WISCONSIN STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN (SCORP) 2019-2023

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Inside front cover

2019-2023

Wisconsin

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Prepared by:

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707-7921

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

SCORP Advisory Team

Angie Tornes - NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance

Bridget Monahan - Fort HealthCare

Dave Cieslewicz - Wisconsin Bike Federation

Dave Larson - Wisconsin Conservation Congress

David Spiegelberg - Wisconsin Department of Tourism

Doug Johnson - Governor's State Trails Council

Gretchen Marshall - Wisconsin School Forest Program

Hilary Markin - Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest

Jane Severt - Wisconsin County Forest Association

Laura Anderson McIntyre - UW-Stevens Point, College of Natural Resources

Mark LaBarbera - Outdoor Heritage Education Center

Michael John Jaeger - Wisconsin Society for Ornithology

Mike Carlson - Gathering Waters

Mike Wollmer - Ice Age Trail Alliance

Paul Heinen - The Nature Conservancy

Steve Brunner - Wisconsin Parks and Recreation Association

Department of Natural Resources

Guidance

Ben Bergey - Parks and Recreation

Terry Bay - Facilities and Lands

Staff

April Dombrowski - Law Enforcement

Beth Norquist - Community Financial Assistance

Bob Holsman - Analysis Services

Brigit Brown - Parks and Recreation

Jennifer Gihring - Facilities and Lands

John Pohlman - Facilities and Lands

Jonathon Kult - Facilities and Lands

Jordan Petchenik - Analysis Services

Kathryn Gehrke - Parks and Recreation

Nick Zouski - Facilities and Lands

Paul Cunningham - Fisheries Management

Peter Bakken - Forestry

Sadie Derouin - Law Enforcement

Teague Prichard - Forestry

Thomas Meyer - Natural Heritage Conservation

Tim Lizotte - Wildlife Management

Layout/Design

Savanna Ernzen - Facilities and Lands

ACRONYMS

4-WD	Four wheel drive
ATV	All terrain vehicle
BCPL	Board of Commissioners of Public Land
DNR	Department of Natural Resources
DOT	Department of Transportation
FWS	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
GOMESA	Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
NPS	National Park Service
OPSP	Open Project Selection Process
ROA	Recreation Opportunities Analysis
SCORP	Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
UTV	Utility task vehicle (aka, side-by-side)

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10	**Recreation grants and guidelines for the development of local recreation plans**

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FOREWORD

Dear Fellow Wisconsinites:

I am pleased to present Wisconsin's 2019-2023 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. This document will provide you with updated information on the status of Wisconsin's outdoor recreation and goals for the future. This plan also provides guidance for distributing money through the Land and Water Conservation Fund and other grant programs administered by the Department of Natural Resources that support outdoor recreation projects on state properties and in local communities throughout the state.

High-quality outdoor recreation experiences available in Wisconsin contribute to our exceptional quality of life, reflected in sustained economic growth in recent years and in outdoor recreation traditions passed down through generations. From city riverwalks to expansive public forests, public recreation lands and facilities enhance our lives, draw millions of visitors, and support businesses large and small. The economic, social, and health benefits of outdoor recreation in Wisconsin far exceed our investment.

Thanks to the vision, economic investments and dedication of earlier generations, the portfolio of outdoor recreation opportunities in our state is unrivaled. From the Brule River to Chiwaukee Prairie, we are blessed with beautiful places to enjoy the outdoors in a plethora of ways. Yet, there are many ways and many opportunities to continue enhancing the recreation offerings throughout Wisconsin and to grow our recreation-based economy.

I'd like to thank all those who answered a survey, attended a public meeting or sent in comments. The information, ideas and suggestions you provided are the foundation of this plan. I also want to extend my appreciation and recognition for the work, wisdom and counsel of the SCORP Advisory Team. Their collective passion for the outdoors and desire to enhance the recreation opportunities in Wisconsin weaves through these pages.

Many agencies and organizations are involved in shaping outdoor recreation in the state. City and village park directors, conservation groups and recreation clubs, chambers of commerce, foresters and biologists, health care providers and countless others all play a role. The Department of Natural Resources is committed to working with agencies, local governments, businesses, organizations, and private citizens to expand and modernize outdoor recreation programs and facilities to serve changing public outdoor recreation preferences.

My hope is that the information presented in this report encourages people and groups to continue cooperatively growing our recreation infrastructure and enhancing opportunities for all our residents – and generations to come – to enjoy Wisconsin's great outdoors.

Name
Secretary, Department of Natural Resources

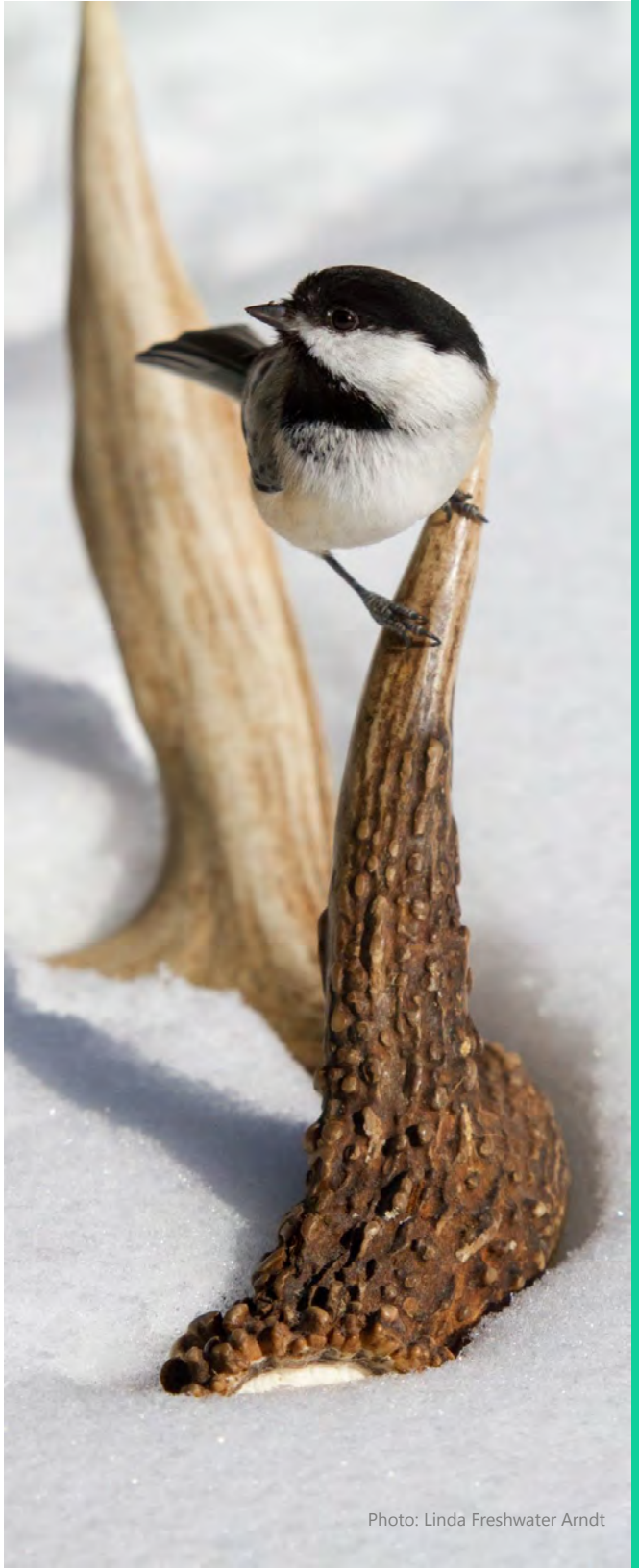

Photo: Linda Freshwater Arndt

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This plan lays out **five** overarching goals for outdoor recreation.

Priorities for **LWCF grants** in Wisconsin include projects that:

- Meet the needs of urban areas.
- Provide recreation opportunities that serve diverse populations.
- Develop facilities in areas with limited outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Provide multi-use facilities.
- Meet outdoor recreation needs identified by local communities.

1. Boost participation in outdoor recreation

2. Grow partnerships

3. Provide high-quality experiences

4. Improve data to enhance visitor experiences and benefits

5. Enhance funding and financial stability

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document comprises the 2019-2023 iteration of the Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The plan provides recommendations to guide public outdoor recreation policy and planning decisions, guides the use of Land and Water Conservation Fund money that comes to Wisconsin, and provides guidance for other Department of Natural Resources (DNR) administered grant programs.

To support the development of SCORP, a statewide survey of Wisconsin residents was conducted regarding their outdoor recreation participation and frequency, as well as their opinions about future needs. In addition, the DNR undertook an assessment of recreation opportunities and needs in each region of the state. Together, these supporting documents (Appendix 6 and Appendix 8) provide the foundation of the SCORP.

Remarkably, although maybe unsurprisingly, an estimated 95% of Wisconsin adults participated in some type of outdoor recreation in the past year. Activities in which residents most frequently engaged tend to be those that require little preparation or travel time and can provide a high-quality experience in a limited amount of time. Examples include hiking and walking on trails, fishing, bicycling, dog walking, and bird/wildlife watching.

Although this SCORP provides some basic information on a wide variety of outdoor activities, the focus is on those activities that are related to natural resources and where experiences are enhanced with higher quality natural habitats. In this document, these are referred to as nature-based recreation activities.

Top priority needs include providing more places near urban centers to support a variety of nature-based recreation. Of particular note is the demand for more trails (both non-motorized and motorized) and water and shore access for fishing, boating and swimming.

Our effectiveness in meeting future recreation needs will be shaped by many factors including the shifting demographics of our population, the quality of habitats and the impacts from invasive species and changing climate conditions, our ability to improve the compatibility between and among recreation participants, and sustainable financial resources.

Parks and nature preserves, wildlife areas and refuges, and forests and trails connect people to the natural environment. These places, from small neighborhood parks to the large national, state and county forests, are the stages on which we enjoy the outdoors, improve our health, protect our air and water, and provide a large economic boost, particularly to our rural areas.

This document presents the "who, what, where, when, why, and how" of state outdoor recreation in Wisconsin.

This SCORP is designed to both provide a broad overview of issues affecting nature-based recreation as well as include information, much of which is in the appendices, that the public and decision-makers can use in evaluating local and regional needs and opportunities.

Photo: Scott Maurer

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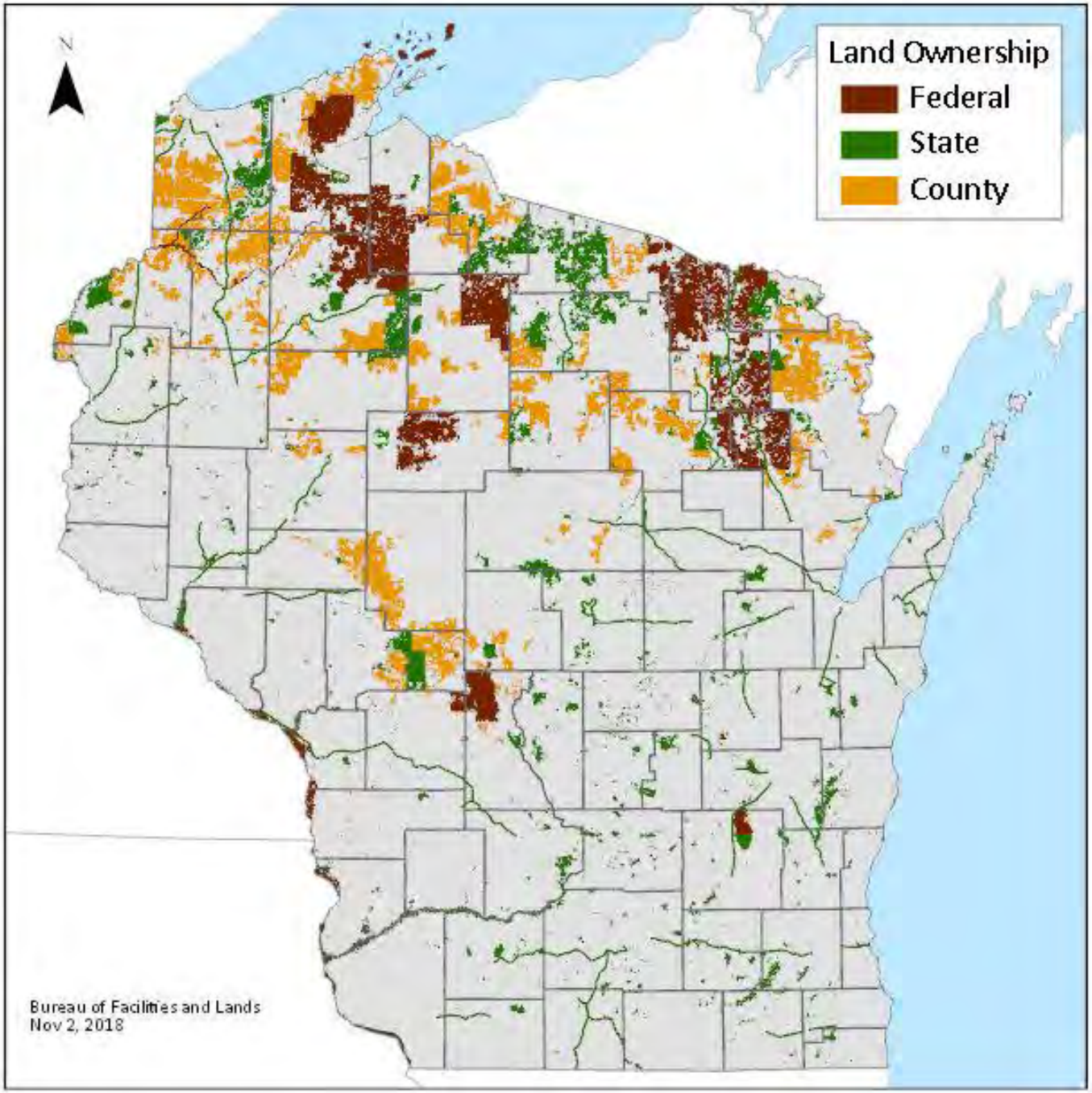
Figure 1: Public lands in Wisconsin



*See **Appendix 3** for maps of public lands by region*

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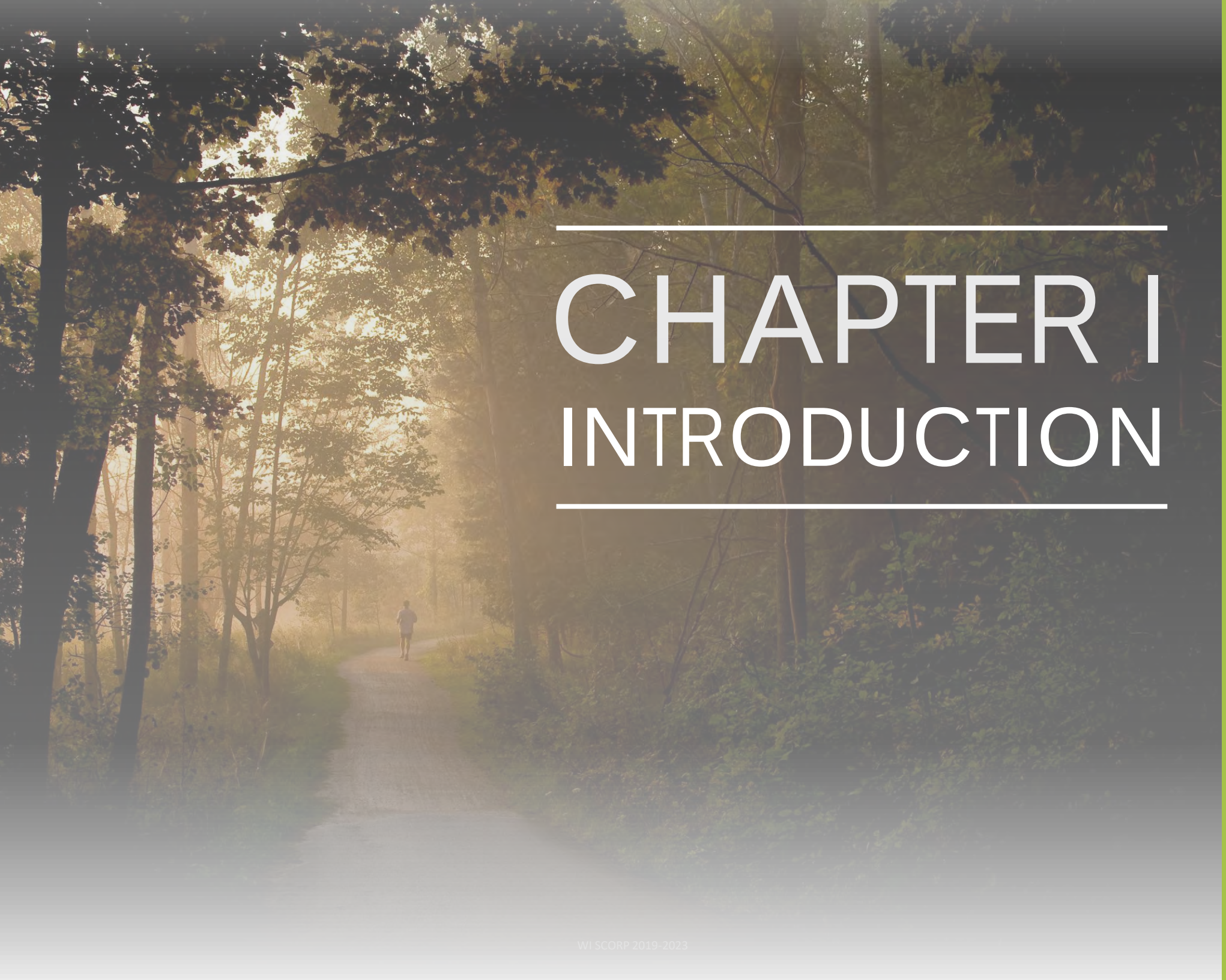

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Photo: Tom Davenport

Photo: Liz Herzmann

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"Outdoor Recreation Activities"
include all 58 activities that were included in the survey of Wisconsin residents' recreation participation. See Appendix 6.

"Nature-Based Activities"
include a subset of 40 of these "outdoor recreation activities" that require or occur in natural habitats or settings. See Table 1.

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BACKGROUND

Wisconsin's economy and the exceptional quality of life our residents enjoy are interwoven with our abundant and rich natural resource base. From deep forests to Great Lake shorelines, from urban trails to secluded campsites, Wisconsinites have unparalleled opportunities to enjoy the outdoors. Whether motivated by the desire to relax, exercise, or be with friends and families, Wisconsinites participate in outdoor recreation with an uncommon passion. For most citizens, what makes our state special is directly tied to the good times we have at our favorite places to camp, hunt, walk, ride snowmobiles or ATVs, bike, fish, or simply enjoy the peace and quiet of a natural setting.

Public conservation lands in Wisconsin protect some of the state's most notable, scenic and cherished places. Although these places collectively meet many recreation demands, numerous other places – from school forests to land trust preserves to local parks – also play critical roles in providing high quality recreation opportunities to residents and out-of-state visitors.

On behalf of the State of Wisconsin, the Department of Natural Resources has developed this SCORP with the help of many partners and the public. This document brings together a variety of information on the outdoor recreation opportunities in Wisconsin and lays out goals and priorities for the future. What that future ultimately becomes will depend on the collective effort of elected officials, public agencies, private organizations and, most importantly, residents.

Some types of outdoor recreation, notably ball sports, occur on athletic fields and sport courts provided by local units of government. LWCF grants in Wisconsin fund a wide variety of outdoor facilities important to local communities, including athletic fields. Participation in many of these activities varies considerably across the state making their inclusion in a statewide plan difficult.

Other types of recreation take place outdoors but aren't related to natural resources (e.g., walking on sidewalks or roads, driving for pleasure, attending an outdoor music festival). Consistent with past SCORP efforts, many of these activities were included in the survey of state residents' participation in outdoor recreation.

Although this SCORP addresses all types of recreation that occur outdoors (as required by federal legislation), its focus is on "nature-based recreation" activities that are typically provided at larger public lands and require or occur in natural habitats or settings (see Table 1).

NOTE: *the term "nature-based" is used in other policies, codes and laws. Its use here in SCORP* ***only applies to this document*** *and does not influence or affect use of the term in other contexts.*

Table 1: Nature-based activities for this SCORP

- Bicycling - rail/trails, mt. biking, fat-tire/snow biking
- Bird/wildlife watching - at home & away from home
- Camping - tent and RV/pop-up
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Cross-country skiing
- Downhill skiing/snowboarding
- Driving 4-WD vehicles on trails/routes
- Fishing – lake, stream, river
- Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.
- Geocaching
- Hiking/walking/running on trails
- Horseback riding on trails
- Hunting - big & small game, turkey, migratory bird
- Ice skating
- Motor boating
- Nature photography
- Personal water craft riding
- Picnicking/tailgating/cookout
- Riding ATVs/UTVs on trails/routes
- Riding motorcycles on trails/routes
- Sailing
- Snowmobiling
- Snowshoeing
- Stand-up paddle boarding
- Swimming - lakes/rivers/ponds
- Target shooting - firearms and archery
- Trapping
- Visiting a nature center
- Visiting a beach/beach walking
- Visiting a dog park
- Walking/running dogs on trails
- Waterskiing/tubing/wakeboarding

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PURPOSE OF SCORP

The SCORP provides data related to the supply and demand for outdoor recreation in Wisconsin that can help inform local and state-level recreation decision making.

The objectives of this SCORP are to:

- Provide an analysis of outdoor recreation supply and demand.
- Provide information and context that is useful to counties, local units of government, organizations, tribes, and others as they develop plans and policies for recreation opportunities in their communities.
- Ensure Wisconsin's continued eligibility for National Park Service LWCF state-side grants.
- Establish priorities for LWCF grants and guidance for other applicable state and federal funds.

States are required to complete SCORPs every five years to be eligible to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program. SCORPs are intended to evaluate outdoor recreation trends and issues of statewide importance and set forth ideas about recreation's future role in the state. There are several required elements for SCORPs, including identifying priorities for use of LWCF grants. Of the many important issues related to outdoor recreation in Wisconsin, the SCORP highlights the areas of greatest need, thus providing a framework for evaluating LWCF grants.

Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, school districts and other state political subdivisions are eligible to apply for LWCF grants for acquisition or development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Of course, these government entities best understand their citizens' needs, as well as the opportunities to leverage their local resources and assets. As such, the focus of this SCORP is on providing a range of information, at the county level where possible, to help the public and their elected officials place local conditions, needs, and opportunities into a broader framework.

While this SCORP brings together a range of information on outdoor recreation in Wisconsin, it is not intended to provide guidance at a site or project level, nor does it attempt to address all outdoor recreation issues. Rather, this SCORP identifies general outdoor recreation participation patterns, trends, issues and opportunities, and provides recommendations for future steps. Collaborative planning at local and regional scales, ongoing research on issues affecting recreation supply and demand, and cooperative implementation of policies and programs by governments, businesses, health care providers, community organizations, and others will continue to be essential in achieving the priorities described in the SCORP.

The DNR will use the SCORP to help guide decisions related to recreation, including land acquisition, management and development of facilities.

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SCORP REQUIREMENTS

The National Park Service identifies five components required in all SCORP documents. Table 2 identifies where the required elements can be found in this document.

Table 2: Crosswalk of required SCORP components and the SCORP

Component	Requirement Description	Location
Process & Methodology	The plan must describe the process and methodology(s) used by the State to develop the SCORP and meet LWCF program guidelines.	Page 13
Public Participation	The planning process must include ample opportunity for public participation involving all segments of the state's population.	Page 13 Appendix 6 Appendix 8
Comprehensive Information	The plan must: 1) Identify outdoor recreation issues of statewide importance; 2) Evaluate public outdoor recreation demands; and 3) Evaluate available outdoor recreation resources.	Chapter 2 Appendix 6 Appendix 4 Appendix 8
Implementation Program	The plan must have an implementation program of sufficient detail for use in developing project selection criteria for the State's Open Project Selection Process (OPSP).	Page 56 Appendix 9 Appendix 10
Section 303 Compliance	The plan must contain a wetlands priority component consistent with Section 303 of the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986, including the following: 1) Be consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan, prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 2) Provide evidence of consultation with the state agency responsible for fish and wildlife resources; 3) Contain a listing of those wetland types which should receive priority for acquisition; and 4) Consider outdoor recreation opportunities associated with its wetlands resources for meeting the State's public outdoor recreation needs.	Appendix 1

Photo: Judy Klippel

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LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND

Did You Know?

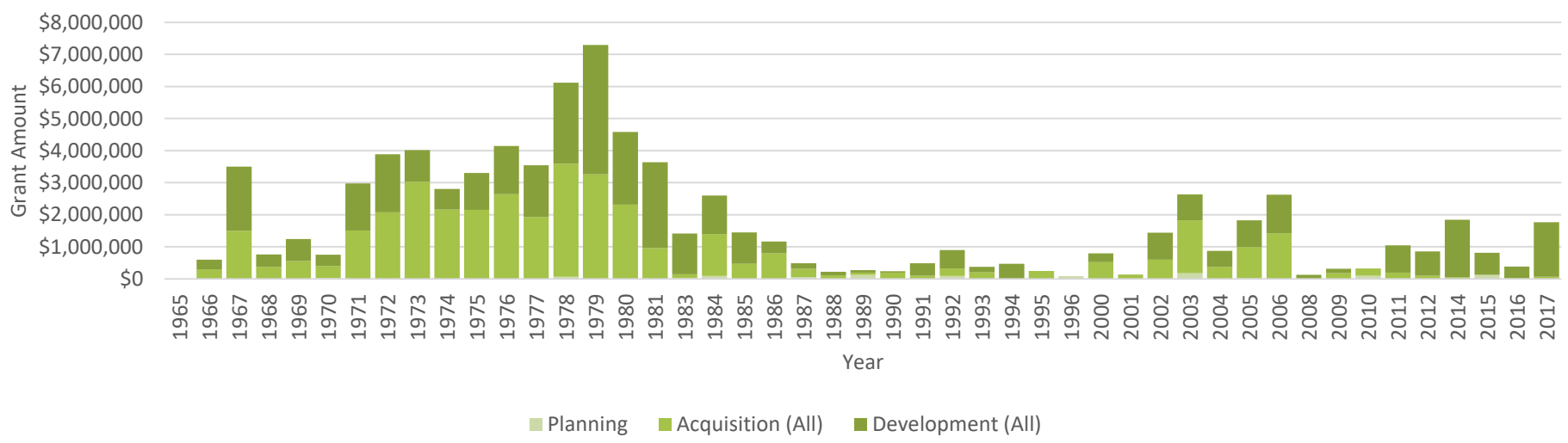
Since 1965, Wisconsin has received **$81 million** from the Land & Water Conservation Fund to support recreation projects throughout the state.

Background

The Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (LWCF) was enacted by Congress in 1965 "to strengthen the health and vitality of the citizens of the United States" through outdoor recreation. A portion of the LWCF supports development of outdoor recreation opportunities in national parks and other federal lands and a portion is passed to states for projects on state, tribal, and local properties. A related federal program is the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA), which was passed in 2006. States have flexibility to determine how to use these funds, either on state properties or as pass-through to eligible grant recipients (local governments, school districts, and tribes).

The National Park Service (NPS) administers the program at the federal level. Each state has an agency responsible for administering the program in partnership with NPS. In Wisconsin, the LWCF program is administered by DNR.

Figure 2: LWCF grants to Wisconsin



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Funding

The LWCF is funded through lease and production fees paid to the federal government by energy companies operating in federal waters. The total LWCF appropriation is set annually by Congress. Funds are allocated to all U.S. states and territories via a formula that incorporates population and proximity to leased lands in the Gulf of Mexico. Annual LWCF and GOMESA appropriations have varied dramatically over the years, largely due to fluctuations in oil and gas activity and competing Congressional priorities. Wisconsin's allocations from these funds have varied considerably over the years (Figure 2). In FY2019, Wisconsin received $2.9 million, a significant increase in funding that was due to a change in the GOMESA formula.

LWCF and GOMESA support a wide variety of public outdoor recreation projects. Grant recipients are required to provide a minimum of 50% non-federal matching funds. Projects proposed for LWCF grants must be selected through an open project selection process, which is designed to ensure that available funds are used to address priority outdoor recreation needs at the state and local level. Unique to Wisconsin, the LWCF also supports acquisition and development projects that expand the Ice Age National Scenic Trail and North Country National Scenic Trail.

LWCF Impact in Wisconsin

LWCF grants have touched communities in every one of Wisconsin's 72 counties (see Table 3 – pg.12). Over 1,800 state and local projects have received LWCF support, leveraging more than $81 million in federal funds. Since the program began, 72% of LWCF projects in Wisconsin have been implemented by local communities, 27% by DNR, and the remaining 1% by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and Tribal governments. In early years of the program (1960s and 1970s), LWCF grants were used almost evenly between land acquisition and development projects (Figure 3). This balance has shifted over time in favor of development projects. In the past 10 years, nearly 90% of LWCF dollars spent in Wisconsin supported a development project in a state or local park. LWCF grants have supported a wide diversity of recreation facilities including trails, picnic shelters, and athletic fields as well as facilities such as splash pads, dog parks and skateparks. LWCF is a key funding resource for local governments, as it is the only grant program administered by the DNR that funds development of active recreation facilities.

