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WISCONSIN

— OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION —



A Note from the Director

The Office of Outdoor Recreation was established as a two-year project, and we are extremely grateful to share news that the Joint Committee on Finance voted to renew the Office for another two years. As of this writing, the budget still needs to make its way through the full Assembly and Senate before it lands on the Governor's desk, but we are encouraged by this good forward momentum and vote of confidence in our work. Stay tuned for more updates!

Meanwhile, the busy summer season is already underway, and we expect even more people to be recreating outside this year. During the pandemic, the industry realized the monumental opportunity to engage the new audiences turning to the outdoors. This summer will be critical to seizing that potential to begin cultivating lifelong outdoorists.

Below we've put together some tips and resources for sharing inspiration and ideas with your customers and clients. We also encourage you to utilize the Office's new

website, including the [Outdoor Business Directory](#) and [Research Library](#), to make connections with other partners or find supporting evidence for your next project.

We're also wrapping up National Great Outdoors Month, sharing your nominations that highlight businesses and organizations inspiring adventures and connecting people to the outdoors through recreation.

As the workdays get longer and busier, we're grateful for your dedication as outdoor recreation ambassadors. Together, by supporting individuals on their journeys to experience and care for the outdoors, we're growing the industry.



Mary Monroe Brown
Director, Office of Outdoor Recreation

We're a growing office that wants to talk to all outdoor recreation related businesses & organizations. 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](#).

Inspiration for Wisconsin Exploration

Skyrocketing participation in outdoor recreation was not just a temporary spike last year, it has become a way of life for millions of Americans. As just one indicator, the Wisconsin DNR recorded 15,503 camping nights completed through April 30, 2021, nearly tripling the number of camping nights completed by the same date in 2019. Additionally, interest remains high with more than double the number of completed and pending reservations for the current year as of April 30 over 2019. (Note: Campgrounds were closed from March 20 – June 10, 2020.)

Anticipating that more people want to spend time outdoors this summer, it will be important to share inspiration, ideas, knowledge, and resources with both new

outdoor enthusiasts and lifelong ones to ensure they enjoy a positive outdoor experience.



Here are a few tips and resources we've collected from [TravelWisconsin.com](https://www.travelwisconsin.com):

1. Share some less popular yet stellar spots to explore, especially with those who may be looking to escape the crowds. Start with, "[If you liked that, try this...](#)"
2. Anglers will be searching for their special spot. Here are [10 secret fishing spots in Wisconsin](#).

3. ATV and UTV riding has exploded. Share these [five must-experience ATV trails](#) along with resources to review [regulations and safety education](#).
4. Remember, there's a campsite for every camper:
 - [Rustic campsites off the grid](#)
 - [Waterside campsites to sleep along the shore](#)
 - [State Park campsites with a view](#)
 - [Fun on wheels – RV camping](#)
5. Hiking is more than walking.
 - Birding can give purpose to any hike. Check out these [birding hot spots for beginners](#).
 - Waterfalls offer an exciting reward at the end of a hike. [Chase them in Marinette County](#).
6. Mountain biking offers some heart-pumping activity while exploring nature's beauty. Here are some of the [top mountain biking trails in Wisconsin](#).
7. The [Wisconsin Trail Report](#) is the perfect resource for anyone planning a hiking or biking adventure – lots of trail descriptions with updated conditions located across the state.
8. In the summer, the water is always calling.
 - Suggest these [ocean-like beaches](#) or these [kid-friendly beaches](#).
 - Here are [rivers great for tubing](#) and [for canoeing](#).
 - For the more adventurous or rustic, share these [canoe camping trip ideas](#).
 - For more adrenaline, suggest [Wisconsin's whitewater rafting adventures](#).
 - And these [fan favorites for boating, skiing, and paddling](#) never disappoint, so they're always worth sharing.

In these interactions, pairing inspiration with knowledge about gear or the how-to of activities is often second nature. It's also an opportunity to share safety reminders and outdoor ethics to keep both our human and natural communities safe and healthy. You can find lots of safety and regulation information on the [Wisconsin DNR's website](#) when you search by activity, and for outdoor ethics, visit [Leave No Trace](#) for a wealth of resources.

Here's to a successful summer of cultivating more lifelong outdoorists.



“ What We're Hearing ”

Special Edition: Businesses connecting people to the outdoors

Thank you for helping us celebrate National Great Outdoors Month by recognizing the businesses and organizations within our vibrant outdoor recreation industry. Whether it's a retailer helping a hiker find the right boot, a fishing guide sharing tips and tricks, or a youth camp introducing youngsters to the wonders of nature – these businesses and organizations are the gateway to people discovering joy and an appreciation for the outdoors.

Bikes-n-Boards
rhinelander • wisconsin

A local brick and mortar bike shop, [Bikes-N-Boards](#) of Rhinelander, is outfitting customers for biking, boarding, snowshoeing, and disc golf as well as providing repair and custom build services in its shop. Bikes-N-Boards also believes in building a stronger community through area trail development and has a sister organization, Moustache Sustainable Trail Solutions (MSTS), that has been teaching and building trails in the area for 28 years. Owner Al Jozwiak was recently nominated for a local “Unsung Difference Maker” award. His nominator said, “These trails bring people from all over who want to enjoy the great activities they were designed for. Al is also a huge supporter of youth getting involved in biking and he supports the youth BMX and Mt. Bike teams. He is a great teacher and gets youth involved in the volunteer

trail work. Our community is very fortunate to have Al and his drive to help make this one full of opportunities for people to get out and enjoy nature.”

