



ARKANSAS
OFFICE OF
OUTDOOR RECREATION

CONNECTING THE NATURAL STATE



2025-2030
ARKANSAS
SCORP

STATEWIDE COMPREHENSIVE OUTDOOR RECREATION PLAN



This SCORP meets the requirements for continued eligibility to receive matching Land and Water Conservation Funds. This plan was funded in part through a grant from the National Park Service under LWCF Act of 1965 (PL 88-575).



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STATE OF ARKANSAS
SARAH HUCKABEE SANDERS
GOVERNOR

Lauren S. Imgrund
Associate Director, Partnerships and Civic Engagement
Department of the Interior
1849 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20240

Mrs. Imgrund,

Arkansas is called the Natural State for a reason. From the mountains to the timberlands, to the Delta, and everywhere in between, natural beauty surrounds us. My administration has set a course to expand access to this beauty like never before.

Part of this expansion requires strategic planning, which Arkansas accomplishes every five years through the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). This plan provides us with an opportunity to review what we have already accomplished and look to the future for new initiatives to stimulate our state's outdoor economy. Further, the plan provides a chance to identify specific challenges that we face in the outdoor recreation space and create an action plan to overcome those issues.

The SCORP combines the work of outdoor recreation stakeholders from around Arkansas, multiple state agencies, and Arkansans, who utilize our state's natural resources on a daily basis.

Arkansas' outdoor spaces are one of our state's greatest natural resources. They offer great opportunity but must be properly stewarded to achieve their full potential. That's the aim of this report, and we look forward to continuing to make Arkansas the best state in America to live, work, and raise a family.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Sarah Huckabee Sanders.

Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor of Arkansas

Sincerely,

A red ink signature of Bryan Sanders.

Bryan Sanders
First Gentleman of Arkansas

State Capitol Building • Little Rock, AR 72201
Telephone: (501) 682-2345
www.governor.arkansas.gov



Sarah Huckabee Sanders

Governor

Shea Lewis

Secretary

Dear Colleagues and Stakeholders,

Every five years, the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism takes a pulse on the current state of outdoor recreation and Arkansas' opportunities in the years ahead as it pertains to recreation development and grants. The 2025-2030 Arkansas Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) celebrates the enduring bond between the people of Arkansas and our state's extraordinary natural landscapes, a connection that has defined our history and continues to shape our future.

From the days when Arkansas was known simply as "Arkansaw" to its current recognition as "The Natural State," our unspoiled wilderness has been a beacon, drawing explorers, settlers, and indigenous peoples alike. These lands, rich with natural beauty and resources, have provided sustenance, adventure, and solace to all who have called them home.

In these modern times we live in, the outdoors brings more importance than ever. Since the last SCORP, technology has leaped forward but has left many without the experience of adventure in our state. We see the work of our department as more important than ever—to welcome all into the Natural State and create a lasting impact for future generations. The outdoors continues to bring us together, offering shared experiences of adventure, relaxation, and rejuvenation. Whether through family camping trips, a float down our scenic rivers, or chance encounters on our trails, the outdoors dissolves barriers and fosters connections across generations and cultures.

The SCORP is a testament to this enduring connection. It not only celebrates our state's natural treasures but also seeks to preserve and enhance them for future generations. By promoting access to recreational opportunities and fostering a deeper appreciation for the outdoors, the SCORP aims to strengthen the ties that bind us to our land and one another.

This report calls upon us to carry forward the spirit of stewardship and reverence for the outdoors that has defined Arkansas for centuries. It encourages us to invest in conserving land for preservation and recreation and offer access to green spaces for all communities.

In doing so, we honor the legacy of those who came before us and pave the way for a future where the natural beauty of Arkansas continues to inspire, connect, and uplift all who call it home. The SCORP offers valuable insights and inspiration for professionals in the recreation industry and local communities alike, inviting everyone to experience the beauty and bounty of The Natural State.

Together, let us embrace the spirit of adventure and discover the wonders waiting to be explored in Arkansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shea Lewis".

Shea Lewis

Secretary

Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
One Capitol Mall, Suite 3B • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-682-2039
Adpht.Arkansas.gov



Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor
Shea Lewis
Secretary

Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
Office of Outdoor Recreation
Little Rock, Arkansas

Fellow Arkansans:

Allow me to present the 2025-2030 Arkansas Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, or "SCORP." The plan is a required component of Land and Water Conservation Fund eligibility, and so this document represents, at base level, the continued eligibility of Arkansas to receive LWCF funding. These dollars help to fund projects that provide outdoor recreation for all the citizens of Arkansas, and also guests to our state.

The SCORP is not just a part of the federal funding system, but also a comprehensive guide to Arkansas' outdoor recreational opportunities. It covers the state's natural resources and facilities that make it one of the best places to enjoy the outdoors in the country. The SCORP aims to capture the beauty of Arkansas in its entirety, from the highlands of the Ozarks to the lowlands of the Arkansas Delta, and everything in between. This includes the wonderful outdoor opportunities available in our largest cities as well as those found deep in the woods or on our many lakes and streams. It is the essence of why our moniker is The Natural State.

The most important thing to remember is that the SCORP plan is just that – a plan. It takes into account the recreational opportunities available in the state and the opinions, suggestions, and wishes of the citizens who use those opportunities. By doing so, the SCORP writing staff was able to identify a set of priorities that will help in the development of new and innovative facilities for public outdoor recreation, while also preserving Arkansas' natural resources. These priorities come directly from the public and outdoor recreation professionals who serve them. Our staff hopes that these priorities can serve as a helpful guide for these dedicated professionals as they continue to increase access to Arkansas' wealth of public outdoor recreation opportunities.

The plan I am presenting is the result of a collaborative effort from multiple state agencies, hundreds of professional recreation providers, and thousands of everyday citizens. This project is a testament to teamwork and public trust, and it reflects well on all Arkansans. I am excited to share this plan with the people of Arkansas.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'K. Andrews'.

Katherine Andrews
Director, Office of Outdoor Recreation

Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation
1 Capitol Mall, Suite 3B • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501.324.9150
Adpht.Arkansas.com



Acknowledgements

Advisory Board

Katherine Andrews
Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation
Director

Leah Beck
(Previously with The Nature Conservancy)

Traci Berry
Visit Hot Springs
Northwoods Trails Coordinator

Michael J. Bradley, Ph.D.
Arkansas Tech University
Chair, Department of Agriculture and Tourism

Zach Foster
City of Fayetteville, AR
Park Planner II

Leesa Freasier
(Previously with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences)

Kayla Gomance
Arkansas State Parks
Assistant Chief of Interpretation

Katrina Johnson
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission
Assistant Chief, Fiscal Division

Dave Roberts
Crafton Tull
Senior Vice President - Business Development

Kim Sanders
Arkansas Department of Transportation
Bicycle-Pedestrian Coordinator

Martin Smith
Ecological Design Group
Principal

Mike Sprague
(Previously with the Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation)

Document Construction

Katherine Andrews
Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation
Director

Research

Michael J. Bradley, Ph.D.
Arkansas Tech University
Chair, Department of Agriculture and Tourism

James Maples, Ph.D.
ERT Inc.

Photo Credits

Will Newton
Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
Photographer

Kirk Jordan
Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
Photographer

CJRW

Special Thanks

Zach Foster, Austin Booth, Bill Holiman, Bill Jackson, David Wigley, Kristen Dane and Shealyn Sowers

How to Use This SCORP

This SCORP serves as a quick reference for ideas, inspiration, and guidance for those developing outdoor recreation in Arkansas. The SCORP's goal is to help outdoor recreation providers recognize and remove barriers so that everyone can enjoy outdoor recreation.

When planning your next project, consider using the SCORP to help influence your decision-making process.

Gain Context

1

Read through the "Introduction" and "Research" chapters to better understand the SCORP's purpose, theme, and research methods.

2

Understand Barriers

Barriers are obstacles that keep people from participating in outdoor recreation. Learn how to recognize, remove, and prevent barriers.

3

Discover Arkansas' Needs

SCORP Priorities are large ideas meant to encourage future outdoor recreation projects. Think of them as the recreation categories that will positively impact Arkansas the most.

4

Plan Your Project

Take another look at your community. Now that you have the tools you need, it's time to plan a project that meets the needs of your city, your region, and the state.