Figure 3: LWCF grant use in Wisconsin

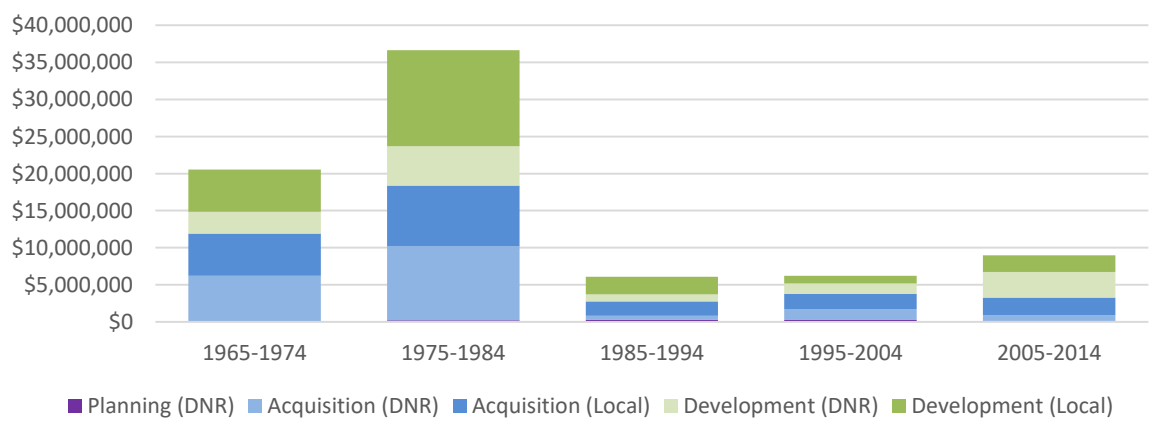

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Table 3: LWCF/GOMESA grants by County, 1965 to 2017

County	Total Grant Awards	# Projects	County	Total Grant Awards	# Projects	County	Total Grant Awards	# Projects	County	Total Grant Awards	# Projects
ADAMS	$116,777	5	FLORENCE	$136,911	5	MARATHON	$515,672	27	RUSK	$133,956	8
ASHLAND	$271,775	11	FOND DU LAC	$584,970	29	MARINETTE	$1,269,858	23	SAUK	$4,066,862	72
BARRON	$404,834	14	FOREST	$148,643	7	MARQUETTE	$283,834	9	SAWYER	$471,893	17
BAYFIELD	$378,527	21	GRANT	$1,251,766	34	MENOMINEE	$6,893	1	SHAWANO	$766,796	31
BROWN	$2,473,758	59	GREEN	$252,496	12	MILWAUKEE	$3,476,761	44	SHEBOYGAN	$1,053,706	31
BUFFALO	$142,871	20	GREEN LAKE	$130,912	12	MONROE	$295,229	20	ST. CROIX	$1,993,784	38
BURNETT	$403,144	21	IOWA	$937,708	19	OCONTO	$158,013	9	TAYLOR	$184,632	7
CALUMET	$617,628	25	IRON	$354,284	9	ONEIDA	$921,486	26	TREMPEALEAU	$395,494	22
CHIPPEWA	$2,648,342	42	JACKSON	$419,232	14	OUTAGAMIE	$954,018	39	VERNON	$454,910	12
CLARK	$285,242	12	JEFFERSON	$230,296	18	OZAUKEE	$395,554	15	VILAS	$462,214	28
COLUMBIA	$412,507	19	JUNEAU	$953,072	22	PEPIN	$72,150	8	WALWORTH	$1,185,262	23
CRAWFORD	$1,261,435	10	KENOSHA	$3,289,116	23	PIERCE	$1,034,941	21	WASHBURN	$513,144	6
DANE	$7,991,977	121	KEWAUNEE	$282,454	11	POLK	$2,068,979	29	WASHINGTON	$1,443,211	37
DODGE	$821,513	31	LA CROSSE	$636,281	30	PORTAGE	$1,734,602	31	WAUKESHA	$3,674,591	56
DOOR	$3,907,803	43	LAFAYETTE	$429,494	15	PRICE	$25,053	3	WAUPACA	$677,432	28
DOUGLAS	$691,357	24	LANGLADE	$2,472,965	15	RACINE	$1,420,556	24	WAUSHARA	$147,150	15
DUNN	$429,381	20	LINCOLN	$126,406	6	RICHLAND	$118,157	9	WINNEBAGO	$1,824,796	43
EAU CLAIRE	$1,254,062	37	MANITOWOC	$1,199,544	47	ROCK	$763,578	24	WOOD	$537,189	24

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND SCORP DEVELOPMENT

Developing a plan for outdoor recreation requires understanding residents' participation patterns and their perspectives on the future. The DNR gathered public input several ways in developing this document. A 17-member SCORP Advisory Team – consisting of representatives from public agencies, conservation organizations, recreation groups, the University of Wisconsin, and the health care industry – provided invaluable assistance and guidance on a wide range of issues affecting outdoor recreation in the state.

As part of the Recreation Opportunities Analysis, which was undertaken to support the development of this SCORP, the DNR hosted meetings in each region of the state to gather public input on existing recreation opportunities and future needs. Hundreds of people attended these meetings and thousands of people submitted comments. In addition, county park directors and staff were asked to provide input on recreation opportunities, needs and trends at their properties.

Finally, the DNR surveyed a random sample of 6,400 residents to gather statistically-significant data on recreation participation, issues of concern, and future needs. A portion of the survey is shown in Figure 4. Following this data collection effort, the DNR provided the opportunity for the public to complete the same survey online; over 16,500 people did, which presented an additional set of perspectives.

This SCORP builds on the work of earlier iterations and uses the eight regions first delineated in the 2005-2010 SCORP to describe recreation uses, patterns and needs. In drafting this SCORP, the DNR combined the extensive public and advisory team input with staff expertise. Staff began their work in 2015 gathering background information and assembling the Advisory Team. Over the ensuing three years the Team provided advice, input and direction on plan's content and the goals, objectives, and desired action items.

In 2017 the DNR received an extension in the timeline from the National Park Service in order to devote considerable effort in developing the Recreation Opportunities Analysis to help inform the SCORP. This effort generated extensive information on existing opportunities and high priority needs for the future, including an assessment of DNR properties that may be well-suited to help meet these needs.

Figure 4: Portion of the SCORP recreation participation survey (Appendix 6)

3. Trail-related activities in Wisconsin

Activity	How many days did you participate in this activity in the last 12 months? 0	1-2	3-9	10-29	30+
Hiking/walking/running on trails	○	○	○	○	○
Walking/running dog on trails	○	○	○	○	○
Horseback riding on trails	○	○	○	○	○
Bicycling on rail trails/developed trails	○	○	○	○	○
Mountain biking on single-track trails	○	○	○	○	○
Riding ATVs/UTVs on trails/routes	○	○	○	○	○
Driving 4-WD vehicles on trails/routes	○	○	○	○	○
Riding motorcycles on trails/routes	○	○	○	○	○

4. Winter activities in Wisconsin

Activity	How many days did you participate in this activity in the last 12 months? 0	1-2	3-9	10-29	30+
Snowmobiling	○	○	○	○	○
Cross-country skiing	○	○	○	○	○
Downhill skiing/snowboarding	○	○	○	○	○
Snowshoeing	○	○	○	○	○
Ice fishing	○	○	○	○	○
Ice skating outdoors	○	○	○	○	○
Hockey outdoors	○	○	○	○	○
Fat tire biking/snow biking	○	○	○	○	○

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Photo: Joseph Warren

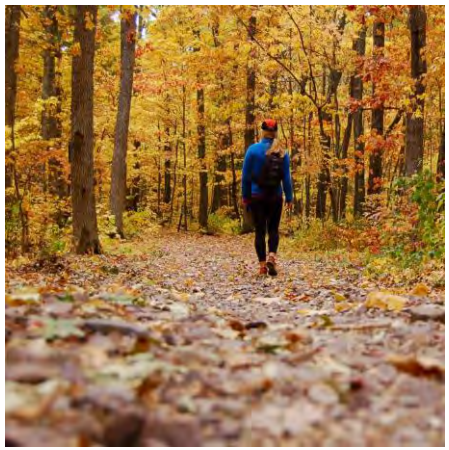
Photo: Linda Freshwater Arndt

Photo: Wisconsin Bike Fed

Photo: Angie Tornes

Photo: Savannah Ernzen

Photo: Gretchen Marshall



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CHAPTER II
RECREATION IN WISCONSIN

Photo: Tim Haugen

OUTDOOR RECREATION: AT THE CROSSROADS OF OUR QUALITY OF LIFE

Outdoor recreation influences many aspects of our lives and the larger communities in which we live. For example, people that participate in outdoor recreation, especially from an early age, tend to have stronger connections to nature and conservation ethics.[1, 2] In turn, these connections often lead to stronger support for the protection of natural resources. Thus, **participation in nature-based activities is likely to be increasingly important in the public's level of support for protecting air and water quality, open spaces, and wildlife.**

As has been described in previous SCORPs and in many other studies, participation in outdoor recreation also plays a critical role in promoting health.[3, 4, 5] Whether walking their dog, canoeing, mountain biking, hunting, camping or engaging in countless other activities, the fresh air, exercise, natural settings and companionship with others helps people feel physically and mentally refreshed. Engaging in outdoor recreation activities is an effective way to aid in preventing and treating many chronic illnesses including obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. In addition, participating in outdoor recreational activities is increasingly recognized for its benefits to people's mental health. A further description on the health benefits of outdoor recreation can be found on page 36.

People often participate in outdoor recreation as a group activity. The shared experiences among family and friends help create social bonds among participants. Participation in outdoor activities also creates social connections among people pursuing the same activities, even if they don't participate together. Interactions between people participating in different recreation activities can provide opportunities to learn about respective needs and desired experiences. A further description on the social benefits of outdoor recreation can be found on page 38.

Generating almost $18 billion in consumer spending, 168,000 jobs, $5.1 billion in wages and salaries, and $1.1 billion in state and local tax revenue, outdoor recreation is a financial engine in Wisconsin.[6] A further description on the economic benefits of outdoor recreation can be found on page 40.

Finally, lands and waters that provide the spaces for outdoor recreation often also have important environmental benefits, including habitats for rare and game species, flood control, carbon sequestration and groundwater replenishment. A further description on the economic benefits of outdoor recreation can be found on page 41.

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FACTORS AFFECTING RECREATION PARTICIPATION

Many factors and attributes influence participation in outdoor recreation. Some, such as the weather, vary daily and seasonally resulting in spur of the moment trips or skipped outings that had been planned well in advance. Other factors – including demographic characteristics, population distribution, and technological advances – evolve over extended periods. A summary of major factors affecting participation in outdoor recreation in Wisconsin follows.

Demographics

Population characteristics such as age and gender play important roles in determining participation levels in many types of recreation.

From childhood to early adulthood, participation in many outdoor activities generally increases.

Younger age groups tend to participate in activities that are more physically demanding, rugged, faster-paced or motorized. Examples include team sports, running, tent camping, hunting, whitewater canoeing, snowmobiling, all terrain vehicle (ATV) riding, downhill skiing, and riding personal watercraft.

People's participation in outdoor activities changes over time. Older age groups tend towards less strenuous and slower-paced forms of recreation such as wildlife watching (in particular bird watching), golf, nature photography, walking, utility task vehicle (UTV) riding and camping with recreational vehicles.

Gender also plays a big role in participation. In general, males participate in outdoor activities in greater numbers than females. Hunting is one of the outdoor activities most skewed towards men; in Wisconsin, almost 75% of hunters are male. Women tend to participate in nature photography and dog-related activities more than men.

Access to Opportunities

Although many people travel to seek out unique recreation experiences, most people have limited time for leisure activities and tend to participate most frequently in activities for which opportunities are located nearby. As a result, urban residents participate in ball sports, bicycling, running, visiting dog parks and other similar activities at higher rates than rural residents. Conversely, rural residents participate in hunting, fishing, trapping, ATV/UTV and snowmobile riding at higher rates than urban residents.

Since many opportunities for nature-based recreation activities are in rural areas, as more and more of our residents move to cities their ease of access to places to pursue activities such as hunting, snowmobiling, ATV and UTV riding and horseback riding will decline. Places near the state's major urban areas that provide opportunities for these activities are often heavily used.

In addition to the distances that many people now need to travel to participate in various outdoor activities, other barriers have developed. For example, another factor that influences access is simply knowledge and exposure over time. Family experiences, traditions, and the transfer of know-how can play substantial roles in participation rates. [7, 8, 9, 10]

Health

People's health is often related to and influenced by their participation in outdoor recreation. The benefits of outdoor recreation on one's physical and mental health has been well documented recently.

People are more likely to participate in activities in which their parents, other close family members or friends engage. This is most noticeable in activities, like hunting and trapping, that take considerable skill and experience to succeed.

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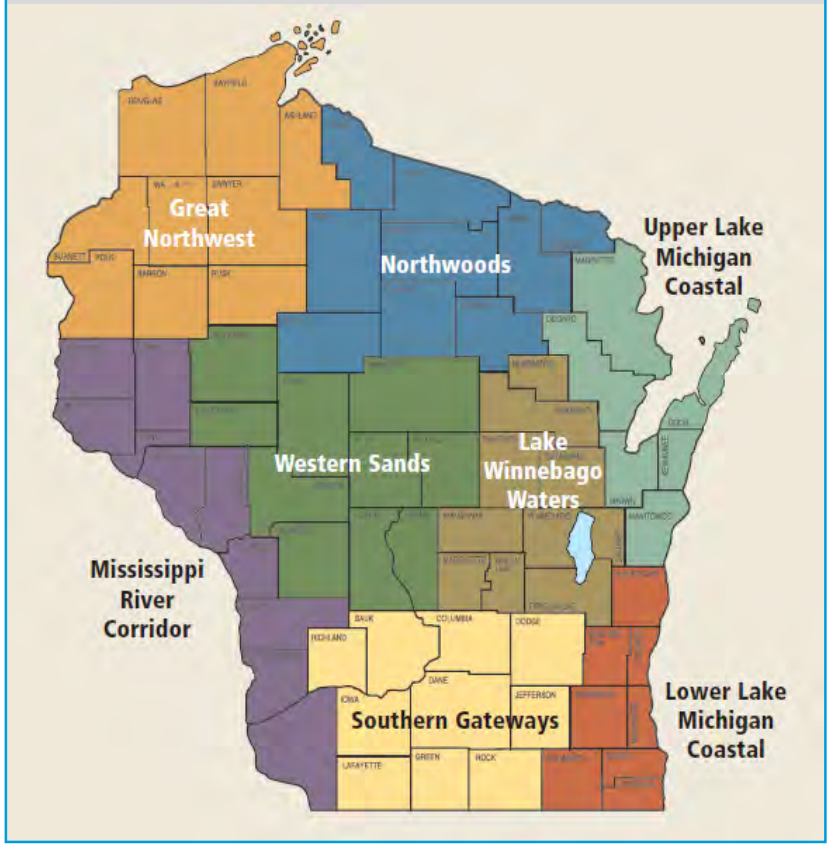
REGIONS OF THE STATE AND THEIR RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Figure 5: Recreation regions of Wisconsin



Previous SCORPs divided the state into eight regions based on similarities in their recreation attributes, visitation patterns, natural resources, and general features. This SCORP uses the same eight regions in describing recreational supply and demand.

Great Northwest

The Great Northwest Region has an abundance of natural resources such as Lake Superior, the Namekagon and St. Croix rivers, numerous inland lakes, and large forest blocks. Not surprisingly, tourism is a large and growing industry within the region. In addition to Wisconsin residents, visitors from the Twin Cities and surrounding suburban areas, utilize the region's recreational resources. Seasonal home development, particularly along rivers and lakes, has also increased dramatically within the region.

Mississippi River Corridor

The Mississippi River Corridor Region includes the state's western border counties running along the "Mighty Mississippi." The river and its backwater sloughs and wetlands are used for a variety of water-based recreational activities. In addition to the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, a number of popular state parks and natural areas occur along the corridor. A number of clear, cold trout waters are found in the region that draw anglers from throughout the Midwest.

Northwoods

The Northwoods Region has one of the largest concentrations of lakes in the country and has been a tourist and seasonal home destination for over a century. Increasingly, retirees are moving to the region and converting their vacation houses to permanent residences. With a number of popular public lands including the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest and the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, tourism is an important business here. The construction of an extensive bicycle trail network along with a growing number of ATV/UTV routes and trails, has increased visitation.

Western Sands

The Western Sands Region has an abundance of public lands that draw visitors from Milwaukee, Chicago and the Twin Cities. From camping to ATV riding and hunting to bird watching, the county and state forests and the expansive wildlife areas here support a wide diversity of recreation. Although largely rural, easy highway access and relatively inexpensive land prices within the region have increasingly made it a popular location for seasonal home development.

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Lake Winnebago Waters

The Lake Winnebago Waters Region is centered on the Lake Winnebago watershed which includes the lakes of Butte des Morts, Winneconne, and Poygan as well as the Fox and Wolf rivers. Together, these waters are the major recreational resource within the region and draw visitors from throughout the state and beyond for boating, fishing, hunting, bird watching and more. The region is home to the popular sturgeon fishing season. Urban and suburban development within the region continue to grow in the Fox River Valley.

Southern Gateways

The Southern Gateways Region contains a variety of environments - rolling hills in the south, the centrally-located Wisconsin River, and large marshes in the east - the combination of which provides a wide array of recreational opportunities. The region also has a number of important geologic features, including Devil's Lake, a craggy glacial lake surrounded by high cliffs and scenic overlooks that is one of Wisconsin's most popular recreation destinations. The rapid development around Madison has also increased demand for urban-based recreation opportunities such as dog parks, bicycle trails and developed sports facilities.

Upper Lake Michigan Coastal

The Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region is heavily influenced by Lake Michigan. Although many residents and visitors to the region use Lake Michigan for their recreational needs, other water resources such as the Peshtigo, Menominee, and Manitowoc rivers also attract visitors with their abundant fishing and paddling opportunities. Door County contains over 250 miles of picturesque shoreline (more than any other county in the United States) and 10 historic lighthouses, features that attract many tourists and seasonal residents. Peninsula State Park, located along the shores of Green Bay, is one of the most popular state parks in Wisconsin.

Lower Lake Michigan Coastal

The Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region is the most urban and populous of the eight regions. The urban influence of Milwaukee and its surrounding suburbs has led to an extensive network of trails and associated recreation facilities such as dog parks, athletic fields and sport courts. Despite this urban influence, some areas of the region offer opportunities for undeveloped outdoor recreation. The five units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest are easily accessible not only to the region's residents but also the greater Chicago metropolitan area and are some of the most heavily used public lands in the state.

Betty LaBarbera

My Story: Traditions

Betty LaBarbera

Betty LaBarbera, 91, has been buying a resident fishing license for as long as she can remember. Residents around Long Lake talk about the old plywood boat that she and her late husband, Joe, frequently rowed around the lake. Other boaters with modern, high-tech rigs slowed to no wake and gave a wide, respectful berth to the couple as they fished and enjoyed the scenery.

Nowadays, Betty's children and grandchildren pick her up for family fishing trips to the same Long Lake cabin that has been in the family since the turn of the last century. They still have the plywood rowboat that grandpa made, but they prefer to fish and swim from the multi-colored pontoon boat, "Grandma Betty's Barge."

The family fishing trips continue to follow a familiar pattern.

> *"First, we buy our license at Din's Market in Dundee," explains Betty, "and a dozen nightcrawlers. Joe is probably looking down from heaven and shaking his head; he'd always dig worms in the garden."*

After filling up on groceries and gas at Din's, Grandma Betty sometimes treats everyone to burgers and ice cream cones at the Hamburger Haus drive-in or a meal at Benson's on the north end. When she's done helping the local economy and reminiscing with old-timers from the Long Lake Fishing Club, it's time to go fishing.

Betty gives her annual lesson in how to put just the right size piece of nightcrawler on the bare hook. When the sun finally sets on another day on the lake, she says, "Whose gonna cook grandma's fish? Remember, we only keep 'em if we're gonna eat 'em."

After a fresh panfish supper, the LaBarbera tradition dictates that everyone in the family pitch in for the evening ritual. While some do the dishes, others start the campfire or prepare the s'mores. When the fire is lit, everyone gathers, and stories are told of memorable days gone by, fishing with friends and family.

The warmth lingers long after the last ember fades.

Mark LaBarbera
Outdoor Heritage Education Center

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THE CURRENT STATE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

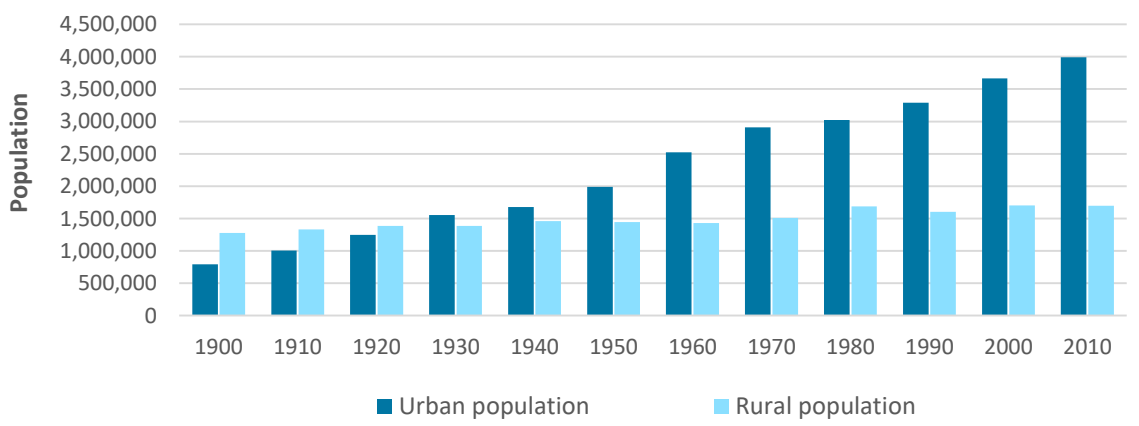
WISCONSINITES WHO WE ARE

Over the last 50 years, Wisconsin's population has increased at a rate of about 0.6%/year. The state's population is projected to grow from 5.8 million today to 6.5 million in 2040, an increase of about 0.5%/year (Table 4, Figure 7 – pg. 21).

The state's rural population has remained relatively stable over the last century (at about 1.5 million) while the urban population has more than tripled to over 3.5 million (Figure 6). While Wisconsin's urban population is growing considerably faster than the rural population, the state's rural population is relatively strong compared to nearby states that are dominated by very large urban centers (e.g., Chicago or the Twin Cities).

Following national trends, our population is increasingly urban, more ethnically and culturally diverse, and older (Figure 8 – pg. 22). [11, 12] Although Wisconsin's population is less diverse than other states, populations of people of color continue to grow. The Hispanic population nearly doubled from 2000 to 2015 and now comprises 6.7% of the state's residents. Wisconsin's Black/African American population increased 9.7% since 2000 and is the second largest community of people of color (6.6% of Wisconsin's population).[14]

Figure 6: Wisconsin urban and rural population, 1900 Census - 2010 Census[13]



With over 44% identifying as people of color, residents ages 18-34 are more diverse than any preceding generation.[15]

The distribution of Wisconsin's population is concentrated in several areas: the southeast metropolitan area centered on Milwaukee (Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, Waukesha, Washington, and Ozaukee counties), Madison and surrounding communities (Dane County), the Fox Valley (Brown, Outagamie, and Winnebago counties), La Crosse (La Crosse County) and the region near the Twin Cities (St. Croix County). Together, although these 12 counties comprise just 11% of the state's land area, they harbor 56% of the state's population (Figure 9 – pg. 22). Current and projected population numbers by county are shown in Appendix 2.

The number of Wisconsin residents living with disabilities continues to climb (Figures 10 and 11 – pg. 23). In part, this is due to the rise in our aging population and the increase in chronic diseases. Over 32% of Wisconsin residents over age 65 report living with one or more disabilities.[16] Many communities are building and upgrading facilities to meet the needs of people with different types of disabilities.

Participation in most outdoor activities declines after age 50; after 70, participation drops considerably (Figure 13 – pg. 25). Much of this decline in participation is likely due to health-related issues.

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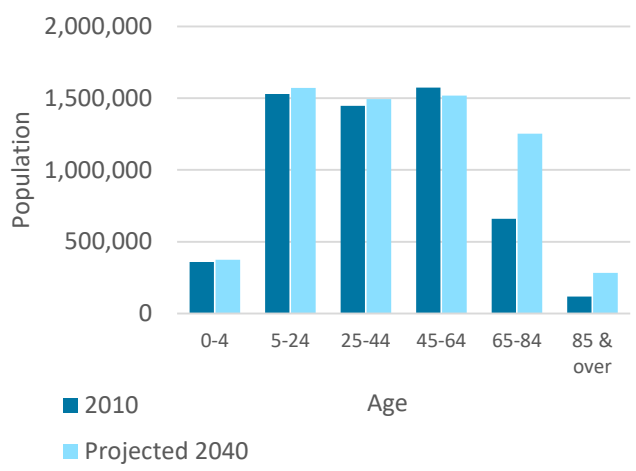
Table 4: Wisconsin population projected change, 2010 Census - 2040 projection, by age group[11]

Age Group	Numerical Change	Percent Change
0-4	15,497	**4.3%**
5-24	41,060	**2.7%**
25-44	46,235	**3.2%**
45-64	-56,194	**-3.6%**
65-84	592,956	**90.0%**
85 & over	165,095	**139.3%**
TOTAL	**804,649**	**14.1%**

Figure 7: Wisconsin population projected change by age group, 2010 Census – 2040 projection[11]



The Millennial Generation: the country's largest age group

Understanding the lifestyles and interests of younger generations can be helpful in anticipating the activities and experiences that may be popular in the future as these groups age. The Millennial generation (typically defined as those born from 1982 to 2000 and 18 to 36 years old today) is having a large impact on outdoor recreation. Not only are they the largest age group in the country (they surpassed the Baby Boomers in 2015) but they also spend more time and money on outdoor recreation than the average outdoor consumer.[17] This cohort, more than other age groups, generally has the following attributes related to outdoor pursuits:

Committed to health and wellness

More than previous generations, Millennials spend more time exercising and are the least obese age group.[18]

Seek experiences over material goods

More than three-quarters of Millennials would choose to spend money on a desirable experience or event over buying something desirable.[19] This may be linked to the sharing of experiences on social media, which may entice others to try similar or other experiences.

Participate in active outdoor pursuits

Younger people typically engage in more active forms of recreation (e.g., hiking, kayaking, and stand-up paddling) than their elders, a pattern that continues with Millennials. However, Millennial participation in newer, more strenuous activities (endurance races, trail running and mountain biking) is particularly notable. This is also linked to their desire to live healthy lives.

Are more likely to rent than own

This approach includes a range of items (e.g., cars, music and bicycles) and provides a greater degree of flexibility and mobility than traditional ownership.[20] Millennials tend to move more frequently than older generations did in when they were young adults and they continue the long-standing pattern of young adults moving from rural areas and small cities to large metropolitan areas (both in-state and out-of-state).

Use social media to share their experiences

Posting pictures, stories, reviews and endorsements on various internet-based platforms is likely to become an even more dominant way that participants communicate about their outings and influence others' participation.

