgrounds and facilities	RV/trailer campgrounds and facilities
Community trail system	Off-highway vehicle trails/areas
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Law enforcement officers

**Table 9.34 Wasco County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Dog off-leash areas/dog parks	Law enforcement officers
Sports fields (soccer, baseball, football)	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

**Table 9.35 Washington County Need**

<b>Close-to-home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-area priorities</b>
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Outdoor pool/spray park	Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas
Restrooms	Restrooms



**Table 9.36 Wheeler County Need**

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Restrooms	Law enforcement officers
Law enforcement officers	Interpretive displays

**Table 9.37 Yamhill County Need**

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Lighting and/or security cameras in key areas	Outdoor swimming pool/spray park
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Visitor center and program facilities
Sports fields (soccer, baseball, football)	Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom and kitchen

## Oregon Resident Need

The following are recreational needs identified in 2022 Oregon resident outdoor recreation survey. The survey identified need at the statewide, urban, suburban, and rural levels for the general population. Needs for the following demographic groups are also identified: households with disabilities, low-income population, age 60+ population, Asian population, Black/ African American population, Hispanic/ Latino/a population, and Mixed Race population.

## Statewide Need

**Table 9.38 Oregon Outdoor Recreation Resident Survey**

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Parks and recreation areas	Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Parks and recreation areas

## Statewide Urban Need

**Table 9.39 Statewide Urban Need**

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Parks and recreation areas	Parks and recreation areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Nature and wildlife viewing areas

## Statewide Suburban Need

Table 9.40 Suburban Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Parks and recreation areas	Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

## Statewide Rural Need

Table 9.41 Statewide Rural Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Parks and recreation areas	Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

## Households with Disabilities Need

Table 9.42 Households with Disabilities Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Parks and recreation areas	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

## Low-Income Population Need

Table 9.43 Low-Income Population Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Restrooms
Restrooms	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Parks and recreation areas	Nature and wildlife viewing areas

## Age 60+ Population Need

Table 9.44 Age 60+ Population Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Restrooms
Restrooms	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Parks and recreation areas	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Nature and wildlife viewing areas

## Asian Population Need

Table 9.45 Asian Population Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Lighting and/or security cameras in key places
Parks and recreation areas	Nature and wildlife viewing areas

## Black/African American Population Need

Table 9.46 Black/African American Population Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

## Hispanic/Latino/a Population Need

Table 9.47 Hispanic/Latino/a Population Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Restrooms
Restrooms	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Parks and recreation areas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Nature and wildlife viewing areas



## Mixed Race Population Need

Table 9.48 Mixed Race Population Need

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Clean and well-maintained facilities
Clean and well-maintained facilities	Restrooms
Restrooms	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	Parks and recreation areas

A kayaker at Willamette Mission State Park.





## ► CHAPTER 10

# SCORP Statewide Strategic Actions

### Introduction

This chapter provides a description of the strategic actions identified during the planning process of the Oregon SCORP to better serve the needs of Oregonians, as related to top statewide issues. These actions are intended to support increased outdoor recreation participation for all segments of the Oregon population in both the short and long term, thereby enabling current and future generations of Oregonians to experience the personal and societal benefits of outdoor recreation.

The strategic actions fall under the following categories:

1. Address the top outdoor recreation priorities of Oregon residents.
2. Address the top constraints to outdoor recreation for Oregon residents.
3. Increase engagement with low-income Oregon residents.
4. Increase engagement with Oregon households with disabilities.
5. Increase engagement with diverse racial/ethnic communities in Oregon.
6. Take actions to balance conservation and recreation at outdoor areas in Oregon.

These strategic actions were developed with contributions from the SCORP Advisory Committee on January 18, 2024.

### Address the Top Outdoor Recreation Priorities of Oregon Residents

The 2025–2029 SCORP contains two studies that demonstrate how outdoor recreation benefits Oregonians from both health and economic perspectives. “Health Benefits Estimates for Oregonians from Their Outdoor Recreation Participation in Oregon” and “Total Net Economic Value from Residents’ Outdoor Recreation

Participation in Oregon” investigated the general economic impacts of outdoor recreation, as well as its specific impacts on health spending. The studies found that the total annual “Cost of Illness” savings to Oregon from Oregonians’ participation in 76 outdoor recreation activities is conservatively \$2.965 billion per year, while the total economic value associated with outdoor recreation in the state is estimated at \$57.1 billion per year.

Oregon’s park and recreation providers can support the continuation and growth of these benefits by providing the amenities and services that Oregon residents prioritize the most. The actions in this section summarize how providers can meet the needs of the Oregon general population.

#### **Action 1.1:** Oregon Parks and Recreation

Department will weight priority in grant programs for “within your community” and “outside your community” priorities as identified in the 2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey by the statewide Oregon population.

**Action 1.2:** Recreation providers should prioritize the addition of drive-in tent sites, cabins, yurts, and drive-in group sites to better serve the camping needs of the Oregon general population.

**Action 1.3:** Municipal recreation providers should prioritize providing more clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, parks and recreation areas, and directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead to increase recreation engagement by Oregonians.

**Action 1.4:** Dispersed-area recreation providers should prioritize providing more clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, nature and wildlife viewing areas, and parks and recreation areas to increase engagement by Oregonians.

**Action 1.5:** Municipal recreation providers should examine how well local community needs are being met by current farmers' markets, community gardens, outdoor sports (youth and adult), outdoor concerts and movies in their service area.

**Action 1.6:** To support the physical activity benefits of outdoor recreation, recreation providers should provide trails for walking, hiking, biking, and rolling; fields for dog parks and playing sports; courts for playing sports such as tennis, pickleball, and basketball; places for nature immersion and nature observation; places for camping, including RV sites, tent sites, cabins, and yurts; and children's playgrounds and family-friendly areas.

## Address the Top Constraints to Outdoor Recreation for Oregon Residents

The 2024-2029 SCORP is the first Oregon SCORP to explicitly ask Oregon residents about the constraints they face when trying to recreate. Specifically, the 2023 Oregon Outdoor Recreation Survey asked residents about the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with several statements on general, social, and natural setting constraints to outdoor recreation. The information from the survey provides insight into which constraints recreation providers should address to enable increased outdoor recreation participation across the Oregon population.