Preface

Arkansas' Outdoor Legacy

Arkansas' natural beauty has always been its defining feature, attracting people from all walks of life to its untamed landscapes long before urbanization and development took hold. From the days when it bore the simpler moniker of "Arkansaw" to its present designation as "The Natural State," the allure of Arkansas has been its unspoiled wilderness, beckoning explorers, settlers, and indigenous peoples alike with promises of adventure, sustenance, and solace.

Indigenous people forged deep connections with the land and landscapes of Arkansas. Their legacy endures in the rocky soil beneath towering bluffs and along the clear rivers, where traces of their existence remain etched into the landscape.

Centuries later, as waves of settlers and pioneers ventured into this territory, they too found themselves captivated by the wilderness that surrounded them. For them, Arkansas represented not just a destination, but a way of life—a rugged existence shaped by the land's abundance and challenges alike. Whether they settled at the head of a creek, atop a bald hill, or along the banks of the mighty Mississippi, these early Arkansans forged communities bound together by a shared reliance on the land and its resources.

But it wasn't just survival that drew people together in Arkansas' great outdoors – it was also the promise of connection and camaraderie. Along the rivers and trails that crisscrossed the state, travelers encountered one another, sharing stories, resources, and companionship. From chance encounters with fellow wanderers to planned gatherings at trading posts and settlements, these interactions served as the lifeblood of early Arkansas society.

Even today, as modern amenities shape our lives in new ways, the outdoors continues to serve as a powerful connector, bringing people together in shared experience of adventure, relaxation, and rejuvenation.

Arkansas' Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) stands as a testament to this enduring bond between people and nature. It not only celebrates the state's natural treasures but also seeks to preserve and enhance them for future generations. The SCORP aims to strengthen the ties that bind Arkansans to their land and to one another.

As we reflect on Arkansas' rich history and the enduring connections forged in its great outdoors, it becomes clear that this legacy is not merely a relic of the past. The importance of preserving our natural heritage and nurturing our connections to the land has never been more critical.

Looking ahead, it is incumbent upon us to carry forward the spirit of stewardship and reverence for the outdoors that has defined Arkansas for centuries.

In doing so, we honor the legacy of those who came before us and we pave the way for a future where the natural beauty of Arkansas continues to inspire, connect, and uplift all who call it home. Whether you're a professional in the recreation industry or a local community working towards improved quality of life, the SCORP offers valuable insights and inspiration. It's a testament to the shared love for the outdoors among Arkansans and visitors alike, inviting everyone to experience the beauty and bounty firsthand. So let's dive in, embrace the spirit of adventure, and discover the wonders waiting to be explored in The Natural State.

Signed,

The 2025-2030 SCORP Team



Introduction

Background & Purpose

The SCORP aims to provide an overview of Arkansas' current public outdoor recreation resources. It offers recommendations, guidance, and inspiration for the state's outdoor recreation providers as they work to conserve, maintain, and expand the recreational opportunities available to both residents and visitors.

Beyond its role in everyday planning and development of public outdoor facilities, the SCORP is crucial for grant applications, which often require references to it. Specifically, any application for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State Assistance Program must detail how the project aligns with the latest SCORP priorities.

The Arkansas Office of Outdoor Recreation is the agency with the authority to represent the state with the LWCF program.

The Land and Water Conservation Act of 1964, which established the Fund, also mandates that each state produce and periodically update a tailored SCORP. Other state agencies, like the Arkansas Natural and Cultural Resources Council (ANCRC), have similarly integrated SCORP references into their grant requirements.

The LWCF is funded through the extraction of oil and gas from America's Outer Continental Shelf. It provides financial support for conserving and managing public lands and waters in the U.S. LWCF helps fund the acquisition of land for parks and recreation areas, supports conservation easements, and enhances outdoor recreational facilities and access, all aimed at preserving natural resources and providing outdoor opportunities for the public.

These areas can serve conservation purposes, such as Lucy’s Bend Natural Area in Saline County, a site managed with the primary goal of protecting significant ecological habitats, or provide urban recreational opportunities, like Valencia Park Inclusive Playground in Maumelle, a state-of-the-art recreational facility designed to be accessible and enjoyable for children of all abilities. Despite their differences, both projects share two key features: they are partially funded by the LWCF and significantly enhance the ability of all Arkansans to enjoy the state’s natural beauty.

The latest version of Arkansas’ Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan reflects both past traditions and new ideas. Although some concepts may appear divergent, the plan is unified by a long-standing love and respect for the outdoors in Arkansas and all of the benefits that time outside offers.



Theme: Connecting the Natural State



Connecting outdoor recreation parks and amenities through a comprehensive network of pathways, green spaces, and multi-modal transportation options fosters a dynamic ecosystem where people and nature coexist harmoniously. It enhances accessibility, promotes community engagement, and fosters environmental responsibility, making outdoor recreation more enjoyable and beneficial for everyone.

It's important to note that trail development requires planning and consideration of environmental impact, community needs, and land management. However, when done thoughtfully, connecting parks and amenities through trails can be a powerful tool for enhancing the value and impact of outdoor recreation in our communities.

Benefits to prioritizing trail connectivity:

Enhanced access and exploration:

- **Expanded opportunities:** Trails create a network that allow people to explore a wider range of landscapes and amenities within a single trip. Instead of being confined to one park, they can hike, paddle, bike, or run between different areas, experiencing diverse scenery and activities.
- **Accessibility for different abilities:** Trails can be designed to cater to different levels of physical ability, allowing people of all ages and fitness levels to enjoy the outdoors. Connecting accessible trails between parks provides greater inclusivity and encourages shared experiences.
- **Increased movement:** Trails offer a healthy way of life. As individuals traverse landscapes, they not only strengthen their bodies but also rejuvenate their minds, fostering a deeper connection with the natural world and igniting a passion for adventure and exploration.

Conservation:

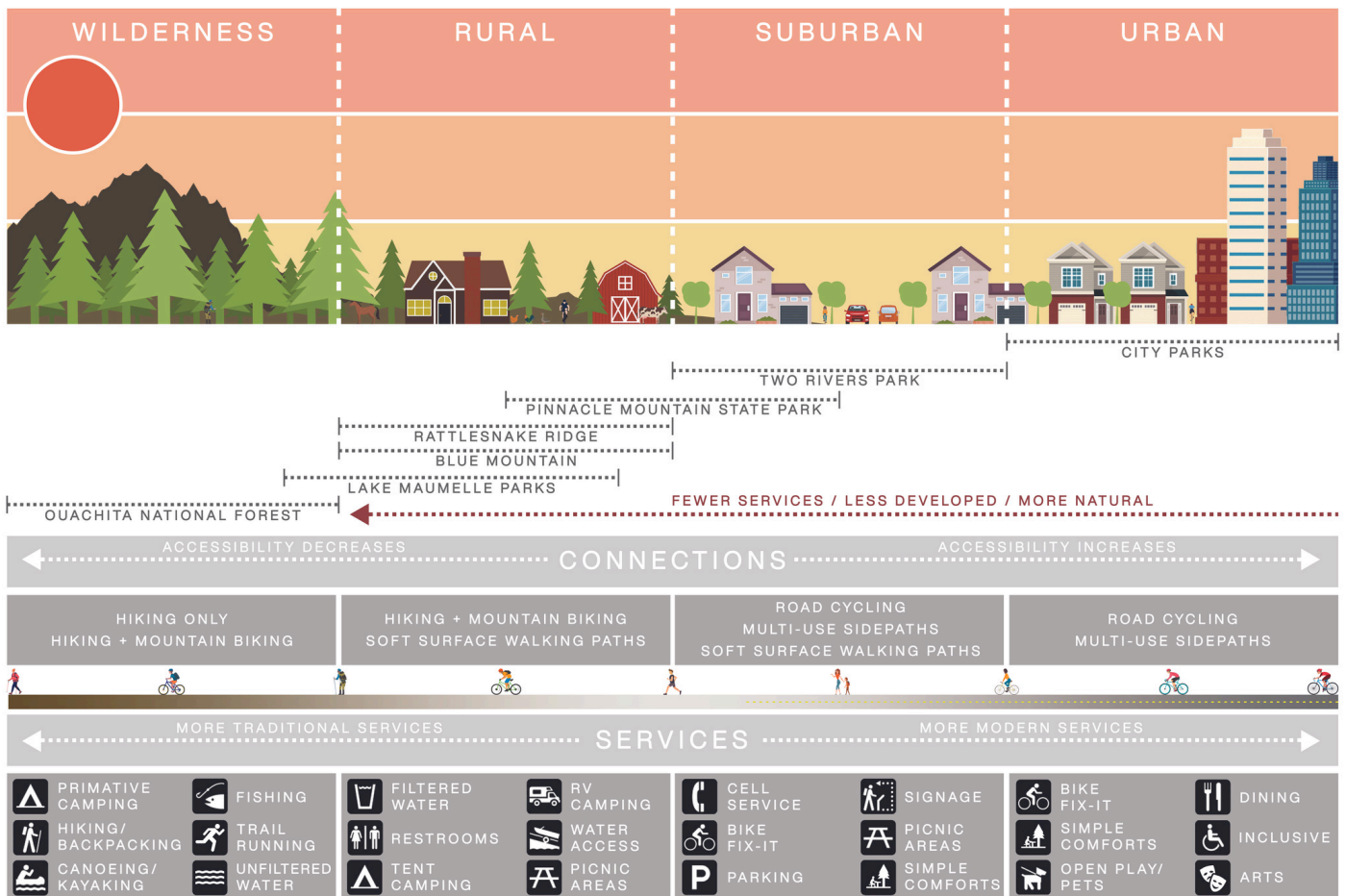
- **Habitat connectivity:** Trails can be planned to protect and connect wildlife corridors, allowing animals to move freely between different habitats. This is crucial for maintaining biodiversity and healthy ecosystems.
- **Sustainable land management:** Trail networks can encourage responsible use of natural resources and promote awareness of conservation efforts. Connecting parks also helps protect green spaces and prevent sprawl development.
- **Improved water quality and air quality:** Trails can reduce runoff and erosion, enhance natural filtration, and encourage eco-friendly transportation.

