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WISCONSIN OUTSIDE | March 2024

A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

This winter has been anything but winterlike, and the warm temperatures and lack of snow have impacted businesses that rely on winter recreation. Relief is available for businesses and nonprofits that incurred losses. Last week, Governor Evers shared that affected businesses are eligible to apply for assistance from the U.S. Small Business Administration. For more details, please read the press release [here](#).

Despite this challenging season, we've seen the creativity of outdoor recreation professionals and communities across the state who have pivoted in myriad ways to adapt to the unseasonable conditions. Coupled with the availability of relief, these inspiring stories of successful shifts provide a hopeful note as the winter season comes to a close.

Over the past several years, ski areas – both downhill and cross-country – have invested in snowmaking equipment to help buffer warm winter stretches. Thanks to these preparations and many hours of scenario planning and human labor, the American Birkebeiner welcomed competitors and fans for its 50th anniversary, albeit on an alternate lapped course crafted by truckloads of machine-made snow. By all accounts, [the milestone Birkie](#) was a success, adding an extra day of racing to allow for safe spacing of participants and more opportunities for spectators to see their favorite racer. In Fond du Lac, the Sturgeon Spectacular adjusted and moved the ice fishing festival

from on Lake Winnebago to the streets downtown where [crowds still showed up](#) in droves. In Lake Geneva, [70,000 spectators](#) turned out to watch the snow sculpting and take part in the Winterfest activities. We also heard stories of ATV and UTV clubs that organized rides to patronize businesses that regularly receive hoards of snowmobilers in winter.

In the face of challenge, the outdoor industry comes together to support each other and our communities. It is an honor to work with such a compassionate, innovative and resilient group of partners. Please continue to share how the Office can provide resources, tools and support to advance your work and grow Wisconsin's outdoor industry. In the newsletter below, you'll note a few upcoming opportunities to learn and be inspired.

We look forward to seeing partners at the [Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism](#) in March and invite you to join us for the [Wisconsin Healthy Communities Summit](#) in April.

We hope to see you at one of these events!



Cassie Mordini
Director, Office of Outdoor Recreation

The Office is interested in making industry connections.

Click [here](#) to update your information and help build Wisconsin's outdoor recreation directory.

Wisconsin Outside is a monthly newsletter from the Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation. Please share it with friends or colleagues with a vested interest in Wisconsin's outdoor recreation industry by forwarding this email or [subscribing here](#).

2024 Healthy Communities Summit to Showcase Ideas, Inspiration, Tips & Tools

Registration is now open for the second Wisconsin Healthy Communities Summit! Back by popular demand and co-sponsored by the Office of Outdoor Recreation and the Wisconsin Bike Federation, the summit focuses on the links between cycling, outdoor recreation, health and community engagement. This year's event builds on the conversations had and connections made at the successful inaugural event and will be held Monday, April 29, at the UW-Madison Memorial Union.

The day is chock-full of engaging breakout sessions, insightful speakers and active workshops that will arm participants with inspiration and tools to take back to their communities. Participants can follow one of the tailored tracks throughout the day — Education Empowerment, Changemaker Inspiration or Trail Development Toolbox — or mix and match sessions from each track.

Over lunch, hear [Jessie Singer](#), journalist and author of *There Are No Accidents: The Deadly Rise of Injury and Disaster*. Her powerful delivery inspires change, and her talk will leave attendees with ideas on how communities can design built environments to prevent or reduce the harm of traffic crashes.

Dive deep in the afternoon sessions which, incorporating feedback from the 2022 summit, are structured to be longer, more hands-on and align with the three summit tracks. Learn how to teach safe bicycling, conduct a walk audit or “speed date” with experts at stages along the [WiBike Toolkit](#) for developing new trails.

While the summit is being held in Madison, the scope of lessons learned come from across the state, from urban and rural communities, with representatives from the [Ice Age Trail Alliance](#), [National Interscholastic Cycling Association \(NICA\)](#), [Wisconsin Bike Fed](#), [Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources](#) and [Wisconsin Horse Council](#) as some of the confirmed speakers lending their expertise.

Wisconsin residents and internationally recognized outdoor recreation leaders like Mike Passo, Executive Director of [American Trails](#), and Mike Repyak, Director of Planning and Design for the [International Mountain Biking Association](#), will be on hand to bring expertise from beyond Wisconsin’s borders. More speakers will be announced in March.



