

**Shawangunk Ridge, NY**

In partnership with Open Space Institute, we have protected more than 21,300 acres on and around the Shawangunk Ridge.

Photo by: Chris Bennett



# Reimagining Rural Land Conservation & Outdoor Recreation Session 2

April 10, 2024



Connecting everyone to the outdoors™





# Welcome!

In the chat, share:

- Your name
- Where you're joining from
- In 1-2 words, what are your community's planning priorities?



# Agenda

## Economic Benefits of Public & Conserved Lands

- Welcome
- Session 1 Recap
- Session 2 Overview
- Presentations
- Q&A
- Breakout Discussions
- Closing





# Recap: Leveraging Natural, Historical, & Cultural Assets for Growth and Vitality

In the face of climate change, practitioners from across the country continue to identify a set of common benefits and obstacles around leveraging local assets. Conservation in rural areas is growing to have a multi-benefit approach to both nature and human health.

## Opportunities

- Reducing infrastructure and public service costs
- Increasing economic development
- Improving public health
- Protecting the environment
- Climate mitigation
- Quality of life & people

## Key Challenges

- (Re)vitalization with fewer resources
- Meeting multiple objectives

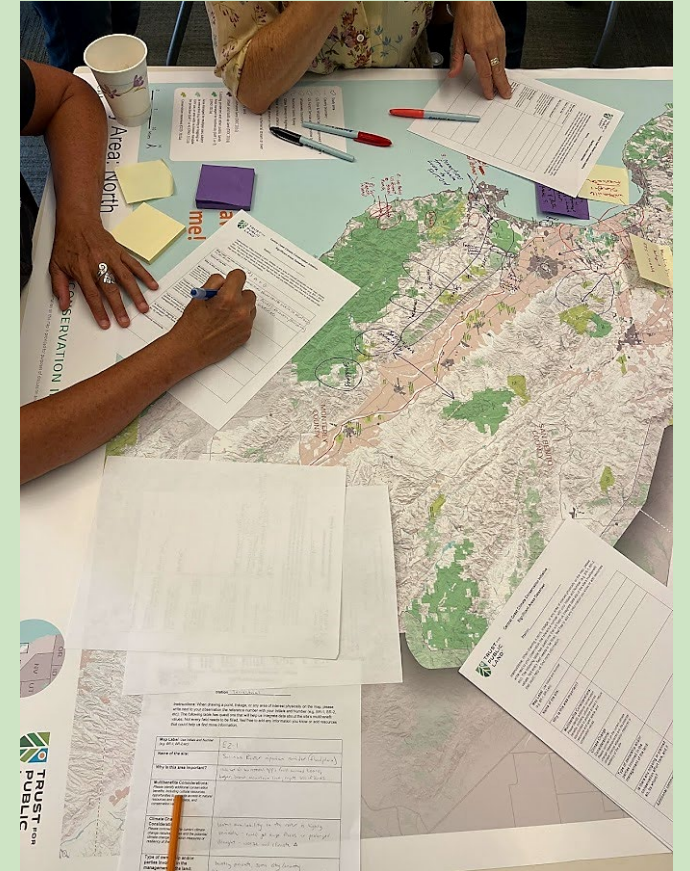




# Priorities for Leveraging Local Assets

Participants shared key strategies for utilizing lands and local resources to develop a broader shared vision among decision-makers and communities.

- ❑ Embrace a **multi-benefit lens** and **community-led approach** from the start of any visioning or planning process.
- ❑ **Raise funds for planning** stages, not only for implementation.
- ❑ Secure **sustainable funding** for staff capacity.
- ❑ Utilize **case-making tools**, e.g., GIS mapping, Decision Support Tools.
- ❑ Facilitate spaces dedicated to **partnership-building**.
- ❑ **Build equity** into every step of planning and development.
- ❑ **Engage meaningfully** with communities and **build consensus**.
- ❑ Understand how conservation agencies can work with, not against, **private landowners**.





# Common Challenges

- ❑ Effectively communicate how conservation efforts can offer both **public access** *and* **ecological protection**
- ❑ Working lands can carry **stereotypes and assumptions**, including that they do not value or maintain biodiversity. Uplift their important social and economic benefits.
- ❑ People want quiet parks, but sometimes outdoor recreation and economic development are active and bring more **influx of surrounding activities**.
- ❑ **Messaging the benefits** of parks and open space to decision makers. Include data and facts supporting the return on any investments.





# Economic Benefits of Public & Conserved Lands

By the end of today's session, you will have:

- Explored **tools for quantifying economic benefits** of conservation & outdoor recreation
- Identified **tactics for case-making and stakeholder buy-in**
- **Discussed strategies** for managing success, ensuring inclusive growth, and preserving community character





# Today's Speakers



**Megan Lawson**

Economist

Headwaters Economics



**Chris Perkins**

Vice President of Programs

Outdoor Recreation Roundtable





# Q&A

**Megan Lawson, Chris Perkins  
David Patton**



# Breakout Discussions

25 minutes

- Where do outdoor recreation and open space currently fit within your local and/or regional economic development strategy?
- What economic benefits, if you could quantify them, have been or would be most useful for making your case for public space & recreation to your community?
  - What are the terms you find most motivating/relevant when making the case for your work?
  - What are the biggest counter-arguments you come up against?
  - How can you begin to gather that information?
- What strategies have been most successful in garnering buy-in from your key stakeholders?
- What's one thing you heard today that you'll commit to trying next week?



**Welcome back!**  
What did you hear?







# Next Steps

- Exit Ticket
- Session Materials
- Next Session: June 12 - Effective and Equitable Community Engagement



# Thank you!

See you on June 12!

Session 3: Effective and Equitable  
Community Engagement



Connecting everyone to the outdoors™

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# Using economics for good



Megan Lawson, Ph.D.

Economist

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 [@headecon](https://twitter.com/headecon)

<https://headwaterseconomics.org>





# Today's Agenda



**A success story**



**Honing your message**



**Resources**



**Community  
Partnerships**

**Economic  
Research**

**Data  
Tools**



Independent Nonpartisan Research







# Today's Agenda



**A success story**



**Honing your message**



**Resources**





# Whitefish, Montana

Using economic data to fund long-term trail maintenance



## Fact #1

The Whitefish Trail brings **\$6.4 million in spending** annually, supporting **68 jobs** and **\$192,000** in local tax revenue.





A person wearing a blue jacket and a helmet is riding a mountain bike on a dirt trail. The trail is surrounded by tall evergreen trees, and sunlight is streaming through the canopy, creating a warm, golden glow. The rider is leaning forward, and the bike is in motion. The background shows a dense forest with some trees displaying autumn colors.

## Fact #2

Outdoor recreation is the **#1 reason** why visitors come to Whitefish, and why locals stay.