Have pets

Nearly three-quarters of 30 to 39 year old's (the older Millennials) own dogs.[21]

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Figure 8: Percent of Wisconsin population age 65 or older by county, 2015 estimate – 2040 projection[22]

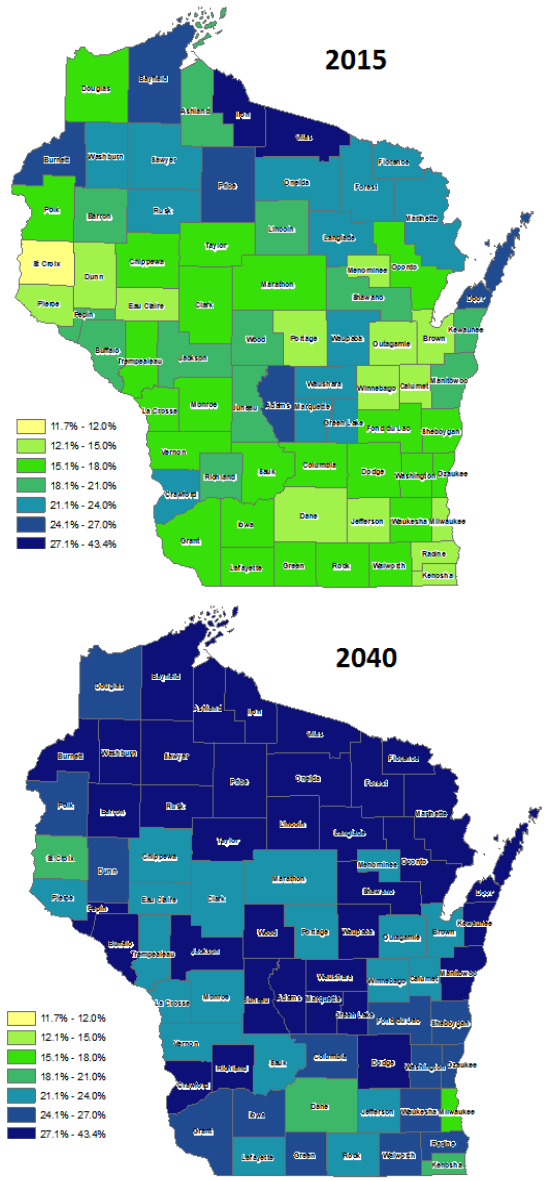

Figure 9: Population density by Census tract, 2010 Census[23]

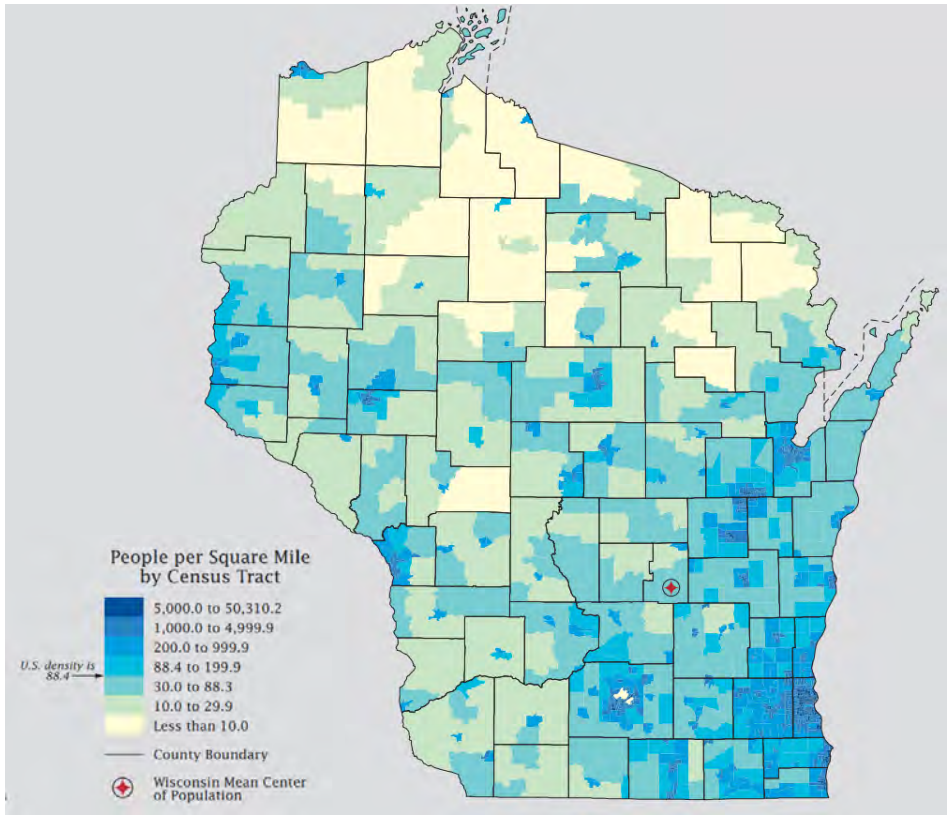

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Figure 10: Number of Wisconsinites with a disability[24]

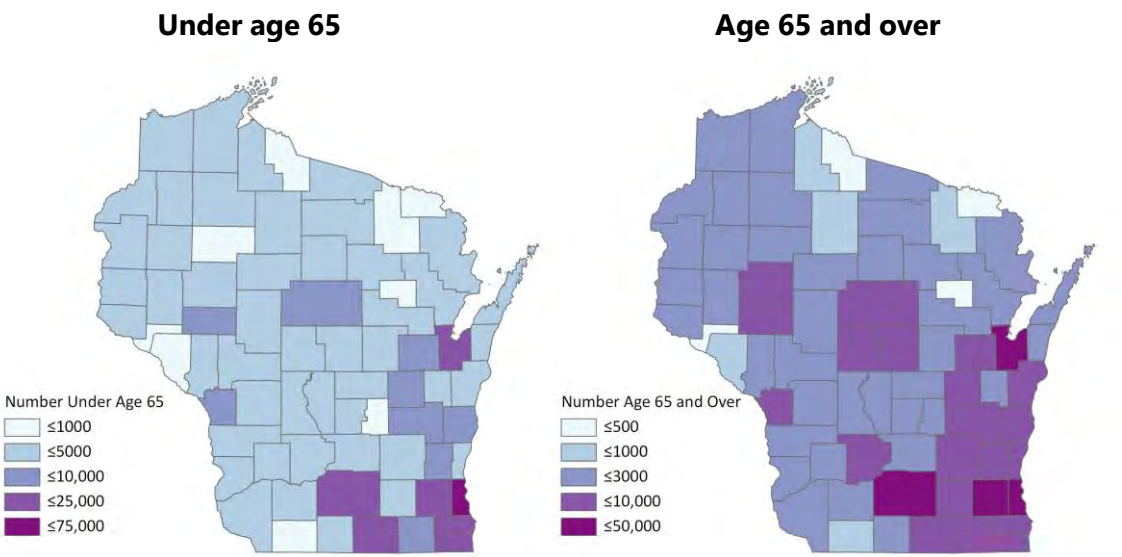

Figure 11: Percent of Wisconsin population with a disability[24]

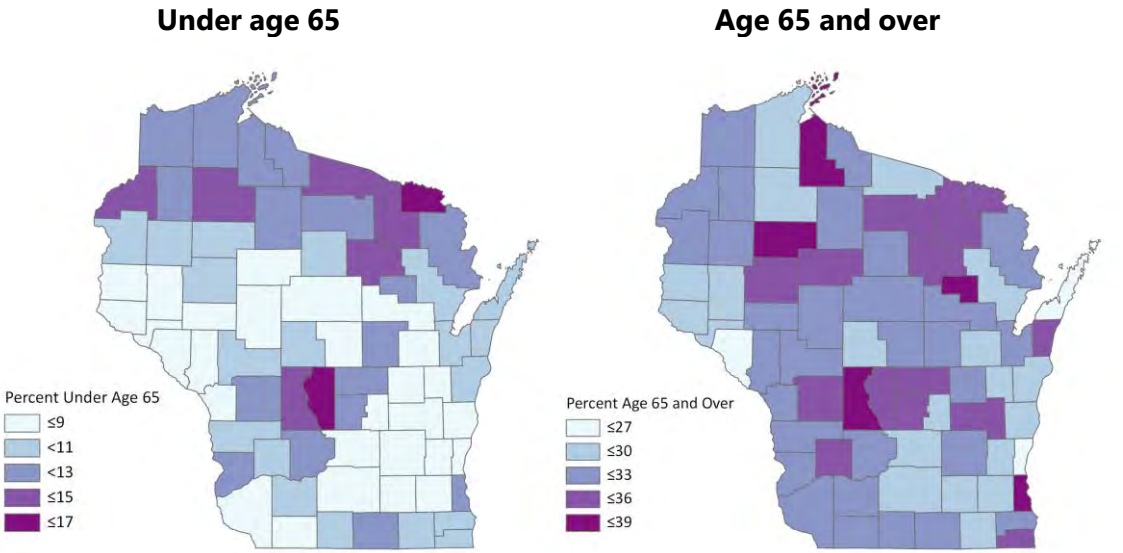

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Table 5: Wisconsin resident participation rates of grouped nature-based recreation activities[25]

Activity group	% of WI residents that participated at least once in last 12 months
Hiking Hiking/walking/running on trails	**68%**
Nature observation Bird/wildlife watching Nature photography Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.	**66%**
Boating-related Motor boating Canoeing/kayaking Personal water craft (jet-ski) Sailing Stand-up paddle boarding Waterskiing	**61%**
Bicycling Bicycling on roads Bicycling on rail-trails or other developed trails Mountain biking Fat-tire biking/snow biking	**50%**
Fishing Lake fishing Stream/river fishing Ice fishing	**49%**
Camping Tent camping RV/pop-up camping	**41%**
Dog-related activities Walking/running dog on trails Visiting a dog park	**38%**
Hunting Big game hunting Turkey hunting Small game hunting Migratory bird hunting	**27%**
Motorized trail-based activities ATVs/UTVs on trails-routes Snowmobiling 4-WD vehicles on trails-routes Motorcycles on trails-routes	**25%**

WISCONSINITES WHAT WE DO

Participation Rates

Wisconsinites have historically participated in outdoor recreation at higher rates than the national average. This is likely largely attributable to our abundant natural resource base, the quantity and quality of public lands and waters, and cultural traditions that value the outdoors. It is estimated that more than 95% of state residents participated in some form of outdoor recreation in the past year.

Table 5 shows participation rates of Wisconsin residents for general groupings of nature-based recreation activities. For comparison, 46% of Wisconsin residents participated in ball sports (golf, tennis, basketball, softball, baseball, soccer, and handball).

A list of the 20 most popular specific nature-based activities is presented in Table 6. A full listing of participation rates for recreation activities is found in Appendix 6.

Most residents participate in many outdoor recreational activities. Of the 65 activities that were included in the participation survey, over half of residents noted that they participated in at least 10 different activities in the last year (Figure 12).

Outdoor enthusiasts recreate in many different ways. One common thread is that people often participate in multiple activities on the same trip or outing. Canoeists watch wildlife while paddling down a river. Horseback riders take nature photographs. Motor boaters swim and fish; hunters ride ATVs and camp.

What differs, often dramatically, is the overall type of outdoor experience that people favor. Some prefer quiet, secluded settings where they can experience the sights, sounds, and smells of the natural world with few (if any) other groups or distractions. Popular activities for these people include wildlife watching, fishing, canoeing, tent camping, hiking, hunting and horseback riding.

Others prefer more active, strenuous experiences such as cross-country skiing, trail running, mountain biking and geocaching. Still others prefer the thrill of faster, often motorized activities such as ATV riding, motor boating, personal watercraft riding and snowmobiling (see Appendix 6 for activity clusters).

Figure 12: Number of outdoor recreation activities in which Wisconsin residents participate[25]

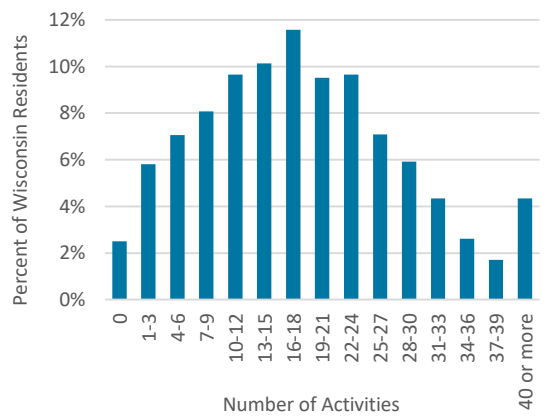

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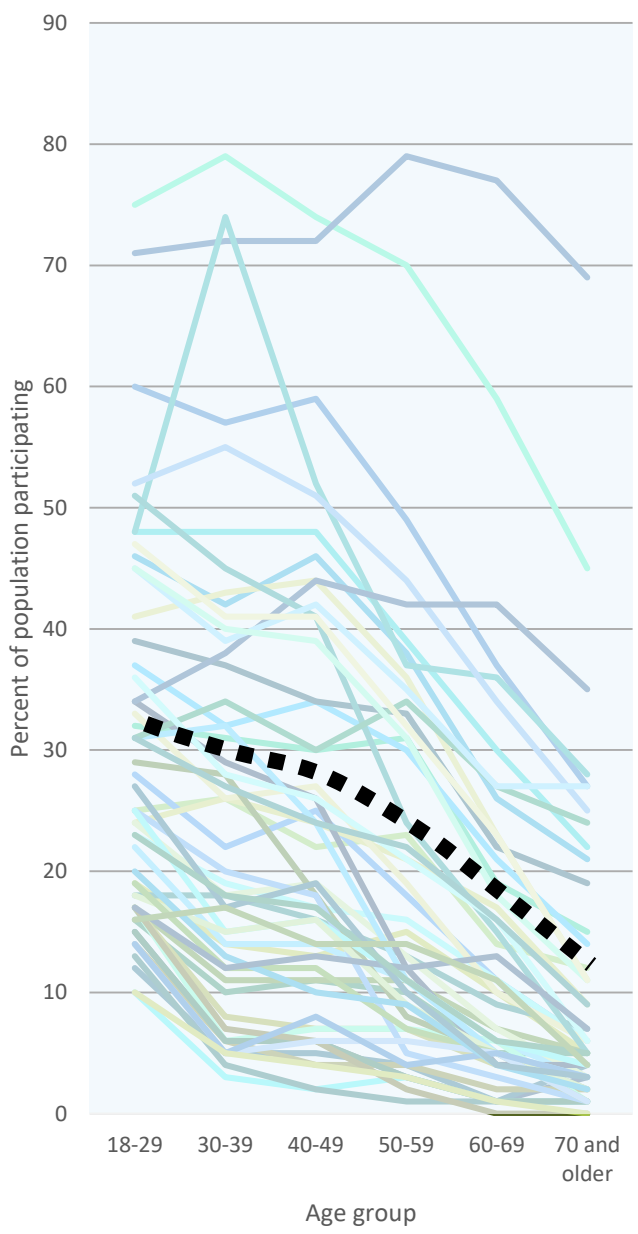
Figure 13: Wisconsin resident participation in outdoor recreation activities, by age group[25]



Age

As mentioned earlier, age plays an important role in participation rates**.** Although participation in most activities decreases with age, there is variation in the degree to which participation drops.

Figure 13 shows **participation rates by age group** (that is, the percentage of the state's population within each age group that participates). Each line depicts a different recreation activity and the average of all the activities is shown as a **dashed black line**.

It is likely that activities with relatively stable participation rates across age groups "pick up" participants in other activities as people age.

For example, it is likely that some people that downhill ski as young adults shift to cross country skiing in later years (participation in downhill skiing drops from 24% of the population in the 18 to 29 age group to 4% for the 60 to 69 age group while cross county skiing only declines from 17% to 13% for the same age groups).

Table 6: Wisconsin resident participation rates of <u>specific</u> (non-grouped) nature-based recreation activities.[25]

Participation Rate	Activity
68%	Hiking/walking/running on trails
65%	Visiting a beach/beach walking
55%	Bird/wildlife watching at home
54%	Swimming in lakes/ponds/rivers
45%	Motor boating
40%	Lake fishing from shore or a pier
39%	Bird/wildlife watching away from home
37%	Lake fishing from a boat/canoe/kayak
37%	Nature photography
34%	Bicycling on rail-trails/developed trails
34%	Canoeing or kayaking
32%	Tent camping
32%	Dog walking on trails
31%	Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.
29%	Target firearm shooting
23%	Ice fishing
21%	Hunting big game on private land
21%	RV/pop-up camping
21%	Stream/river fishing from shore/wading
21%	Water skiing/tubing/wakeboarding

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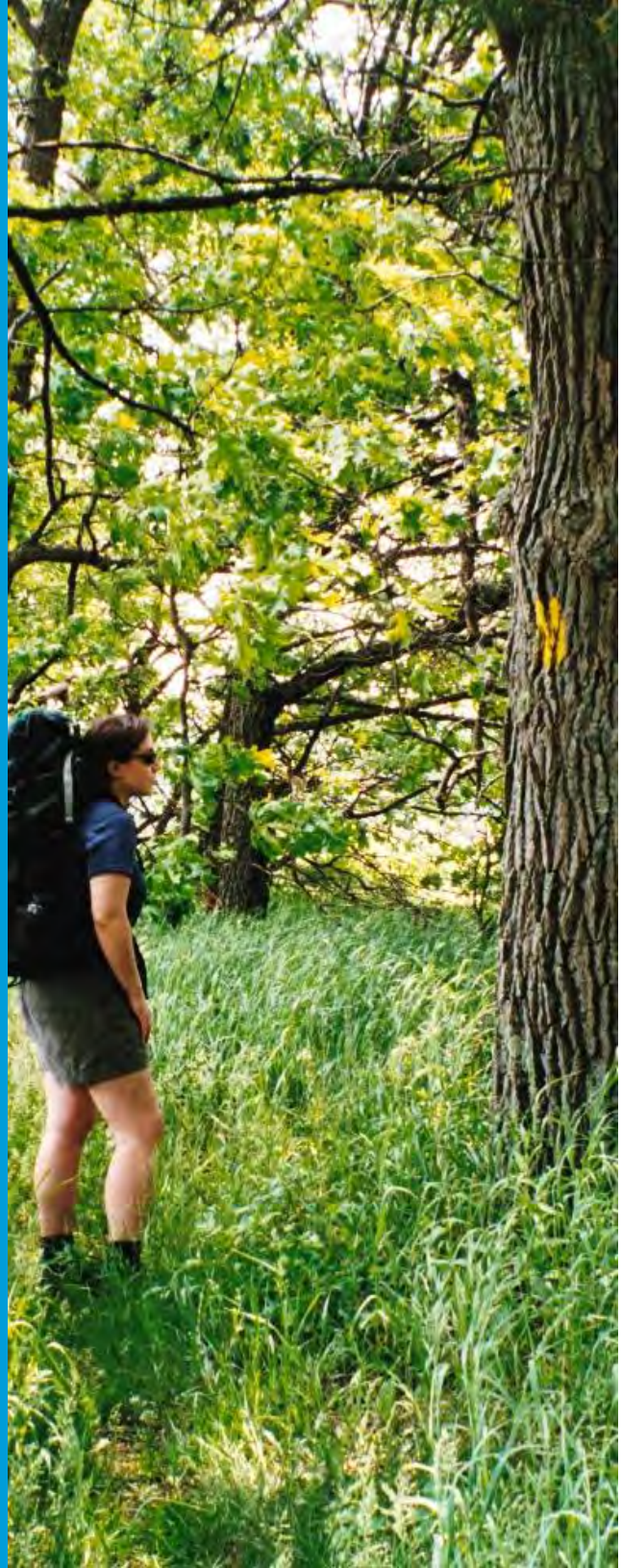

Participation Frequency

Understanding overall demand for recreation requires knowing both the number of people participating and how often they participate. Together, these provide a picture of the total "recreation outing days" that occur. As part of the survey on participation, the department collected data on frequency using the following categories: 0 days/year, 1-2 days/year, 3-9 days/year, 10-29 days/year, and 30+ days/year. Results are listed in Appendix 6.

As can be seen in Figure 14, for some activities (e.g., canoeing/kayaking and tent camping) participants typically only engaged in the activity 1-2 days in the last year. For other activities, most notably bird/wildlife watching at home, people tend to participate often. Unsurprisingly, people tend to participate most frequently in activities that can occur near their homes, require little preparation or can provide a high-quality experience in a limited amount of time. Although the frequency of participation is comparable across many activities, there are several factors to bear in mind. For example:

Hunting, fishing and trapping regulations
The harvest seasons for different game animals can limit participation. For example, most residents can only legally hunt turkeys in the spring during one of the six, one-week periods. Thus, someone who participated in turkey hunting 3-9 days in the last 12 months could have participated during the majority or entirety of their legally allowed days.

Seasonality
Some activities are dependent on conditions associated with seasons. For example, there may be a limited number of opportunities for people to participate in snow or ice-based activities, particularly in the southern part of the state, simply due to a lack of adequate conditions. Thus, although ice fishing, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing registered fewer days of average participation than activities such as nature photography or bird/wildlife watching, the people participating in winter activities may be participating in a higher percentage of the available days.

Value vs. Frequency
Activities in which people participate infrequently can still be very important to them. For example, someone may only go camping once per year, but it may be an annual family reunion that is their favorite outdoor activity of the year.

Favorite Outdoor Activities

Of course, frequency of participation can be independent of passion for an activity. That is, people's favorite outdoor activities are not necessarily those in which they participate most frequently.

When asked to name their favorite outdoor activity, the top five responses were:

1. **Walking, hiking**
2. **Fishing**
3. **Hunting**
4. **Bicycling**
5. **Camping**

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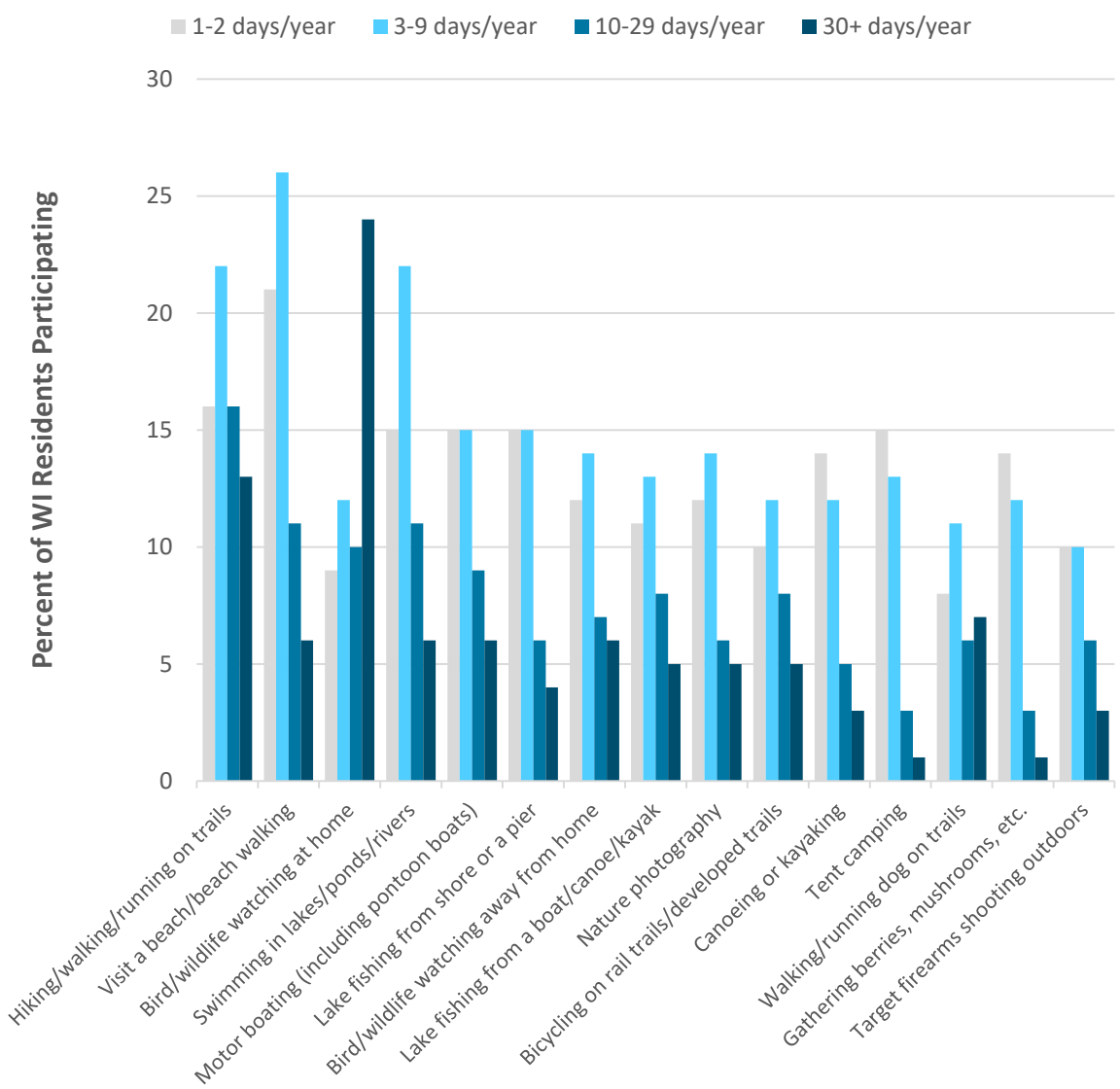
Figure 14: Frequency of participation in the 15 most popular nature-based recreation activities[25]



My Story: Childhood Explorer

The Spaul Family

Hannah and her husband Mike love spending time outdoors and have taken their son, Oscar, along pretty much everywhere since he was born. Oscar was 3 months old on his first camping trip and was canoeing before he could walk; his mom would hold him while he paddled.

Unsurprisingly, Oscar wants to do everything his parents do so they make sure he has equipment, but in his size. His paddle, fishing pole and net, headlamp and walking stick fit him well. His parents also change things up to keep him interested.

> *"We might start a scavenger hunt while on a hike or stop for snacks by the lake. And we give him as much control over what he wants to do as we can. Instead of moving at our desired pace, we slow things down and let him appreciate that cool rock or shell he just found," says Hannah.*

Most kids, unfortunately, don't get this type of exposure to the outdoors or the benefits. Surveys reveal children are not spending enough time outdoors. "I don't think it's just an issue for children. People are not spending much time outdoors, which means they're not taking their children outside either. Some children I know are afraid to go out in nature because they have no experience with it. But most children enjoy spending time outdoors when it's well-facilitated and they have the companions and the supplies they need to be comfortable," says Hannah.

Oscar's favorite place to visit is The Nature Conservancy's Lulu Lake Preserve in southeast Wisconsin. "When we take him canoeing there, he hops off the side of the canoe with his life jacket and his snorkel set. He'll swim around looking at fish until he's blue," reports Hannah.

Oscar is now ten and in fourth grade. He loves swimming, snorkeling, canoeing, fishing and taking short hikes. He digs in the dirt, collects rocks and loves bugs. When asked why she thinks it's important for Oscar to spend time in the outdoors, Hannah responds, "It's healthy, and it encourages independent learning and problem-solving. It's also a great way to unplug and spend time with other people - from family and friends to park rangers and naturalists. Nature adventures and discovery are a big part of our lives, and it's a gift we want to give to Oscar."

Paul Heinen
The Nature Conservancy

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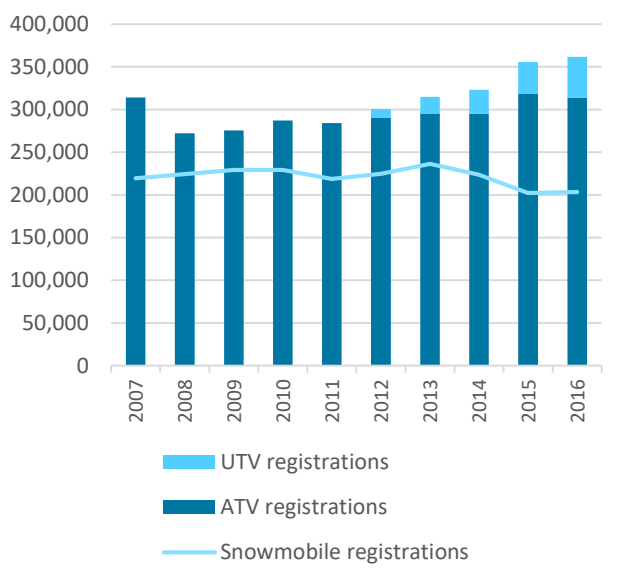
Figure 15: ATV, UTV, and snowmobile registrations in Wisconsin, 2007 - 2016[26]



Participation Trends

Future participation levels will be affected by the size of our population and the rates at which residents engage in different activities. The state's population is projected to grow by about 700,000 additional residents by 2040 and as a result most activities will see increases in the number of participants, even if participation rates for many activities decline as our population ages.

Of course, participation rates in activities rise and fall as trends come and go.[27, 28] Newer forms of recreation provide users with more options for enjoying the outdoors, and in some cases supplement users' recreational experiences. For example, fat-tire bikes can extend biking opportunities into the winter months, kayaking can be another way to fish small streams, UTVs can be a way for groups to get to a favorite hunting spot, and drones can be a new way to photograph nature. As battery technology continues to improve, it is possible that many applications will affect outdoor recreation in the future.

Based on the number of residents that are projected to be in different age groups in 2040, if future participation rates for each age group are the same as today's rates, the largest increases in the number of participants in nature-based recreation are expected for bird watching, picnicking/tailgating/cookout, visiting a nature center, and hiking/walking/running on trails (Appendix 4, Table 17).

Because the methods to survey recreation participation in Wisconsin have changed over time, it is not possible to analyze current and past data to quantitatively identify changes in statewide participation rates or frequencies. To address this, qualitative input was gathered from county recreation providers on how recreation participation has changed over the past five years at their properties. The recreation opportunities in highest demand on county-managed properties are campsites, hiking/walking/ running on trails, mountain biking and recreational biking trails, motorized trails, and shore access to lakes, rivers and streams (Appendix 4, Table 16).

Recreation Trend Example

Motorized recreation

While ATV use has been generally constant in Wisconsin over the last decade, UTV use has increased significantly. This growth is likely due both to the substantial number of Baby Boomers (older riders tend to prefer UTVs over ATVs) and also because on-going upgrades in UTV features have expanded their appeal and utility.

Given the projected growth in older age groups, there is likely to be an increase in the number of people that will participate in UTV riding.

ATV and UTV - What's the difference?

ATV (all terrain vehicle): usually meant for a single rider that straddles a saddle and steers using a handlebar system.

UTV (utility task vehicle, sometimes referred to as side-by-side): can seat multiple people and riders sit in bench or bucket seats. Driver uses a steering wheel.

See State Statutes 340.01 and 23.33(1)(ng) for legal definitions.

Trends in participation at county parks, forests and trails

Activities with largest increases:

- Bicycling – winter/fat-tire biking
- Camping – RV/pop-up
- Bicycling – mountain biking
- Riding ATV/UTVs
- Canoeing/kayaking
- Bicycling – recreational/rail-trail biking
- Picnic areas/day use/beaches
- Paddle boarding
- Dog walking on trails
- Hiking/walking/running on trails
- Fishing

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WISCONSINITES

WHERE WE PARTICIPATE

With nearly 7.5 million acres of land open to the public, there are abundant opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy outdoor recreation experiences in Wisconsin. Approximately half of this acreage is managed by state and federal agencies, including the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service. Local governments also manage a broad portfolio of places available to the public for outdoor recreation, including local parks, school forests and nearly 2.4 million acres of county forest land.

In addition, the public has access to private lands enrolled in some conservation programs and lands where agencies have acquired public access easements. Descriptions of the types of lands open to the public for nature-based recreation and acreages for each county are listed in Appendix 3. In addition, Table 14 in Appendix 4 provides an overview of the recreation opportunities at county-managed properties.

Although public conservation and recreation lands comprise only about 17% of the state (Table 7 – pg. 30), a sizable percentage of residents use public lands for outdoor recreation. When asked about their top two favorite outdoor activities, nearly two-thirds said their participation was "entirely" or "mostly" on public lands or waters. However, 65% of respondents that listed hunting as their favorite outdoor activity used private lands "entirely" or "mostly." This is not surprising since public lands – especially in the southern part of the state – are typically crowded during hunting seasons.

Given the distribution of our population as well as our public lands, it is logical that for some activities there are geographic patterns of visitation. The large public land holdings in central and northern Wisconsin draw visitors for multi-day outings, including camping, ATV/UTV and snowmobile riding, hunting and fishing. Public lands in the southern and eastern parts of the state, which tend to be smaller, are heavily used by people pursuing shorter outings (half-day or less) to hike, walk a dog, bird watch, ride a bike, picnic, fish, hunt, gather edibles and other activities.

Did You Know?

With over 200,000 registered snowmobiles and over 25,000 miles of trails, Wisconsin is the nation's snowmobiling champion.

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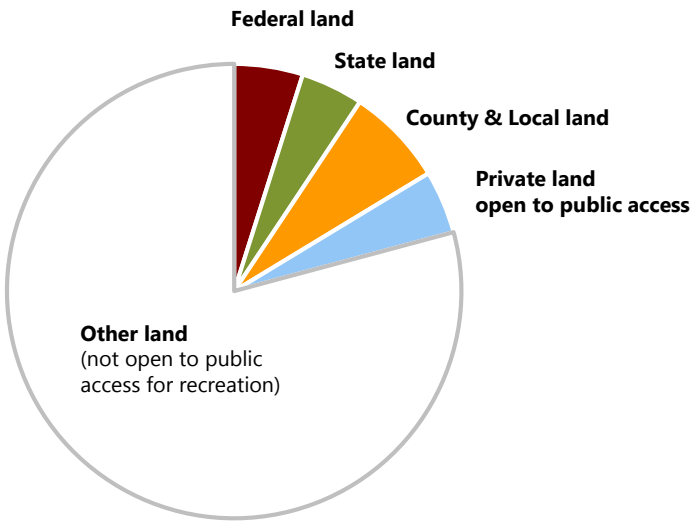
Figure 16: Lands in Wisconsin open to the public for recreation[29]



Ways to value potential land purchases for recreation

Governments acquire land at the request of their constituents. In determining where to purchase property, agencies must evaluate costs and benefits to determine the most effective and efficient use of public funds.