-Submitted by Rhinelander Area Chamber of Commerce



[Bookworm Gardens](#) in Sheboygan has spent the last ten-plus years inspiring the love of books and nature in the young and young at heart. The botanic garden encourages visitors to explore the great outdoors and promotes literacy in the whimsy of nature. During the 2019 season (May - October), they welcomed over 80,000 visitors who traveled from throughout the region. The core of Bookworm's mission is to inspire nature-based learning, empowering all families to get outside and play.

-Submitted by Kohler Company



The locally owned and family-operated [Fontana Sports Specialties](#) of Madison believes in respecting the outdoors and endeavors to educate and equip their customers with quality products and services for their next adventure. The store uses its platform to encourage outdoor recreation and environmental stewardship, is known to host clinics on-site that bring in experts and highlight local organizations, and organizes fun events for the community. Despite the hard times the store experienced over the last year, they remained true to their values of outfitting customers for adventure and supporting area conservation nonprofits.

-Submitted by Community Conservation Inc.



[Pike Pole Fishing](#), operating out of Janesville, provides opportunities for people to experience fishing on a variety of Wisconsin waters through their guided trips. They also offer sonar training, ice fishing classes, and group seminars. Cleverly honoring a profession common among the family, the business name actually refers to the tool used in firefighting, though “pike” and “pole” conjure fishing imagery that one would expect from an angling service. The business also offers discounts for first responders and veterans, encouraging outdoor recreation and making it more accessible.

-Submitted by Janesville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau

More Businesses & Organizations Nominated

Drift Away Paddle Co. | Forest Home Preservation Association | Ice Age Trail Alliance | Janesville Velo Club | Mel's Trading Post | Michael's Cycles | Velocity Multi-Sport & Cycling | Wisconsin Fishing Expo | Wisconsin Women Fish

Did you forget to nominate a business or organization?

We know summer is a busy time, so we'll leave the [form](#) up a little longer. We'd love to hear about others doing great work in Wisconsin.

Industry & Community News

Mercury Marine Announces Plans for New Electric Outboards

After its first foray into electric propulsion in 2020, Mercury announced it will launch five new electric lines, including four electric outboards. [Read the article.](#)

Trek's First Class of "All In Development Scholarship Program" Graduates

Last summer Trek announced its All In plan to address racial equity. The first eight students graduated and all accepted technician positions in their New York stores, beginning what Trek hopes will be the start of long-term careers within the company.

The graduates represent the first step toward Trek's goal of providing career paths for 1,000 people of color. [Read the article.](#)

Saxon Harbor Celebrates Rebuilding and Resiliency

The rededication of Saxon Harbor honored the efforts of locals and support of federal, state, and municipal agencies. In 2018 a strong storm scattered boats into Lake Superior, washed away the 30-site campground, and created a temporary island of devastation. Five years and nearly \$15 million later, Saxon Harbor welcomes outdoorists again. [Read the article.](#)

Newly Designated Wisconsin Shipwreck Coast National Marine Sanctuary

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) published the final rule establishing a 962-square mile national marine sanctuary in Lake Michigan from Two Rivers to Port Washington to protect 36 known shipwreck sites. [Read the article.](#)

Art Exhibit Underway at Lakeshore State Park

The first-ever temporary art exhibit at Lakeshore State Park highlights the intersection of art and the outdoors, and it is on display through August 1. The 22 five-foot-tall bird sculptures made of "regenerable" plastic, or recycled plastic that will be reused again in future artworks, aim to "create a sense of wonder that can bring pleasure while highlighting the overwhelming presence of plastic," according to the artistic movement Cracking Art. [Read more.](#)

Events

Climate & Outdoor Recreation Webinar Series | Wednesdays in July

The Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals (SORP) will convene a panel of experts on topics such as climate adaptation, vulnerability and resilience assessment, the "America the Beautiful" or 30 x 30 plan, and more. [Learn more and register.](#) To view recordings of previous webinars, [click here.](#)

Wisconsin Science Festival | October 21 - 24

The Wisconsin Science Festival is currently accepting event proposals. Communities, organizations, and businesses can host events to illuminate how science, technology,

engineering, art, or math are part of every day life in today's society. [Learn more about hosting an event.](#)

Resources

Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant Deadline August 1

The Department of Tourism's reimbursement grant for nonprofits provides funding to make a promotion or event come to fruition. Five different categories of projects can be considered for funding:

- New events
- Existing events
- Sales promotion
- One-time/One-of-a-kind
- Destination marketing

Recent outdoor recreation related projects awarded JEM funding include Northern Wisconsin ATV/UTV Traveler Development Project (Antigo/Langlade County Chamber of Commerce), Come Out and Play! (Driftless Wisconsin), Mammoth Hike Challenge (Ice Age Trail Alliance), Dirt City Duel (Oconto Economic Development Corporation), and The Trails to Trout Fishing Tournament (Sparta Area Chamber of Commerce).

[Learn more about JEM Grant opportunities.](#)

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

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— DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM —

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