A person wearing a blue jacket and a helmet is riding a mountain bike on a dirt trail. The trail is surrounded by tall evergreen trees, and the sun is shining brightly through the canopy, creating a warm, golden light. The person is leaning forward, focused on the trail ahead. The background shows a dense forest with some trees showing autumn colors.

### Fact #3

Every dollar spent building and maintaining the trail generates **\$2.52** in local spending.



## Outcomes

- **Secured 10-year public funding for maintenance**
- **Passed with 89% of the vote**
- **About \$100,000 each year**







# Today's Agenda



**A success story**



**Honing your message**



**Resources**



**Do you really need a**

**Big Number?**



# Audience

- **Who isn't here?**
- **What do they care about?**
- **How do they need to hear it?**





# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.





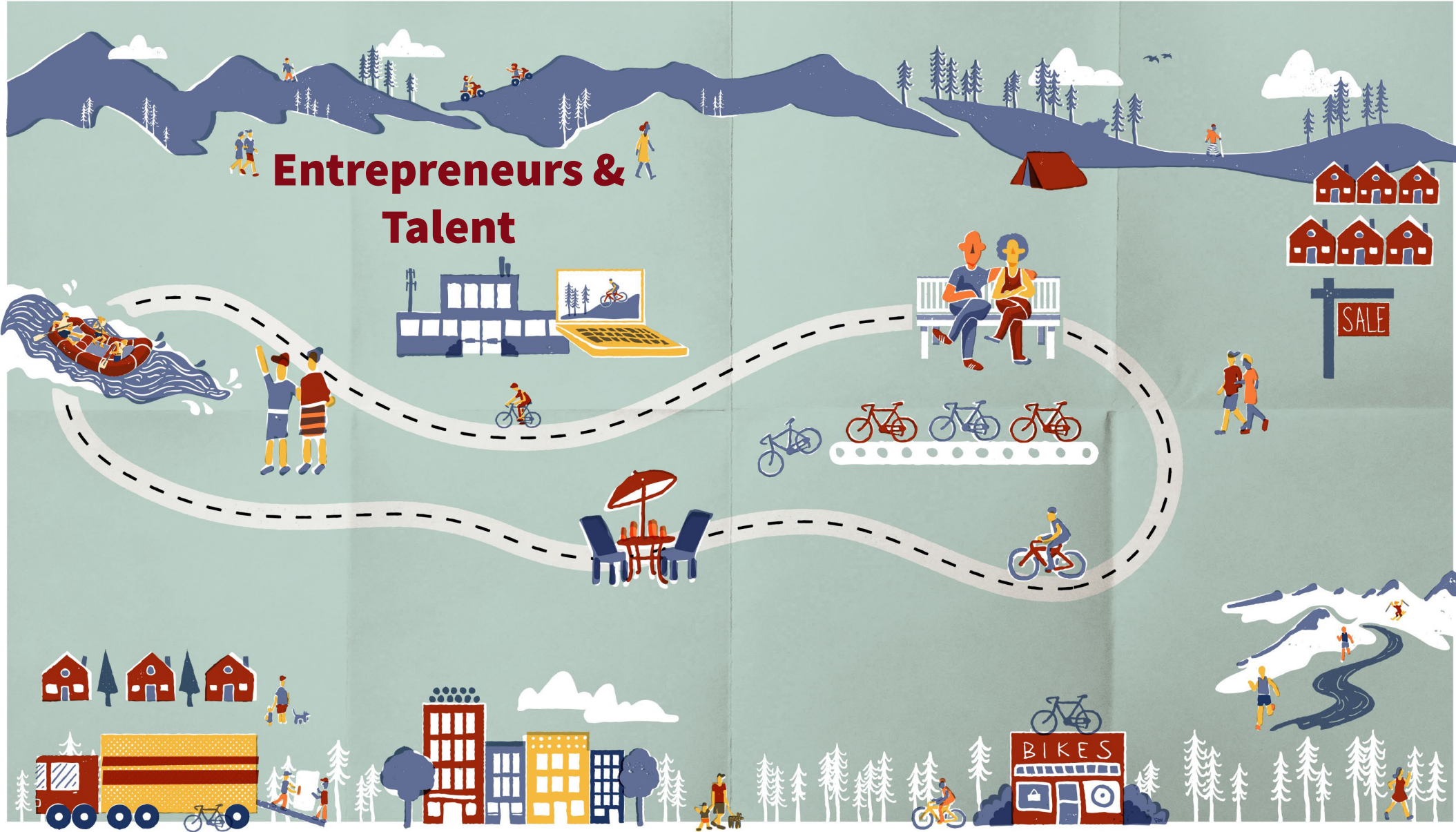
# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.



**Tourism**



# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.





# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.





# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.





# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.



**Healthier Residents**



# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.



**Gear Manufacturers**



# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.



## Main Street Businesses



# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.