**Action 2.1:** Recreation providers should examine ways to lower barriers related to the most prominent general constraints to outdoor recreation. According to Oregon residents, the most prominent general constraints are the following:

- It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)
- There is limited or unsecure parking
- There are too many people/it is crowded
- Requiring a permit restricts my participation

**Action 2.2:** Recreation providers should examine ways to lower barriers related to the most prominent social constraints to outdoor recreation. According to Oregon residents, the most prominent social constraints are the following:

- The presence of unsheltered/homeless persons on-site
- I have no one to go with/lack of support
- Lack of personal security (from perceived threats posed by other people)
- There is a lack of group or club activities I could join

**Action 2.3:** Recreation providers should examine ways to lower barriers related to the most prominent natural setting constraints to outdoor recreation. According to Oregon residents, the most prominent natural setting constraints are the following:

- The sanitation issue of encountering human waste influences my visitation
- I am concerned about excessive heat
- A wildfire that destroyed, impacted, or closed sites kept me from visiting
- Health issues related to smoke from forest fires meant I visited less

## Increase Engagement with Low-income Oregon Residents

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal that low-income Oregon residents (earning <\$25,000/year) are underserved in terms of outdoor recreation participation. Compared to Oregonians with middle and high incomes, the proportion of low-income Oregonians who participate in outdoor recreation is lower. Low-income Oregon residents also participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year and have a lower participation rate than that of the Oregon population in most activities. However, the survey data shows that the top motivations to recreate are very similar for low-income residents and the Oregon general population. As such, it is assumed that low-income residents' lower rates of participation in outdoor recreation are caused by constraints to recreation, rather than by unique preferences for different leisure activities. It follows, then, that lowering barriers to outdoor recreation may be the most effective way to enable increased participation for low-income residents.

By focusing on barriers that are both prominent and unique for this demographic group, the following





A group mountain biking in LaPine State Park.

constraints are considered the most important for low-income residents:

- Requiring a permit restricts my participation
- The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high
- Transportation to recreation settings is difficult
- I do not have the gear, equipment, or appropriate clothing
- I have no one to go with/lack of support
- My personal health is a limiting factor for me
- The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform

In general, recreation providers are encouraged to prioritize these constraints when considering ways to improve opportunities for low-income residents. The recommendations presented here fulfill this goal by providing tangible suggestions that directly address

most of these barriers, helping recreation providers design and locate services that meet the needs of the low-income population and facilitate economically equitable enjoyment of outdoor recreation.

**Action 3.1:** Oregon Parks and Recreation Department will weight priority in grant programs for “within your community” and “outside your community” priorities as identified in the 2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey by low-income Oregonians.

**Action 3.2:** Recreation providers should prioritize adding drive-in tent sites, cabins, yurts, and drive-in group sites to better serve the needs of low-income residents.

**Action 3.3:** Municipal recreation providers should prioritize providing more clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation

opportunities, nature and wildlife viewing areas, and parks and recreation areas to increase recreation engagement by low-income Oregonians.

**Action 3.4:** Dispersed-area recreation providers should prioritize providing more restrooms, clean and well-maintained facilities, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, and nature and wildlife viewing areas to increase recreation engagement by low-income Oregonians.

**Action 3.5:** Municipal recreation providers should examine how well low-income resident needs are being met by current farmer's markets, community gardens, outdoor concerts and movies, and educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours) in their service areas.

**Action 3.6:** Recreation providers should seek out transportation assistance for low-income residents by working with ride-share companies, city transit authorities, charter bus companies, local schools, and/or community-based organizations.

**Action 3.7:** Recreation providers should find ways to provide low-cost equipment rentals to support outdoor recreation participation among low-income residents.

**Action 3.8:** Recreation providers should provide clear information about the following items to help low-income residents determine the actual cost of outdoor recreation participation: locations and activities that do not have any associated participation fees, activities that are generally low-cost for participants (e.g., walking on trails, picnicking, nature observation), gear requirements (or lack thereof) for each activity, and public transportation options for visiting outdoor areas. All this information should be available on websites, visitor centers, and maps and brochures.

**Action 3.9:** Recreation providers should advance accessibility and universal design principles when designing park amenities and features to support outdoor recreation among low-income residents.

**Action 3.10:** Recreation providers should increase community engagement in recreation planning to improve outdoor opportunities for low-income residents. Recreation providers can do this by

collaborating with community partners such as schools, non-profit organizations, churches, youth organizations, and/or other community groups that serve low-income residents.

## **Increase Engagement with Oregon Households with Disabilities**

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal that Oregon households with disabilities are underserved in terms of outdoor recreation participation. Compared to households without disabilities, the proportion of households with disabilities that participate in outdoor recreation is lower in Oregon, and these households also participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year, in general. Furthermore, the rate of participation is lower for the majority of specific activities. Because the survey data also shows the top motivations to recreate for households with disabilities are very similar to those of the Oregon general population, it is expected that the lower participation for households with disabilities is caused more by constraints to recreation than by unique preferences toward different leisure activities. It follows, then, that lowering barriers to outdoor recreation may be the most effective way to enable increased participation for households with disabilities.

By focusing on barriers that are both prominent and unique for this demographic group, the following constraints are considered the most important for households with disabilities:

- It is difficult to find available sites on the reservation system (everything is booked)
- The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high
- There is a lack of information about which locations have accessible features (for those with disabilities)
- My personal health is a limiting factor for me
- Transportation to recreation settings is difficult
- I visit less because there is a lack of accessible features
- I have no one to go with/lack of support
- Lack of personal security (from others)
- There is a lack of group or club activities I could join



This section provides tangible recommendations within the purview of recreation providers that directly address most of these constraints and help providers design and identify services that meet the needs of persons with disabilities so that all Oregonians can enjoy the benefits of outdoor recreation. Furthermore, it is important to note that types of disabilities (e.g., sensory, mobility) can differ greatly, and recreation providers need to consider the multifaceted nature of accessibility and the different accommodations that are required in different contexts.

**Action 4.1:** Oregon Parks and Recreation Department will weight priority in grant programs for “within your community” and “outside your community” priorities as identified in the 2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey by households with disabilities.

**Action 4.2:** Oregon’s outdoor recreation providers should prioritize adding drive-in tent sites, cabins, yurts, and drive-in group sites to better serve households with disabilities. Each of these site types should be designed according to accessibility standards for outdoor areas.

**Action 4.3:** Municipal recreation providers should prioritize adding more clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, and parks and recreation areas to increase recreation engagement by households with disabilities.

**Action 4.4:** Dispersed-area recreation providers should prioritize adding more clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, and directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead to increase recreation engagement by households with disabilities.

**Action 4.5:** Municipal recreation providers should examine how well households with disabilities are being served by current farmer’s markets, community gardens, seniors’ activity centers, and educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours) in their service areas.

**Action 4.6:** Recreation providers are also encouraged to pursue universal design in new and ongoing development efforts to support outdoor recreation participation by households with disabilities.

**Action 4.7:** Oregon outdoor recreation providers should publish detailed information on the accessibility of all features in outdoor areas and the information should be available online and on-site at recreation areas.

**Action 4.8:** Recreation providers should seek out transportation assistance that is accessible to households with disabilities by working with ride-share companies, city transit authorities, charter bus companies, local schools, and/or community-based organizations.

**Action 4.9:** Recreation providers should find ways to offer programs such as outdoor education and training, guided hikes, nature walks, or other activities to promote accessible outdoor recreation specifically for households with disabilities.

**Action 4.10:** Recreation providers should collaborate with community partners such as disability advocacy and support groups, schools, non-profit organizations, churches, youth organizations, and other community groups that specifically serve households with disabilities. This will enable recreation providers to better understand the needs of households with disabilities when developing, monitoring, and evaluating outdoor recreation programs and opportunities.