Community building and social interaction:

- **Shared spaces and experiences:** Trails create corridors for people to meet and interact, fostering a sense of community and encouraging social connections. Shared use trails can bring together hikers, bikers, families, and nature enthusiasts, promoting understanding and appreciation for different activities.
- **Community events and activities:** Connected trails can facilitate organized events like races, group hikes, or educational walks, further encouraging community engagement and participation in outdoor recreation.
- **Economic benefits:** A network of trails can attract visitors from outside the area, boosting local businesses like restaurants, shops, and accommodation providers. This can revitalize communities and provide economic opportunities.

Connecting outdoor recreation parks and amenities creates a more cohesive and vibrant network for people and nature to thrive. It enhances accessibility, promotes community engagement, and fosters environmental responsibility, making outdoor recreation more enjoyable and beneficial for everyone.





Graphic provided by Crafton Tull.

A case study for connectivity

Many are familiar with popular spots like Pinnacle Mountain State Park and Two Rivers Bridge. You might not be as familiar with the Maumelle Pinnacles Conservation Area (MPCA). This area offers over 19 unique destinations, including Lake Maumelle, which supplies 90% of Little Rock's fresh water.

Numerous hiking and mountain biking trails with varying levels of difficulty can be found at Pinnacle Mountain State Park, Rattlesnake Ridge, Bufflehead Bay, Blue Mountain and beyond. But even more options for play, recreation, and relaxation are available:

- Trail Running
- Backpacking
- Mountain Biking
- Road Cycling
- Camping
- Rock Climbing
- Bank & Boat Fishing

- Boating, Kayaking, Canoeing & Paddleboarding
- Birdwatching
- Horseback Riding
- Hunting

These recreational opportunities range from urbanized city parks to secluded natural spaces. The plan aims to link these areas via diverse pathways, including mountain bike trails, paved pedestrian paths, soft surface trails, and the Ouachita Trail spanning 223 miles. The system will connect Pinnacle Mountain State Park to Queen Wilhelmina State Park and beyond. This connectivity will also create an extension to downtown Little Rock and the largest population center in Arkansas.

This connectivity project is a collaboration between multiple state agencies, nonprofits, city and county governments, and private organizations; a great lesson in teamwork.

Destinations in the MPCA are categorized into four "transects": wilderness, rural, suburban, and urban, each offering distinct experiences. Explore the graphic above for more details.



Research

Lessons Learned in Methodology

In the previous SCORP, the State of Arkansas transitioned from telephone to internet-based research methods. This alteration resulted in heightened response rates, facilitated the pinpointing of region-specific feedback, and ultimately furnished our team with data that surpasses the accuracy, detail, and comprehensiveness of previous SCORP surveys conducted via telephone in Arkansas. The same survey questions for this SCORP were used in the previous SCORP. However, in future SCORPs, staff will make the survey shorter. We learned that promoting the survey online and through social media drastically increased our survey responses compared to the previous SCORP when the survey was sent through the mail.



Town Hall Meeting Findings

In April 2022, Arkansas Tech University partnered with the SCORP staff to organize 9 regional outdoor recreation leadership forums. These forums, held at 7 state parks, a conference venue, and online, aimed to inform the SCORP and illicit recommendations. Each forum featured discussions on current and future outdoor recreation trends in Arkansas, with attendance ranging from 5 to 14 participants.

When summarizing thoughts and discussion points related to current issues and trends for outdoor recreation Arkansas, the topics most notable include:

- Public access to outdoor recreation areas
- Demographic changes to residents and outdoor recreation participants
- Lower rates of outdoor recreation participation and engagement
- Lack of trained workforce
- Need to improve information distribution related to grants and outdoor recreation opportunities
- Safety when participating in outdoor recreation opportunities

It is prudent to monitor these issues when identifying trends in the future.

When summarizing thoughts and discussion points related to future issues and trends for outdoor recreation in Arkansas, the topics most notable include:

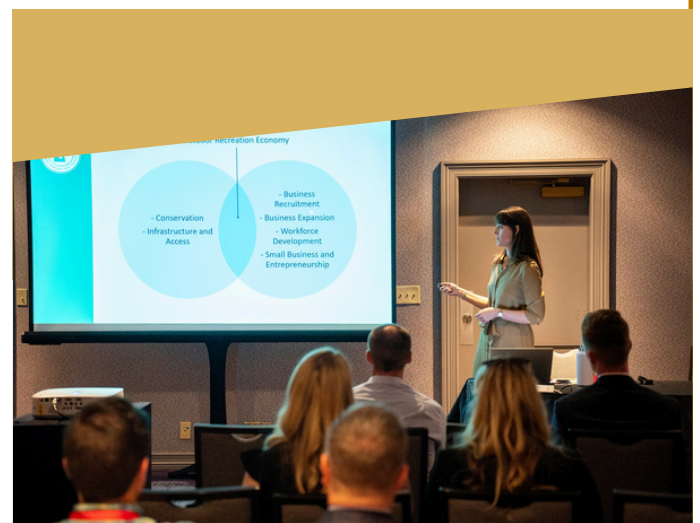
- Aging infrastructure and maintenance
- Participation and engagement (specifically with youth)
- Continued demographic shifts in resident population
- Workforce recruitment and education/training
- Fiscal responsibility and resource procurement
- Community leadership education/training
- Lack of information distribution and optimizing distribution opportunities
- Procuring additional areas and opportunities for public access
- Wifi and cellular availability for information and safety
- Resident/participant education and training for conservation and sustainable use of resources
- Connectivity of people to places and between recreation opportunities
- Collaboration related to communities, agencies, and nonprofits

Arkansas Resident Survey Results

Arkansas residents reported participating in a wide range of outdoor recreation activities across all regions and counties in the state. Respondents to this survey noted areas of improvement related to their participation in outdoor recreation and respondents reported a wide array of motivations for outdoor recreation participation.

The research team designated six regions across the state of Arkansas: Central, North Central, Upper Delta, Lower Delta, Southwest, and Northwest. Notably, the Northwest region had the highest activity concentrations, including hiking, backpacking, cycling, and camping. The Southwest region also saw significant activity, while the Delta regions had lower overall use. Activities varied by region, with hiking concentrated in multiple areas, and certain activities like off-highway-vehicle use prevalent in specific regions. State-owned lands were the most utilized, followed by private and federal lands. Certain activities, like hunting, primarily occurred on private lands, while nature activities led by public programs were predominantly in state-run areas.