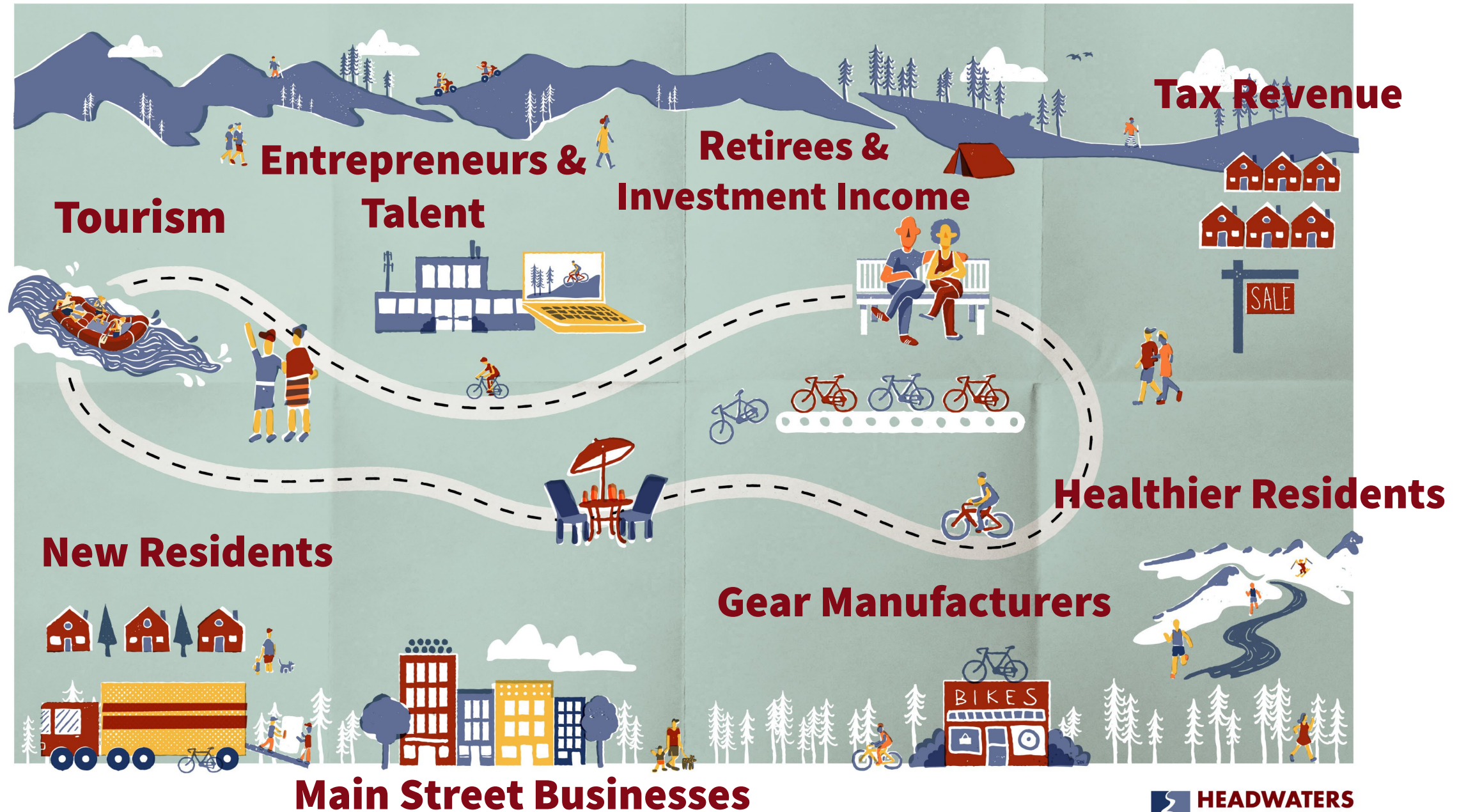


## New Residents





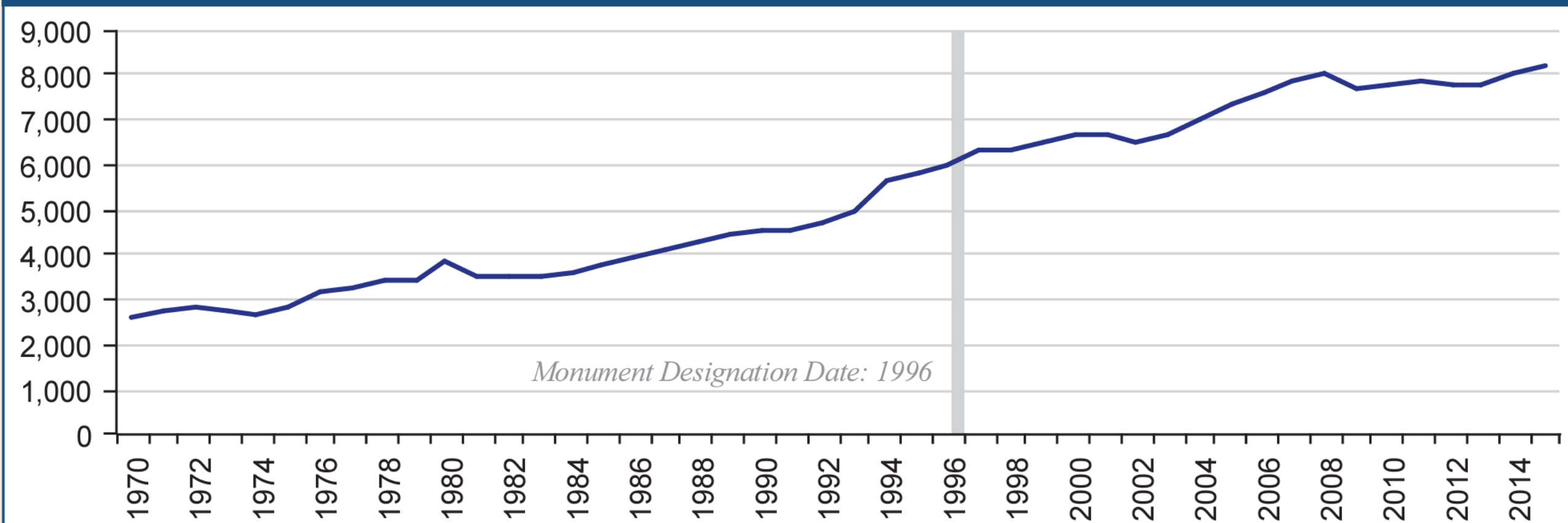
# Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.





# Simple is powerful

## Total Employment





A Research Paper by



## National Monuments Redesignated as National Parks

*Insights for White Sands National Monument*



May 2018

# Peers are effective





# Today's Agenda



**A success story**



**Honing your message**



**Resources**



# Our Family of Data Tools

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Library of  
**Trails Benefits**