## **Increase Engagement with Diverse Racial/Ethnic Communities in Oregon**

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal clear differences in outdoor recreation participation across Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, Mixed Race, and White populations in Oregon. Mixed Race and White populations report outdoor recreation participation levels similar to that of the Oregon general population, while Asian and Black/African American residents participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year than the general population. In terms of specific outdoor recreation activities, the Asian and Black/African American populations each have a



lower participation rate than the Oregon population for most activities. There is also evidence that the Hispanic/Latino/a population may be underserved in terms of total outdoor recreation times per year, even though this group participates in more specific activities than other Oregonians. Low response numbers limited the inferential power of data for some racial/ethnic groups, including individuals identifying as “American Indian or Alaska Native” and “Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.” Although the specific needs and priorities of all racial and ethnic groups are not included in this report, recreation providers are encouraged to reflect on the diversity in their own communities and identify ways to best support all residents.

The survey data shows that, despite small differences, the top motivations to recreate are similar for residents from different racial/ethnic backgrounds. It stands to reason, then, that participation differences across groups are caused more by constraints to recreation rather than differing leisure preferences and that lowering these barriers to outdoor recreation may be the most effective way to empower underserved communities. By focusing on barriers that are both prominent and unique for minority racial/ethnic groups, the following constraints are considered the most important for these residents:

- There is a lack of cultural events
- I don't see people like me in their advertising or working there
- The overall cost of trips to visit natural areas is too high
- The presence of (or extra attention from) officers/law enforcement in uniform
- I do not have the gear, equipment, or appropriate clothing
- Discrimination of any kind
- There is a lack of information about which locations have accessible features (for those with disabilities)
- There are not enough nearby places to go (travel distance)
- There is a lack of traffic safety at recreation areas
- I visit less because there is a lack of accessible features

- Not having the appropriate skills or experience to feel comfortable
- There are language barriers for me (signs, website, staff)

In general, recreation providers should prioritize addressing these constraints when developing ways to improve opportunities for Asian, Black/African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a populations. This report aims to provide tangible recommendations that directly address most of these constraints and help recreation providers design and identify services that meet these communities' needs, enhancing enjoyment of the benefits of outdoor recreation in Oregon. It is important to note that although these recommendations are crafted to be relevant to multiple underserved groups, recreation providers must consider the specific communities they serve, as each community will have unique needs, priorities, and resources.

**Action 5.1:** Oregon Parks and Recreation Department will weight priority in grant programs for “within your community” and “outside your community” priorities as identified in the 2023 Oregon resident outdoor recreation survey by Asian, Black/ African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a residents.

**Action 5.2:** Oregon's outdoor recreation providers should prioritize adding drive-in tent sites, cabins, yurts, and drive-in group sites to serve the camping needs of Asian, Black/African American, Mixed Race, and Hispanic/Latino/a residents.

**Action 5.3:** Municipal recreation providers should prioritize adding more clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, parks, and recreation areas, directional signs and details about trails at the trailhead, accessibility, and opportunities for people with disabilities, and nature and wildlife viewing areas to increase recreation engagement by minority racial/ethnic residents.

**Action 5.4:** Dispersed-area recreation providers should prioritize adding more clean and well-maintained facilities, restrooms, free-of-charge recreation opportunities, nature and wildlife viewing areas, parks and recreation areas, accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities, directional signs and details about trails at the trailhead, and

lighting and/or security cameras in key places to increase recreation engagement by minority racial/ethnic residents.

**Action 5.5:** Municipal recreation providers should examine how well minority racial/ethnic communities are being served by current farmers' markets, community gardens, outdoor sports (youth and adult), outdoor concerts and movies, educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours), functional strength training (training the body for activities performed in daily life), and quiet zones for reading, meditating, or games (e.g., chess, cards) in their service areas.

**Action 5.6:** Outdoor recreation providers must promote a sense of belonging and safety for all communities. For instance, recreation providers can make progress toward this goal by incorporating a thorough history of diverse communities' relationships to recreation areas in interpretative materials and memorials, partnering with supportive organizations to host events serving and celebrating diverse communities, and identifying ways to take appropriate action when any residents report harmful encounters with others while using recreation areas.

**Action 5.7:** Outdoor recreation providers should continue promoting internal and external organizational diversity to encourage a sense of belonging in the outdoors.

**Action 5.8:** Recreation providers should consider opportunities for parks to serve as venues for cultural events and festivals that are important to residents in both close-to-home and dispersed settings. It is recommended that recreation providers enhance their marketing for new and existing events and ensure they are accessible to the intended audiences, including multiple language publications, disseminating information through outside organizations and their media, or sharing event announcements on culturally diverse online platforms.

**Action 5.9:** Recreation providers should publish detailed information on the accessibility of all features in outdoor areas and the information should be available online and on-site at recreation areas.

**Action 5.10:** Recreation providers should seek out transportation assistance by working with ride-share companies, city transit authorities, charter bus

companies, local schools, and/or community-based organizations.

**Action 5.11:** Recreation providers should consider programs such as outdoor education and training, guided hikes, nature walks, or other activities that promote outdoor recreation for households from diverse racial/ethnic communities.

**Action 5.12:** Recreation providers should consider offering low-cost equipment rentals to support outdoor recreation participation among minority racial/ethnic residents.

**Action 5.13:** Recreation providers should increase community engagement with underserved racial/ethnic communities in the process of recreation planning. Recreation providers should collaborate with community partners such as diversity advocacy groups, schools, non-profit organizations, churches, youth organizations, and other community groups that serve diverse racial/ethnic communities. This type of action will enable recreation providers to better understand these residents' needs when developing, monitoring, and evaluating outdoor recreation programs.

## **Take Actions to Balance Conservation and Recreation at Outdoor Areas in Oregon**

Many places in the Oregon outdoors have seen record visitation in recent years. The growth in outdoor recreation should continue to be encouraged due to the resulting health and economic benefits. However, higher usage of outdoor areas can also lead to a "tragedy of the commons" in which crowding and natural resource degradation diminish visitor experiences to the extent that they decrease outdoor recreation participation. The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses provide evidence that the problems associated with high visitation are present in Oregon. To improve this situation, outdoor recreation providers must seek a balance between conservation and recreation that maximizes visitor experience while minimizing environmental degradation so that current and future generations are able to enjoy the full benefits of outdoor recreation.



Combining insights from land manager experiences, the Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey, the Oregon Park and Recreation Provider Survey, and the SCORP Advisory Committee, the 2025–2029 SCORP report offers management recommendations to outdoor recreation providers to help protect natural resources and visitor experiences.

**Action 6.1:** Oregon Parks and Recreation Department will provide priority in grant programs for projects that protect natural resources and visitor experiences by addressing either crowding or natural resource impacts associated with outdoor recreation.

**Action 6.2:** Recreation providers should promote outdoor practices and principles to minimize visitor impacts. The education programs should particularly focus on the top natural resource priorities identified by residents: reducing trash and minimizing fire risk.