The survey revealed trends such as extended travel for activities like sightseeing, nature exploration, and softball, while also highlighting higher engagement in outdoor art among residents living close to recreation sites and opportunity for participation growth in archery and target shooting.



Arkansas Recreation Provider Survey Results

Arkansas recreation providers (agencies) reported offering in a wide range of available outdoor recreation areas, facilities, and activities across all regions and counties in the state. Responding agencies reported a wide range of needs and varying priorities related to maintenance and upkeep of areas, facilities, and programs. Visitation estimates were wide ranging as were social media use to distribute information. Most agencies reported seeking out grants to facilitate projects in their agency.

Among camping options, camping while backpacking and camping in an undeveloped campground were the most popular options just ahead of camping in a developed camping area. In terms of fishing, fishing from a bank, dock, pier, or jetty was by far the most popular option. Off-roading activities were largely equal across all types and were also overall low in comparison to other activities in the table. For water play, swimming or wading in freshwater (lakes, rivers, creeks) was the top activity followed by visiting lakes/rivers/streams/bayous. Popular team activities included softball, swimming, kickball, and volleyball.

Respondents expressed interest in additional park activities, with pickleball, ATV use, and disc golf among the most requested, while new popular activities prompting park adaptation included: pickleball, biking, disc golf, shooting sports, soccer, paddling, and dog parks, with concerns raised about funding and land availability, and mentions of decreased popularity in activities such as handball, football, tennis, and outdoor education programming.

The survey illustrates the presence of methods to track park visitation, with approximately half of parks employing some form of visitation estimation. The most common approaches to estimation include traffic and car counting systems, trail counters, head counting, and reservation systems, often used in combination. Additionally a significant portion reported over a million visits with local residents as the majority, followed by visitors from adjoining counties, throughout Arkansas, and out of state.





Barriers

Background & Purpose

Upon meticulously gathering, sorting, and examining thousands of data points, SCORP staff uncovered that the survey results consistently revealed several persistent obstacles Arkansans encounter when trying to partake in public outdoor recreation. Despite the wealth of opportunities in The Natural State, many residents still struggle to enjoy them.

The causes of these obstacles are diverse; some are immediately apparent, while others require recreation providers to adopt different perspectives. Overcoming these challenges, whether they are physical, socioeconomic, or psychological, necessitates a deeper understanding of the issues at hand.

Breaking down these barriers can enhance connections among individuals and communities.

When issues like financial limitations, physical impairments, time constraints, or discomfort are addressed, a broader segment of the population can engage in outdoor activities. This increased accessibility helps build bridges among different groups. Outdoor experiences offer a unique platform for people to bond, form new relationships, and strengthen community connections. Activities such as group hikes, team sports, or community gatherings in parks can serve as a foundation for social interaction and connection.

The following page details the barriers identified in the 2022 SCORP survey.

Barrier 1: Income Inequality

Income inequality significantly impacts participation in outdoor activities. It creates barriers for those who lack the financial means to purchase necessary equipment or afford transportation. Our survey indicates that low-income individuals face multiple barriers to outdoor recreation, including physical impairment, lack of access for the disabled, and safety concerns. These findings highlight income inequality as a major obstacle to enjoying the outdoors, as financial constraints often underlie other barriers to participation.

Barrier 2: Physical Impairment

Living with a physical impairment is a significant barrier to outdoor recreation, affecting 16.5% of respondents across all demographics. Recreation providers should consider this when designing parks and projects. Merely providing accessible parking and access does not eliminate barriers; integration into recreational spaces is essential for full access.

Barrier 3: Lack of Free Time

Many respondents cited a lack of free time as a barrier to outdoor recreation. While recreation providers cannot address this individually, they can consider it in project planning. Facilities near urban areas or downtown spaces reduce travel time. Additionally, offering activities requiring minimal planning or time commitment for recreationists can enhance accessibility.

Barrier 4: Nobody To Go With

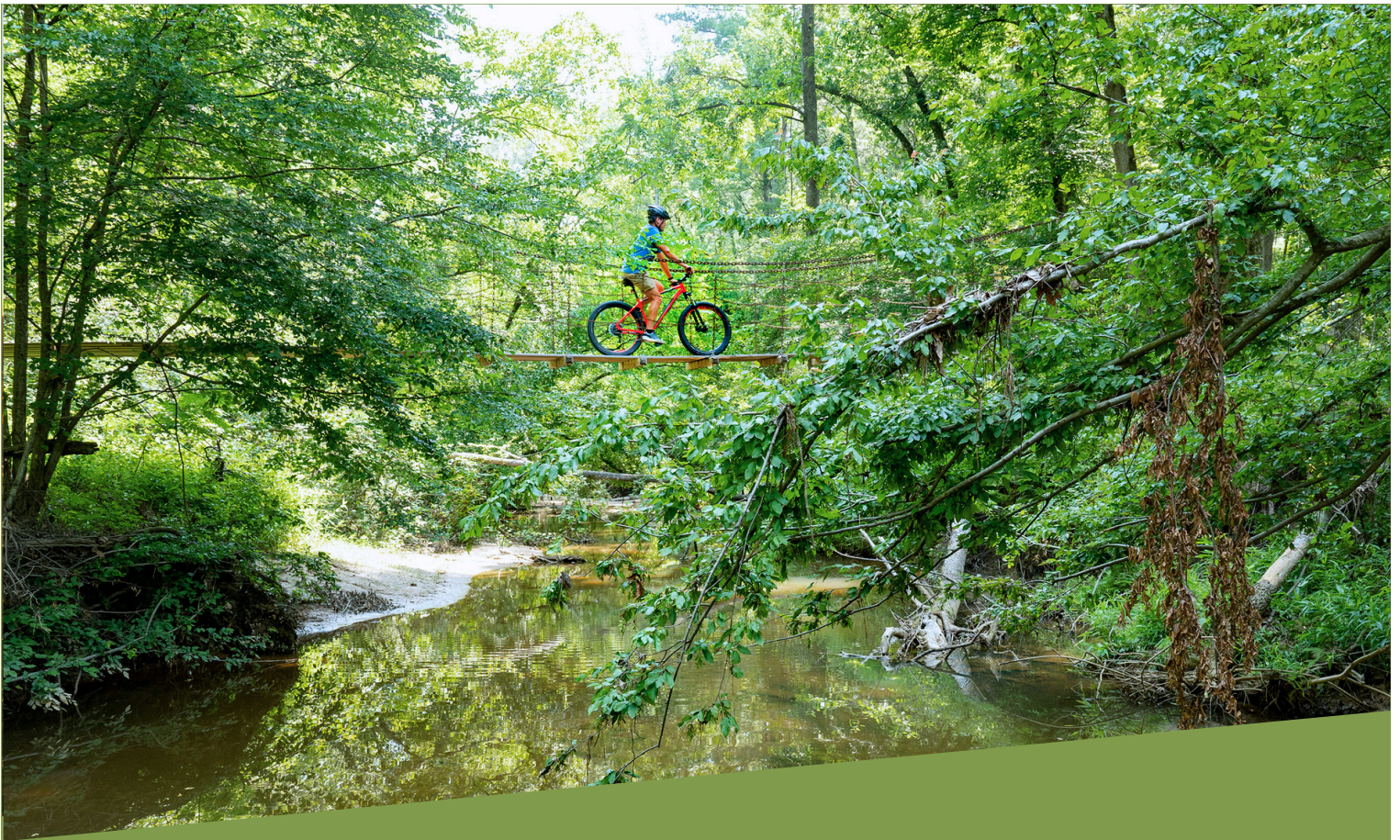
While some people enjoy solitude outdoors, many respondents noted a lack of companionship as a barrier to outdoor recreation. While it's unrealistic for providers to address this individually, Arkansas' recreation professionals should consider the isolating aspects of modern life when designing projects, especially in densely-populated areas that encourage casual public interactions.

Barrier 5: Feeling Unsafe

Concerns for personal safety in outdoor recreation pursuits act as a barrier to access, entry, and enjoyment. Recognizing and addressing this barrier may be challenging for providers. Educational opportunities to help bridge gaps and shed light on perceptions and misconceptions should be considered. Providers must understand the realities that influence access to and the use of outdoor spaces for different individuals and groups.