Lands that are least expensive to purchase often provide limited public outdoor recreation opportunities, given their location and the type and quality of experiences the land provides.

When viewed using metrics other than dollars/acre, higher-priced places near population centers may provide a much better return on investment for taxpayers than less-expensive lands distant from cities.

For example, using metrics such as visitor-days or the economic returns accruing to nearby communities from these visitors' spending (and state sales taxes generated) may show that lands for recreational use near urban areas provide a better return on investment than lower-priced lands in remote areas. Similarly, the benefits of improved health and quality-of-life accrue to substantially more people when places are available near urban areas for outdoor recreation.

Table 7: Lands in Wisconsin open to the public for recreation[29]

	Public Ownership	**Acres Owned**	**Percent of the State**
Federal	U.S. Forest Service	1,524,600	4.2%
	National Park Service	67,500	0.2%
	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	149,500	0.4%
	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	14,300	0.0%
	Total Federal	**1,755,900**	**4.9%**
State	Department of Natural Resources - Fee title	1,523,200	4.2%
	Board of Commissioners of Public Land	75,900	0.2%
	Total State	**1,599,100**	**4.5%**
County and Local	County Forest	2,381,900	6.6%
	County Parks (estimate)	70,000	0.2%
	City, Village, and Town recreation properties funded by Stewardship matching grants	15,000	0.0%
	City, Village, and Town recreation properties not funded by Stewardship matching grants (estimate)	50,000	0.1%
	School Forests	27,900	0.1%
	Total County and Local	**2,544,800**	**7.0%**
	Total *publicly-owned* lands	**5,899,800**	**16.4%**

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Table 7: Lands in Wisconsin open to the public for recreation (continued)

Private Ownership	**Acres Owned**	**Percent of the State**
Non-government organizations lands funded by Stewardship matching grants	70,000	0.2%
Managed Forest Law land open to the public*	1,081,600	3.0%
Forest Crop Law land**	125,800	0.4%
Forest Legacy program easements	248,200	0.7%
Department of Natural Resources – easements on private lands	55,100	0.2%
Voluntary Public Access (VPA)	32,000	0.1%
Total *privately-owned* lands open to public access	**1,612,700**	**4.5%**

* By statute, open for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing, and cross-country skiing.
** By statute, open for hunting and fishing.

Total: Land Open for Public Recreation	
Acres of the State of Wisconsin	**35,640,000**
Acres of land in the State of Wisconsin open for public recreation	**7,512,500**
Percent of the State of Wisconsin open for public recreation	**21%**

See Appendix 3 for maps and a listing of public lands by county.

Photo: Gretchen Marshall

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WISCONSINITES WHEN WE PARTICIPATE

Wisconsin's four-season climate supports a wealth of opportunities for outdoor recreation throughout the year. The seasonal patterns of participation vary across activities; some are popular year-round while others are limited by conditions – like adequate snow or migration events – or by specific dates (for example hunting, fishing and trapping seasons). In addition to participation patterns related to the seasons, there are also ebbs and flows of participation across the days of the week and the times of the day.

Participation in outdoor activities varies from outings of an hour or two (often after work) to half-day or day-long trips (often on weekends) to multi-day vacations. Although people pursue the full gamut of activities in each of these types of getaways, activities differ in the length of time needed to provide a high-quality experience. For example, participants in activities such as dog walking, trail running, or nature photography can have a high-quality experience in as little as a half-hour. Other activities, such as horseback riding, hunting, fishing, canoeing and bicycling are often pursued for two to three hours or longer. Table 8 shows estimates of the frequency of the duration of people's participation in different recreation activities.

Where people go to participate in outdoor activities is, of course, a function of available time and locations of opportunities. One's willingness to travel different distances is often directly related to the time available to participate in an activity. Typically, people are willing to invest a total travel time (getting to and from the destination) no more than the same amount of time they will recreate. If the travel time is much beyond the recreation time, then most people conclude the enjoyment of participating in the outing isn't worth the cost or effort.

Combining travel time and the participation time needed for a high-quality experience provides an indication of what types of activities people typically engage at different distances from home. As an example, since most people walk their dog for 30 minutes to an hour at a time, they typically travel no more than 15 to 30 minutes to a place that would provide a high-quality experience. Thus, most dog walking happens close to home and a map showing where participation takes place would mimic our state's population map.

For other activities, such a map would be quite different. Participants in hunting and many motorized activities often spend four to six hours or more a day engaged in these activities; occasionally, participants spend several days in a row on trips. Participants are typically willing to spend four or more hours travelling to locations that provide high-quality experiences. And, of course, camping involves multi-day trips. For these types of activities, a map showing where participation occurs would be more influenced by the locations and characteristics of existing opportunities rather than where people live.

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Table 8: Frequency of estimated hours per day participants typically engage in nature-based recreation*

Recreation Activity	Hours Spent within a day											Multi-day
	0.5	1	1.5	2	2.5	3	4	5	6	7	8+	
Water skiing/tubing/wakeboarding												
Swimming in lakes/ponds/rivers												
Dog walking on trails												
Target firearm shooting												
Target archery												
Trapping												
Hiking/walking/running on trails												
Nature photography												
Mountain biking												
Gathering berries, mushrooms and other wild edibles												
Visiting a beach/beach walking												
Cross-country skiing												
Lake/river fishing from a boat/canoe/kayak												
Lake/river/stream fishing from shore or pier												
Motor boating												
Horseback riding												
Canoeing or kayaking												
Bicycling on rail-trails or other developed trails												
Bird/wildlife watching away from home												
Hunting small game												
Ice fishing												
Riding motorcycles on trails/routes												
Riding ATVs/UTVs on trails/routes												
Snowmobiling												
Driving 4-WD vehicles on trails/routes												
Hunting big game												
RV/pop-up camping												
Tent camping												

Frequency	
Rarely - (less than 2% of trips) or not applicable	
Infrequent - (3% to 9% of trips)	
Occasional - (10% to 19% of trips)	
Common - (20% to 39% of trips)	
Most common - (40% or more of trips)	

**These estimates are based on department staff consultations with outdoor organizations and their professional judgement.*

My Story: Empowered
Sarah Lisiecki

The outdoors is a space for me. A space where there aren't expectations or "shoulds" and a space where I can go to be a happier, healthier, more creative version of the person I was when I went in. As a woman, I spend a lot of time being told how to behave, feel, act and believe.

The outdoors offers me a place to transcend those "shoulds" and focus on who I am at the core and who I want to be as my future self.

Being outdoors – hiking, biking, climbing, kayaking, trail running, camping – allows me to be physically challenged and to confront fear and be brave. Here I feel empowered yet find a peacefulness that is unique to time spend without walls. It allows me to see my body for all it can accomplish and not what it can't. It allows my mind to be relaxed, yet focused.

In the outdoors I build my thoughts, find my peace, overcome and gain confidence. People in outdoors foster a community; there is something special about these places that brings people together.

Being outdoors and void of distractions help me deepen friendships, family relationships and my relationship with myself.

Maybe it's the struggle followed by the reward or maybe it's being reminded of what's essential and having the opportunity to relish beauty uninterrupted.

Sarah Lisiecki

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WISCONSINITES WHY WE PARTICIPATE

Table 9: Top ten reasons to get outside, US residents, Age 6+[33]

Reasons to get outside	% of respondents
Get exercise	64%
Be with family and friends	55%
Keep physically fit	50%
Observe scenic beauty	49%
Be close to nature	47%
Enjoy the sounds and smells of nature	47%
Get away from the usual demands	40%
Be with people who enjoy the same things I do	31%
Experience excitement and adventure	32%
Experience solitude	20%

Table 10: Top ten reasons to not get outside, US residents, Age 6+[33]

Reasons to *not* get outside	% of respondents
Too busy with family responsibilities	21%
Outdoor recreation equipment is too expensive	18%
Do not have anyone to participate with	17%
Do not have the skills or abilities	16%
Have a physical disability	14%
My health is poor	11%
Places for outdoor recreation cost too much	10%
Too busy with other recreation activities	10%
Places for outdoor recreation are too far away	10%
Do not have enough information	7%

Considerable research has been conducted by various organizations to understand what motivates people to participate in outdoor recreation and what obstacles exist. The results of these research efforts consistently identify social and health benefits as primary drivers of participation. At heart, many people spend time outdoors simply to have fun and get away from daily stresses. In addition to the reasons that draw people to outdoor activities listed in Table 9, another motivation that has come to the forefront in Wisconsin recently is the desire to eat locally-grown, sustainable, organic food. This has led some people to take up or increase their participation in hunting, fishing and gathering wild edibles.

Although many people understand the health and social benefits of ongoing experiences in nature and are interested in pursuing outdoor activities, there is a substantial gap between "concept and reality."[30] Competing priorities for time, lack of easy access to places or people to go with, and cost of equipment are often cited as obstacles to participation. Although some types of equipment can be expensive, it should also be noted that the price of computers, phones, Internet and phone service, cable television and other technology can also be costly. Americans spent $36 billion just on video games in 2017; about $110 for every person in the country.[31] This is more than the combined spending on all fishing and hunting equipment ($34 billion).[32] Table 10 lists top reasons people identify for not getting outside.

Photo: TJ Brusoe

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Photo: TravelWisconsin

Photo: Mark LaBarbera

Photo: DC Kayak Tours

Photo: Mark LaBarbera

My Story: AccessAbility
Monica Spaeni

As daylight faded and the northern Wisconsin forest darkened in the early evening, Monica saw 300 pounds of shadow move closer to her wheelchair. The hungry bruin had a white chevron of hair on its chest. It moved through the trees slowly, pausing often.

Unlike most other hunters, she wasn't in the relative safety of an elevated tree stand. Seconds seemed like minutes and minutes seemed like hours as Monica sat still, her senses tingling with excitement. Monica was focused solely on the bear moving among the shadows. It stepped into an opening nearby. Monica's heart raced. She raised her .308 and shot, killing the bear and filling her freezer.

Her guide, Wayne, and friend, Steve, made it possible for her to hunt bear despite her spinal cord injury.

Monica was in a wheelchair because of a skiing accident when she was chaperoning her child's field trip. She resisted feelings of self-pity and did not settle for a sedentary life.

After the diagnosis that she would not walk again, Monica focused on how she and others could enjoy a life filled with accessible outdoor recreation activities.

It didn't take long for Monica to discover the Action TrackChair, a motorized all-terrain wheelchair that allows anyone to go afield where normal wheelchairs cannot. Soon, Monica was tracking through corn stubble on pheasant hunts, navigating rough trails to fish streams, and traversing wooded terrain in pursuit of whitetails. Dog park trails near home were easy for her Action TrackChair as she exercised her dog.

She did not stop there. She wanted others to have access to the all-terrain chairs. With help from the local chapter of Pheasants Forever, AccessAbility was born and has grown into an independent, non-profit organization that is building a fleet of chairs throughout the state that can be used by anyone at no cost.

What started as a ski accident that threatened to limit her mobility and future recreation opportunities, has turned into a series of accomplishments that has improved opportunities and access for not just Monica, but so many others.

Mark LaBarbera
Outdoor Heritage Education Center

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WISCONSINITES
HOW WE BENEFIT

Health benefits

Most people participate in outdoor activities for enjoyment and because it helps them feel energized and revitalized. The fresh air, exercise, natural settings and companionship with others helps people feel physically and mentally refreshed. Participating in outdoor recreational activities, or simply being in peaceful natural settings, can have substantial benefits to one's mental health. Outdoor exercise has been shown to reduce stress, boost the immune system, diminish the risk of disease and increase life expectancy.

And from walleyes to ducks to mushrooms, "consumptive activities" can be a nutritious source of lean, organic, sustainable food. For many years the DNR has hosted a Learn to Hunt program that links novice hunters with experienced ones. The program is increasingly popular with young urban residents interested in connecting with the state's hunting heritage and harvesting locally-grown, healthy food.

As the physical and mental health benefits of spending time outdoors are better understood, the health care community is developing creative ways to encourage patients to get outside. In one of the better-known examples, some physicians are recommending "park prescriptions" to patients with various chronic diseases.[52]

The health care cost savings generated by participating in outdoor recreation, particularly more strenuous activities, is just beginning to be explored. Given the physical and mental health benefits of outdoor recreation, several programs in Wisconsin (along with many other states) have embarked on campaigns to draw people outside and become more active. Three of these efforts are highlighted on the adjacent page.

Chronic Diseases and Their Costs

Wisconsinites currently face chronic health issues related to society's increasingly sedate lifestyle.

Despite the growing awareness of the problem, the obesity rate for adults in our state has doubled since 1990.[34]

Maybe more troubling, 25% of adolescents are overweight or obese.

In addition, more than 350,000 Wisconsinites have been diagnosed with diabetes.[35] And in both Wisconsin and the United States, heart disease is a leading cause of death; one-third of all deaths in the state were due to cardiovascular disease.[36] A table of some health care indicators, by county, is presented in Appendix 2.

Chronic diseases exact a substantial cost on the state's economy. The direct costs of these diseases to just the Medicaid system are estimated to total $1.15 billion annually in Wisconsin; if costs to the private sector were included, the amount would be significantly higher.[37]

Did You Know?

OutWiGo is a statewide initiative encouraging people to improve their overall health and wellness by being active in the outdoors.

Since launching in May 2018, over 2,000 residents have pledged to be active in Wisconsin's Parks, Forests and Trails. OutWiGo aims to reach additional users through outreach, partnership events and social media marketing.

Learn more at:
https://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/outwigo.html

OutWiGo

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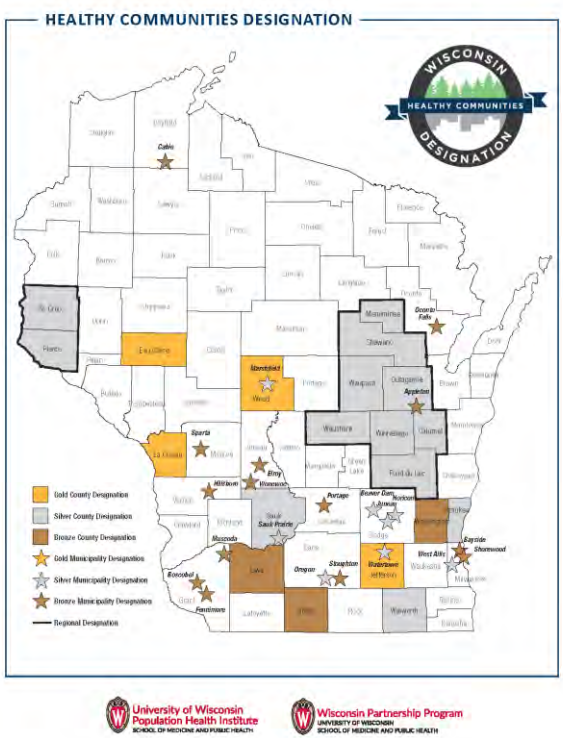
Wisconsin Healthy Communities Designation[38]

This new program encourages achievements in health improvement in Wisconsin by recognizing communities that focus multiple, connected efforts – including health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and the physical environment – to improve the health of their residents. The program's inaugural round of gold, silver or bronze designations was announced in September 2018 and included 31 communities (Figure 15).

One of only four gold designations went to Jefferson County, which was recognized for its efforts to reduce obesity rates through outdoor exercise strategies (among other programs geared to improving resident's health). The county's Parks Department has been a leader in providing natural-resource-oriented parks and trails that make it easy for residents to get outside, exercise, and enjoy the woods, prairies, and rural landscape. Examples include expanding the popular Glacial River Trail, constructing a new bicycle trail from Watertown to Oconomowoc, increasing recreational offerings in parks, and developing a series of water trails for paddlers.

These and other efforts appear to be paying off; the county's health ranking jumped from 33rd in the state in 2012 to 12th in 2018.

Figure 17: Healthy Communities Designations, 2018



Wisconsin Active Together[39]

Wisconsin Active Together is an initiative that provides recognition awards to community groups or coalitions that are making it easier for people to walk, bike and be active and meets basic criteria to demonstrate that commitment. The initiative was developed in 2017 by a diverse group of state-level and community-based partners that identified the need to support more local-level action on strategies that make physical activity easy, safe and fun in community settings.

Wisconsin Active Together focuses on coalitions and processes working on policies, systems and environments that build physical activity into routine daily life.

The first set of communities recognized were:

- Appleton
- Fond du Lac
- Fox Valley
- La Crosse Region
- New Holstein
- Watertown
- Wausau

Marathon County Strategic Plan

Marathon County recently adopted their 2018-2022 Strategic Plan with an overarching goal to be the healthiest, safest, and most prosperous county in Wisconsin. Their plan recognizes that:

> "Health is not merely restored at the doctor's office, but instead starts in our families, in our schools and workplaces, in our playgrounds and parks, and in the air we breathe and the water we drink. We recognize that health and well-being are lifelong pursuits and that our communities can support positive, healthy lifestyles."

Marathon County Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department plays a key role in helping meet this goal. With 13 parks and over 30,000 acres of county forest, residents have an abundance of opportunities to enjoy outdoor recreation and stay active as part of efforts to improve their health. In addition, the lands managed by the Parks, Recreation, and Forestry Department improve air and water quality in the county.

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Photo: Greg Sanderson

Social benefits

Participation in many nature-based outdoor activities is often a group activity. Families and friends tend to camp, bicycle, ride ATVs and UTVs, horseback ride, bird watch and hike in groups (Table 9 - pg. 34 where 55% of people stated that they participated in outdoor recreation to "be with family and friends").

The bonds that form through the collective outdoor experiences shared by groups in many ways are the "social glue" that bring people together. And the stories that accompany particularly memorable outings – whether because of a rare bird sighting, attempting an activity for the first time, reeling in a trophy fish, getting lost in the woods, or the inevitable mishaps that leave people laughing – often become family legends that are retold over and over.

Outdoor recreation can also be an opportunity for people to meet and better understand each other's perspectives, needs, and motivations. Like sports, the arts, religion, social clubs and school, outdoor recreation can bring together diverse groups of people interested in a common pursuit and provide a forum to interact, learn new customs, and better understand each other. This in turn can strengthen community cohesion and connections to natural resources.

Recent research has indicated a connection between greenspace and the amount of time people spend in nature with reduced crime and how people view their surroundings.[40] This is particularly true in urban settings. In Wisconsin, local park programs are increasingly customizing new outdoor recreation facilities to reflect the heritage and current ethnic diversity of the surrounding community. These city parks can serve two purposes – one as an outdoor recreation facility and also as a source of cultural education.

The link between physical activity and academic achievement in a range of school-age children has been the topic of ongoing research. Several studies have shown a positive connection between children's participation in physical pursuits, including nature-based outdoor activities, and improved educational outcomes.[41]

Outdoor recreation groups

Wisconsin has numerous clubs and associations representing hunters, bicyclists, snowmobilers, horseback riders, ATV and UTV riders, birdwatchers, and many other participants.

These groups have long been exceptionally key players in organizing events, volunteer work days, educational and outreach programs, and in advocating for policies and funding to support outdoor recreation.

Participation in these groups is on the rise. For example, the number of snowmobile clubs has grown from 575 to 615 over the last ten years.

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Photo: Gretchen Marshall

Photo: Gretchen Marshall

Photo: Gretchen Marshall

Photo: Jennifer Gilring

My Story: The Outdoors - from Passion to Occupation

Chase Cummings, Pepin County Land Conservation & Planning Director

The Tri-County School Forest is a 280-acre parcel in rural Waushara County that provides an excellent educational setting for students as well as recreational opportunities for the community. Area students from kindergarten through high school visit the property multiple times each year. The school forest is also open to the public to hunt, snowshoe, bicycle, cross-country ski, and picnic.

Rain or shine, Chase Cummings has always enjoyed being outside and connected with natural resources. For Chase, learning was easier in the woods or fields where he could see, hear, and feel his surroundings. It would be an understatement to say that he was very excited to visit the school forest each year.

When he reached high school, Chase became an Environmental Education (EE) Counselor at the forest. In his role, he coordinated field trips for the district's teachers and led a variety of lessons for other kids. Chase had to learn to identify different plants and animals, display leadership ability, and be a good communicator – skills that have benefited him in his career. The EE Counselor program helped give him the boost of confidence needed in more challenging experiences, such as public speaking, that are common elements of his career.

After high school, Chase pursued a degree in Soil and Waste Resources and now works as the Pepin County Land Conservation & Planning Director. Building on his experience at the school forest, in 2011 Chase started Conservation Field Days for 5th and 6th Grades in Pepin County.

> *Students and teachers look forward to their twice-yearly trips out in the field learning about natural resources and their management; it has grown into a very successful program.*

As a kid growing up, Chase was fortunate to have opportunities to connect with the outdoors. With the Field Days program he created, he's passing that good fortune on to the next generation and planting the seeds for future conservationists.

Gretchen Marshall
Wisconsin School Forest Program

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My Story: Small business Success

Suzann and Montgomery "Mo" Mouw

How does outdoor recreation drive the tourism economy in Wisconsin? The story of ROAM Adventure Basecamp, located in Seely and offering a modern twist to trailside camping, shows how a couple's passion and love for outdoor recreation and the Northwoods led to a successful new business.

The Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association (CAMBA) develops, maintains and promotes over 300 miles of user-friendly biking, skiing and hiking trails in northwest Wisconsin. The extensive trail network was the primary reason Suzann and Mo Mouw have owned a trailside second home in the Hayward area since 2004.

After they acquired 96 acres of land on the American Birkebeiner ski trail in the heart of the CAMBA trail system, Suzann and Mo thought it would be nice to share their love of trailside living with others. Mo states, "though there are a number of campgrounds in the area, none catered specifically to bikers and skiers - thus, the idea of ROAM was hatched."

Started in 2017, the business provides both traditional tent camping sites and trendy, comfortable "tiny house" cabins with easy access to the trails. At the end of the day, guests can unwind in the campsites, eco-friendly cabins, or around a campfire with friends in a secluded natural setting.

The overwhelming feedback they receive from guests is their appreciation of being trailside with direct access to Wisconsin's premier Northwoods trail system. "No more loading gear every time they start an adventure."

The backbone of Wisconsin's tourism industry is small business owners and small family-run operations.

"On any given weekend we bring over a hundred plus people to the area that likely would have gone somewhere else if we did not offer our services," states Mo. Suzann and Mo's ROAM Adventure Basecamp is just one of many examples of how individuals turn their passion for the outdoors into a thriving business that generates travel, creates jobs, and drives economic impact in Wisconsin.

by David Spiegelberg
Wisconsin Department of Tourism

Economic benefits

From manufacturers of outdoor gear to resorts and restaurants, outdoor recreation is a financial powerhouse throughout Wisconsin. People's participation in outdoor recreation results in several types of economic activity. The most obvious is the travel-related spending that occurs on trips. These costs can include gas, meals, supplies (e.g., fuel for motors, bait and shotgun shells), equipment rentals, overnight accommodations, entry fees, guide services, and various souvenirs. Of course, the amount of spending associated with travel varies considerably. Spending varies due to the distance participants travel, type of activity, personal preferences and other factors.

Typically, people engaged in many nature-based outdoor activities (e.g., bird watching, fishing, hunting, hiking, bicycling, horseback riding or cross-country skiing) spend about $20 to $50/party on day trips (see the sidebar on page 41 for citations). People participating in motorized activities (snowmobiling and ATV/UTV riding in particular), and overnight trips tend to spend considerably more on a daily basis. It is not uncommon for these participants to spend more the $100 per day on travel-related expenses.[56]

Another major form of economic activity associated with participation is the purchase and upkeep of outdoor gear. Although most of the supplies and equipment that residents purchase, including from local stores, are made in other states or countries, Wisconsin is home to several manufacturers of equipment used in nature-based recreation. Examples include fishing rods and lures, bicycles, motorboats and boat engines, canoes and kayaks, firearms and bows, and saddles.

In looking at the financial benefits that accrue to an area due to people's participation in outdoor recreation, it is important to highlight money that "moves into" an area from visitors.

In Wisconsin, estimates of overall economic activity related to outdoor recreation range considerably due to differences in the accuracy of data collected, recreation activities and expenditures included, how indirect and induced regional impacts are calculated, the geographic scale of analysis and other factors. Importantly, outdoor recreation has long been one of the key mechanisms by which economic activity and wealth is transferred from urban areas (and out-of-state visitors) to the state's rural communities.

A tabulation, by county, of the broader tourism industry's economic impact in Wisconsin is provided in Appendix 5.

Did You Know?

Wisconsin hosts dozens of **manufacturers** of outdoor recreation equipment – from fishing rods to sailboats and canoes to bicycles.

Photo: Maggie Kailhofer

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Not only does the state's economy benefit from the spending generated by people participating in outdoor recreation, but additional financial benefits are generated by the places that are protected to provide high-quality experiences for residents and visitors.

The property values of privately-owned lands near federal, state, county and local parks, trails, fish and wildlife areas, forests, natural areas and other protected places are typically higher and more stable than other private properties. A recent study for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service found that, all else being equal, homes within a half-mile of wildlife refuges are valued on average 3% to 9% higher than houses further away.[53] In Wisconsin, a study found that lots adjacent to the Mountain-Bay State Trail in Brown County sold for an average of 9% more than similar property not located next to the trail.[54.]

The places that provide outdoor recreation opportunities also contribute to nearby communities' quality-of-life, which in turn has a direct impact on their ability to attract businesses. The experiences available at parks, trails and other recreation lands and waters are key selling points that communities use to entice companies to locate and expand their operations.

In today's economy, high technology and service-sector industries are prime sources of wealth creation and growth; their workers are typically interested in a diverse range of outdoor activities. Communities that can tap into their natural resource base to provide opportunities for active experiences – from biking to rock climbing to kayaking – stand to benefit economically.[55]

Finally, providing opportunities for outdoor recreation complements other natural resource-based industries in the state, most notably the forest industry in the north. Similarly, several utility companies manage flowages throughout the state for power generation and flood control and provide the public with boat access sites and associated facilities on some of Wisconsin's most popular waterbodies.

Did you know?

Places open for public recreation also provide a wide range of high-quality habitats that support a diversity of native plants and animals. Indeed, some of the most ecologically important places in the state – Devil's Lake and Peninsula state parks, Kettle Moraine State Forest, and Horicon Marsh – are also among our most popular recreation destinations. It is estimated that over 75% of the Species of Greatest Conservation Need in Wisconsin are found on public lands in the state.[59]

In addition to their habitat values, places open for public recreation also provide a range of ecological services including flood control, groundwater replenishment, water and air filtration, nutrient capture, refuges for insects that pollinate agricultural crops, carbon sequestration, and temperature moderation.[57] A recent study found that the benefits generated from ecosystem services on lands acquired by the Minnesota DNR ranged from $19 to $154 per acre, annually.[58] It is likely that public lands in Wisconsin provide similar values.

Outdoor recreation: big business in Wisconsin!

Some examples of the economic impact of outdoor recreation in Wisconsin:

- Consumer spending on outdoor recreation in Wisconsin totaled **$17.9 billion** which resulted in 168,000 directly-related jobs, $5.1 billion in wages and salaries, and $1.1 billion in state and local tax revenue.[42]
- Properties in the Wisconsin State Park system draw an estimated 14 million visitor-days that generate more than **$1.0 billion in annual expenditures** in local communities.[43]
- **$19 million** in trip and equipment expenditures associated with waterfowl hunting in Wisconsin.[44]
- **$1.5 billion** in retail sales, 36,000 jobs and $235 million in state and local tax revenue generated by wildlife watchers in Wisconsin.[45]
- **$425 million** in output and personal incomes related to bicycle manufacturing in Wisconsin.[46]
- **$1.6 billion** annual total spending and economic impact generated by trout fishing in the Driftless Area (much of which is in Wisconsin).[47]
- **$1.4 billion** in sales generated by Wisconsin's horse industry.[48]
- Research conducted for the Wisconsin Department of Tourism indicates that day visitors to tourism events (which includes outdoor recreation trips) spend an average of **$64 per visitor** and overnight visitors spend **$144 per visitor**.[49]
- Wisconsin ATV riders spend on average **$164 per day** while out-of-state riders spend an average of **$573 per trip** to Wisconsin.[50] A more recent study found that ATV riders spent between $355 and $427 per trip while visiting the network of trails in Jackson County.[51]

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Photo: Greg Sanderson

ISSUES, CONCERNS, AND FACTORS INFLUENCING THE FUTURE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

This section summarizes key topics that are expected to affect the future demand for outdoor recreation opportunities, as well as the nature of experiences, in Wisconsin.

Demographic Changes

The continued evolution of our population's demographic characteristics will drive changes in recreation participation. As our population continues to age, urbanize and diversify, participation rates and frequencies in outdoor recreation will change. The popularity of some activities such as hiking, dog walking, bicycling, UTV riding, nature photography and bird watching are likely to increase in the future.

Condition of Recreation Facilities

Ongoing maintenance is key to protecting public investments in outdoor recreation and ensuring that existing facilities continue to provide high-quality experiences for the public. Although many recreation facilities are modest in design and scale, they require ongoing maintenance to remain safe, useable and enjoyable. The flip-side of a long history of outdoor recreation infrastructure in Wisconsin is a large portfolio of older infrastructure in need of upgrades to meet user expectations and heaver use (e.g., conversion of pit toilets to plumbed toilet/shower buildings). Adequate funding is key to adequate maintenance. For example, in 2017, all projects supported with LWCF grants on state properties involved repair or renovation of existing facilities.

Technology Advances

Technological advances affect all aspects of our lives, including outdoor recreation. From electric bikes to WiFi in campgrounds, technology is changing recreational experiences and providing new ways for people to engage in the outdoors. These changes require recreation providers to develop and implement new policies, manage an increasing number of uses (many of which can conflict with more traditional ones) and adapt to shifting conditions and demands. Adequate funding is also key to support modernization of outdoor recreation infrastructure to meet public expectations.

Social media provides a means to share experiences quickly and widely, which can help recreation providers attract a broader audience and better understand the features and attributes that drive demand. Attention and interest on social media can also result in visitation spikes.

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Access to Public Lands

A longstanding issue complicating efforts to provide opportunities for several types of outdoor recreation in Wisconsin is the distribution of where many of the state's residents live and the locations of most public conservation and recreation lands. In large part driven by historical land use patterns and the economic fallout of the Great Depression in the 1920s and 1930s, over half of the lands open to the public (over 3.1 million acres) are located in just ten northern counties. Over half of the state's population resides in just nine counties, all in the southern or eastern part of Wisconsin.