**Action 6.3:** Recreation providers should use their web presence to provide information about crowding and encourage visitors to explore less-busy locations. When recommending locations, it is important to identify areas that have the facilities and amenities to support more visitors, such as restrooms, nature and wildlife viewing areas, trails, opportunities for people with disabilities, and lighting/security cameras in key places.

**Action 6.4:** Recreation providers should implement timed-entry systems, reservation requirements, and permit requirements to manage crowding when necessary. When these actions are implemented, providers must work with the public, partners, and local communities to develop strategies to effectively disseminate information. Given these kinds of systems can pose a barrier to participation by traditionally underserved communities described above, their application needs to be tailored with equity in mind.

**Action 6.5:** Recreation providers should examine ways to adapt current infrastructure to address crowding and natural resource impacts. Establishing 1-way directional trails could potentially reduce natural resource impacts, user conflict, and perceived crowding without reducing the number of user groups with access to the trails. Seasonal closures can also be employed to protect habitats during vulnerable times and to allow wildlife to thrive when recreation demand is low.

**Action 6.6:** Recreation providers should pursue larger investment projects that can reduce natural resource impacts and perceived crowding. Examples of these projects that are most supported by residents include making walking/biking between different parks safer, securing new areas for outdoor recreation, and expanding recreation opportunities in existing areas (e.g., new campgrounds, trails, facilities in current parks).

**Action 6.7:** Recreation providers should engage with local communities, user groups, tourism entities, and nearby park and transportation authorities to develop collaborative solutions to managing crowds and protecting resources. The management actions should be tested with pilot programs, monitored for effectiveness, and assessed with public and stakeholder feedback before there is long-term application.

A hiker enjoying the view at Milo McIver State Park.





## ► CHAPTER 11

# LWCF Open Project Selection Process Review & Scoring

### Introduction

In compliance with federal regulations, Oregon has developed an Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) that provides objective criteria and standards for grant selection. These standards are explicitly based on Oregon's priority needs for the acquisition and development of outdoor recreation resources as identified in the 2025–2029 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The OPSP connects SCORP to the use of Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) grants to meet high-priority outdoor recreation resource needs. The OPSP also assures equal opportunity for all eligible project applicants and all sectors of the general public to participate in the benefits of the LWCF State Assistance Program and to affirmatively address and meet priority recreation needs. Oregon has developed a priority rating system for selecting projects that ensures the fair and equitable evaluation of all projects and a project selection process that evaluates and selects projects based on quality and conformance with its priority rating system.

The LWCF OPSP criteria point distribution is summarized below.

OPRD will accept grant applications at a minimum of once every two years. Each grant cycle will be announced through a press release, an email to the grants email distribution list, a post on the OPRD Grants website, and at grants workshops hosted by OPRD. Potential applicants can also receive guidance on the application and selection process through grants workshops, the OPRD Grants website, and one-on-one conversations with

### LWCF Grant Rating Criteria Point Summary

Criteria Type	Possible Points
<b>1. Technical Review</b>	0
<b>2. SCORP Criteria</b>	
A. Consistency with Statewide Priorities	0–20
B. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Priorities	0–10
C. Accessibility Accommodations	0–5
D. Balancing Conservation and Recreation	0–5
E. Local Needs and Benefits	0–25
F. Physical Activity Benefits	0–5
G. Universal Design / Inclusive Outdoor Recreation Opportunities Criteria	0–10
H. Need for Major Rehabilitation	0–5
<b>3. Community Support Criteria</b>	0–5
<b>4. Financial Commitment Criteria</b>	0–10
<b>5. Sustainability Criteria</b>	0–5
<b>6. Readiness to Proceed Criteria</b>	0–5
<b>7. Discretionary Committee Criteria</b>	0–15
<b>TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>125</b>

OPRD Grants staff. Up-to-date information on grant opportunities is available at the OPRD Grants website: <https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/GRA/Pages/GRA-overview.aspx>.

## 1. Technical Review

As part of the LWCF grant evaluation process, Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) grant personnel conduct a technical review of all grant applications. National Park Service (NPS) may participate in the technical review process. Each submitted grant application packet must include all the materials requested in the current Land and Water Conservation Fund Oregon Grants Manual. Only eligible or complete applications will qualify to compete for grant funding in the current cycle. Staff will contact the project applicant to explain why their application was not accepted.

### Project Priority Scoring System

Projects presented to OPRD for grant funding that satisfy the requirements of the application technical review will be scored by Oregon Outdoor Recreation Committee (OORC) members according to the criteria, rating factors, and points shown in the following “Project Priority Scoring System.” A project’s final score will be calculated as an average of the sum of all individual committee member scores. The highest possible score for a project will be 125 points. Eighty-five of the 125 possible points are tied to specific priorities identified in the 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP. The priority rank of a project will depend on its score relative to other projects and in relation to the amount of LWCF grant funds available each year.

If OPRD does not receive enough qualified project applications to obligate all available funding, at the Director’s discretion, funds may be used in the next grant round, offered to eligible projects from the Local Government Grant Program ranking list, or used for eligible OPRD projects. OPRD may honor requests to amend projects to change project scope without further OPSP competition. OPRD may also honor requests to increase the cost of a project, including the grant amount, without further OPSP competition.

## Application Technical Review

OPRD will support high-quality outdoor recreation grant projects that have a reasonable likelihood of being funded. Project applicants are encouraged to contact OPRD grant staff with questions regarding the LWCF grant application process. New applicants who have not received prior LWCF funding are encouraged to participate in the program. Due to the large number of requests for LWCF funds, OPRD staff will review submitted applications to determine if the project applicant and proposed project meet the minimum requirements for LWCF grant funding. No scoring points will be awarded for the application technical review. The following are factors that will be considered in the application technical review.

**A. Grant Performance and Compliance.** The successful completion of projects in a timely and efficient manner is an important goal of the LWCF grant program. A project applicant’s past performance in effectively meeting the administrative guidelines of the program is also an important factor in evaluating performance and compliance.

- a. The project applicant is on schedule with all active OPRD-administered grant projects.
- b. The project applicant is in compliance with applicable guidelines at previously assisted project sites (e.g., no unresolved conversions, overhead utility lines, maintenance issues, or public access restrictions).

OR

- c. The project applicant has never received an OPRD-administered grant.

### B. General Project Suitability/Minimum Program Requirements.

Since LWCF grant funding is limited, OPRD wants to ensure that all proposed projects are a good fit with the program’s intent and meet minimum program requirements.

- a. Is the project a good fit for this particular grant program? If not, is there another grant program that would provide a better fit?
- b. Is the project’s budget well-researched and complete? Does it anticipate the time needed to navigate the application process and complete the project?

- c. Is the scope of work appropriate and complete? Does it follow “best practices” and incorporate the use of proven materials and products?
- d. Has the applicant demonstrated that they are can complete a project of this size and scope?
- e. Has the applicant demonstrated that this project is a priority in their community, that it has strong public support, and that an adequate public process has been followed in selecting it?