Whether it's through improving infrastructure, reducing financial or geographical obstacles, or ensuring accessibility for all abilities, more inclusive access to nature can enhance health and quality of life. By making outdoor spaces more accessible and connected, we not only improve individual well-being, but also promote a collective responsibility for preserving these spaces for future generations.





Priorities

Addressing Arkansas' Needs

As you delve into the SCORP Priorities outlined in the pages ahead, you'll discover a wealth of strategies aimed at enriching and enhancing the landscape and visitor experience of public outdoor recreation opportunities in Arkansas. Building upon earlier discussions, it becomes evident that many of these priorities not only intersect with each other but also with the barriers highlighted in the preceding chapter.

For instance, obstacles such as a perceived lack of companionship and lack of free time often exhibit strong correlations with factors such as age and income. Individuals in their prime working years commonly identify both a shortage of free time and companionship as impediments, with these sentiments waning among older age brackets. Furthermore, there's a subtle uptick in such sentiments as income levels rise.

These correlations hold particular relevance for recreation providers, especially in bustling urban centers, where a significant population of young professionals reside and work within the city's core. It's also extremely relevant to create and build more access to the outdoors as we see loss in population of rural towns across America. Those in the workforce are choosing to move to locations with higher quality of life, and certainly, outdoor recreation access ranks among the highest contributors.

We've identified what we deem to be the five most important priorities to the future of Arkansas' outdoors. These priorities are presented as overarching concepts, capable of addressing even the most specific community challenges. As recreation providers embark on the grant-writing journey, it's crucial to integrate these priorities and explain how proposed projects align with Arkansas' public outdoor recreation objectives by implementing each referenced SCORP Priority on the following pages.

Priority 1: Sustain Community Investment

Arkansas' outdoor recreation industry is a significant economic driver for the state, generating billions of dollars in revenue and supporting tens of thousands of jobs. The state's natural beauty, diverse landscapes, and abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities make it a popular destination for tourists and residents alike. Building access to the outdoors through infrastructure investments benefits the outdoor industry and helps grow this sector of our state's economy.

According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis' most recent report, outdoor recreation in Arkansas generates more than \$4.5 billion in economic activity and supports roughly 41,000 jobs. This represents 2.2% of the state's gross domestic product (GDP).

Examples of outdoor recreation opportunities benefitting local economies:

- The Razorback Greenway is a 40-mile multi-use trail connecting communities in Northwest Arkansas. The trail has been credited with boosting property values and increasing business activity in these communities along its route.
- The Buffalo National River is a popular destination for canoeing, kayaking, and fishing. The river generates over \$100 million in economic activity each year and supports over 1,000 jobs.
- Hot Springs National Park is a world-renowned destination for its natural hot springs. The park generates over \$200 million in economic activity each year and supports over 2,000 jobs.

The future of outdoor recreation investment in Arkansas:

- The outdoor recreation industry is expected to continue to grow in Arkansas in the coming years. The state is making investments in its outdoor recreation infrastructure and in business resources for the industry. This growth and investment is expected to create new jobs and generate additional revenue for the state.
- The state's investment in the Delta Heritage Trail, an 85-mile gravel bike rail-to-trail project, not only preserves the rich history of the Delta region but also creates opportunities for tourism and economic development. Through collaborative efforts between local communities, government agencies, and conservation organizations, the Delta Heritage Trail project exemplifies Arkansas' dedication to building a sustainable and vibrant future for all.

- In 2023, Governor Sanders created the Natural State Initiative to further establish Arkansas as a leader in the outdoor economy and a destination for outdoor enthusiasts from around the world. The advisory council published a list of recommendations including:
 - Educate Arkansans to the personal and economic benefits of a thriving outdoor economy.
 - Promote careers in outdoor recreation, tourism, and hospitality.
 - Provide greater investment in and support to those engaged in Arkansas' outdoor economy.
- The University of Arkansas has invested in the Greenhouse Outdoor Recreation Program (GORP), a business incubator focused on the development of entrepreneurs who are creating innovative products and services within the outdoor recreation industry.

Our parks, trails, and other recreational amenities serve as magnets, drawing people to live, work, and play in our communities. To accurately gauge the impact of these recreational resources on our communities, recreation leaders require robust economic data to effectively communicate with key stakeholders. In 2025, the Office of Outdoor Recreation will conclude a statewide outdoor recreation economic impact study that will provide valuable data and insights for this purpose.

The financial gains and clear positive returns from investments in outdoor recreation infrastructure underscore the importance of maintaining funding for these activities. In the face of budget constraints, it becomes crucial to substantiate the economic value of allocating funds to parks and outdoor recreation amenities. Sustaining investment requires effective communication with decision-makers and citizens alike. To advocate for the value of outdoor recreation, both socially and economically, enhanced data and outreach efforts to local officials and leaders are essential. By emphasizing the return on investment, recreation providers can demonstrate that these funds are well-spent and yield significant societal and economic benefits.

Recreation providers should leverage state and federal grant opportunities, like the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) managed by the Arkansas Department of Transportation, for infrastructure investments.

Priority 2: Improve Accessibility to Outdoor Recreation

All recreation providers strive for inclusivity, ensuring that their parks are welcoming to all users. No reputable provider would intentionally exclude any individual or user group from enjoying communal spaces. Consequently, it might appear unnecessary to designate Improve Accessibility to Outdoor Recreation as a SCORP Priority. However, based on survey responses, we believe this Priority holds significant importance.

Access extends beyond measures like sidewalks and wheelchair ramps, which serve to make previously inaccessible areas accessible. While it's true that many parks could benefit from upgrades for wheelchair access, there are demographics beyond the physically impaired that face barriers to outdoor recreation. This priority encourages providers to deeply assess their communities and honestly evaluate the services offered by their public spaces and facilities.

Improving accessibility to outdoor recreation involves implementing various measures to ensure that individuals of all abilities can fully participate and enjoy outdoor activities. Below are ways to enhance accessibility:

Infrastructure Improvements:

- Install wheelchair-accessible ramps, paths, and trails to provide easy entry and navigation for individuals with mobility impairments.
- Construct accessible parking spaces and restroom facilities near recreational areas to accommodate individuals with disabilities.
- Incorporate tactile paving, signage with braille, and audible signals to assist individuals with visual impairments in navigating outdoor spaces.

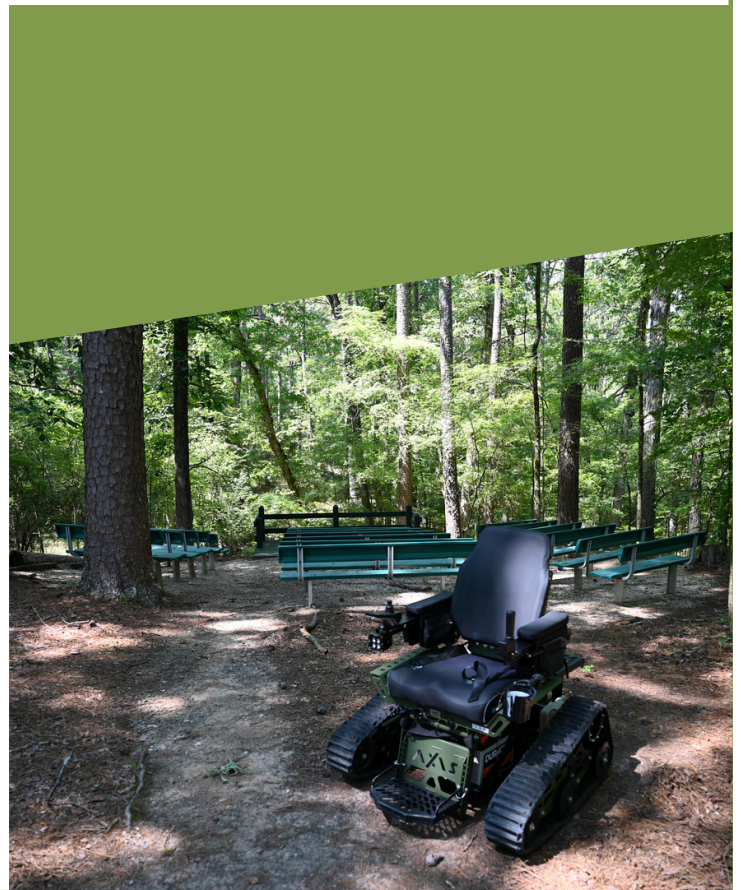
Adaptive Equipment and Facilities:

- Provide adaptive equipment such as all-terrain wheelchairs, handcycles, and adaptive kayaks to enable individuals with disabilities to engage in many types of outdoor activities.
- Establish adaptive sports programs and inclusive recreational events that cater to individuals with diverse abilities, fostering participation and community integration.