**Neighborhoods**  
at Risk



**Economic**  
Profile System



**Rural Capacity**  
Index







## Library of **Trails Benefits**

- **188 studies**
- **Searchable**
- **Many benefits categories**





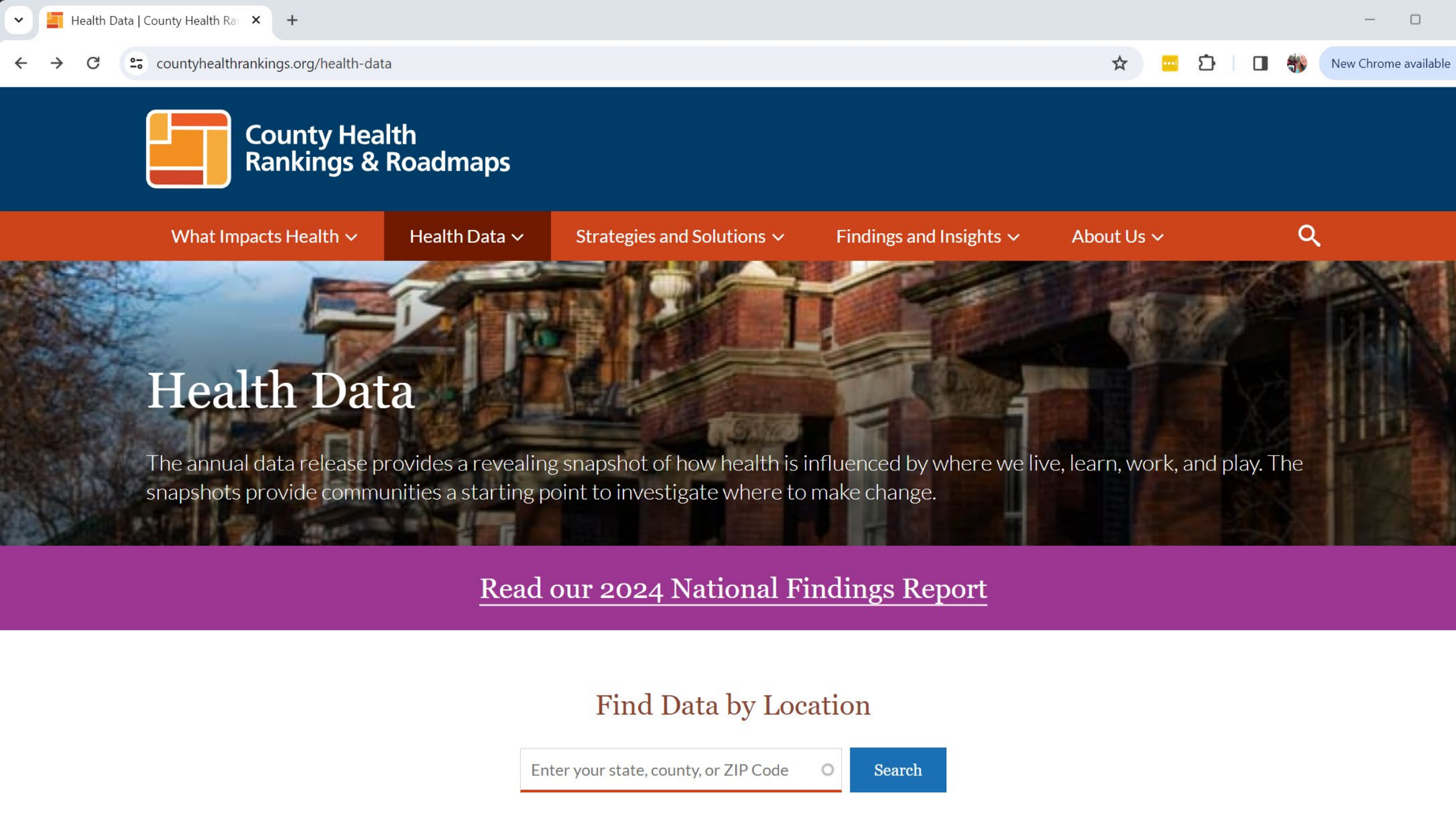
## Library of Trails Benefits

This Trails Benefits Library is a collection of studies on the positive impacts of trails on businesses, public health, and quality of life. Use this form to search by type of benefit, use, year, and region.

Benefit	Use	Region	Year
Select Benefit...	Select Use...	Select Region...	Select Year...
Access (13)	Cycling (76)	Midwest	1985-2000
Business impacts (94)	Equestrian (16)	Northeast	2001-2009
Consumer surplus (18)	Hiking (31)	South	2010-2019
Novel visitor use estimates (21)	Mountain biking (47)	West	2020-present
Property value (15)	Nordic skiing (9)		
Public health (31)	Other (5)		
Trail use estimates (68)	Parks & Public Land (24)		
User attitudes (63)	Summer motorized (18)		
	Walking (84)		
	Water (12)		
	Winter motorized (18)		

**APPLY FILTER**





# Health Data

The annual data release provides a revealing snapshot of how health is influenced by where we live, learn, work, and play. The snapshots provide communities a starting point to investigate where to make change.

[Read our 2024 National Findings Report](#)

## Find Data by Location



# Benefit-Cost Analysis of the Ponderay Undercrossing

Analysis in support of a 2024 RAISE grant



# Inequitable access to the outdoors





- **Maps reveal:**

- Exposure to flooding and heat
- Potentially vulnerable populations
- Temperature and precipitation projections



# **Neighborhoods** at Risk

See where climate change will have greatest impacts





**Grand Rapids, Michigan**







# Economic Profile System

## Get Socioeconomic Profiles

Jump to: [Comprehensive](#) [Natural Hazards](#) [Land Management](#) [Industries](#) [QUICKFACTS](#) [Grants](#)

### Comprehensive Reports

	Available for:	Grants	Cibola County
<b>Demographics</b> Population, age distribution, race and ethnicity, poverty and income, housing affordability, language, and education.			
<b>Populations at Risk</b> <a href="#">Custom Tool</a> Populations more likely to experience adverse outcomes due to race, age, gender, poverty status, or other factors.			
<b>Socioeconomic Trends</b> Trends in population, employment, personal income, income by industry, wages, and unemployment.			
<b>Key Indicators</b> Metrics of population, employment, income, industry-specific economic summaries, and public lands.			

### Natural Hazards Reports

	Available for:	Grants	Cibola County
<b>Wildfire Risk</b> Summary of wildfire risk and exposure, community susceptibility, and land ownership.			
<b>Neighborhoods at Risk</b> <a href="#">Custom Tool</a> Maps and information about where climate change is likely to impact the most vulnerable people.			

### Land Management Reports

	Available for:	Grants	Cibola County
<b>Land Use</b> Public land ownership, land cover, and trends in residential development.			
<b>Federal Land Payments</b> Payments that compensate county governments for the nontaxable status of federal lands within their borders.			
<b>Living Near Public Lands</b> Population, residential development, tourism, jobs, and income near public lands.			
<b>Bureau of Land Management</b> <a href="#">Custom Tool</a> Metrics considered by the Bureau of Land Management when planning how to manage lands.			

### QUICKFACTS Grants

**Population**

**9K**

2022

**Top 3 Sectors**

Per. Jobs in Cibola County 2022

1. Government 29%
2. Health care and social assistance 18%
3. Retail trade 11%

**Median Household Income**

**\$55,631** (2022)

Grants, NM	\$55,631
United States	\$75,149

**Household Income 2022**

Less than \$25K (26%)
\$25K to \$100k (51%)
More than \$100K (24%)

**Employment 2022**

64%	Full-time
14%	Part-time
32%	Did not work

**People of Color & Hispanics**

**76%**

2022

**High School Graduates**

**81%**

2022



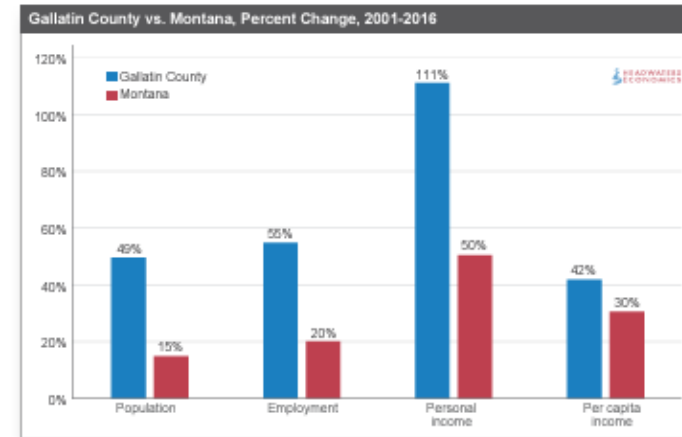
# Gallatin Valley Open Space Bond Measure