**C. Accessibility Compliance.** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law ensuring equal access to park and recreational facilities and services. Title II of the ADA prohibits state and local governments from discriminating on the basis of disability. In Oregon, there is a need to retrofit existing facilities constructed before current ADA accessibility requirements were in place. Additionally, the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) is a law that requires access to facilities that are designed, built, or altered with federal funds or leased by federal agencies.

Staff review that the project applicant has a board or city council adopted/approved ADA Transition Plan or an ADA Site Evaluation<sup>10</sup>.

**D. Readiness to Proceed.** OPRD intends to ensure that available LWCF grant funds are used in a timely manner and that appropriate local land use and consistent zoning are applied to the property once funding is awarded to a project applicant.

- a. **Planning/Design Status.** The project applicant has demonstrated, through sufficient documentation:
  - Land use compatibility (by providing a land use compatibility statement).
  - Construction or concept plan completed.
- b. **Acquisition Status\*.** The project applicant has demonstrated, through sufficient documentation:
  - Completed appraisal.
  - Proof of willing seller or donor.

- Land use compatibility by providing a land use compatibility statement.
- Can the sponsor demonstrate adequate legal ability to ensure the site is managed for public outdoor recreation purposes in perpetuity?

*\*Note: Acquisition Status does not apply to rehab/development projects.*

## 2. SCORP Criteria (0–85 Points)

OORC members will determine a value from 0 to 85 points based on the information provided by the applicant for addressing one or more of the eight SCORP priorities (A–H), demonstrating that the project satisfies high-priority needs identified within their jurisdiction through the SCORP needs assessment or local planning efforts.

(Note: The 2025–2029 SCORP effort included surveys of Oregon outdoor recreation providers and Oregon residents to identify outdoor recreation facilities and amenities that land managers should invest in for the future. The SCORP criteria focus on ranking priorities relevant to eligible projects because some items in the survey questions are not eligible for funding. In addition, priorities for SCORP criteria are identified for both close-to-home and dispersed area projects. Applicants with projects located within community boundaries (located within an urban grown boundary (UGB), unincorporated community boundary, or a Tribal Community) are instructed to use close-to-home priorities, and applicants with projects located outside of these boundaries should use dispersed-setting priorities. There are some circumstances (e.g., lack of available land or high cost of land within the UGB) where recreation providers may choose to locate recreation facilities outside of community boundaries that are specifically intended to serve the close-to-home needs of the nearby community (e.g., regional park, trails, or water access sites). In such cases, OPRD will consider the use of close-to-home priorities by project applicants. For such consideration, the project applicant must make the case for why the project is intended for primary use by the population within the nearby community.

<sup>10</sup> If the project applicant does not have an approved ADA Transition Plan, the applicant needs to conduct an ADA Site Evaluation for the project. An ADA Site Evaluation should identify and propose how to fix problems that prevent people with disabilities from gaining equal access to programs, services, and activities. Grant program staff will provide a tool kit for ADA Site Evaluation upon request.



Such projects must be within a reasonably short distance of the community being served.)

## A. Consistency with Statewide Priorities (0–20 points)

The 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP effort included an analysis to identify priority projects using the following two methods. Please identify if the project satisfies needs identified by one or both of these methods.

- **Public recreation provider identified need (See Table 11.1).** The first method involved a survey of Oregon public recreation providers to identify priority projects for the distribution of LWCF funds for both close-to-home areas (located within an urban growth boundary (UGB), unincorporated community boundary, or a Tribal Community) and for dispersed areas (located outside of these boundaries). If the project is located within a UGB, unincorporated community boundary, or a Tribal Community, use the close-to-home area priorities. Projects outside of these areas will use the dispersed-area priorities. A map clearly identifying the project location and with the UGB, unincorporated community boundary, or Tribal Community boundary drawn on it must be submitted.
- **Oregon resident identified need (See Table 11.2).** The second method was a component of the statewide survey of Oregon residents. Residents were asked to rate several items for investment by park and forest agencies for both close-to-home and for dispersed areas. A map clearly identifying the project location and UGB or unincorporated community boundary or Tribal community boundary drawn on it must be submitted.

## B. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Priorities (0–10 points)

One of the purposes of recent Oregon SCORP reports has been to provide greater information regarding equity in outdoor recreation in the state. The 2025–2029 SCORP report builds on previous reports by evaluating specific differences in recreation behaviors, priorities, motivations, and constraints for underserved populations, including low-income

residents and residents from Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, and Mixed Race backgrounds. The report has highlighted that key differences in recreation behaviors for these groups are likely explained by differences in constraints to recreation rather than different motivations or activity preferences. Therefore, the intent of this criteria is to award points to applicants who demonstrate a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion by lowering barriers to outdoor recreation. This commitment can be shown by addressing at least one of the following categories (a–d).

### a. Outdoor Recreation Needs of The Low-Income Population

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal that low-income Oregon residents are underserved in outdoor recreation participation, consistent with findings in the 2019–23 Oregon SCORP. Compared to Oregonians with middle and high incomes, the proportion of low-income Oregonians who participate in outdoor recreation is lower. Low-income Oregon residents also participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year and have a lower participation rate than the Oregon population in most activities.

OPRD would like to encourage the development of opportunities for **low-income residents** across the state. To be considered for scoring points for the **low-income** criterion, the project must satisfy one or more of the needs identified in Table 11.3.

### b. Outdoor Recreation Needs of Underserved Racial/Ethnic Communities

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal clear differences in outdoor recreation participation across Asian, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latino/a, Mixed Race, and White populations in Oregon. Mixed Race and White populations report outdoor recreation participation levels like that of the Oregon general population, while Asian and Black/African American residents participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year than the general population. In terms of specific outdoor

recreation activities, the Asian and Black/ African American populations each have a lower participation rate than the Oregon population for most activities. There is also evidence that the Hispanic/Latino/a population may be underserved in terms of total outdoor recreation times per year, even though this group participates in more specific activities than other Oregonians. Low response numbers limited the inferential power of data for some racial/ethnic groups, including individuals identifying as “American Indian or Alaska Native” and “Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.” Although the specific needs and priorities of all racial and ethnic groups are not included in the 2025–2029 SCORP, recreation providers are encouraged to reflect on their communities’ diversity and identify ways to best support all residents.

OPRD would like to encourage the development of opportunities for underserved racial/ethnic communities across the state. To be considered for scoring points for this criterion, the project must satisfy one or more of the needs identified in Tables 11.4–11.7.

**c. Outdoor Recreation Needs of Additional Underserved Communities**

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses reveal that additional demographic groups may also be underserved in terms of outdoor recreation participation. For example, individuals over 60 tend to participate less often than individuals under 60. Lower participation is also common for rural residents compared to urban and suburban residents. OPRD would like to encourage the development of opportunities for all underserved demographic groups across the state.

To be considered for scoring points for this criterion, the project must satisfy one or more needs of an underserved demographic group that is not included in either item a. or item b. Tables 11.8 and 11.9 display the needs identified for residents over 60 and those living in rural areas. You may also consult the Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey

report as a reference for identifying the needs of the particular group the project serves. If the targeted demographic group’s needs are not identified in the Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey, please describe how the needs have been identified through citizen involvement, such as public workshops, public meetings, or surveys.