Education and Training:

- Offer training programs and resources to outdoor recreation staff and volunteers on disability awareness, inclusive practices, and proper assistance techniques.
- Provide information and guidance to visitors with disabilities on accessible trails, amenities, and activities available in outdoor recreation areas.

In 2024, the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission and the Arkansas State Parks partnered on an initiative to make the outdoors more accessible to all Arkansans by creating a new adaptive recreation program to increase outdoor opportunities and awareness for mobility-impaired individuals. Electric wheelchairs, equipped with rubberized tracks to allow the user to overcome many types of terrain, were purchased for use, providing greater access to hunting, shooting, angling, traversing the trails and wildlife-watching opportunities for mobility-impaired individuals.



Priority 3: Foster Outdoor Innovation

In the modern age, technology has become an integral part of our daily lives, permeating every aspect, including outdoor recreation. Leveraging technology can revolutionize outdoor experiences, making them more accessible, engaging, and informative. This priority explores various technological innovations and initiatives aimed at enhancing outdoor recreation, fostering innovation, and creating memorable experiences for enthusiasts of all ages.

Incorporating Technology for Outdoor Recreation:

Mobile Applications:

Mobile apps offer a plethora of functionalities, from trail maps and GPS navigation to weather forecasts and safety alerts. Incorporating features such as user-generated reviews and real-time updates can significantly enhance the outdoor experience.

Recommendations:

Collaborate with local outdoor organizations and developers to create comprehensive, user-centric apps that facilitate connectivity among users. Incorporate features such as social sharing, community forums, and event calendars to foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie.

Interactive Map Concept:

The WY Wonder Map concept, inspired by Wyoming's outdoor recreational opportunities, utilizes interactive mapping technology to showcase various attractions, trails, and amenities.

Recommendations:

Expand the concept to encompass the state of Arkansas, fostering collaboration among state agencies, conservation groups, and technology companies. Integrate features like live updates, user-generated content, and crowd-sourced recommendations to foster dynamic engagement and community collaboration.

Outdoor Recreation Rural Toolkit (ORR):

The ORR toolkit provides resources and guidelines for rural communities to enhance outdoor recreation opportunities, leveraging technology and innovative design principles.

Recommendations:

Utilize the toolkit and incorporate emerging technologies and best practices. Offer training and support to help communities implement technology-driven solutions effectively.

The SCORP serves as a framework for strategic planning and development of outdoor recreation resources. By integrating tech into SCORP initiatives, innovative solutions can be realized.

Incorporating technology into outdoor recreation initiatives offers immense potential to cultivate connectivity and enhance experiences for individuals and communities. By leveraging mobile applications and innovative design principles, stakeholders can foster deeper connections with nature, promote community engagement, and inspire stewardship of outdoor resources. Technology also impacts the outdoor industry by enhancing user experiences, expanding accessibility, creating business opportunities, and helping it evolve to meet the demand for more personalized and responsible outdoor experiences.

Embracing the ethos of innovative connectivity ensures that outdoor spaces remain accessible, inclusive, and cherished for generations to come.



Priority 4: Support Public Wellness

Outdoor recreation plays a vital role in promoting health and wellness among residents of Arkansas. The state's diverse outdoor recreation facilities, settings, and programs contribute to healthy behaviors in several ways. Firstly, they offer opportunities for physical activity, helping to combat obesity and reduce the incidence of chronic diseases. Secondly, outdoor recreation activities can enhance mental health by connecting individuals with natural environments, which can alleviate stress and improve interpersonal relationships.

This connection between outdoor recreation and improved health is particularly significant in Arkansas. Arkansans report higher rates of poor physical and mental health days per year compared to the national average. In 2016, a significant portion of adults in Arkansas indicated that they engaged in minimal physical activity outside of their regular job duties.

Improving access to outdoor recreation can help address these health challenges. Recent research indicates that leisure activities, rather than work or housework, now comprise the majority of physical activity in people's lives. By offering opportunities for physical activity during leisure time, outdoor recreation services are increasingly recognized as essential components of the healthcare system in the United States.

Outdoor recreation significantly contributes to public health and wellness through its connectivity to various aspects of well-being:

Physical Activity: Engaging in outdoor recreation activities like hiking, biking, and swimming fosters physical exercise, promoting a healthy weight, cardiovascular health, and reducing the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity and diabetes.

Mental Health Benefits: Spending time in natural environments during outdoor activities lowers stress levels, alleviates symptoms of anxiety and depression, and boosts mood and overall well-being. The social connections formed through outdoor recreation further enhance mental health resilience.

Stress Reduction: Natural settings have a calming effect, reducing stress and tension. Activities like nature walks and meditation in outdoor settings promote relaxation and mindfulness, supporting mental and emotional health.

Recognizing the points made above, in 2023, the Arkansas Department of Health and the Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism revitalized the Great Strides Program. This grant program was created for cities to develop walking trails and associated facilities, such as accessible parking, signage, and benches, further promoting healthy active lifestyles through outdoor recreation. It is funded with a portion of Arkansas' Master Tobacco Settlement award and was also completed as a recommendation from the Natural State Initiative report.

Overall, outdoor recreation serves as a vital connector to public health and wellness, offering opportunities for physical activity, stress reduction, mental rejuvenation, and the cultivation of lifelong healthy habits. Research consistently demonstrates that increased outdoor time correlates with lower community healthcare costs. Investing in outdoor recreation infrastructure and programs strengthens the connectivity between individuals, communities, and well-being.



Priority 5: Promote Environmental Stewardship

Arkansas is known as The Natural State. Our state boasts a wealth of natural wonders, including majestic mountains, pristine forests, scenic rivers, and picturesque lakes. The state is home to several national parks, forests, and wildlife refuges, such as the Ozark National Forest, Hot Springs National Park, Buffalo National River, and the Ouachita National Forest, which offer opportunities for hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, climbing, and wildlife viewing.

The state's commitment to conservation and environmental protection has contributed to its rich biodiversity and preserved natural landscapes.

Connectivity to the outdoors plays a crucial role in promoting environmental stewardship and conservation through several key mechanisms:

Awareness and Appreciation: By fostering connections to nature, outdoor experiences increase awareness and appreciation of the environment. Spending time outdoors exposes individuals to the beauty, diversity, and fragility of natural ecosystems, leading to a greater understanding of the importance of conservation efforts.

Personal Connection: Developing personal connections to specific outdoor spaces, such as parks, trails, and wilderness areas, fosters a sense of ownership and responsibility for their preservation. Individuals who have positive experiences in nature are more likely to advocate for the protection and conservation of these spaces.

Education and Interpretation: Outdoor recreation activities often include educational components and interpretive programs that inform participants about local ecosystems, wildlife, and conservation issues. Learning about the natural world enhances understanding of ecological processes.

Volunteerism and Advocacy: Connectivity to outdoor spaces inspires individuals to become involved in conservation efforts through volunteer work, advocacy, and community engagement. Outdoor enthusiasts often participate in habitat restoration projects, litter clean-ups, trail maintenance, and advocacy campaigns to protect natural areas and wildlife habitats.

Sustainable Practices: Outdoor recreation encourages the adoption of sustainable practices that minimize negative impacts on the environment. This includes principles such as Leave No Trace, which promotes responsible behavior and stewardship ethics, such as packing out trash, staying on designated trails, and minimizing disturbance to wildlife.

Economic Value: Recognizing the economic value of outdoor recreation and ecotourism can provide incentives for conservation and sustainable management of natural areas. Protecting and preserving outdoor spaces not only maintains their ecological integrity but also supports local economies through tourism and recreation-related spending.