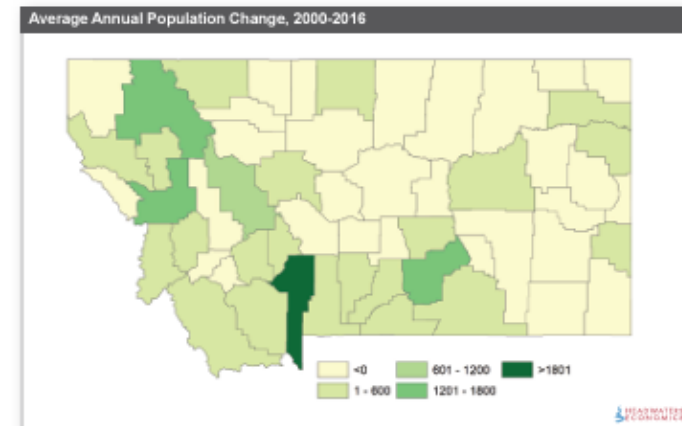
## GALLATIN COUNTY'S ECONOMY, GROWTH, AND OPEN SPACE

This report summarizes Gallatin County's economy, analyzes how it has grown, and explores what is driving its current and future performance. The report also includes a description of how local growth threatens open space and the role that these lands play in preserving Gallatin County's quality of life.

### Gallatin County Is Growing Faster Than Montana



From 2001-2016, Gallatin County's population, employment, total real personal income, and real per capita income increased substantially faster than Montana as a whole.



FROM 2001-2016,  
GALLATIN  
COUNTY'S  
POPULATION  
GREW 3X  
FASTER  
THAN THE STATE

*Gallatin County's high quality of life and natural amenities attract entrepreneurs, workers, retirees, and tourists. While the economy diversifies, the rapid pace of growth threatens the open space and natural amenities that draw and keep people here.*



Economic data is only effective  
when it's strategic.





# Subscribe to updates!

[headwaterseconomics.org/contact](https://headwaterseconomics.org/contact)











# Communities of Practice: Building Authentic Economies Around Outdoor Recreation

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April 10, 2024



# ORR OUTDOOR RECREATION ROUNDTABLE



**CHRIS PERKINS**  
Vice President of Programs





**CHRIS PERKINS**  
Vice President of  
Programs





DNR's next round of state park  
infrastructure projects includes more  
than \$108 million in ARPA investments  
**Revitalization Across Pennsylvania**

Pa. investing millions in  
outdoor recreation, launches  
new dedicated office

The Shift: Arkansas looks  
to match Colorado in

## Outdoor recreation drives Michigan tourism recovery

Why these 5 communities in Illinois  
believe

Local  
mil

Linnabary: Utah's Economic Growth  
Depends on the Outdoors

**DEVELOPING FROM WITHIN:**  
OLD FORT'S BLACK COMMUNITY IS  
CREATING OUTDOOR  
RECREATIONAL AREAS TO

Commission Funding, solar pa

## The Perf

Rail trail expansion builds dreams  
that Freeport and Kittanning could  
rival GAP Trail destinations

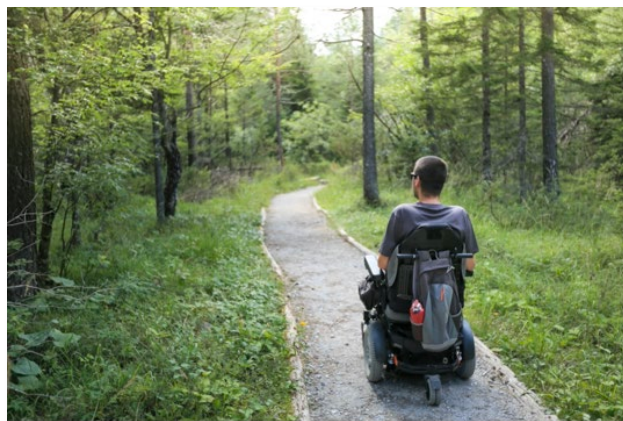
Gov. Whitmer approves \$45.6 million in  
recreation development and acquisition

## Million in Grants for Parks and Recreation Projects Statewide

Partnership formed with goal to make Minnesota a top 10 state in  
outdoor recreation