Who should attend the summit?

The summit is designed with a wide audience in mind. Community leaders, municipal representatives, educators, recreation enthusiasts and businesses should come ready to learn and share ideas. Themed tracks are tailored to offer something for everyone.

For community champions looking to jump-start a trail project, the Trail Development Toolbox track offers several opportunities to better understand trail development and maintenance. From how to get started to how to get dirty, hear from the experts on bringing your trail idea to life.

The Education Empowerment track features two sessions focused on the Safe Routes to School program, is an opportunity for educators and volunteers to learn more about the community engagement and school-based effort to get more kids walking to school safely.

In the Changemaker Inspiration sessions, those most interested in understanding how to influence policy changes in their cities and towns will find others interested in the same.

Learn more

The Summit offers two registration levels. Lunch is included in the registration. Sponsorship options are available; contact info@wisconsinbikefed.org to learn more. Stick around for happy hour and networking immediately following the sessions.

More information about the summit, registration details and speakers are [available online](#).



Wisconsin's outdoor recreation industry is an impressive combination of businesses, manufacturers, outfitters, guides, destinations and nonprofits. Each month, we share information about the industry so you can get to know your peers across the state and learn how each contributes to the collective success and diversity of the valued outdoor recreation industry in Wisconsin. Here are this month's industry highlights:



Nonprofit: [Wisconsin Coalition of Four Wheel Drives](#)

- The Wisconsin Coalition of Four Wheel Drives is a nonprofit organization of four wheel drive (4WD) enthusiasts working to advance education, legislation and recreational opportunities for 4WD vehicles. Members help facilitate off-road education, sustainable land use and trail projects.



Manufacturer: [The Kayak Cart](#)

- Based in Delavan, The Kayak Cart is a wheeled device for carrying any size of kayak, canoe or rowing shell. It can be stored inside of a kayak or canoe. Products are available for sale online and at several brick-and-mortar stores around Wisconsin.

Guides, Tours, Rentals: [Silver Doctor Fly Fishing](#)

SILVER DOCTOR FLY FISHING



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- Silver Doctor Fly Fishing offers guided walk-and-wade fly fishing day trips on creeks in the Driftless Region, teaching clients how to fly fish, what tackle to use and pro tips for catching fish.

Retailer: [Silly Goose Silent Sports](#)



- Silly Goose Silent Sports is an outdoor retailer based in Park Falls, selling footwear, clothing and accessories, adventure gear for dogs, camping and backpacking equipment, golf gear, winter sports gear, water equipment and more.

Destinations: [Discover Polk County Wisconsin](#)



- Discover Polk County helps visitors discover everything to do in this northwestern Wisconsin county. Find information on how to enjoy the wilderness, trails and water of northern Wisconsin.

Interested in being featured? To be considered, make sure your business or organization is listed in our [Outdoor Business Directory](#). There, you can submit a request to be added or to update your information. If you are already listed, feel free to send us an [email](#) with your interest to be featured in the newsletter.

INDUSTRY & COMMUNITY NEWS

Canoecopia coming to Madison March 8 – 10

Canoecopia is the largest paddlesports consumer event in the world, held annually at the Alliant Energy Center Exposition Hall. With over 100 presentations and clinics, Canoecopia is also an educational event. [Read more here.](#)

Campground hosts needed at state parks

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is looking for volunteer campground hosts for the 2024 summer season. Volunteer and camp at state parks, forests and recreation areas.

[Learn more here.](#)

West Allis Joins List of Bicycle Friendly Communities

First-time applicant West Allis joins the League of American Bicyclists' Bicycle Friendly Communities, as four other Wisconsin communities (Madison, Shorewood, Eau Claire and Verona) were renewed in this round. The program provides incentives, hands-on assistance and award recognition for communities that actively support bicycling through a combination of infrastructure, programs and policies. There are currently 23 Wisconsin Bicycle Friendly Communities. [Read more here.](#)

RESOURCES

Together Outdoors Inclusive Micro-Grant Program applications due March 11.