By cultivating a sense of responsibility and appreciation for the environment, outdoor recreation contributes to the long-term protection and sustainability of our planet's natural heritage.





Sarah Huckabee Sanders
Governor
Shea Lewis
Secretary

January 26, 2024

Katherine Andrews, Director
Office of Outdoor Recreation
Arkansas Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
One Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Letter of support for land acquisition in the development of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Dear Katherine Andrews:

The Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission (ANHC) is in support of the prioritization of land acquisition in the development of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for the state of Arkansas. The Arkansas State Parks, Outdoor Recreation Grants Program will be the lead in development of this plan, which is updated every five years.

A main goal of the ANHC is conserving Arkansas's natural landscape. One of the ways we do this is through our System of Natural Areas, currently at 79 natural areas with 74,102 acres. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been important in acquiring many of those acres, providing protection to a variety of different natural communities such as prairies, glades, pine-oak flatwoods, swamps, and upland streams. These natural areas support a great deal of biodiversity, including rare and imperiled species.

In addition to serving as "living museums" these natural areas provide opportunities to the public for birding, hiking, hunting, nature photography, botanizing, and connecting better with nature. This in turn has important economic implications. Citizens visiting these sites spend money traveling to and from and often on lunch or dinner in local towns. Green spaces help businesses attract top talent to their locations and people who have access to outdoor recreation often have reduced healthcare costs.

The ANHC natural areas are a great example of how conservation and recreation interests work well together. The LWCF funds for land acquisition have been critical in that success. Many of our partners in the state have experienced similar success. That history and continued conservation and recreation needs makes it easy for the ANHC to endorse land acquisition as a priority in the development of the updated Arkansas SCORP.

Sincerely,

Bill Holimon, Director

Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission
1100 North Street • Little Rock, AR 72201 • 501-324-9150
NaturalHeritage.com



Chris Racey
Chief of Staff

Ben Batten
Deputy Director

Brad Carner
Deputy Director

Spencer Griffith
Deputy Director

Arkansas Game and Fish Commission

Austin Booth
Director

January 31, 2024

Katherine Andrews, Director Outdoor Recreation
Department of Parks, Heritage and Tourism
One Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201

RE: Letter of support for land acquisition in the development of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

Dear Mrs. Andrews:

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) fully supports the inclusion and prioritization of land acquisition in the development of a Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for the state of Arkansas, which is updated every five years under the lead of the Outdoor Recreation Grants Program within the Arkansas State Parks.

In support of our agency's mission to conserve and enhance Arkansas's fish and wildlife and their habitats while promoting sustainable use, public understanding and support, the AGFC has acquired approximately 400,000 acres of land and water that is managed and maintained through a system of Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) for fish and wildlife habitat and public use. In addition, the AGFC collaborates with other conservation partners within the state to cooperatively manage another 2.6 million acres of public land across the Natural State. The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has been important to AGFC and our conservation partners in acquiring lands across the state to both conserve areas for fish and wildlife habitat as well as provide much-needed public access for outdoor recreation opportunities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, paddling and wildlife viewing.

Recent data from the 2022 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation indicated that 1.6 million Arkansas residents age 16 and older participated in wildlife associated recreation (includes fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing) in 2022. Overall, state residents and nonresidents spent \$12.5 billion on wildlife associated recreation in Arkansas in 2022. The existing system of public lands within the state, which exceeds 3 million acres, serves as a major component to the wildlife associated recreation economy for Arkansas. Recognizing the vital importance of public lands within our state for both fish and wildlife habitat conservation and outdoor recreation, securing additional acres of priority habitat for wildlife and public access is a stated goal within the AGFC Strategic Plan, Natural State Tomorrow. The past use of LWCF funds for land acquisition within the state has played an integral role in advancing conservation efforts as well as supporting outdoor recreation, but the need exists to expand our current network of public lands even further. Therefore, it is my pleasure to endorse land acquisition as a priority in the development of the updated Arkansas SCORP.

Sincerely,

Austin Booth

2 Natural Resources Drive, Little Rock, AR 72205
833-345-0325 | 501-207-0326 | agfc.com

The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission's mission is to conserve and enhance Arkansas's fish and wildlife and their habitats while promoting sustainable use, public understanding and support.



Appendix

State Wetlands Narrative

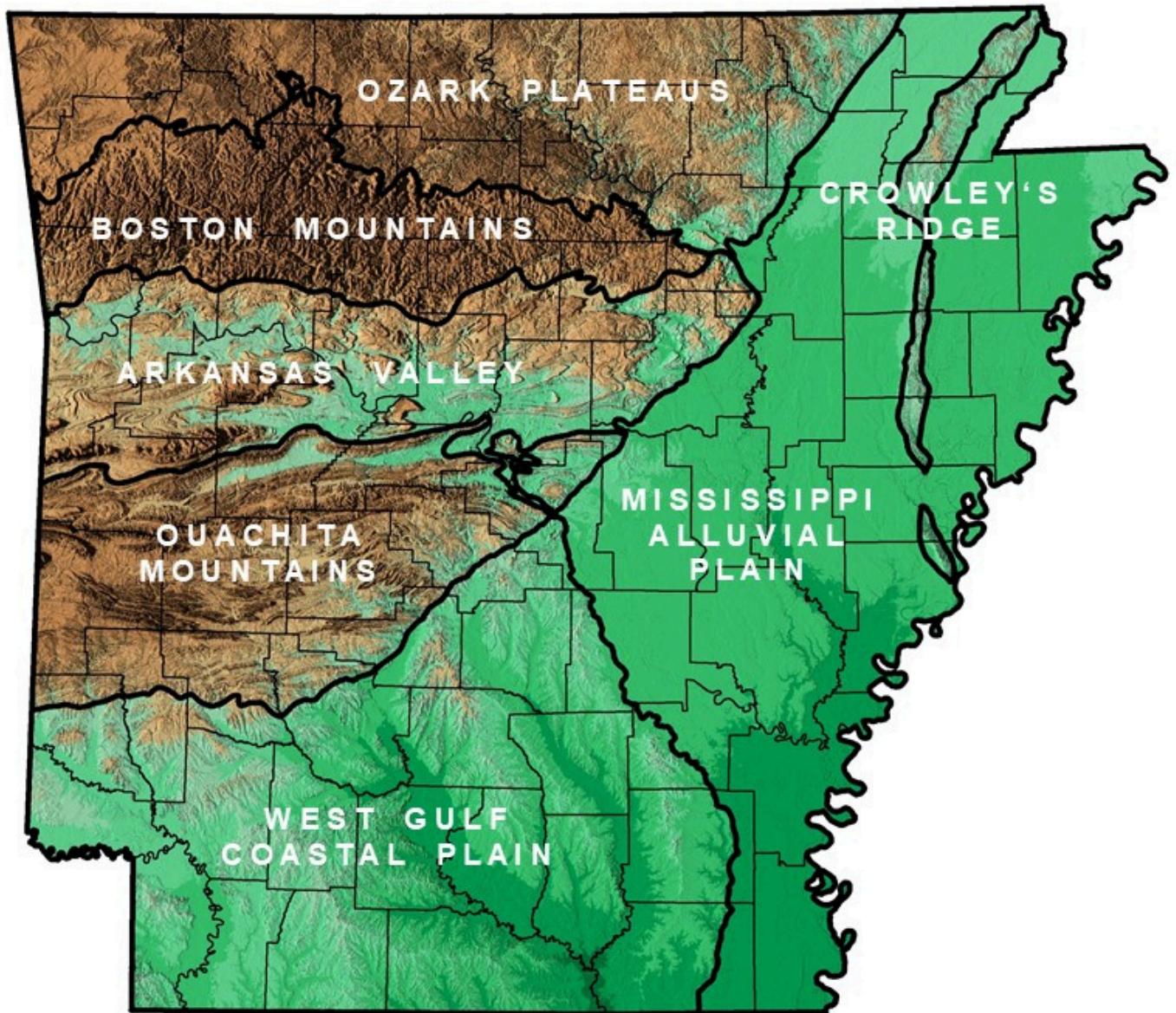
Wetlands play an essential role within our interconnected ecosystems. These ecotones, transitional zones bridging land and water, act as vital buffers, filters, and anchors, ensuring the equilibrium and functionality of larger ecological systems. Furthermore, wetlands function as indispensable sanctuaries, offering unique and irreplaceable habitat for populations of threatened and endangered species. They also serve as the exclusive flyway for numerous migratory birds, guiding them on their seasonal journeys. Despite constituting only 8% of Arkansas' landmass, wetlands hold disproportionate significance for the state. They provide a multitude of invaluable environmental services, such as flood control, water purification, and nutrient cycling. Additionally, these vital ecosystems offer substantial economic benefits, supporting millions of migrating waterfowl and contributing

significantly to the cultural and economic identity of eastern Arkansas. Notably, the Cache-Lower White River system, recognized for its global importance at the Ramsar Convention, stands as the world's duck-hunting capital due to its extensive and thriving wetland ecosystems. This system exemplifies the critical role wetlands play not only for biodiversity and environmental health, but also for the economic and cultural fabric of surrounding communities.