# OUTDOOR RECREATION IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE





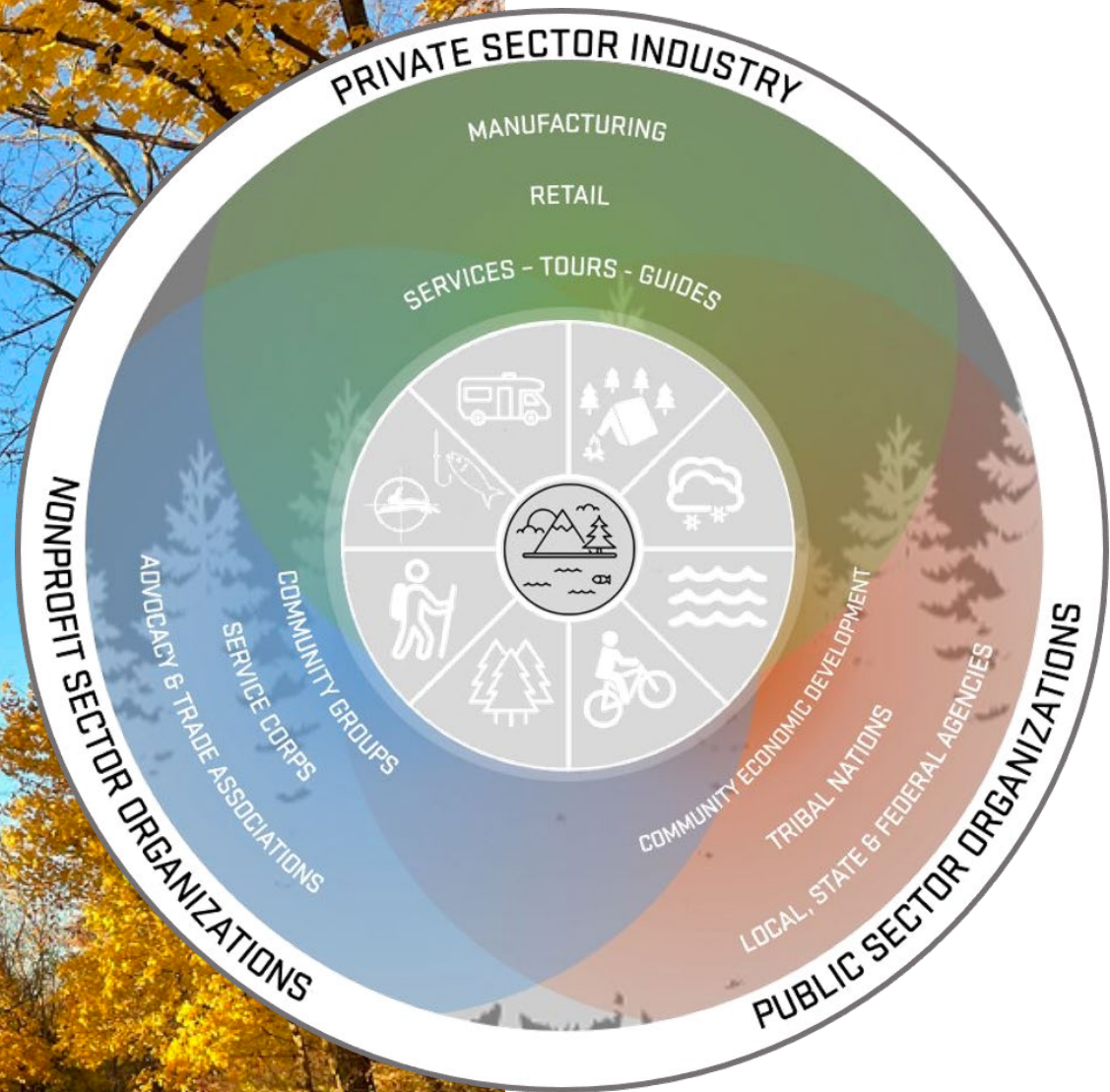
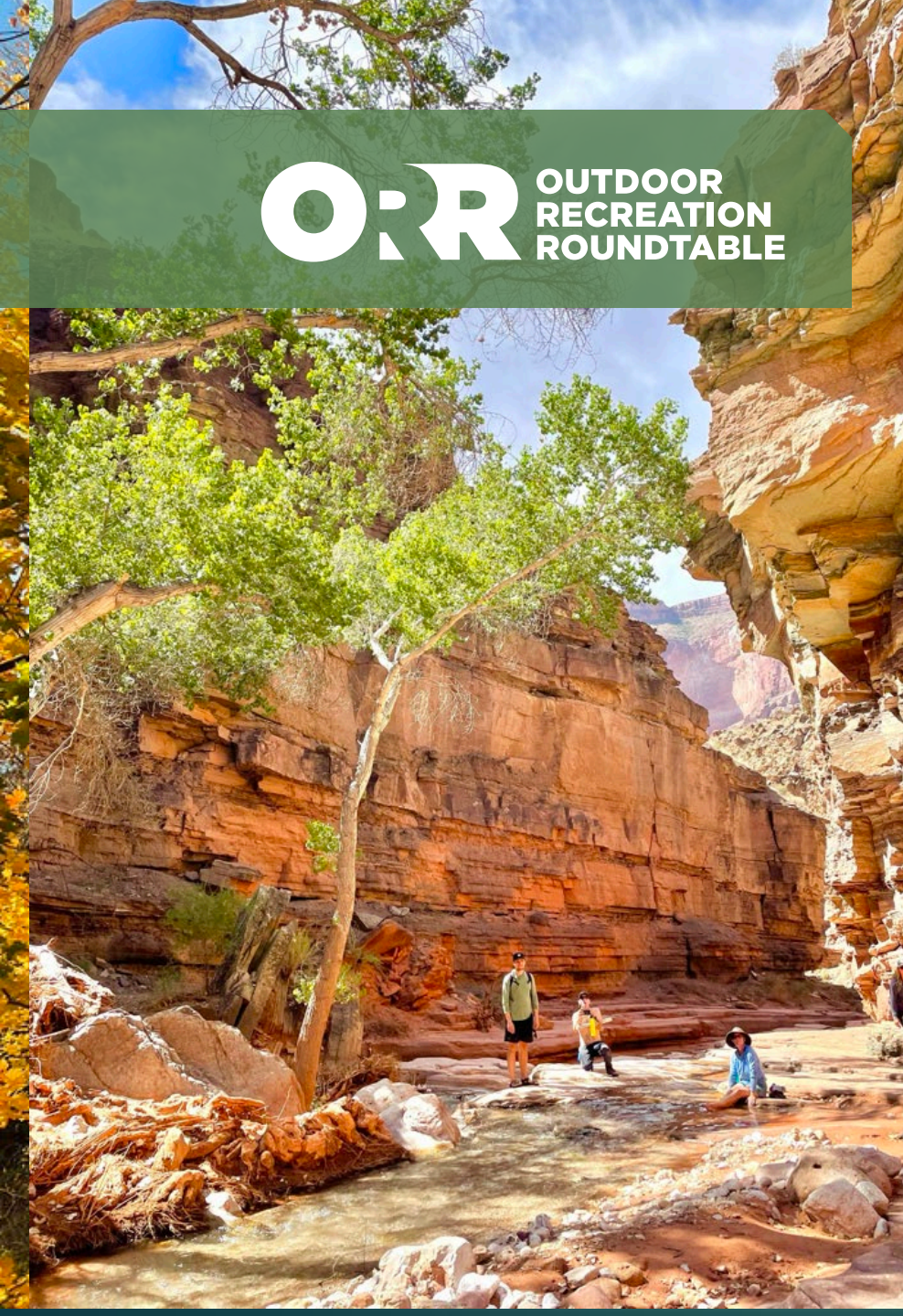
## The outdoors is Utah tech firms' No. 1 recruiting tool

State leaders extol the economic importance of “protecting and preserving” Utah’s outdoor opportunities.





# ORR OUTDOOR RECREATION ROUNDTABLE





# ORR OUTDOOR RECREATION ROUNDTABLE

## 2022, National

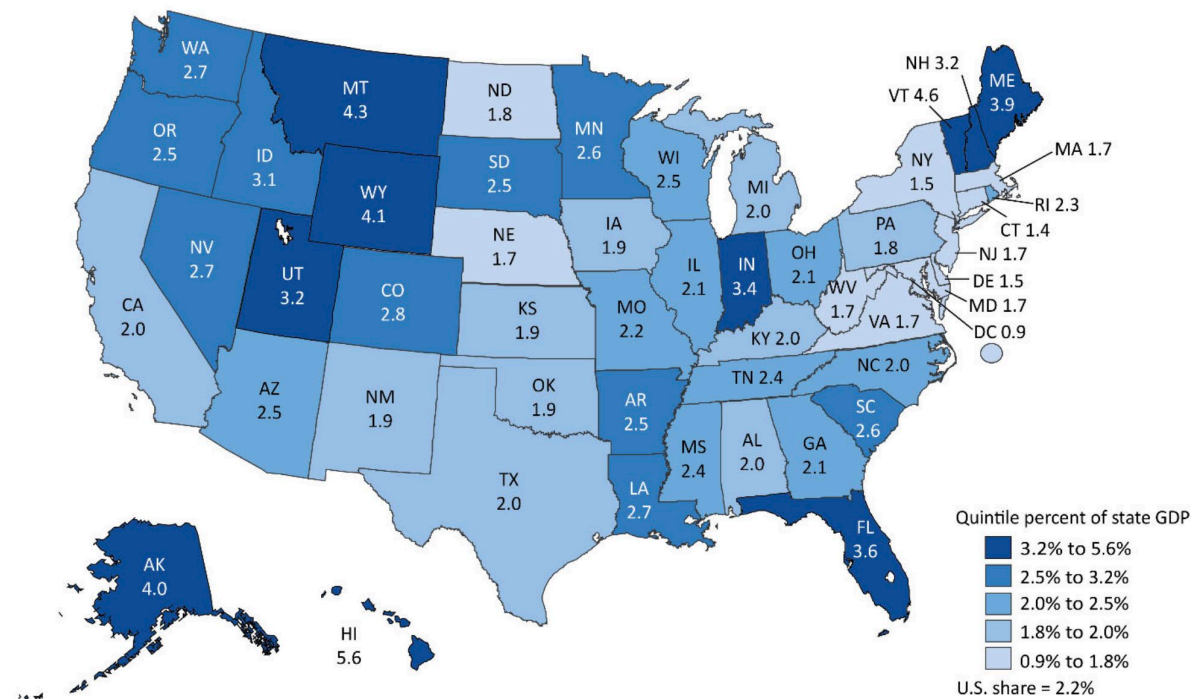
**\$1.1 Trillion** Gross Output

**2.2%** of U.S. GDP

**5 Million** Jobs

**3.3 %** of U.S. Employment

State Outdoor Recreation Value Added as a Percent of State GDP, 2022



U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



	Outdoor Recreation Economy	U.S. Economy
<b>Growth in GDP</b>	<b>+4.8%</b>	+1.9%





Welcome to the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable's Rural Economic Development Toolkit. Click "Introduction" below to get started.

**First Edition (2021)**



Welcome to the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable's Rural Economic Development Toolkit.

Click "Introduction" below to get started.

**Second Edition (2024)**



**ORR** OUTDOOR  
RECREATION  
ROUNDTABLE

Where are you located?







# DEFINE THE PROCESS

Elk Country  
Visitors Center, PA  
Wilds





# PLAN PROACTIVELY

Beckley,  
West Virginia





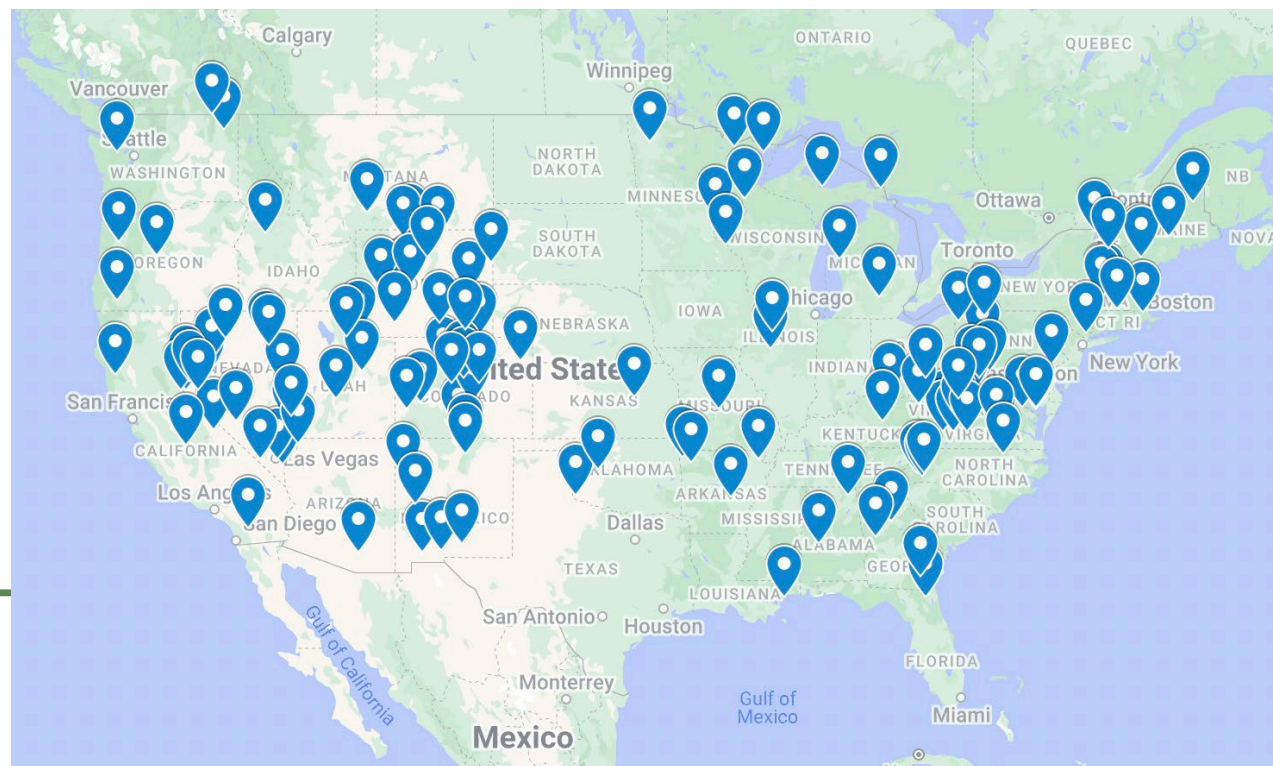
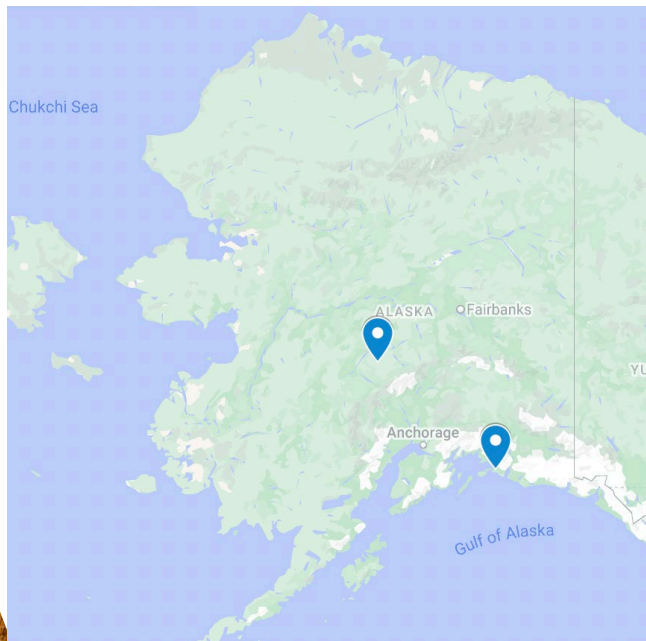
# SPOTLIGHT GREAT WORK

Old Fort, North Carolina  
(Photo Darrel Cassell)



[Click Here](#)

# Rural Development Toolkit Mapping Project





# SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL



## ORR Rural Economic Development Toolkit Self-Assessment Tool

This **ORR Toolkit Self-Assessment Tool** was developed in partnership with Once a Day Marketing to enable communities to evaluate their current status and progress over time in rural economic development through outdoor recreation.

Anywhere you see a yellow cell, **input a score for yourself ranging from 0 to 5.**

0 = *Low or Disagree*, while 5 = *High or Agree*, depending on the category.

DATE	
MATRIX SCORE RECAP	
Best Practice	Score
1. Identify and Empower Local Champions	2.5
2. Make Outdoor Recreation a "Must Have"	4.3
3. Build Collaboratives	3.6
4. Guarantee Buy-in and Dependability	3.8
5. Generate Public Support	3.0
6. Provide Professional Development	4.4
7. Create a Brand	4.2
8. Identify Funding Partners	4.0
9. Achieve Buy-In from The State	3.6
10. Plan for Destination Management/Value Capture	4.0
11. Take on Infrastructure Needs	3.5
12. Attract and Support Outdoor Businesses	5.0
	<b>3.83</b>

### SELF ASSESSMENT

#### 1. Identify and Empower Local Champions

Economic development through outdoor recreation doesn't come from the top down, it comes from energetic local champions who are motivated to get behind the work.

For outdoor recreation to take hold as a viable economic driver within a rural community, the community must have people who love recreating outdoors and see the potential for recreation access to benefit everyone, from youth and families to small business owners and healthcare providers and everyone in between.

Criteria	Guiding Questions	Self-ranking (5 Star System)
<b>Local outdoor recreation advocates identified</b>	Is a champion or champions in place who have identified themselves as excited to help move this effort forward? Do they have a good reputation in the community between members of the public and important stakeholders? Do they understand perspectives along a diversity of political, race, class, and other identities?	2
<b>Recreation opportunities considered</b>	To build a bigger coalition, have these champions considered how a diversity of recreation activities may benefit from this effort?	4



# ACCESSIBILITY

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## Accessibility in Recreation Infrastructure

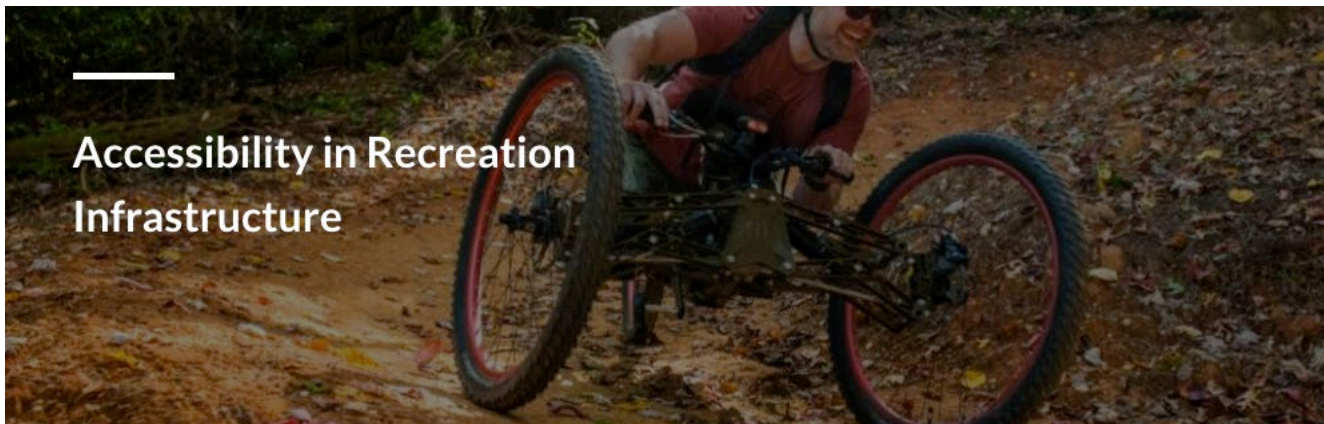


Photo: Eric Arce

For outdoor recreation infrastructure to reach its full potential, **it should be designed in such a way to maximize accessibility for the disabled population,** which has historically been under-prioritized in outdoor recreation development and lacked the same quality of access to outdoor recreation destinations.





## Planning for Climate Resilience in Outdoor Recreation

Since the initial publication of this toolkit, climate-related, severe weather has devastated rural communities reliant on outdoor recreation assets, including wildfires across the West and Hawaii, droughts impacting Lake Powell and Lake Mead, floods in Yellowstone, Vermont and Kentucky. These tragic events underscore the need for proactive preparation at the local and regional level to provide safety measures for local residents and businesses and plans for rebuilding with more resilient infrastructure.



Interviewees suggested a number of strategies to mitigate these damages before they happen, including:

- Creating community-wide disaster plans** to guide communication and prioritization during extreme events (see [this](#) from the New York Times).
- Designing recreation infrastructure with an eye to severe weather** (see [this](#) from Climate.Park.Change.)
- Siting of homes, buildings, and other critical infrastructure** in geographies less susceptible to fire and flooding.
- Building homes and buildings** with flood and fire-resistant materials.
- Building new infrastructure like microgrids and water storage** to adapt to disasters when they happen (see [this](#) on Disaster-Resilient Infrastructure from GovPilot).
- Creating business-support services immediately in the wake of natural disasters** (like [this](#) from the Vermont Outdoor Business Alliance).



# TRIBAL LEADERSHIP

## Tribal Leadership and Legacies

In many places, Indigenous communities connected to land and water since time immemorial have been pushed out of meaningful involvement in decision-making structures. In others, historic legacies of [heirs property](#) and [allotment and fractionation](#) have led to land loss for Black and Indigenous communities around the United States.

### New Visitor Center to Tell Katahdin Woods' Story Through Native American Eyes

A privately funded visitor center is emerging from the Maine wilderness at the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument that will tell the story of the region through the eyes of Native Americans

By [Associated Press](#) | May 23, 2023 |



Tribes should be prioritized for inclusion in planning efforts, given the ignominious history of genocide and [forcible relocation](#) of Indigenous peoples from today's public lands and outdoor spaces. This point was underscored by Mary Monroe Brown, Former Director of the Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation, who counts Native American Tourism of Wisconsin (NATOW) as an important partner in the state's work.

Recently, the Trust for Public Land announced a new effort to [return 31,000 acres of ancestral lands](#) to the Penobscot Nation south of the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument, reflective of a growing movement nationwide to return land or stewardship rights to historic Indigenous inhabitants.



1. Share your needs in Toolkit Mapping Project
2. Reach out to connect with Leaders and Communities
3. Send me a note!

**Chris Perkins**

[cperkins@recreationroundtable.org](mailto:cperkins@recreationroundtable.org)

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