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WISCONSIN OUTSIDE | April 2021

A Note from the Director

The subtle sounds of gradual snow melt, the warmth of sun rays, and the songs of birds are clear signs that spring has arrived. It's always bittersweet to hang up the skis or put away the sleds, but as anticipation builds for the next season's activities, I'm reminded how lucky we are in Wisconsin to experience four seasons of outdoor fun and wonder.

The variety of seasons offers endless options for outdoor recreation, allowing us to find our own way of enjoying the outdoors. Even so, we are not alone. We connect with each other outside, and we form communities around our favorite activities as a way to share the experience with others – something that is instinctive in our human nature.

Whether we identify as mountain bikers or snowmobilers, horseback riders or hunters, paddlers or boaters, we are all outdoorists. We spend time outside because we know it makes us feel good, and we all share a common love and appreciation for the outdoors. As we look ahead to spring when outdoorists of all kinds converge in

our natural spaces, let's collectively appreciate these places for the variety they provide.

In this special newsletter, we commemorate Earth Day – an idea birthed here in Wisconsin more than 50 years ago. We celebrate the amazing people whose work is to connect us to the outdoors as well as our common bonds formed outside.



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](#). You may also update your subscription preferences [here](#).



“ *What We're Hearing* ”

Special Edition: What do the outdoors mean to you?

This month we celebrate Earth Day, and even if we each connect to the outdoors differently, the outdoor industry appreciates our natural environment every day of the

year. We asked several stakeholders to tell us in their own words how they enjoy spending time outside and what the outdoors means to them. Here's what they had to say.

"Spring not only brings an explosion of color, returning sounds in the trees and the welcoming change of daylight, but also the opportunity to make bike riding a daily occurrence. Putting away the snowshoes is bittersweet as those forays into the snow blanketed forests fill my soul with joy. I guess the point is to get out. I find that the more time I spend outdoors, the easier it is to find balance throughout my day."

**-Willie Karidis, Route of the Badger Project Manager,
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**



"The outdoors means exploration, exercise, quality time with family and away from screens. In spring, I look forward to fishing local trout streams; summer is mountain biking season; fall is all about hunting; and when we're fortunate enough to have snow, winter offers lots of fun opportunities for skiing and snowshoeing."

-Mike Carlson, Executive Director, Gathering Waters

"The outdoors to me means self-identity as it relates to my Anishinabe Culture and way of life. Our people were placed on the earth to be caretakers and stewards of the land. So, the outdoors is very much a part of my everyday life and many of the activities revolve around being outdoors and the natural resources around this place we call home."

-Nathan Gordon, Vice Chairman, Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa



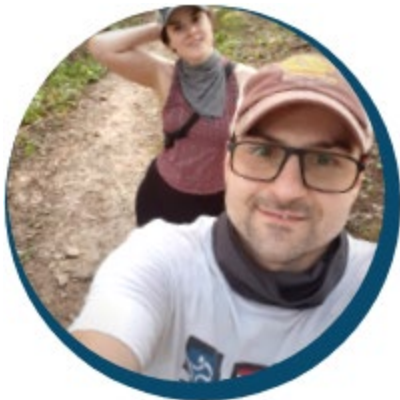


“My nickname throughout my childhood was “the outside girl.” Being outside in any condition is literally “LIFE” to me. I am happiest encouraging folks to get outside and watching them realize how enjoyable it is to be outside regardless of what they are doing.”

-Kathy Mock, Co-Director, NICA Wisconsin League

“To me, the outdoors is a grounding place. Every time I go outside, it’s likely that I’ll feel something along the lines of comforted, awed, or humbled—whether it’s letting my daily cares fall away during a jog down the street or getting lost, cold, and a little worried exploring some trail-less land – I am always reminded that there’s something bigger than me out here. That seems like a healthy idea.”

-Emily lehl, R3 Coordinator, Department of Natural Resources



“The outdoors means everything to me. Nearly all of my personal relationships have been built around enjoying the outdoors. Between traveling to state parks or recreating in some fashion (hunting, fishing, biking, backpacking, or hiking) there has been some tie-in to the outdoors. The outdoors provides me a blank canvas to experience all a region or area has to offer.”

-Roy Atkinson, Wisconsin State Trails Council

“To me, the outdoors is the greatest stress reliever a person can ask for. No matter how busy or stressed out I am, as soon as my face hits the fresh Wisconsin air, I feel like I am in my element. And my favorite way to spend time outside is by taking a boat out on the water and getting the opportunity to enjoy the great outdoors with family. Making memories with the ones you love is something that I will always hold close to my heart. Hooking into fish is the goal, but the family time spent outdoors is what I cherish the most.”