This \$5,000 - \$10,000 funding opportunity is for small and rural grassroots organizations with projects, events, initiatives and research that lead to a more inclusive and welcoming outdoor recreation environment. [Learn more.](#)

Learn How to Advocate for Trails Where You Live webinar

Want to be a voice for trails and trail networks? The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has all the tools and resources you'll need—no experience necessary! Join one of two sessions on [Tuesday, March 12](#), at 6 p.m. or [Wednesday, March 13](#), at 11 a.m., to learn about the ways you can make a difference for trails in your community.

Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program applications due March 29

ORLP is a nationally competitive program targeting grant assistance to provide new or significantly improved recreation opportunities in urban, disadvantaged communities lacking access to walkable outdoor recreation. Funds can be used for the acquisition and/or development of, or to substantially renovate, public parks and other outdoor recreation spaces. [Learn more here.](#)

Nominate a candidate for the International Snowmobile Hall of Fame

Nominations are accepted annually until April 1. Categories include Inventors, Designers & Manufacturers; Explorers & Adventurers; Trail & Program Developers; Volunteers & Club Organizers; and Publishers & Journalists. [Learn more here.](#)

Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant open

The SS4A program supports the National Roadway Safety Strategy to achieve zero deaths and injuries on roadways and funds the development of action plans, the design and development activities for projects, as well as implementation of projects in an action plan. Multiple deadlines exist for different grant types. The earliest deadline is April 4. [Learn more.](#)

Free webinars for outfitters

A slate of free webinars this spring from America Outdoors will delve into several topics from insurance coverage to managing daily events that can help expand the expertise of outfitters.

[Learn more and register.](#)

ORR call for outdoor recreation economic development needs

The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable is looking for rural communities to share specific needs related to outdoor recreation economy development (planning, funding, infrastructure, marketing, etc.) for an aggregated map for state and federal representatives and agencies to showcase all the communities across the United States seeking support to develop around outdoor recreation. [Add your community to the map.](#)

JOB LISTINGS

Natural Areas Field Technician for Milwaukee County Parks

As a paid intern, help manage 10,000 acres of diverse natural areas within the Milwaukee County Park System. [Applications due March 17.](#)

Wisconsin DNR hiring for Wisconsin state parks and forests

Seasonal opportunities are available at state parks, forests, trails and recreation areas across Wisconsin. [Learn more and apply now.](#)

Door County Adventure Center seasonal positions open

Sixteen seasonal guiding positions open and an adventure park/marketing internship is available. [Read more.](#)

CAMBA hiring for two year-round positions

The Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association has a Development Director and a Trails Director position open now. [Learn more.](#)

Positions available at S&S Cycle

Multiple positions open in the Driftless region to be a part of the future of powersports. [Read more.](#)

Borah Teamwear now hiring

Become a Sewing Machine Operator in Coon Valley making custom sports apparel. Training provided. [Find out more.](#)

This is a new feature for Wisconsin Outside. If you have an outdoor recreation job posting you'd like us to include, please send a link to the posting to orec@travelwisconsin.com.

EVENTS

Fri - Sun March 1 - 3	Fishing - Boating Outdoor Show	Marinette
Fri - Sat March 1 - 2	Bayfield Winter Festival	Bayfield
Sat March 2	Survival Without A Smartphone	Hudson

Fri - Sun March 8 - 10	Bike-O-Rama	Madison
Fri - Sun March 8 - 10	Wisconsin Women Fish For Their Crappies	Hayward
Fri - Fri March 8 - 15	International Women's Day Together We Ride For Equality	Various
Sat March 9	Women's Hike @ Devil's Lake SP	Baraboo
Sat March 9	Candlelight Hike @ Big Foot Beach SP	Lake Geneva
Wed March 13	Hartland Walking Club @ Merton IAT	Hartland
Sat March 16	Tyke Hike @ Lodi Marsh	Lodi
Tues March 19	Outdoor Explorer Series: Rationing and Cooking in the Backcountry	Madison
Thurs March 28	Six Steps to Build a Trail Nation	Virtual
Sat March 29	Spring Adventure Day @ Havenwoods	Milwaukee

Add your events to TravelWisconsin.com to increase your reach. Events should be marketed to a statewide audience or beyond. Read the full criteria [here](#). Login to the Travel Wisconsin database to submit a listing or fill out the [event form here](#). Please also keep the Office up to date on the events, projects and news in your area by adding orec@travelwisconsin.com to your email distribution lists. A few selected events are highlighted here each month.

The Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation is part of the
Wisconsin Department of Tourism

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