This inverse distribution of public land and people means that for many residents wanting to participate in activities that require larger expanses of land they often must travel multiple hours. And as peoples' lives become busier and they have less time to devote to outdoor recreation (and the travel time required), the use of many public lands near urban centers – for example, Kettle Moraine State Forest, Devil's Lake, High Cliff and Kohler-Andrae state parks, and Richard Bong State Recreation Area – has grown significantly.

Photo: Susan Braun

Access to Private Lands

A generation or two ago, a higher percentage of our population lived in rural settings (see Figure 6 on page 20) and people who lived in cities were more likely to have a relative or close friend that lived in the country. Consequently, many residents could get permission to hunt, fish, hike, pick berries or other activities on land owned by someone they knew. More and more residents live in urban or suburban settings and no longer have direct contact to rural landowners.

In addition, there has been a loss of public access to industrial forest land in recent decades as paper companies, which historically owned over a million acres in the state and allowed public access, have sold most of their land holdings to timber investment management organizations or real estate investment trusts. These new owners typically have not re-enrolled their lands into programs that allow public access (Managed Forest Law).

Two programs administered by the DNR facilitate public access to private land for recreation purposes:

Managed Forest Law (MFL) Program.

The program reduces property taxes for eligible landowners in return for implementing a certified forest management plan for their property. Landowners can choose to allow public access for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing, and cross-country skiing (for which they receive a greater financial benefit).

Voluntary Public Access (VPA) Program

Landowners who are willing to allow the public to hunt, fish, trap and watch wildlife on their property can enroll in this program and receive a modest payment. Recently, 32,000 acres have been enrolled.

Increasing Compatibility

The overwhelming majority of outdoor recreation occurs without significant conflicts between participants in the same activity or in different activities. However, on occasion, conflicts emerge that can impact participant's satisfaction. Often, an underlying cause of recreation conflict is simply the density of use in an area. Even activities that are prone to conflict with one another (e.g., water skiing and fishing on the same lake) can co-exist if the number of interactions is minimal. Yet, as the number of participants in an area increases, overcrowding can easily emerge and result in conflicts and displacement. Many providers of outdoor recreation increasingly must devote resources to address conflicts.

Things that can influence compatibility include:

- Expectations of participants about interactions with others.
- Skill and experience level of participants.
- Duration and intensity of interactions.
- Tolerance levels of participants, including social values and beliefs.

Techniques that can increase compatibility and decrease conflicts include:

- Education, outreach, signage.
- Community engagement, self-policing by groups and clubs.
- Regulations and enforcement.
- Separation of participants in time and/or space.

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Invasive Species and Habitat Quality

People have moved living things - sometimes purposefully, sometimes inadvertently - for millennia. Occasionally when non-native species are brought into a new area, they will spread rapidly and widely. When this happens, major impacts can occur to native wetland and upland ecosystems, farm and ranch lands, lakes and streams, and other settings. Invasive plants, animals, and pathogens can alter ecological relationships among native species and can affect ecosystem function, economic value of ecosystems, and human health.

Invasive plants and animals can significantly affect recreational experiences. Hunters, hikers and birdwatchers can find they are no longer able to walk in their favorite areas. Thorny multiflora rose, dense stands of buckthorn and other invaders can fill in the understory of once open native forests and grasslands. As the habitat is modified by such invasive plant species, wildlife that depends on native vegetation is affected. Invasive animals such as the mute swan can also change wildlife opportunities by chasing away all waterfowl from the waterbodies they occupy.

Fishing outings can result in disappointment when aquatic invasive species modify lake and stream habitat. Eurasian water milfoil clogs boat motors and invasive animals, such as the rusty crayfish, devour aquatic plants, reducing habitat for native fish at every stage of their life cycle.

Weather Patterns and Changing Climate

Weather patterns directly affect participation – a rainy weekend can result in cancelled camping or bicycling plans, while a very snowy winter in the north can attract lots of snowmobilers and skiers from Madison, Milwaukee and Chicago.

The changing patterns of our climate over extended periods of time may also affect the type and timing of participation. If, as predicted, spring arrives earlier and autumn later, opportunities for many types of outdoor recreation activities will be extended while others may be reduced. For example, reduced snow cover may lead some cross country skiers to shift to fat-tire biking, which doesn't require as much snow pack for an enjoyable experience.

Species' ranges and migration periods are projected to continue shifting as well.[60] This is likely to affect activities such as bird watching, hunting, and fishing over time.

Funding Recreation

Purchasing lands, developing and maintaining recreation facilities, managing habitats, enforcing regulations, and the other tasks associated with operating Wisconsin's recreation infrastructure is costly. Federal, state, and local agencies spend millions of dollars managing our public lands each year.

Funds to maintain and operate conservation lands and recreation facilities come from a variety of sources, including hunting, fishing and trapping licenses and stamps, park entrance fees, trail passes, excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment, grants and donations.

In addition to LWCF funds, over the last 25 years the DNR, local units of government, and non-profit conservation organizations have used funds from the Wisconsin Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program to help pay for many of the lands and facilities that provide recreation opportunities around the state.

The Stewardship funding is $33.25 million, allocated as follows:

- DNR land acquisition: $9.0 million (1/3rd for purchasing land, 2/3rd for purchasing easements)
- DNR property development: $3.75 million
- Grants to counties to acquire lands for county forests: $5.0 million
- Matching grants to local units of government (LUGs) for property development and land acquisition: $6.0 million
- Matching grants to non-profit conservation organizations for land acquisition: $7.0 million
- Recreational boating aids: $2.5 million

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Photo: Savannah Ernzen

Photo: Dan Thoftne

Photo: Gabriel Hesed

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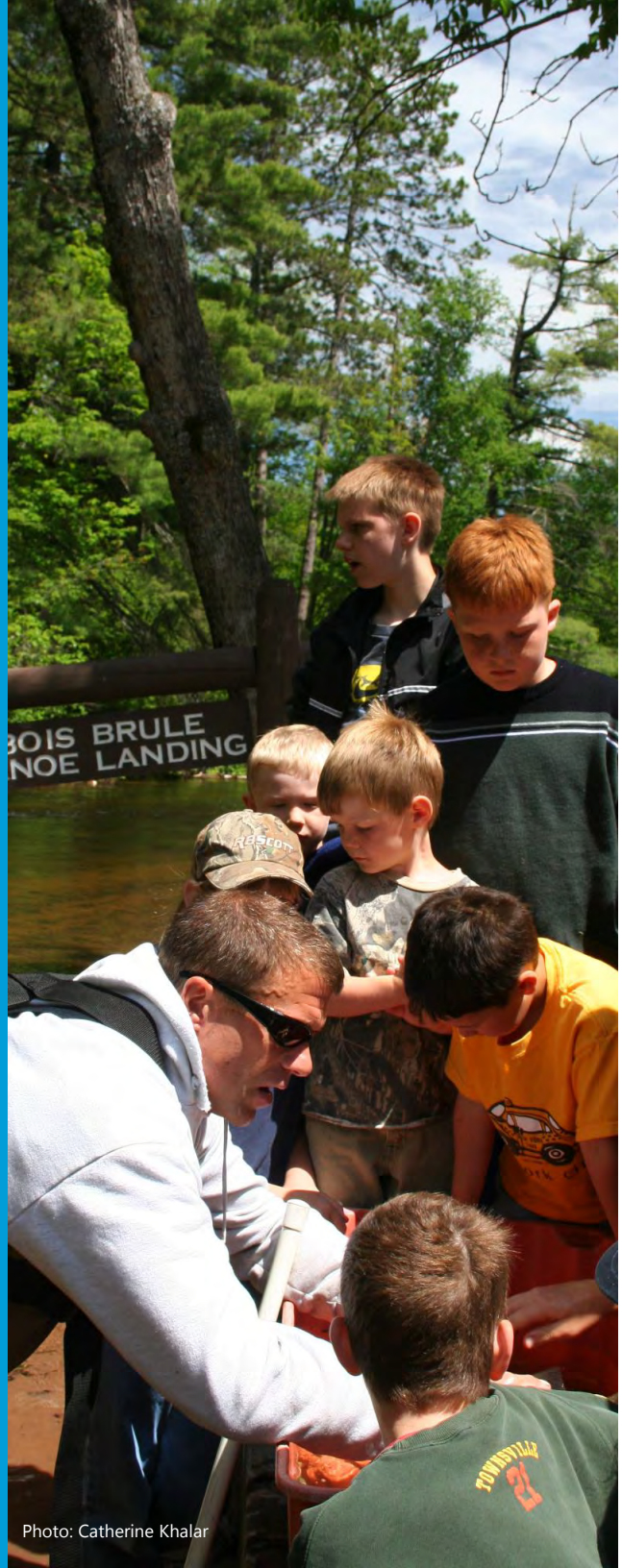

Photo: Catherine Khalar

GAPS AND NEEDS IN OUR EXISTING RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

In developing the following statewide needs and gaps in our recreation opportunities, the department incorporated information from:

- The SCORP recreation participation survey question regarding needed recreation opportunities in residents' home county (Appendix 6).
- Recreation Opportunities Analysis, which identified recreation needs for each of the eight regions of the state (Appendix 8).
- The SCORP survey of county park directors, which asked about needs at the county level (Appendix 4).
- The SCORP Advisory Team and department staff.

Statewide Recreation Needs:

Places near population centers

Because of the inverse distribution of our population and public lands as well as the limited amount of time people have to participate, there is a very large need to provide more places for people to participate in outdoor recreation near where they live. In particular is the need to provide opportunities for residents to visit places after work or for a couple of hours on a weekend. Places that provide opportunities for hiking, all types of bicycle riding, dog walking, picnicking, and different water-related activities such as fishing, canoeing and kayaking are likely to be heavily used.

Trails

By nearly every measure, the largest need throughout the state is for more trails that enable people to experience natural settings, visit the vibrant downtowns of our cities and villages, commute to work, and access favorite sites. All types of trails are in demand – hiking, bicycling (recreational, mountain biking, and fat-tire), horseback riding, ATV/UTV and motorcycle riding, and 4WD vehicle trails.

Water access – shoreline and boat launches

Lakes, streams and rivers are a defining feature of Wisconsin. From the Great Lakes to the Mississippi River, from the thousands of inland lakes and the tens of thousands of miles of flowing water, residents and visitors have been drawn to the water's edge to fish, hunt, launch any manner of watercraft, bird watch and beach walk. Access to water remains a universal need throughout the state; what varies are the activities pursued when on or near the water.

Camping Opportunities

With a large cohort of retirees travelling in RVs combined with an adventurous younger generation, demand for camping has grown in recent years and is likely to remain popular for years to come. Given the divergence in desired experiences – some campers wanting access to hot showers and WiFi while others wanting neither – recreation providers will need to collaborate and coordinate on providing the camping experiences best suited to different public lands.

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Statewide Recreation Needs: (cont.)

Dog parks and exercise areas

Taking care of a dog has many benefits, not the least of which is the exercise people get in walking their pets. With the steady rise in dog ownership (75% of people in their thirties own a dog) and an urbanizing population has come an increasing demand for places to walk, play with, socialize and train our canine friends. Many municipal and county dog parks are among their most visited properties.

Target shooting ranges for firearms and archery

Many hunters and shooting sports participants live in rural areas or belong to gun clubs and practice their craft on their or the club's property. However, as our population continues to urbanize there is a growing need for places where people can practice marksmanship and gun safety. By their nature, gun ranges generate considerable sounds and siting new ranges has been a challenge in more populated areas of the state.

Policy Needs:

Better understand place-based recreation and its outcomes

At the request of and on behalf of their constituents, governments at all levels have acquired lands and developed recreation facilities in Wisconsin to provide a range of public benefits.

The State of Wisconsin first purchased land for conservation purposes in 1876 and has invested considerable effort over the ensuing 150 years identifying the most important lands and waters to protect. Federal, county and local governments similarly evaluate needs and gather public input to identify high priority places and recreation opportunities.

A considerable amount of information about the distribution and abundance of habitats and species at many public properties in the state exists. However, only a minimal understanding of the recreational use of most public places is known. Questions for which more detailed, property-specific data are needed include:

- How many people visit the property? What are the patterns of visitation through the day, week and year?
- What recreation activities did they pursue?
- Why did they visit the particular property (as opposed to another one)?
- What would improve their satisfaction?
- What are the economic and health benefits associated with their visit?

With a more complete understanding of property use and the features and attributes that draw people, agencies can make more informed decisions about what types of recreation facilities to build and maintain at different places. And the public can better understand their "return on investment."

Enhance and stabilize funding for outdoor recreation

Although funding for conservation and recreation is derived from many sources, for a variety of reasons it has fluctuated from year to year. This has complicated efforts to plan, develop, and maintain recreation facilities. Some states have implemented funding sources that provide a more stable source of money for conservation and recreation projects. In addition to more stable funding, there is a need to broaden the network of people and sources that help pay for the management of public lands in the state.

Expand collaborations among recreation providers

Each recreation provider has unique capabilities and their lands offer different types of experiences, features, facilities, and opportunities. There would be substantial benefit in continuing and expanding collaborations among federal, county and local governments. Focus should be placed on identifying ways to coordinate recreation experiences in each region of the state, minimizing duplicative efforts, and maximizing the benefits of recreation investments.

Together, providing well-planned safe and enjoyable recreation opportunities that visitor's value will increase support for local communities and businesses, strengthen tourism, respond to evolving demographic and visitor needs, reduce user conflicts and improve natural settings.

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Regional Recreation Needs (high needs identified in the Recreation Opportunities Analysis – see Appendix 8)

Great Northwest Region

ATV/UTV riding
Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Bird or wildlife watching
Camping - developed and primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Fishing
Four-wheel vehicle driving
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Hunting - big game
Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
Off-highway motorcycle riding
Swimming in lakes and rivers

Western Sands Region

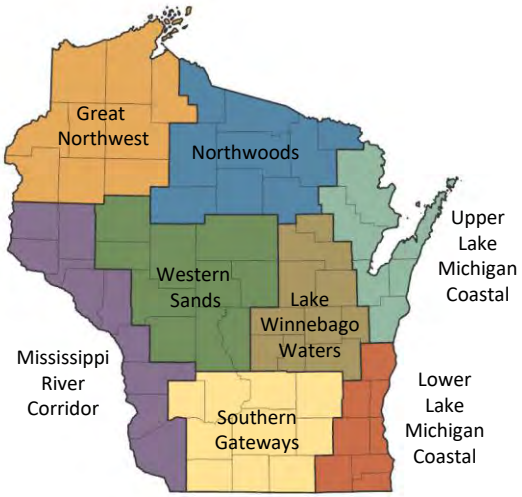
Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Bird or wildlife watching
Camping - developed and primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Cross country skiing
Dog walking
Fishing
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Horseback riding
Hunting - big game
Picnicking
Snowshoeing
Swimming in lakes and rivers

Mississippi River Corridor Region

Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Bird or wildlife watching
Camping - developed and primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Cross country skiing
Dog walking
Fishing
Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Hunting - big game
Nature photography
Participating in nature-based education programs
Picnicking
Snowshoeing
Visiting a beach, beach walking

Northwoods Region

ATV/UTV riding
Bicycling – bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Camping – developed and primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Fishing
Four-wheel vehicle driving
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Hunting – big game
Off-highway motorcycle riding
Participating in nature-based education programs
Snowmobiling



Southern Gateways Region

ATV/UTV riding
Bicycling – bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Bird or wildlife watching
Camping – developed and primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Fishing
Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
Picnicking
Snowshoeing
Swimming in lakes and rivers

Upper Lake Michigan Coastal Region

Bicycling – bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Bird or wildlife watching
Camping – developed and primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Fishing – all types
Hiking, walking, trail running or backpacking
Horseback riding
Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
Visiting a beach, beach walking

Lake Winnebago Waters Region

Bicycling – bicycling touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Bird or wildlife watching
Camping – developed and primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Cross country skiing
Dog walking
Fishing
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Hunting – big game
Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
Nature photography
Participating in nature-based education programs
Picnicking
Swimming in lakes and rivers
Visiting a beach, beach walking

Lower Lake Michigan Coastal Region

Bicycling - bicycle touring/road riding and mountain biking/off-road biking
Bird or wildlife watching
Camping - primitive
Canoeing or kayaking
Cross country skiing
Fishing Gather mushrooms, berries, etc.
Hiking, walking, trail running, backpacking
Motorboating (waterski/tubing, personal watercraft)
Nature photography
Picnicking
Snowshoeing
Swimming in lakes and rivers

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CHAPTER III LOOKING AHEAD

Wisconsin has beautiful places, a four-season climate, healthy and diverse habitats, and citizens that care deeply about the environment and enthusiastically participate in a wide range of outdoor recreation activities.

Together, these provide the framework for identifying goals for the future.

Photo: Mike Grota

STATE OF WISCONSIN'S
GOALS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION

1. Boost participation in outdoor recreation
2. Grow partnerships
3. Provide high-quality experiences
4. Improve data to enhance visitor experiences and benefits
5. Enhance funding and financial stability

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BOOST PARTICIPATION

Increase Wisconsin residents' participation and frequency of participation in outdoor recreation.

Objectives

- Increase the economic, social, and public health benefits resulting from residents' and out-of-state visitors' participation in outdoor recreation in Wisconsin.
- Enhance residents' overall quality of life.

Desired Actions

- Increase promotion and marketing of places that provide high-quality outdoor experiences.
- Continue improving the Public Access Lands maps and online mapping app.
- Continue upgrading and developing recreation facilities to meet demand.
- Evaluate visitor use at different types of public lands and waters.
- Identify and implement strategies to improve access, reduce barriers, and provide desired experiences, particularly for groups that have traditionally had lower participation rates or limited access.
- Expand efforts among federal, state, county, and local governments to coordinate and collaborate on providing recreation opportunities that leverage the unique features and facilities available at their lands and waters.
- Identify and implement programs to encourage more residents to participate in outdoor recreation, particularly as they age.

Photo: Joseph Warren

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GOAL 2

GROW PARTNERSHIPS

Continue to strengthen connections and partnerships across the spectrum of agencies, organizations, and businesses with a vested interest in outdoor recreation.

Objectives

- Improve the effectiveness of public and private recreation providers in delivering high-quality experiences for residents and out-of-state visitors.
- Enhance the success of industries that manufacture outdoor recreation equipment and businesses that provide a range of facilities, retail opportunities and travel-related services associated with outdoor recreation.
- Facilitate support and advocacy for policies, programs and funding to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Integrate and coordinate SCORP, local outdoor recreation plans, and other agencies' and organizations' recreation plans.

Desired Actions

- Bring together manufacturers of outdoor gear & equipment with recreation providers to identify ways to market Wisconsin-made products and increase participation.
- Strengthen collaborations across public and private owners of land that provide recreation opportunities. Identify ways to provide more and enhanced participation opportunities across the collective portfolio of public and private lands.
- Continue building partnerships between outdoor recreation providers and the health care industry to improve residents' physical and mental health.
- Cultivate collaboration between outdoor recreation groups and non-traditional partners.
- Increase outdoor recreation opportunities by coordinating recreation interest groups, health care providers, recreation providers, elected officials and others to collaboratively develop outdoor recreation projects.

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PROVIDE HIGH-QUALITY EXPERIENCES

Provide opportunities and settings – across the full range of public and private recreation lands – that, collectively, meet the state's recreational needs.

Objectives

- Encourage participation across all types of recreation.
- Provide recreation opportunities that properties are well-suited to provide.
- Maximize compatibility and minimize conflict among and between recreational uses.
- Maintain and enhance the ecological health of recreation properties and enrich people's connection with nature.
- Tailor recreation opportunities provided at places to match local conditions, needs, and requests.

Desired Actions

- Provide collections of recreation experiences that are matched to property conditions, needs and opportunities and that maximize compatibility.
- Identify and proactively address potential obstacles, conflicts and issues related to providing high-quality outdoor recreation experiences.
- Assess satisfaction of participants in a range of outdoor activities.

Photo: Mark Godfrey

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IMPROVE DATA TO ENHANCE VISITOR EXPERIENCES AND BENEFITS

On an ongoing basis, gather, analyze and distribute data on recreation participation in Wisconsin and the associated economic, health and social benefits.

Objectives

- Improve the public's and elected officials' understanding of the economic, health and social benefits from public and private investments in outdoor recreation.
- Improve property managers' and administrators' understanding of both property-specific patterns of use and potential ways to improve visitor experiences.
- Improve public and private providers' understanding of regional recreational demands.
- Inform the next iteration of the Wisconsin SCORP.
- Better understand the recreation facilities and amenities that draw visitors to different types of properties.

Desired Actions

- Develop a standard protocol to assess visitation and satisfaction that can be applied to a wide variety of outdoor recreation properties.
- Gather data at an initial set of places on numbers of visitors, activities pursued, patterns of visitation, levels of satisfaction, travel-related spending and, as feasible, other information related to property use and management.
- Apply information related to property visitation to the DNR's property planning process for decisions related to individual properties and broader regional needs.
- In support of the development of the next iteration of the Wisconsin SCORP, assess overall outdoor recreation participation in Wisconsin and associated issues through a statewide survey.

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ENHANCE FUNDING AND FINANCIAL STABILITY

Broaden and strengthen the funding sources for developing and managing outdoor recreation facilities and lands.

Objectives

- Provide a robust, long-term, and stable funding framework for outdoor recreation facilities and lands in Wisconsin.
- Identify ways for all participants in outdoor recreation to contribute equitably to the development and management of recreation opportunities.

Desired Actions

- Facilitate collaboration among federal, state, and local governments and other partners to fully utilize available LWCF and state funding to maintain, develop, and enhance outdoor recreation facilities.
- Develop and distribute materials that describe the economic, health and social values of outdoor recreation.
- Continue building and encouraging public property friends groups.
- Survey outdoor recreation participants to identify their support for different options to fund the development and operation of recreation facilities.
- Explore opportunities for public land management agencies to cooperatively develop creative funding solutions and efficiencies to meet recreation needs.

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Photo: City of Madison

LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND PRIORITIES IN WISCONSIN OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

As required by federal guidelines, Wisconsin has developed an Open Project Selection Process (OPSP) that provides criteria and standards for grant selection to distribute LWCF funds. The OPSP assures equal opportunity for eligible project applicants to participate in the benefits of the LWCF State Assistance Program.

Wisconsin has developed a project selection process that evaluates and selects projects based on quality and conformance with its priority rating system. Grants cover 50% of eligible project costs. The adjacent information provides guidance for how the State of Wisconsin will utilize LWCF monies to help achieve its recreation goals and objectives.

Wisconsin Open Project Selection Process (OPSP)

As described in Wisconsin Administrative Code (ch. NR 50.06), Wisconsin divides its LWCF allocation between state projects and pass-through grants to local governments, school districts, and tribes. For state projects, LWCF project selection occurs via the DNR capital budget development and property planning process. Proposed projects are evaluated and prioritized on three criteria: compatibility with the property master plan, compatibility with the six-year facility plan, and available matching funds.

Local projects are selected through a competitive grant process. Applications are accepted once per year. DNR grant staff score applications on a series of criteria that reflect statutory requirements, administrative code, and program policies. Projects are awarded funds in rank order until funds are fully utilized. Program application materials are reviewed and revised annually. The DNR works closely with selected project sponsors to conduct final reviews and submit proposed grants to NPS for review. Each grant must be approved by the NPS.

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LWCF Grants:

Eligible Applicants

- Towns, villages, cities, counties, tribal governments, and school districts are eligible.

Eligible Projects

- Land acquisition or development projects that will provide opportunities for public outdoor recreation.
- Property with frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, estuaries and reservoirs that will provide water based outdoor recreation.
- Property that provides special recreation opportunities, such as floodplains, wetlands and areas adjacent to scenic highways.
- Natural areas and outstanding scenic areas, where the objective is to preserve the scenic or natural values, including wildlife areas and areas of physical or biological importance. These areas shall be open to the general public for outdoor recreation use to the extent that the natural attributes of the areas will not be seriously impaired or lost.
- Land or development within urban areas for day use picnic areas.
- Land or development of nature-based recreation trails.
- Development of basic outdoor recreation facilities.
- Renovation of existing outdoor recreation facilities which are in danger of being lost for public use.

Funding Priorities

- Meet the needs of urban areas.
- Provide recreation opportunities that serve diverse populations.
- Develop facilities in areas with limited outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Provide multi-use facilities.
- Meet outdoor recreation needs identified by local communities.

See **Appendix 9** for more information on grant guidance

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Appendices

1. WISCONSIN WETLANDS STRATEGY
2. POPULATION ATTRIBUTES AND PROJECTIONS
3. PLACES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR NATURE-BASED RECREATION
4. RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES, TRENDS AND NEEDS, BY REGION
5. TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT, BY COUNTY

Appendix 1:
WISCONSIN WETLANDS STRATEGY

Wisconsin has a wealth of wetlands that are accessible to citizens interested in exploring the state's tremendous diversity of marshes, swamps, bogs, fens, and sedge meadows. These ecosystems provide habitat for a wide range of plant and animal species, some of which are rare and unique to wetland systems.

Why wetlands matter

Wetlands play a critical role in maintaining the overall health and functioning of lakes, rivers, prairies and forests because they're located among these landscapes. They also provide critical habitat for Wisconsin plants, fish and wildlife, clean water, protection from floods, recreation, and natural scenic beauty.

- Wetlands reduce flooding peaks by as much as 60 percent and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that an acre of wetlands can store 1 to 1.5 million gallons of floodwaters.
- Polluted runoff from cities, farms and construction sites is filtered by wetlands before entering lakes and rivers. Clean lakes and rivers are the backbone of Wisconsin's tourism industry, which generated $12 billion in 2009 and supported more than 286,000 jobs.
- The filtering capability of wetlands cuts the cost of treating drinking water. Some wetlands can remove a quantity of pollutants from the watershed equivalent to that removed from a $5 million treatment plant.
- Nearly 40 percent of Wisconsin's 370 species of birds live in or use wetlands and many important game birds, mammals, fish, amphibians and reptiles are associated with wetlands, among them waterfowl, white–tailed deer, ring–necked pheasants, northern pike and walleye. In Wisconsin, bird–watchers and wildlife watchers spend $271 million annually waiting for a glimpse of their favorites.
- One–third of the plants and animals on Wisconsin's state endangered and threatened list depend on wetlands.
- Wetlands provide recreation benefits, both for their contribution to improved water quality (and associated activities such as fishing and boating) and their habitats that support activities such as waterfowl hunting, bird watching, canoeing and kayaking.

Wetland protection laws

All wetlands in Wisconsin are protected under state law and most are under the federal Clean Water Act, and in some places, by local regulations or ordinances as well. Landowners and developers are required to avoid wetlands with their projects whenever possible; if the wetlands can't be avoided, they must apply for permits and receive approval to proceed with proposed wetland impacts.

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Acquisition

It is important to permanently protect wetlands to maximize benefits to people and a healthy environment. Priority wetlands for protection include unique, high quality and rare types, as well as wetlands that provide critical functions like flood storage, water quality and wildlife habitat. Through the acquisition of land, easements, covenants or deed restrictions, landowners, conservation organizations and government agencies can ensure these wetland systems are permanently protected for future generations.

Land use & community planning

How we use land and the land use decisions we make today are perhaps the most important, long–term environmental issues facing Wisconsin. The vast majority of Wisconsin's wetlands, approximately 75 percent, are privately owned. As a result, individual landowners, developers and local governments are the principal land use decision–makers. In order to be successful in addressing environmental concerns, the DNR must work with others to help guide development patterns that maintain Wisconsin's character and minimize negative environmental effects.

Wisconsin will continue to implement the following conservation goals and strategies, as described in the 2011 -2016 SCORP:

1. Strengthen and establish partnerships to maximize wetland stewardship and conservation opportunities.
- Work with state, federal, and local agencies and organizations on wetland protection and restoration.

2. Strengthen and develop incentives for wetland conservation on private lands.
- As 75% of wetlands in Wisconsin (over four million acres) are privately owned, policymakers should identify and adopt a package of economic incentives for wetland landowners to restore and manage wetlands.

3. Advance public understanding and connection to Wisconsin wetlands.
- Create awareness of wetland laws through publications and web sites.
- Increase public awareness of wetlands through public events and outreach.

4. Avoid and minimize wetland loss and degradation.
- Ensure wetlands are protected at the local, state, and federal level by assuring that standards, policies, and guidance fully address threats to wetlands.
- Take steps to reduce illegal wetland filling and increase permit compliance.
- Develop and implement wetland protection tools for use in local planning and development.

5. Restore lost wetlands and improve health and functions.
- Restore and maintain wetlands in an efficient manner to maximize limited funding and address identified needs, values, and services that will benefit both the natural resource and Wisconsin residents.
- Develop landscape plans that effectively target wetland restoration activities.
- Position Wisconsin to maximize federal and private investments in wetland conservation.

6. Report and track the status of Wisconsin wetlands.
- Establish and refine an integrated program for tracking wetland quantity and quality, including efforts to develop and promote wetland monitoring programs.
- Increase the production, use, and accessibility of the Wisconsin Wetland Inventory and related data using best available technology.
- Develop better tools to evaluate wetland function at the watershed scale and site-specific tools for assessing wetland function, condition, and restoration success.

7. Develop wetland science and address research needs.
- Further develop research and monitoring for invasive species.
- Identify and minimize hydrologic impacts to wetlands from various sources, such as high capacity well pumping and stormwater runoff.

8. Secure stable funding for wetland conservation and stewardship.
- Optimize financial investments for wetland conservation and education.
- Seek full federal funding allocations for federal wetland conservation and environmental programs.