**d. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategy**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion strategies direct organizations to address inequity in the communities they serve; ensure diverse representation in the planning and decision-making process, and promote welcoming environments for all visitors, employees, and volunteers.

The committee will consider if the project applicant is working towards or has an inclusion strategy. If applicable, The applicant may also describe how their strategy or work towards a strategy relates to this proposed project.

**C. Accessibility Accommodations (0–5 points)**

The SCORP Oregon resident survey identified that about one quarter (25%) of respondents indicated that they or someone in their household had a disability. The survey responses also reveal that Oregon households with disabilities are underserved in terms of outdoor recreation participation. Compared to households without disabilities, the proportion of households with disabilities that participate in outdoor recreation is lower in Oregon, and these households also participate in outdoor recreation fewer times per year. Furthermore, the rate of participation is lower for most activities.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a law ensuring equal access to parks and recreation facilities and services for people with disabilities. The ADA Standards establish design requirements for the construction and alteration of facilities subject to the law. These enforceable standards apply to places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities. OPRD encourages disability accommodation actions that go beyond the scope of ADA requirements.

Priority need is demonstrated at the statewide level for households with disabilities. To be considered for scoring points for the accessibility accommodations criterion, the project must satisfy one or more of the needs identified in Table 11.10.

## **D. Balancing Conservation and Recreation (0–5 points)**

Many places in the Oregon outdoors have seen record visitation in recent years. The growth in outdoor recreation should continue to be encouraged due to the associated health and economic benefits. However, higher usage of outdoor areas can also lead to a “tragedy of the commons” in which crowding and natural resource degradation diminish visitor experiences to the extent that they decrease outdoor recreation participation. The 2023 Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey responses provide evidence that the problems associated with high visitation are present in Oregon. To improve this situation, outdoor recreation providers must seek a balance between conservation and recreation that maximizes visitor experience while minimizing environmental degradation so that current and future generations are able to enjoy the full benefits of outdoor recreation.

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey asked residents to rate their level of support for management strategies that can reduce natural resource impacts and perceived crowding. Securing new areas for outdoor recreation and expanding opportunities in existing areas are examples of some of the most strongly supported actions by residents. Acquisition projects may meet this criterion as a means of securing new areas for outdoor recreation; development and/or rehabilitation projects may meet this criterion by expanding opportunities in existing recreation areas. Applicants may also refer to the 2025–2029 SCORP report titled “Balancing Conservation and Recreation” for additional examples of how outdoor recreation providers can help protect natural resources and visitor experiences.

To be considered for scoring points for this criterion, explain how this project could address crowding while also decreasing the burden on current natural resources.

## **E. Local Needs and Benefits (0–25 points)**

Project applicants are strongly encouraged to develop project applications that meet high priority needs of their jurisdiction. Need can be demonstrated through results of the SCORP needs assessments (item a.), coordinated, long-range planning with a minimum of a 5-year planning horizon (item b.), or through a substantive public involvement process (item c.). If the project isn’t identified as a county-level need by the SCORP needs assessment, local need should be demonstrated through the project’s inclusion in a current local planning document, or by describing the project’s public involvement process (item c.).

### **a. SCORP Needs Assessment**

The 2025–2029 Oregon SCORP effort included an analysis to identify priority projects using the following two methods. Please identify if the project satisfies needs identified by one or both of these methods.

- Public recreation provider identified need. The first method involved a survey of Oregon public recreation providers to identify relevant priority projects for the distribution of LWCF funds for both close-to-home areas (located within an urban growth boundary (UGB), unincorporated community boundary, or a Tribal Community) and for dispersed areas (located outside of these boundaries). Data were collected and analyzed to identify need for each of Oregon’s 36 counties. Results are included in Tables 11.11–11.46. If the project is located within a UGB, unincorporated community boundary, or a Tribal Community use the close-to-home area priorities. Projects outside of these areas will use the dispersed-area priorities. A map clearly identifying the project location and UGB or unincorporated community boundary or Tribal Community boundary drawn on it must be submitted.
- Oregon resident identified need. The second method is a component of the statewide survey of Oregon residents. Residents were



asked to rate several items for investment by park and forest agencies for both close-to-home and for dispersed areas. Results are included in Tables 11.47–11.50. For close-to-home projects, priority need is identified at the urban, suburban, and rural areas. Please select one of these three community types that best describes your service area. For dispersed projects, priority need is identified at the statewide level.

**b. Coordinated, Long-range Planning**

The extent to which the project will satisfy priority needs, as identified in a current local planning document (park and recreation master plan, city or county comprehensive plan, trails master plan, transportation system plan or a bicycle and pedestrian plan).

**c. Public Involvement Process**

If the project is not included in a current local planning document, describe the public involvement effort that led to the selection of the project including citizen involvement through public workshops, public meetings, surveys, and local citizen advisory committees during the project's planning process.

## **F. Physical Activity Benefits (0–5 points)**

The Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey and the estimates of energy expenditures and Cost of Illness savings identified in the Oregon SCORP physical activity study are consistent with findings that the lived environment influences people's physical activity participation and that parks and recreation providers can play a key role in increasing their physical activity participation. This is particularly relevant in close-to-home settings where physical activity benefits most often occur. Priority need is demonstrated at the statewide level and for high-priority physical activity locations of the state. Statewide physical activity needs are identified by outdoor recreation infrastructure that supports high-priority activities. High-priority activities are activities with low participation in a relatively large number of

counties, moderate to high energy expenditure, higher than average minutes per user occasion, and higher than the average cost of illness savings per user occasion. High-priority locations for physical activity are identified as counties that have disproportionately lower participation rates in numerous activity categories, both inside and outside communities. The highest number of points will be awarded to applicants demonstrating need at both the statewide level and within high-priority areas of the state.

**a. Statewide Physical Activity Needs**

Please identify if the project satisfies one of the five physical activity infrastructure priorities included in Table 11.51.

**b. Physical Activity Priority Counties**

Please identify if the project is in one of the physical activity priority counties listed in Table 11.52.

## **G. Universal Design / Inclusive Outdoor Recreation Opportunities Criteria (0–10 Points)**

Universal design attempts to meet the needs of all people, and includes those of all ages, physical abilities, sensory abilities, and cognitive skills. It includes using integrated and mainstream products, environmental features, and services without needing adaptation or specialized design. The 2025–2029 SCORP recommends that park amenities and features should be planned with universal design principles. This approach can help address barriers related to personal health and accessibility that were found to be especially prominent for low-income residents and households with disabilities.

Please describe how your project goes beyond ADA and strives to incorporate Universal Design concepts and design considerations.<sup>11</sup> OORC committee members will determine a value from 0 to 10 points based on the information provided by the applicant related to use of Universal Design considerations in the project.