Palustrine scrub-shrub wetlands across the U.S. have experienced a significant decline, with a 96,500-acre loss between 2009 and 2019. This decrease is primarily attributed to human alteration and a transition to forested wetlands. These wetlands provide valuable flood risk mitigation services and critical habitat for numerous species. However, the trend indicates a broader shift, with remaining wetlands more likely to be emergent rather than forested. This ongoing decline underscores the need for conservation efforts to address habitat loss and the changing composition of wetland ecosystems.

Arkansas Eco Regions Map

A natural division or ecoregion (ecological region) is a geographical area occupied by a distinctive ecosystem. An ecosystem can be defined as an environment made up of interrelated living and non-living components. The seven main ecoregions of Arkansas are labeled in white in the map below. These can be further divided into smaller ecoregions. Ecoregions are not bound by state boundary lines, and most extend into adjoining states.



Arkansas Resident Survey

Executive Summary

In April 2022 the Outdoor Recreation Grants Program (ORGP), within the Office of Outdoor Recreation, contracted with Arkansas Tech University to develop, facilitate, and provide analysis for two surveys within the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) framework, a resident survey and a provider survey. In collaboration with staff from the ORGP, the researcher developed and launched the two surveys for participation on May 1, 2022 and data collection concluded September 15, 2022. Arkansas residents reported participating in a wide range of outdoor recreation activities across all regions and counties in the state. Respondents to this survey did not perceive any significant barriers to their participation in outdoor recreation and respondents reported a wide array of motivations for outdoor recreation participation.

Methodology

The 2022 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) resident survey was published and active for participation from May 1, 2022 to September 15, 2022.

The principle investigator developed an email introducing the SCORP process and resident survey in May 2022. This email included information about the history of SCORP, the history of SCORP in Arkansas, surveying anonymity and confidentiality information, and a link to the online survey. The email included the request to help distribute the information and link to the survey. This email was labeled “initial contact email” for further use across the data collection process. Due to the data collection methodology, the information attained through this process is best viewed as a convenience sample.

For each county in Arkansas, the principle investigator sent the initial contact email to specific individuals:

- a) The mayor and/or mayor’s administrative assistant for each city or town with a 2020 US Census count of 500 or more individuals
- b) The county judge and/or judge’s administrative assistant for each county
- c) Additionally, the principle investigator compiled a list of religious institutions in each county. From there, the investigator developed an extensive contact list for leadership and/or administration personnel for as many religious institutions as possible, dependent on availability of contact information.

Additionally, several other organizations and nonprofits entities communicated with the principle investigator and agreed to distribute the survey information and survey link to their networks. This included, but may not be limited to, the following:

- a) Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC)
- b) The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- c) The Arkansas Environmental Education Association (AEEA)
- d) Arkansas State Parks

In all, 8,196 persons clicked on the survey link with 175 persons unable to continue the survey (68 were not aged 18 or older, 107 declined to consent). Responses in the survey are included up to the moment the respondent discontinued the survey.

*full report available upon request

Arkansas Recreational Providers Survey

Executive Summary

In April 2022 the ORGP, contracted with Arkansas Tech University to develop, facilitate, and provide analysis for two surveys within the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) framework, a resident survey and a provider survey. In collaboration with staff from the ORGP, the researcher developed and launched the two surveys for participation on May 1, 2022 and data collection concluded September 15, 2022. Arkansas recreation providers (agencies) reported offering in a wide range of available outdoor recreation areas, facilities, and activities across all regions and counties in the state. Responding agencies reported a wide range of needs and varying priorities related to maintenance and upkeep of areas, facilities, and programs. Visitation estimates were wide ranging as were social media use to distribute information. Most agencies reported seeking out grants to facilitate projects in their agency.

Methodology

The 2022 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) provider survey was published and active for participation from May 1, 2022 to September 15, 2022.

The principle investigator developed an email introducing the SCORP process and provider survey in May 2022. This email included information about the history of SCORP, the history of SCORP in Arkansas, surveying anonymity and confidentiality information, and a link to the online provider survey. Additionally, since many agencies manage several properties, communication included sending the survey link to managers of the properties for completion. For example, an agency administrator may send the link to the individuals managing specific properties for completion. Due to the data collection methodology, the information attained through this process is best viewed as a convenience sample.

The principle investigator sent an initial contact email to specific individuals to elicit agency participation in the survey. This included the following:

- a) Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC)
- b) The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- c) Arkansas State Parks
- d) Arkansas Recreation and Park Association (ARPA)
- e) United State Forest Service (USFS)
- f) Army Corps of Engineers (ACE)
- g) National Park Service (NPS)
- h) Arkansas Association

In all, 107 persons clicked on the survey link with 65 persons completing the entire survey. Responses in the survey are included up to the moment the respondent discontinued the survey.

*full report available upon request

Arkansas SCORP Forums Report

Executive Summary

From June to September 2022, Michael Bradley, Associate Professor at Arkansas Tech University, developed, facilitated, and reported on regional outdoor recreation leadership forums. In collaboration with staff from the ORGP, the researcher identified 7 regional state parks, a conference, and an online opportunity to facilitate the leadership forums. With notes from those leadership forums, the researcher identifies the top trends related to current and future outdoor recreation issues in Arkansas as well as recommendations for future iterations of the SCORP process for Arkansas.

Methodology

In April 2022 the ORGP, contracted with Arkansas Tech University to develop, facilitate, and report on regional outdoor recreation leadership forums to provide context and information for the forthcoming Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). In collaboration with staff from the ORGP, the researcher identified 7 regional state parks, a conference, and an online opportunity to facilitate a total of 9 leadership forums.

Each forum followed the same agenda: personnel introductions, an introduction to SCORP, and the leadership forum agenda (10-20 minutes), a discussion time designated to the current state of outdoor recreation in Arkansas (30-45min), a discussion time designated to future outdoor recreation trends in Arkansas (30-45min), and a discussion time designated to thoughts and recommendations for the future of the SCORP process in Arkansas (30-45min). Due to the variation of attendees and discussion progress, the time spent on each topic fluctuated per meeting, however, the discussion facilitator interjected when discussion topics lasted more than 40 minutes. The number of attendees fluctuated per forum, with the lowest attendance being 5 and the highest attendance being 14.

The list of forum sites included 7 state parks, an annual conference related to recreation in the state, and an online forum opportunity:

Lake Chicot State Park – June 20, 2022

Crater of Diamonds State Park – June 23, 2022

Ozark Folk Center State Park – July 20, 2022

Lake Dardanelle State Park – July 25, 2022

Devils Den State Park – July 26, 2022

Pinnacle Mountain State Park – July 27, 2022

Crowley's Ridge State Park – July 28, 2022

Online Forum – August 17, 2022

ARPA Forum – August 31, 2022

The researcher sought to identify outdoor recreation providers of all types in a geographic region surrounding each identified location. This includes leadership at the municipality, county, region, state, and national levels working in the area. Across all forums, represented agencies included the National Park Service, the US Forest Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, Arkansas State Parks, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, numerous county and municipal recreation leaders, numerous recreation leaders in the nonprofit sector, and some elected officials.

With notes from those leadership forums, the researcher identified the top issues noted by individuals attending the forums. These topics were in reference to the agenda for the forum: current and future outdoor recreation issues in Arkansas and recommendations for future iterations of the SCORP process in the state.

*full report available upon request