Appendix 2:
POPULATION ATTRIBUTES AND PROJECTIONS

Table 11: County population projections to 2040

County Rank
Top quintile
Second quintile
Middle quintile
Fourth quintile
Bottom quintile

			Change from 2010 to 2040	
County	Estimated population 2010	Projected population 2040	Projected change in population	Projected percent change in population
Adams	20,875	23,315	2,440	12%
Ashland	16,157	15,315	(842)	-5%
Barron	45,870	49,545	3,675	8%
Bayfield	15,014	13,725	(1,289)	-9%
Brown	248,007	312,320	64,313	26%
Buffalo	13,587	13,000	(587)	-4%
Burnett	15,457	17,425	1,968	13%
Calumet	48,971	64,210	15,239	31%
Chippewa	62,415	70,600	8,185	13%
Clark	34,690	42,980	8,290	24%
Columbia	56,833	68,450	11,617	20%
Crawford	16,644	16,555	(89)	-1%
Dane	488,073	606,620	118,547	24%
Dodge	88,759	95,650	6,891	8%
Door	27,785	26,620	(1,165)	-4%
Douglas	44,159	47,105	2,946	7%
Dunn	43,857	48,485	4,628	11%
Eau Claire	98,736	111,610	12,874	13%

			Change from 2010 to 2040	
County	Estimated population 2010	Projected population 2040	Projected change in population	Projected percent change in population
Florence	4,423	4,030	(393)	-9%
Fond du Lac	101,633	110,250	8,617	8%
Forest	9,304	10,655	1,351	15%
Grant	51,208	52,810	1,602	3%
Green	36,842	42,555	5,713	16%
Green Lake	19,051	18,885	(166)	-1%
Iowa	23,687	26,990	3,303	14%
Iron	5,916	5,420	(496)	-8%
Jackson	20,449	23,290	2,841	14%
Jefferson	83,686	100,300	16,614	20%
Juneau	26,664	29,465	2,801	11%
Kenosha	166,426	209,670	43,244	26%
Kewaunee	20,574	21,475	901	4%
La Crosse	114,638	131,500	16,862	15%
Lafayette	16,836	18,095	1,259	7%
Langlade	19,977	19,470	(507)	-3%
Lincoln	28,743	29,355	612	2%
Manitowoc	81,442	78,920	(2,522)	-3%

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Table 11: County population projections to 2040 (continued)

County Rank
Top quintile
Second quintile
Middle quintile
Fourth quintile
Bottom quintile

County	Estimated population 2010	Projected population 2040	Change from 2010 to 2040: Projected change in population	Change from 2010 to 2040: Projected percent change in population
Marathon	134,063	152,790	18,727	14%
Marinette	41,749	41,445	(304)	-1%
Marquette	15,404	17,015	1,611	10%
Menominee	4,232	5,170	938	22%
Milwaukee	947,735	1,016,250	68,515	7%
Monroe	44,673	54,410	9,737	22%
Oconto	37,660	44,985	7,325	19%
Oneida	35,998	38,500	2,502	7%
Outagamie	176,695	215,290	38,595	22%
Ozaukee	86,395	94,370	7,975	9%
Pepin	7,469	6,885	(584)	-8%
Pierce	41,019	46,825	5,806	14%
Polk	44,205	53,825	9,620	22%
Portage	70,019	76,865	6,846	10%
Price	14,159	11,645	(2,514)	-18%
Racine	195,408	213,760	18,352	9%
Richland	18,021	18,380	359	2%
Rock	160,331	182,860	22,529	14%

County	Estimated population 2010	Projected population 2040	Change from 2010 to 2040: Projected change in population	Change from 2010 to 2040: Projected percent change in population
Rusk	14,755	13,310	(1,445)	-10%
Saint Croix	84,345	119,010	34,665	41%
Sauk	61,976	77,815	15,839	26%
Sawyer	16,557	17,430	873	5%
Shawano	41,949	45,900	3,951	9%
Sheboygan	115,507	125,160	9,653	8%
Taylor	20,689	21,975	1,286	6%
Trempealeau	28,816	33,450	4,634	16%
Vernon	29,773	36,520	6,747	23%
Vilas	21,430	23,890	2,460	11%
Walworth	102,228	123,680	21,452	21%
Washburn	15,911	18,010	2,099	13%
Washington	131,887	163,890	32,003	24%
Waukesha	389,891	455,720	65,829	17%
Waupaca	52,410	55,670	3,260	6%
Waushara	24,496	27,990	3,494	14%
Winnebago	166,994	193,130	26,136	16%
Wood	74,749	71,150	(3,599)	-5%
STATE	**1,394,363**	**1,623,700**	**229,337**	**14%**

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Table 12: County health metrics – average rankings of selected characteristics

County	Poor or fair health		Poor physical health days in past 30 days		Poor mental health days in past 30 days		Adult obesity		Physical inactivity		Access to exercise opportunities		Average state rank
	Percent Fair/Poor	State rank	Physically Unhealthy Days	State rank	Mentally Unhealthy Days	State rank	Percent Obese	State rank	Percent Physically Inactive	State rank	Percent with Access	State rank	
Waukesha	11	4	2.9	3	3.1	3	25	3	18	3	96	3	**3.2**
Ozaukee	11	2	2.8	1	3.1	2	26	4	19	5	90	10	**4.0**
Washington	10	1	2.8	2	3.1	4	31	21	19	7	91	9	**7.3**
St. Croix	12	7	3.1	6	3.2	5	27	5	21	16	87	16	**9.2**
Outagamie	11	5	3.0	4	3.4	18	30	17	19	6	93	7	**9.5**
Dane	13	19	3.2	13	3.5	31	24	1	16	1	95	4	**11.5**
Jefferson	13	21	3.1	7	3.4	22	29	10	17	2	77	28	**15.0**
Brown	13	27	3.4	24	3.4	17	30	16	19	9	95	5	**16.3**
Door	11	6	3.2	8	3.3	10	28	7	23	35	74	34	**16.7**
Calumet	11	3	3.1	5	3.1	1	31	28	24	49	84	18	**17.3**
Winnebago	12	9	3.2	12	3.3	9	34	52	20	15	90	13	**18.3**
Pierce	12	11	3.3	19	3.4	21	30	18	21	20	81	23	**18.7**
Sheboygan	14	46	3.2	11	3.2	7	29	11	22	28	88	15	**19.7**
Wood	12	10	3.3	22	3.3	11	32	35	22	23	75	32	**22.2**
Trempealeau	13	31	3.4	30	3.4	24	31	22	19	10	82	21	**23.0**
Green	12	16	3.2	10	3.4	12	33	47	22	29	78	25	**23.2**
Manitowoc	13	20	3.3	18	3.5	30	31	31	21	17	76	30	**24.3**
Walworth	14	39	3.5	43	3.4	20	25	2	23	30	89	14	**24.7**
Eau Claire	14	44	3.5	40	3.5	35	28	6	18	4	81	22	**25.2**
La Crosse	13	30	3.5	45	3.5	32	31	25	20	12	93	8	**25.3**
Marathon	12	8	3.5	41	3.3	8	31	20	23	40	73	35	**25.3**
Chippewa	13	29	3.3	16	3.5	28	28	8	22	26	69	47	**25.7**
Iowa	12	12	3.3	21	3.4	16	31	34	21	19	63	59	**26.8**
Dodge	13	22	3.3	17	3.2	6	34	54	24	50	85	17	**27.7**

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Table 12: County health metrics – average rankings of selected characteristics (continued)

County	Poor or fair health		Poor physical health days in past 30 days		Poor mental health days in past 30 days		Adult obesity		Physical inactivity		Access to exercise opportunities		Average state rank
	Percent Fair/Poor	State rank	Physically Unhealthy Days	State rank	Mentally Unhealthy Days	State rank	Percent Obese	State rank	Percent Physically Inactive	State rank	Percent with Access	State rank	
Sauk	13	23	3.4	29	3.4	14	31	29	23	46	77	29	**28.3**
Oneida	12	13	3.4	23	3.4	13	33	46	23	33	71	43	**28.5**
Columbia	13	17	3.2	9	3.4	25	35	66	22	25	74	33	**29.2**
Polk	14	33	3.4	34	3.4	23	32	39	20	13	67	49	**31.8**
Fond du Lac	14	41	3.3	14	3.5	37	33	50	23	32	83	20	**32.3**
Portage	13	26	3.4	25	3.5	41	34	64	21	21	80	24	**33.5**
Lincoln	13	25	3.4	35	3.5	39	29	12	27	65	75	31	**34.5**
Oconto	12	15	3.3	20	3.4	26	31	30	25	59	64	58	**34.7**
Washburn	14	34	3.4	32	3.6	51	30	15	23	37	72	41	**35.0**
Waupaca	13	24	3.5	46	3.5	33	32	40	23	47	77	27	**36.2**
Kewaunee	12	14	3.3	15	3.4	15	34	59	26	61	65	56	**36.7**
Kenosha	15	56	3.5	48	3.7	60	31	32	23	31	97	2	**38.2**
Iron	13	32	3.5	37	3.6	45	29	13	23	43	62	61	**38.5**
Buffalo	13	18	3.4	31	3.4	19	33	45	28	70	67	51	**39.0**
Bayfield	14	42	3.7	62	3.6	59	29	14	21	18	72	40	**39.2**
Price	14	36	3.5	39	3.5	43	34	56	20	14	67	50	**39.7**
Florence	14	37	3.4	28	3.5	36	33	49	24	54	73	37	**40.2**
Racine	14	51	3.7	59	3.6	46	32	36	23	38	90	12	**40.3**
Vilas	15	62	3.7	60	3.7	61	29	9	25	55	93	6	**42.2**
Douglas	14	47	3.7	61	3.8	65	32	38	20	11	73	36	**43.0**
Barron	14	35	3.4	26	3.6	58	33	44	25	56	72	39	**43.0**
Dunn	14	43	3.5	38	3.5	38	34	55	22	27	63	60	**43.5**
Monroe	14	48	3.4	36	3.6	49	34	53	22	24	67	53	**43.8**
Richland	15	59	3.6	55	3.6	53	31	26	19	8	62	62	**43.8**

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Table 12: County health metrics – average rankings of selected characteristics (continued)

County	Poor or fair health		Poor physical health days in past 30 days		Poor mental health days in past 30 days		Adult obesity		Physical inactivity		Access to exercise opportunities		Average state rank
	Percent Fair/Poor	State rank	Physically Unhealthy Days	State rank	Mentally Unhealthy Days	State rank	Percent Obese	State rank	Percent Physically Inactive	State rank	Percent with Access	State rank	
Rock	16	69	3.8	66	3.5	42	34	61	22	22	90	11	**45.2**
Pepin	13	28	3.4	33	3.5	34	34	63	26	60	66	54	**45.3**
Lafayette	14	38	3.4	27	3.4	27	37	70	24	53	48	70	**47.5**
Marinette	14	53	3.5	49	3.6	57	32	42	26	63	78	26	**48.3**
Crawford	14	45	3.5	47	3.6	47	36	69	23	45	73	38	**48.5**
Burnett	16	64	3.9	67	3.9	69	30	19	23	36	71	42	**49.5**
Milwaukee	19	71	4.0	70	4.3	71	33	51	23	34	99	1	**49.7**
Grant	15	57	3.6	51	3.5	44	35	65	23	39	70	45	**50.2**
Green Lake	14	40	3.5	42	3.6	48	37	71	25	57	71	44	**50.3**
Taylor	14	54	3.5	50	3.6	52	32	37	23	44	60	65	**50.3**
Jackson	14	49	3.6	52	3.6	50	34	57	24	48	66	55	**51.8**
Langlade	16	67	3.8	63	3.8	66	31	23	23	41	67	52	**52.0**
Waushara	15	55	3.6	53	3.5	29	34	60	25	58	61	63	**53.0**
Marquette	14	52	3.5	44	3.5	40	36	68	24	51	54	67	**53.7**
Shawano	14	50	3.7	58	3.8	64	34	58	23	42	60	64	**56.0**
Vernon	15	61	3.8	65	3.6	56	32	41	27	66	69	48	**56.2**
Ashland	16	66	4.0	69	3.9	67	31	27	24	52	64	57	**56.3**
Forest	16	68	3.9	68	3.9	68	34	62	26	62	83	19	**57.8**
Sawyer	17	70	4.1	71	4.2	70	31	24	28	69	69	46	**58.3**
Adams	15	63	3.6	56	3.6	54	33	48	27	64	53	68	**58.8**
Clark	15	58	3.6	54	3.7	62	32	43	27	68	48	71	**59.3**
Rusk	16	65	3.8	64	3.7	63	31	33	29	71	49	69	**60.8**
Juneau	15	60	3.6	57	3.6	55	35	67	27	67	59	66	**62.0**
Menominee	32	72	6.3	72	5.8	72	45	72	30	72	2	72	**72.0**

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Table 12: County health metrics – average rankings of selected characteristics (continued)

Measure	Data Elements	Description	Source	Year(s)
Poor or fair health	% Fair/Poor	Percentage of adults reporting fair or poor health (age-adjusted)	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2016
Poor physical health days	Physically Unhealthy Days	Average number of physically unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2016
Poor mental health days	Mentally Unhealthy Days	Average number of mentally unhealthy days reported in past 30 days (age-adjusted)	Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System	2016
Adult obesity	% Obese	Percentage of adults that report a BMI of 30 or more	CDC Diabetes Interactive Atlas	2014
Physical inactivity	% Physically Inactive	Percentage of adults age 20 and over reporting no leisure-time physical activity	CDC Diabetes Interactive Atlas	2014
Access to exercise opportunities	% With Access	Percentage of population with adequate access to locations for physical activity	Business Analyst, Delorme map data, ESRI, & US Census Tigerline Files	2010 & 2016

Source: www.countyhealthrankings.org.
The information in this spreadsheet includes measures used in calculating the 2018 County Health Rankings.
The County Health Rankings project is a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute.

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Appendix 3:
PLACES OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR NATURE-BASED RECREATION

Visitors participate in nature-based outdoor recreation activities in different settings in order to realize desired experiences. These settings range considerably. At one end of what is often referred to as the "recreation opportunity spectrum" are large areas dominated by high-quality native habitats that provide remote, primitive, non-motorized settings. At the other end are smaller, highly developed sites that provide amenities including shelters, visitor centers, developed campgrounds, toilets and drinking water, paved trails, and other similar features.

Governments and private conservation organizations provide a wide range of opportunities for nature-based outdoor recreation. In addition to the places that are open to the public, many private enterprises (e.g., fishing and hunting guides, marinas, bike rental shops, horse stables and canoe liveries) facilitate the public's participation in outdoor activities and are critical components of the outdoor recreation ecosystem in Wisconsin.

More than 7.4 million acres in Wisconsin – just over 20% of the state – are open to the public for a variety of different outdoor activities. These range for small neighborhood parks in cities and villages to the 1.5-million acre Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. Similarly, they range from densely developed outdoor sports complexes to remote corners of the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore that see only the most adventurous visitors. These places, publicly and privately owned, encompass many of the most popular, treasured, and scenic sites in Wisconsin.

A summary of lands open to the public, by county, is provided in the accompanying table.

For many years the goal of 10 acres of park land per 1000 residents was a widely held standard. Today, communities recognize that there are many factors that go into determining appropriate goals for park land – some seek to achieve more than 10 acres, others fewer.

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Publicly-owned lands open for outdoor recreation

Federal

The **U.S. Forest Service** owns more than 1.5 million acres across 11 northern Wisconsin counties in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest. The land is managed for multiple uses including forestry, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, fisheries management, special forest products gathering, wilderness and natural areas management. The Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest offers the full spectrum of outdoor recreation opportunities. From developed campgrounds to primitive camping, to beaches, boat launches and picnic areas, to non-motorized and motorized trails, and the thousands of miles of roads open to vehicles, the Forest provides a variety of outdoor experiences that contribute economically and culturally to local communities.

The **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** (FWS) owns 149,500 acres in Wisconsin in seven National Wildlife Refuges and two Wetland Management Districts. The bulk of the FWS land in Wisconsin is within the refuges, the two largest being Necedah and Horicon. These two properties have a variety of facilities to support visitors and are among the most popular places in the state for bird watching. In addition to the refuges, the FWS owns and manages over 50 Waterfowl Production Areas totaling over 13,000 acres in 17 counties throughout the state. The WPAs have very limited facilities.

The **National Park Service** owns 68,000 acres, primarily within the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore and the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. These properties are managed to provide remote, wild experiences in two of the most spectacular settings in the state. A range of basic facilities are present.

The **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers** owns about 14,000 acres, primarily in the Mississippi River valley as part of the lock and dam system. The lands along the Mississippi River are cooperatively managed with the FWS as part of the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, which provides high-quality and diverse hunting and fishing opportunities that draw visitors from throughout the Midwest.

In addition to these lands, the Department of Defense (Army) owns over 60,000 acres in central Wisconsin as part of Fort McCoy and associated properties. Although access is regulated, the public can hunt, fish, trap, and cross-country ski on portions of the property.

State

The **Department of Natural Resources** (DNR) is the principal state agency providing places for outdoor recreation. The DNR owns 1.5 million acres spread across 71 of 72 counties (not Menominee County). These properties range from small boat launches to the 232,000-acre Northern Highland American Legion State Forest. The DNR manages the full range of facilities to accommodate nature-based outdoor recreation including hiking, biking, equestrian, snowmobile, ATV, and other types of trails, campgrounds, nature centers, picnic shelters, fishing piers, and wildlife watching blinds.

The DNR also owns easements along streams and rivers throughout the state to provide fishing opportunities and to manage critical streambank habitats. Many of these easements are along trout streams. Finally, the DNR owns public access easements across large blocks of forested lands as part of the federal Forest Legacy program. This program is designed to maintain healthy and economically viable working forests open to some forms of public recreation.

The **Board of Commissioners of Public Land** (BCPL) owns about 75,000 acres, mostly in northern Wisconsin. These lands, remnants of the millions of acres of land granted to the state by the federal government at statehood, are managed to provide quality forest habitat and an income stream to fund public education in the state. These lands have minimal facilities and are primarily used for hunting, trapping, fishing, and wildlife watching.

Publicly-owned lands open for outdoor recreation

County

Counties provide a very wide diversity of opportunities for outdoor recreation. Most northern counties own large acreages that have been enrolled in the **County Forest** program. These lands, totaling nearly 2.4 million acres, primarily came to public ownership due to tax delinquency in the 1920s and 1930s following the mass clear-cutting of trees throughout the north combined with the country's economic collapse. Collectively, these lands now provide extensive trail networks, campgrounds, some of the best hunting and fishing in the state, and remote experiences.

In the southern part of the state is the award-winning Milwaukee County Parks program that consists of over 140 parks and nearly 15,000 acres. With facilities ranging from basketball courts to disc golf courses and swimming pools to botanical gardens, these lands receive millions of visits each year.

In between are countless county properties that provide a critical blend of natural areas and developed settings. Increasingly, many of Wisconsin's more populated counties host dog parks. The number and total acreage within county park, recreation, and conservation lands is not known, but is estimated to be about 70,000 acres.

Cities, Villages, and Towns

The bulk of participation in outdoor recreation in Wisconsin likely takes place on the many and varied city and village public lands found throughout the state. With ball fields, playgrounds, urban trails, picnic sites, and many other facilities, these places are easily accessible to the state's 3.6 million residents that live in urban settings. As such, they are typically heavily used daily.

Excluding the City of Milwaukee (because the park land within the city is owned and managed by Milwaukee County), the nine largest cities in the state are estimated to hold over 15,000 acres of park, recreation, and conservation lands. If the remaining 180 cities and the 402 villages average 10 acres per 1000 residents, that would encompass an additional 15,000 acres. With these assumptions, it is estimated that about 30,000 acres of park, recreation, and conservation lands are owned and managed by cities and villages in Wisconsin.

Some towns have small, but typically well-used, parks. There are 1,259 towns in the state. It is unknown how many towns have park and recreation properties, nor how large they average. If 25% of towns have park and recreation lands which average 20 acres, then towns in Wisconsin would hold about 6,000 acres.

About 51,000 acres of city, village and town lands are enrolled in the Community Forest program. Much, but not all, of this land is believed to be included in the preceding estimates. In sum, cities, villages and towns are estimated to hold about 65,000 acres of park and recreation land in Wisconsin.

School Forests

Over 425 school forests encompassing nearly 28,000 acres have been established throughout the state. These properties are heavily used as outdoor environmental education resources. Some also have physical education facilities, such as ropes courses. When these lands are not being used as part of educational programs, many are open to the public for some types of recreational uses. These forests are managed for (and to showcase) sustainable forest management. The school forest program is administered by LEAF: Wisconsin's K-12 Forestry Education Program housed at UW-Stevens Point.

School and university properties

Wisconsin is home to over 2,200 public schools, nearly all of which have facilities to support outdoor recreation. For many students, these fields, playgrounds, and courts are where most of their participation in outdoor recreation takes place. Many of these places are open to the public when school activities are not underway. The number and type of facilities and acres within these properties are unknown.

Some universities own and manage arboretums, botanical gardens, and other places that are open to the public, generally for walking, photography, nature study, wildlife watching and similar activities. The number of these properties and acres within them are unknown.

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Privately-owned lands open for outdoor recreation

Non-profit organizations

Non-profit groups in Wisconsin have been actively involved in providing outdoor recreation opportunities for decades. Many of these groups are organized as land trusts and have land protection as a central goal for their operations. Other non-profit groups that have protected lands open to the public in Wisconsin include Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, the Trust for Public Land, and other similar organizations.

The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship fund provides matching grants to non-profit organizations for the acquisition of qualifying parcels. Lands acquired since 2008 using Stewardship funds must be open to the public for hunting, trapping, fishing, hiking, and cross-country skiing unless an exemption is provided by the Natural Resources Board.

In addition, many other lands protected by land trusts prior to 2008 and not subject to the Stewardship requirement are open to the public for hiking, wildlife watching, nature study and photography, and similar activities. Some of these lands are also open to hunting and fishing.

Voluntary Public Access

The Voluntary Public Access (VPA) program is administered by the DNR and provides financial incentives to private landowners who open their property to public hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife observation. Funding was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. Enrollment in the program and use of these lands has grown steadily since inception and now encompasses about 32,000.

Managed Forest Law and Forest Crop Law programs

Wisconsin's forest tax laws encourage sustainable forest management on private lands by providing a property tax incentive to landowners. Some of these privately held forest lands also allow public access for recreation. Lands enrolled under the Managed Forest Law program as "open" to public access (about 1.05 million acres) allow for hunting, fishing, hiking, sight-seeing, and cross-country skiing. Lands enrolled under the Forest Crop Law program (about 104,000 acres) allow for public hunting and fishing. Both tax laws require that all hunting and fishing follow the DNR hunting and fishing seasons and regulations.

Businesses

A large number of privately owned businesses and enterprises provide places or opportunities for the public to participate in outdoor activities. Examples include campgrounds, marinas, ski hills, and horse stables. Although there is not a central database of these enterprises and as such their number and distribution is unknown, these places are critical components of the recreation infrastructure in the state.

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Table 13: Public lands, by County

	FEDERAL				STATE				COUNTY	
					Department of Natural Resources			Board of		
County	National Park Service	National Forest Service	Fish & Wildlife Service	Army Corps of Engineers	Fee ownership	Easements on private land*	Forest Legacy easements	Commissioners of Public Land	County Forest	TOTAL
Adams		-	344	1,833	17,838	68	9,088	180	39,820	**69,172**
Ashland	39,609	181,597	-	-	15,458	438	-	2,106	-	**239,208**
Barron	-	-	-	-	6,625	1,106	-	-	15,783	**23,514**
Bayfield	3,982	272,832	1,431	-	27,028	339	2,793	86	169,842	**478,333**
Brown	-	-	-	-	3,700	84	-	-	-	**3,784**
Buffalo	-	-	2,610	472	23,782	21	-	5	-	**26,889**
Burnett	9,376	-	-	-	73,320	79	-	81	110,841	**193,697**
Calumet	-	-	-	-	11,024	18	-	-	-	**11,042**
Chippewa	-	-	-	-	12,696	886	-	82	33,885	**47,548**
Clark	-	-	-	-	630	397	-	-	133,270	**134,297**
Columbia	-	-	3,763	-	22,215	67	-	-	-	**26,045**
Crawford	-	-	-	-	16,067	5,298	-	-	-	**21,365**
Dane	-	-	1,720	-	22,636	1,114	-	-	-	**25,470**
Dodge	-	-	21,716	-	23,415	383	-	-	-	**45,514**
Door	-	-	-	-	14,587	2,185	-	-	-	**16,772**
Douglas	1,811	-	-	-	61,179	132	64,066	79	278,708	**405,976**
Dunn	-	-	1,196	-	17,148	1,084	-	38	-	**19,466**
Eau Claire	-	-	-	-	3,417	189	-	39	51,284	**54,929**
Florence	-	85,269	-	-	19,006	1,634	36,318	2,085	36,221	**180,534**
Fond du Lac	-	-	2,133	-	23,511	185	-	-	-	**25,830**
Forest	-	344,765	-	-	5,342	84	24,940	21,779	14,026	**410,936**
Grant	-	-	-	6,355	19,249	1,184	-	-	-	**26,788**
Green	-	-	-	-	5,475	468	-	-	-	**5,943**
Green Lake	-	-	-	-	18,284	46	-	-	-	**18,330**
Iowa	-	-	-	-	21,253	795	-	-	-	**22,048**
Iron	-	-	-	-	133,157	5	16,992	4,186	172,963	**327,303**
Jackson	-	-	1,424	-	78,199	346	-	40	122,126	**202,135**
Jefferson	-	-	246	-	20,292	293	-	-	-	**20,831**
Juneau	-	-	77,843	-	21,702	505	-	88	17,794	**117,932**
Kenosha	-	-	-	-	8,163	150	-	-	-	**8,314**
Kewaunee	-	-	-	-	3,644	89	-	-	-	**3,732**
La Crosse	-	-	-	3,677	7,182	586	-	50	-	**11,495**
Lafayette	-	-	-	-	5,530	597	-	-	-	**6,127**
Langlade	-	32,763	-	-	18,196	744	19,107	1,389	133,450	**205,649**
Lincoln	-	-	-	-	12,588	239	20,527	573	100,480	**134,407**
Manitowoc	-	-	256	-	9,519	395	-	3,570	-	**13,740**

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Table 13: Public lands, by County (continued)

Marathon	-	-		-	30,486	159	1,368	-	30,007	**62,020**
Marinette	-	-	-	-	48,122	51	16,767	-	228,760	**293,700**
Marquette	-	-	1,240	-	12,231	1,106	-	-	-	**14,576**
Menominee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Milwaukee	-	-	-	-	495	20	-	-	-	**515**
Monroe	-	-	15,470	-	5,472	792	-	-	7,300	**29,034**
Oconto	-	140,781	139	-	7,301	121	-	-	43,558	**191,901**
Oneida	-	11,209	-	-	109,766	3,933	8,468	23,738	82,080	**239,193**
Outagamie	-	-	34	-	11,711	177	-	-	-	**11,921**
Ozaukee	-	-	710	-	2,891	248	-	-	-	**3,849**
Pepin	-	-	-	-	5,995	60	-	33	-	**6,088**
Pierce	-	-	-	223	5,160	197	-	-	-	**5,580**
Polk	3,307	-	1,177	-	24,994	940	-	25	17,010	**47,454**
Portage	-	-	-	-	34,511	212	-	-	-	**34,723**
Price	-	150,165	-	-	19,844	211	-	8,412	93,708	**272,340**
Racine	-	-	-	-	3,708	58	-	-	-	**3,766**
Richland	-	-	-	-	8,756	3,964	-	-	-	**12,720**
Rock	-	-	423	-	8,698	377	-	-	-	**9,498**
Rusk	-	-	-	-	18,643	222	-	122	88,130	**107,117**
Saint Croix	1,183	-	5,769	-	28,910	1,778	-	-	-	**37,640**
Sauk	-	-	236	-	89,071	9,990	-	-	-	**99,298**
Sawyer	3,607	126,626	-	-	16,556	26	18,175	2,019	114,964	**281,973**
Shawano	-	-	107	-	20,722	305	-	2	-	**21,135**
Sheboygan	-	-	723	-	11,433	458	-	-	-	**12,614**
Taylor	-	124,024	-	-	9,511	86	-	81	17,820	**151,522**
Trempealeau	-	-	3,935	144	7,539	380	-	-	-	**11,998**
Vernon	-	-	0	1,642	5,884	881	-	-	984	**9,391**
Vilas	-	54,505	-	-	154,638	3,111	1,042	4,796	40,537	**258,629**
Walworth	-	-	-	-	15,885	1,077	-	-	-	**16,961**
Washburn	4,590	-	-	-	9,983	376	8,577	232	149,050	**172,809**
Washington	-	-	-	-	12,411	381	-	-	-	**12,792**
Waukesha	-	-	-	-	19,420	68	-	-	-	**19,487**
Waupaca	-	-	-	-	9,943	764	-	-	-	**10,707**
Waushara	-	-	267	-	19,123	175	-	-	-	**19,565**
Winnebago	-	-	2,379	-	10,811	7	-	-	-	**13,197**
Wood	-	-	2,247	-	16,036	183	-	-	37,527	**55,993**
WISCONSIN	**67,465**	**1,524,536**	**149,538**	**14,346**	**1,619,715**	**55,126**	**248,229**	**75,917**	**2,381,929**	**6,136,802**

* Includes easements owned by the DNR on private lands that allow the public to pursue some types of recreation (e.g., fishing access easements along trout streams, conservation easements donated by land trusts and conservation organizations that allow some forms of recreation).

This table does not include lands where accurate statewide data are unavailable (i.e., county or municipal parks). Generated from DNR database 10/03/2018, Protected Areas Database-US (PADUS), and federal data.