<sup>11</sup> For acquisition projects where development of outdoor recreation facilities is planned at a future date, please describe how your project will be planned to go beyond ADA requirements and incorporate Universal Design concepts and design considerations. During the period between acquisition and development, the property should be open for public recreation purposes on a reasonable, limited basis (e.g., appropriate to environmental considerations and achieved with minimum public investment).

## **H. Need for Major Rehabilitation (0–5 points)**

The 2023 Oregon recreation provider survey asked respondents to identify the degree to which ten funding issues were challenges or concerns for their agency. Both within UGB and dispersed-setting providers reported that the top funding issue was rehabilitation/replacement/maintenance of parks and recreation areas and facilities. Major rehabilitation projects involve the restoration or partial reconstruction of eligible recreation areas and facilities, which is necessitated by one or more of the following:

- The recreation area or facility is beyond its normal life expectancy,
- The recreation area or facility is destroyed by fire, natural disaster or vandalism,
- The recreation area or facility does not meet health and safety codes/requirements,
- The recreation area or facility requires rehabilitation to ensure critical natural resource protection, and/or
- Changing recreation needs (e.g., changes in demographics within the service area) dictate a change in the type of recreation area or facility provided.

OORC members will determine a value from 0 to 5 points based on the information provided for the project by the applicant for addressing this priority.

## **3. Community Support Criteria (0–5 Points)**

OORC committee members will determine a value from 0 to 5 points based on information provided by the applicant related to the degree to which the project demonstrates broad community support for the project is in place.

Project applicants should demonstrate broad community support for the project by providing information such as letters of support and/or survey analysis. Examples of how applicants could show broad community support include results or summary documentation of recent community or neighborhood meetings concerning the project; letters of support from park users, neighbors, and/or a variety of project stakeholders; community fundraising through grassroots efforts for the project.

## **4. Financial Commitment Criteria (0–10 Points)**

OORC committee members will determine a value from 0 to 10 points based on information provided by the applicant related to the degree to which the project demonstrates that financing is in place for successful completion.

Project applicants should demonstrate that finances are available for the project by showing agency budget information or other documents demonstrating financial commitment to the project. What is the source of local matching funds? Project applicants are encouraged to develop applications involving partnerships between the applicant, other agencies, or non-profit organizations. Project applicants are also encouraged to demonstrate solid financial commitment to providing necessary project maintenance and upkeep. To what extent does the project involve partnerships with other agencies or groups? Is the funding from other agencies or groups guaranteed? To what extent are local matching funds available? What is the local commitment to the project from the local community through donations? To what extent has enough money been budgeted to successfully complete the work?

Note: Donations of land, labor, equipment, or materials cannot occur until written authorization to proceed has been received from OPRD.

## **5. Sustainability Criteria (0–5 Points)**

Sustainability means using, developing, protecting, and managing resources in a manner that enables people to meet current and future needs from the multiple perspectives of environmental, economic, and community objectives. For more on sustainability, refer to the current Land and Water Conservation Fund Oregon Grants Manual (<https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/GRA/Pages/GRA-lwcf.aspx>).

The committee will consider to what extent the project applicant describes intent, strategies, and long-term management plans. Examples may include but are not limited to sustainable design methods, projects that will have a minimal impact on the surrounding ecosystem, and projects that will result in user protection of natural resources such as water

quality/conservation, plant conservation, wildlife conservation, energy conservation, pollution control, and environmental protection and restoration.

### 6. Readiness to Proceed Criteria (0-5 Points)

OORC committee members will determine a value from 0 to 5 points based on information provided by the applicant related to the degree to which the project is ready to proceed based on the status of zoning, design plans, and required permits.

Project applicants should demonstrate that the project is compatible with land use requirements and the degree to which site plans, construction plans, or other planning documents have been completed. What is the status of the required permits? Project applicants are also encouraged to demonstrate how they will complete the next steps in order to complete the project in a timely manner.

### 7. Discretionary Committee Member Criteria (0-15 Points)

The OORC membership is representative of state geographic regions, agencies, and communities. This assessment allows committee members to bring their knowledge of statewide and local recreation patterns, resources, and needs into consideration. The determination of points awarded is an individual decision based on informed judgment. OORC committee members will determine a value from 0 to 15 points. Applicants do not need to provide any additional material for this committee member review.

Table 11.1 Statewide Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Community trail system	Restrooms
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Children’s playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Interpretive displays
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Day-use hiking trails
Sports fields (soccer, baseball, football)	Tent campgrounds and facilities (car camping)

Table 11.2 Statewide Priorities—Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey

Close-to-home Priorities	Dispersed-area priorities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities	Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead	Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Nature and wildlife viewing areas	Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Natural/dirt or other soft surface walking trails	Natural/dirt or other soft surface walking trails



**Table 11.3 Low-Income Population—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide drive-in tent campsites
Provide cabin and yurt sites
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Farmers' markets
Community gardens
Outdoor concerts and movies
Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

**Table 11.4 Asian Population—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide drive-in tent campsites
Provide cabin and yurt sites
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Farmers' markets
Community gardens
Outdoor sports (youth and adult)
Quiet zones for reading, meditating, or games (e.g., chess, cards)
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Public pools and/or waterparks

Person fishing at Minam State Recreation Area.





**Table 11.5 Black/African American Population—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide cabin and yurt sites
Provide drive-in group sites
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Children’s playgrounds and family-friendly areas
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)
Farmers’ markets
Community gardens
Outdoor concerts and movies
Functional strength training (training the body for activities performed in daily life)
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas

**Table 11.6 Mixed Race Population—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide drive-in tent campsites
Provide cabin and yurt sites
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Restrooms
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Farmers’ markets
Community gardens
Outdoor concerts and movies
Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Natural/dirt or other soft surface walking trails

Bike trail bridge at Fort Stevens State Park.





**Table 11.7 Hispanic/Latino/a Population—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide drive-in tent campsites
Provide cabin and yurt sites
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Restrooms
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Children’s playgrounds and family-friendly areas
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Farmers’ markets
Community gardens
Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)
Outdoor sports (youth and adult)
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead

**Table 11.8 Age 60+ Population—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide drive-in tent campsites
Provide cabin and yurt sites
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Farmers’ markets
Seniors’ activity centers
Community gardens
Outdoor sports (youth and adult)
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

Whitewater rafting at Milo McIver State Park. (Mark Gamba)





**Table 11.9 Rural Population—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide drive-in tent campsites
Provide cabin and yurt sites
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Farmers' markets
Community gardens
Outdoor sports (youth and adult)
Seniors' activity centers
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

**Table 11.10 Households with disabilities—  
SCORP Funding Priorities**

<b>Camping Opportunities</b>
Provide drive-in tent campsites (ADA accessible)
Provide cabin and yurt sites (ADA accessible)
<b>Close-to-Home Priorities Within Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
<b>Community Recreation Program Needs</b>
Farmers' markets
Community gardens
Seniors' activity centers
Outdoor concerts and movies
Educational activities (e.g., environmental, health, computer, orienteering and geocaching, historical tours)
<b>Dispersed-Setting Priorities Outside Urban Growth Boundaries</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas

**Table 11.11 Baker County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Community vegetable garden areas (community gardens)	Interpretive displays
Non-motorized boat launches and support facilities	Day-use hiking trails
Quiet zones for reading, meditating, or games (e.g., chess, cards)	Equestrian trails/trailheads

**Table 11.12 Benton County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Interpretive displays
Restrooms	Restrooms
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Picnic areas and shelters for large groups

**Table 11.13 Clackamas County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Acquisition of parklands for developed recreation	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Acquisition of trail corridors and rights of way	Day-use hiking trails
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.14 Clatsop County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Restrooms
Restrooms	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.15 Columbia County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	RV/trailer campgrounds and facilities
Restrooms	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.16 Coos County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Dog off-leash areas/dog parks	Restrooms

**Table 11.17 Crook County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Trails connected to public lands	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Urban bike paths (separate from street traffic)	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.18 Curry County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
RV dump stations	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Equestrian trails/trailheads	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Acquisition of natural open space	Restrooms

**Table 11.19 Deschutes County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Trails connected to public lands	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Mountain biking (single track) trails/areas	Interpretive displays
Restrooms	Day-use hiking trails

**Table 11.20 Douglas County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Showers	Long-distance bicycle routes

**Table 11.21 Gilliam County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Interpretive displays	Day-use hiking trails
Showers	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.22 Grant County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Tent campgrounds and facilities
Directional signage and details about trails and locations	RV/trailer campgrounds and facilities

**Table 11.23 Harney County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Nature study/wildlife watching sites	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Urban bike paths (separate from street traffic)	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Directional signage and details about trails and locations	Mountain biking trails/areas

**Table 11.24 Hood River County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Dog off-leash areas/dog parks	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups	Interpretive displays
Picnic areas and shelters for large visitor groups	Mountain biking trails/areas



**Table 11.25 Jackson County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Restrooms
Sports fields (soccer, baseball, football)	Day-use hiking trails
Community trail system	Long-distance bicycle routes

**Table 11.26 Jefferson County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Community trail system	Restrooms
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.27 Josephine County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Urban bike paths (separate from street traffic)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Restrooms	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.28 Klamath County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Restrooms	Day-use hiking trails

**Table 11.29 Lake County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Golf courses	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Picnic areas and shelters for small groups
Skateboard parks	Picnic areas and shelters for large groups

**Table 11.30 Lane County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms	Restrooms
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Trails connecting adjacent communities	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.31 Lincoln County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Restrooms
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Nature study/wildlife watching sites

**Table 11.32 Linn County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Mountain biking trails/areas
Community trail system	Interpretive displays
Restrooms	Day-use hiking trails

**Table 11.33 Malheur County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.34 Marion County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms	Interpretive displays
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Trails connected to public lands	Restrooms

**Table 11.35 Morrow County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Marinas	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Restrooms	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.36 Multnomah County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Trails connecting adjacent communities	Interpretive displays
Directional signage and details about trails and locations	RV dump stations
Interpretive displays	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities

**Table 11.37 Polk County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Community trail system	Mountain biking trails/areas
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Interpretive displays
Acquisition of trail corridors and rights of way	Day-use hiking trails

**Table 11.38 Sherman County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Sports fields	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Restrooms	Day-use hiking trails
Interpretive displays	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.39 Tillamook County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Trails connecting adjacent communities	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Restrooms	Restrooms
Community trail system	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.40 Umatilla County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Outdoor sports courts (pickleball, tennis, basketball, hockey, volleyball, in-line skating, hockey)	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Children's playgrounds and play areas built with manufactured structures like swing sets, slides, and climbing apparatuses	Connecting trails into larger trail systems
Community trail system	Interpretive displays

**Table 11.41 Union County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>	<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Community trail system	Day-use hiking trails
Trails connected to public lands	Interpretive displays
Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups	Equestrian trails/trailheads



Table 11.42 Wallowa County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey

Close-To-Home Priorities	Dispersed-Area Priorities
RV/trailer campgrounds and facilities	RV/trailer campgrounds and facilities
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (i.e., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)	Restrooms

Table 11.43 Wasco County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey

Close-To-Home Priorities	Dispersed-Area Priorities
Dog off-leash areas/dog parks	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Sports fields (soccer, baseball, football)	Interpretive displays
Trails connected to public lands	Mountain biking trails/areas

Table 11.44 Washington County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey

Close-To-Home Priorities	Dispersed-Area Priorities
Community trail system	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Outdoor pool/spray park	Restrooms
Restrooms	Connecting trails into larger trail systems

Table 11.45 Wheeler County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey

Close-To-Home Priorities	Dispersed-Area Priorities
Restrooms	Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities
Interpretive displays	Interpretive displays
Picnic areas and shelters for small visitor groups	Restrooms

Table 11.46 Yamhill County Funding Priorities—Oregon Provider Survey

Close-To-Home Priorities	Dispersed-Area Priorities
Children's playgrounds and play areas made of natural materials (logs, water, sand, boulders, hills, trees)	Outdoor swimming pool/spray park
Sports fields (soccer, baseball, football)	Visitor center and program facilities
Restrooms	Cabins or yurts with heat, lights, bathroom and kitchen

Table 11.47 Statewide Urban Need: Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey

Close-To-Home Priorities
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

**Table 11.48 Statewide Suburban Need: Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

**Table 11.49 Statewide Rural Need: Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey**

<b>Close-To-Home Priorities</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)
Nature and wildlife viewing areas

**Table 11.50 Statewide Need: Oregon Resident Outdoor Recreation Survey**

<b>Dispersed-Area Priorities</b>
Restrooms
Free-of-charge recreation opportunities
Nature and wildlife viewing areas
Directional signs and details about trails (e.g., distance, difficulty, elevation gain) at the trailhead
Accessibility and opportunities for people with disabilities (e.g., trails for hand cycles or trail chairs)

**Table 11.51 Statewide Physical Activity**

<b>Infrastructure Priorities</b>
Trails for walking, hiking, biking, and rolling
Fields for dog parks, playing sports such as soccer, softball, baseball, football, ultimate frisbee, disc-golf, lacrosse, etc.
Courts for playing sports such as tennis, pickleball, basketball, badminton, futsal, beach volleyball, etc.
Places for nature immersion and nature observation
Places for camping, including RV, tent, and yurts/cabins
Children's playgrounds and family-friendly areas

**Table 11.52 Physical Activity Priority Counties**

Clackamas	Grant	Jefferson	Malheur	Morrow	Sherman	Wheeler
Crook	Hood River	Lincoln	Marion	Polk	Tillamook	Yamhill

Back cover photos. Clockwise, from top left: Cooking S'mores over a campfire. Two people sitting in wheelchairs, with one hugging their river guide after a successful day of kayaking at Milo McIver State Park. A child fishing at Wallowa Lake State Park. A climber at Smith Rock State Park. A group bird watching at L.L. Stub Stewart State Park. A family next to their tent.





# 2025-2029

## Oregon Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan