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# WISCONSIN

— OFFICE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION —



## A Note from the Director

Our new website tool, the [Wisconsin Trail Report](#) is chock full of information to help you plan your trail adventures. Did you know the information comes to you from volunteers dedicated to our area lands and trails? After a recent storm, a number of reports had updates similar to this: “Our volunteer crew was out and cleared away the downed trees. Trails are open, dry, and ready to ride. Join us next Saturday for our annual event for some fun riding and to raise funds for ongoing trail maintenance.”

Volunteers are helping deliver important information to help others prepare for their next hiking or biking outing, but they’re also doing more. From that one condition report, there are at least four different volunteer efforts at play:

- Volunteers cleared the trail of storm debris.
- Volunteers were planning an upcoming event.
- Volunteers are fundraising to maintain the trail.
- A volunteer provided the condition update for the Wisconsin Trail Report.

Volunteers fill a huge and often underappreciated role in making our public lands accessible for recreation. As we look ahead to [National Public Lands Day](#) on Saturday, September 25, let’s take a moment to appreciate those volunteers who often go unnoticed, yet are critical to making Wisconsin’s outdoor recreation offerings truly remarkable.

We anticipate this coming Labor Day weekend to be busy outside, yet again. The growth in outdoor participation is exciting, and that’s why we believe it’s an

opportunity to remind and educate users about caring for our lands and the people we meet. Get the [#AdventureWithCare](#) poster and encourage visitors to post pictures showing how they #AdventureWithCare this weekend and beyond.

Saturday, September 25 is also [National Hunting and Fishing Day](#) recognizing hunters and anglers for their leadership in conservation, as well as [Bike Your Park Day](#) encouraging people to explore parks and public lands by bike. Check them out!

Enjoy the outdoors and please thank a local volunteer!



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](#).

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## For the Public, By the Public

National Public Lands Day, often considered the nation's largest single-day volunteer event, is recognized on the fourth Saturday of September every year. It celebrates the human connection to natural places and encourages public involvement in the care and education of these community assets.

Wisconsin is home to over 6 million acres of public land, and thanks to the collaboration between land managers and local volunteers, these lands are available and provide the space for recreation of all types. Volunteers are involved in the acquisition, conservation, development, stewardship, and education efforts for our public lands and recreation infrastructure. The countless hours of labor and service volunteered stretch every taxpayer dollar further.

Look at many of the ways Wisconsin volunteers pitch in to make public lands available for exploring and recreation:

- Over 25,000 miles of snowmobile trails across the state are groomed by local snowmobile clubs and organized by the [Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs](#), and dozens of local clubs groom trails for winter fat biking and cross-country skiing, too.
- Each year, thousands volunteer building trails of all kinds. In most years, the [Ice Age Trail Alliance](#) organizes over 2,000 volunteers.

- Volunteers maintaining trails in La Crosse have already logged an impressive 2,000 hours with [ORA Trails](#) this season.
- [Friends groups](#) provide thousands of hours each year in support of Wisconsin State Parks by organizing clean-ups, planning events, leading educational programs, assisting with construction and maintenance of park facilities, and even raising money to purchase new equipment.
- The [Trail Ambassador](#) program has trained over 1,000 volunteers to patrol the trails and host pop-up stations to help ATV/UTV users understand regulations and ride safely.
- The [Wisconsin Master Naturalists](#) provide over 25,000 hours of service each year to more than 700 organizations, teaching students of all ages about the natural world around them and igniting a curiosity and appreciation for the outdoors.
- In just one year, volunteers of Milwaukee's [Urban Ecology Center](#) planted over 8,000 native plants and trees in the adjacent parks where their education programs take place and families come to explore.
- [Snapshot Wisconsin](#), one of the Wisconsin DNR's many citizen science programs, has collected over 50 million wildlife images from trail cameras across the state.
- Eighty-five volunteers tested water quality weekly at 71 sites in the Madison area to inform beach-goers via [lakeforecast.org](#) managed by [Clean Lakes Alliance](#).



***The Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail organizes an Annual Earth Day cleanup as well as “Stew” Crews that adopt a section of the Trail and keep it clean yearlong among other supportive activities that keep the trail and community vibrant. Photo courtesy of the Friends of Hank Aaron State Trail.***

That list just scratches the surface of volunteer efforts to keep the outdoors healthy and accessible for sustainable recreation. For the land managers and organizations that tap into the valuable resource of volunteers, it can be a lot of work to organize such efforts, but it is worth it to see how so many benefit from it – enjoying trails, parks, beaches, and more. Our public lands are a true community effort to be appreciated on National Public Lands Day and every day.

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# We're Hiring!

Join the Office of Outdoor Recreation [team](#) to support Wisconsin's outdoor industry and partners. It's a short turn-around so please share or apply today:

## Technical Program & Partnership Specialist

This position will be responsible for implementing or supporting new and existing public information and promotional communications programs of the small, but fast-paced Office. This position will perform technical and administrative elements for a variety of programs including managing webinars, organizing logistics, creating pre and post program surveys, and analyzing data. This position will also function as a communications liaison and primary contact for many of the Office's projects and will collaborate with stakeholders, internal teams, and volunteers on a regular basis.