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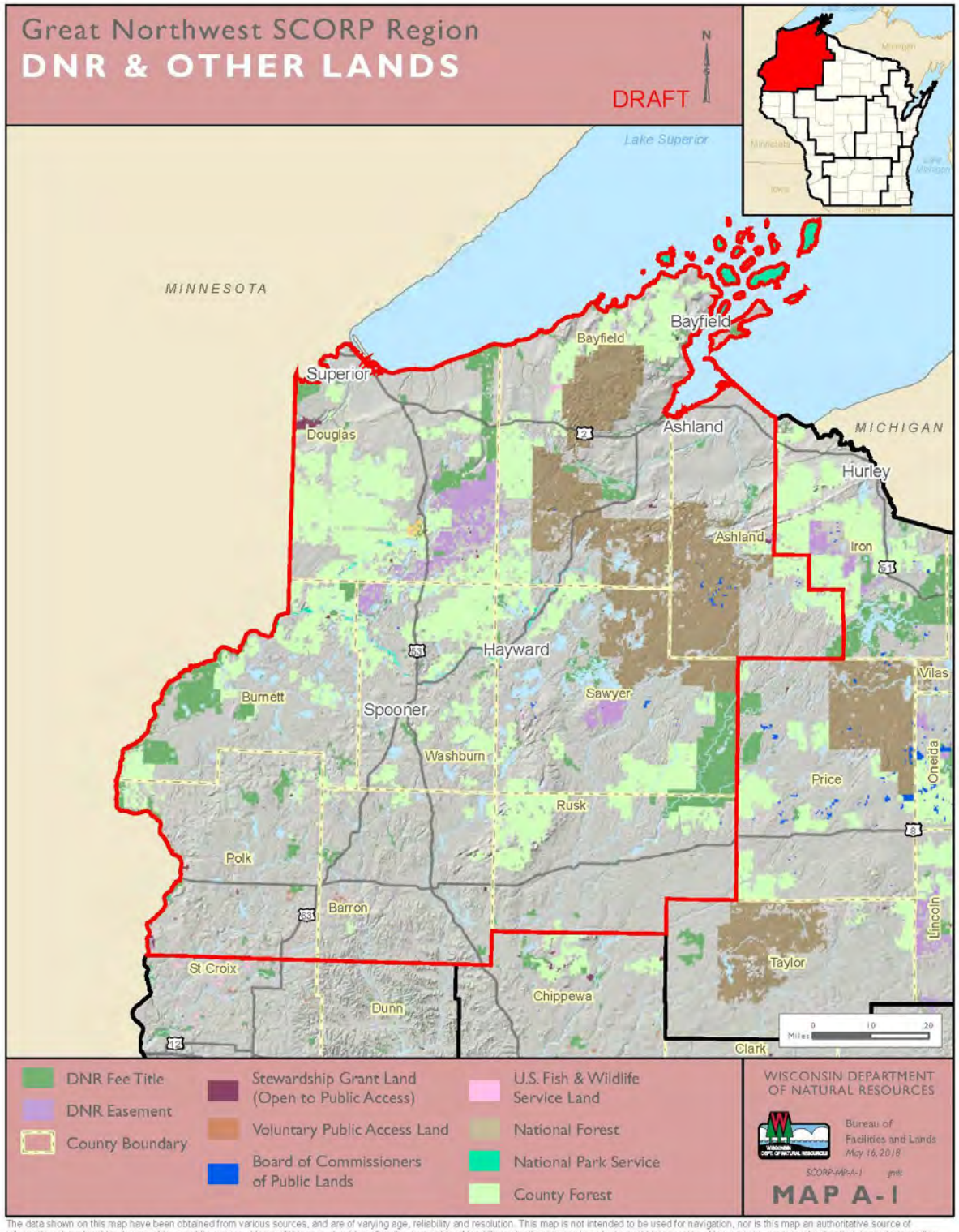

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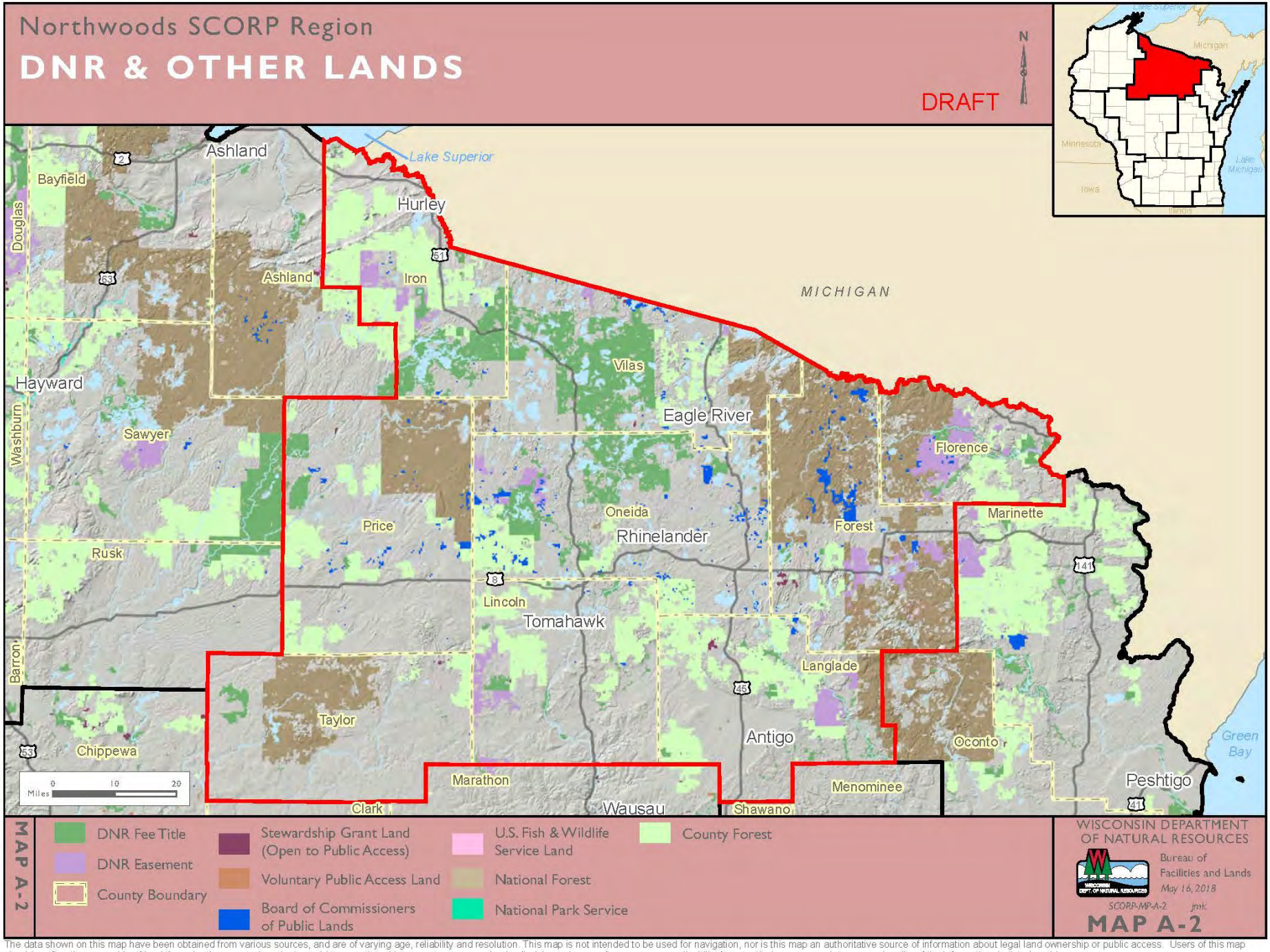

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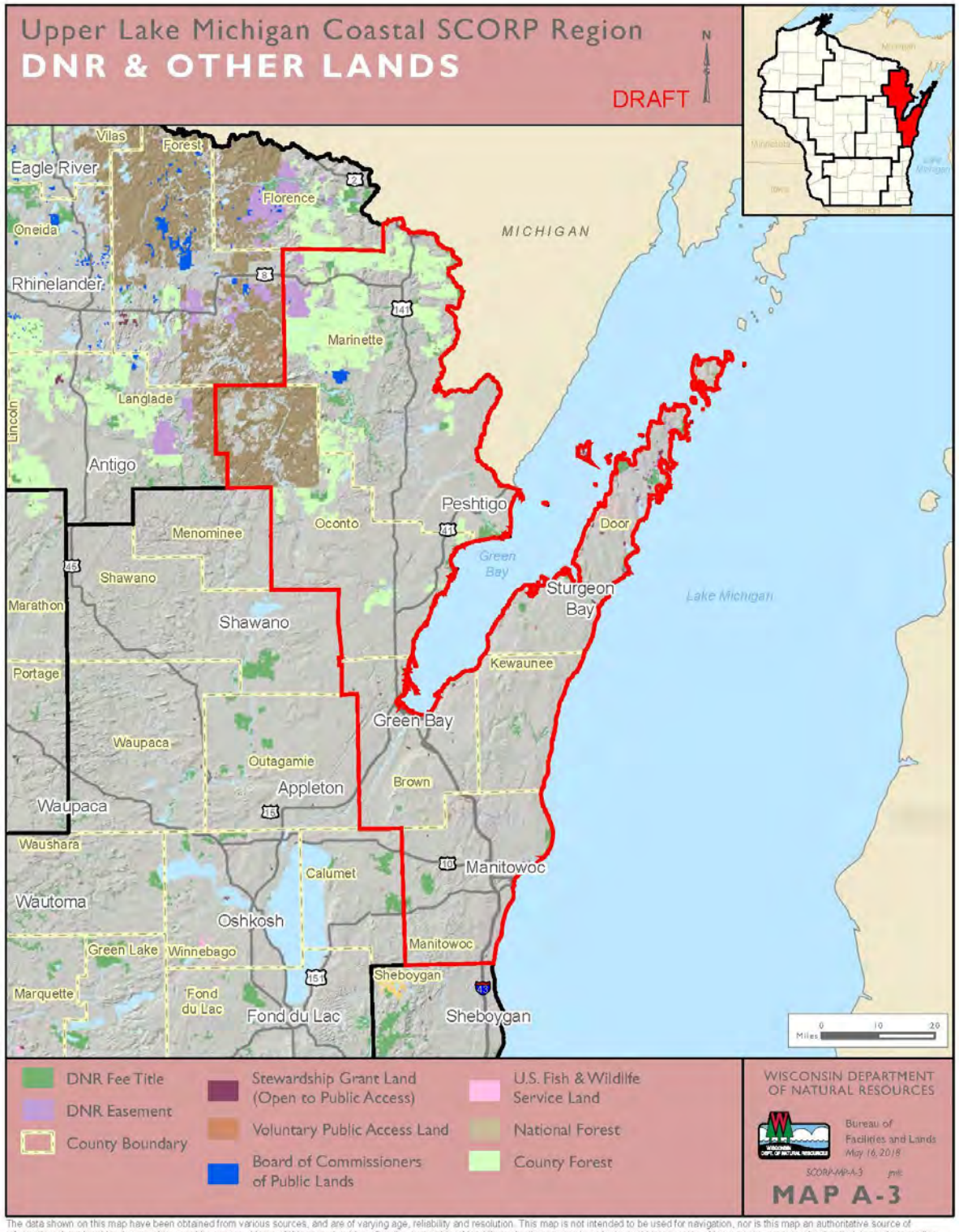

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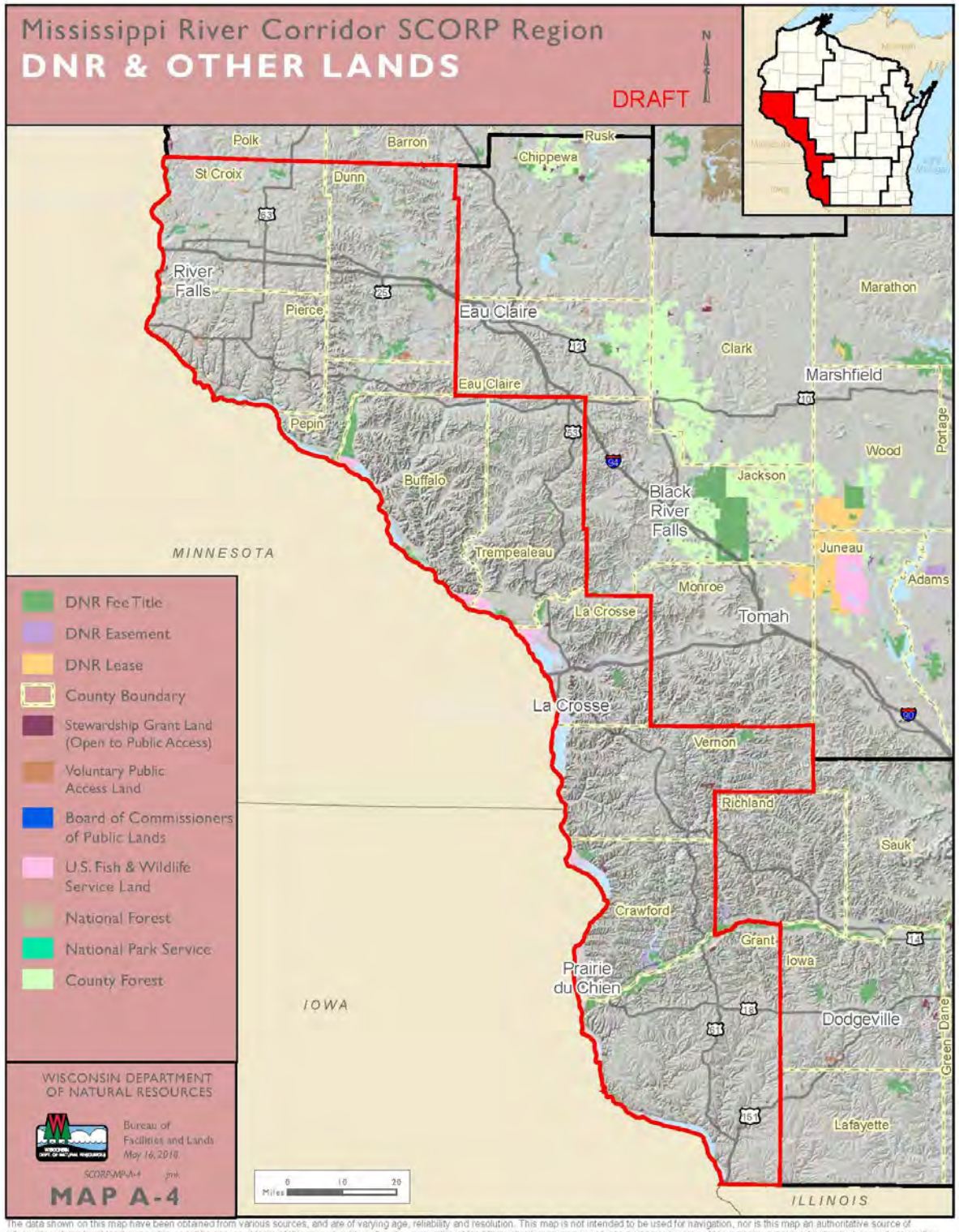
Mississippi River Corridor SCORP Region
DNR & OTHER LANDS
DRAFT
N
Polk
Barron
Rusk
Chippewa
St Croix
Dunn
River Falls
Pierce
Eau Claire
Eau Claire
Marathon
Clark
Marshfield
Pepin
Wood
Portage
Buffalo
Jackson
Black River Falls
Juneau
Trempealeau
Adams
Monroe
La Crosse
Tomah
La Crosse
Vernon
Richland
Sauk
Crawford
Grant
Iowa
Prairie du Chien
Dodgeville
Green
Dane
Lafayette
MINNESOTA
IOWA
ILLINOIS
DNR Fee Title
DNR Easement
DNR Lease
County Boundary
Stewardship Grant Land (Open to Public Access)
Voluntary Public Access Land
Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Land
National Forest
National Park Service
County Forest
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of Facilities and Lands
May 16, 2018
SCORP-MP-A-4
MAP A-4
0 10 20
Miles
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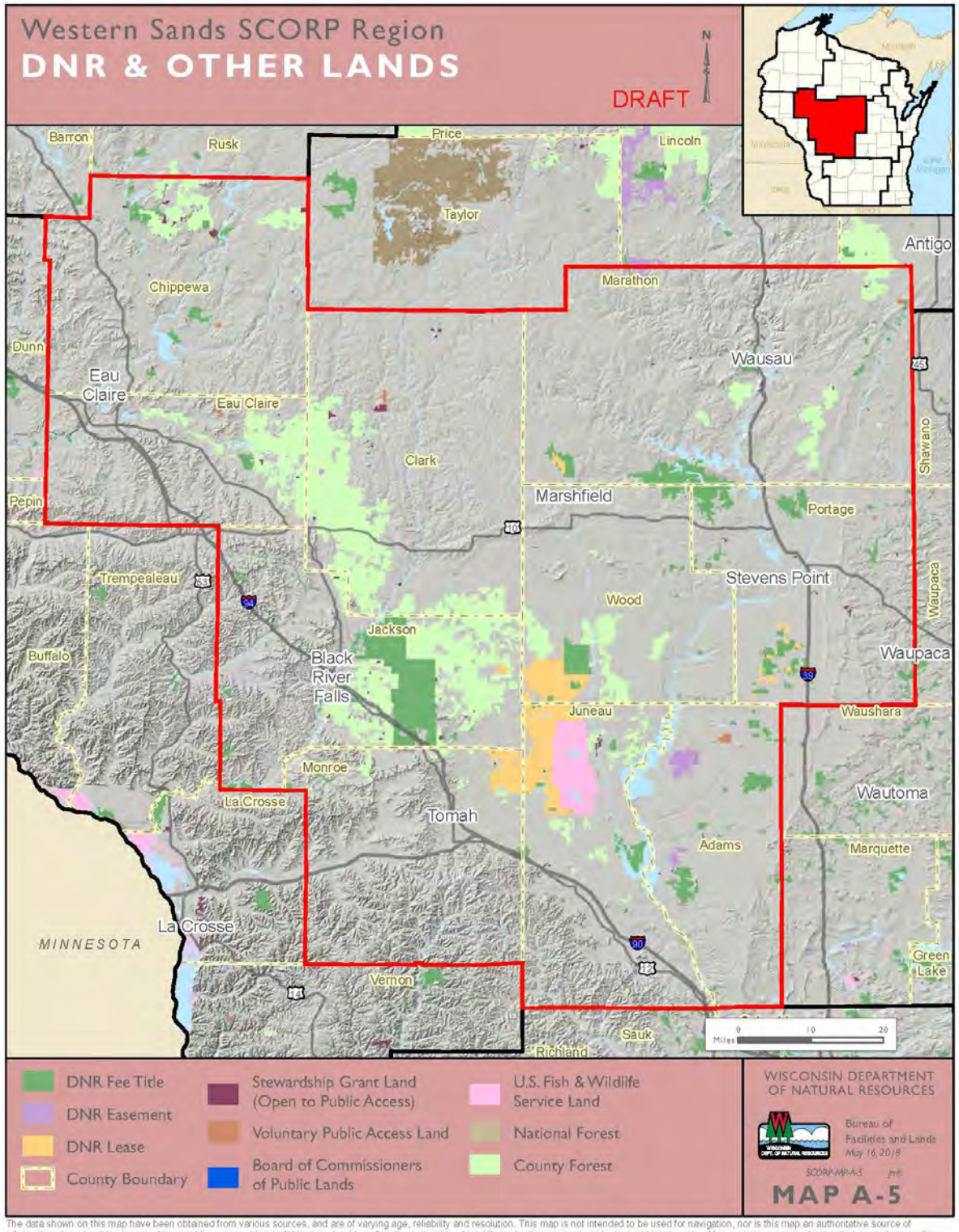

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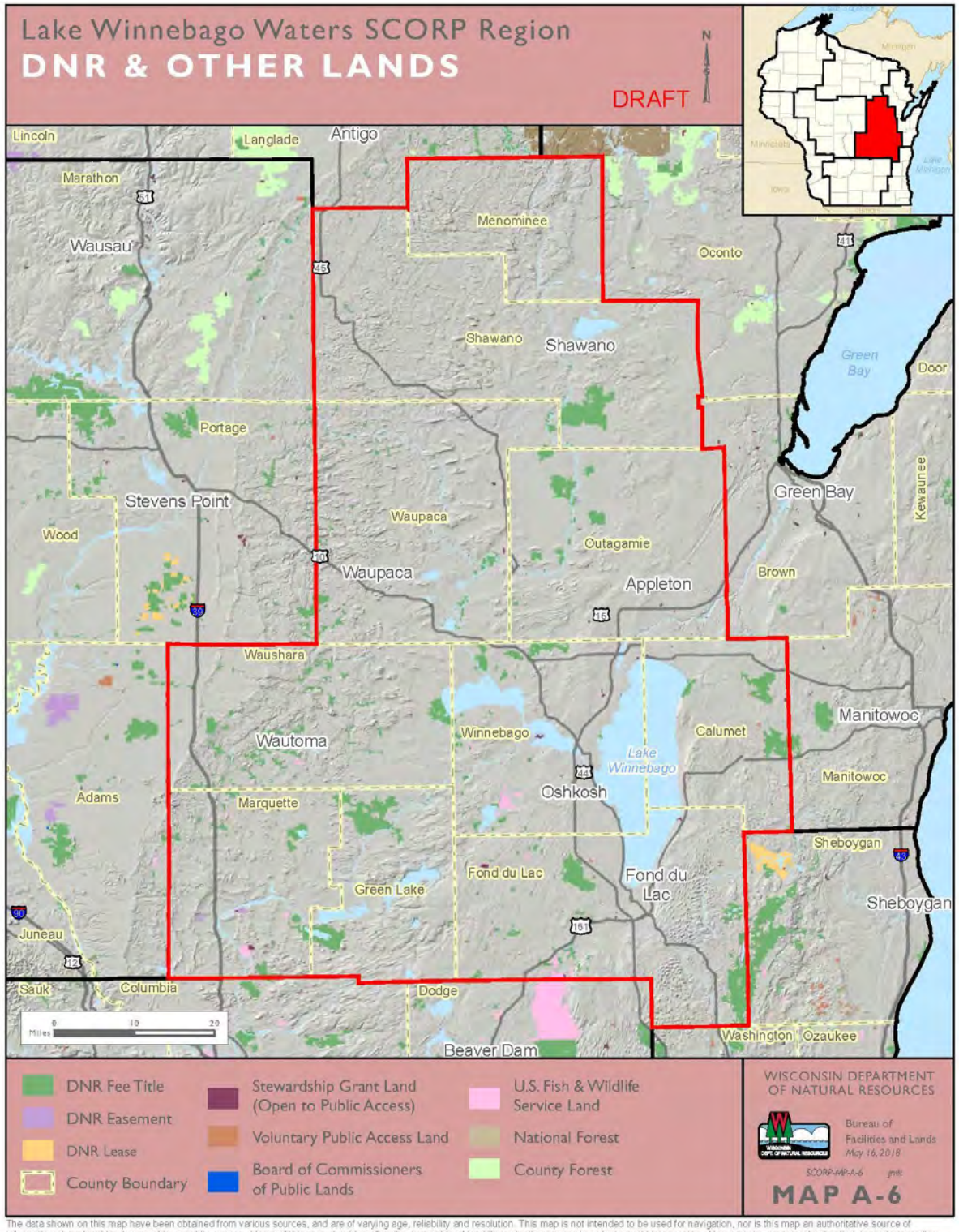
Lake Winnebago Waters SCORP Region
DNR & OTHER LANDS
DRAFT
N
Lincoln
Langlade
Antigo
Marathon
Wausau
Menominee
Oconto
Shawano
Shawano
Green Bay
Door
Portage
Stevens Point
Wood
Waupaca
Waupaca
Outagamie
Appleton
Green Bay
Kewaunee
Brown
Waushara
Wautoma
Winnebago
Lake Winnebago
Calumet
Manitowoc
Manitowoc
Adams
Marquette
Oshkosh
Sheboygan
Sheboygan
Fond du Lac
Fond du Lac
Green Lake
Juneau
Sauk
Columbia
Dodge
Beaver Dam
Washington
Ozaukee
Miles
0
10
20
DNR Fee Title
DNR Easement
DNR Lease
County Boundary
Stewardship Grant Land (Open to Public Access)
Voluntary Public Access Land
Board of Commissioners of Public Lands
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Land
National Forest
County Forest
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
Bureau of Facilities and Lands
May 16, 2018
SCORP-MP-A-6
MAP A-6
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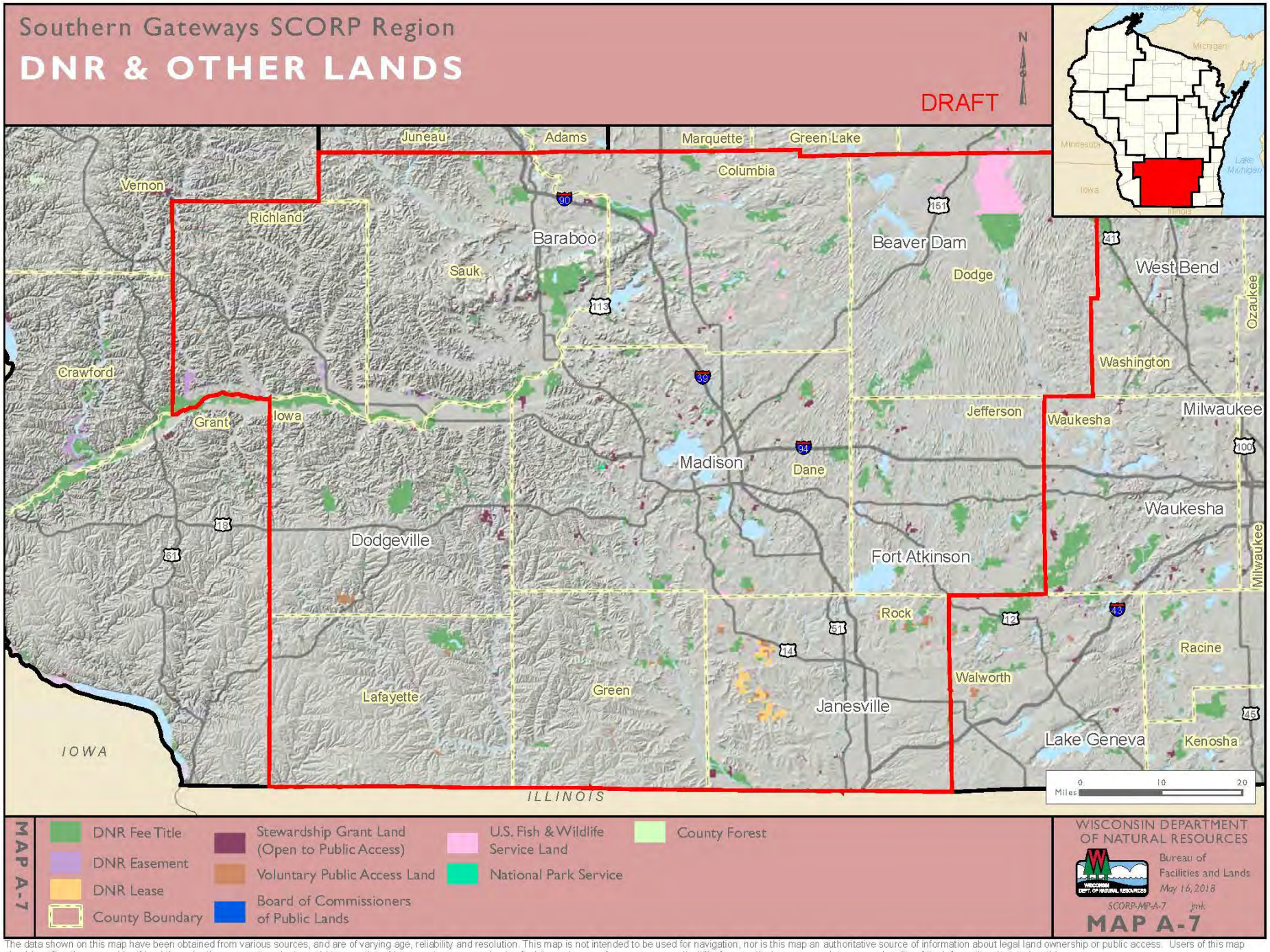

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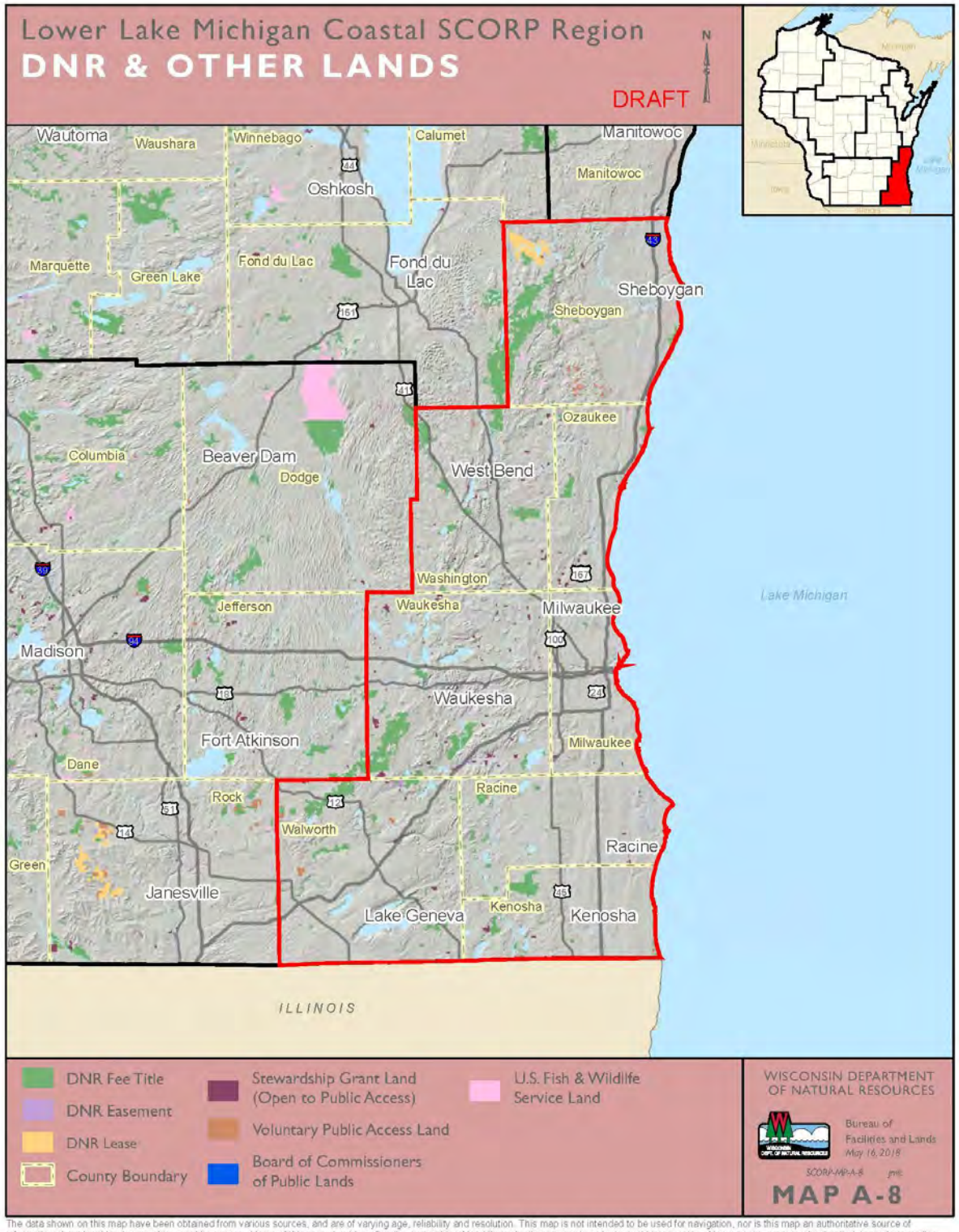

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Appendix 4:

RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES, TRENDS AND NEEDS, BY REGION

Table 14: Existing recreation opportunities at county park properties

This table is based on responses to a questionnaire sent to all county park systems in 2018.