-Nik Kolbeck, Communications Director, Mepps



“It’s hard to boil down the beauty of the outdoors, but hiking, biking, and skiing give you the fresh air and exercise we all need. The bonus is the quiet beauty of the sounds of nature.”

-Tim Dybevik, Provider Recruitment Manger, Wisconsin Office of Rural Health

“Wisconsin’s outdoor beauty is tops in the nation – bar none. There is nothing better than getting out on one of the many lakes and rivers throughout the state or on the spectacular Great Lakes of Superior & Michigan. The most magical moment is waking up to the sunrise at an anchorage in the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. It is truly paradise.”



-Michelle Shrider, General Manager, Washburn Marina



"I've always found inspiration in the outdoors, whether I'm fishing, hunting, hiking or pursuing another activity. The outdoors is far more than just a place to go to do things that are fun. For me, outdoor recreation is a way of life. I've been fishing and hunting for more than 60 years, and I've shared that passion with friends, family, TV viewers, radio listeners and readers."

-Dan Small, Host & Producer, Outdoor Wisconsin and Outdoors Radio

Industry & Community News

Seasonal Trail Closures as Spring Arrives

To protect the ground during the freeze and thaw cycles, conditions-based trail closures to motorized vehicles, bicycles, and horses may be in place at a trail near you. As closures are announced (a few listed below) and lifted, be sure to check your potential destination for current conditions. Stay tuned for a new resource designed to help you see current trail conditions from across the state in one quick glance!

- [CAMBA Mountain Bike Trails](#) – Closed; gravel routes open
- [Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest Trails](#) – Closed; hiking permitted
- [Kettle Moraine State Forest](#) – Mountain bike & equestrian trails closed
- [Levis/Trow Mound](#) – Closed to all users; opening April 2nd
- [Nine Mile County Forest](#) – Closed for season until May 15th
- [Silver Lake County Park](#) – Closed; hiking permitted

If you head out for a hike during this muddy season, learn tips from the Ice Age Trail Alliance for protecting the trails from damage. [Read the article.](#)

Content Marketing Writer Position at Department of Tourism

Travel Wisconsin is seeking a creative, dynamic copywriter to elevate the brand and inspire travelers. [Learn more here.](#) Deadline to apply is April 6.

Multimedia Designer Position at Department of Tourism

Travel Wisconsin is seeking a Multimedia Designer responsible for visual marketing and multimedia production to promote tourism in Wisconsin. [Learn more here.](#) Deadline to apply is April 9.

Creative Producer Position at Department of Tourism

Travel Wisconsin is seeking a Creative Producer to conceptualize, design and create videos. [Learn more here](#). Deadline to apply is April 9.

American Birkebeiner Seeking Marketing & Communications Director

The American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, is looking for someone to lead the organization's marketing and communication efforts as part of the leadership team. [Learn more here](#). Deadline to apply is today, April 1.

Wheel & Sprocket Hiring at All Locations

The bicycle retailer is looking for sales associates, service managers, bike builders, techs, and more. [Learn more here](#).

Events

Note: In-person events may change due to precautions based on COVID-19 guidance. Please see each individual event for more information.

Wisconsin Governor's Council on Tourism Conference (WIGCOT) | April 20 & May 6

Reimagined as a virtual conference of half-day programs with insightful keynote presentations, panels, and breakout sessions, the conference will focus on "the path forward" for tourism. [Learn more and register](#) for the remaining sessions. Exclusive access to the recording of the Outdoor Recreation Panel for our stakeholders can be found under "Resources" below.

Bailey's Harbor Brown Trout Tournament | April 15 – 17

Fish from the shore or the boat in Kewaunee and Door County waters, bay or lake side, and anglers with the top 40 fish win prizes. [Learn more and register](#).

Nelson Institute's Earth Day 2021 | April 22 – 23

A virtual program, Nature at Work: Inspiring Just Responses for an Unruly World, will look at nature's power and how increased efforts to respect it can lead to social justice and climate change mitigation. [Learn more and register](#).

Resources

Outdoor Recreation Panel Discussion at WIGCOT

Outdoor recreation and tourism industry experts reflect on 2020 and the first year of the Office of Outdoor Recreation, as well as share their vision for how outdoor recreation will continue to uplift the tourism economy, drive economic development, and support healthy lifestyles. [Watch the panel.](#)

Rural Economic Development Toolkit for Outdoor Recreation

The Outdoor Recreation Roundtable launched its online toolkit as a road map full of resources for rural communities interested in pursuing outdoor recreation projects for economic development. [View the toolkit.](#)

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

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