[Learn more here.](#)

**Deadline to Apply is Monday, September 6.**

*Please share this opportunity with your networks.*

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## Showcasing Wisconsin's Outdoors

Dedicated to inspiring outdoor enthusiasts for epic adventures, Backpacker Magazine is a household name for many outdoor lovers. Full of how-to articles, gear reviews and recommendations, wilderness and survival trips, as well as travel inspiration, the print and online versions are a cavernous resource for planning one's next trip outdoors.

Last month, the Office of Outdoor Recreation, working closely with the Travel Wisconsin communications team to develop concepts for the Backpacker off-shoot project, [Get Out More TV](#), hosted Steve Yocum and Jordan Meeks for a 10-day multi-sport trip in Wisconsin.

The Office coordinated almost a dozen partners to provide Steve and Jordan with gracious hosts along the way, Wisconsin-made gear to test out, and experts to share local knowledge of what makes Wisconsin so special. Through this effort dots were connected between activities, communities, businesses, nonprofits, and manufacturers to showcase Wisconsin as a truly unique outdoor recreation destination to a national audience eager to explore new places.

Throughout their adventure, Steve and Jordan experienced Wisconsin's diverse outdoor recreation opportunities while hiking portions of the Ice Age Trail, mountain biking the Mississippi River bluffs, and paddling the lower Wisconsin Riverway. They wrapped their tour with a stop at a local brewery to experience Wisconsin's craft culture and toast to the fun and memories made.



**Top row: Steve and the dogs before the hike. Steve, Jordan, and Christopher Kilgour on the Ice Age Trail in Devil's Lake State Park. Both photos courtesy of Christopher Kilgour, Color in the Outdoors.**

**Bottom left: Jed Olson of ORA Trails and Randi Pueschner of Smith's Bike Shop and ORA Trails are interviewed by Steve and Jordan at the Gateway Trails atop Grandad Bluff.**

**Bottom right: John Motoviloff of National Wild Turkey Federation and author Wild Goose Rice and Other Dishes of the Upper Midwest cooks a fresh meal during the canoe-camping adventure on the Lower Wisconsin River.**

Mark your calendars to watch the Wisconsin episode premier September 15 on Backpacker's YouTube, Facebook, or Instagram channels. Keep an eye out for the outdoor recreation and tourism partners that collaborated with the Office of Outdoor Recreation and Travel Wisconsin on this project and are featured throughout the episode. Special thanks to our stakeholders: Bending Branches, Color in the Outdoors, Duluth Trading Company, Ice Age Trail Alliance, International Mountain Biking Association, Mepps, National Wild Turkey Federation, ORA Trails, Potosi Brewing Company, Smith's Bike Shop, St. Croix Rod, Trek Bicycle, WI River Outings, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

## Industry & Community News

### **DNR Announces New Parks Director**

A 29-year veteran of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Steven Schmelzer served as the Park Superintendent for Devil's Lake State Park for more than a decade before being promoted to District Park Supervisor in 2020. He will now oversee the entire Wisconsin State Park System [Read the release](#).

### **New National Partnership for an Inclusive Outdoor Community**

Leave No Trace and Black Folks Camp Too launched a project utilizing a new Unity Blaze patch that aims to make the outdoors a more welcoming place for members of the BIPOC community. [Read the story](#).

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## Events

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

### **Wisconsin Sports Show – Fall Edition | September 10 – 12 | Chippewa Falls**

The three-day event features over 100 fishing, hunting, retail, and recreational exhibits including live demonstrations and entertainment. [Learn more and get tickets](#).

### **Bicycle Film Festival Wisconsin | September 10 – 19**

In celebration of Wisconsin Bike Week and with a portion of proceeds supporting the Wisconsin Bike Fed, the virtual film festival features an all-new international selection of the most important short films from the festival's collection. [Learn more and get tickets](#).

### **Chequamegon MTB Festival | September 18 | Cable & Hayward Areas**

Thousands of off-road enthusiasts will take to the Northwoods in the 38<sup>th</sup> annual mountain bike festival in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Three race options include one for the kids, too. [Learn more and register](#).

### **The Ryder Cup | September 21 – 26 | Kohler**

All of the world's golfing eyes will be on Wisconsin as Kohler's Whistling Straits will host the top golf event of the year. Learn more about [The Ryder Cup history](#) and [Wisconsin as a golf destination](#).

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## Resources

**Outdoor Recreation Webinar Series | September 15 & 22**

The Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals (SORP) will convene a panel of experts on regarding the “America the Beautiful” or 30 x 30 plan and the Civilian Climate Corps. [Learn more and register](#).

**Creating Inclusive & Equitable Trails: Case Studies in Detroit & Milwaukee**

Hear from projects that have maximized trail benefits by ensuring every stakeholder is part of the development process. [Watch the webinar](#).

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

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