The values are number of responses for each region where opportunities are available.

Activities	REGIONS								Of the counties providing data, those that provide opportunities at their county park properties	
	Great Northwest	Northwoods	Upper Lake MI Coastal	Winnebago Waters	Western Sands	Miss. River Corridor	Southern Gateways	Lower Lake MI Coastal	Number	Percent
Bird/wildlife watching	5	9	6	10	4	3	6	5	48	100%
Canoeing/kayaking	5	9	6	10	4	3	6	5	48	100%
Nature photography	5	9	6	10	4	3	6	5	48	100%
Use of picnic areas/day use areas/beach areas	5	9	6	10	4	3	6	5	48	100%
Dog walking on trails	5	9	6	10	4	3	5	5	47	98%
Snowshoeing	5	9	6	10	4	3	5	5	47	98%
Fishing	5	9	6	10	4	3	5	5	47	98%
Cross-country skiing - on ungroomed trails	5	9	6	10	4	3	4	5	46	96%
Hiking/walking/running on trails	5	9	6	9	4	3	5	5	46	96%
Snowmobiling	5	9	6	10	4	1	5	5	45	94%
Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.	5	9	4	10	4	3	5	5	45	94%
Paddle boarding	5	9	6	10	4	2	5	4	45	94%
Swimming in lakes/ponds/rivers	5	9	6	10	4	2	4	5	45	94%
Motor boating (including pontoon boats)	4	9	6	10	3	2	6	3	43	90%
Geocaching	5	7	6	9	3	3	5	4	42	88%
Bicycling - mountain biking	5	9	6	8	2	3	3	3	39	81%
Bicycling - recreational/rail-trail biking	4	9	5	8	1	3	4	5	39	81%
Bicycling - winter/fat tire biking	4	7	6	7	2	3	3	4	36	75%
Horseback riding	5	9	5	7	2	1	3	4	36	75%
Hunting - migratory birds	5	9	4	6	4	2	2	4	36	75%
Hunting - big game	5	9	4	5	4	2	2	4	35	73%
Cross-country skiing - on groomed trails	5	9	6	7	1	2	2	2	34	71%
Hunting - small game	5	9	3	5	4	2	2	4	34	71%
Hunting - turkey	5	9	3	5	4	2	2	4	34	71%
Camping - tent	5	9	3	4	4	2	4	3	34	71%
Trapping	5	9	3	5	3	1	2	3	31	65%
Camping - RV/pop-up	5	9	3	4	4	2	2	2	31	65%
Sledding	2	6	3	7	2	2	4	3	29	60%
Target firearm shooting at designated ranges	4	9	2	9	1	2	-	-	27	56%
Riding ATVs or UTVs	5	9	4	2	3	-	2	1	26	54%
Disc golf	1	5	5	6	1	1	3	3	25	52%
Playing sports on athlectic fields	1	4	5	5	1	3	3	2	24	50%
Target archery at designated ranges	4	8	3	4	1	1	-	1	22	46%
Visiting dog parks	1	3	3	5	4	1	1	3	21	44%
Ice Skating	1	5	2	5	1	1	3	2	20	42%
Riding dual-sport motorcycles	3	8	4	1	2	-	-	-	18	38%
Driving 4WD vehicles	4	8	3	1	1	-	-	-	17	35%
Playing sports on courts	1	3	2	5	2	1	-	2	16	33%
Tennis	1	4	1	5	-	-	-	1	12	25%
Visiting splash pads	1	3	1	2	3	-	-	-	10	21%
Counties in the region providing data	5	9	6	10	4	3	6	5		

Non-motorized trail activities
Motorized activities
Consumptive-related activities
Non-consumptive activities
Other recreation activities

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Table 15: Trends in recreation participation at county park properties

This table is based on responses to a questionnaire sent to all county park systems in 2018.

The values are mean responses of trends in participation at county park properties where opportunities are available.

Activity	REGION: Great Northwest	Northwoods	Upper Lake MI Coastal	Lake Winnebago Waters	Western Sands	Miss. River Corridor	Southern Gateways	Lower Lake MI Coastal	STATE
Bicycling - winter/fat tire biking	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	**↑↑↑**
Camping - RV/pop-up	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑	**↑↑↑**
Bicycling - mountain biking	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	**↑↑↑**
Riding ATVs or UTVs	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	*	**↑↑↑**
Canoeing/kayaking	↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	**↑↑**
Bicycling - recreational/rail-trail biking	↑↑	↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	**↑↑**
Use of picnic areas/day use areas/beach areas	↑↑	↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	**↑↑**
Paddle boarding	↑↑	↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	**↑↑**
Dog walking on trails	↔	↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑	**↑↑**
Hiking/walking/running on trails	↑	↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑↑	↑↑	↑↑↑	↑	**↑↑**
Fishing	↑	↔	↑↑	↑↑	↑	↑	↑↑	↑	**↑↑**
Motor boating (including pontoon boats)	↑	↔	↑↑	↑↑	↑	↑	↑↑	↔	**↑**
Snowshoeing	↔	↑↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑↑	↔	**↑**
Target firearm shooting at designated ranges	↑↑	↑	↔	↔	↑↑	↑↑	*	*	**↑**
Target archery at designated ranges	↑	↑	↑	↑↑	↔	↔	*	↑↑	**↑**
Bird/wildlife watching	↑	↔	↔	↑	↔	↔	↑↑	↑↑	**↑**
Nature photography	↑	↔	↔	↑↑	↔	↔	↑↑	↑	**↑**
Swimming in lakes/ponds/rivers	↑	↔	↑	↑↑	↔	↔	↑↑	↑	**↑**
Cross-country skiing - on groomed trails	↑	↑↑	↑↑	↔	↑	↑	*	↓	**↑**
Driving 4WD vehicles	↔	↔	↑	*	↑	↑	*	*	**↔**
Horseback riding	↑	↑↑	↑	↔	↑	↑	*	↓↓	**↔**
Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑↑	↔	**↔**
Hunting - turkey	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↑↑	↓	**↔**
Camping - tent	↑	↔	↓↓	↑	↓	↓	↑↑↑	↑	**↔**
Hunting - small game	↔	↔	↓	↓	↔	↔	↑↑	↓	**↔**
Hunting - migratory birds	↔	↔	↑	↓	↔	↔	↔	↔	**↔**
Riding dual-sport motorcycles	↑	↑	↔	*	↓	↓	*	*	**↔**
Hunting - big game	↓	↓	↓	↓	↔	↔	↑↑	↓	**↔**
Cross-country skiing - on ungroomed trails	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↓↓	↓↓	**↓**
Trapping	↔	↓	↔	↓	↔	↔	↓↓	↓↓	**↓**
Snowmobiling	↔	↑	↓	↓↓	↓↓	↓↓	↓↓	↓↓	**↓↓**

On County Park properties:	
Strong increase	↑↑↑
Moderate increase	↑↑
Slight increase	↑
About constant	↔
Slight decrease	↓
Moderate decrease	↓↓
Few or no opportunities	*

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Table 16: Top recreation needs at county park properties

Activity	REGION								STATE average
	Great Northwest	Northwoods	Upper Lake MI Coastal	Lake Winnebago Waters	Western Sands	Mississippi River Corridor	Southern Gateways	Lower Lake MI Coastal	
Campsites	57%	67%	50%	50%	57%	100%	71%	29%	58%
Hiking/walking/running trails	43%	44%	50%	80%	57%	50%	29%	57%	53%
Bicycling trails - mountain biking	57%	56%	67%	50%	43%	50%	29%	57%	51%
Bicycling trails - recreational/rail-trail	29%	33%	50%	50%	29%	50%	57%	71%	46%
Motorized recreation trails	86%	89%	17%	50%	43%	0%	0%	14%	42%
Public shore access	29%	11%	67%	60%	43%	50%	14%	71%	42%
Dog parks	0%	0%	17%	30%	29%	75%	57%	71%	32%
Boat launches	43%	22%	33%	30%	14%	50%	14%	14%	26%
Playgrounds	29%	22%	50%	10%	43%	25%	29%	0%	25%
Hunting opportunities	0%	22%	0%	40%	57%	0%	14%	14%	21%
Picnic areas	29%	0%	17%	10%	14%	25%	29%	43%	19%
Disc golf courses	14%	11%	0%	0%	14%	25%	43%	29%	16%
Equestrian trails	14%	22%	33%	0%	14%	0%	14%	0%	12%
Shooting ranges	14%	11%	0%	10%	14%	0%	0%	0%	7%
Sports fields	0%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	5%
Sports courts	0%	11%	0%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Number of counties providing input	7	9	6	10	7	4	7	7	

This table is based on responses to a questionnaire sent to all county park systems in 2018.

The values are the percent of counties identifying the recreation activities as a top 5 need on their properties.

Percent of responding counties that identified the activity as being a top need on their properties	
High demand in the region	67% to 100%
Moderate demand in the region	33% to 66%
Low demand in the region	0% to 32%

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Table 17: Estimated potential change in statewide participation from 2020 to 2040

This table combines the current participation rates for different recreation activities by age group (as determined in the statewide survey - Appendix 6) and the projected populations in 2020 and 2040.

The table shows the estimated change in the number of people that would be participating in different activities ***if the rate of participation in 2020 and 2040 are the same as today.*** This table includes the top 25 nature-based activities by their estimated growth.

Ranked by number of additional participants from 2020 to 2040		Ranked by percent change in additional participants from 2020 to 2040	
Activity	# of additional participants	**Activity**	Percent growth
Birding/wildlife watching at home	242,000	Birding/wildlife watching at home	8.60%
Picnicking/tailgating/cookout	231,000	Birding/wildlife watching away from home	7.70%
Visiting a nature center	209,000	Visiting a nature center	7.30%
Hiking/walking/running on trails	172,000	Nature photography	7.00%
Visiting a beach/beach walking	166,000	Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.	6.90%
Birding/wildlife watching away from home	152,000	Picnicking/tailgating/cookout	6.30%
Nature photography	127,000	Visiting a beach/beach walking	5.30%
Fishing - any	124,000	Hiking/walking/running on trails	5.30%
Swimming in lakes/rivers/ponds	115,000	Motor boating	5.30%
Motor boating	113,000	Fishing - any	5.20%
Gathering berries, mushrooms, etc.	104,000	Hunting - any	5.20%
Bicycling on roads	92,000	Driving 4-WD vehicles on trails or routes	4.90%
Hunting - any	68,000	Target shooting	4.60%
Target shooting	64,000	Cross-country skiing	4.60%
Walking/running dogs on trails	55,000	Sailing	4.50%
Biking on rail-trails/developed trails	51,000	Swimming in lakes/rivers/ponds	4.50%
Canoeing/kayaking	51,000	Ice skating outdoors	4.20%
Ice fishing	40,000	Bicycling on roads	4.10%
RV camping	38,000	RV camping	3.90%
Waterskiing/tubing/wakeboarding	33,000	Ice fishing	3.70%
Target archery	31,000	Walking/running dogs on trails	3.60%
Tent camping	31,000	Riding ATV/UTVs on trails or routes	3.50%
Cross-country skiing	28,000	Target archery	3.40%
Ice skating outdoors	27,000	Waterskiing/tubing/wakeboarding	3.30%
Riding ATV/UTVs on trails or routes	26,000	Canoeing/kayaking	3.20%

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Appendix 5:

TOURISM ECONOMIC IMPACT, BY COUNTY

Table 18: Tourism economic impact, by County

	Direct Visitor Spending				Total Business Sales				Employment				Total Labor Income				State and Local Taxes			
	Millions			%	Millions			%	Total			%	Millions			%	Millions			%
County	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change
Adams	$212	$209	$197	-7.0%	$265	$264	$254	-4.1%	2,365	2,300	2,121	-10.3%	$50	$50	$48	-4.4%	$25	$24	$23	-8.1%
Ashland	$34	$35	$35	1.6%	$52	$53	$54	3.5%	575	571	561	-2.4%	$13	$13	$13	0.7%	$5	$5	$5	-0.7%
Barron	$97	$97	$102	5.5%	$145	$146	$154	6.1%	1,434	1,433	1,470	2.5%	$32	$34	$35	9.5%	$11	$11	$11	4.0%
Bayfield	$45	$47	$48	5.5%	$61	$63	$64	5.9%	598	606	603	0.8%	$11	$12	$11	2.6%	$6	$6	$6	3.6%
Brown	$614	$638	$671	9.3%	$1,023	$1,063	$1,110	8.5%	11,302	11,588	11,877	5.1%	$416	$429	$448	7.5%	$87	$91	$95	8.5%
Buffalo	$11	$11	$12	4.4%	$19	$19	$20	5.6%	194	190	189	-2.3%	$4	$4	$4	0.8%	$1	$1	$1	0.7%
Burnett	$23	$24	$24	3.5%	$35	$36	$36	4.7%	369	372	367	-0.6%	$7	$7	$7	3.9%	$3	$3	$3	2.1%
Calumet	$30	$31	$32	6.4%	$57	$60	$61	6.8%	657	667	673	2.5%	$14	$15	$15	6.5%	$4	$4	$4	3.9%
Chippewa	$84	$89	$98	17.2%	$136	$143	$154	13.4%	1,332	1,377	1,459	9.5%	$31	$34	$35	12.2%	$9	$10	$11	14.2%
Clark	$28	$29	$28	-1.5%	$49	$51	$50	2.3%	354	359	346	-2.0%	$7	$7	$7	-1.3%	$3	$3	$3	-2.5%
Columbia	$126	$133	$133	5.9%	$183	$192	$194	6.4%	1,768	1,894	1,926	8.9%	$37	$42	$42	13.8%	$15	$16	$16	8.3%
Crawford	$44	$43	$44	-0.3%	$63	$63	$64	2.0%	712	701	688	-3.4%	$12	$12	$12	-0.1%	$6	$6	$6	-2.6%
Dane	$1,154	$1,214	$1,247	8.0%	$1,984	$2,074	$2,136	7.7%	21,013	21,654	21,918	4.3%	$593	$635	$654	10.2%	$149	$156	$159	6.8%
Dodge	$79	$81	$81	2.1%	$147	$152	$154	4.5%	1,478	1,519	1,521	2.9%	$34	$34	$34	1.6%	$9	$10	$10	2.8%
Door	$333	$348	$359	7.8%	$424	$443	$457	7.7%	3,111	3,178	3,225	3.7%	$71	$75	$79	11.1%	$36	$37	$39	6.7%
Douglas	$89	$90	$95	6.6%	$130	$133	$139	6.8%	1,263	1,239	1,251	-0.9%	$27	$27	$28	4.0%	$10	$10	$11	2.8%
Dunn	$47	$45	$46	-2.0%	$81	$81	$82	1.9%	858	849	837	-2.5%	$18	$18	$18	3.9%	$6	$6	$6	-2.9%
Eau Claire	$216	$228	$257	19.0%	$353	$371	$404	14.4%	4,152	4,299	4,578	10.3%	$95	$103	$107	13.2%	$28	$29	$32	15.1%
Florence	$5	$5	$6	16.8%	$7	$8	$8	13.5%	91	89	95	3.9%	$2	$2	$2	-0.7%	$1	$1	$1	9.0%
Fond du Lac	$132	$141	$147	11.1%	$227	$240	$249	9.5%	2,572	2,653	2,698	4.9%	$59	$62	$65	10.2%	$17	$18	$18	8.2%
Forest	$13	$14	$14	5.3%	$20	$21	$21	6.0%	219	223	220	0.6%	$3	$3	$3	3.7%	$2	$2	$2	3.4%
Grant	$43	$44	$44	1.7%	$80	$82	$83	4.2%	887	884	863	-2.7%	$21	$21	$21	1.7%	$5	$5	$5	-0.6%
Green	$39	$41	$45	13.2%	$69	$73	$77	10.7%	764	773	786	2.9%	$18	$19	$19	6.4%	$5	$5	$5	8.0%
Green Lake	$38	$38	$39	3.6%	$57	$59	$60	4.8%	777	749	736	-5.3%	$16	$17	$16	0.3%	$6	$6	$6	-1.8%
Iowa	$35	$35	$36	4.2%	$55	$56	$57	5.3%	434	428	423	-2.3%	$11	$11	$11	-1.3%	$3	$3	$3	2.2%
Iron	$19	$20	$20	7.3%	$26	$27	$28	7.3%	252	254	252	0.0%	$5	$5	$5	1.4%	$2	$2	$2	3.3%
Jackson	$39	$35	$38	-0.8%	$57	$54	$58	1.8%	575	541	554	-3.6%	$10	$10	$10	5.1%	$5	$4	$5	-4.6%
Jefferson	$91	$94	$95	5.4%	$160	$166	$169	6.2%	1,646	1,683	1,681	2.2%	$39	$41	$41	5.9%	$11	$11	$11	4.1%
Juneau	$68	$71	$73	6.9%	$95	$100	$102	7.0%	743	768	797	7.3%	$14	$15	$15	13.6%	$7	$7	$8	7.3%
Kenosha	$197	$209	$214	8.6%	$327	$345	$353	8.1%	3,158	3,249	3,286	4.1%	$81	$84	$85	5.4%	$22	$23	$24	6.7%
Kewaunee	$17	$18	$20	14.6%	$32	$33	$36	11.3%	276	280	311	12.6%	$5	$5	$5	11.8%	$2	$2	$2	13.0%
La Crosse	$236	$248	$264	11.7%	$388	$406	$426	10.0%	4,123	4,274	4,387	6.4%	$99	$106	$110	10.8%	$30	$32	$33	9.5%
Lafayette	$12	$12	$13	12.4%	$21	$22	$23	10.2%	190	197	233	22.8%	$3	$3	$3	17.5%	$1	$1	$2	17.4%
Langlade	$47	$46	$48	0.6%	$68	$68	$70	2.7%	503	495	494	-1.8%	$11	$11	$11	5.5%	$5	$5	$5	-0.9%
Lincoln	$53	$54	$55	3.2%	$84	$85	$88	4.7%	700	701	708	1.1%	$15	$15	$16	7.7%	$6	$6	$6	2.1%
Manitowoc	$115	$112	$113	-1.7%	$192	$192	$196	1.9%	2,093	2,051	2,033	-2.9%	$45	$47	$47	3.1%	$15	$15	$15	-3.4%

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Table 18: Tourism economic impact, by County (continued)

	Direct Visitor Spending				Total Business Sales				Employment				Total Labor Income				State and Local Taxes			
	Millions			%	Millions			%	Total			%	Millions			%	Millions			%
County	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change	2015	2016	2017	2015-2017 Change
Marathon	$236	$235	$238	0.9%	$404	$410	$418	3.5%	4,172	4,141	4,110	-1.5%	$101	$102	$104	2.9%	$30	$29	$30	-0.1%
Marinette	$154	$153	$153	-0.8%	$215	$217	$219	1.5%	1,633	1,591	1,558	-4.6%	$31	$31	$32	1.5%	$16	$15	$15	-3.4%
Marquette	$21	$22	$23	6.6%	$32	$33	$34	6.9%	288	291	295	2.4%	$5	$5	$5	4.5%	$3	$3	$3	4.9%
Menominee	$3	$3	$3	5.2%	$5	$5	$5	6.2%	48	49	49	2.1%	$1	$1	$1	7.7%	$0	$0	$0	3.2%
Milwaukee	$1,858	$1,931	$1,991	7.1%	$3,313	$3,441	$3,551	7.2%	31,346	31,894	32,141	2.5%	$1,077	$1,106	$1,121	4.1%	$225	$232	$237	5.3%
Monroe	$82	$77	$80	-2.0%	$125	$122	$127	1.2%	1,213	1,148	1,147	-5.5%	$25	$26	$26	3.5%	$10	$10	$10	-4.6%
Oconto	$84	$84	$87	4.0%	$116	$118	$122	4.9%	871	886	903	3.7%	$16	$16	$16	5.7%	$8	$8	$9	2.9%
Oneida	$216	$222	$230	6.5%	$286	$294	$305	6.7%	2,141	2,173	2,208	3.2%	$48	$50	$52	7.7%	$21	$22	$22	4.7%
Outagamie	$335	$339	$348	3.8%	$580	$594	$611	5.2%	6,420	6,433	6,395	-0.4%	$163	$167	$164	0.9%	$43	$43	$43	1.2%
Ozaukee	$92	$97	$98	5.7%	$186	$194	$198	6.5%	2,014	2,067	2,047	1.6%	$55	$59	$58	6.0%	$12	$12	$12	3.9%
Pepin	$6	$6	$7	12.8%	$11	$11	$12	10.5%	103	104	109	6.5%	$2	$2	$2	9.0%	$1	$1	$1	9.7%
Pierce	$25	$26	$29	15.3%	$48	$50	$53	11.5%	422	421	436	3.4%	$9	$9	$9	9.6%	$3	$3	$3	8.6%
Polk	$82	$84	$87	6.4%	$124	$127	$132	6.7%	1,060	1,070	1,098	3.6%	$21	$23	$23	7.0%	$9	$9	$9	4.9%
Portage	$120	$125	$128	7.2%	$211	$219	$226	7.2%	2,154	2,216	2,234	3.7%	$45	$48	$49	9.5%	$16	$16	$16	5.1%
Price	$19	$18	$19	1.5%	$31	$31	$32	3.9%	322	313	309	-3.8%	$6	$6	$6	-5.5%	$2	$2	$2	-3.0%
Racine	$232	$229	$237	1.9%	$420	$424	$438	4.3%	4,090	4,012	4,025	-1.6%	$109	$110	$112	3.2%	$27	$27	$27	-0.3%
Richland	$19	$20	$20	3.0%	$32	$33	$34	4.8%	320	317	312	-2.4%	$7	$7	$7	-1.7%	$2	$2	$2	0.0%
Rock	$221	$235	$245	11.0%	$364	$384	$398	9.5%	3,891	4,053	4,146	6.6%	$90	$96	$96	6.9%	$27	$28	$29	9.1%
Rusk	$27	$27	$27	2.0%	$40	$40	$41	3.7%	417	411	411	-1.4%	$8	$8	$8	0.4%	$3	$3	$3	-0.4%
St. Croix	$100	$106	$111	11.0%	$167	$176	$183	9.5%	1,829	1,909	1,954	6.9%	$41	$44	$45	9.2%	$13	$13	$14	9.3%
Sauk	$1,005	$1,048	$1,087	8.1%	$1,277	$1,330	$1,377	7.9%	10,932	11,000	11,093	1.5%	$232	$242	$241	3.9%	$118	$121	$124	5.1%
Sawyer	$86	$88	$92	7.5%	$114	$118	$122	7.5%	969	990	1,006	3.7%	$21	$22	$23	9.1%	$10	$10	$11	5.8%
Shawano	$62	$65	$67	8.3%	$93	$98	$101	8.0%	878	904	929	5.8%	$18	$19	$20	9.2%	$7	$7	$8	7.0%
Sheboygan	$215	$224	$223	3.9%	$359	$373	$377	5.2%	3,453	3,516	3,500	1.4%	$78	$82	$84	6.7%	$27	$28	$28	3.2%
Taylor	$26	$27	$28	5.5%	$44	$45	$47	6.2%	356	356	358	0.7%	$7	$7	$7	3.2%	$3	$3	$3	3.0%
Trempealeau	$25	$25	$26	2.5%	$50	$51	$52	4.8%	381	385	384	0.8%	$8	$8	$8	4.8%	$3	$3	$3	2.4%
Vernon	$35	$36	$36	5.3%	$55	$57	$58	6.1%	488	503	505	3.4%	$11	$11	$11	3.8%	$4	$4	$4	4.2%
Vilas	$212	$213	$219	3.3%	$271	$274	$283	4.1%	1,962	1,940	1,961	-0.1%	$41	$42	$44	8.6%	$22	$22	$22	2.0%
Walworth	$510	$529	$544	6.8%	$682	$708	$729	6.9%	6,865	6,936	6,938	1.1%	$169	$179	$180	6.2%	$64	$65	$66	4.0%
Washburn	$28	$30	$31	8.2%	$42	$44	$46	7.9%	495	513	528	6.7%	$10	$11	$12	12.6%	$4	$4	$4	8.3%
Washington	$115	$118	$120	4.0%	$229	$236	$241	5.6%	2,374	2,397	2,414	1.6%	$59	$61	$62	5.4%	$14	$14	$14	2.8%
Waukesha	$722	$743	$776	7.6%	$1,342	$1,387	$1,442	7.4%	14,290	14,361	14,575	2.0%	$398	$409	$421	5.7%	$90	$92	$95	4.5%
Waupaca	$90	$89	$94	4.5%	$139	$140	$146	5.5%	1,304	1,276	1,284	-1.5%	$25	$24	$25	0.6%	$11	$11	$11	0.8%
Waushara	$70	$73	$74	5.2%	$96	$99	$101	5.8%	874	895	897	2.6%	$14	$15	$15	5.4%	$8	$8	$8	4.0%
Winnebago	$234	$243	$241	3.0%	$447	$464	$469	5.0%	4,827	4,879	4,806	-0.4%	$128	$134	$132	3.2%	$30	$31	$31	1.4%
Wood	$88	$91	$93	5.7%	$171	$178	$182	6.5%	2,184	2,228	2,226	1.9%	$60	$64	$63	4.7%	$11	$12	$12	4.3%
Wisconsin	**$11,919**	**$12,311**	**$12,701**	**6.6%**	**$19,292**	**$19,968**	**$20,607**	**6.8%**	**190,717**	**193,454**	**195,255**	**2.4%**	**$5,066**	**$5,274**	**$5,368**	**6.0%**	**$1,469**	**$1,506**	**$1,537**	**4.6%**

Source: http://industry.travelwisconsin.com/research/economic-impact

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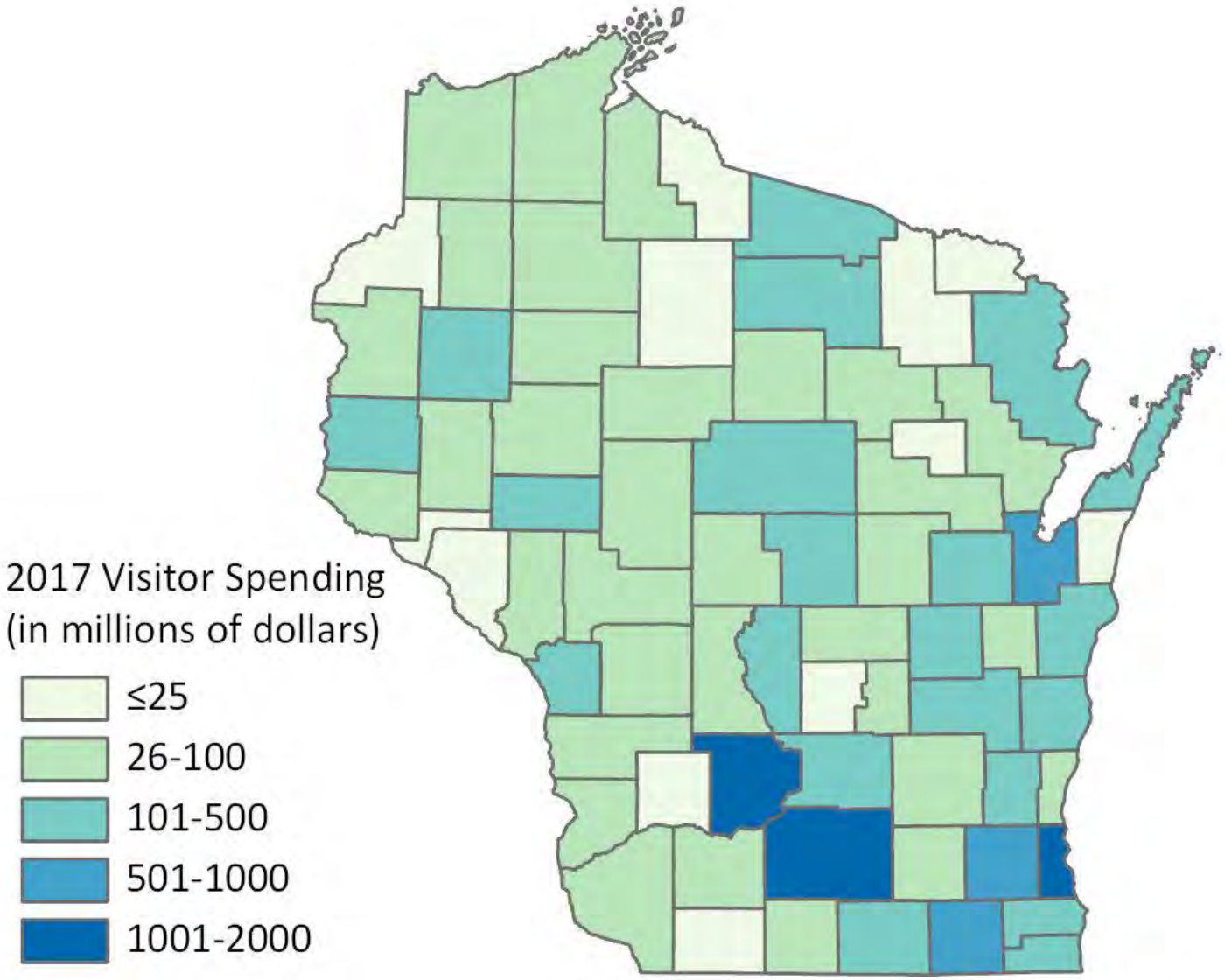
Map of direct visitor spending in 2017, by county



Data Source: Wisconsin Department of Tourism, 2018

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